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HERALD

MONDAY

DECEMBER 10, 2007



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Missing man's body found

By **THOMAS JENKINS**
Staff Writer

The body of an 82-year-old man reported missing from Gilmer was discovered in a field near the Old Colorado City Highway Saturday morning, and investigators with the Howard County Sheriff's Office are now trying to piece together events that took place during the last hours before his death. Berry Barney Steelman was returning from a visit in the

Texas Panhandle to his home in Gilmer when family members say he disappeared somewhere near Snyder, according to HCSO Investigator Josh Peterson.

"Steelman's car was discovered abandoned on the Old Colorado City Highway, about a half-mile from Midway Road Dec. 2," said Peterson. "It wasn't until Dec. 5 that we received a report from Upshur County that Steelman was reported missing, most likely by family

members.

"As soon as we received the missing person report, we began searching for Mr. Steelman. We had searchers on horseback, as well as the Department of Public Safety helicopter looking. The DPS helicopter spotted his body in a field approximately a mile from where his car had been discovered."

Peterson said there were no signs of foul play when the body was found.

"The report from Gilmer said he had a heart condition," said Peterson. "It appears he died of natural causes. An autopsy is being performed in Lubbock."

According to Sheriff Dale Walker, information gathered during the autopsy may be the only way investigators will be able to piece together the last hours of Steelman's life.

"It's just such an odd set of circumstances," said Walker. "We've looked at the footprints, and he walked all over that

field, mostly in circles. We're not sure if he had a stroke or a heart attack and was disoriented, or what happened at this point. I'm really hoping the results from the autopsy will help shed some light on this."

Walker declined to comment on the condition of Steelman's vehicle when it was found.

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

COOKING UP A STORM



HERALD photo/Steve Reagan

Mike Lindsey grills some hamburgers during the Cossacks Motorcycle Club fundraiser supper Friday evening at the Eagles Lodge. The Cossacks were raising money for their annual Bykes for Tykes event.

Council to eye Settles

By **STEVE REAGAN**
Staff Writer

The Settles Hotel and its possible renovation is expected to be the top topic of discussion when the Big Spring City Council holds its regular meeting at 5:30 p.m. Tuesday in council chambers at 307 E. Fourth.

The council will consider two resolutions pertaining to the historic old building, which has stood vacant for most of the past three decades.

The first resolution would approve a performance agreement between Moore Development for Big Spring Inc. and Settles Hotel Development Co.

Moore Development directors voted unanimously in April to provide up to \$3 million to help SHDC Manager Brint Ryan renovate the Settles Hotel, which he agreed to purchase for \$75,000 from the city of Big Spring.

Since announcing the project, Ryan and SHDC have also acquired several other properties, including 313 and 315 Runnels, adjacent to the Settles, which served as a Greyhound station for many years.

A performance agreement is necessary, Ryan told Moore officials, so that his company can move forward with development plans in the downtown area. It is also expected to clear the way for the company's official purchase of the hotel — the \$75,000 has been held in escrow pending finalization of the pact.

Pending approval of the performance agreement by all parties, the council will then consider a resolution authorizing the city manager to execute a tax abatement agreement with SHDC.

Also Tuesday, the council will consider whether to authorize Mayor Russ

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NUN SHOCKS STUDENTS

GROSSE POINTE PARK, Mich. (AP) — Sister Kathy Avery won't put up with swearing on the playground at her school, and she's not above repeating the offending language to make sure everyone understands which words she won't tolerate.

The principal of St. Clare of Montefalco Catholic School had students stay after a Mass last month and informed the fifth-through eighth-graders that she has a zero-tolerance policy for cursing.

Just in case anyone wasn't sure what she was talking about, Avery read off a list of the very words and phrases that she was banning.

A VERY 'STIFF' DRINK

NEW YORK (AP) — A bottle of 81-year-old Scotch sold for \$54,000 at this New York's first liquor auction since Prohibition.

An anonymous collector bought the pricey potable at Christie's sale of wines and spirits on Saturday.

The 100-lot auction sold a total of \$304,800 worth of rare wine and liquor. The top lot was a collection of 729 bottles of whisky, which went for \$102,000.

The \$54,000 bottle was distilled at Macallan in Scotland in 1926, bottled in 1986 and rebottled in 2002.

Prohibition lasted from 1920 to 1933, but New York State did not allow auctions of spirits until this year.

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ST. ANDREW'S DAY SERVICE



HERALD photo/Lyndel Moody
Bag piper Richard Keen, left, drummer Randy Wothke, and bag piper E.J. Jones, members of the internationally-known group The Rogues, march out of the St. Mary's Episcopal Church's church ending the annual St. Andrew's Day evening prayer service. The parish's annual service and Scottish music festival drew about 250 people Sunday night who braved the cold, rainy weather. Local and regional musicians also lending their talents to the service were the choirs of St. Mary's and St. Nicholas Episcopal Church of Midland; organist Darryl Knapp; singers Joyce Bradley, Joseph and Susan Dawes; conductor Dr. Keith Grauman; St. Mary's choir master Linda Hill; brass members Samuel Haul, Ruben Chance, Rocky Harris and Ryan Harris; and flute and violinist Gloria Steelman.

Shuttle launch off until January

By **MARCIA DUNN**
AP Aerospace Writer

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. — NASA on Sunday delayed the launch of space shuttle Atlantis until January after a gauge in the fuel tank failed for the second time in four days.

With only a few days remaining in the launch window for the shuttle's mission to the international space station, senior managers decided to stand down until next month in hopes of better understanding the perplexing and persistent fuel gauge problem.

"We're determined to get to the bottom of this," said LeRoy Cain, chairman of the mission management team.

Whether Atlantis can fly as early as Jan. 2 "is all going to depend on what we find out," he said.

The trouble with the fuel gauge resurfaced just before sunrise Sunday, about an hour after the launch team began filling Atlantis' big external tank for an afternoon liftoff.

Shuttle managers had said they would halt the countdown and call everything off if any of the four hydrogen fuel gauges acted up. Three failed during Thursday's launch attempt; no one knows why.

Launch director Doug Lyons said Sunday's failure was similar to what happened before, except only one gauge malfunctioned this time.

"We would rather have launched today, obviously," Cain said. "This was going to be in the very

least a good tanking test for us, and that's what it's turned out to be."

NASA quickly established an engineering team to come up with ideas on how to pinpoint and fix the problem, which has bedeviled NASA or the past two years. The engineers will report back to Cain on Tuesday. Most inspections and repairs could be carried out at the launch pad. If the shuttle has to be returned to its hangar for more invasive work, there will be no hope of launching in early January, Cain said.

NASA had until Thursday to launch Atlantis with the European Space Agency's space station laboratory, Columbus.

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Ted O. Groebl, III, 42, died Thursday. Memorial Services will be at 4 p.m. Monday at Coahoma Church of Christ.

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COUNCIL

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McEwen to enter into negotiations with Howard County regarding operation of the Spring City Senior Citizens Center.

Informal discussions between city and county officials have been ongoing for the past several weeks on the subject. The county, facing a \$1 million shortfall in its budget, would benefit from the city taking a more

predominant role in the center's operation, County Judge Mark Barr said in November.

McEwen has expressed support for the action.

"Our structure in municipal government lends itself to these types (of operations) because we have professionals with management structure that can do this," he said recently.

In other business Tuesday, the council will consider:

• First reading of an ordinance approving a

settlement agreement with Atmos Energy West Texas Division.

• Emergency readings of resolutions authorizing the sale of property at 1200 Utah to Howard County; and authorizing the mayor to execute an agreement with AT&T for long distance services.

• Equipment and vehicle bids.

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

Christmas Decorating Contest
Enter Your Home or Business
Categories: (Circle the appropriate category)
RESIDENTIAL:
A. Religious B. Lights Only C. Original Homemade
D. Other
COMMERCIAL:
A. Show Windows B. Lights Only D. Other
NON-JUDGED ENTRY:
A. Residential B. Commercial
JUDGING will be Monday, December 17 Starting at 6:00 pm
Winners will receive media recognition.
ALL entries will be listed as places to go and lights to see.
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