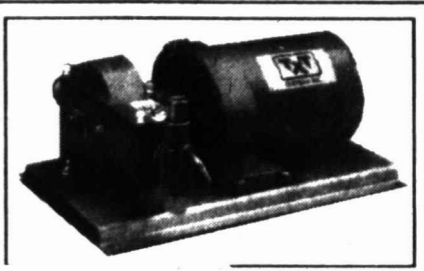




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THE Pampa NEWS

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WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 17, 2003

NEWS

Vol. 99 No. 822 • Pampa, Texas
50 cents Daily • Sunday \$1



WEATHER WEATHER

HIGH **LOW**
60 **25**

BRIEFS

Pampa High band plans Christmas concert
The annual Pampa High School Nona S. Payne Band Concert is scheduled at 7 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 18 at M.K. Brown Auditorium. The high school and jazz bands will be performing a number of Christmas selections.

The bands are under the direction of Bruce Collins and Jason Jones.

Lenders sinking nation's soldiers into debt

FORT STEWART, Ga. (AP) — On Gen. Screven Way, the one-mile strip of fast-food joints and pawn shops leading to the front gate of Fort Stewart, getting a cash loan of \$100 to \$500 is about as easy as buying a cheeseburger. Numerous strip-mall businesses bear names like Check Into CASH ("Need Cash Today? It's Easy as 1-2-3"), First American Cash Advance, Gold Check C.S. Payday Advance, and PJ Cash ("Civilian and Military Welcome").

DEATHS
W.M. "Bill" Ledbetter, 91, retired administrator.

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Beautiful Paving Stones...
You Can Install Yourself

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PAMPA, TX.

Firefighters battle wind and fire

By DAVID BOWSER
STAFF WRITER

The sky over the east side of Pampa was filled with gray, acrid smoke Tuesday as Pampa firefighters battled a house fire in the 1600 block of Dogwood Lane in

strong, bitter north winds.

Fire units were called to the home of Marty and Melissa Scott shortly after noon Tuesday

after neighbors reported smoke.

Fire officials said the blaze apparently spread throughout the attic of the house before flames

burst through the roof.

Firefighters raced past the Christmas tree in the livingroom and tore at the ceiling of the home in an effort to

reach the flames.

"They've done a lot of work on that house," Jim Hollingswood, a neighbor across the street, said of the Scotts.

Hollingswood said his house had burned in 1979.

It took firefighters two hours to bring the blaze under control.



(Pampa News photo by David Bowser)

► Pampa firefighters change air packs while fighting a blaze at the Marty and Melissa Scott home at 16th and Dogwood Tuesday as Fire Chief Kim Powell, left, directs the efforts. The fire is currently under investigation. Fire Marshal Gary Stevens said earlier today. No one was injured in the conflagration, Fire Marshal Gary Stevens said.

Blackstone Capital makes offer for Celanese AG

By MARILYN POWERS
STAFF WRITER

Blackstone Capital Partners has offered to buy all outstanding shares of Celanese AG in a voluntary public offer of EUR (Euro dollars) 32.50 per share, or \$40.30 per share in U.S. dollars, according to Celanese AG's corporate center in Kronberg, Germany. Total value of the offer is EUR 3.1 billion, or \$3.84 billion in U.S. dollars.

Share prices began rising yesterday in response to the offer. Celanese AG's shares were selling at \$35.80 on Monday, at \$40.06 yesterday,

and at \$40.20 today. Quotes for the three days, provided by Edward Jones Investments of Pampa, were as of 9:30 a.m. each day.

The Celanese AG Board of Management supports the offer, as does Kuwait Petroleum Corporation, the largest shareholder, according to a press release from the chemical company.

"We will continue on our path to growth and productivity. We believe that Blackstone as a strong partner will provide Celanese with financial strength to realize opportunities," said Claudio Sonder, chief executive officer of Celanese.

Blackstone expressed enthusiasm for the achievements of Celanese to date and for the company's strategic and restructuring initiatives which are underway, according to the press release. As a financial investor, Blackstone indicated it will not assume operating responsibilities, but will work with Celanese's

management team.

"My colleagues on the board of management and I have examined very carefully the merits of this proposal for all stakeholders and we support it," Sonder said.

The proposed offer is subject to regulatory approvals and other mostly customary conditions such as a minimum

acceptance of 85 percent of the outstanding shares and the absence of a material adverse change with respect to Celanese.

In accordance with German takeover law, Blackstone has four weeks to prepare an offer document describing the details of the

(See CELANESE, Page 3)

Squirrel bites hand that tries to rescue it, official says stay clear of injured animals

By MARILYN POWERS
STAFF WRITER

A Pampa woman was treated for an animal bite Tuesday when she tried to help an injured squirrel in the 500 block of Letors Street.

Pampa Police Officer Keith Morris responded to a call concerning the incident. The woman had picked up the injured squirrel, which then bit her.

Animal control officers were called to remove the squirrel, which was shipped to Austin today for testing. The woman went to Pampa Regional Medical Center's emergency room for treatment of the bite.

"Our concern on any animal bite is potential exposure to rabies. We need to have the animal observed and examined, or euthanized and tested," said Monty Montgomery, Pampa animal control officer.

Any warm-blooded mammal has the potential to transmit rabies, Montgomery said, although certain mammals such as skunks are more apt

to transmit rabies. Animals that are sick or injured raise the risk factor for rabies

transmission, he said. Montgomery recommends

(See SQUIRREL, Page 2)



(Pampa News photo by Marilyn Powers)

A squirrel pauses in a tree in the 1300 block of Christine this morning. A Pampa woman was bitten by an injured squirrel Tuesday when she picked it up.

City Commissioners vote to give Keeton 'key' to city

By DAVID BOWSER
STAFF WRITER

December 27 will be George Keeton Day in Pampa. It will also be George Keeton's 104th birthday.

The Pampa City Commission, in a special meeting Tuesday, unanimously approved a resolution designating Dec. 27, George Keeton Day and giving him a key to the city.

Monty Danner of Lubbock had asked the commission at their Dec. 9 meeting to name a park after Keeton, Danner's grandfather.

Mayor Lonny Robbins, during Tuesday afternoon's special meeting, said the city had no policy on such actions, and he hesitated to name a park after a person without some

research into the idea.

"We need to be careful about naming something that has already been named," Robbins said. "We don't have a policy for that."

Initially, Robbins indicated that he would like to postpone the question until it could be researched.

Commissioner Faustina Curry said that she had already been approached by several people who wanted the city commission to name things after their relatives.

Curry suggested planning a walk from Pioneer Cottage to Atchison Street and let people buy bricks with their names on them as a way of saluting friends and relatives. She noted that Pampa High School has such a program for alumni and

(See PARK, Page 3)

Happy Holidays... from Pampa Area Chamber of Commerce

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ON RECORD

POLICE

Pampa Police Department today reported the following incidents and arrests.

Sunday, Dec. 14

Theft was reported at Devic Gallery, 1615 N. Hobart. A DVD movie valued at \$20 was taken.

Terry Gene Washington, 47, 1611 Christine, was arrested for interference with an emergency call.

Tuesday, Dec. 16

An animal bite was reported in the 500 block of North Lefors. The victim received treatment for a squirrel bite. (See story, page 1.)

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

Theft under \$50 was reported in the 1500

block of North Hobart. The victim bought a gift card for \$25 from an individual. The card had never been activated and is believed to have been stolen from a place of business.

Clifford Lee Brown, 22, and William H. Hatt, 20, both of 1334 Coffee #2, were arrested at United Supermarket, 1420 N. Hobart, for theft under \$50. Taken were three toy slingshots with a total estimated value of \$4.50.

Wednesday, Dec. 17

Luke William Pryor, 19, 1141 Juniper, was arrested on a Randall County motion to revoke concerning a charge of unlawfully carrying a weapon, plus warrants for no insurance, no seat belt, no driver's license and two charges of failure to appear.

FIRE

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

Tuesday, Dec. 16

12:04 p.m. — Eight units

and 14 firefighters responded to the 1600 block of Dogwood Lane on a structure fire. Fire officials said the fire is still under investigation and could not com-

ment further at this time.

5:44 p.m. — One unit and three firefighters responded to a motor vehicle accident at Kentucky and Price Road. No injuries were reported.

WEATHER FOCUS

PAMPA

Today's forecast is calling for mostly sunny skies, highs around 60 and west winds 5 to 15 mph. Tonight should fall on mostly clear skies with lows in the upper 20s and north winds 10 to 15 mph. Thursday should see mostly sunny skies. Highs in the lower 50s. North winds 15 to 20 mph. Thursday night, mostly clear. Lows in the upper 20s. Northwest winds 5 to 10 mph. Friday, mostly sunny. Highs in the lower 60s. Southwest winds 5 to 15 mph. Friday

night, partly cloudy. Lows in the lower 30s. Saturday, partly cloudy. Highs in the upper 50s. Saturday night, partly cloudy. Lows in the mid 30s. Sunday, mostly cloudy. Highs in the lower 50s. Sunday night, mostly cloudy. A 20 percent chance of rain after midnight. Lows in the mid 30s. Monday, mostly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of rain. Highs in the upper 40s. Monday night, partly cloudy. Lows around 30. Tuesday, partly cloudy. Highs in the upper 40s.

STATEWIDE

By The Associated Press

The state will see seasonable temperatures for the rest of the week, with daytime highs mostly in the 60s. Highs will be in the 50s in

some northern areas especially on Thursday. The northern Panhandle will see some 40-degree days.

Tonight, the deep south will likely see freezing temperatures in the

north and west. Early next week, a front will bring cooler temperatures and slight chances of precipitation over the state.

Tuesday's temperatures ranged from 78 degrees at Corpus Christi to an overnight low of 10 at Maria. No rain was reported in Texas cities.

The West Texas forecast calls for partly cloudy skies today through Saturday. Highs will be in the 50s and 60s through Saturday, except for some 40-degree days in the northern Panhandle. Overnight lows will be in the teens and 20s in the north, and lower 30s in the south. On Sunday it will be colder in the Panhandle, with highs in the 40s across the region.

The rest of the region will see colder temperatures on Monday: highs in the 40s and 50s. A slight chance of snow is forecast in the Panhandle Sunday night and Monday, otherwise no precipitation is expected in West Texas.

South Texas will be sunny today, a little cloudier for the rest of the week. Highs will be in the 60s today. It will warm into the 70s as the week progresses except in Southeast Texas, which will remain in the 60s.

AMBULANCE

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

Tuesday, Dec. 16

7:55 a.m. — A mobile ICU responded to the 1000 block of South Dwight and transported a patient to Pampa Regional Medical Center.

10:20 a.m. — A mobile ICU responded to PRMC and transferred a patient to Baptist-St. Anthony's West, Amarillo.

12:08 p.m. — A mobile ICU responded to the 1600 block of Dogwood on a fire stand-by.

5:43 p.m. — A mobile ICU responded to Price and Kentucky. No transport.

9:24 p.m. — A mobile ICU responded to the 1200 block of North Wells and transported a patient to PRMC.

Wednesday, Dec. 17

2:47 a.m. — A mobile ICU responded to PRMC. No patient.

STOCKS

The following grain quotations are provided by Anebury Grain of Pampa.					
Wheat	3.55	Limited	17.46	+0.11	
Milo	4.18	Williams	9.85	NC	
Corn	4.73	MCD	24.65	-0.23	
Soybeans	6.88	XOM	38.53	+0.06	
		Atmos	24.47	-0.13	
The following 9:30 a.m. N.Y. Stock Market quotations are furnished by Edward Jones & Co. of Pampa.					
OXY	40.34	+0.11	SLB	50.15	-0.21
BP	46.77	+0.94	Tenneco	6.52	+0.16
Celanese	40.20	+0.14	CVX	81.59	+0.89
Cabot Corp.	31.96	+0.16	Wal-Mart	51.96	+0.66
Cabot Oil Gas	29.51	+0.01	OKE	20.63	+0.04
Coca Cola	50.64	0.04	NS Grp	8.53	-0.04
VLO	43.89	-0.21			
HAL	25.21	+0.07	New York Gold	407.35	
Triad	32.66	-0.44	Silver	5.61	
NOI	20.95	-0.04	West Texas Crude	32.89	

CORRECTION

In an article that ran on the front page Monday, a fire which destroyed a home at Williston and Randy Matson occurred at approximately 9:30 p.m. Sunday.

OBITUARIES

SERVICES TOMORROW

LEDBETTER, W.M. "Bill" — 2 p.m., First United Methodist Church, Pampa.

W.M. 'BILL' LEDBETTER

1912-2003

W.M. "Bill" Ledbetter, 91, of Pampa, died Tuesday, Dec. 16, 2003. Services will be at 2 p.m. Thursday in First United Methodist Church with the Rev. Scott Penrod, pastor, officiating. Burial will be in Fairview Cemetery under the direction of Carmichael-Whitley 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 Millford, 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

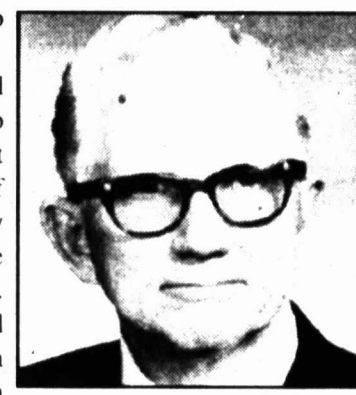
Fellowship Class.

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-whitley.com.



City Briefs

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

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CHRISTMAS PARTY Dance, Fri. Dec. 19th, 7 p.m., Pampa Senior Citizens Ctr.

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

EARLY ADVERTISING Deadlines for *The Pampa News*, for the week of Christmas! 669-2525. See display ad in Thurs. Dec. 18th paper!

PACK-N-MAIL OPEN Sat. 13th & 20th, 9-2 p.m., for packing & shipping needs. New shipment of silver jewelry! New location-1320 N. Banks. See our ad in the Feist.

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

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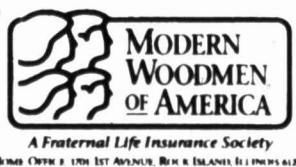

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Kiw

Pampa Club recently out one law; firefighter to for the year Highway Pa David O'Brien named "Outstanding Enforcement of the Year" a Roberts "Outs Firefighter Year."

According news release f Kiwanis, O'Brien previously worked Gray County Office for five prior to joining Highway where he earned \$48,990 in money, 732 pounds of marijuana, and five stolen cars and two arrests, all in 2002. O'Brien served field training for his Daimon Jones.

CELAN

offer to Following German regular intends to pul document and der offer.

In accordance German take Celanese board ment and sup will express opinions to sh; they have received the offer board of ma

PARK

the Freedom M a similar progra "That would to do something Curry suggest Dec. 27 George giving him the k "I think a pr Day with a pr good idea," she She also sug ing a long term situations after tion about rena The commis ered changing t Hobart Stree Hobart/Keeton Commission Dixon noted th not named for T.D. Hobart, l Street, which T.D. Hobart.



Kiwanis honor outstanding officer, firefighter of the year

Pampa Kiwanis Club recently singled out one law enforcement officer and one firefighter to honor for the year 2003. Highway Patrolman David O'Brien was named Kiwanis "Outstanding Law Enforcement Officer of the Year" and Tim Roberts "Outstanding Firefighter of the Year."

According to a news release from the Kiwanis, O'Brien previously worked with Gray County Sheriff's Office for five years prior to joining the Highway Patrol where he confiscated \$48,990 in drug money, 732-pounds of marijuana, recovered five stolen vehicles and made 24 arrests, all in 2003.

O'Brien served as field training officer for his partner, Daimon Jones, who

said of him, "There is no limit to his (O'Brien) giving. Four years ago I came here as a single officer. He included me in his family get together, fed me many meals and helped me be accepted into the community. After I was married and our child came, he helped out when my wife was ill. He is an outstanding person and an outstanding law enforcement officer."

O'Brien and wife Valerie have a daughter, Kaitlyn, and a son, David, Jr. Mrs. O'Brien is employed part-time at North Gate Inn as well as with Justice of the Peace Joe Martinez.

O'Brien was chosen for the honor from within his department.

Tim Roberts, an

equipment operator for Pampa Fire Department, currently oversees the First Safety House Program for Pampa. A Pampa firefighter since 1998, Roberts educates kids on fire safety and how to respond in case of a fire.

Each year during Fire Prevention Week, Roberts uses something called a Fire Safety House, borrowed from the City of Canyon, to bring his message home to school children. The "house" is actually a trailer consisting of a bedroom,

living room and kitchen area. "A little girl recently went through the Fire Safety House and a week later was credited with saving her grandfather's life because of what she had learned (from Roberts presentation). An ounce of preven-

tion was worth more than several pounds of cure," said John Warner, the Kiwanian who made the presentation.

Tim and wife Angela have two children, Michael and Kenzie. Mrs. Roberts teaches at Stephen F. Austin Elementary

School. Roberts serves as deacon at Calvary Baptist Church.

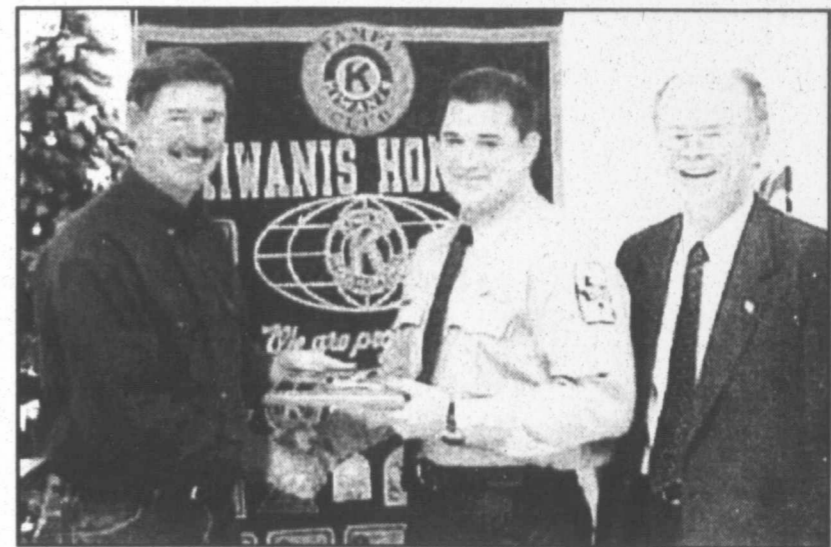
"He is an outgoing, helpful person," said Deputy Chief Randy Dunham. "He has a very friendly personality. He helps with a lot of the 'in house' projects we do on

maintenance of our trucks. This last year his captain was off with health problems. Tim stepped up to the captain's position for quite awhile and did a great job."

Roberts was chosen for the honor by members of Pampa Fire Department.



(Left-right) Lynn Allison, president of the local Kiwanis Club, hands a plaque to Outstanding Law Enforcement Officer of the Year David O'Brien while Kiwanian John Warner looks on.



Outstanding Firefighter of the Year, Tim Roberts, center, receives a plaque from Lynn Allison, left, president of Pampa Kiwanis Club, while Kiwanian John Warner looks on.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

CELANESE

offer to shareholders. Following review by a German regulator, Blackstone intends to publish the offer document and launch the tender offer.

In accordance with German takeover law, the Celanese board of management and supervisory board will express their reasoned opinions to shareholders once they have received and examined the offer document. The board of management can

make only preliminary comments on the proposed offer at this time, according to the press release.

As of Sept. 30, Celanese had 49.32 million shares outstanding excluding the dilutive effect of stock options, of which approximately 55 percent are held by institutional investors, 10 percent by retail investors and six percent by employees and retirees. Kuwait Petroleum Corporation, the largest

shareholder with approximately 29 percent of outstanding shares, has said that it will accept the offer and tender its shares.

CONT. FROM PG ONE

SQUIRREL

keeping some distance away from any animal that appears to be sick or injured, and not touching it or picking it up.

"Leave it alone and call us or the police immediately because of the potential of being exposed needlessly to rabies or other dangers," he said. Sick or injured animals are more likely to bite, he said.

The injured squirrel should arrive in Austin by noon tomorrow for testing, which is being done as a precautionary measure, Montgomery said. Testing should be completed no later than 5 p.m. Friday, and the woman and her doctor will be notified of the results, he said.

Celanese AG is a global chemicals company with five main businesses: Acetyl Products, Chemical Intermediates, Acetate Products, Technical Polymers Ticona and Performance Products. The company has 24 production plants and six research centers in 10 countries, mainly in North America, Europe and Asia. Further information is available on the company's website, www.celanese.com.

The Blackstone Group is a global investment firm founded in 1985 and headquartered

in New York. Blackstone's policy is to only pursue transactions that are fully supported by management of the target company.

"I think it's pretty positive that they've expressed confidence in our management," said Dawn Clendingen,

human resources manager of Pampa's Celanese plant, this morning in response to the offer by Blackstone. She said no information was available yet on any impact the acquisition of shares by Blackstone would have on the Pampa plant.



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

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

PARK

the Freedom Museum USA has a similar program for veterans.

"That would be a good way to do something," Curry said.

Curry suggested designating Dec. 27 George Keeton Day and giving him the keys to the city.

"I think a George Keeton Day with a proclamation is a good idea," she said.

She also suggested developing a long term policy for such situations after Robbins hesitation about renaming a park.

The commission had considered changing the name of the Hobart Street Park to Hobart/Keeton Park.

Commissioner Robert Dixon noted that the park was not named for Pampa pioneer T.D. Hobart, but for Hobart Street, which was named for T.D. Hobart.

Dixon suggested that the city change the name of Central Park.

"I've talked to many people about this," Dixon said. "Not one is opposed to naming a park after him."

"I don't think we need to be naming any park until we get more information," said Commissioner Jeff McCormick.

Dixon, questioning a delay, said it was something that the family had wanted and said that Keeton was not in good health.

"It's a milestone when someone reaches 100-years-old," Dixon said. "I think we should do it."

In the end, the commission opted for designating Dec. 27, George Keeton Day and giving him a key to the city.



Dec. 17
8 shopping
days to Christmas

Limited Time Offer — Public Notice To All Residents of Gray County, Texas

You May Qualify For A Free Burial Space!
Memory Gardens Cemetery and Mausoleum
23rd & Price Road ~ Pampa, Texas

Since talking about cemetery property is not the most popular subject in the home today, we would like to give families in our area, who do not already own cemetery property, one complimentary grave space in one of our finest gardens.

We feel that it is better to discuss this subject at a time when you do not need it rather than at a time of death. This way there are no mistakes to be made and the entire family will know exactly what your wishes are!

There is absolutely no obligation and you are not required to purchase anything in order to receive this valuable burial space and information. This program is designed to establish good will in the community it services and to help build additional heritage for our cemetery.

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Join the thousands of families who already own in one of the nicest, best kept cemeteries in the State of Texas.

Mail the below postage paid card today or call 806-665-8921.

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Mail to Memory Gardens Cemetery of Pampa, PO Box 1972, Pampa, TX 79066-1972

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Phone _____ Married Yes _____ No _____
Veteran Yes _____ No _____ Age _____

PET OF THE WEEK

Lady... This gray female adult cat needs a home. She's sweet and curious. Call or come by today.

The GOLD Is Here... Please Protect Your Animals From The Cold North Wind

For information about these pets or any other contact the Animal Shelter at 669-5775 or come by their location at Hobart Street Park.

NEW HOURS Monday-Friday 9-6, Office Open To The Public 5-6 p.m., Closed Weekends & Holidays

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Public comment period open on watercraft rule

FRITCH — Lake Meredith National Recreation Area has published in the Federal Register a proposed rule concerning the continued use of personal watercraft within the recreation area. The proposed rule was based on the preferred alternative in the Draft Environmental Assessment, which was released to the public in March.

The proposal for continued personal watercraft use is as follows:

- Establish the following back covers on the lake as no-wake zones: North Turkey, Bugbee Canyon, North Canyon, South Canyon, Sexy Canyon, Amphitheater Cove, coves between day markers 9 and 11, Fritch Canyon and Short Creek (plus Evans Canyon and Canal Canyon should the water level ever rise to a certain height.)
- Enhance PWC user education through interpretive talks, onsite bulletins and brochures for PWC registrants and visitors who rent PWC; educate PWC users about the advantages of using watercraft with cleaner-burning engines.
- Prohibit PWC fueling on the lake except at the marina fuel dock, with an attendant providing the fuel service.
- Permit PWC fueling by operators onshore and out of the water.
- Prohibit carrying of extra fuel on PWC.
- Continue to monitor water quality tests on Lake Meredith, available from other agencies.

Individual parks are required to determine whether personal watercraft use is appropriate based on an evaluation of that area's enabling legislation, resources and values, other visitor uses, overall management objectives, while being consistent with National Park Services criteria for management.

Two other alternatives were presented in the draft EA including a no personal watercraft alternative. The alternatives may be reviewed and considered and comments submitted on the proposed rule by logging on to www.npa.gov/lamr on the Internet, clicking on management docs then clicking on Economic Analysis on PWC's.

The comments submitted by the public on the draft EA have

not been incorporated into the proposed rule. Comments on both documents will be incorporated into the final rule making.

The comment period is open for 60 days. The proposal was published in the Federal Register Dec. 12. If you wish to see the Federal Register publication, visit http://www.archives.gov/federal_register/the_federal_register/indexes.html on-line.

Submit your written comments by mail to: Superintendent,

Lake Meredith National Recreation Area, PO Box 1460, Fritch, TX 79036, Fax: (806) 857-2319, e-mail: LAMR_Superintendent@nps.gov. If you comment by e-mail include "PWC rule" in the subject line and your name and return address in the body of your Internet message. Also, you may hand deliver comments to the Superintendent, Lake Meredith National Recreation Area, 419 East Broadway, Fritch.

SEC blessing proposed NYSE overhaul

WASHINGTON (AP) — Federal regulators are giving their blessing to a proposed overhaul of the New York Stock Exchange while urging further governance changes in the future as the exchange emerges from a scandal prompted by its former chairman's lavish pay.

The Securities and Exchange Commission was voting Wednesday to approve the plan proposed by the NYSE's interim chairman, John Reed, and endorsed last month by 98 percent of the exchange's members. The plan would establish a smaller and more independent board of directors to oversee regulation of the nation's largest stock exchange and appointment of a chief regulatory officer.

A lawsuit alleging fraudulent trading, filed against the NYSE by the biggest U.S. pension fund and announced Tuesday, may have been at least partly intended to grab the SEC commissioners' attention as they prepared to vote on the proposal.

SEC approval is required for the plan to go forward. Commission Chairman William Donaldson, who headed the NYSE in the early 1990s, has called the proposal a "substantial and critical first step toward revamping its governance structure."

Despite lapses — notably trading abuses now under investigation — and poten-

tial conflicts of interest, the principle by which the NYSE polices itself is sound and should be maintained, Donaldson has said. He has rejected the notion that the SEC or another independent body should assume direct regulatory oversight of the exchange.

Officials of the biggest U.S. pension funds, controlling hundreds of billions of dollars in nine states, have insisted that the proposed reforms are insufficient to restore investors' trust shattered by revelations this summer of the \$188 million pay package of then-chairman Dick Grasso. He was ousted in September.

Several lawmakers have questioned the adequacy of the NYSE proposal, noting that the board members supervising the exchange's regulation would be up for election annually by the member firms being regulated.

"The SEC is falling short," Sen. John Edwards, D-N.C., a candidate for the Democratic presidential nomination, said Tuesday. Strict separation between the exchange's regulation and commercial operations is needed, he said.

The largest pension fund, the \$154 billion California Public Employees Retirement System, announced Tuesday it is filing a class-action lawsuit against the NYSE and seven trading firms, alleging

that fraudulent practices cost it millions of dollars in recent years. The pension fund is seeking an unspecified amount of money, but fund officials said it could add up to hundreds of millions of dollars if other parties join the suit.

Law professor John Coffee, director of Columbia University's Center on Corporate Governance, suggested that the timing of news of the CalPERS suit, a day before the SEC's vote on the exchange's reform plan, had been no coincidence.

"I read this complaint as much more a political act to implement a political strategy than litigation," Coffee said Tuesday. "I think CalPERS wanted to make it very clear to the SEC that they would be coming in for criticism if they approve modest reforms" for the exchange.

The suit names seven specialist trading firms that CalPERS says defrauded the fund, which has \$60 billion invested on Wall Street. Specialist firms make a market in stocks assigned to them by matching buyers and sellers on the NYSE trading floor.

The exchange has said it is examining nearly 1 million trades over a three-year period and has found substantial evidence that specialists may have improperly intervened in transactions.

The SEC also is investigating.

Organizers gearing up for another musical performance

CANADIAN — Prairie Rivers Musical will present its, Holiday Season show at 7:30 p.m., on Dec. 20 at the Middle School Auditorium, 404 S. 6th Street.

"We have been in regular contact with the North Pole, and, SANTA CLAUS has promised he will make another appearance at the show," reported Jay Godwin, a founder of Prairie Rivers Musical. "He was here last year and apparently enjoyed the

music as did several hundreds of regular folks!"

Regular performers who are presently committed include Scott Campbell, Frankie McWhorter, Mary Lynn Schafer, Phil Ridgway, Hank & Venita Mcpherson, Wayne Wright, George Briant, and Jay Godwin. Guests who are presently committed include Dale Jenkins and daughter Kayla.

David Jenkins, fiddle player from Leedy, Okla., is returning, possibly with

his wife and two children, all of whom play fiddle!

"If things work out, we may have as many as seven or eight fiddle players at one time, at least for a couple of tunes," Godwin said. "It promises to be a really good show. Christmas songs will be featured for the first half and Jolly St. Nick is expected to arrive just before the intermission to visit with all the children."

There is no admission charge and the Auditorium

features theatre type seating in an alcohol and smoke free environment. Coffee, hot chocolate, soft drinks, and cookies will be available at the intermission.

Godwin reminds everyone to come and enjoy an evening full of LIVE classic country, western swing, honky-tonk, gospel, and traditional Christmas music. "We promise you a great atmosphere and good music!" he exclaimed.

For information, call (806) 323-6213.

THE Pampa NEWS

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FOOTB

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FI

1993: C three-run Pampa past in high action.

Winning Danny Frye

SPORTS

Pampa has weekend games with Herd, Clovis

PAMPA — Pampa gets the District 3-4A basketball season under way Friday night with Hereford coming to McNeely Fieldhouse.

Hereford is in a rebuilding stage this season with only one starter (senior forward Seth Hoelscher) returning for coach Clint Coley. The Whitefaces will be among only a handful of teams that will be shorter than the Harvesters. Senior forward LaMark Williams at six-foot is listed as their tallest player.

Hereford has a 6-7 record and posted a big win Monday, defeating Class 5A Lubbock Monterey 53-49. The Whitefaces had 22 points from 5-10 guard Danny Garcia, who was a parttime starter a year ago.

The Harvesters beat Dimmitt on Friday to snap a four-game losing streak. Pampa got 22 points from Andy Rodgers while Brittin East had 18 and Jed Martin 10.

Although Hereford is the district opener, PHS head coach Jeff Reed may be more excited about the Saturday night meeting with Clovis, N.M. in McNeely Fieldhouse. Clovis is where Reed grew up.

"This will be the first time I've coached against my hometown. I'm real nervous about it, but I'm also looking forward to the game," Reed said.

Earlier this month, Pampa was entered in The Gene

Messer Tournament of Champions, which was won by Clovis. The Wildcats, unbeaten at 5-0 going into the tournament, downed Amarillo High 59-55 in the finals.

Clovis, ranked in the top 10 in New Mexico, is led by Justin Pinckney and Dominique Easterlin. Pinckney was named the Most Valuable Player in the Tournament of Champions and Easterlin was high scorer with 15 points against the Sandies.

"Anybody who can beat Amarillo High has got to be pretty good," coach Reed said. "I believe they're still unbeaten."

Gametime for the Pampa-Clovis boys is 7:30.

Pampa girls will be trying to break into the District 3-4A win column against Hereford.

The Lady Whitefaces dropped their district opener to Palo Duro 45-33. Carlie Henson, a 6-0 senior, is Hereford's top returning starter.

Henson had 12 points in the loss to Palo Duro. Kali Gerber (5-11 senior) is another stand-out player.

The Lady Harvesters are looking to rebound after two district losses to Randall (53-36) and Plainview (52-38).

Pampa had a good outing against Plainview, the No. 1 ranked team in Class 4A, and a three-time defending state champion.

Pampa jumped to a 6-0 lead and trailed by only a field goal at the end of the first quarter. Pampa went on another 6-0 run in the third quarter, but couldn't overcome a 28-10 halftime deficit. Senior guard Abbi Covalt was Pampa's top scorer with 13 points.

The Lady Harvesters stayed close for three quarters against Randall in their district opener. Senior guard Stacey Johnson had 18 points to lead Pampa.

Pampa and Clovis girls tip off at 6 Saturday night.

The Lady Wildcats beat No. 13th-ranked Frenship 61-47 on Dec. 15. Aimee Hilburn, a sophomore, has been one of the Clovis standouts. She had 15 points against Frenship.

NOTEBOOK

FOOTBALL

NEW YORK (AP) — Coach Jim Fassel will be fired by the New York Giants at the end of a disappointing season, two football sources told The Associated Press on Wednesday.

The sources, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said Fassel would coach the team's remaining two games. A Super Bowl team three seasons ago and expected to contend again, the Giants (4-10) have lost six straight games to drop to last place in the NFC East.

BASKETBALL

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — San Antonio Spurs coach Gregg Popovich signed a contract extension through the 2007-08 season.

Popovich, who is also the team's general manager, has led the Spurs to a pair of NBA championships during his seven years as coach, including last season's victory over the New Jersey Nets.

Popovich has a career record of 355-195.

BASEBALL

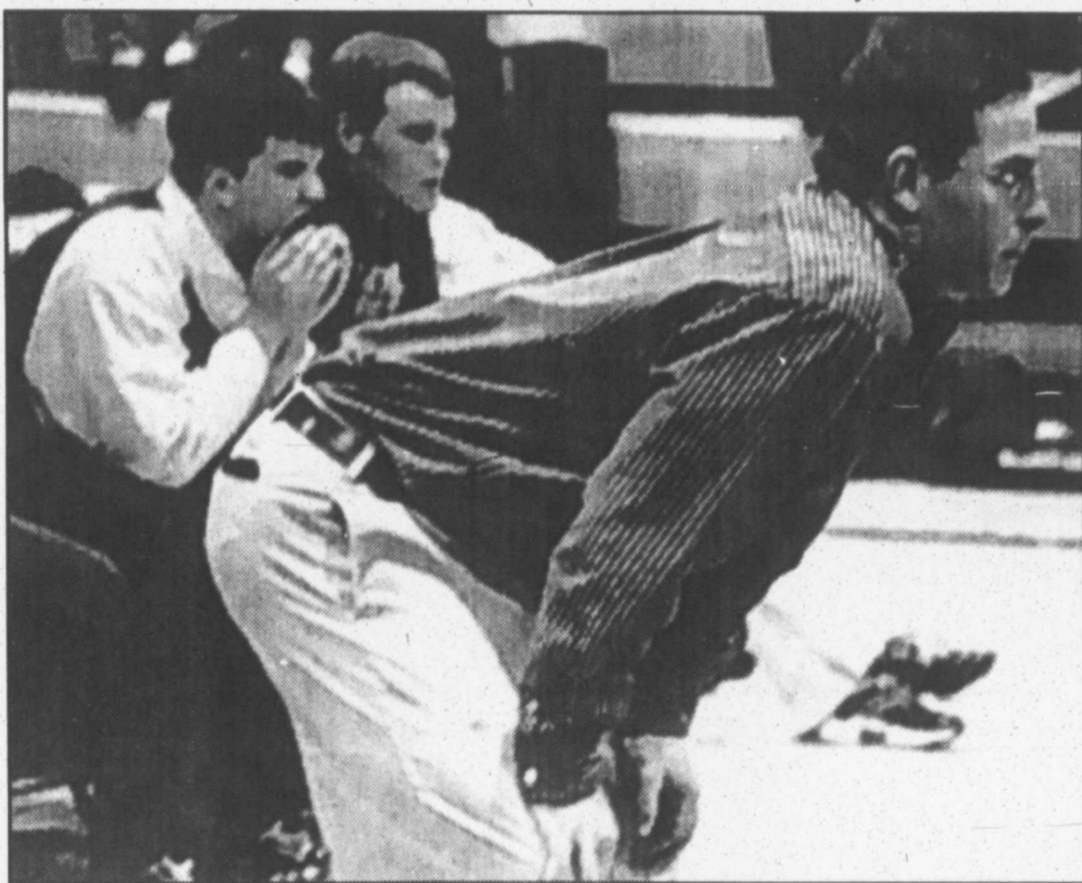
SAN ANTONIO (AP) — A Bexar County official said Tuesday he has been talking to investors about trying to bring the Montreal Expos to San Antonio, but said he thinks it is "highly unlikely" that it will occur.

Nelson Wolff, the chief elected official in Bexar County, said the only way the plan could work is in a shared agreement with Monterrey, Mexico, or some other city. Under such a plan, the National League team would play some of its games in Monterrey and some in San Antonio.

Flashback

1993: Chris Poole hit a three-run homer to lift Pampa past River Road 8-5 in high school baseball action.

Winning pitcher was Danny Frye.



(Pampa News photo by Ben Briscoe)

New PHS head wrestling coach Josh Cadenhead watches intently in a recent match at McNeely Fieldhouse. Pampa hosts Dumas in a dual at 7 Thursday night. Cadenhead, who graduated from Hardin-Simmons University in 2002, is a Vernon native

Middle School Basketball

Results from the Pampa 7th grade girls basketball tournament held in Canyon this past weekend are as follows:

7th A - lost to Clovis Marshall - 22-54
lost to Borger - 42-58 in the 2nd round

Tournament stats: Holly Winegeart & Lauren Smith - 16 pts. Each
Kamie Doughty, Jessica Miner & Libby Dyson - 7 pts. Each
Kelby Doughty - 5 pts.
Keisha Crowell - 4 pts.

April Silva & Lilly Price - 1 pt. each

7th B - lost to Clovis Marshall - 12-29 lost to Borger - 16-26 in the 2nd round

Tournament stats: Alex Hutto - 9 pts.
Tabby Courter - 6 pts.
Emily Watson - 4 pts.
Kamy Miller - 3 pts.
Katelin Wall, Teysha Parker & Victoria Campbell - 2 pts. Each

Bowling

HARVESTER LANES		
League Standings		
Harvester Women's League		
Team	Won	Lost
Schiffman Machine	31 1/2	12 1/2
Rug Express	31	13
O'Brien Enterprises	30 1/2	13 1/2
Big Uns!	25	19
Peacevale Land & Cattle	23	21
Davis Minit Mart	22	22
Gymnastics of Pampa	20	24

Coney Island	
Harvester Lanes	
Week's Top Scores	
High scratch game:	Joy Hilbern 215.
High scratch series:	Joy Hilbern 554.
High handicap game:	Joy Hilbern 244.
High handicap series:	Joy Hilbern 641.
Association Awards: Correen Nichols, WIBC 400 High Series Recognition, Nichols, who has a 108 average, bowled a 401 series.	

Benson undecided on future

AUSTIN (AP) — Texas tailback Cedric Benson said he's still undecided about whether to leave for the NFL after this season but hinted Tuesday that he's seriously considering staying with the Longhorns for his senior year.

Benson told reporters after practice he believes he could be drafted late in the first round, but recognizes that another good season in college could improve his draft status and his potential contract.

"The way things are rolling right now, keep them rolling next season, you've got a chance to increase your money by another six million," dollars he said. "What would you do?"

Asked if he was saying he was staying at Texas, Benson said, "It was kind of a hint, huh? I don't know. Things could change."

The fifth-ranked Longhorns (10-2) play Washington State (9-3) Dec. 30 in the Holiday Bowl in San Diego.


Benson said a chance to win a national title next season could inspire him to return.

"That would be the neatest thing," he said.

Benson rushed for 1,277 yards and 20 touchdowns during the regular season. He's the third Longhorns back to post three 1,000-yard seasons in a career.

Benson, who said he's been "50-50" on what to do, said he's trying to keep his decision from becoming a distraction during bowl preparations.

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Red Sox, A-Rod meet with union

BOSTON (AP) — The much-discussed, long-awaited trade that would send AL MVP Alex Rodriguez to Boston is moving closer to fruition.

Red Sox general manager Theo Epstein and the Texas Rangers shortstop met with an official from the baseball player's union Tuesday to discuss the blockbuster deal, and Rodriguez's agent, Scott Boras, was planning to join them Wednesday for more talks.

"They're moving and plodding along," Boras said before heading to New York.

Gene Orza, the union's No. 2 official, confirmed that a meeting took place but wouldn't comment on its substance. The union would get involved

if there was a renegotiation of the record \$252 million, 10-year contract Rodriguez signed three years ago; any change would have to add some benefit for the player, according to baseball's labor contract.

The Rangers and Red Sox owners have been discussing a swap of Rodriguez for Red Sox outfielder Manny Ramirez, the sport's only \$20 million men. Talks have bogged down over the sheer magnitude of the money involved — more than \$300 million remaining on the two contracts, including deferred money — and the Rangers' demand that Boston pay a big chunk of Ramirez's salary in addition to more than \$179 million due Rodriguez.

"At this time, negotiations are at a sensitive point," Texas owner Tom Hicks said in a statement. "Due to this fact, we will have no further comment on this situation today."

Boston has balked at paying part of Ramirez's salary. Even without it, the Rangers would already save about \$81 million in the deal. Talk has recently focused on whether the Red Sox would include another player in lieu of cash.

Epstein declined to comment on the negotiations, and Boston president Larry Lucchino has said the team was going into "radio silence" on the talks until they conclude, one way or the other.

Titans may turn to injured McNair

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP) — The Tennessee Titans hoped to rest banged-up quarterback Steve McNair this week.

Billy Volek's lacerated spleen put an end to those plans.

McNair is nursing an injured ankle and right calf, but because Tennessee has yet to secure a playoff spot, he might be called upon against the Houston Texans on Sunday.

That's because Volek, a little-known backup, is out for the season after being hurt Sunday while leading the Titans to a 28-26 victory over the Buffalo Bills.

That leaves rookie Jason Gesser, signed as an undrafted free agent, as the only healthy option. Gesser has yet to play a down in the NFL.

So it looks as if the Titans (10-4) will turn to McNair, one of the NFL's most durable quarterbacks. He has played with injuries often during a streak of 43 straight starts that ended last week.

Titans coach Jeff Fisher

said it was too early Tuesday to say if McNair would start Sunday. But he said his star quarterback was willing, if not altogether healthy.

"The fact of the matter is Steve was ready last week, and he was wanting to play," Fisher said.

McNair received three hours of treatment Tuesday and was no longer wearing a protective boot on his left ankle.

Meanwhile, the Titans were negotiating with former backup quarterback Neil O'Donnell, a 13-year veteran who was cut after training camp but still has a home in Nashville. Fisher said O'Donnell was flying to Nashville on Tuesday to try to work out a contract.

"He's very interested in joining the club," Fisher said.

O'Donnell arrived at the Titans complex Tuesday night and said he was hopeful of reaching an agreement quickly.

"We'll sit down and hear what (the Titans) have to say," O'Donnell told WZTV

of Nashville. "But it has to make sense for both sides."

O'Donnell said if he makes the trip to Houston he would be ready to play Sunday.

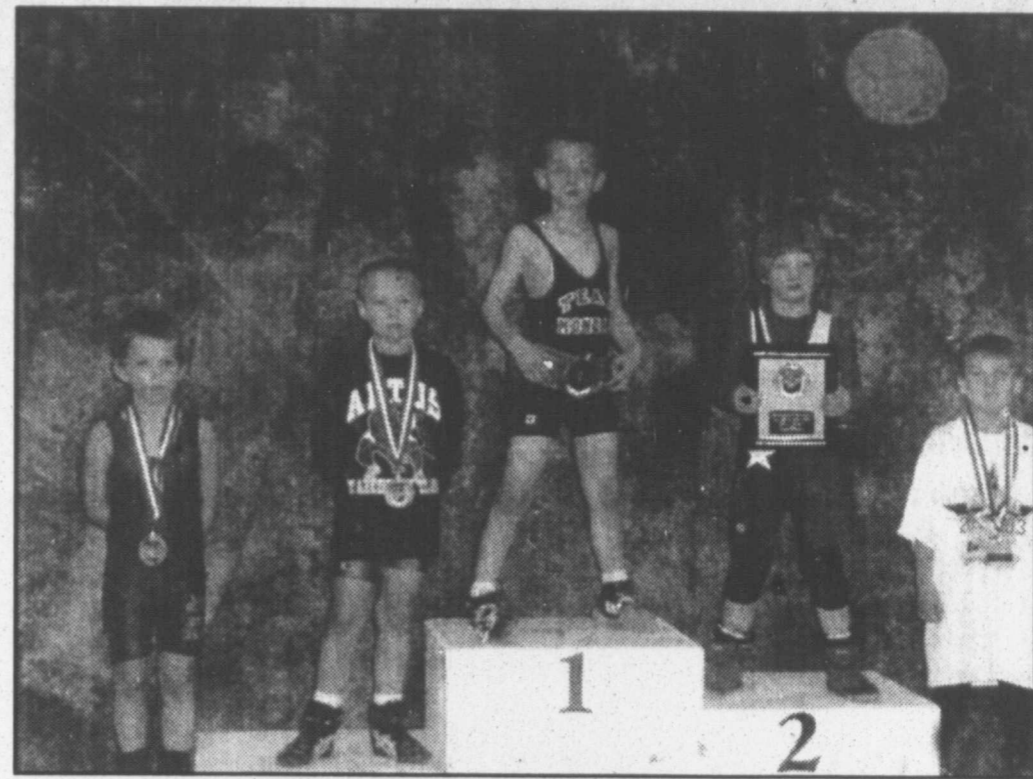
Volek played well in McNair's absence, throwing for two touchdowns and running for another. The injury wasn't announced until Monday night, when Volek was hospitalized.

"After the game, he was on a high," said Volek's father, John. "Then on Monday morning, he let us know that he and Steve were going to practice, and that he still felt sore."

Fisher said doctors believe Volek will not need surgery to remove his spleen. He should be fully recovered in eight to 12 weeks, Fisher said.

Titans linebacker Keith Bulluck understands Volek's disappointment of being unable to help the team clinch a playoff spot. Tennessee can qualify for its fourth postseason berth in five years with a win or a loss by Baltimore, Cincinnati or Miami.

Wrestler wins award



Wrestler Krysten Miller, 8, (second from right) of Pampa displays the award she won after placing second at the Panhandle Nationals in Amarillo. Krysten is a member of the Pampa Takedown Club.

Uncertainty continues at Nebraska

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — Nebraska interim head coach Bo Pelini on Tuesday dismissed reports of player unrest on the football team over uncertainty surrounding the head coaching position.

"That's absurd. It's ridiculous," Pelini said after practice. "Make no mistake, I am in charge of this football team."

"There doesn't need to be 170 voices — there needs to be one voice," he said.

NU athletic director Steve Pederson fired head coach Frank Solich late last month and appointed Pelini, the defensive coordinator, as interim head coach.

Nebraska's players met behind closed doors Monday. Players declined to comment

after the meeting and they were not allowed to talk to reporters Tuesday.

But there were reports that many players expressed frustration about the secrecy of the search for a new coach.

Some reportedly discussed the possibility of not practicing, and even boycotting the Dec. 29 Alamo Bowl game against Michigan State.

Several players reportedly indicated they would leave Nebraska if Pelini is not named head coach.

Pelini said he came in at the end of the meeting and was the voice of reason for the players. It is understandable that some players are upset with the situation, Pelini said, but added that he hopes they use it as a learning

experience.

"We talked things out," Pelini said.

"I'm proud of the way they're handling the situation," he said. "There are no issues."

Pelini and assistant head coach Turner Gill are the only two known applicants for the job.

But that hasn't stopped the rumor mill from churning out a list of possible replacements for Solich, including past and present NFL coaches Tom Coughlin, Dave Wannstedt, Butch Davis, Bill Cowher, Monte Kiffin, Al Saunders, Dennis Green and Steve Spurrier.

Pederson has said he will not comment until he is ready to introduce the new coach.

North Texas falls in New Orleans Bowl

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — Persuading good players to come to long-struggling Memphis was a tough task for Tigers coach Tommy West.

He made a point of recognizing those who had faith in him after Memphis (9-4) won its first bowl game in 32 years Tuesday night — a 27-17 victory over North Texas (9-4) in the New Orleans Bowl.

"These guys had to buy into a dream of what it could be, not what it was because it wasn't very good," West said. "We had always been the type that had to learn how to handle adversity, now we've got to learn how to handle success, but I don't think that'll be a problem."

Danny Wimprine, who grew up in New Orleans, threw for 254 yards and accounted for two touchdowns to lead the Tigers' attack.

Wimprine, a junior, was born about a decade after Memphis' last bowl appearance — a 28-9 victory over San Jose State in the 1971 Pasadena Bowl. Memphis has been bad for most years since, including last season, when the Tigers went 3-9.

"It's been a long time coming for this university," Wimprine said. "All those seniors, those guys who have been here through so many tough times ... to go out as winners makes me feel great for this team."

Wimprine had played in the Superdome three times before, winning two Louisiana high school championships with John Curtis and a regular-season game for Memphis over Tulane this season.

He was named the MVP of Tuesday night's game, the

first of 28 college bowls this season.

"This is a great place for me," Wimprine said. "It's just another memory to add to the collection, and this is probably the best one."

Memphis was without its best running back, DeAngelo Williams, who was the Conference USA player of the year. But Wimprine moved the offense early by completing his first 10 passes, including sideline bombs of 63 yards to Darren Garcia and 50 yards to Mario Pratcher. Both passes set up TDs as the Tigers took a 17-3 lead. Wimprine finished 17-of-23 with no interceptions.

Wimprine's touchdown pass was a 10-yard bullet to Chris Kelley as the receiver crouched in tight coverage along the sideline. Wimprine also ran for a 7-yard score on a quarterback draw, the game's first touchdown.

"He made some outstanding throws. He's a smart quarterback. He moves around the pocket well," North Texas coach Darrell Dickey said. "We hadn't given up a ton of big plays, but they hit us for some."

North Texas' Patrick Cobbs, the nation's leader in yards rushing per game with 157, gained 110 yards and scored two touchdowns.

Scott Hall threw for 152 yards, completing several long passes in the second half on two touchdown drives as North Texas kept it

Canadian wins district opener

CANADIAN — Canadian girls opened the District 6-2A season Tuesday night with a 67-33 victory over Sanford-Fritch.

Shila Province led the Lady Wildcats in scoring with 17 points.

close well into the fourth quarter.

North Texas has represented the fledgling Sun Belt Conference in all three New Orleans Bowls and won the game last year against Cincinnati.

The Mean Green made it 17-10 when Cobbs burst through a hole outside the left tackle and broke free for a 35-yard score.

But after North Texas' defense played a nearly flawless third quarter, a mistake by that unit allowed Memphis to regain a two-touchdown lead. North Texas appeared to have forced a punt just outside its own 40 when LaKendus Cole was tackled on a screen play for a loss.

But Adrian Awason was flagged for a 15-yard face-mask penalty that gave Memphis a first down on the North Texas 21. Several plays later, Cole squirmed into the end zone on a 5-yard run up the middle for a 24-10 lead.

Memphis needed the cushion as Hall completed two long passes in a 5-play, 86-yard drive made it 24-17 when Cobbs bowled his way into the end zone from 2 yards out.

Memphis then used up 4:47 on an 11-play drive that ended with Stephen Gostkowski's 42-yard field goal with 2:26 left.

"They responded whenever we seemed to have the momentum," Dickey said.

Canadian wins district opener

Shelly Adams had 14 points for Sanford-Fritch.

Carlee Culver and Tandi Rankin added 14 points each for Canadian.

For the season, Canadian has a 10-2 record.

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Wed., Dec. 24th.....	Fri., Dec. 19th, noon

NO THURSDAY PAPER

Fri., Dec. 26th.....	Mon., Dec. 22nd, 10:00am
Sun., Dec. 28th.....	Tues., Dec. 23rd, noon

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Red Sox, A-Rod meet with union

BOSTON (AP) — The much-discussed, long-awaited trade that would send AL MVP Alex Rodriguez to Boston is moving closer to fruition.

Red Sox general manager Theo Epstein and the Texas Rangers shortstop met with an official from the baseball player's union Tuesday to discuss the blockbuster deal, and Rodriguez's agent, Scott Boras, was planning to join them Wednesday for more talks.

"They're moving and plodding along," Boras said before heading to New York.

Gene Orza, the union's No. 2 official, confirmed that a meeting took place but wouldn't comment on its substance. The union would get involved

if there was a renegotiation of the record \$252 million, 10-year contract Rodriguez signed three years ago; any change would have to add some benefit for the player, according to baseball's labor contract.

The Rangers and Red Sox owners have been discussing a swap of Rodriguez for Red Sox outfielder Manny Ramirez, the sport's only \$20 million men. Talks have bogged down over the sheer magnitude of the money involved — more than \$300 million remaining on the two contracts, including deferred money — and the Rangers' demand that Boston pay a big chunk of Ramirez's salary in addition to more than \$179 million due Rodriguez.

"At this time, negotiations are at a sensitive point," Texas owner Tom Hicks said in a statement. "Due to this fact, we will have no further comment on this situation today."

Boston has balked at paying part of Ramirez's salary. Even without it, the Rangers would already save about \$81 million in the deal. Talk has recently focused on whether the Red Sox would include another player in lieu of cash.

Epstein declined to comment on the negotiations, and Boston president Larry Lucchino has said the team was going into "radio silence" on the talks until they conclude, one way or the other.

Titans may turn to injured McNair

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP) — The Tennessee Titans hoped to rest banged-up quarterback Steve McNair this week.

Billy Volek's lacerated spleen put an end to those plans.

McNair is nursing an injured ankle and right calf, but because Tennessee has yet to secure a playoff spot, he might be called upon against the Houston Texans on Sunday.

That's because Volek, a little-known backup, is out for the season after being hurt Sunday while leading the Titans to a 28-26 victory over the Buffalo Bills.

That leaves rookie Jason Gesser, signed as an undrafted free agent, as the only healthy option. Gesser has yet to play a down in the NFL.

So it looks as if the Titans (10-4) will turn to McNair, one of the NFL's most durable quarterbacks. He has played with injuries often during a streak of 43 straight starts that ended last week.

Titans coach Jeff Fisher

said it was too early Tuesday to say if McNair would start Sunday. But he said his star quarterback was willing, if not altogether healthy.

"The fact of the matter is Steve was ready last week, and he was wanting to play," Fisher said.

McNair received three hours of treatment Tuesday and was no longer wearing a protective boot on his left ankle.

Meanwhile, the Titans were negotiating with former backup quarterback Neil O'Donnell, a 13-year veteran who was cut after training camp but still has a home in Nashville. Fisher said

O'Donnell was flying to Nashville on Tuesday to try to work out a contract.

"He's very interested in joining the club," Fisher said.

O'Donnell arrived at the Titans complex Tuesday night and said he was hopeful of reaching an agreement quickly.

"We'll sit down and hear what (the Titans) have to say," O'Donnell told WZTV

of Nashville. "But it has to make sense for both sides."

O'Donnell said if he makes the trip to Houston he would be ready to play Sunday.

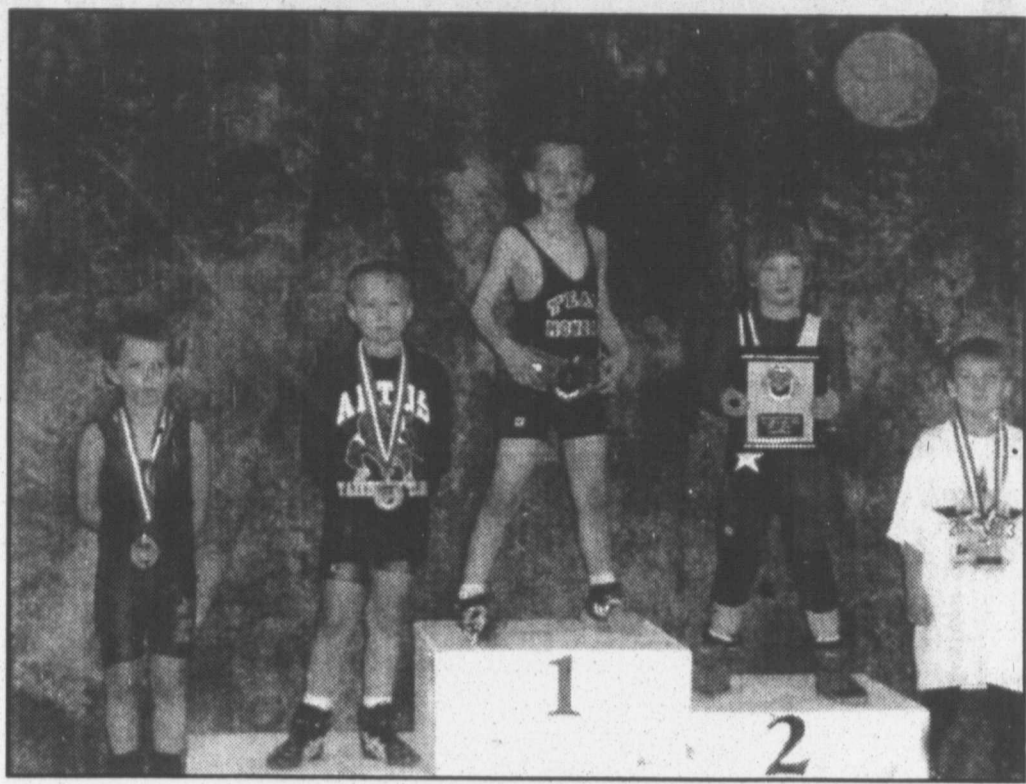
Volek played well in McNair's absence, throwing for two touchdowns and running for another. The injury wasn't announced until Monday night, when Volek was hospitalized.

"After the game, he was on a high," said Volek's father, John. "Then on Monday morning, he let us know that he and Steve were going to practice, and that he still felt sore."

Fisher said doctors believe Volek will not need surgery to remove his spleen. He should be fully recovered in eight to 12 weeks, Fisher said.

Titans linebacker Keith Bulluck understands Volek's disappointment of being unable to help the team clinch a playoff spot. Tennessee can qualify for its fourth postseason berth in five years with a win or a loss by Baltimore, Cincinnati or Miami.

Wrestler wins award



Wrestler Krysten Miller, 8, (second from right) of Pampa displays the award she won after placing second at the Panhandle Nationals in Amarillo. Krysten is a member of the Pampa Takedown Club.

Uncertainty continues at Nebraska

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — Nebraska interim head coach Bo Pelini on Tuesday dismissed reports of player unrest on the football team over uncertainty surrounding the head coaching position.

"That's absurd. It's ridiculous," Pelini said after practice. "Make no mistake, I am in charge of this football team."

"There doesn't need to be 170 voices — there needs to be one voice," he said.

NU athletic director Steve Pederson fired head coach Frank Solich late last month and appointed Pelini, the defensive coordinator, as interim head coach.

Nebraska's players met behind closed doors Monday.

Players declined to comment

after the meeting and they were not allowed to talk to reporters Tuesday.

But there were reports that many players expressed frustration about the secrecy of the search for a new coach.

Some reportedly discussed the possibility of not practicing, and even boycotting the Dec. 29 Alamo Bowl game against Michigan State.

Several players reportedly indicated they would leave Nebraska if Pelini is not named head coach.

Pelini said he came in at the end of the meeting and was the voice of reason for the players. It is understandable that some players are upset with the situation, Pelini said, but added that he hopes they use it as a learning

experience.

"We talked things out," Pelini said.

"I'm proud of the way they're handling the situation," he said. "There are no issues."

Pelini and assistant head coach Turner Gill are the only two known applicants for the job.

But that hasn't stopped the rumor mill from churning out a list of possible replacements for Solich, including past and present NFL coaches Tom Coughlin, Dave Wannstedt, Butch Davis, Bill Cowher, Monte Kiffin, Al Saunders, Dennis Green and Steve Spurrier.

Pederson has said he will not comment until he is ready to introduce the new coach.

North Texas falls in New Orleans Bowl

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — Persuading good players to come to long-struggling Memphis was a tough task for Tigers coach Tommy West.

He made a point of recognizing those who had faith in him after Memphis (9-4) won its first bowl game in 32 years Tuesday night — a 27-17 victory over North Texas (9-4) in the New Orleans Bowl.

"These guys had to buy into a dream of what it could be, not what it was because it wasn't very good," West said. "We had always been the type that had to learn how to handle adversity, now we've got to learn how to handle success, but I don't think that'll be a problem."

Danny Wimprine, who grew up in New Orleans, threw for 254 yards and accounted for two touchdowns to lead the Tigers' attack.

Wimprine, a junior, was born about a decade after Memphis' last bowl appearance — a 28-9 victory over San Jose State in the 1971 Pasadena Bowl. Memphis has been bad for most years since, including last season, when the Tigers went 3-9.

"It's been a long time coming for this university," Wimprine said. "All those seniors, those guys who have been here through so many tough times ... to go out as winners makes me feel great for this team."

Wimprine had played in the Superdome three times before, winning two Louisiana high school championships with John Curtis and a regular-season game for Memphis over Tulane this season.

He was named the MVP of Tuesday night's game, the

first of 28 college bowls this season.

"This is a great place for me," Wimprine said. "It's just another memory to add to the collection, and this is probably the best one."

Memphis was without its best running back, DeAngelo Williams, who was the Conference USA player of the year. But Wimprine moved the offense early by completing

his first 10 passes, including sideline bombs of 63 yards to Darren Garcia and 50 yards to Mario Pratcher. Both passes set up TDs as the Tigers took a 17-3 lead. Wimprine finished 17-of-23 with no interceptions.

Wimprine's touchdown pass was a 10-yard bullet to Chris Kelley as the receiver crouched in tight coverage along the sideline. Wimprine also ran for a 7-yard score on a quarterback draw, the game's first touchdown.

"He made some outstanding throws. He's a smart quarterback. He moves around the pocket well," North Texas coach Darrell Dickey said. "We hadn't given up a ton of big plays, but they hit us for some."

North Texas' Patrick Cobbs, the nation's leader in yards rushing per game with 157, gained 110 yards and scored two touchdowns.

Scott Hall threw for 152 yards, completing several long passes in the second half on two touchdown drives as North Texas kept it

Canadian wins district opener

CANADIAN — Canadian girls opened the District 6-2A season Tuesday night with a 67-33 victory over Sanford-Fritch.

Shila Province led the Lady Wildcats in scoring with 17 points.

close well into the fourth quarter.

North Texas has represented the fledgling Sun Belt Conference in all three New Orleans Bowls and won the game last year against Cincinnati.

The Mean Green made it 17-10 when Cobbs burst through a hole outside the left tackle and broke free for a 35-yard score.

But after North Texas' defense played a nearly flawless third quarter, a mistake by that unit allowed Memphis to regain a two-touchdown lead. North Texas appeared to have forced a punt just outside its own 40 when LaKendus Cole was tackled on a screen play for a loss.

But Adrian Awason was flagged for a 15-yard face-mask penalty that gave Memphis a first down on the North Texas 21. Several plays later, Cole squirmed into the end zone on a 5-yard run up the middle for a 24-10 lead.

Memphis needed the cushion as Hall completed two long passes in a 5-play, 86-yard drive made it 24-17 when Cobbs bowled his way into the end zone from 2 yards out.

Memphis then used up 4:47 on an 11-play drive that ended with Stephen Gostkowski's 42-yard field goal with 2:26 left.

"They responded whenever we seemed to have the momentum," Dickey said.

Canadian wins district opener

Shelly Adams had 14 points for Sanford-Fritch.

Carlee Culver and Tandi Rankin added 14 points each for Canadian.

For the season, Canadian has a 10-2 record.

EARLY DEADLINES FOR Christmas

CLASSIFIED LINE ADS AND CITY BRIEFS

Insertion Date	Deadline
Wed., Dec. 24th.....	Tues., Dec. 23, 10:00am
Fri., Dec. 26th.....	Wed., Dec. 24th, Noon

ROP DISPLAY AND CLASSIFIED DISPLAY (Boxed Ads)

Mon., Dec. 22nd.....	Fri., Dec. 19th, 10:00am
Tues., Dec. 23rd.....	Fri., Dec. 19th, 10:00am
Wed., Dec. 24th.....	Fri., Dec. 19th, noon

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Sun., Dec. 28th.....	Tues., Dec. 23rd, noon

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WEDNESDAY • December 17, 2003

DEAR ABBY

written by Pauline Phillips and daughter Jeanne Phillips

Teenager Gets Grounded For Sky-High Phone Bill

DEAR ABBY: My 13-year-old daughter, "Karen," met a boy on the Internet. I guess she felt she needed to talk to him because she called him on the telephone. Unfortunately, he lives in Spain, and she ran up an \$1,100 phone bill. Karen had no idea it cost that much to call him, and of course she didn't ask for my permission.

I grounded Karen until she works off the debt, which will probably take six months. I also took away her phone and Internet privileges and made her quit the school volleyball team.

Karen has ADHD, so we've had some problems with her in the past. I don't want to overreact and make her rebel or run away like I did when I was her age. What I do want is to teach her responsibility. What do you think?

UNHAPPY MOM IN OHIO

DEAR UNHAPPY: I don't blame you for being angry, but you have gone a little overboard. It's time to reconsider the multiple punishments you've levied on your daughter. You say you don't want to overreact or make her rebel. Yet you have cut off her contact with the outside world — no phone, no Internet, no sports. I agree she should pay at least part of the phone bill, but as she does, you should gradually reinstate her privileges.

DEAR ABBY: You dispensed some wonderful advice in your Thanksgiving Day column. You wrote, "If you're feeling down and want an instant 'upper,' the surest way ... is to do something nice for someone else." I'd like to echo your sentiments and encourage your readers to keep the doldrums at bay by volunteering.

Volunteering not only benefits the recipients of service, but often the volunteer feels better as a result of giving back. Volunteering reduces social isolation and disconnection, boosts spirits, combats stress and builds stronger communities.

According to the most recent

study by the Points of Light Foundation and Indiana University, respondents said that volunteering as a family improves communication, promotes positive values, emphasizes the importance of teamwork, teaches kids empathy, respect, friendliness and tolerance, and creates a new generation of dedicated volunteers.

Please encourage your readers who might be dreading this holiday season to volunteer. Giving to others is the best way to nourish your own spirit.

ROBERT K. GOODWIN, PRESIDENT AND CEO, POINTS OF LIGHT FOUNDATION

DEAR ROBERT: Thanks for an inspiring reminder that the surest way to forget your own troubles is to do something nice for those less fortunate. The adrenaline rush you'll get is more powerful than speed, and the "high" is perfectly legal. Everyone has something to give, and the most precious gift isn't money — it's time.

Readers, to find projects in your local communities or wherever you spend your holiday vacations, call toll-free (800) 865-8683 and enter your ZIP Code, or visit www.1-800-Volunteer.org. Families can find project ideas, activities for kids and other helpful resources by exploring the Web site. Since the holiday season is upon us, don't procrastinate. Reach out and grab the opportunity to help someone.

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.

Good advice for everyone — teens to seniors — is in "The Anger in All of Us and How to Deal With It." To order, send a business-size, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for \$5 (U.S. funds only) to: Dear Abby, Anger Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included.)

For Better or For Worse



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Garfield



Beetle Bailey



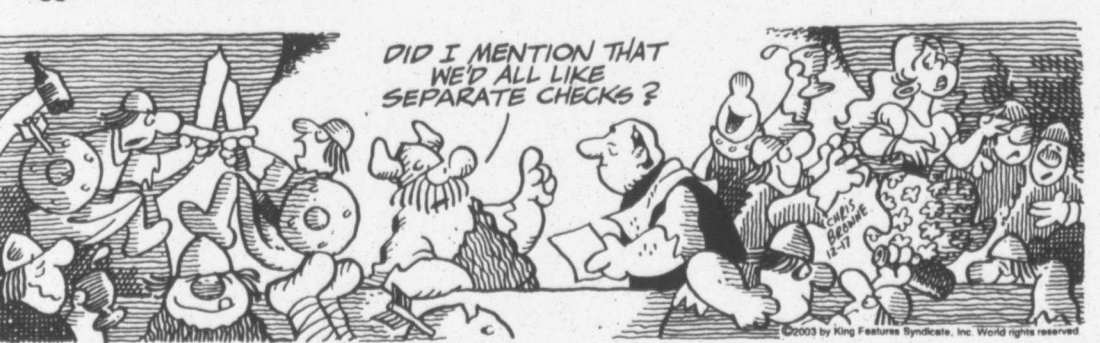
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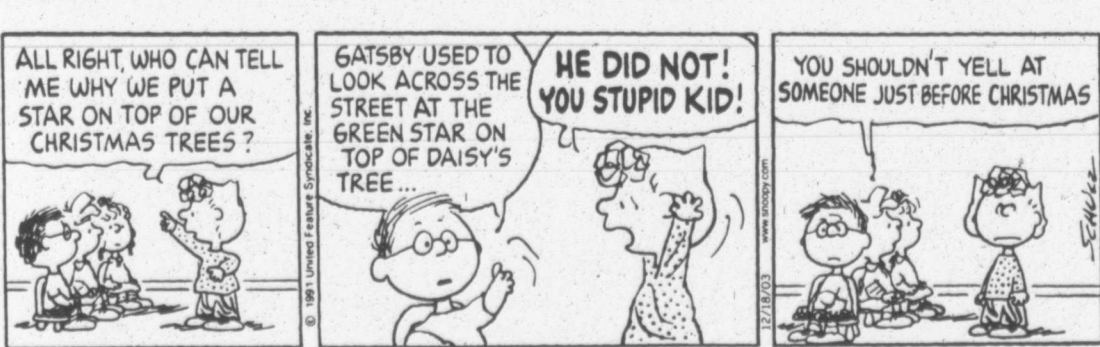
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Peanuts



Blondie



Crossword Puzzle

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

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1 "Calm down!"
7 Poker bet
11 Steep-roofed home
12 Fast runner
13 Co-star of "Diner"
14 Singer Paul
15 Conclusion
17 Play divisions
20 Secluded valleys
23 Baseball's Gehrig
24 Holler
26 Like some verbs: Abbr.
27 Have debts
28 Mine rock
29 Like some sweet potatoes
31 Use a straw
32 With 13-Across, "Sea of Love"
33 Ohio team
34 Marked down
37 Tree part
39 Compiled book
43 Different
44 Honey-suckle's cousin

HARPS ROBOT
EQUAL ARENA
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BAG DOG TEE
DEREK
DIVER DITTO
ARAB LOON
DIATUM GNOME
GURUS
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RUNNINGHEAD
AZTEC HOUSE
BOOTH OGDEN

Yesterday's answer

- 18 Reef
19 Free
21 Shocking
22 Flight units
24 Change
25 Wonderment
30 Made an impression on
33 Lear's daughter
35 First name
36 Judy's daughter
37 Game caller
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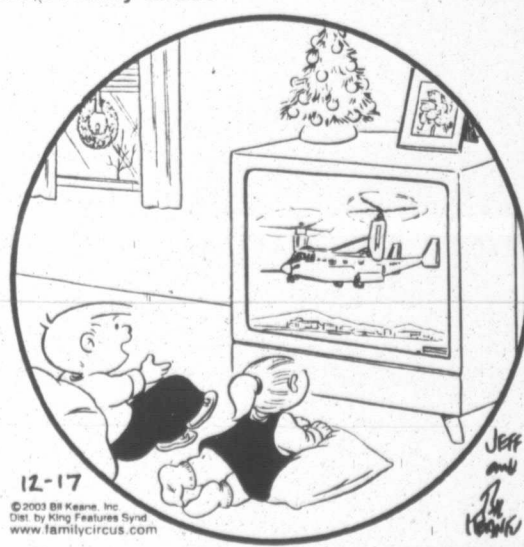
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Marmaduke



"Sometimes I think he just likes to listen to his own voice."

The Family Circus



"That's what Santa Claus should have — a vertical takeoff and landing jet."

Flo & Friends

