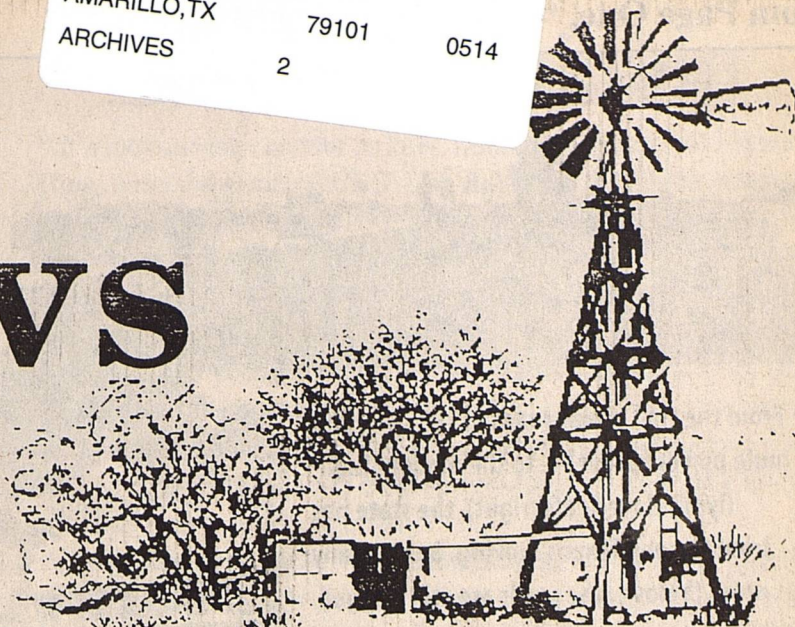


Cowboy Country News

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

Volume V11, Issue 26, March 14, 2001

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Interest in local elections only lukewarm to date

Three local governmental entities have scheduled elections for Saturday, May 5, 2001. Plains Independent School District will elect two trustees, City of Plains will conduct an election for three council members, and Sandy Land Underground Water District will hold an election for two spots on its Board of Directors.

In the Plains ISD election, Trustees Randy Tuggle, District 2, and Dwayne Canada, At-Large District face expiring terms of office. At print time, they are the only candidates who have filed for spots on the

election ballot. The City of Plains has three council members facing expiring terms, Rick Ramos, Arlon Alexander and Owen Schneider. Alexander and Schneider both have filed for the election.

Sandy Land has two directors with expiring terms, Ray Bearden and Dennis Harrison, and both have filed for ballot positions.

Potential candidates for any of these office are reminded, March 21 is the deadline for filing for the elections.

Senator adds support to school start date legislation

Last week's issue of CCN featured a front page article outlining legislation introduced in the senate by Sen. Eddie Lucio, D-Brownsville to permit Texas voters to choose the time for starting school in their districts. Recent news releases have detailed support for the bill from Sen. Robert Duncan, R-Lubbock.

Sen. Lucio is now proposing an amendment to Senate Bill 108. His original bill called for school start dates to be no earlier than August 21. An amendment to the bill from Sen. Lucio would allow voters to opt for a start date during either the second, third or last week in August, or after September 1.

SB 108 must be heard by the Senate Education Committee, but at this date, has not been placed on the committee calendar.

There are a number of scenarios Texas voters could face if the amended bill clears both the senate and house; The proposal could be placed on a school district's next election, or it could be offered on the statewide November Constitutional amendment election. School districts would have the option to hold a vote for the proposal, but would not be required to.

Plains ISD Superintendent Jim Haynes told CCN, "I am certainly in favor of local control over the start date. Our Board of Trustees are elected by the citizens to represent the views of the citizens to the best of their ability. I would much prefer, and I think our trustees will agree, to have the start date issue determined here in our district, and not Austin. I feel our board is in a much better position to determine the needs and desires of our students and their families than the good folks in the state capitol."

An Encouraging Scene



This area of standing water behind Cowboy Baseball Park was typical of many scenes in Sulphur Draw following the rain here last Wednesday evening and early Thursday morning. The gauge at City Hall recorded 1.67 inches of precipitation, bringing the total for the year to date to 3.21 inches. Local ag producers are hoping the wet start of 2001 is a positive signal the La Nina spawned drought has at last ended.

County Officials Visit Nation's Capitol

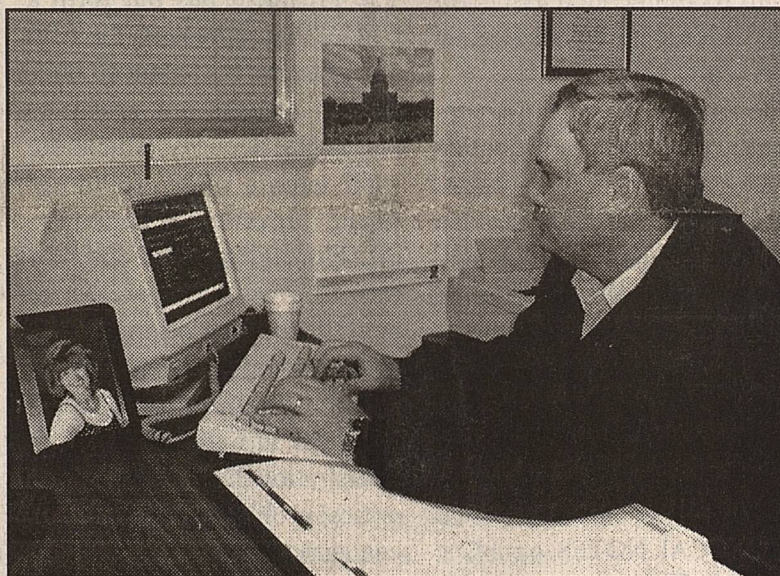
County Judge Dallas Brewer, Treasurer Toni Jones, Pct. 4 Commissioner Jack Cobb, and County Clerk Debbie Rushing were among many hundreds of officials attending the annual Conference of the National Association of Counties (NACo) in Washington D.C. March 2 through March 6.

While those attending the conference were faced with a whirlwind schedule of meetings, demonstrations and speakers, there was time available to see some of the historic sights of the Capitol City. The four Yoakum County officials reported they enjoyed tours of both the White House, and then the Capitol where they visited the offices of Texas Representative Charles Stenholm and Larry Combest. They took the vaunted Metro line to Arlington National Cemetery and watched the changing of the Guard, and also toured the Smithsonian's Air and Space Museum.



Judge Brewer reflects before gate to Arlington Cemetery

Howard promoted to Captain of Department



In Monday's session of Commissioners Court, approval was granted Sheriff Don Corzine to promote Jerry Howard to Captain of the Sheriff Department. He had been serving as Lieutenant of the department since the first of this year.

Howard, is a former Lamesa resident who graduated from high school there in 1976. He farmed a number of years there, and laughingly told CCN, "I

was convinced I was going to be a rich farmer. The first year, I stripped a dry land cotton crop that averaged two bales an acre. I told my dad, 'there's not much to this, is there?' He laughed at me and advised me to stick around a bit. He was right."

Howard received his Peace Officer certification through the South Plains Association of Governments law enforcement program in 1989. His first job in the field was as a patrolman with the Denver City Police Department.

In May of 1991, he was hired as a Deputy in the Sheriff Department here by then Sheriff Jim Rice. As department captain, Howard serves as the County Jail Administrator, and is responsible for scheduling duties for seven deputies under he and Sheriff Corzine. The department currently has five jailers, five dispatcher, four full time reserve deputies, and an office secretary in Denver City.

Howard said, "I feel we have a great department here. I love what I'm doing, and we have great people to work with. If I have my way, I want to retire right here in Plains and Yoakum County."

* (More Commissioner Court news on this page)

At a crossroads....

TxDOT faces proposed sweeping changes

In 1917 the Texas Legislature created the Texas Highway Department to build a network of roads - using mostly mules - between towns. Demand for the innovation was caused by the proliferation of the automobile.

In the 1940's, Texas farmers, ranchers and oil producers asked for better access to markets. In 1946 the Legislature passed the Good Roads Amendment to the Constitution, dedicating fuel taxes to roads and schools, and in 1949 passed the Colson-Brisco Act creating the farm-to-market road system. These investments led to growth in the Texas economy and Texas cities.

In the 1950s and 60s, post World War II affluence produced a booming demand for interstate highways. Texas built more than 3,200 miles of interstate highways, more than any other state.

By the 1980s and 90s, the department was looking at how other modes of transportation, airplanes, buses and ships, fit into the state's transportation system. In 1991, the Legislature combined the State Department of Highways and Public Transportation, the Department of Aviation and the Motor Vehicle Commission to create the Texas Department of Transportation.

TxDOT reported in 2000 the agency will be able to meet only an estimated 36 percent of identified transportation system needs for now through 2006.

In January 2001 Texas Comptroller Carole Keeton Rylander released a performance review of TxDOT, recommending sweeping changes that would provide an additional \$1.1 billion for road construction and maintenance over the next two years, without raising taxes.

Turn To Page Two,
'TxDOT CHANGES'

Extension Agents review activities for court

In Monday's session of Commissioners Court, Extension Agents Debra Pollard and Arlon Gentry delivered an update on recent extension service activities. Ms Pollard said she had assisted in the recent Yoakum County Junior Livestock show, and was playing an active role in supporting the Yoakum County Connection. She reported a number of young married couples have signed on for an upcoming Leadership Retreat in Ruidoso at the end of March. "We are hoping our efforts to bring younger people into organizations like the Connection will produce new leaders with new ideas." The Connection and Commissioners Court each granted \$2,000 to defray expenses for the retreat.

Arlan Gentry reported his "livestock show season" ended with a number of county youngsters doing very well here, and at San Antonio, Fort Worth, Odessa, San Angelo and El Paso shows. He reported he will soon be assisting county FFA and 4-H livestock judging teams at area competitions. He also told the court he will soon host a Terry, Hockley and Yoakum County meeting of ag producers to explore possibilities of more Guar production in the area. Tax assessor/collector Betty Rivas reported collection of \$105,492 taxes in February, and the hiring of Connie Webb as secretary in the Sheriff office in Denver City was approved.

From Page One, "TxDOT Changes"



From the first paved roads in 1917—using mule power (above)—to the modern high-flying cloverleafs (right), the state has tried to keep Texans moving. But in many areas (below), the roads are still clogged.

PHOTOS: Texas Department of Transportation.

The review, requested by the 1999 Legislature, recommends TxDOT adopt innovative financing tools, such as Grant Anticipation Revenue Vehicles (GARVEES), build more toll roads and tap into a new line of credit through the Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act.

Traditionally, Texas has used the pay as you go approach to road construction, which has led to snarled traffic. By using innovative financing tools such as GARVEES, TxDOT can speed up the process. GARVEES are highway construction bonds based on the state's future federal highway funds and would allow TxDOT to start construction sooner, complete them faster and save millions for Texans.

Other financing options TxDOT could explore include expanding the reach of the State Infrastructure Bank so the state can issue revenue bonds for state and local construction projects, using the Texas Turnpike Authority to obtain greater funding for TxDOT projects and managing cash flow more effectively.

To address traffic congestion in all areas of the state, the Comptroller's report recommends TxDOT adopt a simpler, straightforward funding allocation system and guarantee regions a better return on money sent to Austin. The current allocation system comprises 34 funding categories, several with sub-allocations.

"TxDOT's own current standard of fairness states it should get back 95 cents of every dollar Texas sends to Washington," the report says. "Therefore, it should enthusiastically embrace the recommendation that regions in Texas get back 90 cents of ev-

ery dollar sent to Austin."

The review also recommends expanding the Texas Transportation Commission from three members to seven. "The agency must become more broad minded and open," Rylander says, "and that can only be accomplished with a change at the top, which requires additional representation from all across the state on the Texas Transportation Commission."

Financing is not the only way to speed up transportation projects. A number of creative contracting techniques have been introduced by state departments of transportation and toll authorities around the country that can improve efficiency while reducing costs to taxpayers.

TxDOT does not consider a contractor's past performance in bid evaluations. To improve accountability, the report suggests TxDOT consider past performance when awarding contracts and require contractors to provide warranties on the roads they build.

Contracting could be improved by increasing the use of bidding procedures that consider both price and the time to required to finish a project. The current system awards contracts based on the lowest bid, but a cost plus time bidding system bidding system considers the straight cost of the project and the time the contractor estimates it will take to complete the project. Incentives can be added for completing the project within a certain time frame, and contractors can be fined for going over the estimated deadline - or given bonuses for finishing early.

The review found streamlining and improving TxDOT's business practices such as purchas-

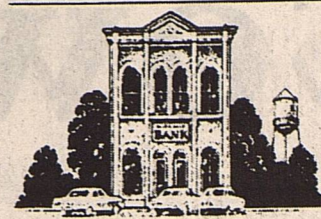
ing, human resource staffing and asset management would enable the agency to devote as much funding as possible to meeting transportation needs. By switching from buying in bulk and warehousing excess supplies and materials to 'just-in-time' purchases TxDOT could cut the cost of handling and storing materials. The agency could reduce the operating costs of its facilities by up to 8 percent and reduce assets by 15 percent with aggressive management, including the sale of all recommended assets for sale or lease in the next two to five years.

The agency must play a substantial role in the continuation of the state's economic success, but fundamental changes in the way the agency operates will be necessary. By redesigning its operation, the agency can be more efficient, customer friendly, and better able to meet the needs of Texas' changing population and economy.

** Material for this article courtesy FISCAL NOTES, a publication of the Texas Comptroller Office.

Getting Your Finances in Shape

In an effort to make 2001 a better year than the last, the Independent Bankers Association of Texas offers some recommendations to whip your finances into shape. By stressing the importance of personal finance early, your family will formulate the basic understanding of their financial position and what is needed to reach financial goals.



Tips from your Community Banker

- Although it sounds like a huge project, it is necessary to organize your financial records. Start by sorting your financial papers into reference categories of savings and investments, outstanding bills, mortgage and so forth. Arranging and updating your files will also help your family to locate important documents easily in cases of emergency.
- Choose and use credit cards carefully. Shop for the card that offers the best rates, fees, grace periods and terms most suitable to your charging style.
- Set savings goals. Determine in advance how much money you plan to keep on deposit each month. If you receive a raise, increase the amount of money deposited into your savings too.
- Find ways to spend less and save money. Here is where to determine needs versus wants. For instance, do you need to eat out every day for lunch? Bringing your lunch to work a couple of days a week can save a sizeable lump sum. Another angle is to take a look at your expenses to make sure you are receiving the best deals available on the market. After you begin reducing expenses, take a large chunk of that extra cash alleviated by spending reductions and put in into savings.
- Manage your credit cards responsibly by paying your bills on time and by paying more than the minimum amount. Establish a monthly schedule to pay and mail invoices so that they are received on time.
- At any point in your management plan, it is advised to consult your local bank to ensure you are receiving bank products and services that best fit your needs. Your banker is also a good source for account and interest rates available to you through your financial institution.

Provided as a public service by the Independent Bankers Association of Texas (IBAT)

Contact: Mae Beth Palone, Independent Bankers Association of Texas (IBAT), 512/474-6889

Larry Combest Comments

This week, President George W. Bush submitted his domestic budget plan before a joint session of Congress. For the first time in years, we have a president and a budget blueprint about which to be excited. The President has put forth a budget that represents the fifth straight year for balanced budgets. It reflects our priorities like Social Security, education, and defense while providing modest tax relief for all taxpayers. Our agricultural community in West Texas will also benefit from the priorities that the President has identified.

We are fortunate to be working hand in hand with an administration that recognized the critical problems facing American agriculture today, and also to have a President who knows firsthand the conditions we face in West Texas. No one is more

aware of the harm that the death tax imposes than the family farmer. Eliminating this tax will allow many of our farmers to ensure that the product of a lifetime's labor can remain in their family. Further, our producers will now have the opportunity to build savings in FARRM accounts so that they will be prepared for the ups and downs of the farm economy. And like all other Americans, our producers will benefit from income tax rate reductions that will allow them to keep more of their hard earned money. The combination of these benefits will help strengthen our nation's farm families as agriculture returns to profitability. Education is a top priority in the President's budget. Funding education at generous levels is necessary, but it is also important to maintain accountability incentives to ensure that children are learning. High tech computers and state of the art technology means nothing when a student cannot read the words on the screen. I am also in favor of giving local schools and communities the maximum amount of control possible in making decisions about their children's education. No body knows better than parents and teachers when it comes to teaching children. For far too long, Washington, D.C. dictated where education money must go and offered a one size fits all approach that has not served American schools well.

This must and will change. Opponents of the President's budget are forecasting gloom and doom, but the surplus numbers since Republicans took control of Congress have been nothing short of impressive.

That is why the time is now to pay off the public debt and offer tax relief to hardworking Americans. The President's budget allows for the greatest amount of debt reduction in U.S. history. Since 1998, the Republican controlled Congress has provided \$625 billion in debt relief. President Bush's budget will more than triple that amount to \$2 trillion over the next 10 years.

Tax relief is also a priority. The President stated in his address, "The people of America have been overcharged and, on their behalf, I am here asking for a refund." By lowering income taxes across the board, we will stimulate the economy and give back some of the overpayments from those who paid too much to the Internal Revenue Service in April. For example, under current law, a Texas couple with a household income of \$37,776, filing a joint return with one dependent pays an average \$2,440 in annual federal income taxes. Under President Bush's plan, they would pay \$1,340 a year, resulting in a tax cut of almost 50 percent.

In addition, retirement security is an issue on the minds of many employees and retired workers, young and old. The President focused heavily on Social Security during his address to Congress, and he will promote options for better returns on your retirement money. People who pay into the system ought to be allowed to invest some of their Social Security reserve in a conservative fund, such as a mutual fund, in order to get better results.

Soon, Congress will take the President's budget blueprint and flesh out the details for a balanced budget. The President's budget lays out a commendable agenda that will steer us in the right direction and follow through on our national commitments.

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Many local fruit trees, including this one at the Rowe and Sandra Stephens home, are in full bloom, and most owners are keeping their fingers crossed Mother Nature won't produce a late freeze



On The Level with Donald Haley USDA/NRCS



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CRP WEED CONTROL

Well, it won't be long now! Spring green-up and a new growing season is right around the corner.

If you're a CRP participant that has seeded grass recently, this is usually the time of year to hook up a shredder and eliminate the old canopy cover from last year's growth.

Shredding will give new grass seedlings needed sunlight for germination and growth this spring and early summer.

In theory, this will allow the grass a head start on this year's round of weeds.

Due to good moisture conditions, we are no doubt in for a bumper crop (weeds, that is!).

For those producers enrolled in CRP sign-ups 16, 18 and 20, caution must be used later on in the summer prior to any chemical weed control.

Many of these contracts were enrolled to seed a forb, shrub and/or legume (the majority forb sown was Illinois Bundleflower) along with the native grass for enhanced wildlife benefit.

If the forb was seeded with the grass, no broadleaf chemical can be used, as it will terminate the planted forb along with the weeds.

In this case, timely shredding is the only available form of weed control for these contracts.

If you have questions about the chemical weed control aspect of your CRP contract, please give us a call.

It is interesting to note the two types of management decisions for Terry and Yoakum Counties concerning the sowing of these forbs for wildlife benefit.

Most Terry County producers elected to first seed grass only, then spray with chemical for weed control, and then seed the forb later after the grass was on the way to establishment.

All Yoakum County producers elected to do the opposite - seeding both the grass and forb at the same time.

While saving another

seeding operation and trip across the field, this method eliminates the option of chemical weed control.

Many of the newly seeded (grass not established) CRP contracts in Terry and Yoakum Counties have already been shredded to eliminate old weed canopies.

Under specific conditions, due to spring winds that will be here shortly, wind erosion considerations, present grass stand conditions, etc. it may be best to delay shredding until later on this spring/early summer.

NRCS field personnel make a field visit to every CRP contract to provide local producers recommendations based on the best requirements of that particular CRP contract.

If you have questions on your CRP contract or any other area of resource conservation, please contact the Terry or Yoakum County NRCS office.

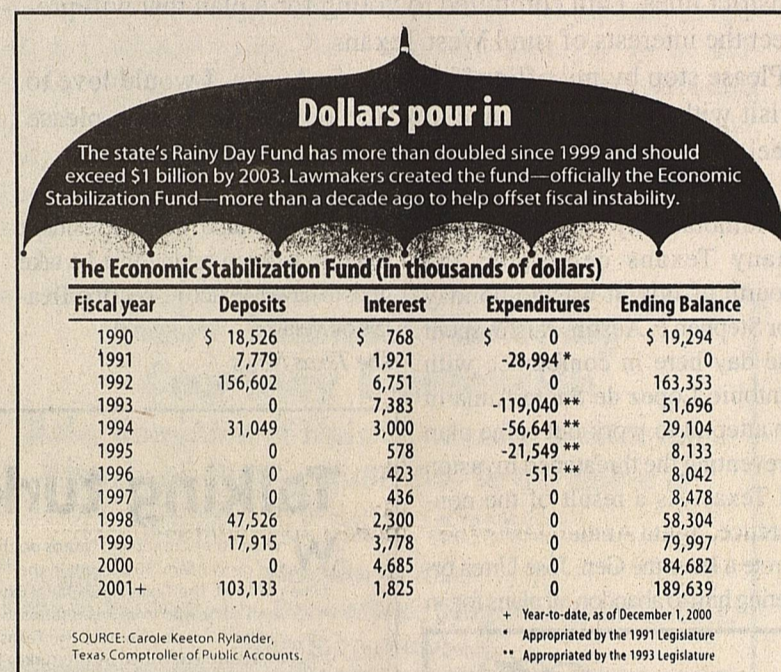
County youth score in livestock shows

A number of Yoakum County 4-H Club and FFA students carried show animals for entry in the Houston and San Angelo Livestock shows recently.

Plains and Denver City youngsters carried pigs to the pre-show 'sift' at Brenham. 3,646 show pigs were unloaded at Brenham, with only 660 pigs getting past the sift judge's eye to advance to the show at Houston. Making it to the sale were Sandi Anderson, Denver City FFA, who placed 3rd in the Hamp class. Brandon Craft, Plains FFA, placed 4th with a Crossbred, and brother Landon Craft was in 5th place with a Hamp. Elizabeth Clanahan, Plains 4-H, was 20th with a Cross.

At the San Angelo March 5 show, the goat show drew an average 85 goats per class for some tough competition. Stetson Sellers, Plains FFA took a 6th place ribbon, Chance Kitchens, D.C. FFA and 4-H, was 7th, and T.J. Kitchens brought home an 8th place ribbon.

In 1880, the population of Texas reached 1,591,749, an increase of 94.5% over 1870. Texas moved from 19th to 11th in rank among the states. Galveston, with a population of 22,248, continues to rank first among Texas cities, followed by San Antonio with 20,550.



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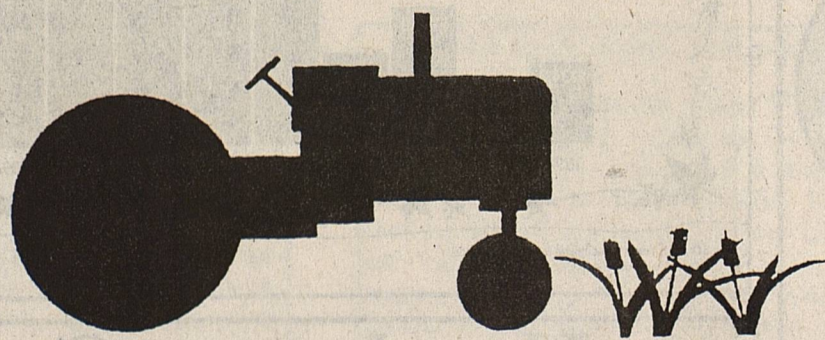
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FROM OUR E-MAIL:

"LEST WE FORGET"

On February 18, while racing for fame and fortune, Dale Earnhardt died in the last lap of the Daytona 500. It was surely a tragedy for his family, friends and fans. He was 49 years old with grown children, one a son in the same race. I am new to the NASCAR culture, so much of what I know comes from the newspaper and TV. He was a winner and earned everything he had, including more than \$41 million in winnings, and ten times that from endorsements and souvenir sales. He had a beautiful home and a private jet. He drove the most sophisticated cars, and every part was inspected as soon as there was any evidence of wear. This is normally funded by the car and team sponsors.

TV stations today continue to remind us of his tragic end, and the radio features a song of tribute to the winning driver. Nothing should be taken from the man, a professional and the best in his profession. He was in a very dangerous business, but the rewards were great.

Several weeks ago seven U.S. Army soldiers died in a training accident when two UH-60 Blackhawk helicopters collided during night maneuvers in Hawaii. The soldiers were all in their twenties, pilots, crewchiefs

and infantrymen

Most of them lived in sub-standard housing. If you total their actual duty hours (in the field, deployed) they probably earned something close to minimum wage.

The aircraft they were in were between 15 and 20 years old. Many times parts were not available to keep them in good repair because of lack of funding. They were involved in the extremely dangerous business of flying in mountains at night, and it only gets worse when weather moves in as it did that night. There was no one there to wave a yellow or red flag to slow things down when it gets critical. Their children, many toddlers, will lose all memory of who 'Daddy' was as they grow up. They died training to defend our freedom.

I take nothing away from Dale Earnhardt, but ask you to take this simple test - ask anyone if they know who was the NASCAR driver killed February 18. Then ask if they can name one of the seven soldiers who died in the Hawaii crash.

Dale Earnhardt died driving for fame and glory at the Daytona 500. The nation mourned, and still does. Seven soldiers died training to protect our freedom. No one remembers their names, and most people don't even remember the incident.

Walker, Texas Rep
By State Representative Gary Walker, Dist. 80

Austin - The session has definitely taken off, and each day is busier and a little more hectic than the last. This past week, six of my bills were voted out of committee, and now are waiting to be scheduled on the calendar. In all, I have filed 20 bills this session. Most of them deal with groundwater management and other issues that affect our rural West Texas communities.

This week I attended my first Calendars Committee meeting. The Calendars Committee is responsible for setting the schedule for bills that have been voted out of committee, and need to be heard before the entire House of Representatives. This week's meeting was very exciting for me, as it is a huge honor to be appointed to this committee. On Wednesday, the House of Representatives voted on its first bills of the session.

As we speak, many rural bills have been referred to the committee I chair, Land and Resource Management. Hopefully, we can get a few bills passed that will benefit the citizens of rural West Texas, by improving health care, education and agricultural programs. This week we will consider a bill authored by Warren Chisum that would establish the Office of Rural Community Affairs. The Office would "develop programs to improve the leadership of rural community leaders, monitor developments relating to rural Texas communities, administer the federal community development block grant nonentitlement program, administer programs that support rural health care and perform research." I believe this bill would definitely improve the quality of life for many residents of rural communities.

The 2000 Census numbers should be out soon, and then the redistricting process will begin. I am looking forward to seeing the count, so we can roll up our sleeves and begin to redraw the district lines. I am committed to voting for a plan that will protect the interests of rural West Texans.

Please stop by my office if you are in Austin. I would love to visit with you! If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact my Austin office at 512-463-0678.

Columbia, July 4, 1836 While many Texans celebrated the Fourth of July, it was no holiday for Stephen F. Austin. Austin spent the day here in conference with Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna in an attempt to work out some plan preventing the threatened invasion of Texas. As a result of the conference, Santa Anna wrote a letter the Gen. Jose Urrea ordering him to abandon all plans for an

invasion. He also wrote President Andrew Jackson asking that he take steps to have Mexico respect the Treaties of Velasco.
The Texas News

Keeping an Eye on Texas

Dollars and Sense

Wise investment strategies earn bigger returns. Texas school districts that increase the amount of interest earned on excess cash by 1/10 of 1 percent, could gain an extra \$23 million.

With the dollars earned from higher interest rates, school districts could afford:

- 612 more teachers at \$37,567 each,
- 460 more school buses at \$50,000 each,
- 15,333 more computers at \$1,500 each
- 460,000 more library books at \$50 each.

SOURCES: Carole Keeton Rylander, Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts (www.window.state.tx.us). Banks to Bonds: A Practical Path to Sound School District Investing.

PISD Honor Roll continued

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|---|
| Junior High 'A-1B' Honor Roll | Allison Butler
Elizabeth Clanahan
Wendy Fierro
Ashley Gonzales
Tanner Hamm
Chris Hansen
Arasely Luna
Servando Luna
Jarod Newland
Annaliesa O'Quinn
Jonathan Peppin
Scott Tirell
Becky Wilmeth | Tyrel Tyson
Lexi Warren
'A-1B' Honor roll |
| Fifth Grade | Amber Friesen | Ninth Grade |
| Sixth Grade | Erika Loewen | Helena Neufeld
Nolan Newsom |
| Seventh Grade | Ramiro Martinez | Tenth Grade |
| Eighth Grade | Payton Bean
Marlie Diaz
Cody Flores
Mayra Flores
Breck Hamm | Jordan Bean
Kelly Bowers
Ismari Guzman
Robert Luna
Liz Wilmeth |
| High School 'A' Honor Roll | Emily Blair
Aaron Cain
Lensey Cullins
Roxey Fuentes
Taylor Gray
Kari Guetersloh
Nicole Haynes
Skyler Johnson
Kimbe Jones
Lisa San Filippo | Eleventh Grade |
| Ninth Grade | Sandra Gallegos
Jill Gray | Louis Escobar
Ragan McGinty
Chelsi Wagnon |
| Tenth Grade | Kim Martinez
Jared Bell | Twelfth Grade |
| | | Kelsey Blundell
Adam Garcia
Dawn Garland
Donita Richardson
Dustin Six
Sharla Vantine |

PHS Second In Journalism Meet

Plains UIL journalism competitors won the second place team award at their home meet Saturday. The team swept the news writing contest with senior Nicole Haynes placing first, sophomore Liz Wilmeth second and sophomore Mandi Rogers third. Senior Lisa San Filippo placed fourth in feature writing and Haynes was fourth in headline writing.

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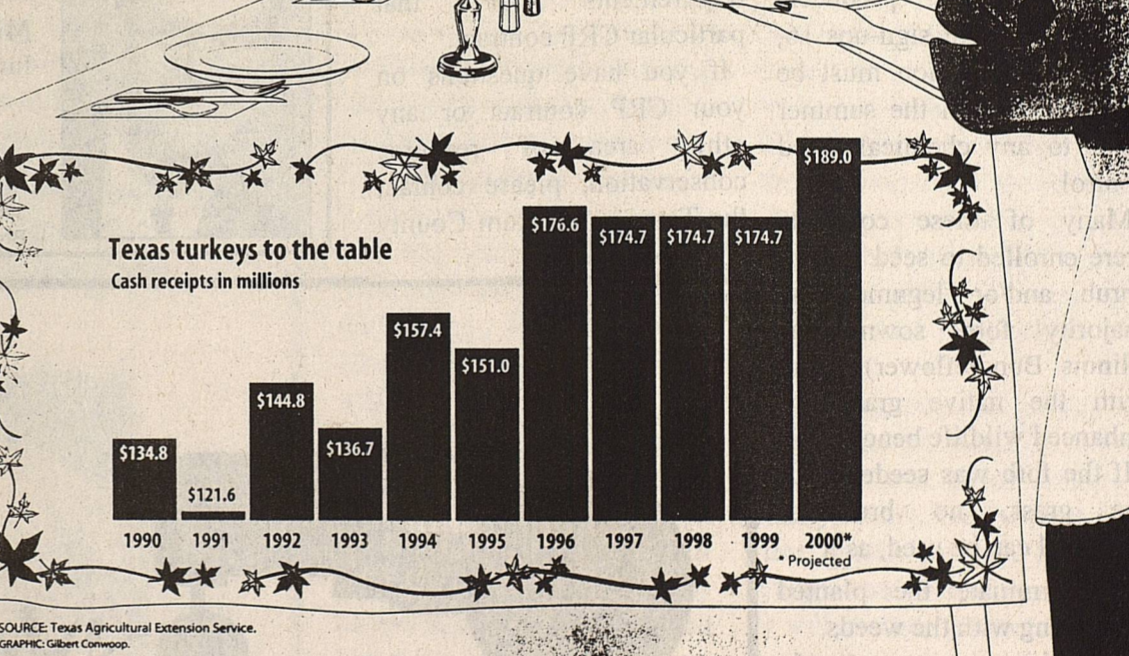
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G & B

Talking turkey

When it comes to turkey, Texans do the gobbling. Turkey producers saw their sales grow nearly 30 percent in the 1990s, from \$135 million in 1990 to \$175 million in 1999. The Texas Agricultural Extension Service says \$189 million worth of turkeys will be sold from Texas farms in 2000. The wild birds are popular too. The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department issued 69,073 turkey hunting stickers in 1999, and 25,188 turkeys were bagged. The state has a long history of putting turkeys on the run—Cuero held its first Turkey Trot in 1912, and prize birds from across the nation still race through downtown during the city's annual Turkeyfest.



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Lifelines & Styles

Learn About Texas' Colorful History While Enjoying Its Beautiful Blooms

Austin, Texas-Texans are gearing up for a spectacular wildflower season and as you travel the state in search of bluebonnets and Indian paintbrush, you can brush up on your Texas history as well. Colorful and informative travel guides for the Texas Forts Trail Region and the Texas Independence Trail Region are available free from the Texas Historical Commission (THC). The Texas Independence Trail Region covers the 28 county "Cradle of Texas Liberty" with more than 50 historical museums and dozens of restored

homes and buildings along the way. The Texas Forts Trail Region takes you to eight famous frontier forts in West Central Texas as well as parks, historic districts and other area attractions.

Other heritage tourism guides available include Los Caminos del Rio: Legacies of the Borderlands, and African Americans in Texas: Historical & Cultural Legacies.

For more information contact the THC's Marketing Communications Division, at 512/463-6255, or visit the THC web site at www.thc.state.tx.us.

Cosmetology Pre-Entrance Exam Set

A pre-entrance test for students wishing to enroll this fall in South Plains College's cosmetology program is scheduled March 29.

The exam is scheduled 9 a.m.-12:30 p.m. in the Counseling Center in the Student Services Building. Fee is \$5. A picture ID is required.

An Additional exam is April 26.

Prospective cosmetology students will be given the pre-TASP exam, an in house exam

similar to the Texas Academic Skills program (TASP), a state required exam which measures college level entry skills in reading, writing and math.

Following the exam, students will interview with program faculty.

Program advisor is Carolyn Newkirk, assistant professor of cosmetology.

For more information, contact the SPC cosmetology program beginning March 19 at 894-9611, ext. 2287.

SPC Job Fair April 10th

Prospective employers from throughout the South Plains area are signing up to participate in South Plains College's annual job fair April 10 in Levelland.

The job fair is open to any current or former SPC student and is scheduled 11 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. in the Sundown Room in SPC's Student Center.

"A number of employers have contacted us that they will be on hand to talk with persons

interested in employment," said Lynn Whitfield, technical counselor who is coordinating the event.

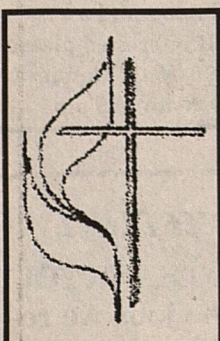
"Whether someone is serious about finding a job or simply wants to find out more about future career opportunities, the job fair is an excellent source of information," said Whitfield.

For more information, contact Whitfield beginning March 19 at 894-9611, ext. 2365.

Denver City Art Association is coordinating the annual Yoakum County Watermelon Round Up T-Shirt Contest. It is open to all ages, in and out of school. Designs must be an original design no larger than 8 1/2 x 11" in size and must have "Yoakum County Watermelon Round Up" on it. Watermelon Willie is optional on this year's shirt. Yoakum County Connection is awarding \$100 cash for the top design picked by the judges. Entries will be accepted beginning March 23, 2001, with the deadline on April 20, 2001. For more information call Sue Holder at (806) 592-2960, after 5:00 p.m. Mail unfolded entries to Denver City Art Association at Box 854, Denver City, Texas 79323, or hand deliver to Bayer Lumber in Plains or the Chamber of Commerce office in Denver City.

First United Methodist Church 1202 Avenue G - Plains, TX.

Cordially invites you to worship and grow in Christ with us!



Sunday Schedule

Sunday School - 9:45 am
Morning Worship - 10:45 am
Youth Fellowship - 5 - 6:00 pm

Wednesday Connections

Food & Fellowship-5:30-6:30 pm
Eve. Bible Study - 6:30 - 8:00 pm

Other Opportunities

Afternoon Bible Study - 5:15 pm Thursdays

GOD loves you and so do we!
Come grow in CHRIST with us!

Senior Citizens Corner

This has been a pretty good week. Layne and I had quite a surprise last Friday. We had just sat down to eat and my sister and brother in law came in. They spent the afternoon with us. They came to Seagraves for his niece's wedding the next day.

We had a good turn out this week for birthdays, but no anniversaries. The people that came were: Betty Boatman, Katherine Spivey, Cora Luck, Nell Rickles, Verbon Sparks, Mutt Rogers, Chris Humphrey and Jean Sparks. If I missed anyone I'll put it in next week and I apologize.

Elmer Hanneman is supposed to be home from U.M.C.

Charlie Gillis is doing well and is wanting to be home.

Mark Clevenger is doing really well but still has a long road ahead of him. We are so glad for the whole family.

Lillie Mae Brown is in the hospital here in Denver City.

Our condolences, prayers and love go to the Mead family in the loss of Harold.

Don't forget Thursday the 15th is our pot luck and Country & Western Band. It starts at 6:00 p.m.

Until Next Week,
Wanda B.

Library Storytime

Storytime was held on Wednesday, March 7th in the Yoakum County Library, celebrating St. Patrick's Day. We watched several movies starring Tweety Bird, and read two books "Toddlerobics" and "Who Hoots?". Kim Gass brought special shamrock

cookies and punch, and Old St. Patrick himself came by to tell the children why his day is special and deserves to be celebrated! The children attending Storytime were: Clayton Gass, Jentry Wall, Claire Carpenter, Anthony Torres, Angel Torres, and Isaiah Lira.

Baby Shower Honoring Courtney Guetersloh

Baby daughter of Dain & Mandy Guetersloh
March 24, 2001 at 6:00 pm. in the home of
Macky & Connie McWhirter
Couples Invited
Selections: Nelson's-Brownfield, Magnolia-Denver City,
Toys R Us-Lubbock

Please join us for a Baby Shower honoring
Angie Lourey

Saturday, March 31, 2001

2:00 to 4:00 p.m.

4908 102nd Street Lubbock, Texas

Given By: Georgia Simon, Lisa Sosa, Nancy Barnes, Tonya Patton, Tracy Lourey, Shannon Wilson

Selections: Target and Toys R Us

R.S.U.P. Georgia 798-2470 Lisa 791-3467 Tonya 456-5374

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Yoakum County Hospital is seeking a Controller to be responsible for the financial operations of the organization. Duties include gathering and analyzing financial data, developing reports on the financial conditions of the organization and reporting findings to administrative and management staff. Minimum of two years experience in a health care setting, and bachelor's degree in accounting or related field required. CPA license preferred. Please send resume and salary history to Yoakum County Hospital, ATTN: Clay Taylor, PO Box 1130, Denver City, TX 79323.

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Festival April 6 To Celebrate Spanish Language And Culture

The Spanish language and culture will be celebrated in word, song, music, art and dance April 6th as more than 800 area high school students participate in the 10th annual South Plains Foreign Language Festival, hosted by South Plains College in Levelland.

Public broadcasting has been added to the list of competitive events, which include folkloric dancing, arts and crafts, puppet shows, skits, sight reading, prose and poetry recitation and extemporaneous speaking.

"The festival gives students a chance to demonstrate their abilities in a foreign language that not only encompasses language but also history, art, geography and performance activities," said Valerie Job, instructor in foreign language at SPC and first time festival coordinator. Foreign language

skills can be transferred to numerous other areas, Job noted.

The festival had been supervised for the past nine years by Irma Bollinger, professor of foreign language at SPC. She is retiring from teaching this summer.

The competition begins at 9:00 am. and will conclude at 4:00 pm. First and second place winners in each category will receive blue and red ribbons. Festival participants will receive a certificate of participation, a festival T-shirt and a packet of information on the college.

The festival is co-sponsored by SPC and the South Plains Foreign Language Collaborative, a group of area high school language teachers.

For more information, contact Job beginning March 19th at 806-894-9611, ext. 2913.

Wildflower Hotline

Mororists searching for the best wildflower locations along Texas highways have help at their fingertips.

The Texas Department of Transportation's (TxDOT) wildflower hotline, 800-452-9292, gives callers information on the best spots to find wildflowers along the 79,000 mile Texas highway system.

Callers may request information on seven regions of the state; The Big Bend, Gulf Coast, Hill Country, Panhandle, Piney-Woods, North Central Texas, and Southwest Texas. Information on the hotline comes from TxDOT's maintenance offices, chambers of commerce and parks officials.

"The stage is set for an excellent crop of bluebonnets," said Herb Neimann, TxDOT landscape designer. "The dry summer and cool and wet winter have made excellent conditions for a colorful spring show of wildflowers."

April is considered the prime blooming month for wildflowers. The department's wildflower program is part of a vegetation management program encouraging growth of native species requiring less mowing and care.

Each year TxDOT sows more than 47,000 pounds of wildflower seeds along Texas highways, each pound containing at least 30 varieties.

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Concert. No admission charge.

From The Hack

I came in from the golf course last Wednesday, tired, wind blown, disgruntled over the fact I had only won two dollars. I related this to the Bride, who queried, "Why disgruntled? It's better than you coming home in a rage after losing fifteen bucks, like you usually do." I had to agree with her observation.

Something in the kitchen smelled delicious, and I asked what. She gave me a look which I interpreted to mean, your smeller is as effective as your memory. It was chicken soup, my favorite. I think Jewish moms had it right - constipated? A little chicken soup will clear you out right away. Have a cold? Chicken soup is the ticket. Achey all over? Chicken soup will make you feel like a spring, what else, chicken.

I got a bowl of the elixir, sat at the table, and saw she was watching Oprah Winfrey. I hesitated to open my mouth, except for soup, of course, for the Bride is fascinated by Oprah. She is convinced the lady is the GURU of all GURUS for women.

I slurped a couple of spoons, and realized the guest female by Oprah's side was a lady Doc, who was talking about menopause. She was really into it, and the largely female audience on the screen seemed almost drooling in anticipation of her next statement.

I casually mentioned, "I've never understood much about menopause."

My bed partner sniffed, said, "Among about 4,079 other things about women you've never understood."

In self defense, I countered, "Well, I know it's something to do with, you know, well, the monthly curse."

She sniffed again, and said a bit louder, "That's male terminology, you dolt. We women prefer to call it the monthly cleansing period"

"Yeah, now I recall, in high school, I'd be on a date with this scrumptious beauty, eating a burger or something, and she'd say 'OH, GOD, I GOT THE CRAMPS!'. My first thought was, oh, man, spoiled meat again, but before I could demand a refund, the girl would always say, no, really, take me home."

The Bride smiled cuttingly, and stated, "Of course she did, Mush Brain, she refused to spend any more of her time with an idiot." Whereupon, she left the table in a huff.

I couldn't understand all the fury. Later, I looked the M word up in our medical encyclopedia. OK, now I know. The book has it right - Pre-Meno is bliss, Post-Meno is Hell for females, and all those about her. I am eternally grateful, God, our wedding was performed Post-Post-Meno.

I'm not sure I understand all the Hullabaloo about the proposed tax cut and the huge surplus of cash Uncle S. has managed to accumulate. The D's on Capitol Hill scream, 'maybe the surplus isn't real, maybe we'll need the surplus for something else to spend it on, while the R's scream, cut taxes now so the surplus doesn't grow bigger and the D's dream up new stuff to spend it on!'

It's been awhile since I dozed fitfully through Economics 101, but it seems to me if our present tax code has resulted in a \$5.6 Trillion buck surplus, SOMEONE has been paying too much in taxes. The surplus certainly hasn't occurred because of UNDER-SPENDING, that I will bet my sweet bippy on.

And the furor in Washington D.C., dutifully fanned by the media talking heads, seems to be the core of the bitter debate. I promise you I have heard not one soul in Johnnie's Restaurant, a church, at the golf course, in the school teacher's lounge, in the courthouse, or sitting behind the wheel of a John Deere tractor moaning, "Oh, please, don't cut taxes... I feel badly enough about not paying more as things are now!" I suspicion the true sentiments, if truly reported, would be mimicked in every state and hamlet in the land. Well, maybe not California. They're just different out there.

How come those on the Hill who are against the proposed cut haven't asked ME, or YOU, how we feel about possibly shipping fewer bucks to Washington? I mean, you know, I feel fairly certain you and I were responsible for them getting there.

How do you know when you're in a Kentucky hotel room? You call the front desk, say "I've gotta leak in my sink." They say, "Go ahead."

Notice For Bids

The Commissioners Court of Yoakum County will receive bids until 10:00 A.M., Wednesday, March 21, 2001, for a County Depository for the County of Yoakum for a period of four (4) years ending sixty days from the time fixed by law for the next selection of a depository.

Bids will be reviewed with contract to be awarded in Commissioners Court on Monday, March 26th, 2001.

For bid forms and specifications, please contact the Yoakum County Auditor, 806-456-2422, P.O. Box 516, Plains, TX, 79355 or Yoakum County Treasurer, 806-456-8794, P.O. Box 492, Plains TX 79355.

Sealed bids should be marked "Bid-Depository" on the envelope and mailed or delivered to County Judge, Dallas Brewer, P.O. Box 456/Cowboy Way and Avenue G, Plains, TX 79355. NO FAX COPIES WILL BE ACCEPTED.

Commissioners Court reserves the right to reject any or all bids.

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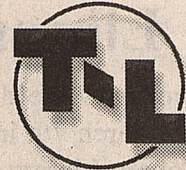
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A family in a hospital waiting room received the somber news, "Your loved one must have a brain transplant. There is no alternative, or he will die." A relative finally managed to ask, "How much will it cost, Doc?" "\$5,000 for a male brain, \$200 for a female brain." A few male family members giggled, and one finally asked, "How come so much difference for the male and female brain?" The Doc stated, "Just pricing procedures. No way we can get top price for one already used."

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