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Shelton named chair of Children's Shopping Tour

Nikki Shelton has been named General Chair for the 2009 Children's Shopping Tour by Shane Stokes, President of the Pampa Optimist Youth Club.

"The General Chair is rotated every four years between the Kiwanis Club, Altrusa, the Optimist Club and The Salvation Army," explained Stokes. "This year is the Optimist's turn. Nikki has served as Secretary-Treasurer for the Optimist Club for three years and has worked on the shopping tour each of those years. We know that she will do a great job."

Shelton is the owner and operator of Shutterbug Photography. She is President of the Downtown Business Association. Her husband, Clint, is employed by Carmichael-Whately Funeral Directors. They have two daughters, Aly, 16, and Summer, 14. The Sheltons attend Trinity Fellowship Church.

"The Children's Shopping Tour is unique," Shelton commented. "The emphasis is on teaching children Christmas is about giving. Most of

Artful Baskets



staff photo by David Bowser
Pat Kindle works on a basket at the Pampa Art Club meeting Tuesday as Kay Crouch, an art teacher, lends her advice. The club meets twice a month. This week they met in the Pampa Chamber of Commerce offices.

For our troops



staff photo by David Bowser
On their way to the troops, Jana Gregory, the executive director of the Eastern Texas Panhandle Chapter of the American Red Cross, has five sacks of Christmas cards that will be sent to the national headquarters where they will be screened before being sent on to military hospitals and U.S. troops both in the U.S. and overseas. It's part of a national program, she said. The local Red Cross office will be collecting Christmas cards until Saturday, Dec. 5.

This holiday season don't give a gift to a thief

By Kit Grice
SOCIAL SECURITY DISTRICT MANAGER IN PAMPA

It's been said that the true spirit of the holiday season is in giving, not receiving. With this in mind, it's likely that you will be spending a bit of time shopping for presents, your credit card flying out of your wallet or purse like wind-blown snow.

But as you shop in stores and online, be sure you're not giving a surprise gift to an identity thief. Because the surprise will be on you — and it won't be a good one.

Sometimes when you do business, you may be asked for your Social Security number. In many cases, those asking don't really need it. If anyone asks for your Social Security number or other identifying information, ask them why they want it and whether they absolutely need it. They can refuse you service if you don't provide it, but consider whether the service is worth the risk.

Identity theft is one of the fastest growing crimes in America. Someone who steals your Social Security number

Miami chamber receives Community Center donation



Darrell Dodson of TransCanada Pipeline Company presents a \$6,500 donation to Billy Holland, vice-president of the Miami Chamber of Commerce.

At a recent meeting of the Miami Chamber of Commerce Darrell Dodson of TransCanada Pipeline presented a \$6,500.00 contribution from the company to the organization. These funds are to go toward the Miami Community Center renovation expenses.

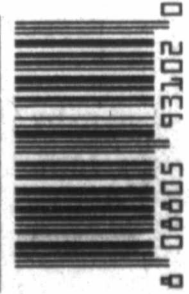
The Miami Chamber has had an on-going fund drive for several months to make badly needed changes and improvements to the Community Center building. The property was acquired in 1968 and volunteers went to work remodeling and improving the building to provide a community gathering facility. Some improvements were made in the early 1980s. As with all buildings, time has taken its toll and it is time for an "extreme makeover".

"Not only do we need to make cosmetic changes, we have some ADA issues that need to be resolved and that is going to be a rather hefty expense. This facility houses the food bank, seven community access computers and is utilized weekly by various groups and organizations as well as being reserved for parties, receptions and safety meetings. It is truly an integral part of our little community

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For the record

PAMPA FORECAST

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
		
20%	20%	
High 39 Low 17	High 30 Low 17	High 29 Low 20

Tonight: A chance of rain before midnight, then a chance of snow. Cloudy, with a low around 28. Wind chill values between 15 and 25. Windy, with a north northwest wind 5 to 10 mph increasing to between 20 and 25 mph. Winds could gust as high as 35 mph. Chance of precipitation is 50%.

Wednesday: A 20 percent chance of snow before noon. Mostly cloudy, with a high near 39. Wind chill values between 13 and 23. Windy, with a north wind 25 to 30 mph decreasing to between 10 and 15 mph. **Winds could gust as high as 40 mph.**

Wednesday Night: Mostly cloudy, with a low around 17. Wind chill values between 9 and 14. North northeast wind between 5 and 10 mph.

Thursday: A 20 percent chance of snow. Mostly cloudy, with a high near 30. North northeast wind between 5 and 10 mph.

Thursday Night: Mostly cloudy, with a low around 17. North northwest wind around 5 mph.

Friday: Sunny, with a high near 29. West wind between 5 and 10 mph.

Friday Night: Mostly clear, with a low around 20. West southwest wind around 10 mph.

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H1N1 vaccine available to Pampa WIC clients

Texas Dept of Health Services will be in the Pampa WIC office Monday December 7, 2009, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. to administer H1N1 vaccine to WIC clients only. Must Have WIC ID. The Pampa WIC office is located at 1201 N Hobart suite 1-1, next to the movie theater.

Meals on Wheels menu

<p>Tuesday, Dec. 1</p> <p>Meatloaf Scalloped potatoes Peas Pineapple</p> <p>Wednesday, Dec. 2</p> <p>Stew Cornbread Pears</p>	<p>Thursday, Dec. 3</p> <p>Baked Chicken Corn Green Beans Cranberry salad</p> <p>Friday, Dec. 4</p> <p>Tuna casserole Pickled beets Brussels sprouts Apricots</p>
---	---

Woman burned with pie during fight

SANTA FE, Texas (AP) — A pecan pie fight on Thanksgiving led to a woman suffering burns and her brother facing assault allegations. Galveston County sheriff's Capt. Barry Cook says the 23-year-old woman suffered first- and second-degree burns to her neck, face and chest on Thursday

in Santa Fe. Cook told The Associated Press that the brother is expected to face an aggravated assault charge. An affidavit has been filed but a warrant had yet to be issued Tuesday. Some pecan pie heated in a microwave allegedly was thrown on her.

Obituaries

George W. Gamblin, 79

George W. Gamblin, 79, died December 1, 2009, in Pampa, Texas. Services are pending with Charmichael-Whitley Funeral Directors.

Patricia Nichols, 84

Pampa — Patricia Nichols, 84, died November 30, 2009, in Amarillo, Texas. Services are pending with Charmichael-Whitley Funeral Directors. Mrs. Nichols was born June 6, 1925 in Quanah. She was a graduate of

Quanah High School, North Texas State University in Denton, and West Texas State University in Canyon. She married Jack W. Nichols on August 3, 1947 in Quanah. He preceded her in death on December 13, 2004. Patricia was a school teacher in Quanah

for a year, and Pampa ISD, retiring after 20 years of service. She had been a resident of Pampa since 1947, and was a member of St. Matthew's Episcopal Church. Survivors include a brother, Malcolm Bottoms of Quanah; several nieces,

nephews and cousins. St. Matthew's Episcopal Church, 727 W. Browning, Pampa, Texas, BSA Hospice, P.O. Box 950, Amarillo, Texas 79105, or a favorite charity. **Sign the on-line register at www.charmichael-whitley.com**

EMERGENCY SERVICES

PAMPA PD

POLICE REPORT (continued)

Thursday, Nov. 26. A theft was reported to police.

Fire officials investigated a fire in the 1000 block of North Cinderella.

Criminal mischief was reported in the 800 block of North Dwight.

A suspicious person was reported at McCullough and Nelson.

Officers performed a welfare check at Kentucky and Coffee.

A theft was reported in the 800 block of North Nelson.

A suspicious person was reported in the 2400 block of Charges.

A violation of city code was reported at the intersection of Price and 23rd.

An alarm was reported in at One Medical Plaza.

Disorderly conduct was reported in the 1400 block of East Francis.

Friday, Nov. 27. A suspicious person was reported at Browning and Crest.

An alarm was reported in the 700 block of East Frederic.

A suspicious person was reported at Hobart and Cook.

A suspicious person was reported in the 500 block North Faulkner.

Officers attempted to serve legal papers in the 1600 block of West Buckler.

Officers performed a welfare check in the 400 block of North Perry.

A burglary was reported in the 600 block of East Craven.

A theft was reported in the 700 block of North Hobart.

Water officials were called to 500 block of North Nelson.

An alarm was reported in the 2100 block of Williston.

A suspicious person was reported in the 1100 block of North Garland.

An assault was reported in the 300 block of North Somerville.

A theft was reported in the 100 block of North Cuyler.

Criminal trespass was reported in the 900 block of South Wells.

Found property was reported in the 2100 block of North Hobart.

A domestic disturbance was reported in the 821 North Gray.

Criminal mischief was reported in the 700 block of East Francis.

Disorderly conduct was

reported in the 400 block of North Wells.

Saturday, Nov. 28. A suspicious person was reported at Atchison and Starkweather.

A suspicious person was reported at Tyng and Ballard.

A suspicious person was reported at Foster and Warren.

Disorderly conduct was reported in the 1100 block of East Kingsmill.

An assault was reported in the 1500 block of Coffee.

A suspicious vehicle was reported in the 1800 block of North Nelson.

An alarm was reported in the 1100 block of North Rider.

Criminal mischief was reported in the 1500 block of North Williston.

An alarm was reported in the 600 block of North Starkweather.

Criminal mischief was reported 1800 block of Everygreen.

An alarm was reported in the 2300 block North Navajo.

A vehicle was burglarized in the 300 block of South Anne.

A burglary was reported in the 900 block of East Frederic.

Criminal trespass was reported in the 700 block of North Wells.

An alarm was reported in the 1100 block of East 16th.

An abandoned vehicle was reported at Alcock and Dwight.

An intoxicated driver was reported in the 1000 block of East Frederic.

An alarm was reported in the 2500 block of Chestnut.

A theft was reported to police.

An alarm was reported in the 2700 block of North Duncan.

Officers assisted a motorist at the intersection of U.S. 6 and Texas Highway 70.

A forgery was reported in the 2800 block of North Charles.

Criminal mischief was reported in the 800 block of East Frederic.

A threat was made in the 1300 block of East Terrace.

A burglary was reported in the 1100 block of South Prairie.

Officers assisted another agency in the 1300 block of North Garland.

Harassment was reported to police.

Theft was reported in the 400 block of Rose.

Criminal mischief was reported in the 1100 block of Juniper.

Disorderly conduct was reported in the 300 block

of South Jean.

A burglary was reported in the 500 block of Elm.

The burglary of a motor vehicle was reported to police.

Criminal mischief was reported in the 1800 block of North Zimmers.

A suspicious person was reported at Hobart and 21st.

Criminal mischief was reported in the 1500 block of North Sumner.

Sunday, Nov. 29. A burglary was reported in the 1700 block of Holly Lane.

A suspicious person was reported in the 600 block of South Ballard.

A suspicious person was reported at Cuyler and Kingsmill.

Officers assisted another agency at Browning and Warren.

A suspicious person was reported in the 700 block of North Banks.

A suspicious person was reported in the 300 block of South Miami.

Officers found an open door in the 100 block of East Randy Matson.

Officers assisted another agency in the 1400 block of South Doyle.

Criminal mischief was reported in the 200 block of South Anne.

Officers performed a welfare check in the 1100 block of South Finley.

Criminal trespass was reported in the 700 block of North Banks.

An alarm was reported in the 200 block of East Browning.

Officers assisted another agency in the 1200 block of East Frederic.

Officers assisted another agency in the 600 block of East Craven.

A suspicious person was reported in the 400 block of North Wynne.

A burglary was reported in the 400 block of South Starkweather.

An assault was reported in the 1100 block of Prairie.

A fire investigation was reported in the 300 block of North Hobart.

A prowler was reported in the 700 block of North Banks.

Carbon monoxide was reported in the 1600 block of North Sumner.

Monday, Nov. 30. Violation of a city ordinance was reported in the 1000 block of South Varnon.

A suspicious person was reported at Browning and Starkweather.

A burglary was reported in the 100 block of North Houston.

LAST MINUTE CLASSIFIED LINE ADS

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50% OFF of every item in stock starting Nov. 20!! Avenues of Pampa, 1201 N. Hobart #1B (Coronado Shopping Center). 665-0983.

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ALTRUSA'S SOUP with "Mrs. Claus", Dec. 5, 11:30-1:30p. 318 N. Cuyler (Knights of Columbus). \$5 per person.

CLASSIFIED LINE Ad Specials for Dec., Jan. & Feb. 4 lines-4 days \$18.50, 8 lines-4 days, \$21.50. Call for dead-lines 669-2525.

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Texas' Brown AP Big 12 coach of the year



Texas Coach Mack Brown was named AP Big 12 Coach of the Year today (AP file photo).

AUSTIN, Texas (AP) — Texas coach Mack Brown has been named The Associated Press Big 12 Coach of the Year.

Brown, in his 12th season with the Longhorns, has guided Texas to a 12-0 record with a South division title and a berth in the Big 12 championship game Saturday night against Nebraska.

A win over the Cornhuskers likely puts Texas in the BCS championship game at the Rose Bowl on Jan. 7. Texas last won the Big 12 and national championships in 2005.

The AP award is voted on by 20 reporters who regularly cover the conference for newspapers in the league's seven states.

25th Annual Amarillo Farm and Ranch Show starts today

Amarillo, TX (December 1, 2009) Today the 25th annual Amarillo Farm and Ranch Show will begin its three-day event at the Amarillo Civic Center in Amarillo, TX. The exhibit space is completely sold out, packing the civic center with over 445 local and leading exhibitors to showcase the latest products and services in the agriculture industry. The show is expected to attract over 30,000 attendees from the Texas and Oklahoma Panhandles, as well as New Mexico, Colorado and Kansas.

This year marks the 25th Anniversary of the Amarillo Farm and Ranch Show and the event continues to encompass every aspect of farming and ranching providing a one-stop shop for attendees to interact with manufacturers, attend informational seminars such as the Texas Commodity Symposium, obtain necessary CEU credits at the Texas A&M Annual Panhandle Farm and Ranch Management Symposium, network with other producers in the region and have the opportunity to register to win multiple prizes from participating exhibitors.

The show will be held December 1 - 3, 2009 at the Amarillo Civic Center in Amarillo, Texas. Show hours are 9:00 am to 5:00 pm Tuesday and Wednesday, and from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm on Thursday. Admission is \$2.00 with 100% of the proceeds being donated back to local FFA chapters.

Miami

cont. from page 1

and we are determined to preserve it for future generations," stated a spokesperson for the group. "We are truly grateful for TransCanada's generous donation to help us make this a reality. We are still accepting donations and contributions because our goal has not yet been met."

Pheasant surveys mixed heading into hunting season

Todd Montandon, Regulatory Biologist, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department

Pheasant season is here again! Beginning this weekend, Saturday Dec. 5th hunters across the panhandle will set out for a potentially rewarding outing.

TPWD's roadside pheasant surveys are conducted in the last two weeks of October and the first two weeks of November. Established twenty-mile routes are driven shortly after daylight and the numbers of pheasants are recorded. Counties typically have two or three different lines.

Surveys revealed promising pheasant numbers for many counties in the northern panhandle, while southern counties may not fare as well. Proper timing of spring and summer rains, along with favor-

able crop selection led to a good hatch for counties like Ochiltree, Hansford, Dallam, and Sherman counties. All of these counties showed considerably higher survey numbers as compared to 2008. Counties further south such as Deaf Smith, Swisher, Parmer, Floyd and Castro counties had more localized rainfall leading to variable nesting conditions. Overall, southern counties did not survey as well as in some years past; however, there are still portions of these counties with hunt-able numbers of pheasant.

Nesting conditions were poor to average to slightly above average throughout the Panhandle for ground-nesting birds. Rainfall is important to provide both cover for rearing broods and insect production for growing chicks.

Playa lakes, particularly those adjacent to grain

fields, typically hold the most birds. However, Conservation Reserve Program Fields (CRP) and grain stubble should also provide good hunting opportunities. TPWD leased lands throughout the Panhandle typically exhibit these type conditions, so check ahead to see where the nearest public lease may be to you.

This year's pheasant season runs from December 5, 2009 to January 3, 2010. The daily bag limit is 3 cock pheasants (possession limit 6 cocks). Please obey all game laws and hunt only on lands where you have permission to tread. Remember that the Annual Public Hunting Permit (APH) will allow hunters access to TPWD leased lands. The APH is available wherever licenses are sold.

What? Charities checking immigration status for toy drives

HOUSTON (AP) — Happy holidays — now where's that immigration paperwork?

Several programs providing Christmas gifts for needy children are checking immigration status first, requiring at least one member of the household to be a U.S. citizen before handing over toys. The Salvation Army and a charity affiliated with the Houston Fire Department are asking for children's birth certificates or Social Security cards.

The point isn't to punish children but to ensure parents are citizens, legal immigrants or working to become legal residents, said Lorugene Young, whose Outreach Program Inc. is one of three groups

that distribute toys collected by firefighters.

"It's not our desire to turn anyone down," she said. "Those kids are not responsible if they are here illegally. It is the parents' responsibility."

Cesar Espinoza, executive director of the advocacy group America for All, says such policies are unfair to kids who did nothing wrong.

"It is very disturbing to think a holiday like Christmas would be tainted with things like this," he said. "Usually, people target the adults because the adults made the decision to migrate, where the children are just brought through no fault of their own."

Other groups don't

require specific documentation. Those that check immigration status or other qualifications say they are trying to make good decisions.

"We want to be good stewards, so the people that are donating to us trust we're going to do the right thing," said Sonya Scott, manager of care ministries at West Houston Assistance Ministries. The group does not check immigration but requires identification, including birth certificates for children and proof of income.

Dinner theater Thursday

The Pampa High School Art and Drama Club will present *The Wizard of Oz*, a dinner theater performance to help raise funds for the club's trip to San Antonio. Tickets are \$10 and include a spaghetti dinner and musical performance in the new PHS commons at 6:15 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 3.

For more information or to make a donation, please contact Mallory Stevens or Jessica Hargus, 669-4800.

Gift

cont. from page 1

can use it to get other personal information about you. Identity thieves can use your number to apply for more credit in your name. Then, they use the credit cards but leave the bills for you. Falling victim to identity theft can ruin your credit rating and make things difficult for months or years to come.

Identity thieves can obtain your Social Security number, credit card numbers, and personal information in a number of ways, including:

Stealing wallets, purses, and mail;

Intercepting personal information you provide on an unsecured website, from business or personnel records at work, and personal information in your home;

Rummaging through your trash, and public trash dumps, for personal information;

Posing as someone who needs your information, such as a government agency, employer, bank, or

landlord; and Buying personal information from store clerks, employees, or other individuals who have the information.

There are things you can do to protect your identity. Don't give out your Social Security number to just anyone. Don't carry your card in your wallet or purse; keep your Social Security card locked away in a safe place with your other important papers. Check your credit reports once a year, which you can do for free at www.annualcreditreport.com.

If you think someone is using your number or identity, contact the Federal Trade Commission at www.ftc.gov/bcp/edu/microsites/idtheft, or call 1-877-IDTHEFT (1-877-438-4338) (TTY 1-866-653-4261.)

Protect your information this holiday season, and you'll enjoy a little more "peace on earth" in the year to come.

Tour

cont. from page 1

the children we serve have never experienced giving at Christmas before."

The tour is scheduled for Saturday, December 12.

Between 30 and 40 organizations are expected to participate. Donations to the project are tax deductible and should be made out to the Pampa Optimist Youth Club and mailed to John Warner, Box 645, Pampa, Texas 79066-0645.

In July, Judy Warner, a Co-general Chair for the 2007 Children's Shopping Tour and John Warner, the treasurer for the tour,

went to Orlando, Florida, to receive an award for the project from Optimist International which named the project as the outstanding community service project in the nation. In August, Kerrick Horton, the other Co-general Chair for the 2007 Children's Shopping Tour, accepted an award from Altrusa International which named the project as the outstanding community service project in the world. The project has been done annually in Pampa since 1963.



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Viewpoints

Today in History

Today is Tuesday, December 1, the 335th day of 2009. There are 30 days left in the year.

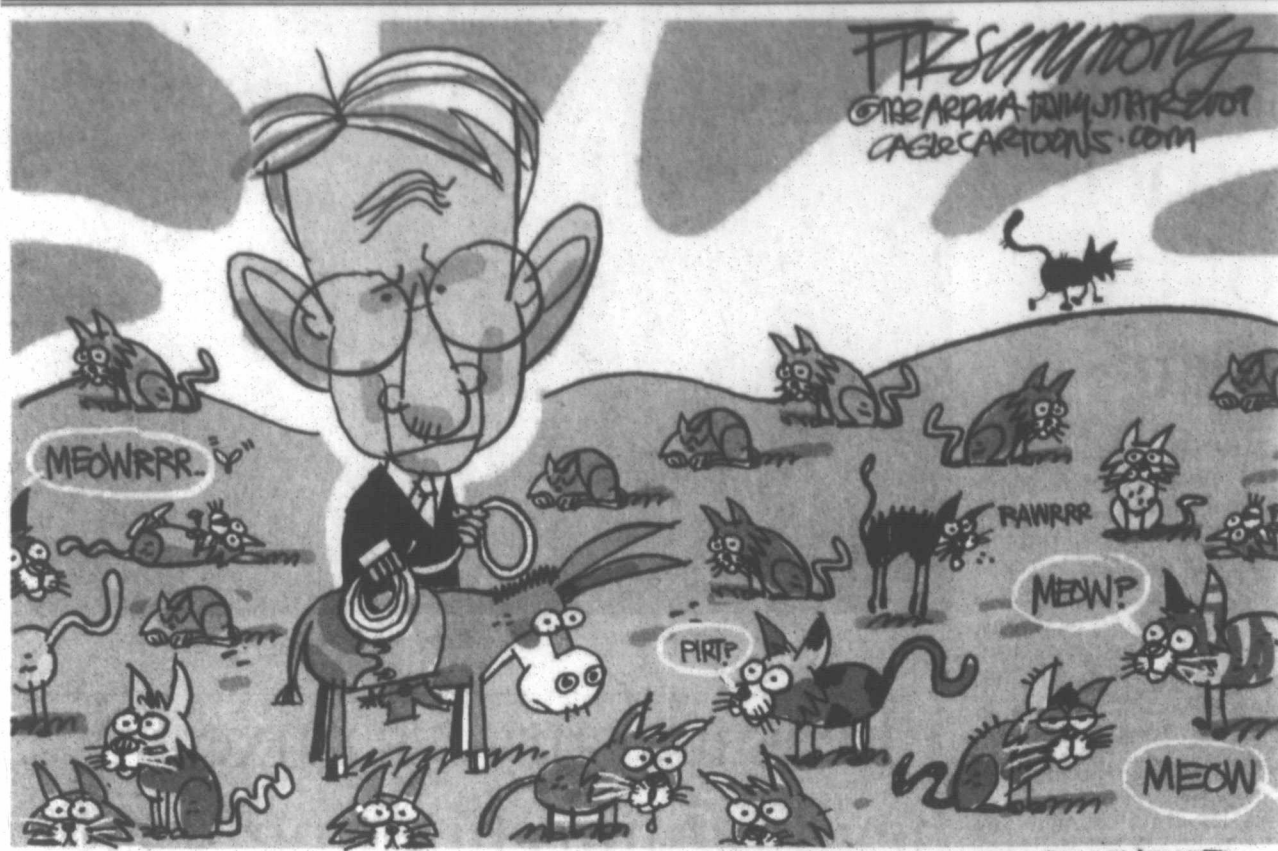
- Highlights in history on this date:
- 1530 - Margaret of Savoy, Governor of the Netherlands, dies. She ruled the country for her nephew, who later became Holy Roman Emperor Charles V.
 - 1640 - Portugal revolts against Spanish control and becomes independent under John IV.
 - 1813 - Allies agree to invade France after Napoleon Bonaparte's vague replies to peace terms.
 - 1821 - The Dominican Republic declares independence from Spain.
 - 1824 - The presidential election is turned over to the U.S. House of Representatives when a deadlock develops among John Quincy Adams, Andrew Jackson, William H. Crawford and Henry Clay. Adams is declared the winner.

'The only people who attain power are those who crave it.'

— Erich Kastner, German author and poet

- 1887 - Portugal secures the secession of Macao from China.
- 1913 - The first U.S. drive-in automobile service station opens in Pittsburgh.
- 1918 - Croatia becomes part of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes — later Yugoslavia; Transylvania, formerly under Hungarian rule, unites with Romania; Iceland becomes a separate state under the Danish crown.
- 1925 - Through the Locarno Treaties Belgium, Britain, Italy, Germany and France agree to a mutual peace in Europe.
- 1934 - Sergei Kirov, a trusted aide of Soviet leader Joseph Stalin but also a possible rival, is assassinated, prompting Stalin to purge the Communist Party.
- 1935 - Chiang Kai-Shek is elected president of Kuomintang, China's ruling party.
- 1948 - Arab conference at Jericho proclaims Abdullah of Transjordan King of Palestine.
- 1954 - United States signs mutual security pact with Nationalist China — now Taiwan.
- 1955 - Rosa Parks, a black seamstress, defies the law by refusing to give up her seat to a white man aboard a Montgomery, Alabama city bus. She is arrested, sparking a yearlong boycott of buses by blacks.
- 1959 - Representatives of 12 countries, including the United States, sign a treaty in Washington setting aside Antarctica as a scientific preserve, free from military activity.
- 1962 - India rejects Chinese proposals for cease-fire and negotiations over disputed border territory.
- 1965 - An airlift of refugees from Cuba to the United States begins. Thousands of Cubans are allowed to leave their homeland.
- 1971 - The "Croatian Spring," a movement for more independence within Yugoslavia, is crushed.
- 1978 - U.S. President Jimmy Carter places more than 56 million acres (22.4 million hectares) of Alaska's federal lands into the national parks system.
- 1981 - A chartered Yugoslav DC-9 jetliner slams into a Corsican mountain as it approaches Ajaccio Airport, killing all 174 people aboard.
- 1988 - Benazir Bhutto is named Pakistan's prime minister, becoming the first woman to lead a modern-day Muslim nation.
- 1990 - Chad's President Hissene Habre flees the country after Libyan-armed guerrillas march into the capital; British and French workers digging the Channel Tunnel between their countries finally meet after knocking out a passage in a service tunnel.
- 1991 - Ukrainians vote 9-to-1 in favor of independence from Soviet Union in a referendum.
- 1992 - A tear gas grenade blows off a farmer's hand as tens of thousands of European farmers protest in Paris against a U.S.-European accord to cut farm subsidies.
- 1993 - The United States and Britain increase pressure on Belgrade ahead of Bosnian peace talks by stopping a Russian proposal to supply natural gas to Yugoslavia during the winter.
- 1995 - Prosecutors in South Africa formally charge former Defense Minister Gen. Magnus Malan and 19 others with the murders of 13 people in 1987.
- 1997 - Historians say banks in Switzerland received three times more gold than previously believed from the Nazis during World War II and that as much as one sixth was stolen from concentration camp victims.
- 1999 - Scientists announce for the first time they have virtually mapped an entire human chromosome, one of the chains of molecules that bear the genetic recipe for human life.
- 2000 - Vincent Fox is elected president of Mexico, ending the seven-decade political dynasty of the Institutional Revolutionary Party. The election marks the first peaceful transfer of power to an opposition party in Mexico's history.
- 2006 - Hundreds of thousands of Lebanese heed a call by Hezbollah and congregate in downtown Beirut to pressure the U.S.-supported government to resign.
- 2007 - Colombian government officials release a letter written by former presidential candidate, Ingrid Betancourt, and videos that are the first evidence in years that she and other rebel-held hostages including three U.S. military contractors may still be alive.

Today's Birthdays:
 Gerard Swope, U.S. industrialist (1872-1957); Rex Stout, U.S. mystery writer (1886-1975); Walter Alston U.S. baseball manager (1911-1984); Mary Martin, U.S. actress (1913-1990); former Vietnamese President Le Duc Anh (1920-); Woody Allen, U.S. director (1935-); Bette Midler, U.S. singer/actress (1945-); Jeremy Northam, British actor (1961-).



SENATOR HARRY REID and THE HEALTH CARE REFORM VOTE ROUNDUP

Opinion from across the state

The Dallas Morning News on Texas' truth-in-grading law:

Are you sitting down? Seriously, get this: Some Texas school districts have gone to court attempting to strike down a new state law that requires that a student's grades actually mean what they say.

(You said you were sitting down.)

Hard to imagine, right? Yes, sadly, but true.

Six districts near Houston -- Aldine, Fort Bend, Klein, Alief, Anahuac and Clear Creek -- have filed a lawsuit that challenges a measure the Texas Legislature passed this spring that requires truth-in-grading. Lawmakers got into high gear after reading reports about school districts assigning students minimum grades, even if they were doing closer to zero work. Minimum-grade policies usually assign a grade of 50 to a student for a grading period, even if that student has earned something less than that.

Sen. Jane Nelson, a Republican from Flower Mound, led the charge against such wrongheaded policies, resulting in unanimous votes by both chambers of the Legislature to prohibit them. Legislators were very clear in wanting to curb the practice of giving students grades they didn't earn.

To be fair, some districts argue that minimum-grade policies are really best for kids. Here's how the plaintiffs explained it in their suit:

"Minimum grading policies ... ensure that a student still may gain credit for a course as a whole and in turn continue progressing toward graduation, even after receiving a failing grade in, say, the first grading period, provided they can attain requisite grades in subsequent grading periods for the course. As such, minimum grading policies for report cards are a key tool for keeping students in school."

In other words, if a child tanks in the first grading period with an extremely low score in math, that student still could work back to a passing score by knocking it out of the park in subsequent grading periods. We understand wanting to keep from discouraging kids, but we also recognize that it does children and their families no good to assign grades they don't deserve.

A teacher commenting on our Education Front blog (dallasnews.com/education front) expressed this clearly:

Letters to the editor

To the editor,

In today's economy, with everything being so commercialized and families buying this and that for Christmas, we have lost the true meaning of Christmas that Jesus is the reason for the season. We now have Black Friday, stores opening up at five in the morning. Hundreds of people line up to get great deals at a Walmart and other places, waiting all night sometimes.

Last year someone got trampled to death on Black Friday. This year a Walmart in California had to close because of unruly customers.

Some of today's families are really hurting, with people losing their jobs that they have worked at all their lives and not being able to find another job. Thousands and thousands of foreclosed homes, families on the streets homeless, not to mention all the children. The little children cannot help if their parents have lost their jobs and cannot afford Christmas gifts. To go along with this, the children cannot help if their parents have abused them and they are in Foster care.

I work at the Jordan Unit and every Christmas each department sponsors a child to give gifts to. These are the only gifts that these children will get and there are a lot more children out there in Pampa that we cannot help so I'm issuing a challenge to the good people of Pampa.

If you are truly blessed by having a job and buying your children Christmas presents, to donate to an organization of your choice, like the Salvation Army or Child Protective Services.

Just imagine if everyone in Pampa that is truly thankful for having a job gave \$5. Every child in Pampa could have a great Christmas.

Come on, people of Pampa, we live in the United States of America. Is there any reason at all for a child to go without a Christmas gift? Think back to when you were a child. How did you feel if you did not get any Christmas gifts do to no fault of your own. And how great it would feel if you were given Christmas gifts for the first time.

We could be a model for the state of Texas that small town came together and made sure every child had Christmas.

Dale Knott
 Pampa

"A kid who gets a 25 during one six-week period could pass -- might pass if the kid pulls their act together and starts working. If they don't, well -- so we lie to the parent and represent their effort as "half-done" with a 50, when, in fact, they have not done that, even? Have you seen the faces of parents who come up to a teacher to complain about a 50, then watch the horror and dismay when they found out it was really a 37? Then they wonder if they can believe any grade!"

To us, that's really the issue. Either grades mean what they say, or they don't.

We have to hope that North Texas school districts see it that way. If any of them sign on with these plaintiffs, they will do their students far more harm than good.

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.

THE PAMPA NEWS

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Pampa City Lake slated for trout stocking

Quality fishing is one of the many natural resources Texas has to offer, but when lower winter temperatures result in decreased activity of our popular warm water species, what is an angler to do? For Texans in search of convenient winter time fishing, it doesn't get much better than winter trout season.

Each winter Texas Parks and Wildlife in cooperation with participating cities and agencies stocks approximately 270,000 catchable-size rainbow trout into 120 sites across the state. Many of the fish stockings will be conducted at small community fish-

ing lakes, state parks, and popular river tailraces that offer easy angling access. This program is designed to provide increased fishing and natural resource education opportunities for city residents and children.

The Pampa City Lake is scheduled to receive 1,000 rainbow trout on December 3, 2009 and an additional 1,000 trout on February 18, 2010. All dates and times for stocking are subject to change due to weather conditions and availability of fish.

Anglers are reminded that Community Fishing Lakes do have special regulations for rainbow trout:

the bag limit is 5 fish per day per person, and there is no minimum length regulation on these small lakes. A valid Texas fishing license is required for anyone that doesn't meet state exemption guidelines. Only fishing by pole and line is permitted in Community Fishing Lakes. For more information on statewide and community fishing regulations consult a 2009 - 2010 Texas Parks and Wildlife Outdoor Annual available at any license retailers or the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department website at www.tpwd.state.tx.us.

The Twentieth Century Cotillon Study Club
The 14th annual
Christmas Tour of Homes
 1 - 4 p.m.
Sunday, December 6

The Lewis and Debbie Davis Home & Christmas Tree Farm
 641 County Line Road
 Take Hwy 70 North to County Line Road, which is the road one mile before the Little Red School House. Go left on County Line Road to the tree farm.
The Tina Cox Home
 645 Pheasant Lane
 Enter Walnut Creek and take Walnut Lane, crossing the cattle guard to Pheasant Lane.
The Robert and Jane Jacobs Home
 640 Pheasant Lane
 Enter Walnut Creek and take Walnut Lane, crossing the cattle guard to Pheasant Lane.
The Wesley and Sharon Crosier Home
 311 Oak
 Walnut Creek
 Proceeds Benefit The Opportunity Plan, Inc.
 Tickets are \$10 and may be purchased at the homes on the day of the tour.

Sudoku

Answer to yesterday's puzzle:

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

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

Level: Beginner

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Dear Abby...

By Pauline & Jeanne Phillips



DEAR ABBY: You advised "Pooped Out in North Carolina" (Sept. 21) that as long as dog doo-doo is securely sealed in a bag, you saw no harm in putting it in a stranger's garbage can.

While I agree in principle, as a homeowner who is a frequent recipient of foreign feces, there is a practical issue that you may not have foreseen. Our garbage collectors will not dispose of small bags of dog poop; they will only take trash bags of the larger size one would expect to contain household waste.

The result is that after our trash is taken, we're left with several bags of strangers' dog waste in the bottom of the can. My wife and I have to pull these bags out and add them to larger bags of garbage. Otherwise, they'll remain at the bottom of the can indefinitely.

So while putting one's dog droppings in a stranger's trash may appear to be harmless, it may also have consequences you didn't consider. I would suggest that pet owners err on the side of taking it home with them. And if you don't want to carry it for 15 minutes, don't walk your dog 15 minutes from your house. -- **FREQUENT FECES FINDER**

DEAR F.F.F.: I'm sorry to say my advice to "Pooped" landed ME in the doghouse. Read on:

DEAR ABBY: You should have told "Pooped" to check the local laws first. In my community, if you're caught putting your trash in someone else's container, you are made to clean it out, fined and sometimes given jail time. I'm sure "Pooped" would not appreciate being sent to jail on account of his dog's delivery. -- **TOM IN REED CITY, MICH.**

DEAR ABBY: A lot depends on how the trash is collected. My trash collector and the nearby city collectors just come and pull the bags out of the

cans. That little baggie, if deposited in my trash can, would either be knocked out on the ground or fall to the bottom of my trash can. Neither is acceptable.

On the other hand, some of my neighbors use a trash service that utilizes a truck with a mechanical arm that turns the cans upside down and empties them into the truck. In a case like that, I don't see what difference it makes whose can it's "deposited" in. -- **CONNIE IN PARIS, TENN.**

DEAR ABBY: I walk my dogs through the neighborhood and, as a responsible pet owner, I clean up after them. Often, however, I wonder why I bother. Many dogs here run loose and leave their messes wherever they please with no one to clean up after them. I think that neighbors should thank pet owners who do clean up -- no matter where they deposit the doo-doo. -- **DOG WALKER IN LAYTON, UTAH**

DEAR ABBY: When we walk our dog, we always carry a bag. I have seen others "scoop" up after their dog and then toss it under the bushes. Carry it home, folks! Or, as the gentleman did, place it in a trash container. If it's on the curb, it's public property. -- **SCOOPER IN FLORIDA**

DEAR ABBY: We walk our dogs four times a day and place their carefully bagged "deposits" only in the trash at our house. We do this for two reasons: One, people can be territorial about their refuse containers and resent any "unauthorized" garbage placed there. Two, many homeowners hate finding animal waste on their property or in their trash.

Abby, please rethink your reply to "Pooped Out." He sounds lazy. His wife, family and co-workers, on the other hand, appear to be responsible and considerate. -- **PICKER-UPPER IN CALIFORNIA**



Classified
 Adopt A nurturing financially secure LOVING HOME awaits for 1st baby to LOVE forever. Expenses paid. Lisa 1-800-989-8921

3 Personal
 Adopt A nurturing financially secure LOVING HOME awaits for 1st baby to LOVE forever. Expenses paid. Lisa 1-800-989-8921

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 in 800 block of Somerville Female Black Lab mixed dog wearing Harley Davidson collar. Please call 662-2883

LOST Diaper Bag. Zebra & black. Has paperwork w/ Cheyenne Williams name on it. Lost on Dwight & Gwendolen. Call 440-4765

13 Bus. Opp.
 GREAT Investment opportunity Howardwick Convenience store. 665-1875, 806-383-1985.

14d Carpentry
 Carpentry, Roofing, Replacement Windows, steel siding & trim. Continuous gutters. Jerry Nicholas 669-9991, 662-8169

CUSTOM Building & Remodeling. New Homes & Additions. Shawn Deaver Const., 806-662-2977.

14e Carpet Serv.
 NU-WAY CLEANING SERVICE Bob Marx Owner-Operator. Call 665-3541.

14h Gen. Serv.
 CERAMIC tile work. Remodeling floor, shower, kitchen. Texture, painting, dry wall. Free esti. Call 665-3453 or leave message. Jesus Barraza.

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.

PANHANDLE HOUSE LEVELING. Floor or roof sagging, walls cracking, doors dragging, bricks cracking? Call us! 669-0958

JH Concrete. Driveways, additions, stamp, patios, tile, remodeling. Free Est. 806-382-5408.

14h Gen. Serv.
 SOLIS FENCING. New Fence / Fence Repairs. Free estimates. 806-486-1368, 662-2473

14s Plumbing/Heat
 BROWNING Heating & Air Cond., 665-1212. Free esti. on new equip. We service all brands!

14u Roofing
 WENDELL'S ROOFING CO. Metal Roofs, Composition Roofs and Built-Up Roofs. Free Estimates. 806-665-7648

19 Situations
 SINGLE mom will run errands, clean, cook or shop for u! Can provide home care. CNA exp. Need a ride to appts. or store? 663-6061.

21 Help Wanted
 PART-TIME Afternoon Position avail. 25 hrs. per week. Computer skills necessary with a working knowledge of programs such as Photoshop, Quark Xpress and InDesign helpful. We will train the creative person who is detail oriented and not afraid of tackling something new. Your artistic side would find an outlet in this position. Send resume to Box 86, c/o Pampa News, Po Box 2198, Pampa, Tx 79066

21 Help Wanted
 MCLEAN Feedyard is now hiring Feed Truck Driver and Mill Hand. Apply in person at McLean Feedyard, 4 mi. South on Hwy. 273.

NEEDED Pumper for Pampa area. 5 yrs exp. Vacation, holidays, 401K, insurance. Send resume to Box 43, Pampa, TX 79066

PART Time Trainer 6:30am-12:30pm. Safety / OSHA background w/ training exp. and computer skills. Send resume to ECC. P.O. Box 1172, Pampa, TX 79066-1172

TEXAS Rose Steakhouse is now hiring for Hostesses & Servers. Apply in person. No phone calls!

FULL-TIME RN needed at Parkview Hospital Home Health in Wheeler. Please call 826-1370, ask for Susan Leflew RN Director, or come by 306 E. 9th St., in Wheeler, for an application.

Hospice Care of the Southwest
 We are currently seeking to fill the following position:
RN-Full Time Pampa Area
 Call 806-356-0026 for more info. Submit resumes to: Fax: 806-358-3114.

21 Help Wanted
 PAYABLES Clerk that is familiar with inventory, payments, fix assets. A good understanding of accounting principles (Debit & Credit). Great ground floor opportunity with strong construction co. Benefits included. Send resume to jpotts@williams weldinginc.com

CRALL
 QUALITY ASSURANCE INSPECTOR Experience in ISO 9001/API welding knowledge helpful. 40-45 hours/wk. working in welding shop environment.

Send resume to: P.O. Box 453 Pampa TX 79066-0453 No Phone Calls Please

RADIATION DETECTOR ASSEMBLER
 Responsibilities include assembling, testing, and repairing detector parts. Machine and polish scintillation crystals. Assemble spring, shields and shims. Perform spectrum analysis of radiation detector. Knowledge of welding lath operations and basic lath operations. Technical School experience desired. Pre-employment physical exam and drug screen required. Competitive wage and benefit package. Send application or resume to Titan Specialties, Ltd. P.O. Box 2316, Pampa, TX or contact hr@titan-specialties.com BOE

SEEKING experienced Pumper for the Sunray area. Send resume to PO Box 1422, Pampa TX, 79066.

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

69 Misc.
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FURNITURE CLINIC Refinishing, Repairing Re-Gluing 662-9700

SOFA, Loveseat, Recliner. Leather. Originally \$3500, asking \$500. 440-1347

UPRIGHT Piano and full sz Pool Table-good cond., for sale. Call 669-6198, 669-6323.

69 Misc.
 SOY Candles - Choose size, color & scent. 669-2158

RED Barn will be Closed Sat. Nov. 28th. 1420 S. Barnes.

LIKE new Maroon reclining lift chair, antique 3 piece bedroom suite w/bed dresser and chest. Call 663-2055, 898-6754.

80 Pets & Suppl.
 FREE to good home due to allergies. Male Red heeler mix. 629 N. Dwight after 5 pm.

JUST in time for Xmas Pure Breed German Shepard Pups. 3 female. \$600 each. Parents on site. 806-664-0748 - Crystal.

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 ALL real estate advertised herein is subject to the Federal Fair Housing Act, which makes it illegal to advertise "any preference, limitation, or discrimination because of race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status or national origin, or intention to make any such preference, limitation, or discrimination." State law also forbids discrimination based on these factors. We will not knowingly accept any advertising for real estate which is in violation of the law. All persons are hereby informed that all dwellings advertised are available on an equal opportunity basis.

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OFFICE Space for rent, ask about 3 months free rent. 669-6841.

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 4 bdrm, 1 3/4 bath. Master bath remodeled. 2 living areas, 2 fireplaces. Several updates. New driveway. 669-1846 or 663-0514

EXECUTIVE Home in Walnut Creek. 5 bdr 3 ba, 2 car gar. \$175,000. Call 662-7557.

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MCLEAN, Tx. 3 bdr., 1 ba., 1 car gar., fenced yard. Totally rebuilt. Must see! Priced to sell. Call 8-5pm., 806-584-7166, by appt. only.

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Is your salon not listed?
 Call Beverly at 669-2525 for information.

DAILY HOROSCOPE

HAPPY BIRTHDAY for Wednesday, Dec. 2, 2009:
 This year, you open up to new ideas and different styles. Whether you simply allow yourself to drop some of the filters to your thinking or events force your hand, you will transform your mental process. Often you find that your feelings take new twists and turns. Your emotions will change if you don't lock in. You have an opportunity to travel or perhaps to go to school. Some of you might take seminars and workshops to increase your knowledge or expertise. If you are single, many people could enter your life. The art will be choosing who. Someone very different could play a significant role in your life. If you are attached, the two of you often are on opposite sides of a question. Learn to respect your differences. GEMINI often plays devil's advocate.

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)
 ★★ Calls, knocks on your door and seemingly endless e-mail seem to define your morning. By the afternoon, you declare "enough" and need some space to breathe and think. Clear your head quickly through a walk or some yoga. Tonight: Insights aren't always comfortable.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)
 ★★ What you believe to be your strong suit — making financial decisions that work — could be tested. Resist tossing the baby out with the bath water, even though you could become increasingly frustrated. Tonight: Consider nixing a friend's suggestion.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)
 ★★★★★ The Full Moon draws opportunities as you rarely have seen. If you would like another approach or to do something differently, the time is now. Understand that others find you unusually assertive. Tonight: Remain calm.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)
 ★★ Much is going on, and feelings could run the show, at least with the Moon Child. What appears as a stunning concept could be extremely costly. Travel and assess, knowing you don't need to say yes immediately. Tonight: Pull yourself out of the social whirlwind.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)
 ★★★★★ You see that being more straightforward has its benefits. You zero in on what is important, and now others can see your priorities. The majority of those around you agree; it is that one person who could give you flak. Tonight: Recognize the value in disagreement.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)
 ★★★★★ You often wonder what others would do, as you frequently pick up their slack. The only difference right now is that you have a lot on your plate, and this established pattern of shouldering others' burdens easily could lead to some anger and disagreeable feelings. Tonight: Practice saying the word "no."

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)
 ★★★★★ Detach, and understanding will evolve to a new level. You might want to take the high road in disagreements or understand more deeply where someone is coming from. Tonight: How about a stress-buster?

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)
 ★★ Deal with others directly in order to obtain positive results. Clearly, a boss or someone you look up to has very strong ideas. This person's demanding attitude could take you aback. Use care in discussing money matters right now. Tonight: Avoid risks.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)
 ★★★★★ You want to change gears and handle a matter, but clearly a partner or associate wants to continue on a chosen path. Pull back and let time be your ally. You will like the end results. Tonight: Understanding grows.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)
 ★★★★★ Often labeled as the workhorse of the zodiac, once more you prove to others how right-on this nickname is. A partner or associate could become irritated. Why? This person simply feels he or she doesn't have enough time with you! Tonight: Relax at home. Change your plans if need be.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)
 ★★★★★ Investigate possibilities that surround a child, loved one or creative enterprise. Your way of handling a problem could trigger someone close, not to say that you are wrong. Ride the wave of disagreement for now. Tonight: Avoid dealing with money.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)
 ★★ You move to a new depth of understanding and realization within a personal relationship. Lighten up about what you are thinking and try to be less reactive — that is, if you would like to stabilize a situation. Tonight: Moving onward.

BORN TODAY
 Pop star Briney Spears (1981), designer Gianni Versace (1946), actress Lucy Liu (1968)

 Jacqueline Bigar is on the Internet at www.jacquelinebigar.com.
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