

80°/56°
Partly sunny with a chance of p.m. showers.
14A

Don't like the weather?
See when it will change



MAVERICKS DEFEAT SPURS

Dallas Mavericks clinch No. 2 seed in the Western Conference. Win sets up a first-round playoff matchup between the Mavs and Spurs. **SPORTS, 1C**

THURSDAY, APRIL 15, 2010

75 CENTS



Times Record News

SERVING WICHITA FALLS



FOR MORE THAN A CENTURY

Quick Read



SCHOLARSHIP COLLOQUIUM

Midwestern State University students present spring projects to the public.
LOCAL, 4A

SETTING ASIDE JOURNALISM

Former Times Record News employee Christina Vance plans to open a church geared to serving youth and the homeless.
LOCAL, 3A

NEED TO MAIL YOUR TAXES?

Mail placed in collection boxes at 1343 Hatton Road before midnight will receive the April 15 postmark.
LOCAL, 5A

600 KILLED IN CHINA QUAKE

Earthquakes struck a mountainous Tibetan region injuring more than 10,000 people.
WORLD, 9A

BULLPEN

Nothing wrong with Jerry Jones' remarks caught on a cell phone camera.
SPORTS, 1C

HOW NOW JOE BROWN



After three straight months of declines in the Dallas-Fort Worth area, home sales rose by 11 percent, and prices figured 6 percent higher in March, according to the Texas A&M Real Estate Center. Reasons cited were reasonable prices, federal tax credits and even warmer weather. Don't ask me about that warmer weather bit, but it was given as a reason for home sales increases!

Opinion

LOCAL COLUMNIST **12A**
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Local home sales up in March

■ Total for year slightly behind '09

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Existing home sales increased significantly here in March over February, according to the Wichita Falls Association of Realtors.

The data showed that 157 existing homes were sold during the month, a jump of

66 from 91 in February. Also, the Multiple Listing Service statistics revealed that the sales volume was up \$8.8 million over February. The sales volume hit the \$18.2 million mark. In February, the total was \$9.4 million. And the March sales volume was up \$4.9 million over March '09, which was \$13.3 million.

Year-to-date, the total existing home sales volume sits at \$36.5 million, an increase of \$1.5 million over \$35 million in '09.

"These numbers were

Please see SALES, 3A



This house on Kingsbury in Wichita Falls recently sold. Local home listings, sales and volume all showed sizable increases in March and seem to be continuing on that path, a local Realtor said.

CLARE KOWALCZYK/TIMES RECORD NEWS

RED RIVER RODEO TO RETURN



Rodeo action will return to the Mounted Patrol Arena this summer. Organizers intend to put the Red River Rodeo on in June following a one-year hiatus due to financial problems. The rodeo will include team roping, barrel racing and other events, and there also will be junior barrels and breakaway roping.

STEERING the saddles back

■ Annual event set for June after hiatus last year due to finances

JESSICA LANGDON
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Good news for fans of the Red River Rodeo — the long-time North Texas tradition is on its way back after a year's hiatus.

"Hey all you rodeo fans, we're gonna have a Red River Rodeo again," said Ronny Cartwright,

past president of the Wichita County Mounted Patrol.

Plans are in the works to have the Red River Rodeo June 4-5 at the Mounted Patrol Arena, and Cartwright looks forward to bringing participants and rodeo fans from across the community together for the event.

"We hope that they have a wonderful time," he said. "We're going to have some things going on this year that we've never had before."

Organizers have teamed up with the United Professional Rodeo Association and the Texas Cowboy Rodeo Association for the upcoming rodeo, which is a professional event.



The normal rodeo events will take place. There will be timed events and roughstock events. The rodeo will include team roping and barrel racing. There will be junior barrels and breakaway roping. Breakaway roping often is for the kids, but is fun for the kids

Please see RODEO, 3A

Hutchison criticized for beef earmark

■ Conaway also assailed as wasteful

NIKKI ROBERTI
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WASHINGTON — Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison, R-Texas, won an award for her work in the beef industry Wednesday — "The Steak Through the Heart of Taxpayers Award."

And "steak" is not a typo.

Citizens Against Government Waste cited Hutchison and Rep. Ciro Rodriguez, D-Texas, for sponsoring an amendment to spend \$693,000 for beef improvement research in Missouri and Texas.

The group, which examines pork-barrel spending, released its latest edition of the "Pig Book" Wednesday.

The "Pig Book" is an annual report about earmarks, or pork-barrel spending, in the federal budget. It also grants fictitious awards to the "Pig Book 'Oinkers' of 2010."

An earmark is the appropriation of government spending that does not go through committee review. Hundreds of such amendments are added to the federal budget every year by senators and House members.

Often, they are local projects that bring money to a representative's district.

The "Pig Book" said earmarks for 2010 totaled \$16.5 billion, down 15.5 percent from 2009. The number of earmarks also declined, by 10 percent — from 10,160 to 9,129.

Earmarks have been a hot topic of discussion this past year, as President Barack Obama promised to reduce their number.

The purpose of the book is to shine light on the spending so taxpayers can see where their money is going, said David Williams, CAGW vice president for policy.

Rep. Mike Conaway, R-Texas, though not an award recipient, was mentioned in the "Pig Book" for his earmark of \$206,000 for wool research in Texas, Montana and Wyoming. Rodriguez was a co-sponsor.

Since 1995, the CAGW found 14 earmarks worth more than \$3.5 million for wool research in those three states, the book said.

Conaway's press secretary Anna Harris said Conaway has legitimate reason to support the wool industry.

"This project is clearly

Please see BOOK, 3A

Petition derails center remodel

■ Signers left off mandatory extra details

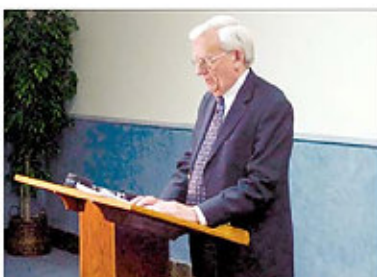
MARISSA MILLENDER
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Despite some missing information on a petition filed in the Burk Burnett City Clerk's office Monday, issuing certificates of obligation to remodel the Burk Burnett Community Center and add some sewer service will not be considered by the Burk Burnett City Council

on Monday. The petition was submitted at 11 a.m. Monday and contained 578 signatures. According to the Texas Election Code, all signatures must be accompanied by addresses and dates of birth or voter registration numbers. All signatures lacked dates of births or voter registration numbers. City Clerk Trish Holley made attempts to validate the signatures and was able to do so on 501 names, which exceeded the 348 signatures needed to pass.

So the City Council will not consider Monday

Please see PETITION, 3A



Burk Burnett Mayor Carl Law on Wednesday talked about a petition filed Monday regarding the City Council pursuing certificates of obligation to remodel the city's Community Center.

MARISSA MILLENDER/TIMES RECORD NEWS