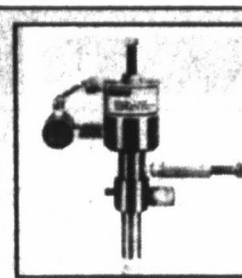


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WEATHER

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LOCAL

Miami ISD board sets special meeting

MIAMI — Miami school board members plan to interview a principal applicant in a special meeting at 7 p.m., Monday, March 8, at the school administration office.

DEATHS

Richard Leslie Minton, 67, Vietnam veteran.

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Wanted: Running mate for Kerry

By CALVIN WOODWARD
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

WASHINGTON (AP) — Hours after staking claim to the Democratic nomination for president with decisive Super Tuesday victories, John Kerry began laying the groundwork Wednesday for selecting a running mate for the struggle to unseat President Bush.

Kerry told reporters during a campaign trip to Florida that he expects to announce soon the process by which he will choose the No. 2 person for the Democratic ticket. His campaign said details might be released as early as Wednesday.

Jim Johnson, a prominent Washington Democrat, heads the list of potential candidates to lead Kerry's selection process. Johnson, vice president of a merchant banking firm, once worked for former Vice President Walter Mondale.

Senior advisers said it was possible that Kerry would choose a nominee well before the Democratic nominating convention in his hometown of Boston in July.

Kerry was moving quickly to seize the reins of the Democratic National Committee. His aides met with DNC staff Wednesday to discuss the party's plans to integrate its apparatus with Kerry's operation. The plans call for

Kerry naming a "general election director" who would oversee the DNC's activities for the November contest.

Kerry's New York-to-California victories in the 10-state Super Tuesday series knocked the fight out of his spirited rival, John Edwards. The North Carolina senator let the word out that he was quitting even before polls closed in the West and just as Minnesotans gathered in caucuses.

The Democrat-to-Democrat sniping was over, replaced by calls for unity, and Kerry is left with his hard-fought reward.

"Tonight, the message can now be heard all across our country: Change is

coming to America," said Kerry, 60, a four-term Massachusetts senator whose understated ways disguise a hotly competitive streak. "We will fight to give America back its future and its hope."

There were grace notes in the first blush of his victory: a polite exchange with Bush, who called to congratulate him. But there is to be no grace period in their campaign fight.

The Republican president opens a multimillion-dollar TV ad blitz Thursday to try to win back favor in a time of slipping poll numbers, and has a war chest of more than \$100 million

(See KERRY, Page 3)

Early voting ends Friday

By MARILYN POWERS
STAFF WRITER

Early voting in the national, state and local primaries ends Friday, and the primary election is Tuesday, March 9.

Gray County voters may cast their primary ballots through Friday in the non-jury courtroom on the first floor of Gray County Courthouse, 205 N. Russell.

Winners in the primary election will go on the November general election ballot. Those elected in November will take office in January 2005.

There are 10 Democrats and one Republican candidate for president of the United States. The Republican ballot lists a choice between George W. Bush and "uncommitted."

State Senator Robert Duncan of District 28 and

State Representative Warren Chisum of District 88 are both unopposed in the Republican primary, and no Democrats filed as candidates in either of those races.

No Democrats are running for any of nine district and county races. Doug Ware is running unopposed for reelection as county G.O.P. party chairman.

Incumbents are the only candidates listed in all but two of the constable positions. Both of the constable races which have more than one candidate include a candidate who has promised to resign office immediately after being sworn in, in order to begin the process of eliminating that office.

Information on the number of early ballots cast was not available from the county clerk's office by press time today.

Passing through...



(Pampa News photo by Marilyn Powers)

Pampa City Manager Mitch Grant, left, visits with State Sen. Robert Duncan, R-Lubbock at a fundraising luncheon for area Boy Scouts yesterday in the local Knights of Columbus Hall. Duncan was scheduled to speak at the luncheon, attended by about 60. He planned to stop in White Deer, Panhandle and Claude after leaving Pampa and then heading home to Lubbock. Armstrong, Carson and Gray counties are among those in Senate District 28 represented by Duncan.

Program focuses on preventing substance abuse

By DEE DEE LARAMORE
EDITOR

Jim Ingham likes to talk about things that kill people.

He especially likes to talk about these things with children and teens.

In fact, it's his job to talk about these things with children and teens.

Ingham supervises an Amarillo Catholic Family Services program called CARE which stands for Children and Adolescents Reaching Excellence.

CARE aims at preventing young people from doing things that could kill them — like using drugs, alcohol and tobacco.

Recently Ingham presented a program on the effects of tobacco use to residents at Pampa's Genesis House. He also gives presentations to youth support groups, day

care centers, schools — both private and public, and juvenile probationers.

"We talk about all the things that kill people," he said. "For instance, with tobacco, we talk about why people start smoking."

Ingham said that many young people have had relatives around them who smoke and who don't seem to be affected by the habit.

"A lot of kids use that as an excuse that it's okay to smoke," Ingham said. "I explain that how (smoking) impacts you depends on your individual body chemistry. You don't really know until you're addicted."

He displays graphic photos of organ damage caused by drug, alcohol and tobacco use. He shows a comparison between a pink, healthy lung and a blackened, cancer-riddled lung of a smoker.

He uses a squeeze bulb and plastic tube to demonstrate just how much tar is collected on the cotton filter in the tube from just one cigarette.

"It makes a pretty good impression," Ingham said.

He shows them a pint jar filled with this sticky black-brown substance — the amount of tar that collects in a person's lung if they smoke a pack a day for a year.

He talks about arsenic, ammonia, and carbon dioxide — some of the poisons contained in cigarette smoke.

"Would you stick your finger in rat poison and then lick it?" he asks. "Well that's what you're doing when you stick a cigarette in your mouth."

Ingham talks about the law, too.

"It's illegal (for persons under 18 to possess tobacco or tobacco products, alcohol, drugs or drug paraphernalia),"

Ingham said. "I tell them, you can lose your (driver's) license if you're not careful."

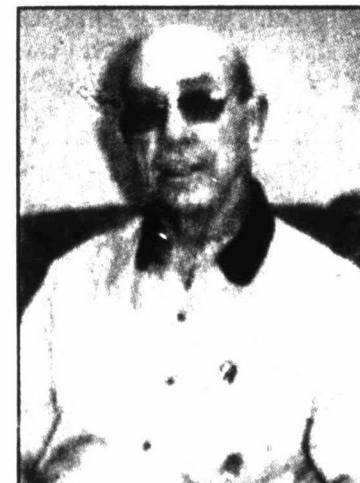
Funded by a grant from the Texas Commission on Alcohol & Drug Abuse, CARE offers a tailor-made program on substance abuse that qualifies to be presented at no cost for drug- and alcohol-free schools. The program consists of 10 to 12 sessions, generally presented once a week.

"It's pretty enticing," Ingham said of the program, "especially for rural schools that don't have a lot of money for programs like this."

Ingham estimates that the CARE program touched more than 2,500 young people in the 20 counties of the Texas Panhandle.

Ingham likes to talk about things that kill people, but he doesn't like to "harp" at kids.

"This is a life-skills type of



(Courtesy photo)

Jim Ingham, CARE supervisor, presents informative programs about dangers of drugs, alcohol and tobacco to area children and teens.

curriculum," he explains. Through his work, Ingham tries to help young people feel better about themselves. He teaches decision-making

(See CARE, Page 3)

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ON RECORD

POLICE

Pampa Police Department today reported the following incidents and arrests.

Monday, March 1

Theft was reported in the 1000 block of South Christy. A cell phone valued at approximately \$150 was taken.

Tuesday, March 2

Disorderly conduct/fighting was reported at Pampa Middle School, 2401 N. Charles. The incident reportedly occurred on March 1.

Sexual assault was reported at Pampa Regional Medical Center. No other information is available as of press time today.

Forgery was reported at United Supermarket, 1420 N. Hobart.

Internal theft was reported by Taylor Mart, 1342 N. Hobart. Items suspected taken include an unknown amount of cash. The case remains open.

A runaway was reported in the 200 block of North Wells. The subject was later located.

Alicia Deann Lunceford, 24, 1022 E. Francis, was arrested for expired motor vehicle registration, failure to maintain financial responsibility and two counts of possession of drug paraphernalia.

William Roe, 37, 1139 S. Nelson, was arrested for evading arrest with a vehicle after an attempted traffic stop in the 1000 block of Prairie.

AMBULANCE

Rural/Metro Ambulance reported the following calls during the 24-hour period ending at 7 a.m. today.

Tuesday, March 2

7:57 a.m. — A mobile ICU responded to a local nursing facility and transported a patient(s) to Pampa Regional Medical Center.

4 p.m. — A mobile ICU responded to the 800 block of Gwendolyn and transported a patient(s) to PRMC.

5:26 p.m. — A mobile ICU responded to the 300 block of Sunset and transported a patient(s) to PRMC.

10:12 p.m. — A mobile ICU responded to the 1400 block of Kingsmill and transported a patient(s) to PRMC.

11:29 p.m. — A mobile ICU responded to the Baten prison unit and transported a patient(s) to PRMC.

Wednesday, March 3

12:45 a.m. — A mobile ICU responded to the 600 block of South Reid and transported a patient(s) to PRMC.

2:08 a.m. — A mobile ICU responded to the Jordan prison unit and transported a patient(s) to PRMC.

FIRE

Pampa Fire Department responded to the following calls during the 24-hour period ending at 7 a.m. today.

Tuesday, March 2

8 a.m. — One unit and three firefighters responded to a medical assist in the 1500 block of West Kentucky.

STOCKS

The following grain quotations are provided by Attebury Grain of Pampa.		KMI	61.29	-0.37
Wheat		XCEL	17.67	-0.06
Milo		Kerr McGee	51.78	-0.33
Corn		Limited	19.44	-0.04
Soybeans		Williams	9.37	+0.01
		MCD	28.54	+0.12
		TSCO	43.01	-0.34
		XOM	41.94	-0.10
		Atmos	26.65	NC
The following 9:30 a.m. N.Y. Stock Market quotations are furnished by Edward Jones & Co. of Pampa.		Pioneer Nat.	32.79	-0.13
OXY		JCP	31.89	-0.08
DG		COP	69.30	-0.24
BP		SLB	65.66	-0.70
Celanese		Tenneco	13.97	-0.08
Cabot Corp.		CVX	89.39	+0.11
Cabot Oil Gas		Wal-Mart	59.92	+0.37
Coca Cola		OKE	22.70	-0.30
VLO		NS Grp	12.21	+1.15
HAL		Nortel	7.66	-0.11
Tnad		New York Gold	393.05	
NOI		Silver	6.72	
		West Texas Crude	36.66	

ACCIDENTS

Pampa Police Department today reported the following accidents.

Sunday, Feb. 29

5 a.m. — A 2001 Ford F350 pickup, driven by Daniel Eugene Cantu, 39, Shallowater, struck two mail boxes and posts in the 1500 block of East Frederic and then left the scene. Cantu was cited for hit/run accident and was arrested at 6:04 a.m. in the 1000 block of North Hobart for driving while intoxicated and evading with a motor vehicle.

10:11 p.m. — An unknown vehicle struck a legally parked 1993 Ford F150 pickup, owned by Jimmy Williams, 1109 Sirroco, in the 1000 block of South Farley and then left the scene.

Tuesday, March 2

6 p.m. — A 2000 Volkswagen Beetle, driven by Wendy Elizabeth Stephens, 16, 2700 Chaumont, struck a pedestrian, James Wyatt Earp, 51, 2416 Evergreen, in a private parking lot at 1005 W. Harvester. Earp was transported by private vehicle to Pampa Regional Medical Center with incapacitating injuries. No citations were issued.

Jury resumes deliberations in case involving woman who stabbed her husband 193 times

HOUSTON (AP) — A Houston jury is deciding whether a woman acted in self-defense when she stabbed her husband 193 times or murdered him so she could collect thousands of dollars in life insurance.

"Someone isn't going to stab someone 193 times over a couple hundred thousand dollars," defense attorney Neal Davis told jurors Tuesday in his closing argument in the case of Susan Wright. "This was a brutal, terrifying, sadistic relationship that spanned years."

Prosecutor Kelly Siegler contended Wright's self-defense claims were concocted between the night she killed Jeffrey

Wright, 34, on Jan. 13, 2003, and when his half-buried body was discovered in the Wrights' back yard five days later.

"How long has she been lying? Since her arm got tired of plunging the knife in Jeff's body," Siegler said.

If convicted, Wright could be sentenced to five to 99 years in prison.

Jurors reconvened Wednesday morning after deliberating for about two hours Tuesday.

Susan Wright, a former topless dancer, said her husband was a cocaine abuser who beat her repeatedly.

Wright testified she killed her

husband only after he raped her and threatened her with a knife. She explained ligature marks on his wrists by saying she tied his body to a dolly, hauled him to the back yard and put the body in a hole her husband had dug to install a fountain. She covered the body with topsoil.

Siegler told jurors Susan Wright staged a seduction to get her husband to allow her to tie him to their bed, which caused the ligature marks. Then she straddled Jeffrey Wright and stabbed him repeatedly.

Susan Wright testified that after the killing, she spent several sleepless nights on the couch, holding the knife, fearful her husband was still alive and would come after her. She called Davis on Jan. 18 to tell him what had happened, and he alerted authorities.

But Siegler introduced evidence that Wright filed a domestic abuse report the day after she killed her husband and sought a restraining order that was granted on Jan. 17. The restraining order was intended to explain Jeffrey Wright's absence, and Susan Wright had never before reported any abuse to police, Siegler said.

The prosecutor also said Susan Wright tried to cover up the crime by painting the bedroom, cleaning it with bleach and cutting away soiled carpet.

Davis said the paint covered patches to holes left in the bedroom walls by Jeffrey Wright's fists. Susan Wright testified she cleaned because she believed her husband would return and the dwelling needed to be spotless.

"Susan Wright has lived a nightmare for four to five years," Davis said.

But Siegler said Wright cried only in the jury's presence, and her actions were calculated to ensure she rid herself of her husband so she could pocket \$200,000 in life insurance.

OBITUARIES

RICHARD LESLIE MINTON
1936-2004

Richard Leslie Minton, 67, of Pampa, died Tuesday, March 2, 2004, at Amarillo. Graveside services will be at 10:30 a.m. Friday in Memory Gardens Cemetery with the Rev. Barry Owens, associate pastor of First Baptist Church, officiating. Military rites will be provided courtesy of Altus Air Force Base, Altus, Okla. Arrangements are under the direction of Carmichael-Whitley Funeral Directors.

Mr. Minton was born Oct. 15, 1936, at Goldsboro, N.C., and came to Pampa over 20 years ago. He married Betty Shorter in 1961 at Reno, Nev.

A U.S. Air Force veteran, serving during the Vietnam War and retiring after 20 years of service.

Mr. Minton was a member of Veterans of Foreign Wars, American Legion and Retiring Enlisted Men's Association.

He was preceded in death by a sister, Dorothy, and a brother, Ralph.

Survivors include his wife, Betty, of the home; a daughter, Patricia Stone of Pampa; a son, Herb Minton of Pampa; five sisters, Judy Turner and Elsie Graham, both of Goldsboro, N.C.; Lena Brunke of Ormond Beach, Fla.; Mary Helen Tall of Jennings, La.; and Lessie Rich of Elizabeth City, N.C.; and a grandchild.

—Sign the on-line register book at www.carmichael-whitley.com.

WEATHER FOCUS

PAMPA

Today's forecast is calling for rain with thunderstorms likely in the afternoon., highs in the upper 40s and northeast winds 5 to 15 mph. Tonight should fall on widespread fog with a 70 percent chance of rain, lows around 40 and northeast winds 5 to 15 mph. Thursday should see a 70 percent chance of rain. Areas of fog in the morning. Highs near 50. Northeast winds 10 to 15 mph. Thursday night, partly cloudy. A 20 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms in the evening. Lows in the upper 30s.

Northwest winds 10 to 20 mph. Friday, partly cloudy. Highs in the mid 50s. Northwest winds 10 to 15 mph. Friday night, partly cloudy. Lows in the lower 30s. Saturday, partly cloudy. Highs around 60. Saturday night, partly cloudy. Lows in the mid 30s. Sunday, partly cloudy. Highs in the upper 50s. Sunday night, partly cloudy. Lows in the mid 30s. Monday, partly cloudy. Highs in the mid 60s. Monday night, partly cloudy. Lows around 40. Tuesday, partly cloudy. Highs in the lower 60s.

Fight over assault weapons ban provides grist for fall election

WASHINGTON (AP) —

The demise of Republican gun legislation in the Senate and a stalemate over renewing the assault-style weapons ban thrusts gun control squarely into the fall presidential campaign, both sides in the debate say.

The Senate voted 90-8 on Tuesday to scuttle a GOP-sponsored bill that would have given gunmakers liability protection against lawsuits. The vote came after Democrats gained enough Republican support to amend the bill to extend the assault-weapons ban and to require background checks for gun show purchases.

Those provisions caused the National Rifle Association to withdraw its support for the bill, and Senate Republican leaders decided to kill it.

The vote gave Democrats and gun control advocates an unexpected victory in the GOP-controlled Congress and all but eliminated any chance for passage this year of gun legislation. The gunmaker liability bill was a priority for President Bush. It would have shielded gunmakers from suits stemming from use of a gun in a crime.

Bush and Senate Democrats, including Bush's likely Democratic challenger, Massachusetts Sen. John Kerry, support reauthorization of the assault weapons ban but there is no sure way of getting House approval before the ban expires in September. The end of the ban would mean the gun industry could resume making, importing and selling 19 types of military-style semiautomatic weapons.

"You can be sure it's going to be in the presidential campaign as a bona fide issue as to whether the American people want AK-47s, street sweepers and Uzis sold once again," said Sen. Dianne Feinstein, D-Calif., one of the chief sponsors of the assault weapons ban.

Liberals say Republicans don't care if "weapons of war" can once again get in the hands of people willing to kill innocent Americans, while conservatives say Democrats want to limit gun ownership by law-abiding Americans.

"The U.S. Senate had its vote today. Law-abiding gun owners will have their turn to vote in November," Wayne LaPierre and Chris Cox, the National Rifle Association's executive vice president and the group's chief lobbyist, said in a joint statement.

Democrats had hoped to use a GOP bill preventing lawsuits

Liberals say Republicans don't care if "weapons of war" can once again get in the hands of people willing to kill innocent Americans, while conservatives say Democrats want to limit gun ownership by law-abiding Americans.

against gun manufacturers and distributors as a vehicle for renewing the 10-year-old ban against the manufacture, importation and sale of military style semiautomatic weapons.

However, Senate Republicans voted overwhelmingly against their own bill Tuesday after a small number of GOP senators defied their Republican leaders, the White House and the NRA by joining with Democrats in attaching the assault weapons ban and other Democratic amendments to the legislation.

The NRA, a political juggernaut because of its 4 million members, e-mailed other senators in both parties after those votes urging them to vote against the bill because of the Democratic amendments.

"We will not send that to the president," said GOP Sen. Larry Craig of Idaho, chief sponsor of the gunmaker immunity bill. He wound up voting against his own bill after the Democratic amendments were attached.

The White House supports reauthorizing the ban, but wanted the Senate to move it as a separate bill instead of attaching it to the gunmaker immunity bill. The Republican-controlled House already has said it wouldn't vote for the reauthorization, and the Bush administration predicted combining the two would simply lead to the GOP legislation's failure.

"Some are simply more interested in undermining that piece of legislation than they are in necessarily getting the other leg-

islation passed," White House spokesman Scott McClellan said.

Democrats, who were not particularly upset that the gunmaker immunity bill failed, say that doesn't necessarily mean that the assault weapons ban can't make it through Congress, especially since they now have the Senate on record as supporting the assault weapons ban by a 52-47 vote.

"If we don't get this assault weapons legislation signed into law and it lapses, we will come back with another piece," Feinstein said.

Democrats say the ban has worked, pointing to Justice Department data showing the proportion of banned assault weapons traced to crimes has dropped by 65.8 percent since 1995. In 1995, the first year that the ban went into effect, assault weapons represented 3.57 percent of all crime guns recovered from crimes. By 2002, assault weapons represented only 1.22 percent of the number of guns used in crimes, Feinstein said.

But Republicans call those numbers misleading and say they will fight against any reauthorization in the Senate.

On the Net:

NRA explanation of assault weapons ban: <http://www.clin-tongunban.com/FactSheets.aspx?i80&aFact%20Sheet>

Brady Center explanation of assault weapons ban: <http://www.bradycampaign.org/facts/faqs/?pageawb>

City Briefs

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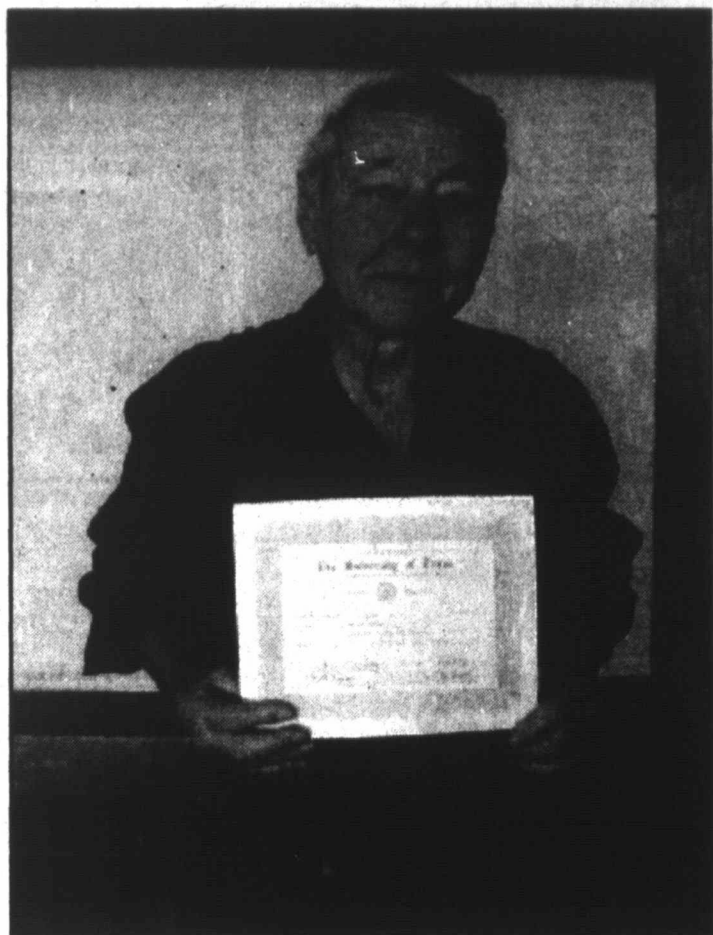
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Better late than never ...



(Pampa News photo by Marilyn Powers)

After 47 years, a certificate from the University of Texas showing completion of a 14-hour course in Rochester carburetor service finally reached its owner, J.B. Fife of Pampa. Fife earned the certificate in 1956, when he was a mechanic for Reeves Olds and Cadillac of Pampa, but had never received it. The certificate was found between pages of a service manual for 1956 Cadillacs which had once been at the dealership. Ted Powers of Coe's Machine Shop found the certificate and called Fife, who was a mechanic at various dealerships in Pampa from 1954 until he retired in 1984.

Shiites vent anger at U.S. after attacks

KARBALA, Iraq (AP) — Shiite Muslim mourners chanted slogans against the United States Wednesday, venting their anger at Iraq's instability after a series of suicide bombings against pilgrims. As the country began three days of mourning, officials said 15 people, some possibly Iranians, were detained in the attacks.

Iraq Governing Council President Mohammed Bahr al-Ulloum said 271 people were killed and 393 wounded in Tuesday's near-simultaneous bombings at Baghdad's Kazimiya shrine and holy sites in Karbala.

U.S. officials put the combined death toll at 117, down from 143 that they reported Tuesday. It was impossible to reconcile the discrepancy immediately.

The draft constitution drawn up this week by Iraq's leading politicians and the U.S.-led administration will be signed Friday as the national period of mourning comes to an end, al-Ulloum said.

American forces have intelligence connecting the bombings to Jordanian Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, a militant also linked to al-Qaida, the U.S. military commander in the Middle East said Wednesday.

"The level of organization and the desire to cause casualties among innocent worship-

pers is a clear hallmark of the Zarqawi network and we have intelligence that ties Zarqawi to this attack," Gen. John Abizaid, head of the U.S. Central Command, told a Congressional committee.

In a letter purported to be from al-Qaida, the terror network led by Osama bin Laden issued an unusual denial that it was responsible.

Tuesday's bombings struck pilgrims from Iraq, Iran and other Shiite communities who had gathered to mark Ashoura, the holiest day of the Shiite calendar.

Iran said at least 22 of its citizens were among the dead. Deputy Interior Minister Ali Asghar Ahmadi urged Iranian pilgrims Wednesday to put off visiting Iraq in the wake of the blasts.

U.S. Brig. Gen. Mark Kimmitt said 15 people were detained in Karbala after being pointed out by witnesses. Some had been seen with wooden carts used to bring in explosives. "We think these people were involved, and that's why they're being interrogated," Kimmitt said.

Among those detained were five Farsi speakers, he said. Kimmitt said the 10 others appeared to be Iraqis. An estimated 100,000 Iranians were believed to have come to Iraq for Ashoura.

Three suicide bombers carried out the blasts at Kazimiya, one inside the shrine's courtyard and two outside, Kimmitt said. Early reports that a would-be fourth suicide bomber was caught proved incorrect, he said. The Karbala attack involved one suicide bomber and cart-borne bombs set up on nearby roads. Mortars may also have been fired on the city outskirts, he said.

As authorities slowly identified the dead, relatives picked up their slain loved ones from Karbala's Al-Hussein hospital Wednesday. Others wept as they scanned handwritten lists of names posted on the hospital walls. Iranian pilgrims, speaking in Farsi, struggled to communicate with the Iraqi hospital officials.

Several thousand joined a funeral procession in the afternoon, taking three bodies to the tombs of Islamic saints Imam Hussein and Imam Abbas for blessings before heading to bury them at the cemetery in this city 50 miles south of Baghdad.

"No, no, Americans! No, no, Israel! No, no, terrorists!" they chanted.

U.S. and Iraqi officials pointed to al-Zarqawi, as a "prime suspect" in the attacks, saying he aims to spark a Shiite-Sunni civil war in Iraq.

A letter purported to come

from al-Qaida denied responsibility for the bombings, blaming American troops instead.

"The American troops have carried out a massacre to kill innocent Shiites in Karbala, their (Shiites') infidel city, and in Baghdad," the letter, received on Wednesday via e-mail by the London-based Al-Quds Al-Arabi newspaper and shared with The Associated Press in Cairo.

Also Wednesday, three rockets hit a telephone exchange building in Baghdad, knocking out international phone service for much of the country only days after the system was put back in service. One Iraqi worker was killed and another injured, Iraqi officials said.

In Kirkuk, police found and defused a 22-pound bomb alongside a road where Shiites had planned to march Tuesday, said Anwar Amin, the Iraqi Civil Defense Corps chief in Kirkuk.

In Najaf, police arrested two people carrying explosives near the Imam Ali shrine, police Col. Saeed al-Joubri said Wednesday.

Police in Basra said they found a car packed with 550 pounds of explosives and two women who were apparently planning to set explosives in Shiite mosques. Kimmitt denied those reports, calling them only rumors.

U.S. Marines block rebels from chasing Aristide supporters

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP) — U.S. Marines blocked rebels from chasing officials of exiled leader Jean-Bertrand Aristide as they fled to the airport Wednesday, apparently the first action of American forces in Haiti to prevent further bloodshed.

With rebels patrolling the streets of Port-au-Prince and their leader threatening to arrest the prime minister, U.S. forces said their mission in Haiti had expanded beyond protecting American citizens and interests to include protection of Haitian civilians from reprisal attacks.

There was no sign of American or French forces as a gunbattle erupted Wednesday between rebels and militant loyalists in the Aristide strong-

hold of La Salines, a seaside slum of the capital.

A day after declaring himself Haiti's new military chief, rebel leader Guy Philippe met briefly with U.S. Ambassador James Foley at the envoy's residence on Wednesday. Neither side would comment about the contact.

Haiti's latest violence started four weeks ago with a bloody, popular uprising leading to the Aristide's flight into exile Sunday. The death toll rose Wednesday to at least 130, with workers at the Port-au-Prince hospital saying 30 more bodies had been brought to the morgue since Sunday.

At the airport, Marines stood holding their weapons outside the main terminal when rebels

arrived, preventing them from reaching dozens of officials Aristide's Lavalas party who had just gone inside, witnesses said.

Staff Sgt. Timothy Edwards said at the airport that the Marines' mission now also aimed "to protect Haitians from reprisal attacks."

U.S. Marine Col. Dave Berger told a news conference that the Marines will increase their presence throughout Haiti after Philippe's declaration of power and threat against the prime minister.

"The country is in my hands!" Philippe announced Tuesday on the radio.

Two U.S. Chinook helicopters slowly circled Tuesday over Philippe's base, the rebel-

held northern port of Cap-Haitien, on an apparent reconnaissance mission, said a resident reached by telephone. Some U.S. Marines patrolled Port-au-Prince's seaport, which was being looted, in a Humvee.

American and French troops in Haiti have no orders to disarm Haiti's factions, said Berger and the commander of the French forces.

"We are not a police force," said Berger.

The Pentagon said there would be some 400 Marines in Haiti by Tuesday. Chile said it was sending 120 special forces to Haiti on Wednesday, the first of about 300. France said it would have some 420 soldiers and police in place by the end of the week.

Speaking in Washington, Assistant U.S. Secretary of State Roger Noriega said Philippe had no real power even as his rebels sought to take advantage of the political chaos.

"He is not in control of anything but a ragtag band of people," Noriega told lawmakers Tuesday.

The buildup of the U.N.-authorized international peacekeeping presence in Haiti will

make Philippe's role "less and less central in Haitian life. And I think he will probably want to make himself scarce," Noriega said.

"We have sent that message to him. He obviously hasn't received it," he said.

Philippe, who arrived in Port-au-Prince in a rebel convoy on Monday, apparently plans to transform his fighters into a reconstituted Haitian army.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

CARE

skills, relationship-building, and perhaps most importantly, "how to say 'no.'"

"We talk about making positive choices," he said. "I know life gets difficult at times and kids look for a crutch to get their mind off of things. But it doesn't have to be drugs or alcohol or tobacco. They can spend time with their friends, exercise, play games.

"I try to talk to them and let them decide. I give them good information so they can make an informed, intelligent decision."

For More information about CARE or to schedule a program or presentation, contact Ingham at 806-376-4571, extension 234.

Borger Altrusa



Spring Arts, Crafts & Flea Market

Featuring the fine handicrafts of local artisans

*Antiques *Candles *Clothing
*Woodworking *Sterling Jewelry
*Collectibles *Gifts

Date: March 6th & 7th

Times: Saturday 9:00 to 6:00

Sunday: 10:00 to 5:00

Place: Borger Dome

Free Admission

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

KERRY

to draw from in the months ahead, more than Kerry can muster.

Vice President Dick Cheney criticized Kerry on the airwaves Tuesday as a frequent foe of defense and intelligence budgets, seeking to neutralize Kerry's draw as a decorated Vietnam veteran and his Senate experience in foreign policy.

And the courteous phone call aside, Kerry kept up the drumbeat of recent weeks against Bush, giving him no quarter on the war on terrorism or anything else. "The Bush administration has run the most inept, reckless, arro-

gant and ideological foreign policy in the modern history of our country," he told supporters.

Kerry dominated the six-week Democratic competition from the Iowa caucuses on, once he shook off a torpid start and overcame the fading phenomenon of Howard Dean. He has won 27 of 30 contests, putting him well on his way to winning the nomination formally once he has collected 2,162 delegates.

The Super Tuesday states awarded a mother lode of 1,151 delegates, more than half those needed, and pushed Kerry's total to nearly 1,300. Kerry won nine of the 10 states Tuesday, losing only in

Vermont, where voters made Dean, their former governor, the sentimental favorite even though he ended his campaign two weeks ago.

In all regions and among practically all groups, voters interviewed about their choice spoke of making the same political calculation.

That imperative helped him win Tuesday in states such as Ohio, Minnesota and Georgia, even though Kerry backed trade agreements that voters blamed for costing their communities jobs.

"I really want to win," Angie Kline, a St. Paul, Minn., caucus-goer, said in explaining her vote for Kerry. "Kerry has the breadth of

experience. He's had umpteen years in the Senate working on both domestic and foreign policy issues."

Edwards knew he had to quit, and aides tipped his hand on that plan on the eve of his formal departure. "We have been the little engine that could," the North Carolina senator told supporters.

Edwards immediately started closing ranks with his rival, calling Kerry an "extraordinary advocate for jobs, better health care, a safer world," and declaring, "These are the causes of our party, these are the causes of our country, and these are the causes we will prevail on come November."

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WEDNESDAY • March 3, 2004

DEAR ABBY

written by Pauline Phillips and daughter Jeanne Phillips

Reaching Out to Shy Teens Brings Moms, Girls Together

DEAR ABBY: I have questions about "growing up." I am 15 and want to talk to my mom about it, but I'm embarrassed. We talk about some stuff, but most of the time I wait until I can't stand it anymore and finally talk to her.

Do you have any ideas about making it easier for me to open up to my mom? I want to just walk through the front door and say, "Hey, Mom, I've got a question" - but I can't. I'm too shy.

Abby, please help! -- TOO SHY IN A SMALL TOWN

DEAR TOO SHY: I'm sad to say your question is very common. It is repeated in nearly every batch of mail I receive. Teenage girls want to talk to their mothers, but they are afraid to reach out.

What I recommend are scheduled mother-daughter dinners, one-on-one time where there are no distractions, and feelings can be discussed, questions answered and opinions and attitudes aired and explained. This quality time can be the basis of precious memories and the foundation for trust and closeness. If this seems far-fetched, consider how many thousands of young girls have such distant relationships with their mothers that the only person they feel they can confide in is an advice columnist. Mothers, please reach out to your daughters. You'll be glad you did.

DEAR ABBY: My children attend a local elementary school here in Dallas. They are in kindergarten and second grade.

Other parents have told me about a practice that occurs in third grade at our school. If a child's desk is not properly organized (to the teacher's specifications), the teacher does a "desk dump" in front of the class and orders the child to put the items back using the "proper organization."

I don't think public humiliation is an appropriate teaching technique. And I seriously doubt that the children learn anything more than fear of their teacher.

Fortunately, the school district does not allow corporal punishment; however, this kind of emotional abuse can be almost as destructive as physical abuse for children this young.

What do you think of this "teaching technique"? -- WORRIED PARENT IN TEXAS

DEAR WORRIED: I think it is unacceptable, outmoded and should be scrapped. Instead of teaching children, it demeans them and causes resentment.

Since you feel strongly about it, visit the principal and confirm that the stories are true. If they are, ask that the teacher be instructed about what is appropriate and effective and what is not. If the teacher persists, you and other concerned parents should take this matter up with the school board.

DEAR ABBY: I am 7 years old. I live with my mother and father in a small apartment. I have two fish, two cats, a hamster and a mouse -- but I would also like a dog. My mother says our apartment is too small. My dad says to ask you because I practice reading through your column. Plus, I told my dad that I would ask your advice. Thank you. -- AMBER IN CHICAGO

DEAR AMBER: At the risk of getting myself in the doghouse, I vote with your mother. Two fish, two cats, a hamster and a mouse are already quite a sizeable menagerie for a family of three living in a small apartment. Enough is enough.

I'm pleased that you read my column -- it's never too early to start.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Abby shares more than 100 of her favorite recipes in two booklets: "Abby's Favorite Recipes" and "More Favorite Recipes by Dear Abby." Send a business-size, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for \$10 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby -- Cookbooklet Set, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included in price.)

(EDITORS: For editorial questions, please contact Alan McDermott, [amcdmott\(at\)amuniversal.com](mailto:amcdmott(at)amuniversal.com))

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For Better Or Worse



Zits



Garfield



Beetle Bailey



Marvin



B.C.



Haggag The Horrible



Peanuts



Blondie



Crossword Puzzle

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS 40 Table

1 Radar

5 Fly

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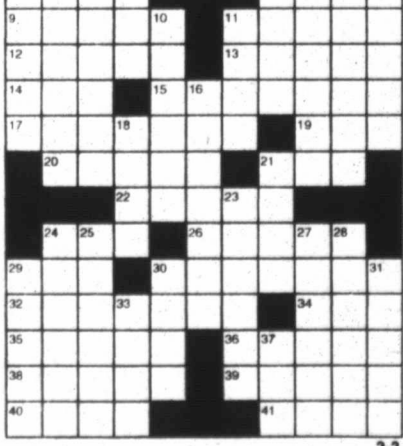
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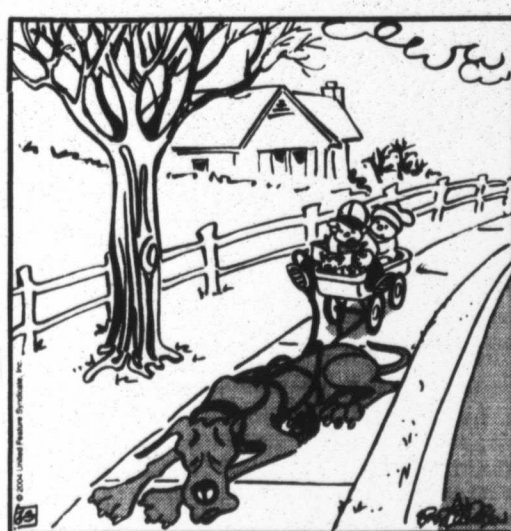
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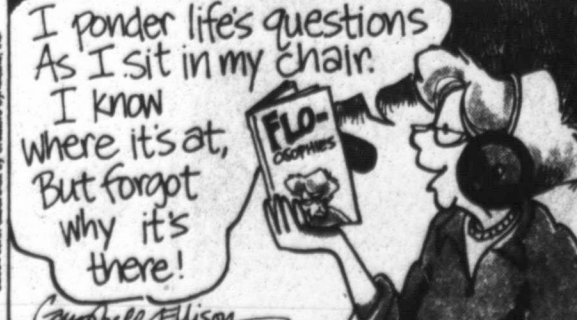
Marmaduke



The Family Circus



Flo & Friends



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SPORTS

NOTEBOOK

BASKETBALL

PAMPA — The Pampa Lady Harvester Basketball Banquet will be held Wednesday (March 10), starting at 7:30 p.m. in the Knights of Columbus Hall. Tickets are \$10.

RSVP to Janis at 665-6719 or Doretta at 669-3523.

SOCCER

PAMPA — Pampa dropped a 2-1 decision to Caprock in a District 3-4A girls' soccer match Tuesday.

Caprock is 4-3 in district and Pampa is 2-5.

FOOTBALL

DALLAS (AP) — Steve Spurrier has kept a low profile since his abrupt departure from the Washington Redskins, even ducking through airports in sunglasses and a hat.

He's not trying to hide anything. He's just enjoying retirement after 20 seasons as a "head ball coach" in college and pro football.

Spurrier says his new life is so relaxing that he plans to do nothing more strenuous this fall than watching his son's high school games. He's not interested in broadcasting and won't return to the sidelines — not in 2004 and possibly never.

"I'll be low-key, out of sight for a year, definitely," he said Tuesday in his first news conference since quitting the NFL via cell phone from a Florida golf course. "Maybe I'm finished. I don't know yet."

The home of the Dallas Cowboys is a strange place for a deposed Redskins coach to appear, but Spurrier was in town for a long-arranged speech hosted by the SMU athletic forum.

In a nod to his surroundings, Spurrier said he might follow the career path of former University of Texas coach Darrell Royal, who retired in 1976 at age 52 and never returned.

"He and I have a lot in common," said Spurrier, who turns 59 next month. "We enjoy playing golf, being with our family and having fun."

Spurrier resigned Dec. 30, three days after his second season ended. Washington went 12-20 under his guidance, losing 10 of the last 12.

He walked away from the final three years of a five-year, \$25 million contract, the richest ever given to an NFL coach, because the Fun 'n' Gun offense that worked so well at Florida wasn't working — and he doubted that it ever would for Redskins owner Dan Snyder.

"There was no light at the end of the tunnel in the direction our coaching staff and our team was headed," Spurrier said. "Mr. Snyder basically wanted me to probably change a lot of coaches — which actually probably needed to be done — and I said, 'Hey, maybe it's best if I step aside and you get a new head coach and new assistant coaches and have a go at it.'"

He said his two seasons with the Redskins "overall, weren't a lot of fun." He said he'd do a lot of things differently if he returns to the NFL, but wouldn't elaborate because he didn't want it to seem like he was making excuses.

Lady Longhorns stake claim to share of Big 12 title

NORMAN, Okla. (AP) — Getting booed off the court never felt better for the Texas Longhorns.

Freshman Tiffany Jackson scored 15 points, including two free throws with 7.9 seconds left, leading No. 3 Texas to its second straight Big 12 regular-season title with a 57-54 victory over No. 17 Oklahoma on Tuesday night.

Making this win sweeter was the chance to clinch the league championship on the Sooners' home floor — on Senior Night. Texas players merrily flashed "Hook'em Horns" signals to the booing crowd as they skipped into the locker room.

"Them booing us off of the court is a sign that they have

such respect for our program," said a smiling Stacy Stephens, who finished with 14 points and 14 rebounds. "We don't take it too personal."

Added coach Jody Conradt: "As long as they don't throw things."

Nina Norman added 14 points for the Longhorns (26-3, 14-2), who won their fifth consecutive game against their border rival.

Texas will have the top seed in next week's conference tournament.

Oklahoma (19-8, 9-7) dropped into sixth place in the Big 12, guaranteeing the Sooners won't get a first-round bye in the tournament.

Caton Hill led Oklahoma with 12 points in what was

probably her last game at the Lloyd Noble Center.

"(Texas) made the plays at the end," said Hill, a fifth-year senior. "They did exactly what they have done the last two games. They made tough shots and they made defensive plays."

The Sooners never backed down from the defending league champs, turning the game into a physical, contest-every-possession type of game. Texas, coming off an exhausting 65-63 win over eighth-ranked Kansas State on Sunday, looked a little weary at times.

The Longhorns won despite committing nearly three times as many turnovers (17) as assists (6).

"I looked at the contrast of this game and ... this game was so much more physical," Conradt said. "However, our team is able to adjust what is happening in any situation and we do whatever we have to do to win."

Freshman Erin Higgins' long jumper from the corner gave the Sooners their first lead of the game, 34-33, with more than 17 minutes to go.

From there, the score was tied at 40, 43, 46, and 53 as neither team could put together enough of a run to get any breathing room.

The game was so hotly contested that Conradt, normally an even-tempered sort, drew a technical foul with 6:49 to play after jawing with an official

during a timeout.

Hill made one of two free throws following the technical to give Oklahoma a 47-46 lead, but freshman Leah Rush committed a turnover on the next possession.

Missed free throws ultimately doomed Oklahoma's opportunity to pull off the upset: the Sooners finished just 4-of-11 from the line.

"We needed to capitalize on the technical foul," Oklahoma coach Sherri Coale said. "I felt like that really changed the game."

Stephens made what essentially was the game-winning basket with 58 seconds left, scoring on a tough inside move as the shot clock expired to give the Longhorns a 55-53 lead.

Pampa gymnasts turn in high scores at Lubbock



Kelby Doughty (left) and Madison Fatheree.

LUBBOCK — Gymnastics of Pampa team members recently competed at the Texas Elite Gymnastics Academy's Winter Classic in Lubbock.

Pampa was led by Level 8 gymnast Kelby Doughty, who was attending her first Level 8 competition. Kelby had very solid performances in her first outing at that level. Her best score was on bars, where she received an 8.65. On floor exercise, Kelby scored an 8.55. She placed fourth on vault with an 8.45 and had an 8.25 on balance beam. Kelby finished fifth in the All-Around with an awesome first-time score of 33.9.

"Kelby's difficulty in her skills has improved greatly in the last year. In order to compete at Level 8, she is doing several new skills on each event and competed them well at the meet. We were very proud of her performances," said coach Kristi Petty.

Madison Fatheree was entered in her first Level 7 meet and had outstanding performances to dominate the 9-11 year-old age group. The 9-year-old gymnast won all four events with a 9.15 on vault, 9.15 on balance beam, 9.15 on floor exercise and an 8.35 on bars. Her 35.8 was good for the All-Around gold.

White Deer's Smith wins three events at Sunray

SUNRAY — White Deer senior Sara Smith won three events to lead White Deer to a second place finish at the Bobcat Relays last weekend.

Smith finished first in the high jump (4-10), 400 (66.20) and 200 (28.44). Becca Rapstine won the 1600 with a time of 20.89 and Brittany Warminski came in first in the

3200 with a time of 34.45.

Other top three placings for White Deer were Penny Armstrong, second, long jump (14-6 1/2) and third,

triple jump (31-5 1/2); Kim Gamblin, third, shot put (29-3 1/2); Patience Ball, second, 800 (2:39.54) and Keeley Longo, third, 100 (14.01).

Cowboys cut OL Young

IRVING, Texas (AP) — Already comfortably under the salary cap, the Dallas Cowboys trimmed a bit more Tuesday by releasing often-injured offensive lineman Ryan Young.

Young, who was due \$1.1 million this season and \$2 million in 2005, signed with Dallas in March 2003. Although he was coming off an injury-marred season in Houston, the Cowboys were interested because he'd played for coach Bill Parcells on the New York Jets.

Young became the starting right tackle until hurting his right knee. He was in and out of the lineup at tackle and even was moved to guard the rest of the season.

Initially a seventh-round pick of the Jets in 1999, he lasted three seasons until the Houston Texans took him in the expansion draft.

The Cowboys continue trying to add receiver Keyshawn Johnson from Tampa Bay. The preferred way is by trading Joey Galloway, but negotiations between Galloway and the Buccaneers have slowed.

Bryant's accuser ordered to testify at next hearing

EAGLE, Colo. (AP) — The woman who accused Kobe Bryant of rape will face detailed questions about her sex life when she testifies in a closed hearing in three weeks.

Hours after an attorney for Bryant's accuser denied a claim that the woman had sex with someone else the morning after the alleged attack, State District Judge Terry Ruckriegle made his decision.

The 19-year-old woman is scheduled to face her alleged attacker for the first time in court in the March 24-25 hearing.

The Los Angeles Lakers star's attorneys subpoenaed her in hopes her testimony would

convince the judge that her sexual conduct in the days surrounding her encounter with Bryant can be used at trial.

Prosecutors had argued such questions were irrelevant and asked the judge to limit what Bryant's lawyers could ask.

Under Colorado's rape-shield law, the sexual activity of an alleged victim is presumed to be irrelevant; defense attorneys have to convince the judge otherwise.

Bryant, 25, is accused of sexually assaulting the woman on June 30 at the Vail-area resort where she worked. Bryant has said they had consensual sex.

Second at Shamrock



The Lefors Peewee 5th-6th grade placed second at the Shamrock Basketball Tournament this season. They are (front, l-r) A. Simpson, M. O'Brien, K. Calloway, A. Andis and L. Johnston; (back, l-r) coach Brad Overstreet, C. Graham, T. Overstreet, S. Morris, H. Smith, A. Shepard and A. Premo.

Pampa Rangers schedule baseball tryouts

PAMPA — The Pampa Rangers will be holding open tryouts this Saturday (March 6), beginning at 1 p.m. at the Pampa Optimist Club's 9-10 year old field.

The Rangers were organized two years ago to play baseball against area and out-of-state teams. The team consists of players ages 12 years and under.

The Rangers will be entering tournaments in Oklahoma and around the Texas Panhandle area.

The team is coached by Mike Killgo, Huey Green and Kevin Hunt.

"This is an excellent opportunity for our kids," said coach Hunt. "The level of competition is outstanding. We invite any and all

kids to try out."

Hunt said the team works hard on and off the field. Passing grades are required and the team also does a fund-raiser to help off-set the cost of the tournaments.

Tryouts are open to youngsters between the ages of 10 and 12.

Still unbeaten

By The Associated Press

Saint Joseph's is three wins away from a perfect regular season.

Jameer Nelson scored 25 points and Chet Stachitis added a career-best 16, leading the second-ranked Hawks to a 82-50 victory over St. Bonaventure in their final home game Tuesday night.

"It's been a special season, but we have unfinished business here," Nelson said.

Only the Atlantic 10 tournament stands in the way of Saint Joseph's (27-0, 16-0) getting the NCAA's first perfect season in 13 years. The NCAA considers conference tournaments part of the regular season. The Hawks have clinched a first-round bye for the A-10 tourney, which starts March 10.

"They're far from finished. We got nine games left," said Hawks coach Phil Martelli, referring to the number of games his team would play if it won the A-10 and NCAA tournaments.

No team has entered the NCAA tournament unbeaten since UNLV in 1991, and the last undefeated to win the tournament was Indiana in 1976. Top-ranked Stanford (25-0) has two games remaining before it starts the Pac-10 tournament.

Delonte West finished with 15 points, and Nelson added eight rebounds and six assists.

"It's a great feeling," West said. "I'm just glad to be part of it."

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SCOREBOARD

BOWLING
Harvester Lanes
League Standings50 To Heaven League
(Week 4)

Team	Won	Lost
Grey Ghosts	10	6
Future Forensics	10	6
Polygrip Pals	10	6
Geritol Go-Getters	8	8
Old But Good	7	9
Rolaid Rollers	6 1/2	9 1/2
Going, Going, Gone	5	11
Prilosec Prowlers	4	12
Metamucil Maulers	2 1/2	13 1/2

Season's High Scores

Men
High scratch game: Andy Anderson 267; High scratch series: Andy Anderson 657; High handicap game: Andy Anderson 267; High handicap series: Dave Thomas 717.

Women

High scratch game: Judy Anderson 203; High scratch series: Ann O'Brien 538; High handicap game: Shirley Jernigan 253; High handicap series: Ann O'Brien 655.

Generation Gap League
(Week 21)

Team	Won	Lost
Team Seven	12	1
The Wintonizers	10	2
M & M's	10	3
Split This	8	4
For Better Or Worse	7	5
We Don't Know	6	6
Rice O'Roni's	5	7
Bottom of the Barrel	3	8

Week's High Scores

Girls
High scratch game: Shayley Morris 157; High scratch series: Shayley Morris 426; High handicap game: Shayley Morris 250; High handicap series: Shayley Morris 705.

Boys

High scratch game: Zach Wilson 254; High scratch series: Zach Wilson 650; High handicap game: Michael Adams 285; High handicap series: Michael Adams 741.

Ladies

High scratch game: Judy Morris 232; High scratch series: Judy Morris 549; High handicap game: Judy Morris 278; High handicap series: Judy Morris 687.

Men

High scratch game: Gary Winton

268; High scratch series: Gary Winton 801; High handicap game: Gary Winton 268; High handicap series: Gary Winton 801.

COLLEGE BASKETBALL

Tuesday's Major Scores

By The Associated Press

EAST

Miami 59, Villanova 56

Pittsburgh 88, Providence 61

Saint Joseph's 82, St. Bonaventure 50

Syracuse 65, West Virginia 52

SOUTH

Mississippi St. 105, Auburn 91

North Carolina 69, Clemson 53

Virginia 84, Wake Forest 82

MIDWEST

Valparaiso 74, Chicago St. 66

Wisconsin 68, Michigan St. 64, OT

SOUTHWEST

Stephen F. Austin 69, Northwestern St. 59

FAR WEST

No major team scores reported from the FAR WEST.

TOURNAMENT

Big South Conference

First Round

Coastal Carolina 67, Radford 62

High Point 75, VMI 43

Liberty 60, Charleston Southern 54

N.C.-Asheville 49, Winthrop 46

Horizon League

First Round

Butler 88, Youngstown St. 57

Detroit 62, Cleveland St. 34

Loyola of Chicago 76, Wright St. 59

Ohio Valley Conference

First Round

Austin Peay 75, Tennessee St. 71

E. Kentucky 81, Samford 61

Morehead St. 82, Jacksonville St. 68

Murray St. 92, Tennessee Tech 75

PRO BASKETBALL

National Basketball Association

At A Glance

By The Associated Press

All Times EST

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

W	L	Pct	GB
New Jersey	37	22	627
New York	26	35	426
Boston	26	36	41912 1/2
Miami	25	36	410
Philadelphia	24	36	40013 1/2
Washington	19	39	32817 1/2
Orlando	17	45	27421 1/2

Central Division

W	L	Pct	GB
Indiana	44	16	733
Detroit	38	25	6037 1/2
Milwaukee	32	27	54211 1/2
New Orleans	32	28	533
Toronto	26	34	433
Cleveland	24	36	400
Atlanta	20	40	333
Chicago	18	42	300

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Midwest Division

W	L	Pct	GB
Minnesota	43	17	717
Dallas	39	20	6613 1/2
San Antonio	39	21	650
Memphis	36	24	600
Houston	34	25	5768 1/2
Denver	33	29	532
Utah	31	30	50812 1/2

Pacific Division

W	L	Pct	GB
Sacramento	44	15	746
L.A. Lakers	38	21	644
Portland	29	30	492
Seattle	27	33	45017 1/2
Golden State	25	34	424
L.A. Clippers	25	34	424
Phoenix	20	41	328

Monday's Games

Boston 117, Orlando 96

Washington 111, New Orleans 106, OT

Chicago 92, Cleveland 81

Memphis 81, San Antonio 80

Utah 94, Detroit 86

Tuesday's Games

Toronto 89, Miami 86

Atlanta 94, L.A. Lakers 93

Dallas 107, Seattle 96

New Jersey 95, Denver 91

Sacramento 113, L.A. Clippers 106

Indiana 96, Golden State 88

Wednesday's Games

Atlanta at Cleveland, 7 p.m.

Toronto at Washington, 7 p.m.

Milwaukee at Orlando, 7 p.m.

Philadelphia at New York, 7:30 p.m.

Dallas at Minnesota, 8 p.m.

Chicago at New Orleans, 8 p.m.

Seattle at San Antonio, 8:30 p.m.

New Jersey at Phoenix, 9 p.m.

L.A. Lakers at Houston, 9 p.m.

Memphis at Portland, 10 p.m.

Indiana at L.A. Clippers, 10:30 p.m.

Thursday's Games

Milwaukee at Miami, 7:30 p.m.

Sacramento at Philadelphia, 7:30 p.m.

Detroit at Portland, 10 p.m.

Texans reach agreement with defensive lineman Gary Walker

By MARK BABINECK
Associated Press Writer

Facing the prospect of having to release one of their best players, the Houston Texans have reworked the contract for two-time Pro Bowl defensive lineman Gary Walker to make it more salary-cap friendly, general manager Charley Casserly said Wednesday.

Walker would have counted \$12.6 million against the cap this season under the contract the Texans inherited when they plucked him from the Jacksonville Jaguars in the 2002 expansion draft. His new six-year deal softens the blow, though financial terms were not immediately available.

Walker, who turned 31 last week, played in just four games last year because of

shoulder and toe injuries. In the Texans' inaugural year, he registered 115 tackles and 6 1/2 sacks and accompanied cornerback Aaron Glenn to the Pro Bowl.

Drafted by the Houston Oilers in 1995, Walker signed with the Jaguars in 1999 and came to the Texans in the expansion draft along with defensive tackle Seth Payne and offensive tackle Tony Boselli, who retired last summer with chronic shoulder problems and never played a down in Houston.

The defensive line was a weakness last year as both Walker and Payne, who suffered a season-ending knee injury in the second game, barely played. The position was considered a priority in free agency or the draft and still could be, even with Walker and Payne returning

healthy. However, Casserly's focus in free agency will be to help the entire defense, where injuries and lack of depth made it a liability in 2003.

"Clearly, defense is where we want to look first," Walker said. "Then you kind of just evaluate whether there is any player out there in free agency you think could be an upgrade at one of your positions."

Walker's return "obviously fills a slot there," Casserly said.

Particularly, the Texans are on the lookout for either safety help or a cornerback good enough to push Marcus Coleman to safety. The team also could seek a talented pass-rusher at outside linebacker and bolster depth at virtually every position.

Colts sign Manning to 7-year deal

By BARRY WILNER
AP Football Writer

The Indianapolis Colts overcame their biggest off-season hurdle just before the NFL's free agent signing period began.

The Colts signed All-Pro quarterback Peyton Manning to a \$98 million, seven-year contract Tuesday. The deal for the league's co-MVP included a record \$34.5 million signing bonus and was so complex that, initially, neither the team nor agent Tom Condon were certain about the exact dollars.

Regardless, Manning is staying in Indianapolis and the Colts have room to maneuver in free agency. The deal saved the Colts \$10.1 million in cap space, allowing them to re-sign current players and pursue free agents.

"I'm happy to be a Colt for life," Manning said. "Everybody's happy ... I'm just relieved it's over with."

So are the Colts, who

would have taken an \$18.4 million salary cap hit if Manning remained the team's franchise player.

"There was a lot of pressure because we're getting close to (making) the Super Bowl," Colts owner Jimmy Irsay said. "If you don't get it done, we're going in a dramatically different direction."

Several teams are headed in different directions from star players, most notably the 49ers.

San Francisco quarterback Jeff Garcia, who didn't accept a cut in his \$9.9 million salary for next season, was released.

He'll be among the most coveted free agents and the 49ers will save \$1.7 million against the cap.

"We made this decision based primarily on cap ramifications," 49ers general manager Terry Donahue said. "The reality of it is we're going along with a plan we've established. In our view of things, we took the long-term view. This isn't

anyone's fault, there are just things we've got to do."

Another thing they're doing is shopping Terrell Owens. The disgruntled wide receiver was given permission to seek a trade after a paperwork mistake cost him a shot at free agency.

"I think it's very improbable that he would be back," Donahue said. "Both parties have agreed to pursue a trade very actively in the next 72 hours."

Two more stars, Denver running back Clinton Portis and Washington cornerback Champ Bailey, are switching teams.

Bailey agreed to a seven-year, \$63 million contract with the Broncos late Tuesday, clearing the way for the four-time Pro Bowl cornerback to be traded Wednesday to the Broncos for running back Portis, who ran for 1,500-plus yards each of his first two seasons. Denver also receives Washington's second-round draft pick this season.

Mavericks finish off perfect five-game homestand

DALLAS (AP) — The real test for the Dallas Mavericks is about to begin.

The Mavericks finished off a perfect five-game homestand with a 107-96 victory over the Seattle SuperSonics on Tuesday.

Dallas will hit the road starting Wednesday night against the Midwest Division-leading Minnesota Timberwolves.

"We've had success at home," said Michael Finley, who led the Mavericks with

35 points, including 20 in the fourth quarter. "Now it's time to prove it on the road. It starts with a premier team in Minnesota."

The Mavericks won their eighth straight at American Airlines Center, improving to a league-best 28-4 at home. But Dallas is just 11-16 on the road, where it will play 11 of its next 15 games.

"We have to try and take some of that home cooking with us on the road," said Antawn Jamison, who scored

21 points.

Against the Sonics, the Mavericks got a big lift from rookie Marquis Daniels in his third career start.

Daniels, a free agent from Auburn, had 14 points, nine assists and nine rebounds to help the Mavericks stretch their overall winning streak to six games.

"I played against him in summer leagues," Seattle's Ronald Murray said. "I knew he was capable of going out there and having a big game."

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CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)
 ***** Working with a partner could be confusing, especially if he or she cannot get the story straight. You might be angry or frustrated about a personal relationship or a child. Stop and regroup. Share your feelings for better results. Tonight: A quiet night for two.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)
 ***** You might be as confused as those around you, or you might be the source of the chaos. Work with others to clear the air. Refuse to give into anger and frustration. Let others lead, and respond as clearly as possible. Tonight: Seek out a friend.

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Facing criminal charges, mayor will continue same-sex weddings

NEW PALTZ, N.Y. (AP) — New Paltz's mayor vowed to go ahead with up to two dozen same-sex weddings this weekend, despite being charged with 19 criminal counts and possibly facing jail time for marrying gay couples.

Jason West insisted Wednesday that it was New York's Health Department that was breaking the law by refusing to give marriage licenses to same-sex couples. "Our state constitution requires equal protection for all New Yorkers," he said on NBC's "Today Show."

A crowd of gay couples was expected to go

to the county administration building in Portland, Ore. Wednesday after a county commissioner there said she would begin issuing marriage licenses to same-sex couples.

West, 26, said he was motivated by civil rights and "common decency" to join the vanguard of the growing gay marriage movement, along with San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom.

West married 25 gay couples on Friday, making this small college village 75 miles north of New York City another flash point in

the national debate over gay marriage. More than 3,400 couples have been married in San Francisco; West now has about 1,000 couples on a waiting list.

West was to be in court Wednesday night to answer charges that he married 19 couples knowing they did not have marriage licenses, a violation of the state's domestic relations law. He planned to plead innocent.

"I don't plan to spend time in jail," the Green

Party mayor said. "I think that the judge before whom this case will be heard will see that the constitution is clear on this, will see that our laws are clear on this and will see that these marriages are in fact legal."

In Oregon, Multnomah County Chair Diane Linn directed the county to begin issuing such licenses, after consulting with the county attorney, but without an official vote from the four other county commissioners.

Middle School musical



(Courtesy photo)

The Middle School Choral Department will present "Guys and Dolls" at 7:30 p.m. March 5-6 at the middle school auditorium. Above: (Top row, left-right) Jordan Dodge, Chandler Talley, Kailee Intemann; (middle, l-r) Diana Mechelay, Claire Boyd, Annie Day, Marli Street; (bottom, l-r) Morgan Reagan, Anna Hillman, April Silva.

Georgia voters decide stick with current banner

ATLANTA (AP) — Georgia officials hope their flag flap is finished now that voters overwhelmingly approved a banner that nods to the state's Confederate history without embracing the divisive rebel "X."

In a statewide referendum Tuesday, voters overwhelmingly chose to keep the red, white and blue banner adopted last year by the Legislature. About three of every four voters chose that flag over a blue flag selected in 2001 to replace the 1956 banner that was dominated by the Confederate battle emblem.

Even though voters didn't have a chance to pick the 1956 flag still favored by some, political leaders of both parties expressed confidence that the referendum will put an end to the debate.

"We can finally close this chapter in the history of Georgia," said state Sen. George Hooks, who helped design the current state flag.

"The people of Georgia spoke with great clarity," said Republican Gov. Sonny Perdue, who won the state's top office two years ago in part because of unrest over the 2001 flag.

The 1956 flag, which blacks vehemently oppose, was replaced in 2001 by then-Gov. Roy Barnes. The replacement, which

included the 1956 flag in miniature with four other flags, caused so much outrage that it helped Perdue oust Barnes in 2002.

Red Cross month



(Courtesy photo)

American Red Cross is celebrating Red Cross Month by offering CPR classes during March. Braley Long of Canadian knows first-hand the importance of Red Cross CPR courses. His grandmother is Jana Gregory, executive director of Gray County Red Cross. When Braley was only 5-days-old, he choked and stopped breathing. Due to skills learned from CPR, his life was spared. Enroll in a CPR class today. Celebrate Red Cross Month in March.

Pet of the Week



Brutus...

This cute little guy is a male, blonde pomeranian. Brutus is loveable and playful and likes a little scratch behind the ears. Call or come by today.



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