

# THE LAWTON CONSTITUTION

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THE SOURCE FOR INFORMATION IN SOUTHWEST OKLAHOMA

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## WHAT'S INSIDE



### Out at OU, in at Indiana

University of Oklahoma head basketball coach Kelvin Sampson on Tuesday completed contract details that will make him the new coach at Indiana.

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### Better get buckled

Oklahoma lawmakers are considering a change to the state's seat belt law that would give the fine for not wearing one a lot more impact.

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### News to chew on

Some interesting "emerging research" suggests that chewing gum not only tastes good; it also may be good for your health.

### News of interest

At his first meeting as chairman of the Federal Reserve Board, Ben Bernanke opted to raise borrowing costs to a five-year high.

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### Card dealt new hand

In a shakeup at the White House, chief of staff Andy Card has resigned and will be replaced by President Bush's budget director, Joshua Bolten.



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### Israeli elections

Sharon's party claims victory in the latest election in Israel.

### Asylum for Afghan Christian?

Italy may offer a new life for man who faces death in Afghanistan for converting from Islam.

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### Prints charming

What's a stylish gal to do if she wants to make a bold statement for the arrival of Spring? She picks a print. See Styles, Page 2B



## New look, same name

2nd Street plan looks like a go

BY KIM MCCONNELL  
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A streetscape schematic for the downtown redevelopment project is a go, but City Council members turned thumbs down Tuesday on a proposal to rename Northwest 2nd Street.

The proposals — and a third item to initiate an application for a federal grant and a federal loan — were all part of city efforts to jumpstart a revitalization

proposal intended to encourage development in Lawton's historic downtown.

The streetscape for Northwest 2nd Street, between Northwest Ferris and Northwest Columbia, will be the template for the entire 2nd Street project. City Planner Richard Rogalski said the council was not committing itself to the final plan Tuesday; rather, it was merely approving the schematic, as the Lawton Urban Renewal Authority negotiates with design firm TetraTech to begin final designs for what will ultimately be a \$3.9 million, four-phase project focusing attention on Lawton's central corridors.

SEE CITY, 3A

## Couple in cat fight with city

Feeding stray brings animal control, fines

BY ANDREW GRIFFIN  
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One morning earlier this month, Sherry Morgan was outside her north Lawton home when she heard the mournful meowing of a friendly cat with gray fur.

Not wanting to see the animal starve, Morgan put out some cat food for the weebegone feline. Little did she know that this act of kindness was going to cost her and her husband more than \$300, because the city was and remains convinced that the cat in question belonged to the compassionate woman.

Around this same time, Morgan's husband, Jerry Morgan, had called City of Lawton animal control officers to come and check on the welfare of what he feared were two abused dogs living in a backyard adjacent to their home. Jerry Morgan then went to work, while Sherry Morgan was still at home.

As Sherry Morgan tells the story, there was an unexpected knock at the door.

When she opened it, she was greeted by two men in uniform and a woman in civilian clothing, none of whom identified themselves.

"They said, 'Do you live here?' And I said, 'Yes.' Then they said, 'I need to see your I.D.'" Sherry Morgan said.

Sherry Morgan said she invited the three into her home — people she assumed were police — but they declined, only taking information down off of her Oklahoma driver's license.

"They then asked me if this cat was my cat and if I fed it," she said. "I told them that yes, I'd fed it but that it wasn't my cat."

This was where the disagreement began.

Sherry Morgan said the trio — she finally deduced they were animal control officers — were insistent that the cat chowing down on her property was, in fact, hers. Perplexed, she insisted that they were wrong and that the cat was simply a hungry stray and that was that.

But that wasn't that. The city officials lost no time in giving Morgan three citations. The first, no proof of rabies shot, would cost \$95. The second was that the cat had no city license. Another \$95. The final citation, allowing a cat to run at large, was a whopping \$125, making for a total of \$315.

Sherry Morgan said she was stunned when she received the tickets.

"Again, I told them it wasn't my cat," Sherry Morgan said. "But they said, 'You fed it, it's your cat.'"

Sherry Morgan pleaded 'not guilty' in city court on March 15. But the Morgans are still expected to pay the fines.

Jerry Morgan said he and his wife

SEE CAT, 3A

## A hero's footsteps

Elgin Bataan Death March survivor's memory honored

BY JARED KALTWASSER  
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A Southwest Oklahoma veteran's memory provided inspiration for a group of northeast Oklahoma teenagers as they walked across the New Mexico desert this weekend. On Tuesday, they stopped in Elgin to recognize the veteran and thank his widow.

Ten cadets from Thunderbird Youth Academy in Pryor stopped by the Elgin Municipal Building on their way back from the 17th annual Bataan Memorial Death March observance in White Sands, N.M. The students marched 26.2 miles Sunday in honor of the late Master Sgt. Elmer Parks of Elgin, a Bataan survivor.

"He was very young when he made the death march. He spent three and a half years there, the first part in the Philippines, the last in Japan," said Parks' widow, Naeoma, who was presented with mementos of the journey by Thunderbird's assistant commandant, Reb Grybowski.

"The 'Bataan Death March'



JARED KALTWASSER/STAFF

Sixty-two years ago, Elmer Parks marched as a prisoner of war through the Filipino jungle in the Bataan Death March. Tuesday, his widow Naeoma, back center, was on-hand as students from Pryor's Thunderbird Youth Academy stopped in Elgin after completing a marathon in Elmer Parks' honor.

refers to the plight of tens of thousands of American and Filipino soldiers who surrendered to Japanese forces on April 9, 1942. They were forced to march from the Filipino forts they had been assigned to defend to Japanese prisoner of war camps.

"They walked 65 to 100 miles,"

said Thunderbird shift supervisor Mike Hayes. "No food. No water. No rest."

If they stopped or slowed down, Hayes said, they were beaten severely or killed on the spot.

In 1989, the memorial march was set up in White Plains, N.M. Pri-

SEE BATAAN, 3A

## Firefighter to be buried

BY JARED KALTWASSER  
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CHICKASHA — Flags across the state will be flown at half staff on Thursday as family and friends gather to remember fallen Chickasha firefighter Destry Horton.

Horton, 32, died Friday in an Oklahoma City hospital, three weeks after being severely burned March 1 while fighting a fire near Duncan.

Funeral services are set for 2 p.m. Thursday at Grand Assembly of God Church in Chickasha, 102 W. Almar.

Gov. Brad Henry issued an order Tuesday mandating that all flags on state property be lowered Thursday to remember Horton. The governor said he plans on attending the funeral.

"Our brave and heroic firefighters routinely risk personal safety for the sake of their fellow Okla-

homans," Henry said. "Destry Horton paid the ultimate price for his selflessness and for that we honor his sacrifice and cherish his memory."

Rep. Joe Dorman, D-Rush Springs, said television sets will be set up at two nearby churches to accommodate overflow spectators. The TVs will carry a live feed of the service.

Horton's body will be escorted from Callaway-Smith-Cobb Funeral Home in Rush Springs to the Chickasha church by Chickasha fire trucks, a police trooper and Oklahoma Highway Patrol car. That procession leaves Rush Springs at 1 p.m.

Following the service, Horton will be buried at Westview Cemetery, just west of Rush Springs.

Rush Springs Superintendent David Divine has canceled school for Thursday to allow students and staff the opportunity to attend the funeral and heal. He said the day would be made up during a previously-scheduled snow day on April 28.

## Profuse profanity

Nearly three in four Americans swear they use it

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

This is a story about words we can't print in this story.

You probably hear these words often, and more than ever before. But even though we can't print them — we do have our standards — we can certainly ask: Are we living in an Age of Profanity?

Nearly three-quarters of Americans questioned last week — 74 percent — said they encounter profanity in public frequently or occasionally, according to an Associated Press-Ipsos poll. Two-thirds said they think people swear more than they did 20 years ago. And as for, well, the gold standard of foul words, a healthy 64 percent said they use the F-word — ranging from several times a day (8 percent) to a few times a year (15 percent).

Just ask Joe Cormack. Like any bartender, Cormack, of Fort Dodge, Iowa, hears a lot of talk. He's not really offended by bad language — heck, he uses it himself every day. But sometimes, a customer will unleash the F-word so many times, Cormack just has to jump in.

"Do you have any idea how many times you've just said that?" he reports saying from time to time. "I mean, if I take that out of your vocabulary, you've got nothin!"

And it's not just at the bar. Or on TV. (Or on the Senate floor, for that matter, where Vice President Dick Cheney used the F-word in a heated argument two years ago.)



At the community college where Cormack studies journalism, students will occasionally inject foul language into classroom discussions.

Irene Kramer, a grandmother in Scranton, Pa., gets her ears singed when passing by the high school near her home.

"What we hear, it's gross," says Kramer, 67. "I tell them, 'I have a dictionary and a Roget's Thesaurus, and I don't see any of those words in there!' I don't understand why these parents allow it."

For Kramer, a major culprit is television. "Do I have to be insulted right there in my own home?" she asks. "I'm not going to pay \$54 a month for cable and listen to that garbage." And yet she feels it's not a lost cause. "If people say 'Look, I don't want you talking that way,' if they demand it, it's going to have to change."

### 4 SECTIONS



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Rain likely  
Today's high: 71  
Tonight's low: 58  
More weather, 7A

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Dow  
- 95.57  
11,154.54  
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Crude  
+ 1.91  
\$66.08/bbl.

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