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Trial in Sunny Isle drive-by shooting gets under way

Two men face 12 counts in daylight attack at center

WILL JONES

ST. CROIX — A parade of prosecution witnesses took the stand in District Court Wednesday to described the horror of hearing gunshots from a drive-by shooting in a busy shopping-mall parking lot last March that wounded three people and sent others scurrying for cover.

The witnesses testified in the first day of the trial of Felix "Lito" Parilla and Clint Sobratti, who have been indicted by a federal grand jury on 12 counts of local and federal charges, including attempted murder, conspiracy, being ex-convicts in possession of an unlicensed firearm and third-degree assault.

One of the witnesses was Camille Hitesman, 13, who was one of two bystanders wounded in the attack in front of Kmart in the Sunny Isle Shopping Center on March 24.

The other wounded person, Eddie Martinez, was a passenger in the car that gunmen opened fire on and apparently was one of the targets of the broad daylight shooting.

Hitesman, who was 12 at the time, testified that she and a girlfriend were walking on the sidewalk near Kmart when shots rang out from a moving car.

"I jumped, but fell to the ground in pain," she said. She said that after she was helped to her feet she realized that she had been wounded in her right side in the rib cage area, but that the bullet had only grazed her.

Emergency medical technician Alphonso John-Phillip, who was in one of the two ambulances responding to the scene, said he examined Hitesman at the scene and that the wound appeared to be an abrasion.

John-Phillip also said he treated the second wounded

SHOOTING, PAGE 2

The Great Dane

Crucians remember a fine man, friend in Victor Borge

VALERIE LOVETT

ST. CROIX — The world lost a great performer, comedian and humanitarian with the passing of Victor Borge, 91, last Saturday at his home in Greenwich, Conn.

The loss is felt here on St. Croix, too, by the friends and neighbors who knew him well during the approximately 30 years that he spent the winter months on the island.

Borge was known by the world for his whimsical approach to classical music. He would thrill audiences with such comical antics as falling off his piano bench and playing his music upside down, earning him the nickname the "Clown Prince of Denmark."

It was probably Borge's Danish background that led him to St. Croix, according to Hannah Rasmussen, long-time friend and owner of Top Hat Restaurant with her husband Bent.

"He would appear at the Island Center and put on full performances with his entire cast, at a great expense to him, for the nonprofit agencies. He was a gentleman in the true sense of the word."

Mary Smith,
president of
Southerland Travels

"He used to like to come into the restaurant to get the traditional foods," Rasmussen said, "like herring and Danish meatballs — the simple, regular food he used to have as a child."

Another friend, Mary Smith,

BORGE, PAGE 2



Ben Twingley

Victor Borge bought and completely renovated his former home, now owned by Jeffrey Prosser, at 58 Hill Street in Christiansted.



Ben Twingley

Victor Borge bought and completely renovated his former home at 58 Hill Street in Christiansted.

BORGE: Entertainer spent winters on St. Croix

FROM PAGE ONE

president of Southerland Travels, said that Borge was charming and very, very funny.

"When I would attend his performances," Smith said, "I would laugh so hard that the next morning the insides of my lungs were chaffed."

Smith said that Borge loved to draw the names of local people into his acts, and he was very generous to the community.



A signed photo of the late Victor Borge.

"He would appear at the Island Center and put on full performances with his entire cast, at a great expense to him, for the non-profit agencies," Smith said. "He was a gentleman in the true sense of the word."

Smith left St. Croix on Wednesday afternoon to attend Thursday's funeral in Greenwich.

Rasmussen spoke very highly of Borge's philanthropic endeavors as well.

"He did a lot of things for people who didn't have much," Rasmussen said. "He never talked about it because he didn't want anyone to make a big deal of it."

She said that although Borge was a joker in the public eye, in private he was a very serious, deep-thinking human being and a big humanitarian.

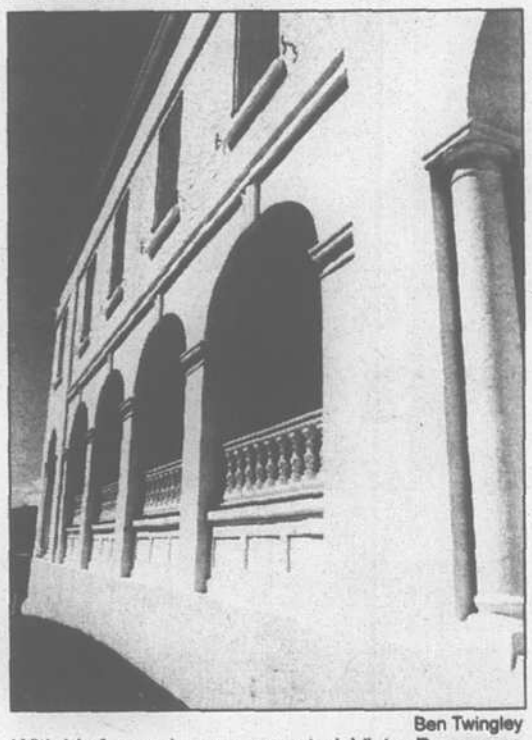
"That's why he did a lot of his good deeds without a lot of fanfare, and that may be a side to him that not a lot of people know about," Rasmussen said.

Borge bought and completely renovated his former home, now owned by businessman Jeffrey Prosser, at 58 Hill Street in Christiansted.

"The house is filled with lots of memories," Rasmussen said. "It was filled with special things, and when we went there we felt so welcome; it was very warm."

Borge is survived by his five children.

Rasmussen said that Borge's children attended Country Day School during their winters on the island, and they were a very close, loving family.



Ben Twingley

With his former house renovated, Victor Borge was able to spend Christmas there with his family.

"One of their traditions that I think we could learn from," Rasmussen said, "is that at Christmas, the children were only allowed to hand-make all their Christmas presents. They had to put a personal touch into everything they gave each other."

She said that Sanna, his wife, was a gentle, wonderful person, and although she was always a little in the background, she was always there for Borge.

Sanna Borge passed away only a few months ago, according to Rasmussen.

"They were so close, maybe he just decided they had to be together again," she said.

"He was a nice man," Bent Rasmussen said. "We're going to miss him a lot."

He said that Borge's manager and daughter called them with the disheartening news before it went to the press.

"He was amazing," Bent Rasmussen said. "He was a great Dane."

Santa Claus decoration may be cause of St. Croix house fire

STEVE S. BULLOCK

ST. CROIX — Police and Fire Department officials are investigating a structural fire on Wednesday that damaged a home in Estate La Grande Princesse.

Deputy St. Croix Fire Chief Roosvelt Parsons said two units from the Peter's Rest Fire Station with a complement of eight firefighters responded to the midday fire and completely extinguished it within a few minutes.

Parsons credited a Vitelco linesman, who was working in the area, for initially bringing the fire under control and calling for help.

Parsons said the linesman, identified as Angel Parilla, after noticing a pale of smoke coming from inside the residence, broke a couple of louvers in a window to turn off the circuit breaker.

"Parilla certainly saved the homeowner from a lot of damage by turning off the electricity," Parsons said.

"This guy is truly a hero for saving the home from total destruction," said a neighbor who asked not to be identified. "He gave the owner the best New Year's gift he could have wanted."

Parsons said the homeowner — Jay M. Buadick — apparently left a lighted Santa Claus on the living room table which appeared to have overheated, causing the fire.

Parilla broke through the door of the burning house to see whether anyone was trapped inside. He then used a garden hose to douse the flames and bring it under control before firefighters arrived on the scene.

Parsons said the home had a lot of soot and some water damage in addition to the burned electrical cables and accessories. He again is advising residents having Christmas lights or lighted Christmas trees and ornaments to turn them off when leaving their homes.

SHOOTING: Defendents ex-felons

FROM PAGE ONE

bystander, a Lithuanian sailor who was visiting the island.

He said the sailor suffered a gunshot wound in the stomach, which he bandaged at the scene before the man was taken to nearby Juan Luis Hospital for treatment.

Assistant U.S. Attorney David Nissman, who is prosecuting the case along with Assistant U.S. Attorney St. Clair Theodore, told the jury in his opening statement that the sailor was aboard a Lithuanian navy ship that was in port on St. Croix at the time of the shooting.

He said the sailor would not be available to testify at the trial because the United States does not have subpoena power to force him to return here.

Edward Montanez told the jury that he was at the mall visiting his girlfriend who sold VI lottery tickets outside Kmart.

Montanez said when the shooting started he pushed his girlfriend to the ground and kept her there until the gunshots stopped. He said he heard at least five gunshots.

Nissman said in his opening statement that the gunmen were shooting at a green pickup truck containing Martinez as passenger and Wilfredo Perez as the driver.

Nissman said that as the pickup truck passed a gray Jeep Cherokee — with Sobratti as the driver and Parilla as a passenger — when Parilla leaned out and fired at least 10 shots at the pickup.

The Jeep then sped westward out of the parking lot over several speed bumps and turned right on the road that goes by the hospital.

Nissman did not give a motive for the shooting, but police have said that Martinez was the target of the attack.

They said he was shot in retaliation for the shooting of Angel "Nene" Felix, who was killed on Dec. 11, 1999 at an illegal dog fight in the La Reine area.

Martinez also was shot and wounded during a drive-by shooting at the John F. Kennedy housing community on the day of Felix's funeral — seven days after he was killed.

Defense attorneys Edward Jacobs, representing Sobratti, and Martial Webster and Jomo Meade, representing Parilla, said prosecutors didn't have sufficient evidence to prove that their clients were the occupants of the Jeep and the ones responsible for the shooting.

"We intend to show you that it is not certain that Client Sobratti was the driver of the Jeep," Jacobs told the jury in his opening statement. "The real question is who was the driver?"

Webster said it was a "who-done-it" case, adding that he will present witnesses who will testify that Parilla was elsewhere during the shooting.

"My client was not involved in the shooting," Webster said. "They have charged the wrong man."

The attorneys conceded out of the presence of the jury that Sobratti and Parilla have prior criminal records, which means that if they are found guilty of the current charges, they also would be guilty of being ex-felons in possession of a firearm. Each has been convicted of prior gun charges.

A jury of nine men and 6 women, including three alternates, were selected earlier in the day to decide the case.

The trial continues at 9:15 a.m. today with District Judge Thomas Moore of St. Thomas presiding.

Will there be another tourism commissioner?

Search for new commish still far off, but position may be eliminated with new tourism authority

DAN KUEMMEL

ST. THOMAS — If a section of the Omnibus Act of 2001 creating a tourism authority is signed into law by the governor, the powerful and troubled position of Tourism Commissioner could become extinct before a new commissioner is found.

Rena McBrowne, Press Secretary for Governor Turnbull, said Wednesday that the governor is continuing to eye prospective candidates for the job. McBrowne said while the governor still "has his feelers out" for a new candidate for the position, she was unsure where the search was at or who were potential candidates for the position.

If Turnbull finds a candidate that is approved by the Legislature, the job itself could change from overseeing the operation of the Tourism Department to directing the change-over to a new tourism authority — providing the governor signs into law that section of the Omnibus Bill.

In the Omnibus Bill, the tourism department is replaced with a tourism authority comprising a nine-member board that will oversee all government operations relating to tourism. The tourism authority would create regulations, but operate as a private corporation and pay no taxes.

The nine-member board would consist of the President of the West Indian Company, the Executive Director of the VI Port Authority, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget and representatives from the Chamber of Commerce, Taxi Association, Hotel Association in both districts of St. Thomas-St. John and St. Croix. The board would choose an executive director who would attend all meetings of the authority — but would have no voting power.

In the legislation, the position of Tourism Commissioner would be replaced by the Chairperson of the Tourism Authority and be voted in by the majority of members on the tourism authority board.

If the position is eliminated and the authority created, it would be the end of a job that has been notoriously hard to fill, and would leave an opening on the Industrial Development Commission executive board, and the VI Port Authority Board — both of which the Tourism Commissioner serves on.

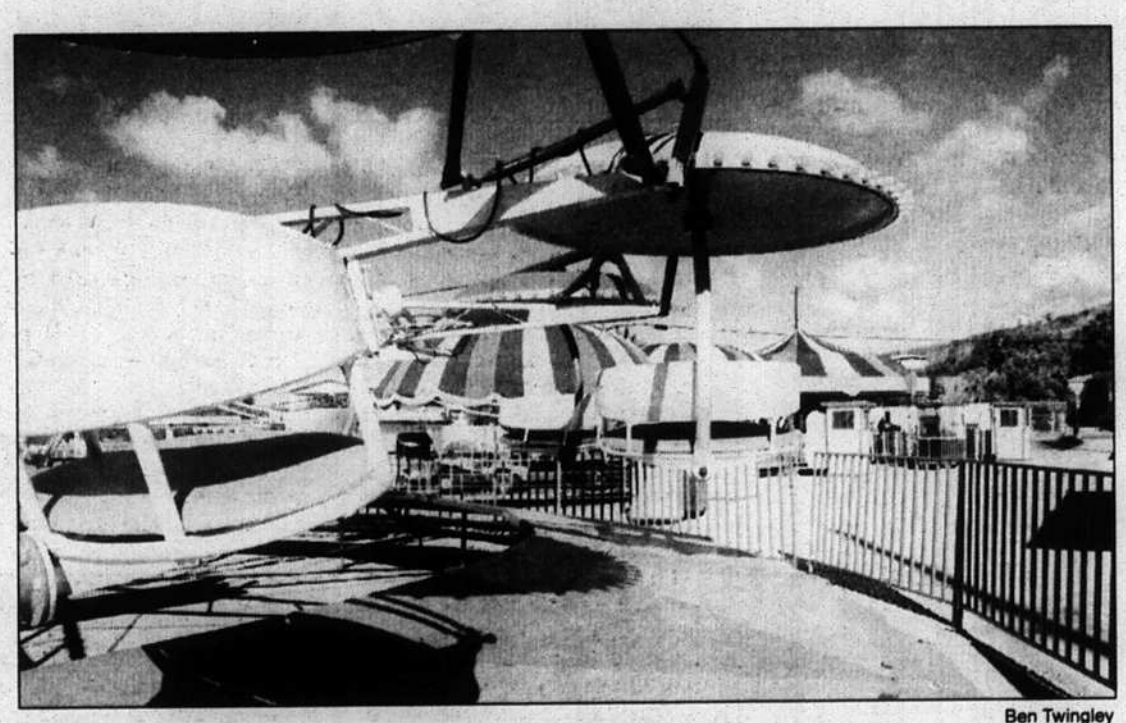
Whether the position of tourism commissioner will become extinct should be known by the end of the year. By law, the governor has 10 days to act on the Omnibus bill from time it is sent to him by the 23rd legislature.

Turnbull's first nominee to fill the position of tourism commissioner, Clement Magras, was voted down by the 23rd legislature after allegations that he sexually assaulted one of his assistants. He was serving as acting tourism commissioner while his appointment was being considered by the Senate.

Turnbull later asked his second nominee, Michael Bornn, to withdraw his name because of comments he made about his administration. He also served as acting commissioner until being asked to step down.

Turnbull's third nominee, Rafael Jackson, served as acting tourism commissioner for 12 weeks before being confirmed in June. He handed Turnbull his resignation in October, and the position has been vacant for the last three months.

The vacancy has left Assistant Tourism Commissioner Monique Sibilly-Hodge in a familiar position she has in served between the search for nominees to fill the position: Acting Tourism Commissioner. Hodge has repeatedly turned down offers to serve as tourism commissioner and did not immediately return calls seeking comment about the new authority.



Ben Twingley

Lawrence's Heritage Village in Canagata Ball Park offers St. Croix plenty of rides, food and music during the 12-day holiday celebration. The village opened Tuesday and will go through Jan. 7.

Entertainment abounds in Festival Village

ST. CROIX — The Festival Committee has lined up hours of entertainment in the Festival Village, which opened Tuesday night at D.C. Canegata Ball Park.

Tonight is Quelbe Night with Velma Cruz from 7 to 9 p.m., Blinky and the Roadmasters from 9 to 11 p.m., then Native Rhythms and D.J. Myron from 11 p.m. to 3 a.m.

Festival Village entertainment will continue as follows:

- **Friday, Dec. 29** — Cultural Mix stepping show with Vio International, 9 p.m. to midnight; China Dan and D.J. Junie, midnight to 3 a.m.
- **Saturday, Dec. 30** — Latin Night and a salsa contest with Mo Tempo, 9 p.m. to midnight; Liquid Sounds and D.J. Brache, midnight to 3 a.m.
- **Sunday, Dec. 31** — Old Year's Night with Generation Band and D.J. Hammer, 9 p.m. to 1 a.m.
- **Monday, Jan. 1** — New Year's Cultural Night with Stanley and the Ten Sleepless Knights, 8 to 11 p.m.; Native Rhythms, St. Croix Heritage Dancers, Community Quadrille and D.J. Sax, 11 p.m. to 3 a.m.
- **Tuesday, Jan. 2** — Caribbean Night with master of ceremonies Alvin G. and entertainers China Dan, St. Lucia Creole Dancers, Dominica Dancers and D.J. Karl (times to be announced).
- **Wednesday, Jan. 3** — Digital Band, 8 p.m. to midnight; Imaginations Brass, midnight to 3 a.m.; D.J. Junie, intermittently from 8 p.m. to 4 a.m.
- **Thursday, Jan. 4** — King and Queen of the Bands competition with Xpress Band, 8 p.m. to midnight; Image Band and D.J. Johnny, midnight to 3 a.m.
- **Friday, Jan. 5** — Imaginations Brass, 8 p.m. to midnight; Liquid Sounds, Trovadores and D.J. Brache, midnight to 3 a.m.
- **Saturday, Jan. 6** — Native Rhythms, 1 to 5 p.m.; Jam Band, 8 p.m. to midnight; Imaginations Brass, midnight to 3 a.m.
- **Sunday, Jan. 7** — Last Lap with Xpress Band, 8 to 11 p.m.; Vio International and D.J. Hammer, 11 p.m. to 2 a.m.

Suspected drug dealers to be released on bail

WILL JONES

ST. CROIX — A federal judge will decide today the terms and conditions for three men who were arrested on drug charges to be released from jail pending their trial, despite objections from a prosecutor.

U.S. Magistrate Judge Jeffrey Resnick said he will issue an order to free Ramon Antonio Mateo Jr., 27, and brothers Samuel Mercado, 26, and Jose Luis Mercado, 25.

The three men are charged with conspiracy to distribute a controlled substance after officers of the U.S. Drug Administration's High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area Task Force raided a Estate Profit home last Thursday and confiscated large quantity of drugs.

HIDTA agents said they seized 1,600 grams of crack cocaine, 168.8 grams of cocaine powder, 9.8 grams of heroin and 80.1 grams of marijuana.

HIDTA agent Christopher Howell testified Wednesday that Mateo and Jose Luis Mercado attempted to discard bags of drugs when officers, armed with a search warrant, rushed into the home.

Howell said there was a small amount of marijuana, which indicated that it was for personal use rather than to distribute. But he said that the trio apparently intended to distribute the large quantity of other drugs.

He said the house appears to be a "crack-cocaine manufacturing facility" because it contained various ingredients for processing raw cocaine, including baking soda and a microwave oven to heat the substances.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Denise Hinds argued against the men being released.

She said they had an extensive drug operation in the community and were a dangerous to the area.

"They had a drug supermarket," Hinds said.

She also said they were a flight risk because they face up to 29 years in prison if convicted on all counts.

But Resnick said the men were eligible for bail and that he would issue order at 9:30 a.m. setting the conditions for their release, including the amount of bail.

Relatives and friends of each defendant, called by defense attorneys, testify that they either would post bail or serve as third-party custodian for the men.

Federal Public Defender McKelvin Thurston represents Samuel Mercado; attorney Patricia Welcome is defending Jose Luis Mercado; and Eric Chancellor is Mateo's attorney.

Traffic report

ST. CROIX — Eight auto crashes were reported to police from 4 p.m. Tuesday to 4 p.m. Wednesday.

There were six reports of vehicle tampering and one report of a stolen vehicle.

Police received a report of an overturned vehicle in the vicinity of Carambola and Cane Bay shortly after 9:30 p.m. on Tuesday.

Police said the vehicle slipped off the road and came to rest on a cliff.

Four reports of vehicle tampering occurred in the vicinity of the Festival Village in Christiansted.

Police said three persons received minor injuries due to auto accidents.

Miss STX thanks public; welcomes everyone to Christmas festivities

ANGELA BORCHERT

ST. CROIX — An abundance of community support helped 20-year-old Essi Anya Gaston land the 2000-2001 title of Miss St. Croix.

The aspiring star said she could not have done it alone.

Among her many supporters were were Trevor Julien; Elizabeth Thurland; Anthony and Simone Gaston; Emmrie Edwards; Shakima Ortiz; Kenneth Donowa; Shernelle Julien; Irving Julien; Richard Ortiz; Tonia and Jamie Gaston; Christina Clendenin; Claire Roker; Dennise Collins; Lisa Acosta; Angela and Felicita Martinez; Trinity Sounds; Private Collections; Vonnet Newborn of Ultima Galleria; and Jamal Drummond.

"They aided me in preparation for the pageant as well as contributed, whether it was props for the pageant or helping backstage," the pageant queen said. "They helped me physically, emotionally and spiritually."

Gaston also thanked all those who contributed financially to her pursuit of the crown, including ABS Printing; Ben Goas Air Conditioning; Carino Water Supply; Eagle's Fashions; Marvin Pickering; Essentric Shoes; attorney Joel Holt; attorney Stacey White; St. Croix Gas Company; Rena Brodhurst; Scotia Bank in Sunny Isle; Purple Papaya; Ann Marie Joseph; Marianne Stores; A-Plus Signs; Colorama; and staff of the Virgin Islands Lottery.

The Miss St. Croix/Prince and Princess Pageant was held Dec. 17 at the St. Croix Educational Complex.

After winning the crown, Gaston participated in ribbon-cutting ceremonies for the Festival Food Fair on Friday, and opening of the Festival Village on Tuesday. She attended the Junior Calypsonian Competition in the Festival Village Wednesday night, and plans to be in the village Thursday for Quelbe Night, and Saturday for Latin Night and the giant salsa competition.

As presiding queen, Miss St. Croix will also play a prominent role in the Children's Parade on Jan. 5 and the Three Kings Day Parade on Jan. 6, both in downtown Christiansted.

"I have also been a guest at the Miss Elena Christian Pageant, and I also was a guest on the YIMI (Young Intelligent Minds and Ideas) talk show on WSTX," Gaston said. "With that talk show, we went Christmas day to sing for the children at the hospital."

And she is getting a warm welcome from the community.

"Everyone greets me with open arms," Gaston said. "Nothing negative at all. I'm getting good responses from the children as well as the teens and the adults.

"As Miss St. Croix, i represent the entire island from my youthful perspective, and I feel I convey dedication, education as well as talent."

Gaston said her greatest aspiration is to open a Caribbean Institute of the Performing Arts. She also plans to become a professional dancer and choreographer, and to one day work for WBLS Radio in New York City.

WBLS is owned by Hal Jackson, and Gaston in 1998 was first runner-up in Hal Jackson's Talented Teen contest.

"I'd like to be a talk show host or producer," she said. "Mass communications is what I enjoy doing, whether it's radio or television."

Currently in her third year at the University of the Virgin Islands, Gaston said she plans to transfer in the fall to Fordham University in New York and earn a degree in mass communications.



Essi Anya Gaston, Miss St. Croix 2000-2001

Harbour Night sponsors support nonprofits raising funds on grounds

ST. CROIX — Harbour Night sponsors are making booth spaces available for nonprofit and community organizations for the purpose of fund-raising during the biweekly block parties in Frederiksted that cater to cruise-ship visitors and also attract crowds of locals.

Dalton Associates, the public-relations firm that produces Harbour Night, said to date it has provided fund-raiser booth space for the Women's Coalition of St. Croix; the Karamu Afi Dance and Drum Troupe; the St. Croix Deaf Coalition; and the St. Croix Animal Shelter.

Booth space will be available on a first-come, first-serve basis throughout the 2000-2001 cruise ship season to community groups and nonprofits. Call 772-4000 or 772-1624.

STT public library still without librarian

Official says three would be ideal for Enid M. Baa building

TIM HAY

USVI — Although libraries on both St. Croix and St. John have librarians on staff, the Enid M. Baa Public Library on St. Thomas has been without one since 1997, Simon Caines, coordinator for libraries, said.

The territory's libraries are operated by a division of the Department of Planning and Natural Resources.

Caines said the libraries are staffed with hard-working people. However, he said, there are simply not enough of them.

"They have been doing an excellent job, " Caines said of the two library technicians who run the St. Thomas library, "but we do have a staffing problem."

Ideally, Caines said, a library the size of Enid M. Baa would have three librarians — one for the reference section, one for special collections and one for childrens' books. Claudette Lewis, the DPNR's assistant commissioner, said Caines was interviewing candidates for the St. Thomas post.

"The kind of money we're offering is not attractive enough," she said. Lewis added that starting yearly pay for a professional librarian was about $23,000 in the territory.

"Each year millions of people are inspired, informed, enlightened and entertained as they visit libraries in their local communities, in their travels or online."

Simon Caines, coordinator for libraries

Librarians and library technicians are unionized workers. They have had some of the same difficulties getting pay increases that other public-sector employees have experienced.

Librarians hold a Master's Degree in library science. One of their main functions is to develop and maintain a library's collection. They also keep government records and historic documents, as well as promote literacy and assist with research.

In his fiscal 2000 report on the condition of the territory's libraries, Caines explained how they function as a resource in the community. "Each year," he reported, "millions of people are inspired, informed, enlightened and entertained as they visit libraries in their local communities, in their travels or online.

"Each year, millions more benefit as business professionals, health professionals, historians and scientists use libraries to research and solve the problems facing the world."

Wallace Williams, head librarian at Florence Williams Public Library in Christiansted, said services become very limited when there are not enough librarians on staff.

He said the libraries sometimes lose employees to the Department of Education because that department has a more favorable salary structure and takes the summer off.

Caines' report said that, in the mainland U.S., most libraries receive an average of about 12 percent of their funding from state governments and about 78 percent from "local sources."

"In the Virgin Islands," he reported, "there is no distinction between state and local sources; therefore, the territorial government is expected to provide 90 percent of the total operating budget ..."

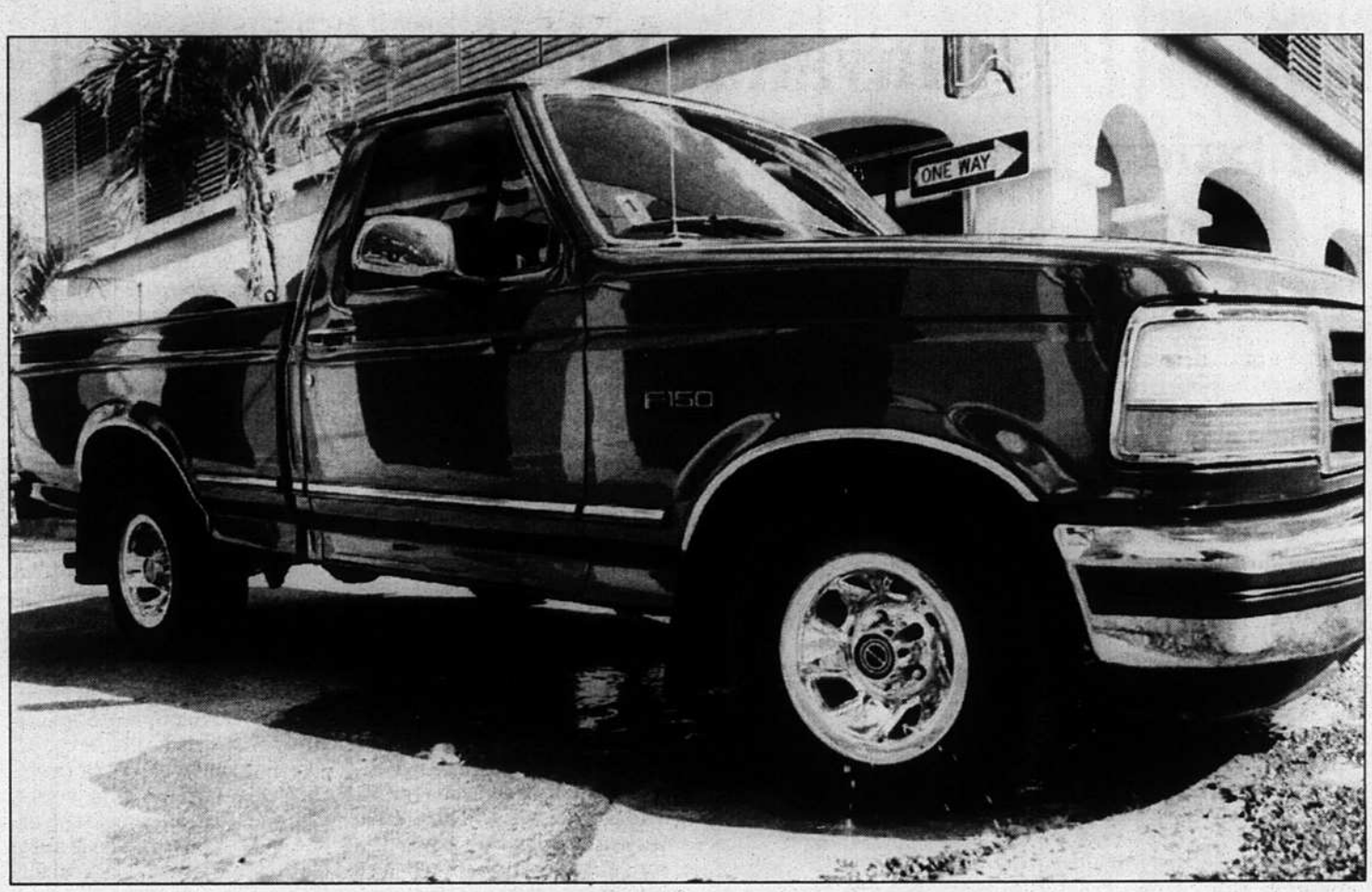
He said that libraries in the states are supported in part by federal and state taxes, while they are not so financed here.

Caines and Wallace both said that library buildings here have structural problems, mostly caused by hurricane damage.

Thanks to a $1 million appropriation from the Legislature through the Youth Education and Empowerment Fund, the buildings are being fixed, they said.

Much of the appropriation is also going toward acquiring more books for libraries on all three islands.





Ben Twingley

Deeper and deeper

A truck splashes muddy water from a gaping pothole at Strand and Kings Cross Street in Christiansted Wednesday. The pothole has grown larger in the past two months slowing busy traffic down and making it hard to park in the already overcrowded Government Parking Lot.

Briefs

Martin Luther King Day coming up

ST. CROIX — Seven years ago, the United States Congress designated the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. holiday as a day of service.

On Jan. 15, 2001, several St. Croix residents plan to remember King by helping to refurbish five houses in Estates Whim, Humbug, Ginger Thomas and Calquohoun that received considerable damage in previous hurricanes.

The day of service is sponsored locally by Lutheran Social Services, the Boys and Girls Club of the Virgin Islands, St. Croix Foundation for Community Development, the Kingshill school and Flamboyant Gardens.

About 40 volunteers are signed up, and more are needed to help with roof repairs and painting.

Call 778-8990 to get involved or visit www.mlkday.org on the Net.

Adult calypsonians aim for the crown

ST. CROIX — The Calypso Monarch Finals are set to begin at 8 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 3, at Island Center for the Performing Arts.

Vying for the 2001 title are Morris Benjamin; Wellington Pelle; Lariel Gerard; Elvis Liburd; Lewellyn Westerman; Lloyd Rennie; Chester Brady; Samuel Ferdinand; Campbelle Barnes; and Allan Clarke. They will compete against the 2000 Calypso monarch Lestroy James, a.k.a. King Happy.

Sunny Isle wins Safe Facility award

ST. CROIX — The staff, management and owners of Sunny Isle Housing recently won the Safe Facility Award for Excellence for the year 2000 from the national Senior Crimestoppers program.

Senior Crimestoppers is a crime-prevention program involving more than 4,500 senior-citizen housing venues throughout the United States. The organization's purpose is to foster an attitude of "zero tolerance" toward all facets of crime.

Patricia Frorup, Sunny Isle Housing administrator, accepted the Senior Crimestoppers "Seal of Excellence" ribbon, which will be displayed on the community's membership charter.



Submitted photo

Loving kids

About 250 children attended the 14th annual Luvkids Television and Radio Productions' Christmas Eve party, held Sunday in Estate Calquohoun on the grounds of Front Line night club.

Luvkids co-founders Charles Nibbs, left as Santa, and his wife Anita Nibbs said they enjoyed performances by Camille "King Derby" Macedon and several young calypsonians, as well as the Baga Steelpan Band; the Children's Safety Patrol of the John F. Kennedy housing community; Santa's elves from the D. Hamilton Jackson Terrace and Ralph deChabert housing communities; and Alli Paul's Mocko Jumbies.

Charles Nibbs said the party was videotaped and replayed from 5 to 6 p.m. Monday, Christmas Day, on Channel 27 TV.

— Police blotter —

ST. CROIX

Arrests:

10:54 a.m., Tue., Elvis Albert "Shaggy" George, 26, of 461 Frangipani, was charged with aggravated assault and battery after allegedly striking his girlfriend, causing injury to her face. Bail was set at $1,000.

8:23 p.m., Tue., Jenine "Mersadise" Audain, of 54 Tam Tam Terrace was charged with mayhem after allegedly cutting a victim in the face with a knife. Bail was set at $10,000.

Assaults:

7:18 p.m., Tue., deChabert housing community.

9:10 p.m., Tue., an assault and battery at JFK housing community was reported at the Marshall Command.

8:49 a.m., Wed., an assault by a mental patient was reported at Gov. Juan F. Luis Hospital.

11:13 a.m., Wed., Estate Profit.

Burglaries:

8:12 p.m., Tue., Adventure Hill.

4:08 a.m., Wed., Paradise Mills.

5:35 a.m., Wed., Harvey housing community.

Grand larcenies:

10:00 a.m., Wed., Strand Street, Fredericksted.

12:45 p.m., Wed., Sunny Isle Shopping Center.

Other:

9:10 a.m., Wed., a hit-and-run was reported in the parking lot of Sunny Isle Shopping Center.

ST. THOMAS

Arrest:

12:30 p.m., Wed., Roger Francis, 18, of Leifte Gade, was charged with grand larceny after allegedly towing away a person's vehicle without permnission and stripping it down to its shell. Bail was set at $35,000.

Larceny:

9:12 a.m., Wed., 99 Steps, Charlotte Amalie.

Other:

9:45 a.m., Wed., DOA reported in Estate Thomas.

–Senate calendar–

USVI — Virgin Islands senators took a break Monday for Christmas Day and Tuesday for Boxing Day, which is also known throughout the territory as Christmas Second Day.

The Senate reserved Wednesday through Friday for constituent meetings and office work.

– For the record –

Planning and Natural Resources Commissioner Dean Plaskett has said that there were no serious violations of environmental laws that would have warranted him to issue a cease-and-desist order to stop work on the Henry E. Rohlsen Airport runway. A story in Wednesday's edition about the legal hassle over the project mistakenly reported otherwise.

Navy puts Vieques road project on hold after nonviolent confrontation

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (AP) —After a tense confrontation with protesters, the U.S. Navy is rethinking its plans to build an access road to accommodate police on security duty at its controversial Vieques bombing range.

Puerto Rico police officers from the main island who are stationed on the island of Vieques to guard the range had requested the new road, Navy spokesman Ruth Calderon said Wednesday. It would be a much shorter route from their housing quarters to the base, she said.

On Dec. 20, a group of anti-Navy protesters went out to stop the project, with up to 10 people blocking the machinery's path, Calderon said. There were no injuries or arrests.

"The Navy decided to stop what we were doing to avoid any confrontation," Calderon said. "Right now we're evaluating what we're going to do."

The group, the Committee for the Rescue and Development of Vieques, said in a written statement Tuesday its members blocked the Navy project because they objected to the military project on civilian land.

The group planted palm trees in the path of the project, and the local Catholic parish priest blessed the trees on Monday.

"In order to build their road they will have to destroy the palms that were blessed by our parish priest on Christmas Day," protester Emilio Garcia said in a written statement.

The protesters also accused the Navy of not having the proper permits, but Calderon said all permits were in place.

Decades of resentment over the bombing on the island of 9,400 residents intensified after two off-target bombs killed a civilian guard on the range in April 1999. A year later, federal marshals cleared the range of 200 protesters, many of whom had camped on Navy land for a year to stop further exercises.

The Navy has resumed training on Vieques, which it considers invaluable, but has stopped using live bombs. Opponents say the exercises present a health risk and prevent economic development of the island, which the Navy denies.

Vieques residents will vote next November whether the Navy must leave by May 2003 or whether it can stay, resuming the use of live ammunition.

Havana: President Clinton would be welcome in Cuba

HAVANA (AP) — Should President Clinton decide to visit Cuba before he leaves office next month, he would be greeted here like any other U.S. citizen, a senior Cuban official said Wednesday.

A group of Americans opposed to the U.S. government's current hard line against the communist island this week asked Clinton to visit Cuba before he leaves power in an attempt to improve relations between the countries before President-elect Bush takes office.

But Ricardo Alarcon, president of Cuba's National Assembly, or parliament, told a news conference that "we have received no indication that (Clinton) is interested in traveling" to the island. Alarcon is President Fidel Castro's point man on Cuba-U.S. relations.

But should he come, Clinton, and his wife, Senator-elect Hillary Rodham Clinton, D-N.Y., would be welcomed and could count on meeting with parliament members, said Alarcon.

Although Alarcon said he did not expect any immediate changes in Cuba-US policies during the Bush administration, he did say that he was "profoundly optimistic over the long term."

"I don't have the least doubt that it is a policy condemned to fail," Alarcon said, referring to the nearly 40-year-old American trade embargo against the island nation. He noted that there had been an increased amount of U.S. legislation in recent years aimed at easing the sanctions.

Proponents of the embargo hope the sanctions will remain under Bush, who has announced that he has chosen Cuban-American Mel Martinez to serve as housing secretary. Martinez will be the first American of Cuban origin to serve on the Cabinet.

Havana has criticized Martinez, referring to him as a "worm" — a term the communist government commonly uses for exiles.

Those who wrote the letter to Clinton said they, too, believed that the Bush administration would continue the hard line toward Cuba.

The letter was signed by 106 people, including Wayne Smith, former chief U.S. diplomat to Havana during the Reagan and Carter administrations; John Coatsworth, of the Rockefeller Center for Latin Studies at Harvard University; Septime Webre, of the National Ballet of Washington, which performed in Cuba earlier this year; Charles Currie, president of the Association of Jesuit Colleges; and Randall Robinson, of the Trans-African Forum.

DR legislators approve tax increases

SANTO DOMINGO, Dominican Republic (AP) — The lower house of parliament gave the final approval to President Hipolito Mejia's tax package, which includes a 50 percent increase of the value-added tax, a new tax on gross business receipts and higher taxes on luxury goods.

The Chamber of Deputies approved the measure Tuesday night. The Senate had approved it Dec. 11. Mejia has not said when he will sign it.

The changes are meant to pay off debts and prepare the Caribbean nation of 8 million people for more open global markets, Mejia has said.

"I am certain that the postponement of these reforms for one more day puts the economic stability of the country at risk," Mejia said in November.

The measure creates a 1.5 percent tax on gross business receipts and raises taxes on luxury items, electronics, liquor and cigarettes.

The value-added tax will increase to 12 percent, from 8 percent. It also will be extended to health-service companies, publicity agencies and media firms. Certain medicines, medical supplies and basic foodstuffs are exempt from the value-added tax.

However, Mejia has promised the opposition Christian Social Reformist Party that he will send the lower legislative house a bill to lower the rate to 6 percent for the publicity sector, according to a document he signed with the party's leader.

Mejia also promised to eliminate a clause banning the importation of cars more than five years old.

The opposition Dominican Liberation Party of former President Leonel Fernandez has warned that it believes the new taxes would harm consumers and could boost inflation by double digits, which has not happened in more than five years.

Among the higher taxes are a 25 percent tax on beer, 35 percent on rum and wine and 45 percent on whiskey and other liquors. The cigarette tax will be 50 percent.

Electronic appliances such as microwaves, stoves, and air conditioners will have a tax ranging from 15 percent to 45 percent. Guns will have a 60 percent tax.

Briefs

American tourist dies in Jamaican hotel

KINGSTON, Jamaica (AP) — An American tourist died of undetermined causes in a hotel room in the west coast resort town of Negril, police said Wednesday.

Kenneth Ranham, a 52-year-old farmer from Kentucky, arrived in Jamaica on Monday, checked into the Point Village hotel and went to bed around 9:30 p.m., his common-law wife told police.

Several hours later, Ranham's wife said she tried to wake him and he did not respond. A doctor called to the room pronounced the man dead. Police are awaiting the results of an autopsy.

Police did not know Ranham's hometown.

Former head of DR armed forces killed

SANTO DOMINGO, Dominican Republic (AP) — An armed burglar shot and killed former Secretary of the Armed Forces Juan Rene Beauchamps Javier in his vacation home Wednesday.

The attacker also raped a woman in the house after shooting Beauchamps Javier, 70, before dawn Wednesday, police said. The woman gave police a description of the attacker, and several people have been detained for questioning.

The assailant took several guns that Beauchamps Javier had in the house in Nagua, 110 miles northeast of Santo Domingo, but police have not determined if there appeared to be any other motive for the slaying. Police have not given further information.

Beauchamps Javier was secretary of the armed forces from 1975 to 1978 under former President Joaquin Balaguer and had served as a top military officer since 1966.

ATTENTION ALL AVIS ADVERTISERS

The Avis will be closed Monday, January 1, 2001 in observance of the New Year's Day holiday. The deadline to schedule Display ads and Classified Display ads to appear in the Wednesday, January 3 edition is Saturday, December 30 by 12:00 p.m. Camera ready ads for the Wednesday edition may be delivered on Tuesday, January 2 by 12:00 p.m. if they are scheduled by Saturday, December 30 by 12:00 p.m. There will be no Tuesday, January 2 Avis.

The Staff of The Avis appreciates your cooperation.

ONLY IN America

Herb-laced food lays firefighters high

ELKHART, Ind. (AP) — Just because there's no smoke doesn't mean there isn't trouble at the firehouse.

Someone delivered marijuana-laced baked goods this weekend to the Elkhart Fire Department's central station, intoxicating 11 firefighters.

"The firefighters are extremely upset that someone would even do this to them," said Fire Chief Jerry Vaughn. "It just blows my mind. I guess that's why firefighters and policemen have a job. You really can't understand criminal minds."

Two of the firefighters got so sick after eating the drugged desserts they had to be treated at a hospital. With almost half of its firefighters incapacitated, the department scrambled to call in firefighters on holiday vacation to work overtime.

Meantime, detectives are developing a composite photo of the person who dropped off the drug-laced food.

The firefighters were tested for multiple contaminants. The one identified was marijuana.

Vaughn said the firefighters returned to work Tuesday and were retested to see whether the marijuana was gone. Indeed, it was.

He said because the drug was ingested, rather than smoked, it went through their systems faster.

Garbage experts score the gold

SALT LAKE CITY (AP) — In the trash collecting event, who gets the gold medal?

Browning-Ferris Industries Inc., which handled waste disposal for Atlanta's 1996 Olympics, won a contract to haul trash from Salt Lake's Olympic Village during Utah's 2002 Winter Games. They feel like champs.

"We do Super Bowls and NASCAR races, so it's nothing we can't handle," said Chad Hardy, BFI general manager for Utah and Wyoming.

In a sweeping, tourist-driven event like the Olympics, garbage collection goes almost unnoticed, and that's fine with BFI.

"If you never hear about the trash and you never see it, then we've done our job," Hardy said.

And, keeping the miniature Olympic city spic-and-span will be complicated by tight security.

"It's basically a reverse prison," Hardy said. "In prison they're trying to keep everybody in. In the village they're trying to keep everybody out."

Houston-based BFI is a subsidiary of Allied Waste, the second-largest waste disposal operation in the world.

Rose Parade promised enough juice

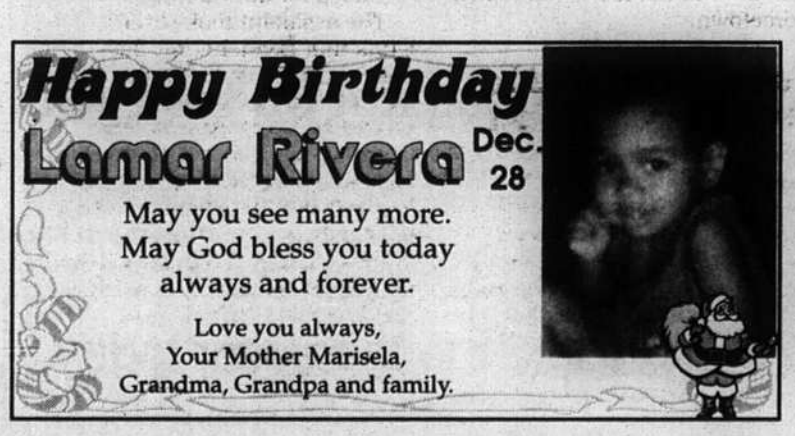
PASADENA, Calif. (AP) — Petal-covered parade floats — and not power outages — will roll through the city on New Year's Day.

Despite a statewide energy crisis, the 112th Tournament of Roses parade has been spared by Pasadena officials, who promised Tuesday to keep sufficient electricity on hand to carry out the annual tradition.

Pasadena Water and Power — a city-owned utility company — said it will plump staffs to ensure the parade, the game and 57,000 customers remain supplied.

"Our business on a 24-hour basis is keeping the lights on, so Jan. 1 is not much different," said George Wilson, director of the department's power delivery services. "But on New Year's Day the whole world is looking at Pasadena, so we do all we can to make sure everyone gets to see it shine."

The Pasadena power department began planning in November for the parade's extra power needs, including the supply of electricity for television broadcasting equipment. About 350 million people worldwide are expected to watch the event.



VA hospitals get high marks in heart cases

Veterans hospitals don't deserve their reputation as inferior, at least when it comes to treating heart attack victims, a study found.

Researchers at the Houston Veterans Affairs Medical Center found that although the VA patients were sicker than Medicare patients taken to private hospitals, the same percentages in each group, 68 percent, were still alive a year after a heart attack. At one month afterward, 82 percent of the patients in each of the two groups were still alive.

"It is pleasantly surprising," said Dr. Rohit R. Arora, chief of cardiology at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey in Newark. "The VA patient population will be less afraid to go to the VA for care."

Dr. Laura A. Petersen, who led the study, she said more research is needed on how well VA hospitals do in providing other types of care.

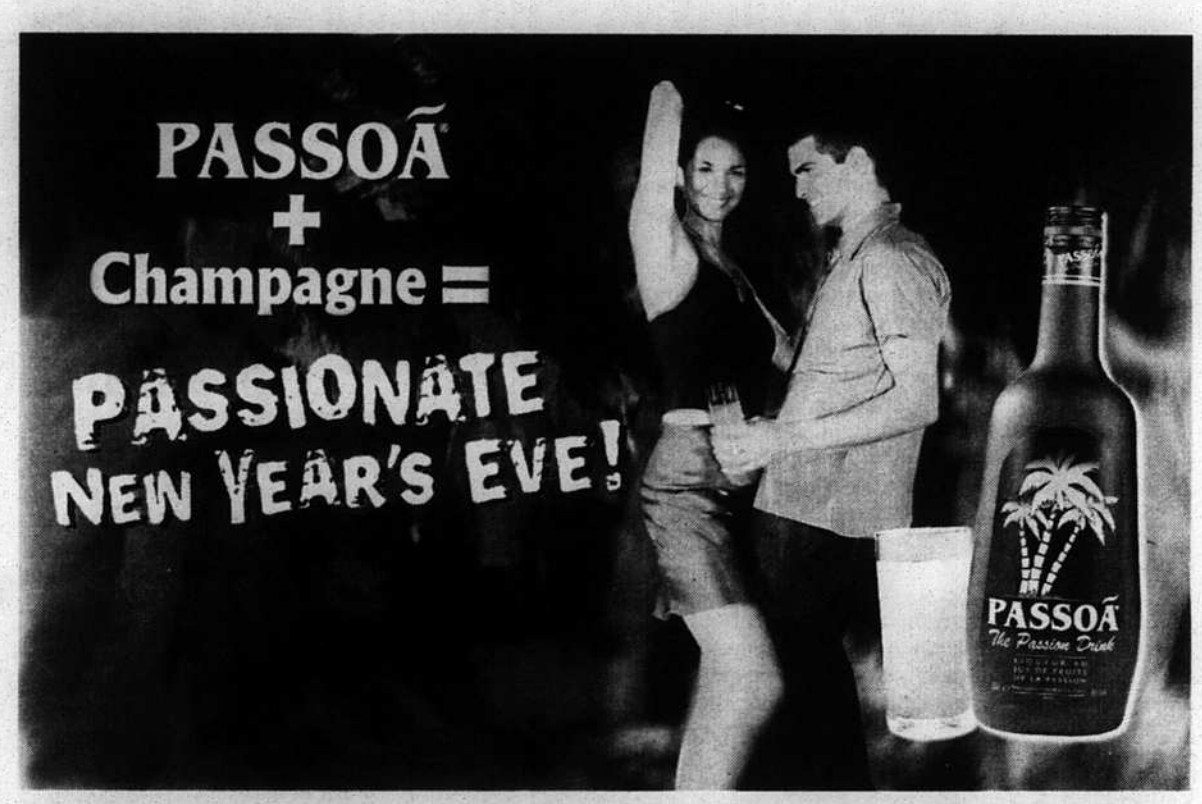
The Veterans Affairs Department operates the largest U.S. health-care system, with 139 hospitals serving 3.5 million veterans annually, many of them poor and elderly.

The system has been dogged by criticism dating back at least two decades, when a congressionally mandated study found that the quality of care was often poor. Other, small studies have promoted the belief that VA hospitals are inferior.

Houston VA researchers and colleagues at medical schools and hospitals examined the records of men 65 and older taken to hospitals for a heart attack. The study involved 2,486 veterans treated at 81 VA hospitals nationwide and 29,249 Medicare patients treated at 1,530 non-VA hospitals in seven states.

The researchers expected to find higher death rates among the VA patients, but found virtually identical rates.

The research was reported Thursday in the New England Journal of Medicine.



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The Avis

Publisher/Editor .....Rena Brodhurst
Managing Editor .....Robert Hoffman
Printed and published daily except holidays by
Brodhurst Printery, Inc., *36A/B La Grande Princesse,*
PO Box 750, Christiansted, U.S.V.I., 00820
Telephone (340) 773-2300; Fax (340) 773-5511
16 Norre Gade, Charlotte Amalie
Telephone (340) 774-7576; Fax (340) 774-8039
Second-class Postage paid at Christiansted, St. Croix, U.S.V.I.
Publication No. 475860
Postmaster: Send Form 3579 (Notice of Address Change) to Publisher, PO Box 750, Christiansted, V.I., 00821

Member: The Associated Press
American Newspaper Publishers Association

EDITORIAL:
Quo vadis, VI?

As we approach the New Year — and by some people's reckoning the actual beginning of the New Millennium — thoughts arise of a kind of fresh start, a step forward without the depressing baggage of the not-so-distant past.

In the eyes of some people we recently spoke to, people who have lived in the Virgin Islands for decades, things are worse than ever before. The enduring fiscal crisis goes cheerfully unaddressed by both elected officials and powerful private-sector elements. There is, to be sure, lots of empty rhetoric and breast-beating, but nothing of any substance is in fact being done or even being seriously contemplated. By all indications, the new Legislature has neither the intention nor indeed the capability to reverse the fortunes of the territory, and already the debate has descended into partisan and personal bickering.

The governor, for all his promises and rousing speeches, has proved essentially ineffective in his tenure. While showing flashes of courage and even leadership, Dr. Turnbull has not inspired much hope or demonstrated any concrete resolve in attacking our ills. He, like the territory, seems to be drifting aimlessly in the vast Caribbean, without purpose or a working compass. Sooner or later, drifting ships wind up on a reef. It is only a matter of time and current.

Above all, however, is the scourge of crime that is the stuff of the news day after day. "Thirty years ago," one old-timer reminisced, "we didn't lock our doors or our cars. We could go out and party till the wee hours and hitch a ride with a complete stranger in safety. Those days seem to be gone. Gone forever, maybe."

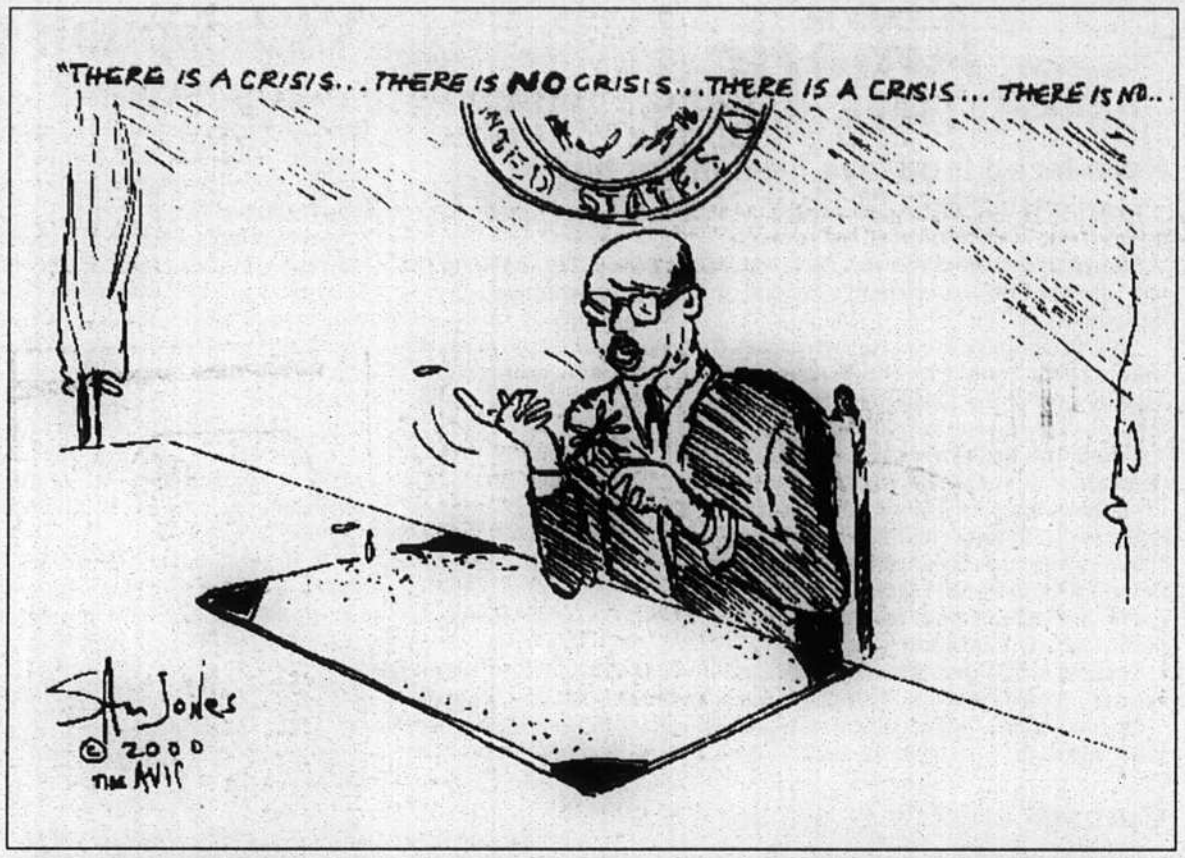
There is little doubt in most people's minds that the Fountain Valley Massacre was a watershed event in the social history of the Virgin Islands. It was more than shocking; it was an appalling incident of such senseless violence against innocent folks that it burned itself into our psyches and is still spoken of in hushed tones. It had chilling racial and class-struggle overtones, debated to this day.

It is perhaps more perceived than real, but since that fateful day it seems that crime — including grisly, brainless violence, be it domestic strife or attacks on tourists or scores being settled among acquaintances — has grown willy-nilly. Police are handcuffed, so to speak, with few resources, and the judiciary is able to prosecute the miscreants only with the greatest difficultly, be it in federal or territorial courts. Larceny, armed robberies, burglaries and muggings have become, it seems, commonplace.

We wish we could divine how to return to those good old days of harmony and security, to suggest some all-encompassing New Year's resolution that would lead us back to the high ground, but we cannot.

Like everyone else, we pray for reason and humanity to prevail, for people to love and respect one another, for politicians to recognize their basic duties and obligations, for peace.

We know that better things are possible for our territory, for they once were the rule, not the exception. Can we make a new beginning? Or are we terminally damned? We must decide — now — where we are going, and who will lead the way.



Letters to the Editor:

People must bring back spirit of St. Croix

Dear Editor:

Let me first apologize to Ms. Marise James, Stanley and the Ten Sleepless Knights and the listening audience for attempting to voice my opinion in such an agitated state. I cannot for the life of me understand why an officer of the law would be so concerned with the attire of a band. Attire, albeit exceedingly eccentric at times, is an important aspect of the individuality of an artist.

I understand they were riding in the back of a truck or in an unmarked van (wrong, Knights), so am I led to believe that the officers in question thought the Knights were attempting to blend in with their musical instruments? Or the slats on the side of the truck or interior of the van? Maybe, dressed in camouflage outfits, standing in the back of a high-sided slat truck or crowded in a van it was thought that we were being invaded by revolutionaries? I don't truly know. I mean who am I? I heard they were dressed that way because it was cold that morning.

It is evident no one knows anyone anymore, and yes at times we can use our popularity over much. But Stanley and the Ten Sleepless Knights are an institution. And no one seems to be taking up the baton, so over a mishap such as this an institution, a tradition is disappearing.

On Dec. 15, the weekend of midnight madness at Sunny Isles, I noticed a young man dressed from head to toe in camouflage. Not one officer walked up to him and said, "stop, drop and roll." Since returning to St. Croix after 12 years abroad, it saddened me to see such debilitating changes, such a negative metamorphosis perpetuated upon the spirit (the life force within a human being) of the people of St. Croix.

No one freely offers a smile any more or calls out to you on the street. The sense of dejectedness that abounds is heartbreaking.

I hardly know anyone anymore, and not because they have met their maker, although some have (God, bless their souls). But most are living off-island and believe it or not, would love to return, especially those who are parents. I know when I finally decided to return home for good, I was admonished for making such a rash and uneducated decision (so I was told). Ain ga nuttin home, me son. No jobs, government corrupt, food prices killing people, and on and on and on.

Hailing from such hardy stock as I do, and as mommy always told me, hard head mek soft. . . , I returned.

Debra George said during a conversation one day, "St. Croix will have to drop down around me, I ain't leaving."

I did not make a wrong decision to leave when I did. I definitely made a right decision to return when I did. For the people, of the people, by the people.

Stop and take time to notice, to remember the beauty of our island, the importance of our traditions, those who have gone on before and their contributions to the essence of what makes us who we are. I love my people and my island. We are unique, beautiful and everlasting. Bring back, take back our spirit and the life force living within a human being.

Maya Angelou said, "I shall rise."

Anna Quintero
St. Croix

Cable selections in TV Focus not on St. Croix

Dear Editor:

Seasonal and perpetual pitchforks to Mr. Prosser's conglomerate. His entourage obviously takes great satisfaction in tantalizing St. Croix with the selection of St. Thomas/St. John cable selections in his Saturday TV Focus pullouts. I think the man has his own satellite.

Dorothy Schlice
St. Croix

Got an opinion? Write a letter to the editor today.



Editorials from around the US, world

Dec. 26

The South Florida Sun-Sentinel, on D.C. statehood:

On Dec. 18, Barbara Lett-Simmons, 73, didn't cast an Electoral College vote for Al Gore, as she was supposed to do. Instead, she cast a blank ballot, as a protest that she and other residents of the District of Columbia cannot vote for and are not represented by any members of Congress.

She complained of "taxation without representation," which the early American colonists rightly regarded as tyranny.

It's unfair, unreasonable and unjust that the estimated 519,000 D.C. residents are still treated as second-class citizens. They pay income taxes, must heed Congress' laws and have served in America's armed forces. Yet, unlike 276 million other Americans, they can't elect a member of the U.S. Senate or House or even a state legislator.

... Unfortunately, reformers have settled on an inappropriate and unlikely remedy: turning the District of Columbia into a separate state called New Columbia, so residents could elect two U.S. senators and one representative.

... Rather than press for statehood, district residents should instead be seeking to be included in an existing state. The best solution would be to put the district back into Maryland, the state from which it is now carved...

... Denial of basic civil rights in the cradle of our nation's democracy is a national black eye.

But the district should be part of a state, not a state unto itself.

Dec. 26

New Straits Times, Kuala Lumpur, on divisions in Malaysia's ethnic majority, Malay Muslims:

The Malays stand divided — a divide that will erode the primacy of the Malay viewpoint in determining the country's direction. But logic dictates that the split in Malay unity should not be happening since Islam is, as it has always been in the past, the unifying factor for the Malays. Yet it is happening and it has reached a combustible point where a Muslim is put against another Muslim.

It is not merely a political divide but an intra-religious divide as well within the community. Sadly, the prognosis is that it appears irreversible unless something concrete is done, and done swiftly.

The refrain that "in Islam, religion and politics are one and the same thing or inseparable" is used to dupe the layman into accepting that instead of politics of the state serving Islam's long-range goals, Islam must serve the immediate a shortsighted objectives of party politics.

Political hegemonism is the antithesis of democracy, and coercive religious hegemonism amounts to fascism.

Dec. 22

The Seattle Times, on children and smoking:

Don't be misled by those headlines about the failure of a smoking-prevention program aimed at kids.

To be sure, it is disappointing to learn that an ambitious study over 15 years failed to achieve what researchers hypothesized — that children could be dissuaded from smoking by early and persistent instruction in resisting tobacco products.

At the end of the rigorous study, which involved more than 8,000 kids in 40 school districts in Washington state, researchers at the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center found no substantial difference in smoking habits for either boys or girls in the two groups. One group had a special curriculum from grade three through high school. The others had only whatever health and tobacco prevention materials were already in place in their schools.

The findings reinforce what experts in tobacco prevention have been saying all along — effective prevention is achieved through a variety of methods, not a single classroom-based curriculum.

... One expert who reviewed the study said its failure may point to an underlying fallacy of the premise that behavior can be changed through social influences. He concluded what any parent already knows intuitively — that youthful decision-making is not necessarily rational.

... A 1999 survey showed nearly 35 percent of U.S. high school students smoke at least once a month. Those who begin smoking as youths are more likely to become heavy smokers. Smoking prevention not only saves lives, it saves money. In Washington state, smoking is responsible for 12 percent of all medical expenditures. That explains why Gov. Gary Locke has included in his budget full funding — $30 million — for the state's new tobacco prevention and control program.

Leaves in Dallas dazzle with color this year



Olasee Davis

My Turn

Well, I finally took my vacation. My co-workers and close friends always behind me for not taking a vacation. They said that I worked to hard with long hours. My involvement with many civil organizations on- and off-island they also blamed. They believed the only solution for me is to have a companion or a girlfriend that will keep me distracted from my work at times onto the more pleasurable things in life. They firmly believe a girlfriend will balanced my work and play. Please don't blame them, they only mean well.

However, I must admit that the last time I took a vacation was in 1993 when my young brother Dale got married in Cincinnati, Ohio. Nevertheless, on my vacation time, I spent it in Dallas, Texas, where my son Omar and daughter Olessa lived. Of course, they were glad to see me. While there, I decided not to think on work even though I have called my office a couple of times to see how things were going. I also promised myself to finish reading "Long Walk To Freedom," by Nelson Mandela, which I believed would keep me focused on enjoying my vacation.

Dallas is the ninth largest city in the United States. It is a major U.S. financial center. It is one of the top convention cities in America. Dallas has four times more restaurants per person than New York City. It has more shopping centers per capita than any other major city in the United States. The city is about 384 square miles with a metropolitan population of 3 million. It has the largest wholesale merchandise mart in the world.

But what made my stay pleasant in Dallas, besides my family, was the trees changing their colors from green to dazzling orange, deep red, or shocking yellow. The autumn foliage colors of trees that exploded across Dallas landscape while I was there reminded me of the New England states. Fall in Dallas tends to be warm. Thus, the leaves on trees act accordingly resolute green until sometimes mid-November when the leaves fall on the ground.

But this year, weather conditions in Dallas were perfect to trigger the fall colors of leaves which are rare. To get brilliant fall foliage requires a couple of things. First, the weather has to be just cool if not downright cold overnight, then bright and warm during the day. Secondly, one or two days is not enough to get perfect fall colors. Good color takes weeks of this particular preparation. It also takes an extended period of cool temperatures and sunny bright days.

This fall in Dallas I was told they had some bright sunny days before the rain came. Typical Texas fall weather is marked by warm stretches and sudden freeze, which aren't conducive to striking fall colors. You see, once mother nature gets that particular step down, extraordinary things begin happening in the leaves. With the right conditions, chlorophyll (that stuff that makes leave green and more important allows photosynthesis) begins to break down.

The sugars and carbohydrates pull back from the leaves and into the tree's trunk and roots, called "sap falling." As the process proceeds, the greens of summer give way to other pigments in the leaves such as reds and yellow of autumn. These pigments are always there, but they just aren't visible if the right weather condition doesn't present itself. Such trees as maples, oak, and pecan burnt with brilliant autumn colors. Ornamental pear trees and crape myrtles also bloom with fall colors.

Olasee Davis is a St. Croix ecologist. This is Part I of a two-part article.

Please send your letters to the editor via e-mail to stxavis@viaccess.net; via fax to 340-773-5511; by mail; or drop them off at our office. We do not publish anonymous letters, so please include your name and place of residence and and a daytime phone number.

Teens charged with starting huge fire

THOUSAND OAKS, Calif. (AP) — Four teen-agers were cited for allegedly starting a blaze that spread over 600 acres and surged within 100 feet of luxury homes.

The fire erupted early Tuesday and spread quickly in the powerful Santa Ana wind before it was fully contained 16 hours later with no homes lost, Ventura County Fire Department spokeswoman Sandi Wells said.

Two 16-year-old boys, a 17-year-old and Chad Montagnino, 18, were arrested on suspicion of carelessly causing a fire, sheriff's Sgt. Ron Nelson said. They also were booked on suspicion of taking a vehicle without the owner's permission, said Detective J.T. Manwell.

The vehicle, a van that belonged to the mother of one of the boys and had been reported stolen, became stuck in rugged terrain and ignited dry brush, Nelson said.

More than 600 firefighters aided by water-dropping helicopters and retardant-dropping air tankers battled the flames in the city of 120,000 about 40 miles west of Los Angeles.

Ventura County Fire Dispatcher Charles Carranza said late Tuesday that firefighters were anticipating only moderate breezes Wednesday and into the weekend, and hoped the worst of the fires were behind them.

"It should be pretty calm," he said.

Another Ventura County fire, a 369-acre blaze that started Christmas Day in mountainous terrain, was declared fully contained late Tuesday, though it was still being monitored.



Associated Press

Three firefighters watch as wind-driven flames burn a hillside during an early morning brush fire that burned more than 600 acres in Thousand Oaks, Calif., Tuesday. No structures were destroyed and the cause is under investigation.

Ford moves fast to settle bad-tire suits

MIAMI (AP) — Ford Motor Co. appears to be moving quickly in settling claims related to Explorer accidents blamed on Firestone tires, including settling six legal claims in one day, a lawyer said Wednesday.

Bruce Kaster, a leading lawyer in defective tire cases, said Ford expressed "heartfelt condolences" and embarrassment about tire quality problems in settling six cases he was handling. As many as 200 lawsuits have been filed against Ford and Firestone for tire-related crashes.

"Firestone is still in the same mode they started in, and that being far behind Ford."

Bruce Kaster, leading lawyer in defective-tire cases

Kaster said he arranged a series of one-hour session between Ford attorneys and his clients on Friday and completed each meeting with an agreement.

He said he had never before seen so many cases resolved so quickly.

The agreements, and a seventh claim handled by another lawyer, called for the settlements to remain confidential, but Kaster characterized them as fair and said they signaled a change in attitude by Ford.

Ford spokeswoman Susan Krusel said the settlements are not unusual for the automaker.

"Ford has committed significant resources to the prompt investigation and resolution of these cases," Krusel said. "We're working to resolve the claims against the company ... and trying to do what's right for everyone involved."

Kaster's cases all involved Firestone tires, and all but one involved brands included in Bridgestone/Firestone's August recall of 6.5 million ATX, ATX II and Wilderness AT tires. Data from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration links 148 U.S. deaths to tread separations, blowouts and other problems with the tires. NHTSA also issued a consumer advisory in September that 1.4 million tires not covered in the recall had high failure rates.

Many of the fatal accidents have involved Firestone tires on Ford Explorer sport utility vehicles. Firestone has suggested the vehicle design, including its high center of gravity, and lower tire inflation levels that Ford used to recommend may be contributing factors. Ford contends the problem lies exclusively with the tires.

Kaster said claims against Bridgestone/Firestone are still pending involving the same accidents settled with Ford, and he is waiting for the tire company to respond to his proposals.

"Firestone is still in the same mode they started in, and that being far behind Ford," Kaster said.

Firestone spokesman Cliff Haas said: "We're always in contact with other attorneys in these cases, and I don't think there's anything to read into that one way or the other."

Medhat Labib, whose wife and son were killed and who was paralyzed in a 1999 Explorer rollover after a tire came apart on an interstate, told Florida Today that he considered the settlement fair and a "surprising" gesture.

"This money will not bring my family back to me," Labib said. "But for me, I think it shows that Ford is serious in trying to do what it can."

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Buyer I:	High school diploma required. Bachelor's degree in Business Administration or Engineering preferred. One to two years relevant work experience and a basic knowledge of refinery equipment and materials nomenclature as needed for supplier selection and communications with requisitioners. Working knowledge and one year practical usage of SAP system software or comparable software, which includes purchasing, warehouse management and accounting modules. Ability to evaluate market conditions and trends and to communicate with local and stateside vendors. Knowledge of expediting and traffic conditions unique to this geographical location. Knowledge of customs procedures, laws and documentation requirements.
Marine Engineer:	High school diploma or equivalent is required. Also, successful completion of a vocational training program with emphasis on diesel engine repair and maintenance, or successful completion of a manufacturing diesel engine repair and maintenance training program. A minimum of five (5) years of experience in repairing diesel engines and components is required. A towboat license or other license that will qualify the individual to perform a standing engineering watch on vessels. Ability to work in difficult positions to make repairs on vessels and other equipment. Ability to interface with other departments, i.e. maintenance, warehouse, fabrication shop and contractors.
Utilities-Powerhouse Shift Supervisor:	High school diploma or equivalent required. Minimum of three years operating experience, preferably in electrical power and/or steam generation. Demonstrated experience in a supervisory capacity is a plus. Technical training in mechanical and electrical fields or demonstrated job experience is preferred. Ability to supervise and instruct a crew of six to eight individuals. Ability to prepare written documentation for incident reports, operator evaluations, shift logs and other reports. Ability to work rotating shifts. Ability to interface with employees and other refinery department personnel.

Applications and/or resumes of qualified candidates should be sent by fax to 692-3226 or by mail to the following address no later than *January 2, 2001*: **HOVENSA L.L.C., Attn: Laurine Willie, Human Resources Dept., 1 Estate Hope, Christiansted VI 00820-5652.**

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Peace On Earth, Good Will to People

We wish you what we wish for ourselves - a holiday of thoughtfulness and rest, of assessment and compassion. A time to look back on the year just passed and sort out wastefulness from growth. A time to plan a new year of work informed by respect for each person's worth and by love for one another. A time of realizing that time is all there is - and it is not too late to change our lives.

We wish for all of us the courage to hold on to a vision of a world in which children are born wanted and loved, with enough food and care and shelter to grow up whole. The vision of all people as perfectible and transcendent - free of social prisons of sex and race - and remarkable for the hopes and dreams and capabilities that exist in unique, unrepeatable combination in each of us.

It is too late to justify suffering with the promise of rewards in some other world. Too late for nationalism, for racism, for violence or for the belief that one can win only if another has truly lost. Too late even for the brotherhood of man because it has excluded the sisterhood of woman and, therefore, the humanness of us all.

At last we begin. We look into the good in each of us and say yes. We celebrate the world outside us.

We Say, "Peace On Earth - Good Will To People"

This Christmas message is over 20 years old. It first appeared in Ms. Magazine. Its meaning is just as timely today.





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Alleged mass killer emerges as surly, 'strange and quirky'


McDermott

BOSTON (AP) — Michael McDermott was often surly to neighbors and co-workers, yet embraced the nickname "Mucko" given him by nieces and nephews who couldn't pronounce his first name.

To his acquaintances, the former U.S. Navy electrician and software engineer was known to keep to himself. He was recognized more for his bearish 6-foot-2, 260-pound frame and bushy, black beard than any personality traits.

Today, much more is known about him.

Prosecutors say McDermott, 42, apparently angry over a demand by the Internal Revenue Service to garnishee his wages for back taxes, carried an arsenal of weapons into his workplace and opened fire Tuesday, killing seven co-workers.

"Of all the people that I thought could have done this, it was him," said Mike Stanley, a team projects leader at Edgewater Technology in Wakefield, where the slayings took place. He described McDermott as "strange" and "quirky."

McDermott has no known criminal record. He served eight years aboard the nuclear submarine USS Narwhal and was divorced with no children.

A co-worker who spoke under the condition of anonymity said McDermott went by the nickname "Mucko" — something his nieces and nephews came up with when they couldn't pronounce Michael. He even had it on his car's license plate.

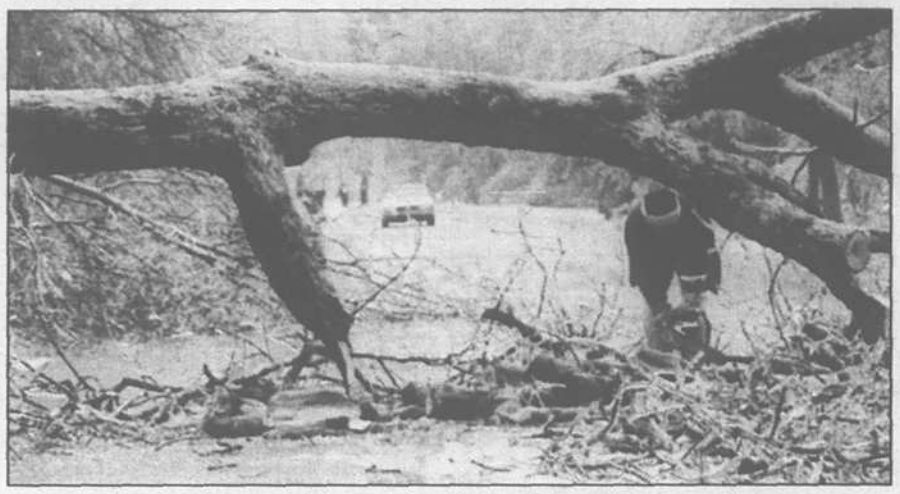
McDermott had worked at Edgewater as a software tester since March, company officials said. He usually dressed in flannel shirts, jeans and sneakers.

Jonathan Oldham, a neighbor in Weymouth where McDermott lived in a rented condominium until the end of October, said McDermott kept to himself.

"He was very quiet and didn't say much," Oldham said. "I just passed him in the hallway and said 'hi' to him."

The condo's owner, Saburo Imura, told The Washington Post that McDermott shared a lease there for 10 years.

Imura said McDermott and his wife, who later divorced, had been chronically late paying their rent over the years, and McDermott skipped out without paying for September and October, at $840 a month.



A worker saws a tree that fell across a Little Rock, Ark., street when it became weighted down with ice Wednesday.

Associated Press

South paralyzed by ice, 9 dead

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (AP) — An ice storm across the southern Plains knocked out power to nearly a half-million homes and businesses and stranded travelers through the region, unexpectedly extending their holiday vacations.

The weather has also caused numerous accidents and nine traffic deaths and forced the Arkansas governor to shut down state government Wednesday.

In many towns, the only light early Wednesday came from exploding power transformers streaking blue and yellow lights across the sky.

"You're just hoping your roof's not gonna cave in," said Kay Bowling, a 21-year-old mother of two who first lost electricity and then telephone service. "Everything in my trailer house is electric. We've got water but it's really, really cold."

About 214,000 Arkansas customers lost electricity early Wednesday, while 120,000 Oklahoma homes and businesses were dark late Tuesday. About 106,000 Texas customers were without electricity at least part of Tuesday, as were another 50,000 in northern Louisiana.

A lull in the icy weather — however short-lived — was predicted for Thursday by the National Weather Service at North Little Rock.

"It will be a brief break, because we have another batch of moisture coming Thursday night, but that may be just snow," said forecaster Nelson De Villiers.

Entergy Arkansas said restoring service might take until Tuesday. A Dec. 12-13 storm cut electricity to nearly a quarter-million Arkansas users. Entergy spokesman James Thompson said the company had 4,000 workers on task.

At a hotel near the Little Rock National Airport — closed since Monday — Gary Blankenship of Memphis, Tenn., remained trapped with other stranded travelers and lamented his family's aborted trip to Amarillo, Texas. Little Rock had more than a half-inch of ice and Amarillo had 15 inches of snow.

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Happy New Year! from the Staff and Management of QUALITY GROCERY

FedEx driver gives stolen gifts to relatives

LOS ANGELES (AP) — A FedEx contract driver took packages he was supposed to deliver and gave some of the items to relatives as Christmas presents, authorities said.

Russell Carnes, 29, allegedly stole packages worth about $14,000 from October to November. He pleaded no contest to a charge of grand theft, said Deputy District Attorney Rouman Ebrahim.

Family members tipped deputies after becoming suspicious when Carnes gave them boxes bearing the shipping company's logo.

FedEx launched an internal investigation when packages appeared to be missing and about $6,500 worth of goods were recovered after Carnes' arrest.

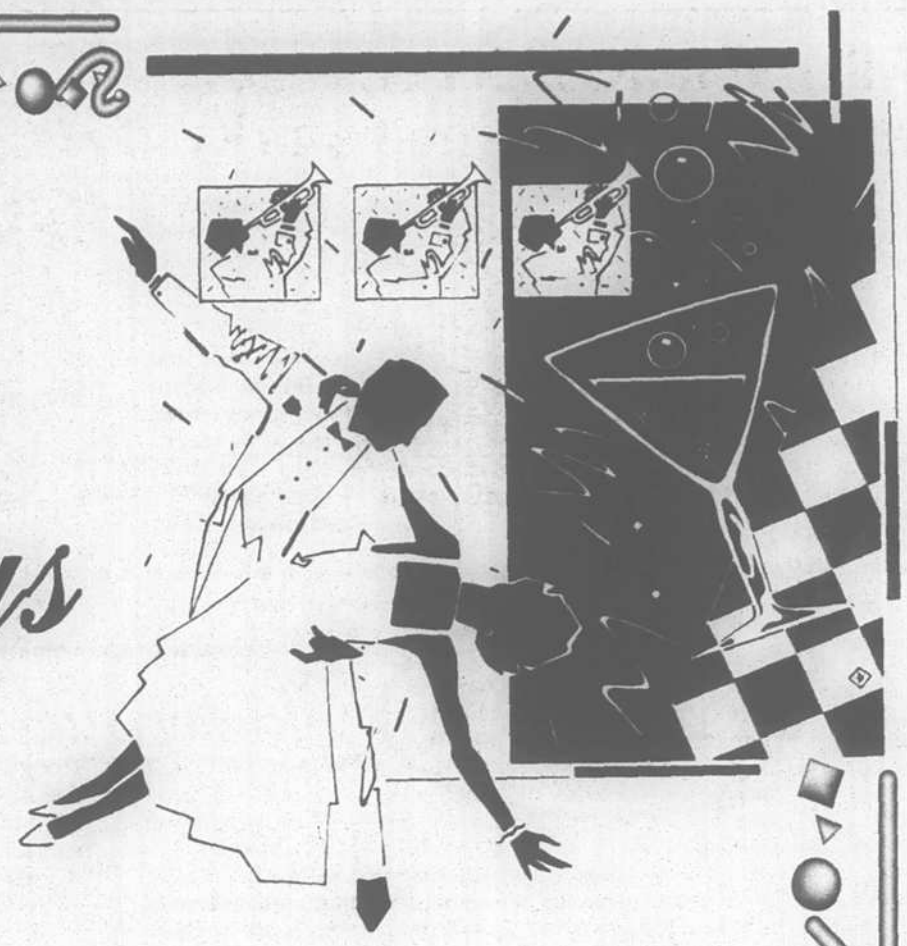
In exchange for his early plea, Carnes will serve 180 days in county jail, pay restitution and be placed on probation for five years.

Stolen items included books, about 50 video and computer games and an ultraviolet measuring device intended for Edwards Air Force Base.



Prices good through January 3, 2001. On sale only at Pueblo.

Holiday Happenings

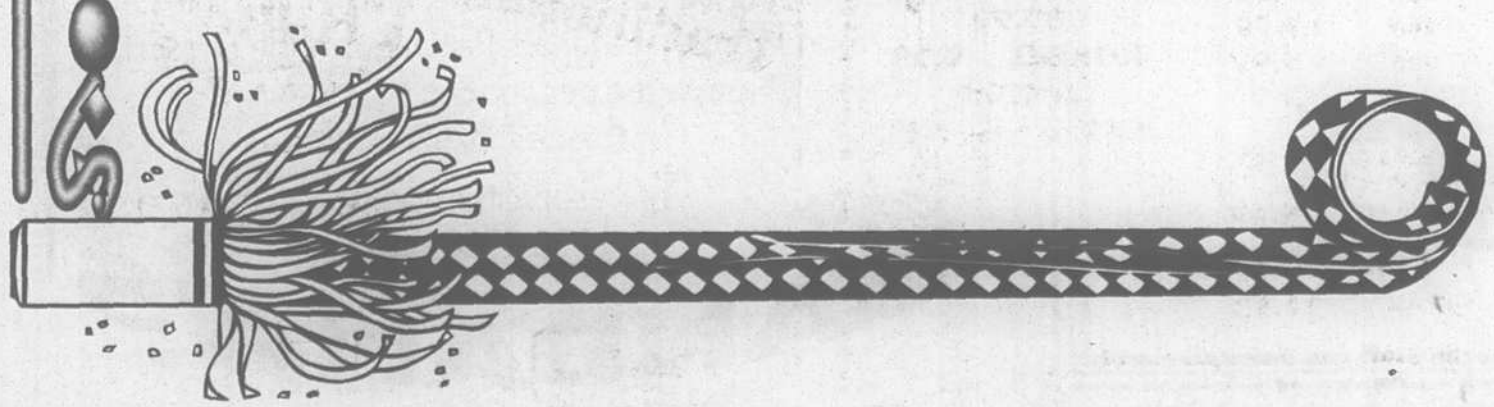


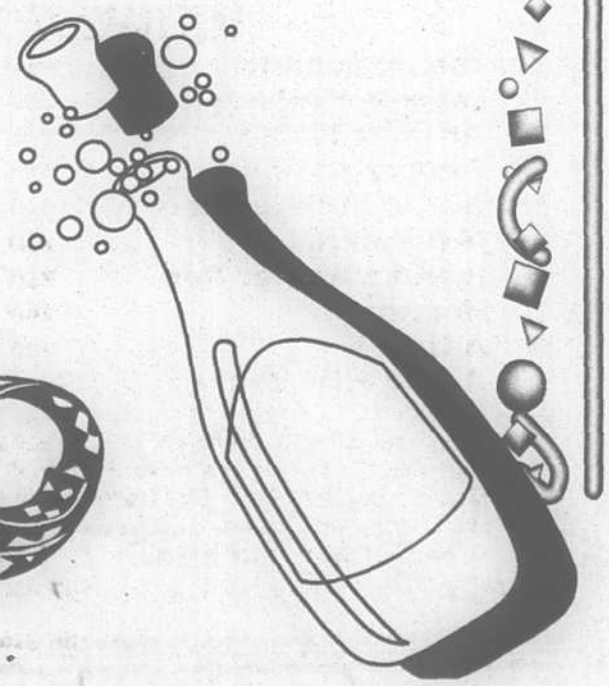
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New Year's Eve
• Brunch 8-2pm with Bill Bass
• Dinner 6-10pm, complimentary glass of champagne with dinner
• Live Entertainment by Just the Two of Us
• Dinner Specials
• Bar Closing at 11pm

New Year's Day
• Brunch 9-3pm
• Dinner 4-8pm

RumRunners would like to wish everyone a safe and Happy New Year!

AWOL airman spends 16 days in snow-buried auto

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP) — Chuck Bloom noticed it first — a patch of black fabric buried in the snow, uncovered by the blades of a snowmobile as he and others rode along a desolate trail.

Bloom tossed the frozen bag aside. The backpack hit a drift, knocking some snow away and revealing the glint of a car window. What happened next was a miracle, his wife said.

"All of a sudden this little claw hand comes up and taps twice," June Bloom recalled. "It just scared us to death. We thought, 'Oh my God, there's somebody in there.'"

Thomas Wade Truett, 29, was buried in the snow for 16 days in his sports car, in blustery winter weather in central Oregon's Deschutes National Forest. He had uttered his last goodbyes — scrawling a note to his parents in Florida — after deserting his job as a fuel manager in the Air Force, police said. He had lost 20 pounds and exhausted his supply of orange juice, a quart of water and a package of almond M&M candies, police said.

"We gave some guy his life and we didn't even set out to do anything remarkable that day," June Bloom said. "I'm not real religious, but somebody was directing all of us up there."

Truett was in fair condition late Tuesday at St. Charles Medical Center in Bend and recovering from advanced hypothermia, according to hospital administrators.

However, Truett's odyssey hasn't ended.

When the hospital discharges him — expected within a week — military police from Fort Lewis, Wash., will return the lost airman more than 800 miles to Ellsworth Air Force Base in Rapid City, S.D., on federal desertion charges, said Cpl. Neil Mackey of the Deschutes County Sheriff's Office.

The sheriff's office and medical center denied The Associated Press access to Truett. It is not known if he has obtained a lawyer.

Truett allegedly fled the base on Dec. 3, driving to northern California and then to Oregon, the sheriff's office said. He enlisted in the Air Force in early summer and recently succumbed to personal problems, Mackey said.

Four days after he abandoned the base, Truett's car became stuck on a snowy, rural Oregon road, Mackey said. He survived four days in the woods, using a cigarette lighter to build small fires.

After depleting the lighter fuel, Truett tried hiking out of the forest, but was too weak.

He retreated to the car and consumed his meager rations, remaining there until he was discovered.

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LAST SUNSET 2000
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Hors d'oeuvres at 5:30
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Your Dinner includes Vichyssoise
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Stuffed roasted tenderloin of Pork, Potatoes au Gratin, String Beans Almondine, Homemade Biscuits & Lemon Butter, Bandana's Peach Supreme Dessert, Bottle of Champagne per couple.

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From: The Staff & Management of The Avis

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Jack Peterson Quintet

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Ocean Confetti with Flower Petal Salad

Warm Goat Cheese with Pear Ravioli, Red Oak Lettuce, Poblamo Coulis

Homemade Smoked Duck, Three Mushroom Salad, Hazelnut Oil, Cilantro Juice

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Vegetable Dumpling, Carrot and Ginger Essence, Julienne of Vegetable Truffle Oil

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DINNER SEATING 6:00PM - 10:00PM

ENTERTAINMENT - **"THE BLACK DIAMOND"** 9:30PM - 11:00PM
DANCING 11:05 - Until
Reservations are requested: phone 772-5559



Associated Press
Julio Medina, executive director of Exodus Transitional Community, Inc., poses on the roof of his office in New York's East Harlem area Dec. 13. Medina, who served prison time on drug charges, heads the organization which helps drug offenders adjust to society. When in prison at Sing Sing, Medina was among a group of inmates to attend a master's degree program in Christian ministry.

Turning it around

Ex-offenders get second chance at Christmas

BY JULIA LIEBLICH
AP RELIGION WRITER

NEW YORK (AP) — Up the river at Sing-Sing, Christmas is a reminder of what might have been. Some men try to make the day festive — they cook up cans of rice and beans on heating coils in their cells, or thrust their hands through steel bars to say "Merry Christmas."

But late at night, it's tough not to think of friends who stopped visiting and parents who died while their sons counted days.

After Christmas No. 9 in prison, Julio Medina wrote in his journal: "As always the holidays are really depressing.

"Last night in A block, a man was stabbed in the heart and died," he continued. "Well, let me not complain because the man who was killed ... will not have the possibility of spending Christmas with his family."

Today Medina celebrates Christmas on the outside with his own family: his mother, his fiancee, and a slew of nephews and nieces. And he sent Christmas cards to 200 men still in New York state prisons to tell them they have a friend when they get out.

At 40, he has a ministry degree earned in prison and is the director of the Exodus Transitional Community, an East Harlem-based program to help ex-offenders adjust to society. He and 11 staff members, mostly ex-offenders, counsel clients in finding jobs and housing and help them deal with losses, from the death of relatives to partners who didn't wait.

The aim is to help former inmates survive their newfound freedom so they don't join the 43 percent who end up back in prison.

Given Medina's boyish face and gentle manner, even his new friends at Sing-Sing Correctional Facility had a hard time believing he was the leader of a South Bronx drug gang with a seven-year-to-life sentence. But Sing-Sing was his fifth prison in nine years.

"By 15, my life of crime had begun," he says. He spent his youth in the South Bronx projects. His mother, a factory worker, sent her children to Roman Catholic school, "but I was tired of being poor so on a small scale I began drug dealing," he says. At 16, he was arrested with a gun and placed on five years' probation.

A good student nonetheless, he finished high school and was accepted to the State University of New York at Albany. "Talk about transitions," he says. "I was a street guy, and I was totally lost." He left college for a time, then returned and was caught dealing drugs. He was sentenced to two-and-a-half years in prison.

Contacts made inside with other drug dealers helped him expand his operations when he got out — until the state's Organized Crime Task Force charged him with 12 counts of conspiracy.

Behind bars again, he recalls, "I turned off any feelings I may have had. Some guy would get stabbed, and I'd just be hoping no blood would get on me. Compassion is not a strength in prison. It's kill or be killed."

Not until five years into his sentence, he says, did he feel any desire to change.

"There was no thunderbolt," he says, "no breaking out in a sweat." But certain incidents stood out, like the visit from a favorite niece, who told him she wanted him to meet her boyfriend because he, too, was a big-time drug dealer.

"I thought, 'That's what she thinks of me.'"

He didn't want to be that person.

At the Eastern Correctional Facility in upstate New York, he heard about a program leading to a certificate in Christian ministry.

One of the instructors, Lonnie McLeod, was a big, approachable man who would later become an ordained United Church of Christ minister.

"Julio was a tough guy in the vein of Jimmy Cagney," McLeod recalls, "small but lethal. He was a leader who had the power to tell others to destroy you. Still, I understood that ... he could lead people up a positive path."

In Bible class, says Medina, "Lonnie sparked my interest. He made God human somehow. Jesus was so contemporary, like a cool guy. I'd been a doubter for so long. Now I thought, if there is a God, let me find out what he's about.

"It wasn't one of those 'Hallelujah-I-was-talking-to-the-Holy-Ghost' things. It was a gradual process."

So was praying. "In prison there's a lot of prayer going on: 'Shorten my sentence,'" Medina says. "I started saying, 'God, I will no longer destroy what you created.'"

In 1993, Medina was transferred to Sing-Sing to attend the master's degree program in ministry that had been offered by New York Theological Seminary at the prison since 1982. For the next year, Medina and more than a dozen men studied world religions, the Bible, the history of Christianity, theology and ethics in a program that focused on urban ministry and the biblical injunction to work with the poor and forgotten.

"I was a sponge," Medina says. "Within two months I was waking up at 4 a.m. to read church history. I'd found my calling." He wanted to be a healing force in the communities where he'd done so much damage.

Medina was luckier than most when he was released in September 1996. He had family members to come home to, and he found a job as a drug treatment counselor.

But he saw too many parolees left homeless and jobless, too many who'd found God in prison but lost God when faced with countless rejections, too many who returned to prison for violating terms of parole.

Medina talked with his mentor, now the Rev. Lonnie McLeod, who offered him space in the Church of the Living Hope in East Harlem to start a program for ex-offenders. He received grants from a Presbyterian church and an anonymous donor. And Exodus opened its doors in March 1999.

The staff, which includes five seminary graduates, encourages ex-offenders to volunteer with churches, synagogues and mosques so they can learn work skills while they're giving back to the community.

On a recent weekday morning, a 50-year-old man who served 16 years for murder is sitting at a table while two Exodus staff members look for rooms and apartments that accept former prisoners.

"I'm going to find you a place," housing specialist Dawn Hurd, 38, assures the man, who is in treatment for heroin addiction.

"You know he's been out five years," another staff member tells her.

"His life's not together," she says, determined not to turn him away. "He's still in transition."

The staff receives about 500 cards a year from people in prison, mostly men, asking for help when they get out. They've seen 220 clients since they opened, and experience has taught them not to judge a person by his worst moment.

Still, on rare occasions even Medina finds a story troubling.

"We had a client who committed six child molestations," he says. "A bunch of feelings were running through me. Should I throw him out the window? But the more he talked, the more I saw I had to listen. He was abused by men for three years. In a group home he became a prostitute. You begin to say: 'If only he had had help.' As I sat there, God was present. Here you had a drug dealer and a child molester in one room, and God was present."

Although some programs won't accept convicted child molesters, the Exodus staff referred him to an organization that helped him find city housing.

Staff members also listen to each other, at weekly meetings to talk about business as well as their own problems with housing, kids, spouses and ex-spouses.

"They're my counselors," says Amanda Jimenez, 27, the office manager.

At a recent meeting, the subject is Christmas.

Hurd says she's spending the holiday with parolees determined to keep out of prison. "The lonely hearts club," she says, smiling.

A former inmate visiting the community remarks that he "killed off" Christmas during his 30 years in prison, and now he has to relearn how to celebrate.

Jose Louis Reyes, 44, Exodus' assistant director, says he will be hanging out with "my extended family" — the Exodus staff. He is also helping with the program's second annual fund-raising drive for families in need and people with HIV/AIDS.

Medina and the others carried beepers during the holidays in case their clients needed them.

First Christmases on the outside can be particularly tough for parolees without family and activities to distract them from loneliness. "Holidays become like long weekends," says Reyes, when ex-offenders have too much time on their hands and can be particularly vulnerable to temptations like alcohol and drugs.

In his office at the Church of the Living Hope, Medina finishes his Christmas cards to men like Sadiq Najee, 40, an Exodus board member still serving time in Sing-Sing for second-degree murder.

Christmas cards from friends who got out might be depressing for some prisoners. But not for Najee, who says that just thinking about Exodus brings him comfort.

"It's a blessing," he says. "It shows I'm getting closer to the door."



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HOLIDAY BANKING HOURS

Saturday, December, 30
2 BRANCHES IN ST. THOMAS (FT. MYLNER AND MAIN BRANCH) AND
2 BRANCHES IN ST. CROIX (ORANGE GROVE AND SUNNY ISLE) WILL
BE OPEN FROM 9 AM TO 1 PM. TORTOLA WILL BE CLOSED

Monday, January 1
ALL ST. THOMAS, ST. CROIX AND TORTOLA BRANCHES WILL BE CLOSED

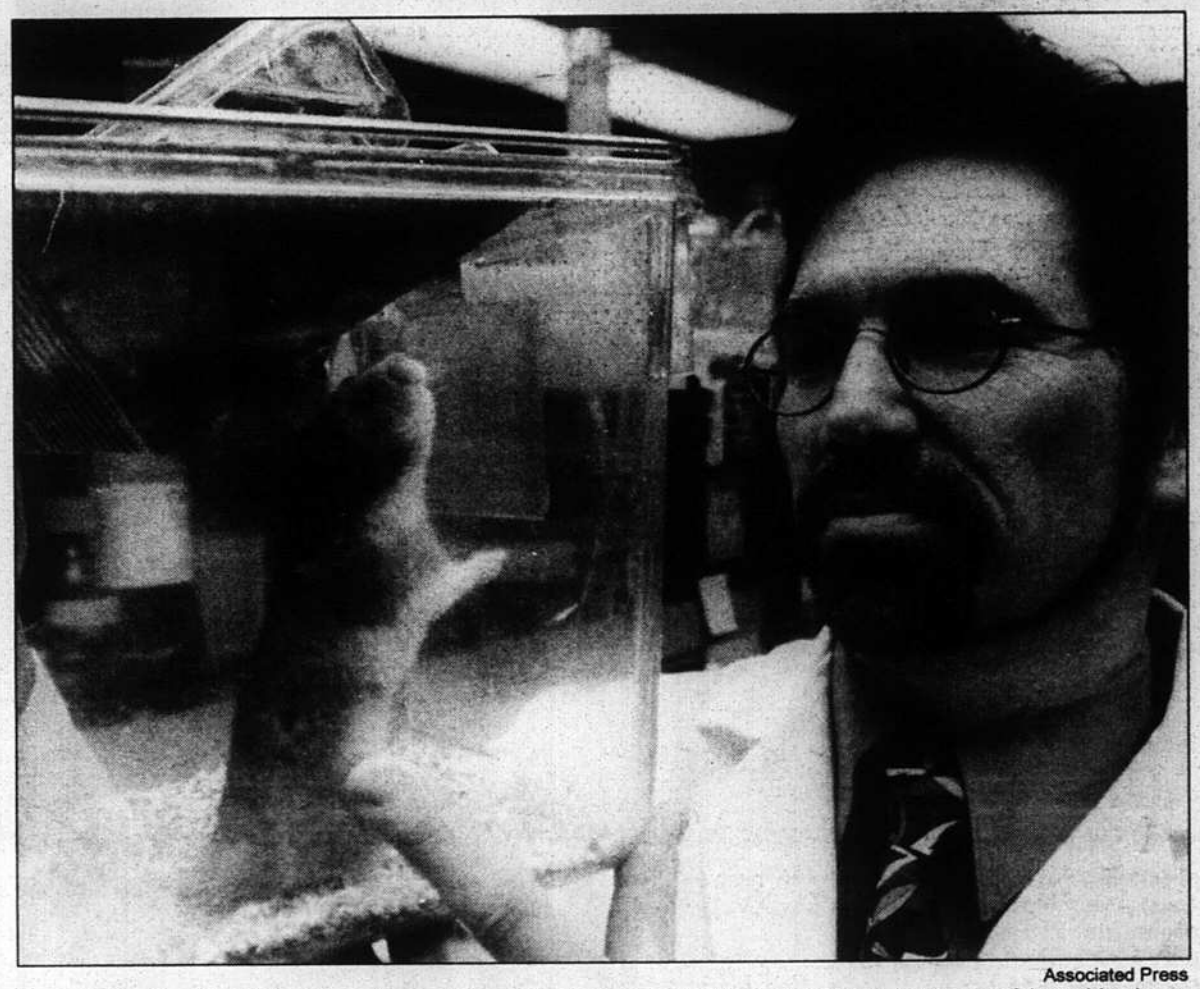
Friday, January 5
ST. CROIX BRANCHES ONLY WILL BE CLOSED

Saturday, January 6
ALL ST. THOMAS, ST. CROIX AND TORTOLA BRANCHES WILL BE CLOSED

Parents just don't understand:

Brain changes, not hormones, explain many adolescent behaviors

BY MATT CRENSON
AP NATIONAL WRITER



Associated Press
Dr. Craig Ferris of the University of Massachusetts Medical School in Worcester, Mass., holds one of the golden hamsters he studies in his lab Dec. 19. Ferris' research indicates that the experiences of adolescent hamsters effect behavior for the rest of their lives.

Every parent dreads it.

Almost overnight a sweet, cheerful, obedient child mutates into a churlish monster prone to recklessness and unpredictable mood swings.

This is not "The Exorcist." This is adolescence.

Parents and experts have always blamed the same hormones that catapult young bodies into adulthood for the sleeping until noon, the reckless driving, the drug use and the other woes of adolescence. But recent research shows that what's going on above teen-agers' necks, not raging hormones, explains the changes.

Beginning around age 11, the brain undergoes major reorganization in an area associated with things like social behavior and impulse control. Neuroscientists figured this out only in the last few years, and the discovery has led them to see adolescence as a period when the developing brain is vulnerable to traumatic experiences, drug abuse and unhealthy influences.

"The adolescent brain is different. It's still growing," says Fulton Crews, a neuroscientist at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill.

Not long ago, neuroscientists thought that the brain stopped growing by the time a child entered nursery school. By then, it was thought, nearly all the brain's wiring had been connected and the only remaining task was to program that hardware.

But new brain imaging technologies have shattered that notion. Using techniques like MRI and positron emission tomography, or PET scanning, researchers have detected brain growth throughout childhood and well into adolescence.

Because their brains are not yet mature, adolescents do not handle social pressure, instinctual urges and other stresses the way adults do. That may explain in part why adolescents are so prone to unsavory or reckless behavior.

"The adolescent brain is just in a different state than the adult brain," Crews says.

This year in the scientific journal Nature, researchers presented a series of time-lapse images depicting brain growth from age three to 15. The images showed a tangle of nerve cells sprouting in the part of the brain that sits above the eyes, then a period of "pruning" after puberty, when about half of the new fibers are cut away to create an efficient network of circuits.

All this action happens in a part of the brain known as the prefrontal cortex, an area responsible for what neuroscientists call the "executive functions." Those functions are practically a laundry list of the qualities adolescents often lack — goal-setting, priority-setting, planning, organization and impulse inhibition.

Adolescence is a time of risk-taking, says Lynn Ponton, a psychiatrist at the University of California-San Francisco and author of "The Romance of Risk: Why Teen-agers Do the Things They Do."

"A big part of adolescence is learning how to assess the risk in an activity," Ponton says. "Part of the reason teen-agers aren't good at risk-taking is that the brain isn't fully developed."

Looked at that way, it is no big surprise that accidents are the leading cause of death among adolescents, or that teens are more likely to become crime victims than any other age group. It's no wonder that the vast majority of alcoholics and smokers get started during their teen years, or that a quarter of all people with HIV contract it before age 21.

It's no big secret that things like criminal records and sexually transmitted diseases can really mess up your life. But neuroscientists are learning that less serious stuff can have lasting effects too.

Scientists conduct most of their research on adolescent brain development using animals, because it would be unethical to experiment with human teens. Animals don't all go through a transitional period between childhood and adulthood, but most mammals do exhibit some kind of adolescence.

"They don't hang out at malls and spike their hair and stuff, but their social behavior and social structure changes dramatically," says Linda Spear of Binghamton University in New York state.

Adolescent rats, for example, show more interest than adults do when strange objects are put into their cages. They start hanging out with their peers more, exploring their surroundings intensely and flitting from one activity to the next.

Craig Ferris, who studies golden hamsters at the University of Massachusetts Medical Center in Worcester, says that in the wild his study subjects enter adolescence when they are ejected from the nest at about 25 days of age. For about two weeks they wander the wheat fields of Syria, looking for a nest that will take them in or founding one of their own.

Ferris' experiments show that a golden hamster's experiences during this stage can determine how it will behave for the rest of its life. If an adolescent golden hamster is put in a cage with an aggressive adult for an hour each day, it will grow up to become a bully that picks on animals smaller than itself. But it will cower in fear around hamsters its own size.

Those golden hamsters raised in the presence of aggressive adults also grow up to have lower than normal levels of vasopressin, a chemical associated with aggression, in the brain's hypothalamus. And they sprout more receptors in the hypothalamus for serotonin, a chemical that blocks vasopressin.

Ferris and his colleagues aren't sure yet exactly what to make of the chemical changes they observe. But they are certain that at least for golden hamsters, the experience of being intimidated by an adult during adolescence has permanent effects.

"The take-home of all this stuff is that the brain is constantly interacting with the environment," Ferris says.

To neuroscientists, one of the most disturbing behaviors among today's adolescents is binge drinking. Studies have already shown that alcohol exposure in utero can have devastating effects on the developing brain, and many researchers fear the period of vulnerability could extend through childhood and into adolescence.

Researchers at the University of North Carolina recently decided to test the sensitivity of the adolescent brain to binge drinking by subjecting rats to an alcohol bender. Four times a day for four days, they gave both adolescent and adult rats 10 grams of alcohol per kilogram of body weight. After the rats had sobered up the researchers looked for brain damage and found more in adolescent rats compared to adults. Most importantly, the adolescents sustained damage in brain regions associated with addiction.

Researchers who study cigarette smoking tell a similar story. The vast majority of smokers start during their teen years, but until recently nobody had thought to look at how the adolescent brain responds to nicotine.

When they did, researchers at Duke University found that adolescent brains respond more intensely to nicotine. The scientists injected rats with nicotine every day for more than two weeks, a dose comparable to what a typical smoker receives. In all of the rats the number of chemical receptors dedicated to nicotine increased — a sign of addiction. But in adolescents, the number of nicotine receptors increased twice as much compared to adults.

"What we found is that the adolescent brain gets a lot more bang for the buck," says Theodore Slotkin, one of the scientists who performed the research.

That doesn't mean that people who begin smoking at a young age are doomed to live out their days depressed and in thrall to nicotine.

"A person isn't a slave to one's genes or biology," Ferris says.

But even at this early stage of research, he added, it is clear that things like violence and drugs can permanently alter a teen-ager's brain. And that may make an often difficult period even tougher.

Journalists among chief victims in Colombia war

BOGOTA, Colombia (AP) — While waiting to interview an imprisoned paramilitary commander seven months ago, newspaper reporter Jineth Bedoya was kidnapped, beaten and raped by suspected paramilitary gunmen. Today, she goes to work in an armored car, accompanied by armed bodyguards.

Bedoya, 27, is among a rising number of journalists who are attacked, kidnapped or killed this year by armed factions waging a 36-year war in Colombia.

Eleven of the 57 journalists assassinated around the world this year were killed in Colombia, according to the Brussels-based International Federation of Journalists. Eight were abducted through October, according to the Free Country Foundation, a Colombian kidnapping monitoring group.

Since 1977, 138 journalists in Colombia have been assassinated, according to the Bogota-based Foundation for Freedom of the Press. "What is shocking about Colombia is that year after year it is among the most dangerous countries for journalists," said Joel Simon, deputy director of the New York-based Committee to Protect Journalists.



Associated Press

Jineth Bedoya, a journalist working for El Espectador, takes notes as she prepares to leave the newspaper's building in Bogota in an armored car, Friday.

Drug traffickers once committed most of the crimes. But today, the culprits increasingly are guerrillas and paramilitary bands battling for territory and influence. The tactic inspires fear, forces self-censorship and drives dozens of reporters and opinion writers to seek refuge abroad.

On Saturday, radio and TV reporter Wiston Viracacha was freed after nine days in the hands of the leftist National Liberation Army, or ELN, who felt his report about a village massacre put the blame on the rebels. "We're all becoming targets," Viracacha said, defending his report for the local Caracol network.

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Young Mitterrand denied release from jail

PARIS (AP) — A son of the late French President Francois Mitterrand, jailed nearly a week for alleged illegal weapons sales to Africa, will spend at least another six days behind bars, his lawyers said Wednesday.

A Paris appeals court that was expected to rule Wednesday on a request for Jean-Christophe Mitterrand's release from La Sante Prison in Paris has delayed its decision until Jan. 2.

"This is purely a political decision," said Remy Wilner, one of Mitterrand's lawyers. "This measure is based on a judge's wish to keep the son of the former president of the republic in prison." Prosecutors have asked the court to keep Mitterrand in jail.

Mitterrand, 54, was placed under investigation late Thursday for alleged complicity in arms trafficking and misuse of political power in a scheme that involved money laundering in illicit deals to Angola.

Mitterrand, who worked under his father from 1986 to 1992 as special presidential counselor for Africa, has denied any illegal role in the affair, which centers on the activities of the French company Brenco International.

Mitterrand is alleged to have received $1.8 million via Brenco's president, Pierre Falcone, between 1993 and 1998. Falcone was placed under investigation Dec. 1 for tax fraud, arms trafficking and influence trafficking.

Attorneys for Mitterrand said Wednesday there was no proof that their client committed any wrongdoing and that he was being wrongly punished.

Jean-Pierre Versini-Campinchi, a Mitterrand lawyer, said that his client had arranged introductions for Falcone in Angola that allowed the businessman "to set up swaps."

"Which is to say, exchange contracts of intergovernmental bank loans for oil," Versini-Campinchi said, adding: "This type of operation, worth billions of dollars, leads to certain commissions." He did not elaborate.

Danielle Mitterrand, the suspect's mother who herself is a prominent human rights campaigner, demanded that authorities "explain the serious, precise reasons" for her son's detainment, Versini-Campinchi said.



Associated Press

A relative weeps as she waits outside a hotel to find out if her relatives were among those who died in a Christmas Day building fire in Luoyang, in central China Wednesday.

Chinese officials vow punishment for fire

LUOYANG, China (AP) — Premier Zhu Rongji pledged on Wednesday to punish those responsible for a Christmas night fire that fatally trapped hundreds of holiday revelers in a fourth-floor disco with a long history of safety violations.

Police questioned 20 people with ties to the shopping center and put them under close watch in connection with the deaths Tuesday of 309 people, most of whom died in the disco, state television reported.

Officials throughout China were ordered by the Public Security Ministry to shut down unlicensed and unsafe dance halls and to check hotels, shopping malls and other public venues.

In Luoyang, relatives tearfully scanned the lists of victims as reports emerged of years of safety violations at the Dongdu Commercial Building. The shopping center was declared unsafe three years ago but never made fire safety improvements, the official Xinhua news agency reported. The fire apparently began in a furniture shop below ground, with the flames only reaching the first-floor lobby, Xinhua said. But smoke rushed quickly up stairwells, suffocating trapped partygoers.

The fourth-floor disco had no emergency exits, Xinhua said, and of the two regular exits, one was filled with smoke and the other hidden from view behind a bar, survivors quoted on the Web sites of local newspapers said. Smoke also prevented firefighters from getting inside, and panicked patrons were hanging out windows and balconies hoping for rescue.

Wang Weihong, a survivor quoted by the Southern Daily newspaper, said she and her boyfriend escaped by smashing the window in a private back room of the disco and were rescued by firefighters at 1 a.m., half an hour after the fire was put out. Three others in the room succumbed to the smoke and died, the newspaper reported.

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Cinema I



Mon-Fri: 7:10, 9:15; Sat.-Sun: 3:00, 5:05, 7:10, 9:15. "PG-13"

Cinema II



Mon-Fri: 7:10, 9:15; Sat.-Sun: 3:00, 5:05, 7:10, 9:15. "PG-13"

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Theatre 1



Mon-Fri: 7:10, 9:15; Sat.-Sun: 3:00, 5:05, 7:10, 9:15. "PG-13"

Theatre 2



Mon-Fri: 7:10, 9:15; Sat.-Sun: 3:00, 5:05, 7:10, 9:15. "R"

Theatre 3

Wes Craven presents
DRACULA 2000



Mon-Fri: 7:20, 9:15; Sat.-Sun: 3:20, 5:15, 7:20, 9:15. "R"

Theatre 4



Mon-Fri: 7:15; Sat.-Sun: 3:15, 5:20. "PG"



Mon-Fri: 9:15; Sat.-Sun: 7:05, 9:20. "PG-13"

Theatre 5



Mon-Fri: 7:05, 9:15; Sat.-Sun: 2:40, 4:50, 7:05, 9:15. "PG-13"

Theatre 6



Mon-Fri: 7:20, 9:15; Sat.-Sun: 3:20, 5:15, 7:20, 9:15 "G"

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HERB & JAMAAL By Stephen Bentley



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FOXTROT By Bill Amend



KIT & CARLYLE



HERMAN



"I'm charging you a dollar for whatever it is you've got in your mouth."

RIPLEY'S



Donor labors to climb mountain of charity mail



Dear Abby

DEAR ABBY: Please help me and others who are constantly asked to give donations. I am a university professor at retirement age; I have a modest salary. Fortunately, I am frugal and thus able to lead a comfortable life.

I contribute to numerous causes. Helping my fellow human beings is a moral duty from which I derive great satisfaction. Yes, I realize there are catastrophes in this world, and I do add something to my contribution whenever I can. However, I am unable to do it all the time.

Every year, I send checks to more than 80 charities, and I make it a point to label each donation "annual contribution for the year" — to no avail. Still I continue to receive three to four daily requests and/or "gifts." Besides the inconvenience of all this unasked-for and unwanted mail, I'm concerned about the waste of paper and the money that should go to philanthropy and not marketing. How can I convince charities to accept the fact that I can send them only one check a year? Could you suggest that these associations label us "once-a-year contributors" and stop showering us with requests and gifts the rest of the year? Believe me, Abby, I would be most grateful. — **NOT A MILLIONAIRE, COLUMBIA, S.C.**

DEAR NOT A MILLIONAIRE: I could suggest that charities send solicitations only once a year — but the effort would be useless. Many large charities have become automated. The donor lists have become part of a computer information bank, and requests for money are spit out and mailed a minimum of several times a year. One would think the expenditure of paper and postage would be taken into consideration, but they must make so much money that they can afford to waste it.

At one time, I was in your situation regarding a charity in Los Angeles. I, too, was concerned when I continued to be solicited almost monthly. I called a development person at the charity and asked to be solicited only once a year. During the next few months, I continued to receive requests for money from them — and then a package arrived containing a useless "gift," because I was such a "valued friend" of the charity.

Since that was not how I wanted my donations spent, I contacted a much smaller charity that does similar work and solicits me only once a year. It now receives the donation I previously gave to the larger program.

P.S. It has been years, and I still receive requests from the large charity. I throw them away unopened.

DEAR ABBY: I don't have enough money to quit working, but I want to. I have this desire to live my life freely. I would like to travel around the world and get to know new people and rich men. If possible, I would like to meet handsome, kind men. How can I do this? — **THE WISHER, MADRID, SPAIN**

DEAR WISHER: Unless you win a lottery or an unexpected inheritance of some size comes your way, traveling without earning an income is indeed a fantasy. However, it's refreshing to learn that some fantasies are universal.

If you are willing to work while you travel, apply for a position as a crew member for a cruise line or a business that provides private jets to upscale companies. You're sure to meet new people in such a job. Unfortunately, there's no guarantee that the men you'll meet will be rich, handsome and kind. However, with luck, you might score two out of three.

Horoscope

By Francis Drake

ARIES
(March 21 to April 19)
Try to connect with someone new who shares similar goals for the future. Shed your reluctance to change, and let a new influence take hold.

TAURUS
(April 20 to May 20)
You find yourself feeling uncharacteristically wild and free. Make the most of the moment, and be sure to take others along for the ride.

GEMINI
(May 21 to June 20)
Your spin on the arcane turns it into an item of mass appeal. Spend time with people who can truly appreciate your brilliance.

CANCER
(June 21 to July 22)
Take a moment to really think things through, rather than reacting instantly. Remember that you don't really need to try every flavor to know what you want.

LEO
(July 23 to Aug. 22)
Behave yourself or face the consequences, Leo. Unfortunately, in order to enjoy all the benefits of the adult world, you have to at least try to act the part.

VIRGO
(Aug. 23 to Sept. 22)
Look at a change as an opportunity to experiment. You might learn things that will revolutionize your life. At the very least, you will have fun.

LIBRA
(Sept. 23 to Oct. 22)
Your smile is genuine, and your embrace is enormous. Try something you've never done before, and you'll surprise yourself greatly.

SCORPIO
(Oct. 23 to Nov. 21)
Keep your hands steady, and find reasons to laugh from the heart. Remember that while love might conquer all, it does not do so by brute force.

SAGITTARIUS
(Nov. 22 to Dec. 21)
You encounter some radical people and ideas. Keep your mind open to the possibility of change, and you'll be surprised at the results.

CAPRICORN
(Dec. 22 to Jan. 19)
A real commitment brings an instant return. You might not yet be ready to decide, but your list of possibilities is growing rapidly.

AQUARIUS
(Jan. 20 to Feb. 18)
Your current emotional state might earn you some strange new bedfellows. You are filled with a sense of adventure and curiosity.

PISCES
(Feb. 19 to March 20)
Finally, things are growing calm and stable on your domestic front. Make the most of it by beginning some renovations or planning a dinner party.

YOU BORN TODAY Your outgoing, adventurous and gregarious nature leads you into all manner of exciting situations. While your life will be full of friends and fun, you need to check that tendency to be just a little too trusting. You are a generous and romantic lover.

Birthdate of: Jude Law, actor; Ted Danson, actor; Mary Tyler Moore, actress.

HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.

Differences: 1. Window is removed. 2. Pocket is lower. 3. Hair is added. 4. Sign is added. 5. Arm is not showing. 6. Hat is different.

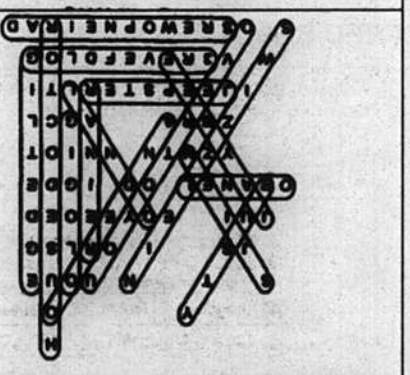
SPORTS SLEUTH ● MEDALING HORSES IN THE 2000 OLYMPICS

C A X V T R P N L J H F H D B
Y X V T R Y P E O M K I O G E
D S B Z T X R W N U U O U E T
R Q J S O I N I L O R L S G J
I J U I F G E O Y E E O E D F
O R A N E L D O D C I G D E A
Y X O Y Z M T N W N N I O T V
T B S Z B R A R P O A G C L N
L K I (J E E P S T E R) L T I J
I W G V 3 R E V E F D L O G F
S E O S R E W O P N E I R A D

Wednesday's unlisted clue: DAM

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions - forward, backward, up, down and diagonally.
Thursday's unlisted clue hint: A LARGE OUTDOOR FIRE

Anderoo	Goldfever 3	Lando	Rusty
Darien Powers	House Doctor	Lenaro	Sjiem
Gigolo	Jaybee	Over To You	Swizzle In
Giltedge	Jeepster	Ranier	



MEDALING HORSES IN THE 2000 OLYMPICS

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A1	V4	U1	L1	S1	E1		RACK 1 =	17
G2	U1	L1	P3	I1	N1	G2	RACK 2 =	72
A1	N1	S1	A1	T1	E1	D2	RACK 3 =	58
B3	R1	I1	B3	I1	N1	G2	RACK 4 =	65

PAR SCORE 135-145 JUDD'S TOTAL 212

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L1	I1	U1	G2	P3	G2	N1	Double Word Score
A1	E1	N1	S1	T1	D2	A1	
B3	I1	I1	R1	G2	B3	N1	1st Letter Double

RACK 1 RACK 2 RACK 3 RACK 4

PAR SCORE 135-145

by JUDD

FOUR RACK TOTAL
TIME LIMIT: 20 MIN

JUMBLE

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME by Henri Arnold and Mike Argirion

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

SOIVR

KELUF

SHORKE

ETTORP

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www.jumble.com



Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Answer: A " " (Answers Monday)

Yesterday's Jumbles: PATCH CHASM FUSION BAMBOO
Answer: Car crash scenes can turn a movie into this — A "SMASH" HIT

Earlier British film awards prompt flurry of publicity

NEW YORK (AP) — With Britain's top film awards coming ahead of the Oscars for the first time, studios are putting their publicity machines into high gear earlier than usual.

The British Academy of Film and Television Arts awards, or Baftas, normally are given after the Academy Awards. This year, they're scheduled for Feb. 25, four weeks before the Oscars — and smack in the middle of prime Oscar campaigning time.

British Academy officials say the earlier date has raised the profile of their awards, which in the past were something of an afterthought.

"We've had a fantastic response from the studios and big independents," Steve Woolley, chairman of the organization's film section, is quoted as saying in Wednesday's Variety.

There are more special screenings in England and more videos being sent out. Stars and directors appearing at screenings at the Academy's London headquarters have included Geoffrey Rush, star of "Quills"; Michael Winterbottom, director of "The Claim"; Joel Schumacher, who directed "Tigerland"; star Michael Douglas and director Curtis Hanson of "Wonder Boys"; and Kate Hudson and Patrick Fugit, the young stars of "Almost Famous."

"Everyone is looking at it as a stepping stone," said Andrew Cripps, president of distributor United International Pictures, which represents Universal and Paramount.

But not everyone thinks earlier Baftas will influence the Oscar race.

"It's of less significance than I would hope it to be," said David Livingstone, Universal's London-based president of international marketing. "In reality, nine out of 10 people in Hollywood don't know the Baftas exist."

TV GUIDE

THURSDAY EVENING — DECEMBER 28, 2000

		6 PM	6:30	7 PM	7:30	8 PM	8:30	9 PM	9:30	10 PM	10:30	11 PM	11:30	12 AM	12:30
(TBS)	6	Full House "D.J.'s Choice"	Full House "The Producer"	Roseanne "Couch Potatoes" $	Roseanne $ (CC)	College Football Micron PC Bowl -- Minnesota vs. North Carolina State. From Miami. (Live)							Movie ((("Two Mules for Sister Sara" (1970) Clint Eastwood, Shirley MacLaine. Time Approximate.		
(ENC)	7	Justification Not	Faith Factory	Hildebrand: Knight	Scandal of the Cross	Our Lady of the Angels Monastery Daily Mass		Life on the Rock (Live Phone-In)		We Are One Body	Rosary-Land	Catholic University Christmas Concert			Household of Faith
(WSVI)	8	All My Children (CC)		News	ABC World News Tonight (CC)	Real Estate Preview	Famous Homes and Hideaways	Whose Line Is It Anyway?	Whose Line Is It Anyway?	Who Wants to Be a Millionaire "VH1's Pop-Up Celebrity Edition." (CC)		Primetime Thursday (N) (CC)	News		(:35) Nightline (N) (CC)
(FOX)	9	Judge Joe Brown (CC)	Divorce Court (CC)	Judge Judy (CC)	Home Improve-	Simpsons $ (CC)	Blind Date	Movie ((• "Jumanji" (1995, Fantasy) Robin Williams, Bonnie Hunt. $ (CC)				Fox Report	Blind Date		Arrest & Trial (CC)
(WSEE)	10	Inside Edition (CC)	News	News	CBS Evening	Wheel of Fortune	Jeopardy! (CC)	Diagnosis Murder "Man Overboard" (N) $ (CC)		48 Hours "Bad Girls" $ (CC)		48 Hours "Great Dames" (N) $ (CC)	News		(:35) Late Show (N)
(WNBC)	11	News (CC)		News (CC)	NBC Nightly News (CC)	Extra (N) $ (CC)	Access Hollywood $ (CC)	Friends $ (CC)	Weber $ (CC)	Will & Grace $ (CC)	Just Shoot Me $ (CC)	ER Dr. Kovac's hasty decision may cost an accident victim her life.	News (CC)		(:35) Tonight Show (N) $ (CC)
(WTJH)	12	Reading Rainbow	Financial Success	Newshour With Jim Lehrer (CC)		Topics		World of National Geographic $ (CC)		Mystery! "A Certain Justice" (CC) (DVS)		Still Holding On-Dorothy Love Coates	Charlie Rose $ (CC)		
(WKRQ)	13	Abrázame Muy Fuerte		Locura de Amor		Wilson Wilson	Atrévete			Película se Anunciará			Ocurrió Así		
(WH1)	14	Before They	Before-Stars	Before They	Before They	Before They	Before They	Before They	Before They	Before They	Before They	Before They Were Rock Stars II $	Before They	Before They	
(WGN)	15	7th Heaven "Just You Wait and See" $ (CC)		Full House (CC)	Clueless $ (CC)	Fresh Prince	Suddenly Susan (CC)	Movie (("Backfield in Motion" (1991, Comedy) Roseanne Arnold, Tom Arnold. $				News $ (CC)	In the Heat of the Night "A Step Removed" (CC)		
(MTV)	16	Daria $ (CC)	Daria "The F Word"	Daria $ (CC)	Daria $ (CC)	Daria $ (CC)	TRL $ (CC)		Save-Last Dnce	Fake ID Club $	When Sex Goes Pop	TRL Uncensored $			MTV Uncensored
(GEMS)	17	Próxima Víctima		Aguamarina		Susana Gimenez		América en Vivo		Maritere		Noticias	Rompeportones		
(BET)	18	(5:00) Rap City: Tha Basement		106 & Park: BET's Top Ten Live			Oh Drama!		Linc's $ (CC)	Comicview		BET Live	BET News		BET Tonight
(CNN)	19	Inside Politics (N) (CC)		Worldview	Moneyline Newshour		Crossfire	Blitzer	The Point	Larry King Live (CC)		Tonight	Spin Room	Sports	Moneyline
(FAM)	20	S Club 7 $ (CC)	Two of a Kind $ (CC)	Two of a Kind $ (CC)	Who's the Boss? $	Early Edition "Halloween" $ (CC)		Movie ((• "Air Bud" (1997, Comedy-Drama) Michael Jeter, Kevin Zegers. A lonely boy discovers a dog with a nose for basketball. $				Hidden Secrets of Magic $ (CC)	700 Club (CC)		
(USA)	21	Martin $ (CC)	Martin "Beat It"	Walker, Texas Ranger "Crime Wave Dave" $		JAG "War Cries" $ (CC)		Nash Bridges "Hard Cell" $ (CC)		Movie ((• "Red Scorpion" (1989, Adventure) Dolph Lundgren, M. Emmet Walsh. $			Martin $ (CC)	Martin "Beat It"	
(LIFE)	22	Golden Girls (CC)	Golden Girls (CC)	Golden Girls $ (CC)	Golden Girls $ (CC)	Intimate Portrait "Cybill Shepherd" $ (CC)		Unsolved Mysteries $		Movie (("Armed and Innocent" (1994, Drama) Gerald McRaney, Kate Jackson. A couple's 11-year-old son kills intruders in their home.			Golden Girls "Mister Terrific"	Golden Girls $ (CC)	
(TLC)	23	Home Again	Home Again	How'd They Do That?		Trauma: Life in the ER		Paramedics "Wild West"		Secrets of Forensic Science: Sex Fiend		Ancient Ancestors: Princess	Paramedics "Wild West"		
(ESPN)	24	(5:00) College Football Music City Bowl -- Mississippi vs. West Virginia. From Nashville, Tenn. (Live) (CC)				College Football Insight.com Bowl -- Iowa State vs Pittsburgh. From Phoenix. (Live) (CC)							Sportscenter (CC)		
(ESPN2)	25	ESPNews	Street Rodder (N)	Sportscenter		NFL 2Night (N) (CC)	NHL Hockey Los Angeles Kings at St. Louis Blues. From Savvis Center in St. Louis. (Subject to Blackout) (Live)						NHL Hockey Edmonton Oilers at San Jose Sharks. (Subject to Blackout)		
(CNN2)	26	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News (CC)	Headline News (CC)	Headline News (CC)	Headline News (CC)	Headline News (CC)	Headline News (CC)	Headline News (CC)	Headline News (CC)	Headline News (CC)	Headline News (CC)
(WCUI)	27	Headline News	Wild's Life (El)	Entertainment	Adrenaline TV $	Thunderbox (Taped)		WWF Smackdown! $ (CC)				Headline News (CC)	(Off Air)		
(TBN)	28	Praise the Lord (CC)				Dino	Myles Munroe	Behind the Scenes	Intelligence Briefing	Bishop T.D. Jakes (CC)	Benny Hinn (CC)	Praise the Lord (Live) (CC)			
(NICK)	30	Rocket Power $	U Pick Nicktoons	Pinky & the Brain	Thornberrys	Hey Arnold! (CC)	Rugrats $ (CC)	Spongebob Sq.	Deeds of Eddie	Gilligan's Island $	Beverly Hillbillies	Facts of Life $	Facts of Life "IQ"	Three's Company	Three's Company
(DISC)	31	Your New House Plywood factory.		Wild Discovery: Grizzlies-Rockies		Wild Discovery "Great Siberian Grizzly"		Three Minutes to Impact		Discovery News: Science 2000		Quest for the Giant Squid	Justice Files "Bad Girls"		
(DISN)	35	So Weird "Eddie's Desk" (CC)	Smart Guy (CC)	Famous Jett Jackson (CC)	Boy Meets World (CC)	Movie "Mom's Got a Date With a Vampire" (2000, Adventure) Caroline Rhea, Charles Shaughnessy. (CC)		(:35) Movie (("Larger Than Life" (1996) Bill Murray, Janeane Garofalo. An elephant and its new owner head for the West Coast. (CC)				(:20) Movie ((• "Johnny Tsunami" (1999, Drama) Brandon Baker, Cary-Hiroyuki Tagawa. (CC)			
(BBCE)	37	Magnum, P.I. "Forty" (CC)		Night Court	Newsradio (CC)	Law & Order "Old Friends" (CC)		Biography: Charles Lindbergh		Behind Closed Doors (CC)		Investigative Reports (CC)	Law & Order "Blood" (CC)		
(TNT)	38	Pensacola: Wings of Gold "Acceptable Casualties"		ER "Responsible Parties" $ (CC)		Pretender "Red Rock Jarod" $ (CC)		NBA Basketball Portland Trail Blazers at Utah Jazz. From the Delta Center in Salt Lake City. (Live) $ (CC)				Inside the NBA (CC)	Movie ((• "Ricochet" (1991) Denzel Washington, Ice-T.		
(SCIFI)	39	Xena: Warrior Princess		Sliders "Easy Slider"		Babylon 5 "Walkabout"		Crypt Tales	Crypt	Crypt Tales	Crypt	Crypt Tales	Crypt Tales	Crossing	Twilight Z.
(BRAVO)	40	Movie (((("The Third Man" (1949, Suspense) Joseph Cotten, Orson Welles. A writer questions a friend's death in postwar Vienna.				St. Elsewhere		Movie ((("The Last Emperor" (1987, Biography) John Lone, Peter O'Toole, Joan Chen. Bernardo Bertolucci's epic recounting of the life of Pu Yi.							Movie "The Last Tycoon"
(TOON)	41	Dragon-Z	Tenchi	Batman	Superman	Scooby	Powerpuff	Powerpuff	Dexter	Bugs	Tom Jerry	Flintstones	Scooby	Powerpuff	Dexter
(COURT)	42	Closing Arguments (N)		Pros Cons	Cops (CC)	Profiler "Train Man" $		Forensic	Wanted	Cops (CC)	Cops (CC)	Crime Stories		Wanted	Cellblock F
(FOXSP)	44	Thunderbox		Football	Last Word	Football	See This	College Basketball Sugar Bowl Classic -- Florida vs. Tulane.					College Basketball: LSU vs. Ore. St.		
(TCM)	45	(5:00) Movie ((• "My Reputation" (1946) Barbara Stanwyck.		Movie ((• "Mr. Blandings Builds His Dream House" (1948) Cary Grant. A Manhattan family tries to build a home in the country.				Movie ((("The 5,000 Fingers of Dr. T." (1953) Hans Conried, Tommy Rettig. A piano teacher has a disturbing effect on a boy's dreams.				Movie ((• "Excuse My Dust" (1951, Comedy) Red Skelton, Sally Forrest, Macdonald Carey. (CC)			"Meet Me in Las Vegas" (1956)
(CNBC)	53	Market Wrap (CC)		Edge (CC)	Business Center (CC)			Hardball		Geraldo Rivera Reports: Smashed		News With Brian Williams (CC)	Hardball		
(E_)	54	Hollywood Off-Ramp	Hollywood Off-Ramp	Fashion Emergency	News Daily (N)	Celebrity Homes	Talk Soup (N)	Mysteries & Scandals	Mysteries & Scandals	True Hollywood Story "Gilligan's Island"			Howard Stern (N)	Howard Stern	
(HEALTH)	55	Medical Diary	Medical Diary	Children's Hospital		Operation "Blue Baby Syndrome"		Best of Discovery Health		Best of Discovery Health		Best of Discovery Health	Best of Discovery Health		
(GOOD)	56	More Money		Tony Orlando and Dawn Rainbow Hour		Combat! "The Raider"		Ozzie & Harriet	Room-Daddy	GTV Dancesport From Miami Beach, Fla.		Bonanza: The Lost Episodes	Combat! "The Raider"		
(FOOD)	57	Essence of Emeril	Molto Mario	Calling All Cooks	Martha-Kitchen	Cooking Live "New Year's Day Brunch"		Emeril Live		Food 911	Best Of	Ming's Quest	Extreme Cuisine	Emeril Live	
(TRAVEL)	58	Destination: Style	Destination: Style	Destination: Style	Destination: Style	Curious World (CC)		Mount St. Helens Fury		Amazing Destinations Mount Rainier. (CC)		Amazing Destinations "Grand Canyon" (CC)		Mount St. Helens Fury	

People *in the* News

Actress Ryan says it hard to say goodbye

NEW YORK (AP) — Breaking up is hard to do, Meg Ryan says, especially under a microscope.


Ryan

"It's been very weird to find out how ready people are to think the worst of you," the 38-year-old actress said in the January issue of Harper's Bazaar.

Ryan split from husband Dennis Quaid and is now seeing her "Proof of Life" co-star Russell Crowe.

"My marriage was breaking up long before it became a matter for public discussion. I will never talk about the reasons why it broke up, and neither will Dennis," she said.

Ryan and Quaid, 46, split up in July after nine years of marriage. They have a 7-year-old son.

Attorney says suit against Tyson a ploy

LAS VEGAS (AP) — Mike Tyson's lawyer says money and not justice is the motive behind a lawsuit a topless dancer filed against the boxer.

"Mr. Tyson has sadly been targeted by a number of people who seek monetary gain over frivolous lawsuits," Jim Jimmerson said.

Victoria Bianco claims Tyson shoved her May 8 at Cheetah's, a topless club near downtown Las Vegas. The lawsuit claims Bianco was injured when Tyson's "violent and powerful" shove "caused her to fall on her tailbone."

Bianco, 24, quit dancing the next day. She is seeking unspecified damages.

Jimmerson said the allegations are false.

CommunityCalendar

St. Croix

DECEMBER 29

The Business and Professional Women's Organization of St. Croix invites the general public to join them for "Happy Hour," at 5:30 p.m., Friday, Dec. 29, at the King's Landing Yacht Club on the Boardwalk (the former seaplane site). Call 713-9148.

DECEMBER 30

St. Croix Hiking Association invites all members and their friends to their Annual Holiday party at 8:00 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 30, at the Nature Conservancy Little Princess Estate. Call 773-8409, 692-9984, or 778-2078.

DECEMBER 31

Holy Ghost Deliverance Ministries/City of Refuge invites the public to join them for New Year's Eve service at 10 p.m., Sunday, Dec. 31, at #303 Barren Spot. The Youth Steel Orchestra will be performing.

The Bible Church of Christ invites the public to its Old Year's Night service, at 10 p.m., Sunday, Dec. 31, at 1-J Diamond. There will be an after-service birthday party for Dr. Floyd Thomas, pastor of Bible Church of Christ. Call 778-1002.

Interfaith Coalition presents "World Peace Prayer," from 7 a.m., Sunday, Dec. 31, at the Christiansted Bandstand for peace songs and readings by all faiths. Call 778-2880.

Speak the Word Ministries invites the public to its New Year's Eve Concert at 9 p.m., Sunday, Dec. 31, at the St. Croix Educational Complex auditorium. Special performances by the Lansiquot singers.

Virgin Islands Bowling Federation will hold a meeting at 7 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 31, at Tropical Tenpins Bowling Center (Estate Castle Coakley).

Camp Arawak is accepting applications for a Job Training Program which will begin Jan. 8, 2001. Training will be in Intro to Computers, Microsoft Word, Microsoft Office, Excel, Windows 98, word processing, computing time and attendance, payroll and payroll taxes, accounts payable, accounts receivable and basic office practices and procedures. You must be 16-25 years old to participate. All classes are free. Registration will be held from 9:30 a.m. to noon, Monday through Friday, at 1AMA Diamond Ruby (upstairs of Little Buddies Development Day Care and Preschool). Call 773-7377.

St. Croix Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc. is seeking young girls ages 11-14 to participate in the Delta Academy that meets Saturday from 10 a.m. to noon at Juanita Gardine School. The academy provides free training in technology, academic assistance, culture and personal development. Call 778-6401 or 778-8259 to register. Space is limited.

J & J Fun Troupe is now accepting registration for their 2001 Three Kings Day presentation "Tribal Rage" at their Mas camp at #104 Est. LaReine. Come out early and register for the section of your choice. For more information call 778-3177.

The Courtyard Players are sponsoring a one-act playwriting contest open to St. Croix junior high, senior high, university, public, private and parochial school students. Prizes of $100, $50 and $25, and a certificate will be presented at each level. Submit plays to Courtyard Players by Jan. 31 to P.O. Box 24653, C'sted, St. Croix VI 00824-0653.

One Love Productions presents "Nature's Way" for the 2000-2001 Three Kings Day Parade. They are accepting registration and displaying costumes. Call 778-0517 or 779-3442. Everyone is welcome.

Top Dogg Festival Troupe will have costume viewing at their new location every evening from 7 p.m., in Paparazzy's Night Club. Call 778-6190 or 690-1464 Music will be provided by "De Awesome Jam Band." Anyone interested in joining the troupe can attend meetings every Wednesday, at the Paparazzy's Night Club (on the main road one block west of the Canegata Ball Park).

Strikers for Festival 2000-2001 wants any interested teachers, policemen, cable TV workers, firemen, EMTs and the public to join their floupe. Call Lariel Gerard at 692-2619. Registration will be held until Jan. 5, 2001.

The Business and Professional Women's Organization of St. Croix is seeking candidates between the ages of 25 and 35 to participate in their annual Young Careerist competition. Judging will be based on the candidates' written biographical information, personal interview, group interaction and prepared speeches on a specific topic. Call 772-4433 or 778-9749.

Stepping Stones, Inc. wants you to donate your new or reusable building materials for use in single family homes by low income families. To leave a message or to arrange a pick-up call 772-0010.

Queen Louise Home For Children is seeking male special friends to serve as role models for the boys at Queen Louise Home. Call Ms. Springer between 2 p.m. and 10 p.m., at 772-0090.

Intrigue Troupe invites anyone interested in parading with Intrigue and V.I.O. International, for St. Croix Festival 2001, to register at Sun Stroke Sportswear and Promotions in the United Shopping Plaza. For more information call 773-8393.

The Recovery and Reuse Project of Stepping Stones, Inc. will be closed from Dec. 23 to Jan. 7, 2001.

USDA-FSA announces that the request for a Noninsured Crop Disaster program (NAP) area for St. Croix, St. Thomas-St. John, Virgin Islands due to Hurricanes Georges and Lenny has been approved. Call 773-9146 or 692-9662.

My Brothers' Table needs volunteers to help serve those who are hungry in Frederiksted. Call 778-0520.

Obituaries

JAMES EMMANUEL "NEZAKAN" NESBITT JR., age 25, of William's Delight passed away on Monday, Dec. 18, 2000.

He is survived by his father: James Emmanuel Nesbitt Sr.; mother: Ernestine Nesbitt; brothers: Charlie Nesbitt, Roland Nesbitt, Justin "Ninja" Nesbitt, Calvin Nesbitt, Emmanuel Nesbitt, Kareem Nesbitt, Jaccan Nesbitt, Anthony Nesbitt, David Nesbitt and Steve Nesbitt; sons: Dionte Kof and Emmanuel Nesbitt; daughters: Jahmeta E. Nesbitt and Jahmaris Martha Nesbitt; significant other: Thamaris "Tasha" Colon; godparents: Malcolm Maynard and Netta Maynard; aunts: Margaret McLean, Doreen Haliday, Sylvia Weekes, Myrtle Carty and Carmen Sweeney; uncles: Raphael Lewis, James Lewis, Peter Lewis, Leslie Rawlins, Charles Sweeney and Nathaniel Haliday; close family friends: The Rawlins Family, The Colon Family and The Mintas Family and many other relatives and friends too numerous to mention.

Funeral service will take place on Thursday, Dec. 28, at the United Community Methodist Church in Hogensburg, F'sted, at 11 a.m. Viewing will begin at 10 a.m. Interment will follow in the Kingshill Cemetery.

Professional arrangements are entrusted by Thomas Hyll Memorial Funeral Chapel of St. Croix.

***


Rodriguez

CANDIDA BOLQUES RODRIGUEZ, age 66, of Estate Mon Bijou passed away on Saturday, Dec. 23, 2000 at the Gov. Juan Luis Hospital on St. Croix.

She is survived by her husband: Alberto Rodriguez; sons: Alberto Maldonado, Jose Serrano and Edwin Figueroa; daughter: Mirian Maldonado Romero; brother: Federico Bolques; sister-in-law: Angelita Bolques and Family; grandchildren: Ray Romero, Julio Figueroa, Angelie Figueroa, Eduardo Figueroa, Carlos Maldanado, Luis Maldanado, Maritza Ayala, Alicia Serrano, Jose Luis Serrano, Marisol Serrano, Luis Enrique Ayala Jr., Joel Serrano and Luis Angel Serrano; great grandchildren: Sol Marie Bennett, Kiara Bennett, Daniela Serrano, Melissa Percel, Adasha Percel, Veronica Romero and Aurora Romero; son-in-law: Alphonso Daniel; daughters-in-law: Antonia Castillo, Delia Bolques and Angie Figueroa; other friends and family to numerous to mention.

Funeral service will take place on Friday, Dec 29, at the Kingshill Cemetery Chapel at 2:30 p.m. Viewing will begin at 1:30 p.m. Interment will follow in the Kingshill Cemetery.

Professional arrangements are entrusted by the Thomas Hyll Memorial Funeral Chapel of St. Croix.

BAJE Entertainment Services continues to hold youth soccer training for boys and girls 6 years old and up, from 9 a.m. to noon, Saturdays, at the New Drive-In. Call 719-0116.

St. Thomas-St. John

JANUARY 8

St. Thomas Alumanae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. will hold a formal meeting at 6 p.m., Monday, Jan. 8, 2001, at the Curriculum Center. All members are encouraged to attend.

Rotary II — St. Thomas meets on Wednesdays at 12:15 p.m. at Marriott's Frenchman's Reef. For more information call 776-0677.

Lutheran Church of the Reformation invites everyone to join them for Sunday morning worship service at 8:30 a.m., in Tutu. If you need a church home, they are there for you. Also bring your children to Children's Village each Sunday at 11 a.m.

Independent Living Center, Inc., will hold a training in Disaster in Home Health Care. The dates and times will be announced at a later date. Call 774-0368.

Non-Profit Groups are welcome to use Center Court, or the Food Court at Tutu Park Mall, free. For more information call 775-4658.

KATS, St. John, Inc. (Kids and The Sea) meets every Saturday morning at Coral Bay, St. John. The program is a nondiscriminatory marine safety program for children 8-18 years of age. Call 779-4994.

National Scrabble Association of the VI Club 190 plays Scrabble every Thursday evening at the Frenchtown Deli from 5-9 p.m. Call 776-2035.

Women for Positive Change invites all women to participate in a survey. Call 774-6683.

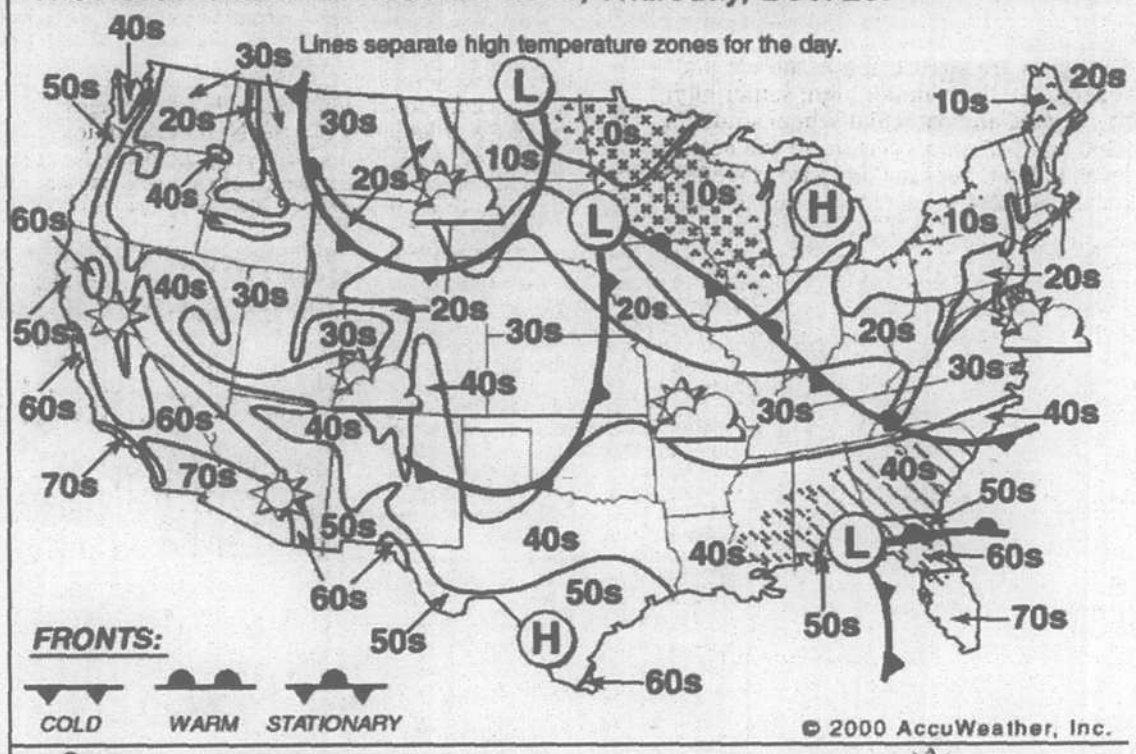
Free of Charge Computer Training Classes are being offered to adults who have a disability. Learn spreadsheets, etc. Space is available. Call 777-2253 or the VI Relay at 1-800-855-8477/777-2253.

The Avis reminds you not to drink and drive.

WeatherOutlook

NATIONAL Weather

The AccuWeather® forecast for noon, Thursday, Dec. 28.



Via Associated Press

World Temps

City	Hi	Lo	Wthr
Amsterdam	31	29	sn
Athens	65	59	cdy
Auckland	78	67	cdy
Barbados	83	75	cdy
Barcelona	58	44	cdy
Beijing	38	19	cdy
Beirut	65	52	cdy
Belgrade	54	43	rn
Berlin	33	27	sn
Bermuda	60	54	cdy
Bogota	64	44	cdy
B'Aires	89	66	rn
Cairo	66	46	clr
Calgary	52	30	cdy
Caracas	81	67	cdy
Copenhagen	33	28	sn
Dhahran	72	50	clr
Dublin	39	24	sn
Frankfurt	38	32	rn
Geneva	42	36	cdy
Guatemala City	74	57	cdy
Hanoi	76	67	cdy
Harare	75	59	rn
Havana	70	66	cdy
Helsinki	29	24	cdy
Hong Kong	73	66	cdy
Istanbul	60	50	rn
Jerusalem	53	37	clr
Jo'burg	75	56	cdy
Kiev	41	31	cdy
La Paz	59	36	rn
Lima	77	67	cdy
Lisbon	56	49	rn
London	37	35	cdy
Madrid	49	40	rn
Manila	85	75	rn
Mexico City	66	37	cdy
Montreal	14	-4	clr
Moscow	23	0	sn
Nairobi	81	55	clr
Nassau	74	65	cdy
New Delhi	76	42	clr
Osaka	48	38	cdy
Oslo	28	18	sn
Panama	94	94	cdy
Paris	43	37	rn
Rio	88	79	cdy
Rome	61	53	rn
San Jose	82	69	clr
San Juan	84	71	clr
Santiago	76	45	cdy
Sao Paulo	84	68	rn
San Salvador	81	70	clr
Seoul	32	16	cdy
Sydney	94	69	clr
Taipei	72	68	cdy
Tegucigalpa	80	60	cdy
Tel Aviv	66	42	cdy
Tokyo	49	37	clr
Toronto	22	12	sn
Vancouver	47	42	rn
Vienna	33	26	cdy
Warsaw	29	26	cdy
Zurich	38	33	cdy

VI Forecast

Local forecast for Puerto Rico and the United States Virgin Islands (*NWS*):

Thursday — Mostly cloudy. A 50-percent chance of showers. High 80 to around 85.

Thursday night — Mostly cloudy. A 40-percent chance of showers. Low around 75.

Friday — Partly cloudy. A 30-percent chance of showers. High 80 to around 85.

Coastal waters:

Synopsis — Surface high pressure extending from the central north Atlantic southwest to the northeast Caribbean tonight will continue to weaken.

A cold front arcoss eastern Hispaniola will move southeast, reaching the adjacent Atlantic waters and Puerto Rico Thursday.

Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands waters:

Saturday through Wednesday — Partly cloudy.Chance of showers. High 80 to around 85. Lows 70 to around 75.

CaribbeanClouds



Crossword

by Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS
1 Antenna type
5 TV watchdog org.
8 Dog's dogs?
12 Never again
13 Play with robots
14 Rue the run
15 Exam format
16 Oklahoma city
17 Garbage barge
18 Broadway belter
20 Tubular entree
22 Mexican menu items
26 Wan
29 The whole shootin' match
30 Comedian Philips
31 Picnic intruders
32 Fellow
33 Blue dye source
34 One — customer
35 Garfield's owner
36 Preamble
37 Captivating
40 Rubik's baffler
41 Spit in the food
45 Made like a fish
47 Prot. or Cath.
49 Exceptional
50 Tittle
51 Glass or Levin
52 Maleficence
53 Lunch hour
54 Felon's flight
55 Just say no

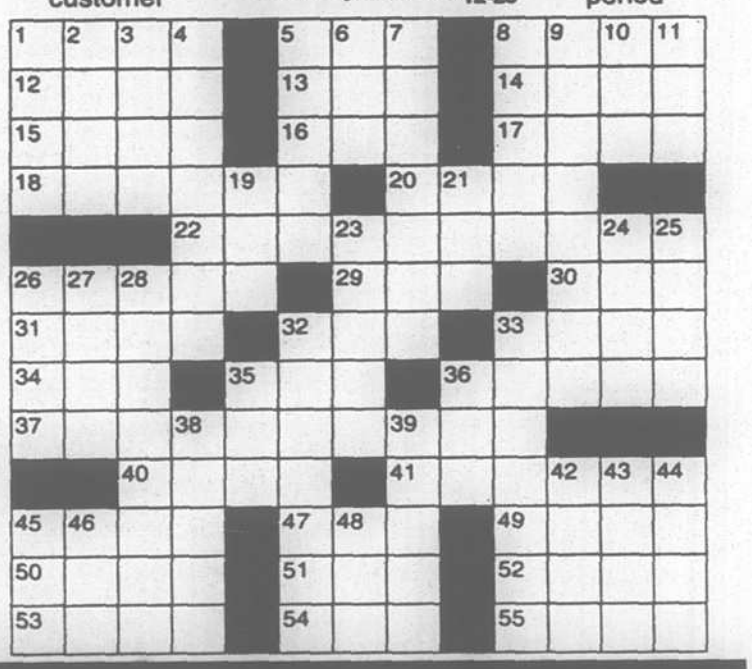
DOWN
1 Tragic fate
2 Concerning
3 "Lion King" baddie
4 Bike shop wares
5 Belgian money
6 Chew the —
7 In a mad way
8 20-Across, e.g.
9 Mishap
10 Personal question?
11 Wield a needle
19 Whatever number
21 Under the weather
23 Frequent
24 Eastern potentate
25 Alone
26 Appetizer spread
27 In a few moments
28 Disjointed
32 Daughter of King Lear
33 Ticked off
35 Poke
36 Squid squirt
38 Mortal
39 Muslim faith
42 Breaker
43 Green land
44 Hinge (on)
45 Sermon subject
46 Court
48 Time period

Solution time: 24 mins.

		B	U	G			D	O	H			
	T	A	T	A		B	A	R	O	N		
T	O	G	A	S		A	N	G	L	E	S	
H	I	G	H	M	U	C	K	A	M	U	C	K
E	L	Y		A	S	H	E	N		T	E	E
			P	I	E	S			D	E	N	Y
	S	W	A	N	S		C	O	U	R	T	
O	T	I	S			R	O	B	E			
O	R	G		S	H	A	K	E		W	A	S
H	I	G	H	W	A	T	E	R	M	A	R	K
	P	L	E	A	S	E		L	O	V	E	Y
		E	A	R	N	S		I	D	E	A	
			P	M	T			N	E	D		

Yesterday's answer 12-28





Cryptoquip

V X M M E V A D N G F A K G D N D G X F F E V X K G C A J G N C X J F G M G A M F G .

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: I LIKE TO REFER TO ENCHANTING GOLDEN OLDIES AS THE ROCK OF AGES.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: V equals H

ClassifiedAds / Call 773•2300

Real Estate for Sale



OCEANFRONT - BY OWNER
East End - 5 bdrm - 5Bath, Private Home with 50ft. Waterfront Pool - Near Casino
Excellent Vacation Rental History
(photos) www.AffordableVilla.com
800-989-9959 Glenn930@aol.com
By Appointment Only - $860,000

Christiansted Gems - Several lots in Christiansted Historic District, some with partial structure, reduced for fast sale. Asking from $22,500.00 to $39,500.00. Owner will consider all offers. Call Sandy Bastian-Carty, CPS. Pan Am Pavillion. **773-3300 or 773-1464**

East End waterfront. Boat dock. Two bedrooms could be three. Guest cottage. Pool. New kitchen. 90% remodel awaits finishing touches. Superb Cotton Valley location. $945,000. Patrice Kelly, Hamilton Real Estate, Caravelle Arcade, **773-3300** or home **773-1817**.

Historic Plantation Estate. Two acres. Five bedroom main house plus three cottages. Pool. Great room. Zoning allows for some business uses. Convenient location near Christiansted. $695,000. Patrice Kelly, Hamilton Real Estate, Caravelle Arcade, **773-3300** or home **773-1817**.

Investment Opportunity - Two bedrooms, one bath upstairs, office apartment or store downstairs. Heavy traffic area. Excellent condition. Asking $175,000.00. Owner will consider all offers. Call Sandy Bastian-Carty, CPS, Hamilton Real Estate, Pan Am Pavillion. **773-3300 or 773-1464**

Estate Carlton Subdivision located south of William's Delight intersection-23 plots available for sale-down payment of $5,000.00 and balance payable $250.00 monthly. You may start building with down payment. Call Jay-Ro-Mar, Inc. at **778-8747** 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.

Enfield Green - Beautiful 0.600 acre corner lot, across the street from beach, asking $42,500. Owner will consider all offers. Call Sandy Bastian-Carty, CPS-Hamilton Real Estate, Pan Am Pavillion **773-3300 or 773-1464.**

Personal Injury
Transfers of Property
Deeds * Probates
Wrongful Discharge
Leases * Evictions
Cr. Defense
Wills * Divorce

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PUBLISHER'S NOTICE
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Beautifully furnished, immaculate hilltop home, clever accomodations for guests. Attached (rented) studio could be second bedroom. Sparkling 24X12 pool, deck, covered porch. Many extras: generator, china cabinets, solar water, BBQ, etc. Asking $199,000. Marmaduke, Broker Princesse. **(340)773-1851.**

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•DIVORCES•
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Attorney at Law
St. Croix Avis Building
36AB LaGrande Princesse
773-6363

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Chenay Bay Beach Resort requires a hardworking, experienced restaurant manager. Candidate shall possess outstanding people skills, thorough knowledge of both food and beverage and an ability to train and motivate staff. Relentless control of food and beverage costs is expected and required.
Apply in person
8am - 4pm
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CHENAY BAY BEACH RESORT

Temporary position-Receptionist needed. Light typing, filing answering phones, etc. Call **692-5207** for more info.

Part time Customer Sales & Service people needed for Nisky Center, St. Thomas and Plaza Extra, St. Croix. Bilingual skills preferred. Salary, bonus, holiday pay. Resume & cover letter to American Beeper **778-8844.**

Administrative Assistant: Women's Coalition of St. Croix is seeking organized, energetic, self-motivated person for full-time position. Must be computer literate in Microsoft Word, personable and have excellent communication skills (oral and written), knowledge of graphics and positive attitude. Must have prior secretarial experience. Due to the crisis nature of the work, applicants must be able to work under pressure in a very busy environment. Send resume cover letter and writing sample to: WCSC Co-Director, P.O. Box 2734 Christiansted, St. Croix, VI 00822. No phone calls!!! WCSC is an equal opportunity employer.

Legal Services of the Virgin Islands, Inc., is seeking a full time Legal Secretary to work in the St. Croix office. Must have good communication skill; Knowledge on wordperfect 8.0, organized and type 60wpm. We encourage all serious applicants. Salary commensurate with abilities and experience. Liberal Benefits. No phone calls please. Send cover letter and resume to: Harvey Nielsen, Legal Services of the Virgin Islands, Fax:778-8593 or e-mail: **lsvistx@viaccess.net.** LSVI is an equal opportunity employer.

Sales Position
Food & Beverage Distributor seeking an experienced, self-motivated sales representative with the following skills:
- Experience with food and liquor sales
- Excellent communication and customer service skills
- Excellent time management and organizational skills
- Proficiency in Excel and Word
- Bachelor's degree

Send resume to: Sales Position, P.O. Box 5165 C'sted, VI 00823.

Managers position at Gas Station/Mini Mart, motivated individual able to work independantly Experience a plus but will train the right person. Mail resume to P.O. Box 339 St. Croix, VI 00821 or Call **773-1670**.

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Bates Trucking and Trash Removal, Inc. is now hiring: Truck Drivers, drivers License, clean traffic record and professional references required, compensation based on experience. Send resume and copy of photo identification to: **P.O. Box 834** kingshill, St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands 00851.

Experienced cooks full or part-time. Excellent pay for qualified applicant. Leave name, phone number and a detailed message. Call today! **773-4210.**

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Wanted: Bartender/Waiter. 5 yrs experience. Health card. Able to work day or night. Full time busy bar & restaurant. Excellent tips. Not a seasonal position. **773-2128.** Call 9 -10 a.m, 4-5 pm.

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Samantha Ross gifted Psychic. Makes love happen. Reunites separated. Reveals lovers feelings. Returns lover that's been taken by another. Regain the one you love. Call: **1-713-649-2825.**

Free reading by phone. Ordained Psychic Christian Reader/Advisor Ashley Brooks. Healer from the Islands. Returns lover. Reveals enemies. Relieves loneliness, depression, anxiety, roots, herbs, oils for all conditions. Toll free:**1-888-833-0421**

Free reading by phone. Ordained Psychic Christian Reader/Advisor Cleo Kingston. Healer from the islands. Returns lover. Reveals enemies. Relieves loneliness, depression, anxiety, roots, herbs, oils for all conditions. **1-800-757-2412.**

Notices

UNIFORM CITY will be CLOSING on FRIDAY
DECEMBER 22
and will REOPEN
on January 8.
778-9775

IF THE FOLLOWING PEOPLE ARE STILL ON PLANET EARTH,
PLEASE CALL
SUN STORAGE:
Richard Wilson
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Kevin Archibald
Debra Maragh
Paulette Hodge
Aubrey Washington
Armando Zabala
Michael Malcolm
Arturo Roebuck Jr.
Fred Borchert
Bill Hendricks
Shirley Thomas
Claude Elcock
Please call 778-7867 Right Away !!!!

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Friday - Rob Paper
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Messages

John 3:17
For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

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What a GREAT idea!
Fun, Food, & Friends
Happy Hour
7 Days a week • 5 to 6
$1.00 domestic beer
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Sunday, always a tropical treat drink special.
Lunch and Dinner Specials Daily
FRIDAY!
Last Time in 2000!
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jam with Friends
come jam with Jim 6:30 to 9:30
"Strip Nite"
N.Y. Strip Specials
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FOOD CHEESEBURGER IN PARADISE FUN
Daily Lunch and Dinner Specials
ENTERTAINMENT
Thurs. 28th Llewellyn & Dem Calypso & Pork Nite
Fri. X-ITEMENTS BAND Reggae & BBQ
Sat. 2 NITES ONLY KIRK KELLY from NY, NY
Sun. 31st Happy New Year
6-9 The X-itements Reggae & Dancing
10-12:30 Kirk Kelly
Free Champagne & Party favors at Midnight.
773-1119 East End Road

IN THE TERRITORIAL COURT OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS
DIVISION OF ST. CROIX
SUMMONS

JOSEFA ORTIZ BRITO vs. JAMIE ROSARIO Fam. No. D4130/200

TO: JAMIE ROSARIO
Address: Unknown
WITHIN THE TIME limited by law, 30 days from the last date of service by publication, you are required to appear at the above Court to answer a complaint for divorce filed against you. If you fail to appear or answer, judgment by default will be taken against you.

DENISE D. ABRAMSEN
Clerk of the Court
William W. Franks, Esq.
Legal Services of the Virgin Islands, Inc.
3017 Orange Grove
Christiansted, St. Croix 00820-4375

12/7,14,21,28, 2000

IN THE TERRITORIAL COURT OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS
DIVISION OF ST. CROIX

THE BANK OF NOVA SCOTIA,

PLAINTIFF, **CIVIL NO. 61/2000**

VS. **ACTION FOR DEBT AND MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE**

ROSALIND ROBERTS,
PAULLYNE J.R. SURZANO,

DEFENDANTS.

NOTICE OF SALE PROPERTY ON EXECUTION

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that pursuant to the provisions of 5 V.I.C., §471 et seq., the V.I. Marshal shall sell at public auction on January 26, 2001, at 10:00 a.m., at the Office of the V.I. Marshal in the Hall of Justice Building, Kingshill, St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands, the following real property situate in St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands in the name of Defendants ROSALIND ROBERTS AND PAULLYNE J.R. SURZANO, to satisfy the execution issued herein for Judgment entered on July 25, 2000, against defendants in this matter. The below described property shall be sold as stated herein:

Plot 278 (0.530 U.S. acre) of Estate Mary's Fancy, Queen Quarter, St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands as shown on Public Works Department Drawing No. 3001, dated August 4, 1971.

TOGETHER WITH all of the tenements, hereditaments and appurtenances thereunto is belonging without any representation or guarantee. The above described property is an unimproved lot.

Ten percent (10%) of the purchase price is to be paid in cash, certified or bank check at the time of sale, balance within thirty (30) days. Sale is further subject to all provisions of Title 5, Chapter 43 of the Virgin Islands Code.

DATE: 12/7/00 **By:SOBERS JOSEPH**
V.I. MARSHAL

SAMUEL T. GREY Esq.
NICHOLS NEWMAN LOGAN & D'ERAMO, P.C.
1131 KING STREET
CHRISTIANSTED, ST. CROIX **12/14,21,28,2000, 01/04/2001**

THE VIRGIN ISLANDS OF THE UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Virgin Islands Department of Agriculture is completing its plan to construct a facility for a fishermen's Market at Plot 24C Estate Body Slob in the Villa La Reine area, adjacent to the farmer's market. The Virgin Islands Department of Agriculture is soliciting public comments relevant to environmental concerns and Flood Plain Management they may affect the construction of this facility.

Concerned residents are asked to submit their concerns on or before December 31, 2000 in writing to: Fishermen's Market
C/O Henry P. Schuster
Commissioner Of Agriculture
1 Estate Lower Love, Kingshill
St. Croix U.S.V.I. 00851

12/28, 29, 30/2000

IN THE TERRITORIAL COURT OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS
DIVISION OF ST. CROIX

NOTICE OF TERRITORIAL COURT MARSHAL'S SALE

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that in compliance with the Judgment entered in the Territorial Court of the Virgin Islands, St. Croix Division dated April 28, 2000 in the matter of Betty J. Skeoch, Plaintiff vs. Sylvester Roberts, Defendant (Civil 759/1996) and the Writ of Execution issued therein, the Territorial Marshal shall sell at public auction to the highest bidder at 10:00 a.m. on Friday, January 19, 2001 at the Office of the Territorial Marshal, Territorial Court, St. Croix Division, Kinghsill, St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands, the following described real property situated in St. Croix U.S. Virgin Islands:

Improved Plot No 130, Estate Castle Coakley, Queen's Quarter, St. Croix USVI consisting of 0.48 U.S. acres, more or less, as more fully shown on PWD 4316, dated June 2, 1986.

For informational purposes only and without warranties or representations of any kind, this property is improved to include a concrete/wood house which, upon information and belief, measures +/-11,000 square feet and includes three (3) bedrooms and one (1) bath.

Said sale is made subject to any unpaid real estate taxes and any other liabilities of record as well as any homestead exemption should Defendant claim any entitlement thereto.

The conditions to the sale will be read and posted at the time of public auction. Subject to amendment, or modification thereof and for informational purpose only, the Terms of Sale are as follows.

1. **Ten percent (10%) of the purchase price must be deposited with the Marshal no later than the close of business on the day of sale. The balance of the sum bid must be paid within thirty (30) days, or the deposit will be retained by the Marshal as and for liquidated damages and applied toward satisfaction of the judgment of which the property is being sold, and at the Marshal further reserves the right, in such event, to award the sale to the next highest bidder.**
2. **All payments must be made by cash, certified check, bank check, or U.S. Postal money order. Personal uncertified checks will not be accepted.**
3. **The Marshal reserves the right to reject any and all bids not in accordance with the terms of sale.**
4. **The Marshal will issue a Certificate of Sale to the purchaser following confirmation of the sale by the Territorial Court of the Virgin Islands, and will issue a Marshal's Deed to the said purchaser, or said purchaser's assignee, upon the expiration of the Virgin Islands statutory redemption period of one (1) year. The purchaser will be responsible for the payment of the necessary documentary stamps on the deed (2% of the purchase price) and for the recording of the deed and all other attendant costs and necessary certificates, documents, attests, etc., if any.**
5. **Sale is further subject to all the provisions of 5 V.I.C., § §484 and 485, et seq.**

Dated this 27th day of November, 2000.

SOBERS JOSEPH
TERRITORIAL MARSHAL

Counsel for Plaintiff
Carl A. Beckstedt III, Esq.
Bryant Barnes & Simpson, P.C.
#47 King Street
Christiansted, St. Croix USVI 00820

12/7,14,21,28,2000

IN THE TERRITORIAL COURT OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS
DIVISION OF ST. CROIX

THE BANK OF NOVA SCOTIA,

PLAINTIFF, **CIVIL NO. 35/2000**

VS. **ACTION FOR DEBT AND MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE**

SHIRVIN RICHARDSON,

DEFENDANT.

NOTICE OF SALE OF PROPERTY ON EXECUTION

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that pursuant to the provision of 5 V.I.C., § 4 7 1 et seq., the V.I. Marshal shall sell at public auction on February 9, 2001, at 10:00 a.m., at the Office of the V.I. Marshal in the Hall of the Justice Building, Kingshill, St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands, the following real property situate in St. Croix, U.S. Virgin islands in the name of Defendant SHIRVIN RICHARDSON, to satisfy the execution issued herein for judgment entered on August 31, 2000, against defendant in this matter. The below described property shall be sold as stated herein:

Plot 393 (0.44035 U.S. acre) of Estate Union and Mt. Washington, East End, St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands as shown on Public Works Department Drawing No. 2590-A, dated December 16, 1970, last revised February 14, 1991;

TOGETHER WITH all of the tenements, hereditaments and appurtenances thereunto is belonging without any representation or guarantee. The above described property is an unimproved lot with a partially constructed cistern.

Ten percent (10%) of the purchase price is to be paid in cash, certified or bank check at the time of sale, balance within thirty (30) days. Sale is further subject to all provisions of Title 5, Chapter 43 of the Virgin Islands Code.

Date:12/7/00 **By: SOBERS JOSEPH**
V.I. MARSHAL

SAMUEL T. GREY, Esq.
NICHOLAS NEWMAN LOGAN & D'ERAMO, P.C.
1131 KING STREET
CHRISTIANSTED, ST. CROIX

12/14,21,28,2000, 01/04/2001

* PUBLIC NOTICE *

The following vehicles have been abandoned at Antilles Automotive #1B Estate Glynn, St. Croix, U.S.V.I. These vehicles must be removed from the premises. If you are the owner of one of these vehicles, please bring proof of ownership and see Scott Fricks or Rick Estes to arrange removal of your vehicle. ALL VEHICLES NOT REMOVED BY DECEMBER 31ST, 2000 WILL INCUR A STORAGE FEE OF $10.00 PER DAY. ALL VEHICLES NOT REMOVED BY JANUARY 31ST, 2001 MAY BE REMOVED AT YOUR EXPENSE OR SOLD AS SALVAGE.

VIN	YEAR	MODEL	COLOR
1JCMW731X4T177175	1987	CHEROKEE	GREY
JA3AY26A0VU021888	1997	MIRAGE	GOLD
KNAFB1213W571104	1998	SEPHIA	WHITE
JA3EA26A6RU034057	1994	MIRAGE	SILVER
KNAFA125XU5292110	1997	SEPHIA	BLUE
1G2NE14D6LC288057	1990	GRAND AM	WHITE
1GCDH14Z5HS173633	1987	C1500	GOLD
JM1BG2247R0719114	1994	MAZDA	BLACK
1G2NW54M0JC604859	1988	GRAND AM	MAROON
1JCCF88E2ET003691	1984	JEEP CJ7	RED
1MELM6533SK607717	1995	MYSTIQUE	PINK
1G1FP87H0FL103970	1985	CAMARO	BLUE
1Y1SK546XMZ071816	1991	GEO PRIZM	BLUE
YS3CD55L7G1010734	1986	SAAB	MAROON
1GCCS1453YK242154	2000	S-10	PEWTER
1FTCR10U2RUE75280	1994	RANGER	BROWN
4S2CM58V5V4305982	1997	RODEO	WHITE
3G1JC5242XS806667	1999	CAVALIER	GREEN
1G2JB5246Y7365432	2000	SUNFIRE	DK. BLUE
VIN UNKNOWN	UNK	CAVALIER	BLUE
2GBHG31K8J1156649	1988	C30	BLUE

After miracle economy for 8 years, Bush has tough act to follow

WASHINGTON (AP) — Whatever else is said about President Clinton's stewardship over the last eight years, one fact is indisputable: He presided over one of the most remarkable periods of prosperity in the nation's history.

For George W. Bush, another historic footnote may be of more pressing interest: Can he become the first Republican president since Abraham Lincoln to avoid a recession in his first term in office?

All the major indicators of the economy's status reached levels during the Clinton years not seen in more than a generation. The country over the past four years has enjoyed the strongest economic growth since the mid-1960s, growth that has helped to push the unemployment rate down to the lowest level in 30 years.

And at nearly 10 years and counting, the current economic expansion is the longest lasting in history. Clinton is the first president since Lyndon Johnson to escape a recession during his time in office.

Bush and Vice President-elect Dick Cheney, looking at signs that the economy is slowing, have warned that the country may be, in Cheney's words, "on the front edge of a recession."

Gene Sperling, Clinton's chief economist, said the incoming Republicans need to be more judicious in their comments, lest their words become a self-fulfilling prophecy.

But the GOP comments serve two purposes. They lay the groundwork for blaming Democrats if the economy does go sour. And they build a case for the centerpiece of Bush's election platform — a 10-year, $1.3 trillion tax cut.

Bush's big tax cut idea harkens back to another Republican — Ronald Reagan, who railed against the economic malaise of the Jimmy Carter years and promised to slash income taxes and shrink the size of the federal government.

Republicans point to that "supply side" revolution as the roots of the Clinton prosperity. They credit Reagan, not Clinton, for unleashing free-market forces through less government regulations and lowering taxes on investors and businesses.

Balderdash, say Democrats, who give credit for the good times to Clinton — for courageously pursuing a deficit-reduction package in his first year in office that passed Congress without a single Republican vote and in the face of GOP warnings that its tax increases invited a recession.

That package, Clinton supporters say, laid the ground work for the budget surpluses and kept interest rates low, which, in turn powered a surge in business investment that has propelled productivity growth, the key ingredient of rising living standards, to the best rates since the golden years of the 1950s and 1960s.

"Some times it's better to be lucky than to be good and President Clinton certainly enjoyed a fair amount of luck when it came to the economy."

David Wyss, chief economist at Standard & Poor's

Asked to apportion credit, private economists mostly say that the forces at play in a $10 trillion economy are far too diverse to point to a single factor supporting the current boom.

On the government side, they are more inclined to credit Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan and his steady hand on interest-rate policies, knowing when to raise rates to keep the economy from overheating and when to cut rates to give a weakening economy a boost.

Greenspan is a proponent of the "New Economy" theory for the cause of prosperity. He contends that the emergence of the computer, the Internet and other high-tech tools has triggered a surge in productivity akin to the boom spurred by electricity and the invention of the telephone and automobile.

Added to all this has been the good fortune the country has enjoyed during Clinton's watch. The Asian currency crisis of 1997-98, which plunged 40 percent of the world into a downturn, turned out to be a blessing here, holding down inflation as foreign suppliers sold their products at bargain prices in the United States.

"Some times it's better to be lucky than to be good and President Clinton certainly enjoyed a fair amount of luck when it came to the economy," said David Wyss, chief economist at Standard & Poor's in New York. "But he also knew what to do with his luck, especially when it came to promoting good relations with the Fed."

Robert Reischauer, president of the Urban Institute and former head of the Congressional Budget Office, credits a convergence of forces including the end of the Cold War, which allowed sharp cuts in defense spending, and the 1990s stock market boom, which swelled the government's tax revenues. But he said at least 40 percent of the credit should go to Clinton's economic decisions, including his support for free trade and a free hand for the Fed.

Reischauer noted that when Clinton campaigned in 1992, the government racked up its biggest budget deficit in history — $290 billion. During the next eight years, Clinton was able not only to shrink the deficits but to put the country on course for recurring surpluses for the first time since the 1920s.

"A tremendous record," Reischauer marveled.

Will Bush build on Clinton's successes or will he suffer the same fate as his father, who watched the economy sink into a recession for which he was punished at the polls in 1992?

"It is going to be tough. The last four years have been truly exceptional, perhaps the best in our history. The next four years are not going to be as strong," said Mark Zandi of Economy.com, a West Chester, Pa., forecasting firm.

Many economists are forecasting that economic growth in 2001 will measure around 3 percent, puny compared to a string of 4 percent-plus increases over the past four years.

While Bush hopes to the slowdown will spur Congress to enact his tax package, others are warning that a slowing economy will limit the money available for tax relief by cutting into projected surpluses.

Republican leaders are already cautioning the incoming administration to opt for selective tax cuts rather than Bush's across-the-board approach.

Greenspan, who recently took note of unexpected threats, still believes he can bring about a soft landing. The Fed at its December meeting signaled it was prepared to start cutting interest rates, perhaps as soon as January, to offset the drag caused by its six earlier rate increases.

The expansion has survived as long as it has because Greenspan was able to achieve a soft landing in 1994-95, first raising rates and then cutting them to guide the economy in for an easy landing.

While the Fed has never brought about two soft landings in a row, economists say the central bank under Greenspan has become much more adept at fine tuning the economy.

"We expect to see growth slowing down but not falling apart," Wyss said. "The Energizer Bunny expansion should keep going."

Injury sits Hill down for season

ORLANDO, Fla. (AP) — Grant Hill will have season-ending surgery on his ankle, a devastating blow to the Magic and their hopes the five-time All-Star would lead them to an NBA title.

Hill said he was sitting down because he had become a distraction to his teammates who were uncertain he could play. Doctors said he should make a full recovery.

Hill, acquired from Detroit in the offseason, is expected to be sidelined for 6-8 months, general manager John Gabriel said Wednesday.

"Our focus is to put Grant Hill in the best possible position to return as the player that we all know he is," Gabriel said. "We have great confidence in the outcome and wish Grant a speedy recovery."


Hill

The 6-foot-8 forward was originally injured at the end of last season while with the Pistons. He had surgery April 28 to repair a broken bone in his left ankle in which five screws and a plate were inserted.

"You don't ever really want to have surgery unless you have to and I guess in this case I do," Hill said at a news conference. "When your body talks, you have to listen to it."

He appeared in only four games for the Magic, who are 12-16 and third in the Atlantic Division. He is averaging 13.8 points, 6.3 rebounds, 6.3 assists and 1.25 steals in 33.3 minutes a game.

Hill was acquired by Orlando on Aug. 3 in a sign-and-trade deal with the Pistons for Chucky Atkins and Ben Wallace.

Hill, whose ankle injury forced him to miss the Sydney Olympics, said his injury created uncertainty for his teammates.

"Can he go? Can he not go?" he said. "Is he injured? Can he practice? What's the deal? It just kind of became a distraction, and that's the last thing I want to become, a distraction to the team."

Team physician Dr. Joe Billings said a plate and five screws will be removed from the ankle. A bone graft from his pelvis will be done and new screws will be reinserted, most likely next week.

Only 5 percent of patients need a second operation, Billings said. Hill had continued to complain of pain and doctors were concerned that the ankle was only 20 percent-30 percent healed, he said.

"The new set of X-rays showed that we weren't happy with his progress," Billings said.

NBAStandings

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Philadelphia	19	8	.704	—
New York	16	12	.571	3 1/2
Miami	15	14	.517	5
Orlando	12	16	.429	7 1/2
Boston	11	17	.393	8 1/2
New Jersey	9	19	.321	10 1/2
Washington	5	23	.179	14 1/2

Central Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Charlotte	20	9	.690	—
Cleveland	15	11	.577	3 1/2
Milwaukee	15	12	.556	4
Toronto	14	14	.500	5 1/2
Detroit	13	15	.464	6 1/2
Indiana	13	16	.448	7
Atlanta	10	18	.357	9 1/2
Chicago	3	24	.111	16

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Midwest Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Utah	20	9	.690	—
San Antonio	18	10	.643	1 1/2
Dallas	19	11	.633	1 1/2
Minnesota	16	13	.552	4
Denver	15	14	.517	5
Houston	13	14	.481	6
Vancouver	8	20	.286	11 1/2

Pacific Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Sacramento	19	7	.731	—
L.A. Lakers	20	10	.667	1
Portland	19	10	.655	1 1/2
Phoenix	17	9	.654	2
Seattle	15	14	.517	5 1/2
L.A. Clippers	10	19	.345	10 1/2

NBASchedule

Tuesday's Games

Charlotte 115, Cleveland 110, OT
Detroit 101, Boston 96
Atlanta 81, New Jersey 76
San Antonio 103, Houston 95
Milwaukee 89, Orlando 77
Dallas 114, Seattle 93
Minnesota 100, Toronto 97
Philadelphia 97, Utah 91
Denver 109, L.A. Clippers 108
Phoenix 97, Vancouver 95

Wednesday's Games

New York at Washington, (n)
Indiana at Miami, (n)
Seattle at Houston, (n)
Philadelphia at Golden State, (n)

Today's Games

Milwaukee at Cleveland, 7:30 p.m.
Detroit at Orlando, 7:30 p.m.
Boston at New Jersey, 7:30 p.m.
Portland at Utah, 8 p.m.
Atlanta at Minnesota, 8 p.m.
L.A. Clippers at Dallas, 8 p.m.
San Antonio at Chicago, 8:30 p.m.
Toronto at Denver, 9 p.m.
L.A. Lakers at Phoenix, 9 p.m.
Charlotte at Sacramento, 10:30 p.m.

Friday's Games

Cleveland at Atlanta, 7:30 p.m.
Chicago at New York, 7:30 p.m.
Washington at Miami, 7:30 p.m.
Vancouver at Portland, 10 p.m.
Utah at Golden State, 10:30 p.m.

Sister sues Reinsdorf

LOS ANGELES (AP) — The ailing sister of Chicago sports franchise owner Jerry Reinsdorf filed a $5 million breach-of-contract lawsuit Wednesday against her brother, claiming he cut her off financially.

The Superior Court suit filed by Marvin Mitchelson said the managing partner of the Chicago Bulls and Chicago White Sox gave Judith Reinsdorf $10,000 a month for her care for 16 years.

The 64-year-old Reinsdorf had promised their mother, Marion, that he would always support his sister financially "to maintain a substantial quality of life according to the family wealth," the suit claimed.

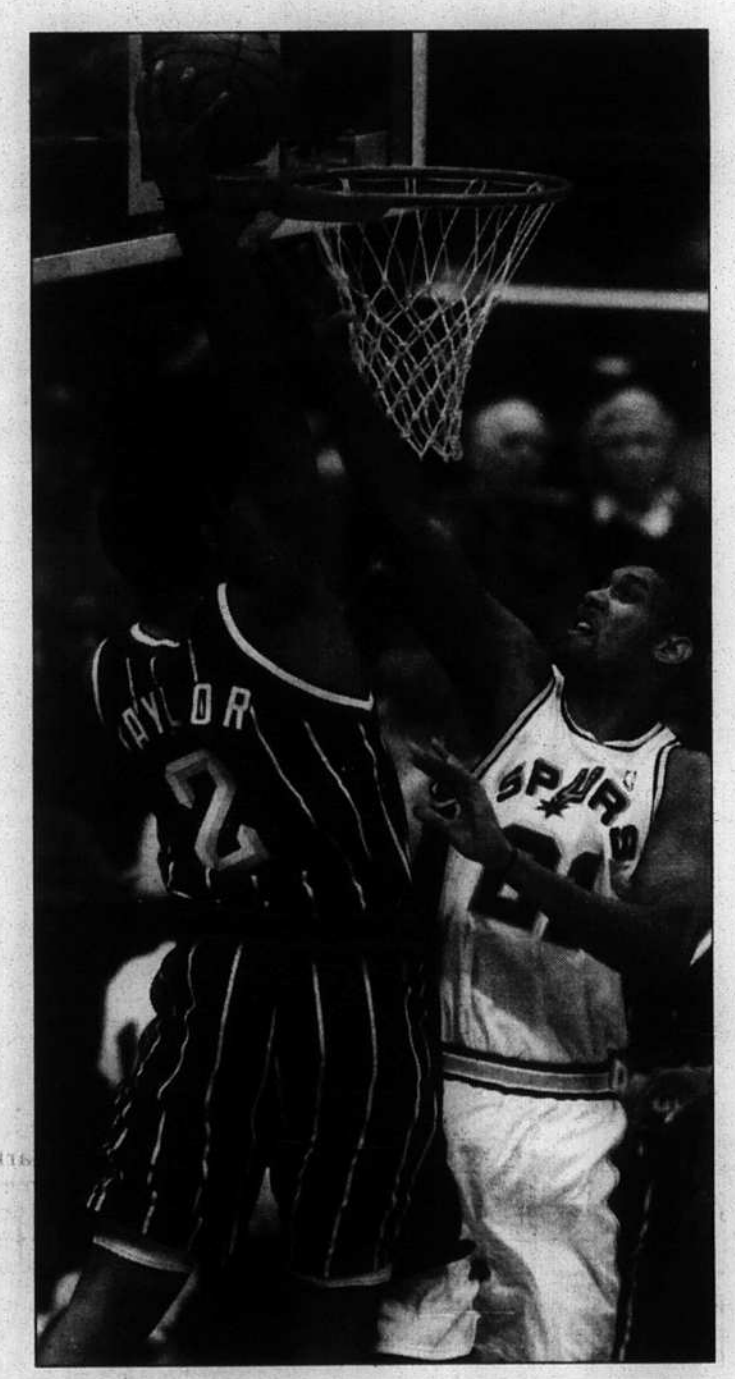
Those payments stopped in 1998 because Judith Reinsdorf refused her brother's demand that she stop seeing their elderly mother, the suit said. Marion Reinsdorf died in 1998.

The lawsuit seeks $5 million for past, present and future support based on breach of contract and intentional and negligent infliction of emotional distress.

The nature of Judith Reinsdorf's health problems weren't disclosed. Mitchelson would only say the 59-year-old woman was in poor health. She lives in Los Angeles.

Mitchelson pioneered the concept of "palimony" when he represented Michelle Triola in a lawsuit against actor Lee Marvin.

She sued the actor in the 1976 case which established the right of unmarried partners to sue for property division when they break up.


Associated Press

Blast off

Houston Rockets' Maurice Taylor dunks over San Antonio Spurs' Tim Duncan in the first period in San Antonio late Tuesday night. But Duncan got the last laugh, pouring in 20 points in helping the Spurs to a 103-95 victory.

MNF ratings suffer

NEW YORK (AP) — Neither Dennis Miller nor a series of good games could prevent "Monday Night Football" from drawing its lowest TV ratings in 31 seasons.

ABC Sports' NFL broadcasts averaged a 12.7 national rating and 22 share, a drop of 7 percent from last season's previous record low of 13.7/23.

While 11 of the 17 Monday games were decided by a touchdown or less, the program did have to compete with the Sydney Olympics on two nights and a pushed-back fall schedule.

The low point came in Week 13, when a game between nonplayoff teams Kansas City and New England generated a 9.9 rating — the second lowest ever. The only worse rating was for a telecast opposite Game 7 of the 1986 World Series.

The show's Nielsen ratings have decreased for six straight seasons.

Nevertheless, the show ranked fifth among prime-time programs during the 2000 NFL season. And it remains a strong draw among male viewers; it was the top-rated prime-time program among men 25-54.

The Titans' 31-0 victory over the Cowboys in the season finale on Monday drew an 11.0 national rating. That was 9 percent higher than last season's final ABC game.

ABC brought Miller into the booth this season in hopes of generating attention and keeping viewers tuned in even when the play on the field wasn't intriguing. Each rating point represents a little more than 1 million television households.

NFLPlayoffGlance

All Times Atlantic
Saturday, Dec. 30

Wild-card Playoffs
Indianapolis at Miami, 1:30 p.m. (ABC)
St. Louis at New Orleans, 5 p.m. (ABC)

Sunday, Dec. 31
Denver at Baltimore, 1:30 p.m. (CBS)
Tampa Bay at Philadelphia, 5 p.m. (FOX)

Divisional Playoffs
Saturday, Jan. 6
New Orleans, Philadelphia or Tampa Bay at Minnesota, 1:30 p.m. (FOX)
Baltimore, Denver or Miami at Oakland, 3 p.m. (CBS)

Sunday, Jan. 7
Baltimore, Denver or Indianapolis at Tennessee, 1:30 p.m. (CBS)
Philadelphia, Tampa Bay or St. Louis at New York Giants, 3:15 p.m. (FOX)

Warner reports no headaches

ST. LOUIS (AP) — Three days after the fact, Kurt Warner's concussion is old news.

On Wednesday, the St. Louis Rams' MVP quarterback said he'd been headache-free for two days and would definitely start Saturday's wild-card playoff game against the New Orleans Saints.

"I feel good, I feel real good," Warner said. "It's great to get back to work."

Warner, who missed all but one series in the second half of the Rams' playoff-clinching 26-21 victory over the New Orleans on Sunday, said he has no health worries headed into the Saints rematch and didn't appear the least bit groggy or lightheaded in an extended session with reporters.


Warner

He's not concerned about being more prone to another concussion, an injury that has ended the careers of many quarterbacks, and plans no special precautions such as wearing a special helmet.

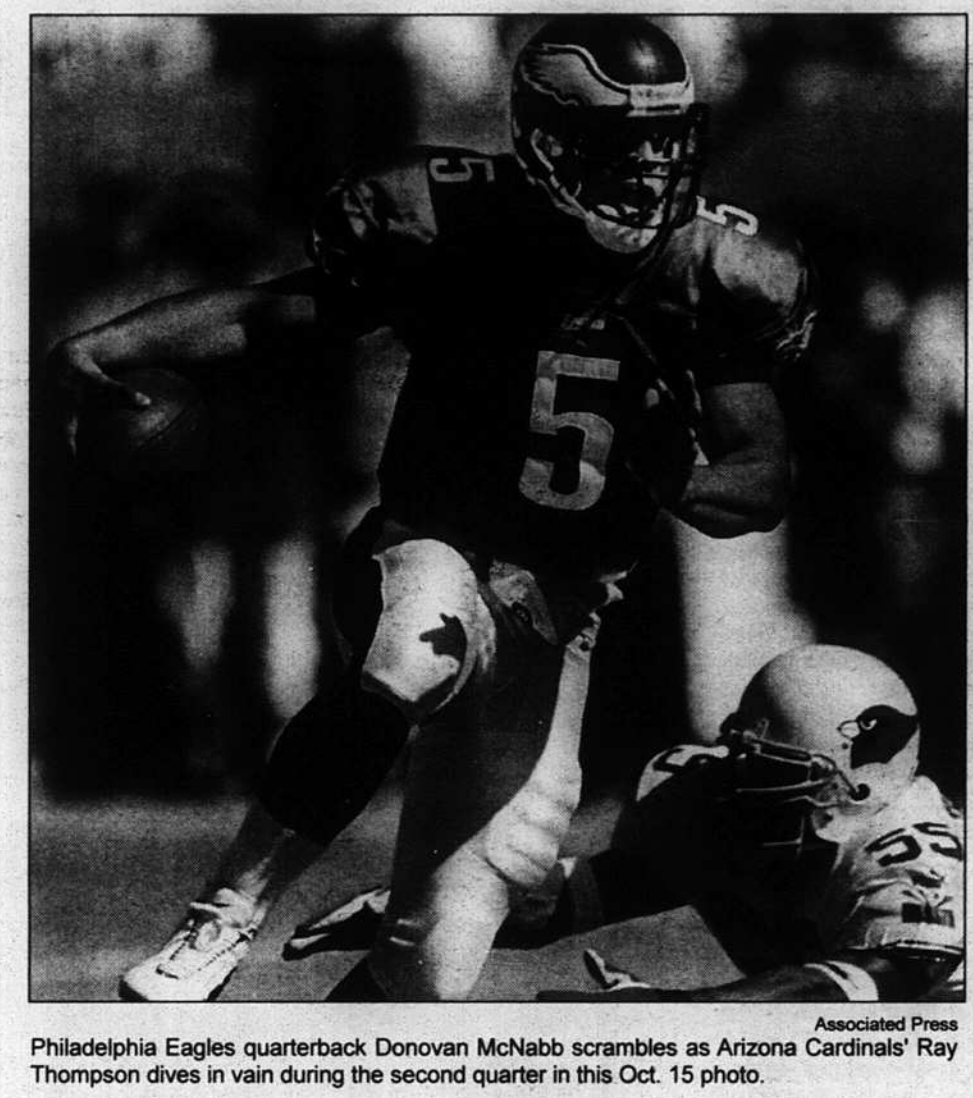
"You can't think about that," Warner said. "You hear all the stories about other guys and you definitely want to take precautions if precautions are necessary.

"But with the judgment they made and what they've told me, I don't think that's a risk or they would have told me a lot more than they have so far, I guess."

Warner said his last concussion came in 1995, when he was playing for the Iowa Barnstormers in the Arena League.

"I've never been prone to having concussions," he said. "I think it happened to be one of those things where I got hit just right, but it's nothing they're extremely worried about."

Warner said there are no gaps in his memory. His only regret is missing most of the second half having tests at a New Orleans hospital.


Associated Press
Philadelphia Eagles quarterback Donovan McNabb scrambles as Arizona Cardinals' Ray Thompson dives in vain during the second quarter in this Oct. 15 photo.

McNabb faces unknown territory with latest Philadelphia experiment

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — Donovan McNabb has performed under pressure before. The playoffs are another level, however.

McNabb makes his playoff debut when the Philadelphia Eagles play host to the Tampa Bay Buccaneers on Sunday in the last of this weekend's wild-card games.

The second-year quarterback may already have failed his first test, though. He provided the Buccaneers with some bulletin-board material in his first news conference of playoff week.

Asked on Wednesday if Tampa has the best defense the Eagles will see this year, McNabb said, "I think the best defense we've faced is our own defense. This is a defense that really doesn't do too much as far as blitzes are concerned, recognizing and seeing it coming."

The Bucs have the ninth-ranked defense in the NFL, while the Eagles tied the New York Jets for 10th. Philadelphia played seven games this season against teams with higher-rated defenses and went 3-4.

But Warren Sapp, the Bucs' Pro Bowl tackle, seemed surprised and a bit offended by McNabb's comments.

"Donovan McNabb said that," Sapp said incredulously during a conference call with Philadelphia reporters. "It's a beautiful country we have."

Eagles defensive end Hugh Douglas defended McNabb and tried to deflect any controversy his statement may have caused.

"The only reason Donovan said that is because he faces us every day in practice and we know what he's going to do," Douglas said.

McNabb made his NFL debut in a 19-5 loss to Tampa on Sept. 19, 1999. He was 4 of 11 for 26 yards and was sacked six times. Sapp had 3 1/2 of Tampa's nine sacks in that game.

"There were certain blitzes we didn't prepare for," McNabb said. "It was my first time playing in an actual game and I learned from that and everything that has happened ever since that game, I've seen just about all the blitzes. We will prepare and we will be ready to go. I expect them to bring everyone to try to rattle me and have me get me out of the pocket a little bit, but I plan to do what I have to do."

McNabb started just six games his rookie season as the Eagles went 5-11. He helped the team overcome the loss of Duce Staley in Week 5 this year, threw for 3,365 yards and 21 touchdowns, added a team-high 629 yards rushing and six TDs and finished second to Marshall Faulk in the league's MVP voting.

The Eagles need a big game from McNabb to beat Tampa, and they expect him to deliver.

"We don't expect him to play any differently than he has all year," center Bubba Miller said. "This guy has played in big games before. He expects to have success. That's why people look at him and he acts so cool. His head is below the clouds. He realizes he's the leader of this offense."

McNabb doesn't seem phased by Tampa's defense because the Eagles beat three teams with higher-ranked defenses: Pittsburgh, New Orleans and Washington. And, Philadelphia lost on a last-second field goal to Tennessee — the league's No. 1 defense.

ISU seeks first bowl triumph

PHOENIX (AP) — The players will dress in a clubhouse, not a locker room. They'll enter the field through dugouts. Heck, the fans might even sing "Take me out to the football game" at the end of the third quarter.

The Insight.com Bowl, the grandaddy of all dot-com bowls, has moved north from Tucson to Bank One Ballpark.

The first football game in the three-year-old baseball park might be an amusing novelty to many, but it's deadly serious to Iowa State. The Cyclones (8-3) are bringing some 20,000 fans to their fifth bowl appearance and first in 22 years.

A victory over Pittsburgh (7-4) Thursday night would be Iowa State's first in a bowl game and give the Cyclones their first nine-win season since 1906.

"It's of great magnitude, this game is," said coach Dan McCarney, who spent six tough seasons resurrecting one of the country's most downtrodden programs. "We can't get so uptight and feel so much pressure that they have to do something to be part of history."

The Cyclones averaged 424.5 yards per game, 21st among Division I-A schools. Ennis Haywood, who followed brothers Troy and Darren Davis as the latest talented tailback at ISU, led the Big 12 in rushing at 123.7 yards per game.

Amazingly, the Cyclones' running backs have not fumbled the ball away all season. Iowa State's quarterbacks were sacked just seven times, second-fewest in Division I.

"If you don't give up sacks and you don't fumble the ball, those are two great ways of not beating yourself," Pittsburgh coach Walt Harris said.

But the Panthers are stingy against the run. Pittsburgh's defense has given up just 99.7 yards per game on the ground.

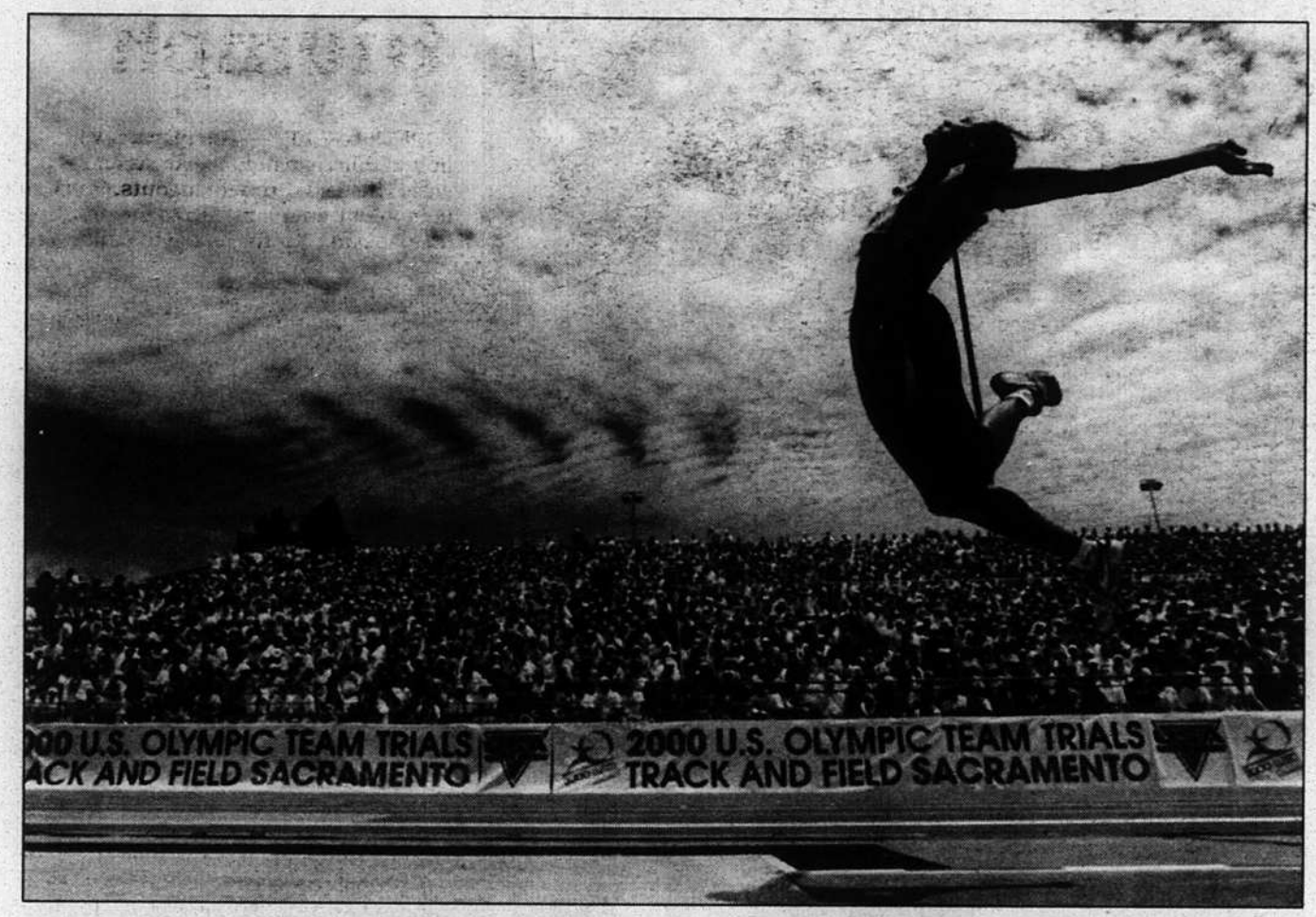
BowlGameOdds

RENO, Nev. (AP) — Updated odds for college football bowl games and the NFL games this week as provided by Harrah's Reno Casino & Sportsbook:

Bowl Games

FAVORITE	LINE	UNDERDOG
Dec. 28		
	Humanitarian Bowl	
at BoiseSt.	7	UTEP
	Music CityBowl	
Mississippi	4	West Virginia
	MicronPC.com Bowl	
Minnesota	3	N.C.State
	Insight.com Bowl	
Pittsburgh	1	Iowa St.
Dec. 29		
	Liberty Bowl	
Colorado St.	1 1/2	Louisville
	Sun Bowl	
Wisconsin	5	UCLA
	Peach Bowl	
Georgia Tech	8 1/2	LSU
	Holiday Bowl	
Texas	7	Oregon
Dec. 30		
	Alamo Bowl	
Nebraska	14 1/2	Northwestern

A TAKEOFF YEAR



Marion Jones competes in the long jump finals at the U.S. Olympic Track and Field Trials in Sacramento, Calif., on July 16, Jones was chosen Wednesday as The Associated Press' Female Athlete of the Year.

Associated Press

Jones named AP's top female athlete of 2000

NEW YORK (AP) — Marion Jones failed to reach her goal of five gold medals at the Sydney Games. All she did was win more medals than any female track athlete ever had at a single Olympics.

That record-setting haul — three golds, two bronzes — in a personally stormy month Down Under was enough for Jones to be chosen as The Associated Press Female Athlete of the Year.

In balloting by sports writers and broadcasters, Jones received 27 first-place votes and 111 points, edging tennis star Venus Williams, runner-up with 16 1/2 firsts and 104 1/2 points. Golfer Karrie Webb was third with 30 points. Points were awarded on a 3-2-1 basis.

Last year's winner, the U.S. soccer team, didn't receive any votes this time.

Jones, 24, was the 10th woman track-and-field athlete to win the honor since the award was inaugurated in 1931, and the first since the late Florence Griffith Joyner in 1988.

The imperturbable Jones earned golds in the 100 and 200 meters and the 1,600 relay, the bronzes in the long jump and 400 relay.

"I set out to do something that a lot of people thought I couldn't do," Jones said. "I didn't get everything I wanted, but I didn't give in. I had a great shot and it didn't pan out. I can live with that."

Those bronzes could have been golds, Jones said.

"That gold medal was there for the taking in the long jump," she said. "And in the (400) relay, we had some injuries (Gail Devers and Inger Miller). We didn't have our best horses.

"I wanted to win them all, and I still think it's possible. But I didn't, so I'm not going to dwell on that."

The 400 relay team didn't even practice together until the day of the race.

Jones' prediction, made two years in advance of the Sydney Games, earned her a lot of publicity, something she will avoid for the 2004 Olympics.

"I've vowed not to make a prediction such as the five golds, especially not four years prior to the next games," Jones said.

The performances by Jones at Sydney were even more extraordinary, considering what was going on around her.

Track world body, the IAAF, said midway through the games that her husband, e 1999 world shot put champion C.J. Hunter, had tested positive for the steroid nandrolone four times after the U.S. Olympic trials. The disclosure came two days after Jones' victory in the 100, meaning she had to compete in four events with that distraction.

Jones' timing on the track was impeccable.

She affirmed her status as the world's fastest woman, winning the 100 at 10.75 seconds, her victory margin of 0.37 seconds the second-largest in Olympic history.

She won the 200 at 21.84, her victory margin of 0.43 seconds the largest behind Wilma Rudolph's in 1960.

Herd continues to cruise through Motor City

PONTIAC, Mich. (AP) — The Motor City Bowl might as well be called the Marshall Invitational.

The Thundering Herd beat Cincinnati 25-14 Wednesday in front of 26,018 fans at the Silverdome, to give Marshall a three-game winning streak in the bowl after losing the inaugural game in 1997.

Marshall's Byron Leftwich threw a 77-yard touchdown pass on the fourth play of the game and rushed for a score, making up for two turnovers in the second quarter. Leftwich was 17-of-30 for 221 yards. Frank Wallace rushed for 78 yards and a touchdown.

Marshall (8-5) won six of its last seven games in what was expected to be a rebuilding year.

Cincinnati (7-5), which won its last four regular-season games, played in just its second bowl since 1951. Deontey Kenner was 19-of-39 for 189 yards with two interceptions, and DeMarco McCleskey rushed for 72 yards and two touchdowns.

Marshall scored touchdowns on its first two drives of the second half after Cincinnati went three-and-out on consecutive possessions.

The Thundering Herd sealed the win on a 25-yard field goal from J.R. Jenkins with 43 seconds left.

Cincinnati's offense stalled at the Thundering Herd's 44 late in the third quarter and at their 41 midway through the fourth quarter when it had a chance to tie it.

The Bearcats also got the ball back at their 9 with 3:02 left, but were unable to get a first down after three passes were deflected near the line of scrimmage.

Jones captures top honor

Marion Jones was selected as The Associated Press Female Athlete of the Year. Jones became the first female track and field athlete to win five medals at one Olympics.



Jones' five medals at the 2000 Sydney Games

100-meter	Gold
200-meter	Gold
Long jump	Bronze
4x100-meter relay	Bronze
4x400-meter relay	Gold

AP Female Athlete of the Year voting

Top votes based on a 3-2-1 point system (first place votes in parentheses).

Athlete	Points
Marion Jones (27)	111
Venus Williams (16)	104.5
Karrie Webb (4)	30

Source: Compiled from AP wire reports AP

TVSportsWatch

All Times EST
Thursday, Dec. 28

COLLEGE FOOTBALL
1:30 p.m.
ESPN2 — Humanitarian Bowl, UTEP at Boise St.
4 p.m.
ESPN — Music City Bowl, Mississippi vs. West Virginia, at Nashville, Tenn.
7 p.m.
TBS — MicronPC.com Bowl, Minnesota vs. N.C. State, at Miami
7:30 p.m.
ESPN — Insight.com Bowl, Pittsburgh vs. Iowa St., at Phoenix

MEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL
8 p.m.
FOXSN — Sugar Bowl Classic, Tulane vs. Florida, at New Orleans
10:30 p.m.
FOXSN — Sugar Bowl Classic, LSU vs. Oregon St., at New Orleans

NBA BASKETBALL
8 p.m.
TNT — Portland at Utah

NHL HOCKEY
7:30 p.m.
ESPN2 — Los Angeles at St. Louis
10:30 p.m.

E-mail your local sports news to stxavis@viaccess.net

SportsThursday

Hill out for season. **Page 29**
McNabb to be tested. **Page 30**
Jones earns AP honor. **Page 31**



Faulk chalks up MVP

Record-setting St. Louis RB earns league's top honor

NEW YORK (AP) — Marshall Faulk's record-setting ride for the St. Louis Rams earned him the NFL's Most Valuable Player award in balloting conducted by The Associated Press and announced Wednesday.

Faulk, whose 26 touchdowns beat Emmitt Smith's league mark by one, carried the defending-champion Rams into the playoffs with his late-season heroics. He scored 11 of those touchdowns in the last three weeks and had three four-TD games.

The swift running back also had 220 yards rushing in last Sunday's victory at New Orleans that helped St. Louis squeeze into the postseason.

"Look at what he did in 14 games, I don't think there's any question about what he meant to the team."

Kurt Warner

"This season was pretty high up there, a very special one just because of all the things we faced," said Faulk, who finished with 1,359 yards and 18 touchdowns rushing, plus 81 receptions for 830 yards and eight TDs.

Faulk said it was especially gratifying to break a record set by "a warrior" like Smith, and that the mark also showed what the Rams were capable of as a team.

"But the thing that overshadows it for me and doesn't allow me to harp on it is we were fighting for our lives to try to get into the playoffs," Faulk said.

The Rams got in thanks mostly to Faulk, and play at New Orleans again on Saturday.

Faulk, 27 and in his seventh NFL season, received 24 votes from a nationwide panel of 50 sports writers and broadcasters. He beat Philadelphia quarterback Donovan McNabb (11), Tennessee running back Eddie George (8), Oakland quarterback Rich Gannon (5), Indianapolis quarterback Peyton Manning (1) and Baltimore linebacker Ray Lewis (1).

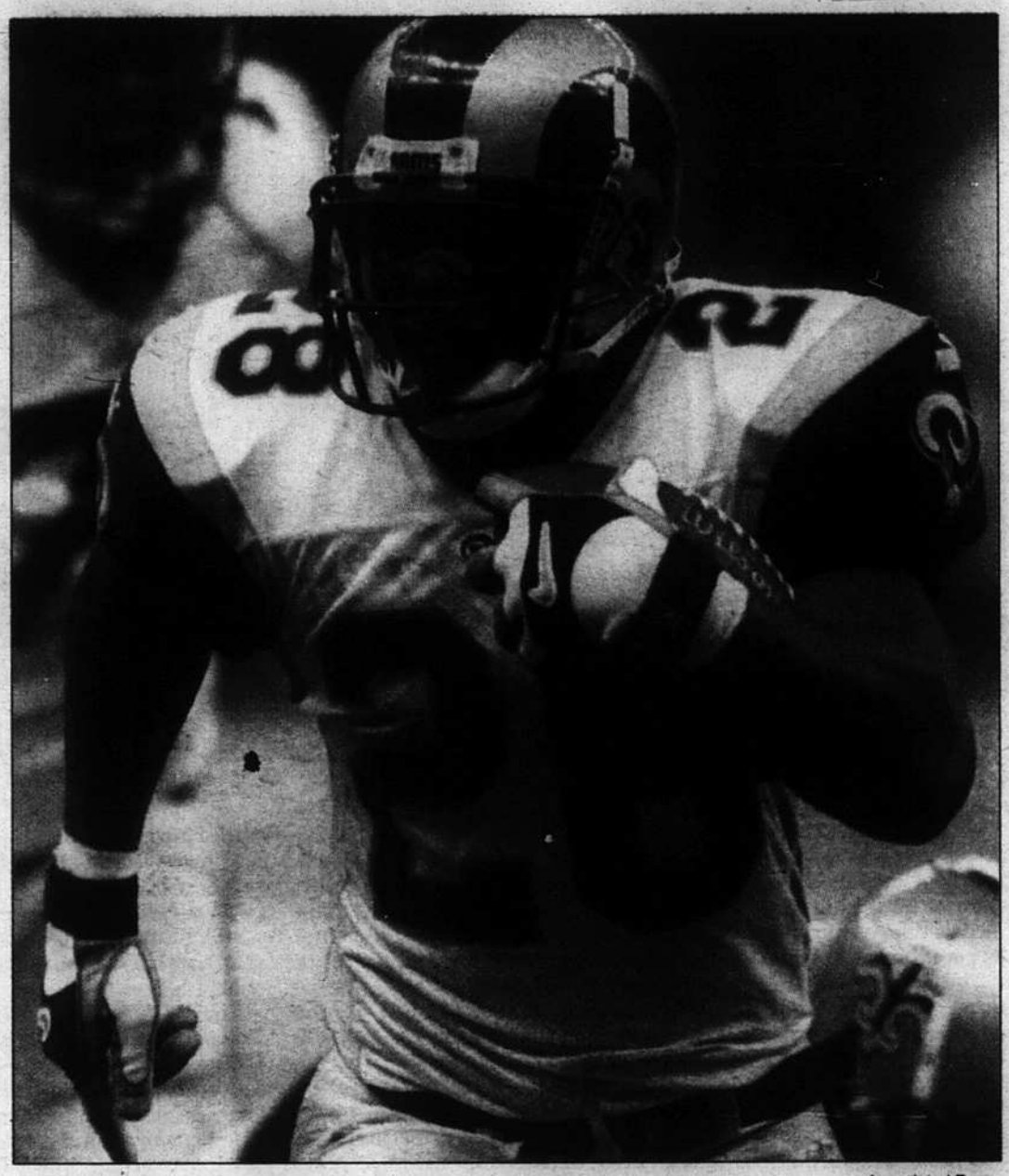
"No question he's deserving of the MVP," said Rams quarterback Kurt Warner, who won the honor last year. "Look at what he did in 14 games. I don't think there's any question about what he's meant to the team."

Without Faulk — he missed two games and was hobbled in two others with a knee injury that required mid-season arthroscopic surgery — St. Louis has a good offense, but virtually no running game. With him, the Rams can be devastating with the ball.

But Faulk not only is a great runner, he's as good a pass-catcher as most starting wide receivers.

"I don't think there is a prototype," he said. "To play the position and be effective and help the team in the passing game — catching the ball, blocking and picking up blitzes, understanding protections — you eliminate the need for another person on the roster. They can add someone else at another position to the roster. It's sort of like having one guy who could do two jobs."

Faulk, the 1999 Offensive Player of the Year, is the 14th running back to be voted MVP, joining such Hall of Fame runners as Jim Brown, Walter Payton, Jim Taylor, Paul Hornung, Earl Campbell and Marcus Allen.



Associated Press

St. Louis Rams running back Marshall Faulk carries the ball downfield during second half NFL action against the New Orleans Saints in the Louisiana Superdome in New Orleans last Sunday. Faulk's record-setting ride for the St. Louis Rams earned him the NFL's Most Valuable Player award.

Bowl game will be Nehlen's farewell

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP) — Somewhere between that first job in 1958 as a high school assistant and the end of his 21st season as head coach at West Virginia, the 85-hour work weeks got to Don Nehlen.

And so the most successful coach in school history — one of just 17 men to coach 200 or more victories in Division I-A — will guide the Mountaineers (6-5) through the Music City Bowl against Mississippi (7-4) on Thursday. Then he'll figure out what to do with the rest of his life.

"Well, I don't know," he said this week when asked about his plans for retirement. "I'm not going to do much of anything for a month.

"I'm not ready for bingo. I'm going to miss the football a great deal, but I don't think I'm going to miss the 85 hours a week it takes to get a team ready."

The 65-year-old Nehlen has been a head coach in high school in his native Ohio, for nine years at Bowling Green University and for the last 21 in Morgantown. His college teams have posted 201 victories. This year's media guide, printed in the preseason, raves about his renewed energy and commitment.

By November, Nehlen could see both running out. He called it quits.

"You know I've had a lot of pride in myself and in these guys, and I was not real sure I was willing to make the commitment you have to make," he said. "I've done it for 42 straight years and I've always upheld my part of the bargain. But I'm not real sure I'd uphold my part of the bargain next year, and that's not right for these players."

Nehlen was the youngest head football coach in the nation when he was hired at Bowling Green in 1967, "when my kids were this high," he says, holding a hand parallel to his knees.

"If I hadn't had a good wife, I'd have two kids in jail," he said.

Mississippi's David Cutcliffe is in his first full season as head coach of the Rebels after 17 years as an assistant at Tennessee. He, too, knows the strain the job puts on a coach and his family.

"You're into 18- and 19-hours days. I've never counted it up and probably don't want to know," he said. "That's why it's a family-oriented business. It's really not a job, it's a calling.

"To work that way you have to have that fire lit and it has to remain lit. I don't know how long that fire lasts. I guess Don Nehlen came to a point where he felt like he needed time for some other things in his life."

But not before taking the Mountaineers on one last trip.