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## Expert: High gas prices spark drilling

By DAVID BOWSER  
 Staff Writer

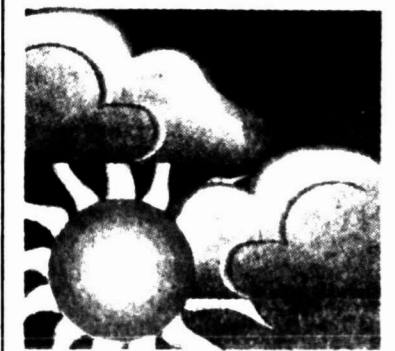
The natural gas industry in the Texas Panhandle is profiting from higher prices for natural gas, but nobody is getting rich. Prices for natural gas the last few months have soared to record highs, but it wasn't that long ago that natural gas was cheap. Less than two years ago, natural gas sold for less than a dollar per 1,000 cubic feet (mcf). Today, it sells for \$7.50 per mcf. "We are recovering gradually from a deficit condition of 18 months ago," H. Wayne Hughes, executive vice president of Panhandle Producers & Royalty Owners Association, said of the producer. "No, we are not getting rich." The typical Texas Panhandle gas well, depending on several variables, starts to break even at two dollars per mcf,

Hughes said. "We can operate the well efficiently at two dollars," he said. "We cannot replace the reserve that we drain from the well bore at two dollars." The replacement cost is in the three-to-five-dollar range. "When we hit five dollars, we're able to actually drill for additional reserves," Hughes said, "and replace the reserves that we are depleting." The five dollar level triggers increased exploration. "We're as anxious about the price of gas as anybody else is on a day-to-day basis," Hughes said. "We're paid daily." While \$7.50 per mcf is the price quote on a given day, the next day it may be entirely different. As with any commodity, the price swings can be volatile. A lot of money can be made, but a lot of money can be lost.

**"It's basic supply and demand. Pampa homeowners are in competition with electric generation plants in other parts of the country for the natural gas that is produced in the Texas Panhandle. The gas, in most instances, goes to the highest bidder. That competition increases price."**

— H. Wayne Hughes  
 Panhandle Producers & Royalty Owners Assoc.

"We sell gas on the spot market on a daily basis," Hughes said, "and Energas buys gas on a daily basis." Energas is allowed by law to pass along the costs of the gas to the consumer. "It's basic supply and demand," Hughes said. Pampa homeowners are in competition with electric generation plants in other parts of the country for the natural gas that is produced in the Texas Panhandle. The gas, in most instances, goes to the highest bidder. "That competition increases price," Hughes said. When prices were low, there was no (See PRICES, Page 2)



High today 45  
 Low tonight 28  
 For weather details see Page 2

### Job info meeting at Rufe Jordan Unit

PAMPA — A career opportunity meeting is scheduled at 7 p.m., Thursday, Feb. 8, at Rufe Jordan Prison Unit, 1991 Hilton Road. The event is open to anyone interested in a job as a correctional officer. Participants will be required to wear a photo ID and no weapons, purses, tobacco or containers are allowed in the prison. Facilitators will discuss duties, qualifications and benefits of correctional officers as well as certification procedures through Amarillo College. For more information, contact Toni Brasher, coordinator of Corrections Officers Programs, Amarillo College, (806) 354-6083.

### 100 vacant hospital jobs won't be filled

EL PASO, Texas (AP) — A cost-cutting plan means about 100 vacant jobs won't be filled at El Paso's Thomason Hospital, officials said. The hospital's board of directors approved the recommendation Tuesday, and other job cuts may follow. "The specific cuts have not been made," said Jim Eyerman, chief financial officer. The hospital lost \$205 million in the fiscal year that ended Sept. 30.

- Berl 'Junior' Bridwell, 74, heavy equipment operator, pipe fitter.
- Myrtle Edith Dickerson, 94, seamstress.
- Margaret I. Francis, 69, homemaker.
- John W. Neuhaus Sr., 60, employee of First National Bank in Shamrock.
- Alma H. Peeler, 92, homemaker.
- Claudine Pope Peeler, 89, homemaker.

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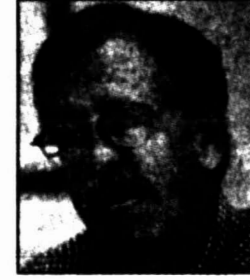
## Hours to change at Pampa landfill

### Vacant position won't be filled

By KATE B. DICKSON  
 Associate Publisher

While no specific date has been set, hours at the city's landfill will be reduced and one vacant position won't be filled in an effort to save dollars. Rather than be open 10 hours a day Monday through Friday, the facility off Loop 171 will go to 8 hours open for the public and 9 for employees. City Commission members discussed the changes during a work session Tuesday at City Hall prior to the regular commission meeting. The plan is a followup to summer budget discussions. City Manager Bob Eskridge said the changes should be made within a couple of months and said the city will announce the change date in advance. On Saturdays, landfill hours will be cut back from eight of four with a time span set that commissioners believe will best accommodate citizens. Eskridge and Public Works Director Richard Morris noted that no commercial users bring loads to the regional landfill on Saturdays as that day is primarily used by Pampans who are cleaning out garages, doing yard work and the like.

## Bivins proposes oil, gas tax-relief



Sen. Bivins

AUSTIN (AP) — Texas should adopt a sliding scale for the state severance tax on oil and gas to help the industry survive in tough times and keep production rolling, a state senator said Tuesday. Sen. Teel Bivins, R-Amarillo, filed a bill that would create a sliding tax scale allowing the industry to pay as little as 1 percent in taxes if the price of oil fell below \$12 a barrel. Bivins said a \$45 million tax-relief bailout in 1999 showed the Legislature is willing to protect the industry. Lawmakers approved that measure when the price of oil fell below \$15 a barrel for three consecutive months. Former Gov. George W. Bush helped push it through by declaring it an emergency. Critics called it corporate welfare. (See BIVINS, Page 2)

### Shy performer ...

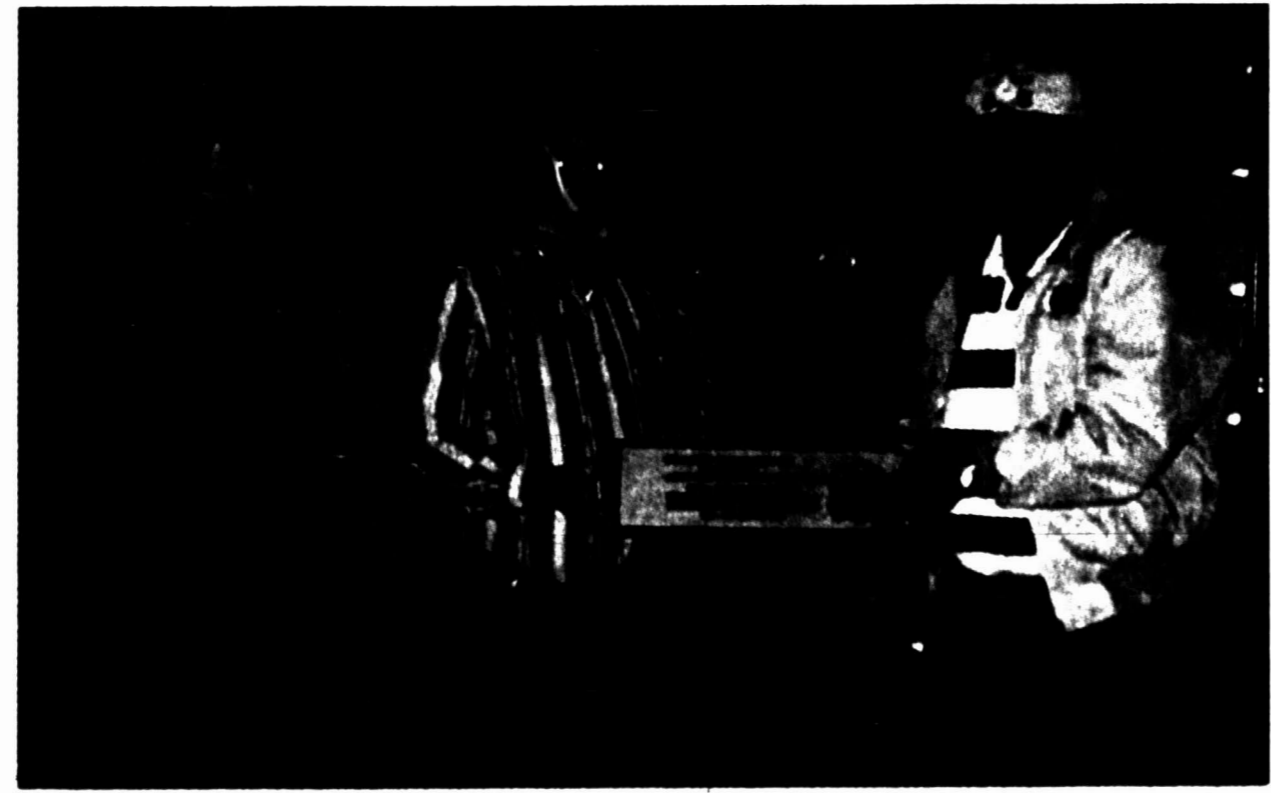


(Pampa News photo by Dee Dee Laramore)  
 Krysten Miller, 5, sings "Jambalaya" for the Pampa Shrine Club's January dinner meeting from the safety of her mother Lana's lap. Enjoying the performance along with local Shriners are her dad Kelly Miller, left, and sister, Courtney, 7, far right.

## Lefors superintendent gets new contract

LEFORS — Lefors Independent School District's board of education completed Superintendent Allen Law's appraisal and renewed his contract for another two years at their January meeting. With the contract extension, board members approved a raise of almost six percent in the superintendent's annual salary which will be \$62,000. Law reported that a 1999 Oldsmobile Intrigue purchased as a school district vehicle had been traded in for a 1999 4x4 Suburban. He said the Intrigue, which seats five passengers, had proven to be cost effective for the school district. The vehi-

cle traveled 28,000 miles in the past year, Law said, which was "better than break-even" for the school district if mileage had been paid instead. School officials decided to trade the Oldsmobile in for a four-wheel drive Suburban so it could be used as a back-up for one of the school bus routes when the bus often gets stuck in bad weather. "We've already had to use it twice," Law said. The Suburban seats nine passengers, which has made it possible for the school district to transport more students in one vehicle to special events. (See LEFORS, Page 2)



(Pampa News photo by Dee Dee Laramore)  
 Reed Echols, left, outgoing director of Good Samaritan Christian Services, hands over her responsibilities to newly appointed co-directors, Ernie Wilkinson and James Richardson. Jeanne Bailey, standing between Wilkinson and Richardson, has taken over as volunteer coordinator for the community service organization.

## Torch passes to new leaders of service group

By DEE DEF LARAMORE  
 Staff Writer

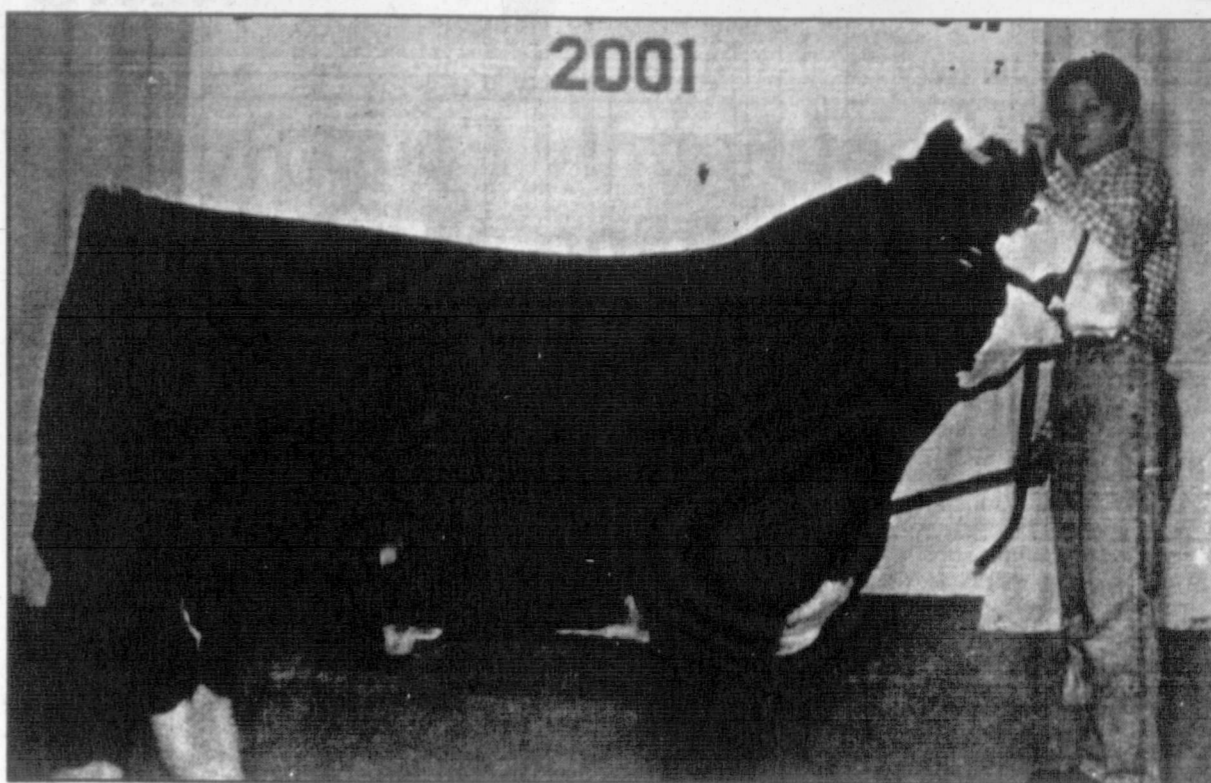
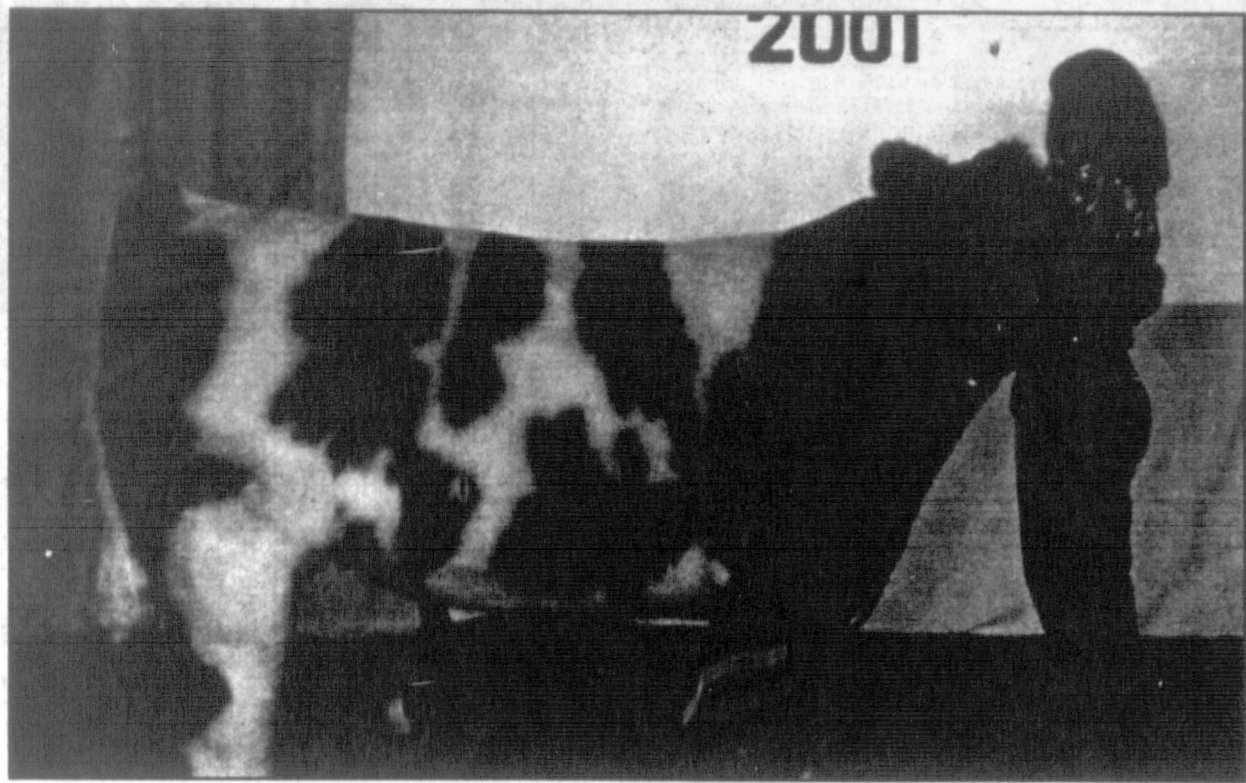
Board members for Good Samaritan Christian Services, 309 N. Ward, have selected two long-time volunteers to share the responsibility of directing the ecumenical service organization. James Richardson and Ernie Wilkinson have agreed to serve as co-directors, filling the position held by John Norris until he resigned for health reasons. The board's decision followed the resignation of Reed Echols who had served as assistant director for approximately 17 years and interim director for the past year. Jeanne Bailey was picked as the new volunteer

coordinator. "This is a milestone for us," Echols said Tuesday. "We're passing the torch. These changes are good. There's lots of exciting things ahead." Wilkinson, owner of Shepherd's Crook Nursing Agency, has volunteered at Good Samaritan for approximately 11 years. Richardson, a Celanese employee, has been a Good Samaritan volunteer for almost nine years. Bailey is a two-year volunteer for the organization. Organized by the Pampa Ministerial Alliance 18 years ago, Good Samaritan Christian Services, with the support of 22 (See TORCH, Page 2)

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## Top of Texas Stock Show



(Special photos)

The Top of Texas Stock Show was held recently at Clyde Carruth Pavilion in Pampa. Winners of the Steer Show included: Sandy French, left, Grand Champion Steer; and Cody Bivins, Reserve Grand Champion Steer. Bivin's steer was exhibited by Kenna Shields.

# Calendar of events

**WHITE DEER LAND MUSEUM**  
White Deer Land Museum (112-116 S. Cuyler) winter visiting hours are 1-4 p.m. Tuesday-Sunday. No charge for admission; elevator provided.

**LAS PAMPA WATER GARDEN AND KOI SOCIETY**  
Las Pampa Water Garden and Koi Society meets the second Monday of each month at 7 p.m. at Austin Elementary School. For more information, contact Sharon Andrew at 665-6138 or Lance DeFever.

**PLANNED PARENTHOOD**  
Planned Parenthood of Amarillo and the Texas Panhandle is changing its hours. It is now open from 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday-Thursday, 408 W. Kingsmill Ave., #175-A, in Pampa. For more information or for an appointment, call 665-2291. Planned Parenthood is a not-for-profit health care organization serving women and men in 17 offices covering 26 counties in the panhandle.

**HIGH PLAINS EPILEPSY ASSOCIATION**  
High Plains Epilepsy Association of Amarillo, funded in part by Pampa United Way, will have a licensed social worker in Pampa from 9:30-12 noon the second Tuesday of each month at Pampa Community Building, 200 N. Ballard. The program assists people with epilepsy and their families. To make an appointment, contact the Amarillo office at 1-800-806-7236.

**ALZHEIMER'S SUPPORT GROUP**  
The local Alzheimer's Support Group meets regularly at 7 p.m. the first Thursday of each month at Shepard's Crook Nursing Agency, 916 N. Crest. For more information, call Dauna Wilkinson, 665-0356.

**PRE-SCHOOL STORY HOUR**  
Lovett Memorial Library will sponsor a pre-school story hour at 10 a.m. every Tuesday this fall beginning Sept. 5. The free program is open to children 18 months to 5 years of age and will include stories, crafts and other activities. No registration is required. For more information, call the library at 669-5780.

**GED TESTING**  
Clarendon College-Pampa Center will conduct GED testing at 9 a.m. Feb. 26 and March 26. Test-takers must bring a government-issued picture ID such as a driver's license and a Social Security card. Pre-registration is not required. Cost is \$45 or \$10 for each re-test.

**LOVETT MEMORIAL LIBRARY**  
During January, Lovett Memorial Library will offer four introductory hands-on computer workshops: "Computer Comfort I" for beginners; "Computer Comfort II" for individuals who can open and close files and use the mouse; "What is the Internet?"; and "Introduction to E-Mail," for individuals who wish to learn how to establish a free web-based e-mail account. All classes are free but registration is required. Class size is limited to 10, so space is limited. For information, contact the library at 669-5780. The workshops will continue monthly through the spring.

**PPQG MEETING**  
Panhandle Piecemakers Quilt Guild will meet at 6:30 p.m. Jan. 25 at Pampa Senior Citizens Center, 500 W. Francis. Various members will demonstrate round robin and other quilt-related techniques. For more information, call (806) 779-2115. Visitors are welcome.

**GRAIN SORGHUM SEMINAR**  
National Grain Sorghum Producers will host a Regional Grain Sorghum Seminar beginning at 11:30 a.m., Wednesday, Feb. 7 in the Moore County Community Building in Dumas. For more information, call 1-800-658-9808.

**TRAVELING EXHIBIT**  
The Borger branch of Amarillo National Bank will host the traveling exhibit "Experience Your America" Jan. 22-Feb. 2 in the main lobby of the bank. The exhibit is designed to enhance awareness of the more than 380 units that comprise the National Park System including Lake Meredith National

Recreation Area and Alibates Flint Quarries National Monument. For more information, call (806) 857-3151.

**YOUNG PERFORMERS' COMPETITION**  
Amarillo Symphony Guild will host the 2001 Young Performers' Competition Saturday, Feb. 24 at Amarillo College Concert Hall in Amarillo. Contest categories are Piano, String, Vocal and Wind/Percussion. Winners in each division will receive a cash award in the amount of \$250 and will be

featured in a recital, with piano accompaniment, at a youth orchestra concert. The overall grand prize winner will receive a total cash award in the amount of \$500 and will take the stage with the Randel Chamber Orchestra in the spring. The entry fee is \$25 and is due, along with entry form and picture, by Friday, Jan. 26. All students high school age and below are eligible to apply. For more information, contact Robyn Rhodes at (806) 359-8160 or Amarillo Symphony Office at (806) 376-8782.

**FSA WEBSITE**  
USDA's Farm Service Agency has launched a redesigned website located at [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov) on the Internet. The redesign includes user-friendly features and easily accessible on-line FSA forms.

**IMMUNIZATION CLINIC**  
The Texas Department of Health will be offering immunization clinics for vaccines that give protection against several childhood diseases including polio, diphtheria, lock jaw (tetanus), whooping cough (pertussis), measles, rubella, mumps, HIB (haemophilus influenzae Type B) and chickenpox (varicella). Flu vaccines will also be

offered at designated clinics. The TDH will charge money to help with the cost of keeping the clinic open. The amount charged will be based on family income and size, and the ability to pay. The following clinics will be offered: 9:30 a.m.-12 noon and 1-4 p.m., Jan. 17, Pampa Family Clinic, 700 W. Kentucky, 10 a.m.-12 noon, 1-3 p.m., Jan. 25, Wheeler School, Wheeler.

**RAINBOW POETS**  
New Jersey Rainbow Poets is sponsoring a religious poetry contest free to everyone. A \$1000 grand prize will be awarded. Deadline for entry is Feb. 17. To enter, send one poem of 21 lines or less to: Free Poetry Contest, PMB70, 103 N. Wood Ave., Linden, NJ 07036.

**ARBOR DAY FOUNDATION**  
The National Arbor Day Foundation is offering a free "Conservation Trees" booklet with colorful photos and illustrations and easy-to-understand descriptions to help people plant and care for trees. To obtain a booklet, send name and address to: Conservation Trees, The National Arbor Day Foundation, Nebraska City, NE 68410.

## 4-H and FFA Focus

—Ashley Freeman is a member of Gray County 4-H and FFA, Pampa chapter. She and other FFA and 4-H members throughout the county will participate in the Gray County Livestock Show and Sale Jan. 25-27 at Clyde Carruth Pavilion in Pampa. Weigh-in will begin at 6 p.m., Jan. 25. The Steer Show will kick-off the actual show and sale at 7 p.m., Jan. 26 followed by the Swine and Lamb Shows beginning at 7 a.m. the 27th. A Buyer's Barbecue and Sale is also slated Saturday at 5:30 p.m.

My name is Ashley Freeman. I am a junior at Pampa High School. I am 17-years-old. I live with my mom and two sisters. My mom, Chalenia, my sisters, Amber, 15, and Amy, 14.

I am involved in the youth group at Briarwood Full Gospel Church, Future Farmers of America and Theater Arts. I have been involved in FFA for the past eight years. I am the historian for our FFA chapter. I also have participated in the theater program at school for six years.

My sister Amber is a freshman in high school and also is involved in basketball. She also has been known to show a lamb or two and several pigs. She has participated in theater and a traveling basketball team. She is always involved with us as a family and is a go-getter.

My other sister, Amy, is an eighth-grader at the middle school. She plays volleyball. She loves gymnastics and dancing. She competed in several meets, and she enjoys theater also. She also has been showing pigs since she was eight. She wants to show a lamb next year.

My sisters and I participate in the swine program. Also we do some parliamentary procedure and meat judging. It is a great way to bring a family together. My mom was involved when she was in high school and introduced us to it in elementary school.

My mom helps us a lot with our activities. She is a respiratory therapist at Pampa Regional Medical Center. She also gets us

involved in the Relay For Life Cancer Drive. We raise money to help our cancer victims in this area by walking or running and collecting donations. My mom is a real inspiration to all three of us. Our greatest role model in our lives has got to be our mom. She has raised us by herself for as long as I can remember. With her being a single parent, she couldn't have done any better.

## Pampa native Grace Bennett to visit, promote cookbook

Grace Davis Bennett is visiting her old hometown to promote her first cookbook, "The Davis Family & Friends Cookbook" featuring recipes from both the North and the South.

Bennett, a native of Pampa, now lives in Battle Creek, Mich. She is one of seven children born to Gladys and Bonner Arlander Davis. She moved with her mother and three younger siblings to the North in 1944.

Most of Davis' recipes hail from the southwest including vegetarian recipes from Fort Scott, Kan. She says the oldest recipe, "Mamma's Tea Cake," is believed to be more than 140 years old.

Among the contributors to the cookbook is Mildred Davis Collum of Pampa. She shared three of her recipes for the publication: "Lottie Moon Plain Tea Cake," "Taco Soup," and "Mississippi Super Casserole" which had been handed down to her from her mother.

Bennett says she was in her early twenties when she began writing in a journal 50 years ago with the dreams of someday publishing a book. She says a cookbook proved to be a difficult book to start out with, adding that she learned to start at the beginning and go step-by-step until the goal is achieved.

Bennett will be visiting Pampa Jan. 23 and 24. Now in it's third printing, Bennett's cookbook is available



Grace Davis Bennett

locally by contacting Tams Collum at 665-7771 or by e-mailing Bennett at [jimandgracebennett@worldnet.att.net](mailto:jimandgracebennett@worldnet.att.net).

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