

The Brackett News

Four local teens injured in two-vehicle accident
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14th year, No. 48

Serving the communities of Brackettville, Fort Clark Springs, Spofford and Kinney County

1 Section, 8 Pages

Kerr: Fort lacks revenues to pay taxes

Chief appraiser 'astonished' by claim that association's taxes have 'gone up drastically'

Fort Clark Springs doesn't have enough revenue to meet its current tax burden, according to Maggie Banner Kerr, the association's general manager.

The fort has yet to pay its property taxes for the 2002 tax year. Kerr addressed the issue in the association's January newsletter.

"MUD taxes were paid in October, but none of the remaining balance, which is \$101,000, has been paid and is due by Jan. 31," Kerr said.

"At this time, the revenues are not there to pay taxes. The Board of Directors will be making a decision this month on the best method to pay the taxes.

"The association has the funds available in the impound fund and could possibly borrow from itself and reimburse the impound fund over the next year," she added.

In her column, Kerr suggested the possibility of assessing all the membership a one-time, once-a-year common property tax in order to pay the fort's taxes.

"A lot of members will argue that their assessments are supposed to be paying for the taxes," she said. "Up until 1992, the association used to bill each membership for their share of the taxes.

"Only since 1992 has the association been paying the taxes on the association-owned property. But membership has dropped drastically in the last 10 years, taxes have gone up drastically and the result is a shortage of funds to pay taxes."

Kinney County Chief Appraiser Bill Haenn said he was "astonished" by Kerr's statement that the association's taxes have "gone up drastically."

"Fort Clark Springs Association property taxes were \$147,372 in the 1999 tax year," Haenn wrote in a letter to *The Brackett News*.

"Solely through Appraisal District initiative, multiple property tax remedies were applied to FCSA accounts which reduced FCSA property taxes by \$30,000 in 2000 to \$117,110.

"Again in 2001, FCSA property taxes went down almost \$5,000 to \$112,266.

"In the current 2002 tax year, despite the new property taxes levied by the Kinney County Groundwater Conservation District, FCSA property taxes are \$111,483 (\$783 less than 2001), down for the third consecutive year," Haenn added.

Fort Clark Springs lost 202 members during the fiscal year and there are 188 more delinquent accounts than last year, the general manager said

in the newsletter.

The association cut expenditures by over \$100,000 to compensate for the loss of memberships, according to Kerr.

"When you calculate the loss of 202 memberships, it comes to a loss in revenue of \$72,720," she said. "The loss is a steady decline that has historically been there due to death, age, distance and the economy. We average around 6 percent loss of our total membership roll each year."

Kerr said legal fees associated with employee problems and lawsuits with the Preservation Society have also contributed to the fort's financial woes.

"These two groups have costs the association well into the \$30,000 range on legal expenses, as well as a lot of down time due to court restraining orders," she said.

The fort was forced to operate without a board for over a month because of the restraining orders imposed by District Judge Tom Lee.

"That was a strange and trying time for the staff and myself, as well as for our membership," Kerr said. "But, we weathered the storm just like any 150-year-old fort would have done, and the fort prevailed."



Fort Clark Springs general manager Maggie Banner Kerr said the association doesn't have enough revenue to pay its taxes.

College Station teen-ager dies in one-car accident

Teen driver charged with intoxicated manslaughter

New Year's Day turned into tragedy for the family of a 19-year-old College Station man.

Javier Hernandez died in a one-vehicle roll-over on New Year's Day at 7:10 a.m.

Hernandez was transported from the scene to Val Verde Regional Medical Center, where he died at approximately 11 a.m. He was pronounced dead by Val Verde County Justice of the Peace Dorothy Weddle.

The driver of the vehicle, Steven Wills II, 19, also of College Station, was treated for minor injuries.

Wills was arrested by DPS Trooper Tully Welch and charged with intoxicated manslaughter. He was booked into the Kinney County Jail and released the following day on a \$12,000 surety bond.

Wills was driving a 1999 Toyota east-bound on Highway 90 early New Year's morning when he veered off the roadway onto the right side of the highway, according to DPS reports. Wills then over-corrected to the left. The vehicle rolled onto its right side and skidded on the roadway approximately 300 feet.

Hernandez, the only passenger in the vehicle, was partially ejected as the vehicle was skidding on the roadway, officials said.

According to Welch's report, Wills was wearing a seat belt, but Hernandez was not.

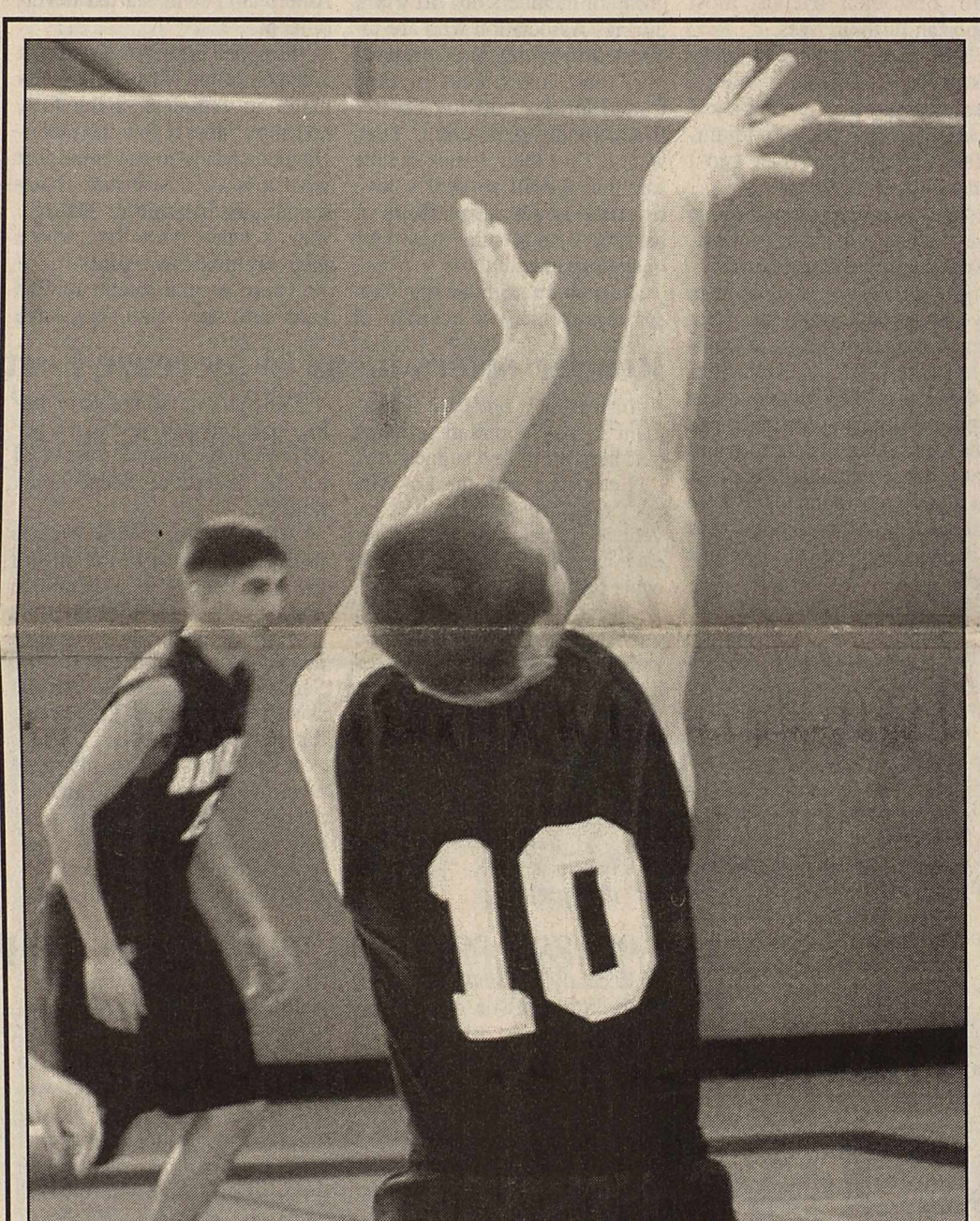


Photo by J.J. Guidry

Putting up the trey

Brackett guard Boyd Brotherton (10) puts up a shot as teammate Charlie Slaughter crashes the boards during recent basketball action. The Tigers open district play Friday against Dilley in an 8 p.m. contest at home.

Water board changes rules, Davis resigns

By J.J. GUIDRY
Editor

Zach Davis said he has had enough.

The Kinney County Groundwater Conservation District director resigned from the board Tuesday during a five-hour session which saw officials adopt a fee schedule and additional revisions to the district's rules.

Davis announced his resignation at the beginning of the district's monthly meeting, which followed public hearings on the rules and fee schedule.

"I've voiced my concern earlier, even in writing, to the ethics that this board is operating under," Davis said. "I can't continue with the way this board is operating."

"You haven't seen the last of me, I assure y'all," Davis added, as he stepped down.

The board voted 5-1 to adopt the rule revisions drafted by Brian Sledge, the district's attorney from Austin.

Directors Chuck Hall, Don Hood, Darlene Shahan, Cecil Smith and Bob Young approved the changes, while Davis was in opposition. Board member Hadley Wardlaw was absent.

"You have neglected the public's input in the process," Davis said.

G.M. applicants set to interview

Two individuals have applied to serve as general manager for the Kinney County Groundwater Conservation District.

Board members agreed to interview the candidates Monday at 5:30 during a special meeting at the Courthouse.

Davis initially motioned to delay the vote and recess the hearing for two weeks.

"I didn't get these rules until today," Davis said when making his motion. "I want to sit down and go through these changes. I rely on an attorney too, and he's never even seen a copy of these changes. I think we owe it to the people we serve in the district that are going to be impacted by these rules."

Smith seconded Davis' motion, but the measure failed by a 4-2 vote with Hall, Hood, Shahan and Young opposing.

"No one has had a chance to see this in print," said Smith, chairman of the board. "To me, it makes sense to wait two weeks so everyone has the chance to read the revisions."

Elementary teachers, students prepare for new Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills test

By FRANCES McMASTER
Contributing Writer

Preparations are being made for taking the TAKS (Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills) test at Jones Elementary School, according to principal Paula Renken.

Renken, the January program chairman for the Brackettville Rotary Club, discussed the issue at last Thursday's meeting.

The TAKS test is replacing the TAAS (Texas Assessment of Academic Skills) test that has been used for the past 12 years.

The Texas Board of Education has adopted passing standards for the TAKS test and has provided a two-year phase-in of the standards. In 2003, the passing standard will be below that required when they are fully implemented in 2005.

Generally speaking, a student will need to correctly answer three to six fewer questions the first year than when it is fully implemented.

The TAKS will be a more challenging test for students than

its predecessor, even in the initial phase-in level. However, Renken said that in her opinion, it is a better test.

This test will align with the curriculum, wherein test questions in the past might be different from what had actually been taught. She said that the test stories and the questions are better. The test provides information for the student to read, interpret and apply, and fewer multiple-choice questions are used.

Complaints from teachers about test questions being "tricky" in the past were acknowledged and input from teachers was utilized when the TAKS was designed.

Students have been hearing about this test for three years, and the information has been presented in terms of challenges and learning new ways of doing things, rather than in a manner that would raise anxiety.

Teachers have been trained in teaching and in administering the test, and students are carefully being prepared to take it.

The TAKS will be a more challenging test for students than its predecessor, even in the initial phase-in level. However, Renken said that in her opinion, it is a better test.

One important new requirement is that third-grade students must pass the TAKS in order to advance to the fourth grade. However, they will have three tries before he or she will be retained. An appeal can be made and a conference between parents, teacher and administrator may consider the situation.

The student who has not passed is required to go to summer school and is given the opportunity to take the test one last time in July. However, Renken pointed out that some exceptions could be made. For instance, some children know the material, but simply can not take tests effectively.

When the TAKS is given, every effort will be made to insure fairness. The room in which it is taken will be prepared; any-

thing that might provide information, such as clocks and calendars, will be covered up. When it is time for the lunch break, the test material will be taken up and food brought in. No talking will be allowed at any time. If a child gets tired during the day and wants to put his or her head down on the desk, this is allowed.

If a child asks the teacher a question, the only permissible answer is, "Do the best you can do."

One thing that is particularly hard for third graders is to answer questions on paper separate from the questions. If teacher notices that the answers are not lined up properly, she may only remark, "Don't forget to go back and check your work."

The test is taken from 8:30

a.m. to 3:30 p.m., an extremely long period of time for children this age. Part of the preparation for taking the test will be to build up "mental stamina," Renken said. The children will practice by taking some longer tests, and parents are being asked to have their children read for 20 minutes each night.

The first TAKS test will be given on March 4, and the goal is to pass it this time so that it won't have to be taken again. The reading test will be given again on April 30. However, the math test will have been given on April 29, so this will make taking the reading test the following day difficult.

This year's 10th grade students will be the first who must pass the exit-level TAKS, along with course work, in order to graduate. This year's eighth-grade students will be the first required to meet the fully implemented standards.

Additional information on the TAKS test is available at: <http://www/tea/us/student.assessment>

INSIDE

Shanae Simmons

I bent down and let my grandmother kiss me goodbye. I was going for it. I was going to fly in a plane, for the first time by myself.

Opinion/Page 2

Taylor Stephenson

Each January, Texas gives recognition to its school boards in 1,040 school districts. Locally, elected citizens serve without compensation.

Community/Page 3

Tigers fall short

Brackett lost a heart-breaker to Knippa last Monday, 38-37. Knippa outscored Brackett 13-10 and 9-6 in the last two quarters for the win.

Sports/Page 4

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Making A Difference

Taylor Stephenson

Recognize local dedicated citizens

Each January, Texas gives recognition to its school boards in 1,040 school districts. Locally, elected citizens serve without compensation and make decisions that affect, influence and direct the education of our youth.

These board members enable us to have local control of the public schools. With the advice and counsel of the educational professionals they hire, our School Board has an impact on virtually every aspect of our schools.

School Board membership is a huge responsibility. Many times, we neglect to recognize the dedication and hard work of School Board members who serve as advocates for our schools.

Our staff and students ask that local citizens take a moment to tell School Board members: "Thanks for caring about our children."

Brackett School Board members are: President Tim Ward, six years of service; Vice President Henry Lutz, four years; Secretary Rose Mary Slubar, nine years; Lloyd Lee Davis, 10 years; Ronnie Hobbs, four years; Jim McDaniel, 12 years; and Sara Terrazas, five years.

Regular board meetings are held in BISD's central office at 6 p.m. on the second Monday of each month.

Back to School

We're happy to be back to school after a wonderful holiday break.

The second semester has begun and will hold many challenges for students and staff with the new Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS).

I have confidence that we will have a good showing when test results are received.

Have a great week!



Four injured in two-vehicle accident

Photo by J.J. Guidry

Four Brackettville teen-agers were injured Tuesday in a two-vehicle accident on Highway 674, about 1 mile north of Brackettville. Jason Smith was airlifted to San Antonio, while Jesse Gonzalez, Valentino Morin and Evaristo Villarreal were treated in Del Rio. Domingo Villarreal, the driver of one of the vehicles, was the only person not injured in the accident.

KINNEY COUNTY SHERIFF'S REPORT

Wednesday, Jan. 1

1:41 a.m., A woman reported someone yelling and breaking bottles near her residence in the Kickapoo Trailer Park.

7:15 a.m., A woman reported a one-vehicle roll-over near the A.J. Foyt Ranch on Highway 90, west of Brackettville.

11:59 a.m., A man reported that someone had burglarized his residence on E. Fourth Street.

1:04 p.m., A Sentry Security employee reported an alarm sounding at the Middle Rio Grande Workforce Center on Spring Street.

2 p.m., Steven Wills II, 20, of College Station was arrested by DPS Trooper Tully Welch for intoxicated manslaughter. He was released the next day on a \$12,000 surety bond.

10:49 p.m., A woman reported fireworks going off near her residence on Fort Clark Springs.

Saturday, Jan. 4

12:03 p.m., A Del Rio rail-

road police officer reported a truck stuck on the railroad tracks on F.M. 1572.

2:51 p.m., A woman reported a sick animal near her residence on N. Ann Street. A city employee was notified of the situation.

7:12 p.m., A woman reported shots fired north of E. Thorn Street.

Sunday, Jan. 5

12:29 a.m., A woman requested assistance at her residence on W. Fulton Street.

6:30 a.m., Julia H. Potts, 19, of Austin was arrested by Trooper Welch for public intoxication. Potts was booked into the Wackenhut Correctional Facility in Del Rio where she was still being held as of press-time.

6:30 a.m., Cory Ray Lawrence, 21, of Richland Hills was arrested by Trooper Welch for driving while intoxicated and failure to comply with the requirements of an unattended

vehicle. Lawrence was booked into the Kinney County Jail where he was still being held as of press-time.

6:30 a.m., Trevor Strong Lunt, 21, of Mesquite was arrested by Trooper Welch for public intoxication. He was later released for two days served after paying a \$300 fine.

11:30 a.m., Agustin S. Capilla, 50, of Austin was arrested by Deputy Manny Pena on warrants out of Travis County. Capilla was booked into the Kinney County Jail where he was still being held as of press-time.

11:30 a.m., A woman reported two dogs at her residence on N. Ann Street. A city employee was notified of the situation.

12:07 p.m., A man called requesting a wrecker for his 18-wheeler.

12:52 p.m., A San Antonio man reported that his binoculars and backpack had been stolen.

9th ANNUAL BRATWURST FRY

Sunday, January 19, 2003
12:00 - 2:00 p.m.

Our Redeemer Lutheran Church E.L.C.A.
Fort and Henderson Streets, Brackettville, TX

Bratwurst * Bolillo Buns

German Potato Salad

Baked Beans * Sauerkraut

Coffee * Tea * Desserts

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BRIEFS

Livestock Show set this weekend at Civic Center

The 48th Annual Kinney County 4-H and FFA Livestock Show will be held Friday and Saturday at the Kinney County Civic Center.

All market animals will be weighed in the west side of the Civic Center from 8 a.m. to noon on Friday. Following will be the judging of the rabbit classes at 1:30, the steer classes at 3, meat goat doe kids at 4, commercial ewe lambs at 4:30 and swine at 5.

On Saturday, judging begins at 8 a.m. with market lamb classes, and the market goat classes will be judged at 9:30. A barbecue lunch will be sold at noon.

The Stock Show awards presentation is set for Saturday at 1:30 and the Junior Livestock Premium Sale is at 2.

Woodson earns bachelor's degree

Laura Jill Woodson of Brackettville was among 192 students who received degrees during the fall commencement exercises at Sul Ross State University's Alpine campus and Rio Grande College.

Graduation ceremonies were held Dec. 14 at the Pete P. Gallego Center in Alpine. Commencement for Rio Grande College was held that evening at C.C. Winn High School in Eagle Pass.

Woodson earned a bachelor of arts degree in social science. She graduated summa cum laude.

Hunt earns honor at Sul Ross State

ALPINE — Sam Hunt of Brackettville was among 244 students named to the Sul Ross State University Dean's List for the fall semester.

Undergraduate students enrolled for 12 or more semester hours that maintain an average 3.3 or higher on a 4.0 scale are eligible for the Dean's List. Graduate hours are not included in the computations.

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STARTS THURSDAY 9AM-9PM

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You'll Love What You Save!

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STARTS THURSDAY 9AM - 9PM

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Walk out without paying... that's right during Ricks January incredible clearance you can afford all the furniture, bedding and more without paying interest for 12 months. You make no down payment, plus give you free delivery now. You won't pay a finance charge for 12 months, then you can spread your payments out with our low monthly payments, starting Feb., 2003. See chart below.

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\$825	0	0	\$25
\$875	0	0	\$30
\$1125	0	0	\$35
\$1275	0	0	\$40
\$1425	0	0	\$45
\$1575	0	0	\$50
\$1725	0	0	\$55
\$1875	0	0	\$60
\$2025	0	0	\$65
\$2175	0	0	\$70
\$2325	0	0	\$75
\$2475	0	0	\$80
\$2625	0	0	\$85
\$2775	0	0	\$90
\$2925	0	0	\$95
\$3075	0	0	\$100

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0.0%
FOR 60 MOS




2003 RENDEVOUS #1693

MSRP ... \$25745
Rebate ... \$3000
Brown Discount .. \$2350

\$20395

APR AS LOW AS
0.0%
FOR 60 MOS




2003 GRAND AM #1884

MSRP ... \$18705
Rebate ... \$3000
Brown Discount .. \$1410

\$14295

APR AS LOW AS
0.0%
FOR 60 MOS




2003 VIBE #1991

MSRP ... \$19040
Rebate ... \$2000
Brown Discount .. \$1045

\$15995

APR AS LOW AS
2.9%
FOR 60 MOS




2003 SIERRA 1500 #2002

MSRP ... \$20953
Rebate ... \$2000
Brown Discount .. \$2000

\$16953

APR AS LOW AS
0.0%
FOR 60 MOS




2003 SONOMA EXT. CAB #1980

MSRP ... \$21620
Rebate ... \$3000
Brown Discount .. \$2025

\$16595

Save \$4000

APR AS LOW AS
0.0%
FOR 60 MOS




2003 CENTURY LIMITED #2168

MSRP ... \$22355
Rebate ... \$3000
Brown Discount .. \$1660

\$18695

APR AS LOW AS
0.0%
FOR 60 MOS




2003 AZTEK #1693

MSRP ... \$20995
Rebate ... \$3000
Brown Discount .. \$1500

\$16495

APR AS LOW AS
2.9%
FOR 60 MOS



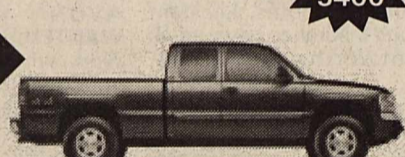
2003 SAFARI #1952

MSRP ... \$26682
Rebate ... \$2000
Brown Discount .. \$2187

\$22495

Save \$4100

APR AS LOW AS
2.9%
FOR 60 MOS




2003 271 EXT. CAB #2146

MSRP ... \$33460
Rebate ... \$2000
Brown Discount .. \$3465

\$27995

Save \$5400

0.0% APR



2003 ENVOY #2178

MSRP ... \$31415
Rebate ... \$2000
Brown Discount .. \$2820

\$26595

APR AS LOW AS
2.9%
FOR 60 MOS



2003 EXT. CAB SLE #2072

MSRP ... \$28161
Rebate ... \$2000
Brown Discount .. \$3166

\$22995

Save \$5100

0.0% APR



2003 ENVOY XL #1998

MSRP ... \$32920
Rebate ... \$2000
Brown Discount .. \$3025

\$27895

Save \$5000

0.0% APR



2003 YUKON SLE #2181

MSRP ... \$34775
Rebate ... \$2000
Brown Discount .. \$4000

\$28775

0.0% APR



2003 YUKON XL #2078

MSRP ... \$38515
Rebate ... \$2000
Brown Discount .. \$4520

\$31995

APR AS LOW AS
2.9%
FOR 60 MOS



2003 CREW CAB 4X4 #2171

MSRP ... \$36210
Rebate ... \$2000
Brown Discount .. \$3715

\$30495

Save \$700

PRE-OWNED VEHICLES

Trucks

2335A	1999 Toyota Tacoma KC	\$15,900
2220A	1992 GMC Sierra Ext. Cab	\$7,950
2170A	2000 Nissan Frontier KC	\$10,850
1572A	2002 Nissan Frontier CC	\$21,975
2009B	2000 Nissan Frontier CC	\$14,875
1971A	1999 Nissan Frontier KC	\$10,975
1839A	2002 Chevrolet S10 RC	\$11,875
2258A	1999 Ford F250 XLT SC	\$17,375
2192A	2001 Chevy Ext Cab LS	\$20,575
2002	GMC 2500 CC DSL	\$34,900
P7111A	1998 Ford F150 XLT SC	\$15,400
2029A	1997 Ford F350 XLT CC	\$9,950
P7115B	1996 Chevy EXT Cab LS	\$9,500
2066B	1998 Nissan Frontier KC	\$8,975

CARS

1065A	1999 Nissan Maxima GXE	\$14,975
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1105A	2001 Pontiac Grand AM SE	\$12,875
2178A	2000 Mercury Cougar	\$11,400
2102A	2001 Honda Accord EX	\$17,400
2149A	2000 Ford Mustang Conv	\$14,850
1809A	2000 Mercury Gd Marquis LS	\$13,575
1998A	2002 Pontiac Gd Prix GT	\$16,595
2337A	1999 Lincoln TownCar	\$17,950
2181B	1999 Nissan Sentra GXE	\$8,995
1745C	1999 Chevrolet Malibu	\$8,975
2329A	1991 Nissan 240 SX	\$5,950
1666C	1997 Nissan Maxima GXE	\$10,475
P7183A	1997 Volkswagen Jetta	\$9,950
2276A	1999 Chevy Tahoe LS	\$16,475
P7138	2002 Chevy Trailblazer LS	\$21,950
1563A	2002 GMC Envoy SLE	\$24,975

SUV'S

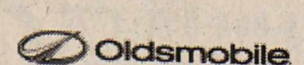
P7160	2000 Chevy Blazer LS	\$15,575
P7156	2002 Montero Sport	\$20,875
2217A	2000 Nissan Pathfinder SE	\$22,475
2266A	2002 Nissan Xterra XE	\$18,375
P7144A	1999 Chevy Tahoe LS	\$18,475
1870B	1998 Ford Expedition XLT	\$10,975
2315A	1999 Chev. Suburban LS	\$14,800
P7197A	1998 Chev. Tahoe LS	\$10,875
2268A	GMC Yukon XL	\$26,875

MINIVAN'S

2218A	1998 Ford Windstar GL	\$9,450
2132A	1998 Ford Windstar GL	\$10,875
2061B	2000 Dodge Gd. Caravan SE	\$11,950
2231A	2001 Nissan Quest GLE	\$18,475
9997A	2000 Nissan Quest GXE	\$15,775
9974B	1997 Pontiac Montana EXT	\$10,875



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