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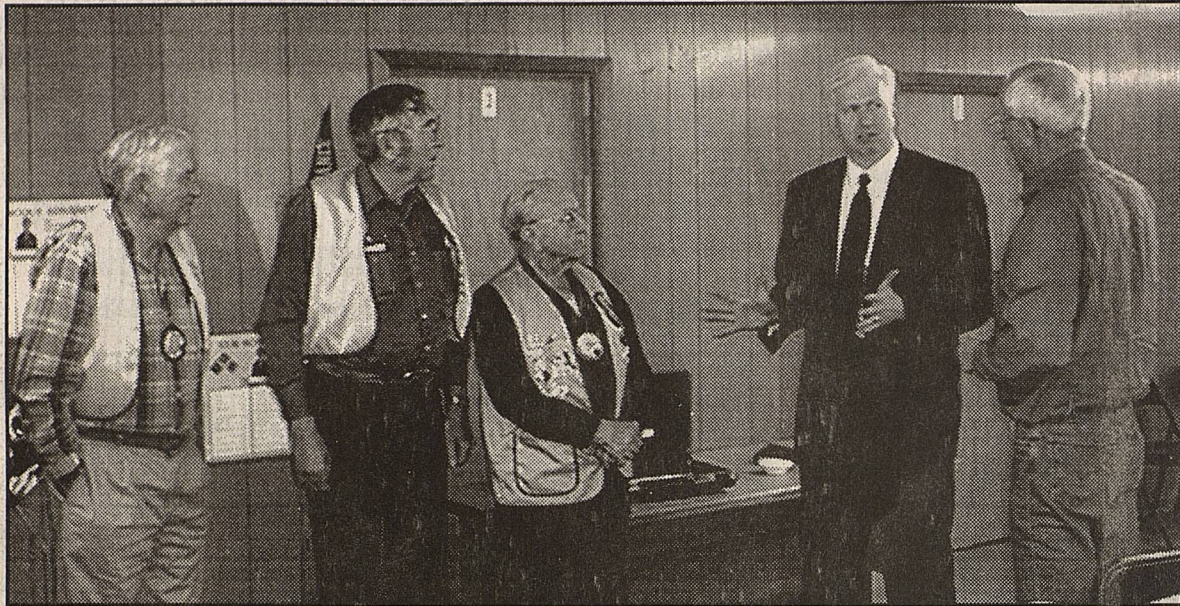
Cowboy Country News

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

Volume V, Issue 32, Wednesday April 21, 1999



Lea County Electric plans extravaganza 50th birthday



Mike Dreyspring, Gen. Mgr. L.C.E.C., makes point to Lions T.J. Miller, Harry Richardson, Pierre St. Romain and Jim Barron.

When some companies herald a commeroative anniversary of their service to customers, most make public announcements of the event, extolling the number of years of their service. Lea County Electric Cooperative is going a step further to celebrate their 50 years of service to the members and owners.

The cooperative is planning a gala event for it's Golden Anniversary on April 24. Mike Dreyspring, General Manager of the cooperative, told Plains Lions Club members last Thursday, "We're celebrating,, we're having a party, and all you Plains customers are invited."

The cooperative in years past has normally scheduled the annual membership meeting in the evening. This year, it will be held on a Saturday morning, starting with a number of entertaining events at the Lea County Fairgrounds. A number of exhibit booths will display historical records of the companies growth from the fledging stage to it's present day service to a wide area of southeast New Mexico and

Yoakum County. Some of the entertainment prior to the annual business meeting includes free bucket rides on the company pole trucks, a lineman's rodeo which will demonstrate crew's skills in doing pole top jobs. One unusual event involves crew members from the three service areas manually climbing a pole while holding an egg in their mouth. Speaker Dreyspring said, "I still have no idea how they are supposed to climb the pole, pass the egg around the pole, then climb down the pole." These work and skill demonstrations are scheduled for 9:30 AM, MST time.

Lunch for all registered cooperative members, catered by J & M Barbecue of Lovington, will be served in the Zia building at the fairgrounds starting at 11:30 am.

The annual business session will follow at 1 pm. Dreyspring said a financial report of the companies performance will be given, followed by the election of two trustees. Long term members J. W. (Lefty) Spears, present

Secretary/Treasurer, and Jack McMillan, respectively represnting districts 4 and 7 of the cooperative, are seeking reelection to the board.

A special attraction at the meeting will be the appearance and brief address by former Dallas Cowboy football stars Charley Waters and Cliff Harris. They will sign autograph requests for members.

Dreyspring also spoke on current legislative events involving deregulation of the electric utility business. He stated the recent New Mexico legislative session had favorably addressed the issue, while the current legislative Texas session is still mulling the question. He reported the Texas Senate has passed SB 7, their version of the dereg question, and a substitute bill is now being debated in the House.

Dreyspring said, "We think dereg is inevitable, and we are encouraged by actions taken in New Mexico, and are hopeful the election positive action will follow in

Turn to Page 2,
"Lea County Electric"

Precip Enhancement, Boll Weevil Eradication Programs Will Impact Local Economy

When the Boll Weevil Eradication Foundation kicks off the 1999 aerial spraying effort to rid the area of the pest in our cotton fields, and the Weather Modification, or Precipitation Enhancement program starts cloud seeding in the area, the counties economy could receive a very welcome shot in the arm.

Interviews last week with officials of Sandy Land Underground Water District and the South Plains Boll Weevil Eradication Zone described how cooperation between the two entities will result in multi-benefits;

Cloud seeding flights originating from the county airport here could play a huge role in combating the continuing statewide drought. A local office staffed by some five to ten, year round weevil eradication employees, overseeing work of possibly 75 seasonal field workers, would mean economic opportunities for many locals.

Sandy Land participated in the weather modification program last summer. Negotiations led to it's Board authorizing seeking bids for the construction of a 5000 square foot building at the

county airport, to house one of the aircraft used in seeding cumulus clouds when they are present. Last year flights originated from Lubbock and Littlefield. The proposed building will be large enough to lease a front portion for offices of the weevil eradication zone employees.

Don Parrish, a Director of the Weevil Eradication Foundation, said staff would lease the portion of the Sandy Land building for three years, with an option

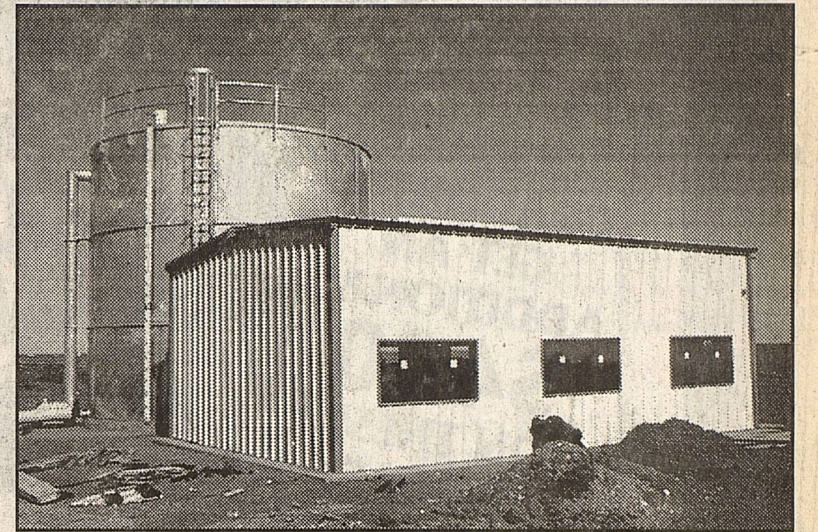
Turn to Page 6,
"Local Economy"

Top White-Tail, Mule Deer and Pronghorn harvested in Area

The 1998-99 hunting season has produced the #1 ranked typical whitetail in the state (Sherman County), #1 ranked nontypical whitetail in the state (Gary County), #1 ranked typical mule deer in the state (Roberts County), #2 ranked typical mule deer in the state (Randall County), #3 ranked nontypical mule deer in the state (Yoakum County), and #5 ranked pronghorn in the state (Dallam County).

These hunters, along with numerous participating landowners, will be recognized at the Texas Big Game Awards Banquet, sponsored by Texas Wildlife Association and Texas Parks and Wildlife, on Sunday, April 18, 1999, at the Koko Palace, 50th & Q, Lubbock. Seminars for adults and kids (ages 7 and up) regarding wildlife and land management will be held from 2:00 - 4:00 p.m. The Awards Banquet with an all you can eat buffet is scheduled from 5:00 - 7:00 p.m. Total cost for adults is \$10, kids (age 12 and under) \$8.00 to be paid at the door. Reservations are not required; number of people attending would be appreciated.

Water project nears final stages



City's new water storage tank and pump building.

City of Plains Council members and employees are well satisfied with the progress made in bringing additional and badly needed water to town. The drilling and testing of new wells, ditching and laying of pipe from the wells to the city transmission line, construction of a 100,000 gallon storage tank and pump building at the well have all progressed either on or ahead of schedule.

The excellent progress made on the project, however, may downshift to a much slower gear. The three wells must now be approved by a governmental agency, in this case Texas Natural Resources Conservation Commission (TNRCC).

City Administrator David Brunson told CCN water samples from the wells normally would be sent to the Texas Department of Health in Austin for intensive tests for a large number of harmful substances. The tests would then be reported to TNRCC, and that agency would either approve or disapprove the water quality of the wells.

Brunson said, "That process would take at least six to eight weeks. We have arranged to have samples from the three wells taken to an independent, commercial testing firm in Lubbock. When their tests are complete, their report will be sent to

Turn to Page 2,
"City Water"

These transplants should make tons of watermelons



Susana Harms is shown hand watering thousands of watermelon transplants in hothouse owned by ag producer Macky McWhirter

This scene in Mackie McWhirter's plastic covered hothouse behind the Eddins - Walcher station on the west side of town represents a potential multi-million pound crop of famed Yoakum County watermelons. The tiny plants are to be transplanted prior to conventional seed planting practices, hopefully to get a jump in

growth and early market prices. This is the second year McWhirter has grown the transplants. He told CCN the transplanting method of established plants should insure an earlier harvest of watermelons, hopefully bringing a higher sales price.

Turn to Page 6' "Watermelons"

From Page 1, "Lea County Electric" Austin."

He said he felt the House substitute bill definitely addressed the concerns of consumer interest, and was drafted to prevent the huge power providers in urban areas from dominating the market for electric power. He added, "Whatever the legislature passes, it will probably not take effect until 2000 or 2001." He added an interesting foot note in his talk. The old diesel generating plant owned by the cooperative, just east of the town, shut down since 1983, may be the subject for acquisition in the future. "We've had several inquiries about the sale. One of the

more recent was from Navajo Refining here in Lea County. They are studying the possibilities of re-activating the plant to produce wholesale electricity, in order to utilize their petroleum interests. This could be a possible source of more competitive power for our Texas and New Mexico customer/owners."

Livestock Association Board And Officers Elected

The Yoakum County Livestock

held its annual meeting last Thursday evening in Denver City.

Sale checks were distributed to the annual Livestock Show exhibitors, and board members were elected. Newly elected members included; Mike Roberts, Tracy Moore, Jimmy Bearden, Trey Keese, Tim Addison. Returning board members are; Jim Brown, Bill Anderson, Kevin Gibson, Don Parrish, Chris Chambliss, & Glen Trout. Officers elected for 1999-2000 are; President-Jim Brown, 1st up-Chris Chambliss, 2nd up-Jimmy Bearden, Sec/Tres-Tracy Moore.

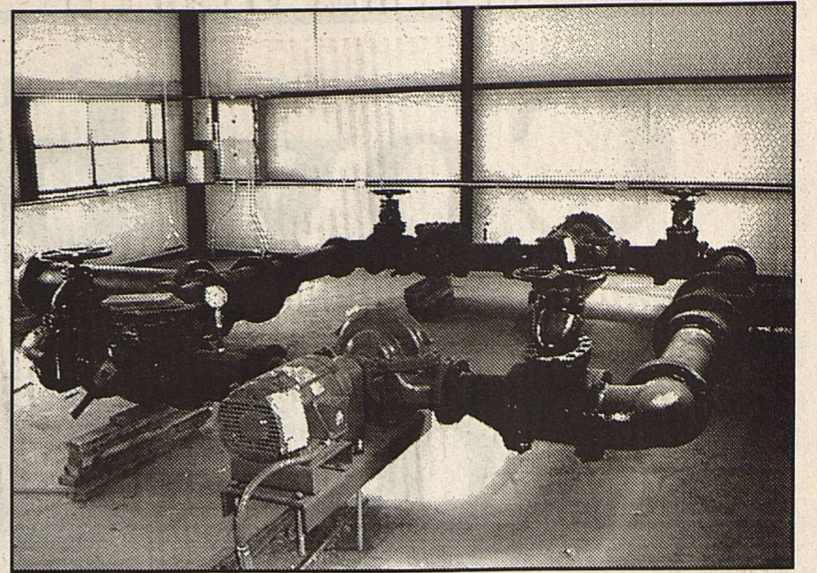
Preliminary talks were held about next year's Junior Livestock Show and Sale.

TxDOT calls for Applications

Nonprofit organizations that transport the elderly or disabled may now apply for a federal grant that provides funding to replace buses, vans and other vehicles. Applications should be submitted to the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) on or before May 10.

The Section 5310 Grant Program is administered through the Federal Transit Administration and provides up to 80 percent of the cost of the vehicle. The applicant provides the balance with local, nonfederal matching funds.

From Page 1, "City Water"



Massive pipes, valves and pumps inside new building

TNRCC, who can then issue us temporary approval to put water in our lines."

Brunson said a few projects must be completed while the testing process takes place. The storage tank at the well site must be disinfected, as well as the 12 inch line bringing the water to town. When the line was being laid, solid chlorine tablets were placed in the pipe joints. The line will be filled with water and allowed to sit 24 hours. When the disinfecting process is over,

the line will be drained, then thoroughly flushed.

Brunson said an all weather, caliche based road will be built by the county to the well site. Electronic automatic control systems must be installed, and each water well must have a protective shed installed. He is still optimistic, unless the water quality testing hits a bureaucratic snag, new water will be flowing in the city lines around May 1.

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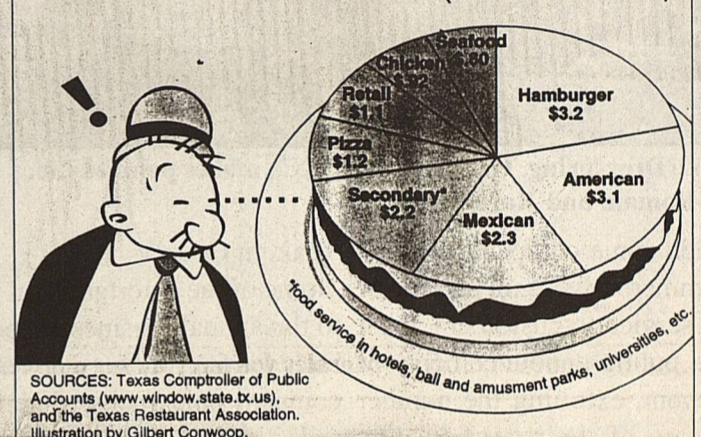
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Keeping an eye on Texas

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Cooperative Participates In National Y2K Drill

Operations personnel from Lea County Electric Cooperative today participated with approximately 2,000 other electric utility personnel throughout North America to conduct a Year 2000 drill. The test exercise was intended to simulate the partial loss of voice and data communications needed to operate the electric power grids of the United States and Canada. This drill was facilitated by the North American Electric Reliability Council (NERC), who is coordination Y2K preparations of the electric power industry, and monitored by the U.S. Department of Energy.

Typical drill scenarios included loss of external voice systems and real time data systems used to monitor and control electric power systems. Additional aspects of the drill included partial loss of data acquisition and control computers in the energy control centers. Several hundred generating units participated in the drill, including coal, gas, oil, hydro, and nuclear facilities. Over 500 critical electric facilities around the continent were staffed with field personnel using backup radio, privately owned telephone switches, microwave, and satellite voice systems. These personnel relayed critical information, such as power flows, voltage and frequency back to area control centers.

During the test, the Cooperative and Southwestern Public Service (SPS) exchanged critical system information via two way radio and cellular phone. According to Greg Faith, Supervisor of System Operations for the Cooperative, the test was

successful. "We've created a contingency plan to address any number of possibilities that may occur on January 1, 2000. While it's pretty unlikely that we'll have to resort to using cell phones and radios to transmit data on January 1, we have plans to do what it takes to keep the lights on." Lea County Electric will also participate with SPS in nation wide electric utility drills to be conducted on September 8-9.

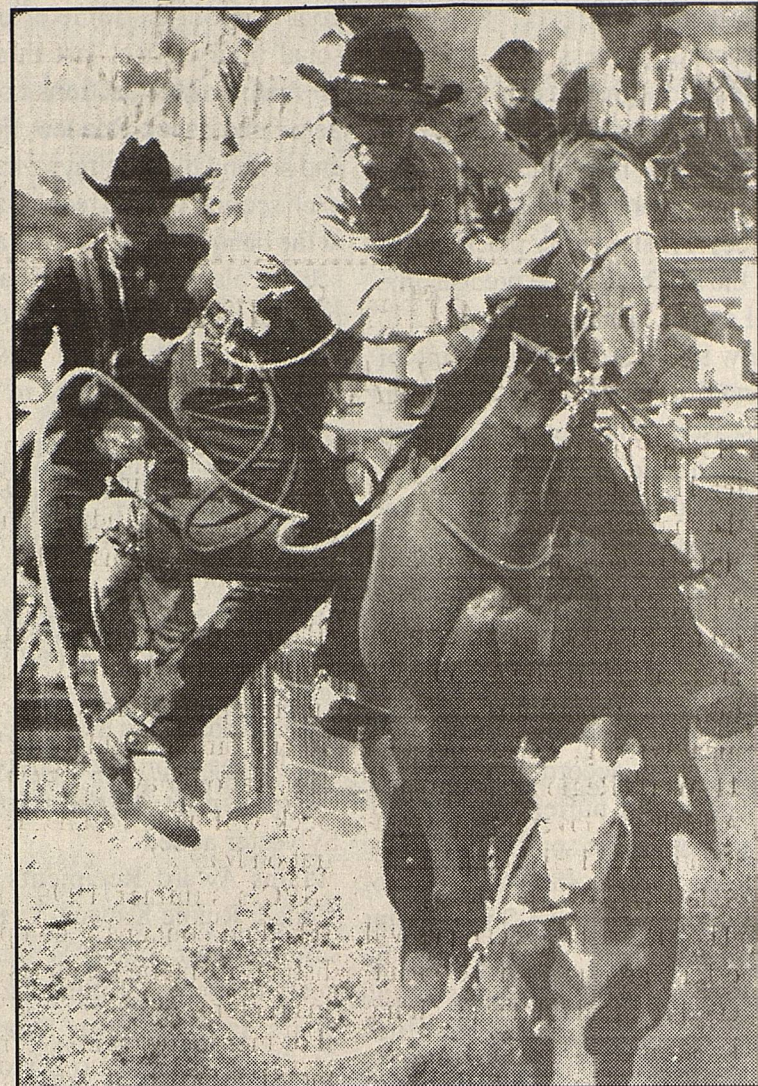
County Court of Yoakum County

In County Court on April 12, 1999 with Judge Dallas Brewer presiding and Richard Clark attorney for the state: Thomas Christopher Martin, 21, agreed on the state's order to modify conditions of community supervision resulting from a prior DWI cause. Martin's period of community supervision shall be extended for 12 months from July 16, 2000 through July 16, 2001. He must pay a community supervision fee of \$40.00 per month during the extended period of community supervision, and shall attend and successfully complete the out patient TAIP program. He must also pay Brownfield CRTS \$662.53 payable at \$25.00 each month.

Honoring troops of Kosovo

On Monday, PHS Student Council members Lisa Parrish, Anne Palmer and Krystle Blundell hung yellow ribbons along Cowboy way in honor of US troops serving in Kosovo. The Council also plans to distribute lapel pins for the purpose soon, and asks for the public's support

Brett Squyres advances to rodeo finals



Brett Squyres, 16 year old son of Newell and Peggy Squyres, finished the Texas High School Rodeo Association season 8th in Region II calf roping. He will advance to the THSRA finals in Abilene this June. He competed against 28 others in the event. During the spring, Brett placed in the event at rodeos in Ft. Stockton, Odessa and San Angelo. He is a sophomore at PHS, and plays football, basketball and baseball. He also competes in the High Plains Junior Rodeo Association, and when that season starts he will join Blake Parrish, Kimbe Jones and Marcey House, other local youngsters in the association.

To the entire community of Plains, Tx., we THANK YOU! Thank you for the food, flowers, and prayers for each of you when Milton Bayer went to be with God. The Bayer family is indeed blessed to have such wonderful neighbors and friends. Our Love to All, Jimmie's sisters & brothers and families, Eva Lee Roberts, Sybil Cagle, N.B. Teaff, Auda Vee Teaff

Soil & Water Stewardship Week April 25 - May 2

The Yoakum Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) will join in the national observance of Soil & Water Stewardship Week, according to Don Burgess, Chairman of the district.

The theme of the observance is "In the children's hands." The need for stewardship is vital to maintain the capabilities of our resources of soil, water and wildlife. Participation in The Stewardship Week activities offers an opportunity to reflect on the nations renewable resource problems, and actions to resolve them or reduce their impact.

The Yoakum SWCD was organized to offer farmers, ranchers and the community a voluntary conservation technical assistance program which citi-

zens could utilize to request conservation assistance to meet capabilities and needs of the land.

"It's the district's responsibility to provide technical assistance when requested relative to proper soil use, erosion control practices, drainage problems, and assist farmers and ranchers with crop, range, pastureland and wildlife management," said Burgess

The National Association of Conservation Districts has sponsored the Stewardship Week since 1955, in cooperation with the nation's nearly 3,000 soil and water conservation districts.

Information and materials for the 1999 observance of the Stewardship Week is available here by calling the District Office, 456-3703.



SWCD Directors Cindy Gray, Danny Bell, Dan Wall and Larry Nelson present "Stewardship Week" proclamation to Judge Dallas Brewer for his signature

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Lea County Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Welcome to Lea County Electric Cooperative's
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Celebrating 50 Years Of Cooperation!

Saturday, April 24th, 1999

**Lea County Fairgrounds
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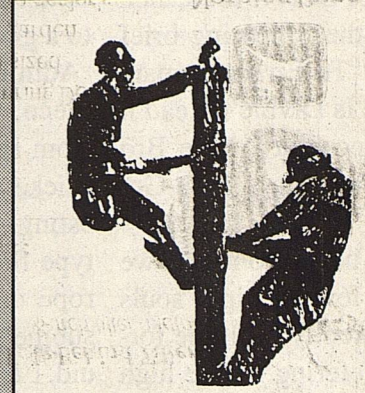
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Register Friday, April 23 from 8am to 5 pm
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Register at Fairgrounds Saturday,
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* Door Prizes Following Business Meeting At 1 pm *



Linemen's Rodeo !
9:30 - 11:30 a.m. (MST)
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Lea County Electric Cooperative, Inc.

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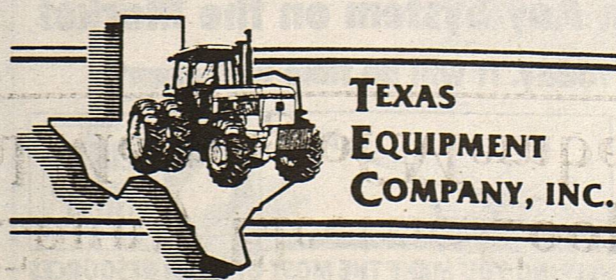


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