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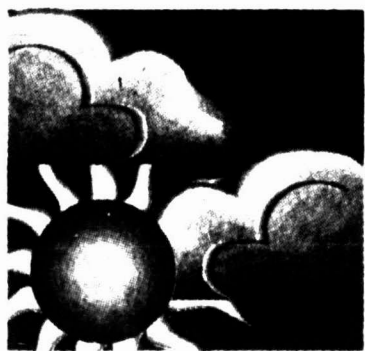
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High, mid-40s
 Low, low 20s
 For weather details, see
 Page 2

ACT I announces winter dinner theatre

PAMPA — ACT I (Area Community Theater, Inc.) will present its winter dinner-theater "Natalie Needs a Nightie" at 7:30 p.m., Feb. 8-10 and 15-17 at its auditorium in the Pampa Mall. The event will get under way with a prime rib dinner to be catered by Clint and Sons at 6:30 p.m., followed by the actual production at 7:30 p.m. Cost is \$9 for the meal and \$7.50 for the show. For reservations or for more information, call Computech Computers at 665-3266. Deadline to RSVP is two days prior to the show. The play is under the direction of Gary Hartman.

PHS open house set

PAMPA — Pampa High School will host an Open House beginning at 6 p.m., Thursday, Feb. 1. Students will be bringing home copies of their schedules.

Prison mess hall brawl ends after 2 1/2 hours

DILLELY (AP) — Black and Hispanic inmates brawled in a prison cafeteria and kitchen at breakfast early Tuesday before riot gear-clad officers subdued them with tear gas 2 1/2 hours later, officials said.

The disturbance involving some 125 to 150 inmates broke out at 3:47 a.m. at the Texas Department of Criminal Justice Dolph Briscoe Unit near Dilley in Frio County, about 60 miles southwest of San Antonio.

About 50 prisoners took their fight from the eating area into the kitchen, with some continuing to brawl and others throwing metal dishes.

Chester A. Lucas, 79, retired highway department employee

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Consumer confidence plunges

By ADAM GELLER
 AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Consumer confidence fell sharply in January to its lowest level in four years, driven down by growing fears of a recession, an industry group said Tuesday.

The Consumer Confidence Index dropped more than 14 points to 114.4, the lowest level since December 1996 when it was 114.2, the Conference Board reported.

The decline in confidence raises new worry about the fragility of the economy, with consumers decidedly more pessimistic about business and employment conditions, said Lynn Franco, director of

the Conference Board's Consumer Research Center.

"Since apprehension leads to caution and cautious consumers spend less than the confident ones, confidence levels in February will be carefully watched," Franco said. "Further erosions in consumer confidence will create more serious concerns about the overall health of the economy."

Economists noted that consumers continue to view the current situation in relatively favorable terms, with their doubts focused on the future. The question is whether consumers act on those fears, observers said.

"Historically, when we see confidence

decline, we have to watch and see if it shows up also affecting spending," said Gary Thayer, chief economist with A.G. Edwards & Sons in St. Louis.

The Conference Board index is considered a key indicator because consumer spending accounts for about two-thirds of the nation's economic activity. The index compares results with its base year, 1985, when it stood at 100.

The new report will be watched particularly closely, since it follows remarks by Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan emphasizing the importance of consumer confidence.

Greenspan said last week that whether the economy dropped into recession

would be determined by how well consumer confidence holds up during the slowdown. For now, he said, he does not believe "the fabric of consumer confidence" has been shaken enough to bring on a recession.

The Federal Open Market Committee, which includes Greenspan, opened a private two-day meeting Tuesday, and were expected to announce Wednesday whether to cut interest rates, again to boost the economy.

The markets were mixed following the release of the report, with the Dow Jones industrial average up 9 points to 10,711 and the Nasdaq composite index off 10 points to 2,827.

Thefts, wrecks, oh my!

By DAVID BOWSER
 Staff Writer

Pampa police were today investigating what appears to be the theft of three vehicles Sunday night, two of which were wrecked. They say a series of vehicle break-ins appear to be related.

Officers said a 1994 red Ford van belonging to Ronald Bennett Rogers, 64, 1915 Dogwood Lane, was apparently stolen late Sunday night.

Police said they were called to the scene of a one vehicle wreck at the intersection of 17th and Dogwood about 1:30 a.m. Monday. Officers said the van was southbound on Dogwood when it struck a street sign, went airborne, hit the curb across the street, struck a utility sign and then a tree. The driver reportedly fled.

Officers said they were called to East 17th, across the street (See THEFTS, Page 2)

Steamy sunrise



The sun rising over the horizon in frigid morning temperatures turns steam rising from the Celanese Chemical Plant west of Pampa into golden swirls.

Ice still wreaks havoc

By DAVID BOWSER
 Staff Writer

Area law enforcement officers were continuing to answer calls on weather-related wrecks today.

Pampa police reported at least four accidents Monday caused, at least in part, by weather conditions.

Sunshine Monday afternoon helped melt away much of the snow and ice on panhandle highways, but many roads in the region remained ice covered this morning.

Interstate 40 was mostly clear, although patches of ice were reported this morning. Several motorists were reported off in bar ditches along the interstate as it winds through southern Gray County. A school bus was reported stuck near Austin School in Pampa this morning.

Interstate 27 near Happy was partially blocked early today due to a jackknifed tractor-

(See ICE, Page 2)

Treasury head says tax cut plan makes headway

By MARTIN CRUTSINGER
 AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill said Tuesday he believes the Bush administration has close to "uniform agreement" with Congress on the need for an across-the-board tax cut. The size of the reduction is the major unresolved issue, he said.

O'Neill said the administration is intensively trying to work out the mechanics of how to make President Bush's proposed 10-year \$1.6 trillion tax package retroactive to the first of the year.

A decision on whether this acceleration of the tax relief will be a part of the final

proposal has not been made, he said.

"The president hasn't decided to accelerate yet. There is only one decision-maker down here and he is over there," O'Neill said, pointing from his Treasury office to the White House next door.

One issue to resolve is how to change individual tax withholding rates to cover the full year, O'Neill said.

That would make the withholding reductions larger since they would not take effect until several months had passed. However, that could result in what would appear to be a tax increase next year when withholding rates would be readjusted to be spread over a full 12 months.

"It is a complex, technical issue and it involves millions of employers and more millions of individuals and it is something that you have to attend to really carefully," O'Neill told a small group of reporters during a breakfast interview.

O'Neill, who won widespread praise for his successful turnaround of aluminum giant Alcoa, expressed a businessman's frustration about the length of time it takes in the political process to decide such issues as a tax cut.

"We now have what looks like pretty uniform agreement that we should have a tax cut and that we should have marginal rate reductions and the question about how much, which is a legitimate ques-

tion. But once we have agreed to all of that, how long should it take to pass legislation, a week, two weeks, be generous, say six weeks," O'Neill said.

The administration is expected to send its tax proposal to Congress next month along with the broad outlines of its budget proposal for 2002, the fiscal year that begins next Oct. 1.

On other matters, O'Neill said he had a "useful first meeting" Monday with Horst Koehler, managing director of the International Monetary Fund, and Deputy IMF Director Stanley Fischer.

He suggested the Bush administration would be pushing for larger reforms at the institution.

Quite frankly... What are you doing to cut back on your gas bill?



I shut off the heat and dress warm.

— Brad Elliott



Use the fireplace more often, turn the thermostat down, and wear more clothing.

— Dennis Cavalier



Burn kerosene heaters.

— David Ivey



I'm putting in a wood-burning fireplace.

— Jackie Shaw



I turn the temperature down to 60 degrees on the thermostat.

— Luis Gonzalez

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~ Business Review ~

Hiway Package now offers leathers



Sabrina Smith's father Gene Daniels and her daughter Haley Rex models selections from Antelope Creek Leathers.

Hiway Package Party Shop, owned by Sabrina and Alan Smith, is now a division of Antelope Creek Leathers and is offering a full selection of leathers in the local store.

Located on West Highway 60, the local store just recently began selling the wide selection of leather products.

Motorcycle jackets, vests, chaps, hats and gloves are available to the public.

Antelope Creek Leathers originated out of Borger, said Sabrina Smith.

The leathers are available in a wide range of sizes from extra small to 3X-large.

Dew rags are carried in stock in the store.

The Smiths have owned the local business since Oct. 31, 1999.

Alan Smith has been a resident of Pampa for 24 years while his wife, Sabrina, moved to the community 13 years ago.

Carrying a complete line of liquor, the Smiths also carry a wide selection of wine and

beer in a large assortment of brands. Mixes and snack items are also available at the local store.

A drive-through window at the store is a convenient feature for the customers.

Sabrina Smith said the local store often draws out-of-town customers who are in town overnight on business or driving through as well as their regular local customers.

The couple stocks a wide selection of soft drinks as well as cigarettes for their customers. They also sell lottery tickets.

The store is open from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m., Monday through Saturday. They are closed on Sunday.

Four major credit cards are taken at the local business. They are Visa, MasterCard, American Express and Discover.

Owners of three other local businesses, Alan and Sabrina Smith stay very busy.

They also own Suntrol Tint and Glass, A&S Auto Sales and GL Mini Mart.

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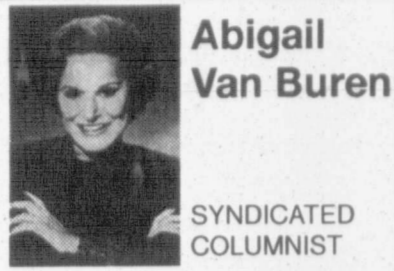
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Having Grandma Care for Kids Is Bargain at Twice the Price

DEAR ABBY: The letter from "A Grandma or a Doormat?"...



Abigail Van Buren

SYNDICATED COLUMNIST

changes hands - there are tax liabilities. Both the daughter and her mother should make sure they follow the tax laws to the letter...

DEAR ABBY: The daughter who leaves her child with Grandma and expects it to be "free" should wake up. Ten dollars a week is an unheard-of bargain for child care.

I work for my daughter at her day care. I am paid minimum wage. The parents pay nearly \$100 a week per child. Their kids get breakfast, lunch and two snacks a day...

toughen up and join the 21st century. Haven't they heard? There are no free lunches these days!

DEAR GRANDMA T.: The children in your daughter's day-care center are lucky. They are learning to interact with peers at an early age...

DEAR ABBY: I was married to a woman for 15 years, and then she left me for another man. We have been divorced for more than a year now.

I have always been close to her sister, and we would like to start dating. The problem is, even though she really wants to, she's afraid it's wrong because I was married to her sister.

DEAR CONFUSED: Since you are a free man, and you two have always been close, I see no reason why you shouldn't date and enjoy some happiness together.

*** Build on the unexpected. Excellent communication surrounds family and your home life. Speak your mind, especially with a day-to-day project. Think about what is happening with a loved one. Verify meetings and return calls. Your instincts could be off. Tonight: Relax and put up your feet. CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) ***** Your creativity and ingenuity emerge when dealing with a loved one. Think twice about what is on your mind. Though you might believe you have a handle on your finances, events could prove otherwise. Let your creativity surge. Tonight: Play the night away. AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18) ***** Priorities come first. Listen to your instincts about family. You might hit a conflict and not exactly be sure about what is appropriate. Review a situation carefully before making a decision. Think through an investment. Tonight: Put up your feet. PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20) ***** Your wit draws others toward you. Ask for what you want. Exchange ideas. Others remain unusually responsive and direct. Honor strong feelings, and review an important decision. You actually might know more about a problem than you realize. Tonight: Munchies with a pal.

BORN TODAY Baseball legend Jackie Robinson (1919), baseball player Nolan Ryan (1947), actress Suzanne Pleshette (1937)

Jacqueline Bigar is on the Internet at http://www.jacquelinebigar.com. © 2001 by King Features Syndicate Inc.

Horoscope

WEDNESDAY, JAN. 31, 2001

BY JACQUELINE BIGAR

The Stars Show the Kind of Day You'll Have: 5-Dynamic; 4-Positive; 3-Average; 2-So-so; 1-Difficult

ARIES (March 21-April 19) ***** Use your money sense with decisions. You have a sixth sense that comes through for you more often than not. Confusion surrounds a friendship or a meeting. Carefully sort through what is happening. Postpone a decision until you feel as if you have the facts you need. Tonight: Pay bills first. TAURUS (April 20-May 20) ***** Use your assets, both material and emotional. You weed through problems like no one else. Sit back, especially with a work-related matter. Confusion shrouds responsibilities and dealings with others. You, above many signs, can see the forest and the trees. Tonight: Whatever makes you smile. GEMINI (May 21-June 20) ***** You act with clarity, but you still might need more information. Ask vital questions, and keep asking until you feel satisfied. You have a particularly inquisitive nature. Connecting with someone at a distance proves to be problematic. Tonight: Take the night off. CANCER (June 21-July 22) ***** Seek out friends for advice. You might be especially confused by a close associate or loved one. It's possible

that this person isn't expressing himself as clearly as you need him to. Be sensitive to this person. Empathy reigns. Tonight: Where your friends are. LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) ***** You see another's issues clearly, and you know why he muddles situations. Be the naturally strong leader you are, and take charge. Others are relieved to see some structure in plans or a project. Though you like to delegate, your timing might not be right. Tonight: Be the lead player. VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) ***** You understand a lot more than others do. Strive to communicate the big picture and to help others get over trivial details. Your workload might seem to not have an end in sight. Trust your abilities here. You will gain in the long run as long as you are at peace with your work. Tonight: Movie time. LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22) ***** Work with someone. Do a good job of listening to another's feedback. What you want to see might be fogging up reality. Take off your rose-colored glasses and listen to someone. You might not see the pros and cons of a situation. As a result, you could make a bad decision. Tonight: With your best friend. SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21) ***** Let others display their true colors. As a result, you gain vital information. You could be incorrect about some fundamentals. Could you only be seeing what you want to see? You might think that someone is a wet blanket. This person actually wants to shed light on things. Tonight: Go along with another's plans. SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

Crossword Puzzle

By THOMAS JOSEPH

- ACROSS 43 June honorees 1 Writer Ferber 5 Strong winds 10 Bouquet 12 Newton or Asimov 13 David Baldacci book 15 She sheep 16 Obtained 17 Rule 18 Native name for Mt. McKinley 20 '70s detective series 21 Black bird 22 Eye part 23 Inert gas 25 Figure (out) 28 Peru natives 31 Give off 32 Took in 34 Mimic 35 List-ending abbr. 36 "Bali" 37 David Baldacci book 40 Band-leader Shaw 41 Discussion group 42 The "Tower" poet

Word search grid with words: RACK, SHAPE, IRAN, CANALS, GORE, OUTLET, HATEFUL, AMI, TRADERS, DEN, ELS, LINK, SPIEL, HUNTS, LAMP, YAK, IRA, SELECTS, DOG, KNOWHOW, ELICIT, ALIE, SENORA, ROLE, DENTS, MEET

Yesterday's answer

- 14 Dis-cussing 19 Nautical cry 20 Slight color 24 Recipe amount 25 Ocean lane 26 Diamond judge 27 Nap 29 Goddess of wisdom 30 Closed 33 Some pickles 35 Potato parts 38 Popular song 39 Bankroll

STUMPED?

For answers to today's crossword, call 1-900-454-7377! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

Marmaduke



"Stop trying to hide...you're friends aren't even looking!"

The Family Circus



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For Better or For Worse



Zits



Garfield



Beetle Bailey



Marvin



B.C.



Haggar The Horrible



Peanuts



Blondie



Mallard Filmore

