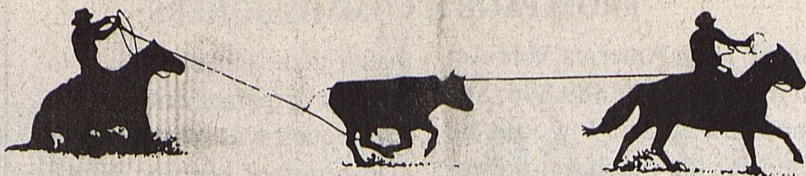


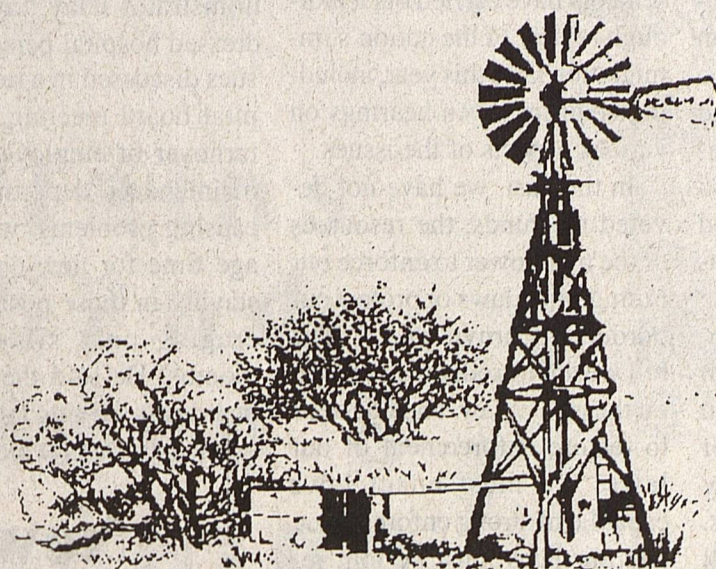
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# 52nd Rodeo & Reunion This Week!

## Cowboy Country News



Published each Wednesday in the county seat of Yoakum County, Plains, Texas

Volume XI, Issue 45, August 3, 2005

### County Taxes May Be Paid Via The Internet

The Yoakum County Tax Assessor's office recently announced a new option for paying county taxes. For the first time payment of county property, mineral and delinquent taxes may be paid by credit card by telephone or directly over the internet. Tax Assessor Collector Jan Parrish said, "This gives our customers one more way of interacting with us. Tax payers will be able to pay their taxes when it's convenient for them."

An agreement with Official Payments Corporation, the credit card service provider, created the new payment option, and provides convenience, flexibility and rewards of credit card payment of taxes. The tax office reports the service is safe and reliable and in accordance with all state and governmental regulations. In order to process payments, Official Payments Corp. charges a nominal fee based on the amount of the transaction. A fee calculator is available at their internet site.

To pay by credit card tax payers may call 1-800-2PAY-TAX, or may visit the internet site, www.officialpayments.com. It is necessary to use Jurisdiction Code:6344. It will be necessary to have the tax amount due for the month in which payments are made, the statement number and the tax year. For additional information you may call the Yoakum County Tax Office, 806-456-7491/295

**Rodeo Aug. 4,5,6, 8 PM - \$5 & \$3 - \$50 drawing nightly - Queen crowned Sat. night - Saddle or \$500 drawing - \$20 Calf Scramble - Street Parade Saturday 10:30 am, prizes for floats - Barbecue at noon in the Park, \$6 per plate - Art Show Community Building Friday & Saturday. JOIN US !!**

### 2005 Jamaica Festival



Sacred Heart Catholic Church's principal fund raising event last Sunday was another successful day of good things to eat, games, daylong volleyball, and many moms were wheeling their youngsters about in high tech strollers, and a great time was had by all. Many more photos inside.



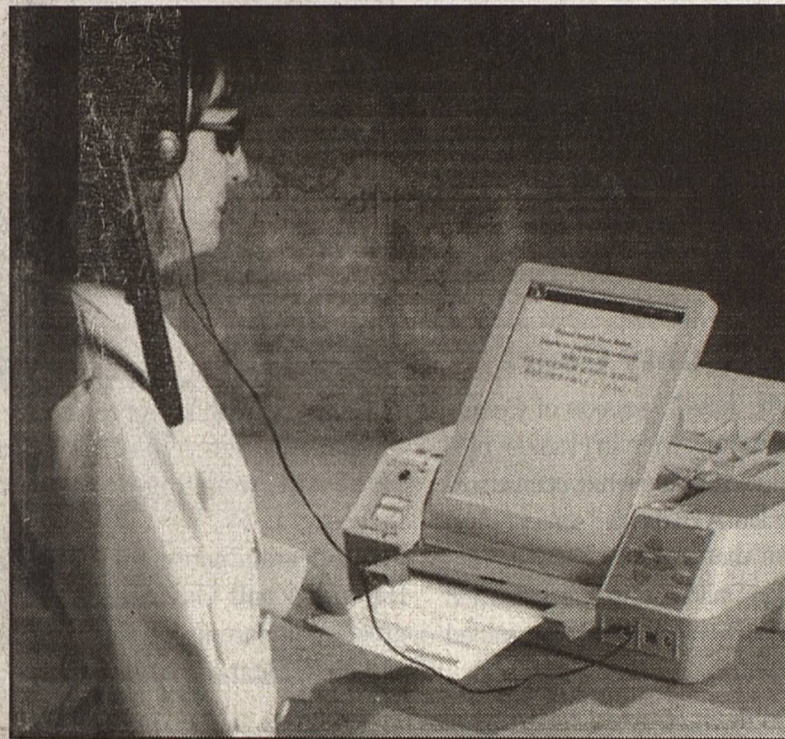
### Mandated electronic voting machines a bit easier to swallow with state funding

For many years nothing has been harder for city or county officials to live with than edicts from the state or national level requiring the lesser entities to install equipment, facilities and or programs - at the local taxpayers expense.

Such was the original scenario when the Help America Vote Act (HAVA) was originally passed by Congress. Among many other stipulations, HAVA called for installing electronic voting machines in each government entity polling place.

The law would require the machines being installed in the local courthouse, city, school and other governmental polling places - at local expense. For once, the hue and cry of complaints of unfunded mandates was heard elsewhere. The machines have been ordered, but federal grant funds will foot their bill.

County Clerk Debbie Rushing told CCN the county will be receiving six of the balloting machines, one for each voting pre-



cinct. "They are promised to be simple to set up and use," Rushing said. They will be furnished by a Nebraska firm, ES&S.

The portable devices are approximately two feet wide and two feet long, and can be installed anywhere. A voter needing assistance in casting a ballot will use the same optical scan paper ballot other voters

use. The ballot will be inserted and candidates name will appear on a screen. Voters with physical disabilities have a number of options on how to mark their choices.

The machines have multiple language capabilities, and visual and audible ballots in multiple languages can be stored on each machine. After the user has

marked his ballot, it will be placed in a ballot box for future counting. County Clerk Rushing stressed use of the electronic machines will not be limited to only the handicapped. "Anyone may use one of the balloting machines if they choose." Some sort of screening curtain will be in place for privacy while voting on the machine.

HAVA went into effect in October 2002. Some other provisions of the act include; By January 1, Texas and its counties must utilize a single, centralized statewide voter registration list - Also by January 1 each polling place in the state must have at least one accessible voting system per polling place - Instead of the challenge process voters not listed on the voter registration roll can cast a provisional ballot, which is not counted until eligibility is confirmed after the election.

Rushing said when the new machines are received the public will have 'learning sessions' which will be announced.

### Equipment tops agenda in court session

In the August 1 session of Commissioners Court, replacement and addition of equipment for offices was the predominant issue.

An interlocal participation agreement was approved with the Local Government Purchasing Cooperative. The county will pay an annual \$200 membership fee, enabling the purchase of virtually any type equipment at more attractive prices.

Treasurer Barbara Wright sought the court's approval to purchase two new Dell computers with monitors from CTSI for \$3100. The request was approved

District Clerk Vicki Blundell also sought and received court permission to purchase two Dell computers and monitors for her office from CTSI for \$3839.

Sheriff Don Corzine asked the court to approve the purchase of a new printer for \$1030. The purchase was approved.

County Clerk Debbie Rushing reported on an amended grant award agreement under terms

**TURN TO PAGE 2, COMMISSIONERS**

### Coaches Association honors Plains High cross-country notables



The town of Plains was well represented at the Hall of Honors luncheon during the Texas High School Coaches Association meeting in San Antonio last week. Todd Davis, head coach of the Plains cross-country team which won the Conference A state championship event at Round Rock this year, and former PHS student Lenny Morrow, now head coach of the Conference AA cross-country state champion team at Ozona. The pair were seated side by side at the head table, and both were presented with state championship rings during the luncheon. Coach Davis noted, "It was a very neat thing to be recognized in front of our peers. We had lots of common ground to talk about, from both of us being mentored by Coach Evertt McAdams, and the fact Lenny's parents, Larry and Paula Morrow, still live in Plains". Morrow was a member of the Plains cross-country team that finished second at the state meet three years running, and finally won the state championship his senior year in 1993.



**John Cornyn**  
UNITED STATES SENATOR \* TEXAS

Washington - U.S. Sen. John Cornyn (R-Texas), Chairman of the Immigration, Border Security and Citizenship subcommittee, and U.S. Sen. John Kyl (R-Ariz), Chairman of the Terrorism, Technology and Homeland Security subcommittee, recently introduced comprehensive security and immigration reform legislation.

The Comprehensive Enforcement and Immigration Reform Act of 2005 will strengthen enforcement, bolster border security, and comprehensively reform our immigration laws. The key components of the bill include enhanced border security and interior enforcement, employer accountability, and reform addressing temporary workers and the current illegal population.

"This bill strengthens our border enforcement and reforms our immigration system," Cornyn said. "We need both stronger enforcement and reasonable reform of our immigration laws."

Sen. Kyl said; "people rightfully ask; if the current laws at the border and at the workplace are not being enforced, why should we believe new laws will be? Our bill answers that question by putting in place both stringent legal requirements and the assets necessary to ensure we can control the border and prevent illegal hiring in the United States."

As senators from Texas and Arizona, Cornyn and Kyl represent

85 percent of the nation's southern border. In preparation for the bill, the two senators have carried out a thorough review of the nation's immigration laws this year, including chairing seven hearings on various aspects of the issues.

"In the past, we have not devoted the funds, the resources or the manpower to enforce our immigration laws or protect our borders," Cornyn said. "The bill we are introducing is based on the rule of law, and our need to restore enforcement of our laws. We must enact laws capable of strong enforcement, and our laws must be fair, requiring all undocumented individuals to go through the legal process."

"Beyond the notion of returning the rule of law to the border, the single most important aspect of this bill is, it does not reward those who have broken the law, and does not constitute amnesty," said Sen. Kyl. "As a nation, we have made both of those mistakes and learned from them - they are the reason we now have an undocumented population as high as 15 million people."

**County Court**

In the July 25 session of County Court, Jody Marvin Franklin pled guilty to driving while license suspended. A 23 day jail sentence had been met with 23 days served. Judge Dallas Brewer presided and CDA Richard Clark represented the state

**FROM PAGE 1, COMMISSIONERS**

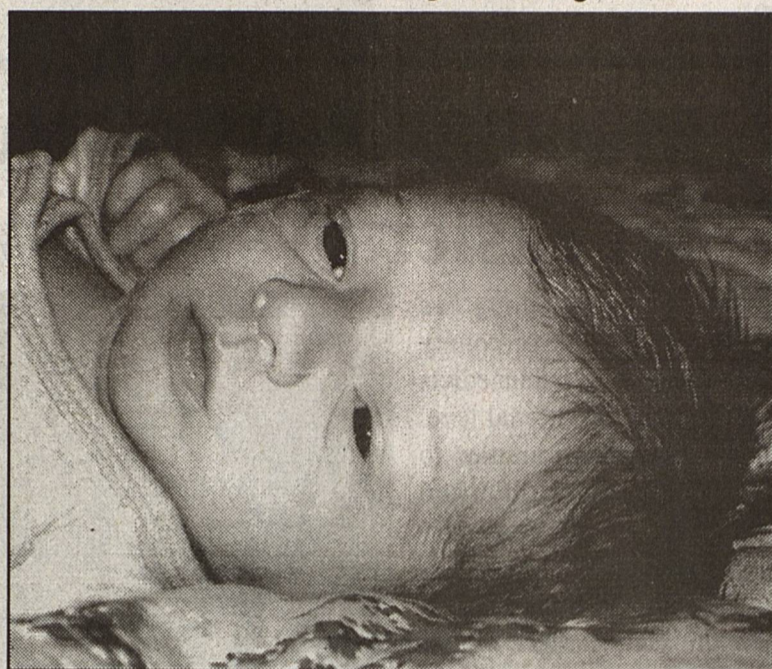
of the Help America Vote Act in the amount of \$89,876. She reported \$55,271 would be used for the purchase of electronic voting machines ( see article page 1), \$21,000 for a new vote system, and \$7,000 for educational expense.

Yoakum County Hospital Administrator Clay Taylor addressed hospital personnel issues discussed in a recent hospital board meeting. He said turnover of employees in the maintenance department was causing problems, with average time for new employees staying in those positions averaging only six to eight months. He said the hospital board was seeking approval to set hourly rates which would

match those currently paid to the four precinct employees. The request was approved. He also reported keeping Nurse Practitioners and Physician Assistants on the payroll continued to be difficult. He said the current average wage for area nurses at this level was \$36 per hour, and the pay rate here now is \$31.75. His request to raise the rate was approved.

Taylor also spoke briefly about the need to conduct a formal study to determine if a self insurance plan for liability coverage was feasible. He reported the current premium for this type coverage is over \$100,000 per year. The court approved pursuing the possibility of self coverage.

**New Baby Boy !**



Mitch and Michelle Frerich are proud to announce the arrival of their son, Sawyer "Creed", who was born June 28, 2005, at 12:31 AM, weighing 6 pounds 14 ounces and measuring 20.5 inches.

Proud grandparents are Joel and Debra Lowe of Plains and Raymond and Gaylene Frerich of Bracketville, Texas. Proud great grandparents are Jack Lowe, the late Cora Lowe, and Alfred and Faye Bearden of Plains.



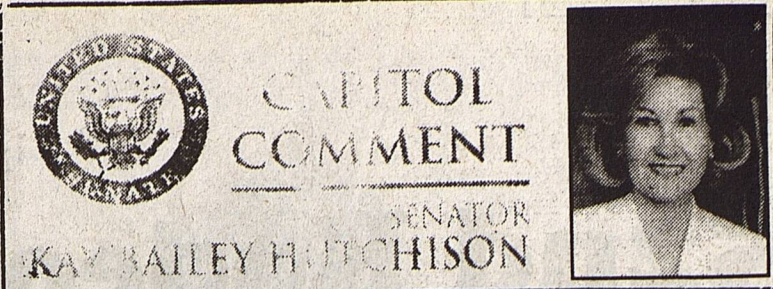
Agriculture in the 21st century is facing its share of challenges. With the Texas population expected to almost double by 2050, statewide water demands are on the rise, and producers are consistently affected by unpredictable weather - from floods to drought - as well as invasive pests and global competition. But Texas agriculture continues to come out on top as our producers remain dedicated and innovative in this uniquely rewarding industry.

According to the Texas Cooperative Extension's "Facts About Texas and U.S. Agriculture," agriculture is big business in Texas. The estimated value of 2004 agricultural production and related items totaled more than \$18 billion. That's up from \$16.7 billion in 2003 and \$14.4 billion in 2002.

By the time these agricultural products get from the farm to the consumer, the total economic impact translates to more than \$73 billion each year for Texas. During the last few years, the number of farmers whose principal occupation was farming increased 25 percent to just less than 123,000, and the total number of farms increased by more than 750. This is all great news for the industry and for Texas.

The newer face of Texas agriculture shows farmers are taking the lead in synchronizing farm production with market demand by recognizing higher value production of crops, such as fruits and vegetables, and value-added processing businesses.

Meeting consumer demands and evolving with the times is something we are always working toward. Good nutrition is on the minds of many Texans as we face an obesity epidemic, especially among our children, and agriculture is a great partner for this. We're producing fresh, wholesome and nutritious foods across the state, and Texans are catching on and taking steps for a healthier tomorrow.



Whenever I have visited an emerging democracy, I have noticed consistency on two points: first, everybody easily understands the need for democratic voting and free speech; second, they have a much harder time understanding the rule of law, which is just as essential for a democracy to function.

I once met with members of the Russian Duma and emphasized how eager Americans were for Russia's fledgling democracy to succeed. One member replied, "No you don't. Americans are not investing here."

I replied, for American countries to invest, there has to be an independent judiciary and respect for the rule of law, so the state cannot easily confiscate private property. This was extremely difficult for the Russian parliamentarians to understand.

We have grown up in the United States in a society of laws, not men. We take that concept for granted. In most emerging democracies, the rule of law is an alien idea, almost incomprehensible. But if you want democracy to succeed, it must harness the two concepts of individual rights and majority rule - and it can do this only through respect for the rule of law.

The rule of law involves four basic requirements: Equality under the law; a respect for individual rights; an independent and honest judiciary; and transparent court proceedings.

This concept was built into our Constitution which established the judiciary as a co-equal branch with the legislative and executive. Because of this, the Supreme Court can strike down laws through "judicial review" if it decides the law violates our supreme law, the Constitution.

Judicial review provides courts with a great deal of power which some people believe has been abused. Some believe the courts have taken judicial review so far some judges are legislating from the bench rather than interpreting and implementing the laws passed by elected representatives. If the public begins to view the courts simply as a different avenue for partisan political contests instead of a fair arbitrator of legal questions, their faith in the impartial rule of law will erode.

This would be an unhealthy development. Many times in our history, court rulings have been unpopular, but the general respect accorded to the law allowed the public to accept its decisions.

The importance of the courts explains why we must take the replacement of retiring Justice Sandra Day O'Connor very seriously. The Senate has a responsibility to examine the president's nominees closely to determine whether they are qualified by experience, knowledge and temperament to sit on the high court.

The Constitution says Congress shall ascertain whether the nominee is qualified and fair, not fight to make sure he or she has a certain set of approved views on a laundry list of hot button political issues. If this process is perceived by people as a partisan contest, it will only serve to diminish the respect the people have for the justice the court is expected to deliver. This could further erode the respect for the rule of law which buttresses our government and legal system.

This concept is so important to the stable functioning of representative government I joined with the Southern Methodist University Dedman School of Law to establish a Rule of Law program to bring jurists and officials from developing countries to the United States. The hope of all who participate in this program is our foreign guests will build their understanding of the rule of law, and help this vital principle take root in their countries and foster the growth of strong and stable democracies around the world.

**New vaccination requirements  
Take effect September 1**

A new law requires children attending child-care centers and enrolled in early childhood programs be vaccinated against pneumococcal and hepatitis A diseases, according to the Texas Dept. of State Health Services (DSHS).

Pneumococcal is caused by a bacteria that often leads to inner ear infection, pneumonia, sinus infection and meningitis. Vaccine is required for all children age 2 months through 59 months attending child care facilities and pre-kindergarten programs.

Hepatitis A is a liver disease spread from person to person often by putting objects in the

mouth that have been contaminated with the stool of a person with hepatitis A. Children in child-care centers and pre-k programs two years old or older will need two doses of hepatitis A vaccine given six to eight months apart.

To attend child care facilities and pre-k programs, a child must also be immunized for diphtheria, tetanus, whooping cough, polio, measles, mumps, rubella, hepatitis B, chicken pox and type b HIB. If children do not have at least the first dose of the required vaccines by Sept. 1 they may be excluded from those facilities.

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The legislature voted today to stop granting public land to railroad companies to encourage construction. The sudden decision was reached after a survey revealed the legislators have already awarded 8 million more acres than are available. No decisions were made about the grants that can't be filled. *Texas News*, 1882.

MULTI - PERIL CROP & CROP HAIL

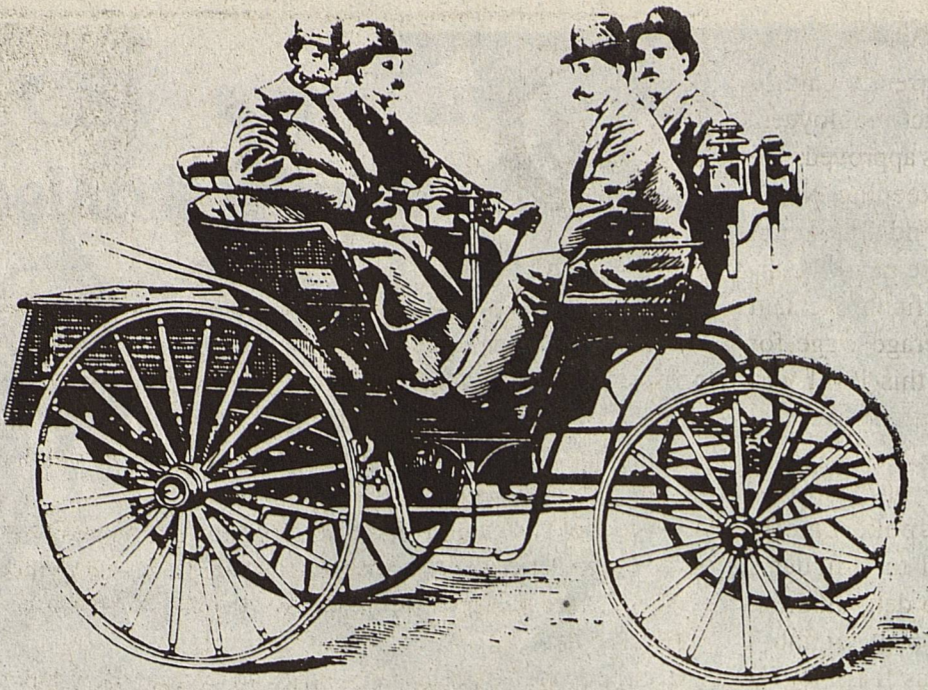
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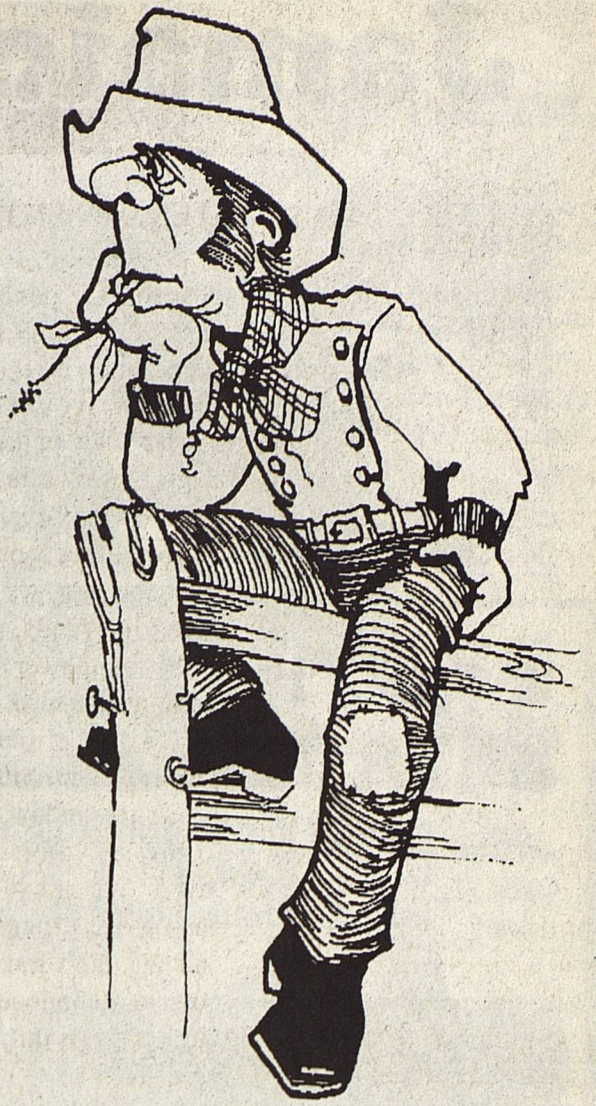
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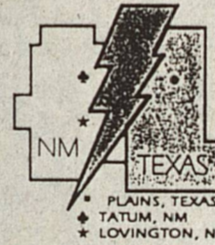
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# Plains 52nd Rodeo & Reunion



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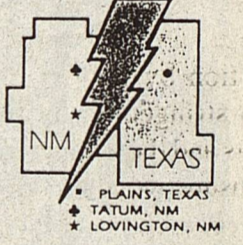
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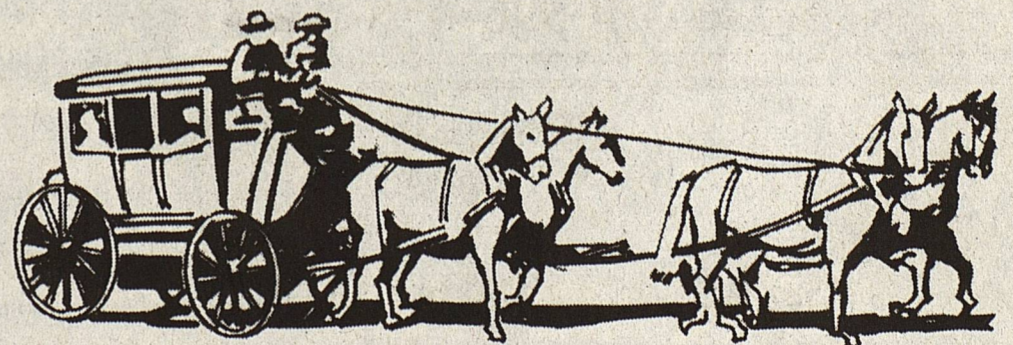


Equal Housing Lender



We're Getting All Foo-fooed Up For The Annual Rodeo & Reunion. Join Us !!

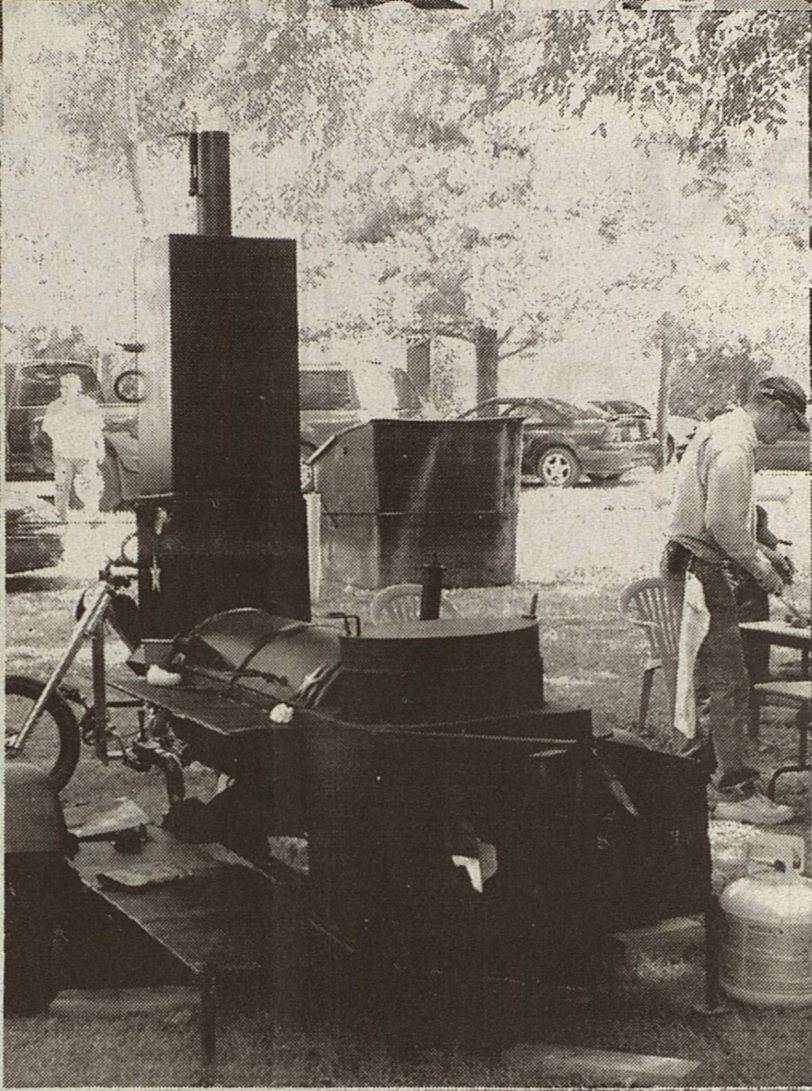
The Plains Lions Club



It's Slow And It's Rough, But We'll Make It! Join Us At The 52nd Rodeo & Reunion!

The City Of Plains Staff, Council Members and Mayor

# Jamaica 2005



**And A  
Great  
Time  
Was Had  
By All**

## CSW accepting scholarship applications

College of the Southwest recently announced it is accepting applications for the Daniels Opportunity Awards Scholarship for Fall 2005.

Any new undergraduate student who is a GED recipient, foster child, transfer student, and/or 24 years older and above may apply for this scholarship which has a potential of paying up to \$3,000 per year until the student graduates.

Additionally, any student who applies for the Daniels Opportunity Awards Scholarship must also complete the application process for undergraduate admission at CVSW, complete the process to apply for financial aid, and write a

letter to the Daniels Opportunity Committee.

According to Karen Workentin, Dean of Student Enrollment Services at CSW and Chair of the Daniels Opportunity Scholarship Committee, the Daniels Fund is looking for students who are "diamonds in the rough" or "behind the eight ball."

Applications may be obtained in the Office of Undergraduate Admission at College of the Southwest at 6610 Lovington Highway in Hobbs, or for further information, contact Dean Workentin at 800-530-4400 or 505-392-6561, Ext. 1007. She may also be reached via e-mail at kworkentin@csw.edu.

## Roadcheck 2005 Results Announced

DPS troopers inspected 5,560 commercial vehicles during Roadcheck 2005, which ran from June 7 through June 9. The inspections found that 1,518 of the vehicles and 200 of the drivers had serious enough safety violations to be removed from service.

DPS Commercial Vehicle Enforcement troopers, along with Highway Patrol troopers who have received specialized training in commercial vehicle inspection, stopped commercial vehicles to inspect safety equipment, as well as checking driver licenses and endorsements. Troopers also looked for possible drug or alcohol use.

The annual Roadcheck program, which stretches from Mexico to Canada, is designed to reduce commercial vehicle highway fatalities through increased vehicle safety. The Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance, which sponsors Roadcheck, reports a significant decrease in the commercial vehicle crash rate in North America since the program's start in 1988.

Vehicles passing inspection received a CVSA decal exempting the vehicle from inspection for a 90-day period, unless they have an obvious safety defect. Troopers issued 2,726 decals during Roadcheck 2005.

### Plains Family & Friends

Our family is very blessed to be part of such an amazing community. We are grateful for all the cards, flowers, meals, and most of all, prayers we received after Mom passed away. Through your many acts of kindness, you showed how much you love Mom and our family. Thanks!

Anne, Bradley and Brad Palmer

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## Seniors Corner

We live our lives so quickly sometimes we fail to appreciate the outstanding moments. I would like to share with you one of those special times that came my way this week. The northern sky was filled with scattered clouds. It was just before seven o'clock in the morning. I was driving to Lubbock. I had a ringside view of the rising sun, which appeared as a burning ball of fire, stealing up over the eastern horizon. As it crept upward, the sky was filled with those scattered clouds reflecting the sun's vivid color. During those few brief moments as I watched this panorama, the radio was softly playing "How Great Thou Art".

O.B. Brooks, a benefits counselor from SPAG, came to talk to us and leave information with each one this week about Medicare's new prescription drug coverage that will be available for everyone January 1, 2006.

Harold and Vera Brown have finally returned from a trip of over 6000 miles in four weeks. They report an enjoyable time visiting old friends, their son's families and attending the wedding of a granddaughter on the east coast.

This week we sadly said goodbye to Becky Cryer, a long time part of our Senior Center family. We offer our sympathy to her family.

Guests of Maurine Wehrend one day this week at lunch were Mary Lou and John Holcomb. Maidelle Mitchell had her son Truitt and his wife Michelle with her on another day. Dan Swanson's name also appeared on the guest list this week and it was good to see some of our own people, who have not been here for awhile, come in for lunch.

We always enjoy the people who come from Lovington to play in our pool tournament each month. Joe Trujillo took first place in both 8 and 9 ball at the mens end of the room, while June Hanneman won in the 8 ball and Betty Cantrell took the prize for 9 ball in womens competition.

Do you ever wake up in the morning and look in the mirror then come away wondering what happened to the person you used to see there? Enjoy with me the following;

Youth Flew Out The Door

Good Grief, I just turned sixty four  
and youth has flown out the door.

Where is that girl with head held high,  
a merry twinkle in her eye,

Who vowed to make her dreams come true?  
Where is she now, I ask of you

Where is that winsome lass of old,  
with all her curves and ways so bold,  
who laughed her troubles all away  
and lived for every fulfilled day?

I haven't seen this girl around  
and fear that she cannot be found.

I think I know who took her place;  
a woman with an age worn face,  
who grumbles at her worldly lot  
and wants for things she hasn't got.

Bi-focals help her get around  
as she puts on pound after pound

Arthritis plagues her every step,  
she scorns the young for being hep.  
She thrives on speaking of her ills  
and takes a hundred different pills.

She resembles in no way  
the happy me of yesterday.

I took for granted carefree youth  
and now must face the awful truth;  
time flies - our lives quickly unfold.  
I closed my eyes and woke up OLD!

....author unknown

### Hey, Ladies !!

**The Old Settlers Reunion  
needs your help again this  
year. On Saturday,  
August 6, please bring  
your cobblers to the park  
No Later Than 11:45 for  
the noon barbecue. Bowls  
are again being furnished  
by the Dairy Queen and  
may be picked up there.**

**The rodeo will run August  
4, 5, and 6, and the Parade  
will start at 10:30 AM  
Saturday, Aug. 6.  
SEE YOU THERE!**

## Kids compete in recipe contest

Nearly 200 kids from across the state competed in the first ever Texas Department of Agriculture's Kids Kitchen Corral Contest, submitting their secret concoctions for everything from fruit taquitos to breakfast pizza and chicken pot pie. The winning recipes

will be featured in a new cookbook called Healthy Helpings. It will be inserted in a future issue of Texas Monthly and will be available in Texas public school libraries. The young chefs were required to submit their own, and healthy, recipes. Three of the winners;

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### Laura Mendez Morales fund at Plains State Bank

**Thank you for your prayers and support in this time of need!**

**The Morales Family**

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## From The Hack

A young, brash college student challenged a senior citizen, saying it was impossible for those of his generation to understand his generation. "Today we have television, computers, the internet, jet airplanes, space travel, nuclear energy....". Taking advantage of a pause in the students' spiel, the old geezer nodded, said "You're right. We didn't have ANY of those things. So we INVENTED THEM!"

I wish to direct your attention to a small filler with which I plugged an empty space on page 2 of this issue - near the bottom of the page, over the left portion of State Line Insurance's ad; Yes, the one about the 1882 Texas Legislature giving away 8 million acres of public land which didn't exist.

Quick Now, what does this call to mind? Why of course - the ongoing fiasco in Austin! What this suggests to me is, our politicians of today are hardly a great deal improved over what roamed the halls of the capitol 123 years ago.

This mess brings to mind a passage in Don't Throw Feathers At Chickens, by Charles Herring Jr. and Walter Richter in the section dealing with the Texas Legislature; Former Chief Justice of the Texas Supreme Court Bob Calvert, who was also a former Speaker of



I was lucky enough to take this rather shaky and fuzzy photo during my recent trip to Ruidoso while playing golf with friends at the Cree Meadow course. You can readily tell who the cowards are in the photo. None of them could break 90, either. OK, so you don't believe this nonsense. The photo came via e-mail from a buddy - He said he thought this settled the argument for all time about how the expression a "Gimmee Putt" originated.

the House, recalled the occasion when "two of our less brilliant" representatives were arguing about the merits of a particular bill. One said to the other, "Why are you trying to tell me about this bill? You never got out of the third grade." The other replied, "If I hadn't went to school at all I'd have more sense than you've got." At this point Calvert recalls, "The smart young representative from Decatur, Herman Jones, arose at his desk, sought and obtained recognition by the Speaker by shouting, 'Point of order, Mr. Speaker, Point of Order!'"

The Speaker replied, "State your point of order, Mr. Jones." Mr. Jones replied, "Mr. Speaker, I raise a point of or-

der that this is a battle of wits and both parties are unarmed!"

### Definitions:

**ADULT**- One who has stopped growing at both ends and now grows in the middle  
**COMMITTEE**- A body that keeps minutes and wastes hours.

**DUST**- Mud with the juice squeezed out.

**INFLATION**- Cutting money in half without damaging the paper.

**SECRET**- Something you tell to one person at a time.

**TOMORROW**- One of the greatest labor saving devices of today.

**WRINKLES**- Something others have - you have character lines.

### About The New Electronic Sign

Personnel at City Hall have graciously agreed to assist the Chamber of Commerce by taking orders for advertising on the new sign in Pioneer Park.

**NO TELEPHONE ORDERS** will be accepted. An order form is available at City Hall, and the following information must be written on the form; Date, Name, Address, Phone #, Dates for the ad to run. The message must be written on the form with a maximum of 14 spaces per line of type. Three message frames is maximum length of ad, for a maximum total of 42 spaces per frame. Maximum time for ad to run is one week (seven days). Cost of each ad is \$15. **ALL ADS MUST BE PAID FOR IN ADVANCE AT TIME OF TURNING IN AD ORDER.**

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# Texas tops nation in uninsured

Every major city in Texas exceeds the national average for health uninsured residents, according to an April report by the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts.

From 2001 to 2003, Laredo had the state's highest rate of uninsured residents, 36 percent. More Texans go without health care insurance than residents of any other state in the nation. One in four Texans lack health insurance compared to one in six in the nation, according to the US Census Bureau.

"The sheer number of uninsured Texans makes health care less affordable for Texas employers and individuals alike," said Comptroller Carole Keeton Strayhorn. "Much of the costs in providing health care to the uninsured ultimately are shifted to those who have insurance and to Texas taxpayers."

Some Texans can't afford private health insurance and some work for small businesses not offering insurance. Others can afford insurance but choose not to buy it. Others are eligible for but not enrolled in programs like Medicaid or the Childrens Health Insurance Program (CHIP). CHIP insures children of working families who can't afford private insurance but earn too much to qualify for Medicaid.

More than 2.6 million Texan uninsured live in Houston, Dallas, Fort Worth and Arlington. Houston has two hospitals able to treat the most critical trauma patients, but are often crowded with uninsured seeking treatment for non-emergencies. The uninsured tend to go to emergency rooms for free, federally mandated care.

Three Texas metropolitan statistical areas along the border, Laredo, El Paso and Brownsville-Harlingen-San Benito had the highest rates of uninsured in the state. Laredo



led the state with 36 percent. A health official said, "If you go to one of the big federally funded clinics in Brownsville, more than 75 percent of the patients are uninsured."

The border area also has the lowest wages in the state. The same health official said, "The cost of health care is about the same on the border as in other parts of the state, but the residents just don't have the money to pay for it."

The Comptrollers report recommends several solutions to the problem; Restoring cuts made to the CHIP program; restoring 2003 cuts to the Medicare Medically Needy Program; Opening more federally funded clinics to cut the number of uninsured seeking non-urgent care in hospital emergency rooms, which could cut insurance costs.

The sheer number of Uninsured Texans ultimately makes health care less affordable for Texas employers and individuals alike. Most of the costs of providing healthcare to the uninsured ultimately are shifted to those who have insurance - and to all Texas taxpayers.

Dr. Guy Clifton, Chairman of Save Our Emergent Rooms based in Houston said "It makes no sense to have 21 percent of children uninsured in Texas. Unless things change, I think we are going to see the face of the uninsured change to more educated, temporarily unemployed or even employed individuals who are priced out of the market" for health care.

Article by Karen Hudgins in FISCAL NOTES, a publication of the Texas Comptroller office

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Juniors 1-3 p.m.  
**Plains High School**  
**Registration**  
**THURSDAY, AUGUST 4, 2005**  
Sophomores 10 a.m.-12 p.m.  
Freshmen 1-3 p.m.

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