

## Waiting for the movie



Fifth grade students from North School were lined up Thursday afternoon as they waited to go into the Sherman Theatre to see the movie, "The Road to El Dorado." All Goodland elementary students went to the movie, a Christmas gift to them from the schools.

Photo by Janet Craft/The Goodland Daily News

## Bush nominates attorney general

AUSTIN, Texas (AP)—President-elect Bush nominated defeated Missouri Sen. John Ashcroft to be attorney general today, choosing a conservative Republican who lost his re-election bid to a dead man.

"An effective attorney general must be a person of prudent character and executive ability," Bush said. He also said there must be a commitment to "fair and firm and impartial administration of justice."

"I'm confident I found the correct person in John Ashcroft," he said.

Ashcroft, 58, was a two-term governor of Missouri before he went to the Senate in 1994. Gov. Mel Carnahan challenged him for re-election in one of the feature Senate contests of 2000, but was killed in an airplane crash in October. His name remained on the ballot, and he won. His widow, Jean, was appointed to the Senate seat.

Ashcroft said political defeat "brings more than emotion and pain, it brings perspective." With the appointment, he said, it also brought a call to renewed and noble service.

The senator, a favorite of Republican conservatives who had maneuvered against more moderate choices for the Justice Department, said he

would "strive to be a guardian of liberty and equal justice." Ashcroft, an ardent foe of abortion, said the rule of law "knows no class, sees no color and bows to no creed," and that will be his guideline.

"You have my word that I will administer the Department of Justice with integrity, I will advise your administration with integrity and I will enforce the laws ... with integrity," he promised Bush.

At a news conference after the announcement, Bush said of Ashcroft, "This is a person who believes in civil rights for all citizens."

Dealing with White House criticism of his suggestions that there are warning signs of an economic slowdown, Bush said it is foolish for anyone to suggest that he is trying to talk down economic prospects.

Bush said one way to encourage consumption and enhance consumer confidence "would be to let the people have some of their own money back."

"There are clear warning signs, warning signs which will require action in the halls of Congress," Bush said in a push for his \$1.3 trillion, 10-year tax cut proposal.

He was asked about his apparent dif-

ficulty in finding a secretary of defense.

"I would characterize my search as deliberate," he said.

Former Sen. Dan Coats, R-Ind., long considered a sure bet to become the Pentagon chief, remains a leading candidate, but Bush has told advisers he needs more time to consider his options. Other candidates include Paul Wolfowitz and Richard Armitage, who both served under Vice President-elect Dick Cheney when he was defense secretary.

Bush said he knows there is a lot of speculation but when he makes up his mind on Cabinet posts, he won't be acting on the basis of politics but on the basis of what is right for the country.

Asked about a moratorium on the federal death penalty, Bush said he supported capital punishment "when it is administered fairly."

Bush, who oversaw a record 40 executions in Texas last year as governor and 152 over the course of six years, said he sees no reason for a moratorium on the death penalty at the federal level.

"If there is compelling evidence that the system is not swift and sure and just, I will listen" on any death penalty case, Bush said.

## Mediamogul offers \$34 million

### INTERNATIONAL

UNITED NATIONS (AP)—Three years after he stunned the United Nations with a \$1 billion gift, media mogul Ted Turner is offering \$34 million more to break a budget impasse between the United States and the 188 other U.N. countries, sources close to the deal say.

If accepted by U.N. members, the offer could help resolve a dispute over U.S. payments to the organization that has had negotiators wrangling for months.

The United States currently pays 25 percent of the U.N. administrative budget and says its share should be reduced to 22 percent. But that would leave other countries to make up the shortfall, and many have objected.

Turner has approached the Clinton administration and offered to pay the \$34 million shortfall for 2001, sources said Thursday, speaking on condition of anonymity.

The years after that aren't addressed by his offer, though, and it wasn't immediately clear if the gesture would be enough to persuade 188 reluctant countries to accept the U.S. demands for a permanent cut in America's share of the U.N. bills.

U.S. Ambassador Richard Holbrooke has had a hard time persuading countries to make up the U.S. shortfall, particularly for next year, since many governments have already approved their 2001 budgets.

DORNOCH, Scotland (AP)—Reversing the formula that made her an international star, Madonna commanded maximum attention with the most minimal exposure on her wedding day.

Madonna was set to marry British film director Guy Ritchie on Friday in a strictly private ceremony, and it was only Friday morning that a waiting world got a first hint of the dress she would wear to the altar.

London jeweler Susy Lauder disclosed that "in keeping with the gothic style wedding dress Madonna is going to wear," the singer had chosen an antique French bracelet studded with 19 carats of diamonds.

The wedding came a day after Madonna, 42, and Ritchie, 32, brought their 4-month-old son Rocco to Dornoch Cathedral to be baptized, to the delight of several hundred local people who joined the media crush outside.

Private security men made sure that no one got close to the happy couple or to celebrity guests including Gwyneth Paltrow, Sting and Rupert Everett.

### NATIONAL

BETHEL, Pa. (AP)—A man dived into a backyard pond to save his 10-year-old brother, but both died in the freezing, murky water.

Jay Paul Oberholtzer, 19, died at Hershey Medical Center late Thursday

after being removed from the pond.

Scuba divers used infrared equipment to locate 10-year-old Timothy Oberholtzer, who fell through the ice about 4:30 p.m., state police said. The child was flown to the hospital, where he later died.

Timothy and his 6-year-old brother, Jonathan, had ventured onto the ice in their backyard pond to see if it was safe to skate, police said.

They were on their way back from crossing the pond when Timothy fell through the ice. Jonathan was not hurt.

Their father, Clinton Oberholtzer, 42, went into the frigid water after Timothy. He became stuck but was rescued, police said.

Jay Oberholtzer then made his unsuccessful attempt to save Timothy.

Rescuers in boats used poles to search for Timothy, and divers searched underwater. The pond, which has a maximum depth of about 12 feet, is in a rural area about 35 miles northeast of Harrisburg.

GRANTS PASS, Ore. (AP)—A final federal plan to save endangered and threatened salmon species in the Columbia Basin will focus on restoring habitat in tributaries and estuaries but does not rule out breaching Snake River dams.

The final plan, which was released Thursday, calls for federally owned hydroelectric dams to be operated to minimize harm to salmon during migrations to the ocean and spawning beds, as well as habitat improvements, hatchery operations and fishing policy changes.

Removing four hydroelectric dams on the lower Snake River in eastern Washington has been a lightning-rod issue.

Removing the dams, which were built in the 1970s, would cut federal

hydroelectric production in the Northwest by 4 percent and wipe out barge service between the Columbia and Lewiston, Idaho. It also would lower reservoirs used for irrigation.

American Indian tribes and environmentalists want to remove the dams to return the river to a more natural condition. The federal plan calls for studies to evaluate the species' recovery before removal is reconsidered.

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—Regulators have voted for rate increases that would affect millions of customers across the state starting next month in an effort meant to rescue two shaky electric companies tangled in a deepening power crisis.

The unanimous action by the Public Utilities Commission on Thursday means that hikes likely would take effect beginning Jan. 4, affecting 10 million customers of Pacific Gas and Electric Co. and Southern California Edison Co. The level of increase has yet to be determined.

"Retail rates in California must begin to rise," the Public Utilities Commission ordered Thursday. "This is crucial in light of the extraordinarily serious financial difficulties the dysfunctional wholesale markets have imposed on the utilities."

However, the commission promised an independent audit of the utilities' books before ratifying its decision on Jan. 4.

The two privately held utilities have said they were squeezed by deregulation in the state. PG&E and SoCal Edison blame \$8 billion in losses since May on soaring wholesale costs and frozen customer rates.

Commission President Loretta Lynch said wholesale electricity costs had increased five-fold over three weeks.

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from The Goodland Daily News  
& Country Advocate staff



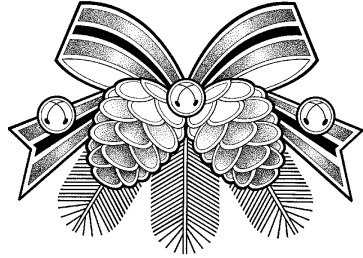
Front row (l-r): Steve Haynes, Dana Sulsberger, Janet Craft, Betty Morris, Helen Dilts, Debra Turner, Susanne Allaman, Rachel Miscall and Cynthia Haynes. Back row (l-r): Ron VanLoenen, Tom Betz, Eric Yonkey, Sheila Smith, Doug Jackson, Pat Schiefen, Jim Bowker and Evan Barnum. Other full-time staff not pictured are Richard and Lana Westfahl and Judy McKnight.

## HOLIDAY SPICE CELEBRATION

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# Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!



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