

LATE SPORTS

No sure shots

NBA teams that switched coaches are struggling. 1C



Torre: Yanks play March 1.

Spring fever

That time of year: Baseball spring training schedule. 9C

USA TODAY

NO. 1 IN THE USA



The Mexican: Br

Fri/Sat/Sun, January 5-7, 2001

Newline



News Money Sports Life

Dow and Nasdaq stocks sl

Dow Jones industrial average drops 10,912.41; Nasdaq index falls 49.86 | 30-year Treasury bond yield dips to .
 ▶ USA TODAY Internet 100 falls 0
 ▶ Japan's Nikkei index is up 220
 ▶ Seng index is up 188 points to 15,42

Jet cockpit doors a safety com

On at least six flights last year, passengers got into the cockpit. A locked door is a trouble out. And, Federal Aviation regulations call for sturdy, but break-

Oklahoma executions rile critics

With eight deaths scheduled over the coming week, Texas' record for such a period targeted by critics seeking a moratorium in the state. 3A

Uneasy economic feelings in Se

Aircraft king Boeing is still flying | shined-up Emerald City — home to other late names such as Microsoft, Amazon.com — could be losing some of its lust-

Inaugural ball gown will be red all over

Red is the color of choice for first lady-to-be Laura Bush during the presidential inaugural functions, Dallas designer Michael Faircloth sketches the ball gown, right. 1B.



Price of postage rises Sunday

Increase of a penny to 34 cents, becomes Sunday. That's about 15 cents more a month average household, postal officials say. Other rates also rise. Beware, there is no grace period and parcels that carry insufficient postage will be returned to sender, officials add.

Today's debate: Medical disclosure

In USA TODAY's opinion, "Medicare hides pl errors as states open up. Policy hurts patients' receive substandard care." 12A.

▶ "Incomplete, distorted information, unc current rules of the legal game, could destroy cine on the pretext of saving it," says Jane Orie sation of American Physicians and Surgeons

Money: Bush bullish on high tech

The president-elect wraps up meetings with b tans, praising the sector's economic power. 1B.

▶ George, the struggling glossy political mag founded by John F. Kennedy Jr. in 1995, will publication in March. 2B.

▶ Guide to surviving a skidding economy. Man Your Money. 3B.

Sports: More bowls, lighter appetite

Number of college football bowls increases, but tence falls to a 21-year low. 1C.

▶ Fed up with the cold, kayakers head south paddling comfort in warmer Florida. 2C.

Life: New 'Survivor' cast unveiled

CBS introduces new members for follow-up to last year's hit TV show. They're younger, prettier and in better shape than the original castaways. 1E.

▶ What constitutes art haunts some museumgoers,

Fatal combination: Guns and depression

Gun-control advocates often forget one victim of gun violence: the suicide.

How many fatal, impulsive decisions have been aided by the presence of a handgun in the home? Too many. And African-Americans are doubly at risk, given their rising suicide rate and an appalling availability of handguns in their communities.



Commentary

By Donna Holland Barnes

Handguns are the leading method of self-destruction, accounting for 57% of the more than 31,000 U.S. suicides in 1998. Homes with handguns are five times more likely to experience a suicide.

Although suicide rates among minorities remain much lower than among whites, the African-American suicide rate has risen alarmingly, particularly among youths. From 1980 to 1995, the suicide rate among black men doubled; it now is the third-leading cause of death for black men between the ages of 15 and 24.

Suicide is often an impulsive decision. In 1975, David H. Rosen interviewed people who attempted suicide by jumping from San Francisco's Golden Gate Bridge. Survivors said they changed their minds before they hit the water. A handgun leaves far less chance for such a last-minute change of heart.

Young black men who tend toward aggression and substance abuse are all the more susceptible to impulsive behavior. Couple that with a trauma such as unemployment, blocked opportunity or a loved one's death — each all too common for African-American men — and the result can be despair and depression.

These dark nights of the soul often can be overcome through some good talk therapy; but trying to convince black men to "talk it out" is difficult. Not only do many blacks mistrust the health care system, but also a limited number of African-American health care providers are trained to treat suicidal behavior.

What reason would an African-American family have for keeping a handgun in the house? Consider the rising rate of suicide among our young men, then think about making a gun available to someone who is depressed, isolated and impulsive. A gun in the house is likely to make him think he has a permanent answer; and sadly, he does. It's just not the right one.

Donna Holland Barnes, a sociology professor at Southwest Texas State University, is president of the National Organization of People of Color Against Suicide.

4 Super Bowls

rushing team

Houston Oilers

X

Eagle
Mich
Ron E

ou your action nteed

their
' replies

es into obli-
and.
the usual re-

liers find the
' you want. In

th consumer
books on ef-
r the top of
aries."

line with a
erience got
is of nearly
times.

ands, came

▶ Similar
complaints
treated dif-
erently. 2A

▶ Talk live
with reporter
Chris Wood-
yard at 2 ET
today on
talk.usa
today.com.

readers sent USA TODAY copies of their written complaints along with the airlines' replies. Although unscientific,

Please see COVER STORY 4A ▶