



WEATHER

HIGH **LOW**
84 **45**

LOCAL
PRMC to be site of Infant Adoption Awareness program

The north conference room of Pampa Regional Medical Center's Medical Office Building will be the site of an upcoming Infant Adoption Awareness training program, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Friday, Nov. 14. Deadline for registration is Friday, Oct. 17.

The one-day training program educates individuals interested in learning basic infant adoption information. A complete list of referral resources will also be provided. Participants will receive six contract hours along with an Adoption Liaison certificate. For more information, call Karen Gordy at 663-5766.

DEATHS

C.W. Burch, 75, carpenter and preacher.
Larry C. Ledford, 46, graveside services set.
Debi Tolbert, 47, nurse aide and housekeeper.

INSIDE...

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Beautiful Paving Stones... You Can Install Yourself

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County may consolidate precincts

By MARILYN POWERS
 STAFF WRITER

Public hearing set for 9 a.m., Friday

Gray County commissioners will hold a public hearing and special meeting at 9 a.m. Friday, Oct. 17 in the county courtroom on the second floor of Gray County Courthouse, 205 N. Russell, to consider consolidating 14 of the county's precincts into seven in order to cut costs.

Commissioners voted to hold the special meeting during their regular meeting Wednesday. At that meeting, County Clerk Susan Winborne reported that she will attend an

election day seminar Nov. 14 in Randall County.

She invited commissioners to also attend the seminar in order to see a demonstration of new election machines. The machines are mandated by the state to be placed in each voting precinct in the state by January 2006. The mandate came about partly due to the last presidential election, in which Florida's ballot style caused problems with counting votes, and to the Help

Americans Vote Act, or HAVA, passed by Congress to help disabled persons vote, Winborne said.

Each election machine costs \$3,200. Gray County has 15 precincts, including the early voting location, and must buy one machine per voting place. The State of Texas will pay for \$3,000 of the total cost per machine, Winborne said.

Gray County Judge Richard Peet said that the county had temporarily consolidated the

14 voting locations into seven, plus the early voting site, for the Sept. 13 state constitutional amendment election, but had not yet submitted the plan to the state for approval.

If commissioners vote to consolidate the precincts, 25 items must be submitted to the state to gain approval of the plan, Peet said.

The consolidation will cut the number of election machines required from 15 to eight, saving \$1,400 of the

county's share of the purchase price. It would also require one less election judge and 13 fewer election clerks per election, Peet said. Election judges and clerks are paid for time worked at each election.

Some voters would cast their ballots at a different polling place as a result of consolidation. The biggest impact on voting location would affect Alanreed residents, who would no longer be able to vote in Alanreed but would cast their ballots in McLean. Also, some voters in south Pampa would no longer vote at

(See **PRECINCTS**, Page 3)

Commission OKs tax rolls, revised city fire contract

By MARILYN POWERS
 STAFF WRITER

Gray County's 2003 tax rolls were approved by county commissioners in a regular meeting at 9 a.m. Wednesday in the second floor courtroom of Gray County Courthouse, 205 N. Russell.

Total appraised value of property in the county is \$1,158,661,790. Of that total, \$1,010,478,886 is taxable after exemptions. Actual levy due for the county is \$4,711,102.24, and for roads, \$560,534.56.

Exemptions included \$37,792,480 for agriculture productivity, \$562,418 for homesteads, \$69,720,216 for absolute exemptions such as churches, and \$40,107,790 for partial exemptions such as Celanese and Cabot Carbon Black.

Commissioners scheduled a public forum and special meeting for 9 a.m. Friday, Oct. 17 to consider consolidation of 14 current voting precincts into seven. The meeting will begin with citizens who wish to speak to the commission concerning the proposed consolidations, and will continue with commissioners meeting on the subject. (See related story, this page.)

A revised fire contract with the City of Pampa was approved. The original contract had required the county to pay half of the appraised value of any equipment lost by the city in the course of fighting a fire, after subtracting the

amount paid by insurance. The revised contract states that the county will be responsible for half of the deductible amount specified in the city's insurance policy.

County Judge Richard Peet said he had heard from city commission members that the city's deductible on fire equipment insurance is generally \$500 per item. The county will not be financially responsible for any equipment loss that is not covered by the city's insurance plan.

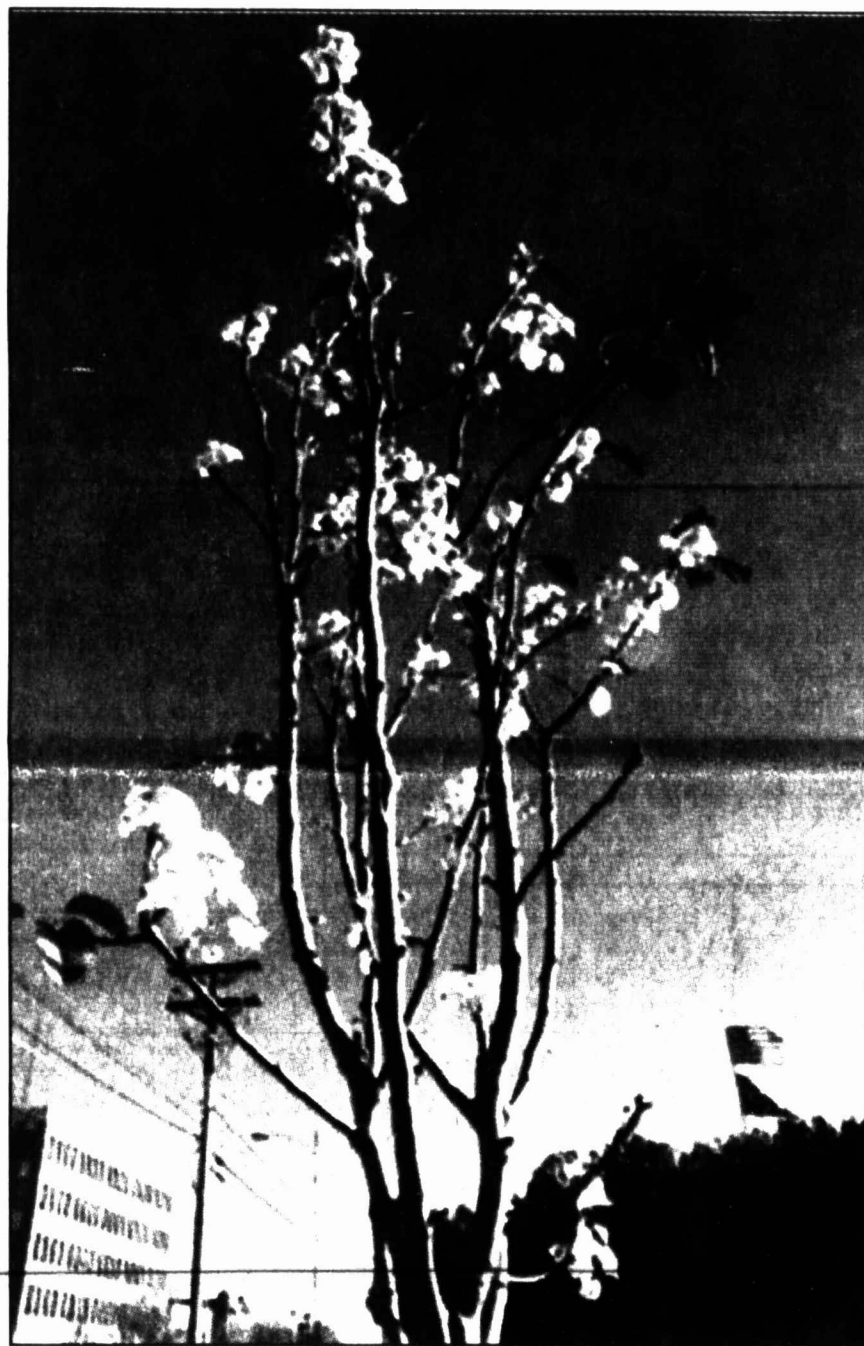
Sheriff Don Copeland was given approval to seek bids for two new vehicles for the sheriff's department. Copeland said he needed one cruiser with regular back seats and another with plastic back seats and a cage for transporting persons under arrest. He explained that the plastic back seats provide more leg room and are easier to clean.

Peet asked if Copeland planned to trade in any used vehicles currently owned by the sheriff's department toward the proposed new vehicles. Copeland mentioned a Chevrolet Bronco, a Jeep and a 1995 Ford Crown Victoria that might be traded or sold outright. Precinct 4 Commissioner James Hetley said that some surplus vehicles might be considered for use by the county constables.

Commissioners voted to approve advertisements for bids on the two new

(See **MEETING**, Page 2)

Blooming confusion



(Courtesy photo by Seth Davidson)

This pear tree sapling recently planted in front of Keller Williams Realty, 301 W. Kingsmill, must be confused by the recent warm Indian Summer temperatures. All of the newly-planted trees in front of the business are covered with blooms now, instead of waiting for Spring.

U.S. wins victory for postwar Iraq plan

By EDITH M. LEDERER
 ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — In a diplomatic victory for the United States, the Security Council unanimously adopted a resolution Thursday aimed at attracting aid to stabilize Iraq and putting it on the road to independence.

The vote bolstered U.S. efforts to win credibility for its rebuilding effort in Iraq and to ease the burden of American troops there. At a summit in Brussels, European leaders ruled out any immediate commitments of troops and money for Iraq.

U.S. officials had been concerned that after six weeks of intense diplomatic campaigning, the resolution might get only the minimum nine "yes" votes needed for adoption.

U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell called the vote "a great achievement."

"We have come together to help the Iraqi people and put all of our differences of the past in the past," Powell said.

Powell said the vote sets the stage for the donors conference next week in Madrid and would help U.S. officials raise money and make it easier for countries to provide peacekeepers.

The resolution, he said, "will assist those who are interested in providing troops by giving this broader U.N. mandate for those troops and putting them under multinational force designation."

The United States won last-minute backing from France, Germany and Russia, the main opponents to the U.S.-led war to oust Saddam Hussein.

"We agreed that the resolution is

really an important step in the right direction," Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder said after the conference call with presidents Jacques Chirac of France and Vladimir Putin of Russia. "Many things have been included from what we proposed. This led us ... to jointly agree to the resolution."

The resolution was not expected to translate into immediate funds and troops.

European countries are "very far from being able to commit themselves financially or militarily" to the reconstruction of Iraq, said Catherine Colonna, a spokeswoman for Chirac.

Washington also won backing from China and Pakistan, and from Syria, the only Arab nation on the Security Council and a staunch opponent of the U.S.-led war.

Germany, France and Russia had

announced their decision to vote "yes" after a 45-minute conversation earlier Thursday, in a bid to bring international solidarity to the reconstruction effort.

Putin, who was in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, as a special observer at an Islamic summit, said the leaders had agreed on a common position, but he didn't give details.

The United States had focused on Russia in its search for votes after it rejected the French-Russian-German demand for a timetable to restore Iraq's sovereignty. Moscow had taken a more moderate position than France and Germany.

Council diplomats said Washington asked what Moscow wanted and then submitted three amendments Wednesday morning. Less than 12

(See **PLAN**, Page 3)

OCT 16 2003

PAMPA AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE 19TH ANNUAL COUNTRY FAIR

our theme for this year... Celebrating Strength Through Diversity

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 18TH • M.K. BROWN CIVIC AUDITORIUM • 5:00PM TO MIDNIGHT

purchase tickets at the following locations... **Centramedia • Bank of America • First American Bank • FirstBank Southwest • First State Bank of Miami**
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OBITUARIES

SERVICES TOMORROW

LEDFORD, Larry C. — Graveside services, 3:30 p.m., Memory Gardens Cemetery, Pampa.

TOLBERT, Debi — Memorial graveside services, 1 p.m., cemetery, Lefors.

LARRY C. LEDFORD
1957-2003

DEWEYVILLE — Larry C. Ledford, 46, died Tuesday, Oct. 7, 2003. Graveside services will be at 3:30 p.m., Friday, in Memory Gardens Cemetery in Pampa with the Rev. Ben Corbitt, pastor of Faith Tabernacle, officiating. Arrangements are under the direction of Dorman Funeral Home in Orange, Texas.

Mr. Ledford was born Aug. 17, 1957, at Topeka, Kan. He had been a resident of Pampa from 1967 until 2000. He attended Pampa schools. He married Mashelle Shattuck on May 23, 1998. He was a longtime OTR truck driver.

He was a veteran of the U.S. Army, serving during peace time, and was a member of United Pentecostal Church.

Survivors include his wife, Mashelle Ledford, of the home; a son, Spc. Sam Ledford, serving with the U.S. Army in Iraq; a

daughter, Rachel Ledford of Bethany, Okla.; a stepdaughter, Whitney Shattuck, of the home; his parents, Wayne and Betty Ledford of Pampa; two brothers, Tony Ledford of Pampa and Ronnie Ledford of Jennings, La.; two sisters, Wanda Videon and Eva Nolan, both of Pampa; and two grandchildren.

The family requests memorials be to Faith Tabernacle in memory of Larry Ledford, 610 Naida, Pampa TX, 79065.



C.W. BURCH
1928-2003

MOBEETIE — C.W. Burch, 75, died Tuesday, Oct. 14, 2003, at Elk City, Okla. Services will be at 11 a.m., Saturday, in Mobeetie First Baptist Church with the Rev. Lewis Ellis, retired Baptist minister of Pampa, officiating. Burial will be in Mobeetie Cemetery under the direction of Wright Funeral Home of Wheeler.

Mr. Burch was born Feb. 9, 1928, at Quanah, to Alcuen and Lucy Burch, and graduated from Mobeetie High School, his family having

moved there from Quanah in 1928. He was a carpenter and had preached at Mobeetie Community Church. He was a member of Mobeetie Methodist Church.

Survivors include a daughter, Melody Sherrell of Copan, Okla.; a son, William Burch of Wheeler; a sister, Alice Flaherty of Bend, Ore.; and six grandchildren.

The family requests memorials be to Christian Student Fellowship, Anthony Sherrell Fund or Northeastern Oklahoma College.

DEBI TOLBERT
1956-2003

BRIDGECREEK, Okla. — Debi Tolbert, 47, died Tuesday, Oct. 14, at her home in Bridgecreek. Graveside memorial services will be held at 1 p.m., Friday in the cemetery at Lefors with the Rev. Lewis Ellis officiating. Arrangements are under the direction of Wilson-Little Funeral Home in Newcastle, Okla.

Mrs. Tolbert was born April 20, 1956, at Altus, Okla., to Glen Blakley Mayben and Mary Lou Gilbert. She grew up at Lefors and graduated from high school there in 1974. She and husband, Raymond Gene Tolbert, made their home in the Tulsa, Okla., area for many years where she was a nurses' aide and a house-

keeper. They moved to Bridgecreek in August of this year.

She was preceded in death by her father, Glen Mayben, and her stepfather, Derl Boyd.

Survivors include her husband, Gene, of the home; her four children, Deborah Childress of Sapulpa, Okla., Melissa Hall of Tulsa, and Shadd Tolbert and Dennis Tolbert, both of Amarillo; her mother, Mary Lou Boyd of Lefors; two sisters, Betty Cockrell of Glen Rose and Debbie Alexander of Kentucky; five brothers, Bobby Gilbert Jr. of Bridgecreek, David Boyd and Denny Boyd, both of Lefors, Chris Gilbert of Alabama and Ricky Lynn Harp of Morgan City, La.; and seven grandchildren.

ON RECORD

POLICE

Pampa Police Department today reported the following incidents and arrests.

Monday, Oct. 13

A minor in possession of tobacco was reported in the 1000 block of Frost.

Wednesday, Oct. 15

Disruption of class was reported at Pampa Middle School, 2401 N. Charles.

Donald Dwayne Johnson, 53, 531 Somerville, was arrested for public intoxication.

Thursday, Oct. 16

Parent Dyer, 40, 1601 W. Somerville, was arrested for possession of marijuana under 20 ounces, driving while intoxicated, driving with suspended license, and possession of drug paraphernalia.

Chris Jackson, 31, 512 Harlem, was arrested for public intoxication and failure to appear.

Anthony Gamble, 32, 1400 Somerville, was arrested for bond surrender on a charge of criminal trespass, and no valid driver's license.

SHERIFF

Gray County Sheriff's Department today reported the following arrests.

Wednesday, Oct. 15

Lauren Heath Holtman, 24, 937 S. Faulkner, was arrested by Texas Department of Public Safety for driving with a suspended license.

AMBULANCE

Rural/Metro Ambulance reported the following calls during the 24-hour period ending at 7 a.m., today.

Wednesday, Oct. 15

7:09 a.m. — A mobile ICU responded to the 1200 block of East Foster and transported a patient to Pampa Regional Medical Center.

7:59 a.m. — A mobile ICU responded to the 1600 block of Bond. No patient was transported.

9:21 a.m. — A mobile ICU responded to the 1900 block of Hilton Road and transported a patient to PRMC.

11:04 a.m. — A mobile ICU responded to PRMC and transferred a patient to Baptist-St. Anthony's West, Amarillo.

7:58 p.m. — A mobile ICU responded to Highway 273 and transported a patient to PRMC.

STOCKS

The following grain quotations are provided by Attebury Grain of Pampa:					
Wheat	2.96	Unlimited	17.66 -0.01		
Milo	3.60	Williams	10.19 +0.11		
Corn	4.08	SLB	23.89 -0.03		
Soybeans	6.63	XOM	38.69 +0.20		
		Atmos	24.56 NC		
		Pioneer Nat	25.63 +0.18		
The following 9:30 a.m. N.Y. Stock Market quotations are furnished by Edward Jones & Co. of Pampa:					
OXY	36.34	+0.04	Tenneco	6.88	+0.08
BP	43.64	-0.26	JCP	25.63	NC
Celanese	33.43	+1.05	Wal-Mart	59.13	+0.06
Cabot Corp	29.27	+0.06	OKE	20.89	+0.06
Cabot Oil Gas	27.09	+0.03	NS Grp	6.85	+0.07
Coca Cola	44.72	-0.60			
VLO	39.93	+0.19	New York Gold	372.95	
HAL	24.10	+0.07	Silver	4.93	
Trad	29.46	+0.56	West Texas Crude	31.77	

FIRE

Pampa Fire Department responded to the following calls during the 24-hour period ending at 7 a.m. today.

Wednesday, Oct. 15

9:57 a.m. — Four firefighters in one unit presented a fire prevention program at First Baptist Church.

4:08 p.m. — Two units and five firefighters responded to a fire in the 300 block of Doyle. It was a controlled burn.

Thursday, Oct. 16

12:45 a.m. — One unit and three firefighters responded to a lifting assist in the 2100 block of Lynn.

Local Xcel Energy linemen to compete in 20th International Lineman's Rodeo

AMARILLO — Pampans Jack Loggins and Dru Chidester will be among competitors at the upcoming 20th International Lineman's Rodeo slated Saturday, Oct. 18, in Kansas City, Mo. Both men will be competing for Xcel Energy.

"Lineman's rodeos" are contests that test safety skills and work practices of electric linemen — the men who construct, operate and maintain power lines that deliver electricity to homes and businesses.

The rodeo will involve competitors in such events as races to climb 40-foot utility poles

and "hurt man (mannequin) rescues." Senior linemen, three-man journeyman teams and apprentices are all eligible for competition.

In addition, journeymen teams will vie against each other in two mystery events, apprentices in one.

Mystery events are surprise contests that test everyday linemen skills.

"Typical mystery events could be a race in installing an electric service drop from power lines to a home, or in replacing heavy, on-the-pole electrical equipment," rodeo director, Bill Weems of

Amarillo, said. "To learn more about the international rodeo, go to www.powerlineman.com."

Apprentices must also compete in a fourth event in which the written exam for journeymen linemen is administered.

Xcel Energy's regional team entries are: Tommy Bullock of Denver City, Justin Presley of Seminole and Joey Zahn of Lubbock; Freeman Miller and Shea Bramler of Levelland and Carl Davis of Littlefield; and Richard Mauldin of Perryton, Loggins of Pampa and Jack Avent of Follett. Apprentice entries are James Stovall of Amarillo, Chidester of Pampa and James Bach of Hereford.

The contestants qualified for the international rodeo at Xcel's 13th annual Lineman's Rodeo held earlier in Lubbock.

THE WAIT IS OVER!!
Open Thursday, October 16

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New Owners
NEW ATTITUDE!

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Halloween Night
Live Entertainment
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BLUES BOY WILLY

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has moved to 1320 N. Banks.
Still same service & gifts.
Mon. - Fri • 9 am to 5 pm
See our ad in the Feist phone book

WEATHER FOCUS

PAMPA

The forecast today is calling for sunny skies, highs in the mid 80s and southeast winds 5 to 10 mph, shifting to the northwest 10 to 15 mph in the afternoon. Tonight should fall on mostly clear skies with lows in the mid 40s and northeast winds 10 to 15 mph with gusts to around 30 mph early. Friday should see mostly sunny skies. Highs in the mid 70s. North winds 5 to 10 mph. Friday night, mostly clear. Lows in the upper 40s. South winds 5 to 10 mph. Saturday, mostly sunny. Highs

in the lower 80s. Southwest winds 10 to 15 mph. Saturday night, mostly clear. Lows in the lower 50s. Sunday, mostly sunny. Highs in the lower 80s. Sunday night, mostly clear. Lows in the lower 50s. Monday, partly cloudy. Highs in the lower 80s. Monday night, partly cloudy. Lows in the mid 40s. Tuesday, partly cloudy. Highs in the upper 60s. Tuesday night, partly cloudy. Lows in the lower 40s. Wednesday, partly cloudy. Highs in the upper 60s.

STATEWIDE

By The Associated Press

Great weather will continue through the weekend over the state. After some warmer temperatures today, highs should be in the 70s to low 80s through the weekend. Only some scattered coastal rain is forecast. Skies will be mostly clear.

Wink led the state Wednesday with a high of 88 degrees. Dalhart recorded an overnight low of 37. No significant rain was recorded in Texas cities Wednesday.

The West Texas forecast calls for warm temperatures today, with highs reaching or topping 90 in areas of the

South Plains and Permian Basin. Highs should be in the 80s elsewhere today. Friday will be cooler, with highs in the 70s to low 80s. Weekend highs will be in the 80s. Skies will be clear over the region, with no rain in the forecast. In South Texas, highs will mostly be in the low 80s through the weekend. Today the lower coast may see some isolated showers; Friday the entire coast may see isolated or scattered showers. Otherwise no rain is forecast through the weekend. Skies will be sunny to partly cloudy.

The forecast now calls for

minor to moderate flooding on southernmost parts of the Rio Grande, with crests this evening or early Friday. Any dangerous stretches on the Frio River have crested, but a number of points on the Nueces will see major flooding in the coming days.

In North Texas, more clear days are forecast, except for a partly cloudy day Friday. Highs will be in the 80s today and Sunday, in the 70s Friday and Saturday. No rain is forecast today to 15-25 mph, from the south. A windy day is also forecast Friday, with winds from the north-northwest.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

MEETING

vehicles, and specified that Copeland seek bids both with and without trade-ins.

Sharon Braddock of Genesis House was appointed to the Texas Panhandle Mental Health/Mental Retardation board of trustees. She replaces Dean Copeland, who is retiring from the board.

Payment of bills totaling \$147,878.54 and salaries of \$205,701.35 was approved. Commissioners adopted revisions to the county personnel policy manual and voted to participate in the Vision Source 20/20 Eye Care Program. Drs. Simmons and Simmons offer the eye care plan to county employees, who will receive a 20 percent discount on eyeglasses.

A three-year lease with Danka of Amarillo was approved for copy machines for the county judge's and county attorney's offices. The lease includes 15,000 copies per month and all service and materials excluding paper, at a cost of \$210.35 per month. The current lease with Xerox for copiers expires this month, and costs \$240 monthly,

said Sandra Martin, Peet's secretary.

Elaine Morris, county auditor, reported that no departments are over budget. Non-departmental items over budget will be covered after the accrual process is completed and monies can be transferred, she said. She reported a 98 percent tax collection rate.

Commissioners approved a request by West Texas Gas to lay underground pipe across County Road 21 and B, in Precinct 1.

In addition to the proposed precinct consolidation, other topics which commissioners discussed but did not take action on included the county attorney's office and setting county constables' base pay before candidates begin filing in December for the January election.

Peet announced that the Texas

Historical Preservation Committee and the Gray County

Historical Society will tour the courthouse from 4 to 4:30 p.m. Wednesday to inspect the recently completed renovations to the building.

Influenza vaccine was available at the courthouse from 2 to 6 p.m. Wednesday for anyone wishing to get the shot, Peet said. The shot was free for county employees and \$20 for all others.

Brad E. Heidelberg was introduced by County Tax Assessor-Collector Gaye Whitehead. Heidelberg is an attorney with the Odessa law firm of Lineberger, Goggan, Blair and Sampson, LLP, which collects and files suit on delinquent taxes for Gray County. Heidelberg will handle all Gray County legal action regarding the delinquent taxes.

City Briefs

The Pampa News is not responsible for the content of paid advertisement.

CELEBRATE BOYD'S Friendship Special Event, Fri. & Sat. only, at All Its Charm!

KENNETH WYATT pewter shadow boxes. North Fork Antiques. Tues.-Sat., 10-6. McLean.

FOR SALE Fresh Brown Eggs. Will be at corner of Randy Matson & Hobart 8-10am, Wed. & Sat. 665-8014.

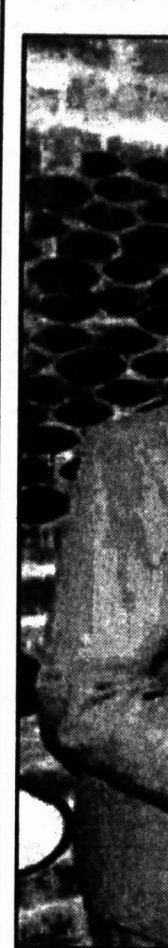
LOCALLY GROWN Tomatoes, \$8 a flat or \$3 a container. Pumpkin Patch, 717 N. Hobart

IMAGES, COME help us celebrate Betty and Edna's birthday, Fri. Oct. 17th. Lots of cake and candles, 123 N. Cuyler, Downtown.

LOST WHITE/GRAY Cockatiel. Call 669-1956.

TOMMY HENSON to play every Fri. night 7-9 pm at Pampa Senior Citizens Ctr., \$3.50 each.

Count



Robbie Stone accepts a left, museum Richard P. museum T

PLAN

hours later, ments were acc cent by the s included in a fi resolution, said Ambassador Se The amend give U.N. Sec Kofi Annan gr participate in the new Iraqi const political tran would state for that the manda troops would e Iraqi governme Facing risi casualties in I administration centrated on

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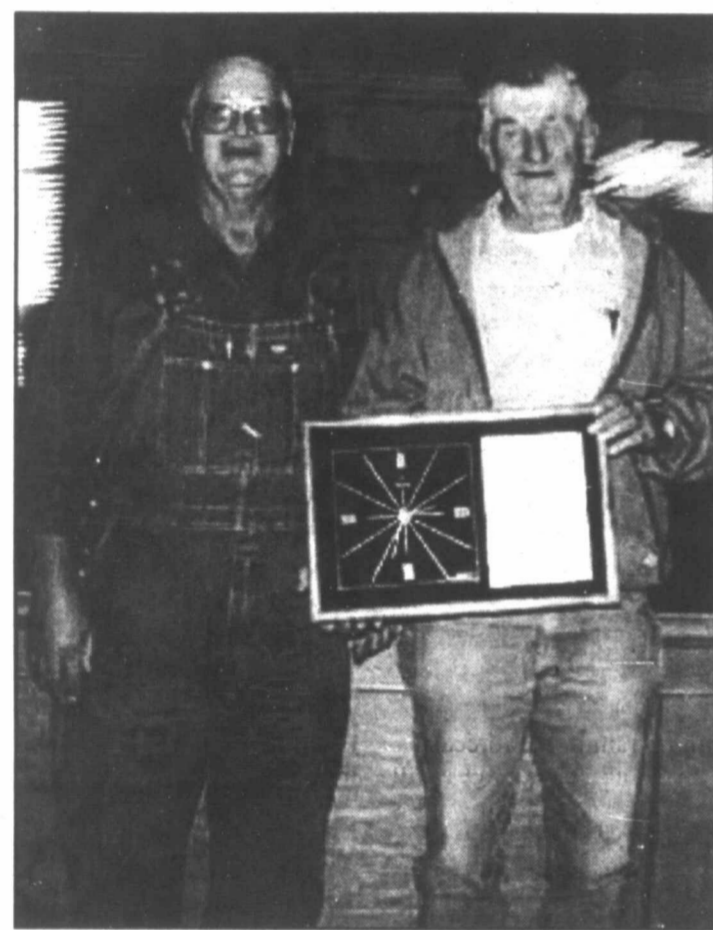
CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

County employees honored



(Pampa News photo by Dee Dee Laramore)

Robbie Stone, center, longtime employee of the White Deer Land Museum accepts a leaf for the museum's Heritage Tree presented by Nancy Coffee, left, museum board president, and a plaque from Gray County Judge Richard Peet. Stone, who is retiring, was honored with a reception at a museum Tuesday afternoon.



(Photo by Marilyn Powers)

Philip McCullough, right, is presented with a clock at the Gray County Commissioner's meeting at 9 a.m. Wednesday to commemorate his retirement from county employment, effective Oct. 31. Presenting the clock is Alton Stokes, operator, Precinct 2 maintenance department. McCullough has been employed by the county for the past 10 years and is foreman of the road department for Precinct 2.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

PLAN

hours later, the amendments were accepted "99 percent by the sponsors" and included in a fifth draft of the resolution, said Russia's U.N. Ambassador Sergey Lavrov.

The amendments would give U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan greater scope to participate in the drafting of a new Iraqi constitution and the political transition, and would state for the first time that the mandate of U.S.-led troops would expire when an Iraqi government is elected.

Facing rising costs and casualties in Iraq, the Bush administration initially concentrated on getting more

countries to provide troops and money to help stabilize and rebuild Iraq.

France, Russia and Germany changed the agenda to the quick restoration of Iraq's sovereignty, forcing the United States to make clear it has no intention of remaining an occupying

power. The resolution states that "the day when Iraqis govern themselves must come quickly."

The United States and Britain never wavered in their assessment that sovereignty can't be relinquished until Iraq drafts a new constitution and holds elections.

MOONLIGHT MADNESS SALE

BORGER DOWNTOWN MERCHANTS AND ANTIQUE STORES
FRIDAY, OCTOBER 17TH • 6PM - 9PM
27 MERCHANTS WAITING FOR YOU INCLUDING MUSEUM AND ONIONS.
FIRST TIME EVER!

PRECINCTS

Lamar Elementary School but would go to M.K. Brown Civic Auditorium.

"It does not change any commissioner's precinct or change the ethnic makeup or ethnic voting strength. We do not want to impact anyone's ability to vote or the impact of their votes. We are considering this to save tax dollars," Peet said.

Lefors' precinct would remain unchanged under the proposed consolidation. Lefors is in voting Precinct 1, and residents there vote at Lefors Community Center.

Voting Precincts 2, 10 and 3 would become Precinct 2, and residents of that precinct would vote at Lovett Memorial Library in Pampa. The area includes residences surrounding Pampa but not inside city limits, as well as southeast Pampa and the Recreation Park area.

Grandview Hopkins residents would see no change in their voting location, which is Grandview Hopkins School. Precinct 3 would still be their precinct.

Voting Precincts 4 and 5, Alanreed and McLean, respectively, would be combined to make Precinct 4, with voters casting all ballots at Lovett Library in McLean, including the 90 registered voters in Alanreed.

Voting Precincts 7, 11 and 12 in Pampa would be combined to create Precinct 7, covering southwest and west central Pampa. Residents there would vote at M.K. Brown Civic Auditorium.

Precincts 8 and 9 would become voting Precinct 6 in the northeast section of Pampa, and would stretch from the city limits west to Duncan Street and south to Browning Avenue. Calvary Baptist Church would be the voting location for those residents.

The proposed Precinct 5 would combine



The voting machine Gray County may buy to comply with state and federal mandates is a tabletop machine that is about the length and width of a legal-size piece of paper. Each voting precinct in Texas must have at least one new machine by January 2006. The machines, designed to assist disabled voters in casting their ballots, cost about \$3,200 each. Presently, Gray County has 15 voting precincts.

current Precincts 14 and 15, in the northwest part of Pampa. Travis Elementary School gym would be the voting site for that precinct.

Special meetings of the commissioners' court normally require a 72-hour advance notice to the public. One exception to this rule is if the meeting deals with finances. Peet said that since the Friday meeting was scheduled to determine how much money will be needed for voting machines, the 72-hour rule does not apply.

Discrepancy found in number of border deaths

PHOENIX (AP) — There are wide discrepancies in the number of people who have died while attempting to cross Arizona's border with Mexico.

According to an analysis by The Arizona Republic, 205 illegal immigrants have died while making a crossing over the past 12 months, compared to the 151 deaths recorded by the U.S. Border Patrol.

Officially, the Border Patrol's Tucson sector record-

ed 139 deaths in Arizona during the 2003 fiscal year that ended on Sept. 30.

The Border Patrol's Yuma sector recorded an additional 12 deaths in Arizona which

resulted in the 151 total deaths, an all-time high.

During the same period last year, 145 people died while attempting to cross the Arizona-Mexico border.



John Mann
 Lawyer
 115 W. Foster
 "Across From The Coney"
806-665-2555
Not Certified by the Texas Board of Legal Specialization

October 16

National Breast Cancer Awareness Month

Please Come Find Out More About Breast Cancer Awareness

Friday, October 17, 2003

2:30pm - 4:00pm

Outpatient Lobby ... South Entrance

Pampa Regional Medical Center

Giveaways • Door Prizes

The Cure For Breast Cancer Supporters

Dr. Prudencio Avendanio
 Bealls Dept. Store
 Best Finance & Rental
 Best Kept Secrets
 Brown Shoe Fit Co.
 Carousel Expressions
 Curves for Women
 Dunlap's Dept. Store
 Dr. Scott Ellis

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OCT 16 2003

VIEWPOINTS

U.S.A. must keep its promises

THE Pampa NEWS

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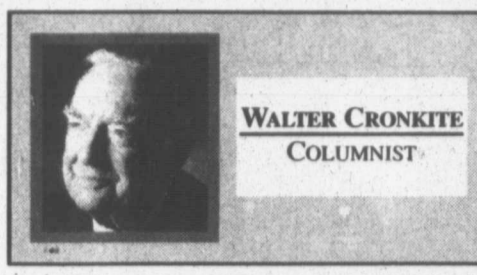
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 period.

In spite of the "sticker shock" uproar about President Bush's \$87 billion emergency request for Iraq and Afghanistan, it is being debated in the House and Senate this week and is expected to pass next week with only minor cuts - fewer garbage trucks here, "no" to a children's hospital there.



WALTER CRONKITE
COLUMNIST

Ironically, this request comes at a time when the administration is facing severe criticism from across the political spectrum for its handling of the war's aftermath: the false confidence, the lack of planning, the inadequate forces and the alienation of allies. Even the administration seems frazzled and at odds with itself as the Iraq dilemma worsens.

The request also comes at a time when unemployment in America appears at least to be static but still records the loss - since Bush took office - of some 2.8 million manufacturing jobs; a time when 15 percent of Americans are without any health insurance, and critical parts of the national infrastructure are in perilous states of repair - the electrical grid is the most dramatic example.

Given all that, the \$87 billion seems to many excessive, and some members of Congress - with the Democrats in the lead - have looked for ways to cut it back. But as they examine the request, it has begun to dawn on a few that the amount is not too much, but too little.

More than \$1 billion is to be allocated for Afghanistan - a woefully inadequate sum. While American troops reportedly have made some progress fighting Taliban "returnees" in eastern Afghanistan, the security situation in most of the country has steadily worsened. This is the place,

you will recall, where the administration, speaking out of both sides of its mouth, announced a "Marshall Plan" to rebuild the economy while simultaneously refusing to have anything to do with "nation-building," for which Bush, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld and the Joint Chiefs of Staff had so much contempt.

This is the place where for months we blocked the expansion and wider deployment of a NATO-staffed security force. We feared it might get in the way of U.S. troops looking for al-Qaida. As a result, the effective authority of Afghanistan's president, Hamid Karzai, still does not run much beyond Kabul's city limits.

As for Iraq, the target of the cost-cutters is not the whole amount, but only the \$21 billion requested for reconstruction. Most of the remaining \$65 billion will be spent on U.S. forces, now stretched dangerously thin by Afghanistan, Iraq and other international deployments, such as Bosnia and Kosovo.

I say "dangerously thin" because we might be doing serious, permanent damage to our Reserve and National Guard systems with frequent and long-term mobilizations that already are discouraging re-enlistments.

The bottom line? The \$87 billion in the administration's emergency request is not sufficient to meet the United States' obligations for defense and reconstruction.

Those obligations were incurred when America went to war. And make no mistake about it, it was the nation that went to war, not just the Bush administration.

However misled by scare stories and faulty, hyped intelligence, a large majority of Americans fully supported, and Congress overwhelmingly approved, the decisions to invade both Afghanistan and Iraq. We don't have the option of saying now that we can't afford it. I think most Americans understand that - even those who opposed the Iraq War from the beginning. I was particularly struck by the comments of former Sen. Carol Moseley Braun - an early war opponent, now one of the nine who seek the Democratic presidential nomination. She said, "It is absolutely critical that we not cut and run, that we provide our troops with what they need and that we not just blow up that country and leave it blown up; we have a responsibility."

In 1991, the American president urged the Iraqi people to rise up and overthrow Saddam Hussein. We then stood by as Saddam slaughtered tens of thousands of those he suspected of taking that advice. That retaliation included the draining of Iraq's great marshlands, destroying the economy of more than 200,000 "marsh Arabs." The dead can't be resurrected, but at this point Congress is still debating whether some of the \$87 billion will go to restoring those marshlands - just one of those costly responsibilities.

(Write to Walter Cronkite c/o King Features Syndicate, 888 Seventh Ave., New York, NY 10019, or e-mail him at mail(at)cronkitecolumn.com.)

Opinions expressed on this page do not necessarily reflect the views of *The Pampa News*.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

'Straws' will suck us dry

To the editor:
 Okay, I was "out-thunk" over pipelining Ogallala Aquifer water across Texas. Now we're talking recreational use for Panhandle water, as well. Possum Kingdom Lake, Lake Whitney, fishing in the Brazos and, in the end, the Gulf of Mexico will get what's left of the Ogallala. Can someone who's more in the know tell me what's wrong with this picture? Am I the only one swimming with my head above the water?

Here's the picture as I see it. Take one of your mother's mixing bowls and fill with water. Ogallala water or Lake Meredith water, it doesn't make a difference. Get one straw. Insert straw into mixing bowl of water and start sucking. With the placement of the straw at the particular arc of the bowl, answer this question. After sucking was initiated, did water recede only from where the straw was placed? God bless Mrs. Inez Call, my sixth grade teacher! I learned ...

If Boone and the others succeed, they will suck the Ogallala Aquifer dry. The Ogallala was not in God's plan to wind up freshening up the Gulf of Mexico.

Dennis Palmitier
 Pampa

TODAY IN HISTORY

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Today is Thursday, Oct. 16, the 289th day of 2003. There are 76 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:
 Twenty-five years ago, on Oct. 16, 1978, the College of Cardinals of the Roman Catholic Church chose Cardinal Karol Wojtyla to be the new pope; he took the name John Paul II.

On this date:
 In 1793, during the French Revolution, Queen Marie Antoinette was beheaded.

In 1859, abolitionist John Brown led a group of about 20 men in a raid on Harper's Ferry.

In 1916, Margaret Sanger opened the first birth control clinic, in New York City.

In 1943, Chicago Mayor Edward J. Kelly officially opened the city's new subway system during a ceremony at the State and Madison street station.

In 1946, ten Nazi war criminals condemned during the Nuremberg trials were hanged.

In 1962, the Cuban missile crisis began as President Kennedy was informed that reconnaissance photographs had revealed the presence of missile bases in Cuba.

In 1970, Anwar Sadat was elected president of Egypt, succeeding the late Gamal Abdel Nasser.

In 1973, Henry Kissinger and Le Duc Tho were named winners of the Nobel Peace Prize; however, the Vietnamese official declined the award.

In 1981, Israeli war hero Moshe Dayan died in Tel Aviv at age 66.

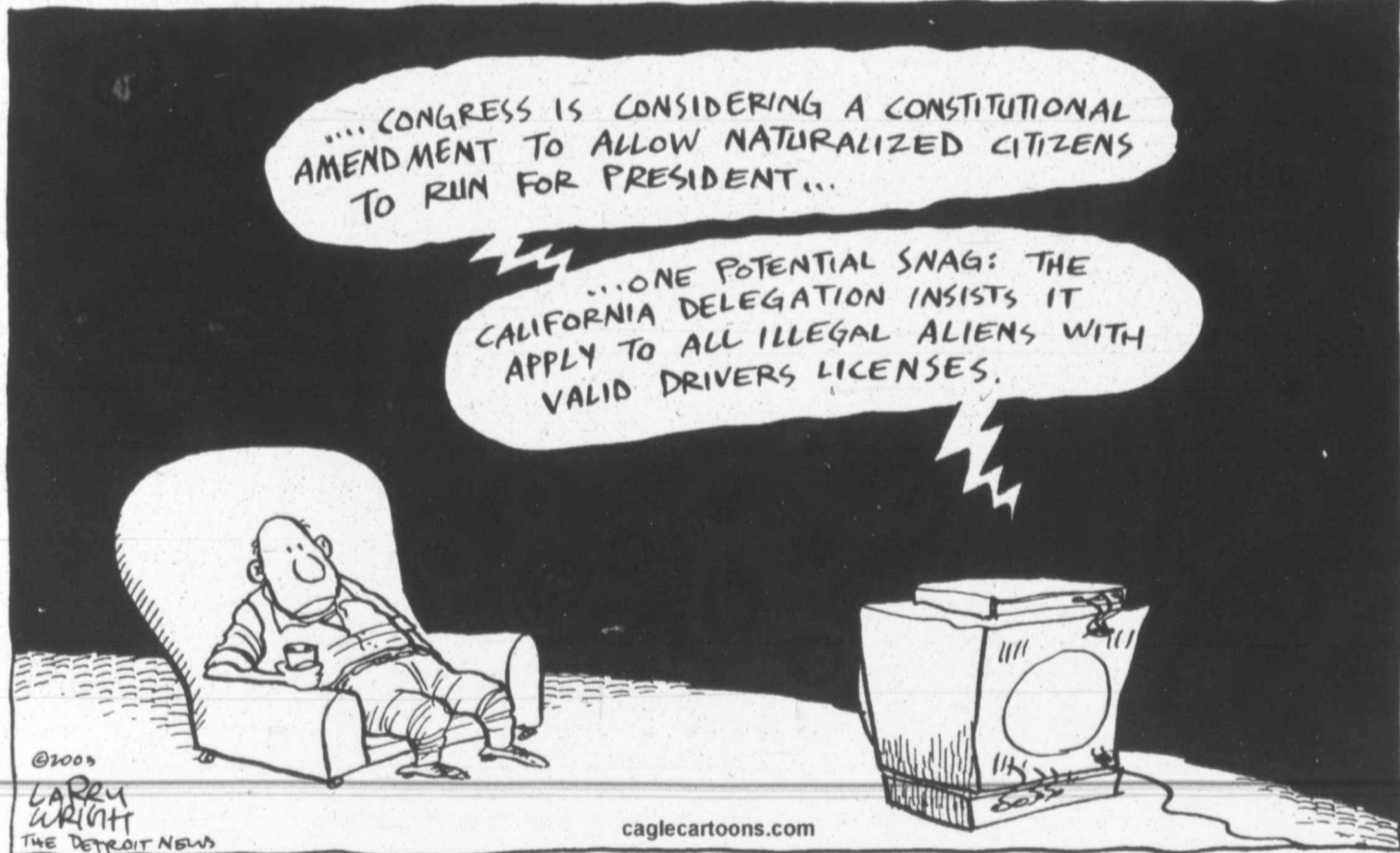
In 1995, a vast throng of black men gathered in Washington D.C. for the "Million Man March" led by Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan.

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Voter fury rises against politicians

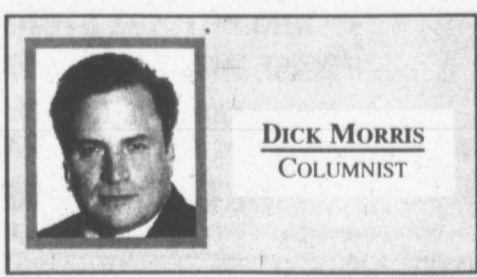
There is always a temptation to put a partisan spin on voter anger and pretend it is directed at one or the other of our political parties. Republicans celebrate the upheaval of the Democrats in California. Democrats chuckle at Bush's dive in the polls. Republicans have their share of fun in watching first Howard Dean and then Wesley Clark eclipse the best and the brightest among the Democratic candidates.

But the fact is that none of these three political earthquakes is directed at a party. All are directed against the political establishment in general. It is the political class that the voters are angry at, not just its practitioners in either party. Voters are in such a froth at the political establishment that anything is possible as this election year takes shape.

Leading all other causes of this massive anger is the sense of having been deceived over the issue of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. However aggressively the administration tries to spin David Kay's report to indicate that Saddam was, indeed, worth ousting, the plain fact is that any 7-year-old watching television believed that Bush and Co. had plain evidence of masses of weapons scattered about the country.

The fact that they are not there is galling to voters.

Just as Bush Sr. tripped over raising taxes after pledging "read my lips: no new taxes," so Bush Jr. is finding it hard to overcome his own statements earlier in the year. Bush is deeply wrong if he believes that the current good economic news will



DICK MORRIS
COLUMNIST

bail him out of his midterm doldrums. Bush I didn't lose over the economy. He fell over a lack of credibility. Bush II will not recover with a good economy. He needs to bridge the credibility gap he has created.

Most of us don't think Bush lied. We can't bring ourselves to think that. But we do think that we were misled through malfeasance or incompetence, and we don't like it one bit. The fact that Americans massively approve of ousting Saddam is quite beside the point. We don't like being fed a fantasy as a justification for a war.

But the anger in America has deeper causes than just Bush's credibility. Voters feel that the political class is introverted, self-absorbed and as impervious to outside influences as Catholic bishops. They see our political leaders as ignoring our needs and wishes in a self-perpetuating oligarchy of power. The lifetime tenure the members of the House awarded themselves in cahoots with their respective state legislatures through massive gerrymandering is but one example of this arrogance of power.

The hardest thing to do in politics is to be an insider and still think like an outsider. Senators and congressmen must be able

to dine with presidents and still think like factory workers. The groupthink inside the Beltway can be numbing and few politicians really understand how to reach out through it to grasp what Americans are thinking.

The hothouse of adulation within the capital and the frequent frost of public reactions outside of it create a fog through which it is hard to see.

But Arnold Schwarzenegger's election and the surge of Dean and Clark in the Democratic polls come as beacons reminding us of the voter anger that lies just beyond the Beltway. Its raw, almost uncivilized quality cuts across party lines and leads to a ubiquitous call to throw the incumbents out.

Ponder for a moment how the Democratic establishment, rooted so deeply in California so as to make it virtually a one-party state, could be so easily swept aside.

Think about the fact that four candidates representing the cream of the Democratic Party's congressional leadership - a former vice presidential candidate, their former floor leader in Congress, their most charismatic senator and the latest Clinton Southern wannabe - have been swept aside by an unknown former governor of Vermont with a good Internet list and a previously unknown general from the army, albeit one with no great military victories to his credit.

Only in an environment laced with voter discontent and anger could such drastic upheavals be possible. It's not a good year to venture out to the polls.

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Two lawmakers accuse Halliburton of overcharging for gas imports

By LARRY MARGASAK
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

Halliburton, the Houston company with a no-bid contract to restore Iraq's oil industry, is charging U.S. taxpayers exorbitant prices to import gasoline into Iraq, two Democratic congressmen said Wednesday.

Reps. Henry Waxman, D-Calif., and John Dingell, D-Mich., wrote the Bush administration that the company's KBR subsidiary is billing the Army between \$1.62 and \$1.70 per gallon, while Iraqis are charged between 4 cents and 15 cents at the pump.

"Although Iraq has the second largest oil reserves in the world, the U.S. taxpayer is, in effect, subsidizing over 90 percent of the cost of gasoline sold in Iraq," the lawmakers said in the latest Democratic attacks against the company formerly led by Vice President Dick Cheney.

The charges cover the purchase and transportation of the petroleum from Kuwait and other countries.

Halliburton, originally hired to extinguish oil fires, has received the expanded role of restoring Iraq's oil industry. The company has been paid \$1.4 billion through September for its work.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, which chose Halliburton, has received competitive bids for a replacement contract that could be awarded this month.

Agency spokesman Robert Faletti said he could not confirm the figures that Waxman and Dingell cited in a letter to Joshua Bolten, director of the Office of Management and Budget.

He added, however, that the contract is being audited by Congress and the Army.

"I have a feeling this one is going to be audited more often and closer than any contract we've ever done," he said. "So far, they have found no major red flags, no significant errors."

He said the Halliburton subsidiary buys gasoline on

the spot market at the best possible price.

Added Halliburton spokeswoman Wendy Hall: "KBR is not responsible for establishing the price Iraqi motorists pay for gasoline at the pump."

She said the company negotiates "fair and competitive prices" and must transport the gasoline in a hostile environment.

Waxman and Dingell said the corps informed them the Army paid Halliburton more than \$300 million to import some 190 million gallons of gasoline into Iraq — an average of about \$1.59 per gallon.

Halliburton then adds a fee that boosts the cost to \$1.62 to \$1.70 per gallon — nearly a dollar more than the price in

the Mideast, the letter said.

In a further move against Halliburton, Sen. Frank Lautenberg, D-N.J., announced Wednesday he would propose barring the government from awarding Iraq reconstruction contracts to companies that maintain close financial ties to the president, vice president or members of the president's Cabinet.

Lautenberg wants the measure added to an \$87 billion reconstruction bill for Iraq and Afghanistan. Cheney receives deferred payments from Halliburton and also has stock options.

Cheney's office has said the vice president had no role in the contract and that the deferred payments were for his services while he headed the company.

Employee of the Month



(Courtesy photo)

Jordan/Baten Units' "October 2003" Employee of the Month is Heidi Chronister, property and supply clerk. Ms. Chronister has been employed at the Jordan Unit for three years. Her future plans are to seek higher level positions in accounting, budgeting or management. Ms. Chronister also enjoys selling real estate, gardening and attending college classes. She attends Mary Ellen and Harvester Church of Christ and is a realtor member of Pampa Board of Realtors, Texas Association of Realtors and National Association of Realtors. Ms. Chronister has two sons; Laramie and Jeremy. She is pictured here with Senior Warden Chris Bell.

Company corners vintage tire market

CHATTANOOGA, Tenn. (AP) — Looking for wide whitewalls for that baby blue '55 Cadillac? Or maybe the hard-to-find tires for a 1914 Mitchell touring sedan?

Classic car collectors know exactly where to turn: Coker Tire Co. in Chattanooga, the largest supplier of collector and specialty tires in the world, according to owner Joseph "Corky" Coker.

The company, with 50 employees, ships 600 to 1,200 tires a day to customers in 40 countries, Coker said.

"I have the best job in the world," said Coker, 49, who himself owns more than 50 collector cars and 20 vintage motorcycles.

From the fledgling company he took over from his father, Harold Coker, at a BFGoodrich dealership in 1974, Corky Coker figures he now has cornered about 50 percent or more of the market for specialty tires.

He got started by buying molds from original tire makers. He traveled to South America, the Philippines and Australia to acquire molds from old factories and reproduced some molds from drawings.

The company, headquartered in a historic building near downtown, owns more than 800 tire patterns and is an exclusive distributor of vin-

tage brands such as Michelin and U.S. Royal.

"We were first to produce a wide whitewall radial, in the early 1990s," Coker said.

The company logged its largest single contract in January — more than 3,000 tires for the final edition of the classic VW Bug.

In July, Coker Tire opened a store in Fresno, Calif., in the heart of what he calls "a car-crazy culture." The West Coast store will help eliminate some long-distance shipping costs.

The demand for vintage tires comes from collectors

who aren't satisfied until they get historically accurate tires. The vintage reproductions sell for about 30 percent more than regular ones.

The family business generates sales of more than \$1 million a month, Coker said, and has enjoyed double-digit growth annually for longer than a decade.

"We are very fortunate in that the majority of our clients are using funds that are their 'play money,'" Coker said. "They are middle-income and above and somewhat insulated" from the economic downturn.

Undercover agents get weapons past screeners at Boston's Logan Airport

BOSTON (AP) — Five federal agents posing as passengers succeeded in sneaking weapons through security checkpoints at Logan International Airport last week, officials said.

The Homeland Security agents smuggled certain "prohibited items" past federal screeners, said George Naccara, the airport's federal security director. He did not specify what the items were.

The two jetliners that were flown into the World Trade Center towers originated in Boston. Federal screeners were hired at airports nationwide to tighten

security after the attacks.

"I am always disturbed if we miss anything," Naccara told the Boston Globe. "We're not perfect. I admit that. It was a learning experience."

A number of screeners were pulled aside on the spot and told they had failed to find illicit items, Naccara said.

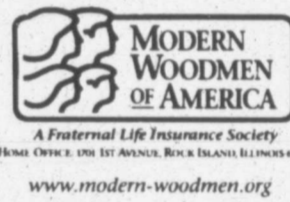
"In individual cases (undercover agents) spoke to the screeners," he said.

The tests at Logan were part of a federal investigation at about 15 major airports around the country, he said, adding that security at Logan is "no better or worse" than at other airports.

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OCT 16 2003

The Pampa News Comics

THURSDAY • OCTOBER 16, 2003

DEAR ABBY

written by Pauline Phillips and daughter Jeanne Phillips

Ex-Cons Profit By Using Their Skills Of Deception

DEAR ABBY: I'm a retired police officer who has worked in prisons with both male and female inmates. Your response to "Alarmed Host," whose co-worker "Jane," wants to bring "Al," an ex-convict, to her dinner party, needs to be expanded.

While incarcerated, inmates live with other inmates who are often smarter and more experienced. This gives them many opportunities to enhance their skills. They become experts in deceiving those around them, including persons like "Jane," the naive young lady in "Alarmed's" letter. A host has a responsibility to protect her guests. Inmates are adept at listening and taking mental notes of information, such as that being shared by potential victims that can be used later to commit burglary, home invasions, identity theft, rape, assault, etc. Without behavior modification treatment programs while in prison, few inmates change on their own.

NO NAME FOR OBVIOUS REASONS

DEAR NO NAME: Your points are well taken. The fact that Jane refused to disclose the nature of Al's crime is also telling. Read on:

DEAR ABBY: Get out the wet noodle. "Alarmed" doesn't need to meet Al before the party; she should disinvite Jane immediately!

Almost 70 percent of convicts are repeat offenders, masters in the art of deceit. I know. I have worked with them. Many proudly display albums of "girlfriends" with whom they correspond and carefully catalog their assets. "Alarmed" has due cause for concern.

I once had an inmate clerk I'll call Russ — very intelligent, quite handsome. Although he had only completed high school before his first conviction, I could explain to him a highly technical accounting procedure — once — and he'd turn in a perfect work product.

One day, Russ rushed into my office, exclaiming, "Boss, Boss, I'm getting out. I leave this weekend!" I asked him how many times he had been down. "Five," he said. "But one doesn't count because it was for parole violation." I congratulated Russ and told him, "You're a good

worker. You're smart. I don't ever want to see you again." He thanked me and assured me I wouldn't.

Six months later, my inmate truck driver reported that a new inmate at Diagnostics had asked him to tell me that he wanted his old job back. You guessed it — it was Russ.

Friend "Jane" needs help. It's true that Al has paid the debt society has imposed upon him. But the relevant question is, "Has he changed?"

FORMER PRISON EMPLOYEE

DEAR FORMER PRISON EMPLOYEE: You're right. But let's not forget that some people do change. Read on:

DEAR ABBY: I am an ex-con, a former drug dealer. Although I abide by the law now, I am still paying for what I did. I have a hard time finding work, living arrangements and living a normal life.

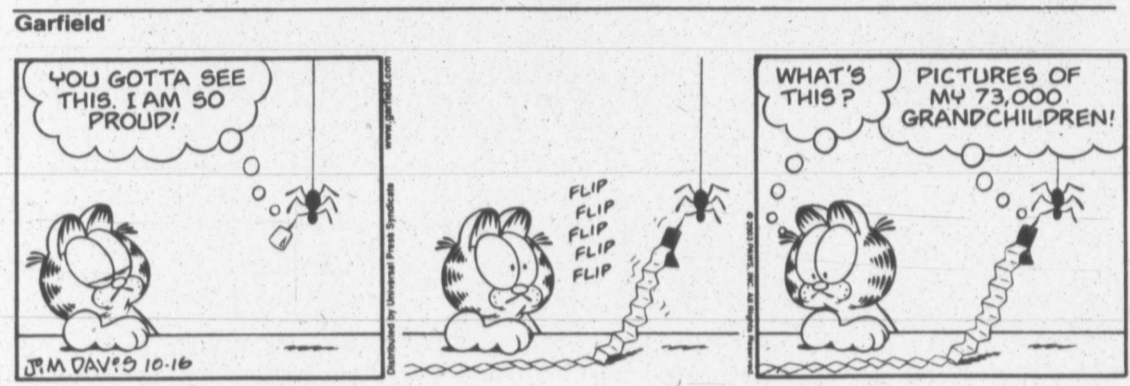
"Al" needs a break. You're never done with your time when you must tell everyone you're an ex-con. You're looked down on, no matter how sorry you feel or how well you're doing. It's humiliating. I wish I could go back and do things differently, but I can't. And neither can Al.

EX-CON IN ARIZONA

DEAR EX-CON: I understand that post-prison life is frustrating. However, as long as you refuse to allow your past to determine who you are, the lessons you have gained from it will make you stronger and wiser. Yes, there is a lot of bias, but if you have earned the respect of those who are closest to you, that is what's most important.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Abby shares more than 100 of her favorite recipes in two booklets: "Abby's Favorite Recipes" and "More Favorite Recipes by Dear Abby." Send a business-size, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for \$10 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby — Cookbooklet Set, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included in price.)



Crossword Puzzle

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

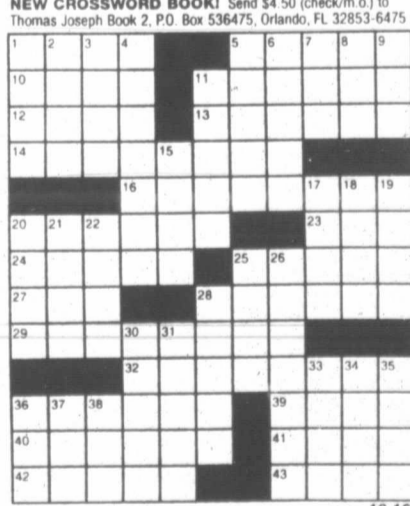
ACROSS DOWN

- 1 Oscar winner
- 2 Sorvino
- 3 Fenway team
- 4 Object of worship
- 5 Stringent
- 6 Patricia of "Hud"
- 7 On cloud nine
- 8 Star player's reward
- 9 Emcee's concern
- 10 Like clear nights
- 11 Epoch
- 12 Henry VIII's house
- 13 Beam
- 14 Lawyer's org.
- 15 Saw the sights
- 16 Grouse, e.g.
- 17 Strategy
- 18 Gale Storm TV role
- 19 Topnotch
- 20 Blockheads
- 21 Takes in
- 22 Hired thugs
- 23 Macramé bit
- 1 Chinese dynasty
- 2 Notion
- 3 Wander
- 4 Brisk
- 5 tempo
- 6 Charming lass
- 7 Tracks
- 8 Go down
- 9 Refinery input
- 10 Struck out
- 11 Unpleasant
- 12 '90s Attorney General
- 13 Brush target
- 14 Gawk
- 15 pest
- 16 Without a date
- 17 Oompah producer
- 18 First person
- 19 '90s Achy General
- 20 Facial treatment
- 21 London paper
- 22 Without a date
- 23 Canadian dollar symbol
- 24 Domini
- 25 Tree house
- 26 Soviet jet
- 27 Bustle
- 28 Southern resort
- 29 Prepares the hook
- 30 Canadian
- 31 Oompah producer
- 32 Domini
- 33 Tree house
- 34 Soviet jet
- 35 Bustle
- 36 Southern resort



Yesterday's answer

- 19 Garden
- 20 Without a date
- 21 Oompah producer
- 22 First person
- 23 '90s Achy General
- 24 Facial treatment
- 25 London paper
- 26 Without a date
- 27 Canadian dollar symbol
- 28 Domini
- 29 Tree house
- 30 Soviet jet
- 31 Bustle
- 32 Southern resort
- 33 Prepares the hook
- 34 Canadian
- 35 Oompah producer
- 36 Domini
- 37 Tree house
- 38 Soviet jet
- 39 Bustle
- 40 Southern resort



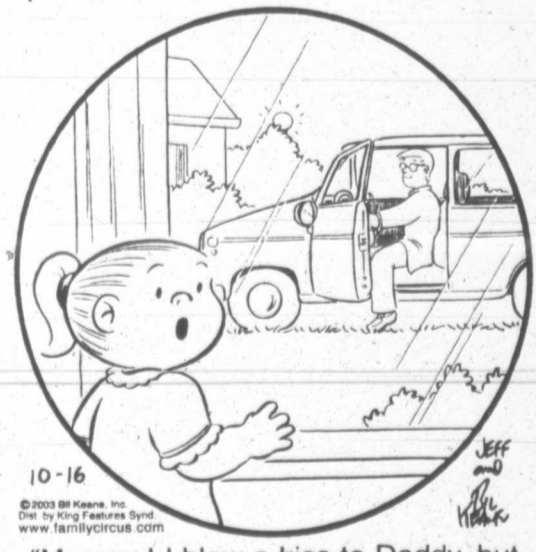
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Marmaduke



"Whatever you're planning to pounce on... don't!"

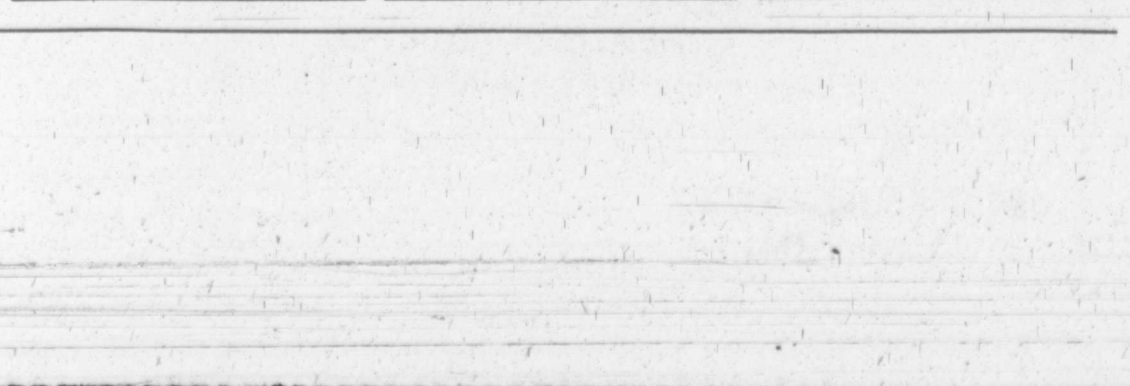
The Family Circus



"Mommy! I blew a kiss to Daddy, but how do I blow him a hug?"

Flo & Friends

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SPORTS

Red Sox force Game 7 with 9-6 victory over Yankees

NEW YORK (AP) — Twenty-five games later, the New York Yankees and Boston Red Sox are still going at each other.

And now, for the first time in baseball history, teams will meet for the 26th time in a single season, with the winner going on to face Florida in the World Series.

Need some more spice? It's Roger Clemens vs. Pedro Martinez.

"The gods of baseball wanted to see this happen," Boston's Kevin Millar said after the Red Sox won 9-6 Wednesday and forced these two old foes to the limit in the AL championship series.

Down by two runs and nine outs from ending their season, the resilient Red Sox rallied

again, putting Boston one win from its first World Series in 17 years.

David Ortiz tied it with a run-scoring single and Johnny Damon drove in the go-ahead run with a bases-loaded walk in a three-run seventh inning.

Game 7 has all the makings of a classic: Clemens and Martinez were the central characters who set off fireworks and fights during Game 3 at Fenway Park, and it could be the Rocket's final appearance of his illustrious career.

"I guess it was supposed to come down to seven games," Yankees manager Joe Torre said. "I don't know of any two

clubs that are more evenly matched than we are."

Slumping Nomar Garciaparra had four hits, including a wind-blown triple that started the seventh, atoning for an error. Jason Varitek hit a third-inning homer off starter Andy Pettitte, and Trot Nixon added a two-run shot in the ninth off Gabe White.

"We have battled and fought against these guys all year," Varitek said.

A swirling 25 mph wind floated napkins across the field during the entire game, and the conditions made it difficult for fielders, spinning line drives into twisting gap-

pers. Boston's first hit was a second-inning liner by Bill Mueller that sailed over Hideki Matsui in left for a double.

"It's a fact that it is hard to catch fly balls in wind like that," Matsui said through a translator.

Jason Giambi's first-inning homer put New York in front, but Boston went ahead 4-1 in the third on Varitek's long solo homer to left, Ortiz's two-run single over a leaping Derek Jeter at shortstop and Millar's soft RBI single to center.

Boston starter John Burkett, a 38-year-old who relies on offspeed pitches, couldn't get through the fourth. Nick Johnson hit an RBI double to

the right-center gap. Aaron Boone had a run-scoring grounder.

Garciaparra allowed Karim Garcia's bounce to kick out of his glove for an error and Alfonso Soriano lined a two-run double to center that the wind pushed into left-center.

Jorge Posada made it 6-4 in the fifth with a solo homer that appeared to ride the wind over the wall in left.

Jose Contreras relieved Pettitte to start the sixth and struck out the side, but he overthrew in the seventh and wound up the loser.

Wheeler wins district opener

WHEELER — James Chapman threw for one touchdown and ran for another as Wheeler downed Claude 28-14 last weekend to open the District 3-1A season for both teams.

Chapman tossed a 6-yard TD pass to Brenton Goerand. He also ran for a 4-yard TD. Also scoring for the

Mustangs were Josh Miller (4-yard run) and Tanner Collins (34-yard run).

The score was tied 7-7 at halftime.

Chapman connected on 4 of 9 pass attempts for 154 yards.

Wheeler evened its overall record to 3-3.

Claude is also 3-3.

Pampa gymnasts have highest scores at Lubbock

LUBBOCK — Gymnastics of Pampa Level 5 team members competed in the District One Junior Olympics in mid-September.

MaKayla Hampton and Payton Alvey led their team and the competition by having the number one and number two All-Around scores, respectively, of all Level 5's in the meet. The two gymnasts combined with teammates McKinlee Stokes and Chelsee Whinery for the highest Level 5 team total at the Lubbock meet.

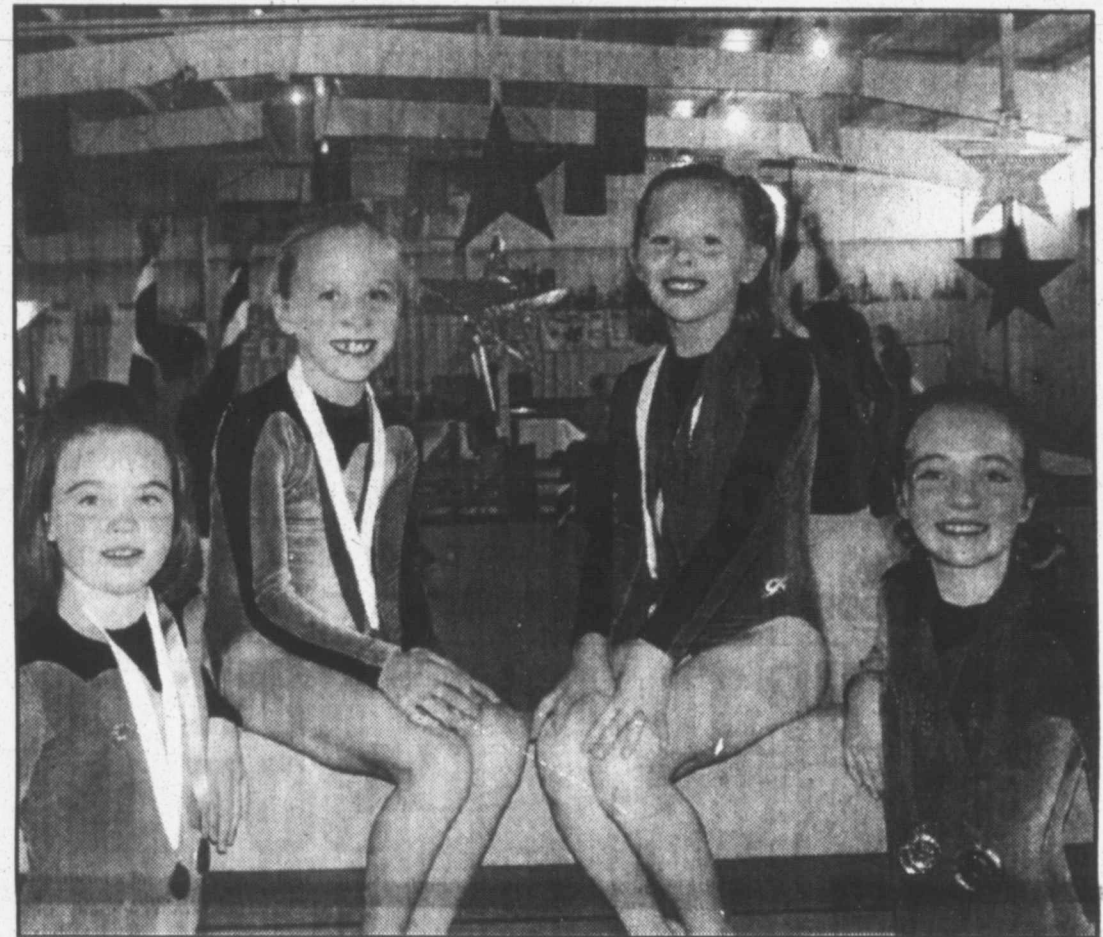
MaKayla Hampton continued to dominate the 9-year-old division by turning in a personal best floor score of 9.55 for a gold medal. She also won gold on balance beam, 9.2, and on bars, 8.7. Her vault scores of 8.2 was good for the bronze. MaKayla's winning All-Around score of 35.65 was three points higher than her nearest competitor.

First-year Level 5 gym-

nast Payton Alvey had personal best performances on beam, floor, bars and All-Around to take top honors in the 10-year-old age group for the second meet in a row. Payton won gold on balance beam, 9.3, and on uneven bars, 8.65, and earned the silver on floor exercise, 9.2. Her winning 34.95 All-Around was a point better than the previous competition.

Nine-year-old McKinlee Stokes improved her All-Around score to a 32.5 for the bronze medal. The first-year Level 5 earned a silver on floor exercise, 9.05, a bronze on beam, 8.45, and was fourth on uneven bars with a 7.25. Floor, beam and All-Around were personal bests.

Competing in the 10-year-old division was Chelsee Whinery, who had a personal best floor score of 9.05 for the bronze medal. She took fifth place on balance beam, 8.05, and finished sixth in the All-Around with a 31.45.



Gymnastics of Pampa Level 5 Team members are (from left) Chelsee Whinery, McKinlee Stokes, MaKayla Hampton and Payton Alvey.

Symons is ready

LUBBOCK, Texas (AP) — Texas Tech quarterback B.J. Symons, the nation's leading passer who slightly twisted his knee last week after celebrating a touchdown pass, vowed he'll be 100 percent for Saturday's game at Oklahoma State.

Symons said he "landed a little funny" after jumping to give a high five to Wes Welker after a TD pass in Tech's 52-21 win over Iowa State. But he returned to the game on the next series after trainers placed a brace on it.

"B.J.'s going to play. B.J. feels great," Symons said this week. "I don't expect it to be any problem."

Symons, who has passed for 2,954 yards and 27 touchdowns, sat out Sunday's practice. His leg appeared to be bothering him on the team's off day Monday; he walked gingerly at the weekly news conference. But he returned to practice Tuesday.

"I had a little bit of soreness (Sunday) when I woke up but that's natural," he said.

The Red Raiders (5-1, 2-0 Big 12) are averaging 47 points a game, and they'll need Symons against Oklahoma State (5-1, 1-1), which is scoring 41 points per game. Symons has passed for more than 400 yards in five games, and he has gone over 500 yards three times.

"Of course he's going to play," coach Mike Leach said. "We're having a game; B.J. plays in games."

Symons said there was no discussion with Leach about whether he'd return to last week's game after the injury.

"It wasn't a question," Symons said. "The brace was more of a precautionary thing. They just wanted to be safe and threw that on me. I could have gone out there without it, I felt like."

No one would say whether Symons would wear a brace Saturday.

Marlins advance to World Series

CHICAGO (AP) — The shouts of joy bounced all around the ballpark, for everyone to hear at Wrigley Field. And while the Florida Marlins whooped it up, the Chicago Cubs and their fans could only watch in stunned silence.

Somehow, these Marlins had survived in Game 7 of the NL championship series. Playing like true wild cards, they rallied against Kerry Wood and added to the Cubs' lore of losing with a 9-6 win Wednesday night.

"The Cubs were America's favorite. I think we're the darlings of the baseball world now," Marlins manager Jack McKeon said.

Florida won the final three games, earning a World Series trip to face either Boston or the New York Yankees on Saturday night.

As the Marlins celebrated, another season came to a sad ending for the Cubs, signified by the blue flag with a white "L" hoisted above the center-field scoreboard. This loss might've been the most painful of all.

Destiny? Fate? The fan in Game 6? Whatever. The Cubs'

long, strange drought continued because of MVP Ivan Rodriguez, Miguel Cabrera and these remarkably resilient Marlins.

"Nobody expected us to be in the World Series," Rodriguez said.

Even more stinging for Cubs' fans is that this marks Florida's second Series trip in only 11 years of existence. Chicago has been absent since 1945, prompting the team's motto of "Wait 'Til Next Year."

"I felt I let the team down, the organization down and the city of Chicago down," Wood said. "I choked."

Cubs manager Dusty Baker was not nearly as harsh.

"We didn't lose the pennant, the Marlins won it," he said. "We were close and the Marlins took it from us, it's as simple as that."

So the 58-year wait goes on. "If it's a burden this year, it will be 59 next year," he said.

Baker's 4-year-old son, Darren, added a final word when his dad was done talking.

"The Cubs will win next year," he said.

Home teams had won 12 of the last 13 times a postseason series went to Game 7.

Pampa Middle School team competes in WT CC meet

CANYON — The Pampa Middle School girls cross country team competed in the West Texas A&M Cross Country meet Saturday, Oct. 11.

Girls and boys ran together in this meet, making it the largest race the team had competed in. There were 215 participants in the junior high division.

Results in the girls division were as follows:

Runner	Place	Time
Kari Carter	55	16:49

Kayla Jeter	62	17:13
Amanda Harkins	68	17:31
Carley Richardson	79	17:53
Destiny Fitzer	86	18:06
Amy Adams	114	19:33
Sarah Cannon	124	20:48
Keziah Clennenden	125	20:52
Kenzie Carter	143	22:38
Stephanie Jimenez	151	24:38
Callie Preston	152	24:39

The Patriots finish their 2003 season at the Pan Fork Meet, Saturday, Oct. 18.

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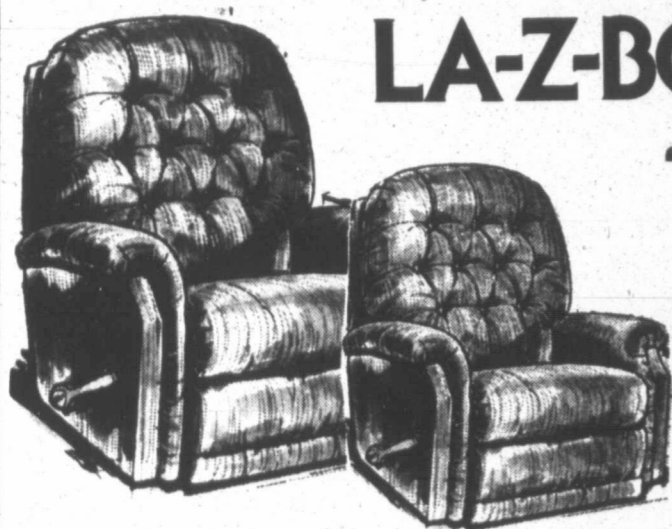
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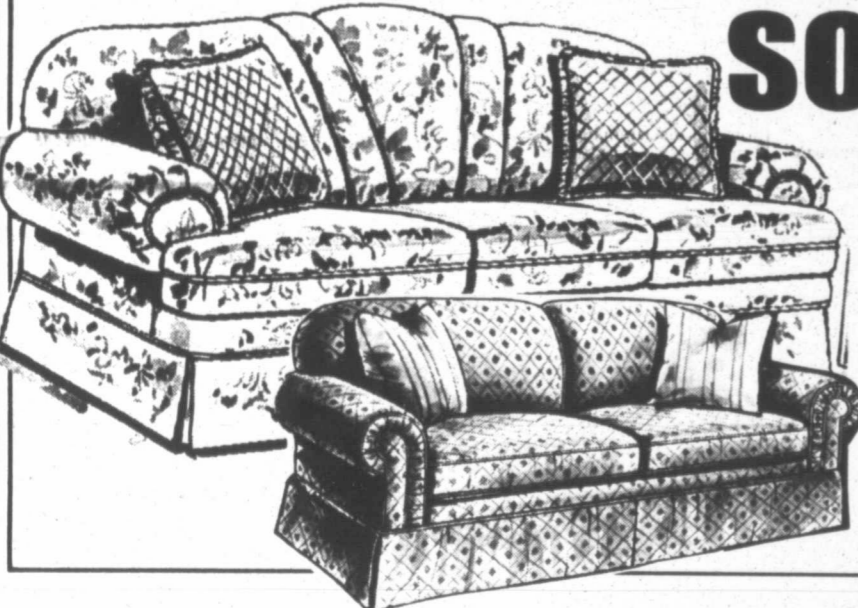
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BOWLING				Washington				N.Y. Giants				Philadelphia			
Harvester Lanes League Results				3				3				0			
The Harvester Combo (Week 4)				0				.500				128			
Team	Won	Lost		Pct	PF	PA	Pct	PF	PA	Pct	PF	PA	Pct	PF	PA
B&C Twice	13	3													
AT&T Yard Service	12	4													
JJ&R	11	5													
Team Seven	9	7													
Team One	9	7													
A-1 Concrete	8	8													
Reed's Welding	8	8													
Team Ten	7	9													
Onie's Regulars	6	10													
Team Eleven	5	11													
Black Gold	4	12													
Coney Island	3	13													

High scratch game: Pete Long 253; High scratch series: Pete Long 599.

High scratch game: Ashleigh Burns 254; High scratch series: Peggy Chase 682.

FOOTBALL

National Football League At A Glance						
All Times EDT						
AMERICAN EAST						
Team	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Miami	4	1	0	.800	105	58
New England	4	2	0	.667	126	113
Buffalo	3	3	0	.500	114	103
N.Y. Jets	1	4	0	.200	75	80

Teams try to avoid letdowns

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Maybe this weekend should be called Letdown Saturday.

After the biggest weekend of the season led to upset losses and season-defining wins, this week's slate lacks that drama.

There are no storied rivalries such as Oklahoma-Texas or Miami-Florida State on the schedule — just those run-of-the-mill games that can derail championship seasons.

The top-ranked Sooners hope to avoid a letdown after a 65-13 victory in the Red River Shootout against Texas. Oklahoma hosts No. 24 Missouri, which has to guard against being too satisfied with last week's upset of Nebraska.

"Many a time, I have sat in here after a loss to Miami and not lost any more games," coach Bobby Bowden said. "Many times. What will happen next, I don't know. It's not like we've got to roll over and die."

The picks:
No. 24 Missouri (plus 26 1/2) at No. 1 Oklahoma
Tigers should have short stay in poll ... OKLAHOMA 41-17.
Temple (plus 31) at No. 2 Miami
Hurricanes get breather against Owls ... MIAMI 42-7.

College Picks

No. 4 Georgia (minus 24) at Vanderbilt
Bulldogs have won eight straight vs. Vandy ... GEORGIA 31-3.
No. 5 Southern California (minus 8) at Notre Dame
Julius Jones won't crack 200 yards vs. Trojans ... USC 27-13.
No. 6 Washington State (minus 10) at Stanford
Cougars moving up the rankings ... WASHINGTON STATE 28-20.
No. 7 Florida State (minus 8) at Virginia
Seminoles hope for dry weather ... FLORIDA STATE 24-21.
No. 9 Iowa (plus 3 1/2) at No. 8 Ohio State
Buckeyes try to rebound from first loss ... OHIO STATE 23-21.
No. 10 LSU (minus 4 1/2) at South Carolina
Tigers 9-3 following a loss under Nick Saban ... LSU 27-20.
Florida (plus 5 1/2) at No. 11 Arkansas
Razorbacks need to get ground game going ... FLORIDA 21-17.
Western Michigan (no line) at No.

12 Northern Illinois
Huskies seek to impress BCS computers ... NORTHERN ILLINOIS 27-20.
No. 13 Purdue (no line) at No. 14 Wisconsin
Winner in good shape for Rose Bowl berth ... PURDUE 24-21.
No. 15 Michigan State (plus 8) at No. 25 Minnesota
Spartans start stretch of four straight ranked opponents ... MICHIGAN STATE 27-24.
UAB (plus 11) at No. 16 TCU
Horned Frogs looking to go 7-0 for second time since '38 ... TCU 31-14.
Illinois (plus 26) at No. 17 Michigan
Illini 2-2-1 last five trips to Ann Arbor ... MICHIGAN 34-13.
Texas A&M (plus 10 1/2) at No. 18 Nebraska
Cornhuskers looking for 35th straight homecoming win ... NEBRASKA 24-10.
Mississippi State (plus 21) at No. 19 Auburn
Tigers have won four straight since 0-2 start ... AUBURN 31-3.
No. 20 Texas (minus 16 1/2) at Iowa State
Mack Brown's squad happy not to face Oklahoma ... TEXAS 31-13.

McLean defeats Fort Elliott

BRISCOE — McLean (10-yard run) downed Fort Elliott 42-27 in a District I-1A six-man game last weekend.

James Alexander led the McLean assault with four touchdowns. Alexander scored on runs of 15, 25, 1 and 25 yards.

Others scoring for the Tigers were Dusty Moody (1-yard run) and Nick Jones

(Fort Elliott) quarterback Steven McAlpine threw three touchdown passes, two to Justin Bryant for 8 and 17 yards.

Russell Longberger caught a 30-yard TD strike from Bryant.

Junior Newman returned a kickoff 64 yards for a touchdown.

Horoscope BY JACQUELINE BIGAR

HAPPY BIRTHDAY for Friday, Oct. 17, 2003:

You are unusually stubborn and want what you want when you want it. This year, you might need to lighten up some and understand where others are coming from. You cannot successfully buck the establishment. Put your effort into work, and you will gain enormously. You also will see caring flow toward you if you stay focused on the person rather than the events around the relationship. If you are single, you will meet someone special this year, but you can also be sure that you're not seeing this person realistically. Toss off your rose-colored glasses. If you are attached, the two of you enter a very romantic year together. Don't get hung up in power plays. CANCER drives a hard bargain.

The Stars Show the Kind of Day You'll Have:
5-Dynamic; 4-Positive; 3-Average; 2-So-so; 1-Difficult

ARIES (March 21-April 19)
*** No one knows better than you that it's Friday. You will buckle down to the tasks at hand, determined to get the job done. In fact, you might do such a good job of screening out others that someone could get annoyed. Tonight: Finally, a good time is had by all.
TAURUS (April 20-May 20)
***** Verify information, as difficult as it might seem to absorb. You might not like what you hear, but you do know what has to happen. Allow greater creativity and fun into your life later on. Not everyone agrees with you, especially an associate. Tonight: Kick up your heels.
GEMINI (May 21-June 20)
*** Dealing with misinformation could take up a large part of your day.

You might need to take a strong stand with someone you care about, as uncomfortable as that might be. Understand that you do need to say "no" sometimes. Tonight: Indulge and treat yourself.
CANCER (June 21-July 22)
***** With the Moon in your sign, the cards are on your side of the table. Still, you might be unusually firm and direct about how you are feeling with a family member or a roommate. Listen, though, because there might be logic to this person's side. Tonight: Your night to play and party.
LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)
*** Sit back and take your time. You might find someone to be unduly sharp or difficult. Be reasonable in how you deal with this person. Express your feelings, but don't be surprised if there is unusual flak. You clear the air later on. Tonight: Follow a playmate's advice.
VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)
***** Reach out for an important group of people, whether it is many or few. A discussion could be hard, but it makes a big difference in what goes down. You might not have all the money facts clear. Ask for what you need. Tonight: How 'bout a night to yourself!
LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)
*** A "must" stand could have an impact on others, as well as you. Understand that although you might be uncomfortable, you are making a difference by clearing the air. A late lunch helps others open up to you. Talk about your feelings. Tonight: It could be memorable.
SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)
***** Keep reaching out for more information, especially if you don't feel comfortable with what you are hearing. Your ability to make waves and make others respond comes out. Don't doubt yourself at this immediate juncture. Tonight: Take off ASAP.
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)
***** Work with someone else and you will find that though there are differences, the going will be easier. Swapping ideas often only makes an idea tighter and more effective. You might be less sure of yourself than normal. Tonight: Let go and play.
CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)
***** Others defer to you, though not easily. You have a way of handling difficult people that can surprise them. The ideas that you present are grounded. You can and do make a difference. Confusion surrounds a boss or superior. Tonight: Say "yes" to an invitation.
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)
*** Listen to what happens behind the scenes. You might want to share more of what is going on with your right now. Open up to discussions that involve both a co-worker and information you are hearing from a distance. Tonight: Kick up your heels as if there is no tomorrow.
PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)
***** Your ability to add to a situation is very strong. Your interest, however, might be making an arrangement concrete rather than nebulous. You might have difficulty with a partner as you seek out answers. Tonight: Let the good times roll.

BORN TODAY
Rapper Eminem (1972), stuntman Evel Knievel (1938), reporter Jimmy Breslin (1930) ***

Jacqueline Bigar is on the Internet at <http://www.jacquelinebigar.com>.

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The Pampa News Classifieds

1 Public Notice

PUBLIC NOTICE
The following storage units will be sold to satisfy landlords' lien. The auction will take place October 25, 2003 at 1:00 P.M. Location of auction will be American Self Storage, 2520 N. Hobart, Pampa, TX. Sale will go to highest bidder.
Notice published Oct. 9 and Oct. 16, 2003.
#A2-Wilbanks-Golf clubs, Bedroom dresser & headboard
#C9-Epperson-Bedroom furniture, Fishing rods & tackle
#C23-Longoria-Washer, Dryer, Bedroom furniture, Gas cook stove, Refrig.
#D4-Aldrich-Halloween decorations, Pet carry
#E19-Hernandez-Refrigerator, Bedroom furniture, TV
D-39 Oct. 9, 16, 2003

5 Special Notices

ADVERTISING Material to be placed in the Pampa News, MUST be placed through the Pampa News Office Only.

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FOUND Sat. small white male Pomerian. Call 669-0735.
FOUND female black lab at high school, red collar, no tags. Call 665-7197, come by Gray County Vet
FOUND 10-13-03 on Hwy. 152 and Price Rd new work boots. Call 898-0312

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10-16 CRYPTOQUOTE

D RDM IL VITBQ DMB

MIA IL BUUBQ GQ ZGJU

D NDTBUM LSZZ IL

VUUBQ — UMNZGQP

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GRAND OPENING

THIS WEEK ... MONDAY OCT. 13 - SATURDAY OCT. 18

Euthanasia battle ends

PINELLAS PARK, Fla. (AP) — One of the nation's longest and most bitter euthanasia battles approached an end with the removal of a feeding tube from a comatose woman, but her parents clung to hope for a legal reversal and Gov. Jeb Bush promised to help.

The tube was removed Wednesday from Terri Schiavo, 39, at the Tampa Bay-area hospice where she has lived for several years. She was expected to die within 10 days.

Schiavo's parents have been locked in a legal battle with her husband, Michael Schiavo, who says she would rather die than be kept alive artificially. She has been in a vegetative state since 1990, when her heart stopped because of what doctors said may have been a chemical imbalance.

Bob Schindler said he and his wife, Mary, went in to see their daughter shortly after the tube was removed and gave her a kiss and hugged her. He said his daughter was not as responsive as they claim she normally has been.

"She's OK for the next couple of days," said Suzanne Carr, Terri Schiavo's sister. "We are just going to try to work some magic."

"I have to believe that somebody is doing something, somewhere to stop this judicial homicide," she said.

Wednesday's removal came just hours after Bush told the Schindlers that he was instructing his legal staff to find some means to block a court order allowing Michael Schiavo to end his wife's life. But even the family's lawyer has said their legal remedies have been exhausted.

"I am not a doctor, I am not a lawyer. But I know that if a person can be able to sustain life without life support, that should be tried," the governor said, adding the "ultimate decision of this is in the courts."

Family members were heartened by the governor's last-minute effort.

"The family has not given up hope on Terri," the woman's brother, Bob Schindler Jr., said following a meeting with Bush. "We have spoken to the governor, and he hasn't given up hope either."

Michael Schiavo and his attorney George Felos were not immediately available for comment after the removal of the tube.

Several right-to-die cases across the nation have been fought in the courts in recent years, but few, if any, have been this drawn-out and bitter. The tangled case has already been handled by 19 separate judges and the tube has been ordered removed three times. At one point 2001, the tube was removed for two days before a judge ordered feeding to be resumed based on new evidence.

About 100 protesters stood outside the hospice Wednesday in what has become a 24-hour vigil staged by advocates for the disabled and anti-abortion activists.

Schiavo's family members believe she is capable of learning how to eat and drink on her own and say she has shown signs of trying to communicate and could be rehabilitated.

Doctors have testified that the noises and facial expressions Terri Schiavo makes are reflexes and do not indicate that she has enough mental capabilities to communicate with others.

The Florida Supreme Court has twice refused to hear the case, and it also has been rejected for review by the U.S. Supreme Court. On Tuesday, a Florida appeals court again refused to block removal of the tube.

Pilot investigated for possibly falling asleep in ferry crash

NEW YORK (AP) — Authorities on Thursday investigated whether a Staten Island ferry pilot lost consciousness during a trip across a windy New York Harbor before the mighty vessel slammed into a pier, killing at least 10 people and injuring 42 others, including three who lost limbs.

Three people were missing, Mayor Michael Bloomberg said Thursday, though he added, "whether those people were really on the boat or not, nobody really knows."

The pilot bolted the scene so quickly that he left behind his gear and his keys, then broke into his house where he slit his wrists and shot himself with a pellet gun, a law enforcement source told The Associated Press. The source spoke on condition of anonymity.

The pilot, identified by the source as Richard Smith, was in critical condition Wednesday night after surgery, St. Vincent's Hospital said. It was the same hospital where 22 victims were rushed

after the 3:20 p.m. crash, the city's worst mass transit accident in at least a generation.

A co-worker of Smith told authorities the pilot had been asleep, slumped over the controls, the source said.

About reports that the pilot had passed out or fallen asleep at the wheel, National Transportation Safety Board chairwoman Ellen Engleman said Thursday the agency has "a lot of conflicting reports as far as that. We don't want to pass on stories or rumors."

Witnesses said the boat never appeared to slow down before it hit a maintenance pier, hundreds of feet from the slips where the ferries normally dock. The ferry was immediately backed up and moved to one of the passenger slips, where rescue crews began their work.

"The scene was total chaos," said passenger Frank Corchado, 29, of Staten Island, recounting a tableau of horrific sights: a decapitated man, a legless woman, a fellow passenger bleeding from his eyes. "There was a lady without

legs, right in the middle of the boat," he said. "She was screaming. You ever see anything like that?"

The dead, one woman and nine men, ranged from age 25 to 52, police said. The names of all but one were released early Thursday.

The crew was to be interviewed and tested for drugs and alcohol. Such testing is routine after major transportation accidents. The crew members referred investigators to their union lawyers.

Smith was being represented by an attorney, said police, who obtained a sample of his blood for testing. Telephone messages left at his home were not returned.

Investigators said Thursday morning they had gotten conflicting reports on where the crew members were when the boat crashed. The pilot and captain are both supposed to be in the pilot house when the boat is entering port.

City Transportation Commissioner Iris Weinsall said Smith, the pilot, had been an employee for 15 years.

"There's nothing in his record that we have seen so far that would indicate a problem," she said.

Smith gave initial comments to police but has not yet been interviewed in depth, Engleman said Thursday.

The 310-foot craft was carrying an estimated 1,500 people, 36 of whom were treated at the scene or immediately taken to hospitals. Six others walked away injured and went to hospitals later.

Corchado said he tried to help as many people as possible get out. Witnesses said some jumped into the windswept 62-degree water and others ran as the pier chewed up the side of the boat.

"Most of the people who died were older people, I believe, who couldn't move or didn't have enough time to get out of the way," Corchado said.

The victims were seated in the window seats on the front right side of the Andrew J. Barberi. Some of the injured were pulled from the rubble by rescue workers; one of the dead was found in

the water off Staten Island.

Evan Robinson, a musician waiting for a ferry on Staten Island, said he watched as the craft suddenly veered crazily. Two other witnesses said the ferry appeared to speed up when it should have slowed down for docking.

"I looked on in disbelief," Robinson said. "I said, 'Oh, my God, he's going to crash!'"

"The ferry was coming too fast," said witness William Gonzalez, who lives nearby. "They had no control to stop the boat."

At Staten Island University Hospital, two victims with amputations were among those brought in from the ferry, said spokeswoman Arleen Ryback. Others were suffering from back and spinal injuries; one victim reported chest pains and one had hypothermia.

Ferry service was immediately shut down, forcing thousands of evening rush hour commuters to head for buses and taxis. Service resumed Thursday morning and the mayor said it was operating normally.

Social Security recipients get 2.1 percent rate hike

WASHINGTON (AP) — Social Security beneficiaries will get a 2.1 percent cost-of-living increase next year, providing an extra \$19 a month for the average retiree.

Next year's boost, announced Thursday by the Social Security Administration, is up from this year's increase of 1.4 percent, but still reflects an economy with low inflation.

The increase begins in January and covers more than 51 million Americans. It is tied to an index of consumer prices, the government's chief measure of inflation.

Monthly benefit checks have been adjusted automatically since 1975 to protect retirees' income from erosion by rising inflation.

The average monthly benefit for retirees will rise from \$903 to \$922. For the average couple receiving benefits, the

monthly check will jump from \$1,492 to \$1,523, an increase of \$31.

The maximum monthly benefit for disabled workers will increase from \$844 to \$862.

For most older Americans, the increase will be depleted by a 13.5 percent hike in Medicare premiums that also takes effect next year. Premiums will rise \$7.90 a month to \$66.60.

Medicare is very much on the minds of lawmakers in Congress with political attention turning to next year's election. Both parties are eager to reach an agreement this year, with President Bush urging action on the issue.

House and Senate leaders working on a Medicare prescription drug bill moved closer to a consensus Wednesday night on requiring higher-income seniors to pay more

than other beneficiaries for coverage.

If enacted, that would mark a historic policy shift for a program that has always provided a standard benefit at a fixed price for every participant.

When Medicare began in 1967, premiums were set at \$3 a month. Next year's 13.5 percent increase is the third-largest in the program's history.

The largest premium increase was in 1988, at 38.5 percent, followed by 1993, when the jump was 15.1 percent.

As for Social Security, the largest annual increase was 14.3 percent in 1980, reflecting double-digit inflation of that era. Adjustments in the past decade have remained under 3 percent with inflation pressures moderating.

The annual adjustment is based on third-quarter consumer price changes in 2002 through the third quarter of this year. This allows the Social Security Administration time to get the raises included in January checks.

The Social Security

Administration also announced that for working Americans, the maximum annual earnings subject to taxes next year will rise to \$87,900 from \$97,000. That means a tax increase for about 9.2 million of the 156 million workers who will pay Social Security taxes next year.

Bush campaigned in 2000 on the idea of letting younger workers invest a portion of their payroll taxes in the stock market, helping to shore up future funding for the retirement system.

Flu season arrives early in Central, Southeast Texas, health officials say

TEMPLE, Texas (AP) — With dozens of early flu cases diagnosed in Central and Southeast Texas, state health officials have issued an immunization advisory.

At Texas Children's Hospital in Houston, 40 patients were diagnosed with influenza in the past five days. During the flu seasons of the last two years, doctors said the most cases treated during any week was nine.

"It's a little bit frightening," Dr. Ralph Feigin, physician-in-chief of Texas Children's Hospital and chair of pediatrics at Baylor College of Medicine, told the Houston Chronicle in Thursday's editions.


The Texas Department of Health, noting heavier-than-normal amounts of influenza cases

across the state, issued the flu advisory on Wednesday.

At Scott and White Memorial Hospital in Temple, health officials said the influenza A strain was confirmed in up to 13 patients.

Doug McBride, a TDH spokesman, said the flu was identified this month in Bell County.

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