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The PAMPA NEWS

TODAY IN SPORTS



Big games ahead

Andrew Glover: Caprock could be turning point for hoops teams

Page 1B

on the web:
Pet of the Week



www.thepampanews.com

Thursday, December 23, 2010 Volume 106 • No. 221 75¢ Daily • Weekend \$1.50

United Way nearing 2010 fundraising goal

ARNIE AURELLANO
editor@thepampanews.com

With this year's United Way fundraising campaign in the home stretch, executive director Katrina Bigham is optimistic that the group will meet its monetary goal. Not counting the \$14,500 that the United Way had allocated to the Genesis House (which closed its doors in October), the United Way is presently short by a balance of \$2,910, Bigham said.



Bigham

"I think we can reach that," she said. "There's that much money still out there, and I think we can do it."

It has been a fairly good 2010 for the United Way, Bigham said. While the flagging economy continues to hamper contributions to nonprofits such as the United Way, Bigham said that Pampa has been a consistently generous community.

The United Way's volunteers, Bigham added, have been more instrumental than ever in keeping the fundraising campaign on track.

"Everyone's always felt we could do it," Bigham said. "Everyone's worked hard to pitch in and make (the campaign) successful. It's just a process of getting calls out there."

For anyone who's still considering a contribution to the United Way, Bigham said, the push is still going.

"If anyone hasn't made pledges yet, there's still time to do it," Bigham said. "We invite them to rally around us and help us get UNITED cont. on page 3

MARQUEE ASSET



staff photo by David Bowser

Landon Roberts of the Pampa Independent School District guides the new marquee into place in front of Pampa High School on Wednesday afternoon.

Officials to be sworn in on Jan. 1

DAVID BOWSER
dbowser@thepampanews.com

Newly elected Gray County officials will be sworn into office Jan. 1, in the district courtroom of the courthouse.

Retiring 223rd District Judge Lee Waters will administer the oath of office to his successor Phil Vanderpool.

Vanderpool, in turn, will administer the oath of office to county officials elected in November.

Those county officials include Richard Peet, Gray County judge; Scott Hahn, treasurer; Gary

Willoughby, precinct two commissioner; Jeff Haley, precinct four commissioner; Susan Winborne, county clerk; Sandra Burkett, district clerk; Joe Martinez, justice of the peace for precincts one and three; Kurt Curfman, justice of the peace for precinct two, and Mary Ann Carpenter, justice of the peace for precinct four.

SWEARING cont. on page 3

Concert Association, Create-A-Beat to get Xcel grants

ARNIE AURELLANO
editor@thepampanews.com

Glennette Goode and Julie Long are getting some Christmas wishes granted a little early this year. Goode, treasurer of the Pampa Community Concert Association, and Long, founder of Create-a-Beat, learned earlier this week that their respective organizations would be the beneficiaries of grant money from Xcel Energy.

Xcel Energy, based in Minneapolis with a satellite office in Amarillo, announced on Tuesday that a total of \$142,500 was being given to 29 nonprofit groups in Texas and New Mexico. The grants are part of Xcel's ongoing Arts & Culture and Environment focus initiatives, which grants funds to groups based in areas served by the power provider.

Create-A-Beat will receive \$4,000 in grant money, while the Concert Association will get \$3,000.

The grant is the latest in a long history of contributions from Xcel to Create-A-Beat, which received its first grant from the company in 2003.

"We're real grateful to keep getting help from Xcel Energy," Long said. "They have been a big help to us for a long time now, pretty much since we started. We're just really thankful for everything that the community does for us, and Xcel Energy's been one of our biggest supporters."

Long said that with about half of Create-A-Beat's enrollment (which currently stands at 100 kids) on fee waivers, the money will help get the group through a couple of months to kick off 2011.

"We're real excited about the Xcel grant,

because money has gotten tighter and tighter every year," Long said. "We've been tightening our belts here at the end of the year, so this puts us in good shape for the beginning of next year."

Likewise, Goode said that the money from Xcel will help the Concert Association continue its programs aimed at keeping local youth interested in arts, music and education.

"We're trying really hard to encourage kids to stay in school and expand those horizons," Goode said. "This money is going to go towards that."

Goode said that the grant was made possible because of a November concert featuring the Dallas Brass, an event that the Concert Association highlighted in its grant application.

"(Dallas Brass) had its concert on Thursday, **GRANTS** cont. on page 8

Nominations Needed! Business of the Year & Citizen of the Year

To be awarded at the Annual Banquet on March 24, 2011
Deadline: December 31
Please email erica@pampachamber.com or call 669-3241 for more information and ticket reservations

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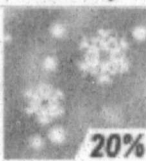


| | | | |
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| Obituaries | 2A | Antique or Junque? | 5A |
| Local Record | 2A | Comics | 6A |
| Weather | 2A | Sports | 1B, 2B |
| Afternoon Rush | 3A | Classifieds | 3B |
| Viewpoints | 4A | | |



For the record

Obituaries

PAMPA FORECAST

| Friday | Saturday | Sunday |
|---|---|---|
|  |  |  |
| High 40 Low 19 | High 40 Low 22 | High 44 Low 19 |

Tonight: A chance of rain before midnight, then a chance of rain and snow between midnight and 1 a.m., then a chance of snow after 1 a.m. Cloudy, with a low around 28. Wind chill values between 21 and 26. Breezy, with a south wind between 10 and 15 mph becoming calm. Winds could gust as high as 25 mph. Chance of precipitation is 40%.

Friday: A 20 percent chance of snow before noon. Partly sunny, with a high near 40. Wind chill values between 16 and 26. Windy, with a north northwest wind between 10 and 20 mph, with gusts as high as 30 mph.

Friday Night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 19. Wind chill values between 10 and 15. North northwest wind between 5 and 10 mph.

Christmas Day: Mostly sunny, with a high near 40. North northwest wind between 5 and 10 mph.

Saturday Night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 22. East northeast wind 5 to 10 mph becoming south southwest.

Sunday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 44. Breezy, with a south wind between 10 and 15 mph, with gusts as high as 20 mph.

Sunday Night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 19. Breezy, with a east southeast wind between 10 and 15 mph, with gusts as high as 20 mph.

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LAST MINUTE ADS

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

EXTRA SPECIALS on Christmas Eve! Open 10 a.m.-7 p.m. Carousels Expressions, downtown Pampa.

MEALS ON WHEELS will be closed Friday, Dec. 24th & Friday Dec. 31st.

END OF Year Liquidation Sale!! Holmes Sport Center.

PAMPA NEWS Weekend Edition will not be delivered Sat. Dec. 25th. A combined edition of Fri. Dec. 24th and Weekend edition 12-25/26th will be delivered on Fri. Dec. 24th. Merry Christmas!

OPEN LATE Dec. 20 thru Dec. 24th. Rheams Diamond Shop.

D. Grace Garner Futch, 87

ALLEN—D. Grace Garner Futch, 87, died December 20, 2010, in Frisco.

Services are pending with Carmichael-Whatley Funeral Directors of Pampa.

Mrs. Futch was born February 20, 1923, in the Gray Community of Beaver County, Okla., the daughter of the late Bertha and Edgar Garner. She joined her late husband, James David Futch, when she passed away on Monday.

Grace, as she was known to her family, left Oklahoma as a young girl to settle in the Kelton community, located in the Texas panhandle. She moved to Pampa in 1949 and lived there until 1998 when she relocated to Plano to be closer to her daughters.

She graduated from Kelton High School in 1940 where she was a star basketball player. She was an avid basketball fan who loved sewing, cooking and spending time with her family and being a part of her church.

Grace was the fifth of eight children. She is survived by three of her siblings, Pauline Holland, Juanita Smith and Joe Garner. Grace was blessed with three children of her own, two daughters, Sandra Franks and husband Dennis Wayne of Plano, and Donna Larson and husband Jerry of Allen; a son, J. D. Futch of Houston; five grandchildren, Dennis Franks and wife Elyce of Flower Mound,



Futch

David Franks of Plano, Bobby Burrows of Allen, Dack Franks and wife Alica of Stafford, and August Larson of Dallas; four great-grandchildren, Brant Burrows, Caitlyn Franks, Taylor Burrows, and Andrew Franks.

The family will receive friends from 5-7 p.m. on Sunday, December 26, 2010, at Carmichael-Whatley Funeral Home in Pampa.

Sign the online register at www.carmichael-whatley.com.

Pat Tennison, 84

WELLINGTON—Pat Tennison, 84, of Wellington, died Tuesday, December 21, 2010, in Wellington.

Graveside services were at 2 p.m. Thursday, December 23, 2010 in North Fairview Cemetery with Cary Don Neeley officiating. Arrangements are by Adams Funeral Home of Wellington.

Pat was born on November 22, 1926, in Vernon, to Frank and Ollie Roberts Turley. She married Ralph Tennison on April 11, 1946, in Shamrock. He died in 2002.

She was a member of the first United Methodist Church, a homemaker and was the assistant office manager at the Farmers Coop Gin in Wellington for many years before retirement.

Survivors include her son, Steve Tennison and his wife Heidi of Pampa; five grandchildren, Steven Michael Tennison, Leslie Ann Tennison, Daniel Austin Tennison, David Andrew Tennison and Gabrielle Cheri Tennison.

The family requests memorials to the Wellington Cemetery Association.

EMERGENCY SERVICES

Police Department

The Pampa Police Department reported the following incidents during the 24-hour period ending at 8 a.m. Wednesday.

Police reported 20 traffic-related calls and one accident.

Animal control officers reported eight animal-related calls.

Pampa EMS reported eight ambulance calls.

Tuesday, Dec. 21

Criminal mischief was reported in the 1900 block of North Wells.

An assault was reported to police.

Criminal mischief was reported in the 700 block of North Nelson.

Criminal mischief was reported in the 1600 block of North Williston.

A suspicious vehicle was reported in the 1200 block of North Wells.

A suspicious person was reported at the intersection

of Crane and Primrose.

An alarm was reported in the 1600 block of North Faulkner.

Thefts were reported in the 1400 block of North Hobart and in the 800 block of North Somerville.

A sexual assault was reported in the 100 block of West 30th.

A suspicious person was reported in the 500 block of East Kingsmill.

A gas drive off was reported in the 1000 block of West Wilks.

Criminal mischief was reported in the 1000 block of South Faulkner.

Disorderly conduct was reported in the 2000 block of North Coffee.

Criminal mischief was reported in the 1200 block of North Christine.

Officers checked on the welfare of people at 1400 North Hobart.

Officers served a warrant in the 1400 block of West Somerville.

Disorderly conduct was reported to police.

Criminal mischief was reported in the 2700 block of North Cherokee.

A prowler was reported in the 400 block of North Christy.

Found property was reported in the 300 block of East Frederic.

A suspicious person was reported in the 1400 block of North Hobart.

Wednesday, Dec. 22

A suspicious person was reported at 22nd and Nelson.

Officers served a warrant in the 140 block of West Somerville.

A suspicious person was reported in the 1500 block of North Coffee.

A suspicious person was reported in the 1000 block of South Barnes.

Pampa firefighters reported a structure fire in the 300 block of North Hobart.

A runaway was reported in the 800 block of Locust.

Sheriff's Office

The Gray County Sheriff's Office reported the following arrests during the 24-hour period ending at 8 a.m. Wednesday.

Wednesday, Dec. 22

Bill M. Graham, 58, was arrested by deputies on charges of possession of a controlled substance.

The Gray County Sheriff's Office reported the following arrests during the 24-hour period ending at 8 a.m. today.

Wednesday, Dec. 22

James Jerald Hunt, 52, of Fritch, was arrested by police on charges of public intoxication and a fugitive warrant out of Oklahoma.

Ricky Joe Diaz, 36, was arrested by police on charges of assaulting a family member and interfering with an emergency call.

SAVE A LIFE. DON'T DRIVE HOME BUZZED. BUZZED DRIVING IS DRUNK DRIVING.

U.S. Department of Transportation

AFTERNOON RUSH Group wants death penalty hearing resumed

EPA takes over Texas permits

DALLAS (AP) — The Environmental Protection Agency is taking the unprecedented step of directly issuing air permits to industries in Texas because of the state's refusal to comply with new greenhouse gas regulations going into effect Jan. 2.

The EPA on Thursday announced it will issue Clean Air Act Permits for greenhouse gas emissions in Texas beginning in January. The agency said in a statement that it prefers if states remain the permitting authorities but that "officials in Texas have made clear ... they have no intention of implementing this portion of the federal air permitting program."

A spokesman for the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality did not immediately return a message.

The nation's largest oil refineries are in Texas, which also is home to more coal-fired power plants than any other state.

Gay ban repeal not yet in effect

WASHINGTON, D.C. (AP) — Defense Secretary Robert Gates is warning troops that the law allowing gays to serve openly in the military is not officially in effect yet.

Though President Barack Obama has signed the law repealing the "don't ask, don't tell" policy, the change is not expected to be in place for a number of months. The Pentagon issued a memo that Gates sent Wednesday night to armed forces branch heads and other officials explaining the timing and stressing that troops can still run afoul of the old law.

Aubrey Sarvis of the Servicemembers Legal Defense Network says the advocacy group has received dozens of phone calls from troops confused about the timing and wanting to make sure when they may legally begin talking about the fact that they're gay.

Car crashes onto Bush lawn

DALLAS (AP) — Police and security agents were sent scrambling when a driver crashed onto the front lawn of former President George W. Bush's home near Dallas.

Secret Service spokesman Ed Donovan says the single-car accident happened Wednesday, and neither Bush nor his wife were injured. He says there was no reported damage to their house.

Donovan says the driver was questioned but released after the accident. He says the man had been visiting one of Bush's neighbors.

Dallas police are investigating. The Bushes live in a gated community in North Dallas.

In a statement, Bush spokesman David Sherzer says the Bushes were home but never in danger.

850 furloughs in Houston

HOUSTON (AP) — Houston Mayor Annise Parker says about 850 city employees have taken voluntary furlough days as the city faces a nearly \$30 million budget shortfall.

Parker on Wednesday said the city has saved about \$250,000 so far. She says additional voluntary furloughs could push that figure to \$500,000 as more employees take days off between Christmas and New Year's Day.

Parker has not ruled out mandatory furlough days for employees of the state's largest city. The mayor also says she hopes to make progress on reforming the city's pension obligations.

The Houston City Council on Dec. 15 voted to hike fees on almost 150 municipal services to help close the budget gap.

250K of coins seized

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — Texas Attorney General Greg Abbott says \$250,000 worth of gold coins linked to fraud have been recovered to benefit Medicaid.

Abbott's office says authorities on Monday seized the 101 coins from a depository account in Wilmington, Del. The FBI in San Antonio took custody of the coins late Tuesday.

Investigators on Wednesday said pharmacist Marcellius Jhekwoaba Anunobi is believed to have bought the coins using fraudulent proceeds from Medicaid overbilling. The account belonged to his wife.

Anunobi was president of Advanced Doctor's Prescribed Pharmacy. He was convicted of billing the Texas Vendor Drug Program for prescriptions that were never filled.

Anunobi was convicted of Medicaid fraud, theft and money laundering. He was sentenced in September to 20 years in prison and ordered to make \$2.2 million in restitution.

Activists protest nuclear waste plan

AUSTIN (AP) — Environmentalists are slamming a proposal they say will soon make Texas the dumping grounds for nuclear waste from around the nation.

A handful of people staged a symbolic protest Thursday outside the Texas Capitol. They rolled a black barrel, with a radioactive symbol on the outside, under the state Christmas tree.

Opponents say a politically-connected company and state regulators were hoping to get approval for the plan while Texans, out shopping and spending the holidays with their families, are too distracted to pay attention.

The public comment period for allowing 36 states to dump waste in far West Texas ends Sunday, the day after Christmas.

Wilderness rules restored

DENVER (AP) — The Obama administration plans to undo a Bush-era policy that barred the recommendation of new wilderness areas, making millions of undeveloped acres of land once again eligible for federal wilderness protection, Interior Secretary Ken Salazar said Thursday.

Salazar said his agency will repeal 2003's so-called "No More Wilderness" policy adopted under former Interior Secretary Gale Norton. That policy stated that new areas could not be recommended for wilderness protection by the U.S. Bureau of Land Management. It opened millions of acres in the Rocky Mountain region to potential commercial development.

Environmental activists have been calling on the Obama administration to restore protections for potential wilderness areas. Salazar announced Thursday that the agency will resume evaluating lands that could be designated as wilderness areas.

"Americans love the wild places where they hunt, fish, hike, and get away from it all, and they expect these lands to be protected wisely on their behalf," Salazar said.

HOUSTON (AP) — An alliance of nearly 60 current and former prosecutors, judges, police chiefs, governors, death row exonerees and crime victims filed a legal brief Wednesday asking Texas' highest criminal court to let an unusual hearing on the constitutionality of the death penalty in the state continue.

The court hearing in Houston was put on hold earlier this month after the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals granted a request by prosecutors to stop it.

The hearing, which was halted after two days of testimony, had been ordered by Kevin Fine, a state district judge who is considering a motion in a capital murder case on whether Texas' death penalty statute is unconstitutional.

Fine is a judge in Harris County, which has sent more inmates to the lethal-injection gurney than any other county in the U.S. Texas has more executions than any other U.S. state.

Lawyers for the Houston man who had asked for the hearing say problems with such things as eyewitness identification and evidence offered by informants have created flaws in death penalty prosecutions in Texas and resulted in a risk that innocent people like their client will be executed.

They said the case against their client, John Edward Green Jr., uses some of the same faulty evidentiary procedures that have resulted in others being wrongly convicted. Green, who is awaiting trial, faces a possible death sentence if convicted of fatally shooting a Houston woman during a June 2008 robbery.

Prosecutors with the Harris County District Attorney's Office have said the claims being made by Greens' attorneys are well-settled case law and that Fine doesn't have the authority to prevent the state from seeking the death penalty in the case.

In their amicus brief, the group of current and former law enforcement officials, lawmakers, exonerees and crime victims said the hearing was crucial as "confidence in the criminal justice system is shaken when problems go unaddressed."

"The tie that binds this diverse group of citizens together is the profound philosophical and practical concern that the Texas death penalty, as currently applied, unreasonably and substantially risks the conviction and execution of the innocent," wrote Walter Long, the group's attorney.

The group includes former Texas Gov. Mark White; former Maryland Gov. Parris Glendening; former Indiana Gov. Joe Kernan; six former federal prosecutors; five former state and federal judges; 12 current state lawmakers from California, Connecticut, Maryland, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico and Texas; current and former police chiefs from Connecticut, New Hampshire, New Jersey and Washington; and six death row exonerees from around the country.

In a statement about the brief, Harris County District Attorney Pat Lykos said the hearing in Fine's court is not "the proper forum for this particular constitutional challenge to the law."

"Justice has been delayed in the Green case for more than a year because of the stratagems of death penalty opponents — a trial on the merits has thus far been denied to the victim, the family of the victim, society and the

Board: Emmanuel can run for Chicago mayor

CHICAGO (AP) — Former White House chief of staff Rahm Emanuel can run for Chicago mayor although he spent much of the last two years living in Washington while working for President Barack Obama, the Chicago Board of Election Commissioners ruled Thursday.

The board's unanimous decision to put Emanuel's name on the Feb. 22 ballot allowed the former White House chief of staff to clear a major hurdle to his ambitions to replace retiring Chicago Mayor Richard M. Daley. But the commission ruling the Emanuel met the residency requirement didn't resolve the matter completely, with one of the objectors' lawyers saying he would immediately

appeal the ruling and fight Emanuel's candidacy all the way to the Illinois Supreme Court, if necessary.

More than two dozen people had challenged Emanuel's candidacy, contending he didn't meet a one-year residency requirement. But an election board hearing officer recommended early Thursday morning that Emanuel's name be placed on the ballot.

Merry Christmas!

Duane Harp
Financial Advisor



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Member SIPC

defendant himself," Lykos said.

The brief, as well as one by Green's attorneys were filed on Wednesday, the deadline the appeals court gave for motions on whether the death penalty hearing should continue. The appeals court did not set a timetable for when it would make a decision.

Fine initially declared the Texas death penalty statute unconstitutional last spring after granting the motion in Green's case. Under heavy criticism, Fine clarified then rescinded his ruling and ordered the hearing, saying he needed to hear evidence on the issue.

Prosecutors unsuccessfully tried to get Fine removed from the case, calling him biased against the death penalty.

Fine has said he believes capital punishment is constitutional and the hearing would focus only on the specific legal issues raised by Green's attorneys.

If the hearing were allowed to continue and Fine rules the state's death penalty statute is unconstitutional, prosecutors have said they would appeal the decision, which legal experts say would have a good chance of being overturned.

The debate over possible wrongful executions in Texas has been fueled in part by the case of Cameron Todd Willingham.

Willingham was put to death in 2004 after being convicted of burning down his home in Corsicana in 1991 and killing his 2-year-old daughter and 1-year-old twins. His execution has been questioned since several fire experts found serious fault in the arson findings that led to his conviction.

Sudoku

Answer to yesterday's puzzle:

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

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

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United

cont. from page 1

over our goal. The donations don't have to be payable until next year, so we hope we can get some more people involved."

Swearing

cont. from page 1

The swearing in ceremonies are slated to begin at 10 a.m., Saturday, Jan. 1, in the Gray County District Courtroom on the third floor of the Gray County Courthouse, 205 North Russell.

CORRECTION

In yesterday's issue of *The Pampa News*, Dr. John Nguyen was misidentified as "Hall" under a photo on page 3 ("Two New Clinics to open in '11"). *The Pampa News* apologizes for the error.

Christmas Eve Service

December 24 • 6 pm

First Baptist Church
203 N. West St.
Pampa, Texas

Light refreshments will be served in the church foyer at 5 pm.
The public is cordially invited to attend.

Viewpoints

Today in History

Today is Thursday, Dec. 23, the 357th day of 2010. There are 8 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Dec. 23, 1968, 82 crew members of the U.S. intelligence ship Pueblo were released by North Korea, 11 months after they had been captured.

On this date:

In 1783, George Washington resigned as commander in chief of the Continental Army and retired to his home at Mount Vernon, Va.

In 1788, Maryland passed an act to cede an area "not exceeding 10 miles square" for the seat of the national government; about 2/3 of the area became the District of Columbia.

In 1823, the poem "Account of a Visit from St. Nicholas" was published anonymously in the Troy (N.Y.) Sentinel; the verse, more popularly known as "Twas the Night Before Christmas," was later attributed to Clement C. Moore.

In 1893, the Engelbert Humperdinck opera "Haensel und Gretel" was first performed, in Weimar, Germany.

In 1928, the National Broadcasting Company set up a permanent, coast-to-coast network.

In 1941, during World War II, American forces on Wake Island surrendered to the Japanese.

In 1948, former Japanese premier Hideki Tojo and six other Japanese war leaders were executed in Tokyo.

In 1967, President Lyndon B. Johnson held an unprecedented meeting with Pope Paul VI at the Vatican.

In 1975, Richard S. Welch, the Central Intelligence Agency station chief in Athens, was shot and killed outside his home by the militant group November 17.

In 1980, a state funeral was held in Moscow for former Premier Alexei N. Kosygin, who had died Dec. 18 at age 76.

Ten years ago: Death claimed comedian Victor Borge in Greenwich, Conn., at age 91 and actor Billy Barty in Glendale, Calif., at age 76.

Five years ago: Chad declared himself in a "state of belligerence" with Sudan, accusing its neighbor of aggression.

One year ago: Richard and Mayumi Heene, the parents who'd pulled the "balloon boy" hoax in hopes of landing a reality TV show, were sentenced by a judge in Fort Collins, Colo. to jail -90 days for him, 20 days for her. Gary Patterson, who'd guided TCU to its best season in 70 years, became the first Associated Press Coach of the Year from outside the six conferences with automatic BCS bids. Yitzhak Ahronovitch, captain of the Exodus during a 1947 attempt to take Holocaust survivors to Palestine, died in northern Israel at age 86.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Gerald S. O'Loughlin is 89. Actor Ronnie Schell is 79. Emperor Akihito of Japan is 77. Pro Football Hall of Famer Paul Hornung is 75. Actor Frederic Forrest is 74. Actor James Stacy is 74. Rock musician Jorma Kaukonen is 70. Rock musician Ron Bushy is 69. Actor-comedian Harry Shearer is 67. Gen. Wesley K. Clark (ret.) is 66. Actress Susan Lucci is 64. Rock musician Dave Murray (Iron Maiden) is 54. Actress Joan Severance is 52. Rock singer Eddie Vedder (Pearl Jam) is 46. The first lady of France, Carla Bruni-Sarkozy, is 43. Rock musician Jamie Murphy is 35. Jazz musician Irvin Mayfield is 33. Actress Estella Warren is 32. Actress Anna Maria Perez de Tagle is 20.

Thought for Today: "All that is really necessary for survival of the fittest, it seems, is an interest in life, good, bad or peculiar." - Grace Paley, American writer (1922-2007)



Smoke across the road? Don't drive into it!

Texans have lost their lives during past wildfire seasons driving into smoke covered roads. The following safety tips can save your life.

Never drive into dense smoke. You could become a fire fatality.

High winds may cause wildfires to spread rapidly and jump across natural barriers such as roads, highways and even waterways. Strong winds can force smoke to stay low to the ground, obscuring roadways and traffic signs. Texas wildfires have been propelled by wind gusts as high

as 60 mph.

When wildfires threaten, pay attention to TV and radio broadcasts BEFORE you travel. Be aware of fire and weather conditions along your route. Avoid traveling into areas where wildfire activity has been reported. As you travel, monitor local radio and TV news broadcasts - and watch for highway signs providing information on fire danger.

Watch for traffic control personnel, firefighters and law enforcement officers. Slow down and be prepared

to stop if they signal you to do so.

When you prepare to turn around because you have encountered dense smoke, slow down and activate your emergency flashers. Make sure you warn vehicles behind you that you are decreasing your speed or preparing to stop. Turn around when you have checked for oncoming traffic and can turn safely.

For more information on fire danger and advisories, see the Texas Forest Service website at: <http://texasforests.tamu.edu>

Wildfires on the edge of town: Are you fire ready?

Wildfire may seem like a threat from a wilderness adventure movie, but 80 percent of all Texas wildfires start within two miles of residential neighborhoods and suburbs. Wildfires can move at six miles per hour - and much more rapidly when propelled by gusty winds. That puts many Texas homes and suburbs at risk during extremely dry periods when weather fronts blow into the state. Remember, embers blown from a fire as far as a mile away can ignite your home.

Fire Protection Tips for Your House

- Choose fire resistant materials and protective roofing, such as stone, brick and metal.
- Cover all vents coming out of attics and eaves with metal mesh screens. Mesh size should be no larger than six millimeters or 1/4 inch to stop debris from collecting in the vents and to keep sparks out.
- Install multi-pane windows,

tempered safety glass or fireproof shutters to protect large windows from radiant heat. Use fire-resistant draperies for added window protection.

- Have chimneys, wood stoves and home heating systems inspected and cleaned annually by a certified specialist. Stack firewood at least 100 feet away and uphill from the house.
- Insulate chimneys and place spark arresters on top. Chimneys should be three feet above the roof.
- Remove ladders, trellises or any other object that might serve as a path for fire to travel from ground level to the roof of a building, or from the ground into canopies of trees.
- Store gasoline, oily rags and other flammable materials in approved safety containers.

Fire Protection Tips for Your Yard

- Keep your grass well

watered, with grass and weeds mowed to no more than two inches in height.

- Avoid planting shrubs and trees that catch fire easily, for example: juniper, yaupon holly, pine, evergreen, eucalyptus and fir trees. Instead, plant hardwoods, crepe myrtle, red yucca, forsythia, China rose and Texas sage.
- Remove any tree limbs located within ten feet of your chimney and roof.
- Prune tree limbs from ground level to six feet up.
- Regularly rake up leaves, dead limbs and other dead vegetation.
- Remove branches, twigs and leaves from roof and gutter areas.
- Prune limbs of trees and shrubs that are near the ground.
- Ask power companies to clear branches away from power lines.

The PAMPA NEWS

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Multiple wars. Tax cuts for the rich. Another stimulus program. No long-term economic strategy. Endless political polarization. **Ah, the holidays can be hectic, America. But paying for them shouldn't have to be...**

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- Defamatory comments will not be published.
- E-mail submissions are welcome.
- The views and opinions expressed here do not necessarily reflect those of The Pampa News or its staff.

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Economy brightens as consumers spend

WASHINGTON (AP) - Economic reports today suggest employers are laying off fewer workers, businesses are ordering more computers and appliances, and consumers are spending more confidently.

Combined, the latest data confirm that the economy is improving, even though too few jobs are being created to lower the 9.8 percent unemployment rate.

The number of people seeking unemployment benefits edged down by 3,000 to a seasonally adjusted 420,000, the Labor Department said. That was the second drop in three weeks.

Weekly unemployment applications at around 425,000 signal modest job growth. But economists say the number would need to dip consistently to 375,000 or below to indicate a significant decline in unemployment. Weekly applications peaked during the recession at 651,000 in March 2009.

The four-week average, a less volatile gauge, rose slightly to 426,000. The average had fallen for six straight weeks to the lowest point in more than two years.

Companies increased their orders for long-lasting manufactured products, excluding volatile transportation goods, by the sharpest amount in eight months, the Commerce Department said. Demand rose for computers, appliances and heavy machinery.

Total orders for durable goods dropped 1.3 percent. That decline reflected sagging demand for aircraft and autos. But excluding transportation, orders surged 2.4 percent, the best showing since last March.

Personal spending rose modestly last month, giving the economy a lift before the holidays. Spending increased 0.4 percent, the fifth straight monthly increase.

Consumers' incomes grew 0.3 percent last month, lifted by gains in stock portfolios. Wages and salaries barely budged. Hiring slowed in November.

Housing remains a drag on the economy. More people bought new homes in November, though far too few to signal better times are ahead for the battered housing industry. Sales rose 5.5 percent to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 290,000 units, the government said. That's less than half the rate that economists consider healthy. And the increase follows a dismal October pace that nearly matched the lowest level in 47 years.

The economy is expected to pick up next year as consumers spend more freely. Most Americans will have more cash to spend because of a cut in Social Security taxes that Congress approved this month. But economic growth probably won't be fast enough to quickly reduce unemployment.

Many analysts are predicting that the economy will grow at a 3.5 percent to 4 percent annual pace next year. That would be up from an expected 2.8 percent pace this year.

Economists generally say growth needs to reach 5 percent for a full year to bring down the unemployment rate by 1 percentage point. Many expect the rate

to be near 9 percent by the end of next year.

The recent decline in the number of people seeking unemployment benefits has encouraged economists. Applications have fallen by more than 20,000 in the past month. That should translate into more hiring in December than the previous month, according to most economists. The economy added a net total of only 39,000 jobs in November and the unemployment rate rose to 9.8 percent.

Weekly applications are a real-time snapshot of the job market. If they continue to move down, hiring is more likely to pick up. Applications reflect the level of layoffs. But can also indicate whether companies are willing to add workers.

Fewer people are receiving unemployment benefits. The total unemployment benefits rolls dropped by 103,000 to little more than 4 million in the week ending Dec. 11, the department said.

That doesn't include millions of additional laid-off workers who are receiving emergency aid under extended unemployment benefits programs set up during the recession. About 4.7 million people are receiving extended benefits for up to 99 weeks.

All told, about 8.9 million people obtained unemployment benefits during the week of Dec. 4, according to the latest data available. That was about 150,000 fewer people than the previous week.

Antique casserole dish adorned with pastel prints of morning glory vines

ANNE MCCOLLAM

Q: Enclosed is a photo of a covered dish that belonged to my great-grandmother. With a blue base, the lid is decorated with pastel blue and pink morning glories against a white background. On the bottom, the word "Hall" is in a circle.

It has a lot of sentimental value, and I would like to know more about its history.

A: Hall China Co. made your casserole dish. They made kitchenware and dinnerware beginning in 1903 in Liverpool, Ohio. Introduced in the late 1940s, the pattern is "Pastel Morning Glory." Plates, mixing bowls, gravy boats, teapots and custard bowls were included in this line. The base is cadet blue, and the morning glory design is a decal.


Your covered casserole would probably be worth \$25 to \$45.

Q: This mark is on the back of a plate with a brown design. The plate is decorated with a crab on the top border. At the lower part, there are two circles -- one with a sailing ship and the other has a small rowboat.

Across the bottom border, you will see seaweed and coral. The plate's diameter is 10 inches and it's still in excellent condition.

I have always wondered if my plate has any value. Is it antique or junque?

A: Your plate is a desirable antique and was made around 1909. Doulton and Co. used this mark,



and the pattern is "Oceana." The "RD. 56252" shows the pattern was registered with the British government in 1909.

Doulton and Co. has made earthenware and stoneware in Staffordshire, England, since 1853. The value of your plate would probably be \$150 to \$250.

Q: I have an old stoneware jug. Round and 8 inches in diameter, it has a wooden handle and its original stopper. "The Adaptable Hot Water Bottle and Bed Warmer" is the phrase marked on the front.

What can you tell me about my jug?

A: Bed warmers have been used for hundreds of years. Even with the advent of central heating, they have remained popular. Your bed warmer was made by the Old Fulham Pottery, which was founded in the late 1600s in England.

A word of caution: never use very hot water without first gradually warming up the jug.

Your bed warmer was made around 1900 and would probably sell for \$150 to \$200 in an antiques shop.

If you have any antique inquiries, address your questions to Anne McCollam, P.O. Box 247, Notre Dame, IN 46556. Items of a general interest will be answered in this column. Due to the volume of inquiries, she cannot answer individual letters.

Antique
OR JUNQUE?



Hall China Co. introduced their pattern "Pastel Morning Glory" in the late 1940s.

and the pattern is "Oceana." The "RD. 56252" shows the pattern was registered with the British government in 1909.

Doulton and Co. has made earthenware and stoneware in Staffordshire, England, since 1853. "Oceana" is a transfer-ware pattern that featured coral, ships, seashells and children.

The value of your plate would probably be \$150 to \$250.

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Holiday travelers benefit from spread-out season

NEW YORK (AP) - As travelers take to road, air and sky in the sometimes-hecky last days before Christmas, they should keep one thing in mind: It could be worse.

Planes took off into windy but accommodating skies Thursday morning at New York's LaGuardia Airport as Steve Kent prepared to fly to Denver for a family ski trip, scoffing at the puny lines.

"I don't find it that difficult," he said. "I think Thanksgiving is harder."

Though Christmas and New Year's travel is expected to be up from last year, the spread-out nature of these holidays means things won't be quite so cramped as Thanksgiving, for instance, when practically everyone who's going somewhere is on the move the same day.

"We have a lot of folks who already may have taken off of work," said Troy Green, a spokesman for AAA. "They may have arrived at their destination before today."

Mike Lukosavich, of

Harrison Township, Mich., was surprised the first leg of his trip was moving so smoothly when he stopped at rest area on the Ohio Turnpike in Elmore, Ohio, near Toledo.

He, his wife and their 8-month-old daughter were heading to see family in Parkersburg, W.Va. His only headache came when he saw the gas price of about \$3 a gallon.

"It's something you have to do to see the family," said Lukosavich, 33.

The AAA has expected overall travel to rise about 3 percent this year, with more than 92 million people planning to go more than 50 miles sometime between now and Jan. 2. More than 90 percent said they would be driving.

The Vino Volo Wine Room at Detroit Metropolitan Airport is benefiting from more travelers, manager Mark Del Duco said Thursday.

"The Christmas mood is more there this year than last," he said, estimating that sales are up this 10 percent this season com-

pared with last year as financially confident travelers spend more freely.

Helping matters is that the most densely populated parts of the country are getting a break from the weather.

Rains that have been pounding California have stopped. And while a snowstorm is making its way across the country, it's not expected to hit the crowded East Coast until the weekend, when people are settled at their destinations - though it could make for a tricky return trip.

Swaths of the Rocky Mountain region and Midwest expect snow Thursday and Friday, but nothing widely crippling. The National Weather Service issued winter storm warnings for parts of Colorado, Utah and New Mexico and advisories for other parts, including an area stretching from Wyoming to Illinois.

Steve Brown, 50, of Elm Creek, Neb., left Tuesday afternoon and drove all night to beat the storm

as it worked its way east. Brown, a grain hauler, was taking his two children to see his mother on the Ohio dairy farm where he grew up.

"I had orders to come home or she was going to come get me," Brown said during at the Elmore rest area, where adults filled up on coffee while kids, traveling in pajamas, loaded up on Tater Tots.

After record-breaking snow falls in the East and a treacherous Christmas travel season in the nation's midsection last year, the ways weather can mess up

travel seem to be on plenty of minds.

At LaGuardia, Mike and Martha Lee Mellis waited to fly to Aspen, Colo., with their three young sons. They dreaded a repeat of last winter's ski trip, when a snowstorm hit while they were transferring in Chicago on their way home.

"We had to return via Philadelphia, and I had to rent a car and drive everybody home at 11 at night," Mike Mellis recalled.

His wife had been trying to forget, saying, "I've blocked it all out."

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Dear Santa, I have been a good boy. I always try to clean my plate, but I saved some milk and cookies for you!

Here's hoping you're on Santa's nice list!

Merry Christmas!

from the staff at
Keyes Pharmacy

comics PAGE

THE FAMILY CIRCUS By Bil Keane



12-23
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"If Santa doesn't have a Magical-Maria Giggle and Coo Interactive Talking Baby, would another kind be okay?"

Non Sequitur



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Nest Heads



daily horoscope

HAPPY BIRTHDAY for Friday, Dec. 24, 2010:

You often become distracted by a boss or key person in your life. This year, learn how to juggle the many demands of life. At first you might feel awkward, but you will succeed. If you are single, you could meet someone quite special who you can become much closer to than anyone before. Don't rush or push. If you are attached, you and your sweetie dance quite a jig. You enjoy each other more than you have in a long time. LEO helps you relax as he or she bottom-lines issues.

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

ARIES (March 21-April 19)

★★★★ You might feel as if you are on a countdown. You are! Use care with someone who has difficulty with the holidays. A little indulgence will go a long way. Play a more subtle role in upcoming events. Tonight: The kid within you rises.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

★★★★ Understand your limits when dealing with family and last-minute details. The Bull is human. Stop pushing when it is evident that no more can be done. Others want you to enjoy yourself. Tonight: At home.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

★★★★ Don't stand on ceremony with someone who plays games unconsciously. Make the extra effort: be clear in your message. A problem or a distance could be bridged. One-on-one relating opens new doors. Many people seem to be bidding for your attention. Tonight: Chat up a storm.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)

★★★ Be aware of what is going on financially. You might not be able to make that last-minute effort or get that gift. Make it OK to give a card or some other less costly token of affection. Share strong feelings. Tonight: Treat yourself well too.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

★★★★ Others gather, wanting your attention. You always attract others, but especially so right now. Whether bringing friends and family together or taking care of some last-minute details, make time for yourself too. Tonight: Beam in what you want.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

★★★ Remember, you are still overly sensitive and perhaps in a "bah humbug" mood. Do your best to process your negative feel-

ings. Stop and visit with some people who are less fortunate. You might perk up. Tonight: Relax with the moment.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

★★★★ Your ability to draw people out could be more significant than you realize. You may decide to make a round of parties of visits. On some level you greet the holiday with relief. Nevertheless, you do enjoy the celebration. Tonight: Without question, you are where the action is!

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

★★★★ Assume a traditional role within your immediate circle. Take the lead as the holiday unfolds. Whether you are throwing a get-together or taking care of older relatives or friends, know that you make a difference. Tonight: Could be late.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

★★★★ Your mind is certainly not on the here and now. You could be quite detached from those around you. If you need to make a call or take a walk in order to be more present, do. Tonight: Reflect on the true meaning of this holiday. Don't forget "ho ho ho" music.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

★★★★ Explore the possibilities with others in discussions that might not be holiday related. Know what you would like to extract from this situation. Guide a talk accordingly, and be open. You might not be comfortable with the immediate results, but something better is ahead. Tonight: Be with a favorite person as the holiday unfolds.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

★★★★ Juggling all your friends and maintaining a heavy pace could make even the strongest person tired. Remember to slow down some time in the day and take a few minutes just for you. Tonight: Dance to another's tune. Everyone will be happier if you are compliant!

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

★★★★ Orchestrating events could be a dominant theme right now. You also might be picking up last-minute details involving work or a project. Yes, your hands are full. Make it a point to cut out all the excess activity at a certain time. Tonight: Make a special meal. Enjoy the ones around you.

BORN TODAY

Singer Ricky Martin (1971), novelist Mary Higgins Clark (1929), frontiersman Kit Carson (1809)

Tundra



Shoe



Mother Goose and Grim



Zits



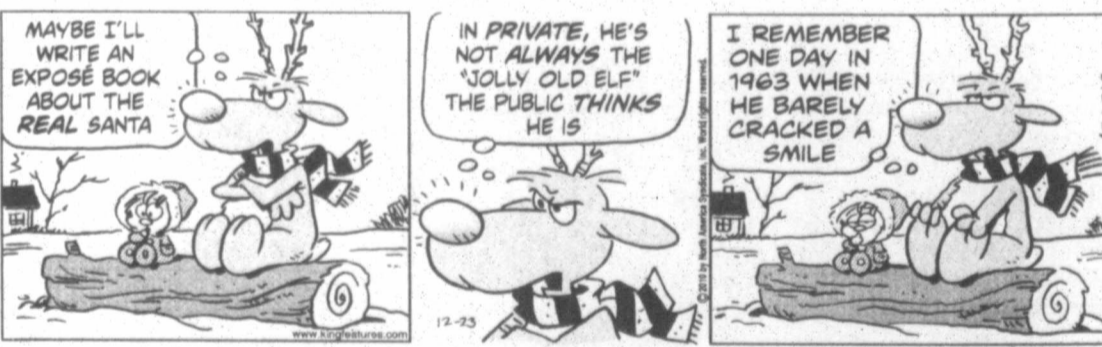
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Beetle Bailey



Marvin



Hagar The Horrible



Peanuts

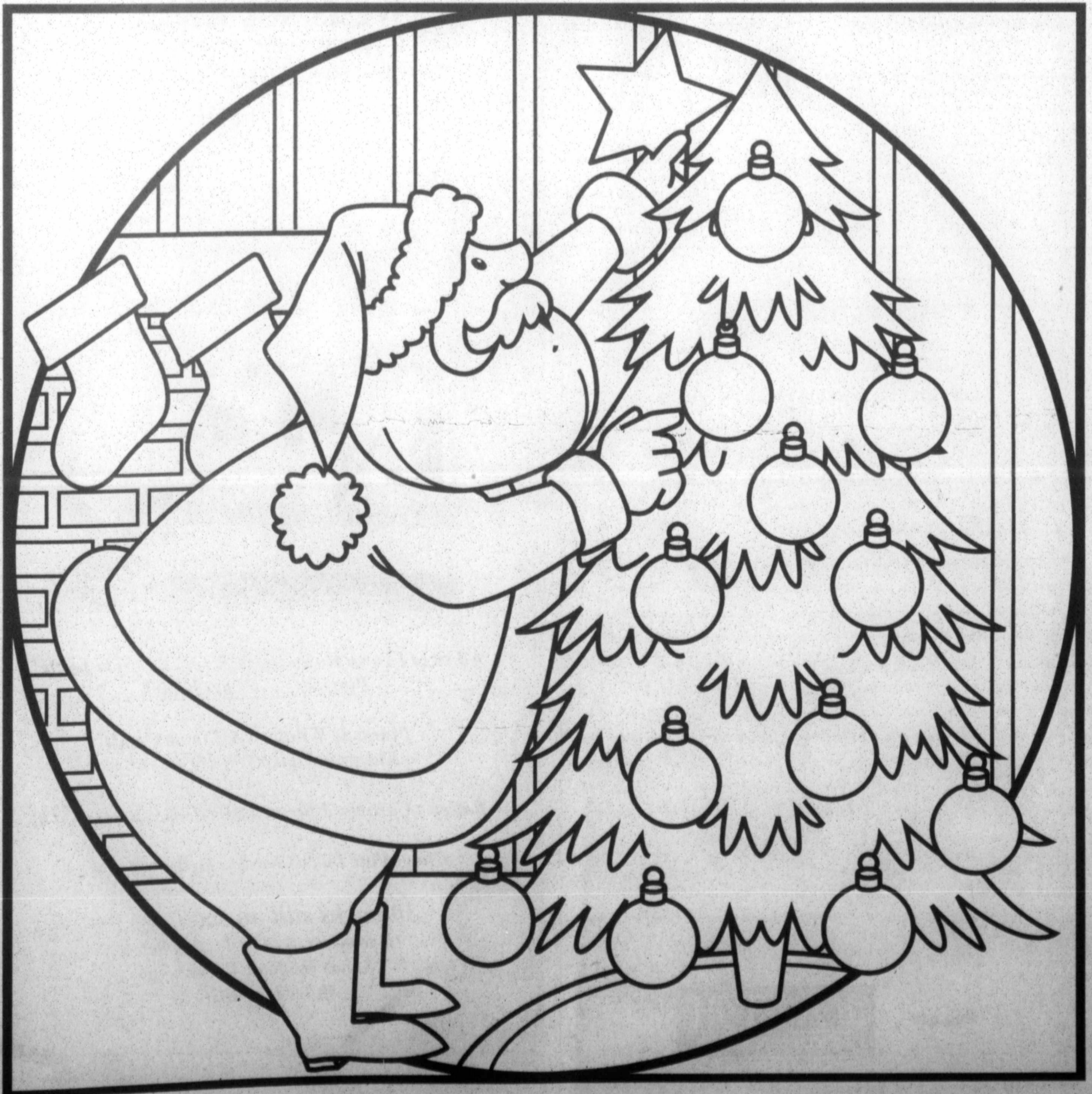


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Christmas Coloring

GALLERY



12-23

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Despite violence, Mexico remains top destination for many vacationers

MEXICO CITY (AP) — Mexico is experiencing its bloodiest year of drug violence yet, but that's not stopping domestic and international vacationers alike from flocking to Cancun.

The resort city on the Mexican Caribbean coast, the Riviera Maya coastline below it and the Pacific coast resort of Puerto Vallarta will be named top destinations this year by Orbitz travel website, based on flights and hotel bookings, said spokeswoman Marita Hudson Thomas.

On the Pacific coast, Acapulco Mayor Jose Luis Avila Sanchez is predicting a huge turnout of Mexican travelers, with hotels expected to be nearly full for Christmas and New Year's Day.

Tourism officials in Mexico and the U.S. say holiday travel to Mexico is up from a year ago as vacationers cash in on low-cost tropical holidays.

Tourism revenue is up 7.1 percent in the first 10 months of 2010, compared to the same months of 2009, with visitors spending \$9.8 billion, according to the Mexican Tourism Ministry.

Safety is a problem "only in some parts of Mexico" and it "has not affected the major tourist areas of the country," said Miguel Torruco Marques, the president of the National Tourism Confederation, which represents the tourism industry.

The confederation projects that about 22.4 million foreigners will have vacationed in Mexico in 2010, a 4.7 percent increase from last year. Adding in the flood of domestic travelers, the group expects 16.1 million tourists throughout the country for December alone.

Air travel to Mexico is up 6 percent this year compared to 2009, according to American Express Travel data, said travel specialist Linda D'Arcy: It's "all about the value."

A trip for two from Denver, Colorado, to Cancun now costs as little as \$823 per person for airfare and five nights at a hotel, according to the Orbitz site. A trip from the U.S. to the Caribbean could cost double, said Chris Russo, president of the American Society of Travel Agents.

"We've had to do a lot of explaining that the Riviera Maya is a long way from the border. It's just taken more education," he said. "We have a big map and we show them."

The Texas Department of Safety warned residents last week not to travel to Mexico for the holidays because of drug cartel violence in northern border cities, as well as in popular tourist towns such as Acapulco.

The Mexican Tourism Ministry retorted by urging "anyone considering a vacation to Mexico to speak with any of the millions of Americans, Canadians, and other foreign nationals who chose to vacation at our resorts this year."

The government says most of the violence takes place among the drug cartels themselves. More than 30,000 have died in drug-related violence since President Felipe Calderon launched a military-led offense to

quash the cartels in 2006.

Crime figures also show the level of violence varies wildly across the country. The homicide rate in the border state of Chihuahua last year was a horrifying 74 per 100,000. Levels in some other states such as Yucatan, Queretaro or Baja California Sur — where the Los Cabos resorts are located — were 5 per 100,000 or less, which is low to average even by U.S. standards.

In the western state of Michoacan, Calderon's home state, suspected henchmen from the La Familia cartel battled state and federal police in shootouts for days this month near the state's capital, Morelia, killing three civilians, including an 8-month-old baby and a teenage girl.

Morelia is on the quaint-colonial-city tourist circuit, but it's not a draw on the scale of Puerto Vallarta, Huatulco or Cancun.

Cancun's hotel occupancy rate was about 77 percent for the first days of December, compared to 51 percent during the same time last year, said Rodrigo de la Pena Segura, president of the city's hotel association. He said the hotels expect occupancy rates as high as 85 percent for Christmas and New Year.

In Cuernavaca, a city about 40 miles (65 kilometers) south of Mexico City that is popular with the capital's elite and U.S. retirees, five-star hotels had 90 percent occupancy rates during the Dec. 12 holiday weekend celebrating the Day of the Virgin of Guadalupe, said Alfredo De La Torre Nunez, a spokesman with the Morelos Tourism Department. That is despite recent battles for control of drug routes through the state by factions of the former Beltran Leyva Cartel.

The same cartel war has affected foreign tourism in Acapulco, where two decapitated bodies were hung from a bridge recently, their amputated hands holding two severed heads.

"Americans are just not coming," said Jonathan Fabian, who owns a company that rents villas in the city and runs the website, Real Acapulco, a community forum for businesses and tourists.

"I would say tourism hasn't just been in decline; it's fallen off a cliff. Business has been absolutely horrible."

But Mexicans are still coming, and the Department of Public Safety in Guerrero, where Acapulco is located, said it would have almost 7,400 state and federal police around the city's beaches from Dec. 17 to Jan. 9, some in rafts and helicopters.

Torruco Marques said Mexican visitors understand the limits of the drug war.

In Huatulco, located in the state of Oaxaca bordering Guerrero, tourism revenue was up slightly this year at \$274 million, compared to \$262 million last year. Agustin Pumajero, project director for the new El Secreto resort, said Huatulco is one of the safest places in the country.

"You can go out and walk at 1 a.m. and nothing happens," he said.

Mexico looks for missing migrants

MEXICO CITY — Mexican authorities said Wednesday they are investigating the possible kidnapping of 50 illegal migrants in the southern state of Oaxaca, a day after saying there was no evidence of the crime.

Honduran, Guatemalan and Salvadoran migrants were being interviewed by officials at the federal Attorney General's Office about an assault last Thursday, the National Migration Institute said in a statement.

The migrants — 30 men, 15 women and five children — were held up by gunmen while trying to cross the country by train and are now missing, said the Foreign Ministry of El Salvador, which first reported the crime.

Migration Commissioner Salvador Beltran del Rio said he has been in contact with the foreign ministers of Honduras and El Salvador about the alleged abduction on the Oaxacan isthmus, which many migrants from Central America cross on their way to the United States.

The Salvadoran Foreign Ministry asked the Mexican government Tuesday to investigate the disappearance after witnesses said the victims were held up, beaten with machetes and had their belongings stolen. Witnesses said they had just escaped an operation by Mexican soldiers and federal police that resulted in the arrest of 92 illegal migrants from the same train.

Mexico is the transit route for thousands of illegal migrants seeking to reach the United States, with many falling victim to gangs and organized crime. The government's National Human Rights Commission reported in 2009 that nearly 10,000 migrants are kidnapped a year by gangs. The commission said Wednesday that it also has opened an investigation into last week's reported abduction, and called on local, state and federal governments to prevent such kidnappings and guarantee the safety and rights of migrants, regardless of their legal status.

In the most brazen case to date, 72 slain migrants were found in the northeastern state of Tamaulipas in August, a massacre blamed on members of the Zetas drug gang, which controls transport routes in that area for drugs and other contraband.



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Grants

and they got here on Monday," Goode said. "They spent some time Tuesday and Wednesday with the high school band as far as demonstration and training. It was really good for the kids. They had a lot of fun."

It's educational outreaches like that one that the Concert Association prides itself in delivering to the community, and being recognized with grant money for its work makes the effort worthwhile, Goode said.

"It's wonderful," said Goode. "We're glad to be able to do it, and to know that Xcel cares is just great. The money will certainly help."

For Xcel, the commitment to help com-

munity nonprofits is both a good business decision and a welcome privilege, said Xcel media relations man Wes Reeves.

"Really, it's about quality of life in our communities," Reeves said. "These types of programs lead to a higher quality of life and makes people want to stay in our communities... We're glad to be able to share a little bit of prosperity with our customers."

Xcel is happy to lay down roots in its communities by actively working with organizations based in those areas, Reeves added.

"I think a lot of these groups can figure in Xcel Energy's support through the year," he said. "We're glad to play a role."

cont. from page 1

Dave Ramsey's Financial Peace UNIVERSITY

Local Church Offering Financial Peace

Faith Bible Church, at the corner of Cuyler and Kingsmill, will be offering Dave Ramsey's Financial Peace University (FPU) beginning Sunday, January 9th. This 13-week, life-changing program is led by best-selling author and nationally syndicated radio host, Dave Ramsey on DVD. Ramsey authored the books "Financial Peace," "More Than Enough" and "The Total Money Makeover."

FPU is designed to teach families how to get out of debt and stay out of debt and includes small group discussions for accountability and discipleship. Topics such as cash flow planning, budgeting, dumping debt, saving, giving, understanding insurance, and much more will be covered. Everyone truly benefits from this program regardless of your age, income, financial position, or whether you are single, married, divorced, with children or without everyone benefits from FPU! Join us Sunday, January 9th at 5:00 p.m. for the FREE "Super Saver" Lesson and get signed up. Classes will be offered on Sundays from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. beginning January 9th. Childcare and food will be provided. Membership kits can be purchased through Faith Bible Church at a discount and include a lifetime membership. If you have taken FPU at another location and already have a membership kit, there is no cost to take the course again.

Learn more about Faith Bible Church at www.fbcfaith.org. For more information about this course visit Dave Ramsey online at daveramsey.com. To sign up today contact Clint Curtis, the FPU coordinator for this event, at 806-663-0083.



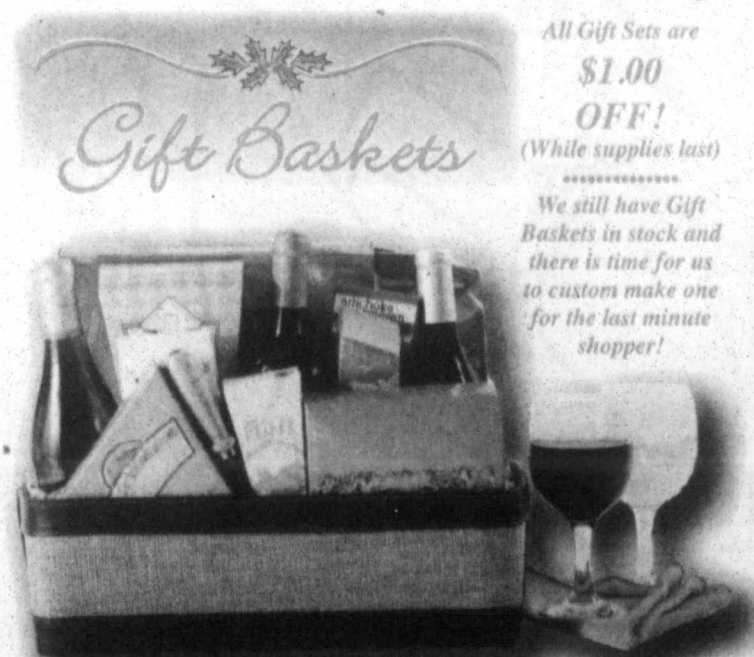
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4712

Sports

Caprock a great opportunity for Harvester hoopsters

Both the Pampa Harvesters and Lady Harvesters are nearing the end of their non-district schedules. While both teams' seasons have been different, the Caprock tournament at the end of the month could provide key momentum as they head into district.

The Harvesters enter the tournament with a 7-5 record. Their losses have been to four 5A schools and Randall, who is in 4A. Three of those losses were by three points or less. Pampa will not face that quality of competition the rest of the way.

Junior guard Latigo Collins and senior forward Garrett Ericson have been the leading scorers this season and as expected. But Pampa has had several others contribute in the scoring column and other areas throughout the season. Junior center Reid Miller has contributed a couple of double digit scoring games. In every game, Miller has been strong on the boards and getting charges. Senior Zach Murray has done a great job of running the floor in his first season as starting point guard.

Senior guard Jonathan Polasek can heat up from three-point territory and contribute on the glass. In every game, he plays with a lot of energy. Junior Cole Engle has developed into a solid sixth man and can heat up in three-point shooting. Senior Brandon Chairez is a tough, physical player and can have an impact. Senior Greg Cabrales



ANDREW GLOVER

plays with a lot of effort and is also good at running the floor. Sophomore Derrek Pollard has been a strong contributor in points and rebounds. He has also become a force down low on defense, as he gets at least a couple of blocks a game. Senior Joseph Mechelay is very good at getting to the line and makes a majority of his free throws.

Last year, the Caprock tournament wasn't so kind to the Harvesters, but this year is different. First, the Harvesters are playing in a small-team bracket due to their reclassification to 3A. Most importantly, this is a different team and they are focused on being successful. If the Harvesters can enter the last part of their district schedule with an 11-5 record, they will be in great shape.

As for the Lady Harvesters, obviously it's been a rough start. But don't let their 1-13 record fool you; the Lady Harvesters are putting their heart and soul in every game. Though the scores haven't looked pretty, Pampa has played tough competition well. In their last two home games against Amarillo High and Shallowater, only one

bad quarter hurt them. They played with these teams for three quarters.

This team has a solid starting five that is getting better with each game. Junior Kirsten Kuhn has developed into a leader on the floor as the starting point guard and is one of the leading scorers. Senior guard Cori Cook is very aggressive with the ball and has been awarded with several trips to the line. She can be an outside threat as well. Senior post Kayla Hughes has been a strong physical player and has led the team in rebounds most of the season. Junior Delaney Clendening seems to be taking after her brother Alex, as she led the team in rebounds and scoring. Kailyn Troxell has been tough down low and is one of the block leaders on the team.

Sophomore Taylor Morgan and junior Caitlin Sieck has really stepped up from the bench. The keys for this team is to continue to have strong bench support and for everyone to have a good game at once.

The Caprock tournament could be a great opportunity for the Lady Harvesters to gain some much needed victories and confidence before they enter their district schedule.

Andrew Glover is the sports reporter at The Pampa News. He can be reached at aglover@thepampanews.com

Love 'em or hate 'em, the Cowboys are still 'America's team'

ARLINGTON (AP) — Although Jerry Jones calls this season "a huge disappointment" for his Dallas Cowboys, it sure hasn't hurt the bottom line.

Based on attendance, television ratings and merchandise sales, the blue star on the shiny silver helmet remains the gold standard in the NFL and perhaps all of pro sports.

It's hardly even close.

Love them or hate them, everyone pays attention to the Cowboys, in good times and bad.

Their enduring popularity in a season that opened with visions of becoming the first team to play in the Super Bowl at home, then cratered midway through when they were 1-7 and fired their coach, proves that no matter the circumstance this franchise remains "America's Team."

"I don't know of any other team that would've gone through what they went through and provided the ratings punch the Cowboys did," said Fred Gaudelli, producer of "Sunday Night Football" on NBC. "Dallas is way on top of the mountain."

Wins and losses are all that matter to fans, and that's foremost to folks in the front office, too. But they also monitor the financial standings, and that's where the Cowboys really dominate.

They are the No. 1 team in the nation's No. 1 sport, valued at \$1.8 billion by Forbes and at or near the top in other major fiscal categories. The astounding part is that they've maintained that glow despite this being their 15th straight season without winning the Super Bowl, or even reaching the championship game. It is the longest drought in franchise history.

"The Arizona Cardinals have had more success lately than the Dallas Cowboys, but there isn't anyone who follows the industry that would want the Cardinals' brand over the Cowboys' brand," said Marc Ganis, president of Chicago-based consulting company Sports Corp. Ltd.

"That's in large part because Jerry Jones is one of the great marketers sports has ever seen. He finds ways to keep the Cowboys relevant, part of the national conversation."

His latest feat was building a \$1.2 billion stadium that's the most luxurious in the country, perhaps the world, and luring the upcoming Super Bowl to North Texas for the first time.

With the Cowboys coming off a division title and a rare playoff victory — their first since 1996 — Jones steered the national conversation toward whether his club would be in the big game. The Cowboys became a chic pick, which is why the pratfall was so devastating, although only in a football sense.

"In sports marketing, you generally like to keep expectations low and exceed them. That makes fans feel great and keep coming back," Ganis said. "Jerry marches to different

beat. It's part of what makes him unique. ... Missing those high expectations has not damaged the brand. It's the opportunity that was lost. One season of the kind Jerry was hoping to have this year would have had benefits for at least another decade."

It's hard to imagine the Cowboys having a stronger hold over the public.

They're already the league's No. 1 drawing card both at home and on the road. They are the only team that has played in front of a sold-out crowd every game this season.

They wrapped up their home schedule last weekend, averaging 87,047 fans per game. That is down only 3 percent from last season, a phenomenal feat considering the 2009 total was boosted by an NFL-record crowd of 105,121 in the debut of Cowboys Stadium, another 100,621 for the regular-season finale, and the team won the division.

The size of the stadium, and the fact they sell \$29 standing room tickets, helps those totals. But that's not the case when they go on the road, and they still pack 'em in. With two games left, they had lured an average of 74,246 fans per away game.

Their TV figures are equally overwhelming.

Most-watched NFL game this season? Cowboys-Saints on Thanksgiving, seen by 31.9 million viewers. Most-watched Sunday night game? Cowboys-Eagles, seen by 25.7 million. The NFL and NBC had the chance to move that game, but they knew what they were doing by leaving it right where it was. It became the most-watched game in the five-year history of "Sunday Night Football."

"You can never go wrong having the Dallas Cowboys on," said Gaudelli, who has been producing NFL games for 21 years for various networks. "John Madden used to have a saying, 'When in doubt, the Cowboys.' I think that still holds true."

In the five-year history of NBC's prime time show, the Cowboys have been featured 16 times, matched only by the Indianapolis Colts.

The Colts deserve the spotlight. They have Peyton Manning, winner of multiple MVP awards, and have reached the Super Bowl twice in that span. The Cowboys have Tony Romo, dater of multiple celebrities, and have won a single playoff game over the same span.

The Cowboys are such a ratings magnet that "60 Minutes"

drew its most viewers of the season to that point (17.6 million) the night it featured a segment on Jones.

"Any time you have a football personality like Jerry Jones on your broadcast, you can expect some extra football fans in addition to your normal audience tuning in," show spokesman Kevin Tedesco said. "While Jones may not have been the only factor in the large audience, he was certainly a key one."

How many other owners would even get a "60 Minutes" segment?

So, what did this season really cost them?

The lost profit from a home playoff game or two is about it. Sure, some season-ticket holders, suite owners or advertisers could back out, but other folks would be lining up to take their place.

"In my mind, if you keep working, good things will happen," Jones said. "Even though (fans) could be critical of how I do it, how we're structured, I know they believe that we're one of the top teams. ... I want that interest, not apathy. I do think the reason that's there is because they know that I'll do whatever I can do (to win)."

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Sports

Small consolation for Boise State, but a win is a win

LAS VEGAS (AP) — It wasn't the bowl Boise State wanted to be in, and for the better part of the first half Wednesday night, the Broncos played as if they were thinking about the one that got away.

Then Doug Martin raced 84 yards up the middle, and suddenly the MAACO Bowl didn't look so bad after all.

Martin shook Boise State out of its brief postseason funk with his long touchdown run midway through the second quarter, and the 10th-ranked Broncos dominated the rest of the way to beat No. 20 Utah 26-3 in a game that wasn't as close as the final score indicated.

"It was a startup for our team," Martin said. "A momentum changer."

The victory was small consolation for Boise State, which missed out on a possible Rose Bowl appearance on two missed field goals last month at Nevada. But the dominating win against a team that was at one time ranked No. 6 in the country was a reminder why the Broncos rode high in the polls before suffering their only loss in two years.

It may also be a reminder for next year's poll voters not to write off a team that won every game over the last two years except the one that really mattered. The loss to Nevada not only cost the school millions of dollars in a BCS bowl bid, but some of the grudging respect others had finally given Boise State.

Count Utah coach Kyle Whittingham among the believers.

"This is a team that was the top ranked team that was setting itself up for a run at the national championship," Whittingham said. "If they beat Reno (Nevada) and if Auburn or Oregon stumble, they're in that game."

Neither of those things happened, of course, forcing Boise State to go begging for a decent bowl bid despite its gaudy record. The Broncos landed in this gambling city, where the bookies quickly established them as 17-point favorites to beat a Utah team that also had its BCS dream dashed late in the season.

But Boise State came out flat and seemed disinterested. Kellen Moore fumbled on the third play of the game and the Broncos turned the ball over three times to help Utah to a 3-0 lead.

Martin then scampered up the middle and headed down the left sideline on the first play from scrimmage following a Utes punt.

"It was huge," Moore said. "We hadn't been executing at a high level with our offense. Anytime you get a one-

play drive that results in a touchdown it's a huge momentum swing and it gets everyone going."

Martin's run came after a mistake-prone first quarter in which Boise State kept giving the ball away and making costly errors. Utah wasn't much better, and when the Broncos began finding their stride the game quickly turned one-sided.

Moore, who also threw an interception in the first quarter, rebounded with a 25-yard touchdown pass to Tyler Shoemaker in the closing seconds of the first half to give Boise State a 16-3 lead. He added another 18-yard TD pass to Austin Pettis in the third quarter.

Meanwhile, Boise State's defense held Utah to just 200 yards, forcing the Utes to punt again and again. The Broncos shut down both the running and passing game and Utah never scored after its opening field goal.

"We had hoped it would end like this because Utah's a great team," Boise State coach Chris Petersen said. "If we couldn't get to a BCS game we wanted to play a team like Utah that's as good as any team out there."

Boise State (12-1) was ranked as high as No. 2 in The Associated Press Top 25 poll this year, but early on looked little like the team that was everyone's favorite BCS buster. That changed with Martin's run, with the Broncos taking control on both sides of the ball against a team that was a BCS team itself two years ago and had won nine straight bowl games.

Moore, who finished fourth in Heisman voting earlier this month, finished with impressive numbers despite his rocky start. He completed 28 of 38 passes, including 12 to Pettis, who was playing the final game of a college career in which his team won 51 of 53 games.

The game was the last for Utah (10-3) before going into the Pac-12 Conference, where the Utes can play for an automatic big bowl bid. Boise State is also switching conferences, heading to the Mountain West where the Broncos still will have to impress both voters and computers to get a Bowl Championship Series bid.

Boise State was plenty impressive against Utah, shutting down quarterback Terrance Cain and the Utes running game. Utah didn't help itself by losing three fumbles and being penalized 10 times for 83 yards in a sloppily played game.

"When you play a team the caliber of Boise State you have to play better than we did tonight," Whittingham said.

Boise State kicker Kyle Brotzman, whose chip-shot

misses cost his team a BCS bowl game and his school dearly, became the all-time NCAA leader in points kicking with a 29-yard field goal in the second quarter. Brotzman added another field goal in the fourth quarter but had a mixed night, getting one attempt blocked and dropping a pass while wide open on a fake punt.

BANANAGRAMS!

Each set of 12 tiles below contains two common six-letter words. The letters of the first six-letter word are adjacent, but not in order. Find them and rearrange them to spell a word. Cross out those letters and imagine that the six remaining letters are now consecutive. These remaining letters can now be rearranged to spell the second word.

LEVEL

FAEGISVCOTAR

RATAUYNSEKME

LOMALFEECNUM

Yesterday's Answer: BONSAI, AIKIDO, GEISHA



Dear Abby...

By Pauline & Jeanne Phillips

DEAR ABBY: I am writing about the letter from "Turkey Eater in Texas" (Nov. 12), who resented having a vegan Thanksgiving to accommodate two family members. I think your answer missed what being a gracious host is about. The entire meal shouldn't have to consist of vegan items. However, it wouldn't be a big deal to serve a vegan main dish and have those individuals also bring their favorite items. Making them bring a complete meal excludes them from a family gathering, and what fun is that?

After your column ran, my father called to tell me that holiday dinners would no longer accommodate my daughter's celiac disease. She's 9 and struggles with being "different." When she ingests gluten, she has cramps and vomiting, loses weight and risks significant long-term consequences.

Next year, we will host the holiday dinners. Our extended family can join us — or not. The bottom line is that if you exclude family (for being vegan or having celiac disease), you've done the opposite of what holidays are about. — KAYE IN ALABAMA

DEAR KAYE: That's true. What bothered me about the letter from "Turkey Eater" was the idea that his brother expected him to cater the entire Thanksgiving dinner to his nieces' preference to eat vegan. If the writer had said he had been asked to ensure there were dishes that would not inflame (literally) his nieces' serious medical condition, I would have answered differently.

What has surprised me about the comments I have received from readers about that letter has been the amount of prejudice and anger expressed against vegetarians by more than a few. But read on for some responses from vegans:

DEAR ABBY: I am a vegan in a meat and potatoes family. For 15 years I have spent every holiday and family gathering listening to them degrade my food choices and try to "convert" me back to my "senses." I have never expected them to cook for me. I always pack my own foods since they are unwilling to branch out and try new foods. When I have brought a dish, they all loved it, as long as they

didn't know it was vegan and that I had prepared it.

I find many people are resentful if we host a dinner party with only vegan food. They expect us to accommodate them by cooking meat, but feel we should fend for ourselves at a function they hold. I encourage people to please get over the stigma of vegan/vegetarian and sample something new once in a while. If I can endure every family gathering taking place at a steakhouse, I don't think it's unreasonable to have one night when they experience how tasty food without meat in it can be. — RACHEL IN SEATTLE

DEAR ABBY: I am 31 and have been a vegetarian my entire life. I come from a meat-loving family and have never insisted they change an entire meal to accommodate my eating habits. Instead, I take food I know I will eat and share it with everyone else. "Turkey Eater's" vegan relatives should realize they're in the minority. If they each brought a vegan-friendly dish or two, they'd have three to six things to choose from — and that's plenty. — EATING WELL IN NEW MEXICO

DEAR ABBY: I chose veganism for many reasons, none of which is to be a pain in the keister — either by lecturing/scolding others, or by having high-maintenance expectations. I feel it's important to be flexible, especially at get-togethers. What I value most about holidays is sharing a meal with people I love. If I want a completely vegan Thanksgiving, it should be one that I host and prepare. To expect that of non-vegetarians is not only unreasonable, but also difficult, since many people are inexperienced in how to cook vegan.

My family Thanksgiving has an array of omnivores, vegetarians and vegans. Dad loves to cook and makes sure there's something for everyone. I help bake pies, others bring a vegan dish and everyone is content. Sometimes the vegetarian dishes are so delicious, the omnivores salivate.

Mutual respect is of utmost importance. Being militant or demanding can bring a negative perspective to vegetarianism. If we want others to empathize with us, we need to do the same. — THANKFUL VEGAN IN KANSAS

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CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

- ACROSS**
- 43 School
 - 1 Spice on the from Thames nutmeg
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 - 12 More cautious
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12-23

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Public Notice
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
Notice is hereby given that original Letters Testamentary for the Estate of Helen Spalding, Deceased, were issued on December 20, 2010, in Cause No. 9800, pending in the County Court of Gray County, Texas, to: Vivian D. Neff.
All persons having claims against this Estate which is currently being administered are required to present them to the undersigned within the time and in the manner prescribed by law.
c/o: Vanessa G. Buzzard Attorney at Law 208 N. Russell St. Pampa, TX 79065 DATED the 20th day of December, 2010.

Public Notice
Vanessa G. Buzzard Attorney at Law Vivian D. Neff State Bar No.: 03547900 208 N. Russell St. Pampa, TX 79065 Telephone: (806)665-7281 Facsimile: (806)669-0972 G-36 Dec. 23, 2010

10 Lost/Found
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AXYDLBAAXR 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.

12-23 CRYPTOQUOTE

YD UJLIAUEC LS RBICC
IALSFR YDWJERD LI LR LS
IADB IAJI ZMEV RIVDSFIA

CLDR — BMIADV IDVDRJ
Yesterday's Cryptquote: TRUE PATRIOTISM HATES INJUSTICE IN ITS OWN LAND MORE THAN ANYWHERE ELSE. — CLARENCE DARROW

Public Notice
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
Notice is hereby given that original Letters of Administration for the Estate of Kenneth Duane Mayer, Deceased, were issued on December 20, 2010, in Cause No. 9797, pending in the County Court of Gray County, Texas, to: Lajuna Ann Mayer.
All persons having claims against this Estate which is currently being administered are required to present them to the undersigned within the time and in the manner prescribed by law.
c/o: J.A. Martindale Attorney at Law P.O. Box 1017 114 West Kingsmill St Pampa, TX 79065 DATED the 20th day of December, 2010.

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Merry Christmas

to all of our loyal readers!

Our Christmas wish is that your family enjoys the blessings of the season.
The staff of The Pampa News.

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