



JAY
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New owner tips for the dog

An acquaintance who hoped for and received a dog as a holiday present called me the other evening, saying she didn't think she could take much more because, among other things, the animal was eating the woodwork as though it were strips of beef jerky.

Her thought was that because I had just raised a male springer spaniel from the age of six months to the age of two years without a visit from the cops, I could offer some useful advice.

I'll never forget the valuable tip I got from a dog owner of many years the night my first springer spaniel ate an electrical wire and washed it down with old rainwater standing in a rusty charcoal grill.

The tip was: marry a veterinarian.

First puppies that grow up to be too big to sit in a coffee cup can drive you crazy in a hurry, so I went to see what I could do to help the new dog owner.

I looked around and then had a conversation.

With the dog.

Sometimes the human is too set in his or her ways.

What follows is something all dogs should know about a first-time owner.

Dogs will be dogs: The first thing a pet needs to understand about a new owner is that he or she can't stand anything the dog does.

It's a little like the average adult romance: You're the one for me, if you'll do exactly as I say.

People want the dogs on television that are stretched smiling by a fireplace, the dogs that have been heavily sedated.

The average owner of a pet that showed up for Christmas is quick to overreact at the first sign of a material shredding, and start dialing around for somebody who lives on a farm.

People who don't know what to do with dogs think that shipping them to an acreage among the wolves is actually in the pet's best interest.

I've seen few so-called "country dogs" running with the wind while exuding good health.

I have seen "country dogs" tip-toeing down an isolated lane, ever alert for anything that could jump from the cockleburrs and coil around a leg or attach itself to an unprotected underbelly.

Wild dogs to angels: If after a puppy has done what a puppy does, like roll in it, and the adult goes right to the phone and starts dialing, stop rolling. It's somebody in the country being called, and you don't want any part of an old cold barn, no matter how it might look in a photograph.

Here's a tip that has served my dogs well.

When somebody stares hard at a dog, it should move immediately.

If somebody keeps staring, keep moving.

Once the staring stops, sit.

People new to dogs don't listen as well as dogs new to people.

After one year, the wild dogs turn into angels as the people remain pretty much the same.

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Tulsa's homicide rate down in '04

► Police cite efforts to stop gang violence as one reason for the decline from 69 slayings in 2003 to 50 in 2004.

By NICOLE MARSHALL
World Staff Writer

The numbers look better.

With 19 fewer homicides, Tulsa had a nearly 28 percent decrease in slayings in 2004 compared to the record-breaking 69 in 2003.

But the human toll — and the effort expended by officers who track down the killers — isn't as easily

measured.

"We had all of these glaring 'who-dunits,'" Sgt. Mike Huff said. "You can't really see what is happening just by looking at statistics. The effort that goes into the cases — even for the ones that appear to be simple — it's just enormous."

Several times last year, the apparent inhumanity of the killers who preyed

For more

For an interactive map of 2004 homicides, go to the Tulsa World Web site www.tulsaworld.com.

on Tulsans shocked both police and the entire city.

Many longtime detectives couldn't remember another time when gang members had targeted the family of their rivals. But Ples and Shelly Vann were gunned down in their home

Feb. 23, apparently unwitting victims of a gang war that was waged here for more than a year, according to police.

In a month's time, two bank robberies turned tragic, ending in the deaths of two bank employees. Security guard Kenneth Wayne Anderson was slain May 24 as he worked to defend the MidFirst Bank at 7050 S. Yale Ave. Gunmen who shot three people during an ambush at First Fidelity Bank, 2642 E. 21st St., claimed the

SEE DEATHS A-22

Residents call for intervention



JAMES GIBBARD / Tulsa World

Owen Park Neighborhood Association President Guy Wolcott (left) and board member Laurie Phillips are among residents who are concerned about the operation of a city-owned recreation center in their neighborhood.

Dispute is over church operation of a city rec center

By P.J. LASSEK
World Staff Writer

A group of residents in the Owen Park area are frustrated with the faith-based entity managing a city-owned recreation center in their neighborhood and want Mayor Bill LaFortune to seek bids for a new operator.

"This is the worst case of faith-based failure," said Guy Wolcott, president of the Owen Park Neighborhood Association.

But Acting Deputy Mayor Clay Bird said Sanctuary Evangelistic Church will be given the opportunity to continue its management under a modified contract that is more concise in addressing neighborhood expectations.

"We want to be fair to both the neighborhood and the church," Bird said. "I think the city is not without fault in getting the situation to this point."

While several members of Owen Park Neighborhood Association and Owen Park Council are dissatisfied with the church's performance, there are others who participate in the center's programs and say the church is trying to provide services to the community.

Center manager Dewayne Cooks said the residents who are upset have never accepted the church's involvement in the center. The upset residents say the center has

shut them out.

Sanctuary Evangelistic Church is one of five private entities that currently contract with the city to operate recreation centers closed mostly due to budget cuts. The church has operated Owen center since 2003.

Owen Park Neighborhood Association board member Laurie Phillips, an attorney, said that since the

SEE OWEN A-25

Developer to again pitch bank project

By BRIAN BARBER
World Staff Writer

Plans for a \$3 million Arvest Bank showcase branch in Tulsa are being resurrected but still include a secondary street access that was removed last year by the City Council due to neighborhood traffic concerns.

Developer John Bumgarner will bring his proposal for the southeast corner of 15th Street and Utica Avenue to the Tulsa Preservation Commission this week.

It is the first stop on the route back to the City Council since Bumgarner has expanded his plans to include the demolition of a third house in a historic preservation district to make room for parking.

The Yorktown Neighborhood Association, once again, is preparing for a fight.

"The plans are the same, so our arguments are the same," president Mark Radzinski said.

"We've never been against the bank. What we oppose is increased traffic through our neighborhood and the encroachment of commercial development into residential space."

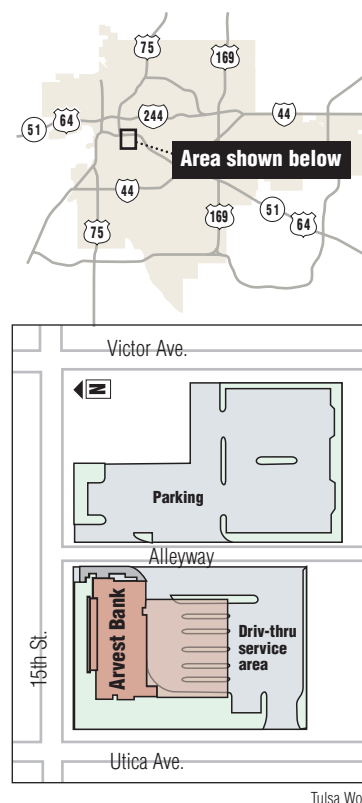
However, Peter Walter, a real estate broker who owns a house in the neighborhood that he is remodeling and about to sell, said he has circulated a petition among residents to show there is support for the project.

So far, he said, he has gotten 87 signatures by canvassing a small area of the neighborhood.

"I think the bank is the best thing that the residents could hope for," said Walter, adding that he is not affil-

SEE ARVEST A-23

Arvest Bank at 15th & Utica



Tulsa World

Juvenile office faces Rader audit

By OMER GILLHAM
World Staff Writer

The Office of Juvenile Affairs is expected to face a strenuous challenge this week defending itself against claims of institutional misconduct at the Lloyd E. Rader Center.

OJA Executive Director Richard DeLaughter will travel to Phoenix to face an appeals panel of American Correctional Association officials on Sunday.

Maryland-based ACA holds its winter business conference in Phoenix, said Robert Verdeyen, director of ACA standards and accreditation.

An ACA monitoring team last month released a report that detailed 11 violations of ACA standards at the

SEE AUDIT A-22