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SEE PAGE 10



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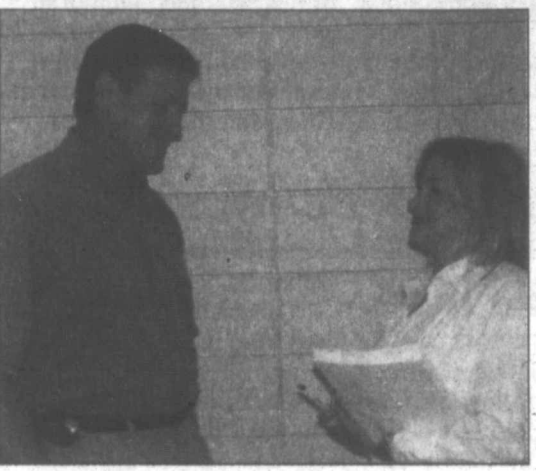
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Pampa News photo by MARILYN POWERS
Guest speaker Greg Vincent, left, talks with Lesley Gershmel, Pampa High School counselor, at Thursday's substance abuse meeting at M.K. Brown Auditorium.

Speaker tells of life of drug abuse

By MARILYN POWERS
Staff Writer

A car wreck wrecked more than Greg Vincent's family's vehicle. It also wrecked his life.

Vincent, now 42, was a teenage passenger in a vehicle driven by his father along Farm to Market Road 1062 when another man hit their car broadside on the passenger side, where Vincent was sitting.

"I fell out of the car, and the other vehicle bounced off me and dragged me around and left me in a bar ditch," Vincent told the audience Thursday evening at the final meeting in a series of six on substance abuse.

Vincent was guest speaker at "Life After Drugs -- It Is Possible" at M.K. Brown Civic Auditorium.

"I remember coming to in Northwest Texas Hospital. I had a serious head injury. The right side of my skull was crushed, I couldn't see out of my right eye, both collarbones were broken and my sternum was broken," Vincent said.

At the time, he was a student and football player at Amarillo High School. But his football days were over as a result of the accident.

"I asked God why this hap-

pened. I had over 150 stitches on the right side of my face, and my head was swollen as big as a basketball," he said.

His life changed in more ways than football.

"Something changed about me. I don't know whether it was the wreck or my disappointment, or whatever," Vincent said.

"My senior year was very traumatic. I started school with hundreds of stitches in my face, part of my head shaved, and my other injuries," he said.

A classmate who was new to

About 100 pray at courthouse

By MARILYN POWERS
Staff Writer

Approximately 100 persons gathered on the south lawn of Gray County Courthouse during the noon hour Thursday to observe the 55th annual National Day of Prayer.

Participants divided into seven groups, each group focusing their prayers on a specific subject.

The seven topics for prayer were the nation, led by Lonny Robbins; state, led by Mike Sublett; county, led by Doug Hixson; city, led by Paul Nachtigall; military and law enforcement, led by Capt. Gary Steward; churches, led by Bryan Davis; and moral state of the nation, led by Ed

Barker.

The meeting began with the Pledge of Allegiance, followed by a prayer before participants chose the group in which they wished to pray. The meeting ended with another prayer and the singing of "Amazing Grace."

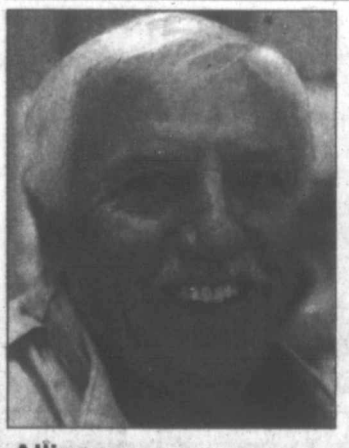
Scripture noted in the event's program included 1 Samuel 2:30: "Therefore the Lord God of Israel declares, 'I did indeed say that your house and the house of your father should walk before Me forever'; but now the Lord declares, 'Far be it from Me -- for those who honor Me I will honor, and those who despise Me will be lightly esteemed.'"



Pampa News photo by MARILYN POWERS
Salvation Army Captain Gary Steward, second from right, leads a group in prayer for the nation's military and law enforcement at Thursday's National Day of Prayer on the south lawn of Gray County Courthouse. Flanking him are, from left, Beadie and James Baird and Agustin Vasquez.

4 vying for 2 vacant city commissioner spots

**Ward 2: Dalton Lewis
Bill Allison**



Allison

By DAVID BOWSER
Staff Writer

Bill Allison wants to see Pampa grow.

"I'm like everyone else," Allison said. "I'd like to see more people here."

He said he'd like to see the city maintain its services.

It worries him that some city services may be closed down.

"I never like to see anything close," Allison said. "I'd like to see some other businesses come in that would bring some employees with them."

Allison is one of two candidates vying for the Pampa City Commission. See **ALLISON**, Page 3



Lewis

By DAVID BOWSER
Staff Writer

Dalton Lewis wants the new economic development corporation to succeed.

One of two candidates for Pampa City Commission, Ward 2, Lewis is facing Pampa businessman Bill Allison in this month's city elections. The incumbent, Ray Boring, is not running for reelection.

"My vision for Pampa is to try to make it the city with the best EDC in the state," Lewis said. "I think with my experience and background working with people that I can give service to the community."

He said he's gotten a lot of

Early voting turnout light

By MARILYN POWERS
Staff Writer

Early voting in the Pampa city election has been light for the first three days, with 49 ballots cast as of 5 p.m. Wednesday, according to City Secretary Phyllis Jeffers.

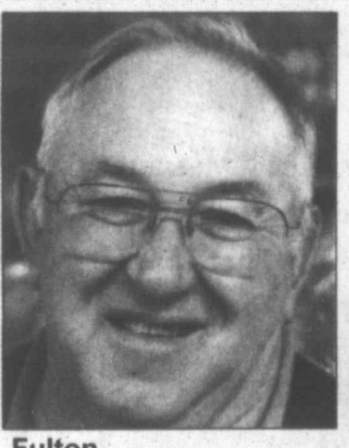
The positions of commissioner for Wards 2 and 4 are up for election. Incumbents Ray Boring of Ward 2 and Faustina Curry of Ward 4 did not file for re-election, leaving both races open for challengers.

Boring moved into a different ward, Jeffers said, and Curry decided not to run after completing her 12th year as a commissioner this year.

Candidates for Ward 2 commissioner are Bill Allison and Dalton B. Lewis. Ward 4 candidates for commissioner are Neil Fulton and Shirley Nicholson.

Early voting continues through 5 p.m. Tuesday in Room 205 of City Hall. Hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays, except for Monday, when the early

**Ward 4: Shirley Nicholson
Neil Fulton**



Fulton

By DAVID BOWSER
Staff Writer

Pampa businessman Neil Fulton wants to see the city grow.

"I want to see a community of 25,000 to 30,000 people which I think is a self-sustaining community," Fulton said. "My vision is to get more people here. To get more jobs."

"I look at people in Fort Worth and Dallas and those people who are driving an hour and a half to work and an hour and a half home," Fulton said. "If we can get those companies to bring their businesses to our area, they can save money and their employees can save



Nicholson

By DAVID BOWSER
Staff Writer

Shirley Nicholson said she sees a bright future for Pampa.

"We're in a growth period, and I think we need to take advantage of that," she said.

Nicholson is one of two candidates running for city commissioner from Ward 4. The other is Pampa businessman Neil Fulton. The incumbent, Faustina Curry, is not running for reelection.

She said this area has a cycle of booms followed by busts.

Nicholson said that during the boom times, she

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Obituaries

Services tomorrow

BROGDON, John J. — 2 p.m., United Methodist Church, Miami.

Sue Price, 62

Sue Price, 62, of Pampa, died April 30, 2006, at Pampa. No services are scheduled at the present time.

Cremation and arrangements are under the direction of Carmichael-Whatley Funeral Directors of Pampa.

Mrs. Price was born May 29, 1943, at Quincy, Ill. She was a homemaker and had been a Pampa resident most of her life.

Survivors include a daughter, Karen Luann Fuller of Lynnwood, Wash.; three

sons, John O. Fuller of Lynnwood, Dwayne Fuller of Bristow, Okla., and Brian Lee Fuller of Pampa; her mother, Vivian McCall of Springfield, Mo.; a sister, Sandra Barnes of Quincy; nine grandchildren; and a great-grandchild.

The family requests memorials be to Good Samaritan Christian Services, 309 N. Ward, Pampa, TX 79065.

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

John J. Brogdon, 68

MIAMI, Texas — John J. Brogdon, 68, of Miami, died May 4, 2006, at Amarillo, Texas. Services will be at 2 p.m. Saturday, May 6, 2006, at the United Methodist Church of Miami with the Rev. Mindy McLanahan, pastor, officiating.

Graveside services will be at 3 p.m. Sunday, May 7, 2006, at the Dye Mound Cemetery in Dye Mound under the direction of Carmichael-Whatley Funeral Directors of Pampa.

Mr. Brogdon was born Jan. 10, 1938, in Dye Mound. He married Shirley Jackson on Sept. 7, 1956, in Forestburg. He was a 1956 graduate of Forestburg High School in Forestburg and attended the University of Texas at Arlington.

He had been a resident of Miami since 1967, moving from Montague County. He was a cowboy for 40 years with various ranches in Roberts County. For the past five years, he was a correctional officer at the Baten Unit of TDCJ in Pampa.

He was a member of the United Methodist Church of Miami, the Miami Masonic Lodge #805, the Miami Lions Club, and the

Miami Chamber of Commerce. He was an EMT with the Miami EMS and volunteer fireman with the Miami-Roberts Volunteer Fire Department. He was a hospice volunteer with BSA Hospice in Pampa.

Survivors include his wife, Shirley Brogdon, of the home; two daughters, Pamela Berry of Borger and Karla Scott and husband Ken of Luling, La.; his mother, Veda Brogdon of Forestburg; three sisters, Jane Sledge of Cleburne, Marjorie Hess of Forestburg and Becky Scott of Waco; one brother, Max Brogdon of Cheyenne, Wyo.; seven grandchildren; and six great-grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by his father, Barney Brogdon; and a son-in-law, Royce Berry.

The family requests memorials be to United Methodist Church of Miami, P.O. Box 248, Miami, TX 79059; or the Coffee Memorial Blood Center, 1915 S. Coulter, Amarillo, TX 79106.

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

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RABIES DRIVE Dogs: May 5&6, Cats: May 8 at your Pampa Veterinarian Clinic

THE PAMPA Rifle and Pistol Club will have a work day at the indoor range Saturday, June 10 @ 8 am. Vintage Military Rifle Match Saturday, June 10 @ 2:00 pm, outdoor rifle range, 5 miles west of Pampa on 23rd St. This is a CMP sanctioned match. You must bring your own rifle, Irson sights only, and military ammo only, (50 rounds). Entry fee of \$3. Civilian Marksmanship Program rules and regulations will be followed. Contact Tim Kirkwood @ 806-665-3816.

OPTICAL TECHS- Full and Part-time positions-fax resumes 665-3511

WILDFIRE MAGAZINES (Special Edition) are now available at the Pampa News, 403 W. Atchison. Proceeds will be donated to area fire-fighting organizations. \$10.

Emergency Services

Pampa PD

Pampa Police Department reported the following incidents for the 24-hour period ending at 7 a.m. today.

Twenty-two traffic stops were made; leading to at least two arrests.

A traffic complaint was received from the 2800 block of Charles.

A missing person was reported in the 1800 block of Fir.

Agency assistance was rendered in the 1100 block of South Sumner.

Found property was reported in the 1100 block of Coronado Drive. A brown bottle with a yellow label was found.

Two burglar alarms were

reported.

Disorderly conduct was reported in the 1300 block of Mary Ellen.

Harassment was reported in the 800 block of North Hobart.

Criminal trespass was reported in the 600 block of Plains.

A domestic disturbance was reported in the 500 block of North Dwight.

Criminal mischief was reported at Pampa High School, 111 E. Harvester. Five tree branches were damaged. Estimated cost of damage is \$100.

Criminal mischief was reported in the 2200 block of North Sumner.

Forgery was reported in the police department lobby.

Sheriff

Gray County Sheriff's Office reported the following arrests today.

Thursday, May 4

Rebecca Ann Covalt, 23, of Pampa was arrested in the 500 block of East Crawford by Pampa Police Department for no insurance and failure to appear.

Timmy Max Kellison, 27, of Lefors was arrested by the Lefors Marshal for evading arrest/detention with a vehicle, driving while license is invalid, and capias pro fines for no valid driver's license and failure to appear.

David Tyree Robinson, 23, of Pampa was arrested in the 1300 block of North Hobart by PPD on a capias pro fine for disorderly conduct/fighting.

James Ray Devoll, 29, of Pampa was arrested by Texas Department of Public Safety for driving while intoxicated.

Jose O. Rodriguez, 53, of Las Vegas, Nev., was arrested by DPS for possession of over 50 pounds and under 2,000 pounds of marijuana.

Friday, May 5

Jason Samuel Shorter, 25, of Pampa was arrested in the 100 block of East Browning by PPD for no valid driver's license.

Fire

Pampa Fire Department reported the following calls during the 24-hour period ending at 7 a.m. today.

Thursday, May 4

1:26 p.m. — One unit and three personnel responded to the 2700 block of Seminole on a gas odor investigation.

1:29 p.m. — One unit and two personnel responded to the 200 block of East Brown on a gas leak.

8:36 p.m. — Two units and three personnel responded to the 300 block of North Hobart to investigate a reported flare.

9:51 p.m. — One unit and three personnel responded to aid Pampa Police Department in searching for a missing person.

Weather

Today: Periods of showers and thunderstorms. High near 57. East wind around 10 mph. Chance of precipitation is 100 percent.

Tonight: Periods of showers and thunderstorms. Low around 46. East-northeast wind between 5 and 10 mph becoming calm.

Chance of precipitation is 80 percent. New rainfall amounts between a quarter and half of an inch possible.

Saturday: Showers and thunderstorms likely, mainly in the morning. Cloudy, with a high around 58. Northeast wind between 5 and 10 mph. Chance of precipitation is 70 percent.

Saturday Night: Mostly cloudy, with a low near 47.

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Abuse

Continued from Page 1

Vincent's class that year asked the 18-year-old one day if he smoked dope and invited him to do so. "I accepted. I don't know why I did that. I went with him to a house at lunchtime one day," Vincent said. His journey into substance abuse began that day and lasted for years. Until the accident, Vincent had not even drunk alcohol or smoked tobacco. "I got baptized at age 13. I went to church twice on Sundays, once on Wednesdays, plus youth fellowships. I remember doing

all those things, but I don't remember really feeling anything from that. It was just something I was supposed to do," he said. He attended a Church of Christ private school for nine years in Amarillo, until he entered Tascosa High School in 1979. Most students at the private school had similar backgrounds, beliefs and lifestyles. One notable student for a time was J. Kelly Pinkerton, who would later be convicted of murder and sentenced to death. The switch to Tascosa was a difficult one. "The only way I fit in there was, I made the basketball team. That was my only sense of security at that school," Vincent said.

A move to another home resulted in a transfer to Amarillo High School after a year. He wanted to play basketball but was persuaded to life weights. "I was 6'5", weighed 275 and could bench press over 300 pounds. I wasn't a great student, so football was my ticket to success, Vincent said. Then his life changed in a few moments on a farm to market road. Within two years, he was snorting methamphetamine, then began injecting methamphetamine and cocaine. He spent his settlement from the accident within four months. "I lived homeless for two

to three years," Vincent said. "My life was a total wreck. I had lost everything." Whenever he found himself in jail, he would call his father and play upon his father's feelings of guilt about the accident to manipulate his father into bailing him out. That method worked until 1986, when he found himself once again behind bars and tried to call his parents. No one answered after several calls, so he called his lawyer. "He said he wasn't getting me out, and that my parents were on a missionary trip to Brazil," Vincent said. He remained in Randall County Jail for several weeks until his parents returned from Brazil. They also refused to get him out of

jail. He was sentenced to a rehabilitation center for a year, followed by six months in a halfway house. His last day at the center arrived. "I had been telling everyone what they wanted to hear. My counselor handed me my discharge papers and said I didn't have a chance in hell of staying sober, and then walked off," Vincent said. "I decided, 'I'll show you, old man,'" he said. "Of the 17 in my group, I'm the only one who stayed sober." He joined a 12-step program and went to meetings daily. His probation ended in 1988. He stayed sober. "One day, I was invited to tell my story at Randall

County Jail. From that day, I learned the importance of telling my story," Vincent said. "Every time I tell my story, I hear it and it helps me from forgetting it." A couple of years ago, he became a born-again Christian. He also completed college and holds a master's in education administration. He is completing coursework for a master's in counseling. He is married with five children age 17 and under. "He is a great success. That's possible for anybody going through substance abuse," said Lesley Gershmel, Pampa High School counselor and one of the organizers of the six-part series of programs.

Voting

Continued from Page 1

polls will be open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Election day is May 13, with polls open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. at M.K. Brown Civic Auditorium. City elections are at-

large elections, meaning that anyone living within the city limits of Pampa may vote for one candidate for each ward, regardless of whether the voter actually lives in that ward. Daily voting totals through Wednesday are 17 for Monday, which was a 12-hour day; Tuesday, 9; and Wednesday, 23.

Allison

Continued from Page 1

Ward 2. He faces Dalton Lewis in this month's city elections. The incumbent, Ray Boring, is not running for reelection. Allison said he hopes the new economic development corporation will hire a good director. He said if he's elected to the city commission, he'll be able to participate in hiring that person. He said it would be great if Pampa had 30,000 people here again. There's no reason that Pampa doesn't grow," Allison said. "If people find out about how great it is

here." Allison was born in Greggton, which is now a part of Longview. He graduated from Pine Tree High School in 1957, and attended the University of Houston before going into the U.S. Army where he spent two years in France. While he was in the Army, his parents moved to Pampa in 1961. His father was with Sinclair Oil Co. and was transferred here. Allison returned to East Texas working for CIT Financial Services and he was transferred to Pampa in 1968. He's been in Pampa ever since. Allison has had his car lot here for about 10 years.

Fulton

Continued from Page 1

time on the road." He said he expects to see a trend to move toward smaller towns like Pampa. With the price of gas rising, he said it may be a bigger opportunity than many people realize. Fulton is one of two candidates for city commissioner from Ward 4. He faces Shirley Nicholson in this month's city election. The incumbent, Faustina Curry is not running for reelection. Fulton said he's optimistic about Pampa's future. Fulton said he expects Pampa's economy to continue to prosper, and he is a strong supporter of the new economic development corporation. As Pampa has contracted over the past 20 years, there are fewer taxpayers to pay for the infrastructure that must be maintained. Increased population would

help solve that problem. Fulton said the city needs to be cleaned up and made more attractive. Fulton has long been involved in civic affairs in Pampa. "I've been on the board of directors of the Top o' Texas Rodeo for 35 years," Fulton said. "I've been a director of the Pampa Chamber of Commerce for the last eight years." He's served on the White Deer Land Museum board for the last six years. Most recently, he and his wife were both involved in the benefit for area firefighters. Fulton was born in Donley County and came to Gray County at age 2. He's lived in Gray County ever since, except for a tour in the National Guard. But Fulton's father died when he was 14, and he had to drop out of school to help support his family. Fulton went to work for the gas company for 35 years. When he retired, he and his wife bought Bob Clements Dry Cleaners.

Lewis

Continued from Page 1

calls about city services and he's concerned about them. Lewis was born in Canyon. His family moved to Phillips where Lewis graduated from high school and then went to work for Phillips Petroleum Co. Lewis then joined United Carbon Co. in Borger. They transferred him to their research and development division in Houston. He said he didn't like Houston, but it was a good job. "It took me three years to escape," he laughed. "We moved back to Pampa from Houston in 1965." That's when he went to work for Cabot in their machinery division as an

efficiency expert. "We looked around and picked Pampa because it was the nicest town that was the size we wanted to live in," Lewis said. He was with the company for 32 years. He was on the planning committee for Ingersoll Rand International. "I served on the Cabot and IRI Employee Credit Union for 12 years," Lewis said. "I was secretary the last four years of that." Lewis retired from the company in 1997. He was also on the old Pampa Economic dissolution board for three and a half years. He said that was very interesting. "Everything I've been involved in, except the time I worked at the refinery, has been very interesting," Lewis said. "It's been a learning experience."

Nicholson

Continued from Page 1

would like to see procedures put in place so when the bust comes, the city will be ready for it. She said she would also like to see the times of the commission meetings changed. She also advocates ward meetings. "We need to do anything we can do to get citizens involved and let the citizens know this is their town," Nicholson said. "We are here only to serve." "All I have to offer voters," Nicholson said, "is my willingness to serve and my dedication to making Pampa the very best it can be." She was born in Little Rock, Ark. After graduating from Whitehall High School near Pine Bluff, she went to work for the Social Security Administration. That took her to

Albuquerque, N.M., to Hobbs, N.M., Odessa and then Pampa. Nicholson earned a business administration degree from Wayland Baptist University while she was working for the SSA. "When I retired from Social Security," she said, "I got my nursing degree, a bachelor's of nursing, from what's now West Texas A&M University in Canyon." "There's something I'm very excited about," Nicholson said. "That's this new Working for Pampa group, headed up by Barbara Patrick." It's a volunteer group working with donated tools and equipment to clean parcels of land the city can't get around to, she said. She said she does a lot of volunteer work. She enjoys working with people and often helps friends with their Social Security paperwork, especially disability.

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Viewpoints

Idle American: In search of small blessings

Blessings, even small ones, seem harder to come by.

Winces are growing to wails, particularly at gas pumps. It's a blessing, though, that no matter the cost to fill our gas guzzlers, figures pale when compared to 747's. The tab to fill up for a flight to Asia is more than \$100,000.

And that's without topping it off. ...

Sympathies are extended to parents of prom go-ers. Putting the pencil to proper prom purchases perplexes; the total cost this year exceeds \$4 billion. (There are blessings if you happen to be on the "selling end" of the prom industry.)

The most "with it" kids are renting truck limos this

year at a tab of about \$2,000. Just a few decades ago, guys got new strings for their tennis shoes and begged to drive the "good car" to the prom. Gals wore borrowed gowns. And proms were in gyms. ...

Most of us claim mere "cuts to the chase" as blessings. (In case you're in the sub-par "yellow bird" reading group, you may wonder about the expression's origin. Read on. The term goes back to the days of silent movies, when most of them climaxed with chase scenes. Viewers, antsy to finish, urged projectionists to "cut to the chase.")

Aggies are experts in such cutting. Odessa minister Randy Duckett will take you to the mat on that. The

Alabama native loves to grow flowers. But he wasn't sure his green thumb was equal to the soil shock at his new home in the Permian Basin a decade ago. He sent a soil sample to Texas A&M University, seeking an Aggie's advice: "Move" was the one-

word answer.

Another Permian pulpiteer, Wayne Keller, short-answers questions about favorite technologies: "The 'off' button on the phone and the 'mute' button on the TV. ..."

For some people, slowing to the chase is an art form. But Amarillo's Victor Leal,

CEO of a Mexican restaurant chain and a member of the 24-member Texas Tax Reform Commission, thinks Chairman John Sharp is doing his best to explain proposed reforms.

On the House floor to introduce the bill, Sharp was asked by a representative to "explain it one more time, just for me. ..."

Finally, Sharp said, "I'll be happy to explain it to you, but I can't understand it for you."
Sharp, a product of Gulf Coast garden patches, says he ate so much boiled okra as a kid, he was full-grown before his socks would stay up. ...

I was in the "top of Texas" recently to commit a speech. I flew to Amarillo, sawing many logs at a hotel there at the end of a long day. Arising at the crack of 10:30, I proceeded to the car rental place to pick up a car for the short drive to Pampa.

Second in line, there clearly would be no chase cutting without serious intervention and possible sacrifice. A tearful woman was pleading for a car. Kirk, the rental car guy, repeatedly gave his "no more cars" spiel, no matter how vital it was for her to get to Lubbock. ...

"Give her my car," I interrupted. "But then you'll have no car," the rental man said. I knew we were lengthening

to the chase, so I repeated the offer, slowly and firmly.

She showered me with thanks, and was on her way. Now I was first in line. "What types of conveyances do you have today?" I asked.

"Sir, surely you heard me say that we have no more cars. All we have is a cargo van."
"That will do nicely - if you'll give me a good rate."

The young man, grateful that the crying woman had made her exit, quoted the economy car rate, less 30 percent. ...

I had asked around about Mexican food places, and that's where I met Leal, who serves up the best avocado enchiladas I ever lapped a lip over.

See IDLE, Page 5

Don Newbury
Columnist



Today in History

By The Associated Press

Today is Friday, May 5, the 125th day of 2006. There are 240 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On May 5, 1961, astronaut Alan B. Shepard Jr. became America's first space traveler as he made a 15-minute sub-orbital flight in a capsule launched from Cape Canaveral, Fla.

On this date:

In 1821, Napoleon Bonaparte died in exile on the island of St. Helena.

In 1862, Mexican forces loyal to Benito Juarez defeated French troops sent by Napoleon III in the Battle of Puebla.

In 1891, Carnegie Hall (then named "Music Hall") had its opening night in New York City.

In 1925, John T. Scopes was arrested in Tennessee for teaching Darwin's theory of evolution.

'Wars on nations change maps. War on poverty maps change.'

— Muhammad Ali
American boxing champion

In 1942, during World War II, Japanese forces landed on the Philippine island of Corregidor.

In 1955, West Germany became a sovereign state.

In 1955, the baseball musical "Damn Yankees" opened on Broadway.

In 1980, a siege at the Iranian embassy in London by armed men demanding the release of political prisoners in Iran ended as British commandos and police stormed the building. Nineteen hostages were rescued; two others had already been killed by their captors; four of the five hostage-takers were also killed.

In 1981, Irish Republican Army hunger-striker Bobby Sands died at the Maze Prison in Northern Ireland in his 66th day without food.

In 1985, President Reagan kept a promise to West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl by leading a wreath-laying ceremony at the military cemetery in Bitburg.

Ten years ago: Israel and the Palestinians began the final stage of their peace talks in Taba, Egypt. The FBI released preliminary figures showing that serious crimes reported to police fell for the fourth straight year in 1995.

Five years ago: Pope John Paul II became the first pope to visit Syria, where President Bashar Assad asked him to take the Arabs' side in their dispute with Israel, referring to what Assad described as Jewish persecution of Jesus Christ. Monarchs won the Kentucky Derby.

One year ago: Tony Blair won a historic third term as Britain's prime minister, but his Labour Party suffered a sharply reduced parliamentary majority. "Precious Doe," a slain girl mourned but unknown for four years in Kansas City, Mo., was identified as Erica Michelle Marie Green; her mother and stepfather were charged with murder.



Concentrate on top three things for life

What three things should most concern us? The Iraq War? The economy? This year's elections? The Israeli-Palestinian conflict? The Iranian nuclear program?

The answer is none of the above. The three things that should most concern us and every other human being are potable water, breathable air and topsoil. Those are the three essential components for human life. Lose any one of them and we'll see mass destruction that far exceeds the effects of any of our technological devices.

Those are three things that make our planet - alone, apparently, among all the others in our solar system - able to sustain life. Without air, you die in minutes; without water, in days; and without food, in weeks.

Not only has our urban life cut us off from direct contact with the land, but it has caused most of us to take for granted the three things,

the absence of which will destroy civilization. It's unfortunate that the superficial sophistry that passes for public discussion these days has relegated conservation to the epithets like "tree-huggers." We had better all be tree-huggers and environmentalists if we wish our posterity to survive.

Those ideological ignoramuses falsely labeled "conservatives" often scoff at the problem of population because they do not know the difference between land that will grow food crops and land that won't. Much of the land on this planet will not grow food crops because it's too steep or too dry or too wet. Thus, growing population plus loss of topsoil equals a train wreck about to happen in the not-too-distant

future.

One of the ancient writers remarked that a man could cross North Africa from the Atlantic to the Indian Ocean and never leave the shade of a tree. Try it now. North Africa is one of the great desert regions of the world. Closer to home, the part of the island on

which Haiti is located was once lush and tropical, but today it is an ecological disaster. People know how to convert good land into bad land. Strip the land of its plants, and erosion will eliminate your topsoil as well as silt up your rivers and coastal waters. There are no factories that make topsoil.

Many people today are as superstitious as any generation that ever lived. They

believe in the magic of technology. Oh, don't worry about that, technology will solve that problem. No, it won't. Much of technology is more enemy than friend because so much of it is devoted to destruction and to superficial things. You can't eat a computer or an iPod, and looping around the planet in a space shuttle contributes nothing to human survival.

Part of this problem is that too many people no longer know what the purpose of human life is. They've been sold on the idea that the purpose of life is to make money; that the measure of success is making money; that whatever helps someone to make more money is good, and whatever deters someone from making money is bad.

Thus, you get industrial agriculture instead of farms;

See REESE, Page 5

Charley Reese
Columnist



Texas Thoughts

By The Associated Press

A sample of editorial opinion around Texas:

■ April 24

Fort Worth Star-Telegram on school finance:

The Texas House is in the process of hijacking the plan advanced by Gov. Rick Perry and former state Comptroller John Sharp as a way to solve problems with the unconstitutional school finance system.

Bills scheduled for debate in the House today would allow the state's wealthiest school districts to raise millions of dollars more than poor districts and would block future revenues from a new Perry-Sharp business tax from being used to improve schools, dedicat-

ing the money to property tax cuts instead.

That's not what Perry advocated - at least publicly - as the Legislature prepared to convene its current special session April 17. With help from Sharp, the governor pushed his plan to modernize the state's main business tax, raise levies on cigarettes and other tobacco products and plug loopholes in the motor vehicle tax. He said that the first goal for lawmakers was to use that revenue to meet a state Supreme Court mandate to fix the school finance system by June 1.

Perry and Sharp talked about their plan as one that would not only allow school property taxes to be cut by one-third now but also would provide a source of revenue that would grow with

the state's economy and meet the growing needs of schools in the future. The House plan - backed up by a rule narrowly adopted after raucous debate on Friday, prohibiting most amendments - would snare all of that money for tax relief only.

Perry and Sharp focused on the Supreme Court's ruling, but House leaders have gone far beyond that. They are proposing a bill to scuttle part of the Robin Hood school finance plan under which the state has operated since 1993. The bill would allow wealthy school districts to raise some local tax money that would not be subject to the "recapture" requirement of the Robin Hood plan - meaning that

See SCHOOL, Page 5

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Idle

Continued from Page 4

He was brimful of optimism, mentioning how pleased he is that his parents decided to "plunge into business" with a restaurant in Muleshoe

back in 1957. Their options were to open the business, or pay down on a home.

"Life is pretty much what we make it," he said. "We can choose to be victors or victims."

And you can guess the CEO's choice. (He insists that the letters stand for Chief Enchilada Officer. ...)

Soon, it was time to leave for Pampa. I opened the van door, then retreated several steps to get a running start. Grabbing the steering wheel, I catapulted into the driver's seat, up there in the nosebleed section.

I considered hiring out for afternoon floral delivery. Pampa folks said I was the only speaker to arrive there in a cargo van, decked out in a tuxedo.

The country club manager offered a step stool for van re-entry. On the way back to Amarillo, I thought of three speeches — the one I had prepared, the one I had made and the one I wished I'd made. Alas, again I had failed to cut to the chase. But, I was grateful for the day's blessings, and wondered if the woman made it to Lubbock in time. ...

Dr. Newbury is a speaker and author whose weekly column appears in 125 newspapers in six states.

Reese

Continued from Page 4

corporate monopolies instead of family-owned businesses; mass production of junk and usury instead of permanent things and frugal lifestyles; speculation in paper instead of investment in real businesses; and massive pollution of the sea, the ground water, the rivers and the air.

Our civilization is a lot more fragile than most people suppose. We ignore agriculture because the supermarkets are full of food, but instead of that food being grown on nearby farms, it is all transported long distances. What will happen to the price of that food when the cost of oil, which is a diminishing resource, breaks the \$100 barrier? You really wouldn't want to be in New York City two weeks after food shipments had been halted, or if food becomes a luxury available only to the rich.

A good start toward changing direction from destruction to preservation would be to turn off the political babble and go buy a book by Wendell Berry. He's the wisest man in America at this time.

Write to Charley Reese at P.O. Box 2446, Orlando, FL 32802.

School

Continued from Page 4

they would not have to share that revenue with poor districts. The effect of that change would be profound in a statewide public school financing system that still lacks proper funding. A penny on the tax rate of a wealthy district like Highland Park raises more than \$120 per student. Poor districts get only the state-guaranteed support of \$27.14 per student for each penny on their tax rate. Along with other provisions of the school finance plan that already give some advantage to wealthy districts, the House bill would allow a district like Highland Park to easily raise more than \$1 million more for a typical elementary school than a poor district could raise.

No voters in any school district would allow their school board to give an elementary school on the west side of town a \$1 million advantage over a comparable school on the east side of town. Neither should the people of Texas — or the members of the Texas House — allow such inequity in the financing of public schools in different parts of the state.

These House bills must not pass as written. Perry must not allow the plan that he has pushed so strongly to be steered so far astray.

The governor has said repeatedly that after the Supreme Court mandate is met, he would consider opening the call of this special session to measures that would improve Texas schools. He also has said that he favors an increase in teacher pay.

If he sits on his hands now and allows the House to hijack his tax plan, there will be little reason to believe that he will do anything that is good for public schools.

Events calendar

Habitat For Horses, Inc., is in the area distributing horse feed, hay, medical and barn supplies. The volunteer organization will continue to organize feed and hay drives to the fire damaged area and coordinate distribution centers as needed. For more information, call (866) 434-5737 or (806) 681-5858.

Pampa High School Class of 1956 needs help locating the following students: Aurelia (Adams) Gallaher, Beverly (Bonnell) Carruth, Andrena (Chisum) Greasby, Bobbie Jean Lindley, Dorothy Payne, Zona (Ruttman) McNeely, Velda Thompson and Bill Weatherford. Contact Glenda Malone at 665-4563 with any information.

Pioneer Days Rodeo in Guymon, Okla., will be staged today, Saturday and Sunday at Henry C. Hitch Pioneer Arena. Planned in conjunction with the rodeo is a carnival Saturday; a parade at 10:30 a.m. Saturday; a mercantile Saturday and Sunday; Coors Rodeo dances today and Saturday; and more. For further details, log onto www.guymonrodeo.com on the Internet.

Carson County Historical Commission will meet Monday after its board of trustees meeting at approximately 8 p.m. in the Hazlewood Building of Carson County Square House Museum in Panhandle. Reports of activities will be made and future projects discussed. The meeting is open to the public.

Armstrong County Extension will host a Wheat Tour starting at 10 a.m. Tuesday at Troy Skarke's test plot west of

Claude. The tour will be worth two CEUs. Featured speakers will be Dr. Brent Bean and Dr. Carl Patrick. For more information, contact the local Extension office.

Top of Texas Wheels Xtravaganza will be staged from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. May 13 at Tradewind Airport in Amarillo. The event will showcase a variety of specialty vehicles and include live demonstrations, a children's choo choo train, a live auction, exhibits and more. For more information or to enter a vehicle in the show, call (806) 374-0055 or log onto www.amarillocorvetteclub.com on the Internet.

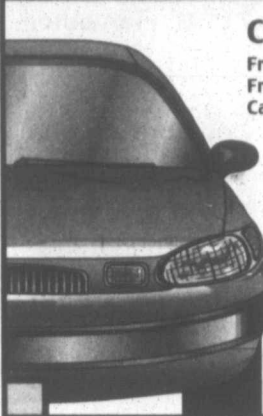
Clarendon College-Pampa Center will offer a nursing assistant course May 15-June 10 in Room 106 of the college. Students may choose between an afternoon or an evening class. The class is given to prepare the student to take the state certified nursing assistant exam. The overall cost for the class is \$320 with an additional \$75 fee for the state exam. Participants must have a current CPR certificate. A CRP training will be conducted from 8 a.m.-5 p.m. May 20 for an additional \$35 for those whose certifications aren't current. For more information or to register, contact the college at 665-8801.

Clarendon College-Pampa Center will offer a one-day basic life support CPR class from 8 a.m.-5 p.m. May 20 in Room 106 of the college. The instructor will be Sharron Rust, RN. The class is worth 0.8 CEU. The class fee will be \$35. For more information or to register, call the college at 665-8801.

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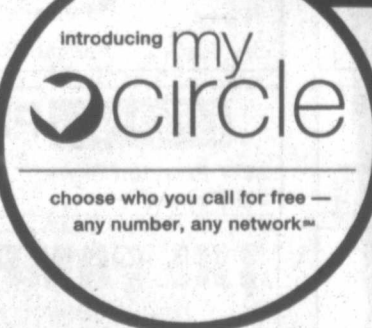
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**JESUS CHRIST, THE SAME
YESTERDAY, TODAY, AND FOREVER
HEBREWS 13:8**

Religion

Zion Lutheran plans Big Z Barbecue

Zion Lutheran Church, 1200 Duncan, is gearing up for its annual Big Z Barbecue and Silent Auction slated from 5-7 p.m. Saturday at the church. The event will also include a "country store."

Many local businesses donated items for the auction. Proceeds will raise funds for projects and community service programs.

Tickets are \$4 for adults and \$3.50 for children if purchased in advance. At the door, tickets will be \$8 for adults and \$4 for children. For more information or to purchase tickets, call the church office at 669-2774.



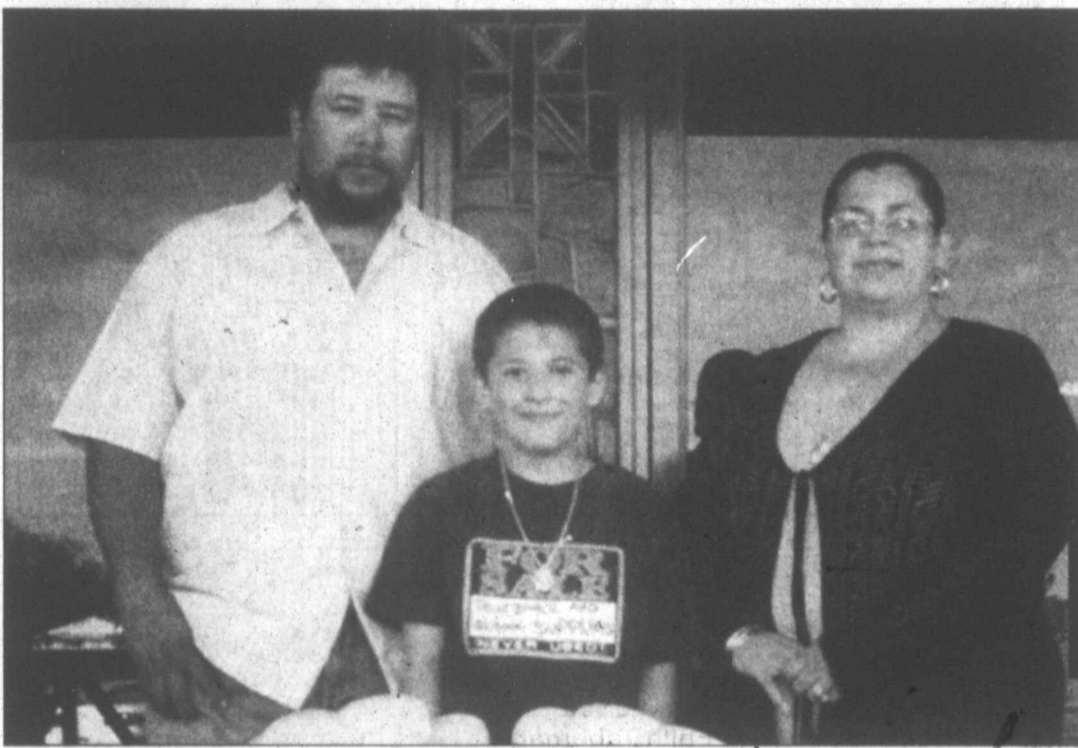
Scott Beyer, left, and Jeff Beyer tend a brisket prepared "barbecue style" for Zion Lutheran Church of Pampa. Zion Lutheran will hold its annual Big Z Barbecue and Silent Auction between 5 and 7 p.m. Saturday at the church.

**CHILDREN'S
CHOIR MUSICAL
GRADES 1-5**

**RACE
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Sunday, May 7
6:00 P.M.

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Raffle winners



◀ The Lopez family — Max, Mary Lou and Max Jr. — was all smiles recently after winning the Edge and Life Teen Raffle at St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Parish recently. The junior high and high school youth groups raffled off a set of God's Hands with the Blessed Mother nestled in them. The proceeds from the raffle will be used to fund a youth trip to Steubenville West in Tuscon, Ariz., in July. Funds are still needed to help defray the cost of the trip. To make a tax deductible donation, contact the church office at 665-8933, or Pam Zemanek at 665-6347.

"A Mighty Fortress Is Our God"

We think of Martin Luther as a great reformer, Bible translator, political leader, fiery preacher, and theologian. But he was also a musician, often borrowing popular secular melodies for his hymns. His tunes were occasionally criticized because they were too closely associated with bars and taverns. Luther's most famous hymn is "Ein, feste Burg ist unser Gott" - "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God." Based on Psalm 46, it reflects Luther's awareness of our intense struggle with Satan. This was a difficult hymn to translate because the original German is so vivid, and at least 80 English versions are available.

Ref: Robert J. Morgan

This hymn history brought to you by



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CETA CANYON

UMC Ministry offers Christian camps

Ceta Canyon Camp and Retreat Center, a United Methodist Church Ministry and a Christian Camp and Conference Association member camp, is located on 316 acres of land by Ceta Creek near Happy.

The center offers motel style accommodations with VIP apartment and multiple meeting areas, dormitory-style cabins and meeting rooms, a multipurpose dining hall, a tabernacle, a prayer chapel, a pool, a recreation center, RV sites and hookups, and outdoor group sites.

The camp is home to waterfalls and offers many hiking opportunities. Rappelling workshops are offered as well as beach volleyball and more.

The center is used by many organizations and churches.

The 2006 schedule of summer camps is as follows:

June 12-16. "New Dawn." (Camp designed for mentally challenged adults.)

June 19-23. "One Way Grades, 8-9."

June 26-30. "One Way Grades Sr., 10-12."

July 3-7. "One Way Grades, 4 & 5."

July 10-14. "One Way Grades, 6-7."

July 17-21. "Vision Grades 10, 11 & 12" and "Whoz-We-R Grades 4, 5, & 6."

July 24-28. "Crossroads Grades 7, 8 & 9."

The camps cost \$160 apiece if registered before May 15. After this deadline, the cost is \$180.

To find out more about the center or the camps, call (806) 488-2268.

Church briefs

First Presbyterian Church will present the program "Planning a Service that Expresses Your Wishes," the final installment of a three-part series titled "Confronting the Seriousness of the Future," this Sunday after regular morning services at the church.

The class will be presented by Roy King, a retired Christian minister. Nancy Ruff and Doug Carmichael will also be present to answer questions.

A spaghetti meal will be served to participants. Guests are welcome. For more information, call 665-1031.

Rushing Wind Emmaus will meet at 6 p.m. May 13 at First United Methodist Church in Spearman. Those attending are asked to bring a special dish for a potluck meal at 6 p.m. in fellowship hall of the church. Training for new sponsors will be conducted at 6:30 p.m. fol-

lowed by a praise and worship service.



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Dear Abby...

By Pauline & Jeanne Phillips

DEAR ABBY: After being single for several years, I met the man of my dreams. "Chet" was everything I was searching for. We have become very close, and I'd trust him with my life. For nearly a year our relationship has been bliss. Chet seems to be completely devoted to me. He told me when we first met that his wife had died seven years ago from diabetes. He seemed upset at the memory of her loss, and I never pressed him for more details. He wears a lock of her hair braided to his, and I never really thought much about it. Well, Chet took me "home" for the Easter holiday. Some things were casually said in passing, and his story began to unravel. After I got home I accessed public records and found in place of a death certificate, a judgment for divorce in 2001! I couldn't believe that Chet would lie to me. I felt such a deep connection to him. When I confronted him about it, he told me that to him, she IS dead. He says he never looks back, only forward, and that he didn't want to discuss it further. When I brought up the trust issue, he said he had never cheated on me or been with another woman -- completely ignoring the fact he'd lied. I could understand his wearing his deceased wife's hair -- but his divorced wife's? Now he says it isn't her hair; it's hair he bought and he likes the way it looks. Then why did he tell me it was his wife's hair? I want more than anything to get past this because we really are good together. Please help me. -- **DAZED IN DENVER**

DEAR DAZED: Your confusion is understandable, but for your own sake you must open your eyes and see clearly. The man you would trust with your life is someone who dwells in his own reality; he bends the truth for his own convenience. Your relationship may feel warm and cozy, but you can't believe a word the man says -- and my advice to you is to double-check EVERYTHING he has told you. Your boyfriend appears to be a compulsive liar, and if you are wise, you will end the relationship

before you get sucked in any further. You fell in love with the person he portrayed himself to be, but it's not who he really is at all.

DEAR ABBY: Our 24-year-old son was killed recently in an auto accident. We had long dreaded that his life might end like this. He had a history of many traffic tickets and a terrible driving record. He had totaled three vehicles in the last three years. The wreck that killed him was his fourth accident in three years. We have discovered that our son's grandmother took out a large life insurance policy on him after the first accident. Thinking that his own grandmother would "bet" on his death has made our grief even harder to bear. At first, when we confronted her, she said she had taken out the policy to ensure his proper burial because we have no money. (My wife was diagnosed with cancer 3 1/2 years ago, and the treatment left us destitute.) The policy is many times the cost of our son's funeral. When the funeral director asked my wife and me in the presence of other relatives (including his grandmother), if there was a life insurance policy to defray the expenses, I turned and looked at her. She didn't utter a word! We borrowed the money from my wife's brother. We don't want a penny of this "blood money" for ourselves or our son's burial. But now our son's grandmother is acting very hostile to us. We feel she saw our son's bad driving record and thought she had a chance to profit from his death. Are we wrong? -- **BROKENHEARTED PARENTS IN TEXAS**

DEAR BROKENHEARTED: You have my sympathy not only for the loss of your son, but also the loss of your illusions about his grandmother. People who feel guilty often act hostile. Unless there is something you failed to mention in your letter, it appears you have assessed the grandmother's motives correctly.

For Better Or For Worse



Zits



Garfield



Beetle Bailey



Marvin



Crossword Puzzle

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

- 1 Produce group
- 5 Fast planes
- 9 Not quite straight
- 11 Post-workout woes
- 13 "That's a lie!"
- 14 Canine, e.g.
- 15 Business abbr.
- 16 Ordinance
- 18 1950s Secretary of State
- 20 "Aw, shucks!"
- 21 Like Poe tales
- 22 "Believe" singer
- 23 Opposite of "oui"
- 24 Trendy
- 25 Uses a ray-gun
- 27 Pens for hens
- 29 Swearing in oath
- 30 Dennis Weaver role
- 32 Painter Jackson
- 34 Whopper

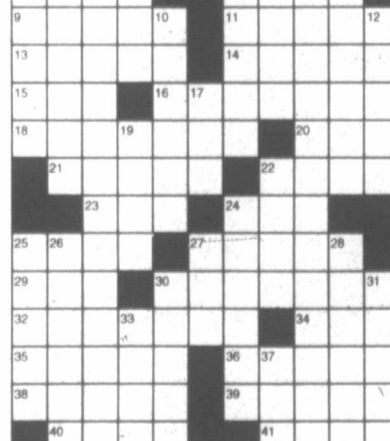


Yesterday's answer

- 6 Glasgow native
- 7 Orwellian officers
- 8 Sofa's kin
- 10 Include
- 12 Very thin
- 17 Sock part
- 19 Amorous archer
- 22 Fan
- 24 Pawed
- 25 Close, as
- 41 Last letters, in London
- 26 Beautiful boy
- 27 New Deal org.
- 28 Appropriate
- 30 Calendar page
- 31 Actions
- 33 Pirate's take
- 37 Designer Claiborne

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Sports Day

Suns force game 7 against Lakers with OT win, 126-118

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Tim Thomas spent most of the regular season in a strange state of limbo.

Thomas has been a member of the Phoenix Suns for two months after spending most of the season at home. Without him, their season would probably be over.

Thomas made two huge 3-pointers, Boris Diaw and Shawn Marion each scored six points in overtime, and the Suns beat the Los Angeles Lakers 126-118 Thursday night to force a Game 7 in the first-round Western Conference playoff series.

Thomas signed with the Suns on March 3, two days after being waived by the Chicago Bulls, who acquired the 29-year-old forward from the New York Knicks last summer. Thomas played only three games with the Bulls. After complaining about his role, he was told to leave the team.

Thomas has been a perfect fit for the Suns, who have been playing without injured big men Amare Stoudemire and Kurt Thomas.

Kobe Bryant scored all but one of the Lakers' 13 points in overtime, and finished with a career-playoff high 50. But it was all for naught, and now, the much-anticipated Battle of L.A. is in jeopardy.

Game 7 will be played Saturday night in Phoenix, where the second-seeded Suns beat the Lakers 114-97 to send the series back to Los

Angeles for Game 6. The home team has a 75-17 advantage in NBA playoff Game 7s.

"Our place is going to be crazy on Saturday," Thomas said.

"We know it's going to be a tough game at home," said Steve Nash, who led the Suns with 32 points and 13 assists. "We feel like we're better at home. Our team feels good with the opportunity to play for the series."

In other playoff action Thursday night, New Jersey beat Indiana 96-90 and Miami downed Chicago 113-96. The Heat and Nets will meet in the second round of the playoffs after winning their Eastern Conference first-round series in six games.

Thomas forced the overtime by making a 3-pointer with 6.3 seconds left in the fourth quarter. Bryant, the hero in Game 4, tried for another winner at the buzzer, but Marion got a piece of the ball and it fell short of the basket.

"It was a normal shot," Thomas said. "I had missed the last two. It felt good when it left my hands. I wasn't concerned about the atmosphere."

Lakers coach Phil Jackson said he thought his team did a good job defending at the 3-point line until the shot by Thomas.

"Both teams shot exceptionally well and played a lot of good offensive basketball," Jackson said. "But that

is their style, and we need to do a lot better job of playing our style on Saturday. For them, it would be a terrific comeback. For us, it would be a monumental upset."

The Suns shot 56.8 percent to the Lakers' 55.3 percent. Los Angeles won the rebounding battle 39-31, but committed 20 turnovers to 14 for Phoenix.

Two baskets by Diaw and another by Marion gave the Suns a 113-109 lead with 2 1/2 minutes remaining in overtime, and Thomas' 3-pointer with 1:41 left put Phoenix ahead by seven. The Lakers weren't closer than five points after that.

"I felt the Lakers were tight down the stretch," Thomas said. "They don't have too many guys with experience in these types of situations. They wouldn't take the shots; they kept passing to Kobe."

The winner of the series will face the Clippers, co-tenants of Staples Center with the Lakers. Two teams from Los Angeles have never met in postseason play in the NBA, NFL or major league baseball.

Leonardo Barbosa, starting for the suspended Raja Bell, scored 22 points for Phoenix. Thomas had 21 points and 10 rebounds, Marion had 20 points and 12 rebounds, and Diaw added 19 points and seven assists.

Bell was suspended for one game after clotheslining Bryant in Game 5.

Astros nip Cards again, 4-3

HOUSTON (AP) — Lance Berkman hit a two-run homer and Willy Taveras had a go-ahead RBI single to lead the Houston Astros to a 4-3 win over the St. Louis Cardinals and Cy Young winner Chris Carpenter on Thursday night.

The Astros are 19-9 through 28 games, the best start in franchise history, while the Cardinals have lost four straight, their longest losing streak since 2004.

Houston lefty Andy Pettitte (2-4), who had lost three straight decisions, allowed seven hits and three runs in 6 2-3 innings.

Carpenter (3-2) was 4-0 in five starts against Houston last year, with two complete games and one shutout. On Thursday, the right-hander gave up six hits and four runs and struck out four in six innings.

Houston closer Brad Lidge put two men on in the ninth, but worked out of the jam by getting pinch-hitter Gary Bennett to ground into a force out. Lidge has 11 saves in 13 opportunities.

Albert Pujols, who leads the majors with 15 home runs, went 0-for-4.

Then Berkman's opposite field homer to left in the fourth scored Taveras and tied the game at 2. It was the 11th home run of the year for Berkman, who leads the league in RBIs (36).

Taveras gave Houston its first lead of the night when his single scored Adam Everett in the fifth inning.

In the sixth, Morgan Ensberg got on with a double and scored when Jason Lane's high popup dropped right in the middle of Hector Luna, Pujols and Juan Encarnacion for a single.

Rangers' Millwood silences Baltimore

ARLINGTON, Texas (AP) — Kevin Millwood pitched a four-hitter for Texas' first complete game this season, and the Rangers got home runs from Mark Teixeira and Kevin Mench to win their sixth straight with an 8-2 victory over the Baltimore Orioles on Thursday night.

Millwood (3-2) struck out one and walked two in his best performance with his new team. He threw 69 of his 99 pitches for strikes.

Teixeira hit a two-run homer and Mench a solo shot. Every starter had at least one hit for the AL West-leading Rangers, who won for the 11th time in 14 games but lost Brad Wilkerson to a mild concussion after he crashed into the outfield wall.

After rookie shortstop

Brandon Fahey opened the game with a single, Millwood retired eight in a row before walking Fahey in the third. The Orioles didn't get another hit until Corey Patterson and Chris Gomez had consecutive singles to start the eighth. Nick Markakis drove in a run with a grounder.

Jay Gibbons homered in the ninth.

Millwood threw one complete game last year with Cleveland on Aug. 27 at Toronto. The reigning AL ERA champion signed a \$60 million, five-year contract with Texas during the offseason.

Rangers starters haven't lost in the last 17 games, going 7-0.

Baltimore has lost nine of 12.

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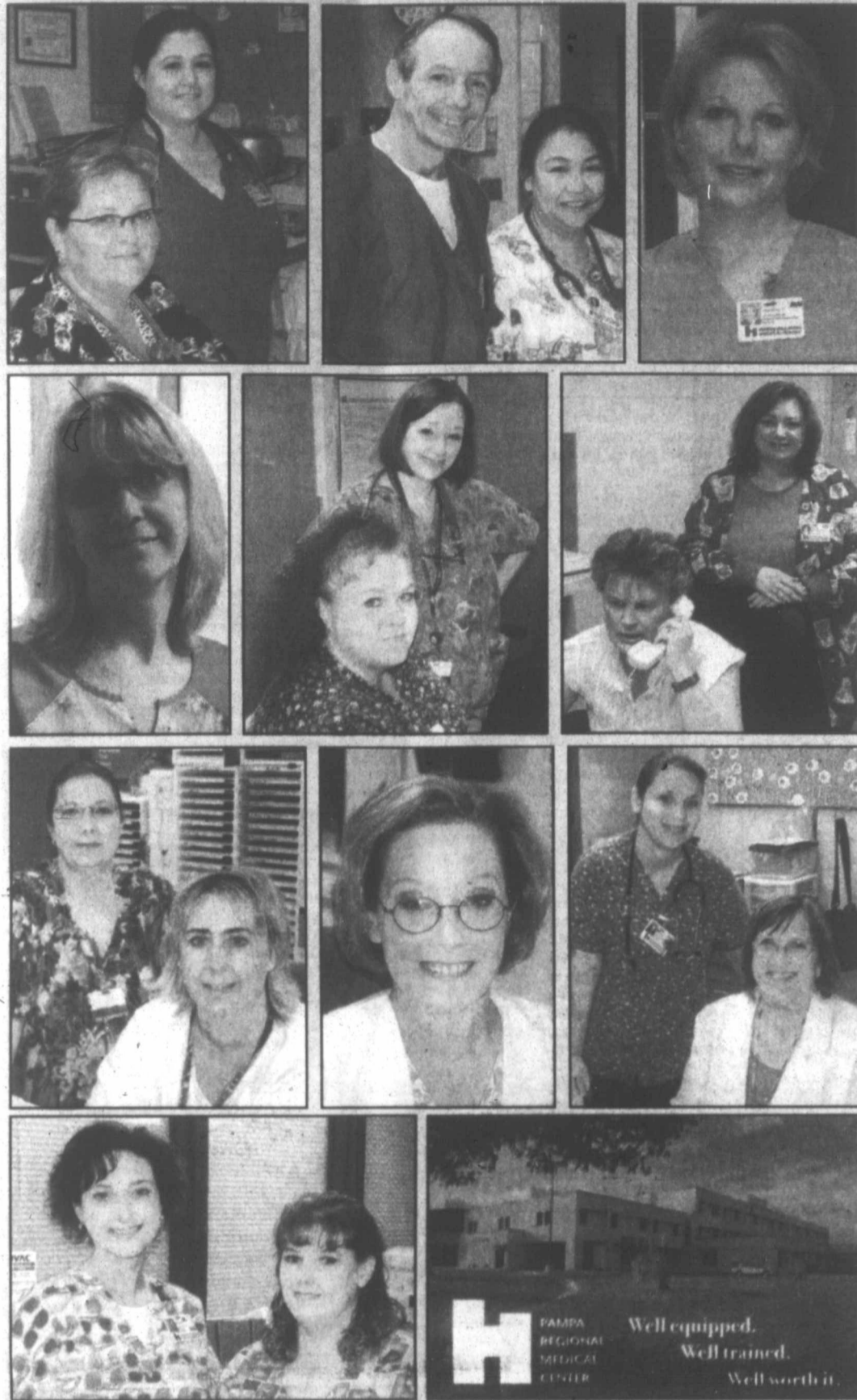
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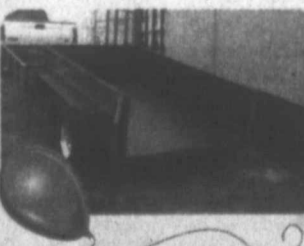
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