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BIG SPRING HERALD

WEDNESDAY

JULY 9, 2008



VOLUME 103, NUMBER 189

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50 CENTS DAILY/\$1.25 SUNDAY

Settles asbestos removal gets go-ahead from city

By **THOMAS JENKINS**
Staff Writer

The environmental abatement of the historic Settles Hotel got a thumbs up from the Big Spring City Council Tuesday night, and while hammers are about to fly in the downtown structure, it looks like ownership of the



Darden

building will remain on hold.

The council unanimously approved contracts with Abatement Inc. and Honesty Environmental Services totaling \$250,000 to abate the building, but per the

purchase contract between the city of Big Spring and the Settles Hotel Development Company, the Dallas-based company will not yet take ownership of the building.

"After numerous months getting to this point with the Settles Hotel Development Company, we're very excited to bring these

two contractors to you tonight," said Darden. "The city staff has reviewed their credentials, checked their references for the proposed abatement, which the city is responsible for."

The primary design consultant will be Honesty Environmental Services; the abatement contractor is Abatement Inc.

"These bids were taken through a RFQ process, which is a request for proposal," Darden said. "You take the most qualified contractor for the project. There are numerous contractors around the state and country, and SHDC did most of the

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Courtesy photo

Dianna Newton, left, and Ashton Evans display some of the items up for auction when the Howard County A&M Club holds its annual scholarship event Saturday evening at the Big Spring Country Club. Admission is free.

Who'll give me \$1,000? 1,500?

Lots to bid on at annual Aggie Auction

By **STEVE REAGAN**
Staff Writer

Calling all Aggies (and Longhorns and Red Raiders and Cowboy fans and ...), it's time for the annual Howard County A&M Club Scholarship Auction.

The auction, which raises money to finance scholarships for Howard County students attending Texas A&M University, will be held Saturday evening at the Big Spring Country Club. Appetizers will be served at 5:30 p.m. and the auction will begin

What: Howard County A&M Club Scholarship Auction.

Where: Big Spring Country Club.

When: 5:30 p.m. Saturday.

around 7 p.m. Admission is free, organizers said.

Dianna Newton, who has helped organize the event the past several years, said a wide variety of items — ranging from vacation trips to

sports memorabilia — will be auctioned Saturday.

The item nearest and dearest to club members will be the chance to have one's name put on an endowed scholarship to the university. The minimum bid for the naming rights to the scholarship begins at \$5,000, Newton said.

"We currently have 14 kids on scholarships," Newton said. "Each year, we try to raise enough money to add an endowed scholarship for \$25,000 ... so that we can keep this up for years to come."

Last year, the club raised just

more than \$50,000 at its auction and members are hoping to exceed that total this year. To that end, Newton said they are offering a wide selection of items.

One of the biggest is a week's vacation at the Club Regina in Cabo San Lucas, Mexico. Other vacations up for auction include trips to Cancun, Mexico, Pagosa Springs, Colo. and a "Kenny Chesney" weekend in Houston, including tickets to watch Chesney, Keith Urban and Leann Rhymes in concert.

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SALVATION ARMY

School supplies program gears up

By **THOMAS JENKINS**
Staff Writer

While most students will be quick to point out the summer vacation is far from over, time is running out for the local Salvation Army and its annual program to provide area children with much needed back-to-school supplies.

As fall quickly approaches, many area parents are faced with a dilemma: How to purchase much needed school supplies on an already depleted budget. Luckily, the Big Spring Salvation Army is starting its annual back-to-school supply drive in an effort to make sure area children have the materials — notebook paper, pencils and pens — to start the school year.

Paula Lafler, a social worker with the Salvation Army, said the program has been such a success over the years because of community support, and there are two ways for area residents to help.

"If they would rather make a monetary donation instead of going out and buying the supplies, it actually saves a little bit of money," said Lafler. "The Salvation Army is tax exempt,

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Suspect in double-homicide arrested without incident

By **THOMAS JENKINS**
Staff Writer

A suspect wanted in connection with the May 4 double-homicide that claimed the life of two Big Spring residents is in custody this week after being arrested over the weekend by U.S. Marshals in Levelland.

James Cole, 18, of Lamesa, was charged with deadly conduct — discharge of a firearm after federal agents arrested



Cole

him, according to Sgt. Tony Everett, public information officer with the Big Spring Police Department.

"My understanding is he was arrested without incident," said Everett. "After we determined Cole had fled the area, we asked several federal agencies to assist in locating him. It just

happened to be the U.S. Marshals that apprehended him." Cole — known by the alias "Blitz" — was identified by law enforcement officials as a "person of interest" in the case in mid May.

According to Everett, the charge of deadly conduct — discharge of a firearm Cole faces is from the incident that claimed the lives of Valerie Garcia, 20, and Michael Cardona, 21, both of Big Spring.

"It's believed at this time Cole participated in the shooting," said Everett. "No one has been charged with murder in this case yet. We're still at a point where we're trying to figure out who did what."

Garcia and Cardona were pronounced dead at Scenic Mountain Medical Center shortly after a shooting was reported at 905 E. 16th St. at

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State Briefs

Bush lauds summiteers for work on protecting environment, advancing trade, helping poor

TOYAKO, Japan (AP) — President Bush on Wednesday hailed the move by G-8 leaders to coalesce behind a global climate-change strategy, claiming “significant progress.”

“In order to address climate change, all major economies must be at the table, and that’s what took place today,” Bush said at the conclusion of the summit of leading industrialized nations — a get-together that he said also worked to advance free trade and combat hunger and disease around the world, particularly in Africa.

The global warming statement represented quite a progression for Bush, who in his first term disputed scientists’ assertions about this problem. He backed the G-8 summit declaration that greenhouse gas emissions should be halved by the middle of the century.

“We made clear, and the other nations agreed, that they must also participate in an ambitious goal,” Bush said, “with an interim goal, with interim plans to enable the world to successfully address climate change. And

we made significant progress toward a comprehensive approach.”

Armed men clash with police outside U.S. consulate in Istanbul, 6 killed

ISTANBUL, Turkey (AP) — Armed men attacked a police guardpost outside the U.S. consulate in Istanbul on Wednesday, and the ensuing clash killed three officers and three of the assailants, officials said.

At least one of the assailants opened fire at the post near the consulate’s main entrance at about 11 a.m., a U.S. embassy spokeswoman said, speaking on the condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the matter.

There were no reports of casualties among American consulate employees, she said.

“Three policemen were martyred and three attackers were killed,” Istanbul Gov. Muammer Guler told reporters at the scene.

Guler said a policeman and a tow-truck driver were also injured.

Authorities were trying to identify the attackers, he

said.

Wildfire northeast of Sacramento burns dozens of homes and forces thousands to flee

BIG SUR, Calif. (AP) — A wind-stoked wildfire northeast of Sacramento burned dozens of homes Tuesday and has forced thousands of fire-weary residents to flee, state officials said.

About 40 homes in the rural Butte County community of Concow were destroyed after erratic winds blew embers across fire containment lines, said Todd Simmons, a California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection spokesman.

Firefighters went door to door early Tuesday to evacuate 800 to 1,000 residents from Concow and Yankee Hill, about 85 miles north of Sacramento. Residents of 3,200 homes were ordered to evacuate in nearby Paradise, where wildfire destroyed 74 homes last month.

“Right now we’re battling the weather and the erratic winds,” Simmons said. “Whatever the winds are doing, that’s pretty much what the fire’s going to do.”

CITY

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negotiations. We just basically checked their references and the projects they have done of this magnitude, and they have done several projects of this magnitude.”

According to City Attorney Linda Sjogren, the funding — which comes to \$200,000 for Abatement Inc. and \$50,000 for Honesty Environmental Services — will be the responsibility of SHDC and its manager, Big Spring native Brint Ryan.

“It will be approximately \$250,000 put into the escrow account to pay the consultant and contractor,” said Sjogren. “If the cost is more than that, they (SHDC) will either have to put more into the account or cut the amount of abatement to be done short. This is all part of our purchase agreement (with SHDC), that we do it this way and get the environmental abatement done before we change ownership. However, they (SHDC) are paying for it.”

McEwen said the council is following SHDC’s lead in the matter.

“They are going to reimburse us 100 percent,” said McEwen. “We’re basically following their (SHDC) lead as to who they want to do the work and they are paying for it.”

Also during Tuesday’s meeting, the city council voted unanimously to approve a suspension of a proposed rate increase from Oncor Electric Delivery.

“We have until Aug. 8 to suspend that rate increase or it will go into effect,” said Peggy Walker, city finance director. “This resolution will take care of that. We will hire a legal consultant, a legal representative to review

the rate to determine if it’s necessary and if it’s reasonable. If it’s not, we’ll go forward with them through negotiations with the steering committee, which we are a member of.

“The overall increase is about \$275 million. We have built into our rate case through the steering committee that all rate case related costs will be absorbed by Oncor. So all costs associated with this suspension will be reimbursed to the city,”

McEwen expressed his frustration over the proposed rate increase, claiming the majority of similar requests the city re-

ceives are over-inflated.

“It is so frustrating that we can’t have people we do business with that we trust and will give us an (honest) rate increase. They ask for this much,” said McEwen, stretching his arms out wide, “wanting this much,” he added, bringing his hands close together. “It really is frustrating.”

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

SUPPLIES

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so we don’t have to pay the taxes on them. But if they prefer to purchase the supplies and bring them to us, it’s fine as well. If they make a monetary donation, they also need to earmark it for the back-to-school supplies.”

According to Lafler, the application process and distribution of the school supplies will be handled similar to past efforts.

“The last few years we’ve

done the applications and distributions at the same time,” said Lafler. “The parents come in and fill out the paperwork, and if they are eligible, they can pick up the supplies right then. It makes it easier to keep up with our supply, and it makes it easier on them because they don’t have to make a second trip to the office.

“Last year’s demand was less than we had expected, but this year — with gasoline and everything else costing so much more — we’re expecting a much higher demand. We’ve or-

dered the backpacks and we should have them in time for the distribution, so now it’s just a matter of getting donations in and taking the applications..”

Lafler said the annual effort makes a big difference in the lives of children that might not otherwise have school supplies to start the year.

“It’s hard enough to get back into the books,” said Lafler. “When you don’t have the things you need — notebooks, paper, pencils — it just makes it that much harder.”

Applications for supplies

will be taken from 9 a.m. until noon and 1 p.m. until 3 p.m. July 21 through 25, and again from July 28 through Aug. 1, according to Lafler.

“We need people who are coming in to apply to bring a birth certificate or Medicaid card for each child,” said Lafler. “We also need to know what school the child is going to and what grade they will be in. Also bring proof of income and expenses, and a picture ID for the person applying for the program. We’ll let you know right then and there whether you qualify for

the program, and if you do, you’ll be able to take the supplies home right then.”

For more information on the program, contact the Salvation Army at 267-8239.

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

AUCTION

Continued from Page 1A

Local banks have donated U.S. Savings Bonds to the auction and Southwest Airlines has donated a pair of round-trip tickets good for anywhere in the continental United States.

Newton said there will be various hand-crafted items auctioned as well, including a five-piece wood din-

ing set donated by a local business. Local artists and welders also are donating items for the auction, she said.

Sports fans also will have plenty to choose from, Newton promised. Among the memorabilia items for auction Saturday include:

- A jersey autographed by John David Crow, Texas A&M’s only Heisman Award winner.
- A Leroy Nieman print

of Tom Landry, Roger Staubach and Bob Lilly, autographed by those Cowboys greats.

• A Houston Oilers jersey autographed by Earl Campbell.

• Various other sports items from A&M, University of Texas, Texas Tech University and other colleges.

Despite some of pricier items, Newton swears one doesn’t have to be a high

roller to participate.

“You don’t have to be a big spender to have fun,” she said. “It’s free, any donations will be accepted ... so just come out and enjoy it with us.”

For more information, contact Newton at 263-4204.

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

SUSPECT

Continued from Page 1A

9:38 p.m. Sunday, May 4. According to police reports, Garcia was pregnant at the time of her death.

Also injured in the shooting were an unidentified 3-year-old girl, 19-year-old Philp Martinez, 21-year-old Daniel Rios and 21-year-old David Rios.

Cole’s arrest is the second stemming from the murder investigation, as police took 24-year-old Lubbock resident Earnesto Trevino into custody May 15, charging him with deadly conduct — discharge of a firearm for his alleged involvement in a May 3 shooting near Cantu Hydraulics, according to police officials. No one was injured in the May 3 shooting.

Everett confirmed Cole is a member of the Latin Kings street gang and maintains the May 4 shooting — along with a slew of other shootings currently being investigated — are all connected to a drug turf dispute between a Big

Spring family and the Latin Kings.

Howard County District Attorney Hardy Wilkerson said his office will examine the evidence before deciding whether the shooting should be prosecuted as a capital murder.

“It certainly appears to have the merits necessary for capital murder, but until the details of the investigation are turned over to us its hard to say for sure,” said Wilkerson shortly after the investigation began. “Anything at this point would purely be speculation.”

Anyone with information regarding the murder investigation is encouraged to contact the Big Spring Police Department at 264-2550 or Big Spring Area Crimestoppers at 263-TIPS (8477) or 264-TIPS

(8477).

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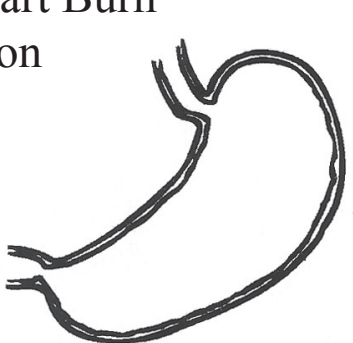
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Timothy Michael Drinkard, 36, died Friday. Funeral Services will be at 2:00 PM Wednesday at Myers & Smith Chapel with burial at Trinity Memorial Park.

Jerry Waldner, 56, died Monday. Private family services will be held at a later date.

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