



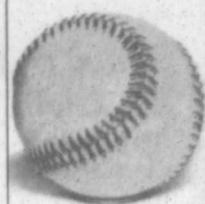
Tomorrow's Weather

HIGH 48 LOW 32

See expanded weather on Page 2

Harvester Softball

Pampa takes lead in District 3-4A. SEE PAGE 7



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THE PAMPA NEWS

Wednesday, April 4, 2007

Volume 102 • No. 308

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Current school dress code said difficult to enforce

By MARILYN POWERS Staff Writer

One thing several participants in Tuesday evening's public hearing agreed on is that Pampa independent School District's dress code is difficult to enforce.

About one-fourth of the 20 who attended the hearing addressed the committee formed to examine the current dress code and formulate a recommendation to the school board concerning the code.

"As a teacher responsible for trying to enforce the dress code on the 8th grade hall, it is nearly impossible," one woman said.

"I can walk down the 8th grade hall every morning and pick out at least 75 boys with sagging pants,"

she said. "How do I enforce that?"

Others commented on the subjectivity of some of the code's rules, including what is objectionable to different individuals.

Several agreed that the code needed to be changed, although the type of change varied widely.

"I'm in favor of either standardized dress or uniforms," one woman said.

"Kids are more concerned about what they're wearing than what's going on in the classroom. It's a big distraction." She said that if standardized dress or uniforms were

adopted, "you won't be able to distinguish between the haves and the have-nots."

One attendee asked who would furnish the uniforms. PISD Superintendent Barry Haenisch and PISD board member Derrell DeLoach said they were unsure if the school district would pay for the uniforms if chosen.

"Parents don't realize kids leave for school dressed one way but are in school dressed another way," one

See DRESS, Page 3

Sam Houston nearly gone



Pampa News Photo by KERRI SMITH

The old Sam Houston elementary school is no longer. Demolition is complete on the building and now the debris is being hauled off. The school board has not yet decided what to do with the property once it is cleared.

Wheat Producers seeking applicants for board

The Texas Wheat Producers Board (TWPB) biennial election began March 26 and will continue through April 10th. Any person qualified to vote may pick up a ballot at the county agricultural extension service office, the county Farm Service Agency (FSA) office, or at their local elevator.

Ballots must be mailed to the polling place at 5405 I-40 West, Amarillo, Texas 79106, with a postmark on or before April 10.

This year, the six-year term of five of the current 15 board members will expire.

Board members are responsible for the allocation of funds from a statewide wheat producer assessment of two cents per bushel.

These funds are applied to wheat research, education and market development. The Texas Agricultural Commodity Referendum Law prohibits such funds from being used for lobbying or legislative efforts.

Board members' terms expiring in 2007 include District I: Cagle Kendrick of Stratford; District II: Tommy Womack of Tulia; District III: Fred Dwyer of Wichita Falls; District IV: Ken Davis of Grandview; and Jack Norman of Howe. All of these board members are eligible for re-election.

Any person living within the following counties who is engaged in the business of producing, or causing to be produced, wheat for commer-

cial purposes, is eligible to vote and/or have their name on the ballot. This includes owners of farms and their tenants and sharecroppers, if such person is subject to paying the assessment that is collected on a refund-only basis on wheat within the following counties:

District I: Dallam, Sherman, Ochiltree, Lipscomb, Hansford, Roberts, Moore, Hartley, Hutchinson

See WHEAT, Page 3

3 new firefighters join force at Pampa Fire Dept.

By KERRI SMITH Staff Writer

Three new firefighters have joined the Pampa crew in the last six months. These new young men, who are all 21 and single, bring with them enthusiasm and a desire to learn all they can about fighting fires and helping residents in need.

Jason Brown is the newest man on the squad, being there for one month. He grew up in Pampa and graduated from Pampa High School in 2004. He said no one in his family

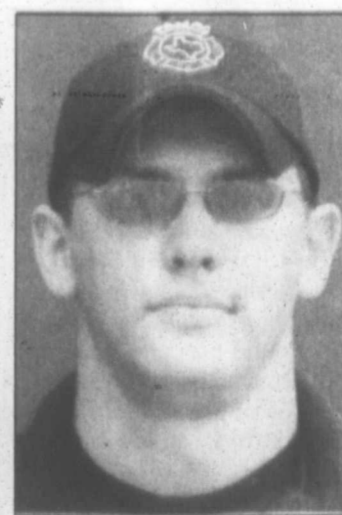
has ever been a firefighter, but it is something he always wanted to do.

"After I graduated from high school, I decided to attend Amarillo College for an associate's degree in fire protection technology," Brown said. "I really enjoyed these classes and made the decision to stop going to AC and attend the fire academy at Texas A&M. I wanted to become a firefighter first and then figured I could go back to

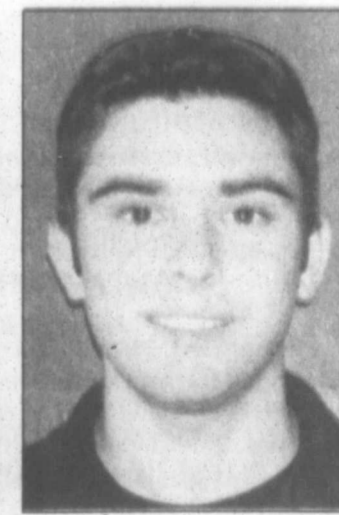
See PFD, Page 3



Brown



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Viewpoints

Making sense: Bill Clinton weakened America

Recently Rep. Duncan Hunter, former chairman of the House Armed Services Committee and now its ranking Republican member, appeared on the Hannity and Colmes show on Fox, and I was astonished to hear him castigated for failing to see that our troops in Iraq needed equipment.

He was specifically challenged on the matter of the alleged lack of body armor for our troops in Iraq, and the administration's alleged failure to ensure that our troops had the protection the armor affords them.

Ignored were certain inconvenient facts such as the amount of body armor that was available under Bill Clinton, which was zero. Today under President Bush and thanks to Duncan

Hunter's work in the Armed Services Committee, which authorized the funds to purchase the body armor, the armed services have one million sets of body armor. That's one million!

It's puzzling to see the media ignore the disastrous cutbacks in our armed services that took place under Bill Clinton, and the extraordinary efforts of the Bush administration and Hunter's committee to beef up our military.

Under Clinton, for example, the number of armored Humvees available to the military was a pitiful 1,300. Under President Bush it's over 26,000.

And it was not just Clinton who sapped our strength — Congress under the Democrats has just

turned thumbs down on the Pentagon's request for \$4.75 billion for the mine-resistant, ambush-protected vehicles that can safeguard our troops from the IED explosions which are responsible for a large part of the deaths and wounding of our soldiers and Marines.

Instead of funding that vital request in the \$124 billion supplemental bill passed recently, the Democrats were able to find billions for such things as subsidies for spinach farmers and the shrimp industry, but not a dime for a vehicle that could save the lives of thousands of our troops in Iraq.

It's instructive to look at what happened to the 1st Cavalry Division under Bill Clinton and what its strength is today under George Bush.

In 2000, the division had three brigades — MIA2 (base-design Abrams tanks, Bradley A2 (base-design tanks) — the situational awareness of the battlefield was provided solely by soldiers on the ground calling in spot reports, communications were by line-of-sight radio, there was no armor protection for Humvees, there was no connectivity between services, and the brigades had a mere 1,600 radios.

In 2006, however, the

division had four brigades with more maneuver-capable companies. They had the MIA2 System Enhancement Package including improved armor, independent thermal sights, and embedded digital command systems. Their Bradley A3 tanks had improved armor, and embedded digital command systems. Battlefield situational awareness was enhanced by unmanned aerial reconnaissance vehicles (UAVs) integrated by Army Battle Command Systems (Network Centric Warfare). Communications were by a digital command-and-control network, including satellites. All Tactical Wheeled Vehicles off the forward operating bases were to be armored and radios in a Brigade numbered 2,500.

The fact is that this president, along with Duncan Hunter and others, sought to give the military all the equipment they need because when they came in there was no equipment thanks to the skeltonizing of our armed forces under Bill Clinton.

Under Bill Clinton, we heard such horror stories as our soldiers and sailors going without essential training because equipment was broken and there were no parts to fix it. There were reports of maintenance crews "cannibalizing" other pieces of equipment to make Band-Aid repairs on equipment that had worn out.

One observer warned that because no new tanks were

See REAGAN, Page 5

Michael Reagan
Columnist



Today in History

By The Associated Press

Today is Wednesday, April 4, the 94th day of 2007. There are 271 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On April 4, 1968, civil rights leader the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., 39, was assassinated in Memphis, Tenn.

On this date:

In 1818, Congress decided the U.S. flag would consist of 13 red and white stripes and 20 stars, with a new star to be added for every new state of the Union.

In 1841, President William Henry Harrison succumbed to pneumonia one month after his inaugural, becoming the first U.S. chief executive to die in office.

In 1850, the city of Los Angeles was incorporated.

In 1887, Susanna Madora Salter became the first woman elected mayor of an American community: Argonia, Kan.

In 1902, British financier Cecil Rhodes left \$10 million in his will to provide scholarships for

Americans, British colonists and Germans at Oxford University.

In 1945, during World War II, U.S. troops on Okinawa encountered the first significant resistance from Japanese forces at the Machinato Line.

In 1949, 12 nations, including the U.S., signed the North Atlantic Treaty.

In 1975, more than 130 people, most of them children, were killed when a U.S. Air Force transport plane evacuating Vietnamese orphans crashed shortly after takeoff from Saigon.

In 1981, Henry Cisneros became the first Mexican-American elected mayor of a major U.S. city: San Antonio.

In 1983, the space shuttle Challenger roared into orbit on its maiden voyage.

Ten years ago: Space shuttle Columbia blasted off from Cape Canaveral, Fla., on what was supposed to have been a 16-day mission — however, a defective power generator forced the shuttle's return four days later.

Five years ago: President Bush urged Israel to pull its troops back from Palestinian cities and dismissed Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat as a failed leader who had "betrayed the hopes of his people." Bush ordered Secretary of State Colin Powell to the region to seek a cease-fire. Two teenagers were sentenced to long prison terms in the murders of Dartmouth College professors Half and Susanne Zantop. (Robert Tulloch received life without parole; James Parker was sentenced to 25 years to life as an accomplice.)

'You can kill a man but you can't kill an idea.'

— Medgar Evers
American civil rights activist (1926-1963)



Free speech must not be trumped by law

From time to time, it is good to remember that a free society means that everyone may form his own opinions and express them even if we disagree with them or even find them "offensive."

Gen. Peter Pace, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, expressed a personal opinion recently that homosexual acts are immoral. The homosexual lobby and most of the television news folks went berserk. Some demanded an apology, which, to the general's credit, was not made.

Whether you think homosexual acts are immoral depends on which system of morality you believe in. Certainly the traditional Judeo-Christian code of morality considered them to be immoral, as do the moral teachings of Islam. Any American who believes in those codes is free to say so unapologetically.

I put quotation marks around the word "offensive" because I don't believe any opinion or belief can be truly offensive. Being "offended" by something someone says is used mainly as a propa-

ganda tool in the hopes of silencing debate, especially if what is said is true. Well, the Bill of Rights does not protect any of us from being offended.

Another propaganda tool even more dangerous is labeling some opinions as "hate speech." While some states and localities have adopted hate-speech laws, Americans should vigorously oppose the attempt, especially on the federal level.

In a free society, even speech deliberately designed

to inspire hatred must be protected. One is not entitled to incite riots or to libel or slander another person. Those traditional limits on speech are all we need.

Some countries in Europe have made it a crime to deny the Holocaust or even to quibble over some details of it. The excuse is that such denial or quibbling is "hate speech." Well, this is as wrong as it can be. The Holocaust is a well-documented fact, but if people wish to deny it or quibble over the details, so what? Historians revise history all the time. People everywhere believe some things that are not true. If it becomes a crime just to be mistaken, then a majority of the popu-

lations of most of the world's countries will be in jail.

In fact, one English wit observed that while God cannot change the past, historians do it all the time. Nevertheless, truth needs freedom, not the protection of the police, courts and prison system. In fact, making it a crime to question the Holocaust has, in my judgment, the opposite effect than the law's intention. It makes it seem that there is something to hide. To prohibit people from investigating or questioning anything is a totalitarian concept. Truth needs no such protection as long as people are free to debate and to apply reason.

In fact, that is the philosophical justification for free speech. The Founding

See REESE, Page 5

Charley Reese
Columnist



THE PAMPA NEWS

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Texas Thoughts

By The Associated Press

A sample of editorial opinion around Texas:

■ **March 26**
Austin American-Statesman on control of the Texas Youth Commission:

As the Legislature sorts through the wreckage of the Texas Youth Commission, it ought to reconsider its initial rejection of Gov. Rick Perry's proposal to install a single commissioner to run the agency rather than appoint a new board.

Under current law, the agency is governed by a commission of six members nominated by the governor and confirmed by the Texas Senate. The commission hires the executive director and oversees the agency.

Commission members are part-time volunteers.

When the scandal broke last month, determining who was responsible for what had gone wrong within the agency quickly disappeared into a maze of government and bureaucratic lines. Executive Director Dwight Harris suddenly retired. The governor took the commission's chairmanship away from one member and gave it to another. Finally, all six commission members, each a Perry appointee, were forced to resign.

Perry has proposed replacing the commission panel with a single commissioner nominated by the governor and confirmed by the Senate to serve a two-year term. A similar arrangement is in place for the Health and Human

Services agency, the Texas Department of Education and the Texas Department of Insurance.

The big advantage to having a single commissioner is clarity on who is responsible for the agency's performance. It's also clear who hired that person.

It's true a single commissioner would boost the governor's direct influence over the youth agency. But when problems erupt at a state agency, the public tends to hold the governor responsible for dealing with it, and the governor ought to have some power to meet that responsibility.


In addition, with a single commissioner, the Legislature would know

See TYC, Page 5

Rotary Club



Lou Ann Humpries, above, was a guest speaker, along with Mike Giesler, both of Pampa Regional Medical Center, at a recent meeting of the Pampa Rotary Club. Ms. Humpries discussed the new sleep lab here in Pampa and went over warning signs for sleep apnea. The sleep lab opened in October and is open Wednesday, Thursday and Friday evenings. Giesler, director of respiratory therapy at PRMC, said patients must be referred to the lab by a doctor and explained the appointment process in more detail.



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FEATURE STORY BOX

Coast Guard rescues cockatoo from tree

PORTER, Texas (AP) — It took a Coast Guard helicopter to rescue a man and his pet cockatoo from the heights of a pine tree after he got stuck trying retrieve the \$2,000 bird.

William Hart, 35, had climbed about 60 feet up the tree to get the bird after it escaped from its cage and flew out a bedroom window. Television video showed him standing on a branch Tuesday evening awaiting rescue, the exotic white bird apparently tucked under his shirt.

The bird, Geronimo, got out after Hart's daughter apparently forgot to latch his cage after feeding him, Hart told the Houston Chronicle. He said he spotted Geronimo in flight and chased him, then climbed the tree until the

cockatoo flew to his arm.

That's when Hart realized they were stuck. He said he yelled to his sister, who was helping him chase the bird, to call 911.

Firefighters had trouble backing a truck up to the tree because of the rain-saturated ground, so the Coast Guard helicopter was called in. The crew used a harness to get both man and bird down.

Hart had a few scratches and a bite on his finger from the frightened bird nipping him, but he said he was glad it all worked out. The shaking bird tucked its beak under his collar as he held it.

"He's my baby," Hart said. "I'd do it again."

Reagan

Continued from Page 4

purchased in 1995, there was a clear danger that by 2005 the tanks available would be older than the soldiers

driving them. Thanks to President Bush and Duncan Hunter that was not allowed to happen.

Under President Clinton our military was drastically downsized. Under the new Democratic leadership in Congress our troops are now being denied the funding they need to prevail in Iraq.

Once again, I have to ask why they want us to lose another war. Wasn't losing in Vietnam enough?

—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.

Reese

Continued from Page 4

Fathers believed that as long as people were free to speak and to debate, that ultimately the truth would triumph. That is the basis of our belief in self-government. In the long run,

truth will triumph over error.

It is the totalitarian society that says there is only one version of the truth and forbids debate and inquiry. That's why people in such societies are slaves. Speech is a reflection of thought, and to prohibit speech is to prohibit thought. Since the mind is what distinguishes the human being from other animals, to prohibit thinking is to prohibit people from being

human.

Thomas Jefferson had it right. If the people err, the solution is education, not repression. We must always be on guard to protect liberty, because it is only freedom that distinguishes our great country from others.

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

TYC

Continued from Page 4

exactly whom to summon for a detailed accounting, rather than pound on a group of part-time volunteers who may have little idea what really goes on in the depths of their agency. In examining another recent state government fiasco, the failed privatization contract with Accenture, lawmakers knew exactly whom to interrogate on the state side: Health and Human Services Commissioner Albert Hawkins.

The Legislature, of course, retains its budget authority over any state agency, regardless of how it is run. And the governor is not free to fire a commissioner confirmed by the Senate to a two-year term, though few such appointees would likely resist a gubernatorial demand for a resignation.

Even with a single commissioner, there ought to be an advisory council made up of experts from various fields to monitor the youth agency. The Legislature is not in session most of the time, and such a panel if its members get out of the boardroom and talk to staff and youths could be useful not only to the agency's man-

agement team but to lawmakers.

Some, especially Democrats, may object to giving Perry, a Republican, more direct authority over a state agency. There are questions about how aggressively his office looked into signs of trouble at the commission.

But the issue isn't Perry. It's how to focus responsibility, not spread it around until everybody and nobody is accountable when things go wrong. The governor's proposal for a single commissioner has gotten a cold reception in the Legislature so far, and no legislation has been introduced. But we urge lawmakers to reconsider.

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Dear Abby...

By Pauline & Jeanne Phillips

DEAR ABBY: Within the last two months, my dear 75-year-old friend, "Margery," lost her 51-year-old daughter and her 29-year-old granddaughter to cancer. (They were mother and daughter.) At the funeral home there was a table at the entrance to the viewing room with a printed card asking for your name, address and phone number if you wanted to receive an obituary and memorial card encased in plastic. (I did.) Two days after the funeral, I received a call from the funeral home asking me what my thoughts were about the funeral. I told the man I had been to many funerals in my life, but had never been called and asked my thoughts about any of them. However, since he was asking, I told him I had been upset to hear from Margery that he had tried to charge her \$1,000 more for her granddaughter's wake than he did for the daughter's identical wake. And then, this insensitive jerk proceeded to ask me if I had any thoughts about making "pre-arrangements" for my OWN demise and funeral! Abby, I couldn't believe my ears! A funeral home trolling for business from grieving friends and relatives of the deceased mother and daughter two days after the granddaughter's funeral? And to use the signed book (to receive memorials) for names, addresses and phone numbers to "promote business" is, in my eyes, unconscionable! Your thoughts, please. --

DORIS L. IN FLORIDA

DEAR DORIS: Just when I think I have seen it all, a letter like yours lands on my desk. Whether the person who called you was the funeral director or a salesman, that person is his own worst enemy. Margery should consider herself fortunate that he didn't approach any mourners who appeared to be under the weather and try to sign them up then and there. People with such little sensitivity for the feelings of others should not be in a people-oriented profession. If that man's employer reads this, I strongly recommend that he be re-

gated to the back room, where the individuals he deals with are far beyond the cares and concerns of this world. Readers, in case you're under the impression that most people are this insensitive and cynical, read on for a change of pace:

DEAR ABBY: Please print my letter about an act of kindness. I was having a rough day at school. I had left some medication at home, but only had enough bus fare for one way. So I borrowed money from a friend and went home at lunch. The heat was terrible, but I still had to walk back to school. After I returned to school, I fainted in my fourth period class. My teacher said I could go home. The bus came right away. The driver told me to get on and look for my money afterward. Well, I couldn't find it. It must have fallen from my pocket when I fainted. I told the driver why I didn't have the fare and even offered him two fares for the next day. He didn't believe me. I was so upset I started to cry while I was getting off the bus. Then I heard a woman say, "Wait!" She took out her wallet and looked for change. She didn't have any, so she offered the driver a \$20 bill. The driver couldn't accept the money, but I thought it was so kind of her to offer to pay the bus fare for a total stranger. I was just about off the bus when another woman offered me a bus ticket. I don't know how to express how grateful I was to those two women. So if you are one of the women who took the Route 43 bus and helped me out that day, please know I will always remember the kindness you showed me. You are the two nicest people ever -- and I don't even know your names. --

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DEAR THANKFUL: Thank you for an upper of a letter, which proves that angels don't always fly -- sometimes they ride the bus just like the rest of us.

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CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

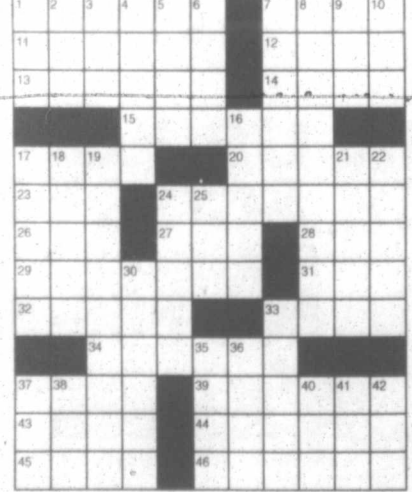
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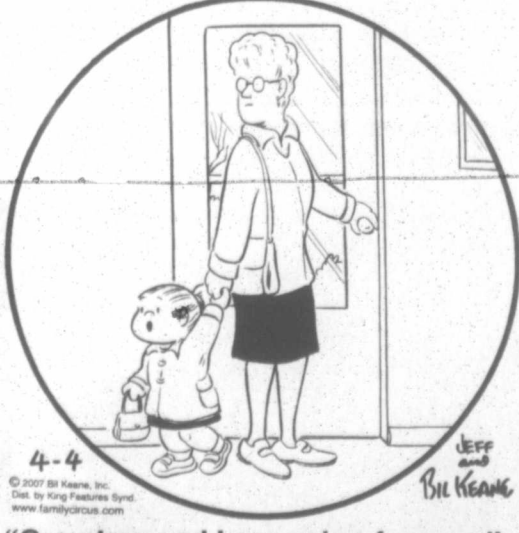


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The Family Circus

By Bil Keane



B.C.



Hagar The Horrible



Peanuts



Blondie



Flo & Friends



EPA revives California's request for tougher emission regs

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP) — California can move forward with its efforts to set the nation's first standards to cut tailpipe emissions from cars, light trucks and sport utility vehicles, the Environmental Protection Agency said.

The state has been seeking an exemption from the federal Clean Air Act since 2005 to set emissions standards in hopes of reducing greenhouse gases.

The EPA had refused, arguing

that the authority to set fuel economy standards belonged only to the U.S. Department of Transportation. The Supreme Court, however, eliminated that argument on Monday, ruling that the EPA has the authority to establish vehicle emissions standards.

That 5-4 ruling could also affect an auto industry lawsuit seeking to block the state's proposed regulations.

The California regulations were

designed in 2002 to reduce the emissions from cars and light trucks by 25 percent and from SUVs by 18 percent starting in 2009.

"We've reviewed the issues within the waiver request," EPA spokeswoman Jennifer Wood said Tuesday. "We're moving forward to the next steps of the process."

The agency next will schedule a public comment period and public hearing.

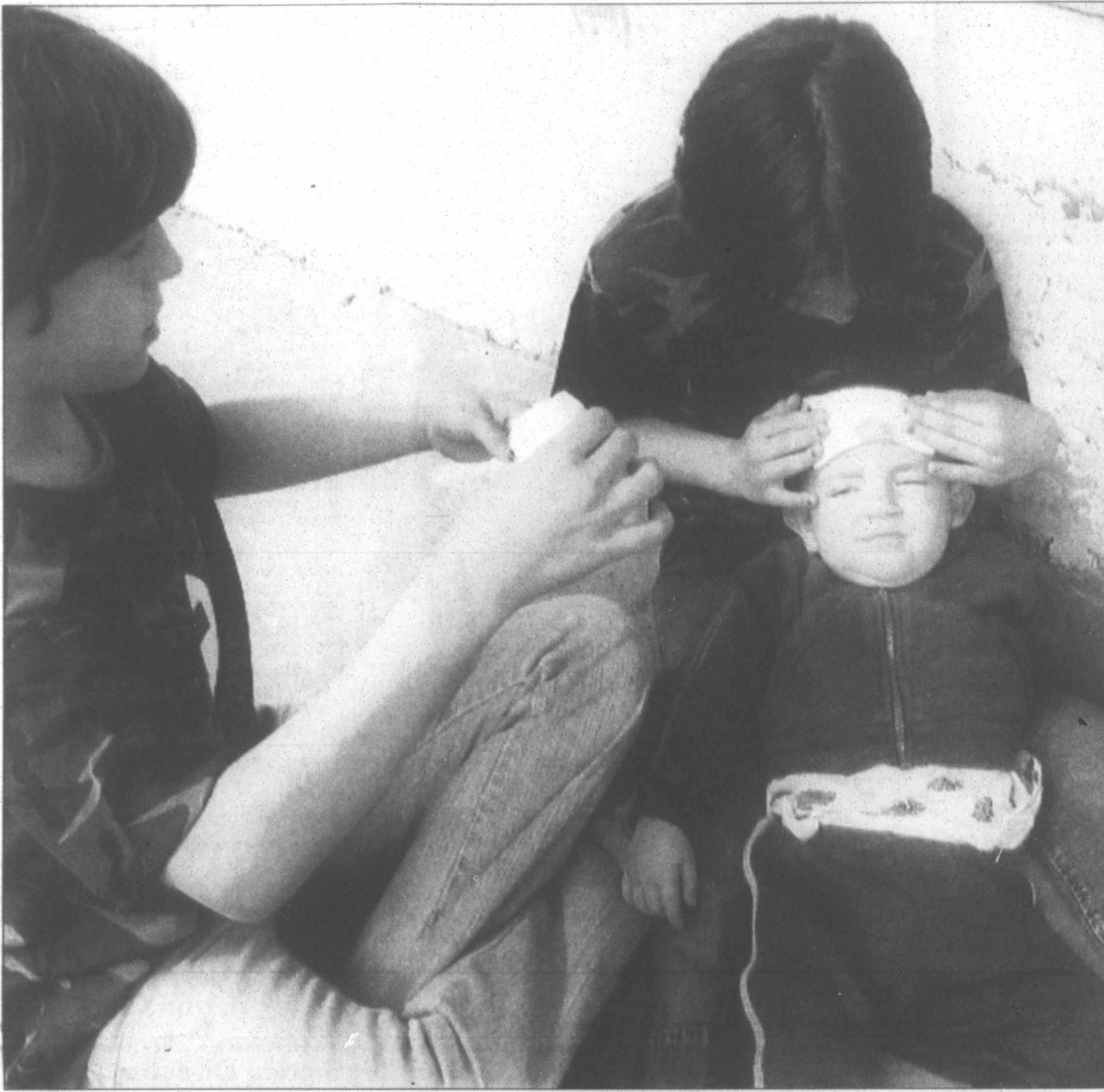
California has special authority under the federal Clean Air Act to set its own vehicle emissions standards because it began regulating air pollution before the federal government did in the 1970s. Ten other states have adopted California's standards, and Maryland is considering doing so, but they have to wait to implement them until the EPA grants California a waiver.

"It's clear EPA has to consider

California's waiver request now," said Sean Hecht, executive director of the environmental law center at the University of California, Los Angeles. "That doesn't mean it's a foregone conclusion with respect to the waiver request."

Monday's court ruling prompted movement Tuesday in a separate lawsuit brought by the auto industry to prevent California from moving forward with its regulations if it receives the waiver.

Red Cross



COURTESY PHOTOS
 TOP: The fellow with a bandage on his head is named Garrett. Don't worry. He is only pretending to be injured. Attending him are Summer and Sierra, members of the Eastern Texas Panhandle's Youth Chapter of the American Red Cross. The youth are learning first aid and CPR. BOTTOM: Matthew, Summer and Sierra toted cases of water during the recent training.

People flee midday shooting at CNN Atlanta

ATLANTA (AP) — Gunfire inside the CNN Center sent a lunchtime crowd scurrying for cover as a hotel employee was shot dead in a domestic dispute and her former boyfriend was wounded by security.

The man dragged the woman down an escalator following an argument in the lobby of the Omni Hotel, which is part of the downtown CNN complex, and shot her Tuesday, police said.

A CNN security guard witnessed the altercation and shot the man, police said.

"All of a sudden we heard a big boom. We thought it was an explosion," said

Trina Johnson, 44, of Atlanta, who was with her daughter in the busy food court in the CNN atrium. "We didn't see the gun. Everybody just started running."

The Omni employee was identified as Clara Riddles, 22, of College Park, according to Caryn Kboudi, a spokeswoman for the Irving, Texas-based hotel chain. Riddles checked and restocked honor bars in the hotel rooms, she said.

Riddles was taken to Grady Memorial Hospital and pronounced dead on arrival, a hospital spokeswoman said.

The man, identified by

police as Arthur Mann, in his late 30s, was in stable condition at the hospital's detention center. He faced a murder charge, Atlanta Police officer James Polite said.

"I heard four or five shots. I really didn't see it. I got out of there quick," said Jas Stanford, 27, who had been across the street taking down a temporary stage that was used for college basketball's Final Four festivities.



The NCAA basketball final was played Monday night at the nearby Georgia Dome.

Soon after the shooting, CNN's own coverage of the shooting was being shown on large-screen televisions

inside the atrium, near the escalator where the shooting had just taken place.

The security guard, 10-year veteran Odell Adams, saw the couple arguing, and when the man fired his gun, Adams shot the man, said Lisa Tobias, director of corporate responsibility for Turner Broadcasting System, which operates CNN.

The CNN Center is just across the street from Centennial Olympic Park, where a bomb exploded during the 1996 Summer Olympics, killing a woman and wounding more than 100 people.

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