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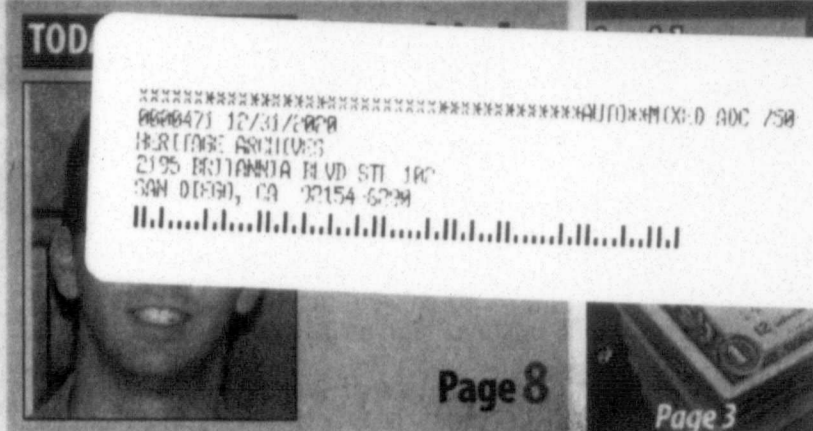
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The PAMPA NEWS

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a new beginning

With trial over, Bolins start anew

DAVID BOWSER
 dbowser@thepampanews.com

It's been almost six months since Mary Lee Bolin was found not guilty of killing her infant daughter, but the decision of a Gray County jury wasn't the end of it.

Kenzee Renee Bolin was only 42 days old when Mary Lee Bolin called 911 to report that her baby was having trouble breathing in the early morning hours of May 21, 2007.

Shortly after arriving at Pampa Regional Medical Center emergency room, the baby was pronounced dead.

Charges of capital murder were filed against Bolin in the baby's death. Her other daughter, K'Lee, then three years old, was taken away from her.

When her son, Duke, was born, he was taken from her, too.

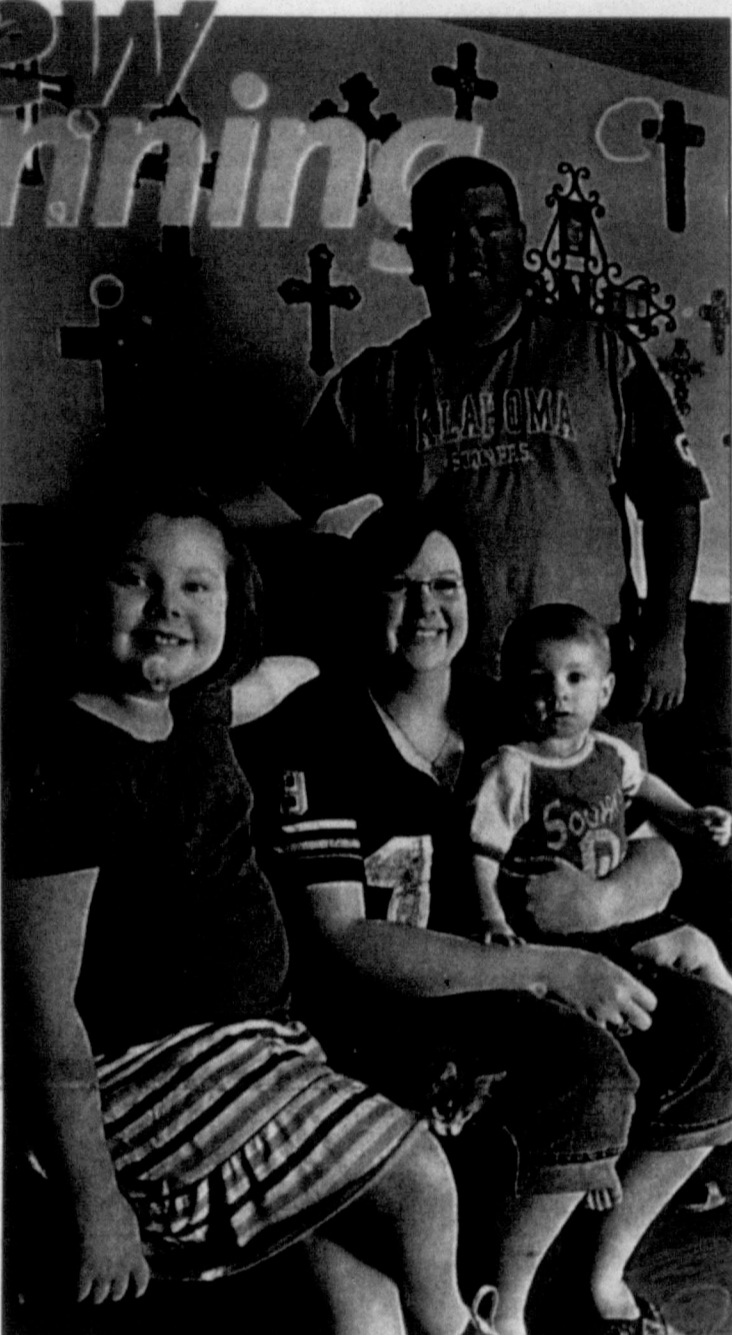
It wasn't until after a jury of six men and six women found her not guilty of Kenzee's death that Mary Lee Bolin could begin the process to regain custody of K'Lee and Duke.

This week, Mary Lee Bolin, husband Tyrel, K'Lee and Duke sat in the living room of their Wells Street home as they tried to regain some degree of normalcy in their lives.

"We finally got K'Lee back," Bolin said. "I have custody of her again."

The state has dismissed its case involving Duke. He'll be 14 months old on July 12.

"We're finally starting to get back to a normal life," Bolin said as Duke chased one of the



Mary Lee Bolin (center) sits next to daughter K'Lee and holds son Duke as husband Tyrel stands over them. Bolin, who was found not guilty of capital murder earlier this year, says she's ready to move on with her life.

two new kittens in the Bolin household across the floor.

Right now, Bolin said she's trying to get her pharmacy technician license.

"I'm just waiting to hear back from the state board on that," she said. "I'm hoping that comes through in the next few weeks."

She said she intends to move forward in the pharmacy field.

Bolin was working as an operator at the prison east of Pampa when Kenzee died.

When Bolin was charged with murder, the prison terminated her employment.

While she was awaiting trial, Bolin went to work for Bill Hite at Heard-Jones Health Mart.

"Work is great," Bolin said. She said she's learning how to do all the ordering for the drug store.

"It's difficult to learn how to do all that," Bolin said, "but we're getting there."

She said they have to do their **BOLIN** cont. on page 3

Pampans reflect on July Fourth

THE PAMPA NEWS

Editor's Note: There was no big show in the skies above Rec. Park on Monday evening, but Pampans know that the Fourth is about more than just fireworks and a three-day weekend. We spoke to some people out and about Pampa this weekend to get their thoughts over what the holiday really means to them.

Deck Woldt

"It's a great celebration. It's a holiday that honors freedom. I remember being in the service and seeing the flags out. It's a great family celebration that brings everyone together."

Dustin Miller

"It's very special to me, because my grandpa who passed away in March spent a big chunk of his life fighting so his grandkids and their kids can have freedom. I am forever grateful to him and all those who sacrificed for our freedom."

Mark Bailey

"The Fourth means Independence. The fireworks are a reminder of the many battles we have fought in the many different theaters of war so that we can have freedom. Long live the USA!"

Ramie Hutto

"The Fourth of July is one of my favorite holidays. I always take a few minutes to remember what Independence Day is really about: A group of men risking their lives and future for the importance of freedom. I also honor those who have fought for us since that time. Many people have continued the work that was started so long ago in the first fight for freedom. I honor them all and, while honoring them, I also enjoy the food and fireworks that come along with it. But this year I might just get to enjoy the food."

FOURTH cont. on page 2

NRCS gets funding for Panhandle water conservation

THE PAMPA NEWS

The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has announced additional funding in the Panhandle and South Plains regions to enhance natural resources on Texas agricultural working lands.

Additional funds are now available through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) to address water conservation concerns through the Agricultural Water Enhancement Program (AWEP) and the Ogallala Aquifer Initiative.

"AWEP and the Ogallala Aquifer Initiative are both voluntary programs and provide financial and technical assistance to farmers and ranchers to improve water conditions on their agricultural land," said Salvador Salinas, NRCS state conservationist for Texas. "With water supplies at an all time low, this is just

one more way agriculture can help conserve its use."

AWEP and the Ogallala Aquifer Initiative promote ground and surface water conservation by helping farmers and ranchers implement agricultural water enhancement activities. Projects address water quantity resource concerns in the 49 Panhandle and South Plains counties within the aquifer area.

Types of water enhancement activities include irrigation system improvements and irrigation efficiency enhancements, which include new pivots on previously row-watered ground, new pivots replacing 20-year old or older pivots, pivot conversions to higher water use efficiency and replacing old, leaky underground pipeline.

All these activities are utilized to enhance water quantity or water conservation benefits on agricultural lands.

"There are funds currently allocated specifically to Gray County that will be swept and used elsewhere if there is no interest or need for those funds in this county," said NRCS Gray County District Conservationist John Wimberley.

Local producers are encouraged to work with NRCS on conservation planning assistance to develop a conservation plan as a primary tool for long-term management of their natural resources.

"Benefits of a conservation plan go a long way in helping producers protect and improve their land," said Jon Weddle, NRCS program manager in Lubbock. "The plan will help producers qualify for NRCS financial assistance to implement the conservation practices to make the changes on their farms or ranches. It will also serve as a planning tool, and can be **NRCS** cont. on page 2

Booth Registration Deadline for Boomtown Block Party & Business Expo is July 1
BBQ Cook-off Registration Deadline is July 1
(late registration will be accepted only if there is space available)
 For forms or information, contact the Chamber of Commerce at 806-669-3241 or harvest@pampachamber.com

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PAMPA FORECAST

Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
High 100 Low 72	High 98 Low 70	High 99 Low 70

Tuesday: Mostly sunny and hot, with a high near 100. Breezy, with a south southwest wind between 5 and 15 mph.

Tuesday Night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 72. Breezy, with a south wind between 10 and 15 mph, with gusts as high as 20 mph.

Wednesday: A 20 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms after 1pm. Mostly sunny and hot, with a high near 98. West southwest wind around 10 mph becoming south southeast.

Wednesday Night: A 20 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms. Partly cloudy, with a low around 70. Southeast wind around 10 mph.

Thursday: Mostly sunny and hot, with a high near 99. South southeast wind between 5 and 10 mph.

Thursday Night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 70. Breezy, with a south southeast wind between 10 and 15 mph, with gusts as high as 20 mph.

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DELAY
[] [] [] [] [] []

METAL
[] [] [] [] [] []

APRON
[] [] [] [] [] []

Yesterday's Answer: MAGNOLIA, NASHVILLE, GOODFELLAS

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Donations aid cheerleader in legal battle

SILSBEE (AP) — As one of her school's basketball stars approached the free-throw line to hit a shot during a 2009 playoff game, a cheerleader stepped away from her squad, folded her arms and stood in silence, refusing to root for the athlete she says raped her at a party in this Texas town.

Now, two years later, her silent protest is drawing new attention nationwide as the result of an unusual series of events: Suspended as a cheerleader but later reinstated, the 16-year-old and her family sued over her punishment, lost and ended up with \$40,000 in penalties from the legal proceedings. Meanwhile, the basketball player settled the criminal case against him by pleading guilty to reduced charges.

An online campaign to help the former cheerleader's family with the legal costs has gained momentum on Facebook and Twitter and collected more than \$23,000. The family also has appealed in federal court the judge's order for them to pay the school district's legal costs after their lawsuit was dismissed.

"It's really an awful statement to send on how you treat a teenage sexual assault victim," said Alex DiBranco, whose petition on Change.org has gathered more than 94,000 signatures asking the school district to not to make the family pay the fees. DiBranco, a New York-based women's rights advocate, got involved after reading about the case.

The controversy is renewing debate about how the school and courts handled a sensitive matter involving teenagers, sexual assault and allegations made but not yet proven.

Silsbee Mayor Herbert Muckleroy, a former school superintendent in the town of 7,000, said he thinks the criminal case was handled appropriately but has doubts about making the girl's family pay the school district \$40,000. "I just wish it could have been settled and over with and let the community settle back in," he said.

The father of the girl, who is now 19, said he cannot accept that a rape victim and her family are being punished.

"I will never give up hope that in some form or fashion there will be justice, (and) hope that our story will help another family, another girl that's been through this," said Craig S., 44, whose last name is being withheld to protect his daughter's identity. The Associated Press does not identify sexual assault victims.

The girl claimed she was pulled into a darkened room with basketball player Rakheem Bolton and several others during an October 2008 party and raped under a pool

table while she was drunk. Bolton and two others were arrested after the party. A grand jury declined to indict him in January 2009. A second grand jury indicted him 10 months later. Bolton eventually pleaded guilty to a lesser assault charge in a plea deal and received a suspended one-year sentence. Charges were dropped against the two others indicted in the incident.

The girl, who was suspended from the cheerleading squad but reinstated two weeks later, filed a federal lawsuit in May 2009, claiming the school district violated her First Amendment rights as well as her rights to liberty, property and equal protection under the Fourteenth Amendment.

In court documents, school officials said they were justified in punishing her because Bolton was not facing any charges during the playoff game. Her conduct violated school rules and her allegations appeared to be "the story of a girl who became angry with a boy about something that may or may not have happened at a private party," the schools' attorneys said.

Silsbee school district officials and their attorney have declined further comment on the case.

U.S. District Judge Thad Heartfield in Beaumont ruled the girl's lawsuit was "without foundation."

"There are no facts to support a finding that the school, or its officials, owed her any additional process," Heartfield wrote, and ordered the family to pay the district's legal costs. The case was appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court, which in May declined to review it, leaving the legal fees the only issue pending.

The girl's father acknowledged that his daughter did not object to Bolton's plea deal. He said she wanted some admission of guilt from him.

David Barlow, the special prosecutor who handled the case, said, "This was the best outcome that could have resulted, given the law and the facts."

Bolton's grandmother, who declined to give her name, said her grandson is now in college and just wants to be left alone. The former cheerleader, who graduated from high school last year, also declined to be interviewed, her father said.

The school district remains unwilling to give the girl's family a break on the payment. "I think the district has a fiduciary responsibility and obligation to the taxpayers to try to collect on any money that is due them," school board President John Griffin said.

Fourth

Taryn Eubank

"It means family and fireworks and remembering how great the USA is."

Tamara Jordan

"It just gives me a sense of pride and thankfulness. Thank God that we live here. I'm just proud. My husband was in Desert Storm with my brother. My dad fought in Korea. Everybody I know has served in the military. It wasn't a matter of a choice but they felt it was their duty."

Sharon Holmes

"I feel very proud to be an American. Just like every-

one else remember the ones who died for our freedom. For me also it's a family reunion at a church camp in Oklahoma...My brother and sister grew up at and my great grandparents helped build. My great grandfather, my grandpa and my uncle served. My grandfather was a medic in World War II because he didn't want to carry a gun. He wanted to save lives and not kill anyone."

Tiffany Lane Qualls

"It means remembering and celebrating the freedoms that those before us worked and fought so hard for."

Kristy Powell

"Thankful for my freedom. And... for me the Fourth means another day older, because it's my birthday!"

cont. from page 1

Bolin

orders six-months in advance. That takes some adjustment and a lot of thought.

"I just did the Christmas order," Bolin smiled.

But she said she enjoys working at the store.

"I love working there," Bolin said.

She said Bill and Ramona Hite have been wonderful throughout her ordeal.

"Without them," Bolin said, "I don't know where I'd be now."

She said that her other friends at the First Baptist Church have also been great.

"They were all very supportive," Bolin said. "There were several that were with me through everything.

There were several that helped financially. Everybody there has just been wonderful."

She said she doesn't know how anybody could go through a trial like she had without a church family.

Bolin also praised her defense team, Harold Comer and Mark Buzzard.

She said that she and her family are planning on staying in Pampa.

"There's no reason for us to leave," she said.

Bolin looked at Tyrel and said they are going to renew their wedding vows in September.

They didn't get to have much of a wedding when they first got married.

"This time," she said, "we're actually going to have a wedding. We're going to have a new beginning."

While the past few years have been stressful, Bolin said it has brought her and Tyrel closer together.

Watching Duke and K'Lee play, Bolin said she plans on enjoying watching them grow up.

cont. from page 1

A X Y D L B A A X R
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.

7-5 CRYPTOQUOTE

FG QDNOO PWNMR F VEG RHZ

H J O S O N C Q D F G U F ' S O

TOENGOM EAWHQ TFXO: FQ

UWOR WG. — NWAONQ XNWRQ

Yesterday's Cryptoquote: PATRIOTISM IS EASY TO UNDERSTAND IN AMERICA. IT MEANS LOOKING OUT FOR YOURSELF BY LOOKING OUT FOR YOUR COUNTRY. — CALVIN COOLIDGE

A X Y D L B A A X R
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.

7-4 CRYPTOQUOTE

HFRDCMRCIV CI YFIJ RM

SZKYDIRFZK CZ FVYDCQF. CR

VYFZI XMMGCZA MSR LMD

JMSDIYXL UJ XMMGCZA MSR

LMD JMSD QMSZR DJ.

— QFXBCZ QMMXCKAY

Saturday's Cryptoquote: I BELIEVE IN OPENING MAIL ONCE A MONTH, WHETHER IT NEEDS IT OR NOT. — BOB CONSIDINE

NRCS

cont. from page 1

modified as they change their objectives and goals throughout the years."

EQIP is a continuous sign-up program. NRCS field office in Pampa will be accepting applications through July 29, 2011 for current funding on a first come, first served basis. NRCS implements the programs by entering into EQIP contracts directly with agricultural producers.

For more information, visit the Pampa NRCS office is located at 12125 Frederic Ave. in the Gray County Annex or contact the office by telephone at 806-665-1751, ext.3.

More information about EQIP can also be found online at www.tx.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/eqip (click on Texas 2011 EQIP information).

Obituaries

Lewis E. Haymes, 76

Lewis E. Haymes age 76 of Pampa, died June 29, 2011 in Amarillo. There are no services scheduled at this time. Arrangements are by Schooler Funeral Home, 4100 South Georgia.

Mr. Haymes was born in Pampa to Paul E and Edna Haymes on November 28, 1934. He served in the United States Army. He held a Doctorate from UT and was an educator.

He is survived by his wife Yoriko of Japan; a son Gary Haymes of Wilmington, North Carolina; two sisters, Pauline McClollum of Pampa and Evelyn Maple of West Virginia.

Please sign the online guest book at www.schoolerfuneralhome.com

AFTERNOONRUSH

Miss Frisco named Miss Texas

ARLINGTON (AP) - Kendall Morris, Miss Frisco, was crowned Miss Texas on Friday night and will move on to compete for the Miss America crown.



Morris

The first runner-up was Adrianna Nelson, Miss Harris County.

Second runner-up was Miss Lake O' The Pines, DaNae Couch. Third runner-up was Miss Colleyville, Jordan Johannsen, and fourth runner-up went to Miss Dallas, Candice Bennatt.

The Miss Texas Organization describes the purpose of the competition as providing personal and professional opportunities for young Texas women and promoting their voice in culture, politics and community.

Oil spills into Yellowstone River

LAUREL, Mont. (AP) - Teams of federal and Exxon Mobile workers are moving along the banks of Montana's legendary Yellowstone River in an effort to contain damage and gauge the impact from tens of thousands of gallons of crude oil that gushed from a ruptured pipe beneath the riverbed.

A break in an Exxon Mobile pipeline near Laurel fouled miles of riverbank and forced municipalities and irrigation districts to close intakes across eastern Montana.

The company estimated that up to 1,000 barrels, or 42,000 gallons, spilled late Friday night before the flow from the damaged pipeline was stopped, coating parts of the watercourse with globs of crude.

Exxon Mobil Pipeline Co. president Gary Pruessing said flyovers had shown most of the damage was limited to a 10-mile stretch of river.

But Gov. Brian Schweitzer dismissed Pruessing's claim as premature. The Democratic governor said Exxon Mobil needed to get more personnel to inspect the situation close-up. He also slammed Pruessing's statement to reporters that no injured wildlife had been found.

"For somebody to say at this early stage that there's no damage to wildlife, that's pretty silly," Schweitzer said. "The Yellowstone River is important to us. We've got to have a physical inspection of that river in small boats - and soon."

Pruessing also said that the 12-inch pipeline had been temporarily shut down in May because of concerns over the rising waters on the Yellowstone. He said the company decided to restart the line after examining its safety record and deciding the risk was low.

Agent sentenced to 15 years

McALLEN (AP) - A former Border Patrol agent was sentenced to more than 15 years in federal prison Friday for the 2003 sexual assault of a woman he pulled from a bus at an inland checkpoint.

Scott Anthony Sullivan, 45, maintained through his sentencing that he had made a poor decision, but that sex with the then 23-year-old woman in a Falfurrias motel was consensual.

U.S. District Judge Ricardo Hinojosa listened to Sullivan tell his version of events, but said Sullivan needed to deal in reality, not excuses.

"You didn't uphold your oath as a law enforcement official," Hinojosa said. "You besmirched the good reputation of thousands and thousands."

The original indictment also included a second charge that stemmed from allegations that Sullivan molested a 16-year-old girl he stopped at the checkpoint in 2001. That count was later dropped.

Los Alamos nuke lab to reopen

LOS ALAMOS, N.M. (AP) - The Los Alamos National Laboratory will re-open to employees on Wednesday after the threat from the largest wildfire in state history passed.

Laboratory Director Charles McMillan tells workers in a memo that the lab escaped major damage from the Las Conchas fire. The lab and town of Los Alamos were evacuated on June 27 and residents were allowed back home on Sunday.

McMillan says every one of the 2,000 buildings on 36-square-mile campus will be checked for safety before they reopen.

Laboratory managers will begin assessing the work areas on Tuesday.

Montana to 'welcome' millionth

MISSOULA, Mont. (AP) - Montanans like to call their state "Big Sky Country," or "The last, best place." Nowhere in these descriptions are there hints of crowds.

Yet Montana is set to reach a major milestone later this year when the state tops one million residents for the first time, according to projections by the U.S. Census.

The slowest-growing state in one of the nation's fastest-growing regions, Montana will remain a vast and largely empty place. Don't expect to wait in line at fly-fishing streams. And morning commutes will still average 17 minutes, enough to make big city dwellers cry.

Even so, some Montanans are treating the advancing milestone with a sense of dread. Said Mary Craigle, Census director for the state, "They don't want more neighbors."

Judge nixes sleepwalking defense

OKLAHOMA CITY (AP) - A man was sentenced to life in prison for an Oklahoma City murder after a judge wouldn't allow him to claim that he was sleepwalking at the time of the killing.

The Oklahoman reports that 49-year-old Roger Frank Kincaid drew a sentence Friday of life plus 20 years for the stabbing death four years ago of Terry Lee Jobe. A jury convicted him of first-degree murder.

Kincaid was also convicted of assault for hurting another man, Kenneth Ruff.

Kincaid was staying at the apartment of the two men at the time of the slaying but claimed he wasn't present in the apartment when the killing occurred.

The defense produced an expert who said Kincaid might have been sleepwalking, but the judge wouldn't let the jury hear it.

Tips for managing your debt crisis

TERRY SAVAGE
Creator's Syndicate



Q: Because I was out of work for nearly a year, I have so much credit card debt that I can never repay it. What's better — credit counseling, debt negotiation or bankruptcy?

A: It's important to know the difference between these alternatives and choose the one that best solves your problem and has the least impact on your future ability to borrow. And it's important to get competent help you can trust to guide you through this decision.

There are many rip-offs out there, promising help and charging steep fees. That can only add to your woes. But it's even worse to ignore the situation and hope the debt collectors will give up on finding you.

America does not have debtors' prisons, but many lenders and collection agencies are going to court to get warrants to arrest borrowers who default on loans and ignore court orders.

Debt collection agencies have stepped up their collection lawsuits, and many states, including Illinois, are taking action to make sure that debtors have been properly notified.

There are a range of options for dealing with your debt before jumping into bankruptcy.

The place to start is with an agency affiliated with the National Foundation for Consumer Credit (NFCC.org). There are more than 800 such offices in every state, staffed by certified consumer credit counselors. You will be automatically connected with the nearest office by calling (800) 388-2227.

These nonprofit agencies either offer free counseling or charge only a nominal fee. Although you

can receive counseling over the telephone, it's better to gather all your bills, collection notices and other financial information, and schedule a meeting (which does not go on your credit report).

The agencies can also set you up with a debt-repayment program. They notify all your creditors, and typically get interest charges and penalties waived or reduced. Then you make one monthly payment to the agency, and they send out reduced payments to each creditor who agrees to this setup.

Most creditors are happy to cooperate because they'd rather receive a lower payment than none at all. This type of payout arrangement does negatively impact your credit report, but at least it shows that you are dealing with your debt.

Let me wave a big red flag here. There's nothing wrong with trying to negotiate a lower payoff with your creditors, or getting an agency to help you do it. But you can't negotiate if you have no money to offer.

The whole idea of debt negotiation is that you — or an agent — offer the lender an immediate settlement in cash to fully settle your outstanding debt. (And be sure you get a written confirmation of the deal.) But first you need the cash to make the offer.

Many of these debt negotiation companies direct you to stop paying your bills, and instead accumulate the money so you can negotiate in the future. That has the effect

of worsening your situation, and exposing you to collection agencies and judgments. Plus, they take a big cut of any money they ultimately save you.

In 2010, more than 1.6 million Americans filed for bankruptcy. This year, the numbers are down slightly, though more than 1 million people will file. But before jumping into the hands of a bankruptcy attorney, you need to understand the two forms of personal bankruptcy: Chapter 7, where you surrender almost all your assets, and Chapter 13, where you may keep your mortgaged house and car, in exchange for an agreement to pay off a reduced amount of debt in the coming years.

(Remember, bankruptcy does not wipe out student loan debt, alimony, child support or most back taxes.)

There are so many intricacies to the bankruptcy laws that you do need a professional to guide you through the process. Go to NFCC.org and check out the section on bankruptcy. Then make an appointment to talk, even if by telephone. The counselors can help you evaluate the alternatives, and even refer you to a bankruptcy attorney.

Don't panic over huge bills. And don't hide. That's when you need to take a deep breath and make a call to the NFCC. Facing your situation and getting trusted advice is the first step to starting your new life. And that's The Savage Truth.

Terry Savage is a registered investment adviser and is on the board of the Chicago Mercantile Exchange. She appears weekly on WMAQ-Channel 5's 4:30 p.m. newscast, and can be reached at www.terrysavage.com. She is the author of the new book, "The New Savage Number: How Much Money Do You Really Need to Retire?"

Who knew? National anthem has 4 verses

DALLAS (AP) - Sure, Christina Aguilera had trouble with the first stanza of "The Star-Spangled Banner" at Super Bowl XLV, but it's probably a good thing she didn't have to tackle verses two, three and four.

That's right. The national anthem doesn't end with one verse and a declaration to kick things off, play ball or start your engines.

"I don't think most people even know there are multiple stanzas," said Jeffrey Snider, chairman of the vocal music department at the University of North Texas.

Snider got an understanding of how unfamiliar many people are with the national anthem last year when he posted a third stanza excerpt on his Facebook page during the 9/11 anniversary.

"People were sort of offended by the militaristic tone, unaware that I was quoting the third stanza," Snider said. And where is that band who so vauntingly swore That the havoc of war and the battle's confusion, A home and a country should leave us no more!

Kevin Hanlon, associate professor of music at Southern Methodist University, said people may be avoiding the additional stanzas because they are more specific, giving details about the battle for Fort McHenry in Baltimore. And the words were penned using the language of 1814.

"That's sort of a confusing thing to get people involved in," he said. "The notes are hard enough to hit as it is. It's

an incredibly gymnastic melody."

Georgetown lawyer and amateur poet Francis Scott Key wrote "Defense of Fort McHenry," a poem describing his eyewitness account of the British naval attack on Fort McHenry.

Key's poem was printed in a Baltimore newspaper and later set to music, a means of spreading news to the illiterate.

Snider has yet to pin down a reason we just sing the first verse.

"I don't know that it was ever established that the first verse was the verse to be done," he said, noting that more than one verse has been performed at a sporting event, although very rarely.

Proponents of the full lyrics note that the first stanza ends in a question, "Does that star-spangled banner yet wave o'er the land of the free and the home of the brave?"

Key's first verse leaves you hanging, Snider said. "It wasn't until dawn and he could see the flag that he still knew it was in American hands," he said.

The additional verses are tough, but so is the song's range. The musical trip from "Oh, say" to "the home of the brave" covers 11/2 octaves.

"It's really beyond the range of most untrained singers," Snider said.

Lawsuit seeks to halt wild-horse roundup in Nev.

RENO, Nev. (AP) - Wild-horse advocates have filed a lawsuit seeking to halt the federal government's plans to remove about 1,700 mustangs from the range in eastern Nevada, claiming officials failed to show the animals are a threat to the land.

An advocacy group and two animal activists

were questioning whether the Bureau of Land Management's plan complied with a provision of the 1971 federal Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act that allows roundups only after determining the mustangs are a threat to the "thriving natural ecological balance" of an area.

"They have not done it

in this case," said attorney Rachel Fazio, who represents Cloud Foundation, the Colorado-based horse advocacy group. "The range is currently in a state of natural balance, and there's

no indication these horses are causing any type of damage. The BLM doesn't have the legal authority to remove these animals."

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Viewpoints

Today in History

Today is Tuesday, July 5, the 186th day of 2011. There are 179 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On July 5, 1811, Venezuela became the first South American country to declare independence from Spain.

On this date:

In 1865, William Booth founded the Salvation Army in London.

In 1911, French President Georges Pompidou was born in Montboudif.

In 1935, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed the National Labor Relations Act.

In 1946, the bikini, created by Louis Reard was worn by Micheline Bernardini during a poolside fashion show in Paris.

In 1947, Larry Doby made his debut with the Cleveland Indians, becoming the first black player in the American League.

In 1948, Britain's National Health Service Act went into effect, providing government-financed medical and dental care.

In 1971, President Richard Nixon certified the 26th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which lowered the minimum voting age from 21 to 18.

In 1975, Arthur Ashe became the first black man to win a Wimbledon singles title as he defeated Jimmy Connors.

In 1984, the Supreme Court weakened the 70-year-old "exclusionary rule," deciding that evidence seized in good faith with defective court warrants could be used against defendants in criminal trials.

In 1991, a worldwide financial scandal erupted as regulators in eight countries shut down the Bank of Credit and Commerce International.

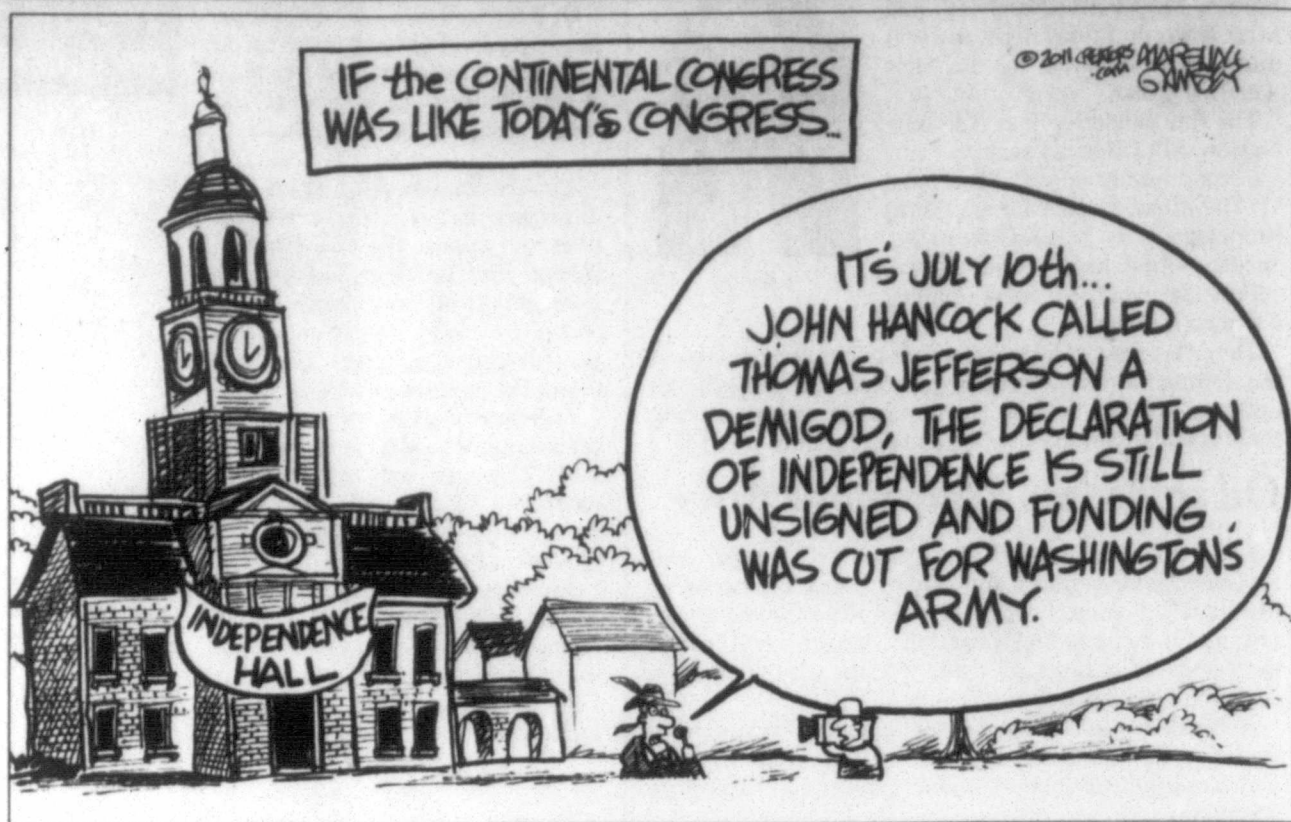
Ten years ago: President George W. Bush named veteran prosecutor Robert Mueller to take over the FBI.

Five years ago: North Korea test-fired seven missiles into the Sea of Japan, including at least one believed capable of reaching the U.S. mainland.

One year ago: Israel eased its blockade of Hamas-ruled Gaza to allow virtually all consumer goods; the move was welcomed by the White House, but Gaza business leaders and rights activists said the measures were far short of what Gaza needed. Opera singer Cesare Siepi, 87, died in Atlanta.

Today's Birthdays: Actress Katherine Helmond is 82. Actress Shirley Knight is 75. Singer-musician Robbie Robertson is 68. Julie Nixon Eisenhower is 63. Rock star Huey Lewis is 61. Baseball Hall-of-Fame pitcher Rich "Goose" Gossage is 60. Country musician Charles Ventre is 59. Singer-songwriter Marc Cohn is 52. Actor Dorian Wilson is 49. Actress Edie Falco is 48. Actress Kathryn Erbe is 46. Actor Michael Stuhlbarg is 43. Country musician Brent Flynn (Flynnville Train) is 42. Rock musician Bengt Lagerberg (The Cardigans) is 38. Actor Dale Godboldo is 36. Rock singer Jason Wade (Lifehouse) is 31. Actor Ryan Hansen is 30. Country musician Dave Haywood (Lady Antebellum) is 29. Actor Jason Dolley is 20.

Thought for Today: "Aim above morality. Be not simply good, be good for something." - Henry David Thoreau (1817-1862)



In Iowa, Perry finds voters like those in Texas

AUSTIN (AP) - As Texas Gov. Rick Perry ponders whether to throw his cowboy hat into the GOP presidential ring, he and his recently reunited team of advisers are looking hardest at Iowa.

For good reason: The voters who stand up on the cold caucus night of an Iowa winter bear a striking resemblance to voters in the Texas Republican primaries who have re-elected Perry three times in the past decade, making him the longest-serving governor in the country and the state's history.

The conservative Southerner might not yet have a single office open in Iowa and he's hired no staff, yet pollsters and strategists familiar with the state's politics say he would enter the race there with a natural edge.

"Rick Perry is going to have a basic appeal to rural Iowa conservatives," said Jim Henson, a pollster and director of the Texas Politics Project at the University of Texas at Austin. "These are his people."

For months, as potential rivals for the Republican nomination began the work of building a White House campaign, Perry insisted he wouldn't run. But as the Texas Legislature headed toward adjournment, he said in late May he would think about the race. His advisers started laying the groundwork for a campaign in June.

This past week, Perry was in California for a run of private meetings with members of Congress, conservative activists, CEOs and potential fundraisers. On Friday, he underwent

minor back surgery and has no events planned this week.

Perry's first stop should he announce is almost sure to be Iowa, where voters in its Republican caucuses are nearly all white and roughly 60 percent describe themselves as born-again or evangelical Christians, according to entrance polls from the 2008 GOP caucuses. In Texas, Perry has enjoyed "astronomical support" from Protestant Christian conservatives and evangelical white Christians, Henson said. "You have to count religious conservatives in Texas as among the components of Perry's base," he said. "People that go to church a lot are disproportionately Perry people."

Past entrance polls also found nearly 90 percent of GOP caucus goers considered themselves conservative, including 45 percent who say they are "very conservative." While Perry would not be alone among candidates on the right in the Republican field, joining Minnesota Rep. Michele Bachmann and others, few in the race could claim deeper conservative bona fides.

Daron Shaw, a Texas-based pollster who worked for former President George W. Bush's 2000 campaign, cautions against a belief the conservative base in the two states are identical.

Social conservatives in Texas tend to be from the state's rural areas and are voters who have an "intense mistrust of government." They are, he said, "more libertarian, tea party, anti-government, pull-yourself-up-by-your

bootstraps."

Iowa's conservative Republicans are more "small town" than purely rural, Shaw said. They're "true, classic social conservatives interested in questions of religion and morality. They think the current occupants of government offices have lost faith, lost their way," he said.

The differences, however, don't matter to Perry. A fierce advocate for states' rights who once flirted with the idea of Texas seceding from the union, he has admitted his past attacks on Washington might actually make him too conservative to run for president. Perry is also a deeply religious man who recently invited the nation's governors to an Evangelical prayer rally in Houston.

"Perry actually appeals to both of those," Shaw said.

To compete, of course, Perry will need to win votes in more places than Iowa. Dave Carney, Perry's senior political strategist, said there are plenty of voters in states whose primaries follow the Iowa caucuses who also look a lot like the voters in Texas ICB's state where Perry has never lost an election.

"Most primary voters in Iowa, New Hampshire, South Carolina and elsewhere are small-government, freedom-seeking, spending-weary voters who care about jobs, the economy and border security," Carney said in an e-mail. "I think they would line up favorably with Texas primary voters."

Romney watches for Iowa path as campaigns heat up

DES MOINES, Iowa (AP) - The accelerating GOP presidential campaigns in Iowa probably will define front-runner Mitt Romney's chief challengers over the next six weeks and could force the former Massachusetts governor to reconsider his decision to mount only modest efforts in this early voting state.

Rep. Michele Bachmann's quick rise in popularity in the leadoff caucus state and former Minnesota Gov. Tim Pawlenty's stubbornly low poll numbers after more than a year of groundwork in Iowa give Romney new opportunities in the state where he has worked to lower expectations in his second campaign.

Romney may stick with his plan to tread lightly in Iowa and look to New Hampshire's leadoff primary for a liftoff in 2012 if there is no opening for him to seize as a consensus choice.

But Romney's healthy fundraising, with as much as \$20 million in the three-month reporting period that ended last week, and his lead in national polls give him flexibility his less-known rivals lack and make it possible for him to wait to see how the chips fall in Iowa this summer, and decide later whether to up his ante.

"I think it's awfully hard for me at this stage to predict where we'll spend all our time and devote all our resources," Romney told The Associated Press this past week. "But we're focused on running our race, where we think best."

Minnesota's Bachmann was on her first sustained Iowa campaign trip this weekend. She's coming off a successful stretch marked by a well-received national debate debut, a widely covered campaign kickoff in her native Iowa and a strong showing in The Des Moines Register's poll. Bachmann nearly matched Romney, the No. 2 GOP caucus finisher four years ago, for the early Iowa lead in the survey.

Criticized for having little caucus campaign heft on her team, Bachmann has named as her deputy national campaign manager David Polyansky,

who's credited with bringing organizational and strategic weight to the 2008 campaign of caucus winner Mike Huckabee.

Bachmann has feet in Christian conservative and tea party camps, and will need to quickly organize within these groups. Polyansky, who helped Huckabee form relationships with Christian home-school advocates in Iowa, for instance, can help behind the scenes. Bachmann's schedule had her headlining a tea party rally in Des Moines on Saturday.

But caucus support is more often sealed in person than in crowds at a rally or along a July Fourth parade route. Bachmann will have to meet privately with influential GOP activists, as she plans to begin this weekend. She's also staffing a phone bank to drum up support for the Aug. 13 straw poll. "We can't make enough personal appearances in 40 days to make that happen," said Bachmann's Iowa campaign chairman, Kent Sorenson.

Businessman Herman Cain, a tea party favorite, also will need strong support from this motivated but untested segment of the GOP electorate. Cain, third in the new Iowa poll, was the only other candidate in double digits, with 10 percent. But his campaign organization has suffered some key staffing departures in Iowa.

Former Sen. Rick Santorum of Pennsylvania has a foothold among social conservatives. He's looking for a straw-poll breakthrough with help from a top aide to Romney's 2008 campaign.

For Pawlenty, the task in Iowa is the opposite of Bachmann's. He will spend 15 days in the state this month trying to show that the organization he has built there can generate enthusiasm.

Pawlenty has the largest Iowa campaign staff, has spent more than two dozen days in the state since November 2009 and is airing the campaign's first television ads. He has a list of recognizable Republican supporters, from former statewide office-

holders to up-and-coming figures. Yet he was the choice of only 6 percent in the Register's poll.

After saying in January he needed to "in or do very well" in the caucuses, he recently has tried to lower expectations for the straw poll, despite hiring the consultant who helped Romney win the 2007 straw poll.

"As to the straw poll, I don't know that we need to win it," Pawlenty told a conservative radio host in Des Moines this past week. "I think we need to do well and show some progress."

The pressure is on Pawlenty to assemble those pieces of the broad GOP coalition he has long said he can deliver, including social and business conservatives.

"Tim Pawlenty is coming up on a pretty serious EKG test in Iowa," said Robert Haus, who ran the 2008 Iowa caucus campaign for former Sen. Fred Thompson of Tennessee. "Is he going to ultimately materialize into the big challenger to Romney or not?"

Pawlenty's lack of early momentum could open the door for Texas Gov. Rick Perry, who could attract support from Iowans looking for a pro-business governor besides Romney. Perry, who's also popular with social conservatives, is considering a White House run and plans a national day of prayer in Houston for Aug. 6, a week before the straw poll.

A top Perry adviser, Dave Carney, has made inquiries in Iowa about the timing and rules of the straw poll and caucuses, while Perry has raised his profile with key appearances and private meetings with influential Republicans.

Perry will claim the space in Iowa for a pro-business governor if Romney does not, said Doug Gross, a top Iowa backer of Romney's 2008 campaign who tried to coax Indiana Gov. Mitch Daniels into running.

"Unless Romney gets in and campaigns here, he will only go down, leaving an opportunity for a Perry," Gross said.

The PAMPA NEWS

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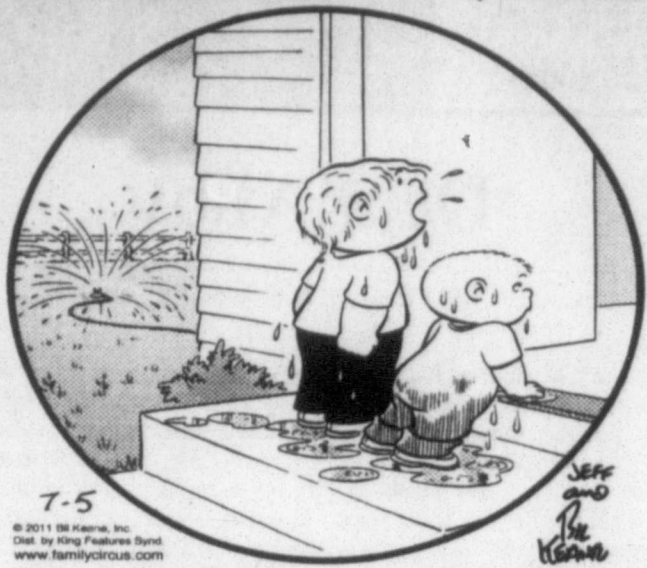
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comics PAGE

THE FAMILY CIRCUS By Bil Keane



7-5
© 2011 King Features Synd. Dist. by King Features Synd. www.familycircus.com
"Mommy, would PJ and I getting wet be a GOOD idea or a BAD idea?"

Non Sequitur



Nest Heads



daily horoscope

HAPPY BIRTHDAY for Wednesday, July 6, 2011:

This year, you could be more fussy than in the past yet still communicative. Your ability to befriend others is high, but people start to expect that friendliness every time they see you. Resentment could be the end result if you don't follow through. If you are single, you meet people with ease. Take your time dating; don't rush. If you are attached, the two of you might benefit from making a point of spending several nights a month alone as a couple. More warmth will be the end result. Relating to LIBRA could produce tension.

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)
★★★★ A steady effort draws strong results. You might not see the end results until later. Trust yourself and your choices. You might need to redo a discussion or revisit a decision. Make a point of scheduling a dentist's or doctor's appointment. Tonight: Just don't be alone.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)
★★★★ Your creativity often astounds others. With your sure and steady approach and unrelenting endurance, you are a sure winner when you focus. Stop if you're bored with or tired of a project. Ask yourself what you need to do to make yourself feel better. Tonight: Slow down. Take care of yourself.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)
★★★★ If you hit conflict, you might wonder whether your chosen path is best. Discussions don't result in any great ideas. It appears you are on your own. Know when you need to ask for help. Tonight: Complete what you must, then be spontaneous.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)
★★★★ How you deal with a difficult communication and someone who can be pushy really depends on your mind-set. Refuse to get cornered or do something the way someone else wants it done. Do only what you feel will work. Tonight: Head home.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)
★★★ Be aware of the cost of staying with "group thinking." It might be worth it, but only you can judge. A male friend

could be problematic. Keep communication flowing, even if you want to close down. Tonight: Out and about.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)
★★★★ You are more aware of the consequences than many. A boss can be cantankerous, and you really cannot impact his or her behavior. You might want to rethink a close association. Honor your feelings. Tonight: Treat yourself well.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)
★★ Kick back and relax during the day. If a situation arises that doesn't make you happy, know that you will have time to change it. A discussion with someone in the know at a distance makes a difference. Tonight: Let your imagination rock and roll.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)
★★★★ Zero in on what you deem important. Honor what others are feeling. With this approach, they will feel supported. Push in the daylight hours, when you are the most energetic. Tonight: Vanish while you can.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)
★★★★ Take charge early on today. You can get a lot done, and quite quickly at that. Consider or revisit a decision later in the week. Someone could be pressuring you beyond what you can or will tolerate. Tonight: Where the crowds are.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)
★★★★ Note what is going on with a key friendship. Before this person verbalizes what he or she is thinking, you see from his or her expressions a lot more than this person realizes. Do as much research as possible. Tonight: In demand.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)
★★★★ You and a partner or associate need to clear the air. Being angry or too strong with a loved one is likely to get you nowhere fast. Discussions need to remain on a one-on-one level. Postpone calling someone important until later. Tonight: Use your creativity.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)
★★★★ Defer to others and get their feedback. If you make those around you feel that they are part of the decision-making process, you will get better results. Schedule one-on-one meetings for tomorrow, if possible. Tonight: Go with another person's suggestion.

Tundra



Shoe



Mother Goose and Grim



Zits



Garfield



Beetle Bailey



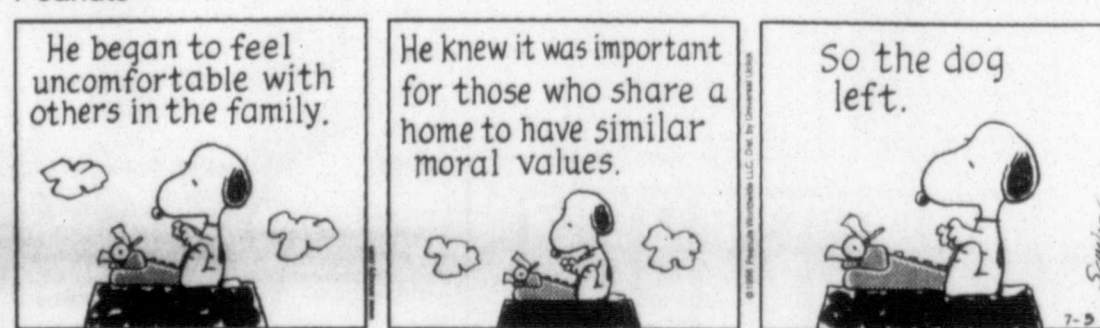
Marvin



Hagar The Horrible



Peanuts



Blondie



CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS 43 Is inquisitive

1 Seethe
5 Chin cover

10 Dogpatch boy

12 Concur

13 National Park in Alaska

15 Memorable time

16 By way of

17 British verb ending

18 Cad

20 Declare

21 Approaches

22 Trounce

23 Gate feature

25 Go it alone

28 Disgusting

31 Writer Hunter

32 Singer Kitt

34 Original

35 Battle of Britain org.

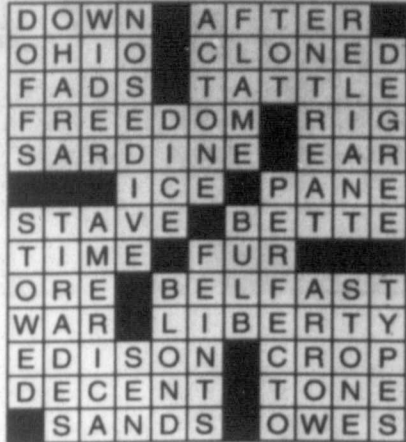
36 Horace's "Poetica"

37 National Park in Florida

40 Notions

41 Wasn't thrifty

42 Usual values



Yesterday's answer

DOWN

1 Cookie creator

2 King of the fairies

3 Deep-seated

4 Grazing spot

5 Mexican peninsula

6 Sense of self

7 Show up

8 Suez outlet

9 Arid expanse

11 Muralist Diego

14 Low

19 Hawk's grabber

20 Despise

24 Arts' partner

25 Mail, as an entry

26 Exaggerate

27 Case worker

29 Rocket sections

30 Got smaller

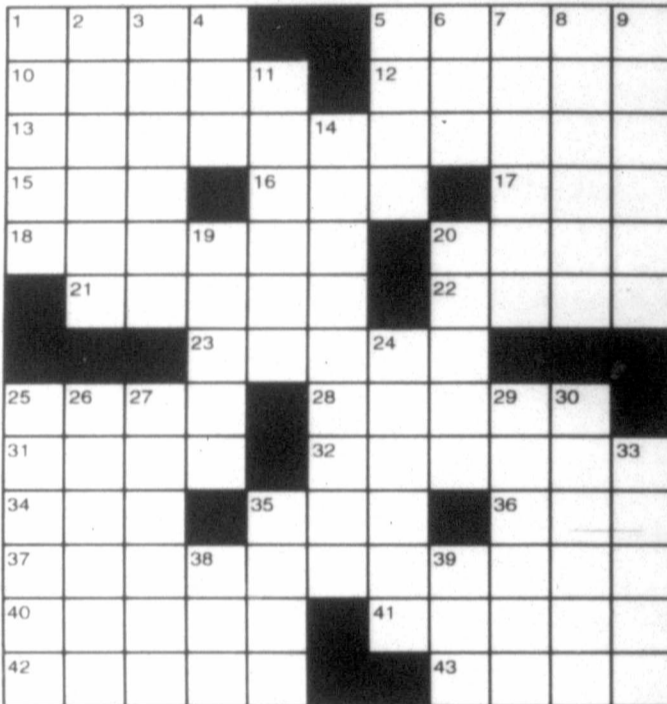
33 Helpers: Abbr.

35 Flag creator

38 Scot's topper

39 — tree (cornered)

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7-5

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Dear Abby...

By Pauline & Jeanne Phillips



DEAR ABBY: The letter from "Turned Off in Texas" (May 18) caught my attention. While I agree that putting a toilet brush in the dishwasher with the dishes was unexpected and off-putting — we don't ever want to link the toilet with our food — I think your answer showed a little overreaction. Running the dishes in another cycle should take care of any concerns as long as the water is hot.

Studies have shown that the inside of the average public toilet bowl is not as bacteria-laden as a public drinking fountain. Our disgust is emotional, not likely fact-based. As I told a colleague during his wife's baby shower, you have to believe in the power of soap and water or you won't survive parenthood.

While it's worthwhile for "Turned Off" to tell his stepdaughter that this practice is unacceptable to him, it is no reason not to eat at her house — unless she'd not cooking food properly.

— **FACTS OVER EMOTION IN MIAMI**
DEAR FACTS: Thank you for your letter. Frankly, I was as grossed out by what "Turned Off" saw his stepdaughter do as he was. So it surprised

me to find that many of my readers weren't as affected by the "ew" factor. **Read on:**

DEAR ABBY: It's possible that what "Turned Off" perceived to be a toilet brush was never used for cleaning a toilet. I bought a brand-new toilet scrubber to keep under the kitchen sink. I use it only for cleaning the garbage disposal. Afterward, I wash it in the sink, not the dishwasher. Let's give the stepdaughter the benefit of the doubt. Things are not always what they appear to be. — **NOT DISGUSTED IN ARCADIA, CALIF.**

DEAR ABBY: I can top the letter from the gentleman who said his stepdaughter, after cleaning his house when his wife fell ill, put the toilet brush in the dishwasher. My daughter has a close friend who told her she and her husband put the cat's litterbox in the dishwasher when they want to clean it. I was mortified, as was my daughter. You'd never guess it — she's an otherwise clean-appearing person. Well, needless to say, we no longer eat at this woman's home. — **ANONYMOUS IN CONNECTICUT**

DEAR ABBY: I clean houses for a living and I

thought it was a smart way to wash that scrubber. The dishwasher uses scalding hot water that kills all germs. In addition, most toilet cleansers contain bleach, so there is little chance germs could survive on the brush. If you're still concerned, you could run it through the dishwasher separately. — **TERESA IN TENNESSEE**

DEAR ABBY: I am a retired doctor. I have been in the Army, slept in the woods and eaten three-day-old food — so I know a little bit about germs. The hot water and soap will take care of any bacteria on the brush. (It's unaesthetic, but not unsanitary.) The brush will be as clean as your hands are when you wash them after using the toilet. I would be happy to eat off the plates that came out of that dishwasher. — **DR. M. IN NAPLES, FLA.**

DEAR ABBY: We bought a new toilet seat a few years back, and on the instructions it stated that it was "dishwasher safe." That made me think at the time, "Who in their right mind would remove a toilet seat in order to run it through the dishwasher, and why would they want to?" — **L.O.L. IN ANDERSON, S.C.**

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T O O K
[] [] [] []

Yesterday's Answer: RANCID, DEADLY, MALTED, PARDON

Sudoku

Answer to yesterday's puzzle:

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

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

SIVALLS Inc. is looking for Welder-Fabricators. Welding and drug tests req. Benefits: health ins., profit sharing, 401K, 8 paid holidays and 10 days vacation per year. 806-665-7111, Pampa, Tx.

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Pampa, TX. 79066

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Cash Collections Clerk
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Applications can be filled out online at www.cityofpampa.org or picked up at City Hall Room 304. Complete job descriptions available online or in the Human Resources Office.

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813 N. Dwight. 3 Bdr., 2 Ba., Garage, Carport in back. Storage building, huge backyard, Central heat & air, very nice family home. Call 440-6339 or 664-5146

928 Terry. 3/2/2 car gar. Completely remodeled. Lrg. workshop. Buyer Agents Welcome. 806-669-5264. r_robbe25@hotmail.com

945 Sierra
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1400 sq. ft. Corner lot.
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103 Homes For Sale

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920 Crane	\$150,000	3/2/2 - 1617 SF/GCAD
928 Crane	\$150,000	3/2/2 - 1617 SF/GCAD
908 Crane	\$147,000	3/2/2 - 1617 SF/GCAD
1811 Lynn	\$139,900	3/1.75/2 - 1733 SF/GCAD
1040-1942 N. Dwight	\$132,000	4/2/2 - 25932 - SF/GCAD Duplex
2113 Lynn	\$129,500	4/2/2 - 2077 SF/GCAD
1005-1007 N. Wells	\$121,000	5/2/2 - 2668 - SF/GCAD Duplex
1904 Lynn	\$94,000	3/1.75/2 - 1753 SF/GCAD
977 Cinderella	\$89,000	4/1.75/2 - 1553 SF/GCAD
1801 Dwight	\$75,000	3/2.75/3 - 1980 SF/GCAD
1000 Terry	\$50,000	3/1.75/1 - 1817 SF/GCAD

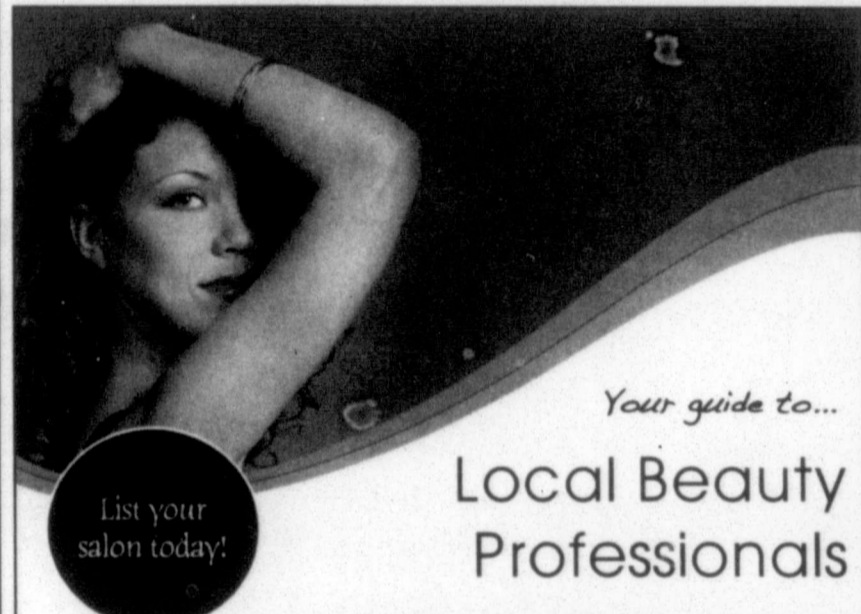
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612 Powell	\$55,000	3/1/0 - 1166 SF/GCAD
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732 Bradley	\$32,000	3/2/1 - 1253 SF/GCAD
1324 Starkweather	\$29,900	2/1/1 - 954 SF/GCAD
332 Miami St.	\$15,000	2/1/1 - 924 SF/GCAD

OTHER AREAS Outside Pampa City Limits

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220 N Ballard	\$395,000	Lt. Commer. 4 bth/27,797 SF/GCAD
615 N Price	\$179,900	Comm 3 - 3552 SF/GCAD 9 Bays
854 S Hobart	\$175,000	4 lots + 10' on North end Comm.
1421 N Hobart	\$175,000	Smoke House - 1816 SF/GCAD
804-805 W. Jackson AV, WD	\$150,000	4/2/2 - 2536 SF/CCAD duplex
200 N. Hoyme, Fitch	\$87,500	3/2/1 - 1368 SF/HCAD
600 W 3rd Ave, WD	\$67,500	3/1/1 - 1100 SF/CCAD
1331 Potter, Berger	\$58,900	2/1/1 - 1095 SF/HCAD
220 E Francis	\$57,500	1/1 - 745 SF/GCAD comm.
201, 205, 207 Swift	\$50,000	Church & 2 houses
507 Ware Ave, Groom	\$49,500	3/1/1 - 1924 SF/CCAD
609 Foster Ave. Lt. Comm.	\$35,000	1 - 400 SF/GCAD

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Sports

America's votes for MLB All-Star starters mostly right

The other day I was playing NBA 2K11 on my Wii. The commentators debated whether fans have too much authority in determining the All-Star Game starters. It made me wonder: when Americans cast their ballots in the various professional sports, do they select the best players at each position or just the more popular ones?



ANDREW GLOVER

I examined the Major League Baseball All-Star Voting, which concluded Thursday. I determined my starters based on the stats and how they ranked in their respective league. For the most part, I found that I agreed with the voting results, as six of my starters were the same in each League. Still there were some that I questioned.

At shortstop in the American League, America voted Derek Jeter. Now, I'm not going to argue his credentials because obviously he is a future Hall of Famer. In fact, the Pampa Harvester baseball team dedicated one of their baseball games to him. In the past he has put up All-Star numbers but not in this season. Statistically, Jeter has been in the middle of the pack. This season, a new young shortstop from the Cleveland Indians named Asdrubal Cabrera has risen up ranking in the Top 20 in runs, home runs, RBI and stolen bases. Yet he fin-

ished second to Jeter. In the outfield, Boston Red Sox outfielder Jacob Ellsbury on average ranks in the Top 20 of the American League, but he's not going to be a starter. The Texas Rangers outfielder Josh Hamilton is. The only category he ranks in the Top 30 is RBI. Yes, I know Hamilton has an amazing story of drug addiction recovery that has captivated the hearts of many fans. Is Hamilton a good player? Yes. Is he one of the top three outfielders in the American League? No.

On the National League my findings were the same. I did think first base was debatable, though. Prince Fielder of the Milwaukee Brewers was the one the fans selected. I'm not going to lie, Fielder has produced solid numbers as he is ranked the Top 20 in runs, home runs and RBI. But let's look at Cincinnati Reds first baseman Joey Votto, who is in the Top 30 in batting average while Fielder is only in the Top 50. Votto also has scored more runs and stole more bases. On the contrary, Fielder hit more home runs and drove in more runs.

At third base though, was probably the biggest oversight in All-Star history. Chicago Cubs third baseman Aramis Ramirez leads the National League third baseman in home runs and RBI while he is second in runs scored and batting average. But guess what?—He wasn't

voted in. Placido Polanco was. Ramirez could have been selected as a reserve but wasn't. Chipper Jones was. Jones has been to multiple All-Star Games and will probably be in the Hall of Fame when he retires. This season, Ramirez was better than him in every key category except stolen bases, yet he won't be playing in the game July 12.

Again, for the most part, the fans got it right. How can we avoid having oversights like Ramirez? There isn't a guaranteed way because no system is perfect. Locally the Pampa Harvesters had two baseball players selected to play in the Greater West Texas Baseball Coaches Association All-Star Game. Last spring none of us were punching ballots or going online to vote. Coach Kaleb Snelgrooves nominated them and the GWTBCA selected them. For the MLB, maybe the coaches pick the starters and the fans the reserves or the fans' vote doesn't count as much.

After all, since the All-Star game could potentially "count" for a handful of teams, shouldn't each league of the best players starting?

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

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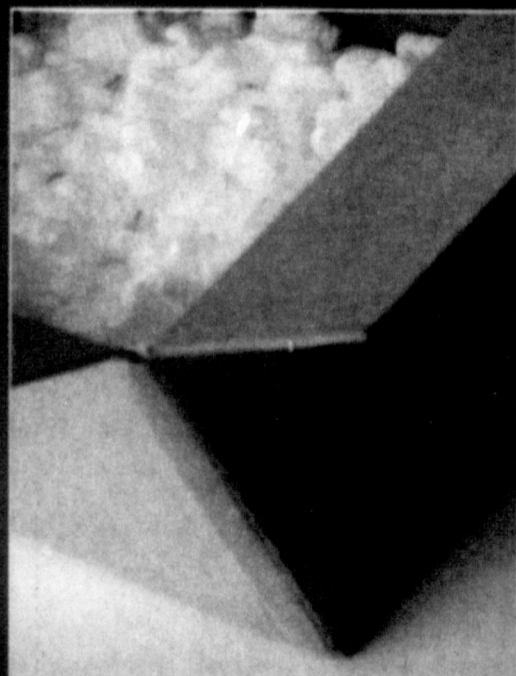


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