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# Cowboy Country News

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



Volume V.I. Issue 28, March 29, 2000

## Yes, folks, sometimes dreams do come true!



Who is the bearded ball player walking across the field with Matt McKinzie? Why, none other than Matt's idol, Garth Brooks.... yes, THE Garth Brooks

A dream came true for Matthew McKinzie during Spring Break. In the Fall of 1999, the Make A Wish Foundation contacted Matt's family and visited with Matt, asking him what his very best wish would be. Matt made two choices - "Meet Garth Brooks" and "Meet Garth Brooks." The Make A Wish People made no promises, but said they would try to make Matt's wish come true. A few weeks ago, they notified Matt their plans were complete.

See Page Two..... DREAMS COME TRUE

## Criminal cases heard in District Court

In 121st Judicial Court March 21, Judge Kelly G. Moore presiding, Luis Porras pled guilty to a charge of theft of a firearm. A two year prison sentence was suspended and probated five years. He was fined \$750, must pay \$207 court costs and appointed attorney fees of \$250. He must also serve 160 days community service. Causes of aggravated assault of a police officer, evading arrest and detention, and purchase/furnish alcohol to a minor were adjudicated. He was represented by Attorney Bill Helwig.

John Wayne Bagley pled guilty to the charge of Criminally Negligent Homicide, resulting in the death of Ralph and Edith Valentine. Bagwell's two year prison sentence was suspended and probated two years.

He was ordered to pay court costs of \$231, and fined \$2,500. He was also ordered to pay \$500,000 restitution to the deceased's estate, plus \$15,400 for a vehicle loss. He must serve 29 days in the Randall County Jail

## Truck - Cattle Collision Produces Huge Blaze Transport Driver Burned But Survives



Firefighters sprayed fire with foam and water almost 30 minutes before extinguishing blaze.

Around 10:20 P.M. last Wednesday, the Ron Craft family, living some 12 miles west of Plains and just off Highway 82, heard a grinding of metal and then a series of three loud explosions, and then the night skies lit up to the east of their home.

A gasoline transport truck loaded with 8,600 gallons of gas had just struck a pair of heifers on the highway. The driver, Karl Warford, lost control of the semi-rig, and the transport careened across the highway, overturned and burst into flames, the truck now on its side in the ditch facing east, the direction from which it came. Warford, an employee of Bell Gas, was transporting the load of gasoline from Lubbock

to Artesia, New Mexico.

Department of Public Safety and Yoakum County Sheriff officers on the scene said the pair of cattle wandered onto the highway from a nearby field after electricity went off in a confining electric fence where a herd of animals were grazing, probably on irrigated wheat. Officials stated earlier in the evening one owner of cattle in the area had reported a loss of electric power to Lea County Electric, who sent crews to work on the system and restored power.

Fire Departments from both Plains and Denver City responded to the fiery crash. Eight truck units and 17 firefighters finally extinguished the blaze with a water

and foam mixture around 12:35 A.M. A Five Star transport truck from Denver City brought additional water to the scene, and Precinct Three employee Hershel Smith manned a front-end loader to remove the dead animals from the highway, and built a fluid containing dirt dike around the overturned truck.

The transport driver was burned while escaping the overturned rig, and carried to the County Hospital in Denver City. Officials on the scene said his burns did not appear life threatening.

DPS Trooper Carmen Medrano said it did not appear any charges would be filed against any possible owners of the cattle.

## Fire damages residence here



Last Tuesday around 4:20 P.M., Plains Volunteer Fire Fighters responded to a blaze on the rear section of a residence at 102 12th Street. Fire Department personnel Alex Barrientes, Michael Barrientes, Jerry Dominguez and Donna Diamond manned the departments two pump trucks, and they were soon joined by Denver City Fire Department personnel and three truck units.

The fire apparently started in a storage shed on the southeast side of the house, and caused structural damage to a portion of the home's

kitchen wall. Cause of the blaze was undetermined.

While fire fighters were battling the blaze, two small personal use oxygen canisters in the store room "cooked off". A City of Plains employee busy shutting off natural gas to the home reported the canisters went off like small rockets.

The residence is owned by Robby Guetersloh, and was occupied by tenant Mary Curtis. No personal injuries occurred during the fire. Dollar value of the damage is unknown at this time.

## Marketing 'Workshop For Dummies' to be held here

Do you have a marketing plan? Do you even know what a "put" or "call" is? Well, don't feel alone. Many people would like to know more about how to market their crop and take advantage of pricing strategies which become available during the year, but just do not feel comfortable in entering the market.

To assist inexperienced marketers, the newly organized Yoakum County Extension Marketing Club will host a workshop for beginning marketers on Monday, April 3, from 5 P.M. until approxi-

mately 9 P.M. at the Plains Community Building. There will be a cost of \$10 which will include a catered meal by Lalito's and subsequent materials. Dr. Jackie Smith, Agricultural Extension Service Economist, will be on hand to provide the training. Spouses are encouraged to attend this important workshop! We do ask that you RSVP by March 29 at any of the following numbers: 456-4985, 456-5185, or at the County Extension Office, 456-2263

## County and State primary results call for runoff election

The Secretary of State has called for a runoff election throughout many areas of the state, including Yoakum County.

A facsimile of the official voting ballot for both the Democrat and Republican Party runoff election is featured on Page 3 of CCN.

We urge all voters to take part!

## Cowgirls Earn All-District Honors



Five members of the PHS Cowgirls 1999-2000 basketball team were recognized recently by coaches in the 3 - AA District. Head Coach Jan Newland told CCN coaches in the district are not allowed to cast ballots for members of their teams. Pictured here, left to right; Anne Palmer, Sr., Guard, Honorable Mention Team. Kristen Gray, Sr., Guard, Honorable Mention Team. Krystle Blundell, Sr., Point Guard, Second Team. Annaliesa O'Quinn, Sophomore, Post, named the District's Newcomer Of The Year. Candace Bowers, Sr. Post, Second Team

**From Page 1, "Dreams"**  
The Foundation would not only fly Matt but his entire family to Florida where they would all meet Brooks. On March 13, Matt and family were met at the Lubbock airport by representatives of Make A Wish and camera crews from Lubbock TV stations for interviews and warm wishes. The family then flew to West Palm Beach, Florida, where hotel reservations and a rental car were at their disposal. The next day they drove to Port St. Lucie, where Brooks is working out with the New York Mets baseball team, practicing for an upcoming game. Brooks came

off the field to greet Matt, and after a warm visit, took Matt onto the field to meet other team members, and where Matt was presented with many mementos. They later visited the locker room. There were many photo opportunities, and later Matt and family watched the game Brooks played in. Following the game, Brooks spent almost an hour with Matt and his family. He talked at length with Matt, and even sang Matt's favorite song, "Thunder Rolls", strumming Matt's guitar for his own accompaniment. The Make A Wish Foundation and Garth Brooks not only made

Matt's dream come true, they demonstrated a wonderful love for children. The family were touched by Brooks' kind compassion, and wish to express their appreciation for the preparation and hard work going into Matt's dream trip. They wish to express their special thanks to Garth Brooks, Paula Maxie in Lubbock, Tom, Joyce and Rebecca in Florida, and the Plains High School Student Council for their generous donations to the Make A Wish Foundation.  
*Kathy Guetersloh*

## Watermelon Promotion Board Convention To Nominate Producers, Handlers For District 6 Directors

The National Watermelon Promotion Board (NWPB) will hold a nomination convention April 3, 2000 at 1:00 p.m. at Dallas Love Field, Aviation Department, 8008 Cedar Springs Road, Dallas, TX 75235, Conference Room A to nominate two qualified watermelon producers and two watermelon handlers to serve as directors for District 6 of the Board. District 6 is comprised of Texas, Arkansas and Louisiana.

All watermelon producers and handlers in District 6 are encouraged to attend and vote to nominate their representative to the NWPB. Nominations are submitted to the U.S. Department of Agriculture and USDA Secretary Dan Glickman makes the final appointments to the Board. New directors will take office on January 1, 2001 and serve three year terms.

About 2,200 commercial producers, handlers and importers make up the membership of the NWPB and finance all of the Board's programs through assessments on watermelons as authorized by the Congressional Watermelon Research and Promotion Act. To be eligible for nomination, producers must grow 10 or more acres of watermelon and handlers must ship at least 150,000 lbs. of watermelon. Producers and handlers must have complied with the requirements of the NWPB national check off program.

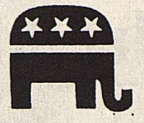
The NWPB will allow proxy voting for Board nominees. Individuals wishing to vote by proxy should prepare signed, dated statements, including the proxy voter's printed name, address, identity as a producer or handler, and the name of the individual authorized to cast the proxy vote, who will then provide the statements to the NWPB no later than March 27, 2000.

Additional information regarding the elections and nomination procedures may be obtained by contacting NWPB Executive Director William Watson toll free at (877) 599-9595.



Runoff Election

## Terry Davis



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Plains, Tax Office  
Denver City.  
Runoff election day  
Apr. 11, Community  
Bldg. Plains,  
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Denver City.

If you voted in the Republican Primary, OR you did NOT vote in either the Republican or Democratic primaries, you are eligible to vote in the runoff. Let your voice Be Heard!

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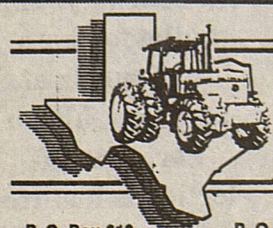


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## Sample Ballots, Democrat & Republican Party Runoff Elections

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UNITED STATES SENATOR  
(SENADOR DE LOS ESTADOS UNIDOS)

- Gene Kelly
- Charles Gandy

PRECINCT 303/305  
REPUBLICAN

JUDGE, COURT OF CRIMINAL APPEALS  
PLACE 1  
(JUEZ, CORTE DE APELACIONES  
CRIMINALES, LUGAR NUM. 1)

- Charles Holcomb
- Guy Williams

JUDGE, COURT OF CRIMINAL APPEALS  
PLACE 2  
(JUEZ, CORTE DE APELACIONES  
CRIMINALES, LUGAR NUM. 2)

- Barbara Parker Hervey
- Jim Wallace

PRESIDING JUDGE,  
COURT OF CRIMINAL APPEALS  
(JUEZ PRESIDENTE,  
CORTE DE APELACIONES CRIMINALES)

- Sharon Keller
- Tom Price

COUNTY COMMISSIONER, PRECINCT NO. 3  
(COMISIONADO DEL CONDADO, PRECINTO NUM. 3)

- Rex R. Swann
- Terry D. Davis

**Republican Party County  
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## Jury awards bode ill U.S. economy

By DOUG BANDOW

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The 20th century may have passed into history, but its effects live on. Not just the consequences of communism, fascism, and world war. But the effects of smaller, more mundane trends with potentially huge societal impacts.

America's liability explosion is a prime example. The top ten jury awards to individuals and families in 1999 totaled \$9 billion. Every one topped \$100 million. Two of them exceeded \$1 billion. And that doesn't include big class actions and corporations suing each other.

According to Lawyers Weekly USA, last year's \$9 billion was triple the sum in 1998 — and 12 times the total in 1997. Just one of the verdicts in the latter year would have made it onto 1999's list.

This phenomenon does not reflect increased negligent behavior or defective products. Rather, the staggering judgments result from juries' growing willingness to impose huge punitive awards on defendants, irrespective of the actual damages.

In the biggest case of 1999, a jury assessed \$4.8 billion in punitive damages (subsequently reduced to a mere \$1.09 billion) on General Motors for an allegedly defective gas tank.

GM's liability was not obvious; the accident resulted when a drunk traveling at an estimated 70 mph hit the plaintiffs' stopped car.

At least in this case there was traumatic injury. In three of the top ten actions massive punitive damages were levied without anyone suffering serious physical or emotional harm.

An Alabama jury topped its recompense of a few thousand dollars in sales overcharges with a punitive judgment of \$580 million.

An Alaska insurance agent collected a cool \$150 million in punitives after losing his job.

A Georgia salesman who was fired and lost \$182,000 in commissions enjoyed a punitive judgment of \$136 million.

In theory, punitive damages are supposed to punish criminally irresponsible defendants. In practice, punitives have become a commonplace response to everyday disputes.

California seems to be one of the trend-setters. Just three days after a Los Angeles jury hit GM with the \$4.8 billion penalty, jurors further north, in Modesto, whacked Ford with a \$295 million award, \$290 million of which were punitives.

In the latter case 19-year-old Juan Romo crashed in 1993 while driving his family. Romo was speeding slightly and was probably tired; his five passengers had all fallen asleep. After nearly 200,000 miles and several owners, his 1978 Ford Bronco was well-used.

Romo lost control when he swerved to avoid hitting the van that he had been passing on the right, before it changed lanes in front of him. The Bronco flipped over. His parents and brother died; he and his two sisters survived with minor

injuries.

Romo and his sisters blamed Ford, claiming that the Bronco was prone to roll over and had a weak roof.

The Bronco was manufactured like other sports utility vehicles and had the same accident rate. It exceeded federal roof guidelines in 1999, as well as those from two decades before. The Bronco also met government roll-over standards.

Nevertheless, the jury held Ford responsible. While the liability verdict seems dubious, it is at least defensible.

The disproportionate punitive judgment is not. The plaintiffs' emotional pitch overwhelmed serious reflection. For instance, in his closing argument, the plaintiffs' attorney encouraged jurors "to say a number that gets on the front page of every newspaper in the country."

Both plaintiff lawyers, Joseph Carcione and Lawrence Drivon, publicly lauded the GM verdict, announced while the Ford jury was deliberating.

Moreover, Drivon mailed to each juror a copy of his book, defending large liability judgments and attacking Ford by name. He did so after the verdict, but before the company had collected juror declarations as part of its post-trial motion to set aside the punitive award.

During deliberations, a juror cited an old 60 Minutes story on supposedly defective Ford Mustangs as evidence of the company's malice. One juror mistakenly claimed that Ford

had admitted preferring to settle lawsuits rather than remedy defects. Jurors also talked about a different TV program on the alleged propensity of SUVs to roll over.

Another juror reported a dream in which Ford attorneys jeered while her and other jurors' kids died in a Bronco accident. She termed her dream an "omen" and urged her fellow jurors to "save the babies."

Because of these factors, Superior Court Judge Robert Beauchene ordered a new trial on the issue of punitives. But Ford, and all other potential defendants, people as well as companies, remain at risk of huge punitive awards.

Romo's lawyers, indeed, have indicated they would like nothing better than to eclipse the GM award's record total of \$1.08 billion. Given the right California jury, that's entirely possible.

Sometimes people make mistakes. And they should be held liable when they do.

But today's tort system too often punishes the innocent, enriching trial attorneys more than compensating injured parties.

As we enter a new century, Americans must bring their liability laws under control.

Doug Bandow is a Senior Fellow at the Cato Institute. A graduate of Stanford Law School, he is a member of the California and D.C. bars. Readers may write him at: Cato, 1000 Massachusetts Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20001.

## Denver City Art Show is Scheduled

The Denver City Art Association will hold its Annual Art Show and Sale on April 4th through 8th, 2000

The show will be at 118 N. Main (the Yoakum County Connection building), in Denver City, and will include paintings, graphics and photography. Entries will be accepted on Tuesday, April 4th from 11 am. to 6 pm. The show will be open to the public Thursday, April 6th, from 2-6:30 pm.; Friday, April 7th 10 am.-6:30 pm.; Saturday, April 8th, 10 am.-4:30 pm. There will be an awards presentation and reception at 4 pm., Saturday, April 8th. Cash prizes will be awarded for Best of Show in photography and Fine Art, and to ribbon winners in original categories.

Anyone needing any further information may call Sue Holder at 806-592-2960 (after 5 pm.), Mola Moorhead 806-592-3187, or Euple Taylor 806-592-2704.

## SPC Summer 2000 Schedules Available

South Plains College's summer 2000 class schedules are now available, listing registration dates for campuses in Levelland, Lubbock and SPC Reese Center.

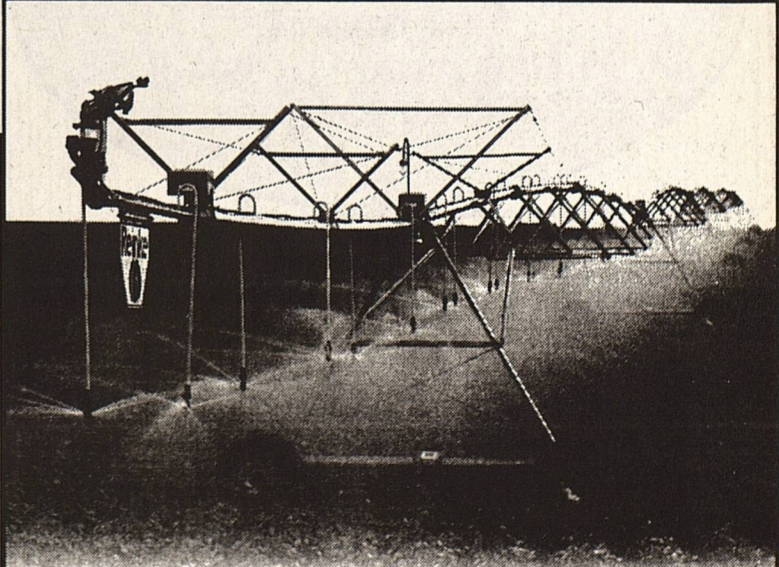
Enrollment is May 31 at SPC's Reese campus location and June 1st at SPC Levelland for the first of two five week summer sessions and June 1st for SPC Lubbock's summer term.

Classes at all locations begin June 5 and late registration is June 5-6.

To obtain a summer 2000 class schedule, check out SPC's website at [spc.cc.tx.us](http://spc.cc.tx.us) or contact SPC at 894-9611, ext. 2374 or 2375, SPC Lubbock at 747-0576, ext. 4660 or the SPC Reese campus at 885-3048, ext. 2902.

**Yoakum County Art Association is coordinating the annual Yoakum County Watermelon Round-Up T-Shirt Contest. It's open to all ages, in and out of school. Design must be no larger than 8 1/2" x 11" in size and must have Yoakum County Watermelon Round-Up on it. Watermelon Willie is optional on this year's shirt. Yoakum County Connection is awarding \$100 cash to the top design picked by the judges. The deadline is May 19th. For more information call Susie Powell at 456-3411. Mail unfolded entries to Yoakum County Art Association, Box 38, Plains, Tx. 79355 or hand deliver to Bayer Lumber in Plains or the Senior Citizen's Center in Denver City.**

**A los electores del Precinto No. 3:  
Doy gracias a todos aquellos que han apoyado en la Campana Democratica primaria del 14 de Marzo. Ha sido un placer y una gran experiencia mantener esta campana y haber compartido con cada uno de ustedes. Yo encomiendo a Cody Flores por haber corrido una campana limpia y por el apoyo que recibio. Espero continuar con my esfuerzo y ciertamente les agradeceria su continuo apoyo.  
Sinceramente,  
Ty Earl Powell  
Democratic Candidate for Pct. 3  
Pol. Adv. Paid For By Ty Earl Powell**



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Jared Bell (center) 3rd in 200 M Dash



Chelsea Blount finished 2nd in her heat of 800 M



David Granados 2nd in 800 M run

### Cowgirls win golf tourney

The Plains Girls Golf Team took first place honors in a high school tournament at Sundown March 22. The combined team score was 416 strokes. Liz Wilmeth took second place medalist honors with a score of 96 over 18 holes. Other team members included Autumn Deaton, Allison Butler, Mackenzie Winn, and Leticia Canon.

### Sundown Track Summary

Junior High:

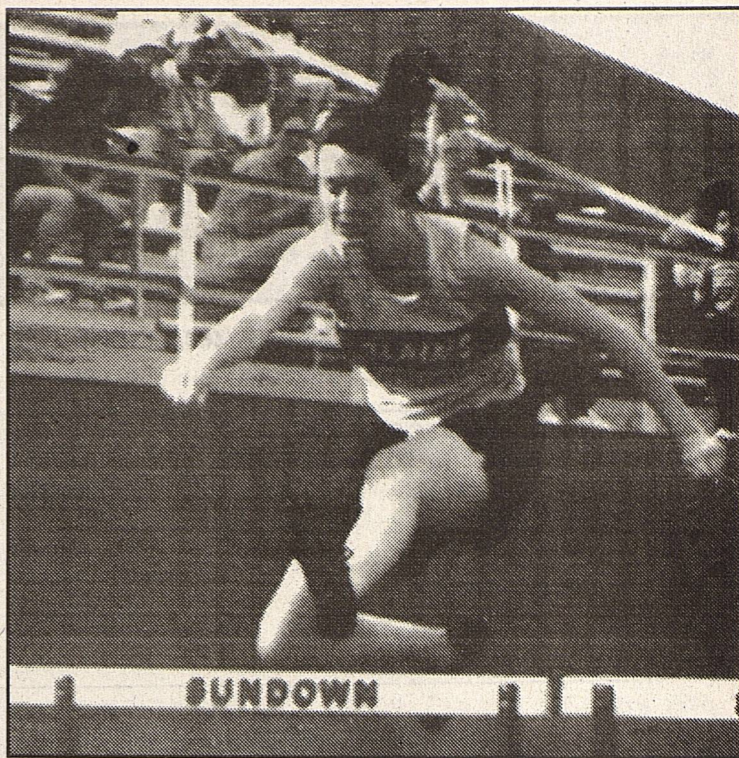
7th Girls- Kristian Morales, 3rd 800 M run, 6th Shot; Daniela Lazos, 4th Shot, 5th Discus, 5th 200 M dash, 5th 400 M dash, 6th 100 M dash. Jamie Covarrubias 5th 100 M hurdles, 6th 200 dash. Sandra Gandara 6th discus, 6th 400 M dash.

8th Girls- Moriah Traweck 2nd 100 dash, 400 dash, 3rd 200 dash. Ashley Vantine 3rd 1600 M run, 5th 800 M run. Kim Trent 3rd 800 M run, 4th 400 M dash, 4th 200 dash. Sarah Martinez 6th Shot.

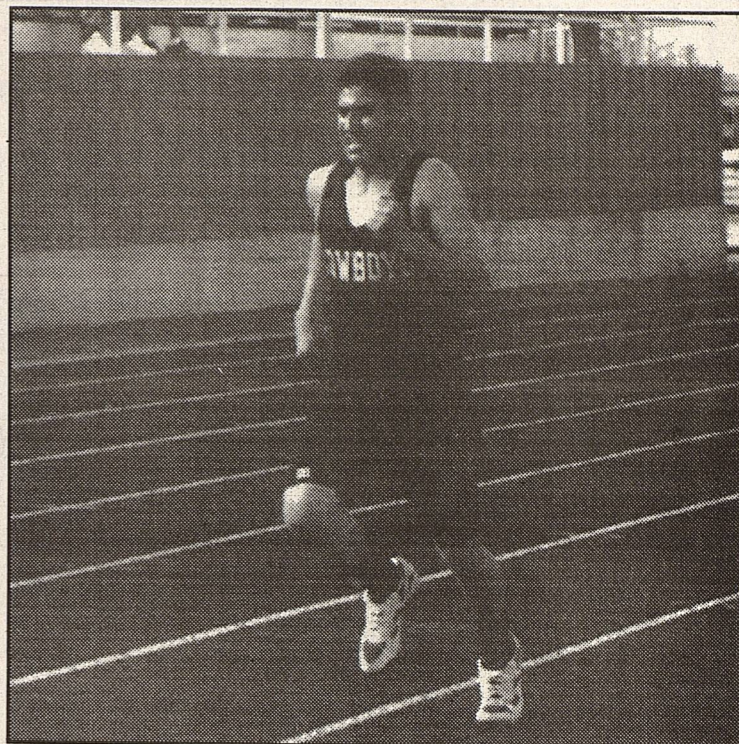
7th Boys- Scott Bruton, 1st shot, 1st discus, 3rd 100 dash. Eddie Ortega 1st 400 dash. Payton Bean 1st 1600 run, 4th 800 run. Patrick Cotton 2nd 1600 run, 3rd 800 run. Evan Cain 3rd 300 hurdles. Breck Hamm 4th pole vault. Cody Flores 4th shot. Isaac Ramon 5th discus. 400 M Relay, Payton Bean, Eddie Ortega, Evan Cain, Scott Bruton, 3rd. 1600 M Relay- Kilby Johnson, Scott Bruton, Evan Cain, Eddie Ortega 4th.

8th Boys- Richard Diaz 1st 400 dash, 4th triple jump, 6th long jump. Arnold Cordova 1st 300 hurdles, 4th long jump. Armando Ramirez 2nd 2400 M run, 2nd 1600 run. Grady McNabb 3rd discus, 6th shot, 5th 110 hurdles. Jerry Granados 5th 2400 run, 5th 1600 run. Anthony Loya 3rd 200 dash, Ryan Martinez 4th shot. Zachary Broome 6th 800 run. 1600 Relay, Anthony Loya, Arnold Cordoba, Grady McNabb, Richard Diaz, 2nd

Cowgirls- (a number of girls were unable to compete in the meet at Sundown because of one-act play competition at Post). Kristen Gray - 1st, 300 hurdles, Jessica Rodriguez 6th 200 dash Cowboys- 400 Relay, Jared Bell, Israel Moreno, Joseph Rodriguez, Moises Gonzales 2nd. Josh Bell, 1st shot, 5th discus. Jared Bell, 3rd 200 and 400 dash. Moises Gonzales 6th 100 dash. David Granados 2nd 800, 5th 1600 run. Israel Moreno 6th 200 dash. Chisum Justus 4th 3200 run



Kristen Gray won the 300 M Hurdles



Luis Hernandez ran the tough 1600 M

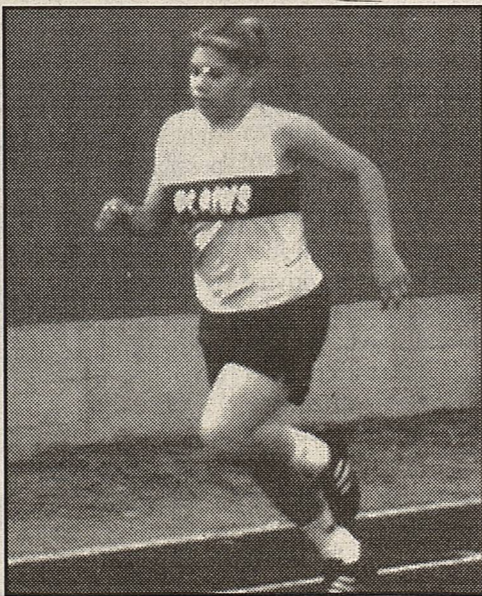
### Cowboys lose to Morton Indians

The Cowboys dropped a district baseball game to Morton last Friday 5 to 2. Cold bats accounted for only 5 hits through 7 innings of play Gerry Rivas had two of the hits, with Jared Bell, Jeremy Morphis and Colt Winn managing one each. After three district games, Rivas leads the hitting with a .667 average. The Cowboys face Olton there this Friday, and take on Post here Tuesday, April 4



Cowgirl sprint relay team practices baton handoff

**GO**  
Cowboys



Jessica Rodriguez 2nd in 200 M Dash

**GO**  
Cowgirls

**GO**  
Cowgirls

**GO**  
Cowboys

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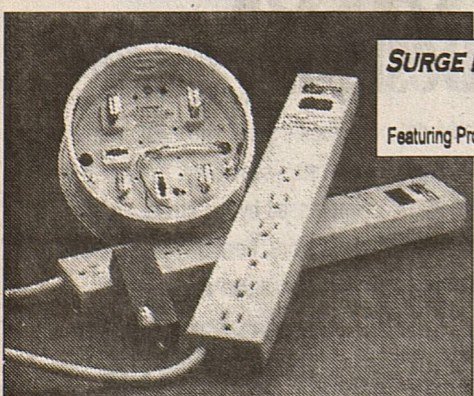
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# Lifelines & Styles

## Watermelon Festival 2000

The Watermelon Festival Planning Committee met on February 17 in Plains. The 5th Annual Watermelon Round-Up is scheduled from 9 am. - 6 pm. Saturday, September 2.

Cowboy Way, Hwy 82/380, in front of the Courthouse will be closed this year. Traffic will be detoured around in front of the Post Office. The booth selling watermelons will be located in front of City Hall.

Carolyn Culwell is in charge of the food booths, booth rentals will be raised to \$65.00 this year. Cindra Box is in charge of the arts and crafts booths, booth rentals will be \$50.00 this year. Tommy Box will be in charge of commercial booths. These will be located across the street-between Sandy Land and City Hall. These booths will be targeting "Big Boy Toys", sports, Ag equipment, etc. The price for these booths has not been set.

Karen Williams will be in charge of the kids games again this year. Travis Jones, with Alltel, will be in charge of the volleyball tournament. Jo Beth Cromer will have a style show during the Festival. James

Altman is in charge of organizing the musicians and entertainment again this year. Bill Helwig will sponsor the Giant Watermelon Contest. Melvin Dearing will be holding the Fun Run. In addition to the 1 mile run and the toddler run, there will be a 5K run this year. Ribbons and medals will be awarded again. Ted Welch will be sponsoring the Brisket and Chili Cook-off. He is working on making this an official Cook-off Contest, with points being awarded toward the National Cook-off. Neal and Alice Bearden will be sponsoring the seed spitting contest. Terry and Wadonna Davis will organize the Classic Car Show again this year. Jerry Parrish will be in charge of the Team Roping. Linda Harris is in charge of the Tabloid. The prices for ads in the Tabloid were raised to: Full page \$200-\$250, 1/2 page \$125-\$150, 1/4 page \$65-\$85, 1/8 page \$40-\$50, one line \$20 each. Pictures are still needed for the Tabloid. If you have any questions or suggestions, call The Yoakum County Connection at 456-5762.

## Yoakum County Library Filmtime

Yoakum County Library Filmtime March 22, 2000. The group played games, followed by the pledges to the United States and Texas flags, then sang several songs. The book read was "Is Your Mama A Llama?", which introduced a discussion about Llamas. A video entitled "Arthur's Lost Library Book", concluded the program. Five boys and girls attended Filmtime this week, they are: Micah St. Romain, Clayton Gass, Whitney and Johnathan Davis, Bailey Winn.

**LEARN INC.** will be in the Plains ISD Resource Center from 9:00 am. - 3:30 pm. April 3 to assist Seniors and Parents with Education Pell Grants (Free application for Federal Student Aid). Former students now out of high school who plan to attend College and need financial aid are also welcome.



## The Journey

*For the joy set before Him,  
He walked on toward the cross*  
First Baptist Church Sanctuary Choir  
will present The Journey a musical  
arranged and orchestrated by  
David T. Clydesdale  
Directed by; Patrick Hamilton  
Sunday, April 9th  
Time 10:45 a.m.

## Wedding Announced



Tessa M. St. Romain and Cleve W. Bearden were married in Houston, Tx. on March 10, 2000 at 3:30 pm. Tessa is the daughter of Joe and Elouise St. Romain of Plains. Grandparents are Pierre and Mary Jo St. Romain of Plains and Juan and Marie Teddy of Window Rock, Az. Cleve is the son of Neal and Alice Bearden of Plains and Sherry Smith of Houston, Tx. Grandparents are Melba Bearden of Plains and Charles and Betty Dorminey of Denver City. Tessa is attending Nursing School at Texas Women's University and Cleve is employed by M.D. Anderson Cancer Center as a Clinical Laboratory Scientist.

## Lesa Wood, CPA

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First United Methodist Church  
1202 Ave. G-Plains  
Sunday School - 9:45 AM. Morning Worship - 10:45 AM.

## Acrospirits Shine At Meet

The South Plains Acrospirits Tumbling and Trampoline Team had an exceptional Division II National Qualifying Meet in Snyder. They won the Team Awards in Tumbling and Trampoline both, quite an accomplishment for any team. The Acrospirits are very proud of their young team and hope they can repeat at the second National Qualifier to be held in Levelland at the Texas dome on April 1st. The Acrospirits took 63 athletes to the competition and were coached by Sherry

Mulkey, Will Green, and Kellie Earnest. The meet was attended by 460 athletes from 26 teams from all over the Region XI of Texas.

Youths from Plains/Denver City in tumbling, trampoline, double-mini synchronized trampoline included; Kaytlyn Dutton, Dakota Earnest, Courtney Miller, Jana Nelson, Chris Estrada, Landon Earnest, Jimmy Norman, David Norman, Taylor Miller, Danial Estrada.

## Academic Honor For Local Resident

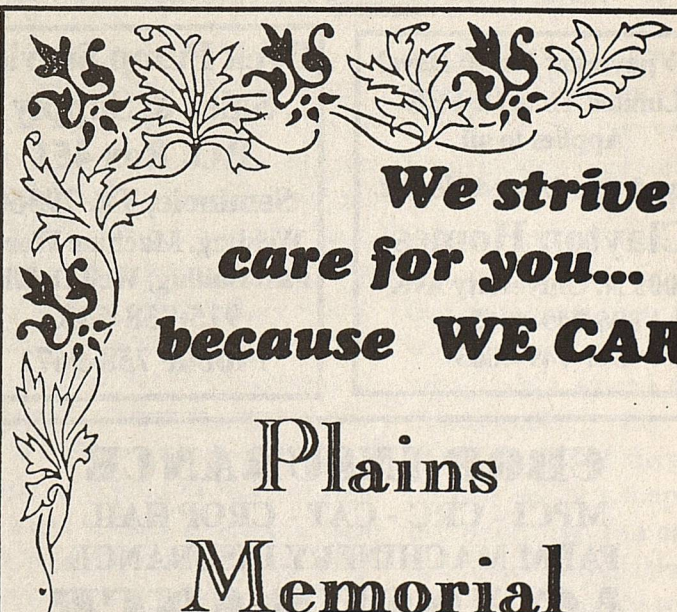
Baltimore, MD - Tommie Patrice McNabb of Plains, TX, was named to the Dean's List for the fall semester at The Johns Hopkins University. To be selected for this honor, a student must earn a grade point average of 3.5 or higher on a 4.0 scale.

Tommie Patrice McNabb is the daughter of Darryl and Pat McNabb and attended Plains High School in Plains, TX.

Tommie Patrice McNabb, who is majoring in biomedical engineering, will graduate in May 2003.

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Eunice Moore From  
Cowboy Country News  
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and is a member of American Hospital Association & Texas Hospital Association

# From The Hack

Ever have a yen to learn where your favorite, or possibly more important, your *least* favorite state political candidates are getting the bucks to finance their expensive campaigns? In years past, it has been impossible to learn the source of these funds without making a trip to Austin and digging through reams and reams of paper stacks, an expensive and time-consuming task. According to The Texas Press Messenger, a monthly publication of the Texas Press Association for its member newspapers, the Austin trip and digging will be past history come this July. In the last session, the Legislature passed HB 2611, requiring statewide candidates and political action committees to file electronic campaign finance reports with the Texas Ethics Commission. Hooray, and Amen!

Come sometime in July, I can turn the trusty Mac on, pull up the Internet, stroke the mouse

a bit and tell to a penny how many war-chest bucks Slimy Slim or Nasty Nellie have to toss around luring our votes, and more importantly, where the loot came from.

A small drawback - candidates, office holders and committees who don't accept or spend more than \$20,000 in a calendar year are exempt from filing electronically. I doubt this is a huge problem; What state politician or committee today could possibly spend or accept LESS than the twenty grand?

Another good feature of HB 2611: The mouse clicks can reveal more than dollar amounts and their sources. During legislative sessions the system will enable tracking of key political issues and how politicians vote on the issues. A prime example for this needed type reporting occurred during the last session's lengthy hassle over utility deregulation.

I think the whole idea is commendable. Something tells me, however, it may not be universally loved by all politicians. We're looking forward to giving the thing a trial whirl come July.

I heard a few interesting tales recently while sipping coffee in Johnnie's. This local character said once he and companions

headed out of town, southbound on a bitter cold, windy and snowing day. Out in the middle of nowhere, driving very slowly because of ice on the highway, they saw what looked like a nude critter of some kind in the bar ditch. Sure enough, coyote hunters had managed to kill one of the beasts. The guy said they had carefully skinned it, then propped it up on all four legs in the ditch, and it evidently quickly froze in place, including it's naked tail which pointed straight up in the air. The teller of tales stated emphatically, "You know, a coyote running 'cross a pasture's kinda pretty, but that naked, froze coyote was the ugliest varmint I ever laid eyes on!"

The tale brought a response from another coffee sipper. "Back when I was in high school some of us guys went rabbit hunting. We killed a bunch, and when we got back in town we discovered a dead jack rabbit in the back of my pickup. There was a public pay phone booth out in front of the courthouse then, and we took this old, stiff rabbit and twisted and mashed him around till he looked like he was sitting straight up, his eyeballs wide open. We stuck him in the phone booth and he looked exactly like he was waiting for a phone call. We moved down the block, keeping an eye on the booth, and pretty soon this truck pulls

up, and a big, burly guy gets out, walks up to the door, then leaps backwards 'bout six feet. He finally eases back inside, all stretched out, trying to dial the phone at arms length, and we can see him really eye-balling the rabbit. We was about to die laughing, and I bet the driver was saying into the phone, 'You ain't gonna believe this, but I gotta make this short and sweet, there's a rabbit waiting to use the phone!'"

These tales remind me of being stationed at Corpus Christi some Eons back, and after a bash on Padre Island where there may have been strong spirits involved, several of us gingerly picked up a dead, smelly 20 pound black drum and sneaked it back on base. One very brave buddy succeeded in depositing the fish very carefully in the bed of a petty office not universally loved by the entire squadron. I not so fondly recall all the Hell which broke loose about three that morning when sleeper rolled over on fish.

A few of Bride's favorites for her friends: "When we win the lottery, we're going to sleep in separate beds. Mine in Florida, his in Oregon." "I always make him hold hands with me.. if I let go, he heads for the golf course." "He said he wanted to do something different on our anniversary. I told him he could pick up his dirty socks."

Here's an ad campaign which seems to have gone awry; People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) recently produced an ad campaign with the theme, "GOT BEER?". The irreverent campaign was PETA's idea to protest the conditions of dairy cattle, and also claimed fat and cholesterol in regular milk make it much more unhealthy than beer.

Bad move. Mothers Against Drunk Drivers (MADD) and other conservative groups

came down hard on PETA, claiming the ad campaign encouraged underage drinking.

One conservative group, so ticked at PETA, staged a large and free steak and egg breakfast, complete with milk, butter and pita bread.

PETA apparently drew enough heat and venom it pulled the "GOT BEER" campaign. Only problem I see here, pulling the ad may have miffed die hard suds drinkers. No biggie here, of course, with so few beer lovers

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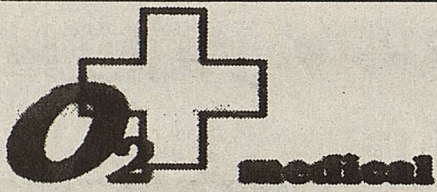
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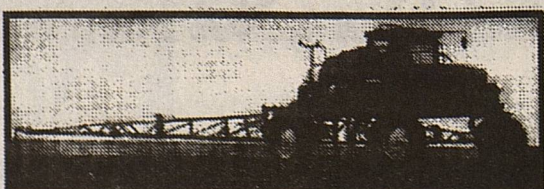
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