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# SULPHUR SPRINGS News-Telegram

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## Presents from Santa



Students from the Early Childhood Learning Center in Sulphur Springs received presents from Santa Claus Thursday after enjoying milk and cookies that were provided by the Rotary Club of Sulphur Springs at the Hopkins County Civic Center. See more photos at [ssnewstelegram.com](http://ssnewstelegram.com).

Staff Photo by Jillian Smith

Benefit

## Sisterbabyz sets Christmas Style Show

By STEVE SNYDER  
News Staff

Sisterbabyz is again repeating its popular Christmas Style Show.

Maci Fowler said that tickets are \$10, half of which would be donated to the Salvation Army's Christmas angel gift program for those in need. The other half would be offset by a \$5 coupon for Sisterbabyz.

In addition, Sisterbabyz will match all donations made to angel gifts that evening.

"That's how we got most of our money last year," Fowler said.

Several other vendors will be participating in the event as well. Fowler said they included Phinisse Farms Winery, Healing Hands Massage and Danna's Southern Charm.

Tammy Flemons from the Salvation Army will also be present. She is the person who gets all the angel information for presents, Fowler said.

See SHOW, Pg. 3A

### IF YOU GO

- What: Sisterbabyz Christmas Style Show
- When: 5 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 9
- Where: The Venue at two nineteen, 219 Main St., Sulphur Springs
- Cost: \$10

## Crime Cattle roundup continues

Head count in seizure may exceed 600

By KERRY CRAIG  
News Staff

More than 500 cows, calves and bulls have been rounded up and seized by Hopkins County Sheriff's Department and SPCA Texas since Monday and was continuing late Thursday from six different properties owned by George Lawrence Bergin, 61, of Sulphur Springs.

Late Thursday afternoon Sheriff Lewis Tatum estimated the total head county could exceed 600 head and said that work may continue through the weekend to get all the cattle gathered up.

The seizures came after Hopkins County sheriff's department had received a lot of complaints about the cattle, and after inspecting the cattle, Deputy Koby Hume contacted SPCA Texas.

Deputy Hume and the SPCA investigator identified six different properties and found more cattle in poor condition and not being provided with food or health-care. The owner was putting out feed for the cattle, but



George Lawrence Bergin

See CATTLE, Pg. 3A

Economy

## Future of local job market looks steady

Guest speaker outlines local options for change

By STEVE SNYDER  
News Staff

*Editor's note: This is part two of a two-part series covering expected trends for the future of the local labor market.*

Richard Froeschle, a labor market economist consulting with the Texas Workforce Commission, gave his review and analysis of the past, present and future of local employment trends, needs and ideas to attendees at the Hopkins County Civic Center Wednesday.

He was the featured speaker at the annual Economic Outlook Contest jointly hosted by the Sulphur Springs-Hopkins County EDC and the Hopkins County Chamber of Commerce. His theme was "Where the jobs are — a fresh look at the Texas and Hopkins County labor market."

See ECONOMY, Pg. 3A

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## OBITUARIES



**WEST OAKS** "The Name You Know.  
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### Mary Juanita Preston Griffin

Graveside service for (Mary) Juanita Preston Griffin, 93, of Carrollton, formerly of Sulphur Springs, will be held at 11 a.m. on Saturday, Dec. 9, at Shirley Cemetery with Buddy Wiggins officiating.

Visitation will be held from 9:30 to 10:45 a.m. on Saturday, Dec. 9, at Murray-Orwosky Funeral Home.

Ms. Griffin died Dec. 5, 2017.

(Mary) Juanita Griffin was born on April 13, 1924, to Robert and Maud Preston. She married Roby Griffin on Jan. 5, 1946, in Greenville. He preceded her in death on March 7, 1995. She was a homemaker, a member of Church of Christ and The Big Sisters community group in Shirley.

Survivors include her son, Larry Griffin and wife Gloria of Addison; sister Martha Collins; grandchildren Patty Bouma and husband Dirk, Nicole Parks and husband Joe, and Terry Ault and wife Susan; and great-grandchildren Christopher Ault, Lauren Ault, Kendall Parks, Reimer Bouma and Koert Bouma.

She was preceded in death by her parents; two sisters, Murriel Renshaw and Jinnie Maude Bishop; and four brothers, Raymond Preston, Johnnie Lee Preston, Ray Preston and Robert "Robbie" Preston. Memorials can be made to the charity of your choice.

Funeral arrangements are under the direction of Murray-Orwosky Funeral Home.

The online register can be signed at [www.murrayorwosky.com](http://www.murrayorwosky.com)



Mary Juanita Preston Griffin

### Wanda McCormack

Funeral service for Wanda McCormack, 69, of Cumby, will be held at 2 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 9, at Murray-Orwosky Funeral Home with Bro. Wayne Darty officiating.

Interment will follow at Cumby Cemetery with Michael Comer, Steve Hammond, Brent Seely,

Nicholas Dyer, Noah Dyer and Cody Groening serving as pallbearers and Jeremy McCormack, Joseph Seely, Anthony Thorn and Eric McCormack serving as honorary pallbearers.

Visitation will be held from 6 to 8 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 8, at Murray-Orwosky Funeral Home.

Mrs. McCormack passed away Wednesday Dec. 6, 2017, at her residence.

Funeral arrangements are under the direction of Murray-Orwosky Funeral Home.

The online register can be signed at [www.murrayorwosky.com](http://www.murrayorwosky.com)

### Arthur Eugene Francis

Memorial services for Arthur Eugene Francis 78, of Sulphur Springs, will be held at 2 p.m. Saturday Dec. 9, at Wesley United Methodist Church with Pastor Steve Cook officiating.

Visitation will be held at 1 p.m. one hour prior to service time at the church.

Arthur died at CHRISTUS Mother Frances hospital in Sulphur Springs. He was born Sept. 25, 1939 in Detroit, Michigan to Frank and Marion Gorecki Francis. He married Frances Grace Francis on Nov. 28, 1980 in Pickton.

Arthur was a member of Wesley United Methodist Church; he was a retired over the road truck driver.

Arthur is survived by his wife, Mary; children Kathie Marlin, Richard James Francis, and Frank Samuel Francis; grandchildren Lisa Marlin, Amanda Marlin, Tyler Wayne Francis, Mckenzie Francis, Frankie Francis, Tyler Kimbro and Kendal Kimbro; great-grandchildren Ava Marlin, Maddox James Francis, Addilyn Grace Francis and Jaxsyn Wayne Francis; and siblings Donald Francis, Bernie Beauchaine and Gloria From.

He is preceded in death by his parents and siblings Gerald Francis, Patricia Grandner, Delphine Danovic and Richard Francis.

Arrangements are under the direction of West Oaks Funeral Home.

[www.westoaksfuneralhome.com](http://www.westoaksfuneralhome.com)



Arthur Eugene Francis

## Economy

Continued from Pg. 1

### CURRENT JOBS

In looking at current employment by job fields and job titles, Froeschle said that jobs in education, health care and professional services, which includes information technology and other computer-related jobs, had been shown to be the most recession-proof during the Great Recession and beyond.

Statewide, that matched the fastest-growing job fields, he said. Registered nurses were at No. 1, followed by heavy truck drivers in second. After that, IT, education, business management and health care jobs filled out the rest of the top 10.

Below the state level in Collin County, where many Hopkins County commuters go to work, the top dozen or so job postings, by field, included software developers, website developers, network systems administrators, IT project managers and two computer-related categories.

Many of these jobs were not only growing, they were among jobs with faster-growing pay, he said. And they often required additional job skills. Locally, he said, management and IT jobs weren't on that list.

"I am telling young people that a lot middle income jobs are disappearing, such as assembly line workers and bank tellers. Many of these middle income jobs are being replaced by technology," said Larry Allen, Lamar University economist, as quoted by Froeschle. "There is growth in low paying service jobs that cannot be replaced by technology, such as taxi drivers. There is also growth in higher paying jobs for people skilled in using the new technologies. They either have to move up the skill ladder or get pushed down."

### TECHNOLOGY DISRUPTIONS

Froeschle said that technology is likely to become ever more a jobs disruptor, especially for entry-level and blue-collar type jobs.

He showed a photo of a set of self-order kiosks that he said McDonald's has begun using. With such kiosks, a customer places an order with the system, not a person. The only personal contact is when they get their meal. Froeschle added that computer kiosks don't ask for time off and don't know what holidays are, which also makes them attractive to a company like McDonald's.

Robots are another challenge, he said, with the possibility of eliminating many jobs in logistics and packing. Here he cited the example of Amazon, which has gone from about 1,400 robots in 2006 to 45,000 last year.

Automated vehicles are another disruptor of jobs that are likely to loom larger in the future. Noting that truck driver had been listed as the second-fastest growing job in the state, Froeschle mentioned Tesla's recent announcement that it was officially working on a semi that was not only automated but battery-powered. He said that trucking jobs that weren't eliminated would need a higher skill set, because remaining drivers would need to have the technology skills to help diagnose and fix problems with the automated driving systems.

Froeschle said he expected Internet-related trends to bring further disruption to travel and related industries. Internet technology could further disrupt bidding for AirBnB housing and other services, he said, especially when combined with autonomous vehicles, it could do similarly for Lyft and Uber drivers.

### A LOOK AHEAD

With all of this in mind, Froeschle concluded with a discussion of anticipated job and educational trends through 2024, along with some suggestions on future local economic development strategies.

He said that health care jobs were expected to show growth both locally and statewide. The latter, Froeschle said, is a mix of top jobs similar to those he listed earlier — nursing, computer and information technology, and business analysis and services — that are expected to top the employment list for jobs with both rapid growth and higher pay.

Froeschle said that the highest earning bachelor's programs include nursing, followed by a variety of computer-related and engineering fields. A number of technology-related fields are also among top associate degrees. However, the top majors and career fields of study for college students don't fully align with what are the most in-demand or most lucrative fields, he said.

**"I am telling young people that a lot middle income jobs are disappearing, such as assembly line workers and bank tellers. Many of these middle income jobs are being replaced by technology,"**

—Larry Allen  
Economist

"Education and skills are not the same thing," he said.

He pointed out that many students are pursuing college majors in various liberal arts and humanities fields. He called this a skills mismatch as much or more than an educational deficiency.

He then issued a rhetorical question, wondering if the high school and college educational system was doing a good job educating youth about career paths.

Looking specifically at Hopkins County, Froeschle gave some job projections through 2027.

He said the county would likely add about 1,500 new jobs. They would have an average wage of \$40,000 in 2016 terms, above approximately \$35,000 right now. He said food preparation, retail sales, nurses and truck drivers were expected to be the four largest local job fields.

"You either grow your own or you go recruiting," Froeschle said.

He mentioned five main alternatives.

The first is getting existing businesses and industries to grow. The second is boosting economic diversification. The third, he said, is a variation on the second, targeting specific types of jobs to the local workforce, including trying to retain more of that age 25-54 demographic, the prime employment range of which Hopkins County has a relative deficit and slower growth rate versus major cities.

The fourth is targeting new people for existing job growth. This includes using amenities like Celebration Plaza as an attractor. The fifth is upgrading educational services to have a workforce that better matches expected statewide as well as local and regional job growth projections.

## ADVICE

### Phantom lovers

**Dear Annie:** It's been over a year now since my wife left for the fourth time. This time, I really don't have confirmation of her exact reason, but I can hazard a good guess, because the other three times she left for the same reason. She thinks I'm a cheater. In her mind, there is always someone else — but that's the only place there is someone else. I've never cheated.

I can't help but feel as if I'm free at last. I truly loved her and adored her. But I just couldn't take the mistrust any longer. For 13 years, I had my wallet dug through, Facebook account examined and email checked. I've been followed by numerous detectives. I know of two because I caught them, and my wife admitted she'd hired them. Here I was paying off bills so we could have a fun retirement, and she was paying detectives \$500 a day to follow me. One time, at my work, one of my employees came to me visibly shaking. When I asked her what was wrong, she said, "Your wife offered me \$100 to listen in on your phone calls, and, sir, I want nothing to do with this."

Annie, I could go on and on with the examples of mistrust. But for my own sanity, I had to move on. I kept saying to myself that the mistrust would pass, but it just never did. I've moved on, and now I'm with God. My question to you to finally put this to rest in my mind is: Is this some kind of illness? — **Free at Last**

**Dear Free at Last:** Yes, it sounds as if she suffers from mental health issues that can only be addressed through professional treatment. I sincerely hope she gets the help she needs. It would be nearly impossible to get back together and stay

**Dear Annie**

By:  
Annie Lane



together otherwise. Trying to build a marriage without trust is like trying to build a brick house without mortar. It cannot stand.

**Dear Annie:** In response to the letter from "Frustrated Family in Florida," you stated that the disabled man who was conned out of his money has limited options because he consented to giving the money. As a former court advocate for seniors, my heart sank, because as a veteran, he may well have options.

This man should file a police report to have a record. In Louisville, Kentucky, the police department has a unit dedicated to crimes against seniors. Other resources include the attorney general's office, Adult Protective Services, the Office for Victims of Crime, the American Bar Association's pro bono resources for veterans and the Department of Veterans Affairs. I encourage interested people to see what's available in their state.

It took the family over a year to realize what was going on. Sounds as if the veteran depended on the predator. Unfortunately, that is not unusual. The predators look for this exact situation. That's why they are criminals. Veterans are heroes. Some of us appreciate and are grateful for them every day. Please let this family know that there are options.

— **Knows Better**

**Dear Knows Better:** Thank you for those resources. Veterans are heroes indeed, and we owe them all the support we can give, along with our deepest gratitude.

Send your questions for Annie Lane to [dearannie@creators.com](mailto:dearannie@creators.com).

## White after Labor Day

**Q:** Hi! I've been reading your column since it first began in the newspaper and have recently found your blog, as well. I have a question that I hope won't seem dense. Why is it that white isn't appropriate after Labor Day?

**A:** Every question is a good question, and I appreciate your continued readership!

First, not every rule of etiquette makes 100 percent practical sense in today's world. However, the question you ask is actually twofold. Before AC, white was a common color of cotton clothing, keeping the wearer cooler than they would have been in dark fabrics. However, it is also rumored that white was a color of the elite class. Not wearing white from Labor Day until Easter was a sign of wealth.

Personally, I avoid white pants and the like during that timeframe. I liken it to wearing pajamas in Wal-Mart. Do the pajamas technically count as clothing? Yes. However, dressing nicely is a sign of respect for others around you, and it's a particular area of etiquette I try to always follow.

**Q:** I have a Christmas cocktail party with a group of friends coming up. What does this actually mean in terms of dress? Is it more business dress?

**A:** No, cocktail dress is a style in and of itself. In general, the time of day dictates the style and length of a woman's dress. The earlier in the day, the shorter the hem line (within reason). A sundress

**Etiquette by Emily**

By:  
Emily Glass



would not be worn in the evening.

Usually, cocktail is knee length. You could also wear very dressy pants, if you prefer. It would not be a gown, as that would be formal. Think "little black dress."

Feel free to have it a little dressy and fun, though. Your taste and style should still come through. If you prefer color, absolutely dress in color. Your hair should be nicely styled, as well.

**Q:** I'm not sure if this is really an etiquette question, but when do the 12 Days of Christmas actually begin? Is it December 13th?

**A:** This is part etiquette, as this is a great opportunity for me to state that it is perfectly appropriate to have Christmas parties and to send Christmas cards anytime through the end of the 12 days of Christmas.

Christmas Day starts the 12 days of Christmas. Therefore, the 12th day is on Jan. 5, with January being the Epiphany. I know Christmas has become commercialized more than ever, but the time leading up to Christmas is known in most Christian denominations as Advent.

Send your questions to Emily Glass to [etiquettebyemily@gmail.com](mailto:etiquettebyemily@gmail.com) or visit [www.etiquettebyemily.com](http://www.etiquettebyemily.com).

## Cattle

Continued from Pg. 1

according to investigators it was not nearly as much as needed.

Justice of the Peace B.J. Teer signed seizure warrants for six properties owned by George Lawrence Bergin Monday and deputies and SPCA Texas animal cruelty investigators began rounding up the cattle.

As they began, investigators found the situation was even more serious than first thought. The pastures had been grazed down to the dirt, and some of the cows were attempting to eat the bark from trees in the pastures.

As livestock were being loaded at a pasture just north of Ridgeway late Monday morning, the owner of the cattle, George Bergin, drove up with a small roll of hay for the more than 130 head of livestock and was arrested on a warrant alleging cruelty to livestock and animal physical abuse.

Bergin posted a \$20,000 bond and was released from the county jail Wednesday afternoon.

Most of the animals had reverted to the wild and proved a challenge for experienced cowboys on horseback to get out of thick brush in rough terrain. Some of the cows had to be roped, tied down and loaded on trailers pulled by all terrain vehicles.

**Officials have seized since Monday more than 600 head of cattle.**

Staff Photo by Isabel Reyna



## Show

Continued from Pg. 1

Flemons also sets schedules for local bell-ringers at Wal-Mart. Part of the fashion show, to further get people in the spirit of angel gifts, will be models dressed like bell-ringers, Fowler said.

"We're going to have a lot of holiday looks," she said of other parts of the show. "Crushed velvet is in this year."

Beyond holiday-specific clothing, other winter wear will be modeled. Fowler said that people wanting ideas for Christmas

shopping should get plenty of inspiration.

The event is at The Venue at two nineteen, 219 Main St. Doors open at 5 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 9, and the show starts at 6 p.m.

Beyond the show and the donation opportunities, other fun



**Classic Lanes**  
333 E. Industrial - Sulphur Springs - 903-885-5046

**Quarter Mania**

September 11th through December 18th of 2017, Classic Lanes will host Quarter Mania on Monday nights from 5:00pm - 8:00pm. \$6.00 cover charge (per person). Each game (per person) is only a quarter and shoe rentals are just a quarter! One FREE session of Laser Tag for each individual bowling two games or more during Quarter Mania, valid for that night only.

## Local

# Keeping young adults in Hopkins County improving with opportunities

The economic development forecast given by economist Richard Froeschle to more than 100 interested businessmen and women on Wednesday was akin to the chicken or the egg conundrum.

Froeschle had both parts good and bad news for the local economy in his presentation. The good news is that Hopkins County unemployment remains low at 3.2 percent – a full percentage point under the thriving Texas economy – and there appears to be continued local growth in the near future.

The bad news is that the demographic of young employable adults, those in the 18-34 age range, is below optimal range. While Hopkins County has a sizeable population of children

and young teens (who should be employable in the next decade), the pool for young employable adults is currently low.

There is the conundrum: How do we keep our young people in the county? With more jobs for them. How do you recruit more companies to bring jobs with them? Have a great local recruiting pool of young talent.

The fact is, the problem of keeping our young adults in the county is decades old. It is improving because the county now has more job outlets than ever before and more job training, thanks in part to Paris Junior College's local campus and their communication with the local Economic Development Corporation and businesses. But, talent retention is still an issue that needs to be considered when local companies are hiring and setting wage ranges.



*By  
Patrick  
Buchanan*

## National

# Is Flynn's defection a death blow?

Why did Gen. Mike Flynn lie to the FBI about his December 2016 conversations with Russian Ambassador Sergey Kislyak?

Why did he not tell the FBI the truth?

As national security adviser to the president-elect, Flynn had called the ambassador. Message: Tell President Putin not to overreact to President Obama's expulsion of 35 Russian diplomats. Trump will be president in three weeks, and we are committed to a new relationship.

Not only was this initiative defensible, it proved successful.

Putin accepted the loss of his diplomats and country houses on Long Island and the Eastern Shore. Rather than expel U.S. diplomats in retaliation, he invited them and their families to the Kremlin's New Year's parties.

"Great move...(by V. Putin)," tweeted Trump, "I always knew he was very smart." This columnist concurred:

"Among our Russophobes, one can hear the gnashing of teeth.

"Clearly, Putin believes the Trump presidency offers Russia the prospect of a better relationship with the United States. He appears to want this, and most Americans seem to want the same. After all, Hillary Clinton, who accused Trump of being 'Putin's puppet,' lost."

Flynn, it now appears, was not freelancing, but following instructions. His deputy, K. T. McFarland, sent an email to six Trump advisers saying that Obama, by expelling the Russians, was trying to "box Trump in diplomatically."

"If there is a tit-for-tat escalation," warned McFarland, "Trump will have difficulty improving relations with Russia." Exactly.

Flynn was trying to prevent Russian retaliation. Yet, as the ex-director of the Defense Intelligence Agency, he had to know his call to Kislyak was being monitored and recorded.

So, again, why would he lie to the FBI about a conversation, the contents of which were surely known to the people who sent the FBI to question him?

The other charge of lying about a call with Kislyak was Flynn's request for Russian help in getting postponed or canceled a Security Council vote on a resolution denouncing Israeli settlements on the West Bank.

Obama's White House was backing the anti-Israel resolution. And Bibi Netanyahu had asked Trump to weigh in to block the vote.

Bottom line: Flynn, acting on instructions, tried to prevent a U.N. condemnation of Israel, and to dissuade Russia from a mass expulsion of U.S. diplomats, lest this poison the well against a rapprochement for which the American people had voted.

In the court of public opinion, Flynn's actions would find broad support. Rather than deny knowledge of them, Trump should have taken credit for them.

Why the general would lie to the FBI about conversations he had to know U.S. intelligence had recorded is a puzzling question, but now also an irrelevant one, water over the dam.

For Trump's general is now the newly conscripted collaborator of the media-Mueller-Democrat-deep state conspiracy to overturn the election of 2016 and bring down the Trump presidency.

Remarkable.

After 18 months, we have no evidence Trump colluded with Russia in hacking the emails of the DNC or John Podesta, which is what the FBI investigation was supposedly about.

There is no conclusive evidence Flynn committed a crime when, as national security adviser-designate, he tried to prevent Obama from sabotaging the policies Trump had run on – and won on.

Yet there is evidence Russian intelligence agents colluded with a British spy in the pay of the oppo research arm of the DNC and Hillary Clinton campaign – to find dirt on Donald Trump.

And there is evidence James Comey's FBI wanted to hire the British spy who appeared to have access to the Russian agents who appeared to possess all that wonderful dirt on the Donald.

It is hard to see how this ends well.

This weekend, after Flynn's admission he lied to the FBI, Beltway media were slavering like Pavlov's dogs at anticipated indictments and plea bargains by present and former White House aides, Trump family members, and perhaps Trump himself.

The joy on the TV talk shows was transparent.

Yet the media have already been badly damaged; first, by the relentless Trump attacks and the cheering for those attacks by a huge slice of the country; second, by their reflexive reaction. The media have behaved exactly like the "enemy" Trump said they were.

In this us-versus-them country, the media now seem to relish the role of "them." The old proud journalistic boast to be objective and neutral reporters, observers and commentators is gone. We are all partisans now.

As last Friday's sudden 300-point drop in the Dow reveals, if Trump's enemies bring him down, they will almost surely crash the markets and abort the recovery that took hold in Trump's first year.

And if the establishment, repudiated by Trump's victory, thinks it will be restored to the nation's good graces if they destroy Trump, they are whistling past the graveyard.

When Caesar falls, the cheering for Brutus and Cassius tends to die down rather quickly. Then their turn comes.

Patrick J. Buchanan is the author of a new book, "Nixon's White House Wars: The Battles That Made and Broke a President and Divided America Forever."



Patrick Buchanan



Vote in this week's online poll:

Do you support President Trump's travel ban that targets people from Libya, Syria, Chad, Iran, Somalia and Yemen?  
Visit [ssnewstelegram.com](http://ssnewstelegram.com) to cast your vote.

## Local

# What I really want for Christmas is...

Material gifts for Christmas are ultimately an attempt to express immaterial values of love, concern, friendship and other thoughts and feelings. Sometimes, the immaterial can't be fully expressed by the material, and the best thing is a gift of the immaterial itself.

I say that thinking back on my dad when I was a kid many years ago. At more than one Christmas-time, he said, "All I really want for Christmas is some peace and quiet."

Well, what noisy 10-year-old understands that? First, I wanted some swag! Then I wanted some Christmas noise or something.

Being a few years older and a bit wiser today, I understand more about what my dad was getting at. I understand not just the desire for immaterial gifts, but often for my dad's specific wish: Peace and quiet.

Or, as the English poet William Wordsworth wrote, "The world is too much with us."

Wordsworth wrote his poem as a paean to nature when the Industrial Revolution was first starting. He might have written a whole book about it today.

As the world becomes ever more Internetized, to invent a word, it seems to become even more "too much with us." Stories are written about kids taking smartphones to sleep with them, and then turning them on again the first thing when they wake up. Psychologists do research about the various effects this may have, including quasi-addictive ones. Some adults do this too. Sleep scientists wonder how much this affects people's sleep.

In short, it makes me wonder if much of the populace isn't doing a giant self-inflicted experiment upon itself.

I'm not perfect, I'll admit. I'm online enough at home as well as work. But, I don't have a smartphone.

That way, at times, I avoid temptation to have peace and quiet interrupted.

Part of what made me reflect on this is the recent economic development conference held at the Civic Center. Automated semis, automated taxis, and more. And, the Internet never sleeps.

This all strikes me as being a bit like gold, the original material gift. "It's a fine servant, but a terrible master," per an old saying.

There are many things to appreciate about the world online. YouTube is certainly one of them. Online streaming of television and movies is another.

But, like the greed that gold can induce, there's the same in the Internet. In this case, it may be a vague fear of missing something, somewhere. Of not getting enough "likes" on a Facebook post or a Tweet.

What can really wind up missing, though, is that peace and quiet. Time for reflection, for meditation, personal downtime or whatever one calls it, is easier without the feeling of having to be "always on."

I'm now thinking of Apple's iconic "1984" commercial at the time that it came out. What would really be iconic today would be smashing an iPhone with a giant wrecking ball or something.

As the holidays approach, here's hoping that people find, hold on to and spread a bit of peace.

Steve Snyder is part of the news staff of the News-Telegram. He can be reached at [steve.snyder@ssnewstelegram.com](mailto:steve.snyder@ssnewstelegram.com) or 903-885-8663.



Steve Snyder

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The News-Telegram encourages letters-to-the-editor from its readers for publication. Letters should be typewritten or printed neatly if brought in or mailed to 401 Church St., Sulphur Springs, Texas 75482. We also accept letters to the editor emailed to [butch.burney@ssnewstelegram.com](mailto:butch.burney@ssnewstelegram.com) or visit [ssnewstelegram.com](http://ssnewstelegram.com) to submit your letter online.

## DO YOU REMEMBER ...

... these local events that made headlines.

**10 Years Ago:** The Empty Stocking Program volunteers and the News-Telegram staff thanked individuals who made donations to the program. The first week netted \$735 for this worthy program, and following week's total eclipsed the \$2,000 mark.

**5 Years Ago:** Two Sulphur Springs Middle School students took to heart Rachel's Challenge to make a difference through acts of kindness to others. Because of Brianna Isham and Laura Caviness' efforts, more than 300 toys were sent to the East Coast to benefit the children impacted by Hurricane Sandy.

**1 Year Ago:** The Sulphur Springs Lions Club handed out awards for the best entries in their Lighted Christmas Parade. The winners were Large Business, Carriage House Manor; Small Business, Don Lalo's Mexican restaurant; Non-Profit Organization, Trinity Harvest Church of God; and Mayor's Choice Award, Chad Rawson and Brandon Brewer.

**Sulphur Springs**  
**News Telegram**

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To contact the News-Telegram or Down Home Living, readers can call the main number at 903-885-8663 or can email the staff.

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## YOUR ELECTED OFFICIALS

Interested in letting your elected officials know what you think? Here are addresses and phone numbers that might come in handy.

**U.S. Sen. John Cornyn**  
517 Hart Senate Office Bldg.  
Washington, D.C. 20510  
202-224-2934

**U.S. Senator Ted Cruz**  
455 Dirksen Senate Office Blvd.  
Washington, D.C. 20510  
202-224-5922

**Congressman John Ratcliffe**  
325 Cannon HOB  
Washington, D.C. 20515  
202-225-6673

**Texas Sen. Bob Hall**  
P.O. Box 12068  
Austin, Texas 78711  
512-463-0102

**Texas Rep. Dan Flynn**  
P.O. Box 2910  
Austin, Texas 78768  
512-463-0880

**Gov. Greg Abbott**  
P.O. Box 12428  
Austin, TX 78711  
512-463-2000

**Attorney Gen. Ken Paxton**  
300 West 15th St.  
Austin, Texas 78701  
512-463-2100

**Hopkins County Judge Robert Newsom**  
P.O. Box 288  
Sulphur Springs, Texas 75483  
903-438-4006