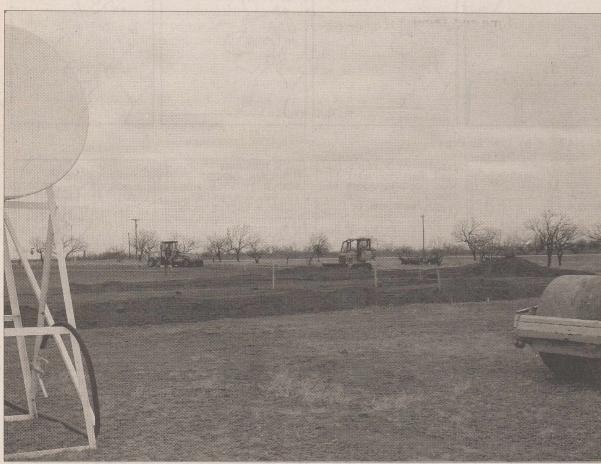


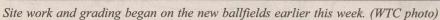
WESTERN TEXAS COLLEGE RODEO

March 27-29 Scurry County Coliseum



Q/A addresses Baseball and Softball Program Concerns







Welding students Aaron Dietrich and Jarrett Thornton work on measurements for the press boxes. (WTC photo)

Q: What is the nature of the agreement between WTC and Scurry County for the use of Moffett field?

A: Over the past several months, many have posed this question and have received varying answers. A very definite agreement was reached between the entities following a period of negotiation. The college initially requested use of the field for both games and practices. The Commissioner's Court had established a Parks and Recreation Department in the latter part of 2001, and, quite correctly, deferred the issue to them. Their decision was to allow use of the field for games only, with periods for warm-ups before games and an occasional inter-squad scrimmage in the fall. A tentative agreement was brought to the WTC Board of Trustees in February, 2002 for approval and to the Commissioner's Court the following month. The court accepted the contract, which gave the county the final word on any scheduling conflicts with the high school and listed a set fee for a one-year use of the facility. From that point on, the agreement has been a matter of public record.

Q: What was the college's contingency plan for practice facilities?

A: The college made every effort to provide both the softball coach and the baseball coach with suitable practice facilities as their own fields were being planned. In the case of the softball team, a better arrangement could not have been reached. There are two wonderful softball facilities at the county complex. The high school was given first choice of which field they preferred, and WTC took the other. The county has been working very hard to make improvements on the second field, and the Dusters have been fortunate to have it available for both practice and play.

On the other hand, there have been a number of obstacles to securing a place for the baseball team to practice. The Dean of Student Services went to the Ira ISD early in 2002 and was graciously granted access to their baseball field as needed for practice. The Ira administration offered to improve the field and even went so far as to offer busses for transportation of the team if necessary. The college, acting on a professional relationship between the college and high school baseball coaches, requested access to the high school practice field as well. In August of 2002, the college received a letter from the interim superintendent of the Snyder ISD stating that they had "no reservations about WTC using the field," but that they hesitated upon entering into a contractual agreement that would indicate any sort of equitable sharing. The college accepted a tentative agreement to use the Snyder field on an as-requested or asneeded basis, sensitive to the priority of the high school teams. This arrangement offered a good alternative until the field became unavailable due to renovations made possible by the fundraising efforts of the Snyder High Booster Club.

The county had initially offered the use of the North Park field to the college as a practice facility. They also offered to alter the field to baseball

dimensions, if needed. At the time the college felt it had secured use of both of the high school fields, and, therefore, informed the county that tingency worked out well. The Snyder field was unavailable, and the Ira agencies? field, while available, had a very short outfield fence unsuited for collegiate use, making it difficult to have fielding practice there. The team then began practicing on the site of the future WTC field, and over the course of the past month, the WTC GLT students have transformed the North Park field for practice use. At this point, obtaining a practice field for the baseball team is no longer an issue.

O: What has caused the delay in construction of the WTC sports complex?

A: One factor has to do with the logistics of bidding procedures that must comply with state law. Also, as with many construction projects, the paying entity must rely on information and guidance from outside sources and experts who contract their services. WTC initially sought guidance from the architects of Parkhill, Smith, and Cooper, of Midland, a well-known and respected firm. Through a series of problems beyond the control of the college, the firm did not address the plans forwarded to them in a timely manner, setting the project back by at least four months. The company realized this after several very pointed reminders from the president and assigned a new architect to the project. Since then, the college has experienced the usual stumbling blocks and logistical problems that accompany construction. An aggravating factor has been the wait for a state permit for use of water from the WTC golf course. The college plans to water both fields with the treated effluent, as with the golf course, but found that different permits are required for irrigating ballfields. These applications have been in Austin since the spring of last

Many companies and individuals have made contributions toward the complex, and rightfully ask when the fields will be completed. The college has been at a loss to give any definitive answers since their own timelines have come and gone on the word of construction professionals. On a positive note, however, the dirt contract has been awarded, and construction began earlier this week. In an effort to quantify its services to other taxing entities, the county has entered into an intergovernmental agreement with the college to haul the dirt for the fields and has been trying to clear its own construction calendar to accommodate this mas-

WTC has also benefited from donations of pipe by Kinder-Morgan and Anadarko; transportation of pipe by E.L. Farmer; coordination of donated pipe by Bob Barbee, 12,000 bricks from Snyder Brick; and welding and landscaping labor from welding and GLT instructors, Sam Walker and Sam Fare and students in their programs. In addition, area businesses and individuals, including many WTC employees, have contributed funds toward the completion of the project.

: How is the complex being paid for, and how has this been im-North Park would not be needed. As it turned out, however, neither con- pacted by the drastic cuts the State has mandated for all government

A: The state cuts will not affect this project. The college has had a plan in place from the outset to pay for the construction of the complex through a combination of fundraising efforts and conventional financing, which will be offset by increased enrollment. This plan is already being confirmed by WTC's ranking as 2nd in growth for contact hour funding among all Texas community and technical colleges. The college investment will continue to return benefits for both WTC and the community. This is a reciprocal relationship since WTC has already benefited from the support of local businesses like West Texas State Bank, which has agreed to provide full financing for the complex at an interest rate of 4.5% with a line of credit up to the needed \$500,000. With around \$150,000 already raised for the project, in addition to donated labor and materials, the college will be able to construct a million-dollar facility for roughly half the price.

O: How will the new complex be utilized to benefit not only WTC, but also Scurry County and local schools?

A: When completed, the fields will be available for tournaments, play-offs, and other games, which, in turn, will bring in more visitors to the area, benefiting local hotels, restaurants, and entertainment establish-

O: What is the proposed timeline for completion of the complex?

A: Both fields should be completed in time for use in the fall 2003

Q: What work is currently being done on the fields?

A: Site work and grading began earlier this week along with work on the water and sewer lines. Bids for seeding and sodding are scheduled to be opened March 31, and bids will go out this week for construction of concession and restroom facilities. Also, during their regular lab time, welding students of Sam Walker have completed the press boxes, are working on dugouts for the complex, and will begin work on the fencing as they are allowed on the fields for construction, and GLT instructor, Sam Fare and his students are finalizing plans for the irrigation system, with work to begin within the next three weeks.

Having students work on the fields has been beneficial to the college in keeping costs down while allowing the students to receive hands-on experience that will serve them well in the job market when they complete their studies.



CAN YOU BELIEVE IT? As of press time, less than 500 chances have been distributed to win the 2003 Ford Focus pictured above. On Saturday, Apr. 5, the car, donated to WTC by Wilson Motors, will be given away at Wal-Mart at 5:00 p.m.

You can make a tax-deductible \$10 donation for a chance and get a free Coke for you and the kids, at Wilson Motors this coming Friday, Mar. 28, from noon until 6:00 p.m.

The car will be on display, and donations taken, at the WTC Rodeo at the Coliseum this weekend, and donations can also be received at Barbee Medical Supply, Bullard's Computer Solutions, First American Bank, Texas Finance, or the President's office at WTC.

Drama Dept presents comedy on Shakespeare

WTC Theatre is pleased to present the comedy, "The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (Abridged)" opening Thursday, March 20.

The play is billed as a scholar's nightmare that will make you laugh until you cry. The New York Post reported that the show was "like the Marx Brothers, Monty Python, and Mad Magazine all rolled into one . . . A Great Show!"

In true comedic form the play comes with a warning label: "This show is a high-speed roller-coaster type condensation of all of Shakespeare's plays, and is not recommended for individuals with heart ailments, bladder problems, inner-ear disorders, and /or people inclined to motion sickness."

Student director, Jacob Brumley encourages everyone to come out for an evening of great entertainment, saying, "It's a really fun play with a lot of interaction with the audience. In fact, you'll laugh so hard, you just might wet your pants. I guarantee there won't be a dry eye or a dry seat in the house."

The cast includes Ryan Ballard, Michael Gonzales, and Chris Shoemake. Performances are at set for 7:30 pm nightly March 20, 21, and 22, and 2 pm March 23. Ticket prices are \$5 for adults; \$3 for seniors and students. WTC faculty, staff and students are admitted free.



Chris Shoemake, Ryan Ballard, and Michael Gonzales rehearse a scene for the upcoming performance of 'The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (Abridged).' (WTC Photo)