

run for \$50,000; downtown for \$50,000; and Branson Veterans Task Force for \$50,000.

Development for White River Theater Complex, Inc., doing business as The Cabins at Maple Creek.

BDN photo by T. Rob Brown

ing an apparent gas war. Both convenience stores are charging 97.9 cents per gallon for any type of unleaded gasoline. Recent gasoline prices have dropped into the 96.9 to 98.9 range throughout Branson and Hollister.

# Branson West supports highway access plan

BDN Staff Writer  
by Pat Payne

The Branson West Board of Aldermen has agreed to support an alternate plan for access to a new highway project to connect Missouri 160 at Reeds Spring Junction to Missouri 13 at Branson West.

Dan Tharp of Backyard Garden and Nursery asked the board to support a proposal to the Missouri Department of Transportation for changes in a proposed highway project from Reeds Spring Junction to the northern edge of Branson West. Tharp said the current highway design gives residents on the

north end of the city little access to the County Commission earlier this week and were given support for their proposal.

Following a Tuesday public hearing on the highway improvements, residents and businesses have 10 days to submit written comments about the highway project for consideration by state officials. The board approved a change in meeting dates from Feb. 10 to Feb. 3 in order to approve a resolution in support of the proposal presented by Tharp and Branson West resident Steve Biggs propose eliminating the three access points in favor of one major intersection. They said they presented the alternate plan to the Stone

board referred the issue to Ken Smith, the new Branson West city administrator. Smith will begin his employment in February.

Former Mayor Nick Tavaglione, representing International Real Properties, told the board all the required documents for approval have been submitted to the board. However, Alderman Mary Ayres said she had never seen subdivision plans for the development, including plans which show the layout of the development, lot sizes and setbacks. Alderman Kelby Ayres asked if a plat for the development had ever been filed with the county, and questioned other aspects of the development.

Tavaglione said all of the documents and information Mary Ayres asked about were completed before the city established regulations concerning those items. He said the plat for the development was filed years ago, and the board of aldermen had approved the development.

Kelby Ayres said the issue was the size of the lots at the development, but Tavaglione said it was not. He said none of the questions being asked had

(Continued on 2A)

# Magical Mansion names new magician

BDN Entertainment Editor  
by Jimmy Lancaster

There will be no name change for the Magical Mansion for 1998 but there will be a new magician - Melinda, the First Lady of Magic will headline the 3,000 seat theater. For the last several years she has been performing her shows in Las Vegas, as well as recently doing a television special for Walt Disney television that was aired on CBS. Now, Melinda Saxe is moving to Branson.

A press conference and tour operator reception was held at the Magical Mansion Tuesday.

Theater president, Mike Bick-

nell said, "We will continue being the Magical Mansion with a magical show."

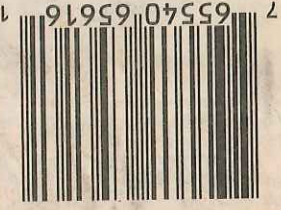
"Melinda will still be traveling on the road in the off season promoting the show," Bicknell said. "Not only will it be good for us, but it will be good for Branson. We have every intention, in our planning, in having Melinda here for a long time."

"We have the option to stay here longer in Branson if things go well," Melinda said.

Shows will start on April 15 with two shows a day and there will be Christmas shows, too.

(Continued on 2A)

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## Stock Market

**DOW** +102.14  
**JONES** +12.14  
**S&P** 500 +12.11  
**969.06**

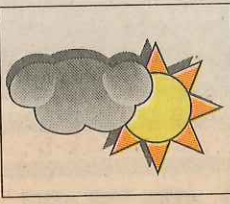
Blue-chip stocks rallied Tuesday and the broad market halted a four-session slump after popular names such as Disney, Ford and Merck posted robust profit reports.

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## Area Weather

**TODAY'S OUTLOOK:** Mostly sunny and mild, high around 60. Tonight, partly cloudy with a low in the middle 30s.



**HIGHS** 60S  
**LOWS** 30S

## Lake Levels

**701.0 - TANAYCOMO**  
702.1; 1.1 feet above full pool level; up 1.3.  
**654.0 - BULL SHOALS**  
652.6; 1.4 feet below full pool level; up 0.2.  
**915.0 - TABLE ROCK**  
914.6; 0.4 foot below full pool level; down 0.1.

# Budget approved for Taney County

by Linda Morgan  
BDN Staff Writer

Taney County's 1998 budget at \$38 million addresses economic development, courthouse building needs, sewer construction and professional services as the county prepares for the future.

The county commission has responded to the growth within the county with a vision toward the future and a responsive 1998 budget, said county clerk and budget officer Ron Houseman.

The 1998 budget is very similar to the \$35 million 1997 budget in the amount of appropriations, Houseman said.

"The county commission has approved and appropriated approximately \$38 million for expenditures in 1998. Approximately \$18 million will come from grants for the construction of sewers within the county. That means our general county government, road and bridge budgets and others total approximately \$20

(Continued on 2A)