



Local landowners face condemnation

BY RUBEN CANTU-RODRIGUEZ

WINTERS ENTERPRISE

WINTERS - Oncor Electric Delivery Company started condemnation procedures against five landowners in Runnels County, in order to start building the Bluff Creek-Brown transmission lines. The project will connect the Bluff Creek Switching Station to the future Brown Switching Station in Brown County.

Condemnation procedures were filed on December 9, 2010, in the District Court, once the company and landowners were unable to settle for the right of way of the lattice steel towers.

Landowners filed for condemnation in Runnels County include

Brian W. Dierschke, Carolyn Kay Colburn, Malcolm L. Bredemeyer, Marian Guerin, and Robbin W. Middleton and Carolyn Middleton.

"We negotiate a settlement with landowners, the condemnation procedures filed are the ones who were not willing to settle," said Catherine Cuellar, a spokeswoman for Oncor.

Landowners contacted by The Winters Enterprise did not comment on the matter and others didn't return the calls. The route is approved by Public Utility Commission of Texas and reviewed if some of the landowners oppose the project.

This project is part of the 2005 legislative initiative to increase

the ability to have renewable wind power in Texas. Over 850 miles of new lines were awarded to Oncor Delivery Company all over the state.

"We spent years making the public aware through public meetings, advertising in newspapers and direct mail to all landowners potentially impacted," said Cuellar.

Transmission lines move electricity from power plants to distribution systems. In response to the Texas Legislature's direction in 2005, the Public Utility Commission of Texas has designated certain areas for development of wind power, known as Competitive Renewable Energy Zones.

The Public Utility Commission has approved a plan for building transmission lines to deliver the electric energy produced by wind generating facilities in the CREZ to the Texas electric market.

As part of the process, Oncor is building two connected projects in the area that consist of building approximately 90 miles of double circuit electric transmission line.

Central Bluff-Bluff Creek will connect the future Central Bluff Switching Station in Nolan County to the existing Bluff Creek Switching Station in Taylor County, and the Bluff Creek-Brown transmission lines, this project will connect the Bluff Creek Switching Station to the

future Brown Switching Station in Brown County.

According to Oncor these two projects have been recommended by the Electric Reliability Council of Texas to ensure continued safe and reliable electric service to the State due to the increased integration of electric energy generated by wind production facilities.

The line will be a 345 kilovolt electric transmission line in Taylor, Runnels, Coleman, and Brown counties.

Bluff Creek Switching Station is located 2.25 miles southeast of U.S. Highway 277 in Taylor County, and Brown Switching

SEE ONCOR, 6

Farewell Christmas trees



RUBEN CANTU-RODRIGUEZ / WINTERS ENTERPRISE

With a packed house, a great show and bittersweet sensation of the Christmas season about to end, last Thursday, December 23, the Rock Hotel closed the second annual "Magic Moments with Trees." Richard and Starlyn Smelker entertained the night. Assistants enjoyed their music and refreshments served, the presentation closed the 2010 Christmas trees exhibition at the historical building and Agricultural museum.



Commissioners Court schedules special meeting

Burn ban may be lifted

BY RUBEN CANTU-RODRIGUEZ

WINTERS ENTERPRISE

WINTERS - The Runnels County Commissioners Court scheduled a special meeting for this Thursday, December 30, 2010, to be held at 9:30 a.m. at the Courthouse.

Items for discussion and action include consider approving payment of all current accounts, consider approving official bonds of Barry Hilliard as Runnels County Judge and Ann Strube as Runnels County Treasurer, meeting and discussion with the Board of Commissioners of Runnels County Emergency Services District No. 1, and consider rescinding the order prohibiting the outdoor burning adopted on November 15, 2010.

The meeting will be held at the Commissioners Courtroom, at the Courthouse, 613 Hutchings Avenue.

The notice of meeting was posted on Monday, December 27, 2010 at 9 a.m. and signed by Runnels County Clerk Elesia Ocker.

Ronnie Vanicek retires from NRCS

RUBEN CANTU-RODRIGUEZ

WINTERS ENTERPRISE

WINTERS - Friends, fellow workers and family of Ronnie Vanicek enjoyed last Monday a retirement reception for the District Conservationist with the Natural Resources Conservation Service, at the USDA building, on Hutchings Avenue.

The Runnels Soil and Water Conservation District sponsored the retirement party from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Ronnie will be retiring from the NRCS effective December 31, 2010, after 34 years of public service. He spent the last 20 years in Ballinger.

Ronnie, Sara and their three children, Ashley, Russ and Wes, moved to Ballinger in 1990 when Ronnie took over operations of the Ballinger field office of the then, Soil Conservation Service. After the retirement he will be changing careers, to start a guided hunting service and private consulting.

Ronnie started his career in Bartlett and spent time in Big Lake, Edinburg, and Pleasanton, before moving to Ballinger.

Fifteen years serving the community

BY RUBEN CANTU-RODRIGUEZ

WINTERS ENTERPRISE

WINTERS - Fifteen years after becoming the first woman appointed as Runnels County Judge, and the only one who has served so far, Judge Marilyn Egan is leaving the office. In her retirement, and after 51 years of working uninterruptedly she will be dedicating her time to her family and to do more volunteer work.

Judge Egan was appointed in 1995, by the Commissioners Court and the next year she won her first election for the position.

Prior to become the Runnels County representative she had worked with attorneys for over 30 years as a legal assistant. The last five years before she was appointed she was working for

an attorney in San Angelo.

"At that time I was appointed because the Judge had resigned, I was supposed to fill the position until the election," Judge Egan remembers.

One of the main challenges of the office was to bring the county up to date in criminal cases. Runnels County had been accumulating a considerable backlog.

Judge Egan had to deal with the job for the first year of her period without any secretarial or computer assistance "It was very difficult because we did not have computers, everything had to be done by hand."

The challenge didn't frightened Judge Egan, she brought her own personal computer and along with the by-then County Auditor, Darlene Smith, attended a computer school in San

Angelo, to learn how to operate the managing and administration systems.

Back in those days only the Tax office, Treasurer's office and Auditor office used computers, and that was exclusively for payroll, accounts and tax statements.

The county purchased some used computers from the State of Texas for \$50 each, and as others could see how easy was to use a computer and how much better it was, more offices started updating their systems.

"We were able to get a free software from the state for our criminal system, so we could enter the cases in and that helped us to update the archives."



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

SEE JUDGE, 6

After 15 years as County Judge Marilyn Egan will be dedicating more time to her family, and will be doing volunteer work.

Got News ?

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FUNERALS

Bonnie Eva Plumley

Bonnie Eva Plumley, 65 formerly of Brady, went home to be with the Lord, December 25, 2010 at her residence, surrounded by her family. Visitation will be 6-8 pm, Wednesday, Dec. 29, at Heritage Family Funeral Home. Funeral service will be held at 3 pm Thursday, Dec. 30, at the First Baptist Church, in Ballinger, with Brother Richard Evans officiating. Burial to follow in Wilmeth Cemetery.



Bonnie was born May 16, 1945 in San Diego, California, to Nora and Luther Potts. She loved being around her kids. Bonnie loved to watch softball and listening to music. She loved being Grandma and spending time with her grandchildren.

Bonnie is survived by: a daughter, Sherry Teague and husband, Frankie of Brady, three sons, Kenneth Plumley and wife, Donna of Ballinger, Chester Plumley and wife Linda of Ballinger, and Fernando Zaldiver of Lansing Michigan, eleven grandchildren, Brian Plumley and wife, C.J., Roxanne Plumley, Kendra Plumley, Chris Teague, Bonnie Teague, Frankie Teague, Jason Combs, Jacob Stokes, Jayton Combs, Derick Plumley, and Whitney Plumley, two great-grandchildren, Layne Plumley and Blake Plumley, a brother, Olen Potts, two sisters, Pauline Alewine and Ruby Goodson, and numerous nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by: her parents, a daughter, Chrystle Gayle Plumley, three brothers, Bill Potts, Paul Potts, and Doc Potts, and seven sisters, Barbara Henry, Mary Clark, Stella McKinney, Esther Jonas, Veda Anderson, Edna Woodrum, and Fay Murphey.

Winters Enterprise, Dec. 30, 2010

Mary Evelyn Gilbert

MONAHANS - Mary Evelyn Gilbert, age 84, of Monahans passed away Wednesday, Dec. 22, 2010 at her home.

She was born Dec. 1, 1926 in Dublin, Texas to William Ivey and Bertha (Holmes) Whitfield. She was a homemaker. Graveside services were held at 2 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 23, 2010 at Lakeview Cemetery in Winters with John Wynn officiating. Services are under the direction of Harkey Funeral Home.

Survivors include her daughter, Becky Golden of Monahans; 2 grandchildren and 3 great-grandchildren.

She is preceded in death by her parents; her husband, Lloyd Gilbert; and her daughter, Pamela Briley.

Winters Enterprise, Dec. 30, 2010

Car-tractor crash leaves one man dead

WINTERS ENTERPRISE

STAFF REPORT

ABILENE - One person was killed on Tuesday, December 21 in Knox County, when a car struck a tractor towing a farm plow. The crash occurred at 6:30 p.m. on Farm Road 267, one mile south of Rhineland, Tx., in Knox County.

Aaron Jeffrey Urbanczyk, 25 years of age from Munday, Tx., was pronounced dead at the scene by Judge Travis Floyd. The body was taken to McCauley-Smith Funeral Home in Munday, Tx.

Urbanczyk was driving a 2000 Chevrolet Malibu, and Santiago Luis Martinez Espinal, from Munday, Tx., was driving a John Deere tractor towing a farm plow.

The car was headed south on Farm Road 267, one mile south of Rhineland and Martinez-Espinal was driving the tractor north-bound on the same roadway.

According to the Department of Public Safety report the weather was clear and the roadway dry. The crash is under investigation by Trooper Nick Jimenez.

Joyce Krause

Joyce Krause left this world Saturday December 23, 2010 to go home to her Savior.

Mrs. Krause was born Joyce Irene Teague on August 7, 1929 in Brown County to Andy and Lois Teague. She attended school in Bangs Texas and went on to graduate from Howard Payne University. She taught school in Winters from 1967- 1990.

Mrs. Krause had a love for reading from the time she was a small child and throughout her life. She could always be found with a book or two that she was reading. It came as no surprise that she went to work for the Winters public library shortly after her retirement. While at the library she was responsible for procuring a grant that enabled the library to become automated. Realizing the importance of technology, she taught herself to use a computer and helped others in her community use the libraries' computers.

Her love of reading and her desire to help others led her to do volunteer work to promote literacy by teaching adults to read. She is preceded in death by her parents, Andy and Lois Teague and a son Mike Krause.

Her Memory will be cherished by her children, Karen and her husband Mike Fambro of Odessa Texas, John and his wife Sylvia Krause of Winters Texas, and Cherie Large of Kyle Texas, Her brothers, Brooks Teague and his wife Dean, of Grand Prairie Texas, AL Teague and his wife Wanda, of Irving Texas, Her grand children Bill Large, Kari and Kevin Fambro, and Eric Hallmark whom she loved as a grandchild. Her Niece and Nephews, friends, and former students.

Arrangements are entrusted to Hubbard Kelly Funeral home. Visitation in Odessa was held Sunday afternoon on December 26th at 4 to 6pm, and visitation in Winters was held Monday December 27th at 3 to 6 p.m., Graveside services were held Tuesday December 28th at 11 a.m. in Rocky Creek Cemetery in Brown County.



Winters Enterprise, Dec. 30, 2010

Robert Wayne Bowen

Robert Wayne Bowen, 58, of Ballinger died at his home Thursday, December 23, 2010

after a courageous 45-year battle with diabetes.

Robert was born in San Angelo, Texas June 8, 1952. He was preceded in death by his son, Michael Everett Bowen; his mother, Billie Mae George, and his father, Troy Webb Bowen.

He is survived by his loving wife of 27 years, Sharon Bowen; one son, Willie Covington and wife, Libby, of Ballinger; daughters, Chrysti Cate of Salisaw, Oklahoma, Elizabeth Barrow, and Cathy Jo Cook both of San Angelo, and Michelle Baird of Goldthwaite; one sister, Diana Collins of Grape Creek; and his mother-in-law, Agnes Parker of Ballinger. Also surviving are 10 grandchildren, three nieces, three nephews, three great-nephews, and two great-nieces.

Visitation for family and friends will be today, December 30 from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. at Lange Funeral Home. A memorial service will be held Friday, December 31 at 10:00 a.m. at the First United Methodist Church in Ballinger. Honorary pallbearers will be members of the Ballinger Volunteer Fire Department.

Arrangements are with Lange Funeral Home. Guests may register at ballingerfuneralhome.com.

Winters Enterprise, Dec. 30, 2010

Inmate found dead in Taylor County

WINTERS ENTERPRISE

STAFF REPORT

WINTERS - A 54-year-old inmate was found dead in Taylor County Jail, on Friday, December 17, 2010. Jailers were preparing inmates for breakfast when they found him unresponsive, inside his cell, according to a news released from the Texas Department of Public Safety.

Inmate Daven Ellis, from Abilene, was pronounced dead by Justice of the Peace Deather Age at 6:05 a.m., at the jail.

The body was taken to the Tarrant County Medical Examiners Office in Fort Worth, for autopsy. At press time the results of the autopsy was still pending. The final report, according to DPS may take as long as two months.

Taylor County Sheriff's Department requested Texas Ranger Mike Parker to assist with the investigation. This is a normal procedure when an inmate passes away while under custody of an authority.

PUBLIC RECORD

Marriage licenses, divorce filings, crime and misdemeanor in Runnels County

Runnels County Criminal Docket and Fee Book.

Jerry James Carson, filed with criminal trespass on December 20.

Jail Record

Caleb D. Gentry, 18, was arrested by Miles Police Department on charges by assault; Cindy M. Dahlberg, 51, by RSCO on charges by theft by check; Clayton D. Foster, 21, Coke Co., public intoxication; Brenda M. Rumbaugh, 19, DPS, possession of marijuana, less than 2 oz./controlled substance; Gabriel Cardenas, 30, DPS, possession of marijuana, less than 2 oz./controlled substance.

Final pointers to protect children

HIGH RISK OFFENDERS - Part IV

As we conclude our series on sex offenders, I will share some final pointers to protect children from sex offenders. The following are some current ideas of what you as a parent and we as a community can do to help protect our children. Many of these ideas have been put together by law enforcement around the country, the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, and the Department of Justice.



POLICE REPORT

Nathan

Johnson

WHERE CAN YOU GET FURTHER HELP?

If you suspect a child or someone else to be a victim of abuse, or if you are a victim, please seek help immediately. You should report suspicious activity to the Winters Police Department.

For general information about sex offenders, sexual offending, and signs of abuse, you may also contact the following organizations:

1. Texas Department of Public Safety Sex Offender Registration Unit
2. National Center for Missing and Exploited Children
3. U.S. Department of Justice Center for Sex Offender Management
4. <http://www.csom.org/prevedu/education.html>
5. <http://www.scom.org/pubs/mythsfacts.html>
6. <http://www.stopitnow.org/warnings.html>

WHAT SHOULD CHURCHES, SCHOOLS, AND OTHER CHILD CARE INSTITUTIONS DO IF THEY BECOME AWARE OF A PERSON WHO COULD BE A THREAT TO CHILDREN?

Due to the volatile nature of this subject, responsible adults must balance the issues of "jumping to conclusions" while simultaneously "proactively protecting" vulnerable children. If a responsible adult becomes aware of a threat to children, the first and most important step is to NOTIFY LOCAL POLICE. After law enforcement has verified a possible threat to children, the child-care institution may wish to consider taking further actions such as:

1. Sending a letter home to parents to outline whatever description and information is available about the person and his/her actions which have alerted the institution to a specific threat
2. Make parents aware of the DPS Sex Offender Registry and other sources of information
3. Encourage parents to talk to their children about the specific issue, and about sexual offending more generally
4. Tell the parents that the organization will communicate further information as it becomes available
5. Tell the parents that staff may talk to individual children about the threat, and that parents should call the school, church, etc ... if they do not want their children to participate in any such discussions
6. Encourage parents to require children who walk to and from school to walk in groups or be accompanied by an adult, depending on the child's age
7. Request parents to report any information they may have about the issue to the police and to the institution representative
8. Gather children together in small classes or groups to talk about the issue, show them any available pictures, and LISTEN to whatever information they may have to offer about the issue. Often children will have already noticed a suspicious person lurking around the playground, walking with kids' home from school, etc...
9. Increase teacher and adult monitoring of playground activities, as well as morning and afternoon or evening dismissal.
10. Hold an assembly in which children can act out skits or engage in role-playing to demonstrate appropriate responses to specific dangerous situations, like being followed on the way home from school, being asked to get into a car, etc.

GUIDE CHILDREN TO BE AWARE AND CAREFUL, BUT NOT FEARFUL.

Once again, be honest and open about dangers, but always keep in mind that adults know much more than children need to know about these issues. Avoid scary details and use language that is age-appropriate.

The Winters Police Department is committed to doing everything we can to insure the safety of our community. If we can be of further assistance to you as an individual or as a family, please contact our office.

Semper Fi,
Chief Johnson

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Protect plants from freezing temperatures

WINTERS ENTERPRISE
STAFF REPORT

WINTERS - As Old Man Winter's icy fingers reach out, South Central Texas residents need to make preparations to ensure their plants are safe from his grasp, according to a Texas AgriLife Extension Service expert.

"Now that daily low temperatures in this region have been dropping to freezing or near-freezing, it's a good time for people to take precautions to make sure their plants aren't damaged or killed," said David Rodriguez, AgriLife Extension agent for horticulture in Bexar County. "And what people don't realize is that many popular plants in this area can be seriously damaged without a hard freeze or even at temperatures several degrees above freezing."

Rodriguez said some Texas residents have become used to milder winters in recent years, but should understand "there's really no such thing as a typical winter" and it's possible that there can be 24-hour periods when the temperature drops as much as 40 degrees.

"Container-grown plants are more susceptible to cold damage because their roots are more exposed," he said. "And many plants popular such as bougainvillea and hibiscus, as well as other tropical or semi-tropical plants, can still be damaged by above-freezing temperatures."

There are, however, a number of things Texas residents can do to help "winterize" plants, Rodriguez said. This tips included:

- Bring plants indoors or move them into a protected outdoor area, such as a covered patio, under the eaves of the house or near the base of a large tree. Extra-hardy plants, such as Dwarf Yaupon holly, Dwarf Burford holly, aspidistra (cast-iron plant) and nandina need not be moved, except in the case of prolonged, severe freeze.

- Cover plants with plastic film only if an added layer to other wrapping materials such as burlap or cloth. During cold weather, plant tissue can "burn" wherever it comes in direct contact with plastic.

- Make sure plant coverings drape all the way down to the ground and are adequately secured with rocks, boards, bricks or soil to keep wind out and allow heat retention.

- Water plants thoroughly before freezing

temperatures occur as moist ground stays warmer than dry ground.

- Use mulch to protect lower stems and roots from cold. Mulching provides an extra layer of protection and helps retain the moisture that keeps plants warmer.

- Consider buying a hoop tunnel or other covered structure for plants and place open jugs of water inside to add heat through moisture.

- Make sure greenhouses are airtight and remove any shading material until spring. If practical, add another layer of polyethylene plastic, keeping space between layers to maximize warmth. Soak the greenhouse floor frequently to keep it moist.

Rodriguez said in preparation for the possibility of colder future winters, people may want to consider planting more cold-tolerant plants.

"Many Texas residents are landscaping with plants more native to arid desert regions, which makes them more drought-tolerant," he said. "But for cold tolerance it's best to use plants native to the high desert region, such as the Chihuahuan Desert in far West Texas and New Mexico, as these places have colder nights and freezing winters so the plants have adapted to these too."

Plants such as the common non-variegated American agave, angustata - a hardy variety of esperanza - and the aptly named "hardy ice plant" fare well in colder weather. "And if you want to plant some more cold-tolerant winter annuals for color, you may want to consider pansies and cyclamen. However these won't be able to handle the heat when summer rolls around."

During the spring, people who are concerned about their landscaping surviving lower temperatures in the late fall and winter might do well planting perennials, sages or hollies, he added.

"Of course even with more cold-tolerant plants it can be a matter of degree - or maybe I should say degrees - as to whether the plant will survive, especially with several days of below-freezing temperatures in a row, so you may need to take extra measures to protect them too."

Additional gardening tips can be found at the Aggie Horticulture website: <http://aggiehorticulture.tamu.edu>.

Ribbon Cutting Ceremony



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

The Ballinger Chamber of Commerce recently held a ribbon cutting ceremony for Rustic Princess. The new business is owned and operated by Rhonda Black of Winters.

Windbreak tree program

WINTERS ENTERPRISE
STAFF REPORT

WINTERS - A tree standing alone adds a certain aesthetic quality to rural living. But the systematic planting of trees in a windbreak becomes a management tool that affects every aspect of the farm or ranch.

Whether around a homestead, near cattle or bordering cropland, multiple row windbreaks act as a silent partner naturally protecting their investments. Windbreaks, in addition to reducing soil erosion, increase land value, crop yields and reduce livestock weight loss and mortality.

Seedlings to produce such a conservation tree planting are produced by the Texas Forest Service at

West Texas Nursery in Idalou and are available for ordering through Runnels Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD). The deadline to order is January 24, 2011

and the trees will arrive on February 3, 2011.

For a list of available trees please call the office at 325-365-3415 ext. 3 or come by 2000 Hutchins Avenue in Ballinger.

Brotherhood Cookie Recipe

From Alan Hollander Winters City Manager

1. Start with a large bowl of good health for all.
2. Blend in happy times with family and friends
3. Combine prosperity for everyone
4. Melt in loving and liking your neighbors
5. Prepare remembering the elderly, sick, and less fortunate
6. Fold in thinking good thoughts, and doing good deeds
7. Pre heat your memory to recall good times and forget bad times
8. Spread a compliment on qualities in other people
9. Stir in make a new friend.
10. Remove, season to taste, and tell someone that you love them

Merry Christmas, Happy New Year

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Winters on Wednesday

The Winters Area Chamber of Commerce sends our thanks to each of you for your support this holiday season. Winters on Wednesday is an invitation to residents and friends of this area to include Winters in your daily/weekly/monthly/annual appointment book. Your activities in Winters are important and appreciated. We look forward to seeing you in Winters and help make 2011 a WOW year.

Immunization clinics

The Texas Department of State Health Services will be holding two Immunization Clinics in Runnels County. Flu vaccine will be available to all. In Winters the clinic will be held on Thursday, January 6, 2011, from 1:30-5:30 p.m. at the Professional Building, 110 South Main St, Suite 108. Attendees are asked to use the rear entrance, on Grant St. The second clinic will be held in Ballinger, on Thursday, January 13, 2011, from 10 a.m.-12 Noon and from 1:30-3 p.m. at 608 Strong Avenue, behind the Runnels County Courthouse. People attending the clinics are asked to bring child's immunization records. If child has Medicaid or CHIP bring card. For more information call (325) 754 4945.

Ministerial Alliance meet until January

Winters Ministerial Alliance will not meet in December. Next meeting will be on Jan. 10, 2011, at the Samaritan's House at 9

a.m.

VFW meetings

Winters Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 9193 meet the second Monday night of each month at 6 p.m. in the Rock Hotel. All eligible veterans of the United States military are invited to attend.

Co-Dependant Recovery Group

Winters Co-Dependant Recovery Group meeting at Southside Baptist Church on Tuesdays, at 6 p.m. for more information call Theresa at (325) 977-1007.

Band Boosters

The Band Boosters meet at 6:30 p.m. every Monday evening at Dot's Diner.

Winters Woman's Club

Members meet the second Tuesday of the month. Call Marlene Smith at 754-4961 for additional information.

AA Meetings

AA meeting are held at 204 W. Truett behind church on Main St. Tuesday and Thursday at 7 p.m.

Ballinger Al-Anon meetings

Al-Anon meetings will be held every Monday and Wednesday at the First United Methodist Church of Ballinger, on Broad Ave. Meetings begin at 7:00 p.m. Please enter through the south side of the church. FMI contact Theresa at (325) 977-1007.

Chamber of Commerce

Chamber of Commerce meets at 5:30 p.m. first

Monday of the month at 100 West Dale Street.

City Council Meetings

Winters City Council meets at 6 p.m. the last Monday of the month at 310 North Main.

School Board Meetings

Winters ISD School Board meets at 6:30 p.m. every

second Monday of the month at 603 North Heights.

Wingate Masonic Lodge meetings

Wingate Masonic Lodge 1042 A.F. & A.M., meetings on fourth Monday of the month, at 6:30 p.m. at Wilmeth, TX Lodge. For further information contact

Hank Bourdo, at 754-2048.

Ballinger Masonic Lodge meeting

Masonic Lodge # 643, 500 N Broadway, Ballinger

Tx.Stated meetings are at 7 p.m. on the first Monday of every month except for holidays if it falls on that Monday. For more information call (325) 365-3202.

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Looking Back at Christmas...

THE IDLE AMERICAN

Post-Christmas feelings are vastly different from the warm fuzzy dreams fluffing up our nighttime slumber leading up to the festive holiday. Sort of like confetti. Views of folks dropping it from tall buildings to the parade below are at variance with the clean-up crew wading in the stuff on snowy streets.

Among many sobering thoughts are:
1) Adornments, both inside and out, must soon come down. (And much "disassembly" is required.)

2) Pounds added at sumptuous meals--enlivened by "we-only-live-once" banter that drowns out reason's flimsy voice--will be voided only by exercise and dietary drudgery shrouding long stretches of time. Pyramids went up faster.

3) Attitudes of resolve are not easily mustered. One guy remembers a Christmas past when post-holiday depression tugged mightily. "I was so low I could walk under a bathtub with a fireman's helmet on," he groaned....

Fans of the Texas Rangers are still moping about pitching ace Cliff Lee opting to play henceforth (or at least for five years) for the Philadelphia Phillies. And a Philadelphia newspaper "rubbed it in" with headline cleverness: "Merry CLIFFmas!"

Lee's decision to retreat to the National League saves would-be mathematicians a bunch of work. Had he stayed around, they'd be buzzing about how many thousand dollars he makes per pitch, etc. My Uncle Mort claims he knew from the "git-go" that Lee would join a National League team. "I'm satisfied he wants to become the first modern day major leaguer to set the standard for both pitching AND batting."...

Many of us can lay claim to memorable nuggets meriting laughter throughout the year simply by noting grandchildren's animated conversations. And this doesn't cost a thing.

I'm particularly fond of the banter of 3-4 year-olds. With minds like sponges, they "want to know" and are not hesitant to ask. (A few years up the way, feeling already "in the know," they'll be far more into telling than listening.)

Our four-year-old Kedren, learning that seeds become plants, kittens grow into cats, colts soon are horses, etc., is wide-eyed at processes of growth all around him. He dreams of reaching "tall enough to" goals. The

other day, he inquired about the age of his family's suburban. Learning that it was three years old when acquired two years ago, he questioned, "How big was it when we got it?..."

Equal time department: Grand niece Avery, at Christmastime last year, was asked to name her favorite among the reindeer pulling Santa's sleigh. "Olive," she answered.

Her family explained that when Santa's reindeer are harnessed for their annual flight, there's nary an "Olive" in the bunch.

The then three-year-old wasn't convinced. "Yes there is," she maintained. "You know, Olive, the other reindeer..."

I'm reaching back a couple of months for this nugget. My wife and I were in Brownwood for homecoming at Howard Payne University. (They let presidential "has beens" ride in the parade, in a convertible yet!)

Four grandchildren accompanied us, three of them yelling "HPU!" with the cheerleaders.

Addison, age 3, failed to grasp the concept. Besides, her mind overflowed with memories of media broadsides heralding the opening of a new grocery store in our town. A trio repeated yells of "HPU!" and one lone voice proclaimed "H-E-B!"...

This year's final tale is attributed to Uncle Mort, my 98-year-old kin down in the thicket. He's bragging about successfully completing a short course he called "computers for old people."

On top of this, he may make Guinness World Records for having the longest computer password. Taught that the passwords require eight characters, he chose "curly/joe/moe/gabby/daffy/goofy/mickey/minnie." I'm satisfied that

my wife will be valedictorian of a similar class in our town. She has a distinct advantage, since she already knew the keyboard going in.

Happy New Year, one and all. Keep an ear out, and when you hear a good 'un, write it down! And then, share it....

Dr. Newbury is a speaker in the Metroplex. Send inquiries/comments to: newbury@speakerdoc.com. Phone: 817-447-3872. Web site: www.speakerdoc.com.

Runnels County Meals on Wheels

Runnels County Meals on Wheels has received donations in memory of the following:

In memory of Lavern Gallant by Morris Sweeney, June Curbo, and Christine Wade, Alma Cooper, Shirley and Frances, the Jennie Fulton Family, in memory of Lynn Coleman by Christine Wade, in memory of Myrtis Hudson by West Texas Bank, in memory of Dr. John Green by Kelly and Virginia Chapman, Fred and Mary Ann McShan Ebb and Jay Gridstaff, in memory of Mead McShan by Herman Hallmark and the late Margaret Hallmark, in memory of Milton Fulton by Herman Hallmark and the late Margaret Hallmark, in memory of Melvin Gillespie by Herman Hallmark and the late Margaret Hallmark, in memory of Joe Sharp by the Jennie Fulton family, in memory of Dorothy Johnson by the Jennie Fulton family, in memory of Martha Arrott by the Jennie Fulton family, in memory of Jay Garrett by Pam Price Murfee, in memory of A.G. Buchanan by Fred and Mary Ann McShan, in memory of

Leroy Wall by Chritine Wade, in memory of Steve Moon by Fred and Mary Ann McShan, in memory of Sharon Dykes by Jerry Baker, in memory of Doyle Keesee by Beth Doty, in memory of Alfred Multer by Ross and Shirley Murchison.

We have also received donations from Phil and Donna Springer, the Ballinger Bunko Group, First Presbyterian Church of Ballinger, Mary Martha Sunday School Class, Jimmy and Shannon Caughorn and Joyce Spreen, Bobby and Paula Moore. We appreciate all the donations and encourage all the citizens of Runnels County to support your homebound, elderly and indigent citizens, donations may be sent to Ballinger Senior Citizens, 608 Sealy Suite B, Ballinger, Texas 76821.

Highway Patrol to target DWI during holidays

WINTERS ENTERPRISE
STAFF REPORT

In addition to their traditional increased patrols for the Christmas and New Year's holidays, the Texas Highway Patrol will conduct focused DWI patrols in high-risk locations during the times when alcohol-related crashes are most frequent. These special DWI patrols are thanks to a TxDOT grant targeting impaired driving.

The targeted DWI patrols started on Tuesday, December 21, 2010, and will keep on going until Saturday, January 1, 2011.

Highway Patrol troopers also had all available troopers out patrolling Texas highways from Friday, December 24, to midnight on Sunday, December 26.

"We'd prefer that drivers obey the traffic laws on their own, but we'll be out on the roads to ensure that travelers are as safe as

possible," said David Baker, Assistant Director for the Texas Highway Patrol. "We'll be looking for intoxicated drivers, as well as speeders and seatbelt violators."

During the Christmas holiday last year, DPS troopers arrested 350 drivers for DWI and issued 9,212 speeding tickets and 658 safety restraint violations.

DPS advises for holiday travel to drive with courtesy; it's contagious. Remember, it's the holidays!!! Buckle up everyone in the vehicle. Slow down - especially in bad weather, construction areas and heavy traffic. Don't drink and drive; get a designated driver. Keep cell phone chatter to a minimum. Don't text and drive. Avoid drowsy driving. Make sure your vehicle is properly maintained. Be sure to turn on your headlights in inclement weather.

CAFETERIA MENU

January 3-7
Subject to change

WINTERS ISD BREAKFAST

Monday HOLIDAY
Tuesday
Breakfast Pocket or Cereal or Breakfast Taco, Toast w/Jelly, Juice, Choice of Milk.
Wednesday
Biscuit/Egg Pattie or Cereal or Oat Meal or Breakfast Burrito, Toast w/Jelly, Juice, Choice of Milk.
Thursday
Breakfast Pizza or Cereal or Pancake/Sausage Link, Toast w/Jelly, Juice, Choice of Milk.
Friday
Breakfast/Sausage or Cereal or Muffin/Sausage, Toast w/Jelly, Juice, Choice of Milk.

Note: Menus subject to change without notice. Students may purchase extras: Entree got \$1.00, Milk for \$.30, Sides for \$.50.

WINTERS ISD LUNCH MENU

Monday HOLIDAY
Tuesday
Tatar Tot Casserole or Chicken Fries w/Gravy, Broccoli w/Cheese, Baked Potatoe, Tossed Salad/Carrot Stick, Rainbow Bar, Hot Roll, Choice of Milk.
Wednesday
Frito Pie or Chicken Fajita, Spanish Rice, Pinto Beans, Tossed Salad/Carrot Stick, Coleslaw, Peaches, Cornbread/Jep. Che, Bread, Choice of Milk.
Thursday
Chicken Nuggets or Sloppy Joe/Bun, Baked Beans, Mashed Potatoes w/Gravy, Tossed Salad/Carrot Stick, Hot Cinnamon Apples, Hot Roll, Choice of Milk.
Friday
Cheese Burger or Spaghetti/Bread Stick, Oven Fries, Green Beans, Lettuce/Tomato, Tossed Salad/Carrot Sticks, Orange Wedges, Sugar Cookie, Choice of Milk.

Along with the menu, Sub Sandwiches available Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. Fajita Wraps on Wednesday.

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Memorials to the American Cancer Society

The following memorial contributions were recently made to the South Runnels Unit of the American Cancer Society, Contributions may be sent to the American Cancer Society, South Runnels Unit, P.O. Box 772, Ballinger, Texas, 76821 or come by The First National Bank of Ballinger and speak with Lola Quirino or Patricia Vancil

Given by: Pete and Ginger Bryan

In Memory of Robert Schumann
Given by: Richard and Mary Minzenmayer & Family

In Memory of William Ross Setzler IV
Given by: June H. Dankworth

In Memory of Guy and Kit Folger
Given by: Richard and Mary Minzenmayer & Family

In Memory of Johnnie D. Wilson, Sr.
Given by: Jim Ventress and Tina Smith

In Memory of John Dyess
Given by: Vi and Gary Everett

In Memory of Johnny "Raybo" Walker
Given by: Edna Gillespie

In Memory of Jerome Hoelscher
Given by: Vi and Gary Everett

In Memory of Mary Hartgrove's sister-Loretta
Given by: Allen and Elsie Belk

In Memory of Senaida Mares

In Memory of Betty Lynn Smith
Given by: Mr. and Mrs. Donald Wade

In Memory of Venita Bagwell
Given by: Dennis and Lucille Rohmfeld

In Memory of Beverly Griffith
Given by: Dennis and Lucille Rohmfeld

Tax bill boosts farming

WINTERS ENTERPRISE
STAFF REPORT

WASHINGTON - The tax bill signed last week by President Obama will help families, businesses, farmers and ranchers, and represents a huge aid for America's economy, said Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack.

"Members of both parties came together to get this done and now middle-class families in rural America and throughout the country no longer have to worry about a massive tax hike next

year. As President Obama signs this important legislation, he is bolstering efforts underway to rebuild and revitalize rural America and promoting job creation in rural communities." The tax package signed last Friday by President Obama reauthorizes ethanol tax credits and reinstates the biodiesel tax credit. "Ethanol and biodiesel production is critical to continuing the growth of our domestic fuel industry that is reducing our dependence on foreign oil while creating green jobs from renewable sources and adding opportunities for people in rural communities throughout the country. "The tax package will also extend tax incentives through 2011 for farmers, ranchers and forest owners who voluntarily conserve their lands through

donation of a conservation easement. Providing this tax incentive will increase conservation of our working lands and, in so doing, support our rural economy."

As part of the President's America's Great Outdoors Initiative, USDA, the Department of Interior, the Environmental Protection Agency and the Council on Environmental Quality held listening sessions across the country to hear Americans ideas to advance in local conservation.

"Providing tax incentives for working lands conservation was one of the ideas that we heard repeatedly from landowners and conservationists during those listening sessions. I am pleased that the bill the President is signing... provides these incentives and I know America's farmers, ranchers and forest owners will respond positively."

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Here's to a great & fun season!
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Gene, Jeanie, Doug & Amy Wheat

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Game Warden Field Notes

Texas Parks and Wildlife law reports

The following items are compiled from recent Texas Parks and Wildlife Department law enforcement reports.

Hunter up a tree, literally and figuratively

Tarrant County Game Wardens John Padgett and Clint Borchardt found a vehicle parked in the tree line inside a Fort Worth park on Dec. 6. The Fort Worth Marshal's Office had reported possible illegal hunting in the area several weeks prior. As police vehicles entered the property, the hunter climbed out of a tree and tried to hide. He was found squatting in

some brush close to the road and apprehended. A photograph of the subject posing with a deer he had killed was found in his truck. After further questioning, the man said he had shot that deer in Azle, another property he did not have permission to hunt on. The deer, which had not been tagged, was picked up at a local taxidermist. The man, previously convicted of hunting without consent, was also in possession of a drug pipe and methamphetamine. He was charged with hunting without landowner consent, possession of a controlled substance, and cited for the untagged deer for which civil restitution will be sought. Cases pending.

We're not in Kansas any more

A Texas Department of Public Safety trooper working drug interdiction along IH-35 on Dec. 8 in Wise County made a traffic stop and noticed blood and deer parts in the bed of the truck. The trooper contacted Wise County Game Warden Chris Dowdy, who then contacted Denton County Game Wardens Chip Daigle and Daron Blackerby to assist the trooper. The driver at first said he had shot the deer, and then changed his story to blame someone else. After a lengthy interview the driver said he had brought three bucks back from Kansas intending to process them in Texas and

return the meat to Kansas. He said he had only two tags, but he did not want to waste the meat of the third deer. The wardens went to the man's house and located a 6-point buck from Montague County along with the man's Kansas tags, but only one tag was for a buck. The other was for a doe. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service joined the investigation and multiple cases are pending.

How not to hunt deer

Shortly before midnight on Dec. 3, Polk County Game Wardens Ryan Hall and David Johnson observed a vehicle traveling very slowly down a county road, occasionally turning so its headlights illuminated the right of way. The wardens stopped the vehicle and found the driver in possession of a loaded .22 Magnum rifle. He later said he had been hunting white-tailed deer from the roadway. Early the next morning, Hall returned to the area and recovered a yearling white-tailed deer near the scene. The animal had a fresh small caliber bullet hole in its neck. The suspected night hunter implicated another subject as well, and additional charges were filed on both subjects. These included a Class A misdemeanor waste of game charge for the shooter, who claimed responsibility for not coming back for the deer. Cases and civil restitution are pending.

Ronnie Vanicek retires from NRCS



RUBEN CANTU-RODRIGUEZ / BALLINGER LEDGER
Sara and Ronnie Vanicek, and CJ Robinson at the retirement party last Monday, December 27.

Retirement reception for County Judge



RUBEN CANTU-RODRIGUEZ / BALLINGER LEDGER
Fellow workers and friends held last Monday, December 20, a retirement reception for Runnel's County Judge Marilyn Egan. The reception was held in the first floor of the Runnel's County Courthouse. At the ceremony County Commissioners James T. Self and Rick Strube presented Judge Egan with a plaque to recognize her dedication and service for the Runnel's County community during the last 15 years. After holding the position since 1995 Judge Egan is retiring on December 31, 2010.

JUDGE: No other place I rather live

CONTINUED FROM 1

Ever since the Judge's office and the County Attorney have been doing a very good job trying to keep everything current.

Judge Egan's career in public service is not limited to her county's seat. She also served two different terms as Board member in the West Central Texas Council of Government, West Texas Centers for MHMR and Region F Regional Water Planning Group.

Now Judge Egan's objective is to enjoy the simple things "Do some volunteer work in my church and possibly the library and some other organizations, but mostly what I'll do will be volunteer work, spend time enjoying life."

Cooking, have everything organized at home, and forget about schedules for a while will be some of the things she'll be doing now.

She thanked the community of Runnel's County for the confidence that voters have had in her by electing her as County Judge.

"I appreciate the opportunity of being able to serve them, I feel like I have done a good job and I hope they feel the same way."

Born, raised and a Runnel's County resident for almost all of her life, Judge Egan says her future is still here, with the community she has served for many years.

"This is home and there is no other place I rather live, I plan to stay here," she said.

ONCOR: Runnels county affected

CONTINUED FROM 1

Station approximately 0.6 miles south of Ranch Road 586, southwest of Brownwood. Clearing of brush and trees is expected to begin as soon as January 2011.

About 135 landowners will be affected by the whole project between Nolan County and Brown County.

In Runnel's County the

proposed transmission route includes but is not limited to CR 320, CR 312, CR 200, CR 171, FM 1770, CR 179 and CR 152.

For most of the line Oncor is purchasing an aerial easement with overhead wires. The carrying company needs to keep the land below free from any vegetation that would obstruct access to construct and maintain the lines.

Senior Citizens Activity Center Menu

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January 3-7
Subject to change

MONDAY
Chicken Pot Pie, Carrot Raisin Salad, Fruit Salad, Crackers, Peanut Butter Cereal Cookie

TUESDAY
Swiss Steak, Squash Dressing, Peas, Hot Roll, Cake

WEDNESDAY
Hamburger Steak w/gravy, Green Beans and Tomatoes, Pear Salad, Biscuit, Cookies

THURSDAY
Ham, Cabbage, Navy Beans, Cornbread, Apricot Cobbler

FRIDAY
Mexican Cornbread, Pinto Beans, Lettuce and Tomatoes, Crackers, Dessert

Meals are served 11:30 a.m. daily. Anyone who does not take the meals regularly is asked to reserve a lunch by contacting the Activity Center at 754-4205 by 1 a.m.

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