

# Hansford County Centennial Series.....

## 50's The Decade Of The Oil Boom

By Jean Ann Behney

**Editor's Note:** This is the seventh article in our special Centennial Series on Hansford County history. It deals from the period of roughly 1950 - 1960. We remind our readers that these later decades of history provide such a wealth of historical information that our reporter tries to limit her story to two or three main events of major significance plus some fun details about life during that period. As has been true all along, we cordially invite all readers to contribute their own memories and memorabilia to this series by telephoning the newspaper office at 659-3434.

Today's first part of the two-part article on the 50's concerns the oil and gas industry's start and the advent of irrigation in the county. Next week's second part will cover social and family events from this era.

An article which appeared in the *Amarillo Sunday News-Globe* in December of 1964 describes the Hansford County of the 40's in the following words: "When Hansford County's rich water, oil and gas reserves remained untapped, towns such as Spearman remained

quiet county seat," according to this article, to a "thriving trade center modern in every respect" due largely to the development of the oil and gas industry in the 1950's, and other towns in the county were not far behind it.

As readers will recall, the Panhandle oil boom was first evident at Borger in 1926. The Great Depression and the Dirty Thirties slowed the momentum of oil and gas exploration, but test wells were being sunk in Hansford County prior to the 50's, and the **Spearman Reporter** excitedly documented each site and the activity there. It wasn't until 1952 and the arrival of Baker and Taylor Drilling Company, however, that oil and gas exploration news made

the headlines on a weekly basis.

After drilling wells in fields northeast of Pampa in late 1951, Baker and Taylor rigs were moved up to Gruver and Spearman. The first well drilled here was a gas well on the Collier Ranch in 1952. "We leased an old building from Ralph Blodgett for a shop and our present property from the railroad for a pipe yard," recalls present-day company vice president Roy Bulls. "By 1954 we had seven to eight rigs running in the Panhandle, with a crew of three drillers and 12 roughnecks on each rig."

The "boom" years in the industry for this county, Roy asserts, were from 1952 until 1960. Roy, who has been with Baker and Taylor for over 35 years and who moved permanently to Spearman in 1964, saw the drilling company grow from a two-man operation with one rig to a business which at one time employed well over 250 people in Hansford County alone.

The first oil well Baker and Taylor drilled in Hansford county was the Discovery well on the Steele Ranch in 1956. "This well is still producing today," Roy says with understandable pride. (The Steele Ranch and this well will soon exist no more: they are located at Palo Duro dam site where there will one day be a lake.)

Hansford County attorney John Hutchison recently explained how the gas-oil explorations were financed during the county's boom. "In Texas, gas, oil and minerals are considered part of the land," he said. "So the landowner also owns the 'hydrocarbons' below the ground." He went on to explain that drilled expenses were and are prohibitive for private landowners, so the minerals are "leased" to companies, leaving the farmer or rancher free to continue using his acreage for grazing or planting.

"Back in the early 50's when this industry got going, landmen would come around to take leases.

Sometimes these men worked for a company and other times they were independents," John says. The slang term for these men, he adds with a grin, was "lease hounds." The landmen generally paid the landowner a bonus of \$25 per acre as an up-front fee for the landowner's signature on the lease, and then the owner would get a one-eighth royalty of the gross production (before expenses) of the well. Simply put, if a well produced eight barrels of oil a day, the landowner got one barrel credited to his account. These mineral leases had terms of between five and ten years.

The Texas Railroad Commission made a ruling that there could only be one gas well per section, or 640 acres (one square mile) of land. This ruling was made for conservation purposes and still applies to most properties in this county.

A cursory glance at section-by-section maps of Hansford County denoting gas and oil wells tells more compellingly than words



Matt Archer of Spearman is shown in the winners circle at the recent Texas State 4-H Horse Show. Matt placed 3rd in pole bending and 4th in the stake race.

The Hansford

# Plainsman

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YOUR HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER

Sunday, August 6, 1989

how rapidly the industry grew here. A 1957 map provided by Dorothy Hart Hudson of Gruver reveals areas of exploration concentration, but it is not difficult to locate sections with no wells. Maps dating from only a few years later are covered with the symbols for wells and virtually every section of land has one.

The Hansford County boom was considered to be an "orderly

boom": it took place in and around already-established towns without any outbreaks of lawlessness, as opposed to the infamous overnight Borger boom. John Hutchison, who was a child during Hansford County's booming 50's, theorizes that the orderliness accompanying the rapid population growth in this area was due in part to the fact that the wealth acquired through gas and oil was rather evenly distributed. "No one family or group of families were becoming rich all at once, because the land in this county was already well divided up prior to the boom. Everybody's bread got buttered."

A comparison of Hutchinson County land sections to Hansford County's makes this clear. In Hutchinson County, the Wittenburg family owned nearly all the sections along the Canadian river and a current map of their well sites shows a huge swath cutting through, along the river, literally peppered with black dots and circles denoting wells, with the landowner name "Whittenburg" written in each square. In Hansford County, sections show many, many different owners.

John adds that most of the wealth from oil and gas royalties in Hansford county stayed in the county. "These landowners were often pioneer settlers and they didn't strike oil and then move to Amarillo or some other big town and start building mansions."

The single most profound effect the boom had on Hansford County was a doubled population, according to Roy Bulls. That population caused an immediate building boom. "Most of the houses south of seventh street were built after the mid-fifties," Roy comments.

Richard Holton, the founder of H&H Water Wells (which will be discussed later in this article) reveals that a roughneck made between \$4 and \$4.50 per hour in the 50's, so young families could afford to build nice homes. Salaried employees of oil and gas related businesses in the county were good for local businesses, too. Forty new businesses opened in Hansford County between 1961 and 1964 and building permits soared past the one million dollar mark every year after 1960 for several years.

By far the most significant economic factor associated with the oil and gas boom, however,

### Local Foundation Plans Community Center

A meeting of the recently organized Spearhead Foundation was held Thursday evening at the Chamber of Commerce offices. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the plans for the Foundation's first big project, the Spearman Community Center.

Don Townsen called the meeting a "brainstorming" session. Items discussed were articles of incorporation, establishing a board of directors, and applying for a tax exemption for the Foundation so that donations to the project will be tax deductible.

Other items considered were some preliminary drawings of the proposed building which would be a multipurpose building containing a large area for both athletic events and large group meetings and smaller meeting rooms and offices. Tentative estimates range between \$600,000 and \$650,000. Approximately \$135,000 has been contributed. Ralph Blodgett has indicated his willingness to donate the land at the corner of 11th and Cotter Street as the site.

Committees were formed to continue the study. Areas assigned to the committees were sources of grants, design and function of the center, administration, public relations, maintenance and operation of the building and fund raising.

Don Townsen remarked, "This is the beginning of a project to enhance the community, but if we get down the line and can't get the money, or it becomes unfeasible, we will drop it, and the money goes back to the people who donated it--with interest."

Don also invited any interested community people to call Cora Queener at the Chamber of Commerce office if you would like to serve on the planning committees. The Chamber number is 659-5555.

### Under Cover Operation Results In 15 Arrests

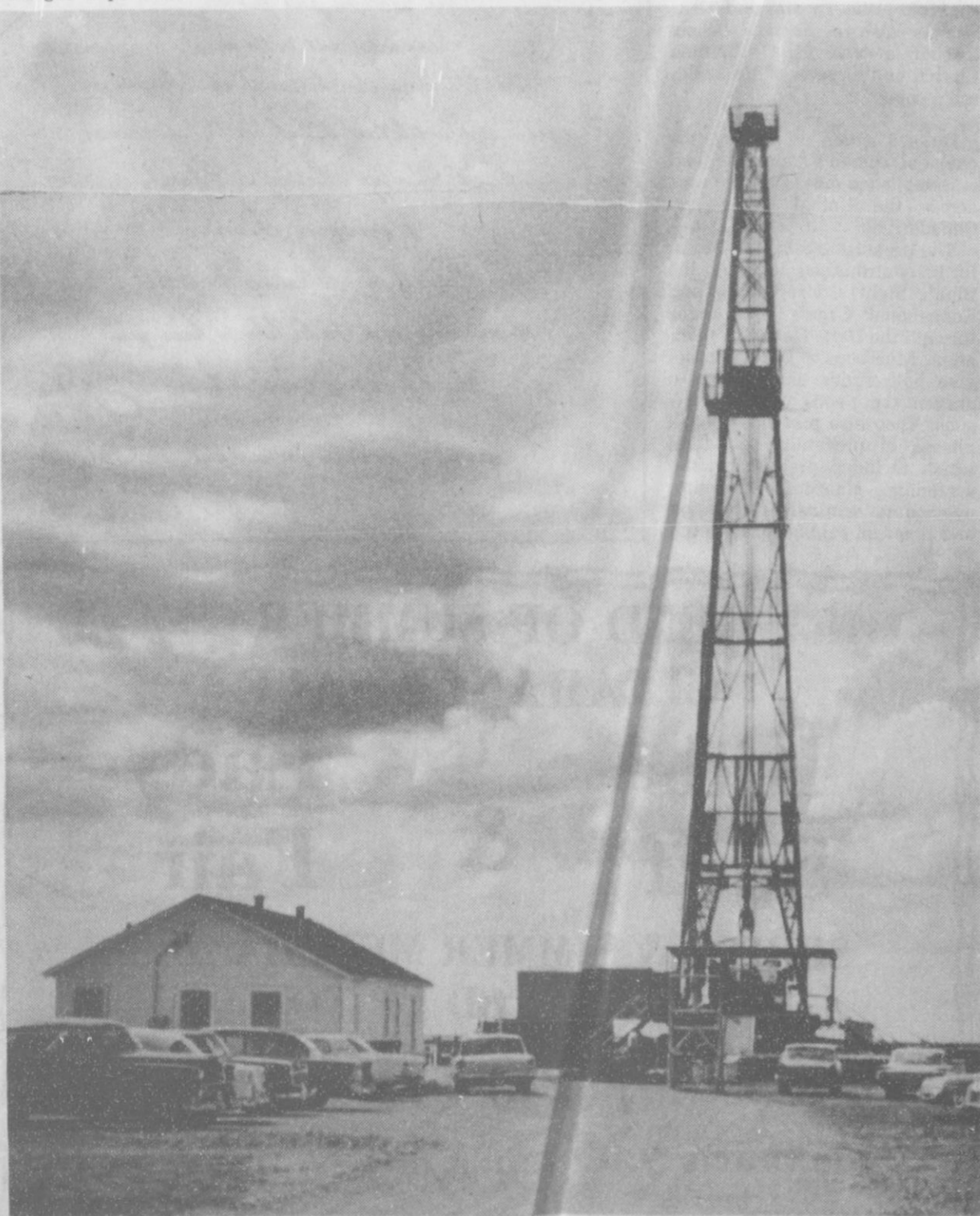
The Hansford County Sheriff's office, along with representatives from the Alcoholic Beverage Commission out of Amarillo and Borger, Moore County officers, and Spearman and Gruver police, completed a 4 months undercover operation when they made 15 arrests for suspected drug dealing. Warrants were issued for an additional 8 more.

According to Gary Evans of the Sheriff's office, 13 of the arrests were felonies relating to selling a controlled substance. These charges involved selling small amounts of cocaine, methamphetamine or marijuana. Two of the arrests were on a lesser charge of misdemeanor for delivery of less than 1/4 ounce of marijuana.

Bonds for the group arrested on Wednesday ranged from \$5,000 for the felony charges to \$2,000 for the misdemeanor. All of the 15 arrested were out on bond.

If convicted, the felony charges could bring a maximum 20 year imprisonment and a \$10,000 fine. A third-degree felony charge could result in a maximum of 10 year prison term and \$5,000 fine. The misdemeanor charges could bring a maximum of \$2,000 fine and a year in jail.

The arrests were brought about through the efforts of an undercover agent who was hired to investigate the drug activity in the county. The agent, a veteran of 17 years established himself in the community and began his investigation approximately 4 months ago. Chief Deputy Evans reported that they decided to make the preliminary arrests at this time because "we were getting to the point where we weren't getting any new names."



Baker and Taylor set up this oil drilling rig on a dry hot spot west of town. It was used in the late 50's to train "Rough Necks" to work on the drilling rigs.

## Among the Neighbors

by Helen Fisher

That tough kid from around Morse, 81 year old Erlis Pittman, is doing his riding from a wheel chair rather than horseback since last Saturday.

Erlis, with his sons Bill and Frank, together with other cowboys were branding cattle when an annoyed steer kicked Erlis with such force that a bone was broken in his hip joint.

He was taken to St. Anthony's hospital where surgery was performed on Sunday. He is recuperating much faster than expected, but will be hospitalized for several days. Ethel (the Mrs.) is staying in Amarillo as are other family members.

To prevent the birthday of T.C. Kitchens from slipping by unnoticed, their daughter Sandra and Bert Williamson, with Matt and Christie, came over from Broken Arrow. Barbara Jacques, with Jason and Jill, came over from Tahoka. All stayed about four days, so he was well aware that he had a birthday.

Juanita Pierce is sharing her company, her sister Rosie Steele, with her mother and sister at Gage, Oklahoma.

Rosie lives at Vernonia, Oregon, and visited with the Pierces a few days and will return for a later visit.

Eloise and Clarence Renner are back at home, sharing their memories of a most pleasant two weeks in Alaska.

They flew to Vancouver, then took a cruise, by the Holland-American line, to Juneau. Then inland to Fairbanks and Anchorage by bus, train and small boat - Eloise says every means except dog sled.

There were many places of interest and one of the highlights for the Renners was the Denali National Park, near Mount McKinley - the refuge of many wild animals.

The weather was cool and there was considerable rain. An oddity for them was the daylight - lasting the 24 hours except for 2 1/2 hours.

Owen and Ollie Pendergraft returned from two weeks at Beuna Vista, Colorado, just in time to attend the 50th wedding anniversary reception for their long time friends, the Phil Jenkins, arriving an hour before.

The Pendergrafts joined eight other friends in the mountains for sight-seeing, fishing and fellowship.

The weather was very pleasant as there had been recent rains, but there was evidence of the long dry spell just ended.

Last weekend Patti Sheppard attended the two day reunion of the Taylor family at Robert Lee, Texas. Other local family members were unable to attend since they were involved in the swim meet at Dodge City.

Patti's daughter, Debbie and Mike Cook, with Rance and Chase, came over from Coleman, as did Rory and Janet Sheppard of

Amarillo. A very sad event on Sunday was the notification of the passing of Patti's sister, Ruth Ann Goode of Weimar, Texas. She had planned to attend the reunion, but succumbed to a long illness during the afternoon.

Walter Woolley and his sons, Joey and Gary, returned from a once-in-a-lifetime fishing trip recently.

They flew to Minneapolis, then to International Falls. They caught a flight to Fort Francis, Ontario - then by small plane to Northern Lights Fishing Camp.

The accommodations were comfortable, though rustic, and for three days their catch of northern pike, walleye and bass fishing was excellent. They brought home the evidence to prove it.

Lois and Woodrow Gibner are pleased that after a long siege of poor health, they can enjoy again a few days in the mountains.

They drove to Angel Fire for a couple of days and also spent some time at Taos.

The six daughters of Rev. and Mrs. Wesley Daniels once again held their sisters slumber party - the first in three years.

Lynn Woolley and Bekee Baker drove to Plainview on Friday and on Saturday were joined at their parents home by the other four. They were Debbie Bryant, Dallas; Buzz (Dana) Daniels, Lubbock; Kim Messamore, Sudan, and Thel Lemons, recently of Yokato, Japan.

They spent a busy Saturday and Saturday night with the Daniels. The girls laid the groundwork for a retirement reception planned for next June when their father retires.

After church on Sunday, the girls drove to Lubbock for a talk fest until Monday morning - when all went their separate ways.

Alice Lackey is convinced that in her life surprises will never cease. Last Sunday her daughter, Donna Sheets, coaxed her into going to Amarillo to the home of Donna's daughter, Sue and Dr. Randy Felders. The pretext was they would attend a little dinner for the doctor, who is just opening his practice.

When they arrived, they found the house elaborately decorated for her (Alice's) 85th birthday. Donna's other daughters, Sharon Woodward and Karen and Wayne Woodward were there also. Everything was perfect, including homemade ice cream and a beautifully decorated birthday cake. Many Happy returns, Alice!

Ruth Bryan and Beth Phelps have enjoyed having their sister, Mary Hazlewood visit them for four days last week. Her son, Travis, and two seven year old sons and a four year old daughter, were guests also. All live in Ft. Worth. At Ruth's rural home, the children were completely entertained by watching the prairie dogs, catching frogs and other



John and Sammie Bishop

## Bishops Celebrate "60"

In 1929, John Bishop and Sammie Jones were married in Canyon, Texas. Soon after their marriage, they moved to Spearman where John began working for the Spearman Hardware. A few years later, they bought the business and operated it for forty years before retiring in 1969.

On Sunday, August 13, the Bishops will be celebrating their 60th wedding anniversary with a celebration at the Methodist Church between the hours of 2 to 4 p.m. They are inviting their friends and family to come by and visit and share memories with them.

The Bishops have been active activities not possible in the city. The previous week, James Bryan, Ruth's son, from Lubbock, had spent the week with her.

Family members advise that Leon Schroeder was able to come home Thursday and is feeling well enough for company.

He underwent surgery on Tuesday, at High Plains Baptist, for the removal of a malignancy of the tongue. His surgeons assure him that the surgery was successful and do not anticipate any further treatments.

## Boys And Girls Are Ready To Rodeo

Boys and girls of all ages are preparing for exciting Old West action and the 45th Annual Cal Farley's Boys Ranch Rodeo.

More than 10,000 people are expected to attend the two-day event Labor Day weekend. Rodeo action will begin at 2:30 p.m. Sept. 3 and 4. Approximately 200 of the Ranch's boys will ride calves, steers, bulls and bareback broncs in competition for belt buckles and the titles of Junior and Senior All-Around Cowboys.

Specialty acts will include the antics of the rodeo clowns, a calf scramble and little boys riding stick horses and sheep. The rodeo is for all of the boys and those who are not contestants will sell barbecue beef plates and other refreshments or will play in the band and assist guests.

For the second year, the young cowgirls from Girlstown, U.S.A. will participate in several rodeo events. Along with a challenging flag race, the girls will also compete in goat dressing, a new event.

Among the spectators will be many of Boys Ranch's graduates who are expected to return for their annual reunion. Since Boys Ranch was founded more than 4000 boys have called the Ranch home and many will attend the activities because of the 50th Anniversary year.

Reserved bleacher seat tickets are on sale at the Boys Ranch administrative offices at 600 West 11th St. in Amarillo and can be obtained by calling (806) 372-2341.

### THANK YOU

We would like to thank all our friends for the moral support, cards, letters, phone calls, flowers and visits.

We also want to thank The First Baptist Church, The First Christian Church and the Union Church, and their pastors, Russ Gibbs, Mike Wolf, and Bill Miller for their prayers.

Delbert and Ivan Allen, S40-2tp

members of the community since they moved here. They have been members of the Methodist church for 60 years. Sammie has been a member of the garden club in Spearman since 1932. John is now an honorary member of the Lion's Club, after being in the organization for 50 years. In 1987, John and Sammie were the Parade Marshalls for the Hansford Round-Up Parade.

Prior to their marriage, John graduated from Higgins High School and Sammie graduated from Canyon High School. Sammie is also a graduate of West Texas State University with a degree in education.

## Boxwell Appointed

## Alumnae Chairman

Candy Boxwell of Spearman has been appointed a Province Alumnae Chairman for the Delta Gamma Fraternity.

Boxwell will work closely with and oversee the activities of alumnae groups in Texas and Oklahoma.

A graduate of Texas Christian University, she attended the 1972 Delta Gamma Convention in Los Angeles and the 1986 Delta Gamma Convention in Dallas.

Boxwell is active in variety of community activities including the Spearman Meals on Wheels, the Amarillo Little Theatre and TPA. She is also a Sunday School teacher at the First Christian Church and director of the children's choir.

Delta Gamma is among the oldest of women's fraternities and is established on 125 campuses across the United States and Canada.

The organization is well-known for its contributions to Aid to the Blind, Sight Conservation, and Educational Grants and Loans through the Delta Gamma Foundation. Members of Delta Gamma give both funds and service to answer the needs of blind persons. They also participate in all phases of preventin blindness which includes preschool vision screening, glaucoma screening, eye safety seminars, education, and financial support of research.

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## Hilton To Speak

## At Flame Fellowship

Mrs. Johnnie Hilton of Amarillo will be the main speaker at the Top-O-Texas Flame Fellowship meeting on August 14th, 7 p.m. at the Home Demonstration building 209 Bernice.

Mrs. Hilton is a mother and grandmother, pastor, teacher and evangelist. She has been a key speaker at ladies retreats and conferences. She also started the first Flame chapter in the Texas Panhandle and established a Flame ministry in Nigeria.

## Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor,  
 I would like to applaud our local sheriff and police departments for their actions on August 2, 1989. I and everyone I have talked to about the drug investigation hope that their efforts are not wasted on an indifferent judicial system.  
 Sincerely,  
 Tindle Ramon

**THANK YOU**  
 I want to thank everyone for their prayers, cards, flowers and visits. I would like to write each one in person, but can't do that as yet. God Bless each!  
 My Love to All,  
 Maudine Patterson

**BABY SHOWER**  
 Honoring  
 Joann Schneider  
 August 15, 1989  
 7:30 - 9:00 p.m.  
 First State Bank  
 Come and Go  
 Given by Hostesses

*John and Sammie Bishop*  
 would like to have you,  
 our relatives and friends,  
 come to visit with us  
 on Sunday, the thirteenth of August  
 from two until four o'clock in the afternoon  
 First United Methodist Church  
 Spearman, Texas  
 We will be celebrating 60 years  
 of marriage and would like to have you  
 share some memories with us.  
 Bring a memory for our gift.  
 1929 1989



MARANDA LOOMIS, an 1989 graduate of Spearman High school is shown receiving a scholarship check for \$500.00 which was presented Thursday by Cindy Avila of the Servitors organization. Maranda plans to attend Texas Tech. She is the daughter of Duane and Kay Loomis.

**END OF SUMMER CLEARANCE SALE**  
**Kids' Stuff** AT **Lady Fair**  
**&**  
**SPRING & SUMMER MERCHANDISE REDUCED UP TO 70% OFF**  
 Sale Starts 9:00 am. Monday, August 7th  
 719 West 7th  
 Spearman, Texas

# Car Club Formed Members Attend Shows

Recently there seems to be a lot of interest in cars around town. April 22nd, the nice folks out at Gillaspie's Chevrolet put on a Show & Shine. This turned out to be a day of fun for young and old alike.

Soon after that a car club was formed right here in Spearman. It is made up of a group of people who share a common interest in cars, whether it be restoring an old car bought out of a field somewhere, customizing one that they already had and giving it a new look, building model cars, or people who don't have a show car, but just plain "like 'em." Anyone who may be interested in joining our group should feel free to contact Sam Abston at 659-3019, or Joey Wooley at 659-3550.

The next meeting is August 7 at 7:30 p.m. at Joey Wooley's shop at 222 Hazelwood, stop by and join us if you like, we'd be happy to have you.

Car Shows are the highlight of many car enthusiast's life. It's the time you shine her up, drive her or haul her to the show, drag out the old lawn chairs, and sit back and get ready for a day or two of non-stop car talk. This is the time you get to do a little bragging on your hard work that you've put into your car and see what others have done with their cars. And nobody appreciates a rebuilt car more than someone who has rebuilt one themselves.

Most shows are a pretty good all-around time for the whole family. Our club members here in Spearman have seen their share of car shows and here is a list of all that we could remember...I hope that I haven't overlooked anyone... if I have please contact me and I'll be sure it gets in the newsletter or something.

### Amarillo, Texas Feb. 25-26, 1989

Members attending were: Bruce Stinson, with his Delorian, which won a People's Choice Award. Sam Abston, with his '23 T-Bucket. Joey Wooley with his '85 Suburban-Supercab Conversion, which won a People's Choice Award.

### Borger, Texas April 1-2, 1989

Members attending were: Sam Abston with his T-Bucket in Roadster, which took second place. Joe Wooley, with his Suburban-Supercab Conversion, which took third place in 4 x 4. Joe Close also displayed his '51 Ford Coupe at this one.

### Perryton, Texas April 15-16, 1989

Members attending were Sam Abston, with his T-Bucket, which took 1st place in Roadster. Bruce Stinson, with his Delorian, which got 2nd place in Special Interest. Joey Wooley, with his Suburban-Supercab, which got him 1st place in 4 x 4. Joe Close showed his '51 Ford Coupe at this one. Sam Abston also received 3rd Place in the Model Cars. And Brady Wooley, son of Joey and Lynn Wooley got 2nd Place with his model car. Rick O'Quinn, who is a member of both Perryton's Club and Spearman's Club, was a host at this one.

### Hansford Show & Shine April 22, 1989

This was our hometown showing. Everyone enjoyed the day. There were over 100 cars attending, including Jack Lamb with the chassis to his 1967 El Camino on display. At the time the rest of his car was not completed. Other members showing their vehicles were: Bruce Stinson's Delorian, Sam Abston's T-Bucket, Joey Wooley's Suburban-Supercab Conversion, Joe Close's Ford Coupe, and Rick O'Quinn's '65 El

Camino. There were many other entrants and vehicles present and we would like to thank each and everyone of them for helping to make this a success.

### Elk City, Oklahoma May 20-21, 1989

Spearman was well represented at this show. Everyone from Spearman showing their vehicles brought back trophies. Members attending were: Jack Lamb with his '67 El Camino which got 1st place in Street Machine Wild. Bruce Stinson's Delorian got him 1st Place in Sportcar Class. Joey Wooley's Suburban-Supercab Conversion got him 3rd Place in '49 & Above Commercial. Sam Abston's T-Bucket took 1st Place in Pre '49 Pickups. Rick O'Quinn's '65 El Camino won 2nd Place in Street Machine Mild. Joey Wooley received the "Best Interior" Trophy, for having the best interior of the show. The Hard Luck Trophy went to Jack Lamb for all the troubles he had on the trip to the show. Ask him about it sometime! Sam Abston won 3rd Place for his model car. And little Brady Wooley swept up with 1st and 3rd Place for his models.

### Woodward, Oklahoma May 27-28, 1989

Members attending were: Bruce Stinson and his Delorian, Joey Wooley and his Suburban-Supercab Conversion, Rick O'Quinn with his '65 El Camino, and Jack Lamb with his '67 El Camino, which won 2nd Place in Commercial '49 & Above.

### Pueblo, Colorado June 16, 17, 18 1989

This show was huge with over 1000 cars all pre 1948. Representing Spearman, Sam Abston took his 1923 T-Bucket and Don Gibson took his 1948 Pontiac Hearse.

### Great Bend, Kansas June 10-11, 1989

Spearman was represented by Jack Lamb and his '67 El Camino. He brought back the trophy for "Top Ten" Post '48. There were 350+ cars at this one.

### Belleville, Kansas June 18, 1989

Again representing Spearman was Jack Lamb and his '67 El Camino. This time he came back with the "Host Car Club's Choice" Trophy. He also received the "Longest Distance" traveled to the show. There were 486 cars at this one.

### Salina, Kansas June 25, 1989

Jack Lamb and his '67 El Camino, represented us well again. Bringing back the award for one of the "Top Five" in Trucks & Special Interest Class-All Years.

### Wichita, Kansas July 2, 1989

Representing us were Bruce Stinson and his Delorian, and Jack Lamb with his '67 El Camino. Jack received "Long Distance" award for this show beating out Bruce by just a few miles.

### Moore, Oklahoma July 4, 1989

Jack Lamb's '67 El Camino put us on the map again, bringing home 1st Place in Class. He also received the "Best Paint" Trophy for having the best paint job in the whole show. He's getting a little razzing about it because that trophy has been a goal for him, and he fell asleep in his lawn chair at the show and slept through the trophy presentation! Future shows that our members plan to go to are as follows:

### SWSR NATIONALS Oklahoma City, Oklahoma August 11-13, 1989

Pre 1948 only. Sam Abston and Don Gibson both plan to attend.

### Open Air Heart-of-America Nationals Newton, Kansas August 25-27, 1989

Jack Lamb plans to attend. There will be a JAN & DEAN concert at this one.

## Waterfield Reports

### On Called Session

Well, The Called Session is over, and we still have the same crisis that we had when we came down in January. This is a sad state of affairs. We (the legislature) have failed to pass a good Workman's Comp bill. I emphasize the word good because had the House listened to the Senate, we would have passed a bad bill, even worse than what we have now - if possible to do that. I believe we had a good H.B. 1, but the Senate who is controlled by the trial lawyers fought to keep the same game that is making them money now.

Significant concessions were made in order to help reach an agreement for the reform bill. These include: improved benefits and expedited delivery of those benefits to injured workers; increased emphasis on safety; and retention of jury trials, even though jury trials are not a legitimate issue in a no-fault workers comp system. Certain members of the Senate, who are trial lawyers engaged in workers comp practices, stubbornly refused to agree with the House that disputes should be resolved by a strong administrative system.

Both the working people of Texas and those who provide jobs are being held hostage by the trial lawyers and a handful of supporters in the Texas Senate. The majority of the Senate could not accept a system which controlled legal costs. It just came down to the fact that the trial lawyers wanted no change in the existing law. So, we will be back in session in October or November to work on this again. This must be resolved for the good of the people and our state's future.

Other issues that were passed and we felt good about included the merger bill between West Texas State University and A&M. This merger is made complete by both Board of regents and the Coordinating Board. The Panhandle Coalition worked together to pass this bill. The Governor helped as did the chairman of the calendars committee, Stan Schlueter.

I also passed a bill expanding the power of the Animal Health Commission to include authority to quarantine and regulate exotic fowl. Currently, foreign ostriches have created a tick problem by transferring into the country infested ticks which are harmful and dangerous to wildlife and domestic livestock.

In closing, I wish I could give you a more positive report, but we will continue to work at passing a good Workman's Comp bill. I do want to thank each newspaper for running these articles over the past six months. If anyone has questions or comments, please call my office on our new WATT line number, 1-800-446-2991.

## Country Magazine Launches Search For "Character"

Country magazine has launched a search for "America's No. 1 Country Character", and has contacted Plainsman to request our staff's assistance in this national search.

Our staff is turning this assignment over to you, our readers. We're asking your help in nominating someone from this area for the title.

The national winner will receive a 30-day unlimited ticket on Greyhound or Amtrak, allowing him or her to travel anywhere in the U.S. for a full month to see rural America up close!

And the person who nominated that winner will receive the same, allowing unlimited free travel by train or bus throughout the U.S. for 30 days! Or, the winner or nominator can accept \$1,000 in cash instead.

A quick read-through of Country's description of the kind of "character" it's looking for in this search leads our staff to believe we may have a few viable candidates right here in our community.

"Every rural community has at least one 'real character' who can be counted on to brighten a dull day," says Roy Reiman, publisher of Country.

"He or she is the one who always comes up with a colorful remark, finds humor in what could be a depressing situation, is perhaps a practical joker, or is someone who simply marches to a little different drummer to the delight of others in the area."

Sound like someone you know? Then nominate that colorful person it may give him or her national exposure by being featured in Country magazine, which has attracted over 1 million subscribers in just 2 years. And both you and the winner could be traveling around the country by train or bus for a full month later this year!

To nominate one of the locals, Country simply requests some details on why you feel this person is "America's No. 1 Country Character", and asks you to enclose a photo of your candidate if at all possible.

You're to enclose a self-ad-

ressed, postage-paid return envelope so the editors can get back to you quickly to get more details or to return your material later.

All entries and photos become property of Country magazine, which will feature many of the runners-up in future issues before announcing the national winner at the end of the year.

Send your nomination to: "America's No. 1 Country Character Contest", Country Magazine, Box 643, Milwaukee WI 53201. A sample copy of the magazine is available for \$1.

### Mixed Drink Tax

### Money Distributed

State Comptroller Bob Bullock recently sent checks totaling \$11.3 million to 221 counties and 442 cities that collect mixed drink sales tax.

The checks represent the counties' and cities' share of the state's 12 percent mixed drink tax collected during the second quarter of 1989.

Bullock said that the state collected \$46.8 million in mixed drink taxes for the second quarter, compared to \$45 million collected during the same period in 1988.

Under state law allowing the sale of mixed drinks, Texas cities and counties each receive a 12.5 percent share of the tax collected on mixed drinks sold within their boundaries.

Bullock said \$35.5 million was deposited into the state's general revenue fund from second quarter collections, compared to \$34.2 million collected in the second quarter of 1988.

Spearman's 12.5% remittance was \$254.35 for the second quarter. Perryton receives \$1,953.13 for the same quarter.



# LEGAL NOTICE

## State of Texas County of Hansford

# BUDGET HEARING

Whereas, the Board of Trustees of Spearman Independent School District have caused to be prepared an annual budget for the fiscal year beginning September 1, 1989 and ending August 31, 1990.

Notice is hereby given that a public hearing on said proposed budget will be held on Monday, August 14, 1989 at 8:00 p.m. in the Board Room of the School, 403 E. 11th, Spearman, Hansford County, Texas.

Larry Butler  
Superintendent

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9-5:30 Spearman 659-2226  
Mon-Sat CASH-VISA-M.C.-LOCAL CHECKS

# Herrera Meets Mexican Movie Stars

by Joanne Eaton

When Pete R. Herrera, of Gruver, came into the office to see if his trip to Mexico, where he met famous Mexican movie stars, was newsworthy, I told him it was. I was not familiar with these stars, but knew some of our readers were. After interviewing Pete at some length, I found the important person was Pete himself; therefore, this is really two articles in one.

Pete recently went to Chihuahua City, Mexico, to visit relatives. While he was there, he went to the Palacio Del Sol (a hotel) where Mexican movie stars, Antonio Aguilar, Flor Silvestre, Eleazar "Chelelo" Garcia, and Pepe Aguilar were staying. They were from Pete's hometown of Zacatecas, Mexico, where he lived when he was younger.

"It was very important to me to get to meet these people," Pete told me.

Since I was not familiar with any of the actors, I went to the Knack Shoppe, in Spearman, to rent a couple of movies with the actors in them. I spent last Saturday watching Spanish movies and I'm not bilingual. My one year of Spanish helps if they speak "mas despacio," very slowly, but that is not the way of Spanish speaking people.

I did enjoy the movies, westerns in the Roy Rogers fashion. Antonio Aguilar is the romantic lead; he has a beautiful singing voice. His wife, Flor Silvestre sometimes is his leading lady; she also sings beautifully. "Chelelo" reminds me of Anthony Quinn in his acting and his voice. Pepe Aguilar, the son of Antonio Aguilar and Flor Silvestre, was not in the movies I watched; he has acted since he was a little boy.

Aguilar also has trained dancing horses that are in some of his movies.

"In Mexico these people are very important," Pete said. "It meant very much to me to get to meet them."

Pete Herrera is very proud of both countries, Mexico and the

United States. Both countries should be proud of Pete Herrera.

Pete moved to the United States in 1956. After living in Kansas and California, he settled in Gruver. He then worked for J on Hart for 23 years as a farm and ranch laborer.

Pete and his wife Maria raised their three children, Sylvia, Oscar, and Lee in Gruver. Their son, Oscar, is in the Air Force. He has served his country for 2 years in England.

Pete Herrera is not an American citizen, but he supports this country. For several years, Pete has donated money to causes he felt were worthy or charities he felt were good. A stack of receipts from the Gruver State Bank show he has supported the Republican Party, Christmas Seals, Mothers Against Drunk Drivers, Texas Sheriff's Association, St. Jude's Hospital, American Lung Association, Police Hall of Fame, Disabled Veterans, Easter Seal, and different Catholic Missions. He carries a card in his billfold that says he is a member of the Republican Presidential Task Force. He has been presented a flag and 2 medals by President Reagan for his support of the Republican Party.

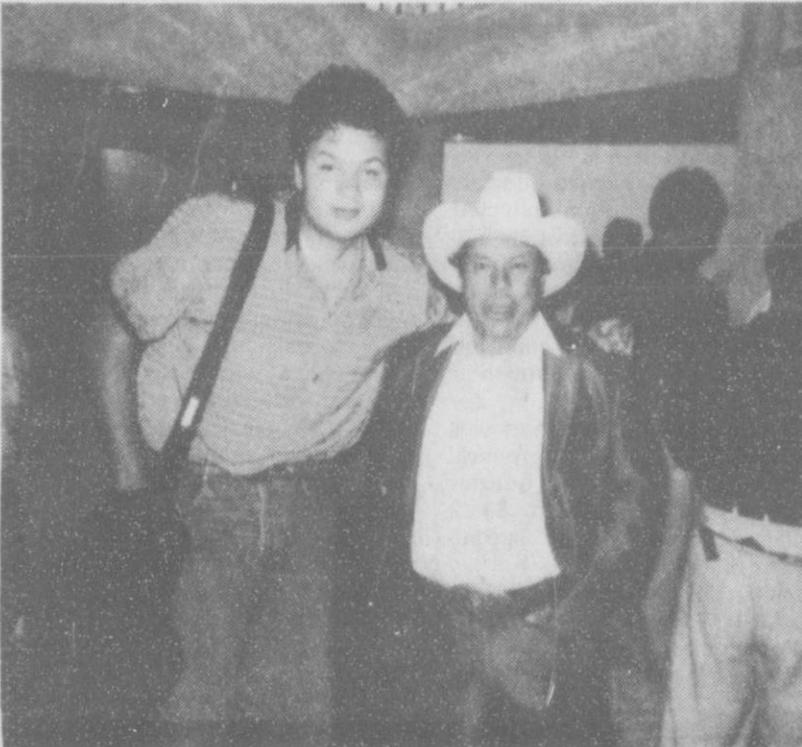
When asked why he contributes money to all these causes, Pete says, "I feel it will do good for the country - for the American people." As for such causes as Mothers Against Drunk Drivers, he said, "Always I'm against crime!"

Although Pete is disabled now, he still contributes when he can. "I can't donate much now," Pete explained. He went on to say, "I feel strong as a citizen - all my children are citizens."

If every American felt as strong about this country and did as much for it, as Pete Herrera, it would be an even better place to live.



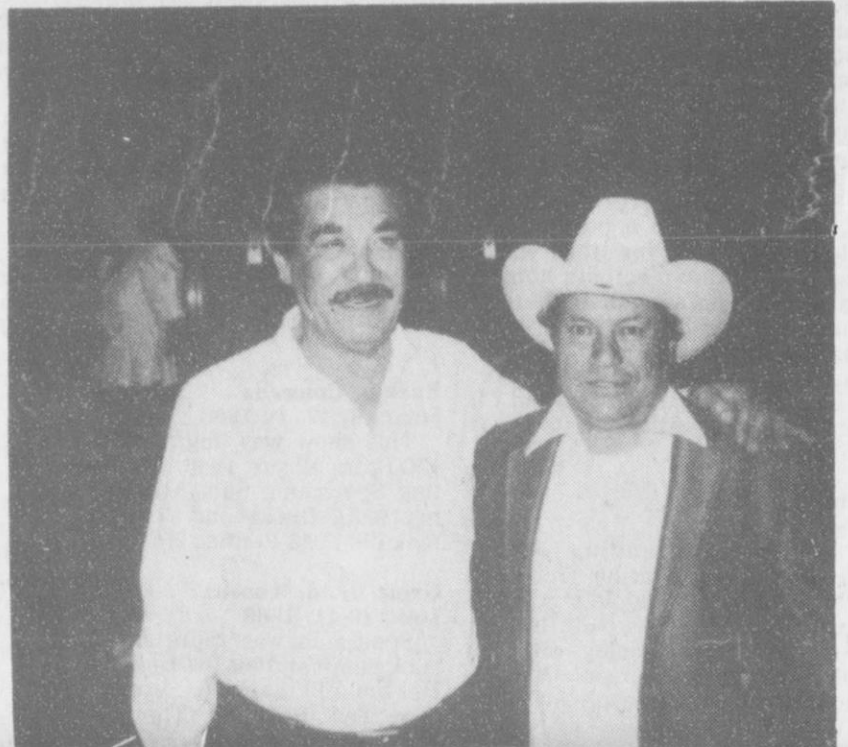
Antonio Aguilar and Pete Herrera visit at the Palacio Del Sol in Chihuahua, Mexico. Aguilar is a leading actor and film producer in Mexico.



Pepe Aguilar, son of Antonio Aguilar, and Pete Herrera, met recently in Mexico.



Pete Herrera and Flor Silvestre, leading movie actress in Mexico, pose for a picture at the Palacio Del Sol.



"Chelelo," famous Mexican movie star, and Pete Herrera get acquainted in Mexico while Herrera visited relatives.

## Oil From Pg. 1

was the tremendous increase in county revenues. Oil and gas wells are taxed as real estate with the amount based on the fair market value determined by an appraiser. The landowners pay these taxes but the companies leasing the minerals also pay taxes on their working interest in the leases. Many county officials unabashedly admit that oil and gas tax revenues built the county hospital, the new Spearman High School the county courthouse addition, and other public facilities.

A direct result of increased revenues of landowners was the birth of the irrigation system of farming in Hansford County. Richard Holton explains that several dry years of bad harvests in the early 50's encouraged farmers' investments in irrigation systems and the fact that natural gas was a readily available commodity in the county made irrigation suddenly more affordable. (Most irrigation wells are operated by natural gas.)

Richard started his water well company in 1952 with a partner, Jimmy Hester, who had previously worked on oil rigs. He and Hester bought a used rig and started putting in irrigation wells initially on a part-time basis. "I was a farmer and needed an income during the winter months," Richard says frankly.

He and his partner worked out of R.L. McClellan's shop in Spearman learning the trade, in his words, "the hard way--by doing it!" In a very short time, the water well business had become a 24-hour-a-day 7-day-a-week job for the men and their crews. "It was cheaper to put in a well than to haul water," he explains. "By the late 50's, there were 400 water wells in a 40-mile radius of Spearman."

Most of the wells Holton's company put in were about 400 feet into the ground (although some had to go as far down as 780 feet) and if good water was obtained, two wells could adequately water a section of land. The wells were always dug on high ground, as ditches transported the water to the fields. Today, this is accomplished by underground pipe. "By the mid-60's, water wells were common in

Hansford County," Richard comments, "and you could really see the crop yields go up on irrigated acreages. Milo did the best. I remember one year when people were getting up to 9,000 pounds of milo per acre, which was unheard of before irrigation." The prevalent attitude about irrigation in the 50's and 60's, he says, was "if you could afford it and you had the water underground, it was the way to go!"

Looking back on his years in the irrigation business, Richard says he always enjoyed the work because "no two days were the same." He tells the story of the rigs' vibrations, particularly down in the breaks, attracting rattlesnakes. "I turned around more than once only to find myself about to step on one," he remarks, adding that he kept a strong piece of metal chain handy for these situations.

Reporter's note: Next week's story on the 50's will attempt to show how the progress and wealth associated with Hansford County's new gas, oil and irrigation

industries affected daily life for young families. I will list my sources of information for both 50's articles next week. By the way, I still have been unable to find out who owned the first television set in the county. Does anyone know?

## Tennis Tournament Begins In Borger

The 1989 Borger Open Tennis Tournament will be held at the Borger High School courts beginning at 8:00 a.m. on August 12 and 13, 1989. Categories include men's and women's "A" division single and doubles, "B" division singles and doubles, men's and women's "35 and older" singles and doubles and "A" and "B" division mixed doubles. Entry fees are \$7.00 for singles and \$14.00 for doubles. Entry deadline is August 9, 1989. For more information, call Bobbye or Dirk Schmitz at (806) 274-5952. Send entries to: Box 3313, Borger, Texas 79007.

## Football Begins Cheerleader Clinic Scheduled August 9th

Superintendent Larry Butler announced preparation details this week for the 1989-90 football program.

On August 9th equipment for the juniors and seniors will be issued from 9 to 12 a.m. The sophomores and freshmen will pick up their equipment beginning at 2 p.m.

Physicals for the 7th and 9th grade players will be given, beginning at 1:30 p.m. August 8, 9 and 10. The coaching staff will be assisting with the physicals.

Two-a-days will begin August 14th. These will be held from 9 to 11 a.m. and from 6 to 8 p.m. The first scrimmage against Wheeler will be held in Spearman on August 25th. The second pre-season scrimmage will be against Memphis. The time and place has not been decided for this scrimmage.

offering classes in cheers, tumbling, dance and pyramids. Anyone interested in learning as well as having a good time is encouraged to participate.

The cheerleaders have also received the Top of Texas football books. These books will be delivered to the advertisers. There are some extras and can be purchased for \$4.95 from Linda Wilkerson, 659-3849 or come by 604 Barkley.

### Cha Lor's Bridal Gift Registry

	Wedding Date
<i>Suzy Ragsdale &amp; Jeff Varlandingham</i>	August 19
<i>Kim Jenkins &amp; Tim Woolley</i>	August 19
<i>Mita Baker &amp; Larry Rob</i>	August 19
<i>Carmon Aquirre &amp; Joe Arila</i>	August 26

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24 OZ.  
**\$1.99**



**OCEAN SPRAY**  
•CRANBERRY  
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REG. & LOW CALORIE  
48 OZ.  
**\$1.89**



**DEL MONTE VEGETABLES**  
•GREEN BEANS CUT OR FRENCH STYLE  
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**2 FOR .89**



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REG.  
5 LB. BAG  
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1 1/2 LB. LOAF  
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ASST. 15.3-17.5 OZ.  
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