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The PAMPA NEWS

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TODAY IN SPORTS

Viewpoints: National debt
Compromise's embers flicker | p4

Varsity teams struggle Friday
JV boys dominate Perryton Tournament | p3B-4B

Mixed drink issue will now go to voters

■ Petition gets required signatures for May 11 election.

By Timothy P. Howsare
thowsare@thepampanews.com

Pampa voters will now decide whether local restaurants can serve mixed drinks along with beer and wine.

A petition for a local option special election got 1,321 verified signatures, narrowly surpassing the 1,260 required for the special ballot to be added to the May 11 election for City Commissioners.

"The voters will decide on it now," said Donny Hooper, public information officer for the city of Pampa.

He said the City Commission will accept the petition at its Jan. 22 regular meeting. The petitions were available for Pampa voters to sign at several businesses in Pampa and had to be turned in by Dec. 26.

Only registered voters who live within Pampa city limits could sign the petition, and there were several invalid signatures, Hooper said.

"We got one signature from someone as far away as Tarrant County."

The special election for mixed drinks will be similar to the one held in May 2012 to approve bond money to build a new animal shelter. That passed by a 75 percent margin.

The issue on whether to allow local restaurants to also sell mixed drinks is divisive in Pampa.

Several local pastors have spoken out against changing the city ordinance, citing that there is already enough alcohol in Pampa, while others in the business community said updating what they say is an outdated law would bring chain restaurants like Chili's and Bennigan's to town while increasing business at the restaurants we already have. The Pampa News queried its Facebook followers, who overwhelmingly said they supported mixed drink sales.

Mike Sublett is a local pastor who signed the petition, although he does not drink.

Sublett said it was contradictory for Pampa residents who eat in restaurants in Amarillo like Chili's, Bennigans and Applebees, which do serve mixed drinks, to not want the same for Pampa.

Sublett said he was surprised the signature count was close.

"I thought it would be either way over or way under," he said.

He added it will continue to be a divisive issue in the city, with even more people speaking either for or against it than before.

"People who didn't say anything before will be a lot more vocal now," he said.

GCSO nets half-kilo drug bust

By Sasha Heller
sheller@thepampanews.com

The Gray County Sheriff's Office logged a major drug bust on Saturday as deputies took nearly half a kilogram off the streets after making multiple arrests.

29-year-old Jennifer Marie Brown, Lefors, was arrested for possession of a controlled substance — greater than 400 grams; and both 24-year-old Allen Bailey Huffman, Pampa, and 23-year-old Aaron Lee Hink, Pampa, were arrested for manufacturing/delivery of a controlled substance — greater than four grams and less than 200 grams.

State Legislature convenes today

By Sasha Heller
sheller@thepampanews.com

The 83rd Texas Legislature returns to session today to discuss issues that may determine how the state funds public school systems, the state's water infrastructure and social programs like Medicaid.

School funding should receive a lot of attention during this session as half of the state's 1,029 school districts have sued the Legislature on grounds that the state has failed to adequately fund public schools, a requirement of the Texas Constitution. A trial between the public school districts and the Legislature began Oct. 22 and is expected to end sometime in 2013. However, litigation may continue for years as the losing side can always appeal the court's decision.

Representatives with the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) has been vocal recently about their organization's needs and how decisions

CONGRESS cont. on page 3

DOWN FOR THE COUNT

Photo by Charla Shults

Pampa wrestler Joseph Radke in his match against a Boys Ranch wrestler. Radke won all but one of his matches on Saturday. The Pampa boys wrestling team finished the tournament in third place. For pictures of both the boys and girls wrestling teams with their trophies, turn to page 8A.

Pampa boys wrestlers take third, girls nab fourth

By Zachary Green
zgreen@thepampanews.com

Last Saturday Pampa hosted its first wrestling tournament since 1991. On the boys side, Hereford, Bushland, Palo Duro, Vernon, Pampa, Boys Ranch, River Road and Borger competed. For the girls, Palo Duro, Hereford, Bushland, Pampa, Tascosa, Vernon and Renegade competed. Renegade was a team comprised of wrestlers from all the teams in the tournament.

The tournament was a pool format with four teams separated into an "A" pool and four into a "B" pool. Everyone played all the teams in their pool. Then, based on a team's record after the three duals, it determined where they would fall into the placing part of the bracket.

Pampa was in the "B" pool on the girls side, which included Tascosa, Vernon and Renegade. The Lady Harvesters faced Renegade in their first dual and won 36-18. The girls lost to Tascosa 36-24. And in their final pool dual, they defeated Vernon 54-0. The loss to Tascosa prevented the Pampa girls from having a chance to complete for first place. Instead, they faced Hereford for a chance at third place.

Hereford defeated Pampa 37-12 which left Pampa in fourth place. The final standings on the girls side were first place, Palo Duro; second place, Tascosa; third place, Hereford; fourth place, Pampa; fifth place, Bushland; sixth place, Renegade and seventh place, Vernon.

Pampa was in the "B" pool on the boys side as well. The Harvesters pool included Boys Ranch, River Road and Borger. Pampa's first dual was against Borger ended with a Harvesters victory, 57-18. The second dual for Pampa was against River Road and the Harvesters won 54-30. The final pool match for Pampa was against Boys Ranch and the Harvesters lost 46-27.

This was unfortunate as it left Pampa to face Palo Duro in the placing games. Pampa lost 60-27 to Palo Duro forcing them into the third place game against Bushland. Pampa defeated Bushland 42-38 to place third.

The final standings on the boys' side were first place, Palo Duro; second place, Boys Ranch; third place, Pampa; fourth place, Bushland; fifth place, Hereford; sixth place, Vernon; seventh place, River Road and eighth place, Borger.

WRESTLING cont. on page 3

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PAMPA FORECAST

Today	Wednesday	Thursday
High 54 Low 28	High 38 Low 33	High 51 Low 38

Tuesday: Partly cloudy with a high of 54. Ten percent chance of rain. Winds west southwest at 14 mph. Sunrise at 7:54 a.m.

Tuesday night: Mostly cloudy with a low of 28. Ten percent chance of rain. Winds north northeast at 9 mph. Sunset at 5:48 p.m.

Wednesday: Rain with a high of 38. Eighty percent chance of rain. Winds north northeast at 15 mph. Sunrise at 7:54 a.m.

Wednesday night: Showers with a low of 33. Sixty percent chance of rain. Winds north at 8 mph. Sunset at 5:49 p.m.

Thursday: AM clouds with a high of 51. Twenty percent chance of rain. Winds west southwest at 13 mph. Sunrise at 7:54 a.m.

Thursday night: Partly cloudy with a low of 38. No chance of rain. Winds southwest at 14 mph. Sunset at 5:50 p.m.

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Obituaries

Anne Davidson

Anne Jordan Davidson, 78, died Saturday, Jan. 5, 2013, in Tulsa, Okla.

Memorial services will be at 2 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 10, 2013, at the First Baptist Church with the Rev. Norman Rushing, pastor of Central Baptist Church, and the Rev. Jimmye Cole, pastor of First Church of the Nazarene, officiating. Private burial will be in Fairview Cemetery. Arrangements are by Carmichael-Whatley Funeral Directors.

Anne Davidson

Anne was born Nov. 20, 1934 in Pampa and was a 1953 graduate of Pampa High School. She attended West Texas State University in Canyon. She married James W. "Jim" Davidson on June 6, 1982 in Silverton. Anne resided in Silverton for 30 years before returning to Pampa in 1986. She had been the director of White Deer Land Museum in Pampa since 1989. Anne was pianist for the First Baptist Church in Silverton for 30 years, pianist for the First Church of the Nazarene in Pampa for 20 years, and was pianist for the Pampa Noon Lions Club for many years. She was a member of First Baptist Church and taught the Business and Professional Women's Sunday school class for over 25 years. She was a member of the Silverton Chapter of the Order of the Eastern Star. Anne was preceded in death by her parents, Sheriff Rufe and Viola Jordan.

Anne had a tremendous love for her family and friends, and she exhibited that love through her dedication to them. She loved the Lord with all her heart, and she exemplified it in all she set out to do. She lived what she believed and invested countless hours ministering to people anytime she saw a need. Anne's graciousness, strength and character will leave a legacy for generations to come.

Survivors include: her husband, James W. "Jim" Davidson of the home; a daughter, Lee Ann Nuckols and husband J. T. of Canyon; two sons, Ty Wayne McMurtry and wife Pam and Kelly McMurtry and wife Mary, all of Amarillo; a stepdaughter, Gena Davidson of Amarillo; a stepson, Chief Davidson and wife Becky of Kearney, Neb.; five grandchildren, Ryan Nuckols and wife Alyssa of Fort Worth, Cole Nuckols of Canyon, Calli Ann Hill and husband C. J. of Canadian, and Lexi and Lily McMurtry, both of Amarillo; two great grandchildren, Chava Nuckols and Ari Liam, both of Fort Worth; and two stepgrandchildren, Steele and Sawyer Davidson, both of Kearney, Neb.

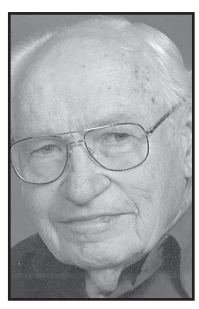
Memorials may be made to the White Deer Land Museum, 116 S. Cuyler, Pampa, Texas 79065, First Baptist Church, P. O. Box 621, Pampa, Texas 79066-0621, First Church of the Nazarene, 500 N. West, Pampa, Texas 79065, or Clear House, 7617 S. Mingo, Tulsa, Okla. 74133.

The family will receive friends from 5:30 to 7 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 9, 2013, at the funeral home.

Sign the online register book at Carmichael-whatley.com.

William J. "Bill" Campbell

William J. "Bill" Campbell, Jr., 90, of Skellytown died Thursday, Jan. 3, 2013 in Amarillo. Services were held at 1 p.m. Monday, Jan. 7, at the First Baptist Church, Skellytown with Alan Wilson Pastor of First Baptist Church of White Deer officiating. Interment was at the Memory Gardens Cemetery in Pampa under the direction of Minton Chatwell Funeral Directors of Borger.



William Campbell

Bill was born on May 10, 1922 in Rule, Texas to Esten Florence (Cook) and William J. Campbell, Sr. Bill served his country as a Corporal in the Army Air Force in World War II. He married Ernestine Doyle on April 16, 1943 in San Angelo. He was a member of the First Baptist Church of Skellytown and the Adobe Walls Masonic Lodge No. 1355. He was the owner of Campbell Carpet Cleaning and Laying.

Bill was preceded in death by his wife on Nov. 2, 1994 and his son William E. Campbell in 1953.

Survivors are his two daughters, Tammie Krapp of Altamonte Springs, Florida and Teresa Britten of White Deer; four grandchildren and three great grandchildren.

Alma Nelson

Alma Nelson, 95, of Dimmitt passed away, Friday, Jan. 4, 2013 in Dimmitt.

Funeral services will be Tuesday, Jan. 8, 2013 at the Fourth and Bedford Church of Christ Church at 2 p.m. with Mr. James Jones officiating, burial to follow at Castro Memorial Gardens Cemetery. Family visitation was Monday evening at the funeral home from 5 to 7 p.m. Arrangements are being handled by Colonial Funeral Home of Dimmitt.

Alma Nelson

Alma was born Sept. 1, 1917 in Lexington, Okla. to James Douglas and Elzora Bates Brock. She grew up and attended school in a community near McLean, Texas. She graduated from McLean High School. She married Woodrow Nelson on Dec. 20, 1936. She was a homemaker most of her life.

She was a member of the Fourth and Bedford Church of Christ of Dimmitt. She enjoyed her church and her family.

She is survived by her two sons, Donny Nelson and wife Wanda of Dimmitt and Ronny Nelson and wife Ruth of Arlington; seven grandchildren; 14 great grandchildren and two great-great grandchildren. She had one sister-in-law, Leola Durant of Pearland, Texas.

She is preceded in death by her husband, Woodrow Wilson Nelson, four sisters, three brothers, one grandson, Roy Nelson and three great grandchildren.

Memorials can be made to a favorite charity or to Smith Lawn Home, 711 76th Street, Lubbock, Texas 79404

Sign the online resiter book at Colonialfuneralhome.org.

Charlotte Geraldine Bradley Shultz

Charlotte Geraldine Bradley Shultz, 100, died Friday, Jan. 4, 2012, in Pampa.

Graveside services were held at 11 a.m. Monday, Jan. 7, 2012, at Fairview Cemetery with Dr. Jeff Knighton, pastor of First Christian Church, officiating. Arrangements are by Carmichael-Whatley Funeral Directors.

Charlotte Shultz

Geraldine was born Dec. 14, 1912 in Arnett, Okla., to Clyde Isaac and Mary Susan Parks Bradley, the second of four children.

She lost her mother when she was nine in child birth, and her father raised 4 children on his own. Geraldine graduated from Arnett High School in 1932 and married B. R. "Bunny" Shultz in 1933 at Seiling, Okla. Bunny and "Jerry," as he called her, traveled with the Art Names Traveling Tent Theater for three years until the birth of their second child. They moved back to Arnett and in 1942, they moved to Texas. Bunny worked for the Cactus War Plant until the end of World War II and then moved his family to Pampa in 1945. Geraldine worked for Horace Mann School cafeteria for 15 years and was the Gray County Welfare Director for 15 years. In 1971, Geraldine was named "Woman of the Year" by the Pampa Chamber of Commerce. She was a member of First Christian Church.

She was preceded in death by her husband in 1962, a son, Larry, in 2003, her parents, her stepmother, two granddaughters, two sisters, a brother, two stepbrothers, and her brother-in-law.

Survivors include two daughters, Shirley Ray and husband Donnie of Pampa and Bernadine "Punky" Daniels and husband Delbert of White Deer; her son, Gordon Shultz and wife Kay of Devine; a daughter-in-law, Daisy Shultz of Sugar Land; two sisters-in-law, Loree Shultz of Grand Prairie and Elsie Bradley of Lubbock; a step sister-in-law, Yvonne Sober of Amarillo; 12 grandchildren, 24 great-grandchildren, 18 great-great grandchildren, four great-great-great grandchildren and several nieces and nephews.

The family would like to express their appreciation to the staffs of Pampa Regional Medical Center and Interim Hospice for their tender care of Geraldine.

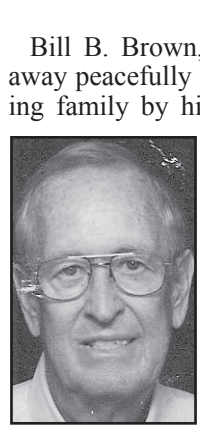
In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to Pampa Senior Citizens Center, 500 W. Francis, Pampa, Texas 79065, or Interim Hospice, 1901 Medi-Park, Suite 1055, Amarillo, Texas 79106.

The family received friends at the funeral home on Sunday evening.

Sign the online register book at Carmichael-whatley.com.

Bill B. Brown

Bill B. Brown, age 73 , of Robinson, Texas, passed away peacefully on Saturday, Jan. 5, 2013, with his loving family by his side. Services will be held 10 a.m., Wednesday, Jan. 9, at Pecan Grove Funeral Home Chapel, Waco, Texas with Pastor Michael Moore of First Baptist Church Robinson officiating. Visitation will be held Tuesday, Jan. 8 from 6-8 p.m. at the Pecan Grove Funeral Home.



Bill Brown

Bill was born Sept. 25, 1939 in Asher, Okla. to A.C. (Ted) and Imogene Brown. He graduated from Pampa High School in 1958 and from North Texas State University in 1964 with a Bachelor of Science Degree. Bill married Mary McKinney of White Deer, Texas in 1963. He retired in Waxahachie, Texas in 1993. Bill was a devoted family man, loving husband, father and grandfather. He loved all sports, especially golf and fishing. He enjoyed the companionship of many friends.Bill was preceded in death by his parents, a brother, James Brown, and a sister Teddy Pyron.

Bill is survived by his wife, Mary Brown of Robinson; two sons, Kelly Brown and wife Shawn of Robinson, Kevin Brown and wife Sonya of Houston; a sister Patricia Britton and husband Rex of Pampa; five grandchildren, Kody, Shanna, Jacob, Braelyn and Blake Brown. He will be deeply missed.

Sign the online guest book at Pecangrovefuneral.com.

Rhonda Welch Coleman

Rhonda Welch Coleman, 48, died Jan. 6, 2013, in Amarillo.

Services will be at held at 10 a.m. Wednesday, Jan. 9, 2013 at First Assembly of God Church in Amarillo with the Rev. Billy D. Nickell, pastor, officiating.

Rhonda Coleman

The family will receive friends from 6 to 8 p.m. on Tuesday, Jan. 8, 2013 at First Assembly of God Church in Amarillo.

Arrangements by Brooks Funeral Directors with burial at Dreamland Cemetery.

Rhonda was born on April 19, 1964 in Douglas, Ariz. to Bud and Betty Welch. She graduated from Pampa High School and Southwestern Assemblies of God University. She married Derek Coleman on June 9, 1990, in Pampa and relocated to Canyon. Rhonda was a godly and faithful wife, mother, and friend to many. She was a member of First Assembly of God in Amarillo where she served on the worship team and was always willing to serve in any way she could.

Survivors include her husband, Derek; two sons, Taylor and Nathan; her parents Bud and Betty Welch, of Dustin, Okla.; her sister Ladonna Childs and husband Jerald of Ardmore, Okla.; her brother Terrell Welch and wife Kristen of Magnolia, Texas; parents-in-law Gary Coleman and wife Faye of Amarillo, Texas; sister-in-law Amanda Parks and husband Brad of Richardson, Texas; sister-in-law Alyssa Stevens and husband Tim of Denton, Texas; eight nieces and nephews; along with a large extended family.

The family will receive friends from 6 to 8 p.m. on tonight at First Assembly of God Church in Amarillo.

OBITS cont. on page 3

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Obituaries

Continued From Page 2

Charlene Terrill

Charlene Smith Terrill, 93, died Jan. 5, 2013 in Pampa.

The family will receive friends from 5 to 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 9, 2013, at Carmichael-Whatley Funeral Home in Pampa.

Charlene Terrill

An additional visitation will be held at 10 a.m. Friday, Jan. 11, 2013, at Nowlin Anders Funeral Home in De Leon.

Graveside services will be at 2 p.m., Friday, Jan. 11 at the De Leon Cemetery, with Bro. Jackie Avenshine, officiating. Arrangements are under the direction of Carmichael-Whatley Funeral Directors.

Mrs. Terrill was born May 10, 1919 in Tatum, New Mexico to Roy and Mary Smith. Her early years were spent in De Leon and she graduated from De Leon High School in 1937. She married James Ralph Terrill on Jan. 18, 1938 in Eastland, and he preceded her in death. Charlene had been a resident of Pampa since 1961.

She was a self-employed beauty operator in De Leon and Pampa, retiring after 40 years of service. She was a member of the Church of Christ. Charlene was preceded in death by two brothers and one sister.

Survivors include: two daughters, Joy Thompson and husband Joe of Pampa, and Pat Hayes and husband Jim of Canton; four grandchildren, Melodee McGinnis of Arlington, Brad McGinnis of Euless, Denise Childress of Blanchard, Okla., and Scott Thompson of Chatsworth, Calif.; and five great-grandchildren; Colby Childress of Blanchard, Okla., Jackson McGinnis of Euless, Griffen Thompson, Gracie Thompson and Tessa Thompson, all of Chatsworth, Calif.

Memorials may be made to Pampa Meals on Wheels, P.O. Box 939, Pampa, Texas 79066-0939, BSA Hospice, 800 N. Sumner, Pampa, Texas 79065, or a favorite charity.

Sign the on-line register at Carmichael-whatley.com.

Photo by Charla Shults

Pampa girls wrestler Bella Wilson in a match against a Bushland girl wrestler. The Pampa girls wrestling team took home fourth place in the tournament on Saturday.

Wrestling

Continued From Page 1

Pampa Wrestling Coach Michael Stovall said, "We finished right where I thought we would finish."

He added that he thinks a lot of work still needs to be done.

"The boys have a lot of work to do and I thought the girls could have done better," he said. "I am not satisfied with a third or fourth place finish, but there is still a lot of wrestling to be done. The girls were wrestling some very tough teams and the boys got a lead and held onto it in the last one to get third place. The teams have been fighting the injury bug. We will make a good run at district when we are at full strength."

The Pampa girls travel to Caprock on Saturday and the Pampa boys travel to the Hereford Boys Tournament on Saturday.

Congress

Continued From Page 1

made by the Legislature will affect the millions of Texas public school students they serve.

"Not sure who will win, but either way the legislature will be forced to act," State Rep. Ken King said, regarding the lawsuit. "Hopefully, the result will be equal education opportunities for all children in Texas."

The THECB lists three legislative priorities on its website: implement outcomes-based funding, decrease the time to degree and restructure state financial aid.

The board suggests the Legislature base 10 percent of the state's public education funding on student outcomes, with a higher weight for outcomes that are aligned with critical workforce needs.

The board recommends the Legislature reduce the total number of hours students take to earn their degrees, capping the hours total at 60 for an associate's degree.

The board also wants the Legislature to restructure the state's financial aid program by limiting the amounts that awarded to only cover academic charges, limit the award to eight regular semesters, requiring full-time enrollment (12 hours) and expanding award eligibility to all transfer students.

Discussion over the state's water infrastructure plan will be centered around funding priorities as Lt. Gov. David Dewhurst has already recommended withdrawing $1 billion from the state's savings account, commonly referred to as the "rainy day fund."

Concerning social welfare, the Legislature will decide whether to expand Medicaid to cover poor, uninsured adults or consider an online insurance exchange. Gov. Rick Perry has in recent months expressed support for drug testing welfare recipients.

Other issues up for discussion during this session include: school vouchers, a voter ID bill and anti-abortion proposals.

Gov. Perry also has vocalized support of a "fetal pain" bill that would ban abortion after 20 weeks of pregnancy.

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For the record

Pampa man arrested for aggravated assault Saturday

■ 30-year-old Derek Dwayne Howard, Miami, was arrested Saturday by the Gray County Sheriff's Office for aggravated assault causing serious bodily injury.

■ 25-year-old James Edward Valentine, Trent, was arrested Monday by the GCSO for driving while intoxicated.

■ 34-year-old Christopher Louis Smith, Pampa, was arrested Friday by the Department of Public Safety for capias pro fine — expired insurance.

■ 19-year-old Stephen Henry Spencer, Pampa, was arrested Friday by the Pampa Police Department for possession of drug paraphernalia and ran stop sign.

■ 39-year-old Jayson Dwight Williams, was arrested Friday by the PPD for driving while license invalid.

■ 28-year-old Danielle Rena Cummings, Borger, was arrested Thursday by the GCSO for evading arrest/detention.

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Dodd-Frank's problems — and potential solutions

MICHAEL BARONE

Over the next year, we will probably see much controversy over the implementation of Obamacare. Health insurance is something that almost every adult has some acquaintance with, and there seem to be glitches aplenty in the legislation, much delay in issuing regulations and some possible changes resulting from litigation.

We're likely to see or hear less about the operations of the Dodd-Frank financial regulation legislation, passed four months after Obamacare. Most of us don't work at banks or financial institutions, which will have to grapple with its myriad provisions and the regulations to be issued thereunder, and we tend to toss out those disclosure forms our bank sends out.

But Dodd-Frank may produce more problems than it solves. That is the thesis of David Skeel, professor at the University of Pennsylvania Law School, in his new book, "The New Financial Deal: Understanding the Dodd-Frank Act and Its (Unintended) Consequences."

Skeel does not find fault in Dodd-Frank's effort to regulate derivatives — contracts in which one party agrees to pay another in case of changes in interest rates, currency exchange rates, oil prices or just about anything else — with provisions encouraging them to be conducted through clearinghouses.

Derivatives were an obvious target for regulation, since it was derivatives based on the value of mortgage-backed securities that did much to trigger the collapse of Lehman Brothers and AIG in 2008. Skeel calls these Dodd-Frank derivative provisions "an unequivocal advance."

But he sees serious problems in what he describes as the two themes that emerge from the law's 2,319 pages: "(1) government partnership with the largest financial institutions and (2) ad hoc interventions by regulators rather than a more predictable, rule-based response to crises."

The prime mover behind these policies, he argues, was Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner, who as a junior Treasury official played a role in the bailout packages for the Mexican peso in 1994-95 and the hedge fund Long Term Capital Management in 1998. They're his models for future regulation.

As president of the New York Federal Reserve, he played a key role in fashioning responses to the financial crises of 2008. Dodd-Frank, Skeel argues, was written to give regulators powers they felt they lacked when they allowed Lehman Brothers to go into bankruptcy in September 2008.

Lehman's collapse, followed by the Bush administration's demand for the $700 billion TARP legislation and especially its initial rejection (reversed four days later) in the House, led to staggering losses first in the stock market and then in the economy at large.Skeel is one of many who argue, persuasively in my view, that the real mistake here was not the failure to bail out Lehman but the apparently successful bailout of a smaller investment bank, Bear Stearns, in March 2008.

Dodd-Frank's provisions requiring special treatment of the very largest financial institutions create similar expectations, Skeel says.

Michael Barone is a senior political analyst for The Washington Examiner and Fox News Channel contributor.

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National debt

Government needs to cut spending without raising debt ceiling

When you max your credit card, you can't spend anymore unless you can convince Citibank or Chase or whoever the bank is to raise your limit.

Right now the United States has reached the Congressionally set debt ceiling of $16.4 trillion and the national debt increases by an estimated $3 billion per day.

In his weekly radio address, President Obama indicated he favors raising the debt ceiling and warned Congress they will be playing a "dangerous game" if they resist raising the ceiling.

The resolution to the fiscal cliff fiasco, which will raise income taxes for individuals earning $400,000 or more and couples with incomes of $450,000, only reinforces how difficult it is for the president and Congress to take serious action to cut spending and reduce the debt.

Tax hikes for all American taxpayers were averted, but there is a price to pay.

Our View

This editorial reflects the views of The Pampa News' editorial board. Other opinions on this page may not reflect this view.

The debt keeps piling on without enough money to pay it off.

The gross debt has two main components: Debt held by the public, which is money the government borrows on the open from domestic or foreign investors; and intergovernmental debt, which is money the government owes itself, as in the Social Security trust.

Raising the debt ceiling will allow the United States to remain solvent and continue borrowing money when it needs to, proponents say.

But according to Jonathan Capehart, a writer who blogs for The Washington Post, raising the debt ceiling is not just about future spending, but also about past spending approved by Congress.

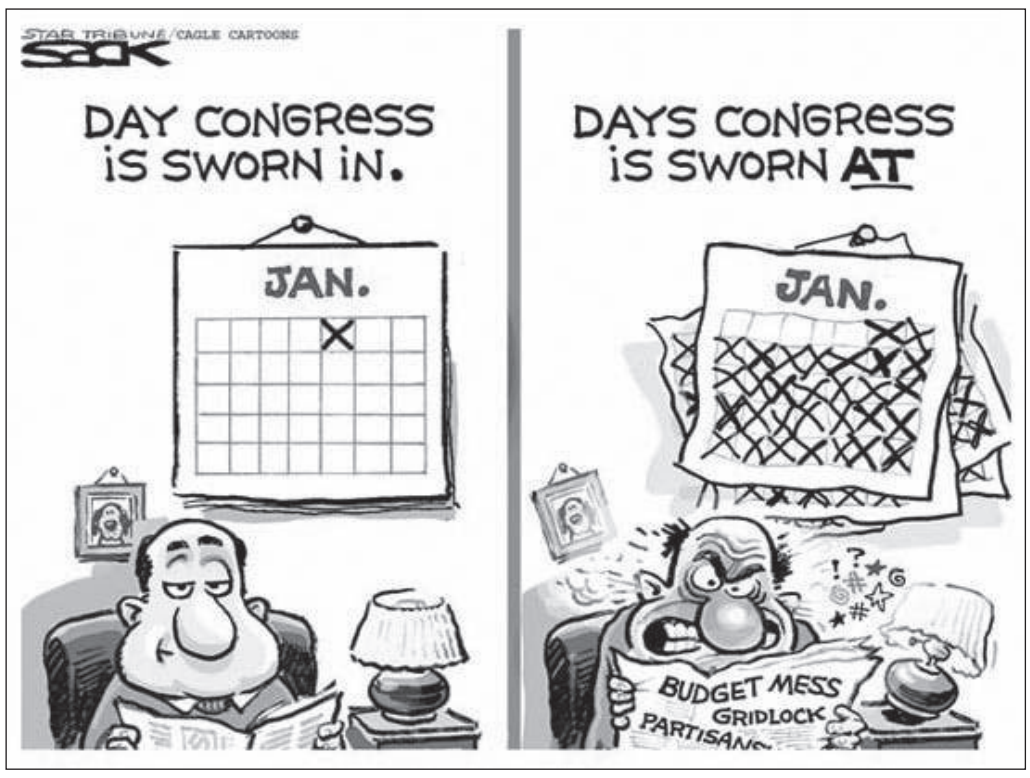
Or, as Capehart said the U.S. Treasury department points out in its website, "Refusing to raise the debt limit does nothing to reduce those existing obligations or cut the deficit."

"To not pay those bills is to destroy the full faith and credit of the United States," Capehart writes. "And as we saw during the last debt-ceiling fight, to threaten not to pay them is to hit the nation with a credit downgrade."

Right now, if the national debt was divided up among the American population, each one of us owes $52,340, and like the debt itself, that number continues to grow.

Let's hope and pray that as this new Congress goes to work, they will use their best judgment to cut spending and not raise the debt ceiling.

You can ask your credit card company to raise your limit, but it's better to pay off what you owe than spend even more money.



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In Washington, compromise's embers flicker

LIZ SIDOTI

WASHINGTON (AP) — Every election year, they become the popular ones, the celebrities with the power to hire or fire politicians. Then, when actual governing begins, they become the forgotten ones — jilted wallflowers watching as the leaders they elected are devoured into a political system dominated by extremes.

These middle-of-the-road American voters feel betrayed, and many grow cynical. Why, they wonder, did they bother to cast ballots at all?

It's always a dramatic fall for the ideological center of the country, independents and moderates in swing-voting states and regions that hold outsized sway in determining the balance of power in Washington. One minute, every candidate promises to represent your interests. The next, freshly elected lawmakers carry the water of their parties' far wings and ignore the wishes of everybody else.

Now, after Republicans and Democrats alike reluctantly shunned their core supporters and reached a bipartisan compromise to avert a fiscal crisis, there's a reasonable question to ask: Did American lawmakers actually — for a moment, at least — listen to the regular Joes and Janes pleading for a gridlocked Washington to get something, anything, done?

Nobody on the spectrum's far ends was truly happy with the "fiscal cliff" accord. Conservatives were apoplectic that Republicans agreed to tax increases on the wealthiest Americans. Liberals complained that President Barack Obama gave in on too much. It was an ugly fight. But, in an often deadlocked capital, the result was attractive: significantly bipartisan votes in both chambers of Congress on a hard-fought and important matter. In modern Washington, that's become almost extinct.

In the end, our political leaders sided not with their party's most passionate backers but with everyone else. The ones who are anything but hard-core partisans. The ones whose voices are usually drowned out by the extremes that drive political discourse. The ones who are desperate for Republicans and Democrats to come together to tackle at least some of our problems.

It's these voters who played a pivotal role in giving Obama a second term while leaving Republicans in power in the House and Obama's fellow Democrats in control of the Senate. These voters chose to keep the same people in charge at a challenging time. These voters overlooked their lack of faith in hyperpartisan Washington ever getting its act together. And these voters sent this crop of leaders back to the capital with an urgent directive: "Work it out!"

Post-election polling seems to concur. One survey from McClatchy/Marist found that a whopping 74 percent of adults thought it was more important for government officials to "compromise to find solutions," rather than "stand on principle even if it means gridlock." Just 21 percent preferred sticking to principles. While Democrats were most strongly in favor of compromise (83 percent), majorities of independents (77 percent) and Republicans (63 percent) agreed.

Within hours of the election, Obama and House Speaker John Boehner — the highest-ranking elected officials in their respective parties — each suggested they got the message, separately signaling a desire to seek bipartisan compromises to fix the nation's ills, starting with our fiscal health. But that was quickly forgotten, and the typical politicking was back.

The legislative debate was initially driven by the bases of the Republican and Democratic parties demanding that any deal to avert the so-called "fiscal cliff" include elements purely in line with their core principles. Weeks of stalemate ensued. But ultimately, after an especially nasty and personal negotiation period, those in positions of power in the White House and Congress chose problem solving for all, rather than party orthodoxy for some.

Compromise is a part of this nation's fabric, as much so as the divisiveness that makes it necessary. From its start, America has seen pragmatic periods with people with dissenting viewpoints coming together to find workable solutions. As recently as the 1980s, Ronald Reagan, the Republican president, and Tip O'Neill, the Democratic House speaker, showed how deals can get done across the aisle. And in 1990, President George H.W. Bush compromised with himself and agreed to the Democratic majority's demands to raise taxes. In doing so, he violated his "read my lips" pledge as a way to reduce the national

SIDOTI cont. on page 5

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Sidoti

Continued From Page 4

deficit.

Yet, lately, Washington has become a town of no compromise in a country that wants it.

Republicans and Democrats alike have allowed themselves to be held hostage by their loudest backers, the ones who help them get re-elected. Gerrymandering has exacerbated the problem, with lawmakers redrawing congressional lines to make House districts Republican and Democratic bastions. That gives lawmakers little reason to deviate from the party line.

In this environment, reaching across the aisle sometimes has become a fatal act. Republicans, specifically, have been targeting their own in primaries, casting anyone with a history of working with Democrats as not sufficiently conservative.

To suggest that we're entering a new era of feel-good compromise governing is, of course, overstating things. And "grand bargains" of the sort Obama and Boehner had initially sought may not happen anytime soon. After all, it takes time for a political system to transition out of an age as toxic as this.

Yet, to the voters in the middle, there's reason to see hope in the "fiscal cliff" deal. It suggests that a divided government can actually accomplish something — and that lawmakers are starting to realize they actually have to listen to the people who elected them, even when Election Day isn't around the corner.

Exhibit A: Paul Ryan, a Republican congressman from Wisconsin and the GOP's 2012 vice presidential nominee, who voted for the deal that most of his House GOP colleagues and the tea party opposed. "The American people chose divided government. As elected officials, we have a duty to apply our principles to the realities of governing," Ryan said.

Obama, too, suggested the average voter won out: "While neither Democrats nor Republicans got everything they wanted, this agreement is the right thing to do for our country."

But, as he faces the reality of a GOP-led House and a long second-term to-do list, Obama also made clear that his stomach for compromise only goes so far. Boehner signaled he was done privately negotiating with the president, and Senate Republican leader Mitch McConnell suggested the GOP would stand firm on its demand for spending cuts during the next fiscal debate, this one over raising the nation's debt ceiling.

That issue is among the many coming up that are likely to require bipartisan solutions: guns, immigration, Social Security, Medicare and the tax code.

How much each side is willing to give on them will determine whether the fiscal agreement is kindling a new season of compromise, and whether independents, moderates and other voters in the center will continue to influence lawmakers when they're actually governing, not just when they campaign.

For these voters, the "fiscal cliff" deal was a first step toward what they expect from their government — cooperation that begins when negotiations start and doesn't end as the latest one did, with a frantic deal to avert catastrophe struck by a handful of resentful partisans in the dead of a contentious Washington night.

Liz Sidoti is the national politics editor for The Associated Press.

Obama taps Hagel for Pentagon, Brennan for CIA

WASHINGTON (AP) — Despite Republican misgivings, President Barack Obama announced Monday he will nominate former GOP Sen. Chuck Hagel as his next defense secretary, calling him "the leader our troops deserve." He also chose White House counterterrorism adviser John Brennan to lead the Central Intelligence Agency.

Controversy surrounds both choices, but the president called on the Senate to quickly confirm both.

"The work of protecting our nation is never done. We've got much to do," Obama said at the East Room announcement. "My most solemn obligation is the security of our people."

Obama announced his choice of Hagel, a political moderate who represented Nebraska in the Senate, even as critics questioned the pick over issues including Hagel's views on Israel and Iran.

Facing a potential fight to get Hagel confirmed by the Senate, Obama praised his independence and bipartisan approach, and said that Hagel, a Vietnam veteran, understands war is not an abstraction. He also praised Hagel, 66, as one who could make "tough fiscal choices" in a time of increasing austerity.

Brennan, 57, a 25-year CIA veteran, is a close Obama adviser who has served in his present post for four years.

The president praised him as one of America's most skilled and respected intelligence professionals. Obama said Brennan and Hagel understand that "the work of protecting our nation is never done."

Brennan withdrew from consideration for the spy agency's top job in 2008 amid questions about his connection to harsh interrogation techniques used during the George W. Bush administration.

Hagel, in brief remarks, thanked Obama "for this opportunity to serve this country again, especially its men and women in uniform. ... These are people who give so much to this nation every day."

Hagel voted for U.S. military involvement in the Iraq war at first but later opposed it. He broke ranks with other Republicans to support Obama for president in 2008.

If confirmed, he would replace Leon Panetta as defense secretary.

Obama said Panetta, standing with the others alongside the president, had "earned the right to return to civilian life."

Panetta was CIA director before Obama tapped him to be defense chief.

Along with secretary of state nominee Sen. John Kerry, D-Mass., Hagel and Brennan would play key roles implementing and shaping Obama's national security priorities in a second term. All three men must be confirmed by the Senate.

In nominating Hagel, Obama signaled he is willing to take on a tough confirmation fight. Once Hagel emerged as Obama's likely nominee, GOP lawmakers began sharply questioning his commitment to Israel and his willingness to take a hard line with Iran over its disputed nuclear program.

January is often the best month to file

Tom Margenau
Creator's Syndicate

I write a column similar to this one every January. However, I don't mind plagiarizing myself because it contains a very important message for people planning to retire in 2013.

January is a critical month for the hundreds of thousands of potential Social Security beneficiaries who are reaching their so-called "full retirement age" in 2013. The important message: All of them should at least consider filing for their benefits this month, even though they may not be reaching their retirement age until later in the year.

The reason for this early-filing timeframe has to do with some quirky and complicated features of Social Security's earnings penalty provisions. Those provisions generally keep seniors who are still working off of Social Security until they reach that magic "full retirement age." For most people reading this column, your full retirement age is probably 66. (Check out the Social Security Administration's website at www.socialsecurity.gov for a chart listing the various full retirement ages.)

The law essentially says if you are over 62 but under your full retirement age and are still working full time, you are not eligible for Social Security. Specifically, the rules require that the SSA deduct one dollar from any retirement benefits you might be due for every two dollars you earn over $15,120 in 2013.

However, the rules say that once you reach your full retirement age, you are due full Social Security benefits even if you are still working and no matter how much money you are making.

Let's follow an example. Let's say Ed was born in July 1947, which means he'll reach his full retirement age of 66 in July 2013. And let's further say Ed generally makes about $80,000 per year, and he plans to continue working indefinitely. Based on the earnings penalty rules I briefly outlined above, Ed figures he must wait until July (his full retirement age) to begin collecting his Social Security benefits. As I said, at that magical point the earnings penalty rules no longer apply, and he can get his Social Security. And prior to that, he's making way more than the $15,120 income threshold.

But here is why Ed should check into applying for Social Security in January. Congress set up a more lenient earnings threshold for the year you reach your full retirement age. Specifically, it says you can earn up to $40,080 between January and the month you reach your full retirement age and still get Social Security benefits. And even if you earn more than $40,080, you lose only one dollar from your benefits for every three dollars you exceed that threshold.

Ed is going to make $40,000 between January and June (i.e., before he reaches the magic age of 66). And that's just under the $40,080 threshold for 2013, which means Ed is due benefits beginning in January. He does NOT have to wait until July to apply for his Social Security checks.

There is a bit of a catch. By starting his benefits in January, Ed will be accepting a slightly reduced amount. (Benefits are reduced roughly one-half of one percent for each month they are taken before full retirement age.)

If Ed's Social Security benefit at full retirement age is $2,000 per month, let's look at his options.

Ed's first option is to wait until July (his full retirement age) to start his Social Security benefits. He'll get $2,000 per month for six months or $12,000 for the year 2013.

Ed's second option is to file for Social Security in January. Starting his benefits slightly early, his monthly rate is reduced to $1,940. That comes out to $23,280 in total benefits for the year 2013. The downside to option two is his ongoing monthly benefit rate will be $1,940, $60 less than what he would have been getting in option one. But because he'd be getting about $11,000 less in total 2013 benefits in option one, it would take Ed a long time to make up that loss with his extra $60 per month in ongoing benefits. If I were Ed, I'd choose the second option.

Even if Ed was going to make more than the $40,080 income threshold between January and June, he only loses one dollar in Social Security benefits for each three dollars he exceeds that amount. So he probably still comes out ahead by filing in January.

Here is a quick example of that scenario. Let's say Ed will make $50,000 between January and June. That's $9,920 over the $40,080 limit. And one third of that excess, or about $3,307 must be deducted from his 2013 benefits. But he would still get $19,973 in benefits for the year. That's way better than the $12,000 he would be due by waiting until July to file for his Social Security.

I know these rules are complicated and the math in the examples above might be difficult to follow. But my overall message is easy to follow: If you're reaching age 66 in 2013, talk to a Social Security representative sometime this month to find out if it's to your advantage to file for those benefits in January.

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

Los Angeles judge says to release unredacted California priest files

By Greg Risling
Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — A Los Angeles judge has ordered the release of personnel files that would identify Roman Catholic priests accused of child molestation.

Superior Court Judge Emilie Elias also said Monday that she wants the Archdiocese of Los Angeles to unredact the names of church higher-ups.

How long the process will take remains unclear. Church attorneys expressed concern about combing through 30,000 pages of documents.

Elias is continuing to meet with attorneys following the hearing.

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STILLWATER TO PERFORM

Submitted photo

Country artist Ben Stillwater, a.k.a "The Big Guy from the Big Sky" will perform at the M.K. Brown Memorial Auditorium at 7:30 p.m., Saturday, Jan. 18. The auditorium is located at 1100 W. Coronado Drive. His Pampa show is part of a three-stop tour of the Southwest for the Montana resident who has released three albums. He is host of a TV show called "Giddy Up with Ben Stillwater." Tickets will be available at the door for $15. The concert is free for children 10 and under. For more information, visit www.benstillwater.com.

'Diner' musical postponed until fall

By MARK KENNEDY
AP Drama Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — The musical based on the film "Diner" has postponed its Broadway opening.

Producers said late Sunday night that the Kathleen Marshall-directed show with songs by Sheryl Crow will make its debut on Broadway in the fall, instead of the spring.

Producer Scott Zeiger in a statement says a four-week workshop of the show in November got good feedback and that early fall dates work better for all involved.

Set in Baltimore on Christmas 1959, the story explores the lives of a circle of friends in their early 20s, all set to vintage rock 'n' roll and doo-wop.

Barry Levinson, who wrote and directed the 1982 film, adapted it into the new musical. The film starred Steve Guttenberg, Mickey Rourke, Kevin Bacon, Paul Reiser, Tim Daly, Daniel Stern and Ellen Barkin.

At Iowa prison, a lonely battle against sex movies

By Ryan J. Foley
Associated Press

IOWA CITY, Iowa (AP) — Administrators let offenders at one of Iowa's most dangerous prison units watch violent and sexually explicit movies and TV shows for years, despite repeated complaints from a female officer who said it encouraged inmates to sexually harass her.

Murderers, sexual predators and other men housed at a unit for mentally ill inmates at the maximum-security state prison in Fort Madison were allowed to watch movies such as "Deranged," a horror film that includes a scene in which a woman is beaten, raped, hung upside down and skinned. Among other movies inmates watched were "Delta of Venus," an erotic film; "Coffey," which shows sadism and attempted rape; and "Cruel Intentions," records show.

Despite correctional officer Kristine Sink's complaints, administrators told her not to turn off the movies or shows. When she did, they accused her of insubordination, according to department records that Sink provided to The Associated Press. One warden blamed Sink for causing problems by complaining, and another supervisor suggested her outfits — a standard-issue uniform — were enticing inmates.

Sink said she has fought a lonely battle under four wardens against movies that caused inmates to become sexually aggressive — through "10 years of misery." She filed a lawsuit Nov. 30 against prison officials alleging sexual harassment, discrimination and workplace retaliation, seeking an unspecified amount of damages.

"It's inconceivable. If I had not lived through it myself, I wouldn't believe this," she said.

Sink, who started at the prison in 2003 after the factory where she had been working shut down, said the movies played multiple times a day for a week on a television in a common area where 45 inmates could watch. Some inmates would openly masturbate and make sexually harassing comments to her.

Sink said that when prison officials finally acted on her complaints in September 2011 by largely barring movies with sexually explicit content, inmates blamed her and subjected her to a torrent of insults and threats to beat or even kill her. One threw urine on her. Despite the threats, Sink said her supervisors refused to move her to a job where she wouldn't be in contact with inmates for more than a year. She was finally moved to a desk job last month, after she filed her lawsuit.

Sink's attorney, Brooke Timmer, said the lawsuit is aimed at forcing changes to allow employees to file complaints without retaliation and be free from sexual harassment by inmates.

"No private employer could get away with this," she said.

Sink said she began complaining about the practice of allowing inmates to rent or purchase graphic movies to be shown to the unit soon after she went to work there. She filed a formal complaint with in 2007 after the showing of "Deranged."

"What are we saying to the sex offenders that are already convicted of these crimes and then we provide them visual viewing to fantasize about or to act upon," Sink wrote to then-Warden John Ault. She told him she has been waiting for management "to fix this wrong and make it right for over four years."

Sink told Ault, who retired in 2010, that inmates were accusing her of trying to eliminate their movies and suggested a supervisor had let them know she complained.

Tree orders now being taken

Submitted

The Gray County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) is now accepting orders for windbreak and wildlife trees and shrubs. These trees and shrubs will be delivered in March and April.

A wide variety of trees are available for purchase through the district at a nominal cost. Several species of conifer seedlings are being offered including: Arborvitae, Austrian Pine, Pinyon Pine, Ponderosa Pine, Rocky Mountain. Juniper and County Blue Spruce.

Hardwoods available include: Aromatic Sumac, Bur Oak, Caragana, Chinkapin Oak, Chokecherry, Cotoneaster, Cottonwood, Gambel Oak, Golden Currant, Golden Willow, Green Ash, Hackberry, Honeylocust, Hybrid Cottonwood, Lacebark Elm, Lilac, Nanking Cherry, Native Plum, Pecan, Sand Cherry, Sawtooth Oak, Siberian Elm, and Skunkbush Sumac.

In addition, the District will be taking orders for larger trees in one, three, five, 10 and 15 gallon sizes. Several species of conifers, shade trees, shrubs, fruit trees and ornamentals are available in those sizes. For more information, come by the Gray County SWCD Office, from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m., Monday through Friday, or call the SWCD Office at 806-665-6561, Ext. 102.

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AAA Texas reminds motorists of wet weather driving tips as major rainfall is forecast for most of Texas

SUBMITTED BY AAA TEXAS

(Houston, Texas) – AAA Texas encourages drivers to use caution on the roads as recent National Weather Service reports forecast rainfall across the state this week. Driving in cold, wet weather conditions requires preparation, focus, and attention to safety. To maximize driving safety remember to buckle up, be aware of road conditions, reduce speed appropriately, and be prepared for challenging situations.

AAA Texas suggests drivers consider the following techniques when driving in wet weather:

- Allow more travel time. Plan to drive at a slower pace than normal when the roads are wet. Rushing equals a higher risk for collision.
- Buckle up.
- Keep your windshield and windows clean. Wipe down your windows and windshield before you pull out of your driveway. If the glass gets foggy, open a window slightly and turn the defroster fan to a higher speed. Use your air conditioner to reduce humidity.
- Keep headlights clean.

When motorists drive on wet streets, mud and dirt can splash onto your headlights, reducing illumination by up to 90 percent. Remember to clean your headlights before you hit the road.

- Drive with your daytime running lights or low-beam headlights on at all times – especially on dark or overcast days. Also use low-beam headlights in fog.
- Recognize a crisis.

When visibility is so limited drivers cannot see the edges of the road or other vehicles at a safe distance, the driver should consider pulling off the road and waiting for the rain to ease up.

It's best to stop at a rest area or exit the freeway and go to a protected area.

If the roadside is your only option, pull off of the road as far as you can, preferably past the end of a guardrail.

Wet roads mean poor traction. Conditions are most dangerous during the first 10 minutes of heavy downpour, as oil and other debris rise up and then wash away.

Knowing how to handle poor traction reduces the potential for hydroplaning, skidding or getting stuck in the mud.

Avoid using cruise control in wet weather driving conditions.

This feature works great in dry weather scenarios, but when used in wet conditions the chance of losing control of your vehicle increases.

Sudden braking often leads to skids.

Stopping on a slippery surface requires more distance, so increase your following distance.

Focus your attention as far ahead as possible – at least 20 to 30 seconds. Large commercial vehicles require a longer distance to brake safely. Give a truck or bus extra distance.

"Turn Around, Don't Drown." Drivers often underestimate the power of floodwater.

When there's water running across a road, drivers should always turn around and use a different route.

According to Texas Department of Public Safety six inches of water can cause tires to lose traction and begin to slide, 12 inches of water can float many cars, and two feet of rushing water will carry off pick-up trucks, SUVs and most other vehicles.

Remember during flash flooding, especially at night and at low water crossings, water may be far deeper than you think.

As North America's largest motoring and leisure travel organization, AAA provides more than 53 million members with travel, insurance, financial, and automotive-related services. AAA is a not-for-profit, fully tax-paying corporation and serves as an advocate for the safety and security of all travelers.

AAA Texas can be visited on the Internet at AAA.com. Follow AAA Texas on Twitter: @AAATexas and Facebook: Facebook.com/AAATexas

Financial aid night at Pampa High School set for Jan. 10

SUBMITTED

Pampa High School and Clarendon College will host financial aid night for seniors, juniors and their parents at 6:30 p.m., Thursday, Jan. 10 in the Commons.

Financial aid night is designed to help explain and simplify the process of applying for financial assistance to attend college or vocational schools.

Clarendon College's financial aid officer will provide information and answer questions pertaining to all areas of application.

The information will cover what tests seniors need to take, the difference in grants and scholarships, the FASFA, work-study and many other details.

Parents are encouraged to attend even if their students are unable to be there. Financial assistance is available from many directions that parents and students are not always familiar with. Clarendon College and PHS want to be sure that everyone knows how to find what they need.

For more information contact PHS Counselor, Starla Kindle at 669-4800 ext. 1113.

Pampa High School blood drive set for Wed. Jan. 16

SUBMITTED

Pampa High School will host a blood drive from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Wednesday, Jan. 16 at the Pampa High School Commons Stage.

Every eligible donor who presents to donate will receive a M*A*S*H 2013 shirt in appreciation for giving the gift of life.

A photo ID or donor card is required. Must be at least 17 years old to donate.

For an appointment, please call 331-8800 or 1-877-574-8800.

Walk-in's are welcome.

All blood types are currently needed.

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Fast-food robber suspect returns to eat, is nabbed

PONTIAC, Mich. (AP) — Officials say a suspected robber of a suburban Detroit restaurant who apparently returned months later to get some food is under arrest after being recognized by employees.

The Oakland County sheriff's department says workers at a McDonald's in Pontiac spotted the 40-year-old man Saturday in the drive-thru.

Sheriff's deputies responded and took the Pontiac man into custody. He was being held at the Oakland County Jail pending charges.

The robbery happened Oct. 5.

Vt. town says woman's pigs in home must go

ESSEX, Vt. (AP) — A Vermont woman considers her pigs to be pets, but town officials say they're farm animals and have no business living in a residential neighborhood.

The zoning board in Essex has given Florence Gruber and Alan Tsefrekas until Jan. 22 to remove an estimated 30 to 40 miniature potbellied pigs from their home.

Gruber told the board Thursday that her pigs use litter boxes and that the adult animals weigh 50 to 100 pounds. She's given them names like Larry, Nadia, Olive and Snow White Sleepy Girl.

The Burlington Free Press reports that neighbors told the board that the pigs must go.

Gruber says the pigs are up for adoption.

NYC iPhone owner tricks thief using dating app

NEW YORK (AP) — A New York City musician used a combination of technology, seduction, a hammer and a bribe to reclaim his missing iPhone from a confused crook.

Jazz trombonist Nadav Nirenberg says he left the phone in a livery cab on New Year's Eve. The next morning, the 27-year-old learned via email that someone was sending messages to women using a dating app on the phone.

Nirenberg logged on to the service and offered the man a date — posing as a woman. He even posted a picture of a pretty girl.

When the culprit arrived at Nirenberg's Brooklyn apartment building with wine, the musician greeted him with a $20 bill while holding a hammer — just in case.

The thief handed him the iPhone and left without a word.

Cat used in Brazil prison smuggling try

SAO PAULO (AP) — Guards thought there was something suspicious about a little white cat slipping through a prison gate in northeastern Brazil.

A prison official says that when they caught the animal, they found a cellphone, drills, small saws and other contraband taped to its body.

Alagoas state prisons spokeswoman Cinthya Moreno says that the cat was caught New Year's Eve at the medium-security prison in the city of Arapiraca.

The O Estado de S. Paulo newspaper reported Saturday that all of the prison's 263 inmates are suspects in the smuggling attempt, though it says a prison spokesman said "It will be hard to discover who is responsible since the cat does not speak."

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EQUAL HOUSING LENDER

WRESTLING TEAMS PLACE THIRD AND FOURTH IN THE PAMPA DUALS

Photos by Zachary Green

PLACED. Left, the Pampa boys wrestling team poses with their individual medals and team trophy for taking home third place in the Pampa Duals Tournament. Right, the Pampa girls wrestling team poses with their individual medals and team trophy for taking home fourth place in the Pampa Duals Tournament. It was the first tournament Pampa has hosted since 1991.

Colo. prosecutors to outline theater shooting

CENTENNIAL, Colo. (AP) — Nearly six months after a bloody rampage in a Colorado movie theater left 12 people dead, prosecutors will go to court Monday to outline their case against the suspect, James Holmes.

Holmes is charged with more than 160 counts, including murder and attempted murder.

Investigators say he was wearing body armor and a gas mask when he tossed two gas canisters and then opened fire in a theater in the Denver suburb of Aurora on July 20. A midnight showing of the Batman movie "The Dark Knight Rises" had just begun.

In addition to the 12 dead, at least 58 were wounded.

Many of the survivors and family members of the dead are expected to attend the preliminary hearing, and court officials expect an overflow crowd of reporters and spectators.

The preliminary hearing that starts Monday is expected to last all week.

The official purpose is to allow the judge to determine whether the prosecution's case is strong enough to warrant a trial, but legal analysts say it's rare for a judge not to order a trial if a case gets this far.

For Holmes, the hearing could set the stage for a negotiated plea agreement by allowing each side to assess the other's strength, the analysts say.

The hearing will be the first extensive public disclosure of the evidence against Holmes.

Three days after the shooting, District Judge William Sylvester forbade attorneys and investigators from discussing the case publicly, and many court documents have been filed under seal.

It took this long to get to the preliminary hearing because lawyers have been debating what physical evidence should be made available to one side or the other, whether a psychiatrist who met with Holmes is barred from testimony by doctor-patient privilege, who was responsible for leaks to the media, and other issues.

Police say Holmes, now 25, had stockpiled weapons, ammunition, explosives and body armor.

He was a first-year student in a Ph.D. neuroscience program at the University of Colorado, Denver, but he failed a year-end exam and withdrew in June, authorities have said.

The shootings happened six weeks later.

Federal authorities have said Holmes entered the theater with a ticket and is believed to have propped open a door, slipped out to his car and returned with his weapons.

Police arrested him outside the theater shortly after the shootings ended.

Holmes' mental health could be a significant issue — and possibly a contentious one — in the preliminary hearing.

His attorneys have told the judge Holmes is mentally ill, but they have not said whether they plan to employ an insanity defense.

He had seen a university psychiatrist, and his lawyers have said he tried to call the psychiatrist nine minutes before the killing began.

Defense lawyers have said they plan to call at least two witnesses who could testify about Holmes' mental health. Prosecutors asked Sylvester to block the witnesses, but he refused.

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Texas state comptroller reports big jump in revenue

AUSTIN (AP) — The state comptroller estimates that Texas will generate $92.6 billion in general revenue in 2014-2015, a major jump in tax collection from the last two-year budget cycle.

Republican Comptroller Susan Combs on Monday was releasing her biennial revenue estimate. The crucial number sets the limit on what lawmakers can spend for 2014 and 2015, when Democrats and teachers hope to reverse, or at least bandage, deep cuts in the current budget that included $5.4 billion slashed from public education.

Combs reported Monday that the state collected $8.8 billion more revenue during the current 2012-2013 revenue cycle than she initially forecast, giving lawmakers breathing room in settling a $5.2 billion deficit in the current budget.

"Texas experienced a very strong rebound from a severe recession," Combs said.

Over the next two years, Combs expects more than $3.6 billion will automatically go into the Rainy Day Fund, which is available to lawmakers when needed. That will leave $92.6 billion for lawmakers to divvy out.

But that doesn't mean they will spend all of it.

Lawmakers don't have to spend all the money Combs says is available — and chances are they probably won't. Gov. Rick Perry and Lt. Gov. David Dewhurst have promised to limit any increase in state spending to a sum of population growth plus inflation, or 9.85 percent.

Under current conditions, their plan would create a general revenue budget of $89.29 billion. Combs' estimate in January 2011 was $72.2 billion in general-purpose spending available.

Texas' economy is humming again after lawmakers in 2011 wrote a cut-to-the-bone budget as the nation lurched out of the Great Recession.

At the time, unemployment in the state was the highest in a decade and the Legislature faced a $27 billion shortfall. But unemployment now is at a four-year low of 6.2 percent, sales tax receipts are skyrocketing and money is pouring into state coffers behind a new energy boom.

Texas sheriff disbands anti-drug unit

McALLEN, Texas (AP) — A South Texas sheriff has disbanded the anti-drug task force at the center of a federal corruption investigation and arrests including his officer son.

Hidalgo County Sheriff Lupe Trevino announced Monday that the so-called Panama Unit would cease operations and commanders would decide where to reassign five deputy slots. The unit was a joint effort with the Mission Police Department.

Trevino said in a statement that the unit was formed to assist Mission with its local drug problem. Both agencies assigned supervisors to oversee the unit, which was based in Mission.

Federal authorities last month arrested two sheriff's deputies and two Mission police officers, including Trevino's son, on drug possession charges. Prosecutors allege the law officers accepted bribes to guard cocaine loads. Three officers were assigned to that unit.

Miss. company sold to Texas firm

JACKSON, Miss. (AP) — Daily Equipment Company of Jackson, Miss., has been sold to Mitsubishi Caterpillar Forklift America Inc. in Houston, Texas.

The announcement came Monday in a joint news release from the companies. The terms of the sale were not disclosed.

DEC is headquartered in Jackson, and has other full-service branches throughout in Biloxi and in New Orleans, Baton Rouge, Shreveport and Lake Charles in Louisiana.

Kent Eudy, MCFA's vice president of sales and marketing, says DEC will continue to operate as Daily Equipment Company, with no changes in leadership, staff or support.

As part of the transaction, Daily will be resigning its representation of the Crown brand in favor of the Cat lift trucks, Mitsubishi forklift trucks and Jungheinrich brands manufactured and distributed by MCFA.

Megabanks give less than 1% to charity

By Chris Thomas
Texas News Service

AUSTIN, Texas - In an effort to rebuild their tarnished reputations, the nation's biggest banks are touting their charitable contributions and community involvement. On closer inspection, however, they are not so charitable after all, according to a new report.

The National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy (NCRP) has examined the contributions of four megabanks over five years. Report author Sean Dobson says the banks include their employees' volunteer hours and making low-interest loans to for-profit companies when tallying their charitable giving, but overall, they spend only a fraction of 1 percent of their total revenue on philanthropy.

"They brag a lot about their charitable donations, and they brag loudest and most often whenever they're in Washington, D.C., lobbying lawmakers to try to water down financial reforms that will safeguard the public against fraud, abuse and another financial collapse."

The institutions in the report are Bank of America, J.P. Morgan Chase, Goldman Sachs and Wells Fargo. Dobson says his group does not want Congress to be, in his words, "hoodwinked" by the megabanks' claims of generosity, as lawmakers work on more stringent banking regulations.

Also in the report is an evaluation of how the banks fared in meeting the NCRP minimum benchmarks for responsible giving. These include using at least half of their charitable dollars to benefit vulnerable populations instead of, for instance, Ivy League schools; and giving nonprofits more flexible, multi-year grants instead of one-time amounts. None of the four banks met those standards, says Dobson.

"In fact, these four megabanks, their philanthropy compared to other big financial institutions, is actually mediocre in terms of its quantity and its quality. It also lacks transparency - much of it cannot be verified."

He explains a bank typically gives in two ways: through a separate charitable foundation, where the records are public and can be tracked, and from their own corporate treasury, which is private information and cannot be confirmed - even if the company is publicly traded.

The report, "Take and Give," is available at ncrp.org.

Texas woman loses Supreme Court battle

HOUSTON (AP) — The U.S. Supreme Court refused Monday to review the case of a Texas woman who faces execution later this month for the fatal stabbing and bludgeoning of a retired college professor.

The high court, without comment, refused to review the case of Kimberly McCarthy, 51, who is set to die Jan. 29 for the July 1997 killing of Dorothy Booth during a robbery at the 71-year-old woman's home in Lancaster, about 15 miles south of Dallas.

Evidence showed McCarthy, a former nursing home therapist who lived across an alley from Booth, called her neighbor to borrow a cup of sugar. McCarthy then went to Booth's home, where she stabbed the older woman five times with a butcher knife, beat her with a large candle holder and cut off her finger to take Booth's diamond wedding ring. Prosecutors showed McCarthy drove Booth's Mercedes to Dallas, pawned the ring for $200 and then went to a crack house to buy some cocaine. Evidence also showed she used Booth's credit cards at a liquor store and was carrying the victim's driver's license.

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Pampa Sports

Pampa loses to Panhandle for second time this season

By Zachary Green
zgreen@thepampanews.com

Pampa's varsity boys team traveled to Panhandle hoping to seek revenge from a loss earlier this season to the Panthers.

The Hustlin' Harvesters were hoping for a better result this time around against Panhandle but unfortunately they were unable to avenge a Dec. 18 home loss to Panhandle.

Derrek Pollard was the lone bright spot for Pampa in the first half. He scored the team's only four points in the first quarter and added four more in the second quarter.

The score after one quarter was 14-4 Panhandle and at the half it was 28-10 Panhandle.

Derrek Pollard

Cade Engle led Pampa with four points in the third and four quarters. After three quarters the score was 40-20. The final score was 49-28.

Pollard led Pampa with 10 points.

Engle added eight points.

Ryan Powell, Ty Hutto and Oliver Cabrales each scored three points.

Patterson Alvey finished with one point. As a team, Pampa shot only four free throws.

Cade Engle

"We have only one week before it officially counts towards playoff hopes. Friday we took a small step backwards but this week we will take a giant leap forward. The good news is we are capable of getting where we need to be. Borger is almost a must win on Friday night," said Pampa Coach Matt Embry.

With the loss, Pampa falls to 6-12 on the season.

Matt Embry

Their last non district game was Monday against Childress but it finished too late for press time. Check Wednesday's paper for that result.

The Harvesters will open district play on Friday night when they host Borger at 7:30 p.m.

JV boys dominate in Perryton; team went 3-0 in weekend tournament

By Zachary Green
zgreen@thepampanews.com

The JV boys basketball team competed in the Perryton tournament last Thursday and Saturday.

The Harvesters went undefeated through the weekend with victories over Spearman, Canadian and Dalhart.

Head Coach Kyle Sanford said, "I was a little suprised that we came out after the Christmas break and won three straight games especially having to play two games back to back."

"I knew we were capable but after being off two weeks you never know what kind of shape we were going to be in. These kids love to compete but most importantly they play team basketball."

After the Christmas break the Harvesters started the tournament off with Spearman.

Brandon Stokes

The Harvesters had no problem coming out of the break and stepping back out onto the floor as they had a commanding 60-11 victory.

Pampa had a huge lead before Spearman even got on the board. Jonathan Stevens led Pampa with 14 points. Brandon Stokes added 13 points.

Blayne Troxell and Keneth Hair scored 10 points each. Joe Meurer added eight points.

Ty Hooper scored three points and Trey Miller added two points.

As game two started, the Harvesters came out slow and found themselves down at half with Canadian on top 19-4.

To begin the second half, the Harvesters came out in a full court press and never backed off until the final buzzer.

The full court pressure allowed the Harvesters to outscore Canadian 30-14 in the second half. After two successful three-pointers in the fourth quarter the Harvesters won the game 34-33. Stokes and Brayden Trimble led Pampa with 10 points each. Stevens added eight points. Alex Marrufo scored four points and Meurer added two points.

To cap the weekend off the Harvesters led Dalhart 18-10 after the first quarter and never looked back.

The Harvesters had three more strong quarters scoring in double figures and won the game 57-45.

Kyle Sanford

Stokes led Pampa with 22 points. Stevens added 15 points. Troxell scored nine points. Hair finished with six points and Miller finished with five points.

With the wins, Pampa's JV Harvesters record moves to 9-6 overall as they start district play on Friday against Borger.

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PampaSports

Lady Harvesters open district play with a loss

Photos by Charla Shults

Taylor Morgan tries to drive past a Rangerette defender in the game Friday night. Morgan finished the game with five points.

By Zachary Green
zgreen@thepampanews.com

Friday night the Lady Harvesters hosted Perryton for the first district game of the season.

Perryton had the game in control the entire time. After the first quarter it was 19-1, Perryton. At the half, the score was 34-4 in Perryton's favor. After three quarters, the score was 55-13 and the final was 72-33 Perryton.

One bright spot in the game for Pampa was the 20 points the team scored in the fourth quarter, including going 8-8 from the free-throw line and hitting two three-pointers.

Taylor Eubank led Pampa with eight points, including one three-pointer. Hayley Burnett scored seven points, including one three-pointer. Risa Rodriguez scored six points, and shot 4-4 from the free-throw line. Taylor Morgan added five points, including one three-pointer and going 2-2 from the free-throw line. As a team, Pampa shot 12-18, or 67 percent, from the free-throw line.

With the loss, Pampa falls to 6-13 overall and 0-1 in district play. Next up for the Lady Harvesters is River Road tonight.

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JV girls lose a tight one

By Zachary Green
zgreen@thepampanews.com

Pampa's JV Lady Harvesters hosted the Perryton Rangerettes in the first district game of the season. The close game was back and forth the whole way.

After the first quarter Pampa trailed 9-8. At the half, Pampa trailed 17-14. After three quarters, Pampa trailed 24-23. In the fourth quarter Pampa tied the game at 29-29 after a block by Keshia Daniels and a steal followed by a layup from Caragan Niccum. Unfortunately for Pampa, Perryton went 10-17 from the free-throw line in the fourth quarter to ice the game. The final score was Perryton 34, Pampa 30.

Daniels led Pampa with eight points. Raven Neal scored six points.

Reata Collins had five points. Niccum added four points.

Tyranda Johnson, McKinli Thomas and Tiah Brown all scored two points.

With the loss, Pampa falls to 12-6 overall and 0-1 in district play. Next up for the Lady Harvesters is River Road in Amarillo tonight.

Perryton 9th girls get the best of Pampa

The Pampa freshman Lady Harvesters hosted their district opener against Perryton on Friday night.

The first quarter was low scoring for both teams with the score just 4-3 in the Rangerettes favor.

The second quarter is where Perryton started to pull away.

The Rangerettes went on a 6-0 run to start the second quarter.

Pampa did not score in the second quarter until around the four minute mark.

At the half Pampa trailed 16-7.

At the end of three quarters, Pampa trailed 26-12 and the final score was 36-14, Perryton.

Sarah Dennis and Reata Collins scored four points each to lead Pampa.

Cameron Schaub added three points.

Angel Brumfield scored two points and Kassie Jerome added one point.

With the loss, Pampa falls to 7-8 overall and 0-1 in district play.

The freshman girls will be back in action tonight when they hit the road for a game against River Road.

www.thepampanews.com

Rare San Francisco river otter stumps researchers

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — A rapt crowd followed a trail of bubbles that zipped over the surface of a seaside pond in the ruins of a 19th century bath in San Francisco.

San Francisco's newest star ,Äî the first river otter seen in the city in decades ,Äî surfaced its whiskery head furtively, a mouth full of sea grass. The crowd oohed as large waves pounded rocks just offshore, a briny smell and chill in the air.

The otter ducked back under water and took the sea grass underneath a concrete remnant of the historic baths, where the animal was building a nest.

"We came here to see the baths and this was just a bonus," said Eliza Durkin, who brought her son Jonathan to the site for a school project on historic places.

Beyond tourists, the otter has mystified and delighted conservationists, who are piecing together clues to figure out how he got there. The furry creature was first spotted by birdwatchers in September and has since settled into the City by the Bay.

River otters once thrived in the San Francisco Bay area, but development, hunting and environmental pollution in the 19th and 20th centuries has taken its toll on the once thriving local population.

The critters are a living barometer of water quality - if it's bad they cannot thrive. But new populations being seen north and east of San Francisco are giving hope to conservationists that years of environmental regulations and new technologies are making a difference.

"The fact that this otter is in San Francisco and doing so well in other regions of the Bay Area, it's a good message that there's hope for the watershed," said Megan Isadore, director of outreach and education for the River Otter Ecology Project, a group that studies otter populations further north and in the bay.

The group said until now it had no evidence the creatures had returned to San Francisco, and the last sighting was nearly a half-century ago as best they can tell.

The otter is nicknamed "Sutro Sam" after the old baths, which were named after former San Francisco Mayor Adolph Sutro, who built the building which at the time was an engineering marvel.

The facility opened in 1896 on a cliff facing the Pacific Ocean, its baths fed by the salty ocean tides and a freshwater seep. They were torn down and burned in a fire in 1966, and the building's carcass has long been a tourist draw on the city's rugged, western shoreline.

The aquatic mammal seems to have found the mix of the environment he needs to make a home, to the delight of tourists and local nature lovers.

"They do need freshwater to drink and keep their fur clean," Isadore said. "They are also happy in salt and brackish water ,Äî wherever there is food ,Äî and he is getting freshwater from seeps behind the baths."

River otters can be found in other regions of the San Francisco Bay area. To the north of the Golden Gate, the researchers are tracking a group in Marin County. They have also found river otters in shore-side San Francisco Bay area communities of Alameda, Richmond and Martinez.

"Habitat destruction had an impact on the river otters," said Dorren Gurrola, a science teacher at the Marine Mammal Center, which studies Sam's relatives, the sea otter. "So it's always exciting to see these animals return to their habitat."

Young males like Sam often are the ones that travel away from groups, looking for food. If they find a new, hospitable habitat, others including females may join and create the basis of a new colony, Gurrola said.

While there is no certain reason for Sam's appearance in San Francisco, Isadore and biologists working to unlock more clues have some leads to go on.

He could have swam across the bay's mouth from Marin County, and scat collected from Sam will be analyzed to see if there's a genetic link to that population. But now, Sam seems to be happy swimming around and munching on small fish, including goldfish discarded in the area.

"We're just trying to piece things together in a logical way," Isadore said. "River otters sometimes even stow away on boats, we just don't know."

Man attacked by bobcat in his garage

BROOKFIELD, Mass. (AP) — A man in Massachusetts says all he heard was a hiss before a bobcat pounced on him in his own garage, sinking its teeth into his face and its claws in his back.

Roger Mundell Jr. went into the garage in Brookfield on Sunday morning to fetch some tie-down straps for a friend when the animal attacked.

It then ran out of the garage and bit Mundell's 15-year-old nephew on the arms and back.

Mundell and his wife pinned the cat to the ground and shot it dead.

Mundell, his nephew and his wife, are being treated for rabies. His wife wasn't bitten, but got the animal's blood on her.

State Environmental Police took the bobcat to have it tested for rabies, which they think is likely given its unusual behavior.

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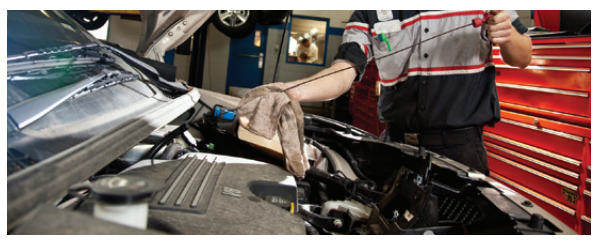
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Zoo count begins: No creature too small to count

LONDON (AP) — In a sea of flapping black and white flippers, Ricky is hard to miss: He's got spiky yellow feathers, a flamboyant character, and he's the only rockhopper among the dozens of penguins living in the London Zoo.

That's a big help for keepers who embarked Thursday on their annual stock-taking of all the zoo's residents.

It's no easy task, when there are more than 17,500 creatures to count. All animals have to be accounted for, including the tarantulas, locusts and snails.

The same scene was being repeated at zoos throughout Britain Thursday — the census is nationwide.

No stone is left unturned, lest there be a beetle below.

At the London Zoo, keepers hope the new year will bring some company to Ricky, who has been the zoo's lone rockhopper since 2011.

"Ricky's quite a unique character — he was rejected by his parents and was hand-reared. He's more interested in zoo keepers than in other penguins," said zoological director David Field. "It's time to get him some rockhopper partners."

In the meerkat enclosure, 11 of the small mammals were only too happy to be counted, climbing onto a keeper's clipboard seeking attention and food.

An all-female family of nine otters likewise rushed forward at the sight of their favored delicacies: Mice and crayfish.

In the invertebrates section, a palm-sized red-kneed tarantula called Jill caused a stir among visitors when she was lifted out of her box for inspection.

"This is quite a docile one," said keeper Amy Callaghan, who held the spider out in her hand for photographers. "I was a little bit wary of them at first, but now I think they're brilliant."

The census is required as part of the license terms of British zoos, and the data is used for zoo management and international breeding programs for endangered animals. The final tally could take weeks.

Most animals in the zoo have microchips in their bodies, making counting a little less daunting.

Fish and animals with camouflage properties — such as leaf insects — are trickier, and the tiniest ones such as ants are counted in colonies, not as individuals.

New additions to the zoo being counted for the first time included baby Ziggy, an endangered white-naped mangabey monkey, and Maxilla, a black-and-white colobus monkey.

The zoo also welcomed a pair of new Sumatran tigers — male Jae Jae from a zoo in Ohio and female Melati, from Perth, Australia.

The endangered tigers were matched by an international breeding program to ensure a genetically diverse population of animals.

"We breed them in the zoo because they are running out of time in the wild," said Field, who's hopeful the tigers will soon produce cubs.

High court rejects Medicare challenge

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Supreme Court has turned away a challenge from former House Majority Leader Dick Armey and other Social Security recipients who say they have the right to reject Medicare in favor of continuing health coverage from private insurers.

The justices did not comment Monday in letting stand a federal appeals court ruling that held that there is no way for people who receive Social Security to reject Medicare benefits.

Armey, a Texas Republican, and two other former federal employees say private insurance covers more than Medicare.

Two other plaintiffs are wealthy individuals who have high deductible private insurance and prefer to pay for their health care.

The case was funded by a group called The Fund For Personal Liberty, which says its purpose is to take on burdensome government regulations.

Convicted East TX killer gets execution date

TYLER, Texas (AP) — A 50-year-old man on death row for the slaying of an East Texas man during a home break-in more than 21 years ago has been set to die April 9.

State District Judge Christi Kennedy in Tyler set the date Thursday for Ricky Lynn Lewis.

Lewis was convicted of the September 1990 shooting death of 45-year-old George Ray Newman. Evidence showed he also raped Newman's fiancée at their home in Smith County and stole her car. She managed to call police to report the attack.

A federal appeals court in November rejected Lewis' claims he's mentally impaired and ineligible for the death penalty, clearing the way for the execution date to be set.

Lewis is among at least nine inmates already scheduled for lethal injection in Huntsville this year.

Bank of America in $10 billion settlement

NEW YORK (AP) — Bank of America will pay $10.3 billion to the government mortgage agency Fannie Mae to settle claims resulting from mortgage-backed investments that soured during the housing crash.

Under the deal announced Monday, Bank of America will pay $3.6 billion in cash to Fannie Mae and buy back $6.75 billion in loans that the bank and its Countrywide Financial unit sold to the agency from Jan. 1, 2000 through Dec. 31, 2008. That includes about 30,000 loans.

Also Monday, a separate settlement was announced between federal regulators and ten major banks and mortgage companies, including Bank of America, over wrongful foreclosure practices.

That $8.5 billion settlement covers up to 3.8 million people who were in foreclosure in 2009 and 2010. Of those, about 400,000 may be entitled to payments, advocates estimate.

For Bank of America, its own settlement with Fannie Mae over the mortgage investments represents a "a significant step" in resolving the bank's remaining mortgage problems while also streamlining the company and reducing future expenses, Bank of America CEO Brian Moynihan said in a statement. Moynihan's predecessor, Ken Lewis, bought Countrywide, a troubled mortgage-lending giant, in July 2008 just as the financial crisis was taking hold.

The bank's acquisition of Countrywide was initially praised by lawmakers. Bank of America was seen as stepping in to eliminate a bad actor from the mortgage market. But instead of boosting Bank of America's mortgage business, the purchase has drawn a drumbeat of regulatory fines, lawsuits and losses.

Bank of America also agreed in September to pay $2.43 billion to settle a class-action lawsuit related to its takeover of Merrill Lynch, another of Lewis's acquisitions during the financial crisis. That lawsuit was filed on behalf of investors who bought or held Bank of America stock when the company announced its plans to buy Merrill Lynch in a $20 billion deal as the banking industry and federal regulators struggled to contain fallout from the financial crisis in the fall of 2008.

The North Carolina-based bank said it would pay for the Fannie Mae settlement in part from existing reserves. Bank of America also said it would record a $2.7 billion hit to its fourth quarter earnings for 2012.

Despite the cost of the settlement, Bank of America still expects its earnings for the period to be "modestly positive," aided by a tax credit and an improvement in the valuation of its debt. Analysts are currently forecasting that the bank will report earnings per share of 19 cents, according to estimates compiled by data provider FactSet. Bank of America is scheduled to report earnings Jan. 17.

Bank of America fell 8 cents to $12.01 Monday, after opening slightly higher. The stock more than doubled in 2012, making it the best performer in the 30-member Dow Jones industrial average. It's up 3.7 percent this year.

Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, which packaged loans into securities and sold them to investors, were effectively nationalized in 2008 when they nearly collapsed under the weight of their mortgage losses.

"Fannie Mae has diligently pursued repurchases on loans that did not meet our standards at the time of origination, and we are pleased to have reached an appropriate agreement to collect on these repurchase requests," Bradley Lerman, Fannie Mae executive vice president and general counsel, said in a statement.

Bank of America also said that it is selling mortgage servicing rights on about 2 million residential mortgage loans. The loans have an aggregate unpaid principal balance of approximately $306 billion.

The transferring of the servicing rights is expected to take place throughout the year.

Former Texas mayor to plead guilty on bribes

MELISSA, Texas (AP) — The former mayor of a North Texas town is scheduled to plead guilty today to soliciting a bribe from a real estate broker on a land deal.

David Dorman is scheduled to appear Monday afternoon in federal court in Sherman.

Prosecutors in November said Dorman had agreed to plead guilty to one count of mail fraud.

Dorman was the mayor of Melissa for a decade.

Documents filed by prosecutors say Dorman collected $30,000 in three separate payments from a real estate broker eying 33 acres of land in 2006 or 2007.

Authorities say Dorman pushed to annex the land so it could be improved with water and sewer lines.

They say he received three payments of $10,000.

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CULBERSON'S Hometown Spotlight

Dustin Kuhn

Dustin Kuhn is a graduate of Pampa High School , class of 2006. He recently married another Pampa native, Haley Acker. His parents are Steve and Lynn Kuhn, of Pampa. He has a younger sister, Kirsten that is a freshman at OSU.

Dustin has worked as a technician for Culberson Stowers for 7 years. He received an associate of Applied Science Degree at OSU in Okmulgee, Oklahoma. He is a Toyota Certified Master Tech and will soon become the only Master Diagnostic Tech in this area. "This is a great accomplishment and we are lucky to have him in Pampa." says Richard Stowers.

When asked , Why did you choose to be a mechanic?" , Kuhn said " Since I was a kid, I enjoyed working on cars and taking things apart. I just have a natural curiosity of the way things work. It's something I really enjoy."

When you bring in your Toyota to Culberson Stowers, just remember to say hello to Dustin. And know that your car is in the hands of a hometown and certainly most qualified Toyota Technician.

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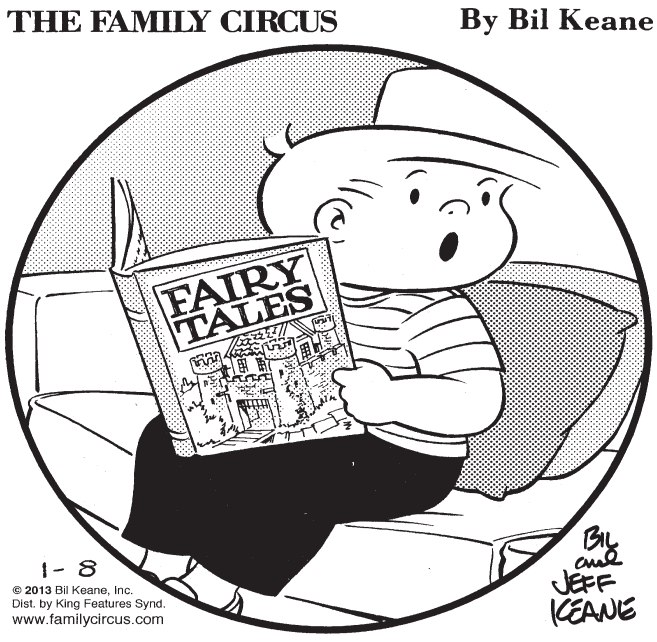
THE FAMILY CIRCUS By Bil Keane



"How many years of college does it take to become a king?"

Non Sequitur

Nest Heads

daily horoscope

HAPPY BIRTHDAY for Wednesday, Jan. 9, 2013:

This year you often are inspired to live out your dreams. Verbalizing these desires will be the first step toward making them become a reality. Others give you their caring support. If you are single, nearly every person you date this year could feel as if he or she is the right one for you. Roll with the moment, and give this process time. If you are attached, you feel more in harmony with each other than you have in many years. Enjoy all the good vibes between you. SAGITTARIUS understands you perhaps too well.

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

ARIES (March 21-April 19)

★★★★ Your feelings drive you. You might be seeing a new situation evolve. Know that the less said the better. A superior might not express his or her appreciation and approval, but trust that it is there. Tonight: Try a new scene. You have little to lose, and you just might like what you find.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

★★★★ Deal with one person directly who means a lot not only to you but also to a key situation. This person might not always seem present, but it's most likely because his or her imagination has no limits and is working overtime. Tonight: Visit with friends over dinner and a movie.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

★★★★ You could be amazed by what develops between you and someone else. You might feel pushed or misunderstood by a boss. Remember, this person has the power. Know when to flex, and know full well what choices you have. Tonight: A long-overdue discussion.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)

★★★★ You know exactly what to focus on. As determined as you are to walk a set path, you will be distracted by others. Realize that they simply don't have the same level of commitment you do. Break past rigid thinking. See how you can accomplish errands. Tonight: To the wee hours.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

★★★★ Your creativity and ability to move past a personal matter might surprise some people. Clearly, you don't waste any time once you make a decision. Be aware that this attitude might be the reason why a loved one is keeping a matter in limbo. Tonight: Let your worries vanish.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

★★★★★ Deferring to someone else might be the only way to proceed. Your knowledge very well could take a discussion to a new level. You know what to do, and you know when to do it. Think positively, and your creativity will open up new opportunities. Tonight: In the moment.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

★★★★ As dicey as a situation might seem, you'll want to think through a decision with greater care and understanding. Acknowledge the fact that there is a cloud of uncertainty around the situation that you cannot eliminate. Know what your priorities are. Tonight: In the limelight.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

★★★★ How you handle a matter and the choices you make could create more options for you to explore. Someone could have a strong reaction to this, yet you might not be able to grasp this person's reasoning. Respond with kindness and caring. Tonight: Let the festivities begin.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

★★★★ You smile, and someone reacts. Your ability to come to terms with a difficult issue marks a choice you've made. Having a greater understanding will help you eliminate any problem. It is quite obvious that not everyone thinks as you do. Tonight: Pretend it is Friday night.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

★★★ Pulling back seems to be the wise choice. You can't always draw the reaction you would like. Remember, everyone is different. Your instincts will clue you into someone's hidden agenda. Tonight: Opt to get a solid night of sleep rather than figure out an emotional puzzle.

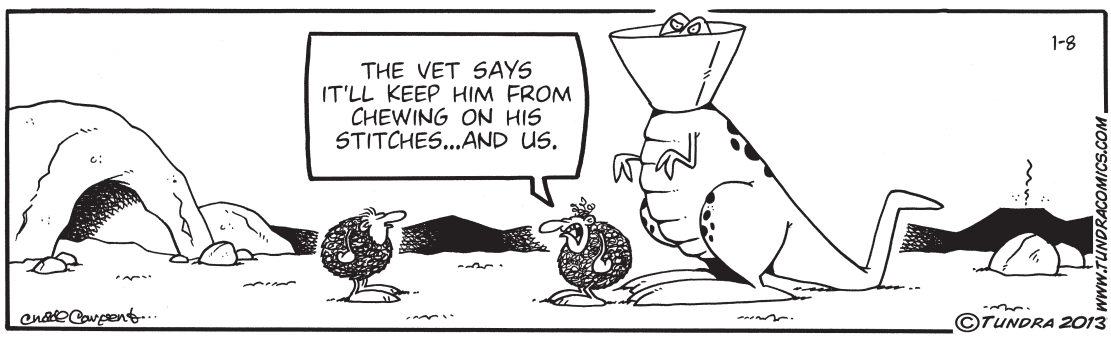
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

★★★★ Honor a friendship, yet be willing to say "no" to any financial involvement with this person; otherwise, you could hit a problem. Laughter might seem out of place, but it attracts an appropriate response. Stay focused on what's relevant. Tonight: Where your friends are.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

★★★★ You seem to understand what works best for you. Be forthright when making a decision, even though you might not be clear about its implications. It appears as if no one is really sure. Loosen up, and do more sharing. Tonight: Hang out with your best friend.

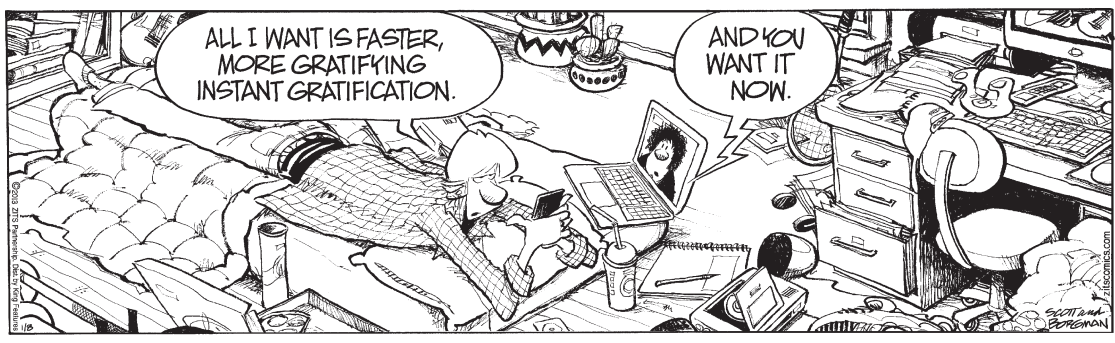
Tundra



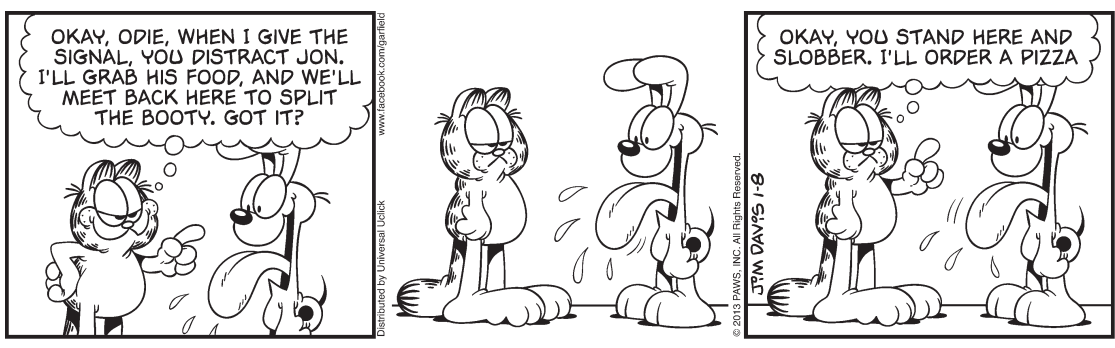
Shoe

Mother Goose and Grim

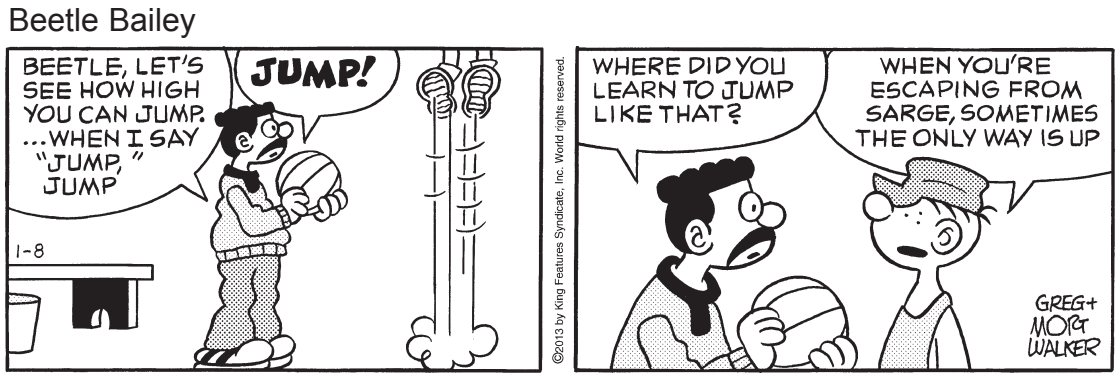
Zits



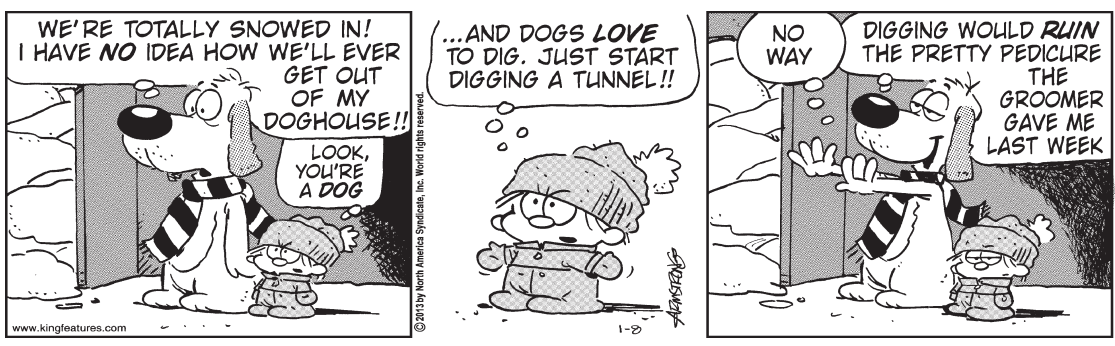
Garfield



Beetle Bailey



Marvin



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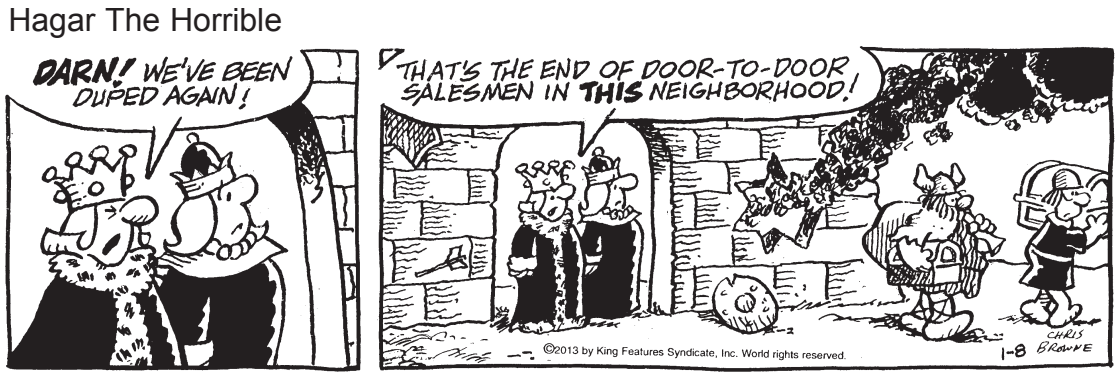
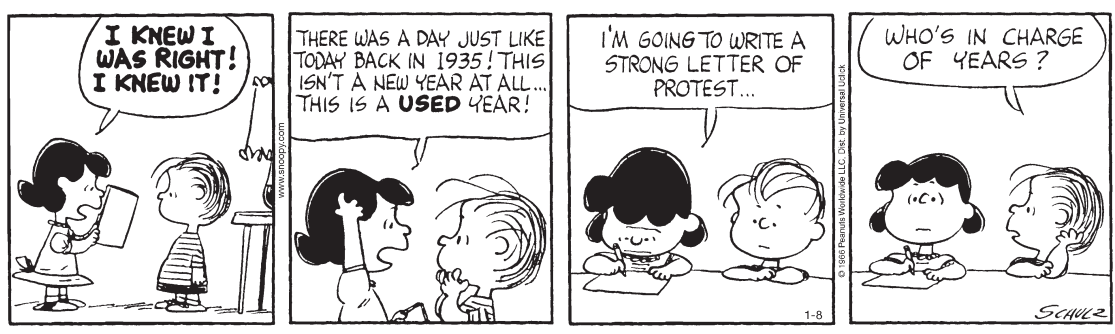
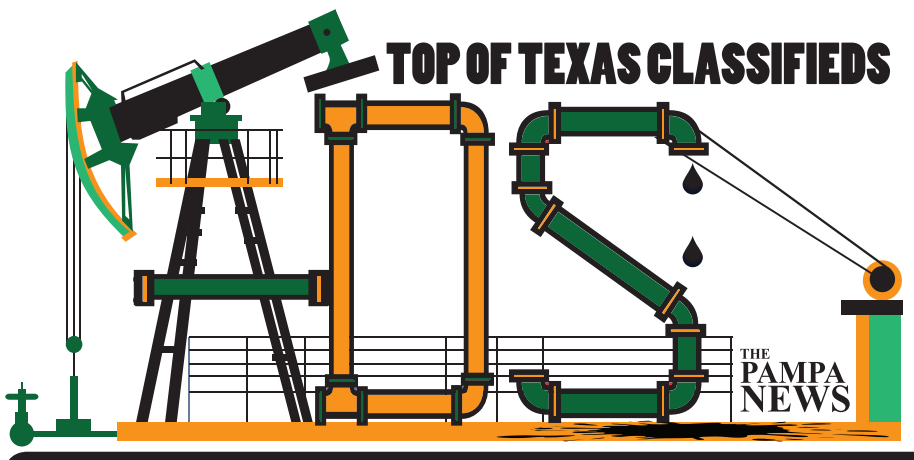


Peanuts



Blondie



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98 Unfurn. Houses

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98 Unfurn. Houses

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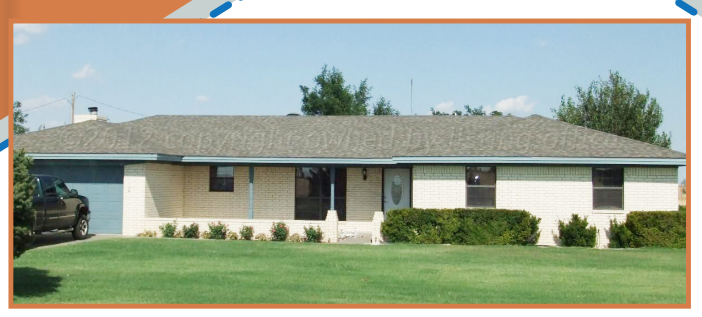
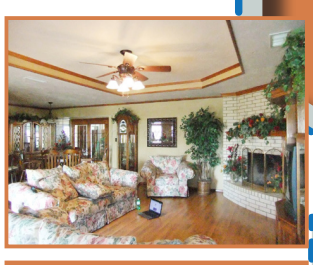
Featured Home





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Lots of Chrome
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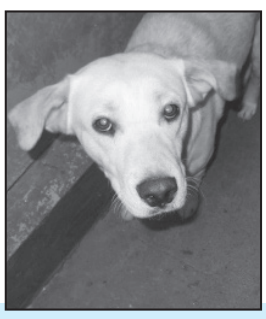
"Johnnie"
Yellow Lab Mix Male #6757

"Winter"
Chi Female #6888

"Sassy"
Shepard Female #6769

"Whiskers"
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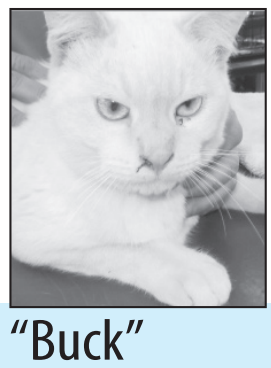
"Buck"
Cream Flame Pt Male #6989

"Lady"
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"North"
Pit Puppy Female, 8 weeks #6988

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AXYDLBAAXR
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

1-8 CRYPTOQUOTE

KU W TJWIT PJ RJUNZKWI KLJBP LDWIT PONDRKEP KE EUKVP? W AJI'P PXWIM EJ.

— KWEXK POZDV

Yesterday's Cryptoquote: WE DO NOT REMEMBER DAYS, WE REMEMBER MOMENTS. THE RICHNESS OF LIFE LIES IN MEMORIES WE HAVE FORGOTTEN. — CESARE PAVESE

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NEWS

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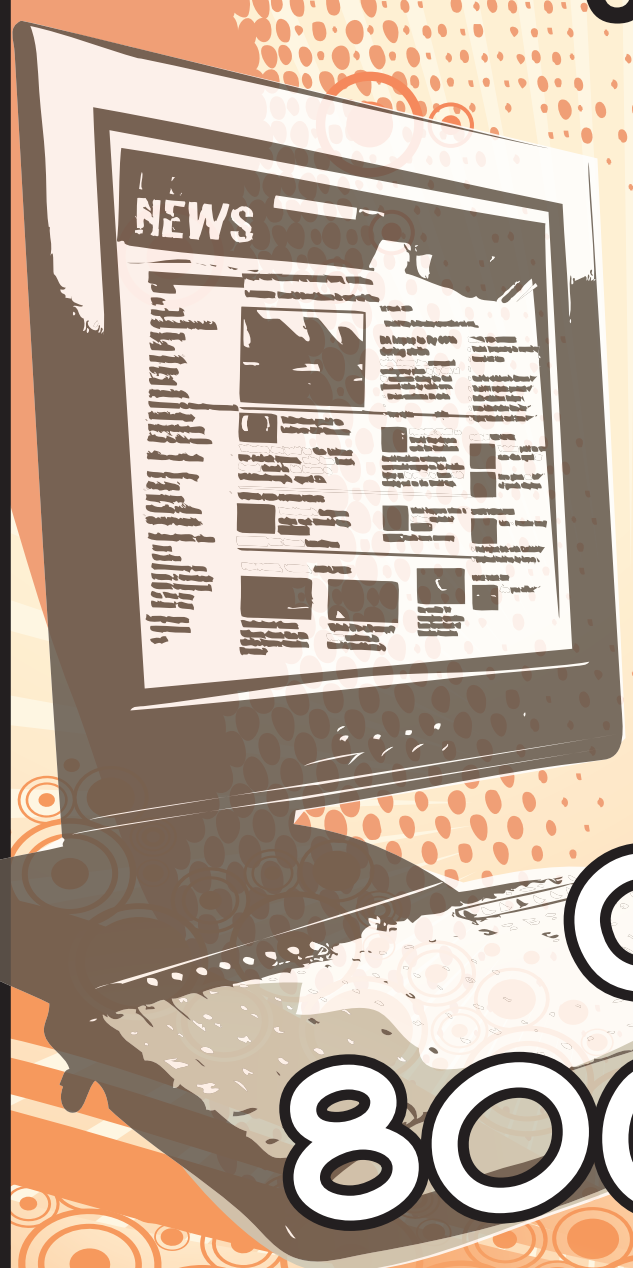

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CALL TODAY!

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Dear Abby...

By Pauline & Jeanne Phillips

DEAR ABBY: My husband, "Arthur," and I are planning a trip. One stop will be to see some friends of his, "Mac" and "Annie," from years back. I am dreading the visit.

Last year, Arthur had a heart attack. I called some of our closest friends to let them know he was in the hospital. One couple knew Mac and Annie, and told them about his illness.

Mac and Annie then called me and yelled at me for "allowing" my husband to get ill. I hung up, but they called back when I was at the hospital and left another hate-filled message on our answering machine. Not wanting Arthur to get upset, I erased it and never told him.

Abby, I don't want to see these people. I know I'll be suppressing the urge to slap them both, but I intend to try to be gracious. Should I tell my husband about my last encounter with them, or trust that they have enough sense not to bring up the matter? — DREADING THE VISIT IN TEXAS

DEAR DREADING: What exactly is it that you should have done to prevent your husband from having the heart attack — thrown your body over his fork so he couldn't eat the "wrong" foods, nagged him into quitting smoking, or "forced" him to exercise and adopt a different lifestyle? You're his wife, not his mother.

You should ABSOLUTELY tell your husband about those outrageous phone calls. Do not assume that folks with such an absence of common sense that they would attack you during a family crisis wouldn't do something equally inappropriate during the visit.

Frankly, I don't blame you for wanting to avoid them. Your husband should clear the air before either of you see them — if you decide to see them at all.

DEAR ABBY: My husband and I are on an extremely tight budget since I lost my job and he was forced to retire early because of health issues. We have a nice home (paid for) and older vehicles, and we have no complaints about our lifestyle other than being more penny-conscious to cover our basic expenses.

We receive numerous wedding invitations from our grown children's friends, whom we have known and loved since they were all in high school together. Our problem is what to do about a gift for them when we don't have the money for one. We love to attend the weddings and receptions, but I feel bad about not taking a gift.

What's the right thing to do? Do we go and not take anything, offer an explanation or decline the invitation? I always send a card and I don't want anyone to think we are cheap. My son was married last year, and people were very generous with their gifts, which I really appreciated.

We also received six graduation announcements last spring — same issue. I'd really appreciate some advice. — TIGHTENING OUR BELTS IN MISSOURI

DEAR TIGHTENING: When you receive a wedding invitation from one of your children's former high school friends, pick up the phone and explain your current circumstances and the fact that they, regrettably, prevent you from attending. That will leave the door open for them to invite you to come anyway. If the invitation is a sincere wish to share their special day with you and not a gift grab, they'll tell you your presence is all the "gift" they need. However, if they don't, send a card extending your good wishes.

As for the graduation announcements, they should be acknowledged with a nice card and a sweet note of congratulations. You are under no obligation to send a gift.

Sudoku

Answer to yesterday's puzzle:

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

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

Level: Beginner

Sudoku

Answer to yesterday's puzzle:

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

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

Level: Beginner

BANANAGRAMS!

LEVEL

Each of the following six-letter sets can be rearranged to spell out a common word that either starts with CH, DE or EN or ends with ED, LY or ND.

B C E H R U

B D E I M U

E L L N O R

A D G L L Y

Yesterday's Answer: WHIMSICAL

1.7

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BANANAGRAMS!

LEVEL

Add an L to each of the words below, and then rearrange the letters in each word to form a new six-letter word.

A R O M A

B A R G E

H E A R D

T A K E N

Yesterday's Answer: CHERUB, IMBUED, ENROLL, GLADLY

1.8

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CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

1 Like some eclipses
6 Cain's brother
10 Chilled
11 Hay bundles
13 Early Mexican
14 Hollywood deal maker
15 Fragrant tree
16 List-ending abbr.
18 Espionage org.
19 Apolo Anton Ohno, for one
22 Sen.'s counterpart
23 Departed
24 Travel papers
27 Shipping cities
28 Guitar boosters
29 For each
30 Fast peruser
35 Min. part
36 "Alley —"
37 Log chopper
38 Opera pieces
40 New York's — Island
42 Hunting weapon
43 Sunday entree
44 Caustic solutions
45 Rotisseries

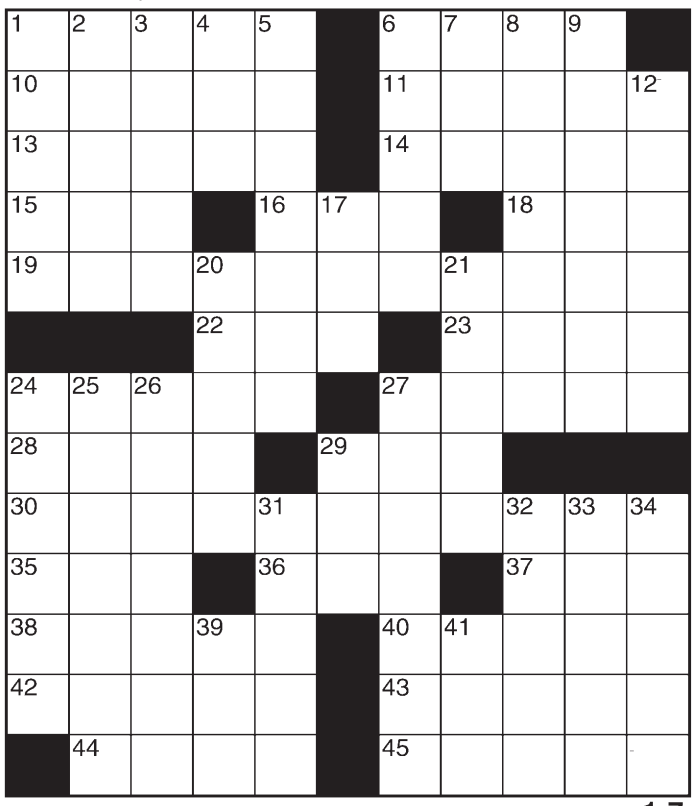
DOWN

1 Avoids work
2 Open, in a way
3 Saltpeter, to Brits
4 Top card
5 Wanes
6 By surprise
7 Sack
8 One with a ballot
9 Not strict
12 Rude looks
17 Recipe amt.
20 Make blank
21 Old marketplace
24 Poughkeepsie college
25 Put in danger
26 Enumerate
27 Eyes, slangily
29 NFL player
31 Medicine amounts
32 — Lama
33 Be real
34 Takes a break
39 Pub drink
41 Cut off

■	B	I	A	S	■	F	L	A	B	■
R	U	M	B	A	■	L	O	V	E	R
A	L	L	E	N	■	O	N	I	C	E
S	K	A	T	I	N	G	■	A	K	A
P	U	T	■	B	U	S	S	T	O	P
S	P	E	W	E	D	■	H	E	N	S
■	■	■	A	L	I	C	E	■	■	■
S	P	A	N	■	S	H	A	R	E	D
A	L	D	E	N	T	E	■	E	R	A
T	E	A	■	U	S	E	D	C	A	R
E	A	G	E	R	■	T	E	A	S	E
S	T	I	R	S	■	A	M	P	E	D
■	S	O	R	E	■	H	O	S	S	■

Saturday's answer

NEW CROSSWORD BOOK! Send $4.75 (check/m.o.) to Thomas Joseph Book 1, P.O. Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475



1-7

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

1 Verdi songs
6 Elite Navy group
11 Corduroy feature
12 Volume-based
13 Chaka Khan song
15 Overhead trains
16 Whole bunch
17 NBC show since 1975
18 Hunting dogs
20 Wire measure
21 Dogfight pro
22 Take it easy
23 Stand on both sides of
26 Like some floors
27 Breathing organ
28 May honoree
29 Music's Yoko
30 Mini waves
34 Informant
35 Conclusion
36 Mine rock
37 Perry Como song
40 Brother's daughter
41 June honorees
42 Propeller type
43 Shoe parts

DOWN

1 Zodiac ram
2 Pillage
3 Namely, in Latin
4 Ripen
5 Tom of "Blue Bloods"
6 Edinburgh natives
7 It's north of Afr.
8 Very bad
9 Treat as a celebrity
10 Competed in a regatta
14 Golf cry
19 Zesty flavor
22 Walk unevenly
23 Old gold coins
24 Madman
25 One more
26 Dominant ones
28 Stole stuff?
30 Make fresh
31 Faithful
32 Eat away
33 Grinch's creator
38 Motel freebie
39 To's counterpart

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

Yesterday's answer

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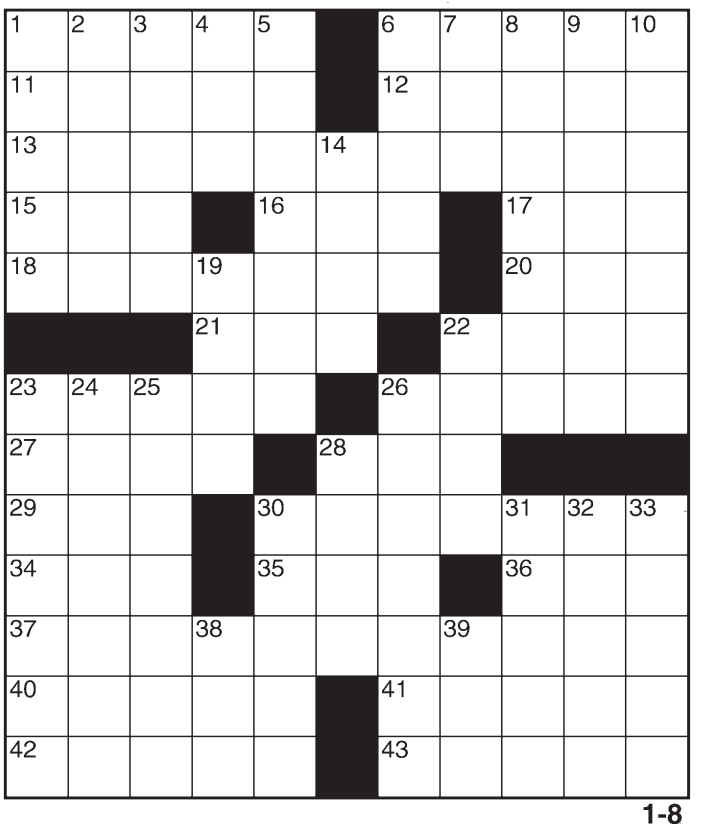

1-8

PAMPA REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER

2013

happy new year

from our family to yours

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