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THE Pampa

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2003

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EL PASO TX 79903-3743

NEWS

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WEATHER

HIGH 48 LOW 23

LOCAL

Fund to benefit Roy and Carol Hermanski

A fund has been set up at NBC Bank in the name of Roy and Carol Hermanski, who lost their mobile home to fire over the weekend.

Persons interested in making a donation should contact Marilyn Howell at NBC Bank.

Mr. Hermanski is employed at Larry Baker Plumbing and Mrs. Hermanski has "Cakes by Carol."

DEATHS

- B.R. Counts, 73, welder.
- W.M. "Bill" Ledbetter, 91, administrator.
- Linda Reames, 56, California native.
- Johnnie Davis Smith, 87, secretary.

INSIDE...

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Beautiful Paving Stones...
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Official optimistic about city's future

By DAVID BOWSER
STAFF WRITER

While the number and value of building permits were down through November compared to the same period for last year, Danny Winborne, who heads the city's building code division, says he is very optimistic about the new year.

"Right now, permits are pretty well in line with the past few years," Winborne said.

Because of the timing of construction projects, permit and inspection numbers are down through 2003, but Winborne said today that his office is getting many more inquiries about future projects than they have in the past several years.

"Probably next year will be a record year for permit values," Winborne said.

In addition to a building permit for a

proposed Wal-Mart Super Center, Winborne said there are several other projects in the works. Some of the projects predate the notification by Wal-Mart of its intentions to build a Super Center on Pampa's north side.

Although there are no applications yet for permits, Winborne said there have been a number of people in contact with his office concerning zoning and the application process, which is usually an indication of things to come.

"I'm really optimistic," Winborne said. There has been a marked increase in interest concerning construction during the last couple of months, he said, but it is a trend he has noticed over the past few years.

"If it all comes into play, it could be an excellent year for commercial permits," Winborne said of 2004.

In addition to the commercial interests, Winborne said developers have shown an interest in building new housing in and around Pampa. Some of the home construction could be inside the city limits while there have also been inquiries concerning housing developments beyond the city limits.

"This is a key factor in growth for a city," Winborne said.

When there is interest in new homes, it is an indication of community growth, he said.

"I've been in this office for nine years," Winborne said, "and I am totally optimistic about what is happening to Pampa right now."

The life-long Pampa resident noted that oil production and exploration is up in the area.

"That's what really stimulates our economy," Winborne said.

(See CITY, Page 3)

County names new attorney

By MARILYN POWERS
STAFF WRITER

Josh Seabourn was named interim county attorney by Gray County commissioners after an executive session yesterday during their regular meeting in the county courtroom on the second floor of Gray County Courthouse, 205 N. Russell.

Commissioners interviewed Seabourn during a 45-minute executive session and then voted unanimously to appoint him to the position.

"We were very impressed with his responses, and very pleased to appoint him," said Gray County Judge Richard Peet by telephone after the executive session.

"I'm very excited about it," Seabourn told *The Pampa News* during a telephone interview this morning.

Seabourn was the only applicant for the position, which will be vacated by Todd Alvey on Dec. 31. Alvey announced his resignation on Nov. 12. His unexpired term runs through Dec. 31, 2004.

"I do plan to," Seabourn said this morning when asked if he will file as a candidate for the position. The primary election for nine county offices, including county attorney, will be in March 2004, with Jan. 2, 2004, as the deadline to file as a candidate. Winners in the March primary will be on the ballot in the November 2004 general election, and those elected in November would take office in January 2005.

Seabourn, 28, currently is a part-time assistant district attorney for 31st District Attorney Richard Roach, and also works part-time for Pampa attorney John Warner.

"I think he'll do a fine job there. We're going to miss him. He's been a big help here," Roach said in a telephone interview this morning. He said he currently has no plans to replace Seabourn, but is in the process of applying for a state grant for a special prosecutor. The special prosecutor, who would work full-time on district cases,



Josh Seabourn

would prosecute mainly domestic violence and other cases involving families, he said.

"Since I've gone to work for the district attorney, I've discovered how much I enjoy being a prosecutor and being on that side of things. I think I have something to contribute to the community," Seabourn said earlier this month concerning why he had applied for the county attorney position.

Seabourn, 28, grew up in Pampa, having moved here with his family when he was 5-years-old. He graduated from Pampa High School in 1993. He attended Oklahoma University, where he earned a bachelor of arts degree in history in 1998 and a juris doctor degree in 2001.

He returned to Pampa immediately after receiving his law degree in May 2001, and was employed by Warner to work on criminal cases, probate work, wills and trusts, real estate, and family law.

On April 1 of this year, he was hired as a part-time assistant for Roach and continued to work part-time for Warner. Seabourn's work in the district attorney's office has included case intake, research, witness interviews, presenting cases to the grand jury and trying cases in court.

Seabourn and his wife, Heather, are Pampa residents, as are his parents, Danny and Sherry Seabourn.

Cities, counties may prohibit 'assisted motor scooter' use

By MARILYN POWERS
STAFF WRITER

The operation of motorized scooters on certain streets has been legalized by the Texas Legislature, according to Trooper Wayne Beighle, public information officer for the Texas Department of Public Safety in Amarillo.

Texas cities and counties, as well as the Texas Department of Transportation, may prohibit operation of the scooters, also known as "motor assisted scooters," on particular streets or highways for safety reasons.

Pampa Police Chief Trevlyn Pitner said that currently there are no city ordinances or local restrictions concerning motor-

ized scooters in Pampa. He said the law concerning the scooters, which was passed Sept. 1, does not include such items as motorized wheelchairs.

The Texas Transportation Code defines a "motor assisted scooter" as a "self-propelled device" with the following characteristics:

- at least two wheels in contact with the ground during operation,
- a braking system that can stop the device during normal operating conditions,
- a gas or electric motor of 40cc or less,
- a deck which allows the operator to stand or sit during vehicle operation, and
- is capable of being self-propelled by the operator.

scooters have a top speed of 20 miles per hour. Pitner said.

Motorized scooters may be legally operated on the following surfaces:

- a street or highway having a posted speed limit of 35 miles per hour or less,
 - a street or highway with a higher posted speed limit if crossing the street,
 - a path designated for the exclusive use of bicycles, and
 - a sidewalk.
- "In general, a law which applies to bicycles also applies to these scooters," Beighle said in a recent press release. "That means the operator must obey the usual traffic laws that bicycle operators must obey, such as speed limit, signal turns, stop at stop signs, etc."

Over budget can be a good thing

By DAVID BOWSER
STAFF WRITER

Being over budget is a good thing when it comes to income, and that's the good news for Pampa this holiday season.

John Horst, Pampa's director of finance, said today that sales tax collections, an income revenue stream for the city, is 12.01 percent over budget so far this fiscal year. Pampa's fiscal year began Oct. 1.

"For the three months through December," he said, "we're over budget by about \$57,000. It looks way better than this time last year."

The city has collected \$21,314.80 more so far this year than it had at this point last year.

"It's much more encouraging than last year this time," Horst said.

The Texas Comptroller's office reports that Pampa reflects the increased sales tax revenue being reported across the State of Texas.

"State sales tax revenue is up for the third month in a row," Texas Comptroller Carole Keeton Strayhorn said this month. "The last time state sales tax revenue increased three months in a row was July-September,

2001, before 9-11."

November sales tax revenue statewide was up 4.3 percent compared to the same month a year ago.

"This is the largest growth since August 2001, before the terrorists' attacks," Strayhorn said.

The state received \$1.36 billion in sales tax revenue in November. For the last two years, the state experienced declining sale tax revenues.

"Last December," Strayhorn says, "the Grinch stole Christmas. We were seeing declining sales tax revenue at both the state and local level, and tough economic times were also taking a toll on other revenue sources. This year, the Grinch isn't going to steal Christmas. State sales tax revenue is up and overall, local taxing entities will receive more sales tax this calendar year than they took in last calendar year."

So far this fiscal year in Pampa, Horst said the city has received \$530,311.31 of its \$1,950,000 annual budget, well ahead of the \$473,466.73 they expected to collect in the first three months of the fiscal year.

"We're looking positive on our sales taxes," Horst said.

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OBITUARIES

SERVICES TOMORROW

REAMES, Linda — Graveside services, 2 p.m., Fairview Cemetery, Pampa.
SMITH, Johnnie Davis — Graveside services, 10 a.m., Fairview Cemetery, Pampa.

W.M. 'BILL' LEDBETTER
 1912-2003

W.M. "Bill" Ledbetter, 91, of Pampa, died Tuesday, Dec. 16, 2003. Services are pending under the direction of Carmichael-Whatley Funeral Directors of Pampa.
 Born Jan. 3, 1912, at Dallas, Mr. Ledbetter was a 1930 graduate of Oak Cliff High School in Dallas and held a bachelor of science degree from Southern Methodist University (1934). He married Elaine Walker on June 26, 1942, at Tonkawa, Okla.; she died May 8, 2002.
 He coached football, taught math and science at high schools in Milford, Canon, St. Jo, Texas, and Blackwell, Okla., and was a high school football and basketball official.
 He worked for Skelly Oil from 1942 until retiring as personnel administrator in 1977.
 He was active in First United Methodist Church, serving as chairman of the finance committee, the house and grounds committee for 16 years, and the administrative board. For several years, he belonged to WinSome Sunday School Class and was a member of Men's Fellowship Class.
 He held membership and was past president



of Pampa Rotary Club and Knife and Fork Club. He volunteered with Pampa Meals on Wheels and organized Skel-Tex Credit Union.
 Survivors include a cousin, Leonard Sullivan of Waxahachie; and his caregivers, Maria Vasquez, Emma Trejo and Kelly Collins, all of Pampa.
 The family requests memorials be to Pampa Meals on Wheels, P.O. Box 939, Pampa, TX 79066-0930; or to WinSome-Fellowship Sunday School Class in care of First United Methodist Church, P.O. Box 1981, Pampa, TX 79066-1981.
 —Sign the on-line register book at www.carmichael-whatley.com.

JOHNNIE DAVIS SMITH
 1915-2003

Johnnie Davis Smith, 87, of Pampa, died Saturday, Dec. 13, 2003, at Canadian. Graveside services will be at 10 a.m. Wednesday in Fairview Cemetery with the Rev. Barry Owens, associate pastor of First Baptist Church, officiating. Burial will be under the direction of Carmichael-Whatley Funeral Directors.
 Mrs. Smith was born Jan. 1, 1915, at Hood, Texas. She lived in Pampa from 1917 until 1945, graduating from Pampa High School in 1933, and from 1986 to the present. She married Raymond Peter Smith on Feb. 28, 1947, at Pampa; he died April 4, 1981.

She was society editor for The Pampa News for 5 1/2 years, was secretary with Cabot Research and Development and secretary with United Carbon/Ashland Oil Company in Borger, Houston and Columbus, Ohio, retiring in 1977 after 31 years of service.
 She was a member of Pampa Community Concert Association.
 Mrs. Smith has no known survivors.
 In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to a favorite charity.
 —Sign the on-line register book at www.carmichael-whatley.com.

LINDA REAMES
 1947-2003

Linda Reames, 56, of Pampa, died Sunday, Dec. 14, 2003. Graveside services will be at 2 p.m. Wednesday in Fairview Cemetery with the Rev. Barry Owens, associate pastor of First Baptist Church, officiating. Arrangements are under the direction of Carmichael-Whatley Funeral Directors.
 Mrs. Reames was born May 5, 1947, at Fresno, Calif. She had been a resident of Pampa for approximately 20 years.
 She was a Baptist.
 She was preceded in death by a daughter,

Pamela Kay Reames in 1984.
 Survivors include a son, George Thomas Reames, Jr., of Pampa; a daughter, Tamie Young of Pampa; five sisters, Marie Mansell of Duncan, Okla., Rosie Toe of Claremore, Okla., Laura Starr of Ringwood, Okla., Mona Marie of Comanche, Okla., and Louise Moss of Del Rio; a brother, Danny Marine of Marlow, Okla.; six grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.
 —Sign the on-line register book at www.carmichael-whatley.com.

WEATHER FOCUS

PAMPA

Today's forecast is calling for partly cloudy skies, highs in the upper 40s and north-west winds 15 to 25 mph. Caution is advised on area lakes. Tonight should fall on mostly clear skies with lows in the lower 20s and west winds 10 to 15 mph. Wednesday should see mostly sunny skies. Highs in the upper 50s. West winds 5 to 15 mph. Wednesday night, partly cloudy. Lows in the upper 20s. North winds 10 to 20 mph. Thursday, mostly sunny. Highs in the lower 50s. North winds 10 to 15 mph. Thursday night, partly cloudy. Lows in the lower 30s. Friday, partly cloudy. Highs in the upper 50s. Friday night, mostly clear. Breezy. Lows in the lower 30s. Saturday, partly cloudy. Highs in the upper 50s. Saturday night, partly cloudy. Lows in the mid 30s. Sunday, partly cloudy. Highs in the lower 50s. Sunday night, mostly cloudy. Lows in the lower 30s. Monday, mostly cloudy. Highs around 50.

Holiday Specials
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STOCKS

The following grain quotations are provided by Attebury Grain of Pampa.

Wheat	3.51
Milo	4.20
Corn	4.75
Soybeans	6.97

The following 9:30 a.m. N.Y. Stock Market quotations are furnished by Edward Jones & Co. of Pampa.

OXY	39.94 +0.07
BP	45.92 +0.32
Celanese	39.88 +4.08
Cabot Corp	31.59 -0.14
COG	29.13 +0.13
Coca Cola	49.91 +0.12
VLO	44.36 -0.13
HAL	24.86 +0.20
Triad	33.16 +0.03
NOI	21.28 +0.32
KMI	55.10 +0.22
XCEL	16.99 +0.08
Kerr McGee	44.11 +0.70
Limited	16.72 -0.45
Williams	9.81 +0.11
MCD	25.27 -0.15
XOM	38.26 +0.46
Atmos	24.34 -0.04
Pioneer Nat	30.20 +0.22
JCP	22.45 -0.51
COP	60.82 +0.57
SLB	50.74 +0.55
Tenneco	6.08 -0.02
CVX	80.18 +1.23
Wal-Mart	51.05 +0.31
OKE	20.62 -0.27
NS Grp	8.46 +0.21

New York Gold 409.25
 Silver 5.64
 West Texas Crude 33.18

B.R. COUNTS
 1930-2003

B.R. Counts, 73, of Pampa, died Monday, Dec. 15, 2003, at Amarillo. Services are pending under the direction of Carmichael-Whatley Funeral Directors of Pampa.
 Mr. Counts was born Oct. 4, 1930, in Dill City, Okla. He had been a resident of Pampa since 1955. He worked for Cabot and IRI for 40 years as a welder, retiring in 1997.
 He married Mary Matney on Jan. 24, 1960, in Borger.

He was an active member of Moose Lodge #1163 and belonged to Fellowship Baptist Church. He was a U.S. Navy veteran.
 Survivors include his wife, Mary Counts, of the home; two sons, Steven Ray Counts and Gregory Lee Counts, both of Pampa; a sister, Sue Kunkel of Saratoga, Fla.; and a brother, Glen Counts of Point, Calif.
 —Sign the on-line register book at www.carmichael-whatley.com.

ON RECORD

POLICE

Pampa Police Department today reported the following incidents and arrests.

Thursday, Dec. 11
 Burglary of a building was reported in the 1100 block of Terry Road. Several tools were taken from a storage building in the rear of the house. The building was unlocked, and no forced entry was made. Estimated loss was \$2,000.

Friday, Dec. 12
 Criminal mischief over \$50 and under \$500 was reported in the lobby of the police department. The incident occurred in the 900 block of East Francis. A lock on a vehicle door was slightly damaged. Estimated loss was \$50.

Burglary of a motor vehicle was reported in the 600 block of Roberta. The passenger side window of a vehicle was broken out, and a stereo and speakers were taken. Amount of loss was unknown.

Saturday, Dec. 13
 Aggravated assault with a deadly weapon was reported in the police department lobby. The incident occurred in the 600 block of North Lowry. A vehicle was used as a weapon. Minor injuries were reported.
 An information report was taken in the 400 block of North Starkweather. Possible harassment was reported. Officers found that no offense had been committed.

Sunday, Dec. 14
 Assault by a family member was reported in the 800 block of Campbell. Minor injuries were reported.
 Theft under \$50 was reported at Allsup's, 140 S. Starkweather. Gasoline valued at \$18 was taken.
 Family violence was reported in the 700 block of North West Street. The incident was verbal with no injuries reported.

Monday, Dec. 15
 Theft was reported in the 200 block of Miami. Taken was \$47 in change.
 Found property was reported in the 300 block of Anne. A red bicycle was recovered in connection with the incident.
 Violation of a protective order was reported at the police department. The incident occurred in the 2200 block of Lea.
 Assault/family violence was reported in the 800 block of West Campbell. Minor injuries were reported.
 A fight was reported at Pampa High School, 111 E. Harvester. Two males were arrested and taken to municipal court.
 Possession of drug paraphernalia was reported in the 1100 block of Crane Road. Staci Proctor, 37, 1117 Crane Road, was arrested at the scene.

AMBULANCE

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

Monday, Dec. 15

10:20 a.m. — A mobile ICU responded to the 300 block of Sunset and transported a patient to Pampa Regional Medical Center.
 12:13 p.m. — A mobile ICU responded to the 1100 block of Crane. No transport.
 1:32 p.m. — A mobile ICU responded to Hobart and Kentucky streets. No transport.

ACCIDENTS

Pampa Police Department today reported the following accidents.

Monday, Dec. 15

12:58 p.m. — A 1992 Buick Regal, driven by Esther Rodriguez, 24, 1113 Seneca, and a 1993 Lincoln Mark, driven by Joyce Wilton Daniels, 60, 209 Tignor, collided in the intersection of Hobart Street and Kentucky Avenue. No injuries were reported. Clifton was cited for disregarding a red light.
 3:08 p.m. — A 2003 Chevrolet C1500 pickup, driven by Richard Daniel Clifton, 33, Garden City, Kan., and a 1995 Chevrolet van, driven by David Glen Cushman, 43, Amarillo, collided in the intersection of Hobart Street and Kentucky Avenue. No injuries were reported. Clifton was cited for disregarding a red light.

FIRE

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

Monday, Dec. 15

11:55 a.m. — Two units and six firefighters responded to the 2200 block of Perryton Parkway on a false alarm.
 1:43 p.m. — One unit and three firefighters responded to City of Pampa Landfill on a grass fire. Some compost and machinery were burning which the firefighters put out.
 2:56 p.m. — One unit and three firefighters responded to the 1400 block of North Williston to assist the fire marshal with an investigation.

City Briefs

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

ALL ABOUT Beauty for the Holidays! Hair, nails, tanning. Gift certificates. Katie Kidd, Connie Perkins, Nancy Jacoby, Vanessa Milligan & Christie Wall. 665-1101.

EXTRA SPECIAL X-mas Gift, 3-2hr massages with Hot Stones, Oils Therapy & relaxing massage, The Golden Touch, 665-9711/665-6850

RHEAMS DIAMOND Shop Open til 8 p.m. for Christmas register, for Free "Diamond Ring", from 6 p.m.-8 p.m. only.

ANGELS, ANGELS we have Salvation Army Angels! Help make someone's Holiday special! Come by and pick an angel off our Christmas tree! 8-5 p.m. *The Pampa News*, 403 W. Atchison.

FRESH HOLIDAY Pecans Cracked or Shelled. For all your needs, at Dobson Cellular 665-4272, 440-1773.

MASSAGE THERAPY Special, Christmas gift certificates & essential oils. Call Cathy Potter, 669-0013.

CHRISTMAS TREES, your choice \$20. 717 N. Hobart. Hurry-going fast!!

THAI-D RESTAURANT (next to Hastings), enjoy our daily buffet! Seafood dinner buffet. Serving fresh high quality Thai food. 665-4561.

'TIS THE Season To Relax With A Massage.....To make an appointment call Zane Walters, 664-2629. Gift Certificates are avail. at Body Works, 118 E. Browning.

San Antonio reservists return from overseas

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — Ten soldiers returned home to San Antonio after serving three months in the Iraq war. Cheering family members and comrades greeted the reservists at San Antonio International Airport on Monday night.
 The reservists are assigned to the 433rd Maintenance and Aircraft Maintenance squadrons at Lackland Air Force Base.
 The soldiers were in Qatar where they maintained and repaired C-5 cargo jets deployed in support of the war effort.
 The reservists were activated three years ago after the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks.
 Families were excited to see their loved ones.
 "Now that he's back, we're going to keep praying for everyone else over there," said Mary Morin, mother of Master Sgt. Rodrigo Morin Jr. "We appreciate the sacrifice the men and women are making for us."



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

Nurs
 SOMERVI are poring on after a nurse claimed he killed to alleviate with murder.
 Charles C administered patients out years in nine New Jersey at
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Nurse charged with murder, claims he killed more than 30 patients

SOMERVILLE, N.J. (AP) — Investigators are poring over patient records in two states after a nurse with a checkered work history claimed he killed 30 to 40 terminally ill patients to alleviate their suffering and was charged with murder.

Charles Cullen, 43, told authorities he administered drug overdoses to put "very sick" patients out of their misery over the last 16 years in nine hospitals and a nursing home in New Jersey and Pennsylvania.

"The evidence that we have indicates that may very well be the case," prosecutor Wayne Forrest said Monday.

If Cullen's contentions prove true, it would be one of the biggest hospital murder cases in recent U.S. history. In 1987, Donald Harvey, a nurse's aide, entered guilty pleas in Ohio and Kentucky to killing at least 34 people, most of them patients. He also claimed involvement in other killings.

Cullen was charged with one count each of murder and attempted murder, but more charges could follow. Cullen said he did not want a lawyer, and was held on \$1 million bail.

In court Monday, Cullen stood and told the judge, "I am going to plead guilty. I don't plan to fight this."

Investigators are examining records at facilities where Cullen worked as they try to document his claims about the other killings. One

body has already been exhumed to undergo toxicological tests and Forrest said other exhumations were possible.

Cullen was charged with murder in the death of the Very Rev. Florian J. Gall, a Roman Catholic vicar who died June 28 at Somerset of an unauthorized dose of digoxin, a heart medication. He was also charged with the attempted murder of a 40-year-old woman at the same Somerville hospital.

Prosecutors were notified by Somerset Medical Center officials after the hospital fired Cullen on Oct. 31. An internal review had found questionable lab results involving six of Cullen's patients.

Somerset turned over information on the six cases to the prosecutor's office, said Dr. William Cors, the hospital's chief medical officer. All six patients had "multiple, serious medical problems," Cors said.

Gall's sister, Lucille Gall, said she did not know there were questions about her brother's death until prosecutors told her there were questions about lab reports.

"I'm almost in shock. I'm a nurse, so I'm embarrassed this had to happen, and I'm also horrified," she said Tuesday on NBC's "Today." "This is something you hear on television. It doesn't happen to someone you love or know."

Cullen had a checkered career and bounced

from hospital to hospital. In August 1997, he was fired from Morristown Memorial Hospital for "poor performance," a spokeswoman for the hospital's parent company said.

Cullen worked at St. Luke's Hospital in Bethlehem, Pa., from June 2000 to June 2002, and resigned amid allegations that he had at least twice hidden unopened heart and blood pressure medications in a safety bin for use

needles, Lehigh County District Attorney James Martin said.

St. Luke's spokeswoman Susan Schantz said Cullen was immediately removed from contact with patients. The hospital also commissioned an independent cardiologist to review the records of 67 cardiac patients who died in the previous six months. The review turned up no evidence that any of them had been harmed.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

CITY

And Pampa isn't alone.

Winborne said he's seeing the same thing in Dumas and other towns in the Panhandle. "Childress is going through a growing spurt right now," Winborne said. "I'm really excited. I really am."

The City of Pampa, he says, is trying to cooperate and help build businesses in the city. "City Manager Mitch Grant has really been instrumental in this," Winborne said.

Winborne said he's noticed a change in attitude over the last year or so in Pampa.

"As I drive around, I've been seeing places being cleaned up that haven't been in the past," he said. "It's an exciting time for me as a building official."

Winborne commended the downtown business merchants association for their work.

"They've been excellent," Winborne said.

Recounting a recent visit by friends from Houston, Winborne said he took them for a tour of the Celebration of Lights at Recreation Park and the downtown area of Pampa.

Winborne said they were impressed, particularly by the downtown area.

"I think it's pride of ownership," Winborne said of the appearance of downtown Pampa.

He said he would like to see merchants in

other parts of the city organize in a similar way, particularly along U.S. Highway 60.

"That's a major thoroughfare," Winborne said.

People driving through town on U.S. 60 perceive Pampa from what they see along the highway, he said.

As for new construction next year, Winborne said he's looking forward to seeing a new Wal-Mart and at least one new motel.

Winborne doesn't think the proposed Wal-Mart Super Center is the savior of the city, but it will help the local economy with increased sales taxes and more job opportunities.

"I cannot see a downside to it," Winborne said.

Wal-Mart is not the only project that Winborne sees adding to the growth of the city.

He commended Chuck White for his efforts to clear the old Coronado Inn and get a new motel built in town.

"Kudos to Chuck White," Winborne said.

Another motel may also be in the works, Winborne said. A sign north of the hospital indicates it could be the site of a motel, although Winborne said the city hasn't gotten any paperwork on it yet.

"This is exciting," Winborne said. "This is the first time in a long time that I've been optimistic about the growth of Pampa."

Alaskan governor proposes cruise ship tax

By MIKE CHAMBERS
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

JUNEAU, Alaska (AP) — Cruise lines would pay \$5 per passenger for every night spent in Alaska under a new budget proposed by Gov. Frank Murkowski.

The Republican governor's budget, announced Monday, also includes a cruise ship gambling assessment based on passenger counts and a 5 percent tax on excursions run by tour operators.

Murkowski is also proposing a \$1 increase in the state's cigarette tax, which would give Alaska the second highest such tax in the

nation behind New Jersey. Cruise ship industry officials — who have been under mounting criticism from Alaskans for not paying state taxes — say they are being asked to shoulder too much of the load.

"We're hoping to have a discussion with the administration very soon to review the details of this and give our response to the administration," said John Hansen, president of the North West CruiseShip Association.

The industry injects an estimated \$800 million into Alaska's economy including money spent by tourists and taxes and fees paid to local governments, Hansen said. "We pay our own way,

and then some," he said. Alaska faces a \$573.5 million deficit in the fiscal year that begins July 1 next year, according to the state Department of Revenue.



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VIEWPOINTS

Press year in review ...

THE Pampa NEWS

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Just what exactly constitutes 'the rich' in this country?

To the editor,
 In a recent letter to the editor, the writer wrote "Bush has bankrupted our country with his giveaway to the rich in this country..."

Well, just who are the rich in this country?
 According to an IRS report based on the year 2000 tax returns, the top 50 percent of taxpayers paid 96 percent of all taxes.

The top 50 percent is anyone who reported over \$27,682 of income. So the next time a politician or an individual says the recent tax cuts need to be repealed to make the rich pay their fair share, just remember who the government considers rich.

B.A. Watson
 Pampa

Thought for Today

Elegance in prose composition is mainly this: a just admission of topics and of words; neither too many nor too few of either; enough of sweetness in the sound to induce us to enter and sit still; enough of illustration and reflection to change the posture of our minds when they would tire; and enough of sound matter in the complex to repay us for our attendance.

—Walter Savage Landor, 1775-1864
 Ibid. Chesterfield and Chatham

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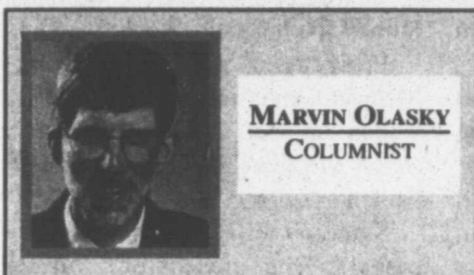
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Does the thrashing about of liberal reporters in 2003 signify the death throes of the old media order or a second wind? Look at this howler from Charles Pierce in the Boston Globe on Jan. 5: "If she had lived, Mary Jo Kopechne would be 62 years old. Through his tireless work as a legislator, Edward Kennedy would have brought comfort to her in her old age." (Kopechne, of course, drowned in Kennedy's submerged car off Chappaquiddick Island in 1969; Kennedy did not report the accident for several hours.)

Or what about the latest fumes from Walter Cronkite, long retired from CBS but still putting out a syndicated column? Look at this Sept. 22 gem: "Attorney General John Ashcroft has earned himself a remarkable distinction as the Torquemada of American law." Torquemada tortured those seen as heretics, and Cronkite acknowledged that Ashcroft was not "burning people at the stake (at least I don't know of any such cases). But one does get the sense these days that the old Spaniard's spirit is comfortably at home in Ashcroft's Department of Justice."

And what about historical illiteracy, as great as ever among reporters, even one like Helen Thomas, who's been around for decades? On Jan. 19, she twice labeled George W. Bush "the worst president in all of American history." (As worldmagblog.com notes, most Democrats think Bush is awful, but could he be worse than James Buchanan? Warren G. Harding? Richard Nixon?) Competing for the "don't know much



MARVIN OLASKY
 COLUMNIST

about history" blue ribbon was James Traub, who stated in The New York Times on Oct. 26, "Today's Republican Party is arguably the most extreme — the furthest from the center — of any governing majority in the nation's history." (Conservative reasons to criticize today's big-spending GOP Congress abound, and Traub has his liberal reasons, but "the furthest from the center"? What about Radical Republicans following the Civil War, or some 20th century Democratic congresses?)

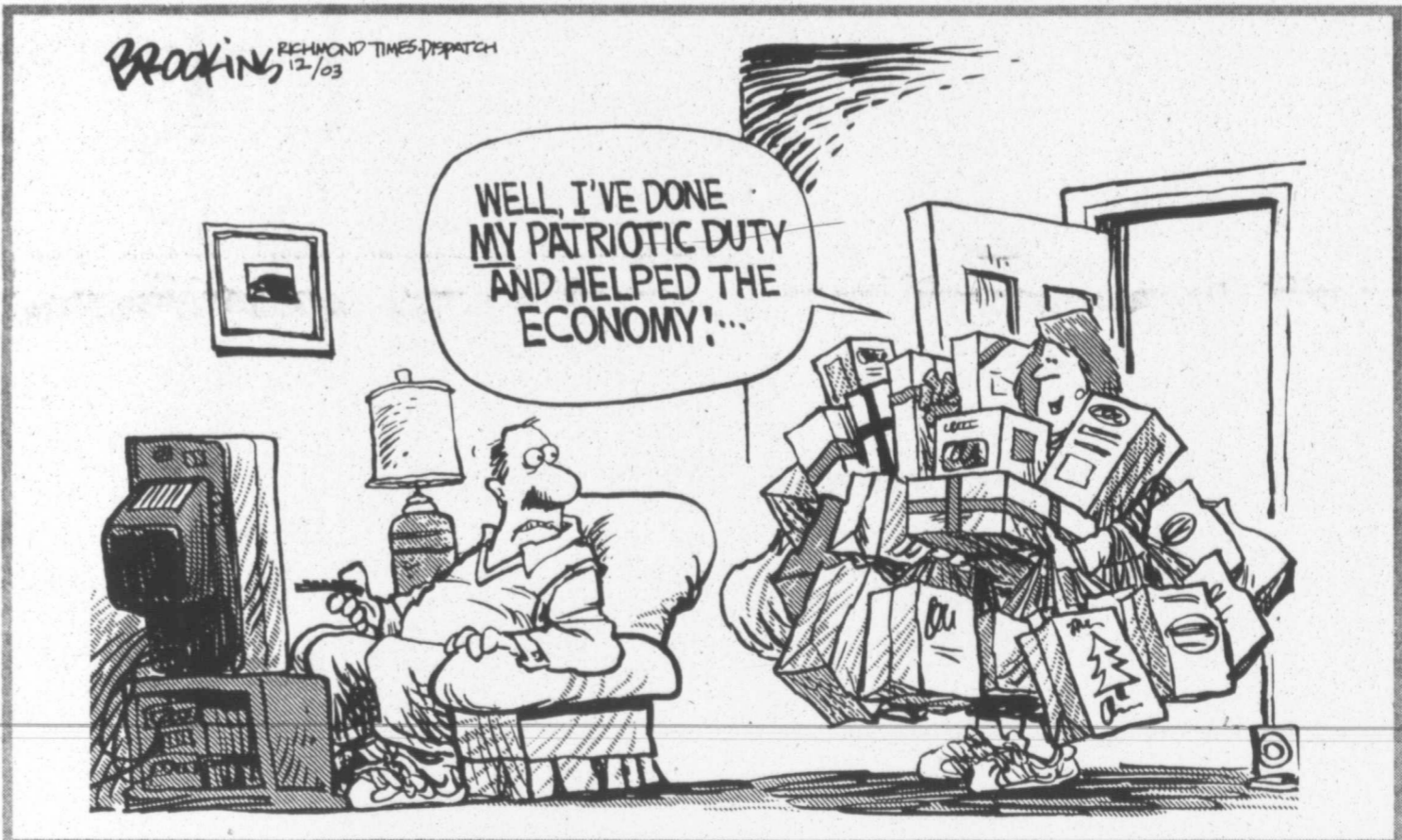
The year's worst reporting probably came from Iraq. Many journalists opposed the war and offered reports like this one by Peter Jennings on Jan. 21: "This week, we were surprised to see several hundred artists and writers walking through the streets of Baghdad to say thank you to Saddam Hussein. ... Whatever they think about Saddam Hussein in the privacy of their homes, on this occasion they were praising his defense of the homeland in the face of American threats."

In recent months, many journalists have tried to justify their earlier position by emphasizing difficulties in Iraq rather than progress. MSNBC producer Noah Oppenheim deserves a gold medal for

traveling to Iraq to "find out if things had really gone as horribly wrong as the evening newscasts and major print dailies reported," and then describing "the failure of American journalism" in the latest Weekly Standard: "America has brought to Iraq the notorious Red State-Blue State divide. Most journalists are Blue State people in outlook, and most of those administering the occupation are Red. (Since) most journalists did not support this war to begin with, (they) 'feel vindicated whenever the effort stumbles.'"

But here's the good news: Editors at the Los Angeles Times and the Chicago Tribune during 2003 acknowledged their newspapers' pro-abortion bias. Don Wycliffe, public editor at the Tribune, quoted complaints by pro-life readers about Tribune headlines ("Anti-choice groups celebrate victories ... Anti-choice victories alarm pro-choice groups") and commented, "The perspective of those who define the issues involved in terms of 'choice' was taken as normative. ... The result was two headlines that couldn't have been more slanted if they had come directly from the public relations office of NARAL Pro-Choice America."

Meanwhile, the big media lie for 2004 — Howard Dean is a moderate — already has emerged. The Media Research Center, which supplied the quotations above, notes that recently CBS announced that Dean "had a moderate record during his 10 years in the Vermont statehouse." Look for more of that, as we find out whether the Dean drive represents the death throes of the old McGovern order or a second wind.

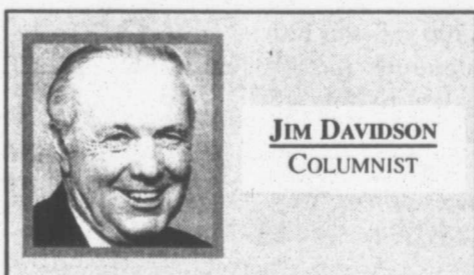


What goes around comes around

It's been some time now since I have talked with you about the great law that controls everything in the universe. This great law is known as the "Law of Cause & Effect." What this means is that for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction. Make no mistake; if our actions or causes are good, the effects will be good. By the same token, if our actions or causes are bad, the effects will be bad. All we have to do as unique individuals, is take care of the causes, the effects will always, in time, take care of themselves.

In reality, this law allows every thinking person to tell his or her own future. What is so sad, at least to me, is that millions of people in America really do not understand this great law and that it applies to them. I make this statement based on common sense. Why else would untold numbers of people set out to deliberately destroy themselves or to fail in life?

The good news is that we can all be winners, if we will just take the time to learn the great laws that operate in the universe and how to use them to our own advantage. When we do this, it's like pad-



JIM DAVIDSON
 COLUMNIST

dling a canoe downstream all the time and not struggling against the tide, as so many are doing. This allows us to take our failures in stride. You want to be a real winner in the game of life? Always do the right thing. Treat other people with respect, work hard and always do a little more than your share, with a positive attitude. Take pride in what you do, it has your signature on it whether it's signed or not. If you want financial success, save and invest your resources with sound financial practices. This is what I mean when it comes to using natural laws to our advantage.

A good example of what I am saying is embodied in a cliché that we have all heard, "What goes around comes around." What we don't know is how big a circle it is going to make or how long it's

going to take. I keep up with sports a good deal and I've seen coaches who were on top just pound their opponents into the ground or court by running up a big score on them. But low and behold, in time, the worm turns and these same coaches are on the other end of the beating. Most of us simply sit back and smile and say, "What goes around comes around." What's important to understand here is that this law or principle works in all of life and not just in sports and those obvious cases that we know, read or hear about.

Because we live in a "negative" world, when we hear the cliché, "What goes around comes around," we usually think of something bad. The point I'm making here is that this law also works on the good side too. When we do good things to help and serve others, this comes back to us as well.

Someone once said to have a truly happy life, we should "Work like we don't need the money. Love like we have never been hurt. Dance like nobody's watching. Sing like nobody's listening. Live like it's Heaven on Earth."

(Write to Jim Davidson at 2 Bentley Drive, Conway, AR 72034.)

TODAY IN HISTORY

By The Associated Press
 Today is Tuesday, Dec. 16, the 350th day of 2003. There are 15 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:
 On Dec. 16, 1773, the Boston Tea Party took place as American colonists boarded a British ship and dumped more

than 300 chests of tea overboard to protest tea taxes.

On this date:
 In 1653, Oliver Cromwell became lord protector of England, Scotland and Ireland.

In 1770, composer Ludwig van Beethoven was born in Bonn, Germany.

In 1809, Napoleon Bonaparte was divorced from the Empress Josephine by an act of the French Senate.

In 1916, Gregory Rasputin, the monk who'd wielded powerful influence over the Russian court, was murdered by a group of noblemen.

In 1944, the World War II Battle of the Bulge began as German forces launched a surprise counter-attack against Allied forces in Belgium.

In 1950, President Truman proclaimed a national state of emergency in order to fight "Communist imperialism."

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A Newspaper Activity Page for Young People

Kid Scoop.com

This Week: Sounds of the Holidays

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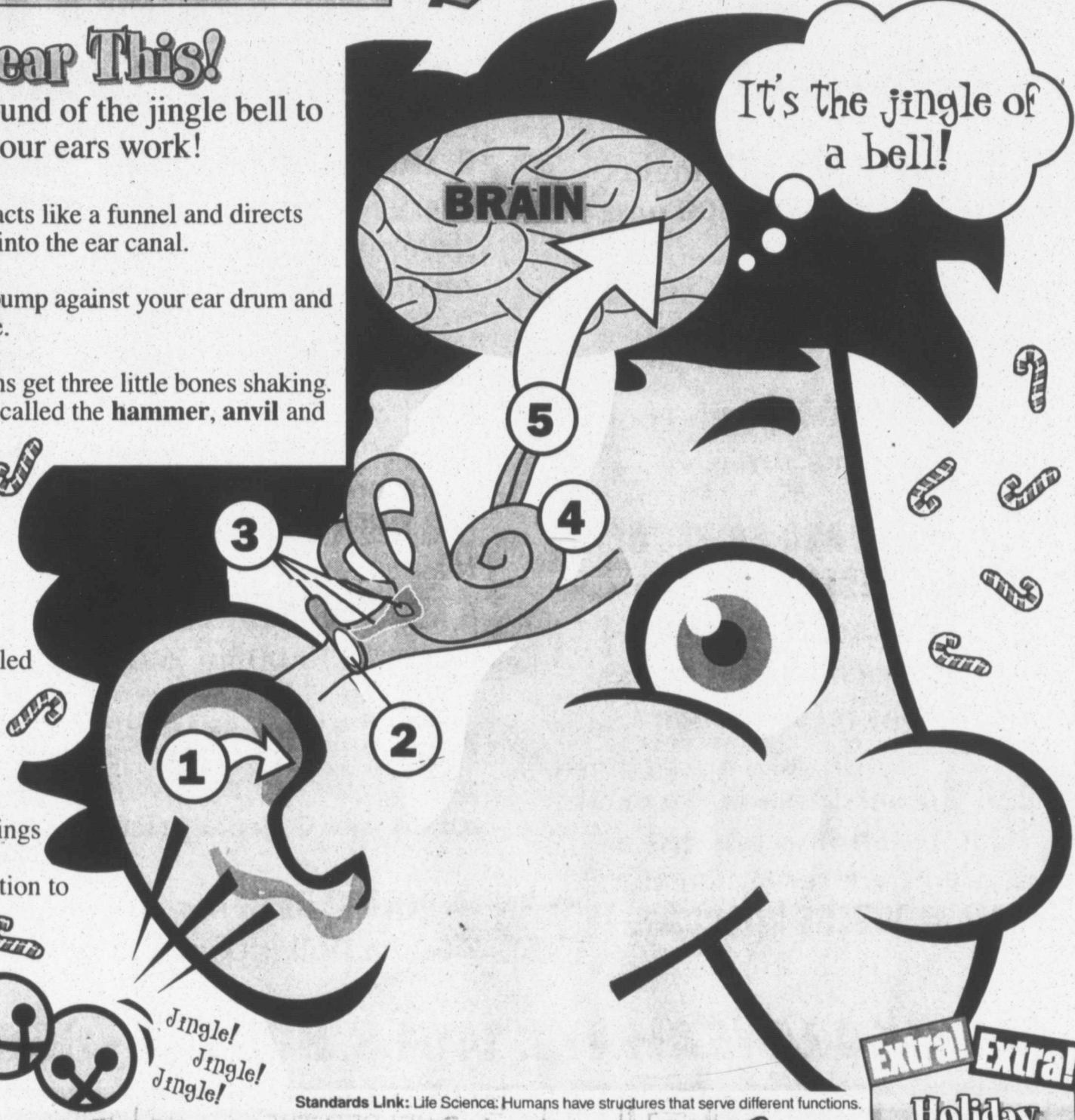
Holiday Sounds!

Church bells, jingle bells,
Laughter,
Wrapping paper crinkles,
Holiday sounds from toots to tinkles.
How marvelous it is to hear,
All because of our two ears!

Now Hear This!

Follow the sound of the jingle bell to find out how our ears work!

- 1 The outer ear acts like a funnel and directs sounds waves into the ear canal.
- 2 Sound waves bump against your ear drum and make it vibrate.
- 3 These vibrations get three little bones shaking. The bones are called the **hammer**, **anvil** and **stirrup**.
- 4 These bones cause fluid inside your ear to move. The fluid is inside a part of your ear called the **cochlea** (coke-lee-uh).
- 5 Inside the cochlea are tiny nerve endings that send the sound information to your brain.



Standards Link: Life Science: Humans have structures that serve different functions.

Elwood the Elf has spelled ten (that's right 10!) three-letter words using the letters in the words

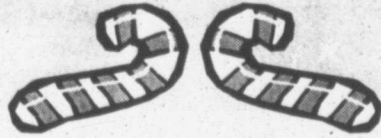
HOLIDAY SOUNDS

Can you find 10 or more?



- 1 _____
- 2 _____
- 3 _____
- 4 _____
- 5 _____

Elwood has hidden lots of crur: ny candy canes on this page. How many can you find?



- 6 _____
- 7 _____
- 8 _____
- 9 _____
- 10 _____

Standards Link: Spelling: Spell three-letter words.

Extra! Extra! Holiday Sounds Tic Tac Toe

Make a Tic Tac Toe grid. Look through the newspaper to find and cut out words that describe sounds. With a friend, take turns putting sound words on the grid. The first one to get three in a row wins.

Standard Link: Spelling: Spell grade-level words correctly. Reading Comprehension: Follow simple written directions.

Weekly Writing Corner

Hear the Holidays

Shouting I hear on Christmas morning, I jump out of bed, *thud!* I run to the door, *pitter, patter, pitter pat*. Get to the door, open it, *creeeeeeek!* I hear lights buzzing, and presents ripping. I grab a present *rip rip!* A cracker pops! My family is here. I greet them, *smooch!* I get a gift, *surprise!* I say, "What a great Christmas!"

Alec,
5th Grade

Hear the bells of Christmas ringing, joyful, carols they are singing. Happy bells of Christmas day.

Nicolette,
3rd Grade

There are many sounds you hear at the holiday times. The chorus of Christmas carols always cheers people's spirits. Rustling Christmas trees and the tapping of ornaments are one of the many pleasing sounds. Crackling fireplaces and the sizzle of Hanukah candles also warm up the heart. The sounds of the holidays are the best sounds of the year.

Briana,
6th Grade

During Christmas I hear wonderful things. I hear Christmas carols, bells and pianos. You hear laughter, joy and lots of thank yous. Also ripping of paper, hugs and kisses, and last of all, sleeping bodies.

Brenna,
6th Grade

We hear bells ring.
And we all sing.
We laugh, we play.
We all love each other in every way.
The sounds we hear go ho-ho,
And there he goes!

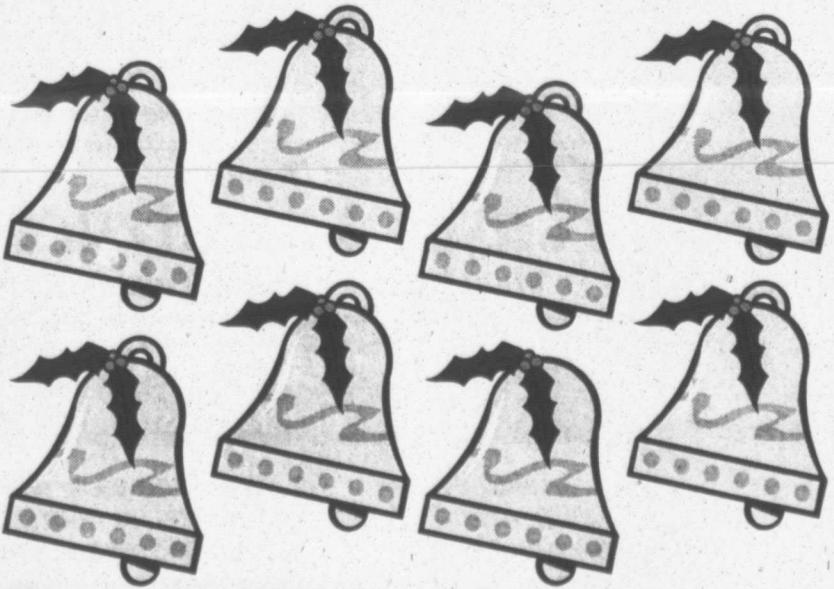
Niesha,
6th Grade

Have you heard the sounds of the holidays? When having a snowball fight, my cousin and sister are laughing like hyenas! Cheerfully, all of the family sings Christmas carols. On Christmas morning, I can hear "thank you" a million times when we're all opening gifts. Don't you love the sounds of the holidays?

Caitlin,
6th Grade

Ring in the Holidays

Ding! Dong! Ding! Dong! Are all of these bells the same? Look closer — one bell is different from the rest. Circle it!



Standards Link: Investigations: Find similarities and differences in common objects.

Double Double Word Search

BRAIN Find the words in the puzzle, then in this week's Kid Scoop stories and activities.

BRAIN	S	N	O	I	T	A	R	B	I	V
COCHLEA	H	C	R	U	H	C	O	A	G	L
STIRRUP	P	B	R	A	I	N	E	R	V	E
VIBRATIONS	U	N	D	Y	E	L	S	J	A	X
FUNNEL	R	Q	N	S	H	E	I	R	T	D
CANAL	R	S	U	C	A	N	A	L	I	R
BONES	I	M	O	T	G	N	F	U	B	U
NERVE	T	C	S	L	Q	U	L	R	C	M
EAR	S	B	E	L	L	F	P	Y	E	L
JINGLE										
FLUID										
DRUM										
BELL										
CHURCH										
SOUND										

Standards Link: Letter sequencing. Recognizing identical words. Skim and scan reading. Recall spelling patterns.

BEYOND Kid Scoop

Holiday Sounds Poem

Look through the newspaper for words that describe sounds. Try to find pictures of things that make sounds. Use these words and pictures to create a poem about holiday sounds!

Standard Link: Writing Application: Write simple narrative poems that develop a single topic.



What do you get when you cross a shark and a snowman?



ANSWER: Frostbite!

Write On!

The Mystery Valentine

On Valentine's Day I received a Valentine card and it said ...

Finish this story.

Deadline: Jan. 11, 2004
Published: Week of Feb. 8, 2004

Send your story to:

Please include your school and grade.

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Afghan constitutional convention hits snag

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP) — The opening celebrations over Afghanistan's constitutional council hit its first controversy Monday, with women delegates denouncing their colleagues for trying to shut them out of leadership positions.

After much wrangling, one woman was granted a deputy chairman's position, but some still expressed anger over second-class treatment.

"From the very beginning, the process was flawed because we are totally outnumbered here by the men," said Palwasha Hassan, a delegate from Kabul. "It was symbolically important for a woman to be in a high position, but the bigger battle will be over the constitution."

Women's rights are a hot-button issue for the council, or loya jirga, which began Sunday in a huge tent on the grounds of a Soviet-built university in Kabul. Some 500 delegates are meeting to hammer out a new charter for this war-ravaged land, a major milestone ahead of elections scheduled for next June.

The council is taking place under intense security, with hundreds of soldiers lining the roads and helicopters hovering overhead. Three rockets struck some six miles north of the council site before dawn Tuesday, damaging a mud house but causing no injuries.

The target of the rockets was not clear, but the U.S. military has warned that

Taliban insurgents might try to strike the council. Leaflets denouncing the gathering have been appearing in several towns.

The peacekeepers said a missile was fired toward its downtown headquarters Saturday, landing well short and causing no injuries.

After a day of procedural back-and-forth, delegates selected three men — Mirwais Yasini, Mohammed Ahzam Dadfar, and Mawlawi Qiamddim Kashaf — to fill deputy chairman positions. Another man, moderate former president Sibghatullah Mujaddedi, was selected chairman on the council's opening day Sunday.

The voting produced outrage from many of the women delegates.

"It is a betrayal of women," said Jameela Mujahed, a delegate from Kabul and the first female radio news anchor to go back on the air after the fall of the hardline Taliban regime.

Mujaddedi later broke with protocol and selected a woman — Safia Sediqi, a lawyer from eastern Nangarhar province — to a created fourth deputy position. He named two other women as deputy's assistants.

Several women delegates said they were satisfied but determined to fight on to ensure women's rights that were eroded under the Taliban. The religious militia barred girls from school and banned women from all public life.

Bush proposes regs to cut mercury pollution

BY JOHN HEILPRIN
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

WASHINGTON (AP) — Days after a scientific panel urged the government to strongly warn pregnant women and children about mercury levels in certain fish, the Bush administration is proposing to give power plants up to 15 years to install technology to reduce mercury pollution.

The proposal, released by the Environmental Protection Agency on Monday, would require immediate action in some cases once the new regulations took effect a year from now.

The move comes a week after scientists told the Food and Drug Administration that it should issue stronger warnings to pregnant women and young children about mercury levels in fish, particularly tuna. White, or albacore, tuna has nearly three times as much mercury as cheaper "light" tuna.

Mercury pollution can taint fish once it enters water and turns into a more dangerous form, methyl mercury. In high levels, it can damage the growing brains of fetuses and young children.

EPA's first-ever proposed controls on mercury pollution from power plants would ease limits envisioned by the Clinton administration, letting owners in some cases delay meeting requirements until 2018. They would let industry meet the first six years' goals by using pollution controls already installed to stem smog and acid rain.

The controls were issued to meet a deadline under a settlement with the Natural Resources Defense Council. The group sued during the Clinton administration to force mercury limits on power plants. The rule must be made final within a year.

"These actions represent the largest air reductions of any kind not specifically mandated by Congress," Mike Leavitt, the new EPA administrator, said Monday. "We are calling for the largest single

industry investment in any clean air program in U.S. history."

In a related measure, EPA proposed that power plants in 30 states cut smog- and soot-forming chemicals from their smokestacks.

EPA estimates the industry will pay at least \$5 billion to comply with both programs.

The Bush administration mercury plan is a departure from the Clinton administration approach. In 2001, EPA estimated that mercury could be cut by as much as 90 percent, to 5.5 tons, by 2008 if the best available technology were used as the Clinton EPA had hoped, according to EPA documents obtained by advocacy group National Environmental Trust.

But the White House and Leavitt want to let utilities meet mercury pollution limits the first six years using the benefits of controls installed for other pollutants that cause smog and acid rain.

That approach, EPA says, would eliminate about 14 tons a year of mercury emissions from the currently unregulated 48 tons a year generated by coal-fired power plants. Such plants account for about 40 percent of the nation's mercury pollution.

After that, the proposal would cut an additional 19 tons a year of mercury emissions, EPA says. The result would be a 70 percent reduction — from 48 tons to 15 tons — by 2018, the agency says.

The Clinton administration listed mercury as a "hazardous air pollutant." The Bush administration would undo that by placing mercury into a less strict category of the Clean Air Act, which will allow companies to buy and sell pollution rights with other plants.

"What we're trying to do is to maximize the total reduction of pollution from power plants," said Jeffrey Holmstead, head of EPA's air office. He said an interim cap on tons of mercury pollution would be set between "the high 20s to low 30s" by 2010.

Proponents frequently point to the acid rain trading program begun in 1990 as the model for using market forces to reward companies that sur-

pass their pollution reduction targets. But it would mean the toughest mercury requirements would not take force until 2018.

EPA's regulation for cutting smog and soot would require power plants in 30 states to cut sulfur dioxide emissions, which contain soot and lead to acid rain, to 3.2 million tons by 2015 from current levels of about 10 million tons a year. It also would require cutting

Tralee donation



(Courtesy photo)

(Left-right) Misty Payne and Kim Thompson, vice president and president, respectively, of Junior Service League, recently presented Karen McGahen, administrative assistant at Tralee Crisis Center, with a check in the amount of \$105 to help buy turkeys for needy families over the holidays.

Agency debates lifting prescription requirement for morning-after pill

WASHINGTON (AP) — Medical and women's groups are asking the government to allow a morning-after pill to sell without a prescription, saying easier access could prevent more than a million unplanned pregnancies and hundreds of thousands of abortions every year.

The Food and Drug Administration says emergency contraception is very safe, having been used by 2.4 million American women and millions abroad with few side effects.

The question the FDA poses to its scientific advisers Tuesday is whether women will understand how and when to take emergency contraception without professional advice.

Using the drug within three days of unprotected sex can greatly reduce the chance of getting pregnant; the sooner it's used, the more effective it is. Proponents of nonprescription sales say it's hard to find a doctor to write a prescription in time, especially on weekends and holidays, and that's if women even know the morning-after pill is available.

Two brands of emergency contraception are sold in the United States; the maker of Plan B has asked that its version be sold over the counter.

If FDA's advisers back the move and the agency ultimately lifts the prescription requirement, the question would become whether morning-after pills would sit on shelves next to aspirin and other easily available products, or have to be handed over by pharmacists upon request. That option would make advice available if desired.

Already, five states allow women to buy emergency contraception directly from certain pharmacists without prescriptions, so-called

behind-the-counter sales. The programs are in Washington, California, Alaska, Hawaii and New Mexico.

Proponents want no restrictions on nonprescription sales.

"Putting safe, effective backup birth control on the drugstore shelves next to condoms will give many more women a second chance to prevent pregnancy," said Kirsten Moore of Reproductive Health Technologies Project. Her group coordinated a petition by more than 70 health and advocacy groups urging over-the-counter sales.

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Published December 24th

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- Releases needed for copyright photos
- Payment in advance

\$25⁰⁰

Autumn Macy Woods
September 6, 2003
Parents... Keith & ReDonn Woods
Grandparents... Dwayne & Cindy Hall,
Monty Elkins, Regina Woods, Mike Woods

Santa Letters . . .

Please bring your letters to Santa to the Pampa News by December 17th. We will forward them to the North Pole as well as print some in the newspaper as we have space!

...
Don't forget to put your name & phone number in case Santa needs to call!

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TUESDAY • December 16, 2003

DEAR ABBY

written by Pauline Phillips and daughter Jeanne Phillips

Deceitful Husband Destroys Wife's Hopes for Their Future

DEAR ABBY: I have been married to "Peter" for almost four years, and we have three children under the age of 4. It is a second marriage for both of us, and I assumed it would be for a lifetime.

About a year ago, I discovered Peter was picking up prostitutes two to three times a week. When I confronted him, he accused me of making it up. He continued to cheat and has become physically abusive as well.

Peter expects me to behave as though nothing happened! My hopes and dreams have been destroyed by this man. I don't know if our marriage can survive the trauma. Can you shed some light on this for me?

TIRED OF BEING A DOORMAT IN VIRGINIA

DEAR TIRED: Gladly, because it's time for you to see the light. Your husband is a sexually addicted abuser. Is this the kind of person you want to spend the rest of your life with? How do you think it will affect your children to see you being brutalized?

I urge you to make an appointment with your doctor to be sure your husband hasn't given you an STD — or to be treated in case he has. Then call the domestic violence toll-free hotline: (800) 799-7233, and contact an attorney who specializes in family law.

DEAR ABBY: My husband took his own life nearly 30 years ago. I have been in individual and group therapy for 20 years and in 12-step recovery for 15. Not surprisingly, my problems affected my kids when they were young.

They both live far away now. My daughter, "Margie," is in therapy and recovery. My son is in denial.

Five years ago, Margie asked her brother and me not to contact her for a while. She said she needed time and space to work on specific issues independently. I have friends who have done this with good long-term

results, so it made sense to me.

Recently a few friends have urged me to write Margie and tell her I miss her. Others, including my AA friends, praise my respect for her process and say they wish they had received similar support from their families.

I regard contacting her as disrespectful, if not abusive. The door is not closed. Margie said she would resume contact when she is ready.

What do you think?
WILLING TO QUESTION

DEAR WILLING: Since you're gathering advice, I'll put in my 2 cents' worth. Five years of silence is enough. Write Margie and tell her that while you respect her "process," you miss her. If she ignores your letter, it's her prerogative. At least you will have made the gesture of trying to bridge the gap, and that is what is important.

DEAR ABBY: I was married a little over a year ago. My husband and I received many lovely gifts. I immediately sat down and wrote my thank-you notes. However, it's been a busy year and I haven't addressed the notes or mailed them yet.

Do you think it's too late? Or should I still send them?

BLUSHING BRIDE IN BALTIMORE

DEAR BLUSHING BRIDE: It's never too late to do the gracious thing. Send 'em out!

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.

To receive a collection of Abby's most memorable — and most frequently requested — poems and essays, send a business-sized, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for \$5 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby — Keepers Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included in the price.)

For Better or For Worse



Zits



Garfield



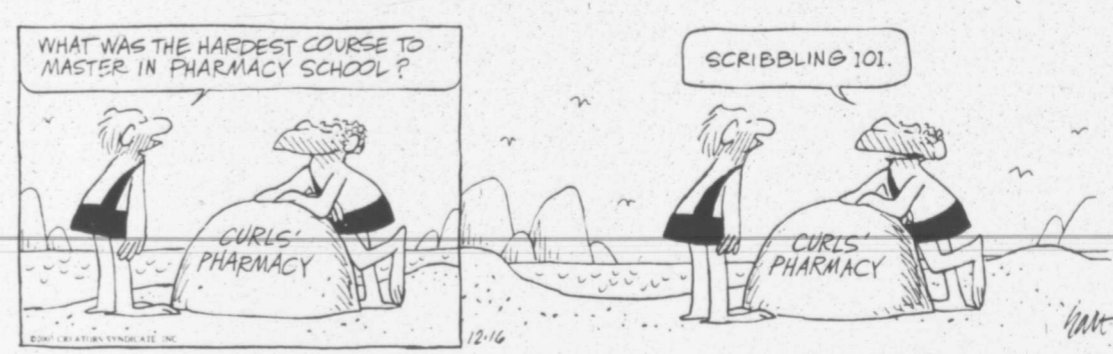
Beetle Bailey



Marvin



B.C.



Hagar The Horrible



Peanuts



Blondie



Crossword Puzzle

CROSSWORD

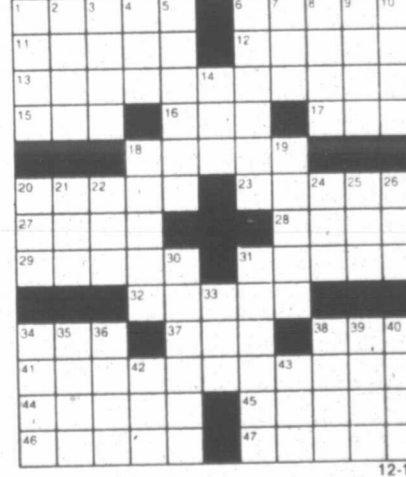
By THOMAS JOSEPH

- ACROSS**
- 1 Angels' strings
 - 6 Metal carrier, often
 - 15 Sack
 - 16 Pound resident
 - 17 Golf prop
 - 18 Bo of "10"
 - 20 Scuba user
 - 23 "The same"
 - 27 Mecca native
 - 28 Maine bird
 - 29 Bit of info
 - 31 Fantasy character
 - 32 Wise teachers
 - 34 Dove call
 - 37 Opposite of "oui"
 - 38 Doc's charge
 - 41 Top-of-page book feature
 - 44 Early Mexican
 - 45 Abode
 - 46 Diner choice
- DOWN**
- 1 Tarragon, for one
 - 2 Blue shade
 - 3 Ladder part
 - 4 Bad review
 - 5 Breaking pitch
 - 6 Unkempt
 - 7 Sphere
 - 8 Thrash
 - 9 Formerly
 - 10 Confiscate
 - 14 Neither follower
 - 18 Fix code
 - 19 Pottery ovens
 - 20 Pop
 - 21 Lyricist
 - 22 Dyeing spot
 - 24 Addition-ally
 - 25 Huck's fight
 - 26 Singleton pal
 - 26 Singleton
 - 30 Bavarian city
 - 31 Eager
 - 33 Director
 - 34 Beach creature
 - 35 Greek liquor
 - 36 Atop
 - 38 Family fight
 - 39 Luxury
 - 40 Spot for a serpent
 - 42 Fishing aid
 - 43 Greedy one



Yesterday's answer

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Marmaduke



"I'm sending Winslow a bill for a pumpkin pie and a dozen Christmas cookies!"

The Family Circus

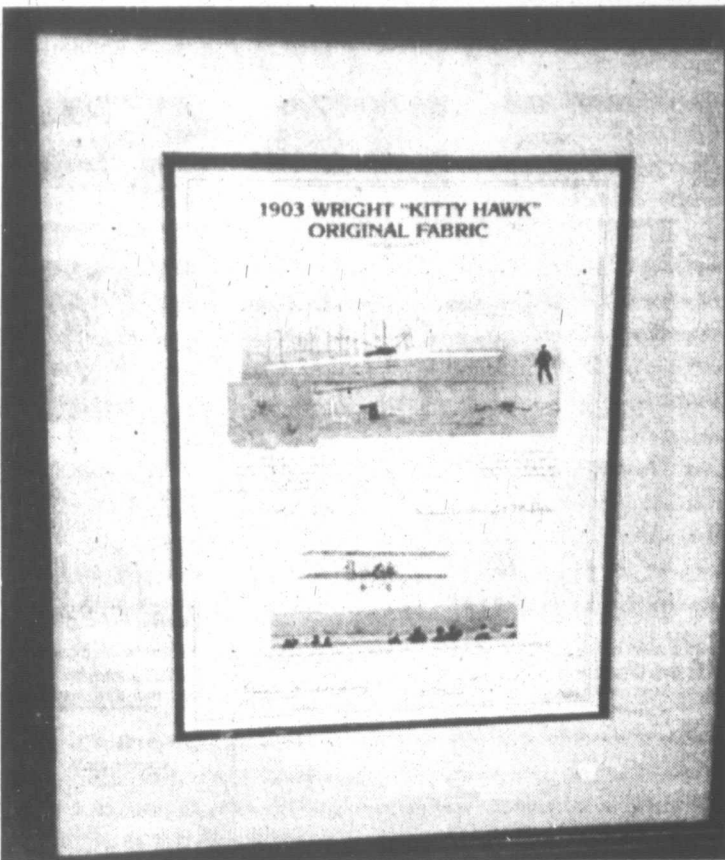


"Grandma, did you used to date Santa Claus?"

Flo & Friends



NOT BASKET BRISCO Elliott's Lady Booker 52-2 Saturday to tournament. Katie D Fort Elliott i 15 points. (had 11 for B In the b Booker d Elliott 45-32 pionship. Dakota Booker's top points. Russ had 10 for th HEDLEY Deer fell to in girls bas Monday night Rebekah l in 33 point Hedley at Bennett add For Whi Smith had Ashley Davi scoring. Hedley record. SOCCER PAMPA - a Harvester : Club meeti tonight in th in the Pamp building. All club urged to atte VOLLEY PAMPA - Pampa Department soring men's adult volle Men's and v (four players divisions wi Players mus old to partici Entry de: Jan. 14 at 5 season will l of Jan. 19, 2 Entry fee is \$100 and \$10 per play mum of five Roster fo and league available at Office at Ci 204. For mo please ca between 8 a Monday thro FOOTBA LINCOL — Without a two weeks, ball player behind close Athletic Pederson fir late last mon ed defensive Pelini as coach. Omaha te KETV, citir mous sourc football pro secrecy of t new coach l Monday to c sibility of and even a p of the Dec. against Mich A large n ers, more th they would if Pelini is r coach, the te said.



(Courtesy photo)

Freedom Museum USA in Pampa will host an open house from 12 noon to 4 p.m., Wednesday, Dec. 17, in commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the Wright brothers' flight at Kitty Hawk, N.C. Above is a framed certificate donated to the museum by Chuck Dempsey, a former cadet at Pampa Army Air Base, that includes a picture of the original flight along with a scrap of fabric from the original plane.

Freedom Museum USA plans special open house

To commemorate the 100th anniversary of Orville and Wilbur Wright's historic first powered flight at Kitty Hawk, N.C., on Dec. 17, 1903, Freedom Museum USA in Pampa will host an open house from 12 noon-4 p.m., Wednesday, Dec. 17, at the museum located at 600 N. Hobart.

The museum has a direct link to the Wright brothers' first successful flight thanks to Charles Dempsey, a former cadet who was stationed at Pampa Army Air Base during World War II. Dempsey became a friend of the Wright brothers' niece while working to build a replica of the Wright "B" Flyer, the first military plane designed, built and flown by the brothers in 1910.

Ivonne Wright Miller passed on to Dempsey two framed certificates which consisted of a picture of the original flight and a scrap of fabric from the first plane. The fabric was damaged in the Dayton Flood of 1913 and was later replaced by identical material by Orville while preparing the plane for public exhibition.

"After his death in 1948 we found that he had preserved some of the original coverings of the wings," Miller, niece to the brothers, said. "We certify that this piece of fabric was used by Orville and Wilbur Wright on 17, December, 1903 at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina in the world's first

heavier-than-air flights in which man achieved free, controlled, powered, and sustained flight."

Several articles will be on display including a set of wings from the first Wright "B" Flyer Military Squadron. A photo of the first successful flight was donated by Dempsey and the Engineers' Club Board of Directors of Dayton, Ohio.

Dempsey graduated from the cadet class 44-G at Pampa Army Air Base in 1944 and went on to fly B-24s with the 8th Air Force during WWII. He later was a test pilot at Wright Field at Dayton and was a research scientist in the Aerospace Medical Research Lab at Wright Field.

One of Dempsey's major interests in the 1970s was constructing and flying a replica of the Wright "B" Flyer. In 1974, he and a friend started work on the project, and in 1981 the "new" Wright "B" Flyer (built with some modifications to meet Federal Aviation Administration safety standards) took flight from Huffman Prairie at Wright Patterson Field and has been flown many times since.

The Smithsonian Institute in Washington, D.C., is marking the Wright brothers' historic achievement with special exhibits in the National Air and Space Museum including a look at Orville and Wilbur, their technical achievements and their impact on the world.

Boy Scouts helping out



(Courtesy photo)

Boy Scout Troop 404 of Pampa recently volunteered to help residents at Pampa Nursing Center with a recent Veterans Day program. They helped put up Christmas lights as well. Above: Bill Schroeder, Kevin Kirkham, Justin Cotrell, Jacob Maciel, Ricky Maciel, Joseph Johnson, Russell Carter and Tyler Dodson.

U.S., Central American nations work on trade pact

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Bush administration may have suffered a setback in its effort to forge a hemisphere-wide free trade agreement, but it is pushing ahead with a smaller deal that would cover five Central American countries.

Negotiators from Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua have been meeting with U.S. officials for over a week in Washington, trying to overcome the final obstacles to a Central American Free Trade Agreement, or CAFTA.

They say a deal is within reach and could be completed by next Tuesday. It would remove virtually all trade barriers among the nations over the next decade.

But the agreement is expected to face considerable opposition in Congress from some politically potent groups including labor unions, textile makers and the sugar industry.

The plan is meant to help U.S. industries expand their export opportunities in Central America.

To gather support, the administration already announced it will try to add the Dominican Republic to the CAFTA agreement early next year before sending it to Congress for approval.

That approach may win votes in congressional districts with large Dominican immigrant populations, but it isn't swaying

opposition from the sugar and textile industries.

"As it now stands, CAFTA would result in the loss of thousands of U.S. apparel and textile jobs," said Mark Levinson, chief economist for the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees. "CAFTA is good for the big retailers, not for apparel and textile workers."

American growers of sugar cane and sugar beets fear competition would increase if sugar imports from the five CAFTA countries are allowed into the United States without the steep tariffs imposed on sugar imports from other countries.

The five Central American countries currently produce 2 million tons of sugar annually, more than the United States imports.

Sen. Byron Dorgan, D-N.D., contends increased imports from Central America could wipe out the U.S. sugar beet industry and gouge U.S. cane sugar production.

"The sugar industry in our region and the family farms and rural communities it sustains would be devastated," Dorgan said.

The administration, however, sees CAFTA as a stepping stone to a much bigger prize of a Free Trade Agreement of the Americas, covering all 34 democracies in the Western Hemisphere.

In talks last month, the administration

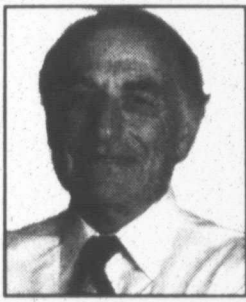
was forced to accept a watered-down outline for the FTAA that will allow each nation to determine the extent it is willing to lower trade barriers on various politically sensitive industries.

That compromise covered over deep disagreements between the United States and Brazil concerning the scope of the negotiations that were threatening to derail the entire enterprise, which is supposed to conclude by January 2005.

To put more pressure on Brazil and its allies to negotiate as broad a free trade deal as possible, the administration is forging ahead with negotiations on smaller free trade deals such as CAFTA and individual agreements with a number of other Latin American countries.

The administration's hope is that the more free trade pacts it can strike with willing countries, the more pressure it will place on holdouts, such as Brazil, which would then face the prospect of losing access to the world's largest market, the United States, to competitors who face lower trade barriers.

Congress passed free trade deals with Chile and Singapore this year, which will take effect Jan. 1. Mexico, Canada, Israel and Jordan are the only other countries that have free trade agreements with the United States.

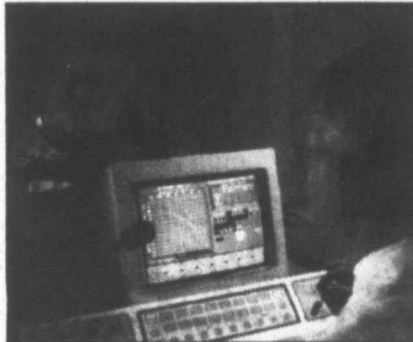


LEN SLESICK

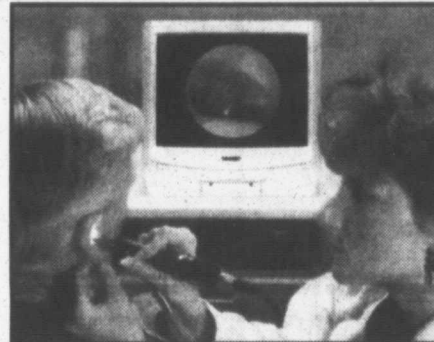
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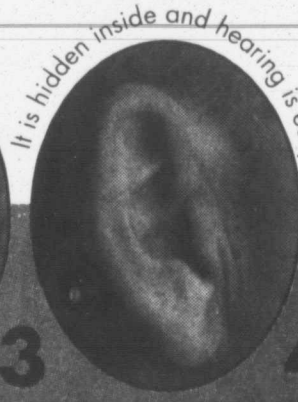
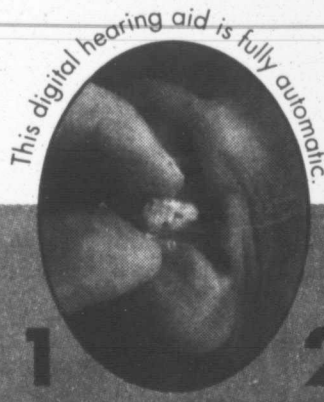
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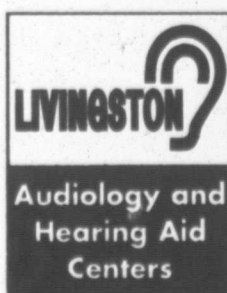


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