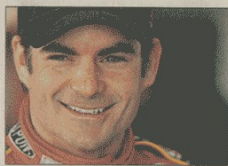


THE TAMPA TRIBUNE

and The Tampa Times



He Just Needs 1 More Win

Dale Earnhardt Sr. used to call him Wonder Boy. Now Jeff Gordon is about to match his total of 76 wins.

DETAILS, Sports, Page 1



Sifting Through The Ashes

A fire at Keel & Curley Winery in Plant City destroys a warehouse containing 27,000 bottles.

DETAILS, Metro, Page 1



Kick Out The Stress

Karate helps children work off pent-up energy while building self-confidence and teaches them to focus.

DETAILS, 4you

Injuries As Infant May Have Killed Girl

INVESTIGATORS REOPEN 1986 SHAKEN BABY CASE

By RYAN KOST, DAVID SOMMER and GEOFF FOX
The Tampa Tribune

NEW PORT RICHEY — It was nearly 20 years ago that 2-month-old Christina Ann Wells' young parents took the infant to a hospital, her tiny body bruised and broken.

She survived. The parents went to jail.

In the years that followed, Christina was given a new family, a new name — Christina Marie Welch — and a new life.

She never completely healed, physically or mentally.

Her death at age 19 in March — ruled a homicide in May — is raising more questions about the shaken baby syndrome she suffered almost two decades before.

Pasco County sheriff's officials announced Friday that the agency is investigating whether the injuries from years ago caused her recent death, after the autopsy in May determined the cause to be complications

See **HOMICIDE CASE**, Page 5 ▶
Double jeopardy isn't issue, lawyers say.

Enrollment Shakes Up School Plan

FEWER STUDENTS LOWERS BUILDING NEEDS, BUDGET

By MARILYN BROWN
The Tampa Tribune

TAMPA — The rampant enrollment growth that packs Hillsborough County classrooms and frustrates parents with shifting school assignments could be winding down.

If so, the good news for schools could serve as a sign that the state economy is cooling.

For the first time that officials could recall, Hillsborough County schools opened Thursday with fewer students enrolled than on opening day the previous year. To meet this year's projection of 195,000 students, an additional 28,245 students will have to show up.

If not? "We'll have to look very closely at where we have the students and make adjustments," Superintendent of Schools MaryEllen Ellis said Friday.

The district has been on target with student projections in recent years,

See **SCHOOL ENROLLMENT**, Page 5 ▶
Demand for teachers might drop, too.

Laying Down The Lawn

By BILLY TOWNSEND
The Tampa Tribune

BARTOW — With his county facing dire water supply problems, Polk County Commissioner Bob English wants to require Empire Zoysia grass as the turf planted in all new commercial and residential construction. His reasoning is simple. Empire Zoysia requires less water to maintain than more commonly used St. Augustine grasses, though just how much hasn't been scientifically established. English's idea is far from becoming law. He plans to unveil it to the Polk County Planning Commission on Aug. 28.

The bold proposal underscores the water difficulties Polk County expects to face in the coming years. English said he's pushing the grass rule in part to show the Southwest Florida Water Management District that Polk County is serious about conserving water. Water district officials say they are hesitant to back or condemn specific plants or grasses, though one praised English's creative thinking. There are no plans to force changes to existing lawns.

EMPIRE ZOYSIA

WHAT IT IS: A variety of Zoysia grass discovered in Brazil. It's being used in several large Florida developments, including Fish-Hawk Ranch near Lithia and Lakewood Ranch east of Bradenton.

COST: About 40 to 50 cents per square foot

EXPERTS SAY: Its root and stem system makes it generally more resistant to drought than St. Augustine grass. It requires less fertilizer and tolerates traffic well. If it goes brown, the root system allows it to recover. St. Augustine generally does not. It does require extensive watering at the time of installation to establish the root system. It does not tolerate shade well.

HEAVY WATER USE

Polk County uses the most water of any county in the Southwest Florida Water Management District.

County	Population	Water Use (Millions of gallons per day)
Polk	113 million	253
Hillsborough	541,840*	238
Public use		65
Other use†		115
		189
		123

* 1 percent of Polk County's population resides outside the water district.
† Agriculture, industrial-commercial, mining and domestic uses of water.

Tribune graphic; Sources: University of Florida's Bureau of Economic and Business Research, Southwest Florida Water Management District

ST. AUGUSTINE

WHAT IT IS: One of the most commonly used turf grasses in Florida and the Southeast. There are a number of varieties used in Florida. Palmetto St. Augustine is the one you might find in the outdoors section of your local home and garden store.

COST: Palmetto St. Augustine costs about 35 to 40 cents per square foot.

EXPERTS SAY: Drought and other tolerances vary among varieties. Generally, when St. Augustine's above-ground stems dry out, the grass dies on the spot and must be replaced. Twice-a-week irrigation of ½- to ¾-inch inch of water is the minimum needed to sustain it.

Sources: University of Florida's Institute of Food and Agricultural Scientists, Sod Solutions

Tribune photos by GREG FIGHT

Reports Offer Insight Into Decade Of Private Foster Care

DATA ON STATEWIDE EFFORT SHOW MIXED RESULTS

By SHERRI ACKERMAN
The Tampa Tribune

SARASOTA — Ten years into a Sarasota County experiment to take foster care from the state and put it in private hands, the community-based-care concept is an \$875 million industry.

Nearly all state child welfare services, including foster care, adoptions and child abuse investigations in Hillsborough County are managed by private agencies. But experience and money have not yielded consistent results.

A series of recent reports comparing Florida's progress shows the state struggles to keep children safe. Among the findings:

• More children were abused again within 12 months after leaving foster care, and there was an increase in the number of children re-entering the system.

• Once in foster care, more children experienced three or more moves to different homes in a year's time.

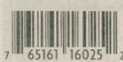
• The state and private agencies were lax in approving licenses for foster care providers and their family members, some of whom had criminal records.

See **CHILD WELFARE**, Page 4 ▶
Private agencies increased adoptions.



Tribune photo by JAY NOLAN

A teen uses a Transitional Living Program building in Sarasota County, where foster care went private a decade ago.



TODAY'S HIGH 91

TODAY'S LOW 76

Isolated severe thunderstorms are possible today, but mostly it will be just hot and sunny. No change is expected through Wednesday.

THE TAMPA TRIBUNE
A Media General Newspaper
200/202 S. Parker St., Tampa FL 33606-2395
Copyright © 2006, Media General Operations Inc., 112th Year, No. 186

COMICS At Home, Pages 19, 20
EDITORIALS This Section, Page 18
LOTTERY This Section, Page 2
MOVIE TIMES At Home, Page 6

OBITUARIES Metro, Page 9
PUZZLES This Section, Page 18
TELEVISION At Home, Pages 2, 19, 20 & Classified
WEATHER At Home, Page 8
Metro, Page 10