

Slaton Insurance Agency
205 W. 15th
267-2398
Call For A Quote Today!

Your Hometown COLORTYME RENT-TO-OWN
• APPLIANCES
• ELECTRONICS
• FURNITURE
• COMPUTERS
Lowest Prices Guaranteed!
501 Birdwell Lane • Big Spring, Tx 79720 • 432.263.0076

The Law Offices Of
R. Shane Seaton, PLLC
Personal Injury and Vehicle Accidents,
Divorce,
Criminal Defense.
1301 S. Gregg St. • (432) 264-1800

BIG SPRING HERALD

WEDNESDAY

MARCH 24, 2010



VOLUME 105, NUMBER 92

COPYRIGHT 2009

50 CENTS DAILY/\$1.25 SUNDAY

It's time to party!

Gregg Street businesses to celebrate end of construction

By **STEVE REAGAN**
Staff Writer

The Big Spring Area Chamber of Commerce and several Gregg Street merchants are having a block party — covering a lot of blocks — Saturday.

To celebrate the completion of Gregg Street renovations, the cham-

ber and various merchants are hosting various activities, including discounts, drawings, kids' crafts, ice cream and more, Chamber Executive Director Debbye ValVerde said.

Even Elvis is making an appearance.

The year-long construction proj-

ect was tough on merchants along Gregg Street, ValVerde said.

"Some of the merchants said people found an alternate way to get to their businesses," ValVerde said. "but for some, there was definitely some hardship."

See **PARTY**, Page 3A

GET YOURS MARCH 31

Faces of the Crossroads 2010 Progress Edition
Insider:
Faith & Courage
Learning & Leisure
Health & Fitness
Business & Industry



Tax error fuels debate at council meeting

By **THOMAS JENKINS**
Staff Writer

What could have been a simple budget amendment turned into a pre-election debate Tuesday night, as incumbent Mayor Russ McEwen and challenger Tommy Duncan squared off concerning a problem with the municipality's certified taxable values for the 2009-2010 tax year.



Duncan McEwen

According to City Finance Director Peggy Walker, the miscalculation — which cost city coffers approximately \$68,400 — was made by an Abilene based tax management company which incorrectly rendered a drilling rig valued at \$6.6 million in Howard County.

"A few months ago we had a \$9 million appraisal value that came off of our certified values. This is now a second correction to those original appraised values," said Walker. "There was a company that basically indicated they had a drilling rig that should be taxable within Howard County, therefore it was appraised and included in the certified values."

"Once the tax bill went out it was determined that it (the drilling rig) was

See **CITY**, Page 3A



HERALD Photo/Thomas Jenkins

A construction worker prepares a window sill on the second floor of the historic Settles Hotel for the installation of windows Wednesday morning. According to officials with the Settles Hotel Development Company, restoration of the downtown landmark is moving along at a good pace, although recent high winds have hampered some work on the windows and painting.

Valuation mistakes haven't hurt BSISD much

By **STEVE REAGAN**
Staff Writer

A second error in the certified tax values for this fiscal year will have little effect on Big Spring Independent School District finances.

Officials recently reported that Aquilla Drilling misreported more than \$6 million of taxable property to Howard County, meaning that county taxing entities face potential revenue shortfalls.

That mistake comes on the heels of other late last year, when it was learned that a clerical error resulted in a

See **BSISD**, Page 3A

Experts: Health care suit will fail

BRENDAN FARRINGTON

Associated Press Writer

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. — The White House says it isn't worried that 13 state attorneys general are suing to overturn the massive health care overhaul, and many legal experts agree the effort is futile.

But the lawsuit, filed in federal court seven minutes after President Barack Obama signed the 10-year, \$938 billion health care bill, underscores the divisiveness of the issue and the political rancor that has surrounded it.

Florida Attorney General Bill McCollum led the effort to file the suit

"The Constitution nowhere authorizes the United States to mandate, either directly or under threat of penalty, that all citizens and legal residents have qualifying health care coverage."

that claims Congress doesn't have the constitutional right to force people to get health coverage. It also

says the federal government is violating the Constitution by forcing a mandate on the states without providing resources to pay for it.

"To that I say, 'Bring it on,'" said White House domestic policy chief Melody Barnes, who cited similar suits filed over Social Security and the Voting Rights Act when those were passed. "If you want to look in the face of a parent whose child now has health care insurance and say we're repealing that ... go right ahead."

A 14th state, Virginia, did not join the bigger lawsuit, but filed its own,

See **SUIT**, Page 3A

INDEX

Comics	3B
Classified	6-8B
Local	5-8A
Obituaries	2A
Opinion	4A
Sports	1-2B

Find us online at:
www.bigspringherald.com

To reach us:
Please call 263-7331. Office hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. If you miss your paper, please call (432) 263-7335 before 6 p.m. weekdays and 10 a.m. Sunday.

TKP the karat patch JEWELRY DESIGNS

2009 Reader's Choice Winner For Best Jewelry Store

- Original Designs
- Unique One Of A Kind Jewelry
- Friendly, Personal Consultation
- Also Available By Appointment
- Have An Idea? Let Us Create It For You
- In House Jewelry Repair

• 90 Day Layaway Available
Authorized Citizen Eco-Drive Dealer

Open Monday-Friday 9:30 am-5:30 pm thekaratpatch.com

997 E. FM 700
432-267-1480