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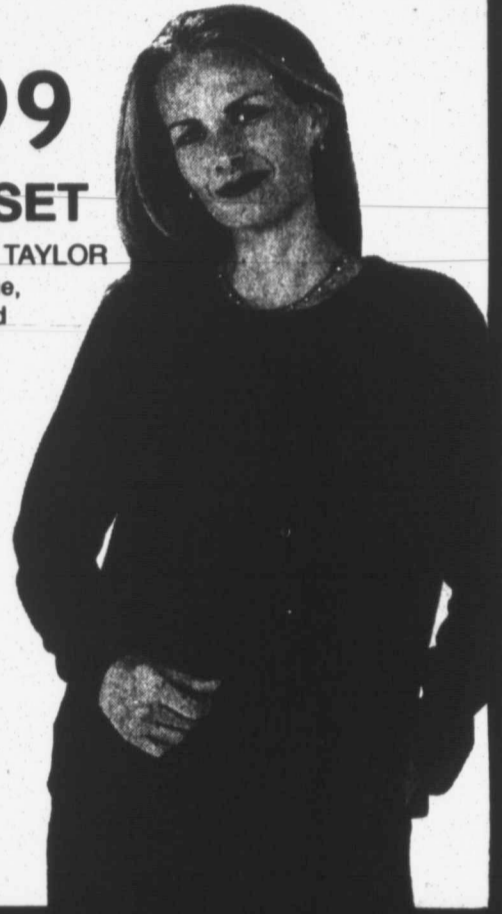
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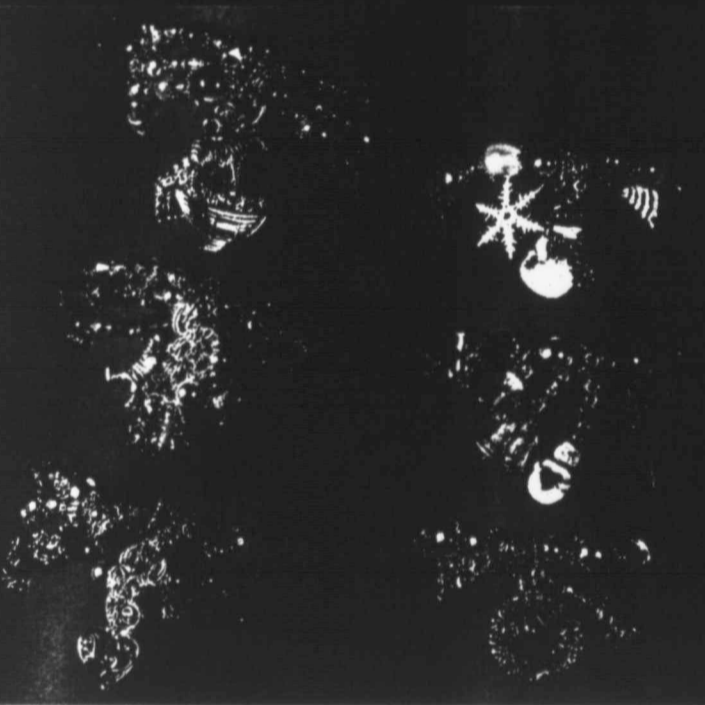
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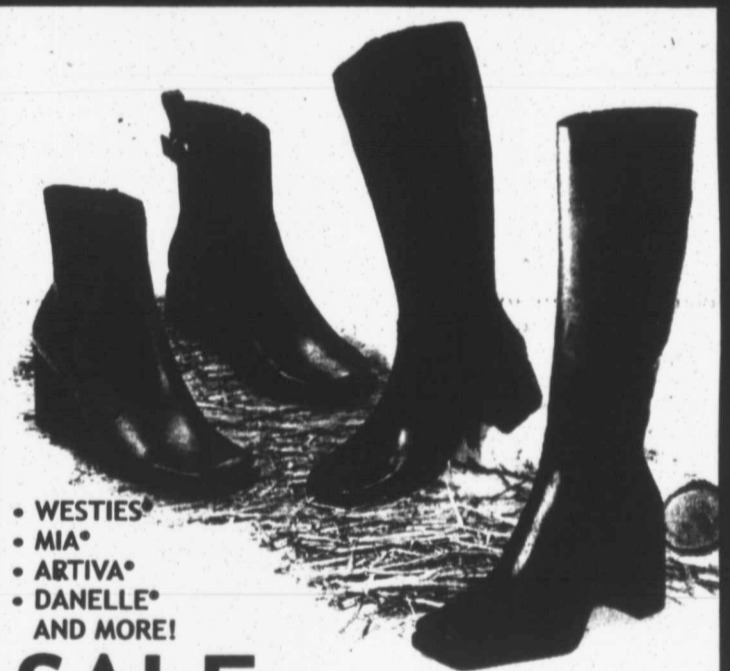


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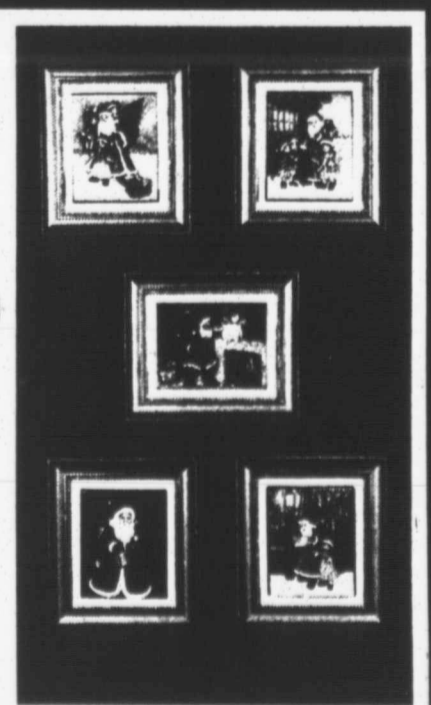
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CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

PLAN

scores and limiting students' educational opportunities.

PHS teachers and staff met several times since November, Kendall told the board, and have come up with a number of strategies they believe will help the high school reach "exemplary" status, the state's highest designation, in four years.

- Reading and writing in all subject areas;
- Testing skills for students and teachers;
- Algebra I offered as year-long class;
- Conduct Exemplary TAKS (ET) tests every three weeks to monitor how students are doing;
- Every class become involved in TAKS testing;
- Teach study skills;
- Involved parents through committees, support groups, meetings. Kendall said he and Pampa Middle School Principal Evan Smith plan to begin meeting with parents in different areas starting in January.
- Improve attendance;
- Teach vocabulary skills across the curriculum
- Remediation classes
- Reading classes
- Continue freshman support programs to enhance transition from middle school to high school.

PHS teachers and administrators recommended keeping the block schedule in some form.

"If after implementing the changes identified in this document, and with strong commit-

ment by the campus administration to insure that all staff used the 90-minute blocks fully and effectively, the high school does not reach 'recognized' status or the equivalent by the 2004-2005 school year," Kendall's report states, "the high school administration will recommend movement to a seven-period day."

"To me you're hamstringing yourself," commented Dr. Jay Johnson, the school board member who brought concerns about the block schedule to the board in August.

Johnson said he felt the high school was using a "Honda to win the Indy." He cited TEA studies where no exemplary schools were on a block schedule, but a number of the low performing schools were.

"This data is not conclusive," he said, "but it does show a trend."

He also reiterated that in a block schedule, a student graduates from high school with 780 hours less instruction time than those who went through four years in a traditional schedule.

Orr said the board may need to refine some of its policies to help the high school meet its goals.

"You'll need to deal with the fact that fear of affecting the grade point average causes students to not take classes," he said.

"I have a student going to college in January because there's nothing being offered (at PHS), that won't hurt his GPA," said Charles Smith, a parent attending the meeting.

Board members may also want to limit the number of physical education credits given for activities outside of regular class time and setting

an accountability standards for teachers, Orr said.

At the board's suggestion, Orr agreed to form a team of educators, school board members, and citizens by January to visit exemplary schools in districts comparable to PISD.

Mark McVay, assistant superintendent for finance, presented the preliminary 2001-2002 annual financial report and the 2002-2003 quarterly financial report. He said 2001-2002 financial figures are to be audited in January.

PISD increased its fund balance by approximately \$500 during the 2001-2002 fiscal year to \$2,319,448 from \$1,562,881 in 2000-2001, McVay said. The additional funds came from a shortened school calendar, lower workman's compensation claims and a large prior claim settlement, lower-than-budgeted utility costs, and savings from staff reduction.

At McVay's request, the board designated \$500,000 of the district's fund balance for future facility renovation and capital expenditures.

They also awarded the following bids:

- \$11,000 to Designer Tree Service of Amarillo for trimming trees throughout the district;
- \$7,490 to B&B Solvent for constructing concrete slopes and drains at Pampa Middle School (PMS);
- \$19,950 to G.W. James Inc., to remove existing asphalt in the play area at PMS, and resurfacing the area so that it slopes to the north.

The board approved hiring two teachers - Misty Hood at Austin Elementary and Lisa Gibson at Pampa Middle School.

CONT. FROM PAGE 1

HONOR

get him to go inside where it was warm, but the youth kept coming back and helping.

"To make matters worse," Lockridge said, "somebody had stolen his bicycle a few days earlier, and we haven't recovered it yet. He had no reason to help a police officer, but he did."

She said she was greatly impressed by the young man and appreciated his assistance. She and Montgomery showed their appreciation Tuesday afternoon.

At 4 p.m. Tuesday, in a brief ceremony at the police station, Montgomery presented Eric with a certificate of appreciation on behalf of the Pampa Police Officers Association. Lockridge was on an investigation and unable to attend.

Freelen also received a \$25 gift certificate to Wal-Mart.

CONT. FROM PAGE 1

DEATHS

Lubbock for the autopsy on Wednesday.

Pampa Police and Pampa Fire Department personnel along with Rural/Metro emergency medical personnel responded to the call on Tuesday.

Pampa Fire Department personnel disconnected the utilities (natural gas) from the home and then ventilated the residence.

First Pentecostal planning public candlelight service

First Pentecostal Holiness Church, 1700 Alcock, presents its Christmas candle lighting service at 7 p.m., Friday, Dec. 20.

Theme of the service will be "Jesus, the Light of the World," and includes carols sung by choir, congregation, soloists and groups, meditation and worship.

Everyone present will hold a lighted candle in the darkened church before the service concludes.

"To give our community a better opportunity to share the experience, this year the service will be on Friday night rather than

Sunday," said Pastors Albert and Mary Maggard.

Developed by Mary Maggard, the service - a church tradition - varies from year to year.

In some years, young people of the church perform the speaking parts. Other years have featured men of the congregation, while still others have seen the women filling these roles.

"This is our congregation's Christmas gift to Pampa," the Maggards said. "We welcome everyone to attend."

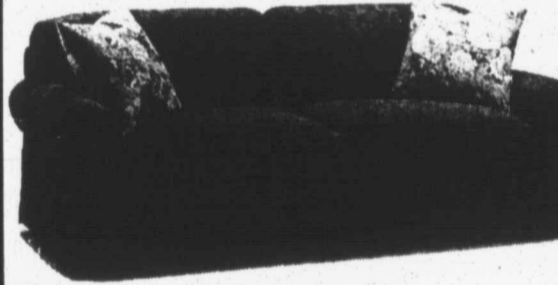
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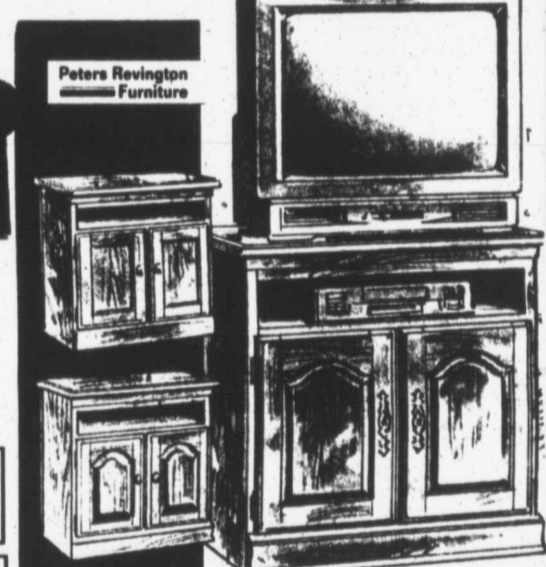
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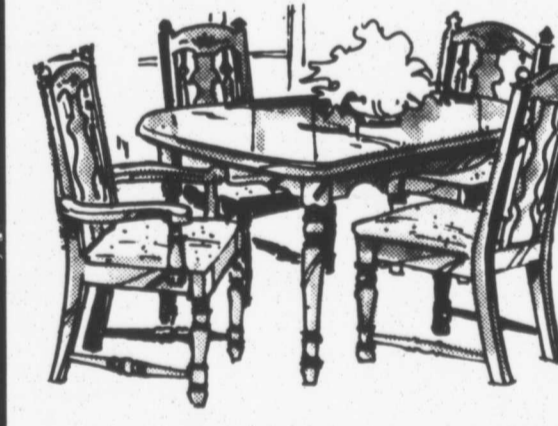
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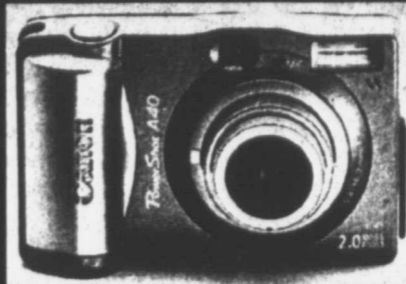
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Celebration of Lights running short on volunteers

BY DARLENE BIRKES
FOR THE NEWS

A hippo and elephant playing tennis, a fisherman catching a whale, Santa pitching hay—it's all at the Celebration of Lights, open nightly through New Year's Eve at Recreation Park east of Pampa on Highway 60.

Thousands of lights beckon visitors to drive through and enjoy painted cutouts, lighted displays, and some animated "cartoons," accompanied with Christmas music.

"We would like everybody to come out to the show and support the project," urged Rae Bagley of the Celebration of Lights committee. "There's no \$5, \$8, or \$10 admission fee, as in some parks, but we do need donations to keep the event going. There's a candy cane for the donors," she added.

"We have had so many good comments this year and hope that

the show can continue because everyone enjoys it so much."

She noted that weekend viewers included people from Borger, Canadian, and other Panhandle towns.

The show is quite varied with displays that are religious to patriotic, and also feature snowmen, Mr. and Mrs. Clause, a farmer and his house, wife, and dog, a dinosaur, carousel, Santa on skis, little tin soldier cut-outs, an elephant on a ball, a hot air balloon, poinsettias, Santa elves, and more.

"We still need evening workers," said Colleen Eskridge, volunteer coordinator.

These volunteers greet the visitors and hand out pamphlets. Volunteers should contact Eskridge at 665-6025. Michael Eskridge is in charge of turning on and off the lights every evening.

AFS exchange student Claudia Benassi of Italy, living with the Eskridge family, is assisting.

"We have a lot of lights in my home town, Reggio Emilia, but they are in the city, at the churches, historic places, and some private homes. We do not have parks full of lights," Benassi said. "My family is involved, so I go to help with the lights, too," he added, as he hurried to turn on the lights at another display.

Making the show possible this year was the Hoover Fire Department, in their third year of erecting the displays.

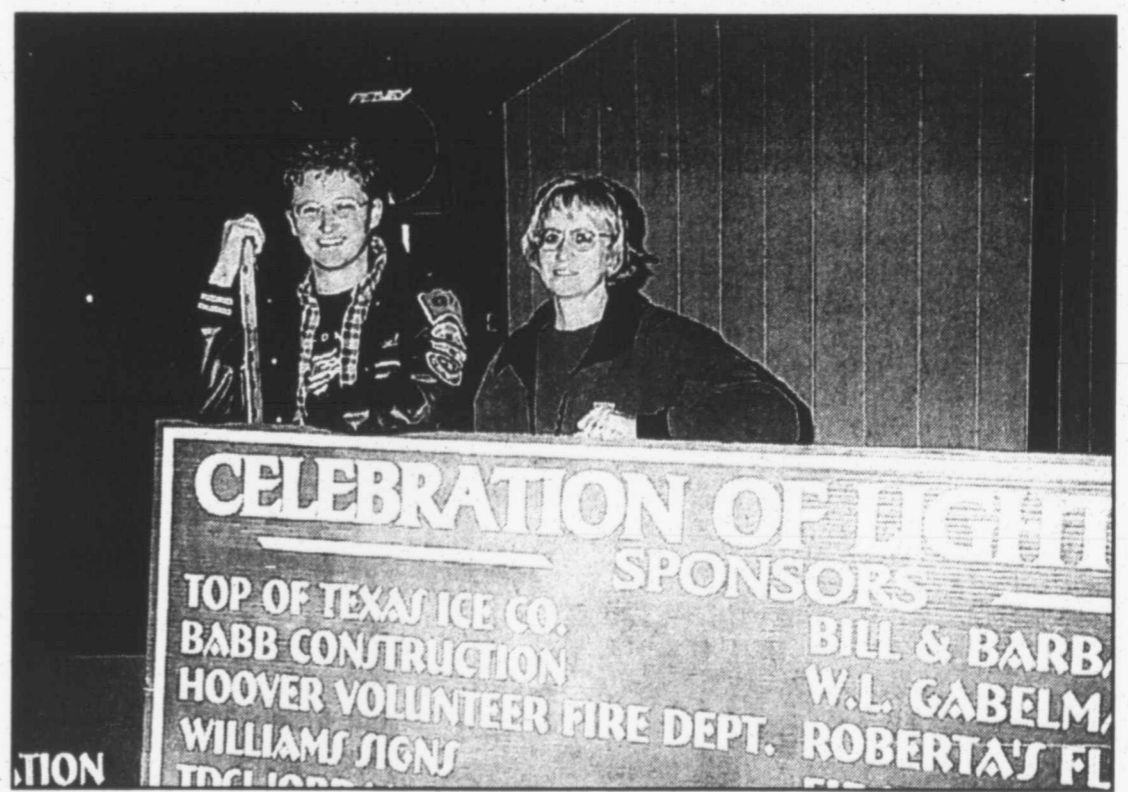
"We average 320 hours putting up the show and a little over 100 hours taking it down," said Joe Millican of Hoover Fire Department. "We have streamlined the procedure. Midway through the summer we make a master plan to redesign the display so that it is different each year. Then we go over the design with the Celebration of Lights committee," said Millican.

Originally men of the Jordan Unit helped cut out, paint and erect the displays. They could work only one week this year.

"We must have more volunteers to set up the displays, to repair and touch them up, replace bulbs, weld, and make new displays," said Kathleen Chaney.

"All the historic nativity display pieces have been duplicated, primed, and are ready to paint," she added. "All we need are volunteers."

The original pieces of the historic display are too fragile to erect any longer but hopes are to display



(Courtesy photo)

Dirk Swope, a student at Pampa High, and Rae Bagley, Celebration of Lights committee member, at one of two sponsors' signs advertising the display at Recreation Park.

them in a vacant store window. The committee needs organizations to help.

"Rotary members changed out the bulbs two Saturday afternoons," said Millican. "Some of our wives come out and change out bulbs."

Considerable time is spent in simply repairing displays, he noted.

One incentive the committee developed for volunteerism is a

college scholarship plan. The recipient is chosen on the basis of community volunteerism plus grade requirements. The student and or family must have helped to either set up, take down, or work during the season with the Christmas display. This scholarship is awarded annually.

On tap for the future is a building where they can store the displays and which they can use during the December event said Chaney. Babb Construction Co. has built and loaned them a shed each year, then he sells it at a reduced price.

"We have appreciated his contribution immensely, but we need to erect a building that we can use

for display storage during the year and then in December," said Eskridge. They added that building chairman Pat Bagley needs assistance in erecting the building.

Work begins in earnest as the weather warms near the end of March, said Rae Bagley. Notices are published in *The Pampa News* and work sessions are held every Monday night. Bill Hildebrandt is the liaison between the Celebration of Lights committee and the City of Pampa.

Designing, creating, cutting out the figures, painting, replacing hundreds of light bulbs, rewiring—all can be fun, but after eight years, committee members are wanting more new faces.

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Jobless claims drop last week but market still sluggish

By JEANNINE AVERSA
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

WASHINGTON (AP) — New claims for unemployment benefits dropped last week, but even with the decline the level of layoffs was still high and suggested that the job market was sluggish, reflecting companies' concerns about the uneven economic recovery.

The Labor Department reported Thursday that new claims for jobless benefits fell by a seasonally adjusted 11,000 to 433,000 for the work week ending Dec. 14. Yet, even with the drop, claims remained above the 400,000 mark, a level associated with a lackluster job market.

The decline, which was smaller than analysts were predicting, came after new claims shot up by 86,000 in the previous week, the biggest one-week gain since the work week

ending July 25, 1992. But private economists and Labor Department analysts cautioned not to read too much into the jump, saying it was exaggerated by difficulties adjusting for seasonal factors.

The more stable four-week moving average of claims, which smoothes out weekly fluctuations, rose last week to 400,750, the highest level since the beginning of November.

And, the number of unemployed people continuing to draw jobless benefits also went up by 229,000 to 3.5 million for the work week ending Dec. 7, the most recent period for which the data is available.

The economic recovery has been advancing this year, but in fits and starts, an environment that has made businesses wary about making big commitments in hiring and in capital investment. Fears about a war with

Iraq, the turbulent stock market and other economic uncertainties have weighed heavily on companies and made workers who still have jobs anxious about keeping them.

President Bush recently said he wants the new Congress to extend unemployment insurance benefits for jobless workers soon after it convenes next month.

Extended federal aid for the jobless runs out Dec. 28. Congress last March approved a 13-week extension in federal unemployment aid. That extension is to run out for people who have exhausted the 26 weeks of payments they typically receive through states.

Efforts to continue the benefits fell victim to partisan wrangling between Senate Democrats and House Republicans in late November's final days of the last congressional session.

Democratic leaders had urged Bush to ask

House Republicans to pass the more generous Senate extension plan. The White House remained on the sidelines throughout.

After slashing short-term interest rates by a bold half-point in November, Federal Reserve policy-makers last week decided to hold short-term interest rates steady at a 41-year low of 1.25 percent. They suggested that such low rates will help foster economic growth.

By leaving rates at low levels, Fed policy-makers hope to encourage consumers to spend more and for businesses to ramp-up investment, forces that would help the recovery.

The nation's unemployment rate jumped to 6 percent in November, matching an eight-year high set in April. Companies slashed 40,000 jobs during the month. Economists believe the jobless rate will stay in the range in the coming months.

Halliburton reaches multibillion dollar settlement to cover all current, future cases nationwide

PITTSBURGH (AP) — In a deal that would settle about 300,000 current and future asbestos cases nationwide, Halliburton Co. has agreed to pay about \$4 billion in cash and stock.

The Houston-based industrial giant once led by Vice President Dick Cheney announced the deal Wednesday in U.S. Bankruptcy Court in Pittsburgh.

The lawsuits mostly involve people exposed to asbestos while work-

ing at plants that produced the material or in places where asbestos was used, such as steel mills.

"This settlement is the kind of model that other companies and asbestos attorneys should be looking at to resolve company liability in the future," said Perry Weitz, the lead negotiator for the plaintiffs. "The settlement shows that companies can quantify their asbestos exposure and conduct business without a cloud of asbestos liability to provide compen-

sation sooner than later."

Halliburton inherited most of the claims four years ago when the oil-field services, engineering and construction conglomerate acquired Dresser Industries Inc. for \$7.7 billion.

The settlement was outlined in Pittsburgh because most of the asbestos claims were filed against a former Dresser subsidiary, Pittsburgh-based Harbison-Walker Refractories Co., that filed for

Chapter 11 bankruptcy last February.

The settlement includes about \$2.8 billion in cash and 59.5 million shares currently worth about \$1.2 billion. The amount paid to individual claimants and their families would vary according to the injuries suffered.

Asbestos is used for fireproofing and insulation. Inhaling asbestos fibers can cause lung cancer and other deadly respiratory ailments, sometimes decades later.

More than 75 percent of the plaintiffs agreed to the deal, which was required for a settlement.

Dave Lesar, Halliburton chairman, president and chief executive, said: "This agreement in principle represents good news for our shareholders, customers, vendors, employees and everyone else with whom we do business. If this transaction is completed, it will resolve a major issue that has been clouding our future."

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Church leader supports settling lawsuits

By DENISE LAVOIE
ASSOCIATED
PRESS WRITER

BOSTON (AP) — The interim leader of the Boston Archdiocese supported efforts to settle hundreds of lawsuits accusing church officials of turning a blind eye to sexually abusive priests, as more church files were released showing priests allegedly molesting youngsters.

Bishop Richard G. Lennon said Wednesday he would not rule out sending the archdiocese into bankruptcy as the church struggles to find a way to resolve more than 400 lawsuits that claim the church failed to protect children from abusive priests. It was an option that was first weighed by Cardinal Bernard Law before he resigned last week.

In his first news conference since being named Friday as Law's temporary replacement, Lennon said he was hopeful that the church could settle the lawsuits by selling some of its real estate holdings and by using insurance money.

Lennon called on church lawyers and attorneys for alleged victims to suspend all day-to-day activity on the lawsuits — except actions mandated by the court — so both sides can "actively pursue" settlement of the cases.

"I will support efforts to arrive at a settlement of claims which will be fair and equitable for all the victims of sexual abuse," Lennon said.

Lennon's proposal received a cool reception from victims' lawyers, who said they would continue to participate in ongoing settlement discussions but weren't prepared to suspend the hectic pace of work on the lawsuits.

"Delay at this point is not feasible," said attorney Mitchell Garabedian, who has filed approximately 40 lawsuits and plans to file another 70 within the next month. "Evidence disappears, memories fade and the statute of limitations is a concern."

Roderick MacLeish Jr., whose firm represents more than 200 alleged victims, said he wants to give Lennon a chance, but said he is not willing to interrupt his lawsuits.

"We want to study and analyze what Bishop Lennon said, but we are not suspending litigation when it's legally necessary to protect our clients' interests," MacLeish said.

Lennon, 55, stressed his desire to help victims of clergy sexual abuse. He offered to sit down with any victims who request a meeting with him.

"Respectfully listening to them, I hope to learn the depth of their suffering. I will extend to each of them my apology on behalf of the church for the abuse which they have suffered," he said.

According to documents released

FDA to let food makers advertise 'qualified' claims

WASHINGTON (AP) — Food makers may advertise "qualified" descriptions of the health benefits of their products now that the Food and Drug Administration has loosened a requirement requiring scientific consensus on such claims.

The first pitch expected after Wednesday's FDA announcement: salmon and other fatty fish contain omega-3 fatty acids that are thought to — but not proved to — reduce the risk of heart disease.

Until now, the FDA standard for health claims about food has been rigid. Before oatmeal could claim to be good for the heart, for instance, there had to be scientific consensus that oatmeal's fiber helps maintain low cholesterol levels.

The new hurdle is similar to the one the courts have established for dietary supplements. They are allowed to carry "qualified health claims" — meaning there is no consensus, but a lot of scientific research supporting a particular nutrient's effect.

Food makers, irked by the disparity between the previously rigid standards governing them and what the \$17 billion dietary supplement industry could claim, welcomed the plans.

The steps are "leveling the playing field for conventional foods," said Rhona Applebaum of the National Food Processors Association.

"This breaks a logjam," added Gene Grabowski of the Grocery Manufacturers of America.

But consumer advocates decried the move.

A qualified food claim is comparable to the airline industry saying, "this airplane may be safe," said Bruce Silverglade of the Center for Science in the Public Interest. "Most consumers ... don't like wishy-washy advice from health agencies."

The FDA also promised more crackdowns on dietary supplement makers who make fraudulent claims.

U.S. marshals acting on an FDA request this week seized \$100,000 of a supplement called EverCLR that was sold illegally as a treatment for herpes and other viruses. Federal law prohibits dietary supplements from being sold as disease treatments, and the FDA spent two years trying to persuade EverCLR's maker to stop its marketing voluntarily.

"FDA will not tolerate fraudulent schemes that deceive or endanger the pub-

lic," the agency said in a report outlining plans to enforce often-neglected laws against false health claims.

It is the strongest warning so far after a year of signals that the agency increasingly is frustrated with cases of deception in the industry.

"We're putting manufacturers on notice about what is coming," new FDA Commissioner Mark McClellan said Wednesday. "We had a major seizure this week, and you can expect more coming."

The agency cautioned that makers of foods and dietary supplements must get FDA approval before putting those claims on their products.

Both plans "will help consumers get accurate, science-based information" necessary

to improve their health, McClellan said after a brief White House visit to discuss the changes with President Bush.

The FDA's main authority over supplements is ensuring that health-related claims on labels and in ads are truthful.

Dr. Sidney Wolfe of the consumer group Public Citizen said he hopes the pledge turns out to be "more than just public relations." Overall, he said, "what the FDA's done in the area of enforcement of dietary supplements is appalling, it's dangerous."

Congress exempted dietary supplements from most federal regulation in 1994, allowing them to be sold without proof that they are safe or benefit health. The FDA can try to force risky supplements off the

market only after the agency has proof of people being injured.

The agency is embroiled in controversy over whether it should force one supplement, ephedra, off the market or restrict sales because of reports linking the pills to heart attacks and strokes.

Annette Dickinson of the Council for Responsible Nutrition, the trade group that represents mainstream dietary supplement makers, said a misleading claim hurts consumers and is an "unfair business practice for the responsible industry that doesn't make those claims."

Calls to Halo Supply Co. of San Diego, which made the EverCLR supplement that was seized, were not immediately returned.

Police: Mother faked daughter's cancer to bilk money for supposed treatment

URBANA, Ohio (AP) — Police say a woman tried to trick her daughter and community into thinking the girl had cancer so she could raise money, even going so far as to shave the 7-year-old's head, give her sleeping pills and put her in counseling to prepare to die.

No charges had been filed against Teresa Milbrandt, 35, as of Wednesday. Her daughter, Hannah, has been taken from her and placed in the custody of relatives.

"By the time we get done, there's going to be a lot of charges here," Sgt. David Reese said.

Reese said Milbrandt admitted this week to county officials that the cancer was a hoax. He said police have collected coffee cans placed at businesses to seek donations that would supposedly go toward treatment. Police also found fliers with photos of the girl inviting people to fund-raisers, and a color TV donated as a raffle prize.

Milbrandt's husband, Robert Milbrandt, 44, is also under investigation, but no charges have been filed against him, police said.

Robert Milbrandt said he and his daughter never knew the cancer was faked. He said he took his wife to a mental hospital Tuesday.

"I don't know how you can be married to someone for so long, them lie to you and you

not know," he told the Urbana Daily Citizen.

The Milbrandts' telephone number is unpublished and The Associated Press could not locate them for comment Wednesday night.

Reese said Mrs. Milbrandt allegedly researched the effects of leukemia and gave her daughter sleeping pills and shaved her head to make it appear she was receiving chemotherapy.

He said Mrs. Milbrandt placed a bandage on the girl's back to cover a supposed "port" where chemotherapy was administered.

Reese said the girl does have some illnesses but police have determined none are life-threatening.

Police began investigating the child's illness about a week ago when employees at the girl's school noticed that her hair was cut or shaved, not falling out. They reported the situation to the county Department of Job and Family Services, and the agency contacted police.

Investigators have not been able to calculate the amount of money collected or the number of fund-raisers that have been held, but at least one church gave \$2,200 and two agencies gave \$500 each.

Reese said people in the community were shocked to hear the woman faked her child's illness.

MOW fund-raiser



(Courtesy photo)

Donna Reynolds and Joe Autry each recently contributed items for a drawing conducted by Pampa Meals on Wheels as a fund-raiser. Reynolds donated a quilt and Autry a trunk. The fund-raiser netted approximately \$1,000 for the organization. MOW is currently offering cookbooks for sale as part of yet another fund-raiser, each features recipes from board members, staff, and volunteers. For more information or to place an order, call 669-1007.

Customer Appreciation Day



(Courtesy photo)

Gladys Vanderpool, Sonya Everson, and Jerry Foote hand customer Traci Hearn a refreshment during Customer Appreciation day at National Bank of Commerce recently.

Early Deadlines

Classified Line Ads & City Briefs

Print Date	Deadline
Thurs. Dec. 26	Tues. Dec 24 10 a.m.

Display

Thurs. Dec. 26	Mon. Dec. 23 Noon
Fri. Dec. 27	Tues. Dec. 24 Noon

The Pampa News
will close at noon
December 24th
and be closed Christmas Day
No papers will be printed
Christmas Day.

Happy Holidays
The Pampa News

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Thursday, December 19, 2002

DEAR ABBY

written by Pauline Phillips and daughter Jeanna Phillips

Young Lovers Must Grow Up Before Trying to Be Grown-Ups

DEAR ABBY: I'm writing regarding the letter from "Totally in Love" about his relationship with a 13-year-old girl. You advised him that if "things went too far," he could find himself in legal trouble. That's an understatement. I am a probation officer. Last Friday, I sat in court while a client of mine was sentenced to three years (the low end of the guidelines) for having consensual sex with a 13-year-old. The girl had told him, he was 15 and said so in court. Once released from the penitentiary, he will have to register as a sex offender for the rest of his life. That 18-year-old needs to watch himself. He also needs to ask himself why he can't date girls his own age. Here in Virginia, if an 18-year-old has sex with a 13-year-old, he's a sex offender — whether or not the girl was willing.

make lifelong commitments, especially to an 18-year-old guy. The girl's mind is going to change so much as she grows up and finds out who she is and what she wants. She may not like him anymore when she gets a little older, and if she says it won't change, she's lying to herself and to him. Abby, that guy needs not only to come clean about his age to her mother, but also not dream too far ahead in the future. He should wait until she grows up before lifelong commitments come into the picture.

I hope the parents of both these young people help them to see that it's better to allow each other time to grow-up. If they're truly meant to be together, no amount of time will change their feelings for each other, and eventually they'll be able to share life experiences they'll never have in the relationship they have now. I wish them the best.

EXPERIENCED OLDER PERSON
DEAR EXPERIENCED: You have a wise and compassionate perspective. Several readers also pointed out that the age difference between this young man and the girl is so great that it is not a relationship of equals. Few girls that age can say no to someone that much older and more experienced.

CONCERNED IN MANASSAS
DEAR CONCERNED: I hope "Totally in Love" sees your letter. Its message is sobering. Read on:

DEAR ABBY: Your advice to "Totally in Love" was great, but you left something out. I'm 19, and don't profess to know everything, but someone needs to explain to him about how 13-year-olds think. At that age, none of us had any idea what love was. Puberty struck most of us full-force and our hormones were going nuts — way too early to

A WOMAN WHO REMEMBERS THAT AGE
DEAR REMEMBERS: It's unfortunate that 13-year-old girl doesn't have a sister like you. You have given sage advice.

DEAR ABBY: While I agree with your advice to "Totally in Love," I feel there is a bit more to say. From personal experience, I have found that if young people (such as his 13-year-old girlfriend) have an "exclusive" relationship, what happens is that she is excluded from the normal passages of youth. I cannot see how what people feel at 13 could possibly be what they want at 18, 21, etc. And if the relationship does "go too far," then what? Two children with a child? That young girl may well regret and resent the exclusiveness of the relationship she had when she was young.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

To order "How to Write Letters for All Occasions," send a business-sized, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for \$5 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby — Letter Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-9447. (Postage is included in the price.)

For Better or For Worse

WE'VE BEEN DISCUSSING CHRISTMAS, DAD—AND HOW WERE GOING TO ORGANIZE OUR DAY...

MIRA SOBINSKI WANTS MIKE, DEANNA AND THE BABY TO STAY AT HER HOUSE CHRISTMAS EVE AND CHRISTMAS MORNING...

SO, WE'LL HAVE ALL OUR FAMILY HERE FOR DINNER APRIL AND LIZ WILL DO THE VEGGIES, JOHN CAN GET THE TABLE, IRIS WILL BRING THE DESSERT...

YOU KNOW ME—I'M ALWAYS WILLING TO HELP OUT!

AND YOU CAN STAY OUT OF THE WAY.

Zita

WHAT ABOUT THAT ONE? THAT LOOKS COOL.

IT'S OUR MOST POPULAR DESIGN—A THREE-LAYER YELLOW CAKE TOPPED WITH A GENEROUS CROWN OF BUTTERCREAM FROSTING ROSEBUDS. \$23.95

HOW MUCH WITHOUT THE FROSTING? I'M OUTTA HERE!

Garfield

WEEEEE WISH YOU A MERRY CHRISTMAS, WE WISH YOU A MERRY CHRISTMAS...

Beetle Bailey

HERE COMES A STEALTH BOMBER WHERE?

I DON'T SEE ANYTHING I GUESS IT WORKS ON CERTAIN PEOPLE

Marvin

I GOT A SCRAPE ON MY ARM THIS MORNING ... AND MOM PUT ON A BAND-AID WITH A LITTLE PICTURE OF A DUCKY

COOL... MY FIRST TATTOO!

Crossword Puzzle

CROSSWORD
 By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS 46 Fast fliers
 1 Region
 5 Tied a shoe
 10 Cheese chunk
 12 Animated Friendship
 13 Central theme
 14 Collection
 16 Hit song of 1953
 18 Breathe out
 20 Buddhism branch
 21 Raw info
 23 Finish
 24 Marine fishes
 26 Spring period
 28 Skill
 29 Mound
 31 "The Boy King"
 32 Threw into the air
 36 Legendary warrior
 39 Chopping tool
 40 Foe of Bugs
 41 La Scala setting
 43 Loose talk
 44 Build
 45 Aunt, to Antoine

DOWN
 1 Conscious
 2 Dance record
 3 Head of costumes
 4 Rep.
 5 Flock member
 6 Scads
 7 Voter, e.g.
 8 Plain to see
 9 Represent in court
 11 Cilium
 17 Wager
 19 Tack on
 22 Steve Martin movie
 24 "101 Dalmatians" villain
 25 Footstool
 27 Pole worker
 28 Optimally
 30 Under the weather
 33 Yarns
 34 Precise
 35 Fender scars
 37 Departed
 38 Goad on
 42 Tax grp.

LOCALS BEST INABIT ARIA DENALI LINT CIRCLE DESK RACED EAU PREDATE USE OAT NUT CEZANNE ADD ELCID FLEX ARSENE FEND DOREMI LEAR AVALON UGLY MALDEN

Yesterday's answer
 6 Scads
 7 Voter, e.g.
 8 Plain to see
 9 Represent in court
 11 Cilium
 17 Wager
 19 Tack on
 22 Steve Martin movie
 24 "101 Dalmatians" villain
 25 Footstool
 27 Pole worker
 28 Optimally
 30 Under the weather
 33 Yarns
 34 Precise
 35 Fender scars
 37 Departed
 38 Goad on
 42 Tax grp.

NEW CROSSWORD BOOK! Send \$4.50 (check/m.o.) to Thomas Joseph Book 2, P.O. Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475

Marmaduke

"No, it doesn't make you look 'with it.'"

The Family Circus

"Billy says Santa Claus is a SNOOP!"

B.C.

winsome

THE SECOND WORD OF A CONCESSION SPEECH

Hagar The Horrible

OKAY, SNERT—LET'S SEE WHAT YOU LEARNED IN OBEDIENCE SCHOOL!

SIT!

VERY GOOD!

Peanuts

I REMEMBER WHEN I WAS SMALL AND I LIVED AT THE DAISY HILL PUPPY FARM, WE ALWAYS HAD A CHRISTMAS TREE...

AND IT ALWAYS HAD A LITTLE STAR ON THE TOP...

THAT WAS A LONG TIME AGO...

Flo & Friends

Treggie! Do you know what time it is?

Flo & Friends

Geez, Grandma, don't you have a watch??

Biondie

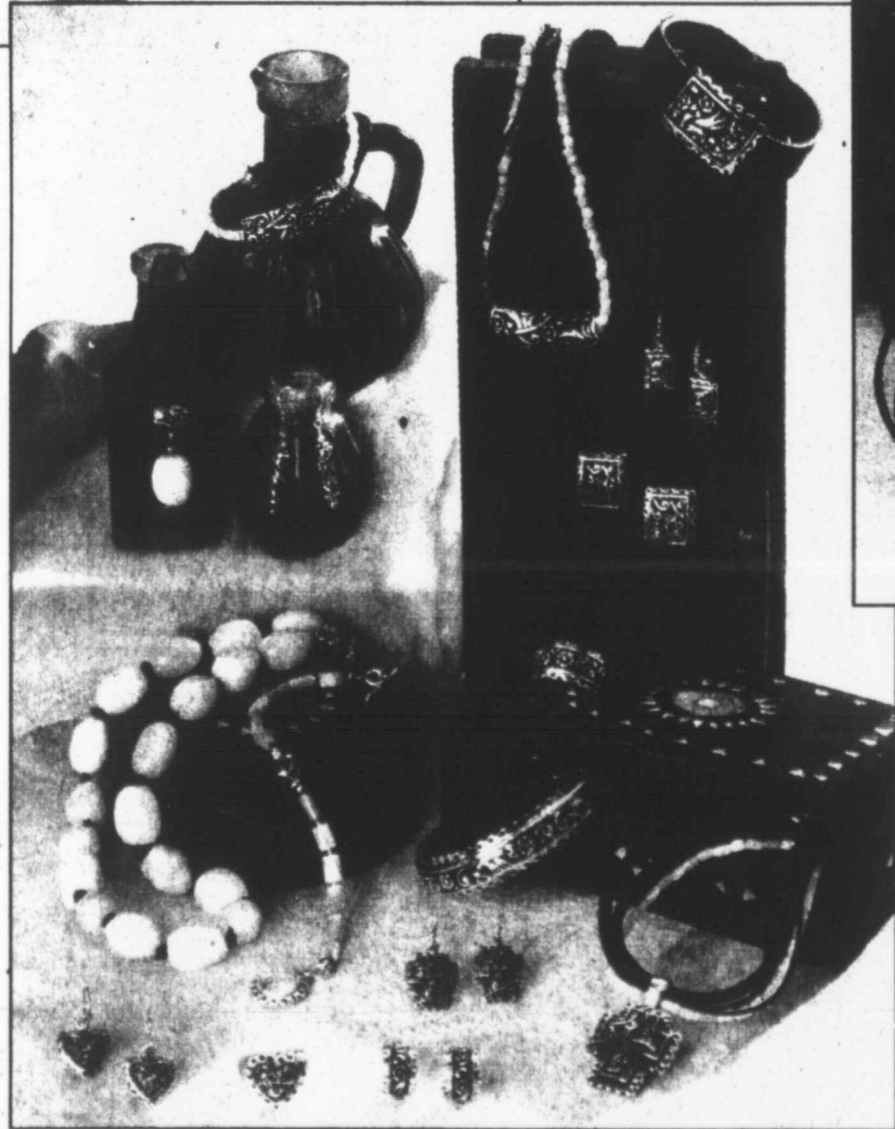
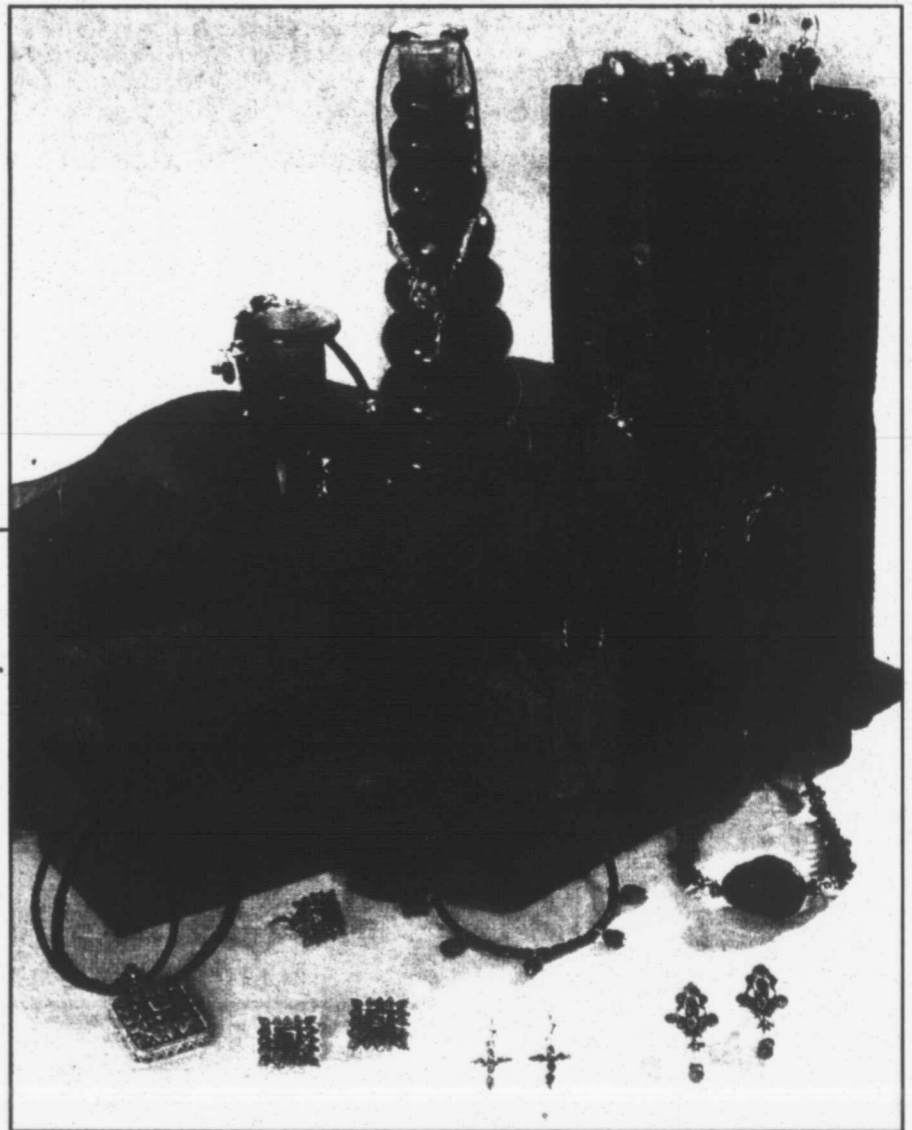
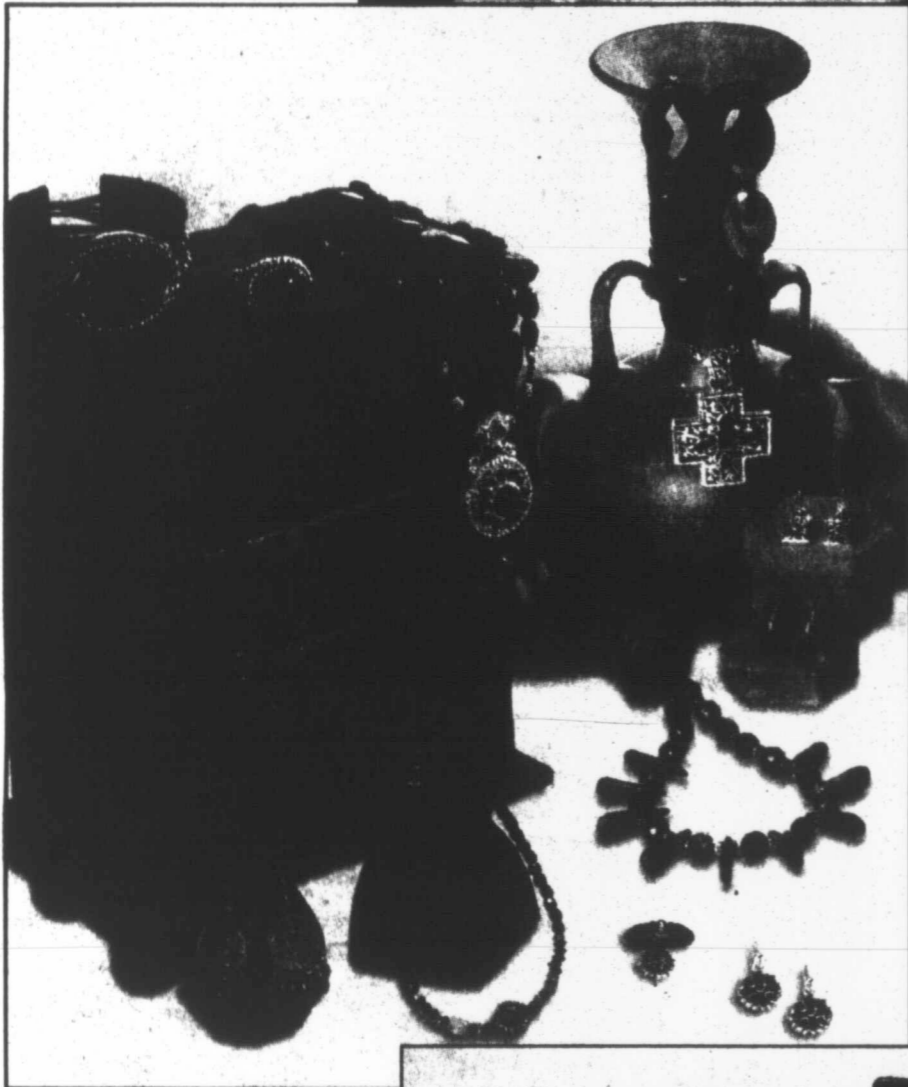
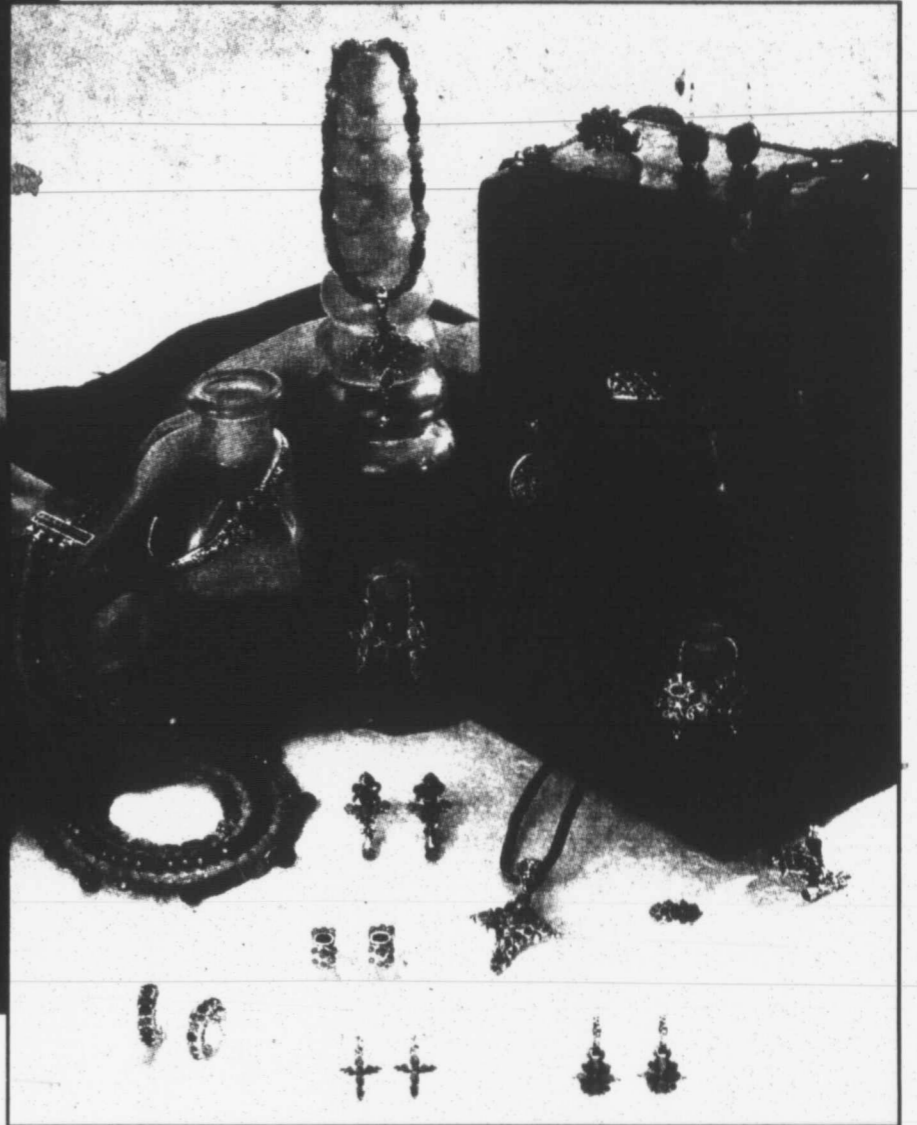
WOW! THAT'S A BIG TURKEY!

LOOK, IT CAME WITH A GUARANTEE...

GOOD FOR TWO WEEKS OF LEFTOVERS

STUMPED?
 For answer to today's crossword call 1-800-454-7377, 99¢ per min., 18 years of age or older only. A King Features Service.

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