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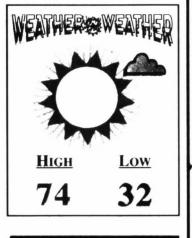
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Vol. 98 No. 546 · Pampa, Texas 50 cents Daily · Sunday \$1





STATE

One dies, three hurt in cement plant fire

MIDLOTHIAN (AP) -One person was killed and three were injured when an explosion and fire erupted at a cement plant late Tuesday.

Midlothian Police Department spokesman Amy Calder said the fire began about 11:10 p.m. Tuesday at Texas Industries' Midlothian cement plant. It was extinguished about three hours later, police said.

The explosion and fire

Insurance rates on state agenda

By NANCY YOUNG MANAGING EDITOR

Insurance will among the many issues facing the 78th Texas Legislature when it convenes Wednesday, Jan. 14, said 28th District Senator Robert Duncan.

Sen. Duncan of Lubbock now represents Gray County following the redistricting of boundaries in July 2001. The Legislative Redistricting Board (LRB) placed 31st District Senator Teel Bivins of Amarillo in Howard County's district, removing him from Gray County. Gray County had been represented by the 31st Senatorial District more than 80 years.

Duncan said two issues facing the legislators will be house insurance reform and medical malpractice insurance

Skyrocketing homeowner insurance premiums are caused by black mold claims and weather-related losses, said Duncan.

"These rates won't come down quickly," he said.

Gov. Rick Perry has stated he will declare an "emergency issue" on the escalating insurance rates. If he does that, legislators can pass bills during the first 60 days of the session.

Duncan also cited rising medical malpractice insurance rates as a major concern for the legislature. He said medical malpractice insurance is much is \$114 billion higher in the Valley of South Texas and is causing serious problems in maintaining needed physicians and health care workers.

The deficit state budget will be another major issue for the legislators to handle, he said. Comptroller Carole Keeton Rylander Strayhorn has predicted a deficit of \$5 billion for Texas.

"Ninety percent of the people serving in the senate and the House have never been in the legislature when it was in the red," he said. "In the 10 years I've been there, we've not been in the red."

After a decade of surplus, the state's current two-year spending plan

Duncan said he will take a "waitand-see" approach to the school funding issue.

"I don't know if we will do it in the regular session," he said. "It can't be fixed with the current tax structure.

He said Senate Bill 7, passed in 1993 to deal with school finance, was not passed until "there was an absolute crisis.

Duncan said he thought the issue could get solved better in a general session of the legislature as there would be more intensity.

"If it's not fixed by then, (school finance) may have to be in a special (See **RATES**, Page 3)

'The Women' Local cast brings famous '30s play to ACT I stage

Gold-diggers, schemers, gossips, and social climbers - these are the women who populate "The Women," a 1936 comedy by Clare Boothe Luce being presented by ACT I community theatre group as the season opener Jan. 10-12 and Jan. 17-18.

Fifteen women and one young man play about 40 different roles with lots of new faces making their ACT I debut. Kayla Pursley is directing and Berinda Turcotte is assisant director.

Board members and volunteers under the direction of James Kane have been busy remodeling the theater. The stage and dressing room area have been moved and bathrooms made accessible. ACT I veteran season ticket holders will notice the new lobby and office.

Performances begin at 7:30 p.m., each night, with a Sunday matinee at 2 p.m. on Jan. 12. The theatre entrance is midway on the back side of the Pampa Mall, 2530 N. Hobart. Season ticket holders get preferred seating. Tickets are \$7 for adults and \$3.50 for children.

"The Women" cast members (in alphabetical order) include



occurred next to a pollution control device called a scrubber, TXI spokesman Maurice Osborn said.

The 2-year-old plant had been closed for repairs when the accident occurred. The workers were contractors making repairs and did not work for TXI, Osborn said.

The name of the victim, who was pronounced dead at the scene, was being withheld until relatives could be notified, police said. The three injured people were not immediately identified.

One of them was taken by medical helicopter to Parkland Memorial Hospital in Dallas, where he was in stable condition. Osborn said. The other two were treated and released at a nearby hospital, he said. .

The cause of the fire was unclear. Investigators were at the scene, Osborn said.

DEATHS

Donald C. Ormson, 82. businessman.

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Comics		•	•	•	.6
Sports					.7

West Texas LANDSCAPE

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(Courtesy photo)

Youngest cast members Jennifer Jones, 11, and Shelby Needham, 11, get to play a little older and more sophisticated Casino Roof Club.

the following:

Cynthia Aler, "Sylvia," is making her ACT I debut and confesses she hasn't done any drama since high school although daughter, Kat, has been acting for several years. Cindy is a basketball coach with the Optimist Club.

Kat Aler, "Little Mary," is an ACT I veteran having played ladies as Girl #1 and Girl #2 at the in last year's "The Prince and the Pauper" direct-(See PLAY, Page 3)

(Courtesy Photo)

Cynthia Aler, playing Sylvia Fowler in a recent rehearsal, screams "I hate vou. I hate vou!" after a wicked cat fight with the woman who "stole" her husband.

Bush pushes bold economic stimulus plan

WASHINGTON (AP) -President Bush, who stunned his critics in 2001 by winning passage of the biggest tax cut since Ronald Reagan, is hoping to repeat history with a a sputtering recovery. Bush bolder-than-expected \$674 billion stimulus plan.

But whether he wins or loses in Congress, his strategy is almost certainly aimed at

avoiding another bit of history - his father's costly political mistake of appearing to ignore the pain inflicted by the nation's last jobless recovery.

"Too many of our citizens who want to work cannot find a job and many employers lack the confidence to invest

and create new jobs," Bush said Tuesday in Chicago, where he unveiled his new package of tax cuts. He said the cuts were needed to bolster was courting Democratic and Republican lawmakers Wednesday in a White House meeting.

Indeed, the last year's performance bears many similarities to the period when Bush's father was in the White House and the economy was coming out of the 1990-91 recession with economic growth so weak that the unemployment rate kept rising.

AP News ANALYSIS

an eight-year high of 6 percent in November. Analysts are predicting the rate will head even higher in coming months, probably topping out at 6.5 percent in early summer, before stronger growth starts to convince businesses they can hire back laid-off workers.

Bush doesn't want his 2004 Democratic opponent to enjoy the kind of success Bill Clinton had in 1992 by using a rising jobless rate to con-

The jobless rate returned to vince voters to reject an

incumbent president.

Both the size of Bush's new stimulus package – at \$674 billion, more than double what the White House just a week ago had been indicating would be offered – and its component parts, which are weighted heavily toward tax relief for the wealthiest Americans, demonstrate that Bush is not afraid to be bold in pushing his economic agenda.

Bush, who complained last week that critics were using "class warfare" arguments. rejected the advice of some of his advisers to tone down the tax breaks for the wealthy to blunt such criticism.

Instead, he proposed accelerating all the rate cuts scheduled for 2004 and 2006, including those for the top. bracket of wealthy taxpayers, and proposed eliminating the tax on corporate dividend payments, not just cutting it in half as contemplated.

The elimination of federal taxes on the dividends corporations pay investors will cost \$364 billion, more than half of Bush's \$674 billion total package. The joint Urban Institute-Brookings Institution Tax Policy Center estimated that 42 percent of these tax savings would go to wealthiest 1 per-

(See BUSH, Page 3)

Commuter plane crashes at airport; all 21 aboard believed to have died

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (AP) - A commuter plane carrying 21 people crashed into an airport hangar on takeoff Wednesday and burst into flames, killing everyone aboard, authorities said.

The cause of the crash - the deadliest U.S. air accident in nearly 14 months - wasn't immediately clear.

US Airways Express Flight 5481, a Beech 1900 twin-engine turboprop, was taking off in clear, windy weather from Charlotte/Douglas International Airport when it hit the corner of a U.S. Airways hangar at full throttle just before 9 a.m., officials said.

Nineteen passengers and two crew members were aboard the flight, which was operated by Air Midwest and headed to Greenville-Spartanburg, said Federal Aviation Administration spokeswoman Laura Brown The last radio contact with the pilots was clearance for takeoff, she said.

"The plane is so destroyed there's not

much to see," said Charlotte police spokesman Keith Bridges. "It's just a horrible sight.'

The plane veered into the hangar and came down on its roof, witnesses told WCNC-TV. Video from the scene showed smoldering wreckage and a charred side of the hangar.

Airport director Jerry Orr said there were no survivors aboard the plane, however three people on the ground who were thought to have been missing had been accounted for.

There was no immediate indication of terrorism, the FBI said.

At Greenville-Spartanburg airport, a room had been set up for friends and relatives arriving to pick up passengers from the flight, airport spokeswoman Rosylin Weston said.

The plane was about 8 years old and had 15,000 hours of flight time and 21,000 takeoffs and landings, said Jonathan Ornstein, chief executive of Mesa Airlines, which owns (See CRASH, Page 3)

Aging population causes increase in U.S. flu deaths

CHICAGO (AP) Influenza has surpassed AIDS as a lethal killer and contributes to an average 36,000 annual U.S. deaths, largely because of a vulnerable aging population for whom the vaccine is often ineffective, government research shows.

The U.S. flu-related death toll surged fourfold from 16.263 in 1976-77 to 64,684 in 1998-99, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported in Wednesday's Journal of the American Medical Association. Those numbers average out to 16,000 more deaths yearly than the previous estimate of 20,000.

Health and Human Services Secretary Tommy

Thompson said the news "that influenza may be taking an even larger toll than we have realized" underscores the importance of flu shots, especially for older people.

Drug breakthroughs in the mid-1990s helped reduce U.S AIDS deaths from 51,000 in 1995 to about 15,000 in 2001 But the main weapon doctors have against flu - a vaccine has proven disappointingly ineffective in the most susceptible population: people 65 and older.

Older people are more prone to flu complications yet only about 65 percent of them get vaccinated. The annual shots do not protect aging immune systems as well as-

(See FLU, Page 3)

	ON RE	ECORD		P
SHERIFF Gray County Sheriff's Department reported the following arrests during the	STOCKS The following grain quotations are VLO	FIRE Pampa Fire Department responded to the following calls during the 24-hour period	AMBULANCE Rural/Metro Ambulance reported the fol- lowing calls during the 24-hour period end-	ed me Oz
24-hour period ending at 7 a.m. Tuesday, Jan. 7 Gary W. Jernigan, 35, 1237 Duncan, was arrested on a blue warrant. Amparo Ortega, 42, 619 Carr, was arrested for driving while intoxicated. Cutter Doy Hutchison, 30, 312 1/2 N. Wells, was arrested on two capias pro fines.	Pampa. Triad Hospitals 28.50 -1.00 Wheat .3.41 NOI .21.01 -0.24 Milo .3.99 KMI .43.50 +0.10 Corn .4.47 XCEL .11.82 +0.02 Soybeans .5.00 Kerr McGee .42.43 -0.24 Sunflowers .9.00 Limited .13.75 -0.30 The following show prices for which these mutual funds were bid at the time of compilation: Occidental .28.25 -0.24 Pioneer Nat .24.20 -0.26 Fidelity Mageln NA Ponney's .23.66 +0.18 Puritan .NA COP .48.08 -0.36	ending at 7 a.m. today. Tuesday, Jan. 7 12 noon – Two units and six firefighters responded to an alarm at 1321 W. Kentucky. It was a false alarm and the call was can- celled before firefighters arrived. 8:23 p.m. – One unit and three firefighters responded to a lifting assist in the 100 block of South Russell.	ing at 7 a.m. today. Tuesday, Jan. 7 7:42 a.m. – A mobile ICU responded to Starkweather at Louisiana; one patient was transported to Pampa Regional Medical Center. 6:52 p.m. – A mobile ICU responded to the 2700 block of North Hobart; no patient was transported.	#1 ch Ra hig act I d Wa AC
Matthew Preston Walker, 18, McLean, was arrested for injury to the disabled. Jose Perez, 27, 1120 Sirroco, was arrest- ed by Department of Public Safety on a warrant for driving while license suspend- ed.	The following 9:30 a m. N.Y. Tenneco 3.77 +0.01 Stock Market quotations are fur- nished by Edward Jones & Co. CVX	Por Pampa Police Department today reported the following incidents. Tuesday, Jan. 8 A runaway was reported in the 1600 block of North Christy.	LICE Domestic assault was reported in the 400 block of Hazel. According to the police report, no injuries were reported. Theft was reported in the 1900 block of North Hobart. A pager valued at \$55 was	th Co gr Ta is In

UBITUARIES

DONALD C. ORMSON 1920-2003

Care Center in Borger, Texas. Services will be held at 10 a.m., Friday, Jan. 10, at First Baptist Church, Borger, Texas. The Rev. Ronald Rhoads, evangelist and grandson-inlaw, Lewisville, Texas, and Dr. Kerry Ormson, Don's son, will be officiating while being assisted by Joe Janeway and Robert Hensley of First Baptist Church. Burial will be in Memory Gardens in Pampa, Texas, under the direction of Brown's Funeral Directors, Borger, Texas.

Don Ormson was born in Monroe County, Wis., on Nov. 19, 1920. After enlisting in the military, he was stationed at Pampa Army Air Field as a Staff Sergeant in Texas. In 1943, Don married Jean Harrison in Pampa. In 1945, he was sent to India for a tour of duty. After the end of World War II, Don returned to Pampa to raise his family. In 1952, the Ormsons moved to Borger, Texas.

Don worked at Coronado Drug until 1955, then he entered the office supply field. From 1956 to 1967, he was the Manager of Borger Office Supply. Afterwards, Don became associated with Jim Hess Printers and Stationers. In 1980, he and his wife, Jean, operated Ormson Office Supply until his retirement in 1985.

Don was a member of the First Baptist Church of Borger since 1952, serving as a deacon, Sunday School teacher, and a choir member. He also served the Panhandle area Thursday, at Brown's Funeral Directors.

Donald C. Ormson, 82-years-old, passed as a member of the Gideon's International for away on Tuesday, Jan. 7, 2003, at the Quinn 48 years. As a member of Rotary International, Don served as Past President of the Borger Club as well as chairman of many committees for civic projects. He was a member of the China/India/Burma Reunion Fellowship of those who served in the military in those countries.

> He is preceded in death by his wife, Jean; three brothers, Archie, Orville, Benny; and one sister, Olga Knutson. Survivors include his son, Dr. Kerry Ormson and wife, Nancy, Amarillo, Texas; his daughter, Judy Springfield, Irving, Texas; his sister, Eleanor Thompson, Kendall, Wis.; his niece, Jerrie Biggers, Pampa; and his nephew, Bobby Brazil, Pampa. Don also had six grandchildren (Zane, Torrie, Jon, Kris, Amber, and Russell) and four great-grandchildren (Taylor, Joshua, Kaitlyn, and Nicholas).

> Pallbearers are Verlie Deaton, Ronald Raff, Al Bierman, Gerald Cornelius, Art Taylor, Vance Brown, Jim Hess, and Ed Biggs.

> Honorary Pallbearers will be members of the Borger Gideon's International, Borger Rotary Club, and Bill Willard's Sunday School Class.

Memorials may be mailed to the Gideon's International, Box 5800, Borger. TX 79008, or Crown Hospice of Amarillo, 1000 S. Jefferson, Amarillo, TX 79101.

Family visitation will be from 7-8 p.m.,

Administration opening door to dialogue with North Korea

Credit card abuse was reported at Beall's A runaway was reported in the 900 block Department Store. EATHER FOCUS

Criminal mischief was reported at a res-

idence in the 1600 block of West

Somerville. According to the police report,

holes were knocked in the walls, and a car-

bon monoxide detector and wall mounted

ashtray were reported taken from the laun-

dry room. Damage estimate was approxi-

Рамра

taken.

mately \$400.

Today's forecast is calling for mostly sunny skies, highs in the mid 70s, and southwest winds 5 to 15 mph. Tonight's forecast should be partly cloudy with lows in the lower 30s, and southwest winds 5 to 15 mph shifting to the northwest. Thursday, mostly sunny. Much colder. Highs in the lower 50s. North winds 15 to 20 mph. Thursday night, partly cloudy. Lows in the lower 20s. Light winds. Friday, partly cloudy. Highs in the mid 40s. East winds 5 to 15 mph. Friday night, partly

Theft was reported in the 2100 block of

Coffee. Reported taken were an engagement

ring, necklace, earrings, and two coats. Loss

Vandalism to a vehicle was reported to a vehicle

Telephone harassment was reported in the

in the 1300 block of Coffee. A side window was

damaged by a BB with a damage estimate of \$250.

was estimated at \$1,050.

700 block of Dean.

of Brunow.

A lingering area of high coast to far West Texas. pressure that's brought pleasant weather to Texas will hang on for a few more days, forecasters with the said

Temperatures ranged from the upper 30s to the lower 40s across North Texas early the south at 5-10 mph.

mid 30s. Chance of rain and snow 30 percent. Saturday night, mostly cloudy. Chance of snow. Lows in the mid 20s. Chance of snow 30 percent. Sunday, mostly sunny. Highs in the mid 40s. Sunday night, partly cloudy. Lows in the lower 30s. Monday, partly cloudy. Highs in the mid 50s. Monday night, partly cloudy. Lows in the mid 20s. Tuesday, partly cloudy. Highs in the mid 50s.

south wind from 5-10 prevailed elsewhere.

North Texas will be partly Wednesday. Winds blew from cloudy and warm on Wednesday night, with lows cloudy overnight, with lows Elsewhere, mostly clear near 50. Partly cloudy and in the lower to middle 30s. conditions were reported, cooler conditions were on tap Highs in the middle 40s to although some scattered clouds for Thursday. Highs will be in about 50 were forecast for

cloudy. Lows in the lower 20s. Saturday, cloudy. Chance of rain and snow. Highs in the

STATEWIDE

Clouds will thicken Predawn temperatures Wednesday night in South ranged from 33 degrees at Texas as lows fall into the Junction to 52 at Brownsville. upper 40s north and the lower Winds in West Texas were 50s south. Isolated showers National Weather Service blowing from the west at were possible on Thursday southwest at 5-15 mph. A morning, giving way to partly cloudy and breezy conditions by afternoon. Highs will be in

> the 70s. West Texas will be partly

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AP DIPLOMATIC WRITER

WASHINGTON (AP) The Bush administration has opened the door to dialogue with North Korea, but said Wednesday Pyongyang should not expect U.S. incentives, such as new financial aid, to drop its nuclear programs.

North Korea has not responded. White House spokesman Ari Fleischer said the offer to talk should not be seen as "a negotiation to give them any inducements, when previous inducements that were given to them were disobeved."

'They dropped their end of the agreement and they should certainly not expect the United States to give them additional inducements to honor old agreements," he said.

"The ball is in their court," Fleischer said. "They are the ones that created this situation by reneging on agreements that they made, and we will continue to work closely with our allies."

The offer to talk is unconditional, but the administration is standing by its position that North Korea must give up its nuclear weapons programs.

"We are not going to pay again for North Korea to live up to its obligations," State Department spokesman Richard Boucher said Tuesday. He referred to a pledge North Korea took in 1994 to freeze the programs in exchange for fuel oil and two light water reactors, a deal financed mostly by Japan and South Korea.

The hard line the administration had taken toward an bellicose increasingly Pyongyang eased with the offer of a dialogue.

and stop their aggressive pursuit of greater nuclear weapons capabilities, they know how to reach members of the international community," said Sean McCormack, spokesman for President Bush's National Security Council. "We are prepared to listen.'

Boucher said, "It's an unconditional offer to talk to North Korea about how it can meet its international obligations.'

Among them is an accord with South Korea that the Korean peninsula would be kept free of nuclear weapons.

"We will obviously be looking to see how North Korea responds and what they say, either in private or in public, what they are willing to do," Boucher said.

There was no immediate, direct response to the U.S. offer, but the official news agency, KCNA, said Wednesday there is an "increasing danger of a nuclear war on the Korean Peninsula" because of the United States and urged the two Koreas to "pool their efforts and condemn and frustrate the U.S. nuclear policy for aggression."

The U.S. offer was included in a statement issued jointly with South Korea and Japan after two days of meetings at the State Department. A copy of the joint communique was sent to the North

Korean mission to the United Nations. South Korean Deputy Foreign Minister Lee Tae-Sik said the participants in the talks agreed that North Korea should take the first step by giving up its nuclear weapons program. "Only after this can we imagine serious discussions or dialogue taking place," Lee said.

He said the United States, "If the North Koreans are Japan and South Korea did prepared to reverse course not set a timetable for North

Korean action, "but the situation is getting worse and worse and we all have to assume not much time is left." South Korea would continue its contacts with North Korea to stress the importance of resolving the problem, he said.

The offer of dialogue was backed by Bush, who again offered assurances in a Chicago speech that "we have no aggressive intentions, no argument with the North Korean people. We're interested in peace in the Korean peninsula.

North Korea has demanded a nonaggression treaty with the United States.

In Pyongyang on Tuesday, thousands of North Koreans rallied in support of a stronger military. And the government said U.S. economic sanctions would lead to war.

The joint statement in Washington said Japan's and South Korea's dialogues with North Korea "serve as important channels to resolve issues of bilateral concern.

extended from the lower Texas the middle 60s. Thursday. **Dynegy holding out greater expectations**

for new year than Wall Street predictions

HOUSTON (AP) Dynegy Inc. officials are optimistic 2003 will bring profits larger than Wall Street had expected and a smaller debt load as the energy company continues revamping its business.

Dynegy also plans to jettison its money-losing trading and communications businesses this year, officials said Tuesday. The company expects to earn 8 cents to 15 cents per share, or \$31 million to \$54 million this year, exceeding analysts' consensus estimate of 3 cents per share.

Dynegy was among the energy companies battered by fleeing investors and squeezed credit ratings in the fallout of former rival Enron Corp.'s December 2001 failure.

"Our credit standing and

Dynegy," Chief Executive Bruce Williamson said. Dynegy's forecast assumes

the company will successfully renegotiate \$1.3 billion in bank agreements due in April and May, despite its low credit ratings, which are below investment grade.

Dynegy will continue paying down debt and rely on its generation and natural gas liquids businesses, as well as its Illinois utility, to provide an estimated \$1.2 billion to \$1.3 billion in 2003 cash flow.

The company has access to \$1.47 billion, either in cash on hand or in bank credit, after paying \$850 million of the company's total \$7.7 billion debt last year. It plans to pay another \$100 million this month.

Gordon Howald, an analyst the economy have created a with Credit Lyonnaise, said challenging environment for Dynegy's outlook may be "a

little bit rosy" when it comes to anticipating gas and power prices and successful renegotiations with banks. But the company's future isn't as bleak as it appeared a few months ago,

he said. "The key point here is, it appears that they are going to make it through at least November 2003," Howald said. "Going from a company that appeared to be very likely to file bankruptcy, Dynegy is now a company that has a pretty good shot at surviving 2003.

Throughout 2002. Dynegy replaced top executives, shut down its Enronlike online trading platform, announced plans to scrap its trading business, laid off more than 1,100 workers and sold about \$2 billion in assets.

'The communications business should be sold or shut down by the end of the first quarter," Williamson said.

Dynegy is the only energy company so far to settle regulatory probes into trading or accounting practices, without admitting wrongdoing.

The company agreed in September to pay \$3 million to the Securities and Exchange Commission regarding a natural gas dealthat forced Dynegy to restate financial statements for 1999-2001.

Then Dynegy agreed to pay \$5 million to the Commodity Trading Futures Commission last month regarding fake trades reported to industry publications to skew natural gas prices in Dynegy's favor.

City Briefs

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THE PAMPA NEWS - WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 8, 2003 - 3

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PLAY

ed by Gina Kane. She was also in the the elementary choir production of "the Wizard of Oz." Kat is a student at Pampa Middle School.

Judy Blackshear, "Peggy" and "Shop Girl #1," is a full-time mother of "two beautiful children" - a daughter Brooklyn and a son Randall. Her acting credits include several high school productions where she did it all acting, makeup and directing. This is her ACT I debut.

Diana Bruner, "Olga," "Masseuse," "Ms. Watts" and "Lucy," serves as secretary on the ACT I board of directors. She's been onstage the past three years, playing in "Musical Comedy Murders," "Claptrap" and "Moon Over Buffalo." She is a London certified high grade gold assayer.

Michele Dabbs, "Pedicurist," "Princess Tamara," "Ms. Trimmerback," and "Helene" is a mother of five and works for Pampa Independent School District at Travis

Elementary in the cafeteria and for Latch Key. She made her acting debut last season as Eileen in "Moon over Buffalo."

Carla Gifford, "Countess de Lage," hasn't been or stage since high school and grade school. She works at Garden Shop. She and her husband Rober, have four children and 12 grandchildren. Carla, sister to Diana Bruner, is making her ACT I debut.

Shirley Fave Hoskins, "Hairdresser #1," 'Maggie," "Nurse" and "Woman #1," is a convenience store manager. "I've wanted to do this all my life," says Shirley. She also serves on the ACT I board.

Jennifer Jones, "Eupie," "Shop Girl #2" and "Club Girl #2," attends Pampa Middle School. She is making her ACT I debut in playing a variety of parts.

Brandon Alton Kane, "Hairdresser #2' and "Fitter," is a sophomore at Pampa High School. He is making his acting debut with ACT I but is no stranger to the stage having played Romeo and LeBray in "Cyrano." Gina Kane, "Edith Potter," is on the board

of directors and has been involved with ACT I on stage, as a children's theater director and served as costume mistress for several years. She and husband James have four children.

Rochelle Lacy, "Jane" and "Saleslady #1," is an ACT I veteran from it's inception. She has directed, acted and served on the board for 19 years. Her bachelor's degree is in theater and her master's is in history. She and husband Calvin have five married children, 13 grandchildren and three great grandkids, two of whom plan to follow in her theatrical steps

Sheila Lindsay, "Miriam Aarons," has been involved with ACT I for seven years as an actor, director and board member. She stays busy these days caring for the newest Lindsay family member, 8-month-old Jeron.

Shelby Needham, "Stagehand" and "Girl #1," is a student at Pampa Middle School also. She has been involved with the children's theater productions directed by Gina Kane.

Lisa Ryan, "Crystal," was a military brat living mostly up and down the East Coast.

Today she's site director at Celanese. She's a newcomer to ACT I.

Karen Smith, "Mary Haines," is making her ACT I debut. She's married to Charles and they have three children, Christopher, Matthew and Hannah. Karen is a substitute teacher and Sunday school teacher with a degree in sociology.

Kim Tatum, "Mrs. Morehead," works for a local grocery store and is making her ACT I debut. She hasn't been on stage since her college days when she played Mae Sister Woman from "Cat on a Hot Tin Roof" and Peppermint Patty in "You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown." She's been married for 20 years and she and her husband have one son David.

Berinda Turcotte, "Nancy Blake," "Ms. Fordyce" and "Saleswoman #2" has won several Best Actress awards for her ACT I performances. Recently she starred in an Amarillo Little Theater production of "Three Tall Women." Turcotte is president of the ACT I board of directors and is scheduled to direct ACT I's next production.

BUSH

cent of taxpayers.

Many economists were perplexed by the plan's heavy reliance on the dividend tax elimination in a package that is supposed to jump-start a sputtering economy, given that taxpayers won't even see this relief until next year when they file their 2003 tax returns.

The administration, however, is counting on the tax dividend proposal to lift spirits on Wall Street, where investors have been battered by a \$7 trillion drop in stock valuations over the past three years. Some advisers estimate that stock prices could rise by 10 percent with an elimination of the dividend tax.

Of course, Bush may also be using the size of his package as a bargaining ploy,

intending to trade away some elements later for items more favored by Democrats.

There are already competing Democratic proposals in both the Senate and House that have far smaller price tags and offer much more relief to lower-income workers and cash-strapped states.

Two potential Democratic presidential rivals, Sens. Joseph Lieberman and John Kerry, blasted Bush's package on Tuesday as a giveaway to the wealthy at the expense of middle-class workers.

White House spokesman Ari Fleischer said Wednesday that many Democrats opposed Bush's 2001 tax plan "at first blush," but some were converted.

However, there was an early sign that moderate Republicans might balk at parts of Bush's proposal. Moderate Republican Sen. Lincoln Chafee of Rhode Island planned to

announce legislation on Thursday that would freeze the top income-tax rate at its current 38.6 percent until budget surpluses return.

In the House, where the rules give the majority Republicans more control over the flow of legislation, House Speaker Dennis Hastert, R-III., predicted the measure that is finally passed "will look very much like what the president has asked for."

While economists generally applauded the plan as carrying effective stimulus measures, they questioned why Bush had earmarked only a token \$3.6 billion to states.

Mark Zandi, chief economist of Economy.com, said Bush's package will probably boost economic growth by 0.7 percentage point this year. But he said the spending cuts and tax increases states are Press in Washington since 1984.

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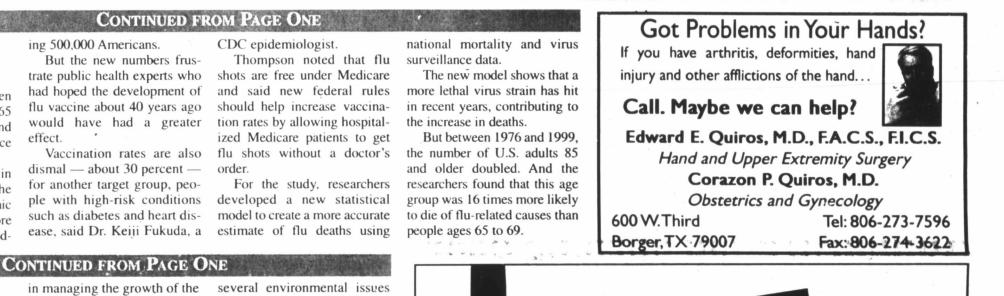
Safety-Your Mo

join Sen. Dianne Feinstein, D-Calif., to being forced to enact to balance their budgets will probably trim 0.5 percentage point from growth, leaving a tiny 0.2 percentage point improvement for the economy as a whole from government actions.

> Other analysts worried that Bush's plan might provide a short-term boost for the economy this year but turn into a long-term drag over the next decade by causing budget deficits to explode and send interest rates soaring.

"I am worried that we are giving away so much in tax cuts, that we will never get back to a budget balance," said David Wyss, chief economist at Standard & Poor's in New York.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Martin Crutsinger has covered economic issues for The Associated



ing 500,000 Americans. But the new numbers frustrate public health experts who shots are free under Medicare flu vaccine about 40 years ago would have had a greater tion rates by allowing hospital-Vaccination rates are also dismal — about 30 percent —

for another target group, people with high-risk conditions such as diabetes and heart disease, said Dr. Keiji Fukuda, a

RATES

FLU

2000.

they do younger ones.

Annual flu shots have been

recommended for people 65

and older since the 1960s and

for those 50 and older since

comparison to that of the

worldwide influenza epidemic

of 1918, which killed more

than 20 million people, includ-

The flu death toll pales in

session," he said.

Many school districts across the state are pushing for a change in the school finance laws. The present system takes money from wealthier school districts and gives it to the poorer districts.

One of every four school districts in the state has hit a legal limit on its property-tax rate, at \$1.50 for every \$100 in property value.

Costs of social services in Texas can be handled by better management, he said.

"We can be more creative

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

CRASH

Air Midwest.

A maintenance alert had been in which there were no deaths issued in August for the same model of airplane after attachment bolts for the vertical stabilizer were found loose on a plane that a year went by without a during a scheduled inspection.

Maintenance records on the according to the FAA.

ogram," said Duncan He said Texas had to

effect.

approve an additional \$2 billion to keep the Medicaid and CHIPS program "floating" because of the federal requirements.

Duncan said 80 percent of the health claims in the two state-furnished health care programs come from 20 percent of the people who are insured.

"We need to get better management of the programs to see costs go down," he said.

He added that there are

plane that crashed weren't

The crash comes after a year

aboard a passenger or cargo air-

liner in the United States. It had

been the third time in a decade

fatality on a commercial plane,

immediately available.

coming before the legislatu "But I don't know how we will fund them all," he said.

Water will be a prominent issue of the upcoming 140day session, he said. "The wisdom of the rule of capture has been raised and probably will be a topic," he said.

"It will be an interesting session," said Duncan.

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House GOP leaders make it easier for free vacations

BY LARRY MARGASAK ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

WASHINGTON (AP) House Republican leaders concealed from the chamber's ethics leaders the now-approved rules changes that allow charities to give lawmakers free vacations and make it easier for lobbyists to send food to congressional offices.

Rep. Joel Hefley, a Colorado Republican who led the House ethics committee in the last Congress, said he learned of the proposals Monday -- too late to organize an effort to delete them from a larger package of rules revisions. The package passed Tuesday on a party line vote.

Hetley, who said he may lead the panel again this year, said Tuesday he decided to try and modify the looser rules later rather than stop them immediately.

served as the ranking minority member of the ethics panel, said he was not consulted either. Berman will not be serving this year on the panel because of term limits imposed by House rules.

A spokesman for House Speaker Dennis-Hastert, R-III., said the changes were cosmet-

the ethical standards introduced by Republicans when they took control of the House in 1995. The GOP toughened standards of conduct for House members and staff after numerous ethics investigations under Democratic rule for the previous four decades. The Senate has not acted to ease its gift rules

11

The House rules package with the ethics changes passed on a party-line vote of 221-203. A Democratic effort to kill the revisions was defeated 225-200.

"We weren't consulted," Hefley said. "We're in a position to know what gets people in trouble.

Hefley said he wants to find a way to have lawmakers help a legitimate charity but added, "You don't want boondoggle deals where you get a nice vacation and someone else pays for it.

Berman said: "I think it's a big mistake. I Rep. Howard Berman, D-Calif., who wish they had given the committee a chance to review the issues before putting them into the rules package."

> The ethics committee, formally the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct, has an equal number of Democrats and Republicans.

The Democrat who led the opposition to ic, but Democrats said they seriously eroded the rules changes Tuesday in the first debate when lobbyists want to have dinner delivered

of the 108th Congress childed the to a committee office when lawmakers and Republicans for undoing the tough rules they initiated.

"The Republican majority made much of past abuses in this body," said Rep. Martin Frost, D-Texas. "Yet, now that the Republicans believe they have a safe and secure majority for the foreseeable future, they want to undo some of the significant strides that were made."

John Feehery, the spokesman for Speaker Dennis Hastert, said the changes were clarifications. "The purpose of the charity provision is to allow members to support charities," he said. The perishable food provision, dubbed by the Democrats as the "pizza rule," means that "low-paid staff can have something to eat at dinner. They can eat pizza ethically," Feehery said.

The charity rule allows organizations certified as charities by the Internal Revenue Service to pay for travel and lodging for events sponsored by the charitable group. Currently, a House member must pay for his own transportation and hotel.

The prohibition was adopted to discourage lawmakers from attending charitable events at resorts, amounting to free vacations.

The new food rule applies, for example,

their staffs are working late on legislation.

Before the change, the value of the food would have counted against a \$49.99 ceiling for a single gift to a member and a \$99.99 annual limit for gifts from the same source.

The change allocates the value of the food against the gift limits of all those who eat it. It was unclear how House officials will keep track of everyone who grabs a slice of pizza or a chicken leg from a table full of food.

The House Committee on Standards of Official Conduct, the ethics committee's formal name, distributed gift-rule guidance to lawmakers last November that said the \$49.99 limit "cannot be evaded by ... averaging the expense of gifts given to more than one member or staff person.'

Don Simon, acting president of Common Cause, said the perishable food rule would create "an easy avenue around the gift rule. It's really a proposal that's in bad faith. To surface this on the day Congress opens gets the House off on a very bad foot.'

Simon said the charity provision "re-creates the abuse of the sham vacation for members in the guise of charitable events."

"There's a long record of abuse, which led to adoption of the rule in the first place," he

Daschle says not planning to run for presidency in 2004

Democratic leader Tom Daschle has decided not to run for president in all the way up to decision time.

Daschle's announcement surprised even some of his own staffers, who were planning a campaign kickoff Saturday in his home town of Aberdeen, S.D., tollowed by campaign trips to states with early presidential contests.

"To be honest, I came very close to deciding in favor of running," the South Dakota lawmaker said Tuesday. He chose instead to run for re-election to the U.S. Senate.

ous 24 hours to stay in the Senate.

'I'm not going to run for president 2004 after wrestling with his choice because my passion is right here," he said. "I must say I feel as good about

this decision as any Γ ve ever made." Daschle laughed when he was asked at a news briefing Tuesday if it felt strange to be a prominent Democratic senator who was not running for president. He also laughed off a question about whom he would support. "We will be excited about our nominee, and until that time, may the best person win," he said.

Fellow Sens. John Kerry of Massachusetts and John Edwards of He told reporters as late as Sunday North Carolina are seeking the that he was leaning toward running for Democratic nomination and Sen. president, but on Tuesday afternoon Joseph Lieberman of Connecticut is

soon. Sens. Bob Graham of Florida and Joseph Biden of Delaware are also considering a White House bid.

Vermont Gov. Howard Dean and Rep. Dick Gephardt of Missouri are also in the race, and Gen. Wesley really believes he can do more for this Clark of Arkansas is considering a run

Al Gore, the 2000 Democratic nominee, probably would have dominated the field if he had run. But he said in mid-December that he was not entering the race.

Several of Daschle's Democratic colleagues said they were pleased the 55-year-old lawmaker would remain as their leader and challenge President Bush's agenda from the Senate.

"The Democratic caucus is

WASHINGTON (AP) - Senate said he had decided within the previ- expected to announce his candidacy stronger because he will continue as to the party by not being a candidate in our leader in the United States competition with some of the very Senate, where we need his purposeful leadership now more than ever," Kerry said.

> "He made his decision because he country as the Democratic leader of the Senate," Edwards said.

> Gephardt on Tuesday called Daschle a "treasured friend" and said he was "particularly grateful today that I won't be facing him in a presidential debate.

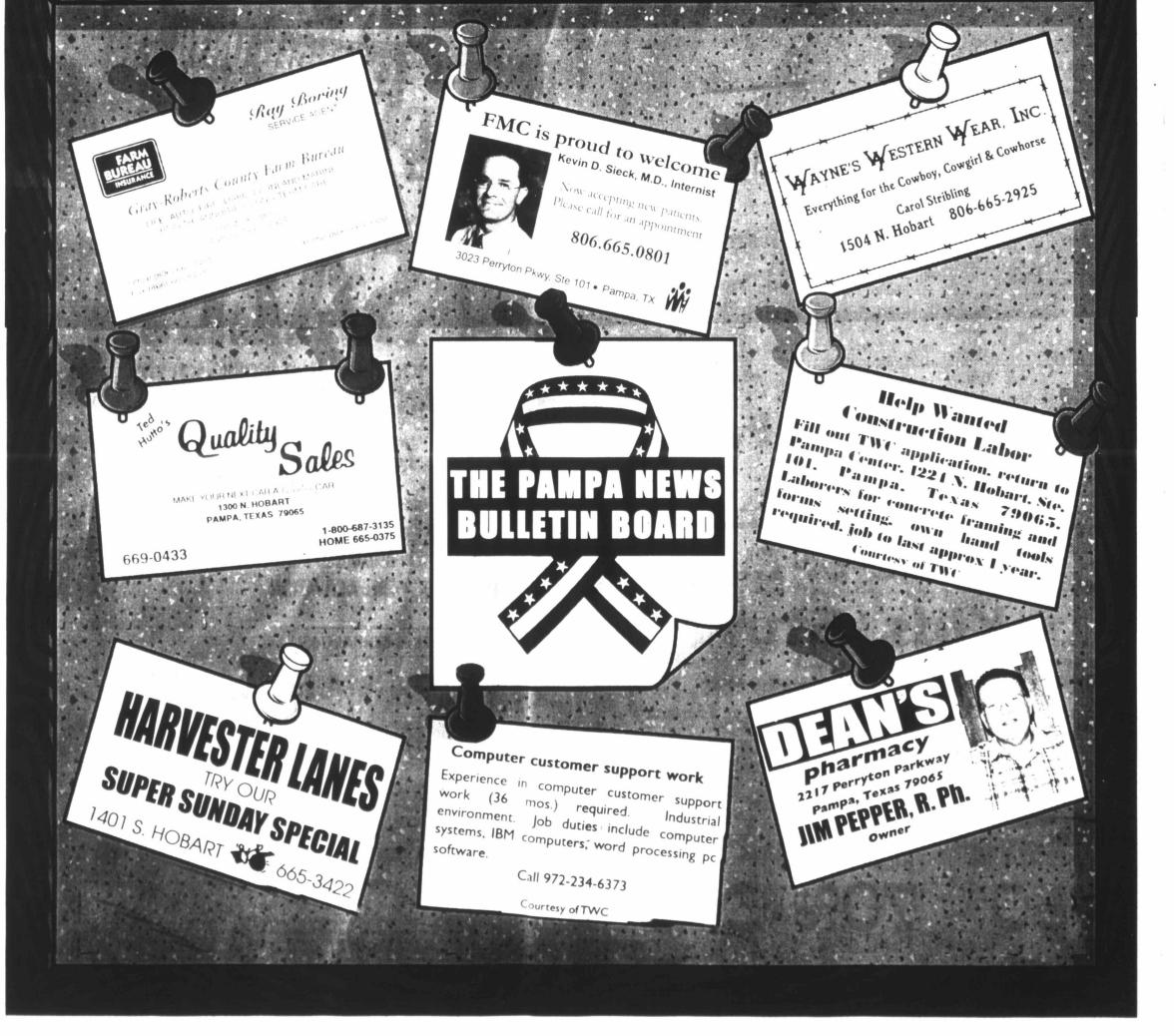
> Tom Mann, who watches Congress for the Brookings Institution,' said Daschle's decision not to join the presidential contest could make him more effective as Democratic leader.

"I think he becomes a bigger asset

senators he has to work with," Mann said.

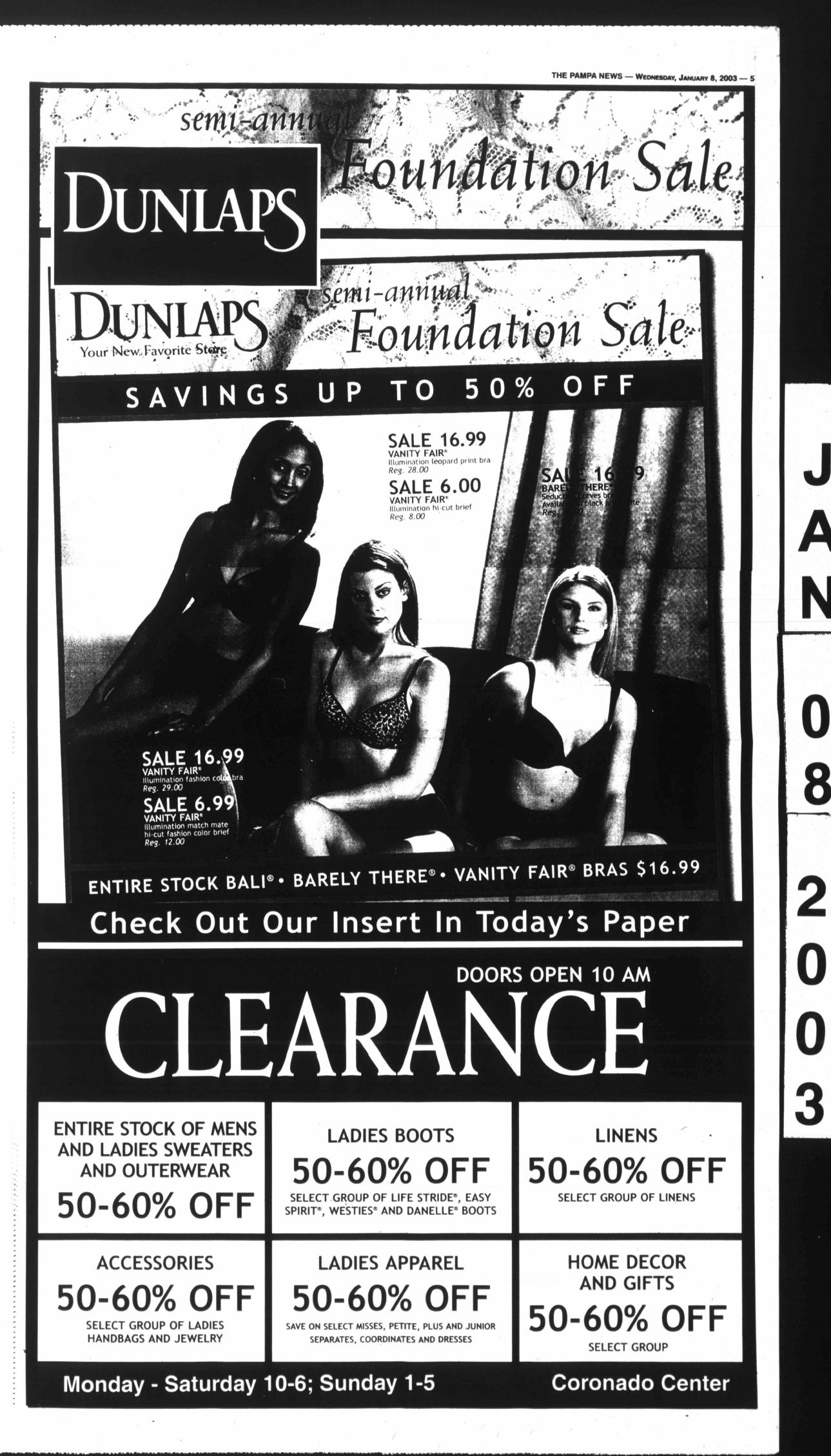
It would have been nearly impossible to run for the Democratic nomination while serving as the party's leader in the Senate, Mann said. But Daschle had been lining up support from Democratic campaign veterans and he was planning visits to key early states like Iowa, New Hampshire and South Carolina.

Daschle's decision changes the dynamics in Iowa, which borders Daschle's home state and where precinct caucuses launch the presidential nominating season. "Tom would have been a formidable force in Iowa," Dean said.



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written by Pauline Phillips and daughter Jeanna Phillips

Freeloading Sons Must Begin To Shoulder Their Own Weight

DEAR ABBY: My husband left me two years ago. Since that time I help from him. I earn only half of what I need to pay my bills each month. Several times this past year I was sick and missed work with no compensation — so you can imagine the poverty level at which I live. My three children still live with me. They are 17, 19 and 22.

The problem is, my two oldest boys have full-time jobs, yet they refuse to help out financially. I ask only that they contribute \$50 a week. I know I am doing them a disservice by allowing them to freeload, because they're not learning to take responsibility. However, I cannot handle the ultimatum of "pay up or get out."

Should my kids choose to leave, I would be sick with worry. I am worried now, too, but not nearly as worried as I'd be if they were to walk out of my life, as my oldest son did when I gave him that ultimatum a year ago. He has only recently started talking to me again, but our relationship is strained. He blames me for the hardship he experienced when he went out on his own.

Is there another way to make my children contribute to our household without taking drastic measures? Please help, Abby. I am too tired to get an additional part-time job in order to keep our heads above water. AT A LOSS IN RIVERHEAD, N.Y.

DEAR AT A LOSS: Please do not tolerate this situation any have struggled financially with no longer. You're doing no one a favor - including yourself.

Your boys have a lot of growing up to do. Your request for \$50 a week from the older boys is not excessive. They are young men now and should want to ease the burden you're carrying to give them a home.

Call a family meeting. Explain your financial situation in no uncertain terms. Then decide as a family - what steps can be taken.

DEAR ABBY: I have been married for 32 years. I love my husband dearly, but last year I had a cancerous breast removed. I am doing well so far. The problem is my husband has not touched me since the surgery. In the meantime, I ran into an old

friend with whom I was very much in love when I was 17. He is also married. We see each other as often as possible — which isn't very often because his job takes him all over the country. I am not sure he would give up his present life, nor am I sure I would give up mine, but my husband is pushing me out the door husband is pushing me out the door.

I can't seem to get my high school sweetheart off my mind. He treats me so much better than my husband, who has a bad temper, has hurt me more than once and obviously can't stand to look at me At my age, should I grab what little joy I have left, or forget it? HURTING IN THE MIDWEST

DEAR HURTING: Before making any decisions that could affect the rest of your life, please

pick up the phone and call the American Cancer Society. It sponsors support groups nationwide for survivors of cancer and their spouses. To find one in JPM DAV'S 1-8 your community, call the tollfree number: (800) 227-2345. It is imperative that you and your Beetle Bailey husband start communicating again. As things stand, you are flirting with disaster -- and the one who could be seriously harmed is you.

*** 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.



at 816 S. Hob information, p Shane Stokes between 8 a.m Monday through **FOOTBAL NEW YOI** Paul Tagliab ensure the breakdown th on the last play wild-card gan the New York

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gal man downt given the Gia chance to kick th The Giants, 24-point lead in half, botched attempt becaus snap. Holder Ma scrambled out o and threw a pa Rich Seubert, w ble on the play b down by Okeafo

"I'm sure that feels that there breakdowns in and I'm sure Ste feels that his down in the first Giants didn't pe second half like the first and th football," Tagl "On the officia shouldn't have and we are n thoroughly."

THE PAMPA NEWS - WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 8, 2003 - 7

SPORTS

Optimist Club needs basketball coaches

First boys games are set for Jan. 26 week

of coaches has caused the Club to postpone the openseason by a week, accord- site: ing to Ron Carr, Optimist second vice-president.

guaranteed a spot in our said.

PAMPA — A shortage program," Carr said. Registration is being Pampa Optimist Youth conducted on-line now. Parents may register their ing of the boys' basketball boys on the Optimist web-

www.Optimist.Pampa.com. A special registration ses-"Boys who are regis- sion will be held from 9 tered through the Internet a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday at before Saturday will be the Optimist Club, Carr

Wednesday and Thursday next week.

Practice will probably begin on Jan. 20 with the first games now scheduled 5921. for the week of Jan. 27, Carr said.

teams on a first-come, eight or nine kids so we said.

are going to able to serve practice or some other dis-

Tryouts will be held the number of bpys who ciplinary reason." from 6 to 7 p.m. Monday, participated last year."

People interested in coaching or refereeing may also sign up on-line or they may contact Carr at 868-

"At our meeting on Tuesday, the coaches "We will assign boys to decided to limit teams to first-served basis," Carr can get more playing time floor and are really looking for the boys," Carr forward to a fun season," "If we run out of room, the explained. "Each boy will Carr said. "We are going to boys will go on a waiting play at least half of each bring one or two teams list. We need at least five game unless he is being or six more coaches if we held out for not attending

The games will consist of eight-minute quarters. Substitutions may be made in the middle of each quarter in the third-fourth grade league.

Substitutions can be made at any time in the fifth-grade league.

"We have a new gym from Miami to play. Our kids are really looking forward to playing."



Katie Barnes (32) was Lefors leading scorer against **Higgins**.

Lefors sweeps district openers

in a pair of District 2-1A basketball games action Tuesday night. last weekend.

Lefors rolled to a 72-26 victory in the Lady Wildcats. boys contest.

Josh Jackson was the Pirates leading scorer with 16 points, followed by Rickey Vaughn with 14.

Hendrickson had 18 points for Higgins. Josh Garcia added 12 points and Zack Kidd 8 for Lefors.

Lefors edged Higgins 40-37 in the girls game.

Barnes with 15 points.

Lefors held a six-point lead (24-18) at halftime.

Calloway had 12 points for Higgins. Others with points for Lefors were Amanda Daugherty with 7, Savanah Smith 6. Lindsay Duckworth 4. Samantha Ceniceros 2, Rachel Stubbs 2 and Jennifer Sprouse 2.

LEFORS - Lefors swept past Higgins Highland Park 61-46 in District 6-2A girls'

Tandi Rankin added 17 points for the

Rashanda Stockard was Highland Park's scoring leader with 13 points.

Canadian dropped the boys' game 49-41. Colby Carpenter was Highland Park's high scorer with 11 points.

Shea Province had 17 points and Bryan Bartlett 12 for Canadian.

. . . .

SUNRAY - Sunray sneaked by White Scoring leader for Lefors was Katie Deer 60-59 in District 6-2A action Tuesday night.

> Sunray's top scorer was Kyron Trussell with 18 points.

Brian Knocke had a 20-point performance for White Deer. Jacob Brame followed with 18.

Tyson Harper added 12 points for Sunray.

In the girls' game, Sunray won by a 40-26 score.

Sunray's scoring leader was Krista Wilson with 10 points.

Sara Smith and Cassie Petty had 7 and 6

scampering.

hits people deep."



HIGHLAND PARK - Brooke Wilson scored 20 points to lead Canadian past points, respectively, for White Deer.

. . . .

Eagles' McNabb will start against Falcons

PHILADELPHIA (AP) -

Donovan McNabb won't be third play of the Eagles' win afraid to scramble in his first over Arizona, but stayed in and that's a positive." game back from a broken ankle. tied a career-best with four TD

McNabb was injured on the McNabb will start the passes. And, he didn't scramble

(Courtesy photo

other guys came in and did a great job. But to have him back, McNabb because he's not as Atlanta's defenders might take

"We'd probably rather see mobile right now," Buchanan a shot at his injured ankle. But McNabb practiced for the said. "I think if we play some Falcons are worried about

first time with the team last McNabb, we have a better the extra dimension McNabb

brings to the field - and won't

be surprised if they see him

he's scrambling around," free

safety Keion Carpenter said. "I

think he's at his best when he's

scrambling around and he gets

guys off their coverages and he

"He's more dangerous when

said the league is reviewing the officials' failure to call pass interference on the Niners to see how the penalty was missed.

NOTEBOOK

PAMPA — Pampa fell to

Palo Duro 88-61 in a fresh-

men boys basketball game

Jarrett Kotara was Pampa's

high scorer with 16 points.

Ryan Torres followed closely

with 15. Braydon Barker and Sharod Young had 7 each.

Pampa's record is 9-3.

PAMPA — The City of

Department will be sponsor-

ing men's and women's, adult

4(four players on each team)

divisions will be offered.

Players must be 14 years old

5 p.m., and the season will

per player with a minimum of

and league by-laws are avail-

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at 816 S. Hobart. For more

information, please contact

Shane Stokes at 669-5770

between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m.

NEW YORK (AP) -Paul Tagliabue wants to

ensure the officiating breakdown that occurred on the last play of the NFC wild-card game between

the New York Giants and

the San Francisco 49ers

The NFL commissioner

won't happen again.

Monday through Friday.

FOOTBALL

begin the week of Jan. 20.

Entry deadline is Jan. 15 at

Entry fee (sponsor's fee) is \$100 and player's fee is \$10

Roster forms, fact sheets

Men's and women's 4 x

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VOLLEYBALL

volleyball league.

to participate.

eight (5) players.

Pampa

BASKETBALL

Monday night.

"What happened at the end, in terms of the breakdown of officiating, was totally unacceptable to us and it shouldn't have happened with the mechanics already in place," Tagliabue said in a radio interview on Sporting News Radio on Tuesday.

"We are going to be thoroughly reviewing how the breakdown occurred," he said.

If a flag had been thrown against the Niners for pass interference, the Giants would have had another chance to attempt a potential game-winning 41-yard field goal. Instead, the clock ran out and San Francisco won 39-38.

The pass interference penalty against Niners defensive end Chike Okeafor would have created offsetting penalties - New York was flagged for an illegal man downfield - and given the Giants another chance to kick the field goal.

The Giants, who blew a 24-point lead in the second half, botched the first attempt because of a bad snap. Holder Matt Allen then scrambled out of the pocket and threw a pass to guard Rich Seubert, who was eligible on the play but got pulled down by Okeafor.

"I'm sure that everybody feels that there were some breakdowns in that game and I'm sure Steve Mariucci feels that his club broke down in the first half and the Giants didn't perform in the second half like they did in the first and that's part of football," Tagliabue said. "On the officiating point, it shouldn't have happened and we are reviewing it thoroughly."

Philadelphia Eagles' playoff game against the Atlanta Falcons on Saturday night, his first action in nearly two months. The two-time Pro Bowl quarterback hasn't played since hurting his right ankle against the Arizona Cardinals on Nov. 17.

"According to everyone else, I'm not mobile, I'm not able to move anymore," McNabb said Tuesday. "I'll just let people continue to think that and when the time comes, make sure to showcase that a little. You run a lot faster when you don't want to get hit."

The Eagles were 7-3 with McNabb, who was having the best season of his four-year career. McNabb completed 211 of 361 passes (58 percent) for 2,289 yards, 17 touchdowns and six interceptions in 10 games. He ran for 460 yards and six TDs.

once the entire game.

Despite his success staying in the pocket, coach Andy Reid doesn't want McNabb to hesitate to run.

"I want him to execute the offense just like he's been doing over the years, and probably be a little more mobile than he was in the Arizona game and just be Donovan. That's all I need," Reid said.

Without McNabb, Philadelphia went 5-1 behind Koy Detmer and A.J. Feeley, captured its second consecutive NFC East title and earned home-field advantage for the playoffs.

"When Donovan was hurt, I'd be foolish to say we didn't miss Donovan," Reid said. "You're talking about a guy who was right there as the top player in the NFL. To say you don't miss a guy like that is silly. On the other hand, the

week, taking all the snaps in practice Thursday and Friday. He was supposed to miss six-toeight weeks, and it will have

when the Eagles play the Falcons at Veterans Stadium. Standing on the sideline watching Detmer and Feeley helped McNabb.

"Just putting the ball in different spots and letting the receivers work, Koy definitely did that," McNabb said. "And A.J., to go in and let the running backs work, get it to the receivers and let them work and get the tight ends involved, that's something when you sit back and watch, knowing you're going back in there, you can use it to your advantage."

The Falcons had a mixed reaction when they heard that McNabb will start. Cornerback Ray Buchanan believes McNabb will be limited.

Escape try

chance."

Atlanta coach Dan Reeves disagreed, saying, "That's Ray's opinion. That isn't my been eight since the injury opinion.'

> The Falcons have some experience with scrambling quarterbacks. Their own starter, Michael Vick, is one of the best running quarterbacks in the game.

him in last year's NFL draft.

the fifth game of the season,

Portis finished with the

league's third-highest rushing

stand out.

Portis proves point with rookie honor

DENVER (AP) - Clinton total and the second-highest Portis felt like he had someyards per carry by a rookie. thing to prove after watching On Tuesday, he edged forfive of his former University of Miami teammates - and

46 other players - go before Press NFL Offensive Rookie of the Year, becoming the sec-He certainly made himself ond Denver player in three years to win the award. Despite not starting until

confidence when you see 50 guys go in front of you," Portis said.

mer Miami teammate Jeremy Shockey as The Associated "You can't have a lot of

Stars enjoy big offensive night

how things are going for the Dallas Stars: On the night when goalie Marty Turco struggles, the team scores its most goals in nearly two years.

Jere Lehtinen recorded his second career hat trick and Darryl Sydor scored twice on the power play, sending the Stars to a 7-4 victory over the Los Angeles Kings on Tuesday night.

The Stars stretched their unbeaten streak to a seasonbest seven games, regained the NHL point lead from idle Ottawa, and improved their Pacific Division lead to 16, easily the largest in the league.

And it could get bigger. This game opened a stretch in which Dallas plays 14 of 18 games at home — and the Stars are 13-1-3-1 at American Airlines Center.

"The last couple of weeks we've been concentrating on playing like a unit and we want to stay on this roll," Turco said. "It's just a matter

DALLAS (AP) — This is of working hard and staying positive." He came in having allowed

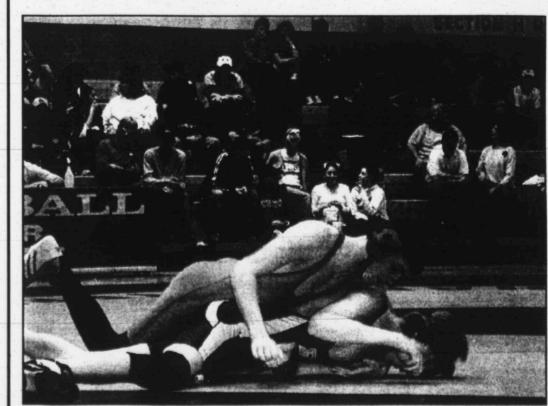
only seven goals in his last six games. He got off to a rough start as the Kings bombarded him, scoring when Brad Chartrand redirected a shot just 5:21 in.

Then Dallas came alive. Sydor and Lehtinen scored . late in the period, putting the Stars ahead for good. Lehtinen scored twice more during a four-goal second - period, which matched Dallas' best of the season.

The Stars had their most goals since beating Anaheim 8-0 on March 21, 2001.

"It was a special night," said Lehtinen, who upped his goal total to 18. "Every guy had a good jump. It was very fun out there."

With five wins and two ties in their last seven games, the Stars have given first-year coach Dave Tippett a chance to lead the Western Conference in the All-Star game.



(Pampa News photo by Tess Kingcade)

Pampa junior Chance Henley tries to escape from a Borger opponent during a high school dual last night in McNeely Fieldhouse. The Harvesters are entered in the Hereford Duals this weekend.

Price is right for Oklahoma in victory over Connecticut

By The Associated Press

Oklahoma's biggest win of the season was also Connecticut's first loss.

Hollis Price scored a career-high 33 points and carried the ninth-ranked Sooners to a 73-63 victory over the third-ranked Huskies on Tuesday night.

The senior guard was 10-of-10 from the freethrow line in the final minutes and stepped in to run the offense when point guard Quannas White went down with a sprained knee midway through the first half.

He also outplayed Connecticut's sophomore star Ben Gordon, helping to hold him to 12 points, 10 below his average, on 5-for-18 shooting.

"It was one of those nights where everything that's happening for you is right on time," Price said. "All the guys just did a great job of getting me the ball.

The Sooners won their 30th straight home game, the second-longest streak in the nation behind Brigham Young's 42, and the Huskies' loss leaves No. 1 Duke and No. 17 Wake Forest as the only unbeaten teams in Division I.

In other games involving ranked teams, it was: No. 11 Florida 74, No. 7 Mississippi State 66; No. 10 Illinois 76, Minnesota 70; No. 13 Missouri 88, Centenary 58; No. 17 Wake Forest 98, Elon 56; Richmond 67, No. 21 Xavier 59; and No. 24 Marquette 60, Saint Louis 54.

Connecticut, which lost 69-67 to Oklahoma last season, came in leading the nation by averaging 90.1 points. The Sooners were able to hold down the Huskies by taking Gordon out of his game.

"Our goal with Gordon tonight was to make him drive," Oklahoma coach Kelvin Sampson said. "That was the key, making Gordon drive the ball, not giving him the 3-point shot."

Gordon, shooting 50 percent from 3-point range, was 2-of-7 from behind the arc. He got several good looks in close in the first half, but missed most of them and Oklahoma took a 20-7 lead and led by 13 at halftime.

Price had three field goals in the opening 4:13 of the second half, including a 3-pointer that gave the Sooners their biggest lead at 51-31. His short jumper off a turnover made it 53-35 with 13:33 left. The Huskies then went on an 11-0 run, but never got closer than five as Price was perfect from the line

"What I really liked about Price is early, he

didn't look for his shot. He looked for his teammates, which I reminded some of our kids of," Huskies coach Jim Calhoun said. "When we did a better job on (guard Ebi) Ere, he took over. He certainly looked like a first-team All-American tonight.

Tony Robertson had 16 points and Emeka Okafor had 15 points and 10 rebounds for the Huskies, who were playing just their second road game.

White left at the 11:22 mark of the first half after banging his left knee. He didn't return until 3:41 left, and promptly hit two free throws to give Oklahoma a 59-52 lead.

'I knew he was a tough guy who was going to try to come back," Price said of White. "That's what he did. He knocked down those two free throws, which we needed.'

No. 11 Florida 74, No. 7 Mississippi St. 66

Justin Hamilton scored a season-high 22 points and fellow seniors Matt Bonner and Brett Nelson made key plays in the second half to lead the Gators (12-2) to their eighth straight win in the Southeastern Conference opener for both teams

Bonner had all but two of his 16 points in the second half, and Nelson had all eight of his after halftime for the visitors.

Mario Austin had 22 points and 16 rebounds for the Bulldogs (10-2), who had their 10-game winning streak snapped.

No. 10 Illinois 76, Minnesota 70

Brian Cook scored 25 points and Sean "Harrington added 22 for the visiting Illini (11-1), who beat Minnesota for the ninth straight time.

Michael Bauer had 17 points for the Golden Gophers (8-4), who were held to 31 percent shooting (18-for-59) in the Big Ten opener for both teams.

No. 13 Missouri 88, Centenary 58

Rickey Paulding scored 21 points to lead the Tigers (9-1), who shot 51 percent in the easy home win.

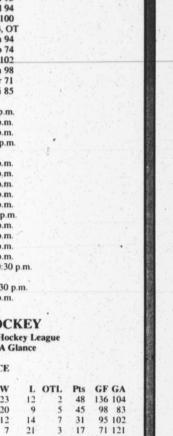
Aaron Moseley had 13 points for the Gents (5-9), who closed a winless five-game road trip by being outrebounded 57-22.

No. 17 Wake Forest 98, Elon 56

Josh Howard scored 18 points and Eric Williams added 15 as the Demon Deacons (10-0) won in their last game before playing at topranked Duke on Sunday.

Sean Newton had 11 points for visiting Elon (4-7), which lost to Wake Forest for the 19th straight time:

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Soccer practice the second s

Murray, Carter elected to

Baseball Hall of Fame



(Photo by Tess Kingcade)

Goalie Keisha Childress works out at the net during a recent Pampa girls' soccer practice. The Lady Harvesters' first home match is Feb. 1 at 2 p.m. against Lubbock Coronado.

Rockets tame Timberwolves, 94-86

usually tell what kind of game he'll have by how he performs at the morning shootaround.

He felt great on Tuesday morning.

Taylor scored a season-high 18 points to help the Houston Rockets beat the Minnesota Timberwolves 94-86 later that night.

Taylor missed all of last season with surgery on his right Achilles' tendon that has been slow to heal. But he scored six points during a 19-0 run in the second guarter and added seven in the final 2:03 to help hold off a late Minnesota rally.

"That's Mo right there," Houston coach Rudy Tomjanovich said. "He had a great game. He hit the big shots in the middle of their comeback. That's what he gave us a couple of years ago."

Taylor knows early how much the foot injury will affect him --- at the shootarounds. "If it feels good then, I'll have a good

HOUSTON (AP) — Maurice Taylor can game," Taylor said. "It's coming around."

Kevin Garnett scored 25 points and had 16 rebounds, but the Rockets still felt they played good defense on him and that Garnett had scored most of his points off rebounds. Garnett shot only 6-of-18 from the field.

We kept them from getting the ball to him a lot." Taylor said. "They're not as comfortable as a team when they can't do that. When he gets the shots, they get into a comfort zone that is unbelievable.

Tomjanovich added: "He can almost will them back into a game. But basically, I'll take that defense on him any time. Our guys did a great job of fronting him.

"People say, 'He's so big, why would you front him?' But it takes him out of his rhythm. When he catches the ball in rhythm, he just shoots over people.'

Steve Francis added 14 points, 11 assists and seven rebounds before fouling out for the first time this season with 3:34 to play.

NEW YORK (AP) — Gary Carter could hardly contain himself, as always. Hearing that he'd finally made the Hall of Fame, he shouted and punched the air.

"I got overly excited and screamed," he said Tuesday. "Now we can do a little celebrating."

Eddie Murray's reaction was much more muted after becoming just the 38th player to be elected in his first year of eligibility.

The steady, silent first baseman of the Baltimore Orioles was the only switch-hitter with 500 home runs and 3,000 hits. But he could not enjoy the moment - later in the day, he was to attend the funeral of his sister, who died Jan. 2 at 38.

"Unfortunately, I cannot speak with you today because of the passing of my younger sister, Tanja, after her long-fought battle with kidney disease," Murray said in a statement from Southern California. "Although I dedicated my professional career to the game, I have dedicated my life to my family.

"The elation I feel by being recognized for my achievements on the field is overshadowed by the anguish of losing someone so dear to me."

Murray easily exceeded the 75 percent necessary for election, being chosen on 85 percent of the ballots (423 of 496).

Carter finally made it on his sixth try. An 11-time All-Star catcher with Montreal and the New York Mets, he might become the first player inducted with an Expos cap on his plaque.

Carter got in with 78 percent, getting 387 votes when it took 372 to make it. He fell 11 votes short last year at 72.7 percent.

Murray and Carter played together for Los Angeles in 1991. They became the sixth set of teammates to be elected together; Minnesota's Kirby Puckett and Dave Winfield made it in 2001.

No one else came close in voting by the Baseball Writers' Association of America.

Carry-over candidates Bruce Sutter, Jim Rice and Andre Dawson were right around 50 percent, and first-timers Ryne Sandberg and Lee Smith didn't even reach that mark. Darryl Kile, the St. Louis pitcher who died last season, got token support.

Pete Rose, ineligible for the ballot because he's on baseball's permanently banned list, got 18 writein votes --- the same as last year. Rose and commissioner Bud Selig's aides have been negotiating terms of a possible reinstatement for the career hits leader.

The Veterans Committee, which is considering Gil Hodges, Roger Maris and many others, will announce its voting results Feb. 26.

Induction ceremonies will be July 27 in Cooperstown, N.Y. Murray and Carter bring the Hall's total to 256 members.

Carter's father, Jim, turns 85 three weeks before the festivities.

"He was beyond words," said Carter, the 13th catcher to make the Hall. "I know how much it means to him.

Murray, the Cleveland Indians' hitting coach, was an eight-time All-Star and finished with 504 homers and 3,255 hits in 21 seasons. Hank Aaron and Willie Mays are the only other players inmin-

500-3.000 club.

He hit 19 career grand slams, second in major league history to Lou Gehrig's 23, and played a record 2,413 games at first base. Murray batted .287 overall.

Murray was never popular with media members, some of whom who did the Hall voting.

"He didn't want all the accolades," Carter said. "He just wanted to go about his business."

But there was no mistaking how much he meant to his teammates. When Cal Ripken broke Lou Gehrig's consecutive-games streak, he singled out a very few people to thank, and Murray was one of them.

"Eddie was not only a great teammate, but he was a great friend as well," Ripken said in a statement. "When I first came to the big leagues, he really helped me out and showed me the way.

"It makes me sad to see how Eddie is misunderstood by some of the fans and members of the media. The Eddie that I know always put his team ahead of everything else and went about his business in a manner that all players should follow."

Hall of Fame pitcher Jim Palmer, who played with Murray for eight years in Baltimore, echoed those sentiments.

"He was a private guy. He didn't wear his emotions on his sleeve," Palmer said. "If people got to know and see the Eddie Murray that I knew, they'd understand he was a terrific guy.

Palmer was among several players who called Carter earlier in the day to wish him good luck. Carter found out his wait was over after finishing a round of golf with friends, including former big leaguer Tommy Hutton.

"Even though the six years seemed long, they shortened it up by the call today," Carter said. "It was like all the other years were blended in and forgotten."

Carter played his first 11 years with the Expos, a team whose future is in doubt. He later helped the Mets win the 1986 title.

Though players can express a preference as to which cap will appear on their Cooperstown plaque, the final choice rests with the Hall of Fame.

"Maybe they might wind up splitting the hat," Carter said from Palm Beach Gardens, Fla.

Carter, a three-time Gold Glove winner, hit .262 with 324 homers and 1,225 RBIs in 19 seasons. He holds the major league record for putouts by a catcher and played an NL-record 2,056 games at the position.

His average is among the lowest among Hall members - Reggie Jackson, Ozzie Smith and Luis Aparicio also hit .262, and only Rabbit Maranville (.258), Harmon Killebrew (.256) and Ray Schalk (.253) were lower.

Sandberg got 49.2 percent (244 votes). A 10-time

All-Star second baseman for the Chicago Cubs, he holds the record for most homers as a second baseman (277) and highest fielding percentage at the position (.989).

"I have to remember struggling through the minor leagues and struggling that first year as a rookie," he said. "I just have to keep things in perspective, that it's just great to be considered."

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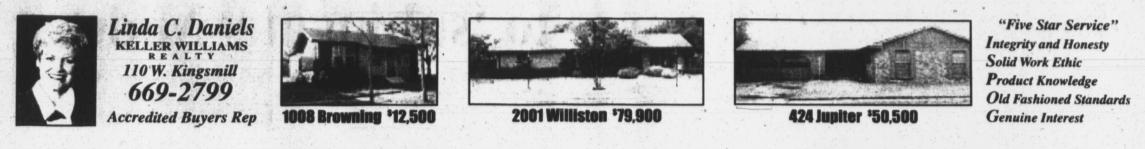
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HOPOSCOPE BY JACQUELINE BIGAR

HAPPY BIRTHDAY for Thursday, Jan. might have difficulty conceptualizing. Tonight: Don't make plans. Do only 9, 2003:

others. Though you're intrinsically a Where your friends are. money sign. somehow this year you CANCER (June 21-July 22) might have more difficulty anchoring *** Understand what someone is inspire them. Use caution if you feel financial facts, but you could be full of looking at. Don't hem and haw, simply something is off, especially while operatideas. Use your creativity to the utmost. aim high. How you see a financial situa- ing electrical or mechanical equipment. Find a sound, grounded adviser to help tion could transform. Avoid making Tonight: Play the night away. you with the details. You will gain agreements right now, especially as they CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) through hard work. If you are single, you might not hold. Tonight: Leader of the **** What you think is a good will meet quite a few people, and you gang. often feel like this person or that person LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) could be the one. Enjoy all the romance **** Reach out for those in your vision. Take off your rose-colored glassaround you. If you're attached, the two immediate circle. Consider your options es. Be smart and allow time to test out an of you might not be grounded but easily carefully, especially those that surround idea or investment. Tonight: Order in. could have a wonderful time. Let it all an emotional matter. Use your creativity AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18) hang out, as they say! ARIES plays and imagination, and you'll get results. devil's advocate.

The Stars Show the Kind of Day You'll VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) Have: 5-Dynamic: 4-Positive; **** Your ability to see others cannot see reality either. On the other 3-Average; 2-So-so; 1-Difficult

ARIES (March 21-April 19)

occurs. A midday walk or break proves Work with a partner. to be unusually inspiring. Realize more LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22) of what you would like through conver- **** Keep reaching out for others. tion.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

drift right out of your mind. Don't decide the first move.

piece of music? GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

Use your dream state. Go for stream of what you want.

Reach out for someone at a distance, might not be seeing the facts as clearly as Tonight: Try some exotic cuisine.

sonal matter. You also might need a ration positively. Tonight: Follow the break from a situation to gain a better music. *** * Your ingenuity comes to the perspective. Relax in the company of a PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20) rescue. Friends might distort what friend who means a lot to you. Tonight: *** Use your intuition to follow

sations. A close associate might seem too with the knowledge of what might be willing. Tonight: Follow your imagina- workable for them. Be ready for some wishy-washy answers. You might be

rather vague as well. You could be * * Listen well to what someone says. inspired if you just flow from one idea to You might discover that his or her words another. Tonight: Let someone else make

that it's you, or the other person. for that SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21) matter. Note the illusive quality of the *** Reach out for associates. Express day. Aim for more of what you want, your intuitive feelings so that others can Tonight: How 'bout putting on a favorite work with them. Charging some of this creativity into your work could make a

big difference in the outcome. Others *** * Consider options, even if you will also feel free to be more intuitive.

You make a difference. Others seek you consciousness. You might have difficulty SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21) out this year for advice and grounding. pinning down a friend. Don't feel like **** Be more imaginative in your Security seems primary to you, as well as you have to have an answer. Tonight: plans. Express more creativity in your word choice. You'll find that others respond with greater energy when you

investment just might not be. Right now the planets could be clouding your

*** No matter what you do, you you would like. You have a way of turning others on to your ideas so that they could be clouded by an emotional or per- hand, you could use this power of inspi-

through on what you want. Your instincts guide you in a new direction, if you're careful. Don't take any money risks that you cannot walk away from. In fact, if you can, buy yourself time. Tonight: Treat yourself to something new.

BORN TODAY

Country singer Crystal Gayle (1951). writer Judith Krantz (1928), singer and human-rights advocate Joan Baez (1941) * * *

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Iraq: U.S. making war to 'subjugate' Mideast

By HAMZA HENDAWI ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

BAGHDAD, Iraq (AP) -A top Iraqi official said Wednesday the United States and Britain were preparing a "devastating" war against Iraq to subjugate the Middle East and renewed charges that U.N. weapons inspectors were exceeding their mandate.

U.S. jets attacked air defense sites Wednesday in the southern no fly zone, according to a statement by the U.S. Central Command. It was the second attack by the U.S.-led coalition this week in the southern zone, set up more than a decade ago to prevent Iraq's army from attacking restive Shiite Muslims in the region.

The remarks by Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz, made to a visiting South African delegation, came one day after the United States and Britain moved closer to a full

Brits call for calm in wake of arrests

LONDON (AP) - A British government minister urged the public to be "alert but | not alarmed" Wednesday, a day after police said they arrested six men and found traces of the deadly poison ricin in a London apartment.

"It's understandable that people are concerned," Home Office minister Beverley Hughes told the British Broadcasting Corp. "But we need to keep it in perspective. People need to be alert, but not alarmed and panicked."

The six men arrested on Sunday in north and east London were being questioned Wednesday, London's Metropolitan Police said.

Anti-terrorist police said Tuesday they had found "material and items of equipment" in an apartment in north London's Wood Green district, and that a "small amount of the material" tested positive for ricin. One of the men, who are all

war footing by announcing the dispatch of thousands more troops and weapons to the Gulf region and by voicing misgivings about Iraq's commitment to disarm.

"The aggressors in Washington and London are preparing for a devastating aggression against ... the people of Iraq and they would like once again to destroy the City of Peace (Baghdad) as they did in 1991," Aziz said.

Turning to the U.N. inspectors, who returned to Iraq in November after a four-year hiatus, Aziz said their mission has strayed beyond the search for weapons of mass destruction.

"They are searching for

other information about Iraq's conventional military capabilities, the Iraqi scientific and industrial capability in the civilian area, and also espionage questions," Aziz said.

Referring to Iraqi claims that inspectors were seeking to recruit key Iraqis, Aziz said a scientist from Baghdad's Mustansiryia University was asked by inspectors whether his salary was enough for him. "What has this question to do with the matter of weapons of mass destruction?" Aziz asked.

Asked about similar accusations made by President Saddam Hussein on Tuesday, U.N. spokesman Hiro Ueki said U.N. officials had received no formal complaint about alleged espionage and had noticed no change in cooperation from Iraqi officials.

"The inspectors are not spies. They are international civil servants," Ueki told reporters Tuesday.

The United States has accused Iraq of stockpiling weapons of mass destruction and says it will use force if necessary to disarm the Arab nation. Iraq denies the charges and insists it already has destroyed its biological and chemical weapons and halted its nuclear program and the making of banned missiles. There have been no known instances of serious problems encountered by the inspectors since they began work Nov. 27.

In a significant move in the run-up to a possible war, the American battle staff that would run a military campaign against Iraq is beginning to assemble at a command post in the small Gulf state of Qatar. Battle plan-Central ners from the Command, which oversees U.S. military operations in the Middle East and South Asia, are heading from their permanent headquarters in Florida to Camp As Sayliyah in Qatar to be in position to carry out, any attack order from President Bush, U.S. officials said.

The officials stressed that the move to Qatar does not mean

war is imminent or inevitable, but a senior U.S. official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the deployment of battle planners, which began this week, was part of an accelerating buildup of forces in the Gulf region. Tens of thousands more combat forces are scheduled to flow into the region over the next few weeks.

In Manila, Philippine Foreign Minister Blas Ople said some Arab governments are urging Saddam to step down and seek asylum in a third country to avoid war.

Ople said he was informed on Monday of the Arab countries' action by their ambassadors in Manila. He refused to name the Arab governments.

In Moscow, Iraq's ambassador said Saddam would not seek asylum but "fight to the last drop of blood."

"Saddam Hussein enjoys excellent health, he is in a determined mood, is in perfect control of the situation and believes in our victory," the Interfax news agency quoted Abbas Khalaf as saying in an interview.

"I'd like to assure you that (he) will continue to defend his homeland. He is one of the leaders who will never leave his country and will fight to the last drop of blood," said Khalaf, who recently returned from Iraq, where he and other Iraqi ambassadors met with Saddam.

In Washington, Defense Secretary Donald . н. Rumsfeld renewed accusations that Iraq was not being forthcoming in revealing its weapons programs as required by U.N. resolutions. He said that while that war with Iraq "clearly is not inevitable," the American troop buildup in the Gulf would continue.

The buildup includes the U.S. Army's mobile biologi-, cal weapons testing laboratory, which helps tests samples to confirm whether a biological attack has taken place. according to Col. Erik Henchal, the Army's top biological defense expert.

Health spending jumps 8.7 percent

By JANELLE CARTER ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

WASHINGTON (AP)Prescription drugs and hospital stays are the main drivers of growing U.S. health care spending that rose a decade-high 8.7 percent increase in 2001.

The nation's health care budget jumped to \$1.424 trillion, up from \$1.310 trillion in 2000, according to the report by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid. Prescription drugs and hospitals were two of the fastest growing expenditures.

The annual report examining private and public sector spending, appears in the January/February issue of the journal Health Affairs.

The report's authors said the nation was feeling the effects of the recession, which followed months of growth and record employment where many companies offered lucrative benefit packages to lure workers.

"Government and employers are feeling enormous pressure on their ability to finance rapidly rising spending with resources that are growing more slowly," said Katharine Levit, one of the authors.

The study found that health care is increasingly becoming a force in the nation's economy, jumping from 13.3 percent of the gross domestic product

in charge of the Customs

Service probe, said new

charges were expected "in the

last month and accused of vio-

lating the Patriot Act of 2001

after federal agents seized

records, computers and more

than \$200,000 from bank

accounts during raids of busi-

nesses and homes thought to

be part of illegal money trans-

The six men were arrested

near future."

largest increase since 1991. The numbers mean health care

spending averaged about \$5,035 per person.

Prescription drug spending - which made up \$140.6 billion of total health spending - continued to grow faster than all other areas. However, the study's authors said the 15.7 percent growth rate in 2001 was down slightly from the previous year's 16.4 percent rate - partly because of a slowdown in the introduction of new drugs.

One of the biggest increases was in hospital spending, which increased 8.3 percent - the fastest growth for that sector in a decade. Economists pointed to huge hospital consolidations which have given facilities more bargaining power with managed care plans for, payments as the reason for the jump in hospital services.

Critics said the spending increases are proof that once-touted HMOs are losing their ability to control costs. Health insurance premiums grew 10.5 percent, while benefits grew slower, about 10.1 percent, the report said.

Democrats, in particular, pointed to Republican proposals to let private insurers administer a prescription drug benefit for Medicare. Congress is expected to debate those proposals this year.

'Given these results, I cannot understand why Republicans continue

in 2000 to 14.1 percent in 2001 - the to devise plans for turning Medicare over to private insurers and HMOs." said Rep. Pete Stark, D-Calif. Stark said the study showed that Medicare had again "outperformed private health insurers."

> But Karen Ignani president of the American Association of Health Plans blamed lawmakers for the increases, pointing to scores of state and federal mandates for benefits like dental care.

> "Managed care worked very, very well to drive down costs in the beginning," she said. "Politicians took away managed care tools. They devalued managed care in their political debates. If Congress wants to look for an explanation of why this is happening, they only need to look in the mirror.'

Public health programs were also hit by increases. Spending for Medicaid, the nation's health insurance program for the poor, grew 10.8 percent - its fastest growth since 1993, according to the report. Economists cited an 8.5 percent rise in enrollment due to the recession and expanded state programs for the uninsured as some of the causes.

Medicare spending grew 7.8 percent, partly because Congress increased payments to Medicare providers.

On the Net

Health Affairs: http://www.healthaffairs.org

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of North African origin, was arrested in the apartment, police said.

Doctors around Britain were warned to look for symptoms of exposure to ricin, one of the most powerful poisons and one for which there is no antidote. Symptoms include fever, stomach ache, diarrhea and vomiting.

"This makes us feel really scared. We are only three or four meters (yards) away from it," said Ismail Ucur, 19, who lives opposite the apartment where the poison was found.

"We should have been told what was going on. We saw the police and then people in protective gear and we asked them what was happening but they didn't tell us," Ucur said.

U.S. authorities drop charges against six men accused of illegally sending millions to Yemen

DETROIT (AP) - Federal fer operations.

officials dropped criminal "Volumes of evidence was complaints against six men obtained at the original accused of illegally sending as arrests," which investigators much as \$50 million a year to are using to revise their claims Yemen, but they said the against the men, Dinkins told investigation was continuing. the Detroit Free Press for Jim Dinkins, assistant agent Wednesday's editions.

> After a nine-month investigation, raids conducted Dec. 18 in Dearborn and Detroit resulted in charges against six men: Gamil Manea Ahmed Al-Najar, 26; David Nasser Ali, 40; Foiad Hussain Mohamed, 25; Mohammad Aidaros Abdulla, 62; Abdulla Hassan Mohamed, 31; and Hussein Ahmed Mohamed, 65. They were later released on \$10,000 unsecured bonds.

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