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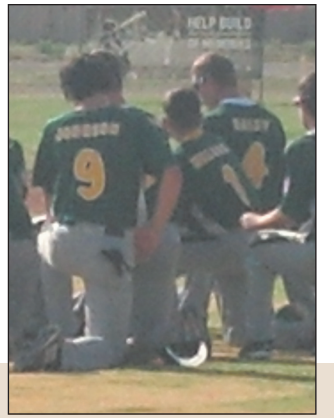
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Xcel's Reeves: Power price cap hike doesn't apply

■ *State's increase only pertains to ERCOT grid, not Texas Panhandle region*

ARNIE AURELLANO
editor@thepampanews.com

If you've been concerned about reports of Texas raising its wholesale electricity price cap and how it would affect your

power bill, Wes Reeves of Xcel Energy has a message for you: Don't be.

Reeves confirmed on Sunday that recent reports of the price cap rising and consumer groups' concerns that the move could raise Texans' household bills

do not apply to power consumers in the Panhandle.

"That issue doesn't pertain to us," Reeves said. "It's an ERCOT (Electric Reliability Council of Texas) issue. They don't communicate it very well from ERCOT, and the statewide media doesn't communicate it very well. It's totally a separate marketplace, separate grid."

ERCOT manages the Texas Interconnection, the power grid that serves most of Texas. ERCOT's ser-

vice area, however, does not extend into Gray County or the rest of the Texas Panhandle.

The Panhandle, Reeves explained, is part of the Southwest Power Pool. The SPP's wholesale pricing is regulated by the federal government because the transmission lines that serve the region cross state borders.

"We are part of an interstate power transmission grid that connects us to **XCEL** cont. on page 2

FUN IN THE POOL



staff photo by **Arnie Aurellano**

Amy McDowell holds on to 3-year-old Cameron Johnson as he sets his sights on 10-year-old Jaden McDowell at the Pampa Youth and Community Center swimming pool.

FSA, NRCS team up for food drive

ARNIE AURELLANO
editor@thepampanews.com

A pair of U.S. Department of Agriculture agencies are pairing up to help fight hunger nationwide, and they need your help.

The Gray County branches of the USDA's Gray County Farm Service Agency and National Resource Conservation Service are partnering to participate in the fourth annual Feds Feed Families food drive, a nationwide campaign started in 2009 to help food banks stay stocked in the summer months.

Last year's drive netted 5.79 million pounds of food, including 1.79 million from USDA employees. In 2012, the USDA is challenging its employees to raise that total to 1.8 million, and Matt Street, executive director of the Gray County FSA, is also urging the county to do its part.

"In order to step up last year's efforts and meet our goal, we need help from the community," said Street. "All donations received in Gray County will benefit the Good Samaritan Christian Services," he said.

The food drive will continue until Aug. 31. A donation drop box is located at the Gray County Annex **DRIVE** cont. on page 2

Sitting for hours a day could lead to neck pain, headaches

■ *Upper cross syndrome results from pressure on discs, nerves, lower back*

MOLLIE BRYANT
mbryant@thepampanews.com

Our jobs and technology-rich lifestyles demand a lot of time spent at desks or in front of computers, which means a lot of time spent sitting.

Sitting for hours a day, though, can lead to neck pain, back pain, headaches and blood clots. According to Dr. Ford of Pampa's New Life Wellness Center, sitting puts 11 times more pressure on the

lower back than any other activity.

"Sitting is a big issue now, because so many jobs require that," said Ford. "...It creates a lot of pressure on the discs and the nerves, and in addition to the lower back, when most people are sitting, their head is forward. They're looking at a computer screen. Their hands are out in front of them. It creates what's called an upper cross syndrome, where you've got forward carriage of your head, and your shoulders are slumping forward."



Upper cross syndrome can lead to tension headaches, neck pain, numbness and tingling of your arms and hands and burning between your shoulder blades.

"As your head goes forward, your muscles in the back of your skull are going to pull back to bring your chin back up," said Ford. "It's going to irritate all of the nerves and muscles up there, and you get those terrible, base of your head headaches that come up over the top. They're the kind where you'll take some over

the counter medicine, and it won't help, because it's due to the muscle tension from your head being held forward."

Many jobs involve sitting at a desk for hours on end, but Ford recommends not sitting for more than 30 minutes at a time. Just standing up for a minute or two before sitting back down can prevent health problems.

"I tell patients it's like a pressure cooker," said Ford. "You have to let the pressure off. Otherwise, the top's going to blow off of the pot, and that's kind of the way it is with our lower back in the discs. If you stand up momentarily, everything will kind of decompress, and you can go about sitting again. Typically, in a car, **SITTING** cont. on page 3

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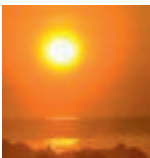
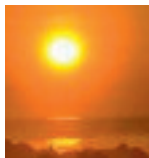
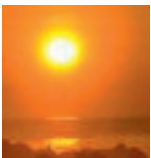
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PAMPA FORECAST

Today	Tuesday	Wednesday
		
High 93 Low 70	High 92 Low 70	High 94 Low 70

Today: Sunny, with a high near 93. South southwest wind between 10 and 20 mph, with gusts as high as 25 mph.

Tonight: Mostly clear, with a low around 70. South southwest wind between 10 and 20 mph, with gusts as high as 25 mph.

Tuesday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 92. South southwest wind between 10 and 20 mph, with gusts as high as 25 mph.

Tuesday Night: Mostly clear, with a low around 70. South wind between 10 and 20 mph, with gusts as high as 30 mph.

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GAO urges research on spill dispersants

BATON ROUGE, La. (AP) — The Government Accountability Office says more research is needed on possible environmental problems that could result from using dispersants to break up an oil spill, as BP PLC did after the disastrous 2010 spill in the Gulf of Mexico.

The Advocate reports that the GAO issued its report Friday and found not much testing had been done on dispersants before they were used in the Gulf.

The GAO was asked to investigate the use of dispersants following BP

PLC's catastrophic April 2010 oil well blowout that killed 11 workers and caused the nation's largest offshore spill.

To combat the spill, BP was allowed to spray dispersants on the Gulf to break up the oil. The use of dispersants has been controversial.

The GAO report said 1.84 million gallons of dispersants were used and 771,000 gallons were sprayed deep underwater at the wellhead.

The report said federal agencies have spent more than \$15.5 million on research involving dispersants

since 2000, but that few of those studies looked at the effects of using dispersants underwater or in the Arctic Ocean.

"Little or no prior testing had been done on the effectiveness and potential adverse environmental consequences of a subsea dispersant use, let alone at those volumes," the GAO report said.

The report recommended conducting more research into the use of dispersants below the sea and in the Arctic environment.

D.A. accused of allowing killer to escape

BROWNSVILLE (AP) — Shortly after her daughter was shot to death by a former lover, Hermila Garcia remembers hearing these comforting words from the local Texas prosecutor: "I am the state. I am the law. I am going to represent and defend your daughter."

Cameron County District Attorney Armando Villalobos' office did secure a murder conviction and 23-year prison term against Amit Livingston, but federal prosecutors allege he also orchestrated a scheme to line his own pockets that allowed Livingston to escape. Five years later, the killer remains at large.

A dozen people, half lawyers, have been indicted as part of a federal probe into what some observers call the most widespread case of judicial corruption they've ever seen. The saga has gripped the community in this southernmost tip of Texas.

Besides Villalobos, two others charged were present the day Livingston dodged prison: Abel Limas, the judge who presided over the murder trial, and Eduardo "Eddie" Lucio, a lawyer who represented the victim's children in a civil case.

"I don't know what is stronger, the pain of losing my daughter or the courage that those who mocked us have given me," Garcia said.

While Lucio and Villalobos are scheduled for trial next month, it was the case against Limas — who was convicted and awaits sentencing — that showed how deep the alleged crimes go. His indictment outlines the bribes and kickbacks exchanged for judicial discretions prosecutors say turned his courtroom into a criminal enterprise and earned him at least \$257,000.

A cascade of indictments followed implicating a former state legislator, a former investigator from the prosecutor's office and most recently Villalobos. Federal wiretaps on Limas' phones intercepted some 40,000 calls, some of which have provided an ugly glimpse of justice behind closed doors where friendships and bribes among lawyers and judge sometimes tipped the scales against the legal process.

"It's been building steadily ever since the first charges came out," said Anthony Knopp, professor emeritus of history at the University of Texas-Brownsville. "I think people are even more horrified with each new accusation and revelation. It seems to be so extensive within the legal community."

Villalobos' attorney Joel Androphy declined to answer questions about the case before trial, which is set for Aug. 30, saying only "somebody has got some things wrong." Lucio also declined to comment when asked recently in the federal courthouse where he and Villalobos watched Limas testify against another lawyer.

But many observers consider the Livingston case to be the most egregious of all. Federal prosecutors allege that Villalobos conspired with Limas and Lucio, a long-time friend and former law partner, to game the system at the expense of justice.

Limas and Villalobos were well acquainted. Villalobos was the first prosecutor assigned to his court in 2001 and later worked as his court's public defender until running for district attorney.

For their scheme to work, federal prosecutors said, it involved a conspiracy among key players both in Livingston's criminal trial and the civil case against him on behalf of the three children of the murder victim, 31-year-old Hermila Hernandez. They say Villalobos set Lucio up to represent the three children, and the criminal and civil cases both landed in Limas' courtroom.

The trio's target was the \$500,000 bond put up for Livingston's release before trial. To get it, they convinced Limas to convict and sentence Livingston on the same

day, thereby freeing up the bond to be used as the settlement in the lawsuit.

But Limas also agreed that day to Livingston's request that he have 60 days to get his affairs in order before reporting to prison. That meant putting Livingston on the street without any bond — highly unusual for a convicted killer already sentenced to decades in prison.

Houston attorney Greg Gladden, who represented Livingston in the criminal and civil cases, said the negotiations over his client's murder plea seemed to proceed normally until Limas agreed, at Villalobos' insistence, to sentence Livingston on the same day he pleaded guilty.

"We're in chambers and the judge said, 'That's fine we'll just do the plea and we'll reset it for sentencing,'" Gladden said. "Villalobos says, 'Well, no judge, we don't care if you want to let him turn himself in later but the family is here, the press is here, we want to get it all done now. We want you to sentence him now, and if you want to let him voluntarily surrender, we don't care about that.'"

Gladden was stunned. Livingston would be let loose for 60 days without bond on a promise he'd return to serve his sentence.

"I walked out of the courthouse wondering, you know that means the sheriff is going to have to release the bond money once the civil case is resolved and I just wonder how much of that money Villalobos is getting," Gladden said.

The answer, according to the federal indictment: \$80,000. That came out of the \$200,000 Lucio received in attorney's fees on the wrongful death suit. Together they kicked about \$10,000 to Limas to keep him quiet, according to the indictment.

"I felt humiliated, mocked," Garcia said in Spanish recently at her home in San Juan. "Why did they mock us? Why? (Villalobos) is a cynic."

When Garcia heard Limas had pleaded guilty to racketeering last year, she and another daughter went to the FBI office in Brownsville. They had complained to the FBI in McAllen in 2007 after Livingston disappeared, but didn't have any proof.

At the Brownsville office last year, the agent who greeted them said, "We've been waiting awhile for you, Mrs. Garcia."

Moises Salas Jr., president of the Cameron County Bar Association, said repairing the system's image will take years.

"Down here, I think the perception has always been that the lawyers are crooked, the judges are crooked and they're all kind of watching each other's back, you know greasing the skids for each other," Salas said. "And this comes out and I think for the general public, I hear people saying, 'Well, that just confirms what we always believed.'"

Xcel

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New Mexico, Colorado, Oklahoma, (and) Kansas," Reeves said. "Our transmission system and our wholesale power sales are regulated by the federal government through the Interstate Commerce Act, where (ERCOT) is regulated strictly by the Public Utility Commission of Texas. ERCOT is entirely within the state of Texas, so it doesn't have federal oversight.

"The marketplace is different there, too, because the utility companies don't necessarily own the power generation," Reeves continued. "All the generation in that part of the state is really owned by outside firms, (who) wholesale the power to all these retail companies who then turn around and sell the power to the customers. That's very different from us, where we generate the power and sell it directly to the customer. The wholesale market in this area really only deals with us selling power to municipal utilities and maybe rural cooperatives, and that market is regulated by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission."

Reeves added that the power grid in the Panhandle was, at one point, considered for inclusion in the PUCT's price cap increase, but that idea was scrapped.

"Because we're a separate grid, it just didn't make a lot of sense," Reeves said. "Finally, they just settled on just changing that marketplace within the ERCOT borders."

Drive

cont. from page 1

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Tax on Amazon goods begins

AUSTIN (AP) — Texans shopping on Amazon.com will start paying state and local sales taxes on Sunday. Under a deal with Texas Comptroller Susan Combs, the online retail giant is to begin collecting sales taxes July 1 on purchases from Texas. Amazon has also promised 2,500 new jobs for the state and \$200 million in capital investment over four years. Before the deal struck in April, Texas store owners had complained that Internet retailers have an unfair price advantage because they are not required to collect state sales tax. But that's about to change. An Amazon spokesman wrote in an email to the Austin American Statesman that "Amazon customers in Texas will see the appropriate sales taxes (automatically) applied to their order when they proceed to check out."

Texas man fatally shot at Ft. Bragg

FORT BRAGG, N.C. (AP) — Military officials have released the name of a battlefield surveillance unit leader who was killed by a fellow soldier during a safety briefing at Fort Bragg. Authorities say 42-year-old Lt. Col. Roy Tisdale of Alvin, Texas, died immediately after being shot Thursday, and the shooter then turned the gun on himself. Tisdale took command of the 525th Brigade Special Troops Battalion when it was activated in January. He was commissioned as an infantry officer after graduating in 1993 from Texas A&M University. Special agents from the Army Criminal Investigation Command are investigating the shooting. The shooter is in custody, but his name and condition have not been released. A third soldier, 22-year-old Spc. Michael E. Latham of Vacaville, Calif., also was wounded and has been released from the hospital.

Cousin arrested in teen's death

ARANSAS PASS (AP) — A man has been arrested in connection with the death of a 16-year-old coastal Texas girl who had been missing for several days. Aransas Pass police said they took 18-year-old Lawrence A. Mireles into custody Saturday on a warrant tied to the killing of Jenna Hernandez. The girl's body was discovered Thursday by a fisherman near a path close to the water. Jail officials say Mireles is being taken to the San Patricio County jail but formal charges weren't yet filed and they did not know whether he had an attorney. Authorities have not disclosed how Hernandez died. The Corpus Christi Caller-Times reports that she had been texting with someone before leaving to meet the person. Donna Hernandez, the teen's aunt, said Mireles is a distant cousin.

Man arrested, accused in shooting

TYLER (AP) — Police have arrested a man in the fatal shooting of his 71-year-old wife in their East Texas home. Tyler police said they took Bobby Nichols custody on Saturday. The 75-year-old is being held in the Smith County Jail on a \$750,000 bond. An attorney for him was not listed in electronic records. Tyler police spokesman Matthew Smyser said a man who identified himself as Dr. Bobby Nichols called 911 Friday night and said someone had been shot. When officers arrived at the house they found Nichols and a dead woman who was later identified as Rosiland Nichols. A motive for the shooting was not released. Police continue to investigate.

Teen found dead in Ft. Worth

FORT WORTH (AP) — Police say a 17-year-old girl was found dead near the back door of a home in Fort Worth. The Tarrant County medical examiner's office says Claudia Hidic of Fort Worth had been shot in the head. Samira Hidic, her older sister, says the family doesn't know what happened but they are grieving for the youth she described as "bighearted and beautiful." The younger Hidic had recently completed her junior year at Trinity High School in Euless. The Fort Worth Star-Telegram reports that a man who lives at the house called 911 when he found Hidic's body Thursday night. He told police he did not know her. Police say the body was facedown near the back door, which appeared to have been kicked in.

Decoding Social Security 'claim' numbers

TOM MARGENAU
Creator's Syndicate



Q. I am 78 years old. I've had a Social Security number since I was about 20. For many years, my Medicare card showed my husband's Social Security number with a letter "B" behind it. Somebody at a Social Security office once told me this meant I was getting wife's benefits on his record. How does the letter "B" stand for a wife? And now that my husband has died, I've received a new Medicare card, and it now has my husband's number with a letter "D." Does this mean "deceased?"

A. No, it doesn't mean deceased. Believe it or not, it stands for "widow!" So you may legitimately wonder why in the world a "D" means widow. Shouldn't it be a "W" perhaps? I will use this column to explain the mysterious world of Social Security claim numbers.

First of all, what is a "claim number?" And how does it differ from a Social Security number? Almost everyone in this country has a Social Security number. It's the number you give to your employer if you get a job, and it's the number you would use to file an income tax return. It's also the number that many government agencies and private companies use as a personal identification number for you. (The use of the SSN for personal identification is a topic for another column.)

But a claim number is the Social Security number on which you are claiming Social Security benefits. And it's always followed by a little letter symbol to indicate the kind of benefit you have claimed. For many people, their claim number is simply their own Social Security number with the little symbol following it, usually an "A." But some people claim Social Security benefits on another person's Social

Security record — almost always a spouse and sometimes a parent. So their claim number is the spouse's or parent's Social Security number followed by the appropriate claims symbol.

The little claims symbols were not assigned in any sort of meaningful pattern. In other words, the letter "R" was not used to indicate "retirement" benefits, and the letter "W" wasn't used to indicate "wife's" or "widow's" benefits.

Instead, the letters were essentially assigned alphabetically, as benefits were added to Social Security law. Here is a list of the claims symbols used. It's not a complete list.

- A — This claims symbol indicates you are getting your own retirement benefits
- B — You are getting benefits as an aged (over 62) wife on your husband's record
- B1 — You are getting benefits as an aged (over 62) husband on your wife's record
- B2 — You are getting benefits on your husband's record as a young wife (under age 62) caring for his minor child
- B6 — You are getting benefits as a divorced wife on your ex husband's record
- C — You are getting benefits as a child on your parent's record
- D — You are getting aged (over age 60) widow's benefits from your deceased husband's record
- D1 — You are getting aged (over age 60) widower's benefits from your deceased wife
- D6 — You are getting divorced widow's benefits
- E — You are getting mother's

benefits — paid to a widow under age 60 who is caring for the minor children of a father who has died

- E1 — same as above, except you are divorced from the father
- E4 — You are getting father's benefits — paid to a widower under age 60 who is caring for the minor children of a mother who has died
- F — You are getting benefits as a dependent parent on a grown son or daughter's Social Security account (very rare)
- HA — You are getting disability benefits on your own account
- M — You don't have enough work credits for regular Social Security and you only qualify for Part B Medicare benefits
- T — You are not insured for Social Security benefits, but you are eligible for Part A hospital coverage from Medicare
- W — You are getting disabled widow's benefits on your deceased husband's account
- W1 — You are getting disabled widower's benefits on your deceased wife's account

Again, this list is not complete. It shows only the most common beneficiary codes. But "common" is a relative term. Many of the benefits listed above are infrequently paid. For example, you could almost count on your hands the number of people getting "F" (parent's benefits) or "W1" (disabled widower's benefits). And there are other conditions that prevent people from collecting Social Security checks they might otherwise be due. For example, although many young widows might be eligible for "E" benefits and many young widowers might be due "E4" benefits, they don't actually receive anything because they are working, and their earnings prevent them from claiming monthly payments.

If you have a Social Security question, Tom Margenau has the answer. Contact him at thomas.margenau@comcast.net.

Sitting

I'll recommend not to sit more than two hours. If you got out every 30 minutes, you'd never get there, but even if you get out, walk around your car once, that's sufficient. It can make a big difference about how you feel when you get someplace."

During times when we can't stand or walk around, like when traveling or in meetings, Ford recommends leg exercises, like moving your feet up and down, tapping your feet or pumping your legs, to keep up circulation and prevent blood clots. Sitting correctly can also reduce the chances of back pain or other sitting-related health problems.

"When you're sitting at a desk, or even at home watching TV, you should have your feet slightly elevated," said Ford. "Your knee should be higher than your waist or your hips, because that also puts you in a better

position for your lower back. When you're driving, that's hard to do, but if you're a passenger in a car, there's no reason you can't put something down there to put your feet on. Under your desk, you can put a phone book. You don't have to buy anything special. ... Just doing that can make a big, big difference."

Some new desk setups encourage working while standing, and some experts even recommend typing while standing. If you work while standing, Ford recommends propping a foot on something, which relieves back pressure. He also noted that you should alternate which foot you prop up.

"When you're standing ironing or doing dishes, a simple thing you can do is open the cupboard and put your foot on the ledge under there," he said. "A lot of women with back issues have trouble leaning into the

mirror and putting on their makeup, or men (have trouble) shaving. I'll have them open the cupboard under their sink and put their foot up in the vanity there. It's only three or four inches, but that relieves the pressure on their back when they're doing those everyday duties."

It may be difficult to remember to interrupt your work or video game to stand, so Ford recommends setting a timer to remind yourself when to stand, or even just placing a sticky note on your monitor.

"It's like any good habit," he said. "You've got to practice it. If you do, it becomes natural."

The physical therapy department at New Life Wellness Center offers ergonomic studies, where they study workers while in action at their desks to recommend changes to improve their ergonomics, but staying active is vital.

cont. from page 1

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Mon/Tue 2:00 4:30 7:00 9:30
9:30 (July 2 is last showing)
The Amazing Spider Man (PG-13)
Mon July 2 @ 12 midnight
Tues July 3-2:00 4:30 7:00 9:45
Wed July 4-2:00 4:30 7:00 9:45
Thurs July 5-2:00 4:30 7:00

Ted (R)
Fri 7:30 10:00
Sat 2:00 4:30 7:30 10:00
Sun 2:00 4:30 7:30
Mon/Wed 2:00 4:30 7:30 10:00
Thurs 2:00 4:30 7:30

Brave (PG)
Fri 7:00 9:30
Sat 2:00 4:30 7:00 9:30
Sun 2:00 4:30 7:00
Mon/Wed 2:00 4:30 7:00 9:30
Thurs 2:00 4:30 7:00

Madea's Witness Protection (PG-13)
Fri 7:30 10:00
Sat 2:00 4:30 7:30 10:00
Sun 2:00 4:30 7:30
Mon/Wed 2:00 4:30 7:30 10:00
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Viewpoints

Today in History

Today is Monday, July 2, the 184th day of 2012. There are 182 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On July 2, 1937, aviator Amelia Earhart and navigator Fred Noonan disappeared over the Pacific Ocean while attempting to make the first round-the-world flight along the equator.

On this date:

In 1776, the Continental Congress passed a resolution saying that "these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent States."

In 1812, Connecticut Gov. Roger Griswold declared his state's militia would not serve in the war against Britain, reflecting New Englanders' opposition to the conflict.

In 1862, during the Civil War, Confederate forces led by Gen. Robert E. Lee withdrew to Richmond, Va., after driving back Union Maj. Gen. George B. McClellan's troops.

In 1881, President James A. Garfield was shot by Charles J. Guiteau at the Washington railroad station; Garfield died the following September. (Guiteau was hanged in June 1882.)

In 1912, the Democratic National Convention in Baltimore nominated New Jersey Gov. Woodrow Wilson for president.

In 1926, the United States Army Air Corps was created.

In 1961, author Ernest Hemingway shot himself to death at his home in Ketchum, Idaho.

In 1962, the first Walmart store (called "Wal-Mart Discount City") was opened in Rogers, Ark., by Sam Walton and his brother, James.

In 1964, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed into law a sweeping civil rights bill passed by Congress.

In 1978, Andy Rooney delivered his first commentary on CBS' "60 Minutes" in which he criticized people who keep track of traffic fatalities on holiday weekends.

In 1982, Larry Walters of San Pedro, Calif., used a lawn chair equipped with 45 helium-filled weather balloons to rise to an altitude of 16,000 feet; he landed eight miles away in Long Beach.

In 1997, actor James Stewart died in Beverly Hills, Calif., at age 89.

Ten years ago: American adventurer Steve Fossett became the first person to fly a balloon solo around the world as he returned to western Australia.

Five years ago: President George W. Bush commuted the sentence of former aide I. Lewis "Scooter" Libby, sparing him a 2½-year prison term in the CIA leak case. Russian President Vladimir Putin concluded his visit to Kennebunkport, Maine, where he'd held talks with President Bush. Opera singer Beverly Sills died in New York at age 78.

One year ago: Petra Kvitova beat Maria Sharapova 6-3, 6-4 to become the first left-handed woman to win the Wimbledon title since Martina Navratilova in 1990.

Today's Birthdays: Country singer Marvin Rainwater is 87. Former Philippine first lady Imelda Marcos is 83. Jazz musician Ahmad Jamal is 82. Actor Robert Ito is 81. Actress Polly Holliday is 75. Former White House chief of staff John H. Sununu is 73. Writer-director-comedian Larry David is 65. Luci Baines Johnson, daughter of President Lyndon B. Johnson, is 65. Actor Saul Rubinek is 64. Rock musician Roy Bittan (Bruce Springsteen & the E Street Band) is 63. Rock musician Gene Taylor is 60. Actress-model Jerry Hall is 56. Actor Jimmy McNichol is 51. Country singer Guy Penrod is 49. Rock musician Dave Parsons (Bush) is 47. Actress Yancy Butler is 42. Contemporary Christian musician Melodee DeVevo (Casting Crowns) is 36. Actor Owain Yeoman ("The Mentalist") is 34. Race car driver Sam Hornish Jr. is 33. Singer Michelle Branch is 29. Actress Vanessa Lee Chester is 28. Figure skater Johnny Weir is 28. Actress-singer Ashley Tisdale is 27. Actress Lindsay Lohan.

Thought for Today: "Courage is the price that life exacts for granting peace, The soul that knows it not, knows no release from little things." — Amelia Earhart (1897-1937?).



No singular approach to wooing Hispanics

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. (AP) — In New Mexico, Tomasita Maestas says she will pick the presidential candidate who has the best plan to fix education and the economy.

In Arizona, Mexican immigrant Carlos Gomez backs Republican Mitt Romney because he's more conservative on social issues than his Democratic opponent.

In Miami, Colombia native Luna Lopez probably will vote for President Barack Obama now that he's decided to halt the deportation of many illegal immigrants brought to the United States as children.

The reasons that Hispanics give for choosing between Obama and Romney are just as diverse as the countries that they or their ancestors once called home, suggesting there's no one-size-fits-all approach to courting the nation's fastest-growing minority group.

The Latino vote isn't monolithic or, really, a voting bloc. It includes a range of people with varying opinions. Among them are Republican-leaning Cubans in Florida, new Mexican immigrants and longtime descendants of Spanish settlers in the Southwest, and Democratic-tilting Puerto Ricans in the East.

Immigration policy would seem to be the natural top issue for these voters, except that nearly two-thirds of Hispanics are born in the U.S. Their priorities are the same as the general population — jobs, the economy, education and health care.

"We need to see more jobs here, that's my No. 1 priority and what I want to hear about," says Stefan Gonzalez, an almost 18-year-old from Denver, whose heritage includes Spanish, Mexican and Native American roots. Gonzalez, who works in a suburban Denver pawn shop, says he plans to vote for Obama this fall.

In Albuquerque, Ernest Gurule, an 84-year-old whose ancestors settled New Mexico in 1580, says his main issue is the federal health care plan upheld by the Supreme Court last week, and that he'll back Obama in part because of it. Also, the Democrat, adds: "It's too expensive to change horses midstream."

Democrats and Republicans are in a fierce race to figure out how to best reach Hispanics.

In the short term, these voters could decide the outcome in Nevada, Colorado, New Mexico, Florida and elsewhere. The long-

term stakes are even bigger because Hispanics are projected to account for roughly 30 percent of the population by 2050, doubling in size and, potentially changing the national political landscape.

Like most minorities, Hispanics traditionally have leaned Democratic. But a recent Pew Research poll indicates that Hispanics also are the fastest-growing group of independent voters, with 46 percent now shunning a party label compared with 31 percent six years ago. Such results only underscore how diverse Hispanics are and the challenges for the political parties.

"It is going to be a very hard fight to win," says Jennifer Korn, the executive director of the Republican-based Hispanic Leadership Network, which was established to help bring more Hispanic voters to the GOP. "The more they assimilate, the more sophisticated they become and that's when they start dividing between parties."

For now at least, Obama and his Democrats have an advantage, with the latest polls showing 65 percent of Hispanics back Obama and 25 percent back Romney.

The Democrats' campaign has worked to keep that edge, helped by Obama's new immigration policy and the Supreme Court's decision to side with the administration on most of an Arizona law that many immigrants viewed as overly harsh.

His campaign has spent the past year setting up offices with grassroots outreach to Hispanic communities in the Southwest, as well as in important states such as Ohio, North Carolina, Pennsylvania and Florida.

Mindful of the diversity among Hispanics, Obama has customized his outreach, including tweaking Spanish dialect for different regions.

For instance, in Florida the campaign has two distinct outreach plans. One focuses on Cuban-Americans in Miami who tend to lean Republican and are less concerned about immigration; the other speaks to traditionally Democratic Puerto Ricans, who are U.S. citizens from birth, as well as new immigrants from Central America.

Obama also has promoted the new health law, which can resonate in states such as New Mexico, which has one of the highest rates of uninsured in the country.

Romney has plenty of ground to

make up after a bruising primary season filled with tough rhetoric that even Republicans acknowledge turned off many Hispanics. He recently established a Hispanic advisory group that includes top elected Republican Hispanics.

During the primaries, the former Massachusetts governor pledged to veto legislation, known as the DREAM Act, that would give a path to citizenship to young immigrants who came to the United States illegally as children but have since attended school or served in the military. He has since toned down his anti-immigration stance, which included self-deportation, telling a Hispanic leadership gathering in the Orlando area that he would address illegal immigration "in a civil but resolute manner."

Alexandra Franceschi, a spokeswoman for the Republican National Committee's Hispanic effort, made clear that the GOP outreach will focus broadly on the economy. "Hispanics are Americans and are facing the same issues as everyone else, chronically high unemployment, lower pay and rising health care costs," she said.

Republicans have noted that under Obama, the Hispanic unemployment rate is higher than the national average. And Hispanics' median household income fell 7 percent between 2000 and 2010, from \$43,100 to \$40,000, according to the Pew Hispanic Center.

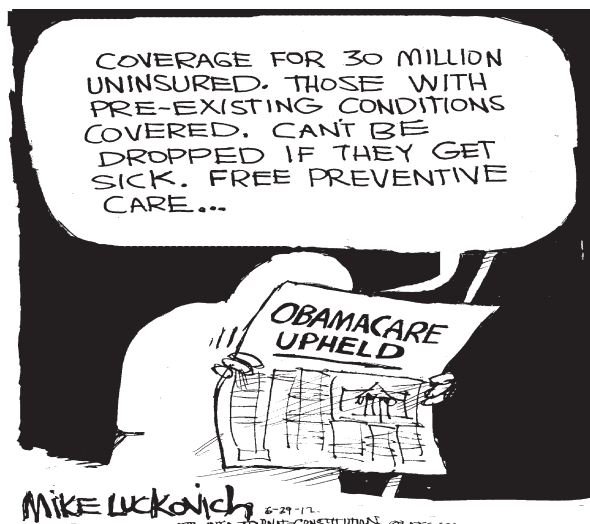
What drives Hispanics to vote depends on who's asked.

Lopez, a 20-year-old new citizen and college student from Colombia, cites Obama's policy shift on deportation as reason she's likely to pick him when she casts her first vote in the country.

"The issue didn't directly affect me, but I have many family members and friends who it did," she said.

In Arizona, Gomez, a 43-year-old priest who immigrated to Phoenix 15 years ago, backed Obama's policy change. But Gomez says immigration isn't his priority because "immigrants will continue coming across the border no matter what we do." He says he's voting for Romney because, like him, the Republican opposes gay marriage and abortion rights.

In Albuquerque, Maestas, a 37-year-old mother and office manager, is focused intently on pocketbook issues. Immigration, she says, is only important to "a certain point" because "If you can't take care of your own, how are you going to take care of others?"



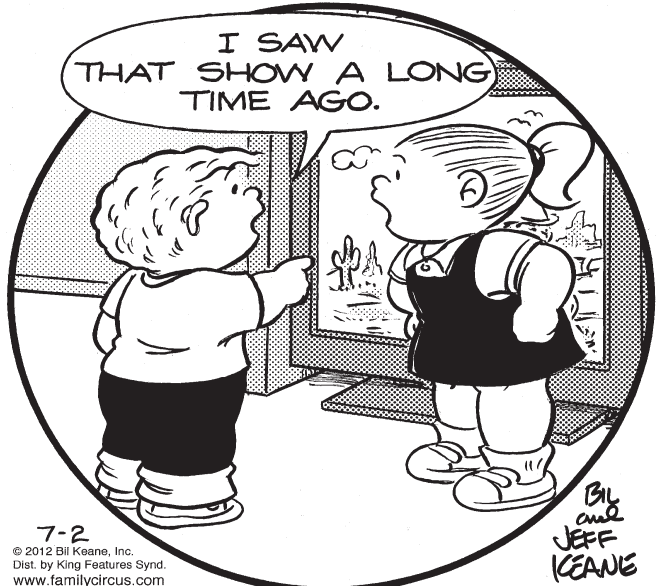
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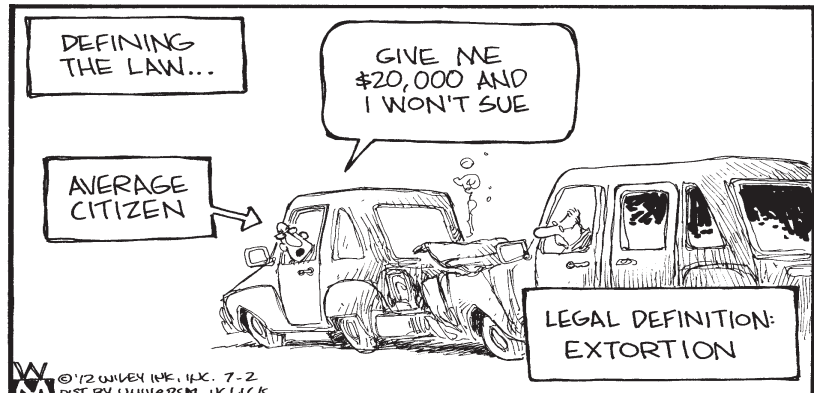
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"No way! You don't even HAVE a long time ago!"

Non Sequitur



Nest Heads



daily horoscope

HAPPY BIRTHDAY for Tuesday, July 3, 2012:

This year your birthday falls on a Full Moon. Every action, decision and situation you are involved with seems to hold enormous intensity. Whether you are single or attached, relationships prove pivotal. Issues such as boundaries, how much to give and when to say no will all be redefined. If you often feel guilty, give more. If you are single, you could go through quite a few suitors until you feel comfortable. If you are attached, your partner could be challenging. You are in the last year of a 12-year cycle. Let go of what doesn't work. **CAPRICORN** challenges you more often than not.

ARIES (March 21-April 19)
★★★★ Whether you decide to lead or let others take charge, you still have considerable influence. Others find you to be full of surprises and often see you doing the unexpected. Help them understand that you march to the beat of a different drummer. Tonight: In the limelight.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)
★★★★ Reach out for someone you care a lot about. You finally seem to be able to get past a naturally stubborn streak. Still, be aware of a tendency to return to that pattern. Though you have a vision of what should happen, it might not be the best course of action. Be careful with your expectations. Tonight: Take off ASAP.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)
★★★★ You do offer a lot, but when others keep demanding more, you easily could lose your cool. Make it OK to let go of diplomacy once in a while. Use care with your funds; otherwise, mistakes easily can be made. Tonight: Make nice.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)
★★★★ Understand what is happening within your immediate circle. You might feel as if you are drained by the upcoming holiday celebrations. Your creativity remains high, even when an elder or boss questions one of your ideas. Tonight: Let the party begin.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)
★★★★ You might want to discuss alternatives. An adjustment could make you feel a lot better about your plans. A close friend is a dominant presence in your day-to-day life. The unexpected runs riot if you are traveling or hosting

people from a distance. Tonight: Pitch in and handle some errands.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)
★★★★ You could see a situation twist and turn. If you are unhappy, your reaction is to become very picky. Curb that attitude for the moment. Take a walk and detach. When you see the whole picture, you won't have a complaint. Tonight: Respond to someone's unexpected actions.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)
★★★★ If you can, try to plan extra time around your home or family. How you see a situation or someone in your daily life might not be in the best light at the moment. Someone also could be critical. Walk away from a quarrel. Tonight: Do the unexpected.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)
★★★★ Your imagination takes you in a different direction. Some people will be surprised by a change they see in you. In the next few days, do not internalize your anger, but kindly let others know you are uncomfortable. Tonight: Ever spunky.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)
★★★★ You might be a little too aware of the costs of a particular situation in your life. Granted, you would like to change it, but perhaps today you would be well advised to stay centered. A child or loved one could be full of surprises. Tonight: Where the fun is.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)
★★★★ Your need for a little more freedom and a little less responsibility weighs on your shoulders. Use care with how you express this need. Done well, you could have a great day. You could feel pushed by an older person. Tonight: Surrounded by options.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)
★★★★ Could you be overthinking a situation? It is possible, as you are choosing what factors to think about. You might be reinforcing a problem rather than working through it. Call a trusted friend for feedback. Tonight: Be spontaneous, and you'll get great results.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)
★★★★ You feel the give-and-take of a growing relationship. Do not overreact to someone's sharp words. Remain centered and caring. Postpone a purchase or major expenditure for a day or so. You might change your mind. Tonight: Be more childlike.

Tundra



Shoe



Mother Goose and Grim



Zits



Garfield



Beetle Bailey



Marvin



Hagar The Horrible



Peanuts



Blondie



Sports



photo courtesy of **Jeanna Zuniga**

Pampa's Babe Ruth All-Stars huddle up after a victory against Plainview on Sunday. It was a good weekend for the team, which also beat Hereford 13-6 on Saturday.

Pampa's Babe Ruth All-Stars dominant at Hereford games

JONATHAN POLASEK
The Pampa News

The 13-, 14- and 15-year-old babe Ruth All-Star baseball team competed in a tournament this weekend in Hereford to get seeded for the upcoming state tournament. Even with the heat in the upper 90s — even scraping the bottom side of 100 degrees — the local All-Stars turned in a dominant showing in a pair of Pampa victories, beating Hereford 13-6 on Saturday and Plainview 7-0 on Sunday.

Ethan Hunt pitched three innings in Saturday's game, recording five strikeouts and allowing two hits and six walks. Thomas Haley finished the job with four innings of work, recording eight strikeouts and allowing two hits and two walks in the victory.

The offense started through Zach Johnson on Saturday, as he tore up the Hereford pitching with three hits, including a home run in the fourth inning. The All-Stars scored 13 runs on 14 hits.

On Sunday, Casey Martindale was dominant on the mound, buoyed by some solid defense.

The All-Stars had seven runs on seven hits, including Martindale adding a home run in the second inning.

Adam Zuniga and Ty Hooper split time

behind the plate at catcher.

"I had a great time playing with my teammates," Zuniga said. "We played very well as a team and we came out on top. I am very excited for the state tournament."

Head coach Mike Hooper felt the same way.

"The team played well," Hooper said. "They matched up well with the teams that they played. We played solid defense, we hit the ball well, and we played overall as a team."

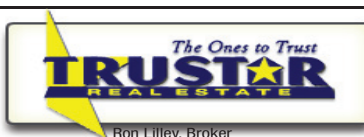
The state tournament will be in Dumas on July 14 to 18. Hooper says that they are poised to go far.

"We should be in the top part of the bracket," Hooper said. "We are ready to go far at state, we have great kids and great parents, and I am excited to see how we do."

Hooper says that they need to continue to keep up the competitive nature before state.

"We will break into teams and scrimmage each day for game feeling," Hooper said. "There is nothing that compares to game conditions. There are winners and losers, and it will keep the kids in a focused mindset."

The announcement of who the team will play will come out later this week.



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