

Cowboy Country News

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

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SPS Fuel Increase Affects Lea County Electric Bills

Electric bills issued in June will likely be higher for most of the Cooperative's members due to increases in fuel charges from Southwestern Public Service, Lea County Electric's wholesale power supplier. According to Allan Brown, Manager of Marketing and Member Services for the Cooperative, "The increase in the fuel component of members' electric bills is caused by fluctuations in the price of natural gas. For the past six months, the pass-through of fuel costs from our wholesale supplier has been \$.00358 per kilowatt-hour (kWh) to all of our members. Beginning in June, this Power Cost Recovery Factor (PCRF) will increase to \$.01227 per kWh."

Residential customers who use an average 1,000 kWh each month will see an increase of \$8.69 per bill. The plan is to continue using this increased factor through November 30, 2004, at which time another analysis will be made to determine if the PCRF requires further adjustment.

"Although our base rates for electric service have not changed, fuel costs from our power supplier can and do fluctuate. We do everything we can to minimize the impact of such changes to our customers by 'leveling' the PCRF over six-month intervals rather than pass through monthly fluctuations. Increases from our power supplier, however, make it necessary to periodically adjust the factor," said Brown.

"Lea County Electric's Levelized Budget Plan can help our members avoid broad fluctuations in month-to-month electric bills by averaging their current electric bill with their previous 11 months' bills," advised Brown. "It's based on a running average of electricity usage, and while the monthly payment amount will fluctuate slightly, it will be much easier to plan and budget for."

Customers interested in obtaining more information on this program are encouraged to call the Cooperative toll free, 1-800-510-5232.

SPC, The Learning Center need public input to form local alliance for expanded educational opportunities

A taskforce in Yoakum County is working with South Plains College to develop a higher education learning site in Denver City. This is a unique opportunity for residents of the county and surrounding rural areas to take college courses or continuing education classes without the time and expense of driving to the SPC Levelland campus. The college offers three modes of coursework delivery; traditional classroom instruction, on-line courses, and interactive TV classes. All three of these types of instruction can be offered by The Learning Center, a family literacy

program active in Denver City a number of years.

The taskforce has developed a survey to determine the educational needs of local and area residents. Citizens in Plains, Denver City, Seagraves, Loop and Seminole are urged to help in this effort. From survey results the task force can plan course offerings and schedule classes. They will also use this information to seek grant funding for this expansion project. The survey can be found online at www.southplainscollege.edu/itech/surveys/dcsurvey2004.html. Interested residents are urged

State Representative Delwin Jones, District 83, was guest speaker at the June 3 meeting of the Plains Lions Club, and offered "a thumbnail sketch of what has been and is going on in Austin."

He described the two recent special legislative sessions called by Governor Rick Perry as totally frustrating, in that neither solved the issue the sessions were called for - solving the financing of our public schools, and offering property tax relief and an end to the so called Robin Hood provision where more fortunate school districts must send their money to less fortunate districts."

Jones said the governor's proposal to the lawmakers at the start of the first special session contained many provisions he considered doomed from the start, yet the governor threatened to use his veto powers against taxation legislation he was opposed to. "The House responded to this by turning down his proposed taxation plan 126 to zero. That earned Governor Perry the distinction

log on the website between June 6 and June 15 to complete a survey. Those without internet service at home may use public access computers at The Learning Center, 500 Ave. C in Denver City, or on computers at either county library. Paper copies of the survey will soon be available at city hall in Plains and Denver City, and will be available in English and Spanish.

The success of this project depends on area residents response. Completing the survey will enhance the opportunity for learning and economic development in the county and surrounding area.

State Rep Delwin Jones updates Plains Lions on legislative issues



Delwin Jones answers questions from Lions, assisted by former Representative Gary Walker

of becoming a member of "The Century Club", which means one of his proposals was defeated by at least 100 to zero", Jones related.

Fielding questions from Lions members, Jones said he did not think another special session would be called before September. If the House and Senate at that time can agree to a new school taxation formula, they must then have a two-thirds majority favoring calling a Constitutional Amendment election.

Former State Representative Gary Walker assisted Representative Jones in covering the ongoing and very frustrating school tax problems. He pointed out the time element at present is not a real issue.

"School tax funds are already in place. It is almost a certainty

any major changes in tax funding methods cannot take place until actual work on the budgeting process for 2005-06 is accomplished," Walker said.

Both Jones and Walker agreed one possible source of education funds could come from a state income tax, but "That is a very dirty word in many areas of the state and in the legislature itself. Many think one income tax already is plenty, though Texas is in the minority of states not resorting to the state income tax."

Walker said school funds could come from increasing the state sales tax, "But the increase would have to be very substantial to put a dent in the needs of public education. The sales tax would have to double to come close to the reported \$10.5 billion shortage of funds,

and it's unlikely voters would go for this jump." He added, "The very large metro areas like Dallas-Fort Worth, Houston, San Antonio would fight the issue strongly, afraid the tax increase would harm their business economies."

Representative Jones, with well over twenty years experience in Austin, related morale in the state capitol during the recent sessions "Is as low as I can remember it in all these years. And it's not just the elected officials, it's apparent in staff members, even the hundreds of lobbyists working the scene. I feel many of us have spent years and years working on improving the public's impression of the reputation of the state legislature, but these last few months have taken a serious toll. And all these questions are not answered yet."

Computer server upgrade, microfilming of court records, re-bid on county property owned for unpaid taxes top Commissioners Court agenda

In Commissioners Court June 7, County Auditor Darinda McWhirter discussed options for updating the courthouse computer server. The present system is out-dated, and is at its limit in data storage capabilities. She reported a consultant had recently reviewed options to upgrade the server. After detailed explanations, she recommended to the court the present 4.3 operation system be upgraded to a 5.1 system until the entire operating system can be replaced at a later time. The estimated cost of \$3370 would be paid from budgeted funds. She reported a complete updating of the courthouse system is estimated at over \$20,000, and Judge Dallas Brewer suggested this could be considered in the next year budgeting session.

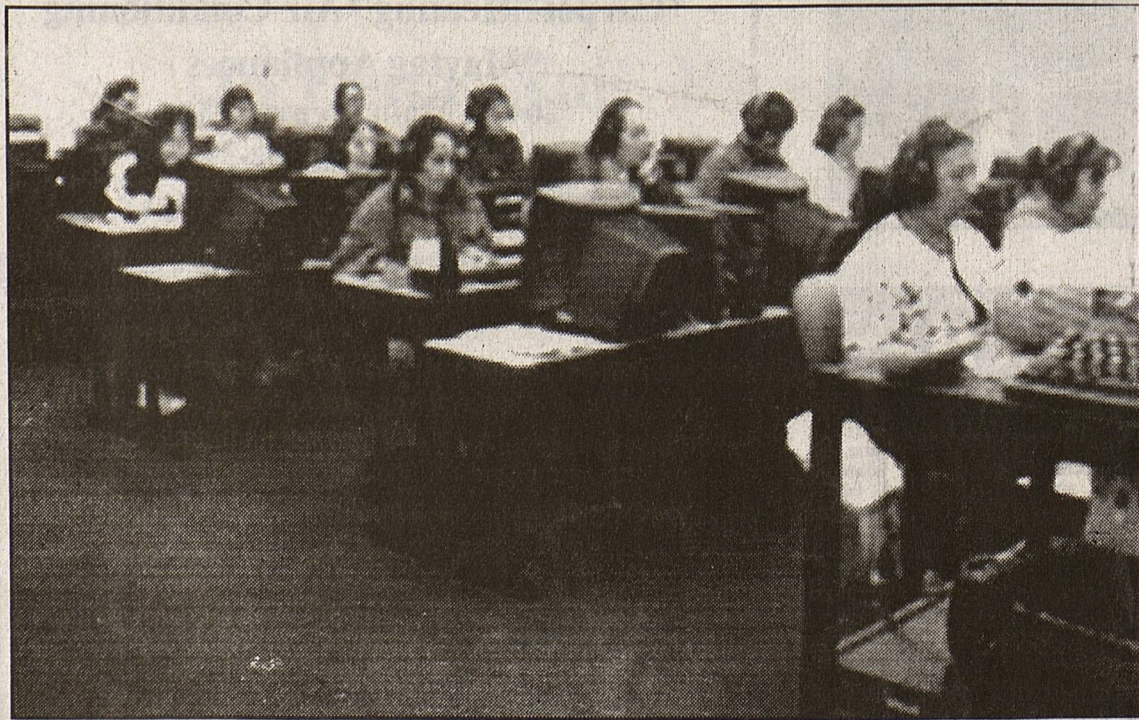
District Clerk Vicki Blundell requested \$4,187 to enable micro-filming of 20 volumes of District Court records. The microfilming program started originally with a total of 68 volumes of the records. She reported at the start of the current year her office had started charging a \$5 fee on all district court civil cases filed,

which should fund the continuing microfilming project until completed. The request was approved.

County Treasurer Barbara Wright reported a May ending balance in the general fund of \$13,583,240. County Tax Assessor/Collector Betty Rivas reported collecting \$39,095 county taxes in May. Rivas also reported to the court nine bids had been received on property now owned by the county and did not sell in the June 2nd Sheriff's sale for the properties.

Judge Brewer told the court he had discussed the matter with counsel, and because of the low bids, he felt it would be prudent to reject all the bids, and give the court ample time to study the list of properties, amount of delinquent taxes, and agree on a minimum acceptable bid on each property. He cited one property on Mustang in Denver City as an example of extremely low bidding which would penalize the county if accepted. The real estate and its improvements had a valuation of approximately \$87,000, and over \$60,000 in back taxes were owed, yet the high

TURN TO PAGE FOUR, "COURT"



Adult students are shown using the computer lab at The Learning Center in Denver City.



CAPITOL COMMENT

U.S. SENATOR

KAY BAILEY HUTCHISON



This Memorial Day weekend, thousands of Americans descended upon the National Mall in Washington, D.C. to pay tribute to the Greatest Generation and celebrate the dedication of the World War II Memorial. It has been nearly 59 years since the end of the Second World War, and at long last our nation has a place that honors the 16 million who served in the Armed Forces, the more than 400,000 who died, and the millions who supported the war effort here at home.

Following 11 years of fundraising, public hearings and construction the memorial finally stands stoic and respectful of its historic surroundings, nestled between the Lincoln and Washington monuments on the Mall. Representative of the importance the American people placed on this memorial is the fact that it was primarily funded through private donations, \$195 million to be exact, including \$16 million from the federal government.

The Memorial is an amazing structure, beautiful, strong and representative of the great heroes of World War II. The Memorial Plaza, a wide open expanse that encourages visitors to wander freely and enjoy the site, and the Rainbow Pool are the principal design features of the memorial. The bases of granite and bronze are adorned with the military service seals of the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Army Air Forces, Coast Guard and Merchant Marine. A series of bronze panels along the entrance depict America's war years, at home and overseas. Visitors can reflect upon the memorial while sitting on the benches that align the outside structure.

Adorning the north and south ends of the plaza are two 43 foot arches representing battles won in both the Atlantic and Pacific theatres. Her four bronze American eagles hold a suspended victory laurel to memorialize the triumph of the World War II generation. Below the arches is the World War II victory medal, surrounded by the years '1941-1945' and the words 'Victory on Land, Victory at Sea, and Victory in the Air.'

Outlining the entire memorial are fifty-six granite pillars representing each state and territory from that period to celebrate the unprecedented national unity during the Second World War. To show the power of this extraordinary bond, a bronze sculpted rope connects every pillar. These pillars are strategically placed so that the center of the memorial is open, allowing ample space for viewing into and across the site.

Within a commemorative area at the western side of the memorial lies a field of 4,000 sculpted gold stars called the Freedom Wall, representing the more than 400,000 Americans who gave their lives. During the war era, the gold star was the symbol of family sacrifice.

One of my favorite aspects of the exhibit is a quote engraved upon the memorial's wall from Colonel Oveta Culp Hobby, a native Texan who served as director of the Women's Army Corps (WAC). The WAC was created to enlist women as auxiliaries for noncombatant duty in the U.S. Army, where they served in roles such as medical technicians and secretaries in all the theaters of war. Col. Hobby's words were chosen to commemorate and pay tribute to the effort and sacrifice of American women during the war era. The inscription reads, "Women who stepped up were measured as citizens of the nation, not as women. This was the people's war and everyone was in it."

The World War II Memorial is a masterpiece of both art and history. It will inspire future generations of Americans and deepen their appreciation of what this great generation sacrificed and accomplished in securing freedom and democracy. Above all, the memorial will stand as an important symbol of American national unity, a timeless reminder of the moral strength and great power that can flow when a free people are united together in a common and just cause.

If you or someone you know helped win the war, whether a veteran or someone on the home front, that person is eligible for the World War II Registry. Names in the Registry will be forever linked to the memorial's symbolic representation. To register visit www.wwiwmworial.com

Neugebauer Appointed To House-Senate Conference Committee

Congressman Randy Neugebauer's past and present work on transportation issues has earned him a highly sought-after spot on the House-Senate Conference Committee that will work out the final transportation funding authorization bill.

Speaker of the House J. Dennis Hastert named Neugebauer to the Conference Committee Thursday. Neugebauer was eligible to be considered for the slot because of his seat on the House Science Committee, which has partial jurisdiction over the legislation.

"This means so much to me, but more importantly, so much to West Texas," said Neugebauer, who was a leader of the Ports-to-Plains Trade Corridor Coalition before coming to Congress. "I look forward to working with my colleagues in the House and Senate on the final TEA-LU bill that will help bring more jobs and economic developments to West Texas and the Big Country."

The conference committees it the key part of the legislative process because it is where the final version of the bill is written by a smaller set of Members that are involved in any other part of the legislative process. Usually, conferees are among the most senior Members of the House.

Neugebauer worked to get high funding levels for key regional road projects in the House version of the bill, which was approved in April, including: \$16 million for the Marsha Sharp Freeway in Lubbock; \$16 million for the Big Spring Reliever Route; \$5 million for the John Ben Shepperd Parkway in Odessa, and; \$2 million for a feasibility study for the La Entrada al Pacifico Trade Corridor

"Congressman Neugebauer's appointment is great news for Ports to Plains and the entire region," said Ports-to-Plains President Michael Reeves. "To be tabbed for that highly coveted post speaks volumes about his ability to get things done in Washington. Congressman Neugebauer has been a great champion for Ports to Plains since its inception, and it is exciting to have him in such a powerful position with the ability to greatly advance our cause."

I would like to extend my gratitude and thanks to everyone who supported me in the P.I.S.D. Board of Trustees election. All of the advice and encouragement was greatly appreciated.

Thank You,
Daniel Canada

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Texas Oil Prices Are Up, But Production Is Down

At least on dry land, the days of the big oil strike are long gone in Texas. While the oil still flows, it's the small producer that is driving the industry. The big names have been selling wells to smaller companies, according to Frank Tomicek of the Texas Railroad Commission, the state agency that regulates the oil industry in Texas.

"With production volumes declining, major oil and gas production companies have steadily been selling off producing asset properties in the state because of this rise in marginal operating cost," Tomicek said.

He added that small and mid-size operators are assuming production roles in some of these areas, and they may actually be able to operate more efficiently even with decreased production volumes since their cost of operation is significantly lower than that of larger companies.

There were about 6,000 small and mid-sized operators in the state in November 2003, which is 1,700 fewer than in 2001, according to Alex Mills, president of the Texas Alliance of Energy Producers (TAEP), a trade association for independent oil and gas producers.

Fewer operators does not mean fewer rigs, though. Mills said these small and mid-sized operators may be responsible for driving the number of drilling rigs to its highest total in years. TAEP reported the total Texas drilling rig count at 473 in November 2003, up from 339 in November 2002 and 255 in November 1995.

Production of Texas crude peaked in 1972 at 3.45 million barrels per day then began a steady decline that, up to now, had seemed irreversible, Mills said.

"We've been on a (yearly) decline in production for a number of years of about 2 percent or so," Mills said. "We've been trying to reverse that trend, but to date we have not been able

to do so." Mills said Texas is still the largest producer of oil in the U.S. and is also the largest consumer. Mills expects consumption to rise and hopes that will put its partner, production, up with it.

"As the economy gets better, consumption is going to rise," he said. "We'd hope that production would raise with it."

In the meantime, Mills said Texas oil continues to play a major role in the state's economy, contributing about \$2 billion in overall economic impact in 2001.

Oil prices have seen both the high side and the low side in the last 10 to 15 years. According to Texas Comptroller Carole Keeton Strayhorn, the taxable price per barrel of oil reached as high as \$34 in 1990; fell as low as \$9.20 in 1999; and rose back up to \$34 in March 2003. By September 2003, the price per barrel had dropped back below \$30 but was the highest for a September price since 1999. (Ed. Note: Current crude prices hover around \$38-\$39 per barrel.)

Steve Howell, an independent producer and owner of Howell Oil and Gas in Marshall, Texas, said the smaller producers need a place to sell what they produce.

"My concern is access to markets," he said. "It's easier for larger entities to attract markets than it is for smaller producers who are drilling one to five wells at a time."

The higher prices are keeping the oil industry revenue stream flowing fairly consistently, though at slightly lower levels from year to year. As production dipped from more than 50 million barrels per month in 1999 to fewer than 30 million barrels per month in 2003, production tax revenue has averaged between \$29 million and \$32 million per month since 2000, according to Strayhorn.

"Things are looking pretty good," Howell said.

Black gold, Texas tea

Texas was the top oil-producing state in 2002, though the state's total production trailed the amount of oil generated in federal waters in the Gulf of Mexico.

2002 rank	State	Thousands of barrels
1	Federal Offshore (Gulf Coast)	567,810
2	Texas	365,817
3	Alaska	359,335
4	California	288,280
5	Oklahoma	66,030
6	Louisiana	60,378
7	New Mexico	58,293
8	Wyoming	54,726
9	Karjasas	33,343
10	North Dakota	30,800

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Texas Unemployment Rate Drops, Employers Continue To Add Jobs

The Texas seasonally adjusted unemployment rate dropped by two-tenths of a percent point to 6.0 percent from March to April. During the same period, Texas employers added jobs for the seventh consecutive month. Total Nonagricultural Employment in Texas gained 17,000 jobs from March to April and 87,900 since September 2003. Continuing a strong downward trend, initial claims for unemployment compensation for the week ending May 8, 2004, declined significantly. Claims have now declined every week since mid-July 2003.

"The Texas labor market continued to show its strength as the unemployment rate declined and employment rose," said TWC Chair Diane Rath. "While all of this bodes well for our economy, we must still maintain the momentum by assisting employers with their needs and helping dislocated workers return to work."

TAKS is giving our schools a roadmap to success

With so many conflicting opinions, it's probably not much of a surprise that the special session ended without a school bill. We hope our legislators come back for the next session focused not only on how to fund our schools, but on what we're trying to fund.

Texas has met the challenge of change in public education and has established a solid track record of improvement - and we need to maintain our progress and the reform initiatives that have given Texas schools a roadmap to success. With everything on the table for consideration, the Texas Legislature needs to recognize what's working and hold fast to programs and policies that are improving our schools.

It's only been five years since the Legislature, after careful deliberation and public input, authorized TAKS at a cost of millions of dollars. Thanks to assessment tools like the TAKS test, accountability measures for schools have improved and our teachers have a fair and accurate way to gauge what students know. According to a 2004 statewide survey conducted by the Texas Public Education Reform Foundation, the majority of Texans support TAKS.



Gayle Fallon
Texas Education Reform Caucus

Despite pessimism by some, our 11th graders showed a 47 percent increase over 2003 and scored big with a passing rate that's 23 points higher. Our 3rd grade TAKS reading scores improved from last year's scores thanks to expanded emphasis on early childhood learning, literacy programs and federal initiatives like No Child Left Behind. And the good news goes beyond test scores. Texas ranks first on the reported adequacy of teacher resources. We have the highest proportion of children in public pre-school and the third lowest elementary class size. Further, we've given school districts even greater flexibility in alternative teacher certification programs so we can address the teacher shortage and get more qualified teachers into the classroom.

More than just keeping up, Texas has actually pulled ahead of the nation in several critical categories thanks to assessment, accountability and programs targeted to

reach high-risk students. From 1990-2000, Texas showed the second largest improvement of 47 states on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics.

When looking at students from similar families, Texas ranks first for improvement of NAEP scores. This rating is significant as a recent RAND study shows that the single most important factor in a student's success at school is not per-pupil spending or even class size, but socioeconomic demographics. In Texas, high-risk, low-income students fare far better than similar students in Washington, DC, for example, because of high standards and programs designed to reach them early and often.

Thanks to high standards, accountability measures and assessment tools like the TAKS test, Texas has seen marked improvement in education. These initiatives are even more critical today than 20 years ago because the role of "teacher" has evolved and expanded dramatically. Today's teachers must function as subject experts, guidance counselors, health advocates, technology wizards and sometimes even family mediators for whole class-

rooms of children. To ensure that scholastics maintain their place as a top priority, teachers and students need, and deserve, a clear roadmap to keep pace in a fast-changing world.

The Legislature should not back away from what's working. Improvement in education is made possible because accountability measures and assessment dictate expectations. Teachers know what they need to accomplish and students understand what's expected of them. Educational landmarks that give teachers and students something to shoot for help everyone keep moving in the right direction.

As the debate for funding education unfolds, Texas legislators must be mindful of our progress and maintain the clearly defined high standards, assessment and consistent expectations that are improving our schools and our state.

Gayle Fallon is a board member of the Texas Education Reform Caucus, a nonprofit organization dedicated to advancing the cause of education reform in Texas. Fallon is president of the Houston Federation of Teachers and has taught elementary, high school and alternative education.

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From Page One, "COURT" and agree on a minimum acceptable bid on each property. He cited a property on Mustang Avenue in Denver City as example of a very low bid which would be unfair to the county if accepted. The property had a valuation of \$87,000, with over \$60,000 owed in back taxes, yet the high bid on the property was just \$15,000. The judge told the court he did not consider this reasonable or realistic, and hoped when the court could agree on a minimum acceptable bid on all the properties it would greatly benefit the county.

Industrial age sweeps state

A survey at Texas A&M indicates there are now 25,000 tractors in use on Texas farms. Since one large tractor can displace several workers, it is easy to see an agricultural revolution is underway. The machine age, however, has not

reached all farm women. A study indicates 57% of farm women interviewed use wood as fuel for cooking, 80% used oil for lamps, 90% washed by rubbing and boiling, and only 50% had telephones.. March, 1930

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I am honored!

Pam Redman

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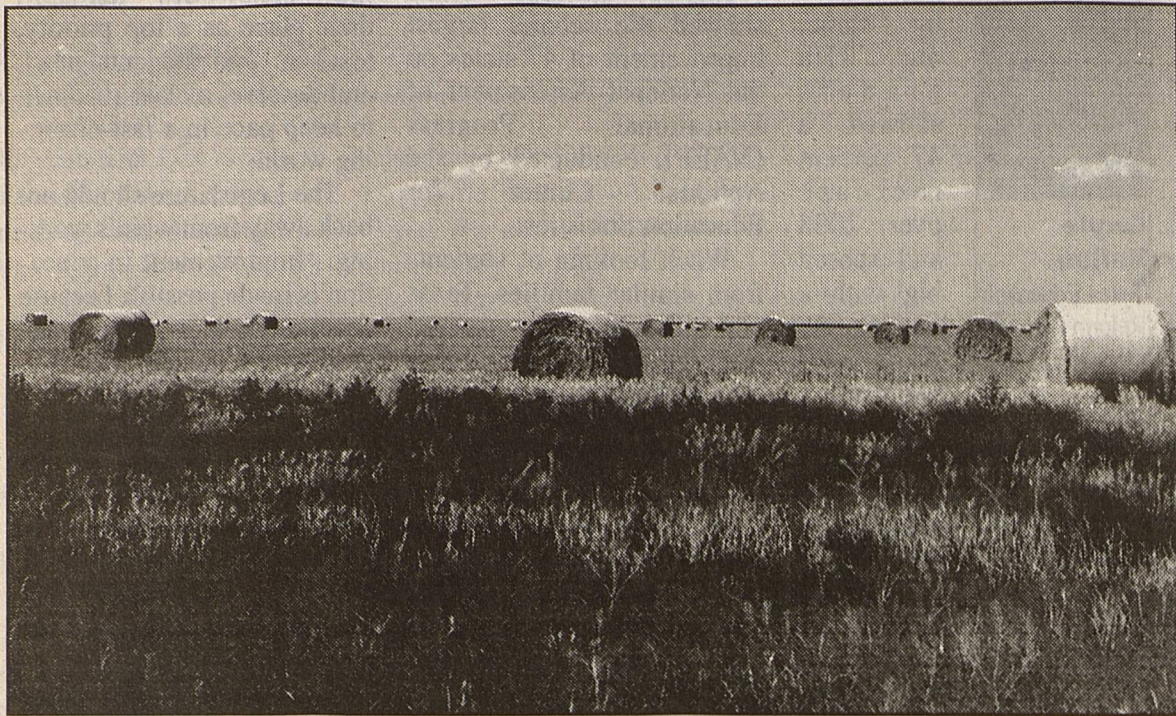
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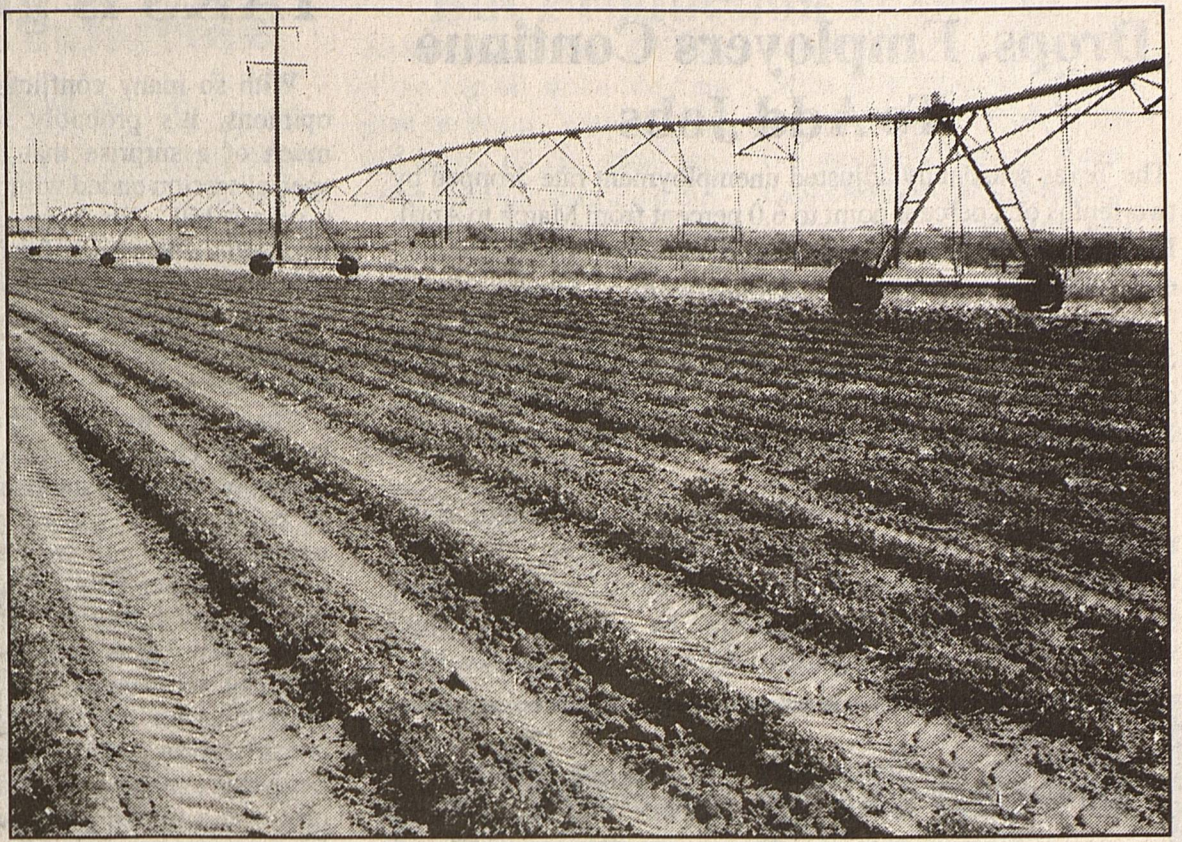
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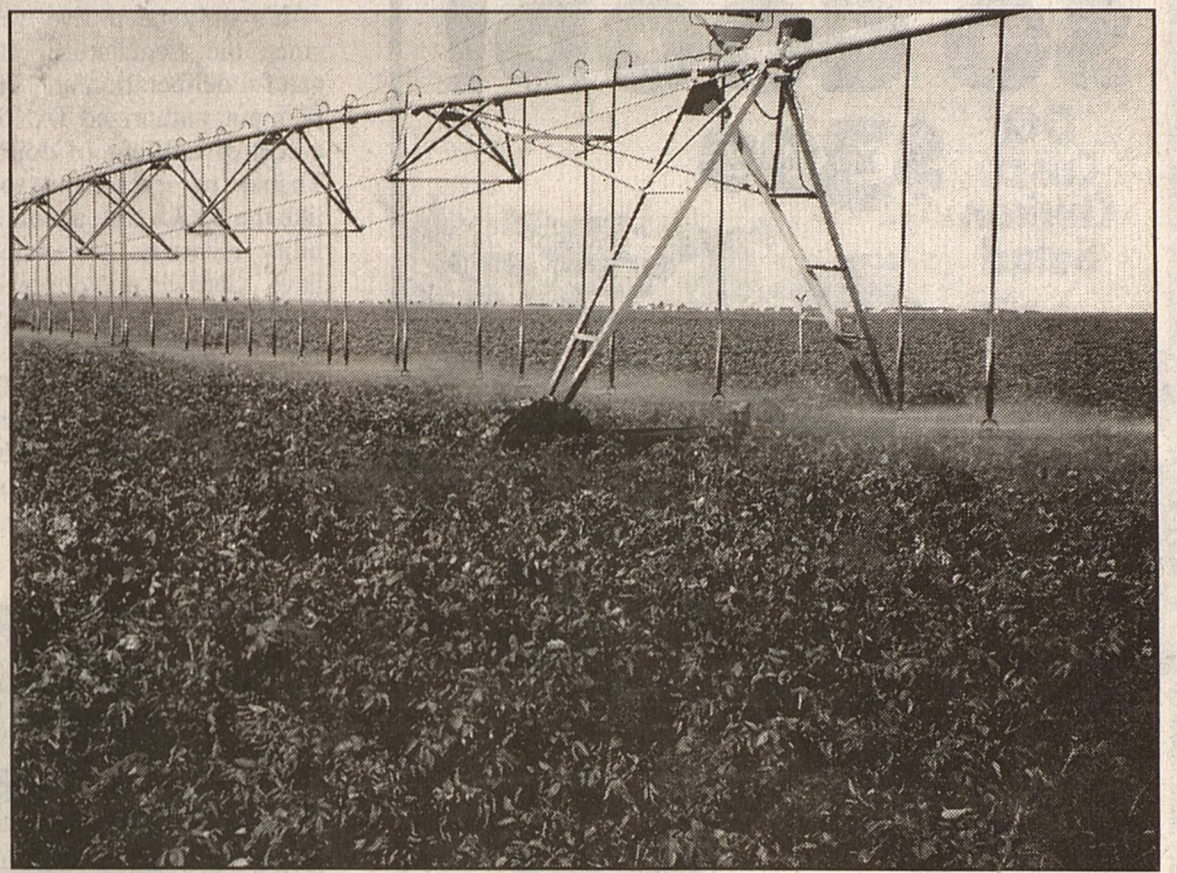
Round bales of wheat stubble following harvesting



Valencia peanuts planted in state line field



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Excellent crop of irrigated chili plants

SPC Fall Registration Dates Announced

South Plains College's fall 2004 registration is August 25 at SPC Levelland and August 26 at the SPC Reese Center campus in Lubbock. Fall classes begin August 30, and late registration will be August 30-September 2.

Online fall registration is available using CampusConnect for those students enrolled in spring and summer 2004 classes who have passed all portions of the Texas Success Initiative or who are exempt. TSI requires that all new students entering Texas public colleges and universities take a placement test prior to enrolling in college level courses. Online fall registration will end August 18.

New student orientation on the Levelland campus is available for all entering freshmen or transfer students with fewer than 15 credit hours. Orientation sessions are scheduled June 22-23, June 29-30,

July 13-14, August 3-4 and August 24-25. Students will receive an orientation letter.

"South Plains College does not have an application deadline or an application fee. However, students are encouraged to apply as soon as possible to be invited to orientation," said Andrea Rangel, dean of admissions and records.

A variety of Internet courses will be offered in Agriculture, Anthropology, Biology, Business Administration, Computer Information Systems, Electrical and Power Transmission Technology, English, Government, History, Human Development, Law Enforcement, Physical Education, Psychology and Sociology.

For more information, check out the college's website at www.southplainscollege.edu or contact SPC Levelland at 894-9611, ext. 2572, or SPC Reese at 885-3048, ext. 4660.

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Juno Jamboree

Motorcycle Rally

June 12, 2004

Lovington, New Mexico

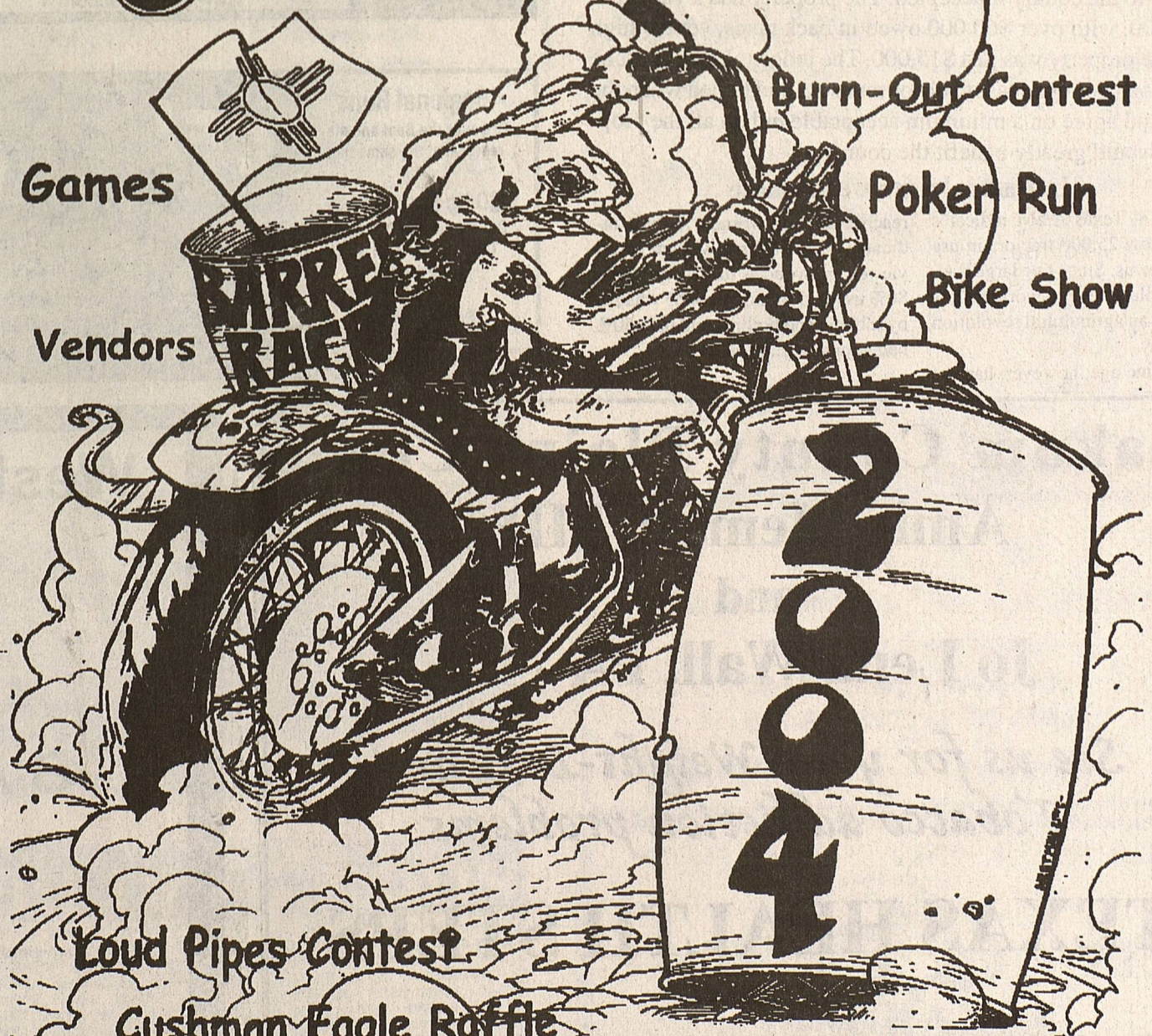
Games

Burn-Out Contest

Poker Run

Bike Show

Vendors



Loud Pipes Contest!

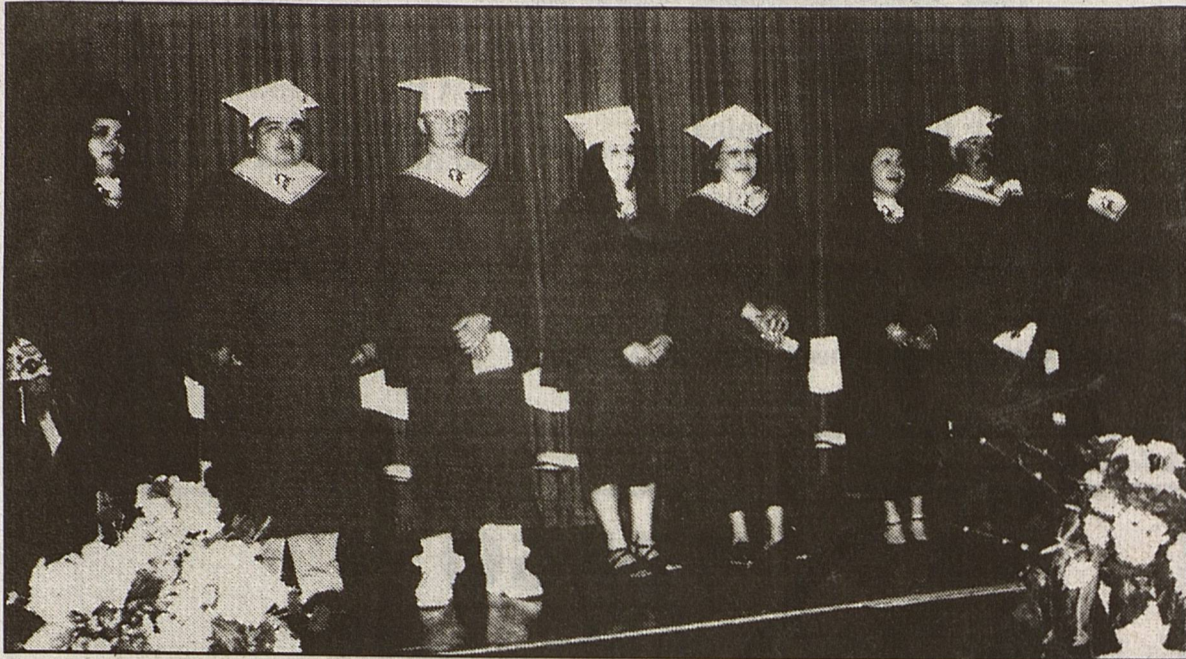
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Lifelines & Styles

YCFL Celebrates Graduation And Year End Breakfast



In caps and gowns with diplomas are Yolanda Velasquez, Plains, Orlando Rodriguez, Joe Glenn, Shanna Cook, Magdalena Aguirre, Diana Sainz, Plains, Cesar Molina, and Josie Guerra, Plains

Yoakum County Family Literacy celebrate the graduation of nine students Thursday, May 20, 2004 in the auditorium of the Denver City High School. The students from the evening GED class receiving diplomas were: Josie Guerra, Cesar Molina, and Diana Sainz. The evening class is taught by Angel Hernandez. Graduates from the morning GED class were: Magdalena Aguirre, Shanna Cook, Joe Glenn, John Neufeld, Orlando Rodriguez, and Yolanda Velasquez. One graduate, John Neufeld, was not able to be at graduation because of military service. The a.m. class is taught by Pamela New. Six graduates reside in Denver City and three are from Plains.

Eight additional students were recognized for completing several portions of the GED tests during the school year. School board president Davela Parker handed out the diplomas to the nine graduates. Yoakum County Judge Dallas Brewer

delivered the invocation for the ceremony. Each graduate revealed his or her future educational or career plans.

All the participants of Yoakum County Family Literacy including the morning and evening programs of English as a Second Language, Computers, and GED classes celebrated the end of the year with a breakfast and awards ceremony at 8:30 a.m. on May 20th. The student with the most class hours in the entire program was Luz Elena Melendez-ESL II a.m., Cesar Molina-GED a.m., and Carmen Cruz-ESL p.m.

The student volunteer of the year was Juana Yanez. The community volunteer of the year with the most hours was Arturo Cortez, who aided students in preparing for the citizenship test for naturalization.

Kathy Johnson was also recognized for her tutoring in GED class. The class presented her with a decorative birdhouse and book on gardening in appreciation for her hours of help in preparing for the math GED test. Also recognized for his special service to YCFL was Ken Taylor, DCIDS Jr. High Counselor and former GED test examiner.

Attendance this year at Yoakum County Family Literacy includes 105 adults and 61 children in the morning classes and 65 adults in the evening classes.

Funding sources for the literacy program include the Yoakum County Judge and Commissioners' Court, Denver City ISD, Region 17 ESC Adult Cooperative, Spartan Transportation, City of Denver City and City of Plains, CJR Contractors, Yoakum County Libraries, Oxy Permian Ltd., and the Denver City United Fund and WorkSource of the South Plains.

Local Named To Honors List

William Boyles of Plains has been named to the President's List at Lubbock Christian University for the spring semester of 2004.

In order to be considered a part of the president's list, a student must be taking a minimum of 12 semester hours and achieve a 4.0 grade point average or better for the entire semester.

The number of LCU students

named to the list has increased dramatically in recent years due to a stronger emphasis on campus toward academics. The administration has developed new programs over the last several years to help students in completing their academic responsibilities, including the Academic Support Center, which offers free student tutoring.

Think Texas

by Agriculture Commissioner
SUSAN COMBS

Texas is the source of many great icons — cowboys, horses and barbecue are some obvious ones. There is one that's quite a bit smaller but packs a Texas-sized wallop when it comes to flavor — jalapeños.

Jalapeños are smooth, dark green or scarlet, and boldly make their presence known in a variety of dishes. Salsa just isn't salsa without jalapeños, and beyond traditional Tex-Mex fare, jalapeños are found in a variety of unexpected places — from jalapeño pecan brittle to jalapeño jelly. They can also be stuffed with cheese or stuffed inside large green olives for extra kick. Jalapeños are so popular in Texas that some people string jalapeño-shaped lights on their Christmas trees.

Texas is the largest source for these little legends: the Lone Star State is the leading producer of fresh jalapeños in the United States. More than 2,500 acres of jalapeño peppers are harvested in the El Paso Valley with annual sales of more than \$5 million.

The market for chipotle peppers has sprung up in Texas as a result of the jalapeño production here. Chipotle is a dried, smoked jalapeño with wrinkled, dark brown skin and a smoky, sweet flavor.

One cup of chopped jalapeños has four grams of dietary fiber and is high in vitamins A and C. They're also low in saturated fat and cholesterol, which is just another good reason put a Texas jalapeño kick into your favorite foods.

Senior Citizens Corner

Ted and Claudia Ferguson are enjoying two weeks of family vacation time at the Lake of the Pines. We hope this hot weather hasn't reached that far east.

Gladys Thomason met with several members of her family at Big Sandy to celebrate the Memorial Day holiday and to get an early start on celebrating Gladys' birthday which will be next week.

Opal and Ray Roberts left this week for a two week visit in Washington state to see their granddaughter graduate from high school and to visit the great grandchildren and other friends in the area.

Harley Evans has gone to Fairfield for two weeks. We miss all of these folks here at the Center.

Thelma Smith surprised everyone the other day when she walked in to share lunch with

us and catch up on all that's new in Denver City. She looks great and assures us that she is enjoying her home and friends in Snyder, Texas.

Anyone interested in attending an AARP Driver's class, please sign up on the list at the Center. Another class is planned for July if there are enough students signed up in time. We need ten students to have a class.

Anna Taylor brought not only an interesting and informative talk today, but gifted each of us with a serving of mixed fresh fruits to enjoy while she gave her program. Thanks, Anna, we look forward to your monthly visit.

A passing thought: "You know you're getting old when it takes you longer to rest that it did to get tired."

Poetry Winners Announced

Yoakum County Connection and Yoakum County Wordsmiths thank participating teachers Tammie Rogers of Denver City Elementary and Renetta O'Quinn of Plains High School for encouraging participation in the Watermelon Round-Up Poetry Contest. Others helping include Christy Brink, Linda Powell, Liz Chandler and Connie Webb, in addition to Yoakum County Libraries. Winning first place entries will be in the 2004 tabloid that Linda Harris edits. In addition, the winners receive \$25 and may read their poems at the Watermelon Round-Up to be held on the Plains Courthouse Square on September 4. The following individuals won this year's contest announces Jeannette Head, festival chair; Adult; Rhymed - 1st-Amber McWhirter. Patience Pays Off - 2nd-Tammie Rogers. Free Verse - 1st-Renetta O'Quinn. Untitled - High School - Rhymed-1st Landon Craft. Watermelon Round-Up-2nd-David Alldredge. Untitled - Antonio Martinez. Watermelon - Intermediate - Free Verse-1st-Kody Kidd. Watermelon Round-Up - Elementary-Rhymed-1st-Lindsey Saenz. Watch What You Eat-2nd-Marcial Zubiate-My Favorite Fruit. Free Verse - 1st-Kammi Birdsong-Watermelon Summer, 2nd-Garrett English-Watermelons

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Keeping Up With Schedules Vital For Childhood Immunizations

Perhaps it's a letter from your child's day care center. Or it may be among the list of requirements for school enrollment. Whatever the timing, the message is the same: Your child needs to be up to date on immunizations.

Texas Department of Health (TDH) officials urge parents to begin monitoring their children's immunizations records from birth, rather than waiting until a deadline rolls around.

According to Dr. Eduardo Sanchez, Texas Commissioner of Health, children should receive 80% of their childhood vaccinations by the time they are 2 years old.

"When children are not vaccinated, they are susceptible to vaccine-preventable diseases," Sanchez said. "Vaccines are health protecting. They are safe and they are effective. They are one of the great public health achievements of the last century. But we must continue to remind people that controlling vaccine-preventable diseases is an on-going process."

Just name them, diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis or whooping cough, hepatitis A, hepatitis B, measles, mumps, rubella, pneumococcal diseases, chickenpox, influenza, bacterial meningitis, polio. These are the baker's dozen of diseases that vaccines can protect children from getting.

According to TDH statistics, about 1,000 births occur in the state daily. "This means there are about 365,000 infants born each year in Texas who need protection against vaccine preventable diseases," Sanchez said. "Having their children immunized on time is one of the most important things parents can do to protect their children."

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campus of New
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camp is for
girl's grade
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the camp is
\$200 for
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additional
information call
Coach Bate at 505-
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FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
Plains, Texas

Sunday School

9:30 A.M.

Morning Worship

10:45 A.M.

Evening Program

6:00 P.M.

From The Hack

It was quite a weekend. The commemoration of D-Day and the horror and glory of the beaches of Normandy. The death of our 40th president, Ronald Reagan. The defeat of Smarty Jones in the Belmont Stakes.

I know which of the three events impressed me the most, probably because at the time it happened I was a very impressionable 12 year old kid living in the military town of El Paso, home of Fort Bliss and Biggs Air Force Base and thousands of G.I.s. When film of the landings on the five beaches of the French Coast were released to movie theaters and we could actually see our troops struggling ashore under murderous German fire, actually going down when hit, many to stay down, our country had a much better idea of the enormity of the event. The almost 10,000 American graves in the Normandy cemetery attest to the carnage of the landing, but it would be over 50 years later, when the epic film, Saving Private Ryan, was released, before we would witness the most realistic battle scenes ever created by Hollywood, all in up-close, gory color.

Over the weekend I caught a few TV interviews with veterans of D-Day visiting the Normandy area, and while most survivors are well in their

80's, they were all capable of exposing their emotions as they visited where many of their buddies fell. One Army survivor described how he was struggling up murderous Omaha Beach, and was hit in the jaw and teeth by Nazi machine gun fire. Struggling toward cover, he was shot again, a grazing wound to his head. He told the interviewer "I knew I was in trouble, and kept crawling, until I came across my best friend, dead from the same machine gun, and then all I could do was cuss the Germans, and cry like a baby until the medics pulled me to safety." Very strong stuff, indeed.

President Reagan's death was a very different matter. It will probably come across as cold and callous, but after all, the man was 93 years old, and in terrible physical condition, so did he and his family receive a blessing or what?

I hereby confess to all you Yellow Dog Democrats, Yes, I voted for the guy, just to get rid of the other guy. Without getting all stressed out about politics, he was a pretty cool cat, entertaining, and if nothing else, give the old Gipper credit for starting the Soviet Union's downward slide. And to be perfectly honest, he was a much better actor than that Chimp Bonzo!

I have not wagered a single peso on a horsrace in years, but if I had been present at Belmont, I'm positive I would have thrown away the largest bundle I could assemble, meager as that would be, on that once phenomenal Smarty Jones. And of course I would still be cursing him.... and my stupidity for not betting the family farm and jewels on Birdstone. When Smarty's owners witnessed Birdstone's burst of speed in the final stretch, I imagine their collective thinking was, "Where the Hell is this JET coming from? Somebody SHOOT him!"

Man, a hundred bucks on Birdstone's nose would have recovered \$3,700. I can't do any higher math.

A very impressive weekend.

Humor At Church:

At the start of children's church, a little girl came to the altar wearing a beautiful dress with lovely ribbons and bows, and as the children were sitting down the pastor leaned over and said to the little girl, "My, that's a pretty dress! Is it your Easter dress?"

The little girl replied loudly and directly into his clip on mike, "Yes, and my mommy says it's a real bitch to iron!"

A Sunday school teacher was escorting her young class into the auditorium and cautioned her charges to be very quiet.

"Do you know why we need to be quiet?" she asked. A bright little lad said, "Sure, 'cause everyone in there is sleeping."

I missed these tid-bits when we celebrated Mothers Day;

My mother taught me challenges; "What were you thinking. Answer me when I talk to you! Don't talk back to me!"

My mother taught me humor - "When the lawnmower cuts off your toes don't come running to me!"

My mother taught me genetics- "You are exactly like your father!" My mother taught me about sex. "How do you think you got here?" My mother taught me to anticipate. "just wait until your father gets home!"

My mother taught me wisdom of age. "When you get to my age you'll understand."

Win two tickets to SHANIA TWAIN concert on June 26 plus dinner at "On The Border". Drawing on June 19. Benefits Elite VB. Tickets \$5 Call 456-8714

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Notice Of Public Auction

Auction of seized vehicles and personal property

This is a public notice of a Sale of seized vehicles and personal property that were awarded to the Llano Estacado Drug Task Force by the 121st Judicial Court of Yoakum County and the United States Department of Justice. The Llano Estacado Drug Task Force at public auction will sell the vehicles and personal property listed below:

DATE: JUNE 24, 2004
TIME: 10:00 AM
PLACE: 2543 STATE HWY 214 DENVER CITY, TX (OLD CLAY TANKS BUILDING, NORTH OF DENVER CITY)

- | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1- 1989 Ford Crown Victoria | 1- 1968 Chev. Pickup |
| 1- 1991 Nissan 2 door | 1- 1990 GMC Pickup |
| 1- 1991 Chev. Cavalier | 1- 1982 GMC Van |
| 1- 1994 Mazda Pickup | 1- RCA Home Theater w/speakers |
| 1- 1996 Chev. Lumina | 1- Sony Playstation |
| 1- 1994 Ford Aerostar Van | 1- Car Amplifier and Speaker |
| 1- 1995 Chev. Pickup | |

**** NOTICE TO BUYERS ****

The vehicles and personal property will be sold as is. Purchaser(s) will be given a reasonable amount of time to remove property from auction location. All sales are final. Only cash or a certified bank check will be accepted.

Potential buyer(s) can contact the Llano Estacado Drug Task Force at 806-592-3802 for information.

SORGO SUDANGRASS

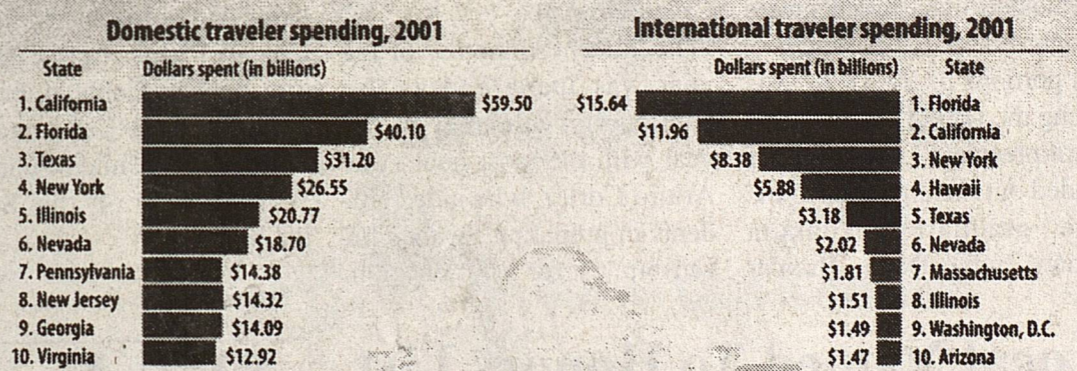
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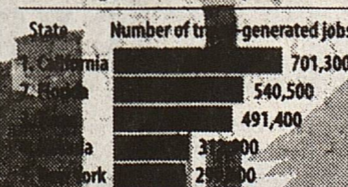
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TRAVELIN' MONEY

When tourists come to Texas, there's no doubt they tend to spend. Texas is one of the top states for tourist spending, trailing only California and Florida, according to the Travel Industry Association of America: In a 2003 study, the association reported that Texas ranked third in spending by American travelers, fifth in spending by international travelers and third in its number of travel-related jobs. The study's rankings were based on 2001 data, the most current year for which comparable data for all 50 states are available.



Travel-generated employment



Epidemic proportions

Texas' Statewide Obesity Task Force reports that "an epidemic of obesity" has become one of the most important health challenges the state faces. In 2001, nearly 39 percent of all fourth graders were overweight and about 30 percent of all 11th graders were overweight, according to the study.

	African American	Hispanic	White/Other*	All
Girls				
4th grade	51.7%	39.6%	32.9%	38.3%
8th grade	39.2	40.7	34.5	37.5
11th grade	44.3	41.8	14.0	27.5
Boys				
4th grade	45.7	50.0	27.6	39.1
8th grade	23.9	49.2	30.9	36.8
11th grade	45.6	41.9	21.4	31.4
Total				
4th grade	48.7	44.9	30.2	38.7
8th grade	31.4	45.0	32.7	37.1
11th grade	44.7	41.8	17.7	29.4