

Bruner

Continued from Page 1

with the rest of the class via e-mail.”

Each class was five weeks long, usually with a week's break in between the end of one and the beginning of the next.

“The biggest difference between online and in person is you had to be self-motivated,” Bruner said. “You weren't marked absent. You had to be motivated to work on it every day. If you waited 'til Saturday afternoon to work on it, your grade would reflect it.”

He devised a routine of working on his class assignments for an hour at the beginning of each day, so that he would have his work ready to turn in by Saturday.

“The advantage of online college is you don't have to be physically on campus. I did everything on my laptop,” Bruner said. “I worked on it in motel rooms, truck stops, and sitting in my truck.”

Online colleges vary in their structure and methods. Bruner said he picked AIU because they provided textbooks which they sent to each student before the first session of each course.

“If I had spare time, I could read ahead,” he said. “There's also the

comfort factor of having a hard copy.”

Some of Bruner's course work at Texas Tech was transferable to apply toward his associate degree, but he still had to complete 12 classes to earn the degree. His bachelor's degree required another 10 classes.

Another reason Bruner chose AIU is the students it attracts.

“One of their biggest clients is the U.S. Army,” he said. “I figure if it wasn't good, the Army wouldn't be using them. I was in a lot of classes with servicemen and servicewomen.”

He checked the Better Business Bureau and college accreditation

sources before settling on AIU.

“One of my fears was getting hooked up with a diploma mill,” he said.

One thing that is true of both on-campus and online colleges is the price.

“It's not any cheaper,” Bruner said. “It cost me over \$20,000 by the time I got my B.A.”

Any time a student missed a class, they could go online and listen to the class by accessing the college's archives.

“I did that several times,” Bruner said. “You couldn't participate, but you didn't fall behind.”

Each class included a group project, in which up to four or five

students would be assigned to a group to research a subject and turn in a paper on it. Group members worked together by use of chat rooms and e-mail.

“I got to know some of them quite well,” Bruner said of some of his classmates.

His graduation Saturday was marked by an online ceremony in which each graduating student's name was announced, accompanied by a list of graduates posted on the university's Web site. A diploma is mailed to each graduate, although no cap and gown was required for the ceremony.

“But I am going to order a class ring,” he said.

Record

Continued from Page 2

speeding, displaying expired registration, and two counts of failure to appear.

Adam Chase Allison, 23, of Perryton was arrested by PPD in the 2200 block of North Wells for possession of less than two ounces of marijuana in a drug-free zone.

Joshua Lloyd Mullen, 21, of Pampa was arrested by PPD for burglary of a habitation, two counts of credit card/debit card abuse, and two counts of forgery of a financial instrument.

Zachary David Cordova, 18, of Pampa was arrested by PPD for possession of less than two ounces of marijuana in a drug-free zone.

Delbert Thompson, 40, of Pampa was arrested in the 1100 block of Alcock by PPD for possession of a dangerous drug.

Kershawna McDonald, 31, of McLean was arrested by Texas Department of Public Safety for possession of drug paraphernalia.

Dustin Ray Langley, 19, of Pampa was arrested in the 1400 block of North Hobart by PPD on a motion to revoke probation for possession of marijuana.

Michael Ray Bybee, 44, of McLean was arrested by DPS for theft of property and possession of drug paraphernalia.

Johnny Ray Greene Jr., 19, of Niles, Mich., was arrested in the 1100 block of Charles by PPD for violation of a city ordinance by soliciting without a permit.

William Langenbacher, 22, of Amarillo was arrested by PPD for credit card/debit card abuse.

Joseph Charles Nicholson, 24, of White Deer was arrested in the 200 block of East Louisiana by PPD for expired registration, driving while license is

revoked, no seat belt, no proof of insurance, and passing a stopped school bus.

Pampa Fire Department reported the following calls for the 48-hour period ending at 7 a.m. today.

Monday, Feb. 19

11:22 p.m. — Four units and eight personnel responded to the 1800 block of North Faulkner on a structure fire.

Tuesday, Feb. 20

10:15 a.m. — One unit and three personnel responded to the 2100 block of North Christy on a medical assist.

2 p.m. — Two units and six personnel responded to the 400 block of West on an odor investigation.

3:27 p.m. — Three units and seven personnel responded to the 1100 block of Willow on a grass fire.

5:24 p.m. — One unit and three personnel responded to the 400 block of West on a service call.

Wednesday, Feb. 21

4:16 a.m. — Two units and four personnel responded to the 600 block of Wynne on a vehicle fire.

Guardian EMS ambulance reported the following calls for the 48-hour period ending at 7 a.m. today.

Monday, Feb. 19

1:37 p.m. — A mobile ICU responded to the 400 block of Pitts and transported a patient to Pampa Regional Medical Center.

2:40 p.m. — A mobile ICU responded approximately 16 miles west on Highway 152 and transported a patient to Northwest Texas Hospital in Amarillo.

3:48 p.m. — A mobile ICU responded to the 800 block of South Faulkner and transported a patient to PRMC.

4:19 p.m. — A mobile ICU responded to PRMC and transported a patient to a local nursing facility.

9:27 p.m. — A mobile ICU responded to PRMC and transported a patient to Perry LeFors Airport.

Medical, food, airlines push up prices

WASHINGTON (AP) — Inflation at the consumer level rose by a larger-than-expected amount in January as falling energy prices only partially offset big increases in the cost of medical care, food and airline tickets.

The Labor Department reported today that prices rose by 0.2 percent in January. That was down from a 0.4 percent rise in December, but it was higher than the 0.1 percent increase that Wall Street had been expecting.

Core inflation, which excludes volatile energy and food components, also was up more than analysts had been expecting, rising by 0.3 percent. It was the largest one-month gain in seven months.

In other economic news, a key gauge of future economic activity rose a tiny 0.1 percent in January, held back by the ailing housing and auto markets.

The increase in the Conference Board's Index of Leading Economic Indicators followed a much larger 0.6 percent December

increase and was lower than the 0.2 percent advance that analysts were expecting.

On Wall Street, investors were spooked by the higher-than-expected inflation reading, sending the Dow Jones industrial average down by 58 points in late morning trading.

While energy prices dropped by 1.5 percent, food prices were up 0.7 percent, the biggest rise since the spring of 2005, as the cost of dairy products, fruits and vegetables all showed big gains.

The cost of medical care shot up 0.8 percent, the biggest increase in more than 15 years, reflecting higher costs for prescription drugs and doctor services, which were rising in January at the fastest clip in 25 years.

Airline tickets jumped by 2.1 percent, the biggest gain since November 2004. The cost of tobacco products rose by 3.1 percent, the largest increase in 4 1/2 years.

The report on consumer prices came a week after Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke had relieved fears in financial markets about possible interest rate hikes because of inflation.

Delivering the Fed's latest economic forecast to Congress, Bernanke had signaled growing confidence that inflation was heading lower although he said the Fed was still worried about some unexpected development that could push prices higher.

For all of 2006, consumer prices had risen by 2.5 percent, the smallest increase in

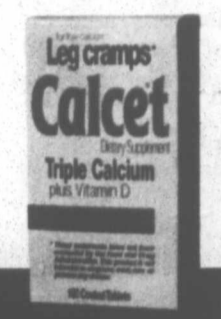
three years, helped by big declines in energy costs in the second half of the year after a sharp run-up in energy costs through last summer.

For January, gasoline pump prices fell by 3 percent, leaving them 2.7 percent lower than they were a year ago and 32 percent lower than their peak in July of last year.

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PEDC

Continued from Page 1

information from potential Pampa employers who are not going to the job fair.

Cota said that there would be about 1,200 veterans being discharged from the U.S. Army at the job fair.

Board member Bill Berry of Titan Specialties said he understood there would be some veterans with experience in explosives at the fair.

“We're interested in that,” Berry said.

Cota said the veterans being discharged were from various bases.

El Paso is simply the discharge point, she explained.

“This is the first time we've been down there,” Cota said.

Viewpoints

The George Washington makeover ...

"What do you mean America's youth don't know who George Washington was?"

"Dude?"

"He was our first president, our best president and one of the primary reasons the experiment called America was able to work. But of course they don't teach you that in school anymore."

"Dude?"

"Scholars and historians deemed Washington to be our greatest president in a Wall Street Journal survey. But another survey shows that Washington's coverage in history textbooks has declined to less than 10 percent of what it was in the early 1960s."

"Dude?"

"Sure, to your generation Washington was just a boring old guy. He isn't as captivating as the pop singers, movie stars and professional athletes you worship. That's why the people at Mt. Vernon, Washington's estate, had to raise \$110 million dollars to reshape Washington's image."

"Dude?"

"The Mount Vernon people constructed a new orientation center, education center and museum right on the grounds of Mt. Vernon. These new facilities, which opened in October, 2006, feature the story of a younger, studlier George Washington."

"Dude?"

"The presentations are designed to appeal to short-

attention-span kids like you who get most of their information from MTV. A 15-minute film uses action-packed techniques to feature Washington's significant accomplishments."

"Duuuuude?"

"No, the film and multimedia presentations do not feature Washington blowing up terrorists, nor does Arnold Schwarzenegger costar. But they do tell the story of a remarkable man."

"Dude?"

"Did you know that Washington was born into a modestly well-to-do family? What little education he got

was given to him by his father and stepbrother. He was a farmer and surveyor and through some inheritance, shrewd business dealings and hard work, he grew his fortune."

"Dude?"

"From early on he was a natural leader. He had an imposing presence, standing nearly 6'3" at a time when the average man was about 5'8". And he was invincible. During one battle in the French and Indian war, four bullets ripped his coat and two horses were shot from under him, yet he was unscathed."

"Dude?"

"He represented the rebellious American spirit, you see, and he led the charge to break away from the restrictions and regulations of the British. In 1775, he took command of our motley crew of an army and led it in a war that lasted six grueling years."

"Dude?"

"And, dude, he didn't have much chance of winning against the British. Nonetheless, he used American ingenuity to completely outwit them. He retreated when they expected him to fight, he fought when they expected him to retreat. Many historians believe that no other man could have won this war. Without Washington,

America's history would have been completely different."

"Dude?"

"After he beat the British, he was so popular he could have become a king. Instead, he used his immense power to help establish our Constitution, which grants power to us little folks. Then he reluctantly became our first president. He wanted nothing to do with the job, but knew our fledgling government needed his leadership to survive."

"Dude?"

"After eight long years as president, Washington finally returned to his beloved Mt. Vernon to farm and enjoy life. But he lived only

See PURCELL, Page 5



Tom Purcell
Columnist

Today in History

By The Associated Press

Today is Ash Wednesday, Feb. 21, the 52nd day of 2007. There are 313 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Feb. 21, 1965, former Black Muslim leader Malcolm X, 39, was shot to death in New York by assassins identified as Black Muslims.

On this date:

In 1885, the Washington Monument was dedicated.

In 1907, Anglo-American poet W.H. Auden was born in York, England.

In 1916, the World War I Battle of Verdun began in France.

In 1925, The New Yorker magazine made its debut.

In 1947, Edwin H. Land publicly demonstrated his Polaroid Land camera, which could produce a black-and-white photograph in 60 seconds.

In 1972, President Nixon began his historic visit to China as he and his wife, Pat, arrived in Shanghai.

In 1973, Israeli fighter planes shot down Libyan Arab Airlines Flight 114 over the Sinai Desert, killing more than 100 people.

In 1975, former Attorney General John N. Mitchell and former White House aides H.R. Haldeman and John D. Ehrlichman were sentenced to 2 1/2 to eight years in prison for their roles in the Watergate cover-up.

In 1995, Chicago adventurer Steve Fossett became the first person to fly solo across the Pacific Ocean in a balloon, landing in Leader, Saskatchewan, Canada.

In 2000, consumer advocate Ralph Nader announced his entry into the presidential race, bidding for the nomination of the Green Party.

Ten years ago: Whitewater prosecutor Kenneth Starr reversed his decision to resign. The space shuttle Discovery returned to earth after a mission to upgrade the Hubble Space Telescope. A bomb exploded at a gay and lesbian nightclub in Atlanta, injuring five people. (Eric Rudolph later admitted targeting the club.)

Five years ago: The State Department declared that Wall Street Journal reporter Daniel Pearl was dead, a month after he'd been abducted by Islamic extremists in Pakistan. President Bush failed to persuade China to halt sales of missile technology as he neared the end of his six-day Asia tour. In Salt Lake City, U.S. figure skater Sarah Hughes jumped from fourth to first to win the gold after a near-flawless performance, leaving teammate Michelle Kwan to settle for a bronze.

'You owe it to us all to get on with what you're good at.'

— W.H. Auden (1907-1973)



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It's the believers who make a difference

The majority in most communities are watchers. They're good people, but they generally don't participate in community activities other than as observers. Then there are the skeptics and critics, people who can find fault with sunshine and blue skies. And finally, there are the believers and doers.

Every community has some believers and doers. These are the people who create progress, however incremental it might be. They're your volunteers who work in civic organizations, chambers of commerce, their churches and their schools. They believe in their country and their community, and more importantly, they believe everything can be made better than it is.

This belief — call it civic faith, if you'd like — is necessary, because if you don't believe something is worth-

while, you won't be motivated to preserve it. If you don't believe that things can be improved, then you won't be motivated to try. Without civic faith, you end up as a passive observer who really doesn't care how things turn out as long as they don't affect your personal affairs.

Often the value of these doers and believers isn't appreciated until they die. Then, all of a sudden, a community realizes that there's a hole in the social fabric. The residents begin to tote up all the person's accomplishments, all the efforts he led or participated in, all the hours he devoted to helping others. And some begin to wonder how this person did it all —

built a successful career, created a great family, made true friends and did all these other things. It's a paradox, but it's usually the busiest people who find the time to contribute to their community.

Young men who fancy themselves as intellectuals when they are too young to know better often scoff at the believers and doers. They might sneer that they are do-gooders, as if doing good were somehow bad. They might feel superior sitting in a bar with like-minded people, drinking and talking about Hemingway and T.S. Eliot.

In the long run, however, they contribute nothing, while the believers and doers

make their communities better places to live and so contribute to making their country stronger and better. The do-gooder's accomplishments are all around — better roads, more jobs, more honest government, better schools and public parks. In the meantime, the intellectuals have left water rings on the bar. They are forced to face the truth that they contributed nothing but hot air and empty words about things that are meaningless.

If you have a son inclined toward the underside of life, tell him from me that it's the wrong path. I sat in parks talking to winos, drank copious amounts of whiskey in dingy bars and juke joints, hung out with cops and got into scrapes. I never in my life met a worthwhile person in a bar, except for the owners. My drinking companion

See REESE, Page 5

Charley Reese

Columnist



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Texas Thoughts

By The Associated Press

A sample of editorial opinion around Texas:

■ Feb. 12

Austin American-Statesman on college tuition control:

However tempting it might be to put a legislative lid on college tuition in Texas, legislators meeting now in Austin should resist.

The governor and speaker of the House have weighed in favor of letting regents set tuition, authority they've had since 2003. We agree that is the best policy for now.

In an interview with the American-Statesman's W. Gardner Selby last week, House Speaker Tom Craddick,

R-Midland, reaffirmed his support for tuition deregulation, and that's good for Texas higher education.

Though the Legislature is promising to commit more money to Texas colleges and universities, rising costs and competitive pressures mandate that regents be allowed to retain the authority to set tuition rates. Regents have been responsible in exercising that authority since they've had it. The average increase for tuition at the University of Texas between 2006 and 2008 will be about 5 percent, according to university officials. UT administrators are also making more financial assistance available for students in need.

Though you'll hear arguments about

equality by opponents of deregulation, remember that artificially setting tuition caps is one way of making Texas schools equally mediocre.

The growth of the state, and its increasing importance in the national and global economies, demand that its institutions of higher learning have as much economic flexibility as required to hire good faculty and provide incentives for top-flight research in all disciplines.

None of that is free, and there is only so much money the Legislature can provide. Tuition is only part of an institution's income, but an important part, and it shouldn't be restricted.

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Events calendar

• **The deadline to enter** the Miss Irish Rose Pageant is Friday. The pageant will be held March 16-18 in Shamrock. The competition is open to teenage girls between the ages of 14-19 enrolled in high school. For more information, call the Shamrock Chamber of Commerce at (806) 256-2501 or phone (806) 334-0929, (806) 256-3503 or (806) 662-5405.

• **Amarillo College Lamplight Youth Theatre Co.** will present "The Adventures of Tom Sawyer" in Ordway Hall on the Washington Street Amarillo campus at 7:30 p.m. Friday; 2:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. Saturday; and 2:30 p.m. Sunday. Tickets are \$10/adults, \$8/seniors and \$5/children. Children 3 and under are not permitted in the theatre. For tickets, call (806) 371-5353.

• **Ten free Colorado blue spruce trees** will be given to each person who joins The National Arbor Day Foundation throughout the month. The free trees are part of the nonprofit Foundation's Trees for America campaign. The trees will be shipped postpaid at the right time for planting between March 1 and May 31 with enclosed planting instructions. The six to twelve inch trees are guaranteed to grow or they will be replaced free of charge. Members also receive a subscription to the Foundation's colorful bimonthly publication, "Arbor Day" and "The Tree Book" with information about tree planting and care. To receive the free trees,

send a \$10 membership contribution to Ten Free Trees, National Arbor Day Foundation, 100 Arbor Ave., Nebraska City, NE 68410, by Feb. 28. For more information, check out the foundation's Web site at www.arborday.org on the Internet.

• **The Texas Teacher of the Year** nomination deadline is March 1. Nomination forms are available online at www.teachers.com/oty. The award will include a prize of \$1,000 and a \$500 grant to the teacher's school. The contest is sponsored by Teachers' Insurance Plan.

• **The Texas Armed Guard Association** will hold its next reunion March 1-3 in Fredericksburg, Texas. All World War II Merchant Marines are invited to attend. The association has no dues and is trying to reach all guardsmen who do not know about the organization. Time is running out for all World War II veterans. To find out more, call (325) 942-6756, (512) 671-3464, (210) 681-2120 or e-mail mocksatx@sbcglobal.net. For reservations, call 1-800-274-3762.

• **Pampa Book Club** will have scheduled to discuss the following books: "Widow in the South" By Robert Hicks, March 14; "Peace Like a River" by Leif Enger, April 11; and "The Last Promise" by Richard Evans, May 9. The group meets at 10 a.m. in the Texas Room at Lovett Memorial Library in Pampa.

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Lions speaker



Pampa News photo by ReDONN WOODS

Richard Devuyt of Red River Dairy spoke at a recent Pampa Lions Club meeting.

Purcell

Continued from Page 4

three years in retirement before dying at the young age of 67."

"Dude?"
"The point is, dude, that one man can make a remarkable difference in the world. Washington was truly a hero — a man who lived his life by simple virtues and a sense of duty. Without Washington, the experiment we call America might not have worked."
"Dude?"

"That is why the people at Mt. Vernon have gone to so much trouble to make sure we don't forget Washington's incredible story. I urge you to visit Mt. Vernon soon and learn all you can about this remarkable man. Now do you have any questions?"
"Dude?"

"Oh, for goodness sakes. Yes, it's true that Washington grew hemp, also known as marijuana. But he used it to make rope and clothing. He didn't smoke it!"
"Duuuuude!"

—Tom Purcell is a humor columnist nationally syndicated exclusively by Cagle Cartoons.

Reese

Cont. from Page 4

ions were all wounded, one way or another.

It turns out that the most fulfilling life, the most useful life, the most appreciated life is that of the believer and the doer. Life is short — shorter for some than for others, as a fictional Texas Ranger observed — but what better way to spend a life than making where you live a better place and to be, as the lovely lyrics say, "brave and strong and true and to fill the world with love my whole life through."

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

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THIS WEEK'S VERSE HOLY BIBLE • AMPLIFIED VERSION

He has sent **1** to His **2**; He has commanded His **3** to be forever;
4 is his name, **5** awe, **6**, and godly **7**. The reverent fear and **8**
of the Lord is the **9** of **10** and skill; a good **11**, wisdom, and
meaning have all those who do. Their **12** of Him endures **13**.

Psalm 111: 9 & 10

WORD

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GOOD LUCK!

Dear Abby...

By Pauline & Jeanne Phillips

DEAR ABBY: I have been in a relationship with a married man who is addicted to any drug, legal or otherwise, that he can possibly get his hands on. He's a kindergarten teacher and also a licensed boat captain. I am concerned that he is abusive to his students, works while high, and even fell asleep while driving a commercial dinner cruise. He gets mad at me when I refuse to be "his drug," claiming that my refusal is the reason he cannot stop using. Today I changed my cell phone number because I am so fed up with his dirty lifestyle and don't want it around my family. He takes kickbacks from prostitutes for helping them find "johns" and for the use of his boat to do their business. He is around such seedy people that I'm a little concerned about retribution for backing out. I want to move forward with my business and live a cleaner life than this. Am I wrong for judging him? — "LAURA" IN THE SUNSHINE STATE

DEAR "LAURA": Are you wrong for judging him? What took you so long? You knew you were in a relationship with a married man -- and it boggles my mind that a substance abuser would hold a position of trust around children or as a boat captain. For everyone's safety -- including your own -- he should be reported to the authorities.

DEAR ABBY: This is the scenario: A few friends were exchanging gifts and having a dinner party. During dinner, some decorations around a candle caught fire and a few gifts burned before the fire was discovered. One of them was my gift to a friend who was attending the dinner. Should I buy another gift to give my friend? What would be the right thing to do? — UNSURE IN VIENNA, VA.

DEAR UNSURE: Thank you for asking me that question, because although it may seem trivial to some readers, it touches on an extremely important subject: fire safety. In recent years, candles have become common decorating accessories, and no one should ever forget how dangerous they can be when left unattended -- or too near flammable materials. You and the other guests are lucky that only a few gifts were lost that evening. You are under no obligation to purchase a replacement gift for your friend. Once the gift was brought to the party, it became the responsibility of the recipient, or the host/hostess.

DEAR ABBY: While eating in a restaurant today, I encountered a piece of coiled metal (maybe from the top of an opened can?) in my rice. I was terribly alarmed and slid my dish to the side, having lost my appetite. When the waitress came back to the table, I showed the piece of metal to her. She apologized and started to take my plate away, but my friend stopped her and said: "Oh, wrap the rest of that up. I'll take it home. I'm not so particular." I was shocked, to say the least. The restaurant took the price of my lunch off the bill, but I was stunned that my friend would take home the rest of a dish that had a foreign object in it. Am I "too particular"? — "FINICKY" IN EUGENE, ORE.

DEAR "FINICKY": You were being prudent, not "particular" (or finicky) when you rejected the dish with the piece of metal in it. There could have been more metal shavings in the food, which could have caused a severe medical problem. Someone should inform your friend that there really is no free lunch, and he or she was taking foolish chances taking the dish home.

For Better Or For Worse



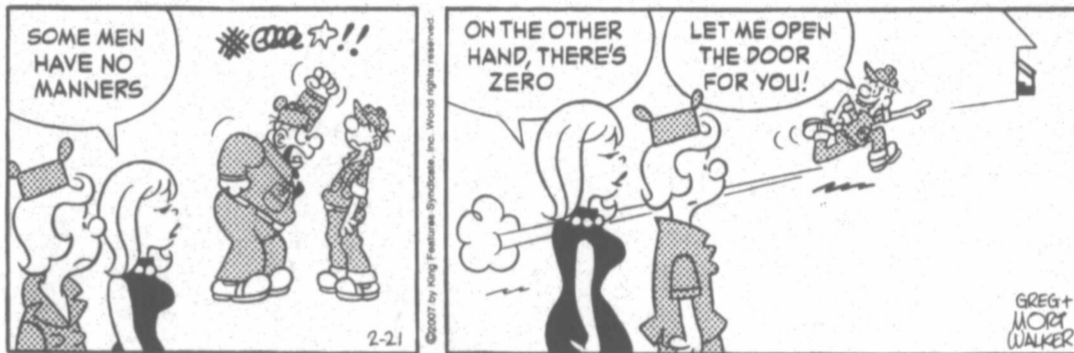
Zits



Garfield



Beetle Bailey



Marvin



Crossword Puzzle

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS DOWN

- 1 DVR
- 5 Wee plant
- 11 Boat's trail
- 12 Wake up
- 13 Vicinity
- 14 Saw the sights
- 15 Port spot
- 16 Intimation
- 17 Dismay
- 19 Medium
- 22 Skier's place
- 24 Successful
- 26 Elbow
- 27 Vacation spot
- 28 More than pudgy
- 30 Bonnie's partner
- 31 Gift from Santa
- 32 Nerd's kin
- 34 Young miss
- 35 Tick off
- 38 Change
- 41 Catch off guard
- 42 Warring woman
- 43 Ibsen's home
- 44 Candles
- 45 Dmitri's denial

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CURSE IRRATE
ANNIELENNOX
MEAYETDIM
SITCOMGALE
NEUROALEX
SENDS
LUMPDRUMS
ERASREPOIS
MAGBOA DOE
ANNIEPROULX
NIECEYALTE
SIATYR REDS

Yesterday's answer

- 22 Set eyes on
- 7 Decisive win
- 8 "Gang" for some sculptures
- 9 Try out
- 10 Sluggish
- 16 Shade
- 18 Big
- 19 Minuscule
- 20 Shivering
- 21 Foil's kin
- 34 Stare
- 36 Hold power
- 37 Macramé bit
- 38 Wrestling need
- 39 Thurman of film
- 40 Phone bug
- 41 Hair, at times

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Marmaduke



The Family Circus

THE FAMILY CIRCUS

By Bil Keane



B.C.



Haggar The Horrible



Peanuts



Flo & Friends



Blondie



Sports Day

Local sports this weekend

Wrestling- State meet	Austin	Feb. 23-24
Tennis- Canyon Tournament	Canyon	Feb. 23-24
Soccer- Sat.- Girls v. Caprock Sat.- Boys v. Caprock	Home	12 p.m. 2 p.m.
Softball- Midland Tournament	Midland	Feb. 22-24
Baseball- Cavalier Classic	Home	Feb. 22

Baseball's latest master plan: Contract fans, not franchises

By JIM LITKE
AP Sports Columnist

It's a funny business that shuts the doors when customers eager to hand over \$179 are still lined up around the block.

But that's baseball for you.

Every time people try and make nice, it pokes a stick in their eye.

Remember contraction? Well, it's back. Only this time, it's fans instead of franchises that baseball is thinking about whacking.

Last season, a half-million of the game's most loyal followers paid \$179 to their satellite or cable provider for Major League Baseball's "Extra Innings" package,

which entitled subscribers to 60 out-of-market games every week of the season.

Some were New Yorkers retired to condos in Florida who still followed the Mets, others die-hard Dodger fans resettled in Las Vegas and one, apparently, was a very powerful, very angry Massachusetts resident who works part of the year in Washington, D.C.

Come next season, almost half of them probably won't be back.

In a deal that could be announced soon, Major League Baseball is proposing to put "Extra Innings" exclusively on DirecTV, where a majority of its subscribers, about 270,000,

already reside. That leaves the 180,000 customers who bought "Extra Innings" on cable and the 50,000 on satellite rival Dish Network with only a few options.

Switch to DirecTV.

Buy "Extra Inning" from baseball's Web site, mlb.com, for \$79 and try to follow games featuring players the size of matchsticks.

Watch reruns.

Or make a federal case out of it, something Sen. John Kerry is threatening to do.

"A Red Sox fan," the Massachusetts Democrat said recently, "ought to be able to watch their team without having to switch to DirecTV."

Or not.

Bloggers have started a brushfire of complaints across the Internet and Kerry has asked Federal Communications Commission Chairman Kevin Martin to investigate the proposed deal, which neither party has discussed in public thus far. But neither the grass-roots campaign backed by petitions with a few thousand signatures, nor Kerry, even with support from plenty of people in Congress, is likely to stop the deal.

Jim Litke is a national sports columnist for The Associated Press. Write to him at jlitkeap.org

First deer



11-year old Wesley Jewett shot his first deer - eight point - in early January on his father's lease east of Childress. He is the son of Chuck and Laura Jewett of Amarillo, and the grandson of Gene and Clara Jewett of Pampa.

Bonds only concerned with Aaron's record

By The Associated Press

The only obstacle Barry Bonds cares to see right now is the number 755.

The San Francisco slugger arrived at spring training Tuesday, ready to resume his pursuit of Hank Aaron's home run record this season. As for the federal grand jury that could still indict him on perjury charges?

"Let them investigate. Let them, they've been doing it this long," Bonds said Tuesday after his first workout with the Giants. "It doesn't weigh on me at all — at all. It's just you guys talking. It's just media conversation."

The seven-time MVP

arrived at the Giants' training site in Scottsdale, Ariz., in better shape than in recent years following a productive winter of conditioning.

Noticeably absent were his two personal trainers, Greg Oliver and Harvey Shields, who no longer can be with Bonds at the ballpark. Bonds, who spent the weekend in Las Vegas for the NBA All-Star game, was flanked by his two publicists and a Major League Baseball security guard.

Bonds joked with new teammate Barry Zito in their corner space of the clubhouse, then the 42-year-old outfielder made his way through the room and greeted outfielder Jason Ellison,

infielder Rich Aurilia and pitcher Matt Morris.

Bonds still could be indicted if a federal grand jury determines that he perjured himself when testifying in 2003 in the BALCO steroid distribution case that he hadn't knowingly taken performance-enhancing drugs. Bonds, who has long denied ever using steroids, said his level of concern about the investigation is "none."

Last month, the New York Daily News reported that Bonds failed a test for amphetamines last season and then attributed it to a substance he took from teammate Mark Sweeney's locker.

Woods faces a big hurdle at Match Play

MARANA, Ariz. (AP) — Tiger Woods has compiled some amazing numbers during the longest PGA Tour winning streak in 62 years. He has won those seven tournaments by a combined 22 shots, is 109 under par and has posted 24 of his last 28 rounds in the 60s.

The math is much more simple at the Accenture Match Play Championship.

To make it eight in a row, he has to win six in a row.

"This has always been one of the tougher events to win just because of the nature of the format," Woods, the No. 1 seed, said

Tuesday. "Match play, anything that happens is unpredictable. Sometimes, it takes a great round to advance. Sometimes, you can shoot over par and advance. All I know is you have to beat one guy at a time. You don't have to beat a whole field. Just six guys."

The 64-man field assembled in the high desert of The Gallery Golf Club represents the best in the world from 17 countries. The only guy Woods cares about Wednesday is Ryder Cup teammate J.J. Henry, his first opponent.

How fickle is this tourna-

ment?

Woods won in 2004 during his worst season on tour, when he went through another overhaul of his swing. He was in top form two years earlier, winning the Masters and U.S. Open, yet he couldn't get past Peter O'Malley in the first round of the Accenture.

"You can shoot 65 and lose. You can shoot 73 and win," Henry said. "You never know what you're going to get. Of course, I know if I play Tiger and shoot 73, I might as well pack my bags."

Henry is fortunate to even be in the field.

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Nash has triumphant return; Iverson fizzles in first game back

By The Associated Press

Two-time MVP Steve Nash was as sharp as usual in his return from injury while Allen Iverson showed some rust.

Nash, who had missed four and a half games with inflammation in his right shoulder, had 13 points and 12 assists in the Phoenix Suns' 115-90 rout of the Los Angeles Clippers on Tuesday night.

His performance was typical Nash, driving the lane and dishing off assists, and mixing it up by pulling up and hitting jumpers.

"On a personal level, it's nice to just be out there with

your teammates, and as a group, it's a lot of fun to win after three straight losses," Nash said.

"It's maybe good for us that we suffered a little bit, and hopefully we can regroup here."

Iverson scored only nine points in Denver's 95-80 loss to San Antonio. He had missed nine of the Nuggets' last 10 games before the All-Star break with a right ankle sprain.

"The shots that I took, I know I can hit with my eyes closed," said Iverson, who went 3-of-11 from the field. "Maybe I should have closed them. I took 11 shots, and I thought I got 11 good looks."

Iverson said his ankle bothered him on a couple of plays "but for the most part I was all right."

"Usually when I come back from injury, I have my rhythm back. I didn't today," he said.

In other NBA games, it was: Washington 112, Minnesota 100; Charlotte 104, New Orleans 100; Detroit 84, Milwaukee 83; New York 100, Orlando 94; Chicago 106, Atlanta 81; Seattle 121, Memphis 105; Sacramento 104, Boston 101; and Portland 103, Utah 100.

In San Antonio, Tony Parker scored 17 points, Manu Ginobili added 14 and

Tim Duncan had 12 as the Spurs played at home for the first time in three weeks.

After trailing for most of the first, the Spurs took a 25-21 lead into the second quarter. Parker helped them extend the lead scoring 10 of his points in the quarter. San Antonio led 49-38 at the break.

The Spurs broke the game open in the third quarter outscoring the Nuggets 30-10. Carmelo Anthony and Iverson were just a combined 1-for-10 in the quarter as Denver had nine turnovers.

In Los Angeles, Shawn Marion scored 31 points and had nine rebounds.

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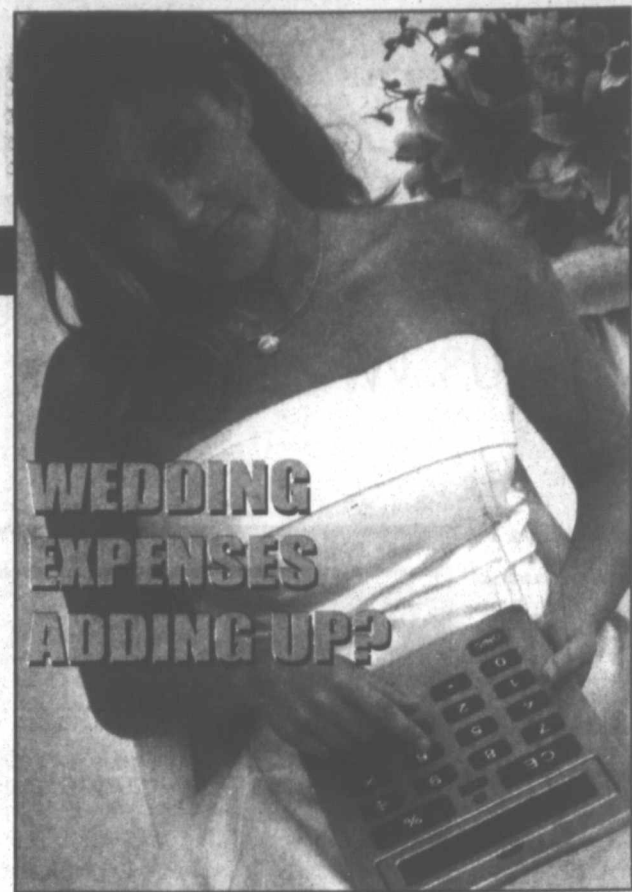
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Artist of the Year



COURTESY PHOTO
Roy Morriss, left, recently presented the 2007 Pampa Fine Arts Association "Artist of the Year Award" to Dona Cornutt. Morriss is secretary of the association's board of trustees.



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WTA&M

Financial aid event

CANYON — College Goal Sunday is coming again to West Texas A&M University, but this time the free financial aid workshop will be on a Saturday.

That's right. Even though the name remains College Goal Sunday, this year's event — one of 38 in Texas — is scheduled from 2-4 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 24 in the Hastings Electronic Learning Center, which is located in the basement of Cornette Library.

The workshops have been moved to Saturday to make them more convenient to families.

Financial aid professionals from WTAMU will be available to help students and their families complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

"College Goal Sunday is actually part of a concerted nationwide effort to offer students and their families professional expertise and answers to questions where financial aid is concerned," Jim Reed, director of financial aid at WTAMU, said.

Reed and several members of his financial aid staff will donate their personal time to the effort.

Reed says students and families planning to attend College Goal Sunday should first access information about the program at <https://financialaid.tam.u.edu/cgs>. The website answers many questions, not only about the program; it also lists the tax, financial and real estate instruments that will be required to complete the FAFSA. Eligibility requirements also are explained at the website.

For more information about College Goal Sunday at West Texas A&M, contact the Financial Aid Office at 806-651-2055.

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