

The Tampa News

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THURSDAY

Comer pleads to misconduct

Assistant attorney general: District attorney 'loaned himself \$10,000'

By BETH MILLER
Staff Writer

District Attorney Harold Comer eluded a possible felony indictment by a Gray County grand jury this morning by pleading guilty to misdemeanor official misconduct relating to the misuse of \$10,000 in seized drug funds.

The hearing in 223rd District Court began at 9:30 a.m. today, an hour later than scheduled, and was completed within 30 minutes.

Comer pleaded guilty to the official misconduct charge, a Class A misdemeanor, and received deferred adjudication of one year probation and a \$1,000 fine. He was also ordered to make restitution of \$101,230 to the 31st and 223rd Judicial District Attorney's forfeiture fund.

The maximum punishment for a Class A misdemeanor is one year in the county jail and a \$2,000 fine.

As a condition of his probation, he has to comply with all Texas Election Code requirements to "irrevocably withdraw his name from nomination for the position of District Attorney and remove his name from the November ballot for the position of district attorney" between March 10 and March 20.

He was also ordered not for "any reason" to withdraw his resignation as district attorney for 31st and 223rd Judicial Districts. He must pay a \$40 probation fee, and comply with all other rules relating to regular probation.

Texas Assistant Attorney General Shane Phelps, prosecutor in the case, said following the hearing that he will hand deliver Comer's resignation to Gov. Ann Richards when he returns to Austin.

District Judge Andrew Kupper of the 286th Judicial District was appointed to hear the case and he accepted the plea bargain arrangement.

Comer waived his right to be indicted by a grand jury, the right to be arraigned, and the right to a trial by jury along with several other rights.

According to the information filed in the case, Comer on April 23, 1991, "did unlawfully with the intent to obtain a benefit for himself, intentionally and knowingly violate a law relating to the defendant's office as a public servant, namely Chapter 59 of the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure by failing to properly deposit and maintain seized money in an appropriate interest bearing account pending lawful forfeiture."

The complaint filed in the case by John B. Pantermuehl, a peace officer employed by the Attorney General's Office, states that Comer violated the law "with the intent to benefit himself."

Questioned by Judge Kupper as to whether he understood the consequences of the proceedings against him and if he was in his right mind, an ashen-faced Comer answered, "Yes."

Pampa attorney Bill Waters, who represented Comer at the hearing, said he believed Comer was fully competent to assist in the proceedings.

Judge Kupper of Levelland said to Comer following the acceptance of the plea: "I'm very sorry and I'm sure you are too (that) we've come to this point. I know you're a fine man and things will get better ... the court will assist you in any way it can."

In an interview following the plea bargain hearing, Phelps said the Attorney General's investigation revealed that \$10,000 in cash seized by Texas Department of Public Safety troopers on April 16, 1991, was turned over to Comer for deposit in the forfeiture fund at NBC Bank.

However, Phelps said the cash was deposited into Comer's law office trust account on April 22 and later put in Comer's personal account.



District Attorney Harold Comer walks into the courtroom this morning.

"The money did not stay in the trust account very long. It went almost contemporaneously into his (Comer's) personal account to pay for some debts," Phelps said.

The assistant attorney general said Comer basically "loaned himself \$10,000 for 2 1/2 months."

On July 1 the money was deposited into the proper forfeiture account, Phelps said.

Asked where the money came from to replace the \$10,000 cash, Phelps said, "I believe it was money Mr. Comer had received in his civil practice from some settlement. Mr. Comer actually placed it into the district attorney's forfeiture fund - \$10,000 - before any of this was even discovered, which is a significant mitigating circumstance which led to the plea."

He said the misuse of the funds was called to his office's attention by former district attorney's investigator Michael Hartsock.

The \$101,230 in restitution Comer is required to pay represents interest that should have accumulated for the benefit of the state for the period of time the money was not where it should have been, Phelps said.

"We did an investigation and we found no other instances of improper use of public funds. This appeared to be an isolated circumstance. I don't want to elaborate, but it appeared Mr. Comer was under some pressure. I don't think he would have done this had he not been under significant pressure," Phelps said.

The assistant attorney general said had the plea fallen through, he was prepared to present evidence to a grand jury of misapplication of fiduciary property, a second-degree felony or for official misconduct by misapplication, a third-degree felony for the amount of money involved. The grand jury was dismissed shortly after the hearing this morning.

Phelps said he knew of nothing that would prohibit Comer from running for election if he completes his term of deferred adjudication. Deferred adjudication is a form of probation that, if completed successfully, leaves the defendant with no final conviction on his record.

Comer, who had held the district attorney's office for more than 10 years during two different time periods, left the courtroom without comment this morning.



District Attorney Harold Comer, standing, pleads guilty to official misconduct, a Class A misdemeanor, this morning, with 286th District Judge Andrew Kupper presiding. District Clerk Yvonne Moler, at Kupper's left, is also pictured.

Hartsock: Disclosure a difficult task

Former district attorney's investigator Michael Hartsock, who initiated the Attorney General Office's investigation into District Attorney Harold Comer, said today he could not apologize for reporting the wrongdoing of his former boss.

"I can't apologize for reporting the offense to the proper authorities," Hartsock said in a prepared statement. "It was a difficult and unpleasant task. After giving the matter careful consideration I concluded that I had a legal and moral obligation to make the report."

Assistant Attorney General Shane Phelps, prosecutor in the case against Comer, said today following the hearing that Comer's successor to be appointed by Gov. Ann Richards to fill the term through Dec. 31 should take a "long, hard look" at Hartsock.

"I think that whoever his successor is should take a long, hard look at him. Mr. Hartsock was an investigator in the office for 11 years. When you get right down to it, as difficult as it was, and as tragic as all of this is, Mr. Hartsock did exactly what he should have done. He did the right thing."

Hartsock also said in his statement, "I have no argument with Mr. Comer being allowed to plead guilty to a misdemeanor offense instead of a felony offense. This is an example of justice tempered with mercy."

"However, I do believe the proverb that says, 'When the sentence for a crime is not quickly carried out, the hearts of the people are filled with schemes to do wrong.' No one benefits when wrongdoing is allowed to go unchecked, not even the guilty person."

Phelps said of Hartsock reporting the incident, "It was a very difficult thing for Mr. Hartsock to do. It was a very courageous thing for him to do."

Hartsock also said, "Each of us has a responsibility to do what is right without regard for any promise of reward or fear of retaliation. What kind of moral sense can be developed when we only do what is right when it is convenient?" he asked. "What will our society become if we neglect this responsibility?"

Comer reportedly fired Hartsock after he learned of Hartsock reporting the incident to the Attorney



Shane Phelps

General's Office in October. He later asked Hartsock to come back to work for him, which Hartsock did, until Jan. 15.

At that time, Hartsock said Comer had fired him again, although Comer said Hartsock's leaving was "mutual."

- Beth Miller

Jury awards damages in assault

By BETH MILLER
Staff Writer

A Gray County jury on Wednesday found a Borger man assaulted a 25-year-old Pampa woman in March 1988 and ruled the woman should receive damages in the amount of \$8,127.

The three-woman, nine-man jury was seated Tuesday morning to begin hearing evidence in the civil lawsuit filed by Kimberly King Heiskell against Steven D. Hefner. Evidence concluded in the case Tuesday with closing arguments and the jury's verdict on Wednesday in 31st District Court with Judge M. Kent Sims presiding.

Heiskell testified that she was assaulted in New Mexico by Hefner, whom she had dated, in March 1988 after she had gone on a skiing trip with him and another couple.

She said they got to Red River, N.M., and stopped at a bar about midnight on March 3, 1988. She said Hefner started playing pool and drinking alcohol while she and the other couple sat at a table and listened to the band. She said she had about four sips out of one drink and that when they left the bar Hefner was intoxicated.

Hefner had alleged that Heiskell was also intoxicated and that Heiskell had fallen down the mountain and gotten injured. In opening arguments, Hefner's attorney Cecil M. Pruett of Borger said, "Mr. Hefner did not assault her, she assaulted him."

But under questioning by plaintiff's attorney Phil Vanderpool,

Heiskell countered that and photographs depicting Heiskell's injuries were introduced for the jury to view.

She said that Hefner started driving the motor home when they left the bar and was "obviously drunk" and took a detour as they were supposed to be going to Taos, N.M. She said she offered to drive, but he would not let her and she continued to object to his driving up the mountain.

After parking the motor home at the top of a mountain, she said Hefner talked them into going to the hot springs at the bottom of the mountain. She said it was about 3 a.m. at the time, that they hiked down to the bottom and the two guys got in the hot springs and the other girl got in. Heiskell said she did not get in.

She said Hefner started telling her she was a "bad sport and a party pooper" and she decided to go back to the motor home to get warm. She said Hefner came up about 15 minutes later and was "very mad," and asked her what her problem was.

He told her she could walk to Taos and then he locked her out of the motor home. She said then Hefner and the other man, Alan Jones, came outside and Hefner started yelling, "I'm going to kill her."

"Alan told me to run. I ran. He (Hefner) came up and grabbed me by the hair and started hitting me with his fist. I fell to the ground and he kicked me in the stomach ... All the blood and I was in so much pain."

She said Jones went into the motor home and got a gun and fired it and Hefner stopped hitting her.

"I thought I was going to die," she said, saying she now has migraine headaches as a result of the assault.

She said she was unconscious and that the next thing she knew she was in the motor home with Jones and the other woman and they were taking her to a hospital in Taos. She said Jones stopped a police officer in Taos and he took her to Holy Cross Hospital where she was treated for her injuries.

See TRIAL, Page 2



Flames leap out of the back of a house at 405 N. Faulkner moments after firefighters were notified of the blaze.

Morning blaze damages residence

A man said he narrowly escaped from a burning house at 405 N. Faulkner this morning.

Mike Reddell, reportedly staying at the residence with Rick Stinnett, owner of the home, said he awakened to find his upstairs room full of smoke.

"There's an electric heater in the room up there in the attic," Reddell said. "All I know is I woke up and the house was full of flames so I got out."

Mary Woodward, who lives

across the alley from Stinnett, her son, said, "This girl stopped at the house and said she thought Rick's house was on fire. I ran over here and looked and ran and called the fire department. They said they had already gotten a call and were on their way."

Four units and nine firefighters responded to the 7:50 a.m. alarm, which created a traffic jam as parents attempted to drop off children

at Horace Mann Elementary across the street.

Stinnett was located about 8:15 a.m. after returning from taking a nephew to another school in the city.

No other persons were believed to be in the house, firefighters said. The official cause of the blaze remained under investigation at press time and no dollar amount of damage was available.

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A FREEDOM
NEWSPAPER

FEB 27 1992

50 years of Masonic service



(Staff photo by Dee Dee Laramore)

R.O. "Bob" Schnell of Borger, Deputy Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Texas, far right, shakes the hand of George M. Clark, second from left, after presenting Clark with a pin recognizing his 50 years as a Mason. The presentation took place in recent ceremonies at Pampa Lodge No. 966. Also pictured are Clark's wife, Hazel, and J.B. Fife, District Deputy Grand Master for the 98th Masonic District. Clark has not only been a Mason for 50 years, he was also raised at the Masonic Home & School from age 9 until his graduation in 1937. He entered the Masons in 1942 and has served in numerous positions including Worshipful Master of Pampa Lodge No. 966. He was issued a life membership in 1973 and received an endowed membership in 1986. He has served the Grand Lodge of Texas in numerous committees and officers' positions. In the 1970s he served as regional chairman of the Masonic Home & School Development Program. He presently serves as District Masonic Relations Officer. He is a member of the Royal Arch chapter and Council of York Rite Masonry, Knights Templar Commandery, and El Paso and Lubbock Scottish Rites as life member. He has been invested with 32nd degree Knight Commander Court of Honor. He is a member of Khiva Shrine and a life member of the Royal Order of Scotland. He is a member of the Order of Eastern Star and has twice served as Worthy Patron. He has been a member of the Methodist Church for more than 50 years, serving on all committees and has been a lay leader and delegate to the Methodist Annual Conference for several years. He has taught Sunday school for more than 30 years.

U.S. quietly keeps military in Mid-East

By ROBERT BURNS
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — One year after the Persian Gulf War, U.S. forces in Saudi Arabia are still operating Patriot missile defenses and a potent fleet of combat aircraft. And there's no stated plan for them to come home soon.

"We're leaving our options open, and the Saudis are willing to permit that," said one military officer familiar with Mideast troop deployment plans. The officer discussed U.S. military involvement there on the condition of anonymity.

There are 24,823 U.S. soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines remaining in the gulf, according to Central Command headquarters at McDill Air Force Base, Fla. That compares with a wartime peak of 541,000.

Prior to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in August 1990, the only U.S. armed force stationed in the area was the Middle East Force fleet of about a half dozen ships and 2,000 sailors. It has been in the gulf since the late 1940s.

Pentagon officials have said since the war ended a year ago Friday that there was no intent to keep air or ground forces permanently in Saudi Arabia. The Army expects to finish by April 1 the enormous task of shipping home millions of tons of equipment sent to Saudi Arabia for the ground war.

Yet the continued presence in Saudi Arabia and neighboring states of a sizeable U.S. air armada, probably numbering more than 200 planes, belies the public impression left by Bush administration officials last spring that all combat forces would be gone by now.

The first U.S. troops began leaving Saudi Arabia shortly after the war ended, and Pentagon officials said they wanted to get everyone home as soon as possible.

Now it's unclear when the final

curtain will drop on Operation Desert Storm. Staff Sgt. Jeff Sammons, a spokesman at Central Command, said Wednesday that the command, which is in charge of gulf operations, has no timetable for ending the operation.

There are three main reasons for holding up the completion of the U.S. withdrawal, according to U.S. officers who spoke this week on the condition they not be identified:

—Iraqi President Saddam Hussein's continued hold on power and his resistance to complying with U.N. efforts to find and destroy Iraqi ballistic missiles and weapons of mass destruction. The administration wants to keep alive an option for using military force to achieve the U.N. goals.

—The Saudi government's uneasiness about Saddam. The Pentagon in September sent two batteries of Patriot air defense missiles to Saudi Arabia, and Gen. Colin Powell, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said the action was taken at the Saudis' request. Each battery includes missiles, launchers, radars and fire control units operated by about 690 soldiers.

—Continuing U.S. negotiations with the Saudis on keeping certain military hardware stored permanently in the kingdom. Such "prepositioned" equipment would make it easier for U.S. forces to respond to a future crisis in the gulf.

Originally the Pentagon wanted to store equipment sufficient for a full Army armored division, but one military officer said the focus now was on arranging for storage of equipment for air forces.

Spare parts and other support equipment for U.S. planes, but not the planes themselves, would be kept there permanently if the details could be worked out, he said.

"We're still talking with the Saudis on prepositioning, and the details of that — along with the entire

scope of security arrangements — are still being worked out," the officer said.

The negotiations are especially delicate due to Saudi sensitivities about having foreign military forces on its soil.

In the meantime, a wide range of U.S. warplanes is operating on the Arabian Peninsula. They include F-15 Strike Eagle attack planes, F-16 Falcon fighters, A-10 Warthog tank killers, E-3 AWACs airborne warning planes, F-117 stealth fighters, U-2 spy planes and EF-111 electronic jammers operated by the Air Force.

The Air Force has 4,608 people in the area, Sammons said. He declined to identify specific U.S. units in the area and said information about numbers of aircraft could not be released.

The Navy has F/A-18 Hornet attack planes, F-14 Tomcat fighters, EA-6B Prowler electronic jammers and A-6E Intruder attack planes. The Navy's roughly 90 aircraft are accompanying the aircraft carrier USS Dwight D. Eisenhower in the northern Red Sea. The carrier USS America is taking over for the Eisenhower this week and is expected to take up station in the Persian Gulf.

The Navy says it has 14,970 sailors on 26 ships in the seas surrounding Saudi Arabia. They include two guided-missile frigates and one destroyer that are intercepting marine traffic to enforce U.N. trade sanctions against Iraq.

Also, the Marine Corps is keeping an amphibious assault group in the gulf. With about 2,100 men aboard five assault ships, the Marine Expeditionary Unit is equipped with AV-8B Harrier attacks jets, transport and attack helicopters, an infantry battalion, an artillery battery and tank and amphibious assault platoons.

Russia, Ukraine split on commonwealth assembly

MOSCOW (AP) — In their latest disagreement, Ukraine and Russia split today over a proposal to create an assembly of commonwealth lawmakers. But parliamentary leaders from member republics agreed to some steps to try to coordinate their laws.

Today's meeting, which brought together lawmakers from 10 of the 11 commonwealth states, was the first such gathering in Moscow. Uzbekistan did not attend, and no reason was given for its absence.

At Ukraine's insistence, debate on a Russian-backed plan to set up an assembly of lawmakers from member republics was postponed for a month to let each state's parliament consider the idea.

"Ukraine will look at this question, but we think that this structure is somewhat premature," said Ukrainian delegation member Vladimir Kryuzhanovsky.

Russia and Kazakhstan, which

also supported the proposal, have called for more central control in the commonwealth than Ukraine has.

The proposed lawmakers' assembly would coordinate legislation, although its exact powers were unclear. It was not known if that would contradict the wishes of the commonwealth founders that the association not have any legislative bodies.

Kryuzhanovsky said Ukraine prefers to cooperate with other states through existing commonwealth committees.

Ukraine and Russia, the most powerful members of the young commonwealth, were already divided over military and economic issues, straining the unity of the association that replaced the Soviet Union.

Ukraine has begun creating its own army and plans to introduce a separate currency. Russian officials say they may also create their own military and may match the new

Ukrainian currency with a new Russian ruble.

This week Ukraine also excluded Russia from a meeting of commonwealth states in Kiev to work out a new plan for repaying the estimated \$65 billion to \$80 billion in foreign debt of the former Soviet Union. It claimed Russia has too much control over Western credits and the current repayment plan.

At the Moscow meeting, the lawmakers did agree to sign documents calling for cooperation by their parliaments in exchanging draft legislation, with the goal of making their legal systems "more or less uniform."

They also agreed that parliamentary leaders would meet regularly for consultations, and agreed to set up an service on legislation throughout the commonwealth.

According to the meeting's agenda, lawmakers had hoped to find ways of resolving some economic disputes.

Worst House check bouncers may be named

By LARRY MARGASAK
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — As many as 300 lawmakers wrote rubber checks on their House bank accounts and an ethics subcommittee has a plan to disclose the worst abusers, congressional sources say.

The six-member panel must persuade the full House ethics committee to publicize the names, a sensitive issue because many House members fear the political repercussions of disclosure.

The names of those who wrote bad checks are not known even to the investigating lawmakers, who are using coded records. But one House source, speaking only on condition of anonymity, said 30 or more members could make the list of worst abusers under the subcommittee plan.

Several House sources said 300 members wrote bad checks from July 1, 1988, through Oct. 3, 1991, although most would not be considered chronic abusers under the investigating panel's plan.

The House bank was shut down late last year. Until then, lawmakers had been allowed to write checks that exceeded account balances, without any interest charges or financial penalty, until their next paycheck was deposited.

The subcommittee has been completing a report on the check-writers, directed by the House to focus on repeated abusers.

While the panel was in general agreement, persuading the full ethics committee to release several dozen names "will be difficult," said Rep. Porter J. Goss, R-Fla., a subcommittee member. "Some are opposed to any disclosure. Some want full disclosure."

The ethics committee may ask the House for authorization to reveal names.

Even if the list is confined to the worst abusers, publicly fingering any bad-check writers is ticklish. There is general agreement that such exposure could cost incumbents their seats and that Democrats — with a 268-166 majority — could be hurt more than Republicans.

Rep. Matthew F. McHugh, D-N.Y., chairman of the subcommittee and acting chairman of the full ethics panel, said the total face amount of bad checks is "irrelevant." What's important, he said, are the differences between the amounts of bad checks and the amounts of money in a member's account.

One source said the subcommittee likely would take into account the number of times an overdraft exceeded the amount of a member's next paycheck.

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Judge bars suspension of miners' health benefits

ABINGDON, Va. (AP) — A federal judge has blocked the cutoff of health care benefits for 120,000 retired members of the United Mine Workers union.

U.S. District Judge Glenn Williams issued the temporary restraining order Wednesday in response to a class-action lawsuit filed on behalf of some retirees. He set a March 4 hearing to consider the matter further.

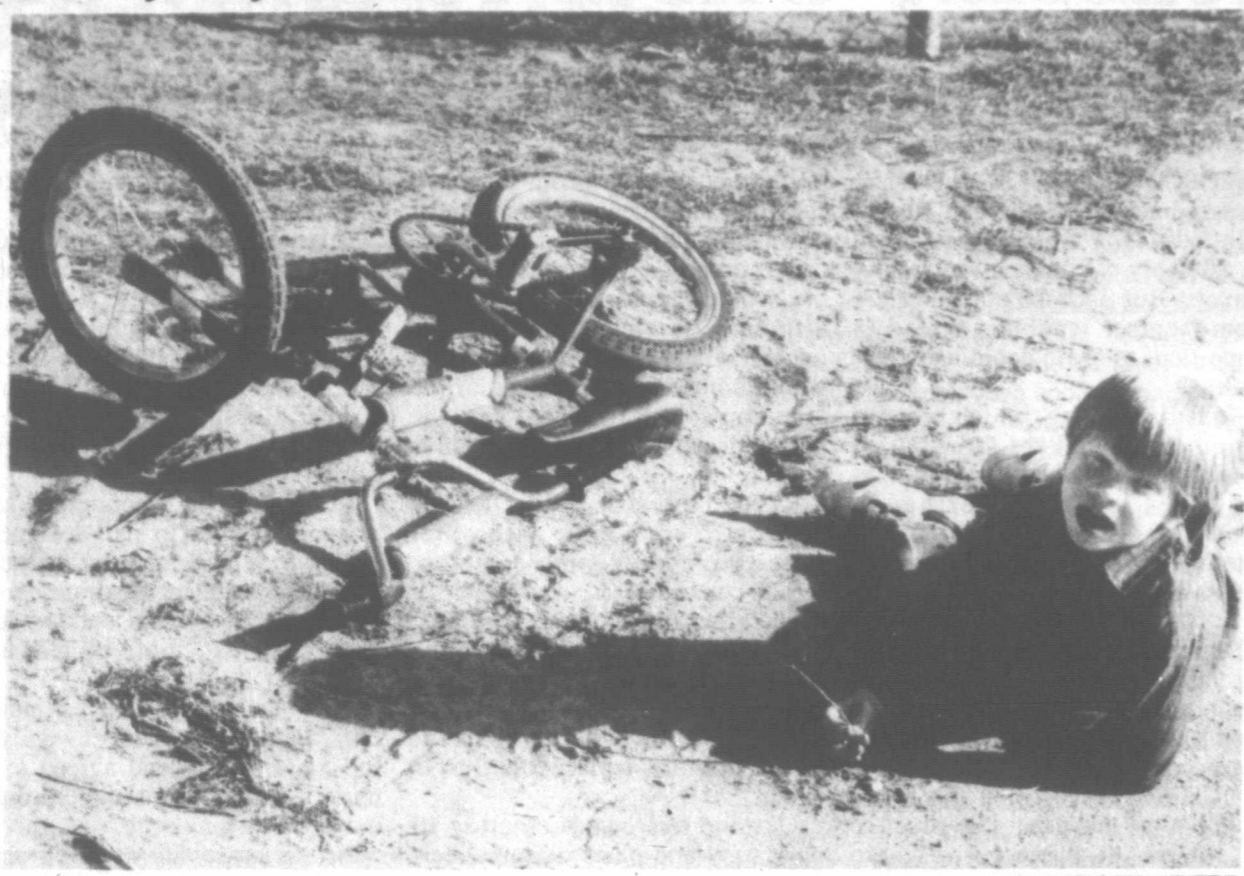
Two trust funds that provide the health insurance have a \$100 million deficit because of a drop in contributing companies. The fund administrators had planned to give notice next month that benefits would be cut off in April.

The funds were created in the 1940s by the Bituminous Coal Operators Association, which today represents 14 of the nation's largest coal companies.

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Sunny day scenes



(Staff photos by Bonner Green)
Pampans took to the outdoors Monday afternoon in appreciation of the spring-like weather. In the top photo, Allen Farriell turned his bicycle over while riding, but decided to take advantage of the opportunity to draw pictures in the dirt with a stick. In the lower photo at lower right, Lori Bustamante and Chantelle Landers wait outside in the sun for a ride after attending Pampa Learning Center. And in the lower photo at left, Brian Overstreet breaks ground the hard way for an electrical line to light the flags at the Coronado Inn on North Hobart Street. More sunny skies and balmy temperatures are forecast for today.

Ireland's abortion ruling praised

DUBLIN, Ireland (AP) The Supreme Court ruling allowing a teen-ager who says she was raped to leave the country for an abortion won widespread praise today, but the debate over Ireland's ban on abortion is far from over.

Opposition Fine Gael lawmaker Nuala Fennell spoke of "unfinished business," a view shared by many women's groups and leaders of opposition parties in the Irish Republic.

The five Supreme Court justices on Wednesday overturned a High Court order that had prevented the 14-year-old girl, who has threatened to kill herself, from having an abortion or leaving the country.

The girl, who has not been identified, says she was raped in December by a friend's father following more than a year of sexual abuse. The man has been questioned but not charged by police.

Her case came to the authorities' attention after the family contacted police about preserving forensic evidence from an abortion for a possible prosecution. The case attracted international attention and reopened the divisive debate about abortion in Ireland.

The Roman Catholic Church here, calling the case "very distressing," said there was a clear distinction between the right to travel freely and abortion.

"It remains the concern of the Catholic Church that whatever the circumstances, innocent new life should not be made to pay the penalty of death for the crime of another," a church statement said.

It was not known whether the Supreme Court decided that the High Court had overstepped Irish law or had acted contrary to Ireland's commitments under European Community treaties, which place no restrictions on travel freedoms.

The court's written decision, outlining its reasoning, is not expected until at least next week. It will be a key factor in determining whether opposition and pro-choice groups seek a constitutional referendum or new legislation.

The government is hoping to avoid a referendum, fearing a repetition of the rancorous 1983 abortion referendum campaign that ended with 69 percent approval for a constitutional ban on abortion.

Prime Minister Albert Reynolds, welcoming the Supreme Court deci-

sion on humanitarian grounds, said Wednesday night: "It has been a sad and distressful case and I am glad that everything is over."

But Mary O'Rourke, a junior government minister, said: "The situation cannot be allowed to happen again."

Fine Gael lawmaker Monica Barnes said the country must address related court rulings that deny Irish women the right to information about abortion and abortion referral.

"I think that those rights have to be restored. That may demand a referendum. It certainly will demand, I think, some change in legislation," she said.

The High Court's order was the first attempt to prevent Irish women from going abroad to circumvent Ireland's abortion law. Some 4,000 Irish women have abortions in Britain each year.

In an editorial Thursday, the Irish Times said, "We have had the first shaft of official light in what must rank as one of the darkest fortnights in the history of the state; when the legal processes stood simple charity and essential humanity on their heads in an endeavor to enforce a monstrosity."

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Tyson's defense: Verdict was rigged

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) — Mike Tyson's defense attorneys are still investigating charges that his guilty verdict on rape charges was rigged, despite the state's conclusion that it was fair and impartial.

"It is our understanding that the defense team is still attempting to conduct their own separate interviews of all the jurors," said Rob Smith, a spokesman for Marion County Prosecutor Jeffrey Modisett. "Their findings will be provided directly to the court."

Modisett's office interviewed the 12 jurors and three alternates from Tyson's rape trial after an Indianapolis attorney reported overhearing a juror say the verdict was "rigged."

Attorney Robert Prather said a man he recognized as juror No. 2 made the comment to other people at a gym on Feb. 15, five days after Tyson was convicted of rape and criminal deviate conduct.

"We uncovered no evidence of any improper conduct by or towards any juror," Smith said Wednesday.

The juror, who was identified only as a 24-year-old public school behavioral specialist, denied making the comments, Smith said.

The state's findings were given to Superior Court Judge Patricia Gifford, who will sentence Tyson on March 26.

Tyson, 25, was found guilty on Feb. 10 of raping Desiree Washington of Coventry, R.I., in his hotel room last July. Washington, then 18, was in Indianapolis as a contestant in the Miss Black America pageant.

The former heavyweight champion could face up to 60 years in prison, but probably will be sentenced to a dozen years or less based on past sentencing patterns.

Tyson has hired Harvard law Professor Alan Dershowitz to handle his appeal, although he reportedly paid Washington attorney Vincent Fuller more than \$2 million to defend him.

"Alan Dershowitz will be running the show for Mike. I don't know, exactly what Fuller's role is going to be, but he's been replaced as chief counsel," said John Solberg, a spokesman for Tyson promoter Don King.

Indianapolis attorney James Voyles, who was part of Tyson's defense team, denied that he and Fuller had been taken off the case.

"We're going to be there for sentencing on the 26th," Voyles said. The appeals process can't begin until after sentencing, he added.

In an interview this week on Black Entertainment Television's

"Our Voices" program, King said Fuller and his team were replaced because of dissatisfaction with "the way they painted my client."

During the trial, Fuller portrayed Tyson as an unsavory character, who was foul-mouthed and out of control. Fuller tried to convince the jury that Miss Washington should have known Tyson wanted sex when she went to his room.

"I don't feel that he raped this girl. I feel that that's a sham and a charade. I believe Desiree put on a tremendous performance," King told BET.

King contended that Miss Washington "was treated like a one-night stand, she played the (911) operator like a Stradivarius violin."

Federal authorities are still investigating Washington's claims that she was offered \$1 million to drop her case against Tyson.

U.S. Attorney Deborah Daniels said her office will decide in a few weeks whether to file charges.

Meanwhile, an Indianapolis woman has more than 500 signatures on a petition urging Gifford to send Tyson to prison. Carlin Chapman and four others collected 394 of those signatures Wednesday across from the City-County Building, where Tyson was convicted. The other 100 were collected last week

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The Pampa News

Comic Page

The World Almanac® Crossword Puzzle

ACROSS

- Snake
- Freshwater tortoise
- Jane Austen title
- Call — day
- Lily genus
- Profit
- Diary
- Advertising fixture
- Variety of wheat
- A rose — rose
- Flightless bird
- Wriggly fish
- Snaky letter
- Middle
- Pickpocket, e.g.
- Language suffix
- Russian no
- Tan
- Impetuous

DOWN

- 1 Troubles
- 2 Knock it off
- Slight intentionally
- Vegetable box
- Exterior
- Subjected to vapors
- Long time
- Gums
- Superlative suffix
- Joyful exclamation
- Brother of Moses
- Drunkennes
- WWII area
- Regulation
- Emit coherent light
- Dawn
- Mild oath
- Went quickly
- Actress Susan —

Answer to Previous Puzzle

CID ATTA ONS
 ATE SORE NEO
 ATNO SOURNESS
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 CAN EARP ORE
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3 Call to the phone
 4 Standard Time
 5 1,051, Roman
 6 Baseballer Berra
 7 Compact

8 Conceit
 9 Yes, —!
 10 Spanish artist
 11 Time — half
 12 Fiber
 13 Allow to
 14 Places
 15 The woman
 16 Mackerel's relative
 17 Jacob's twin
 18 Bird's birthplace
 19 Curved glass
 20 Missile abbr.
 21 American Indian
 22 Sum of money
 23 Ballerina's skirt
 24 Haw
 25 Stopped (on board ship)
 26 Laugh loudly
 27 Motorists' org.
 28 Claws
 29 Emerald Isle
 30 Cozy
 31 Layer of tissue
 32 Accumulation
 33 Oboe, e.g.
 34 Sioux Indian
 35 Inquisitive
 36 Bunk, e.g.
 37 Mao — tung

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WALNUT COVE



By Mark Cullum

ARLO & JANIS



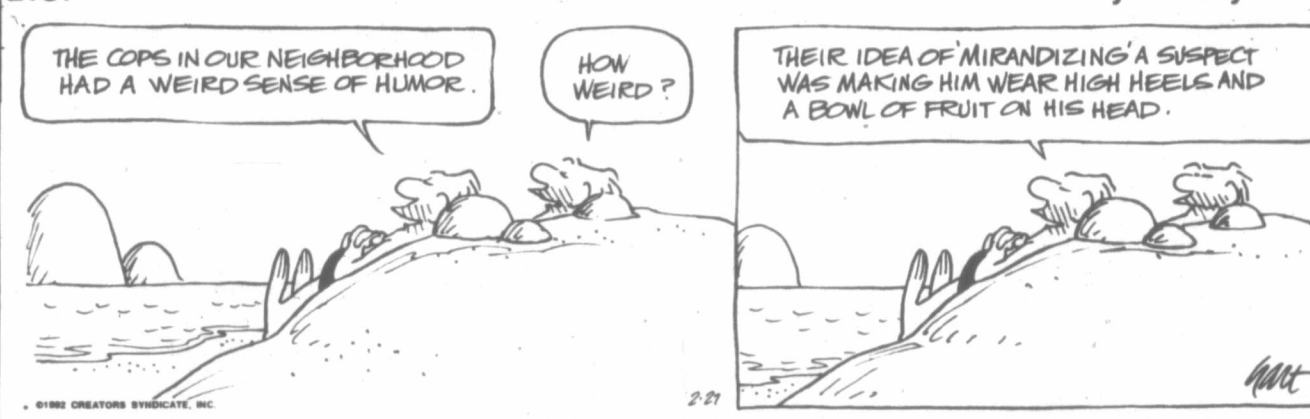
By Jimmy Johnson

ECK & MEEK



By Howie Schneider

B.C.



By Johnny Hart

Astro-Graph

by bernice bede osol

PISCES (Feb. 20-March 20) The good intentions of you and your mate might clash today. Without a game plan that is mutually agreed upon, the actions of each of you could prove counterproductive. Get a jump on life by understanding the influences governing you in the year ahead. Send for your Astro-Graph predictions today by mailing \$1.25 plus a long, self-addressed, stamped envelope to Astro-Graph, c/o this newspaper, P.O. Box 91428, Cleveland, OH 44101-3428. Be sure to state your zodiac sign.

ARIES (March 21-April 19) Through the good auspices of others, a situation you have to resolve could progress rather smoothly today. It would be a different story if you had to manage it unassisted, though.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20) You might have to deal today with someone who is rather unreasonable. However, if you employ tolerance and patience, you can remove this individual's fangs.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20) Even though you may not use the most effective tactics today, it looks like you'll be able to achieve an important objective. Only your victory might not be total.

CANCER (June 21-July 22) You may have to work closely today with an individual who views things from a different perspective than you do. This arrangement will have to be handled diplomatically.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) Be very careful in business matters today. You don't want to waste a lot of time and effort hammering out what you think is a good deal, only to find out it isn't.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) A strong-willed associate might try to impose decisions on you today in a situation where you should be exercising your own judgment. Don't cave in.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23) Responsibilities that require immediate attention should be attended to today and not put off until later. Don't be oblivious to their urgency.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 22) There are strong indications you might be uptight today, a result of placing too much significance on trivial issues. If you're going to worry, worry about something worthwhile.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 23-Dec. 21) Don't let your ego take control of your behavior today in situations that put you before the public. You might think you look good, but the general consensus may disagree.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) In order to advance your self-interests today, it might be wise to circumvent a key player who you know from experience is more your adversary than your ally.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 19) Robbing Peter to pay Paul is not a good way to manage your resources today. This could put you in a position where you'll have two strains on your budget instead of just one.

MARVIN



By Tom Armstrong

MARMADUKE



By Brad Anderson

KIT N' CARLYLE



By Larry Wright

ALLEY OOP



By Dave Graue

SNAFU



By Bruce Beattie

THE FAMILY CIRCUS



By Bill Keane

THE BORN LOSER



By Art and Chip Sansom

FRANK AND ERNEST



By Bob Thaves

PEANUTS



By Charles M. Schulz

GARFIELD



By Jim Davis

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Sports

Southwest Outdoors

By Mel Phillips



Room for improvement exists at Lake Meredith

Mark your calendar and make plans to attend the public hearings sponsored by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.

Only two hearings are scheduled in our region! The first one is Monday, March 2, in the Potter County Courthouse starting at 7:00 p.m. The second is scheduled for Lubbock County Commissioners Court on Tuesday, March 3.

After listening to over 1,000 fishermen concerning the conditions at LAKE MEREDITH, listed below are some of the best suggestions on how to IMPROVE fishing in West Texas.

- (1.) STOP ALL COVE KILLS**—Historically, LAKE MEREDITH, claimed as "one of the most intensively managed lakes in the state," has the most cove kills, BUT the best local fishing lake is BAYLOR LAKE, which has NOT been subjected to a cove kills in ten years!
- (2.) ESTABLISH SANCTUARY COVES** in the best spawning spots on each lake. From April to May, use buoys and signs to protect two or three prime locations from boating, fishing, water skiing and even disruption by TPW biologists.
- (3.) ADD BAITFISH**—Try new varieties and stock them several times each year. Adding additional bait fish makes more sense than wiping out the population base of smallmouths or other gamefish. The rod and reel anglers do not find a surplus of gamefish in any of our local lakes!
- (4.) EXPERIMENT**—In LAKE MEREDITH, the very popular and easy-to-catch sand bass was not stocked by TPW! Desperate anglers, wanting something to catch, brought them in. Why not experiment with hybrids, stripers, Kentuckies, or even saugeyes? A good argument can be made for these cooperative and tasty fish.
- (5.) STOP USING MEREDITH AS A WALLEYE HATCHERY.** If TPW insists on making walleye the dominant gamefish, at least allow the walleye to spawn without disruption.
- (6.) STUDY OUR NEIGHBORS**—In September of 1991, the taxpayers paid for a poorly drafted (but widely distributed) "misinformation" letter signed by TPW biologist JOE KRAAI in which he claimed, "New Mexico stocks no black bass in any of their lakes..." Despite other gross and flagrant errors in that official letter, the TPW officials closed ranks without ever checking the facts or publicly acknowledging any mistakes.
- (7.) CHANGE THE TPW ATTITUDE** as repeatedly expressed by Joe Kraai who claims that locals just don't know how to catch fish at Meredith. FACT #1. Locals are catching walleye at Lake Conchas. FACT #2. Locals are catching walleye and striper at Lake Foss.

The most important fact is that the locals are tired of spending their money driving out-of-state or down-state. They are ready for better fishing at local lakes...and they deserve better.

See YOU at the Courthouse.

Boston's Clemens: 'I'm not late'

By LAURA TOLLEY
Associated Press Writer

HOUSTON (AP) — Roger Clemens doesn't understand what all the fuss is about.

The Boston Red Sox pitcher's whereabouts has been the source of numerous media reports in recent days. Team officials have said they are disappointed he hasn't reported to spring training camp and are waiting to hear from him.

Don't hold your breath. But don't think his absence spells trouble.

"There's nothing to straighten out," Clemens said Wednesday night when asked if he would be calling the team to tell them why he is still back home in Texas.

"This is non-news, me not being in spring training," the three-time Cy Young award winner said. "I'm not late and it's not news!"

Clemens, who surfaced Wednesday night at a charity event, said he is just getting in some final private training before reporting to camp in Winter Haven, Fla.

Under the Basic Agreement, Clemens doesn't have to be in camp until March 4 without penalty. But the Red Sox management, which includes new manager Butch Hobson, have been disappointed about the situation.

Clemens said he told team officials last year he would report to camp shortly before the deadline. He also said he didn't believe his current absence would have any effect on the other players.

"I'm not showing anybody up. I'm working with some people here that I'm close to, videotaping myself and getting my situation right so I can go do my job," he said.

Clemens, who is starting a four-year, \$21.5 million contract, took a break to sign baseballs and cards Wednesday night at the Velvet Elvis, an offbeat bar that puts on monthly charity events. The money was raised for the Escape Center, a child abuse prevention foundation.

He told reporters he intends to be in camp by early next week — as he had planned. Clemens lives in near-by Katy, Texas.

"It's not like I'm holding out or protesting," he said.

He said he still has a few hard workouts ahead of him before leaving the state. If he already was in camp, he joked, he probably would just be standing around spitting out sunflower seeds.

In a sadder moment, Clemens discussed the death of Jean R. Yawkey, majority owner of the Boston Red Sox. Mrs. Yawkey, 83, died Wednesday from a stroke she suffered last Thursday.

The one-time fashion model became the principal owner of the Red Sox in 1976 at the death of her husband, Tom.

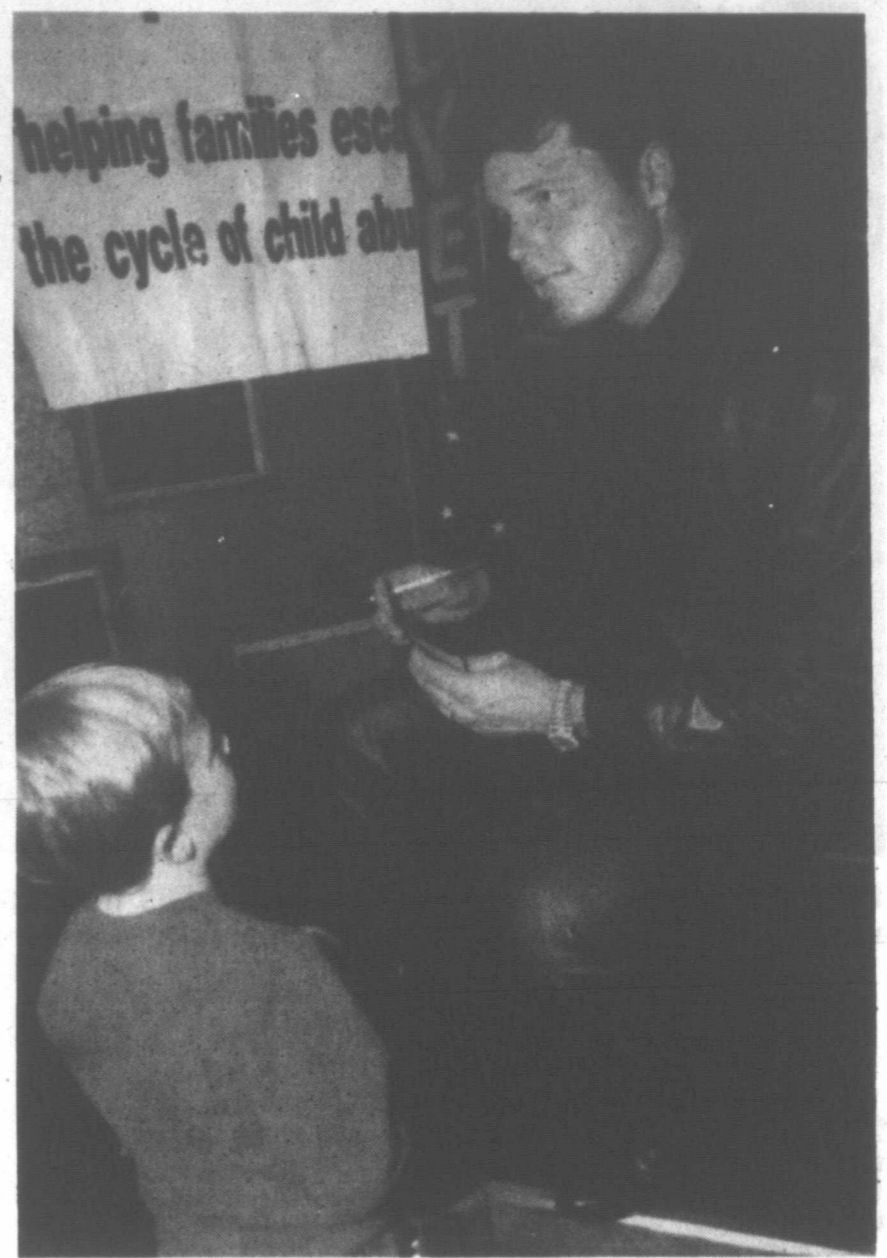
"That's what people should be writing about — there's a great lady that's gone," he said.

Clemens said she would be missed at the games.

"She was there night in, night out, in her little booth up there, keeping score with two or three of her real close friends."

He added he was sorry the team didn't win a World Series before her death.

"It's a situation where, you know, I feel personally like I've let somebody down, because we've come so close," he said.



Red Sox pitcher Roger Clemens autographs a baseball for Taylor Frappier, 6, Wednesday at the 'Velvet Elvis' Club in Houston. (AP Laserphoto)

Red Sox majority owner dies; no club changes expected

BOSTON (AP) — Jean Yawkey will not be in her private skybox above home plate at Fenway Park this season. Little else is expected to change in the operation of the Boston Red Sox.

Yawkey, the majority owner of the Red Sox, died Wednesday from the effects of a stroke she suffered six days earlier. She was 83.

Although there have been reports that the club would be sold to the highest bidder when Yawkey died — with estimates of \$180 million for the team, park and real estate — co-owner Haywood Sullivan said there would be no change in the club's operations.

"John (Harrington) and myself and all the other staff have worked together and will continue to work in that vein," Sullivan said.

Harrington, who was at Yawkey's bedside along with team treasurer William Gutfarb when she died at 2:30 p.m. at Massachusetts General Hospital, is president of JRY Corp., formed by Yawkey. He handled her controlling two-thirds interest in the team.

"In essence, everything continues the same for practical purposes,"

said John Donovan, the team's executive vice president and counsel.

"The only thing that it won't have, the sad thing, is it won't have her input," he said. "She has not been, as you know, an inactive principal."

Mrs. Yawkey, a former fashion model who grew up on Long Island, married wealthy businessman-sportsman Thomas Yawkey on Christmas Eve, 1944, 11 years after he bought the Red Sox.

She became majority owner of one of the original American League franchises about two years after her husband died of leukemia in 1976.

Prior to that, she remained in her husband's shadow. He was "Tom," even to casual acquaintances, while she was always referred to as Mrs. Yawkey.

Beyond her involvement with the Red Sox, Mrs. Yawkey was also known for her work with charities. She became the first woman to sit on the board of directors at the Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, N.Y., replacing her late husband.

Owls defeat Aggies

By The Associated Press

Rice's Dana Hardy says Texas A&M kept giving him open shots and he kept taking them until he had four of six from 3-point range and six of eight from the field.

Hardy had 16 points in Rice's 77-70 Southwest Conference victory over the Aggies Wednesday night. Brent Scott was the leading scorer for the Owls with 17 points.

In other SWC action, Baylor defeated SMU 77-62. In non-conference action, Texas defeated Oral Roberts 128-108 and Texas Christian whipped St. Louis 88-69.

Hardy's first half three-point shooting helped the Owls build an early lead.

"I just wanted to set the pace and when they gave me some open shots I took them. So I just kept shooting," said Hardy.

SWC Roundup

"We did a good job of defense in the first half but it didn't carry over. (David) Edwards got hot and kept them in the game at the end," Hardy added.

Edwards scored 27 points for the Owls, including 25 in the second half.

Scott was pleased with the Owls' defensive play.

"Defense is the key for us. Tonight we got the job done," Scott said.

Texas A&M Coach Tony Barone was disappointed with his team's first-half play.

"I thought in the first half that we were destroyed inside. They out-rebounded us 20-to-11 in the first 20 minutes. We made some adjustments in the second half and we were much more aggressive," Barone said.

Rice is 18-9 and 6-5 in SWC play. The Aggies are 5-18 overall and 1-9 in SWC action.

David Wesley and Alex Holcombe each scored 17 points to lead the Baylor Bears to a 76-62 victory over Southern Methodist.

The victory leaves the Bears (12-13) and Mustangs (10-15) knotted at 4-8 in conference play. The teams are tied for sixth place.

Kelvin Chalmers scored 12 and pulled down 12 rebounds for Baylor.

Baylor coach Gene Iba said the Bears got some easy buckets in the paint, and that helped determine the outcome.

"The post men did a good job of finishing off and were able to maintain position down low. They did a good job of getting open," Iba said.

SMU coach John Shumate said the game shows the inconsistent play that has plagued his team this season, losing big to Baylor after coming within a whisker of beating Texas Saturday.

"The kids showed a lot of character to get back in the game. We got to within eight, and then we self-destructed," Shumate said.

Terrence Rencher, B.J. Tyler and Dexter Cambridge combined for a school-record 98 points leading Texas to its seventh straight victory and a 128-108 romp over Oral Roberts.

Rencher all scorers with 34 points followed by Tyler's career-high 33 and Cambridge's season-high tying 31, marking the first time three different Longhorns have scored at least 30 points in a game.

Texas (19-10) shot 57 percent from the field while Oral Roberts hit 56 percent.

Ray Thompson led Oral Roberts (10-18) with 31 points. Sebastian Neal contributed 20 points.

Michael Strickland scored 29 points as Texas Christian beat St. Louis 88-69, giving the Horned Frogs a 20-victory season for only the sixth time.

"Twenty wins is very important," Strickland said. "We wanted to get over the 20-win hump after being stuck on 18 the last couple of years."

Reggie Smith had 19 points and 13 rebounds as TCU (20-7) avenged an 89-69 loss to the Billikens on Feb. 12.

St. Louis (5-20) got 18 points from Erwin Claggett.

Oklahoma State whips Nebraska

By CHRIS SHERIDAN
Associated Press Writer

Bobby Hurley had been out with a broken foot and Grant Hill came down with a sprained ankle. That appeared to leave Duke without a point guard.

But Hurley made an unexpected return to the Blue Devils' lineup Wednesday night and led a second-half surge that gave Duke a 76-67 Atlantic Coast Conference victory over Virginia.

"Needless to say, I wasn't expecting anything like this," Hurley said after handing out nine assists — including four in a crucial second-half sequence — scoring four points and committing only one turnover in 26 minutes.

College Basketball

In other action involving Top 25 teams, No. 6 Missouri beat Iowa State 75-71; No. 8 Ohio State beat Purdue 71-64; No. 9 Arkansas defeated Auburn 82-74; No. 11 Kentucky downed South Carolina 74-56; No. 14 Oklahoma State crushed No. 25 Nebraska 71-51; No. 16 Alabama

beat Mississippi State 79-69; No. 17 Michigan was upset by Wisconsin 96-78 and No. 18 Georgetown lost to Seton Hall, 73-71 in overtime.

Hurley, who broke his foot in a Feb. 5 loss to North Carolina, made his return one day after Duke lost Hill. Coach Mike Krzyzewski said Hill won't make this weekend's trip to UCLA.

"I'm glad I was able to play Bobby for a couple minutes," Krzyzewski said with a grin. "No, truthfully, we had no idea how long he could go."

Neither did Hurley, who played two short stints in the first half and then started the second half and played 18 minutes.

Duke (22-2, 12-2) was nursing a 51-47 edge with 11 minutes left when Hurley took over. He fed Christian Laettner for a dunk and Thomas Hill for a short jumper on consecutive possessions. On Duke's next trip down the floor, Hurley passed up an open jumper and flipped a pass to Laettner for a 3-pointer.

The closest Virginia (12-12, 5-8) got was 64-58 on a short jumper by Ted Jeffries with 3:18 left.

Duke responded in familiar fashion. Hurley once again passed up an open shot to feed Laettner for a 3-pointer, and the Blue Devils were never threatened again.

Laettner scored 32 points and grabbed 13 rebounds on a night when his number — 32 — was retired.

No. 9 Arkansas 82, Auburn 74

Todd Day scored 21 points and Lee Mayberry had 18 as the visiting Razorbacks held off Auburn in a Southeastern Conference game.

Arkansas (21-6, 10-3) wasted a 15-point lead in the first half and trailed Auburn (11-13, 4-9) by three with 7 1/2 minutes to go.

But Day tied the game on a three-point play and Roosevelt Wallace put the Razorbacks ahead for good by scoring off a rebound with 6:09 remaining.

No. 11 Kentucky 74, South Carolina 56

The Wildcats put up 27 3-pointers and made 12, which was enough to beat visiting South Carolina for their sixth straight victory.

Deron Feldhaus hit three 3-pointers and Richie Farmer sank two during a 17-7 run in the first half that put the Wildcats (21-5, 10-3 in the Southeastern Conference) comfortably ahead.

South Carolina (10-14, 2-11) lost its 10th straight game, the most since 1958-59.

No. 14 Oklahoma State 71, No. 25 Nebraska 51

Oklahoma State returned to early-season form, getting 17 points and eight rebounds from Byron Houston to beat visiting Nebraska in a Big Eight game and avenge its first loss of the season.

The Cowboys (22-5, 6-5) held Nebraska (17-7, 5-6) to 39 percent shooting and limited leading scorer Eric Piatkowski to five points, nine below his average.

Oklahoma State was 20-0 before losing in Lincoln on Feb. 5.

No. 16 Alabama 79, Mississippi State 69

Robert Horry scored 24 points to lead the Crimson Tide to a Southeastern Conference victory at home.

Alabama (21-6, 8-5) held on to third place in the SEC West behind Arkansas and Louisiana State.

The Bulldogs (14-10, 6-7) kept the game close until 10 minutes remained.

Wisconsin 96, No. 17 Michigan 78

Wisconsin coach Steve Yoder took the court in Madison, Wis., for the first time since announcing his resignation and the Badgers responded with their best game of the season.

Freshman Michael Finley scored a career-high 30 points and grabbed 13 rebounds for Wisconsin (13-13, 4-9 Big Ten). Michigan (17-7 and 8-6) was led by 21 points from Jalen Rose.

Seton Hall 73, No. 18 Georgetown 71, OT

Bryan Caver dribbled the length of the floor and made a layup with .3 of a second left to give Seton Hall a Big East Conference victory at the Meadowlands.

The loss ended a four-game winning streak for Georgetown (17-7, 10-5) and knocked it out of first place in the Big East. Seton Hall (17-7, 9-6) earned its eighth victory in 10 games.

Oklahoma State's Byron Houston (35) moves the ball against Nebraska's Bryan Sallier (40) during first-half action Wednesday. (AP Laserphoto)

Harvesters to get boost

Harvester Booster Club has a pep rally planned for the Pampa basketball team at 6:30 p.m. Friday in the middle school boys' gym.

The Harvesters meet Sweetwater at 7:30 p.m. Saturday in the Class 4A area playoffs at Wayland Baptist University Fieldhouse in Plainview.

Tickets for the arena game are \$4 for adults and \$2 for students and are available until 2:30 p.m. Friday at the high school athletic office.

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115 S. Cuyler. Now supplying animal health care products. See us for all your needs.
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FREE Cwdog to good home. Good with children. 665-6738.
GOLDEN Wheat Grooming and Boarding. Puppy daycare. 669-6357 Mon.

- 98 Unfurnished Houses**
1, 2, and 3 bedroom houses for rent. 665-2383.
837 E. Craven 665-7391, 665-8694, 665-3361.
2 Bedroom 842 S. Sumner \$200, no deposit. 3 Bedroom 1148 Neel Road \$150, no deposit. 669-2118 after 3 p.m.
2 bedroom house, nice, clean, 700 Doucette. Attached garage, new fenced back yard, washer, dryer connection. References required. Deposit \$150, \$275 month. 665-3997, 665-0288.
2 bedroom, 2225 Hamilton. Call 669-3764.
2 bedroom, newly remodeled inside, central heat, cooktop and oven. \$300. 665-4842.
2100 Lea, 3 bedroom, 2 bath. \$550 a month \$450 deposit. 665-4306.
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Nation's schools struggling

By TAMARA HENRY
AP Education Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — School days, school days, fewer golden rule days.

Cutting the education calendar is the option that some school systems already have resorted to as they run out of other ways to squeeze their budgets. Others around the nation are on the brink of that reluctant step.

Prince George's County, Md., schoolchildren, for example, celebrated Washington's Birthday for two days. And they will have more days off in the coming weeks as teachers are furloughed to trim pay-rolls.

"I am thoroughly disgusted with the public schools," said Carolyn Alston, whose 9-year-old daughter, Jennifer, attends school in the suburban district just outside the nation's capital. "We are paying our taxes, yet the schools are at the bottom of the heap" when it comes to priority spending, she said.

Public school spending in the country, the largest in Maryland, was cut by more than \$35 million over the past 15 months. In addition to teacher furloughs, officials have canceled programs and implemented other belt-tightening moves to absorb the cuts.

The budget crunch is more the rule than the exception.

Hancock County, Tenn., schools were to close altogether Feb. 14, but county commissioners voted to reallocate \$80,000 to keep them open until April.

In one of the richest counties in Virginia, the Fairfax County School Board suspended merit pay for teachers in the 1992-93 school year. The program had been recognized as a national model for linking teacher salaries to performance.

Samuel G. Sava, executive director of the National Association of Elementary School Principals, said a survey by his organization found that three of four principals face shrinking budgets with increasing enrollments.

"Some teachers are losing their jobs, others have had salaries frozen, school building improvements are on hold, on-the-job teacher training has been canceled, and equipment buying is at a standstill," said Sava.

He added, "Unfortunately, at-risk youngsters are hardest hit by decreased funding."

Lucille Cogdill, principal of Stratford Elementary School in Stratford, Mo., said school officials there have had to abandon their longtime philosophy of keeping classroom sizes small so youngsters can receive more individual attention. Each month, she said, "they keep cutting the funds."

Cogdill noted the Board of Education is considering revisions in the curricula for city's 495 elementary and 430 high school students. Physics, for example, may be offered every two years instead of annually.

Moreover, Cogdill said, faculty members are "financing programs out of our own pockets. We haven't received a pay raise for three years."

The mail survey last December by the principals' group found that 74 percent of about 650 principals from 41 states had budgets cut. Fifty-one percent said they curtailed building repairs and improvements; 40 percent said textbooks were not being replaced and materials not being supplied; 36 percent said pupil-teacher ratios were edging up.

Sixty percent reported salary freezes or minimal raises for teachers; 40 percent lost classroom teachers; 58 percent reduced the number of aides and support staff.

Of the principals reporting curricula changes, 47 percent cut music, 42 percent cut art, 28 percent cut physical education and 31 percent cut remedial programs.

Eight out of 10 schools facing cuts did away with field trips, said the survey.

The Fairfax County School Board's decision to suspend merit pay followed a contentious debate

over whether to keep programs for children or services for teachers. The action saved \$8.4 million.

The \$873 million budget request approved by the Fairfax board also eliminated cost-of-living raises, cut school administration staff and delayed bus purchases.

In Hancock County, Tenn., Superintendent Mike Antrican threatened to close schools for 1,200 students and 100 teachers and administrators when state funding was cut \$225,000 and commissioners placed a cap on a key source of money — payment for housing District of Columbia prisoners.

The county has received \$1.2 million to house the prisoners in past years. Commissioners voted recently to rescind the cap and accept more prisoners.

A New York State survey found that the average 1991-92 school district expenditure, adjusted for inflation, decreased 2.76 percent from 1990 to 1991. Expenditures per student decreased 4.53 percent when adjusted for inflation.

Average state aid per district decreased 6.77 percent between the two fiscal years, and real property tax levies increased an average of 8.54 percent.

That survey was conducted last September by the New York State School Boards Association, Council of School Superintendents and the New York State Association of School Business Officers.

In Prince George's County, teachers at Kettering Elementary sent a letter home to parents urging them to lobby for a halt in the budget cuts.

"Teaching has never been just a job to us," said the letter. "We love to teach! We are excited about making a difference in the lives of children. We nurture them, we wipe their tears, we give them hugs, we listen to their problems, we boost their egos, and long after school ends each day we are still thinking about them and how we can improve their education."

States moving to guarantee abortion rights — just in case

By SUZANNE ZIEGLER
Associated Press Writer

ST. PAUL, Minn. (AP) — As doubts grow over whether Roe vs. Wade can long survive, Minnesota and other states are weighing legislation to guarantee the right to an abortion just in case the U.S. Supreme Court ruling is upset.

At the national level, meanwhile, abortion rights groups are pushing for a federal law that would keep abortions legal in all 50 states.

"The sleeping giant is waking up," Connecticut state Sen. George Jepsen, an abortion rights proponent, said Wednesday. Connecticut in 1990 became the first state to pass a law guaranteeing the right to an abortion.

The legislative activity comes as the Supreme Court prepares to rule on a Pennsylvania law that establishes a 24-hour waiting period for women seeking an abortion and requires women to notify their husbands before terminating a pregnancy. A ruling is expected this summer.

The justices could focus narrowly on the specific provisions of the law or rule more broadly and reconsider the 1973 decision that made abortion a constitutional right. Both sides in the dispute have invited a broad ruling.

Minnesota is among at least nine states that are debating or have considered legislation to safeguard abortion rights. The others are Massachusetts, Alaska, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, New Hampshire, Pennsylvania and Rhode Island.

"In the highly likely event that Roe vs. Wade is overturned, Minnesota should have in statute provisions to allow for safe and legal abortions," said state Sen. Richard Cohen, a Minnesota Democrat and author of the Senate bill.

In Massachusetts, Republican Gov. William F. Weld has initiated comparable legislation. "He believes that the responsibility to protect choice

rests with the state government," said Weld spokeswoman Virginia Buckingham.

In Alaska, state Rep. Niilo Koponen, a Democrat, has sponsored a bill that would guarantee the right to abortion and protect state-funded abortions for the poor.

No action is expected to be taken on the bill except to counter anti-abortion legislation, either on the state or national level.

In Congress, abortion-rights advocates are pushing for the Freedom of Choice Act should Roe vs. Wade be reversed. The act is certain to be vetoed by President Bush, who has called for a reversal of Roe vs. Wade.

Sally Patterson, spokeswoman for Planned Parenthood Federation of America, predicted the public would mobilize and put pressure on Congress to override a veto.

Kate Michelman, president of the National Abortion Rights Action League, said federal protection is vital.

"We cannot fall into the trap of fighting state by state, year by year," she said. "That suggests in a way that we don't believe it's a fundamental right."

The National Right to Life Committee is lobbying against such legislation at both the state and national levels, said Jackie Schwietz, executive director of the group's Minnesota affiliate.

State laws regulating abortion have steadily increased since the Supreme Court's 1989 Webster decision, a case from Missouri that gave states wider latitude to regulate abortions.

Not all states are in a hurry to enact legislation and many will wait until 1993, said Terry Sollom, a policy analyst for the Alan Guttmacher Institute, which researches reproductive issues.

"Since this is an election year, most legislators want keep the status quo and aren't particularly willing to change things," she said.

Organized crime link possible in Japanese businessman's slaying

CAMARILLO, Calif. (AP) — Detectives say they are investigating whether the stabbing death of a Japanese real estate developer was the work of Japanese mobsters rather than a racial hate crime.

Asian crime experts quoted in today's Los Angeles Times said the two stab wounds to Yasuo Kato's

heart resembled an execution by the Yakuza, Japanese organized crime.

Sheriff's Sgt. Pat Buckley said Wednesday that investigators are looking into the possibility of Yakuza involvement. But he said,

"We have not narrowed this down in any direction." Kato, 49, was slain Sunday in his

garage while unloading groceries. A hunting knife was found nearby.

Two weeks earlier, he had told authorities that a stranger blaming Japan for the loss of his job came to Kato's door, demanded money and threatened to kill him.

Camarillo is about 50 miles northwest of Los Angeles.

New York schools losing battle against firearms

By RICK HAMPSON
Associated Press Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — New York City spends about \$60 million a year on school security, more than most communities spend on education itself. It has hired guards, bought metal detectors, cracked down on fighting and started a program for dispute resolution.

None of it has stopped the student arms race.

"We've definitely seen an increase in weapons in schools," said Robert Terte, a school board spokesman. "But then, they're flooding the whole city. ... It's a hellish time to be a kid."

A reminder of how hellish came Wednesday at Thomas Jefferson High School. There, in a hall, a 15-year-old shot two schoolmates to death 90 minutes before the mayor was to give a speech exhorting students to avoid violence and drugs.

At a school swarming with more than two-dozen police officers and guards, many there for the mayor's visit, authorities said the youth brazenly walked up to 17-year-old Ian Moore and his 16-year-old friend Tyrone Sinkler and opened fire.

Kahlil Sumpter was captured by a security guard and charged with murder. Authorities said he and Moore had a falling-out three months ago.

In this school year alone, three students have died from gunfire in Jefferson's halls.

On Nov. 25 a student was shot to death and a teacher seriously wounded when a 14-year-old trying to help his brother in a fight hit the wrong targets.

On Jan. 21, three students were seriously wounded by a knife-wielding assailant as they walked down a nearby street after class.

Last month, after Jefferson joined the school board's Metal Detector Program, a sign was placed over the front door warning all who enter that weapons are not allowed. But that did not help the victims Wednesday, which was not one of the randomly selected days on which metal detectors are placed at the door.

"They should have them every morning," said Monique Donahue, 15. "I feel afraid. That bullet could

have hit anybody."

On campus Wednesday were 13 school guards, 10 police officers assigned to protect the mayor and two police officers who are part of the school's normal security force. Police said the two school officers were standing no more than 15 feet away when the shooting occurred.

Experts on school violence cautioned against tarring all city schools because of such incidents.

"Students carry weapons mostly because of their fear of going to and from school, not of school itself," said Terte, the schools spokesman. "Sometimes the school is the one oasis in a neighborhood."

Nor does New York seem to be that much more violent than other urban school districts, experts said.

"Part of the reason for New York's reputation is that it keeps excellent records and people publicize them," said George Butterfield of the National School Safety Center.

Indeed, a recent Texas A&M study of 23 rural districts found that half the boys had been in a school fight during the previous year that involved a weapon.

Still, New York clearly has a problem. Since September 1989, there have been at least nine incidents in which students or school staff members were injured by gunshots fired inside public schools.

The teachers union also tracks incidents that occur near schools, and by its count there were 45 incidents involving guns during the 1990-91 school year.

This year's toll stood at 51 as of Feb. 13, including 15 shootings of students (four fatal) and four shootings of teachers (one fatal).

In the past month, a student was shot in the ankle in the hall of a Manhattan high school but said he didn't know who fired at him; two students at a Brooklyn junior high were wounded during a playground skirmish; and a 9-year-old Staten Island boy was found toting his father's pistol to school.

After Wednesday's shooting, Mayor David Dinkins delivered his speech as scheduled.

"You've got to survive to get educated," he told the students. "You've got to eliminate the violence."

USDA: Meatpacking exec pumped up ham

CAMDEN, N.J. (AP) — A former meatpacking executive was sentenced to six months in prison and fined \$500,000 for watering down hams.

Merton Zitin, 67, of Bala Cynwyd, Pa., also was ordered Wednesday to perform 1,200 hours of community service.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture found that hundreds of thou-

sands of ham products were pumped with excessive water, mislabeled and sold nationwide over 12 years.

Zitin pleaded guilty in 1989 to adulterating meat and falsifying statements to USDA, and he agreed to sell his company, Sandy Mac of Pennsauken, and never work in meatpacking.

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