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# The Post Dispatch

78th Year Number 27 USPS 439-620 © 2003 The Post Dispatch Newsstand Price 75¢ Thursday, December 4, 2003



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## Holiday traffic woes

by Sheri Lewis

Traffic was bumper-to-bumper through downtown Post over the Thanksgiving holidays - but don't look for that to improve much anytime soon.

Vehicles clogged the north and south-bound lanes of U.S. Hwy 84 as holiday travelers trekked through a Texas Department of Transportation project under way in the Post area.

Some Sunday afternoon travelers waited more than 30 minutes to make their way through the city, they already interrupted trips delayed even further when an 18-wheeler with a broken axle forced the rerouting of all vehicles from Broadway.

At the heart of the traffic tangle is the intersection of U.S. Hwy 84 (Broadway) and Main Street, where vehicles are limited to 35 mph and halted by stop signs and a mid-intersection 'jog.'

Some might argue that removal of the stop signs and the installation of temporary lights might facilitate the flow of traffic through the downtown intersection. But Garza County Sheriff Kenny Ratke, following consultations this week with TxDOT officials and the project contractor's safety coordinator, said lights would not allow for safe negotiation of the 'jog' in the middle of the intersection.

"Stop signs aid in that negotiation of the jog," Ratke said. "Although it's been extremely inconvenient, there have been no serious accidents in the months that the intersection has been torn up. The way I see it, it's my job to make traffic flow as smooth as possible and as safe as possible in a construction zone. If you put a traffic light in there, yellow means 'go' to a motorist. There's no forewarning of that abrupt jog, and people aren't going to be able to negotiate it. Temporary lights would not be a safe thing."

TxDOT officials and the safety engineer agree, the sheriff said. "I know it's unpopular. People are screaming and hollering, and a lot of unhappy people are calling down here," Ratke said. "The DOT, the contractors - everybody's on the same page. We're trying to do what's feasible for the traffic but also to keep everyone safe. What we're doing - it's time consuming, but it's safe."

In an effort to help soothe holiday traffic woes last week, flagmen and sheriff's deputies manned the intersection to help direct traffic during peak daylight periods. But Ratke said a "multitude of near-misses" makes him reluctant to ask men to work the area on foot.

"It sounds real simple to just say, 'Put a deputy down there at the intersection, but... I don't want to put a deputy out there and have him killed. I know of three times... no, more than three times, when deputies were nearly run down,'" he said.

Sidelineing the woes along U.S. 84 over the holiday travel period was an added traffic snarl along the Avenue F



Last weekend, actually beginning on Wednesday, travelers faced up to 30 minutes negotiating their way through the construction on U.S. Hwy 84 through Post. Although thousands wound their way north and south, there were no major mishaps. (Photo by Tim Burnett)

detour many vehicles took to avoid the tangle in downtown Post. On Sunday alone, there were three minor accidents at the intersection of Avenue F and Main Street, according to sheriff's department reports.

In contrast, the Broadway/Main Street intersection has seen very few collisions, the sheriff said.

"Handling traffic the way we are at that intersection cuts down on the frequency of impact and the severity of impact," Ratke said. "Very few times have we had impact at all, and when we have, it's been minor."

Prior to the end of the week, a new phase of construction is expected to begin. With this phase, traffic on U.S. 84/Broadway will be opened up on the west side thoroughfare to "make it a straight shot," Ratke said. The stop signs currently at Broadway and Main will be relocated to the intersection of Broadway and 8th Street.

Depending on the weather, that phase of construction could be completed in January. At that time, all traffic can be shifted over onto the cement areas. No offset areas will be required, although traffic each way will remain single-lane.

"We're hoping drivers should start seeing a smoother flow of traffic in January," Ratke said.

In the meantime, the sheriff suggested local residents be patient and use the newly-reopened cross intersections, particularly those on the north side of town, to better navigate the community.

"This situation is totally unavoidable," he said. "We're used to this sort of thing in the big city, but we're not used to it in West Texas."

## Post Notes

### Pretty Baby Contest winners

The winners of this year's Garza County United Way sponsored "Pretty Baby Contest" will be announced Saturday at 3 p.m. at Old Mill Trade Days in the Cotton Picker Room.

### United Way Silent Auction Saturday

A silent auction to benefit the Garza County United Way will be held Saturday at Old Mill Trade Days. Items and services will be awarded to the highest bidders who are present at 3 p.m.

### United Way final fundraiser Saturday

The final fundraising event this year for the Garza County United Way will be held Saturday at Old Mill Trade Days. Events include a silent auction beginning at 8 a.m. in the Cotton Picker Room. This year's fund raising ends December 31. To donate, send checks to United Way of Garza County, P.O. Box 425, Post, Texas 79356.

### Christmas Play and Science Fair

The Post Elementary School extends an invitation to the public to enjoy the December 9 annual Christmas play and Science Fair. Science Fair projects will be set up in the elementary school gym at 6 p.m. for public viewing. The Christmas play will begin at 7 p.m. in the school auditorium.

### "Miracle on 34th Street" opens Dec. 5

The Garza Theatre production of "Miracle on 34th Street" opens Friday, December 5 for seven performances, continuing December 6, 7, 12, 13, 19 and 20. The play is directed by Laura Bryan and features an all star cast including Stan Tucker, Mitchell Britton, Marissa Merritt and Taylor Garland. Call the box office at 495-4005 for reservations.

### VFW Ladies, Men meet Monday

Members of the VFW Ladies' Auxiliary and VFW Post 6797 will meet Monday. Ladies meet at 5:30 p.m. with the VFW Post members meeting at 7 p.m. Ladies plan to discuss the Christmas party for children.

### County republicans meet December 4

An organizational and get acquainted meeting hosted by the Garza County Republican Party will be held Thursday, December 4 beginning at 6:30 p.m. at the CitizensBank community room. Those interested in learning more about the local Republican Party are encouraged to attend.

### Merry Christmas edition Dec. 23

The Post Dispatch will publish its annual "Merry Christmas" edition on Thursday, December 23, with a Friday, December 12 deadline for Santa Letters and Friday, December 19 for "Merry Christmas" advertisements.

### Dalby Unit sponsors Angel Tree

Employees at the Giles W. Dalby Correctional Facility are once again sponsoring the Angel Tree to provide gifts and clothing for children who otherwise might not have gifts this Christmas. The facility is joined this year by the Post Lions Club in the effort. This is the fourth year employees at the Dalby unit have provided this outreach program for children. Those interested in contributing should contact Rev. Lloyd Stice at the First United Methodist Church (495-2942) or Rev. Ron Miner at the Church of the Nazarene (495-3044) or by mail to Joe Duran, P.O. Box 644, Post, Texas 79356. Gifts will be distributed December 19.

### Trailblazers set Dec. 13 bake sale

The Garza County Trailblazers will hold a fund-raising bake sale at United Supermarket Saturday, December 13 beginning at 9 a.m.

### Church offers Gordita plates Dec. 13

Members of the Holy Cross Catholic Church are offering Gordita plates with rice, beans and salad on Saturday, December 13 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. The plates are \$5 each, available at the church's parish hall.

### Lions Club seeks Toys for Tots help

The Post Lions Club is once again asking for monetary and new toy donations for the annual "Toys for Tots" campaign. The program provides gifts for needy children for Christmas. To donate call 777-4783 or 495-5383.

### Annual Christmas Sing December 10

The First United Methodist Church is inviting fellow congregations to join in the annual Community Christmas Sing, set for 7 p.m., Wednesday, December 10. Each church choir, group or soloist is invited to sing one or two selections. Contact Patty Kirkpatrick at 495-2868 or the Methodist Church office at 495-2942 no later than Monday, December 8. There is a new sound system in the sanctuary and someone will be at the church December 10 to those who wish to practice, please contact the church in advance to schedule a practice time.

### 4-H Christmas Party Date & Location Changed

The County-wide 4-H Christmas Party & Hot Dog Supper has been moved up to Thursday, December 4, at 6:30 p.m. at the Extension office. There will be a Scavenger Hunt to collect canned goods for a needy family. Each 4-H'er is asked to please bring a Christmas ornament for a tree for that needy family.

## Big weekend for Post

The first week in December offers a flurry of holiday-related activities - shopping, entertainment, socializing and even an opportunity to give "the gift of life" - for Post area residents.

Old Mill Trade Days, the initial performances of the Garza Theatre's latest production, the Caprock Cultural Association's annual banquet, the grand opening of a new business and a handful of entertainment opportunities are on top beginning Friday.

Events scheduled for this weekend include:

- Old Mill Trade Days - Friday, Saturday and Sunday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Old Mill Trade Days area, 318 S. Avenue F. Admission costs \$2 for adults, while children ages 10 and under are admitted free of charge. This event will be the final Trade Days of the year.
- Blood drive - Friday, noon to 6 p.m., United Blood Services bloodmobile at the Dalby Correctional Facility; call 495-2175 for an appointment. "Can you think of giving someone any better holiday gift?" asks drive coordinator Ruby Williams.
- Grand opening, Ruby Lane Books - Friday, 4-6 p.m., CCA building. Singer/songwriter and former Post resident Cathy Whitten will be on hand to introduce her debut CD.
- Caprock Cultural Association Annual Banquet - Friday, 6:30 p.m., CCA building. Tickets cost \$10. Call 495-4148 for more information.
- Fifth Annual Christmas Celebration with Doug Smith - Friday, Saturday and Sunday, Hotel Garza Bed & Breakfast. Ticket availability is "extremely limited," according to the hotel Web site. For more information, contact Jim Plummer at 495-3962.
- "Miracle on 34th Street" - Friday and Saturday, 8 p.m., and Sunday, 2:30 p.m., Garza Theatre. Tickets cost \$9 for adults and \$6 for children ages 6-12. Call the box office at 495-4005 for more information.
- Photography exhibit and guitar performances - Saturday, all day, Ruby Lane Books (CCA building); free and open to the public. An exhibit featuring the work of award-winning photographer Tom Higley is set, sidelined by live performances by guitarist David Waldon.
- Annual Lighted Christmas Parade - Saturday, 6 p.m., along Main Street in courthouse/downtown area. To arrange a parade entry, contact the Post Commerce & Tourism Bureau. Cash prizes will be awarded.
- Special Christmas exhibits - Garza County Historical Museum and the O.S. Ranch Art Museum.
- Readings from "Welcome to Calicheville" - Sunday, 2 p.m. and 3 p.m., Ruby Lane Books (CCA building); free and open to the public. The writing trio behind "Calicheville" will read samplings from their novel, which is set in a small West Texas town.

## Sheriff switches to Republican Party

Garza County Sheriff Kenny Ratke announced Monday he will seek re-election in the 2004 Republican Party primary.

"I chose to change parties because the values and principles of the Republican Party reflect my own," Ratke said. "I believe these conservative principles, if administered at all levels of county government, can guide Garza County through its current fiscal crisis."

Ratke, who previously ran as a Democrat, has served as sheriff since 1992. He has been re-elected to the post twice.

"We are thrilled that Sheriff Ratke intends to seek re-election with our party," said Ross Aten, Garza County Republican Party chairman. "He is extremely well qualified, and his record as a fiscally conservative, tough-on-crime sheriff speaks for itself."

The primary will be held March 9.

## Lions Club sponsors 'Toys for Tots'

For the past 15 years, the Post Lions Club has led the effort to ensure that local children have a happy holiday season. And this year is no different.

The Lions Club, with assistance from employees of the Dalby Correctional Facility, is coordinating this year's Toys for Tots campaign. Chairman Joe Duran said the effort is expected to serve approximately 100 underprivileged children.

"That's pretty close to last year," Duran said. "We usually have between 80 and 100 kids that we help out."

Donations of toys - both new or "in good shape" - and monetary contributions are being accepted. Toys may be dropped off at the local Cellular One location, while tax-deductible donations may be mailed to the Post Lions Club, Box 644, Post.

Duran said there is no deadline for donations, but assistance provided early in the month will help project workers make sure all eligible children are served.

"The sooner, the better," he said.

Many of the families served by this effort are identified through the schools, but families in need of assistance may make an informal application for assistance, Duran said. To apply, a parent should write a note detailing the number of children to be served, the children's ages and genders. Notes may be deposited at Cellular One.

Children of all ages are eligible for assistance.

Duran lauded the community for its ongoing support of the Toys for Tots effort. "We want to thank everybody that's willing to help us again this year," he said. "Merry Christmas!"



A huge cast has been assembled for the Garza Theatre's special performances of the classic "Miracle on 34th Street," which opens Friday. The play, directed by Laura Bryan, continues December 5, 6, 7, 12, 13, 19 and 20. Call the box office at 495-4005 for reservations.

# Judy's Jabberin'

by Judy (Ballentine) Bush

Hey everyone,

I hope everyone had a wonderful Thanksgiving holiday! Did you all get up and go shopping at dawn the next day? Not me. We had a houseful in our home Thursday and had a great time with

way too much wonderful food.

Those sharing Thanksgiving with Rick and I were: My mom, Fannie Ballentine, Jane and Mack Terry, Cindy and "Jibber" Herridge of Gail with their sons Caden and Cody and Cody's girl, Tara, Jana, RayDon and Raylea Underwood of Gail, Kevin, Devron and Lexi Crispin of Lubbock, Kelly, Corinna, Eric, Skyler and

Monique of Lubbock, Colby Crispin, Stephen, Amanda, Alison and Ethan Quisenberry of Tahoka, Krisha and Zach Bush, Kerri, Robby, Kaylan, Kylee and Kenley Dean, Valerie and Randy Melton with James and Gregory. Rick's mom Lucille came by in the afternoon to visit with us and see all the grandkids. We had a great time and I believe everyone got their fill. Hope all of you did too!

### CONGRATS TO CANDI!!!

Candi Dawson has been accepted for enrollment at Texas Tech University's College of Education Teacher Program. Candi is such a sweet girl, she will make a great teacher I know. Anyway, congrats Candi, I know you are excited.

### GET WELL

To our uncle W.O., PLEASE get well soon. You are in our thoughts and prayers and we love you!!!!

### WEEKEND VISITORS

Pat and Wes Burnett enjoyed a weekend visit (Nov. 21-22) with their daughter Kimberly, her husband Allen Dolberry, their daughter Lindsey Noel and their friends Brian and Sherri Tucker with their daughter Allyssa from Mesa, Arizona. While in Post, Allen celebrated his birthday by attending the Texas Tech and University of Oklahoma football game with his brother-in-law Tim Burnett of Post and his friend Brian. The weekend was capped with a dinner at County Line Saturday following the Red Raider football game. Allen is a huge Red Raider fan, having grown up in the Lubbock area, graduating from Roosevelt High School in 1986.

### THANKSGIVING AT THE BURNETTS

Sharing Thanksgiving dinner with Pat and Wes Burnett were Pat's sister Fay Mann and her daughter Paula Kay Mann of Crowley; Pat's niece Donna Hale, her husband

Harvey and their son Keith of Mertzon and Tim Burnett of Post.

### CHRISTMAS PARADE

Hope everyone is planning on attending the Christmas parade Saturday. I am really looking forward to the "new" light color down town. The parade will kick everything off and make the holiday season much brighter. See you there.

### SIGNS THAT YOU HAVE GROWN UP

You keep more food than beer in the fridge. 6:00 AM is when you get up, not when you go to bed. You hear your favorite song on an elevator.

You go from 130 days of vacation time to 14.

Jeans and sweater no longer qualify as dress up. You are the one calling the police because those kids next door won't turn down the music.

Your car insurance goes down and the payment goes up. You actually eat breakfast food at breakfast.

A \$4.00 bottle of wine is no longer "pretty good stuff." 90% of the time you spend in front of the computer is for real work. You read this entire list looking desperately for just one sign that doesn't apply to you..... and can't find a single one to save your sorry old body!!!!

### TILL NEXT WEEK

Hope all of you have a great week end. May God bless each of you. See you next week. Don't forget the parade!!! Judy



Mr and Mrs Roger Adams

## Lisa Lunder, Roger Adams exchange wedding vows

Roger Edward, son of Charles and Dedra Adams, married Lisa Marie Lunder in Maui, Hawaii on Saturday, November 8. The ceremony was attended by many of the couple's friends and family at the Sheraton Maui in Kaanapali. Roger and Lisa reside in Dallas, Texas where he is working as a trainer and nutritionist while earning his Ph.D. in Nutrition, and she is working in Marketing.

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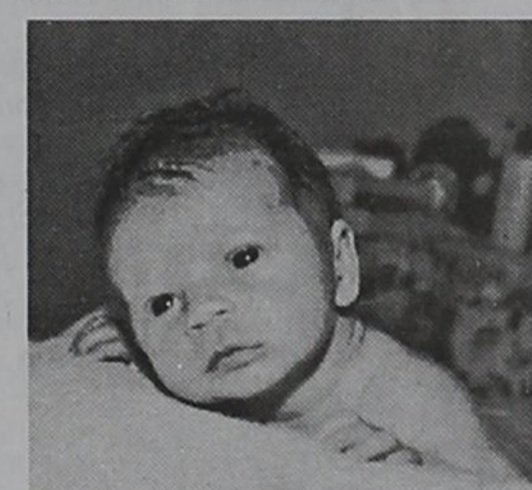
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## Births

### Rebekah Lynn Pearce

Mr. and Mrs. Herb Pearce of Hillsboro, Oregon, have announced the birth of a daughter, Rebekah Lynn, on Oct. 20, 2003. The infant weighed 6 pounds, 3 ounces, at birth and was 19 inches long. She was welcomed home by sisters Jordan and Amy Pearce.

Grandparents are Wayne and El Wanda Culvahouse and Glenda Pearce, all of Midland, and Herb Pearce of Comanche. Great-grandparents are Leta Davies, formerly of Post, and the late Curtis Davies, R.O. Pomroy of Monahans and the late J.S. and Eula Culvahouse.



Rebekah Lynn Pearce

### Indigent health care guidelines clarified

In last week's Dispatch story on the health care district, it was stated that the Garza County Health Care District has no written policy regarding indigent health care. That statement should have read, "The health care district has no local written policy regarding indigent health care." The district follows state policy with regard to indigent health care, and district officials are eyeing the possibility of establishing a local written policy.

**Worth repeating ...**  
When the people find that they can vote themselves money, that will herald the end of the republic.

Benjamin Franklin

## CCA celebrates 20th year with "Cowboy Christmas" event Friday

The Caprock Cultural Association will celebrate its 20th year with a "Cowboy Christmas" event set for 6:30 p.m. Friday at the Algerita Arts Center.

The association's annual banquet will be conducted, sidelined by the opening of the Ruby Lane Book Store in the CCA building.

Tickets to the banquet cost \$10; deadline for RSVPs was Wednesday.

Entertainment for the event will be provided by Cathy Whitten, Jan Marc Olsen, Chip Polk and Alvin G. Davis.

The event promises to provide an overview of new projects under way in Post, including the Ragtown Amphitheater, the CCA's Culture Center, the revival of the Rendezvous of the Arts, and literary and music developments.

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### Sheriff reports 12 arrests

Twelve individuals were booked into the Garza County Jail during the past week, according to sheriff's department reports. Two arrests were made on Nov. 24, including that of a 28-year-old, commitment, and a 32-year-old, driving while license invalid. A pair of arrests also were made on Nov. 25, including a 20-year-old for possession of marijuana, under two ounces, and a 31-year-old held for the Border Patrol. A 48-year-old was picked up for commitment Nov. 26. On Nov. 27, a 21-year-old was arrested on a Garza County warrant. Arrested on Nov. 28 were an 18-year-old, commitment, and a 21-year-old, Garza County warrant. Two individuals were jailed Nov. 29 for public intoxication, including a 40-year-old and a 41-year-old. A 28-year-old was arrested Nov. 30 for driving while license invalid and subsequent offense no insurance. On Dec. 1, a male, age unlisted, was arrested for driving while intoxicated/ third offense and driving while license invalid.



Joel Snow and Labeth Jones

### Labeth Jones, Joel Snow announce engagement

Labeth Jones, daughter of Darrell and Ruby Jones of Post, and Joel Snow, son of Joe and Lois (deceased) Snow of Odessa, announce their upcoming marriage on January 3, 2004 at the Circle Six Ranch Baptist Camp in Stanton, Texas. Joel & Labeth are both of Midland.

### Cliff Laws proclaims candidacy for sheriff in Democrat primary

I am announcing my candidacy for sheriff of Garza County on the Democratic ballot.

I was born in Lamesa; however, my parents' home was in the Graham Chapel area. I have lived in this area most of my life and have strong feelings and family ties to Garza County.

I attended elementary school in Hobbs, N.M., and Post, but graduated from Tahoka High School. I also attended college at West Texas State and Texas Tech. I served four years in the U.S. Air Force.

I started in law enforcement in August of 1979, working for the Lynn County Sheriff's Department as a jailer and deputy sheriff. I worked there until Dec. 31, 1988. I began working for the Garza County Sheriff's Department Jan. 1, 1989,

as a jailer and deputy sheriff. I worked in this capacity until Dec. 15, 2000. After leaving the sheriff's office, I became a deputy constable for Garza County.

I have 24 1/2 years of experience in law enforcement with a master peace officer's license and a law enforcement instructor license. I have an excellent working knowledge of how the sheriff's department and its budget should be handled. Also, I understand fully the legal responsibilities and requirements that are put upon a sheriff.

The time for a change is now. The citizens of Garza County need honest and fair law enforcement for all, but stronger enforcement of the law on all criminal activities. Law enforcement should work for the citizens of Garza County, not against them.

I would appreciate your support and vote.  
Cliff Laws

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Saturday, December 13, 2003

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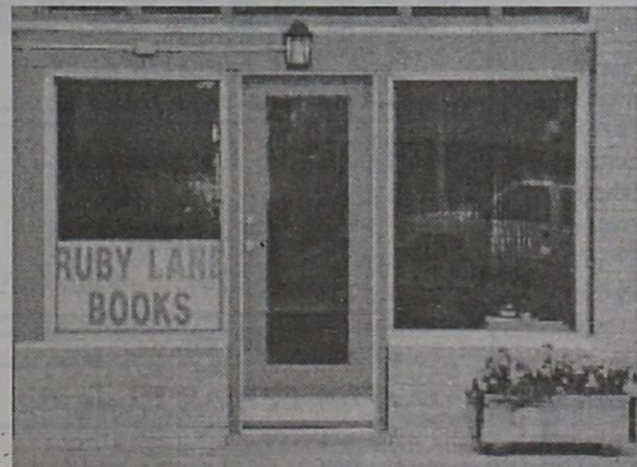
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| Friday, December 5 at 4 pm        | Cathy Whitten, singer/songwriter  |
| Saturday, December 6 - all day    | Tom Higley, photographer<br>Guitarist David Waldon  |
| Sunday, December 7 at 2 pm & 3 pm | Writers Dorthy Stephenson, Nell Shaver and Mary Ruthart will perform readings from their book, <i>Welcome to Calicheville</i> |

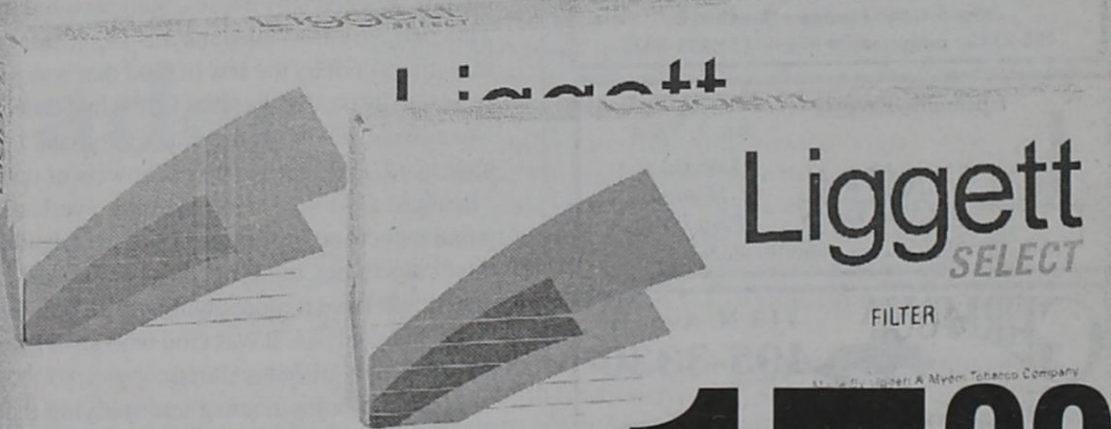
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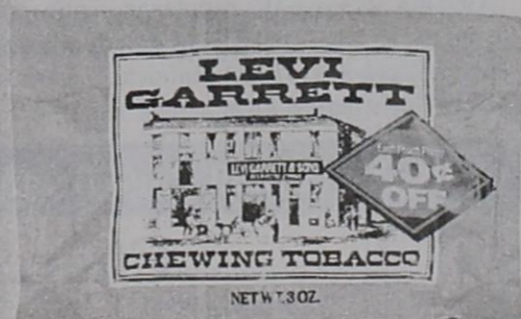
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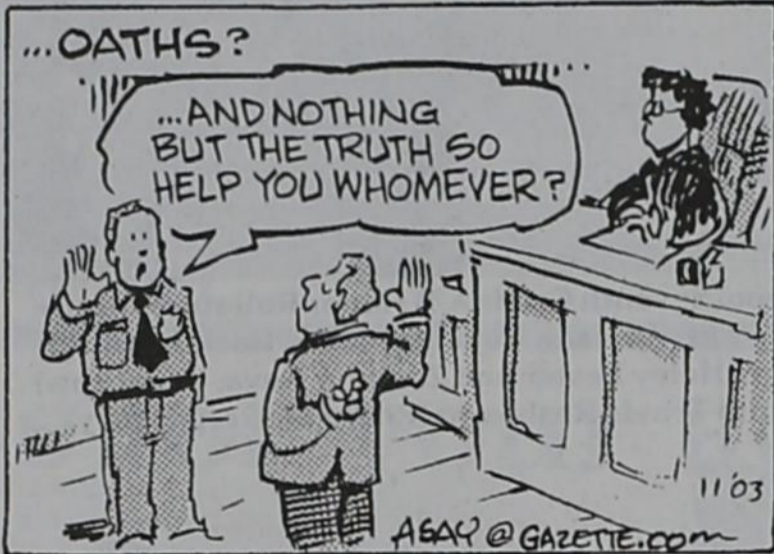
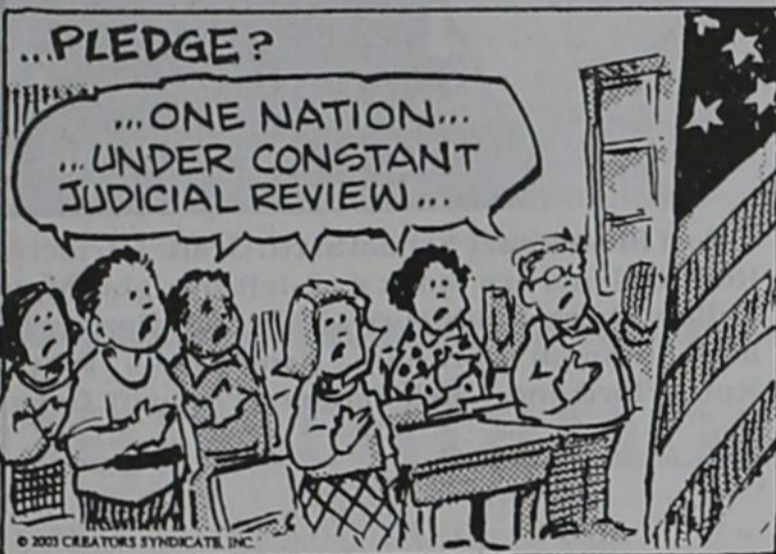
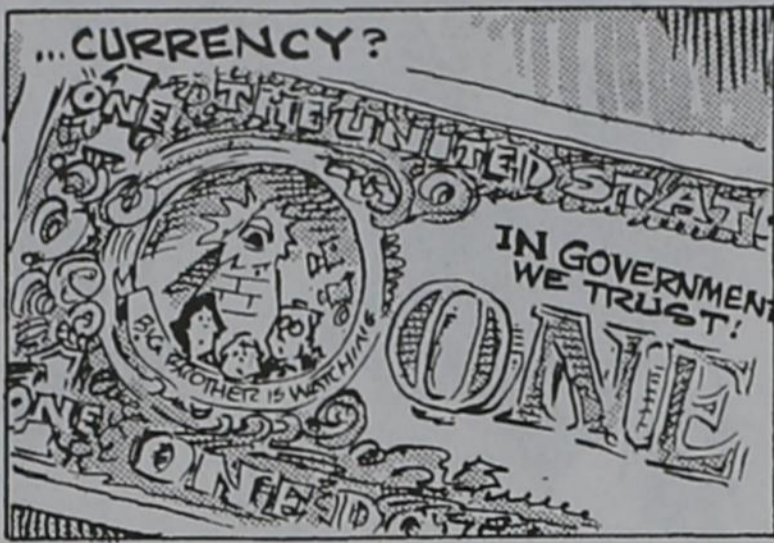
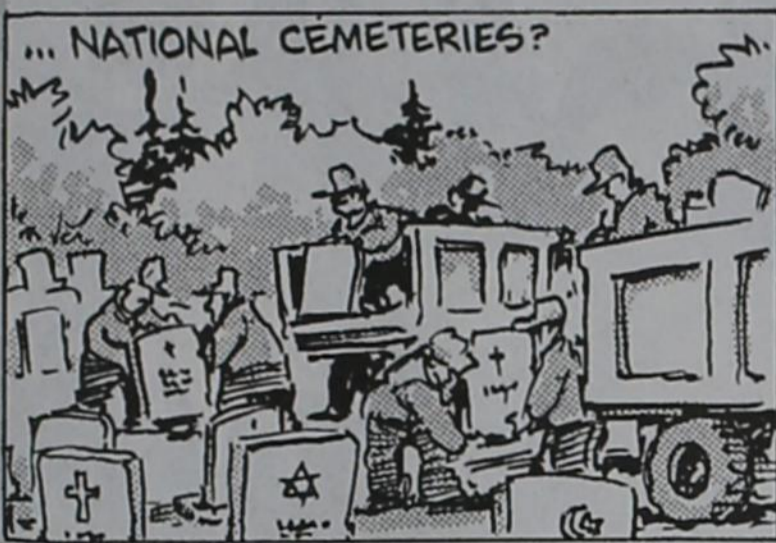
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# Opinions

IF WE ARE GOING TO HAVE A TOTALLY SECULAR STATE, SHOULDN'T WE CHANGE OUR...



## Jobs Come and Go

by Walter E. Williams



In 1970, the telecommunications industry employed 421,000 switchboard operators. In the same year, Americans made 9.8 billion long distance calls. Today, the telecommunications industry employs only 78,000 operators. That's a tremendous 80 percent job loss.

What should Congress have done to save those jobs? Congress could have taken a page from India's history. In 1924, Mahatma Gandhi attacked machinery, saying it "helps a few to ride on the backs of millions" and warned, "The machine should not make atrophies the limbs of man." With that kind of support, Indian textile workers were able to politically block the introduction of labor-saving textile machines. As a result, in 1970 India's textile industry had the level of productivity of ours in the 1920s.

Michael Cox, chief economist at the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas, and author Richard Alms tell the rest of the telecommunications story in their Nov. 17 New York Times article, "The Great Job Machine." Spectacular technological advances made it possible for the telecommunications industry to cut its manpower needs down to 78,000 to handle not the annual 9.8 billion long distance calls in 1970, but today's over 98 billion calls.

One forgotten beneficiary in today's job loss demagoguery is the consumer. Long distance calls are a tiny fraction of their cost in 1970. Just since 1984, long distance costs have fallen by 60 percent. Using 1970s technology, to make today's 98 billion calls would require 4.2 million operators. That's 3 percent of our labor force. Moreover, a long distance call would cost 40 times more than it does today.

Finding cheaper ways to produce goods and services frees up labor to produce other things. If productivity gains aren't made, where in the world would we find workers to produce all those goods that weren't even around in the 1970s?

It's my guess that the average anti-free-trade person wouldn't protest, much less argue that Congress should have done something

about the job loss in the telecommunications industry. He'd reveal himself an idiot.

But there's no significant economic difference between an industry using technology to reduce production costs and using cheaper labor to do the same. In either case, there's no question that the worker who finds himself out of a job because of the use of technology or cheaper labor might encounter hardships. The political difference is that it's easier to organize resentment against India and China than against technology.

Both Republican and Democratic interventionist like to focus on job losses as they call for trade restrictions, but let us look at what was happening in the 1990s. Cox and Alm report that recent Bureau of Labor Statistics show an annual job loss from a low of 27 million in 1993 to a high of 35.4 million in 2001. In 2000, when unemployment reached its lowest level, 33 million jobs were lost. That's the loss side. However, annual jobs created ranged from 29.6 million in 1993 to a high of 35.6 million in 1999.

These are signs of a healthy economy, where businesses start up, fail, downsize and upsize, and workers are fired and workers are hired all in the process of adapting to changing technological, economic and global conditions. Societies become richer when this process is allowed to occur. Indeed, because our nation has a history of allowing this process to occur goes a long way toward explaining why we are richer than the rest of the world.

Those Americans calling for government restrictions that would deny companies and ultimately consumers to benefit from cheaper methods of production are asking us to accept lower wealth in order to protect special interests. Of course, they don't cloak their agenda that way. It's always "national security," "level playing fields" and "protecting jobs". Don't fall for it — we'll all become losers.

To find out more about Walter Williams, and read features by other Creators Syndicate writers and cartoonists, visit the Creators Syndicate web page at [www.creators.com](http://www.creators.com).

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## Bush as Fake Free-Trader

by Sheldon Richman

President Bush is the most protectionist president since Ronald Reagan. And that's saying something, because Reagan was the most protectionist president since Herbert Hoover, who signed the infamous Smoot-Hawley Tariff and helped turn a recession into the Great Depression.

Take note: all three presidents mentioned are Republicans. No wonder many people still think that capitalism is merely a rationalization for helping politically connected business interests. President Bush, with a straight face, can announce to the world, as he just did in London, that he is a free-trader - while wooing electoral constituencies by slapping Chinese fabrics with quotas (which had been previously removed) and foreign steel with high tariffs. If that's being a free-trader, I'd hate to see him as a protectionist. Why should those whom Bush urges to lower trade barriers take him seriously?

The president is a "free-trader... but." And the list of buts is endless. In London he said free trade works only when the playing field is level. Since playing fields are never level we never get around to free trade. How convenient.

I guess it is a sign of progress that even protectionists have to claim to be free-traders ("but"). However, we consumers are still denied the benefits of open markets.

Here's what the counterfeit free-traders don't want you to know: We should open our markets not primarily to get others to open theirs, but rather to enjoy the fullest array of the world's products. Our standard of living is determined by the accessibility of the goods and services we want. Opening our markets means that we are free to buy what we want from whomever we want. In that way we can get the most from our incomes. That's the route to prosperity.

Notice what else that means: other people's success is not a threat to us. It's a boon. That ought to be common sense, but common sense is scarce. Listen to how people talk about China. You'd think we were living in the midst of a new Yellow Peril. This "threat" is not the result of its army or authoritarian political system. It's the result of its economic growth. The Chinese are getting too good at making things we want. Are we just going to stand by and let that happen? President Bush says no. He's going to limit the amount of fabric the Chinese will be permitted to sell to Americans. That's free trade, Republican-style.

What is China in a position to do to us? Heavyweight thinkers, such as CNN's Lou Dobbs, answer that we are "exporting jobs" to China and putting Americans out of work. Please. Manufacturing jobs have

been diminishing here for decades, mostly because of better machines. Manufacturing is still a big part of the American economy. But now it takes fewer people to make an increasing volume of goods. It's called capital investment - and progress.

Less-skilled work has always shifted to low-wage developing countries, but that makes perfect sense. The Chinese "threat" looks less formidable when you realize that the jobs being done in China would be done in other developing countries (not America) were China not growing economically. As the Economist writes, "The rich world's scapegoat of choice is China." Don't be fooled. The anti-China talk is coming from vested economic interests who don't care if Americans have to pay more for consumer goods.

Yes, the Chinese are starting to compete with Americans in higher-skilled jobs. But for those who worry about Americans' being permanently out of work, that's something we won't face until we return to the Garden of Eden. Since we all want more things, there's no limit to the work to be done - as long as government doesn't burden entrepreneurs.

To be sure, China doesn't fully practice free trade, although imports are rising faster than exports. But the United States is in no position to cast stones. The U.S. government maintains a host of protectionist barriers, and the trend is toward more not less. Keeping trade promises isn't its strong suit.

Sheldon Richman is senior fellow at The Future of Freedom Foundation, author of *Tethered Citizens: Time to Repeal the Welfare State*, and editor of *Ideas on Liberty* magazine.

Perhaps the sentiments contained in the following pages, are not yet sufficiently fashionable to procure them general favor; a long habit of not thinking a thing wrong, gives it a superficial appearance of being right, and raises at first a formidable outcry in defence of custom. But the tumult soon subsides. THOMAS PAINE, *Common Sense*, January 1776

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## Schooling around

by Bill O'Reilly



After a decade of pouring billions into the public school system, the final exams are in: American kids are not reading much better than they did 10 years ago, and there's no way to spin it otherwise. The National Assessment of Educational Progress says that only 31 percent of fourth graders read at a "proficient" level; for eighth graders the percentage rises to 32 percent.

This, of course, is a disaster and one that will lead to economic deprivation for millions of Americans in the coming decades.

Presidents Bush and Clinton both promised that more money would solve the educational problem, but that has turned out to be false. The reason so many American students can't read very well is twofold: first, many parents do not encourage reading, and allow their kids unfettered access to TV, computers and crude music. And second, discipline in many public schools is woeful. Students simply are not held accountable for behavior and academic performance.

Consider the following as a microcosm of what's going on. In the small town of Mt. Pleasant, Mich., a 16-year-old high school junior named Alexander Smith stood up in the cafeteria of his public school and called the principal, Betty Kirby, a "skank" and a "tramp."

Smith was suspended for 10 days. Enter the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), which sued on Smith's behalf. The ACLU said his speech was a "parody," and therefore protected. A federal judge agreed and struck down Michigan's verbal assault law. While the judge did rule that the school had a right to discipline Smith, it could not do so simply on his abusive statements alone.

This kind of nonsense is happening all over the USA. The ACLU, which I believe is the most dangerous organization in America, is on the prowl. It will bring litigation against anything it sees as limiting "freedom of expression," even if that expression demeans and humiliates schoolteachers and administrators. Think about it. How can teachers possibly keep order in large schools when students know there are few consequences to outrageous behavior? Anything said can be described as "satire" or a "parody." In Houston, a survey of public school teachers finds 70 percent of them have been the targets of profane language by students. That's an awful lot of parody.

We are living in a hypercompetitive society where the kids who can read, think and are respectful will prosper while the children who do not learn those things will, most likely, find it difficult to earn a good living as adults. The ACLU and its acolytes are succeeding in undermining almost every traditional institution in the country. Patriotism, spirituality, respect for authority and basic moral values are all under siege from a well-funded, secular lobby that envisions a society free of judgments about personal behavior. And if that society falls apart in the process, so be it.

It is certainly true that you have a "right" to be an illiterate, unskilled person under our Constitution. You have a "right" to be irresponsible and to be lazy. Those attributes are strongly defended by the ACLU and some federal judges who believe responsible Americans should support irresponsible ones with their tax dollars. And anyone who disagrees with that thesis is immediately labeled a dreaded "conservative."

I feel badly for Alexander Smith and for the principal he verbally assaulted. Both have been poorly served by our rapidly degenerating social system. Many Michigan kids now know they can call just about anybody a "skank" and a "tramp." But the question is, can they even spell those words?

Veteran TV news anchor Bill O'Reilly is host of the Fox News show "The O'Reilly Factor" and author of the new book "Who's Looking Out For You?" To find out more about Bill O'Reilly, and read features by other Creators Syndicate writers and cartoonists, visit the Creators Syndicate web page at [www.creators.com](http://www.creators.com). This column originates on the Web site [www.billoreilly.com](http://www.billoreilly.com).

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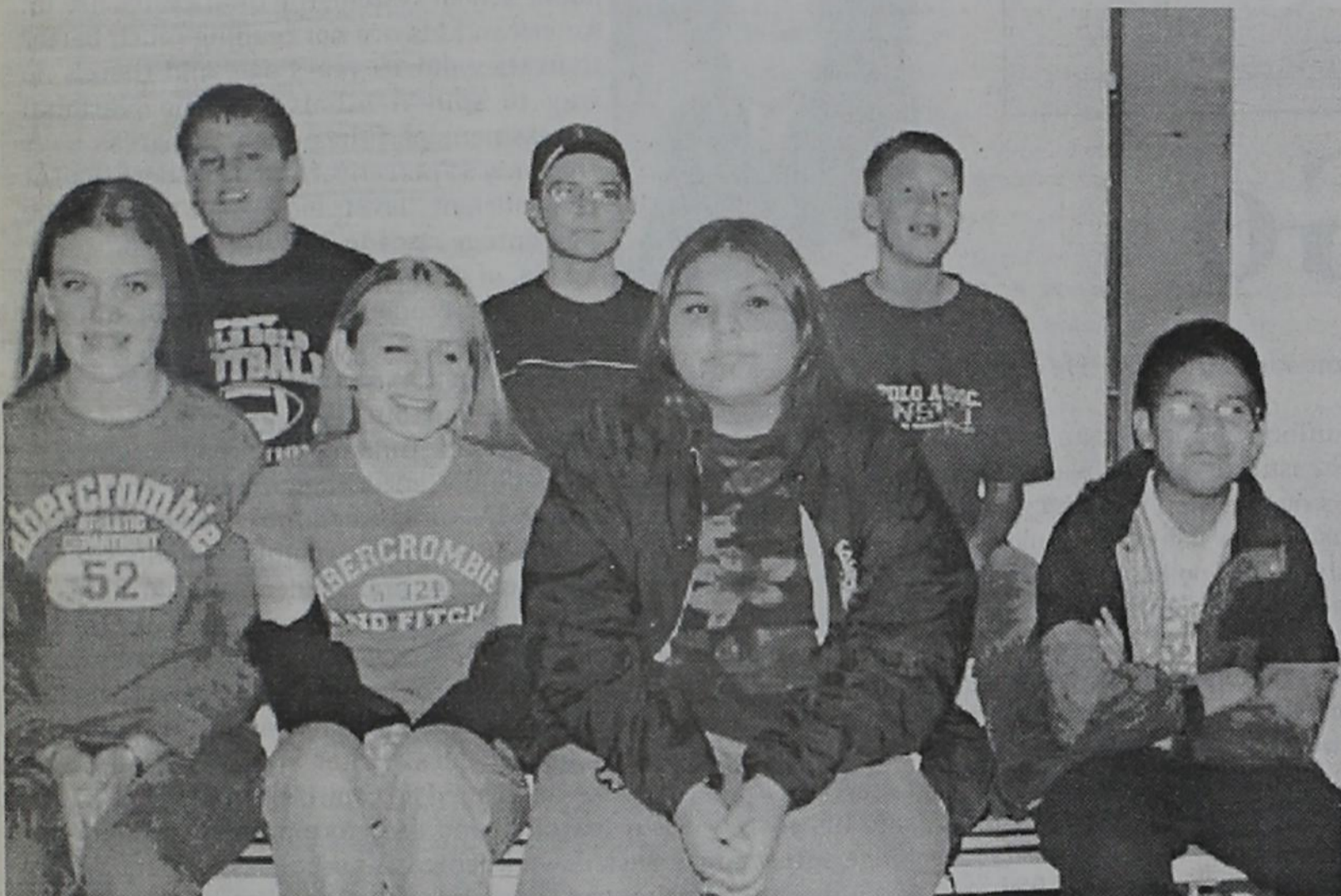
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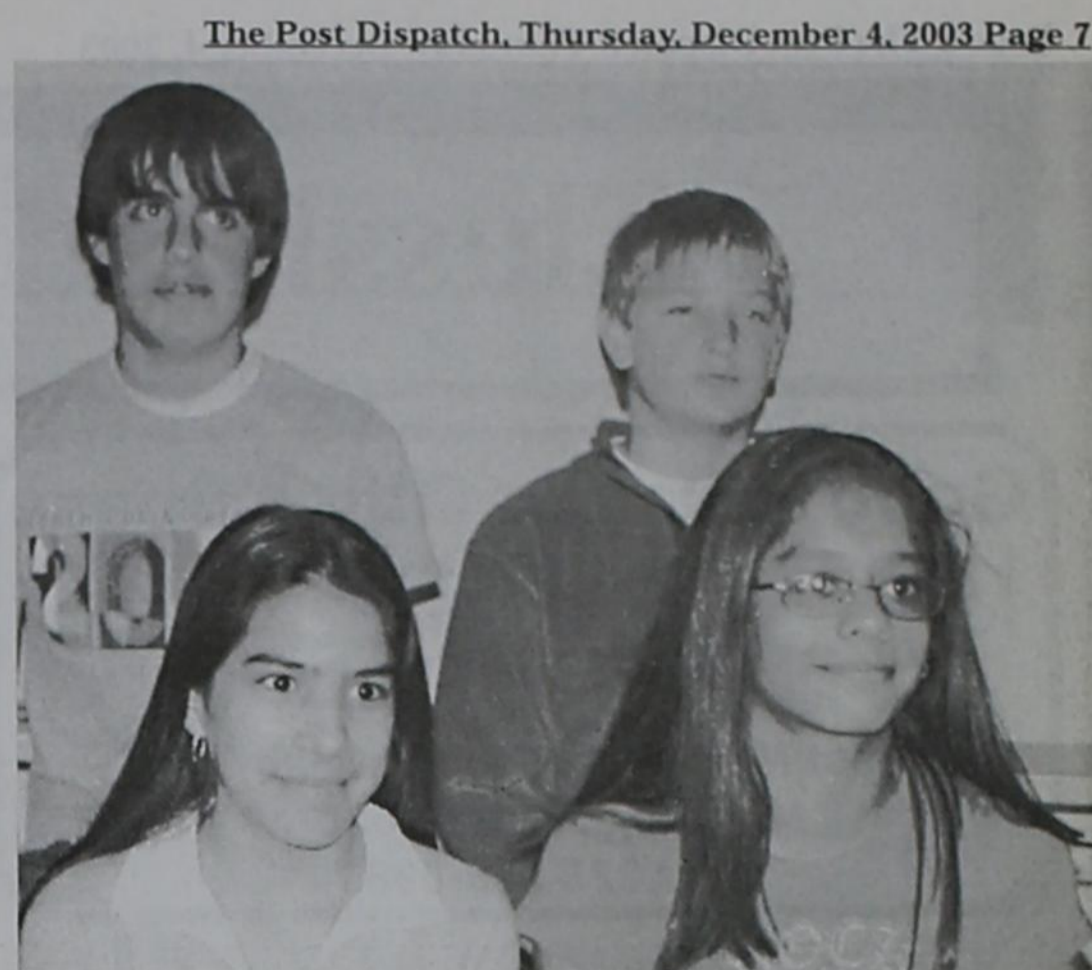
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Vince Robles  
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Daniela Galindo  
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Travis Arguello  
Kelcee Lewis  
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Charlsi Heinrich  
Daegan Moore  
'A/B' Honor Roll  
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Katie Colvin  
Aaron Garza  
Joseph Romero  
Justin Torres  
Gabby Abraham  
Jeanette Aguayo  
Linda Gonzales  
Paula Guerra  
Angelica Hutsepillar  
Joe Rodriguez  
Jaden Binford  
Dustin Powell  
Irma Sanchez  
Kirsten Shankles  
Rebecca Benavides  
Angela Garza  
Maria Sanchez  
Devin Blanton  
Brandon Martin

## Southland Secondary 'A' Honor Roll

Maegan Garza

## 'A/B' Honor Roll

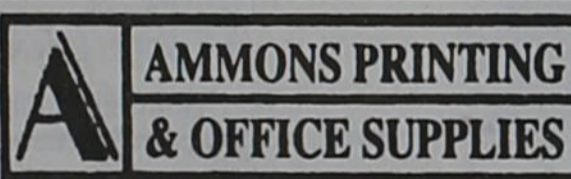
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 To all of those that showed your love and friendship in ways of cards, calls, food, prayers and flowers was and is so greatly appreciated in our time of loss of our brother and uncle. Thanks, is such a small word when it comes to expressing your feelings at a time like this.  
 To the churches that brought and served food, thank you so much. May God bless and keep each of you in his loving care.  
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We want to thank everyone for helping us celebrate our 50th Wedding Anniversary. Thanks for the pretty cards, phone calls, and visits.  
 Especially want to thank our kids and grandkids, Tina, Todd, Jeff, Karen, Benny, Kim, Jarrod, Raelye, Joe, Terrica, Corlee, Benjamin, and Kevin for their special services. Also want to thank Betty, Jim, Delcy and Ron for their help.  
 Again Thanks and We love you,  
 Billy & Louise

We would like to thank everyone for all of the food, cards, phone calls, flowers, visits and most of all for the many prayers during our recent accident and hospital stay. We are truly blessed to live in such a wonderful and caring community. God bless all of you!  
 Rodney, Vicki, Nicole, Miles & Rachel Gray

**Card of Thanks**  
 To all of those that showed your love and friendship in ways of cards, calls, food, prayers and flowers was and is so greatly appreciated in our time of loss of our brother and uncle. Thanks, is such a small word when it comes to expressing your feelings at a time like this.  
 To the churches that brought and served food, thank you so much. May God bless and keep each of you in his loving care.  
 Bill & Willie McBride  
 Butch Cross & Family  
 Donna Harden & Family  
 All Nieces & Nephews

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 The City of Post will accept written bids until December 12, 2003 for the following used vehicles and equipment. Potential bidders can view the items by calling 806-495-2811. Items sold will be "as is, where is."  
 All bid sheets should briefly describe the vehicle or equipment covered by the bid and must be written, dated and signed by the bidder. Terms are cash on date of sale.  
 1 1990 International 2 1/2 ton Truck with EMCO Trash Canister- IHTSDTVR1LH237935  
 1 1991 Half ton Chevrolet Pickup Short Wide Bed ... 1GCDC14H8M192686  
 1 1997 Ford 4 door Crown Victoria. 2FALP73W8VX107829  
 1 1989 Half ton Chevrolet SWB Pickup 1GCDC14H7KZ220314  
 ••••••••••  
 1 used MTD Riding Lawn Mower  
 1 used John Deere Riding Mower  
 ••••••••••  
 1 used 1,000 gallon fuel tank on skids  
 1 used 500 gallon diesel tank on stand  
 ••••••••••  
 1 used self-propelled Road Sweeper 6300 Versa Sweeper Larson Mfg,  
 1 used Outboard Motor  
 The City may reject any bid or all bids, for any reason.

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# Ruby Lane Books opening Friday

A bookstore featuring "previously read" books, one-of-a-kind gifts, candles and framed art and photography will observe its grand opening this weekend in Post.

Ruby Lane Books is located at 127 E. Main St. in the Caprock Cultural Association building. The CCA office is located in the rear of the building. The bookstore, owned by Rosa Walston Latimer, will be open every Trade Days weekend and most other Saturdays. Store hours this weekend are Friday and Saturday, 10 a.m. to 8 p.m., and Sunday from 2-6 p.m.

"We'll also be open on theatre nights before performances and for other special events in Post," said Latimer. "Ruby Lane is a very comfortable, cozy place to relax and browse through our collection of books. We've got some very old first editions and some collectible children's books too, as well as mainstream novels - both hardback and paperback."

Latimer, a freelance writer and photographer, plans to offer writing classes and other special events in the store.

"I hope Ruby Lane will provide a good opportunity for local and regional writers and artists to present their work," she said.

Cathy Whitten, singer/songwriter and former Post resident, will be in the store from 4-6 p.m. on Friday prior to her performance at the CCA awards dinner. Whitten wrote three of the songs on her debut CD. Her children, R.H. and Amanda, inspired the song, "So Much More." On the CD, she covers country standards, including "I Walk the Line" and "Cowboy's Sweetheart."

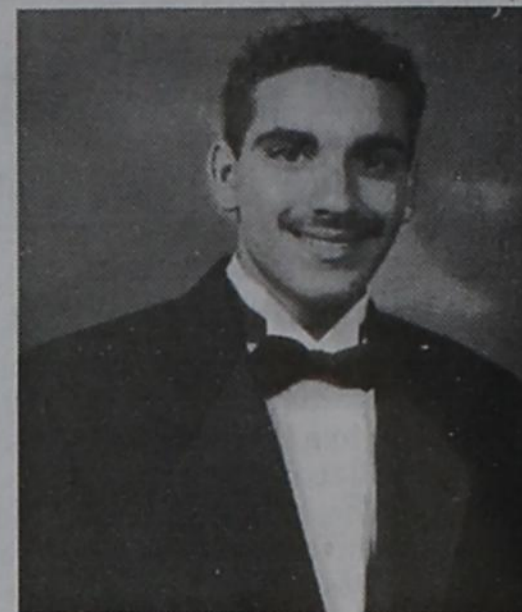
Photographer Tom Higley, a Childress native, will have an exhibit at the bookstore on Saturday. Higley is a retired radio and television news director, anchor and newspaper publisher who has had exhibits in Midland, Amarillo and Sayre, Okla. He currently has exhibits at the Hubbard Museum of the American West in Ruidoso and the Sad Café &

Gallery in Ribera, N.M. Higley has won numerous news photography awards. His most recent recognition was a first place award at the 12th annual Fall American Competition at the Hubbard Museum.

Guitarist David Waldon, a BMI-published songwriter, will perform Saturday. His most recent CD, "A Simple Christmas," contains traditional carols on guitar and will be available at the bookstore. Waldon has been a singer with the San Antonio and Sacramento Symphony choirs and the Texas Bach Choir and played guitar and led music in several churches. Recently, he played acoustic guitar and keyboards in the touring band of recording artist Shelley Laine, with whom he also has co-written songs. He also played bass in several bands, most recently with Mike Pritchard's Cat House Blues Band.

On Sunday afternoon at 2 p.m. and 3 p.m., writers Dorothy Stephenson, Nell Shaver and Mary Ruthart will present readings from their latest book, "Welcome to Calicheville." The women met in a writing class several years ago and have been writing together since.

"Welcome to Calicheville" is set in a small, fictional West Texas town and is described as "a refreshing look at West Texas as seen through the eyes of a trio of skilled and imaginative writers." Copies of the book will be available at Ruby Lane Books.



PHS students Lisa Soto and Ricky Reyna were recognized by the Post Rotary Club recently.

## Post Marine returns home from war

by Shannon Morell  
Navy Public Affairs Center

Marine Corps Air Station, Yuma, Ariz. - Never seen or detected, always on the prowl, in rain or shine, night or day, they will find you. They are night predators. Post's Jimmy L. Albert and his fellow Marines of Marine Attack Squadron-513 (VMA-513) are part of an elite group of nocturnal attackers who recently returned home from war in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

Known as the "Flying Nightmares," the squadron attached to Marine Aircraft Group 13 based at Marine Corps Air Station, Yuma, Ariz., and was responsible for the night attacks accomplished while deployed in Bagram, Afghanistan, from October 2002 to September 2003.

Marine Gunnery Sgt. Albert, the 35-year-old son of Jimmy L. Albert Sr. of Post, is a quality assurance chief for VMA-513.

"I monitor the overall quality of maintenance and paperwork for our squadron," Albert said. The "Nightmares" are known for their night missions, electronic capabilities and striking power. They also are trained to deploy on short notice. Their aircraft, AV-8B Harrier Jump Jets, are capable of hovering close to the ground and releasing precision guided missiles (smart bombs), Mark 80 series bombs as well as other types of ordinance.

While deployed, VMA-513 was the only Marine unit serving in Afghanistan. Its main objective was to fly close air support for the Italians, Germans and U.S. Army ground units. They flew 3,764 combat flight hours and 1,250 combat sorties or missions. More than half of these missions were flown at night.

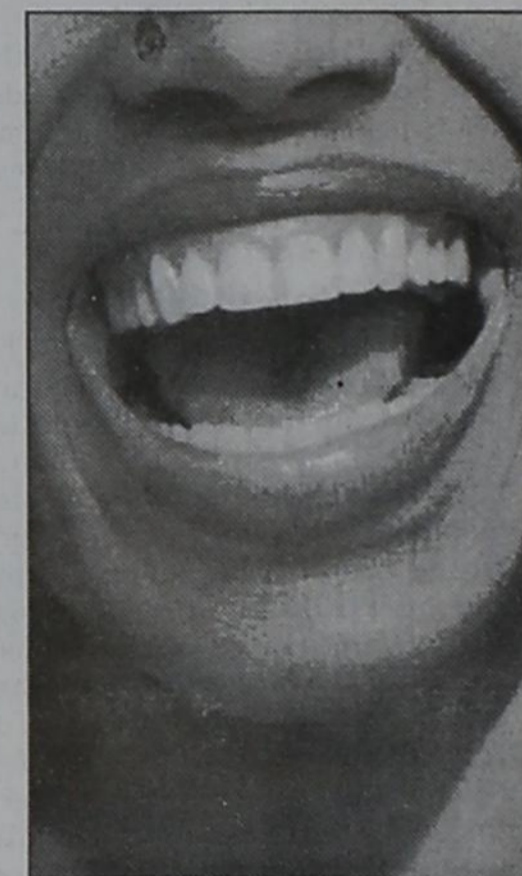
Albert said his command played a significant part in the war on terrorism. "We proved that our AV-8B Harrier Jump Jet are versatile and can deploy in very harsh weather," the Marine veteran said.

Accomplishing their missions meant working many long hours and lots of hard work. According to Albert, 513 was ready for action 24 hours a day, seven days a week. They flew 29 days out of each month. They also worked 12-hour shifts seven days a week. This left the Marines with little time for relaxation, but that didn't stop Albert and his fellow Marines from being proud to serve his country in support of the

global war on terrorism. "To serve my country gives me a sense of home and pride," Albert said. "I am proud to be serving my country."

During September and October, the "Nightmares" returned to the United States. This was the first time in nearly a year many of the Marines were able to touch American soil.

"After a year of being away from family, it's great to be able to be with them," Albert said. "I have missed so much."



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## JV Lady Lopes undefeated

The Post Lady Lopes traveled to Stanton and improved their season record to 2-0 by defeating Stanton. The Lady Lopes narrowly out scored their opponent in every quarter to win 51-36.

Scoring by quarters were as follows: 1st-14-10, 2nd-10-5, 3rd-14-10, 4th-13-11. Laural Tatum lead the Lady Lopes in scoring with 19 points. Tatum scored 9 of her 19 points in the fourth quarter.

Ashley Wilson scored 10 points and made four out of four freethrows. Rachel Gray scored 11 points played outstanding defense and handled the ball for the Lady Lopes. Larissa Halford scored 3 points and played outstanding defense.

Scoring for the Lady Lopes, Courtney Copeland 2, Jackie Hays, 4, and Kylie Easerling 2. All of the Lady Lopes played hard and made a contribution to the win.

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