

Home Improvement

Seasonal touches, do-it-yourself fixes covered in special section **Inside**



Missing Market

Vendors try to adjust to the prospect of losing the space to sell their wares **IB**

Tyler Clubs

Area organizations profiled and officers recognized in special section **Inside**



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Tyler, Texas



— Staff File Photo By D.J. Peters

CRIME SCENE: First Assistant District Attorney Brett Harrison gestures to a crime scene photo of Deanna LaJune Laney in blood-spattered pajamas during her capital murder trial in Tyler on March 29, 2004. On the witness stand is Smith County Sheriff's Deputy James Finch. Laney, of New Chapel Hill, was on trial for allegedly bludgeoning two of her children to death and seriously injuring a third.

U.S. Marine Loses Medals, Uniform When Car Stolen

Police Recover Vehicle, Charge Dallas Man With Auto Theft

A Whitehouse Marine, whose car was stolen with his dress uniform and medals inside, got his car back on Monday — minus the medals and uniform.

Cpl. Blake Weller, who was on military leave, drove his recently-purchased 2005 Mazda RX-8 to the Broadway Square Mall on Friday and parked it.

When he returned a short time later, the car was gone, along with his dress uniform and medals, one of which was a replica of a Purple Heart.

Cpl. Weller was awarded a Purple Heart for injuries sustained during a mortar attack in Iraq and is scheduled to receive his real medal this fall.

Dallas police recovered Weller's vehicle during a routine traffic stop early Monday morning after the officer ran the car's license plate and it came up stolen.

See MARINE, Page 6A

Treasury Secretary: Current Debt Ceiling Approaching Oct. 1

Action Sought To Increase Limit

WASHINGTON (AP) — Treasury Secretary Henry Paulson told Congress on Wednesday the government will hit the current debt ceiling on Oct. 1.

He sought quick action to increase the limit, saying it was essential to protect the "full faith and credit" of the country, especially at a time of financial market turmoil.

The limit is \$8.965 trillion. Unless Congress votes to raise it, the country would be unable to borrow more money to keep the government operating and to pay debt obligations coming due.

The United States has never defaulted on a debt payment but the decision on whether to raise the debt ceiling often means a prolonged battle in Congress.

Paulson wrote congressional leaders that according to data now available, the Treasury expects to reach the ceiling on Oct. 1 — the first day of the new budget year.

That projection does not take into account moves the government often has to use, such as withdrawing investments from certain trust funds to create room for extra borrowing until Congress finally approves a debt increase.

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ET State Fair Opens Marking Its 38th Year

By LAUREN KEATON
Staff Writer

The East Texas State Fair gates will open today, marking its 38th year, and Fair General Manager John Sykes said he is "more excited than ever" about this year's events.

The 2007 fair hours are 4 to 11 p.m. Monday through Friday and 10 a.m. to midnight Saturday and Sunday.

Ticket prices are \$6 for adults and \$4 for children ages 6-12. Children 5 and younger are free.

"Armband Days," student passes and a discounted admission day with the donation of four canned goods are just a few promotional events making ETSF a little more affordable this year.

For dates and more information, visit www.etstatefair.com. Although the fairgrounds aren't open to the public until this afternoon, today is Senior Citizens' Day at the fair, giving those 55 and older some special privileges this morning.

"I wanted (Senior Citizens' Day) to be the premiere event to kick off the fair," Sykes said. "It's a great day. There are over 3,000 senior citizens that come to the event, and they are so happy. I want to see them happy."

There will be two programs, at 9 a.m. and 1 p.m., designed to

See FAIR, Page 6A

"Why mommy?"

In 2005, nearly 1,500 children died from abuse or neglect — more than a fourth of those at the hands of their mothers. Some of the most horrific examples of mothers killing or injuring their children have happened in Texas, but experts suspect the state hasn't seen more than its share of such attacks.



By Staff and Wire Reports

A New Chapel Hill woman beats her sons to death with rocks. A Tyler woman strangles her child while her husband sleeps. Now a suburban mom is accused of dousing her three daughters with gasoline and setting them on fire.

Some of the most horrific examples of mothers killing or injuring their children have happened in Texas, though experts suspect the nation's second-most populated state hasn't seen more than its share of such attacks.

"Some cases become high-profile because the public gets more interested in dramatic cases," said Jill Korbin, an anthropology professor and director of the Schubert Center for Child Studies at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland.

Many of those cases are in East Texas. In July, a Tyler woman with an extensive mental history was jailed after allegedly strangling her 2-year-old son as her husband slept in an adjoining room. EMS personnel were dispatched to 2513 Memory Lane, a quiet cul-de-sac off Boldt Avenue, when the child's father, William Stevens, called 911 reporting his child was unresponsive. The child's mother, Catherine Alana Stevens, 39, later confessed to detectives that she had strangled



— Staf File Photo By Jaime Carrero

ARRAIGNMENT: Catherine Alana Stevens during her capital murder arraignment. Ms. Stevens allegedly strangled her 2-year-old son, William, in Tyler. Above right, an undated photo of sisters Alexandria, Adamira and Ariania Green. Ariania Green, the youngest of the three girls who were doused with gasoline and burned in Haltom City last weekend, died Tuesday. The girls' 29-year-old mother, Alysha Green, is accused of coaxing her children into a closet and burning them.

her son, William. Authorities said during the investigation that they were unable to locate any type of weapon used in the strangulation.

reasons

Experts say women who turn against their children do it for a variety of reasons:

- mental illness
- abuse that turned deadly
- revenge against the youngsters' father
- others intend to commit suicide, and decide also to kill their children so they won't be left alone

"She strangled the child with her bare hands," Tyler Police chief Gary Swindle said during the investigation.

According to a representative of the Texas Department of Family and Child Protective Services, workers conducted an investigation at the home of Catherine Stevens 14 months before the incident, and found the situation at the Stevens home was not dangerous.

Stevens is awaiting trial for the capital murder charge and remains in the Smith County Jail on a \$1 million bond.

Before Stevens, in 2003, Deanna Laney, a 39-year-old New Chapel Hill woman calmly called 911 and told the dispatcher she beat her two young sons, Luke and Joshua, 6 and 8, and attacked and injured her baby, Aaron Laney.

The older boys were beaten to death in

See MOTHERS WHO KILL, Page 6A

Army Begins Testing Soldiers' Brains Before They Leave For Iraq

FORT CAMPBELL, Ky. (AP) — Before they leave for Iraq, thousands of troops with the 101st Airborne Division line up at laptop computers to take a test: basic math, matching numbers and symbols, and identifying patterns. They press a button quickly to measure response time.

It's all part of a fledgling Army program that records how soldiers' brains work when healthy, giving doctors baseline data to help diagnose and treat the soldiers if they suffer a traumatic brain injury — the signature injury of the Iraq war.

"This allows the Army to be much more proactive," said Lt. Col. Mark McGrail, division surgeon for the 101st. "We don't want to wait until the soldier is getting out of the Army to say, 'But I've had these symptoms.'"

The mandatory brain-function tests are starting with the 101st at Fort Campbell and are expected to spread to other military bases in the next couple of months. Commanders at each base will decide

"The initial shock is a little disorienting. Your first thought is seeing if anyone is wounded and suppressing enemy fire."

— Sgt. Adam Wyatt, 22
Has been close to 20 to 30 blasts

whether to adopt the program. The tests provide a standard, objective measurement for each soldier's reaction time, their short-term memory and other cognitive skills. That data would be used when the soldiers come home to identify mild brain trauma that can often go unnoticed and untreated.

One veterans group wants to ensure the Army doesn't use the results to deny treat-

ment by claiming that soldiers' problems came from pre-existing conditions.

"We certainly think these tests should not be used to reduce the responsibility that the Army has to treat the soldiers who have served," said Jason Forrester, director of policy for Veterans for America.

About 7,500 Fort Campbell soldiers have completed the tests, said Dr. Robert Schlegel, a University of Oklahoma researcher who administers the 10-minute exams to soldiers as they file quickly through a testing center.

One question asks soldiers to memorize patterns on the screen and then identify them later among several different patterns. Other questions require soldiers to match numbers and symbols, or complete simple addition and subtraction problems.

"Everybody functions a bit differently in terms of how quickly they react to things, how well they process things and remember things and so forth," Schlegel said.

Brain injuries caused by explosions have become some of the most common combat wounds suffered in Iraq. Thirty percent of soldiers taken to Walter Reed Army Medical Center since 2003 suffered traumatic brain injuries, according to the Defense and Veterans Brain Injury Center.

The brain-injury center, which has seven facilities around the country, has seen 2,669 patients between 2003 and 2007. But doctors believe many less obvious brain-injury cases go undetected.

Sgt. Adam Wyatt, 22, has been close to 20 to 30 blasts from homemade bombs, rocket-propelled grenades or mortar fire during his last two deployments. But he's never been directly hit.

"The initial shock is a little disorienting," Wyatt said. "Your first thought is seeing if anyone is wounded and suppressing enemy fire."

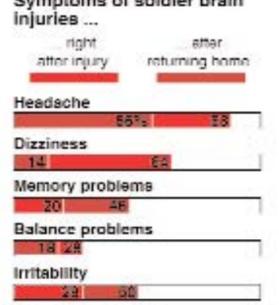
Soldiers sometimes walk away from

See BRAIN, Page 6A

Troop brain injuries

The Army has begun brain-function tests on soldiers before war to give doctors critical data for treatment if a soldier returns with a traumatic brain injury.

Symptoms of soldier brain injuries ...



SOURCE: Walter Reed Army Medical Center

Forecast

Partly Cloudy
High 89, Low 61
East Winds
5-10 mph



— Weather 10C

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DOW	NASDAQ
13,815.56 +76.17	2,666.48 +14.82
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Bible Thought

"For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?"

— Matthew 16:26