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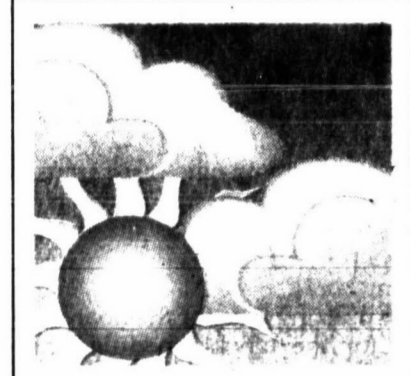
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Pampa

Vol. 92 No. 2 • Pampa, Texas
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High today low 80s
Low tonight low 50s
For weather details see
Page 2

PAMPA — There will be a garage sale on Friday and Saturday, Apr. 9-10 at the corner of Ballard and Kingsmill (southside of Tom Rose building). This event is sponsored by the Youth of Central Baptist Church.

PAMPA — There'll be a community fish fry Saturday starting at 11 a.m. at St. Mark CME Church at 406 Elm. A donation of \$5 gets you a generous portion of fish, crispy French fries, green salad and cake, said the Rev. Amy Lakey. For delivery call 669-6743.

WHEELER — The Top O' Texas CattleWomen will meet for dinner April 12 at 7 p.m. at Mel's Diner. The speaker is Sharon Spennath, former 1997-98 Texas CattleWomen's president.

EL PASO (AP) — Four children left in a car by their mother were found unharmed about an hour after the vehicle was stolen from a market parking lot Tuesday.

The children — ages 6 months, 4, 5 and 8 — and the 1989 Buick were found about three miles away from the market. The kidnapping triggered a massive search involving some 60 officers.

Police detective John Haddad was grateful for the children's safe return but upset that their mother, Rebecca Montoya, had left them in harm's way.

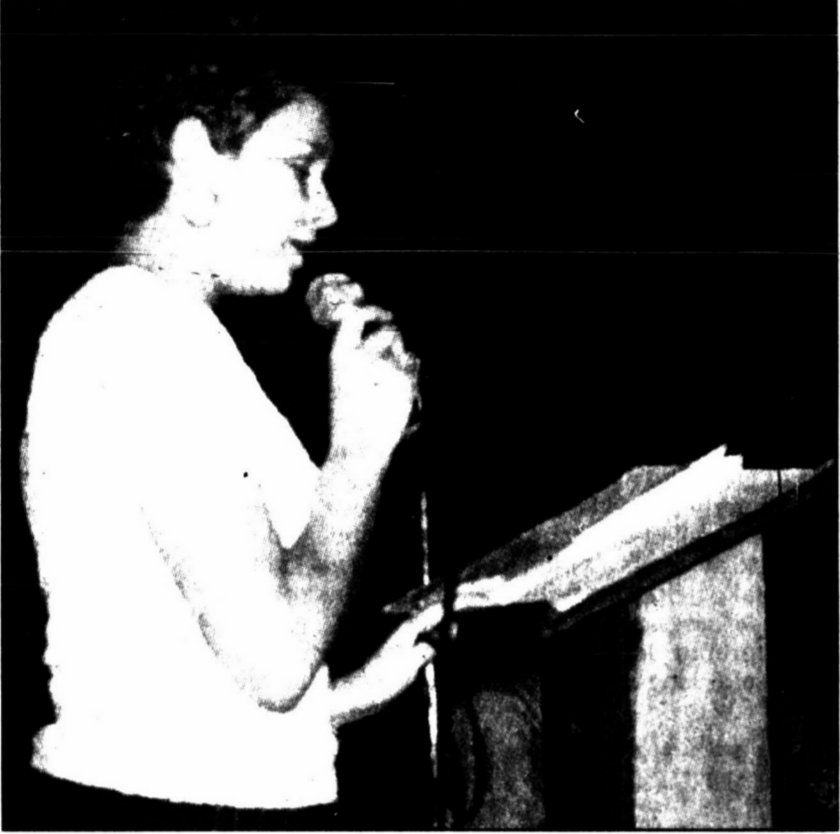
"People who leave their children in the car, especially with the keys, are asking for trouble," Haddad said. "They're doing something they shouldn't."

- Joel Weldon McCandless, 66, self-employed carpenter, builder.
- Betty Marie Rains, 67, homemaker, bookkeeper for Tajas Feeders.
- Bobby Dean Risner, 61, heavy equipment operator for Wheeler County.
- Edward Dale Worley, 74, author, retired conductor for the Santa Fe Railroad.

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Block scheduling gets public airing



By MIRANDA G. BAILEY
Managing Editor

If the purpose of the school district's public meeting to discuss the block schedule at the high school last night was only to hear the opinion of Pampa citizens, it was clearly a success.

With standing room only in the high school auditorium and the camera rolling from an Amarillo news station, the spotlight was put on the more than 30 individual parents, students and teachers who stood behind microphones and addressed the Pampa ISD Board of Education with their opinions on the block schedule.

But if some of the purpose behind the public forum was to help school board officials evaluate the pros and cons of the block system, as was suggested by one board member, the meeting was somewhat lacking.

While the benefits of the school block schedule were impressively promoted by high school administrators, teachers, students and parents, there was not much discussion on the negatives of the block schedule, a schedule that most of the proponents admitted "is not perfect."

The block schedule is a class schedule where students attend four 90-minute courses for two semesters instead of attending six or seven shorter classes for the entire year.

Of the seven teachers, the high school counselor, and the 25 citizens who signed up to speak to the board, only five parents brought up questions regarding the potential downfalls of the block schedule.

Of the seven teachers, the high school counselor, and the 25 citizens who signed up to speak to the board, only five parents brought up questions regarding the potential downfalls of the schedule.

However, the benefits of the block schedule were, as one parent said, "masterfully presented."

Principal John Kendall began the meeting with striking information regarding the high school's steady increase in SAT scores, ACT scores, and attendance since implementing the block schedule. Graphs revealed the SAT and ACT scores had been up and down prior to the block scheduling.

Most impressive was the jump in the number of graduating special education students from 26 percent in 1991-92 to 80 percent in 1997-98.

The school's drop-out rate has decreased from (See SCHEDULE, Page 2)

Alex Soria (above) was one of several PHS students who addressed the Pampa ISD Board of Education at last night's public meeting on the school's block schedule. Board members (right) include Joe Martinez, Pat Kennedy, Superintendent Dr. Dawson Orr, Board President John Curry, Sue Fatheree, Lee Porter and Dr. Jay Johnson. Absent was member Bill Jones.
(Pampa News photo by Miranda Bailey)



Cattlemen must meet challenges in industry

By DAVID BOWSER
Staff Writer

WHEELER — The beef industry is changing, and cattlemen are going to have to figure out where they will fit in a new order.

"For a long time, we've been able to produce cattle and be relatively independent," said Dr. Ted McCollum, beef cattle specialist with the Texas Agricultural Extension Service. "We've been able to produce what we want to and go on from there."

Looking three to five years out, McCollum said all that is changing.

"One of the challenges for cow-calf producers and stock operators is going to be trying to figure out where they're going to fit into things in the future," McCollum said.

He said he sees more consolidation in the industry. McCollum said producers will ally themselves to exert more market muscle and there will be vertical cooperation rather than integration throughout the production chain.

There has been consolidation in the beef industry for years now, he said, especially in the packing industry.

"They've gone from more than 50 packers in the United States to mainly three or four primary packers now," he said.

In the cattle feeding link of the production chain, Amarillo-based Cactus Feeders bought three additional feedyards, giving them a one time feeding capacity of over 460,000 head of cattle.

(See CATTLEMEN, Page 5)

PEDC has new director

By JEFF WEST
Staff Writer

The Pampa Economic Development Corporation has hired a new director, a man with experience in both government and private enterprise.

William Buckner Ready is currently working in Austin for the Texas Department of Economic Development where he's been since 1996. The TDED works with local economic development bodies including the PEDC.

Ready also worked for the Texas Department of (See PEDC, Page 5)



PEDC Board President Lewis Meers (left) with new PEDC Director Bill Ready and PEDC Project Coordinator Susan Tripplehorn.

Workers reassigned after Pantex safety incident

"This incident posed a nuclear explosive safety concern...
— Energy department report

AMARILLO, Texas (AP) — Three technicians at the Pantex nuclear weapons plant have been reassigned for failing to detach a weapons component from a missile warhead before running an electrical test on the part.

The nuclear explosive safety incident occurred March 29, according to government and contractor reports. The electrical

test was on a weapons component connected to a W-87 warhead, which is used in the MX or Peacekeeper intercontinental ballistic missile system.

The technicians quickly realized the mistake after taking a test reading and disconnected a battery-powered tester from the weapon, which was not damaged. The operation then was stopped, and plant officials began reviewing the program.

"The test should have been performed on the component, after its removal from the weapon and placement on a bench assembly, rather than while still attached to the weapon itself," said an Energy Department report.

"This incident posed a nuclear explosive safety concern. Consequently, the certification of the involved technicians has been revoked, pending further review," according to the report.

Officials from Pantex contractor Mason & Hanger Corp. said the workers' certification is on hold pending further review. Pantex production technicians, who dismantle and assemble nuclear weapons, must be certified and properly trained before they may work on a warhead.

The certification of the three can be reinstated when Mason & Hanger management is satisfied with the outcome of the review and they meet all training requirements, Mason & Hanger officials said.

A.J. Eggenberger, a member of the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board, a government agency that oversees U.S. defense nuclear facilities, said board and staff members are reviewing the matter.

"We want to understand it fully. We don't yet," he said. "We know what happened. I guess you would categorize it as a slip in conduct of operations."

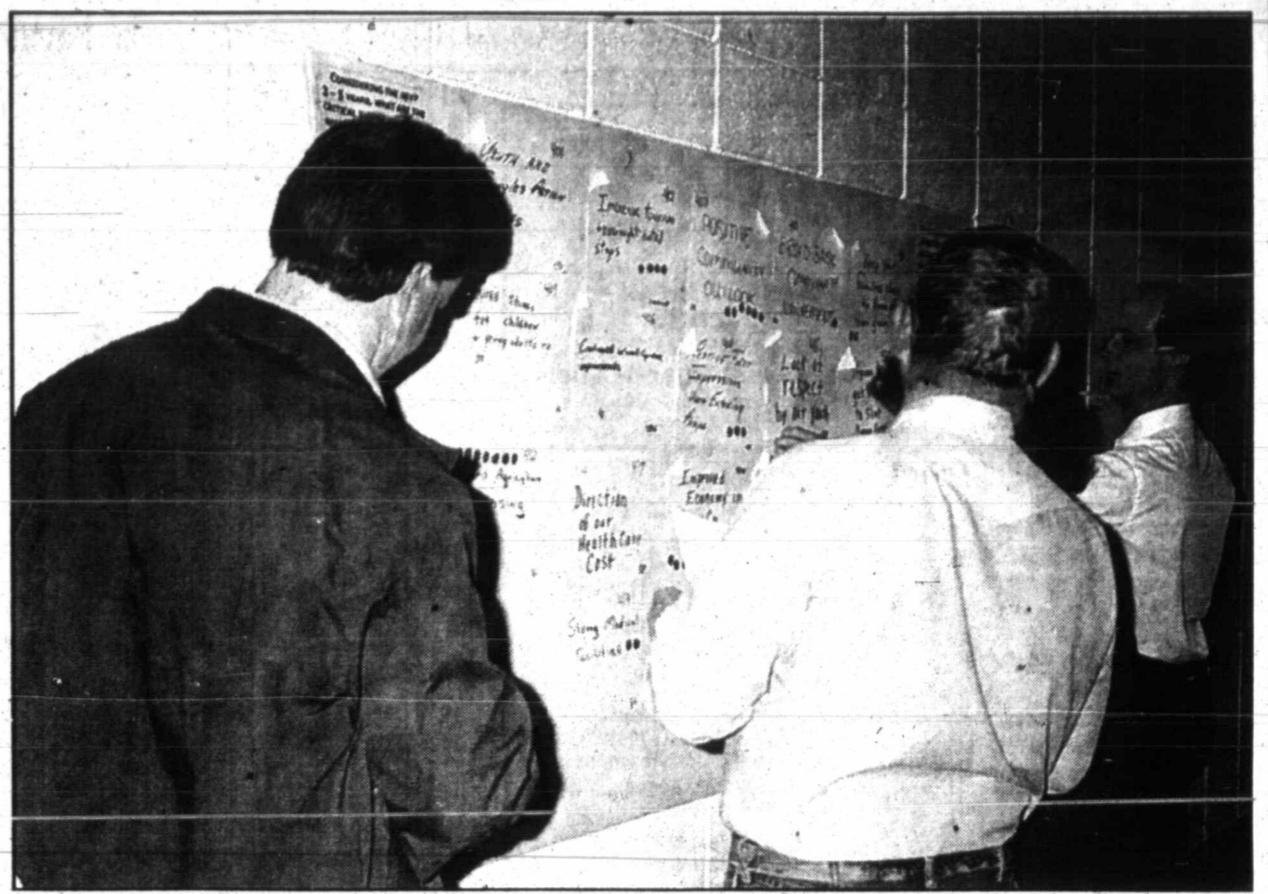
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(sitting) Pampa resident Denise Story and the extension office's Joan Gray taking a break at a forum held recently to come up with ideas of issues that need to be addressed in the community during the next five years. (From right)



(Pampa News photos by Miranda Bailey)

Pampa's Community Services Director Bill Hildebrandt and County Commissioner Joe Wheeley were two of the members of this focus group voting on issues to address in the Pampa community in the next few years.

Extension Service sponsors city-wide forum

By MIRANDA G. BAILEY
Managing Editor

What if you were asked to write down several issues that you feel need to be addressed in the Pampa community in the next few years?

- Stabilize the tax base
- Higher education
- Promote Pampa
- Water conservation
- Help youth become responsible
- Increase tourism
- Population growth

These were a few of the ideas that came from contributing citizens at a city-wide forum sponsored by the Gray County Extension Office to develop a three to five-year plan to address critical issues pertaining to Pampa.

Danny Nusser and Joan Gray, agents from the extension office, coordinated the "Futures Forum" at M.K. Brown recently.

Those attending were asked to split into four groups where they generated ideas that were taken to another focus group comprised of members from each of the four original groups. The ideas were then brought before the entire gathering of residents before the night's end.

The top five issues narrowed down from the focus groups included:

- Higher education possibilities
- Economic development
- Water conservation
- Positive community outlook and promotion
- Creation of value added agriculture products.

"We were really pleased with the turnout... we had a good spectrum of the community," said Joan Gray.

A similar forum held in town four years ago,

said Gray, "accomplished each of the addressed goals in some way."

For example, she said, crime and crime prevention was one of the issues and a "crime summit" was held in Pampa.

The information gathered at the meeting this year is being put into a computer system which extension agency officials in College Station will look at before a final focus group is put together later this month.

Experts will then come in and help Gray County citizens decide how to accomplish goals set around the issues addressed.

'One Big Happy Family'



(Special photo)

Ryan Watson of Travis Elementary is dressed up for the play "One Big Happy Family" held recently.

Captured Plano teen held in Hemphill County jail

CANADIAN — A 17-year-old Plano man was in Hemphill County jail today in lieu of bonds totalling \$160,000 after escaping from a juvenile detention center here last week.

Robert Olvera Lemus was in the Hemphill County jail in lieu of bonds on charges of escape, aggravated robbery, aggravated

assault and unauthorized use of a motor vehicle. Hemphill County Justice of the Peace Frankie Hill set bond on each of the first three charges at \$50,000. Bond was set at \$10,000 on the unauthorized use of a motor vehicle charge.

Lemus and a 16-year-old juvenile are accused of hitting a cook

over the head with a 2x4, stealing his car and escaping from the Hemphill County Boot Camp on March 28. The pair were captured Monday evening on the west edge of Wheeler.

Lemus was initially held in the Wheeler County jail, then transferred to the Hemphill County jail. The 16-year-old was

sent back to the boot camp.

District Attorney John Mann said he has petitioned the 31st District Court of Judge Steven R. Emmert to try the 16-year-old as an adult on similar charges because of the seriousness of the crimes.

The cook at the boot camp, Jean Pierre Campillo, was home today after spending most of last week in an Amarillo hospital with head injuries.

Top O' Texas CattleWomen announce upcoming speaker

WHEELER — Top O' Texas CattleWomen Past President for 1997-98 Sharon Spenrath will speak at 7 p.m. April 12 at Mel's Diner in Wheeler. Spenrath's topic will be "restructuring of society" and a plan called "sustainable development."

By using a technique called "consensus," organizations bypass local and state governments without the debate of

national or state congresses, Spenrath says.

Spenrath, of Comfort, Texas, is a rancher's wife. She came into contact with the focus of her discussion in the Hill Country in Kerrville and believes this move-

ment threatens private property rights in Texas.

Top O' Texas CattleWomen urge the public to attend this meeting. For reservations, call (806) 826-5250 by Saturday, April 10.

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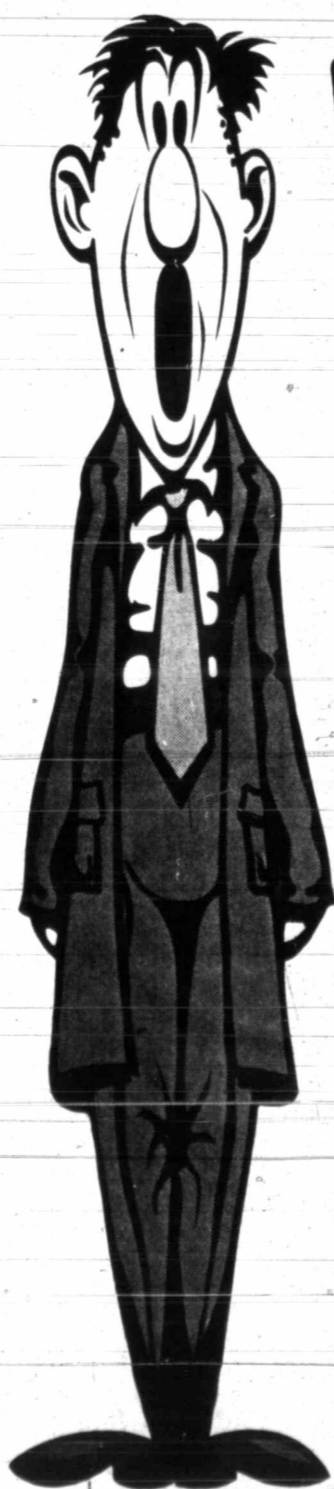
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Thornberry visit



Jim Knierihm, top, left, and Ann Metcalf, top, bottom, visit with Congressman Mac Thornberry following a town hall meeting at the Square House Museum in Panhandle. Thornberry said he plans to hold at least one meeting in each of the counties in the 13th Congressional District this year.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

PEDC

Transportation in the late '80s as well as helping with Bill Clements campaign for governor. Ready said he met Clements while working on one of his floating oil rigs.

The PEDC has been searching for a new director since late last year when Lew Mollenkamp resigned to take a job in the private sector in Dallas.

Ready has also had experience in the private sector including nine years as head of a construction company with five branches in two states and as the president of a company that represented the product lines of several petrochemical and semiconductor companies in south Texas.

Ready is married and has three children, twin 17-year-old daughters who will graduate from high school this year and a 13-year-old son who will

start high school next year.

"I'm looking forward to moving up here. I've worked with Pampa for three and a half years (through the TDED) and have enjoyed my relationship with the people here," Ready said. "Pampa has a lot of potential and I want to continue the work that has started here."

Ready's salary will be \$68,000 plus the use of a vehicle. Vacation, sick leave and holidays follow the city government policy but the PEDC offers its own health and retirement program. The PEDC will also pay his moving expenses from Austin. He is scheduled to begin on April 19 or sooner.

President of the PEDC Board of Directors Lewis Meers said, "Bill was our search groups number one recommendation. He is highly qualified with a very diverse background which we think fits Pampa very well."

Naval Academy expels Texas couple

FORT WORTH, Texas (AP) — An affair between a senior at the U.S. Naval Academy and his freshman girlfriend has resulted in their expulsion and the possibility he will be ordered to repay the costs of his education.

Birk Billingsley, 22, of Dublin, Texas contends that's too tough a penalty for simply falling in love. His expulsion and that of Kristina Shiroma, an underclassman from Richardson, Texas, are pending approval by the Office of the secretary of the Navy.

"I made a mistake. There's real-

ly no excuse for my actions — I fell in love," Billingsley said.

Midshipmen at the Naval Academy are forbidden from engaging in sexual relations on campus or having romantic involvement with a freshman.

But in an interview from his mother's residence in Paris, Texas, Billingsley added, "I really don't think what I did warrants my expulsion from the academy."

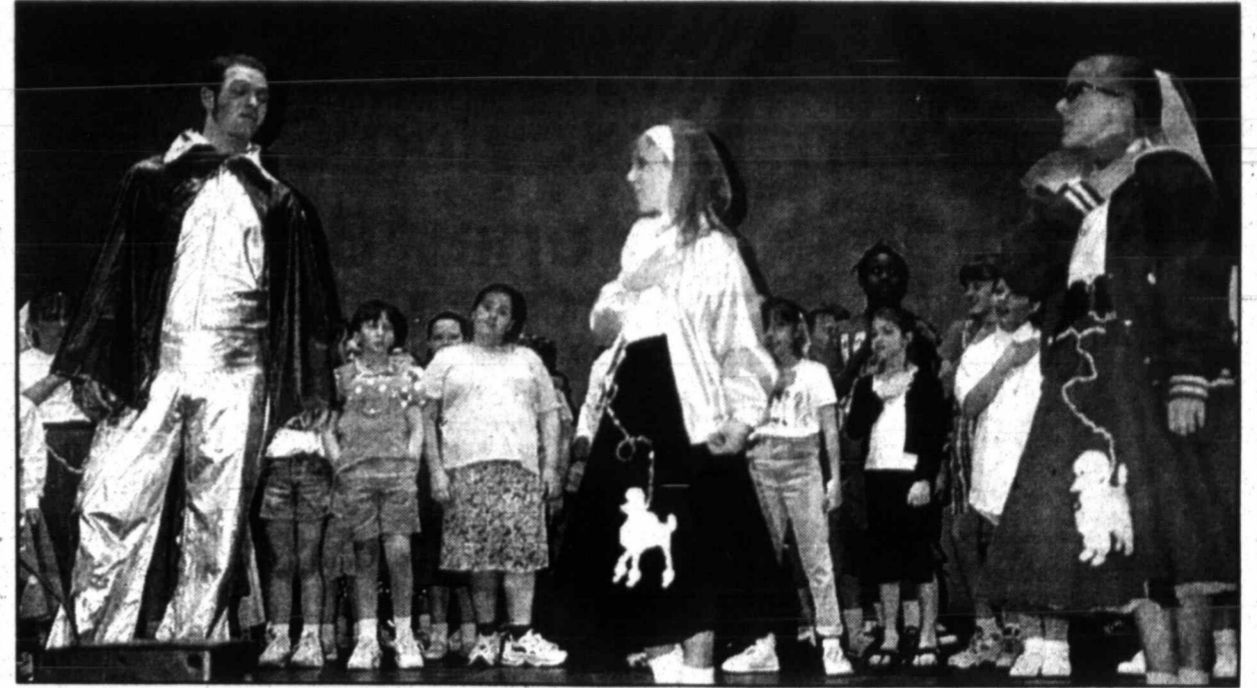
A 1995 graduate of Dublin High School and a straight-A student, Billingsley said he and Ms. Shiroma were intimate but did

not have sexual intercourse. He pleaded guilty to sexual misconduct, fraternization and failure to maintain a proper relationship with a plebe. Ms. Shiroma pleaded guilty to similar charges.

The move to expel Billingsley from the academy came 25 days before he was to graduate.

Four midshipmen who have had sex or romantic relationships were expelled this year, and five were expelled in 1998.

'Bye, Bye Birdie'



Thann Scoggin, Nicole Furnuik, and Myca Vinson rehearse for Pampa Elementary Chorus' 10th anniversary show, "Bye, Bye Birdie" scheduled to perform this weekend Friday and Saturday, April 9 and 10 at 7:30 p.m. in M.K. Brown. Adult tickets are \$5 and student tickets are \$4. Children under 5 are free.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

CATTLEMEN

"In a year, they're going to feed over a million head of cattle through Cactus Feeders," McCollum said.

Caprock Feeders has expanded their capacity and consolidated their power.

That's not necessarily fewer people running things, but fewer entities that controls more and more of the production, he said.

Consolidation moves are to unite, strengthen or combine, he said.

"I think if we look at those three words, that's exactly the reason that consolidation is occurring," McCollum said.

The livestock industry isn't the only one going through such consolidations, McCollum said.

"How much consolidation has occurred in the banking industry in the last five or ten years?" he asks.

Consolidation has taken place in the pharmaceutical industry, not only among the companies that produce the pharmaceuticals and the companies that wholesale them, but also among the companies that sell them in the retail markets.

"Where do you go to buy prescription drugs these days?" he said. "It's not necessarily the locally, family-owned drugstore anymore."

In the auto-industry, Chrysler and Daimler-Benz have joined. Ford bought Volvo.

There are more and more linkages in the computer industry.

"The airline industry is the same way," he said.

In crop and forage genetics, there's a big company called Agri Bio Tech that was formed to become the premiere company in forage genetics.

"We getting down to fewer and fewer farm implements," McCollum said, "and we're getting down to fewer and fewer farm implement dealers. Ag chemicals, the same way."

There is also consolidation in the grocery industry with Kroger's, HEB, United and Albertson's being the big players.

"A lot of your family supermarkets or grocery stores aren't there anymore," he said.

If they are, then they've most likely joined an

alliance of other independent grocery stores.

The big companies are getting bigger and the small companies don't exist much any more.

Part of this consolidation movement is vertical coordination and the formation of alliances, he said.

"People combine their operations to strengthen their positions and become more efficient," McCollum said. "They're not necessarily buying each other out, but they are becoming partners in the production system."

But McCollum said he doesn't think the beef industry will integrate like the poultry industry. It is too big and too complex.

"The capital layout required to have the infrastructure to run a vertically integrated beef system is huge," McCollum said.

A study by Friona Industries, based in Amarillo, indicated that if they took the money to build a 4,000 head per day slaughter head facility, built the feedyards to maintain the cattle to put into that 4,000 head packing plant, had the stocker operation and the cow-calf operations, the ranch land, the cattle and every thing else involved, it would take about \$13 billion of infrastructure just to fuel that one 4,000 head per day packing plant.

"And the minute they opened that plant up, they could probably be put out of business in about four months by the larger packers, just by competitive pricing on things," he said. "For that reason, I don't think we're going to see this vertical integration where one entity owns everything from birth to slaughter."

But he does see a continued move to partnerships and alliances in what he calls vertical coordination.

"The retailer working with the packer," he said. "The packer working with the feedyard. The feedyard working with the cow-calf or stocker producer operator. They may be working with the seed stock producer so they can vertically coordinate this production system."

The retailer will dictate it back through the chain.

"In the future, if you want to participate, you're going to have to know what these companies and what these coordinated production systems are looking for and be able to market cattle into those production systems," McCollum said.

Prison tobacco ban prompts wild end runs

CANON CITY, Colo. (AP) — In the month since smoking was banned in Colorado's state prisons, three workers have been fired, several inmates have been sickened on tobacco substitutes and appetites are raging.

At one facility, several inmates stockpiled tobacco, but ran out of rolling papers. They tried making cigarettes using wrapping paper from toilet-paper shipments.

"Apparently the paper has some toxic stuff in it," said Nard Claar, associate warden of the Fremont Correctional Facility in Canon City, where half of the 1,200 inmates were smokers. "They got really, really dizzy and nauseous. One guy, they had to give oxygen to."

One inmate was found smoking a nicotine patch. "I think he got sick," Corrections Department Director John

Suthers said.

Three prison workers lost their jobs after smuggling tobacco to inmates, who now pay \$5 for each cigarette on the prison black market, officials said. Before the ban, one of every three inmates smoked.

"We've got people here saying, 'Who cares about getting heroin or marijuana? We want a cigarette!'" said Claar.

Quick Vinegar Weight Loss Shocks Woman



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ATTENTION BASEBALL & SOFTBALL PLAYERS

The dream starts at the Optimist Club with sign-ups and tryouts for baseball and softball on April 6, 7 and 8. All players will need to sign up to play. Players moving to a new league and players who did not play last year will need to try out in most leagues.

Please bring your glove, a cap and a light jacket if you are trying out. The tryouts will begin at 5:30 p.m. and end at 7 p.m. each day.

A playing donation of \$35.00 will be requested. Scholarships are available.

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