



Tomorrow's Weather

HIGH 60  
LOW 28

See expanded weather on Page 2

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# THE PAMPA NEWS

Thursday, February 7, 2008

Volume 103 • No. 263

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**79TH ANNUAL BANQUET OF THE PAMPA AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & 2007 CITIZEN OF THE YEAR AWARD**  
FEBRUARY 21ST AT 7PM IN THE HERITAGE ROOM AT THE MK BROWN AUDITORIUM. FEATURED SPEAKER RICHARD "BUZZ" DAVID, PRESIDENT & CEO OF THE AMARILLO EDC. MEAL WILL BE CATERED BY THE TEXAS ROSE RESTAURANT. TICKETS ARE \$25 PER PERSON. AVAILABLE AT THE CHAMBER OFFICE LOCATED AT 200 N BALLARD. ADVANCE SALES ONLY

## Pampa junior goes to state speech competition

By KERRI SMITH  
Managing Editor

Pampa High School junior Jacob Wichert recently won the "Voice of Democracy" speech competition that was sponsored by local Veterans of Foreign Wars Post #1657. This is the second year that Wichert has earned this honor, which his sister Whitney also earned the year before.

Each year, the local VFW Post hosts this competition for students to write a speech about different aspects of democracy and patriotism and what it means to them.

For winning in Pampa, Wichert received a \$2,000 award. He then traveled to the district competition where he also won and received an additional \$1,000. The next stop for Wichert and his parents was the state competition in Austin.

"The VFW Post here in Pampa and all of the veterans are wonderful to our kids," Jarilyn Wichert, Jacob's

mom, said. "The reason for this event is for young kids to learn about veterans and how to honor them. But, instead, we feel that the veterans are honoring our children."

Wichert won 11th at the state level and that was out of 1,810 entries from Texas. For this honor, he won another \$1,000 award. Only the top 25 places are invited to Austin and approximately 400 were in attendance at the Veterans of Foreign Wars Mid-Winter Conference. The travel expenses for the Wicherts was paid by VFW Post #1657.

"Last year we all flew to Austin for the conference thanks to the generosity of the veterans," Jarilyn Wichert said. "But, this year we didn't want the veterans to pay so much to get all of us down there so we decided to drive this time."

While in Austin, the speech winners See SPEECH, Page 3



Courtesy Photo

Jacob Wichert, center, is pictured at The VFW Mid-Winter Conference in Austin where he won 11th place at the state level of the "Voice of Democracy" speech competition. Pictured with Wichert is District 9 District Commander Doug Shepard and District 9 Ladies Auxillary President Carol Holden.

### LAW ENFORCEMENT

## Woman arrested on drug charge

By MARILYN POWERS  
Staff Writer

A Pampa woman was arrested after a substance believed to be methamphetamine was found in her car during a traffic stop.

Gray County Sheriff's Deputy Rhett Rollins stopped Kachira Marie Sellers, 22, on South Barnes Street at 9:38 p.m. Wednesday for a reported traffic violation, according to sheriff's office records.

"The driver appeared to be very nervous and jittery," said GCSO Lt. Joe B. Hoard. "The deputy asked permission to search the vehicle, and the driver agreed to that search."

The search yielded the substance believed to be methamphetamine, and Sellers was arrested and booked into Gray County Jail on charges of possession of less than one gram of a controlled substance and possession of drug paraphernalia.

Sellers was the only occupant of the car at the time of the traffic stop and arrest, Hoard said.

## PRMC announces new CEO

By KERRI SMITH  
Managing Editor

Pampa Regional Medical Center welcomes a new CEO, Todd Lorenz, who brings more than 13 years of experience to the hospital.

Terry Barnes, director of public relations and marketing for PRMC, said that Signature officials are pleased to announce this appointment of Lorenz.

Lorenz is currently serving as CEO at Medical Park Hospital, a Signature Hospital Corporation facility in Hope, Ark. He will assume his new role on Feb. 11, when Pampa Regional's current CEO Alan King assumes his position at the Signature facility in Parkersburg, WV.

"Pampa Regional has accomplished so much in the past couple of years,

and we feel very confident that Todd brings the experience and enthusiasm to keep that crucial momentum going," said Charles Miller, president and CEO of Signature.

Lorenz brings 13 years of healthcare experience to his new position at PRMC. Prior to his service at Medical Park Hospital, he held various leadership positions with Angleton Danbury Medical Center in Angleton, Texas.

"I'm excited about becoming part of the Pampa community, and I look forward to working closely with our dedicated employees and physicians to continue the excellent service that I believe

See PRMC, Page 3

## Pampa Police Department working to be 'recognized'

By MARILYN POWERS  
Staff Writer

Pampa Police Department is working to achieve "recognized" status by the Texas Police Chiefs Association Law Enforcement Recognition Program, according to PD Chief Trevlyn Pitner.

The Law Enforcement Recognition Program is a voluntary process where Texas police agencies prove their compliance with over 150 Texas law enforcement "best practices." These practices were developed by Texas law enforcement professionals to help agencies in the efficient and effective delivery of services and the protection of individuals' rights, according to the Texas Police Chiefs organization's web site.

Being recognized means that the agency meets or exceeds all of the identified best practices, which

cover aspects of law enforcement operations such as use of force, protection of citizen rights, pursuits, property and evidence management, and patrol and investigative operations.

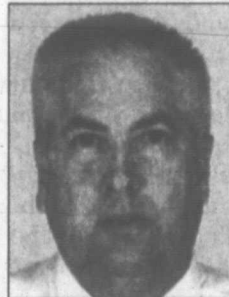
An appointed committee of professional police chiefs from across the state developed the "best practices". This committee now conducts the final review of an agency's efforts and awards recognized status to those agencies which meet or exceed the practices.

"The Pampa Police Department has always considered itself to be one of the best in the area," Pitner said. "This process allows an independent review of the department's operations and will assure the citizens of Pampa that its police department is conforming to the current state of the

art in law enforcement."

The process of achieving recognized status begins with the department conducting a critical self-review of its policies, procedures, facilities and operations. The department will prepare proofs of compliance for each of the practices identified in the criteria, and upon completion of this step, the department will request outside audit and review.

A facilitator from a nearby agency is assigned as a resource to a department during the department's internal review. After an independent review of the department's written documents and proofs, a team of assessors is sent to the department to review their operations and facilities and interview their staff.



Chief Pitner

A final report outlining the team's findings is then sent to the Texas Police Chiefs Association Foundation's recognition committee, which reviews the findings and votes whether or not to award recognized status.




Pitner has been involved in meetings and training sessions involving the recognition program since 2006, and he is a state agency facilitator for the program.

"Being a facilitator and traveling to other agencies and helping them gain compliance for this program really helps me better understand how other agencies operate," he said. "Therefore, this knowledge is brought back to Pampa to help our department. We never stop learning and finding better and more efficient ways of doing business."

Recognized status is awarded for

See POLICE, Page 3

**NEXT DAY FORECAST**

Friday	Saturday	Sunday
		
Sunny	Sunny	Sunny

Friday: Sunny, with a high near 60. Wind chill values between 20 and 30 early. Windy, with a northwest wind between 15 and 25 mph, with gusts as high as 35 mph.  
Friday Night: Mostly clear, with a low around 28. West-southwest wind between 5 and 10 mph.

Saturday: Sunny, with a high near 60. North-northwest wind between 5 and 10 mph.  
Saturday Night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 26. South-southeast wind between 5 and 10 mph.

Sunday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 57. Southeast wind between 10 and 15 mph, with gusts as high as 25 mph.  
Sunday Night: Mostly cloudy, with a low around 32. South wind around 15 mph, with gusts as high as 25 mph.

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The following grain quotations are provided by Atebury Grain of White Deer		XCEL	20.44	-0.16
Wheat	10.00	Anadarko	54.18	-1.18
Milo	7.88	XOM	80.77	-0.32
Corn	8.78	Nat'l Oilwell	55.97	-1.88
Soybeans	11.29	Limited	18.19	+0.34
The following 9:30 a.m. N.Y. Stock Market quotations are furnished by Edward Jones & Co. of Pampa		Williams	31.72	-0.40
OXY	63.66	MCD	53.70	-0.03
BP PLC ADR	62.86	Atmos	27.57	-0.06
Cabot Corp	29.63	Pioneer Nat	40.74	+0.31
Celanese	39.08	JCP	47.08	+3.36
Cabot Oil Gas	37.14	COP	73.24	-0.23
Coca Cola	58.14	SLB	73.87	-0.99
VLO	55.22	Tenneco	25.64	+0.04
HAL	33.04	CVX	77.19	-0.32
		Wal-Mart	48.63	-0.20
		OKE	46.18	-0.11
		New York Gold	905.00	
		Silver	16.55	
		West Texas Crude	87.14	

**'Jena 6' defendant facing assault charge in Texas**

CARROLLTON, Texas (AP) — A defendant in the so-called "Jena Six" case last year that led to angry allegations of racially biased prosecution in the small Louisiana town now faces a misdemeanor assault charge after an apparent fight at his new high school in Texas.  
Bryant R. Purvis' mother said he got in a fight at Hebron High School in Carrollton on Wednesday because he'd heard a classmate had vandalized his vehicle. Denton County jail records show Purvis, 19, was arrested on an assault causing bodily injury and released Thursday on bail.  
Purvis was one of six black Jena High School students initially charged with attempted murder after a Dec. 4, 2006, assault on a white student. Charges were reduced, but the original counts caused angry complaints of harsh, racially motivated prosecution that led to 20,000 people marching in Jena.

Purvis faces aggravated second-degree battery and conspiracy to commit battery charges in the Jena case and is set for trial in March. If convicted of both charges, he faces up to 22 1/2 years in prison.  
Purvis couldn't be reached for comment Thursday because there's no listed number for the uncle he lives with in Texas, Dallas Cowboys defensive lineman Jason Hatcher.  
Carrollton police did not immediately return calls from The Associated Press on Thursday, and school district declined to comment on details of the incident. His mother, Tina Jones, told the Alexandria Daily Town Talk newspaper that Wednesday morning someone told him who vandalized the vehicle.  
Purvis, a 6-foot-6 starter on his school basketball team, had left a game Tuesday night and found that two tires had been flattened.  
"I wish he could just get in a place where he could walk away from the situation," Jones told the newspaper. "I understand he gets frustrated. But he needed to walk away from this situation, being that he's already in a situation. It's very frustrating and upsetting to have to go through so much."  
Hebron officials were still investigating the incident, said Dean Tackett, a spokesman for the Lewisville school district. He said that the usual punishment if an assault is verified is three days out of school suspension, followed by seven to 10 days at an off-campus learning center. The student would not be able to participate in school activities while suspended or at the learning center.  
Tackett said he wouldn't be able to confirm any specific punishment given to a student.

**CITY BRIEFS**

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

- BALLOONS FOR Fun!** Valentine Open House, 304 W. Foster, Sat. 9-5. Prizes Hourly. 662-1801.
- MEDICAL FUND** has been set up for Dan Barker, son of Ed & Jennie Barker at Firstbank Southwest. To make deposit, the acct. is under Nick Martin, c/o Dan Barker.
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**Obituaries**

**Services tomorrow**

**BELL, Charles Ronald** — Graveside services, 2 p.m., Fairview Cemetery, Pampa.

**Charles Ronald Bell, 70**

ABILENE, Texas — Charles Ronald Bell, 70, died Feb. 7, 2008, at Abilene.  
Graveside services will be at 2 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 9, 2008, at Fairview Cemetery in Pampa, Texas, with the Rev. Rick Parnell, associate pastor of Central Baptist Church of Pampa,

officiating.  
Arrangements are under the direction of Carmichael-Whatley Funeral Directors of Pampa.  
Mr. Bell was born July 4, 1937, in Pampa. He had been a resident of Pampa until 1968 when he moved to Abilene.  
Survivors include brother,

John Lee Bell and wife Anita of Pampa; nephew, Bret Bell and wife Cathey of Pampa; and two nieces, Brooke DeFever and husband Lance of Pampa, and Brenda Brown of Amarillo.  
Charles was preceded in death by his mother, Mildred Haggard Bell; his father, Alvin R. Bell; and his grand-

parents, John and Eddalee Haggard, and Charles and Marie Bell.  
MEMORIALS: Abilene State School, 2501 Maple, Abilene, TX 79604.  
—Sign the on-line register book at [www.carmichael-whatley.com](http://www.carmichael-whatley.com).

**ECONOMY**

**Jobless claims fall after big increase in previous week**

By **MARTIN CRUTSINGER**  
AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — The number of newly laid off workers filing applications for unemployment benefits dropped last week, but not enough to indicate that strains on the labor market are easing.  
The Labor Department reported Thursday that 356,000 claims for jobless benefits were filed last week, a decline of 22,000 from the previous week. The decline only erased a part of the huge jump of 72,000 in claims of the previous week.

The four-week average for jobless claims rose to 335,000, which was the highest level in a month.  
A severe slowdown in economic growth that has raised concerns about a possible recession has begun to affect the labor market. The government reported last week that the economy shed 17,000 jobs in January, the first monthly job loss in more than four years.  
Analysts said that the performance of claims in the past two weeks showed that a surprising decline in claims from mid-December to mid-January was a statistical fluke caused by difficulty in adjusting the numbers around holidays and the start of the

year. They predicted further increases in jobless claims in coming weeks as more companies are forced to lay off employees.

*'In this environment, simply cutting back on hiring will not be enough for companies to maintain earnings as demand slows. Jobs will have to be cut, too.'*

— Ian Shepherdson  
Economist

"In this environment, simply cutting back on hiring will not be enough for companies to maintain earnings as demand slows. Jobs will have to be cut, too," said Ian Shepherdson, chief U.S. economist at High Frequency Economics.

In other economic news, the nation's retailers reported weak sales in January. The disappointing sales figures, which followed a lackluster holiday season, showed that con-

sumers are cutting back in the face of high gasoline and food prices, a slumping housing market and a severe credit crisis.

Wal-Mart, the world's largest retailer, reported a 0.5 percent gain in same-store sales, or business at stores open at least a year, far below the 2 percent gain that had been expected by analysts surveyed by Thomson Financial.

Many economists believe that the current quarter will be the maximum danger point for the economy to slip into a recession, which would be the first downturn since 2001.

Those fears were increased on Tuesday when the Institute for Supply Management reported a startling contraction in the service sector, triggering a 370-point drop that day in the Dow Jones industrial average.

On Wednesday, Macy's department stores announced that the company was cutting 2,300 jobs, adding to worries that the current economic slowdown is spreading.

President Bush is urging the Senate to quickly pass an economic stimulus plan that would provide tax rebates to millions of households this summer as a way to boost consumer spending and help combat the economic sluggishness.

**Emergency Services**

**Pampa PD**

Pampa Police Department reported the following incidents for the 24-hour period ending at 7 a.m. today.  
Twenty-six traffic stops were made. One stop in the 900 block of South Faulkner resulted in three arrests.  
Traffic complaints were received from the intersection of Browning and Magnolia streets, Highway 60, and the intersection of Foster and Hobart streets. At least one arrest was made in connection with the incident on Highway 60.  
Vehicle accidents were reported in the 1800 block of North Hobart and the 1200 block of North Hobart.  
Animal control officers made stops concerning animals in the 900 block of East Frederic, the 400 block of North Faulkner, the 1300 block of North Russell, the 1700 block of Williston, the 1000 block of Terry Road, the 1400 block of North Zimmers, the 2100 block of North Banks and the 100 block of West 30th.  
Agency assistance was rendered in the 800 block of Municipal Drive, the intersection of Barnes and Denver streets, and Highway 60 West.  
Welfare checks were made in the 700 block of Murphy and the intersection of Wilks

and Faulkner streets.  
Civil matters were reported in the 1100 block of South Wells and the 1100 block of North Starkweather.  
Suspicious person calls were received from the 500 block of Gillespie, the 1600 block of North Russell, the 1000 block of Denver, the 800 block of North Hobart, the 500 block of North Crawford Street and Huff Road, and the intersection of Crawford and Barrett streets. At least one arrest was made in connection with the incident at Crawford Street and Huff Road.  
A suspicious vehicle call was received from the intersection of Barnes and Frederic streets.  
Silent/abusive 911 calls were received from the 900 block of South Nelson and the 300 block of North Wells.  
Disorderly conduct was reported in the 600 block of East Foster and twice in the 800 block of North Nelson.  
Harassment was reported in the 1100 block of Sierra.  
Domestic disturbances were reported in the 1600 block of West Somerville and three times in the 500 block of North Sumner.  
Assault was reported in the 400 block of Graham.  
Sexual assault was reported in the police department lobby.

Two alarms were reported. Fraud was reported at Taylor Mart, 600 E. Frederic. One counterfeit \$10 bill was received.  
Theft was reported in the police department lobby and at Wal-Mart Supercenter, 2801 Charles. An arrest was made in connection with the incident at Wal-Mart.

**Sheriff**

Gray County Sheriff's Office reported the following arrests today.  
**Wednesday, Feb. 6**  
Esteban James Osoria, 38, of Amarillo was arrested in the 100 block of North Hobart by Pampa Police Department for evading arrest with a vehicle.  
Amber Mae Davis, 17, of Pampa was arrested in the 2800 block of Charles by PPD for theft over \$50 and under \$500.  
Kachira Marie Sellers, 22, of Pampa was arrested by GCSO for possession of less than one gram of a controlled substance and possession of drug paraphernalia.  
**Thursday, Feb. 7**  
Maria Del-Socorro Palencia, 42, of Pampa was arrested in the 900 block of South Faulkner by PPD for failure to yield at a stop intersection and failure to maintain financial responsibility.

Humberto Gonzales-Lozano, 41, of Pampa was arrested in the 900 block of South Faulkner by PPD to hold for immigration as a previously deported alien.  
Bruce Elmer Mitchell, 43, of Borger was arrested in the 900 block of South Faulkner by PPD for violation of parole.  
Henry Lee Williams, 49, of Pampa was arrested in the 1100 block of Huff Road by PPD for theft by check greater than \$20 and less than \$500.

**Ambulance**

Guardian EMS ambulance reported the following calls during the 24-hour period ending at 7 a.m. today.  
**Wednesday, Feb. 6**  
6:21 p.m. — A mobile ICU responded to the 200 block of North Nelson and transported a patient to Pampa Regional Medical Center.  
7:24 p.m. — A mobile ICU responded to the 1800 block of North Nelson and transported a patient to PRMC.  
9:39 p.m. — A mobile ICU responded to the 2100 block of North Christy and transported a patient to PRMC.  
**Thursday, Feb. 7**  
1:43 a.m. — A mobile ICU responded to the 300 block of North Faulkner and transported a patient to PRMC.

## Inmate tries to slash throat during hearing

FORT WORTH, Texas (AP) — A prisoner tried to slash his throat during a family court hearing with a piece of razor blade he smuggled out of his cell, officials said.

Court bailiffs restrained William Lee Brothers, 39, before he could severely injure himself Wednesday morning, said Terry Grisham, a Tarrant County sheriff's spokesman. Brothers was treated at a hospital and was back in jail by the after-

noon.

Brothers, who was wearing leg irons and was handcuffed with his hands in front of him, tried to cut himself as he prepared to sign some legal papers, Grisham said. No one else was in danger.

The blade came from a hygiene kit given to prisoners after they are booked into jail, Grisham said.

Brothers is serving a 25-year prison sentence for several convic-

tions for sex crimes against a child. He had been transferred from a Texas Department of Corrections unit outside Houston to Fort Worth for his court hearing.

Brothers was placed on suicide watch in a single cell Wednesday evening, with deputies checking on him every 10 or 15 minutes. He will remain on suicide watch until he returns to prison, Grisham said.

### TRAGEDY

## Man shoots wife at school in front of students

PORTSMOUTH, Ohio (AP) — A teacher's husband charged into her fifth-grade classroom Thursday morning, then stabbed and shot her as students watched, police said. He fled and was believed to be holed up in a nearby home.

Emmaly Baker, a student at Notre Dame Elementary, said she hid in the classroom's coatroom when the gunman came in. The teacher was in critical condition.

"We heard gunshots, and we heard her yelling. I was scared," she told WSAZ-TV. "The police officer came and got us and she was still laying there and she was hurt really bad."

Later in the day, SWAT teams surrounded a home near the school where they believe the suspect fled. Neighbors heard shots fired at the house.

Kim Harris, who cares for a man who lives next door, said at one point police fired at the house after gunshots came from inside the home. Police "told us to get down on the floor and stay in the back of the house," she said.

Another person was stabbed in town before the shooting, and authorities believed it was connected to the teacher's shooting, Portsmouth police Capt. Rob

Ware said. He did not elaborate.

The shooting happened around 9 a.m. at the Catholic school on the main road in Portsmouth, a community in southern Ohio near the Kentucky border.

Parents, many with cell phones clutched to their ears, congregated and began leaving with their children around 10:30 a.m., said Kathy Hall, the office manager at the Cornerstone United Methodist Church across the street from the school.

"I wasn't afraid for my own safety, I was afraid for the children, because these turn out so terrible, you know," said Hall.

The scene was chaotic with police cars and few ambulances descending on the school, and the fire department blocked off the street.

The school and another Catholic school nearby were locked down, said Deacon Tom Berg, vice chancellor of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Columbus. The diocese was sending a crisis team.

Public schools also were put on lockdown, said Superintendent Jan Broughton, who oversees the community's public schools.

## Speech

Continued from Page 1

got to meet the governor and lieutenant governor and tour the Capital and LBJ Library.

"I think that the total cost that Texas veterans spent to get these students and their families to the conference was more than \$162,000," Jarilyn Wichert said. "I think the night of the banquet about \$35,500 was given as scholarships and prizes to these students. That is great to help get these kids started with high-

er education."

Wichert is using the money he won last year and this year to attend Clarendon College to get started on his college journey, even though he is only a junior currently. He hopes to repeat this win one more time next year before he graduates and he would really be honored to win state.

## Police

Continued from Page 1

a four-year period. During that time, the department must submit an annual report and show compliance with two performance-related stan-

dards. These are reviewed as they are received and compliance verified. In order to retain recognized status, the department must submit updated documentation on all "best practices", and another on-site review is conducted. The recognition committee then votes on whether to continue the department's recognized status.

PPD Sgt. Donny Brown has been

named the department's program manager. He is responsible for pulling the program together and getting all policies and procedures current and approved, Pitner said.

"We are planning on being ready for a final audit and inspection by the end of May 2008 and hopefully be approved as a recognized agency by June 2008," Brown said.

## PRMC

Continued from Page 1

Pampa Regional provides the residents of the Texas Panhandle," Lorenz said.

Lorenz has a master's degree in healthcare and business administration from the University of Houston and a bachelor's degree in economics from the University of Texas. He

and his wife Julie have been married for 12 years. They plan on relocating to Pampa in the near future.

Today's announcement by Signature is part of a series of transitions throughout the organization. The changes reflect Signature's assessment of its hospitals and how each can best serve their communities and provide exemplary patient care.

PRMC was founded in 1950 and they employ more than 275 full-time and part-time staff members. Recently, the Quality

Program of PRMC gained recognition in The Quality Improvement Report. This hospital is an affiliate of Signature Hospital Corporation, which is based in Houston and is a privately held company founded in 2005.

Signature presently owns and operates four hospitals: 115-licensed bed Pampa Regional Medical Center in Pampa; the 161-licensed bed Gulf Coast Medical Center in Wharton, Texas; the 79-licensed bed Medical Park

Hospital in Hope, Ark.; and 325-licensed bed St. Joseph's Hospital, in Parkersburg, W. Va.

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## Tulia undercover agent's appeal denied

AUSTIN (AP) — The former undercover agent in the discredited Tulia drug busts on Wednesday lost another appeal of his conviction for lying.

The Texas Court of Criminal Appeals ruled Tom Coleman's aggravated perjury conviction in 2005 should stand.

In 2006, the 7th Court of Appeals in Amarillo upheld the conviction.

Coleman was sentenced to 10 years probation after a jury found him guilty of falsely testifying in a 2003 hearing that he did not learn of a theft charge against him until August 1998. Court documents showed that Coleman had earlier learned of the accusation that he stole gasoline while working for the Cochran County Sheriff's Office.

The 1999 drug sting in

Tulia led to the arrest of 46 people — most of them black — on drug charges.

Coleman, who's white, worked alone and without audio or video surveillance.

In 2003, Gov. Rick Perry pardoned 35 of 38 who went to trial or accepted plea agreements.

Forty-five of the 46 arrested shared in a six million dollar settlement of a civil rights lawsuit against the agencies Coleman worked for.

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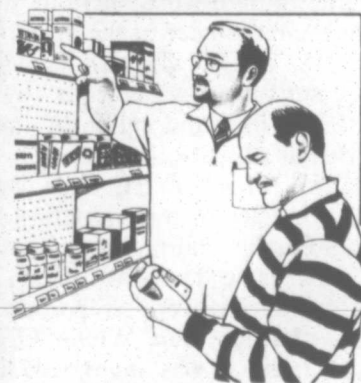
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# Viewpoints

## Politics not taboo in the modern day workplace

According to a recent poll conducted through OfficeTeam, a worldwide staffing service, some 67 percent of surveyed Americans find it acceptable to discuss politics in the workplace.

A news release regarding the survey described 14 percent of respondents as not only approving political conversations at their places of employ but as "actually inviting" such political debate. "Nearly four in 10 workers polled," the OfficeTeam release reports, "said discussing political campaigns and candidates is common practice."

And here I thought religion and politics to be taboo subjects. I find it heartening that so many of in this nation

are embracing the political freedom that America is famous for; I only hope that these same individuals are also embracing their right to vote by participating in every election that comes their way.

I will now endeavor to exercise my right to free speech, a privilege that allows me to sound off about a variety of topics in this particular space. Below are excerpts from "Quotes from the Left" which I lifted verbatim from an e-mail provided by an organization dubbed FightMediaBias.

**The NYT uses a positive about troops as a negative to cover themselves...and insults the troops AGAIN!**  
"The journalists most

responsible for the series — reporters Lizette Alvarez and Deborah Sontag and their editor, Matthew Purdy — argued against trying to make a comparison to civilian homicide rates. The military does not accept people with mental problems or records of serious crimes — the likeliest killers in the civilian population — so its rate is likely to be lower and the comparison irrelevant."

—New York Times Public Editor Clark Hoyt, tackled the paper's inflammatory front-page story from January 13 that baselessly

suggested returning veterans were in danger of coming home killers, in a Jan 27th NYT article and reported by TimesWatch Clay Waters Jan. 28

**In Case You Missed It**  
**State of the Union? Forget It! Obama's Getting Anointed**

The liberal media just blew the State of the Union address off and instead went berserk on news that Ted Kennedy was endorsing Obama.

\* "Today the audacity of hope had its rendezvous with destiny. The Kennedy clan anointed Barack Obama a

son of Camelot." (ABC)

\* "Passing the torch: Barack Obama is tapped as the candidate to continue the Kennedy legacy." (Couric on CBS)

\* "The endorsement brought the Kennedy mystique to this campaign, not in a whisper, but a roar." (NBC's Lee Cowan — the same guy who said, "it's almost hard to remain objective" when covering Obama)

But MRC's analysts saw this over-the-top adulation as "seemingly relaying the perspective of the press corps more than the public at large." And as for the State of the Union, MRC reported: "ABC and NBC pivoted almost immediately from President Bush's State of the Union address to the 2008

presidential campaign, but CBS stuck to Bush's speech in its post-coverage in which Katie Couric complained "a lot of it was Bush redux."

—Two CyberAlert items Jan. 29

**Obama Sugar Daddy's Arrest Ignored by Liberal Media**

Meanwhile, in their one-sided enthusiasm for the return of "Camelot," the media managed to virtually ignore a potential blot on the "audacity of hope." The item — picked up by MRC's Brent Baker — reported "the arrest order issued Monday for Tony Rezko, a big Obama donor up on charges of fraud, extortion and money laundering." But even in the

See BRYANT, Page 10

**Skyla Bryant**  
News editor



## Today in History

By The Associated Press

Today is Thursday, Feb. 7, the 38th day of 2008. There are 328 days left in the year. This is the Lunar New Year of the Rat.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Feb. 7, 1964, The Beatles began their first American tour as they arrived at New York's John F. Kennedy International Airport.

On this date:

In 1812, author Charles Dickens was born in Portsmouth, England.

In 1857, a French court acquitted author Gustave Flaubert of obscenity for his serialized novel "Madame Bovary."

In 1861, the general council of the Choctaw Indian nation adopted a resolution declaring allegiance with the South "in the event a permanent dissolution of the American Union takes place."

In 1904, a fire began in Baltimore that raged for about 30 hours and destroyed more than 1,500 buildings.

In 1936, President Franklin Roosevelt authorized a flag for the office of the vice president.

In 1943, the government announced the start of shoe rationing, limiting consumers to buying three pairs per person for the remainder of the year.

In 1948, Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower resigned as Army chief of staff; he was succeeded by General Omar Bradley.

In 1974, the island nation of Grenada won independence from Britain.

In 1983, Elizabeth H. Dole was sworn in as the first female secretary of transportation by the first woman to sit on the Supreme Court, Justice Sandra Day O'Connor.

In 1984, space shuttle astronauts Bruce McCandless II and Robert L. Stewart went on the first untethered space walk.

Ten years ago: The Winter Olympic Games opened in Nagano, Japan. It was announced that Carl Wilson, a founding member of The Beach Boys, had died in Los Angeles from complications of lung cancer; he was 51.

Five years ago: The government raised its terror threat level to "high risk" orange, warning of a growing possibility that the al-Qaida network would launch an attack against the United States to coincide with Muslim holy days. President Bush courted the leaders of France and China in an uphill struggle to win U.N. backing for war with Iraq. Tom Christerson, the longest-living recipient of a fully self-contained artificial heart, died at Jewish Hospital in Louisville, Ky., after 512 days on the AbioCor; he was 71.

*'The only discipline that lasts is self-discipline.'*

— O.A. "Bum" Phillips  
American football coach



## Blog: Taking your diary to the Internet

Do you keep a diary? You know, that little book containing all of your most intimate secrets, secured by a little lock that any 4-year-old could pry open? Well, my friend, it's time to take the next step — blogging.

What Is It? ... The word "blog" is short for "Web log" or "Weblog." A blog is simply a spur-of-the-moment scribbling of your everyday experiences onto a Web site. Some of you might be wondering, at this point, why anyone would be interested in your day-to-day rantings. You'd be surprised.

The CBS TV show, "Survivor," is enjoying great ratings, thanks, in part, to the natural voyeuristic tendencies of human beings. We like to watch other people live their lives. And if it's real, all the better. Blogs are tiny windows into the real-life experiences of everyday

people. Still not convinced? Check out some great blogs at the Radio Community Server (<http://www.weblogs.com>). They keep a list of the most-recently updated blogs on the Web.

When you start reading some of them, you may find yourself thinking, "What a waste of time." However, four hours later, you'll realize you're hooked.

Wanna Make Your Own? ... To create a blog on your Web site, go to the preeminent site on the subject, Blogger (<http://www.blogger.com>) owned by Google. They provide a free tool, allowing you to instantly publish your musings to the

Web. You can have Blogger publish your writings to your Web site; or, if you don't have a "WWW" place to call your own, use their site.

Updating your blogs is extremely simple. You simply type your text into a Web form and hit "Publish." For you techno-geeks out there, Blogger uses standard FTP to transfer your blogged page to a site. You can customize a Web page template to have the look and feel of your site.

Other Uses ... So, besides a personal diary, what else could you use blogs for? To quote Blogger.com:

"Blogs are also excellent team/department/company/f

amily communication tools. They help small groups communicate in a way that is simpler and easier to follow than e-mail or discussion forums. Use a private blog on an intranet to allow team members to post related links, files, quotes, or commentary. Set up a family blog where relatives can share personal news. A blog can help keep everyone in the loop, promote cohesiveness and group culture, and provide an informal 'voice' of a project or department to outsiders."

Blogger is an excellent way to allow non-technical people to contribute to a Web site without having to learn complex Web authoring systems. For instance, let's say you have an on-line newsletter. Each columnist could update their particular

See SPELL, Page 10

**Eric Spellmann**  
Columnist



## THE PAMPA NEWS

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## Texas Thoughts

By The Associated Press

A sample of editorial opinion around Texas:

Jan. 25  
San Antonio Express-News on an economic stimulus package:

When both sides of the aisle in Congress agree on something and when Congress agrees with the White House, that should be a sign of the kind of bipartisan comity needed for our government to function effectively. Unless that something about which they agree happens to be a free lunch.

Few people doubt that the U.S. economy is in perilous straits. Some businesses, banks and hedge fund managers made bad decisions on risky home sales, selling and bundling dicey mort-

gages that proved to be bad investments. Some homeowners got in over their heads, betting on a continuous rise in home values.

The resulting credit crunch has economic implications that go far beyond American shores.

But the proposed remedy for the ailing economy might be worse in the long run than the malady itself. A stimulus package of \$150 billion, as the Bush administration has proposed, couldn't possibly have much beneficial impact on a \$13 trillion economy. But piling on national debt and intensifying fiscal irresponsibility could be harmful.

The money for those proposed \$600 income tax rebates has to come from somewhere. And while there's a good case to be made for lowering the tax

burden to increase economic activity, unless those tax cuts are accompanied by spending reductions, they increase the deficit in the short run.

What's under consideration incorporates the worst of both worlds tax cuts accompanied by greater spending. Which seems to be the bipartisan way of saying that there is such a thing as a free lunch. There isn't, even in an election year.

Occasional contractions followed by expansions are part and parcel of the cyclical nature of the free market. Politicians have a poor record of trying to flatten out the bumps in the economic cycle.

Allowing the government to borrow

See STIMULUS, Page 10

# BUSINESS REVIEW

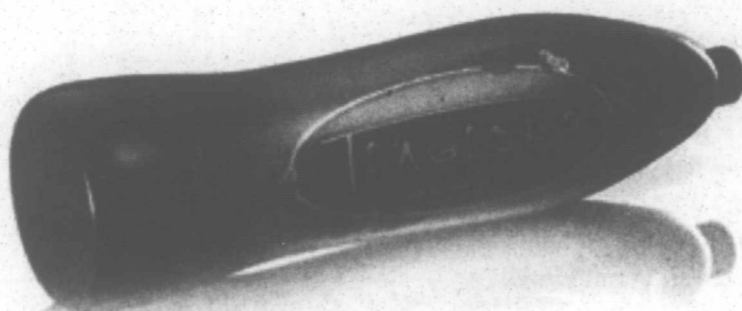
## Mission

### The Mission of Tunguska Blast

To promote the power of the Tunguska Effect in the lives of people everywhere. This is our Mission. This is our Cause. To fulfill this mission, we commit to sharing the story and the benefits of Tunguska Blast. First with our family and friends. Then, with their help, to as many people as possible, as fast as we can. The message and benefits of the Tunguska Effect have waited nearly a century to be told, to be empowered. That is why we are committed to this Cause, this Mission. And because we are committed...the wait is over.

#### Tun • gu • ska - n. Russian

1. a valley bordered by three tributaries of the Yenisei River in Siberia; 2. identified by scientists as the location of a mysterious event in 1908; 3. subject of a prominent theory that a near impact of an asteroid caused a concussion blast in the atmosphere; 4. site of an event of such force that the landscape of the region was permanently and remarkably changed.



*A Letter from Mark T. McCool,  
President and CEO of CyberWize*

If you have been waiting for a product with the power to change your life, the wait is over. Tunguska Blast was born of a miraculous event that happened nearly 100 years ago. For more than seven years, CyberWize has been dedicated to harnessing the power of that event into a potent, proprietary product that will change your life.



When my wife Jeanine and I founded CyberWize in 1998, we set out to develop the world's best products for improving health, wellness, and quality of life. Today, it is with great joy that we can say: Tunguska Blast fulfills our mission.

I am committed to the belief that ordinary people can do extraordinary things. Like the Phoenix that rises from the ashes of a cataclysmic event, people under great stress show remarkable strength and resilience. In a world filled with everyday stresses, we can all benefit from the added boost of energy, stamina, and immune system support that Tunguska Blast delivers.

Based on the solid foundation of CyberWize, Tunguska Blast is generating a huge explosion of interest that is destined to spread around the world. Try Tunguska Blast today and feel the Tunguska Effect for yourself.

The wait is over. The time is now.

Sincerely,  
*Mark T. McCool*  
President, CEO



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# Dear Abby...

By Pauline & Jeanne Phillips

**DEAR ABBY:** My husband is 56. His daughter, "Loreen," from his first marriage is 35. At times when he gives her a hug (as she's leaving from a visit) he will slap her on the butt. This makes me uncomfortable because it seems inappropriate at her age. I have told him how this makes me feel; he says it's something he has always done with both of his children. (He also has a son.) I guess I could see it as a playful gesture when they were kids, but at this point I don't think so. It reminds me of the kind of intimacy demonstrated between a husband and wife, not a father and daughter. Am I being too uptight? — **UNCOMFORTABLE IN OKLAHOMA**

**DEAR UNCOMFORTABLE:** You have confused someone getting a "love pat" with someone being hit ON. Yes, I think in this case you are being too uptight, unless there is something else you have observed that you haven't told me.

**DEAR ABBY:** I'm 16 and have a 13-year-old sister I'll call "Becky," who is mentally retarded. My mother recently tried to force me to promise that I'll always take care of Becky when she and Dad die or can no longer take care of her. I think it's unfair to saddle me with a lifetime obligation like this. I have had to make many sacrifices because of Becky. I have to share a room with her and sleep with her in a double bed because she's afraid to sleep alone -- even though we have a spare bedroom. I have never had a sleepover because Becky gets too upset with someone else sleeping in our room. I could go on and on. I think I should be free of Becky as an adult. There

are other alternatives for challenged individuals. Mother says it's my obligation because she's family. I don't believe it should be my lifetime obligation just because we're born to the same parents. What do you think? — **NO THANKS! SACRAMENTO, CALIF.**

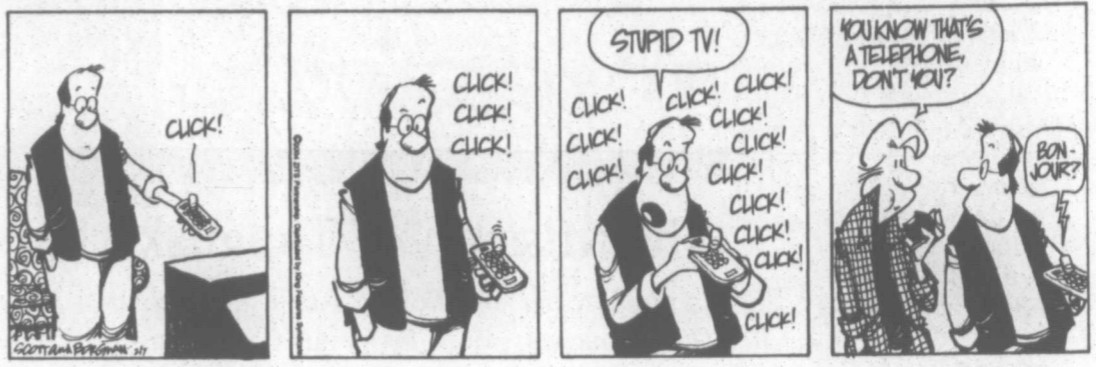
**DEAR NO THANKS!** You appear to be very angry, and with some justification. You have already had too much responsibility thrust upon you. Your sister should have been taught to sleep by herself years ago, because eventually that's what she will have to do. Your family obligation to your sister isn't necessarily the kind your mother is trying to coerce you into. If and when your parents become too incapacitated to care for Becky, a group living situation might be healthier for all concerned. Your sister may not have a life of her own until she makes that transition. Consider how lonely it must be for her to have no socialization beyond your parents. While you do not have to keep your sister with you, you do have a moral obligation to see that she's well cared for. In that sense, your mother is right. But you certainly have a right to pursue your own life, career and family without anyone laying a guilt trip on you. And you do not have to sacrifice your happiness, or sleep with your sister, for the rest of your life and/or hers.

**DEAR READERS:** Today marks the lunar New Year. It's the Year of the Rat. Those born in the Year of the Rat are imaginative, charming and generous to those they love. Gung Hay Fat Choy!

## For Better Or For Worse



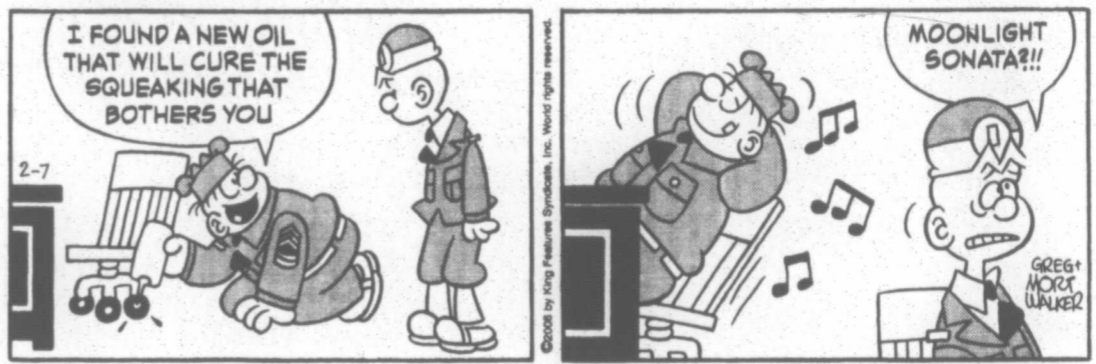
## Zits



## Garfield



## Beetle Bailey



## Marvin



## B.C.



## Haggar The Horrible



## Peanuts



## Blondie



## Crossword Puzzle

### CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

#### ACROSS

- 1 Commotion
- 5 Some hits
- 10 Castle of dance
- 12 Tube, to Brits
- 13 Indy events
- 14 Buenos
- 15 Greek vowel
- 16 Child's place when traveling
- 18 Conquer
- 20 Enzyme ending
- 21 Tarzan's pals
- 23 Rep.'s rival
- 24 On this spot
- 26 Methods
- 28 Williams of baseball
- 29 Stops working
- 31 Hurler's stat
- 32 Iterate
- 36 "Piece of cake!"
- 39 Carnival city
- 40 Had supper

S	A	L	A	D	S	S	C	A	R	
I	B	E	R	I	A	P	O	C	O	
T	E	T	O	N	S	O	N	T	O	
M	O	S	A	I	C					
P	I	C	A		P	L	E	B	E	
L	O	O		S	E	E	S	R	E	
A	N	N		E	R	R	N	A	G	
N	I	C	O	L	A	S		E	R	
S	C	E	N	E		O	D	D	S	
R	E	S	T	U	P					
P	U	T	T		E	L	A	T	E	
A	N	E	W		E	N	R	A	G	
D	O	D	O		M	A	T	R	O	N

Yesterday's answer

#### DOWN

- 1 Trite
- 2 Give
- 3 Greek addresses
- 4 Indivisible
- 5 Big name
- 6 Maui
- 7 By now
- 8 Satisfies
- 9 Method
- 11 Got away
- 17 Had supper
- 19 Plug's place
- 22 Darling
- 24 Jane Eyre, for one
- 25 "Lou Grant"
- 27 Nile
- 28 Sinew
- 30 Writer
- 33 Clear
- 34 Was
- 35 Rings under the weather
- 37 Make one's way
- 38 Whirl of water
- 42 Collar

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1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10			11		12			
13					14			
15				16	17			
18			19			20		
21				21		22		23
24	25				26	27		
28				29	30			
31				32		33	34	35
36			37	38		39		
40					41	42		
43					44			
45						46		

## Marmaduke



## The Family Circus

THE FAMILY CIRCUS By Bil Keane



## Flo & Friends



# Sports

## WT Men's and Women's basketball teams travel to ACU

CANYON, Texas — Lone Star Conference South action continues this week for the Buffs and No. 12 Lady Buffs as the teams hit the road to face Abilene Christian on Thursday followed by a match-up against Angelo State on Saturday.

Last week, the Lady Buffs — who are also ranked No. 1 in the South Central Region (as of Jan. 30) — improved to 16-3 overall and an unblemished 6-0 in LSC South play as they collected wins over Texas A&M-Kingsville and Texas Woman's, bumping their consecutive league win streak to 32 games. Also, the victory over TWU pushed WT's home win streak to 41 straight games.

Junior guard Emily Brister continues to lead the league in scoring with her 21.8 points per game average while she also leads the Lady Buffs in all but three major statistical categories. She is shooting .899 from the free throw line (116-of-129), .495 from the floor (137-of-277) and .352 from behind the arc (25-of-71); additionally, she has 137 rebounds (7.2 per game), 54 assists, 54 steals and 10 blocks.

The junior class as a whole has been solid for WT as Courtney Lee is averaging 12.0 points per game and 4.3 rebounds per game with 23 steals and 39 assists while Jamie Dreiling has tallied a 9.9 points per game average and a 5.0 rebounds per game average in addition to 23 steals and nine blocks. Chelsea Blackshear has come on strong in the last four games, sinking 7-of-17 (.412) long distance shots and 11-of-23 (.478) from the floor while also dishing out 12 assists. Starting point guard Dixie Bell has continued to be a work horse on the court and her efforts have paid off as of late—she has made 7-of-12 baskets from the floor and 5-of-9 from long range in addition to handing out 10 assists.

Freshman Joni Unruh has continued to play beyond her years as she is averaging 5.8 points per game on 37-of-82 made baskets from field goal range and 24-of-38 made free throws while also being a force under the basket with her 4.6 rebounds per game; she also has tallied 27 assists, 16 steals and five blocks.

Abilene Christian's Kristee Davidson was honored as the LSC South Player of the Week this week as she helped the Wildcats beat Tarleton State and Texas A&M-Kingsville. Junior Audrey Maxwell is ACU's leading scorer with 16.8 points per game, followed by senior Alex Guiton's 14.0 ppg average. The Wildcats enter the contest with an overall record of 10-9 and a 4-2 conference mark.

West Texas A&M men's hoops heads to ACU after a close win over Texas A&M-Kingsville last week, during which seniors Robert Lee and Kyle Shields scored 14 points apiece. Lee is averaging 20.6 points per game as he has made 40-of-74 baskets from the floor, 11-of-22 from three-point range and 12-of-19 from the charity stripe against conference opponents; overall he is averaging 16.0 points per game and has 37 assists and a team-high 25 steals.

The local Buffs, all from Amarillo, Texas, have proved to be a steady force as Tyler Cooper has grabbed 100 rebounds and scored 141 points (7.1 ppg), senior Chris Hinz has

tallied an average of 10.3 points per game and Shields has dished out a team-high 72 assists and has grabbed 19 steals.

Senior Andre Hill, a Brooklyn, N.Y. native, has 101 rebounds (5.1 rpg) and 174 (8.7 ppg) points and a team-high 29 blocked shots.

Abilene Christian's men (15-4, 2-2) will look to end a three-game losing streak against WT on Thursday. The Wildcats were ranked No. 14 in the country before losing to Midwestern State, Tarleton State and Texas A&M-Kingsville, which dropped them out of the national polls. ACU has three men in double-digit scoring as Corwin Ragland as 16.8 points per game, Dejan Sencanski is right behind him with 16.5 ppg and Brandon Callahan has 15.1 ppg. Sencanski and Stephen Musa have 130 and 108 rebounds, respectively, to lead the team in boards; Musa also has a team-high 25 blocks. Additionally, Ragland leads ACU in assists, with 88, while Callahan has a team-high 33 steals and 72 assists.



Pictured back row, left to right: Brooklyn Barker, Diana Mechelay, Sam Pearson, Aubrei Dourdy, Hayley Smith, Andi Hutto. Front row, left to right: Ashley Holland, Ashley Facio, Teryn Eubanks.

## JV girls end season with close game

The Randall girls JV basketball team defeat Pampa 52-47 Tuesday night.

The Lady Harvesters trailed 23-20 at the half and 37-34 after the 3rd.

Leading scorers were Andi

Hutto (14 points) and Teryn Eubanks (11 points).

Eubanks was a leading rebounder with 4 rebounds, as well as Andi Hutto, with 4 rebounds.

## Hidden Hills results

Seniors Scramble  
Hidden Hills  
Golf Course  
Feb. 6, 2008

**1st Place (60)**  
J. Brashears  
R. Cross  
M. Driver  
J. Gray

**2nd Place (63)**  
P. Montoya  
J. Davis  
C. Johnson  
B. Harwood

**3rd Place (64)**  
R.D. Stephens  
J. Gilbert  
B. Henderson  
J. Richardson

**4th Place (64)**  
B. Hammer  
J. Mathis  
H. Musgrave  
B. Brandon

**Closest to the Pin**  
R.D. Stephens (#6)  
T. Taylor (#15)



Senior Baseball Players Jacob Davis, Colden Fortenberry, Dakota Gowin and Shane Davis, along with the rest of the team and coaches are selling tickets for their annual Brisket Dinner. The dinner is Feb. 17, 2008 at the Pampa Optimist Club from 11 a.m. until 2 p.m. Adult tickets are \$10 each, and children 8 and under are \$5 each. Tickets will be sold at the door and there will be a carry-out and drive-thru service available.

## Pampa Optimist Club Basketball

The second week of action in Optimist Club boys basketball tipped off on Monday night at 6pm with the Great Plains Title & Abstract Buckeyes beating the Embridge Longhorns by a score of 37 to 13. Cade Engle led the way for the Buckeyes with 16 points and his 5 assist were for the most part directed at Landon Taylor who hustled his way to 10 points.

In the 7pm game the combination of Brandon Stokes (6 points) and Jonathan Stevens (8 points) was not enough to overcome the hot hand of the Nuggets Damon Walker who scored 28 points to help the Willis Oilfield Nuggets defeat the Alvey Law Mavericks 34 to 22.

The Late game featured the NBC Sonics defeating the Clifton Supply Pistons by a score of 25 to 12. Ethan Hunt led the charge for the Sonics with 10 points and Calvin Webb took over for the Pistons with 8 of their 12 points.

The action will heat up again on Thursday with 6 more games scheduled for this week. The Fenton Motor Cowboys will take on the K.C. Enterprise Irish at 6pm, the NBC Sonics and the Celtics play at 7pm and the late game will feature the Willis Oilfield Nuggets and the Clifton Supply Pistons.

The Pampa Optimist Club is a United Way Organization.

## Nowitzki sends Mavericks over Bucks

DALLAS (AP) — Dirk Nowitzki passed his way to his first career triple-double.

Nowitzki had 29 points, 10 rebounds and 12 assists as the Mavericks stretched their home winning streak to eight games with a 107-96 victory over the short-handed Milwaukee Bucks on Wednesday night.

"Getting the assist part of it has always been the problem," Nowitzki said. Not on this night.

Nowitzki consistently passed out of double-teams to open teammates as he registered his first career game with double-digit assists.

"I'm seeing more double-teams than I ever have in my career," Nowitzki said. "Before,

teams played me more one-on-one, but my post game has gotten better so I'm seeing more double-teams and I've been able to find the open guys."

Dallas' last triple-double was by Antoine Walker on Jan. 14, 2004, against Philadelphia with 11 points, 17 rebounds and 13 assists.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY for Friday, Feb. 8, 2008:

You'll have your hands full this year, as a particular associate or partner could be very demanding. Agreements and joint finances don't flow with the ease you might like. Not everyone you come into contact with will be easygoing. Optimism surrounds your thoughts. You recycle during your private or personal time. If you are single, many people appeal to you. Choosing Mr. or Miss Right could be an interesting and important process. If you are attached, the two of you need to work on one very important goal together. PISCES helps you spend your money.

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

ARIES (March 21-April 19)

★★★ You are not invincible. If you are tired or worn out by demands, try to call it an early day or, better yet, take some personal time. Ultimately it might be more important to recycle. Tonight: You don't need to tell.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

★★★★ You feel as if you can't give any more and cannot push any further. Take a much-needed timeout. Consider an option or a very different idea. Listen to your inner voice. Tonight: Do exactly what would make you happy.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

★★★ If you feel as if you are dragging while in a pressure cooker, don't worry. Not feeling 100 percent up to snuff would be normal. Though you have a must appearance, try not to push your-

self. You simply aren't going to be happy with the end results. Tonight: Meet up with a favorite person.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)

★★★★ Tap into your ingenuity, and you could be far more resourceful and dynamic than you thought possible. Knowing what you want could be instrumental to finding the path there. Brainstorm with others. Amazing ideas bubble forth. Tonight: In the whirl of life.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

★★★★ Deferring might be the best way to handle a partnership matter. Don't commit to financial involvement in any way shape or form. In a few days, you will be far more clear about what you want. Tonight: Special time with a special friend.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

★★★★ You are full of smiles and handle yourself in a very different manner. How you deal with a partner changes as you relax. Mix creativity and fun if you want to lighten up the moment. A child or new romance demands attention. Tonight: Enjoy the person you are with.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

★★★★ You add a lot to nearly any venture or involvement. Others count on your creativity, endurance and foresight. At first you easily could be overwhelmed by an implicit demand. Know what you desire. Tonight: TGIF with a co-worker or associate.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

★★★★ You might want to veer in a new direction. An obstacle could appear. It's your call whether to jump over it. Know that you have what it takes, no matter what. Your smile is a sure winner. Tonight: Let your imagination play out.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

★★★ Once more, if you can take today off, there really is no reason not to. Sometimes you go on overload and simply don't want to deal with what is dropped on your plate. Listen to feedback with an eye to security. Tonight: Don't stop at go; head home.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

★★★★ Your positive attitude can ride over a lot of hassles today. Don't stop if you feel frustrated. A problem can be reversed with a different perspective. Understanding will emanate if you listen more intently. Tonight: Where the action is.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

★★★ You might not always be as clear as you might like. At the same time, a partner could shut down, making a conversation close to impossible. Do for yourself at the present moment, but curb a tendency to overspend. Tonight: Treat yourself to a new CD or DVD.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

★★★★ You might be in the mood to conquer the world, but unfortunately a key partner, friend or associate could be the Prince or Princess of Negativity. This too will pass. Aim for what you want. Friends play a big role in your plans. Tonight: Wish upon a star.

BORN TODAY

Newsreader Ted Koppel (1940), author Jules Verne (1828), actor Nick Nolte (1941)

\*\*\*

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

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# Xcel seeks renewable energy

ROSWELL, N.M. — Xcel Energy's Southwestern Public Service Company (SPS) is seeking proposals for new renewable energy sources as part of its plan to diversify its renewable energy portfolio.

This solicitation will enable the company to comply with recently enacted regulatory requirements to add renewable generation resources and bring significant economic development and environmental benefits to New Mexico.

Texas customers of Xcel Energy will benefit from additional energy resources as well because the SPS system is interconnected across state lines, and power is shared between the two states.

SPS will require approximately 434,931 megawatt-hours of energy produced by renewable resources, or 10 percent of its New Mexico retail sales, beginning in 2011. This requirement increases to 15 percent of New Mexico retail sales beginning Jan. 1, 2015, followed by another increase beginning Jan. 1, 2020 to 20 percent of New Mexico retail sales.

As part of this solicitation, the company is seeking renewable generation from solar and other renewable technologies such as biomass and/or geothermal.

Contracts entered into will be subject to the Reasonable Cost Threshold, which ensures that

renewable energy technologies will not unduly raise customers' rates. Contracts may also be subject to explicit regulatory approval by the New Mexico Public Regulatory Commission.

Proposals are due back to the company by Monday, May 5. Energy and Renewable Energy Credits (RECs) associated with new projects and offered in response to this solicitation are required to have achieved commercial operations by January 2011. However, as circumstances warrant, SPS may entertain offers with planned commercial operation dates after Jan. 1, 2011.

RECs are environmental commodities that can be sold or traded. An REC represents proof that one megawatt-hour (MWh) of electricity was generated from an eligible renewable energy resource.

Xcel Energy (NYSE: XEL) is a major U.S. electricity and natural gas company with regulated operations in eight Western and Midwestern states. Xcel Energy provides a comprehensive portfolio of energy-related products and services to 3.3 million electricity customers and 1.8 million natural gas customers through its regulated operating companies. Company headquarters are located in Minneapolis. More information is available at [www.xcelenergy.com](http://www.xcelenergy.com).

## Word Find winner



Courtesy Photo

Kera Kent, left, from The Pampa News presents Janice Hubbard with \$25 Pampa Bucks for winning one of the Word Find contests in the paper recently. One of the other winners who was not photographed was J.B. Minyard who also won \$25 in Pampa Bucks.

### ECONOMY

## Retailers report weakest January results in nearly four decades

NEW YORK (AP) — The nation's retailers delivered more evidence of a stumbling economy Thursday, as merchants reported their weakest January performance in nearly four decades, extending a malaise that has deepened since the holiday shopping season.

The sales figures made it clear that consumers are wrestling with high gas and food prices, a slumping housing market, an escalating credit crisis and a weakening job market retrenched further, buying mostly necessities even when redeeming their holiday gift cards. The disappointments cut across all sectors including discounters like Wal-Mart Stores Inc., teen retailers including Pacific Sunwear of California Inc. and mall-based apparel chain Limited Brands Inc. Even affluent shoppers are pulling back, hurting stores like Nordstrom Inc.

"Clearly, this is a reflection of a very difficult environment for the consumer," said Ken Perkins, president of RetailMetrics LLC, a research company in Swampscott, Mass. "It looks like consumer spending is stalling."

Nonetheless, shares of a number of retailers rose as many either backed their earnings forecast or even raised guidance, signaling that they were able to control their inventories. Hot Topic Inc. and Wal-Mart stuck with their earnings forecast, while Pacific Sunwear, Wet Seal and Gap Inc. raised their profit outlooks despite sales drops.

The UBS-International Council of Shopping Centers preliminary sales tally of 43 retailers rose 0.5 percent in January, well below the original 1.5 percent forecast. The results followed an anemic 0.7 pace in December and were below last year's same-store sales average gain of 2.1 percent. Michael P. Niemira, chief economist, said

January's performance was the weakest ever, according to records that go back to 1970. It is based on same-store sales, or sales at stores open at least a year.

Thursday's results extended a streak of news that showed more signs of consumer strain. Consumers' spending accounts for two-thirds of economic activity, and their outlays appear to have stalled from an already slowing pace seen over the past year. Wal-Mart noted in

would only be temporary.

As Perkins said, if the job market continues to deteriorate, "all bets are off."

Janet Hoffman, managing partner of the North American retail division of the consulting firm Accenture, agreed, noting she expects "some relief" but nothing "radical."

"Consumers have exhausted all the avenues to get access to credit," she added.

Retailers are expected to offer a better picture of the impact of slower sales when they report fourth-quarter earnings over the next few weeks. The retail fiscal year ends in late January.

What might salvage earnings for some retailers is their efforts to control inventories; they're also expected to pare merchandise offerings further in the coming months to respond to slowing demand. Still, Wall Street profit expectations have been lowered in recent weeks — Perkins noted that fourth-quarter earnings growth for the 130 retailers he tracks is expected to be down 5.4 percent, compared to a 1.2 percent growth expected at the beginning of December.

Wal-Mart, the world's largest retailer, reported a 0.5 percent gain in same-store sales. Analysts surveyed by Thomson Financial had expected a 2.0 percent increase. The company said it continues to do well with staples like groceries but that home furnishings remain weak. Wal-Mart noted in its news release that gift card redemptions were below expectations and that customers appear to be holding gift cards longer and "using them more often for food and consumables rather than discretionary purchases."

Rival Target Corp. reported a 1.1 percent decline in same-store sales in January, worse than the 0.6 percent analysts expected.

*"Clearly, this is a reflection of a very difficult environment for the consumer. It looks like consumer spending is stalling."*

— Ken Perkins  
President of RetailMetrics LLC

its release Thursday that gift card redemptions were below expectations and that customers appear to be holding gift cards longer and "using them more often for food and consumables rather than discretionary purchases."

While consumers have had to contend with rising gas and food prices and a slumping housing market, there are signs that the job market is becoming a concern as well. On Friday, the Labor Department reported that U.S. employers sliced payrolls by 17,000, the first decline in more than four years. And on Thursday, the department said jobless claims fell last week by 22,000, but the decline was smaller than expected.

And while investors are hoping the Federal Reserve can avert a recession with a series of rate cuts, some economists say the moves may be too little, too late. Analysts also say that while the government's proposed economic stimulus package, which offers rebate checks for more than 100 million Americans, could help reignite spending, the lift

## Prisoner punches attorney

GEORGETOWN, Ky. (AP) — A public defender who was punched in court by a disgruntled client said Thursday he doesn't blame the man who gave him with two black eyes.

The disorder in the court, captured on video, happened Monday at Scott County Circuit Court after the judge refused defendant Peter Hafer's request for a new attorney.

Hafer, 30, of Cynthiana, told the judge he didn't trust his court-appointed lawyer, Doug Crickmer. As Judge Rob Johnson began to tell Hafer he couldn't choose his public defender, Hafer landed the first punch.

"I just couldn't take it anymore and I just snapped," Hafer said later at the Scott County jail.

Hafer hit the attorney several times in

the face and stomach. Hafer was restrained on the ground. Crickmer was admitted to Georgetown Community Hospital and released later that day. He said he will not file assault charges.

"I certainly don't fault him or blame him or wish him any ill will," Crickmer said Thursday on NBC's "Today" show. "I think Mr. Hafer was just frustrated. Like I said, he had been in jail for some time. ... I think he just got frustrated, fed up, and he just snapped and I was the nearest target."

Hafer was arrested in August on charges of burglarizing a K-Mart store in June.

As for his request for a new attorney, Hafer apparently will get his way. Authorities said a new one will be appointed.

## Top 5 lists for entertainment

### TELEVISION

1. Super Bowl: N.Y. Giants vs. New England, Fox.
  2. "Super Bowl Post Game," Fox.
  3. "House" (Sunday), Fox.
  4. "American Idol" (Tuesday), Fox.
  5. "American Idol" (Wednesday), Fox.
- (From Nielsen Media Research)

### FILM

1. "Hannah Montana & Miley Cyrus: Best of Both Worlds Concert (3-D)," Disney.
  2. "The Eye," Lionsgate.
  3. "27 Dresses," Fox.
  4. "Meet the Spartans," Fox.
  5. "Rambo," Lionsgate.
- (From Media By Numbers LLC)

### HOT FIVE

1. "Low," Flo Rida feat. T-Pain. Poe Boy/Atlantic.
  2. "With You," Chris Brown. Jive/Zomba.
  3. "Don't Stop the Music," Rihanna. SRP/Def Jam/IDJMG.
  4. "Apologize," Timbaland feat. OneRepublic. Mosley/Blackground/Interscope.
  5. "No One," Alicia Keys. MBK/JRMG.
- (From Billboard magazine)

### ALBUMS

1. "As I Am," Alicia Keys. MBK/JRMG. (Platinum)
  2. "Juno." Soundtrack. Rhino.
  3. "The Bedlam in Goliath," The Mars Volta. Universal/UMRG.
  4. "Scream Aim Fire," Bullet for My Valentine. 20-20 Ent./Jive/Zomba.
  5. "2008 Grammy Nominees." Various artists. Grammy/Hip-O/UME.
- (From Billboard magazine)

### CONCERT TOURS

1. The Police.
  2. Van Halen.
  3. Dane Cook.
  4. Billy Joel.
  5. Neil Young.
- (From Pollstar)

### VIDEO SALES

1. "Yoga Conditioning for Athletes," Gaian Video.
  2. "Sesame Street Presents: Follow That Bird," Warner Home Video. (Gold)
  3. "The Passion of the Christ," 20th Century Fox.
  4. "Grease (Anniversary Edition)," Paramount Home Entertainment.
  5. "Notting Hill," Universal Studios Home Video.
- (From Billboard magazine)

### VIDEO RENTALS

1. "The Game Plan," Buena Vista Home Entertainment.
  2. "Saw IV," Lionsgate Home Entertainment.
  3. "Good Luck Chuck," Lionsgate Home Entertainment.
  4. "3:10 to Yuma," Lionsgate Home Entertainment.
  5. "Mr. Woodcock," Warner Home Video.
- (From Billboard magazine)

### DVD SALES

1. "The Game Plan," Buena Vista Home Entertainment.
2. "Saw IV," Lionsgate Home Entertainment.
3. "Good Luck Chuck," Lionsgate Home Entertainment.
4. "Family Guy Presents Blue Harvest," 20th Century Fox.
5. "3:10 to Yuma," Lionsgate Home

## Angelina Jolie visits Baghdad to highlight plight of Iraqi refugees

BAGHDAD (AP) — Angelina Jolie brought her star power to Baghdad on Thursday on a mission as a U.N. goodwill ambassador to highlight the plight of Iraqi refugees.

The actress said there needs to be a more coherent plan as the more than 2 million internally displaced Iraqis begin to trickle back to their homes amid a recent lull in vio-

lence that had threatened to spark a civil war in the country.

"There's lots of goodwill and lots of discussion, but there seems to be just a lot of talk at the moment," Jolie said in excerpts of an interview aired on CNN.

"What happens in Iraq and how Iraq settles in the years to come is going to affect the entire Middle East," she added. "And a big

part of what it's going to affect, how it settles, is how these people are returned and settled into their homes and their community and brought back together and whether they can live together and what their communities look like."

Jolie's itinerary included meetings with the top U.S. commander in Iraq Gen. David Petraeus, Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-

Maliki and Iraqi migration officials during her visit, according to the American Embassy.

AP Television News footage also showed the Academy Award-winning actress mingling with American troops during lunch at a dining facility in the heavily guarded Green Zone, which houses the embassy and Iraqi government offices in central Baghdad.

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## Junior High



COURTESY PHOTO

Sherese Oles, a counselor at Pampa Junior High School, recently accepted a contribution in the amount of \$800 from Wal-Mart. Kelly Cox, co-manager of the local store, presented the check to Oles on behalf of Wal-Mart.

## Southern towns to try to rebuild after twisters

LAFAYETTE, Tenn. (AP) — County Mayor Shelvy Linville could only shake his head at the horrific toll left by a deadly series of tornadoes that pounded across the South.

"It really is unbelievable that Mother Nature can create that much devastation," he said Wednesday evening

at his Macon County home. "We need your prayers."

Rebuilding has barely begun in this northern Tennessee community and in the others where dozens of tornadoes ripped across Arkansas, Mississippi, Tennessee, Kentucky and Alabama, killing at least 55 people and injuring hun-

dreds more in the nation's deadliest set of twisters in more than two decades.

"I'm surprised that I'm alive," said Telia Sorrells, 24, who survived one twister that left only parts of two walls standing in her home. A gash on her head required eight staples at a hospital to close.

## Spell

Continued from Page 4

section without any help from the Web master. While other blogging tools exist, I haven't seen any quite as simple as Blogger.

Where Did They Come From? ...

As to history, most people attribute the first Weblog to Wil Wheaton. Does that name sound familiar? He played Wesley Crusher, that sniveling, boy-genius ensign on "Star Trek: The Next Generation." His

blogs are quite interesting and often funny. Anyway, check out his site (<http://www.wilwheaton.net/>).

Not everyone is cut out for blogging. However, it's not a contest. Anyone can post anything on the Web. That's the beauty and bane of this cyber-culture we live in. To weed out some of the ego-blogs and otherwise boring postings, check out the Blogger site. They have some great links to popular blogs. Before you start your own, I HIGHLY recommend you read some of these to determine what "works" and what "doesn't."

See you in Cyberspace!

## Bryant

Continued from Page 4

midst of the media's frenzy over Obama's anointing, Baker wrote, "none found time to mention" the item.

—NewsBusters Jan. 28

Rudy Refuses to Sink to NY Times' Level

Bob Schieffer — sounding like the NY Times's chief water boy Sunday on Face the Nation — joined the leftist media in piling on Rudy Giuliani in true liberal kick-'em-while-they're-down style. Schieffer dredged up the NYT's editorial charge last week that Rudy's "arrogance" and "vindictiveness" was "breathtaking" and wanted to know what Giuliani thought about that. Refusing to lower himself to the ad hominem level of his "hometown paper," Giuliani simply pointed out that the NY Times ideologically opposed just about everything he did in his tenure as NYC Mayor. The exchange, wrote MRC's Brent Baker, presumed

Giuliani "should be ashamed and defensive" by the NYT attack, "instead of seeing it, as any conservative would, as a badge of honor."

—CyberAlert Jan. 28, NewsBusters Jan. 28

STOP THE PRESSES: Hillary Might Cry Again! Stay Tuned!

On Good Morning America last Friday, Robin Roberts wanted to know if Hillary Clinton plans to cry again anytime soon, reports MRC's Scott Whitlock. Proving Clinton is still getting a pass from the liberal media, Roberts "blithely accepted the New York Senator's claim to be focusing her campaign on what

can be done for America," and fired puffballs her way including: "I'm sure your tone will be well received this morning." And: "Do you believe that your strategy of emphasizing your experience is paying off?" "But," wrote Whitlock, the cry-baby thing was "the most over-the-top question: 'It has been a grueling campaign thus far, another hard week. Turning point for you, one of the turning points in New Hampshire when you just really let your emotion, really come through. Have you felt that similar emotion since that time?'"

—CyberAlert Jan. 28 and NewsBusters Jan. 25

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## Stimulus

Cont. from Page 4

more money while refusing to address runaway spending especially the entitlement spending bomb only increases the downside potential. Equally bad, foreign investors could lose more confidence in the U.S. economy, driving down the dollar even further and stoking inflation. U R L : <http://www.mysa.com>

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