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SEE PAGE 6.



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Gray County supports use of Panhandle Transit

By **MARILYN POWERS**
 Staff Writer

Gray County commissioners unanimously approved a resolution this morning in support of Panhandle Community Services' Panhandle Transit as transit provider for Medicare/Medicaid customers, kidney dialysis patients and others.

Commissioners met at 9 a.m. in the second-floor courtroom at Gray County Courthouse to work through a 10-item agenda.

The Texas Department of Transportation oversees the type of service provided by Panhandle Transit and contracts with agencies for the service.

"Panhandle Transit had done a proposal to continue to provide the transportation," said County Clerk Susan Winborne. "TxDOT talked to agencies in Amarillo and Lubbock seeking bids. These agencies offered to subcontract to Panhandle Transit."

"For some reason, they're going outside our local group to find a provider," said County Judge Richard Peet.

Panhandle Transit has provided the service to the 26 counties of the Panhandle since 1985.

The Texas VINE annual maintenance grant contract was renewed with no changes from the previous

year.

"It allows our district attorney's office to maintain a working relationship and position with the attorney general's office to provide aid to victims of crime," Peet said.

An internal audit report by the county auditor's office which is provided at the request of the local district judges was accepted. There were 18 corrections totaling \$143,765.01 for transactions from the month of March, according to the report.

The largest corrections were \$64,444.97 on a tax distribution correction; a \$44,000 reimbursement

under the Help Americans Vote Act; and \$16,108.03 on another tax distribution correction. All corrections were transfers from one fund to another; none of the corrections represented changes in actual monetary amounts.

Commissioners accepted two paragraphs to be added to the county's HIPAA Security Standard Policy, which concerns confidentiality of county employees' health information.

A bid of \$50 by Carson County was accepted for a thermal binding

See COUNTY, Page 3

Reflections



Pampa Fire Department firefighters are reflected in the highly polished Engine No. 1 at the Central Fire Station on West Foster.

City to pick up grass clippings at curbside

By **DAVID BOWSER**
 Staff Writer

City officials said they are again picking up bagged grass clippings at curbside this summer.

Donna Darling with the City of Pampa said the city offers free pickup service from April through September.

"Grass clippings are not to be put in Dumpsters," she said.

Darling said clippings should be bagged and placed at the curb. The bagged clippings should weigh no more than 50 pounds.

She said the clippings are picked up once a week. Pickup times vary, Darling said, depending upon the quadrant of the city.

"They pick up on Tuesday where I live," she said, "so everybody mows their lawns on Saturday, Sunday or Monday."

Darling lives in Ward 2

See GRASS, Page 3

Inflation picks up; consumer spending surges

By **JEANNINE AVERSA**
 AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — The national economy carried its strong momentum into the second quarter as factories cranked up activity, builders boosted construction spending to a record high and consumers opened their pocketbooks ever wider.

But inflation picked up, too.

The information was contained in a trio of economic reports released Monday.

"Households and corporations are still very active and are creating economic momentum, which is tremendously encouraging news for the economy," said Carl Tannenbaum, chief economist at LaSalle Bank. "The only dark cloud comes from the news on prices, which are going

up."

A report from the Institute for Supply Management showed manufacturing activity grew briskly in April. The group's manufacturing index jumped to 57.3 in April, from 55.2 in March, the strongest showing in six months.

The report also showed the prices are rising not only for energy but also for other commodities, such as

aluminum and copper.

"The indicators of prices ... are beginning to point more clearly toward inflation pressures," said Stephen Stanley, chief economist at RBS Greenwich Capital.

In a second report, the Commerce Department said total construction spending in March climbed to

See ECONOMY, Page 3

Meredith boat ramps get facelift

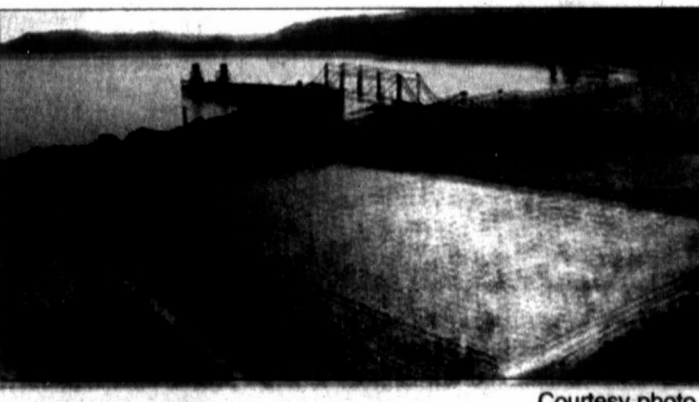
FRITCH — The launch ramp at the Sanford-Yake Marina will be temporarily closed on Tuesday and Wednesday from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. for construction. An excavator has been rented and will arrive on Tuesday to begin work.

The Fritch Fortress boat ramp will reopen on Tuesday and lake visitors can use that launch ramp while mud is being cleared from the Marina ramp.

"The maintenance crew has worked tire-

lessly to provide the lake access that the visitors expect," Chief of Maintenance Jimmy Muncy said. "We will continue to 'follow the water' and provide lake access to the best of our ability."

Visitors are reminded that a Lake Meredith boat decal is necessary in order to operate a boat on the lake. For questions about lake access or boat permits, contact park headquarters at 419 E. Broadway in Fritch or phone 806-857-3151.



Lake Meredith boat ramps getting a makeover. Courtesy photo

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Bush confident Iraq leaders prepared to meet challenges

WASHINGTON (AP) — Three years after declaring major military operations over in Iraq, President Bush said today that a report from his two top foreign policy officials on their visit to Baghdad shows that Iraq's leadership is "more determined than ever to succeed."

"We believe we've got partners to help the Iraqi people realize their dreams," Bush said outside the Oval Office after meeting with Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld. "They need to know that we stand with them."

But Bush said that Rice and Rumsfeld didn't come back from their surprise joint visit to Iraq last week — intended to boost the standing and spirits of the newly formed permanent government in Baghdad — with all good news.

"There's going to be more tough days ahead," the president said, with Rice and Rumsfeld at his side.

Though Bush was emphasizing the positive, it was a decidedly less positive message than the one he offered from aboard an aircraft carrier, the USS Lincoln, on May 1, 2003. "The tyrant has fallen and Iraq is free," he said then, standing underneath a banner proclaiming: "Mission Accomplished."

Also today, the senior Democrat on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee proposed that Iraq be divided into three separate regions — Kurdish, Shiite and Sunni — with a central government in Baghdad.

In a speech in Philadelphia, Sen. Joseph Biden of Delaware suggested that a residual force would be left in place that would number about 20,000 — a force that presumably would prevent al-Qaida and jihadists "from essentially taking Afghanistan and moving it to the nether regions of Iraq."

The White House rejected the idea of a partitioned Iraq, saying the Bush administration supports a "federal, democratic, pluralist and unified" country. "A partition government with regional security forces and a weak central government, as you are referencing, is something that no Iraqi leader has proposed and that the Iraqi people have not supported," White House press secretary Scott McClellan said.

On Sunday, the White House defended its prewar planning against criticism from an unlikely source — former Secretary of State Colin Powell.

In an interview broadcast Sunday in London, Powell revisited the question of whether the U.S. had a large enough force to oust Saddam Hussein and then secure the peace.

Powell said he advised now-retired Gen. Tommy Franks, who developed and executed the 2003 Iraq invasion plan, and Rumsfeld "before the president that I was not sure we had enough troops. The case was made, it was listened to, it was considered. ... A judgment was made by those responsible that the troop strength was adequate."

County

Continued from Page 1

machine which had been declared surplus property in a previous meeting.

Continuing education of County Treasurer Lee Cornelison and Indigent Health Care Coordinator Sandra Martin was recognized.

Bills totaling \$134,860.68 and salaries of \$220,024.91 were approved for payment.

Commissioners discussed items which will be on their May 15 agenda. Two of these are the use of Clyde Carruth Pavilion at Recreation Park and the

possibility of banning sales of fireworks during the upcoming Independence Day holiday season.

"The problem with alcohol use in the bull barn is that they're not arranging for security, or they're bringing in security from outside of the county," Peet said.

Precinct 2 Commissioner Gary Willoughby said that gatherings estimated at a certain number often turn out to be larger than the organizers planned. He mentioned the possibility of banning alcohol use at the barn, with the exception of the Top O' Texas Rodeo.

"It has not been a problem with them. They use the Randy Norris Pavilion,"

Willoughby said.

Willoughby also suggested forming a committee to oversee the barn's use if an alcohol ban is not adopted. He explained possible liability issues concerning continued alcohol consumption at the barn.

Commissioners will consider banning fireworks sales for Independence Day as a result of continued dry conditions and the danger of wildfires.

Precinct 1 Commissioner Joe Wheeley said that Xcel Energy and Asplundh had assisted in removal of a dead tree at White Deer Land Museum, enabling plans to proceed for remodeling the museum annex.



Lost Small Female Gray, Blue & Red Cowdog Is Spayed

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Economy

Continued from Page 1

\$1.199 trillion, on an annualized basis, surpassing the previous record high set in February. That marked a 0.9 percent increase.

Private builders ramped up spending on a wide variety of projects in March, including residential construction and factories. The government also spent more on big public works projects, including power plants.

"The construction engine was firing on all cylinders," said Ken Simonson, chief economist of The Associated General Contractors of America.

In another report from the department, consumer spending rose 0.6 percent in March, an improvement from February's 0.2 percent increase. Consumer spending plays a key role in shaping overall economic activity.

Incomes, the fuel for future spending, advanced 0.8 percent in March. That was up from a 0.3 percent increase in February and was the largest gain since September.

Income includes government payments as well as

wages. Payments from the new Medicare prescription drug plan had the effect of helping to boost overall income in March. Wages, meanwhile, grew by a moderate 0.4 percent for the second month in a row.

The spending and income figures are not adjusted for inflation.

When adjusted for inflation, consumer spending looked more subdued, rising by 0.2 percent in both February and March.

An inflation gauge tied to the consumer report revealed inflation accelerated.

The measure showed that prices — excluding energy and food — went up 0.3 percent in March, compared with a tiny 0.1 percent increase in February. Over the last 12 months, these "core" prices rose by 2 percent — considered the upper bound of the Fed's comfort zone for inflation.

The inflation reading didn't include the big run-up in oil prices seen two weeks ago. At that time, oil prices topped \$75 a barrel, a record high. Prices have retreated a bit since then.

To fend off inflation, the Fed is expected to boost a key interest rate to 5 percent at its May 10 meeting.

After May, some econo-

mists believe the Fed will move to the sidelines for a while to assess how its rate increases are affecting economic activity. Others, however, predict the Fed will be forced to push up its key rate to 5.50 percent in the months ahead to prevent inflation from taking off.

Thus far, the economy is motoring ahead despite rising interest rates and energy prices.

For the first quarter, the economy grew at a 4.8 percent pace, the fastest in 2 1/2 years, the government reported last week. A big pickup in consumer spending figured prominently in the strong showing. The first quarter's performance was a vast improvement over the feeble 1.7 percent growth rate seen in the final quarter of 2005.

In the current April-to-June quarter, economic growth is expected to slow to the 3 percent range, which would still be healthy, as consumers moderate their spending.

All three economic reports released Monday showed stronger economic activity than analysts were forecasting. That along with the inflation pickup "are issues the Fed will have to deal with," Tannenbaum said.

Anna Nicole Smith gets nod from court

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Supreme Court ruled today that one-time stripper and Playboy Playmate Anna Nicole Smith can pursue part of her late husband's oil fortune.

Justices were unanimous in giving new legal life to Smith's bid to collect millions of dollars from the estate of J. Howard Marshall II, which has been estimated at as much as \$1.6 billion.

Smith has been embroiled in a long running cross-country court fight with Marshall's youngest son, E. Pierce Marshall. The court's decision means that it will likely not end anytime soon — although there is no guarantee she will collect any money.

Justice Ruth Bader

Ginsburg said in the opinion that a Texas court did not have the last word when it ruled against the blonde reality television star.

"This is just another battle in a very long war," said Douglas Baird, a bankruptcy expert at the University of Chicago.

The ruling gives federal courts more authority to resolve disputes that arise out of estates.

Justice John Paul Stevens wrote a separate opinion to say that he would have given federal courts more jurisdiction. He said Smith's appeal was "an easy case."

Smith was a 26-year-old topless dancer when she married Marshall, then 89, in 1994. He died the following year, setting off an

intense family fight.

At issue for the justices was competing court jurisdiction. A Texas court held a five-month trial before deciding that Smith was entitled to nothing from Marshall's estate.

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Grass

Continued from Page 1

and the pickup day is Tuesday. Ward 1 pickup day for grass clippings is Monday. Ward 3 is Wednesday. Ward 4 is Thursday.

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Dear Abby...

By Pauline & Jeanne Phillips

DEAR ABBY: It's Tuesday, 3:22 a.m., and I'm wide awake, not by choice. I live downstairs from some newlyweds, "Ike" and "Tina," who moved into our apartment building a few weeks ago. This is the second time I've been awakened by their fighting. I hear loud thumps and bangs and cries from both of them. Because we leave our windows ajar at night, we can also hear what they are shouting at each other. I am well aware that Ike has hit Tina on more than one occasion. The first time, I was tempted to run upstairs and "save" her. This time, I'm lying here wondering if I should call the police or write a personal note and leave it under the door. I don't want to embarrass anyone or cause more problems. But I do want them to stop fighting. It breaks my heart. Ike apologizes, then Tina yells and he cries, and she says she wants to leave, and he begs her to stay. I hear the whole thing. I know the best thing would be to suggest counseling, but that's not my place. I have never met them. I'd hate for something worse to happen, and I refuse to be like half the people here in Los Angeles and just sit and watch the violence go by. So what should I do? Please answer soon. I don't think I can handle much more of this. — **SLEEPLESS IN L.A.**

DEAR SLEEPLESS: Someone would be doing this young wife a favor if he or she could catch her when her husband isn't around and tell her plainly that batterers don't break the habit without professional help, and she needs to get out of there before she is seriously injured. If that's not possible, then the next time you hear "thumping," you should definitely summon the police. Law enforcement officers are trained to handle these kinds of situations, which are potentially life-threatening. The husband could be high on something, or a psychopath. Under no circumstances

should you try to intervene because it could be physically dangerous for you.

DEAR ABBY: I have a problem I don't know how to solve. When we have family over for get-togethers, my "Aunt Irene," whom we all love, disappears and goes into our bedrooms -- we have three -- going from one to the other looking through our drawers. Nothing has ever gone missing, so we can't imagine what she's looking for. The last time she stayed 45 minutes. When I asked Aunt Irene's husband where she was, he got embarrassed. He tries to ignore it. I followed her once and asked what she was doing. She said, "Just looking." My husband says I should close all the bedroom doors, but my oldest daughter had her door closed and Aunt Irene went in anyway. Aunt Irene always wants to be included and she's good company, but she has this odd habit. How should we handle this? -- **WONDERING IN CLEVELAND**

DEAR WONDERING: It appears your Aunt Irene is nosy and can't resist the impulse to take "inventory" of your possessions. Few people would be as easygoing as you have been. You do not have to tolerate her snooping. Because closing your bedrooms hasn't kept her out, consider locking them. If that's not feasible, then the next time you have a family get-together, "forget" to invite her. Should she ask why, be truthful. Let her know now much you enjoy her good company, but you cannot put up with her inspection tours. If that doesn't do the trick, the next time you catch "Miss Nosy" in a bedroom, ask her to please rejoin the others -- and feel free not to invite her again.

For Better Or For Worse



Zits



Garfield



Beetle Bailey



Marvin



Crossword Puzzle

CROSSWORD

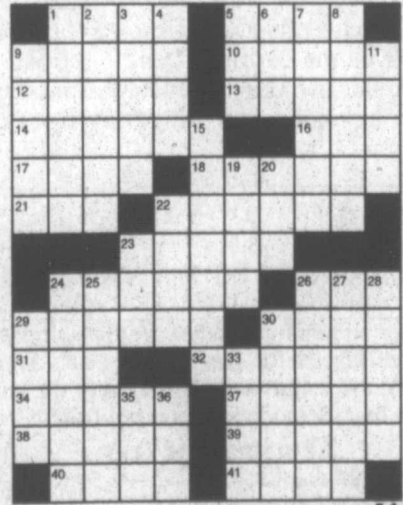
By THOMAS JOSEPH

- | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| ACROSS | DOWN |
| 1 Rescue | 1 Pavlovian |
| 5 Imitate a beaver | 2 Made the food for |
| 9 Supply | 3 Sells |
| 10 Org. that tracks Santa | 4 Thus |
| 12 Beside | 5 African grazer |
| 13 "I give up!" | 6 French denial |
| 14 Aisle alternative | 7 Jockey |
| 16 Brit's brew | 8 Indulge (in) |
| 17 Nights before | 9 Made crowd sounds |
| 18 Drag-race car | 11 Owner's paper |
| 21 Papa | 15 Exasperated question |
| 22 "Rosemary's Baby" star | |
| 23 With fervor | |
| 24 Horse sound | |
| 26 Sign of approval | |
| 29 Deceived | |
| 30 Nincompoop | |
| 31 Pipe bend | |
| 32 Polish city | |
| 34 First letter | |
| 37 Get smart | |
| 38 Eternal City resident | |
| 39 Chats | |
| 40 Skin injury | |
| 41 Some poetry | |

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- Saturday's answer**
- | | |
|------------------------|----------------------|
| 19 Paris airport | 27 Arkansas range |
| 20 Attempt | 28 Football plays |
| 22 Type-setting choice | 29 Cordelia's father |
| 23 Concealed | 30 Bakery output |
| 24 Droopy tree | 33 Sax type |
| 25 Distress call | 35 Movie computer |
| 26 Old register | 36 Wee worker |

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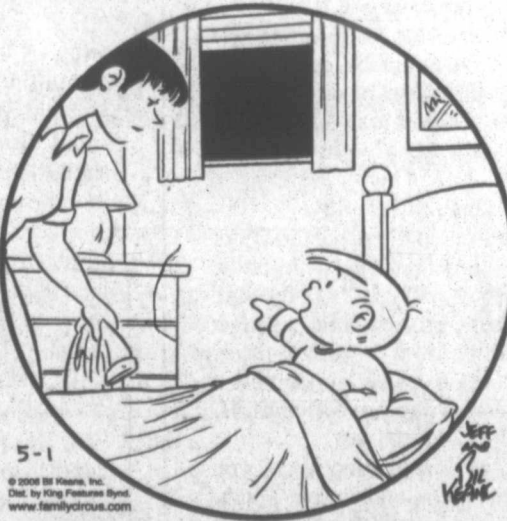


Marmaduke



The Family Circus

THE FAMILY CIRCUS By Bil Keane



B.C.



Haggar The Horrible



Peanuts



Blondie



Flo & Friends



Sports Day

Harvesters to play for top seed today at Randall Field

The Pampa Harvesters and Randall Raiders will meet at 4:30 this afternoon to determine the top seed in District 3-4A high school baseball playoffs.

The game will be played at Raider Field in Amarillo.

The Harvesters' 9-8 win over the Caprock Longhorns Saturday, coupled with a win by the Raiders, left the two top teams with 9-1 records. Since the two split their regular season matchups, the winner of today's playoff will be the No. 1 seed for the playoffs.

In addition to the No. 1 seed, the winner will receive a bye for the tournament.

The loser of today's game will be the No. 2 seed for the bidistrict playoffs this week.

In the final home game of the season Saturday, the Harvesters end the regular season with a 18-5 record, 9-1 in district.

Pampa shares the district title this year with the Raiders, who won the district title last year with a 10-0 district record.

A complicated scenario will determine the No. 3 seed for the tournament.

Palo Duro and Hereford will play at 4 today at Palo Duro. A Hereford win would put Hereford, Caprock and Dumas in a tie for third place.

If that happens, Dumas and Hereford would play at 8 tonight in Canyon at Connor Park.

Caprock would then meet the Dumas-Hereford winner Tuesday to determine the No. 3 seed.

If Caprock plays Hereford, the game would be at 1 p.m. Tuesday at Connor Park.

If Caprock plays Dumas, the game would be at 1 p.m. Tuesday at Tascosa.



Pampa News photo by MICHAEL J. STEVENS
Pampa third baseman Robie Dixon stretches to apply the tag on a Caprock runner Saturday afternoon. Despite the close play, Dixon's tag was good and Pampa went on to defeat the Longhorns, 9-8.

Seniors honored



Pampa News photo by MICHAEL J. STEVENS
Pampa Seniors Dylan Henley (L-R), Weston Teichmann, Jake Craig, Keenan Davis and Tyson Hickman were honored prior to the start of Saturday's home game against Caprock.

Lady Harvesters to play EP Del Valle Friday in Odessa

By MICHAEL J. STEVENS
Sports Editor

The playoff picture is a little clearer for the Lady Harvesters. Pampa, the 2005-2006 District 3-4A champions, will face El Paso Del Valle in Odessa Friday and Saturday in the Area round of the playoffs.

Game 1 is set for 5 p.m. Friday with EP Del Valle as the home team. Game 2 will

be played at 11 a.m. Saturday with Pampa as the home team. If needed, Game 3 will follow 30 minutes after the completion of Game 2.

All games will be played at the Ratliff Complex in Odessa.

Tickets will be \$4 for adults, \$2 for students.

For additional information contact the PHS athletic office, 669-4830.

Astros to re-enter chase for Clemens

CINCINNATI (AP) — The Houston Astros, eligible to re-sign Roger Clemens again starting today, plan to contact the agents for the seven-time Cy Young Award winner.

"This opens up a window of opportunity for us," general manager Tim Lincecum said Sunday from Houston. "We have said that we are interested in getting Roger back. We would love to have him be a part of our team."

Clemens spent the last two seasons with his hometown Astros, winning the NL Cy Young Award in 2004 and the major league ERA title last year. He pitched for the United States in the World Baseball Classic in March and though he considers

himself retired, he hasn't ruled out returning.

Houston, Boston, the New York Yankees and Texas are interested in signing the 43-year-old right-hander.

"We'd like to have him back, but he's not a factor in our ballclub," Astros manager Phil Garner said before Sunday's game against Cincinnati. "We planned our ballclub without Rocket. He told us in the winter that he shouldn't be a factor. We're not waiting for him. We're not holding back."

Under baseball's rules, teams can re-sign their former players who became free agents only through Dec. 7 (or Jan. 8 if offered salary arbitration), or starting May 1.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY for Tuesday, May 2, 2006:

You have a definite style and way with other people. This gift adds to the quality and success in your life. You will get much more of what you want. You will also experience great contentment. What you do instinctively brings positive results. Your creativity will surge, especially if you tune in to your feelings. If you are single, you can kiss that status goodbye this year, if you so choose. Your dance card will be filled to the brim. Some Bulls just might enjoy the popularity. If you are attached, your relationship benefits from your smile and willingness to communicate. Don't let the stubborn Taurean traits interfere with your relationships. **CANCER** opens you up.

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

ARIES (March 21-April 19)

★★★ You might feel pressured by others, as everyone seems to want or expect something. Deal with your personal and domestic life first. Coming from a stable, anchored place can make all the difference. Create that platform for yourself. Tonight: Easy does it.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

★★★★★ Speak your mind and get to the bottom of confusion about common goals. Others easily fall into place, wanting to please you. Head in a new direction because you want the change and variety, not because you have to. Tonight: Yap up a storm.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

★★★ You might want to take charge and get to the bottom of what appears to be a

quirky situation. Investigate new possibilities around your daily or professional life. A positive change could be beneficial. Reach out to someone. Tonight: Pay bills.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)

★★★★★ You want to think positively and creatively. Good news walks through your door. Be ready for quirky information or a change of plans. Listen to others. Your personality helps melt barriers. Tonight: As you like.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

★★★ Much goes on behind the scenes. You will want to think before you leap into action. A partner or associate could be a bit quirky or changeable. Opportunities come from a centered point of view. Others look to you for ideas. Tonight: Get some extra R and R.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

★★★★★ You'll get what you want with a positive attitude. Friends and meetings benefit you, though a key partner could be a bit flaky. Unexpected developments can take you to a new level if you flex. Tonight: Where your friends are.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

★★★★★ Timing works for responsible Libras. Seize the moment and get ahead of your work and routine. Soon enough, you will want some free time to yourself. Planning ahead makes sense. Accept a new piece of technology. Tonight: On top of it all.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

★★★★★ Your good will and ability to pull back help you intuitively make the correct decisions. A child or loved one could be flaky. A risk might fall as you wish. Still, give yourself space for a problem or flub-up. Tonight: Surround yourself with good music.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

★★★★★ A partner reads between the lines. What is being shared is good news. You feel restored and a lot happier. Remember, not everything is your responsibility. Think positively about a partnership who means a lot to you. Tonight: Quality time with someone you care about.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

★★★★★ Others chip in in areas you least expect. You might be delighted if you give up rigidity and positively greet change. Good news surrounds meetings, friendships and people in general. Tonight: Out.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

★★★★★ Surprises finally make the Water Bearer smile. Your enduring work ethic appears to pay off, be it through acknowledgment or financial change. You are coming from a strong place. Schedule a long-overdue appointment. Tonight: Do something just for yourself.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

★★★★★ Your imagination takes you down different paths and makes a substantial change in your plans. Loosen up and relax with others. Add that fun spirit and joy of living. Others cannot help but join you on the bandwagon. Tonight: Let the kid in you out.

BORN TODAY

Singer Lesley Gore (1946), political activist Bianca Jagger (1945), designer Donatella Versace (1955)

Jacqueline Bigar is on the Internet at <http://www.jacquelinebigar.com>.
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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.

5-1 CRYPTOQUOTE

O V K I A D L D K L V O I
B I L G I Q R L M D E I J D B I D R
D L H Z I B A I Y Q I M M I K R
L I B Z H K R P T R H R I B B D P M I
O H L R I B — G R P H B K T O

Saturday's Cryptquote: SILENCE IS THE MOST PERFECT EXPRESSION OF SCORN. — GEORGE BERNARD SHAW

AG NEWS

Cattle feeders elect new vice president

Ben Weinheimer, P.E., has been named vice president of the Texas Cattle Feeders Association, according to Ross Wilson, TCFA president & CEO.

"Ben has served TCFA members for 10 years as regulatory manager and is recognized nationwide as one of the industry's top experts in environmental management," Wilson said. "His steady, scientific approach to addressing regulatory issues has won him respect from cattle feeders, government agency personnel and elected leaders alike."



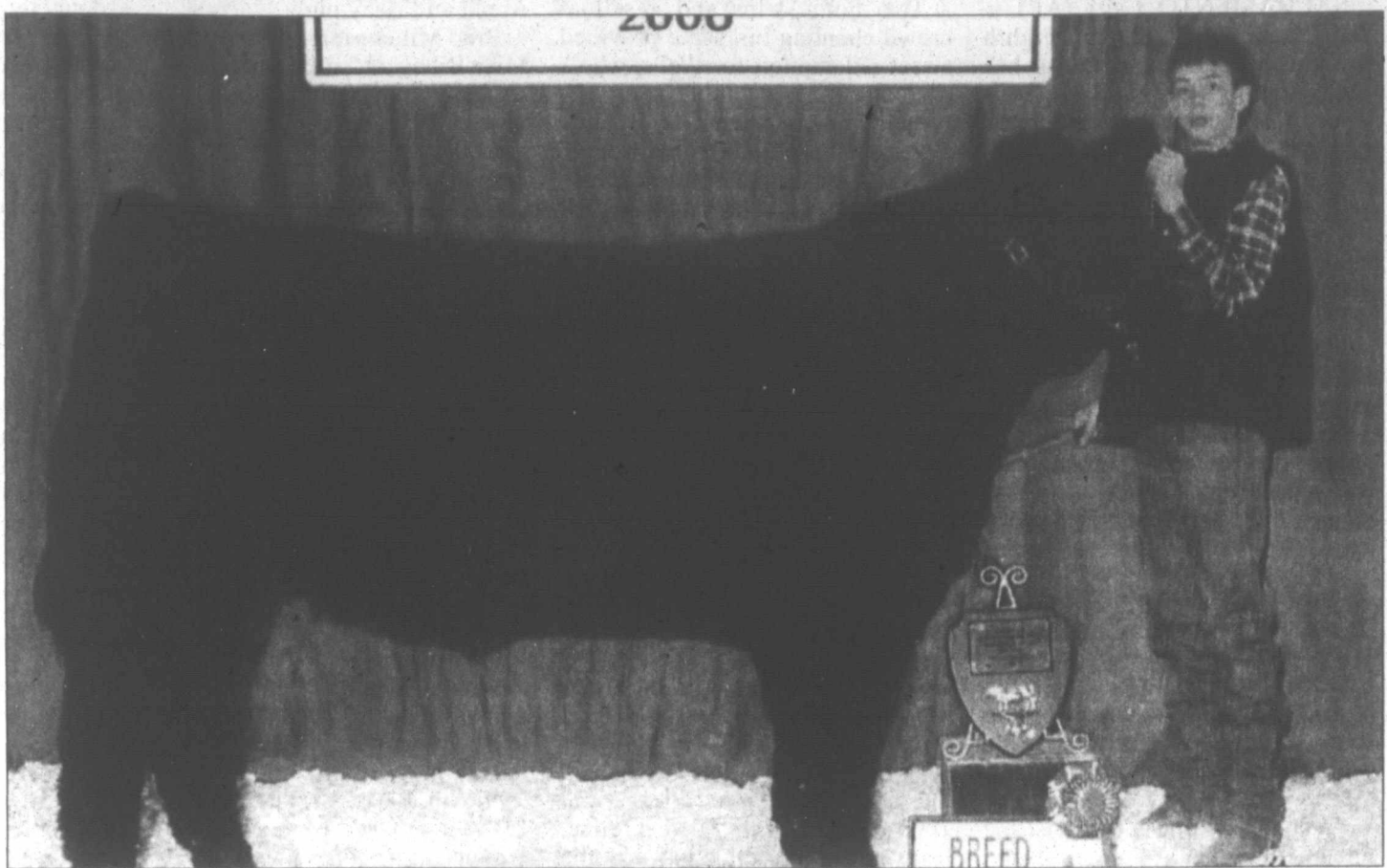
Weinheimer

Weinheimer works with feedyards to resolve specific regulatory issues and is responsible for several of the association's service programs, including the Beef Safety and Quality Assurance Program, Employee Safety Services Program, Environmental Services Program, and the USDA-approved Quality Systems Assessment program for age and source verification of export cattle.

He also staffs the association's Research Committee to prioritize research needs for cattle feeders.

Weinheimer was raised on a Texas Panhandle grain and livestock operation. He graduated from Texas A&M University in 1994 with a bachelor's degree in agricultural engineering and was designated a licensed Professional Engineer in 2002.

Stock show award



Kelby Rucker of Pampa was recently awarded a Top 10 Jacket from the Texas Club Calf Association Junior Angus Steer Division during an awards banquet at the Astrodome in Houston. Rucker placed 10th out of 99 in the Angus steer division of the Houston Livestock Show. The steer was shown in 24 steer shows in Texas and Oklahoma, accumulating 725 points. The steer was champion Angus eight times and reserve champion twice.

Reagan

Continued from Page 4

and to world peace. He allowed the creation of an Islamic Republic bent on imposing the most repressive form of Islam on the entire world.

Then we can turn to Venezuela, now locked in the grip of a Castro clone and fervent communist Hugo Chavez, who is creating a heavily armed communist dictatorship on our southern doorstep. When Chavez faced a recall election Carter was on hand to monitor the election, which turned out to be rigged to elect Chavez from the very start. Despite overwhelming evidence that the Chavez victory was the result of rampant vote fraud, Mr. Carter put his stamp of approval on it, declaring it to have been fair and honest. Carter kept Chavez in office.

In 1994, when Bill Clinton was facing down North Korea's Kim Il-Sung, father of current dictator Kim Jong-Il, he sent Carter to strike a deal on his development of nuclear technology. Speaking of the dying

murderous dictator, Carter said he found him "vigorous, intelligent, surprisingly well-informed about the technical issues, and in charge of the decisions about this country," and added, "I don't see the [North Koreans] are an outlaw nation."

The deal Carter made allowed the North Koreans to work behind the scenes to build nuclear weapons which now threaten world peace. When he came back from North Korea he told CNN's Judy Woodruff, "I think it's all roses now. ..."

I agree with Jack Kinsella who once wrote in the Omega Letter Daily Intelligence Digest that "... Jimmy Carter holds the hands-down record for being the worst ex-president the United States has ever known. His post-presidential meddling in foreign affairs has cost America dearly, both in terms of international credibility and international prestige."

Amen.

Mike Reagan, the eldest son of the late President Ronald Reagan, is heard on more than 200 talk radio stations nationally as part of the Radio America Network.

Puerto Rico shuts down government, schools

By MANUEL RIVERA
Associated Press Writer

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (AP) — The government of Puerto Rico ran out of money Monday, forcing the U.S. commonwealth to close public schools and shut down government offices, putting almost 100,000 people out of work.

The legislature and governor failed to reach a last-minute accord that would have averted the first-ever partial shutdown of the government in island history.

All 1,600 public schools on the island were closed two weeks before the end of the academic year, and 43 government agencies were shut down after last-minute negotiations between lawmakers and Gov. Anibal Acevedo Vila failed.

Acevedo blamed "legislative inaction" for the shutdown.

"As of 8 a.m. this morning, I don't have in hand a single legislative proposal that resolves this crisis," he told reporters.

The closure gave an unplanned holiday to 500,000 students and threw almost 100,000 government employees — including 40,000 teachers — temporarily out of work. The governor has said essential services, such as

police and hospitals, would continue during the shutdown.

Unions planned protests outside the capitol in San Juan and elsewhere to protest the shutdown. Municipal governments, which provide services such as garbage collection, kept functioning.

Outside an elementary school in the Rio Piedras area of the capital, a sign advised parents to monitor news reports to learn when classes would resume. Juan Marrero, a shop owner near the school, said the shutdown would curtail his own business.

"They have to solve this quickly," Marrero said.

Puerto Rico has a \$740 million budget shortfall because the legislature and the governor have been unable to agree on a spending plan since 2004.

Overnight, the Senate leader offered a compromise that would create a 5.9 percent sales tax, which he said would raise enough money to pay off an emergency \$532 million line of credit the government needs to finish the fiscal year.

But that proposal failed to gain traction in the House of Representatives, where leaders said they opposed any sales tax above 5.5 percent — with 1.5 percent earmarked for municipalities.

Both proposals fell short of the 7 percent that Acevedo said was necessary to pay for an additional \$640 million loan and avoid a partial government shutdown. Anything less than 7 percent would only postpone the crisis until July 1, when the next fiscal year begins, the governor said.

The island currently has no sales tax.

Members of the New Progressive Party, which controls the legislature, have blamed the governor for the crisis. The two sides never agreed on the 2005 or 2006 budgets, and the government is using the 2004 budget to operate as debts pile up.

The government is Puerto Rico's largest employer, with some 200,000 workers. Salaries make up about 80 percent of the government's operational costs.

In recent days, Puerto Ricans held protest marches aimed at spurring the politicians to reach an agreement.

"I think it's sad that it came to this, but I think they'll come to their senses after a few days of playing this game," said Hector Aguilo, 24, who lives in Guaynabo, just outside San Juan. "There are too many angry people who would be without their paychecks."

Reese

Continued from Page 4

enough to deter or defeat us in the region. There is no indication at all that the Chinese have any desire or intention to attack us, provided we don't get between them and Taiwan.

Southeast Asia has a long history of close ties with China, and China properly considers that region as its "backyard" just as we consider the Caribbean and Gulf of Mexico our "backyard."

We wouldn't be very happy if China stationed 80,000

troops in Cuba or Venezuela and built a large navy base in one of those countries.

There seems to be a lot of civilian idiots in Washington who, deluded by our victories over pitifully poor and unprepared Third World countries, apparently think we are still a great military power. We are not. There is no way we could defeat China, and if we were to use nukes, then the people in California wouldn't have to worry about earthquakes anymore. The survivors would be too busy worrying about radiation.

As for our trade problems, they are of our own making. It is quite clear that big business has bought the government, so if we refuse to enforce existing trade laws and refuse to discourage American firms from relocating their manufacturing facilities to China, that is our fault, not China's.

As I said, China is a giant waking up. It must be very exciting to be a young, educated Chinese in these times. To be sure, China has plenty of problems, including the environment, but it is, I imagine, like the U.S. was when we were on the cusp of becoming a world economic power. China today is full of possibilities

for the Chinese people. As for its communist government, that's China's business. It is long past the time when we should adopt a policy of strict noninterference in the internal affairs of other countries. The days when we could bully other people are ending. The world is changing. If we readopt our republican virtues, then the 21st century may be a century of peace. If we continue our imperial course, it will be a century of war, and we will be the chief loser.

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TAKS achievers



One hundred percent of fifth graders at Austin Elementary School recently passed the math portion of the TAKS test. Fifty-nine percent were commended, meaning they missed two questions or less. Above: Mrs. Flume, Mrs. DeFever and Mrs. Reagan with their fifth grade students, Freddie Ambriz, Jocelyn Brady, Elizabeth Cahill, Chantelle Dencklau, Christopher Duree, Madison Fatheree, Mario Fierro, Rachel Jones, Taylor Morgan, Hector Ortega, Jenna Parker, Cory Phillips, Bailey Read, Arin Rice, Jacee Smith, Ryan Smith, Austin Starbuck, Tyler Tatum, James Thompson, Trey Wiggins, Adam Williams, Cheyenne Young, Kyler Allen, Rachel Andrews, Bailey Beck, Cole Buck, Dyanna Carlisle, Terry Davis, Ethan DeFever, Kate Ellis, MaKayla Hampton, Trey Hiers, Travis Hinkle, Sydney Hoelting, Ty Hutto, Michael Landsverk, Holly Lane, April Loving, Nicholas Nelson, Dylan Parks, Ramon Portillo, Chris Rivera, Dakota Watson, Leroy Williams, Cassidy Winegeart, Patterson Alvey, J.T. Brown, Dakota Budd, Bethany Casas, Jonathan Cox, Jacob Crippen, Taylor Dalton, Ryne Davis, Robin Doan, Caleb Dunham, Karli Harden, Ryan Holt, Jani Riddhi, Alyssa Kinnaman, Tamra Klusmeyer, Cameron McDonald, Jared Miner, Tyler Montgomery, Nathan Rowell, Luis Servin, Sydney Starks, Abbi Taylor and Alex Romero.

Ex-professor sentenced to more prison time

TAMPA, Fla. (AP) — A judge sentenced former professor Sami Al-Arian today to another year and a half in prison before he will be deported in his terrorism conspiracy case.

Al-Arian, 48, was sentenced to four years and nine months, but he will get credit for the three years and three months he already has served while being held before and after his trial.

His lawyer, Linda Moreno, asked the judge to release her client now, but the judge refused and called Al-Arian "a master manipulator."

Al-Arian signed a plea agreement April 14 in which he admitted providing support to members of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad, a State Department-designated terrorist group responsible for hundreds of deaths in Israel and the Palestinian territories.

The former University of South Florida computer engineering professor took the plea deal despite a jury failing to convict him of any of the 17 charges against him after a six-month trial last year. His family said he took the deal to get out of jail and end their suffering.

As part of the plea agreement, Al-Arian admitted to being associated with the Palestinian Islamic Jihad from the late 1980s and providing "services" for the group, which included filing for immigration benefits for key members, hiding the identities of those men and lying about his involvement.

It was not immediately clear where Al-Arian will be sent once he is deported. Born in Kuwait to Palestinian refugee parents, he was reared mostly in Egypt before coming to the United States 30 years ago.

'RV' opens week as top movie

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Audiences hit the road with Robin Williams as his family-vacation romp "RV" opened at No. 1 with \$16.4 million, while the acclaimed Sept. 11 drama "United 93" debuted with \$11.6 million.

Studio estimates Sunday had Universal Pictures' "United 93" in second place, just ahead of Disney's sports comedy "Stick It," which premiered with \$11.3 million. Those rankings could change once final numbers are released Monday.

The weekend's other new wide release, Lionsgate's spelling-bee drama "Akeelah and the Bee," was No. 8 with \$6.25 million.

The 20th Century Fox release "RV" was expected to debut on top, but "United 93" had been an unknown quantity, with Hollywood analysts wondering whether movie-goers were ready to relive the horrors of the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks.

"It's not about the positioning of the film. It's about the fact that the American public spoke out," said Nikki Rocco, head of distribution for Universal Pictures. "This is a wonderful result. What they said was that it wasn't too soon for a film about Sept. 11."

Married couples accounted for just over half the "United 93" audience, and 71 percent of viewers were 30 and older, according to Universal.

With painstaking authenticity, "United 93" recounts the horrific end of passengers who fought back against their hijackers aboard one of the commandeered planes, which crashed in rural Pennsylvania.

Families of those killed aboard Flight 93 cooperated with director Paul Greengrass ("The Bourne Supremacy," "Bloody Sunday"), who re-creates the experiences of passengers and air-traffic controllers in a documentary-style drama. "United 93" earned widespread praise from critics.

Shot on a modest budget of \$15 million, "United 93" should easily turn a profit once theatrical, television and DVD revenues are tallied. Universal said it will donate 10 percent of the first weekend's grosses to the Flight 93 National Memorial in Pennsylvania.

Playing in 1,795 theaters, about half as many as "RV," "United 93" averaged a solid \$6,462 a cinema, the best results among the top-10 movies.

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