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THE KNOX COUNTY News-Courier

HOME OF GAIL NUNN

THURSDAY, APRIL 3, 2014

KCNEWSCOURIER.COM

75 CENTS

State roads plan topic of regional public meetings

The Knox County News-Courier

CHILDRESS — Texas Department of Transportation officials will conduct two public meetings to receive comments from the public on the latest Rural Transportation Improvement Program for the Childress District for fiscal years 2015-2018.

The Childress District includes Wheeler, Collingsworth, Childress, Hardeman, Foard, Knox, King, Dickens, Motley, Briscoe, Hall and Donley counties.

The TIP is a master plan is required to be updated every four years and is used by state and federal highway officials to fund roads projects.

The first meeting will be at 6 p.m. Tuesday at the Guthrie Community Center, 610 Second St., in Guthrie.

The second meeting will be at 6 p.m. April 10 at the Hampton Inn & Suites, 400 Madison Ave., in Childress.

People wishing to speak at the hearing may register in advance by notifying Barbara Seal at 940-937-7288 by Monday or they may register on site beginning at 5:30 p.m. on the day of the hearing.

These public meetings will be conducted in English, and both the Guthrie Community Center and Hampton Inn & Suites are handicap accessible. Any request for language interpreters or other special needs should be made at least two days prior to the public meeting. Every reasonable effort to accommodate these needs will be made.

Any comments following the public meeting may be submitted in writing to Marty Smith, Childress District Engineer, at 7599 U.S. 287, Childress, TX 79201-9705.

To be considered, a 10-day public comment period to submit written comments will close at the Childress District office by 5 p.m. April 25.

Water will top town hall forum focus

By Wayne Hodgin
The Knox County News-Courier

Members of the Knox County Republican Party will host a town hall meeting on water and drought issues later this month at which local and state officials will discuss the latest issues and allow the public a chance to come, hear and ask questions.

The event will be from 5:30 to 7 p.m. April 22 at the Bill Baker Auditorium at Knox City High School. Refreshments will be served following the forum.

Lou Vail, chairman of the Knox County Republican Party, said a number of local and state officials are expected to attend.

Those listed include state Rep. James Frank, R-Wichita Falls; Mike McGuire, executive director of the Rolling Plains Groundwater Conservation District; David Kuehler, executive director of the North Central Texas Municipal Water Authority, which maintains Miller Creek Reservoir; and city administrators from Benjamin, Knox City and Munday.

"We expect a good crowd willing to find out the latest news about the water situation in Knox County," Vail said.

Seymour child, 8, killed in Haskell County wreck

By Wayne Hodgin
The Knox County News-Courier

HASKELL — An 8-year-old Seymour girl was killed Friday evening on U.S. 277 in northern Haskell County when the vehicle she was a passenger in, along with her two other siblings, crashed as a result of a tire blowout.

The driver of the 1996 Ford Explorer, Marcus Gene Fernandez, 34, of Haskell, father of all three underage passengers, was taken to Haskell Memorial Hospital with serious injuries.

The man's two other children, Destini Paige

Achievement



Scoutmaster Kevin Finley recites the Scout Oath with the Munday Troop 76 Scouts Parker Finley, Trey Tidwell and Shannon Reeves, who are being awarded Eagle Scout ranks.



Parker Finley, Trey Tidwell, and Shannon Reeves all pose with their honorary Eagle Scout plaques. In addition to the plaques, the boys were awarded three different oval pins, an Eagle Scout medal, and the coveted Eagle Scout badge.



A Scout shrine that shows the boys' progress over the years sits in the lobby of First Bank Texas in Munday.

Three awarded Eagle Scout honors

By Geoff Baumgartner
The Knox County News-Courier

MUNDAY — Three members of Munday's Boy Scout Troop 76 were presented this last Saturday with their Eagle Scout badges during a special ceremony at Munday's Church of Christ.

In order to obtain this award, the boys put in extensive efforts. They each had to earn 21 merit badges, serve as a leader in their respective troop, and complete a major community service project.

Shannon Reeves erected a monument in honor of former Superintendent Charles Baker.

Trey Tidwell maintained repairs on various county flag poles and also participated in a military flag retirement ceremony.

Parker Finley replaced part of the roof at the Munday municipal pool.

Altogether, the boys put in almost 600 collective hours of community service to get these projects done. All three boys have been in Troop 76 since 2008 and have dedicated much of their free afternoons and weekends toward Scouting.

More than 100 area residents, family and friends attended Saturday's ceremony, conducted by Scoutmaster Kevin Finley. Lee Skelton was special guest speaker for the event.

Knox Notes

Events are listed free of charge as a service by this newspaper for nonprofit groups, civic organizations, churches, schools and select community events. Listings should be submitted at least two weeks in advance and will run as often as possible through the date of the event. News staff does not guarantee placement of events. Emailed submissions are preferred to kcnewscourier@gmail.com.

KC Chamber Banquet

The Knox City Chamber of Commerce annual banquet will be at 6 p.m. Sat. April 5th at the new Knox City Community Center. Guest speaker will be Glenn Dromgoole, author and former editor of the Abilene Reporter-News. Tickets cost \$18 each and are available at the Knox City Chamber office or from any board member. For information, contact Gail Nunn 940-658-3442.

TOPS Program

(Take Off Pounds Sensibly) meetings are at the Knox County Hospital "Break Room" at 5:30pm, Mondays. Contact Pam or Greg Oliver at (940)658-5120 for more information.

Rifle Raffle

The Orient 905 Mason Lodge A.F. & A.M. is holding a raffle for a Smith & Wesson M&P 15 Sport "black rifle." Tickets are \$5 each, 12 for \$50 or 25 for \$100. All proceeds benefit local scholarships and charities. Contact Steve Pepper 940-256-0028, or Greg Oliver at 361-877-6165 for more information. The drawing date is to be determined. The winner does not have to be present to win but MUST be legal age to possess a firearm in the state of Texas.

T-Shirts on Sale

Knox Prairie Ranch Roddeo t-shirts are now for sale! \$15.00 each. Call 940-203-2411 to place your order. Sizes--youth(x-small)-adult(3xl).

KCAC Raffle

Knox County Aging Center members are selling \$1 tickets for a \$250 gift card to Walmart as a fundraising project. The drawing will be held during the center's Mother's Day luncheon on May 11. Call the Center at 940-657-3618 for information.

Support Groups

AA and Al-Anon meetings are 7 p.m. Tuesdays, the Doug Meinzer Activity Center, 203 SW Fourth St., Knox City, TX. Call if you have questions, JoAnn @ 940-658-3926.

Noah Project

The Noah Project-North organization's Spring Fling will be April 26 at the Haskell Memorial Civic Center for which donations for the silent auction are still being accepted. Call 940-864-2551 for information.

Corrections

If you spot an error of fact, contact Editor Wayne Hodgin at kcnewscourier@gmail.com.

News on the go



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BMG BLACKBURN MEDIA GROUP

Office
121 E. B St., Munday
P.O. Box 151, Munday, Texas
76371

Phone 940-422-5350
Email kcnews-courier@gmail.com

PUBLISHER
William C. Blackburn

EXECUTIVE EDITOR
Wayne Hodgins

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It is the mission of this newspaper to promote the rights of individualism in the American Declaration of Independence. The right of life, liberty and the ownership of property are the cornerstone of freedom. Government's sole purpose is to enhance our liberty and freedom. Therefore, we hold every elected and appointed agent of government accountable to that standard.

DEADLINES
Advertising: 5 p.m. Fridays
Editorial: Noon Mondays

SUBSCRIPTIONS
\$30 a year in the county
\$35 a year outside the county



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Deaths

Doug Cunningham

GOREE — Walter "Doug" Cunningham, 84, passed away Friday, March 28, 2014, in Wichita Falls. Doug was born June 1, 1929, in Haskell County to Jimmy and Irene Cunningham. He and Marion Moore were married August 31, 1950, at the Goree Church Of Christ.

Doug graduated from Bomarton High School in 1946. Then joined the Army. He was on duty in Korea and at other forts in the U.S. He was discharged and decided to start col-

lege. In 1950 he married Marion and she worked for the coaches as a secretary while he went to school. He graduated from A&M in 1953. Then he pursued his career in the military for 25 years. He retired in 1975 as a Lt. Colonel. He managed the gin in Munday and also the gin in Seymour.

Doug is survived by his wife, Marion of Goree, two sons, Mark and wife Tina Cunningham of Texarkana, Texas, and Scott and fiancé Emily Keys of Lubbock, Texas; two grandsons, Tyler

and Jordan, and one granddaughter, Ashley; two sisters, Rheba Clark of Cincinnati, Ohio, and Joyce Roberts of Washington state. Also, several nieces and nephews.

Visitation will be held Sunday, March 30, 2014 from 5:30-6:30 P.M. at the funeral home. Services will be at 2PM, Monday, March 31, 2014 at the Munday Church of Christ. Interment will follow in Goree Cemetery under the direction of McCauley-Smith Funeral Home of Munday.

Menus: Week of April 7-11

Knox City-O'Brien

Breakfast
Monday: Sausage biscuit or cereal bowl, toast, mixed fruit, juice, milk

Tuesday: Biscuits with sausage gravy or cereal bowl, toast pears, juice, milk

Wednesday: Breakfast pancake wrap or cereal bowl with sausage, cinnamon apples, juice, milk

Thursday: Waffles with syrup or cereal bowl, toast peaches, juice, milk

Friday: Breakfast pizza or cereal bowl, toast, applesauce, juice, milk

Lunch

Monday: Spaghetti or antipasto salad with salami or bologna and cheese, corn green beans, mixed fruit, slushy, milk

Tuesday: Corndog or fajita chicken salad or turkey and cheese, carrots, pork and beans, fruit, slushy, milk

Wednesday: Chicken fajita tacos or garden pasta salad or ham and cheese, Mexicali corn, lettuce, cinnamon apple slices, slushy, milk

Thursday: Chicken tenders or zesty tuna salad or tuna salad, gravy, mashed

potatoes, green beans, peaches, slushy, milk

Friday: Pizza or chef salad or po-boy, tater tots, baked beans, applesauce, slushy, milk

Munday

Breakfast
Monday: Biscuit with sausage gravy, honey graham and applesauce, slushy, juice, milk

Tuesday: Cereal bowl with sausage, mixed fruit, slushy, juice, milk

Wednesday: Mini corn-dogs, honey graham, cinnamon apple slices, slushy, juice, milk

Thursday: Cereal bowl with sausage, pineapple, slushy, juice, milk

Friday: Pancake with syrup, honey graham, peaches, slushy, juice, milk

Lunch

Monday: Lasagna or bologna and cheese, green peas, corn, apple, slushy, milk

Tuesday: Chicken fried steak or turkey and cheese, gravy mashed potatoes, green beans, mixed fruit, slushy, milk

Wednesday: Beef tacos or ham and cheese, Mexi-

can style beans, lettuce, orange, slushy, milk

Thursday: Cheeseburger or tuna salad, carrots, lettuce, pineapple, slushy, milk

Friday: Pepperoni pizza or po-boy, tater tots, pork and beans, grapes, slushy, milk

Knox County Aging Center

Monday: Spaghetti with meat sauce, Italian vegetable salad, garlic toast, Jell-o

Tuesday: Hamburger steak with peppers, onions, garlic mashed potatoes, beets, bread cake

Wednesday: Soft taco, Spanish rice, broccoli, tortilla, Mandarin oranges

Thursday: Baked chicken and dumplings, corn tossed salad, wheat rolls, fruit cup

Friday: Hamburgers, potato wedges, tomato wedge salad, melon medley

Come eat with us and support your aging center program.

Please call in your orders by 10:00 a.m. to 657-3618.

Orders can't be taken after 11:00 a.m. please pick up by 11:00 a.m.

The Paperboy An old wound festers

Just when you think Americans have grown past the hate-filled ridiculous notion of racism, here comes the Ku Klux Klan to remind us there are still small, misguided minds lurking around.

It seems the KKK is on a recruitment drive and has been dropping leaflets saying "The KKK wants you" in towns in Texas, Louisiana, Illinois and Pennsylvania.

The Texas town this occurred in was Rhome, between Decatur and Fort Worth.

The fliers in Eunice, Louisiana, said, "Neighborhood Watch!!! The law abiding citizens of your community can sleep in peace knowing the Klan is awake! The KKK wants you." It was signed the "Loyal White Knights."

How comforting. This is not the time for hate. This is not the time for division. This is the time for the best of us to rise and lead.

The KKK needs to be done. The cowards need to climb back into their corner and wither and die.

This country is far from perfect, but conjuring up the hate from the past is the last thing we need.

Is Obamacare the biggest flop of any U.S. government program in history?

Well, since no one seems to know heads, tails, up, down or in-between, I guess it's impossible to tell. One thing is for sure, it is confusing and a sad joke.

Millions of confused Americans are now in peril as a result of the law. What was supposed to keep healthcare costs down has successfully blown up in the faces of many politicians. And they thought Americans would forget the manner in which the bill was passed?

And what does Obama do to try and sell his defective product? He uses his clout and popularity to involve clueless movie stars and athletes to try and convince Americans to sign up for something which is far from anything pitched by the president or Democrats. As if the ones trying to sell it have a lifestyle where affordable healthcare is an issue.

History will tell how bad the bill is. I predict that the troubles are just beginning. I think the courts will be sorting out the details for a long time and that Americans will be forced to participate in a program they cannot afford and one that provides subpar healthcare when compared to the old system.

In retrospect, it would have been easier and much more popular had the bill attempted to make sure all children under 18 were insured first. But no, that makes far too much sense...

Chris Blackburn serves as CEO at Blackburn Media Group, proud owner of The Floyd County Hesperian-Beacon, Hall County Herald, The Hollis News, The Knox County News-Courier, The Post Dispatch, The Childress Index, Wellington Leader and The Stonewall Courier. He can be reached by email at chris@blackburnmedia-group.com and you can follow him on Twitter @WCSBlackburn.

Relay for Life

Relay for Life
This year's event will be May 3 at the Munday High School track. Volunteers needed. For information, contact chairwoman, Leann Harlan, at memawharlan@yahoo.com.

Join a Relay for Life Team

The Knox-Haskell Relay for Life event will be held on Saturday, May 3rd at the Munday track. If you would like to join a team, call Nancy Tidwell 203-0270 or Carla Key 256-2280 or go online to relayforlife.org. In the fight against cancer, silence is the last thing we need. Your local Relay for Life is a great place to take action and make noise. At the Relay, there will be food, games and lots of activities, so GET READY to SALSA around the track as we celebrate, remember and FIGHT BACK. Please join us in the fight.

Relay for Life Bake Sale

Desechado el Cancer aka Castaway Cancer team is having a casserole and bake sale Friday, April 4th at Lawrence Brothers--Munday. To place order call Leann Harlan @ 940-203-0142 or John White @ 940-481-0304. 4 p.m. or until sold out.

R4L Luminarias

Remember or honor a loved one who has fought or is fighting the battle against cancer by dedicating a luminary to be lit during the 2014 Haskell-Knox Relay for Life event May 3 at the Munday track. A minimum \$5 donation is requested per request. Send your name/address along with the name of whom you want to be honored or memorialized. Also include your donation and team name and send to Konnie Kuehler, American Cancer Society, POB 626, Munday.

Gallery boasts new photo exhibit

Special to the Courier

ABILENE — A new exhibit of unique photographic compositions is now on display at The Center for Contemporary Arts' Emerging Artists Gallery. The exhibit is titled "It Was Always There: Photograph Collections," by Carrie Jones Isaacson.

In these photographic images, Isaacson combines several pieces together in one framed work to unite the pieces and form an intimate collection of precious objects for the viewer to consider. These particular objects are all representative of events or people who have been a significant part of the artist's life during a time of important

changes. She describes them as "a timeline of the personal journey I have been on for the past two years."

Isaacson is a native Texan, an award-winning photographer, and an assistant professor of photography at Hardin Simmons University. She has studied in Italy, exhibited across Texas, and lectured at several Texas colleges and art venues.

This exhibit will be on display from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesdays through Saturdays through May 3 and until 8 p.m. April 10, during the monthly ArtWalk event in downtown Abilene.

The Center for Contemporary Arts is at 220 Cypress St. in Abilene.

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Sunday School: 9:45 a.m.
Worship: 11:00 a.m., 6:00 p.m.

Wednesday
Awanas, Pre-K to 6th grade:
5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.
Youth: 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Easter Sunrise Service 7:30 a.m.

★ JOIN US FOR THE ANNUAL KNOX CITY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE BANQUET SATURDAY, APRIL 5TH 6 P.M. @ THE NEW COMMUNITY CENTER ★

Guest Speaker: Glenn Dromgoole
Author, syndicated columnist of 6 newspapers and former editor of the Abilene Reporter-News
Owner of Texas Star Book Store, Downtown Abilene

Tickets are \$18 @ the Chamber or from any Board Member
For more information, call the Chamber office at 940-658-3442

★ ★

Benjamin News

By Gladene Green

Well, today (Monday) is the last day of March. Hard to realize that one-fourth of 2014 is gone already! My, how the time is flying by. Thankfully, on this final day of what we refer to is the month famous for strong winds, it is calm. Maybe that will be the way the month goes out. We hope so.

Varied reports on our friends who have not been feeling too well. Most are pretty encouraging. Philomae Roberson is doing much better than she was for several months. She's been having to be checked weekly, but the last trip to the doctor, he told her she didn't have to come back for a month, and that pleased her.

Donnie and Barbara Ryder are still being very careful with their arms after the problems they have had. Barbara goes to an orthopedic surgeon tomorrow (Tuesday) in Lubbock and is wondering what lies ahead. She thinks there will probably be some surgery involved, but of course won't know for sure about anything until after she sees the doctor. Donnie is still limited on what he can do, but after he sees his doctor, he may be given a little more activity freedom.

Imagean Young and Deann Lamb were in Abilene Saturday to visit their son and brother, Mike Young, at HMC. They report he is doing pretty well but still has no idea when he may be released.

Here 'n' There

Cindy and Roger Potts of Seagraves were in the area last week to finish cleaning out her mom's (the late Mary Stone) house in Knox City. Cindy gathered up a lot of "stuff" to give to the museum, which I'm sure the museum personnel were glad to get. While here, they also visited with their friends, Debi and Mike Moorhouse.

Blaine Conner Neal's daughter, Shay of Seymour, is doing well after an ATV accident last Sunday and a couple of surgeries to repair a broken arm. She was taken to Cook's Children Hospital in Ft. Worth where she stayed until Thursday. She's doing much better. Goes back on Friday for a checkup and will probably have to have some skin grafts, but, so far, things are pretty encouraging. She's very fortunate as it could have been much worse. She is the

granddaughter of Janet Reed and Steve Conner, and her local great grandfather is Bud Conner. Shay is about nine years old.

I visited with Judie and Jack Whitten Saturday night. Judie comes over here pretty often, but I rarely ever see her, so it was good to have a chance to spend a little time with them. They are doing well.

James and Jill Jackson spent the weekend in Ft. Worth as sponsors for a group of young folks from the Believers Chapel in Munday, who attended the Christian retreat, Acquire the Fire. The Jackson's sons, Daniel and Grant, also attended the function.

My sister-in-law, (Van's sister) Neva Ridgeway has been quite ill in a Grapevine Hospital. She is now undergoing some therapy, but the long term prognosis is still very uncertain. Neva and her husband, Bob, live in Grapevine and have both been retired for several years. Bob's health is failing also, but they still maintain their own home with help from family and friends nearby.

Charles and Linda Griffith spent the weekend in the Longview-Gilmer area, revisiting places where Linda grew up. They said it was pretty and green down there, and the stock ponds and tanks had plenty of water in them. Unlike what we are seeing here! They went to Church on Sunday at the church Linda attended as a child. It is now Open Range Cowboy Church, and they said they thoroughly enjoyed it. Of course, lots of things have changed, but it's always good to go back to the places of our youth. It's good to see a change of scenery once in a while!

Lexie and Katie Taylor of Amarillo and Taylor Herring of Munday spent the weekend with grandparents, Mike and Debi Moorhouse. Their little girls—all about the same age—can think of a lot to do, but they all had a great time.

I talked to Ned Jones on Saturday. He had some surgery on his foot on Friday, and although he was doing ok, said it was pretty sore, and he would have to stay off it for a while. I'm sure he's relieved to have that done. Foot problems are no fun, and when your feet hurt, you hurt all over.

Gladene Green is the longtime correspondent for The Knox County News-Courier

Farm loan program expanded for new generation

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack today announced increased opportunity for producers as a result of the 2014 Farm Bill. A fact sheet outlining modifications to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) Farm Loan Programs is available here.

"Our nation's farmers and ranchers are the engine of the rural economy. These improvements to our Farm Loan Programs will help a new generation begin farming and grow existing farm operations," said Secretary Vilsack. "Today's announcement represents just one part of a series of investments the new Farm Bill makes in the next generation of agriculture, which is critical to economic growth in communities across the country."

The Farm Bill expands lending opportunities for thousands of farmers and ranchers to begin and continue operations, including greater flexibility in determining eligibility, raising loan limits, and emphasizing beginning and socially disadvantaged producers.

Changes that will take effect immediately include:

- Elimination of loan term limits for guaranteed operating loans.
- Modification of the definition of beginning farmer, using the average farm size for the county as a qualifier instead of the median farm size.
- Modification of the Joint Financing Direct Farm Ownership Interest Rate to 2 percent less than regular Direct Farm Ownership rate, with a floor of 2.5 percent. Previously, the rate was established at 5 percent.
- Increase of the maximum loan amount for Direct Farm Ownership down payments from \$225,000 to \$300,000.
- Elimination of rural residency requirement for Youth Loans, allowing urban youth to benefit.
- Debt forgiveness on Youth Loans, which will not prevent borrowers from obtaining additional loans from the federal government.
- Increase of the guarantee amount on Conservation Loans from 75 to 80 percent and 90 percent for socially disadvantaged borrowers and beginning farmers.
- Microloans will not count toward loan term

limits for veterans and beginning farmers.

Additional modifications must be implemented through the rulemaking processes. Visit the FSA Farm Bill website for detailed information and updates to farm loan programs.

USDA extends subsidy to dairy farmers
WASHINGTON, D.C. — U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) Administrator Juan M. Garcia today announced the extension of the Milk Income Loss Contract (MILC) program.

The extended MILC protects dairy farmers enrolled in the program against income loss through Sept. 1, 2014, or until a new Margin Protection Program for dairy producers (MPP), established by the 2014 Farm Bill, is operational.

Contracts for eligible producers enrolled in MILC on or before Sept. 30, 2013, are automatically extended until the termination date of the MILC program. Dairy operations with approved MILC contracts will continue to receive monthly payments if a payment rate is in effect.

MILC compensates enrolled dairy producers when the Boston Class I milk price falls below \$16.94 per hundredweight (cwt), after adjustment for the cost of dairy feed rations. MILC payments are calculated each month using the latest milk price and feed cost, just as in the 2008 Farm Bill. The payment rate for October 2013 through January 2014 marketings is zero. Payment rates during the months after January 2014 until the termination of the MILC program will be determined as the appropriate data becomes available.

Since MILC payments are limited to a maximum amount of milk production each fiscal year, dairy operations may select a production start month other than October 2013 (the start of fiscal year 2014). Producers who want to select a different production start month must visit their local FSA office between April 14 and May 30.

FSA will provide producers with information on program requirements, updates and sign-ups as the information becomes available. For more information on MILC, contact a local FSA county office or visit www.fsa.usda.gov.

The Idle American

All pipers must be paid

Bitter as the pill may taste, it is one each generation has a hard time swallowing: The piper must be paid.

It's a fundamental truth, muddled, of course, when "layaway plans" were trumped by credit purchases. "Buying now, paying later" is bait easily ingested, sliding down as smoothly as boiled okra in a gullet greased with WD-40.

Further, ad people tempt with new pitches to dull our financial senses. Soon, I expect "come-ons" with no interest due until The Second Coming. Someone dressed up the importance of payment options with clever wordplay. He/she said: "Some pay when due. Some overdue. Some never do. How do you do?" A fair question, what?

Just as dieters are said to "go to great lengths to avoid great widths," foolish mortals seem forever committed to taking alternate routes. They seek roads that masquerade as shortcuts — that is, to delay payment for as long as possible. Others chug-a-lug from the DIY (Do It Yourself) cup — you know, the devilish drink that convinces us we can save much wampum by "doing it ourselves." Spouses warn us about slippery slopes, but after gulping down the beverage, we take the Lowe's ad to heart — the one that says we can "build something together." If such be true, Lowe's had better be ready to hold up more than its half of the load.

We sometimes hear of derring-do that makes our head spin. Some folks are dumber than doorknobs on revolving doors — pushing envelopes further than the dollar store on sale day.

What about the veteran water department employee in Dallas? About five years ago, he decided he'd rather not pay his own water bills. So, he quit. His scheme worked until the recent discovery that he had jimmied his meter.

He's paying far more than the piper. Faced with a felony charge of criminal mischief, he's lost his job and faces overdue payment of \$1,916 for water "taken from the till." (That's an average of \$30 a month, so he must have used precious little water, perhaps figuring he might one day get caught.)

Bill Fishback, a longtime college

administrator, is a competent professional. And as a rule, he makes it through weekends easily. He's in the church choir, even sings in a quartet.

When fishing, he typically catches his limit. Check his freezer and find fish at all depths.

He's also frugal, known to climb over gates to save hinges. One weekend, however, he partook of that potion — DIY mentioned above — that crumbled his logic. A drain was clogged in the guest bathroom; "I'll fix it myself and save a bundle," he reasoned.

He rented a roter device. Rental shop owner Van Marshall warned that he might encounter some blockages that would require his "working it back and forth" a few times.

"Piece of cake," Bill responded.

Sure enough, the cable twice would go no farther, so Bill did as instructed. With back and forth action, the cable wormed forward, nearing the bathroom, some 75 feet away. Hooray, thought he, at the prospect of a project so quickly completed.

But no. It stopped again, and this time, "back and forth" efforts solved nothing. Bill's "get-a-bigger-hammer" mentality set in. He gave the cable his mightiest shove as prayers went upward for the cable to move forward. All seemed well. Bill chuckled gleefully, thankful he'd cleared the clogs with just five feet of cable remaining.

Whistling, he strutted to the bathroom, ready to dislocate both arms, if need be, during well-earned patting of his own back. Seconds later, his wife, Cecil, joined him, but there was "no joy in Mudville."

Six feet of cable flopped against the wall. Shattered porcelain cluttered the floor where the commode once stood. "I guess I shoved it too hard," he whimpered.

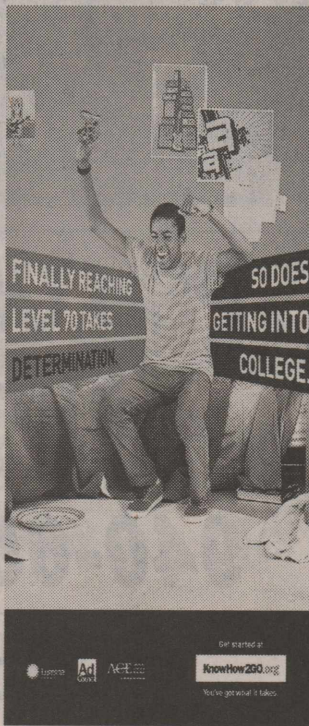
Looking on the bright side, Fishback bragged that the bathtub was not damaged.

Undaunted, he returned the roter. He then spent \$135 more for a new commode, paint and putty.

Money could have been saved, of course, if a plumber had been called early on. This way, though, there's a story for sharing across the years. It has embellishment possibilities, maybe including an eventual account claiming his mother-in-law was in the bathroom when things imploded.

Don Newbury, former chancellor of Howard Payne University in Brownwood, is a Christian humorist and motivational speaker.

Thanks for reading The Knox County News-Courier!



APRIL SAVINGS

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NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR FLUID INJECTION WELL PERMIT

Hunt Oil Company, 1900 North Akard Street, Dallas, Texas 75201-2300 has applied to the Railroad Commission of Texas for a permit to inject fluid into a formation which is productive of oil or gas. The applicant proposes to inject fluid into the Twin Peaks, Strawn Lower and Strawn 5400' formations in the S. B. Burnett Estate Lease Well Nos. N-11R, N-27R and N-53R. The proposed injection wells are located 17 miles southeast of Guthrie, Texas in the Anne Tandy (Strawn) Field, King County, Texas. Fluid will be injected into strata in the subsurface depth interval from 5050' to 5475'.

LEGAL AUTHORITY: Chapter 27 of the Texas Water Code, as amended, Title 3 of the Natural Resources Code, as amended, and the Statewide Rules of the Oil and Gas Division of the Railroad Commission of Texas.

Requests for a public hearing from persons who can show they are adversely affected, or requests for further information concerning any aspect of the application should be submitted in writing, within fifteen days of publication, to the Environmental Services Section, Oil and Gas Division, Railroad Commission of Texas, P.O. Box 12967, Capitol Station, Austin, Texas, 78711-2967. (Telephone 512/463-6792)

LUMINARIA ORDER FORM

Remember or Honor a loved one who has fought or are fighting the brave battle against CANCER by dedicating a luminaria to be lit during the Relay for Life of Knox/Haskell County on May 3, 2014 at the Munday Track Field. We ask a minimum donation of \$5.00 per Luminaria



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The 501 Lamenting playgrounds of yore: No danger, no fun

Take all the risks out of a playground and what do you have? A safe playground. How dull.

Remember swings? Merry-go-rounds? Monkey bars? Tall slides? Seesaws?



HANABA MUNN WELCH

Those were the days. I remember the thrill of swinging high and wondering what would happen if I went too high and fell out and landed on my head.

Mother had told me about a child who went too high and lost his or her perch and hit his or her head on something and died instantly. Or maybe that child was still gripping the chains to the swing and hit his or her head on the

uppermost bar. Either way, I was impressed.

"What's 'instantly'?" I asked her. She told me. I decided I wasn't ready to do myself in, not even instantly. Still I kept swinging. The danger made it all the more exciting.

The next time I encountered "instant" was in the comics. Someone had invented "instant" water. All you had to do was add water. I puzzled over the concept and then decided it was funny. I still think so. We digress.

Someone has just written a book about the dangers of danger-free playgrounds and such. She was on television this week to pitch her book and her concerns about the way today's children are being brought up. She caught my ear, and I started taking notes. Here's a paraphrase of her comments:

Playgrounds are boring. The risks are

gone. Children are less creative. They are shielded from physical harm and emotional harm so they can be safe and happy all the time. They're watched all the time. They aren't learning to be independent and self-reliant. Children are being damaged. Parents should re-conceive their roles. They should be concerned about creating opportunities for children to grow and develop.

INTERNET RESEARCH PAUSE.

The author's name and the title of her book didn't pop up for me in my cursory search, but one thing is evident — she's not the only one complaining about playgrounds that are too safe. Do a search for "boring playgrounds," and you'll see that people everywhere are unhappy about the way things have changed in the name of safety.

The capitalist part of my brain (damaged in just one playground concussion) just

kicked in. Why not revive dangerous playground equipment and market it to parents who would like to let their children have fun and take risks and maybe even break a radius or an ulna or suffer a mild head injury? Or why not build an old-fashioned playground somewhere and make it a destination point for traveling families?

Fabrication should be easy. When nothing is plastic, you don't need molds. Everything I remember from my grade school playground was built of wood painted green and steel painted silver. The most complicated piece of equipment was the merry-go-round. The janitor no doubt kept the bearings greased.

Here's to a return to the good stuff for the good of children everywhere!

And that woman's book be an instant hit.

Hanaba Munn Welch is a columnist and regular contributor Blackburn Media Group newspapers.

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UIL One-Act Play

KC will be alternate at regionals

By Geoff Baumgartner
The Knox County News-Courier

GUTHRIE — The UIL One Act Play District 10A competition was held at Guthrie High School last Saturday, March 29. While several schools competed in the event, only Aspermont and Spur were able to advance, and Knox City was named an alternate.

Spur performed "Of Mice and Men" to advance their performance, while Aspermont put on their successful comedy, "The Learned Ladies." Knox City's "Flowers for Algernon" and Crowell's "To See the Stars" were the alternate plays performed.

Keelie Deville and Chris Richardson took home the All-Star Cast Award for Knox City while Tyler Clark and Nate Wiggins won the Honorable Mention All-Star Cast Award.

Tara Martinez, Knox City's director, said she was disappointed, of course, her team did not advance but, she said, plans are already underway for next year's production.

"It's disappointing we did not move on to the regional competition, but our club did a good job and I'm very proud of them," she said. "We are looking forward to performing again next year."

The 1A competition will be held at Graham Memorial Auditorium on April 8, 2014. The contest will begin at 1 p.m.



Knox City High School students Nate Wiggins, Krys Campos and Tyler Clark received honorable mention awards for their roles in "Flowers for Algernon," the drama department's choice for this season's UIL one-act play competition. This past Friday, the Knox City troupe participated in the district competition in Anson, along with Aspermont and Spur, and was named alternate for the regionals show in Graham next week.

Track

Houndettes take third at Double Mountain Relays

ASPERMONT — Knox City's Houndette varsity track team managed to pick up the third place overall position from the Double Mountain Relay's in Stonewall County this past week. The Greyhound boy's team also placed high in several events, but had numerous runners sidelined due to injuries.

Boys results

400 Meter Dash - Sheldon Baty got sixth place.

400 Meter Relay- Sheldon Baty, Zach Carter, Elias Nevarez, and Anthony Estrada earned fourth place.

1600 Meter Relay- Sheldon Baty, Zach Carter, Elias Nevarez, and Anthony Estrada earned second place.

Shot Put- Krys Campos won third place.

Discus- Tyllyne Eaton won the first place spot, while Krys Campos maintained the fourth place position in the event.

Boys coach Colin Howeth said he was impressed with the performances his team was able to give, but looks forward to the team being in full force again before the end of the season.

"Our boys have been battling some injuries that have kept us from entering as many events as we would like to. Hopefully we are seeing

the light at the end of that tunnel and should be able to get some of our students into other events where they can show their talents."

The Houndettes managed to win the third place position at the competition.

Girls results

4 X 100 Relay Team earned third place.

4 X 200 Relay got won second place while the 4 x 400 Relay team earned fifth place in that race.

Essence Ward got 1st in the 100 Meter Dash, Caitlyn Baxter got 3rd in the 200 Meter Dash. Shailee Manning got second place in the

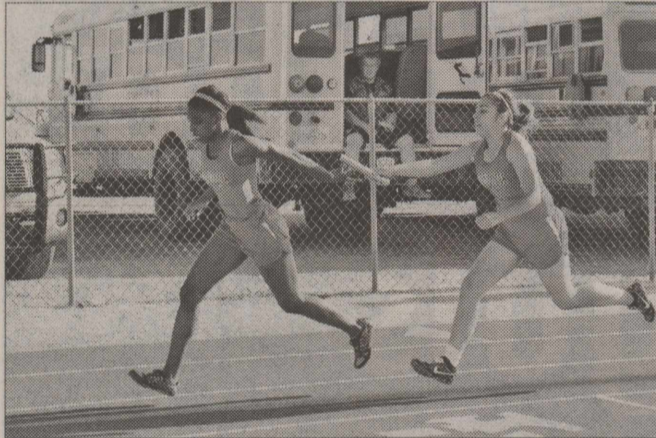
3200 and 5th in the 1600.

Kirstin Tuckness got fifth place in the Long Jump.

Makaylie Steele won second place in the Shot Put, while Jordyn Eaton earned the second place spot in the Discus event.

Girls coach Jason Josselet saw noticeable improvement in his girls performance and has been noticing the improvements every week now.

"I'm proud of our girls. They have been working hard every day. We are getting better each week. We'll have to keep working hard and competing every day to get where we want to go."



Caitlyn Baxter hands off to Essence Ward during the 800 meter relay. Ward won first place in the 100 meter dash and Baxter won third in the 200 meter dash.



Zinzilly McCrary takes flight into the long jump pit. Kirsten Tuckness ended up earning fifth place for KC in the event.



Skylar Neil begins to pull ahead of his competitors during his heat of the 100 Meter Dash event.

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UIL One-Act Play



Submitted photo
The cast, crew and directors of "Soldadera," including Raci Dillard, Mayte Torres, Tiffany Ser-rato, Yadi Gonzalez, Janie Salinas, Grace Tidwell, Rylie Decker, Alfonso Nunez, Haley Eric-son, Kelsie Hobert, Mitchell Lowrance, Mariela Jasso, Aiden Hunter, Kale Lewis, Maria Vega, Karen Longan and Mandi Brown. "Soldadera" is a one-act play about women soldiers during

the Mexican Revolution and has never been entered in UIL competition before. The Munday troupe, along with students from Olney, Archer City and Electra advanced from zone competi-tion the week prior to the district competition this past Friday in Anson. Only Archer City and Olney will advance to the area meet.

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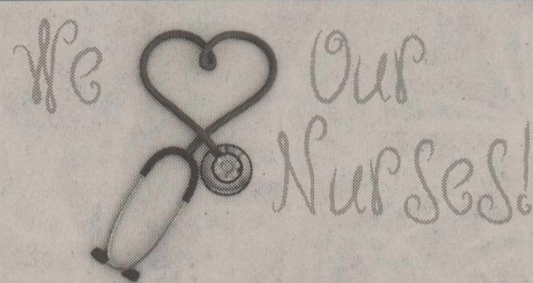
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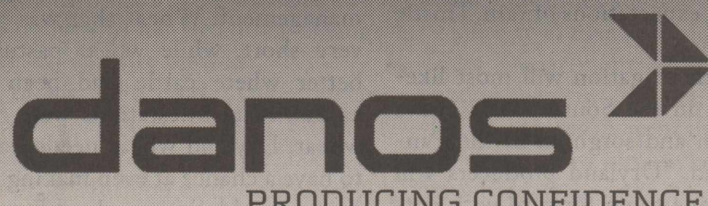
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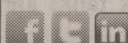
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Dixie Divas

Keep thy word

Not long ago, a friend of mine was huffing, puffing and carrying on something awful about an injustice she had recently suffered. She had dealt with someone rather devious and the result



RONDA RICH

was, well, rather devious. "Rest assured," I told her with the full confidence of a self-anointed know-it-all, a tone I learned well

from Mama. "He will get his comeuppance one day. The score is always settled. Always."

The problem with the score being settled is that it often comes in a time not in agreement with our timeline. We want it immediately. Normally, it comes a bit further down the line and often when it does come, we no longer care. But it comes. Good follows good, bad follows bad. I finally figured that out so I try hard to mind my P's and Q's and do everything in the way that I want to receive it back.

Daddy and Mama both taught strong lessons. It is

their advice and sensibilities that guide my life more than anything. Daddy firmly believed that you kept your word. At all costs. It is one of the strongest guiding principles of my life. It sits at the core of everything I do. And, sometimes it has cost me a lot.

Twice in recent time, I've gotten bitten by speaking engagements. One was a church in Seattle, Washington whose ladies had claimed to gather together and pray fervently for direction on hiring a speaker. Their prayer, they claimed, led them all across the country to me. We came to an agreement, I turned down another engagement for the same weekend but suddenly, their prayers forgotten, they cancelled the contract. A couple of months later, it happened with another speaking engagement. Again, keeping my word, I had turned down a fantastic opportunity for a trip. This time — the non-profit — cancelled a week out.

Yes, I get mad. I think unholy thoughts. Then, I get sad about churches and non-profits not being honorable and keeping their word. For what it's worth — and oh I do hate to tell you this — I have never had this happen with a for-profit company. Ever. On the few

occasions it happens, it will always be a church or non-profit who believe that because they are doing ministry and charity, that the rules of honor and decency do not apply to them. I can only find comfort in knowing that I did the right thing in keeping my word and that I will eventually reap from that.

On the other hand, there are times that keeping my word has given me much. Like when my friend, Karen, invited me to Los Angeles for the Grammy awards. She was nominated for the second straight year and the previous year, I had to miss the awards for a speaking engagement in Savannah. I promised, "If you're nominated next year, I'll be there."

The awards were two weeks away and, suddenly, I panicked. I couldn't afford the time to go because I was on deadline with a book. And, the airfare was outrageous. A weekend there would be ridiculously expensive. "I won't go," I said and closed my laptop where I had been searching for flights. I went to bed but couldn't sleep. I tossed and turned as Daddy's words rang in my ears, "When you give your word, you keep it. No matter what it takes."

I threw back the covers somewhere after midnight, went to my laptop and booked the flight. The day of the Grammys, something moved me to check my office messages. A Los Angeles producer was calling, asking to interview me by phone for a movie he was writing on NASCAR champion Alan Kulwicki who had been a good friend of mine. I returned his call and said, "I'm in L.A. and I could meet you for coffee, if you like."

And, that is how I met my husband.

Being honorable does pay off.

Ronda Rich is a Southern humorist, storyteller and best-selling author of "There's A Better Day A-Comin'."



S.J. Dahlstrom

Bluebonnets in Texas are a quintessential sign of springtime each year. However, many people may not realize that a bluebonnet plant actually takes two years to complete its biological life cycle. In the first year the plant grows leaves, stems and roots, then it enters a period of dormancy over the colder months. Usually the stem remains very short and the leaves are low to the ground, forming a rosette. During the next spring or summer, the stem of the biennial plant elongates greatly, or "bolts." The plant then flowers, producing fruits and seeds before it finally dies.

Wilder's Nature Journal

By S.J. Dahlstrom

Bluebonnet leaves are green with white edges. The white edges you see are actually small hairs that cover the leaves. The leaves branch out in groups of five and are shaped like a star around the plant. No other plant I know has leaves quite like this.

The cool part is when it rains, the leaves catch small droplets of water, kind of like a hand catching a ball. The water droplets run down the channel-like leaves and join in the center into one big droplet. The

bluebonnet leaf "hand" cradles the raindrop in the center.

The light hits the droplet from the top and underneath. It becomes a beautiful blue diamond of water. Bluebonnet blooms are great, but the leaves are very special, too.

S.J. Dahlstrom is a Garza County resident and author of the young adult fiction book series "The Adventures of Wilder Good," based on a 12-year-old boy who enjoys hunting, fishing, cowboying and just about everything there is to do outdoors.

Crops weighed against worsening drought

By Robert Burns
Special to the Courier

As Mother Nature continues to play what seems like an extended April Fools' joke on parts of Texas with ongoing drought, agricultural producers have some tough cropping decisions to make, according to a Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service crops expert.

Calvin Trostle, an agronomist with the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service in Lubbock, said this week that as conditions remain — and are likely to stay — very dry across the Texas High Plains, producers are looking at crop decisions that better reflect the prolonged drought cycle.

The U.S. Drought monitor on March 25 showed about 67 percent of the state in one stage of drought or another, with about another 18 percent listed as abnormally dry. These numbers reflect a substantial backslide from what appeared to be a mollifying of drought conditions as recently as a couple of weeks ago.

And the worsening of the drought is further concentrated in a wide swathe of the state from the Panhandle and the South Plains to the Rolling Plains and other central regions, where extreme drought is the rule rather than the exception, according to the monitor.

Faced with severe or extreme drought — in many counties now for three years running — producers will be looking at crops based upon crop insurance options, irrigation ability and expectations of rain, Trostle said.

"Farmers with irrigation will most likely plant cotton in the South Plains and a mixture of corn and sorghum in the Panhandle," he said. "Dryland producers will probably continue to go forward with cotton. However, because of lower input costs, grain sorghum might be a better choice, especially if they choose to wait toward

the tail end of the planting season, which is about a month later for sorghum than it is for cotton."

Sorghum is highly drought tolerant, but so is cotton, he said. And in some cases, not only are the economic rewards for a successful cotton crop better, but crop insurance coverage for cotton is a little stronger.

"As you move northward into the Texas Panhandle, you're more likely to see corn on the table as a cropping option," he said. "Historically, for full-season corn that is fully irrigated, producers want to get it in by April or the first half of May."

"But what I hear from producers today is that if they are looking at limited irrigation, they may choose a corn hybrid with a shorter maturity and maybe plant late May into mid June — even late June if they're south of Amarillo — just for the possibility of catching a late June rainfall and maturing the crop when the worst of the summer heat is over."

More information on the current Texas drought and wildfire alerts can be found on the AgriLife Extension Agricultural Drought Task Force website at agrilife.tamu.edu/drought.

Localized reports

Rolling Plains: Limited rain fell across the region midweek, but a big windstorm took most of the moisture away. Subsoil moisture remained in some areas, but topsoil was becoming extremely dry and hard. Crops varied in condition depending on management. Wheat that was grazed was very short, while wheat pastures looked better where cattle had been taken off earlier. Mite infestations were reported in wheat. Dryland wheat needed a rain soon to have a chance at even making a close-to-average yield. Spring-planted crops needed precipitation. Peach trees were blooming. Hay was in short supply. Stock tanks and lakes needed runoff.

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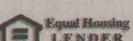
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