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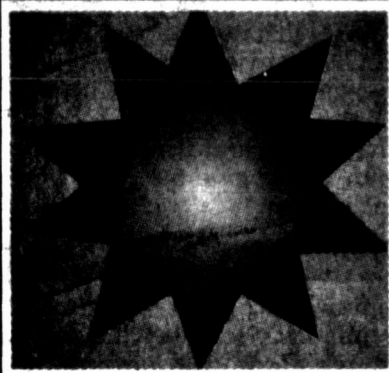
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# Pampa

Vol. 90 No. 245 • Pampa, Texas  
50¢ Daily • Sunday \*1



High today low 50s.  
Low tonight 25.  
For weather details see  
Page 2.

**PAMPA** — Clean Pampa, Inc., is sponsoring Christmas Card Recycling again this year. Local residents wishing to recycle their Christmas Cards may deposit them in the recycle boxes that have been placed in the following locations: Pack and Mail, Chamber of Commerce, Columbia Medical Center, First American Bank, Boatman's First Bank, Down Town, NBC Bank, First Bank Southwest, Pamcel Credit Union-Celaneese Plant, First Baptist Church, First Presbyterian Church, St. Vincent De Paul Church, St. Matthew's Episcopal Church, Calvary Baptist Church, First Christian Church and Bible Church of Pampa. Proceeds go to St. Jude's Ranch for Children.

**WASHINGTON (AP)** — Former Housing Secretary Henry Cisneros pleaded innocent today to charges he lied to conceal payments to his former mistress while under consideration to be in President Clinton's Cabinet.

One ticket correctly matched all six numbers drawn Wednesday night for the twice-weekly Lotto Texas game, state lottery officials said.

The ticket, sold in Dallas, was worth an estimated \$4 million.

The numbers drawn Wednesday night from a field of 50 were: 3-4-7-10-29-34.

- Jewell H. Hale, Pampa resident since 1943.
- Roy Dale Hall, 49, supervisor for Turner Transportation.
- Mark Wesley Parks, 36, glass cutter.

Classified .....8  
Comics .....6  
Editorial .....4  
Sports .....7

## Airport work still on track despite costs Gray seeks ways to save

By MIRANDA G. BAILEY  
Staff Writer

Gray County Commissioners Court continues to take part in the scheduled remodeling plans first initiated in 1990 for the Perry Lefors Field.

The project, in conjunction with the state, began after the county found out about state funding available for area airport renovations. The state has agreed to fund 90 percent of the cost to remodel the airport if 10 percent is contributed at the local level.

Gray County took up the offer at the turn of the decade. "We don't have to do it, but it's good business for Gray County and Pampa to maintain it," said County Judge Richard Peet.

The rising costs of remodeling the almost 60-year-old air field has put a crunch in the original financial commitment from the county.

An original \$1.1 million was first estimated in expenditures for the remodeling. By last fall, that number had gone up to \$1.32 million. And now a total \$1.5 million has been estimated for the total cost of remodeling the airport.

Judge Richard Peet informed commissioners at the end of last month that their 10 percent contribution is now \$220,000 more than was expected or budgeted for.

Peet, who is a member of the airport project committee, told commissioners that the airport engineers are looking at ways to reduce total construction costs by \$220,000. The matter will then go to contractors, "so you can look and decide on bids," Peet told commissioners. "The project is ongoing and proceeding along."

## Curfman running for Precinct 2 JP

Kurt R. Curfman today announced his candidacy for election for Gray County Justice of the Peace, Precinct 2, subject to the Republican primary.

As a resident of Pampa and Precinct 2 for almost 37 years, he graduated from Pampa High School in 1971. He attended West Texas State University and later graduated in 1982 from Amarillo College with an Associate degree in Applied Science.

Curfman said he has spent many hours of study in business law, court proceedings, and civil and criminal law.

"I also have some accounting and bookkeeping experience," he said.

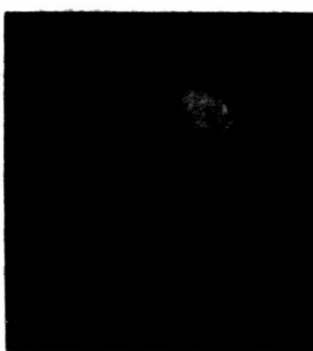
Curfman has, "worked in the public eye," for the last 30 years in both the public and private sector, he said.

He now works with Panhandle Thriftway as the market manager and has done so for the last four years. Prior to that, he worked in Canadian for seven years and for Ideal Food Stores over 13 years, in addition to other grocery and meat outlets.

Curfman has coached girls softball and is an active member of the McCullough St. Church of Christ. His wife of 23 years, Teresa Curfman, is a registered nurse for Texas Tech in Pampa. She was employed by Coronado Hospital for five years, the Texas Department of Health for four years and is a board member of the American Heart Association.

The Curfmans have one daughter, Laura, and son-in-law, Eli Stark

See CURFMAN, Page 2



Kurt R. Curfman



A work crew from the Rufe Jordan Unit replaces bricks to help repair historic South Cuyler Street.

**The cost of the Cuyler repairs will be approximately \$5,000 while city street superintendent Kimberly Lincycomb estimates that the same repairs using city personnel would be around \$43,000.**

## Inmates help fix brick streets

By JEFF WEST  
Staff Writer

Some of Pampa's brick streets are getting repaired at a fraction of the normal cost thanks to the Texas Department of Criminal Justice.

This is the second year that Pampa Street Superintendent Kimberly Lincycomb has requested prisoners from the Jordan Unit outside Pampa to help fix some of the brick streets. The work involves raising the low spots in the road using sand and other materials and removing concrete and asphalt patches and

See STREETS, Page 2

## Oprah show coming to Amarillo Episodes to be taped beginning Jan. 26

CHICAGO (AP) — Oprah Winfrey is taking her top-rated talk show to Texas during the time she is scheduled to defend herself in a federal defamation lawsuit brought by a group of cattlemen.

Ms. Winfrey will tape episodes of the syndicated show in Amarillo, Texas, beginning Jan. 26, her production company said in a statement Wednesday.

The defamation trial against Ms. Winfrey, her production studio, distribution company and a one-time guest on her show is tentatively scheduled to begin Jan. 20. The lawsuit traces to April 16, 1996, when

Howard Lyman, a consumer activist on meat issues, made comments on Ms. Winfrey's show that Amarillo cattle feeder Paul Engler considered defamatory.

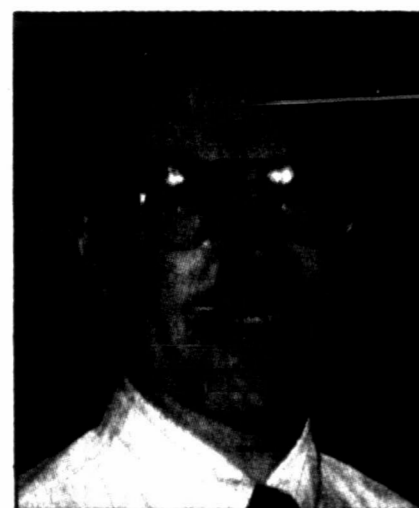
Among other things, Lyman said "mad cow" disease in the United States "absolutely" could rival AIDS as an epidemic. After hearing some of Lyman's statements, Ms. Winfrey responded: "It has just stopped me cold from eating another burger. I'm stopped."

Engler and other plaintiffs who later joined the lawsuit claim the show was responsible for a steep

See OPRAH, Page 2

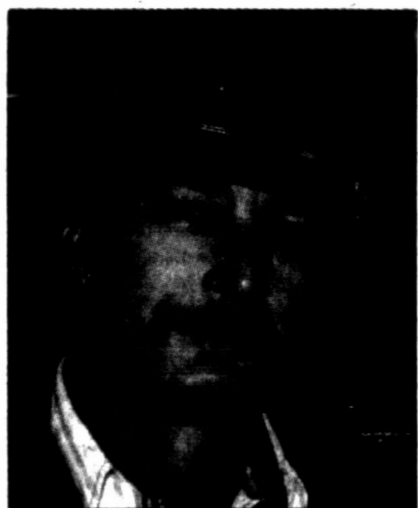
**There was no speculation on whether the show would move if Ms. Winfrey's defense team wins a motion to move the case to Dallas, away from the world's largest concentration of cattle feeders.**

## Quite frankly... Who do you hope gets to the Super Bowl?



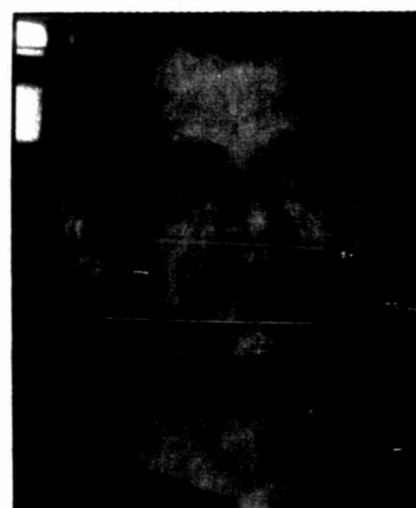
"Green Bay, because of Brett Favre, their quarterback."

— Robert Schwab



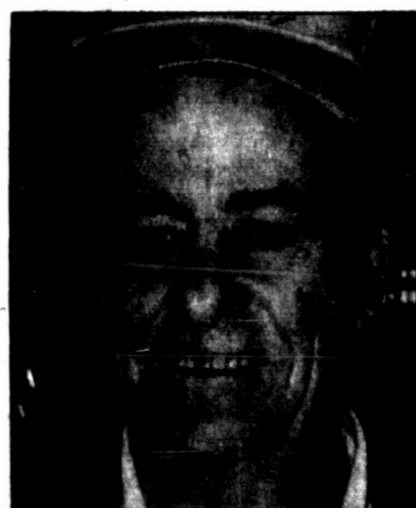
"I haven't paid much attention but I like the 49ers."

— Mark Topper



"Since Kansas City didn't make it, I like Pittsburgh. I think they're due."

— Ron Hayes



"49ers. They're just the best team all the way around."

— Clois Robinson



"Denver, I've always been partial to Denver."

— June Cook

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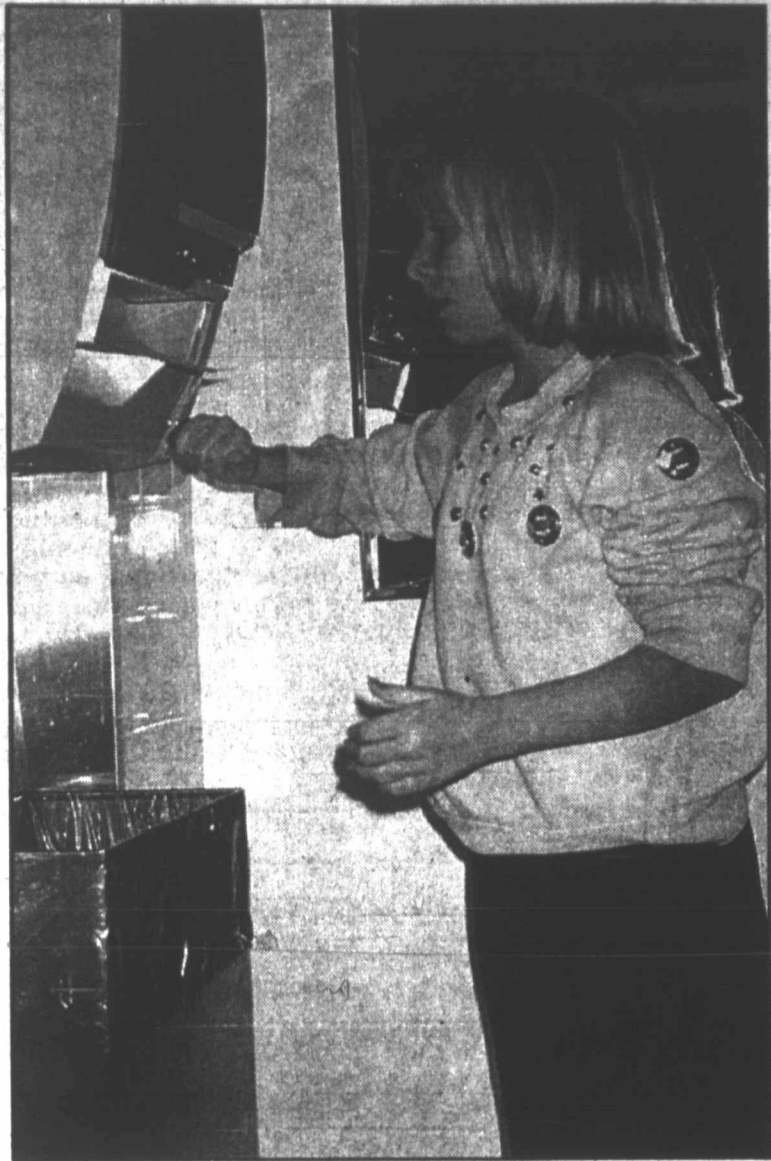
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Golden school days ...



(Pampa News photo by Miranda Bailey)

Heather Likes, a fourth grade student at Lamar Elementary, finishes washing her hands and declares that she is glad to be back to school.

# Clinton to do fundraisers for two House members while in Texas

WASHINGTON (AP) — After Air Force One touches down in the Rio Grande Valley, President Clinton's focus during his whirlwind visit to the Lone Star State will be education, education, education.

But some are wondering whether the president's Texas trek on Friday, which the White House is billing as one of his most important policy addresses of the year, also amounts to payback for two Democratic House members who bucked their party's tide and committed to support the trade negotiating authority Clinton avidly sought from Congress.

Reps. Ruben Hinojosa and Sheila Jackson Lee deny that presidential appearances at their fund-raisers in McAllen and Houston on Friday amount to quid pro quo for support on fast-track. Hinojosa, a freshman from Mercedes, agreed in the eleventh hour to support fast-track, which didn't come up for a vote last year. Ms. Jackson Lee, who represents a Houston district, never publicly stated her position.

"The president and myself have enjoyed a good and open working relationship on many issues, so I'm delighted that he is coming from my invitation that I extended to him in the winter of 1997," Ms. Jackson Lee said Wednesday. "I would believe that this is an honor for the city of Houston, the 18th Congressional District."

Hinojosa said he invited the president to the Valley during an eight-day trip to South America last fall.

"I was able to have some private time with the president and talk about the unique problems we have in South Texas, not only in education but in being able to access health care and have adequate housing, (and) being able to try to find the solution to the three- and four-decade-old problem of having double-

digit unemployment," Hinojosa said Wednesday.

"What pleased me the most is that he said he wanted to come to South Texas and listen to his constituents ... tell him what they thought was the problem and the solution." Privately, however, some Democrats say Clinton's decision to return to Texas just four months after his last visit and raise funds for incumbents in safe seats — at a time when he

is juggling a frenetic fund-raising schedule to help the debt-ridden Democratic Party — amounts to repayment of promises a wheeling-dealing White House cut last year during the fast-track debate.

"There is no other explanation," a Democratic congressional aide whose boss fought fast-track said Wednesday, speaking on condition of anonymity. "It's a payback." White House officials stressed the policy aspects of the trip, which will take Clinton from an address to Mission High School students Friday morning to a McAllen luncheon for Hinojosa then a Brownsville appearance, followed in the afternoon by a Houston education event and then an evening fund-raiser for Ms. Jackson Lee.

Hinojosa, a former state Board of Education member, is hoping for a presidential endorsement of legislation he is pushing to increase college opportunities for Hispanic students and others who are underrepresented on college campuses.

Clinton is perturbed by the high dropout rate among Hispanic high school students, Hinojosa said, adding that the president termed it "a national crisis of great urgency."

Ms. Jackson Lee hopes Clinton uses Houston, which just rejected a bid to terminate the city's affirmative action policies, as a showcase for the merits of equal opportunity.

"Who better should hear a message of education and equal opportunity," she asked.

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## Choctaw family wants custody battle moved to tribal court

DALLAS (AP) — A custody battle between a Dallas widow and her Oklahoma in-laws has taken a complicated turn, with the in-laws asking a judge to turn the dispute over to an American Indian tribal court in Oklahoma.

Attorneys for Katherine Crank of Eufaula, Okla., mother-in-law of Paula Crank and grandmother to her 7- and 10-year-old daughters, asked a state judge in Dallas last week to turn the case over to a Choctaw Nation court in Oklahoma.

Visiting state District Judge William Martin will hear arguments on the venue change at a Jan. 27 hearing in Dallas.

At issue is whether the two girls should continue living with their paternal grandmother in Oklahoma, where they have lived since August 1996. Their father, Walter Crank, died of a heart attack in 1994 at age 36.

The grandmother is full-blooded Choctaw; her daughter-in-law is Caucasian.

Paul R. Shunatona, the grandmother's Dallas attorney and past

president of the Texas Indian Bar Association, cites the federal Indian Child Welfare Act, enacted by Congress 20 years ago to help tribes maintain population and their cultural heritage.

He said his client and her family practice their traditions regularly and think the children would be better off growing up with them. "Clearly, the act applies in this case," Shunatona said. "These are not folks who are just jumping in to invoke the act willy-nilly."

Attorneys for the children's mother say her in-laws are invoking the welfare act only now, two years into the child-custody case, to stave off imminent defeat.

Carol Wilson of Dallas, one of Paula Crank's attorneys, accuses Katherine Crank and her lawyer of "forum shopping," or seeking a judge more sympathetic to their arguments.

"In a state court, you have to prove that parent is unfit," Ms. Wilson said. Just because the girls would be more exposed to Choctaw culture in Oklahoma doesn't make the family there better guardians than their mother, she said.

## Drug survey finds teen drug use on the rise in Texas

AUSTIN (AP) — Use of illegal drugs by Texas students in grades 7 through 12 increased in 1996, continuing an upward trend since 1992, according to a study by the Texas Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse.

About 34 percent of all secondary students in 1996 had used some type of illicit substance during their lifetime, up from 22 percent in 1992, but still below the 1988 rate of 39 percent, the study said.

The survey, conducted by TCADA every two years and released Wednesday, was based on responses from nearly 107,000 students in over 70 school districts in grades 7 through 12.

Marijuana use increased in 1996 with 31 percent of secondary students saying they had tried it at least once, up from 20 percent in 1992, but still just below the peak of 32 percent in 1988.

"Alcohol continues to be the most widely used substance among Texas secondary students," the study said.

"In many ways, curtailing alcohol consumption is more problematic than reducing the use of illicit drugs because of the availability of alcohol and the perception among adolescents that drinking alcohol is not as danger-

ous as using other drugs."

The survey revealed six strategies to help keep kids off drugs, including encouraging a child to participate in extracurricular activities.

According to the study, students who participate in extracurricular activities have positive relations with parents and friends while also being less likely to use or experiment with illegal drugs.

The five other ways for parents to keep their kids off drugs, according to the survey, are:

—Show support for child in school events.

—Encourage child to have healthy relationships with friends.

—Talk to child. Make sure they know that use of drugs is unacceptable.

—Support substance abuse prevention programs at school.

—Encourage child to work at getting good grades.

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EMAIL: kbd@pan-tex.net • pamnew1@pan-tex.net

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# B&W named in nicotine-boosting conspiracy

WASHINGTON (AP) — Charges that a major cigarette maker conspired to boost nicotine levels may put Congress in a bind: How do lawmakers consider the pending tobacco deal when one of the beneficiaries was linked to criminal behavior?

"This will have a major impact on Congress' effort to pass tobacco legislation this year," said Rep. Martin Meehan, D-Mass., an attorney who has provided information to the Justice Department's three-year investigation of the tobacco industry.

The proposed tobacco deal, in exchange for \$368 billion, would offer cigarette makers far-reaching immunity from future lawsuits, a prospect that caused lawmakers from both parties reservations even before Wednesday's court filing.

"Members of Congress will likely have reservations about providing sweeping protections to tobacco companies" linked to criminal charges, Meehan said.

DNA Plant Technology Corp. of Oakland, Calif., agreed in a court filing Wednesday to plead guilty to conspiring to secretly grow high-

nicotine tobacco abroad so that Brown & Williamson Tobacco Corp. could "control and manipulate the nicotine levels" in cigarettes.

B&W, the third-largest U.S. cigarette company, was not charged but was cited as a co-conspirator. DNAP agreed to cooperate with the Justice Department investigation.

The government says the plot between B&W and DNAP involved developing a reliable source of high-nicotine tobacco in other countries, because federal regulations ban commercial growing of high-nicotine tobacco here. Court papers said one goal was to alter tobacco's chemical composition in ways that "could include production of lines with elevated nicotine content."

The Food and Drug Administration first discovered the secret strain of tobacco, code-named Y-1, in 1994. The agency said B&W first denied high-nicotine tobacco was possible but, after the FDA discovered it was put into five U.S. brands, insisted it had stopped using Y-1.

But last year, 18 Brazilian farmers admitted to The Associated Press they are growing high-nicotine leaf by the ton, tobacco that was the off-

spring of a genetically altered plant created in U.S. labs for B&W.

And a source close to the Justice probe told the AP Wednesday that a B&W official testified in a deposition last month that the company continues to use Y-1 in some manufacturing. The deposition said the Y-1 stock is kept in Georgia, said the source, speaking on condition of anonymity.

B&W did not respond to questions about the deposition, but said in a statement Wednesday that it was not charged by Justice and did nothing wrong. Y-1 was developed as part of an attempt to lower tar in cigarettes without automatically lowering nicotine content as well, the statement said. Typically, nicotine drops as tar does.

But the criminal charges against B&W's business partner — the biotech firm — come just as Congress is preparing to consider a massive tobacco deal.

Last June, the tobacco industry agreed to pay \$368 billion and curb their marketing practices in a deal to settle 40 pending state lawsuits. In return, the industry would get immunity from future lawsuits.

But Congress must approve any deal — and lawmakers already have expressed concern about that concession. Saying he hoped to air all the issues before offering immunity, longtime industry defender Rep. Thomas Bliley, R-Va., even subpoenaed and published more than 800 secret industry documents last month that indicated tobacco attorneys hunted for ways to hide smoking's dangers.

Now B&W's business partner has agreed to plead guilty to a criminal charge — in a plea bargain designed so that justice investigators can use testimony from the biotech firm in its probe of the tobacco companies.

"This weakens the industry's hand in its effort to obtain immunity and other protections from Congress," said Michigan anti-tobacco attorney Cliff Douglas. "It's going to be far more difficult for members of Congress, not to mention the president, to provide legal protection to an industry that has been branded criminal."

In addition, trials of anti-tobacco lawsuits are scheduled to start this month in Minnesota and Texas — and the Y-1 saga can be used as additional evidence, he said.

## Lovett Memorial Library/Children's books, videos

Here is a list of new children's books available at Lovett Memorial Library:

- Watch Out! Big Bro's Coming! by Jez Alborough
- Hurry Up, Franklin by Paulette Bourgeois
- Arthur's April Fool and Arthur's Valentine by Marc Brown
- On Call Back Mountain by Eve Bunting
- Rockin' Reptiles by Stephanie Calmenson
- Verdi by Janell Cannon
- From Head to Toe by Eric Carle
- Sparkley, the Tooth Fairy by Mary Casey
- Hank the Clank by Michael Coleman
- Eukeke the Jumpy Jumpy Elephant by Cormann and Trivino
- Mirror by Alexander Day
- Days of the Blackbird by Tomie de Paola
- Hey, Diddle Diddle by Kin Eagle
- A Way Through the Sea by Robert Elmer
- Sitting Down to Eat by Bill Harley
- Friends by Helme Heine
- Baby Duck and the Bad Eyeglasses by Amy Hest
- Hoot by Jane Hissey
- Buzby to the Rescue by Julia Hoban
- Beardream by Will Hobbs
- Why Cowboys Need a Brand by Laurie Lazzarino Knowlton
- Dinosaur Dinner (With a Slice of Alligator Pie) Poems by Dennis Lee
- I Am Fire by Jean Marzollo
- Martha Blah Blah and Martha Calling by Susan Meddaugh
- Rum-A-Tum-Tum by Angela Shelf Medearis
- Am I Beautiful? by Else

- Holmelund Minarik
- Good Girl, Gracie-Growler by Hilda Offen
- A Cote of Many Colors, Ducktails, The Impatient Turtle, The Prodigal Cat and New Kid in Town all by Janette Oke
- Worksong by Gary Paulsen
- Trail Drive by James Rice
- Mr. Putter and Tabby Fly the Plane and Mr. Putter and Tabby Row the Boat, and Poppleton all by Cynthia Kiyant
- Your Mother Was a Neanderthal by Jon Scieszka
- Sad, Sad William by Gitte Spee
- The Itsy Bitsy Spider by Iza Trapani
- Happy Birthday, Felicity and Meet Molly by Valerie Tripp
- Do Cowboys Ride Bikes? by Kathy Tucker

- Amanda Pig, Schoolgirl by Jean van Leeuwen
- William Wegman's Farm Days by William Wegman
- Bunny Cakes and McDuff Moves by Rosemary Wells
- Bad Baby Brother by Martha Weston
- The Old Woman Who Loved to Read by John Winch
- Videos
- Wishbone series — Bone of Arc, Frankenbone, Hercules Unleashed, Homer Sweet Homer, The Prince and the Pooch, Salty Dog, The Slobbery Hound, A Tail in Twain, Terrified Terrier, Twisted Tail.
- The Chronicles of Narnia series — The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe, Prince Caspian and the Voyage of the Dawn Treader, The Silver Chair.

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Neil Quattlebaum — "A number of cities in this area are competing for new business. Pampa needs to be ready with long range plans and financial support to complete for new business."

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## Digital TV makes debut at Consumer Electronics Show

LAS VEGAS (AP) — So, you think that new big-screen television that took a big piece out of your wallet and a chunk of your family room is the latest in video wonders.

Think again. Digital television — with its superior pictures, sound and promise of new, interactive broadcast services — is about to put that set to shame, if not immediately out to pasture.

DTV promises to be the hottest new product at the Consumer Electronics Show that starts today. After a decade of discussion and expectation, the first commercial digital TV sets are finally making their debut.

Manufacturers, broadcasters and retailers are betting that consumers will be captivated by DTV's benefits.

"I think you'll find the pictures they'll be able to display is something really quite extraordinary," said Alan McCollough, president of Circuit City Stores, the nation's largest retailer of consumer electronics. "A year from now, digital TV will really come into its own."

About a dozen television manufacturers — including Thompson, Philips and Zenith — are showing off prototypes or actual DTV sets they plan to start selling this fall.

That's when 26 stations in the 10 largest U.S. markets will start voluntarily broadcasting digital signals. The government will require all stations to switch to digital by 2006.

Given the measured transition and the high initial costs of DTV sets, no one expects consumers to rush out en masse and buy new sets.

The first digital TV sets are expected to cost at least \$2,000 more than current televisions, said Bruce Allan, general manager of the broadcast division of Harris Corp., a leading maker of digital TV transmission equipment.

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Thursday, January 8

# Thought Counts In Marriage, But Gifts Are Important Too

**DEAR ABBY:** My daughter, "Sybil," has had a boyfriend I'll call "Todd" for about five years, through high school and now college. They are considering marriage. They have exchanged gifts for birthdays and holidays, but Todd's participation has always been reluctant.

Recently, Sybil treated Todd to dinner at an expensive restaurant and gave him a gift for his 21st birthday. She was happy to do it, and he seemed very appreciative. When her birthday came, she received only a card and a phone call from Todd, even though they live in the same town. She was hurt, and it strained their relationship. Todd's excuse was that gifts are "materialistic." Sybil and I believe that a gift of any size would have been a thoughtful remembrance.

Abby, I am concerned that this could become a habit. I have known women who have been lucky to get even a nod from their significant others on their special days and, as a result, I have seen sorrow every year when their days roll around. Why should they have to grin and bear it, or nag their partners? Will you please share how this matter can be tactfully handled?

A MOM IN WASHINGTON

**DEAR MOM:** If you are on comfortable terms with Todd, try a candid, confidential talk with him. Bear in mind that upbringing has everything to do



**Abigail Van Buren**  
SYNDICATED COLUMNIST

with how one views gift-giving. Todd's family may have a different value system.

Explain how important a gesture of remembrance is in your family. If Todd is made out of the right stuff, he will adjust and acknowledge Sybil's special days. If not, she will have to decide if Todd is the man for her.

**DEAR ABBY:** My letter is in response to "Grace in Tampa, Fla.," who was worried about her daughter and her daughter's friend chatting with a boy on the Internet.

The parents have every cause to be worried and should get the girls off the Internet, but perhaps they shouldn't go to the extreme of saying she cannot even write to the boy. Why don't they check him out, verify who lives at the address, and speak with him to see what he is like?

If things check out OK, they

should read the letters he has already written to make sure the correspondence is appropriate, and if it is, let the teen keep in touch with him by letter.

As for the girls being home alone every afternoon, those parents should get them busy! As someone who chats online on occasion, I know that most people who are chatting have no life, and chatting is their only entertainment. Teens should have more to do than chat online. Get them into a Big Sister program, volunteer groups, Girl Scouts, sports — something to help them build skills and develop their sense of self. Once they are active and have plenty of outside activities, the Internet will lose its allure.

Laurie in Portland, Ore.

**DEAR LAURIE:** Your answer is better than mine, and I thank you for it. Since this topic has received so much publicity recently, may I add: A computer can be a powerful tool for learning, as well as a rich resource of entertainment. However, it is not, and never was intended to be, a baby sitter.

I agree with you that a computer is no substitute for activities where young people mingle, interact, and learn social skills as well as how they, as individuals, can contribute to their communities.

as well as yourself. **LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)** The hopes and expectations you entertain today will have the best chances of manifesting themselves if they are pursued through collective efforts.

**VRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)** The chances for fulfilling ambitious objectives today are very strong. If you want something intensely enough, you'll figure out a way to get it.

**LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23)** Should someone you know on a purely social basis offer to do you a favor today, acknowledge it immediately. The offer may be short-lived.

**SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 22)** Something you've been wanting to revise but have been unable to swing on your own might be brought about today through the efforts of a thoughtful associate.

**SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 23-Dec. 21)** The best asset you possess today could be your ability to use the ideas of others in ways that benefit all involved. Put it to work early.

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## Horoscope

Friday, Jan. 9, 1998

Substantial material opportunities could present themselves to you in the year ahead. This could be a better year both socially and commercially than you've experienced in a long time.

**CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)** In matters that are meaningful to you financially, you could be more fortunate than usual today, even though you'll still have to earn what you get. Get a jump on life by understanding the influences that will govern you in the year ahead. Send for your Astro-Graph predictions by mailing \$2 to Astro-Graph, c/o this newspaper, P.O. Box 1758, Murray Hill Station, New York, NY 10156. Be sure to state your zodiac sign.

**AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 19)** Set high social standards for yourself today. Do not get wrapped up with people who do

not have constructive things to add to your life. **PISCES (Feb. 20-March 20)** Associates will be willing to move in accordance with your wishes today, provided they understand fully that you are not motivated by selfish purposes.

**ARIES (March 21-April 19)** Do not be reluctant to test new methods today, because with a little experimentation you might find ways to truly simplify a tough assignment.

**TAURUS (April 20-May 20)** Important financial matters should be given top priority today. Do not relegate to rear ranks additions or moderations that could spell increases.

**GEMINI (May 21-June 20)** Everything should move along nicely today if you use your initiative instead of waiting on others. Be a self-starter and not someone who needs a push.

**CANCER (June 21-July 22)** You have a special ability today for being able to unravel entanglements others have left knotted up. What you do will help them.



For Better or For Worse



Arlo & Janis



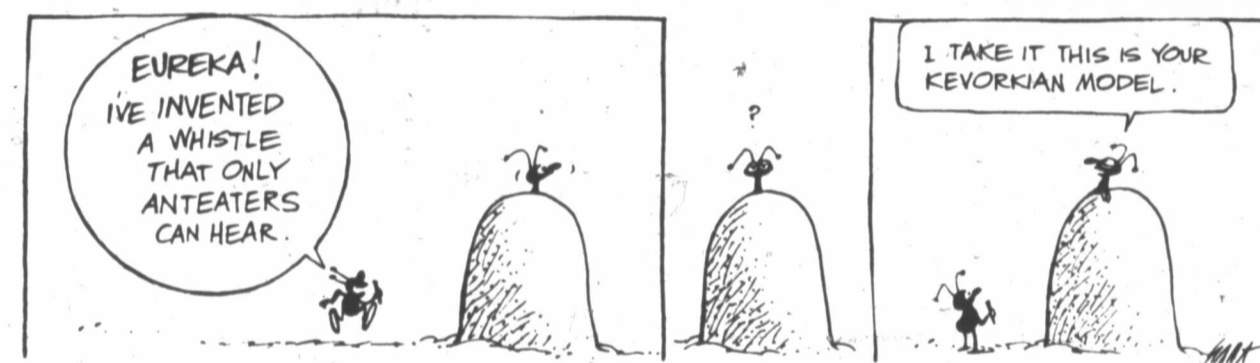
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Walnut Cove



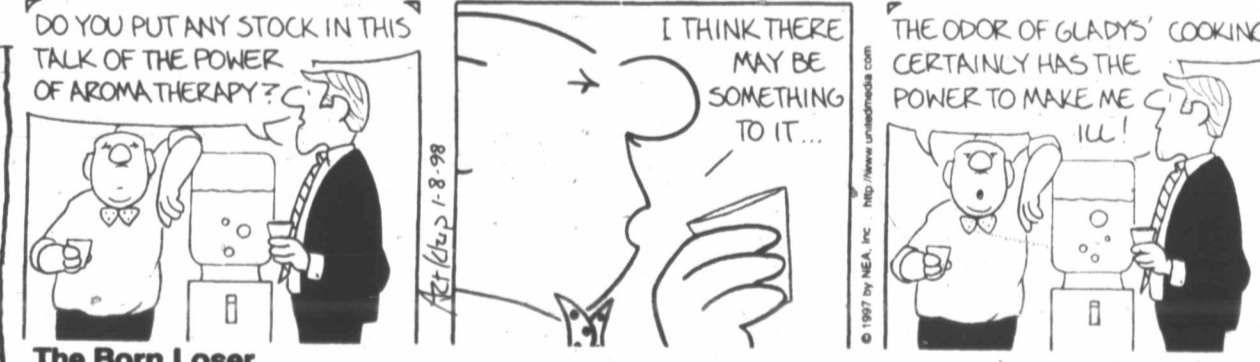
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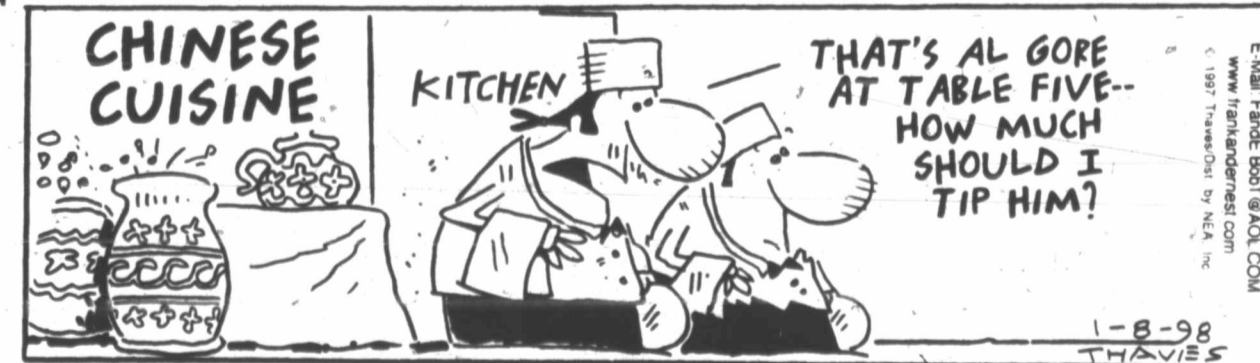
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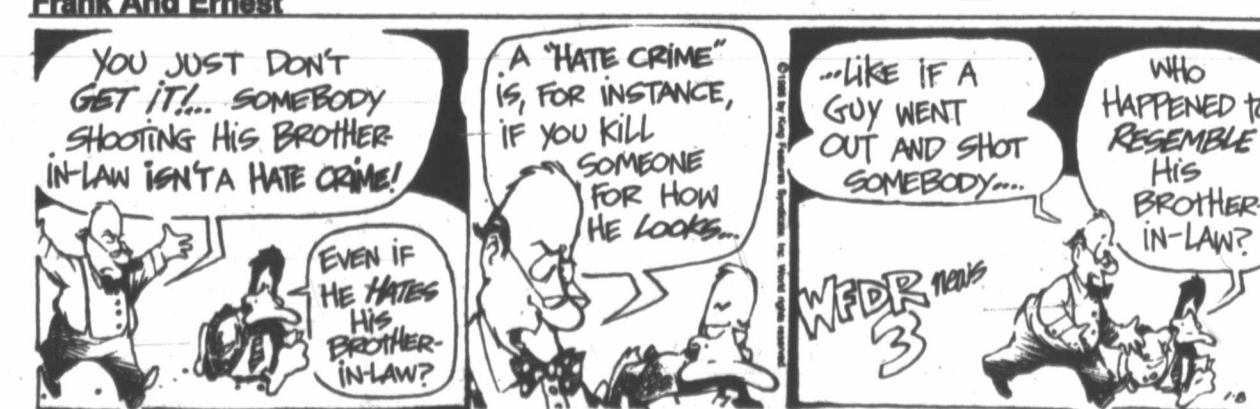
Eek & Meek



The Born Loser



Frank And Ernest



Mallard Filmore



"Look, Dolly! I can see my voice!"



"Take your dish and go. You know it's not feeding time yet."

### The Family Circus



Grizzwells



Alley Oop



Peanuts



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# Phones, gadgets increase danger on roads

WASHINGTON (AP) — Americans have so many distractions in their cars they are becoming part-time drivers — trying to eat, talk on the phone, use a computer, navigate and change tapes while coping with highway traffic. It's a formula for disaster.

"People forget how complex driving is," Dr. Ricardo Martinez, head of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, said Wednesday.

"We're adding so many distractions we're becoming part-time drivers," said Martinez, a former emergency room doctor who saw the results of inattention first hand. "There's a price to pay in crashes."

Martinez' agency released a study: "An Investigation of the Safety of Wireless Communication in Vehicles," noting the growing popularity of cellular phones, laptop computers, fax machines, onboard navigation systems and other high-tech equipment in automobiles. Previous research implicated driver inattention in as many as half of all crashes.

"As cars more and more become an extension of the home and office, we are creating a whole new array of potentially hazardous distractions," said Martinez.

"We are beginning to see crashes ... where drivers were using laptop computers while driving and third-party suppliers are now providing hardware for mounting laptop computers adjacent to the driver or, in some cases, right on the steering wheel," his agency reported.

But it isn't just a high-tech problem, Martinez added, noting crashes can result from something as simple as trying to eat while driving.

"Some of the best minds in restaurant chains are working on food you can eat while driving. Over the holidays I saw a guy with drink in the crook of his arm, fries in his right hand, a burger in his left and steering with one finger," Martinez reported.

Martinez recalled his emergency room days, treating one driver who struck a tree while adjusting a tape, and a group of bicyclists hit by a driver who swerved while reaching for a compact disc.

While the new study warned of the dangers of distractions, it stopped short of calling for restrictions, saying additional research is needed and noting that the wireless equipment also has benefits.

While researchers lacked complete data on crashes involving cellular phones, they were able to study accident reports from several states.

"Contrary to expectations, the majority of drivers were talking on their telephones rather than dialing at the time of the crash. A few drivers also were startled when their cellular phones rang and, as they reached for their phones, they ran off the road," the study said.

"The overwhelming majority of cellular telephone users were in the striking vehicle," in an accident, they added.

With cellular phone use growing rapidly, the report concluded, an increasing number of drivers will be exposed to this distraction.

Jeffrey Nelson of the Cellular Telecommunications Industry Association called the study "balanced."

"Common sense tells us that when people are in their vehicles they have an opportunity to do an increasing number of different things," he observed. Making sure they use the technology safely, he said, is an "educational opportunity that the industry takes very seriously."

There are 50 million cellular phones in use today and their number is expected to double by the turn of the century. That's up from just 345,000 in 1985, according to the new government study.

A year ago researchers reporting in the New England Journal of Medicine provided the first measurement of how dangerous it can be to use a phone while driving.

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