

The Brackett News

Water board officials consider rule changes
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14th year, No. 47

Serving the communities of Brackettville, Fort Clark Springs, Spofford and Kinney County

1 Section, 8 Pages

BRIEFS

4-H members compete in S.A.

The District 10 4-H Food Show was held Dec. 7 at the Morris Activity Center in San Antonio.

There were 200 total contestants, including eight from Kinney County.

In the junior division, Summer Allen won first for main dish and Bailee Allen took top honors in the bread and cereal category. Justin Calk was third in fruits and vegetables, Harmony Pettett placed fifth in nutritious snacks.

In the pre-junior division, Bryan Calk took second-place honors for nutritious snacks, Ramon Gutierrez was fourth in fruits and vegetables, Sarah Davis placed fifth in bread and cereal, and Haley Hale participated in the main-dish category.

Smith and Koch receive diplomas in ASU ceremony

SAN ANGELO — Angelo State University conferred degrees upon 371 students during 2002 fall commencement exercises on Dec. 13.

Among the graduates were Dale Smith, the son of Richard and Beth Ann Smith of Brackettville, and Stephen Koch, the son of Tony Koch of Fort Stockton and grandson of Mary Koch of Brackettville.

Both graduates received bachelor of science degrees.

Border Patrol drug seizures top \$4.2 million

DEL RIO — U.S. Border Patrol agents from the Eagle Pass Station seized more than \$300,000 worth of marijuana Friday, following pursuit of a car near Normandy.

Agents attempted to stop a heavily-laden sedan on Highway 277 at 4:30 a.m. on Friday. As agents pursued the vehicle, it pulled off the road and the driver jumped out, escaping into nearby heavy brush. Inside the car, agents discovered a total of 436.6 pounds of marijuana, valued at \$349,280.

Marijuana seizures by agents in the Del Rio Sector for the month of December total 5,535.27 pounds, with a value of \$4,282,612.80.

Guyons perform at fort restaurant

Courtney and Layci Guyon with Branson will present music, accompanied by Kathryn Manning and Ann Barron, upstairs at Las Moras Restaurant Saturday.

The performance begins at 5 p.m. Dinner is dutch treat.

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Motion for new FCS trial denied

Judge says petition could have changed original decision

By J.J. GUIDRY
Editor

District Judge Tom Lee said he had "no choice" but to deny a motion for a new trial concerning who has legal claim to serve on the Fort Clark Springs Board of Directors.

Lee made the decision following a hearing on Dec. 19 when he considered the motion filed by Chad Ellis, an attorney representing board members Mona Miller and Tom Saylor.

Lee ruled in October the recall election initiated by the

Preservation Society, a group of Fort Clark members unhappy with the current administration, to remove the Fort Clark directors "had no legal effect," leaving the association's original board in control of the fort.

Lee said the Preservation Society had to satisfy a section of the Texas Non-Profit Corporation Act that says a special meeting may be called by "1/10 of the members entitled to vote."

In his decision, the judge said: "I do not know how many Fort Clark Springs As-

"If the petition was introduced, it would probably have resulted in a different decision. If I would have known this, I would have probably ruled the other way."

District Judge Tom Lee

sociation members signed a petition for a special meeting ... In all other regards, I believe the Preservation Society did the best they could to conduct the removal process fairly and under the rules provided. I therefore find that the removal procedure is of no legal effect."

Ellis attached a copy of the

petition, which meets the requirements of the law to call a special meeting, to his motion for a new trial.

Quinton Etzel, a Del Rio attorney representing the association, successfully argued that the petition was not newly discovered evidence.

"I specifically asked to see the petition that had been

gathered from Mr. Ellis. He said they would not make that a part of the stipulated facts of the case," he said.

"Newly discovered evidence has to be evidence that they did not have at the time of the trial. There is no newly discovered evidence. There is no reversible error here and there is no reason to grant a new trial," Etzel added.

Lee said he had "no recollection of anybody ever telling me that a petition existed."

"I made that decision

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State leaders visit Kinney County

Officials discuss water and deregulation issues

By J.J. GUIDRY
Editor

State Reps. Scott Campbell and Pete Gallego and Senator Frank Madla were in Kinney County Dec. 20 to discuss issues facing local leaders as they prepare for the upcoming legislative session.

The three state officials were guests of Rio Grande Electric Cooperative, which addressed issues surrounding deregulation.

"It was just basically a briefing session on their part to make those of us who are going to be serving in the legislature that represent this area to be aware of what they're doing and what their concerns are," Madla said.

"It was beneficial, simply because, with deregulation, it places cooperatives in a different situation. What we have to do is be very alert that we don't place cooperatives at a disadvantage with some of the larger companies, like the City Public Service Board or Houston Power and Light," the senator added.

After a luncheon at Barbara's Table, Madla discussed water issues with County Attorney, Tully Shahan, and his wife, Darlene, interim general manager and a director of the Kinney County Groundwater Conservation District.

"Obviously, water is an important issue in this community," Madla said. "From my understanding, apparently it is something that the entire com-



State Reps. Scott Campbell (from left) and Pete Gallego and Senator Frank Madla attended a briefing session on deregulation here on Dec. 20.

munity is concerned about, and rightly so. I think water is going to be a major issue in the face of Texas — not just this session, but for sessions to come.

"Those of us who serve in the legislature are going to have to be able to come up with a water plan for the state of Texas that includes all of Texas. I don't have an answer to how we're going to do that. I would imagine that it would have to be a regional approach to where communities like El Paso and Juarez are going to have to be at the same table, even though they come from two different nations. It's going to be an important issue."

One of the bigger issues facing local groundwater officials is the marketing of water from Kinney County.

"That board has the authority to make the rules and regu-

lations that are going to determine what individuals are going to be able to do with the water," Madla said. "If someone is going to market water and transport it, the district can regulate it."

"I think the challenge that the board has — and it's not an easy challenge — is that they have to come up with some fair formula that is going to guarantee to each individual their property rights. In this state, property rights have always been sacred, and rightfully so."

"I don't envy their challenge. They have a difficult task before them. I think what the rest of the folks have to do is be somewhat patient, making sure that they come up with a fair formula and that no one be denied any of the property rights that they have. That's a big order," the senator added.



Discussing the issues State Senator Frank Madla (left) discusses issues concerning Kinney County with Brackett ISD Superintendent Taylor Stephenson prior to a luncheon at Barbara's Table on Dec. 20.

Photo by J.J. Guidry

Community Unity a 'huge success'

Brackettville Church Alliance officials have dubbed the 2002 Community Unity Christmas program a "huge success."

Over \$1,300 was collected in donations from both the business and private community.

Over 195 children received gifts and over 250 adults attended the event.

Booths were manned by volunteers from the Las Moras Hispanic Organization, the Brackett Housing Authority, the city of Spofford, Gateway Ministries, the Kinney County 4-H Club, Kinney County EMS, Our Redeemer Lutheran Church and United Medical Center.

The Church Alliance Booth was manned by volunteers from the First United Methodist Church and St. Andrews Episcopal Church.

Santa Claus was brought in by the Brackettville Volunteer Fire Department, headed by Chief Joe "Boy" Williams.

"We want to thank Ricky Alvarado of Pico's for loan of his Santa suite and to John Tipps, as Santa, who lovingly heard many a Christmas wish and sat for many a photo," said Rev. Charolette Corey of Gateway Ministries.

Entertainment was emceed by Rev. Dave Crowe of Frontier Baptist Church. Music was provided by the Voices of Fort Clark, led by Lynn McNew and accompanied by Kathy Conrey, and the Acapella Singers of the Church of Christ blessed the audience. Christmas songs were individually performed by Jackie Duncan, Timmeke Simmons, and the duet of Landon and Kate Tuck.

Christmas readings were given by Emily Petrosky and Shanae Simmons. Landon Tuck read "The Meaning of Christmas."

Crowe, dressed in cowboy attire, read Christmas poetry from a cowboy's perspective.

Corey gave out the cash prizes from the Church Alliance Poster Contest. The theme was "Jesus: The Gift of Love."

In the Elementary School Division, first prize of \$25 went to Abby Gutierrez, second prize of \$15 went to Mairsol Aguirre, and third prize of \$10 went to Natalie Aguirre.

Pedro Pacheco and Victoria Ward tied for the \$25 first-place award in the High School Division. There were no entries in the Junior High Division.

The winning posters were displayed the following week at the Kinney County Library.

The local Girl Scouts of America and Boys Scouts of America, led by Kathryn Letsinger, not only helped put up decorations (paper and posters donated by Brackett ISD), but also served as Santa's helpers.

Bob and Charolette Corey of Gateway Ministries organized, collected and directed the presentation of the program.

The Kinney County Sheriff's Office staff provided security for the event.

"We also thank the county judge and commissioners for the use of the Civic Center, as well as Albert Payne and volunteers from the local jail for clean-up afterwards," Charolette Corey said.

"We appreciate David Luna for hosting and the City of Brackettville for supporting the community Christmas program of past years. It is not an easy job and is often thankless."

"Most of all we wish to thank The Brackett News for helping us promote the event, as well as all those businesses who allowed us to put up posters and donation boxes," she added.



Singing Christmas carols Landon Tuck, 7, and his sister, Katie, 5, sing "Jingle Bells" at the recent Community Unity program.

Photo by J.J. Guidry

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Pray for peace on earth, Fort Clark Springs

During the last year and a half, we haven't been able to spend much time at the fort. We missed this very much, but there was an opportunity for my husband to do some extra work for his employer and the money was welcomed.

This summer, when there was so much turmoil and confusion going on between the Board of Directors and a group opposed to the way the fort was being managed, we like so many others had almost decided to sell and move.

Fortunately, nothing we did could not be changed. Several things happened to make us reconsider.

When we drove through Uvalde, I noticed so many of the parks and businesses were decorated with little white doves that someone had made out of discarded milk cartons.

Then I received a little spiritual booklet containing Christmas prayers and poems. The one titled "The Christmas Dove" struck a spark in me. The poem's message was that the pure white Christmas dove had been sent by God as a symbol to represent goodwill to all and peace and love to the entire world.

The Chamber of Commerce in Uvalde gave me a couple of the doves for a sample, and I am planning to decorate our big

pinetree in front of our property with the doves and angels. Angels are, of course, also messengers of peace and love from God.

It's also the tree's 15th birthday. In 1987, for our first Christmas on the fort, it was a live 3-foot tree in a pot. My how it grew! I am hoping that with my husband's help, it will be finished in time for Christmas Eve.

I invite any one interested to come by and not only look and enjoy, but please say a short prayer for peace on earth and especially on the fort that all may work towards good will to all.

Rosalie Boysen

Truth and facts ruffle snowbird's feathers

It seems that fort members writing truth and facts about legitimate problems here in the fort have ruffled the feathers of a snowbird.

I have nothing against Winter Texans. I know that several are well informed about the problems here in the fort and have seen how the fort grounds have deteriorated since we lost our maintenance department. I have not known any Winter Texans, until now, that went off half-cocked, making statements about the fort as if they were here year-round. The only thing that matters is truth and facts.

In October 2002, the fort swimming pool was so green and

slimy you could not see most of the bottom.

Throughout the rest of 2002, the green areas, airstrip, par 3 and road-sides were overgrown with weeds and brush — many still are. Oh, and the sidewalks and tennis courts have a good crop of weeds and grass growing on them also.

That is the truth and those are the facts, not based on a two-week assessment, but a full-year assessment.

In Texas, the year 2002 started on Jan. 1, not Nov. 22. Leave the assessments to people who are qualified — those that live here all year — or at least have enough motivation to seek

the truth and facts about the situation before making embarrassing, naive statements.

"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances."

Not to be disrespectful, but maybe you should study those words, because anyone who does not respect the United States Constitution and the Bill of Rights, they should move — out of the country!

Dave Reinhold

Society places unrealistic goals on personal appearances of teens

This winter vacation, I am spending a wonderful time with a dear friend. If many remember an earlier column about my best friend moving, she is the one who moved out of state.

Megan lives at Scott AFB in Illinois, and it is really nice up there. I haven't seen snow in a long time, and it was a nice treat to get experience the powdery stuff.

While on my vacation, I noticed my behaviors and habits a lot more than I usually would in a familiar environment.

Something that really caught my attention was the way I ate. I tend to eat very quickly and frequently. This is not a very healthy way to eat, I know, but I can't seem to stop myself sometimes. Some may say I am addicted to food. Maybe that's where I should get a career, in the food industry.

Sometimes, when I am eating something that is truly exquisite, tears come to my eyes.

Today, for the first time in my life, I was introduced to the most amazing place in the world, Krispy Kreme. Now some may have heard of this donut wonderland, and of the goodness and tastiness of their delightful, yummy-in-my-tummy treats.

Krispy Kreme donuts melt in your mouth, not in your hand — OK, maybe they don't, but I definitely don't wait and find out if the glazed pastries do or do not.

That is probably the source of my problem, my inability to control my craving for food. When it comes to food, I go wild, like a crazy animal. Right now, in my youth, this may be OK, but I know behavior like this may lead to health problems in the near future.

After noticing my problem, I decided to do a little research. I

seem to share a lot of symptoms with people called "compulsive overeaters." These people tend to have rapid and extreme weight gain and an excessive food consumption. They also buy large quantities of food at a time, and eat for comfort.

I have a few of those problems. I get big value meals when I am eating out, and I always feel I must finish all of my food, even if the result is a bloated belly or a tummy ache.

I eat when I am bored, I eat when I am sad, I eat when I am happy, heck I eat all the time. It is like breathing to me.

I also have recognized bigger people recently. I mean, folks who are a little larger than others. I know that my eating habits will lead to trouble, and I have a feeling once college comes, the Hoover is really going to flood.

I know that when I grow up, I probably won't be fit, but overweight, because of my poor eating habits, plus I probably would no longer be in any athletic programs.

I don't know why it is so hard for me, but it is. There are a lot of people out there that are in the same boat as I, though they are worse off.

This is where eating disorders are formed. People, especially teens, care so much about what society thinks that they hurt themselves to conform to it. I will never have an eating disorder that is the effect of wanting to lose weight. I love food way too

much, and I wouldn't enjoy it either if it were coming back up.

Much of my pity goes to those who gain weight even when they try to stay healthy. I am also disappointed that society wants to lower self-esteem to sell stupid products, and make money. This is very irritating. I think this is how a lot of teenagers lose self-confidence.

Last year, when I was a freshman, I happened to walk into the restroom and witnessed some upper-classmen vomiting. I was disappointed, and I pitied them. These beautiful girls were vomiting together, without shame, to change their physical image.

I went through a major ordeal trying to help them out. They could not understand why I cared about them and why I was trying to find them help. I told someone who I thought would make sure they were taken care of. Things didn't seem to work out for the best though.

I was even confronted by one of them before a basketball game. I guess it was supposed to scare me off.

Though the whole thing made me nervous, I stood my ground. Those girls may now hate me, or they may not, they may still have their disorders, or they may not, but if I helped save one, then all my discomfort was totally worth it.

I know I don't want to be extremely overweight when I grow up, but I will never change myself physically to be accepted by how society views me. That's just not me.

I may be a compulsive eater, or maybe I am a food connoisseur that enjoys the taste of different culinary delights, but I know that whatever I am I will always be there for myself, because if I am not, who else will be?



Teen Spirit
Shanae Simmons



Christmas now a 'politically-correct' national holiday

Merry nonreligious, politically-correct national holiday and happy New Year.

Yep, Christmas (not X-mas, please) is the latest and most politically correct target of the I-don't-want-to-take-a-chance-on-offending-anyone-except-God set.



The Way I See It
Steven R. LaMascus

All over the country, schools and municipalities are enacting rules and legislation that forbids the very mention of the word Christmas, or the display of anything Christian or having to do with Christ the Saviour.

Jesus Christ, the Word that was in the beginning, and was with God at the time of the Creation, and was the tool by which everything in the universe was made (John chapter 1)!

That same Jesus Christ has, in the Christian nation of the United States of America, become a taboo subject. Yes, our own representatives, especially in our schools, are perpetuating a trend that will cause the total destruction of our nation. And it is all in the name of our new god, political correctness.

Down through time, there are a multitude of examples of what happens to nations that abandon their faith in God. Why in the world do we have the temerity to believe that we are different?

Well, the truth is that if any of the people making those ungodly rules and laws were believers in the One True God and his Son, Jesus Christ, they would never even consider doing anything so stupid. But they do not believe in God the Father or God the Son, so as far as they are concerned, there is nothing wrong with removing such narrow-minded, intolerant subjects from the public view. They feel that they will be regarded as heroes, because they took a moral stand against such a politically incorrect, exclusionistic practice as the public celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ.

Jeremiah 11:3-5 says: "Cursed is the man who does not heed the words of this covenant which I commanded your forefathers in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, from the iron furnace, for I will grant you no favor."

saying, 'Listen to my voice, and do according to all which I command you; so you shall be My people, and I will be your God,' in order to confirm the oath which I swore to your forefathers, to give them a land flowing with milk and honey, as it is this day."

Whether you believe it or not, this nation, also, made a covenant with God when our forefathers wrote the document that says, "that all men are created equal, and that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights."

We stated that we believed that God gave us certain rights that no other man had the right or power to deny us, and that we were claiming those rights, and that we expected and asked that God would bless us, as a nation, because we placed our trust in Him. That is what is meant by our National Motto, "In God we trust."

That is not an idle statement! It is a statement of huge importance. It is the basis upon which this great nation was founded, and is the testimony upon which it will be convicted and sentenced to death.

We seem to think we are invulnerable to any disaster. But that is not true — it is an arrogant view of our own power, which is nothing compared to the power of God. And if we don't find the way back into the right path we will pay the price.

Jeremiah 16:12-13, "You too have done evil, even more than your forefathers; for behold, you are each one walking according to the stubbornness of his own evil heart, without listening to Me. So I will hurl you out of this land into the land which you have not known, neither you nor your fathers; and there you will serve other gods day and night, for I will grant you no favor."

What we are doing in the United States is almost an exact parallel to what Israel did 3,000 years ago to cause God to abandon them to their enemies. We have grown so convinced of our own power and our own abilities that we don't think we need God anymore. God is thought of as a crutch, something that is needed only (as Jesse Ventura said) by the weak.

God is visible everyday, all around us, yet we choose to ignore Him and His works. We invent reasons to deny Him and claim that He is not real. We ignore the obvious reality of His creation and give pure chance the credit for the creation of the Universe. We deny His right to be part of our lives and our schools and our government and seclude Him in buildings that we have labeled "churches." We elevate ourselves to the same level as God and in doing so we condemn ourselves to death eternal.

The Apostle Peter said of Jesus Christ, "He is the stone which was rejected by you, the builders, but which became the Chief Corner Stone. And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved."

That is the real meaning of Christmas — the ultimate Christmas gift of God — the birth of His Son. And the denial of it doesn't lessen the truth of it.

Anyone who doesn't believe in Jesus as the Messiah and Saviour is damned. If that view is considered by you to be intolerant, then you really need to listen to God. He is trying to tell you the truth and you keep sticking your fingers in your ears.

Christmas is not just a national holiday — it is a celebration of the day when the world was saved from its own evil ways by the birth of the Messiah.

Merry Christmas, and may God bless you.

Acts 2:36, "Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ — this Jesus whom you crucified." NASB

What is the meaning of New Year's?

The new year is upon us and once again I find myself wondering where time has gone. It seems, just days ago, I sat on my couch, watching football and regretting my second-helping of pecan pie on Thanksgiving. The holiday season seems to pass so quickly.

It's already time to consider New Year's resolutions. So much has changed in the last two years. I find myself contemplating what New Year's really means.

Unlike many of our traditional holidays, the meaning of New Year's is unclear. Although it is the world's most celebrated holiday, it lacks a single central theme. It is a collection of good intentions. Perhaps, New Year's is simply a yearly detour on the road to self-improvement, enlightenment and finding happiness. A new beginning we are allowed each year.

This year, New Year's finds us at our absolute greatest. Americans have bound together to show their pride and patriotism for our amazing country.



Weekly Report
Henry Bonilla

not allow for change. Less specific wording such as "this year I will express my patriotism," provides room to challenge yourself to be creative with your resolution throughout the year.

3. Make a plan. Search for ways you can volunteer. Help by filling-in roles left behind by those deployed away from home. Devote a specific amount of time to any causes you choose. And ask friends and family to join in the act.

There's no reason why we shouldn't continue to make the traditional resolutions to lose weight and get organized. But it is my hope that we will also focus our resolutions on developing the true spirit of America.

Remember to smile and laugh every chance you get. The soul needs to be balanced, as well as the scale. Don't pass up an opportunity to make a difference in someone's life. And most importantly, don't leave anything unsaid. Let's ring in 2003 as a nation united and rebuilding together.

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Have something to say? Write a letter to the editor!

Water district holds hearing on rule changes

By J.J. GUIDRY
Editor

Brian Sledge, attorney for the Kinney County Groundwater Conservation District, is urging the directors to adopt new rules and a fee schedule when the board meets again Tuesday at 5 p.m.

Sledge introduced a new set of rules in November and the district has allowed citizens time to make verbal and written comments on the changes.

The directors will consider those rule changes following another public hearing Tuesday.

Most citizens and water marketers seem to be encouraged with the changes being proposed.

"They look a lot better than what we had," local farmer Jim McDaniel said. "I can farm with these rules."

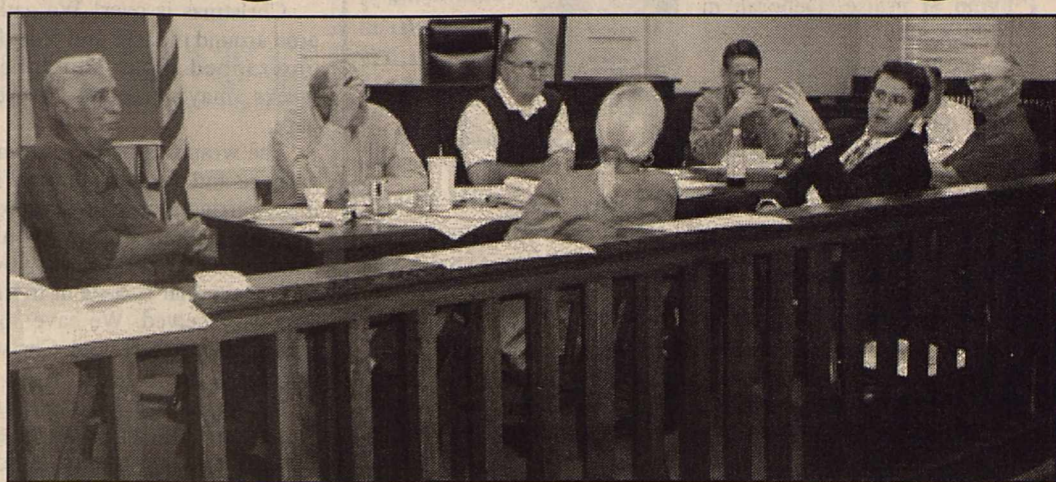
Sledge said the rules "attempt to try to find some common ground with concerns raised by folks that want to sell water and those who want to keep it where it is."

"I think you've done an admirable job of trying to make a silk purse out of a sow's ear, but it's still a sow's ear," Wes Robinson

said when addressing the board. "These rules are more complex than what we need. They need to be simple."

Lynn Sherman, president of Native Valley Alliance, a company trying to market local water, was responsive to the changes made by Sledge.

"A lot of progress has been made," he said. "The rules are protective of historic use, and that's the right thing to do. It also establishes some pretty important procedures. There are some things that still need to be addressed, but it's progress in the right direction."



Answering questions

Brian Sledge (third from right), attorney for the Kinney County Groundwater Conservation District, answers questions during a recent board meeting as directors Darlene Shahan (clockwise from Sledge), Cecil Smith, Hadley Wardlaw, Bob Young, Zach Davis, Chuck Hall and Don Hood look on.

Photo by J.J. Guidry

Building celebrates its anniversary

The sturdy brick building Allen H. Kreiger built in 1952 as an office for his insurance business recently celebrated its golden anniversary.

The building is now the office of the Kinney County Appraisal District.

On Dec. 17, Kreiger's wife, Mary Helen, and his son, Allen Jr., were guests of honor of the Appraisal District Board of Directors for the dedication of memorial plaques which identify the building as the "Allen H. Kreiger Building 1952."

Also on hand were family and friends of the Kreigers and Allen's first employee from 1952, Marcus Tidwell, former Kinney County chief appraiser.



Golden anniversary

Kinney County Chief Appraiser Bill Haenn (from left), Mary Helen Kreiger and Allen H. Kreiger Jr. were on hand for the dedication of the Kreiger Building.

Photo Special to The Brackett News

Education is a major concern in upcoming legislative session

Happy New Year! Best wishes for a prosperous and healthy best year.

Texas will soon begin another legislative session. Held every two years, the main task is to pass laws that will govern our state for the next biennium.

One of the toughest jobs for legislators is to pass a balanced budget for the next two years.

Because of the downturn in the economy, our state comptroller has estimated a shortfall of \$5 billion for the state. We hope that the projection will change before the legislature begins its deliberations.

Many legislators have pledged "no new taxes." Many are saying publicly "education is our first priority." However, with no new money, the challenge is apparent.

Larger school districts that have reached the statutory tax cap of \$1.50 per \$100 of valuation and are facing difficult



Making A Difference

Taylor Stephenson

times.

One of the larger districts has projected massive cutbacks in the number of staff for the next two years with cuts of 500 teaching positions. When staff is cut, the curriculum is cut to offer required subjects plus whatever could be afforded. I suspect that pupil-teacher ratios will begin to rise all throughout the state.

These same lawmakers passed rigid new testing requirements for Texas students without thinking about paying for the instruction to teach the curriculum.

Texas is short 20,000 teachers and the numbers could double in the next two years. Our

salaries must remain competitive.

On the positive side, Texas has managed before, and I believe it can do it again. This legislative session will require the best minds to figure the next state budget.

I am thankful that Brackett ISD has managed its resources prudently. We don't spend more money than we take in, except for items paid from non-recurring revenues (buildings and grounds — not people).

Our tax rate is low, our fund balance is sound, and most school buildings have been remodeled. There is more to do, but we'll weather the storm.

January is a time of renewal and rededication. Please support the Board of Trustees, administration, teachers and support staff as they work to give Kinney County's children the best education possible.

Have a great week!

Middle Rio Grande Development Council lays off 23 employees

The Middle Rio Grande Development Council laid off 23 employees on Dec. 13 after two shortfalls were found in its workforce budget.

The lay-offs were a result of budget meetings held in November between the Middle Rio Grande Workforce Development Board, which monitors and oversees the performance and progress of the Middle Rio Grande Development Council, the contracted operator for workforce programs.

For the past two years, the Development Council has received around \$5 million in reobligated funds from the Development Board to support the work of the workforce programs in serving the residents of the council's nine-county region.

These funds are deobligated annually from other local workforce areas throughout the state that cannot use the funding to meet their workforce goals, and then reobligated to areas that have a need for more funding and that meet all of their goals.

A second factor affecting the

reduction in force was the fact that the state has reduced the WIA funding allocation to the Development Council by \$1.4 million, according to Joe Cruz, comptroller for the Development Council.

Cruz said the reobligated funds were used to hire staff to provide additional services to customers, in order to better serve the employment needs of the region.

The contract for this program year between the Workforce Board and the Development Council commenced on Sept. 1. As is common practice on this contract at the end of the first quarter, every year a close analysis is done by both agencies to determine the amount of money that is available through funding allocations and potential monies that may be available through reobligation.

The contract between the Workforce Board and the Development Council will be amended accordingly, due to the reduction of available funds.

Both Ricky McNeil, executive director for the Workforce

Board, and Leodoro Martinez executive director for the Development Council, agree that the possibility of attaining reobligated monies at the level of the past two years does not seem likely.

The Development Council expects a \$6.4 million total budget shortfall as compared to the previous fiscal year.

To reduce expenses, the executive staff of the the Development Council and the Workforce Board came together to determine the best method of meeting the year-end budget. The result included the reduction in workforce positions that affected 23 staff members from the nine county offices.

In addition to the lay-offs, the Development Council is reducing expenses through other cost-saving measures, including restrictions on travel and supply purchases.

Martinez said that while everyone understands the funding environment is changing, the workforce services delivered to customers will not be affected by this shortfall.

SHERIFF'S REPORT

Tuesday, Dec. 17

9:04 p.m., A woman reported loud music coming from Rose Alley and Swinney Street.

Wednesday, Dec. 18
6:30 p.m., A Interstar Alarm System employee reported that an alarm at the Foyt Ranch, west of Brackettville on Highway 90 was going off.

Thursday, Dec. 19
3:30 p.m., Charles Esparza, 23, of Brackettville was arrested by DPS Trooper Tony Ashley on outstanding warrants for speeding, no liability insurance and failure to appear. He was released three days later on time served.

Friday, Dec. 20
9:45 a.m., Jose DaJesus Rodriguez, 30, of Dayton, was arrested by DPS Trooper Tully Welch for driving while intoxicated, a third-offense felony. He was released two days later on a \$5,000 bail bond.

1:09 p.m., A Fort Clark Springs security employee reported a motorcycle accident near the Red Bridge. EMS personnel were dispatched to the scene.

1:30 p.m., A Pro Tech Alarms employee reported an alarm going off at a residence on E. Fourth Street.

6:00 p.m., Edward Garza, 31, of Brackettville, was arrested by Sheriff L.K. "Buddy" Burgess. He is being held in the Kinney County jail.

Saturday, Dec. 21
12:45 a.m., Teodoro Mendoza Jr., 45, of Uvalde, was arrested by DPS Trooper Welch for driving while intoxicated. He was later released on bond.

5:29 a.m., A man reported that his wife and daughter had been hit by a vehicle on Highway 277, a few miles outside Del Rio. The vehicle fled the scene, driving towards Del Rio. DPS and EMS personnel from Del Rio were dispatched to the scene.

11:45 a.m., Armondo Estrada, 31, of Brackettville was arrested by Sheriff L.K. "Buddy" Burgess for aggravated assault. He is being held in the Kinney County Jail.

Sunday, Dec. 22

1:35 a.m., Antonio

Rodriguez, 44, of San Antonio, was arrested by DPS Trooper Welch for Driving while intoxicated. He was later released on bond.

1:47 a.m., A motorist reported that he had hit a deer on Highway 90, about 3 miles east of the Cline Checkpoint. No injuries were reported.

7:30 a.m., A woman reported that her vehicle had been stolen from her residence at Fort Clark Springs. The vehicle was later found in Brackettville at the corner of Fulton and Beaumont.

9:39 a.m., A Fort Clark Security employee reported children on top of the EMS building, throwing items.

10:30 a.m., A woman reported that her mother's car had been stolen from her residence on E. Thorn Street. The vehicle was later found at Fort Clark Springs.

5:10 p.m., Juan Florentino Flores, 19, of Brackettville was arrested by DPS Trooper Tony Ashley on two counts of unauthorized use of motor vehicles. He is being held in the Kinney County Jail.

Monday, Dec. 23

3:46 p.m., A woman locked her keys in her truck and requested assistance.

10:39 p.m., Hismael Quintera, 50, of Mexico was arrested by Deputy Karl Chism for driving while intoxicated. He was released two days later on a \$1,000 cash bond.

Tuesday, Dec. 24

11:34 a.m., A woman said someone hit her van at Super S. DPS officials were notified.

1:50 p.m., Francisco Prudo, 32, of Batesville was arrested by Trooper Welch on DPS warrants out of Lampasas County. He is being held in the Kinney County Jail.

6:40 p.m., Chief Deputy Johnny Fritter reported that the lights were out on the East Tower on Highway 90.

9:42 p.m., A woman reported her cellular phone missing.

Wednesday, Dec. 25

6 p.m., Juan Luis Olvera, 22, of Mexico was arrested by Con-

stable Bobby Guidry on warrants out of Denton County. He is being held in the Kinney County Jail.

Thursday, Dec. 26
8:23 p.m., A man reported that he had caught someone breaking into his house on Ann Street. The suspect fled the scene in a red Pontiac.

Friday, Dec. 27
12:18 p.m., A woman reported a stray dog. A city employee was notified.

8:00 p.m., Rodolfo Palacios Jr., 31, of San Antonio was arrested by Trooper Ashley on three outstanding DPS warrants. He was released the same day after paying \$670 in fines.

Saturday, Dec. 28

11 a.m., Raul Talamantez, 39, of Brackettville was arrested by Sheriff Burgess for failure to appear. He was released the same day on a \$1,000 cash bond.

2:51 p.m., Trooper Welch reported a goat loose on Highway 90, east of Brackettville. A local rancher was notified of the situation.

Sunday, Dec. 29

12:45 p.m., Ramine Capepp Jr., 19, of California was arrested by Trooper Ashley for speeding and no drivers license.

3:51 p.m., A man said an intoxicated person forced her way into his residence on First Street.

4:46 p.m., A man reported that someone was trying to break into his residence on W. Fulton Street.

3:22 p.m., A woman reported a dog running wild at the corner of Fort and Edwards Street. A city employee was notified of the situation.

6 p.m., A woman reported a dog hanging around Pico's convenience store. A city employee was notified of the situation.

6:47 p.m., A man requested assistance in unlocking his parents vehicle.

8:54 p.m., A woman reported a speeding vehicle on Brown Street.

Monday, Dec. 30

12:50 a.m., A man reported that a semi was blocking Highway 90, about 12 miles east of Del Rio.

OBITUARIES

Barton

Arthur Laverne Barton, 86, of Uvalde died Dec. 24 at Uvalde Memorial Hospital.

Barton was born Oct. 5, 1916, in Roadhouse, Ill.

He married Claudia G. Hubbell on June 23, 1948, in Charlton County, Ga.

Barton is survived by his wife.

Services were held Thursday at Rushing-Estes-Knowles Chapel. Interment was Friday at Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery in San Antonio.

Arrangements by Rushing-Estes-Knowles Mortuary.

Causseaux

Lois Causseaux of Kingston, Okla., passed away Dec. 23 at the age of 90.

Causseaux was preceded in death by her husband, Paul B. Causseaux.

Causseaux is survived by her daughter: Nancy C. Rowe and husband Bob of Kingston; granddaughter: Denise C. Ziegler and husband Chad of Manhattan, Kan.; brother: Bruce Clark and wife Shirley of Branson, Mo.; along with many cousins and friends.

There will be a Memorial Service Friday at 2 p.m. at the First Baptist Church in Brackettville.

The Brackett News

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Read The Brackett News to find out about the latest news in Kinney County!

We are all one in Christ

Mary was not the first Israelite woman to compose a hymn of praise. Deborah in Judges sings, "I will make music to the Lord."

Hannah, the mother of Samuel, opened her hymn with, "My heart rejoices in the Lord." (1 Sam.2:1)

But there is something unique about Mary. She stands alone among all the women of the world because God chose her to be the virgin-mother of His Son, the long awaited Messiah. She is right in saying, "From now on all generations will call me blessed."

Note, however, that in her Magnificat, Mary doesn't rejoice primarily over a personal honor, but over the salvation God is providing for His people as He has promised. When she rejoices in "God my Savior," she includes herself in the salvation



Our Redeemer
Lutheran Church
Nathan Lafrenz

all sinners need. Not only is it true that at the fullness of time God's Son was born of a woman, Mary, but also for her as well as for all, without distinction, Jew and Greek, slave and free, male and female, for by faith they are all one in Christ Jesus. We too are included. Therefore, we can make Mary's Magnificat our own and sing of how God "has been mindful of the humble state of His servant." Come join with other servants of God as we praise Him and the gift of His son Jesus each Sunday morning at 9.

Christianity is defined by the entire biblical account of God's interaction with humanity

Christmas is over! We gathered around the tree and quickly unwrapped what had taken weeks, maybe months to prepare.

The wrapping paper is in the garbage and the leftover food is in the refrigerator. Our new possessions are on display or already in use. We bask in the glow of the love that is evident in the gifts we received. We have 364 shopping days left until Christmas!

In the coming months, our presents will fall by the wayside: clothing will wear out or be returned because it is the wrong size; toys will break or be lost; jewelry will lose its gleam; gift certificates will be spent; and the carefully-trimmed tree will come down.

The gifts we so longed after fade from our memory as we move on to the next gift-giving event — a birthday, an anniversary, Valentine's Day, etc. Our recollection of the love that gave

the gift will also recede so we won't often remind those who love us how much we appreciate their love.

Gone also will be the nativity scene which may be on the lawn or a side table or a mantle. The shepherds are wrapped in bubble-wrap and stored next to the figurines of barn animals. The angels were specially placed so that their wings would be safe from injury. The magi and their gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh (actually plaster, wood and plastic) have retired for yet another year. Mary, Joseph and baby Jesus rest in a special box with styrofoam peanuts (nobody wants a cracked baby for friends to see next year).

We have successfully completed our special tribute to the birth of the Son of God! When is Easter next year?

I had someone ask me this week, "Why do we celebrate Christmas? Isn't Easter, the rec-



First United Methodist Church
Rev. Ken F. Sellers

ognition of the resurrection, what makes Christians really Christians?"

I hadn't quite thought of Christmas in the light of such a question before. My answer is: The resurrection alone isn't enough to keep the faith of Christians alive. One must have the stories of the nativity, the 12-year-old Jesus in the temple, the baptism of Jesus by John, the calling of the disciples — well, you get the picture, I hope.

Christianity is not defined by the Christmas and Easter stories. Christianity is defined by the entire biblical account of God's interaction with humanity, from the creation story through the

Old and New Testaments to the last word of the Book of Revelation.

And that definition is refined by 2000 years of Christian living that has produced our current, and cultural, revelation of God. And for that gift, including the incarnation of God as Jesus, we can daily recall the love that produced it. And we can live in the glow of God's good grace every minute of every hour of every day!

The Nativity set is stored for another year, but the story of which Christmas is an integral part goes on! Thank God!

God's continuing story is visited frequently in many places by the community of faith.

If you cannot yet see the connection of your story with God's, visit a church this Sunday and find out more about it. If you have no church home, come visit us at First United Methodist Church for worship this Sunday at 10:45 a.m.

Humble yourselves before God

Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time: Casting all your care upon him: for he careth for you.

Be sober, be vigilant: because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: Whom resist steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world. But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eter-



St. John's Missionary Church
Rev. Bill Adams Sr.

nal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered awhile, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you. To him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. 1 Peter 5: 6-11

We need to prepare youth for the future

As I was driving past the school recently, I noticed a sign on their marquee that read: "Dream it! Believe it! Achieve it!"

Instantly, I remembered what Happy Shahian used to say a lot, "Man can achieve whatever man can conceive!"

It's wonderful to have a dream, but without believing that it is obtainable, the certainty of failure is almost always a reality. To have a vision of what could be is something seen otherwise than by natural sight.

The Holy Bible indicates to me that visionary experiences are a rather common means of communication between God and his children.

Dreaming is easy, believing is hard and following through and making it a reality is even harder. It takes commitment and dedication — something that most of us don't seem to have much of these days.

The young have a lot more energy than us older folks, and us older folks have a lot more wisdom, knowledge and maturity than the younger ones. We have an obligation, a moral duty to help our young people channel all that energy in the right direction and to help them realize their dreams, because soon enough, they will be leading us.

It's true, "The youth of today are the leaders of tomorrow"



Frontier Baptist Church
Rev. Dave Crowe

and tomorrow will come sooner than you think. How prepared they are for leadership tomorrow will be determined by how we (you and I) prepare them today.

What kind of moral fiber are we weaving into their everyday lives?

We have the responsibility of seeing to it that they are well educated, intelligent, responsible individuals with the ability to feel compassion for others and live Godly lives. That's the kind of stuff that good leaders are made of — people capable of seeing the big picture and acting accordingly.

Good leaders will dream of a better tomorrow! Good leaders will believe that it's possible to obtain. Good leaders will achieve and make these dreams, reality.

Let's give future generations even better, more capable leaders, than those given to us.

We owe it to our children and their children, but mostly, we owe it to our God, who dreamt! Who believed! Who achieved!

New Years is a good time to make changes

"Hey Josh, whataya think of the big drug bust in town the other day?"

"I'm still trying to sort it all out, Doug. There are a lot of people who are hurt by such things, not just the people who were arrested. I can imagine what this is doing to their families."

"I guess people don't think of others when they get into trouble do they?" Doug asked.

"Sometimes they think they can get by with it, but it all comes down on them eventually," Josh answered.

Doug continued: "Long ago a very wise man said, sinners believe that nobody sees what they do. But God sees everything even into the darkest corners and when the lawbreaker least expects it, he will be apprehended." (Sirach 23:11-20)

"Why do you think they get themselves into such things?" Josh asked.

"The wise man also said, for the sake of profit many sin and the struggle for wealth blinds the eyes. (Sirach 27:1) It's an attitude problem Josh," Doug said. "They think God doesn't see and they take the advice of fools."

"Can they change?" Josh asked.



Empowering Families
Dr. Donald Smith

"Sure they can," Doug answered. "There's always hope. The wise man said God made us all subject to our own free choices. If those people choose the right way they can change. Before us all are life and death and whatever we choose is what we get." (Sirach 15:14-17)

"What's your advice?" Josh asked.

"You know, Josh, right now we're in the most of beautiful of holiday seasons. It's a good time for all of us to make changes in our lives for the New Year."

"It is wise for all of us no matter how good we think we are, to make the choice to examine ourselves and determine to follow the commandments of the Lord," Doug said. (15:15)

"Distance yourself from fools and do not delay your conversion to the Lord for equal to his majesty is his everlasting mercy." (27:12; 5:8; 2:18)

Motion for second FCSA trial denied

Continued from Page 1 based on the evidence that was presented in the courtroom. There was nothing said about the petition," the judge said.

"If the petition was introduced, it would probably have resulted in a different decision. If I would have known this, I would have probably ruled the other way."

Etzel and Larry Sofaly, Fort Clark MUD general manager, were the only ones to take the witness stand during the December hearing.

Sofaly testified that the petition had 476 signatures, and that 434 of the signatures had been verified as members in good standing.

After the Preservation Society circulated the petition

last summer, a special membership meeting was held on Aug. 10 to recall the directors. The majority of the members voting chose to remove Frank Cheaney, Carol Miller, Jack Simpson, Glen White and Bob Williamson, and to keep Saylor and Mona Miller.

"The mandate of the membership was very clear," said Pat Ellis, representing Saylor and Mona Miller during the hearing. "It was not a close vote."

Saylor and Mona Miller later appointed five new directors — Nolan Brandt, John Dixon, Al Jenkins, Rozetta Pingenot and Santos Yerena. The fort operated without a board for over a month after the initial lawsuit was filed by the association.

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HEALTH

Tips to successfully lose weight for the New Year

Nearly everyone sees the New Year as a chance to make a new start or an important change.

Many of us make formal resolutions, and up to 60 percent of them involve improving our health or appearance.

Certified trainer and fitness guru James Villedieu, author of the hugely popular "Body Sculpting Bibles for Men and Women," offers these suggestions for forming good resolutions and then sticking with them.

1. **Set reasonable goals:** Losing 30 pounds in a month is neither realistic nor safe. A better goal is 1 to 2 pounds a week. If you set an unattainable goal, you'll only get discouraged when you fail.

2. **Remember all the benefits:** While you may start an exercise program to improve your appearance, don't forget all the other benefits. Regular exercise helps relieve stress, improve energy levels, and helps prevent

heart attacks, strokes, osteoporosis and a wide range of other health problems.

3. **Start with small goals that lead to big rewards:** If going to a gym every day seems impossible with your schedule, don't give up on exercise entirely. Add a little exercise to your day — take the stairs, walk on your lunch hour. Hit the gym just once a week, and as you start to feel your energy increase, you'll be motivated to find more time in your week.

4. **Build in rewards:** Although a healthier body should be its own reward, sometimes it helps to get something tangible in return for your hard work. When you hit a goal, reward yourself with a massage, a new outfit, or a movie night out with friends (just avoid the jumbo popcorn!)

5. **Pick up the weights:** Despite common misconceptions, weight lifting won't make you stiff or give women big "bulky" muscles. In fact, weight training

with dumbbells or a resistance machine helps burn fat, build lean muscle tissue, and can even help fight osteoporosis and heart disease.

6. **Avoid "get thin quick" schemes:** If it sounds too good to be true, it is. From "fat burning" diet pills (dangerous) to electronic ab stimulators (really!), the promise of results without effort is just a marketing gimmick designed to reduce your wallet — not your waistline.

7. **Don't do it alone:** Proper diet and exercise go hand in hand. One without the other is a recipe for failure. Just because you walked for 30 minutes doesn't mean you can reward yourself with a pint of your favorite ice cream.

8. **Be aware of your choices:** Put extra thought into making wise food selections. Choose lean chicken or fish in place of steak, take steamed vegetables instead of mashed potatoes, and skip the heavy sauces and gravy.

Just thinking about what and how much you eat can make all the difference in the world.

9. **Find the fun:** Getting in shape doesn't have to mean the same workout day after day. Enjoy yourself. Find a great exercise class. Go dancing. Ride a bike. Get a dog and take it for long walks. Experiment with cuisine around the world while making healthy meals. Join a walking or hiking club.

10. **Remember that health starts at home:** While the obesity rate for all Americans is climbing, the rate for children and teen-agers is particularly alarming. Everyone in the family can benefit from joining you in healthy activities and better meals, and you'll help them develop good habits for life.

If you have any trouble staying with your fitness plan, Villedieu recommends: "Visualize or see yourself the way you want to look. Use these mental images to fuel your determination to achieve success."

Doctors find cancer genes inherited from both parents

HOUSTON — Both sides of the family are important in considering the genetic risk of breast cancer and prostate cancers, says a genetics specialist here at the Baylor College of Medicine.

"The genes that cause these diseases are genes you inherit from both parents," said Dr. Sharon Plon, associate professor of molecular and human genetics and pediatrics at Baylor. "For a woman, if mom's family has no history of breast cancer, but

dad has three sisters who were diagnosed with breast cancer, that's just as worrisome."

The same is true for other forms of cancer that are influenced by genetics.

"People tend to focus on the parent who is the same gender as they are. Women look at their mom's side for breast cancer and men look at their dad's side for prostate cancer, but this is missing half the story," she said. About 10 percent of all can-

cers are in people who have inherited a predisposition to cancer. Genetics counselors assess those who might have an increased risk of cancer because of family history.

"Even if there is a history of cancer in your family, that does not necessarily mean you will develop the disease," Plon said. "But, it's important to determine if you are at an increased risk and may need early screening." Families with a genetic sus-

ceptibility to cancer may have multiple family members with the same cancers, family members who develop cancer at an unusually young age, family members who develop a second or third "new" cancer, or family members with certain rare cancers, such as male breast cancer.

Plon said those who are concerned about an increased risk of cancer should discuss the issue with their primary care physicians.

Jensen: Exotic animals do not make good pets

So you have some extra cash and you've been thinking about buying an exotic pet, such as a tiger or mountain lion?

Not so fast, say animal experts. "There really is not one good reason for an individual to own big exotic carnivores," said Dr. James Jensen, a professor in the College of Veterinary Medicine at Texas A&M University and an expert on exotics.

"There are numerous reasons why you should not own one. I would strongly advise anyone considering this idea to think it through very carefully. If a person buys one, it's a good bet that both the animal and the owner will end up

unhappy." Big exotic carnivores include lions, tigers, jaguars, leopards, bears and cougars.

Texas is home to more exotic animals than any state in the country, and there are thousands of the animals living in homes and ranches across the state. So many, in fact, that the state passed a new law last year intending to restrict the widespread ownership of dangerous exotic animals.

The new laws say each county must have its own regulations and enforcement regarding exotic animals. Many counties have banned ownership of exotics, while others have much stricter laws regarding animals. The negatives of owning an

exotic animal far outweigh any benefits, Jensen believes.

The first consideration is cost. Many exotics animals can cost thousands of dollars each.

"Plus, they need a specific diet, and that includes meat or meat products, and these diets can be very expensive," Jensen said. "A large cat like a tiger or lion can easily consume 6 to 8 pounds of meat a day. It's rare when an exotic can be trained to eat cat food like a typical house cat."

Another huge consideration is personal risk. It's not uncommon for an exotic carnivore to turn on its owner or others for seemingly no reason, Jensen explains.

"An exotic can go from a lov-

ing, trusting pet to an attack animal in a split second," he said. "When a 300- or 400-pound animal has a mood change, the damage it can inflict can be very significant."

"There are some remarkable stories about owners having the same animal for years and suddenly it attacks them. And if the animals should ever escape, many people can be at risk."

Because exotics are often kept outdoors, it means they must be placed in cages, and rarely are such cages a healthy environment, Jensen notes. Many cages are far too small, and the living conditions are often less than ideal for the animal.

Heads or tails?

The three grandkids woke up at first light. One that had to be held, one that wanted to be held, and one that wanted to run. Three kids and one old man. One sleepy old granddad.

It was Christmas Day. A day to rejoice and be thankful for all my blessings. It was hard to concentrate on blessings and keep up with three fledglings.

I finally got the runner interested in TV. I could hold the other two and relax.

I began to think about Christmas and family of yesteryear. A cousin came to mind. I wondered where Bill was. He was a dumb kid. He really was. He was the embarrassment of the Hall clan. Now you know how ignorant he really was.

Every time a group got together, they would tease Bill. One of the uncles would say, "Watch this. Come here, boy. I have some money for you."

I would cringe with shame. I knew what was going to happen.



But I Could Be Wrong

Chuck Hall

"Here's a nickel and a dime. Take which ever one you want."

Dumb little Bill would always choose the nickel. One Christmas I had had enough.

Taking Bill aside, I told him, "You're an idiot, son. I know the nickel is bigger, but the dime is worth more. Next time they offer you money, take the dime."

"Oh no, cousin Chuck. The first time I take the dime, they'll stop giving me nickels."

Bill has probably never worked a day in his life. He no doubt has an endless supply of money saved up a nickel at a time.

But I could be wrong.

MRGDC makes holiday donations

On Dec. 21, the Middle Rio Grande Development Council's executive staff presented a total of \$1,200 to local agencies in Christmas donations. The money was raised by taco sales throughout the year, the money coming mostly from staff members of the MRGDC.

The Dimmit County Child Welfare Board received \$500, which will be used for many of the needs of foster children in the Dimmit County area, including the "Elf Alicia" program that purchases toys for foster children and delivers them to their homes at Christmas time.

During the rest of the year, the board provides an allowance to each foster child to purchase school supplies and clothes. During the holidays, the board works with local schools to help them identify other children who wouldn't otherwise receive toys on Christmas.

The Dimmit County Public Library received \$300 to help support the programs being planned for the Wade Museum, part of the expansion project nearly at completion at the library. The library provides summer reading programs, computer access to visitors and projects involving children.

The Canterbury Villa Nursing Home received a 27-inch Apex color stereo television that will be placed in their activity room.

The Ministerial Alliance of

Dimmit County, an organization made up of multi-denominational churches, received a check for \$200. This money will be given to various charities to support those less fortunate this Christmas season.

Finally, the Area Agency on Aging, an MRGDC partner, received \$200 for their various giving programs.

According to Lydia Seanz, TRACS coordinator for MRGDC and Taco Fund member, the Child Welfare Board was the first organization to approach the MRGDC for funds to help their program.

At the time, the COG was unable to donate any of its funding to the work of this and similar organizations due to federal fund use restrictions. So the staff came up with the concept of a taco fund where staff volunteers would cook up homemade tacos each week to sell to the other staff members.

The first year, the fund raised \$500 for the Child Welfare Board. Since then, the number of organizations receiving the yearly donations has grown to five, and the amount of money raised has increased to \$2,500.

Each week, the Taco Committee, made up of MRGDC staff members Lydia Seiple, Ramon Johnston, San Juanita Galvan, Mark Mendez and Saenz, helps cook and serve homemade tacos for \$1 apiece. On average, they raise \$60 a week.



Visiting for the holidays Photo by J.J. Guidry
Vinita Sahajwala, originally of India, and Phil Gilbreth, both of Los Angeles, are presented a copy of "90 Miles on Highway 90" by Jewel Robinson of the Kinney County Chamber of Commerce. The two were visiting Gilbreth's parents, Tracy and Kay, who live at Fort Clark.

Floyd graduates from academy

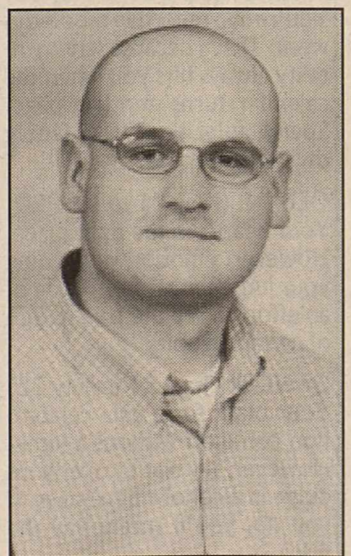
Lynn Floyd graduated fifth in his class from the DelMar Regional Police Academy in Corpus Christi on Dec. 17.

Floyd, a 1993 graduate of Brackett High School, is the son of Harrell and Janis Floyd.

Floyd and the other cadets completed over 700 hours of police training, including defensive tactics, pursuit driving, baton and firearms at the 17-week academy.

Floyd is in the process of becoming a reserve police officer with the Driscoll Police Department in Nueces County. He and his wife, Amanda live in Portland, where he is the pastor of New Community Church.

During the graduation cer-



Lynn Floyd

emony, he received the top physical fitness award in his class.

Rotary hosts annual Christmas celebration

By Frances McMaster
Contributing Writer

The Brackettville Rotary Club met on Dec. 19 for its annual Christmas celebration.

Frank Cheaney headed the program and his wife, Ruby, was a special guest who played Christmas music on the piano prior to the meeting. She also accompanied the group as carols were sung.

Mr. Cheaney spoke about Christmas traditions, and Taylor Stephenson and Tully Shahan joined him as the trio sang "We Three Kings."

Guests of honor were Yolanda and Gilbert Rueda as host par-

ents of Rotary's foreign exchange student, Maarten Voss, who also attended the meeting. Maarten is a friend of Tres, the Rueda's son.

The Ruedas each spoke about their experience having Maarten live with them. Much good-natured teasing took place as each of the foster parents expressed their pleasure at having had Maarten as their guest.

He will soon be moving in with another friend, Elliot Stone, son of Greg and Louisa Stone. It is traditional that each exchange student stay with two different families during their allotted time in order to broaden their experience.

Duplicate Bridge Club hosts party

The Duplicate Bridge Club held its annual Christmas party on Dec. 17 in the Gorgas Room at Fort Clark. There were 20 people in attendance, playing the Mitchell Movement at five tables after a tasty repast.

The winners in the North-South were Helen Marie Jones and Rozetta Pingent. Flo and Jim Stafford finished second and Ruth Potter and Sara Richhart were third. Sharon Boucher and Ann Watt won the East-West, Carolyn Rutledge and Nelda Thomason took second place, and Lloyd and Orlene Alvis were third.

DAR chapter hosts Christmas luncheon

As she has done for the past several years, Toni Hull hosted the Uvalde de las Encinas Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution for a Christmas luncheon in her home.

Brackettville chapter members are Jan Chism, Charlotte Corey, Woodie Hornburg, Marjorie Love, Pat McKelvy and Louise Stone.

The meeting was called to order by McKelvy, the regent. The pledge of allegiance to the flag of the United States of America was led by Dorothy Martin and the pledge to the Texas flag by Helen Fryar. Elizabeth Carmichael gave the invocation.

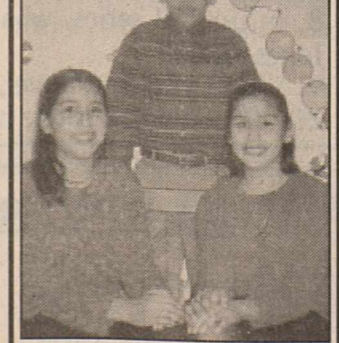
Following the luncheon, Susan Wynn, pianist at Baptist Temple Church, entertained the

group, singing "O Holy Night," "Mary's Little Boy," and "Away in a Manger," and then sang and signed (sign language) "Silent Night." Toni Hull accompanied her on the keyboard.

Wynn then told some of her experiences of 28 years as being an interpreter for the deaf. "Now the deaf have a much better chance of being successful in school, college and life in general, thanks to sign language as a way to learn and communicate," she said.

Wynn is an interpreter for three fourth-graders at Anthon School and also works with a 4-year-old at Dalton School. She and her husband, Dan, music director at Baptist Temple Church, have lived in Uvalde for 2 1/2 years.

Triples Turn 11



Happy Birthday Elena, Daniel & Elidia Molinar

BUSINESS

TXU Energy announces sales agreement with RGEC

DALLAS — TXU Energy has signed a multi-year contract, effective Jan. 1, to provide energy and related services to Rio Grande Electric Cooperative.

Under the agreement, TXU Energy will expand an existing relationship to provide wholesale power services to Rio Grande in the Electric Reliability Council of Texas region.

"By using TXU Energy's services, we're able to enhance service, manage our risk and provide energy cost savings to our members," said Dan Laws, general manager and chief executive officer of Rio Grande.

Peter Greenberg, vice president of origination at TXU Energy, added: "We

look forward to continuing our longstanding relationship with Rio Grande, and are pleased that they have chosen TXU Energy as a supplier in the ERCOT region."

Rio Grande Electric Cooperative has in excess of 5,000 members, and serves a diverse customer base in 18 West Texas counties and two New Mexico counties, including residential, small commercial and industrial consumers, as well as a large number of agricultural operations. Rio Grande's service area spans more than 27,000 square miles, roughly one-tenth of the state land mass, as it follows the river, from which it gets its name, for some 750 miles.

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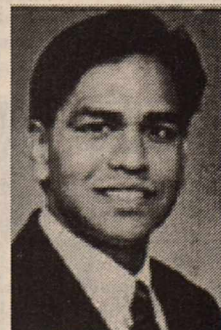
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CROSSWORD PUZZLE

ACROSS
1 Agreement
5 Colorful liquid
10 Bucks
14 Aroma of flowers
15 Lauder
16 Skin lotion ingredient
17 Road sign
18 Highway patrol setups
20 Help letters
21 Curb
22 Wrong
23 Late beloved
25 Croak (less crudely)
26 Job
28 Flag
31 House divisions
32 Friendliness or compassion
34 Period
36 Times
37 Hiding places
38 South African fox
39 Time

DOWN
40 One who sent the Wise Men to find Jesus
41 UCLA athlete
42 Evaluate
44 Unclean
45 Make lace
46 Punitive
47 Despicable person
50 Cause of distress
51 Bank acct.
54 160-acre parcels, in 1862
57 Completed
58 Ruler's title
59 Burning
60 Subside
61 Word of disgust
62 Endings for girls' names
63 Wraps up

ACROSS
3 "___" of America;
Indiana's motto
4 Touch lightly
5 Annoy
6 Fluttering tree
7 Object
8 Bess Truman
9 Joe Sr.'s youngest child
10 1875 Bizet opera
11 Kirghiz's
12 Soaks
13 Notorious German
19 Contaminated
21 Uses one of the senses
24 ___ in; surrounds
25 Place for a speaker
26 Canadian tribe
53 God of war
55 To: Scot.
56 Newt
57 Homonym for a letter

ACROSS
29 Late TV show host
30 Riveter of the '40s
32 Cigarette ingredients
33 Start of a Brazilian city
35 Take care of
37 In case
38 Song
40 Great amount; colloq.
41 Jaw or hip
43 Controls the direction of
44 Touch and others
46 Man of the cloth
47 Female superstar
48 City in Italia
49 Rising time
50 Worms
52 Rip violently
53 To: Scot.
56 Newt
57 Homonym for a letter

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Trivia Time Answers (c) 2001 DBR Media, Inc.
1. Galveston; 2. Switzerland; 3. Germany; 4. Hermes; 5. Marton; 6. "The King and I"; 7. Mr. Porch; 8. Cannonball Express; 9. Virginia Woolf; 10. Suspension

ROARING TWENTIES

In the grid below, twenty words can be found that fit the category for today. Circle each word that you find and list it in the space provided at the right of the grid. Words can be found in all directions—forward, backward, horizontally, vertically and diagonally. An example is given to get you started. Can you find today's 20 words?

Today's Category: RELATIVES & PARTS OF SPEECH

G	R	A	N	D	M	A	D	V	E	K	B
N	D	P	N	M	S	U	E	V	S	J	V
O	R	D	I	O	E	N	I	S	U	O	C
I	E	N	E	T	U	T	B	E	W	N	N
T	H	A	C	H	C	N	V	E	D	U	R
C	T	R	E	E	B	S	H	S	B	O	E
N	A	G	J	R	G	P	S	W	V	N	T
U	F	D	E	R	E	T	S	I	S	O	H
J	A	V	S	N	O	S	D	N	A	R	G
N	O	I	T	I	S	O	P	E	R	P	U
O	W	W	E	L	C	N	U	W	W	S	A
C	E	E	Q	R	E	H	T	O	R	B	D

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Trivia Time by Walter Branch

- What city on the Gulf Coast was also a hit song for Glen Campbell?
- If you receive a holiday postcard with "Helvetia" on the stamp, in what country was it posted?
- Of what language do the Amish speak a dialect?
- Who is the Greek counterpart of the Roman god, Mercury?
- What was the real first name of actor John Wayne?
- In what musical is the song "Shall We Dance?" featured?
- Who designed the Volkswagen Beetle?
- In the TV series, what was the name of Casey Jones' train?
- Who wrote the novel, "To the Lighthouse"?
- What kind of bridge is the Golden Gate Bridge?

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

- | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Dec. 26.....Dorothy Clark | Dec. 29.....Judy Hooker |
| Dec. 26.....Pat Foster | Dec. 31.....Jerry Adams |
| Dec. 26.....Pam Melanson | Jan. 1.....Tootsie Herndon |
| Dec. 27.....Margarita Pena | Jan. 1.....Mary Jane Olson |
| Dec. 27.....Christina Smith | Jan. 1.....Valerie Vela |
| Dec. 27.....J.J. Smith | Jan. 2.....Amanda Meek |
| Dec. 27.....Taylor Stephenson | Jan. 2.....Jerry Taugner |
| Dec. 28.....Hortencia Castro | Jan. 3.....Janelle Senne |
| Dec. 28.....Tiny Castro | Jan. 5.....Norman Butler |
| Dec. 28.....Jesse Garcia | Jan. 7.....Jose A. Cabello |
| Dec. 29.....Clarisa Aguirre | Jan. 7.....Juan M. Flores |
| Dec. 29.....Joan Boutwell | Jan. 7.....Michael Garcia |
| Dec. 29.....Myrna Gonzalez | Jan. 7.....John Osborn |

FLOROSCOPES

by Charles Cooper

ARIES (March 21 to April 19) Be careful with those New Year's resolutions. Taking on too much can be very discouraging. Be realistic.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20) You're in a reflective mood this week. That's because sentimentality always hits you when the calendar turns another page. Spend quiet time with family over the weekend.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20) Your heart's in the right place. However, emotion is clouding your judgment. Make more of an effort to see the true nature of certain people.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22) Your plans for a gala celebration come off without a hitch. However, try not to overly indulge in alcoholic beverages. If you do, you'll surely pay the price.

LEO (July 23 to August 22) A certain special someone you want to invite out is unavailable. Don't take this too much to heart. You've made your plans at the last minute.

VIRGO (August 23 to September 22) Try not to dwell too much on your holiday expenditures. With some careful budgeting, you'll be able to catch up. Later in the week, get-togethers with friends are pleasant.

LIBRA (September 23 to October 22) People are drawn to you this week. That's because you're particularly buoyant and funny. Some find business opportunities mixed in with socializing.

SCORPIO (October 23 to November 21) Waiting for a certain friend to make holiday plans is useless. Go ahead and do what you want. Otherwise, you could find yourself sitting home with nothing to do.

SAGITTARIUS (November 22 to December 21) Let family take precedence over friends. This avoids hurt feelings. Later in the week, bigwigs are pleased with your progress on a certain work project.

CAPRICORN (December 22 to January 19) Take stock of where your career is headed. You may want to make some changes in the New Year. The weekend sees you hosting one more holiday party before it's all over.

AQUARIUS (January 20 to February 18) Sort through those party invitations and pick the one that's most interesting. In business, it's a good time to look for financial backing. Once you receive this, there's no stopping you.

PISCES (February 19 to March 20) You find your plans changing at the last minute. Don't let this upset your holiday. Just go with the flow, and you'll enjoy the day.

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Roaring Twenties Solution:

- Adjective
- Aunt
- Brother
- Conjunction
- Cousin
- Daughter
- Father
- Grandma
- Grandpa
- Grandson
- Mother
- Nephew
- Niece
- Noun
- Preposition
- Pronoun
- Sister
- Son
- Uncle
- Verb

G	R	A	N	D	M	A	D	V	E	K	B
N	D	P	N	M	S	U	E	V	S	J	V
O	R	D	I	O	E	N	I	S	U	O	C
I	E	N	E	T	U	T	B	E	W	N	N
T	H	A	C	H	C	N	V	E	D	U	R
C	T	R	E	E	B	S	H	S	B	O	E
N	A	G	J	R	G	P	S	W	V	N	T
U	F	D	E	R	E	T	S	I	S	O	H
J	A	V	S	N	O	S	D	N	A	R	G
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O	W	W	E	L	C	N	U	W	W	S	A
C	E	E	Q	R	E	H	T	O	R	B	D

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 ASSESS SOILED
 TAT PENAL
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REQUESTS FOR PROPOSALS

MIDDLE RIO GRANDE Development Council announces the availability of Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) Grant Funding for Fiscal Year 2003 in cooperation with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ). Eligible project categories under this grant include: Local Enforcement, Source Reduction and Recycling, Citizens' Collection Stations, "Small" Registered Transfer Stations, Household Hazardous Waste Management, Technical Studies, Local Solid Waste Management Plans, River and Lake Clean-ups, Texas Country Clean-ups, Educational and Training Projects. Eligible applicants are: Cities, Counties, Public Schools and School Districts, General and Special Law Districts and Regional Planning Commissions (Councils of Governments) in the Middle Rio Grande Development Council Service delivery area. Please note that as per Texas Commission on Environmental Quality guidelines applications for the collection and/or transportation of MSW are not eligible for funding furthermore, as a matter of policy the MRGDC Board does not solicit applications for soft costs. For more information on this request for project proposals, and/or a copy of an application packet, please contact: Marco A. Lopez, Solid Waste Coordinator, Middle Rio Grande Development Council, P.O. Box 1199, Carrizo Springs, TX 78834, phone (830) 876-1286. Proposals shall be accepted until 5 P.M. - January 10, 2002.

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- Acreage - 80.03 Acres Tract #303 Leona Ranch.
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SPORTS

Tigers run past Panthers 50-22

Brackett upped its season record to 6-4 on Dec. 17 as the Tigers ran away with a 50-22 win over the Comstock Panthers.

The Tigers jumped out to an 8-2 lead after the opening stanza and then outscored the Panthers 15-10 in the second period to go up 23-12 at intermission.

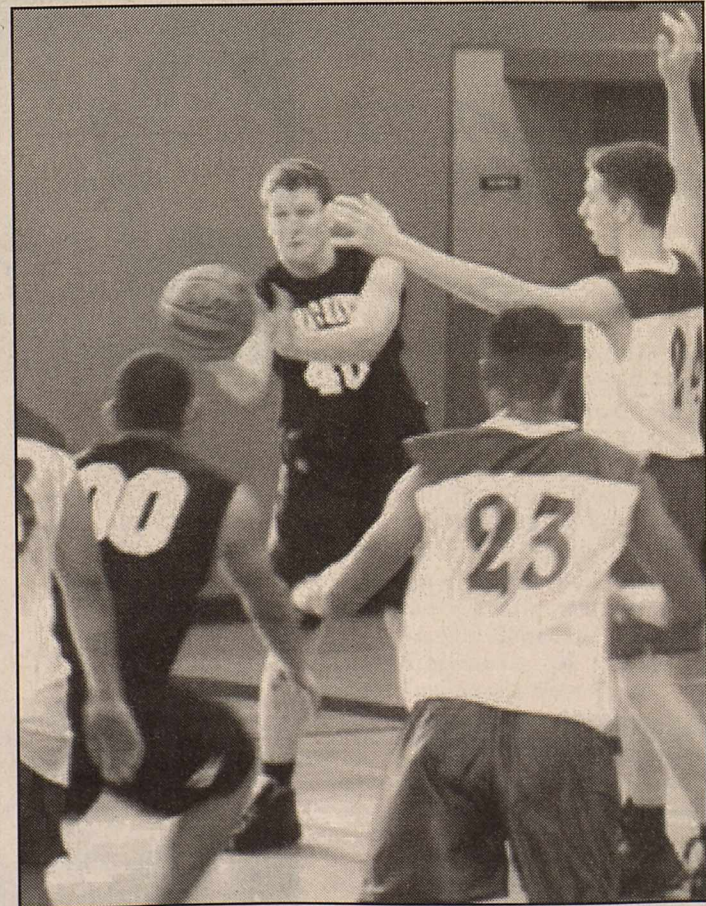
Brackett put the game away in the second half, outscoring Comstock 27-10.

"Our defensive effort was good again, along with our turnovers being cut down again," Tigers coach Charlie Marquardt said. "The guys are starting to come together as a team and realize what role each has to play in order for us to be successful. I'm really pleased with our balanced scoring."

Philip Munoz was Brackett's leading scorer with 12 points. Jared Hobbs finished with 11 points and six rebounds, and Charlie Slaughter also finished in double figures with 10 points.

Jesse Davis pitched in eight points and eight rebounds for the Tigers, Boyd Brotherton scored five points and Noe Talamantes had four points.

The Tigers resume action on Tuesday with a 6:30 road game against Utopia.



Pounding the paint
Tigers center Dietrich Davis (40) works the ball into teammate Philip Munoz (00) during recent action.
Photo by J.J. Guidry

Valenzuela leads Cubettes with triple-double

Emily Valenzuela put together a triple-double Dec. 19 to lead the Brackett Cubettes to a 45-22 home win over Sacred Heart in the eighth-grade basketball action.

"We reached seven of our eleven goals," Cubettes coach Rhonda Marquardt said. "Emily

had her personal best game with a triple-double, and we did a good job of playing as a team."

Valenzuela finished the contest with 23 points, 23 rebounds, 11 steals and two assists.

Lola Cano had eight points and eight steals, Kara Yeager tallied six points and four re-

bounds, Nadine Terrazas pitched in six points and two assists, and Allison Del Bosque added two points and three rebounds.

The Cubettes resume action on Jan. 11 when they will compete in the annual Nueces Canyon Invitational tournament in

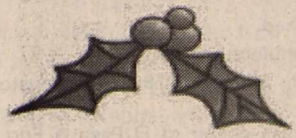
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For information call (830) 563-2961 8-5, M-F,



A Holiday Greeting from

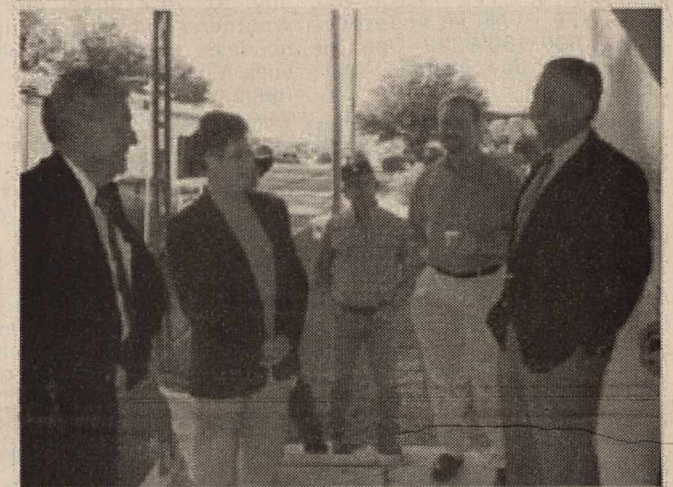


Congressman Henry Bonilla

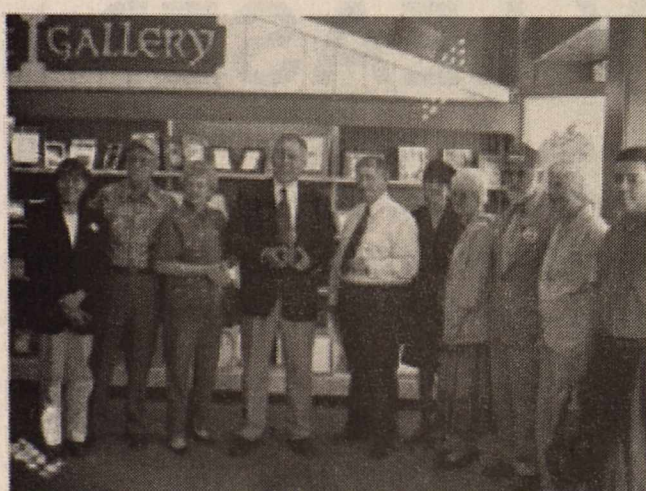


Dear Friends,

I hope that this holiday season brings you and yours all the joy on earth.



It has been my honor to represent you for the last ten years and I look forward to another successful year in 2003.



All the best,



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