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# Pampa

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## PEDC approves short term bailout

By JEFF WEST  
Staff Writer

The Pampa Economic Development Corporation after a lengthy debate helped a company pay its employees and possibly avoid bankruptcy.

The board agreed Tuesday to guarantee a loan for up to \$50,000 for International Compressor Systems. The vote

was 3-2 to help the company pay its 14 employees through January. Dick Van Bergen of ICS said without help the company would have to declare bankruptcy.

The company appealed for help during an emergency PEDC session Monday. ICS asked for \$150,000 over 36 months for salaries and operating expenses for the first quarter of 1998. The

company said they had a cash flow problem due to one job they had bid that cost almost twice as much as the bid. The employee responsible for that bid is no longer with the company, according to Van Bergen.

The PEDC board discussed options for an hour and a half Monday night before recessing to do some research.

"I'd like to see us do some-

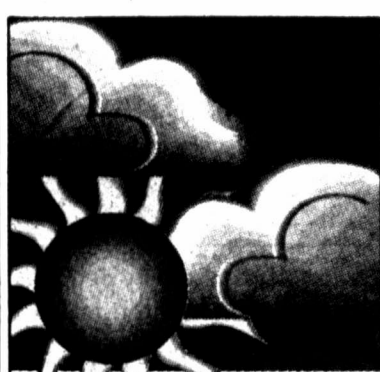
thing on a very short term basis, do the payroll, come back and look at it and get the bank more involved once the contract is there and not see this thing, for lack of payroll, go down the tubes," said board member Roger David at Tuesday's meeting.

"I'd like to help. I feel like they are very viable for Pampa," said board member Wayne Stribling,

"but I also don't like us being the escape factor."

The board agreed to the short term guarantee after Van Bergen and Andy Langley, the two working owners of the company agreed to take money out of their own IRA's for working capital.

After the board gave their approval, the city commission voted 2-1 at noon to O.K. the deal.



Low tonight 33,  
High New Year's 60.  
For weather details see  
Page 2.

**PAMPA** -- The Mary Ellen and Harvester Church of Christ will host a New Year Eve's party tonight.

The party in the church's Fellowship Hall begins at 7 p.m.

Church spokesman Karon Hooper said there would be games and food.

At 11 p.m., the congregation is scheduled to move to the sanctuary for singing, reading scripture and praying.

"At the stroke of midnight, we'll bring in the New Year singing," Hooper said.

**PAMPA** -- The Central Baptist Church, 513 E. Francis, will host a New Year's Eve celebration beginning at 6:30 p.m. today, according to Peggy Turner.

**PAMPA** -- The Fellowship Baptist Church's New Year's Eve celebration begins at 7:30 p.m. today at 622 E. Francis.

**PAMPA** -- Trinity Fellowship Church, 1200 Sumner, will host a New Year's Eve party beginning at 6:30 p.m. today, according to Diana Snuggs.

**PAMPA** -- St. Vincent Catholic Church will have a liturgy at 5:30 p.m. today, according to Sister Ellen.

**PAMPA** -- Calvary Baptist Church, 900 E. 23rd, will have a New Year's Eve celebration beginning at 6:30 p.m. today.

**McKINNEY** (AP) -- A man remained holed up with his estranged common-law wife and two daughters today as police began to worry that the family may be siding increasingly with their captor.

James Riccardo Lipscomb, 43, began the siege on Monday night after he found another man in the apartment of Denise Roach and threatened her with a knife.

Today, he held Ms. Roach, along with two of their three children, 12-year-old Sherissa Lipscomb and 7-year-old Jama Lipscomb. Lipscomb let his 9-year-old son, James II, leave Monday night.

Special-weapons crews and other police remained on the sunlit but chilly scene this morning.

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Iron worker Ricardo Armendariz sits suspended over head laboring on the steel skeleton that is to be an addition to Pampa's Wilson School. Work at Wilson is scheduled to be completed by August. Other school construction projects have been finished or soon will be despite delays caused by weather or suppliers.

## School construction proceeds on schedule

By MIRANDA G. BAILEY  
Staff Writer

The majority of construction for the Austin, Lamar, and Travis elementary schools was complete by the time school began in September, but the "punch list" of final items to be done is still being punched.

The remaining odds and ends of the punch list work is 95 to 98 percent done, said Architect John Shiver of Burleson and Singleton. Shiver and construction manager Charlie Price presented a school construction update to board members at the Pampa ISD Board

of Education meeting this month.

They said that four or five last items to be finished in the project have been delayed because of unavoidable circumstances from materials suppliers. The schools will be inspected and completely "good to go" following the completion of the punch list, Shiver said.

Board member Lee Porter asked if the list could be finished by second semester, but Price said there were at least a couple of things he knew about that couldn't be brought in until January. No firm date was given for entire completion on the three school campuses, although the final work was estimated to be done

by late January or early February.

Construction on the old Wilson Elementary School building is, however, going as expected, Price said.

"You won't recognize Wilson," he said. "I invite you to come take a look."

Price told the board that representatives from the Occupational, Health and Safety Administration (OSHA) have already been to the Wilson construction site for a first random inspection.

"We made an A on our report card with those guys," Price said.

Wilson construction will be finished next August according to an original schedule.

## Index of leading indicators rises 0.1 percent

By ERIC R. QUINONES  
AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) -- A key measure of future economic activity rose for the fifth straight month in November, indicating that the economy will continue expanding into the early part of the new year, the Conference Board said today.

The private research group said the Index of Leading Indicators rose 0.1 percent to 104.6, exceeding Wall Street expectations that it would be unchanged from October.

The Conference Board said six of the 10 components in the lead-

ing index fell, adding a hint of caution to the report. But the board also said the rise in the overall leading index, taken together with gains in two companion indicators, "show a very healthy economy."

Also today, the Labor Department said 13,000 more Americans filed first-time claims for unemployment benefits during Christmas week than in the previous week. Despite the increase, the level still was signaling a plentiful supply of jobs.

Financial markets paid little attention to the report in light trading ahead of the New Year's holiday. The Dow Jones industri-

al average was up 1.49 at 7,917.46 in late morning trading. The benchmark 30-year Treasury bond was up 15-32 point as yields fell to 5.93 from 5.96 late Tuesday.

But the recent trend on Wall Street has confirmed the index's positive outlook. Barring a plunge today, the major stock-market indexes will finish 1997 more than 20 percent higher for a third year in a row.

On Tuesday, the Conference Board reported that consumer confidence in the economy skyrocketed to a 28-year high in December on the back of the solid U.S. job market. The unemployment rate in November, at 4.6

percent, was the lowest in 24 years.

The economic expansion is nearing the end of its seventh year, making it the third-longest in U.S. history.

Today, the Conference Board said big-ticket orders to manufacturers, excluding defense contracts, were the biggest contributor to November's rise in the leading index, followed by growth in the money supply.

But stock prices, hurt in November by worries about the effect of Asia's economic problems on American companies, and new orders for consumer goods were among the index's six components that fell.

## Sheriff wants computer to do better in the new year

By JEFF WEST  
Staff Writer

The new year is growing ever closer and Gray County Sheriff Don Copeland said he just wants to keep doing better.

Copeland said he thinks the department will be in great shape as soon as they get their computer situation up to speed.

The computer system the department uses is programmed in Austin and some of the information the Gray County Sheriff's Office needs doesn't come up like it should, according to Copeland. He said the company was in town last month and some information got lost. The computer company, Apollo Computers, is in the process of fixing it.

The remodeling is complete in the jail except for outfitting the commissary. Copeland said that will wait until the computer is problem free. Once the commissary is operational, then the jail will no longer need to use outside services, the sheriff said.

The state mandates that the deputies have at least 40 hours of continuing education every two years and Copeland tries to include more than that, he said.

"I think that education is the best thing you can do in law enforcement," Copeland said.

The first class scheduled for the classroom in the jail is called "Interpersonal Communications in a Jail Setting," Copeland said law enforcement personnel from other counties and cities have been invited to attend the class.

While the Sheriff is planning to hire two new jailers soon to bring the staff up to full strength there should be no major changes in personnel in the new year.

"Everything's going pretty smooth," Copeland said. "I'm tickled to death with my employees."

### Different strokes for different folks

PHILADELPHIA (AP) -- New York City drops a giant ball and Washington has a huge, descending postage stamp.

But watch for stuffed goats, giant pickles and cigars in Pennsylvania.

In Falmouth, folks have lowered a stuffed goat down a flagpole the past five New Year's eves. The goat became the local emblem when officials in Falmouth, Nova Scotia, presented residents with the stuffed animal -- the very one that will be dropped at midnight.

In York, they drop a giant strawberry. For Red Lion, it's a giant cigar. Dillsburg residents watch a 6-foot-long pickle with arms and legs drop from a fire truck's ladder.

"It's getting bigger and better every year," said Larry Therit, a Dillsburg business owner.

He means the celebration. Not the pickles.

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## Food certificates



(Community Camera photo)

The Junior Service League presented Community Day Care with food gift certificates for the children and their families. Gift certificates were also given to the Head Start program. These certificates were made possible by donations from Pampa businesses and individuals and a total of 54 families were provided for because of the donations. Above are Jr. Service League President Marian Green, left, and Barbara Kirkham, administrator of Community Day Care.

## Republican officials to vote on abortion litmus test

WASHINGTON (AP) — Republican National Committee delegates will be asked to approve an abortion litmus test for candidates, a move that could weaken any "big tent" strategy to embrace party moderates.

While some Republicans have feared such a test, the RNC national committeeman from Texas said he will propose denying party aid to candidates who refuse to back the GOP position.

RNC officials will be confronted with Tim Lambert's resolution when they convene in Palm Springs, Calif., Jan. 15, for their winter meeting. The proposal would ban "support financially, or by in-kind contributions" to a candidate "who opposes measures to end so-called partial-birth abortions."

Steven Hess, a scholar at the Brookings Institution think tank, said Tuesday the proposal would be "pretty bad precedent. When you reach the national level, the national chairmen like to talk about their parties as a big tent. They want people to come into the tent rather than have people pushed out of the tent."

Hess said there's a "tension between people who have to run for office and raise the money and those who in some ways are amateur politicians — the ones who are more interested in their own intellectual and ideological purity."

To illustrate the dilemma, Republicans only need to review the New Jersey governor's race last November. Would party members have wanted to

cut off financial support to Gov. Christie Todd Whitman, who vetoed a bill that would have banned the abortion procedure? She won re-election in November by less than 27,000 votes out of more than 2.3 million cast.

Lambert, of Lubbock, is one of nine members of the resolutions committee that would send the proposal to the full RNC membership.

"Just because a person is a nominee of the party does not conclude they receive funding from the RNC," Lambert said in an interview. "Is the party obligated to support a nominee of the party regardless of their position? I don't think that if we had a candidate who was really great but was a pedophile, we wouldn't be having this discussion."

Lambert cited as precedent the party's refusal to support David Duke, a failed senatorial and gubernatorial candidate in Louisiana who was a former Ku Klux Klan member.

"If we go back to the race issue I don't think we'd be having this discussion," he said.

President Clinton has twice vetoed legislation which would have banned — except to save the woman's life — the procedure involving partial delivery of a fetus through the birth canal, followed by the drainage of its skull.

Clinton chastised Congress for ignoring his demand that the partial-delivery procedure be allowed when a woman's health was endangered.

## Bush proclaims January school board month

AUSTIN — Gov. George W. Bush has proclaimed January 1998 as School Board Recognition Month and districts across the state will use this opportunity to build awareness and understanding of the important function an elected board of education plays in their communities and schools.

"Local control of our schools with an emphasis on academic excellence provides the best way to educate the young people of Texas. For more than 200 years, local school boards have ensured that local residents control and are accountable for their schools," he said.

"Elected school board members set policy and guide local schools in accordance to the will of the people. With our schools confronting new technology-driven challenges and more opportunities, school boards play an integral role in our children's schooling. Cooperation between parents of schoolchildren and school boards has become vital in determining the direction of education in Texas," Bush said.

"I encourage all Texans to recognize school boards' contributions to education and to work with teachers and local school boards to help our children build a bright future for themselves and for the Lone Star State," he continued.

"School board members serve as advocates for our children first and foremost, protecting each child's opportunity to develop his or her potential. They offer vision, knowledge, leadership, and time, and work purely for the common good. It is important to recognize the many contributions made by our locally elected school board members and support them as they tackle the demanding task of educating our children," said James B. Crow, executive director of the Texas Association of School Boards.

## Celebrating the birth of Christ



(Pampa News photo by Miranda Bailey)

St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Church prepared for the birth of Christ with this nativity scene during the holidays.

## Madison County offenders to wear signs

MADISONVILLE, Texas (AP) — Some people who used hot checks for their Christmas shopping sprees in Madison County are soon going to get a rude awakening, a judge says.

Convicted shoplifters and hot-check writers will have some new attire as they will be required to advertise their guilt in a very public way.

Madison County Judge Cecil N. Neely said Tuesday he plans to start ordering offenders to wear large signs that state, "I'm a thief," accompanied by either, "I wrote hot checks" or "I stole from this store."

"On top of that, they're going to have to spend two or three hours at a time marching in front of the store where they did the crime," the judge said. "It's not going to be a fun time for them, I assure you. But something has got to be done."

The signs, in bold black-and-red letters, are ready and posted near the district clerk's office and in the county's probation department.

Jade Martin-Bracewell, a Madison County probation officer, said the stack of hot checks at the district clerk's office is growing daily.

"We're seeing the results of some Christmas shopping sprees," she said, "and we're going to have to help these stores get their money back."

"They're calling this new plan

the 'shame factor,' which I think is appropriate," she said, adding that other stores in town long have posted prominently the names of hot-check offenders.

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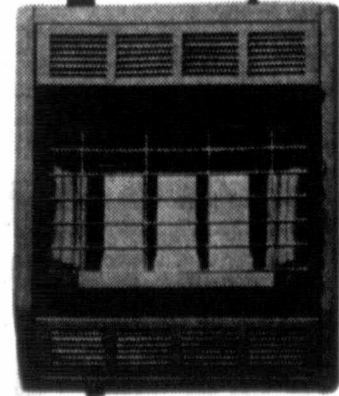
## Pampa Optimist Club

Boy's Basketball sign-ups will be on Jan. 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup>.  
4<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders who played last season need to sign up on Sunday, Jan. 4<sup>th</sup> from noon till 6:00 p.m. 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> graders who did not play last year will need to sign up and try-out Monday, Jan. 5<sup>th</sup> from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.  
5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders will need to sign up Tuesday, Jan. 6<sup>th</sup> from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Sign-ups will be limited, so be early. Coaching spaces available.  
For more information call Rusty Gallagher at 669-7179.



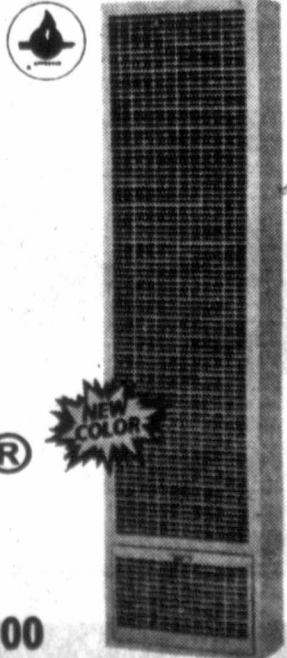
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# Careful Planning Is Crucial Before Battered Wife Flees

**DEAR ABBY:** It appears to me that "Living a Nightmare" is ready to leave her abusive husband. The booklet you suggested may be helpful, but she may not have time to wait for its arrival, or her husband may beat her if he discovers it in the mail.

She needs someone to tell her, "Leave now; you are ready!" She should decide where to go and what to take with her. She should pack lightly, and take nothing that would reveal her whereabouts. She should enlist the support of a few trustworthy friends and family members, as well as the law. Above all, her plans and her location should not be revealed to her husband, for he will resort to extreme violence to try to stop her. You can count on that.

"Living a Nightmare," my prayers are with you. I used to think the only way I'd survive my situation would be if my abuser died. I was wrong. I left, and it was easier than I'd ever imagined. That was 12 years ago. I am now married to a man who treasures my physical and emotional well-being. You deserve the same.

BEEN THERE IN STOCKTON

**DEAR BEEN THERE:** The most dangerous time for the victim is when she decides to leave. Her batterer's mental state can run the gamut from disturbed to downright psychotic. It is essential that the victim have a well-thought-out plan of action ready. That is



**Abigail Van Buren**  
 SYNDICATED COLUMNIST

what the booklet I recommended in my column was designed to provide.

Please note that I also said it should be purchased by someone close to the victim, so that it will not be discovered on the premises or in the mail by the batterer.

Many times over the years I have urged battery victims to leave their batterer. However, the decision when to make that move is a very delicate and personal one. The timing cannot be decided "for" someone, no matter how well meaning one is.

paper in the slot and took two newspapers!

My husband said to her, "Oh, is this two-for-one day?" The child did not reply. She just took the two newspapers to her mother.

Abby, this is stealing, pure and simple. I wonder what this mother is going to think when her daughter becomes a teen and gets arrested for shoplifting at the mall? I suppose she'll wonder where her daughter got the idea that it is OK to take something without paying for it. I hope she reads this and recognizes herself.

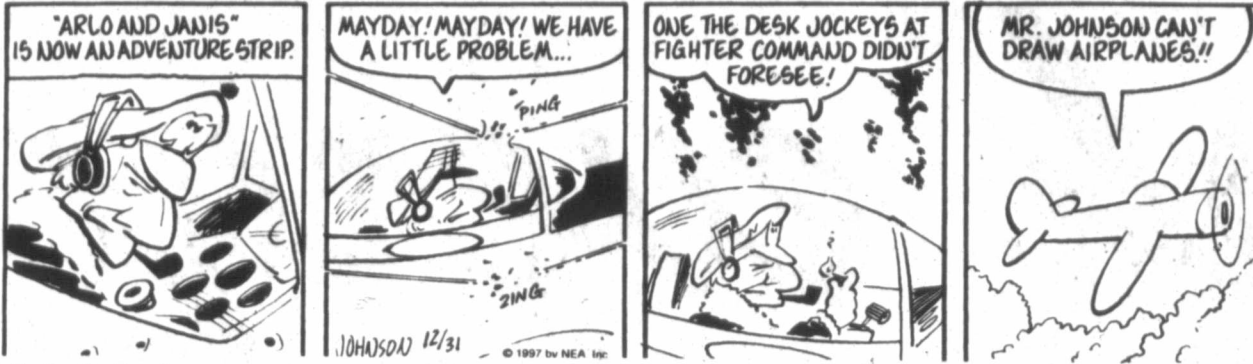
DISGUSTED IN DELMAR, N.Y.

**DEAR DISGUSTED:** The mother missed an opportunity to teach her child right from wrong. (No wonder many of our newspapers are worried about declining circulation dollars.) If the child took the extra newspaper in error, the mother should have instructed her to put it back. However, if she put the child up to it — shame on her.

What teens need to know about sex, drugs, AIDS, and getting along with peers and parents is in "What Every Teen Should Know." To order, send a business-sized, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for \$3.95 (\$4.50 in Canada) to: Dear Abby, Teen Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, Ill. 61054-0447. (Postage is included.)



For Better or For Worse



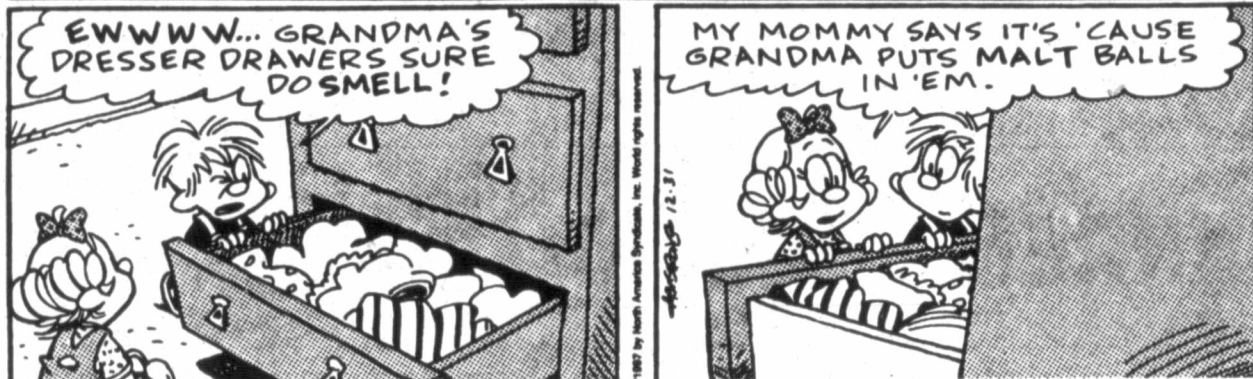
Arlo & Janis



Garfield



Walnut Cove



Marvin



B.C.



Eek & Meek



The Born Loser



Frank & Ernest



Mallard Filmore

## Horoscope



### Your Birthday

Thursday, Jan. 1, 1998

Success in the year ahead will be predicated upon two primary factors. Diligence is one, your luck is the other. Both will be operating to your advantage.

**CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)** Watch for small and large opportunities today where your material interests are concerned. A recognizable trend may reveal itself; move on it. Know where to look for romance and you'll find it. The Astro-Graph Matchmaker instantly reveals which signs are romantically perfect for you. Mail \$2.75 to Matchmaker, c/o this newspaper, P.O. Box 1758, Murray Hill Station, New York, NY 10156

**AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 19)** You will be endowed with stronger resiliency than usual today. This bounce-back faculty will be your key to success in one-on-one situations.

**PISCES (Feb. 20-March 20)** Today, you should be able to achieve the results you desire. Your chart indicates you'll have the right people backing you up when the chips are down.

**ARIES (March 21-April 19)** Be optimistic about new endeavors you implement today. Conditions are more promising than usual, giving you just cause for high expectations.

**TAURUS (April 20-May 20)** Objectives you've been unable to achieve early this week are reachable today. Reanalyze your procedures and focus on all that is doable.

**GEMINI (May 21-June 20)** Today, you'll learn something valuable from several of your important encounters. At a later date, they'll be given useful applications.

**CANCER (June 21-July 22)** Do not interfere today with someone who is managing a delicate matter for you. As long as

he or she is in your corner, it's wise to remain in the background.

**LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)** Good things could be in the offing for you today, but they'll be due in large part to the efforts of associates rather than from your input.

**VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)** Career situations could take a surprising turn today. In matters where your progress was impeded previously, the walls will begin to crumble.

**LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23)** Social involvements could be more significant today than they first appear. Chances are good for beneficial developments with friendly associates.

**SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 22)** Do not anticipate negative results in situations for which you are adequately prepared. Your position at closure should please you.

**SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 23-Dec. 21)** You will be happiest today if you can move about unrestricted, even in your mundane activities. Everything will be an adventure to you.

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"Let's get our piggy banks and go wish everybody Happy New Year."



"I'm letting you watch Oprah with me and you want my snacks, too?!"



The Family Circus



Marmaduke



Grizzwells



Alley Oop



Peanuts

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## SPORTS

## Notebook

## FOOTBALL

**ROCKWALL (AP)** — A Maryland assault charge will bring Baltimore Ravens running back Bam Morris back to Texas next month for a probation revocation hearing on his 1996 marijuana conviction.

District Attorney Ray Sumrow says Morris violated probation when he was charged with assault in Maryland. A woman has accused Morris of choking her after she had a confrontation with his wife Nov. 16. Sumrow also claims Morris failed to report to his probation officer seven times.

State District Judge Sue Pirtle could sentence Morris, who remains free on \$500,000 bond, to up to 10 years in prison and up to a \$10,000 fine.

**PITTSBURGH (AP)** — Former offensive lineman Steve Courson is suing to increase his NFL pension, arguing the league's enforcement of its anti-drug policy led him to take steroids and develop a heart condition.

In a lawsuit received in U.S. District Court, Courson claims his pension should be increased from \$1,750 a month to one of its highest levels because the NFL refused to stop him from abusing drugs and alcohol.

## BASKETBALL

**MINNEAPOLIS (AP)** — Chicago Bulls star Michael Jordan's record-setting night was tarnished by an unsubstantiated telephone call claiming his mother had been hospitalized.

Minnesota beat Chicago 99-95, ruining Jordan's NBA record-setting 788th consecutive double-digit scoring game. Jordan finished with 33 points to eclipse Kareem Abdul-Jabbar's mark of 787 games.

Jordan scored 17 in the first half to break the record, but struggled badly after getting a note at halftime saying his mother, Deloris, had been rushed to a hospital near Greenville, N.C.

The note said a call had come into the arena command office from Jordan's brother, Larry, according to a source who spoke on the condition he not be identified. Jordan was told no one had been admitted to the hospital under his mother's name. Two women reached by the AP at the hospital in Rocky Mount, N.C., also said no one had been admitted under that name.

## HOCKEY

**NEW YORK (AP)** — Defenseman Ray Bourque of the Boston Bruins extended his NHL record by earning an 11th starting berth on the All-Star team.

Joining Bourque in the starting lineup for the North American team are Philadelphia teammates Eric Lindros at center and John LeClair on one wing, wing Brendan Shanahan of Detroit, defenseman Brian Leetch of the New York Rangers and goalie Patrick Roy of Colorado. Roy led all players in votes with 395,656 to earn his seventh All-Star start.

Top NHL players from North America will face a team of NHL stars from the rest of the world Jan. 18 at Vancouver.

**EDMONTON, Alberta (AP)** — The Edmonton Oilers sent three players to the Tampa Bay Lightning to get top young defenseman Roman Hamrlik and the rights to unsigned draft pick Paul Comrie.

Defenseman Bryan Marchment and forwards Steve Kelly and Jason Bonsignore went to Tampa Bay. Hamrlik, 23, has three goals and 12 assists in 37 games this season. He was the first overall pick in the 1992 draft.

## SKIING

**BORMIO, Italy (AP)** — Andreas Schifferer beat Werner Franz by 0.18 seconds in a World Cup downhill to give Austria its second 1-2 finish in 24 hours. Schifferer, second to World Cup leader Hermann Maier in Monday's downhill, has two victories this season and three in his career.

## Don Nelson agrees to coach Mavericks until 2000

**DALLAS (AP)** — Don Nelson has agreed to a contract to serve as head coach and general manager of the Dallas Mavericks through the end of the 1999-2000 season.

Nelson said Tuesday that at the end of the season in 2000 he will turn over the coaching duties to a

new coach and concentrate solely on his duties as general manager.

All of the details have been ironed out and the contract simply awaits his signature, Nelson said. He declined to discuss specifics, but those with knowledge of the negotiations said the two sides had discussed a pack-

age that would pay him between \$8.5 million and \$9 million for the two full seasons in which he held down his dual role.

"It was a fair offer," Nelson said. "I don't want to get into any of that (salary) stuff."

"It's not like money is an issue. I'm committed to the franchise

and the city. I'm going to be there," he said.

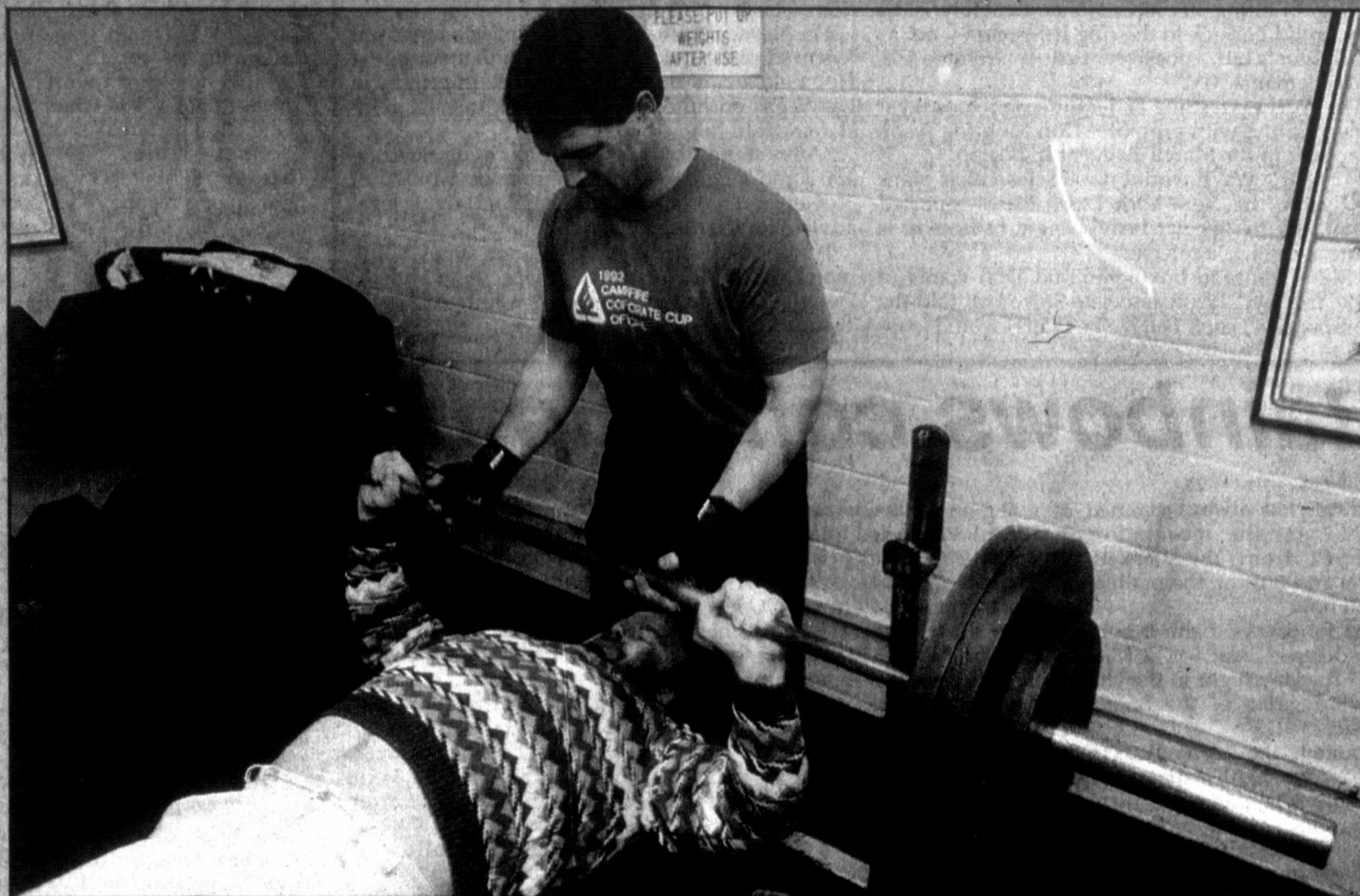
Nelson already was operating under a five-year, \$7.2 million contract that made him the highest-paid general manager in the league. The amended agreement would up the total value of the deal to slightly more than \$13

million.

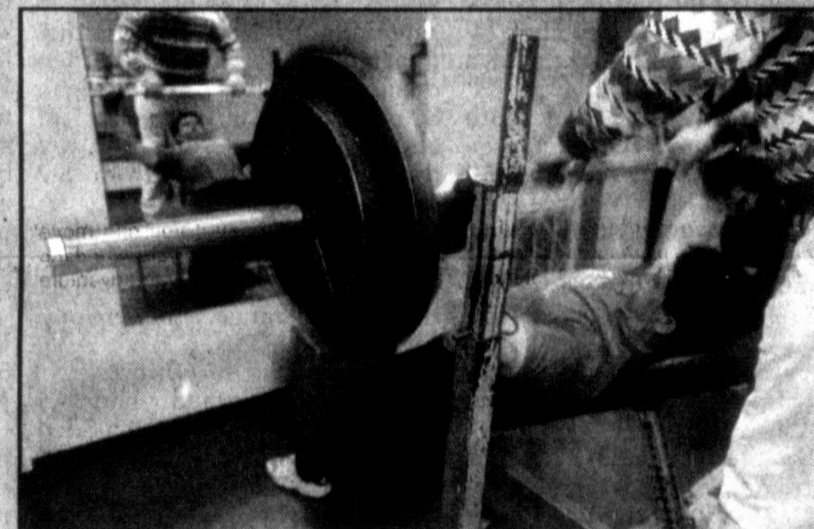
Nelson, at the request of majority owner Ross Perot Jr., replaced Jim Clemons as the team's coach on Dec. 4. He made it clear that he would not have taken over if it hadn't been for Perot's insistence.

The Mavericks have a 1-13 record since Nelson took over.

## Pampa pumps iron during holiday season



**Nathan Bailey, above, helps steady the weights for iron Mike Lane while the two work out at Pampa Youth and Community Center. Lane returns the favor, right, as Bailey hoists the iron. The center saw an increase in activity during the holidays as people ran, walked, swam and sweated the extra pounds off from Christmas dinner, and then there were the regulars like Bailey and Lane that work out regularly, more or less. "We're not as consistent as we should be," Bailey admitted.**



## Levy could be included in shakeup of Bills' coaching staff

By BUCKY GLEASON  
AP Sports Writer

**ORCHARD PARK, N.Y. (AP)** — The Buffalo Bills' purge of offensive assistants was expected. That the shakeup could extend all the way to the retirement of head coach Marv Levy was not.

Bills owner Ralph Wilson planned to meet with Levy today for the second time in less than a week after flying from his home in West Palm Beach, Fla. The owner does not typically travel to Buffalo at this time of year unless a major change is planned.

The Bills would not confirm speculation that Levy, 72, would step down as coach, ending his 12-year stint with the team after taking it to four Super Bowls to start the 1990s.

Buffalo general manager John Butler refused to confirm or deny whether Levy would retire when reached at home late Tuesday.

"There is nothing to report," team spokesman Scott Berchtold said.

However, the Buffalo News reported today that Levy's retirement "is expected," and an afternoon news conference was scheduled.

Team sources said Levy mentioned nothing about retirement when he met with the coaching staff Monday. Levy and Wilson have not returned telephone calls seeking comment. Berchtold was called off vacation to handle media questions about Levy's future.

A day after Buffalo finished 6-10 this season, Levy refused to say whether he would return for another season and become the oldest coach in NFL history. He met with Wilson last weekend to discuss the team's future.

Sources told The Associated Press that Wilson wanted changes made in Levy's offensive coaching staff after Buffalo struggled to move the ball nearly all season. Among those Wilson reportedly wanted dismissed was offensive line coach Tom Bresnahan and tight ends coach Don Lawrence. Levy was hoping to keep his staff intact.

Wilson for years has said that Levy had a job with the Bills as long as he wanted. Levy left the decision to Wilson during the postseason meeting in Florida but nothing was resolved.

Levy overcame prostate cancer two years ago and said at his postseason news conference that he felt physically capable of coaching for the next few years. He even reminded reporters that he might be in better shape than most of them.

"I'm full of energy, and I feel great, and I love the game, and I want the Buffalo Bills to get better fast and excel," Levy said at the time. "My mind is on 1998."

Levy also holds the position of vice president of football operations. Wilson, Butler and Levy all have promised they would be active in free agency this season after being virtually silent last year.

Levy took over for fired coach Hank Bullough in 1986 with seven games remaining and became the winningest coach in team history with a 123-78 record in his 11-plus seasons with the Bills.

Buffalo, with quarterback Jim Kelly, running back Thurman Thomas, wide receiver Andre Reed and defensive end Bruce Smith, had one of NFL's most talented teams in the early 1990s. The Bills won AFC championships from 1990-93, but never won the biggest game.

They have been in steady decline since the 1995 season, losing six of their final seven games this year and missing the playoffs.

## Washington State could shed underdog image forever

By ROB GLOSTER  
AP Sports Writer

**PASADENA, Calif. (AP)** — Ryan Leaf and the Fab Five receivers of Washington State have undermined coach Mike Price's carefully crafted underdog mystique. One more win, and that image will be gone forever.

Price, once a walk-on for the Cougars, revels in portraying his team as David facing college football's Goliaths. On Thursday, the Cougars aim their slingshots at No. 1 Michigan in the Rose Bowl.

Michigan (11-0) will be seeking its first national championship since 1948. Washington State (10-1), with a No. 8 ranking that's the highest in school history, is making its first trip to the Rose Bowl in 67 years.

"We're a mixed breed. We're not all a bunch of All-Americans, blue chips," Price said. "I kind of like turning over the rocks and finding the guy that no one else has recruited."

The contrasts between the schools' traditions are stark.

The Wolverines have more wins (775) than any other college football team and are playing in their 29th bowl game. Washington State will be in its seventh postseason game in 102 years of football.

Michigan has the Heisman Trophy winner in Charles Woodson, a cornerback who doubles as receiver and also is dangerous as a punt returner. The Wolverines' quarterback, Brian Griese, is the son of Pro Football Hall of Famer Bob Griese.

The Cougars' starting lineup includes five players who were walk-ons, and several more rejected by other schools, including running back Michael Black — who served 26 months in juvenile centers after convictions for armed robbery and auto theft as a teenager.

The matchup that has drawn the most attention is Leaf vs. Woodson, especially since the Washington State quarterback has vowed to go right after the Wolverines' best defender.

Leaf threw for 3,637 yards this season, including 33 touchdowns, in leading the Cougars to an average of 42.5 points and 502 yards of total offense per game — both marks that ranked second in the nation.

"There isn't a team that we're going to have as much trouble matching up with as Washington State, and it all starts with the guy throwing the ball," Michigan coach Lloyd Carr said. "If we don't get pressure on Ryan Leaf, it's going to be a long day."

The self-christened Fab Five — Shawn McWashington, Shawn Tims, Chris Jackson, Kevin McKenzie and Nian Taylor — have combined for 186 receptions and 30 TDs this season. McKenzie leads the Cougars with 50 catches.

They'll be facing a Michigan defense anchored by Woodson that leads the nation by allowing only 8.9 points and 207 yards per game.

But Griese, a former walk-on who threw 14 touchdown passes and just five interceptions

this season, says the game will come down to Michigan's sometimes erratic offense against a Cougars defense loaded with seniors.

"The Pac-10 and Big Ten have two totally different styles of football," Griese said. "The Big Ten likes to run and the Pac-10 likes to pass. Their defense has not seen the run that Michigan has."

Plenty of fans outside Washington will be rooting for the Cougars. If Washington State defeats Michigan, that would give No. 2 Nebraska a chance to win a national title in coach Tom Osborne's final game in the Orange Bowl against Tennessee on Friday.

No matter what happens Thursday, the 84th Rose Bowl will be the last of its kind. The oldest bowl game, it has carefully guarded its traditions while other bowls were adding sponsors and changing dates.

Beginning with the 1999 game, the Rose Bowl becomes part of the new super alliance — meaning it no longer will always feature the champions of the Big Ten and Pac-10, and might not always be played on Jan. 1.

It could even end up with a corporate sponsor attached to its name as early as 1999.

Both Price and Carr bemoaned the end of the Rose Bowl's exclusive deal with their conferences, with Carr saying "the Big Ten and the Pac-10 are the losers in this deal."

Price went further, reflecting back to the days before Arizona and Arizona State joined his conference.

"I'm a traditionalist," he quipped. "I liked it when it was the Pac-8."

## Stumped by NCAA, Texas A&amp;M finds way to honor Reggie Brown in Cotton Bowl

By DENNE H. FREEMAN  
AP Sports Writer

**DALLAS (AP)** — Texas A&M linebacker Dat Nguyen, who has made the all-Big 12 teams the last two years, said injured Detroit linebacker Reggie Brown taught him how to compete and be humble.

"He's one of the greatest all-around persons I've ever known," Nguyen said. "He was fun to be around. He taught me a lot about intensity and giving your best."

So it was no wonder the Aggies

wanted to honor their former teammate, who suffered a probably career-ending neck injury late in the Lions' 13-10 victory Dec. 21 over the New York Jets. Doctors say he is responding to treatment after neck surgery.

"What happened to him was sad. I guess you never know which play will be your last because of some freak accident," Nguyen said.

The Aggies were going to wear a decal with the No. 59 on it in the Cotton Bowl game on Thursday against No. 5-ranked UCLA, but the NCAA ruled against it. The

NCAA cited a statute that limits honorary helmet displays to active college players who died during the season.

Now, the Aggies plan to wear a T-shirt with the No. 59 on it under their jerseys.

Nguyen said some players will also honor Brown, who has spinal cord damage, in other ways.

"We'll have his number on socks and sweat bands," Nguyen said. "We just want him to know we're thinking of him in case he watches on television. We've always known him as a fighter

and a battler. He won't let this get him down for long. All his teammates from A&M think about him every day."

A&M coach R.C. Slocum said Tuesday he wouldn't try to explain the NCAA's decision, "because I don't understand the reasoning behind it myself. We'll wear his number on a shirt underneath our jerseys right over the heart. I talked to Reggie's mom this morning and she thought it was a wonderful idea."

Slocum said Brown's mother was encouraged that he has been standing up.







### Chamber Gold Coats



Chuck and Janie Taylor, center, are the owners of CJ Custom Printing, 517 S. Russell. The Taylors were honored as new business owners by Chamber of Commerce Gold Coats, Jerry Foote, left, and Jerry Lane, right, at a red ribbon cutting ceremony Tuesday morning. The Taylors custom print jackets, shirts, caps, magnets, promotional items and "just about anything," said Chuck Taylor.

### Background checks to be conducted for child-care providers

AUSTIN — The state will work harder to protect small children and ease the concerns of parents by checking the backgrounds of a new set of child-care providers, according to a state official.

"The new law applies to people who receive compensation for the regular care of three or fewer unrelated children in their own home," said Karen Eells, deputy director for programs at the Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services. "The background checks are designed to ensure that no person with a criminal or substantiated child abuse history is entrusted with the care of children."

People who fall into the new category of family home child care must become listed with the state. To find out how to comply with the new law, caregivers should contact their local Child Care Licensing office of the Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services or call 1-800-862-5252. Caregivers have until Jan. 1, 1998, to comply with the new law.

The law applies to persons who care for one, two or three unrelated children for four or more hours per day, three days a week, for more than nine consecutive weeks. Related children are the caregiver's own children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, siblings, cousins, nieces or nephews by blood, marriage or adoption.

"This law does not apply to nannies, baby-sitters or those who only occasionally take care of children," Eells said. "This is for people who care for children in their own home on a regular basis."

The background checks apply to the provider, each person employed to work in the provider's home and each person over the age of 14 who regularly or frequently stays or works at the home while children are in care. Once the background check is completed, the family home provider will be issued a certificate of listing with the state. Provider must pay a fee of \$20 to be listed.

If a provider falls into the new category and does not become listed with the state, the provider is operating illegally and may be subject to a fine up to \$2,000 and six months in jail.

Eells said parents should always ask to see the listing certificate. Parents can also call their regional Child Care Licensing office to check the validity of the certificate. Listed family homes are not inspected by the state and the providers are not held to any health or safety standards other than the background check. Parents are responsible for making sure that the family home is a safe place where their children can thrive.

The new law is in addition to the existing registration of family home child care for four or more children and licensing of child-care centers.

### Writers Alive! to sponsor contest, seminar

AMARILLO — The Amarillo Chapter of Inspirational Writers Alive! will sponsor a writer's seminar featuring four speakers from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. April 4 at Kingswood United Methodist Church, 4801 S. Austin Street.

Keynote speaker will be Susan Titus Osborn, editor, *The Christian Communicator*, American Christian writers; author's representative, Broadman & Holman Publishers; Adjunct Professor, Communication Dept., Hope International University; copy editor, *Clear Thinking*; international writing consultant, Spiritual Overseers Service; Advisory Board, American Christian Writers, 1996; adjunct professor, Communication Dept., The Master's College 1993-1996; co-director, Christian Communicators Conference at Master's College, 1993-1995; associate director, Biola Writers Institute, 1986-1992.

Osborn teaches at writing conferences nationwide and internationally. She has a bachelor of arts degree in religious studies and masters of arts degree in communications.

In conjunction with their April 1998 seminar, full details to be announced later, Inspirational Writers Alive! will hold a writing competition. Contest rules are as follows:

Contests are open only to individuals who register for the conference. Last year's first place winner in each category is not eligible to enter that category but is eligible to enter other categories.

Categories are: Inspirational Article, 2000 words maximum; Devotionals, 300 words max; Rhymed Poetry and Unrhymed Poetry (separate categories) up to 40 lines each poem. Only one entry in each category at \$5 per entry. Entries must be the sole work of the entrant, unpublished and not accepted for publication

before the deadline of March 1. Put the category name and the title of your work on the first page of manuscript. No names may appear on the manuscripts. Include a cover sheet with name, address, telephone number, category and title of entry.

If you want your entries returned by mail, include sufficient size envelope with postage attached. Mail entries to Karl Smith, contest chair, 5006 Navajo Trail, Amarillo, TX, 79110, by March 1, 1998. Each winner will receive a certificate, and first, second and third place winners will receive cash.

Entries must be typed, double-spaced (poetry may be single-spaced) on one side only of white, 8 1/2" x 11" paper. If there are not sufficient entries in any category to have a contest, that category will be canceled. Winners will be announced at the seminar luncheon April 4.

For more information about the

contest, call Smith at (806) 352-7103 about the contests. Call Helen Luecke for information about the seminar at (806) 376-9671. Brochures will be ready to mail within two weeks.

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### SPS official speaks to Jordan Unit utility class

By JERRY GUTHRIE  
Jordan Unit reporter

Rufe Jordan Units L.C.D.C., substance abuse counselor H. Gardner recently hosted a utility information seminar.

Retired Southwestern Public Service Company technical supervisor analyst Dick Carter, spoke to the class about customer rights, service, billing and life.

### Applications for art scholarships now available

KERRVILLE — Applications for scholarships in the arts have been mailed to accredited high schools throughout Texas. The competition is open to any high school senior student, under age 21, enrolled in an accredited Texas high school. The applicant must plan to continue their studies in an accredited college or specialty school. Deadline to submit the application is Feb. 1, 1998.

Three scholarships in the amount of \$1,000, \$750 and \$500 respectively are awarded. Merit recognition is also given. A student may enter in the following categories: fiber, glass, graphics/drawing, jewelry, leather, metal works, painting, photography, pottery, sculpture or wood craft.

In addition to the scholarships, the winning works are displayed during the Official Texas State Arts & Crafts Fair in Kerrville. This event will be held May 22-25, 1998, on Schreiner College campus. Only carefully selected Texas artisans who produce original handmade works are on site. For more information, contact your local high school TACEE, PO Box 1527, Kerrville, TX 78029-1527 or web site [www.hilconet.com/~tacee](http://www.hilconet.com/~tacee).

With 36 years experience in the energy field, Carter presented the group with a unique perspective into the inner workings of a energy plant.

Carter also spoke of his personal concerns of the inevitable deregulation of the energy business, and it's impending cost results.

On a lighter side, after 50 successful years of marriage, Carter explained the importance of finding the proper mate to marry

and reminded the men that father time doesn't change who is the boss! More importantly, he emphasized to the inmates to let go and let GOD guide their lives.

Gardner's class would like to host more community leaders and business owners to speak before the inmates. Anyone interested in presenting the "How's and Why's" of their business or occupation, please contact Gardner at the Rufe Jordan Unit.

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