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February 28 - March 3
10 a.m. - 3 p.m.
MSC Foyer

Student Body President, Senior and Junior Yell Leaders,
Class Council Positions, RHA, Student Senate

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NATION

THE BATTALION

Wednesday, March 12

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Six-year-old killed by first-grade classmate

MOUNT MORRIS TOWNSHIP, Mich. (AP) — A 6-year-old girl was shot to death by a 7-year-old classmate at an elementary school Tuesday morning, authorities said.

A single shot was fired during a first-grade class at Buell Elementary School, Police Chief Eric King said. It was not immediately clear if the shooting was accidental or intentional, he said.

The girl died about 10:30 a.m., said Hurley Medical Center spokesperson Stephanie Motschenbacher. That was about a half-hour after the shooting.

The 7-year-old boy was in custody, King said.

About 22 pupils were inside the classroom when the shot was fired.

"We don't know if it's an accident or what," Beecher School District Superintendent Ira A. Rutherford said. "There is

no evidence of animosity or vengeance or a motive."

Third-grader Corey Sutton, 9, said he heard a bang. "I thought it was a desk or something falling," he said.

"The principal came over the PA system and told teachers to shut their doors and lock them.

The teacher told pupils to line up and get their coats on, Corey said, and then "she told us what happened. A girl got shot, and the teacher started crying."

Police closed off nearby streets and sent parents across the street to a church to await the release of children from the school, which has an enrollment of about 500.

Crystal Watson, 8, who was in her third-grade class, said she did not know anything had happened until she

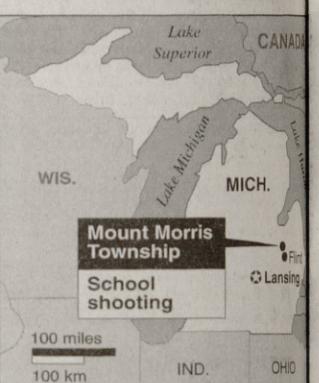
heard sirens.

"We were told to stay in our class and stay calm," she told *The Flint Journal*. "A couple of boys were crying, but everyone else was staying calm."

"We're interested in how the little boy came into possession of the weapon," Genesee County Prosecutor Arthur A. Busch said. "We've had other schoolchildren take guns to elementary schools before ... but it never went this far with it. It's a sign of our times where we have a fully armed society that doesn't take its responsibility to secure its weapons seriously."

A fourth-grader, Christopher Burch, 9, was scared because he has relatives in the first grade.

"My teacher told me a first-grader shot another first-grader, and I started crying because I thought it was my cousin or



sister," he said. He found out minutes later that neither of his relatives was shot.

Mount Morris Township is some miles northwest of Detroit

E. coli bacteria infects nation's cows

WASHINGTON (AP) — Up to half the cattle in the nation's feedlots, far more than previously thought, are infected with deadly bacteria, the government said Tuesday.

Researchers using new testing methods found E. coli O157:H7 present in rates varying from 1 percent in the winter months to as much as 50 percent in the summer. Previously, government scientists had thought the infection rate to be no more than about 5 percent.

Cattle are exposed to the bacteria from manure in feedlots. The new figures were developed by the Agriculture Department's Agricultural Research Service and presented at a public session sponsored by USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service.

The study concluded that chances of E. coli getting into ground beef could be reduced by testing cattle hides and carcasses before the meat is

processed. Testing now is done after the beef is ground.

Consumer groups agree that the government needs to do more extensive testing of cattle and beef to prevent people from being exposed to the germs.

"It is our hope that this data will encourage USDA to re-evaluate its ground-beef sampling program," said

sample carcasses were eventually removed through steam pasteurization, hot water or organic acid rinses, the treatments typically used in packing plants.

"It is our hope that this data will encourage USDA to re-evaluate its ground-beef sampling program," said

"The prevalence figures are much higher than we ever heard before."

— Caroline Smith DeWaal
Center for Science in the Public Interest

heard before," said Caroline Smith DeWaal of the Center for Science in the Public Interest.

Research done at a dozen packing plants last fall found the bacteria on 3.56 percent of the hides that were sampled and 0.44 percent of the carcasses.

All the bacteria on the

James H. Hodges, president of the American Meat Industry Foundation, which sponsored the research.

"A carcass testing program for E. coli O157:H7...will help ensure that the safest and most wholesome product possible enters commerce."

Samples in the industry study were taken at a rate of 1 per 300 carcasses.

E. coli O157 can cause serious illness and sometimes death, especially in children and the elderly. Symptoms include chills and bloody diarrhea. The bacteria are destroyed by adequately cooking the meat.

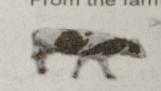
The ground-beef testing program, which was started after tainted hamburger killed several children in Washington state in 1993, "is not systematic, and provides inadequate coverage," DeWaal said.

The federal government recently approved the use of irradiation to treat raw meat, but it is unclear yet whether consumers will react to that.

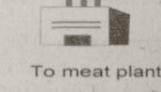
Scientists are working on additional methods of treatment. One of those is an antimicrobial agent, known as lactoferrin, that is a naturally occurring protein in the milk of mammals.

E. coli contamination
The government said Tuesday that half the cattle in the nation's feedlots are infected with deadly E. coli bacteria. Here is a look at how bacteria can get from cattle to dinner table.

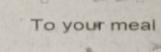
From the farm

 A cow that is carrying the E. coli O157:H7 bacteria in its intestinal tract is chosen for slaughter.

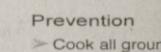
To the slaughterhouse

 E. coli can escape the intestines of infected cattle as they are opened during processing.

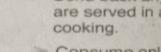
To meat plant

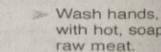
 The contaminated meat is mixed with other meat and ground for hamburger.

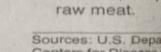
To your meal

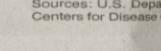
 If the contaminated meat is undercooked, the bacteria can cause severe food poisoning.

Prevention

 Cook all ground beef or hamburger to an internal temperature of 160°. Use a thermometer to be sure the meat is thoroughly cooked.

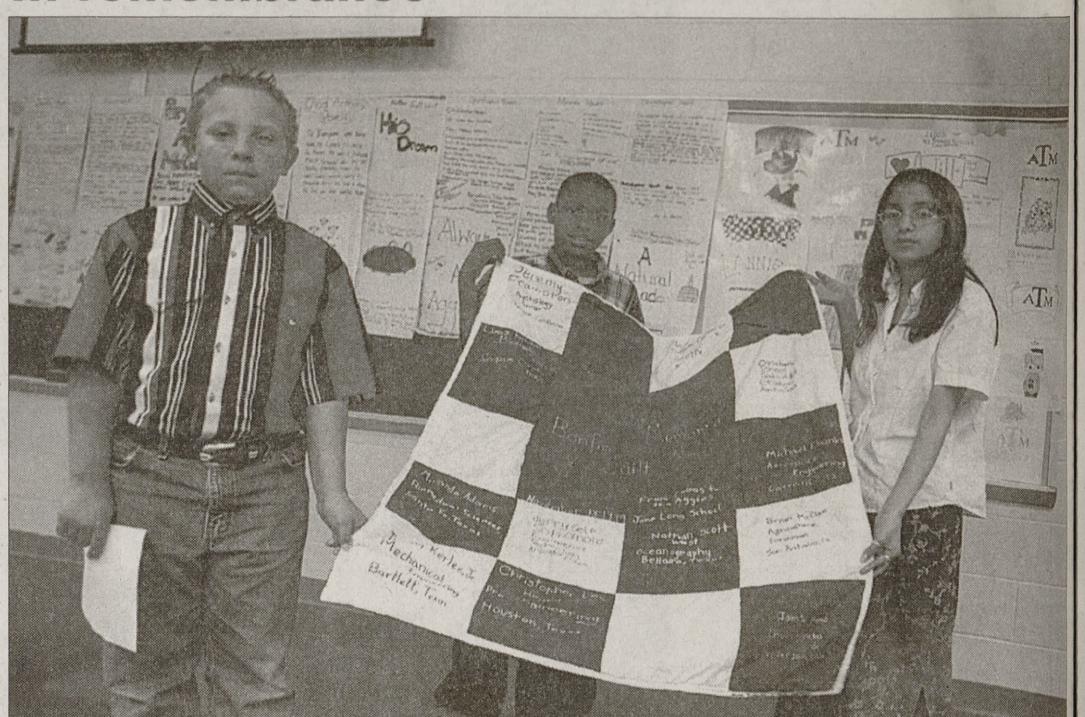
 Send back any undercooked meat or gravy that is served in a restaurant for further cooking.

 Consume only pasteurized milk products and juices.

 Wash hands, counters and utensils with hot, soapy water after they touch raw meat.

Sources: U.S. Department of Agriculture; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

In remembrance



Clayton Bassham, Christopher Young and Nancy Cisneros, sixth graders at Jane Long Middle School in Bryan display a bonfire memorial quilt. The quilt was made by over 100 sixth grade language arts students to commemorate the 1999 Aggie Bonfire Collapse.

Clinton considers dipping into nation's emergency oil reserves to lower prices

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Clinton said Tuesday that he may tap the nation's supply of emergency oil if other options fail to reduce the prices of oil.

"I have not taken the petroleum reserve issue off the table, and I certainly wouldn't do that in the event that we don't seem to have any other options," Clinton said before leaving the White House for a political trip to Florida.

Several Northeast lawmakers have urged the administration to release oil from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, but Energy Secretary Bill Richardson and other administration officials have repeatedly said they do not intend to do that.

The reserve is designed to ease supply disruptions and not to influ-

ence prices, administration officials have said.

There is also the concern that if the strategic reserve were tapped it would

"I have not taken the petroleum reserve issue off the table ... we don't seem to have any other options"



CLINTON

what is needed here," Clinton said Tuesday. "We'll see. I'm encouraged that that might occur."

Richardson visited several oil-producing countries over the weekend but failed to obtain any firm promises that OPEC would agree to significantly raise its self-imposed production cuts.

The cuts have caused oil prices to soar, from \$11.75 a barrel nine years ago to a nine-year high of around \$30 a barrel, and the highest average U.S. gasoline price ever.

Unadjusted for inflation, the price at the pump is \$1.47 per gallon, according to industry analyst Lundberg.

That is up 6 cents on average in two weeks ended Friday, the Lundberg Survey of 10,000 stations nationwide reported Sunday.

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