

# Cowboy Country News

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

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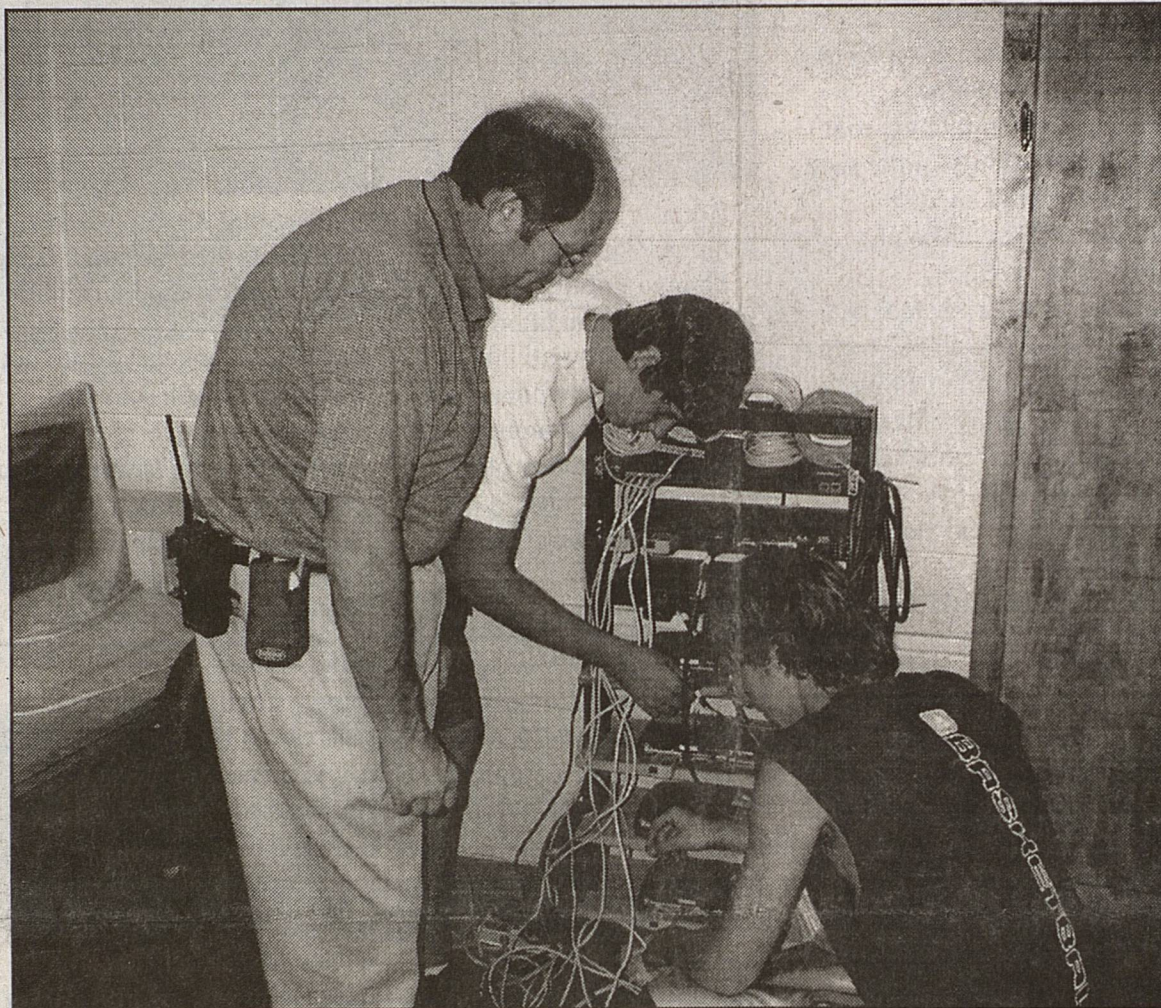


## PHS instructor honored with prestigious teaching assignment

Robert Canon, veteran instructor of the Plains High School prize winning Industrial Arts program, was recently honored with a rather unique teaching assignment. He will be the instructor teaching the Cisco Computer Networking program to 12 specially selected Junior and Senior students from a consortium of regional small schools in Guthrie, Spur, Jayton, Paducah, Matador and Patton Springs. Canon will conduct his classes from the ITV room on the Plains campus which will be video transmitted via the ethernet to the participating schools which all had to earn the approval of the giant Cisco electronic firm.

This pilot program, actually a college student level course, is the only one in the nation offered at the high school level.

Canon reported the class will be aired Monday evenings from 6 to 9 PM, and would consist mainly of lectures and discussions. A three hour Saturday morning session would focus on 'hands-on lab sessions'. Asked how he qualified for the unique position and opportunity, Canon told CCN he had trained four semesters with the



Instructor Robert Canon, left, checks work on networking servers at PISD by students Adam McCravey and Brandon Hise.

Cisco program, and had then passed the Cisco Certified Networking Associates Exam, and had passed the first half of Cisco's Certified Network Professional level training. He added that Cisco also considered the grades of his former

students in his valuation for the current assignment.

Canon will continue to teach the networking class to PHS students. It is very valuable to students graduating here and going to South Plains College to continue their electronic

training. SPC offers 8 semesters of courses in networking, and when enrolled there receive credit for four semesters they have spent here at PHS under Canon's tutelage.

Canon is now networking all electronic servers in the school system

## Plains EDC Holds First Meeting

The recently chartered Plains Economic Development Board held its first meeting at City Hall Wednesday, June 30. Members present included Steve Alldredge, Sandra Stephens, Toni Jones, Debbie Smith, and Elsa Moya. Also attending were City Administrator Ed Hansen and City Attorney Richard Husen.

The first order of business for the committee was election of officers. Alldredge nominated Toni Jones for President, seconded by Elsa Moya. Moya then nominated Sandra Stephens for the Secretary/Treasurer position, and Debbie Smith seconded the nomination. Alldredge nominated Moya for the Vice President position, seconded by Stephens, and all nominations were approved by acclamation.

During the meeting board members reviewed by-laws of other communities EDC organizations, followed by discussion of possible options. The board agreed to further study the by-laws, agree on a final proposal and then submit the proposal to the City Council for their approval.

Ms. Moya made a motion to name Plains State Bank as the official depository for the EDC. When the vote was called, Ms. Smith, an officer and employee of the bank abstained from voting, and the motion was approved by the other four board members.

In future meetings the board will study proposals for development efforts in the city, utilizing the five-cent sales tax increase approved by city voters in the recent special election.

## County Court busy with criminal cases

Eighteen criminal cases were heard in the June 30 and July 1 sessions of County Court, with Judge Dallas Brewer presiding and criminal District Attorney Richard Clark representing the state.

Roberto Ortega Ornelas pled

guilty to possession of less than two ounces marijuana. A 120 day jail sentence was suspended and probated 18 months. He was fined \$350, must pay \$211 court cost, \$250 appointed attorney fees and \$25 time payment fee. He will attend weekly narcotics meetings, complete the drug offender program and pay \$50 monthly supervision fees. Deputy David Bryant was investigating officer and Warren New was his attorney.

Irvan Edward Mata pled guilty to DWI, breath test refused subsequent. He will spend 30 days in jail with credit for one day. Robert Smith, DPS, was investigating officer. Bill Helwig served as his attorney.

Kasi Leigh Mendoza pled guilty to a second DWI, b.t. .091/.093. A one year jail sentence was suspended and probated 24 months. She was fined \$600, must pay \$226 court costs and \$25 time payment fee. She will spend 72 hours in jail, attend weekly AA meetings, complete the DWI repeat offender program, surrender her license 90 days and pay \$50 monthly supervision fees. Investigating officer was Trooper Mark Matlock, and Warren New was her attorney.

Johan Funk Neufeld pled guilty to DWI, breath test refused. He must pay \$326 court costs. 30 days jail time had been met with 67 days served. He was held for the US Border Patrol.

Linda Sanchez pled guilty and

## Trucking companies can be fined for not attending to oil spills

It's easy to just drive off and ignore the oil leaking from a truck, just like some people can throw trash on the highway and not blink an eye.

But major oil leaks, from industry trucks hauling crude, can cause as much of a problem as trash on the highway. In fact, it's even worse, said Carlos Howell, Plains maintenance supervisor, "It's not safe for the motorist and it's costly to clean up," he added.

In Plains and the surrounding area, oil spills are becoming a problem, and TxDOT is asking the public to help curtail this activity.

Most of the time, the operator doesn't even realize what's happening. Trucks transporting crude oil have a vent valve that lets gas out when loading. If the operator forgets to close that valve, pressure begins to build and every time the driver hits the brakes, it blows out the line and the oil dumps on the highway.

"It's much worse during the summer," said Howell, "be-

cause of the heat. The spills have been so bad in the past that the oil was running across the road into the ditch."

There have been a number of large oil spills since the first of the year, Howell explained. "With that slick oil on the road, the potential for accidents increases," he said.

Companies that transport oil need to be conscientious about keeping the valves closed. If a spill does occur, the company should accept responsibility for cleaning it up. A company or operator can be fined up to \$10,000 per violation, according to the Railroad Commission. In addition, the operator could lose their license and all permits.

"If you see a truck losing oil, get the license plate number, and take some pictures if you can," said Howell.

To report an oil spill, call Howell at 806-456-7456 or contact Mark Henkhaus with the Railroad Commission at 432-684-5581.

## Plains Lions Club installs new officers for coming year



At their July 1 meeting new officers were sworn into the Plains Lions Club. David Brunson, a veteran Lions Club member and former City Administrator here and now the Muleshoe City Manager conducted the ceremonies. Toni Jones replaces Vicki Blundell as the new president. Karen Bearden assumed the Vice-President position, Linda Wall will remain the club Secretary-Treasurer. Gary Walker continues as the Tail Twister, and T.J. Miller will continue as Lion Tamer. Ed Hansen and Vaughn Culwell will serve as one year club directors, while Melba Crutcher and Johnnie Fitzgerald will hold the director position for two years. Special guests at the meeting were Pierre (Pete) St. Romain, the only surviving charter member of the club, accompanied by his wife Mary Jo. The Plains Lions Club meets at 12 noon the first and third Thursday of each month, and a directors meeting is held each third Thursday at 7 AM in Johnnie's Restaurant.



## Farm Service Agency Announces Managed CRP Haying And Grazing

Cutting hay and grazing livestock on land enrolled in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Conservation Reserve Program, in the absence of a weather-related emergency, is now an option for Texas producers.

Gary Six, County Executive Director for the Yoakum County Farm Service Agency, announced today that managed haying and grazing is allowed on CRP lands. Haying is approved in Texas July 2 through September 29 and grazing is approved beginning July 2 and ending October 29, 2004. The starting date for both haying and grazing is tied to the end of the primary nesting and brood rearing season in the state. Prior to the 2002 Farm Bill, commercial use of CRP land was generally prohibited except for weather-related emergencies such as droughts.

To take advantage of the haying and grazing options, producers must modify existing conservation plans for the CRP average to include managed haying and grazing practices. The plans must be developed in conjunction with USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) or one of its technical service providers.

Producers must also agree to certain terms and conditions, including signing an agreement to re-establish, at the producer's own cost, any cover destroyed or damaged as a result of haying or grazing and to re-

move all hay within 10 days of being notified that the managed haying and grazing season has ended.

Six emphasized that for acreage that is hayed or grazed, annual rental payments producers receive for enrolling land into CRP will be reduced by 25 percent.

Under this enhanced CRP provision, producers can cut hay or graze livestock on a given acre no more than once every three years after the vegetative cover is fully established. An area hayed or grazed this year, for example, may not be hayed or grazed again until 2007. CRP participants can choose to hay or graze their entire CRP acreage in the first year, or only a portion of their CRP acreage each year. Producers may not harvest hay and graze livestock on the same land in the same year.

"The managed haying and grazing option provides producers latitude when making land management decisions regarding their operations. The periodic disturbance of vegetative cover under managed haying and grazing will increase the diversity and quality of the cover and improve wildlife benefits," said Six.

For additional eligibility criteria and information regarding CRP Managed Haying and Grazing, contact the Yoakum County FSA office at 806-456-2132 or visit the USDA Web site at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov>.

## Grassland Reserve Program Application

Owners and operators of grassland including prairie, improved pastureland, or native rangeland now have the opportunity to enroll their lands in the Grassland Reserve Program (GRP). GRP is a voluntary program that restores or protects these lands while maintaining their use as grazing lands. GRP is one of the conservation programs of the 2002 Farm Bill and is administered by USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and the Farm Service Agency (FSA). Applications for GRP are now being accepted at the local USDA Service Center at either the NRCS or FSA office. The last day for submitting an application for this year's funding is July 23, 2004.

The program emphasizes support for grazing operations, plant and animal biodiversity, and grasslands under the greatest threat of conservation. The minimum amount of eligible land for enrollment is 40 acres.

Enrollment options are: Permanent and 30 year easements; 10 year, 15 year, 20 year, or 30 year rental agreements. Restoration agreements are available in conjunction with easements or rental agreements to provide cost share for needed conservation practices.

Allowable activities include common grazing practices, haying, mowing, or harvesting for seed. Fire rehabilitation and the construction of firebreaks and fences are also allowed.

Prohibited activities are the production of crops, fruit trees, and vineyards that require breaking the soil surface. Also prohibited are any other activities that would disturb the surface of the land except those permitted by an NRCS approved conservation plan.

For more information or to make an application, contact the local office of NRCS or FSA located in the USDA Service Center.



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### On The Level

with Donald Haley  
USDA/NRCS

Well...it's always good when things work out right.

Take the 112 acres that Claude Addison treated for sage and shinnery control for example.

Working with the USDA - NRCS through his EQIP (Environmental Quality Incentives Program) contract, these acres just south of Plains were aerielly treated (pellet form) in April with ¼ pound A.I. of Tebuthiuron.

These acres had a primary canopy cover mixture of sand shinnery and sand sage that was sapping the life out of the native grasses that were trying to hang on.

Thanks to some good April rains that carried the chemical down into the root zone, the majority of the sage is already dead and the shinnery is not far behind.

With this noxious competition eliminated, and with a little help from Mother Nature in the form of timely rains, this pasture will return to the productive native range that it once was.

By this time next year, where there was predominately sage and



Aerially treated this past April, this Sand Shinnery was sapping the life from the native range. With the shinnery and sage controlled and with common-sense management and timely rainfall, these rangeland acres will soon return to their productive and native grassland condition.

shinnery, there will be knee-high sidecoats gramma, sand bluestem, blue gramma, sand dropseed and many other native grass species.

Claude Addison is pleased with the results.

I think it proves again that

our native rangeland does not have to be brush-covered and unproductive.

With effective treatment and subsequent common-sense management, it can be brought back to productive and sustainable life again.

And like Claude and I both felt when we looked out across this pasture coming to productive life again... it sure feels good when things work out right....

### From Page 1, "COURT"

adjudication of guilt deferred in an assault causes bodily injury/family member. She will be under community supervision 12 months, must pay \$211 court costs, serve 80 hours community service, pay \$50 monthly supervision fees and complete the batterers prevention program. Investigating officer was Karen Hobbs, Denver City Police.

Joshua Jermaine Barrientes pled guilty to possession of less than two ounces marijuana. He was fined \$250, must pay \$211 court costs and \$250 appointed attorney fees. He must attend weekly narcotics meetings, complete the TAIP program and serve 24 hours community service. Investigating officer was Eddie Bishop, D.C. Police, and Bill Helwig was his attorney.

Mary Crider Connally pled guilty to possession of less than two ounces marijuana. A 60 day jail sentence was suspended and probated 12 months. She must pay \$211 court costs, a \$250 fine and \$140 restitution to DPS. She must attend weekly narcotics meetings, serve 24 hours community service, surrender her license 180 days, complete the drug offender education program and pay \$50 monthly supervision fees. Antonio de la Cruz, Drug Task Force, was investigating officer.

Ramiro Casmiro pled guilty to a first DWI. A 120 day jail sentence was suspended and probated 12 months. He was fined \$500, must pay \$226 court costs, \$250 appointed attorney

fees and \$25 time payment fee. He will serve 72 hours in jail with credit for 22.5 hours served. He will complete the DWI first offender program and weekly AA meetings. Investigating officer was Trooper Carmen Medrano, and Bill Helwig was his attorney.

David Joe Escobar pled guilty to racing on a highway. He was fined \$100 and must pay \$241 court costs. Trooper Medrano was investigating officer and Bill Helwig was his attorney.

Tanya Nicole Ybarra pled guilty to driving while license suspended. She was fined \$100 and must pay \$241 court costs.

Danny Joseph Rey Jr. pled guilty to possession of less than two ounces marijuana. He was fined \$350, must pay \$211 court costs and \$140 restitution to DPS. He will serve 24 hours community supervision, complete the TAIP program, serve 24 hours in jail with credit for 14 served, and pay \$50 monthly supervision fees. Investigating officer was Deputy David Bryant.

Brandon Edward Aaron pled guilty to failure to appear. He must pay \$255 court costs and \$100 fine.

Trevor Glen Coon pled guilty to DWI/open container. A 120 day jail sentence was suspended and probated 12 months. He was fined \$500, must pay \$326 and \$25 time payment fee. He will spend 8 days in jail with credit for one day, must attend weekly AA meetings, complete the first offender program and pay \$50 monthly supervision fees. Trooper Medrano was investi-

gating officer.

Jessica Castillo pled guilty to assault causes bodily injury. A 180 day jail sentence was suspended and probated 12 months. She must complete the Batterer Prevention program, pay \$59 monthly supervision fees and serve 80 hours community service.

Jose Ruben Moreno pled guilty to two charges of bail jumping and failure to appear. He was fined \$100 on both, and must pay \$256 court costs on both. He also pleaded guilty to driving while license suspended, enhanced. He was fined \$100 and will pay \$241 court costs. He also pled guilty to operating a motor vehicle financial responsibility enhanced. He must again pay \$241 court costs and was fined \$100. Investigating officer was Trooper Robert Smith.

## JP Court Review

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

Cases filed:

80 traffic, 2 public intoxication, 1 Texas Comptroller citation.  
Bonds Set:  
No valid driver license- \$500  
Purchase alcohol for minor- \$500  
Fail to maintain financial responsibility- \$500  
Driving under influence alcohol-\$500  
Operate vehicle with unapproved suncreening device-\$500  
Tampering with government records- \$2500  
Criminal mischief- \$500  
Criminal mischief- \$1500  
No valid trip permit- \$500  
Engage in organized criminal activity- \$2500  
Fugitive from justice- Held for transport  
Failure to appear theft by check- \$1500  
Burglary of building- \$2500  
Theft over \$20/under \$500-\$500  
Assault causes bodily injury- \$1500  
Motion to revoke probation- Bond denied  
Assault causing bodily injury/family violence/enhanced-\$5000

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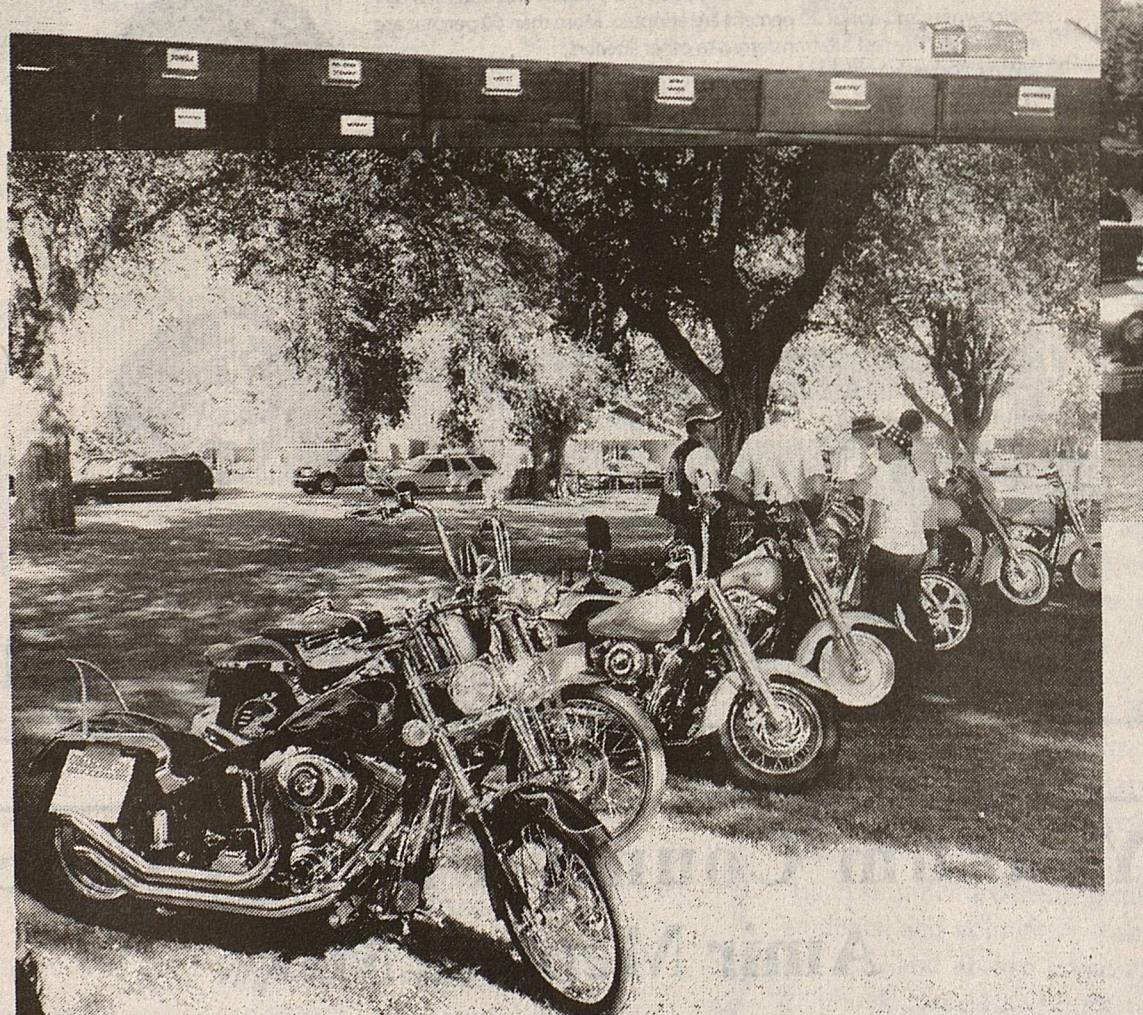
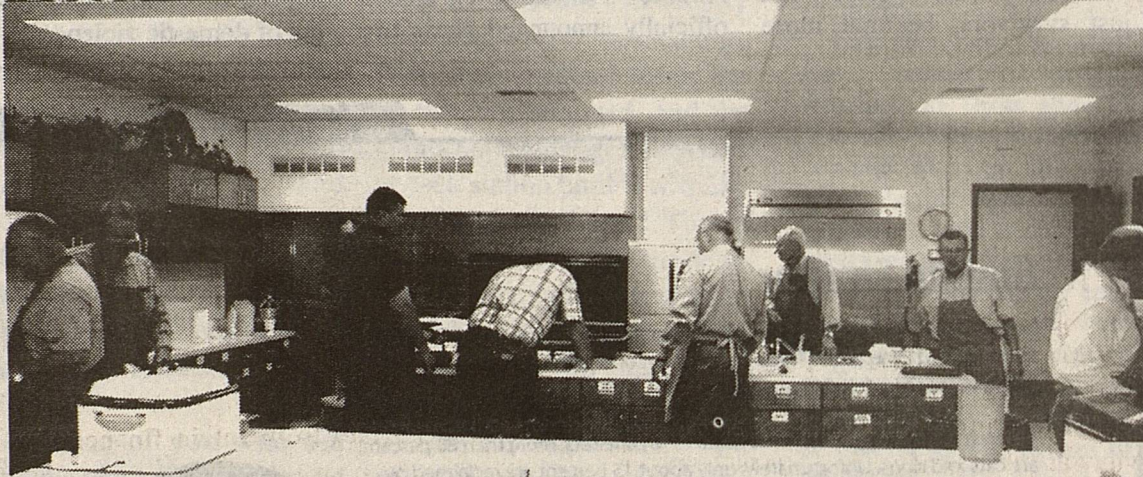
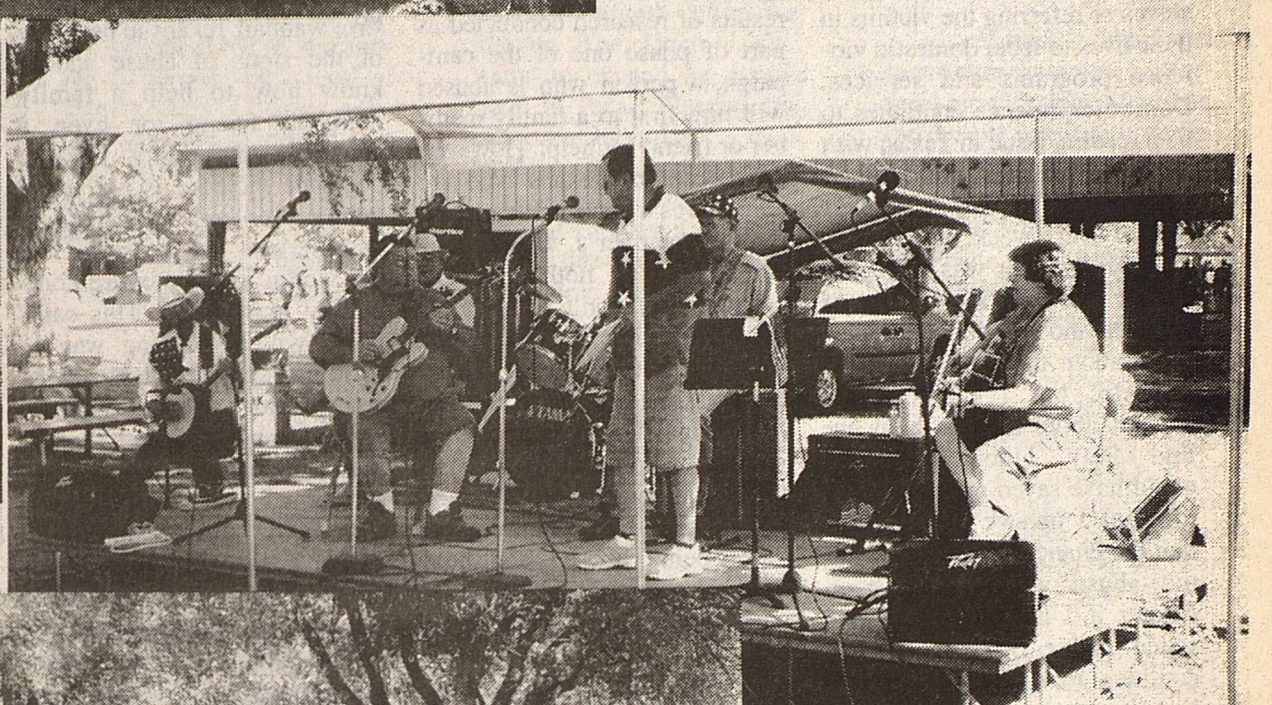
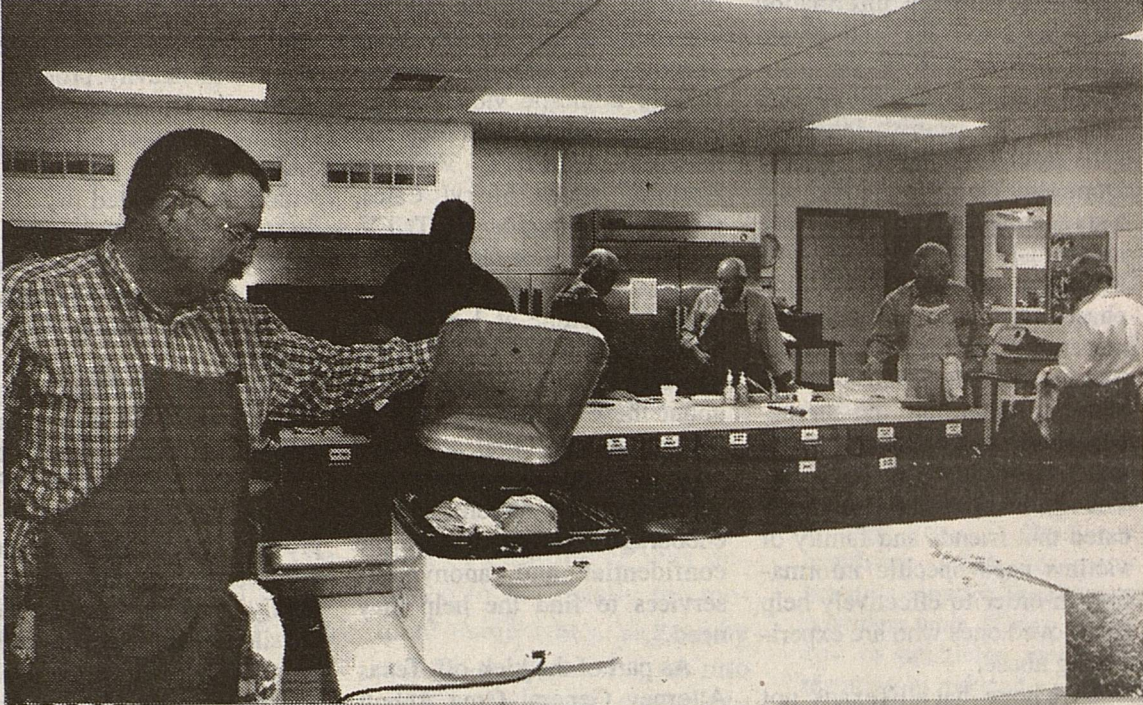
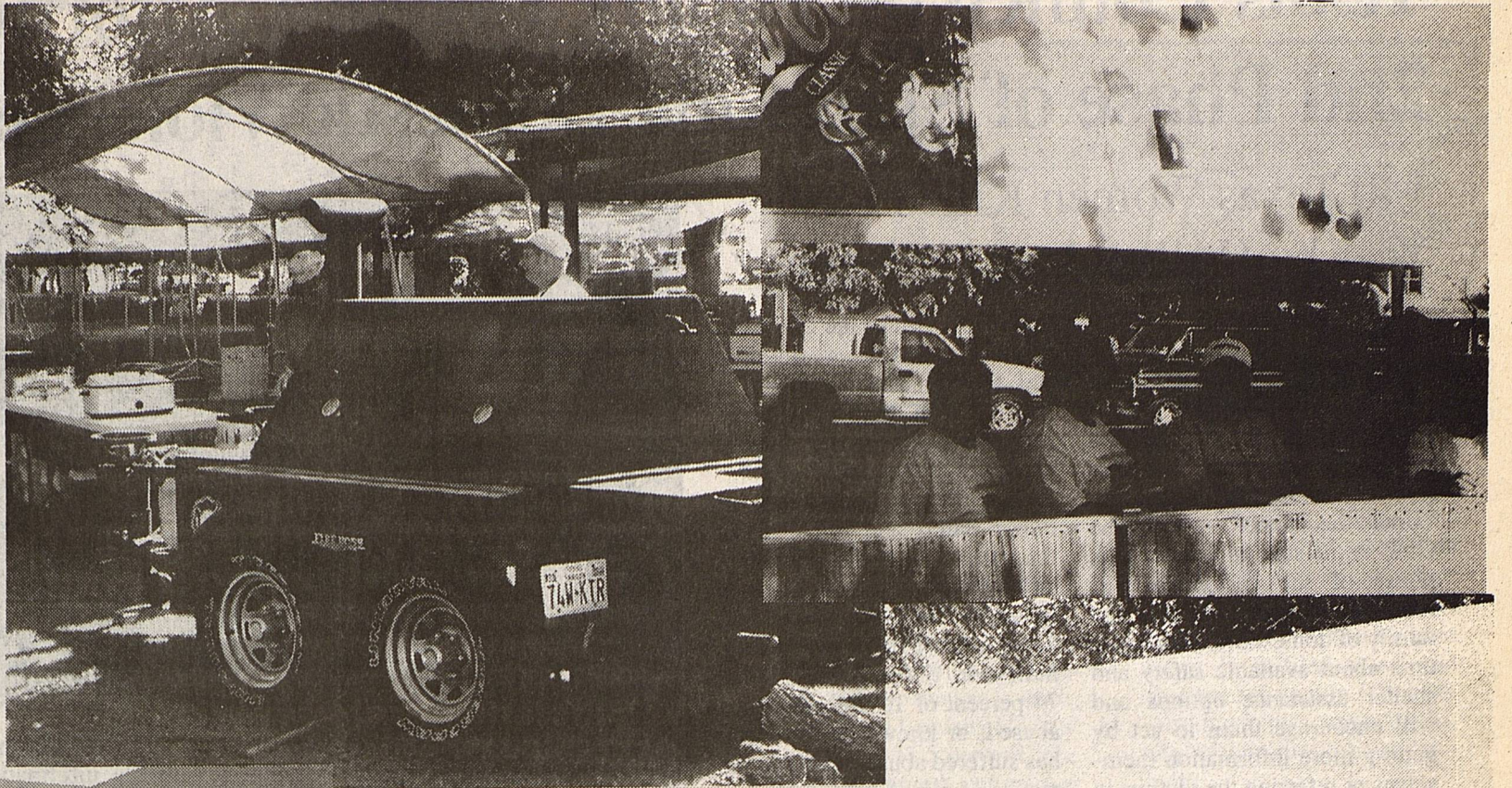
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**Independence Day 2004 Scenes**

Denver City celebrated the 4th with its traditional outing in Morehead Park, featuring good food, a huge classic car show, live music, cow patty bingo, games and rides for the kids, fireworks at the football field that night, and of course, food, food and more food. Plains was a bit more subdued, with a few private parties at home and in the park, and the Baptist Men's Sunday morning breakfast



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# Texas Council on Family Violence, Attorney General Launch 2nd Phase of Statewide Domestic Violence Awareness Campaign

## 140 Texas Women Killed Last Year by Husbands or Partners

DALLAS (June 29, 2004) – Texas Council on Family Violence (TCFV) and Texas Attorney General Greg Abbott today kicked-off the second phase of its highly effective public awareness campaign, "Break the Silence — Make the Call" in the state of Texas. This phase of the campaign will focus on educating friends and family of domestic violence victims about available safety and shelter assistance options and will encourage them to act by getting more information themselves or referring the victims in their lives to local domestic violence programs and services. Domestic violence continues to be a leading issue in Texas, with research revealing more than two women are killed by their partner every week.

"My daughter was murdered by her husband after years of physical and emotional abuse. I knew about the abuse and tried to help, but I didn't know enough about how to help her find safety. I don't know if I could have saved my daughter's life, but I believe in my heart that the chances of her escaping the abuse would have been greater if I had known more," stated Jackie Bolden. "I will continue to speak out on this issue as a part of TCFV's Break

the Silence, Make the Call campaign because I believe my story and the information TCFV is sharing with family members and friends of domestic violence victims will save lives."

The Texas Department of Public Safety and TCFV report that there were 140 women killed by acts of family violence in Texas last year alone, and that's just the tip of the iceberg. Statewide research shows that 74 percent of Texans have been abused, or know someone who has suffered abuse. Based on the results of research conducted as part of phase one of the campaign, a person who is abused will turn first to a family member or friend for help. However, 35 percent of Texans who are themselves a victim or learn of a family member's violent circumstances do nothing, either because they don't realize how they can find help or they don't want to get involved. These findings indicate that educating friends and family members of victims of domestic violence is vital to building a well-informed community that can support those being abused and hold those who are hurting their partners accountable for their behavior.

"Many victims of domestic violence suffer silently each day,



Texas Council on Family Violence and the Office of the Attorney General launch second phase of statewide domestic violence public awareness campaign, "Break the Silence - Make the Call," helping friends and family of victims save lives. Thomasina Olaniyi-Oke recounts her story of abuse and how her loved ones intervened to save her life as Attorney General Greg Abbott, TCFV Executive Director Sheryl Cates and Jackie Bolden, mother of a domestic violence homicide victim, look on.

alone and afraid," said Greg Abbott, Texas Attorney General. "We want all Texans to be aware of the signs of abuse and to know how to help a family member, friend, or even a coworker find safety, because domestic violence is not just a family problem, it is a crime with serious repercussions that the victim and the entire community must face. This campaign will go a long way in building Texas communities that are informed about domestic violence and equipped to take action in support of loved ones suffering abuse."

In 2002, with the aid of a \$2 million grant from the Office of the Attorney General, TCFV launched an unprecedented 16-month, bilingual public awareness campaign called "Break the Silence — Make the Call,"

empowering domestic violence survivors with the information they need to seek and obtain help. Phase one of the campaign resulted in a 69 percent increase in English-language calls from Texas to the National Domestic Violence Hotline and a staggering 93 percent increase in Spanish-language calls in its inaugural month. The first phase also included extensive research via a statewide poll and focus groups with survivors of abuse to determine the knowledge base and direct impact of domestic violence in our state. The results of this research indicated that friends and family of victims need specific information in order to effectively help their loved ones who are experiencing abuse.

"We hope that all Texans, not just survivors, become more

informed about the impact of domestic violence on all our communities and the life-saving programs and services available to help domestic violence victims find safety, including the National Domestic Violence Hotline," stated Sheryl Cates, Executive Director of TCFV. "When a friend or family member of a person living with abuse calls the Hotline at 1-800-799-SAFE or TTY 800-787-3224, we can offer helpful information about these available programs and services, as well as advice on how to approach a friend privately about her options, and we encourage everyone to use these confidential and anonymous services to find the help they need."

As part of the kick-off, Texas Attorney General Greg Abbott officially announced phase two

of TCFV's statewide "Break the Silence — Make the Call" campaign at press conferences in Houston, Dallas and Austin. The fully bilingual extension of the campaign will ensure that the awareness efforts of the first phase have the basis and longevity needed to have a significant impact on victim safety, and will extend awareness efforts and education to friends and family.

Information will include how to recognize possible signs of abuse, what Texans should know about domestic violence, what friends and family can do to help loved ones in abusive relationships and how to contact local domestic violence programs and services. The campaign will heavily promote the National Domestic Violence Hotline number, 1-800-799-SAFE or TTY 800-787-3224, which is operated by TCFV through television, radio and print public service announcements, statewide media relations and wide distribution of printed materials.

"Domestic violence hurts not only victims, but also children and other loved ones in their lives," Mr. Abbott said. "This public awareness campaign will provide crucial information on domestic violence to friends and family, guiding them to 'break the silence and make the call' on behalf of a loved one experiencing the isolation, fear and trauma of domestic violence."

## Texas Heritage Trails delegation tours 'Bonus Shack', seeks historic information



A seven person delegation representing the Texas Historical Commission's Heritage Trails program called on Plains last week, seeking information on the town and county to possibly record in brochures describing the Texas Plains Heritage Trail. The delegation contacted local Tsa Mo Ga members who arranged a tour of their Bonus Shack Museum, and other interested citizens offering information which could be used in the tourism brochures.

### Texas at a Glance

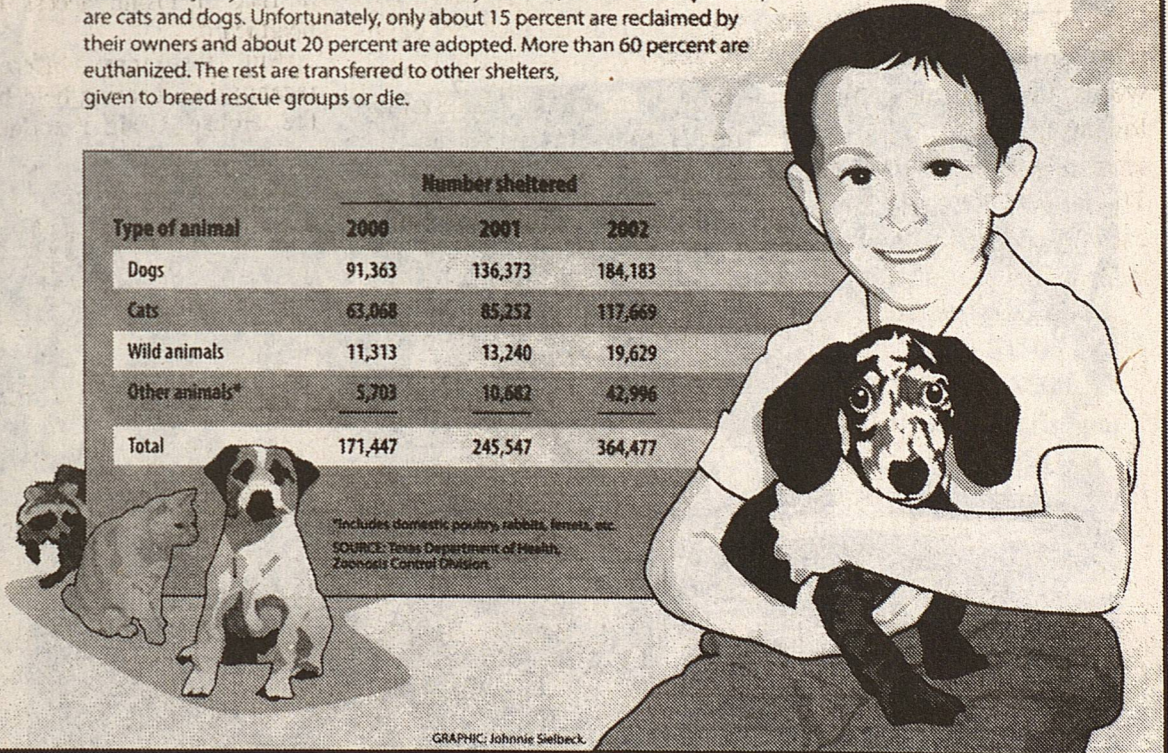
#### Gimme Shelter

In 2002, 80 animal shelter agencies in Texas cared for more than 360,000 animals, according to the Texas Department of Health's Zoonosis Control Division. That's up from 67 agencies in 2001 and 32 agencies in 2000.

The vast majority of the animals cared for by shelters, more than 80 percent, are cats and dogs. Unfortunately, only about 15 percent are reclaimed by their owners and about 20 percent are adopted. More than 60 percent are euthanized. The rest are transferred to other shelters, given to breed rescue groups or die.

Type of animal	Number sheltered		
	2000	2001	2002
Dogs	91,363	136,373	184,183
Cats	63,068	85,252	117,669
Wild animals	11,313	13,240	19,629
Other animals*	5,703	10,682	42,996
<b>Total</b>	<b>171,447</b>	<b>245,547</b>	<b>364,477</b>

\*Includes domestic poultry, rabbits, ferrets, etc.  
SOURCE: Texas Department of Health, Zoonosis Control Division.



GRAPHIC: Johnnie Sietbeck

**West Texas Medical Center**  
announces  
*Extended Clinic Hours*

**8 A.M. UNTIL 12 NOON**

EVERY SATURDAY

Larry Boyd, M.D., Christopher Colton, M.D., Bodindr Thepchalni, M.D., Andria Carter, PA-C and Kara Wilson, PA-C are here to serve your medical needs.

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# Lifelines & Styles

## Senior Citizens Corner

We welcome our new Site Director to the Senior Center Staff this week. Rosa Lopez is her name. Come on down and get acquainted with her. We will be introducing her by way of a biographical sketch in this column within a week or two.

Visitors this week included Barbara Vernon from central Texas; Jean Upton and Dorothy Konczak who came as guests of Jay Noble; and Louise Welch, who came reporting a wonderful trip to Hawaii this month.

Edith Clements' family treated everyone to a serving of chocolate birthday cake on Friday in honor of her eighty-ninth birthday. Congratulations, Edith!

There are some new desks being assembled in the office this week. They look wonderful and the office staff is excited and ready to put them to use. We thank the men from the Trinity Baptist Home for Men for taking care of this project for us.

Reports came in that the two Billy's (O'Neal and McDonnell) were the winners in the ladies' pool playing competition on Monday. Tuesday's winners of the '42' tournament were again Ribble and Ken White.

For those of you who are Scrabble players, or for anyone who enjoys working with words, take a peak at the following three examples of letter arrangements. Number one: The word is Presbyterian, you can rearrange the letters to read: Best In Prayer. An appropriate

one foe these days might be George Bush, which reads when rearranged He Bugs Gore. Or stop a moment to consider that Eleven Plus Two when rearranged reads Twelve Plus One!

A cool breeze swept over the picnic tables last Friday as we sat with others awaiting that special moment! It has been many moons since the inception of the dream of a rubber plant located in our town. On that day it became a reality! All of the glistening equipment awaited the special moment! Several different 'rubber plant guides' led the interested public through the plant while explaining what each different area of equipment was designed to do. Finally the moment came when, engine by engine, the plant was set into motion. We stood breathlessly watching huge tires change from their original form; the steel being removed; and the chunks of rubber grow smaller at each station until it was like face powder at the end. This in itself is a miracle, but the news that already orders have been placed for the product made this day a 'dream come true.' How exciting to witness this success for Denver City! We congratulate those who have faithfully seen this project through all of the disappointments and setbacks to this final victory of today!

Thought for today: "Consciousness is that annoying time between naps."

## Healthcare market improving for doctors and patients

All across Texas there are signs that passage of Proposition 12 and House Bill 4 are delivering on the promise of healing our healthcare delivery system. Just six months have passed since Texans passed Prop. 12, and early indications offered in testimony recently before the House Civil Practices Committee are remarkably positive. The goal of increasing access to healthcare is being realized.



State Rep. Joe Nixon

Both Prop. 12 and its underlying legislation, HB4, were designed to avert a growing crisis in the Texas healthcare system. Too many lawsuits against healthcare providers were driving up the cost of practicing medicine, resulting in reduced access to healthcare.

Last year, only four medical liability insurers remained in Texas after 13 insurers fled a state they claimed was too litigious. Many higher risk medical specialists, such as neurosurgeons and obstetricians, were leaving Texas or simply ending their practices here because of the high cost of malpractice insurance. In short, too many Texans were at risk of losing access to healthcare.

But testimony offered recently in a hearing held by the House Civil Practices

Committee shows that the healing process for our healthcare system has begun.

Christus Health, a not-for-profit Catholic health system with hospitals throughout Texas, is projecting a \$20 million savings on its liability costs this year. Christus has earmarked these savings for patient services, expanding its already high level of charity care. Christus officials say the \$20 million savings is a direct result of recently passed lawsuit reforms.

An Ob-Gyn group in Fredericksburg announced it would again deliver babies. The three doctors had stopped the obstetrical portion of their practice due to an inability to pay the malpractice premiums for that portion of their medical practice. Expectant mothers in that area of Texas no longer will have to travel to San Antonio for prenatal care and to deliver their babies.

The two neurosurgeons in Bryan will continue their practice in that community. These were the only neurosurgeons in Brazos County. They had already announced their departure, but because of the relief in premium expense, they will stay.

Four new anesthesiologists have agreed to move to Beaumont. Four nursing homes, two in Austin and two in San Antonio, are able to continue to provide a home and healthcare to 600 elderly Texans.

In short, the lawsuit momentum against healthcare providers has stopped

and the early signs are it is turning around.

The state's largest carrier, Texas Medical Liability Trust, lowered its rates on January 1, 2004, by 12 percent and a smaller carrier, Continental Casualty Co., cut its rates by 11.5 percent. The nation's largest physician insurer, The Doctors Co., wants to expand its market share in Texas. Planned rate increases by other carriers have been put on hold.

Essentially, every doctor in Texas is either paying less malpractice premiums today or avoiding the pre-Prop. 12 scheduled increase in premiums. Texas Insurance Commissioner Jose Montemayor stated this was clear evidence of the beginning of a downward trend.

Not only have rates begun to stabilize but 10 new insurance carriers have applied to enter the Texas medical liability market. That's additional good news for doctors desperate for rate relief and a reversal of the trend that forced 13 of 17 medical liability underwriters from Texas.

New competition will have the effect of driving prices down. With more choices and lower prices, healthcare providers will benefit from this healthier and more competitive malpractice insurance market. This has and will continue to translate directly into increased access to healthcare for Texans.

The president-elect of the Texas Trial Lawyers Association stated it is unlikely that the volume of

future lawsuits will ever exceed one-half to two-thirds of pre-reform levels.

This is an indication that many past suits should have never been filed at all and that the reforms in HB 4 are working to discourage the filing of non-meritorious lawsuits.

In contrast, Oklahoma doctors are seeing their insurance rates double this year; and despite passing comparatively watered-down reforms in Florida, its physicians are being hit with a 50 percent rate hike. Thankfully, this is not the story in Texas.

In Texas, happily, the early news is very good. The full effects of the reforms passed by the Legislature and approved by the voters have not yet been realized. It is early. The huge spike in the number of suits filed before the reforms became law has not worked its way through the system.

Disturbingly, one carrier is trying to bypass the increased regulatory supervision of the Texas insurance commissioner due to a federal law loophole. Continued monitoring is needed to ensure that the enacted legal reforms translate into increased access to healthcare. Nonetheless, the early signs are that the Texas healthcare system is recovering and the prognosis is good. That's good for doctors, hospitals and other healthcare providers and it's good news for the people of Texas.

State Rep. Joe Nixon, R-Houston, sponsored HB 4.

## Landmark Hosts Archaeology Family Day On July 10

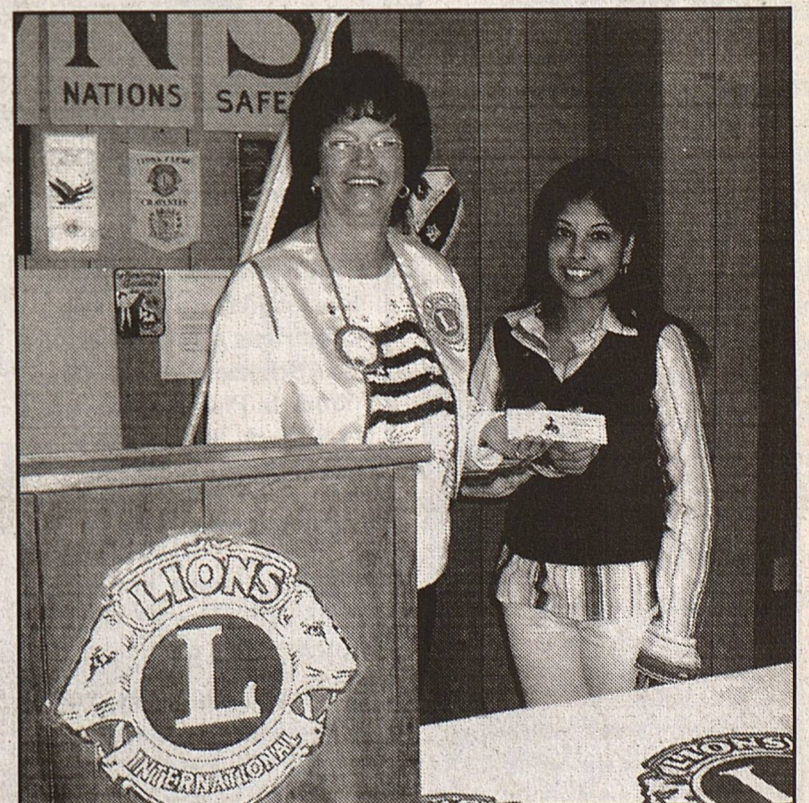
Lubbock Lake Landmark will host Archaeology Family Day on Saturday July, 10, from 10 am. to 4 pm. The event includes behind the scenes guided tours of the archaeological excavations and research facilities at 10:30 and 11:30 am, and 1:30 and 2:30 pm. Hands on family activities include spear throwing, pottery puzzles, and a simulated excavation.

Each summer archaeologists, students, and volunteers from the U.S. and abroad come to Lubbock Lake Landmark to participate in its annual Summer Field Research Program. For over 65 years archaeologists have probed the earth for clues to the ancient past at Lubbock Lake Landmark. Although guided and self-guided tours of the sites and exhibitions are available throughout the year, the summer is a wonderful time for the community to visit the Landmark and see the excavations in progress. During the excavation season tours become more intensive and interactive. Interaction is not only between the tour guide and visitor, but also the excavators and visitor. The visitor has an extraordinary opportunity to see "archaeology in action," a much more

exciting and memorable experience than the usual tour. Visitors can view what is being unearthed and learn how environmental and culture and time period under investigation.

Once the site of an ancient, spring fed watering hole, Lubbock Lake has produced evidence of an unbroken human presence spanning 12,000 years. One of the few placed in North America that reveals this continuous occupation, the site has yielded early tools and weapons, as well as the remains of many extinct animals, including mammoths, ancient camels, two types of ancient horses, ancient bison, giant short faced bears, and giant armadillos. The site was discovered in 1936 as the city of Lubbock attempted to revive the underground springs. Excavations began in 1939, and are conducted annually from June to August. The Museum of Texas Tech University is responsible for the preservation, research, and interpretation of the Landmark.

Admission to the Lubbock Lake Landmark, is FREE OF CHARGE. Please call (806) 742-1116 or e mail lubbock.lake@ttu.edu for additional information.



Recently elected Lions Club President Toni Jones purchases tickets for the annual Rodeo Saddle or \$500 cash drawing from Lions Club Queen Candidate Daniela Lazos. Skyler Keese, Roping Club Candidate, and Priscilla Mares, Chamber of Commerce Candidate, will be featured in future editions of CCN.

**Listen To Our Hearts**  
**Hillside Church Of Christ**  
**Summer Series 2004**  
**A Study From The Psalms**  
**Every Wednesday Evening**  
**At 7:00 pm.**

**Dennis Wilson June 30**  
**Jeff Procter July 7**  
**Charles Robertson July 14**  
**Mike McDonald July 21**  
**Randall Carr July 28**  
**Rudy Munoz August 4**  
**James Kinnard August 11**  
**Ray Young August 18**  
**Virgil Webb August 25**

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Plains, Texas

Sunday School

9:30 A.M.

Morning Worship

10:45 A.M.

Evening Program

6:00 P.M.



# From The Hack

An interesting Fourth of July which turned out better than I expected and probably deserved. It started Sunday morning at 7 AM when I joined a dozen or so other stumbling, fumbling Baptist men who had been conned into volunteering to cook breakfast for the entire congregation. And this was not just a toast/jelly/coffee thing. It featured the whole shmear, bacon, scrambled eggs, two varieties of pancakes, pork sausage, even some deer and antelope sausage, which the cooks totally devoured before the other stuff was half-done. There was naturally male confusion in the huge kitchen, enough so that one worker whispered to me, "I hate to say it, but we need at least one female boss who knows at least which side of an egg you're supposed to crack, and how done is a done pancake." Not wanting to be burned at the stake, I whispered my agreement, but it did turn out OK, even if the school business manager did consume 93 percent of the deer/antelope stuff.

Very puzzling.....  
If you try to fail, and succeed, which have you done?  
Is it actually possible to have a civil war?  
Why is it when you open a can of evaporated milk it's full?  
Does the reverse side have a reverse side?  
How much deeper would the ocean be if sponges didn't grow in it?  
If quitters never win and winners never quit, what idiot came up with "Quit while you're ahead?"

Dear Lubbock Avalanche-Journal, A hearty BOO on your July 6 editorial column entitled Please Be Civil!, the gist of which is your condemnation of foul language, in particular that recently from Veep Dick Cheney. No, I am not condoning an occasional X!#^\*+XX, not even a slipped XX+^\*#!X. And yes, I confess, I have been guilty of a slip of an evil tongue a time or two, in fact quite frequently on the golf course.

Yes, I know, a public figure with such stature as the Vice Pres of the USA should probably be a bit more circumspect, but then I recall the tales told about Nixon's language... and LBJ's....and John Kennedy's.... and Harry Truman's. But public notables are not the sole focus of my being a bit ticked off (notice how I cleverly cleaned that phrase up?). No, it is your reference to four letter words used by people "cussing like a sailor."

Hey, A-J, do you think sailors invented four letter word cussing? I will wager four letter naughty words were around before the first boat was invented. I would also wager old Noah, the truly famous sailor, used a few of them herding all those beasts on the jillion cubit thing before the rain came.

And besides, how about the other branches of our military? You think a marine, especially one with a bit of alcohol on his breath, speaks Sunday school English? How about an army paratrooper? I can even recall a coast guard guy or two familiar with very naughty words. Now I have bravely defended us present day and ex-sailors, what was really ironic about your editorial was at the very bottom of the page, directly under your opinion about cussing, was a cartoon showing a golfer swinging his club, with the little balloon holding a string of obscenities, and his playing partner in the back ground is saying, "Nice shot of profanities!" Make your minds up, A-J!

**\*FOR SALE\***  
**1999 Chev. Silverado 1/2 ton, SWB pickup. Power, air, cruise, airbags, electric seats and windows, split rear window, radio/CD, very clean. 51,300 actual miles, almost all on pavement. See at 1205 Copeland, Plains, call Gary Dyer, 806-456-8451**

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Bass Cat Pantera II DC 19 ft. bass boat, w/200hp Johnson Motor, tandem axle trailer, Troll Motor, 2 new trolling batteries, 2 steel props, 3 fish finders, hydraulic steering, jack plate, tilt and trim, and more. Stored indoors. Very clean like new condition, low hours. 806-456-7121 or 806-456-9001

**Notice To All Persons Having Claims Against The Estate Of Jimmie Catherine Bayer, Deceased**  
Notice is now given that original Letters Testamentary for the Estate of **Jimmie Catherine Bayer** were issued on June 28, 2004, in Cause No. 1455, pending in the County Court of Yoakum County, Texas to:  
**Keith Bayer**  
The residence of such Executor and where claims may be presented is as follows:  
**Keith Bayer**  
P.O. Box 777  
Plains, Texas 79355  
All persons having claims against this Estate which is currently being administered are required to present them within four (4) months after the date of the receipt of this notice and in the manner prescribed by law or the claim will be barred by the general statutes of limitation.  
Dated: June 28, 2004.  
**Warren New**  
Warren New, Attorney for the Estate  
P.O. Box 670, Denver City, Texas 79323  
Phone: (806) 592-2129  
Fax: (806) 592-7733

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# Yoakum County In - Trust Property Sale

The following properties have been acquired by the Yoakum County Taxing Entities thru foreclosure of an ad valorem tax lien.

Each of the properties will be subject to a minimum bid required as indicated below. These properties will be sold subject to any existing redemption rights.

If interested in purchasing this property, you may submit a written bid to County Judge Dallas Brewer's office, Ave G & Cowboy Way, P.O. Box 456, Plains, Texas 79355.

Bids are due by 4:00 pm, Friday, July 16th. Bids will be approved in Commissioner's Court, Monday, July 19th.

Previous Owner	Legal Description
Ignacio Alvarez Minimum Bid-\$1771.81	E82' of S93.4'E/2 Blk 52, OT Plains
Howard Anderson Minimum Bid-\$350.00	Lt 1-2, Blk 2, OT-Allred
Howard Anderson Minimum Bid-\$180.00	Lt 19, Blk 3, OT-Allred
Howard Anderson Minimum Bid-\$700.00	Lt 11-12, Blk 9, OT-Allred
Roy Bennett Minimum Bid-\$2,140.00	Lt 40, Blk 26, South Addn-D. City
Trina Connell Minimum Bid-\$12,932.17	Lt 16-17, Blk 42, OT-D. City
Jack Cummings Minimum Bid-\$6,619.17	Lt 25, Blk 20, South Addn-D. City
James C. Johnson Minimum Bid-\$5,650.86	E 50' Lt 20-24, Blk 44, North Addn-D. City
Carl E Joiner, Jr Minimum Bid-\$3,788.47	Lt 13-16, Blk 42, South Addn-D. City
Carl E Joiner, Jr Minimum Bid-\$8,121.31	Lt 12-16, Blk 30, South Addn-D. City
James R Long Minimum Bid-\$3,030.04	.42AC Tr 14, Mead Tr, Sec 894
Jose-Maria Mireles Minimum Bid-\$8,441.00	Lt 35, E/2 Lt 34, Newman, D. City
W.R. McInturff Minimum Bid-\$8,761.20	Lt 14-18, Blk 26, OT-D. City
Charles Murph Minimum Bid-\$3,304.29	W/2 Lt 1, Blk 128, OT-Plains
Cleo Newman Minimum Bid-\$250.00	Lt 118, Newman, D. City
John Martin Power Minimum Bid-\$15,497.83	Lt 13-16, Blk 25, South Addn, D. City
T. R. Ratler Minimum Bid-\$650.00	Lt 7, Blk 66, OT-Plains
Johnny Richardson Minimum Bid-\$5295.04	NE 10AC SE/4, Sec 696
Jeanie Savage Minimum Bid-\$4,363.88	LT 1-5, E2' Lt 6, Blk 16 South Addn-D. City
Harry D Spencer Minimum Bid-\$3050.00	S 5' Lt 4, Lt 5, Blk 38, OT D. City
Paul S. Wehrly ET AL Minimum Bid-\$6,258.83	S16' Lt 6. Lt 7-9, Blk 29, OT D. City

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