

## Rangers' stars reject deals

Palmeiro, right, nixes returning to Cubs; Gonzalez won't waive no-trade clause. 1D  
**Randy Galloway:** It's time for Alex Rodriguez and his contract to go. 1D



## CHILLING OUT AMONG THE LIFELIKE CELEBRITIES

Only at Grand Prairie's Palace of Wax can you spend quality time with both Saddam Hussein and Marilyn Monroe. INSIDE

# Star-Telegram

"Where The West Begins"

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### Today's News

#### NATIONAL

#### Poindexter is resigning from Pentagon job

John Poindexter, the official who oversaw a plan for the Pentagon to run a terrorism futures-trading market, is resigning under pressure, a senior defense official says.



POINDEXTER

Story on 7A

#### INTERNATIONAL

#### Vatican issues appeal against gay marriages

The Vatican calls laws that recognize same-sex couples "gravely immoral."

Story on 25A

#### IRAQ

#### U.S. approves reward to Iraqi informant

The tipster who revealed the whereabouts of Saddam Hussein's sons is to be paid \$30 million as the White House promised.

Story on 26A

#### BUSINESS

#### Economy shows growth during second quarter

The U.S. economy grew faster than expected in the spring, boosting hopes for stronger growth in the second half of the year.

Story on 1C

#### FORT WORTH & REGION

#### Two Texans die from West Nile virus illness

State officials also confirm that a Fort Worth man is the first human case in Tarrant County.

Story on 1B

#### Tomorrow

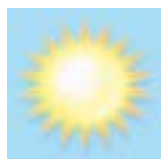
#### Paradise on the patio

Celebrate the heat of summer by bringing a touch of Bali to your back yard.

... in Home

#### WEATHER

#### AIR POLLUTION WATCH LEVEL ORANGE



**Today**  
Mostly sunny and hot.  
Winds south at 5 to 10 mph.  
High, 100. Low, 78.

See the NBC 5 Weather Team's two-day forecast on 22A.

News 2 Use 2A  
Classifieds F-G  
Comics 4-5E  
Crosswords 2E, 2G  
Editorials 8B  
Encore 20A  
Horoscope 2E  
Lottery numbers 2A  
Markets 4-9C  
Movies STAR TIME  
Obituaries 6-7B  
Television 8E

#### QUICK READ

To help you quickly navigate the Star-Telegram, look for summaries with our longer stories. Each summary begins with a topic label in white type on a black bar.



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## U.S. to rank fliers for terror risk

By BRYON OKADA  
 STAR-TELEGRAM STAFF WRITER

The government will begin testing a national computer system to cull would-be terrorists from everyday air travelers, officials announced Thursday.

The vast network will feed personal information on every passenger — name, birth date, phone number, home address — into government and pri-

**SECURITY** A new computer system, which could be online next year, will use passengers' personal information to try to identify security risks.

vate databases and score each passenger based on how likely he or she is to be a terrorist. Only those who score poorly will receive greater scrutiny.

Officials with the Transportation

Security Administration believe that the system — often mistakenly called a no-fly list — will reduce the number of people who must go through a time-consuming secondary screening when passing through airport security. Also, the system has been modified in response to concerns expressed by civil rights groups over privacy issues.

"The proposed program increases

passenger security and strengthens civil aviation in our country, while respecting the privacy of persons affected by the system," Nuala O'Connor Kelly, chief privacy officer for the Homeland Security Department, said in a news release.

Passengers' financial and medical records will not be used by the next-generation Computer Assisted

More on SECURITY on 18A

### TAX HOLIDAY | TODAY-SUNDAY

#### Among the tax-free items



MOST GLOVES



SHOES



NECKWEAR



CAPS AND HATS



BELTS WITH BUCKLES

## UNEVEN BREAK

Confusion over which items are exempt comes as annual holiday gets under way



STAR-TELEGRAM/RON JENKINS

Lorna Hughes checks inventory at SuperTarget in Fort Worth in preparation for the annual sales tax holiday starting today.

By GINGER D. RICHARDSON  
 STAR-TELEGRAM STAFF WRITER

Shoppers are expected to flock to Texas stores this weekend, looking for savings on clothing and many other items during the state's annual three-day sales tax holiday.

Consumer advocates say customers should do their homework to ensure that they're getting the best possible savings. That includes studying the rather bewildering list of tax-exempt items — a list that hasn't changed

■ A list of what is and what is not taxable this weekend. 23A

since the Legislature approved the holiday in 1999.

Shoppers can snap up cowboy boots tax-free, but they're out of luck for such back-to-school basics as backpacks, pens, pencils and notebook paper.

The holiday began at 12:01 a.m. today, and it runs through midnight Sunday. Most clothing and footwear

More on TAXES on 23A

#### Among the taxed items



GOLF GLOVES



BASEBALL CLEATS



JEWELRY



HELMETS



BELT BUCKLES

## N. Korea expected to agree to talks

**WEAPONS** Pyongyang apparently has abruptly agreed to multilateral talks on its nuclear program, but the U.S. negotiating stance remains uncertain.

By SONNI EFRON  
 LOS ANGELES TIMES

WASHINGTON — In a breakthrough for the Bush administration, North Korea has apparently dropped a key demand and agreed to a U.S. proposal for six-nation talks about its nuclear weapons program, State Department spokesman Richard Boucher said Thursday.

Boucher said the United States was "very encouraged by indications" from the Russian and Chinese governments "that North Korea is accepting our proposals for multilateral talks."

Such talks would bring North Korea, South Korea, Japan, China, Russia and the United States together for the first time to discuss whether the Communist regime in Pyongyang might be willing to dismantle its nuclear weapons

More on WEAPONS on 19A

## Families fear troops will be forgotten

**WAR** Fifty-one U.S. soldiers have died in hostile actions since May 1, when President Bush declared an end to "major combat operations," according to the Defense Department.

By ANTHONY SPANGLER  
 STAR-TELEGRAM STAFF WRITER

There were no signs, no parade, and no hoopla to welcome Lance Cpl. Jason Benoit home from his war service.

But the 19-year-old Marine from Arlington was plenty satisfied to hug his mother and younger brother at Dallas/Fort Worth Airport on Thursday after six months in Iraq.

"There was a time when I thought I was coming home in a body bag," said Benoit, as he recalled combat in April, when his Marine unit captured one of Saddam Hussein's presidential palaces in Baghdad. "I'm just glad to make it back in one piece."

More on WAR on 23A

## Flash mobbing fever hits the Metroplex

By AMAN BATHEJA  
 STAR-TELEGRAM STAFF WRITER

DALLAS — Flash mobbing debuted in the Metroplex Thursday night — fittingly, outside the trendy Angelika Film Center & Cafe.

At 7:43 p.m., about 40 people gathered, splitting into groups under two balloons, one red and one blue. The red mob began yelling "Marco!"

**INTERNET** The latest craze comes to town, and organizers promise more to come.

answered by the blue mob with "Polo!" After about a minute of call and response, the two balloons were released, and the mobbers — OK, pranksters — broke into applause.

Ten seconds later, the group, known

as TheMobProjectDFW, scattered like cockroaches when the lights come on.

All for the sake of silliness.

"It seems really weird and stupid, but I guess that was the point of it," said Alex Goldberg, who works at the Angelika.

Flash mobbing was first noticed in New York a couple of months ago,

More on INTERNET on 18A