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THE Pampa NEWS

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2003

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Vol. 55 No. 509 Pampa, Texas
 50 cents Daily • Sunday \$1



WEATHER WEATHER

HIGH **LOW**
65 **52**

LOCAL

United Way offering budget applications

Pampa United Way is giving applications for the next two weeks to 501(c)3 non-profit organizations to be included in the agency's budget allocations.

Organizations may pick up applications at 200 N. Ballard, Ste. 105, or call Katrina Bigham at 669-1001 for more information. Deadline for picking up applications is Feb. 25. New applicants need to pick up another set of forms to be completed for the final budget allocations meeting in April.

LOTTERY

AUSTIN (AP) — Results of the Lotto Texas drawing Wednesday night: Winning numbers drawn: 1-18-20-21-52-54. Estimated jackpot: \$5 million. The winning ticket was sold in: Midland. Next Lotto Texas game: Saturday night. Estimated jackpot: \$4 million.

DEATHS

- Wilbert Ray Babb, 72, market manager.
- Jerry Beckham, 62, warehouse supervisor.
- Donnie Gamble, 51, grocery worker.
- Donna Vee Sillman Rose, retired IRS employee.
- Frances Ruth Bowers Walls, 82, educator.

INSIDE...

- Classified 9
- Comics 6
- Editorial 4
- Sports 7

WEST TEXAS LANDSCAPE

It's Tree Planting Season ...

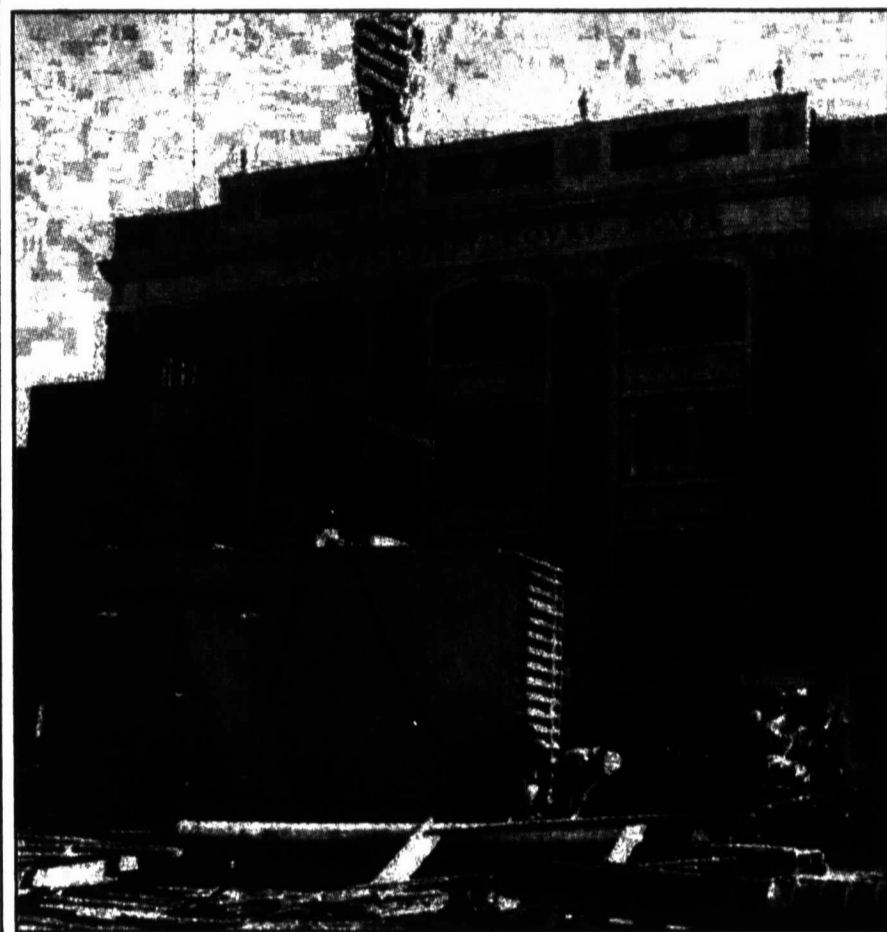
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New generator



(Pampa News photo by Nancy Young)

A worker at the Gray County Courthouse work site attached cables to a 14,200 pound generator to lift it to the top of the courthouse. A special crane was brought in to be used for setting the generator atop the five-story building Wednesday afternoon.

Common sense best safety bet

Standard disaster precautions OK for high alert

By NANCY YOUNG
 MANAGING EDITOR

"The Orange Alert mostly affects the steps municipal governments should take to protect the vital functions of government," said Ken Hall, City of Pampa, Emergency Operations Center Director.

He described examples of those functions as water supply, wastewater and government records.

Hall said many of the recently-released precautions people should take should be done year-round in case of weather or natural disaster.

A portable radio with fresh batteries should always be in households in case of any disaster, he said. "People can stay tuned to local programming to keep updated on what, if any, steps to take," said Hall.

He said Severe Weather Awareness Week will be observed during March, and the precautions to be taken in case

of tornado are similar to the measures recommended in case of terrorism.

Hall described a program called Shelter in Place, and said residents should always plan ahead and be prepared in the event of a disaster.

He said all households should continually maintain an adequate supply of water, food and medications in case of any emergency. "People need to plan in the event of any emergency such as tornadoes, floods, wildfires or ice storms.

Other emergency supplies should include extra clothing, emergency blankets and sleeping bags, flashlights, fire extinguisher, first aid kit, first aid handbook and an adequate supply of toiletries.

"People need to be able to have the necessary items to last until they would be rescued or the all clear is sounded," said Hall. "These are standard measures to take."

(See SAFETY, Page 3)

Jury sentences mother for transporting PCP

By DAVID BOWSER
 STAFF WRITER

PANHANDLE - A single mother of four was in Carson County jail today awaiting transfer to a state prison facility after a four-woman, eight-man jury found her guilty of possession of a controlled substance.

Heather Lynn Queen, 30, of Kansas City, Kan., was sentenced by 100th District Judge David McCoy to 10 years behind bars on drug charges one year to the day after she was stopped on Interstate 40 for not wearing a seat belt.

Texas Department of Public Safety Trooper Oscar Esqueda told the Carson County jury Tuesday that he pulled Queen over on Feb. 12, 2002, while patrolling I-40 near Groom.

After gaining consent to search the rented 2001 Buick Century, Esqueda said he found a bottle containing a clear liquid in one of the door panels.

Queen, who was six months pregnant at the time, was arrested and booked into Carson County jail. Trooper Esqueda said Queen was

alone in the four-door sedan and eastbound on the interstate highway at the time he stopped her.

Esqueda said the car was taken to Groom where more bottles of the liquid were found in other door panels.

Roy Murphy, director of the Department of Public Safety crime lab in Amarillo, testified that the liquid inside the eight bottles was Phencyclidine, or PCP, also known as Angel Dust.

Murphy testified that the eight bottles contained 4.14 kilograms of PCP. Queen took the witness stand and told the jury that she had been in dire financial straits a year ago when a man in Kansas City had paid her \$500 to rent a car for him for a period of five days.

Nine days later, the man contacted her again and told her, Queen testified, that his cousin had driven the car to California and that she needed to fly to California and bring the car back. Queen testified that the man had paid her airfare to the West Coast to retrieve the car.

Queen told the jury here that she

was suspicious and looked through the car, but seeing nothing out of the ordinary, began the trek back to Kansas.

The defense contended that Queen knew nothing about the drugs in the car, but the prosecution introduced Queen's statement that she had transported drugs before and planned to make \$1,000 for three days work.

Defense attorney Harold Comer contended that Queen had been illegally detained longer than she should have been during the traffic stop, but Judge McCoy Monday dismissed the motion to suppress the evidence connected with the stop.

A flickering video tape, taken from a camera mounted in Esqueda's patrol car, showed Queen barefoot and pregnant standing next to her car that cold February day a year ago.

The jury deliberated only minutes before finding Queen guilty.

During the punishment phase of the trial as Queen's mother sat alone in the near empty courtroom wiping away tears, Comer argued that Queen had never been in trouble with the law

before and deserved probation.

"She's never been in violation before," Comer told the jury. "That is the type of situation probation is reserved for."

The most lenient sentence Queen could have gotten was 10 years probation.

District Attorney Stuart Messer, however, told the jury that she deserved to go to prison.

Messer said she was carrying enough PCP to provide 40,000 doses valued at half a million dollars.

"It comes down to ruining lives for money," Messer told the jury.

Messer said Queen had shown no remorse.

"I'm asking you to send her to prison and send her to prison for a long time," Messer told the jury.

The maximum sentence Queen could have gotten was life in prison.

It took the jury two and a half hours to find the middle ground, setting her punishment Tuesday afternoon at 10 years in prison.

Queen sobbed silently as Judge McCoy pronounced sentence.

Authorities arrest Pampan, 36, on two sealed indictments

By NANCY YOUNG
 MANAGING EDITOR

A 36-year-old Pampa man was arrested Tuesday in Lubbock on two sealed 31st District Grand Jury indictments regarding two aggravated sexual assault charges which allegedly occurred in Gray County in May 2001. Both charges involve a juvenile male under the age of 14.

Christopher Dale Harper, 36, 1820 N. Hamilton, was arrested by Lubbock County Sheriff's on the sealed indictments which were returned by the grand jury last week.

Bond in the amount of \$25,000 on each charge was set by 31st District Judge Steven Emmert. Harper posted bond in Lubbock and was released from jail. Both charges are first degree felonies.

"Indictment is not the same as guilt," said 31st Judicial District Attorney Rick Roach. "A person is presumed innocent until tried and convicted in a court of competent jurisdiction."

Spring Mayors



(Courtesy photo)

Mayor Sameer Kelley (right) and Vice-Mayor Shawn Johnson (left) have been elected by the student body to lead Pampa Middle School for the spring semester of 2003. Sameer's parents are Rev. and Mrs. Hubert Kelley. Shawn's parents are Mr. and Mrs. Edward

County will eye joint resolution

Gray County Commission will consider a joint resolution to implement a delinquent fee collection system when it meets in regular session at 9 a.m. Friday in the temporary courtroom at 315 N. Ballard.

Other agenda items for consideration are exercising two year extension on bank depository, annex usage policy, county indigent burial policy, racial profile reports from sheriff and constables' offices, contribution to North Rolling Plains Resource Conservation R & D Council and bid on tax property located at 1240 S. Barnes.

Consideration of participation in Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railway Company Grade Crossing Surface Replacement program along with consideration that insurance money from a recently wrecked sheriff's department vehicle be placed in the sheriff's budget will be taken up by the commission.

Veterans Service Officer and Justices of the Peace will be recognized for their continuing education and training requirements at the meeting.

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OBITUARIES

WILBERT RAY BABB
1930-2003

Wilbert Ray Babb, 72, of Pampa, died Wednesday, Feb. 12, 2003, at Amarillo, Texas. Services will be at 2 p.m., Friday, Feb. 14, 2003, at the Central Baptist Church with Dr. Derrell Monday, pastor, and the Rev. Rick Parnell, associate pastor, officiating. Burial will be in Fairview Cemetery under the direction of Carmichael-Whately Funeral Directors.

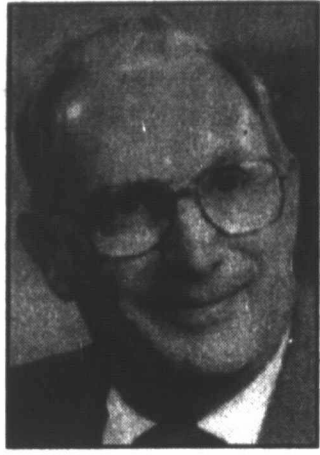
Mr. Babb was born Nov. 3, 1930, at Old Alluwe, Okla., to W.L. and Mae Babb. His family came to Pampa in 1942 when he was 12-years-old. He was baptized in the Church of Christ as a young teenager and attended the Central Baptist Church. He graduated from Pampa High School in 1948 and worked at several meat markets in Pampa.

He married Roberta Silcott on June 3, 1951, and went to work for Ideal Food Stores in 1952 as a butcher. Ideal moved him to Dalhart in 1954 as their youngest market manager. He moved to Liberal, Kan., in 1954, to Enid, Okla., in 1961, and again to Liberal in 1966.

He was head of the meat departments for 20 years until Ideal sold their stores in 1984.

He returned to Pampa in 1984 and began Babb Portable Buildings with his son, Curtis.

He served in the National Guard for 13 years. The highlight of his day was his grandchild-



dren and going to coffee with his friends.

Survivors include his wife, Roberta of 51 years, of the home; a daughter, Susan Ratzlaff of Pampa; a son and daughter-in-law, Curtis and Christine Babb of Pampa; a sister

and brother-in-law, Frances and Lonnie Richardson of Boise City, Okla.; three grandchildren, Tacy Lamb and her husband Jay and K'Lee Ratzlaff, all of Spearman, and Dustin Stoddard of Pampa; and five great-grandchildren, Mackenzie Powell, Rion Broome and Chelsey Lamb, all of Spearman, Alexis Stoddard of Pampa and Jacob Stoddard of Clarendon; several nieces and nephews.

The family requests memorials be to Central Baptist Church, 513 E. Francis, Pampa, TX 79065.

—Sign the on-line register book at www.carmichael-whatley.com.

JERRY BECKHAM
1940-2003

BRANDON, Miss. — Jerry Beckham, 62, died Sunday, Feb. 9, 2003. Services are pending under the direction of Carmichael-Whately Funeral Directors of Pampa.

Mr. Beckham was born Oct. 30, 1940, at Borger and graduated from Phillips High School in 1959. He attended Frank Phillips College for two years, majoring in accounting, and served in the U.S. Army for another two years.

He was employed at Levi-Straus in Amarillo prior to transferring with the compa-

ny to Brandon in 1986, retiring after 30 years of service as district warehouse supervisor.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Roy S. and Myrtle Beckham and a brother, B.J. Beckham.

Survivors include two brothers, Bryce Beckham of West and Justin Beckham of Pampa.

The family requests memorials be to American Heart Association.

—Sign the on-line register book at www.carmichael-whatley.com.

DONNIE GAMBLE
1952-2003

Donnie Gamble, 51, of Pampa, died Tuesday, Feb. 11, 2003, at Amarillo. Services will be at 2 p.m., Friday in Memory Gardens Mausoleum with Dr. Dick Marcear, minister of the Church of Christ at the Colonies in Amarillo, officiating. Arrangements are under the direction of Carmichael-Whately Funeral Directors of Pampa.

Mr. Gamble was born Jan. 1, 1952, at Murfreesboro, Tenn. He had been a Pampa resident for 26 years and married Jenny Lee on April 7, 1973, at Pampa.

He worked at several grocery stores and

was employed at Wal-Mart for five years.

He was a member and minister of the Church of Christ. He was preceded in death by a brother, Hugh Gamble.

Survivors include his wife, Jenny, of the home; two sons, Scotty Gamble and Samuel Gamble, both of Pampa; a daughter, Julie Morgan of Pampa; two brothers, James Gamble and Buddy Gamble, both of West Texas; a sister, Wanda Paddock of Slidell; and two grandchildren.

—Sign the on-line register book at www.carmichael-whatley.com.

DONNA VEE SILLYMAN ROSE
1953-2003

AUSTIN — Donna Vee Sillyman Rose, of Austin, Texas, passed away, Feb. 9, 2003, after a battle with Alzheimer's. She was born Aug. 21, 1932, in Asher, Okla., to Marvin and Ruby Coffey Sillyman.

She graduated from high school in Pampa, Texas.

She married Jack Rose on Nov. 29, 1953, and moved to the Austin area in 1968.

Donna worked for the Internal Revenue Service from 1970 until her retirement in 1998.

Donna's primary interest was her family, especially her two grandsons Andrew and Cody.

Donna was preceded in death by her father Marvin Sillyman and is survived by her hus-

band of 50 years, Jack; her mother, Ruby Sillyman of Tyler; a daughter, Vikki and husband James Wolbrueck of Humble; a daughter, Kristi and husband Kelly Hein of Cypress; grandsons, Andrew and Cody Wolbrueck; sister, Patsy and husband Walter Burleson of Tyler; brother, Tom Sillyman and wife Patsy of Lake Charles, La.; aunt, Emma Lee Trask of Amarillo; and nieces, nephews and cousins.

Memorial services were to be at 2 p.m., today in Klein Funeral Home Chapel, Champion Forest.

In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to the Alzheimer's Association, 3420 Executive Center Dr., Suite 301, Livingston Bldg., Austin, TX 78731.

FRANCES RUTH BOWERS WALLS
1921-2003

Frances Ruth Bowers Walls, 82, of Pampa, died Wednesday, Feb. 12, 2003, at Amarillo, Texas. Services will be at 2 p.m., Saturday, Feb. 15, 2003, at the First United Methodist Church with Mr. John Curry and the Rev. Scott Penrod, pastor, of the First United Methodist Church, officiating. Burial will be in Fairview Cemetery under the direction of Carmichael-Whately Funeral Directors of Pampa.

Mrs. Walls was born Feb. 21, 1921, in Hereford. She was reared in Miami and was a 1938 graduate of Miami High School. She attended Texas Tech University in Lubbock and received her B.A. degree and M.Ed. degree from West Texas State University in Canyon. She received her M.S. degree in library science from East Texas State University in Commerce.

She taught elementary school at Laketon, Miami and Pampa and later became library coordinator for the Pampa Independent School District, retiring in 1982.

She married G.M. "Arkie" Walls on Oct. 1, 1939, in Elk City, Okla.

She was a member of the First United Methodist Church, both in Miami and Pampa. She was a member of the Crusaders Sunday School Class in Pampa, the Kappa Kappa Iota Teacher's Sorority, Pampa Classroom Teachers Association, T.E.A.,



N. E. A., Friends of the Library and Pampa Retired Teachers Association.

She helped farm with her husband during the summer months.

Survivors include her husband, G.M. "Arkie" Walls of Amarillo; three sons and daughters-in-law, G.M. Walls, Jr. and wife Diana of Pampa, Wilbur Walls and wife Judy of Lake Tanglewood and Steve Walls and wife Diane of Hurst; four grandchildren, Autumn Smith and Trae Walls, both of Pampa, Alicia Walls of Amarillo and Jordan Walls of Hurst; three step-grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.

The family will receive friends from 6-7 p.m., Friday at the funeral home and requests memorials be to First United Methodist Church, P.O. Box 1981, Pampa, TX 79066-1981, or to a favorite charity.

—Sign the on-line register book at www.carmichael-whatley.com.

SERVICES TOMORROW

- BABB, Wilbert Ray** — 2 p.m., Central Baptist Church, Pampa.
- CLARK, Phyllis** — 11 a.m., Gaines County Cemetery, Loop.
- GAMBLE, Donnie** — 2 p.m., Memory Gardens Cemetery, Pampa.

ON RECORD

POLICE

Pampa Police Department reported the following arrests and incidents.

Tuesday, Feb. 4

Forgery was reported in the 1100 block of West Alcock.

Tuesday, Feb. 11

Evelyn J. Lemons, 43, 1145 Varnon Dr., was arrested for burglary of a habitation and a municipal warrant for possession of drug paraphernalia.

Catherine Watie, 34, 1717 Hamilton, was arrested for burglary of a habitation.

Michael David Gerik, 44, 519 Frost, was arrested on a municipal warrant for theft.

J. David Hink, 38, 519 Frost, was arrested on municipal warrants for no drivers license, failure to appear and no insurance.

Michael Wayne Blalock, 45, 1125 Mary Ellen, was arrested on a grand jury indictment for possession and transportation of chemicals with intent to manufacture a controlled substance.

Forgery was reported in the 1200 block of North Hobart.

Wednesday, Feb. 12

Niasha Hollingshead, 36, 1020 Twiford, was arrested on a municipal warrant for pos-

session of drug paraphernalia.

Teri Ferguson, 29, Lefors, was arrested for possession of drug paraphernalia.

Drug paraphernalia was located at the intersection of Browning and Houston.

A digital camera was reported stolen from a business in the 600 block of West Foster. It was valued at \$400.

Disorderly conduct-fighting at Pampa Middle School was reported to Pampa PD. Two 13-year-old males were reported to be involved.

A classroom disruption reported at PMS involved a 12-year-old male.

Theft of a lawn mower was reported in the 1600 block of Williston. Value was estimated at \$279.

Thursday, Feb. 13

Tammy Diann Ryals, 30, 316 S. Gray, was arrested on a capias pro fine warrant for possession of drug paraphernalia and a municipal warrant for operating a motor vehicle with no valid drivers license.

Christian Dale King, 21, 1001 N. Sumner, was arrested on a municipal warrant for drug paraphernalia.

AMBULANCE

Rural/Metro reported the following calls during the 24-hour period ending at 7 a.m. today.

Wednesday, Feb. 12

8:36 a.m. — A mobile ICU responded to the 400 block of North Cuyler; one patient was transported to Pampa Regional Medical Center.

9:01 a.m. — A mobile ICU responded to

the 700 block of North Banks; no patient was transported.

10:19 a.m. — A mobile ICU responded to the 100 block of West 30th; one patient was transported to Northwest Texas Hospital in Amarillo.

11:20 a.m. — A mobile ICU responded to the 1300 block of Coffee; one patient was transported to PRMC.

SHERIFF

Gray County Sheriff's Department reported the following arrest.

Tuesday, Feb. 11

Kevin Scott Kidd, 21, 1806 N. Banks, was arrested on a bond surrender on two charges. One was in connection with a burglary of a

building charge while the other charge was assault causing bodily injury.

Thursday, Feb. 13

Department of Public Safety Troopers arrested James Gregory Wallin, 34, Oklahoma City, Okla., for possession of marijuana under two ounces.

LOCAL WEATHER

Today's forecast is calling for mostly cloudy skies with a chance of showers and thunderstorms and a 50 percent chance

of precipitation, highs in the mid 60s and south winds 5 to 15 mph. Tonight thunderstorms and a 60 percent chance of precipitation are likely with lows in the lower 50s and south winds 5 to 15 mph. Friday should be partly cloudy and breezy.

City Briefs

The Pampa News is not responsible for the content of paid advertisement

NOW AT West Texas Landscape Nursery Valentine's Stuffed Gift Balloons. 120 S. Hobart, 669-0158.

621 YEAGER Inside Sale, Fri. 8:30 - ? Lots furn., home decor, collectibles. 669-6707.

CELEBRATIONS VALENTINE Specials With a purchase of \$15 or more, receive a free 18 in. Mylar. 665-3100, Coronado Center.

CONSUELO'S VALENTINE Special, Chicken or Combo Fajitas for 2, \$14.95. Bring that Special person! 1328 N. Hobart, 11 -9 p.m.

COMPLETE TRAVEL Inc. is relocating. Call 669-6110.

EMILY'S CAFE now open Sat. eve. til 8 p.m. Evening Buffet. Breakfast Buffet Wed.-Sun 8-10, 732 E. Frederic.

FOR SALE couch w/matching loveseat, end table, dresser w/mirror & night stand to match, misc. Call 669-3361, 669-2329 eve.

MASSAGE THERAPY Valentines Day Special Gift Certi. Cathy Potter, 669-0013.

SALE WINTER Clothes Out. Great Bargains! Many items \$1 & up. Twice Is Nice

SWEETHEART DANCE, Moose Lodge, Feb. 15th 8:00 p.m. "Rebel Texas"

VALENTINE PAJAMA Party at Lone Star Country Club, Fri. night. Kris & Southern Sky Fri. & Sat. Come join the fun & games!!

WASHER & Dryer for sale. See at 731 N. Faulkner.

STOCKS

The following grain quotations are provided by Anheuser Grain of Pampa		Halliburton	19.12	-0.18
Wheat	3.36	Trad Hospitals	24.21	-0.45
Milo	3.92	NOI	20.20	+0.14
Corn	4.46	KMI	44.83	-0.30
Soybeans	4.84	XCEL	10.46	-0.19
		Kerr McGee	38.83	+0.10
		Limited	11.05	-0.45
		Williams	2.62	-0.18
		McDonalds	13.58	-0.25
		Exxon Mobil	32.56	-0.14
		Atmos	21.22	-0.08
		Pioneer Nat	24.33	-0.02
		Penney's	17.84	-0.39
		COP	47.93	+0.05
		Schlumberger	38.21	-0.16
		Tenneco	2.15	-0.07
		CVX	62.67	-0.41
		Wal-Mart	47.34	-0.51
		OKE	16.43	-0.05
		NS Group	7.21	-0.09
		New York Gold	352.75	
		Silver	4.50	
		West Texas Crude	35.77	

ACCIDENTS

Pampa Police Department today reported the following accident.

Wednesday, Feb. 12

Connie L. Hughes, 36, 1819 Evergreen, was cited for failure to yield right of way, no proof of liability insurance and expired registration in connection with a collision in the 1200 block North Hobart.

Hughes was driver of a 1999 Chrysler Cirrus when she exited a private parking lot, crossed the turning land and attempted to cross both lanes of traffic, according to the police report.

Jacob Stephen Clemmens, 62, 2417 Cherokee, was driver of a 1993 Chevrolet S-10 pickup which was traveling south in the 1200 block of North Hobart.

According to the report, the two cars collided when Hughes entered the lane in which Clemmens was driving.



Pampa Wal-Mart's Pampa/Gray Wal-Mart's g in the bank v utive year th Stoppers pro

PGW

WHITE DE Panhandle Gr Conservation Di written commen changes in the management Monday, Feb. 17 C.E. William manager of the the board of dire cally revises th management plan

USD

on en The U.S. De Agriculture's Resources Service is solic comments on a p concerning the E Quality Incentiv or EQIP.

"The Farm B an unprecedented in conservation of working lands," s D. Butler, NRCS vationist for Texa He said it pro billion increa tion over a 10 which is an increase over pr ing.

"In addition," "the Farm Bill tary solutions fo with the Endang Act, Clean Water Air Act and other EQIP, one of programs in the designed to he meet environmen tions, Butler said He said EQIP

conservation pro mote environm and help produce state and federal Funds from the be used to install practices dealing sion, water effici

The I will b for from m **Menu** **News C**



(Courtesy photo)

Pampa Wal-Mart Assistant Manager David Brown presents a \$500 donation to Pampa/Gray County Crime Stoppers Secretary/Treasurer Suzanne Courtney. Wal-Mart's generous support of Crime Stoppers has ensured there was money in the bank when needed for rewards, Courtney said. This is the third consecutive year that Wal-Mart has made a substantial donation to the local Crime Stoppers program.

PGWCD takes comments on rule changes

WHITE DEER -- The Panhandle Ground Water Conservation District will take written comments on proposed changes in their rules and management plan until Monday, Feb. 17.

C.E. Williams, general manager of the district, said the board of directors periodically revises their rules and management plan. He said that

during the last legislative session there were several changes to the Texas Water Code that needed to be addressed by the district's rules.

The district proposes to require a permit for new domestic and livestock wells on 10 acres or less. Existing wells are exempt, Williams said.

There are also proposed changes to acquiring permits, especially high impact production permits. There are additional requirements for high impact production permits.

An addition application will be required for transportation of ground water out of the district under the proposed rules.

There are also additions to the smaller and larger pump

sizes to the well spacing rules.

Williams said there's a comprehensive revision of the notice and hearing process for high-impact production permits in the proposed rules. There is also an alternative dispute resolution procedure for hearings.

"The district wants to add a rule regarding water transport fees and add to the aquifer depletion rule. The latter will establish an acceptable decline rate as a percentage, removal of a lower limit on production and allow changes at the board's discretion in decreasing the time period for limiting production under the depletion rule.

Written comments may be sent to the Panhandle Ground Water Conservation District, P.O. Box 637, White Deer, TX 79097.

Copies of the proposed rule changes and management plan are available by calling 883-2501.

The final hearing on the rules is set for March 3, at the district offices in White Deer.

USDA seeks public opinion on environmental program

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service is soliciting public comments on a proposed rule concerning the Environmental Quality Incentives Program, or EQIP.

"The Farm Bill represents an unprecedented investment in conservation on America's working lands," said Dr. Larry D. Butler, NRCS state conservationist for Texas.

He said it provides a \$17.1 billion increase in conservation over a 10 year period, which is an 80 percent increase over previous funding.

"In addition," Butler said, "the Farm Bill offers voluntary solutions for complying with the Endangered Species Act, Clean Water Act, Clean Air Act and other regulations."

EQIP, one of the largest programs in the Farm Bill, is designed to help producers meet environmental regulations, Butler said.

He said EQIP is a voluntary conservation program to promote environmental quality and help producers meet local, state and federal regulations. Funds from the program can be used to install conservation practices dealing with soil erosion, water efficiency and the

protection of grazing land. Butler said the NRCS has streamlined the program's administration in the proposed rules.

The proposed rules also address several statutory changes.

Butler said that under the proposed rules, up to 90 percent cost share is available for limited resource and beginning farmers and ranchers.

The proposed rule changes include a total payment limitation of \$450,000 per qualified individual or entity for all fiscal years 2002-2007 EQIP contracts.

The new rules would provide livestock producers with cost share assistance for waste storage facilities, regardless of size, but producers would have to develop and implement a comprehensive nutrient management plan.

Butler said 60 percent of EQIP funding is reserved for livestock related practices.

The proposed fiscal year 2004 agriculture budget includes \$850 million for EQIP to install conservation measures such as soil erosion controls and water quality enhancements, \$51 million for ground and surface water conservation and \$8 million for water conservation and water

NATO cancels emergency meeting; Germany suggests end to deadlock

BRUSSELS, Belgium (AP) — NATO canceled an emergency meeting to discuss its bitter split over Iraq on Thursday, after Germany insisted any breakthrough would have to wait until a key session of the United Nations on Friday.

German Defense Minister Peter Struck suggested his country would be prepared Saturday to drop its opposition to NATO's starting plans to help defend Turkey in case of war with Iraq.

It was unclear whether the two other holdouts — France and Belgium — would go along with the U.S.-backed defense plans.

NATO's decision-making North Atlantic Council was supposed to hold a fourth straight day of crisis talks, but the meeting was called off. There was no decision on whether the ambassadors would reconvene again Friday.

NATO officials said there was insufficient progress to

warrant Thursday's session. Intensive discussions were continuing among capitals, they said.

The issue of preparations in case of an Iraq war — centering on plans to protect Turkey from possible Iraqi reprisals — has spawned the worst crisis in the alliance in decades. France, Germany and Belgium say starting the preparations now would undermine efforts to avert a war; the United States and the 15 members supporting it insist that not protecting Turkey damages NATO unity.

The three holdouts say they will only consider the start of NATO planning after U.N. weapons inspectors present their latest report on Iraq's cooperation Friday in New York.

Struck told the parliament

in Berlin that action would come immediately afterward.

"We will have a decision in the North Atlantic Council at the latest Saturday ... which will absolutely satisfy Turkey's interests," he said.

A request for clarification to the German Defense Ministry was not immediately answered.

France said its position was unchanged. Foreign Ministry spokesman Francois Rivasseau said starting the NATO planning would suggest support for military action against Iraq and "prejudice decisions that belong to the Security Council."

Belgian Foreign Ministry spokesman Didier Seeuws said there may be a deal Saturday, but much would depend on the weapons inspectors' report.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

SAFETY

Protective clothing to be used in winter storms is also recommended.

Hall said it is recommended that people living near a

chemical facility have a plastic tarp and duct tape to seal windows and doors. He said in the event of such an instance people would have to cut off heating and/or cooling systems.

CASA sets meeting for volunteers-to-be

CASA of the High Plains will be holding an informational meeting for persons wishing to become Court Appointed Special Advocates for children on Monday, Feb. 17, at 7 p.m. in the fellowship hall of Highland Baptist Church, 1301 N. Banks.

"If you've always wanted to make a difference in the world, here's your chance. Every year more than a million children are abused and neglected and every year these children's futures are put at risk. But you can make a difference. By standing up for these children and speaking on their behalf, you'll help ensure that these children find safe, permanent homes — something every child deserves. Volunteer as a CASA advocate and change one life at a time," said Janet Watts, local CASA director.

Every year, the state of Texas removes thousands of children from their homes because of abuse or neglect. These victimized children are drawn into an overburdened child welfare system that is hard pressed to address their individual concerns. Eventually, they end up in court. CASA is a non-profit agency that trains and supports volunteers to work with these children as they journey toward safe, loving, permanent homes. The CASA volunteer is frequently the most consistent person in the child's life during their involvement with the court.

"Refuse to be silent. Learn how to speak up for a child. Attend the informational meeting to find out how you can become a powerful voice in a child's life," Watts said.

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VIEWPOINTS

Any day could be last day

THE Pampa NEWS

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Grandchildren can certainly be wonderful. They can also keep us grounded. As everyone who knows me knows that my grandchildren are very special to me. While I have eight of the little darlings, I only get to see five of them on a regular basis because the one lives in California and two in Washington state.



NANCY YOUNG
MANAGING EDITOR

Three of them stay with me quite a bit because of their mother's work and going to college.

A few nights ago I realized many people were getting to a state of panic because of our country being placed on a high orange alert. As I listened to people and watched them, I realized the fear they were experiencing.

I watched as one man gathered up water in all available containers at his residence and others were talking of plans to stock up on food supplies and gasoline in their vehicles.

Realizing these fears are contagious, I had to remove myself from the situation. It's not that I don't think the terrorism threat is not serious. It is serious, but people should always be prepared for emergencies. Not that I always am. But I do keep a few things— flashlights, radios, extra batteries, etc.

Also, I have a manual can opener simply because I seem to be allergic to electric ones. They don't work worth a darn for me.

When I worked at the Borger News-

Herald one of my beats was the Emergency Operations Center. After writing so many stories about people being prepared for snow storms, tornadoes and other emergency situations, it finally began to rub off on me. Now I don't always have everything I should have, but I try to keep stocked up - especially extra batteries for my battery-operated police scanner (In the business I'm in, I'm just naturally nosy and always want to know what's going on.)

As I've listened to people discussing the threat, I've realized many are frightened.

After leaving the residence, I thought of what was most important to me if such a disaster should occur. My first thought was talking to and seeing my grandchildren.

Being a cancer survivor, I'm not afraid of death. The insidious disease does teach you a lot of things. The greatest lesson I learned was that there is no guarantee on how long we'll be here on earth and that I need to make the most of each moment I have. That's the way I

have chosen to try to lead my life.

So, I prayed as I drove home. Realizing that panic wasn't going to stop anything that might happen, I decided to go about my everyday business.

Talking to my grandchildren on the phone brightened my spirits. I always want them to know that their Nana loves them. Just hearing their voices was wonderful to me.

Listening to 4-year-old Paige ask me "Why are you so old, Nana?" I responded, "Because it's better than the alternative," I told her. She giggled, not quite sure what I'd meant.

Christian, 6, the serious child, was talking about dinosaurs and the 5,700-year-old bison found in the Stinnett Park last summer. (He seems to think I was there when the bison was alive.) Peyton, 8, wanted to spend the night with me.

Feeling much better, I knew I wasn't going to worry about terrorism. I did the rational thing - I went to buy cigarettes. I certainly didn't want to run out. (Yes, I am a smoker, and don't anybody bother to tell me it's bad for my health. I know that, and it will make no difference if people tell me that. I'll just smoke more.)

To paraphrase a speaker I once heard - "If you live each day as if it was your last, some day you will be right."

(Nancy Young may be reached at nanceyoung@hotmail.com)

Opinions expressed on this page do not necessarily reflect the views of *The Pampa News*.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Taxpayers will pay price

To the editor:

The people of the Panhandle should know that Robert M. Worley of the Dumas Economic Development Corporation has published an advertisement in a farm journal specifically aimed at attracting "dairies, ethanol plants and beef and pork operations." He states, "There has to be a place that is willing and able to host this necessary part of life, and we're it." He went on to state that the Panhandle is "beckoning" these industries.

In reply, I must say at the outset that this man has no right whatsoever to speak for the rest of us, nor does he have any right to infer that the objectives above have the endorsement of the people of this area. Indeed, the exact opposite is true.

Many of us waged a lengthy battle against the incursion of commercial pig factories in the recent past. These facilities will accommodate seven million animals when present plans for the Panhandle are complete. Perhaps our efforts have only bought about an increased awareness of the problem and little else, because Texas has the weakest environmental laws of all the states. This, in itself, is an open invitation to those who stand to profit from the lack of environmental restrictions.

The majority of our people are opposed to the giant, contaminating industries that have pushed their way into Texas, and in the process, pushed small farmers out. Their economic benefits become subject to question when environmental and social costs are factored in. These costs, of course, fall on the taxpayers. Other states have realized this and taken action, and that is why these mega-corporations are seeking kinder, unrestricted places to do business, and the reason Texas has become their most desirable destination.

The final affront is that Mr. Worley's salary is paid by taxpayers' money.

Edna L. Hayden
Pampa

TODAY IN HISTORY

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Today is Thursday, Feb. 13, the 44th day of 2003. There are 321 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Feb. 13, 1935, a jury in Flemington, N.J., found Bruno Richard Hauptmann guilty of first-degree murder in the kidnap-death of the son of Charles and Anne Lindbergh. Hauptmann was later executed.

On this date:

In 1542, the fifth wife of England's King Henry VIII, Catherine Howard, was executed for adultery.

In 1635, America's oldest public school, the Boston Public Latin School, was founded.

In 1914, the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers, known as ASCAP, was founded in New York.

In 1920, the League of Nations recognized the perpetual neutrality of Switzerland.

In 1945, during World War II, the Soviets captured Budapest, Hungary, from the Germans.

In 1945, Allied planes began bombing the German city of Dresden.

In 1960, France exploded its first atomic bomb.

In 1980, opening ceremonies were held in Lake Placid, N.Y., for the 13th Winter Olympics.

In 1984, Konstantin Chernenko was chosen to be general secretary of the Soviet Communist Party's Central Committee, succeeding the late Yuri Andropov.

In 1988, the 15th winter Olympics opened in Calgary, Alberta, Canada.

Ten years ago: The government of Bosnia-Herzegovina began blocking the distribution of food in the capital of Sarajevo to protest ineffective international attempts to stop the war.

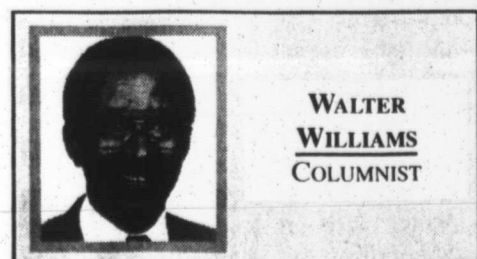
Five years ago: Dr. David Satcher was sworn in as surgeon general during an Oval Office ceremony. The United Auto Workers reached a tentative contract agreement with Caterpillar Inc. (Union members rejected the agreement, which was revised and later ratified, ending a bitter, 6 1/2-year dispute.)

One year ago: John Walker Lindh pleaded innocent in federal court in Alexandria, Va., to conspiring to kill Americans and supporting the Taliban and terrorist organizations. Britain's Queen Elizabeth II made former New York City Mayor Rudolph Giuliani an honorary knight.



FAA aviation aversion therapy

Aversion therapy is sometimes used when there are associated behavior patterns that are pleasant but might be regarded by a third party as undesirable. For example, alcoholics love consuming large amounts of alcohol. Aversion therapy involves associating alcohol consumption with a very unpleasant stimulus. One method is to require the alcoholic to take a sip of whiskey having first taken a nausea-inducing drug. Sipping the whiskey is followed immediately by violent vomiting. In future, just the smell of alcohol produces the unpleasant memory of vomiting -- and hopefully the patient will stop drinking.



WALTER WILLIAMS
COLUMNIST

Aversion therapy is used in the treatment of compulsive gambling, sexual perversions and various phobias. The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has come up with its form of aversion therapy. Flying to one destination or another to deliver lectures on a range of economic topics used to be pleasant, but not any more. The FAA has successfully treated me with aviation aversion therapy. Occasionally, I must fly somewhere. I don't vomit in anticipation, but I succumb to an almost uncontrollable rage on route to the airport that's intensified by the question, "May I see your ticket and photo I.D.?"

Being asked for a ticket and photo I.D. is reasonable, but it's a precursor of what follows. My carry-on luggage is

tossed on the conveyor belt for x-ray. I walk through the metal detector. Suspenders, watches, wallet, cigarettes, tiepin, belt and ring can set off the alarm. I've learned that, so those items are removed and placed in my brief case, and so are my eyeglasses.

Despite de-metalizing myself, it's no guarantee that the alarm won't go off. When it does, a guard escorts me to a chair to wand my legs and crotch. He orders me to take off my shoes, and they're x-rayed. Finally, there's the order for me to stand, arms outstretched, for more wanding. Guards sometimes attempt to exchange pleasantries. I just look at them saying not one word, for fear of saying what I felt would lead to arrest. Instead of pleasantries, they might apologize for the delay, inconvenience and sheer stupidity of a procedure that imposes high costs on millions upon millions of Americans who are no air safety threat whatsoever.

The FAA's aversion therapy has worked well with me. My rule is if the travel distance is 300 miles or less, I

drive instead of fly. Flying is safer than driving 300 miles, but considering the two hour pre-flight arrival time, driving might get me to my destination just as quickly as flying, not to mention having been spared the psychological costs of airport hassle. If there are other Americans like me, FAA's aviation aversion therapy has been costly to the airlines.

There must be a better way. After all, if one's looking for a needle in a haystack, he need not examine every straw. Or, if one is trying to find out which hand grenades are duds, he needn't explode every hand grenade. Robert Poole, a senior researcher at the Los Angeles-based Reason Foundation, suggests the issuance of a "trusted traveler" I.D. To get one, you'd fill out an application -- much like an application for a concealed weapon carry permit. Upon completion of an investigation, you'd be issued a tamper-proof "trusted traveler" I.D. that'd permit you to move through a line where there's less intense passenger screening.

The FAA will receive an apology the very day I hear a news story that an 80-year-old woman, a wheelchair bound amputee and a 6-month old baby, led by an instantly recognizable famous former U.S. congressman such as Newt Gingrich, have hijacked an airliner and flown it to Cuba.

US born in Afg

KABUL (AP) — caves in s where s ers report firing on U.S. milit

U.S. detained tried to f Wednesd Lejay in th of Helma in a state Air Base.

A U.S. dropped bomb and airplane fi non round area.

U.S. n Col. Roger allied troop

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Tuesday a Taliban h rugged Helmand's district, wh located.

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"Battle d conducted Operation E indicated a casualties to statement sa directed at firing at U.S.

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King sai enemy fight of Taliban have taken in the distric year after th Shah-i-Kot Anaconda in

"Over tin tions that th reorganize. gence that that there v hostiles in t we acted or by moving King said.

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injured by s unexploded was flown to southern cit where he ha amputated.

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U.S. troops bomb caves in southern Afghanistan

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP) — U.S. forces bombed caves in southern Afghanistan where suspected enemy fighters reportedly took refuge after firing on American troops, the U.S. military said Thursday.

U.S. ground troops also detained three men after they tried to flee in the operation Wednesday night south of Lejay in the southern province of Helmand, the military said in a statement from Bagram Air Base.

A U.S. B-52 bomber dropped one 2,000 pound bomb and an AC-130 gunship airplane fired 10,105mm cannon rounds at caves in the area.

U.S. military spokesman Col. Roger King said over 100 allied troops were involved.

On Tuesday, U.S. forces said they strafed 25 suspected enemy fighters on a ridge in the same area and arrested 12 of them as part of an operation called Eagle Fury.

An Afghan official and a villager said this week that several civilians were killed in allied assaults Monday and Tuesday against suspected Taliban hide-outs in the rugged mountains in Helmand's Baghni Baghran district, where Lejay is also located.

It was not clear if the Afghan official was talking about the same operation. American officials have said they were not aware of any civilian casualties.

"Battle damage assessment conducted in support of Operation Eagle Fury has not indicated any noncombatant casualties to date," a military statement said. "Aircraft were directed at targets that were firing at U.S. forces."

King said the operation was not taking place in a populated area, but on high mountainous ground full of caves and ridges.

King said he believed the enemy fighters were remnants of Taliban forces who might have taken refuge in a valley in the district of Baghran last year after the last big battle at Shah-i-Kot during Operation Anaconda in early 2002.

"Over time we had indications that they were trying to reorganize. We had intelligence that led us to believe that there was a number of hostiles in that valley, and so we acted on that intelligence by moving forces in there," King said.

"The forces almost immediately made contact, which we felt verified that the intelligence that we had was correct."

Meanwhile, allied forces on Wednesday evacuated a 10-year-old boy from Deh Rawod in the central province of Uruzgan. The boy, who was injured by shrapnel after an unexploded bomb went off, was flown to a U.S. base in the southern city of Kandahar, where he had his right hand amputated.

Strike plunges Bolivian capital into civil unrest

By GRAHAM GORI
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

LA PAZ, Bolivia (AP) — Angry civilians joined striking police officers in a protest that degenerated into riots, leaving at least 14 people dead and Bolivian government buildings in flames.

The violence in La Paz began when 7,000 striking police officers and civilian protesters clashed with government troops over a proposal by President Gonzalo Sanchez de Lozada to raise taxes on the nation's poor.

Rioters set seven buildings on fire, and troops used rubber bullets and tear gas to battle the demonstrators. The fighting subsided after five hours, but sporadic gunfire continued through the night.

Officials said late Wednesday that 14 people had been killed and at least 100 others injured.

Sanchez de Lozada escaped in an ambulance from the besieged presidential palace and gave a nationally televised speech in which he suspended the tax increase and ordered the withdrawal of government troops.

"I plead with all Bolivians to put an end to the violence and to begin honest negotiations," Sanchez de Lozada said. "I ask one more thing from our father above — God save Bolivia."

The riots appeared to be protests that had spiraled out of control and there was no sign that they threatened government stability. But with no police force, the president's call to peace had little effect as the city descended into chaos.

Police officers dressed in green fatigues seized the foreign ministry, firing tear gas in support of the demonstrators who laid siege to the presidential palace across the square.

A steady stream of ambulances sped through the city,

carrying the injured to hospitals and calling on citizens to replenish depleted blood banks.

Fatigued nurses and doctors formed a human chain to keep grieving family members from forcing their way into the city's emergency rooms, surgery wards and morgue.

"I've been a doctor here for 30 years and I've never seen such a bloody day," said Eduardo Chavez, the director of the city's largest hospital.

Fires at seven government buildings raged as the city's firefighters abandoned their posts and joined the police in the protests. The buildings were still smoldering well after dark Wednesday.

Inmates set the city's largest jail on fire and attempted a mass escape. Soldiers fired bullets at convicts trying to crawl to freedom on the jail's roof.

Then looting began. Thousands pooled in the streets below the city's largest department store, arms outstretched as looters hurled boxes of goods from the windows.

One man carried away a pair of Barbie socks. "I have daughters," he explained.

One man inexplicably yelled: "Give me turtles, the turtles!" A woman watching masses shouted, "Not the stores! Burn the government, not the stores!"

Bolivia, a country well known for its violent repression of mass demonstrations, has not seen such a bloody afternoon since the country elected its first democratic government in 1982.

"The big difference is that the government always had the police to defend the constitution," said Carlos Toranzo, a political analyst in La Paz. "This time the police left the fate of the nation in the hands of the looters," he said.

Gas tanker truck erupts, wreaks havoc along Mexican highway

TOLUCA, Mexico (AP) — A tanker truck tipped over and exploded on a highway near Mexico City on Wednesday, setting cars and buildings on fire, killing at least four people and injuring nine others.

Television footage showed burned-out shells of three cars and several brick buildings — mainly shops — scorched by the huge fireball that burst from the tanker truck on the four-lane highway.

One woman and her young son were burned to death in their car. Another man also died in his vehicle, and a fourth man was declared dead on arrival at a hospital in Toluca, 35 miles west of Mexico City.

Nine people were injured, said a hospital spokesman, Juan Carlos Velazquez, including one

man with very severe burns. The flaming wreckage blocked the highway linking the capital to Toluca.

The truck was carrying two huge cylinders of liquefied natural gas, and its driver was listed as missing.

Tanker trucks regularly ply Mexican roads supplying cooking gas to homes, and several have exploded in recent years, often due to poor maintenance or leaks.

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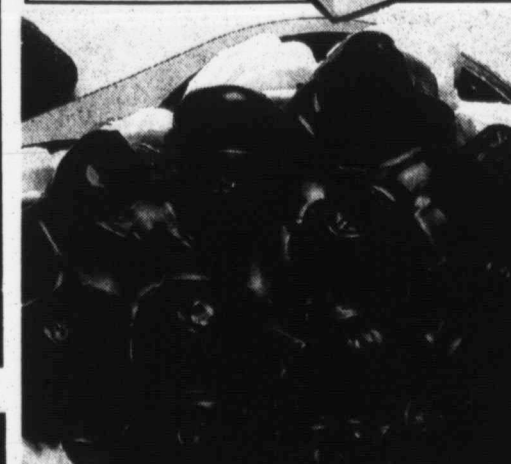
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THE Pampa NEWS COMICS

THURSDAY • FEBRUARY 13, 2003

DEAR ABBY

written by Pauline Phillips and daughter Jeanne Phillips

Wife Who Wants To Unseat Mom Draws Readers' Ire

DEAR ABBY: I disagree with the advice you gave to "Afraid to Speak Up in Philly," the woman who resented her husband's mother sitting in the front seat of the car when they went on a long trip.

When we had this situation in our family, I always insisted my mother-in-law have the front seat next to her son for several reasons:

- (1) It's a matter of respect.
 - (2) It gives her a chance to be near her child and maybe give him an affectionate pat during conversation.
 - (3) And don't forget that age often brings with it impaired hearing, which does not enhance communication from the front seat to the back.
- These are precious times for her to be with her son. "Afraid to Speak Up" will have him all to herself when his mother is gone.

ANN IN SANTA ANA, CALIF.

DEAR ANN: You are not the only reader who wrote to tell me my answer stank. I received hundreds. Read on:

DEAR ABBY: When my mother was alive and we were in the car with my brother, his wife always sat in the back seat while Mother sat up front. It was easier for her to get in and out.

BUB IN SAN DIEGO

DEAR ABBY: I have never written to you before, but I had a heartfelt reaction to the woman who complained about her mother-in-law sitting next to her son during the road trip. First of all, I compliment this couple for taking the time to visit and care for the needs of this mother-in-law. Secondly, the Scriptures say,

"Honor thy father and mother that mayest live long upon the earth." Honor her by allowing her to sit next to her son. The kindness will return to you. Sign me.

LOVE IS ALWAYS THE ANSWER

DEAR ABBY: Your reply to the wife competing with her mother-in-law for seating in the car was wrong! Are these people rednecks with no manners?

If that husband is any kind of gentleman, he will not allow his mother to get into the car without opening and holding her door for her — like any gentleman does. You advised the woman to tell her mother-in-law to hop in the back. Shame on you! I'm a real man, and a real man is also a gentleman.

C.S.K., RICHMOND, VA.

DEAR C.S.K.: Mea culpa! I don't know how I missed that.

DEAR ABBY: Regarding the wife who resents sitting in the back. If the wife can drive, she should ask her husband to sit in the back and see how he likes it.

G.R.W., UNION CITY, N.J.

DEAR ABBY: Why is she complaining about sitting in the back? The passenger seat is known colloquially as the "death seat!"

SMILING IN THE BACK SEAT

DEAR ABBY: I sense there are other factors at work in that woman's relationship with her mother-in-law than "sitting in the back seat." There may be insecurity or jealousy involved. What's the

harm in letting her sit in front? Let it may be well with thee and that thou mayest live long upon the earth." Honor her by allowing her to sit next to her son. The kindness will return to you. Sign me.

I comment this couple for taking his mother to dinner, shopping, etc. They shouldn't spoil such gestures of thoughtfulness with pettiness. BEEN THERE IN HAWAII

DEAR BEEN THERE AND DEAR READERS: So there you have it. I would flagellate with a wet noodle, but I left it in the back seat.

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.

Good advice for everyone — teens to seniors — is in "The Anger in All of Us and How to Deal With It." To order, send a business-size, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for \$5 (U.S. funds only) to: Dear Abby — Anger Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included in the price.)

Abby shares more than 100 of her favorite recipes in two booklets: "Abby's Favorite Recipes" and "More Favorite Recipes by Dear Abby." Send a business-size, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for \$10 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby — Cookbooklet Set, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included in the price.)

Crossword Puzzle

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS DOWN

- 1 Unadorned
- 5 "Theme" ("Dr. Zhivago" music)
- 10 Entertain
- 12 Let up
- 13 Sheets and such
- 14 Singer
- 15 Easter find
- 16 Trial
- 18 Prayer string
- 20 Tiny worker
- 21 Profound
- 23 Corp.
- 24 Team
- 26 Good pair
- 28 — Tin Tin
- 29 Long story
- 31 Crunch targets
- 32 Famous Ford
- 36 Cry to a freeloader
- 39 Misery
- 40 Refrain bit
- 41 Writer
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Marmaduke



"Bark, When."

The Family Circus

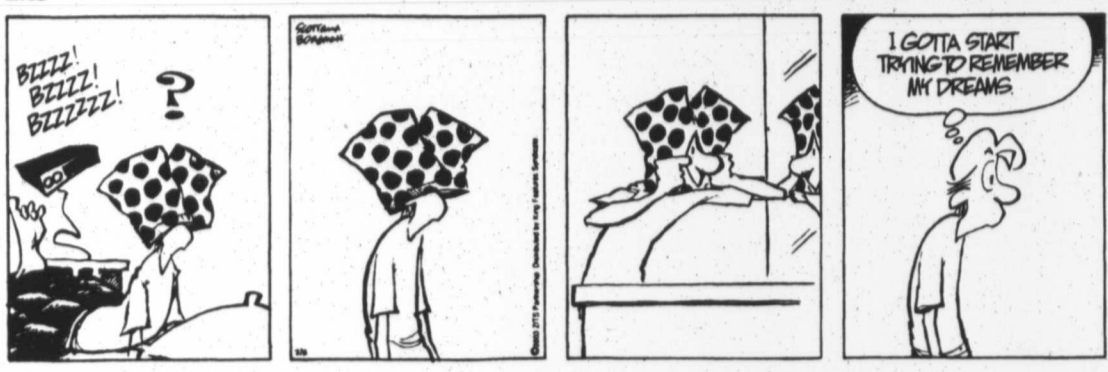


"I've got the two of Valentines."

For Better or For Worse



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Flo & Friends



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SPORTS

PHS tennis team wins Grapevine Invitational

GRAPEVINE — Many outstanding individual performances led to Pampa claiming the overall team championship at the recent Grapevine Tennis Invitational.

The tournament was composed of 20 teams, including 16 5A schools.

"This was definitely one of our best team performances. We won 25 matches, and of the 11 matches we lost, seven of them were hard-fought set matches. This team battled a tough field and inclement weather, and finished first. It was a good tournament," said

Pampa head coach Carolyn Quarles.

Senior Tyler Howard and junior Zach Hucks took first in Boys B Doubles to improve their spring record to 8-0. Seniors Jay Gerber and David Thacker defeated a tough Marcus team in the semi-finals

7-6, 7-5. They lost their first match of the spring to Grapevine's Hanno and Underwood in the finals 3-6, 7-6, 6-4.

Junior Britton White had a disappointing first-round loss to Northwest's Spencer Ross, but went on to win the consolation title. Junior Adam Etchison finished fourth in Boys B Singles, dropping his semi-final match to Grapevine's Robert Taylor 2-6, 7-6, 6-4.

Junior Kevin Turner fell in the second round to Daniel Mound of Marcus 7-6, 6-1, 5-7.

The best finish on the girls' side was from junior Tara Jordan and senior Vanessa Orr, who finished second after losing in the finals to Grapevine's Jones-Baird 3-6, 6-3, 6-2. Senior Helen Brooks had an impressive 3-1 record in Girls A Singles. Brooks defeated Midlothian's Rebecca McCollough 8-2 in the third-place match. Brooks is now 7-1 in the spring season.

Freshman Myca Vinson finished fourth in Girls B Singles and sophomore Payton Baird-freshman Lacie Long won consolation in Girls B Doubles. Senior Abby Bradley and freshman Ashlee Lucus fell to the No. 1 seed in Girls B Doubles

in the second round 6-2, 4-6, 6-4.

Grapevine Tournament Pampa Results

Boys A Singles
Britton White: Had 3-1 record, won consolation.

Boys A Doubles
Jay Gerber-David Thacker (second place): def. Jones-Smith, Newman Smith 6-2, 6-1; def. Simental-McGhee, Graham, 6-0, 6-0; def. Butler-Gankler, Marcus 7-6, 7-5; lost to Hanno-Underwood, Grapevine 3-6, 7-6, 6-4.

Boys B Singles
Adam Etchison (fourth place): def. Matt Siegfried, Grapevine, 6-0, 6-1; def. Justin Reed, Marcus, 6-2, 6-0; lost to Robert Taylor, Grapevine, 2-6, 7-6, 6-4; lost to Abishek Charamuri, Heritage, 9-7.

Kevin Turner def. Ryan Seaberry, Graham, 6-2, 6-3; lost to Daniel Mound, Marcus, 7-6, 1-6, 5-7.

Boys B Doubles
Zach Hucks-Tyler Howard (first place): def. Volpe-Scott, Marcus, 6-4, 6-2; def. Ross-Parker, Coppel, 6-3, 6-1; def. Paige-Sherwin, Trinity, 6-0, 6-1; def. Martin-Carlson, Grapevine, 6-2, 6-0.

Girls A Singles
Helen Brooks (third place): def. Lauren Stalworth, West Mesquite, 6-0, 6-0; def. Azra Saleem, Grapevine, 6-1, 6-0; lost to Dundja Dunda, Summit, 5-7, 6-2, 1-6.

Girls A Doubles
Tara Jordan-Vanessa Orr (second place): def. Divine-Bohn, Keller, 7-5, 6-3; def. Mezzenga-Reyna, Coppel, 6-2, 6-2; def. Daniels-Redfield, Summit, 6-4, 6-4; lost to Jones-Baird, Grapevine 3-6, 6-3, 6-2.

Girls B Singles
Myca Vinson (fourth place): def. Georgiana Udozah, West Mesquite, 6-1, 6-1; def. Alysa Donahoo, Midlothian, 7-5, 6-1; lost to Alicia Jenkins, Marcus, 7-6, 6-1; lost to Christa Hall, Coppel, 8-5.

Girls B Doubles
Payton Baird-Lacie Long (won consolation): lost to Doan-Plam, North Crowley, 6-3, 3-6, 6-4; def. Parker-Martin, Graham, 8-0; def. Rhodes-Cenepper, Trinity, 8-1; def. Alred-Mills, Marcus, 8-5.

Abby Bradley-Ashlee Lucus def. Goulat-Morgan, Midlothian, 6-3, 6-2; lost to Garcia-Frawley, Coppel, 6-2, 4-6, 6-4.



(Courtesy photo)

Pampa's Tyler Howard and Zach Hucks (right) won the Boys B Doubles title at the Grapevine Invitational.

NOTEBOOK

ROLLER HOCKEY

PAMPA — Pampa Kids & Youth Club continues its signups for the second annual Roller Hockey Season.

Remaining signups are as follows:

6-8 tonight, Baker Gym
6-8 p.m. Friday, Baker Gym

10 a.m.-12 noon Saturday, Baker Gym.

For more information, contact Joe Anstey at 669-1533 or Janet Harris at 664-3813 or 669-1838 after 5 p.m.

The club is open to youngsters of all ages, elementary through high school.

BASKETBALL

PAMPA — Pampa meets Perryton in a practice game at 7:30 Friday night in McNeely Fieldhouse.

Both teams are headed into the basketball playoffs next week.

Pampa meets Levelland at 6 Tuesday night in bi-district at Wayland Baptist University in Plainview.

BORGER — Wheeler was eliminated by Gruver 70-44 Tuesday night in a girls' bi-district game.

Lisa Johnson led the Gruver attack with 16 points.

Lyndi Finsterwald had 13 points and Amy Osborne added 12 to lead Wheeler scorers.

BORGER — Fort Elliott girls pulled away from Texline in the fourth quarter for a 49-32 win Tuesday in bi-district action.

Sarah Zybach was Fort Elliott's high scorer with 16 points. Tamara Hartline followed with 12.

Brandi French led Texline with 13 points.

Fort Elliott meets Hedley in an area matchup at 6 Friday night in Pampa.

AMARILLO — Pampa opened the District Freshmen Boys Basketball Tournament with a 44-41 victory over Dumas.

Ryan Torres was Pampa's leading scorer with 16 points. Sharod Young had 14 points and Braydon Barker 10.

Pampa was eliminated by Tascosa in a 60-58 squeaker in the next game. Torres topped Pampa scorers again with 21 points. Young followed with 12 points and Barker had 7.

Pampa's freshmen team finished with a 17-5 record.

BASEBALL

NEW YORK (AP) — David Cone will attempt a comeback with the New York Mets, signing a minor league contract Thursday.

The 40-year-old right-hander, who won the 1994 Cy Young Award and threw a perfect game in 1999, was out of baseball last season.

He pitched for the Mets from 1987-92, going 80-48. His career mark is 193-123 with a 3.44 ERA with the Mets, Yankees, Royals, Blue Jays and Red Sox. A five-time All-Star, Cone ranks 17th in major league history with 2,655 strikeouts.

King scores season-high 29 to lead A&M victory

COLLEGE STATION, Texas (AP) — Not even an upset stomach could dampen Bernard King's enthusiasm.

King scored a season-high 29 points, and made a key defensive play to lead Texas A&M to a 73-71 victory over No. 21 Missouri on Wednesday night.

"He (King) plays with such passion that their team feeds off him," Missouri coach Quin Snyder said. "He's a terrific player."

King made two free throws with 42 seconds left and went to the bench so excited that he got sick to his stomach. He came back and stole the Tigers' inbounds pass as time expired in the game.

"This was a big game. I just wanted to leave it all on the floor," King said.

The Aggies (12-8, 4-5 Big 12) beat a ranked team for the first time since Jan. 23, 2001, when they defeated No. 24 Texas 80-74. Missouri lost for the first time this season when leading at the half.

"We beat a ranked team but with our team this year, this is what we are supposed to do," King said. "We knew that we had to win this game. No matter what it took I was going to take care of business."

Missouri's Travon Bryant hit a 3-point basket from the top of the key to tie it at 71 with 23 seconds to play.

Although the Aggies' final play was designed for King, Bradley Jackson saw the defense collapsing on King and took the winning shot with 2 seconds to play.

"The play was supposed to be for Bernard, but at the last minute, I saw everyone running his way so I just went the other way," Jackson said.

"Bernard brought the whole other team to him. That's why I went the other way."

The Aggies snapped a two-game losing streak with the victory.

"He (Jackson) threw it up there high and got it in," Missouri center Arthur Johnson said. "He had the ball and he went to the hoop. We let it slip away. I don't think there are any games we can't win."

Jackson had the winning shot, but King got most of the attention.

"He (King) played his guts out in more ways than one," A&M coach Melvin Watkins said. "In big games, players have to step up and make plays and he did that."

"I just know it's a good

win, and it keeps us in the running for some of the things we want to accomplish this year. It feels pretty good right now."

Missouri led 37-30 at half-time — its biggest lead of the game — but the Aggies scored the first nine points of the second half and the teams went back and forth the rest of the way.

Jackson finished with 10

Qualifying races crucial for some

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. (AP) — Rusty Wallace needs to find some speed, Jimmy Spencer wants some luck, and rookie Larry Foyt is looking for a near-miracle.

There's a lot to lose and not that much to gain Thursday in the twin 125-mile qualifying races.

Great runs get a driver a good starting spot in Sunday's season-opening Daytona 500. A poor race in the qualifying event could get a car sent home.

"We know we have to stay out of trouble and have a strong race to make the 500," Foyt said. "We're going to need some luck on our side. Luckily I start behind Jeff Gordon, so I hope he can just pull me along."

Johnson led Missouri with 18 points, and Rickey Paulding added 15.

"I couldn't be more upset with the way we handled things in the second half," Snyder said. "There is a higher level you have to play at to win road games in this league. We had guys missing layups and free throws. You have to make those."

Led by their outside shoot-

ers, the Aggies went on a 13-2 run to take a 24-15 lead midway through the first half.

King made a basket and then a 3-pointer to key the spurt while Jackson added another 3-pointer on an assist from King. Antoine Wright added a 3-pointer and Jesse King hit a basket to complete the run.

The Tigers responded with a 22-6 run over the final eight minutes of the half.

Qualifying races crucial for some

speeds Monday in time trials.

Positions 3-30 will go to the top 14 finishers in the two qualifying races, excepting Green and Earnhardt.

The 31st through 36th spots will be filled by the fastest drivers from Monday's qualifying session who don't make it in the 125, with the remaining places going to the highest-finishing teams in last year's car-owner points that are not already in the Daytona 500 field.

"It can be intense," said Ricky Rudd, getting ready to race in his 26th consecutive Daytona 500 and an equal number of qualifying races. "There are a lot of guys here where that race is the only race they're thinking about. They're not even thinking about the Daytona 500."

Pampa's Johnson preparing for state swim meet

PAMPA — Pampa junior Joe Johnson is getting ready for the state swim meet this weekend in Austin.

Johnson won the 200 freestyle at last weekend's regional meet to qualify for state. His winning time was only 6 100ths of a second off the PHS school record set by Ted Brown in 1976 with his time of 1:52.15.

"I've got one last chance to break it this year," Johnson said. "I'm going for it."

Johnson also qualified for the state meet in the 500 freestyle after placing second at regionals with a personal-best time of 5:11.84.

Johnson qualified for the state meet as a sophomore last season. He failed to reach the finals in the 500 freestyle, but his 5:19.69 was a person-

al best.

Regional Swimming Tournament at Lubbock Pampa Individual Results

Boys

Diving: 7. Russell Anglin, 136.55.

200 medley relay: 8. Joe Johnson, D.J. Elliott, Michael Eskridge and Tyler Wishon, 1:58.06.

200 individual medley: 5. Michael Eskridge, 2:16.81.

100 butterfly: 6. Michael Eskridge, 1:00.71.

400 freestyle relay: 5. D.J. Elliott, Tyler Wishon, Michael Eskridge and Joe Johnson, 3:46.72.

200 freestyle: 1. Joe Johnson, 1:52.16.

500 freestyle: 2. Joe Johnson, 5:11.84.

Girls

Diving: 5. Whitney Penrod, 202.55.

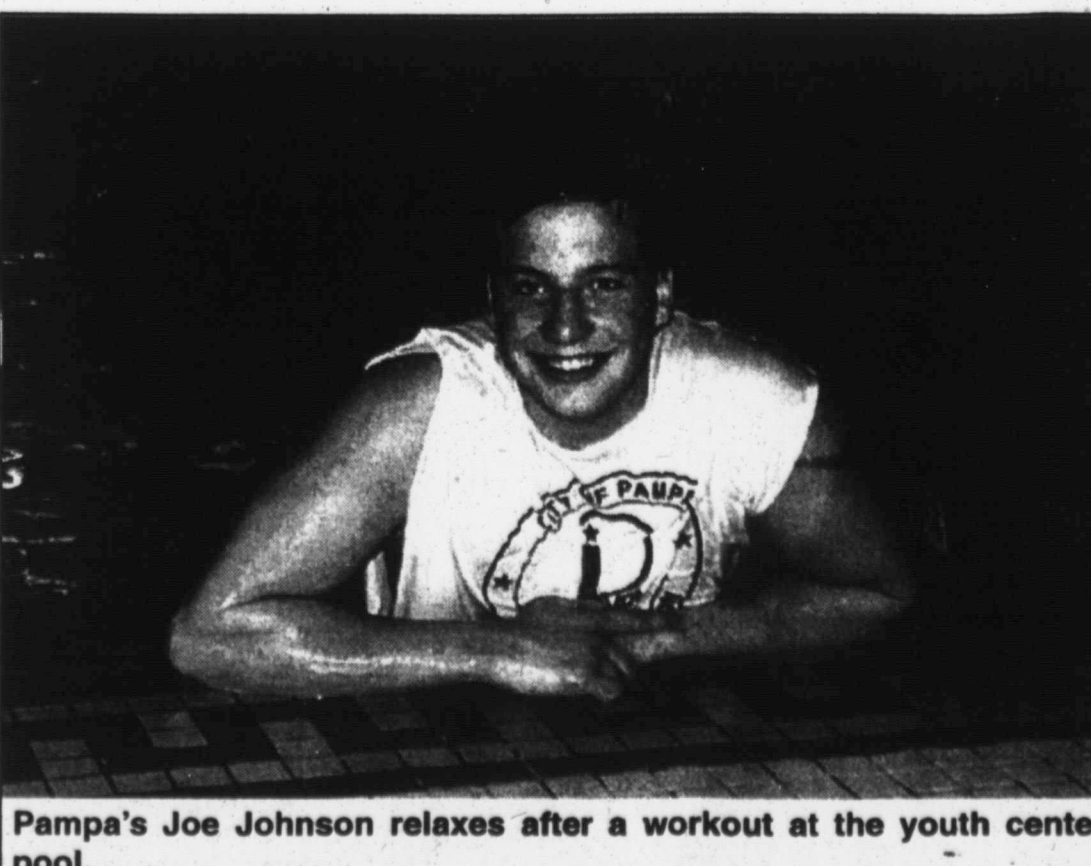
200 medley relay: 5. Kandice Maddox, Jessica Hall, Emily Johnson and Whitney Penrod, 2:15.23.

200 individual medley: 8. Angela Henthorn, 2:50.78.

100 freestyle: 8. Kandice Maddox, 1:07.11.

100 breaststroke: 6. Jessica Hall, 1:22.97.

400 freestyle relay: 7. Jessica White, Wendy Stephens, Angela Henthorn and Kandice Maddox, 4:39.62.



Pampa's Joe Johnson relaxes after a workout at the youth center pool.

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Bucks stop Mavericks

MILWAUKEE (AP) — The Milwaukee Bucks beat the Dallas Mavericks at their own fast-paced game.

Ray Allen scored 28 points, Tim Thomas added a season-high 27 as the Bucks beat Dallas 120-114 on Wednesday night — sending the Mavericks to their third straight loss.

"I love to play fast, it fits my team's personality," Bucks coach George Karl said. "The key I go back to is how we pass the ball."

Allen added nine rebounds and seven assists, and Sam Cassell had nine assists and three key points late as the Bucks scored 65 points in the second half to sweep the two-game season series from the Mavericks.

Milwaukee made eight of its final 13 3-pointers, while Dallas missed its final eight 3-point attempts.

"We did a bad job in transition of picking up their 3-point shooters," Dallas guard Steve Nash said. "We didn't play very good defense. They're a good offensive team, but you have to do better than giving up 120 points."

Thomas was effective inside early in the game, which helped produce some open jumpers in the fourth quarter.

"Timmy set the tone for us," Allen said. "He did a great job of penetrating early. I told the guys at halftime that we had 14 assists in the first half and that if we came out and put up 14 more in the second we'd win the game."

Toni Kukoc scored nine points in a 16-4 run that gave Milwaukee a 110-100 lead with 5:15 left. Dallas then went on a 10-2 spurt to get to 112-110 on Nash's 20-footer with 2:25 left.

Milwaukee has won 12 of 15, coinciding with the return of Kukoc from the injured list. The Bucks are 20-11 with Kukoc this season and 6-12 without him.

Dirk Nowitzki had 27 points and 12 rebounds, Nash scored 26 points and Michael Finley 25 for the Mavericks, who also lost three consecutive games Jan. 15-19 at Sacramento, Phoenix and Seattle. They still have the NBA's best road record at 17-8.

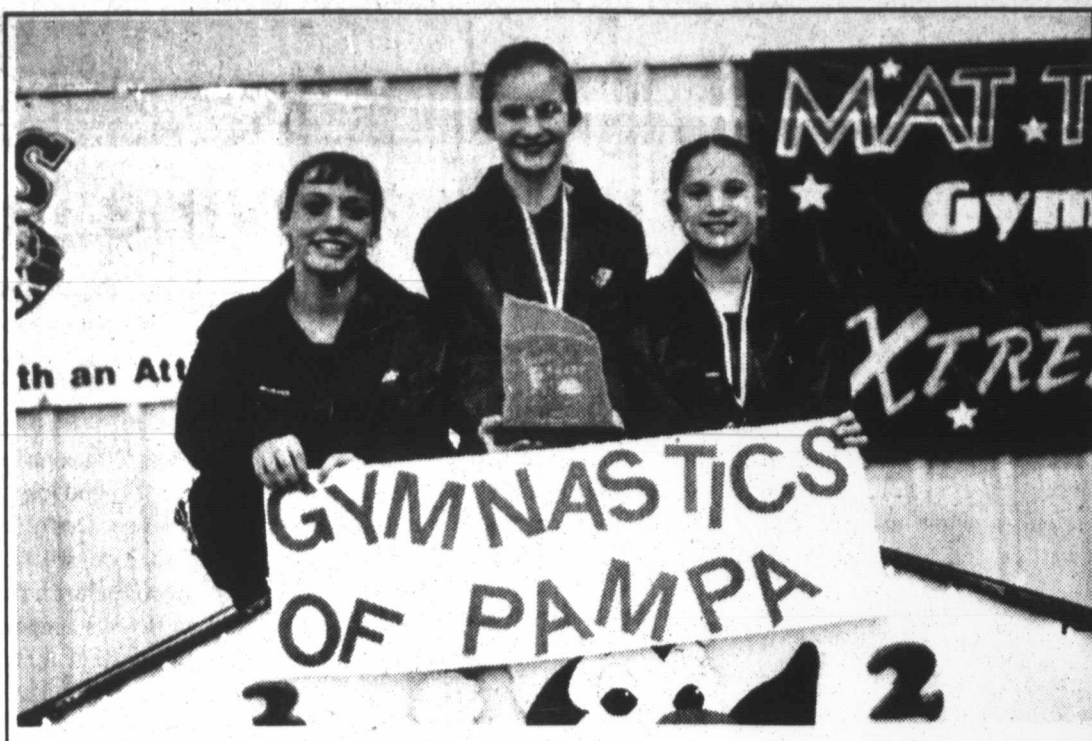
Dallas kept the game close late. With the shot clock winding down, Cassell hit a 15-footer over Nick Van Exel to give Milwaukee a 117-114 lead with 25 seconds left.

Nash missed a 3-pointer, and Finley grabbed the long rebound and shot another 3, but missed.

Cassell was fouled, making one free throw for a 118-114 lead with 10 seconds to go. Nowitzki missed a 3 and Thomas scored on a dunk to seal it for the Bucks, who swept the two-game season series from Dallas.

"We scored a bunch of points against a team that likes to score," Cassell said. "We just need to go out and concentrate on the things that make this team successful, passing the ball and playing solid defense."

Notes: Dallas is 3-19 in Milwaukee. ... Bucks G Michael Redd, touted as a candidate for the Sixth Man of the Year Award, made his 13th start of the season. He replaced C Ervin Johnson as Karl started a three-guard lineup of Redd, Allen and Cassell. ... Finley, a former Wisconsin star, received a loud ovation from the Bradley Center crowd.



Team Pampa Level 7 gymnasts (l-r) Keisha Crowell, Lacie Thompson and Kelby Doughty display the third-place team trophy.

Team Pampa gymnasts keep busy with meets

Gymnastics of Pampa team members Lacie Thompson, Kelby Doughty and Keisha Crowell have been busy lately, traveling to meets in Oklahoma and Texas.

The Level 7 gymnastics team attended an invitational meet in Oklahoma City, which was hosted by Mat Trotters Gymnastics.

The all-around totals for all three girls combined earned the third-place team trophy in the Level 7 team competition.

Next, the Team Pampa

gymnasts traveled to Dallas for a 7-10 Sectional Meet. Lacie Thompson, 13 years old, led the team by placing 10th on bars with an 8.925 and was 20th in the All-Around in the 12-13 year-old division.

Kelby Doughty, 11 years old, had solid scores on floor (9.15) and vault (9.025) to finish 18th in All-Around in the 11-year-old division.

Keisha Crowell is completing in Level 7 for the first time and had good performances at the meet.

Rockets snap 11-game losing streak at Delta Center

SALT LAKE CITY (AP) — Houston coach Rudy Tomjanovich had no complaints after this victory.

Steve Francis scored 36 points and Yao Ming had 11 of his 15 in the second half as the Rockets routed the Utah Jazz 106-76 Wednesday night, snapping an 11-game losing streak at the Delta Center that dated to 1996.

Houston bounced back from a 103-101 overtime loss to the Jazz on Tuesday night.

"We've had some thrills," Tomjanovich said. "Young teams are emotional and sometimes the wrong way. Tonight we used it in the positive."

James Posey and Maurice Taylor added 13 points each for the Rockets, who were

40-for-76 from the floor (52.6 percent) and forced 19 turnovers while handing the Jazz their worst loss since New Orleans beat Utah 100-75 in the season opener. It also was Houston's largest margin of victory of in the series, topping a 134-105 win in 1985.

"I think the most important factor and difference today was our energy level," said Yao, who also had three blocked shots. "Tonight was probably our most complete game this year because of our energy level."

While the Rockets were running up and down the court and outrebounding Utah 46-34, the Jazz were listless.

"I thought we'd come out and play aggressive right

from the start. We didn't and we were digging uphill the rest of the night. And not very well," said John Stockton, who had 10 points but just one assist in 22 minutes.

Utah's Karl Malone, who broke his nose late in Tuesday night's game, finished with 13 points — seven below his average — and sat out the fourth quarter. Andrei Kirilenko led Utah with 15 points and Harpring finished with 10 points and 10 rebounds.

It was the Jazz's last game without coach Jerry Sloan, who will return from a seven-game suspension — for pushing an official — Friday night when Washington visits Utah. The Jazz went 4-3 under assistant Phil Johnson

during Sloan's suspension.

Eddie Griffin scored 10 points for the Rockets, who had lost eight of its previous 11.

"Whatever way they come, we need the wins. By 30, by 10, by two, we just really need to win games," said Francis, who was 11-for-19.

Houston, still stinging from Tuesday's loss, extended a 12-point halftime lead to 24 in the third quarter by going 11-for-21 from the floor.

"They're a veteran, savvy team. They win late in the game, especially at home, so we had to keep playing hard," said Francis, who scored 25 points in the first half. "Last night we kind of gave the game away."

After the Rockets scored the first five points of the third period, Utah made a short-lived run. Stockton's three-point play with 7:39 left in the quarter cut the lead to 59-46, then Posey started a 13-4 run with a 3-pointer, and the Rockets coasted the rest of the way.

It was more of the same in the fourth quarter. With starters from both teams resting on the bench and the game well out of hand, Houston went up by as many as 33 points before it was over.

"You never want to count on comebacks. It's a hard way to win," Stockton said. "You want to come out and play well from the start and set the tone — clearly what they did instead of us."

Top Olympic sponsor criticizes United States Olympic Committee

WASHINGTON (AP) — A leading Olympic sponsor criticized the U.S. Olympic Committee on Thursday for failing its athletes and urged the Senate to make sweeping changes in the organization.

"Frankly, the USOC has lost its way," David D'Alessandro, chief executive of John Hancock Financial Services, said in a statement to the Senate Commerce Committee. "It has lost its way by failing to provide enough resources and opportunities to aspiring athletes, failing to be financially self-reliant, and failing to provide financial and ethical transparency that the athletes and the American public deserve."

John Hancock provides \$10 million annually in sponsorships to the USOC, and D'Alessandro has threatened to withdraw the company's support if the committee does not clean up its act in the wake of its latest ethical scandal.

Leaders of the Olympic committee have been locked in a feud that led to the resignation last week of president Marty Mankamer and calls for chief executive Lloyd Ward's resignation. It is just the latest episode in the tumultuous committee that has seen four CEOs and three presidents in the past three years.

Sen. Ben Nighthorse Campbell, a 1964 Olympian in judo, said it will be up to Congress to fix festering problems at the committee and provide further oversight.

"I think we're past the time where we can just trust them to conform to a high standard without any reform from Congress," Campbell

said Wednesday. USOC leaders have formed their own task force to recommend changes to its management structure and expressed interest in attending, but were not invited.

The Senate Commerce Committee said the chairman, Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., felt it important to hear views from people outside the Olympic committee.

A prime target for reform-minded senators is the USOC's 123-member board of directors, which critics, including Ward, have said is too large and leads to squabbles among leaders.

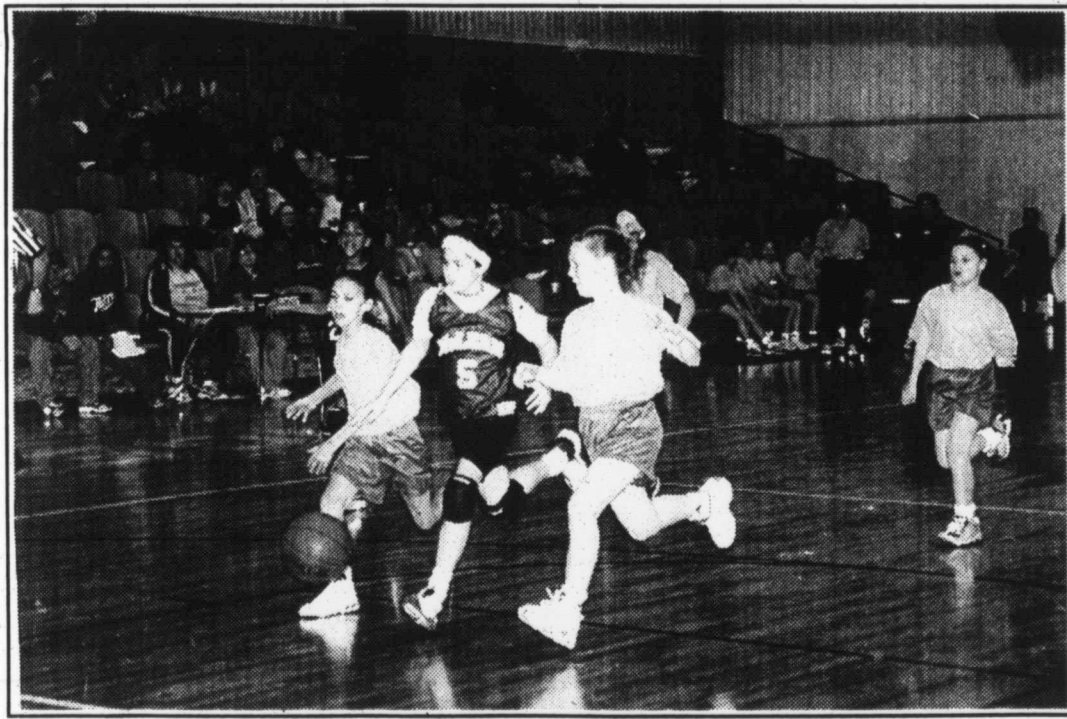
The bloated management also sops up too much of the money before it gets to the athletes that are supposed to benefit, Campbell said.

"If the USOC was an athlete and I was a coach, I'd tell them they have to get rid of a lot of fat," the Colorado Republican said. "They can't win with that much fat."

He points to nonprofit organizations such as the American Red Cross that spend just 10 percent on management and fund raising, compared with 22 percent of the \$127 million spent on overhead at the USOC.

Over the last four years, the 24 percent of the committee's spending has gone to overhead, D'Alessandro said in written testimony to the committee. He urged the committee to require 85 percent of the USOC money to go to athletes and to compete more aggressively for corporate sponsorships, rather than relying on grants from the International Olympic Committee.

Fast break action



(Courtesy photo)

Brittney Coombes (left) and Misty Pairsh of Lefors try to head off Sherry Hanes (5) of Mclean as she dribbles toward the basket on a fast break. Mclean won 22-10 in the Area Peewee Girls League game. Misty Pairsh was Lefors' high scorer with 4 points, while Brittney Coombes, Valorie Willis and Ashlyn Johnson had 2 points each.

Voice of Tech basketball is retiring

LUBBOCK, Texas (AP) — The audience for Jack Dale's first play-by-play broadcasts were the crops on his family's Kansas farm.

Having learned the names of Army and Navy football players by listening to their games on radio, young Dale would climb atop a tractor and narrate imaginary games. He knew then that he wanted to make a living in broadcasting, not farming.

For the past 50 years, Dale has done so as the voice of Texas Tech men's basketball games. His run of more than 1,500 games will soon come to an end, as he's retiring after this season.

His rich baritone voice is leaving radio. Together with his son, Steve, Dale will continue doing a morning sports-talk radio show that began in August 1992.

Dale also will help on pre-game coverage of Tech football. School officials also are establishing endowed communications and athletic scholarships in his honor, ensuring that his name and

ambition will be passed on to future would-be broadcasters and athletes.

"I want to see it happen," Dale said. "I don't have money to do it myself, but I'm going to do everything I can do to help."

Two roasts have been

planned to help raise funds. The first is Sunday in Austin, with scheduled speakers including former Tech chancellor John Montford, state Rep. Pete Laney, former U.S. Rep. Kent Hance and former Tech football coach Spike Dykes.

DAILY CRYPTOQUOTES — Here's how to work it:

A X Y D L B A A X R
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

2-13 CRYPTOQUOTE

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Yesterday's Cryptoquote: LIGHTNING CAN LIGHT UP THE WORLD BUT IT CAN'T WARM UP A STOVE. FREDRICH HEBBEL



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TION OF FORTY TWO (42) DAYS FROM THE DATE THIS CITATION WAS ISSUED, A DEFAULT JUDGMENT MAY BE TAKEN AGAINST YOU. THE WRITTEN ANSWER IS DUE ON: MARCH 3, 2003. THE ADDRESS OF THE CLERK IS: HEMPHILL COUNTY COURTHOUSE 400 MAIN STREET P.O. BOX 867 CANADIAN, TEXAS 79014

1 Public Notice

et al v. David Quentin Isaacs, Jr. et al, for judgment approving the Amended Agreement Pertaining to the Last Will and Testament of Calvin W. Isaacs which has been duly recorded at Volume 527, Page 33 of the Official Public Records of Hemphill County, Texas, for judgment approving partition agreements that affect the following lands:

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Horoscope BY JACQUELINE BIGAR

HAPPY BIRTHDAY for Friday, Feb. 14, 2003: You are a force unto yourself this year. You seem to be able to steer clear of outside events and make clean and clear decisions. As a result, you could experience a spectacular year if you're open to creating just that. Work needs to be a high priority. Examine the quality of your day-to-day life. Make changes where you deem necessary. If you are single, you will walk into a major relationship in the next six to seven months. You might decide that this person is "it." If you're attached, work more as a team, and your bond will grow as a result. Let your sweetie dominate more often. LEO challenges you.

your finances with a strong hand. Reach out for others. Talks prove unusually lively and directed. Tonight: At a favorite spot. CANCER (June 21-July 22) ***** You're personality plus. Use your unique charm to clear out a problem and find strong answers. If you put your best foot forward, you might be amazed by what will happen. Deal with an emotionally possessive situation directly. Tonight: Your treat. LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) ***** You might want to discuss with on your mind with a loved one or a dear friend. Getting a perspective from someone else helps you make up your mind. Take your time, and don't respond to someone else's schedule. Claim your power. Tonight: Now the world is your oyster. VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) ***** Meetings and conversations help you make the right decisions at the right time. Be proactive in the daytime, when the Moon beams success on you. Move during this period, putting nothing on the back burner. Stay on top of changes right now. Tonight: Vanish. Go for mystery. LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22) ***** Be ready to take a risk or go in a new direction. You find that a boss might have pushed you way beyond your limit. Understand what is possible here. A meeting later in the day could be most instrumental. Go for what you want. Tonight: Where the gang is. SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21) ***** Gain a perspective by pulling back. Think in terms of gain. You might want to discuss a positive change in the near future. By pulling together different forces and different people, you hit the bull's-eye — if not immediately, quite quickly. Tonight: A must appearance. SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

***** You discover that there are many ways to get to the same place. Work with an associate, and you'll get the kind of results you desire. Don't do anything halfway. Talk and think past the immediate. You might not be sure which way to go. Tonight: Try a weekend escape. CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) ***** Realize what it is you want and desire from others, then ask. By not holding back, you ultimately gain. Don't hem and haw; just aim for more of what you want. Schedule a one-on-one meeting for later in the day. Eliminate mixed messages. Tonight: Go along with another's request. AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18) ***** Clear out work, but count on the fact that it could take the whole day. If you think you can split from work early, think again. Laughter makes a big difference in how you handle a difficult situation. Relax and don't allow tension to ruin your mood. Tonight: Kick up your heels. PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20) ***** Your perspective could change considerably. Plug in your creativity and allow others to give you more feedback. Brainstorm and try someone else's idea. Once you clear a trail, please don't reverse your path. Complete this project. Tonight: Get some extra R and R. BORN TODAY German psychologist Otto Selz (1881), Teamster leader Jimmy Hoffa (1913), Chicago bluesman Magic Sam (1937)

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FEB 13 2003

NASA engineer warned of 'catastrophic' risk to shuttle

By TED BRIDIS
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

WASHINGTON (AP) — A NASA safety engineer wrote two days before Columbia's mysterious breakup about risks to the shuttle from "catastrophic" failures caused by tires possibly bursting inside the spacecraft from extreme heat during its fiery descent, the space agency disclosed.

Robert H. Daugherty, responding to an inquiry from Johnson Space Center, cautioned in an e-mail to NASA colleagues that damage to delicate insulating tiles near Columbia's landing gear door could cause one or more tires inside to burst, perhaps ending with catastrophic failures that would place the seven astronauts "in a world of hurt."

Such an explosion inside Columbia's belly, Daugherty predicted, could blow out the gear door and expose the shuttle's unprotected innards to searing temperatures as it raced through earth's atmosphere.

On the same day NASA disclosed the contents of Daugherty's e-mail, searchers near Hemphill, Texas, about 140 miles northeast of

Rains come to Southern California

LOS ANGELES (AP) — It's feast or famine for weather in Southern California, where a long stretch of dry days ended in a burst of torrential downpours that caused mudslides, power outages, street flooding and roof collapses.

"We had six weeks without rain, and we've just made up for it," National Weather Service spokesman Bruce Rockwell said.

Rainfall amounts broke and in some cases doubled records Wednesday in many locations, including Mount Wilson in Pasadena, where the 7.68 inches of precipitation topped the 2001 record for the date by 4.34 inches.

Several motorists were rescued from vehicles stuck in floods as rivers, washes and arroyos overflowed.

In Tejon Pass north of Los Angeles, a mile-long wall of mud crashed onto Interstate 5 and covered all four southbound lanes. The mud was as deep as 4 feet in some areas, California Highway Patrol Sgt. Travis Mitchell said.

As the Wednesday night rush hour was beginning, the CHP had recorded about 1,500 accidents in Los Angeles, San Diego, Riverside, San Bernardino and San Diego counties. On Tuesday, a car crash on wet pavement in the high-desert city of Lancaster killed the driver and injured a passenger.

In Orange County, two workers at a Fullerton furniture business suffered non-life threatening injuries when rain caused a 15-by-15-foot section of the roof to collapse.

Power to more than 1,200 customers in Ventura, Santa Barbara and Orange counties was knocked out, said Southern California Edison spokesman Gil Alexander. Another 4,100 Los Angeles Department of Water and Power customers also lost power and heat.

The deluge was a bust for nearby ski resorts. Big Bear Mountain and Snow Summit were forced to close as rain washed away snow Wednesday, only weeks after the resorts had finally been able to produce enough snow to open nearly all trails.

The heavy rains this week came from a storm system located off the Baja Peninsula about 600 miles out to sea.

Houston, recovered what they believed to be one of Columbia's tires. It sustained a massive split across its tread, but it was impossible from photographs to know whether the tire was damaged aboard Columbia or when it struck the ground.

NASA officials in Washington said Wednesday

they could not confirm the tire was the shuttle's.

In his e-mail, which included remarkably strident language, Daugherty wrote that even if astronauts survived the heat, the blast could damage critical systems inside the wheel compartment, prevent the landing gear on one side from lowering, necessitate a

risky belly landing or force the crew to bail out.

Bailing out would be "not a good day," he wrote. But attempting to fly the shuttle with only one side's landing gear lowered would be worse: "You're finished."

Flight Director Leroy Cain said Wednesday that investigators were confident the gear

door did not fall off in flight because such a failure would have been indicated on sensor readings.

Other NASA officials have cited mysterious sensor readings in the wheel well moments before Columbia's breakup but have said they were confident the tire didn't burst inside the shuttle.

Daugherty acknowledged these were "absolute worst-case scenarios," adding, "I don't really believe things are as bad as I'm getting ready to make them out." But he defended raising the issues in e-mail to avoid a "gut-wrenching decision" days later during Columbia's descent.

Daugherty on Wednesday referred questions about his concerns to a NASA spokesman. Agency officials indicated they did not want reporters to speak with Daugherty because accident investigators had not yet questioned him. NASA disclosed the contents of his e-mail Wednesday.

The e-mail from Daugherty, an engineer at NASA's Langley research facility in Hampton, Va., was prompted by a telephone call Jan. 27 from experts at the Johnson Space Center in Houston who asked what might happen if Columbia's tires were not inflated when it attempted to land.

The inquiry from Johnson has attracted interest because it came four days after engineers at The Boeing Co., a contractor, assured NASA that Columbia could return safely despite damage to left wing tiles that might have occurred on liftoff.

Senior NASA officials said Daugherty's concerns were part of a "what-if" analysis by a small group of engineers who already had been assured that Columbia would land safely. They acknowledged that concerns about threats to the shuttle's tires were not passed along to NASA flight directors.

Southwest Florida site of fossil find

FORT MYERS, Fla. (AP) — Bones, teeth and tusks of prehistoric animals unearthed in southwest Florida were sent to the Florida Museum of Natural History for study and display.

The fossils were discovered in 1997, and digging started in 2001. The fossils were packed up Wednesday for the trip to the museum in Gainesville.

Scientists and volunteers found fossils including complete lower jaws, a skull, 50 vertebrae and two 7-foot tusks, all belonging to mammoths or mastodons; several partial jaws and more than 20 limb bones of horses and llamas; and fossilized remains of giant ground sloths, alligators, turtles and gars.

Richard Hulbert, collection manager for the museum's vertebrate paleontology division, estimated that the fossils were more than 300,000 years old.

IRS taxpayer advocate suggests licensing paid preparers of federal tax returns

By DARLENE SUPERVILLE
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

WASHINGTON (AP) — Congress should require paid preparers of federal income tax returns to be licensed and simplify the tax reporting and record-keeping requirements for husbands and wives who jointly own and operate businesses, the government's national taxpayer advocate says.

The advocate, Nina E. Olson, also suggested a new way to calculate the "kiddie tax."

The suggestions are among a half-dozen recommendations in Olson's annual report to Congress, intended to highlight ways to make it easier for people to figure out and pay their taxes.

At the same time, finding the right office or person at the IRS to answer a question or solve a tax issue was the No. 1 problem last year for individual and business taxpayers, the report says.

The national taxpayer advocate is part of the Internal Revenue Service and functions as a watchdog over and problem-solver for the federal tax system. Congress enhanced the power of the advocate's office when it overhauled the IRS almost five years ago, in 1998.

Olson, who was to discuss the report Thursday at a hearing of the House Ways and Means oversight sub-

committee, said regulating tax preparers could result in more accurate returns.

"Taxpayers are ill-equipped to assess the competency of someone's expertise in an area in which they have limited knowledge themselves," she said in the 400-plus-page report.

There are no national standards for paid preparers, meaning anyone can present themselves as one. This is a problem, Olson said, because more than half of all taxpayers — many of whom feel intimidated by the complexity of the tax code — pay someone to prepare their returns, and that person may know as much or, in some cases, as little about the law as the taxpayer.

Among paid preparers, only lawyers, certified public accountants and "enrolled agents" are subject to regulation, either by the IRS or a state licensing agency. Enrolled agents have passed an IRS exam testing their knowledge of tax law and procedure and practice before the IRS.

The report recommends that Congress create an examination, certification, registration and enforcement program for anyone — other than a lawyer, CPA or enrolled agent — who gets paid to prepare more than five federal income tax returns in a calendar year. Between 300,000 and 600,000 tax preparers could be affected by the proposal, the report esti-

mates. Another suggestion would help married couples who jointly own an unincorporated business.

Federal tax law classifies these businesses as partnerships, subjecting them to complex and time-consuming record-keeping and tax-filing requirements. But, in practice, many of these businesses owners file tax forms suggesting that only one spouse is the sole proprietor.

As a result, only that spouse may file other required tax forms and receive credit for paying Social Security and Medicare taxes, a costly oversight that can lead to the loss of these benefits for the surviving spouse, the report says. And, depending on state law, during a divorce there can be adverse consequences from inaccurately classifying a jointly owned business as a sole proprietorship.

Olson said Congress should change the law so that these couples can choose not to file a time-consuming partnership return. They could file simpler forms and also divide net profits or losses between them, giving each one credit toward Social Security and Medicare.

The report also suggested a change in determining the "kiddie tax," which is calculated based on the parent's tax return. The tax was enacted in 1986 to discourage parents from shifting income-producing assets to their chil-

Moseley-Braun to file papers for exploratory committee

WASHINGTON (AP) — Former Illinois Sen. Carol Moseley-Braun plans to join the Democratic field of candidates for the 2004 presidential race, an aide says.

"We are planning to file papers Tuesday for an exploratory committee," said Kevin Lampe, spokesman for Moseley-Braun.

He said Moseley-Braun will go to Iowa on Saturday, New Hampshire on Sunday and South Carolina on Monday as a guest of American Women Presidents, a political action committee.

Moseley-Braun, 55, also plans to request a speaking slot along with other presidential candidates at the Democratic National Committee's winter meeting Feb. 20-22.

That option is only available

to those who have publicly announced their intentions to run for president and file papers for an exploratory committee.

No timetable has been set for a formal announcement of Moseley-Braun presidential bid.

Those already in the race are former Vermont Gov. Howard Dean, North Carolina Sen. John Edwards, Missouri Rep. Dick Gephardt, Massachusetts Sen. John Kerry, Connecticut Sen. Joseph Lieberman and the Rev. Al Sharpton.

Other Democrats are considering expanding the field soon. Ohio Rep. Dennis Kucinich is expected to announce his decision in the next week, associates say, which could lead to him speaking at the Democratic meeting.

Florida Sen. Bob Graham

plans to file papers launching a presidential campaign in the next two or three weeks to begin raising money, according to close associates, but he has put off a final decision on whether to seek the nomination until after he recuperates from heart surgery.

Former Colorado Sen. Gary Hart is traveling around the country delivering policy speeches as he considers a campaign. Delaware Sen. Joe Biden hasn't ruled out a bid, although associates say he is waiting until the fall to make a decision. Connecticut Sen. Chris Dodd is still considering his options. Former NATO commander Wesley Clark is reportedly keeping an eye on the race, Democratic activists say, although he carefully avoids discussing his plans in public.

The latest addition to the field, Moseley-Braun, made political history in 1992 by

being the first black woman elected to the Senate.

Early in her term in the Senate, she drew national attention after speaking against Jesse Helms, R-N.C., when he sought to renew a design patent for the United Daughters of the Confederacy's emblem, which included the Confederate flag. She later accused Helms of taunting her in an elevator by singing "Dixie."

But she was criticized for splitting an inheritance from her mother that should have gone to reimburse Medicaid. Opponents alleged that her campaign manager and then-fiance Kgosie Matthews sexually harassed workers, and Moseley-Braun was criticized for a monthlong, postelection trip to Africa with Matthews. There were also accusations that campaign funds were used for jewelry and fancy clothes.

Officials say Lake Powell at lowest level in three years

PHOENIX (AP) — Lake Powell is at its lowest level in 30 years, the result of scant snow melt and heavy demand from three Western states that look to it for drinking water.

Lake Powell, a 252-square-mile artificial lake created by the construction of the Glen Canyon Dam on the Arizona-Utah border, is down 87 feet from its highest level. The last time levels were so low was in 1973, when the reservoir was still filling behind the dam.

"It's a continuing downward spiral and each month's forecast gets more depressing," said Barry Wirth, a regional spokesman for the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, the agency that manages the reservoir. "We have all fingers and toes crossed for a good storm."

Water levels are expected to dip five more feet before late March, when mountain snow

runoff is expected to start filling the lake again.

The lake has been hard hit by record-low flows from the Colorado River and drought-driven demand from Arizona, Nevada and California. Colorado has also been hurt by drought, so it has been releasing the minimum required amount of water to Powell and the lower basin states.

"They're using every drop twice if they can," Wirth said.

A total of 18.5 million acre-feet of water has come in over the last three years, but reservoir managers are required to release a prescribed amount. They've released 24.7 million acre-feet over the same three-year period.

The reservoir currently holds more than 4 trillion gallons — not enough to last even two years for the states that use the water.

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