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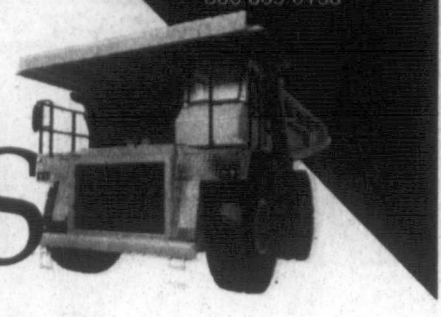
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Jim Bruton

The PAMPA NEWS



Friday, August 21, 2009 Volume 105 - No. 34 50¢ Daily - Weekend \$1.50

PISD adopts property tax rate

BY DAVID BOWSER
dbowser@thepampanews.com
The Pampa Independent School District board of directors adopted a \$1.3688 tax rate for fiscal year 2009-2010.

The rate was based on average enrollment of 3,390 with an average daily attendance of 3,160 students.
The current tax rate is \$1.04 per \$100 valuation.
The board also approved a new contract for Scott Nall as a high school math teacher.
The school board also announced

that Austin Elementary School achieved an exemplary status and that Lamar and Travis Elementary Schools had recognized status under the state's educational guidelines.
The board went into executive session to meet with their lawyer and discuss the artificial turf project at Harvester Stadium. The turf project was slowed this past sum-

mer, but it reportedly will be ready for a scrimmage today.
Randy Stephenson, construction coordinator for the district, said work on Pampa High was nearing completion. Any work that remained after school starts on Monday would be completed after classes so as not to interfere with
PISD cont. on page 3

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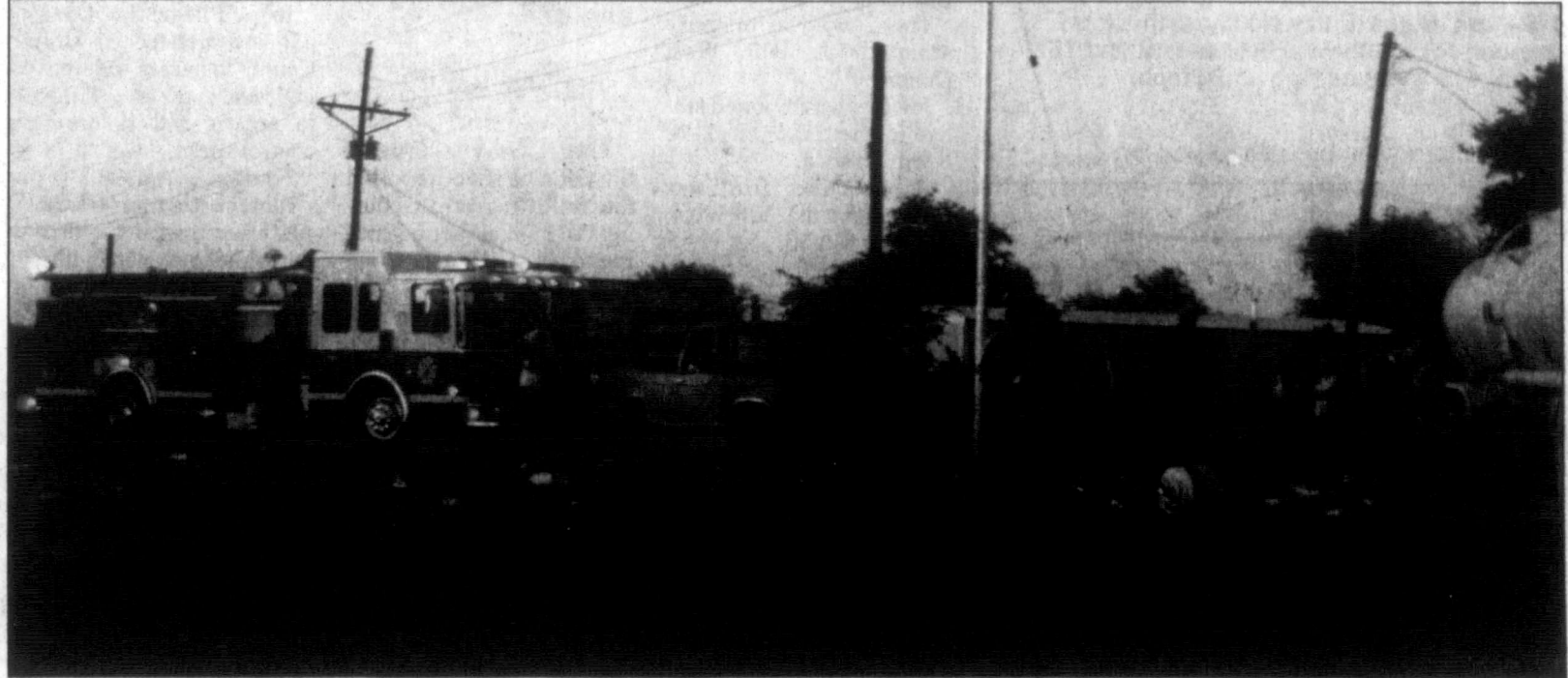
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CRASH CLOSES STREET



South Hobart Street was closed to traffic for a time Thursday night after this pickup and tanker truck collided near the intersection of Hobart Street and McCullough Avenue at about 8:12 p.m. The crash created a large debris field which took emergency personnel some time to clear. Pampa firefighters, police, Gray County Sheriff's deputies, Guardian Ambulance personnel and a DPS officer responded to the scene. One person, believed to be the driver of the red pickup, was transported to Pampa Regional Medical Center. No other details were available at press time.
staff photo by Betsy Phillips

Grand jury indictments handed up to District Court

The following felony indictments were handed up to the 223rd District Court in Gray County on August 17, 2009.

Granville Clement Smith II, 36, has been indicted on one count of entering a habitation with the intent of committing theft. The charge is enhanced by a 1990 conviction of felony unauthorized use of a vehicle in Potter County. Bond was set at \$10,000.

Smith was additionally indicted for fraudulently using a credit card. Bond on that count was set at \$4,000.

Kenneth Dewayne Allen AKA Kenneth Dwyan Yarbrough, 25, was indicted on one count of possession with intent to deliver cocaine in the amount of more than four grams, but less than 200 grams. Bond was set at \$10,000.

Darren William Hathcoat, 44, was indicted on one count of injury to child/elderly/disabled person with the intent to cause bodily injury and one count of possession of methamphetamine, more than one gram, but less than four grams. The charges are enhanced by a 1990 conviction in Ochiltree County for felony burglary of a vehicle, a 1996 conviction for assault on a public servant in Gray County and a conviction in Anderson County in 2000 for assault on a public servant. Bond was set at \$20,000.

Maria Avila, 45, was indicted on one count of possession of cocaine in an amount of 400 grams or more. Bond was set at \$10,000.

Cedric Deshun Parker, 22, was indicted on one count of possession with intent to deliver cocaine in the amount of four grams or more, but less than 200 grams.

The charge is enhanced by a 2007 conviction in Ector County for possession of cocaine in the amount of four grams or more but less than 200 grams.

Brittany Nichole Jones, 19, was indicted on one charge of possession with the intent to deliver cocaine in the amount of four grams but less than 200 grams.

Kevin Undral Jernigan, 30, was indicted one count of possession of cocaine in the amount of one gram

INDICTED cont. on page 3

City sales tax collections up, but down for month

BY DAVID BOWSER
dbowser@thepampanews.com
At \$311,541.65, sales tax collections were up this month over June and July, but City Finance Director Robin Bailey said that's because of the quarterly collections.

Sales taxes on smaller businesses are collected quarterly, which gives the months at the end of the quarter a boost.

The City of Pampa collected a total of \$415,388.87 in sales taxes for this month. Of that amount, 108,847.22 goes to the Pampa Economic Development Corporation, leaving \$311,541.65 in the city coffers.

That's down about 29 percent from last year, Bailey said.

Last year for the same time period, Bailey said, the city collected a total of \$442,611.29 in sales taxes. For this year, the city had budgeted \$417,534.51. Instead, they got \$311,541.65.

That's 25.35 percent under what was budgeted.

Bailey said the city had budgeted \$3,393,563.59 through this month. They have received \$3,437,379.92. They are still \$43,797.42 ahead of their annual budget, or about 1.29 percent, but Bailey said with two months left in the fiscal year, the city might go into the red.

The city may be in the black, she added.

"What we get in October," Bailey
CITY cont. on page 3

Panel suggests students study conservatives

AUSTIN, Texas (AP) — Texas public school students should learn about Newt Gingrich and other conservative politicians but not liberals, according to the first draft of proposed standards for the state's high school history books.

The omission has angered liberals — and some conservatives who feel students should get a look at both sides.

"We ought to be focusing on historical significance and historical figures," state Rep. Trey Martinez Fischer, D-San Antonio, told the San Antonio Express-News in Friday's editions. "It's important that whatever course they take, that it portray a complete view of our history and not a jaded view to suit one's partisan agenda or one's partisan philosophy."

The State Board of Education appointed review committees of current and former teachers as well as "expert reviewers" to help shape the standards document. The 15-member board, which includes 10 Republicans, will decide the standards next spring, influencing how history, civics and geography books are written.

The first draft recommends students studying U.S. history since Reconstruction be able to identify "significant conservative advocacy organizations and individuals, such as Newt Gingrich, Phyllis Schlafly and the Moral Majority."

Gingrich helped lead House Republicans to their 1994 takeover of Congress.
PANEL cont. on page 3

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For the record

PAMPA FORECAST

Saturday	Sunday	Monday
High 90 Low 64	High 93 Low 66	High 94 Low 67

Tonight: Partly cloudy, with a low around 62. Southeast wind between 5 and 10 mph.

Saturday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 90. Southeast wind between 5 and 10 mph.

Saturday Night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 64. Southeast wind between 10 and 15 mph.

Sunday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 93. South southeast wind between 10 and 15 mph, with gusts as high as 20 mph.

Sunday Night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 66. South southeast wind around 15 mph, with gusts as high as 20 mph.

Monday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 94. South southwest wind between 10 and 15 mph, with gusts as high as 20 mph.

Monday Night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 67. South wind between 10 and 15 mph, with gusts as high as 20 mph.

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Police officer dies in shootout

HOUSTON (AP) — A Houston-area police officer has been shot and killed while responding to a disturbance call in a trailer park. The Houston Chronicle reports the 29-year-old Pasadena officer died at Memorial Hermann Hospital in Houston Friday morning from a head wound. The suspect was also seriously injured in a shootout with police. Assistant Police Chief Bud Corbett said the suspect's mother informed the officer that her son had a gun. Corbett says the gunman opened fire a few moments later, wounding the officer in the head. The identity of the four-year veteran officer and married father of two hasn't been released.

LAST MINUTE CLASSIFIED LINE ADS

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- ASPIRE QUICKIE** IF INTERESTED in Freestyle Wheelchair Battery Operated, choice of three colors for fenders. \$1,250.00. 665-9445.
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- COMMUNITY CHRISTIAN School** has openings for Pre K and after school program until 5:30.
- JIM'S BARBER Shop, 1421 N. Hobart, 665-5111.**
- JR. HIGH Back To School Dance, Bull Barns.** \$5 entry, \$1 water, Sat. Aug. 22, 8-11pm. Gym. of Pampa/ House of Cheer
- MCLEAN DANCE, Sat., 8-11:30pm.** \$10 per person.
- CERAMIC TILE.** Keith Taylor, 874-1779 lv. msg.

Obituaries

Barbara Rae Stockton Whitten, 79

Barbara Rae Stockton Whitten, 79, died August 20, 2009, in Florida. Memorial services will be Monday, August 24, 2009 at 10:30 a.m. at First United Methodist Church in Pampa, Texas.

EMERGENCY SERVICES

PAMPA PD

The Pampa Police Department reported the following incidents during the 24-hour period ending at 7 a.m. Thursday. Officers made 16 traffic or traffic-related stops. Authorities made 14 animal related calls. Five medical emergencies were reported. Two accidents were reported. Four 911 hangup calls were reported. Wednesday, Aug. 19. Officers responded to a civil matter. Police made a welfare check. There was a burglary reported at 900 West Duncan. Jewelry was reported stolen in the 2200 block of North Duncan. A structure fire was reported in the 300 block of South Miami. Identity theft was reported. A suspicious person was reported in the 1400 block of North Hobart. A fire prevention call was made in the 1600 block of West Kentucky. A threat was reported to police. An alarm was reported in the 200 block East Foster. A welfare check was done in the 300 block of Starkweather. A suspicious person was reported in the 100 block of North Russell. An accident was reported on Texas Highway 70. A welfare check was done in the 2500 block of

Marry Ellen.

Thursday, Aug. 20. A suspicious person was reported in the 400 block of South Starkweather. A suspicious person was reported in the 300 block of North Lefors. A burglary was reported in the 400 block of North Warren. A suspicious vehicle was reported in the 400 block of South Starkweather. A suspicious person was reported in the 100 block of South Starkweather. An alarm was reported in the 700 block of North Hobart. An alarm was reported in the 300 block of West Kingsmill.

SHERIFF

The Gray County Sheriff's Office reported the following arrests during the 24-hour period ending at 7 a.m. Thursday. Wednesday, Aug. 19. Jose Ray Palacios, 31,



was arrested by Gray County Sheriff's deputies on charges of evading arrest, possession of drug paraphernalia, bond surrender for manufacturing and delivery over 200 grams but less than 400 grams of a controlled substance. Michael Rawleigh Jones, 23, was arrested by Pampa police officers for tampering with and fabricating physical evidence with the intent to impair, evading arrest and resisting arrest. Donald Floyd Willis, 68, was arrested by Pampa police officers on a warrant charging him with theft under \$50. John Fitzgerald Cook, 43, was arrested by Gray County deputies for turning out unsafe, failure to appear and failure to control speed. Thursday, Aug. 20. Ramon Camps Garcia, 41, was arrested for driving while intoxicated, third or more offense.

DEAR ABBY: I'm about to move out of a condo I have shared for two years with a roommate I'll call "Carly." Her parents own it, and I'm leaving because Carly's sister, "Heather," is moving in soon to attend school. Carly is supposed to look out for Heather and teach her how to live on her own because Heather has some mental challenges. In the two years I have lived with Carly, she has been mostly absent. She often leaves for days at a time without telling me. I hope this will change when her sister moves in. Carly is also very promiscuous. She's always with one guy or another, and occasionally intimate with more than one at a time. Through closed doors and over a blaring TV I have overheard her and her boyfriends going at it but accepted it as part of normal college life. I fear Heather will be mortified to hear what I have heard. I don't think Carly knows she has been overheard. Should I warn her when I move out? Or should I not mention it and hope she's a better role model for Heather when she arrives? -- ALMOST EX-ROOMIE IN NEW HAMPSHIRE

DEAR ALMOST EX: By all means warn Carly. Had you done so the first time the noise bothered you, living there would have been less embarrassing for you. But at the same time you should also have a chat with Carly's parents. The responsibility they are placing on her is a serious one, and it doesn't appear Carly is up to shouldering it. A better solution for Heather would be for her to be in a program where certified teachers can help her learn independent living skills and in which she would

FIRE

The Pampa Fire Department responded to the following calls between 7 a.m. Thursday, August 20 and 7 a.m. Friday, August 21. 10:08 a.m.— One unit and three personnel responded to the 400 block of Roberta on a public service call, installation of a smoke alarm. 10:51 a.m.— One unit and three personnel responded to the 900 block of Finley as first responders on a medical call. 11:20 Four units and seven personnel responded to the Gray County court house, 200, block of N. Russell on a bomb threat. No bomb found. 8:12 p.m.— Two units and six personnel responded to a motor vehicle crash in the 1200 block of S. Hobart. 11:59 p.m.— One unit and three personnel responded to 17th and Hamilton for an agency assist.

Dear Abby...

By Pauline & Jeanne Phillips

receive appropriate, consistent supervision. Her safety -- in more ways than one -- could depend on it.

DEAR ABBY: My mother-in-law has a terrible habit. She tells us what she wants for gifts in the form of e-mails with Web links to things she wants.

One year, she bought a pair of \$700 earrings and told her fiance that he bought them for her birthday. He actually had to reimburse her.

Last Mother's Day she sent an e-mail with a link to a site selling personalized crystal items to be engraved with a thoughtful message to "Mom." This week she sent an e-mail -- two months in advance -- saying what she wants for her birthday.

I wasn't raised like this. I have a problem with someone telling me what she wants when I haven't asked. I also don't like being told how much to spend. I think her behavior is selfish and immature, but how do I get it to stop?

My husband is used to it. He doesn't know how to say no to her. His sisters have picked up this habit and tell us what their kids want for birthdays and Christmas. One sister even handed me an ad she had clipped for something she wants on her next birthday. What can I do? -- SOLICITED IN ARIZONA

DEAR SOLICITED: How about ignoring the solicitations and giving something you can afford? Or just say no. And if your mother-in-law or sisters-in-law ask why you didn't "produce on command," say -- with a smile -- that asking for gifts is rude, that it makes you uncomfortable, and what was requested was beyond your means.

Sudoku

Answer to yesterday's puzzle:

5	1	7	9	8	6	3	2	4
4	8	9	2	1	3	7	5	6
6	3	2	5	7	4	1	8	9
9	5	1	3	6	7	2	4	8
2	7	3	4	5	8	9	6	1
8	4	6	1	2	9	5	7	3
7	2	4	6	3	1	8	9	5
3	6	5	8	9	2	4	1	7
1	9	8	7	4	5	6	3	2

	5			7	2			
	9							4
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9			1	5	2			
6								
3	1		9			6	7	
	4	2		7				9
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	6	1						

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Dallas police pioneering new photo lineup approach

DALLAS (AP) — Frustrated with a string of wrongful convictions, the Dallas police department is now the nation's largest force to use sequential blind photo lineups — a widely praised technique designed to reduce mistakes made by witnesses trying to identify suspects.

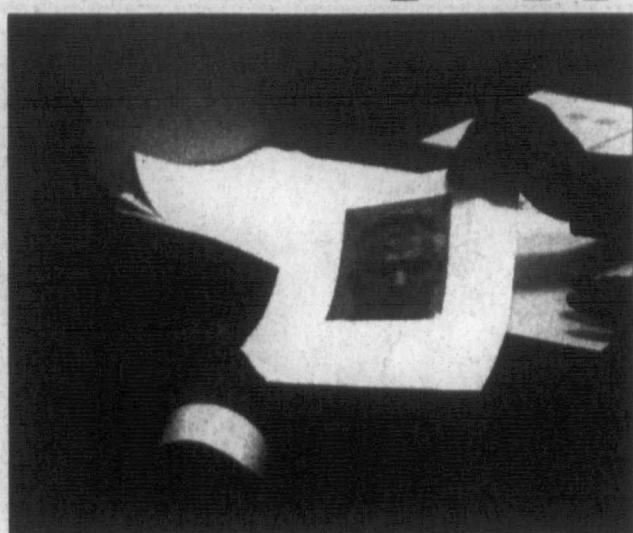
Dallas is not the first department to use the pioneering method. But experts hope that by using it in the county that leads the nation in exonerating wrongly convicted inmates, Dallas will inspire other departments to follow suit.

"If Dallas can do it ... then others are going to rise to the occasion," said Iowa State psychology professor Gary Wells, a national expert on police lineups.

The department switched to sequential blind lineups in April. Before that, Dallas police administered most lineups using the traditional six-pack — law-enforcement lingo for mounting six photos onto a folder and showing them to a witness or victim at the same time.

In sequential blind lineups, mug shots are shown one at a time. Detectives displaying the photos also don't know who the suspect is, which means they can't purposely or accidentally tip off witnesses.

Showing possible suspects all at once tends to make a witness compare the mug shots to one another, Wells said. But if they are shown sequentially, "witnesses have to dig deeper, compare each person to their memory and make more of an absolute decision."



In a new type of police lineup, a Dallas police officer shows a victim of a robbery a single photo of a suspect in an interview room at police headquarters in Dallas. The police department in Dallas has become the nation's largest force to use sequential blind lineups, a widely praised technique that experts said should reduce mistakes made by eyewitnesses trying to identify suspects. (AP Photo/LM Otero)

"It makes witnesses more conservative, more cautious," he said.

An analysis of 26 recent studies shows that presenting mug shots sequentially instead of simultaneously produces fewer identifications but more accurate ones, Wells said. Overall, identification rates in sequential lineups are 15 percent lower than simultaneous lineups — but misidentification rates also drop by 39 percent, he said.

Dallas is taking other measures to try to cut back on misidentifications. Police try to record every lineup to make them more credible, and a lineup unit tells witnesses that police will investigate the case regardless of whether an identification is made. That's designed to reduce pressure on a witness to make an ID for fear the case will stagnate, said

Dallas police Lt. David Pughes.

Dallas police also ask witnesses to express how confident they are in their identifications, Pughes said. That's to avoid what Innocence Project Co-Director Barry Scheck calls a "forced-choice response" when police, intentionally or not, nudge a witness into expressing certainty.

That's what happened to Thomas McGowan, a wrongly convicted Dallas County man released last year after nearly 23 years in prison for a rape and robbery he did not commit.

Police in the Dallas suburb of Richardson gave the victim, who was held captive by her attacker for several hours, several photos including McGowan's and the man that DNA eventually proved to be the rapist. She picked out McGowan's photo, saying she "thought" he was the attacker. Police told her she had to be certain and "couldn't just think it was him." It was then she said McGowan was "definitely" the attacker, according to court documents.

McGowan recently met his accuser, who apolo-

gized. He said he believes police should use an independent person to administer lineups. The Richardson department now has a written policy that states a preference for but doesn't require an independent lineup administrator.

"They showed me the picture of the guy, and to me the guy looked nothing like me," McGowan said. "I'm still trying to figure that one out."

Nationally, more than 75 percent of DNA exonerees who have been released since 1989 were sent to prison based on witness misidentification, according to The Innocence Project, a New York legal center specializing in overturning wrongful convictions. It's the most common element in a wrongful conviction, the center said.

Since 2001, 21 people in Dallas County have had convictions overturned after DNA proved their innocence. A majority of them were in the city of Dallas.

In May, Jerry Lee Evans, of Dallas, had his conviction overturned after spending 23 years in prison for aggravated sexual assault with a deadly weapon. The rape victim wrongly identified him as her attacker.

In another case, Johnnie Earl Lindsey spent more than 25 years in prison for a rape he did not commit. The victim said her attacker didn't wear a shirt. A year later, the victim picked out Lindsey — one of two shirtless men among the six photos. Lindsey, of Dallas, was released last year after DNA showed he was innocent.

Boston, Minneapolis and Denver use sequential blind lineups or some variation. New Jersey and North Carolina have mandated police do the same. Most police departments, however, continue to use the six-pack or other traditional methods.

Panel

cont. from page 1

Schlaflly founded the conservative Eagle Forum and became a leading opponent of the Equal Rights Amendment. The Moral Majority formed in the late 1970s as an evangelical Christian organization.

Board member David Bradley, R-Beaumont, expects the draft to pass a preliminary vote along party lines. Terri Leo, a Republican board member from Spring, doesn't.

"It is hard to believe that a majority of the writing team would approve of such wording," Leo said.

"It's not even a representative selection of the conservative movement, and it is inappropriate."

Another board conservative, Ken Mercer, R-San Antonio, thinks students should study both sides to "see what the differences are and be able to define those differences."

He would add James Dobson's Focus on the Family, conservative talk show host Sean Hannity and former Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee to the list of conservatives. Others have proposed adding talk show host Rush Limbaugh and the National Rifle Association.

But Mercer said he also would include the liberal National Education Association, MoveOn.org, Planned Parenthood and the Texas Freedom Network a group that says it promotes "religious freedom and individual liberties to counter the radical right."

Two reviewers have recommended that Cesar Chavez, the late farm workers union leader, be removed from history books because they deem him an unworthy role model.

PISD

cont. from page 1

classes. The board set Sept. 17 as the date for the dedication of the renovated high school.

Stephenson told the board following their executive session that the new junior high school was 80 percent complete. He said the building should be enclosed within the next month or two so construction could work inside as the weather turned colder this fall.

The school board also approved the purchase of \$87,053 of a new bus for special education students.

They also approved \$157,803 for the purchase and installation of new projection systems in the elementary schools. The district will be responsible for providing about \$25,000. The remainder will be provided by federal funding.

The school board approached a \$1,000 stipend to paraprofessionals in the school system with college degrees and \$2,500 for teaching. The money will come from educational grants.

Dana Terry, school board member, was

chosen to represent the district on the Joint Elections Administration Committee.

Nancy Coffee, who is serving on the Gray County Appraisal District Board, notified the school board that she will leave the district board at the end of her term in December. School Supt. Barry Haensch asked the board to think about recommendations for her position for the board's September meeting.

The school board revised their EIF (Local) policy, requiring students to get a half credit of Health class for graduation.

Haensch told the board that contacting the parents of students transferring from Pampa Independent School District to neighboring district has shown some impact. He said 105 student left Pampa ISD this past year to attend other schools, but that number was down from 132 three years ago.

The board made minor changes to the 2009-2010 Student Code of Conduct.

They also reviewed the campus handbooks of the district's schools.

Indicted

cont. from page 1

or more but less than four grams. The charge is enhanced by a February, 2009 Potter County conviction of possession of cocaine with the intent to deliver cocaine a 1996 Gray County conviction of felony assault on a public servant and conviction in 2000 in Anderson county of felony assault of a public servant. Bond was set at \$10,000.

Kenroy Fyfe, 34, was indicted on one count of possession of marijuana in the amount of 50 pounds or less, but more than five pounds. Bond was set at \$2,000.

Stanley Branch, 43, was indicted on one count of possession of cocaine in amount of four grams or more but less than 200 grams. Bond was set at \$15,000.

Kevin John Boyd, 32, was indicted on one count of possession with intent to deliver methamphetamine in the amount of one gram or more but less than four grams. Bond was set at \$5,000.

Sebero Aguayo, 38, was indicted on one count of possession with the intent to deliver cocaine in the amount of 400 grams or more. Bond was set at \$10,000.

Anthony Lee Williams, 33, was indicted on one count of possession of methamphetamine in an amount of less than one gram. Bond was set at \$3,500.

Laura Beth White, 40, was indicted on one count of possession of methamphetamine in the amount of less than one gram. Bond was set at \$5,000.

Kimberly Ann Turner, 30, was indicted on one count of possession of cocaine in the amount of less than one gram. Bond was set at \$2,500.

Ian David Spencer, 24, was indicted on one count of possession of methamphetamine, in the amount of less than one gram. Bond was set at \$5,000.

Issac Lee Rodriguez, AKA Isaac Lee Rodriguez, 22, was indicted on one count of possession of cocaine in an amount of less than one gram. Bond was set at \$5,000. Rodriguez was also indicted on one count of fleeing from a peace officer. Bond was set at \$5,000.

Earl Franklin Knotts, Jr., 28, was indicted on one count of possession of methamphetamine in the amount of less than one gram. Bond was set at \$3,500.

Christopher Lee Allred, 35, was indicted on a charge of possession of methamphetamine in the amount of one gram or more but less than four grams. Bond was set at \$10,000. He was also indicted on one count of concealing marijuana with the intent to impair its availability as evidence in an investigation. Bond was set at \$3,500.

City

cont. from page 1

said, "will accrue back to this year."

She said the September and October collections will need to total \$563,000 in order to make this year's budget.

"I think it's unlikely that we will make it," she said, "but we may have a good surprise."

To date, Pampa is \$160,018.34 under last year's budget, or about 4.45 percent behind.

Current projections call for a loss of \$47,752.04 for the year, indicating that there could be some budget cuts between now and the end of the fiscal year.

Next year's budget has been pulled back considerably, she said, although it is still being worked on.

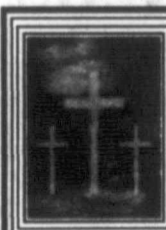
"We budgeted \$3.7 million this year," she said, "and we've taken it down to \$3.2 million for next year."

But before the budget for next year is finalized, Bailey said, it may be increased, but the city is waiting to see September's numbers.

"We can always adjust our budget accordingly," she said, "but the way it's looking now, we felt we needed to drop it."

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When: August 24th, 25th & 27th
Time: 5:30-7:00 pm
Where: P.O.Y.C.
Players Fees: Flag-Grades 1&2-\$70.00
Tackle- Grades 3&4 and grades 5&6-\$100

All Tackle players must be present at sign-ups to be fitted for equipment!

Viewpoints

Today in History

Today is Friday, August 21, the 233th day of 2009. There are 132 days left in the year.

- Highlights in history on this date:
- 1673 - Britain's Prince Rupert is defeated off Texel, ending British efforts to land troops in Holland and freeing Dutch coast from blockade.
 - 1680 - Pueblo Indians drive out the Spanish and take possession of Santa Fe, New Mexico.
 - 1791 - Slaves rise, beginning the Haitian Revolution
 - 1808 - British forces defeat French at Vimiero, Portugal.
 - 1831 - Former slave Nat Turner leads a violent insurrection in Virginia, United States, and is later executed.
 - 1862 - British sailor Billy Barker strikes gold in western Canada's Cariboo mountains, digging up \$600,000-worth. His wife squanders the fortune and Barker dies penniless.

'Happiness, it seems to me, consists of two things: first, in being where you belong, and second — and best — in comfortably going through everyday life, that is, having had a good night's sleep and not being hurt by new shoes.

— Theodor Fontane, German author

1886 - Pro-Russian officers in Sofia, Bulgaria, kidnap the ruler, Prince Alexander, and hand him over to the Russians.

1917 - German forces attack Russians on the Latvian front in World War I.

1939 - The Soviet Union and Germany sign the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact, a 10-year nonaggression treaty, with a secret addendum, to

partition Poland. This treaty proved to be the fuse that ignited World War II.

1945 - U.S. President Harry S. Truman ends the Lend-Lease Program that gave US\$50 billion in aid to the Allies in World War II.

1951 - Construction of the first nuclear submarine is ordered. The same power used in the atomic bombs during World War II would be harnessed as an alternate energy source.

1959 - Hawaii becomes 50th state of United States. 1990 - 100,000 people gather in Prague's Wenceslas Square for first free commemoration of 1968 Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia.

1993 - Bosnian Croats give in to U.N. demands and promise to allow aid to reach tens of thousands of Muslims trapped in Mostar, as heavy fighting rages in the city.

1995 - A bomb rips apart a bus during morning rush hour in Jerusalem, killing five people and injuring more than 100.

1999 - Farmers dump manure in front of McDonald's eateries in southern France to protest U.S. sanctions on European Union goods. The sanctions were imposed in response to the EU decision to ban U.S. hormone-treated beef.

Today's Birthdays:
St. Francis De Sales, French Roman Catholic bishop (1567-1622); Jean Baptiste Greuze, French artist (1725-1805); William Murdoch, Scottish inventor (1754-1839); Jules Michelet, French historian (1798-1874); William "Count" Basie, U.S. jazz musician (1904-1984); Britain's Princess Margaret (1930-2002); Melvin Van Peebles, U.S. film actor/director (1932-); Kenny Rogers, U.S. country singer (1938-).



FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL

Freedom from fear

By David Sirota

Those of us living in the Rocky Mountain region are steeped in America's famous gun culture -- and we therefore know well the binary debates surrounding the Second Amendment. Firearm enthusiasts -- the vast majority of whom use weapons responsibly -- believe the Constitution protects their right to bear arms. Gun control advocates counter that the Constitution doesn't give anyone the inalienable right to wield automatic weapons that can kill scores of people in seconds.

This is the stultified freedom-versus-safety quarrel that seemed to forever define gun politics -- that is, until anti-government activists started bringing firearms to public political meetings.

In early August, a protester came to a raucous Tennessee congressional forum packing heat. Days later, President Obama's health care event in New Hampshire was marred by a protester posing for cameras with a pistol and sign reading, "It is time to water the tree of liberty" -- a reference to a Thomas Jefferson quote

promising violence. And this past week, 12 armed men -- including one with an assault rifle -- not only showed off their firearms at Obama's Arizona speech, but broadcast a YouTube video threatening to "forcefully resist people imposing their will on us through the strength of the majority."

These and other similar examples are accurately summarized with the same language federal law employs to describe domestic terrorism. Generating maximum media attention, the weapons-brandishing displays are "intended to intimidate or coerce a civilian population." Yes, the gun has been transformed from a sport and self-defense device into a tool of mass bullying. Like the noose in the Jim Crow South, its symbolic message is clear: If you dare engage in the democratic process, you risk bodily harm.

With that implicit threat, the incessant arguments about gun ownership have been supplanted by a more significant debate over which should take precedence: The Constitution's First or Second Amendment?

Based on America's his-

tory, the Founders' answer to that question clearly lies in the Bill of Rights' deliberate sequencing.

The First Amendment ethos guarantees people -- whatever their politics -- a fundamental right to participate in their democracy without concern for physical retribution. It is the primary amendment because America was first and foremost created not as a gun-owners' haven, but as a place to shelter citizens from oppression.

Over two centuries, we have taken this tradition seriously, enacting statutes reinforcing freedoms of speech, creating the secret ballot, and outlawing harassment at Election-Day polling stations. This is why, whether tracing roots to Colonial England, Nazi Germany or any other tyranny, so many Americans say they came here specifically looking for protection from political persecution.

While the First Amendment doesn't ensure credibility or significance, it is supposed to guarantee freedom from fear -- a freedom that is now under siege. Citing the Second Amendment and the increasingly maniacal rhetoric of conservative media

firebrands, a small handful of violence-threatening protesters aims to make the rest of us -- whether pro- or anti-health-reform -- afraid to speak out.

And so we face a choice that has nothing to do with health care, gun ownership or any other hot-button issue that protesters of both parties are fighting over. It is a choice about democracy itself -- a choice that comes down to the two axioms best articulated by, of all people, Mao Zedong.

One option is willful ignorance: We can pretend the ferment is unimportant, continue allowing the intimidation and ultimately usher in a dark future where "political power grows out of the barrel of a gun."

Better, though, is simply making public political events firearm-free zones, just like schools and stadiums. That way forward honors our democratic ideals by declaring that politics may be war, but in America it is "war without bloodshed" -- and without the threat of bloodshed.

David Sirota is the author of the best-selling books "Hostile Takeover" and "The Uprising."

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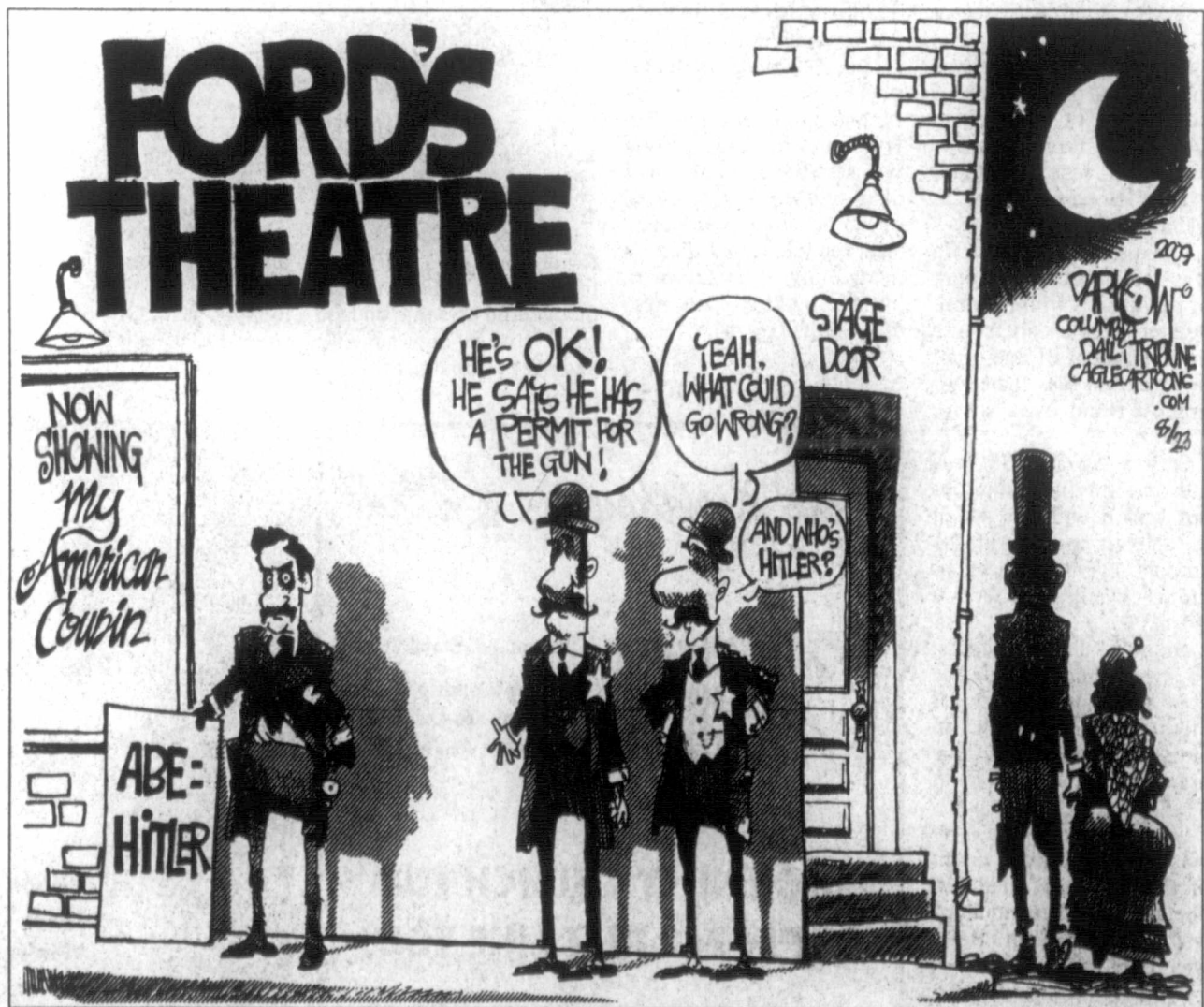
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- Letters should be brief and to the point. All correspondence will be edited for length and clarity.
- All letters must be signed. Submit your name, address and telephone number with the letter for verification. Only your name and city will be published.
- Defamatory comments will not be published.
- E-mail submissions are welcome.



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 Church of the Nazarene launches Saturday
 worship service or SNOW in Pampa

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The goal of Saturday Night of Worship (SNOW) is to reach folks who aren't currently attending a church anywhere, or work Sundays or shift work so they can develop a relationship with Christ.

It will be a casual /come as you are contemporary worship service in which everyone is welcome.

We will have a light meal at 6:30 p.m. and the service will begin at 7 p.m.

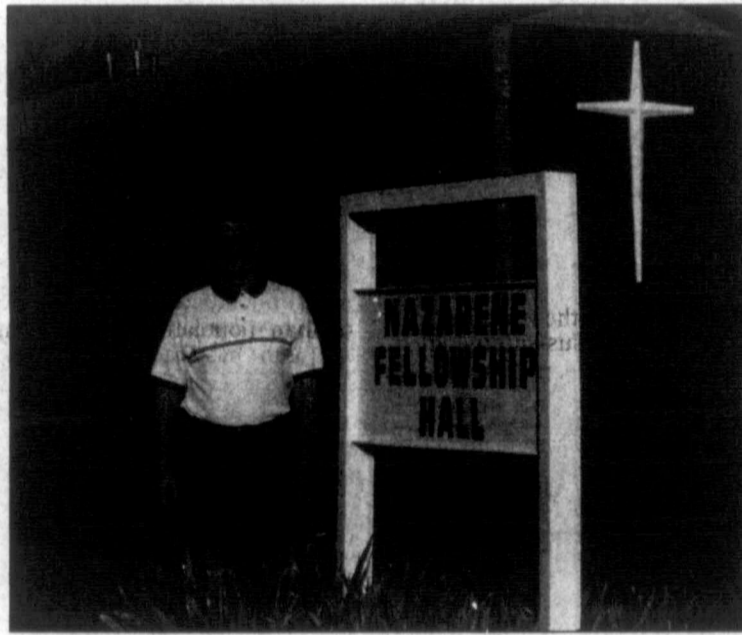
We are excited about the potential of this endeavor God is leading us into.

Pastor Jimmie Cole will be sharing our goals and vision for Pampa and is very excited to visit with those who might be interested in participating at any level.

Pastor Cole plans to have a prayer team, a music and worship team, a fellowship and facility team, and others as the Lord provides workers with spiritual gifts. We are still in need of some equipment, so we appreciate any prayer and assistance because we are convinced where God guides He also provides!

If you are out of work, hope, a job, time, luck, money, church, or out of sorts and discouraged-We have Good News for you! Come worship the Lord with us and renew your relationship with God starting Saturday, August 29. You'll be glad you did!

Pampa Church of the Nazarene
 806-669-3144



*From the desk of Dr.
 Johnny Funderburg*

Sometimes the Song just plays in my head, "One day at a time Sweet Jesus, that's all I'm asking from You—Just give me the strength to do every day what I have to do." Not a bad song; better theology. In fact, it is based on the words of Jesus Himself, "Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble" (Matthew 6:34).

Sometimes life is like that. One day will be so heavy, so burdensome, that all we can do is put one step in front of the other; accomplish just what we have to for that day. We can't concern ourselves with tomorrow, else we would be overwhelmed.

"Sufficient for the day is its own trouble." Not exactly the kind of phrase you build a "Prosperity—Healthy, Wealthy, Wise doctrine" on. But it is true. Trouble does not bypass us just because we are Christians. In fact we are told that those who try to, "Live Godly in Jesus Christ will suffer persecution" (2 Timothy 3:12).

Trials befall the Godliest among us. It's not IF but WHEN. And certain we must not forget that "Our Adversary prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour" (1 Peter 5:8).

The purpose of these burdened days is not necessarily to escape them. Death and Heaven is the only out that scene. Instead, God calls us to walk through them with Him. Trusting Him. Waiting on Him. Making it one day at a time.

Roxanne has a saying in her office, "Life is not about waiting for the storm to pass, it's about learning to dance in the rain." No, Jesus didn't write it, but I think He could have. Jesus' brother, James, wrote this, "Count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing" (James 1:2-4).

You know, it really helps a lot to remember that God is more concerned with teaching me to Trust Him than He is with giving me what I think I want. He is more set on my Holiness than my Happiness. That is not to say that God is not concerned with the way that I feel. It is just that He knows that His Holiness produces joy. And joy is so much sweeter than happiness. Peter said it this way, The genuineness of our faith is much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 1:7).

Well then, we march on. With our face toward the sky and our mind on heaven, take hold of the Lord's Hand and we cling to Him as we faithfully march embracing the truth that, "The sufferings of this present world are not worthy to be compared with the glory which is to be revealed in us" (Romans 8:18).

In His Strength,
 Dr. Johnny Funderburg

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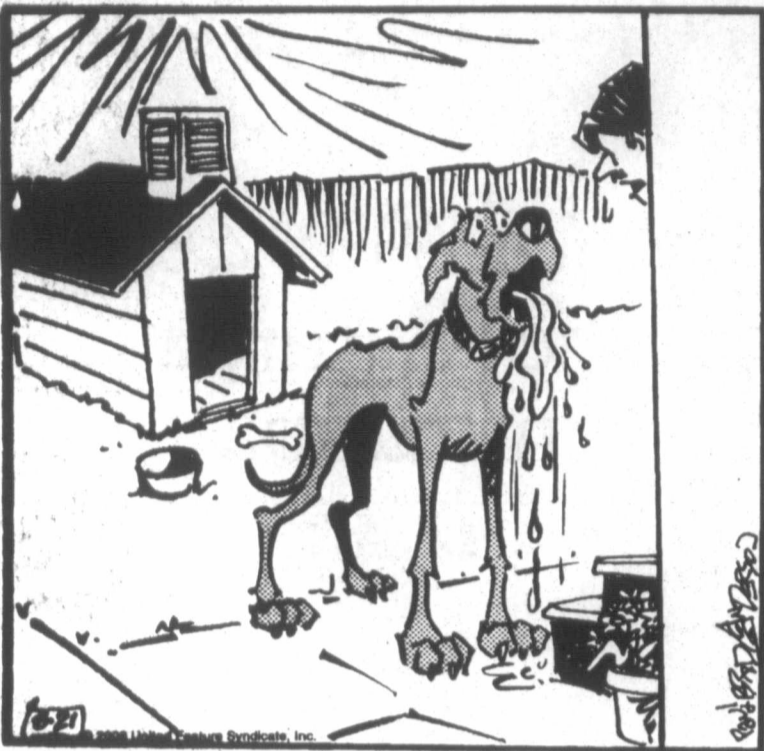
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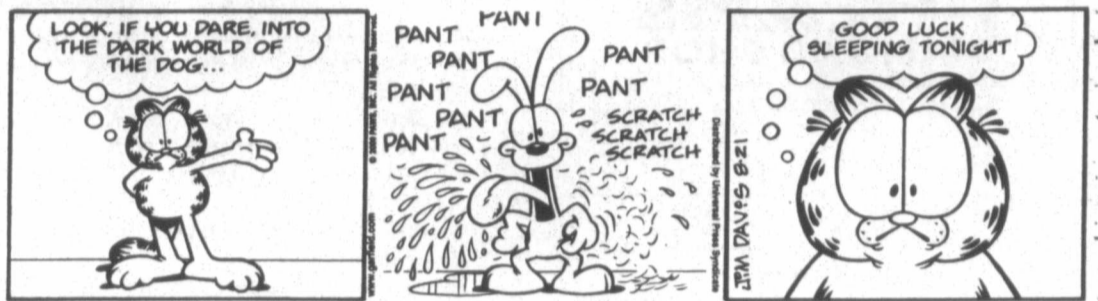
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By Bil Keane



"I'm movin' to the non-smoking section."

Daily Crossword Puzzle

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

- ACROSS**
- 1 Dis-mounted
 - 5 Big gulp
 - 9 Like some eclipses
 - 11 Insignificant
 - 13 Overture
 - 14 Houston player
 - 15 Wisdom bringer
 - 16 Sub sinker
 - 18 Butler, for one
 - 20 Hogwash
 - 21 Catch
 - 22 Hostels
 - 23 Some amount of
 - 24 Bikini half
 - 25 Soccer legend
 - 27 Seethes
 - 29 Notre Dame's Parseghian
 - 30 Calendar quartet
 - 32 Golfer Fred
 - 34 VCR button abbr.
 - 36 Carrie's dad
 - 38 Woods with woods
 - 39 Paris sight
- DOWN**
- 1 Fake name
 - 2 Fencing moves
 - 3 Check by one's accountants
 - 4 Mariner
 - 5 Stylish
 - 6 Tendril
 - 7 Heart, for one
 - 8 Gotham's commissioner
 - 10 Traffic circle
 - 12 Historic miniseries
 - 17 Area-code preceder
 - 19 Roof ornament
 - 22 Eye part
 - 24 Isn't modest
 - 25 Duel count
 - 26 Undermines
 - 27 Spelling contest
 - 28 Allergy symptom
 - 30 Doze
 - 31 Machine part
 - 33 Freshener scent
 - 37 "Believer"

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Garage Sale. Too much to mention! 805 S. Barnes, Fri. 8-4 & Sat. 8-7

HUGE Garage Sale A little bit of everything 1523 N. Faulkner Sat. 8-12

Garage Sale. 1900 Christine. Fri. & Sat. 8-7 Clothing, furniture, misc.

3 FAMILY SALE FRI. & SAT. 8-3PM 216 W. CRAVEN SUPER SALE!! Xmas tree & decor, appliances, antique rocking chair, lots of kids clothes, kitchen stuff, glass & gifts. Framed pics, Barbie car, dressers, chairs, tires, office supplies, baby things, dishes, futon frame & tables. Sat 10-2. No checks. No early birds. 126 S. Houston, 1 bl. south of Lovett Library

LIKE new baby stuff, nice boy's & girl's sch. clothes. Everything \$1. Sat., 8-7 700 N. Lowry

Garage Sale 1002 N. WELLS SAT. 8am.

YARD SALE, Sat. 9-2pm., 524 Powell. Clothes, furni., baby stuff, misc.

506 N. Dwight. Lots of stuff. Womens + sz. clothes, solid oak table w/ 2 leaves & chair. Fri. & Sat. 7am-7

YOUTH Fund Raiser Garage Sale: Hi-Land Christian Church, 1615 N. Banks. Lots & lots of stuff. Sat. 9-2pm.

1933 N. Dwight, Fri. Only, 4pm-8pm. Furni., all sz. clothes, decor & misc.

YARD Sale: Sat. & Sun. 304 N. West. Lots of baby stuff.

69a Garage Sales

SAT. 7am 1706 Grape Lots of clothes & misc.

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3 Family Moving Sale. Something For Everyone! Thurs. thru Sun. 8-5. 2404 Charles.

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Garage Sale queen & full bed, dresser, clothes, dishes, 1912 Christy, Sat. 8-1

SALE: 2204 Duncan, 8-12. Full sz headboard, new Elliptical, J.L. auto speakers, micro., nice clothes, home decor.

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YARD Sale: Sat. & Sun. 304 N. West. Lots of baby stuff.

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YARD Sale, Sat. 8am lots of stuff, 1012 E. Kingsmill Ave.

YARD Sale Sat. 7am-7 1927 N. Nelson

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Garage Sale 1718 COFFEE SAT. 8AM

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BY JACQUELINE BIGAR HAPPY BIRTHDAY for Saturday, Aug. 22, 2009: This year, you will willingly be break from your pattern and follow a different approach to life. Many of you could decide to develop your own business on a secondary level. Focus on risking less and building a more secure financial base. If you are single, you attract many different types of people. Romance happens unexpectedly. Wait till the year mark to consider this bond a relationship. If you are attached, the two of you experience more high-voltage moments than usual. Respect your differences. LIBRA helps you make money. The Stars Show the Kind of Day You'll Have: 5-Dynamic; 4-Positive; 3-Average; 2-So-so; 1-Difficult ARIES (March 21-April 19) ***** Stay centered. Your instinct might be to tackle someone the minute you wake up. Try to go for a walk or jog instead. Your sense of direction returns midday. Certainly, a family member is demanding change. Help this person understand that you cannot do what he or she asks overnight. Tonight: Defier. TAURUS (April 20-May 20) ***** Could you see a different end result? Let your creativity go to work. You might feel as if you don't have what it takes. You do. Listen more to a child or loved one. Hear this person's request, as subtle as it might be. Tonight: Don't push so hard. GEMINI (May 21-June 20) ***** You are bound and determined to have it your way. You seem insolent or difficult to a close friend or loved one. Find an appropriate manner to express your mood. Respond to excitement around news. Tonight: Let your imagination rock and roll. CANCER (June 21-July 22) ***** Express your limitations and ask for help. Nevertheless, be prepared to deal with the situation alone. You are full of energy and fun, which in some manner challenges a key person in your life. Learn how to handle this person's demands. Tonight: Tackle a storm. LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) ***** Keeping an eye on your expenses might not be what is needed to hold them down, but it certainly is the first step. You could be stunned by someone's temper. Do you want to be involved with this type of uproar? Accept a friend's invitation. Tonight: You don't need to go far to meet up with a friend. VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) ***** Curb your assertiveness in the morning. Don't be surprised if you get a harsh response. Be careful with expenditures. A risk could easily backfire and cost a fortune. Careful. Tonight: Your treat. LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22) ***** Lie low in the morning. Someone at a distance could knock on your door - time to revamp your plans. At first, you could be irritated, but you will open up later. Quickly you discover how attitude can change the colors of a situation. You radiate. Tonight: Act like the world is your oyster. SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21) ***** See past a problem and don't allow a partner to get under your skin. Listen to news with a grain of salt. If you cannot accept the present circumstances, withdraw for a while. Recharge your batteries and detach your mind. Tonight: Do your thing. SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21) ***** You cannot wiggle out of a responsibility. It would be best to move forward. Later in the day, you'll be free and clear. Join your friends at a baseball game, or get together at the beach. Enjoy a summer happening of some sort. Tonight: Just wish upon a star. CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) ***** Reach beyond your immediate grasp if you face a hassle. You could be surprised by what some "experts" suggest. Adjust plans to indulge an older relative or handle a last-minute responsibility. Tonight: A force to be dealt with. AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18) ***** Working with a person or loved one is worthwhile, if you aren't too controlling. Wanting events to tumble in a certain direction might not happen. Detach if you find yourself triggered. Start accepting people instead of trying to change them. Tonight: Togetherness is the theme. PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20) ***** Defier. Worry less about people's reactions. Certainly someone on the home front could make your morning less than agreeable. Dedicate the afternoon to those you enjoy. Recognize that it might be best to defer. Tonight: Add that special quality to the moment. BORN TODAY Singer Tori Amos (1963), U.S. Gen. Norman Schwarzkopf (1934), author Ray Bradbury (1920)

Do you have great office skills? Local church seeking friendly, full time office administrator with good public relations skills. Bookkeeping, computer and organizational skills a must! Competitive salary with paid vacation and benefits available. Send resume and references to: Box 83 c/o The Pampa News P.O. Box 2198 Pampa, TX 79066 AXDYLBAAXR is LONGFELLOW One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different. 8-21 CRYPTOQUOTE KBAYDKE WBNI SIAIRAPGFI SBIR AYI IPNAY XNBSJZI AYPK PK JKENPAIHJF WPK. — P J R B K D J R Yesterday's Cryptoquote: THE HUMBLEST INDIVIDUAL EXERTS SOME INFLUENCE, EITHER FOR GOOD OR EVIL, UPON OTHERS. — HENRY WARD BEECHER

Sports

Freshman Lady Harvesters can't escape Lions' den

BY ANDREW GLOVER
aglover@thepampanews.com

The freshman Pampa Lady Harvesters lost in three games to Arbor Christian Academy Lady Lions (25-21, 26-28, 25-27) last night in Amarillo.

Coach Deanna Polasek said her team had a chance to win in the last two games, but made too many mistakes.

"We need to work on finishing the game," Polasek said.

Despite the loss, Polasek was pleased with her teams effort in practice and on the court.

"We were pretty evenly matched with them," Polasek said. "We looked much better on serving, playing defense and getting some good passes. This freshman team is really improving and playing well together."

Last weekend the freshman competed in the Riveroad Tournament at Riveroad. The Lady Harvesters started with pool play on Friday, and won their first match against Childress (25-17, 25-14). Pampa (2-4) played against Dalhart next and lost in three (25-21, 14-25, 20-25). Polasek said her

team played well in the match against Dalhart.

"We had some great bump, set, spikes in this match," Polasek said. "But we struggled with our serving, giving up 12 points on service errors in the second game."

Polasek said her team didn't recover from that second game loss until the end of Game 3.

"We waited a little to late," Polasek said.

The freshman finished second in their pool and qualified for the gold bracket on Saturday. The Lady Harvesters played Bushland and were swept (18-25, 18-25). Pampa finished the tournament being swept by West Texas Stinnett (20-25, 18-25).

The Lady Harvesters finished seventh overall at the tournament. Polasek said the team needs to work on serving more consistently, transitioning and communicating. But the freshman coach was pleased with how her team played.

"The girls really played well together even though it didn't turn out the way we had wanted it to."

The next freshman team game is Saturday, August 29 at Borger.

Cruz returns with homer for Texas in 11-1 win

ARLINGTON, Texas (AP) — The return of Nelson Cruz to the Texas Rangers lineup still didn't mean a day off for Marlon Byrd or put rookie speedster Julio Borbon on the bench.

Byrd, starting his 52nd straight game, homered in consecutive innings and made a spectacular diving catch in between those long balls. Borbon went deep for the first time in his career in an 11-1 victory over the Minnesota Twins on Thursday night that kept Texas within a game of Boston for the AL wild-card lead.

"This is fun," Byrd said. "You just hope you just keep grinding it out, keep getting hits, keep helping this team win and they keep putting you out there."

Cruz, the All-Star slugger activated from the 15-day disabled list before the game after missing 15 games because of a sprained left ankle, homered in his return to the lineup.

Every Rangers starter had a hit in their last home game before playing nine games in a row and 15 of 19 on the road.

Borbon went 3 for 5 with three RBIs, and is hitting .536 (15 for 28) in seven starts since being recalled from Triple-A Oklahoma City while Cruz was hurt. Michael Young and Hank Blalock, who hasn't had a day off since June 30 and was in a 3-for-27 slump, also had three hits.

"I can't say how hungry I am to win. It's great to be in the race.



Minnesota Twins third baseman Joe Crede (24) dives to reach an infield single by Texas Rangers' Taylor Teagarden in the seventh inning of a baseball game as third base umpire Ron Kulpa, left rear, looks on, Thursday, Aug. 20, 2009 in Arlington, Texas. The Rangers won 11-1. (AP Photo/Tony Gutierrez)

ed only two pitches to induce an inning-ending double-play ground-er from Joe Crede.

"That turned the momentum," Twins manager Ron Gardenhire said. "They got back in the dugout and scored some runs."

Cruz, who hadn't played for Texas since getting hurt while chasing a game-winning hit by Oakland's Rajai Davis on Aug. 3, ignited a five-run sixth for the Rangers when he led off the inning with his 26th homer. He was 0 for 10 in a three-game rehab assignment this week at Triple-A Oklahoma City.

That was a welcome outburst for the Rangers, who had blown four-

of the fifth over the left-field wall for Minnesota's only run.

Swarzak was done after giving up a one-out walk to Taylor Teagarden. Bobby Keppel then allowed doubles to all three batters he faced, including Young, whose ball ricocheted off the top of the 14-foot high wall in left. Manager Ron Washington questioned if it was a homer, but umpires used video replay to confirm it was a double.

Borbon pulled his homer down the right-field line in the third, and he had one of the doubles in the sixth off Keppel.

2 elephants seized from owner in Texas

LEGGETT, Texas (AP) — A Texas man accused of mistreating his elephants can keep one of the animals after agreeing to give up two and pay a federal fine.

Willie Davenport, 24, of Leggett, who comes from a family involved in circuses, has denied mistreating the elephants named Boo, Jewel and Tina.

But on Thursday, Davenport gave up 40-year-old Jewel and 39-year-old Tina, both Asian elephants, to end his fight with regulators. He will keep Boo, who has been with his family since the 1960s.

Davenport also agreed to pay a \$3,000 fine in exchange for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service dropping complaints against him for failing to have proper purchasing permits for Jewel and Tina. Davenport said he bought the animals for \$150,000 from a retiring elephant trainer in Florida in 2006.

Both elephants were deemed to be dangerously underweight, and U.S. Department of Agriculture inspectors had filed documents to seize Jewel because of chronic weight loss and alleged inadequate veterinary care.

USDA spokesman Dave Sacks said Jewel and Tina would be taken to a zoo.

"I am sad. This is not just my loss, but East Texas is losing their elephants. They have touched a lot of people," Davenport said. "This is their home."

An animal rescue group, In Defense of Animals, had complained to federal authorities about Davenport and sought to have all three elephants removed from his barn.

Leggett is a town of about 500, located 75 miles northeast of Houston.



In a photo taken Aug. 17, 2009, Willie Davenport, 24, touches Jewel, a 44-year-old Asian elephant, as Boo, 54, walks nearby in Leggett, Texas. (AP Photo/Houston Chronicle, Johnny Hanson)

Bush White House politics linked to terror alerts

WASHINGTON (AP) — Former Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge says pressure from fellow Cabinet members to raise the nation's terror alert level just before the 2004 presidential election helped convince him it was time to quit working for President George W. Bush.

In a new book, Ridge says that despite the urgings of former Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld and then-Attorney General John Ashcroft he objected to raising the security level, according to a publicity release from the book's publisher.

In the end the alert level was not changed.

Bush's former homeland security adviser, Frances Townsend, said Thursday that politics never played a role in determining alert levels.

Two tapes were released by al-Qaida in the weeks leading up to the election — one by terrorist leader Osama bin Laden and the other by a man calling himself "Azzam the American." Terrorism experts suspected that "Azzam the American" was Adam Gadahn, a 26-year-old Californian whom the FBI had been urgently seeking.

Townsend said the vid-

eotapes contained "very graphic" and "threatening" messages.

Ridge's publicist, Joe Rinaldi, said Ridge was out of town and was not doing interviews until his book, "The Test of Our Times: America Under Siege ... and How We Can Be Safe Again," is released on Sept. 1.

In 2004, Ridge explained why he didn't feel the alert should be raised. "We don't have to go to (code level) orange to take action in response either to these tapes or just general action to improve security around the country," he said then.

In 2005, months after he resigned, Ridge said his agency has been the most reluctant to raise the alert level. "There were times when some people were really aggressive about raising it, and we said, 'For that?'" he said during a panel discussion in May 2005. But his book appears to be the first time he publicly attributes some of the pressure to politics.

The Homeland Security Department, which Ridge was the first person to lead, faced criticism in 2004 from Democrats who alleged that raising the alert level was designed to boost support for the Bush administration during an

election year.

Ridge, who resigned on Nov. 30, 2004, said the episode convinced him to follow through with his plans to leave the Bush administration.

Townsend said that anytime there was a discussion of changing the alert level, she first spoke with Ridge and then, if necessary, called a meeting of the homeland security council comprising the secretaries of defense and homeland security, the attorney general and CIA and FBI directors. The group then made a recommendation to the president about whether the color-coded threat level should be raised.

"Never were politics ever discussed in this context in my presence," she said.

Asked if there was any reason for Ridge to have felt pressured, Townsend said: "He was certainly not pressured. And, by the way, he didn't object when it was raised and he certainly didn't object when it wasn't raised."

A former Republican congressman and governor of Pennsylvania, Ridge was widely named as a potential running mate to John McCain in 2008 before the GOP candidate chose Alaska Gov. Sarah Palin.

Perry, Hutchison agree they will debate

AUSTIN, Texas (AP) — Gov. Rick Perry and U.S. Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison agree they will debate as she seeks the job he now holds.

Perry on Friday issued a statement saying he has accepted an invitation from the Tarrant County and Denton County GOP to debate in Denton this fall.

Perry also said he has accepted debate invites from Dallas-based media group Belo Corp. and the Collin County GOP.

A spokeswoman for Hutchison, who this week officially kicked off her campaign, said the senator looks forward to working out scheduling for many debate requests.

Jennifer Baker said Hutchison is "excited to talk about her conservative vision for the future of Texas."

Hutchison has agreed to the Belo debate, but Baker had no specifics about other debates with Perry in which the senator will take part.

Pelosi: House health bill needs public plan

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — A health overhaul bill that doesn't include a new public insurance plan won't pass the House, Speaker Nancy Pelosi said at a Thursday press conference.

"There's no way I can pass a bill in the House of Representatives without a public option," she said after a round-table meeting with community members and faith-based leaders in a San Francisco church.

Pelosi has said repeatedly that health care legislation in the House would have a public plan but her comments Thursday left no room for doubt.

The White House is fac-

ing a liberal backlash for indicating openness to leaving a public plan out of the final bill. Liberals insist a new public insurance plan is essential, but Republicans almost uniformly oppose it.

President Barack Obama also sought to reassure listeners in an interview Thursday with a Philadelphia-based radio talk show host that he sees nothing wrong with having a public option as one of the coverage choices available. But he added that no one would be obligated to go into a public plan.

As Democratic House members fan out across the country to hear from constituents on the issue, some have faced raucous opposition.

In San Francisco, Pelosi found a uniformly supportive audience who frequently interrupted her with applause as she hammered home her message: The bill must meet the four-fold goal of reducing costs, improving quality, expanding coverage and retaining choice.

"What would you want to give up? Would you have fewer people covered? Less quality care?" she asked the crowd. "The priorities have to be addressed if you're going to have real change."