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CHRISTMAS SPIRIT

Car smashes house



Reece Hutchinson and Sidney Armendariz provided musical accompaniment during a recent Christmas program, CREATE-a-Beat!, at Hi-Land Christian Church.

submitted photo

by Rachel Stennett
 rstennett@thepampanews.com

A car believed to be traveling at excessive speed crashed into the living room of a home in the 1300 block of North Hamilton.

The car, driven by a juvenile who is currently under investigation, according to Detective Casey Ingersoll of the Pampa Police Department, hit the house located at 1345 North Hamilton and skidded down the edge of the house, and finally went through the back fence.

"You could see the rear tire of the car from inside the house," Captain Mike Day of the Pampa Fire Department said. One unit and three personnel responded to the incident.

The car broke several studs in a wall, which caved in, Day explained. The occupants were sitting in the living room watching television at the time when "the t.v. went flying." Jose Ponce, who rents the

See **Smash**, Page 5

Medical fund established for crash victims

by Rachel Stennett
 rstennett@thepampanews.com

Medical accounts have been established at FirstBank Southwest to help with medical expenses for two Pampa women who were in a serious car accident last week.

Libby Hudson, 24, Lyric Hudson, 11 months, and Micki Frazier, 24, were traveling westbound on Amarillo Highway 60 on Dec. 15 around 4 p.m. when the car veered off road and rolled several times before coming to a stop.

All three occupants were taken to Northwest Texas Hospital in Amarillo. Libby Hudson and Micki Frazier were sent to the ICU and listed in critical, but stable conditions. Lyric Hudson was released with minor injuries last Tuesday.

Libby Hudson, who is the Children's Pastor at Trinity Fellowship Church, was released Sunday. Micki Frazier remains in the ICU in stable condition. Frazier owns Miekel James Hair Studio in Pampa and is the wife C.J. Frazier, youth minister of Trinity Fellowship Church.

Anyone wishing to assist with either families medical expenses may deposit funds into the Micki Frazier Medical Fund or the Libby Hudson Medical Fund at FirstBank Southwest, 300 W. Kingsmill. Those depositing into either account should note the fund name on the memo line if contributing by check.

For more information, contact Kim Hill at 665-2341.

Freedom USA Museum now owns vintage jeep

by David Bowser
 dbowser@thepampanews.com

The Freedom USA Museum is not the first museum in Pampa to have Dwight Fiveash's vintage Jeep on display.

"A couple of years ago," Fiveash said, "the White Deer Land Museum had a military exhibit and people donated stuff to that for display."

Fiveash said he's done work for Ann Davidson at the White Deer Land Museum and offered her the Jeep for the display.

Earlier this year, the Freedom USA Museum bought the Jeep from Fiveash, and it's now on display at the museum off Hobart.

Dwight Fiveash, executive director of the Pampa Economic Development Corporation, found the Jeep in Guymon, Okla., four years ago, but he'd



Dwight Fiveash stands next to the Korean War vintage Jeep he restored, which is now on display at the Freedom USA Museum.

been looking for much longer.

"It was partially rebuilt," Fiveash said of the Jeep he bought in Guymon, "but there were a lot of things that needed to be repaired and replaced."

Officially, the vehicle is a 1951 Willys M-38. The M is a military designation.

"It's Korean War vin-

tage," Fiveash said.

He said he doubts that the Jeep went to Korea because it has only about 2,000 miles on it.

Initially, Fiveash said he had been looking for something to hunt in.

"When I got this one," he said, "there was no way I was going to put this vehicle in the

See **Jeep**, Page 5

Madoff scandal halts funding for DNA tests

DALLAS (AP)— A Texas legal center will be able to complete all scheduled DNA tests for Dallas County inmates but the foundation that funded those tests will be shuttered in January, a victim of the Bernard Madoff scandal, according to a newspaper report.

The JEHT Foundation funds the post-conviction DNA tests for Dallas County inmates who claim they are innocent. The foundation had given \$400,000

to the Innocence Project of Texas before Madoff's alleged ponzi scheme lost investors \$50 billion. Madoff, 70, a former Nasdaq stock market chairman, has become one of the most vilified people in America since news broke Dec. 11 that he allegedly had been running a giant Ponzi scheme, paying returns to certain investors out of the principal received from others.

Because of the fallout from

Madoff's alleged scam, foundations and nonprofits all over the country are financially pressed.

After a few days of concern, Innocence Project officials realized the money received so far was theirs to keep, said the organization's executive director Natalie Roetzel. And while additional money promised for computers, staff and investigations won't make its way to the Innocence Project, Roetzel said, "I think it's going to turn out

OK," The Dallas Morning News reported Tuesday in an online story.

Without the funding, the Innocence Project would be faced with trying to raise capital in a bad economy and those seeking tests could face indefinite delays, if the testing could be done at all.

Both Roetzel and Dallas County First Assistant District

See **DNA**, Page 5

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PAMPA FORECAST

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
High 56 Low 31	High 54 Low 26	High 54 Low 26

Wednesday Night: Mostly cloudy, with a low around 28. South wind between 15 and 20 mph, with gusts as high as 25 mph.
Christmas Day: Mostly sunny, with a high near 56. Southwest wind between 15 and 20 mph, with gusts as high as 30 mph.
Thursday Night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 31. West southwest wind around 15 mph, with gusts as high as 20 mph.
Friday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 54. Southwest wind between 10 and 15 mph, with gusts as high as 20 mph.
Friday Night: Mostly cloudy, with a low around 26.

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MERRY CHRISTMAS & HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Grain prices

The following grain quotations are provided by Attebury Grain of White Deer for the close of the last open market day.

Wheat	4.89
Milo	5.08
Corn	6.87

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Sheriff
 Gray County Sheriff's Office recorded the following arrests.

Tuesday, Dec. 23
 Amanda Beth Robinson, 29, of Pampa was arrested by Pampa Police Department for theft of property.
 Dillon Thomas Downs, 32, of Pampa was arrested by Pampa PD on a probation violation for possession of marijuana.

Wednesday, Dec. 24
 Michael Charles Tuttle, 32, of Pampa was arrested by Pampa PD for theft of property by check.
 Mario Mendoza, 41, no address listed, was arrested by Pampa PD for

driving while intoxicated, no valid driver's license and no insurance.
 Michael Joseph Demorato, 49, of Reno, Nev., was arrested by GCSO on a probation violation for possession of a controlled substance.

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

Tuesday, Dec. 23
 8:06 a.m. — One unit and three personnel responded to the 2100 block of North Faulkner on a call for lifting assistance.
 2:26 p.m. — One unit and three personnel

Emergency Services

responded to Hobart and Randy Matson on a motor vehicle accident. No injuries were reported.

5:33 p.m. — One unit and three personnel responded to the 100 block of Wynne on a call for lifting assistance.

Ambulance
 Guardian EMS ambulance reported the following calls during the 24-hour period ending at 7 a.m. today.

Tuesday, Dec. 23
 9:41 a.m. — A mobile ICU unit responded to Pampa Regional Medical Center and transferred a patient to Northwest Texas Hospital in Amarillo.

10:58 a.m. — A mobile ICU unit responded to the 1500 block of West Kentucky and transported a patient to PRMC.
 11:37 a.m. — A mobile ICU unit responded to the 1900 block of Hilton Road and transported a patient to PRMC.
 12:36 p.m. — A mobile ICU unit responded to the 8100 block of Farm-to-Market Road 749 and transported a patient to PRMC.
 2:26 p.m. — A mobile ICU unit responded to Hobart and Randy Matson streets. No transport.
Wednesday, Dec. 24
 5:15 a.m. — A mobile ICU unit responded to the 1500 block of West Kentucky. No transport.

Texas news briefs

CITY BRIEFS

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Police say suspect in highway killings was ex-Utah trooper addicted to painkillers
 DALLAS (AP) — A former Utah state trooper suspected in shootings on Dallas-area roads had an addiction to painkillers and was wanted for a North Texas crime spree, according to Texas and Utah authorities.

Dallas police said they think 37-year-old ex-trooper Brian Smith was responsible for at least one death that resulted from the shootings. They declined to comment on another death in neighboring Garland because it was outside their jurisdiction.

Garland police spokesman Joe Harn said his department has not been able to make a definitive connection between Smith and the killing there, but acknowledged that he fit the description of the highway shooter: a balding, 40ish white man.

"We certainly hope it is him," Harn said. "But we are going to have to see more concrete evidence."

Smith was in critical condition on life support Wednesday morning at a Dallas hospital from a self-inflicted gunshot wound. Police said he shot himself in the head

early Tuesday morning after a brief standoff and more than six hours after the shooting spree ended.

Dallas police Lt. Craig Miller said they connected Smith to the killing in Dallas because the bullets from the standoff were a match. The weapon was a high-caliber semiautomatic handgun, Miller said.

Federal lawsuit alleges Galveston girl beaten by police while wrongly accused of prostitution
 GALVESTON, Texas (AP) — A Galveston couple has filed a federal lawsuit against three police officers who they say arrested and beat their 12-year-old daughter after mistaking her for a prostitute, according to newspaper report.

Wilfred and Emily Milburn, the parents of Dymond Larae Milburn, are asking for unspecified damages for physical injuries and emotional problems, which they say have included nightmares.

Sgt. Gilbert Gomez and Officers David Roark and Sean Stewart have filed documents saying their conduct was reasonable in light of the facts they had at the time, the Houston Chronicle reported

Tuesday in its online story.

According to a lawsuit filed in federal court in Galveston, Dymond Larae Milburn went outside her home to flip a circuit breaker at about 7:45 p.m. on Aug. 22, 2006.

Responding to a call that three white prostitutes were soliciting in the neighborhood, the plainclothes officers jumped out of an unmarked van on Gomez's orders and one of them grabbed the girl, who is black, the lawsuit states.

Madoff scandal shatters foundation that funded Texas post-conviction DNA tests
 DALLAS (AP) — A Texas legal center will be able to complete all scheduled DNA tests for Dallas County inmates but the foundation that funded those tests will be shuttered in January, a victim of the Bernard Madoff scandal, according to a newspaper report.

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Because of the fallout from Madoff's alleged scam, foundations and nonprofits all over the country are financially pressed.

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The Dallas Morning News reported Tuesday in an online story.

Without the funding, the Innocence Project would be faced with trying to raise capital in a bad economy and those seeking tests could face indefinite delays, if the testing could be done at all.

Medical Fund established for Jose (Joe) Romero of Pampa who suffers from Lukemia/Graft versus Host disease at Happy State Bank-Your donations can be made out to: the account of **Amanda Smith for the Benefit of Jose (Joe) Romero.**

We would love for you to join us on Christmas Eve!

5 p.m. - a family-oriented service
 11 p.m. - a traditional candlelight service

Wherever you are, we wish you Merry Christmas and the peace of God's love.

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We hope your Christmas is merry
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The PAMPA NEWS

Viewpoints

Today in History

By The Associated Press

Today is Wednesday, Dec. 24, the 359th day of 2008. There are seven days left in the year. This is Christmas Eve.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Dec. 24, 1968, the Apollo 8 astronauts, orbiting the moon, read passages from the Old Testament Book of Genesis during a Christmas Eve telecast that featured live images of Earth.

On this date:

In 1851, fire devastated the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C., destroying about 35,000 volumes.

In 1865, several veterans of the Confederate Army formed a private social club in Pulaski, Tenn., called the Ku Klux Klan.

In 1871, Giuseppe Verdi's opera "Aida" had its world premiere in Cairo, Egypt.

'Christmas waves a magic wand over this world, and behold, everything is softer and more beautiful.'

—The Rev. Norman Vincent Peale

In 1943, President Franklin D. Roosevelt appointed Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower supreme commander of Allied forces as part of Operation Overlord.

In 1951, Gian Carlo Menotti's "Amahl and the Night Visitors," the first opera written specifically for television, was first broadcast by NBC-TV.

Ten years ago: Ignoring NATO warnings, Serb tanks and troops struck an ethnic Albanian stronghold in Kosovo. Most of California's citrus crop was considered ruined after three straight nights of freezing cold.

Five years ago: A roadside bomb exploded north of Baghdad, killing three U.S. soldiers in the deadliest attack on Americans to that time following Saddam Hussein's capture. Talk show host David Letterman visited U.S. troops in Baghdad. Air France canceled several flights to the United States after U.S. officials passed on what were termed "credible" security threats.

One year ago: French news cameraman Gwen Le Gouil, abducted by Somali gunmen Dec. 16 outside the town of Bossaso, was released.

Today's Birthdays: Songwriter-bandleader Dave Bartholomew is 88. Author Mary Higgins Clark is 81. Rock singer-musician Lemmy (Motorhead) is 63. Actor Grand L. Bush is 53. Actor Clarence Gilyard is 53. Actress Stephanie Hodge is 52. The president of Afghanistan, Hamid Karzai, is 51. Rock musician Ian Burden (The Human League) is 51. Designer Kate Spade is 46. Rock singer Mary Ramsey (10,000 Maniacs) is 45. Actor Mark Valley is 44. Actor Diedrich Bader is 42. Actor Amaury Nolasco is 38. Singer Ricky Martin is 37. "American Idol" host Ryan Seacrest is 34.

Christmas can take its toll on people

What is the most joyous time for Christians around the world can also be a prism that focuses on all the problems in our lives — money issues, family problems, loneliness — the myriad pressures on the human condition come to bear heavily when the world around you seems aglow and carefree.

Add difficult economic times to those pressures and things tend to become unbearable for some people.

The unusual pressures of the holidays sometimes drive people to such despair that they take their own life. In the small towns, where people generally are acquainted with almost everyone, that tragedy is amplified.

The fact is that there is never a shortage of problems for the residents of any community and Pampa is not an exception.

We report such problems every day in the newspaper.

I would hope that readers also glean more good than bad from our pages. I certainly look at it that way.

No matter where I have lived, I have always been encouraged by people

doing good things, not for recognition, but because they are decent human beings quietly trying to put their religious beliefs into action. There are good people of lots of different faiths in any community, not just Christians.

However, this is the time of year that people who follow Jesus become more introspective and appreciative of what they have. As we grow older and experience more of life's joys and sorrows, it becomes a more bitter-sweet season perhaps.

We understand the meaning behind the lowly birth of an innocent little child, who is destined to show the world how to live. We exult in the birth, while mindful of the coming sacrifice.

Christians know we can never live up to the example set for us thousands of years ago.

We are human and weak. It is not hard to find professed Christians with ethical and moral lapses.

But it is equally easy to find Christians, right here, delivering meals to people who are elderly or sick, helping women and children going through the

trauma of divorce or abuse, working with disadvantaged children, working to provide families with shelter and funds, working to meet the spiritual needs of people — just quietly doing any little thing they can to help those in need.

If you step back and really pay attention, you can see people you know channeling that spark of the divine — and not just at Christmas.

Often, they meet needs simply by offering counseling or encouragement to people struggling to make decisions or coping with life-changing events. They provide hope to people who may not see the light at the end of the tunnel.

And isn't the Christmas season really about hope?

Whenever we face problems, what gets us through is the knowledge that things can get better. If we lose hope, we lose everything.

For Christians, the child in the manger is the symbol of that hope, of the Creator reaching out to touch us in a direct way. For Christians, Jesus is the Savior.

Even if you do not believe that, his words

ring true.

Jesus taught us many things, but his main message was this: Love one another and forgive



Randy Pribble

other people their failures. Treat others as you would be treated. Be especially mindful of children. Help those in need.

They are such simple ideas that make a lot of sense and we fail miserably most of the time trying to live up to them. I know I do.

Maybe it is the trying that counts and maybe, once in a while, we can get it right.

It's hard to have a "Merry Christmas" when you have problems or when you have lost a loved one.

Still, I wish you a Merry Christmas.

Or short of that, the peace hope can provide.

—Randy Pribble is the publisher of the Pampa News. He can be reached by E-mail: rpribble@thepampanews.com or 806-669-2525.



MERRY CHRISTMAS

THE PAMPA NEWS

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Editorial Thoughts

By The Associated Press

Fort Worth Star-Telegram on childhood obesity:

School cafeterias receive a disproportionate share of the blame for child obesity. A Penn State University study last week gave equal blame to genes and family lifestyles that encourage inactivity and bad eating habits.

Child obesity rates have continued to rise even as cafeterias have raised nutritional standards. About one-third of U.S. children are overweight. The food environment in schools differs significantly. A 2005 study of 395 U.S. public schools gave far higher grades to elementary schools. Middle and high schools were more likely to have vending machines, snack bars and contracts with soft drink companies.

Educators have more opportunity to shape the eating habits of youngsters. The Northwest school district will attempt to do just that in January when it begins

offering free prepackaged fruit and vegetables to pupils in Sendera Ranch and O.A. Peterson elementaries.

The concept, called CoolCaf, was designed by ARAMARK, the district's food service vendor, after extensive nationwide research and focus groups.

Pupils will be able to grab fare such as apples, oranges, bananas, corn or carrot sticks from a produce bar regardless of whether they buy a school lunch that day. The concept will be augmented by classroom instruction on the importance of good nutrition. The pilot program is the first of its kind in Texas. Let's hope that programs such as CoolCaf can help turn the tide.

San Antonio Express-News on flying shoes:

The flying shoes will go down in presidential lore.

President Bush, in the crosshairs of two leather missiles, ducked both during a recent press conference in Baghdad.

Condemned by many, both here and abroad, for his foreign policy, the president was widely applauded for his grace and agility.

The bizarre incident led to an outpouring of satirical skits on the comedy and late-night shows up and down the cable dial, but Iraqi officials saw nothing funny in the spectacle.

During a recent session in the Parliament to discuss the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Iraq, legislators interrupted the debate to focus on the fate of the journalist who hurled the shoes at the

president, Muntadhar al-Zeidi.

The session became so turbulent, the Associated Press reported, that the speaker announced his resignation.

Much of the controversy centers on reports, so far unconfirmed, that the journalist was beaten.

What seemed comical before has suddenly become serious, and the fledgling democracy will face a crucial test.

The last thing the Parliament needs is to turn the journalist into an even more potent symbol than he already is.

We welcome your letters

To insure publication, please adhere to the following guidelines:

• Letters should be brief and to the point. All correspondence will be edited for length and clarity.

• All letters must be signed. Submit your name, address and telephone number with the letter for verification. Only your name and city will be published.

• Defamatory comments will not be published. • E-mail submissions are welcome.

DNA

Continued from Page 1

Attorney Terri Moore said there probably are enough funds to complete all the DNA testing. If not, Roetzel said, they will seek other grants and hold private fundraisers. "The money should get

us through what needs to be tested," said Moore. Since 2001 in Dallas County, the convictions of 20 men have been tossed aside by state district judges based on DNA testing of evidence. Texas has the most such exonerations of any state. The JEHT Foundation, which donates funds to programs that promote justice, equality, human

dignity and tolerance, will be shuttered in January. Had the foundation not been closing, it probably would have given more money to fund Dallas County programs. Just before Madoff's arrest, the JEHT Foundation was in talks with Dallas County to give as much as \$15 million to fund programs with the district

attorney's office and the probation department. Dallas County District Attorney Craig Watkins said the talks had not advanced to specifics but said the foundation was committed to giving more money. "That hurt," said Mr. Watkins. "That hurt."

Smash

Continued from Page 1

house and W.J. Comas, owner, were both in the house when the vehicle came through. The vehicle responsible for the accident fled the scene. The people in the car were found, who reported some minor injuries, Ingersoll said. "The suspects have been identified and charges are

pending. No arrests have been made at this point." "Two to three sheets of 4x8 plywood were used to seal the hole. The damage was bad," Day said. A tarp was used the night of the incident to stop air flow through the house.

Jeep

Continued from Page 1

woods. It wasn't going to happen."

He said it belongs in a museum.

But the Jeep had more than practical or historical value to Fiveash. There was an emotional attachment.

"My first set of wheels when I was a kid and got my driver's license," Fiveash said, "was a 1947 Willys Jeep, exactly like this one."

The only difference, Fiveash said, was that his first Jeep had a metal cover and doors.

"That was my first vehicle," he said. "I drove that to high school for a couple of years."

He paid \$350 for it, a lot less than he paid for the one he bought in Guymon. Fiveash said he drove his first Jeep for two years and sold it for \$450.

"I sold it to a guy that owned a bunch of orange groves," he said, "and he was going to turn that Jeep into a trouble-shooting vehicle with a winch on the front, a winch on the back, spare time, compressor and so forth

so he could aid stuck vehicles that were inoperative in the orange grove."

A few years ago, Fiveash said he was in Florida on a business trip. While there, he tried to locate his old Jeep in his hometown of Acadia, Fla.

"I had made several phone calls to see if there was any chance at all that my original Jeep was still available," Fiveash said. "Somewhere. In a junkyard. Whatever."

If he could have found it, he was going to get it and rebuild it.

"I thought I had hit pay dirt," he said.

Fiveash said he found an old grove workman at a warehouse in Acadia that told Fiveash he thought he knew where the Jeep was. The man told Fiveash that it was buried under a bunch of stuff and it would take half a day to get to it.

"I spent a number of hours uncovering the Jeep," Fiveash said, "but it was not the same one."

That ended Fiveash's quest in Florida.

In the meantime, Fiveash met a man in Panhandle that has rebuilt a couple of Jeeps.

"He gave me the lead on the guy that I bought this one from in

Guymon," Fiveash said. "I drove up there and looked at it and bought it."

Fiveash came back to Pampa, got a trailer and the next day returned to Guymon to get the Jeep.

"Then I spent four years rebuilding it," Fiveash said.

The rebuilding consisted of rewiring it, installing a new gas tank, reconfiguring the bumper, putting in new canvas seats and top, new lights, new generator, new fuel pump and filter system, tires and paint.

He also reworked the lubrication system and installed four different starters before he could get one that worked right.

"There were lots of odds and ends," Fiveash said.

The Jeep was the hit of the parade when the Pampa VFW post brought a replica of the Vietnam Wall to the city.

"I didn't see the parade," Fiveash said, "but I saw the Jeep out there at the wall."

The Jeep was parked next to the wall display in the M.K. Brown Civic Center parking lot.

"Of course the wall project," Fiveash said, "was in my opinion was a significant event here."

Fiveash said he's been to the wall memorial in Washington, D.C.

"It absolutely will grab you," he said. "It is very, very well done. It's breathtaking. It's impressive, very impressive."

Now that he's sold his Jeep to the Freedom USA Museum, he's not sure that he'll undertake another project like it, but he has other projects in the works.

He said he sold the Jeep because he needed the room in his shop on Western Street.

"I had it in there," Fiveash said, "and that's where I worked on it, but I needed the room. I had some other things I wanted to do."

He said he felt the Jeep was far enough along that he could get rid of it.

"It was a lot of fun working on it," Fiveash said.

He said that while he was working on it, he found some half dozen businesses in Texas that specialize in military parts for such vehicles, both original and reproductions.

"What I put in this Jeep was original stuff that I could find," Fiveash said, "and it wasn't hard to find."

Clarendon College announces nursing graduates

Vocational Nursing graduation ceremonies were held Friday, December 5, at Clarendon College with 23 students receiving certificates.

The students are listed below by hometown.

2008 Clarendon College Vocational Nursing Graduates include:

Canadian
Cynthia Marie Vasquez
Childress
Linda Carol McClain
Clarendon
Vicki A. Moore
Lara Matthews
Rhinehart

Claude
Shannon Nicole Moore
Memphis
Felicia Lopez
Monica Maria Narvaez
Veronica Zuniga
Mobeetie
Andrea Kay Long
Pampa
Angela Lee Anguiano
Ramona Dawn Curfman
Michelle Guerra Ramos
Amanda Rodriguez
Amber Karen Williams

Shamrock
Laura Anne Thomas
Silverton

Cynthia Younger
Skellytown
Tamara E. James

Wellington
Brandi K. Brown
Michele Dawn Putman
Jennifer D'Nae Nation

Wheeler
Vernon Wayne Miller
Winona Kaycee Parsley

White Deer
Sara Osbin

Clarendon College is a comprehensive community college in the Texas

Panhandle committed to teaching and learning and to providing equal access to opportunities that assist in the holistic development of its constituents and community. In pursuit of that mission, the College provides academic transfer programs, workforce education programs, student services, developmental education courses, continuing education/community service courses, and diverse cultural enrichment opportunities.

Texans get away during the holidays

DALLAS (AP)—Texans heading out Wednesday for the Christmas and New Year's holidays are expected to face crowded airports and busy highways.

But airport and highway crowding may be smaller than previous years, due to cutbacks in airline schedules and economic concerns.

Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport expects nearly 3 million passengers through Jan. 6. The DFW airport's holiday reporting period began Dec. 18.

DFW also reports passenger loads are down about 7 percent from last year.

The world's third busiest airport says more high-tech offerings will greet passengers, with expansion of the free power/free wired Internet kiosks to 17 locations.

AAA Texas is projecting a 2.1 percent decline in the number of Texans traveling during the two-week holiday period, to about 5.1 million people, compared to last year.

Merry Christmas!

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Signs of Christmas are everywhere, bringing to mind all the kind people we've had the privilege to serve this year, and so we offer our best wishes to all the familiar faces that make the holiday season so special for us. Thank you for your continued patronage.

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SALES & RENTAL
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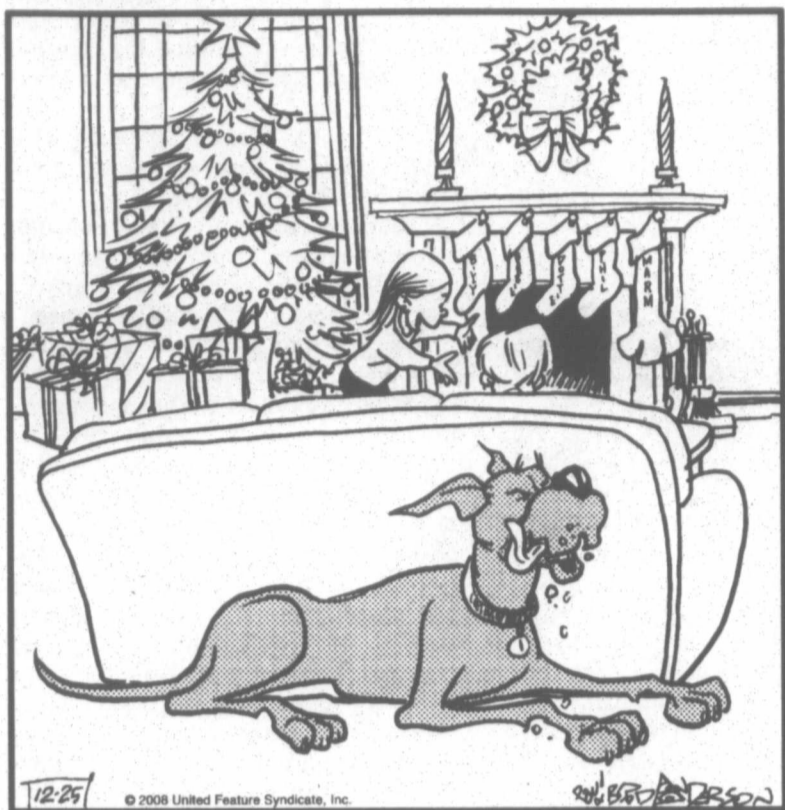
Tom Reynolds
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Pampa, TX 79065
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Comics

Marmaduke



"See! Santa ate all the cookies and milk."

THE FAMILY CIRCUS

By Bil Keane



"Wow! I guess I WAS a good boy this year!"

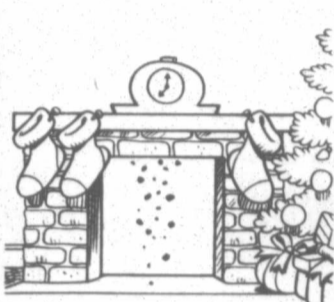
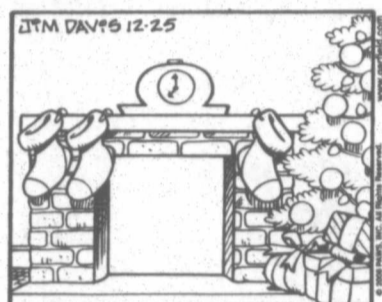
For Better Or Worse



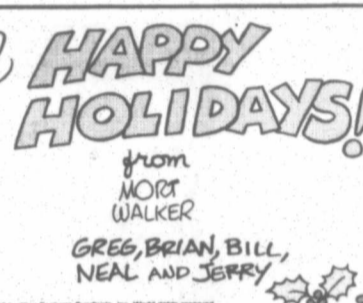
Zits



Garfield



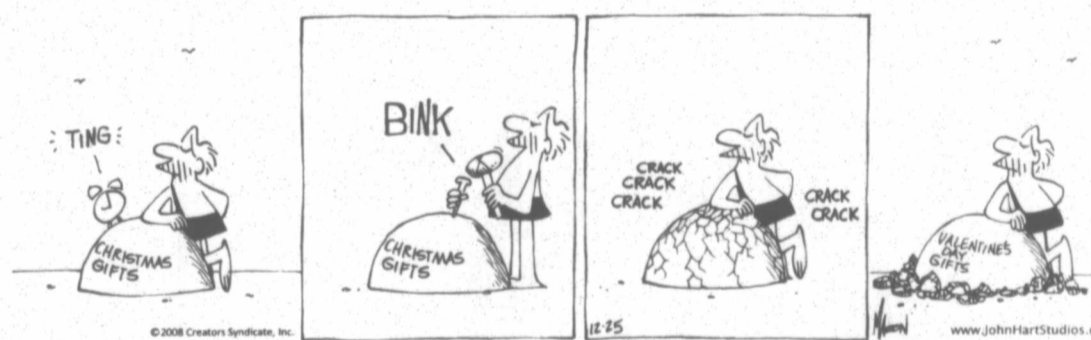
Beetle Bailey



Marvin



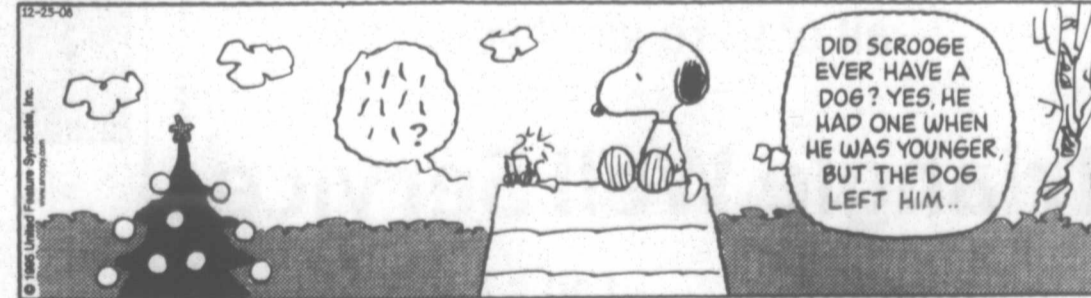
B.C.



Haggar The Horrible



Peanuts



Blondie



Flo & Friends



Daily Crossword Puzzle

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS 45 Spot

- 1 Perp pursuers
- 5 Like some car windows
- 11 Touch on
- 12 "Becket" actor
- 13 Concert highlight
- 14 Court rappers
- 15 Revealing
- 17 Garden visitor
- 18 Surmise
- 22 Shop tool
- 24 Something to fight for
- 25 Jean — Godard
- 26 Young fellow
- 27 Adam of "Life"
- 30 Top grade
- 32 Like some questions
- 33 Fly catcher
- 34 Famed pianist
- 38 Exec's case
- 41 Home of the Bruins
- 42 Expiates
- 43 Snow runners
- 44 Most recent

- DOWN
- 1 Play group
- 2 Clarinet's cousin
- 3 Retreats
- 4 Hot
- 5 Forum wear
- 6 Stressed type
- 7 Nine-day devotion
- 8 Sandal sight
- 9 Building add-on
- 10 — Plaines
- 16 Course peg

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W	I	N	E		E	L	A	I	N	E
A	L	D	A		S	P	I	N	E	T
T	O	E		D	I	A	N			
					R	U	I	N	S	
F	A	L	S	E		O	W	N	E	R
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A	W	A	K	E	N		O	N	C	E
T	E	N	E	T	S		D	E	A	L

Yesterday's answer

- 19 Some gridiron
- 20 Jacob's twin
- 21 Some wines
- 22 Stage doings
- 23 Entice
- 28 Like some skates
- 29 Sounds
- 30 Wonder
- 31 Read over
- 35 Optimal
- 36 Brisk pace
- 37 Relaxed
- 38 Moving day
- 39 Feasted
- 40 Blue

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Aubrey Dorn recently attended "Family Fun Night" at Woodrow Wilson Elementary School. She and other children decorated cookies with their parents.

Bush pardons man for breaking law to help Israel

WASHINGTON (AP) — The last words Charles Winters spoke to his son nearly 25 years ago — "Keep the faith" — guided the Miami businessman as he sought a rare presidential pardon for his late father's crime: aiding Israel in 1948 as it fought to survive.

Charles Winters, a Protestant from Boston, was convicted in 1949 for violating the Neutrality Act when he conspired to export aircraft to a foreign country. He was fined \$5,000 and sentenced to 18 months in prison. Winters' son, Jim, found out about his father's daring missions and imprisonment only after his death in 1984.

On Tuesday, President George W. Bush officially forgave Charles Winters, issuing a pardon posthumously to a man considered a hero in Israel.

"I'm overwhelmed," said Jim Winters, 44, a Miami maker of artistic neon signs. "It happened 16 years before I was born. He went to jail and he didn't want his kids to know. He was old-school and proud."

Charles Winters was one of 19 people to receive pardons — one other person had his sentence commuted — as Bush left Washington to spend the Christmas holiday at Camp David in Maryland. No high-profile lawbreakers were on the list.

In the summer of 1948, Charles Winters, a produce exporter in Miami, worked with others to transfer two converted B-17 "Flying Fortresses" to Israel's defense forces. He personally flew one of the aircraft from Miami to Czechoslovakia, where that plane and a third B-17 were retrofitted for use as bombers.

"He and other volunteers from around the world defied weapons embargoes to supply the newly established Israel with critical supplies to defend itself against mounting attacks from all sides," New York Reps. Carolyn Maloney, Gary Ackerman, Jose Serrano and Brian Higgins wrote in a Dec. 15 letter urging Bush to pardon Charles Winters.

"Without the actions of individuals like Mr. Winters, this fledgling democracy in the Middle East almost certainly would not have survived as the surrounding nations closed in on Israel's borders," the lawmakers wrote.

The three B-17s were the only heavy bombers in the Israeli Air Force, and historians say counterattacks with the bombers helped turned the war in Israel's favor. In March 1961, Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir issued a letter of commendation to Charles Winters to recognize his contributions to the Jewish state's survival.

Two men charged with Winters, Herman Greenspun and Al Schwimmer, also were convicted of violating the Neutrality Act, but they did not serve time. President John F. Kennedy pardoned Greenspun in 1961, and President Bill Clinton pardoned Schwimmer in 2000.

"Rules are rules, but it's interesting

that my dad was the low man on the totem pole in the operation, but he's the only one who had to serve time," said Jim Winters.

Reginald Brown, an attorney who worked on the pardon, said Bush's action "rights a historical wrong and honors Charlie's belief that the creation of the Jewish state was a moral imperative of his time."

Film director Steven Spielberg also wrote a letter to Bush appealing for a pardon for Charles Winters.

"There are probably many unsung heroes of America and of Israel, but Charlie Winters is surely one of them," wrote the director of "Schindler's List," the Oscar-winning movie about the Holocaust. "While a pardon cannot make Charlie Winters whole, and regrettably he did not live to see it, it would be a fitting tribute to his memory and a great blessing to his family if this pardon is granted."

After Charles Winters died on Oct. 30, 1984, half his ashes were buried in a Christian cemetery near the Jewish cemetery of the Knights Templar in Jerusalem. The rest were scattered from the top of Mount Tabor in Israel.

The only other pardon granted posthumously in recent years was given to Henry O. Flipper, the first black graduate of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, N.Y. Flipper was drummed out of the Army after white officers accused him of embezzling about \$3,800 from commissary funds. Flipper initially discovered the funds missing from his custody and concealed their disappearance from superiors, hoping the money would return. Clinton gave Flipper a full pardon in 1999.

Bush has granted 190 pardons and nine commutations during his two terms. That's fewer than half as many as Presidents Clinton or Ronald Reagan issued during their eight years in office.

Well-known names were rare on Bush's holiday pardon list. There have been efforts to get Bush to pardon former Louisiana Gov. Edwin Edwards, who was convicted in 2000 with four others in a scheme to rig riverboat casino licensing; disgraced track star Marion Jones, who lied about using steroids; Ignacio Ramos and Jose Compean, former U.S. Border Patrol agents who were convicted of shooting a drug smuggler in 2005 and trying to cover it up; and Michael Milken, the junk bond king convicted of securities fraud.

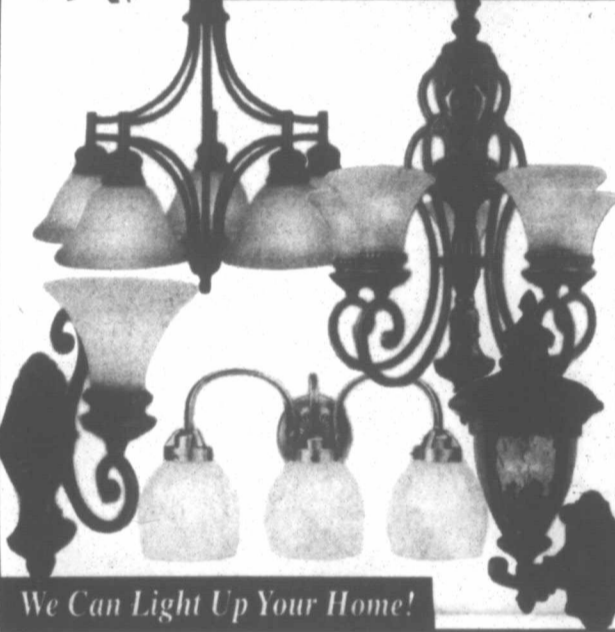
In his most high-profile official act of forgiveness, Bush saved Vice President Dick Cheney's former chief of staff, I. Lewis "Scooter" Libby, from serving prison time in the case of the 2003 leak of CIA operative Valerie Plame's identity.

Libby was convicted of perjury and obstructing justice. Bush could still grant him a full pardon, although Libby has not applied for one.

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Tot goes back to parents

BEAUMONT, Texas (AP) — A 4-year-old boy who was found alone playing with toys inside a closed discount store will be returned to his parents by Christmas, Child Protective Services officials said.

Child welfare officials said there is no evidence the parents did anything wrong.

"Safety precautions have been put in place with the family to ensure the safety of the child," CPS spokeswoman Shari said.

Authorities said the child apparently unlocked a door at his nearby home, got out and crossed a multilane street to reach a Family Dollar store around 3 a.m. on Dec. 15.

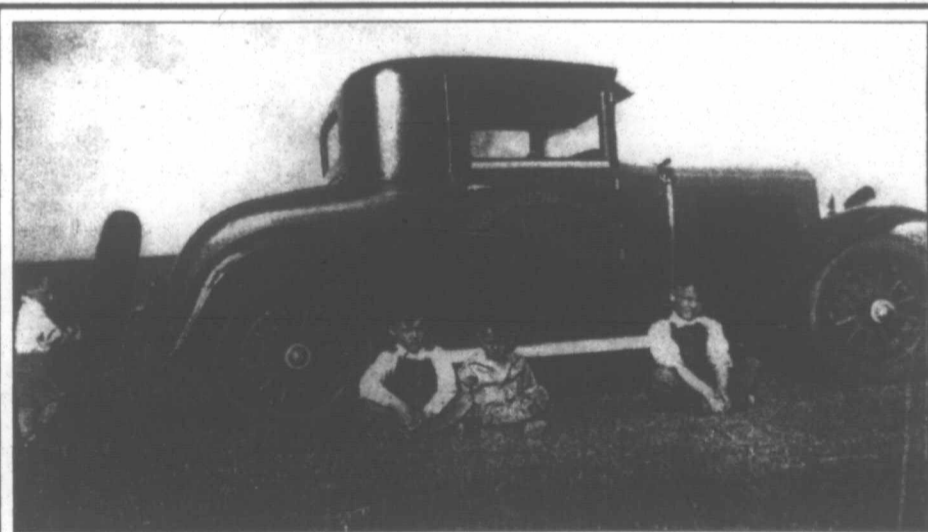
THINKING OF YOU

We're making a list of all the people we'd like to send a big thanks to this year and your name is on it!

With best wishes for a very joyous and merry season from all of us to all of you.

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Church members dress like Jesus

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP)— Just in time for Christmas, hundreds of people in the Kansas City area have committed to dress like Jesus in the days leading to the holiday, in what they say is an answer to a widening secularization of the season.

Members of Praise Chapel Christian Fellowship began showing up at their jobs, shopping malls and restaurants last week dressed in flowing robes and crowns of thorns as a hard-to miss reminder of the holiday's religious roots.

Now the idea is generating interest in other states after video of Jesus-clad shoppers was posted on YouTube.

"We are just showing people on the outside what we are on the inside," said pastor Kelly Lohrke, whose members attend services in Kansas City, Kan., and nearby Lee's Summit, Mo.

In formulating the plan, the 41-year-old tapped into his own frustration over the removal of religious symbols like crosses and nativity scenes from public displays.

Several groups have pushed the issue this year, with the American Humanist Association plastering ads on Washington, D.C., buses that proclaim, "Why believe in god? Just be good for goodness' sake."

That story captured Lohrke's interest, as did another about the

Freedom From Religion Foundation's decision to place a placard that declared "religion is but a myth and superstition" near a Christmas nativity scene at the Capitol in Olympia, Wash.

For Annie Laurie Gaylor, co-president of the Madison, Wis.-based Freedom From Religion Foundation, the removal of religious symbols is appropriate. Her group's attorney has sent 20 letters this year and filed one lawsuit seeking to have nativity scenes removed from public spots.

"There is such a profound misunderstanding about the separation of church and state," Gaylor said. "And there's an unwillingness to honor it in the month of December. It's like the constitution is put on hold in December."

Lohrke, whose church is part of Rancho Cucamonga, Calif.-based Praise Chapel Fellowship of Churches and Ministers International, isn't convinced the founding fathers intended for religion to disappear from the public realm entirely at the holidays.

"It's just absurd," he said, "that Jesus is taken out."

Still, he wasn't sure how his congregation would respond when he told them during Sunday services on Dec. 14 of his plan to dress like Jesus. The members are evangeli-

cal, but he told them, "We aren't going to preach." If asked about their attire, he said, the congregation should feel free to share their faith and explain that they are celebrating Christmas or Jesus' birthday.

Afterward, he asked that church members come forward if they planned to participate. About 400 did.

"We've gotten nothing but positives," he said, adding he personally has dressed like Jesus at a Starbucks, a Target store and a post office.

He said one Jesus-clad church member was strolling through a shopping mall when a store Santa Claus called out and asked to have their picture taken together. The Santa grumbled that he isn't even allowed to wish the children who climb onto his lap a "Merry Christmas."

After video was posted on YouTube, Lohrke received several calls. And he said four or five churches in the Los Angeles and Portland, Ore., areas had planned to urge their members to dress like Jesus, too.

Lohrke is already starting to think ahead after the idea gained so much traction in just a few days.

"Next year," he said, "we are going to make this a big deal."

Remember: The Pampa News will not publish on Christmas Day.

Season's Greetings
from all of us to all of you
Best wishes for a season that's filled with good health, good fortune and good friends.

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Tina Fey voted Entertainer of the Year

NEW YORK (AP) — Tina Fey is the entertainer of the year? You betcha.

Fey was voted The Associated Press' Entertainer of the Year, an annual honor chosen by newspaper editors and broadcast producers across the country. Fey was selected by AP members as the performer who had the greatest impact on culture and entertainment in 2008.

The 38-year-old comedian bested runner-up Robert Downey Jr., whose comeback was capped with the blockbuster smash "Iron Man," and the third-place vote-getter, Heath Ledger, who posthumously wowed audiences as the Joker in "The Dark Knight."

But it was Fey who most impressed voters largely with her indelible impression of Gov. Sarah Palin on "Saturday Night Live." Her cameos on her old show (where she had been a head writer until 2006) helped drive the show to record ratings and eventually drew an appearance from Palin herself.

"Tina Fey is such an

obvious choice," said Sharon Ebersson, entertainment editor of the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette. "She gave us funny when we really needed it and, in a year when women in politics were making huge strides, Fey stood out in the world of entertainment."

Fey's 2008 was a full year, though.

She also starred for the first time on the big screen in "Baby Mama" (which grossed \$60 million at the box office) and won three Emmys for her critically lauded NBC sitcom "30 Rock," which she created, stars in and writes. In the comedy series category, she won for best lead actress and best writing, and shared in the award for best comedy series.

"She simultaneously entertained us with her wit and put a mirror up to the nation during the election and made us think about what was going on," said Scott Shive, assistant features editor at the Lexington Herald-Leader. "She is the epitome of the smart kid coming out on top for once."

As soon as Palin was chosen as Sen. John McCain's running mate, conjecture mounted that the similar-looking Fey would have to return to "SNL" to play her.

In an interview earlier this fall, Fey recalled watching early TV coverage of Palin: "That was the first time I thought, 'Well, I kinda do look like her. I'd better really listen to how this lady talks.'"

Fey debuted the impression on the "SNL" season premiere and a sensation quickly followed. She made four more pre-election appearances as Palin on the late-night satire.

"From the winks to the nods to the accent, she nailed it," said Marc Bona, assistant entertainment editor of the Plain Dealer in Cleveland. "And she did so at a time when it seemed the whole country was tuned in. It's both to the presidential race as well as 'Saturday Night Live.'"

Her Palin impression has benefited "30 Rock," too. The show premiered its fourth season to 8.5 million viewers, a million

more than last year's opener.

Recently, she was also nominated for a Golden Globe (for best performance by an actress in a TV series, comedy or musical), as well as a Screen Actors Guild award.

"The 'SNL' stuff has certainly changed things for me," Fey said in October. "A lot more people seem to know who I am."

Last year's AP Entertainer of the Year also went to a comedian whose satire blended in with politics: Stephen Colbert.

Victoria woman to start new year with donated home

VICTORIA, Texas (AP) — A Victoria woman whose mobile home burned will start the new year with a donated house from a man who moves them for a living.

Trent Peterek (PET'-er-ek) says he will relocate an 800-square-foot modular home and set it up, at no charge, for 65-year-old Lucy Cisneros.

Peterek told the Victoria Advocate

that he read a story in the newspaper about the woman losing her home in a fire Sunday. A candle is suspected as the cause of the blaze.

Cisneros and the 41-year-old Peterek met Tuesday. She described his gift as "what a blessing."

Peterek says it will take a couple of weeks to move the modular home for Cisneros.

With Resounding Thanks At Christmas!

As we give thanks to the Lord at this special time of year, we also offer our gratitude to the many good people who have shown their friendship and goodwill towards us.

Merry Christmas!

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As we count our blessings this holiday season and reflect on the miracle of life, we realize how much ours has been enhanced by knowing and serving all of you.

May you and your loved ones revel in the joy of the season, and please accept our best wishes and gratitude.

Merry Christmas!

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Pampa boys swim to victory in Seminole

by Stuart Stoffle
The Swimming Harvesters took to the water at the Seminole Aqua Tribe Invitational Meet at the Seminole High School pool. The Boys' team brought home the first place trophy with a score of 132.5 besting second place Clovis' score of 98.5. Two school record equivalent times were set in the 400-meter and 200-meter freestyle relay events by seniors Colby Dennis, Dustin Neef, Cole Guyer and junior Kelly Stoffle. The 200 free time was 1:47.38 and the 400 was 4:03.27. Dennis, Stoffle and Neef later turned in an exciting one, two, four finish in the 100-meter freestyle in adjacent lanes. Dennis had a 59.68, Stoffle a 59.91 and Neef a 1:01.90. Senior Team Captain Guyer finished first in the 100 backstroke (1:11.57) and second in the 200 freestyle (2:18.71). Neef and Dennis finished third (26:53) and fourth (26.83) in the 50-meter freestyle. Stoffle added a second place finish in the 200 individual medley with 2:32.45.

"The kids hard work in practice is really starting to pay off." Said Coach Ed Garvin. "We needed some freshmen and soph-

omores to step up and help out, and they did."

Freshman Nate Towry placed third in the 400-meter freestyle and sixth in the 200 free (2:29.16). The boys' B-relay team of freshman Spencer Estes, junior Ethan Addy, sophomore Jaden Payne and junior Christian Hinkle added a sixth place in their 200 freestyle relay (1:58.86). Also, sophomore Cody Hudson finished third in the 100-meter breaststroke in 1:21.77.

The girls' team finished fourth in the Seminole meet with a total of 64 points, just behind Andrews (77 points) and Abilene Wylie (80 points). The girls' 200-meter medley relay team started out with a strong third place finish (2:31.80). They are freshman Kendle Ramey, Senior Abby West, freshman Jessica Covil and sophomore Jessica Gutierrez. The same foursome later finished fifth in the 200 freestyle relay with a 2:16.54. Senior captain West added two firsts in individual events: 2:57.61 in the 200-meter individual medley and 1:28.54 in the 100 breaststroke. Ramey led all others in her 400-meter freestyle finishing at 5:47.07, and added a fifth



Pictured with the first place Seminole meet trophy are from left Seniors Colby Dennis, Dustin Neef, Cole Guyer and Junior Kelly Stoffle.

place in the 100 backstroke (1:23.05). Covil added two third places in the 200 freestyle (2:48.14)

and 100 freestyle (1:35.96).

The Harvesters' next meet is a rare home meet,

hosting rival Tascosa High School and San Jacinto Christian Academy at 10 a.m. on January 10, 2009

in the Pampa Youth and Community Center, 1005 W. Harvester.

Pampa Events and opportunities

• **Lovett Memorial Library** in Pampa will close at 6 p.m. Dec. 24 and will remain closed Dec. 25 and 26. The library will reopen for normal hours Dec. 27.

• **Carson County Square House Museum** in Panhandle will host an artist reception for Charles Firestone from 2:30-4 p.m. Jan. 11 in Hazlewood Gallery of the museum. Firestone is from Dalhart. He has studied under Dord Fitz and other artists. He belongs to several area art groups as a student and as an instructor. Firestone works primarily in oils

but also uses watercolor, pastels, acrylics and personal photographs. A wide range of subjects from landscapes to portraits will be on display at the museum. For more information, call the museum at (806) 537-3524.

• **The 26th Annual Benefit Bridal Show** will be staged from 12:30-4:30 p.m. Jan. 11 in the Heritage Ball Room of Amarillo Civic Center in Amarillo by Bride's World. The event will include 100 merchants, continuous modeling of bridal wear, a silent auction and a grand prize giveaway. Tickets will be \$6 at the door or may be purchased in advance at www.bridesworld.com on the Internet.

• **Pampa Book Club** will meet at 10 a.m. the second Wednesday of each month in the Texas Room of Lovett

Memorial Library. The 2009 reading schedule is as follows: Jan. 14, "The Last Lecture" by Randy Pausch; Feb. 11, "Three Cups of Tea" by Greg Mortenson and Davie Relin; March 11, "Home: A Memoir of My Early Years" by Julie Andrews; and April 8, "The Glass Castle" by Jeannette Walls. The May 13 book for review will be announced at a later date. Public welcome.

• **The South Plains Agriculture Wind and Wildlife Conference** will begin with registration at 7:30 a.m. Feb. 13 at the American Wind Power Center and Museum in Lubbock. The conference is being conducted by Texas AgriLife Extension Service, Texas Wildlife Association, and Texas Parks and Wildlife. The purpose of the conference is to explore the pros and cons associated with the

industry in Texas. For more information, call Ken Cearley, Extension wildlife specialist, at (806) 651-5760.

• **Fawn Lake Press** is offering free "Proud to be an American" flag decals to anyone sending a self-addressed stamped envelope to Fawn Lake Press, 54 Fawn Lake Rd., Durango, CO 81301. Active servicemen and women need not send a SASE to receive the free 2 x 3-inch color decals. Fawn Lake will pay their postage.

• **Manhattanville My Soldier** is seeking volunteers to "adopt" a deployed United States Servicemember. To find out more, visit www.mysoldier.com on-line or write to: Manhattanville College My Soldier Department, 2900 Purchase St., Purchase, NY 10577.

Texas extends health coverage for children

AUSTIN (AP)— Texas is extending Medicaid coverage for 90 days for 34,000 children because Hurricane Ike may have prevented their families from re-enrolling, state officials said.

"Given the widespread damage and disruption in services caused by Ike, we believe it's wise to err on the side of caution and give these families more time to renew their children's coverage," said Albert Hawkins, executive commissioner, Texas Health and Human Services.

The extension begins Jan. 1. State officials had said thousands of children living in Hurricane Ike-devastated areas were in danger of losing health coverage in 2009 because they had not re-enrolled in government health insurance programs.

The agency surveyed more than 100 southeast Texas families, and one in four said they never received a renewal form,

agency spokeswoman Stephanie Goodman said. Of those who did receive the form, nearly 80 percent said they returned it, she said. Goodman said the state has been unable to determine why the forms weren't received at the postal boxes used by an enrollment center.

The extension does not apply in cases where the state received the application and determined that the family was not eligible, Goodman said.

New packets will be sent to families in order to be renewed by April, officials said.

Barbara Best, who heads the Children's Defense Fund Texas, applauded the decision. However, she said the state's eligibility system for social programs "continues to be very hard for families to navigate" and needs to be improved.

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And the angel said, "I bring you good tidings of great joy... Unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord." Luke 2:10,11

May the peace and joy of this holiday season be in your heart now and throughout the coming year.

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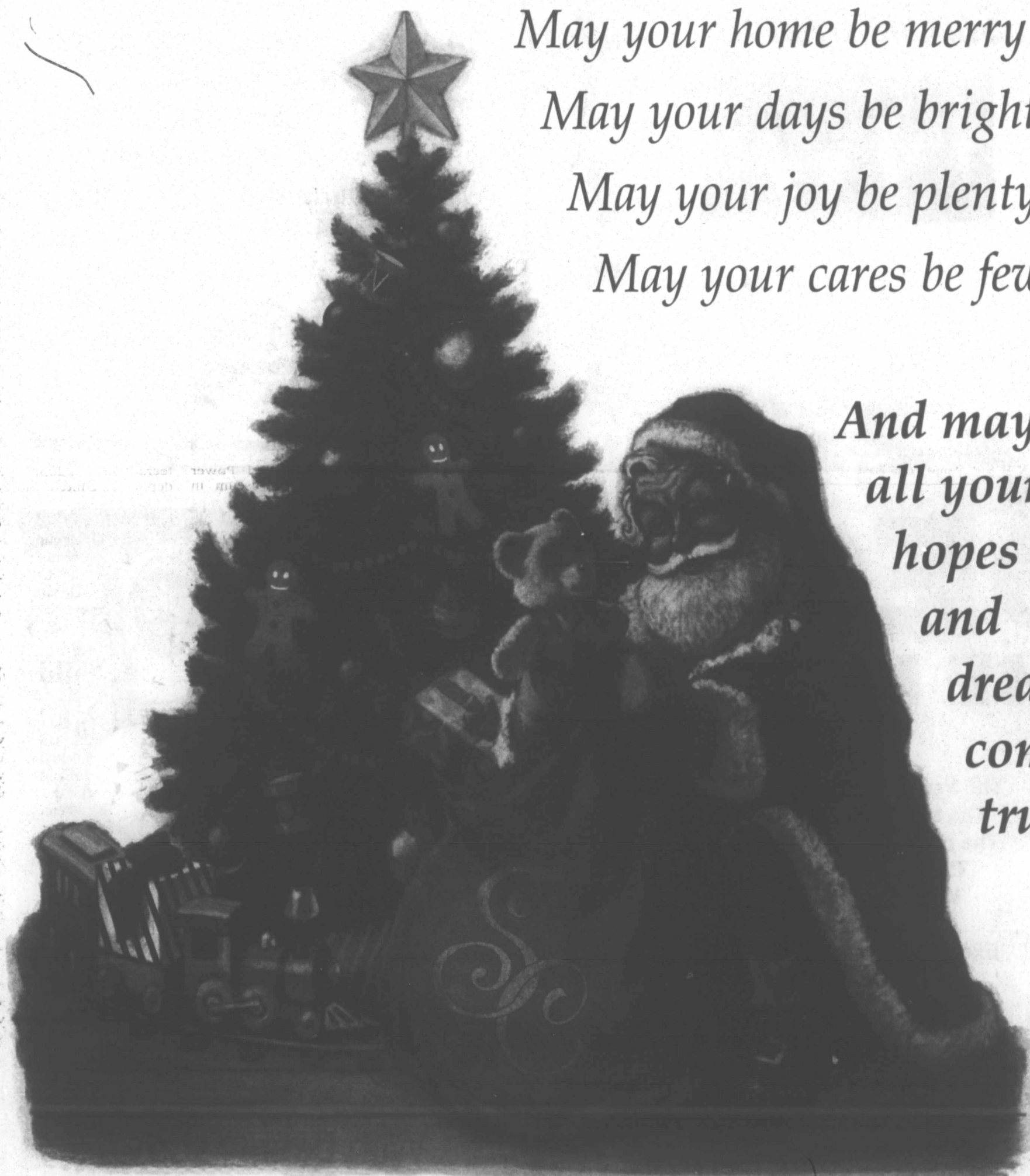
May your heart be light...

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May your joy be plenty...

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May your holiday be filled with joy and the coming year be overflowing with all the good things in life.

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— Isaiah 9:6

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Enough trials to keep you strong
Enough sorrow to keep you human
Enough failure to keep you humble
Enough hope to keep you happy
Enough success to keep you eager
Enough friends to give you comfort
Enough wealth to meet your needs
Enough enthusiasm to look forward
Enough faith to banish depression
Enough determination to make each
day a better day than yesterday.*



Annual Christmas ad as it appeared in 1976.

*As we look back to simpler times,
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United MARKET STREET Amigos

Post-holiday trash can yield memories, treasures

By **LEANNE ITALIE**
Associated Press Writer

While regifting may be frowned upon by some, re-gift-wrapping can be a delight for many.

Every holiday season, dedicated holiday recyclers find ways to reclaim wrapping paper, containers and bows, using them again and again in later years. Those who do it say they can help save the planet, while spending less and savoring memories.

"I haven't had anyone give me funny looks when I ask for the (gift) bag back, most people are just interested in what's inside and never worry about the bag," said Susan Palmquist, whose Budgetsmartgirl.com offers money-saving tips on everything from food to hair color.

What to save, stash and revive for later use depends on your comfort level. Gift wrap with few tears, folds or dangling tape can be ironed, tissue paper with no tears can be smoothed and flattened for storage, bows can be steamed and fluffed, fabric bags gently cleaned, and ribbons pressed and rewound for use good as new.

Boxes and bags from Tiffany, Saks, Nordstrom and other high-end stores are known for durability, said enthusiasts, some of whom carry on Christmas recycling traditions that began with their parents and grandparents.

Tracey McBride has used three of her mother's decorative English biscuit tins for gifts and Santa treats under the tree after she rescued them from her parents' garage sale pile more than 20 years ago. Like Fitzpatrick, she keeps them in the family so she can use them again, recalling her mother's story about craving the biscuits when she was pregnant with McBride's older brother while living in England.

"They remind me of exotic gift boxes," McBride said.

Growing up, McBride remembers the tins around the house, filled with teas, office supplies and crackers. Now, after the death of her mom from multiple sclerosis in 2006, they're also filled with bittersweet thoughts each Christmas.

"I have the original three tins and a half-dozen more. They look charming set under a tree and evoke the memory of my mother," McBride said.

Recycling gift wrap and other holiday

trappings has value beyond sentiment. The Clean Air Council estimates that added food waste, shopping bags, packaging, paper, bows and ribbons create an additional 1 million tons of waste per week between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day, much of it going to landfills.

Some of that can be avoided.

Leslie Carlson of Portland, Ore., said she has gift wrap on hand that's older than her marriage, about 10 years. She hasn't bought a ribbon in five years or more.

"We always warn the receiver that the present is not actually from Nordstrom, even though we do think you'll like it," she said.

Dorothy Molstad of Stillwater, Minn., said recycling fabric bags is so popular in her extended family that each household has its own patterns for easy retrieval and return.

"You can make it to fit any gift you need, and clean up after gift opening is easy," she said.

If you have no intention of chasing down gift boxes or bags after turning them over to friends, family or colleagues, you can cover store logos with inexpensive decals or seasonal fabric as a way to encourage receivers to pass them on rather than throw them out.

Veteran holiday recyclers suggest saving a variety of box sizes that can nest inside each other to avoid flattening them during storage.

Even throwaways that may not look worthy of saving likely can be used again.

Long ribbon is the best, for example, because it can be wrapped around most gifts, but shorter bits can be repurposed for school science projects, arts and crafts, doll hair makeovers or a decorative touch on greeting cards, candleholders or around the bottlenecks of gifted wine and spirits.

"For as long as I can remember my parents neatly folded the wrapping paper, saved ribbons and boxes, and it used to drive me crazy," said Kara DiCamillo of Newport, R.I. "I think they still use a box from a company that went out of business 20 years ago, and we still laugh about it each Christmas. Now, as I've gotten older and conscious about the environment, I am following in their footsteps."

Merry Christmas!



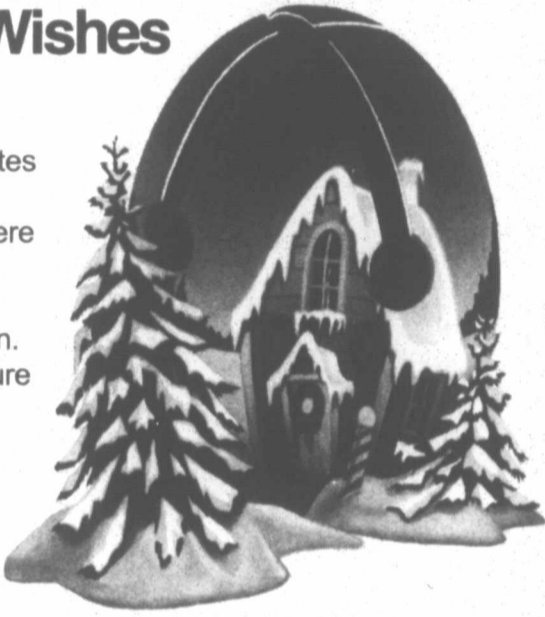
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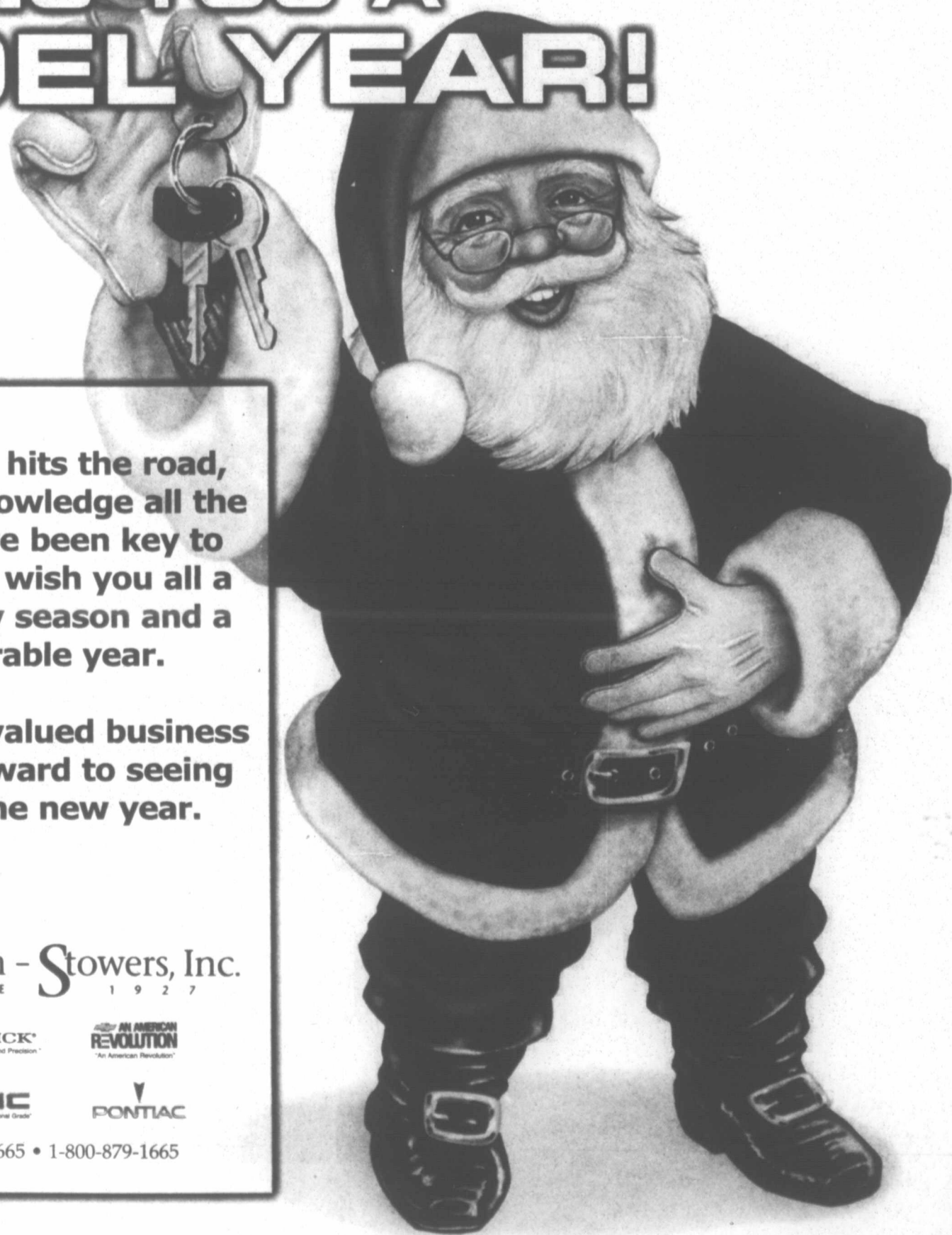
To all our clients, friends and associates everywhere, we extend our sincere best wishes and gratitude this holiday season. It's always a pleasure doing business with you and we look forward to serving you in the future.



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Shirtless images of Obama cause stir online

WASHINGTON (AP) — Forget Barack Obama's staff making contact with a governor charged with corruption. What's got everyone talking is the president-elect's fine first form.

"FIT FOR OFFICE: Buff Bam is Hawaii hunk," the New York Post gushed on its cover Tuesday above a photo of the future president strolling without a shirt in Hawaii. The Drudge Report called him "President Beefcake" while TMZ said the president-elect is "still humble enough to do laundry — ON HIS ABS!"

The photos were distributed by Bauer-Griffin, a photo agency more typically found on the corners of Hollywood. Photographer Chris Behnke simply strolled along the beach to get the shot, said agency co-owner Frank Griffin.

Obama "wasn't hiding. He was completely out in the open," Griffin said. "We didn't by any stretch of the imagination expect to get the images we got."

Griffin said Behnke had gone to the beach to get general views of the estate where Obama is vacationing, but instead found easy access to a view of the first family hitting the beach. "We use the expression, 'He gave it up,'" Griffin said.

Members of the press corps traveling with Obama have been careful to respect his privacy. A spokesman traveling with Obama in Hawaii did not have immediate comment.

Griffin said he doesn't expect his agency to stake out Washington on a regular basis, but added that Obama is "now the world's biggest celebrity, just after Angelina and Brad. I guess they're neck and neck right now."

The celebrity description is apt, even if Obama faces a plummeting economy and two wars upon entering office. He's seen as often on "Access Hollywood" as on the nightly news, and appears in "Us Weekly" with the regularity of a Jennifer

Aniston. And should we really be surprised?

When John F. Kennedy was pictured shirtless, there were media accounts fretting about the threshold we had crossed as a country, said David Greenberg, a professor at Rutgers University who is working on a history of political spin.

"There was John F. Kennedy by the beach, shirt off, this young, glamorous president," Greenberg said. "So in a way this is 48 years old now that we're having this."

Since then we've had Lyndon B. Johnson lifting his shirt to show reporters his surgery scar and pictures of Ronald Reagan and Bill Clinton in swim trunks.

"It was kind of an erosion of what had been boundaries of formality between the president and the public," Greenberg said. "We've had 'boxers and briefs' and a real acquaintanceship with a personal side, an uninhibited side, an unclothed side of the president."

Obama's physique has been well-exposed; photographers snapped him body surfing in Hawaii during the campaign. He was on the November cover of Men's Health and detailed his workouts for the magazine: 45 minutes, six days a week, alternating weights and cardio.

Peter Moore, editor of Men's Health, called Obama focused and disciplined about his workouts and what he eats. "I'd say he has a four-pack, rather than a six-pack, but most of us are working with a full keg," he said.

He said Obama has buffed up since his days on the road during the campaign: "It's heavy lifting to form your Cabinet, that's for sure."

Combine the increased interest in a president's personal life with an increasing hunger for celebrity photos and a chiseled presidential body, and Obama

becomes an obvious target for paparazzi. Apparently the Obama Girl isn't the only one with a crush.

"Comments have been 95 percent positive, everything from 'hellooo president' to a 65-year-old lady who said she had to wait this long to find a president who she finds attractive," Griffin said.

Earlier on his vacation, Obama was cranky as reporters snapped pictures through a chain-link fence and bushes, asking "OK, guys. Come on. ... How many shots do you need?"

But such personal shots — dropping the girls off at school, hitting the gym, practicing his golf swing — also serve to humanize the president. Greenberg can see why Obama might allow the beach photos to be taken.

"I'm sure if he didn't do it on purpose, he's not exactly crying in his coffee about it," he said. "I don't see any downside."

Well, maybe one: Might world leaders take the president less seriously if they can picture him in his underwear?

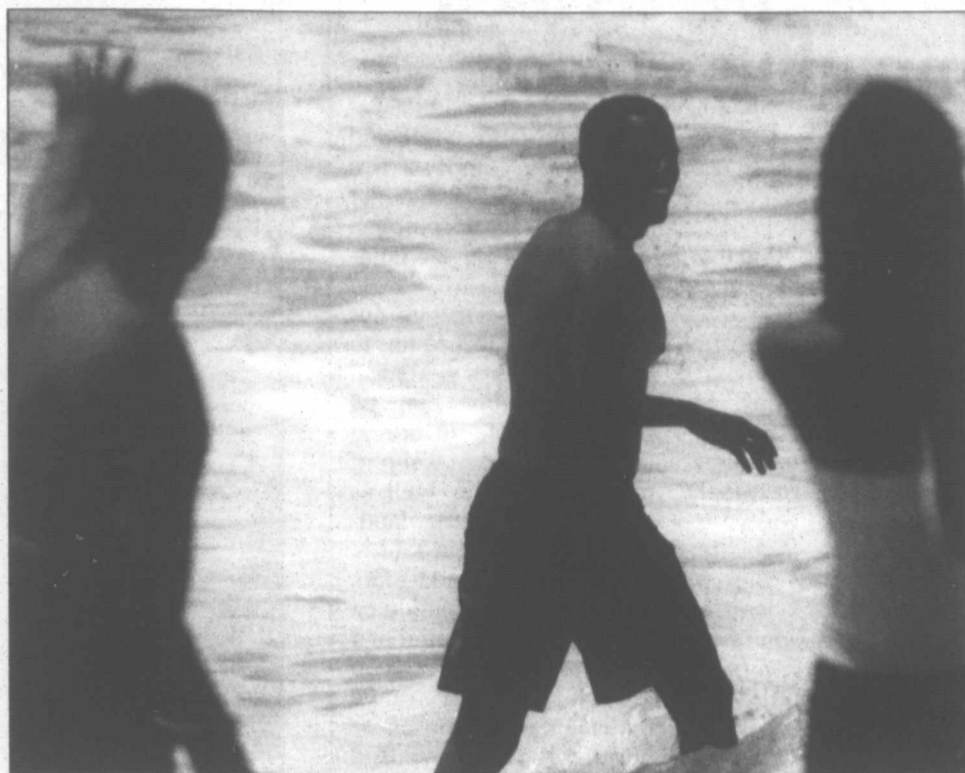
Fortunately, French President Nicolas Sarkozy beat him to it with stripped-down beach photos. Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin was pictured shirtless on a fishing expedition.

"In some ways we're entering a more casual international environment, too," Greenberg said. "But if he's sitting down with Putin, he has to project gravitas."

Griffin has submitted his photo agency for credentials for Obama's inauguration on Jan. 20. He said it's too soon to estimate how much Bauer-Griffin will earn from the beach photos "within tens of thousands or hundreds of thousands."

"I have a feeling that the president-elect kind of accepts this, that it goes with the territory," Griffin said. "He's become a celebrity. I think the pictures humanize him and show that he's just like the rest of us."

Only with tighter abs.



In this Aug. 14, 2008, file photo people on the beach call out to Democratic presidential candidate Sen. Barack Obama, D-Ill., as he heads back into the water while body-surfing in Honolulu, Hawaii. (AP Photo/Alex Brandon, File)



In this Aug. 19, 1962, file photo, President John F. Kennedy smiles as he is surrounded by fans, after going for a swim in the ocean behind his brother-in-law's home in Santa Monica, Calif., and being mobbed by hundreds of bathers. (AP Photo/Los Angeles Times, Bill Beebe, File)

Dressy jackets get a second life with jeans

NEW YORK (AP) — So you couldn't resist a little holiday gift for yourself and you bought into one of the season's trends — the dressy jacket — and it looked great as a topper to your party dress.

Now what? Most calendars aren't booked with fancy parties during the rest of the winter, but that shouldn't stop you from wearing the jacket, says David Hacker, vice president of trend and color at Kohl's.

"The dressy jacket is not limited to holiday parties alone," Hacker says. "To maximize the versatility of the jacket women can either dress it up or down."

The easiest way to tone it down is with jeans and a T-shirt. To keep the

whole outfit balanced, though, Hacker also suggests wearing those jeans with heels.

"Think of the jacket as the 'completer' piece. It does more than a pant or a top to create an outfit. Into the winter, there's also the issue of warmth," he adds.

Some of the most fashionable styles are cropped with a boxy shape, but longer, more tailored silhouettes are also making a comeback — and that's appreciated by women who want something to cover their hips, Hacker says.

Purple remains a popular color, and teal and neutrals are predicted to be strong this spring so you'll get several seasons out of the jacket.

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At The Holidays



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Don't wait too late to use prescribed burning as tool

VERNON — "Plans" for prescribed burns need to be turned into "actions" before a wildfire occurs, said a Texas AgriLife Extension Service specialist.

"I believe that we often plan in our minds to make proper preparations, but these 'planned thoughts' never seem to materialize until the crisis arrives, and then we are forced to hastily make decisions and preparations after the fact," said J.F. Cadenhead, AgriLife Extension rangeland specialist in Vernon.

When utilizing prescribed burning as a tool to mitigate the negative effects of wildfire, landowners should not wait until the wildfire is bearing down upon them before they hastily begin removing the fuel load by burning blacklines and backfires, Cadenhead said.

It was well known following the massive wildfire of 1988 (around 360,000 acres burned in numerous counties), that if substantial acres had not already been burned in Shackelford County with "prescribed fire" during the few months leading up to that fateful March, many more acres, structures, livestock and possibly human lives would have been lost, he said.

"Fortunately, the fuel load (grasses and other vegetation) had already been reduced through prescribed burning on various ranches across the county that the wildfire's advance was often impeded in just the nick of time," Cadenhead said.

The main objective of using prescribed fire on

rangeland is to safely and effectively apply fire under a prescribed set of conditions to accomplish certain goals for the landscape, he said.

"The prescription not only varies according to the landowner's goals and objectives, but can be highly variable according to the type and makeup of the vegetation as well as topography of the landscape," Cadenhead said.

An important and often overlooked goal should be to reduce the potential of a wildfire. "Whether you are burning for range management purposes or burning to reduce wildfire hazards, proper and advanced planning is required for safe and effective burns to occur," Cadenhead said.

He provided some tips for landowners planning a prescribed burn on larger scale ranches, adding that many of these same principles can be applicable to smaller properties as well:

- Get professional help to design and develop a fire plan. Determine goals for the burn with advice from a knowledgeable person to see if they are realistic.
- Check on fire liability riders for the property's insurance policy. It may need updating.
- Plan early enough to acquire needed equipment (sprayers, drip torches, two-way radios, weather monitoring instruments, etc.) and accomplish heavy equipment work (bulldozers or maintainers) for cutting fireguards or re-cutting roads.
- Plan early enough to allow for deferment of grazing so that enough

Altrusa reception



Barbara Hahn, president of Altrusa International Inc., of Pampa, was recently honored during a Christmas reception hosted by Altrusa Board of Directors at the home of Mary McDaniel. Pictured left to right are (back row) Pat Johnson, Beth Miller, Terry Gamblin, Sandra McKinney, Terri Williams, Eileen Kludt; (front row) Myrna Orr, Hahn and Kerrick Horton.

submitted photo.

grass to carry a good flame front is available by burn date. That may require a full growing season or more, depending on the rainfall.

- Try to participate in several prescribed burns before scheduling one.
- Locate some skilled help with experience in prescribed burning or send someone to burn schools or workshops. This may require a lot of advanced planning and dollars.
- As the burn date nears, follow the fire plan in securing help and in notification of neighbors, emergency personnel such as local and county fire departments, county sher-

iff's offices, highway patrol, oil and gas lessees, grazing lessees and hunters.

Some potential problems and safety tips that small landowners should consider are:

- Contact neighbors in the subdivision, the local subdivision authorities and local law enforcement authorities, secure the proper permission and plan how to work cooperatively.
- Examine all structures around the home and outbuildings for vegetation buildup. Grass is the main fuel for fire, but dried weeds can also burn.

Closely shred or mow areas leading up to structures or to other fuel loads, and possibly consider plowing or burning some areas to make a fire-guard. The taller the grass, the wider the fireguard needs to be. A rule of thumb is to make the fire-guard approximately four to five times wider than the vegetation is tall.

- Avoid driving and parking equipment and vehicles in tall, dry grass. Move equipment to a safe area and/or closely mow the parking area or ranch roads. If needed, closely shred ditches along ranch roads and camping areas prior to hunter access.
- Watch for sparks from

rocks when shredding or mowing. If needed, wet down the area before mowing.

- Maintain adequate pasture fireguards, especially those along public roads.
 - Be aware of county burn bans.
 - Maintain spray equipment and keep the water tank full and sprayer ready for emergencies. Check for a good battery and full fuel tank.
 - Be sure the 9-1-1 address is clearly visible from the road.
- Cadenhead said most rural fire departments are familiar with the concepts of "prescribed burning."

With Well Wishes



May you and the ones you care for enjoy a happy and healthy holiday season.

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HANDY HOLIDAY Greetings

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To all those who've passed through our doors this year, we offer our best wishes and thanks. It's always a pleasure serving you.

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Stores pull all-nighters, trying to save season

NEW YORK (AP) — The nation's stores are pulling all-nighters and deepening discounts in the final hours before Christmas, trying to draw in all the shoppers they can as they face dismal sales in what will likely end up as the worst holiday season in decades.

As much as retailers do, however, analysts say the crowds appears to be lighter this week than a year ago — heightening worries about the survival prospects for many merchants.

In Christmases past, the retail industry has depended on last-minute shoppers, along with those pulled in by 24-hour shopping options, to help save the season. But this year, customers worried about their jobs and retirement funds have been pulling back their spending.

A lot is at stake. The holiday shopping season accounts for as much as 40 percent of annual profits for many retailers, and the earnings outlook is growing more dire every week.

"The question that we are really trying to answer is how bad was the season," said Michael P. Niemira, chief economist at the International Council of Shopping Centers. He now expects that sales at established stores for November and December will be down 1.5 percent to 2 percent — making it the weakest holiday season since at least 1969, when the index began.

Excluding Wal-Mart Stores Inc., which is among the few bright spots, same-store sales are expected to fall from 6.5 percent to 7 percent. Same-store sales are sales at stores opened at least a year and are considered a key indicator of a retailer's health.

Meanwhile, ShopperTrak RCT Corp.,

which measures traffic and total retail sales at more than 50,000 outlets, said Tuesday that total sales for the Saturday before Christmas were up 0.5 percent, while customer count dropped 17 percent compared with a year earlier. The Saturday before Christmas is expected to be the second-biggest day of the season.

But the holiday season was essentially over before the end of the Thanksgiving weekend for many merchants, as they were forced to offer marathon shopping hours and big discounts throughout November. Markdowns have only gotten deeper since then.

And if shoppers thought stores were practically giving away the merchandise before, deals are only expected to get better after Dec. 25, particularly on items such as outerwear. Merchants including AnnTaylor Loft were already sending out e-mails to customers Tuesday, promoting after-Christmas discounts that can be enjoyed now.

Despite such come-ons, many shoppers aren't in a big rush.

"I'm just kind of getting an idea. I'm just doing some comparison shopping," said Scott Meyer, a 57-year-old health and safety consultant, who was looking at bracelets at a Macy's near Chicago that was open overnight — one of 13 Macy's stores that are staying open 24/7 until Christmas Eve.

"I'll probably go to a local place and if I don't like what they have there, I'll come back here tomorrow night at 2 in the morning," he added.

Later Tuesday, Bobby Rivers of Warrenton, N.C., was shopping with his two daughters at Triangle Town Center

in Raleigh.

"We choose one day to do Christmas shopping every year, and today happens to be the day," he said. The 50-year-old public correction officer said he had a separate savings account set up for Christmas shopping. Still, he said he's been cautious. He pointed to his Belk shopping bag, which held a single pair of jeans.

"I'm more conservative this year," he said while waiting for his daughters to finish shopping at a clothing store. "I'm not buying a lot of elaborate things."

Retailers have a lot riding on the last few days before Christmas. Last year, the last five full shopping days — Dec. 19 through Dec. 23 — accounted for approximately 17 percent of holiday sales, according to ShopperTrak. The first week after Christmas accounts for about 15 percent of total holiday sales, according to Niemira.

Marshal Cohen, chief industry analyst at market research firm NPD Group Inc., and C. Britt Beemer, chairman of America's Research Group, both noted that crowds were thinner this week than last year. Still, they believe that retailers offering the marathon hours in the season's finale makes sense since the extra labor costs are minimal compared with the goodwill that stores enjoy by offering a convenience to time-starved shoppers.

Ed Schmults, chief executive of toy retailer FAO Schwarz, said that the company's two main locations in Manhattan and in Las Vegas are staying open Christmas Day for the second year in a row.

"We get a lot of appreciation from our

customers," he said.

Schmults reported that business has been stronger in the final days of the season compared with the same time last year. But he acknowledged that the surge won't be enough to offset a drop in overall holiday sales, which have been tracking below last year since late October.

What worries Schmults and others is January and beyond. One factor that stores may not be able to count on is the post-Christmas shopping boost, which had traditionally been spurred by shoppers returning to the malls to redeem their gift cards on discounted and regular-price merchandise. But gift card sales have been disappointing this year as shoppers find they get better value by buying discounted merchandise. Consumers are also fearful of buying gift cards from retailers that may go bankrupt.

Karen MacDonald, a spokeswoman at mall operator Taubman Centers Inc., said gift card sales are below last year. Beemer estimates that they are about 30 percent below a year ago.

Such woes are only good news for shoppers. Dan de Grandpre, editor-in-chief of dealnews.com, which tracks discounts both online and at regular stores, said he is still seeing stores inundated with merchandise. That means that shoppers will have a lot of choices among the piles of deeply discounted items after Christmas.

He's hoping to take advantage of the post-Dec. 25 discounts himself by nabbing a high-quality cashmere scarf for at least half off — or he'll wait until it is.

16th Not-So-Blue Christmas Eve Party in Kittitas

KITTITAS, Wash. (AP) — Organizers of the "Not-So-Blue" Christmas Eve party in Kittitas expect around 60 people to show up for the 16th year of the event at the Kittitas Community Hall.

It's a potluck dinner for people who might otherwise be alone on the holiday.

It was started by Mary Eliason and her husband when she was Kittitas postmaster and talked with residents about the holidays. She told the Ellensburg Daily Record the party brings together people who can't travel, single moms and dads and boyfriends and girlfriends who have broken up.

After the meal, they share stories, sing carols, exchange "white elephant" gifts and play games.

Man tries to go home for holidays — by fire truck

SOUTH SALT LAKE, Utah (AP) — What kind of mileage does that thing get?

Police in South Salt Lake, Utah, have arrested a man they say tried to steal a fire truck so he could drive home to Washington for Christmas.

Detective Gary Keller says firefighters on a medical call heard the \$500,000 truck's air horn blaring Monday and ran outside. They found a man in the driver's seat trying to drive away.

After a lengthy struggle, firefighters were finally able to subdue the man until police arrived.

Police say the 25-year-old man told them he wanted to go to Washington to see his mother for Christmas.

Santa Anna cannonball stolen in San Antonio

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — The original owner of a cannonball reported stolen from a display in San Antonio won't be claiming the weapon of war when it's found.

Police say the historic cannonball, which was still missing Tuesday, had belonged to Mexican Gen. Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna.

The general was in charge of Mexican soldiers who stormed the Alamo on March 6, 1836.

Police say the softball-size cannonball was in a display case at the Fairmount Hotel. The theft was discovered Monday.

Police, in a news release, said the cannonball has been certified by the Institute of Texan Cultures as being authentic.

Southwest seeks OK from DOT for WestJet codeshare

DALLAS (AP) — Southwest Airlines has taken another regulatory step as it seeks to implement a codeshare agreement with Canadian carrier WestJet.

Southwest late Monday said it had submitted an application to the U.S. Department of Transportation to acquire the required international route authority.

The application for a certificate to provide foreign air transportation is needed before Dallas-based Southwest Airlines can fully implement the previ-

ously announced codeshare deal.

Codesharing allows airlines to sell seats on each other's flights. Southwest has formed a similar alliance with Volaris in Mexico.

Southwest says it hopes to receive the route authority in the first quarter of 2009 and announce codeshare flight schedules with WestJet a few months later.

The certificate would also allow Southwest to operate flights to Canada with its own aircraft, but the carrier says it has no plans to do so at this time.

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Tours end in trauma for former Army captain

By CHRIS ROBERTS
El Paso Times

EL PASO, Texas (AP) — In Iraq, soldiers barely clinging to life asked Capt. Fayette Frahm to contact loved ones and deliver deathbed messages. She saw the ghosts of those mangled soldiers wandering her home after she returned.

In Afghanistan, late into the night, she contemplated what she would do if the camp was overrun by nearby Taliban fighters and she was unable to kill her attackers. Those long nights and days come back to her in nightmares.

Frahm's experiences in Iraq and Afghanistan are a testament to the fact that women, although not allowed in combat occupations, increasingly are dealing with the terrors and tests of mettle that come with war. Frahm, serving as a hospital administrator, found herself daily confronting death and her own mortality.

At 38 years of age, she has more than 17 years of experience in the medical field serving in four wars in 12 countries. Out of the Army for nearly a year, she suffers from post-traumatic stress disorder, or PTSD, and traumatic brain injury, or TBI, and she says the transition from soldier to civilian has been anything but smooth.

Her tour in Iraq started with Fort Bliss' 31st Combat Support Hospital.

She arrived at the Balad Hospital in Camp Anaconda on Jan. 4, 2004, as what appears to be the first female hospital commander in that country.

"A 19-year-old kid grabbed my arm and gave me a picture of his wife and told me to tell her he loved her because he was-

n't going to make it," Frahm said. "You can't pick up 10 dead or mangled American soldiers everyday without having some flashbacks."

More than 2,000 mortar rounds rained down inside the compound during 10 months at the base, she said, three of which landed within 50 yards — close enough to knock her down. "I had a couple of concussions and a little bit of shrapnel," Frahm said. "I checked myself out and there was nothing broken and (no body parts) missing, so I went back to work."

Most of her unit returned to Fort Bliss in October, but a forward surgical team needed Frahm's skills in Tarin Kowt, Afghanistan, which is in a region that was known as one of the last strongholds of the Taliban regime and other anti-coalition forces. She wouldn't return home until February the following year.

"We were not mortared in Afghanistan, but our perimeters were constantly threatened," Frahm said. "Five months in Afghanistan was worse than 10 months in Iraq. We were just too far out and undefended."

As is required by Army procedure, she kept a weapon "literally in my sleeping bag," she said. She kept a special clip with two bullets in it for her pistol, "one for the person coming toward me and the other was, if I couldn't stop him, for me."

"It was the back-to-back luxury tour," she said with a grim smile.

When Frahm first returned to the United States, she told the doctors what had happened during her tours, and they told

her to go home and have a nice vacation.

At home, she didn't sleep, hyperventilated, suffered flashbacks and hallucinations and had ringing in her ears. Less than two months later, after going for 14 days without sleep, she was hospitalized. It was then she received the first PTSD diagnosis.

"It took me forever not to see dead people walking around my house," Frahm said.

The first signs of the brain injuries appeared when she began attending Baylor University. She was accepted to the university before her deployment based on her high test scores but she found herself struggling.

During the Army's medical review to determine whether she was fit for duty, Frahm was diagnosed with TBI. She was medically retired from the Army in late 2007 and Veterans Affairs ultimately classified her as 100 percent disabled and unemployable.

Then Frahm started losing feeling in her left leg. An MRI done by her civilian doctor revealed fractured vertebrae in her neck, pieces of which are pressing on her spinal cord, requiring surgery.

"Three mortar blasts, that's altered my entire life," Frahm said, adding that she had been athletic — a long-distance runner and a trainer on her rowing team at California State University.

The struggle is shared by her family.

"Besides being quite humbled and blessed that she returned home safe," said Marcy Frahm, the soldier's mother, "the look in her eyes was the look of a lost soul."

She talked with her



Former U. S. Army Capt. Fayette Frahm smiles as she talks about some of her more happier times during her time served in Afghanistan, while in the Army. Frahm's northeast side home is covered with crosses that line the walls of her home. (AP Photo/El Paso Times, Ruben R. Ramirez)

daughter many times on the phone and she noticed that quick anger had darkened a personality that formerly was "bouncy, outspoken, determined."

"You want to have the love and concern to go through this and you want to show them you appreciate what they did (in their military service)," Marcy Frahm said. "But sometimes, at a point in time, it's impossible because they don't want help."

Marcy Frahm said she was hospitalized with severe chest pains, the result of anxiety attacks.

"If you really love somebody, you can't go through all this hell and not die with them," she

said. Now the war veteran has a lack of sensation from the waist down on her left side and coordination problems with her left hand. In physical therapy, she has learned to pick up things without being able to feel them.

"There are some days when I'm sharp as a whip and other days — don't bother talking to me," Frahm said.

She admits she was in denial early on but, when she came to the realization that she would need help, it didn't come easily or quickly.

"You guys think it's a seamless transition to the VA. I'm here to tell you

it's not," Frahm said, adding that she has had to carry 26 pounds of paperwork in her wheelchair from office to office. "I had to prove to them (VA) that I needed the same care I was afforded on active duty."

Feeling alone and overwhelmed by her loss of physical and mental capacity, she asked VA for additional counseling sessions. She was refused.

Frahm is committed to changing the status quo.

"I wouldn't allow this (poor quality of) treatment in a combat zone where we had a lot more excuses to be complacent," she said.

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Christmas tree trains keep on chugging

NEW YORK (AP) — Chris Forsyth's best Christmas was when he woke up to a train chugging around the tree, a conductor's hat and a little pair of overalls.

So he makes sure to put a train around his Christmas tree each year.

"It brings back those good memories," said Forsyth, 43, of Wheat Ridge, Colo., adding that he is reminded of the excitement of that Christmas morning when he was 6. "It conveys the magic of childhood."

Memories are what often bring out Christmas tree trains this time of the year, as people purchase new sets or dig out their old ones for repairs.

Electric trains under the Christmas tree date back to at least the early 1900s, according to Paul D. Race, editor of BigChristmasTrains.com. But prior to electric, there were wind-up and push trains.

In the 1920s, '30s and '40s, a good train set could cost as much as a washing machine, said Race.

"It was the biggest present you could possibly get, and as a result, it was reserved for Christmas," he said. "Once the presents were opened, usually the only place you could set up the track was around the tree."

Trains also had a special significance because they brought people home for the holidays, according to Ron Hollander's "All Aboard!: The Story of Joshua Lionel Cowen & His Lionel Train Company."

"So for many people, Christmas seemed to involve trains," said Race.

By 1960, Christmas trains were as ubiquitous as gaming systems are today, said Jerry Calabrese, CEO of Lionel, the leading model train manufacturer.

Even today, when the most-hyped electronics tend to be music players or communication devices, and old-fashioned electric train chugging around the

Christmas tree is popular.

Lionel is expecting a 50 percent increase in sales of starter sets, including licensed ones such as a Harry Potter "Hogwarts Express," over 2007 based

run sets, according to the company.

Lionel says it has run a marketing campaign to appeal to consumers beyond the hard-core hobbyists, creating new lines of train sets and putting them

their fathers, he said.

Mike Wolf, owner of MTH Electric Trains, says that's what he sees, too. The average age of his manufacturing company's customer is 52; many are Baby Boomers who want to pass the tradition on to their kids and grandkids.

Some train enthusiasts want the magic of a train but can't afford the \$200 or so for a complete set.

James Pentifallo, owner and manager of Ridgefield Hobby in Ridgefield, N.J., said more people are bringing in their trains for repairs this holiday season compared with previous years. He had 80 to 100 that needed to be fixed one week this month.

For many people, "there is no real money to buy a brand new train set," he said. "They'll fix the old stuff up and add a little bit to it."

At the other end of the spectrum, Caboose Hobbies in Denver reports similar sales numbers to last year, but more people investing more in the higher-end sets, says owner Duane Miller.

For Boomers, a train under the tree can be as much a part of decorating as ornaments and lights, he said.

Lou Failla, 48, of Fair Lawn, N.J., whose trains were featured in O Gauge Railroading magazine, said he and his friends would go to bed and dream about getting Christmas train sets. He got his first one when he was 5.

Failla, a cop, said his trains make him feel like a kid again. He can sit on the floor and watch them, see the lights and hear the sounds.

"What's nice is to be able to go back to that era, the simplicity of the trains running around the Christmas tree," he said. "It's symbolic. It's almost up there with the Christmas tree and Santa."

Some tips on Christmas tree trains

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Looking for a train to put around the Christmas tree? Here are some tips on how to choose the right one.

- Decide whether the train is more for a Christmas decoration or a new hobby. A complete starter set, which can run about \$200-\$300 and includes everything from the track to the transformer is the easiest way to set up a Christmas decoration.

- The most popular Christmas tree train is an O-gauge, an electric train set that plugs into the wall and has cars that are about 10 inches long, according to Lionel, which manufactures electric trains. There are many types of add-on cars and accessories available for an O-gauge.

- Think about how much space you have. With the track included in most sets, most people set up a 40-inch diameter circle around the Christmas tree, according to Lionel.

- Train cars should take up no more than one-third of the track, says Duane Miller, owner of Caboose Hobbies in Denver. You don't want the locomotive chasing the tail of the train, says Neil Besougloff, editor of Model Railroader magazine.

- Purchase the train from a reputable dealer, says James Pentifallo, owner and manager of Ridgefield Hobby in Ridgefield, N.J. A reputable dealer sells and services trains all year-round, not only during the holidays.

- Buy a reliable name, such as Lionel, MTH Electric Trains or Bachmann Trains, says Pentifallo.

- Don't shop only by price, says Besougloff. Consider the quality. You want to make sure the train runs next year, he says.

- Be careful about used trains. You may be buying someone else's headache that will cost you more to fix than it's worth, says Pentifallo.

on holiday pre-orders from major retailers. Lionel sold 200,000 model train sets in 2007 compared with 80,000 in 2004, and the bulk of those were the ready-to-

in places like Target, FAO Schwarz and Toys "R" Us, says Calabrese.

When people see them, they think about being a kid and connecting with



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Jackson chef makes 60 gingerbread houses

By **KELSEY DAYTON**

The Jackson Hole News & Guide

JACKSON, Wyo. (AP) — What do 60 gingerbread houses look like?

A 175-pound body of dough lay on a cart in the kitchen of The Wort Hotel.

In it was 25 pounds of butter, bricks of butter, that started as 1-pound slabs, each 32 servings.

"There's enough butter in there to give 18 people heart attacks," chef Cody Allen said.

The pounds of butter and flour and the cups of molasses and salt are all molded under Allen's hands to create the gingerbread houses The Wort Hotel uses for its annual decorating workshops, sold out weeks in advance.

"It's like dough in biblical proportions," Allen said.

Even with the dough divided into manageable hunks, it takes his full body weight to press each chunk down. He rolls each piece, all 600, the old fashioned way, with a rolling pin, before putting the cookies-to-be on the 70 baking sheets and in the oven.

Only days before Allen was slated to start baking, the giant mixer in the kitchen broke.

Allen was left with a smaller mixer from the 1970s.

Instead of mixing in one batch, he quartered the ingredients and made four, taking extra care to make sure the 2.75 cups of baking soda, the cup of salt and the two gallons of water were evenly distributed.

Mix, weigh, divide.

"I feel like I'm using an Easy-Bake Oven," he said.

Normally Allen makes a pattern from cardboard for each wall, the roofs and chimney. He traces the pattern in the dough with a pairing knife. It is a painstaking process. But not this year. This year he has custom-made cookie cutters.

In the Wedco welding and steel manufacturing shop, staff tried to show him a giant crane and heavy machinery.

Uh huh, Allen nodded. But can you make me some cookie cutters?

What do 60 gingerbread houses smell like?

The smell seeps into his skin. No amount of scrubbing will completely get it out. The scent of 2.3 gallons of brown sugar, 2.75 cups of ginger and 4.25 ounces of

cloves will stay with him about a week.

It is a smell he will get countless comments on, in the kitchen and at home.

"Nothing smells like Christmas more than gingerbread," Allen said, his arms up to his elbows covered in cinnamon and flour, hand-sifting the ingredients. "This is where I start smelling like cloves and ginger."

The smell reminds him of a kitchen in Texas. He can picture the antique Hoosier cabinet where every December he sat on a stool, Christmas music playing, making gingerbread houses with his mom.

The recipe he has used at The Wort Hotel for the last five years is hers — multiplied by 50.

No recipe he's found compares.

It calls for whole butter instead of oil. That makes the cookies sturdier. The flour makes it stronger and with less baking powder than other recipes, the slabs lie flatter.

It is a recipe his mom, Kay Allen Hendricks, found 26 years ago in an old cookbook, tweaking it slightly and then remaining forever faithful.

Every year, Hendricks, Allen and her four other children decorated the houses. The others would throw on candy and icing and then go play. Allen was meticulous, making stained glass windows from Jolly Ranchers, yards with trees and birds and one year a gate that could swing open.

Growing up, Allen was always at ease in the kitchen. By the time he was 11, he could make a complete Thanksgiving dinner by himself, Hendricks said.

She thinks of him every time she's in the kitchen, but especially during the holidays. As she makes her traditional house, she knows hundreds of miles away her son is making 60 of his own.

Allen's siblings no longer make gingerbread houses.

"I'm the only who kept to the religion," Allen said. "But I think I make up for them a couple hundred times."

In the kitchen at The Wort Hotel, Allen sliced through a brick of brown sugar with a giant knife. In one shot he goes through as much brown sugar, flour and molasses as most people do in years.

A sweet spicy scent wafted in the air as the caramel-colored mixture blended and smoothed in the mixing bowl.

"Hey, that smells good," one person said walking through the kitchen.

Allen rolled his eyes. "And so it begins."

What do 60 gingerbread houses taste like?

This time of year, Allen dreams of gingerbread.

One night the cookie cutters weren't finished and he went into Wedco and began bending metal himself.

"I have gingerbread on the brain," he said.

Once the houses are baked, Allen must assemble each one. Each takes about an hour and a half.

By the time the row of houses is standing, Allen will have spent more than 50 hours on gingerbread.

Allen, the chef in charge of planning and executing the hotel's menus, is primarily a pastry chef — one who doesn't really like sweets.

But one of his favorite parts of making gingerbread houses is the candy — pounds of Jelly Bellies, piles of gumdrops and boxes of peppermint sticks.

Allen bought 30 boxes of candy canes last year and still ran out mid-workshop.

The final event, the decorating workshop, is a family affair. The kids are so excited Allen can barely introduce himself. The adults are ready to shrug the confinements of maturity.

"Normally, we're all too worried about the 25 pounds of butter," Allen said. "When we're kids, we don't have to worry about the small stuff. It's a chance to forget the butter."

The imagination is inspiring. One year a kid kept asking for gobs of the 40 pounds of icing Allen made. The mound built up in front of the house. When Allen finally asked what the pool of white icing was, the kid looked at him like he was crazy before answering matter-of-factly. It was a halfpipe.

No matter how a house looks, a few hours later, gumdrops marking walkways will go missing, candy cane chimneys will suspiciously shrink and chocolate borders will turn lopsided. It can't be helped.

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Romeo, black wolf of Juneau, back for the winter

JUNEAU, Alaska (AP) — He lets out a piercing howl that slowly penetrates your chest. To human ears, it's the sound of being alone. And the creature who made the cry probably is.

The locals call him Romeo. He's a black wolf without a pack, a wild canine who's often seen patrolling Juneau's Mendenhall Glacier, the state capital's signature recreation area.

Romeo baffles area biologists and naturalists with his refusal to find a pack or a mate, choosing instead to return each winter, clearly at ease with humans walking within a few hundred yards.

He's typically been seen during a six-month stretch starting in late November when the glacier's lakes begin to freeze.

As predators go, he's gregarious, but when he reveals sharp fangs set against a pair of copper

eyes, it's clear that he's still part of Alaska's wildlife.

Romeo feeds primarily on beavers, snowshoe hares, ptarmigan, grouse and even salmon still lingering in the park's streams in the late fall.

Age estimates, driven in part by his thick, gray snout, put Romeo at about 8 years old, and he's been part of Juneau's wintertime lore for six of them.

Stories behind Romeo's arrival and how he got his name drive his mystique each year. The prevailing story dates to April 2003.

A pregnant female wolf was found dead about one-quarter mile from the glacier's visitor's center. The wolf was stuffed, mounted in the center, and named Juliet.

Six months later, Romeo's first howl could be heard, leaving some to wonder if the male was longing for the female,

possibly his mate.

Over the course of that winter, well into early 2004, the first regular sightings of Romeo had occurred.

Known as an Alexander Archipelago species of a gray or timber wolf, Romeo is as much a part of winter in Juneau as cross-country skiing and snowshoeing.

Sometimes he's walking casually. Other times, he seems to be taking in a rare sunny day just lying in the middle of the frozen lake.

Romeo walks with strides that are as graceful as they are strong, leaving trails of paw prints the size of some adult human hands, a stark reminder that he's a wolf, not a stray dog.

He's as curious about us as we are of him, and seems to seek the company of people walking their dogs. Spotting a potential canine friend from hun-

dreds of yards away, he runs, bounding toward another dog, then shows a polite restraint, sometimes retreating in a backward dance.

As night falls — occasionally with fog settling on the ice and reducing Romeo to a dark outline — the howl emerges.

As sad as it sounds, his cries are an assurance that Romeo is not far away.

If You Go...
ROMEO THE BLACK WOLF OF JUNEAU: Mendenhall Glacier, <http://www.fs.fed.us/r10/tongass/districts/mendenhall>

What to do if you see him: Don't approach him. Use binoculars or a camera for a closer look. Don't feed him. If you're traveling with a dog, keep your pet on a leash; dogs shouldn't be allowed to play with Romeo.

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Traci & Jerry Douthit
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Darlene Vickery
Charley Douthit

Gunter Jax Thomas
Born... December 12, 2008




Parents...
Justin & Casey Thomas
Grandparents...
Charley & Cathy Thomas
Leslee Jewett
Ray & Tammy Fisher
Great-Grandparents...
Nancy Thomas
Charles & Sheila Parr
Roy Don & Gloria Stephens
Ray & Twila Fisher

Kendell Kidd
Born... April 30, 2008




Parents...
Kevin & Heather Kidd
Sister...
Trystan Kidd
Grandparents...
Tony & Gloria Day
Lori Kidd
Nita Hogue

William Andrew Hacker
Born... September 11, 2008




Parents...
Will & Kala Hacker
Grandparents...
Larry & Debbie Middleton
Danny & Ken McGuire

Kooper Zane Preston
Born... February 25, 2008




Parents...
Tommy & Kaysi Preston
Brother...
Stephen Kade
Grandparents...
Steve & Shirley Fueglein
Cathy & Stanley Nelson
Charles & Jean Preston

Ethan Troy & Ayden Brett Martinez
Born... November 13, 2008




Parents...
Rosa Estrada & Benny Martinez
Grandparents...
Antonio & Victoria Estrada
Benny & Alice Martinez

Andrew Brooks, Reese Edward & Caden James Waldrip
Born... March 4, 2008




Parents...
Bryan & Mandy Waldrip
Grandparents...
Jeannie Parks
Gregg Parks
Royce & Belinda Waldrip
Great-Grandparents...
Mellonee & the late James Jennings
Marie & the late Lee Parks
Wayne & Lois Brooks
D.K. & Jo Waldrip

Caden Holly
Born... February 25, 2008




Parents...
Desirae Rochelle & Sean Holly
Grandmother...
Ina Rochelle
Great-Grandparents...
Lois Rochelle
Wally & Marilyn Holly

Christopher Luis Perez
Born... May 2, 2008



Parents...
Jose Luis Perez Jr. & Christie Sanchez
Brother...
Samuel Perez II
Grandparents...
Chris & Terry Sanchez
Jose Luis Perez
Maria Adame

Addison Lynne Witt
Born... April 29, 2008




Parents...
Keith & Amy Witt
Brothers...
Shane & Ryan
Grandparents...
Leland & Darlene Lewis
Great-Grandparents...
Albert & Irene Bean
Aunt & Uncle...
Mark & Tonya Buck

Marquetta Kay Harris
Born... June 18, 2008




Parents...
Jeffrey & Misty Harris
Great-Grandmother...
Doris Puckett

Mya Lily Love
Born... September 16, 2008

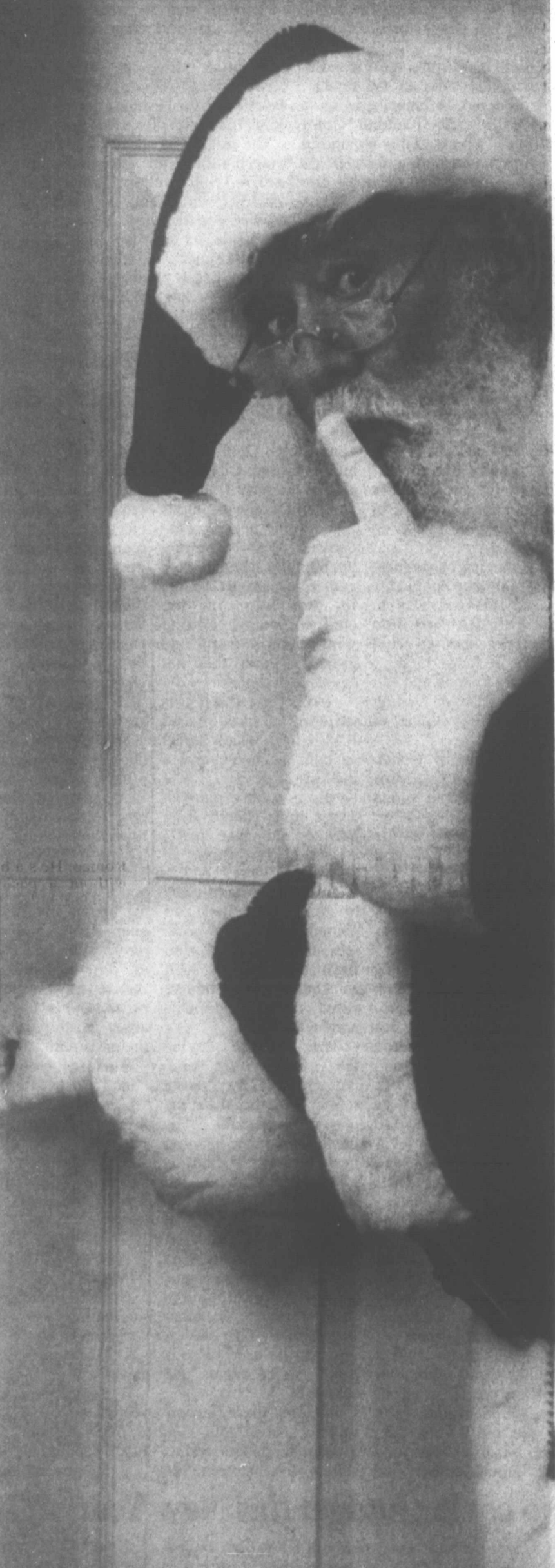


Parents...
Trevor & Misty Love
Grandparents...
Jerry & Deborah Ferrell
Tom & Kathy Love
Great-Grandmother...
Nancy Ferrell

Asher Reid Downs
Born... January 26, 2008



Parents...
Jason & Brienna Downs
Sister...
Kendall Grace Downs
Grandparents...
Ron & Brenda Caudle
Keith & Beverly Taylor
Johnny & Brenda Downs



Yellow expected as a bright, cheerful spot for 2009

NEW YORK (AP) — Enough gloom and doom: There's a prediction from a leading color source that cheerful and sunny yellow will be the influential color of 2009.

Pantone, which provides color standards to design industries, specifically cites mimosa, a vibrant shade of yellow illustrated by the flowers of some mimosa trees as well as the brunch-favorite cocktail, as its top shade of the new year. In general, Pantone expects the public to embrace many tones of optimistic yellow.

"I think it's just the most wonderful symbolic color of the future," says Leatrice Eiseman, executive director of the Pantone Color Institute. "It's invariably connected to warmth, sunshine and cheer, all the good things we're in dire need of right now."

In the spring fashion collections previewed earlier in the fall for retailers and editors, yellow brightened the runways of Carolina Herrera, who called her favorite shade marigold, and Badgley Mischka, Zac Posen and Michael Kors, among others. Kors even

included a retro yellow polka-dot bikini that clearly harkened back to a more upbeat time.

Yellow can be tricky to wear. It's best as a pop, either a shoe, handbag or T-shirt, rather than an all-over outfit color, advise stylists Jesse Garza and Joe Lupo. But the right shade of yellow for your skin tone can make your whole look come to life.

"People want to wear color to bring a smile to their face," says Garza, who co-wrote with Lupo the new book "Life in Color: The Visual Therapy Guide to the Perfect Palette for Fashion, Beauty and You" (Chronicle Books).

The fashion world first embraced orange a few years ago and that has evolved into yellow, which had already been gaining popularity in the home market, too.

"People know yellow lightens up the atmosphere," Eiseman says.

Home-goods companies based in Paris and Milan, Italy, have already been heavily influenced by yellow, says Tom Mirabile, vice president of global trends and design at

Lifetime Brands, Inc., whose portfolio includes Cuisinart, Farberware and Pfaltzgraff.

It helps that it looks good in florals and has a close association with nature, a driving force in the marketplace right now, and it complements current favorites green and purple. A purple-tinged blue called blue iris was Pantone's pick as the top color for this year.

Flashes of yellow appear in kitchens, bathrooms and dining rooms, and it's moving into living room. The color nicely straddles traditional, think of a Williamsburg-style formal dining room, and modern, such as a single statement wall in a cool downtown Manhattan loft.

This particular shade of mimosa should fare best in the kitchen, both in appliances and soft goods, but more mustardy colors will likely be more popular elsewhere in the house, says Mirabile.

"I'd say you should get used to seeing yellow in places you're not used to seeing it," Eiseman says.

Cook at the table for a fast New Year's dinner

By J.M. HIRSCH
AP Food Editor

Want the recipe for a perfect New Year's Eve party? Let your guests do the cooking.

But this isn't a potluck. This is tabletop cooking, a relaxed and fun way to turn a dinner party into something special. And because it tends to be a slow way to cook and eat, it's perfect for an evening that needs to stretch to midnight.

Here's how it works. The host provides a variety of ingredients and a means of cooking them. Guests then come to the table to assemble and cook their own food during the dinner.

Since the ingredients depend on the cooking method, we'll start there.

There are numerous ways to cook at the table. Mini hibachis, for example, are tiny grills are intended for tabletop cooking and reheating, and are available in numerous styles. Many styles retail for \$20 to \$30 online.

Sterno (a food- and indoor-safe gel) is the best fuel for hibachis. There's no mess, few fumes and it's readily available at kitchen and hardware shops. However, there still can be smoke (from the food), so smoke detectors may be triggered.

The trick to this style of cooking is to either pre-cook any meats (so guests mostly are reheating) or to cut the meat very thin. This ensures the food cook through quickly and

completely. Thinly sliced and marinated beef or shrimp are ideal.

Alternatively, use foods that don't need to be cooked. For example, wrap lightly steamed, then cooled asparagus spears in prosciutto, or top chilled cooked shrimp with diced tomato and grated cheese, then let guests heat them.

Another great option is raclette (pronounced RACK-let), which refers to both a cheese and a cooking device. The cheese is a fatty, pungent cow's milk cheese from Switzerland that melts well and is similar to Gruyere.

This cheese traditionally is eaten melted and poured over cooked potatoes, then sprinkled with flavorful ingredients, such as chopped vegetables, cured meats, condiments and herbs.

The cooking device that goes by the same name is a bit like a round toaster oven that sits at the center of the table. The device is plugged in and it heats up. Each diner is given a small tray, which can be piled with cheese and other ingredients, then placed in the device. The device melts and cooks the ingredients, which then are poured over potatoes or other vegetables. The device also can be used to cook thinly sliced meats and seafoods.

Raclette machines are widely available at kitchen shops and online, selling for between \$40

and \$100. And because these usually accommodate up to eight diners and require no fuel (they're electric), this can be the more economical way to go.

To prepare raclette for a dinner party, assemble a variety of good melting cheeses and other ingredients (cooked meats, chopped vegetables, fresh herbs, a variety of olives, etc.).

Just before serving, cook a variety of new or other small potatoes. Place them in a covered pot to keep warm, then bring everything to the table and let dinner begin.

Whichever technique you use, it's best to keep the party small. Indoor open flames and crowds rarely mix. And a gaggle of diners reaching for raclette trays is bound to cause trouble. Eight to 10 adult guests probably is the maximum.

This recipe for thinly sliced marinated beef would work for either mini hibachi cooking or raclette. Offer chopped fresh scallions, fresh cilantro and chopped, seeded tomatoes as toppings.

ASIAN MARINATED STEAKS

Start to finish: 1 hour
marinating
Servings: 8
1/2 teaspoon red pepper flakes
1 tablespoon sesame seeds
1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper
2 tablespoons soy sauce

2 tablespoons toasted sesame oil

3 tablespoons seasoned rice vinegar

1/2 cup beef broth

1 1/2 pounds rib-eye steak, very thinly sliced

Chopped fresh scallions

Chopped fresh cilantro

Chopped, seeded tomatoes

In a blender, combine the red pepper flakes, sesame seeds, black pepper, soy sauce, sesame oil, rice vinegar and beef broth. Blend until smooth.

Transfer the spice blend to a large zip-close plastic bag. Add the beef, being sure to separate the slices. Seal the bag and gently shake to coat. Refrigerate for at least 1 hour, or up to a day.

When ready to serve, drain the steak slices and arrange on a serving plate. Let guests cook steak strips as desired, and serve with scallions, cilantro and tomatoes.

If you don't want to cook at the table, these steaks also could be arranged in a single layer on a rimmed baking sheet and cooked under a broiler for 4 to 5 minutes, turning the steaks after about 2 minutes.

Nutrition information per serving (values are rounded to the nearest whole number): 164 calories; 83 calories from fat; 9 g fat (3 g saturated; 0 g trans fats); 50 mg cholesterol; 1 g carbohydrate; 18 g protein; 0 g fiber; 246 mg sodium.



Dear Abby...

By Pauline & Jeanne Phillips

DEAR ABBY: I hope you can help with an etiquette question. With same-sex marriage becoming more commonplace, how should I address a letter to a same-sex couple?

Example: Now that Ellen DeGeneres has married Portia de Rossi, would I write to "Mrs. and Mrs. Ellen DeGeneres"? "The Ellen DeGeneres Family"? or "Ellen and Portia DeGeneres"? None of the manners books that I have checked has been able to provide an answer, and I have not seen the issue in print. What do you think? — STRAIGHT, NOT NARROW IN GLENDALE, ARIZ.

DEAR STRAIGHT, NOT NARROW: Because this topic is so new, there isn't one hard-and-fast answer to your question. Some couples keep or change their individual names, some join their names together with a hyphen, others select a name together and adopt it.

If you have a question about how a particular couple would prefer their mail to be addressed, my advice is to ask them.

DEAR ABBY: While I was visiting with a relative recently, she informed me that my late husband, "John," who died several years ago, had been having an affair. I was so shocked, I did not respond.

John and I married young and experienced good times and bad, but we were happy together — or so I thought. I live in a small town with many friends and relatives. Needless to say, my heart is broken. I don't know how to respond, or if I should. Why would someone be so hurtful? — HEARTBROKEN IN OKLAHOMA

DEAR HEARTBROKEN: Your relative is either malicious or a thoughtless motormouth, and what she said may not be true. Respond by treating her as if she has a contagious disease, because in a sense she does. The disease she spreads is misery. If YOU think you and John had a happy life together, then you did. If John may have lapsed

once along the way, forgive him because, in the final analysis, you two made it to the finish line together. Many couples do not.

DEAR ABBY: After 30 years as an automotive transmission rebuilder, I retired. I am blessed with a loving wife, three grown kids, beautiful 10-year-old twin granddaughters, a sugar-sweet beagle, three ungrateful, sassy cats and two time-consuming hobbies. Sounds perfect, doesn't it?

The downside is that eight out of 10 nights, I dream about my previous job. I drift around in the clouds rebuilding transmissions, putting a spring here, a valve there. I'd rather be dreaming about more interesting things — hunting, fishing and women — not necessarily in that order.

Can you tell me how to redirect my dreams and enjoy my sleep? Do other tradesmen such as butchers, bakers and candlestick-makers relive their old trades in dreamland? — ONCE A MECHANIC ... IN ARIZONA

DEAR ONCE A MECHANIC: Your letter shows you can take a mechanic out of the trade, but you can't necessarily take the trade out of the mechanic, butcher, baker, candlestick-maker — or advice columnist, for that matter. If someone has performed a job long enough, it becomes part of him or her. Of one thing I am certain: The harder one tries NOT to dream about something, the more he or she will.

We cannot control our subconscious — but we can redirect it. An hour before bedtime, try leafing through magazines about hunting and fishing, or photo albums with pictures of your granddaughters. This may guide your thoughts in a more desirable direction as you drift off to dreamland. And should you find yourself once more at your workbench after nodding off, try this: Tell yourself, "OK, it's time to change the channel." It has worked for me.

No caviar budget this New Year's? Try empanadas

Champagne and caviar may not be in your budget this New Year's Eve, but you won't need to resort to crackers and Cheez Whiz to keep the cost of the festivities under control.

There are plenty of options for foods that are as good to your wallet as to your guests. Consider making bite-size pizzas using purchased dough and sauce. Making the dough yourself is easy, and even cheaper.

Beyond the standard tomato and mozzarella, variations can include caramelized onions and blue cheese, pesto with chopped, sun-dried tomatoes, refried beans with corn, roasted chilies and Monterey Jack cheese, and roasted garlic puree with crumbled bacon and Asiago cheese.

Many markets sell a wide selection of gourmet chicken sausages, which can be grilled, sliced and skewered on cocktail toothpicks. Serve with a selection of home-blended mustards for dipping, such as Dijon with crumbled Gorgonzola, coarse grain mustard with caramelized shallots and thyme, or spicy brown mustard mixed with jarred mango chutney.

To make mini Reubens, layer slices of leftover roast beef, pork or turkey with sauerkraut and Russian dressing on top of cocktail-size slices of rye or pumpernickel bread. Top with shredded Gruyere and broil until the cheese has melted.

Sausage, olive and dried cherry empanadas have a golden crust made from convenient and inexpensive buttermilk biscuit dough that comes packaged in tubes and can be found in the dairy case at most markets.

These treats cost 20 cents each to make and can be baked up to two days ahead, then reheated at 350 F.

SAUSAGE, OLIVE AND DRIED CHERRY EMPANADAS

Start to finish: 60 minutes
Servings: 32
1 pound loose mild pork or turkey sausage
1 cup finely chopped yellow onions
1/4 cup dried cherries, chopped
1/4 cup pitted and chopped Kalamata olives
1/2 cup finely chopped scallions
1/2 teaspoon dried thyme
Salt and ground black pepper, to taste
1 refrigerated tube of 8 large buttermilk biscuits
1 large egg, lightly beaten
Heat the oven to 375 F. Coat 2 baking sheets with cooking spray.

Heat a large skillet over medium-high. Add the sausage, onions and dried cherries and saute, breaking up the sausage, until no traces of pink remain, about 5 minutes.

Stir in the olives, scallions and thyme. Saute for another 2 minutes. Season with salt and pepper, then set aside to cool.

On a lightly floured surface, cut each of the biscuits into quarters. Use your hands to roll each quarter into a ball, then use a rolling pin to roll each ball into a 3-inch circle.

Put about 1 tablespoon of the sausage mixture in the center of each circle. Moisten the edges of the dough with water, fold in half over the filling, then use the tines of a fork to press to seal the edges.

Set the empanadas on the prepared baking sheets and brush lightly with the beaten egg. Bake until golden brown, 12 to 15 minutes. Serve hot.

Sudoku

Answer to yesterday's puzzle:

6	9	7	4	8	5	3	2	1
5	2	1	3	6	7	8	4	9
3	8	4	1	9	2	7	5	6
2	3	9	8	5	4	6	1	7
8	7	5	6	2	1	4	9	3
1	4	6	9	7	3	5	8	2
9	5	8	7	1	6	2	3	4
4	6	2	5	3	9	1	7	8
7	1	3	2	4	8	9	6	5

Level: Intermediate

			5					
	3			2		4		
5				9		3		
	2		6			7	4	
	4	7		3	9			
			4	7			1	
			8		6			
	7	6						
9	2		7					5

Merry Christmas
and a
Happy New Year!

THE PAMPA NEWS

CLASSIFIEDS

5 Special Notices

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

10 Lost/Found

REWARD. Lost male off-white Terrier type dog Dec. 20th. Neutered. Hard of hearing. "Sparky." 1800 bl. of Coffee. 440-1010.

13 Bus. Opp.

GREAT Investment opp. Pampa motel. Retired couple or individual. 665-1875, 806-383-1985.

14d Carpentry

Carpentry, Roofing, Replacement Windows, steel siding & trim. Continuous gutters. Jerry Nicholas 669-9991, 662-8169

OVERHEAD DOOR REPAIR Kidwell Construction. Call 669-6347.

REMODELING all types. Concrete, doors, tile, drywall. Brian, 806-664-9613.

14e Carpet Serv.

NU-WAY CLEANING SERVICE Bob Mark Owner-Operator. Call 665-3541.

14h Gen. Serv.

HOUSE Cracking? In bricks or walls? Childers Brothers, Inc. 800-299-9563, 806-352-9563

COX Fence Company. Repair old fence or build new. Free estimates. Call 669-7769.

CERAMIC tile work. Remodeling floor, shower, kitchen. Texture, painting, dry wall. Free esti. Call 665-3453 leave message, Jesus Baraza.

GOOCH'S Bathroom Renovations. Complete Remodels. 848-2820. Free Estimates.

JH Concrete Work. Stamps, driveways, addition, fences, patios. Free Est. 806-382-5408.

HANDY Man 24/7 Night or day F/Car detail T/ windows, U name it I can do it. Robert 806-688-7878 h 806-664-4424 c Leave message

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JACK'S Plumbing, 715 W. Foster, 665-7115.

21 Help Wanted

NEED Maintenance person, part-time. Call 665-0415.

ST. Ann's Nursing Home in Panhandle has an opening for a Full-Time Kitchen Helper. Complete benefits package. Must be able to work either day or evening shift and some weekends. Come in and apply or call Phyllis for more info. 537-3194.

PAMPA Area Driver Wanted. Local Bus Transit Company has a driver position open for the Pampa area. Applicant must have a good driving record, stable work history, neat and clean in appearance. Must pass D.O.T. Pre-employment drug screen and be acceptable to vehicle insurance policy. Bi-lingual is a plus. General knowledge of surrounding areas is helpful. Contact Panhandle Community Services 806-676-4727 ext. 255 for additional information and application. M-F 8:00-5:00. Equal Opportunity Employer. Application can be picked up 411 N. Cuyler between 8:00 AM and 5:00 PM.

21 Help Wanted

NOTICE Readers are urged to fully investigate advertisements which require payment in advance for information, services or goods.

MECHANICS Eastex Crude Co. is taking applications in Pampa, Tx. Applicants must have knowledge & exp. in servicing of diesel trucks, brakes and general repair. Full Benefit Pkg. (903) 856-2401 x-137 or (800) 443-8580 Clint

\$1500.00 SIGN ON BONUS PAMPA NURSING CENTER is currently hiring a RN/LVN For Mon. thru Fri 6am to 2pm Shift

Please apply in person to: Mandi Martin RN, DON 1321 W. Kentucky EEOE

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CONSTRUCTION LABORERS

Western Builders of Amarillo, Inc. is looking for experienced construction laborers for work at Pampa High School. Employment is subject to passing a drug test. Please contact construction superintendent:

Jeff Popp 806-672-5689

Western Builders of Amarillo, Inc. is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate against applicants or employees on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, gender, pregnancy, national origin, veteran's status, age, disability, perceived disability or any other reason prohibited by applicable law.

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CHEMICAL Delivery Driver. Oil field experience helpful. Mandatory drug test and background check. CDL with hazmat and air brake endorsement will be required during employment. Good benefits- 401k after 1st year of employment. Pampa - Canadian area. 1-806-228-5463 for application. 1-888-881-3248 (ask for Roger, Mike, or Chris)

LARGE Feedyard in Hedley, TX is looking for a Night Watchman. Benefits avail. Please apply in person at 3900 CR 23 in Hedley, between 7am-5pm.

NURSES Unlimited, Inc. is seeking enthusiastic and outgoing caregivers in Lefors & White Deer areas, to assist clients in the home with personal care, meal prep, light house-keeping. P-T. EOE. Call 1-888-859-0631.

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CDL Drivers wanted with tanker endorsement.

Drug test required. Call Brad 216-0960, 256-5188

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AXYDLBAAXR is LONGFELLOW One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

12-24 CRYPTOQUOTE SPQ NCBQDXCMD RFZNCZ XSQ B JCQQA ONQFZDJBZ SYCQ DNFZ NSMFLBA ZCBZSK BKL TCBQC BKL TQSZTCQFDA FK B NCBMDNA KCR ACBQ. Yesterday's Cryptquote: MONEY IS BETTER THAN POVERTY. IF ONLY FOR FINANCIAL REASONS. — WOODY ALLEN

21 Help Wanted

JANITOR needed. Part-time evenings, Mon-Fri. Please call 806-355-0821.

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50 Building Suppl. White House Lumber 101 S. Ballard 669-3291

69 Misc.

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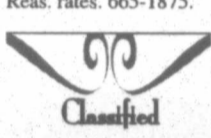
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DAILY HOROSCOPE

HAPPY BIRTHDAY for Thursday, Dec. 25, 2008: There is a very special quality to your next year. You finally feel an easing up financially and emotionally. You might not realize how much you do offer, but you will be given feedback that will help you understand. If you are single, you will meet someone, perhaps simply going to the bank. Give this person plenty of time to reveal his or her true colors. Many people you meet this year could have a hidden agenda. If you are attached, the two of you would benefit from frequent romantic getaways. Soon you will be acting like newlyweds! SAGITTARIUS demonstrates their feelings more often than not.

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

ARIES (March 21-April 19) ***** Put your best foot forward. If you can, empathize and walk in another's shoes. Share more of the universal quality of the holiday. A child or loved one might have difficulty separating the gifts from the spiritual meaning. Tonight: Make a call to a friend at a distance.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20) ***** Recognize what could happen if you maintain the intensity with a key friend or loved one. Though on some level you might be fearful, you'll discover that you just might want this type of closeness. Tonight: Better as a duo than solo.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20) ***** Defer if you want. Let someone else steal the stage. Somehow you will get a lot of pleasure if you allow this person to swirl around you expressing

his or her feelings and joy. Think of yourself as along for the ride. Tonight: You could go till the wee hours.

CANCER (June 21-July 22) ***** Consider yourself the conduit this holiday as you help others draw the most out of their Christmas. You'll discover how close you feel to a loved one as a result of this generous sharing. Tonight: Know that the world is your oyster.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) ***** You might want to let the responsibilities defer to someone else and be a kid again. Whether caroling or going out to visit with friends, you seem uplifted and extremely content. Someone wants to corner you under the mistletoe. Tonight: Enjoy every moment.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) ***** Stay close to home and relax with those close to you. Invite friends and family over to share in some last-minute fun chores. Share egg nog or whatever your family's tradition might be. A partner could be a bit off. Indulge him or her. Tonight: In the thick of events.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22) ***** Communicate what is on your mind. Be willing to share and help others who simply don't handle stress as well as you. A child or loved one delights you with a thoughtful gesture. Let the good feelings flow. Tonight: If you are tired, allow yourself to act tired. No more show.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21) ***** Walk away from the concept of spending and presents. Loosen up and share the more spiritual and caring aspects of the holiday. You might join in with friends or children to help out a family in need. Tonight: Recognize how much you have to offer.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21) ***** Trying to stop you could take a major effort, like putting out a foot and making you trip! Enjoy your high energy. Take time for those who simply are not in the same head space. Know that anything is possible. Tonight: Say yes to a friendly offer.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) ***** Be willing to not be ecstatic, but simply mellow. Remember that the expectation of Christmas being perfect every year is not likely. Honor your needs, but not at the expense of someone else's happiness. Tonight: Curl up with a good book.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18) ***** Friends seem to be romping around you. Enjoy the happiness and fun spirit. Recognize what is happening with a friend, and help ease this person's day. Don't even try to control your expenses today; you need what you need. Tonight: Where the action is.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20) ***** Step up to the plate, realizing your limits and needs. Others will respond if you stay sensitive to their needs as well. Toss away being controlling and demanding. A partner could be difficult or tense. Tonight: Help an older relative relax.

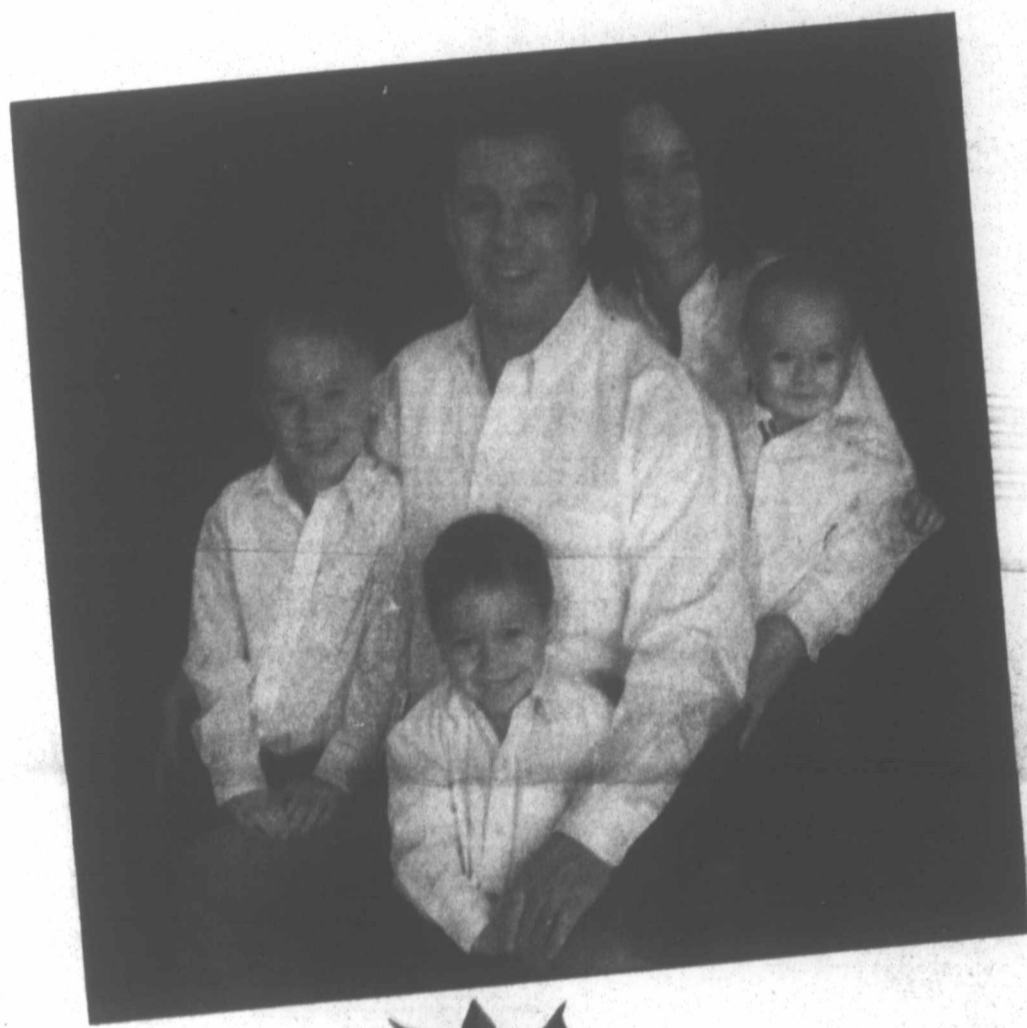
BORN TODAY Actor Humphrey Bogart (1899), hotelier Conrad Hilton (1887), musician Jimmy Buffett (1946) *****

Jacqueline Bigar is on the Internet at http://www.jacquelinebigar.com. © 2008 by King Features Syndicate Inc.

Merry Christmas

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The love of family members ...
From our house to yours, go our very best wishes
for a Christmas to remember.



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