

Cowboy Country News



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

Volume V, Issue 20, Wednesday Jan 27, 1999

County benefits from state tobacco lawsuit

Yoakum County recently received a \$155,170 check from the Comptroller's office, an installment payment representing a portion of almost \$2.3 billion to be paid by tobacco interests to Texas cities, counties and hospital districts over the next five years. The money is in addition to the \$15 billion settlement negotiated by the State of Texas with the tobacco industry.

In an Thursday interview, County Judge Dallas Brewer said the check has been deposited, but Commissioner's Court have not addressed how the 'found money' will be utilized. "This money may be used at the full discretion of the county," Brewer said, and the matter will probably be an agenda item for Commissioner's Court in the

near future.

The \$15 billion settlement will go directly to the State of Texas, and the legislature will determine how those funds are used.

Judge Brewer said this first installment payment to cities, counties and hospital districts was determined by populations. The other future installment payment amounts will be determined by past expenditures for health care, including indigent patients and tobacco related illness.

Surrounding counties receiving first installment checks included Andrews County \$253,224, Gaines County \$65,345, Seminole Hospital District \$184,081, Terry County Hospital District \$233,444, and Cochran Memorial Hospital District \$77,302.

Walker Files Bill to Increase Teacher Multiplier for "Long Termers"

Representative Gary L. Walker (R-Plains) has filed a bill increasing the retirement multiplier for certain teachers from 2.0 to 2.5. This legislation, HB 784, applies to certain school district employees who have spent 20 or more years in the profession.

Currently, the standard service retirement annuity is an amount computed on the basis of the member's average annual compensation for the three years of service in which the member received the highest salary, times two percent for each year of service credit in the retire-

ment system.

"An additional quarter of a percent may not seem like much," Walker said. "But I've been told by those teachers who would like to see the change it could make quite a difference in the quality of their retirement."

"Many of those who have spent twenty or more years in the classroom tell me there is no incentive to stay," Walker added. "I am hopeful that this measure might demonstrate to our teaching veterans that we do value them, and to our younger teachers this profession has a financial future."

County Criminal Cases

In County Court January 20, 1999, Juanita Delores Bernal, 36, pled nolo contendere to a subsequent DWI charge. A 180 day jail sentence was suspended and probated 18 months. She must pay \$300 restitution, and a fine of \$750 and \$199 court costs will be met with time payments. She will spend 30 days in jail with credit for one day served. She must complete the DWI repeat offender program, install an ignition interlock device, attend weekly AA meetings, surrender her license 180 days, and serve 80 hours community service.

Rafael Mendoza Ortez, 31, pled guilty to a subsequent DWI cause. He too will pay a \$750 fine and \$199 court costs with time payments. He will be credited with two days served on a 30 day jail sentence. His

license will be suspended 180 days, he must attend AA meetings, obtain alcohol/drug evaluation, and serve 80 hours community service. He was represented by Attorney Ruben John Garcia 11.

Rigoberto Carreon Hernandez, 36, also pled guilty to subsequent DWI. He must pay a \$750 fine and \$199 court costs with time payments, serve 28 days in jail, install an interlock device for 24 months, and lose his license 180 days.

Hipolito Quintana Dominguez, AKA Polo Dominguez, pled guilty to a first DWI. A 90 day jail sentence was suspended and probated 18 months. His \$600 fine and \$199 court costs will be paid with time payments. He will serve 6 days in jail, credited with 2 days

Turn to Page 2,
"Crime Cases"

14th Annual Chamber Banquet attracts large crowd

Sarah Jane Shelton named Citizen of the Year

Over 120 guests attended the plains Chamber of Commerce 14th Annual Banquet last Thursday evening, a larger number over the last few years.

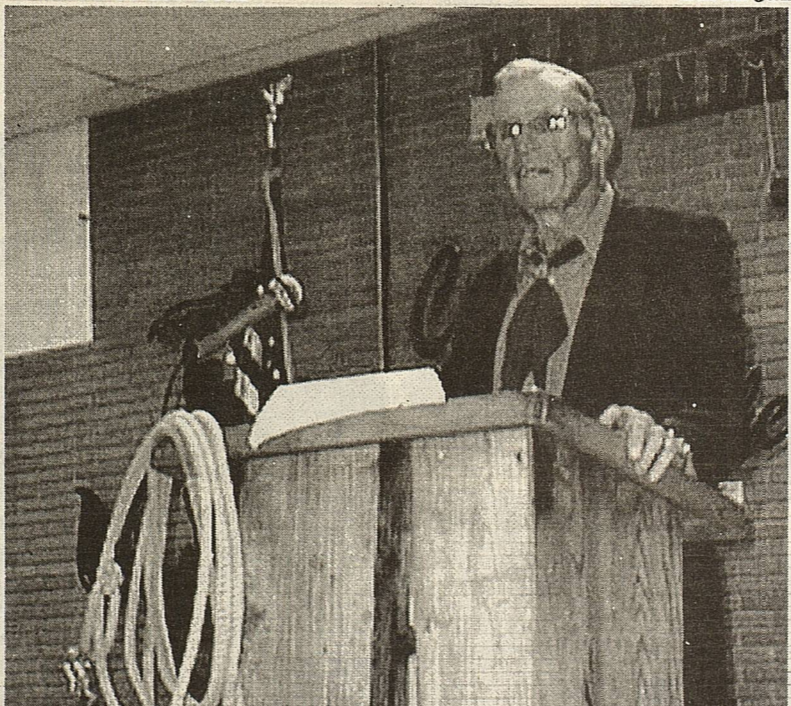
The long awaited, often 'guessed-at' Citizen of The Year award went to long time resident and community and county benefactor Sarah Jane Shelton.

Mrs. Shelton was introduced by Chamber President David Brunson, who described her as "An extremely well respected and seasoned resident of the county, whose commitments and contributions to her family and family business are attributes we could all learn from. Her outgoing and warm personality have welcomed visitors and newcomers to the area, and her always positive attitude has been an encouragement to everyone. Her family, the Methodist Church, the Isa Mo Ga Study Club and her Hereford cattle ranching business have been the central themes throughout her life. We are indeed honored to name Sarah Jane our 'citizen of the Year'"



Sarah Jane Shelton receives plaque from David Brunson

Several dozen door prizes were awarded to lucky guests, donated by local business firms and individuals including the Yoakum County Federal Credit Union, Renaissance Productions, Doug's Specialties, Toni Jones, Alltel Communications, Lea County Electric Cooperative, Richardson Insurance, Yoakum County Farm Bureau, Bayer Lumber, Gary & Frankie Walker, Sandy Land Water District, Cowboy Country News, Crosswind Internet Service, and Tuffy Cooper.



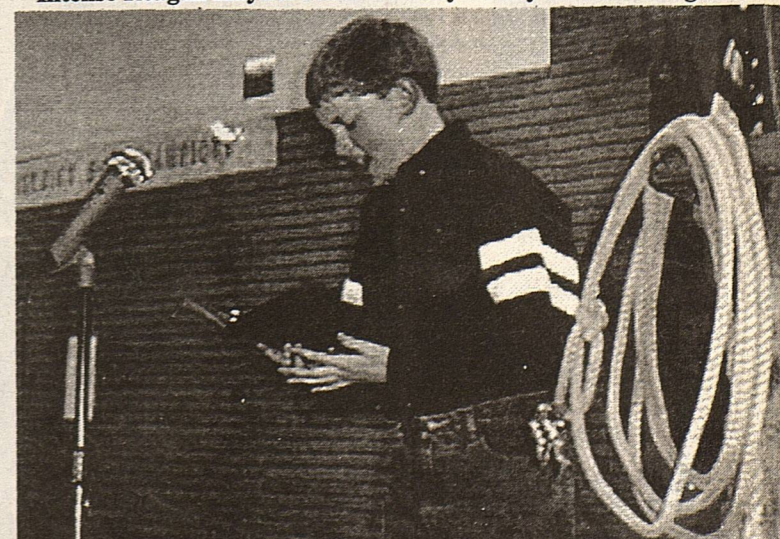
Guest speaker Cowboy Hall of Famer, cowboy poet, and champion roper Tuffy Cooper entertained the crowd.

Long time friend Wilma Powell introduced guest speaker Tuffy Cooper, a Monument, NM rancher, with a long list of professional rodeo achievements and honors, and an equally impressive list of civic service.

The author of the Book, "You need a long rope if you ride a slow horse", Cooper regaled the audience with some of his rodeo experiences, and reciting Cowboy Poetry. He also paid his respects to the many good cowboys originating here in Yoakum County.



Intense Reagan Haynes reads Cowboy Poetry to Chamber guests



Blake O'Quinn had a good time reciting his western theme poetry

A trio of young cowboy poets representing Plains Junior High School, Evan Cain, Blake O'Quinn and Reagan Haynes, delighted the crowd and reinforced the West Texas theme of the banquet with very spirited and talented readings of comic cowboy poetry. Commissioner Jim Barron opened the banquet with an invocation, and State Representative Gary Walker delivered the benediction.

(More banquet photos inside)



PHS Sophomore Lesli Rowe performed the National Anthem

Chamber Banquet Scenes



Young Cowboy Poet Evan Cain did an outstanding job



Attorney Bill Helwig presented Sarah Jane Shelton with free night at Barcelona Courts and dinner at Tony Roma's



Wilma Powell introduces guest speaker Tuffy Cooper

Perry appointments aim to ensure Bipartisanship, productivity

Lieutenant Governor Rick Perry recently took action to ensure the Texas Senate operates in a bipartisan, efficient, and productive manner by appointing members and chairmen of 15 streamlined and specialized Senate committees and four sub committees.

Perry's committee structure and appointments address the major issues facing Texas, reflect bipartisanship, regional representation and diversity, and are aimed at evenly distributing the Senate's workload. In this year's 76th legislative session, Republicans will constitute a majority in 10 of 15 committees compared with the 75th legislative session where 11 of 15 committees contained Republican majorities.

"The committee appointments reflect my commitment to a bipartisan, productive, and efficient legislative session," said Lt. Gov. Perry. "These appoint-

ments allow each senator to strengthen the legislative process, to serve the citizens of their districts, and to make Texas' future brighter. Committees have fewer members so senators have fewer conflicting committee meetings and can put more time and emphasis on vital state issues."

The two Senators in our High Plains area both were named to important committee assignments. Senator Teel Bivins was appointed Chairman of the Education committee. He will also serve on Natural Resources as Vice-Chair of the Agriculture Special Committee, and on Border Affairs and Electric Utility Restructuring special committees.

Senator Robert Duncan was named to the Finance Committee, Vice-Chairman on Criminal Justice Committee, and to the Special Committee on Border Affairs.

Scholarships available through Lea County Electric Cooperative

Area high schools received scholarship application forms earlier this week that will allow students whose families are members of Lea County Electric Cooperative to apply for scholarships in the amount of \$500 per semester. Recipients of the renewable scholarships may use the funds to attend any accredited institution of higher learning in New Mexico or Texas up to a maximum of eight semesters. Applicants must enroll as full time students, and maintain at least a 2.50 cumulative grade point average. According to Mike Dreyspring, Administrator for the Lea County Electric Education Foundation, the program has been providing scholarships to area students since 1988. "Scholarships for the fall semester of 1999 will total \$25,000. We're able to fund the program through individual

donations to the Foundation as well as undeliverable capital credits that would otherwise escheat to the states of New Mexico and Texas. The awarding of some 365 scholarships during the last eleven years signals our trustees' commitment to the educational welfare of the communities within the Cooperative's service territory", Dreyspring said. The Foundation also administers the Jackie C. Noack Memorial Scholarship which provides recipients with \$375 per semester up to a maximum of four semesters. Application forms for both scholarships are available at the main office of the Cooperative in Lovington, as well as their offices in Tatum and Plains, Texas, and are due no later than February 12, 1999. For further information contact Allan Brown at (806) 510-5232 (LCEC).

From Page 1, "Crime Cases"

Services held for Edith Roberson Juarez

Funeral services were held Sunday, January 25, 1999, for Edith Roberson Juarez, 72. Father Andreas Mendoz of the Sacred Heart Catholic Church officiated. Mrs. Juarez died Friday, January 22, at her home here in Plains.

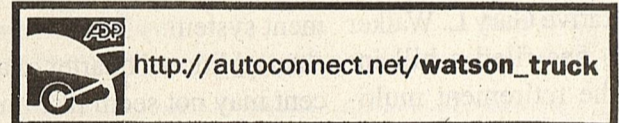
Mrs. Juarez was born April 13, 1926 in Gaines County. She attended school in Seagraves. She married Baldemar Juarez in 1972 in Plains. She was a member of Sacred Heart Catholic Church, and was a homemaker. She was preceded in death by two brothers and two sisters. Survivors include her husband; A sister, Bula Mae Marchbanks of Seminole; a brother, James Roberson of Seminole, and numerous nieces and nephews.

served, must complete the DWI offenders program, attend AA meetings, and serve 24 hours community service. Randy Garza Lopez, 22, pled true to the states motion to modify community supervision from a prior furnishing alcohol to a minor cause. He will serve 7 days in jail, and pay all delinquent fees totaling \$696. He was represented by Attorney Bill Helwig.

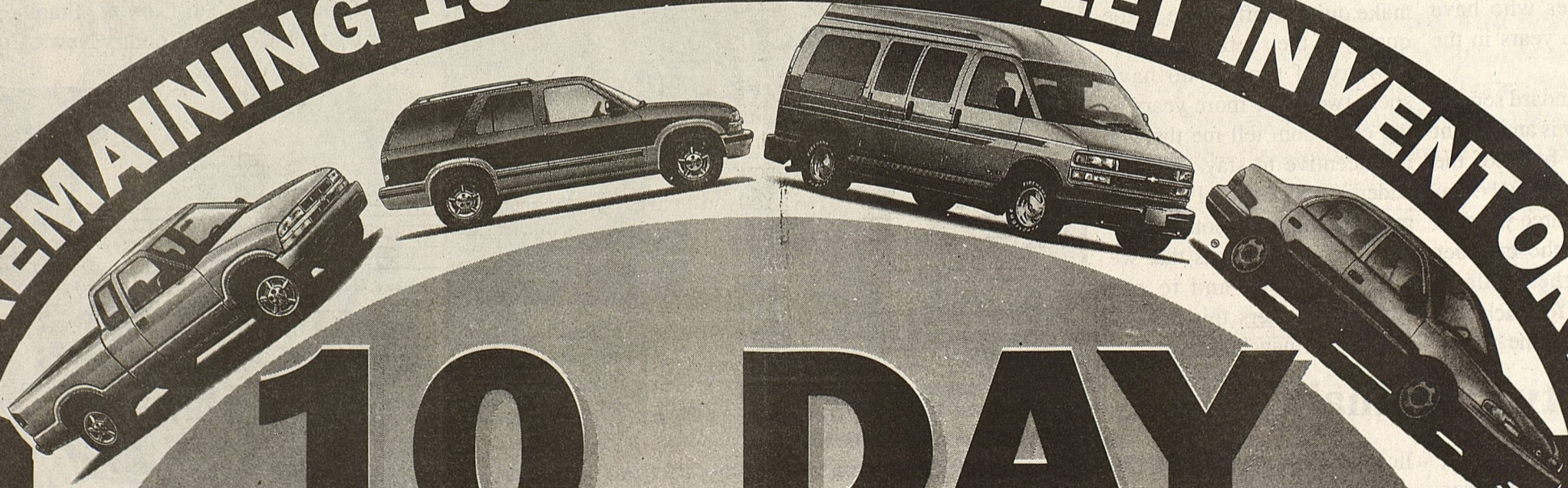
Peggy Franklin Goodin, 48, pled true to modifying conditions of community supervision from a previous criminal trespass case. She will be dismissed from completing the BIPP program to attend individual counseling with the Women's Protective Services in Denver City. The above cases were presided over by Judge Dallas Brewer. Richard Clark was Attorney for the state.



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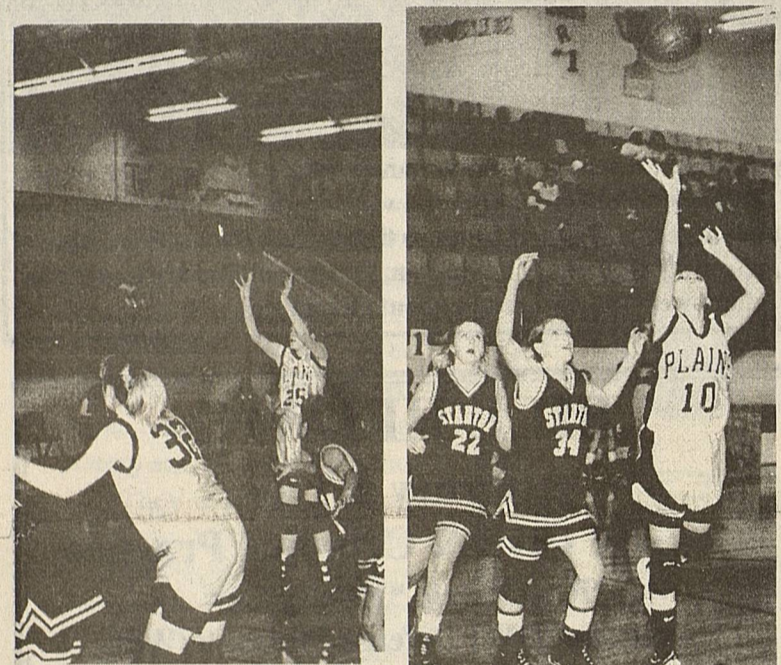
JV Cowgirl Action



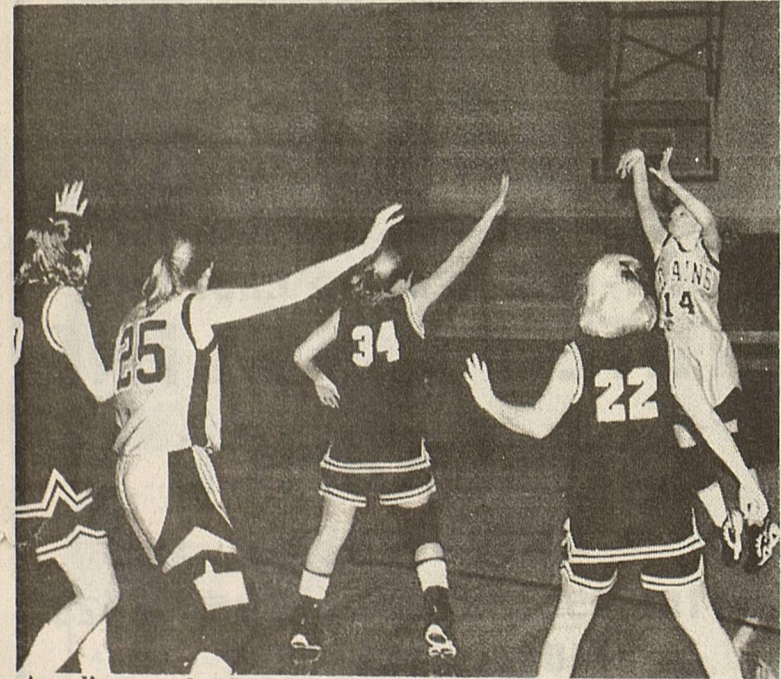
L-R, Lexi Warren, Kim Willis and Frances Cordova defend against Stanton



This scene looked like a free-for-all wrestling match



Kim Willis watches Annaliesa O'Quinn make free throw. Chelsi Wagon lays shot up



Annaliesa watches Lexi make two pointer

PISD Basketball Recap

Junior High:

7th Girls- The younger Lady Wranglers fell to Seagraves last week 30-21. Jeanie Longoria led the scoring with 9 points, Sarah Martinez had 6, Moriah Traweek 4, and Helen Neufeld 2. Coach McKenzie was ill last week, but commented on the girls second place finish in their recent tournament. She said the girls had good looking shots, but the ball just wouldn't fall, and she was proud of their efforts and work on defense.

8th Girls- The older girls also found Seagraves too tough and fell 33-17. Cold free throw shooting didn't help their cause. Chelsea Blount led scoring with ten points.

7th and 8th Boys results unavailable.

JV Cowgirls- The younger Cowgirls were defeated by Coahoma 49-35. Chelsi Wagon was top scorer with 14 points, Lexi Warren had 7, and Michaela Traweek 6. Coach Lusk cited the hustle and defensive work of Kim Willis, Annaliesa O'Quinn and Chelsi Wagon.

The girls were also downed by district foe Stanton, 40-25. Annaliesa O'Quinn was top scorer with 16 points.

JV Cowboys- The young Cowboys had a good effort against Coahoma, ending on top 68-42. Kelsey Blundell was high point with 23, and Dustin Six had 10 points.

The JV Boys suffered their first district defeat in a heartbreaker to Stanton, 55-54. Their district record is now 4-1. Dustin had 21 points, Kelsey and Jared Newland 7 each. Tanner Hamm was cited for his hustle.

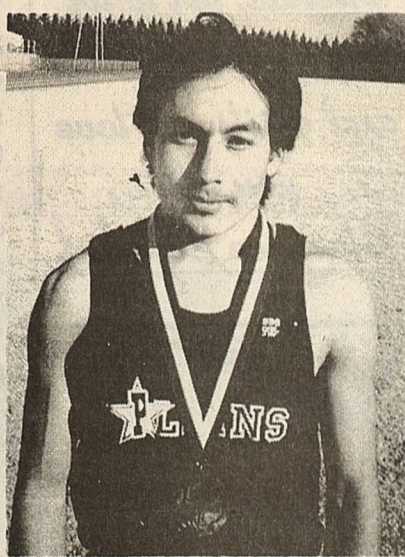
Varsity Cowgirls- The Cowgirls had a tough week. They lost to Coahoma 46-38 on January 19. Kimberly Newland led scoring with 14 points, Kayla Redman had 7, Kristen Gray 6, Krystle Blundell and Candace Bowers 4 each, and Jessica Flores 3. Kayla and Kimberly each grabbed 6 rebounds, and Krystle had 4 steals. Stanton was tough, too, and the girls went down 56-32. Kimberly had 11 points, Jessica 7, Kristen 5, Kayla 4, Candace 3, Anne Palmer 2. Kimberly managed 9 rebounds.

Varsity Cowboys- The Cowboys lost to Coahoma by a single point, 51-50. Tanner Blount led the scoring with 17 points, Adam Garcia had 12, Jared Bell 7, Fermin Luna and Eddy Gallegos 6 each, and Joel Gallegos 2. Tanner and Jared each had 8 rebounds. Stanton topped the Cowboys 70-65 by shooting 50% to the Cowboys 40%. Tanner managed 29 points, Adam Had 17, Kyle Sisson, Patrick McGinty and Joel had 4 each, and Josh Bell 2.

Felipe Reyna Named To All State Team

Felipe Reyna has been selected to the Texas Track and Field News ALL STATE TEAM in Cross Country. Felipe won the Sundown Cross Country Meet, New Home Cross Country Meet and was the AA Regional 1 Cross Country Champion at Lubbock. Felipe placed 9th at the State Meet and helped his team to a 5th place finish at Round Rock.

Felipe Reyna and All - State Medal



Student of the Week



Student of the Week is Esme Moreno, a freshman and the daughter of Mr and Mrs Israel Moreno. She was nominated by Mr. Carter who said, "When you wake in the morning and your school clothes go on, your mission begins. You can't just

show up and put in your 7 1/2 hours of school and check out. You must have a goal and a mission each day for each class you attend. Know what you are trying to accomplish. In athletics you don't just show up, go through the motions, see what happens. You practice and play with a purpose. When you go to class, attend with a purpose. Esme comes to my class and doesn't allow the distractions around her to keep her from learning. You might say, "She has her head in the game." She is on a mission to learn.

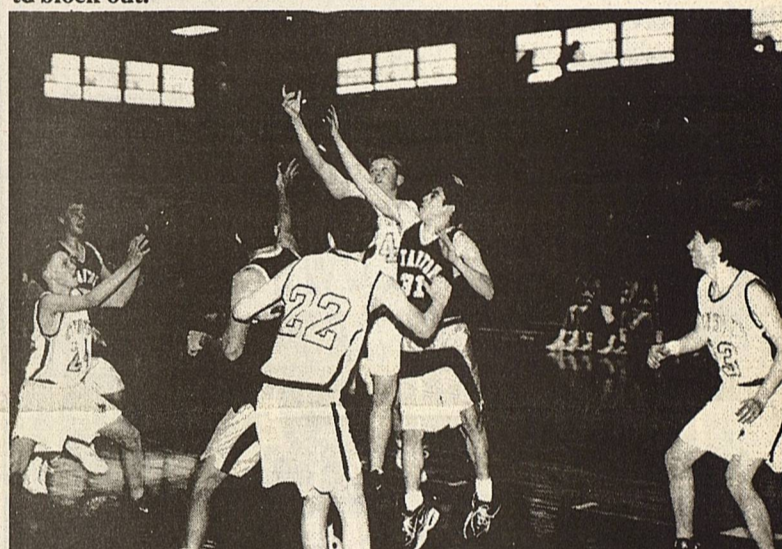
JV Cowboy Action



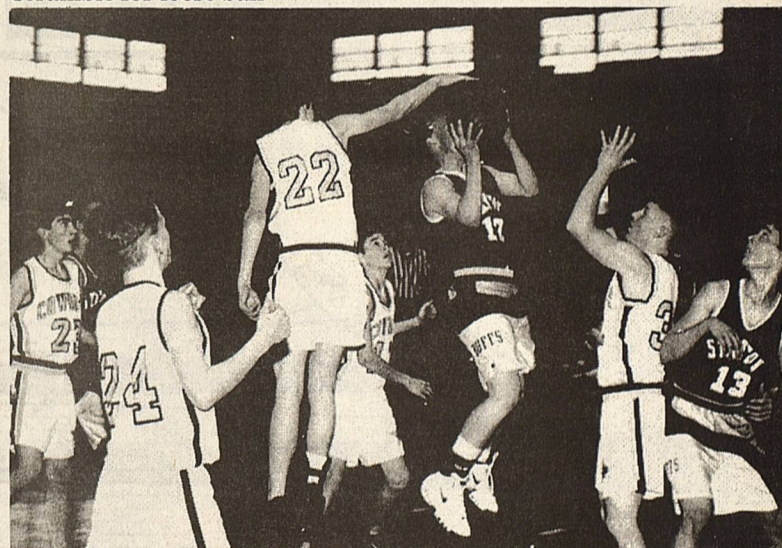
Aaron Cain gets shot off over defender



Kelsey Blundell tries to penetrate with ball, Joseph Rodriguez (20) tries to block out.



L-R, Jarod Newland, Dustin Six, Matt Willis and Kelsey Blundell scramble for loose ball



Dustin Six, 22, about to make perfect shot block, while (L-R) Kelsey Blundell, Jarod Newland, Tanner Hamm and Brett Squyres prepare to help.

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Services to be held for Bobby Gene Johnson

Bobby Gene Johnson of Plains died following a lengthy illness at Lakeside Rehabilitation Center, Lubbock, on Friday, January 22. He was 66.

Mr. Johnson was born in the Happy Community near Brownfield, and had lived in Plains 45 years. He worked for his mother and father, the late Gene and Eddie Lou Johnson, at Gene's Grocery for 15 years. Following their retirement, he became owner of Bob's Grocery which he operated here almost 30 years. He married Laura Ruth Lamb June 25, 1964. She preceded

him in death in May, 1986. His son Bobby Gene Johnson Jr. also preceded him in death in 1996.

He is survived by his brother Leon of San Diego, CA, his sister Mary of Salinas, CA, and his niece and nephew Kelly and Wesley Culwell.

Memorial services will be held at First Baptist Church Plains at 11 a.m. Saturday, January 30. Interment in Plains Cemetery will follow, under direction of the Brownfield Funeral Home. Memorials may be made to American Diabetes Association or American Cancer Society.

Livestock show starts Thursday

The 47th annual Yoakum County Junior Livestock Show kicks off at the show barns here Thursday. The first day will see weigh-ins for all show animals; Swine weigh-in 9 a.m., lambs 1 p.m., goats 2 p.m., steers 3 p.m., rabbit check-in 4 p.m. On Friday, the steer show will start at 8 a.m., followed by the gilt and barrow swine show. A new feature at this year's show is a 'PeeWee Pig Show', following the swine shows.

The lamb show is scheduled for 1 p.m., goat show at 3 p.m., and rabbit show at 4 p.m.

On Saturday, January 30, the show continues with the second concession stand branding ceremony, followed by the Buyer's Luncheon at 11:30 in the school cafeteria.

At 1 p.m. the winner of the Queen contest will be announced, and the premium sale will start at 1:20 p.m.

Officials in this year's show include Kevin Gibson, General Superintendent, Steer Supt. Kreg Keesee, Asst. Kevin Gibson; Swine Supt. Chris Chambliss, Asst. Mike Roberts; Lamb Supt. Jim Brown, Asst. Don Parrish; Goat Supt. Bill Anderson, Asst. Jimmy Bearden; Rabbit Supt. Glen Trout, Asst. Mary Jo Unger.

Thank you, all my friends, for your food, flowers, cards and visits... I love you all!
Florence Bookout

Classifiers this year include Geoff Cooper, Joe Pierce and Tad Knight. Weight man is Kreg Keesee, and Lisa Wood will keep all show records.

January 15, 1841: Congress of the Republic chartered Houston and Austin Turnpike Co. to lay out Austin-Houston road.

January 19, 1857: Colonel Robert E. Lee passed his fiftieth birthday while on duty with the U.S. Army at Fort Brown.

January 1, 1937: The first Cotton Bowl game was played. TCU represented the SWC.

JP Court Summary

The following is a summary of cases heard and fines and bonds set in Pct 1 Justice of Peace Court, Judge Melba Crutcher presiding.

96 Traffic cases, 4 civil cases, 1 public intoxication case, 6 juvenile cases.

Fines and bonds set; Criminal mischief, \$500 bond.

Tampering with government record, held for Border Patrol

Public intoxication, \$150 fine. Motion to revoke probation,

held until hearing. Disobedience of court order, \$1000 cash bond. Criminal mischief, \$3500 bond. DWI, \$1000 bond.

Driving while license suspended, \$500 bond.

No drivers license, \$200 bond. Failure to maintain financial responsibility, \$200 bond.

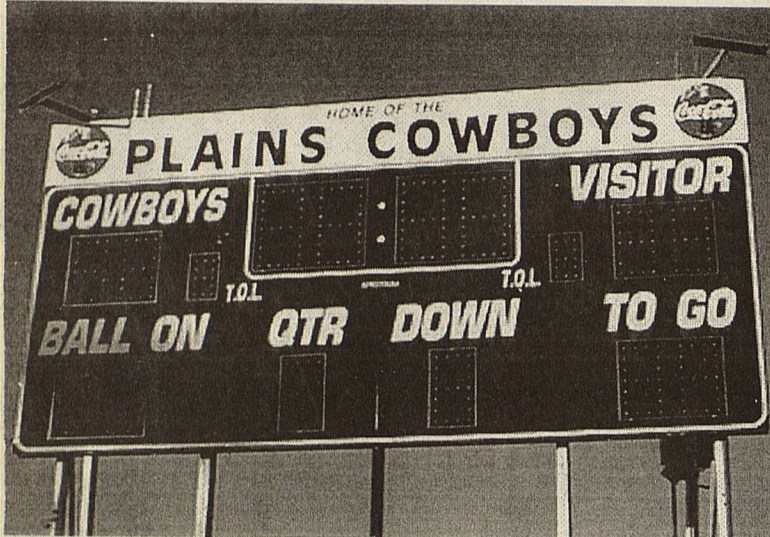
Expired license plates, \$200 bond.

Motion to revoke probation, \$2000 bond.

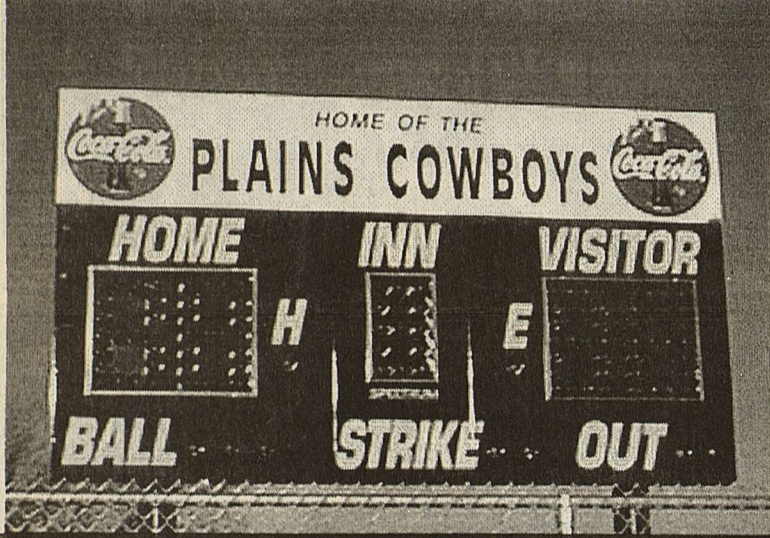
Fail to identify fugitive from justice, \$1000 bond

Capias Pro fine (3 cases), \$100, \$280, \$130 fines.

Coca Cola Generosity



These two new, state of the art electronic scoreboards now grace Cowboy Stadium and the new Cowboy Baseball Park. Both scoreboards were donated to Plains ISD by the Coca Cola Corporation.



Last week's cold, snowy and windy weather caused some minor damage and inconvenience around the county. This large Locust tree on property of Darrell Barron was toppled by high winds, and early last Friday morning high winds caused power interruptions throughout the northern area of Lea County Electric's service area, affecting residents in Lovington, McDonald, Bronco and Plains. The company alternated circuits, and power was restored in about 48 minutes.

District Court

On January 11, 1999, Guillermo Borunda, 17, pled guilty to a lesser offense of criminal attempt of forgery, a state felony. He was sentenced to 180 days in jail with credit for 81 days served; pay court costs of \$236.25. He was represented by Attorney Paul Mansur.

Kelly G. Moore presided and Richard Clark represented the state.

Our Apology

It continues to amaze us how we manage to make dumb mistakes. Last week in the article about PHS Seniors who have been accepted by colleges or universities, we omitted any mention of Jennifer Lollar, and we apologize. Jennifer has been accepted for enrollment at Hardin Simmons University in Abilene, where she plans to major in marketing, and minor in religious education.

BILL HELWIG

Attorney at Law

General Civil & Criminal Practice

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*Criminal/DWI Defense *Probate/Wills

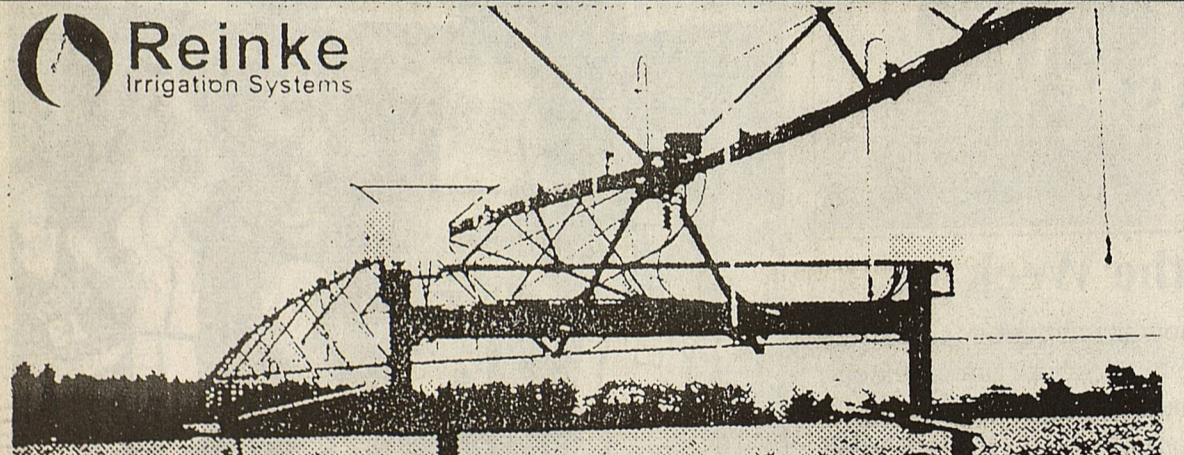
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Dirt Gardeners Meet

New officers were elected for the Plains Dirt Gardeners at their regular meeting January 20. They are president, Jackie Willis; vice president, Debbie Morphis; secretary-treasurer, Dean Richardson; reporter, Ruby Sellers. There was a short discussion of the donations received by Ita Young and Velma Dearing for Operation Christmas Card.

The members drove to Denver City where they heard instructions for properly cutting fresh flowers, and each received a fresh carnation. They were also served refreshments. Members attending were Mary Lou Parks, Dean Richardson, Ruby Sellers, Ita Young, Chris Edwards, Jackie Willis, Debbie Morphis, Velma Dearing, and guest Katie Dearing.

Senior Citizens Corner

Here at the Center nearly everyone has conquered the 'Flu Bug' or what ever we had. A good rain would make everyone feel better.

Plans are for a Garage Sale on February 5, starting at 8:30 a.m. Anyone needing to get rid of 'good junk' give us a call or bring it by. **DON'T FORGET THE DAY!** Come in and browse, you don't have to buy anything.

Our big attraction every day is a good lunch. It sure beats cooking. The hall is busy with walkers, the ceramic girls are busy, the domino games and '42' goes on each day. A big welcome to all visitors!

See you next week,
Smitty

Smith-McDonnell Wedding Planned



Larry and Janice Smith of Flower Mound announce the engagement of their daughter Jenette Sheryl, to Brandon Shane McDonnell, son of Jackie and Gale McDonnell of Plains. The couple will marry April 17 at First Baptist Church in Plains. The bride-elect, a graduate of Robert E. Lee High in Midland and West Texas A&M University with a BBA Degree in Management, is employed as store manager of County Seat. The future groom, a graduate of Plains High and South Plains College with a degree in Radiology Technology, is employed by University Medical Center.

Grandparents of the couple include Billie McDonnell of Plains, Charles Carr of Girard, J.D. and Louise Smith of San Antonio, Virginia Smith of Devine, and Ruth Dunn of Beeville. Great grandmothers are Clemmie Carr, Girard, and Edith Beckham, Odessa.

Gifted and Talented Screening

Plains Independent School district offers many programs to meet the needs of its students. One such program is the Gifted and Talented Program.

A gifted student is one who shows superior creative and productive thinking ability. He/She will be often socially, emotionally, artistically, more advanced than other children his/her own age.

The Texas Education Code defines a gifted and talented student as "a student who by virtue of outstanding mental abilities, is capable of high performance. The student may demonstrate, singly or in combination, above average achievement or potential in such areas as creative and productive thinking, and leadership ability." The Gifted and Talented Program is designed to meet the special and differentiated educational opportunities above those of the regular curriculum. This program shall provide an educational environment which encourages the development of critical thinking, investigative skills, indepth analysis of ideas, higher level thinking processes, and personal responsibility for self learning.

To be served by this program, a student must first be nominated, then screened. A student in grades one through 12 may be nominated by parents, teachers, friends, or himself. Nomination forms are available in each principal's office and must be turned in no later than Feb. 4, 1999. The screening process includes three tests: SOI (Structure of the Intellect) for specific academic aptitudes, Torrance Test for Creative thinking for creative abilities, and the Otis Lennon School Abilities Test for general intellectual abilities. Screening also involves questionnaires filled out by professional people who are familiar with the student who has been nominated.

Questions about the Gifted and Talented Program should be directed to Mrs. Cynthia Blair, program coordinator, at the elementary school. 456-7438.

Library Filmtime

There were eight children in attendance at Library Filmtime on January 6, 1999. They were; Karla Powell, Whitney Davis, Clayton Gass, Ashley Sellers, Autumn Friesen, Johnathan Davis, Haley Welch, Steeli Sellers. The children played a game, sang four songs, heard a story and watched three movies. They celebrated Autumn Friesen's 4th birthday with a party of cupcakes and juice



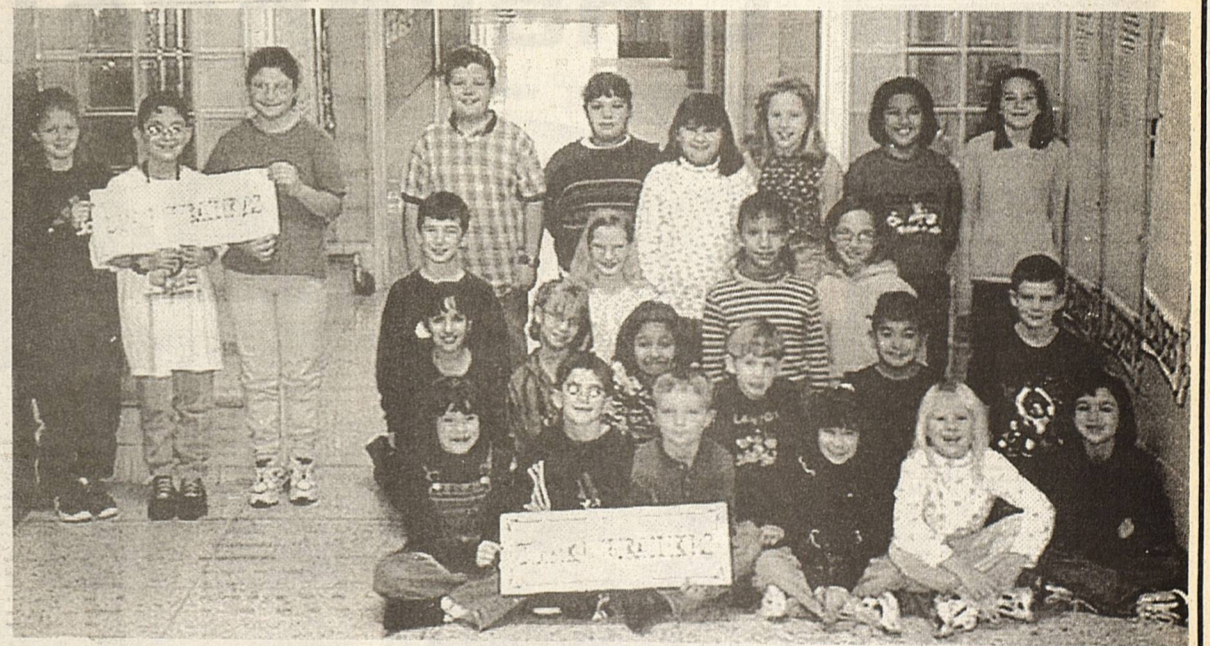
*Character contributes to beauty.
It fortifies a woman as her youth
fades. A mode of conduct, a standard
of courage, discipline, fortitude and
integrity can do a great deal to
make a woman beautiful.*

-Jacqueline Bisset

Elementary reading program achievers



At Left, ADVANCED READERS, front row Alex Perez, Derek Garza, Marissa Melendez, Middle, Caitlin Carter, Joani Bell, Kimberly Jackson, Back Row Desiraye Broome, Araceli Mendoza, Scott Addison. Group at right, INDEPENDENT READERS, front, Claudia Andazola, Brock Carter, Brandon Craft, Middle Row, Alex Penner, Natalie Haynes, Zachary Ramon, Yesnia Loya, Back Row Jacob Brink, Saul Delgado, Kimber Williams, Natalie Butler, Abigail Hernandez



At Left, STAR READERS Lauren Davis, Jose Luis Gallegos, Angelica Mendoza. Large group at Right, SUPER READERS Front row, L'Shae Arnet, Brett Hawthorne, Stetson Sellers, Marissa Melendez, Eva Unger, Briana Conway. 2nd Row, Rubi Castillo, Callie Howell, Mari Ruiz, Landon Earnest, A.J. Martinez, Chase Guetersloh. 3rd Row, Scott Addison, Caitlin Carter, Araceli Mendoza, Desiraye Broome. Back Row, Challie Johnson, Clarissa Zarilla, Flor Lara, Lauren Hise, Meghan Garcia, Kimberly Jackson..

Pink and Blue Baby Shower

for Hannah & Hagen, son and daughter of
Jeff and Amanda Lowery

February 6, 1999

10:00 - 11:30 A.M.

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From The Hack

I somehow found enough time Saturday morning to watch a bass fishing show on the tube. There was a time some years back I would have found time if it was on a family members funeral day (Bride's side of the family, of course). If it was a real good ol' bass fishing show, it might be necessary for me to be late to work, for up to a full hour if some bassin' whiz was pulling 8 and 9 pounders in the boat. I once wrote Hollywood and pleaded for the Oscar moguls there to include in their golden statue award ceremonies a category for 'Best Bass Film', best starring 'Male and Female Bass', and 'Best Male Basser of the Year'. At that time, there were no pro bassing gals, as today. The only response I ever got from Hollywood was a nickel postcard saying, "You redneck Texas idiot, don't you know out here in La La Land we're only interested in sex, glamour, boozey, gory mayhem, sci-fi, and Disney? Re-submit your suggestions for a bass fishing show, including glamorous, voluptuous fish, bass eating the lower half of Long Island, N.Y., or fish addicted to coke, marijuana or speed, and the same bass devouring the angler. We

may possibly consider your entry. Doubtfully." I decided to decline. They would have ended up with a happy faced fish swimming towards the camera singing "Oh What A Wonderful Morning To Be Caught!"

On the above subject, it comes to my mind bass fishermen and golfers have the same characteristics: They arise early in the morning, plotting strategies and plans, they labor throughout the day, and when the day endeth, the truth is not in them. What prompts this is our County Judge Dallas Brewer, the recipient of recent serious knee surgery. I played with the Judge last Saturday. I have never heard such a whiner. He pretended to hobble up to the tee box, asking for an extra stroke or two because of his infirmity.

The golfing group was suspicious of his plea, ignored it, and the crippled Judge drove the ball about 295 yards right down the middle.

Needless to say, his next plea, "I'll turn 65 later this month, then I get to tee off with all you other old geezers up here on the yellow markers"

This suggestion was immediately squealed by the other guys in the group, all geezers.

One guy turned vehement; "The time you tee off up here is when I start voting the straight Republican ticket"

The Judge immediately said he had made an incorrect statement.

The ongoing battle of the sexes continues;

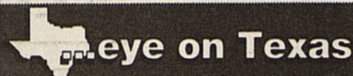
"First God created man. Then she corrected her mistake." "How do you grow dope? Easy.. you plant a man."

Two guys walking, one says to the other, "You know, I've finally realized my wife is an angel." The other one nods, says, "Yeah, I know what you mean, mine's not human either."

Which would a woman rather have, brains or beauty? Beauty - men see much better than they think.

Drought Response Committee

Applying the hard lessons learned from two droughts over the last three years, the Texas



Income tax refunds

More than 1.8 million Texans applied for income tax refunds under the Earned Income Tax Credit program in 1998. EITC refunds may be sent to:

- Families with two or more children, and a gross income of no more than \$30,095. The maximum refund could be \$3,756 in this category.
- Families with one child, and a gross income of no more than \$26,473. Maximum refund: \$2,271.
- Families consisting of adults between the age of 25 and 64 with no children, and a gross income of less than \$10,030. Maximum refund: \$341.

To inquire about the Earned Income Tax Credit:
 • Visit your local Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) center
 • Call IRS toll-free: 1-800-829-1040
 • Call the Texas Comptroller's EITC hotline: 1-800-277-8383.
 SOURCES: Carole Keeton Rylander, Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts, and the Internal Revenue Service.

Department of Agriculture is chairing an interagency Drought Response Advisory Committee that is developing legislative recommendations on preparing the state's agricultural industry for future droughts.

"The droughts of 1998 and 1996 took a more than a \$4 billion bite out of Texas farmers' and ranchers' incomes," said Agriculture Commissioner Susan Combs. "Agriculture cannot afford to be unprepared when the next inevitable drought hits."

Total combined impact to the Texas economy was \$11 billion.

During an August hearing on the 1998 drought, legislative leaders charged TDA with organizing and chairing a Drought Response Advisory Committee.

The committee will be presenting its report on federal and state recommendations to the 76th Texas Legislature. Recommendations include: the establishment of an emergency state drought fund; a federal pilot forage insurance program; affordable and more extensive crop insurance from the U.S. Department of Agriculture; and a cost share program for brush control to enhance water resources.

Another recommendation calls for establishing a Drought Management Center in the Texas Agricultural Extension Service. The center would link the Extension Service with the research capabilities of the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station and the total resources of the Texas A&M University System to coordinate programs to effectively handle drought related issues.

"Over the past several months, this committee has reached a consensus on the best legislative and policy actions that can help Texas agriculture prepare for and withstand the next drought," Combs said. "These recommendations are based on input and suggestions made by industry and producer groups as well as advice from each agency represented."

"The report presented to the Texas Legislature will lay the groundwork for a major comprehensive drought bill, similar to the state's first comprehensive water legislation," the commissioner said.



Walker, Texas Rep

By State Representative Gary Walker, Dist. 80

Inauguration Week

The House and Senate gathered Monday to canvas votes cast in the past gubernatorial election to make sure that Governor Bush and Lieutenant Governor Perry were, indeed, the winning candidates. I am pleased to report that they were.

It is always interesting to suppose what might happen if canvassing determined that someone else was the winner. I also find interesting that the legislature determines the winner if canvassing shows a tie vote. More Texas trivia for you: if the person who receives the most votes for governor has died, then the person having the highest number of votes for lieutenant governor shall act as governor until after the next general election, a period of two years. If, for some reason, the governor and lieutenant governor are both unable to take the oath of office, then a joint session of the legislature will elect qualified persons to fill the two offices.

If you'd like to contact me, you might want to address your letters to the Austin address until June. Those sent to the Plains address will be forwarded on to me. My Austin address is: P.O. Box 2910, Austin, Texas 78768-2910. I encourage you to write letters if your issue or problem is complicated in any way. It can be difficult to take accurate information over the phone, and we want to handle you problem correctly. If you're in a hurry with your letter, you can fax it to Austin at (512) 463-1966. Several guidelines will help us serve you faster.

First of all, please put your full address on your letter. Occasionally I get letters from folks who don't put their address on the outside of the envelope or the letter. You also might want to avoid felt tipped pens when addressing the envelope. When they get wet, the addresses are washed away. Sometimes I receive letters that have been chewed up by postal machinery.

If you are writing to me about specific legislation, it would be helpful if you knew the bill number, but any scrap of information can help tremendously. Do you know the author? Do you know if it is a House or Senate bill? Do you know what committee the bill will be heard in? If you don't know any of these pieces of information, we can still track down the legislation. It will just take a little longer. We may have to take phone number and call you back. But we will call you back.

It's important that we keep in touch with each other. Please feel free to contact me!

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