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County officials take oaths

by David Bowser
 dbowser@thepampanews.com
 Some 18 elected officials and their deputies are ready to meet the New Year.

Prior to the final Gray County Commissioners' Court meeting of 2008 Wednesday, 223rd District Judge Lee Waters administered the oath of office to newly elected John Mark Baggerman, who will take Gerald Wright's seat on the county commission.

Wright, after 24 years on the county commission, elected not to run this year, although he won't rule out running for an office other than county commissioner.

County Judge Richard Peet presented Wright with a congratulatory letter from Texas Gov. Rick Perry during ceremonies in the county courtroom of the Gray County Courthouse Wednesday.

Waters also swore in Commissioner Joe Wheelley, who was reelected to his post in November.

The district judge also administered the oath of office to Gray County Attorney Josh Seabourne and 31st District Attorney Lynn



staff photoby David Bowser
 Gray County Attorney Josh Seabourne, left, and District Attorney Lynn Switzer are sworn in by 223rd District Judge Lee Waters.

See Oaths, Page 10

Commissioners take time to study healthcare plans

by David Bowser
 dbowser@thepampanews.com
 The Gray County Commissioners Court is expected to vote on changes to the county employee health insurance program next month.

Commissioners deferred action on a draft plan until their Jan. 15 meeting in order to study the proposal more closely.

Pat Sanders with Insurance Management Services, who manages the county's insurance needs, suggested a two-tiered program. The basic program would be similar to the existing program except that the deductible would be \$1,000 and copays would be \$35 for doctor office visits and prescriptions.

The premium program would have a \$500 deductible and \$35 copay.

County employees now have a \$250 deductible and \$25 copay. The premium plan would cost \$430.32 a month for family coverage versus the current \$380.32. Spousal coverage under the premium plan would cost \$348.32 versus the current \$298.32. Children's coverage would cost \$199.32 versus \$149.32. Employee only would cost \$30 per month versus zero now.

With the \$1,000 deductible, Sanders said, there should be no change in present premiums.

Commissioner Joe Wheelley noted that traditionally the county has opted for health insurance that didn't cost the employee or elected official anything, but with rising health care costs, the county is looking for ways to save money.

If the county decided to go with only the basic program, Sanders said, the county could save about \$68,000. If they decided on only the premium package, the savings are estimated to be \$40,000. If both are offered and county employees split about 50-50 on them, the estimated savings would be about \$54,000.

Wheelley said he would like to be able to offer the premium package as an option to county employees.

The commissioners' court did decide, upon Sanders' recommendation, to switch the county's re-insurance carrier from Mutual of Omaha to Zurich because of projected savings.

The commission also approved a three-

See Plans, Page 3

Coal plant work brings boon to Riesel

RIESEL, Texas (AP) — A single smokestack 30 stories high looms on the horizon of this rural town 15 miles east of Waco.

Some 275 people are working there to build the Sandy Creek coal-fired power plant. Up to a thousand more could join them before the plant opens in 2012.

To some in Riesel, the tower is a symbol of an economic bonanza, a boost to a community with few businesses or job opportunities.

School officials are anticipating the property tax benefits of the billion-dollar project. Already, the construction traffic has helped quadruple Riesel's sales tax receipts this year. Stores and cafes are doing a "land-office business," said Walter Kuehl, Riesel vice president for Texas First State Bank, and he thinks the plant will be a foundation of long-term prosperity.

"We've got a bright future," he said. "We just have to take advantage of it."

But a coalition of environmental groups who see the smokestack as a pollution men-

ace are trying to stop the project dead in its tracks. And with the prospect of carbon regulation clouding the future of the coal industry, they say the political winds may be blowing their way.

Earlier this year, Dynegy, the lead investor in the 900-megawatt Sandy Creek plant, sold off part of its interest in the plant. Earlier this month, its chief executive, said the company was "re-evaluating" its role in new coal plants, including Sandy Creek.

Dynegy cited "tightening credit markets" and other "rising barriers to entry" as the reason for its re-evaluation. But environmental groups interpreted the news as a reaction to the growing likelihood of carbon-emissions regulations, which could make coal power much more expensive. Just this summer, PNM Resources abandoned plans for a 305-megawatt power plant expansion in nearby Roberston County, citing concerns about carbon regulation.

See Boon, Page 3

McGruff fund over top

Businesses in Pampa stepped up and put the McGruff Crime Prevention fund raiser over the top last week.

The Pampa Police Department needed just over \$3,000 for a new McGruff costume and related materials - things like Safer Senior kits that contain emergency and security cards a fun family safe travel guide for the Internet and information on bicycle safety.

But in just one month, the received just over \$5,000 for the cause, according to Officer Stormy McCullar.

"There is so much we can do with this," McCullar said Wednesday. "We were really surprised and want these businesses to know how much we appreciate their contributions." PPD can now purchase a computerized finger print ID kit so parents and others can have a print-out of their family members prints - just

See PPD, Page 3

United Way tops goal


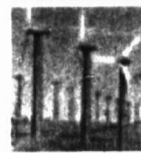



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PAMPA FORECAST

Saturday	Sunday	Monday
		
High 62 Low 22	High 34 Low 20	High 48 Low 28

Saturday: Sunny, with a high near 62. Wind chill values between 25 and 35 early. West wind between 15 and 20 mph, with gusts as high as 25 mph.

Saturday Night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 22. Wind chill values between 11 and 16. North-northwest wind between 15 and 20 mph, with gusts as high as 25 mph.

Sunday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 34. North wind 10 to 15 mph becoming east. Winds could gust as high as 20 mph.

Sunday Night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 20. East wind 10 to 15 mph becoming south.

Monday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 48. South-southwest wind between 15 and 20 mph, with gusts as high as 25 mph.

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Cash Five Texas results

AUSTIN (AP) — Results of the Cash 5 drawing Thursday night:
 Winning numbers drawn: 7-19-1-2-3.
 Number matching five of five: 1. Prize: \$19,686.
 Winning ticket sold in: Harlingen

Matching four of five: 115. Prize: \$77.
 Matching three of five: 3,352. Prize: \$6.
 Matching two of five: 25,214. Prize: \$2.
 Next Cash 5 drawing: Friday night.

Texas Two Step results

AUSTIN (AP) — Results of the Texas Two Step drawing Thursday night:
 Winning numbers drawn: 6-10-3-35. Bonus Ball: 12.
 Number matching four of four, plus Bonus Ball: 0.
 Number matching four of four: 13. Prize: \$1,261.
 Number matching three of four, plus Bonus Ball: 29. Prize: \$69.

Number matching three of four: 1,399. Prize: \$19.
 Number matching two of four, plus Bonus Ball: 913. Prize: \$20.
 Number matching one of four, plus Bonus Ball: 5,822. Prize: \$7.
 Number matching Bonus Ball alone: 10,269. Prize: \$5.
 Estimated jackpot for Monday night drawing: \$675,000.

Attorney wants client freed in Yogurt Shop murders

AUSTIN (AP) — A defense attorney wants his client released from jail based on new DNA test results in the 1991 Austin yogurt shop murders while a prosecutor disagreed that the test results would disprove the state's cases.

Investigators have discovered DNA from unknown males in swabs taken from the bodies of sisters Sarah and Jennifer Harbison, 15 and 17, respectively, said Joe James Sawyer, who represents defendant Robert Springsteen.

Michael Scott and Springsteen were convicted in the killings but the verdicts were overturned on appeal and both men are awaiting new trials. No new trial date has been set.

Killed during the robbery at the I Can't Believe It's Yogurt store were Amy Ayers, 13; Eliza Hope Thomas, 17; and the Harbison sisters. The store was then set on fire.

"I want my client out of jail," said Sawyer, in an online story Thursday for the Austin American-Statesman.

Grain prices

The following grain quotations are provided by Attebury Grain of White Deer for the close of the last open market day.

Wheat	5.25
Milo	5.30
Corn	7.09

CITY BRIEFS

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

AS OF Jan. 2, 2009, New City Brief deadline for Mon. thru Fri. papers will now be before 9am.

VIKA'S IS Now Open to serve breakfast from 6am thru 10:30am & lunch is served from 10:30am thru 2 pm. For carry out orders call 688-1123. We are located at 1301 S. Hobart, (old Sadie Hawkins). Open 7 days per week under new owners!!!!

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Obituaries

Frankie Cooley Bransford, 84

Frankie Cooley Bransford, 84, of Pampa, Texas, died Dec. 30, 2008, at Amarillo, Texas.

Vigil services will be at 6 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 4, 2009, at Carmichael-Whitley Colonial Chapel with Deacon Barnabas Radke officiating.

Funeral mass will be at 2 p.m. Monday, Jan. 5, 2009, at St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Church with the Rev. Joseph Ravi, pastor, officiating.

Burial will be in Memory Gardens Cemetery under the direction of Carmichael-Whitley Funeral Directors.

Mrs. Bransford was born May 19, 1924, in Ardmore, Okla., to Fitzhugh and Opal Cooley. She married Byron Everett Bransford on Feb. 9, 1942, in Marietta, Okla. He preceded her in death in 1991.

She had been a resident of Pampa since 1987.

Frankie worked as a legal

secretary for C a b o t Corporation, retiring after 18 years of service. She was a former resident of Santa Fe, N.M., Albuquerque, N.M., and Borger, Texas.

She was a member of the Legal Secretaries Club of Pampa and the Epsilon Sigma Alpha of Pampa.

Frankie was a volunteer at the Genesis House for more than 30 years. She was a paralegal counselor in Albuquerque for eight years and received the Human Service Award from the Secretary of State of New Mexico.

She was a member of St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Church and her patron saint was St. Jude.

Survivors include two daughters, Lisa Keifer and

husband Ricky of Fritch, and Dr. Angharad Young of Tulsa, Okla.; two grandsons, Matthew Keifer and wife Rachel of Amarillo and Treyce Keifer of Lubbock; three granddaughters, Alison Howard and husband Rick of Santa Clarita, Calif., Stephanie Parker and husband Eric of Norman, Okla., and Cassidy Keifer of Oklahoma City, Okla.; four great-grandsons, Jackson Howard, Alexander Howard, Ryan Howard and Samuel Parker; three great-granddaughters, Annemarie Parker, Sophie Parker and Alyssia Ramirez Keifer; nieces, Cindy Huckabee and husband Ronnie, and Rose Ann Thedford and husband Mike, all of Graham, Sharon Johnson and husband Lynn of Gainesville, and Susan

Clifton and husband Col. Jeff Clifton of Fairbanks, Alaska; nephews, William M. McClendon and wife Debbie of Graham and Bob Bransford and wife Pam of Gainesville; and many great-nieces and great-nephews.

Frankie was preceded in death by a son, Byron Frank Bransford in 1948; a sister, Rosa Hughes in 1992; and her parents, Fitzhugh Cooley in 1951 and Opal Bailey Smith Cooley in 1975.

MEMORIALS: St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, Attn: Memorial/Honor Program FH, One St. Jude Place Building, P.O. Box 1000, Dept. 300, Memphis, TN 38148-0552; Genesis House, 615 W. Buckler, Pampa, TX 79065; or BSA Hospice, P.O. Box 950, Amarillo, TX 79105.

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

D.W. Swain, 91

young child before moving to Pampa in the early 1930's, where he had a dairy route.

D. W. married Lela Mae Bell on Sept. 5, 1937, in Pampa. They celebrated over 50 years of marriage before she preceded him in death on Nov. 10, 1987.

He later married Lucille Smith on May 14, 1988, and she preceded him in death on Oct. 17, 1997.

He was a former member of the First Baptist Church of Pampa and was currently a member of the

Church of Christ in Clarendon.

D.W. retired from Cabot and farming in Pampa before moving to Clarendon in the late 1970s, where he has resided ever since. He was an avid fisherman and loved antiques.

Survivors include one daughter, Jeletta Gatewood and husband Ritchie of Gage, Okla.; one stepdaughter, Lozetta Guthrie and husband Charles of Huntsville; three grandsons, Dane Greenhouse and wife Leisa of Amarillo, Greg Greenhouse and wife Gina

of Pampa, and Duston Cox of Gage, Okla.; two great-granddaughters, Ashley Easter of Amarillo and Kristina White of Ponca City, Okla.; and one great-grandson, Gage Greenhouse of Pampa.

He was preceded in death by a daughter, Olivia Greenhouse; four brothers; and two sisters.

MEMORIALS: American Cancer Society, c/o Gerry Caylor, 2130 Charles, Pampa, TX 79065; or American Heart Association, 2514 82nd Street, Suite B, Lubbock, TX 79423.

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

Sandra 'Sandy' Jean Hill, 56

LEFORS, Texas — Sandra "Sandy" Jean Hill, 56, died Dec. 30, 2008, at Amarillo, Texas.

Services are to be at 3 p.m. today, Friday, Jan. 2, 2009, at the Church of Christ in Lefors with Gene Gee officiating. Arrangements are under the direction of Bailey-Ware Funeral Home, Inc., in McLean.

Sandra "Sandy" Jean Winfield was born March 4, 1952, in Lubbock, Texas, to James and Maudine Winfield. She married James "Jim" Hill on June 20, 1970, in Lefors, Texas.

They were married for 37 years until his death on June 28, 2007.

Mrs. Hill was a homemaker in Lefors for many years.

She enjoyed her home — especially decorating for the holidays. She loved visiting with friends, and she loved her family.

Survivors include one son, Ike Hill (Kimberly) of Lefors; three grandchildren; her father, J.A. "Shorty" Winfield; three sisters, Joy Fulton (Billy Joe) of Lefors, Emily Plumlee (George) of Olney, Texas, and Janice Parsons (James) of Mesquite, Texas; and two brothers, Jim Winfield (Shannon) of Estancia, N.M., and Tim Winfield of Dothan, Ala.

Mrs. Hill was preceded in death by her mother, Maudine Winfield, and her husband, Jim Hill.

Emergency Services

Sheriff

Gray County Sheriff's Office recorded the following arrests.

Tuesday, Dec. 30

Bruce Kenneth Vanderburg IV, 33, of Baltimore, Md., was arrested by GCSO on a probation violation for possession of over five pounds but less than 50 pounds of marijuana.

Wednesday, Dec. 31

Glen Edward Black, 50, of Pampa was arrested by Pampa Police Department for driving while intoxicated, third or more offense, and expired vehicle registration.

tration.

Adam Lee Wright, 25, of Pampa was arrested by Pampa PD for possession of a dangerous drug, possession of less than two ounces of marijuana, driving while intoxicated and possession of drug paraphernalia.

Curtis Ray Smith, 21, of Pampa was arrested by GCSO for possession of marijuana, failure to identify and on bond surrenders for evading, escape from custody, disorderly conduct-fighting another, failure to appear and theft under \$50.

Thursday, Jan. 1

Mitchell Don Stapleton, 39, of Canadian was arrested by Pampa PD for driving while intoxicated.

Larry Don Caviness, 52, of Pampa was arrested by GCSO for public intoxication.

Ronald John Garbulinski II, 33, of Pampa was arrested by Pampa PD for driving while intoxicated.

Charles Edward Shea, 19, of Pampa was arrested by Pampa PD for aggravated assault with a weapon/family violence.

Brandon Lynn Green, 25, of Higgins was arrested by Pampa PD for five counts of issuance of a bad check and one count theft.

Jerry Joe Isbell Jr., 39, of McLean was arrested by GCSO for aggravated assault with a deadly weapon and simple assault.

Fire

Pampa Fire Department reported the following calls between 7 a.m. Monday and 7 a.m. today.

Monday, Dec. 29

2:16 p.m. — One unit and three personnel responded to the 12000 block of East Frederic on a medical call.

2:20 p.m. — One unit and three personnel responded to the 1200 block of South Faulkner on a medical call.

4:51 p.m. — One unit and three personnel responded to the 1200 block of South Hobart on a medical call.

Tuesday, Dec. 30

11:24 a.m. — Two units and six personnel responded to the 700 block of North Russell on a grease fire. The fire was out on arrival.

4:02 p.m. — One unit and three personnel responded to the 1200 block of North Hobart on a vehicle fire. The fire was out on arrival. The vehicle remained operable.

Thursday, Jan. 1

7:47 a.m. — One unit and three personnel responded to the 100 block of North Wynne on a call for lifting assistance.

7:57 p.m. — One unit and three personnel responded to the 400 block of Harmon on a call for medical assistance.

Guardian EMS ambulance reported the following

Ambulance

calls between 7 a.m.

Tuesday and 7 a.m. today.

Tuesday, Dec. 30

9:11 a.m. — A mobile ICU unit responded to Pampa Regional Medical Center and transferred a patient(s) to Northwest Texas Hospital in Amarillo.

1:29 p.m. — A mobile ICU unit responded to the 1100 block of Gwendolyn and transported a patient(s) to PRMC.

4:20 p.m. — A mobile ICU unit responded to the 2700 block of North Hobart and transported a patient(s) to PRMC.

5:28 p.m. — A mobile ICU unit responded to the 400 block of Hughes and transported a patient(s) to PRMC.

Wednesday, Dec. 31

10:23 a.m. — A mobile ICU unit responded to the 1200 block of Williston and transported a patient to PRMC.

1:36 p.m. — A mobile ICU unit responded to PRMC and transferred a patient to Northwest Texas Hospital.

2:20 p.m. — A mobile ICU unit responded to the 300 block of North Nelson and transported a patient to PRMC.

2:44 p.m. — A mobile ICU unit responded to the 2800 block of North Charles and transported a patient to PRMC.

4:37 p.m. — A mobile ICU unit responded to PRMC and transported a patient to the 800 block of West 25th.

Plans

Continued from Page 1

year contract with Carrier for maintenance on the county's heating, ventilation and air conditioning program.

Dennis Criswell with Carrier Commercial Service said the contract called for the company to monitor the county's heating and air conditioning computerized system and perform maintenance, including preventive maintenance, on the equipment.

Criswell said that the preventive maintenance program has saved the county several thousand dollars over the past year.

The cost of the contract, \$4,028 for each of the next three years versus the current contract of \$4,56, is down slightly. Locking in the price over a three-year period, Criswell said, would be advantageous to

the county. "We're the ones that will be responsible if there are any price increases," Criswell said. "Not the county." The county has used Carrier before.

"We've been very pleased with Dennis," Gray County Judge Richard Peet told the commission.

The commission also approved bonds for Justice of the Peace Kurt Curfman, County Attorney Josh Seabourne, Commissioner John Mark Baggerman, Commissioner Wheeley, Sheriff Don Copeland and Constable Chris Lockridge.

Constable James Lewis had already paid for his bond. The county will reimburse him.

The commissioners' court voted to continue current jury reimbursement rates for 2009.

The county pays six dollars to those who are called for jury duty. They pay \$15 for the first day if the per-

son serves on a jury, and they pay \$40 for each additional day.

Gray County Treasurer Scott Hahn said that the state pays part of the \$40 per day fee. The others are paid by the county.

Judge Peet said that those rates are similar to surrounding counties.

Peet also announced that his office had received a letter from the Governor's office saying that Gray County was eligible for low interest disaster loans because of drought.

Hahn said that among the \$650,000 in bills for December, about \$400,000 was to county school districts. The money was being passed through the county from oil and gas leases on school land in Gaines County.

In total this year, Hahn said, the county has passed along about \$700,000 from oil and gas leases on Gaines County school lands.

PHS soccer alumni games Saturday

Pampa High School soccer girls and boys Alumni games/scrimmages will be held Saturday, Jan 3, 2009. The girls game will be at noon and the boys will be at 2:00 p.m. at the fields near Travis Elementary School. All soccer alumni from the girls or boys soccer teams are invited to participate. It will be a relaxed atmosphere and a lot of fun. The community is welcome to watch the games. Admission is free for both scrimmages/games.

Boon

Continued from Page 1

Tom "Smitty" Smith, Texas director of Public Citizen, one of the groups suing to stop the Sandy Creek plant, said he expects a carbon tax or a "cap-and-trade" system under the new Obama administration, eliminating the economic advantage of burning coal compared to cleaner energy sources.

"The future is not good for coal at this point," Smith said. "Why continue to prop up a plant that is quickly going to become the SUV of the power industry? It's going to be too expensive to operate, and you can't sell it for the amount you paid for it. ... It is my hope that in an Obama administration it will be impossible to build a coal plant anywhere in the country."

Dynergy spokesman David Byford said construction on the Sandy Creek plant is still full speed ahead.

"Our focus is on continuing to construct the facility," he said.

Byford said it's too early to discuss how carbon regulation will affect the coal industry.

"We're anticipating some form of regulation on carbon, but we would rather hold off on commenting on the impact of regulation until it's out there and being debated," he said.

The Sandy Creek plant is being built by a joint venture between Dynergy and the privately held LS Power Group. The joint venture sold off interests in the plant to Brazos Electric Cooperative in 2007 and Lower Colorado River Authority this summer and now owns just 64 percent of the plant.

Last week, the Sierra

Club, Public Citizen and other environmental groups wrote a joint letter to LCRA and Brazos warning them of the uncertainties in the future of coal and urging them not to invest further in the Sandy Creek plant.

"The handwriting is really on the wall as far as coal plants are concerned," said Ken Kramer, the Sierra Club's Texas director. "I think we'll have a new carbon regime within a year. I think investors are seeing uncertainties in the coal market, and this is a business where people want stability."

Sierra Club, Public Citizen and a local group, Texans Protecting Our Water Environment and Resources, or TPOWER, have lawsuits pending against the plant, saying its permit violates state and federal environmental rules.

"We said we'd hold them off as long as we could, and that's what we intend to do," said Ricky Bates, a member of TPOWER.

The legal action hasn't stopped construction. Officials at San Antonio-based Zachry Construction say they are moving ahead as quickly as they can.

"We're slowly ratcheting up," said Kathy Green, vice president of Zachry Construction, which is building the plant. "We should probably peak around fall 2010 when we'll be employing about 1,200 people."

Zachry will be bringing in many of its own workers from outside the area, and already a large RV park is under construction near Riesel for those workers.

But Zachry is also hiring locally through an employment office it set up in the middle of Riesel, and local hires for jobs such as welders, pipefitters and electrical workers will increase as the project progresses, Green said.

"To get to 1,200 is a pretty critical mass," she said. "A good part of the hiring is going to be from that area."

Once constructed, the plant would employ about 100.

Kuehl, the Riesel banker, said the short-term and long-term employment will be a blessing to Riesel. Some residents who used to be employed at nearby TXU gas-fired power plants have had to seek work elsewhere in recent years as those plants have been effectively moth-balled.

He said the Sandy Creek group has been generous with local charities. It has also promised to help Riesel with a new well that should relieve water shortages that have "stifled" the community's growth.

"It's difficult to get a water meter right now in Riesel," he said. "Once we get the water issue resolved, I think we'll see some more development. ... I think it's going to bust wide open."

PPD

Continued from Page 1

in case. "This is a helpful identification tool to have for children and for other family members such as seniors who may be suffering from memory loss," McCullar said. The police department does not store the fingerprints, just prints out a copy for the family.

Officers can also take the program to schools and area businesses. The Mc Gruff program is not just for children. According to McCullar there are also fraud and theft prevention programs that can benefit businesses.

For more information on the program, call Officer McCullar, 669-5700.

Trooper kills man wanted in death

EDEN, Texas (AP) — A man sought on a murder warrant in the death of a San Angelo woman died in a shootout with a Texas Department of Public Safety trooper.

The DPS said Manuel Alcantar, 20, shot the trooper with a 12-gauge shotgun while the officer was trying to identify Alcantar and the driver of a car the trooper stopped in Eden Wednesday night. The trooper, whose name was not immediately released, returned fire, fatally wounding Alcantar. The trooper was treated and released, the San Angelo Standard-Times reported in its online edition Thursday.

Alcantar's body has been sent to Lubbock for an autopsy.

Texas Rangers are investigating.

The driver of the car, Dionisio Anibal Saucedo Jr., 21, was being held in the Tom Green County Jail on Thursday on a charge of attempted capital murder of

a peace officer. His bond was set at \$1 million. It wasn't immediately clear if he had an attorney.

Trooper Shawn Baxter, a DPS spokesman, said the charge against Saucedo, Alcantar's cousin, stems from the portion of the penal code that says a person can be charged with the same offense as a suspect if he fails to make a reasonable effort to stop the suspect, the newspaper reported.

Authorities had been looking for Alcantar, who was named in a murder warrant for the shooting death earlier Wednesday of Lynda Fairchild, 38, of San Angelo. Fairchild's daughter, 18-year-old Heather Flores, was wounded in the shooting at a San Angelo home.

Sabrina Castro, 18, told the newspaper that an argument led to the shooting. She said Flores and Alcantar had a relationship and a baby.

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Viewpoints

Today in History

By The Associated Press

Today is Friday, Jan. 2, the second day of 2009. There are 363 days left in the year.

Highlights in history on this date:

1492 - The leader of the last Arab stronghold in Spain surrenders to the Spanish forces loyal to King Ferdinand II and Queen Isabella I.

1900 - Open door policy in China is announced by U.S. Secretary of State John Hay.

1905 - Japanese General Nogi receives a letter offering surrender from Russian General Stoessel, thereby formally ending the Russo-Japanese War.

1909 - Dismissal of Yuan Shih-kai places Chinese administration in Manchu hands.

1913 - Turkish garrison on Chios Island surrenders to Greeks.

1942 - Japanese capture Philippine capital, Manila, during World War II.

1971 - Sixty-six people suffocate or are trampled to death when crowd barrier gives way at a soccer match in Glasgow, Scotland.

1991 - Leftist rebels down U.S. army helicopter in El Salvador; one crew member dies from injuries sustained in crash and two others are apparently execut-

'It is the tragedy of the world that no one knows what he doesn't know, and the less a man knows, the more sure he is that he knows everything.'

— Joyce Cary, British author

ed by rebels.

1993 - Government authorities arrest the second-in-command of the Popular Liberation Army, the third-largest Marxist guerrilla group in Colombia.

1996 - U.S. government dietary guidelines acknowledge for the first time that consuming some alcohol can be healthy.

2001 - Ships from outlying Taiwanese islands dock in ports in mainland China, making the first legal and direct crossing between the mainland and Taiwanese territory in more than 50 years.

2002 - Veteran politician Eduardo Duhalde becomes Argentina's fifth president in two weeks as he takes on the burden of a US\$132 billion public debt.

2003 - Chinese space officials announce plans to launch a manned spacecraft in the second half of the year, making China the third nation, after Russia and the United States, to do so.

2005 - After the devastation wreaked by the seas, a deluge from the skies deepens the misery for tsunami-stricken areas, triggering flash floods in Sri Lanka that send evacuees fleeing and increasing the threat of deadly disease.

2008 - A mob torches a church where hundreds had sought refuge in Kenya's Rift Valley city of Eldoret, and witnesses say dozens of people, including children, were burned alive or hacked to death with machetes in ethnic violence that followed Kenya's disputed election.

Today's Birthdays:

James Wolfe, English general (1727-1759); Nouri Said, Iraqi prime minister (1888-1958); Michael Tippett, English musician (1905-1998); Isaac Asimov, Russian-born writer (1920-1992); Todd Haynes, U.S. director (1961—); Cuba Gooding Jr., U.S. actor (1968—); Christy Turlington, U.S. model (1969—); Taye Diggs, U.S. actor (1971—).

The small God theory

By Martha Randolph Carr

Great upheavals in the economy and the environment mixed with a New Year bring out the prognostications from all sorts of people. The general theme among the new thought crowd, formally the new age, for 2009 appears to be that great change is upon us and it's sink or swim time.

The buzz is that supposedly many of us will decide that we are not willing to make different choices and this resistant group will decide to leave the planet, which means death in various forms. For example, it's been said more than once lately that the seers are seeing New York City under water so for those who live in the city, like myself, it must literally be time to swim or go under. That last one was first predicted for October 2008 but there's been no word on whether or not the date has been moved. Stay tuned.

A large caveat to the big shift is that willingness is apparently not enough. It's also necessary to be fearless or God will ignore your pleadings. It's an interesting side note that spiritual groups to the extreme right and the left stress that anything short of absolute conformity to their way of looking at things leads to judgment and a harsh dismissal.

Apparently, God is no longer taking mere mortals, we are now being required to rise to the occasion of perfection or be cast aside. This would be another fine example of the Small God Theory. There are a lot of great

12 Step Programs saving a seat for this bunch when they come to a few realizations about progress instead of perfection.

Instead of being full of unconditional love God is reduced to pettiness and judgment and has quite a few conditions. What's truly remarkable is how many people sign up for this line of reasoning. It's an enormous competition that marks everything they say, think and do as barely enough or lacking with the end result being an early death or the prize of enlightenment.

Rule number one is don't use negative words because that's all God can hear. Rule number two is, don't buy something that's ostentatious because that's a sign you've slipped off the path. It's very old school Presbyterian of them from when it was believed people were marked for heaven and hell before they were born. There are loads more rules but enough already.

Humanity mixed with a zealot requirement for perfection adds up to a need to be right or else. A rigid stubbornness all dressed up as healing sets in and before long followers are describing themselves in terms of what needs to be fixed. It's a clever form of victimhood that ensures psychics and spiritual teachers will stay employed during the recession.

However, if God was let out of the little box and we operated off of the theory that He really is all that, then people could bring all of their fear, resentment, anger, joy, hope and beliefs to the table as long as they

also packed a little willingness. God would love and accept us just as we are today and work with us. We would be enough for the challenges ahead because something bigger would be right there next to us.

Another bonus is that we would no longer have to ask others what we ought to be doing because we could trust ourselves, realizing that course corrections will be needed along the way. Old stories would no longer be whipped out yet again because the competition to prove worthiness would no longer be necessary. No more hopping into the future either because everyone would be too busy living in the moment, which until now was being ignored.

We'll do the best we can for today, brush our teeth and go to bed. Again, it's because God loves us as is, no take backs and is not looking to swat us off the planet at the first sign of deep imperfection. Some would call this surrender, others may call it turning it over but an even better word is mercy. Inside of mercy competition ends and compassion finally has space to grow for everyone instead of the chosen few. Yes, this does mean that your pompous, gun-toting neighbor who's still driving a Humvee gets to stay too. More adventures to follow.

Martha Randolph Carr's latest book, *A Place to Call Home, a memoir about the reemergence of U.S. orphanages* is available wherever books are sold.



Editorial Thoughts

Here are excerpts from editorials in newspapers around the world:

The Observer, London, on economic woes:

The sight of queues of people waiting for shops to open after Christmas, at thousands strong at some shopping centres, will hearten retailers who fear their very existence is imperiled by the credit crunch.

But even the most optimistic forecasts indicate that times will get tougher for most people in 2009 before a recovery comes into sight. So there is something peculiar, unreal even, in images of avid shoppers bingeing on bargains after a period of enforced abstinence. It is possible that they are motivated by patriotic duty, reluctantly forcing themselves to spend for the greater good of the national economy.

Of course, if everyone stopped shopping completely, the economy would be in even more serious trouble. But it is an awkward state of affairs when, in order to avert further catastrophe, we need, for a time being at least, to engage in just the sort of behaviour that got us into trouble in the first place.

That is not just a neat paradox for economists to contemplate, it is a political problem.

We have borrowed too much and saved too little. Now that the credit has dried up, the government is borrowing more to keep the economy liquid. Inevitably, that means at some point the government will have to restrain spending and raise taxes to get the national finances on track. But not, Mr. Brown hopes, before the next election.

Recovery depends on a credible vision for the long-term future. A spending spree after Christmas might well make us feel a little better, but retail therapy is no substitute for real confidence in the economy.

Jerusalem Post, Israel, on talk of cease-fire:

On day four of Operation Cast Lead, international demands notwithstanding, it is way too premature for Jerusalem to be entertaining thoughts of a cease-fire. It is Hamas that needs an exit strategy to extricate it from a devastating situation of its own making.

Hamas must not get what it most wants. Hamas wants Israel's home front

to be demoralized, to feel under siege. It wants to stampede our government into sending ground forces into Gaza's camps and alleyways, to ensnare our fighters in ambushes it has spent long months setting.

If Hamas can't hoodwink Israelis into self-defeating policies, it is counting on pressure from within Israel or without to produce at least a temporary halt to the operation, during which it could regroup, or better yet a cease-fire. It needs this to claim a "moral victory" over the IDF; to demonstrate that the West has no response but appeasement to violent Muslim extremism. Finally, Hamas needs a cease-fire on its terms, or it will lose face vis-a-vis Mahmoud Abbas.

There should be no talk of a cease-fire until the declared goal of achieving long-term normality in the South has been attained.

Daily News, Bowling Green, Kentucky, on bank bailouts:

It is beyond disturbing that banks across the country that received bailout money from the federal government claim they do not know how they're spending the money.

The American taxpayer-

ers, who had to bail these banks out of financial crisis, deserve a better explanation.

There is nothing in place to ensure if the money is being used as intended. And there are no consequences for banks who don't use it for the purposes intended by Congress.

Part of the problem lies with Congress, which attached hardly any strings to the bailout money. The other part of the problem is that the Treasury Department never asked banks how the money would be spent when they handed it out.

This is a slap in the face to those in Congress that voted to provide the \$700 billion to the banks and most of all it is unfair to the taxpayers.

We were pleased to learn that lawmakers want to tighten the restrictions on the remaining, yet-to-be-released \$350 billion block of bailout money before more cash is handed out.

This is a good start because more oversight is definitely needed. We as taxpayers deserve a full accounting of how this money is being spent.

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Sands Fabrics wove friendships, memories

Store closes its doors after almost 50 years in Pampa

by David Bowser
dbowser@thepampanews.com

Cuyler Street was lined with parked cars, as was Francis Avenue. The signs in the window said "Going Out of Business Sale."

But inside, it was less about business and more about friends.

"It's like the old television show 'Cheers,'" said Janie Morris. "Here, everybody knows your name."

Morris, the owner of Sands Fabrics and Quilt Corner, closed down Wednesday. She's owned the place almost a quarter of a century.

"It would be 24 years in March," Morris said amid a rush of customers.

Most of the customers on the last day were long time customers.

Leota Black, who now lives in Amarillo, used to come here when she was a sewing teacher in Wheeler.

She was a member of the original sewing club here at Sands Fabrics, Morris said.

Judy West of Lefors said she'd been coming here for years. She measured off her cloth and figured the price on it while Morris helped other customers.

While some in Pampa have exclaimed that Sands Fabrics has been on the corner of Francis and Cuyler forever, Morris laughed and said that it had been there only about 50 years.

"It would be 50 years in June," she said.

The store has had only two owners.

The founders of the store were Bill and Grace Monroe.

"They still live here in Pampa," Morris said.

Born and raised in Pampa, Morris said she first became involved in the fabric business as a young bride.

Her husband was work-

ing for IRI International. He worked two weeks on and two weeks off.

"I first started sewing for the public when my son was born because I didn't want to go out and work and leave him," Morris said.

As time passed, Morris went out and talked to Brenda Donelson, who was manager of JoAnn's Fabrics, and went to work there.

"I was there five years," Morris said.

JoAnn's Fabrics went out of business, she said, and the Monroes asked her if she'd consider working at Sands Fabrics.

"Within six months of that time," Morris said, "I bought the place."

She said it's been fun. "We made no money,"

Morris laughed, "but there's no price you could put on the people that I know and the friends that I've made."

She said that she's closing down because she has a new grandson.

"I want to take some time to enjoy him," Morris said.

His name is Christopher Dale, she said proudly.

"My son moved to Amarillo," Morris said, "so they're close to me again."

She said her son Kevin grew up in the store here on the corner.

"This has been a part of Kevin's life," she said.

It's been a part of a lot of people's lives over the years.

There have been different sewing clubs that have met upstairs and different quilting clubs.

"Over the years, there have been a lot of different groups," Morris said.

The most recent call themselves the Blockheads because of the blocks of material they use for their quilts. They'd meet here

once a month.



Janie Morris, center, measures out cloth for Leota Black, left, as Judy West watches. Wednesday was the last day Morris would open Sands Fabric in downtown Pampa.

She said that turned out to be a really important thing. There were about 65 members.

"Everybody feels at home here," Morris said.

She said there are so many memories here.

"There have been people who have come here and didn't have a lot of friends," Morris said, "and they made friends."

The quilters, in particular, are friendly, she said.

"Everybody's a friend when they come here," Morris said.

A lot of friendships developed over quilts.

"They didn't even know each other," she said, "and they'd become the best of friends."

And the friends and customers weren't just in Pampa.

"We've sent fabric to Canada," Morris said.

"We've sent fabric to the Ukraine." She said they've gotten

calls from Los Angeles and New York.

"Over the years," Morris said, "it's been unbelievable."

She said that when she dealt with people in New York, they wanted to get things done.


"You talk to someone in Alabama," she smiled, "they'll talk to you all day."

It's not just the customers, she said.

"All of us who work here," Morris said, "it's like family. Everybody's just part of the family."

Quietly, she looked around at the busy scene. The last day was filled with bustle. Tables toward the front of the store were set with hors d'oeuvres, sandwiches, cookies and dip.

"I imagine I'm going to miss it more than I even know," Morris said.




Medication safety

Statistics

- In 1999, approximately 7,000 patient deaths were linked to errors in the prescribing and administering of medications.
- One person dies each day, and 1.3 million people are injured each year due to medication errors.
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- It is noted that medication-related problems are America's serious.
- While medications are probably the single most important factor in improving the quality of life for seniors, the population remains especially susceptible to medication-related problems.
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Texas home of "Great Debaters" has team again

MARSHALL, Texas (AP) — The movie "The Great Debaters" made millions aware of the decades-old accomplishments of the debate team at a small historically black college tucked deep in the piney woods of East Texas — and gave that history new life at the school itself.

Before work began on the film, the Wiley College team that broke racial barriers with several impressive victories in the 1930s was a faded memory. When the school received e-mails from debaters all over the country after the movie was released a year ago, there was no team for them to join.

That has changed, thanks to donations including \$1 million from the movie's star and director, Denzel Washington. An 11-member team started debating this fall, and its ranks are expected to eventually grow to about 30.

"Obviously, the movie generated a lot of enthusiasm and interest in the story," said Joseph Morale, vice president for student affairs and enrollment services at Wiley.

"It's just been a wonderful ride."

Washington played Melvin B. Tolson, a noted poet who formed the debate group after coming to the private school in 1923 as an English professor. Research shows that, from about 1929 to 1939, the team debated 75 times and only lost once; in 1935 Wiley beat the national champions, the University of Southern California.

The teams Tolson put together included students who went on to distinguish themselves, notably James Farmer Jr., the civil rights leader who formed the Congress of Racial Equality.

Evelyn Bonner, Wiley's director of library services, said it's unclear exactly when debate ceased at Wiley, but Tolson left in 1947 and experts say that many debate teams had fallen apart with the start of World War II.

Morale said the movie not only told Wiley's story to the world, but reminded the college itself of its past.

Haywood L. Strickland, the school's president since 2000, said the idea of restarting the program came while the movie crew was doing research on the campus. He said Washington's donation, announced last December, helped jumpstart its revival.

"We're always looking for ways in which to engage and excite students," he said. "It occurred to us that even though

it's something built on history, it's been demonstrated this is a good way to get students involved."

Debate coach Shannon LaBove came to Wiley over the summer. She whittled down the prospects to a team of 11, all of whom got some kind of scholarship.

The new team did an exhibition debate at Oklahoma City University in October to commemorate the 1931 meeting between the two teams, believed to have been the first interracial debate in the South.

"We have to make our own history, while respecting the previous," LaBove said.

She said this is a building year for the team, but she expects it to be nationally competitive within a couple of years.

"I think we want to once again put Wiley on the map as a force to be reckoned with," she said.

The primarily liberal arts university, founded in 1873, has 967 students and its enrollment has been climbing for the last eight years. It's located in Marshall, a town of about 24,000 not far from the Louisiana state line.

Morale said the movie undoubtedly helped boost enrollment this year, and a documentary released this fall also has brought attention. The Dallas-based production company AMS Pictures' "The Real Great Debaters of Wiley College" chronicles the lives of Tolson and some of his debaters.

Caress Russell of Atlanta was among those who contacted Wiley after seeing "The Great Debaters." The 22-year-old, who had taken off a year to work following a freshman year at Mercer University, wanted to be part of the debate team after learning that Wiley was bringing it back.

"If it wasn't for the movie, I wouldn't be here at all," said Russell, who had participated in speech events in high school and at Mercer.

Tristan Love had been planning to go to Morehouse College in Atlanta, but the offer of a full scholarship to Wiley changed the high school debater's plans.

"There's nothing like that adrenaline rush" of debating, said Love, 18.

Love had seen the movie and enjoyed it, but didn't think much about it until he got the offer from Wiley. Then, he said with a smile, he was inundated with copies of the movie from well-wishers.

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PANHANDLE SINGING MEN

Choir will present Gospel music concert

The Panhandle Singing Men Choir will present a Gospel music concert in Central Baptist Church, 513 East Francis, Pampa, Texas at 7 p.m. Thursday, January 15, 2009.

The Panhandle Singing Men is a choir made up of primarily Ministers of Music and Music Directors from churches across the Panhandle. It also has other church staff members and retired Ministers. The group usually performs one concert each month at a local church as well as other ministry opportunities such as area prisons, retirement centers and regional Baptist events.

The Panhandle Singing Men, formed fourteen years ago, is the newest of six satellite choirs of The Singing Men Of Texas. Because of the size of Texas, the Singing Men have always been divided into

regional choirs. Sponsored by the Baptist General Convention of Texas, the Singing Men of Texas was formed in 1975 and observed its 25th anniversary in 2000.

There is no admission charge but a freewill offering will be taken to purchase new music for the group to sing. Each member pays his own expenses to and from each concert. The Concert Program includes: *Rejoice and Sing Out His Praises, Make Me An Instrument of Thy Peace, A Mighty Fortress is Our God, Breath and Life, Zion's Walls, God Be with You, You Raise Me Up, It Is Well With My Soul, There's a Light A-Comin', A Voice for You, How Great Is Our God, It's Still the Cross, Table of Grace, He Never Failed Me Yet, On Jordan's Stormy Banks, Swing Down Chariot* and other selected songs.

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Good Samaritan Christian Services announces addition

Good Samaritan Christian Services, 309 N. Ward, recently reported the addition of a new member church, Harvest Fellowship, in its monthly newsletter.

According to the newsletter, the addition brings the total count of member churches to 18.

The newsletter reported a grant in the amount of \$5,000 was received by Good Sam from Gray-Pampa Foundation, Inc. In addition, First Methodist Church donated a number of blankets to the charity which also received donations of food and new toys from Girl Scout Troop #521.

Larry Davis provided meals (ham and trimmings) to 10 families for New Year's, and the newsletter recognized James and Berdeana Richardson for 24 1/2 years of service to Good Sam.

The children and staff at St. Matthew's Episcopal Day School donated winter clothing items such as scarves, gloves and hats to the charity. The school decorated a Christmas tree with the items as part of the donation drive.

The newsletter provided the following statistics for November 2008: Families served, 385; individuals served, 1,309; food orders, 295; clothing orders, 173; partial utility aid (\$50), 31; transportation (gas), 8; medical Rx, 7; lodging, 2; other assistance, 63.

Good Sam is currently seeking the following donations for the month of January: Men's tennis shoes, men's jeans (size 30-34), children's shoes, baby food, girl's coats (sizes 6-16), blankets, towels, deodorant, shampoo and brown paper sacks.

Broken Vessel Ministries to appear at Pampa's Church of the Nazarene

Dick and Donna Walls of Broken Vessel Ministries in Lubbock will be at Church of the Nazarene, 500 N. West, Jan. 4-7.

Mr. Walls will lead an adult Sunday school class at 9:45 a.m. and minister at the morning service at 11 a.m. on Sunday.

Donna and "B.J. and the Bear" will tell a Bible

story for children.

At 6 p.m. Sunday, Mrs. Walls will share her testimony at the church which includes a life-threatening episode in a hospital.

"Both Dick and Donna have experienced some tough things that have happened to them," a news release from the church stated, "but all have increased their faith

that God can turn the worst into the best for His glory and our good."

Both Monday and Wednesday evening the Walls' ministry will target youth and families. Each service will kick-off at 7 p.m. Tuesday's 7 p.m. service will minister to all ages.

For more information, call 669-3144.

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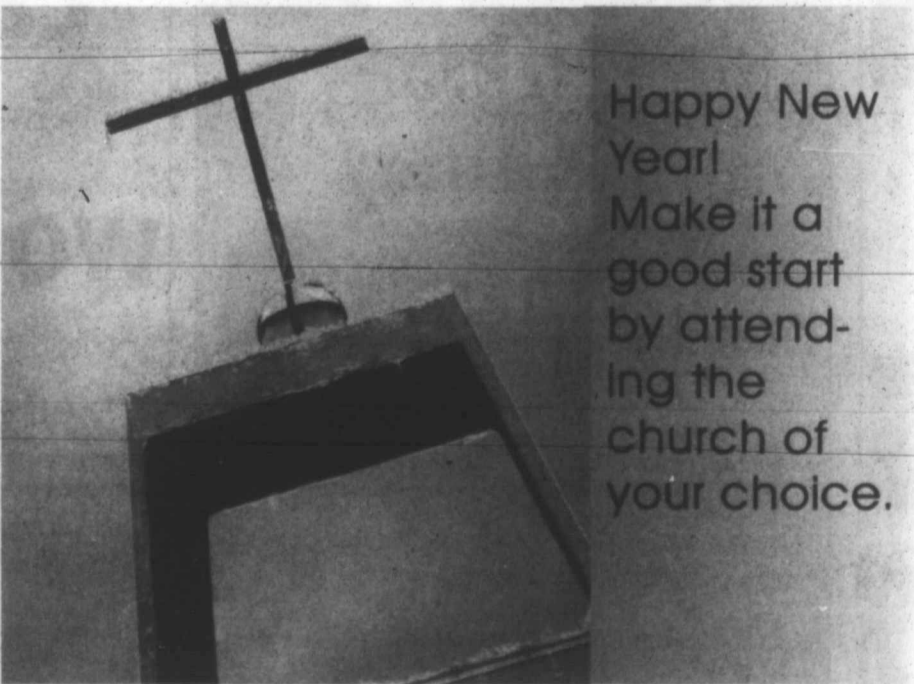
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Pampa events and opportunities

• **Carson County Square House Museum** in Panhandle will host an artist reception for Charles Firestone from 2:30-4 p.m. Jan. 11 in Hazlewood Gallery of the museum. Firestone is from Dalhart. He has studied under Dord Fitz and other artists. He belongs to several area art groups as a student and as an instructor. Firestone works primarily in oils but also uses watercolor, pastels, acrylics and personal photographs. A wide range of subjects from landscapes to portraits will be on display at the museum. For more information, call the museum at (806) 537-3524.

• **The 26th Annual Benefit Bridal Show** will be staged from 12:30-4:30 p.m. Jan. 11 in the Heritage Ball Room of Amarillo Civic Center in Amarillo by Bride's World. The event will include 100 merchants, continuous modeling of bridal wear, a silent auction and a grand prize giveaway. Tickets will be \$6 at the door or may be purchased in advance at www.bridesworld.com on the Internet.

• **Pampa Book Club** will meet at 10 a.m. the second Wednesday of each month in the Texas Room of Lovett Memorial Library. The 2009 reading schedule is as follows: Jan. 14, "The Last Lecture" by Randy Pausch; Feb. 11, "Three Cups of Tea" by Greg Mortenson and Davie Relin; March 11, "Home: A Memoir of My Early Years"

by Julie Andrews; and April 8, "The Glass Castle" by Jeannette Walls. The May 13 book for review will be announced at a later date. Public welcome.

• **The South Plains Agriculture Wind and Wildlife Conference** will begin with registration at 7:30 a.m. Feb. 13 at the American Wind Power Center and Museum in Lubbock. The conference is being conducted by Texas AgriLife Extension Service, Texas Wildlife Association, and Texas Parks and Wildlife. The purpose of the conference is to explore the pros and cons associated with the industry in Texas. For more information, call Ken Cearley, Extension wildlife specialist, at (806) 651-5760.

• **Fawn Lake Press** is offering free "Proud to be an American" flag decals to anyone sending a self-addressed stamped envelope to Fawn Lake Press, 54 Fawn Lake Rd., Durango, CO 81301. Active servicemen and women need not send a SASE to receive the free 2 x 3-inch color decals. Fawn Lake will pay their postage.

• **Manhattanville My Soldier** is seeking volunteers to "adopt" a deployed United States Servicemember. To find out more, visit www.mysoldier.com on-line or write to: Manhattanville College My Soldier Department, 2900 Purchase St., Purchase, NY 10577.

San Antonio lawmaker faced baby dilemma

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — State Rep. Trey Martinez Fischer had all kinds of contingency plans swirling in his mind as he tried to figure out how he could be with his wife for the birth of their first child and be in the Legislature for the vote on the speaker of the house.

The baby's due date was Jan. 13, the same as the date for the Legislature to convene in Austin. Martinez Fischer weighed his options. Should he move his wife from a San Antonio hospital to one in Austin and hire an off-duty state trooper to quickly navigate traffic from delivery room to the House chamber?

His contingencies included taking the oath of office from a remote location and then designating a temporary replacement.

"I was motivated with the concerns for my colleagues and for my wife, I have always said that it's an honor and a privilege to serve in the Legislature. But family comes first." Martinez Fischer can scrap the plans. The baby is due to be born Monday in a scheduled delivery after the couple's physician determined the baby was in a breech position.

Time Warner Cable and Viacom agree on fees

LOS ANGELES (AP) — There's no need to cry, Dora. The programmer Viacom and Time Warner Cable agreed on compensation that preserved access for the cable system operator's 15.7 million subscribers to Dora's Nickelodeon network, MTV and 17 other channels.

The two sides, citing disagreement over fee hikes, had threatened a damaging blackout at a minute past midnight Thursday that would have cut off shows such as "Dora the Explorer," "SpongeBob SquarePants" and "The Colbert Report" for Time

Warner Cable customers. Terms of the deal were not disclosed. Details must still be finalized over the next few days, the companies said.

"We are pleased that our customers will continue to be able to watch the programming they enjoy on MTV Networks," said Glenn Britt, president and CEO of Time Warner Cable Inc. "We are sorry they had to endure a day of public disagreement as we worked through this negotiation."

Viacom Inc. president and CEO Philippe Dauman said the company was happy a deal was struck.

Viacom had mounted an advertising onslaught warning customers of the possible blackout, taking out ads in major newspapers and Web sites from The New York Times and TVGuide.com featuring a tearful "Dora the Explorer" crying and clinging to her monkey pal, Boots.

"It then prompted people to call their cable company to complain. Time Warner's Britt on Wednesday had called Viacom's demand for a 12 percent increase in fees — an extra \$39 million on top of the estimated \$300 million it pays Viacom annually — extor-

tion and outrageous given the recession.

Viacom countered that the requested increase amounted to an extra \$2.76 annually per subscriber.

Analyst Michael Nathanson with Bernstein Research said Viacom's channels had been "underpriced relative to their peers."

Public carriage fee disputes of this scale between a programmer and a cable operator are not that common, especially when there's a threat of a blackout.

The latest dispute would have

affected some 13.3 million Time Warner Cable subscribers, mainly in New York state, the Carolinas, Ohio, Southern California and Texas; and 2.4 million customers Michigan, Indiana, California, Alabama and Florida.

The channels in the dispute were Comedy Central, Logo, Palladia, MTV, MTV 2, MTV Hits, MTV Jams, MTV Tr3s, Nickelodeon, Noggin, Nick 2, Nicktoons, Spike, The N, TV Land, VH1, VH1 Classic, VH1 Soul and CMT: Pure Country.

Dear Abby...

By Pauline & Jeanne Phillips



DEAR ABBY: "Young and in Love" (Oct. 31) does not need to "defend" herself. Lots of folks who marry young have successful marriages. I was 20, and my wife was 21 when we married. My mother thought I was too young, but signed the paper giving us permission because I was underage in the state where we were married. That was 54 years ago.

Our secret is a personal commitment under God to each other to make it work during the difficult times as well as the good ones. -- 54 YEARS AND COUNTING, TIGERVILLE, S.C.

DEAR 54 YEARS AND COUNTING: Your letter expresses the sentiments of many readers. Commitment seems to be the common bond between couples who have long marriages -- some as long as 70 years. Read on:

DEAR ABBY: Please let "Young and in Love" know that I, too, married at 20. My husband and I celebrated 24 years of marriage last month. Abby, your advice is right on. What matters most in a marriage isn't age. It's the willingness to work through whatever comes your way, no matter what it takes. What keeps us strong and still in love today is our faith and commitment to each other. -- LOOKING FORWARD TO THE NEXT 24

DEAR ABBY: I must respond to "Young." I, too, was married when I was 20. There were many naysayers -- even the priest. As he was marrying us he asked, "Are you sure you REALLY want to go through with this?" That was more than 26 years ago.

If you really love and respect one another, it can last. Get rid of the doubters in your life and surround yourself with positive people.

My husband and I are more in love today than we were all those years ago. He's my best friend. One of the perks of marrying young is having kids young. Then you get grandchildren sooner. If nothing else, stay together just to prove them wrong. -- STILL IN LOVE IN CRYSTAL BEACH, FLA.

DEAR ABBY: I met my wife Christmas caroling. My hands were cold and she warmed them (and my heart). I was 17; she was 14. We married when I was 22 and she was 19. Fifty-four years later, we are still together, and she warms my heart every morning when we wake up together. -- IN LOVE FOREVER, MAGNOLIA, DEL.

DEAR ABBY: Our college friends held a lottery betting how long our marriage would last. The longest bet was 18 months. Last August we decided to renew our vows in the same town and church where we were mar-

ried 50 years ago. It was a very special ceremony made even more so when the priest asked the congregation to sing, "They Tried to Tell Us We're Too Young." -- BEEN THERE IN WAITSBURG, WASH.

DEAR ABBY: My husband and I married when we were 19 and 17, without the support of family and friends. They all said it wouldn't last because we were too young, from broken homes and hadn't finished our educations.

Each wedding anniversary we would lift a glass and say, "It can't last," except for our most recent one last March. We lifted our glasses and said, "Happy 60th anniversary, Honey! Love can overcome anything. --

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PAMPA NEWS CLASSIFIEDS

5 Special Notices

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10 Lost/Found

REWARD. Lost male off-white Terrier type dog Dec. 20th. Neutered. Hard of hearing. "Sparky." 1800 bl. of Coffee. 440-1010.

13 Bus. Opp.

GREAT Investment opp. Pampa motel. Retired couple or individual. 665-1875, 806-383-1985.

14d Carpentry

Carpentry, Roofing, Replacement Windows, steel siding & trim. Continuous gutters. Jerry Nicholas 669-9991, 662-8169

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all types. Concrete, doors, tile, drywall. Brian, 806-664-9613.

14e Carpet Serv.

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14h Gen. Serv.

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14s Plumbing/Heat

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JACK'S Plumbing, 715 W. Foster, 665-7115.

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CHEMICAL Delivery Driver. Oil field experience helpful. Mandatory drug test and background check. CDL with hazmat and air brake endorsement will be required during employment. Good benefits - 401k after 1st year of employment. Pampa - Canadian area. 1-806-228-5463 for application. 1-888-881-3248 (ask for Roger, Mike, or Chris)

21 Help Wanted

\$1500.00 SIGN ON BONUS PAMPA NURSING CENTER is currently hiring a **NURSE AIDES** For All Shifts

Please apply in person to: **Mandi Martin RN, DON** 1321 W. Kentucky EEOE



21 Help Wanted

NOTICE Readers are urged to fully investigate advertisements which require payment in advance for information, services or goods.

LARGE Feedyard in Hedley, TX is looking for a Night Watchman. Benefits avail. Please apply in person at 3900 CR 23 in Hedley, between 7am-5pm.

VIBRA-WHIRL SPORTS Seeking Construction Superintendent. Full time position. Travel req. Good benefits. Salary based on exp. For more info, please call 806-537-3526.

CDL Drivers - wanted with tanker endorsement. Drug test required. Call Brad 216-0960, 256-5188

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Pick up application at any of the local Cable One offices or fax resume to: Donna Litterell, 806-665-5174. Apply on-line www.cableone.net EOE

21 Help Wanted

NEED Maintenance person, part-time. Call 665-0415.

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1-2 CRYPTOQUOTE

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VPYH NCENEVJSH. SCH SHDSC

AHKWED JVZJXW VPHW.

— **TECD SGVVPGW**

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DAILY HOROSCOPE

HAPPY BIRTHDAY for Saturday, Jan. 3, 2009.

You open up to many new possibilities this year, especially involving real estate, your domestic life and your family. You will like what happens if you let go of a need to be controlling. You discover how important a key person is to your life and well-being. As a result, you relate in a more authentic manner with this person. If you are single, you certainly draw your share of admirers. You might want to get to know each person completely before committing. If you are attached, a new gentleness emanates from you to your sweetie, infusing your bond. Simply enjoy. ARIES can be a hindrance at times.

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)
**** Listen to news with an open mind. Brainstorming away, you get idea after idea. Focus on a constructive change that could involve your daily life — be it a diet or a new hobby. Paint your life richer. Tonight: Happy at home.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)
*** Know when to end a situation, especially if it doesn't serve you. You might need to feel as if you are on retreat or doing something very different. Understanding will evolve to a new level if you remain open. Tonight: Make it quiet and personal.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)
***** Investigate and consider what might be happening behind the scenes. Associates, friends and loved ones want you. Though you might feel pulled in different directions, you can meet others' needs without cloning yourself! Tonight: Where the action is.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)
***** Take a stand and know what needs to happen. If you understand what is going on, you can help organize plans. An older relative could be most touchy and difficult. Please indulge this person. Listen to another's stiff but earnest sharing. Tonight: A must show.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)
***** Reach out where you feel it might be nearly impossible to go. If you are earnest in this desire for achievement, you will find a path yet undiscovered. Remodel and update your thinking appropriately. Distract your mind first. Then your body will relax.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)
***** Work with associates and evolve to a new level. If you want to approach life in a different vein, you need to give fair warning to a close loved one. People might be vested in you staying exactly as you are! Tonight: Be with your favorite person.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)
***** You cannot say that you feel alone with all the people knocking on your door. Your popularity soars, and even if you already have plans, you could be inviting some people along. Don't worry so much about a personal matter. This too will pass. Tonight: Your treat.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)
***** Fatigue could mar your evanescent spirit and positive attitude, but not for long. Cancel some plans and arrange time for a nap. If someone has a strong reaction to you taking care of yourself, is this person really a friend? Tonight: Don't stress out.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)
***** Add more joyous, childlike energy into your life. You could be surprised by what emerges. Being able to get to the bottom of a problem could help others relax, so they too can join in! Tonight: Fun and games of every variety.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)
***** Tap into your inner self before acquiescing to any plans, projects or anything else of that nature. By being able to center yourself, you will make stronger decisions for everyone involved. Tonight: Entertain at home.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)
***** Reach out for others, refusing to stand on ceremony in a particular case. You might want to rethink a decision about a key partner. Understanding evolves to a new level because of an intimate chat. Tonight: You don't need to go far.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)
***** Curb a need to be overly possessive. You might wonder why you are driven in a certain direction that really doesn't make sense. Stop and reverse gears. Actions count. Tonight: Indulge, but do not OVERindulge!

BORN TODAY
Actor Ray Milland (1905), entertainer Victor Borge (1909), actor Mel Gibson (1956)

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

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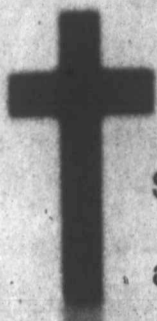
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Oaths

Continued from Page 1

Switzer, both of whom were reelected last fall.

Constable James Lewis, Constable Chris Lockridge and Gray County Sheriff Don Copeland were also sworn in by Judge Waters for new terms after being reelected.

Judge Peet swore in Gaye Whitehead, who was reelected Gray County Tax Assessor and Collector, in her office on the first floor of the courthouse as well

as her deputies, Stacey Brown, Angie Polendo, Connie Schindler, Amy Winkler and Jan Woods in the motor vehicle office and Christie Redding, Ashley Nelson, Garnet Faires, Dona Kitterman and Linda Smith in the tax office.

It was only a short break for Whitehead and her staff, however.

As county residents rushed to pay last their local taxes so they could be deducted from 2008 income taxes, Whitehead's offices were busy the last day of the year.



Constable James Lewis, left, Constable Chris Lockridge and Sheriff Don Copeland are sworn in by 223rd District Judge Lee Waters during ceremonies before the Gray County Commission meeting Wednesday.

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Gray County Judge Richard Peet swears in Gaye Whitehead as Tax Assessor and Collector.



Gray County Judge Richard Peet, left, swears in Stacey Brown, Angie Polendo, Connie Schindler, Amy Winkler and Jan Woods as deputies in the Gray County Tax Assessor and Collectors Office.



Christie Redding, Ashley Nelson, Garnet Faires, Dona Kitterman and Linda Smith are sworn in as deputies in the tax office of the Gray County Tax Assessor and Collector Office by County Judge Richard Peet.

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Clemens, Skilling on pardon watch list

HOUSTON (AP) — A political science professor in Illinois is tracking whether President George W. Bush issues a pardon to former Enron executive Jeff Skilling and clemency to former Astros pitcher Roger Clemens.

Skilling's lawyer, Daniel Petrocelli, said no request is being made on behalf of Skilling, who is in prison and appealing his conviction. No other

Enron defendants were on Justice Department request lists as of Wednesday. But Clemens' lawyer, Rusty Hardin, notes that a clemency request would make no sense, since Clemens is not charged with any crime, although the FBI is investigating whether he lied to Congress about steroid use.

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