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The PAMPA NEWS

Thursday, December 15, 2011 Volume 107 • No. 209 75¢ Daily • Weekend \$1.50

TODAY IN SPORTS Skinning
inside:  Page 7A

City hears '11 report from PEDC's Sutherland

MOLLIE BRYANT
 mbryant@thepampanews.com
 Gary Sutherland, president of the Pampa Economic Development Corporation (PEDC) board of directors, reported the organization's activities for the year at the City Commission meeting on Tuesday afternoon.

projects in the last fiscal year, not counting the purchase of the Pampa Energy Center (PEC). "During the last fiscal year, the most exciting thing that we did was purchasing the Pampa Energy Center, the old Celanese site. We're excited about our prospects. We've got a lot of activity," said Sutherland. The PEDC purchased the site for \$3 million last May, and has since faced a \$365,000 loss, attributed to operating costs.



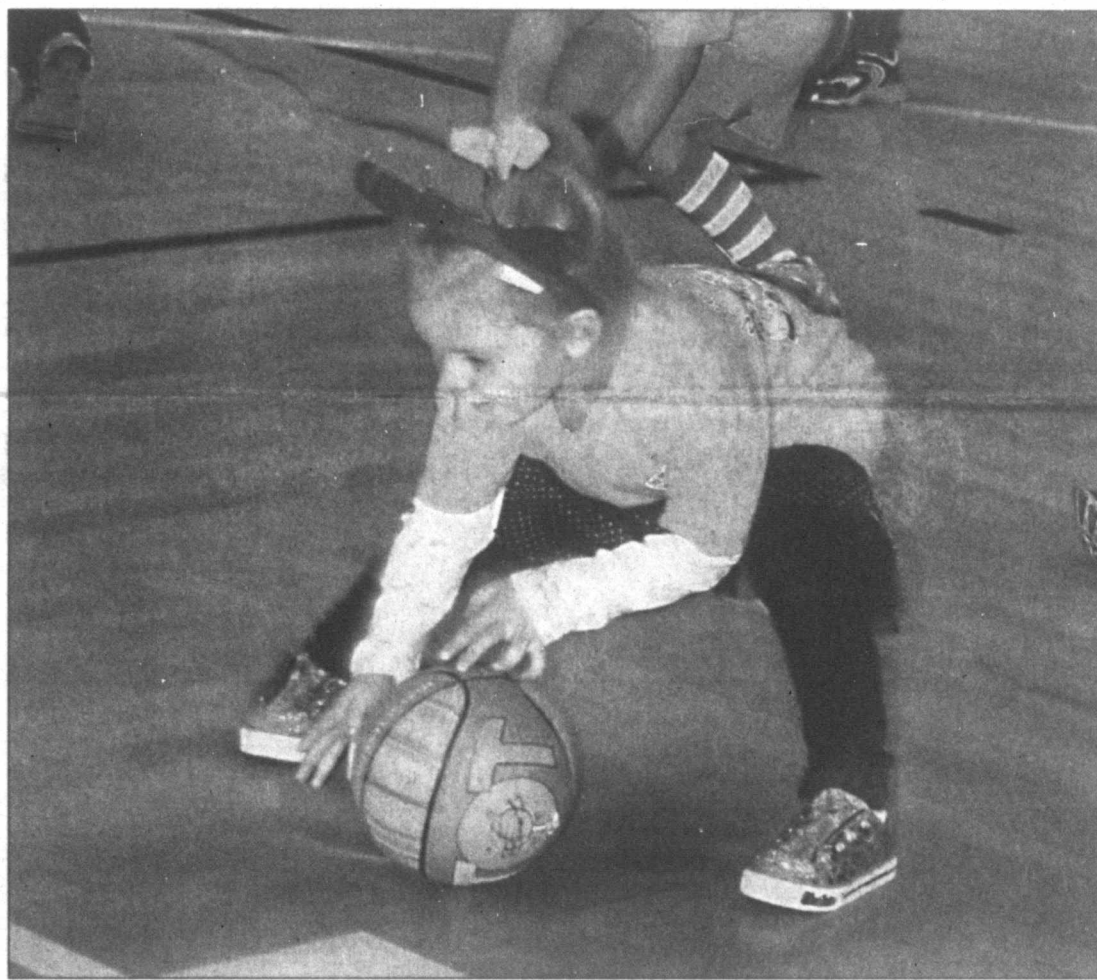
Sutherland

"We're excited about our prospects. We've got a lot of activity."

— Gary Sutherland
 Pampa Economic Development Corporation board president on the efforts to secure tenants for Pampa Energy Center

"Pampa Energy Center is not an inexpensive place to operate," said Sutherland. "We had some income. Open Range (manager of the site) continues to work to reduce those costs." The PEC's first tenant, PEDC cont. on page 7

BOUNCING BABY



staff photo by ReDonn Woods

Sarah Beth Laurence of TOT (Teams of Tomorrow) dribbles a basketball on the hardwood at Pampa High's McNeely Fieldhouse. The TOT showed off their dribbling skills during the halftime show of Tuesday's PHS junior varsity game against Randall.

4H's McGinty updates City about barn

MOLLIE BRYANT
 mbryant@thepampanews.com

Gray County Extension Agent Brandon McGinty gave City Commissioners an update on the 4H Club's use of the Breeders Barn Building during Tuesday's City Commission Meeting at City Hall. The feeding facility has seen much improvement since Gray BARN cont. on page 7

Retirement fund increase gets approval

THE PAMPA NEWS

At a special meeting on Wednesday, the City Commission gave a final go-ahead to an ordinance that will increase the rate taken from city employees' checks towards the retirement system. The rate will increase from 5 percent to 7 percent, and the amount RETIREMENT cont. on page 7

12 kids of Christmas

Karsen Buck, 2
 Parents: Jeremy and Karmen Buck
 What I want most for Christmas is: "ABC's."
 My favorite Christmas song: "Let It Snow"
 My favorite Christmas movie: "Beauty and the Beast: The Enchanted Christmas"

Law enforcement a family business for Deputy Skinner

MOLLIE BRYANT
 mbryant@thepampanews.com

Inspired by his family to enter law enforcement, Deputy J.C. Skinner has worked with the Gray County Sheriff's Office for the past two years. Skinner's grandfather worked for the Sheriff's Office here, his father is a K-9 officer with the Iowa Park Police Department and his uncle works as a police officer in Wichita, Kansas. "My family is the main reason I wanted to be a police officer," said Skinner, who got his start in juvenile corrections, before joining up with the Iowa Park Police Department, and eventually becoming a deputy in Gray County. For three years, Skinner worked as a corrections officer for the Texas Youth Commission in Vernon, where he is

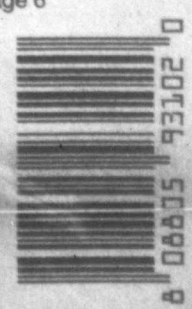


originally from. "I enjoyed working out there. It was a military style boot camp, but we weren't in people's faces yelling at them or anything like that. It was a lot different working with the juveniles and everything," he said. Skinner worked with young people, aged 14 through 21. "A lot of them weren't even kids. You always see the same ones come back through. That's one good thing about here, is you can talk to them in a different situation, where they're not already SKINNER cont. on page 6




Merry Christmas!
 Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

IN THIS ISSUE:

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Weather	2A	Sports	5B/6B
Morning Rush	3A	Dear Abby/Puzzles	3B
Viewpoints	4A	Classifieds	4B
Dog Talk	7A		



PAMPA FORECAST

Today	Friday	Saturday
		
High 45 Low 22	High 46 Low 25	High 42 Low 28

Today: Mostly sunny, with a high near 45. Wind chill values between 17 and 27 early. North northeast wind between 10 and 15 mph, with gusts as high as 20 mph.

Tonight: Mostly clear, with a low around 22. Northeast wind around 5 mph becoming south southwest.

Friday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 46. Northwest wind around 5 mph.

Friday Night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 25. North northwest wind between 5 and 10 mph.

Saturday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 42. West wind between 5 and 10 mph.

Saturday Night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 28. Southwest wind around 5 mph.

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LAST MINUTE ADS

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ANGELS, ANGELS, we have Salvation Army Forgotten Angels for you to choose from on our Christmas tree! These are angels who were not chosen from the Salvation Army Angel tree. Items should be returned unwrapped with angel tag attached before Dec. 20th to the Pampa News or the Salvation Army 701 S. Cuyler, (if you have questions please call 665-7233). Come by The Pampa News, 403 W. Atchison, pick an angel & make someone's Christmas brighter this year! We are open Mon.-Fri., 8am-3pm. Merry Christmas from The Pampa News!!

BABY'S FIRST Christmas! Deadline Dec. 15th, 2pm. \$25 (paid in advance) and will be in the Dec 24th paper. Email Photos Will Be Accepted. If emailing photos, please call Beverly to verify that we have received your photo, 669-2525. Please Email photo and information to classified@thepampanews.com or bring by Pampa News Office 8am-3pm. You may include baby's name, birth date, parents, brothers, sisters, grandparents, (great-grandparents-if there is enough room).

PARTY TRAYS For The Holidays, Hoagies Deli, 665-0292. We Deliver!!!

PACK N Mail will be open Sat. Dec. 17, 10am-2pm. Jewelry and Gift Items 25% off starting Dec. 1st except Lakeshore Candles & Miché Bags.

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Ron Lilley, Broker

Obituaries

Marian Beth Case Reckahn, 44

Marian Beth Case Reckahn, 44, passed away December 10, 2011, in Philadelphia (Penn State Hospice).

Survivors include her husband, Bruce Reckahn, Philadelphia, Pa.; parents, Don and Mary Lynn Case, Granbury; brother, Mark Case, Midlothian; cousins; aunts and uncles; and many friends.

Beth was born February 2, 1967, in Ft. Worth. She graduated Pampa High School in 1985; attended McMurray College in Abilene for two years, and graduated from Texas Tech University in 1989.

She has been a resident of Philadelphia since 1991. Beth will be remembered for her energetic approach to life, for her wonderful sense of humor and quick wit. She always made friends wherever she lived and brought joy into many lives. She was a loving and loyal friend.

Beth loved children, and they loved her. She had a gift for relating to them in a unique way.

Beth was a talented musician and a member of choirs in high school and college. As part of a singing group, she toured England and Scotland in the mid-90's. She loved to travel and was able to fulfill a lifelong dream of going to Paris when she and Bruce spent their honeymoon there.

Beth was an avid reader and an expressive writer, who wrote stories from her early childhood. She could reveal feelings and describe events so that the reader could actually feel and see what she was trying to convey. She had several stories and articles published from her college days and in Philadelphia magazines.

Beth fought a long and difficult battle with cancer for seven years. From her first diagnosis until her death, she showed remarkable courage and determination. She truly lived her life fully.

Those who loved her feel that a light has gone out of their world; but heaven is richer because of her presence there. Memories of Beth will continue to brighten the lives of those fortunate enough to have shared a part of her life.

A celebration of her life will take place February 4, 2012 (two days after her birthday), in Granbury. Time and location will be decided later.

Memorials may be given to Pampa Sheltered Workshop or to the Crisis Pregnancy Center.



Reckahn

2, 1952, in Wichita Falls. He moved to Pampa in 1975 to work for United Mud, and in 1987, he started his own company, Frontier Mud Service. Jerry was happiest when he was around his family, and he was a diehard OU fan. He loved his wife very much, and he was a very loving husband, father, grandfather and great-grandfather.

Survivors include his wife, Patricia Leach of the home; a daughter, Kerry Lofton and husband D. D. of Pampa; a son, Kelly Leach of Oklahoma City; two granddaughters, Lesli Beasley and husband Nathan of Fort Worth, and Heather Rose and husband Brandon of Yukon, Okla.; a grandson, T.J. Leach of Oklahoma City; five great-granddaughters, Ashli East of Denton, Avery Rose of Yukon, Okla., Jordyn Richards, Breeilyn Richards and Lauryn Richards, all of Pampa; and three great-grandsons, Mason Richards of Pampa, Tyson Ward of Yukon, Okla., and Kadin Leach of Amarillo; one brother, Jud Leach and wife Sue of Yukon, Okla.; and a sister, Beverly Higgins and husband Terry of Brownfield, N.M. Jerry was preceded in death by a son, Kevin Leach; and a grandson, Jay Richards.

Memorials may be made to Alzheimer's Association, 415 W. 8th Ave., Suite 300, Amarillo, TX 79101

Sign the online register at www.carmichael-whatley.com.

William Coy "Bill" Sheehan, 85

William Coy "Bill" Sheehan, 85, died December 13, 2011, in Amarillo.

Services will be at 2 p.m. Friday, December 16, 2011, at Carpenter's Church with Rev. Fred Palmer, pastor, officiating.

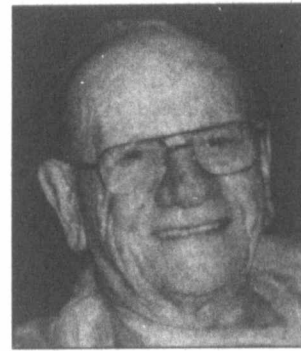
Burial will be at Memory Gardens Cemetery with military honors courtesy of U.S. Navy. Arrangements are under the direction of Carmichael-Whatley Funeral Directors.

Mr. Sheehan was born December 22, 1925, in Slick, Okla. He played football as a quarterback for Cameron College in Lawton, Okla. He was a veteran of the U.S. Navy, serving during World War II. Bill had been a resident of Pampa since 1991, moving from San Diego, Calif., where he worked for General Dynamics for 25 years. He married Rose L. Moody on July 10, 1995, in Pampa. Bill was a member of Carpenter's Church.

Survivors include his wife, Rose Sheehan of the home; four sons, Randy Sheehan and wife Sharisa of Giddings, Greg Sheehan and wife Kim, David Sheehan and wife Debbie, and Terry Sheehan and wife Gloria, all of Odessa; two stepdaughters, Lesia Unruh and husband Mark of Mound Bridge, Kan., and Shelly Yoakum and husband Chad of Skellytown; two stepsons, Russell Matlock and wife Dorla of Edmond, Okla., and Curtis Matlock of Fort Stockton; a sister, Debbie Caldwell and husband Chris of Amarillo; numerous grandchildren and great-grandchildren. He was preceded in death by a sister, Rosemary Holloway and brother-in-law, Charles Holloway.

The family will be at 401 Jupiter in Pampa.

Sign the online register at www.carmichael-whatley.com.



Sheehan

Jerry L. Leach, 78

Jerry L. Leach, 78, died December 13, 2011, in Pampa.

A private family graveside service will be held at Fairview Cemetery with Dr. Jeff Knighton, pastor of First Christian Church, officiating. Arrangements are under the direction of Carmichael-Whatley Funeral Directors.

Mr. Leach was born September 22, 1933, in El Reno, Okla. He graduated from Wentworth Military Academy in Lexington, Mo. and later attended the University of Oklahoma. After college, he served with the National Guard with the 45th Division. He worked for Baroid as a petroleum engineer. He married Patricia Guy on June

For the record

Police Department

The Pampa Police Department reported the following incidents for the 24 hour period ending Wednesday, December 14.

Pampa PD reported 11 traffic related incidents.

Animal Control agents reported nine animal related incidents.

Pampa EMS responded to four medical calls.

Tuesday, December 13
A theft occurred at the 300 block of North Ballard.

Disorderly conduct occurred at the 4000 block of North Bad Cattle Company.

Harassment occurred

at the 700 block of East Campbell.

An accident occurred at the 700 block of West Foster.

Disorderly conduct occurred at the 1100 block of West Sirroco.

An accident occurred at West and Brown.

A domestic disturbance occurred at the 100 block of North Village.

Disorderly conduct occurred at the 1000 block of South Farley and the 100 block of South Starkweather.

A suspicious person was reported at the 300 block of South Starkweather.

A theft occurred at the 400 block of North Bal-

lard.

Disorderly conduct occurred at the 100 block of Village and the 100 block of South Starkweather.

A theft was reported.

An accident occurred at the 100 block of South Cuyler.

A theft occurred at the 200 block of North Naida.

Wednesday, December 14
A suspicious person was reported at the 600 block of West Browning.

A suspicious vehicle was reported at the 1600 block of North Christy.

Sheriff's Office

The Gray County Sher-

iff's Office reported the

following arrests for the 24 hour period ending Wednesday, December 14 at 7 a.m.

Tuesday, December 13
Benjamin Samuel Griffin, 20, was arrested by police for possession of marijuana, failure to maintain financial responsibility, failure to appear in court, no valid driver's license and expired motor vehicle insurance.

Wednesday, December 14
Matthew Brian Driscoll, 28, was arrested by police for public intoxication.

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MORNINGRUSH

\$2 murderer appeal rejected

HOUSTON (AP) - The Texas Court of Criminal Appeals has upheld the conviction of a Dallas street gang member condemned for the slaying three years ago of a man robbed of his car and \$2.

Attorneys for 23-year-old James Garfield Broadnax raised 56 points of error from his trial in Dallas in 2009, many of them focusing on jury selection. The Texas Court of Criminal Appeals rejected all the arguments.

Stephen Swan was one of two men gunned down a year earlier as they left a recording studio in Garland.

Broadnax was 19 when he was arrested in Texarkana. In TV interviews following his arrest, he bragged about the slayings. After he was sentenced to death, he laughed at the mother of one of the victims during her victim's impact statement in court.

Pipeline approval time disputed

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) - South Dakota's two U.S. senators disagree on whether language speeding up approval of the Keystone XL oil pipeline should be included in a bill seeking to extend a payroll tax cut and unemployment benefits.

House Republicans passed a version that includes a requirement that federal officials decide within two months whether to approve the \$7 billion pipeline that would cross South Dakota to deliver Canadian oil to refineries on the Gulf Coast. Senate Democrats and President Barack Obama do not want the pipeline provision in the bill.

Democratic Sen. Tim Johnson says he agrees with Nebraska that the pipeline route should be changed, and that will require extra time for environmental analysis.

Republican Sen. John Thune says the pipeline should be speeded up because it could create 20,000 jobs.

Guard at border to be reduced

WASHINGTON (AP) - When the number of National Guard troops stationed at the Mexican border is reduced next year, their duties are expected to shift from being on the border to flying above it.

About 1,200 troops now help Border Patrol agents spot illegal border crossers and human and drug smugglers. The office of Rep. Michael McCaul, R-Texas, said Tuesday that number will be reduced. It is unclear how many troops will remain.

A federal official briefed on the new strategy said the reduced force will focus their efforts on aerial surveillance. The official spoke on the condition of anonymity because the plan has not been announced.

Lt. Col. Robert L. Ditchey, a Defense Department spokesman, said officials are still working out details of the future of Guard troops at the border.

Death sentence for killer of 6

HOUSTON (AP) - Texas' highest criminal court has upheld the conviction of a man condemned for killing two teenage girls as part of a cross-country murder spree four years ago that left six people dead.

Lawyers for 48-year-old Paul Devoe raised nine points of error from his trial in 2009 in Austin, including claims of insufficient evidence, improper jury selection and jury instructions and improper conduct by trial prosecutors.

The Texas Court of Criminal Appeals rejected each of the claims Wednesday.

Devoe was arrested in Shirley, N.Y., in August 2007, three days after four people were killed at a home in Jonestown, near Austin. He also was accused of killing a bartender in Marble Falls and an 81-year-old woman in Pennsylvania whose car he stole en route to New York.

State wants to thin pike in lake

SANTA FE, N.M. (AP) - If the state has its way, anglers will be allowed to catch all the northern pike they want at Eagle Nest Lake.

The state Game Commission will vote today on removing bag limits on northern pike in Eagle Nest Lake to prevent the aggressive predator fish from decimating popular rainbow trout.

The Santa Fe New Mexican reports state fisheries managers are asking the commission to let anglers catch all the pike they want, as long as they don't dump any back in the lake.

Pike can grow to more than 2 1/2 feet long, weigh up to 40 pounds and live up to 30 years.

Public comment has strongly supported letting anglers keep the pike population in check.

\$337.7M for offshore oil leases

NEW ORLEANS (AP) - The federal government's first auction of offshore petroleum leases in the Gulf of Mexico since the Deepwater Horizon oil spill disaster has drawn \$337.7 million in winning bids.

Petroleum explorers have bid on 191 tracts in the western Gulf off the coast of Texas.

With natural gas prices low and the United States awash in the fuel, most of the bidding is centered on deepwater sites targeted for oil exploration. Twenty companies have issued 241 bids across the western Gulf totaling \$712.7 million.

ConocoPhillips has submitted the largest bid. The Houston energy company will pay \$103.2 million for a deepwater tract.

FEMA declaration extended

AUSTIN (AP) - The Federal Emergency Management Agency has expanded its wildfires disaster declaration area for Texas to include 119 counties.

Gov. Rick Perry on Wednesday announced FEMA has granted the state's request to increase the original 45 counties eligible to seek disaster help.

A FEMA disaster declaration, on July 1, covered Texas wildfires between April 2 and May 3. Perry's office says the updated disaster declaration extends the wildfires incident period through Aug. 29.

Texas, since Perry's initial statewide disaster proclamation last Dec. 21, has responded to more than 26,000 fires that have burned more than 3.9 million acres. The governor's office says state and local response costs are estimated at more than \$330 million.

US death sentences reach 35-year low

MARK SHERMAN
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) - New death sentences in the United States have declined 75 percent from their peak since executions resumed in the 1970s, an anti-capital punishment group reports.

The Death Penalty Information Center said 78 people convicted of murder were sentenced to die so far in 2011, the first time in 35 years there have been fewer than 100 new death sentences.

The option of locking a convicted killer in prison for life without a chance of parole, as well as heightened awareness of the risks of executing

the innocent, are driving the decrease, said Richard Dieter, the center's executive director and author of the report.

In the peak year of 1996, 315 people received death sentences.

The nation also is seeing a sustained drop in executions. The 43 executions in 2011 were roughly half as many as in 2000. Ninety-eight prisoners were put to death in 1998, the busiest year for U.S. death chambers since executions resumed in 1977 following a halt imposed by the Supreme Court.

Texas again led all states by executing 13 people, while 12 other states conducted executions this year: Alabama,

Arizona, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Mississippi, Missouri, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Carolina and Virginia.

Texas' 477 executions since 1977 are the most, by far.

Texas, Virginia and Oklahoma account for more than half the nation's 1,277 executions since Gary Gilmore faced a firing squad in Utah on Jan. 17, 1977, the first execution after the resumption.

In Illinois, Gov. Pat Quinn signed into law the elimination of the death penalty. Oregon Gov. John Kitzhaber stopped a pending execution and declared no one would be executed during his time in office.

California could have a

referendum on next year's ballot to abolish the death penalty. The state hasn't executed anyone in nearly six years because of problems with its old death chamber and then a shortage of one of the execution drugs. California's death row of 720 inmates is the largest in the nation. More than 3,200 people were on death rows across the United States when the year began, the report said.

Polls have consistently shown support for capital punishment remains strong, at 60 percent or higher. But some polls also have found Americans prefer life without parole to the finality of a death sentence.

Combs: Texas will likely tap Rainy Day Fund

CHRIS TOMLINSON
Associated Press

AUSTIN (AP) - Texas lawmakers will almost certainly have to tap the Rainy Day Fund to balance the budget in 2013, but by how much depends largely on the global economy and policy decisions made in Washington, state Comptroller Susan Combs told The Associated Press.

Many lawmakers have said they did not budget enough money to cover the state's obligations for the 2012-2013 budget cycle, but the keeper of the state's books said in an interview Tuesday that lawmakers will need to pass what is called a supplemental bill to make ends meet at the end of the biennium.

A day earlier she forecast that Texas will earn \$1.6 billion more revenue than expected during over the next two years, due to the recovering national economy. But that won't be enough to cover the cost of Medicaid, which lawmakers deliberately underfunded by an estimated \$4.8 billion.

"That is the fungus that will eat the planet ... that is a national problem," Combs said of the health insurance program for the poor and disabled.

The Republican said she supported a new law that will allow Texas to enter into interstate agreements that proponents say will reduce Medicaid costs, but that won't save enough.

"Sales tax revenue is up 9.4 percent year-over-year, and oil and gas is up more than 70 percent, but that's still not enough to get us out of the Medicaid hole, and that has to have a national discussion," Combs said.

Combs said there will still be a shortfall when lawmakers meet again in 2013 and they will likely have to tap the \$7.3 billion in the Rainy Day Fund.

"I think that's probably where they will need to get some money," she said, based on her agency's economic projections based on current conditions. "I don't think the Legislature will have a problem with that. The question always is, how big?"

That will depend largely on oil and gas revenue.

"We are significantly better off now than we were in (2011)," Combs said of the last budget biennium, when lawmakers spent \$3.8 billion from the Rainy Day Fund to make up a shortfall.

State agencies shouldn't see any unexpected budgets before the end of 2013, but that depends on the global economy. She said that while Texas ranks as the nation's top exporting state, the state's continued progress is dependent partly on how China, India and Europe respond to current economic woes.

About 35 percent of Texas exports go to Mexico and 10 percent of those exports go to Europe,

which makes Texas better insulated from European problems, but the state remains subject to global economic woes.

Combs said the lagging sector in the Texas economy is single-family home construction. Texas does not have a problem with a high foreclosure rate, but banks have reacted to global financial problems by making it more difficult for average Texans to get home loans. The result is more construction of multi-family structures, which do not employ as many workers.

She said the future depends on foreign nations, including Greece, Italy and Portugal, working out their debt problems.

At home, she said lawmakers should continue to look at government spending.

"The state needs to look at all of the long-term, ongoing obligations, and by that I really mean debt, pensions and regulatory headwinds," she said.

Combs declined to discuss her plans for higher office. She is widely believed to be interested in replacing Lt. Gov. David Dewhurst, who is the front-runner for a U.S. Senate seat.

She first served in the Texas House and later as agriculture commissioner before becoming comptroller. She has made fighting obesity and promoting good health a priority in all of those positions. In 2011, her office completed a study of the health care costs and economic losses caused by obesity.

"My concern is that we must have a fit workforce that must be going strong," she said. "If we don't do anything about how our kids are and the workforce, we will see about \$30 billion (in annual health care costs to private employers) by 2025 if we don't change what we're doing."

Combs said her office has started keeping a detailed accounting of the economic impact of federal regulations to protect endangered species and prevent air and water pollution. The goal is to know where and how to

intervene to stop needless regulations that could cost Texas jobs and to be ready with a safety net for those companies affected.

Combs also ordered a statewide survey of schools that indexes efficiency by looking at funds spent versus standardized test scores. Researchers then

visited the best schools to identify what she calls "smart practices."

The best schools "are trying to compress their costs and direct dollars to the classroom, which is where I think everybody will agree, we want the dollars in the classroom," she said.

Cinema 4

<p>Movies Showing Friday, December 9 through Thursday, December 15.</p> <p>New Year's Eve (PG-13) Fri 7:15 9:45 Sat 2:00 4:30 7:15 9:45 Sun 2:00 4:30 7:15 Mon/Thur 7:15</p> <p>Arthur Christmas (PG) Fri 7:15 9:30 Sat 2:00 4:30 7:15 9:30 Sun 2:00 4:30 7:15 Mon/Thur 7:15</p> <p>Breaking Dawn (PG-13) Fri 7:00 9:45 Sat 2:00 4:30 7:00 9:45 Sun 2:00 4:30 7:00 Mon/Thur 7:00</p> <p>The Muppets (PG) Fri 7:00 9:30 Sat 2:00 4:30 7:00 9:30 Sun 2:00 4:30 7:00 Mon/Thur 7:00</p>	<p>Showing Friday! Friday, December 16 through Thursday, December 22.</p> <p>Sherlock Holmes: A Game of Shadows (PG-13) Fri 7:30 10:00 Sat 2:00 4:30 7:30 10:00 Sun 2:00 4:30 7:30 Mon/Thur 7:30</p> <p>Alvin and the Chipmunks: Chipwrecked (G) Fri 7:00 9:30 Sat 2:00 4:30 7:00 9:30 Sun 2:00 4:30 7:00 Mon/Thur 7:00</p> <p>Arthur Christmas (PG) Fri 7:00 9:30 Sat 2:00 4:30 7:00 9:30 Sun 2:00 4:30 7:00 Mon/Thur 7:00</p> <p>New Year's Eve (PG-13) Fri 7:15 9:45 Sat 2:00 4:30 7:15 9:45 Sun 2:00 4:30 7:15 Mon/Thur 7:15</p>
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Viewpoints

Today in History

Today is Thursday, Dec. 15, the 349th day of 2011. There are 16 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Dec. 15, 1961, former Nazi official Adolf Eichmann was sentenced to death by an Israeli court for crimes against humanity. (Eichmann was hanged 5-1/2 months later.)

On this date:

In 1791, the Bill of Rights went into effect following ratification by Virginia.

In 1890, Sioux Indian Chief Sitting Bull and 11 other tribe members were killed in Grand River, S.D., during a confrontation with Indian police.

In 1911, jazz musician, composer and bandleader Stan Kenton was born in Wichita, Kan.

In 1938, groundbreaking for the Jefferson Memorial took place in Washington with President Franklin D. Roosevelt taking part in the ceremony.

In 1939, the motion picture "Gone With the Wind" had its world premiere in Atlanta.

In 1944, a single-engine plane carrying bandleader Glenn Miller, a major in the U.S. Army Air Forces, disappeared over the English Channel while en route to Paris. American forces invaded Mindoro Island in the Philippines.

In 1965, two U.S. manned spacecraft, Gemini 6A and Gemini 7, maneuvered to within 10 feet of each other while in orbit.

In 1971, the Secret Service appointed its first five female special agents.

In 1989, a popular uprising began in Romania that resulted in the downfall of dictator Nicolae Ceausescu.

In 1991, an Egyptian-registered ferry, the Salem Express, hit a reef and sank in the Red Sea; at least 470 people died, although some estimates are much higher.

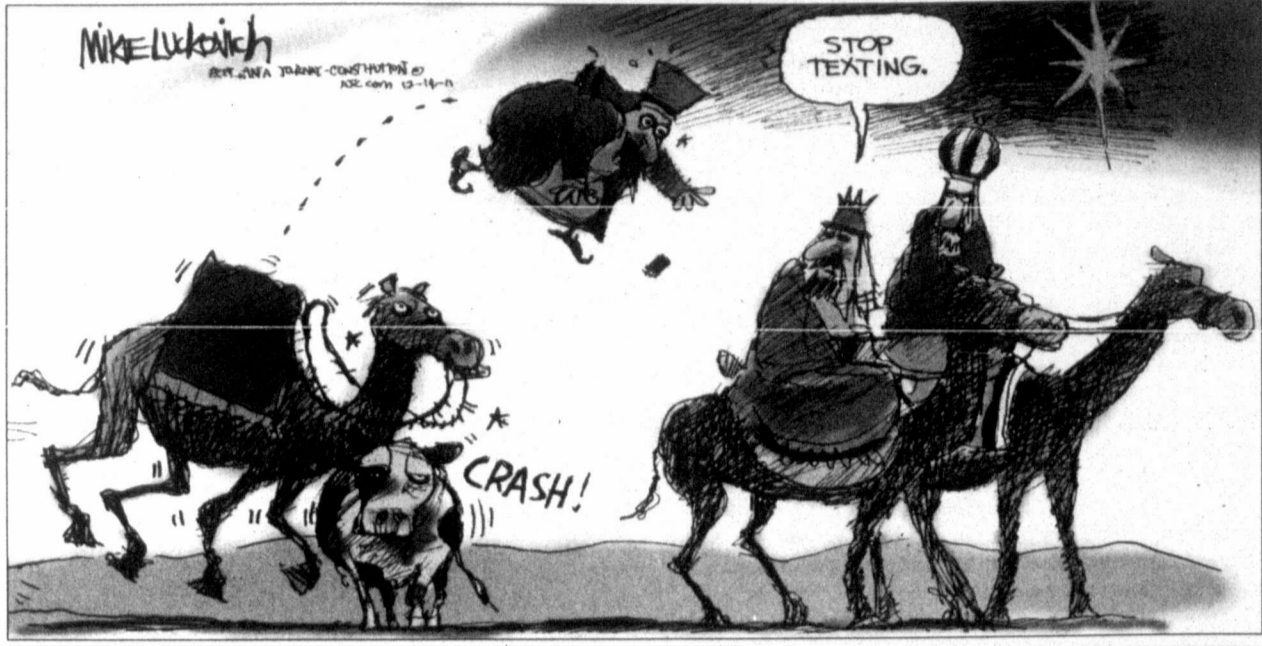
Ten years ago: With a crash and a large dust cloud, a 50-foot tall section of steel - the last standing piece of the World Trade Center's facade - was brought down in New York. The Leaning Tower of Pisa, Italy, was reopened to the public after a \$27 million realignment that had dragged on for over a decade.

Five years ago: Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld bid farewell to the Pentagon in a splashy sendoff featuring lavish praise from President George W. Bush. Gov.

One year ago: The U.N. Security Council gave a unanimous vote of confidence to the government of Iraq by lifting 19-year-old sanctions on weapons and civilian nuclear power.

Today's Birthdays: Actor-comedian Tim Conway is 78. Singer Cindy Birdsong (The Supremes) is 72. Rock musician Dave Clark (The Dave Clark Five) is 69. Rock musician Carmine Appice (Vanilla Fudge) is 65. Actor Don Johnson is 62. Actress Melanie Chartoff is 61. Movie director Julie Taymor is 59. Movie director Alex Cox is 57. Actor Justin Ross is 57. Rock musician Paul Simonon (The Clash) is 56. Country singer Doug Phelps (Brother Phelps; Kentucky Headhunters) is 51. Movie producer-director Reginald Hudlin is 50. Actress Helen Slater is 48. Actress Molly Price is 46. Actor Michael Shanks is 41. Actor Stuart Townsend is 39. Actor Adam Brody is 32. Actor George O. Gore II is 29. Actress Stefania Owen is 14.

Thought for Today: "The world is moving so fast these days that the one who says it can't be done is generally interrupted by someone doing it." - Harry Emerson Fosdick, American clergyman (1878-1969).



America's leaders are small; Americans are not

"We the people of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America."

What a paragraph! Whatever happened to that BIG idea of America — the creation of a society that embraces and fosters such egalitarian values as justice, tranquility, common effort, the welfare of all and liberty?

We know, of course, that our nation has never attained the fullness of this ideal, but over the decades, generation after generation has at least strived to get closer to it — and made impressive progress. But today, some 224 years after the penning of the preamble, America's corporate-financial-political establishment is insisting that it's no longer possible or even desirable to pursue those democratic ideals that make our country important — and make it work.

What's happened is that, from Wall Street to Washington, we now have too many 5-watt bulbs sitting in 100-watt sockets. As a result of our leaders' dimness, America's uniting and constructive ethic of "We're all in this together" and "Together we can" is being supplanted by a shriveled, dispiriting ethic that exalts plutocratic selfishness and scorns the public interest as intrusive, wasteful, ideologically impure and morally ruinous. They're pushing us toward a forbidding Kochian jungle in which there is no "we" — money rules, everyone's on their own, and such matters as justice, general welfare, tranquility and posterity are none of

society's damned business.

So here we are, the wealthiest nation on earth, with massive needs and an industrious population eager to get working on those needs, yet our leaders throw up their hands and say, "No can do." Heavily financed political forces are rumbling throughout the country to crush the union movement, eliminate wage protections, privatize everything from schools to Social Security, kill poverty programs, un-regulate Wall Street, repeal environmental rules, suppress voter turnout, stack the courts, corporatize elections and delegitimize the democratic values expressed in the preamble. They are dynamiting the underpinnings of the middle class and taking away the public tools that ordinary people must have to do the extraordinary things that truly make America great.

Our "leaders" have given up on greatness because there's no greatness in them.

However, there is hope in the people themselves. We see it in the ongoing Wisconsin rebellion that is rejecting the Koch-fueled autocracy of the imperious Gov. Scott Walker; in the 61 percent grass-roots victory in Ohio on Nov. 8 to throw out the repressive anti-labor law that the right-wing Gov. John Kasich arrogantly tried to hang around the people's neck; in the Occupy protest that is so big and so deeply felt by so many angry/hopeful people that even police sweeps cannot make it go away; and in still more uprisings that are coming — coming from such corners as frustrated jobseekers; tens of thousands of misused war veterans returning from the Mideast to mistreatment at home; hundreds



JIM HIGHTOWER

of thousands of homeowners being mercilessly foreclosed on by bailed-out bankers; and others who're simply fed up with the corporados and political flim-flammers who're knocking ordinary Americans down and holding America back.

What we Americans have the most of is the very thing our failed leaders have the least of: bigness of spirit. They say "no," but we say

"yes" — on everything from repairing and extending our nation's crumbling infrastructure (a 2009 poll even found that 74 percent of Republicans are willing to swallow a tax hike to get going on this) to reclaiming our democracy by banning corporate money from our elections (84 percent of Americans support a constitutional amendment to do it).

While it can be disheartening to see the smallness of those in power, don't let it get you down. Better that we turn their failure into our inspiration for more agitation. After all, they're the ones who're wrong — wrong about the can-do power of the people they pretend to lead, wrong about the depth of this nation's historic commitment to egalitarianism and the common good, wrong about what they think they can get away with.

As we head into the New Year, our task is to confront their pusillanimity — demand from every candidate for every office to explain why their vision is so myopic and why their idea of what Americans can do is so small.

Jim Hightower is a nationally syndicated columnist.

Romney bets on old rules as Newt moves under radar

MANCHESTER, N.H. — "We're not going to lose in New Hampshire." So says Mitt Romney's state coordinator, Jason McBride.

Stuart Stevens, the Romney campaign's TV ad-maker, expresses similar confidence. Asked if Romney might finish second in New Hampshire, his answer is an unhesitating "no."

Whether that confidence is well founded may determine the fate of the candidate who has been the on-and-off frontrunner in the race for the Republican presidential nomination.

There are four contests in January — the Iowa caucuses, and then the primaries in New Hampshire, South Carolina and Florida. Romney currently trails Newt Gingrich in polls in three of the four. Only in the Granite State does he cling to the lead he has held in every poll there since April 2010.

If New Hampshire follows the pattern of past primaries, Romney should be headed for a win. In 2008, he only narrowly lost the state, 37 percent to 32 percent, to John McCain. He's been running ahead of that 32 percent in almost all polls this cycle.

He has been building an organization replete with field directors and voter-identification efforts since last May. An absentee ballot drive is getting underway.

McBride is confident that this organizational effort will deliver. "At the end of the day, the ground game is going to matter."

Romney has the support of seven of the 10 county sheriffs, of dozens of state legislators, of legions of Republican activists. Romney signs vastly outnumber those of other candidates on lawns and along highways.

His ads are on the air on Manchester's Channel 9 and will start airing soon on Boston stations.

The efforts of other candidates who

have followed the traditional playbook so far seem to be falling short. Polling suggests that Ron Paul may double the 8 percent he won here in 2008.

Jon Huntsman may also break into double digits. He has concentrated his efforts in New Hampshire and has put together an organization with six full-time field representatives and a 140-person leadership team.

His numerous campaign events attract serious and attentive audiences. But they tend to draw about 75 to 150 people, as compared to 250 for Romney.

By way of comparison, the campaigns for Rick Perry and Michele Bachmann are invisible here. Rick Santorum has an office with two paid staffers but has attracted just a handful of volunteers.

Under the old rules, then, Romney seems to have constructed an impregnable firewall in New Hampshire, able to withstand the surge — McBride calls it a "bubble" — for Newt Gingrich that has been sweeping much of the country.

But do the old rules still apply? Sam Pimm, hired a week ago to manage Gingrich's voter identification and get-out-the-vote efforts in the state, is not so sure. He helped train candidates that enabled New Hampshire Republicans to gain 122 seats in the 400-member state House in 2010.

Pimm says the Gingrich campaign has hired 15 full-time staff, all locals, in the last two weeks and has made 50,000 phone calls to voters in the last seven days. It hired Charlie Spano, who



MICHAEL BARONE

ran field operations for Herman Cain, three days ago.

New technology has made political communication much easier, faster and cheaper than it was even a few years ago. VOIP software makes it possible for volunteers to make phone calls from home in a way that campaigns can control and monitor.

The Gingrich campaign seems to have a more difficult task than the Romney campaign. Polling indicates that Romney's support has been relatively constant over a long period, making it easier for the campaign to identify and keep in touch with those voters.

In contrast, almost all support for Gingrich is much more recent and may be subject to rapid change. Mobilizing that support may be like corralling mercury.

Certainly there is interest in the former speaker. He attracted a crowd of 600 to Windham High School on Monday night and got thunderous applause from the audience. But those proudly wearing Newt 2012 buttons seemed to be outnumbered by those who were still undecided or leaning to Romney or another candidate.

"It's fluid," says former state Attorney General Tom Rath, a Romney backer. "New Hampshire is always tight." But, he adds, "I don't see any slippage for us."

Mitt Romney is betting, and betting more than the \$10,000 he offered in last Saturday's debate, that Rath is right — and that the old rules still apply.

Michael Barone, senior political analyst for The Washington Examiner (www.washingtonexaminer.com), is a resident fellow at the American Enterprise Institute, a Fox News Channel contributor and a co-author of The Almanac of American Politics.

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Houston schools recycle

HOUSTON (AP) — Students and staff in the largest school district in Texas have been challenged to do more to use less energy and increase recycling.

Administrators say the Green School challenge, in a district with 281 schools and more than 200,000 students, is designed to create environmental awareness. Educators and children will be encouraged to put together teams to develop energy and conservation programs that are specific to the needs of their schools.

Wreck shooting investigated

ARLINGTON (AP) — Two people are dead and four others injured after a multi-vehicle accident and shooting in North Texas.

Arlington police Sgt. Chris Cook says a man died when a speeding blue sport utility vehicle slammed into the rear of his pickup truck at a north Arlington intersection. Cook said the SUV driver then shot and killed a man who walked up to his driver's-side window.

A police statement says the 27-year-old Thomas Lester Harper of Arlington is in city jail without bond charged with murder and intoxication manslaughter. Jail records list no attorney.

The statement says a pair of twin toddlers, Harper's son and daughter, also were in the SUV. Their father and a man from another vehicle involved in the chain collision suffered minor injuries.

More Navajo speakers

FLAGSTAFF, Ariz. (AP) — A northeastern Arizona county has the highest number of Native American language speakers in the country.

The U.S. Census Bureau says Apache County in eastern Arizona has 37,000 such speakers. The county encompasses parts of the Navajo Nation, the Fort Apache Indian Reservation and Zuni Pueblo.

The figure is based on five-year estimates from community surveys that allowed the Census for the first time to study small segments of the U.S. population. The Census found that fewer than a half-million people age 5 and over speak a Native American language at home. About 65 percent of them are in nine counties in Arizona, New Mexico and Alaska.

More people speak Navajo than any other Native American language, with 169,000 people, followed by Yupik and Dakota, each with about 19,000 speakers.

Palin harrassers to trial

ANCHORAGE, Alaska (AP) — Two Pennsylvania men accused of harassing Sarah Palin's Alaska lawyers by phone are going to have to stand trial.

Federal Judge Timothy Burgess on Wednesday rejected a plea deal for Shawn Christy and his father, Craig Christy, and instead ordered the McAdoo men to stand trial in early January.

The plea agreement would have let the two avoid prison time and six-figure fines. Burgess says the plea agreements prosecutors had reached with the Christys were not acceptable to him. The judge cited what he described as a disturbing pattern of threats.

The Christys were arrested in Pennsylvania in August. Prosecutors say the men were upset about state restraining orders issued on behalf of the former Alaska governor and 2008 Republican vice presidential candidate. The restraining orders were issued after Palin left office.

Relocation working for bighorn sheep

VAN HORN (AP) — The silhouettes of desert bighorn sheep can once again be seen on West Texas mountain ridges, thanks to a 50-year-old reintroduction program that is now bearing fruit.

A group of nearly 60 Texas Parks and Wildlife Department officials and volunteers gathered Tuesday morning on a private ranch north of Van Horn to begin a weeklong capture program.

They plan to trap more than 100 sheep from the nearby Beach Mountains, where they are thriving, and relocate them to other areas in West Texas where they once roamed. Seven females, called ewes, that were captured Tuesday morning will get a new home at Big Bend Ranch State Park near Presidio.

The sheep, with horns that curve around the sides of their heads, were wiped out in the late 1950s in Texas by disease and unregulated hunting.

Ray Watley, a trapper hired by the department in the 1960s to help start the reintroduction project, was on hand to watch the capture operation Tuesday.

"They told us it would never work," said Watley, sitting on the step of a trailer with three ewes inside. "We had lots of ups and downs. It seemed like, sometimes, it wasn't going to work."

In the mid-1800s, an estimated 3,000 bighorns roamed 16 West Texas mountain ranges, said Froylan

Hernandez, leader of the state Wildlife Division's Desert Bighorn Sheep Program.

About 1,500 sheep now populate eight mountain ranges, thanks to the program, he said, and a goal is to return the sheep to their 1800s population numbers and all the ranges.

On Tuesday, a capture team flying in a small helicopter with an egg-shaped cockpit cruised over the rugged Beach Mountains looking for the animals.

Guns that fire a net with weights on the corners were used to snare the sheep. Then team members jumped out of the helicopter as it hovered close to the ground. They hobbled the sheep and put them in a sling that dangled below the aircraft as it delivered its cargo to a processing station.

At the station, volunteers took hair, blood and stool samples from the sheep. After veterinarians determined the animals were healthy, they were gently put into trailers for transport to their new homes.

The samples taken from each animal will help wildlife biologists create a profile of a healthy sheep. Some animals were also fitted with radio collars that track their movements.

Big Bend Ranch State Park now has about 30 sheep, Hernandez said. It will take about 100 before the population can support itself, he

said. "It's a flagship species," Hernandez said. "If we do good for the sheep, lots of animals under them are going to benefit."

Growing populations will also allow the state to slowly increase the number of bighorn hunting permits it issues each year, Hernandez said.

However, the numbers are still relatively small, he said. That means wildlife officials must watch for disease, heavy predation by mountain lions and other threats.

Without support from private groups like The Bighorn Society, the effort would have failed, Watley said.

The society installed 39 "guzzlers," contraptions that catch rainwater and feed it into troughs for wildlife, in the bighorns' range. Including installation, each guzzler costs about \$35,000, said Daniel Boone, a society member.

Although it will be years before self-sustaining populations are back in their historic habitat, the program appears to be a wildlife management success story.

"We've got (growing) bighorn populations, and they are disease-free," said Clay Brewer, chairman of the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, which represents many states and Canadian provinces with bighorn populations. "This has been a long time coming."

Thousands of birds make crash landing in Utah

ST. GEORGE, Utah (AP) — Thousands of migratory birds died on impact after apparently mistaking a Wal-Mart parking lot and other areas of southern Utah for bodies of water and plummeting to the ground in what one wildlife expert called the worst downing she's ever seen.

Crews went to work cleaning up the dead birds and rescuing the survivors after the creatures crash-landed in the St. George area Monday night.

By Tuesday evening, volunteers had rescued more than 2,000 birds, releasing them into nearby bodies of water.

"They're just everywhere," said Teresa Griffin, wildlife program manager for the Utah Division of Wildlife Resource's southern region. "It's been nonstop. All our employees are driving around picking them up, and we've got so many people

coming to our office and dropping them off."

Officials say stormy conditions probably confused the flock of grebes, a duck-like aquatic bird likely making its way to Mexico for the winter. The birds tried to land in a Cedar City Wal-Mart parking lot and elsewhere.

"The storm clouds over the top of the city lights made it look like a nice, flat body of water. All the conditions were right," Griffin told The Spectrum newspaper in St. George. "So the birds landed to rest, but ended up slamming into the pavement."

No human injuries or property damage have been reported.

It's not uncommon for birds to mistake hard surfaces for water. However, Griffin noted most downing are localized, while "this was

very widespread."

"I've been here 15 years and this was the worst downing I've seen," she told the newspaper.



Wildlife officials said they were continuing the rescue effort that started Tuesday afternoon and included an enthusiastic group of volunteers.

The surviving grebes were gathered up - some in cardboard boxes - and dropped into bodies of water in southern Utah's Washington County, including a pond near Hurricane.

Residents who came across remaining grebes were asked to either call wildlife officials or bring the birds to their office.

"If we can put them on a body of water that's not frozen over, they'll have a better chance of survival," said Lynn Chamberlain, a wildlife agency spokesman.

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Texas has major water plan, but hasn't power to enact it

AUSTIN (AP) — The town of Groesbeck came within days of running out of water this month, even though it knew exactly what could be done to prevent it.

What it would take, according to a plan the Texas Water Development Board is set to approve Thursday, is a \$10.4 million off-channel reservoir. The town, located east of Waco, has an annual budget of about \$2 million.

"Financially we can't handle that," Mayor Jackie Livingston said. Instead, an emergency, \$250,000 pipeline that pumped in water from a nearby rock quarry kept Groesbeck from running dry amid the most-punishing one-year drought in state history.

Livingston said her town is willing to double water usage rates, even "indebt our grandchildren," but can only go so far. "In the meantime, we have had to make arrangements on our own," she said.

The water board plan, released every five years, is a sweeping effort to help Texas cope with its frequent droughts. But the board has no authority to implement its recommendations — meaning towns like Groesbeck can still run out of water under extreme conditions.

Texas' population is slated to grow from 25 million to 46 million by 2060, which should increase water demand 22 percent, according to the 295-page report. But existing state water supplies will decline 10 percent over the same period. It says that failure to meet future water supply needs could cost the state \$11.9 billion in annual economic losses, a figure that might increase to \$115.7 billion per year by 2060.

To cope, the plan recommends 562 water projects, including reservoirs, pipelines, dams and wells, at a cost of

\$53 billion. Texas has set aside just \$1.4 billion to cope with future water needs, however, and is relying on local officials, who have said they can spend about \$26 billion to bolster infrastructure.

Some of the rest can be made up in state grants and low-cost loans the water board helps communities statewide apply for — but that still means billions more in infrastructure improvements that may never come to fruition. What could happen to cities and towns that can't find funding, especially amid deep statewide budget cuts?

"It's certainly putting them at more risk of facing water shortages if we do once again face a historical drought," said Dan Hardin, director of water resource planning at the Texas Water Development Board.

State climatologist John Nielsen-Gammon says Texas has endured droughts in five of the past seven years and that the already historic current one is likely to continue at least another year. It may eventually rival the 1950-57 drought that was the state's longest prolonged lack of rainfall.

Hardin said that even amid such conditions, there's no guarantee local leaders will agree to find funding for the building projects the plan recommends.

"It's tough for me to put myself in the position of a local elected official," he said. "I know the kind of pressure they're under."

The report also recommends the Texas Legislature lay out steps to obtain potential sites for new reservoirs, ease restrictions on the voluntary transfer of surface water, and look at long-term solutions to pay for water plan projects — but there's little mechanism to follow-up with lawmakers.

Some say the report should do more than

make recommendations. "The Texas Water Board doesn't think it's their job to tell the Legislature about water policy, but something has to change," said Amy Hardberger, an attorney and water specialist for the Environmental Defense Fund.

Meanwhile, inaction makes things even more costly. The estimated price tag for meeting the state's water needs has increased from the \$31 billion in the board's 2007 report because the current plan calls for more expensive projects, such as desalination facilities — but also due to inflation.

The 2007 plan itself had a spotty implementation record. Of 497 recommended projects the board was able to track based on internal surveys, just 139, or 28 percent, reported some form of progress on strategy implementation. Of those, only 65, or 13 percent, had been fully implemented.

Ken Kramer, director of the Lone Star Chapter of the Sierra Club, said this year's report projects 36 percent of the state's future water coming from conservation efforts or reusing treated waste water for industrial uses or things like irrigating golf courses. Most of the rest relies on infrastructure improvements. He said that, by calling on authorities to impose mandatory conservation requirements faster during the onset of droughts, the board could ensure conservation plays a larger role.

He noted that encouraging conservation, as well as infrastructure improvements for things like repairing leaky pipes, have helped San Antonio tamp down current water use to levels about equal to 20 years ago, despite its population growth.

"We need to take a closer look at how we're projecting demand versus need," Kramer said.

Police: Mother in welfare standoff had gun in 2010

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — A mother who shot her two children before killing herself in a Texas welfare office was found a year ago with a gun on a beach and told authorities her children were bathing at a gas station, according to a police report released Wednesday.

Rachelle Grimmer was also found with food stamps, a New York driver's license and said her family was staying on the beach "as a learning experience," according to a September 2010 report filed by a Kleberg County sheriff's deputy.

Grimmer's children, 12-year-old Ramie and 10-year-old Timothy, died from their gunshot wounds days after a Dec. 5 standoff in a Texas Department of Health and Human Services building in Laredo. Grimmer, 38, had applied there for food stamps but was denied.

"I asked her why she had the weapon, Grimmer told me that she carried for protection while traveling," Kleberg County sheriff's deputy Robert Wright wrote in the report. "The weapon was returned to her. Ms. Grimmer told me that they would be fine because they were just on vacation."

Authorities visited Grimmer on the beach after receiving a concerned call about the children's welfare.

Wright told Grimmer he was concerned about the children's well-being. The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services sent an investigator that same day to interview Grimmer but ultimately did not intervene with the family.

Patrick Crimmins, an agency spokesman, said Wednesday the investigator verified that Grimmer had \$700 in Ohio food stamps and that she claimed to be receiving more than \$500 a month in child support. He has said that generally speaking, there may be no cause for the state to intervene if the children appear to be well fed, cared for and don't show obvious signs of abuse.

"There are no concerns noted about the children in our documentation," Crimmins said. "They were fully-clothed. Law enforcement documented they were registered for home-schooling through Ingleside (school district). The family appeared to have adequate food."

Yet that same day, Grimmer apparently gave the deputy and child welfare worker conflicting stories. She told Wright the family was vacationing from New York, but hours later, allegedly told the child welfare investigator they came from Ohio. Crimmins said there's no record of New York in the agency's records.

Wright said the family had a small ice chest with lunch meat and bread. When asked where the kids were bathing, Grimmer allegedly told the deputy they cleaned themselves in the bay and at a gas station.

The report from the rural Texas coastal county shed more light on the wayward, impoverished Grimmer family, who appeared to spend their last years crisscrossing the country before winding up in a rundown camper on the U.S.-Mexico border.

Grimmer's former mother-in-law in Montana has said Grimmer had a history of mental problems. Neighbors in the Laredo trailer park, meanwhile, described Grimmer as intelligent and compassionate.

Yet the Kleberg County report was the second this week to note Grimmer's strange behavior. In June, Grimmer walked into the Corpus Christi police department to report that her ex-husband was connected with the Ku Klux Klan and a gang known as MS13, according to a report obtained under an open records request.

Grimmer feared those groups were stalking her, the report said. The officer wrote that "in talking with Grimmer it was evident that she may be mentally challenged." The report went on to say that concern for the children was raised "because of Grimmer's obvious mental issues."

The Kleberg County report described Grimmer as edgy and paranoid. She allegedly wasn't convinced the deputy was a law enforcement officer despite his uniform and became "abusive" when asked to show her driver's license.

State officials say Grimmer's application for food stamps this summer was rejected because she never submitted proof of income, such as how much child support she was receiving.

Skinner

in jail, and I feel like you can help a lot more in that situation than you can when they're already locked up," he said.

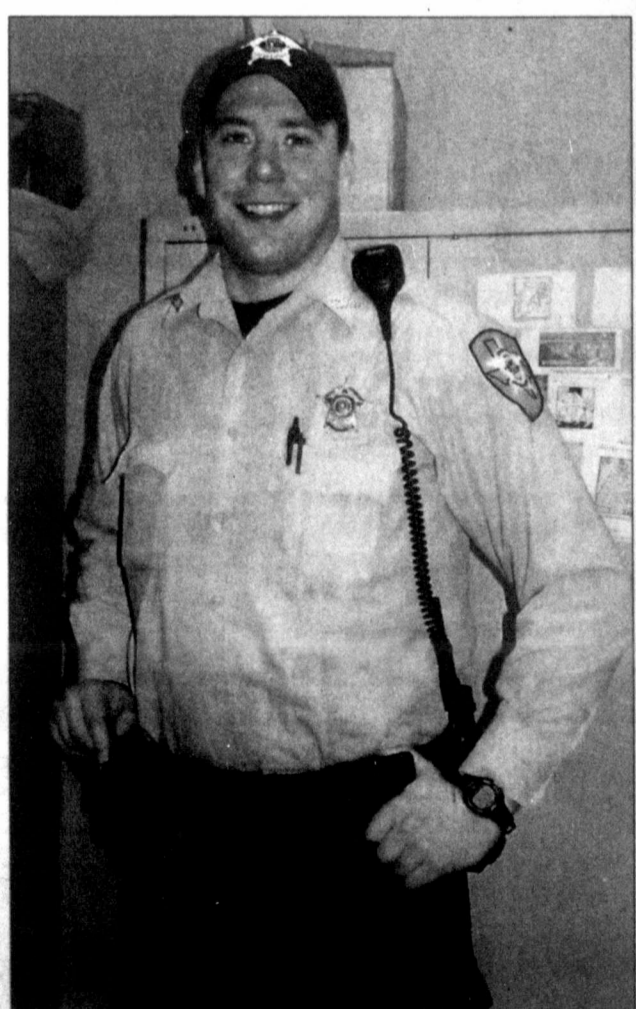
Skinner also prefers the autonomy and pace of his new position.

"You were always confined (working corrections). Out here, you can get out and roam around. Some days I wake up, and can't believe I get paid to do this, just because of the freedom, and you get to do something different every day. That's one of the best parts," said Skinner.

After leaving juvenile corrections, he became a patrol officer with the Iowa Park Police Department. He eventually moved to the Gray County Sheriff's Office to be closer to family in McLean.

"I like the Sheriff's Office more, because for the most part, we have a lot more freedom. We're not confined just to working in the city. We can work the whole county. I enjoy working with everybody here. Of course, the sheriff lets us do what we need to do. It's a lot nicer, to me, working for the county, having more jurisdiction and being able to not be confined to the city or to a beat," said Skinner.

"I'm not assigned to any unit, but what I mostly work is narcotics, other than regular patrol. Whenever I have time to work narcotics, that's what



staff photo by Mollie Bryant

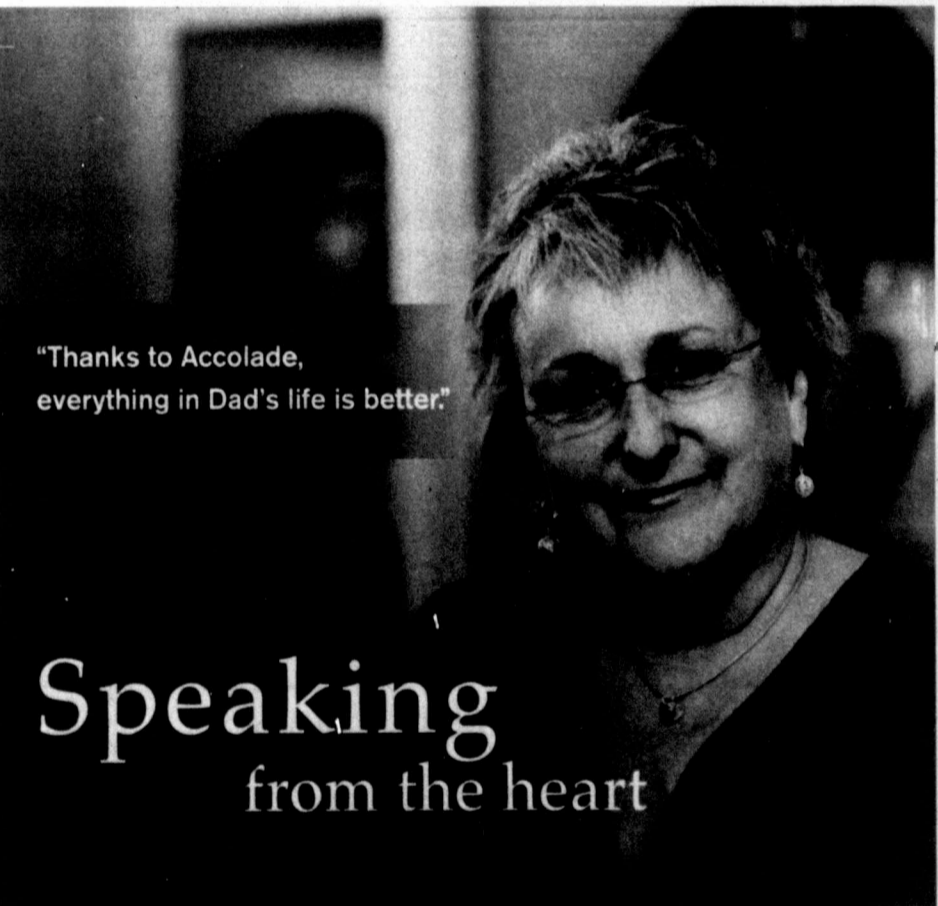
Deputy J.C. Skinner took a job with the Gray County Sheriff's Office to be closer to his family in McLean.

I try to do," he added. In his spare time, Skinner enjoys hunting, spending time with his family and training dogs.

"My dad's been a K-9 officer for about 20 years. I've been involved with

training narcotics dogs and protection dogs with him. My mom actually lives in McLean, and she still shows her dogs. She has belgian malinois. I still help with her and my dad when I can," she said.

cont. from page 1



"Thanks to Accolade, everything in Dad's life is better."

Speaking from the heart

Dad was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease 10 years ago. Recently, he started suffering from arthritis in his knees, extreme shaking and stiffness. The problem wasn't that he couldn't move, it was that his movement was too small to get anything done. That's when I talked to him about getting treatment from Accolade Homecare.

Just a couple of weeks into the program and his muscles feel stronger. He's taking bigger steps, walking up and down the stairs and getting into bed without any problems. He can even bend over to pick up the remote. Thanks to the help from Accolade, everything in his life is much better.

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Cargo a no-go for canines

Dog Talk with Uncle Matty

MATTHEW "UNCLE MATTY" MARGOLIS
Creator's Syndicate



Last month, 56-year-old Lynn Jones of Nevada was fired for refusing to load an emaciated dog into a plane's cargo area. This week, Airport Terminal Services President Sally Leible offered the big-hearted baggage handler her job back, along with back pay and an apology. She told the Associated Press that Jones "was trying to protect the dog, and I think she was courageous in doing that."

Jones' world erupted into a firestorm about a month ago at the Reno-Tahoe International Airport when she came across a pet carrier tagged for a flight to Texas. Inside lay a skin-and-bones hunting dog too weak to stand.

Jones told the Reno-Gazette Journal, "Everyone who saw it, the TSA people, the airport police officers, the girls at the ticket counter, was concerned. The dog was so weak and torn up. It didn't look like it could survive the flight."

But only Jones stepped in. She noted that the dog's paws were raw and his body covered in sores. "It was so thin, it made me cry." But, according to NPR, "when she told her supervisor about it, he insisted she load the dog onto the plane because its paperwork was in order and its condition was none of her concern."

"I kept telling my supervisor, 'That dog is going to die if it gets on that plane.'"

She was right. Traveling in cargo is hard enough on dogs in perfect health. A dog in this condition would not survive. In fact, *if there is any way on earth to avoid it, don't fly your dog in cargo.*

Here are a few things to keep in mind when deciding whether and how to fly your dog into the not-so-friendly skies:

— Major airlines have breed, size and health restrictions that prevent certain

dogs from flying — both in and below cabin. Breeds such as the Pug, Shih Tzu, Pekingese, Bulldog, Boxers, Boston terriers and Chow Chow are prone to respiratory difficulties that make flying dangerous. Senior citizen canines are wise to avoid the hazards of air travel, as are anxiety-prone dogs of any breed.

— Your dog's veterinarian is best equipped to determine whether he is healthy enough to fly, and most commercial airlines require a health certificate prior to boarding. Even so, it's clear that some people will sign off on anything, even the health of a visibly unwell dog.

— If your dog is small enough, he might be eligible to fly in the cabin with you. If so, congratulations! This is, hands down, the best way for a dog to fly. Requirements vary among carriers, so do your homework.

But even if your dog is one of the eligible breeds and your vet signs off on his health, consider these alternatives before booking him in cargo:

— Dubbed *pet daycare in the sky*, Pet Airways offers east- and west-bound service to and from many cities and is the only pet-only airline that transports pets in the main cabin. Visit petairways.com for details.

— Consider using a long-distance pet shuttle or pet relocation service. These services transport animals to their final destination by ground, and some even offer the option of a private and pampered road trip. Options abound, but be sure to check out licensing, credentials and standards of care.

Because of Lynn Jones, that poor dog was spared a flight that surely would have been his last. We owe it to our dogs to be equally vigilant about weighing all other options against the very big cons of cargo.

Woof!

Dog trainer Matthew "Uncle Matty" Margolis is co-author of 18 books about dogs, a behaviorist, a popular radio and television guest, and host of the PBS series "WOOF! It's a Dog's Life!"

Occupy OKC ends, Tulsa picks up

OKLAHOMA CITY (AP) — Protesters in Oklahoma City ended their two-month occupation of a downtown park Wednesday, but the movement in Tulsa intensified as three people chained themselves to a railing outside the front doors at City Hall.

The three Tulsa protesters said they had thrown away the keys to their chain locks and that it was up to authorities to saw them loose, but a city spokeswoman said the group was on public property and could stay.

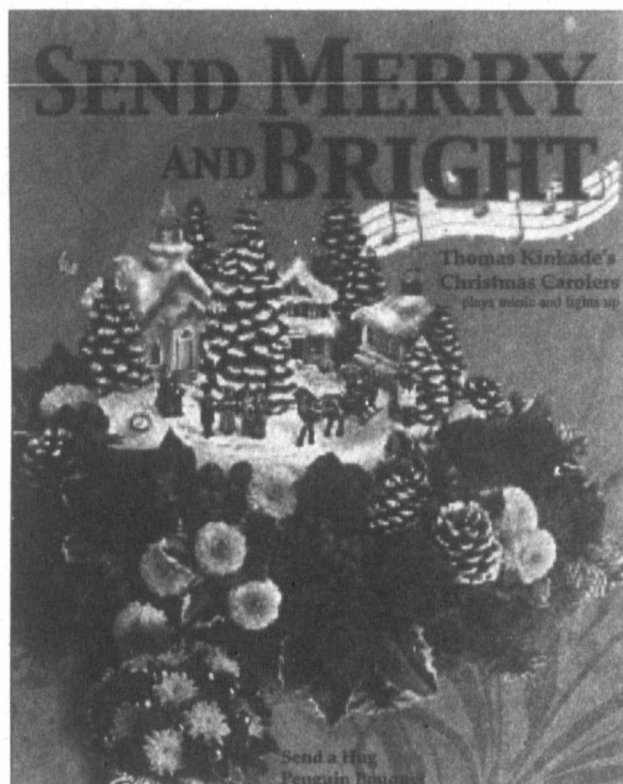
"Tulsa is serious about the Occupy movement," said one of the chained protesters, Eli Silva. The 23-year-old Tulsa resident and de facto leader of the group was among several

protesters pepper-sprayed last month by police after they violated curfew at a city park. Ten people were arrested.

Samuel Molik, who was chained next to Silva, wore a wool hat and a clear plastic poncho, which the cold rain was falling on. Molik,

24, said the trio expected to be arrested right away but that city employees and police officers were being cordial.

Many passers-by politely accepted the green fliers that protesters were handing out, while others shot the group angry looks.



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Retirement

cont. from page 1

the city matches for retirement funds will also go up.

The city estimates that the rate increase will cost between \$185,000 and \$190,000.

PEDC

cont. from page 1

Flogistix, began leasing a shop building in late October, as an expansion of the company's manufacturing operations.

In the past fiscal year, the PEDC also provided a \$525,000 loan to New Life Housing to go towards the construction of Hampton Village, a low income housing development. Sutherland said that the loan was repaid last week.

Barn

County's 4H Club began working on the barn. So far, the 4H has added new plumbing, fences, concrete flooring, improved lighting and pens.

McGinty anticipates lamb and goats to be held in the barn in the future. Currently, it has several hogs in 10 by 6 foot hog pens.

"It's not a big pen, but it's not a small pen," said McGinty. It also encourages the kids to get their pigs out and moving around, exercising."

He said that 4H club members have actively worked to transform the facility into a feeding barn. "They've done a great

job," said McGinty. "Some of that stuff, the kids can't do, like putting pens together and welding them, but they sweep (and) they keep things cleaned up. They dragged out all those little boards that separated the two barns. They put the feed caps together, they put the water barrels together and they rinse those. That surfactant (on the barrels) is not easy to rinse, because it's like soap, and those guys spent two days rinsing 32 barrels. That stuff isn't easy to do."

He said that the barn is helping about six families care for animals. Club members are required to

maintain their pens.

"The kids have signed a contract with me. If their pens are not cleaned up and if their animals are not cared for, they have seven days (to fix it). After seven days, it's a \$10 a day charge out of our office. They have 30 days to get it taken care of and paid. Otherwise, the animal will be sold. The money will go to 4H Club to clean the

pens," said McGinty.

Taking on this responsibility is one way that 4H Club members learn leadership skills.

"At 4H, one thing we do is train leaders, and we go through the process of training the kids as well as the parents," said McGinty. "That's one thing we pride ourselves on is training leaders."

cont. from page 1

A BLUE CHRISTMAS SERVICE OF WORSHIP

Pampa's First Christian Church at 1633 North Nelson will be sharing in a unique blessing this Advent: on Saturday evening, December 17, beginning at 6:30, we will be offering the gift of "A Blue Christmas Service of Worship."

Such a service is not new to Christian worship, and is offered in the hope and prayer that all who are experiencing any kind of pain that might keep them from knowing a fuller joy in Christmas's gift to us in Jesus, can come together and seek Divine Peace.

If you have lost a loved one this past year, or still grieve a loss from years past, or if you are constantly burdened by guilt or Unforgiveness or anger or confusion, or want to more fully support someone who is, you are invited to come lay your burden at the Sacred Manger of the Savior.

Our prayer: may you be blessed at your point of need with renewal and hope, healing and gratitude, and find it possible to truly worship God, who sent Jesus as our Lord and Savior! May this worship bless you so you can indeed celebrate a Merry Christmas!

PET OF THE WEEK

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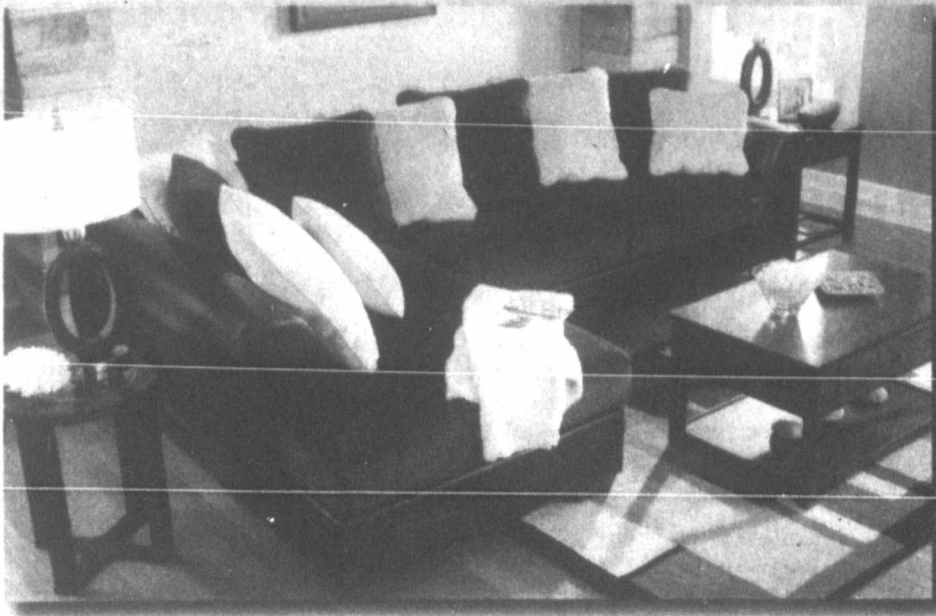
Bleach and Paper Towels

<p>Animal #13468</p> <p>"Bugs" Dutch Rabbit</p>	<p>Animal #P8</p> <p>"Chico" Chihuahua Cross</p>	<p>Animal #13299</p> <p>"Peter Pan" Male Dachshund</p>
<p>Animal #13390</p> <p>"Sugar" Female Terrier Cross</p>	<p>Animal #13413</p> <p>"Maxie" Kitten</p>	<p>Animal #13481</p> <p>"Bennie" Male Terrier Cross</p>

If you're looking for a "forever friend," call or visit us today!

The Shelter is open to the public Mon. - Fri. from 3-5 pm and Sat. & Sun. from 3-5 p.m.

For more info about these pets or any other questions, call 806-669-5775 or visit us at the Hobart Street Park. All photos of animals can be viewed online at www.cityofpampa.org.



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Sofa **\$599** Loveseat **\$549**



Dining Set **\$599**



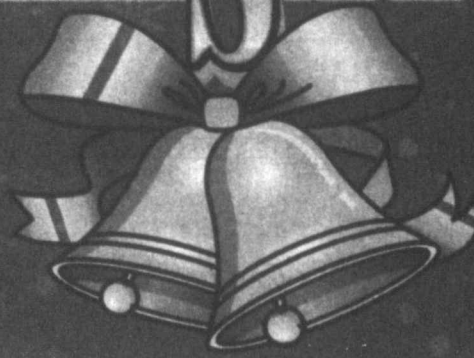
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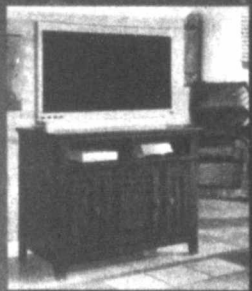
MON-SAT 9 AM TO 5:30 PM



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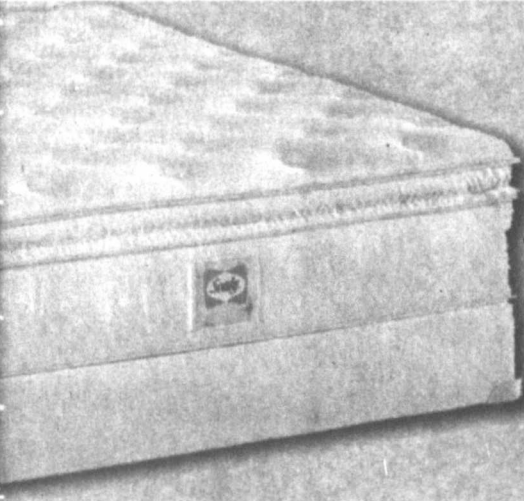
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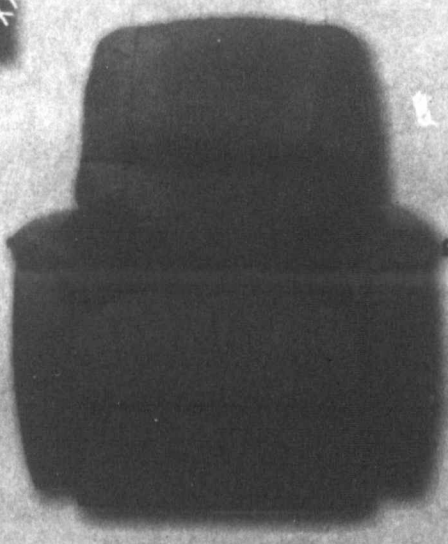
La-Z-Boy Recliners

"Lawrence"

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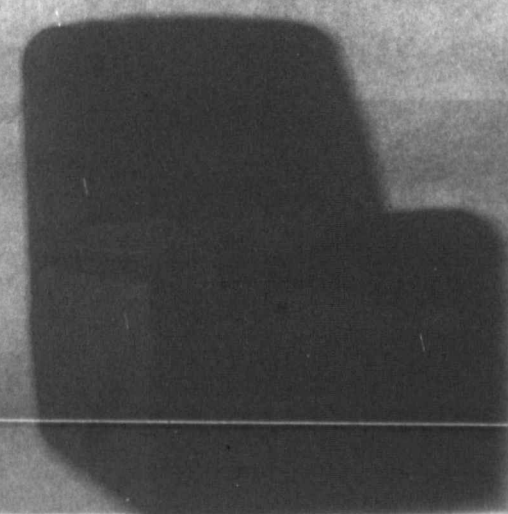
"Anderson"

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Ashley Recliner

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Happy Holidays

1B

Section B
December 15, 2011

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It's All Good

Dutiful but dull, toys intended to enrich a child once sat at the top of adults' shopping lists – and the bottom of the toy box. No more. Creativity, play value and green credentials combine in some of the season's best bets.

Somewhere on the spectrum between techno-dazzle (iPad apps for toddlers, anyone?) and fuzzy-wuzzy bears there's a sweet spot: toys that inspire kids to have fun, stretch their creativity and learn while they play. With a little effort – and some guidance from savvy toy shop owners – any attentive shopper can hit the mark.

Toys that encourage the most beneficial play may not be the biggest spotlight-grabbers. Their attractions are often more subtle and require a shopper to search past the dancing dolls massed out in aisle one.

"Toys today, especially toys in the mass market, you push a button and it does something – it lights up or it sings or it turns around and does all kinds of things. But they're not toys that allow a child to be imaginative and creative," says Jennic Law, owner of KangarooBoo toy store, West Des Moines, Iowa. "The child is play-

ing and having a good time, but the toy is doing most of the actions or thinking for him or her."

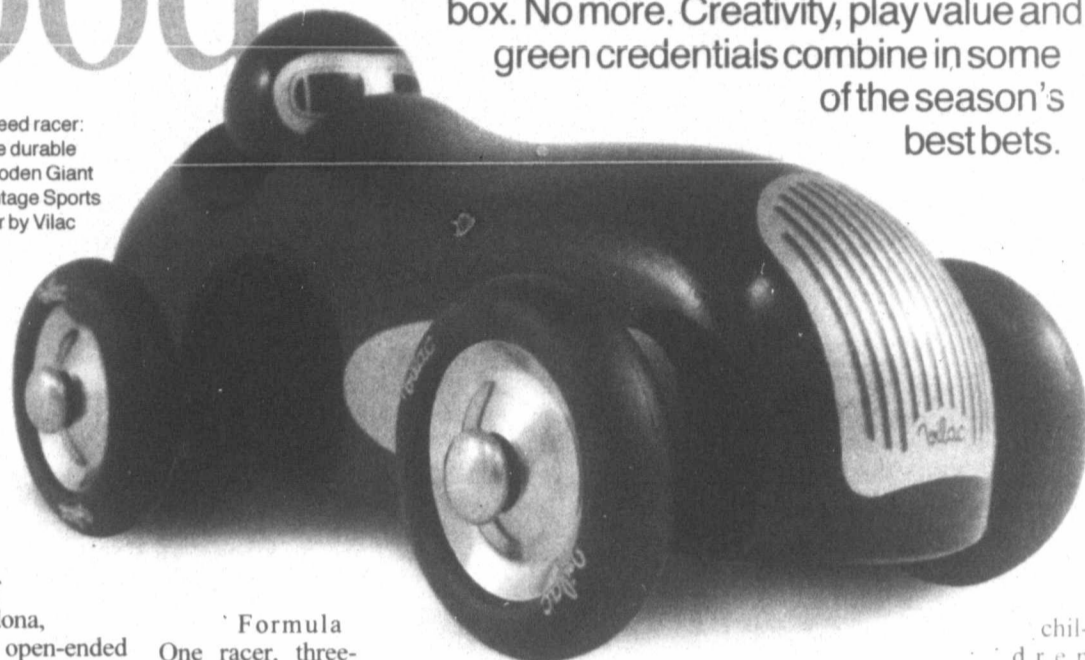
Law says classic problem-solving toys like puzzles and blocks are much better for children. She likes boldly colored Green Toys Blocks (\$25, 6 months and up), which are made from recycled plastic milk containers and come in many shapes.

Wendy Lippman, owner of Tlaquepaque Toy Town in Sedona, Ariz., seeks out toys that spur open-ended play. "I like toys where kids are encouraged to use their imagination," she says. Lippman recommends toys that can serve as the focus for role-playing, where kids can act as cashiers or shoppers with a toy cash register, for example. Such toys also set up scenarios to educate children, she says.

Science-related toys are no longer aimed at little Leonardos and can be packed with fun, says Jim Davis, owner of Kid's Center toy store in Tucson, Ariz. Toys with magnets easily combine science learning with fun. The popular Discovery Set of magnetic blocks from Tegu (\$70, age 3 and up) snap together and hang in balance, a perfect gift to spark the imagination of young children.

Science kits from Thames & Kosmos are perennial award-winners. The Remote-Control Machines set (\$70, age 8 and up) lets kids build 10 different motorized vehicles (including bulldozer, crane,

Speed racer: The durable wooden Giant Vintage Sports Car by Vilac



Formula

One racer, three-blade dozer, robotic arm) and then guide them with a remote control unit. After following the instructions to construct the standard vehicles, kids can invent their own.

Try re-imagining books as toys. "There's a jillion different topics for books," Davis says. "You just need to know a little bit about the child and then pick out the appropriate story book." "Press Here" is the title and also the instruction for the new book by Hervé Tullet that launches young readers on a charming adventure. Watch them blow, tilt, shake, rub and tap colorful dots printed on the page to make them multiply, grow and rearrange themselves (Chronicle, \$15, ages 4-8).

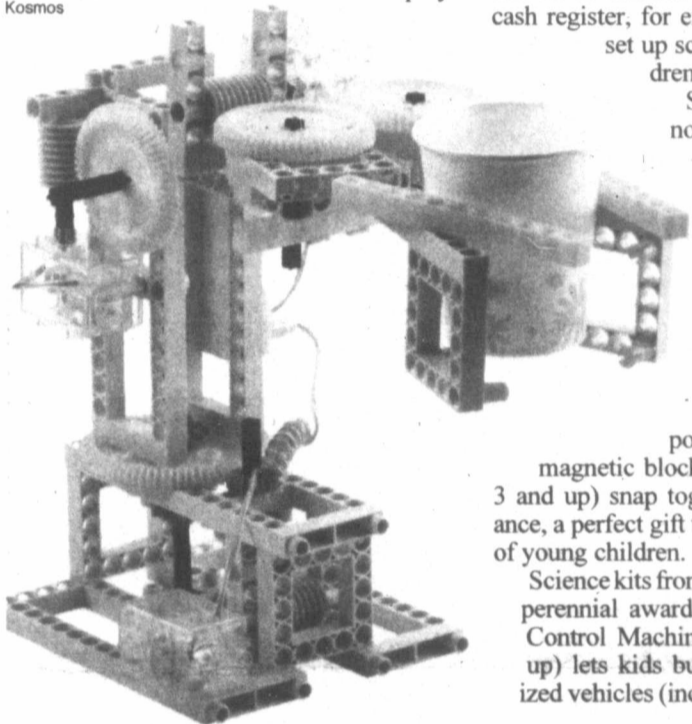
KangarooBoo's Law advises avoiding electronic educational and leisure toys for age 5 and under. "If [children] are able to sit down and solve a problem or a puzzle or build something, it makes the foundation for them as a person," she says. She also says toys that involve physical play help

children develop fine motor skills, gross motor skills, patience and other mental capacities. Fastrack, a new board game by Blue Orange, pits opponents who twang elastic cords to send wooden disks shooting across the board and through a narrow slot. The first to get all 10 to the other side wins (\$20, age 5 and up).

To get kids up off the couch and develop their physical well-being, Davis suggests new classic toys for outdoors, such as jump ropes and sports balls, and new throw toys, including Rhino Toys' SkyO, a flexible flying ring that's easy to catch and throw (\$8, age 3 and up). The Z-Curve Bow from Zing Toys launches foam arrows a satisfyingly long way (\$20, age 8 and up).

Whatever route you take to finding the best toy for a special boy or girl, Davis says, stop, think and proceed with inspiration. "You really need to know the child and try to engage the child in the purchase you make."

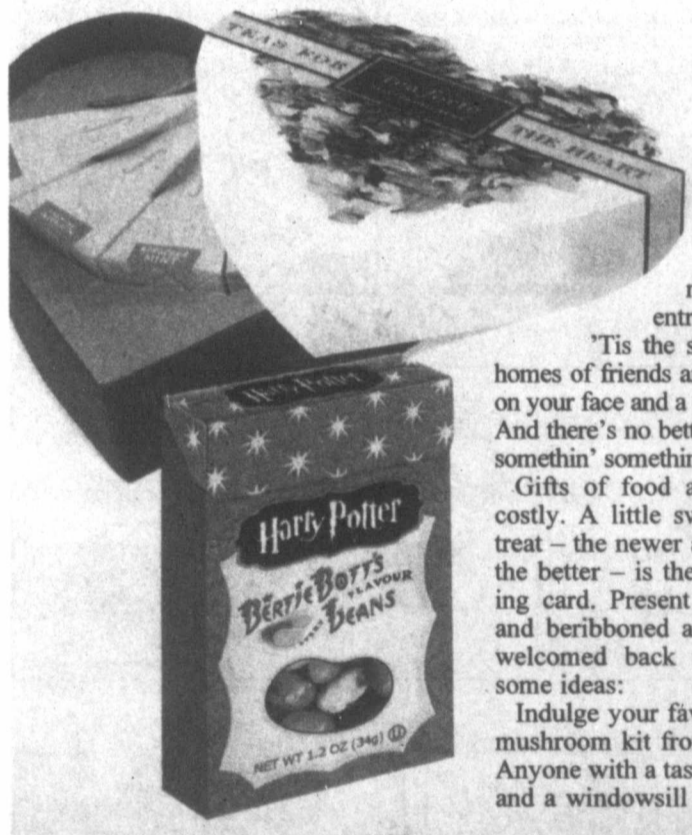
Tackling life's little challenges: Remote-control machines by Thames & Kosmos



Fun with dots: "Press Here" by Hervé Tullet

Taste the Season

Christmas season is the time to eat, drink and be merrily generous.



Has anyone ever made a truly grand entrance empty-handed?

'Tis the season to arrive at the homes of friends and family with a smile on your face and a small gift for the hosts. And there's no better offering than a little somethin' somethin'.

Gifts of food and drink needn't be costly. A little sweet, a little gourmet treat – the newer and more uncommon, the better – is the perfect holiday calling card. Present it festively wrapped and ribboned and you're sure to be welcomed back next time. Here are some ideas:

Indulge your favorite locavore with a mushroom kit from Back to the Roots. Anyone with a taste for risotto al funghi and a windowsill can grow 1.5 pounds

of oyster mushrooms in just ten days, right from the box (\$19.95/ grocery and specialty stores).

Local craft brews are popping up everywhere – including, with any luck at all, a kitchen near you. With a beer-making kit, beer fans can out-micro the microbrewers. A Mr. Beer home brew kit includes a two-gallon fermenting container in the shape of a beer barrel, 8 plastic bottles, caps and labels, and the ingredients that will produce two gallons of beer in 14 days. Throw in a six-pack of your favorite local brew to get the brewing party started. Find a store using the locator link at mrbeer.com. (\$49.95, specialty and liquor stores).

Give 'em a pop and they'll be happy. Kids decorate their own holiday treats with a do-it-yourself lollipop kit from

Kencraft Candy. The pops, decorations and icing are edible. (\$9.95, gift shops).

Booger. Vomit. Earwax. Earthworm. Chances are, there's a Harry Potter fan in your life who will fall on the floor laughing, more than once, as he offers you a taste from the Jelly Belly box of Bertie Bott's Every-Flavour Beans. Insist on a blue one – innocent blueberry – and you may make it to dessert. (\$2.25, bookstores, gift stores, toy stores).

TeaForte's Tea for the Heart heart-shaped box contains sachets of green tea rich in antioxidants that benefit heart health. The company is promoting heart health for women in partnership with womenheart.org. (\$20 for 12 sachets, specialty stores).

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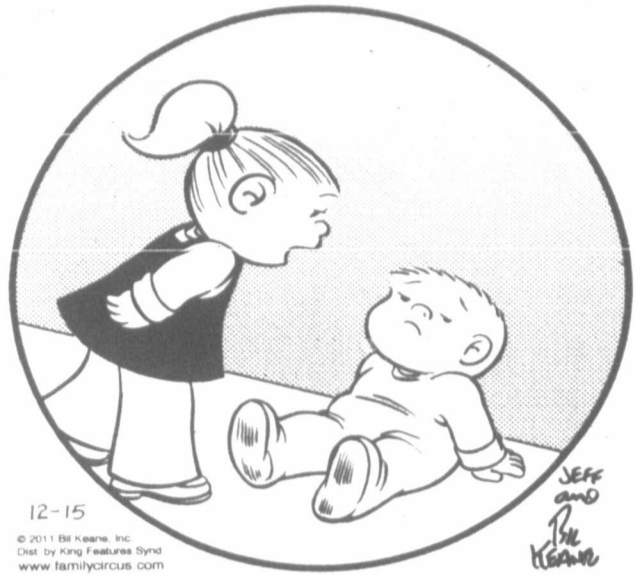
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THE FAMILY CIRCUS By Bil Keane



12-15

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"You better stop poutin', PJ, and I don't think I need to tell you why."

Non Sequitur



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Nest Heads



daily horoscope

HAPPY BIRTHDAY for Thursday, Dec. 15, 2011:

This year you often feel very sure of yourself. Your thinking might be grounded, but for whatever reason, an element of confusion runs through your life. You can count on yourself, but you cannot predict others' behavior. Often people take a different meaning from you than you intend. Learn to clarify. Your positive attitude helps you work through problems. You also will attract people who are more upbeat. If you are single, you could date to your heart's content. Just don't consider a date a marriage proposal. If you are attached, take up a new hobby together. VIRGO can push you beyond your limits.

ARIES (March 21-April 19)
 ★★ ★★ While you can, get as much accomplished as possible. You are definitely overworked, but you can effectively get through that extra work. Confusion surrounds you and/or a project. You might need to wait a little while to clear out the fog. Tonight: Head home, but squeeze in some exercise.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)
 ★★ ★★ You come from a solid position and greater depth and understanding. Your ability to understand the way others work and empathize allows for a strong rapport. Your creativity comes forward, allowing greater give-and-take in the late p.m. Tonight: Start thinking "weekend." Make plans.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)
 ★★ ★★ Don't stand on ceremony with another person. Jump over a barrier and let it dissolve. Confusion surrounds this situation anyway. Verify what you are hearing. Don't be goaded into a disagreement. Stay centered, and listen. The end result will be that you are very content. Tonight: Happy to get home.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)
 ★★ ★★ Be aware of your limitations — those that are self-imposed as well. You might want to see if you can move past a particular boundary. A partnership adds an element of confusion. Ask questions and make sure you are on the same page. Tonight: Head on out. Meet friends.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)
 ★★ ★★ Rethink the possibility of making a change. Say "yes" and head in a new direction. Use the daylight hours to the max. Confusion surrounds a personal matter.

Make sure the fog doesn't hit your finances. A respected boss or relative surprises you. Tonight: Think "gifts." Think "Santa."

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)
 ★★ ★★ Your major focus could be just getting through the day. You have something better waiting around the corner. Think positively. If you need to take a break, do. An element of confusion surrounds your daily life. Tonight: You are top dog.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)
 ★★ ★★ Zero in on your priorities, knowing full well the choices you need to make. Remain upbeat and direct in your dealings. Still, there is a vague side effect with a loved one or a meeting. Somehow you note a disconnect. Maintain a sense of humor. Tonight: Vanish while you can.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)
 ★★ ★★ You know what you want, but do you understand which path is the correct path? Touch base with several different people. Your sense of humor helps when confusion messes up the best-laid plans. Stay on top of a personal matter. Tonight: Tell it like it is.

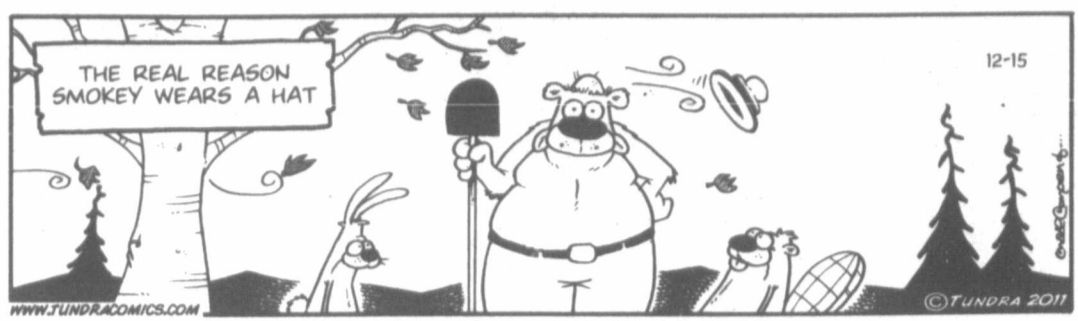
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)
 ★★ ★★ Check out a hunch and brainstorm with those in the know. Although the solution appears in the haze, it seems appropriate. Take a stand, but know that you will need to follow through. Clarify where others are coming from. Tonight: Expect to be burning the midnight oil.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)
 ★★ ★★ Deal directly with one other person. You could be unusually persuasive when following through on an idea. Use care with your finances, as you easily could make a mistake. Tonight: Follow the music.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)
 ★★ ★★ If you think a key person might have an ulterior motive, you could be misreading the situation. Just accept what is offered, and make less of a judgment. Has anyone told you that you over-think situations? Today could be a prime example. Tonight: Chat over dinner.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)
 ★★ ★★ Continue the hectic pace. You know what you are doing. Schedule meetings for late in the day. What starts out as a business meeting turns into a warm get-together, which could evolve into a lot more. Tonight: Socializing to your heart's content.

Tundra



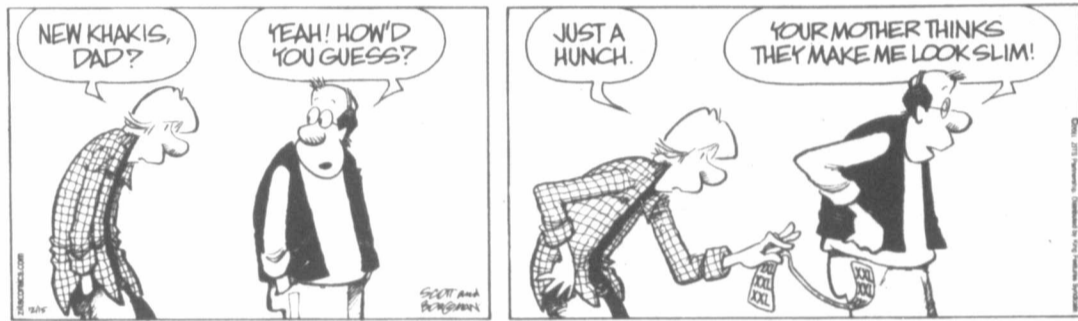
Shoe



Mother Goose and Grim



Zits



Garfield



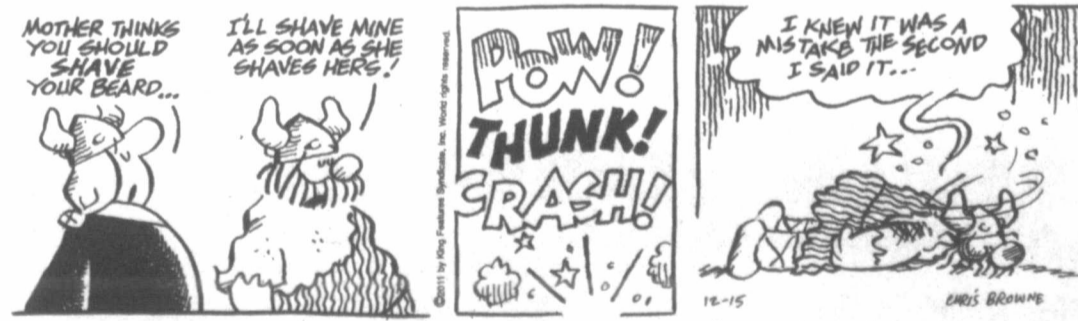
Beetle Bailey



Marvin



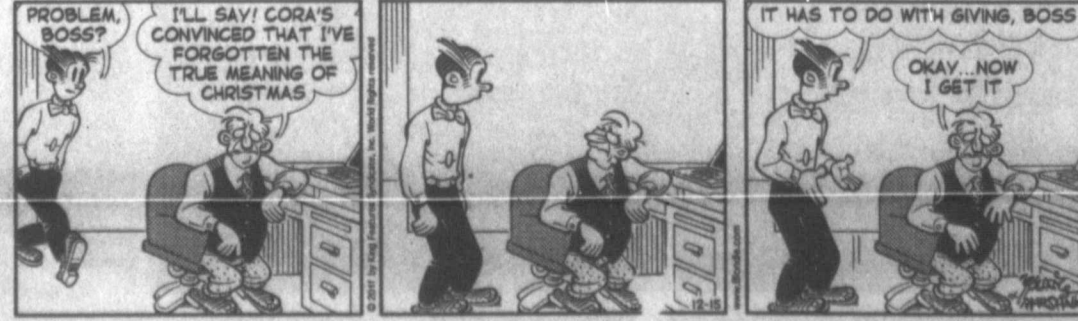
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Peanuts



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Happy Holidays

A Party to Remember

The holidays are the most festive time of the year, and no holiday season is complete without a party or two with family and friends. Be it to celebrate a religious holiday or to ring in the New Year, a holiday party is an essential element to the holiday season.

While it's always great to be a guest, hosting a holiday party is a great way to show friends and family how much they mean to you. This holiday season, consider the following tips to ensure your holiday party is as memorable as the season is merry.

- Make it a themed party. The holiday season is filled with festivities, from office parties to neighborhood gatherings to gatherings with family. For more casual affairs, set your party apart with a theme. For example, a Christmas sweater party, where each guest wears a Christmas sweater, can be a fun way to excite guests and inspire a few laughs. Give a prize to the guest with the most ornate sweater. If sweaters aren't your thing, then encourage guests to dress up like some favorite holiday characters, including Santa Claus, Frosty the Snowman or even Rudolph.
- Don't forget the holiday fare. Just like parties are a staple of

the holiday season, so, too, are certain foods and types of music. Few people indulge in some eggnog outside of the holiday season, so make sure there's plenty of eggnog on hand. And don't forget the gingerbread cookies, either.

As people enjoy holiday goodies, make sure they do so with holiday music playing in the background. Choose songs that guests know and to which they can sing along. Such sing-alongs might become especially memorable once guests have a glass or two of eggnog in them.

- Host a holiday giveaway. Though it can be fun to do a Secret Santa, chances are guests already have enough gifts to buy. But hosts can spice things up with a holiday giveaway that rewards guests. Host a holiday-themed round of Trivial Pursuit or a holiday movie trivia game that encourages guests to compete for prizes. Prizes can be small and inexpensive, but guests will be sure to enjoy some friendly competition for holiday-themed prizes.
- Don't be afraid to take it outside. For those who live in regions with significant snowfall, consider invit-

Here's how to make sure people talk about your Christmas party for Decembers to come.

ing guests outside to have some fun in the snow. While fun in the snow is often left to the kids, don't assume adults won't enjoy building some snowmen or a good old fashioned snowball fight in the backyard. If outdoor fun is going to be on the docket, be sure to remind guests to dress appropriately. And make sure there's plenty of hot chocolate ready once everyone goes back inside to warm up.

- Prearrange transportation home for guests. A successful holiday party is one that is safe, so be sure to prearrange travel home for guests just in case anyone overindulges in holiday cheer. When sending out invitations, seek volunteers to be designated drivers, and avoid drinking alcohol yourself. For larger parties, call a local taxi service and arrange for a couple of cabs to be on call when the party ends.

BANANAGRAMS!

Each set of letters below is arranged alphabetically, and the ? is in the correct alphabetical position.
 LEVEL: Figure out what letter the ? represents and rearrange the letters to spell a six-letter word. For example, in A?ENTV the ? could be an A, B, C, D or E. Here it represents a D, which can be combined with the other letters to spell ADVENT. The last letter is placed to get you started.

E E I O R ?	A B G ? L O
□ □ □ □ E	□ □ □ □ L
E P R S U ?	A B H I O ?
□ □ □ □ E	□ □ □ □ A
E M ? S U U	? F I M N Y
□ □ □ □ M	□ □ □ □ Y

Yesterday's Answer: Common H:
FLASHY, HEALTH, THRIVE, CHOSEN

12.15

Sudoku

Answer to yesterday's puzzle:

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

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

Level: Intermediate

Dear Abby...

By Pauline & Jeanne Phillips



DEAR ABBY: "Saddened in New Jersey" (Oct. 2) complained that her sister's 4-year-old daughter put stickers on the hands and face of her deceased grandmother during her wake. Perhaps the child's mother didn't anticipate her daughter's actions. Children need to grieve, too. That said, they also should behave appropriately.

I saw an article about one funeral home with an excellent solution. Before the dearly departed is placed in the casket, the inside fabric, pillow, etc. are removed. The children are then allowed to decorate the uncovered casket walls with farewell messages and drawings. The interior is then "reupholstered" and nothing is visible. The children are told that it is to keep their messages private.

One story was particularly touching — a little boy wanted his mommy to know how much he loved her and for it to be as close to her as possible. He wrote "I love you, Mommy" on the casket pillow that was placed beneath her head. At the service, only he knew about the secret message he had left for his mom for all eternity. — A MOM IN TEXAS

DEAR MOM: Thank you for sharing a clever solution. I felt that the child's placing of stickers on her grandmoth-

er's body was disrespectful and the mother was wrong to permit it in spite of the grandfather's expression of disapproval. While I viewed it as a desecration of a corpse, readers felt differently. My newspaper readers comment:

DEAR ABBY: "Saddened" should never have removed the 4-year-old from the casket. It was not her place. The child was giving her grandmother a goodbye gift. If the woman wanted to remove the stickers before the casket was closed, she should have done it after the child left the room.

I have seen many friends and relatives place things in caskets as gifts and remembrances. It is not disrespectful to the deceased, but gives closure and a warm memory to those who are still living. Putting stickers on Grandma was the child's way of saying goodbye. A funeral is a celebration of life and no matter what their age, people are entitled to say goodbye in their own way. — MELODY IN NEVADA

DEAR ABBY: If the sticker incident is the worst that can be said about the 4-year-old's behavior that day, what's the harm? Had she thrown a tantrum during the service or before placing the stickers, I'd agree that the child should not have been

there. But since the behavior took place after "Saddened" made an issue of the stickers, the situation could have been handled more effectively.

All "Saddened" had to do was wait until the service was over, take the funeral director aside privately and ask him to remove the stickers before the deceased was interred. No drama, no scene, no tantrum, and everybody goes home in peace. Funerals, like any other event, are only as stressful as you want them to be. — NO DRAMA, PLEASE

DEAR ABBY: I own the West's oldest funeral firm and I disagree with your answer. Funerals are about learning that we are mortal. To stand on ceremony when a young child is participating in one of life's most important lessons misses the point. Memorials are not about formality but humanity. Let the child place those stickers and let everyone learn something from that. — DAN IN SAN FRANCISCO

DEAR ABBY: Our grandchildren love stickers, put them all over themselves and their clothing, and are thrilled if they can share them with me to "wear" for a while. If any of our grandkids are still young enough to want to "decorate" ME in my casket when I go, I would hope everyone around me

would appreciate the gesture and smile at the loving relationship I had with that child. — GRANDMA OF (ALMOST) 13

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

- | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------|
| ACROSS | DOWN |
| 1 Takes the bus | 1 Eminem's art |
| 6 Pocatello's state | 2 S&L offering |
| 11 Stood | 3 Australia |
| 12 "Inception" director | 4 Jacob's twin |
| 13 Man-handle | 5 Home-steader |
| 14 Because of | 6 Book section |
| 15 Baking spice | 7 Baseball's Drabek |
| 17 Winter woe | 8 Pub pints |
| 19 Indulgent | 9 Bowler, for one |
| 20 Bunny move | 10 Music's Yoko |
| 23 Hang around | 16 Bring together |
| 25 Late-night name | 17 Champagne glass |
| 26 Haberdashery buys | |
| 28 Abound | |
| 29 Attack | |
| 30 Go astray | |
| 31 Mythical piper | |
| 32 Good times | |
| 33 Repress | |
| 35 White's colleague | |
| 38 Is ominous | |
| 41 Fill with wonder | |
| 42 Bothered | |
| 43 Oven feature | |
| 44 Cartoonist Trudeau | |

P	A	B	L	O		R	A	S	P
E	R	R	O	R		S	O	L	T
P	O	I	S	E		C	O	L	O
S	U	B	S		E	R	M	I	N
U	S	E		F	L	A	N	E	D
P	A	R	O	L	I	N	G		
		L	Y	R	E		T	A	C
				C	A	R	O	L	I
A	R	C		B	U	N	T	E	L
D	O	R	I	A	N		R	I	C
A	M	O	N	G		D	O	Z	E
P	E	O	N	S		A	M	E	N
T	O	N	S			Y	E	N	T

Yesterday's answer

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 18 Titanic, for one | 27 Purse with a show of hands |
| 20 As covered by this contract | 33 Mist vowel |
| 21 Like bar drafts | 34 Greek |
| 22 Assignments | 35 Convened |
| 24 Beauty | 36 Paris pal |
| 25 Tyler of "The Lord of the Rings" | 37 Traffic snarl |
| | 39 Corn unit |
| | 40 Hog home |

NEW CROSSWORD BOOK! Send \$4.75 (check/m.o.) to Thomas Joseph Book 2, P.O. Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475

1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8	9	10	
11						12					
13						14					
		15				16					
17	18			19				20	21	22	
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35	36	37						38		39	40
41										42	
43											44

12-15

Thank you for not driving buzzed and crashing into my car last night.
Shoshanna Williams

SAVE A LIFE. DON'T DRIVE HOME BUZZED. BUZZED DRIVING IS DRUNK DRIVING.

U.S. Department of Transportation

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ANGELS! ANGELS!

We have Salvation Army Forgotten Angels for you to choose from on our Christmas tree! These are angels who were not chosen from the Salvation Army Angel tree. Items should be returned unwrapped with angel tag attached before Dec. 20th to the Pampa News or the Salvation Army 701 S. Cuyler, (if you have questions please call 665-7233). Come by The Pampa News, 403 W. Atchison, pick an angel & make someone's Christmas brighter this year! We are open Mon.-Fri., 8am-3pm. Merry Christmas from The Pampa News!!

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.

12-15 CRYPTOQUOTE

BZRAZJCC HC HWBRCCHNEJ
YHUXRVU FXQOAJ, QOI UXRCJ
YXR FQOORU FXQOAJ UXJHZ
WHOIC FQOORU FXQOAJ
QOKUXHOA. — AJRZAJ
NJZOQZI CXQY

Yesterday's Cryptquote: HE THAT LEAVETH LITTLE TO CHANCE WILL DO FEW THINGS ILL, BUT HE WILL DO VERY FEW THINGS. — LORD HALIFAX

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Sports

Harvesters look to end losing skid against Panthers

ANDREW GLOVER
aglover@thepampanews.com

The last time Pampa faced the Panhandle Panthers, The Harvesters entered the game on a three-game losing streak. This season, in the exact same situation, the Harvesters hope to enter Christmas break on a winning streak when they play again 6:30 p.m. Monday at McNeely Fieldhouse.



Engle

"It's the last game before Christmas break," senior Cole Engle said. "It would be nice to go in off a win and I think what's key to that is us getting off to a better start."

During their losing streak, the Harvesters fell behind by ten or more points in each of those games. Engle said nothing has changed in practice adding the team needs to be more prepared at the start of games. "It's a mindset thing," Engle said. "That's what coach (Dustin Miller) thinks too. We need to not take as long to get started."

Junior Derrek Pollard said the team has a little chip on its shoulder.

"Hopefully we come out and play like we are supposed to and not like losers," Pollard said. "Play like Pampa."

The Harvesters won last year's game 66-58 in Panhandle. Miller said he thinks the rematch will be a challenge.

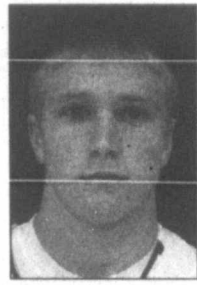
"They are really good," Miller said. "They probably have most of their team back. We barely pulled one out there last year. It's different when you are the hunted."

This will be the sixth game that Pampa has played an opponent in a class lower than itself. The Harvesters won the previous five. In the last three games, Pampa has played teams that are in classes above them.

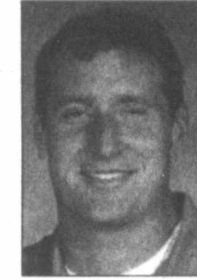
"The bigger schools usually have bigger players," Engle said. "It will be nice to go against someone that's our size or smaller."

Engle said the Harvesters need to be consistent Monday.

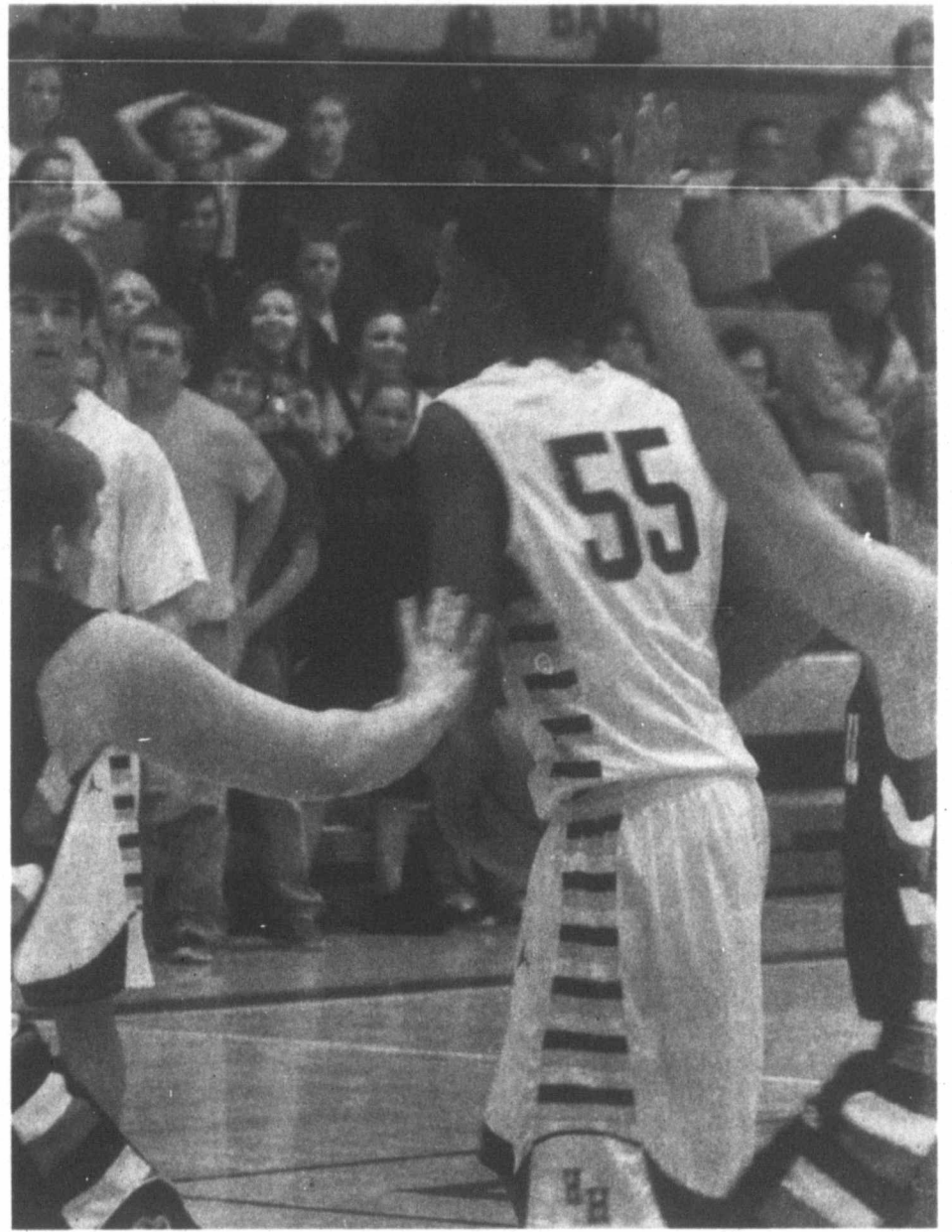
"We will be playing at home so hopefully that gives us an advantage," Engle said. "We need to hustle the whole game and hopefully be able to run it up on them."



Collins



Miller



staff photo by Joe Murray

Junior Derrek Pollard catches a pass Tuesday against Randall. The Harvesters host the Panhandle Panthers of Class 2A 6:30 p.m. Monday.

Sign-ups for winter recreation volleyball league under way

ANDREW GLOVER
aglover@thepampanews.com

As the fall season of recreation volleyball enters the postseason tournament, signups for the winter season have begun.

Teams must turn in their entry form and pay their entry fees by 5 p.m. January 6, 2012. Entry fee's for sponsor is \$100 and \$15 per player. Each team has to have at least five people. Players must be at least 14 and sign a waiver form.

The league will be split into three divisions: men, women and mixed. Games

will start the week of January 16. The men and women divisions will play on Monday nights and the mixed division will play on Thursday night at the Dennis Cavalier Activity Center on the campus of Pampa High School. Schedules will be posted after 1 p.m. January 11 at the M.K. Brown Auditorium.

For more information, people can call City of Pampa Recreation Coordinator Autumn Schaub at 669-5790 or visit the recreation page on the City of Pampa website.

Texans' DC takes medical leave

HOUSTON (AP) — The Houston Texans have been overcoming injuries to players virtually every week since the season began.

Now, naturally, they must adjust to the loss of their top assistant coach.

Wade Phillips, who's turned the Houston defense into the NFL's best, will have surgery this week to

resolve a kidney condition and will be away from the team for a week to 10 days.

The 64-year-old Phillips disclosed the medical issue after working with the team at practice on Wednesday. He would not specify the condition, but said it is not life-threatening, is not cancer, and that doctors recommended that he have the procedure.

"I feel good," Phillips said. "I don't have any physical problems right now, so if I get this done, this procedure that I'm doing, then I'll be fine."

Linebackers coach Reggie Herring will run the defense for Houston (10-3) in Sunday's game against Carolina (4-9). Herring was Phillips' linebackers coach in Dallas from 2008-10, then joined Houston's staff after Phillips was hired last January.

"He's ready to do it," Houston coach Gary Kubiak said. "Reggie's called defenses before. We got a lot of confidence. We just need to keep going."

The Texans play at Indianapolis on Dec. 22, and Phillips is hoping to return in time for the regular-season finale against Tennessee on Jan. 1. In the meantime, Herring won't change anything.

"At the end of the day I'm not Wade Phillips," Herring said.



staff photo by Joe Murray

Senior Cole Engle drives against Randall Tuesday. Engle said getting off to a good start against Panhandle on Monday will be key to a victory.

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Sports

Pampa wrestling teams fall against Caprock, Tascosa

ANDREW GLOVER
aglover@thepampanews.com

The Pampa Harvesters and Lady Harvesters wrestling teams were still without key players and fell to Caprock and Amarillo Tascosa at Caprock High School Tuesday.

The Tascosa Lady Rebels beat the Lady Harvesters 48-3. Pampa's only points were scored by sophomore Krysten Miller who beat Faith Roberson 4-2. The Lady Harvesters had to forfeit five matches, giving Tascosa 30 points.

The Harvesters lost to Caprock 45-30. Pampa led early with Zach Hampton winning by decision and Hunter Hall won by

pin. The Longhorns took control of the match, winning the next seven matches by pin and taking a 42-9 advantage. Junior Quaid Chennault, senior Ryan Pearson and sophomore Isidro Estrada won their matches by pin to round out Pampa's scoring.

Pampa lost 58-21 to Tascosa. Chennault, senior Dylan Hooker, Pearson and Estrada won their matches. Chennault, Pearson and Estrada won their matches by pins while Hooker won by decision.

The Harvesters and Lady Harvesters will wrestle in the Amarillo Duals Friday and Saturday.

Head coach Michael Stovall's comments were unavailable as of press time.

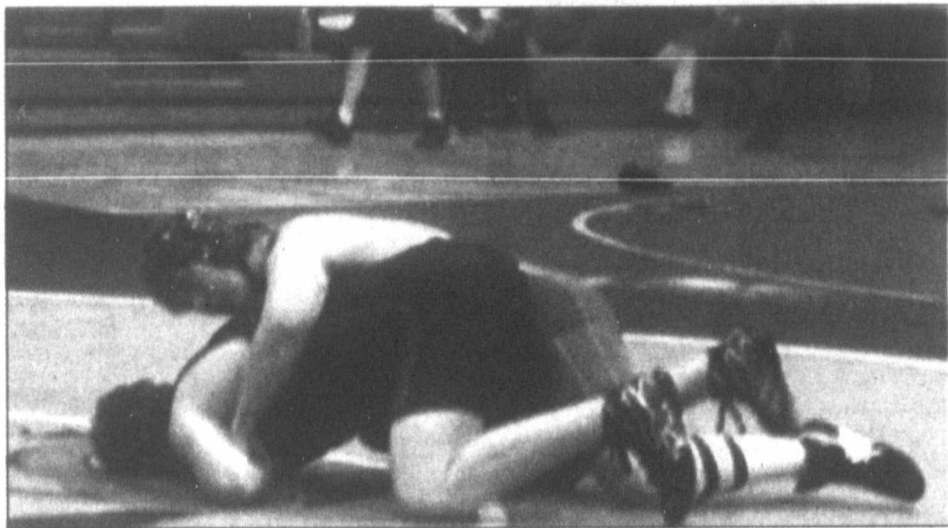


photo courtesy of Leah Pearson

Senior Dylan Hooker takes down his opponent against Tascosa Tuesday. Hooker won by decision 14-7 but Pampa lost 58-21. Hooker lost his second match against Caprock 3-2.

MAVERICKS PRESEASON

Newly acquired Mavs Odom, Carter ready to defend title

DALLAS (AP) — Lamar Odom knows what it takes to repeat as an NBA champion.

Vince Carter wants to know what it feels like to become an NBA champion.

The Dallas Mavericks are hoping a little of both — Odom's experience and Carter's hunger — can go a long way to help their title defense.

The two newcomers were the stars of Mavs media day on Tuesday because of what they represent. They're the proof that team owner Mark Cuban is serious about winning it all again, which is something fans were questioning just a few days ago when the billionaire was letting the core of last year's team dissolve with the departure of free agents Tyson Chandler, Caron Butler and J.J. Barea.

Sure, adding two more players in their 30s keeps Dallas among the league's older teams. But they also should keep the Mavs among the best teams in this lockout-shortened season, especially with the other newcomers such as guard Delonte West joining the mix.

"Having depth and having good guys that can play in part and parcel to being effective," coach Rick Carlisle said. "The deepest team that can stay healthy and stay together is the team that's going to have the best chance to come out of the West."

Late last week, things were looking bleak for Dallas' chances of coming out of the West when the Lakers were poised to get Chris Paul from New Orleans, with Odom part of the bait. Then the league blocked that deal.

The Lakers were still willing to get rid

of Odom and the Mavericks were eager to get him. The deal was struck quickly, using a trade exception Dallas acquired from New York as part of another move that helped pave the way for Chandler to join the Knicks.

Odom was stunned the Lakers didn't want him around. He was glad the commissioner rejected the deal to New Orleans because he wanted to contend for a championship, not start over with a young team. He said he told the Lakers that if they had to deal him, Dallas topped his wish list.

"It's definitely surreal," he said. "It happened like that," he said, snapping his fingers.

Odom also felt disrespected because he never saw this coming. Over seven years, he won two titles and last season was named the league's Sixth Man of the Year.

"If somebody is telling you, 'You can't be here, there's no more room for you,' you've got to understand that," he said. "I think it's because of how they did it that I took it so personally."

He wouldn't describe his initial thoughts about the deal to New Orleans, because, "I can't cuss." He appreciated Kobe Bryant speaking out against the trade, and found it curious that Los Angeles not only would send him to a conference rival, but to the team that swept the Lakers from the playoffs last season, ending their two-year reign as champs.

"Any time you make a sudden switch, it gets a little emotional," Odom said. "But I'm here now. I'm a Maverick. It's time to put the past behind me."

Special Tasting December 16 from 4-7pm

We will be tasting the following and also have prices reduced on all items.

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	\$7.79 Lefle Brown German Beer 6pk		\$8.99 Fulton's Harvest Pumpkin Pie Cream Liqueur 750ML
	\$14.99 New Amsterdam Vodka Liter		10% OFF all sizes in stock Bacardi Oakheart Spiced Rum
	\$19.99 Wild Turkey American Honey 750ML		

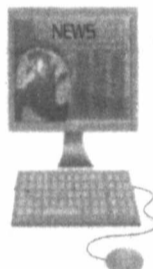
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Dr. Johnny Funderburg
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The Music Ministry Presents

The Miracle at the Manger

An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in the manger."
Luke 2: 9-12

**December 18th
11am**

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