

Henscheid reflects on changes in lumber business

Janet Felderhoff
News Editor

When Rufus Henscheid first began working in the lumber business 66 years ago, it was very different from today. There was still a railroad that came through Muenster bringing wares from other places. Most homes did not have some of the things we take for granted today such as indoor plumbing and electricity. Building things took a lot more physical labor and most people built very conservatively.

It was in October 1948 that Richard Trachta, manager for CD Schamburger Lumber Company, hired 18-year-old Rufus Henscheid to replace Rody Klement. That was the start of Henscheid's ongoing career in the lumber business. At that time, the local lumber company sold items such as hardware, bridge timbers, cement, drilling mud, pipe, electrical supplies, plumbing supplies, and oil field supplies.

"Eighty percent of the materials came in on the railroad and had to be handled a piece at a time, a board at a time on the truck and haul it up to the lumber yard and then a board at a time into the lumber bin, then a board at a time out to the jobs," Rufus recalled. "It was really labor intensive back then."

Indoor plumbing was not yet enjoyed by many when Henscheid first started in the lumber business. "When I first started, many people were adding indoor plumbing, electricity, butane heaters, and other conveniences," said Henscheid. Asbestos siding was what people were putting on their homes.

In the 1950s, chicken houses, dairy barns, and hay barns were being built with tin siding.

"I remember being taught how to figure lumber by John Klement and continuously reminded of another

Great Depression coming, this being right after World War II," Rufus recalled with a chuckle.

Henscheid then served in the U.S. Marines. He was discharged in 1953. He and Dick Trachta then started a construction business of building complete homes. Up until 1953, the lumber company only supplied the needed materials. "We built complete homes from plans to completion," noted Rufus. "It was very successful. We built several hundred houses."

According to Rufus, the foundations were run with sack cement and sand with a mixer at the job site and taken by wheel barrow to the needed areas. Sewer lines were dug by hand. Carpenters hammered building frames together with hand-driven nails. There were no power tools then.

Until the 1970s, there were no fork lifts to move



Janet Felderhoff photo

Recent snow and rains have brought up the water levels in area ponds and lakes. Although most ponds are full, many lakes still need more water to bring them up to normal levels. Muenster Lake is one that is yet not full. Shown are several people enjoying the afternoon on the fishing dock at Muenster Lake last Friday.

pallets of lumber and other materials. "I bought the first forklift in Cooke County," said Rufus. "I bought it my-

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Courtesy photo

Rufus Henscheid is pictured in his office taking care of business for Muenster Building Center. Henscheid began his lifelong career in the lumber business in October 1948.

Jones is director of VISTO

Cathy Krahl
Staff Writer

Becky Jones of Muenster will be taking over duties as director of VISTO the first of April. Outgoing director, Michelle Baldwin of Valley View, is retiring March 31 after serving 13 years.

Jones spent 22 years as a Speech Pathologist, and still does a little. She received her Master's degree in Communication Disorders from West Texas A&M University in Canyon. But she was ready for a change. "I thought I could make a more lasting change in the community," Jones said about her change in profession.

Jones has no real experience in a job like VISTO, other than the volunteering she has done in the community. She has worked with Catholic Daughters, retreats for ACTS, volunteered with Keep Muenster Beautiful, and was chairperson for the Cub Scouts for four years. "And every activity my children are involved in," she laughed.

But during the month of March, she has undergone extensive training under the direction of Michelle Baldwin, the retiring director.

"I am very excited to be doing this," Jones said. "Very excited to be given the opportunity to serve my

community. And very glad to shadow Michelle for this month."

Baldwin has been a wealth of information, according to Jones. "Those are very, very

big shoes to fill," she said.

As a transplant from Amarillo, Jones and her husband David now reside in Muenster and their two children attend Sacred Heart School.



Cathy Krahl photo

Becky Jones takes over as director of VISTO in April. She is in training during the month of March with outgoing director Michelle Baldwin.

Rainy weather raises area lake levels

MISD survey evaluates its custodial performance

Janet Felderhoff
News Editor

Since last summer, Muenster ISD has outsourced its custodian and grounds maintenance to EFI, a company that sends its own employees in to do the cleaning of the school. This was done in an effort to save money since the School District would be operating without sufficient funds to cover its budgetary needs. The District signed a contract with EFI for one year.

Superintendent Steve Self, who officially took over the duties of superintendent in February, is preparing for the upcoming budget process. He spoke with the superintendents of several schools also using EFI's service and the principals as well. "It's favorable overall, and I have some recommendations for this coming year," stated Superintendent Self.

Self decided to do a survey to see how EFI's performance is perceived by the teachers. While he was superintendent at Woodsboro ISD, they did the survey every six weeks to two months to see how the custodians were doing with the floors, desks, wastebaskets, hallways, restrooms, grounds, etc. "That's one way I tried to keep our custodial staff motivated because we could meet and talk about these things," he said.

Self reported the local survey results to the Muenster ISD Board of Trustees at its regular meeting held on Wednesday, March 11. Possible scores were: Beyond

Expectations, Excellent, Good, Fair, Poor, and Unacceptable.

"Overall, the teachers gave the custodial/maintenance staff a very good rate," noted Self. Receiving excellent or good ratings were the hallways, water fountains, and waste disposal.

There was a place for teacher comments. Self said, "There was one major concern and that is there's not enough people during the day. When the Board went with EFI, there was going to be two people during the day on campus. Sometimes when there are emergencies at the Elementary, the teachers clean it up, sometimes Lou cleans it up. It doesn't always get done fast enough." That complaint was noted by several teachers.

"The other complaint was grass being mowed in the summer. It got away from them a couple of times in the summer. But, overall it was good," continued Self.

Maintenance Director Smoke Koelzer said he likes not having to worry about the staff and who will show up for work, etc. He feels EFI is doing a good job of cleaning the school and the management works well with him.

On what he doesn't like, Koelzer said that EFI needs a better record. They deliver supplies at night and he does not have a list of what is delivered and nobody is there to see what they deliver. Also they need to do a better job with the landscape and with trash and do it more often. Getting supplies in a more

timely manner was the third thing that he did not like.

Elementary Principal Lou Heers commented, "My biggest thing in the evenings when I'm there and they're there is communication. We do our best." Also, she would prefer to have someone on her campus from 7:45 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. to take care of mishaps, bathrooms, etc.

Self recommended continuing with EFI for another year since they have not had them a year yet; securing additional help with custodial during the day for the emergency situations; conduct cost comparison in May and June and again mid-year next year; and monitor the summer grounds care. "We need to continue monitoring this and make sure it is costing us less than we were doing it for," said Self. "It seems like it is working well even though they have gone through some people. It's hard to tell anything in eight months or a year."

Board President Steve Trubenbach remarked, "When we originally did this, we saved about (projected) \$80,000 a year."

Self surveyed the teachers on their opinions of various topics during the last year. He noted, "It was encouraging, very positive. Almost everybody mentioned the buildings and the facilities. They mentioned the positive kids, how good the kids are to work with, and the ability to come together and work together. Some nice things they said about what they are proud of."

Do you feel you have the support you need to give your students the education they need? Yes 27; No 11; Sometimes 9.

If you could change one thing that would improve conditions at MISD, what would it be? Answers were teacher morale, administrative stability, better communications, consistency in discipline/code of conduct, more staff, more pay steps, pay raise, more food at lunch for kids, add music, more guidance and support for JH and HS.

One thing they would ask the Texas Legislature for in the area of education. They said Funding for technology, less teaching to the tests (18 votes), raise/more than 20 steps (11), more teacher input, stop voucher pursuit, cut regulations.

See SURVEYS, pg. 2

Child dies from injuries at RWP

Janet Felderhoff
News Editor

Nicholas Torres, age 10 of Fort Worth, was involved in an ATV accident at the Rednecks With Paychecks (RWP) event held near Saint Jo this past weekend. The young boy was taken to Fort Worth Cook Children's Hospital where he died of his injuries.

According to Montague Sheriff Paul Cunningham, Torres was on a 4-wheeler wearing no helmet or protective gear. The 4-wheeler pulled out from a camping area into a pickup. The Sheriff's Department received the call on the accident at 5:31 p.m., Saturday afternoon.

Sheriff Cunningham said that Torres was taken from the accident scene to Cook by helicopter.

There were an estimated 10,000 to 15,000 people at the RWP gathering. Sheriff Cunningham noted that the event has medics and security on site during the four

Letter to the Editor

During the past weeks up until today, you listened with deep faith and compassion to a plea concerning needed education for our young sisters in Africa/Brazil. The responsibility of welcoming young girls to join our communities, requires that they be formed in religious life and ministries in our services in the church. The effort of our sisters in the Third World countries seemed, financially hopeless.

Your response in person at the benefit of the VFW and collections at the Masses at Sacred Heart Church, St. Peter's Church, and by the Gainesville K of C, was an overwhelming surprise that brought joy, and fraternity as we join hearts and hands for a common purpose, truly a work of mercy.

Our initial goal was to raise \$60,000 for the Educational fund for our young sisters who will be doing ministry in the local parishes of our missions. You have generously surpassed that goal. Your incredible gifts have unbelievably tipped the scale over \$100,000!

May you carry the plea in your hearts for a long time. Pray for the young sisters. Our God knows and loves you. I ask His blessing for you as only He can give.

Sincerely,
Sister Roberta Hesse, SSMN
In the name of my Sisters of Saint Mary of Namur.

Texas' Organ Donor Program tops 7 million registrants

In 2014, the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) recorded approximately 1.4 million new registrants to the Glenda P. Dawson Donate Life Texas Registry, boosting the total registry to more than seven million individuals. The registry is the state database of individuals who have officially indicated their decisions to donate organs and tissue to benefit thousands of people currently awaiting transplants.

"Since the program's inception, the DPS driver license system has played a critical role in the registry process, and DPS is proud to have helped millions of Texans join the Donate Life

registry," said DPS Director Steven McCraw. "Every person who selflessly elects to register as a donor has the potential to save another individual's life."

"The Texas Department of Public Safety staff are essential to the Donate Life Texas organ, eye, and tissue donor registry. Of the seven million Texans now registered, 98% of them joined the registry by saying yes to donation while applying for a state ID or driver license," said Patricia Niles, Donate Life Texas Board chair. "Those who register give the precious gift of hope to the thousands who await lifesaving transplants. I commend the DPS for helping to make donor

registration in Texas convenient as well as heroic."

The 79th Texas Legislature created the registry in 2005, and in recent years, legislation has helped streamline the registration process, and additional DPS training has helped increase participation. Since the creation of the registry, more than 6.8 million DPS customers have chosen to become possible donors during the driver license and identification card application, renewal, and duplicate processes.

Residents can register at their local DPS office when applying for or renewing a driver license or identification card, or they can enroll online at www.donatelifetexas.org

or www.donevidatexas.org.

Two state agencies – DPS and the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles – and three organ and tissue recovery agencies – LifeGift, Southwest Transplant Alliance, and Texas Organ Sharing Alliance – participate in the registry.

Currently, more than 13,600 individuals are awaiting organ or tissue transplants in Texas alone. In 2014 in Texas, a record 226 registered donors made nearly 800 transplants possible, according to Donate Life Texas. For more information about organ donation in Texas, visit www.donatelifetexas.org.

HENSCHIED

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self. The lumberyard didn't have one. We were selling so much material that I bought one in Dallas myself and started using it. Then I'd go down to Community and unload lumber for Rody (Klement) too.

Nail guns and paint machines came into use in the late 1970s and '80s.

Rufus worked in the construction business with many people over the years. He recalled carpenters Tony and Gene Klement, Clarence Wilson, Anton Fleitman, Wilfred Bindel, Buck Knabe, Jim Otto, Don Eckart, and Tom Vogel. Painters included Joe Hoenig, Henry Henschied, and Tony Hoenig. Electricians were Albert Henschied, Ed Sicking, Tony Walterscheid, and Rube Griggs. Plumbers named were John Tucker, Joe Russell, Phil Young, Erle Chastain. Ted Henschied

and Robert Klement laid tile and brick with Bobbie Lutkenhaus mixing the mud.

Others Rufus recalled working with were Frank Yosten, Mitchell and Roger Wolf, John Fette, Joe Mages, Oscar Walter, Joe Koesler, Walter Lutkenhaus, Agnes Hesse, John and Gary Henschied, Ronnie Hess, Betty Henschied, Tim Endres, Chas Hellman, Jody Fleitman, Bobby Hartman, and many high school part-time people.

In 1979, Rufus purchased the Schamburger Lumber and the name changed to Muenster Building Center. Muenster Building Center closed for daily business in 2008, but Henschied still does some lumberyard business.

"I was there exactly 60 years under the same roof," noted Rufus. "I was in the same place and involved with near 300 homes. We either built them, helped build them, or furnished the materials for over 300 new homes." He drew the plans for a good many of those homes. He went to drafting school to learn how to draw house plans.

"Homes were a lot simpler back then," said Henschied. "Back then, we built about 100 of these FHA homes. I had to draw five plans - foundation, floor, elevation showing what the sides looked like, heating and air conditioning, and electrical plans." It was not unusual

to have eight or 10 houses under construction at a time, he said.

Some notable changes that Rufus has seen over the years include, "Not getting material in on the railroad - that was one of the big things as far as the business was concerned. Most everything came in on trucks owned by others and ourselves. A big change in the type homes people built from common-sense homes that were very simple to larger and more expensive homes. We did everything very conservatively. Nobody had money after the Depression. Everything was done as cheap as you could do it. You tried to do it good, but cheap. We went from butane heaters to central air conditioning. We went to modern equipment like scaffolding and fork lifts." Financing of new homes was another change that Henschied said happened. When he first entered the construction business, people had the money to pay for their homes when they built. Now, people borrow money to build.

Rufus installed the air conditioning units for years. He taught himself how to install these with the help of the AC salesman. Some units worked for 50 years.

Of what he is most proud, Rufus said, "Being involved in over half the homes that were built. I think that is an accomplishment to be proud of."

In 1990, the family ex-

panded to Bridgeport. Henschied's son-in-law Ronnie Hess manages a lumberyard there. Since then, they have expanded to Springtown, Jacksboro, Alvord, and Tawakoni.

Rufus said, "After high school, my education was in the advanced school of job training and self education. I never one time wished I'd have gone to college."

Rufus and his wife Betty have four children, John, Janet Hess, Gary, and Sharon Hermes. He noted that he is the only person living in the municipality of Muenster whose father came here from Germany. "That was in 1925, just in time for the Great Depression," said Rufus. "I am real happy that he came over here and didn't stay in Germany."

"I was born in 1929 and learned much in my 85 years from the hard times of Depression."

Over the years, Rufus and Betty have traveled overseas going to 14 countries. He served on the Muenster Hospital District Board of Directors for 18 years, 17 years as its secretary. He also built the medical center in Muenster.

Asked what he planned to do since his retirement, Rufus responded, "I'm not retired. I'll never retire. I never intend to retire. I'm still taking care of 100 head of cattle and assisting Ronnie with decisions in the lumber business."

SURVEYS

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Rank the following as being most important to you: Class size 16.7%; Classroom budget 7.14%; and Administrative Support 78%.

Self expressed surprise that administrative support came up as more important than class size or classroom budget. "Ms. Heers name came up as very supportive several times," Self added.

T-TESS (Texas Teachers Evaluation and Support System) is the new teacher appraisal system, explained Self. The current system has been in use since the '90s. T-TESS is being piloted in some districts this year including Woodsboro ISD where Self was superintendent. It will be piloted one more year because it still needs changes.

Self said that districts involved with the pilot of the program will not have to pay for the training which will cost quite a bit of money. The State will pay the travel expense for the training.

"Plus you get a whole year of support from the State folks in asking them questions in how to handle things and respond to things," he added. "It is like a total walk through of being able to practice without it really counting." The teachers will get an evaluation and a score.

The teachers were asked about their interest in participating in the pilot program. The response was 51% did not have strong feelings one way or the other, 33% said they were in favor, and 15% said they were not in favor of it.

Trubenbach commented, "I think it is a good idea that it's a pilot program the first year because I think it is real important that they understand what they are going to be appraised on and why they are being appraised on it. It would not be fair to them to give them an appraisal and they not know what they are being appraised on until that appraisal comes."

Self noted that it would be quite different from the current method. It will be goal directed and staff development directed.

Trustee Kim Walterscheid stated, "I think it is great. It is something that is going to happen inevitably and if we get the opportunity for training and get the front lines out there to see what that's going to look like, that's a win win situation."

Self was seeking the Board's opinion of piloting the new program and seemed to get a positive response.

- In other business, the Board:
- Approved TASB Policy Update 101 as presented.
 - Approved State waiver for early release days in 2015-16.
 - Heard that \$1,725.57 was collected in past due ad valorem property taxes.

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2-WEEK EVENTS CALENDAR To list your event, call 759-4311 BEFORE NOON WEDNESDAY!

Sunday, March 22, 2015	Monday, March 23, 2015	Tuesday, March 24, 2015	Wednesday, March 25, 2015	Thursday, March 26, 2015	Friday, March 27, 2015	Saturday, March 28, 2015
Muenster Museum Open 1-4 pm		Library open 10 am - 6:30 pm MMH Board mtg. 7 pm	Library open 10-6:30 Rel. Ed. class 6:45 pm	Museum open 1-4 pm Library open 10-6:30 MHS OAP District @ NCTC	Museum open 1 - 4 pm MISD Dads Cooking Hot Dogs	Library open 10 - 2:30 MHS Prom
Sunday, March 29, 2015	Monday, March 30, 2015	Tuesday, March 31, 2015	Wednesday, April 1, 2015	Thursday, April 2, 2015	Friday, April 3, 2015	Saturday, April 4, 2015
Muenster Museum Open 1-4 pm Buckaroo & SH Ranch Rodeo		Library open 10 am - 6:30 pm	Library open 10 am - 6:30 pm Rel. Ed. Mass & Tenebrae 7 pm SH Paschal Meal SH NOON Dismissal	Museum open 1 - 4 pm Library open 10- 6:30 SHCS - NOON dismissal MHS Track Meet	Museum CLOSED SH - MISD NO School AARP Board mtg. 10 am	Library open 10-2:30

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Richard Hesse
1944 - 2015



Richard Hesse

Mass of Christian Burial with military honors was celebrated for Richard Joseph Hesse at 11 a.m. on Tuesday, March 10 in Sacred Heart Catholic Church, Muenster, with Fr. Ken Robinson officiating. Altar servers were Alvin Hartman and Leon Knauf. Lector was Joseph Williams, a nephew. Prayers of the Faithful were read by granddaughters Meagan and Ashley Hayes. Offertory gifts were presented by granddaughters Lara Hesse, Lorna Gant, and Rische Nelson. Eucharistic Ministers were sisters Suzanne Williams and Eileen Georgia, and niece Elizabeth Baumgartner. Sacred songs, led by Christy Hesse, and accompanied by Doug Yosten and Diane Grewing, included: "On Eagle's Wings," "Amazing Grace," "Prayer of St. Francis," "Softly and Tenderly," "Songs of the Angels," and "Be Not Afraid." Kristen Suessmann, niece and Godchild, gave the Eulogy.

He was the fourth of seven children born to Meinrad and Ida Hesse. He grew up on a dairy farm southwest of Muenster, assisting daily with milking cows and farm chores. He attended Sacred Heart Catholic School and was known for his quick sense of wit and fun-loving nature. Later, he worked in the oil fields and did some construction work. He was drafted into the US Army during the Vietnam War era in January of 1966.

After serving in the military, Richard married Janis Sue Fitzhugh on Dec. 31, 1973, in Sacred Heart Church. They had three daughters Carol, Melinda, and Jennifer, followed by two sons-in-law, eight grandchildren (all who partook in the liturgy of the Mass), and three great-grandchildren Jaiden, Isaac, and Olivia.

Richard set out with doing cement jobs and working as a carpenter. He planned and constructed many homes throughout this and surrounding areas.

Most enjoyable to him was family time – time that he and Janis spent with all of their children and extended family. All hold special memories of him and he was affectionately known as 'Boppa' to his grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

During his lengthy illness, Janis was his continual source of comfort, love, and an ever devoted wife, along with the support and love of his children and family. Likewise, he continued to love and humor all of us with his "sunny" side and empathetic nature.

A nephew who while attending college in Denton, worked with Richard, shared his reflection on the past: "All day long, Uncle Richard made everybody laugh. It didn't matter who you were,

Uncle Richard had a joke for you; from the clerk at the convenience store, to the clerks at the home improvement center, to the salesman at the construction equipment store that rented out Bobcat's. All day long, Uncle Richard was cracking jokes and making everybody he came into contact with happy. And, this wasn't any different from his normal day-to-day interactions, because at family get-togethers, he made everyone laugh, too. Yeah, when I think of Uncle Richard, I remember him as the clever one who eased people's burdens through his own special brand of humor."

Richard was preceded in death by his parents, and his brother Paul Hesse.

He is survived by his wife, three daughters, eight grandchildren, three great-grandchildren, two sons-in-law, five siblings, (all whose names are mentioned). Also three sisters-in-law, Dorothy, Lucille, and Geri Hesse; two brothers-in-law, Tom Williams and Glenn Georgia; and many nephews and nieces.

In lieu of flowers, his family requests that donations be sent to the Veterans Administration Medical Centers – <http://www.volunteer.va.gov/apps/VolunteerNow/>

DAYS GONE BY.....

65 YEARS AGO
March 17, 1950
Water line repair saves City 250,000 gallons per month. New Arrivals: Robert to Billy Joe and Terese Miller; Glenn to Dick and Laura Trachta; Darla to C.J. and Eugenia Rucker. William Walterscheid is one of top six marksmen in County 4-H Rifle Meet; Richard Hermes of Lindsay is also one of top six. Shamburger Lumber advertises 6 1/2 ft. steel posts for 75¢. Lawrence Martin advertises: I'm ready to shear your sheep again this year.

March 19, 1965
Mrs. Joe Luke is new chairman of Muenster Library. Joe Galloway is elected state director of Area III Jaycees. Leo J. Haverkamp quits his well service business and sells his equipment. New Arrival: Diane to Walter and Helen Luttmer. Obituaries: A.J. Higgins, 79; Andrew Tischler, 69; John Zipper, 78. Karen Luttmer has appendectomy. State Theatre advertises Alfred Hitchcock's *Psycho* and Sandra Dee in *Tammy Tell Me True*: prices are adults 60¢ and children under 12 admitted free.

March 16, 1990
Jon LeBrasseur is named Coach of the Year by TAPPS for the second consecutive year. Virgil Hess wins Cooke County Precinct 4's county commissioner race. Steve Cooper is new superintendent at Muenster ISD. Carl Chappell's custom boot making is subject of feature by Janet Felderhoff. Measles reported in Cooke County. Wedding: Katie Luke and Michael Yourell. Marjorie Alsup is named February Teacher of the Month at Muenster Elementary. New Arrival: Cassandra to Kim and Debbie Hale.

Tax Season is here: filing tips

Tax season officially kicked off and the countdown to April 15 is on. The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) expects to receive 150 million individual income tax returns this year. While few people enjoy this process, it is far better to file your taxes than have the IRS call on you—and do so with penalties. Listed below are tips to make filing your taxes as painless as possible.

Get organized
The first step to filing your taxes is to gather the necessary forms, and you should receive these in the mail by early February. This will include a W-2 from each workplace where you've received a salary as well as a variety of other forms, which could include interest and earning statements. You'll also want to gather records of deductible expenses that you've, hopefully, been collecting throughout the year.

Take advantage of the Free File program
The IRS offers the Free File program available at IRS.gov. This program opened for taxpayers on Jan. 16, and it provides the following two options:

- Software offered by IRS' commercial partners available to individuals and families with incomes of less than \$60,000. Fourteen brand-name software companies are participating in this year's program.
- Online fillable forms,

which are the electronic version of IRS paper forms, available to taxpayers of all income levels. This option is helpful to those who are comfortable completing their own returns.

Tax refund loans
While many tax preparers offer tax refund loans or other immediate refund programs, you won't get your refund that much quicker. Plus, these providers skimp a percentage of your return off the top for the convenience of getting your refund a few days sooner. The IRS expects to issue more than 90% of refunds within 21 days. To ensure the expediency of your tax refund, it is encouraged to electronically file your refund and choose direct deposit. The IRS reports that more than three out of four refund recipients will go this route. For comparison, paper returns will take a minimum of seven weeks for refunds to be issued.

Don't leave money
Taxpayers often overlook deductions, which is the equivalent of giving away money. While many people know about the child and dependent care credit that can be claimed if you've paid a provider to care for a dependent while you've either worked or looked for a job, listed are several others:

- Charitable contributions paid through payroll deductions when employees retain pay stubs as proof.
- Job search expenses allow deductions for costs such as travel and resume printing.
- Earned income tax credit for families with lower incomes.

Under the Affordable Care Act, individuals and families will face fines of \$95 per person and \$47.50 per child or 1% of income—whichever is higher—if they did not have health insurance in 2014. The fine will increase each year. The good news is that the majority of taxpayers will merely need to check a box to verify they had health insurance in 2014.

Don't be scammed
Scam artists and unethical tax preparers come out in droves during tax season. The IRS will never email you to ask for confidential financial information, so be aware this is a phishing scheme. Additionally, beware of tax preparers who earn commission based on the size of your refund. This is incentive to inaccurately fill out forms, which puts you at risk with the IRS. When looking for a tax preparer, always ensure this person guarantees to pay penalties resulting from filing errors.

If April 15 comes around and you're simply not prepared to submit your tax return yet, you can always file for an extension. Particularly if you expect to receive a return, it is important to be thorough in your documentation. If you need more time, the IRS will give you six more months—until Oct. 15—to finish filing if you complete the 4868 form by April 15. That said, you will be required to pay any taxes owed by this date.

The information above is provided by the Independent Bankers Assoc. of Texas with the understanding that the Association is not engaged in rendering specific legal, accounting, or other professional services. sought.

Anne Otto
1925 - 2015

Funeral Mass for Anne Morene Otto, age 90 of Gainesville, is set for 11 a.m., Friday, March 20 at St. Mary's Catholic Church with Fr. Gary Picou officiating. Burial will follow in Fairview Cemetery under the direction of Geo. J. Carroll & Son Funeral Home. Rosary with visitation following was held at the funeral home at 6 p.m., Thursday, March 19.

Anne is survived by her brothers Bud Dudenhoefter and Al Dudenhoefter, both of Gainesville. She was also a special aunt to numerous nieces and nephews who survive her.

She was preceded in death by her parents; her husband Melvin in 1996; brothers Jerry Dudenhoefter and Mike Dudenhoefter; and sisters Eva Bauer and Tootie Bauer.

Memorial contributions may be made to St. Mary's Catholic Church, or St. Mary's Catholic School.

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The family of Richard Joseph Hesse wishes to express their gratitude to all of you for your kindness and support at his passing over to eternal life.
Your fine gifts of prayers, condolences, kind words, attendance at his Rosary/Vigil, Mass of Christian Burial, and Interment at Sacred Heart Cemetery, Masses, donations to various organizations, cards, flowers, food, and other gracious deeds are greatly appreciated.
Father Ken, thank you for your prayers, your officiating at his Mass, your homily, and your words of comfort.
Christy, Doug, and Diane, thank you for your beautiful songs and music. Alvin and Leon, thank you for your ministry as Altar servers. We thank Carolyn, Sacristan, for her dedicated work, for ensuring that all is set/in place.
Thank you to the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) for the military honor guard and services at Sacred Heart Cemetery.
Our gratitude to the Catholic Daughters and the lovely ladies who prepared and served the delicious meal. Our appreciation is extended to the Knights of Columbus for providing the use of their hall.
Thank you to Scott Funeral Home for your kindness and smooth handling of Richard's funeral services.

MMH Star answers to higher calling

"Not all of us can do great things. But we can do small things with great love."
-Mother Teresa

For the February "Rising Star," this saying is something put into action each and every day through his work as an LVN at Muenster Memorial Hospital.

A Muenster native, Kenneth Grewing began his career in health care in 2001, when he became certified as a nurse aide. He graduated from the Licensed Vocational Nursing Program at North Central Texas College in 2007 and worked at Wise Regional Medical Center in Decatur on the Medical/Surgical floor for about a year. In 2008, Grewing joined the staff at Muenster Memorial Hospital.

Grewing credits his grandmother, Emma Lou Hess, and his mother, Linda Luttmeyer, as the ones who inspired him to pursue a career in health care.

"I have been blessed with the ability to take care of

those in need," said Grewing.

"Taking care of people gives me an awesome feeling inside and I know I receive just as much as I give in my career."

Grewing was nominated for the "Rising Star" Award specifically for his care of a patient who wrote "Thank you for taking care of me in my time of need. It was a great feeling knowing a friend was there helping." The patient then went on to praise the entire team "for a job well done."

Grewing noted that he feels fortunate to work with the professionals at MMH. "I try my best to provide quality care to our patients, as do all my fellow nurses."

MMH Chief Nursing Officer Diane Neu stated that Grewing is a patient favorite.

"All the patients love Kenneth," she noted. "He is a team player, has a great work ethic and attitude, and gives great patient care."

In addition to his care and compassion, Grewing is also known for his big smile and friendly nature.

"Being in the nursing profession, we are in a unique position to do many small things for the comfort and care of those in need," Grewing noted. "There are so many little things which often go unnoticed by others but are so important to the patients we care for. When done with love and compassion, those small things are transformed into something wonderful."

When not at work, Grewing enjoys spending time with wife Katie and children Emma, seven, Nathan, four, and Aubrey, three.

The Muenster Memorial Hospital "Rising Star" Award is presented monthly to Hospital staff members who excel in their duties and attitude. Nomination forms can be found near the suggestion box next to the chapel in the front lobby. The next "Rising Star" will be named March 26.

Blood Drive set for March 26

Texoma Regional Blood Center will be at Muenster High School on Thursday, March 26 for its regular Blood Drive. Donation times are from 1-7 p.m.

Donors receive free juice, cookies, a t-shirt, and the amazing feeling of helping others.

Look for the bus!

Notice

Brown Bag Book Review

The April Brown Bag Book Review will be held on Thursday, April 2, at the Morton Museum at noon. Bonnie Slack will review *Claudia* by Rose Franken.

Come and invite a friend!

VFW Auxiliary meets

The Ladies Auxiliary VFW held their regular meeting Monday, March 16 in the Post Home. President Frances Bayer presided. The opening ritual was given by Conductress Linda Knabe, Chaplain Sandra Hennigan pro tem, and Patriotic Instructor Hilda Sicking. Roll call and minutes of the previous meeting were read by Secretary Ida Mae Bindel.

A thank you from the Bonham VA Hospital VANTHCS was read, in appreciation for items donated from the Auxiliary members. Members were informed that all reports are due April 10.

President Bayer has 76 soup labels to send to the National Home for children. Please keep saving the labels to be sent at a later date.

Members voted to send a donation to Cancer Aide and Research in memory of Meinard Yosten.

The next meeting, slated for April 20 at 7 p.m. at the Post Home, will include election of officers and will begin with a meal.

Pray with great confidence, with confidence based upon the goodness and infinite generosity of God and upon the promises of Jesus Christ. God is a spring of living water which flows unceasingly into the hearts of those who pray.
- St. Louis de Montfort

Cooke County Library Easter closings announced

The Cooke County Library will be closed all day Friday, April 3 and Saturday, April 4 for the Easter holiday. They will open back up on Monday, April 6 at 9 a.m. with regular hours.

Just because they're closed doesn't mean you don't have access to library services. You can still access their eBooks, downloadable audiobooks, and music. You can find all of these great products by visiting the Cooke County Library website (<http://cookecountylibrary.org/>), click the "Books & More" tab, and then click on the eBooks, Downloadable Audiobooks, and Music headers to learn more details on each of these services.

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MMH photo

Kenneth Grewing, left, is presented the Rising Star Award for February by Muenster Memorial Hospital Chief Executive Officer Michael Kent.

Cooking for One workshop offered in April

Come join Home Hospice for their workshop Cooking for One where they teach members of the group easy ways to cook for one. Many participants in the group have recently lost a loved one and are learning how to

cope with daily life on their own.

"Cooking for One is open to anyone," said Melinda, lead chef for the workshop. "It can be for someone who doesn't know how to cook at all, or for skilled cooks who

would like to share ideas and gain new ideas from others. A lot of people feel discouraged when they are only cooking for themselves; I hope to make it fun for them again."

"Each session of Cooking for One brings a different mix of people to the table," said Melinda. "They bring humor, share their own cooking tidbits, and offer a piece of themselves as they share their story with the group."

This group will meet Thursdays in April on the 2nd, 9th, 16th, and 23rd from 5-6:30 p.m. at the Home Hospice Office, 505 W. Center Street in Sherman.

Cooking for One is free to attend, but spaces are limited. Please register by March 30. Call Jolene Senek at 903-868-9315 to register. For more information or to find other workshops offered by Home Hospice, visit www.homehospice.org/hopecenter/.

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KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION MISD

Kindergarten registration for MISD will be held on Tuesday, April 7, from 3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. at Muenster Elementary.

Parents registering children for the 2015-2016 school year must complete a registration card. A copy of the child's immunization records, social security card and birth certificate must be filed with the school secretary, Terri Barrett, prior to school starting.

Parents who wish to transfer their children into the Muenster Independent School District must complete a transfer request in addition to the registration card. The MISD School Board must approve all transfer requests. For more information about transfer requests call Lou Heers, Principal, at 759-2281, extension 620.

Muenster Elementary's full day kindergarten, a child centered program, develops pre-academic skills. The kindergarten teachers use a combination of centers, discovery and direct instruction in a language-rich environment to maximize each child's potential. Students discover the fun of learning as they prepare for future academic and social success. The teachers will be on hand at registration to answer questions.

We look forward to seeing you. If you are unable to attend on April 7, please contact the school for a convenient time to register.

La MATRICULA del JARDIN DE LA INFANCIA MISD

La matricula del jardin de la infancia kinder para MISD sera martes, el 7 de abril a las 3:30 p.m. hasta las 5:30 p.m. en el edificio elementaria.

Los padres que registran sus niños para el 2015-2016 año escolar deben completar una tarjeta de matricula. Una copia de los registros de la inmunización: tarjeta social de seguro y certificado de nacimiento oficial se deben presentar a la secretaria de la escuela, Terri Barrett, antes de que los estudiantes empiecen la escuela.

Los padres que desean transferir sus niños en el Muenster Distrito Independiente de Escuela debe completar una petición de la transferencia de la tarjeta de matricula. El Comité Ejecutivo de la Escuela de MISD debe aprobar todas transferencias solicitadas. Para mas información acerca de la transferencia solicitada llame Lou Heers, la Directora en 759-2281, la Extension 620.

El Kinder de Muenster Elementaria es para el día entero para desarrollar las destrezas necesarias para entrar en el primer grado. Las maestras de Kinder usan muchas diferentes estrategias para sacar el maximo desarrollo del niño. Los niños desubren el gozo de aprendizaje mientras preparan para su futuro educacional. Las maestras de Kinder estaran dispuestos a contestar cualquiera pregunta.

Esperamos con ansia verlo. Si usted es incapaz de asistir en el 7 de abril avisa por favor llame la escuela para un tiempo conveniente para el registro.



Muenster ISD Arts and Crafts Show winners included, above, from left - FCCLA entries Noel Rodriguez, Grand Champion with his fashion design story board; Rut Rodriguez, Reserve Champion with her sewing; Junior High Division of Art Kacie Grewing, who took Grand Champion JH Art Award; and Savannah Bohl, Reserve Champion JH Art Award. Pictured at right, from left - Papatsamon Vonsariyavanich, Grand Champion High School Art winner and Noel Rodriguez, Reserve Champion Art winner.

MISD photos



SHCS photo

Sacred Heart Montessori students celebrated Dental Health Month with a presentation on March 6 by Dr. Dana Fuhrmann and Jennifer Aldridge from Smiles By German Design. Students were given pictures of snacks and had to decide if they were good or bad snacks. Pictured is Jennifer and Pre-K students Lynzie Fisher and Mollie Hess watching Arlo Nasche floss "marshmallow" teeth. The students were given goodie bags that included a toothbrush, toothpaste, and a kids flosser. The presentation concluded with a healthy and delicious snack.



MISD photo

MUESTER ELEMENTARY PRINCIPAL'S AWARD WINNERS FOR THE 4th SIX WEEKS are, from left, front - Seth Paulin, Collin Otto, Carson Klem, Carter McCann; row 2 - Jesse Castruita, Addison Aldridge, Wade Schad, Jake Fisher; row 3 - Gabe Grewing, Cassy Acayan, Whitney Newton, J.D. Smith; row 4 - Kyler Fields, Nate Hesse, Mariela Rodriguez, and Annie Anderle.



SHCS photo

Sacred Heart Catholic School Montessori students celebrated famous children's author Dr. Seuss' birthday on March 2 with a breakfast of green eggs and ham, making *Cat in the Hat* hats, and enjoying classic Seuss books. Pictured is the Kindergarten class donning their Seuss hats. "The more that you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you'll go." - Dr. Seuss, *I Can Read With My Eyes Shut!*

TYLA launches End Bullying Now campaign

Bullying has been a persistent problem in our society. While many believe that bullying stops after graduation, in reality it occurs at all ages—from the classroom, to cyberspace, and the workplace.

According to a survey on the Department of Health and Human Services website, 62% of respondents claim they witnessed bullying two or more times in the last month, and 41% claim they witness bullying once a week or more.

With the ease of technology and prevalence of social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram, cyberbullying can be humiliating and extremely public.

Although numerous organizations attempt to address the issue of bullying, none have explained to the public how the law addresses the epidemic or provides help to those in need, said Rebekah Steely Brooker, president of the Texas Young Lawyers Association, or TYLA.

"Being either a bully or a victim can have a profound impact on the individual's life," Brooker said. "TYLA is excited about the prospect of tackling this very challenging subject in a way that engages, educates, and truly changes lives."

To meet this need, TYLA created the End Bullying Now campaign consisting of an interactive website that targets children, teens, parents, educators, and the workplace through short stories, expert education, testimonials, and games. Viewers can watch celebrities such as Marty Turco, a former goalie for the Dallas Stars, and ordinary individuals such as Keri Kaiser, vice president of marketing at Children's Health in Dallas, share their bullying stories.

A grant from the Texas Bar

Foundation is funding the project. Since its inception in 1965, the Foundation has awarded more than \$15 million in grants to law-related programs. Supported by members of the State Bar of Texas, the Texas Bar Foundation is the nation's largest charitably funded bar foundation.

The End Bullying Now campaign is now live at biggerthanbullies.com. TYLA is dedicated to continue collecting videos of testimonials in order to identify with even more website viewers.

For more information on how you can end bullying, visit biggerthanbullies.com.

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SPORTS

Game Warden Reports

District MVP



Courtesy photo

Crowell Lady Wildcat Mardi Wisdom was named District 8A's Offensive Most Valuable Player. The Lady Cats were District Champions, Bi-District Champions, Area Champions, and Regional Quarter Finalists in this season's playoffs. Mardi, a junior at Crowell High School, is the daughter of Rocky and Gina Wisdom of Thalia and the granddaughter of Norma Jean and Denis Hofbauer of Muenster and the late Dorothy and Jake Wisdom.

Cole-McNatt Chevrolet goes to bat for Muenster Jaycees

Cole-McNatt Chevrolet has joined forces with the national Chevrolet Youth Baseball program to provide new equipment, a monetary contribution, invitations to FREE instructional clinics, and an opportunity for community members to earn additional donations for the Muenster Jaycees baseball programs via a Test Drive fundraiser.

"Playing the game of baseball helps kids develop skills like leadership, cooperation, and sportsmanship while bringing families and communities together to show their support. Cole-McNatt Chevrolet and Chevrolet Youth Baseball are proud to participate in a sport that brings so many smiles to kids and families in the community," said Ben Bindel, Cole-McNatt Chevrolet sales consultant, community coordinator. "Chevrolet believes that in play, there are possibilities, and supports the spirit of teamwork that baseball instills in its players."

2015 marks Chevrolet's Youth Baseball program's tenth year, and since its introduction has helped aid local teams, benefiting more than 3.5 million young people in communities where Chevrolet's customers live, work and play. In 2014, more than 1,600 Chevrolet dealers participated across the country.

Cole-McNatt Chevrolet will present the Muenster JCs with an equipment kit that includes useful items such as bags, batting tees, catcher's gear, water bottles, and Chevrolet Youth Baseball T-shirts. The sponsorship also includes youth clinics featuring current and former MLB/MiLB players and coaches, and instructors from Ripken Baseball and the Major League Baseball Players Alumni Association.

In addition, Cole-McNatt Chevrolet will present a check representing a one-time monetary contribution to Muenster JCs. Sponsored leagues across the country will have the chance to earn additional funds as community members take test drives at their partnering dealership to help support the league.

For more information about Chevrolet Youth Baseball, please visit www.youthsports wired.com.

Texas State parks boost the state economy

A recent study finds the Texas State Park system has a significant economic impact on Texas economy, generating \$774 million in retail sales annually, contributing \$351 million in economic benefits, and creating 5,800 jobs statewide.

The study of almost 14,000 visitors at 30 state parks was conducted by Texas A&M University between March and June. Visitors were polled about their spending on fees, groceries, restaurant meals, and equipment during

their travel to the park and in close proximity to the park, according to a TPWD news release.

"The take-away message from this study," says Dr. John Crompton, A&M professor in the Recreation, Parks and Tourism Sciences Department, "should be that the state park system is an important contributor to the Texas economy, particularly in rural areas, and that the state's net investment in parks is returned many times over as visitors travel to enjoy the outdoors and leave their dollars behind."

The study further revealed that state park spending increased all Texans' income by \$202 million and generated 5,871 jobs, paying an average annual salary of \$34,000.

Pigging out

When a Jim Hogg County game warden heard gunshots in the distance, he checked a group of dove hunters nearby. The warden then found hunters riding in a utility vehicle who admitted to shooting a javelina with semi-automatic rifles. When the hunters were asked for their hunting licenses, one of them asked about bag limits of javelina. The hunters then admitted to dumping the javelina in the brush, and the hunters who harvested the javelina received citations and were educated on waste of game laws. The javelina was retrieved from the brush and donated to a family in Hebbronville.

Red "Hairing"

While investigating a hunting camp, a Houston County game warden discovered deer hair on a skinning gambrel and a couple of old blood spots on a four-wheeler. When the game warden asked one of the hunters at the camp if they had taken any deer this season, one hunter replied, "No, only hogs," while another hunter said they "haven't been seeing any." The game warden then showed the hunters the deer hairs he had found on the skinning gambrel. One of the hunters began to shake and admitted his dad had taken a young doe last Saturday. After further investigation, the father said he had not taken any deer this season before finally admitting he had taken a young doe.

Poaching, meth, and stolen tools - oh my!

A Harris County game warden was investigating a call regarding possible poaching. The caller had reported seeing a man with feed and a rifle clearing out an area of the woods with construction equipment. When the game warden arrived, he saw two men using an old 4x4 truck and a trencher to dig up and pull out tons of bundled copper wire. The truck bed was already full of copper wire when the warden made contact with the men and placed them in handcuffs. The warden found a loaded .22 rifle and a meth pipe. When backup arrived and the vehicle had been searched, law enforcement found a total of 14 grams of methamphetamine and numerous possibly

stolen tools. One of the men was a convicted felon. Both men were arrested and face several felony charges, including theft and possession of a controlled substance.

Who let the drugs out?

Two game wardens from Gregg and Upshur Counties were conducting surveillance near their county line when they observed an individual stop near their location and collect a whitetail buck from the roadway. The subject became increasingly irritable and uncooperative after contact was made. When consent to search was given, the wardens located multiple containers of methamphetamine, drug paraphernalia, suspected meth lab components, and an illegal firearm. The subject was arrested for manufacture or delivery of controlled substance and unlawful carry of firearm. Additional charges and cases pending.

Dude, where's my boat?

A Jefferson County game warden responded to a call about a possible stolen boat and motor recovered from the Neches River. When the boat was towed in and contact was made with the owner, he said he had gotten hung up on a pipe and left his boat. When he returned, he discovered it was missing. The value of the recovery was estimated at \$15,000.

"I'm sure glad to see you"

As a Real County game warden pulled into a hunting camp to check for hunting violations, he was greeted by a hunter who said, "I'm sure glad to see you." When the warden asked why, the hunter replied, "Seeing you reminds me that I have to put my tag on my deer." The deer was already quartered in the ice chest and the cape in a trash bag. The hunter was cited for possession of untagged deer.

Deerly beloved

A Karnes County game warden entered a camp to check reports of possible illegal deer being shot. As he approached, he saw a buck hanging from a tree and two antlerless deer in the bed of a truck. A female had harvested the buck, and her husband had taken the two antlerless deer. All deer were not tagged, and there were no permits for the two antlerless deer. The warden seized all three deer.

PRE-KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION

Pre-Kindergarten registration for Muenster ISD will be April 6 - 10, 2015. Registration folders may be picked up at the elementary office. Children must be four years old by September 1, 2015. A copy of the child's immunization records, social security card and birth certificate must be filed with the school secretary, Terri Barrett, prior to school starting.

Parents who wish to transfer their children into the Muenster Independent School District must complete a transfer request in addition to the registration card. The MISD School Board must approve all transfer requests. For more information about transfer requests call Lou Heers, Principal, at 759-2281, extension 620.

El Registro de Pre-Kindergarten para Muenster ISD sera abril 6 - 10, 2015. Las carpetas del registro se pueden recoger en la oficina elemental. Los niños deben cumplir cuatro años ante de septiembre 1, 2015. Una copia de los registros de la inmunization: tarjeta social de seguro y certificado de nacimiento oficial se deben presentar a la secretaria de la escuela, Terri Barrett, antes de que los estudiantes empiesen la escuela.

Los padres que desean transferir sus niños en el Muenster Distrito Independiente de Escuela debe completar una petición de la transferencia además de la tarjeta de matrícula. El Comité Ejecutivo de la Escuela de MISD debe aprobar todas transferencias solicitadas. Para mas información acerca de la transferencia solicitada llame Lou Heers, la Directora en 759-2281, la Extensión 620.

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NOTICE MUENSTER YOUTH ORGANIZATIONS
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FARM & RANCH

AgriLife Extension expert warns of possible rust epidemic in Texas wheat crop

Early sightings of stripe rust in wheat could indicate 2015 might see an epidemic in infections, according to two Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service specialists.

Texas producers and AgriLife Extension specialists and agents have observed leaf and stripe rust throughout a large swath of the state from South Texas north into Oklahoma and in the San Angelo, Abilene, and Chillicothe areas, said Dr. Clark Neely, AgriLife Extension small grains and oilseed specialist in College Station.

"Right now, stripe rust appears to be more prevalent than leaf rust, and in some cases, it has started to move into the upper canopy," Neely said.

Stripe rust was first reported in Northeast Texas on Jan. 29, extremely early in the season, Neely said. In comparison, the earliest record of finding stripe rust was Jan. 8, 2005, which correlated with a severe epidemic of stripe rust across the Southern Great Plains. Another severe stripe rust epidemic occurred when stripe rust was observed on Feb. 20, 2010.

"Generally speaking, when stripe rust is observed before March, a large stripe rust epidemic is likely for the Southern Great Plains," he said.

Neely said producers will need to take extra steps to protect against the disease, which left unchecked could result in as much as 70% reduction of yields in susceptible lines.

"Many growers have already applied an early fungicide application, which is not a typical practice, but likely warranted this spring with the high disease levels," he said.

"This early fungicide application will not protect the crop for the rest of the season, and a second application will likely be needed after flag leaf emergence, assuming weather conditions remain favorable for the spread of the disease."

Stripe rust development is most rapid between 50-64 degrees and favored by intermittent periods of rain or dew, similar to what is being experienced in of some areas of Texas, said Dr. Ron French, AgriLife Extension plant pathology specialist in Amarillo.

Strobilurin fungicides are best suited as a preventive control when applied before infection starts, while triazole fungicides typically have a better curative effect after infection is observed, French said.

Neely said leaf rust also has been observed around the state throughout the winter months. It prefers warmer temperatures around 68-77 degrees; therefore, leaf rust development in wheat fields generally appears as stripe rust is disappearing.

"Both leaf and stripe rust require water on leaf surfaces for spore germination,"

he said. "Therefore, moist weather conditions such as heavy dew and rain facilitate disease development, while windy conditions help distribute the fungal spores."

To effectively control stripe rust, Neely said, growers should know what variety they planted and its resistance level. He said fungicide

efficacy trial results can be found at <http://varietytesting.tamu.edu/wheat>.

For further information about identifying leaf and stripe rust, refer to the publication titled "Identifying Rust Diseases of Wheat and Barley" at <http://bit.ly/19sm9R4> or go to <http://sickcrops.tamu.edu>.



Stripe rust on wheat leaf.

TDA market recap

For the week ending March 14, Texas auctions quoted feeder cattle prices mostly steady and firm, ranging from \$2 to \$10 higher per hundredweight (cwt). Texas weekly direct feeder cattle sales were \$1 to \$6 higher. Fed cattle weekly cash sales were higher at \$161 per cwt, but wholesale beef values were lower, with Choice Grade falling \$4.36 to \$244.12 per cwt and Select Grade falling \$0.32 to \$244.07. Net export sales for Feb. 27 - March 5 were

up 47% from the prior four-week average. Export shipments were up 7% from the previous week.

Wheat cash and futures prices gained \$0.18 and \$0.21 to close at \$5.02 per bushel and \$5.42 per bushel, respectively. The USDA NASS Texas field office reported that increased moisture throughout the state allowed for progress to be made in the Winter Wheat crop. Eighty-nine percent of the Texas Winter Wheat crop is in fair condition or better. Fifty percent of the wheat crop is in excellent or good condition. Net export sales for wheat were down 5% from last week, but up 21% from the prior four-week average. Shipments were 11% lower than the previous week and 1% lower than the average.

Texas corn prices were slightly lower with cash prices down to \$4.07 per bushel and futures prices down to \$3.74. The USDA NASS Texas field office reported that 6% of Texas corn acreage has been planted, up two percentage points from last week but down 4% from the same period last year. Most of this progress came in the South Central, Upper Coast, and Southern areas of the state. Corn export sales were down 50% from last week and 52% from the four-week average. Export shipments were 16% lower than last week, but 31% higher than the average.

Scattered showers were experienced throughout the state during the week, bringing up to three inches of precipitation in some locations. Last week's U.S. Drought Monitor for Texas showed improvement in drought conditions for the state with nearly 58% of Texas still experiencing some stage of drought intensity, down three percent points from last week. On the national level, drought conditions worsened slightly with nearly 53% of the U.S. experiencing abnormal dryness or some degree of drought, up 0.13% points from last week.

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