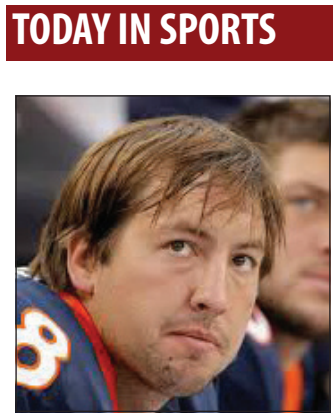


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The PAMPA NEWS



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A legal conundrum



Photo by Timothy P. Howsare

Rick McClelland, who has a hearing Jan. 6 to determine whether he might serve jail time for failure to pay child support, said he has documents that prove he is disabled from the loss of an eye in 2004.

■ Pampa man faces jail sentence for failure to pay child support despite desire to work and evidence that shows he is disabled from loss of eye while working as an electrician.

By **TIMOTHY P. HOWSARE**
 thowsare@thepampanews.com

Rick McClelland could start out the new year serving a 180-day jail sentence.

That prospect has him so worried that he's only sleeping about 2 1/2 hours a night, despite taking a prescription sleep medication.

"I've never had any problems sleeping until now," he said.

On Jan. 6, the Pampa resident has a hearing in Gray County to decide whether he will go to jail for being \$35,000 behind in child support payments for his 11-year-old daughter.

His case will be heard by a special child support judge.

McClelland can stay out of jail by getting a job, but in his case that's not so easy, he said.

The 42-year-old said he wants to work and is actively seeking employment, but is turned down

because of his poor vision.

In 2004, the former electrician lost his right eye on the job when it was pierced by a decking screw.

He said good vision, especially depth perception, is paramount to staying alive as an electrician, and knows of at least one electrician with perfect vision who was electrocuted because of a misjudgment.

One year after the accident, he received a transplanted eye from a 16-year-old male donor who had died from head trauma.

The transplanted eye lacked an iris — the part of the eye that controls the amount of light that passes through to the retina.

"They think there might have been rust or other contaminants that had gotten into it," he said.

"The transplant took place six days after the do-

LEGAL cont. on page 2

New pulmonary PRMC doctor to help with intensive situations

By **JOHN LEE**
 jlee@thepampanews.com

Sometimes a smaller-sized hospital such as Pampa Regional Medical Center may not have all the means it needs to treat patients dealing with the more intense injuries or conditions.



Dr. Sergio Muniz

New pulmonologist and intensive-care specialist Dr. Sergio Muniz at PRMC brings to Pampa the ability to treat patients here instead of referring them to Amarillo.

"What I have noticed in the past is that hospitals in the region send their patients to the hospitals in Amarillo," Muniz said. "One of the reasons is because they lack an intensivist or other specialties that are offered (in Amarillo). This forces them to send patients to other hospitals and not keep them in their hospital."

"What I discussed with Brad (Morse, PRMC CEO) is to keep some of, or most, of these patients in the hospital without jeopardizing the safety of the patients."

Muniz completed his medical degree at the University of San Carlos in Guatemala in 1980. He began his fellowship in pulmonary medicine at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston in 1986. He started working with Baptist Saint Anthony's hospital in Amarillo in 1992, becoming a hospitalist a year and a half ago.

A hospitalist is someone who helps off-site physicians with caring for the patients in the hospital. They are specifically designed to be at the hospital, as opposed to a patient's primary-care physician.

While Muniz still lives in Amarillo, he will be spending a large majority of his time in Pampa. In fact, since starting in late-November, there have only been four days he wasn't in Pampa. His availability will depend on the hours assigned by his group Serel Services, but there is no doubt he will be spending most of his time in Pampa.

Muniz' services will benefit PRMC and the community in multiple ways. The most obvious is that there will be someone in town who not

DOCTOR cont. on page 2

Winter weedy land



Photo by Timothy P. Howsare

Even dried up weeds can look beautiful when covered with frost. This picture was taken on West Atchison Avenue down the street the newspaper office. The frost occurred after the high level of moisture in the air on Monday froze overnight, causing frost on windshields, trees and even these lowly weeds on Tuesday morning.

TxDOT approves funds for U.S. 83 improvements, Loop 335 expansion

STAFF REPORT

AUSTIN — The Texas Transportation Commission last week approved \$35.7 million to build two projects in the Amarillo District.

Both projects are part of an ongoing effort to improve safety and relieve congestion, the department said in a press release.

The closest project to Pampa includes eight miles of U.S. 83 from the U.S. 60 split, south to about 1.6 miles south

of F.M. 277. The project will include a new base, pavement and improved shoulders. This \$3.5 million highway rehabilitation in Hemphill County is part of TxDOT's efforts to improve safety in a region that experiences heavy oil field traffic. A recent three-vehicle crash on the highway six miles south of Canadian claimed the life of a truck driver and sent two other people to the hospital.

The project is expected to get underway in the spring of 2014.

Southwest of Pampa, the commission approved a contract for \$32.2 million to expand capacity on Loop 335 in Randall County from Interstate 27 to just west of Washington Street. The expansion will convert that section of Loop 335 into a four-lane freeway with frontage roads and overpasses at Bell, Georgia and Western streets. The project, when completed, will improve safety and mobility in the area by encouraging

TXDOT cont. on page 2

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Legal

Continued From Page 1

mor died.”

Because of that eye’s sensitivity to light, McClelland keeps all the curtains shut in his house on North Duncan Street. He cannot legally drive.

He said the vision in his left eye is bad, too, because of the years of stress from that eye having to compensate for the right eye.

McClelland said he has been referred for an artificial iris and secondary implant, but those procedure have not yet been approved by the FDA and even many of the very best eye surgeons, like his doctor with the Panhandle Eye Group in Amarillo, have no experience with the highly tech-

nical procedures.

Until approved by the FDA, McClelland said he would have to pay out-of-pocket for the delicate surgeries.

After his accident, McClelland collected worker’s compensation and said he had \$375 deducted every month.

Then the benefits ran out. McClelland applied for supplemental income benefits in 2007 and had a medical evaluation that shows because of the total loss of vision in one eye, he has a “24 percent total body impairment.”

According to the rules of the system, McClelland said he is 9 percent above the threshold to be eligible for supplemental benefits.

However, a document from the Texas Department of Insurance Division

of Workers Compensation shows that McClelland may be in a catch-22.

That paper states that McClelland is less than 15 percent disabled — the legal cutoff point — and that his disability has nothing to do with his eye.

McClelland, who meticulously keeps all the documents related to his case in a briefcase, was denied the supplemental benefits from which he could have continued his child support payments.

He is not facing criminal charges for failure to pay child support.

Rather, the former electrician is being held in civil contempt by the state Attorney General’s Office, which oversees most of the child support cases in Texas.

“We are the official child support agency for the

State of Texas,” said Janece Rolfe, a spokeswoman in the child support office.

“We have 1.4 million child support cases, but not every case.”

In situations like McClelland’s, Rolfe said that any verifiable evidence a parent presents that applies to his or her case is taken into consideration by the AG’s office.

Clair Grammar, McClelland’s court-appointed attorney in Amarillo, said that with an arraignment as large as McClelland’s, jail is a possibility.

“But the possibility of probation is pretty real, too,” she added.

McClelland said he has only spoken to Grammar one time after she was appointed to his case on Dec. 2. He understands that she is very busy, representing clients in 17 counties.

Asked how he is supporting himself, McClelland said he lives with his fiancée.

The couple has chosen not to get married until the child-support issue is resolved. If they did tie the knot, McClelland said the state would garnish her paycheck.

Despite being out of work for so long, McClelland said he has never applied for food stamps.

Another bitter pill McClelland said he’s had to swallow is the strong possibility he may not be the 11-year-old girl’s biological father.

He and the mother were never married, and she told him a few things he didn’t know about after the baby was born, he said.

McClelland said he is having a DNA test to verify whether he is truly the fa-

ther.

However, even if the test proves he isn’t the real dad, he signed the child’s birth certificate as the father.

As far as the state is concerned, he is the father and must pay the child support, McClelland said.

He said the mother has told the court to drop the case because she doesn’t need the money, but that hasn’t made a difference in his case.

“My problem is not with her, it’s with the AG’s office,” he said.

McClelland said it’s a waste of the taxpayers’ money to lock him up in jail only seven blocks away from his house.

“They will have to feed me, house me and clothe me,” he said. “I am already a prisoner in my own house. Why not just give me an ankle monitor?”

Happy 90th Birthday Clyde!

Love - Linda, Brenda, Llaine, Terry, Larry, Linda, Lee & Paulette

Doctor

Continued From Page 1

only is a pulmonary specialist, but also a specialist in the extreme cases that normally involve intensive care.

“If there is a situation

where it is safer to transfer, the transfer will happen,” Muniz. “If there is a situation where we can use the facilities and equipment here — which, by the way [PRMC] is a wonderful facility here — then I think we can easily keep a vast majority of the patients here.”

Muniz hopes that this not only inspires the public in Pampa, but other specialists as well.

“I also want to make the hospital service stronger,” Muniz said.

“I will use the services of the doctors who have kindly helped us in the past with the hospital service.

I would like to obtain two or three other hospitals to come and assist us. Then we would have a stronger hospital group.

“With a stronger hospital group, I think that we can entice other specialist to come and practice here.”

While having an intensive care specialist and pulmonologist in Pampa sounds great, to ensure that you don’t need to be treated by Dr. Muniz, he had a couple of helpful tips for a healthy heart.

“I would say that the main thing that I have observed, that we all have to lose, is our weight,” Muniz said. “It sounds very simple, but

we are, all of us, carrying either a few or very many pounds that we don’t need to carry. Like any other engine, if you overwhelm the human machine, it fails. I would say that one thing we need to put emphasis on is maintaining a proper weight. Not to be skinny or for vanity reasons, but for health.”

Muniz said that weight management and not smoking would get rid of a large number of the problems patients come to the emergency room with.

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TXDOT

Continued From Page 1

commercial truck traffic to use the east loop and bypass downtown Amarillo. The project will get under-

way in mid-spring 2014.

“In a state as vast as Texas, it’s imperative to not only have reliable roadways connecting our rural and urban citizens, but also to be diligent in designing and maintaining them with safety in mind,” said Commissioner Fred Under-

wood, Texas Transportation Commission.

“Keeping everyone safe on the road is our first priority. We must do everything we can to get the driving public safely to their destinations and home to their families at the end of the day.”

DPS seizes nearly 100 pounds of pot Monday

SUBMITTED BY DPS

AMARILLO — The Texas Department of Public Safety conducted a traffic stop Monday on Interstate 40, yielding more than 98 pounds of marijuana valued at more than \$44,000.

At approximately 5:37 p.m., a DPS trooper con-

ducted a traffic stop on a 2013 Chevrolet Suburban traveling eastbound on I-40 for a traffic violation near Bushland in Potter County.

The occupants of the suburban were identified as Jemore Stone Vaughn, 32, and Nicola Neisha Kerr-Stone, 35, both of Fayetteville, N.C. During the traffic stop, the trooper

discovered 19 bundles of marijuana in the vehicle.

Vaughn and Kerr-Stone were placed under arrest for possession of a controlled substance, a second-degree felony, and booked into the Potter County Jail. The illegal drugs were allegedly being transported from Tucson, Ariz., to Fayetteville, N.C.

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Autopsy set for dead newborn found in San Antonio

(AP) An autopsy will be conducted on the body of a newborn baby that a worker found on a conveyor belt at a San Antonio recycling center, officials said Tuesday.

The baby’s body was found Monday at about 1 p.m. by an employee, said Lisa Doughty, a spokeswoman for Waste Management, the company that runs the facility. The employee was working at the start of a sorting line in a center that receives mixed materials from paper to plastics and metals, said Doughty. The newborn’s body was in a bin on an inclined conveyor belt, she said.

The center was immediately shut down and police were called, Doughty said.

“We took all of our records of all the trucks entering the facility ... from

Saturday through noon yesterday. We released the information of where those trucks came from so they could conduct the investigation,” Doughty told The Associated Press.

San Antonio police completed their on-site investigation late Monday.

They did not immediately return calls seeking comment.

The Bexar County Medical Examiner’s Office said the newborn’s body was handed over Monday, and the autopsy will likely be conducted Tuesday.

Meanwhile, the Waste Management facility reopened for business Tuesday, Doughty said.

“Anyone that would encounter something like that has to just be very surprised. It’s a terrible, terrible situation no matter what time of year it is,” she said.

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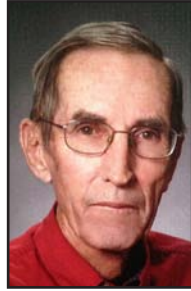
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Obituaries

Danny G. King



Danny King

Danny G. King, beloved husband, father, grandfather, and great grandfather, 77, died Friday, Dec. 20, 2013 in Dallas.

Services will be at 2 p.m. Friday, Dec. 27, 2013, at First Christian Church with Dr. Jeff Knighton, pastor and the Rev. Roy King, his brother and a Disciples of Christ minister, officiating.

Burial will be in Memory Gardens Cemetery under the direction of Carmichael-Whitley Funeral Directors.

Mr. King was born on March 19, 1936 in Pampa where he has been a lifelong resident. Danny married Sue Williams on Aug. 17, 1957 in Pampa. He retired as environmental coordinator from Celanese. He was a member of the First Christian Church. Danny was preceded in death by his parents, son Steven King, and two brothers.

Survivors include his wife, Sue; two daughters, Sharon King of Garland and Jenny King of Houston; son, Matthew King of Haslet; brother, the Rev. Roy King of Pampa; and sister, Jerrye Smith of Madison, Ala.; six grandchildren and one great granddaughter.

Memorials may be made to the American Heart Association National Center, 7272 Greenville Ave., Dallas, Texas 75231 or the Alzheimer's Association, 4144 N. Central Expressway, Suite 750, Dallas, Texas 75204.

Deadline extended for health insurance sign-up

CHICAGO (AP) — The deadline to sign up for insurance on the government's health care website arrived Tuesday, a day later than expected after the Obama administration granted those waiting until the last minute — or those tripped up by the site's glitches — an extra day to enroll.

The one-day grace period was the latest in a series of delays that have marked the rollout of the health care law. Officials said they decided to extend the deadline to Christmas Eve to ensure people in different time zones and those experiencing technical problems that might result from a last-minute rush of applicants can sign up successfully.

Among those not needing the extra day: President Barack Obama. The White House said Monday he had signed up for coverage through the new insurance exchange, even though he won't use it. And Obama aides didn't actually use the HealthCare.gov website to sign up their boss, a reminder of just how complex the process can be.

Had Obama tried to log on Monday afternoon, he would have been among the record 850,000 visitors to HealthCare.gov, five times the number logged by the same time last Monday. Julie Baille, a spokeswoman for the federal agency in charge of the health care overhaul, said the system was handling the volume with error rates of less than 1 in 200 and response times of less than one second.

Still, critics of the law said the grace period is yet more evidence that the website still isn't working and that Obama keeps changing the rules. In Ohio, Lt. Gov. Mary Taylor called the deadline extension "a clear sign Healthcare.gov continues to struggle."

"Consumers are already confused and insurers are overwhelmed with the administration's last-minute changes, yet there seems to be no end in sight," said Taylor, a Republican who heads Ohio's insurance department.

Monday had been the deadline for Americans in the 36 states served by

if they wanted coverage at the start of the new year. The remaining states operate their own online marketplaces, and some of them have also extended their deadlines.

The federal site had a disastrous, glitch-prone debut in October but has gone through extensive improvements to make it more reliable and increase its capacity. The Obama administration is hoping for a surge of year-end enrollments to show that the technical problems were merely a temporary setback. That would also go a long way toward easing concerns that insurance companies won't be able to sign up enough young, healthy people to keep prices low for everyone.

The administration was careful not to characterize Tuesday as a new deadline or an extension, likening the move instead to the Election Day practice in which people who are in line when the polls close are still allowed to vote. As the deadline drew near, more than 1 million people visited the website over the weekend, and a federal call center received more than 200,000 calls.

The government's original deadline already had been pushed back a week because of the website problems. The extra day will add to the already daunting administrative problems that insurance

companies face, such as inaccuracies on applications, said industry consultant Robert Laszewski.


"Insurers would like to have two to three weeks to process applications. Now they're going to have a week, less one more day," he said. "When the day is done, it doesn't help."

Obama said Friday that more than 1 million Americans had enrolled for coverage since Oct. 1. The administration's estimates call for 3.3 million to sign up by Dec. 31, and the target is 7 million by the end of March. After that, people who fail to buy coverage can face tax penalties.

Minnesota, one of the states running their own insurance exchanges, extended its Monday deadline to Dec. 31 amid problems with its website and extra-long hold times to reach its help center. Maryland pushed back its cutoff date to Dec. 27. New York extended its deadline to midnight Tuesday.

Nevada stuck to its Monday deadline, and enrollment counselors there reported a surge of interest.

"We have people lined up out our door. We still have walk-ins, people are asking for help. Our phones are ringing nonstop," said Andres Ramirez in Las Vegas.



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Friday night: Clear with a low of 31. Winds southwest at 10 mph. Sunset at 5:39 p.m.

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Viewpoints

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Museum Musings

Rudolph's beginnings

On an icy January morning in 1939, Robert L. May felt like a loser as he was going to his job grinding out catalog copy in the Montgomery Ward building in Chicago. His wife was gravely ill and he was deeply in debt.



COURTNEY OXLEY

In the copy department he was asked by the department head to design a booklet to replace the Christmas give-away coloring books that Montgomery Ward had been buying from local peddlers. The proposed booklet would save money for the firm, and the boss thought that it should be an animal story with a character like Ferdinand the Bull. That night May decided that a reindeer would be the appropriate animal for a Christmas story.

He wanted the plot to give hope to children by showing that a little reindeer who was teased by other reindeer could turn into an admired

leader of Santa's reindeer. As he wondered what could make his little Rudolph different from Donner, Blitzen and the other reindeer, suddenly he had the idea of a bright red nose that could shine through fog like a flashlight. The nose would help Santa bring joy to children.

May's boss was not pleased with the plan for the booklet and said that a red-nosed reindeer would be a monstrosity, but May had faith in Rudolph and asked a friend in the art department to draw a reindeer with a big red nose that would still be appealing. The boss studied the sketches for a long time before he smiled and told May to put his story in finished form.

May finished his booklet in late August and Rudolph's story was rushed into print. About three million copies were given to children for Christmas, and soon the copy office at Montgomery Ward was flooded with enthusiastic letters from grateful parents.

In 1949, song publishers began

to contact May for permission to use Rudolph's story for a song. A company official said that Rudolph belonged to Montgomery Ward, but Sewell Avery, then chairman of the board of directors, said, "Let Bob May have the copyright." In 1949, "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer," with lyrics and music by Johnny Marks, was published by St. Nicholas Publishing Company in New York. It was first sung and then popularized by Gene Autry, and now it is sung at Christmas time by children over all the world. In December 1964, "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer" was featured on TV in a stop-motion animation style dubbed "Animagic" by producers Arthur Rankin Jr. and Julian Bass. The show has aired annually ever since, finding a new home in 1972 at CBS that gave the song its 40th anniversary telecast on Wednesday, Dec. 1, 2004.

In the 1950s and '60s, boys and girls attending Sam Houston EL-RUDOLPH cont. on page 5

Tales from the Final Frontier

Final Fantasy needs a reboot, or to beautify older titles.

This month video game publisher SquareEnix, who is most known for its role-playing game series, Final Fantasy, decided to re-release their epic, Final Fantasy VIII, on PCs and Steam.

First off, I love the move. Final Fantasy VIII is, along with IX, my personal favorites in the series. But my only problem is, why not re-release it on the modern and next-gen consoles?

In fact, why stop at VIII. Let's revamp the whole series.

Final Fantasy has a long standing reputation for having BEAUTIFUL graphics and lovable characters. But ever since Final Fantasy XII, there is something missing. Fans of the series around my age would probably agree that removing the turn-based combat system has removed a piece of our childhood.

Granted the turn-based system received modifications throughout the series up through Final Fantasy X-2, but it was still basic. The play controls each character, chooses whom they want to attack and then the game carries out commands.

Final Fantasy XII is where it all went south for me. Once again, XII was gorgeous in terms of graphics. It also had so much potential in terms of the side-questing and the world. I gave the game plenty of time to make me overlook the Command Synergy Battle-System.

As if the name wasn't confusing enough, "Each action consumes a portion of the ATB gauge, for example attacking consumes one point, while casting a powerful spell consumes three. Commands can be

chained so as long as there's enough action points. When the player decides on what commands to take, the player presses another button to execute the commands for the character to do.

"If the player executes the chained commands without filling all ATB (Active Time Battle) slots, the unused slots will be filled at the start of the next turn.

"Unlike regular ATB, the player is only able to control the actions of the party leader. At the end of each battle, the player is judged on a rating of zero to five stars." (Final Fantasy Wiki)

How in the heck is a person supposed to enjoy a game with that kind of battle system. They dumbed down the battle system in Final Fantasy XIII, but I still don't like that I cannot control all of my characters.

Controlling all the characters, and planning out who needs to do what is why I fell in love with the series. It was the ultimate strategy game without actually playing an RTS (Real-time Strategy) game.

So which one would I like to see get the reboot first? It has to be Final Fantasy VII. The game was a show of its time. While the cutscenes are, once again, beautiful, the in-game graphics leave plenty to be desired for.

They have recreated characters for appearances in other SquareEnix titles, such as the Kingdom Hearts series (another great series), so half of the work is already done. I guarantee that if they modernized this gem, and resold it at \$60, it would sell. I know because I would buy it. Could you imagine the Summons on the game in modern-console display, such as Odin and Knights of the Round?

Overall, the entire series through IX could use a reboot. They are some games that SquareEnix could really make money on. Which game would you like to see get rebooted?

John Lee is the sports editor of The Pampa News and a self-proclaimed nerd. He can be reached at johnlee@thepampnews.com.



File photo

Pictured is the game cover for Final Fantasy VIII.



How To Write Us

The Pampa News welcomes letters to the editor. When submitting a letter, please include the writer's name, address and signatures.

We reserve the right to edit letters or not to publish certain letters.

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The Pampa News
403 W. Atchison
Pampa, Texas
79065

By E-mail:
thowsare@thepampnews.com

Letter to the Editor

Local producer opposes tax break for wind farm

Editor's note: This is an open letter to the Gray County Commissioners Court.

I am very disappointed in your decision to award the tax abatement to Cielo Land Cattle, LP. Your decision to do so is a slap in the face to all businesses and land owners in Gray County. In your decision you have chosen to continue to place the tax burden on our local businesses and landowners who directly contributed to our community and give a pass to an entity that will provide minimal economic benefit to the community. The tax abatement to Cielo is taking money from the taxpayers and putting it in the hands of outsiders.

You all know, and the fact has been confirmed by Mr. Richard Pena of Cielo, that Cielo also is receiving federal subsidies to construct this project. Without federal subsidies and tax abatements, Mr. Pena said the project is not feasible and cannot stand on its own merits. So that means we are not only giving them a pass in the county not taxing them at 100 percent of market value, but we also get to help pay for the construction of a project with our federal income taxes that will bring minimal economic benefits to us locally. If the project is not feasible to build without federal subsidies and county tax abatements, why do you think it will make it when the help stops?

In the public discussion meeting regarding this project, I spoke and later

addressed individually three commissioners, Joe Wheeley, Gary Willoughby and Jeff Haley, to expand my thoughts. In the course of these conversations some interesting points were brought to mind.

Mr. Wheeley expressed that he and several others he knew were interested in the wind turbines because they want to collect lease payments and royalties from the electricity produced from the turbines on their land. This brings up a point. I believe it is a conflict of interest for any commissioner that has a vested interest in promoting wind energy by having personal land leased to a wind energy company, but involved in any discussion, and more importantly, vote on any decision regarding wind energy.

At this point I asked Mr. Wheeley if he had ever been up close to a wind farm and he answered he had not. I suggested he do so to get a firsthand look. A group of turbines sound like you are in the middle of some jet engines. And when you look around the area, it is devoid of wildlife. So "green energy" comes at the price of riding the countryside of all wildlife? Wind turbines are monstrous and detrimental to all migratory bird migration routes and habits.

Mr. Wheeley brought up the oilfield and how the major oil companies came in and drilled, sold out to small operators and left without being responsible for cleanup.

I expressed that is what

the companies are doing. Many wind farms across the country are being sold while they are marketable commodities and leaving their obligation to some else. The very next day front-page headlines in the Amarillo paper confirmed this statement by reporting that a subsidized "foreign" company had just purchased its third wind farm in the Panhandle of Texas. The third wind farm under construction is in western Carson County. A tank battery is a lot easier to clean up than a wind turbine.

I discussed with Mr. Wheeley how the wind farms provide very little economic impact during construction or permanent jobs. The construction is provided by crews brought in from other areas familiar with this type of construction so the county receives minimal immediate economic benefits.

Mr. Wheeley agreed and we discussed how local businesses are the life blood to the county. Local businesses and landowners pump millions of dollars directly and indirectly into our community and schools. Local businesses and landowners are the life blood of the county and keep our community alive.

My conversation with Mr. Willoughby was somewhat different. I began by saying that I hoped that I got my message across and he replied he completely understood. Mr. Willoughby also has land leased to a wind energy company. Mr. Willoughby expressed his discontent for them and that he had been lied to

and deceived in his dealings and would not cut the wind energy companies any slack.

Mr. Willoughby said he completely understands how the local businesses are the financial backbone of our county and that we should all be playing on a level playing field. Funny how opinions change.

Every year oil and gas companies are forced to pay higher and higher ad valorem taxes. The taxes on these leases range from five and as high as nine year payouts of appraised value. Operators have to operate these leases without any interruption or work over three and sometimes four months' revenue just to pay for their higher ad valorem taxes. This does not even include state and federal taxes from our county government having to generate more revenue because they cannot control their expenses.

It was reported in the paper a commissioner made the statement that our tax base in the oil field in Gray County is expanding. The truth is the appraised value of the properties is increasing and creating more tax revenue and more of a hardship for county operators. The County field is old and depleting and not expanding. We do need to expand our tax base but not give out discounts at the cost of placing the burden on locals. Before long the cost to operate these leases along with the increases in ad valorem taxes will make the leases unaffordable to operate.

WIND cont. on page 5

Rudolph

Continued From Page 4

mentary School in Pampa sang a parody based on "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer." The parody was about Randolph, the bow-legged cowboy, who had a very shiny gun — anyone who saw it would turn around and run. The cowboys laughed at Randolph and would not let him join in any poker games. Then one foggy Christmas Eve, the sheriff asked Randolph

to use his gun so bright to guide the posse through the night. Then the cowboys shouted out with glee and told Randolph that he would go down in history.

Editor's note: Information courtesy of White Deer Land Museum Archives.

For more information about the museum, visit the White Deer Land Museum in downtown Pampa. Regular tours are offered Tuesday through Saturday from 1-4 p.m. If you would like to schedule a special or group tour, please call or email the museum at 806-669-8041 or courtney.oxley@graycch.com.

Wind

Continued From Page 4

What will that do to our tax base?

Agricultural land value is also going through the roof, driving up the ad valorem taxes on all agriculture property. The appraised values have increased to the point where it became very difficult to operate farm and ranch land and make it profitable. At present-day land prices one cannot afford to buy land and try to make a living off it. Ranch land is being purchased for recreation and as an investment hedge against inflation, driving up the cost.

Wind energy is part of the "green" agenda. Like it or not, it is upon us. If wind energy is the future, it should be as any private sector business and be able to stand on its own merits. Wind energy companies should negotiate in good faith with landowners, develop their projects

and pay their fair share of all taxes to support our county.

Judge Richard Peet made the comment we need to look toward the future. The future should not be taxing our local businesses out of business. Our future is to encourage and promote businesses that are economically stable to share our burden. The future is taxing all equally and creating a level playing field and not looking a few years down the road to add a depreciated asset to the tax rolls in which we don't even benefit from the electricity produced. The future is living within means and taking care of the Gray County residents and not selling us out.

We need to remember that Gray County is funded by the property owners and the taxpayers pay for all county salaries and services.

**Terry Hall
Pampa**

Town looks for ways to get rid of vultures

VINTON, Va. (AP) — Officials in a Virginia town are looking for ways to get migrating buzzards to buzz off.

This year, nearly 100 vultures landed in the Gladetown area of Vinton. Vinton police officers fired booming guns into the air to drive the birds away, and most left.

Town manager Chris Lawrence tells The Roanoke Times that more efficient methods are being considered for the vultures' return next year.

The town could apply for a federal permit to kill one vulture. The remains would be hung near the other vultures. Lawrence says the vultures would disperse because they don't like to be around

their own dead.

He says vultures are loud and dirty and tear up trees. But he says the town tries to co-exist with nature.

Statewide gas price average remains steady during busy holiday travel week

SUBMITTED BY
AAA TEXAS

As Texas drivers hit the roads for the holidays, the statewide gas price average remains steady. The average for a gallon of regular unleaded fuel in the Lone Star State is \$3.05, according to the AAA Texas Weekend Gas Watch. That price is the same as last week and a penny less than last year. It is also 20 cents less than the national average of \$3.25. Of the major metropolitan areas surveyed, drivers in Texarkana are paying the most at \$3.10 and drivers in Amarillo are paying the least at \$2.89.

The national average is up two pennies and the main reason for the increase is the expectation for an increased demand for fuel as we move into the Year-End Travel period. AAA Texas projects 7.9 million Texans will

travel 50 miles or more away from home during the holidays. Nine out of ten of those travelers will go by automobile.

"As the roads get more crowded with holiday travelers, we encourage people to buckle up, obey the posted speed limits, don't be distracted and don't drink and drive," said AAA Texas/New Mexico Representative Doug Shupe. "We urge drivers to be extra cautious behind the wheel so they get to their holiday destinations safely."

Texans are now paying about \$43 to fill up the typical 14-gallon size fuel tank. To find out how much to budget for fuel costs, drivers can use AAA's Fuel Cost Calculator at www.fuelcostcalculator.aaa.com.

To help consumers identify quality auto repair shops that can assist in the maintenance and

repair of their vehicles, AAA offers the Approved Auto Repair program as a free public service. AAA-approved repair facilities meet and maintain high professional standards for training, equipment, cleanliness and customer service. Motorists can look for the Approved Auto Re-

pair sign at local auto repair facilities, or search for a nearby AAA-approved shop online at AAA.com/Repair. AAA Texas can be visited on the Internet at www.AAA.com. Follow AAA Texas on Twitter: @AAATexas and Facebook: www.facebook.com/AAA-Texas.



National Bank of Commerce recently announced the retirement of Terry Gamblin, who has been with the bank since 1983. Ms Gamblin started with the bank as a teller and has served in many capacities, but most recently as Supervisor and Loan/New accounts secretary.

Terry and her husband Kris have lived their entire lives in Pampa, except while attending school in other areas. They are blessed with two married sons and five grandchildren.

In recognition of her retirement, the bank will have an open house on Friday, December 27, 2013 from 9:00 to 3:00 in the bank lobby.

National Bank of Commerce

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Police find heroin stamped with 'Obamacare'

HATFIELD, Mass. (AP) — Massachusetts state police say they've stopped a car carrying 1,250 packets of heroin stamped "Obamacare" and "Kurt Cobain" and arrested the four people inside it.

Police say a trooper was making a traffic stop in Northampton when another car passed and he noticed several violations. He stopped the car a short time later in nearby Hatfield and found the driver wasn't licensed to drive it. A state police dog found

the bags of heroin.

The four arrested people have been charged with heroin trafficking.

State police Lt. Daniel Richard says it's not unusual for heroin to be stamped with numbers, words or symbols to identify who's selling it. But he says the "Obamacare" stamp is one he hadn't heard of.

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THE FAMILY CIRCUS By Bil Keane



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Non Sequitur

YOU REMEMBERED TO LEAVE A NOTE ASKING HIM TO SEND A RESCUE BOAT, RIGHT?



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Nest Heads



12/25 ALLEN

daily horoscope

HAPPY BIRTHDAY for Thursday, Dec. 26, 2013:
This year your sixth sense kicks in frequently. If your intuition tells you to head in a certain direction, do. You often sense people's feelings even before they are able to recognize them. Relax, and be a good listener. If you are single, you could be meeting a lot of people. Stay unattached until you meet someone who knocks your socks off. This encounter could occur in the next nine months. If you are attached, the two of you seem to be instinctive with each other this year. You will benefit from scheduling more one-on-one time together. LIBRA knows how to draw others in and have them agree with his or her ideas.

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)
★★★ You'll move forward with relief. You might need to deal with someone who has more than his or her share of clout. Your instincts will guide you in what you choose to say. A family member could be overly emotional. Tonight: The only answer is "yes."

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)
★★★★ You could be too busy handling remaining tasks from the holidays. Take care of all your thank-you cards today. You and a friend might come up with a plan to revamp this New Year's Eve celebration. Tonight: It is about to get hectic again, so get as much sleep as possible.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)
★★★★★ Make an effort to let others know how you really feel, as they often might equate a lack of your time or attention with a lack of caring. You could have a difficult time convincing others that this is not the case. Understand where they are coming from. Tonight: Togetherness works.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)
★★★★ You might want to anchor in and get some extra R and R. You also might feel the need to take care of unfinished post-holiday tasks. Some of you might run out the door to catch a sale or two, only to decide later that it was a mistake. Tonight: Finally, some peace and quiet.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)
★★★★ You are likely to express exactly what you think and feel. You might attempt to draw others into having a conversation. You could cre-

ate a lot of chatter but little else at the moment. Take some time for yourself and relax. Tonight: Hang out with a few friends.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)
★★★★ Kick back, catch a sale or two and start writing your thank-you notes. Don't make a big deal of any meal preparations; just nibble on any leftovers, or make a point of starting a new diet. Play it low-key. Tonight: Indulge yourself and relax.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)
★★★★★ You are on a roll. Others seek you out, perhaps to give you a belated gift or to say "thank you." Indulge a loved one. The two of you could get into a fun hobby or pastime if you can't make it outside to enjoy the winter air. Tonight: Reach out to someone at a distance.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)
★★★ You will want to maintain a low profile. Some of you could experience a Scrooge attack, whereas others simply might be exhausted. Use today for you, either to sleep or to do whatever you need to do in order to feel up to snuff. Tonight: Play it low-key.

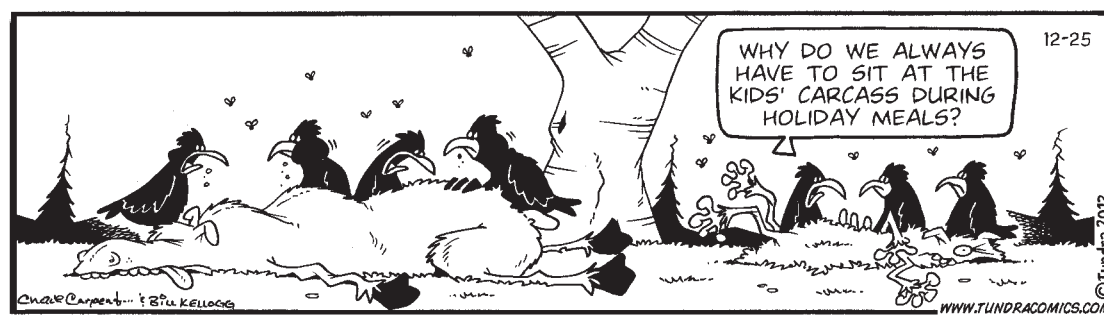
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)
★★★★ You could be pushing your own limits, but you might not care. Get out with family and friends, and enjoy some of the post-holiday sales and events. Touch base with a friend whom you really care about. Tonight: Enjoy the moment.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)
★★★ You might need to handle a problem or go into work, whether you want to or not. Others value your intuitive understanding and creativity. You are able to handle a problem with finesse and speed. Tonight: Sort through the many calls and invitations.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)
★★★★★ Take an overview and decide what the possibilities are surrounding a trip. Play around with travel fees and different methods of getting to your destination. Meanwhile, relax to a great piece of music. Tonight: Answer emails and return calls.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)
★★★★ Reach out to the important people in your life whom you may have been too busy to visit on account of all the holiday celebrations. Everyone enjoys some quiet time, so head off to a movie or catch a late brunch. Tonight: Keep it on a one-on-one level.

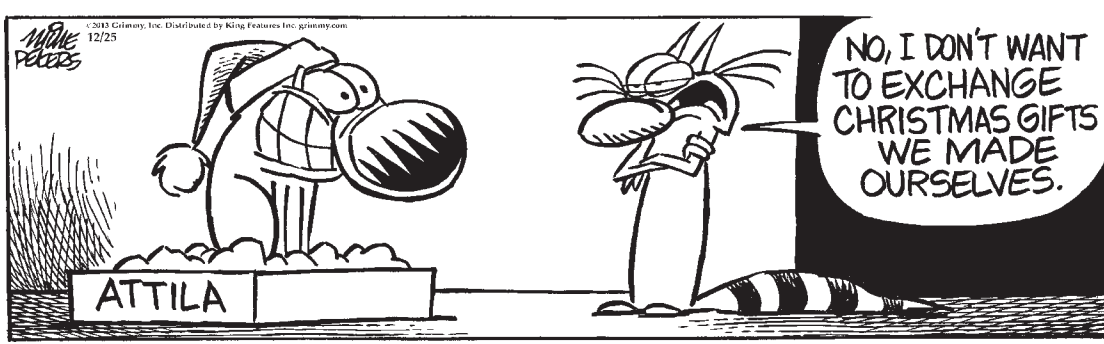
Tundra



Shoe



Mother Goose and Grim



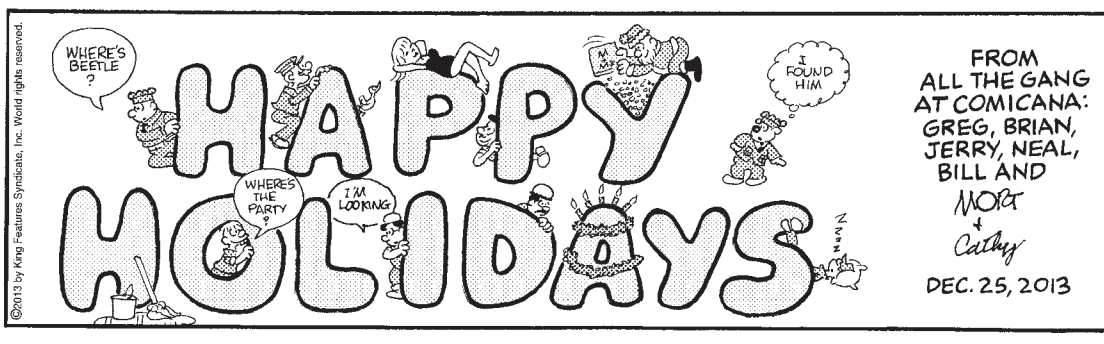
Zits



Garfield



Beetle Bailey



Marvin



Hagar The Horrible



Peanuts



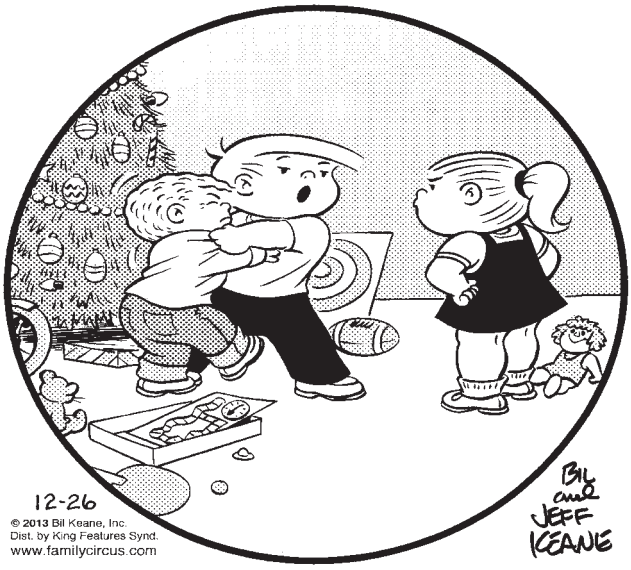
Blondie



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THE FAMILY CIRCUS

By Bil Keane



12-26

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Bil and
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KEANE

**"It's okay to be naughty again.
Santa's done watchin'
for this year."**

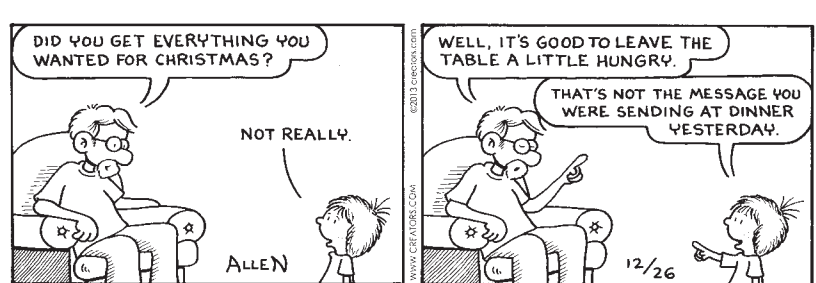
Non Sequitur



...SO I'VE ASKED A PLAUSIBILITY EXPERT TO COME IN AND EXPLAIN HOW A DRONE DELIVERY SYSTEM CAN ONE DAY BECOME A REALITY

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Nest Heads



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daily horoscope

HAPPY BIRTHDAY for Friday, Dec. 27, 2013:
This year you focus on your long-term goals. The possibility of making one, if not more, a reality is reasonable. In many ways, you are inspired to live your life with more attention to others and to your values. If you are single, you are likely to meet someone who will be important to your life's history. If you are attached, the two of you will be happier as a couple if you focus on a mutual goal and make it a reality. Share your feelings more often. Make sure you have enough one-on-one time together.

SCORPIO can be intense, devious, insightful and full of resourceful information.
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)
★★★★ Note that people's moods have changed. Make time for a partner or loved one with whom you often take off. Why not enjoy some special time together? A practical discussion will help set the pace for the next few days. Tonight: Dinner for two.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)
★★★★ Defer to others. You might want to escape the holiday fervor and do something completely unrelated. A friend with lots of imagination could turn up and add some fun to the moment. Allow your creativity to flow. Tonight: Say "yes" to an invitation.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)
★★★★ You have some important matters that demand your attention. You might sense that a parent or higher-up needs your time as well. You will be able to juggle both effectively. A call involving a partner could head your way. Tonight: Get some much-needed rest.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)
★★★★ Investigate the alternatives that surround a child or loved one. This person might want a change, and you might not be comfortable with the idea. Keep communication open. Your emotional response might be right-on. Tonight: Enjoy those around you.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)
★★★★ Be more in touch with a family member's needs. Your ability to visualize what someone else wants will help you please others. Use this talent now. Be sensitive to

what might not be working properly, be it your car or some other mechanical item. Tonight: Stay close to home.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)
★★★★ You express your opinions tentatively yet honestly. You tend to put a partner or loved one on a pedestal, where there is only one place to go: down. Be aware of how you are building this person up. Tonight: Favorite place, favorite people.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)
★★★★ Be more upbeat and positive in dealing with a financial matter. Your attitude could carry over into a negotiation or conversations in general. Listen to your inner voice, but pull back before acting. Tonight: Your treat.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)
★★★★ Beam in more of what you want. Listen to news with greater attentiveness. Understand what is happening within your family and recognize what needs to be done. Someone you care about needs to talk and clear the air. Tonight: Return a call from a relative.

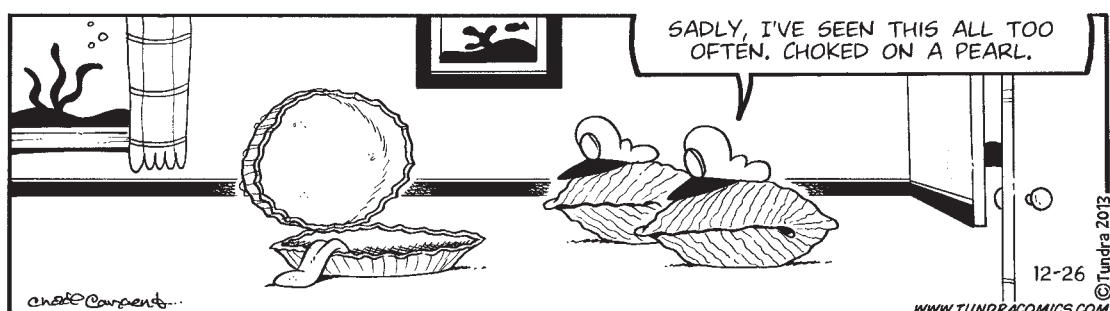
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)
★★★★ Know what is happening behind the scenes, but understand that you might not be privy to all the conversations. Listen well and ask insightful questions. A partner will let you know how much you are appreciated. Tonight: Get some extra sleep.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)
★★★★ Calls come in, and before you know it, you are off doing what you want. A neighbor or close relative will request some of your time. Make it your pleasure. You have a lot of information coming your way! Tonight: Where the crowds are.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)
★★★★ You might have to handle some work or manage a project that has been on the back burner for too long. Use good sense with money, as it could be slipping through your fingers like water. Count your change. Tonight: Grab some munchies with a loved one.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)
★★★★ Try to get an overview of a situation and determine which direction you want to head in. You might think that you have a more constructive solution. Test it out on several people before you decide to make it real. Tonight: Go for some exotic cuisine.

Tundra



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Shoe



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Mother Goose and Grim



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Zits



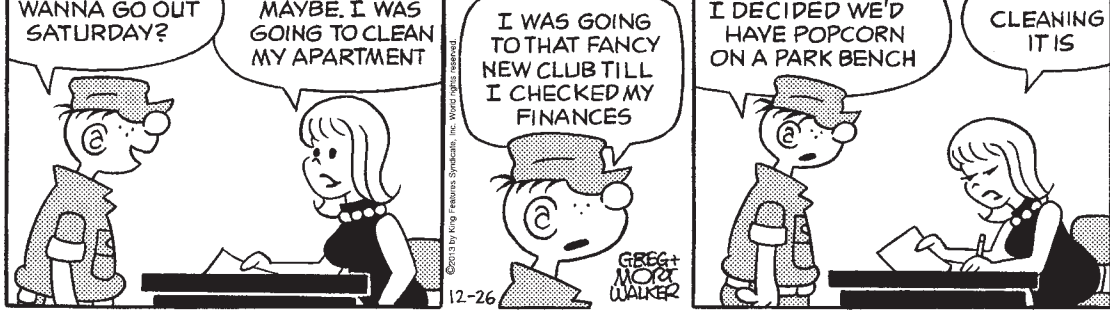
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Garfield



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Beetle Bailey



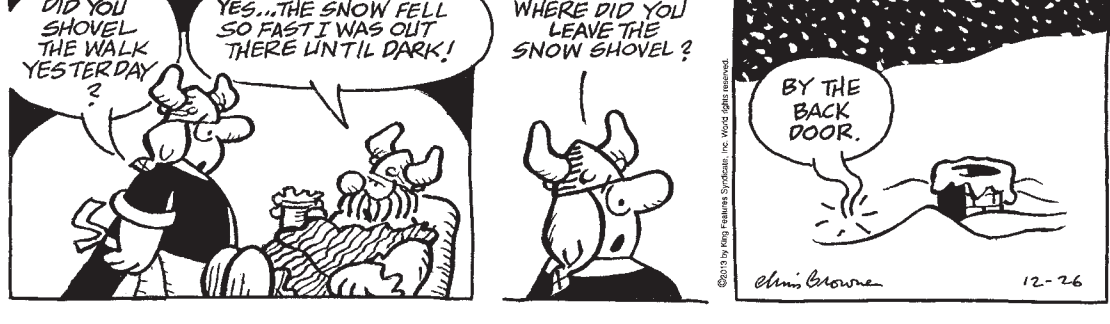
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Marvin



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Hagar The Horrible



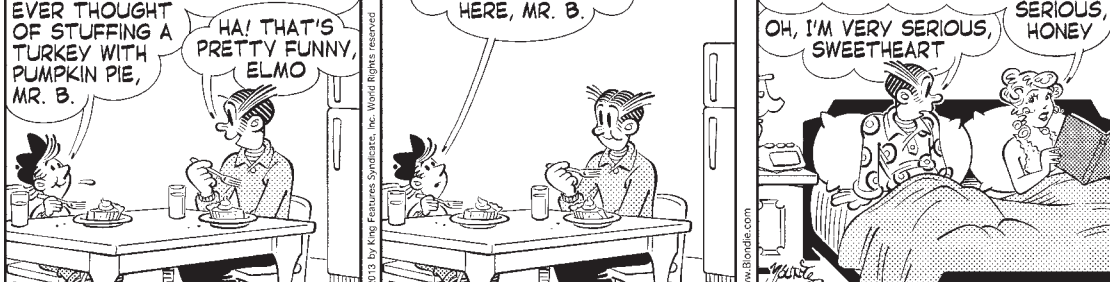
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Pampa Faith

Stabbed with Grandpa's fork

In our modern "wusified," twisted culture it would be called "child abuse" and my grandpa would be arrested, maybe even jailed. But in 1959 at Grandma and Grandpa's house in Bridgeport, Texas it was called "a significant learning experience." And I for one proclaim that most kids today are in desperate need of a whole lot more "significant learning experiences."



MIKE SUBLETT

Ruby Pearl was the typical grandma full of love, fabulous in the kitchen, always thinking of ways to make treats for me and not a harsh bone in her body.

J. W. "Red" Sublett was a totally different type of person. He, too, was a very typical grandpa from that era. He didn't say much, wasn't very emotional (except when he got angry), thought that every boy should know everything about fishing and knives and was willing to be the teacher in those departments. He was more than capable of harshness and discipline and if anyone had ever questioned that he loved me (because of his harshness) I would have thought that they had lost their mind.

One day after a successful morning fishing trip where we had caught a load of crappie (Grandma's very favorite fish), Grandma called us all to their dining room table for lunch. It wasn't anything special, just baloney and cheese with some tomatoes and pickles and of course white bread. That's when the significant learning experience showed up.

My masterpiece construction was going slower than everyone else. In my delay, the plate with the baloney and cheese got moved to the left of grandpa. I was sitting to his right. I got ready to add the baloney and cheese to my work of art and carelessly reached across my grandpa's plate. When I tried to return the baloney and cheese to my plate my grandpa grabbed my wrist and said, "Don't do that again Mike. Reaching across someone's plate is disrespectful and ill-mannered. Understand me?" I immediately said, "Yes, sir."

Lunch continued with the normal visitation that usually filled the time. We visited about the morning fishing trip and what had gone on at the house while "the men" were fishing. By that time I had finished my first sandwich and was ready for No. 2. I carefully applied the MW and then went brain dead and reached across my grandpa's plate again.

Now my grandpa had his own personal fork. No one used that fork except him, he made sure of that. It had a wooden handle

and only three tines.

As I drew the baloney and cheese back toward my plate, Grandpa, with perfect accuracy, put three holes in the top of my left hand. I squealed, the blood started to flow, my mom went ballistic and World War III broke out right there at the table.

Mom was ranting and raving at Grandpa for wounding me and at my dad for saying and doing nothing. It kind of all wrapped up when my mom blared, "How could you do something like that to your own grandson?" Grandpa's answer was, "I was just trying to help Mike learn some manners. Mike, do you think you will ever be reaching over my plate again?" I said, "No sir." "Grandpa closed the conversation with, "Well, it seems to have worked."

The conversation died, the tension was thick enough to cut with a knife, my mom's anger filled the air, but everyone went back to eating. One thing didn't fill the room. It never crossed my mind that my grandpa didn't love me, or that he was abusive or mean. The only thing that filled my head was (to put it in scriptural terms) I had reaped exactly as I had sowed. I never again reached across my grandpa's plate.

The point? I'm not trying to get everyone to go out and buy sharp forks to stab kids with. But what I am trying to do is to get every family to practice what the scriptures teach. Proverbs 23:13 "Do not withhold discipline from children; if you punish them with the rod, they will not die."

Physical discipline of children is now considered in our American culture (sadly by many people claiming to be Christians too) to be barbaric, child abuse, uncivilized and worthy of jail time. Then God is barbaric, guilty of child abuse, uncivilized and worthy of being thrown into jail.

I loved my grandpa and he loved me. And this world would be a much, much better place in which to live if more kids had grandpas (parents, too) who loved them enough to provide more "significant leaning experiences".

Father God, thank You for loving us enough to discipline us. And please bless all of the grandpas who love their grand-children enough to provide those "significant learning experiences," Amen.

Mike Sublett is a pastor at Hi-Land Christian Church, 1615 N. Banks St., Pampa, Texas 79065. Email him at pawdad@nts-online.net.

CHURCH SPOTLIGHT

Merry Christmas

I love Christmas. It is such a wonderful time of the year. The Christmas lights all over the town, the smell of evergreen throughout the house from the Christmas tree, Christmas carols played in the stores and the mall, Christmas cards coming from friends in the mail and everyone smiling and saying, "Merry Christmas."

It is a time when our minds go back to God's love for us by sending His son, Jesus Christ, to come as our Savior.

More than 2,000 years ago, on the night around the world we call Christmas, Mary gave birth to God's Holy son Jesus. He was a little baby, but not like any other baby who had been born. The virgin-born baby was the Son of God, sent from Heaven to save us from our sins, we are told in Matthew 2:11.

Eight hundred years before this special birth of God's Son, the prophet Isaiah told us, "The people who walk in darkness have seen a great light" (Isaiah 9:2).

This was the prophetic promise that Jesus Christ the light of the world would enter human history. That God would come in the flesh and walk among us and share the hope of peace and salvation. This is exactly what He did, "The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us." (John 1:14)



DAVID BOULTER

At a predicted time, a predicted place, a predicted Savior came into this world. That special person was Jesus Christ. From His own lips he said, "The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." (Luke 19:10) Aren't you thankful that Christmas is not a fable, not a dream, not a tradition, but is a glorious reality?

On Dec. 25, the birth of Jesus Christ was celebrated in many languages, in many ways, by people of all races. For a short time we will talk of peace on Earth and good will toward men, exchange gifts and speak of the Prince of Peace.

As you celebrate Christmas, this day of the birth of our Savior, do not lose sight of its meaning amidst all the glitter and busyness of the season.

No matter who you are, you need Christ. No matter who you are He loves you and stands with open arms to receive you.

"Hark! The herald angels sing, Glory to the newborn King, peace on Earth and mercy mild, God and sinner reconciled, Joyful, all ye nations, rise, join the triumph of the skies; With angelic host proclaim, Christ is born in Bethlehem." — Charles Wesley

Dr. David Boulter is from Tennessee Temple University in Chattanooga, Tenn., who writes "God's Good News For Today." He can be reached at davidboulter@tntemple.edu.

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Pampa Church Directory

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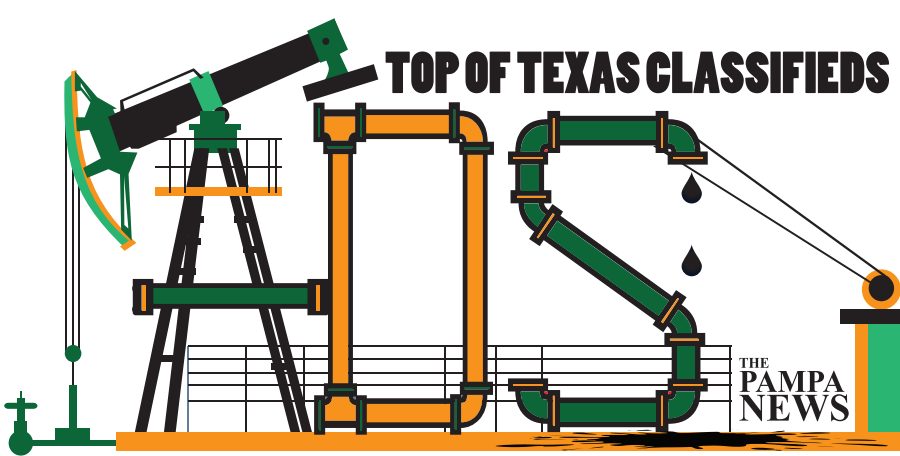
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THE CITY of Lefors is currently accepting applications for the position of part-time City Marshal. Applicants must be TCLEOSE certified and willing to work various hours. A completed application is required and will be accepted until 4:00 p.m. on Monday, January 13, 2014. Applications may be picked up at Lefors City Hall, 101 N. Court, Lefors, TX. Contact Lindy Forsyth, City Secretary at 806-835-2200 for more information.

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 1. A project to grant \$227,515.00 to CP Homes for the construction of Stoney Brook Lane for approximately 3,300 linear ft. of roadway. The funding for the project will not be dispersed until after the foundation of Country Place Senior Living of Pampa has been poured.
 2. This notice is published pursuant to the sixty (60) day public notice requirement set forth in Section Type-B (a-1) of the Development Corporation.
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AXYDLBAAXR is LONGFELLOW
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12-26 CRYPTOQUOTE

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 S U S F X P E D S L W S K K F E V I Z ,
 L V L V I S K I S P Z O E Z M E V I Z .
 — A J A J W L E K S X (“ E P ’ Z L
 M G V C S F Q J K K E Q S ”)
Yesterday's Cryptoquote: LOVING KINDNESS, WARM HEARTS AND THE STRETCHED OUT HAND OF TOLERANCE. ALL THE SHINING GIFTS THAT MAKE PEACE ON EARTH. — BISHOP HENRY BROUGHAM (“THE BISHOP'S WIFE”)

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SUDOKU

Answer to yesterday's puzzle:

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

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

Level: Intermediate

Dear Abby...

By Pauline & Jeanne Phillips

DEAR ABBY: I am a 15-year-old girl and a caring person. I'm worried about my mother. She has been an addict for nine years. She always says she wants help, but she never follows through with getting the help she needs. I have asked her many times to go and get help, and have told her how bad her using makes me feel. What do you think I can do to encourage her to follow through with treatment? I miss my mother. Any advice would be appreciated. -- IN NEED OF HELP IN OLYMPIA, WASH.

DEAR IN NEED OF HELP: You are not only a caring young woman, you are also mature for your age and intelligent. If your mother has been an addict since you were 6, your entire childhood has been spent taking care of her and raising yourself. I am truly sorry for that.

Because nothing you say gets through to her, consider moving in with another relative if that's possible. You should also join a Narateen support group. It's a 12-step program for teenage friends and family members of addicts. There is one in your city called "Hope for Today." To find the location, check the Nar-Anon website, www.nar-anon.org.

DEAR ABBY: I am a grandmother, a former teacher and I have my master's in child psychology. I was also a school board member. I love children.

Please pass this along to parents and anyone else who cares for children: Quit force-feeding them! Again and again I see parents beg and coerce their kids to eat. There are too many obese people in the world. Kids will eat when they are hungry. Just don't give them any junk in between.

I know a dad who told me he forced his son to finish this food until the son went

BANANAGRAMS!

For each of the three words below, change one letter to a **P**, and then rearrange the letters to spell a word used in sports.

TELECOM

LEVEL

LATENCY

LEVEL

ANTACID

LEVEL

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Yesterday's Answer: A V A P O R G
G O U N T C A V O R T
C O W O F A U N
T P O W

12.26

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

1 Dealer's need

5 Book makeup

10 Massage target

11 Good name

12 Scuffle

13 Right away

14 Bakery pastry

16 Reverse, as a ruling

20 Defeated

23 Sturgeon eggs

24 Burns' partner

25 Radio divisions

27 Espionage org.

28 Comes up

29 Post-party woe

32 Roof eave, e.g.

36 Film set on Pandora

39 War of 1812 port

40 Rise up

41 Writer Rice

42 Where-withal

43 Female rabbits

DOWN

1 Silly

S	A	P	S				T	A	I	L			
T	R	O	U	T			D	O	N	N	E		
R	A	L	P	H			A	N	I	T	A		
A	M	I					A	R	M	Y	M	E	N
W	I	S	E	M	E	N		A	N	T			
			S	H	R	E	D		A	L	T		
							A	S	W	A	N		
			A	L	S			I	D	E	A	L	
A	T	E			S	N	O	W	M	E	N		
W	O	R	K	M	E	N			E	G	O		
A	N	N	I	E				I	S	L	E	T	
S	C	E	N	E			S	E	I	N	E		
H	E	R	D						W	A	D	S	

Yesterday's answer

19 Capone's foe

20 "Art of the Fugue" composer

21 Lamb's alias

22 Astronaut Shepard

25 — Rabbit

26 Ditz

28 Turn aside

30 Boarded

31 Squashed circles

33 Florence's river

34 Inverted six

35 Turns right

36 Pitcher's pride

37 Geese formation

38 Gardner of movies

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1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	9
10					11				
12					13				
14				15					
			16				17	18	19
20	21	22					23		
24					25	26			
27					28				
29			30	31					
			32				33	34	35
36	37	38					39		
40							41		
42							43		

12-26

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PampaSports

With Tony Romo possibly out, Cowboys turn to veteran Orton

By JOHN LEE

jlee@thepampanews.com

The Dallas Cowboys are once again in a win-and-your-in scenario Sunday night as they take on the Philadelphia Eagles. Right after the game against the Redskins, Cowboys fans probably felt like they had a legitimate chance to take on their long-time division rival and win the NFC East and secure a home-playoff game.

The optimism was stolen from them like a Popsicle from a baby Monday as conflicting reports are coming out about the condition of polarizing quarterback Tony Romo's back. Cowboys' owner Jerry Jones said they are simply back spasms, Romo will get an injection and be ready to go. Head coach Jason Garrett is saying that Romo is day-to-day. But reporters at ESPN, Adam Schefter and Chris Mortenson (who are some of the most trusted reporters for the NFL), are saying it is a herniated disc and will require season-ending surgery.

"I don't want to get into the medical part of it but I can tell you what his status is going forward," Garrett told reporters Monday. "He is going to get treatment each day, he is getting treatment today and will continue to get treatment and we will evaluate his status on a day-to-day basis and we will see what his status is for Wednesday and Friday and this coming week."

The Cowboys are hoping that Romo will tough through the pain, as he did with his collapsed lung in 2011. But if he can't, the Cowboys will turn to back up quarterback Kyle Orton.

So, who is Kyle Orton? He was selected by the Chicago Bears in the fourth-round out of Purdue in 2005. He spent his first four seasons in the Windy City where he backed up Rex Grossman.

After four mediocre seasons, where he completed 54 percent of his passes for 5,319 yards, 30 touchdowns and 27 interceptions,

he was traded to the Denver Broncos as part of the infamous Jay Cutler trade.

His career as a Bronco was a bit more flashy, albeit not as talked about. He was on the team for three seasons, starting 34 games. While he did start five games in 2011, only completing 58 percent of his passes for eight touchdowns and seven interceptions, the Broncos were ready to give him the boot before the season even started. This was the year that Tim Tebow miraculously turned the season around with the Broncos and won a playoff game.

So in the 29 (2009-10) games before Tebowmania, Orton was not too shabby. He completed 60 percent of his passes for 7,455 yards 41 touchdowns and 21 interceptions.

All of this while the Broncos did not have a 1,000-yard rusher and ranked in the bottom half of the league in rushing.

Orton and the Broncos faced the Eagles in 2009, in the game Orton had three touchdowns and a lone pick. Not that this matters, it is a totally different Eagles team, just side-note.

Orton in his best statistical seasons (2009-10) was a solid quarterback for the Broncos. By quarter, Orton completed 63 percent of his passes for nine touchdowns and three interceptions for the first quarter.

He wanes some in the second, only completing 58 percent with eight touchdowns and six interceptions, but bounces back in the third with 62 percent completion percentage accompanied by nine scores

and four interceptions.

The fourth quarter is skewed some because the Broncos were a bad team in 2009 and 2010, but he completed 58 percent of his passes with 15 touchdowns and eight interceptions.

As solid of a quarterback Orton can be, his feet are just as solid. Orton is not a scrambler. He is every definition of a pocket-passer.

This may sound like the Cowboys could be in a bind, but against the blitz, Orton hits 51 percent of his passes, but for 20 touchdowns and eight interceptions. With four or five defenders on the line, Orton completes 64 percent of his passes for 23 touchdowns and six interceptions.

So what do all these numbers mean? The Cowboys, have a very solid back-up quarterback. Up until Josh McCown and Nick Foles started wrecking teams in Chicago and Philadelphia, I had said that Kyle Orton is the best back-up quarterback in the NFL.

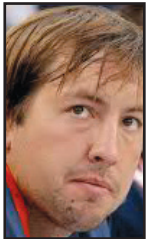
What else can you say about a quarterback who almost took a team to the playoffs two years straight in Denver. (They may have been a bad team, but the AFC West was equally as bad.)

The Cowboys are going to have to run the ball against the Eagles. As indicated by the blitz and defensive line numbers, establishing a run game may get the Cowboys in a position that Orton's seasoned arm can trick defenders. Not to mention, DeMarco Murray is pretty good.

Running the ball does more than open up things for Orton, it also keeps the Eagles red-hot offense off

the field and eats up time-of-possession.

Whether the Romo injury is all smokescreens to throw the Eagles off-guard or Orton is legitimately going to start, the Cowboys are in a must-win situation for the third straight year. But at the quarterback position, they might be okay.



Kyle Orton

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L.A. Clippers at Portland Trailblazers.....TNT 9:30 p.m.

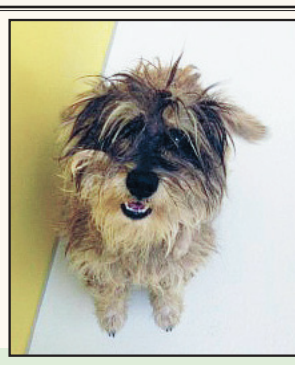
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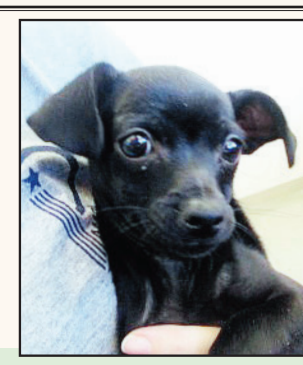
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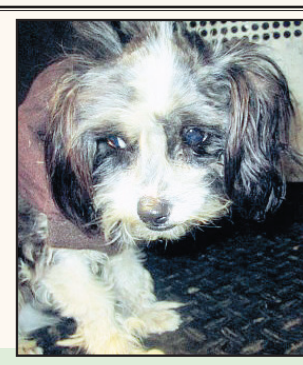
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Emphasize oral hygiene in the year ahead

SUBMITTED

Of all the plans people make at the dawn of a new year, getting healthier is often at the top of the list. Although many individuals are concerned about shedding a few pounds, there are many other ways to focus on health in the upcoming months, including paying more attention to dental hygiene. Proper dental care can not only keep a smile bright, it can affect other areas of the body.

Fluoride benefits

One of the keys to oral health is the use of fluoride to prevent dental caries. In fact, many health professionals will say that exposure to fluoride, whether through use of toothpaste or fluoridated water supplies, is probably the most effective cavity-prevention treatment available. Fluoride helps the teeth in a number of ways.

Fluoride can promote tooth remineralization. This means it attracts other minerals, particularly calcium, to the areas of the teeth where tooth decay can form, helping to strengthen teeth. Fluoride also helps to make teeth more resistant to decay. New tooth mineral created when fluoride is present helps to make teeth harder, making it more difficult for acids and bacteria to penetrate the enamel of the teeth and cause damage.

Another advantage is that fluoride helps to inhibit acid creation.

Dental researchers have found that fluoride can inhibit bacteria living in the mouth. That's an important finding, as such bacteria can contribute to the formation of damage-causing acids that are notorious for wearing down tooth enamel, causing spots for more bacteria to congregate and form cavities.

According to the American Dental Association, individuals who find themselves prone to cavities or whose dentists have deemed them at elevated risk for developing cavities may benefit from fluoride application beyond the norm. This may include prescription fluoride applied directly to the teeth at home or procedures where dentists apply the fluoride in their offices.

Recent clinical recommendations from a multi-disciplinary expert panel convened by the ADA Council on Scientific Affairs suggest that topical fluoride, used in conjunction with drinking optimally fluoridated water and using toothpaste with fluoride, can prevent

tooth decay. These clinical recommendations cover professionally applied and prescription-strength, home-use topical fluoride agents for cavity prevention.

The panel concluded that additional research is needed, but recommended the following products for patients at elevated risk of developing cavities.

- Professionally applied 2.26 percent fluoride varnish or a 1.23 percent fluoride gel every 3-6 months.

- Home-use prescription-strength 0.5 percent fluoride gel or paste or 0.09 percent fluoride mouth rinse (for patients six years old or older).

- A 2.26 percent professionally applied fluoride varnish every three to six months for children younger than six years old.

Application of additional fluoride should not replace daily oral hygiene habits. It is still vital to brush twice a day, floss daily, eat a balanced diet, and visit the dentist regularly for check-ups.

Heart disease and oral health

The millions of bacteria that proliferate inside of the mouth and contribute to dental caries also can affect other areas of the body.

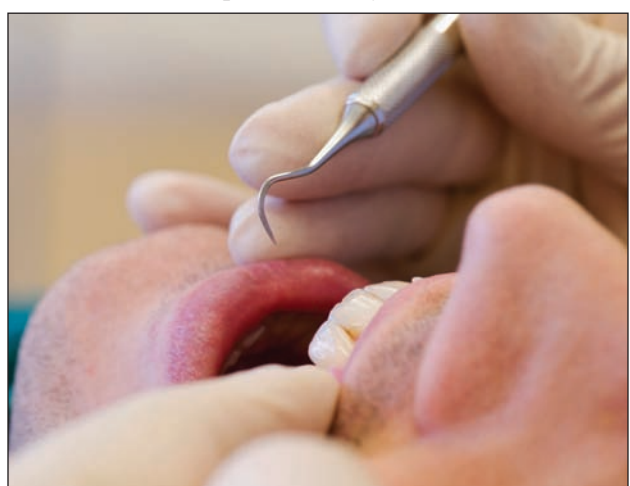
Evidence suggests the same bacteria that can cause plaque and gum disease may lead to cardiovascular problems.

According to information from Harvard Medical School, several species of bacteria that cause periodontitis have been found in the atherosclerotic plaque in arteries in the heart and elsewhere. This plaque can lead to heart attack.

Although research is ongoing, there is reason to believe that oral bacteria could also harm blood vessels or cause blood clots by releasing toxins that resemble proteins found in artery walls or the bloodstream.

When the body's immune system responds to these toxins, blood clots may form more easily. Some evidence also points to a correlation between inflammation in the mouth and inflammation in the body.

With the new year upon us, now may be the ideal time for men and women to take inventory of their personal health. Schedule a physical examination with a doctor, visit an optometrist or ophthalmologist for an eye exam and remember to visit the dentist for a cleaning, checkup and a possible fluoride treatment to protect the mouth and body.



Submitted photo

Those assessing their health in the new year should not overlook their oral hygiene.

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