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Preparing for the Little Red Schoolhouse show
 Lois Minnick makes concrete leaves in various colors which she shows and sells at the annual Little Red Schoolhouse Arts and Crafts Show and Sale. This year will be the 21st year for the annual event, which is scheduled for 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Nov. 7 and 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Nov. 8 at the Little Red Schoolhouse, located on Highway 70 about four miles north of the highway's intersection with Loop 171. A variety of local artisans show and sell their handmade creations at the event.

Second county budget hearing set for 9 a.m. Tuesday

by Marilyn Powers
 mpowers@thepampanews.com

The second of two public hearings on Gray County's proposed fiscal year 2009 budget and property tax rate will be held during their 9 a.m. meeting Tuesday in the second-floor courtroom of Gray County Courthouse, 205 N. Russell.

The first hearing was held Wednesday. Two residents attended and asked questions which commissioners answered.

The proposed county tax rate for 2009 is .44673 cents per \$100 valuation of taxable property. The 2008 tax rate is .47326 cents per \$100 valuation.

The proposed county budget, which is available for public inspection at the county clerk's office on the second floor of the courthouse, totals \$11,679,129 before changes made during recent budget talks. The majority of the changes which have been made have resulted in a reduced amount allocated to a department or fund.

The fiscal 2008 budget is \$11,004,455.

Part of the increase in the 2009 budget is a result of rising fuel costs, said County Judge Richard Peet. Some requests by department heads for personnel and/or equipment have been turned down, and some entities' budgets are lower than for 2008 due to completion of projects such as building

See Budget, Page 8

Program will enforce disabled parking space law

by Marilyn Powers
 mpowers@thepampanews.com

Pampa Police Department is offering a Volunteer Disabled Parking Enforcement Program to persons who are interested in volunteering to check disabled parking spaces around the city for violators.

Volunteers in the program must first complete an application and pass an extensive background check prior to being accepted into the program, said Pampa PD Sgt. Donny Brown.

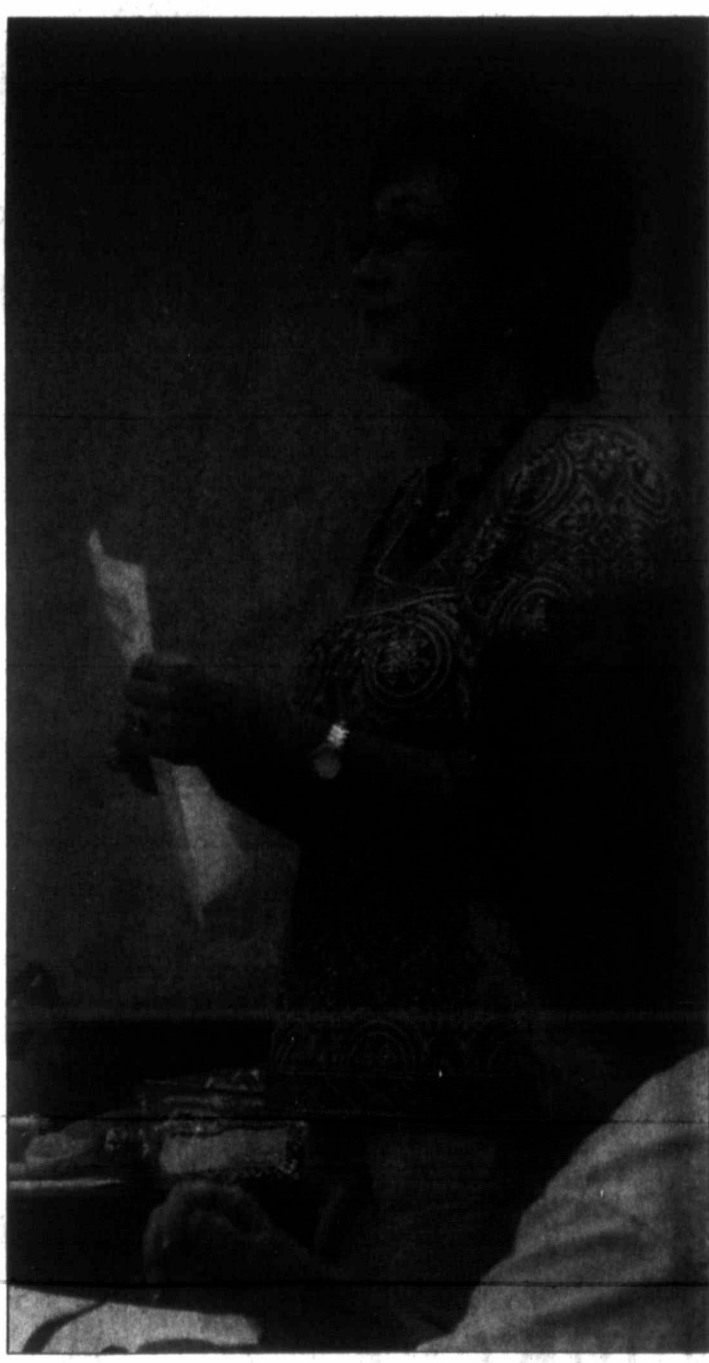
Participants must also complete a four-hour training class, scheduled for Sept. 15, and spend two to four hours riding with a uniformed officer before assuming their volunteer duties.

"In June, the Pampa City Commission approved the utilization of citizen volunteers to enforce laws related to disabled parking violations," Brown said. "With the number of complaints we've had, it was decided to start the program."

Volunteers will not be reimbursed for their time or fuel. Participants in the program will be able to issue citations for disabled parking violations, but will not have any power to enforce or issue citations for any other traffic laws.

A disabled parking violation is a Class C misdemeanor, punishable by a \$257 fine, according to a representative of Pampa Municipal Court.

Anyone interested in becoming a volunteer in the disabled parking enforcement program may call Brown at 669-5700.






staff photo/S. Pribble
 Sharon Andrews, a graduate student at Southern Methodist University, promoted awareness of dyslexia at Altrusa which met at the Pampa Senior Citizens Center on Tuesday, Aug. 26. Andrews is pursuing her master's degree in academic language therapy and volunteers as a parent advocate for dyslexic children in area schools.

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The Gray County Association for Retarded Citizens Trail Ride is scheduled for September 13. It is open to the public and will be held at T. Boone Pickens' Ranch.
 For info call Imogene McMinn at 669-1361. **ON THE TRAIL**

NEXT DAY FORECAST

Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
		
Cloudy	Cloudy	Cloudy

Monday: A 20 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms. Mostly cloudy, with a high near 84. South wind between 15 and 20 mph, with gusts as high as 25 mph.

Monday Night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 66. South wind around 15 mph, with gusts as high as 25 mph.

Tuesday: A 20 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms. Mostly cloudy, with a high near 84. South wind 10 to 15 mph becoming east.

Tuesday Night: A 20 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 56. North-northeast wind around 15 mph, with gusts as high as 20 mph.

Wednesday: A 20 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms. Mostly cloudy, with a high near 81. Northeast wind between 10 and 15 mph, with gusts as high as 20 mph.

Wednesday Night: A 20 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 59.

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Obituaries

Services tomorrow

HAYES, Vicki Lynn — 10 a.m., First Christian Church, Pampa.

HANDLING RABIES

DSHS offers several tips

on avoiding exposure

AUSTIN — Many Texans continue to enjoy outdoor activities into the late summer and early fall days. But Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) health officials warn that September and October often have the highest number of laboratory-confirmed rabies cases.

Last year, 114 rabies cases were reported in September, 93 of those in bats. The only month with a higher total was March with 116 cases out of 969 cases for the year. In 2006, 120 rabies cases were reported in September and another 109 cases in October, most in bats.

While these numbers can be eye-opening, DSHS

health officials say there are things that you can do to keep from being exposed to the rabies virus.

"The most important thing that people can do is to have their animals vaccinated against rabies and keep those vaccinations up to date," said Dr. Tom Sidwa, DSHS veterinarian who heads the department's Zoonosis Control Branch. "State law requires that you have your dogs and cats vaccinated against rabies by a veterinarian."

DSHS also offers this advice:

- Keep cats and ferrets indoors and keep dogs indoors or in a fenced yard.
- Spay or neuter pets to prevent unwanted animals that may not receive proper care.

- Teach children not to play with any animal that they do not know, even if the animal seems friendly.

- Avoid animals, both domestic and wild, that appear disoriented, fearless or aggressive. Nighttime animals such as bats, raccoons and skunks that are active in the daytime may be sick.

- Do not touch any wild animal that appears ill or dead. Call your local animal control or local health department for help.

- Don't attract wild animals to your yard. Avoid leaving pet food outdoors, and keep garbage in closed containers.

- Stay away from wild animals, and never keep a wild animal as a pet.

- Prevent bats from entering the home where they might come in contact with people or pets. You cannot, however, get rabies just from seeing a bat from a distance.

- If you find a bat in a room with an unattended child, a sleeping person or anyone who cannot reliably say what happened, leave the room, close the door and call your local rabies control or local health department to capture the bat and have it tested for rabies. Do not touch the bat yourself.

- Have domestic ferrets, wolf-dog hybrids and livestock, especially those that are in frequent contact with humans, vaccinated against rabies.

Rabies is a viral illness that affects the central nervous system. Once symptoms of rabies occur, it is almost always fatal. However, a series of post-exposure shots, if given in time, can prevent rabies from developing.

Humans and all warm-blooded animals can get rabies. You can be infected with the rabies virus through the bite of an infected animal. Though rare, you also can get rabies if the saliva from an infected animal gets directly into your nose, eyes, mouth or a fresh wound.

Rabies is a medical urgency not an emergency, but decisions must not be delayed. If you or someone in your family is bitten, DSHS recommends that you:

- Wash the wound immediately and thoroughly with soap and warm water. Apply an antiseptic if available.

- Seek prompt medical care if an animal bites you or you believe that you may have been exposed to rabies.

Your health care provider will determine if a series of rabies shots is

needed. Report all animal bites to your local rabies control authority as soon as possible so the animal can be quarantined or tested if needed. Be able to describe the kind of animal, its size and color as completely as possible if it has not already been captured.

High-risk animals for rabies in Texas are skunks, bats, raccoons, foxes and coyotes.

Rabbits, hares and small rodents such as squirrels, rats, mice, hamsters, guinea pigs, gerbils and chipmunks are rarely found to be infected with rabies and have not been known to cause rabies in humans in the United States. Dogs, cats, horses and cattle are the most frequently reported rabid domestic animals in Texas.

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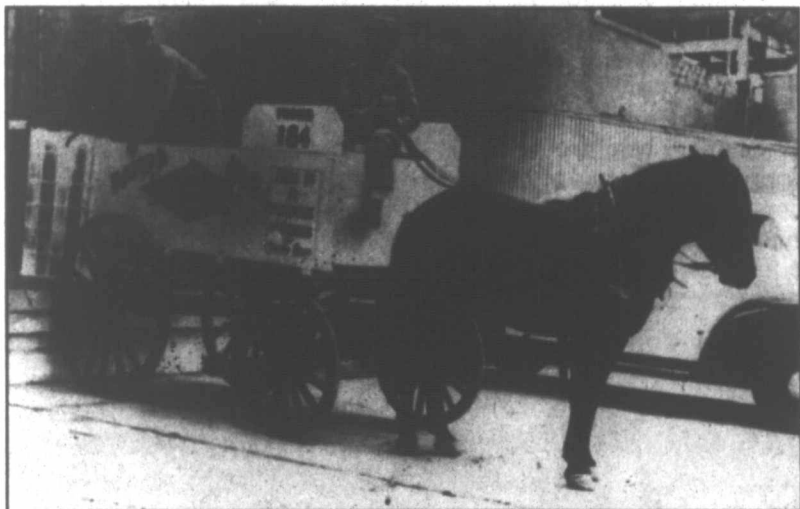
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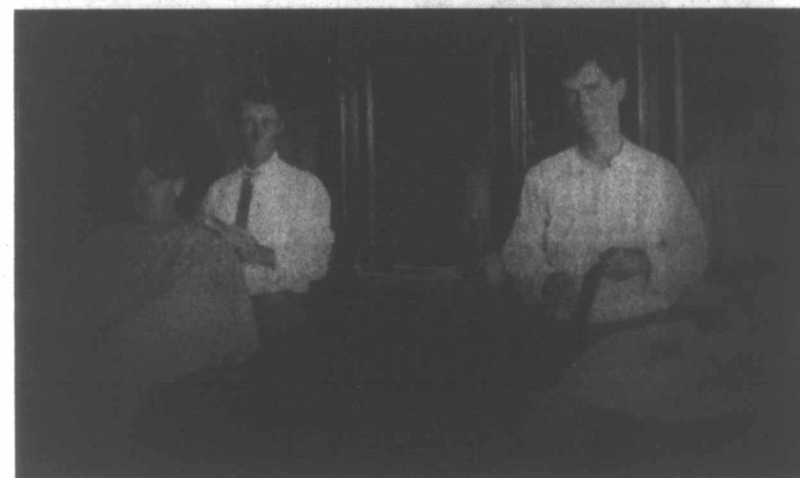
LABOR DAY



As the Industrial Revolution took hold of the nation, the average American in the late 1800s worked 12-hour days, seven days a week in order to make a basic living. Children were also working, as they provided cheap labor to employers and laws against child labor were not strongly enforced.



With the long hours and terrible working conditions, American unions became more prominent and voiced their demands for a better way of life. On Tuesday September 5, 1882, 10,000 workers marched from city hall to Union Square in New York City, holding the first-ever Labor Day parade. Participants took an unpaid day-off to honor the workers of America, as well as vocalize issues they had with employers. As years passed, more states began to hold these parades, but Congress would not legalize the holiday until 12 years later.



On May 11, 1894, workers of the Pullman Palace Car Company in Chicago struck to protest wage cuts and the firing of union representatives. They sought support from their union led by Eugene V. Debs and on June 26 the American Railroad Union called a boycott of all Pullman railway cars. Within days, 50,000 rail workers complied and railroad traffic out of Chicago came to a halt. On July 4, President Grover Cleveland dispatched troops to Chicago. Much rioting and bloodshed ensued, but the government's actions broke the strike and the boycott soon collapsed. Debs and three other union officials were jailed for disobeying the injunction. The strike brought worker's rights to the public eye and Congress declared, in 1894, that the first Monday in September would be the holiday for workers, known as Labor Day.



The founder of Labor Day remains unclear, but some credit either Peter McGuire, co-founder of the American Federation of Labor, or Matthew Maguire, a secretary of the Central Labor Union, for proposing the holiday.

Although Labor Day is meant as a celebration of the labor movement and its achievements, it has come to be celebrated as the last, long summer weekend before Autumn.

Photos Courtesy Of
 White Deer Land Museum

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Viewpoints

The Stennett near Stinnett

I was looking at my trusty Rand McNally atlas trying determine the distance between Colorado Springs and Pampa when my hand accidentally crossed over the town of Stinnett.

I was flabbergasted that such a town existed, and that it was located very close to where I was moving.

Immediately, I started dreaming of taking pictures of myself, Rachel C. Stennett, in Stinnett. I pictured myself with arms spread open hugging the granite/concrete-ish sign that says "Welcome to Stinnett."

My parents were both born and raised in Amarillo, and it has been a long-standing rumor that we are directly related to any Stennett on the face of earth (there aren't that many), even Stennetts who spell the family name "Stinnett." I envisioned myself going to Stinnett and finding my long lost twin.

I haven't had a chance to travel to Stinnett, but already I can feel the impact the town is having on my life.

Anyone who doesn't carry the last name

of Anderson, Smith, or McCain is probably acquainted with having their last name spelled incorrectly. I'm used to it. In my name, people normally leave out an "n" or "e" or "t" because there are an abundance of them. I can handle that. Give me Stennet, Stenet, Stent and I can cope, but I am having to get use to Stinnett.

Something important to know is that Stennett is not pronounced the way that the town of Stinnett is. The town, from what I have been told, is said like (s -sound) (tin) (net). The tin and net both have a strong emphasis. My name is similar but instead of the tin sound, there is a ten sound, and no emphasis. You just spit out Stennett all in one breath.

I can handle mispronunciation, but what I have learned is that there is an assumption that someone so close to the town of Stinnett, with the last name of Stennett, is strange. People think I should be Stinnett, as if the

"e" difference is making me an illegitimate child in the Stennett heritage line. So, instead of people telling me to my face that my version of Stennett is strange and perverse, they simply are starting to spell my name Stinnett.



Rachel Stennett
Staff Writer

I received my official press badge from the Pampa Police Department a few weeks ago, which is a significant milestone in my post-college, four-week career. My editor handed me the badge and jubilantly

I read over it and saw to my heartbreak: "Rachel Stinnett: Reporter". If the Pampa Police think I should be Rachel Stinnett, maybe they are right.

I wasn't set on it though, that is until Stinnett starting popping up everywhere. Stinnett reared it's head when I least expected it. While filling up my gas tank I heard "Stennett...huh, haven't seen it like that before" or even when I was telling someone

my e-mail address.

The conversation went like this. "My e-mail is rstennett, like Stinnett with an e."

"With a what?"

"E, as in Edward."

"Well...(insert awkward pause full of malice) I've never heard it like that...(more malice here)"

If you would have heard the tone, you too would have felt like you had just committed a felony, or robbed Poky the clown, or shot a possum. I had done something, or been named something, that defies nature - but not in a cool way like the mangrove killfish who spends several months a year out of the water living in trees.

The point here is, next time you come across a Stennett, or even a Stinnett, show some love. At least it's not John Jacob Jingleheimer Schmidt; a name like that is fair game.

The neoconservative ideology is flawed

The basic flaw in the neoconservative ideology is that democracy cannot be imposed on other people at the point of a gun.

Furthermore, if neoconservatives came from an American tradition rather than a Trotskyite tradition, they would understand that America itself is not a democracy. Benjamin Franklin emerged from the Constitutional Convention and a lady asked him, "Well, Mr. Franklin, what kind of government have you given us?"

He did not say democracy. He replied, "Madam, we have given you a republic - if you can keep it."

A republic and a democracy are two different animals. A democracy, which can actually work only in a very small country, allows citizens to vote on every issue. A republic allows citizens to elect representatives, who then use their own judgment to decide issues. If the citizens disagree with the representatives' decisions, they can replace them at the next election.

Furthermore, mere elections are not what define America's unique form of freedom. Today, practically every country in the world has elections, most of dubious validity. What most countries lack is a commitment on the part of their individual citizens to the concept of human rights, which cannot be legitimately abrogated by government.

For us, that concept took centuries of thought and conflicts to mature. It began at Runnymede when some barons presented a British king with demands that became known as the Magna

Charley Reese

Columnist



Carta. It placed limits on the king's powers and defined certain rights not only for the aristocracy but for the common folk, too. And the barons were there with their swords to make sure the king understood that it was not negotiable.

A great deal of blood was shed and words written and spoken before the concept matured. Today it's found mainly in what in politically incorrect days were called the Anglo-Saxon countries - the United Kingdom, Canada, the United States, Australia and New Zealand. Our form of freedom is a gift from our English-speaking ancestors. In other parts of the world, government went off in different directions, even those we consider more or less free. But their concept of freedom is not the same as ours.

Ours is best summed up in the Declaration of Independence. All men are given unalienable rights by God. The sole purpose of government is to protect those rights. When a government instead abuses those rights, then the people have the right and the duty to overthrow it and create a new government.

Some Americans today are so stupid and/or ignorant of their country's history that if you asked them if people have the right to overthrow a government, they would reply in the negative. I had a professor who asked that question, and in a class of

more than 30 students, only four of us said "Yes."

For God's sake, if you're going to claim to be an American, at least read the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution and the Federalist Papers. A good history of England and America certainly wouldn't

hurt. Our concepts of a free society are as foreign to the Arabs (and the rest of the non-Anglo-Saxon world) as Arabic and Chinese are to us. If Allah wills, they might evolve their own version of a more or less free society, but it will not be like ours. And they darn sure are not going

to accept anything imposed on them at the point of a gun by "infidels."

George W. Bush is dead-wrong to believe he's been anointed by God to spread democracy. He was merely barely elected to serve the people of the United States in accordance with our Constitution. Even that

appears to be more than he can handle. But if he tries to lead a crusade against the Muslim world, he will meet the same fate as the earlier Crusaders - defeat and disgrace.

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



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Texas Thoughts

By The Associated Press

A sample of editorial opinion around Texas:

■ Aug. 25
Fort Worth Star-Telegram on the sentence of Salim Ahmed Hamdan: Salim Ahmed Hamdan, who once worked as Osama bin Laden's driver, isn't the worst of the accused terrorists the United States is holding at the Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, military compound. Even the Pentagon doesn't argue that he is.

So, why does it appear that the Bush administration intends to hold Hamdan interminably, even after he's served the sentence that a panel of six senior military officers decided is appropriate?

Could be a way of claiming unlimited presidential powers in an unconventional war; of sending a message of "toughness" toward anyone who might associate with terrorists; of refusing to acknowledge that a process the administration fought to curtail produced a fair result despite its shortcomings.

Whatever the administration's motivation, it would be unjust and another blow to U.S. credibility to subvert the findings of the military commission that tried and convicted Hamdan.

And he was convicted of providing material support to terrorism.

But the officers acquitted him of

more serious conspiracy charges, concluding that government prosecutors hadn't proved he plotted with al Qaeda members to commit terrorist attacks.

The panel determined that Hamdan should serve 66 months for that offense. And Navy Capt. Keith J. Allred, the trial judge, decided that Hamdan should get 61 months' credit for time already spent at Guantanamo, leaving him only five months to serve.

According to news accounts of the trial, the officers heard testimony that Hamdan swore an oath to bin Laden, but Hamdan said he had not. They also heard secret testimony, including an assertion that he had cooperated with interrogators from early on after being captured in November 2001 while trying to leave Afghanistan.

Evidence included a written statement from Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, another Guantanamo captive who has called himself the "executive director of 9-11." Mohammed's testimony called Hamdan, a Yemeni who earned \$200 a month, unfit to plan or execute terrorist activity, according to a McClatchy Newspapers report.

Hamdan was among the first captives designated "enemy combatants" to challenge his detention, and his case resulted in the Supreme Court ruling that the military commissions system that the administration initially set up

to try "enemy combatants" such as Hamdan was illegal.

In the revised system under which Hamdan was tried, his conviction and sentence will be reviewed by a Pentagon official and then can be appealed to a military court, a federal appellate court and the Supreme Court.

But even if the sentence stands as is, the administration has indicated that it considers Hamdan a continuing threat who should not be released.

If the American justice system stands for anything, it is that those who are accused of crimes receive due process and, if convicted, are punished in proportion to their wrongdoing. In Hamdan's case, a panel of military officers evaluated the evidence and passed judgment. It seems a reasonable one, considering what's been made public.

There certainly are highly dangerous terrorists being held at Guantanamo Bay. And there might be cases in which the president must use extraordinary measures to keep them from carrying out other horrendous deeds. But the government hasn't shown justification for holding Hamdan longer than his sentence.

There are more sinister men to focus the nation's resources on punishing and putting out of business. URL: <http://www.star-telegram.com>

THE PAMPA NEWS

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Dear Abby...

By Pauline & Jeanne Phillips

DEAR ABBY: When my wife sees lingerie she likes in a store, she asks me to buy it for her birthday or our anniversary. The problem is, she'll wear the item only once and never wear it again. She has a fortune in lingerie in her dresser drawer just taking up space. I hate wasting money. Do you have any advice for me? — **FREDERICK, BUT NOT IN HOLLYWOOD**

DEAR FRED: I see your point and do have a few thoughts on the subject. First, you are a sweet and generous husband to give your wife the lingerie she's requesting. Now: Allow me to share a feminine secret. When women spy a display of "fabulous" lingerie, we often fantasize that we'll look like Giselle Bundchen when we put it on. Sadly, when there's no one to airbrush the image, that often doesn't turn out to be the case. Also, lingerie displayed in a shop window isn't always practical for everyday wear. It may not offer enough support, look lumpy under outerwear, or worse, turn out to be scratchy. Before the next special occasion, suggest to your wife that you go shopping together. That way, perhaps you and she can select something wearable, practical and pretty — and you won't feel so frustrated.

DEAR ABBY: I am writing this letter to make amends to a former co-worker. This incident happened years ago. I have no idea where this lady is, or I would say it directly, but I am hoping she will see it in your column. "Dear Former Co-Worker: Many years ago, your husband sexually molested your daughter. It was in the paper and on the news. You came to work every day looking distraught, and I did and said nothing. I didn't know what to say and didn't want to add to your pain, so I didn't speak up. I have always regretted it. I felt your sorrow and respected your courage. I want you to know that I cared about you and what you and your daughter were going through. I'm sorry I didn't have the

courage to say a kind or sympathetic word. "I still think of you and wish I hadn't held back. I know what a hard time this was for you on many levels. I sincerely apologize and hope you and your daughter are OK. I also hope you can forgive me for being a coward." — **YOUR FORMER CO-WORKER, LESLIE**

DEAR LESLIE: I, too, hope your former co-worker sees your letter. However, whether she does or not, it sets an example for others who see someone in distress and don't know how to reach out. When someone is in pain, knowing that someone cares can be of great comfort.

DEAR ABBY: I grew up in a family of girls. Our parents always told us we could do anything a boy could do, and we did. However, when our brother was born, everything changed. He is now 40 and has never been able to hold a job longer than a month. He has a college degree, a wife who works and three wonderful little girls. Our parents are in their 80s and continue to pay his bills! Mom even takes his clothes to the cleaners. How can we get our brother to stop taking advantage of our parents? — **BIG SISTER IN TEXAS**

DEAR BIG SISTER: I think you have it backward. By turning your brother into an object of worship and failing to teach him responsibility and independence, your parents have done all they could to allow themselves to be taken advantage of.

For Better Or Worse



Zits



Garfield



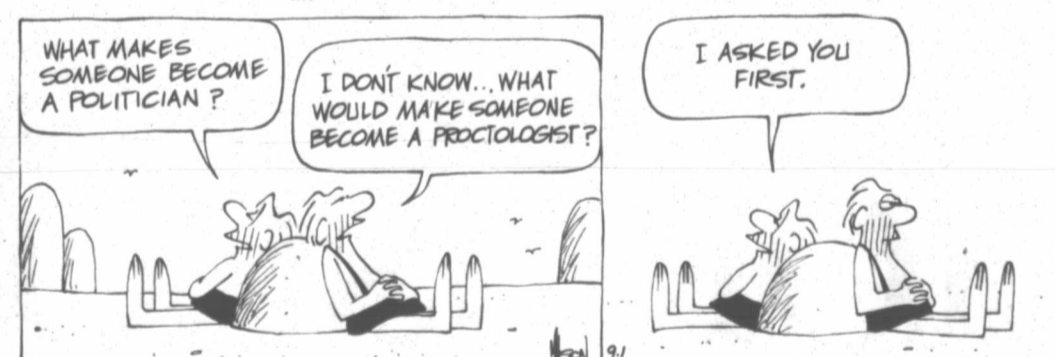
Beetle Bailey



Marvin



B.C.



Haggar The Horrible



Peanuts



Blondie



Crossword Puzzle

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

- ACROSS** 39 Told tales
1 Place in a 40 Do's and TV lineup
5 Forest 41 Finishes worries
10 Plumbing 1 Nutmeg, piece for one
11 Stadiums 2 Add zest to
13 "Terrible" czar
14 Calder 3 Eye-popping prints
15 Sure 4 Octopus arm
17 Tonic's partner
18 Requires 5 Clan
19 Came together 6 Some golf clubs
20 Holler 7 Yank's foe
21 Gasp for breath 8 Puzzles chef
22 Very much 9 Prominent
25 Green sauce 12 Targeted, as with a mailing underage
- DOWN**
1 Nutmeg, piece for one
2 Add zest to
3 Eye-popping prints
4 Octopus arm
5 Clan
6 Some golf clubs
7 Yank's foe
8 Puzzles chef
9 Prominent
12 Targeted, as with a mailing underage
16 Light ring
21 Five-pointed star
22 Like an abacus
23 Like a barbecue chef
24 Actual Olympic medals
25 Role charged atom
29 Dunkable
30 Egg-head
31 Was under the weather
32 Some

ALCAP	PROTS
BALLET	ECHO
ADULTS	RAIL
TENTS	DUNNO
ERGO	NONAME
LEIS	DAD
MIDDLEMAN	
CAN	GERE
RIFLES	MAID
ELIAS	HORNE
AMEN	LUPINE
SALE	ERASED
ENDS	ELDERS

Saturday's answer

NEW CROSSWORD BOOK! Send \$4.75 (check/m.o.) to Thomas Joseph Book 1, P.O. Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	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

Marmaduke



The Family Circus

THE FAMILY CIRCUS By Bil Keane



Flo & Friends



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Clint Allen, a teacher at Pampa Junior High, passes out pizza to 6th graders at the 6th grade orientation.

Budget

Continued from Front Page repairs.

"This budget will raise more total property taxes than last year's budget by \$393,562, which is a 6.38 percent increase, and of that amount, \$47,232 is tax revenue to be raised from new property added to the tax roll this year," Peet said.

Budget-related items on Tuesday's agenda include budget amendments, the county's retirement rate for fiscal 2009 and approval of a part-time employee in the Election Administrator's office as recommended by the joint elections commission, comprised of representatives of each taxing entity in the county.

Contracts and leases which will be considered in Tuesday's meeting are a contract for tax assessment and collection services for various taxing entities, renewal of a contract for Fiscal 2009-2010 with the state attorney general's office for child

support payments, a copier lease for the county clerk's office, a lease agreement with RDS Aviation for a new hangar at the north end of the current hangar locations at Perry LeFors Airport, and a lease agreement with Bourland and Leverich for a new hangar at the south end of the current hangar locations at Perry LeFors Airport.

Bids on tax-delinquent property will be presented for approval. A proposal to change the name of Main Street in Alanreed to Alanreed Main will be heard.

Commissioners will consider an engagement letter from Doshier, Pickens and Francis for an external audit for the fiscal year ending Sept. 30.

Also on Tuesday's agenda is a memorandum of understanding between the county and the Supreme Court of Texas for support of continuity of court operations in the event of an emergency, along with payment of bills and salaries.

As summer ends, flyers brace for airline changes

ATLANTA (AP) — The grip U.S. airlines have on travelers' wallets is about to get tighter as carriers go ahead with plans to trim their domestic schedules due to the high cost of fuel.

Executives acknowledge that despite the economic downturn, fares will rise, discounts currently available will be scarce, and routes and frequencies of flights will be reduced as domestic capacity is cut through the end of the year. The changes starting in September come on top of a litany of new charges — for luggage, drinks, pillows and other amenities — announced by some airlines earlier this year.

"Airline travel is airline travel — it's been bad for a long time," Chris Bardasian, an American Airlines frequent flyer, said recently at Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport. "I suspect prices will go up, fewer people will travel, and if you're willing to pay the price it will be fine."

There were sharp capacity cuts during prior weak economic periods in the early 1990s and between 2001 and 2003, but fares

went down as discount carriers moved in and filled the void, offering more competition, analysts said. But the high price of oil, airlines' limited ability to further cut certain costs and the fact that many of the discount carriers are facing the same difficulties as the big carriers make things different this time, analysts said.

"Despite this sluggish U.S. economy, the general demand picture is better than it was post-9/11," said Standard & Poor's analyst Philip Baggaley. "In addition, you have this consistent response across the board of airlines raising fares and adding fees."

On average, domestic fares between large metro cities are already up roughly 16 percent since Jan. 2, while fares between small cities are up roughly 37 percent year-to-date, according to Rick Seaney, head of airfare research site FareCompare.com.

The cheapest roundtrip ticket with a 10-day advance purchase, for example, on an American Airlines flight from Chicago to New York cost \$258 on Aug. 26,

excluding government and airport fees. That was an 87 percent increase from the \$138 it cost on Jan. 2 for a similar advance purchase, according to FareCompare.com. The cheapest roundtrip ticket with a 21-day advance purchase on a United Airlines flight from Denver to Washington cost \$382 on Aug. 26, excluding government and airport fees. That was a 37 percent increase from the \$278 it cost on Jan. 2, Seaney said.

Recently announced airfare sales for travel during the traditionally slow fall season will be harder to come by as more capacity comes out of the system in the last four months of the year.

"If somebody sees a good fare, they should grab it," said Kevin Healy, senior vice president of marketing and planning for AirTran Airways.

Booking early for travel during peak times like the holiday season generally can get you a cheaper ticket than waiting until the last minute. But, airlines usually do not offer fare sales for travel over the holidays.

American Airlines, United Airlines, Delta Air Lines, Northwest Airlines, Continental Airlines, US Airways, JetBlue Airways, AirTran and Alaska Airlines plan to cut domestic capacity during the third and fourth quarters by single- to double-digit margins.

JetBlue, for instance, in September will end service between several cities, including Boston to San Francisco and Washington to Las Vegas. Southwest Airlines Co., which had resisted the kinds of capacity cuts being made by other carriers, will end service in November between Kansas City and Sacramento, Calif., and between Oakland, Calif., and Tucson, Ariz.

Some airlines, including JetBlue and Southwest, are adding or expanding service to states where other carriers are reducing service, like Florida. However, Southwest said recently that it will eliminate nearly 200 flights early next year as it struggles with high fuel costs and a weakening economy.

Fewer overall seats in the air means planes that remain will be fuller, which gives airlines pricing power to raise fares.

"The reality is — and I don't want to diminish this — the industry is going to have to cover its costs," American Airlines chief Gerard Arpey said in an interview.

Travelers are bracing for the impact of higher fares.

On a recent day at DFW Airport, passenger Vicki Schweiss, a classic rock DJ in Wichita Falls, Texas, said she might not be visiting her parents in Los Angeles quite so often this fall.

"If I can find a \$200 ticket, I'll go," she said. "If there are fewer flights, that won't bother me, but if flights are really expensive, I just won't go or I'll go by myself instead of bringing my son and husband."

At Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport, passenger Melinda Larson, a retired municipal worker, said she can afford the fare increases. What bugs her, though, are all the new fees.

"I'd just rather they incorporate that in the fare," Larson said of baggage fees some airlines are charging. "And then you're good to go. You don't have to worry about that."

Several airlines are now charging fees for a first checked bag. Some have imposed a fuel surcharge on frequent flier reward tickets. US Airways is even charging for soda.

Cuts in the number of flights in the U.S. also could mean people who booked flights far in advance for travel after September might have to fly at a different time or, if a route has been eliminated by their carrier, they might have to find another airline to get them to their destination. But airlines don't expect that to be a big issue.

"A very, very small number of people would have purchased tickets for travel in September or thereafter before the flights were taken out of the fall schedule in May and June of this year," American spokesman Tim Wagner said.

If someone had purchased a ticket for a flight that is canceled

later, airlines provide remedies for passengers. In American's case, the airline would put the passenger on another American flight, accommodate them on another airline or refund their money.

As for frequent fliers, capacity cuts could mean fewer award seats available at the lowest level of award travel. Wagner said that in American's case, people could pony up more of their frequent flier miles to guarantee they get a reward ticket for any available seat on a flight. Atlanta-based Delta recently announced a similar guarantee.

While the price of a barrel of oil has fallen from a high of \$147.27 in July to about \$115 recently, that is not likely to slow the upward spike in fares, according to fare researcher Seaney. The current price of oil is still more than five times what it was in mid-August 1992, and it is more than four times what it was in mid-August 2002.

"I think if oil prices continue to go down, you will hear calls for relaxation of fuel surcharges, but that doesn't mean they won't hike base airfares," Seaney said.

He said that if load factors reach 90 percent, "There will be no reason to discount."

Another airfare observer, Tom Parsons of Bestfares.com, said recently he believes that fares could fall early next year because discounter Southwest has already published its schedule and fares for that period. But Seaney said

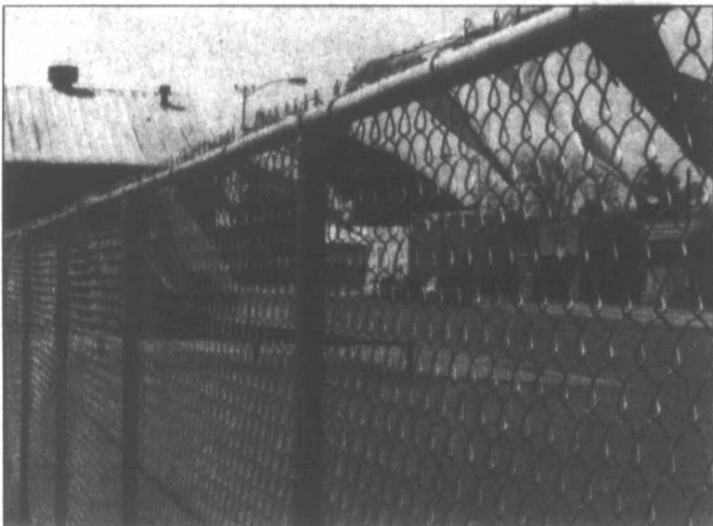
any fare decreases by major carriers would be limited to routes they compete on against Southwest. And Parsons said he believes other airlines will probably again charge higher fares for travel after March of next year.

Healy said that while fewer discounted seats may be available in the fall, he is confident AirTran will continue to provide value to its customers.

"I don't think most people in every aspect of their trip will notice a difference," Healy said. "If there is a silver lining, it may be that as a result of fewer overall operations, they may see better on-time performance."

The question on a lot of travelers' minds is how long will airlines be able to continue to raise fares. Airline analyst Ray Neidl of Calyon Securities said in the short-term that depends largely on the economy.

"That's the thing that will be tested this fall," Neidl said.



staff photo/R. Stennett

The Pampa Salvation Army unit recently put up a new fence around its property to provide a safer environment for kids and students participating in summer camps and the new after-school tutoring program. The fence will help keep people and animals from wandering onto the property and keeps the children from wandering off the property near the highway.

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