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Rockwall County News



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Serving County Readers in • Fate • Heath • McLendon-Chisholm • Rockwall • Rowlett • Royse City

Oldest house in Royse City drawing much interest

Millie Jean Coppedge

A house that has become known in recent years as The Weatherford House was built in 1882, giving it the distinction as the oldest house in Royse City. To the right of the house at 107 N. Houston is a smaller house which was at one time a washateria run by Lena Sisk and her mother, Mattie Sisk. It was eventually turned into a beauty polar, also known as Mattie.

According to the right of the little house was the original home of Lena and her mother. It had originally been moved from Wood Street to Houston and was torn down years ago. Lena and Mattie eventually moved into a big two-story house, The Weatherford House.

Lena's mother, Mattie, and sister Lena died in the house and that was their wish to die there too. Her comment was that she wanted to die in her bed as her mother and sister. But about August 2008, she fell and broke her hip. She was admitted to a nursing home for rehabilitation, but never recovered from the fall.

As stated in Leta Weatherford's obituary furnished by Lucille Bell, a next-door neighbor and good friend, that the beauty polar was a center of much conversation, friendship and community." The obituary also states that Leta was 98 years old and would have been 99 on Oct. 9. She died on Oct. 27, 2009.

Another article titled "Memories Bring Royse City Pioneer Days Back Again" it notes that Leta and Lena's mother was born in 1869, married in 1932 and had two daughters, Helen Givens and Virginia. Helen is still living, a resident of a nursing home. Lena never married.

During World War II, Lena and her mother rented out the two bedrooms on the top floor for extra income. This part of the six-room house is just as it was in the 1800s, but Leta had the bottom floor interwalls paneled. When Leta died, an estate sale was conducted and everything in the house was sold, along with the equipment and supplies from the beauty shop.

Leta loved to make beautiful quilts. She would quilt all winter, her big house warmed by Dearborn gas space heaters. She gave many uniquely styled quilts to family member and friends over the years.

According to the book "The Rockwall County History" published in 1984, Leta, Lena and her mother were descendants of Nancy Francis McCasland who died in 1844. The McCasland family were early settlers of Kaufman and Rockwall counties, who owned a lot of land and helped to create a rich history for the Royse City and Rockwall area.



Leta Weatherford was the last resident of the oldest house in Royse City. She died in 2009. Photo courtesy of Shawn Copeland/Rockwall County News



The oldest house in Royse City, now often referred to as The Leta Weatherford Home, is causing much excitement as the city ponders its future. The house, located at 107 N. Houston, was built in 1882. Photo by Millie Jean Coppedge/Rockwall County News

Hospital recognized for newborn, infant health guidelines

Texas Health Presbyterian Hospital Rockwall has earned the Texas Ten Step Program facility designation from the Texas Department of State Health Services, according to a hospital news release.

The Texas Ten Step Program encourages breastfeeding as the preferred method of feeding for newborns and infants. Recognizing the relationship between breastfeeding and improved newborn and infant health, the hospital has developed a detailed breastfeeding education and support program. Texas Health Rockwall joins a growing number of Texas birth facilities that are supporting new mothers and their decision to breastfeed.

Based on the World Health Organization/ UNICEF's Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding, the program aims to assist birth facility's support of breastfeeding mothers before, during and after delivery; encourages them to identify breastfeeding resources for the mother after she is discharged; and assists facilities in improving on national

performance measures such as the Centers for Disease Control's Breastfeeding Report Card. The goal of the Texas Ten Step Program is to have 82 percent of infants exclusively breastfeeding when discharged.

Texas Ten Step facilities are asked to address 85 percent of the Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding, be designated as a Texas Mother-Friendly Worksite, evaluate their breastfeeding policies, maternity care practices and educate all healthcare staff routinely with evidence-based courses.

"We have worked very hard to earn the Texas Ten Step Program designation," said Evelyne Laka, director of Maternal Child Services. "And we are proud to join the other select Texas hospitals in promoting breastfeeding to our new mothers."

For more information on the Texas Ten Step Program, call Veronica Hendrix, Program Coordinator at (512) 341-4592, or visit texasstep.org.

According to a newspaper article donated by Deloris Ballard of the Robison Historical Museum titled "Even after Century, the House Still Home Here," the house was built by Byrd Royse, who platted the site for the city in 1886. The article shows no date or name or newspaper. This is the year the Missouri, Kansas and Texas Railroad through Rockwall County causing a surge in population, new homes and businesses. The house was built for a Dr. Wright and his wife, Mattie Sisk bought the house in 1938, which had reportedly been the house for several years before her purchase. She had to do general repairs and repairs to the house.

According to Carl Alsabrook, city manager of Royse City, "The oldest house in Royse City and the lot it sets on, along with two other lots, were purchased in early 2012 for a sum of \$57,000 by the city. The prevailing sentiment at the time of purchase was to preserve the house, not so much for our use of us living now, but for our children and grandchildren. We want them to know what life was like in the early days of Royse City.

There are several options for the property," Alsabrook said. "We could create a heritage park to celebrate the heritage and history of Royse City. The house could be refurbished from that time period and turned into an extension of our museum. We have considered moving the house to across the street that was included in the original purchase, or if it proves that the house is structurally or financially cost prohibitive to move, we will consider alternatives to maintaining it in its current location and location."

The Sisk and Weatherford families are buried in the Royse City cemetery.

Information from this column came from various newspaper and contributions or from interviews and contains information from the author's memories. Often people remember things indifferent to what I want to thank those who helped compile this information and make it as near factual as possible. Those who lived during the building and history of the house at 107 N. Houston are now gone, and we depend on written word or "hand me down" stories to compile the history.

Rockwall schools earn College Readiness Awards

Rockwall High and Rockwall-Heath High Schools each received the College Readiness Award from the Texas ACT Council, according to Rockwall ISD news release.

The award was given to recognize schools for increasing the number of students taking the ACT assessment over the past five years as well as increasing the level of student achievement and college readiness.

The ACT assessment is the college-admissions test used and accepted by colleges nationwide.

The Texas ACT Council wanted to recognize those Texas high schools that have made significant strides in increasing the college and career readiness of their graduates as demonstrated by their ACT scores over the past five years, said Karen L. Pennell, assistant vice president and ACT Southwest regional manager. "This can only happen as a result of the high school's faculty and staff efforts and the dedication of Rockwall High School and Rockwall-Heath High School students and staff to focus on college and career readiness and raise the level of academic readiness for all students."



The Hartman Elementary School Honor Choir and Orff Ensemble traveled to Summer Ridge Assisted Living Center in Rockwall recently to entertain residents and spread some holiday cheer. Pictured above are choir members sharing treats with some of the residents. Ensemble students performed two pieces from their fall concert, while the choir students sang selections from their upcoming holiday musical "The Elves' Impersonator." Courtesy photo/Rockwall County News



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Jingle Bells Run slated Dec. 21

The Jingle Bells Run will be conducted at Fort Elementary School from 8:30 p.m. to 3 p.m. Dec. 21 in the school's PE classes. Funds raised will help further the mission of the American Diabetes Association and will be used to help prevent and cure diabetes and improve the lives of those affected by the disease. T-shirts will be sold. Sign up your student at main.diabetes.org/goto/fort2012. The goal is to raise \$3,000. The student who raises the most money will receive a prize; each student who raises money will receive a prize.



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Thursday, December 20, 2012

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Jenna Weiss, a Fort Elementary School fourth-grader, was this year's winner in the Roysce "Country Christmas" poster contest. Jenna participated in the Roysce City tree lighting ceremony and rode alongside Santa in the Dec. 8 Christmas parade. Pictured with Jenna is Art Teacher Carr Slagle.
Courtesy Photo/Rockwall County News

Park named for former mayor

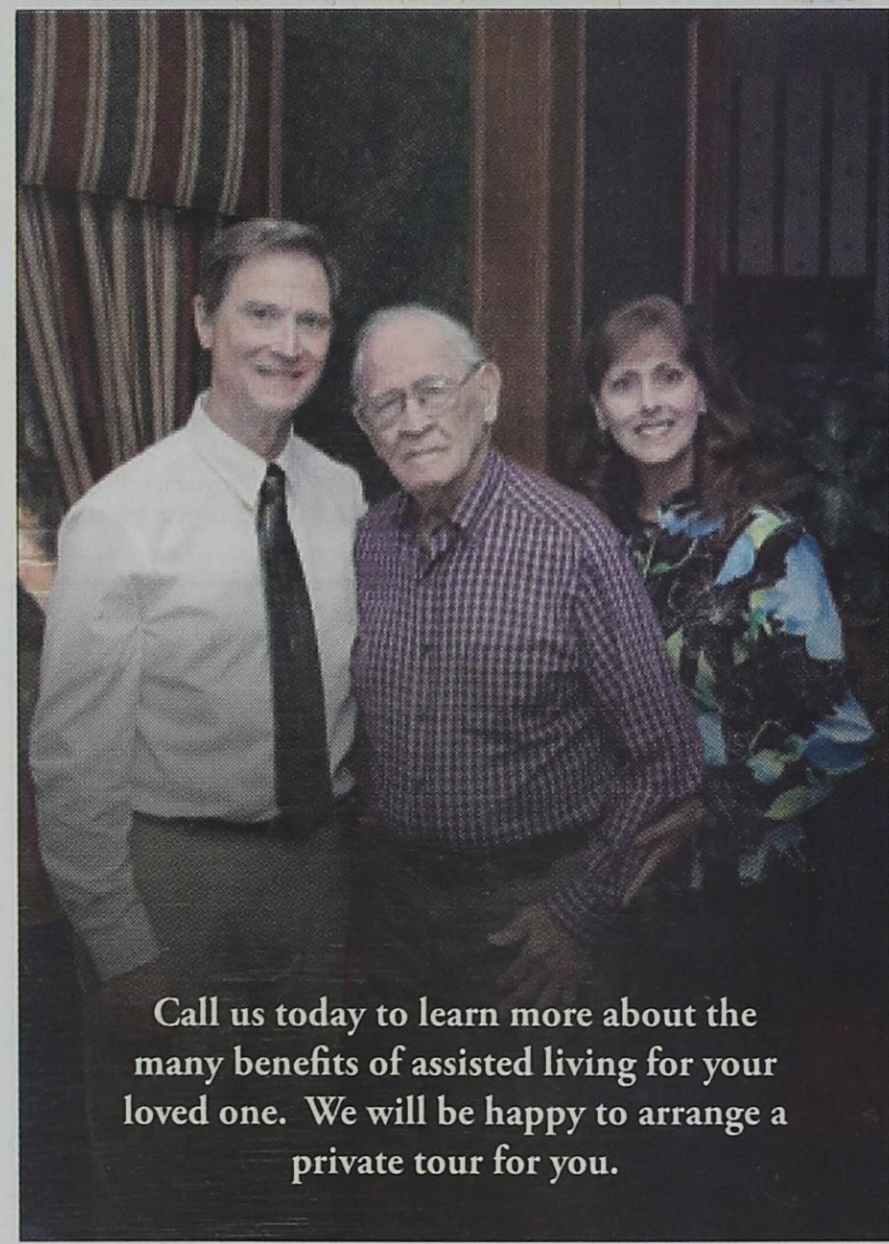
A 50-acre north community park in the City of Rockwall has been named in honor of former mayor Williams Howard.

Howard served on the city's park board for 10 years and on the Rockwall City Council for eight including two years as mayor. She has been an active public servant for more than 30 years in Rock County, holding various elected, appointed and volunteer positions.

During her term as mayor, she facilitated the implementation of the half-cent sales tax to fund the Rock Economic Development Corporation and the expansion of SH-740 and SH-205 were planned and approved during that time.

"I am deeply honored and humbled," Howard said of the recognition.

The Park Board made the recommendation and the City Council unanimously approved to recognize honor Howard at the Dec. 3 meeting. The Alma Williams Howard Park is located east of FM 1141 and of North Country Lane.



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Youth practice area designated

Six acres of the Williams Howard Park at Country Lane and FM will be developed by the City of Rockwall as a temporary sports practice area, according to a recent city news release.

Council members approved the plan this week on the recommendation of the Parks and Recreation Board.

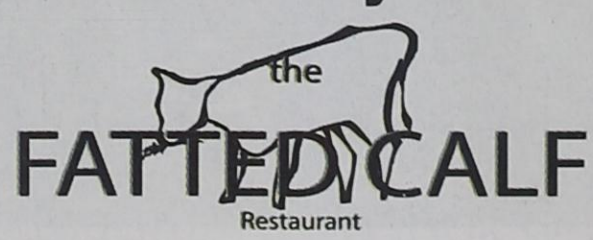
The site is located across from Hayes Elementary and will be developed with a large turf field for athletic team use. This comes as a result of increased demand by area sports teams to practice both baseball and softball that they had practiced in neighborhood parks.

The project will be completed and ready for use by summer 2013, and teams will be recommended to schedule use of the practice fields.

Funding for the project will come from the city's Recreation Development Fund.

For more information on the City's Facility Use Policy, call the parks department office at 972-771-7761.

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Congressman Ralph M. Hall

recognized for his service to his constituents and the Nation

The oldest known House Member to cast a recorded vote

According to research, Chairman Hall became the oldest known House member to cast a recorded floor vote on November 27, 2012.

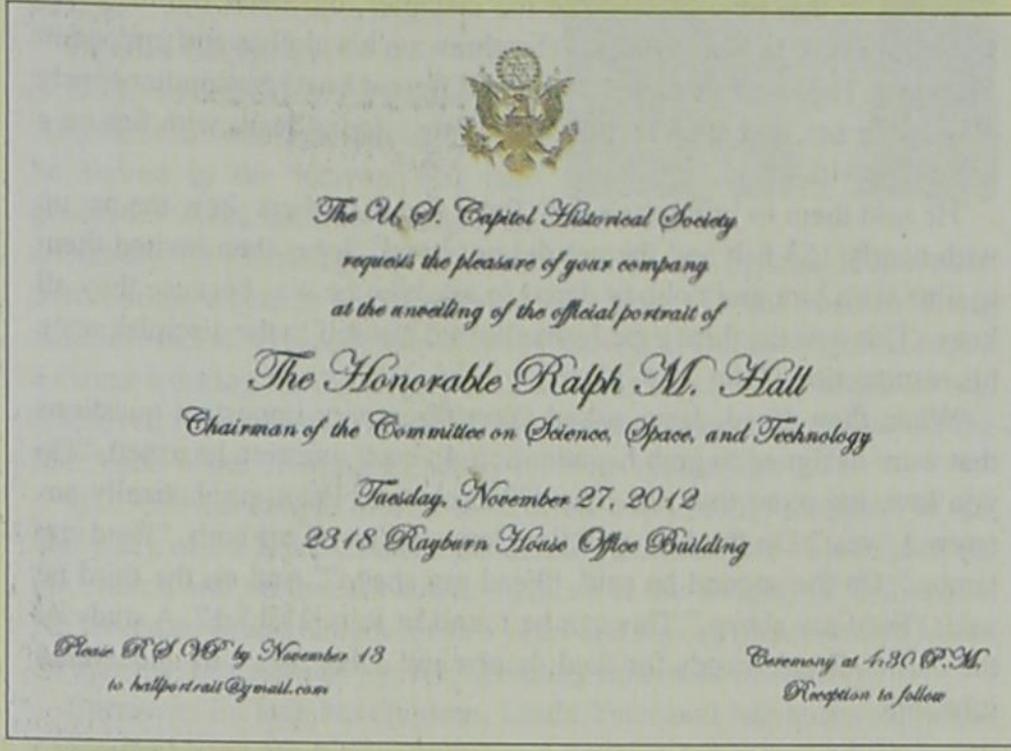
On November 16, 2012, a total of 10,747 individuals have served in the House of Representatives. Although we do not know the birth years of a handful of the Members in the early Congresses, the oldest House member that we have been able to identify is Rep. Charles Stedman, a Democratic Member from North Carolina. Chairman Hall became older than Rep. Stedman on December 25, 2012—and thus the oldest House member in history.

However, the ailing Rep. Stedman stopped participating in recorded floor votes over a year before he died; before he turned 89. He was therefore not the oldest Member to cast a recorded floor vote. The oldest House Member to cast a recorded floor vote that we or the Office of the House Historian have been able to identify is Isaac Sherwood, a Republican from Ohio. Rep. Sherwood, a former judge, voted on his last day he was in office, March 3, 1925, when he was 89 years, 6 months, and 18 days old.

Chairman Hall will be 89 years, 6 months and 19 days old (and thus eligible to surpass Rep. Sherwood's record) on November 21, 2012. However, since the House was in recess for Thanksgiving on November 21, Chairman Hall became the oldest Member to vote in the House on November 27, 2012 when votes are cast.

With appreciation to the portrait artist, John Boyd Martin, a native of Kansas and graduate of the University of Kansas School of Fine Arts, Mr. Martin's works include numerous Administration officials and industry and university executives.

Source: Congressional Research Service, Office of the House Historian.



As Chair of a major Committee Rep. Hall's portrait will be hung in the Science, Space and Technology Committee room permanently.

Congressman Ralph M. Hall

Ralph M. Hall assumed the Chairmanship of the U.S. House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology in January, 2011, at the beginning of the 112th Congress. Congressman Hall has served as a Member of the Committee since he was first elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1980 and is the only Member of the Committee to have served as Ranking Member both as a Republican (2007-2010) and as a Democrat (1999-2003). He previously served as Chairman of the Subcommittee on International Scientific Cooperation (1987-1990) and as Chairman of the Subcommittee on Space (1991-1994).

Upon election in 1980, Congressman Hall was appointed to the Committee on Science and Technology and the Committee on Energy and Commerce. He sought assignment on the Committee on Science and Technology due to his friendship with former Committee Chairman Olin "Tiger" Teague of Texas, whom he admired and with whom he had traveled to space launches. Congressman Hall has been an ardent supporter of human spaceflight and NASA's Space Shuttle Program and continues to support a strong federal space program that sustains the International Space Station, while also developing new capabilities to explore outer space. He considers the space program to be critical to America's competitiveness and national security.

Congressman Hall has long been committed to promoting policies that will ensure America's leadership in science, space, and technology. As Chairman, he has promoted a vision for science for the 21st Century to help keep America Strong and secure and ensure America's technological leadership for decades to come. Under his leadership, the Committee has exercised strong oversight of federal research programs to encourage fiscal responsibility and accountability. He has supported efforts to increase America's energy security by promoting domestic energy production through research and development of new technologies and alternative energy sources. Other priorities include strengthening STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) education, ensuring that federal policies and regulations are based on sound science, improving cybersecurity research and critical weather forecasting capabilities, and promoting policies that keep our Nation competitive and innovative.

Congressman Hall's prior work on the Committee includes: numerous NASA authorization bills, the Space Shuttle Columbia Investigation, International Space Station, Space Exploration Act, Energy Policy Act, Science Education for the 21st Century Act, NOAA Tornado Detection, National Integrated Drought Information System, Cybersecurity Research and Development Act, Inland Flooding Act, National Science Foundation funding, and the Networking and Information Research and Development Act, among others.

According to available records in the House Historian's Office, when votes are called today, Congressman Hall will become the oldest Member of the House of Representatives ever to cast a vote or speak on the House Floor.

Congressman Hall's public service includes his tenure as County Judge of Rockwall County, Texas, from 1950-1962, President of the State Judges and Commissioners Association from 1958-1959, Texas State Senator from 1962-1972, and President Pro Tempore of the Texas Senate from 1968-1969. Born in Fate (Rockwall County), Texas, on May 3, 1923, Hall graduated from Rockwall High School, then joined the U.S. Navy on December 10, 1942, serving as a lieutenant (senior grade) aircraft carrier pilot in the Pacific Theatre until the end of World War II. Following the War, he attended The University of Texas, Austin, 1946-1947, and received his LL.B. from Southern Methodist University, Dallas, in 1951. Hall was admitted to the Texas Bar in 1951 and maintained a private law practice in Rockwall for many years. In the late 1960's he served as President and Chief Executive Officer of Texas Aluminum Corporation, then the Nation's largest independent extruder of aircraft aluminum, later served as General Counsel of the Texas Extrusion Company, Inc., and currently serves as President of the North and East Trading Company. He also has extensive experience in banking, serving as Chairman of the Board of Lakeside National Bank of Rockwall (now Lakeside Bancshares, Inc.) and past Chairman of the Board of Directors for the Bank of Crowley.

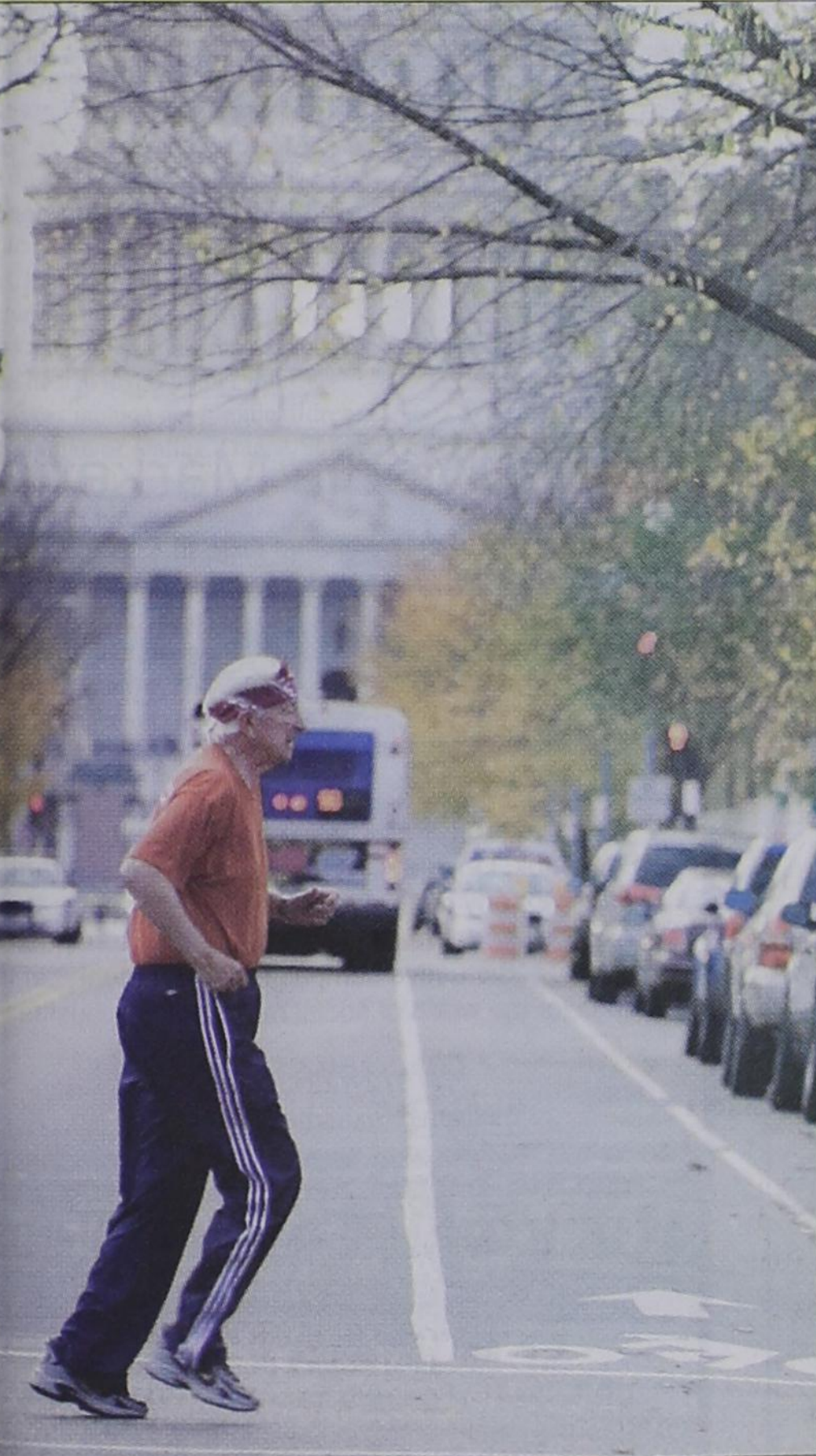
Congressman Hall was married to the late Mary Ellen Murphy Hall for 63 years. He has three sons, Hampton, Brett, and Blakeley, and five grandchildren.



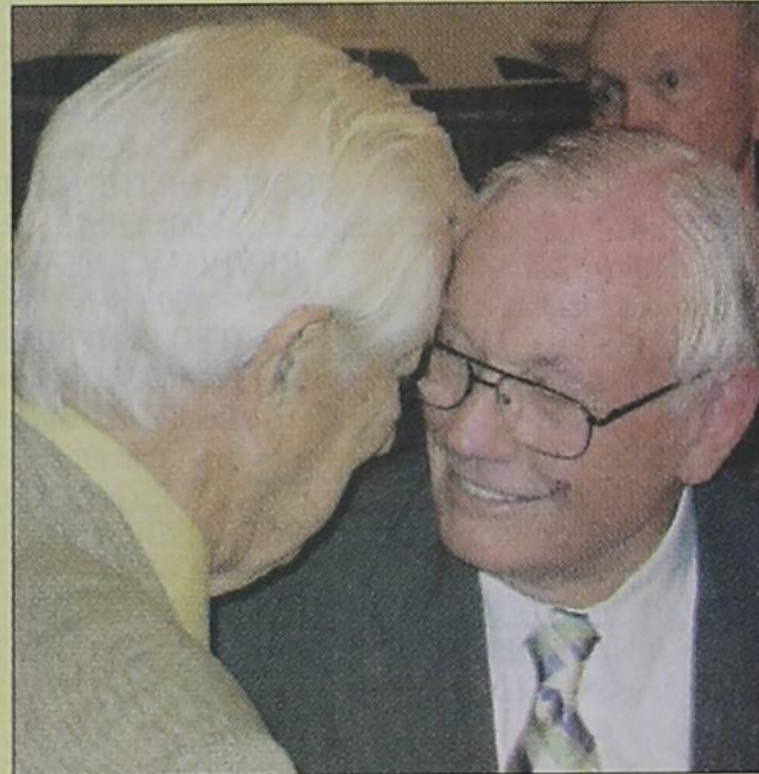
Hall pilots the only remaining WWII B-29 over Rockwall County



Rep. Hall parachutes into Rockwall at 89 years of age.



Rep. Hall jogging near his home in Washington, DC



Rep. Hall recognizes Apollo 11 Astronaut Neil Armstrong on the anniversary of the first moon landing



Rep. Hall and wife Mary Ellen during WWII.

We congratulate our Congressman ...

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Kenneth and Susan Shores

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Ryan Sandknop

Texas Health Presbyterian Hospital Rockwall

Emeritus at Summer Ridge

Lake Pointe Medical Center

Jackson Automotive Specialist, Inc.

Pat and Wes Burnett

This Week in Heath

Finding solace in the season

by Darcy Rocha

As a parent, I have found that the holiday season can leave me feeling as if the loose ends are never tied. Decorating, gifting, baking and all the other accouterments of Christmas can become overwhelming. At what point do I let go, let God and bask in the peace of waiting in joyful hope

of the blessings yet to come?

I believe we hold fast to our ideals of the perfect holiday we would like to create for our families. Who doesn't want the perfect Christmas experience for their child? Maybe I've watched one Lifetime movie too many, but I certainly have held fast to a strong idea of what I'd like my children to remember from the holidays. Cookies for Santa, roaring fireplace, sparkling tree, apple cider ... all the makings of a picture perfect Christmas.

But it's never happened. Not once, in my entire life, have I achieved this ideal peak moment. And the sad thing is that's left me feeling inadequate and disheartened. Not the way anyone should feel at this time of year. Add being a newly single parent to the equation and I find myself moved farther and farther away from what I thought was important.

In God's infinite wisdom, is this what he wanted for me and women like me? Did he anticipate that the gift of His son would induce anxiety and stress? Certainly not. In fact, I believe He may in fact be disappointed in me.

The memories that my children will have of this year's holiday may not be exactly what I wanted for them. But they will be special, even if we don't resemble a Norman Rockwell family. We will have made a feeble and messy attempt at Christmas cookies, taken countless drives to look at Christmas lights while engaging in long talks about the reason for the season, and enjoyed the simple pleasures of each other's company.

This year, I have embraced the unfettered peace and joy that I can find in Christmas. It is like the candle lit on an advent wreath, the flames slowly coming together, bringing light from the darkness and giving me tangible hope for the good yet to come. Knowing that we are blessed, no matter how un-ideal our lives, and trusting in what is to come is nothing short of the purest hope and solace from heaven above.

Even in our darkest hour, when all hope seems lost, the gift of Christmas is to remind us that we are all God's children and as we wait in joyful hope for the good that is to come, His love can sustain us.

Rockwall County News

2012-2013

Holiday Schedule

Publication Date: Thursday, Dec. 20

(Deadline Monday, Dec. 17)

Publication Date: Friday, Dec. 28

(Deadline Monday, Dec. 24)

Rockwall County News



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Church plans bell choir concert, special service

The First Presbyterian Church, 602 White Hills Drive in Rockwall, will offer a Bell Choir Concert beginning at 6:30 p.m. Dec. 24. At 7 p.m., a Candlelight and Communion Christmas Eve service will be offered.

Santa at Hidden Creek Estates Saturday, Dec. 15

Santa Claus himself will be making an appearance at the Hidden Creek Estates holiday event from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 15, to take pictures with the little ones and oversee a day of fun for all.

In addition to photos with Santa, there will be crafts, games, cookie decoration and a reading of "Twas the Night Before Christmas (A Visit from St. Nicholas)."

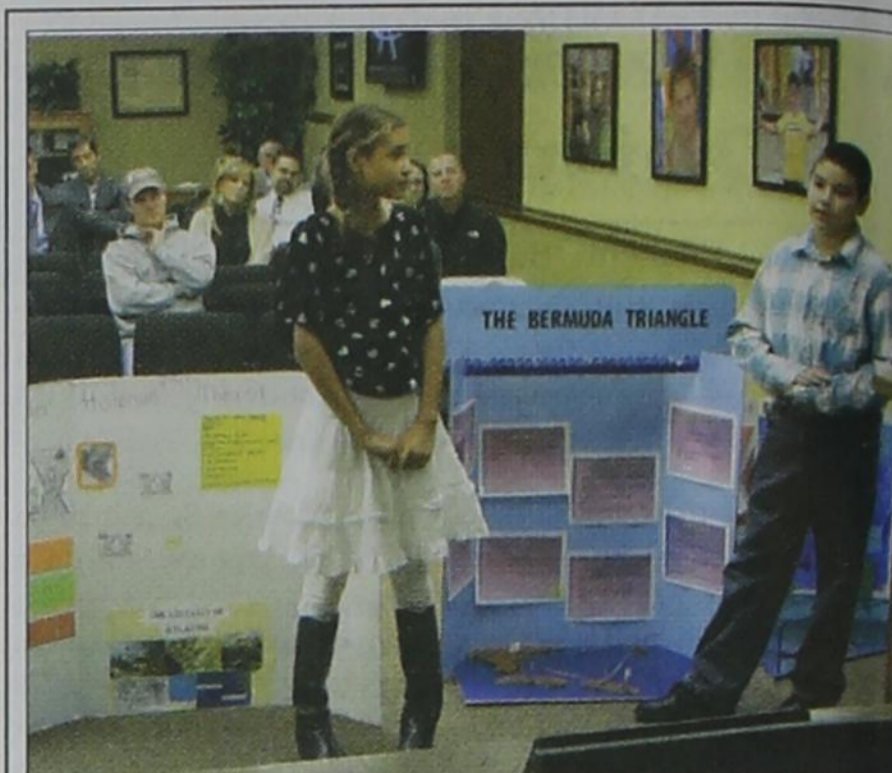
The event will be at 1316 Josephine in Royse City. For more information, contact Christine Reeves at 972-636-9300.

Golden Debs travel to see Rockettes

The Royse City Golden Debs traveled to the Verizon Theatre in Grand Prairie earlier this month to attend a performance of the Radio City Christmas Spectacular starring the Rockettes.

The trip was made possible by the Golden Debs Booster Club, a nonprofit organization that works throughout the year to raise support, promote the education of the drill team and coordinate its involvement in the school and community.

For more information on the drill team, to arrange an appearance or to become a sponsor, contact the booster club at goldendebstoosterclub@gmail.com or visit rchsgoldendebbs.com.



The fourth grade Gifted & Talented class at Miss May Verr Elementary School in Royse City spent most of the fall semester working on in-depth projects studying Enigmas and showed results of their work to the RCISD Board of Trustees. Led by RCISD G&T Coordinator Debbie Smith, the students used skills of geographers, theorists, archeologists, and historians to come up with their own hypotheses and conclusions about the topics. They then participated in the Nov. 30 Gifted & Talented Showcase at the Texas Association for the Gifted & Talented Convention at the Sheraton Hotel in Dallas. Shown at Monday's meeting are students Zariah Pettus, who studied the Lost City of Atlantis, and Ian Carrion, who studied the Bermuda Triangle. Also presenting at the meeting were students Jude Stacy, who studied the Loch Ness Monster; Jonathan Bardin, also a Bermuda Triangle; Grace Gaffney, Loch Ness Monster; Bailey Dickerson, Khufu's Pyramid or The Great Pyramid of Giza.

Photo by Kathy Williams/Rockwall County News

Rockwall County Entertainment

'Oliver' auditions slated

The Rockwall Community Playhouse's auditions for "Oliver," which will be staged in February, are set for 1 p.m. Dec. 15-16. Individuals ages 6 to 99 are invited to audition; be prepared to sing 16 bars of song and have a prepared one-minute monologue (accompanist will be provided) and cold readings from a script will be required.

'Christmas Unwrapped' set Dec. 15

The Tri-County Choral Society will present "Christmas Unwrapped" beginning at 7 p.m. Dec. 15 in the Royse City High School auditorium. Pre-sale tickets cost \$8 and are available at the Royse City Pharmacy and The Wall in Royse City. Tickets will cost \$10 at the door; children ages 7 and younger will be admitted free of charge. The family-friendly event will feature great Christmas music.

Wade Bowen to perform Dec. 29

Wade Bowen will perform at 10:30 p.m. Dec. 29 at Southern Junction. For more information, call 972-771-2418 or visit southernjunction.com.

H-Hands holiday toy drive wraps up Dec. 15

Collection of unwrapped new toys started earlier this month with Helping Hands' distribution on Dec. 15 to less fortunate families in Rockwall County.

Businesses around Rockwall have bins to collect toys, and there also are Angel Trees identifying the sex and age of children that will receive at least three new toys this year for Christmas.

The toy drive serves children up to 16 years of age. It is often difficult to collect gifts for teenagers so \$25 gift cards from stores where like to shop are great for them. Gift cards and gifts for teenagers are dropped off at Helping Hands, Building A.

Anyone interested in volunteering for the Dec. 15 toy distribution should email Director of Assistance sherryhamm@rockwallhelpinghands.com. School-aged children are welcome to help, but they must be accompanied by a parent. Doors open at the Rockwall Independent School District gym at 1050 Williams St. after parents are registered and toys are gathered, sorted and made ready. Then parents check in and can see their toys for each child in the family.

Last year, Helping Hands provided toys for 1,229 children from 400 different families.

The toy drive helps a variety of families that are not able to afford gifts for their children for a variety of reasons. Some parents were laid off from long-time jobs and others have suffered illnesses resulting in lost time at work. Still others have shorter working hours or unexpected expenses.

For more information, call 972-771-HELP (4357).

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The Cherry Bulldog Builders from Ruth Cherry Intermediate School in Royse City recently competed against 33 other schools at the Lego League Regional Competition at the University of Texas in Arlington. This was the first year the school has participated in Lego League, which creates interest in science, math and technology through robotics challenges and real-world projects. This year's theme was Senior Solutions, where each team had to identify an every day problem faced by senior citizens, come up with a solution, and present their solution in a creative way. The Bulldog Builders, all sixth-graders, created a mock charity organization that offers services to seniors to help with daily needs, such as transportation, helping to get food each day, and bringing them items they may need. Each team also had to build a robot to complete a series of challenges that had to do with the competition theme. Shown here demonstrating their robot at Monday's RCISD Board of Trustees meeting are (left to right) team members Jordan Long, Brendan O'Connor, Ethan Margot, Curt Watson, Dylan Freeman, and Trace Kimber. Also on the team are Fabian Aguilon, Tyler Evered, Joseph Frago, and Cody Gibbs. The team was coached by Ruth Cherry Assistant Principal Richard Pense.

Photo by Kathy Williams/Rockwall County News

Rockwall County Letters to the Editor

Encourage the submission of Letters to the Editor. The publishing of letters is at the sole discretion of the editor and should be edited for brevity, grammar and accuracy. Letters that are considered libelous or an attack of an individual's character will be rejected, as well as those promoting illegal candidates. Letters must be signed and include a phone number or address for verification.

Thank you for supporting Boys & Girls Club

Allow me to take a moment and thank the more than 300 who woke up early Friday morning to support the children of our community at the Boys & Girls Clubs of Rockwall County 2nd Annual Among Us Breakfast Celebration. ... [The article continues with details of the event, including the performance by Billy Quinton, the breakfast, and the presentation of awards to youth winners.]

Councilmember explains vote

Regarding the article "McLendon-Chisholm's Council eyes Verde development" in the Dec. 6 issue, I offer the following opinion and explanation: The final plat did not pass unanimously to the City Council. There was one dissenting vote -- mine. ... [The author explains the council's decision regarding the Verde development.]

traffic on the existing roadways. All McLendon-Chisholm property owners will be affected by how these issues are resolved and should be actively concerned and involved in finding the solution.

McLendon-Chisholm is debt-free and I will do all I can to maintain this status. I appreciate the opportunity to hear from and to represent current residents of McLendon-Chisholm on this and any other issue. ... [The author expresses appreciation and provides contact information.]

Rockwall County News Briefs

Toy drive today to benefit Helping Hands

The Rockwall Old Town Shoppes are conducting a toy drive to benefit Rockwall County Helping Hands from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. Dec. 13. Area residents are invited to bring new, unwrapped toys and look for one of the shops' "friendly elves" to assist with convenient curbside drop-off on the east side of the square. Complimentary warm beverages will be served.

Library is holiday drop-off location

The Rockwall County Library is a drop-off location for the following local charities this holiday season: Helping Hands Food Pantry (non-perishable food items); Helping Hands Toy Drive (new, unwrapped toys); Angel Tree (ornament tags with the names of local children in need); Patriot Paws (list of items needed for dogs being trained to help disabled veterans); and the Adoption Center of the Rockwall Animal Shelter (list of needed items).

Library plans Family Night activities

The Rockwall County Library's December Family Night, set Dec. 13, will feature the theme of An Old-Fashioned Christmas Celebration. Santa will be on hand to visit with children; crafts and refreshments also will be offered. S&D Puppetry will present "The Nutcracker in a Nutshell" at 6:30 p.m. and 7:15 p.m.

Christmas Pageant set at First Presbyterian

The First Presbyterian Church, 602 White Hills Drive in Rockwall, will host a Christmas Pageant beginning at 6 p.m. Dec. 16.

Low-cost spay/neuter shuttle set Dec. 20

The next low-cost spay/neuter Rockwall PAWS/KCAAP shuttle will be Dec. 20. Pets are picked up at 7:30 a.m. in the southeast corner of the I-30 Wal-Mart parking lot and returned at 6:30 p.m. Dogs must be on secure leashes with collars that cannot be slipped; cats must be in secure carriers. Prices are reasonable and assistance is available. Appointments can be made by calling 972-472-3500. Questions can be answered by calling Rockwall PAWS at 972-310-1354. Upcoming shuttle dates are Jan. 24, Feb. 21 and March 21.

Library sets holiday closure days

The Rockwall County Library will be closed Dec. 24-25 for the Christmas holiday.

Early registration for Relay under way

Early registration for the upcoming Relay For Life in Rockwall is already under way. Teams pay a \$25 commitment fee to walk in the event and work to raise funds for cancer research. All teams registered by Dec. 31 will be entered in a prize raffle. This year's Relay For Life will begin at 7 p.m. April 26 at Cain Middle School. For more details or to register visit relayforlife.org/rockwalltx or email Mindy Brencé at relayforliferockwallcounty@gmail.com.

Lions Clubs team up for eyeglass clinic

by Millie Jean Coppedge

The First United Methodist Church of Roysie City was the location of this year's annual eye clinic conducted by the Roysie City and Quinlan Lions Clubs.

Thirty adults and children were given vision tests by Dr. Donna Haas from Trinity Vision in Dallas. She donates her services and time as the Lions Club optometrist.

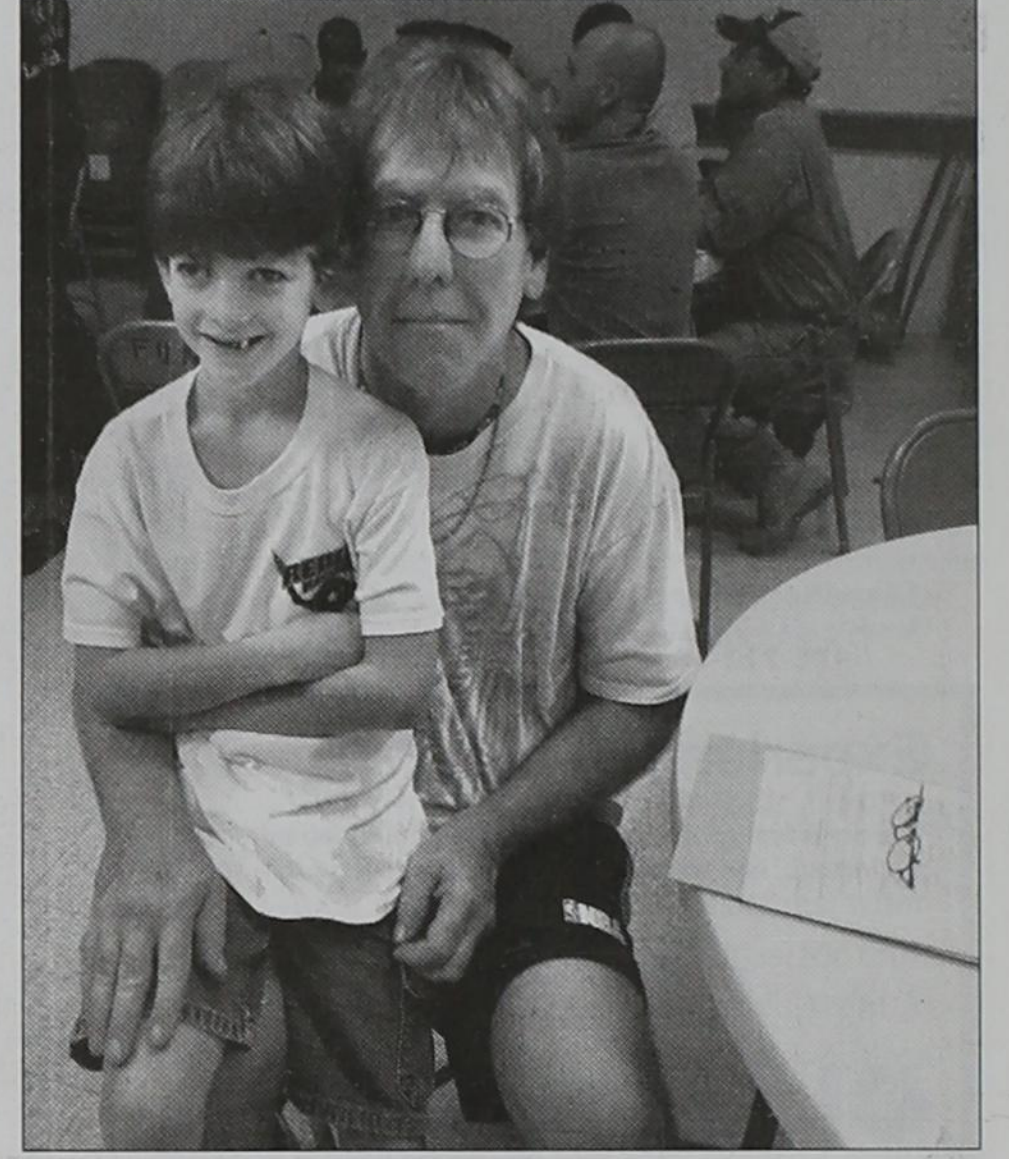
Those coming for vision tests were from Greenville, Caddo Mills, Quinlan and Roysie City. The children who participated were referred by their school nurses.

The Lions Sight and Tissue Foundation bus comes from Waxahachie and is driven to the site by a Lions Club volunteer. Equipment such as the auto refractor machine is located in the bus.

Registration began in the church at 8:45 a.m. and was on a first-come, first-served basis. Volunteers from the Lions Club conduct the registration, pre-vision screening and eyeglass frame selection. A director of Lion Sight and Tissue Foundation is assigned to every clinic and in charge of the bus, which has a two-station optometrist "office."

All eye exams and glasses are free through sponsorships by the Lions Club.

"After seeing the optometrist, the patient turns in all paperwork to a Lions Club member," said Kathleen Tyre, president of the Roysie City Lions Club. "Glasses are delivered to the Lions Club in two to four weeks. Club members arrange delivery of the glasses. Support and donations to the club enable them to continue the free eye care clinic."



Seven-year-old Skyler Haas sits with his father, Alvin, while waiting his turn for the eye exam. The Lions Club sponsored its annual eye clinic at the First United Methodist Church of Roysie City on Dec. 1.

Photo by Millie Jean Coppedge/Rockwall County News

Opinions Tax Raising Insanity

Scott McPherson

An overused expression, but the fact remains that doing the same over and over again while expecting different results truly is insanity. The amount of trust people put in "public servants" is one such example. ... [The author discusses the issue of tax raising and public trust.]

My neighbor is a nice lady. She's smart and highly educated. At a neighborhood party recently I overheard her saying to another neighbor she "loves" paying taxes. "They pay for the people who take my money away. I get a great school for my kids. Why all this grumbling about taxes?"

Apparently this is a common attitude. An Associated Press story in the Globe reports that "during [the recent] elections, voters across the country opted to raise taxes to help their cities, counties, and school districts."

"I'm OK with being taxed for making sure we don't go under and people are taken care of," declared Elizabeth Boyd, of Sacramento, California. "I think it's really good for us to pay for schools and make sure they're kept open and teachers aren't being laid off for ridiculous reasons."

Obviously, it never crossed Boyd's mind that dilapidated schools and teacher layoffs are a result of politicians' mismanagement of the incredible amount of tax money they already command.

Voters elsewhere obviously didn't give that any thought either.

Of 240 local tax and bond measures on the ballot in California, 171 passed, along with statewide tax increases. In Ohio "all local library taxes and a majority of local school bonds" passed, along with 55 percent of school-tax increases. "Voters in Alabama, Oklahoma, and Colorado were among those passing local tax increases."

In one Alabama county, residents voted by a two-to-one margin to renew a 1-cent-per-dollar sales tax for schools. Two years ago an AP analysis "found that voters in a large cross-section of states passed 50 percent or more of the local tax

initiatives that came before them."

According to exit polls, ten percent of voters "would welcome" an income tax increase on all Americans. But "voters tend to have a more favorable opinion about increasing taxes when they can see that the extra revenue will benefit their community directly," reports the AP. Sadly, they've been fooled into believing that taking money from themselves and their neighbors to fund local public-works projects is what it means to "benefit their community directly."

No doubt President Obama expressed the sentiments of millions of Americans when he said recently that "A modest tax increase on the wealthy is not going to break their backs." In today's America, class envy and fuzzy-headed thinking have combined to create an environment where the nation's chief executive can whimsically speak of taking other people's money to pay for Congress's profligacy — and precious few see anything wrong with it at all.

It's bad enough when people so willingly embrace the idea of taxing some abstraction called "the rich." Combine this with a self-congratulatory, sadomasochistic fleecing of one's self and one's neighbors, and we are truly embracing the economics of immorality and insanity.

Simple, One Sentence Explanation

"The problems we face today are there because the people who work for a living are outnumbered by those who vote for a living."

(Contributed by Richard Bigham, author unknown)

We must demand a return to the constitutional limited government we inherited from our ancestors

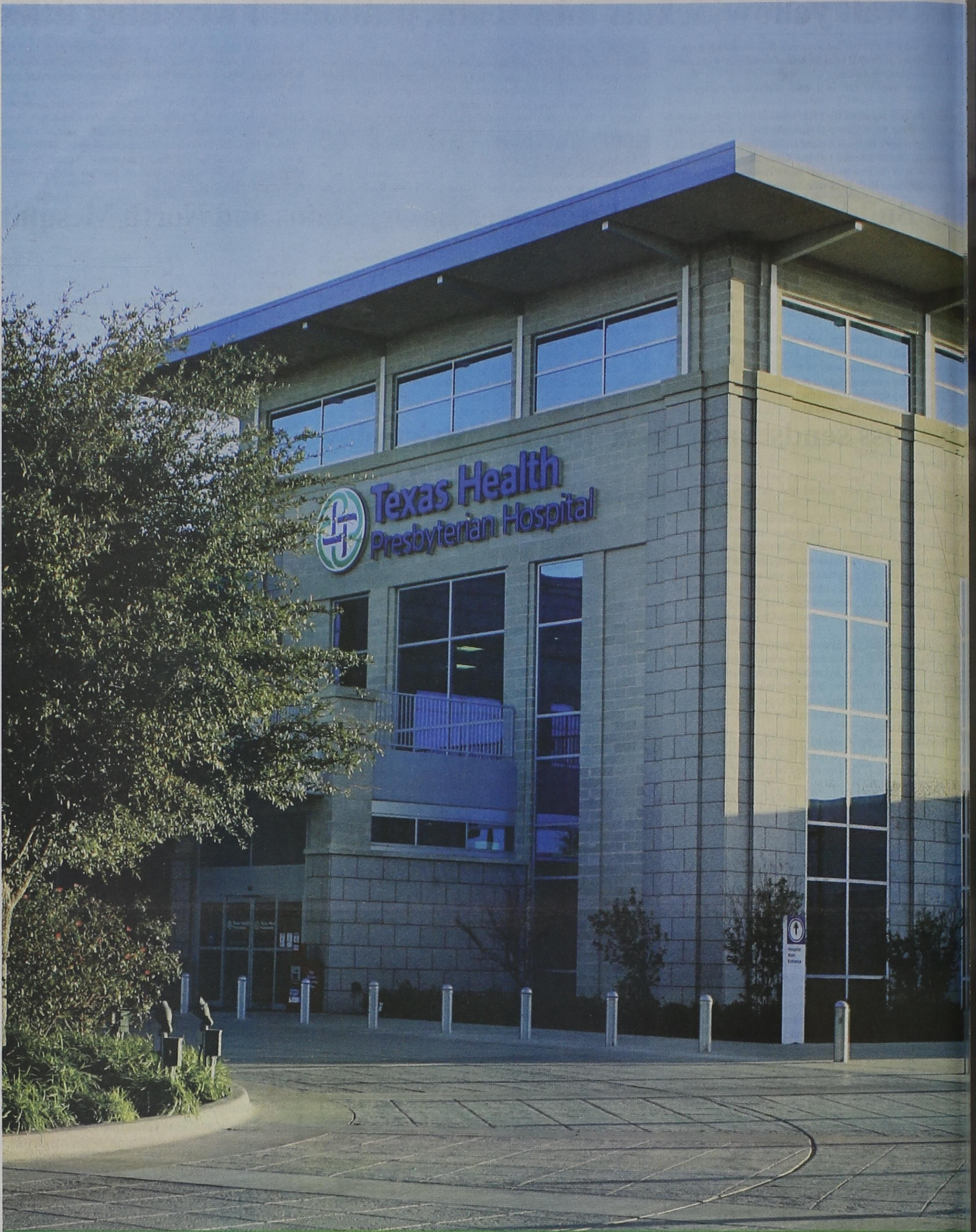
What does the U.S. Supreme Court say about the definition of income?

"Throughout the argument of the Government, in a variety of forms, runs the fundamental error already mentioned — a failure to appraise correctly the force of the term "income" as used in the Sixteenth Amendment, or at least to give practical effect to it." EISNER v. MACOMBER (252 U.S. 189, March 8, 1920).

"The Act of 1916 taxes gains derived from capital invested in corporate stocks, that is, shares of corporate gains or profits. It does not tax dividends per se but merely uses them to indicate the form in which such gains shall be taxed and to mark the time when the tax shall be collected. And, in the case of stock dividends, it uses the stock issued to measure the amount of the gains." EISNER v. MACOMBER (252 U.S. 189, March 8, 1920).*

* This case has never been overturned and is still the Law of the Land. The court ruled that "income" is gain or profit.

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