

Village Salado Voice

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(PHOTO BY MARILYN FLEISCHER)

Madrigal Singers from Ellison High School in Killeen entertained an audience of Bell County Museum supporters who gathered for the annual Christmas party at the home of Chuck and Martha McCarter, on Rock Creek Dr. in Salado Dec. 11. The Madrigal singers also sang Christmas carols throughout the Village as part of the Christmas Stroll.

Stroll weekends good for shops

Salado merchants were smiling this week following completion of the two weekends of the Christmas Stroll, as their cash registers were busy throughout the weekends.

Most shops reported that the sales in their businesses were higher than last year. Long-time shop owners reported that the second weekend of the Stroll, now in its fourth year, is increasing in attendance and sales with each year.

One shop owner who has been in business in Salado since before the Stroll began more than two decades ago said that the first weekend of the Stroll was the best ever in terms of sales receipts.

A few shops said that the sales were down slightly from last year, but attributed that to shoppers buying smaller items. Even those with lower sales totals said that the numbers of people in their shops was higher than the past few years.

It helped that the rain on the first weekend waited until Sunday afternoon and evening. The second weekend was a beautiful, slightly chilly weekend that beckoned shoppers to come to Salado to see her at her most beautiful.

Several shops downtown will remain open past dark on an informal basis during the Christmas rush to give shoppers an extra opportunity.

Aldermen to discuss renewal of contract with fire department

Salado aldermen will discuss the contract the Village of Salado has with the Salado Volunteer Fire Department during their regular meeting 6:30 p.m. Dec. 16 at the Municipal Building.

The Village of Salado currently contracts with the Salado Volunteer Fire Department to provide first responder and fire emergency services to the Village. The Village pays \$25,000 to the Fire Department on an annual basis for the services.

Aldermen will also consider naming a new Municipal Judge, after adjourning into executive session. Alternate Municipal Judge Ted Duffield has been serving in the capacity as Don Svadlenak resigned the position effective Nov. 30. Svadlenak also resigned his position as Justice of the Peace. County commissioners last week named Don Engleking as the new J.P.

The board will consider a request from Police Chief Alan Rogers to fund the purchase of tasers for the Police Department, following a presentation on their safety and usage.

Aldermen will discuss the Stanford Development Subdivision, a portion of which lies within the ETJ of the Village, as well as the Property Abatement Fee Schedule and a proposed cross-walk on Church St. between the Salado Church of Christ and its Activity Center.

Bond election moved back to April, as trustees examine choices, costs

By TIM FLEISCHER
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Salado school trustees have postponed calling a bond election for February, opting instead to call the bond election for April 9. Trustees looked at two election calendars during their regular meeting Dec. 13 and will call the April 9 by Feb. 6.

The other possible election date, April 2, would put early voting during Spring Break. By setting the date for April 9, early voting in the election will be March 23-April 5.

Between now and Feb. 6, when the board calls the election, board members will work with architectural firm Fields and Associates and the construction manager at-risk Baird-Williams to develop bond package(s) for voter consideration.

The board will look more closely at the preliminary cost estimates to find areas where cuts can be made.

"If we cut, we are going to be cutting items, not just dollars," said

board member Trey Little during the Dec. 13 meeting, adding that the board needs to give the architect clear direction on what it wants.

Fields and Associates developed the preliminary drawings and estimates from input from the Facilities Committee of the Board and input from the citizens committee that has met a handful of times over the past two years to discuss facility needs in the school district.

At the September meeting, during which rough cost estimates of \$13.5 million for a 72,000 sq. ft. high school were presented, many citizens told the board that the district needed to plan for a larger building.

That sentiment, however, may have changed in light of the \$20 million estimate for the cost of a 110,000 sq. ft. high school and renovations at the elementary school.

The proposed cost budgets for the new high school, elementary renovations, athletic facilities and auditorium can be found in this

edition of the *Salado Village Voice*. They are draft budgets that were handed to the audience during the Dec. 6 town hall meeting.

Working from those budget estimates, the board will try to formulate a bond package that trustees feel the community will approve.

During a Dec. 9 workshop, trustees mulled several issues, including a dollar amount that they felt the community would support, a date to set the election and what proposals the community would support.

Trustee Jeff Kelley said that he would like for the board to "find a way to keep the tax rate somewhere between \$1.79 and \$1.85."

To do that, the bond proposal for construction of the high school and renovations of the elementary school would have to be cut by at least 20 percent.

Where will the cuts to bring in a \$16 million bond come from? Those are the types of questions trustees will be considering in the coming

SEE TRUSTEES, PAGE 14A



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Happy Holidays

Salado Village Voice will close at noon Dec. 24 and Dec. 31. The newspaper will re-open for business the Monday following the Christmas and New Year's holidays.

The deadline for the Dec. 30 issue of the newspaper will be noon Dec. 23. The deadline for the Jan. 6 issue will be noon Dec. 30.

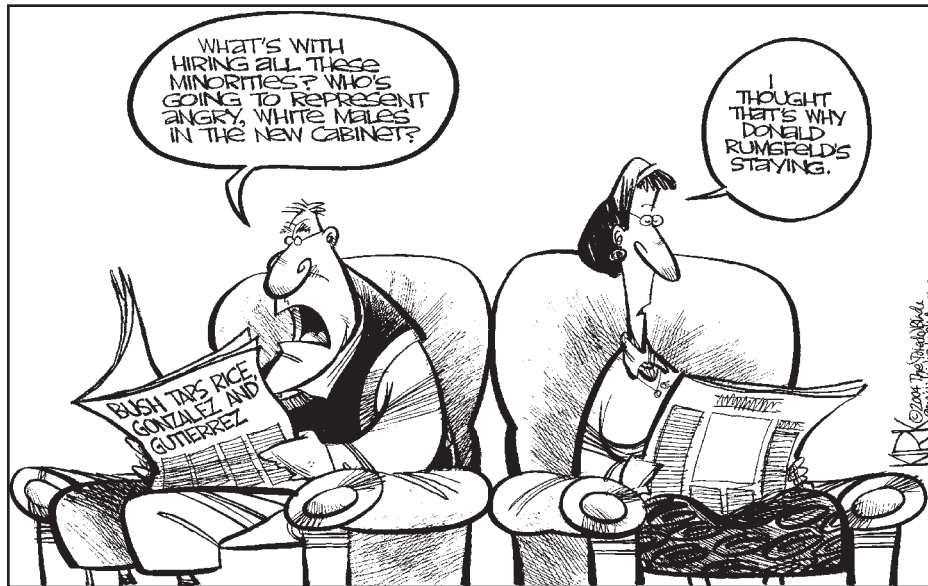
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FORUM

An Open Exchange of Ideas



Bush Reaches Out

This is how the media would write the story of George Bush's second term if they had their way:

WASHINGTON -- President Bush announced that former Senate Minority Leader Tom Daschle would be his new White House counsel, in a move interpreted as part of an effort to reach out to Democrats. The Bush team has reconciled itself to the reality that in a polarized political environment, elevating partisan enemies and encouraging internal critics is the only way to govern effectively.

Bush set the tone for the day by throwing his arm around Daschle and saying: "Tommy fought every day to obstruct my agenda and paid the ultimate political price in a crushing defeat. That is the sort of pluck and political courage that should be honored in Washington -- and that's exactly what I intend to do."

Not everyone was happy with the appointment. A statement released by the Senate Democratic caucus said: "This appointment is empty symbolism from an administration with no mandate. It is the rankest hypocrisy to select Daschle while leaving Sen. Carl Levin (Mich.), who has done as much if not more to obstruct Bush's judges, out in the cold." A senior White House official sighed, "I guess we're just going to have to try harder."

The Daschle move comes after Bush reached out to Secretary of State Colin Powell, begging him to stay to continue, as one State Department insider familiar with the conversation put it, "to sabotage Bush policy from within." A close friend of Powell's said: "It was extremely gratifying to Colin that the president finally gave his role in fomenting internal dissension the recognition it deserves."

Bush's maneuvers represent a departure from his typical political style. Bush usually presents voters with clear policy ideas and, should he win, implements

Rich Lowry



them. "We all realized that was just too simplistic," a Bush official said. "Look, there's no getting around the fact that 55 million people voted for 'nuance' and incoherence. That's exactly what we're going to give them."

White House Chief of Staff Andy Card will stay on board, but under strict orders, say insiders, to leak once a day to Dana Milbank of The Washington Post or David Sanger of The New York Times. "There's such a thing as being too loyal," said a Bush loyalist, who spoke extensively about sensitive internal deliberations in keeping with a new leak-friendly policy.

The Bush team's ambition in implementing its new approach was evident in rumors of a shake-up at the Republican National Committee. Soon-to-depart Democratic National Committee Chairman Terry McAuliffe is being considered for a post there.

"The problem is, the Republicans have a slight majority in the country, which isn't very bipartisan if you think about," said a member of the Bush political team. "We've got to get some of the ineffectual guys from the other side working for us, so they can help tamp down our popularity. Terry would be perfect."

We're considering Bob Shrum too - if we can get him to come down on his fee."

Rich Lowry is editor of the National Review. (c) 2004 by King Features Synd., Inc.

Intelligence merger continues largest consolidation since FDR; GOPers fear huge deficits-debt

Thanks to the courageous and unprecedented bi-partisan work of the 9/11 Commission; the follow-up pressure by the survivors, and relatives of those who perished, in the September 11 tragedies; and the last minute efforts by President Bush - who finally got involved in the legislative action - the massive National Intelligence Reform Bill is now law of the land.

The act puts 15 intelligence agencies and their thousands of employees under one Director. All this with a fervent hope that the squabbling and turf battles can be bridged between the "gatherers" of intelligence information and those who put the data together, the so called "connectors of the dots." An absolute "must" if we hope to avoid future terrorist attacks against our nation.

This \$40 billion effort is the second major consolidation of agencies within the federal government during Bush's first term. Homeland Security was first, and it also combined a large number of independent agencies and thousands of workers.

A DEMO DREAM COME TRUE

If we didn't know better - we would swear this creation of super-agencies was the work of a Democratic President rather than a GOP ideologue like Bush. It's a liberal Demo's dream come true - "bigger government and more spending!" Hardly a true-to-life expectation, for a Republican leader to so nonchalantly produce huge expenditures that have, in four short years, created (from a surplus) a mammoth national debt that has no apparent end in sight.

Fact is - we have to go back to Franklin Roosevelt's time (1933-45) to find such vast bureaucratic consolidation and shuffling - not to mention creativity and spending.

Some of Bush II's strongest backers (and string pullers) are muttering in the background about the budget busting deficits, while wondering if it will ever taper off - much less stop.

HOPES AND FEARS

The administration's wholesale moves to create massive bureaucracies designed specifically to ward off future terror attacks, through more efficient collecting and analyzing of critical intelligence information, is something every American prayerfully hopes will work.

Now, if we can keep those in charge, from developing the usual self-defeating proprietary attitudes, which inhibits most of our governmental agencies, bureaus, departments, secretariats and directorates, we may reach our goal of protecting America from this new and insidious terroristic enemy that is "lurking at the gates." Watching and waiting to destroy our way of life.

Those who spend their waking hours "naysaying" are already busy pointing out problems that may arise with such gigantic mergers of people and missions.

First and foremost is the worry that the two new "free-standing" directorates - National Intelligence Director and Counterterrorism Center Director, will be vying with the Homeland Security Secretary to become the President's top in-house expert on Intelligence matters, as they protect (and enlarge) their newly organized "fiefdoms." This must not be allowed to happen!

A national identification card that everyone must carry, is feared by many, particularly the ACLU - who have so many added suspicions nowadays, that we wonder if they still have time to peek under their beds at night to see who's

Off the Record

by Ken Clapp



listening!

TIME TO ACT

Fact is - it was high time we took a new tack in our intelligence gathering-evaluation procedures and hopefully these new agencies are the correct routes to success. They will naturally need modification over the years, but overall it appears to be a good start on the road to insuring a safer homeland.

It will eventually give us a handle on where terrorists are nesting worldwide, thus aiding our allies across the globe as they battle this same enemy - providing we (and they) can begin restoring our former close working relationships.

SAD NOTE DURING A HAPPY SEASON

We hesitate to point to anything smacking of sadness during this season of the year that has us all, including the heartiest of our curmudgeons, smiling a little and even humming Christmas carols.

But (and there is always this conjunctive hurdle to get past) there have been in recent weeks - headlined activities in and around our military bases - that are heart-rending.

The distressing scenes show wives of our military (many of whose husbands are either in Iraq or some other far flung outpost) having to take part in their community's free food centers.

And why is this happening? Simply because their husband's military pay is below the poverty level and only through food stamps and local generosity can they care for, and feed their children.

This situation is wrong and needs to be changed. Congress and the administration are the villains here, and they should pass legislation (ASAP) to increase military pay well above the national poverty line. Thus keeping their wives from having to seek assistance for their youngsters via foodstamps, special welfare programs, and food pantries.

MR. PRESIDENT.....

President Bush was out in California last week - speaking to the troops and their families at Camp Pendleton. This Marine station is home base for thousands of "gyrenes" who have served, or are serving, in Iraq. Most recently in the battle of Fallujah.

Bush asked, in his California talk, **that all Americans "make the war their own by helping battle weary troops and their families."**

Noble thoughts and challenges. Matters we should respond to at once without further urging. **But, Mr. President - if you really want to help the troops and their families, why not use some of your "mandated political capital" that you bragged about on November 9,** (you were discussing legislation at the time) and see what you can do **to raise pay levels for our troops.**

For starters you could have vetoed just half the outrageous "pork" giveaways in the recent omnibus budget. That would have freed up \$9 billion immediately.

Decent pay will help our troops more than all the morale uplifting speeches. And it would give them back family pride and freedom from financial worry. Bearing in mind that our military personnel, and their dependents, are serving all of us - on a daily basis - without reservation or regret.

That's -30-

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Tim Fleischer, **Editor-in-Chief**

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Ken Clapp, **Political Commentary**

Open and Accountable

Heritage Forum

by Edwin Feulner

On Capitol Hill next month it'll be out with the old and in with the new, as the 109th Congress takes the oath of office.

Of course, neither house will look much different. More than 95 percent of incumbents who ran this year were re-elected. Still, the beginning of a session is a time for changes. Here's one that would make a genuine difference: Make the legislative process more open.

For example, when lawmakers write their rules for this session, they ought to require that every spending measure and conference report be posted on the Internet for at least one day before members can vote on it. And that should be a bare minimum — after all, it would still be difficult to read an entire appropriations bill in one night.

Posting the text wouldn't be difficult. Every measure has to be typed up before it can be presented for consideration. That typed document can easily be posted as a file attachment on the Web. But this small change would pay big dividends.

If you doubt that, just ask Dan Rather.

In September, the soon-to-retire CBS anchor worked on a "60 Minutes" broadcast that showed several documents, supposedly from the early 1970s, which seemed to prove that President Bush had failed to complete his service in the Texas National Guard. The documents, it turns out, were complete forgeries.

Within hours of the CBS broadcast, Internet bloggers were taking the story apart piece-by-piece. They noted that the documents were written in a font style that's common in Microsoft Word, but virtually unheard of 30 years ago. They pointed out that the letters in the documents were proportionally spaced, while typewriters in the '70s rarely offered this feature. And they showed that the documents used "superscript" (e.g., making the "th" smaller and elevated in 7th), again, a common feature in modern Microsoft programs but something unavailable on ordinary typewriters of the day.

It was the classic case of the market proving smarter than any one

person (as Nobel Prize-winning economist F.A. Hayek might have pointed out). It could have taken a single investigator weeks to uncover all those clues. But through the Web, a typewriter expert here, a graphic designer there and a computer programmer somewhere else were able to pool their knowledge, examine the documents and prove they were falsified. All within hours.

Now imagine this process applied to a spending bill. Let's recall that, just last month, Congress had to rework a \$388 billion appropriations measure because somebody slipped in a provision that would have allowed Appropriations Committee staffers to look at confidential IRS records.

By the time that "mistake" was discovered, House members had already passed the spending bill. They had to return to Washington, rework the legislation and vote again to fix the mistake. This could have been avoided if the bill had been posted to the Web beforehand.

Instead, we would have had numerous taxpayers combing through the bill. Bloggers would have found the provision, talk-radio hosts would have amplified their comments, and voters would have complained to their representatives.

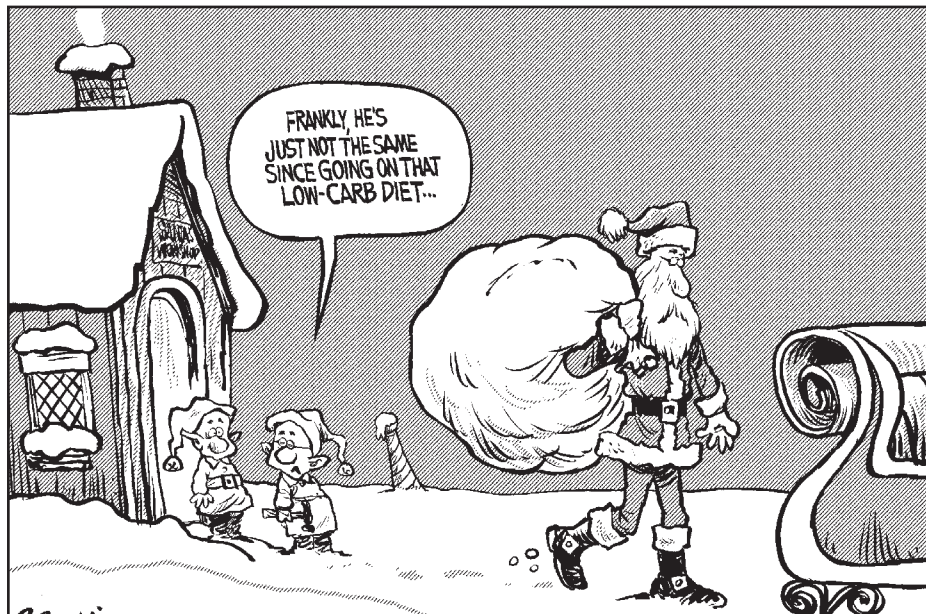
This same process would allow us to identify and eliminate wasteful spending measures before they become law. And it would actually be more evolutionary than revolutionary. When Newt Gingrich became Speaker of the House in 1995, he helped create "Thomas," which makes the text of every bill available online at thomas.loc.gov.

But Thomas doesn't yet include the full text of, for example, spending measures. What we need is full disclosure of every bill, before it's voted on. The public deserves more than just the chance to read bills that have become law; it ought to be able to comment on measures that are under consideration.

That's a sure-fire way to ensure that the 109th Congress is more accountable -- and thus does a better job -- than the 108th.

Feulner is the president of The Heritage Foundation (heritage.org), a Washington-based public policy research institute.

FORUM



Hutchison utilizes survey feedback as legislative priorities are set

This January, a new Congress will be sworn in and will begin setting its legislative priorities. As I contribute to the process on behalf of Texas, I use information I gather from many sources, including my annual Listening Post. In this year's survey on domestic issues, you provided excellent feedback and suggestions for dealing with energy, transportation, tax relief, legal reform, and more.

The largest number of responses came in support of tax relief measures that, without congressional action, are set to expire in 2011. More than any other provision, the respondents said, relief from the Marriage Penalty was the item to preserve. Permanent elimination of the Death Tax, lower marginal tax rates on all income brackets, and maintenance of the higher child tax credit were also heavily supported.

Gordon and Nancy, from Richardson, summed up their position on tax relief in this way: "We don't want this relief so much for ourselves as we do for our children and their children. We had hoped to leave them with a better world than the one we have now, or at least similar to what we remember from our growing up years."

Other comments were short and to the point. Lee, from Austin wrote, "The alternative minimum tax needs reform."

"Eliminate the income tax and IRS and institute a consumption tax," was the terse reply of Stephen, of Highlands.

Dale, who lives in Flower Mound, said he favored elimination of the Marriage penalty, lower marginal tax rates, and the higher child tax deduction, and added,

Capitol Comment



Kay Bailey Hutchison
U.S. Senator



"I also want a balanced budget."

Legal reform questions generated a large number of reactions. The greatest number approved prohibiting lawsuits against gun manufacturers. Medical liability and tort reform drew many responses on both sides. Fern, from Beaumont, argued, "Lawsuits and the threat of lawsuits are the only way to keep big business from putting out bad products and taking advantage of the little guy."

Carolynn, who hails from Friendswood, had a different take, saying she wants to see tort reform to prevent frivolous lawsuits from driving up insurance for doctors. "I lost my OB-GYN for this reason, and he was the best doctor I ever had," she wrote.

Energy policy generated many comments. Most of you said the United States should increase domestic oil and gas drilling and production, while nearly as many argued on behalf of renewable resources. Raising federal requirements for fuel efficiency was much less popular.

James, of Kilgore, said, "I believe our tax dollars are wasted on funding for solar and wind energy." John, of Pflugerville, counters that he wants, "Massive emergency federal funding research and development of alternative energy sources. Get out of dependency on foreign oil, NOW."

William, from San Antonio, speaks bluntly, "We have had 31 years since the OPEC oil embargo of 1973 and still we have no comprehensive energy policy. This is a

disgrace."

The final category of questions addressed our state's transportation needs. On a topic that generated the most answers for any single question in the survey, Texans wanted a fairer share of the gasoline taxes paid to build more roads. Raising those excise taxes received the lowest backing of any proposal in the survey. Almost as unpopular was the suggestion of an alternative way to finance highways through methods such as tolls. Conversely, many agreed we should increase funding for light rail and mass transit.

Michael, a Dallas resident, replied, "New taxes and tolls are not the answer. Increasing efficiency is...I, and everyone I have spoken to, find it hard to believe that there is no high-speed rail system connecting major Texas cities."

Marc, from Houston, agrees with half of what Michael says. "Tolls are bad because they are discriminatory," he wrote. "Gas taxes should be MUCH higher."

Thomas, of Bryan notes, "I do not believe gas taxes should be raised. However, getting people out of their vehicles and onto mass transit will be tough...I do not really have an answer."

With the help of your responses and other input from my fellow Texans, we can work together to develop practical answers to these and many other challenges face our state and nation. I really appreciate the time you took to weigh in...I am listening.

Clean elections - Coming to state near you



Jim Hightower

If you're looking for a little good news from the November 2 election, check out the "Clean Money" campaigns in Arizona, Maine, and North Carolina.

Instead of surrendering their state governments to the Big Money Interests that control Washington and most state capitols, people in these three states have authorized full public financing for candidates who agree to run "clean" — which means that these candidates accept none of the corrupting contributions that special interests (primarily corporations) routinely dole out to Democrats, Republicans, and anyone else willing to be bought. By providing a pool of public funds for public elections, we can get public officials who are no longer financially beholden to corporate, union, or other private funders who always have a private agenda attached to their checks.

In Maine, this clean-election option has been available for three election cycles, and the results are astonishing: 77 percent of Maine's state house members, and 83 percent of its state senators, have now been elected without taking a dime in corporate money! It changes the whole political dynamic, for legislators are free to cast their votes without first checking with their big campaign contributors.

Likewise in Arizona, 23 percent of state senators and 58 percent of house members are now free of any dependence on private campaign donors — as are 10 of Arizona's statewide elected officials, including the governor, attorney general, and all four of this year's winning candidates for the state corporation commission. Also, North Carolina provided the clean-election option this year to candidates for its top judicial seats — and the clean candidates won both races for the supreme court and two of the three seats on the court of appeals.

Full public financing is real reform. To bring it to your state, county, city, school district, or whatever — call Public Campaign: 202-293-0222.

FORUM



Reader responds to Village permit requirements

Dear Editor,

Oh happy day, I am so glad to learn that I will not have to purchase a permit from the Village of Salado to cut the grass in my yard. Making me purchase a permit would have been about as ridiculous as making the people that perform this service for home owners in Salado purchase a permit.

I can see the need to regulate contractors that perform construction or repair work that may run several thousands of dollars. I expect we have all heard the horror stories

Your Voice Readers' Opinion

about the rip-off artist cheating homeowners by pretending to be reputable home repair contractors. In those cases the so called contractors would usually ask for payment up front to purchase materials then disappear. Or, they would never finish the work, or do very shoddy work, which the property owner could not get rectified.

But lawn care people.

I have never seen a case where a lawn care specialist required payment up front for their work. They do the work and the property owner has an opportunity to inspect the results before making any payment. I'll be the first to admit there are many things in this world I have not seen, but I certainly have never seen anyone hiring a lawn care service being cheated by the worker. Also, I have

to wonder about the kids that cut the grass for their neighbors. Will they be required to get a permit before doing this work.

Then there are the pest control operators and air conditioning repairmen. I didn't see them listed as someone that will have to get a permit. Why were they excluded? Looks to me like the people that spent time coming up with these ordinances do not have enough to do.

Sincerely,
Bob Smith
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Shedding the light

By MICHAEL QUINN SULLIVAN

Like all children, mine have gone through the inevitable stage of fearing the dark. Hard to blame them: the bumps, the obstacles, the unknown.

A child's fear of the dark is understandable. What's equally understandable is the average lawmaker's fear of the light. After all, revelations of bumps and stumbles over bad public policy can be a scary thing when pesky constituents come a' calling.

That's why darkness reigns supreme in our beloved state's legislative

process.

Texas is one of only seven states that doesn't mandate at least one house record final votes on legislation, as the Dallas Morning News recently noted. Not exactly a chummy club we should remain in.

Regardless of ideological persuasion, the issue is easy to understand. No employer would allow her employees to hide the very measures by which she judges job performance; mine certainly doesn't.

Yet the only realistic measure Texas taxpayers have in determining

the practical value of their representative or senator is hidden from view. With the current practice of allowing the great majority of bills to pass with unrecorded voice votes, lawmakers are all but unaccountable back home for their legislative work.

That should change. State Sen. John Carona and State Rep. Dan Branch have already filed legislation for the new Session that would bring much-needed light to the voting records of lawmakers. Lieutenant Governor David Dewhurst has put the concept high on his legislative agenda of making government more accessible to the public.

While folks have howled for years at the darkness shielding lawmakers from taxpayer and voter review, the Freedom of Information Foundation of Texas – an organization composed primarily of journalists – reports 2005 could finally see sunshine in Austin. An amazing array of organizations from across the ideological spectrum, and at least 31 state lawmakers, are on record supporting more recorded legislative votes.

In an age of instant information, it is remarkable Texas lawmakers have received a free pass thus far staying out of the light.

That must change.

Some might argue that recording votes will make lawmakers hesitant to take controversial positions. That's the point. Just like the employee wondering if he will get caught sleeping on the job, lawmakers should worry about Ma and Pa Voter reacting negatively to poor public policy performance.

Texasans deserve to know how their lawmakers vote. By bringing light to the legislative process, we will not only reveal perpetrators of bad policy, but bring a higher level of accountability to Texas government.

When my kids awake in the night, they know dawn will come. Day-break is long overdue for Texas taxpayers. Hopefully light will flood the Texas Capitol during the 2005 legislative session. No matter how scary it might be for politicians.

MICHAEL QUINN SULLIVAN IS THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE TEXAS PUBLIC POLICY FOUNDATION, AN AUSTIN-BASED RESEARCH INSTITUTE.



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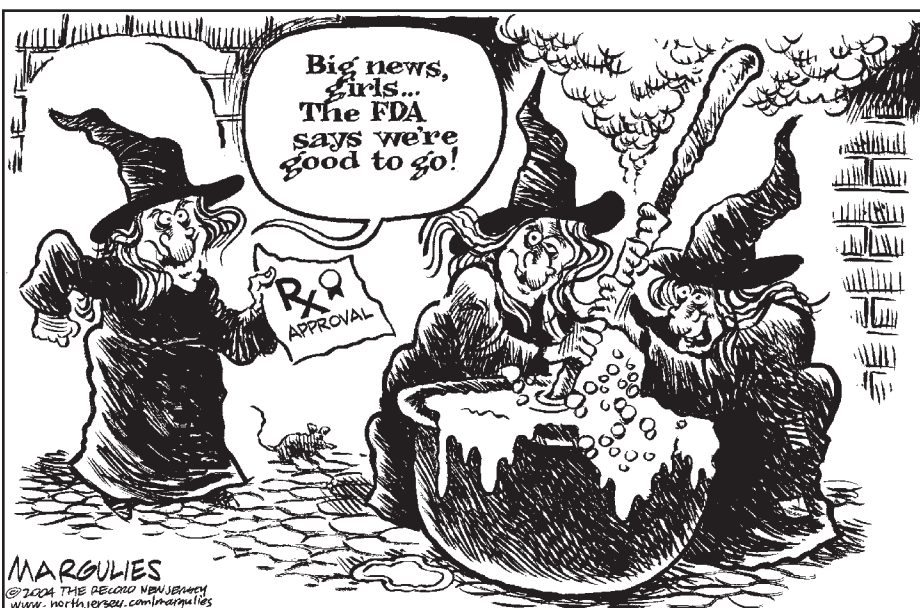
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Salado sales tax out-paces state, county

Village of Salado out-paced both the state and county in sales tax collections in October when compared to 2003, as it received a rebate payment Dec. 10 of \$23,443.82, 11.62 higher than last year's October payment. The state showed an increase of 6.6 percent over last year, while the county showed an increase of 10.65 percent for the December payment.

Last December, Salado received 21,602.62. For 2004, the Village has received \$303,214.90, which is 4.4 percent higher than the \$290,408.08 received

in 2003.

Salado even outpaced Killeen, which received \$1.1 million in December, 7.44 percent higher than December 2003. For the year, Killeen has received \$14.7 million, which is 9.68 percent more than the \$13.4 million it received in 2003. Killeen, along with Temple and Belton, levies the maximum 1.5¢ sales tax.

Village of Salado levies a 1¢ local sales tax. The Salado Public Library levies a half-cent sales tax to bring the local sales tax to the maximum 8.25¢.

The payment to Salado

Public Library District, a special purpose district approved by voters to levy a sales tax, was \$14,497.59, a substantial increase of 12.05 percent over last December's \$12,937.73.

In 2004, the Library District received \$189,437.87, 4.92 percent more than the \$180,539.10 paid in 2003.

Bell County showed more than 10 percent growth in the December payment of \$777,855.82. Last December, the County received \$702,925.65 for the half-cent sales tax it collected in October.

The County has shown a healthy 10.02 percent growth for 2004; it received a total of \$10.2 million in 2004, compared to \$9.3 million in 2003.

Texas Comptroller Carole Keeton Strayhorn Dec. 10 said the state collected \$1.4 billion in sales tax in November, up 6.6 percent compared to November 2003. The Comptroller sent \$321.6 million in December sales tax payments to local governments, up 4.9 percent compared to December 2003.

The final sales tax allocation of 2004 brings total local sales tax revenue for the year to \$4.2 billion, up

7.7 percent compared to calendar year 2003.

Texas cities' December sales tax allocations were \$218.2 million, up 4.5 percent compared to December 2003. City sales tax allocations during calendar year 2004 totaled \$2.8 billion, up 7.5 percent compared to calendar year 2003. Counties' December sales tax allocations were \$18.6 million, up 5.1 percent compared to December 2003. Counties received \$246.8 million in calendar year 2004, up 8.1 percent compared to the previous year.

Nine local transit sys-

tems received December sales tax allocations of \$76 million, a 5.9 percent increase over December 2003. Sales tax allocations to transit systems in 2004 totaled \$1 billion, up 8.3 percent compared to the 2003 total. December sales tax allocations of \$8.7 million went to 89 special purpose taxing districts, an increase of 6.2 percent compared to last December. Special purpose districts received \$115.5 million during 2004, up 6.9 percent compared to 2003.

The Comptroller's next local sales tax allocation will be made on Jan. 14.



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CHURCH NEWS

First Baptist Church • Main St. at the Creek

SUNDAY		WEDNESDAY	
Contemporary Worship/Bible Study	9:00a.m.	Children's Choir	4:45 p.m.
Traditional Worship/Bible Study	10:30 a.m.	Jr. High Halftime	5:15 p.m.
Orchestra Rehearsal	4:45 p.m.	Fellowship Meal	5:30 p.m.
Adult Choir Rehearsal	5:00 p.m.	Youth Choir	6:00 p.m.
Evening Worship	6:00 p.m.	Prayer Service	6:15 p.m.
		Team Kid (Age 3 - 6th grade)	6:00 p.m.
		Bible Drill (4th - 6th)	7:00 p.m.
		High School Halftime	7:00 p.m.



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Sunday School	10:00
Sunday Night Youth Group	6:00

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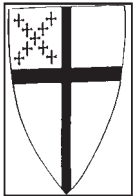
St. Joseph's Episcopal Chapel

Holy Eucharist

Sat. • 5 p.m.

Sun. • 9:30 a.m.

Tues. • 9:30 a.m.



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Wednesday

Mass

Saturday • 5:30 p.m.
Sunday

(Spanish) 9 a.m.
& 11 a.m.

Wednesday • 6 p.m.

Office Hours:
Every day
9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

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947-8037

ststephenchurch@earthlink.net

First Baptist Church Student Ministry adopts children for Christmas project

The First Baptist Church Student Ministry has adopted six children through the Salado Family Relief Fund. The group will provide Christmas gifts to these children.

Seventh and Eighth grade student ministry participants have been asked to provide for:

Girl, 12 years old- stereo, size 12 clothes, size 6 ladies shoes and school supplies.

Boy, 14 years old - stereo, clothes boys size 14 and boots men's size 9 1/2.

Ninth and tenth grade

student ministry will provide for:

Girl, 12 years old, Bean bag green, red tennis shoes(size 4) and clothes

Boy, 14 year old- watch, clothes, and shoes.

Eleventh and 12th grade student ministry will provide for:

Girl, eight years old, clothes (girl's size 8) Barbies, Cartoon Videos VHS, and school supplies.

Boy, 14 years old stereo, cd player, boots men's size 7 1/2 and school supplies.

All student ministry participants should purchase gifts and bring to the Christmas wrapping party 7 p.m. Dec. 19.

If students require more information they are asked to contact their Ministry Teachers.

Intermediate gifted and talented organize toy drive for military families

The Salado seventh grade gifted and talented class is organizing a toy drive to benefit children of military families who have a parent currently serving overseas.

Donations will be accepted at the Intermediate School office until Dec. 17. The drive will culminate with the show-

Identity Theft next program for Monday Club

The Salado Monday Club will next meet 2 p.m. Jan. 3 at the Salado United Methodist Church.

The program, presented by Inspector Best of the Temple Police Department, will focus on identity theft.

All ladies in the community are invited to attend.

ing of two Christmas films in the SIS cafeteria, from 6:30-9 p.m. Dec. 17. Admission will be free to anyone bringing a new, unwrapped toy. All toys suitable for newborns up to age 12 will be accepted, as will cash donations.

The classic Grinch cartoon will be shown first, followed by the Will Farrell comedy, "Elf." Free popcorn will be served, but attendees should bring along a chair, blanket,

pillow, etc. for comfort. Santa Claus is expected to make an appearance.

At the conclusion of the drive, the gifted and talented students will wrap and hand-deliver all the presents collected before Christmas.

For more information on the movie night or how you can participate in the toy drive, email Terry Summers at tsummers@saladoisd.org, or call the Intermediate School, 947-1700.

Memorials held for Frances Beaty

Memorial services for Frances W. Beaty, 82, of Salado, were held Dec. 10, 2004 at the First United Methodist Church in Salado with Rev. Grady Brittain officiating.

Beaty died Dec. 6 in a Temple hospital.

She was born Nov. 30, 1922 in Red Oak. She was a graduate of San Marcos Baptist Academy and attended Southwest Texas. She married Albert Jefferson "Jeff" Beaty on Aug. 4, 1940 in Lubbock. Beaty was a member of

the First United Methodist Church in Salado.

She was preceded in death by her husband on Feb. 4, 2000.

Survivors include one daughter, Joan Settle, of Georgetown, one grandchild and two great-grandchildren.

Memorials may be made to the Salado United Methodist Church Building Fund, P.O. Box 771, Salado, TX 76571.

Dossman Funeral Home of Belton handled arrangements.

Graveside services held for Billie Norwood at Salado Cemetery

Graveside services for Billie J. Norwood, 84, of Belton, were held Dec. 14, 2004 in Salado Cemetery with Rev. Bobby Baggett officiating.

Norwood died Dec. 11, 2004 in a Belton nursing center.

He was born June 3, 1920 in Salado to Fred and Hortense Miller Norwood. He was a farmer his entire life, and served 60 years with Scout Troop 117 as assistant scoutmaster, committee member and charter organization representative. He re-

ceived a number of scout-related awards in his life.

Norwood was a member of the First United Methodist Church in Belton, where he was active in church activities.

Survivors include one brother, Fred Norwood, of Temple, and one sister, Kathryn Schneider, of Fort Worth.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to the First United Methodist Church in Belton, or to Camp Tahuaya in Belton.

Heartfield Funeral Home in Belton handled arrangements.

Attention Church secretaries and publicity chairs. Send in your holiday schedule of events and Christmas programs to saladovillagevoice@earthlink.net. We would also like to announce your plans for the coming year.



The Salado Church of Christ welcomes you to our services this week

Sunday Morning Service • Dec. 1, 2004



Joe Keyes
Minister

"A Manger Instead of a Mansion" (Luke 2): A line from an old hymn asks of Jesus: "Why did he choose a lowly birth...?" Why was the King of the universe laid in a feed trough? Why was his arrival announced first to shepherds? We'll explore some of these questions as we look at the birth of Jesus today.

Sunday
Bible Class • 9 a.m. Worship • 10 a.m.
Evening Worship • 6 p.m.
Wednesday
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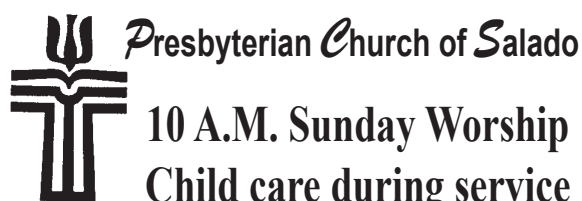
Pre-Worship Adult
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2:00 p.m.

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Worship Schedule

Sunday School • 9:45a.m.

Worship • 11 a.m.

Bible Study • 6 p.m.

Wednesday Praise & Prayer • 7:00 p.m.

CW5 Clapp buried at Ft. Sam Houston

Chief Warrant Officer Five (CW5) Douglas Vincent Clapp, of Salado, was buried Dec. 10, 2004 at Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery. CW5 Clapp was killed in a helicopter accident Nov. 29, 2004.

CW5 Clapp was one of seven Fort Hood soldiers who perished in a helicopter crash on November 29. The seven soldiers were honored by approximately 3,000 fellow troops, surviving family members and citizens in a memorial that filled to capacity the Christian House of Prayer in Killeen.

They were preparing the 4th Infantry Division for a return to combat when their UH60 Black Hawk went down near Bruceville-Eddy after crashing into a television transmission tower's guy wires.

Soldiers killed in the accident were these: Brig. Gen. Charles B. Allen, 4th Inf. Div. assistant division commander for support, Col. James M. Moore, commander for Division Support Command, Spc. Richard L. Brown, a helicopter mechanic assigned to Company A, 2nd Battalion, 4th Aviation, Capt. Todd T. Christmas, an air defense artillery officer assigned to HHC, STB, Chief Warrant Officer 5 Douglas V. Clapp, a senior automotive maintenance

officer for the division, Chief Warrant Officer 2 Mark W. Evans Jr., a helicopter pilot assigned to Co. A, 2-4 Aviation, Chief Warrant Officer 2 David H. Gardner, Jr., also a helicopter pilot assigned to Co. A, 2-4 Aviation.

CW5 Clapp was born May 28, 1956 in Lebanon, PA and was raised in Greensboro, NC.

In 1986, he received an Associate Degree from Troy State University. In 1977, he graduated from University of Central Texas with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Interdisciplinary Studies.

He entered the Army as an enlisted soldier Aug. 28, 1974 and was appointed as a Warrant Officer on Jan. 31, 1985. He enlisted as a 63A, Mechanics Helper. He attended Basic Training at 17th Training Company, 5th Battalion, at Fort Knox, KY.

Upon completion of Advanced Individual Training, he was assigned to 1/21 Aviation Company and Headquarters and Headquarters Company (HHC), 34th Medical Battalion, Ft. Benning, GA. There, he held Military Occupational Skills, 63B (Wheeled Vehicle Mechanic) and 71L (SID-PERS clerk and Equal Opportunity Clerk). In July 198, he was assigned to 66th Maintenance Com-

pany in Germany, where he worked in shop operations as a Report Control Clerk and a Wheeled Vehicle Mechanic. In August, 1980, he returned to HHC, 34th MED Battalion, Ft. Benning, GA, where he worked as a Light Wheeled Vehicle and Power Generation Mechanic, then as Detachment Motor Sergeant. After attending the 63B, LT Wheel Vehicle and Power Generation Mechanic Course, he was assigned to HHC 2ND Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division, Camp Hovey, Korea as the Maintenance Recovery Team Chief. In St. 1983, he was assigned to HHC, 36th Engineer Battalion, Fort Benning, GA, where he served until he was appointed as a Warrant Officer.

After his appointment and initial training as a Warrant Officer, CW5 Clapp was assigned to 6th Cavalry Bridge, Ft. Hood, as a Ground Maintenance Technician. While at Ft. Hood, Chief Clapp was reassigned to 158th Aviation Regiment, where he spent 13 months as an Automotive Maintenance Officer. In Sept. 1988, CW5 Clapp was reassigned to Camp Essayons, Korea, where he served as a Field Artillery Maintenance Technician in 2nd Infantry Division. He returned to Ft. Hood,

where he was assigned as a Battalion Maintenance Technician in 1st Cavalry Division. During his time with 1st Cavalry Division, he was reassigned to Service Battery, 1-82 Field Artillery and deployed to Dhabran, Saudi Arabia, spending one year in support of Desert Storm. In 1993, Chief Clapp was reassigned to 2-12 Armored Cavalry, where he served as the Heavy Unit Maintenance Technician. In 1994, CW5 Clapp was sent back to Korea where he served as the Battalion Maintenance Technician in 2nd Infantry Division, Camp Casey, Korea.

He once again returned to 1st Cav and was assigned to 2-8 Armor for 22 month. CW5 Clapp was then reassigned to III Corps US Army Garrison Ft. Hood, where he worked in the office of the Inspector General, as an Assistant Inspector General for Maintenance. During this time, he applied for "Training with Industry" and was accepted to the program, spending one year at the Red River Army Depot in Texarkana. While there, he was the Liaison from the depot to active duty units. CW5 Clapp was responsible for numerous mid-level management assignments, working

closely with the Directorate of Operations, Combat and Tactical Repair Division, Production Management Division, Production Support Division and the Rubber Products Division. CW5 Clapp returned to Ft. Hood in Aug. 2001, where he was assigned to C Company, 4th Forward Support Battalion, 4th Infantry Division.

CW5 Clapp deployed to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, where his unit directly supported 1-66 Armor. While serving in Iraq, Chief Clapp was promoted to CW5, the highest grade a Warrant Officer can achieve.

After his return from Operation Iraqi Freedom, CW5 Clapp was assigned as the Senior Maintenance Technician for the 4th Infantry Division on June 28, 2004. CW5 served his nation with distinction and honor for more than 30 years.

CW5 Clapp's military awards and decorations include the Bronze Star Medal, Meritorious Service Medal, Army Commendation Medal, Army Achievement Medal, Army Good Conduct Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Korean Defense Service Medal, National Defense Service Medal and Army Parachutist

Badge.

CW5 is survived by his wife of 26 years Shelann Clapp and daughter Jennifer Clapp.

He is also survived by his father Rufus Calvin Clapp, of North Carolina; three brothers, Brian Campbell, of Virginia, Dennis Clapp, of North Carolina, and Rodney Clapp of North Carolina; and three sisters, Olivia Smith, of New York, Jackie Smith of North Carolina, and Annie Lawson, of North Carolina. He is also survived by several nieces and nephews.

St. Stephen Parish Christmas dinner held Dec. 17

St. Stephen Women's Society will host its 2005 All Parish Christmas Dinner at 6:30 pm. on Friday, Dec. 17, at the St. Stephen Parish Hall. Everyone in the parish and guests are invited.

A catered sit down dinner will be prepared and served by Suzanne and Rob Petro of The Inn at Salado.

Dinner will include sirloin of beef, au gratin potatoes, vegetables, green salad, rolls and a dessert of apple cranberry pie.

For more information, call Joyce Dobias at 657-0097 or Tina Jobs at 657-2372 in charge of ticket sales.

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SPORTS

Eagles take 3rd in home tourney

The competition for the Salado boys basketball team didn't get any easier last week, with the Coach Smith Tournament bringing in six ranked teams in Class 2A and 3A, including the Eagles, who are ranked fourth in the Dec. 13 coaches poll.

Salado made it through its opening round opponent, Troy, with ease, winning by a score of 56-30 Dec. 9, although the margin of victory could have been much greater had head coach Tom Long not rested his starters for much of the second half.

Having spent most of the season as the first big man off the bench, Salado senior James Gregurek made the most of his starting opportunity versus Troy, scoring seven points and battling under the boards in the early going, helping the Eagles jump out to a 16-7 lead in the first.

Also coming off the bench, sophomore Ryan Clark quickly made his presence known in the second, draining two three pointers which pro-

pelled Salado to a 30-19 advantage at halftime.

Devon Dunn came alive in the third, scoring seven of Salado's 17 points in that period and effectively putting the game out of reach. Dunn had 13 points on the night, leading Salado scorers.

Ryan Clark finished with a dozen points, while his older brother Travis closed out the game with five, seeing limited second-half action.

Also scoring for Salado were Matt Jennings, nine, Nick Everett, three, and Justin Pruitt, two.

Moving on to face Class 3A power Manor in the second round, the Eagles - who were granted only seven trips to the line the entire game - were unable to avenge an early season loss at the hands of Manor, falling this time by a score of 57-44.

There were many questionable calls from the men in stripes in this game, none of which went the way of the Eagles. Despite seven quick points from Travis Clark in the first, the fourth-ranked Mustangs gained a 16-9 lead early on, which they would not relinquish.

Matt Jennings got the hot-hand in the third, scoring seven points and doing his part to help get the Eagles back in the game.

Salado was able to close the gap slightly, going into the fourth down by a score of 42-34.

As is the case with many close games, the victory goes to whichever team converts the most free throws. Manor held a decided edge in this game, hitting all nine of their fourth period free throws. The Mustangs, in fact, missed just one free throw the entire game, going 15-16 on the night. Manor would go on to defeat Brock in overtime to win the tournament title.

Travis Clark's 15 points led Salado scorers, while Jennings totaled 11 on the night. Dunn dropped in nine points, Scott Williams had five, and Nick Everett and Ryan Clark each scored two.

The loss to Manor set up yet another rematch for the Eagles, this time against Aransas Pass, who Salado upset Nov. 23 in San Antonio, prior to a Spurs/Mavericks game.

Playing for third place in the tournament, Salado accomplished what they couldn't get done versus Manor, which was gaining 28 free throw attempts and converting on 23 those.

Combine that tell-tale statistic with hot shooting from basically the entire team (the Eagles missed just 13 shots in the game), and Salado was able to cruise to a relatively easy 72-59 win over one of the best teams in Class 3A. This victory, similar to the first round defeat of Troy, could have been much

CONTINUED ON PAGE 11A



James Gregurek stuffs Troy post Eric Malmin's shot attempt in Salado's 56-30 victory over the Trojans in the opening round of the Coach Smith Tournament Dec. 9. (PHOTO BY TIM FLEISCHER)

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Lady Eagles land spot in tournament final, ousted in overtime by Academy, 46-41

Four periods of regulation were not enough for Academy to return the defeat visited upon them by Salado in the recent Academy tournament, when the Lady Eagles defeated the Lady Bees in the title game on Dec. 4.

Fast forward to Dec. 11 and again Salado and Academy meet for the championship, this time in the Coach Smith Invitational. On this occasion, however, the visitors came out on top 46-41 in overtime, in a game where team leader Jenny Goode - who scored 24 points on the night - fouled out halfway through the extra minutes.

Salado, a surprising 8-3 going into the game, trailed throughout much of the first half, taking a 23-17 deficit into the third. Goode accounted for all but four of Salado's first half points.

In the third period Salado grabbed the lead, as Kelsey Smith knocked down a three and Goode knocked down a pair, while the defense held Academy to five points for the period. Entering the fourth the Lady Eagles held a slim 31-28 lead.

Academy managed to retake the lead late in the fourth, but a Salado bucket in the waning seconds tied the game at 41 apiece.

With Goode now a spectator, the Salado offense couldn't get on track in the final two minutes of overtime, but the Lady Bees managed five points, which is all they would need to seal the win.

Behind Goode's 24-point effort, Kelsey Gobin scored six, Kate Marshall and Nicole Weatherly each scored four, and Kelsey Smith had three.

Through 12 games, Goode is averaging 14.1 points per game.

Salado earned a spot in the championship game by first rolling past Clifton in the opening round, 52-19, then dispatching McGregor 40-36 in round two.

The Lady Eagles used aggressive, suffocating defense to dominate Clifton. The game was never really close, as Salado jumped out to a 15-3 lead and a 25-10 halftime advantage, which allowed head coach Scott Copeland to rest many of his starters in the fourth.

Kelsey Smith, whose



Kristen Smith advances the ball up the court during the final of the Coach Smith Tournament, which saw Salado fall in overtime to Academy. (PHOTO BY TIM FLEISCHER)

points all came from three pointers, and Goode led the Salado offense with 12 points each. Gobin, who along with Goode was named to the all tournament team, was close behind with 10 points, including 4-4 from the field. Weatherly chipped in with six points and four rebounds.

Advancing to take on McGregor in the second round, the Lady Eagles again were the beneficiaries of an early lead, in this case a 12-3 margin af-

ter one. Marshall was hot early, scoring six points in the first.

McGregor stepped up their defense in the second, though, inching closer to Salado, eventually reducing the deficit to five points, 19-14, at the half.

Picking up more momentum in the third, the visitors charged back to take a 28-27 lead, but Salado responded with a 13-point fourth period which put the game away.

Marshall had a big game on both ends of the court, going 5-9 from the field and scoring 11 points, complimenting a nine rebound performance. Goode also scored 11, and rounded out her stat line with seven assists, six steals and five rebounds. Gobin scored all seven of her points in the second half, while Weatherly had six points and five boards.

Although Salado fell in the championship game, Copeland's young squad now knows, after splitting their first two meetings with Academy, that they can play with the best teams of District 25AA. The two rivals will take court against one another for the third time this season when the Lady Bees return to Coach Smith Gym Dec. 21.

In a game that took place prior to the Salado tourney, the Lady Eagles traveled to Clifton Dec. 7 and came away with a 40-31 victory. This one had the potential to be a blowout, as Salado found themselves up 26-9 at halftime, but then lost some intensity in the third period, allowing Clifton to make the score more

respectable.

Goode's 14 points, seven assists and seven rebounds led the Lady Eagles. Gobin scored 11 and nabbed six boards, while Tamra Stanish and Cortney Dunnahoo both scored four points.

Following a Dec. 14 game against Somerville to open district play, Salado will take the road to take on Lago Vista Dec. 17.

Junior Varsity

In limited action last week, the Junior Varsity Eagles played only one game, losing 30-24 to Clifton Dec. 7.

The girls were able to stay close to the home team for much of the night, but could score only nine points in the second, which allowed Clifton to secure the six-point victory.

Five of the six Lady Eagles scored points on the game, topped off by Brandi Lott and Natalee Cantrell, who both scored seven points.

Also scoring for the Lady Eagles were Jessica Shumaate and Sarah Mofatt, who both had four, and Mary Runyon, who tallied two points.



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JV squads win in Troy

Both A and B teams come away as champs

After running into some difficulties in the recent Hutto tournament, both JV boys basketball teams got back on track with dual championships in the Troy tournament, held Dec. 11.

The A team drew Clifton in the opening round, and scored eight more points in the first quarter than the Cubs could put up in the entire game. Salado won the game by the lopsided final of 65-20.

Six different Eagle players tallied points in Salado's big first, topped off by Noah Harbison's eight. The Eagles led this one 28-6 after one quarter, and 38-11 at the half, which allowed them to cruise in the second half to a 45-point win.

Chad Tumey led all scorers with a dozen points, while Justin Konzen dropped in 10, Chris Redman had nine and Harbison finished with eight. Also scoring were Won Im, Tanner Myers and Blake Newman, who each had seven, along with Stephen Quick, who contributed five.

The win moved Salado into the championship game, where they faced the host team. The result wasn't much different from the Eagles' tourney opener, though, as Salado trounced the Trojans 47-21. The Eagle defense put the clamp on Troy from the tip-off, limiting the Trojans to just two points in the first and nine for the half.

Salado was up by 16 after two, and expanded on that in the second half to sew up the title victory. Although no Eagle player reached double figures in points scored, eight different players did register points, led by Tumey, who had nine, and Harbison and Im, who both scored eight.

The B team also faced Clifton in the opening round, but didn't enjoy the one-sided victories of the A team. In a game that stayed tight throughout, the Eagles were able to come away with a 36-34

victory.

David Rosenau had a game-high 15 points, Tyler Burden accounted for 10, while Clay Sharum scored six, Blake Heller three and Ryan Smith had two points.

Advancing to the championship versus Troy, the Eagles, for the second consecutive game, used a strong fourth quarter to edge their opponent, resulting on this occasion in a hard-fought 48-44 win over the Trojans.

Rosenau was again the high man offensively, as he single-handedly outscored Troy in the first, racking up 11 points - nine of those on three pointers - to the Trojans' 10. Rosenau would finish the game with 16.

Burden also had another strong game, totaling 13 points in the win. Heller finished the game with five points, but did hit four crucial free throws down the stretch.

Sharum had six points on the game, four of those coming in Salado's 14-point fourth. Tanner Johnson contributed four points, and Seth Collins and Josh Caldwell both scored two.

Before taking on the Troy squads in a tournament format, both A and B teams tipped off against the Trojans on the road

Dec. 7

The results were similar to the tournament action, however, with Salado winning both games convincingly.

In the A team contest, Troy had no answer for Chad Tumey or Noah Harbison, who dropped 18 and 16 on the Trojans, respectively. Tumey had all of his points in the first three periods as the Eagles blew out Troy 65-22.

Entering the third, Salado held a 30-15 lead, but Troy's offense went from sluggish to nonexistent, as the home team scored only seven points in the second half.

Every Eagle player scored at least three points in the game, including a trio at six: Chris Redman, Blake Newman and Justin Konzen. Tanner Myers and Stephen Quick each had five points, and Craig Sniggs scored three.

The B team had a bit tougher time with Troy, as the Eagles had to come from behind in the second half to pull out the 44-28 win.

Salado led after one, 12-9, but Troy stormed back to take a slim 21-19 halftime lead. From there it was all Salado, as the Eagles promptly put up 14 third period points, while allowing the Trojans only seven in the entire second half.

The go-to guy for the offense was Rosenau, who closed out the game with 13 points. Clay Sharum scored seven, Greg Faber and Tyler Burden had six apiece, and Tanner Johnson and Blake Heller both dropped in four. Rounding out the scorers was Ryan Smith, who had two.

In the rush of events, we tend to overlook the important friendships that are the true basis of business relationships. One of the great pleasures of the Holiday Season is the opportunity to exchange greetings with those whose friendship and goodwill are valued so highly. In this spirit it is a pleasure to say "Thank You" and extend sincere appreciation for the very pleasant association enjoyed with you. May a bright and prosperous New Year bring happiness to you and to yours.

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All-district football released

Despite being on the outside looking in when it came playoff time, the Salado Eagles (6-4, 4-3) placed 19 players on the 25AA all-district team, including five on the first team offense and three on first team defense.

Senior running back Josh Jacobsen was named first team running back. In his final season, Jacobsen put up gaudy numbers on the ground. Behind a big, powerful offensive line, he amassed 1,398 yards on 224 carries on the season (6.24 avg.) and scored 14 touchdowns. In district, he had 943 yards on 172 carries, finding the end zone nine times.

Senior center Tommy Lyssy, senior guard Jacob Williams, junior tackle Cody Gobin and senior tight end Joseph Shumate were all placed on the first

team offense - an indication of their effectiveness as a unit. Gobin was also designated as an honorable mention defensive lineman.

On the first team defense, Salado was represented by junior linebacker Jesse Rodriguez, junior defensive end Austin Smith and senior defensive lineman Tyler Rooney.

Carrying a 34.86 yard per punt district average - including a long of 58 - senior Devon Dunn was listed as a first team special teams player. On the season, Dunn averaged 35.9 yards per punt. The 6'4" Dunn was also included on the honorable mention team as a wide receiver. He hauled in 12 passes in district, totaling 198 yards (16.5 yard average) and had one receiving

TD. He had 314 yards and three touchdowns receiving on the season.

Two Eagle juniors were named to the second team offense - wide out Brandon Peters and quarterback Wes Ruth. In seven district games, Ruth connected on 38-79 passing for 481 yards, with five touchdowns and six interceptions. On the ground, he ran for 382 yards on 76 carries (5.03 avg.) and scored four TDs. Ruth had 663 yards through the air on the year, and 524 on the ground. Combine that with 204 yards and a TD returning punts, and Ruth put together 1,391 yards of total offense and either threw or ran for 13 touchdowns.

Peters was also represented on the second time defense, this team for his play at his safety position. Juniors Josh Shaw (cornerback) and Chance Coe (defensive end) were also listed on the second team.

Senior place kicker

Nick Everett made second team all district on the special teams.

Rounding Salado's honorable mention selections were junior guard Jared Quirk, junior full back Tucker Wilhite, sophomore linebacker Justin Konzen, junior defensive lineman Kasey Pruett and junior wide receiver Slayt Ebeling.

Lexington standout and Texas A&M signee Jordan Peterson (QB) was named district MVP. Offensive MVP honors went to Rogers senior QB Julius Watts, while his fellow senior teammate Andrew Brenek was listed as defensive MVP.

Academy junior Geoffrey Aguilar was defensive newcomer, while Somerville sophomore Sam Roberson was offensive newcomer. John Stillwell, of Rogers, and Royce McAdams, of Academy, shared coach of the year honors.

BASKETBALL — FROM 8A

more lopsided had Long chose to press the issue.

Ryan Clark, who has played well all season, providing what Long refers to as "instant offense" off the bench, had an impressive game, leading all scorers with 18 points, including 13 in the first half.

Salado also hit 12-13 free throw attempts in the second period alone, breaking open a commanding 41-17 lead at halftime.

With Devon Dunn scoring nine of his 11 points in the third, the Eagles kept any comeback hopes Aransas Pass might have had from materializing.

Aransas Pass did put up 23 basically meaningless points in the fourth, but the 72-59 final is really no indication of how Salado dominated the game.

Behind Ryan Clark's 18 points, Travis Clark scored 12, 10 of them in the first half. Nick Everett had 11, Scott Williams scored eight and Matt Jennings had seven. Rounding out Salado scorers were Barrett Brashier, four, and James Gregurek, one.

The win improved Salado to 8-4 overall, with the first district game scheduled for Dec. 21 at home versus 18th ranked Academy.

The Eagles did have recent non-tournament action, as well, defeating the luckless Troy Trojans on the road Dec. 7 by a score of 62-38.

Senior Travis Clark was almost unstoppable in the first half, scoring 15 of his game-high 21 points in the first two periods.

Salado led this one throughout, increasing a 17-12 first period lead to a 35-26 advantage at half-time.

Troy's offense went flat in the second half, as the Trojans managed a meager 12 points, six each in the third and fourth.

Two other Eagles also reached double-digits in points on the game, led by Jennings, who had a dozen. Dunn finished with 10 points. Gregurek and Everett both had seven, Brashier had three and Scott Williams scored two.

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How can you build resources for a comfortable retirement? One of the very best moves you can make is to contribute the maximum to your 401(k) and IRA. And here's some good news: That maximum has been increased for 2005 - so you've now got an even better chance to accelerate your retirement savings.

Higher contributions can add up

In 2005, you can put in up to \$14,000 to your 401(k), up from \$13,000 in 2004. And, if you're 50 or over, you can add up to \$4,000 in "catch-up" contributions. (These same limits apply to 457(b) plans, for state or local government employees, and to 403(b) plans, for employees of schools, religious organizations or other non-profit groups.)

You can also put up to \$4,000 in your traditional or Roth IRA, up from \$3,000 in 2004. If you're 50 or over, you can add

Financial Focus

by Allen Mantanona



another \$500.

At first glance, you might not think these increases are such a big deal. But, over time, they can really add up. Suppose, for example, that an investor put in the maximum of \$14,000 every year to his or her 401(k), 457(b) or 403(b) plan, and you earned a hypothetical 7 percent rate of return. After 25 years, that account would have accumulated about \$68,000 more than it would have if the investor had only put in the old maximum of \$13,000 per year, and earned the same 7 percent. And if he or she contributed the new maximum of \$4,000 every year to an IRA, again earning the same hypothetical 7 percent rate of return,

he or she would end up, after 25 years, with about \$67,000 more than if the previous maximum of \$3,000 per year (earning 7 percent) was invested.

Furthermore, the above figures don't take into account future increases in contribution limits or "catch-up" contributions.

(Keep in mind that you will have to pay taxes on your 401(k), 457(b), 403(b) and traditional IRA when you start taking withdrawals. A Roth IRA, however, grows tax-free, provided you meet certain conditions.)

Can you afford to "max out"?

If you're like most people, you have plenty of demands on your income, so you may not think you can afford to "max out" on your 401(k) and IRA.

That may, in fact, be the case - but do whatever you can. Whenever you get a raise, consider increasing your 401(k) contribution. You may also be able to set aside more money for your 401(k) if you can find a way to cut down on some of your daily expenditures.

As for your IRA, try to put in a fixed amount each month, rather than scramble to make the entire contribution at one time. You'd probably find it quite hard to come up with \$4,000 at one time - but if you spread it out over 15 months (you have until April 15 of one year to make IRA contributions for the preceding year), you only have to find about \$266 a month.

Reach for the limit

By hitting the contribution limit on your 401(k) and IRA, you can help yourself achieve a retirement lifestyle without limits. So put away as much as you can today - and give yourself the opportunity to reap the rewards tomorrow.



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Share the love

Tips for readying your home to sell

Buying and Selling

by Ryan Hodge

You've heard it a million times, but it's a cliché because it's true - First Impressions Count. And even though "Don't judge a book by its cover" is also a popular cliché, buyers tend to ignore that one when comparing potential home purchases.

Put yourself in the buyers' shoes and step out

to the curb to take a look. See anything that might not make the impression you desire? Consider the following "first glance" improvements.

The front door should be inviting - paint or stain the entrance if it shows signs of chipping or peeling. Have a front porch? Dress it up with container gardens and sweep regularly, making it an attractive "outside room."

Check for other signs of peeling paint around the exterior and touch up where needed. Remember that buyers will be comparing your home to other similar homes, and every little detail that makes yours more appealing will pay off.

Of course, your landscaping makes an obvious first impression, so remove any dead or dying debris, fertilize the lawn and plant some flowering bushes if you need a little color.

Finally, your home looks great, so make sure it's well lit for the show! Don't overdo it, but do offer a well-lit doorway and walkways, and even "uplight" your better landscaping elements. If you show buyers "We love this home," then so will they!

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Peters attends national leadership conference

Brandon A. Peters, of Salado, recently participate in the National Young Leaders Conference (NYLC), held Nov. 30-Dec. 5 in Washington, D.C.

NYLC is a leadership development program for high school students who have demonstrated leadership potential and scholastic merit. Peters was one of approximately 400 outstanding scholars from around the country that attended the conference.

The theme of NYLC was "The Leaders of Tomorrow Meeting the Leaders of Today." Throughout the 10 days, Peters interacted with a variety of personnel who operate within the three branches of government, the news media, and the

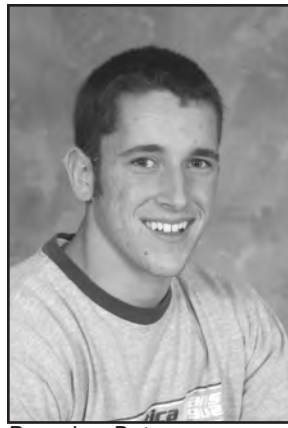
international community.

"We often hear from members of Congress, political appointees and members of Washington's press corps that is a privilege to meet and interact with students like Brandon Peters because they are the face of our country's future," said Mike Lasday, executive director of the Congressional Youth Leadership Council, the organization that sponsors the Conference.

"What these students learn at the National Young Leaders Conference will enable them to build coalitions with one another and exercise their own leadership skills within communities around the country," he continued.

Highlights of past conferences have included welcoming remarks from the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives and a panel discussion with prominent journalists at the National Press Club, in addition to meeting with senators and representatives or appointed staff members to discuss important issues facing the nation.

To complement the schedule of special meetings and briefings, Peters also participated in a number of leadership skill-building activities and simulations. In one role-playing activity titled "If I Were President," students acted as the president and cabinet members responding to an international crisis.



Brandon Peters

Students also participated in "Testing the Constitution," in which they examined actual Supreme Court cases. The Conference culminated with the "Model Congress," in which scholars assumed the roles of U.S. Representatives, and debated, amended and voted on

proposed mock legislation.

CYLC is a nonprofit, nonpartisan educational organization. Founded in 1985, the Council is committed to fostering and inspiring young people to achieve their full leadership potential. More than 400 members of the U.S.

Congress join this commitment by serving on the CYLC Honorary Congressional Board of Advisors. In addition, more than 40 embassies participate in the Council's Honorary Board of Embassies.

For additional information, visit www.cylc.org.

Blood drive part of New Year's Day event

Inevitably, many people will be facing a health crisis in the coming year, and Salado residents can help.

An American Red Cross blood drive will be held 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Jan. 1 in the Red Cross bloodmobile, which will be at Old Mill Pizza, located in Salado Plaza. All eligible and potential new donors are encouraged to give the "gift of life." The drive will be a part of Old Mill's customer appreciation day.

"January is National Volunteer Blood Donor Month," according to Richard Kahabka of Old Mill Pizza. "Stressing the importance of blood donation is very important as a new year begins. It is an excellent time for members of the public to resolve to make giving blood a regular habit."

He continued by saying local blood supplies are traditionally low at this time of year. The holidays and uncertain weather always take their toll and the Red Cross must work during this time of year to make sure there is an adequate supply of blood on the shelf.

"The Red Cross claims that in 2005, the country will need approximately 38,000 units of blood each day to meet the needs of the ill and injured. If those who are occasional blood donors would resolve to give just twice a year, the strain on the blood supply would be greatly eased," Kahabka added.

A person is eligible to give blood if they are in good health, weigh at least 110 pounds and have reached their 17th birthday. Giving blood takes less than an hour. Each donor is asked a series of questions related to their ability to give blood, and

then undergoes a mini-physical which tests temperature, iron level and blood pressure. The actual time of donation is generally seven-to-10 minutes for most people.

The drive is open to the community, and walk-ins are welcome.

All donors will receive a complimentary personal pizza. In addition, a live radio remote will be held from noon-3 p.m., and

anyone bringing a canned good for the Salado Food Pantry will receive a \$1 off pizza coupon. For the entire day, Old Mill will offer buy one, get one free pizza specials, and Boulders Sports Climbing Center will offer free rock wall climbing.

Also, a number of local businesses have donated items for door prizes. These include: Lastovica Fine Jewelers, Ocean

Quest Pools, Boulders Sports Climbing Center, Mud Pies Pottery, Uniquely Europe, Temple Tint, Strawberry Patch, Charlotte's of Salado, Angelic Herbs and Inspirations, Salado Silver Spur Theater, Salado Chiropractic, Donham's Studio of Arts, Horsefeathers, B. Herd Gallery, M.J.'s Country Store, Alice's of Salado, Our Country Treasures, and more.

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Lost in translation: In last week's newspaper, a couple of items were lost in translation. First, when Chris asked me who #44 on the varsity boys team was, I quickly answered Joseph Shumate. Actually, it was James Gregurek. How Shumate's name popped into my brain will be one of the mysteries to remain unsolved. The second item we will blame on technology. The Temple Brethren Church held a Christmas concert, NOT a "Christmas con-" as the headline read. I apologize for these errors. Tim Fleischer, Editor.



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Design & Testing Costs	
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Third Party Consultants	\$100,000
Wastewater System Design	\$30,000
Geotech/Testing	\$100,000
Total Design & Testing Costs	\$1,157,000
General Contractor (100,000sf x \$115)	\$12,650,000
Site Improvements (100,000sf x \$20)	\$2,200,000
Wastewater Treatment Facility	\$600,000
Tennis Courts (non-lighted)	\$280,000
Landscape & Irrigation included in G.C.	
Total Construction Costs	\$15,730,000
Furnishing, Fixtures, & Equipment	\$350,000
Technology (cabling)	\$300,000
Contingency (5%)	\$879,600
Project Total	\$18,471,600

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL BUDGET PROJECTION REV. 11

Administrative Costs	
Municipals & Other Permit Fees	\$11,000
Project Manager	
Land Acquisition	
Printing Costs	\$15,000
Internal Costs	
Total Administrative Costs	\$26,000
Design & Testing Costs	
Architect & Engineering	\$76,000
Third Party Consultants	\$35,000
Geotech Testing	\$15,000
Total Design & Testing Costs	\$126,000
Construction Costs	
General Contractor (5,000 sf x \$146)	\$730,000
Landscape & Irrigation	\$20,000
Gymnasium Roof (7,000 sf x \$10)	\$70,000
Wall Treatment and Windows	\$70,000
Painting	\$30,000
HVAC Gymnasium	\$100,000
Total Construction Costs	\$1,020,000
Furnishing, Fixtures & Equipment	\$40,000
Technology (cabling)	\$25,000
Contingency (5%)	\$61,850
Project Total	\$1,298,850

Fields and Associates, Architects

ATHLETICS BUDGET PROJECTION REV. 1

Administrative Costs	
Design & Testing Costs	
Architect & Engineering	\$188,000
Third Party Consultants	\$25,000
Geotech/Testing	\$10,000
Total Design & Testing Costs	\$223,000
Construction Costs	
Football Stadium (1,500 seats)	\$2,000,000
Football Concession/Toilet	\$275,000
Baseball	\$350,000
Softball	\$325,000
Baseball Concession/Toilet	\$175,000
Total Construction Costs	\$3,125,000
Furnishing, Fixtures, Equipment	\$50,000
Technology (cabling)	\$10,000
Contingency (5%)	\$170,400
Project Total	\$3,578,400

ATHLETICS RENOVATION BUDGET PROJECTION REV. 1

Administrative Costs	
Design & Testing Costs	\$88,000
Third Party Consultants	\$25,000
Geotech/Testing	\$5,000
Total Design & Testing Costs	\$118,000
Construction Costs	
ADA/TAS Compliance	\$100,000
Baseball	\$350,000
Softball	\$325,000
Baseball Concession/Toilets	\$175,000
Remodel Concession/Toilet	\$100,000
Upgrade field lighting	\$260,000
Angle Frame Bleachers (400 seats)	\$50,000
Add 150 Parking Spaces	\$100,000
Total Construction Costs	\$1,460,000
Furnishing, Fixtures & Equipment	\$5,000
Technology	
Contingency (5%)	\$79,150
Project Total	\$1,662,150

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Trustees
FROM PAGE 1A

weeks. Looking at the proposed budgets for individual projects, one could easily assume that an auditorium, a new football stadium and moving the baseball and softball fields will not be top priorities since those projects total more than \$7 million when combined.

Building a new high school and renovating the elementary school are top priorities for the board, as it looks at growth for the next decade.

At five percent growth per year, the district may see its population grow to almost 1,900 students by the 2014-15 school year.

However, with 20 new subdivisions on the books for the school district and a major building program by Salado Water Supply Corporation to bring surface water to its service area, growth projections may be difficult to predict. Salado school district may find itself in a growth pattern unfelt before and SEE NEW SCHOOL, PAGE 15A



Moman Architects

SALADO HIGH SCHOOL
SALADO INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

AUDITORIUM BUDGET PROJECTION REV. 1	
Administrative Costs	
Design & Testing Costs	
Architect & Engineering	\$180,000
Third Party Consultants	\$40,000
Geotech/Testing	\$20,000
Total Design & Testing Costs	\$240,000
Construction Costs	
General Contractor (14,800 sf X \$200)	\$2,960,000
Site Improvements	\$50,000
Total Construction Costs	\$3,010,000
Furnishing, Fixtures, Equipment	\$50,000
Technology (cabling)	\$20,000
Contingency (5%)	\$166,000
Project Total	\$3,490,000

Salado ISD Trustees are expected to meet again in early January to go over budgets and proposals before calling a bond election for April 9

Architect's rendering of proposed high school

New School — FROM PAGE 14A

unforeseen.

Salado ISD current enrollment peaked in November at 1,163. High school enrollment is currently 376 students. School officials estimate that the student population will top 1,875 in 2014-15 at a five percent per year pace. At that rate of growth, the High School population will grow to 612 students by the 2014-15 school year, according to school official estimates.

Another estimate by school officials tracking individual classes for 10 years at a rate of five percent per year would show a high school population of 469 students in 2014-15. This disparity is due in part to the graduation of three historically remarkable classes: the current sophomore class with its record population of 120 students, the eighth grade class with 104 students and the sixth grade class, with 105 students.

These large classes are becoming the norm, rather than anomalies for the school district.

In fact, trustees approved the addition of a part-time science teacher at the Salado Intermediate School to relieve crowding in the seventh and eighth grade classes. An additional teacher will allow for additional sections of science to bring the student-teacher ratio from more than 25 to 1 to about 21 to 1. Trustees will consider the budget amendment when a teacher is hired.

Trustees hired Christina Pointer as a first grade teacher during their Dec. 13 meeting. Pointer did her student teaching with Sandi Tucker at Thomas Arnold Elementary.

Operation costs of a new campus will also be

on the mind of trustees and voters as the days wind down to a bond election for construction of a new high school.

Moving to a new campus that is not adjacent to the junior high campus will require additional slots for personnel who have served both the high school and junior high school campuses, including maintenance, cafeteria, teachers and coaches. Those personnel decisions have not been made, but trustees are mulling a future increase in the maintenance and operations (M&O) tax rate to the \$1.50 maximum allowed by law.

The district's current M&O tax rate is \$1.412. The current interest and sinking (I&S) tax rate is 16.8¢, bringing the total tax rate to \$1.58.

If trustees approve a \$20 million bond package, the impact on the local tax rate could range from \$1.9048 for a 30-year bond to \$1.9628 for a 25-year bond. The \$1.9048 is based on 10 percent growth in the local property values in the next year. The \$1.9628 is the worst-case scenario, based on a 25-year bond with no growth in property values in the next year.

This year, property values increase by 11.6 percent. Bell County Tax Appraisal District now revalues properties annually. In the past, the revaluation was done every other year, sometimes once every three years.

While an individual property owner's property value may increase by more than 10 percent in one year, that property can only be taxed at a maximum increase in value of 10 percent.

Trustees will meet

again on Jan. 6 to mull the numbers, designs and proposals for construction. While the district has an architect and construction manager under contract, it does not have a bond company yet under contract.

Trustees considered hiring Southwest Securities as bond advisors during the Dec. 13 meeting, but took no action.

Two companies gave proposals to be the bond advisors for the school district. The district has used Southwest Securities on the last three bond projects approved by voters.

However, Wade Thompson with Coastal Securities made a lower proposal to the district. Southwest Securities agreed to match the Coastal proposal.

Trustee Trey Little said that he was "concerned with the practice of going back to Southwest Securities to see if they would match the proposal by Coastal Securities."

"If one of them gets a second look, then everyone should get a second look," Little said.

Trustees will consider proposals for a bond advisor at a later date.

Southwest Securities proposed \$9,300 to be the bond advisor for a \$20 million bond package. If no bond is approved, no payment would be made to the Securities company. If approved, Southwest Securities would have a 36-month agreement to be the bond advisor should the first election fail and a second bond election be brought to the voters at a later date.

Trustees hope their work between now and the date they call a bond election makes the 36-month agreement a moot point by bringing a package that voters will approve.

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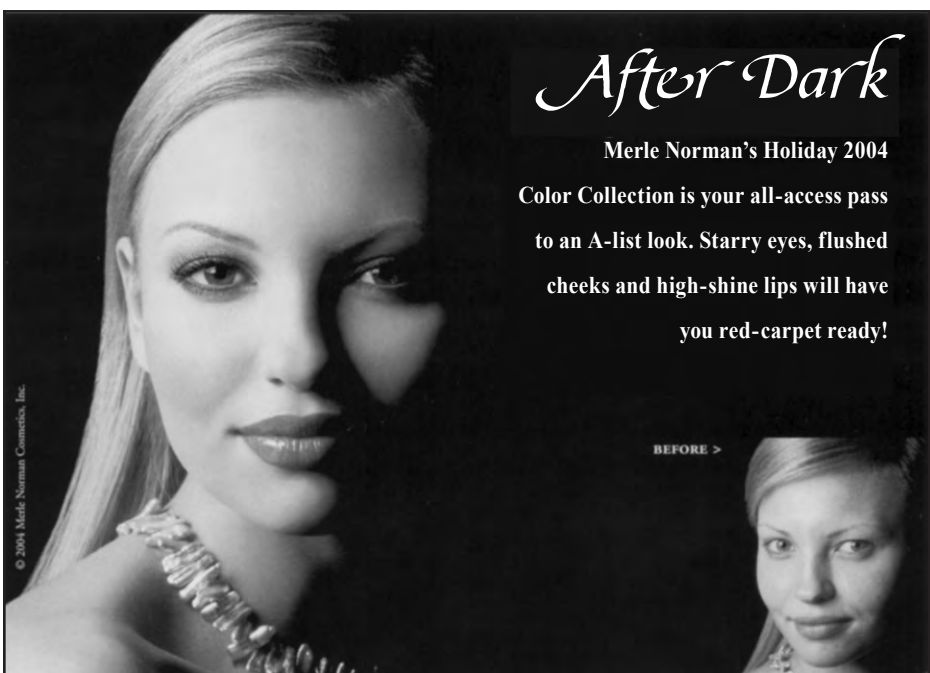
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SHS honor society inducts new members

Salado High School chapter of National Honor Society held its annual induction ceremony for new members Dec. 6 in the SIS auditorium.

The officers, Lauralee Young, Kristi Billington, Joseph Shumate and Rebecca Quick spoke on the four characteristics on which NHS is founded: scholarship, leadership, character and service.

President Jenny Goode gave the pledge to the 20 new members and presented them with an NHS

membership card.

The parents of the inductees draped the NHS cords on their child.

The new members are Mattie Billington, Magan Bradshaw, Jackie Drake, Mark Gentry, Blake Hancock, Larissa Ingalsbe, Tanner Johnson, Jonathan Kendall, Leigh Martin, Jacob Meritt, Sara Mofatt, Blake Newmann, Clint Permenter, Stephen Quick, Molly Rooney, Crystal Schoelmann, Ariel Simpson, Nathan Sitz, Kelsey Smith and Michael Spinks.



Why are these people smiling?

We know why Jack Schrock (left) is smiling: he just finished his last meeting Dec. 13 as the President of the Salado Chamber of Commerce. Schrock will remain on the board of directors for another year, during which he hopes to launch the Ambassadors program for the Chamber. Charlotte Douglass (right) will be President of the Chamber for 2005. She smiles all the time. (PHOTO BY MARILYN FLEISCHER)

UMHB Writer's Festival planned for Jan 5-8

Dr. Cleatus Rattan, Texas Poet Laureate 2004, will be the featured speaker at the George Nixon Memorial Lecture 7 p.m., Jan. 7, during the annual University of Mary Hardin-Baylor Writers Festival set for Jan. 5-8.

Other noted authors bringing keynote addresses will be Thomas Williams, Larry Thomas and Barbara Crooker.

Cleatus Rattan, a former working and rodeo cowboy, is currently the Frank W. Mayborn Chair of Sciences and Humanities and visiting professor of English at The University of Mary Hardin-Baylor. Rattan authored two chapbooks, 130 Miles to Dallas, winner of the 1982 Texas Review Poetry Prize and Free of the Flesh, published by Red Lion Press in Denton, Texas in 1994. In 1996, he received The Mesquite Poetry Award. In 2002, he received The Texas Review Poetry Award for The Border, his first full-length book of poems. He also received The New Texas Poetry Award in 2002, and was a finalist in The Bright Hills National Poetry Contest, also in 2002. Approximately 250 of Rattan's poems have been published. Rattan was selected as a Distinguished Alumnus of Texas A&M University-Commerce.

Thomas Williams will bring the keynote address at 7 p.m. Jan. 5. His eight books include fiction, theology, and drama, among them the Gold Medallion Award finalist *In Search of Certainty*, written with Josh McDowell, and his current novel, *The Bride of Stone*. Williams, a ca-

reer designer and illustrator, turned his avocation into his vocation. Owing his own art studio for 12 years, he designed or illustrated more than 1500 book covers for many of the major Christian publishers. He served as executive art director for Word Publishing for 14 years and is a five-time winner of the Christian Booksellers Association's best book jacket award. His painting of C.S. Lewis hangs in the Wade Collection at Wheaton College. He now writes full time and provides creative services to book publishers.

Larry D. Thomas will read from his own poetry 7 p.m. Jan. 6. He retired from his career in adult criminal justice management to devote full time to his poetry. His four published poetry collections have received several prizes and awards: The Lighthouse Keeper (Timberline Press, 2001), a Small Press Review "pick-of-the-issue" citation, May/June 2001; *Amazing Grace* (Texas Review Press, 2001), winner of the 2001 Texas Review Poetry Prize and 2003 Western Heritage Award; *The Woodlanders* (Pecan Grove Press, 2002), a 2002 Violet Crown Book Awards Special Citation; and *Where Skulls Speak Wind* (Texas Review Press, 2004), winner of the 2004 Texas Review Poetry Award and 2004 Violet Crown Book Award (Literary Prose & Poetry category). In June, 2002, Thomas was selected by Barnes & Noble Booksellers as the Houston Area Author of the Month. He has been a featured speaker at the Angelo State

University Writers' Conference (February, 2002), East Central University, Oklahoma (November, 2002), Arkansas Tech University (November, 2003), and Del Mar College, Texas (November, 2004). Among the numerous national journals which have published his poetry and reviews are The Chattahoochee Review, The Christian Science Monitor, International Poetry Review, Iron Horse Literary Review, Louisiana Literature, The Midwest Quarterly, Poet Lore, Southwest Review, Southwestern American Literature, The Spoon River Poetry Review, The Texas Observer, The Texas Review and Windhover.

Barbara Crooker will present Master Poetry Workshop at 3 p.m., Jan. 5-7. Crooker is the author of more than 1,150 poems published in anthologies and magazines such as Yankee, The Christian Science Monitor, Smartish Pace, The Beloit Poetry Journal, Nimrod, The Denver Quarterly, The Cream City Review, Poetry International, The Christian Century, and America. She is also the recipient of the 2004 WB Yeats Society of New York Award, the 2004 Pennsylvania Center for the Book Poetry in Public Places Poster Competition, the 2003 Thomas Merton Poetry of the Sacred Award, the 2003 "April Is the Cruellest Month" Award from Poets & Writers, the 2000 New Millennium Writing's Y2K competition, the 1997 Karamu Poetry Award, and others, including three Pennsylvania Council on the Arts

Nature in Lights reopens

The Fort Hood Directorate of Morale, Welfare and Recreation is happy to announce that the Nature In Lights program at Belton Lake Outdoor Recreation Area will re-open on Friday, December 10. The program will operate from 5:30 to 11 p.m. nightly.

Santa's Village will also be open nightly from 5:30 p.m. to 11 p.m. through December 24, where a steaming cup of hot chocolate and a treat await visitors and the whole family can munch as they browse the arts and crafts tables that will be available for holiday shoppers. Be sure to get your photo taken with Santa and tell him all those holiday wishes.

Creative Writing Fellowships, ten residencies at the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts, and a prize from the NEA. A seventeen-time nominee for the Pushcart Prize, she was nominated for the 1997 Grammy Awards for her part in the audio version of the popular anthology, *Grow Old Along With Me—The Best is Yet to Be* (Papier Mache Press). She is the author of ten chapbooks, two of which won prizes in national competitions: *Ordinary Life* won the Byline Chapbook competition in 2001 and *Impressionism* won the Grayson Books Chapbook competition in 2004. *Radiance*, appearing in July, 2005, won the Word Press First Book competition. Recently, Garrison Keillor read six of her poems on The Writer's Almanac, National Public Radio.

Other readings and workshops will be conducted by Paul Ruffin, Bryce Milligan, Donna Walker-Nixon, John Jenkinson, Alan Berecka, Lyman Grant, Paul Holcomb, Joan Neubauer, Allen Powell, Marty Braniff, Rod Jellema, Anita Dugat-Greene, Michael Lythgoe, Neil Ellis Orts, L.D. Clark, LaVerne Harrell Clark, Barbara Youngblood Carr, and Carolyn Poulter and others.

Many other authors and poets will be involved in the Festival. Full registration for the conference is \$100. Some scholarships are available. For more information, contact Audell Shelburne, chairman of the UMHB department of English, 254-295-4561 or ashelburne@umhb.edu

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Salado Village Guide

Shopping Map
Pages 6-7B

Section B Salado Village Voice December 16, 2004 12 Pages Shopping, Dining, Overnight, Events

Village Artists install officers

The Salado Village Artists celebrated Christmas and officer installation at the home of Gwen and Joe Morrison.

Beautifully decorated for the Season, it was a lovely setting for lunch and installation of 2005 officers.

The newly presented board consists of six directors: Helen Alexander, Dick Jacobi, Eugenia Lara, Kathleen Letourneau, Andy Phair, and Katherine Yates, plus 2005 treasurer: Marie Martch, Secretary: Judy Beisel, Vice-president: Bonnie Armstrong and President: Caralen Rose.

Members look forward to an interesting program of workshops, meetings and artistic projects during the 2005 year, much of which has been scheduled



Newly installed officers for 2005 for the Salado Village Artists include: (back row, from left) Bonnie Armstrong, Helen Alexander, Joan Hoffman, Andy Phair, Eugenia Lara, and Kathleen Letourneau; front, from left, Caralen Rose, Marie Martch, Judy Beisel, and Dick Jacobi.

by Heidi Couchman, Ways and Means committee.

Please watch the *Salado Village Voice* for information on workshops to which the public is invited.

State Farm gives \$700 for toys to local soldiers' kids

State Farm Insurance agents and employees helped brighten the holidays for returning soldiers and their families through a \$700 donation designated for the purchase of Christmas toys.

This effort was in conjunction with the Temple Chamber of Commerce Military Affairs Committee which has been collecting toys, food and monetary donations for the 13th COSCOM, 13th Chemical Company Welcome Home/Christmas Party.

The event took place on Dec. 10 at Fort Hood and honored 70 soldiers coming home from overseas, as well as the families and fellow soldiers they left behind.

"The local State Farm agents and their employees usually get together for an annual gathering around the holidays," John Farwell, State Farm agent, said. "Our group donating \$700 for toys to be given to local military families was the most rewarding result of any holiday event we have had."



Lt. Gary Ward is shown accepting a check from State Farm Insurance agents John Farwell and Doug Stewart. Jim Granfor is the Military Affairs Chairman of the Temple Chamber of Commerce.

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DECEMBER 16

Salado Area Republican Women program, featuring installation of new officers and a program on the Christian Farms/Treehouse mission, presented by Jon Crosby, executive director of Christian Farms. 11:30 a.m. at Mill Creek. Reservations needed by Dec. 10. Call 947-3617 or email bam002@earthlink.net.

DECEMBER 17

Christmas movie night at Salado Intermediate School cafeteria, marking the end of a toy drive organized by the seventh grade gifted and talented class, 6:30-9 p.m. Movies shown will be the classic "Grinch" cartoon, followed by

"Elf." Admission free to anyone bringing a new, unwrapped toy for ages newborn to 12. Toys will be wrapped and delivered by the seventh graders to children of military families who have a parent serving overseas. Free popcorn will be served. Info: 947-1700 or email tsummers@saladoisd.org.

DECEMBER 19

Cooking Class at The Range taught by Chef Dave Hermann. Theme: "Cooking with Kiddos." Almond Lace Cookies, Pecan Pie, and Chocolate Mousse. Registration information call 947-3828 or www.therangerestaurant.com.

DECEMBER 20-JAN. 2

Salado schools adjourned for Christmas break.

DECEMBER 24

Salado Village Voice office closes at Noon.

DECEMBER 31

Special New Year's Eve celebration at Salado Silver Spur Theater. Package includes 7-8:30 p.m. dinner at Stagecoach Inn, followed by 9-10:30 p.m. Murder Mystery Dessert Theater at the Silver Spur, featuring the Get a Clue Theater Company. Temple College Jazz Combo will take the stage 11 p.m.-1 a.m. Reservations should be made by Dec. 22. Info: 947-3456 or www.saladosilverspur.com.

JANUARY 1

Red Cross Blood Drive and Customer Appreciation Day at Old Mill Pizza. Blood drive will be held 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Donors will receive free personal pizza. All day: buy one, get one free pizza deals, bring a canned good for Salado Food Pantry and receive a

pizza coupon, live radio remote from noon-3 p.m., free rock climbing from Boulders Sport Climbing Center and door prizes from local businesses. Info: 947-0700.

JANUARY 3

Salado Monday Club meeting, 2 p.m. at Salado United Methodist Church. The program will be given by Inspector Best of the Temple Police Department on the subject of identity theft. All ladies are invited to attend.

JANUARY 10

St. Stephen's Women's Society meeting, Melissa Crawford presenting "Biblical Women of the Old and New Testaments," 6:30 p.m. at St. Stephen Parish Hall. Info: 947-3901.

JANUARY 13

Salado Chamber of Commerce Ladies Auxiliary meeting, 10 a.m. at Salado Civic Center. Coffee served at 9:30 a.m. Stephanie Turnham, Director of the Bell County Museum in Belton, will be the featured speaker. Turnham, director of the Museum since 1994, is a life long Texan. She will talk about the Gault Site in Bell County, which is situated at the headwaters of Buttermilk Creek. The unique prehistoric archaeological site is Clovis, which refers to the oldest recognized cultures in the Americas, from a period of 11,500 years ago. Guests are invited to attend. Info: Carolyn Milliser, 947-0899.

JANUARY 23

Annual Harry A. Wilmer Lecture, 3-5 p.m. at Salado Silver

Spur Theater. Lecture is titled "People Need People," featuring Dr. Harry Wilmer and Pam Marvin. Free and open to the public. Info: 947-5729 or www.salado-institute.org.

JANUARY 27

Meet your Bell County Officials dinner meeting of the Salado Area Republican Women. 7 p.m. at Mill Creek Restaurant. Reservations: 947-3617 or bam002@earthlink.net.

JANUARY 27

Salado Water Supply Corporation annual meeting, 6:30 p.m. at Salado Civic Center. Agenda items include adoption of budget, report on improvements to water system and nomination and election of directors.

FEBRUARY 5

Music in Salado Concert Series: International Piano Duo performance, featuring Krassimira Jordan and Wolfgang Watzinger. 7 p.m. Location TBA.

FEBRUARY 5-6

Tablerock's Salado Legend's Auditions, 3 p.m.-5 p.m. each day.

FEBRUARY 14

St. Stephen Women's Society meeting, Gwen Morrison speaking on "Celebration of Women, Conversation With God," 6:30 p.m. at St. Stephen Parish Hall. Info: 947-3901.

MARCH 9

Annual Salado Eagle High School Alumni Baseball game at Eagle field. Any former Salado baseball player is welcome to play. Homerun contest, divided into Over-30 and Under-30 divisions, will precede game, which will pit even-year

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MARCH 10

Central Texas Prose and Poetry Readings, 7 p.m. at Tablerock Amphitheatre. Open mic at 9 p.m. Info: 254-947-9205, or www.allcentex.com/tablerock.

MARCH 14

St. Stephen Women's Society meeting. Program: "What We Are All About," by Scott Simmonds of Peacable Kingdom Retreat. 6:30 p.m. at St. Stephen Parish Hall.

MARCH 18

10th Annual Denver Mills Golf Tournament to benefit Tablerock, at Mill Creek Golf Course. \$60 entry fee. Shotgun start at 1 p.m. Directors: Bruno Matarazzo and David Apichino.

MARCH 25-26-27

Easter Pageant at Tablerock Amphitheatre, presented by the First Baptist Church of Salado. Free admission. Performance to begin at 8:15 p.m. Director: Randy Carder. Info: 254-947-5465 or www.fbcsalado.org.

APRIL 2-3

Annual Salado Chamber of Commerce Wildflower Art Show. Info: 947-5040.

APRIL 9

Chisholm Trail Chapter of the American Business Women's Association Style Show, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. at Mill Creek Inn and Restaurant. Details TBA.

APRIL 11

St. Stephen's Women's Society meeting. Mark Klym will present the program "Attracting Hummingbirds to Your Yard." 6:30 p.m. at St. Stephen Parish Hall.

APRIL 23-24

Tablerock's 10th Annual Gospel Festival 10 a.m. 8 p.m. April 23. Gospel singers, bands groups, trios, duets and solo artists. April 24 10 a.m. singing, 11 a.m.-noon church service. 12:30-6 p.m. More festivities and musical groups. Food booths, drinks, gift booths, desserts of all kinds, Adults \$5 Children 12 and under \$3 254-947-5100 or CVM USIC-MINISTRY@aol.com or 254-947-9205. Tablerock amphitheater is located on Royal St.

MAY 14

10th annual Fourth Grade Play at Tablerock Amphitheatre. Thomas Arnold Elementary stu-

dents, under direction of playwright/author Jackie Mills, write, produce, crew and act in their own melodrama. Proceeds banked for the fourth graders senior class trip. Time: 7:30 p.m. Tickets: adults \$5, children \$3.

JUNE 13

Tablerock's Salado Legends rehearsals begin.

JULY 23, 30 & AUG. 6

Tablerock's 13th Annual Salado Legends. Dinner 7:15 p.m. with cost of \$8 (all ages reservations required). Performance begins at 8:15 p.m. Tickets: \$15 adults, \$5 children 12 and under. Call 254-947-9205 for group rates and

further information, or visit www.allcentex.com/tablerock. Email: tablerock1@aol.com.

SEPTEMBER 10, 17 & 24

Tablerock's production of Shakespeare's "Hamlet." Performance at 7:30 p.m. Tickets: \$10 adult, \$5 child. Info: 254-947-8933, www.allcentex.com/tablerock or email tablerock1@aol.com.

SEPTEMBER 17-18

Tablerock's Fantasy Faire, featuring music, dance and historical demonstrations. 10 a.m.-6 p.m. daily. Admission: \$7 for adults, \$5 for children 12 and under, seniors and military personnel. Info: 254-947-1339 or email

pangea@vvm.com, or tablerock1@aol.com.

OCTOBER 1-2

Tablerock's - A Christmas Carol Auditions Sat.-Sun.: 3 p.m. Information: 254-947-9205. Directed by Harry Sweet.

OCTOBER 29, 30 & 31

Tablerock's Fright Trail, 7 p.m.-10:30 p.m. Admission: \$5 adults and \$3 for children 12 and under.

DECEMBER 2-3

Tablerock's 13th annual presentation of A Christmas Carol, 7 p.m. each night. Tickets: adults \$5, children 12 and under, \$3. Sandwiches and drinks available beginning 6:30 p.m. Info: 947-9205.

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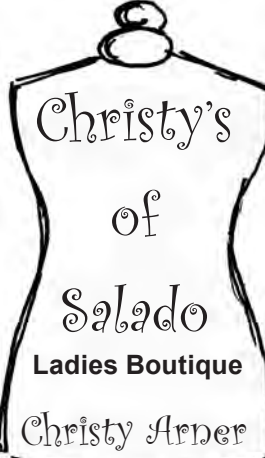
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Trends

Kim Bloomer

Don't forget about senior citizens during rush of Christmas holidays

BY MATILDA CHARLES

For older people, these holidays are especially sweet when celebrated with family and loved ones. But for many seniors, the passing years have left them more and more alone, and it is up to all of us to make sure they know they are not forgotten. Reaching out to them reminds us that we are all one human family.

On that note, let's consider what we can do for them this year.

1. Decorate the homes of seniors in your community who may not have family close by. You can start by bringing them the

symbols of their celebrations: Consider bringing an artificial tree and decorating it with new sets of lights that carry the UL seal attesting to their safety. A box of holiday goodies including fruitcakes, cookies and preserves would also be welcome.

2. And don't forget the older folks living in senior residences or nursing facilities. Check with the doctors to see what foods you can bring. Also consider volunteering to add to the holiday cheer with appropriate (and safety-approved) decorations.

3. For seniors who can't get out and about easily, volunteer to drive them

to the mall or your local shopping area so they can see the lights and decorations of the season. You can also help them shop for greeting cards and gifts for their families and friends.

4. Talk to the religious communities in your area about hosting a combined Three-Festival Celebration for folks living in senior facilities.

5. Gift Suggestions:
 • Your local movie house may have a book of tickets for sale for a number of upcoming film showings. Or you might want to buy tickets to a sporting event.

• Check out local exhibitions (art, photography, museum exhibits) that seniors might enjoy, and

take them there.

• Take them to concerts or an evening at the theater, followed with a great dinner.

• Give your senior the gift of looking great and feeling fit with an indulgence at a spa or a gym.

• Music is always welcome. Whether they loved Sinatra, Presley, Welk, Duke Ellington or the Beatles, give them CDs and a CD player if they don't have one.

• And don't forget Fido or Fluffy. Bring your senior's furry (as well as finny and feathery) best friends some holiday goodies.

Enjoy the season, and let's help make the festivities special for everyone.

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Last minute gifts

The best way to prepare for last-minute gift-giving is to have some generic gifts on hand that are wrapped and ready to go. This is something that can be done year-round, so that if someone comes over and/or the mood strikes you, you'll be ready. Here are some great gifts you can prepare in advance:

• Books are handy because you can write a note on the inside to make it a personal gift for anyone.

• Give a batch of your favorite recipes as a last-minute gift. Just hand-write them on colorful index cards. Wrap in a decorative package with key ingredients inside. You can even pre-measure ingredients in glass jars or bottles.

• If you're a gardening enthusiast, here's a great idea: Buy vases when you see them on sale. When you need a quick gift, pick flowers from the garden and tie a ribbon around the vase.

• When people com-

ment on items in your home that they love, remember that the next time you need a gift for them. Either wrap up the one you have (if you no longer need it), or get them another one.

• For a quick but thoughtful last-minute housewarming gift, fill a mailbox with fresh-baked cookies or muffins. Mailboxes can be purchased at your neighborhood hardware store. Mix in some store-bought cookies with the ones you made to beef up the gift.

• Take one of your favorite household plants and place it in a fancy jar or vase. Include an index card with care instructions.

• Keep extra money cards around the house so that if you decide to give money as a gift, you're prepared. Or try this: Roll up the bill and stick it in a balloon with instructions to blow up and pop.

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**Gingerbread With Pears
and Whipped Lemon Topping**

SERVES: 8
PREP TIME: 35 minutes
COOK TIME: 40-45 minutes

Nonstick cooking spray
1/2 cup granulated sugar
3 ripe pears, peeled, cored and sliced lengthwise
1 lemon, juice and zest
4 tablespoons lightly salted butter, softened
1/2 cup dark brown sugar, packed
1 large egg
1/2 cup nonfat buttermilk
1/4 cup dark molasses
1 cup flour
1 1/2 teaspoons ground ginger
1 teaspoon baking soda
1 teaspoon pumpkin pie spice
1/4 teaspoon coarse salt
2 cups nonfat whipped topping

- Preheat oven to 350 F. Coat bottom and sides of a 10-inch cake pan with nonstick cooking spray. Sprinkle sugar over bottom of cake pan.
- Place pears in a medium bowl. Grate zest from the entire lemon. Add 1/2 teaspoon of zest to pears, along with 1 tablespoon lemon juice; save remaining zest for whipped topping. Arrange pears in pinwheel pattern around bottom of cake pan.
- Blend together butter and dark brown sugar in a medium bowl until well-mixed. Beat in egg, then nonfat buttermilk and molasses.
- Whisk together flour, ginger, baking soda, pumpkin pie spice and salt in a small bowl. Add to buttermilk mixture and stir until blended. Pour batter over pears and gently smooth top with a knife. Bake for 40-45 minutes, or until gingerbread springs back when gently pressed. Let cool on a rack.
- To serve, carefully run a sharp knife around the inside edge of cake pan and invert cake onto a serving platter. Cut into 8 wedges.
- Gently stir remaining lemon zest into the nonfat whipped topping. Serve each gingerbread wedge with a dollop of whipped lemon topping.

Nutrition per serving (1 wedge and 1/4 cup whipped lemon topping): 307 calories, 7 g fat (4 g saturated), 58 g carbs, 3 g protein, 2 g fiber, 118 mg calcium, 3 mg iron, 332 mg sodium.
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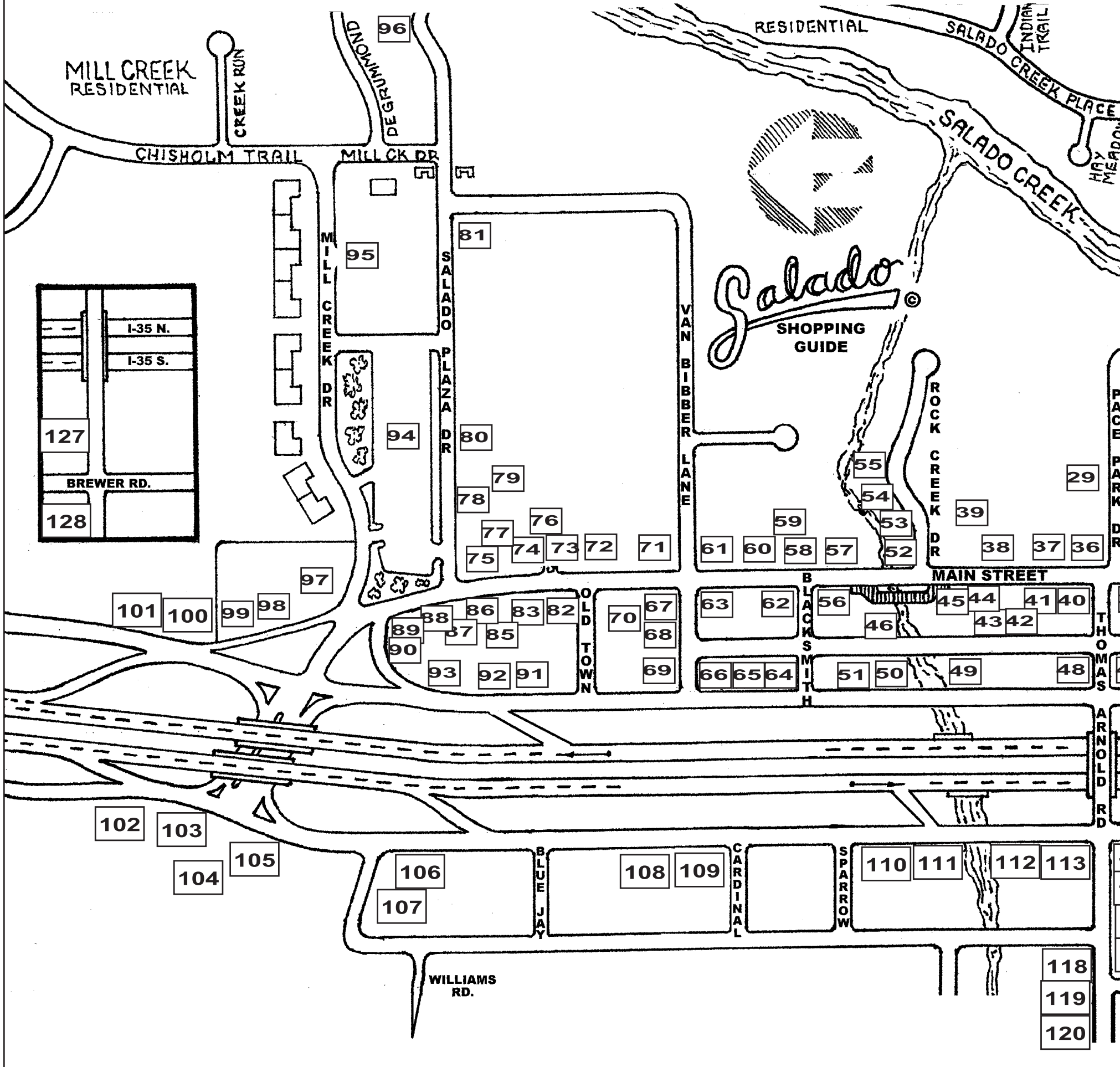
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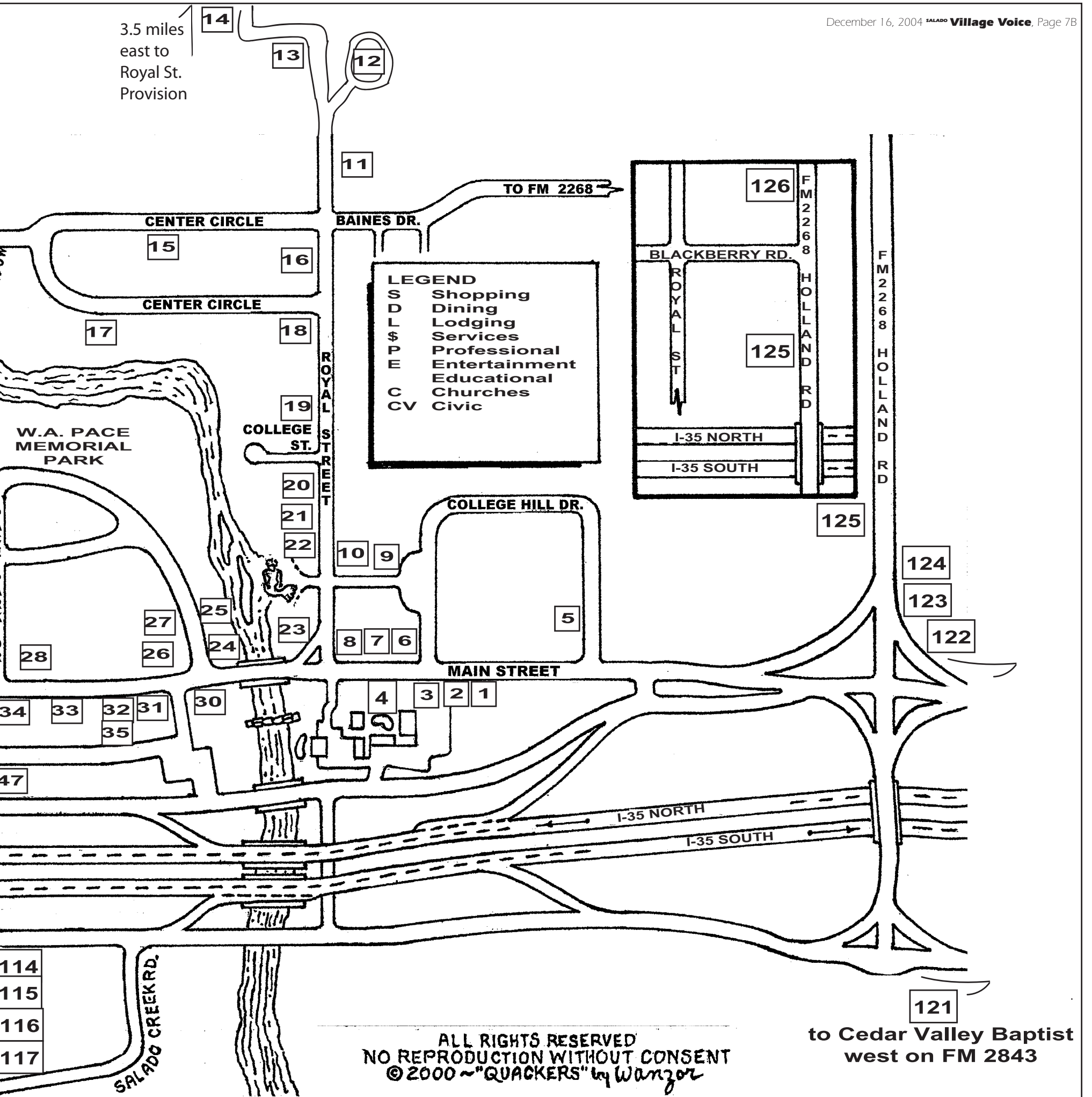
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1. Wells Gallery	254/947-0311	S	24. Accents of Salado	254/947-5908	S	44. Salado Haus	254/947-1868	S
4. Stagecoach Inn	254/947-5111	D,L	26. CREEKSIDE CENTER			45. Sweet Dreams	254/947-9200	S
5. Stone Creek Settlements	254/947-9099	L	Prellop Fine Art Gallery	254/947-3930	S	46. Wigglesworth Place Lodging	254/947-8846	L
	888/777-8844		Susan Marie's	254/947-5239	S	48. Salado United Methodist Church	254/947-5482	C
6. Central Texas Area Museum	254/947-5232	E	29. Levi Tenney House B&B	254/947-1003	L	49. Salado Printing	254/947-3590	\$
Daughters of the Republic of Texas	254/947-5232	C	30. First Baptist Church	254/947-5465	C	50. Salado Fire Department	254/947-8961	CV
	254/947-5232		31. Salado Mansion	254/947-5157	D	51. Salado Church of Christ	254/947-5241	CV
7. Salado Galleries	254/947-5110	S	32. THE VERANDA					
8. SHADY VILLA			First Texas Brokerage	254/947-5577	\$	ROCK CREEK		
Gregory's	254/947-5703	S	33. First State Bank	254/947-5852	\$	53. Splendors of Salado	254/947-3630	S
Sweet Nut Things	254/947-8088	S	35. Salado Masonic Lodge #296		CV	54. Charlotte's of Salado	254/947-0240	S
9. Peddler's Alley	254/947-9722	S	36. Christy's of Salado	254/947-0561	S	55. Uniquely Europe	254-947-3222	S
10. The Dusty Rose	254/947-9215	S	37. Inn at Salado	254/947-0027	L			
11. Tablerock Amphitheatre	254/947-9205	E	38. SALADO SQUARE			56. OLD CHURCH PLACE		
12. The Rose Mansion B&B	254/947-8200	L	Browning's Courtyard Cafe	254/947-8666	D	Heirlooms	254/947-0336	S
14. Royal Street Provision	254/947-3350	L	Carden's	254/947-0300	S	The Front Row Emporium	254/947-5831	S
Country Inn			Classics on Main	254/947-3277	S	57. THE COLONY		
15. Friendship House B&B	254/947-3136	L	Linda Rountree Pritchard	254/947-4263	P	Griffith's Fine Art	254/947-3177	S
16. The Baines House B&B	254/947-5260	L	Main Street Place	254/947-9908	S	Miller Fine Art	254/947-0771	S
17. Inn on the Creek B&B	254/947-5554	D,L	Magnolia's on the Square	254/947-0323	S	59. Watersong Massage	254/947-0042	P
18. ROYAL STREET COURTYARD			39. The Range at the Barton House	254/947-3828	D	60. Skin Deep Clinic	254/947-3225	P
Botangles	254/947-4747	\$	40. Family Dentistry	254/947-5242	P	61. SALADO CIVIC SQUARE		
Creative Innovations	254/760-2620	\$	Dr. Douglas B. Willingham			Properties by Larry Sands	254/947-5580	\$
21. Springhouse Antiques	254-947-0747	S	42. Mud Pies Pottery	254/947-0281	S	Uncommon Grounds Cafe	254/947-3354	D
22. Salado Silver Spur Theatre	254/947-3456	E	43. Southern Comforts	254/947-0595	S	62. Salty Creek Cafe	254/947-8550	D
23. ONE ROYAL			Matters of the Heart		S	63. Seasons of Salado	254/947-4769	S
FSG Fine Jewelry	254/947-9447	S	Trends		S	65. The Village of Salado	254/947-5060	CV



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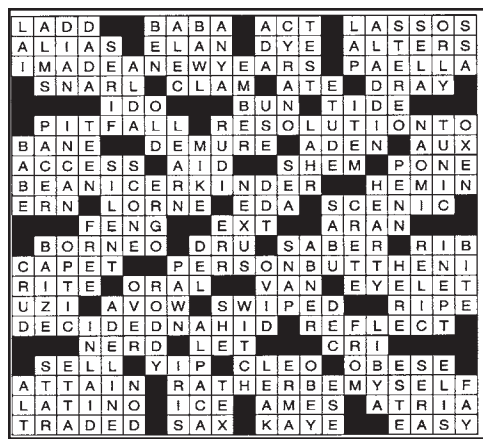
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70. STAGESTOP RETAIL CENTER			Alice's	254/947-9000	S	117. The Barber Barn	254/421-5173	\$
Angelica Herbs	254/947-1909	S	B. Herd Gallery	254/947-HERD	S	118. Thomas Arnold	254/947-5191	E
Holly Dunn Art Song Gallery	254/947-5247	S	Cathy's Boardwalk Cafe	254/947-8162	D			
The Sewing Basket	254/947-5423	S	Miz Tillywigger's	254/947-0124	S	119. Salado Intermediate	254/947-1700	E
71. SALADO CIVIC CENTER			MJ's Country Corner	254/947-8885	S	120. Salado High	254/947-5429	E
Salado Civic Center	254/947-8300	CV	Texan by Design	254/947-4479	S	121. Cedar Valley Baptist Church	254/947-0148	C
Chamber of Commerce	254/947-5040	CV	83. Horsefeathers	254/947-3203	S	122. Eagle Rock Ranch	254/947-5369	\$
Historical Society		CV	86. Remember This Antiques	254/947-0858	S	Hidden Springs at Salado Creek		\$
SISD Administration	254/947-5479	E	87. Century 21 Bill Bartlett Real Estate		\$	888/973-5263, ext. 294		
72. The Halley House	254/947-1000	L		254/947-5050		123. Wildfire Saddlery	254/947-8080	S
73. CARRIAGE PLACE SQUARE			88. The Personal Wealth Coach			124. St. Stephen Catholic Church	254/947-8037	C
Before & After	254/947-5814	\$	94. SALADO PLAZA			127. Grace Baptist Church of Salado	254/947-5917	C
74. Etrulia's	254/947-0504	S	Salado Village Voice	254/947-5321	\$	128. Janelle's	254/947-3584	S
Merle Norman Cosmetics	254/947-9993		Express Video	254/947-0045	S	Not shown on map		
76. ArchAngel Antique Gallery	254/947-5933	S	Edward D. Jones	254/947-5128	\$	The Event Center at Tenroc Ranch		
77. St. Luke's Episcopal		C	Old Mill Pizza	254/947-0700	D	2 miles west of I-35 on Thomas Arnold Rd.		
78. Three Dogs or a Quilt	254-947-9070	S	Salado Chiropractic	254/947-BACK	P	254/947-9274	\$	
79. Presbyterian Church of Salado	254/947-8106	C	Salado Eye Care	254/947-LENS	P	Toodles (150 W. Amity Rd.)	254/947-5977	S
81. Salado Sawmill	254/947-0137	S	Village Pharmacy	254/947-3185	\$			
The Timbers at Salado Sawmill	254/947-0137	L	96. Mill Creek Golf & Country Club	254/947-5144	D,L			
			97. Salado Public Library	254/947-9191	E			
			98. Salado Cleaners	254/947-7299	\$			
			100. Village Realty	254/947-0342	\$			
			102. Robertson's Hams and The Choppin' Block	254/947-5562	S			
82. OLD TOWN SALADO			104. Fairway Golf Carts	254/947-4065	S			
			111. Super 8 Motel	254/947-5000	D			
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ANSWERS TO CROSSWORD
PUZZLE FROM PAGE 12B



More TAE letters

Mrs. Morgan's Class

Robert Alexander Cortes

Dear Santa, Waz up homie! Is it cold up there? I enjoyed the "Gameboy Advance SP." You rock! Totally! You're like the best holiday idol ever! How is Rudolph? This year I would like a "Spongebob Squarepants on "Xbox" and on "Gameboy Advance SP." A taperecorder in my stocking. My mom would like a silky blanket. My dad would like a Baylor football. My brother would like to be healed of his broken kneecap. Thank you for the StarWars game. Please don't give anyone coal. Bless all of the poor people and all of the soldiers. Sincerely, Robert Alexander Cortes.

Say hi to Mrs. Claus. Can you help the poor people, Santa. I what wranglers for Christmas and a pocket knife, with three wolves on the side. I would also like a twenty two and for my dad a forty-five seventy. My brother wants a wood deer rifle and I would like on to. Thanks for giving me a bike last Christmas and a USA Army man.

Tyler Tischler

Dear Santa, How are you and Mrs. Claus doing? I like the Xbox you gave me last year. This year I want Halo2. My brother want a guitar. My dad wants the house to be done. My mom wants a nice family. Thank you for being a nice man. Sincerely, Tyler.

Elizabeth Franco

Dear Santa, How are you? I upreshiate the gameboy advance sp. I bet its cold out there. This year I would like an eclectric scooter. My mom would like a computer. My ddad would like a new cell phone. My dog would like a chew toy. My teacher Mrs. Morgan would like a sign that says her name. And can you tell my aunt that I love her and hope to see her soon. Hope you have a merry Christmas. You don't have to get all that stuff. Love Elizabeth.

Mason Tyler Charanza

Dear Santa, How are you doing? I hope you've had a great year. Thank you for the cool globe you got me last year! How are the elves doing? How is Mrs. Claus doing? This year my wish will be cool rock's and books by Ron Ray. For my brother I want lots of monster trucks and fast and cool cars. For my mom I want cook books and for my dad I want all kinds of camaroes. Once again, thank you for giving every one what they wanted. You Rock!

Reagan Best

Dear Santa, How are you doing? I am enjoying my fourwheeler. I rode it everyday after I got it and I still do. Thank you. This year my wishes are a drum set, cd player and cd's. I hope all of my wishes come true. Please give parents to all of the people in the hospital and the poor. Thank you for all you have given me. I hope that you get to visit the hospital and the poor. love Reagan Best.

Amy Manna

Dear Santa, How are you doing? I hope you got enough milk and cookies last year. What's Mrs. Claus' first name? I won-

der the elves are doing. This year I want 5-seiz and a mini piano (please). Thank you for last years gift. I hope you keep the soldiers safe. I have been a good girl, I think. Don't forget Mom, Ray, Laura, Joe and Jake. Oh and Tipper, Khatelena and Nancy (pets). And something for poor people. We also need a new DVD player with VHS. Thanks you for Chelsea and Hudson my dolls. I really enjoyed it.

Daniel Rosenau

Dear Santa, How you doing? Thank you for the robot cat, I have enjoyed playing it. I also liked "Video Now" you gave me last year. Thank you for the Gameboy advance too. This year I want a video for the Gameboy advance. My brother wants a cell phone and an electric guitar. My sister wants a crimper. Thank you for all the toys you gave me. From Daniel Rosenau.

Macie Resendis

Dear Santa, You are so nice. Are you going to be at a mall or is it going to be the fake one? I like to play with my Kareoke machine. How is the reindeer, and Elves, and Mrs. Claus? I want you to have a Merry Cristmas, all of you. This is what I want. 1. Toys for the needy children. 2. Radio. 3. Make up kit. 4. Teddy bear. 5. I want toys for my family. Thanks for being a nice guy. Ho, Ho, Ho, Ho, Ho.

Chase Manning

Dear Santa, You rock! Thank you for the bike you gave me. I love the scooter you gave me. Thank you for my stockings. This year I want Rudolph. This year I want an elf. You are a good guy. Thank you, you are the best.

Isaiah Aaron

Dear Santa, How are you doing? I hope you have a great year. Thank you for the toys you gave me. I have enjoyed playing with my brother and sister and my cousin. This year my wish would be for a Kareoke machine. I would also like a X-box game. You rock! My sister wants a doll. Please take care of my family in Mexico. Thank you for bringing joy to so many people in the world. I think you're cool. From Isaiah Aaron.

Eric Vasquez

Dear Santa, Was up! Thanks for the walkie talkies. I hope I get Xbox games like 'Need

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Colby Priest

Hey Santa. I bet it is cold at the North Pole.

Anissa

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to Santa Claus

for Speed, Hot Pursuit, and Halo 2. My sister would like a Playstation 2. She also likes "Need for Speed" on playstation 2. My mom would like a better garden. Please help by giving money to the poor people.

Sierra

Dear Santa, Thanks for all my favorite toys. Is it freezing at the North Pole? I hope you can get the poor lots of clothes, food, blankets. I want a cross with Jesus on it. I want to give my mom and dad a new computer. I want to give my brother a xbox game. Thanks again for my toys last year. I look forward to seeing you if I am not asleep. Love Sierra.

Samantha Laurenson

Dear Santa, How are you doing? Is Mrs. Claus doing good? Do you have enough elves. Who is feeding the reindeer? I would like a Luv Cub that is a Panda. My brother would like a G.I. Joe Jet, and my mom would like a warm blanket. Keep my dad safe. Thank you for everything you gave me and my family. I am glad you got me all the things I wanted. From Samantha.

Rebecca Patterson

Dear Santa, How are you doing? What are you doing? OK, I want a radio and lots of stuff. Animals like care bear, monkey and a big rabbit. And I want a miniture brat tv with a DVD and a VCR. And a celphone also. I want a drat mini computer and a Video Now with lots of movies. And a polly hotel with all the dolls and close.

Mrs. Van Winkle's Class

Macy Ashford

Dear Santa, How are you? How are the raindeer? Does it snow yet? Is it cold? I think I want a phone, a go cart, a dog, a doll, a horse blanket, a hollter, a cat bed, a dog bed, some clothes, some swet pants. My brother wants a gameboy. Will you get him one?

Trey Berry

Dear Santa, How are you doing? Is it cold up at the North Pole. How do reindeer fly? I want an electric scooter, and a gator at my dad's house. I want the scooter to be blue, and the gator to be orange. I want at my mom's house a maroon color electric scooter. I want you to give my dad a big person bike. I want you to give my mom a Santa Claus hat like yours. At my dads house I want a playstation 2. I want an xbox at both of my parent's houses. My sister wants a santa hat, and a barbie cd player, and a barbie karaoke.

Jake Bloomer

How are you doing? Is it cold up there? You better slow down on eaten cus your going to have a lot of cookies to ate. I wood like you to give one of my friend Branden Walker something speshel becuse hes nise. And Tristen is nise and I think she daserbs something nise too. And for my sister I have been meen to her. But I want her to have pink clothes. Thank you for my things last year. I liket them. I still have some and some of them got chood up by my dog.

Anna Bracken

Dear Santa, Have you ate lots of cookies? I love cookies myself! I live in Hidden Springs. It's butifule. I think I wish I can see the reindeer. How are they doing? What I want for Christmas is a sealphon, goldfish, and a gokart. For my mom I want her to have china. For my dad I want him to have cowboy boots. For my brother Eathen I want him to have Spiderman 2. For my other brother Heath I want him to have a car. A little car from the 70s. For my sister Erin I want her to have a neckles. For my other sister Amber I also want her to have china. And for my neace I want her to have dress up clothes. And one last thing I want the poor people to have lots of things. Mary Christmas.

Tristan Bragg

Dear Santa, Where do elfs come from? Could you get Backyard Baseball for my friend Clayton cause he really wants that game for PS 2. How are the Reindeer dooing? My friend Brandon would like Backyard Baseball for PS 2 also. I would like Yu-Gi-Oh cards for Christmas, rare wons please. What do you do during the summer? What do polar bears do at the North Pole?

Clayton Cole

Dear Santa, How do reindeer fly? Did you have a good Thanksgiving? Can I have a 12 gage shotgun please. I sure wold like a gator. Can I have a Bow and arrows, a Texas Tech ball cap. Oh yeah, a toy bow for my brother. A new car for my

mom. A new rifle for my dad. A crossbow for my grandpa. A new hoarse for my grandma.

Nicholas Cousins

Dear Santa, What is the whether like? What degrees is it? I want for Christmas roller caster 2, scooter, gameboy, socem bopers, sreke 2 video boy, dog toy for my dog. A 3 layer candle formy mom. Thanks for the trampilene last year.

Lacey Dusek

Dear Santa, Is it cold where you live? How is Rudolph doing? Is Mrs. Claus in her rocking chair? Thank you for the Barbie Crew Ship. My mom needs a Strawberry Shortcake doll as a gift for taking care of me and the house. My dad needs a G.I. Joe set. I really want a My Little Pony Castle.

Dane Hankamer

Dear Santa, How is Rudolph doing? Are you really busy on Christmas eve? For Christmas I want a motor scooter and a football for Christmas. I think Dallas, my brother, would like a tractor or a train for Christmas. I know Dalton would want a gameboy game for Christmas. Have you been eating a lot of cookies? Thank you for everything last year. I like everything a lot. I hope all the kids that don't have parents or don't have a home get something for Christmas. I hope we all have a god Christmas this year.

Michael Hester

Dear Santa, How are you doing and how are the raindeer doing? How do

CONTINUED ON 10B



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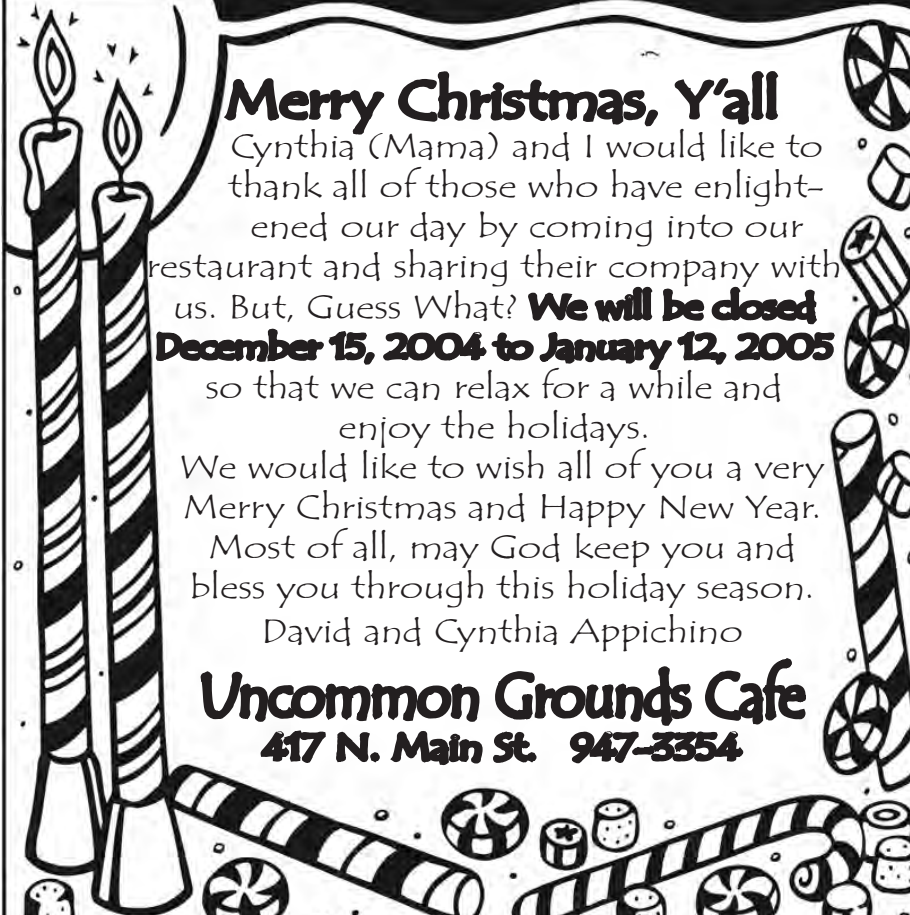
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Merry Christmas, Y'all

Cynthia (Mama) and I would like to thank all of those who have enlightened our day by coming into our restaurant and sharing their company with us. But, Guess What? **We will be closed December 15, 2004 to January 12, 2005** so that we can relax for a while and enjoy the holidays. We would like to wish all of you a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. Most of all, may God keep you and bless you through this holiday season. David and Cynthia Appichino

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LETTERS TO SANTA

FROM PAGE 9B

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your reindeer fly? I want a new game called Need for Speed Underground 2, and a vanilla candle for my mom, and light up cunchrolers for Jordan. Is it hard to do all that work?

Kristin Houston
 Dear Santa, How are you? What is the wether like there? Is it snowing? For Christmas last year I relly liked what you got me. Thanks again. For Christmas I want a cell-phone and a horse. My little brother wants a go cart for Christmas. My

mom has been cleening and taking care of me and she needs some new clothes. My dad needs to get some new clothes.

Davis Little
 Dear Santa, How are you doing? Are the presents ready? This is what I would for Christmas: A Texas Tech baseball and a little bit of camo clothes and a Go Cart. (That was two seats). Also a twenty gage. For my dad, a spot light that has a red lense. My mom would like a camping trailer. My little

brother would like a four-ten. My big brother would like a X-Box and big bones for my dogs.

Morgan Marie Mattson
 Dear Santa, How are you doing? How are the randeer and the elfs? Last year I got a game boy and I lost it so maby you colde get me another won for christmas? But if you don't it's ok. Me and my sister have ben fitting a little. I hope you are doing good. I am. Merry Christmas to all the people there. I forgot I wold like a goldfish too.

Kegan Owen
 Dear Santa, How are you dowing. How are your Randeer. I want this for crismes; a horse and a fake pickup and trailor. For my Mom, shoos a shirt and ireneeng's. For my Dad, cofe cup and pants and shoos. I want a rose for my bruther. Santa thanks for my radio you got me last year.

Sommer Sloan
 Dear Santa, Thank you for giving my sister, brother and me presents in our stockings last year. This year I want flip flops, a big bike lik my sister, Santa Clause hat like Morgans, and a stuffed teddy bear. My sisters wants a

horse. My brother wants a Spiderman toy.

Brandon Walker
 Dear Santa, How are you doing? Are you getting ready for your trip? When will it be time for you to come to town? May you please get me a gocart, a four wheeler, and a limo. This one kid I know his name is Micheal can you get him a Playstation for Cristmas? How do reindeer fly? Do they have magic or something? Do you want som ecookies and milk or something cause I just want to know? That's all I want for today. So can you pray for my mom to come home safly?

Taylor West
 Dear Santa, How is Rudolph doing? Is it cold up there? Are all of your elf's nice? I wish I could have a cell phone, a white puppy, and a mickey mouse t.v. and stand to hold it on, and a air hocky to put in the garage. My mom could use some new oven mitts, some cloths, a gingerbread hous.

Brandon Wilhite
 Dear Santa, How are you doing? How are your reindeer doing? Listen, I want you to git me a Playstation 3. I want Spider-man 2 the movie and game. My brother wants grand thef auto san andres. My dad wants a boat my wants a break and we all want a want a new computer.

Daniel
 Dear Santa, How are the reindeer doing? How are you doing? And thank you for the gifts last year. And can you please give me these gifts. I would like a Game Boy and a PSP. And I would like one more thing and that would be Mario Kart double dash. And I would like for you to give gifts to my brother, Mom and my Dad.

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Holiday closing, ad deadlines announced

Salado Village Voice newspaper office will close early on both Dec. 24 and Dec. 31 to observe the holidays.

The newspaper will close at noon on Dec. 24. The display advertising deadline for the Dec. 30 issue will be moved forward to noon Dec. 23. The classified deadline of noon Dec. 27 will remain for the Dec. 30 issue.

The newspaper will close at noon on Dec. 31. The display advertising deadline for the Jan. 6 issue will be noon Dec. 30.

The most beautiful burro, mule in the mountains

I have judged some unusual events over the years: beauty pageants, duck races, all kinds of cookoffs, even a llama kissing contest.

Last weekend I had the privilege of being a judge at the Most Beautiful Burro and Mule Contest in Fort Davis. The animals had names like Doc, Tinkerbell, Maggie Mae, Sammy, Chula Mula, Blue, Dinamito, Billy the Kid and Jesse James.

I was thrilled to be there in the fall. I've never seen more color in the mountains. It was rainy and foggy, too, which added an element of interest. The clouds nestled on top of the mountains and the colorful desert plants in the palisades looked spectacular. The trees had leaves of red, gold and orange.

Fort Davis has had 30 inches of rain this year, quite a bit more than usual. But this weekend was about mules and burros. They came from as far away as Colorado City. They wore everything from dollar bills to Mardi Gras beads. The owners paraded their livestock in front of the judges and put money in the bribe jars, which were lined up at the judges' feet.

Hey, it worked. That's the way they raised money, which went to the 4-H kids. Some of the little girls parading their mules or burros threw kisses and winked at the judges.

The Fort Davis Merchants Association sponsored the event. The idea for it came from Donna Trammel, who owns a rock shop in Fort Davis. She had attended similar mule contests in Victoria. "We were trying to figure out some way to raise money for our 4-H kids," says Donna, "and

Tumbleweed Smith



what is more native to West Texas than burros and mules. We started talking to some of the local mule and burro owners and they seemed to be all for it. They are a different breed of people who love showing their animals."

Wild burros roam the mountains west of Fort Davis. They are descendants of burros used by miners and soldiers years ago. The burros used to run wild in downtown Fort Davis. The courthouse lawn was one of their favorite hangouts. A fence was built around the courthouse with turnstiles in it to keep the burros out.

The categories for judging were the longest ears, the loudest bray, the hardest working, the most obstinate, the most beautiful, the best dressed, the most congenial and the mule or burro that traveled the farthest distance.

"The event started as just a burro contest, but some of the local mule

owners thought we were mules as well." The event raised nearly \$2,000.

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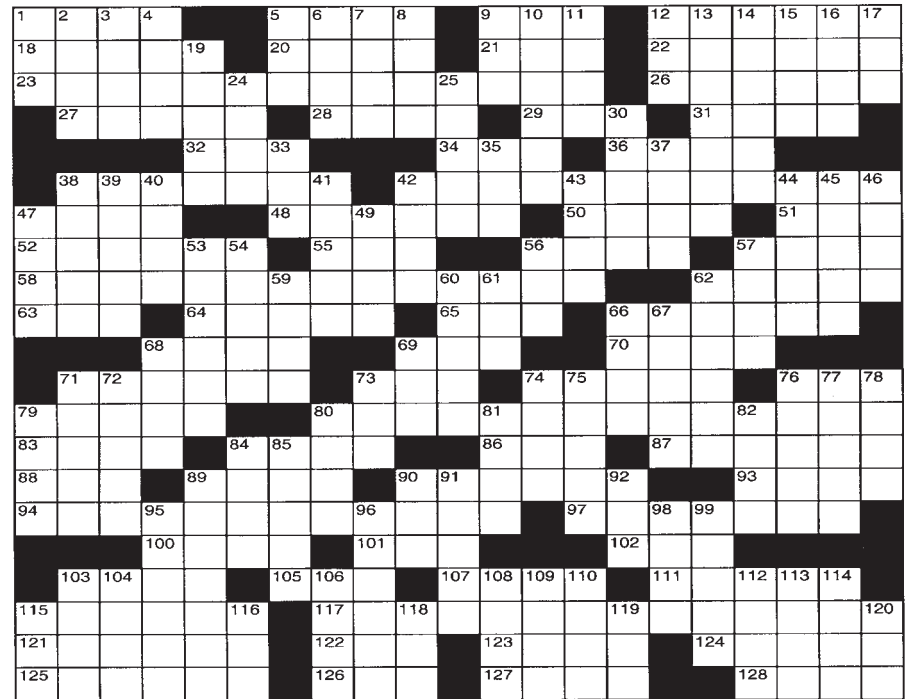


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|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| ACROSS | 56 Noah's eldest | 93 Pickable | 8 Novelist Seton | 44 Mother Judd | 84 Mind — matter |
| 1 Cheryl of "Charlie's Angels" | 57 Cornmeal concoction | 94 Part 5 of remark | 9 "Tobacco Road" | 45 Jerkin | 85 Actor McDowell |
| 5 — ghanouj | 58 Part 3 of remark | 97 Act like a mirror | 10 Nosy guy? | 46 Draft animals | 89 "Sweet —" (1903 song) |
| 9 "Sister —" ('92 film) | 62 Surround | 100 Dweeb | 11 Try out | 47 Movie piglet | 90 Heifer or hen |
| 12 Rodeo ropes | 63 West ender? | 101 Empower | 12 Drink like a dachshund | 49 Boxer Tyson | 91 Good speller? |
| 18 "America's Most Wanted" info | 64 Greene of "Bonanza" | 102 Dernier — | 13 '92 Disney film | 53 Taciturn | 92 Cal. page |
| 20 Panache | 65 Author LeShan | 103 Bear's advice | 14 Audiophile's equipment | 54 Teatime treat | 95 Like mother-of-pearl, often |
| 21 Chase away gray | 66 Picturesque | 105 Puppy bark | 15 Ward of "Sisters" | 56 Where the gulls are | 96 Llama kin |
| 22 Changes | 68 — shui | 107 Role for Liz | 16 French airport | 57 Quaker colonist | 98 Starting at |
| 23 Start of a remark by Gene Perret | 69 Switch-board abbr. | 115 Reach | 17 Govt. agency | 59 As a result | 99 Neighbor of Niger |
| 26 Rice dish | 70 Irish island group | 117 End of remark | 19 Printer's stroke | 60 Link | 103 Christmas-tree topper |
| 27 Tangle | 71 Asian island | 121 Hispanic | 24 Robert of "Rhapsody in Blue" | 61 Banned pesticide | 104 Singer James |
| 28 Quahog, e.g. | 73 Joanne of "Red River" | 122 Cover the cake | 25 Fireplace fragment | 62 Cordial | 106 Mascagni opera |
| 29 Consumed a knish | 74 Cavalry weapon | 123 The — Brothers | 30 Practice piece | 66 "The Thief of Bagdad" star | 108 Plumbing problem |
| 31 Cart | 76 Spare part? | 124 Lofty spaces | 33 Vintage | 67 Mimos' realm | 109 "Cope Book" aunt |
| 32 Altar oath | 79 French dynast | 125 Exchanged | 35 Manipulate | 68 Manumit | 110 Head |
| 34 Hair ball? | 80 Part 4 of remark | 126 Getz's instrument | 37 Bookkeeping entry | 69 Misjudge | 112 Punta del — |
| 36 "The — Is High" ('80 hit) | 83 — of passage | 127 Sammy or Stubby | 38 Dad-to-be, often | 71 Fellike fabric | 113 Blood components |
| 38 Hazard | 84 University ordeal | 128 No sweat | 39 Like Machu Picchu | 72 Eye-related | 114 "— Coming" ('69 song) |
| 42 Part 2 of remark | 86 Family vehicle | DOWN | 40 Rock hound? | 73 Singer Shannan | 115 Cockpit fig. |
| 47 Bete noire | 87 A hole near the sole | 1 Chou En — | 41 Find out | 74 Ginger cookie | 116 Head motion |
| 48 Reserved | 88 Sten relative | 2 Charity | 42 Designer Gernreich | 75 One of the Yokums | 118 John Ritter's dad |
| 50 Mideast gulf | 89 Profess | 3 Anthropologist Fossey | 43 Cowardly Lion Bert | 76 Antique | 119 Language suffix |
| 51 Supp. | 90 Walked off with | 4 Arp's art | | 77 Like a lummo | 120 Weldon or Wray |
| 52 Way in hand | | 5 Role for a rat | | 78 — the bullet | |
| | | 6 Baldwin of "Malice" | | 79 Muck | |
| | | 7 Cry like a baby | | 80 Dupe | |
| | | | | 81 Roman poet | |
| | | | | 82 Present | |



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Crossword Answers, Page 8B

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Marketplace

Section C

Salado Village Voice Marketplace Classifieds

December 16, 2004



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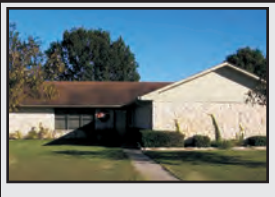
Country home on half-acre of beautiful trees. Metal roof, storage building, wood burning fireplace, large utility room with lots of storage! 3BR/2BA \$110,000



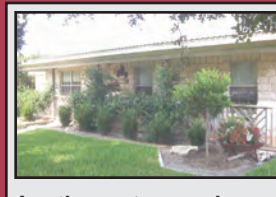
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Dear EarthTalk: What are the environmental and health risks of genetically engineered foods, and do they outweigh the benefits such as reducing pesticide use and increasing crop yields? -- Liz from California

Genetic engineering is a technology that manipulates the genes of organisms and transfers them between species. While genetically engineered (GE) foods such as corn and wheat appear identical to their natural counterparts, they differ in that they contain genes from bacteria, viruses, insects, nuts or animals.

Proponents of genetic engineering claim that the technology actually improves upon Mother Nature, as altered plants can be made resistant to weeds, insects or even cooler temperatures. As such, the technology has been touted as the future of agriculture and looked to as a solution for world hunger.

But many scientists believe that the reality of genetic engineering is quite different. According to UC Berkeley biologist Miguel Altieri, the replacement of a wide variety of crops with a few genetically modified monocultures (large groups of a single species of plant) threatens to undermine the very genetic diversity which helps

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crops avoid insect infestation and the spread of disease in the first place.

"Although biotechnology has the capacity to create a greater variety of commercial plants," says Altieri, "the trend...is to create broad international markets for a single product, thus creating the conditions for genetic uniformity..." He adds that the potential transfer of genes from GE crops to wild or semi-domesticated relatives may help create "super weeds" resistant to any and all control efforts.

Additionally, some believe that GE foods can be hazardous to human health when ingested. Ronnie Cummins of the Organic Consumers Association says that GE foods have been linked to many health problems, including blood disorders and food allergies. For instance, a few years ago Pioneer Hi-Bred International, in order to boost the protein content of its products, developed a soybean using a gene from a Brazil nut. Independent tests on the GE soybean revealed that people allergic to Brazil

nuts could have severe allergic reactions to the modified soybeans.

While many American lawmakers and farmers have embraced genetic engineering, governments in other parts of the world are not convinced that the known benefits of the technology outweigh the potential risks. According to Yale University researcher Kathleen McAfee, American advocacy for genetic engineering has strained foreign relations as European and African nations reject any such "modified" products for trade and food aid.

With more than 40 varieties of GE crops approved for marketing and use in the U.S., as much as 70 percent of the foods on American grocery shelves today already contain genetically modified components. Since the federal government does not require GE foods to be labeled as such, the best way for consumers to avoid them is by buying only products that have been certified organic.

CONTACTS: Organic Consumers Association, (218) 226-4164, www.organicconsumers.org; The Ecological Impacts of Agricultural Biotechnology, www.actionbioscience.org/biotech/altieri.html; Yale Global Online, www.yaleglobal.yale.edu/environment.

in the 1950s and 1960s.

A Danish study by Kolstad, Brandt and Rasmussen revealed that pregnant dry cleaning workers are twice as likely to have a miscarriage as pregnant women in other professions. And the University of California at Berkeley found that male dry cleaning workers have more sperm abnormalities and a significantly lower sperm count than men not employed by the industry.

Less toxic alternatives to perc are beginning to take hold. Comet Cleaners, which has 350 locations in 17 states and Mexico, replaced perc a decade ago with the more benign petroleum solvent, Exxon D-2000. Other cleaners have switched over to Chevron-Phillips' EcoSolv, a similar hydrocarbon-based alternative. Meanwhile, more than 200 cleaners--including Chicago's Greener Cleaner--employ "wet cleaning," a non-toxic, non-polluting alternative that uses biodegradable soap and water.

Perhaps the most promising non-toxic perc alternative is produced by GreenEarth Cleaning, which has patented its silicone-based dry cleaning solvent called Cyclic Silioxane. This product poses no threat to the environment or human health and simply degrades to sand, water and carbon dioxide. General Electric and Proctor & Gamble have formed a joint venture with GreenEarth to help dry cleaners worldwide switch over to this more benign alternative. At greenearthcleaning.com, consumers can search an international database to find dry cleaners in their area that are using the new solvent.

While the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regulates the use of perc under the Toxic Substances Control Act, the Clean Water Act and the Safe Drinking Water Act, states have been reticent to adopt phase-outs. The dry cleaning industry has mounted a strong lobby in favor of keeping perc legal, but consumer opposition is building, especially as more non-toxic alternatives are becoming available.

CONTACTS: Natural Resources Defense Council, (212) 727-2700, www.nrdc.org; Comet Cleaners, (817) 461-3555, www.cometcleaners.com; Green Earth Cleaning, (816) 926-0895, www.greenearthcleaning.com; EPA Perc Fact Sheet, www.epa.gov/opptintr/chemfact/f_perchl.txt.


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Dear EarthTalk: I've heard that the solvents commonly used in commercial dry cleaning are unhealthy and unsafe for the environment. Is this true? -- Earl Eckstrom, Portland, OR

Studies show that perchloroethylene--the solvent used by the vast majority of dry cleaning establishments--is both hazardous to human health and injurious to the environment. For one, "perc," as the solvent is commonly known in the industry, can have negative effects on the central nervous system. According to the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences, short-term exposure to perc can lead to headaches, nausea, dizziness and memory problems.

The environmental organization Greenpeace found that perc breaks down into toxic by-products like phosgene, vinyl chloride, carbon tetrachloride and trichloroacetic acid (TCA). Dr. Gina Solomon, a senior scientist at the Natural Resources Defense Council, says, "Phosgene is an extremely hazardous gas which evaporates and in closed spaces is potentially lethal. Vinyl chloride is a proven carcinogen and carbon tetrachloride is a known liver toxin." And TCA has been linked to the extensive damage done to trees in the Black Forest in Germany, where it was used as an herbicide



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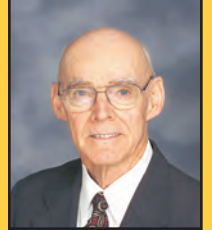
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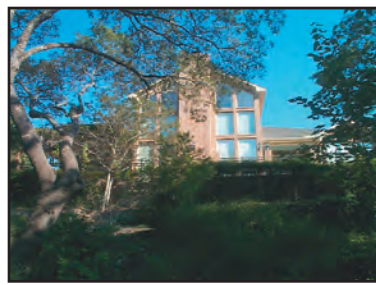
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719 Park Drive, Salado
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Artist studio/residence/ or office: beautiful space with approximately 2,000 sq. ft. plus loft. Lots of light, great combination of living, working and displaying space. Call (254) 947-5575.

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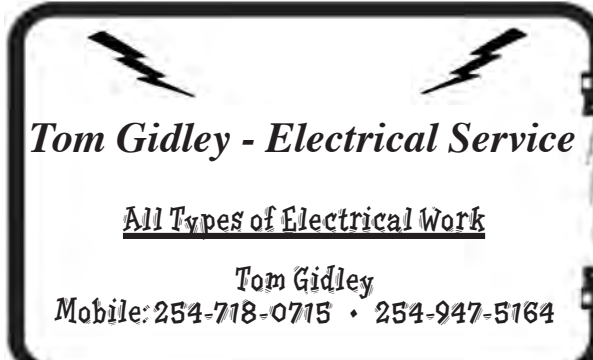
tfnb
Retail space for lease in new emporium on Main Street. Front Row. 947-5831

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Take care of Christmas plants

This is the season of giving, and chances are that some time during the month of December you will either receive a live plant as a gift or you will buy one for yourself to help decorate your home during this festive season.

Poinsettias and Christmas cactus are available just about anywhere and can put on a spectacular display that will last long after Christmas. Unfortunately, most of these plants will be discarded at the end of the season, but they can become beautiful houseplants and with some knowledgeable tending can be brought to bloom in the following years.

Poinsettias are probably the most often bought and given plants for this season. In recent years nurseries have developed numerous colors from different shades of red and pink to whites and variegated colors; there is a color out there to please just about anyone.

Once you have selected the color you would like, there are a couple of other things you should consider before selecting a plant to make your own. Be sure to select a plant that has stiff stems, one that has retained its bracts (leaves that make up the flower), and one with no signs of drooping or wilting. Check the soil and make sure that it is damp but not soggy. The plants often come with a protective sleeve and if left on the plant very long it can damage the plant. Also beware of plants that are displayed in a closely packed group, poinsettias need their space to stay in premium condition.

Once you buy the plant do put on a protective sleeve or put the plant into a large plastic bag to protect it during transport. This is particularly important if the outside temperature is below 50 degrees. Poinsettias are tropical plants and don't like the cold. A brisk wind can also break stems and leaves off if the plant is not protected properly. This means you must protect the leaves from the cold and wind. Do not leave the plant in the car while you do other Christmas shopping on a cold day.

When you get it home put it in a place where it will receive at least six hours of bright indirect sunlight a day. Avoid direct sunlight or find a way to diffuse it. The ideal temperature for the plant is between 68 and 70 degrees. Warmer is not better. When the soil is dry, remove it from any decorative pot cover, water it thoroughly; let the excess drain out and then put back in the decorative

Master Gardener

by Debbie Lauer

cover.

Do not let water build up inside the cover/pot, this will cause the roots to become soggy and could cause root rot. Do not place the plant where it will be exposed to cold drafts such as near a door that opens to the outside or near a heat register or fireplace. Place plants in groupings as they will benefit from the humidity generated by the presence of other plants. You can also place the plant in a tray of gravel and fill partially with water to create humidity. This will help counteract the dryness caused by the home furnace.

Finally, don't fertilize the plant while it is in bloom. To re-bloom your poinsettias, go to the Texas A&M Horticulture website, <http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/extension/newsletters/hortupdate/jan03/art8jan.html> for more information.

I would like to clear up one common misconception about poinsettias. They are not poisonous. Studies conducted by Ohio State University and the Society of American Florists found no toxicity even at levels equivalent to over 500 bracts (flowers). Some people may have an allergic reaction to the milky sap that comes out when a branch is pruned or broken.

A Christmas cactus can also bring lots of color into the home during the holiday season. The flowers may not last as long as the poinsettia but they do bloom abundantly and can be spectacular. These plants also come in diverse colors from red, to fuchsia, orange and white. In addition, they are easy to grow and if you follow a few simple steps they will re-bloom and become more impressive as the years progress.

Select a plant with many branches and many buds for the first year. Do not place the plant in a warm spot; this will cause the buds to fall off. Keep the temperature below 65 degrees. After enjoying it this season, continue to care for it and it may

reward you with a smaller bloom sometime near Easter. This plant needs full sunlight in the winter and less direct sun during the summer months. Too much sun in the summer will yellow the leaves.

They will recover when placed in a less sunny spot. Again let the soil get dry before watering. They need less water between October and March: it is very important not to let it stand in water. Be sure to remove any decorative pot cover when watering as with the poinsettia.

There are several easy things to do to ensure a heavy bloom the following year. The most important involve light and temperature. Christmas cacti need bright light, short days and night temperatures between 55 and 65 degrees to develop the buds for the Christmas bloom. One final secret to produce a profuse bloom; these plants like to be pot bound. They should not be repotted more than once every three years.

Many stores and catalogues sell Amaryllis bulbs this season. You may also receive one of these as a gift. If so, lucky you, as these plants produce a spectacular flower. I had one grow over four feet tall with four large bright red blooms over six inches across on its top. These bulbs usually come in a kit where all you have to do is start watering the bulb.

Follow the directions that come with the bulb. Usually, you place the bulb in its pot in a brightly lit window and water it a little each day. A quality amaryllis bulb will reward you shortly with a shoot that will quickly grow and produce a stalk that usually has four flowers on it.

Not only are they gorgeous, but also the rate that they grow will amaze you. These flowers can also be repeat bloomed in subsequent years; the key here is to continue to grow the leaves after the stalk and blooms have faded. Cut off the stalk and grow the leaves by keeping the plant in full sun and with a night temperature of at least 60 degrees.

After the last frost, you

can place them in your garden in a semi-shaded spot. Bring it inside in the fall, just before the first frost, and put it in a cold dark spot to rest. Around the first of the year bring it out and start to water it again. The magic will start over and if you tended the bulb well you may even get two flower stalks. Paper whites and other bulbs should be treated in the same fashion.

Christmas plants add a bit of festive color to our homes and with a little care can last for years to come. With the proper growing conditions, they will continue to reward you with holiday color. I hope that this article encourages you to give them a try not only for the season but on into the year.

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Salado Lots

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