

# ANOTHER LONG DECEMBER?

The Cowboys say this year will be better than the last 12, during which their record in games after Nov. 30 is 19-39. 1D



# Star-Telegram

FORT WORTH

Tuesday

December 1, 2009

'Where The West Begins'

www.star-telegram.com

\$1.00

## SCHOOLS

### Arlington district weighs holiday for Cesar Chavez

A few months after being criticized for a lack of "cultural competency," the Arlington school district is considering honoring civil-rights and labor leader Cesar Chavez with a holiday. Trustee Gloria Peña said she believes it would make Arlington the first Texas school district to have such an observance. She said Chavez's life can inspire district students to overcome adversity, especially the 38 percent who are Hispanic.

"We're saying, 'You are important and we believe in you,'" Peña said. **Traci Shurley reports, 1B**

## AFGHANISTAN

### Obama makes troop order official

The White House said Monday that President Barack Obama had issued orders to send thousands of additional troops to Afghanistan, relaying his decision to military leaders late Sunday afternoon during a meeting in the Oval Office.

Obama spent Monday telephoning his foreign counterparts informing them of details that he will announce

in a nationally televised address to-night.

The White House declined to say how many additional U.S. troops Obama had approved, but senior administration officials have said that about 30,000 would be sent in phased deployments over the next 12 to 18 months, bringing the total U.S. presence in Afghanistan to around 100,000. **5A**

## On TV

Live coverage of the president's speech will air at 7 p.m. on most network and cable news stations.



Obama

## In Afghanistan

Afghans fear that an emphasis on exit strategy means the Taliban will simply wait until the Americans leave. **5A**

## BEYOND THE RAINBOW

New Tarrant County business provides end-of-life care for pets, comfort for owners



Dustin Womble, 16, holds the cremated remains of Copper, his cat. Beyond the Rainbow handled the funeral and cremation.

STAR-TELEGRAM/JOYCE MARSHALL

# A little help saying goodbye

Seven years ago, Terry Branson made the heart-wrenching decision to put down his elderly dachshund, Chelsea. Afterward, Branson, a licensed funeral director, took his dog back to his funeral home and put her body in a baby casket. The next day, he held a funeral for Chelsea at a pet cemetery.

"It gave me the opportunity to recognize that this relationship was very, very special to me and that I was paying tribute and honor to someone that I loved with all my heart," Branson said.

That day, Branson decided that when he got out of the human funeral business, he would provide a similar service for pets.

In October, Branson and his business partner, Kate Moore, opened Beyond the Rainbow, which offers complete end-of-life care for pets, including pet cremation, pet funerals and even pet hospice. **Melody McDonald reports, 10B**

"You don't just say, 'That is just a dog or a cat.' They are part of your life."

**Anita Westmoreland**, a minister who provides emotional support to families grieving the loss of a pet

## Online exclusive

Watch a video about Beyond the Rainbow, a Tarrant County business that provides end-of-life care for pets, at [star-telegram.com/videos](http://star-telegram.com/videos)

## FEDERAL BUDGET DEFICIT

### U.S. Congress challenged by soaring debt

Federal budget deficits are at record highs, seven federal agencies are operating on stopgap funding, and the national debt continues to soar. So Congress faces a more volatile issue than the healthcare overhaul or escalation in Afghanistan: how to pay for it all. Moderates and conservatives are calling for the creation of a commission to study and suggest ways to cut the deficit, and a new survey indicates that public support is strong. **4A**

## Healthcare analysis

The Congressional Budget Office says the Senate health bill could cut costs for many. **4A**

## COBRA | HEALTHCARE COVERAGE

### End of subsidy may add to ranks of the uninsured

Millions of laid-off American workers are facing the end of hefty federal subsidies for healthcare coverage, potentially forcing them into the ranks of the uninsured, a study being published today says.

An estimated 7 million jobless workers and their dependents are thought to have received the temporary subsidy, which pays 65 percent of their health insurance premiums under a law known as COBRA, the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act. **Work & Money, 1C**

## WEATHERFORD

### Ex-official accused in relatives' deaths

In January, Karen Kahler, wife of former Weatherford utilities director James Kraig Kahler, filed for divorce, citing abuse. In March, Kraig Kahler was accused of assaulting her, and in September he lost his job with the city of Columbia, Mo., because of "difficult family issues." On Monday, Kahler was in a Kansas jail facing a capital murder charge in the slayings of his wife and two daughters. **1B**

## WEATHER

### Thanks to El Niño, '09 had just 3 hurricanes 2A

## WASHINGTON | OFFICERS' SLAYINGS

### Suspect had told of plan to 'shoot some cops'

A man suspected of gunning down four uniformed police officers in a suburb of Tacoma, Wash., early Sunday told people before the shooting to "watch TV tomorrow; I'm going to shoot some cops," said Hunter George, a Pierce County spokesman. "Unfortunately, nobody reported that," George said. **4A**

## FORT WORTH VISIT

### U.S. transportation chief pitches idea of gas tax hike 1B



**YOUR LIFE**

## HIGH-TECH GIFTS AT LOW PRICES

A T-shirt, left, that's also a guitar, a telescoping device for cameras, a 16-socket wrench, an S-Pod (hint: It won't play songs) and even a video-game necktie are among the items available for the gadget lover in your life. And they're all under \$30. **1E**

## WEATHER | 6A

50 | 37

Partly cloudy early, with rain in the evening.



Classifieds	4-5C	Lottery	1B, 4B
Comics	4-5E	Markets	3C
Crosswords	2E, 6E	Movies	3E
Editorials	6A	Obituaries	7-9B
Horoscope	2E	Television	6E



TO SUBSCRIBE: 800-776-STAR, 800-776-7827  
Copyright © Fort Worth Star-Telegram  
104th year, Issue 220, 38 pages