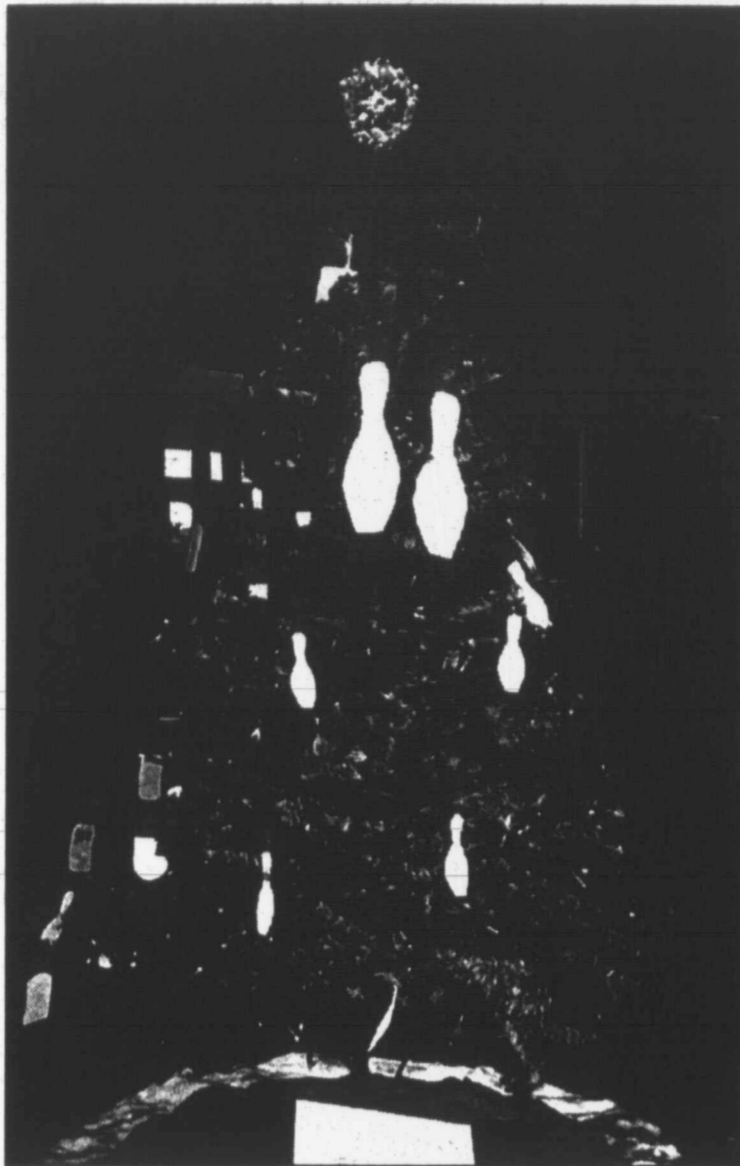


Festival of Trees



(Community Camera photos)

Pampa's annual Festival of Trees was held recently at M.K. Brown Auditorium. The Festival of Christmas Trees was first begun in 1982, when Floyd Sackett, then-manager of Pampa Chamber of Commerce, asked all his committees to create fund-raising opportunities. Thelma Bray was chair of the Civic Improvement Committee at the time and presented the idea of a festival of Christmas trees. This year the Festival included a display of miniature trees and was chaired by Cythia Mann. Pampa Garden Club sponsored the event. Far left: James Flippo admires Cynthia Mann's "Butterfly Tree." Middle: This tree, entered by Pampa Youth Bowling Association, won a blue ribbon at the Festival. Far right: This tree designed by Peggy's Place earned a blue ribbon.

Vatican okays new sex abuse policy for U.S.

VATICAN CITY (AP) — The Vatican gave its approval Monday to the revised U.S. bishops' policy to combat sex abuse in the clergy, declaring the need to restore the image of the priesthood in a scandal that has rocked the Roman Catholic Church in the United States.

Approval had been expected after differences in the original plan were worked out by a joint U.S.-Vatican commission in November.

The Vatican released a letter from Cardinal Giovanni Battista Re to Bishop Wilton Gregory, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, pledging the Holy See's support to "combat and to prevent such evil."

The Vatican announcement came three days after Pope John Paul II accepted the resignation of Cardinal Bernard Law as archbishop of Boston, removing a figure who was a flash point for victims' groups, lay Catholics and some priests.

Re said "it appears necessary to devote every available resource to restoring the public image of the Catholic priesthood."

The Italian prelate, who heads the Congregation of Bishops, called sex abuse "one of the most serious offenses" a priest can commit and noted that the American policy can lead to dismissal from the priesthood.

Touching on some of the Vatican's original objections, Re also said the revised policy protects "inviolable human rights" of the accused.

Re said that the Vatican "feels duty-bound" to defend "the good name of the overwhelming majority of priests and deacons."

The cardinal asked the American bishops to continue their meetings with the heads of religious orders who have raised several issues of concern about their members coming under the policy.

In any case, the policy comes up for review in two years.

Re's letter stressed that the Vatican will not tolerate sex abuse crimes against children.

Boy, 10, said he prayed to survive icy plunge

LAWRENCE, Mass. (AP) — One of three boys who survived an icy plunge into the Merrimack River as four friends drowned said he prayed God would rescue him.

"I was scared and cold, but I was hoping that God would get me out of this mess," 10-year-old Jaycob Morales said Monday on NBC's "Today" show.

Another survivor, 9-year-old Francis Spraus, sobbed when asked on the "Today" show about the terrifying moments his friends slipped through the ice.

"I thank God that God gave me another life," he said.

William Rodriguez, 11, 7-year-old Christopher Casado, Victor Baez, 9, and 8-year-old Mackendy Constant died Saturday after falling through the thin ice on the Merrimack River.

It was still unclear whether all seven boys had been playing on the ice or whether some walked onto the ice to try to save their friends.

On the "Today" show, Jaycob said William went out onto the ice as the boys returned from the Lawrence Boys and Girls Club. Jaycob said Ivan Casado, Christopher's 9-year-old brother, warned William against going out too far because the ice was thin.

Jaycob said he saw William fall through the ice.

"I went to go help him out and I fell in," he said.

Jaycob said Constant then took off his coat and tried to pass it to them to pull them out. "Then when they tried to pull us out, everybody fell into the water," he said.

Mayor Michael J. Sullivan was expected to announce on Monday details of a trust fund for the families, and grief counselors were being sent to city schools to help students come to terms with the deaths. "A lot of us are going to miss those kids," Manuel Reyes, 14, said as he stared at the river that had claimed his basketball buddies.

On Sunday, a steady stream of mourners placed candles bearing the children's names, religious tokens, flowers and toys on the muddy berm overlooking the river in this working class city of 72,000 about 25 miles north of Boston.

The boys say William fell through first, as he played on the ice. Five of his friends, in a valiant rescue effort, also fell through the 1- to 2-inch-thick ice, they said.

Ivan, closest to shore in waist-deep water, scrambled up the bank and went for help. He found a neighbor, Jacques Fournier, 63, who called emergency personnel then tried rescuing them with a rope that proved to be too short.

When Fournier arrived on the scene, four of the boys, William, Mackendy, Victor, and Christopher Casado had slipped below the ice.

The boys who died were trapped under the ice for at least 10 minutes, and were unconscious when they were pulled from the river, said Police Chief John J. Romero. They were about 25 feet from shore in water up to 8 feet deep, he said.

"My legs started to get stiff and I had a freezing headache," Francis told the Eagle-Tribune of Lawrence.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

RULE

corporate agriculture that has led to fights between livestock farms and neighbors complaining about health and environmental effects.

The court-ordered deadline results from a broader settlement requiring EPA to update technology standards for industrial sources of water pollution. Runoff from agriculture is the biggest source of pollution in rivers, streams and lakes, the government says.

In 1992, EPA and the Natural Resources Defense Council, or NRDC, an environmental group, reached a

court settlement requiring the agency to update its technology standards for several categories of industrial water pollution.

After study, EPA chose the factory-style farms as one of the industrial categories that needed improvement. Large-scale animal factories produce 220 billion gallons of manure annually, the government says.

Melanie Shepherdson, an attorney with NRDC's clean water project, said the rule leaves too much discretion to states in regulating water pollution, and relies upon a system that is still largely voluntary.

Under existing law, concentrated animal feeding operations already are required to get permits because Congress 30 years ago said they must be regulated as sources of water pollution under the Clean Water Act's water pollution permitting program, she said.

"I was hanging on to Christopher but he started to slip under. I tried holding on to his hand, but it was like he let go."

"We're feeling a lot of pain but we're proud of them," said Eusebio Alicea, 36, the Casado brothers' uncle. "We consider them little heroes."

One sign left on the bank Sunday read: "I will miss you my friend Christopher, your

friend Zachary." Rebecca Perez, 11, who lives nearby, said Mackendy teased her all the time.

"I feel really sad. It's scary. But everybody who lives around here knows not to go in (the river) there," she said.

Christopher Santos, 10, said he missed his friend Victor, known as "Ricky."

"We built clubhouses together and rode our bikes together. I wish he was alive but he's not," he said.

Sullivan called it a "tragic course of events" for the families as well as for the city.

"They were just people in shock. Here are some parents who lost their kids," he said of a meeting with one of the families. "There's nothing you could say that would make them feel better."

Some operations are exempted from permitting, such as those that say they will discharge waste only during very severe storms.

"It's just that existing law isn't implemented," Shepherdson said. "Basically, the new rule is not going to fix this tremendous problem. In fact, it's just going to give factory farms the legal cover to continue polluting."

On the Net: EPA: <http://cfpub.epa.gov/npdes/afo/cafinalrule.cfm> NRDC: <http://www.nrdc.org>

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

ORR

work at Pampa Middle School.

The school district's 2001-2002 annual financial report is to be presented at the meeting. A 2002-2003 quarterly financial report is also planned. Dr. Tim Powers is scheduled to present a report on Pampa Middle School and girls softball facilities also.

THE Pampa NEWS

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Monday, December 16, 2002

DEAR ABBY

written by Pauline Phillips and daughter Jeanna Phillips

In-Laws' Attempt at Baptism Has Woman Wholly Confused

DEAR ABBY: I am happily married to a man with a strong Catholic upbringing. I was raised without any religious ties, and therefore I was never baptized. This has never bothered me.

Since I do not believe in baptism, I made a conscious decision not to be baptized. This has caused considerable concern for my husband's parents, who are convinced I'll end up in hell.

A few weeks ago as I entered my in-laws' home, they surprised me by sprinkling holy water on me and mumbling a few words. When I described the incident to some friends, they informed me that I have now been baptized — whether I like it or not, Abby, is this possible?

WHAT'S GOING ON IN ST. PAUL

DEAR WHAT'S: No, it isn't. According to Father Greg Coiro, a Catholic priest, once a person is past the age of 7 — he referred to it as "the age of reason" — the decision to be baptized must be a conscious one. The only exception to that would be a "conditional baptism" for someone who is in a coma. So, you weren't baptized. You were only moistened.

DEAR ABBY: A few years back, you published a poem that asked the question, "What do you want for

Christmas?" The answer was, "Nothing!" I sent it to family members that year, but have since lost it. Please print it again.

"OLD" FAN IN ILLINOIS
 DEAR "OLD": I'm happy to. The verse was written by two "Longtime Readers in Missouri" to help senior citizens tell their families and friends what they want — and what they don't want — for Christmas. Read on:

So many of you asked us (since Yuletide's drawing near)

"What do you want for Christmas? What can we give this year?" If we say, "We want nothing!" you buy something anyway. So here's a list of what we'd like, believe now what we say:
 Pajamas for a little child, food to feed the poor.
 Blankets for a shelter, and we ask but little more —
 Perform good deeds and let us know,
 Or volunteer your time.
 These last are worth a fortune, And they needn't cost a dime.
 We have too many things now, vases, candles, tapes and clocks.
 We have our fill of garments, ties, underwear and socks.
 Candy is too fattening, crossword books we've more than 20.
 We don't need trays or plates or cups,
 And knickknacks we have plenty.
 We've no walls to hang more

pictures;
 We have books we've not yet read; So please take what you'd spend on us

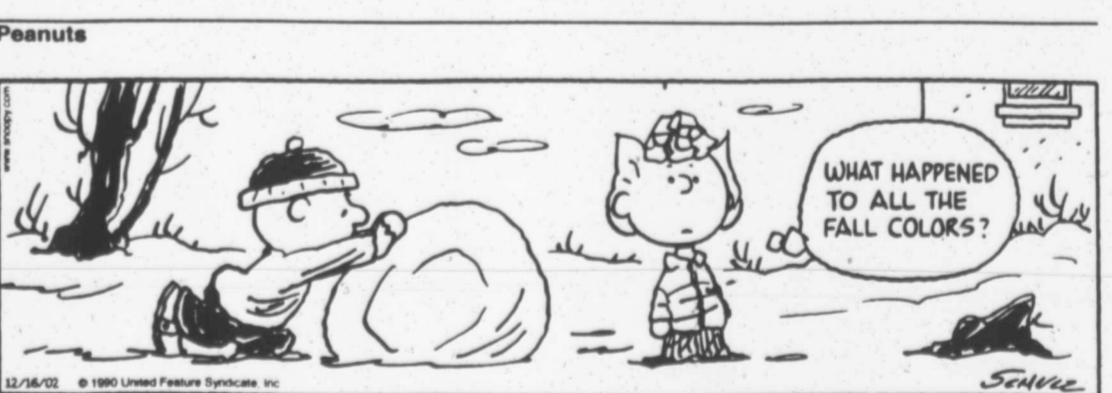
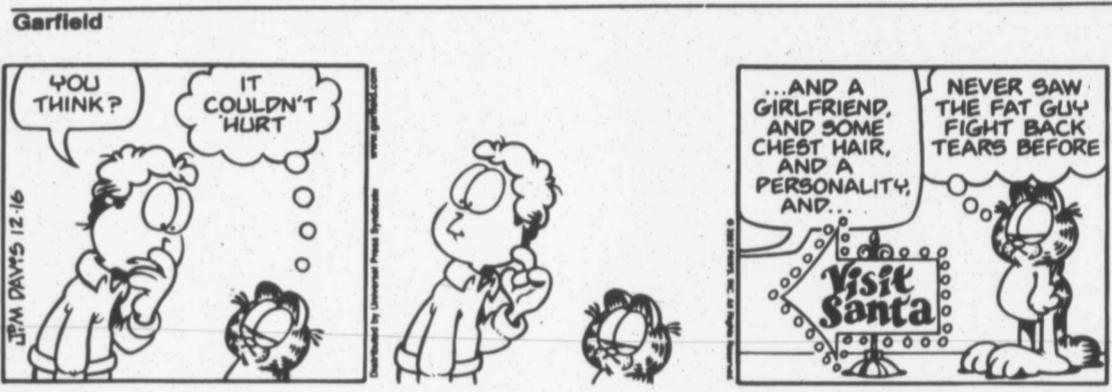
And help the poor instead! Just send a Christmas card to us and tell us what you've done; We'll open them on Christmas Eve and read them one by one.

It won't cost as much for postage as a package sent would do,
 You'll need no wrapping paper, ribbons, ink or glue.

And we'll thank God you listened to what we had to say,
 So we'll be the instruments to help someone this way.

DEAR ABBY is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeane Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90068.

To receive a collection of Abby's most memorable — and most frequently requested — poems and essays, send a business-sized, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for \$5 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby — Keepers Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included in the price.)



Crossword Puzzle

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By THOMAS JOSEPH

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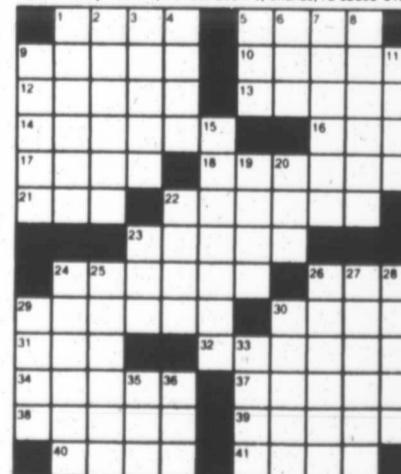
- 1 Couch
- 5 Thin cut
- 9 Oscar's roomie
- 10 Art stand
- 12 Writer
- 13 Steak
- 14 Funny stuff
- 16 Naughty
- 17 Historic times
- 18 Site of Sevilla
- 21 Brown shade
- 22 Casual top
- 23 Cook's spice
- 24 Catchphrase
- 26 Mal de
- 29 Top-notch
- 30 Volcano flow
- 31 Deli choice
- 32 Rum drink
- 34 Playwright Edward
- 37 Fancy buttons
- 38 Right now
- 39 Blender speed
- 40 Stallion's mate
- 41 Went 70

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 POTENT HUNT
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 LONER EATEN
 SWORE POSE

Saturday's answer

- 22 Harbor boats
- 28 Poker play
- 8 Lease signer
- 23 Cornic Bill, for short
- 29 Casual talk
- 9 Side
- 30 Brightened
- 11 Castor's mother
- 24 Ski event
- 33 Nile snakes
- 15 Polite answer
- 25 Greek letter
- 35 Head feature
- 19 Leg part
- 26 Grow up
- 36 Head feature
- 20 Brooch
- 27 Dodged

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SPORTS

Being Heisman winner is a full-time job

By JIM LITKE
AP Sports Writer

The Heisman Trophy he won a year ago is still in its original packing crate, somewhere in his mother's house back in Omaha. "I've got a display case there," Eric Crouch said Sunday, "but I've been kind of busy."

At that moment, busy meant shepherding his fiancée and daughter through the maze of a New York airport to catch an evening flight back home. Twenty-four hours earlier, it meant sitting across the aisle from 1991 winner Desmond Howard at the Yale Club in midtown Manhattan, exchanging knowing smiles when Southern California quarterback Carson Palmer became the latest member of their exclusive fraternity.

Tomorrow it could mean new business opportunities, more appearances, charity work, or books, T-shirts and magazines to autograph. Being a Heisman Trophy winner is full-time work if you want it, especially if you were once a star in a place as mad about col-

lege football as Nebraska.

"In the few seconds before they announced Carson's name I was thinking, 'One of these guys' lives is about to change forever.' Because no matter what else you do, even if you don't have a great pro career, you'll be recognized in most places and remembered everywhere."

"This award has a life and a legacy all its own."

And a curse all its own, too. The Heisman has been won by a long line of running backs who could charitably be described as second-rate pros. Few quarterbacks with the trophy can claim to be even that lucky.

The only great one was Roger Staubach, Navy, class of 1963. The last really good one was Jim Plunkett, Stanford, 1970. Of the last five, two — Crouch and Gino Torretta of Miami — never played even a single down in a real NFL game. A third, Charlie Ward of Florida State, opted to play pro basketball instead. The two others — Danny Wuerffel of Florida and Chris Weinke of Florida State — probably

wished they'd had the option.

Given that history, you'd have expected Crouch to tell Palmer to turn down the trophy, exit the Yale Club stage left and take off running like his suit was on fire. But not.

"If I was going to tell Carson anything," Crouch said, "this is it: 'Be yourself.'"

That is the one regret of his own, all-too-brief pro career. Growing up in Omaha, Crouch was a quarterback. It defined who he was and what he wanted to be. He began at age 8 and by his early 20s was good enough to be entrusted with control of the offense for one of the most storied programs in the game.

But despite the Heisman, NFL scouts judged him too small for the position — 6-foot-1 and 200 pounds — with a suspect throwing arm to boot. The only thing that measured up to league standards was Crouch's speed and desire to please.

Told that his future lay anywhere but at quarterback, Crouch offered to play wide receiver, running back, defensive back or kick returner. The move appeared to pay off when

the St. Louis Rams drafted him in the third round last spring. But by the end of the summer, Crouch was hobbled by injury, homesick for Omaha and regretting his decision to let others define what he could do.

Struggling, he tore up a contract that would have paid him \$1.2 million and instead made out a check to the ballclub for the \$395,000 he'd accepted as a signing bonus. Friends were astonished by the move as they were bewildered.

"It wasn't just a case of a guy talking the talk. In this case, Eric was walking the walk, too," said John Hoich, an Omaha businessman who has served as a mentor to Crouch.

"Sure, some people looked at it and said, 'He quit,' but very few of them were from around here. Around here, people knew what he did was heartfelt. Eric was a hero."

But not to everybody, at least not initially.

At a clinic he put on one day, "a kid came up to Eric and said, 'You quit,'" recalled his fiancée, Nicole Kousgard. "The word 'quit' startles you. I think it hurt Eric because he loves kids so

much."

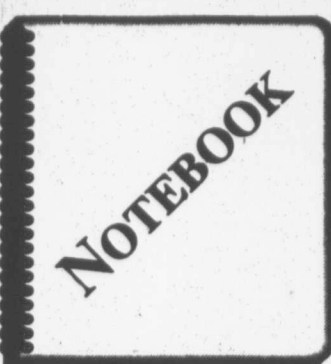
Not that Crouch needed any more motivation. Healthy once more, he works out every morning. The rest of the day is his. With a phone call, he can arrange an apprenticeship with the savviest businessmen in town or feed his ego appearing at a banquet that same evening in front of the same crowd.

"I still love the game," he said. "The only thing that has changed is I've learned playing receiver is not for me. I let other people label me as somebody who couldn't play quarterback in the pros before I got the opportunity."

"That won't happen again. I need to get fit, stay healthy, and see if somebody else will give me that chance."

Crouch puts the odds of things falling in place at 50-50. Once he couldn't imagine life without football; now, he's learned to make do with everything but football.

"It's something special to be born and raised and play in front of people, then grow up and have those people be the same way towards you," he said. "I've been blessed to have the career I did and the opportunities I did."



SOFTBALL

AMARILLO — An organizational meeting will be held for persons interested in umpiring high school fastpitch softball for the 2002 season in the panhandle area.

The meeting will be at 7 p.m. Wednesday at the Kid's Inc. Warehouse, located at 2201 East 27th in Amarillo.

All persons who plan to umpire should attend this meeting.

Contact Kevin Cotter at 806-499-3746 if more details are needed.

BASKETBALL

BRISCOE — The Fort Elliott Cougars reached the finals of their own tournament, but lost to Randall Junior Varsity 64-49 Saturday.

Nathan Maxwell scored 23 points for Randall and Wesley Hathaway had 10 for Fort Elliott.

Shamrock slipped by Groom 65-63 to win the girls' championship.

Leading the way for Shamrock was Vanita Wright with 25 points. Amanda Conrad was high-point scorer for Groom with 20.

Fort Elliott girls claimed third place with a 53-46 win over Wheeler.

Amanda Mick led Fort Elliott with 18 points while Lyndi Finsterwald had 14 for Wheeler.

White Deer downed Allison 49-39 for the consolation title.

Cassie Petty tossed in 23 points to lead White Deer. Donaldson had 15 for Allison.

FOOTBALL

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — Hours after Trinity University of Texas won a place in the NCAA Division III football championship game, its quarterback was arrested and charged with public intoxication.

Roy Hampton, who was named offensive player of the year for 2002 by both the Southern Collegiate Athletic Conference and the south region, was arrested in Sunday's early hours on San Antonio's River Walk.

James Hill, a spokesman for the university's athletic department, confirmed the arrest Monday. He said the school had yet to decide Hampton's status for the Amos Alonzo Stagg Bowl, which determines the Division III champion.

Hampton, a 23-year-old senior, "tried to grab the officer's arm," and "had a strong smell of intoxicants on his breath, bloodshot eyes, slurred speech and was unsteady on his feet," according to the police report.

Hampton quarterbacked Trinity (14-0) to a 41-34 victory Saturday afternoon over St. John's (Minn.) that earned the team a trip to the Stagg Bowl in Salem, Va. Trinity will play Mount Union (Ohio), which is unbeaten in 13 games and has won 95 of its last 96 games.

Hampton leads NCAA Division III in pass efficiency (184.86). He has 43 touchdown passes and has thrown for more than 4,000 yards.

9th graders take second in tourney

BORGER — Pampa won three games to reach the finals of the Borger 9th Grade Boys' Basketball Tournament last weekend.

However, Dumas came away with a 60-39 win in the finals.

Ryan Torres was high scorer for Pampa with 16 points. Eric Kingcade followed with 8 points while Colby Scott and Kennon Davis had 4 each.

Pampa opened the tournament with a 53-26 win over Perryton.

Jarret Kotara was high-point scorer with 11 points, followed by Torres 9 and Braydon Barker 8.

The Threshers downed West Texas High in the next game 48-28.

Tyson Hickman, Sharod Young and Kotara had 9 points each.

Pampa went against Canadian in the semi-finals and earned a 61-50 victory.

Kotara led all scorers with 15 points, while Torres had 12, Barker 10 and Kingcade 10.

The Threshers, 7-1, for the season, are entered in the Perryton Tournament on Jan. 2. Their next home game is Jan. 6 against Palo Duro.

Cross country MVP



Kori Dunn (second from left) is presented the Pampa cross country MVP award for the 2002 season from coach Mark Elms. Looking on are Kori's parents, Randy and Brenda Dunn. Coach Elms said Kori's selection was based on her willingness to work in practice, which resulted in improving her times throughout the season. Kori, a junior, is expected to be much improved next year, Elms said.

Eagles win NFC East, Bucs clinch playoff spot

By The Associated Press

The Philadelphia Eagles are NFC East champions again, and they could face a familiar foe in the playoffs.

Minus Donovan McNabb, the Eagles clinched the NFC East title Sunday with a 34-21 home victory over Washington. Philadelphia (11-3) is 4-0 without McNabb, who broke his right ankle Nov. 17.

If the Eagles win at Dallas and the New York Giants, they will have home-field advantage for the NFC playoffs.

Against Washington, A.J. Feeley threw two touchdown passes and was 16-of-28 for 220 yards.

Tampa Bay (11-3) also clinched a playoff berth for the fourth straight season, holding off Detroit 23-20. The Bucs, who tied franchise records for wins and road victories (five), can win the NFC South on Sunday night with a road victory over Chicago.

Earlier this season, the Eagles beat Tampa Bay 20-10 in Philadelphia. They also won 31-9 at home in a wild-card game last season.

Against the Lions, Martin Gramatica kicked a 38-yard field goal with 3:04 left. Detroit's Jason Hanson was

short on a 57-yard attempt with 1:51 left.

The weekend also saw Atlanta and Seattle play in the league's 22nd overtime game this season, setting an NFL record. And Cincinnati quarterback Jon Kitna ripped the league's lowliest organization and questioned the ownership's dedication to winning.

In Atlanta, Shaun Alexander's 27-yard TD run gave Seattle a 30-24 victory after Atlanta's Jay Feeley missed a 36-yard field goal.

The previous record of 21 OT games was set in 1995.

The Bengals didn't come close to extra time against Jacksonville, losing 29-15 at home. Cincinnati has the NFL's worst record at 1-13 and matched the franchise record for losses.

In the last 12 years, the Bengals have had the league's worst record. They haven't had a winning season since 1990.

"I'm saying that, as an organization, we don't expect to win," Kitna said. "And if you don't expect to win, you're not going to win very often. Until you expect to win and do the things that are necessary to win — until you give your players reason for optimism — you're going to have a tough time."

On Monday night, New England (8-5) played at Tennessee (8-5) with playoff hopes on the line.

Eagles 34, Redskins 21

At Philadelphia, Feeley threw touchdown passes to Duce Staley and to Antonio Freeman.

Washington (5-9) was sloppy, and two fumbles led to Philadelphia scores. Champ Bailey fumbled a punt for the second week in a row to set up a field goal by David Akers. Carlos Emmons had a 44-yard fumble return for a score in the third quarter.

Buccaneers 23, Lions 20

At Detroit, Martin Gramatica kicked three field goals, Brad Johnson was 24-of-41 for 253 yards for the Bucs, and Keyshawn Johnson caught six passes for 90 yards.

The Lions (3-11) were without quarterback Joey Harrington after the first drive because of an irregular heartbeat. Harrington's heart returned to a normal rhythm before he was hospitalized, but he stayed overnight at Henry Ford Hospital as a precaution.

Seahawks 30, Falcons 24, OT

At Atlanta, Matt Hasselbeck was 22-of-31 for 298 yards and a touchdown for Seattle (5-9).

Michael Vick was 21-of-38 for 240 yards, and ran for 40 yards on 13 carries for the Falcons (8-5-1). **Dolphins 23, Raiders 17**

At Miami, the Dolphins limited the NFL's top-ranked offense to 218 yards as Miami (9-5) tied the Raiders (9-5) for the best record in the AFC with two games left.

Ricky Williams ran for 101 yards, Jason Taylor had three sacks, and Patrick Surtain intercepted Rich Gannon's pass to end Oakland's last bid. Oakland

had only 162 yards passing.

Packers 20, 49ers 14

At San Francisco, a steady downpour didn't stop Brett Favre from passing for 201 yards for Green Bay.

Green Bay's defense also stepped up, stopping the 49ers' final drive at the 11 with 22 seconds left.

Ahman Green ran for 90 yards and a touchdown, and Donald Driver caught a TD pass for the Packers (11-3).

Middle School Basketball

8th Grade Division

Borger A 49, Pampa A 36
Pampa scoring: Michael Robinson 9, Brett Ferrell 6, Zac Ammons 4, Kyle Irvin 4, Bradley Johnson 4.

Plainview A 53, Pampa 34
Pampa scoring: Michael Robinson 10, Brett Ferrell 9, Bradley Johnson 6.

Plainview A 79, Pampa 49
Pampa scoring: Craig Crowell 13, Bradley Johnson 10, Chase Harris 9, Brett Ferrell 9.

Valleyview B 36, Pampa B 20
Pampa scoring: LeKeith Towles 14, Robert McLean 4.

Plainview B 40, Pampa B 21
Pampa scoring: Ben Gibson 10, LaKeith Towles 7.

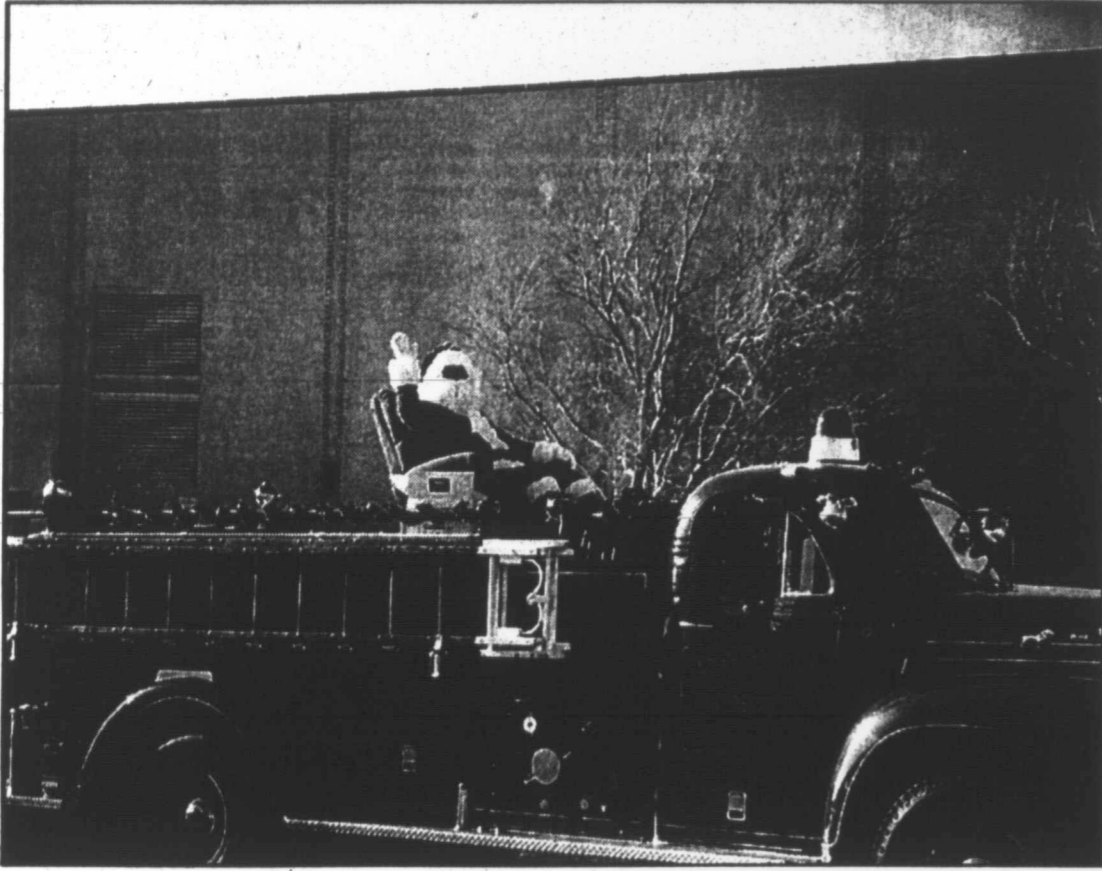
7th Grade Division

Dumas A 43, Pampa A 24
Pampa scoring: Colby Copeland 6, Mark Stone 3, Jerod Bivins 3, Kenny Hightower 3, Garrett Eggleston 1.

Plainview A 43, Pampa A 19
Pampa scoring: Mark Stone 5, Dane Howard 4, Rusty Snider 4.

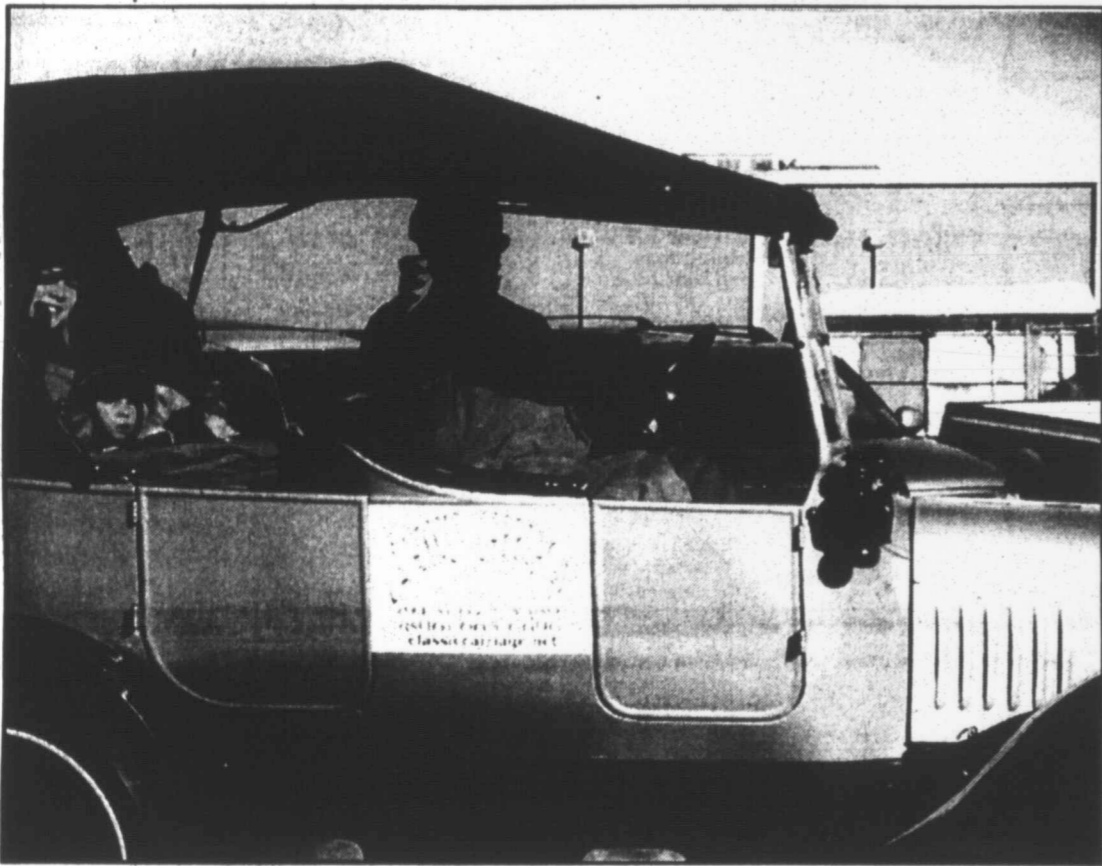
Happy Holidays!

from the Pampa Area Chamber of Commerce



(Courtesy photo)

Santa Claus waves from a vintage Pampa Fire Department truck during the 2002 Chamber of Commerce Christmas Parade, Saturday, Dec. 7



(Courtesy photo)

Miles Cook drives his 1923 Model T in the 2002 Chamber of Commerce Christmas Parade.

Special Thanks to:

City of Pampa Street Department for all their hard work to ensure that the streets were clear for the Chamber Christmas Parade.

Pampa High School Show Choir for their wonderful performance at the quarterly Chamber Prayer Breakfast on Dec. 3. Greg Brown for his dedicated efforts in coordinating our Prayer Breakfasts for the last three years.

All of our great volunteers for their faithful dedication throughout the year.

To all of our members for their continued support.

Dear Members,

Unbelievably, another year has come and gone. We are now looking forward to a new year with great anticipation and the hope of new and exciting opportunities and possibilities. Yes, there will be challenges, but that just makes the journey more interesting.

The Chamber staff and I have thoroughly enjoyed working with Chairman John Curry through this past year and we look forward to his continuing role in our developing Chamber and community. His knowledge, creativity, wisdom and calm presence have been greatly appreciated.

Beginning in January, the position of Chairman will be placed in the very capable hands of Chairman-Elect Doug Ware. Doug is ready to take the helm and lead us toward future success in the many endeavors we will embark upon in 2003.

Looking back on 2002, we see a year like many in the past with lots of positive activity and a search for new ways to promote our great way of life, our history and our future.

We kicked the year off with our annual banquet, which honored a very deserving Paulette Kirksey as the 2001 Citizen of the Year. The Top O' Texans Goldcoats were always busy having taken part in our 40 functions and events. The Membership Committee, chaired by Chuck White, brought in 20 new members and developed an outstanding new membership program that you will hear more about in 2003 called the "Sustaining Member Program."

The Retail Committee, chaired by Bob Marx, had another banner year yielding very successful events including the Pampa Partnership Golf Tournament, the growing Business Expo and another fabulous Christmas Parade. In addition, the Retail Committee co-sponsored the 2002 "Come Back to Christmas" event with the Downtown Business Association.

Co-Chairmen John Forster and Charles Henry once again infused the Tourism Committee with the passion to reach new levels of excitement and creativity. The results have been impressive which include new Chamber websites and literature dedicated to our area wildlife and to the Red River Indian Wars, each designed to generate interest and bring visitors to Pampa.

With the 2002 Country Fair "Safari-Texas Style" having also been a wonderful success, our overall year proves that with planning, hard work and cooperation the future will be bright and optimistic.

2003 is right around the corner and, as always, the Chamber will be striving to put Pampa and our surrounding area in its most positive light. The Membership Committee will continue to seek new members to help us achieve our Chamber and community goals. The Retail Committee will continue to develop and/or expand events to help create new avenues of growth and prosperity for our local economy.

In addition, the Tourism Committee is planning ways to increase positive exposure of our community through future work with the Panhandle Tourism Marketing Council, inclusion in a nationally televised program on The Travel Channel called "Discover America" and numerous advertising strategies.

Lastly, the Chamber staff will be working closely with our Board of Directors to follow up on leads involving potential business and industry opportunities.

Pampa is a community in transition. Transitions are not always easy, but can provide great opportunities for growth and positive development. The key for a successful future is in working together on a great vision.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Sincerely,

Clay Rice
Executive Director
Pampa Chamber of Commerce

December Luncheon

Program: Keith Pitner - Executive Director, Texas Historical Foundation

Sponsor: Britkare Home Medical

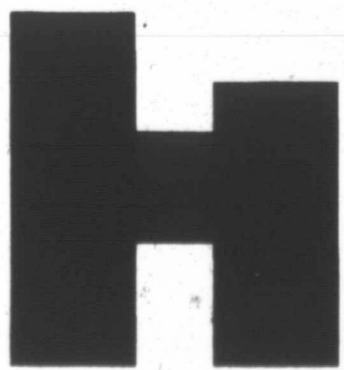
Caterer: R&R Catering

Cost is \$7 per person

Call the Chamber office at 669-3241 for reservations.

Welcome!

Pampa Chamber of Commerce would like to welcome our new Chief of Police Trevlyn Pitner and his wife Ashly to Pampa.



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