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# The PAMPA NEWS

**TODAY INSIDE**



Tuesday, August 7, 2012 [www.thepampanews.com](http://www.thepampanews.com) Volume 108 • No. 104

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**Viewpoints: Chuck Norris** | More about Obama | **p4**  
**Top O' Texas Rodeo** | See inside for a Pampa News special rodeo edition

## Rodeo edition

### Top O' Texas Rodeo teams with Pampa News

**BEN TINSLEY**  
 editor@thepampanews.com

Inserted inside your copy of today's Pampa News, you should find a copy of "Top O' Texas Rodeo, 2012 Pampa News Special edition." Enjoy. This rodeo is incredibly important to our community and we're proud to help present it to you.

## Your Golden Horseshoe Clues

The Golden Horseshoe Treasure Hunt, sponsored by the Top O' Texas Rodeo Association, is underway. Here are the clues for Monday, Aug. 6 and Tuesday, Aug. 7:  
 "HAIR, NAILS, JEWELRY OR WOMEN'S CLOTHES RIGHT HERE ON THIS BUSY STREET."  
 And: "THIS STORE HAS BEEN AROUND A LONG TIME. HOPEFULLY, THEY HAVE IT IN STOCK BECAUSE I DON'T THINK THEY DO CATALOG ORDERS ANYMORE."  
 All clues will be placed in selected stores in Pampa. You can only have access to these clues by going into the stores. The lucky person who finds the horseshoe will win box seat tickets valued at \$150 to the rodeo performances on Aug. 9, 10 and 11. Additionally, the winner gets the chance to ride in the rodeo parade at 10:30 a.m. Aug. 11.  
 Any questions? Call Cindy Kempf at 806-669-0434.



## Harvester Youth Camp



Staff photo by **Gayden Hays**

Coach Heath Parker passes the football Monday to one of the 175 kids that participated in the Harvester Football Camps.

## County pondering new budget

**MOLLIE BRYANT**  
 mbryant@thepampanews.com

With the beginning of a new fiscal year looming on the horizon, the Gray County Commissioners Court began exploring its next budget. During its meeting last Wednesday, commissioners examined departmental requested budgets, but as they await the totals for certified tax-property valuations, the county remains in preliminary stages in its planning. The current tax rate stands at 52.96 cents per \$100 of taxable value. "It appears that all departments are being conscientious about keeping budgets down," said Commissioner Jeff Haley. "There are still some question marks out there."  
 "We're just beginning to look at and check what's requested, and see how it all comes together," said Commissioner John Mark Baggerman. He added that he hopes to not raise taxes, which reflects the view of the other commissioners, who all declined to comment on the county's plans for the tax rate. "We want to keep conservative with taxpayer money and taxes, which is hard to do with projects going on and trying to remember employees," said Commissioner Joe Wheeler. "It'll come together. It always does."  
 Right now, the group does not plan

**BUDGET** cont. on page 7

## Grass fire hits Roberts county

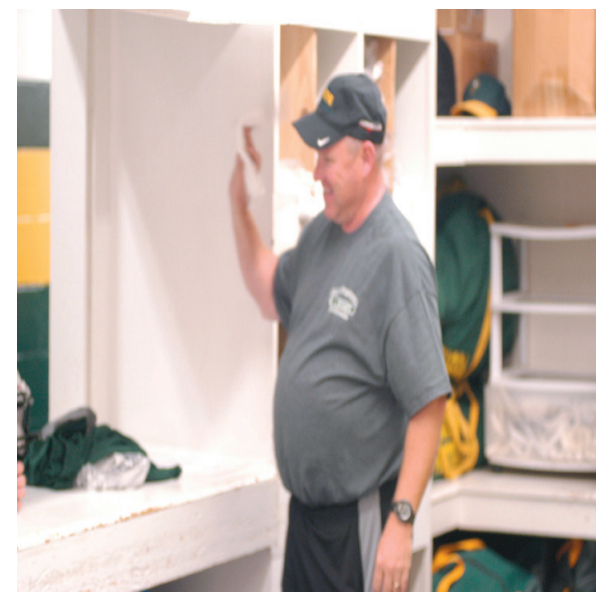
Local firefighters tackle aggressive blaze, fighting the fire nonstop

**MOLLIE BRYANT**  
 mbryant@thepampanews.com

A grassfire on the Roberts and Ochiltree county lines hit during the weekend, destroying between 5,000 and 6,000 acres. The Roberts County and Miami Volunteer Fire Department, along with 13 other are departments, including the Pampa Fire Department, fought the fire for almost 24 hours between Friday and Saturday evening. The fire was visible in Pampa,

according to Paul Sublett, assistant chief of the Roberts County and Miami Volunteer Fire Department. No injuries resulted from the fire. Around 8:15 p.m. on Friday, the Roberts County and Miami Volunteer Fire Department responded to the fire, which hit a brushy, canyon area between the Canadian River and FM 281. Area fire departments, along with several volunteer ranchers who had vehicles with spray rigs and two helicopters fought the fire nonstop until Saturday at 6 p.m. Sublett said that the fire depart-

ments suspect lighting as the cause of the grassfire, which hit the Corsen, Cook and Killerbrew Ranches. Sublett, who also fought the 2006 wildfire that hit the Panhandle, said that the fires show you who your neighbors are. Over 50 people responded to the Roberts County fire. "We appreciate the people that came, including the Red Cross, which came out twice with food and refreshments," Sublett said. "Most of the responders were volunteers, and they come running when they're needed."



Staff photo by **Gayden Hays**

Harvester Coach Tad Smith passes out the equipment at the fieldhouse Monday morning.

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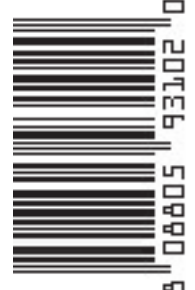
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**PAMPA FORECAST**

Today	Wednesday	Thursday
High 98 Low 72	High 96 Low 68	High 94 Low 68

Today: A 20 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms after 1pm. Partly sunny and hot, with a high near 98. South wind 5 to 10 mph.

Tonight: A 30 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 72. South southeast wind 5 to 10 mph becoming southwest after midnight.

Wednesday: A 20 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms. Mostly sunny, with a high near 96. West southwest wind 5 to 10 mph becoming northeast in the afternoon.

Wednesday Night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 68. East southeast wind 5 to 15 mph becoming southwest after midnight.

Thursday: Sunny, with a high near 94. West wind 5 to 15 mph becoming northeast in the afternoon.

Thursday Night: Mostly clear, with a low around 68. East wind 5 to 15 mph.

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**Obituaries**

**Bernita Ruth Hayes Nidiffer**



Nidiffer

Bernita Ruth Hayes Nidiffer, 92, died Sunday, Aug. 4, 2012, in Pampa. Services will be 11 AM Wednesday, August 8, 2012, at First Christian Church, with Dr. Jeff Knighton, pastor, officiating.

**BURIAL:** Graveside services will be at 2:00 PM Wednesday, August 8, 2012, at Citizens Cemetery in Clarendon, under the direction of Carmichael-Whitley Funeral Directors.

Mrs. Nidiffer was born June 21, 1920 in the middle of a wheat harvest in Minneapolis, Kansas to Bert and Bessie Page Hayes. She graduated from Rossville, Kansas High School and attended Stuart's Beauty College in Topeka, Kansas.

She married William F. "Bill" Nidiffer on August 23, 1940 in Monk's Corner, South Carolina, starting her trip around the world with him.

Bill ended his trip on October 30, 1989 in Howard-wick, near Clarendon, after 49 years of marriage. They lived in South Carolina, three times in Texas, Oklahoma, Louisiana, California, Kansas, Colorado, and Saudi Arabia, plus trips through the Orient, Canada, Mexico and numerous states in the U.S.A., with stops in Holland, Pakistan, Thailand, the Philippines, Hong Kong, Tokyo, Hawaii and back to Pampa, making a complete circle of the globe.

Bernita was an avid sportswoman, playing basketball and softball in high school and semi-pro softball until her marriage. She became an excellent bowler and golfer, even playing in the sands of Saudi Arabia and the mountains of Colorado.

She was an active member of the First Christian Church since childhood, working in the church wherever she lived, including the Pampa church since 1960. She enjoyed helping "older people" and became a certified

nurse's aide, working at the Clarendon Nursing Home in her sixties.

Survivors include her daughter: Nancy Jo Brogdin and husband Robert of Pampa; her son: William Hayes "Billy" Nidiffer and wife Kathy of Thatcher, Arizona; 4 grandsons: Timothy Nidiffer and wife Rachel of Owasso, Michigan, Brady Brogdin of Pampa, and Jonathan Nidiffer and Christopher Nidiffer, both of Arizona; a granddaughter-in-love: Chris Nidiffer of Sherman; 9 great-grandchildren: Stephanie Nidiffer Long and husband Cody, Rebecca Nidiffer, Brayden Trimble, Zack Trimble, Tristen Morgan, Brennan Brogdin, Joelee Brogdin, Nicholas Nidiffer and Noah Nidiffer; and several nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by her parents, 3 brothers, 3 sisters, and a son: James Nidiffer in 2007.

**MEMORIALS:** First Christian Church, 1633 N. Nelson, Pampa, Texas 79065.

Sign the on-line register at [www.carmichael-whitley.com](http://www.carmichael-whitley.com)

**W. R. DENISON**

W. R. Denison, 63, died August 5, 2012, in Gray County. Services are ending with Carmichael-Whitley Funeral Directors.

Mr. Denison was born January 13, 1949 in Manhattan, Kansas. He had been a resident of the Pampa area for the past 20 years. He married Jeannie Joiner on May 26, 1995 in Pampa. He had been a truck driver for 30 years, and was a computer technician for the past 3 years. He was a veteran of the U. S. Marine Corps, serving during the Vietnam War. He enjoyed riding his motorcycle and spending time with his grandchildren.

Survivors include his wife: Jeannie Denison of the home; 2 stepsons: Jeremy Evans and fiancée Racheal, and Chris Oliveira and wife Krickett, all of Pampa; a stepdaughter: Marquetta Oliveira and husband Keith of Colorado Springs, Colorado; 7 grandchildren; 4 brothers: Bob Denison and wife Tammy, Chuck Denison and wife Pat, Tom Denison and wife Lisa, and Bart Denison, all of Mineola, Kansas. He was preceded in death by his parents: Charles and Erma Denison.

Memorials should go to Somerville Church of Christ, 500 N. Somerville, Pampa, Texas 79065.

**Romney trounces Obama in fundraising**

STAMFORD, Conn. (AP) — Can President Barack Obama raise the money he needs to hold onto the White House?

Money wasn't supposed to be a worry for the president's campaign, which smashed fundraising records in 2008. But Mitt Romney's team has hauled in more than Obama and his allies for a third straight month, raising the once-unthinkable question.

While the race for voter support is tight, according to polls, Romney's robust fundraising and a crush of money from Republican-leaning political action committees have forced the president's campaign to spend heavily through the summer.

Highlighting the challenge for Obama, Romney on Monday reported a July fundraising haul of more than \$101 million along with the Republican National Committee, compared to the \$75 million that Obama's campaign said it had brought in along with the Democratic National Committee.

During a fundraiser in Stamford, Conn., Obama said Romney's tax proposal would benefit the wealthy at the expense of many middle-class families. "It's like Robin Hood in reverse," he said. "It's Romney Hood." Romney campaign spokesman Ryan Williams countered that Obama was the only "candidate in this race who's going to raise taxes on the American people."

The president also warned that his campaign faced a deluge of Republican money.

"Over the course of the next three months, the other side is going to spend more money than we have ever seen on ads that basically say the same thing you've been hearing for the past three months," Obama said, then summarized their argument as "the economy is not where it needs to be and it's Obama's fault."

Before Romney's summer surge, Obama had not been out-raised by an opponent since 2007.

In an email to supporters after the July numbers were announced, the Obama campaign said, "If we don't step it up, we're in trouble."

A huge spending advantage in the final months of a close election can help a campaign as it seeks to sway undecided voters.

Obama officials say they expected Romney to out-raise the president through the summer and have made contingency plans if the disparity continues. Part of that planning has involved heavy spending on ads through the spring and summer in an attempt to define Romney for voters before he has access to most of his general election funds.

With the election still three months away, Obama and the DNC have spent more than \$370 million since January of last year. In June, the campaign spent more

than it brought in.

Seeking to keep its coffers full, the campaign has special plans for some donors who live in reliably Democratic states where the president may not visit in the midst of the campaign. They'll get a chance to fly elsewhere in the country to meet him at an event. The campaign has also been raffling off chances for smaller donors to attend meals with the president or attend events with celebrities such as actor George Clooney.

Obama has been spending big chunks of time making his own pleas. He raised money Monday in Connecticut at two events with Hollywood connections.

One fundraiser was at the Westport, Conn., home of film mogul Harvey Weinstein, where two Academy Awards sat on the mantle before a group that included actresses Anne Hathaway and Joanne Woodward, the widow of Paul Newman, and writer Aaron Sorkin. Weinstein told the audience that Obama showed he was "not afraid to throw a punch. Witness the raid on Osama bin Laden. You can make the case that he's the Paul Newman of American presidents." The events were expected to bring in at least \$2.5 million for Obama's campaign.

Romney, who is closing in on his vice presidential pick, spent Monday at his vacation home in New Hampshire, but he, too, has a series of fundraising appearances this week.

Obama aides say their campaign is bringing in enough money to stay competitive in television advertising. The campaign has already purchased most of its air time in battleground states through Election Day using money it raised earlier in the cycle.

The campaign also has poured tens of millions of dollars into setting up field offices in battleground states, launching registration drives and compiling data on voters — all expensive efforts that could pay dividends for Obama in November. The Romney campaign is still setting up those efforts in some states and will probably have to devote a significant amount of its incoming cash to doing so.

Three months from Election Day, Democrats say Romney's fundraising gains have not forced the Obama campaign to re-evaluate its fall strategy, cut back on staffing or shift resources — signs that would show a campaign in financial trouble.

Les Coney, a top Obama donor in Chicago, said he had heard "zero concern" among the president's finance committee members that the fundraising disparity could hurt Obama's ability to run an effective campaign. "But obviously we're out there hustling, trying to raise money," he said. "You're always looking for new people to support the campaign."

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# MORNINGRUSH

## Government settles fence case

McALLEN (AP) — The U.S. government has paid almost \$1 million for part of a South Texas nature preserve taken for the border fence, drawing to a close nearly four years of litigation in one of the project's highest-profile condemnation cases.

Court records show the government deposited \$978,650 with the court Monday, a month after notifying the judge that it had reached a settlement with The Nature Conservancy and farmers who leased property there.

The government took an 8.31-acre strip of land east of Brownsville for its fence, leaving most of the 1,000-acre property of sabal palms, oxbow lakes and citrus groves known as the Southmost Preserve in a no-man's land between the fence and the Rio Grande.

The government has built about 650 miles of border barriers along the 1,954-mile U.S.-Mexico boundary.

## Judge: Feds can auction horses

DALLAS (AP) — A federal judge in Texas is allowing prosecutors to sell more than 400 racehorses amid allegations the animals were used to launder profits from a Mexican drug cartel.

Fifteen people are charged in the investigation, which centers on the operation of an Oklahoma horse ranch. Among those in custody is Jose Trevino Morales. Prosecutors say he is the brother of two alleged leaders of the Zetas cartel.

Authorities seized 49 of the most valuable horses and claimed control of the remaining 414. Prosecutors said in court documents that four horses have died. Others have been injured due to overcrowding. Caring for the horses is also expensive.

U.S. District Judge Sam Sparks last week ruled proceeds would be held until the case is resolved. Five horses won't go up for sale.

## Man guilty in City Nursing fraud

HOUSTON (AP) — Prosecutors in Houston say a seventh person has pleaded guilty or been convicted in a \$45 million health care fraud scheme.

A federal judge on Monday accepted a guilty plea from 56-year-old Tony Nnonso Obi. The naturalized U.S. citizen from Nigeria pleaded guilty to conspiracy to commit health care fraud and to money laundering.

Prosecutors say Obi was affiliated with an assisted living facility and sent some residents to City Nursing Service of Texas Inc.

Investigators say City Nursing owner Umawa Imo paid Obi more than \$1 million as part of the Medicare and Medicaid scam. Imo last year was sentenced to more than 27 years in federal prison.

Obi faces up to 10 years in prison. Sentencing has been set for Nov. 5.

## Smuggler guilty in Texas wreck

CORPUS CHRISTI (AP) — A Houston man has pleaded guilty in a South Texas human smuggling case and wreck that left an immigrant dead.

Prosecutors say 22-year-old Leonel Alvaro Abundis-Carreon pleaded guilty Monday in Corpus Christi to conspiracy to transport 14 suspected illegal immigrants. He also pleaded guilty to causing serious bodily injury to a person.

Sentencing is Oct. 30. Abundis-Carreon, who remains in custody, faces up to 20 years in federal prison.

Border Patrol agents from Falfurrias (fal-FYOO'-ree-uh) on Feb. 9 chased a pickup truck driven by Abundis-Carreon. Authorities say suspected illegal immigrants were in the cab and the truck bed when the vehicle crashed.

One passenger died. Several others were hurt. Abundis-Carreon said he received \$125 for each immigrant he smuggled.

Details weren't released Monday on the immigration status of the survivors.

## Bicycle shelter open in Austin

AUSTIN (AP) — Capital Metro in Austin has opened its first secured, fully-enclosed bicycle shelter for transit users.

The site opened Monday at Kramer Station. Agency officials say as many as six more MetroBike shelters are planned within two years.

The shelter is a way for riders to combine bicycle travel with bus and rail line use, but not take their bikes on board. The shelter has key card access with space for 24 bicycles, plus video surveillance and a spot for minor bike repairs.

One year shelter passes cost \$30. Access cards are limited to the first 50 customers.

Capital Metro spokeswoman Francine Pares (puh-REZ') said Monday that access cards are still available. She says the agency is encouraging riders to leave bicycles at the shelter no longer than 24 hours.

## Romney's family?



Mitt Romney's second cousin Lynn Romney and his wife, Albina, live in Colonia Juarez, a small Mormon community about 200 miles from El Paso. Romney's father, George W. Romney, was born to American citizens living in Mexico, and when he was five years old, his family returned to the United States.

# Crop-killing drought will cost you

TERRY SAVAGE  
Creator's Syndicate

While politicians are still wrangling over the twin deficit dangers of tax and spending cuts, an even more dangerous financial crisis is about to hit the economy: the food prices crisis.

The searing temperatures and drought in the heartland of America have already devastated the corn crop — and without any relief in sight, the soybean crop will also be affected.

Just take a drive in the country, and you'll see the corn plants, still tall in the fields. But the foliage is spiky and pointed skyward, in an effort to conserve water. And inside the green portions of the corn plant, the cobs are empty of kernels. The heat and drought made pollination impossible. The plants exist, but the cobs are stunted and empty.

Corn is now about \$8 a bushel — up 50 percent from where it was priced at just a month ago. Soybeans are at an all-time record price nearing \$17 a bushel, up from \$13, just two months ago. These two important crops have hit all-time high prices.

According to the Department of Agriculture, 78 percent of the corn crop this year is now in a drought-impacted condition, and 77 percent of the soybean crop is similarly affected.

For those of us who buy our food on store shelves, it's difficult to make the connection between the worst drought in 50 years and the impact it will have on the family budget.

Food prices overall rise about 1 percent for every 50 percent increase in corn prices, partly because corn is used in so many products. But most city dwellers don't realize that a good portion of the corn and

soybean crop are used to feed livestock. There the impact will be more dramatic — but not as immediate.

Ranchers will bring more of their hogs and cattle to market now, as they realize it will be expensive to feed them over the winter — if they can find enough hay after the drought. So the first impact is a glut on the market, driving prices down. Then, with a few months' lag, you'll see prices of beef, pork, chicken, eggs and dairy start to skyrocket — probably around Election Day.

Forget food prices for a minute. About 25 percent of the corn crop is used for ethanol — in gasoline. So not only will food prices be affected, but the price of a gallon of gasoline will start moving higher in the days ahead. Then we will see the true folly of subsidizing an industry that diverts food to fuel.

Since transportation is a key cost of many consumer goods, rising gasoline prices should push prices of many consumer goods higher. That's exactly what the economy doesn't need as it struggles to move ahead. Higher food and transportation prices will be a drag on an already slowing economy — increasing the chances of recession as we approach the election. This drought adds the ingredient of stagflation — rising prices in a slowing economy.

The politicians may be able to skirt the issues of taxes and spending and the debt ceiling until after the election. But there's no



way to postpone the impact of Mother Nature. Soon, every voter will realize that a limited paycheck — if they have one — is going to have to stretch further to cover the basic necessities.

The last time this conjunction of economic slow-down and drought occurred, it was in the "Dust Bowl" of the 1930s. A quick reread of John Steinbeck's classic "The Grapes of Wrath" reveals what happens when misguided government economic policies collide with the inexorable forces of nature.

We've come a long

way in technology since the 1930s — but we still haven't learned to control the weather. And it appears that government still hasn't learned how to create policies that foster economic growth. That wouldn't combat dry farm fields, but a growing economy and more jobs would make the inevitable food price increases less painful. 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?"*

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Thurs 7:30

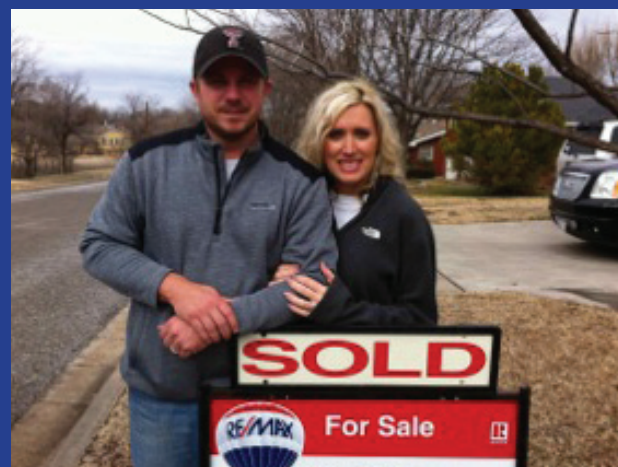
**The Dark Knight Rises (PG-13)**  
Fri 6:45 10:15  
Sat 2:00 6:45 10:15  
Sun 2:00 6:45  
Mon/Wed 6:45 10:15  
Thurs 6:45

**Diary Of A Wimpy Kid: Dog Days (PG)**  
Fri 7:00 9:30  
Sat 2:00 4:30 7:00 9:30  
Sun 2:00 4:30 7:00  
Mon/Wed 7:00 9:30  
Thurs 7:00

**Step Up Revolution (PG-13)**  
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# Viewpoints

## Today in History

Today is Tuesday, Aug. 7, the 220th day of 2012. There are 146 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Aug. 7, 1942, U.S. and other allied forces landed at Guadalcanal, marking the start of the first major allied offensive in the Pacific during World War II. (Japanese forces abandoned the island the following February.)

On this date:

In 1782, Gen. George Washington created the Order of the Purple Heart, a decoration to recognize merit in enlisted men and non-commissioned officers.

In 1882, the famous feud between the Hatfields of West Virginia and the McCoys of Kentucky erupted into full-scale violence.

In 1912, Theodore Roosevelt was nominated for president by the Progressive Party (also known as the Bull Moose Party) in Chicago. New Jersey Gov. Woodrow Wilson accepted the Democratic presidential nomination at his summer home in Sea Girt. Sergei Prokofiev premiered his Piano Concerto No. 1 in D-flat major in Moscow.

In 1927, the already opened Peace Bridge connecting Buffalo, N.Y., and Fort Erie, Ontario, Canada, was officially dedicated.

In 1947, the balsa wood raft Kon-Tiki, which had carried a six-man crew 4,300 miles across the Pacific Ocean, crashed into a reef in a Polynesian archipelago; all six crew members reached land safely.

In 1959, the United States launched the Explorer 6 satellite, which sent back images of Earth.

In 1961, Yale psychology professor Stanley Milgram began conducting his controversial human behavior experiments concerning obedience toward authority figures.

In 1962, President John F. Kennedy awarded FDA official Dr. Frances O. Kelsey the Distinguished Federal Civilian Service Medal for her diligence in blocking approval of thalidomide, a sedative found to cause severe birth defects.

In 1964, Congress passed the Gulf of Tonkin resolution, giving President Lyndon B. Johnson broad powers in dealing with reported North Vietnamese attacks on U.S. forces.

In 1971, the Apollo 15 moon mission ended successfully as its command module splashed down in the Pacific Ocean.

On this day in 1947, Kon-Tiki, a balsa wood raft captained by Norwegian anthropologist Thor Heyerdahl, completes a 4,300-mile, 101-day journey from Peru to Raroia in the Tuamotu Archipelago, near Tahiti. Heyerdahl wanted to prove his theory that prehistoric South Americans could have colonized the Polynesian islands by drifting on ocean currents.

Heyerdahl and his five-person crew set sail from Callao, Peru, on the 40-square-foot Kon-Tiki on April 28, 1947. The Kon-Tiki, named for a mythical white chieftain, was made of indigenous materials and designed to resemble rafts of early South American Indians. While crossing the Pacific, the sailors encountered storms, sharks and whales, before finally washing ashore at Raroia. Heyerdahl, born in Larvik, Norway, on October 6, 1914, believed that Polynesia's earliest inhabitants had come from South America, a theory that conflicted with popular scholarly opinion that the original settlers arrived from Asia. Even after his successful voyage, anthropologists and historians continued to discredit Heyerdahl's belief. However, his journey captivated the public and he wrote a book about the experience that became an international bestseller and was translated into 65 languages. Heyerdahl also produced a documentary about the trip that won an Academy Award in 1951.

Heyerdahl made his first expedition to Polynesia in 1937. He and his first wife lived primitively on Fatu Hiva in the Marquesas Islands for a year and studied plant and animal life. The experience led him to believe that humans had first come to the islands aboard primitive vessels drifting on ocean currents from the east.

Following the Kon-Tiki expedition, Heyerdahl made archeological trips to such places as the Galapagos Islands, Easter Island and Peru and continued to test his theories about how travel across the seas played a major role in the migration patterns of ancient cultures.

## The ticking time bomb of Iran and Obama

**CHUCK NORRIS**  
Columnist and actor

Last Thursday, Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad posted on his website his most recent anti-Semitic tirade, saying global forces should join together to annihilate Israel. Meanwhile, in Orlando, Fla., President Barack Obama had a take-out plate of pulled pork and rice.

The Jerusalem Post reported Ahmadinejad as saying, "Anyone who loves freedom and justice must strive for the annihilation of the Zionist regime in order to pave the way for world justice and freedom."

Those words came from the same international leader who called the Holocaust a myth and entreated that Israel should be "wiped off the page of time" in a 2005 speech.

One might think Ahmadinejad's caustic influence would play out with only extremists, until one realizes that his words preceded Iran's annual "Quds Day" (Aug. 17), a nationwide event and national holiday (since 1979) during which massive crowds condemn Israel and the U.S. with chants of "Death to Israel" and "Death to America."

To add insult to injury, in the past week, Iranian officials have chided increased Western sanctions as "warfare." Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, who holds the last word on all Iranian state matters, retorted that his Islamic Republic can overcome the latest round of sanctions restricting their oil

and money. And a top Iranian official said his government will share "experience and capabilities" with the regime of President Bashar Assad in Syria.

Tensions with Iran have been ramped up lately way beyond Obama's foreign diplomatic abilities and sanction-only quasi-restrictions. To put it simply, the former senator from Chicago is way over his head. He's playing chess with madmen.

Obama's foreign-relations political waffling is not only a dismal failure but also a detriment to peace, stability and safety in the Middle East. One day he coddles Israelis, assuring them that America will stand by them. The next day he is the pro-Palestinian in chief, dissing Israel's president to the French president. (Remember when Obama belittled Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu during a hot-moment after French President Nicolas Sarkozy said he "cannot bear Netanyahu; he's a liar"? Obama replied, "You're fed up with him, but I have to deal with him even more often than you.")

In 2010, The Jerusalem Post reported that only 10 percent of Jewish Israelis really believed that Obama is "more pro-Israeli" than pro-Palestinian. With Egypt granting the Muslim Brotherhood's rise to power, Syria percolating with chemical weapons -- which some are saying were possibly smuggled from Saddam Hussein's alleged surplus -- Hezbollah perched in Lebanon and Hamas

working internal affairs, Israel remains in the cross hairs of the Middle East thus.

Imagine the volatility that will reign in the Middle East during the next four years! And 43 percent of Americans really want to re-elect a U.S. president who, rather than come to the active aid of our greatest ally in the Middle East, disses Israeli leaders on French soil?

Mark my words. America could very well aid and abet World War III with a leader like President Obama who is in his second term. Obama already has initiated that political momentum with his actions and inactions, but will we stand by and watch him carry it to fruition in a second term?

Foreign dictators and other extremists are praying U.S. citizens re-elect Obama. The truth is that the world's stability is buckling under the lethal combination of a militant Ahmadinejad and a passive Obama -- one pushing for the annihilation of Israel and the other sitting back and waiting for it to happen, one creating the bomb and the other sitting back and watching while the fuse is lit.

Add to all that the Obama administration's second-term plans to radically reduce the U.S. military!

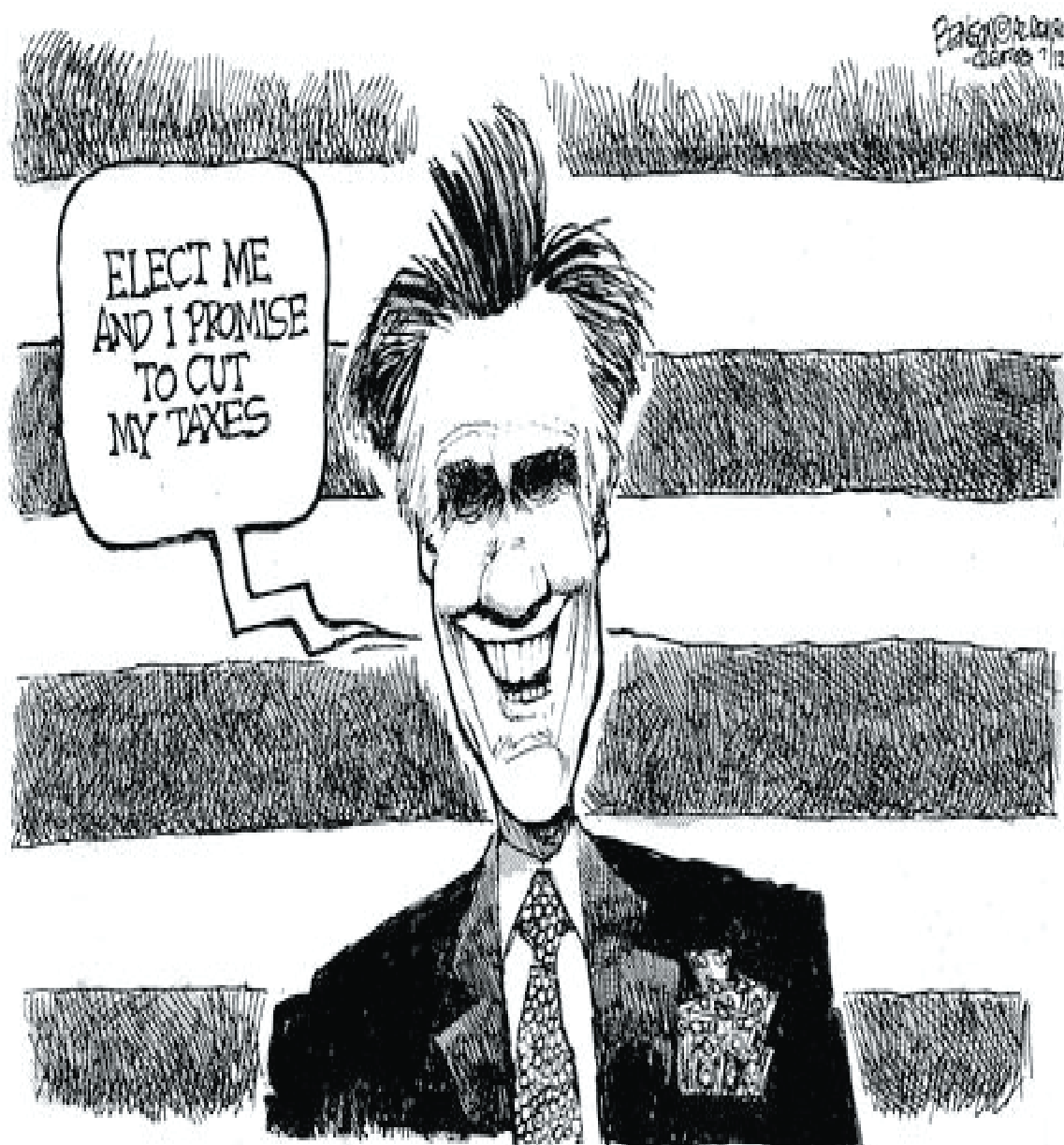
WorldNetDaily's Jerusalem bureau chief, Aaron Klein, has just written (scheduled for release Aug. 14) a groundbreaking expose and borderline prophetic look into exactly what will happen in a second term with Obama. For example, in "Fool Me

Twice: Obama's Shocking Plans for the Next Four Years Exposed," Klein details Obama's second-term "large-scale reductions to the U.S. military. Some examples: Scaling back the size of all U.S. ground forces by 20 percent; reducing the Navy's surface fleet by 20 percent; reducing the Air Force by two combat air wings; reducing the U.S. nuclear arsenal to no more than 292 deployed nuclear weapons and the complete elimination of the Trident II nuclear missile; the complete halt of all further missile defense development; the total cancellation of the second SSN-744 Virginia Class submarine."

Fellow Americans, America and the world need a U.S. president who will restore our economy and steady chaos in the world, not usher in Armageddon with his anti-Semitic, noncommittal, conciliatory, laissez-faire leadership. The very personage of the U.S. president should emanate deterrence, not indifference.

We need a president who will honor the timeless traditional relationship between America and Israel and reciprocate a blessing back to the U.S. by simultaneously observing these eternal promises: "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem; they shall prosper that love thee!" "Blessed is everyone who blesses you, O Israel, and cursed is everyone who curses you!"

Follow Chuck Norris through his official social media sites, on Twitter @chucknorris and Facebook's "Official Chuck Norris Page."



## We welcome your letters

To ensure publication, please adhere to the following guidelines:

- Letters should be brief and to the point. All correspondence will be edited for length and clarity.
- All letters must be signed. Submit your name, address and telephone number with the letter for verification. Only your name and city will be published.
- Defamatory comments will not be published.
- E-mail submissions are welcome.
- The views and opinions expressed here do not necessarily reflect those of *The Pampa News* or its staff.

## Once-powerful Russia far behind in gold medal race

LONDON (AP) — After a miserable first week in the gold medal stakes, traditional powerhouse Russia is showing signs of a revival — though not enough to avoid its lowest Olympic finish in 60 years.

While some of Russia's strongest events are still to come, the team is set to wind up outside the top three in golds for the first time since the Soviet Union began competing at the games in 1952.

It's a worrying sign for a country that will host the next Olympics, the 2014 Winter Games in Sochi, and follows Russia's worst-ever performance at the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver.

"Sure, we would like to have more gold medals," Deputy Prime Minister Alexander Zhukov told the RIA Novosti news agency. "But this is sports, and in many sport events we just lack a bit of luck and good fortune."

After lagging in 10th for total gold medals won in London behind even North Korea and former Soviet republic Kazakhstan, Russia started to come to life Monday, picking up three gold medals to move into a tie for sixth place with Italy with seven.

China and the United States are 1-2 in golds with 31 and 29, respectively, and host Britain third with 18.

Despite the shortage of gold, the Russians have been racking up other medals — 17 silver and 18 bronze for an overall count of 42. They have moved two ahead of Britain into third place in total medals.

Russia's recent decline has coincided with China's rise as an Olympic superpower and continued dominance by the United States.

The Russian daily Sports Express said in a front page commentary Monday that Russian sports was "fro-

zen" between the Chinese and American systems. It blamed a shortage of state funding and lack of oversight and control over national sports federations.

"It's very far from China, where the watchful Communist Party is eyeing the selection process starting from the kindergarten stage, builds giant sports arenas and finances powerful medical research — and harshly demands results," the paper said. "We must admit that we stand even further from the American model, and the distance keeps growing. Because it would be deadly if we end state involvement in sports as they did. Sports industries that will feed themselves are simply absent in our country."

There's room for Russia to bring home plenty more in the final days of the games, which end Sunday. Russia has good medal chances in wrestling,

synchronized swimming, gymnastics and boxing, among others.

"Historically, we win 80 percent of our gold medals in the last five days," Mikhail Kusnirovich, deputy head of the Russian team, said. "If we finish with 20 gold medals, it would be great."

Barring an amazing set of circumstances, Russia will not be able to catch Team GB in the gold medal race. The hosts, who already have 11 more gold than Russia, have strong contenders ahead in track cycling, boxing, equestrian, sailing and track and field.


Russia finished third in both medal counts at the past two summer Olympics and had been widely predicted to do the same in London.

Before that, the Soviet Union or Russia had always been first or second going back to the 1952 Games in Helsinki.

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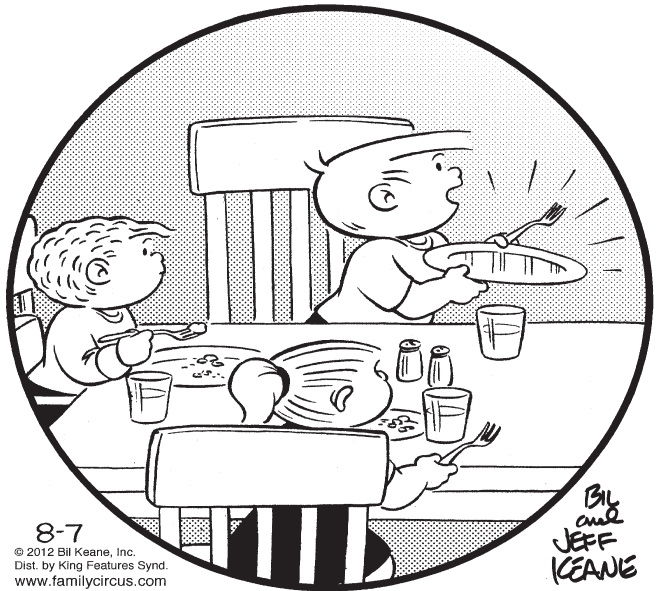
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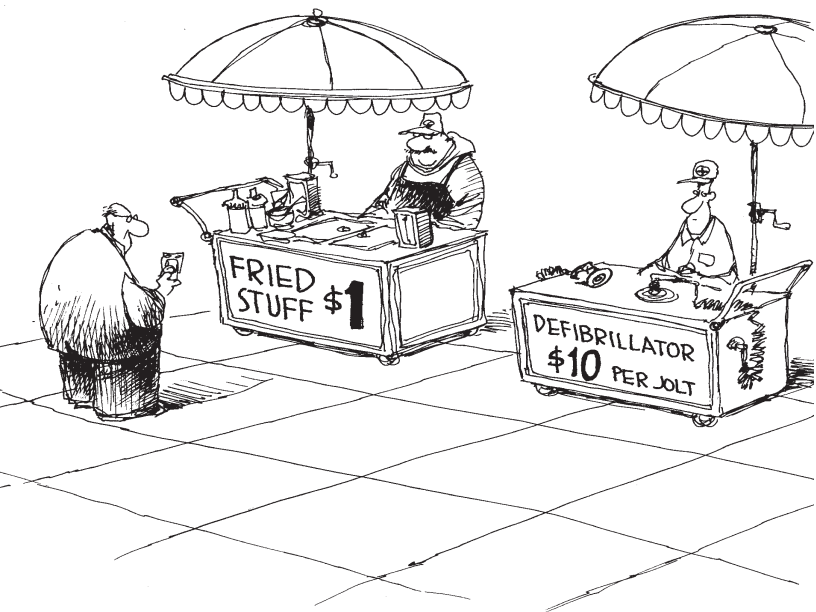
**THE FAMILY CIRCUS** By Bil Keane



**"I get the gold medal! I finished first!"**

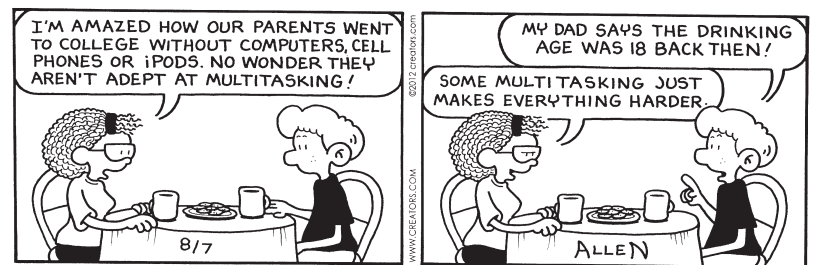
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Nest Heads



# daily horoscope

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY** for Wednesday, Aug. 8, 2012:

This year you bloom as you rarely have before. You convey a greater clarity in your conversations, and others hear you loud and clear. Learn to mix in some diplomacy, and you will not miss your mark. You are likely to succeed in your professional life and be noticed by superiors. If you are single, you will meet people when you are out and about. In this setting, you could encounter Mr. or Ms. Right. You will know when you cross this person's path. If you are attached, you both might commit to a public cause. Through this mutual interest, you'll become much closer and bonded. **TAURUS** pushes you into the limelight. Take advantage of his or her efforts. **ARIES** (March 21-April 19) **★★★** Be aware of a very sensitive and possessive side, either in you or the person who you are dealing with. Your softer side will emanate and come through in a discussion about a purchase. Confusion surrounds you. Tonight: Your treat. **TAURUS** (April 20-May 20) **★★★★** You are more empowered than you have been in a long while, and this allows greater give-and-take. It also gives you the ability to come to an agreement in a difficult matter. This process could take a few days. Tonight: Whatever knocks your socks off. **GEMINI** (May 21-June 20) **★★★★** You wake up feeling much clearer than you have in a long time. You might wonder which way to go with a situation. What would be best? Take your time right now to regroup and reprioritize. Think positively, and you will figure it out. Tonight: Keep it low-key. **CANCER** (June 21-July 22) **★★★★** A meeting provides a different perspective and allows a greater exchange of ideas. You might want to revitalize a project or situation, but you often hit a roadblock. Recognize the importance of trying out someone else's ideas or thought process. Tonight: Just don't be alone. **LEO** (July 23-Aug. 22) **★★★★** Prioritize your life by putting a key project involving others at the top of your list. You will get more cooperation if you handle this situation with quickness and precision. You also can clear out some strong feelings about a misunderstanding. Tonight: A force to be dealt with.

**VIRGO** (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

**★★★★** Act on an idea you have been toying with for a while. Since you have viewed this potential project from many different perspectives, it has become much sounder. If a friend gives you some feedback, listen -- it can only make your idea better. Tonight: Where there is music. **LIBRA** (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

**★★★★** Understand where a partner is coming from rather than dismiss his or her idea as being crazy. You'll understand a lot more about this person and gain a new perspective as a result. Do some soul-searching before you respond. Tonight: Dinner for two. **SCORPIO** (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

**★★★★** Defer to others, and do more listening. You could be surprised by the new sense of clarity you gain as a result. Verify facts and ask questions as need be. Your sense of humor emerges when speaking to someone so different that you barely can understand what he or she is saying. Tonight: The only answer is "yes." **SAGITTARIUS** (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

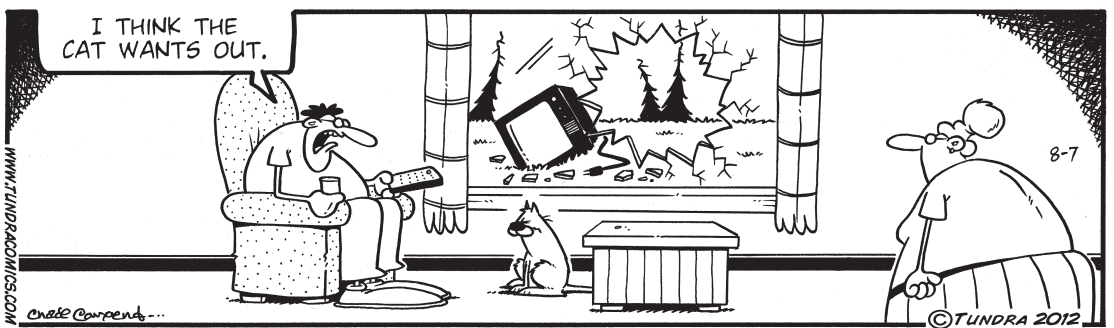
**★★★** Use your energy well. Program yourself to complete certain projects, return key calls and schedule a much-needed appointment. You could be overwhelmed by what is on your plate at first, but later you'll be glad you cleared up so much. Tonight: Take a walk. **CAPRICORN** (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

**★★★★** Your creativity is high and attracts many different points of view. You might wonder how best to approach a sometimes-contrary associate or partner. You both value money but have different perspectives. Tonight: Try to come to an agreement through more innovative thinking. **AQUARIUS** (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

**★★★** Your instincts tell you to stay close to home. If you can work from a home office, do. You will see a situation much differently by not being in the middle of it. Given time and patience, a relationship will come to a resolution. Tonight: Don't push too hard. **PISCES** (Feb. 19-March 20)

**★★★★** You will have an opportunity to clear up a problem. Do some thinking as to the most effective manner for how to approach the situation. A child or loved one is a source of happiness. Schedule some special time together. Tonight: Hang out.

Tundra



Shoe



Mother Goose and Grim



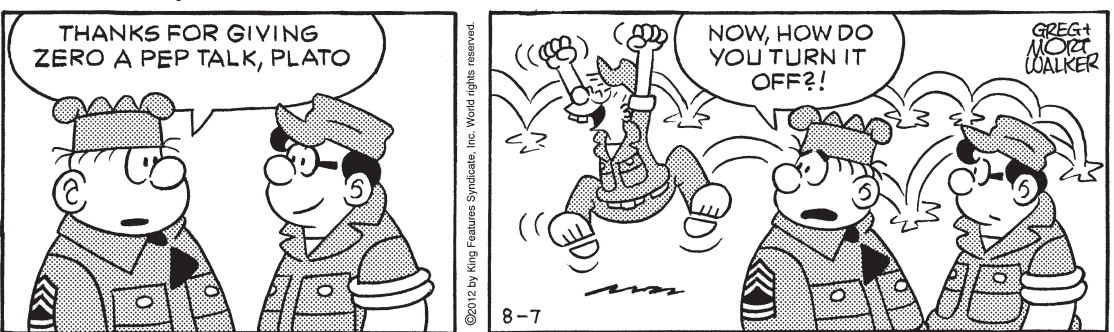
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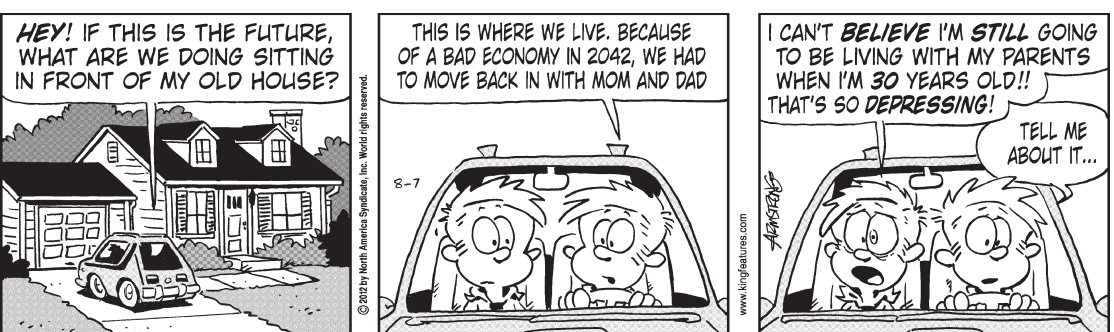
Garfield



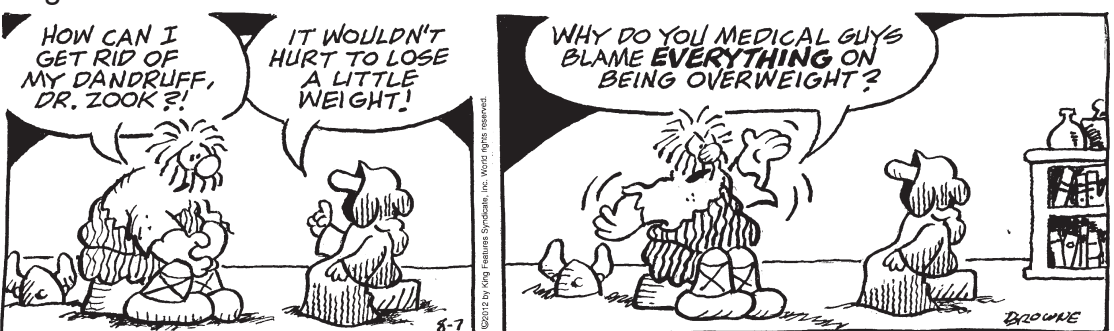
Beetle Bailey



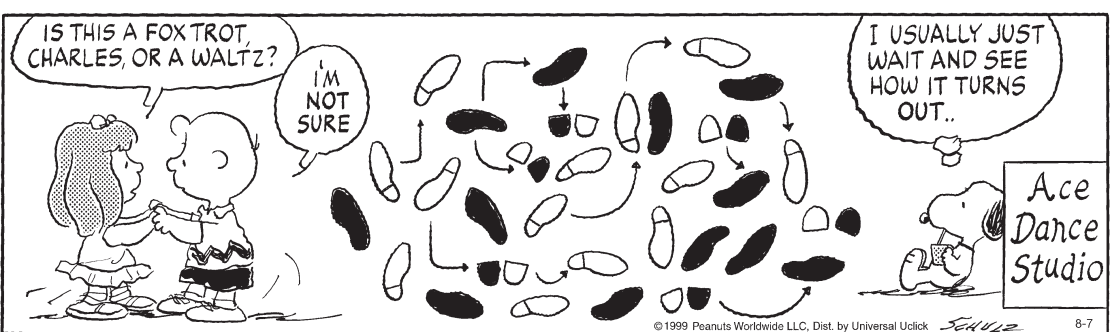
Marvin



Hagar The Horrible



Peanuts



Blondie



# Sports

## Kickoff: Harvester High school sports starts now



Staff Photo by **GAYDEN HAYS**



Staff Photo by **GAYDEN HAYS**

Monday, Head Coach Heath Parker and the 2012 Harvester varsity football team (above and below) passed out equipment and held their first team meetings and practice of the 2012 year.

Coach Brooke Sanford and the Lady Harvesters (above and below) began 2-a-day practices Monday. The Lady Harvesters will continue this schedule through the beginning of school.



## Sean Lee quickly becoming a leader for the Dallas Cowboys, explains Coach Ryan

(OXNARD, Calif.) Sean Lee already knows virtually every detail of the Dallas Cowboys complicated defensive scheme.

knowledge of the game is just amazing, fellow linebacker Victor Butler said. picks up stuff like that. He probably could coach us.

When Rob Ryan sees how teammates respond and follow Lee, the Cowboys defensive coordinator is reminded of one of his former Super Bowl-winning linebackers, Tedy Bruschi. He deserves the respect. He has earned the respect, Ryan said of Lee. didn have to say anything. They just followed him. It the same way with Sean.

They are talking about a guy going into only his third NFL season, a high-energy linebacker who became a starter last year and then played the second half of the season with a broken left wrist protected by a bulky cast.

Lee still led the Cowboys with 131 tackles, 52 more than any other player, despite missing a game because of his injury.

He tied for the team lead with four interceptions. The two teammates with more passes defended were cornerbacks.

hurt Sean Lee is good. I take him at 50 percent, Butler said. Sean Lee is a great asset to the team just in leadership qualities.

As the quarterback of the defense, Lee is responsible for relaying the calls from Ryan, then checking the offensive formation. Lee calls out signals and makes sure everybody is lined up in the right spot. Lee intensity is evident even during a walk-through session, such as on Monday when the defense had a bad play. Lee shouted something in disgust and asked to run the play again.

When the Cowboys got to training camp after the NFL lockout ended last year, they were in a cram session to learn Ryan 3-4 defense since they hadn been able to have any offseason work with

their then-new coordinator.

Now they have been with Ryan for a year, including a full offseason.

were able to learn the defense. We coming into camp with a lot more confidence.

Now we can really perfect the techniques, instead of finally learning the defense for the first time, Lee said. Ryan always has wrinkles. He a guy who loves variations.

He loves teaching different defenses, but our defense we have a great foundation to build off of. And I think that a key, we have got to build on it.

Lee was hampered by injuries during his rookie camp and early in his first season, though he played 14 games without starting. And there was the December 2010 game at Indianapolis in which Lee intercepted Peyton Manning twice. He returned one for a touchdown and set up a game-winning field goal in overtime with the other.

When Ryan arrived, Lee emerged as a starter and leader on the field. Veteran linebackers Keith Brooking and Bradie James, both starters previously, wound up splitting time at the other inside linebacker spot last season. Neither was re-signed during the offseason.

was ready last year, and that why we gave him the opportunities that we gave him, coach Jason Garrett said. He knows this game inside and out, he knows this scheme, he studies the opposing offenses. Itsreally, really important to him. And his personality is infectious. Garrett said Lee has determination in everything he does, on the field or when he is in and focused during meetings, trying to absorb everything that is said.

When Lee was sidelined by a torn ACL in his right knee for what was supposed to be his senior season at Penn State in 2008, he took a medical redshirt.

He served as basically an undergraduate coach during practices and on the sideline during games that year, then had 86 tackles in 10 games the following

season.

speaks to his maturity, Garrett said. if you are a guy in college to be coaching his teammates, whatever role he was in, I think it senses what the coaching staff thought of him at Penn State. Since day one since he been here, he been off the charts that way.

Ryan said nobody worked harder in the offseason than Lee learning the defense, and that the linebacker earned keys to that and the respect of his teammates.

### Budget

any major equipment purchases, however, commissioners are taking on the task of balancing the possibility of employee raises and the cost of future projects, including completion of the Gray County Courthouse restoration, projects at the Perry-Lefors Airport and the heliport at Pampa Regional Medical Center.

"We're in between the rock and the hard place, and you have to weigh both sides together," said Wheeley.

At its next meeting on August 15, the county plans to speak with officeholders on their requested budgets.

"It's push and shove, give and take, in budget time," Wheeley said.

As for Ryan comparison to Bruschi, who played for the coach in New England, Lee was honored even though he believes he has plenty of work to do to reach that level.

need to play a lot more, and I need to make a lot more plays, and we got to start winning. We got to win Super Bowls, Lee said. a guy who won Super Bowls, a Hall of Fame-type guy. ... I don think I close to it yet, but I going to work to get to it.

cont. from page 1

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# Dear Abby...

By Pauline & Jeanne Phillips

DEAR ABBY: I am one of nine employees who work in a jewelry store owned by "Tom" and "Carol," a husband and wife. Tom is having an affair with "Angie," our bookkeeper. I know, because I have heard him talk about it to my co-workers. Carol is suspicious and has approached each of us to ask if anything is going on between them. So far we have covered for them.

Abby, we are getting tired of covering for our boss. It creates tension to lie to Carol, and personally, I feel a lot of guilt over this.

Some of us have suggested to Angie that she quit, but she has no intention of doing so.

Should we tell Carol what we know, tell Angie's husband, or just keep our mouths shut and continue working in these uncomfortable circumstances? — UNEASY IN NEW YORK

DEAR UNEASY: I don't blame you for feeling uneasy. You have been placed squarely in the middle. It is unfair for your boss to expect you to lie for him, and equally unfair that his wife is asking you to be her stool pigeon.

Carol probably knows what's what. She shouldn't be putting her employees on the spot to obtain proof that Tom's fooling around. If she questions you again, simply say, "Sorry, I have nothing to say." I assure you, she'll get the message.

DEAR ABBY: What do you do with someone who has no manners? A relative of my husband's has been dating a woman for more than a year. They are both in their 30s, and there's a strong possibility they will marry.

Whenever a group of us get together to go out for dinner, on vacation or any-

where, she puts a damper on the entire event. She won't converse (and it's not because she's shy), she never smiles, she just sits with her arms crossed and is absolutely miserable.

She has been to our home for dinner on a couple of occasions. Afterward she gets up from the table and never, ever, says please or thank you. She's the most immature, self-centered, unpleasant human being I have ever met. Even our children comment on her rudeness — in addition to the group of people we go out with. She is even rude to my mother-in-law, but her boyfriend just doesn't see it.

They say that love is blind — but THAT blind? It has reached the point that we don't want to associate with this couple. Would I be out of line to say something to her (particularly when she is in my home) about her lack of manners, and if so — what do you suggest I say? (I know what I'd

LIKE to say!) — FUMING IN DELAWARE

DEAR FUMING: From your description of this unhappy young woman's body language, it is obvious that she's desperately uncomfortable in social situations with you and "the group." It is possible that she suffers from a social phobia of some sort.

Rather than confront her about her "bad manners," make a date to see her alone. Then, in the kindest way possible, try to get her to open up about what's bothering her.

If that doesn't work, then talk to your husband's relative about your concerns. His girlfriend may suffer from emotional problems that could be helped with counseling or medication.

As a last resort, curtail your invitations to them.

## BANANAGRAMS!

Each set of 10 tiles below contains two common five-letter words. The letters of the first five-letter word are adjacent, but not in order. Find them and rearrange them to spell a word. Rearrange the five remaining letters to spell the second word.

C I P N U E N L R Y

\_\_\_\_\_

G W L R T A D U R O

\_\_\_\_\_

Yesterday's Answer: PANDA COCOA  
LOUD MUIT

8.7

## CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

F	I	R	S	T		E	V	I	T	A
I	D	A	H	O		X	E	N	O	N
G	O	T	A	T		P	E	C	A	N
			K	A	T	E		A	D	O
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O	R	I	O	N		S	A	B	I	N
O	P	T	F	O	R		V	E	N	D
			F	O	U	R	E	Y	E	S
J	A	M		D	E	E	S			
E	Q	U	A	L		H	O	N	E	Y
S	U	R	G	E		A	F	I	R	E
T	A	K	E	S		B	F	L	A	T

### Yesterday's answer

- |                              |                               |                              |                            |                          |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>ACROSS</b>                | <b>3</b> Court-room oath      | <b>8</b> Gun                 | <b>22</b> Take the title   | <b>33</b> Lowly worker   |
| <b>1</b> Tolerates           | <b>4</b> Olympics saucer      | <b>9</b> Undivided           | <b>23</b> Tie the knot     | <b>34</b> Earth: Prefix  |
| <b>7</b> Coming out of       | <b>5</b> Studio stand         | <b>10</b> Spoil              | <b>25</b> Lucy's brother   | <b>35</b> Belg. neighbor |
| <b>11</b> Tire type          | <b>6</b> Winter glider        | <b>14</b> Goliath's opponent | <b>28</b> Bible strongman  | <b>36</b> Mine yield     |
| <b>12</b> Musical Horne      | <b>7</b> Like some wallpapers | <b>16</b> Dismissed          | <b>29</b> Puget Sound city | <b>37</b> Promise person |
| <b>13</b> Bridged wood       | <b>18</b> Expansive trees     | <b>17</b> Make speeches      | <b>31</b> Cuba's Castro    | <b>39</b> Checkers side  |
| <b>15</b> Fragrant wood      | <b>21</b> Evergreen trees     | <b>19</b> Murdered           |                            |                          |
| <b>16</b> Ump's call         | <b>22</b> Droopy tree         | <b>20</b> Carries            |                            |                          |
| <b>18</b> Expansive trees    | <b>24</b> Lyricist Gershwin   | <b>21</b> Pear-shaped fruit  |                            |                          |
| <b>21</b> Evergreen trees    | <b>25</b> Pot part            |                              |                            |                          |
| <b>22</b> Droopy tree        | <b>26</b> Had supper          |                              |                            |                          |
| <b>24</b> Lyricist Gershwin  | <b>27</b> Arrives             |                              |                            |                          |
| <b>25</b> Pot part           | <b>29</b> Even, as a score    |                              |                            |                          |
| <b>26</b> Had supper         | <b>30</b> College head        |                              |                            |                          |
| <b>27</b> Arrives            | <b>31</b> Stadium group       |                              |                            |                          |
| <b>29</b> Even, as a score   | <b>32</b> Band output         |                              |                            |                          |
| <b>30</b> College head       | <b>34</b> Explained away      |                              |                            |                          |
| <b>31</b> Stadium group      | <b>40</b> Mark's replacement  |                              |                            |                          |
| <b>32</b> Band output        | <b>41</b> Delete              |                              |                            |                          |
| <b>34</b> Explained away     | <b>42</b> Cart pullers        |                              |                            |                          |
| <b>40</b> Mark's replacement | <b>43</b> Imperfect           |                              |                            |                          |

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1	2	3	4	5	6		7	8	9	10	
11							12				
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34	35	36							37	38	39
40							41				
42											

8-7

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Answer to yesterday's puzzle:

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

Sudoku

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

Level: Beginner

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# Sharon Osbourne in reality show battle with NBC

LOS ANGELES (AP) — NBC defended itself Monday against Sharon Osbourne's claim the network discriminated against her afflicted son in casting a new reality show.

The "America's Got Talent" judge told The New York Post that she's quitting the show because NBC fired her son, Jack Osbourne, by email two days before he was to co-star on the reality show "Stars Earn Stripes."

Jack Osbourne, 26, was diagnosed recently with multiple sclerosis. In a statement Monday, NBC Entertainment Chairman Bob Greenblatt said the network "does not discriminate on any basis."

All potential contestants for "Stars Earn Stripes," which puts celebrities through arduous military-style exercises, had to undergo medical vetting, Greenblatt said. He cited medical privacy in declining to discuss Jack Osbourne specifically.

"Stars Earn Stripes," which debuts Aug. 13, requires "dangerous water stunts, strenuous physical activity, and uses live ammunition," Greenblatt said.

Jack Osbourne was offered two alternative roles on the show but declined both, said Greenblatt, who made an effort to smooth things over with the Osbourne clan,

including patriarch-rocker Ozzy Osbourne.

"We have the deepest affection for Sharon Osbourne and consider her to be part of the NBC family," Greenblatt said. "And our hearts go out to her, Ozzy, Jack and his family at this time."

NBC declined further comment. Sharon Osbourne's publicist didn't respond to a request for comment.

A person close to the production said that, contrary to Sharon Osbourne's claim that Jack Osbourne was abruptly fired, NBC hadn't signed him to a contract and had tried to call Sharon Osbourne several weeks beforehand to discuss why her son wouldn't be on the show.

An email was sent after she didn't respond, said the person, who was not authorized to comment on the issue and spoke on condition of anonymity.

Sharon Osbourne had tweeted two weeks ago that she wanted to leave "America's Got Talent," but gave no explanation other than saying it wasn't an issue of money. She remains under contract with the talent contest, the summer's top-rated series.

## NASA releases low-res video of Mars rover descent

PASADENA, Calif. (AP) — NASA's Curiosity rover on Monday transmitted a low-resolution video showing the last 2 1/2 minutes of its white-knuckle dive through the Mars atmosphere, giving Earthlings a sneak peek of a spacecraft landing on another world.

As thumbnails of the video flashed on a big screen on Monday, scientists and engineers at the NASA Jet Propulsion let out "oohs" and "aahs." The recording began with the protective heat shield falling away and ended with dust being kicked up as the rover was lowered by cables inside an ancient crater.

It was a sneak preview since it'll take some time before full-resolution frames are beamed back depending on other priorities.

The full video "will just be exquisite," said Michael Malin, the chief scientist of the instrument.

NASA celebrated the precision landing of a rover on Mars and marveled over the mission's flurry of photographs — grainy, black-and-white images of Martian gravel, a mountain at sunset and, most exciting of all, the spacecraft's white-knuckle plunge through the red planet's atmosphere.

Curiosity, a roving laboratory the size of a compact car, landed right on target late Sunday night after an eight-month, 352-million-mile journey. It parked its six wheels about four miles from its ultimate science destination — Mount Sharp rising from the floor of Gale Crater near the equator.

Extraordinary efforts were needed for the landing because the rover weighs one ton, and the thin Martian atmosphere offers little friction to slow a spacecraft down. Curiosity had to go from 13,000 mph to zero in seven minutes, unfurling a parachute, then firing rockets to brake. In a Hollywood-style finish, cables delicately lowered it to the ground at 2 mph.

At the end of what NASA called "seven minutes of terror," the vehicle settled into place almost perfectly flat in the crater it was aiming for.

"We have ended one phase of the mission much to our enjoyment," mission manager Mike Watkins said. "But another part has just begun."

The nuclear-powered Curiosity will dig into the

Martian surface to analyze what's there and hunt for some of the molecular building blocks of life, including carbon.

It won't start moving for a couple of weeks, because all the systems on the \$2.5 billion rover have to be checked out. Color photos and panoramas will start coming in the next few days.

But first NASA had to use tiny cameras designed to spot hazards in front of Curiosity's wheels. So early images of gravel and shadows abounded. The pictures were fuzzy, but scientists were delighted.

The photos show "a new Mars we have never seen before," Watkins said. "So every one of those pictures is the most beautiful picture I have ever seen."

In one of the photos from the close-to-the-ground hazard cameras, if you squinted and looked the right way, you could see "a silhouette of Mount Sharp in the setting sun," said an excited John Grotzinger, chief mission scientist from the California Institute of Technology.

A high-resolution camera on the orbiting 7-year-old Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter, flying 211 miles directly above the plummeting Curiosity, snapped a photo of the rover dangling from its parachute about a minute from touchdown. The parachute's design can be made out in the photo.

"It's just mind-boggling to me," said Miguel San Martin, chief engineer for the landing team.

Curiosity is the heaviest piece of machinery NASA has landed on Mars, and the success gave the space agency confidence that it can unload equipment that astronauts may need in a future manned trip to the red planet.

The landing technique was hatched in 1999 in the wake of devastating back-to-back Mars spacecraft losses. Back then, engineers had no clue how to land super-heavy spacecraft. They brainstormed different possibilities, consulting Apollo-era engineers and pilots of heavy-lift helicopters.

"I think its engineering at its finest. What engineers do is they make the impossible possible," said former NASA chief technologist Bobby Braun. "This thing is elegant. People say it looks crazy."

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## Tea party focused on coming GOP Senate primaries

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. (AP) — Sarah Palin is mounting an aggressive campaign in Missouri — in television and radio ads, in automated telephone calls, even serving barbecued pork sandwiches at a rural political picnic. She's urging residents to vote for Sarah — Sarah Steelman, one of three Republicans in a prickly U.S. Senate primary.

Fresh off a resounding Republican runoff victory by Ted Cruz in Texas, Palin and the tea party movement now are trying to capitalize in primaries this month in Missouri, Wisconsin and Arizona.

But they may pose a more difficult test than in

Texas, where the charismatic Cruz waged an outsider's campaign against the Republican establishment's pick of Lt. Gov. David Dewhurst.

In Tuesday's primary in Missouri, conservative loyalties are fractured among a trio of candidates all preaching a smaller-government message while splitting the endorsements of conservative celebrities.

In Wisconsin, the would-be tea party beneficiaries are up against a political icon — former four-term Gov. Tommy Thompson.

In all three states, millionaire businessmen are self-financing campaigns focused more on a Main Street message of

job-creation than a direct tea party appeal.

The uncertain outlook shows that winning as a tea party candidate still takes a combination of factors, even in states where Republicans are conservative and getting more so.

Holding sole claim to the tea party label is a big help, along with strong campaign skills and vulnerable opponents.

Few hopefuls manage to have all three.

"The voters in Missouri are conservative like Texas, so I certainly hope it's going to help," Steelman said a day after Cruz's victory on July 31.

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