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THE KNOX COUNTY News-Courier

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THURSDAY, JANUARY 8, 2015

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Keystone pipeline high on GOP agenda

WASHINGTON--Republicans took full control of Congress earlier this week with an agenda that included trying to force approval of the Keystone XL oil pipeline and push back on President Barack Obama's sweeping policy shifts on immigration.

After years of battles over the budget and other issues, further clashes loom as Republicans who already control the House of Representatives took over the Senate majority on Tuesday after wins in November's midterm elections.

Obama has vowed to use his veto pen if Republicans pass legislation he opposes, but has indicated he believes he may be able to forge common ground with them in some areas, including free trade, overhauling the tax code and boosting infrastructure spending.

Reaching deals won't be easy amid deep mistrust on both sides. A spokesman for House Speaker John Boehner noted that to suddenly claim you're going to work with members of Congress after years of ignoring them is ludicrous.

Republican Mitch McConnell, who became the Senate majority leader, said the American people expect compromise on key issues despite divided government.

McConnell has said the first item on his agenda will be legislation to force approval of TransCanada Corp's Keystone XL pipeline. The pipeline, which has been under review by the Obama administration for years, would help transport oil from Canada's oil sands to the U.S. Gulf Coast. Many Democrats see the project as a threat to the environment, but supporters say it will create jobs and increase North American energy security.

A similar bill on Keystone failed late last year. The new Senate Energy Committee Chairwoman, Lisa Murkowski, plans a vote on Thursday by her panel on the issue.

Republican aides said efforts to weaken Obama's signature health care law are also high on their priorities.

One early legislative fight will come when Congress considers funding for the Department of Homeland Security. A \$1.1 trillion government spending bill passed in mid-December funds government through September, except for the DHS, which is funded only until Feb. 27. That was an effort by Republicans to block money for implementation of Obama's executive order that grants temporary relief from deportation to some undocumented immigrants.

Rep. Bill Flores, R-Texas, the incoming chairman of the conservative Republican Study Committee, said he was hopeful the GOP could move beyond the "internal strife" that has caused friction within the ranks. "I'm hoping that the fact that we're in the majority will resonate with people," he said.

Knox sees uncertainty of weather

One of the uncertainties during winter is how only a few degrees above or below the freezing mark can make a difference between a cold rain, a blanket of snow, an ice storm or a mixture of all of the above.

Knox County residents found how true this is during the last part of December and the start of 2015.

The result was icy conditions on the roadways that caused travel problems for those coming and going during the holidays.

On the welcome side, however, there were reports of from .9 to 1.5 inches of welcome moisture last week.

Knox City posts notice on water

KNOX CITY--The city of Knox City has been notified by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TECQ) that drinking water being supplied to customers has exceeded the Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) for total trihalomethanes.

There is no need to use an alternative water supply, but those with health concerns may want to talk to their doctor to get additional information.

New County officials sworn in



New officials of Knox County officially took office Jan. 2. Pictured (l to r) are: Nathan Urbanczyk, commissioner precinct # 4; Lisa Cypert, county and district clerk; Augustin Rodriguez, justice of the peace; Travis Floyd, county judge; Rosie Ake, county treasurer; and Dan Godsey, commissioner precinct # 2.

Knox Livestock Show scheduled Jan. 16-17

MUNDAY--The Knox County Junior Livestock Show is scheduled here Jan. 16-17 at the Young Farmers Building.

The annual event is a collaborative effort of the Knox County Junior Livestock Association, the FFA organizations at each of the county's three high schools, the respective 4-H groups and the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service of Knox County.

Youngsters will start weighing in their animals at 7 a.m. on Jan. 16. At 5 p.m. that day, judging will be done for rabbits,

chickens, sheep and goats. Then starting at 8 a.m. the next day, hogs and steers will be shown.

Jason Evans of Knox City High School reports that one of the seniors from the Texas Tech University judging team will do the judging.

Grand champion and reserve grand champion winners will be announced in each category.

A special new event will be the "Little Britches" contests for youths 5 to 8 years old.

Project show set Sunday

KNOX CITY--The Knox City Project Livestock show is scheduled here Sunday at the Ag Farm.

The annual event provides Knox City kids with an opportunity to show their pigs, goats, sheep and steers prior to the

Knox County Junior Livestock Show.

Knox City FFA teacher Jason Evans reports that a grand champion and a reserve grand champion will be picked in all divisions.

Perry wants to preserve 'Rainy Day Fund'

LUBBOCK--Sen. Charles Perry filed SJR 19 requiring that a minimum balance equal to 5% of general revenue must remain in the Economic Stabilization Fund, more commonly known as the 'Rainy Day Fund' (RDF) at all times.

Under Perry's legislation, the minimum balance for the 2014-15 biennium would have been \$4.81 billion.

"The Rainy Day Fund is primarily funded by revenue from oil and natural gas production," said Perry. "The amount deposited into the fund is much lower at \$50 per barrel than at \$100 per barrel. We need to be cognizant of that and ensure that we have savings in the fund when we truly need it."

Perry has long been an advocate for preserving the RDF, filing the same Constitutional Amendment in the House last Session.

SJR 19 requires a 4/5 vote for any appropriations from the RDF that would cause the balance to fall below the 5% threshold. This procedure would ensure

that a higher threshold than the current 2/3rds vote should be met in order to use the money available in cases of emergency or natural disaster. It not only ensures money in the fund when needed, but it is a protection of the state's AAA bond rating.

"I am proud of our budget writers for prioritizing the RDF and setting a floor of \$7 billion," continued Perry. "My legislation simply puts in place a floor to ensure that in the future we do not get overzealous in spending from our savings account."

This legislation is the latest in a series of fiscal responsibility bills authored by Perry. In addition to proposing a floor to the RDF, Perry has proposed limiting increases in our budget to population growth plus inflation, enacting zero-based budgeting for state agencies, eliminating diversions from transportation, and phasing out our state's cumbersome franchise tax.

Knox Calendar

Please notify the News-Courier to add or update your events and meeting times. Emailed submissions to kcnewscourier@gmail.com are preferred, but will also be accepted by phone at 940 422-5350. The deadline for inclusion in the next week's issue will be 5 p.m. on Fridays.

Thursday, Jan. 8

Benjamin JH basketball at Chillicothe
O'Brien JH basketball at Spur
O'Brien JHG basketball at Guthrie Tournament
Knox City JV basketball at Knox City Tournament

Friday, Jan. 9

Munday JVG, VG basketball vs. Harrold
Benjamin VG basketball vs. Chillicothe
Knox City VG, VB basketball at Patton Springs

Saturday, Jan 10

Knox City JVB basketball at Knox City Tournament
Munday JVG basketball at Albany JV Tournament

Sunday, Jan. 11

Knox City Project Livestock Show, 2:30 p.m., Ag Farm, Knox City

Monday, Jan. 12

Knox County Commissioners Court, 1:30 p.m., Knox County Courthouse
Benjamin JH basketball vs. Harrold

Tuesday, Jan. 13

Munday Lions Club, noon, Perry Payton Community Center
City of Munday, 6 p.m., City Hall
Benjamin VG, VB basketball at Harrold
Knox City JVB, VG, VB basketball vs. Paducah
Munday JVG, JVB, VG, VB basketball vs. Crowell
North Central Texas Water District, 7 p.m.

Thursday, Jan. 15

O'Brien JH basketball vs. Paducah
Munday JVG, JVB at Aspermont Tournament

Friday Jan. 16

Knox County Junior Livestock Show, Young Farmers Building, Munday
Munday VG, VB basketball at Benjamin VG, VB

Saturday, Jan. 17

Knox County Junior Livestock Show, Young Farmers Building, Munday
Munday JVG, JVB at Aspermont Tournament

Corrections

If you spot an error of fact, contact kcnewscourier@gmail.com.

News on the go



Use your smartphone to scan the quick response, or QR, code to visit us online.

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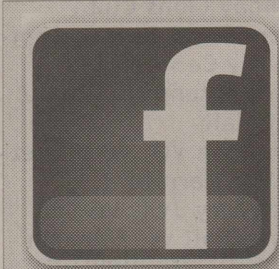
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The Knox County News-Courier

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: Noon Mondays
Editorial: 5 p.m. Mondays

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



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Deaths

Barbara Jane Ratliff

Barbara Jane Almanrode Ratliff, 85, died on Monday Jan. 5, 2015, in the Munday Nursing Center.

Funeral services will be Thursday Jan. 8 at 1:30 p.m. in the First United Methodist Church in Munday, with the Rev. Ms. Barbara Ibarra and Rev. Gary Hubbard officiating. A private burial in Johnson Memorial Cemetery will precede the service under the direction of McCauley-Smith Funeral Home.

Barbara was born March 10, 1929, in Knox City to parents Robert Muncie and Jane Elizabeth Horton Almanrode. She graduated from Sunset school system west of Munday and received degrees



BARBARA RATLIFF

from McMurry College and Abilene Christian College. She taught school in Goree and Munday before retiring after 35 years.

Barbara married William O. "Bully" Ratliff on June 24, 1952. He preceded her in death Nov. 27, 2007.

Barbara was active in the Knox County and Region 9 Retired Teacher Association. She was a lifelong member of the First United Methodist Church in Munday, serving as choir director and Sunday school teacher for many years. She also held various offices in United Methodist Women after her retirement.

Survivors include daughter Becky Ratliff of Lake-way; son and daughter-in-law, Barry and Karen Ratliff of Haskell; step-granddaughter Lynzie and Charlie Parks of Lubbock; step-grandson Jeremy Harlan of Goree; and two step-great-grandchildren, Remy and Brooklyn Parks of Lubbock.

The Paperboy

Can the new kids make a difference?

The Republicans are now in power in the House and Senate.

They seem ready to go and

should have bills in front of President Obama soon.

Let's hope those bills are done in a bipartisan fashion and feature strong legisla-

tion which will benefit Americans.

I was hoping the House would replace Speaker John Boehner, but I doubt that happens. Too much politics involved.

However, if they were to do it, I think it would be a positive move for the country and Congress.

In my opinion, the GOP needs new blood in leadership positions. In the long run, I think it would make the party better and more seemingly more attractive.

I think Democrats can look squarely at their na-

tional leadership and place direct blame on the shoulders of Nancy Pelosi and Harry Reid for how the party has fared over the past couple of years.

Those two had it their way for years and provided cover for Obama instead of making choices in the best interest of the country. In fact, they filled their time with blocking legislation and shutting out the opposition so very little could be accomplished.

Democrats need a change at the top and they should be looking elsewhere as well for their next presidential candidate.

In my 45-plus years on this planet, there has been one constant: The country runs better when neither party is in control of all three branches of government. It also works better with more moderate leaders in control of the respective parties.

I hope most Americans, regardless of party, are like me and are encouraging their elected officials to find common ground with the other party and get strong legislation passed for the country.

There is a reason that Presidents Reagan and Clinton are regarded as strong leaders. They were able to find common

ground in a variety of areas that most Americans could get on board with. The result was economic growth. Both presidencies occurred in more peaceful times when compared to other modern day presidencies.

What's strange about American politics to me is that if you take out a handful of issues, nearly all Americans are on the same page.

Probably the easiest thing for elected officials to do is concentrate on the economy and how to get our economic engine humming to the point that the U.S.A. is once again a great investment.

Let's put aside the issues that separate us and concentrate on those that unite us. When our leaders show us they can do that and get results, Americans will buy in and so will the world. At that time, we can create serious momentum.

Chris Blackburn serves as CEO at Blackburn Media Group, proud owner of The Red River Sun, The Floyd County Hesperian-Beacon, The Knox County News-Courier and The Post Dispatch. He can be reached by email at chris@blackburnmediagroup.com and you can follow him on Twitter @WCSBlackburn, although he doesn't tweet much.



CHRIS BLACKBURN

Knox County Sheriff's Report

December 15-January 6

- Macias, Michael Ray, 12/16/14, DOB 9/21/88, Criminal trespass, (M-8), Knox County
- Terrier, James, 12/21/14, DOB 12/17/81, assault family member/impede breathway, (M-8), Baylor County
- Hall, Gabrielle Denise, 12/30/14, DOB 5/30/96, unauthorized use of motor vehicle, (SJF), Knox County
- Plume, Cleborn, 12/20/14, DOB 10/29/94, disorderly conduct (M-C), Knox County
- Macias, Michael Ray, 1/2/15, DOB 9/21/88, Criminal trespass x2, (M-B), resist arrest (M-A), Knox County

DEAN W. HOMSTAD SHERIFF

Knox County Aging Center

Lunch menus for week of Jan. 11-17

Monday: Chicken tenders, gravy, green beans, corn, wheat rolls, mandarin oranges.

Tuesday: Beef stew, cornbread, salad, dessert.

Wednesday: Crumb topped fish, garlic roasted potatoes, peas, rolls & cake.

Thursday: Baked ham/pineapple, lima beans, corn, rolls, dessert.

Friday: Hot dogs, potato salad, pork & beans, fruit cocktail.

The twelve sites of Social Security

By Jose M Olivero

Social Security Public Affairs Specialist

Back by popular demand is our holiday favorite, "The Twelve Sites of Social Security." It's inspired by the popular traditional holiday song, "The Twelve Days of Christmas," a holiday favorite since 1780. Play it again, Santa!

For the first site of Social Security, we give to you: our home page, www.socialsecurity.gov. It's the place to go for all things Social Security. Everything you could want—from online services and benefit screening tools to publications and frequently asked questions—you can find easily on this site.

For the second site of Social Security, we give to you: answers to all of your Social Security related questions at our Frequently Asked Questions page at www.socialsecurity.gov/faq.

For the third site of Social Security, we give to you: an easy way to learn how to replace your Social Security card at www.socialsecurity.gov/ssnumber.

For the fourth site of Social Security, we give to you: an online application for retirement benefits that you can complete and submit in as little as 15 minutes, at www.socialsecurity.gov/applyretire.

For the fifth site of Social Security, we give to you: five estimates of your future Social Security benefits! Or one, or as many estimates as you would like using different scenarios. Get instant, personalized estimates of your future benefits at www.socialsecurity.gov/estimator.

For the sixth site of Social Security, we give to you: a convenient way to apply for disability benefits at www.socialsecurity.gov/applyfordisability.

For the seventh site of Social Security, we give to you: an online application for Medicare that you can complete in as little as 10 minutes, at www.socialsecurity.gov/medicareonly.

For the eighth site of Social Security, we give to you: Extra Help with Medicare prescription drug plan costs. You can learn more and apply online at www.socialsecurity.gov/prescriptionhelp.

For the ninth site of Social Security, we give to you: our convenient publication library with online booklets and pamphlets on numerous subjects at www.socialsecurity.gov/pubs.

For the tenth site of Social Security, we give to you: services for people who are currently receiving benefits, such as the ability to replace your Medicare card, request a proof of benefits letter, or check your Social Security information or benefits. You can do these and other things at www.socialsecurity.gov/pgm/getservices-change.htm.

For the eleventh site of Social Security, we give to you: a way to get your Social Security forms online at www.socialsecurity.gov/online.

On the twelfth site of Social Security, (and we saved the best for last): open your own personal my Social Security account, which will enable you to verify your earnings, get future benefit estimates, obtain instant benefit verification letters, update your Social Security information, and more at www.socialsecurity.gov/myaccount.

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The 501

Drip, drip, drip -- the sound of winter

Whether you want to slumber or stay awake, the sound of a dripping faucet does the trick, as long as you're happy either way.

That's the secret of contented living. If you don't agree, maybe you take running water for granted.

If my words sound odd, good. I'm aiming for paradoxical. The more torturous any philosophical snippet, the deeper the meaning. Right?

Blame my thoughts on the dripping faucet I monitored last night, awake and asleep. It sounded good. Yes, dripping water connotes Chinese water torture and Proverbs 27:15 the verse that likens a nagging wife to a dripping roof. Forget those connotations. What matters is that I restored running water to the farm RV after winter arrived with unexpected force.

Letting the water drip not only kept the system from freezing but also cheered me. Take that, winter!

Psychologist Abraham Maslow's famous hierarchy of needs rings true. Basic requirements must be met before humans can achieve higher levels of fulfillment. Here's to running water. But if Maslow had been helping cows survive the cold winter wherever he lived doubtless someplace with icy weather; those climates seem to produce the most famous psychologists; I could be wrong Maslow as herdsman would have put cows first. When you're in charge of cows, you can't worry about your own self until the cows are taken care of. Break the ice; breakfast second. Run water to depleted tanks.

Don't delay the hay. So many pairs

of wide-set staring eyes can't be denied, especially if there's snow on the ground.

That's why our rural RV functions as a place to let icy water hoses thaw. Secondly it's a roof to shelter human heads.

Strange but true: Every hot summer erases awareness of the powers of winter to freeze every un-drained hose.

Household hint: If you have to drag a couple of hundred feet of frozen water hoses into an RV to thaw, postpone housekeeping and don't let the coils trip you up especially if you must routinely answer snooty geriatric medical questions about whether you've fallen in the past year.

RV hint: If the water doesn't run, maybe it's the intake valve rather than frozen plumbing. If you own an RV and didn't know that, be glad you've read this far. Apologies to others.

Murphy's Law of RV catastrophes: Water inlet valves generally fail when the installation of a new one can't happen till the sun has set and the weather is below freezing in my case, not till the cows were happy and I'd driven 100 miles round-trip for the part.

By the time the water was running both hot and cold in the RV, a celebratory shower seemed in order.

I eyed the snarl of frozen hose beyond the frosted glass, ready to strangle me. ³Psycho² on the farm.

Wisdom prevailed. Better to call 9-1-1 after being flattened outdoors in a snowy stampede. Better to be wearing clothes.

Postscript: Maslow grew up in Brooklyn, but one meaning of his surname is ³dairyman.²

Hmmm.

Knox Notes

Lions Club seeking potential members

MUNDAY—The Munday Lions Clubs is inviting potential new members to check out the service club by attending and enjoying its Tuesday lunches at the Perry Payton Community Center as their guests during January.

Goree public meeting scheduled Jan. 13

GOREE—The City of Goree will hold a public meeting at 6 p.m. Tuesday in City Hall to discuss an application for a grant by the Texas Department of Agriculture.

Penalties for uninsured to rise

WASHINGTON—If you were uninsured last year, it's going to cost you.

In 2015, all taxpayers have to report to the IRS on their health insurance status the previous year. Most will check a box. It's also when the IRS starts collecting fines from some uninsured people, and deciding if others qualify for exemptions.

Going without health insurance has always involved financial risks. You could have an accident and end up with thousands of dollars in medical bills. Now, you may also get fined. In a decision that allowed Obama's law to advance, the Supreme Court ruled in 2012 that the coverage requirement and its accompanying fines were a constitutionally valid exercise of Congress' authority to tax.

What many people don't realize is that the penalties go up significantly in 2015. Only 3

percent of uninsured people know what the fine for 2015 will be, according to a recent poll.

Figuring out your potential exposure if you're uninsured isn't simple.

For 2014, the fine is the greater of \$95 per person or 1 percent of household income above the threshold for filing taxes. It will jump in 2015 to the greater of 2 percent of income or \$325. By 2016, the average fine will be about \$1,100, based on government figures.

People can get a sense of the potential hit by going online and using the Tax Policy Center's Affordable Care Act penalty calculator.

Many taxpayers may be able to get a pass. Based on congressional analysis, tax preparation giant H&R Block says roughly 4 million uninsured people will pay penalties and 26 million will qualify for exemptions from the list of more than 30 waivers.

But it's unclear whether

taxpayers are aware of the exemptions.

Deciding what kind of waiver to seek could be crucial. Some can be claimed directly on a tax return, but others involve mailing paperwork to the Department of Health and Human Services. Tax preparation companies say the IRS has told them it's taking steps to make sure taxpayers' returns don't languish in bureaucratic limbo while HHS rules on their waivers.

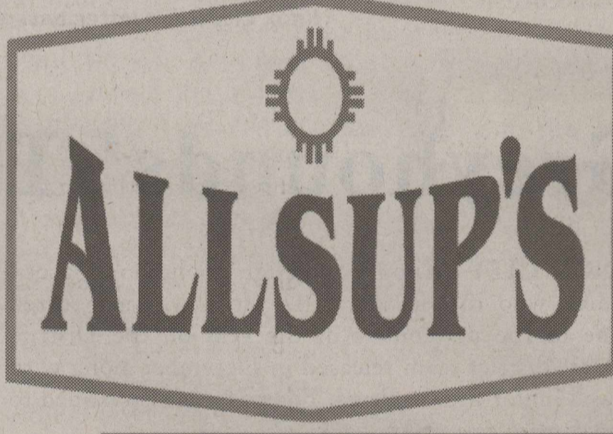
TurboTax has created a free online tool called "Exemption Check" for people to see if they may qualify for a waiver. Charges apply later if the taxpayer files through TurboTax.

Timing will be critical for uninsured people who want to avoid the rising penalties for 2015. That's because Feb. 15 is the last day of open enrollment under the health law. After that, only people with special circumstances can sign up.

Prices Good Thru 01/24/15

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Back row, left to right: Scott Stanfield, Allsup's; Rudy Soliz, Jr.; Bryan Marshall, Dr. Pepper; Jackie White, Pepsi;
Front: Elyas Soliz and Rachael Soliz

Hounds have hopes of making playoffs

KNOX CITY—Although picked to finish fourth in District 7-1A, the Knox City Greyhounds still are entertaining hopes of making the playoffs after a 7-9 record in non-district play. The Greyhounds were scheduled to kick off district play at home Tuesday against Spur.

"They were picked ahead of us in district and beating them would be a good start in the right direction," said Coach Josh Webb.

"Paducah was picked first by the TABC (Texas Association of Basketball Coaches) and they will be the team to beat."

Other teams in the district are Guthrie, Motley County and Patton Springs.

Webb said the Greyhounds don't have "goals" and instead are focusing every day on what they can control to become better.

In looking at non-district play, Webb indicated that the Greyhounds played a brutal schedule, playing only four of the games with all nine varsity players available because of injuries and sicknesses.

"Only two of the losses came to other 1A schools," Webb added, "and we beat two ranked teams in Valley and Ira."



Knox City Greyhounds basketball team

Sheri Baty/The Knox County News-Courier

Houndettes open 7-A against Spur

KNOX CITY—A "battle-tested" young squad of Knox City Houndettes kicked off District 7-A basketball action here Tuesday against the Spur Spurettes.

"Our tough non-district schedule has more than prepared us for district," said first-year Coach Dylan Ballard talking about a 2-15 start to the season.

"We have been projected third behind Paducah and Spur," he continued, "but we'll be a tough, young, scrappy team that will give the Lady Dragons and Spurettes a run for their money. We'll shock a few teams."

Other members of 7-A include Guthrie, Motley County and Patton Springs.

The Houndettes' game last Friday night in Newcastle was cancelled.



Knox City Houndettes basketball team

Sheri Baty/The Knox County News-Courier

Greyhounds' Thomas 8-1A newcomer of year

KNOX CITY—Knox City High sophomore Jacoby Thomas, who rushed for 1,197 yards, was recognized as one of the newcomers of the year on the District 8-1A all-district team released in December along with Crowell junior Steven Perez. Thomas was also named to the first team as a utility back.

A pair of Greyhound seniors, Zach Rodriguez and Krys Campos, were also first team selections. Rodriguez was recognized as center and special team on offense and as lineman on defense while Campos was named as a tight end. In addition, Rodriguez and Campos were named on

the second team on defense as a kicker and a lineman, respectively.

Knox City sophomore Anthony Estrada made the first team offense as a quarterback and the second team defense as a safety.

Senior Israel Rodriguez and junior Elias Nevarez were first team defense selections as linebacker and safety, respectively. Rodriguez and Nevarez were named to the second team offense as a utility back and a spread back, respectively.

Other Greyhounds recognized were sophomore Sam

Schnable (second team linebacker); junior Sheldon Baty (second team tight end and defensive lineman); junior Ryan Heard (second team wide receiver) and sophomore Christian Abila (second team fullback and defensive utility player).

As expected, Mitchell Parsley of state champion Crowell, who passed for 2,282 yards, was the district's offensive MVP. Teammate Nathan Moya was the defensive MVP. The Wildcat coaching staff was also recognized.

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Munday Moguette Basketball Team



Moguettes open 8-1A as favorites

MUNDAY—The Munday Moguettes are scheduled to open District 8-1A basketball play Friday night on the road against Harrold.

The Moguettes were picked as the district favorites in a Texas Association of Basketball Coaches poll ahead of Northside and Crowell.

Coach Corey Stephenson indicated he didn't know much about the other district teams except that Northside had won district the previous year and that Crowell was always a tough opponent. Other teams in the district are Benjamin and Chillicothe.

After getting two weeks off for the holidays, the Moguettes returned to action last Saturday afternoon with a 33-25 victory here over the Quanah Lady Indians. The game was moved from Friday night

because of the icy road conditions. The win evened Munday's record at 8-8 going into Tuesday's final non-district game at home against a strong Windthorst team.

The Moguettes jumped off to a 13-5 lead over the Lady Indians after the first quarter and led 21-15 at halftime. The Lady Indians narrowed the deficit to 24-22 after three periods, but the home team pulled away in the closing period.

Raci Dillard supplied the offensive firepower for Munday, scoring 22 points. She also pulled down 15 rebounds to help Munday enjoy a 33-25 edge on the boards.

The Moguettes were a little more patient on offense, making 12 of 36 field goal attempts, while the Lady Indians could only connect on 4 of 33 from two-point range and 3 of 17 from three-point range.

Moguls picked 3rd in District 8-1A

MUNDAY—The Munday Moguls suffered a 46-45 setback at the hands of the Quanah Indians here last Saturday in returning to action after the holidays. The game was moved from Friday because of icy road conditions.

The Moguls had one remaining non-district game against Windthorst on Tuesday before they start District 8-1A play next Tuesday night at home against the Crowell Wildcats, picked as the district favorites in a Texas Association

of Basketball Coaches poll. The Wildcats got a late start with basketball because of a long football season that ended with a state title, but are 3-0 and ranked third in the state.

The Moguls of Coach Greg Clark were picked third behind the Chillicothe Eagles and could make playoffs if that prediction is correct. Harrold is off to a 10-2 start and might get into the playoff picture. Other teams in the district are Benjamin and Northside.

Thanks for Reading the Knox County News-Courier!

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Benjamin News

Gladene Green

Here we are now five days into the new year—so far, so good. The weather was not very pleasant for a few days, but although it's cold, the sun is shining brightly here Monday. At least, the snow from early last week and after some rain, we did get a little moisture, and that will help.

Maybe the "flu" victims are all improving. Most that I have talked to seem to be "on the mend." It just takes time to get back to feeling 100% after being down a few days. Now, if we all don't relapse, maybe we will be OK.

The community was saddened greatly early last week when we got the word that former resident and BHS graduate, Roy Ed Griffin, had passed away. He lived in Stephenville, and his funeral was there. Roy Ed always made it back to homecoming and was a great supporter of the Benjamin Ex-Student Association. I'm not sure about his survivors, just know he had a sister, Maxine Stubbs, who lives in Abilene. My sympathy to his family.

Here 'N There

There's a little more Christmas news this week. Donnie and Barbara Ryder divided their time between her family at the home of Jay and Paula Haynie in Munday and his family at the home of James and Stacia Propps here in Benjamin. Other out of town guests in the Propps home were her mom and her husband, Don and Jimmie Kay Liles of Holly Lake Ranch (near Longview) and sons, Chance

Propps of Hollywood, California, and Cody Propps of Tarleton University in Stephenville.

Mary Jane Young returned home Saturday after about a 15-day visit with her son and his wife, Jackie Jr. and Cindy, in Austin, and her daughter, Debbie Niell and family in Boca Raton, FL. She reported a great time, and while we were freezing here, she was enjoying the warmth of Florida. Said when she left there it was 81 degrees—a far cry from the 21 degrees and lower we were experiencing here.

Shannon Propps and Jason Ewing enjoyed a few days after Christmas with his family in Corpus Christi and Austin. They returned to Benjamin Saturday.

Betty Lyles joined her friends, Romain Stubbs and Pearl Eaton Stephens at the Stubbs home in Knox City for Christmas Day dinner and a wonderful time of visiting. Romain "did it up right" with a delicious meal and all the "extras" that go with the holidays. Also visiting with Romain during the snowy week were former Knox City residents, David and Paula Lorenz, of Abilene. They are back here pretty often since they now live closer. You may remember them. He worked at the Plant Materials Center when they lived in Knox City.

Debbie and Megan Goforth of Ft. Worth spent Christmas with her parents, Sonny and Doris Bufkin. Doris has had the flu for about a month, but said she is finally doing better. And so far, Sonny has escaped it.

Benjamin will start district cage action

BENJAMIN—The Benjamin High girls basketball team is scheduled to kick off District 8-1A play Friday night against the Chillicothe Lady Eagles while the boys team waits until Tuesday to open against Harrold.

The Stangs and Mustangs of Coach Jacob Navarro were not expected to be con-

tenders for playoff positions as they took 1-7 records into non-district games with Woodson Tuesday.

In ratings from the Texas Association of Basketball Coaches, Crowell, Chillicothe and Munday were the top choices for the boys and Munday, Northside and Crowell for the girls.

Mustangs' Rainwater all-district as punter

BENJAMIN—Benjamin High sophomore Justin Rainwater was named to the District 11-1A first team defense while fellow Mustangs Caleb Barriventes, a freshman, and Lincoln Strickland, a sophomore, were named on the second teams.

Rainwater was recognized as one of the punters on the first team defense, Barriventes as a spread center on offense and Strickland as a defensive lineman.

Chillicothe senior Denzel Graves was recognized as the offensive MVP while teammate Connor Pautsky, a junior, shared defensive

MVP honors with Harrold senior Jake Welch. Clint Miller of district champion Chillicothe was named coach of the year. Harrold freshman Anthony Trijo was newcomer of the year.

The first team offense included Colton Hibbitts of Harrold and Troy Sowells of Chillicothe as tight ends; Brady Blakely of Harrold and Victor Casarez of Northside as wide receivers; Pautsky as tight center; Glenn Cook of Northside as spread center; Creed Harris of Chillicothe as quarterback; Kierren Gaines of Harrold and Dimonick Ross of Chillicothe as running backs; Welch as fullback;

Justin Faulkner of Northside as spreadback; Dylan Reagan of Chillicothe as utility back, Hibbitts as kicker; and Graves as special team.

Earning double honors on first team defense were Hibbitts, Blakely, Ross as linemen; Sowells and Faulkner as linebackers; Gaines and Harris as safeties; Reagan as cornerback; and Faulkner as punter. Others on the first team defense included Isaiah Ross of Chillicothe as nose guard; Connor Potts of Chillicothe as cornerback and Hunter Hopkins of Harrold as utility player.

Hunter safety course scheduled Jan. 24

QUANAHA—Changes in the law has made taking Hunter Safety easier; the course requirement has been shortened and can be done in eight hours or less. The state required Hunter Safety class will be offered at Copper Breaks State Park on Saturday, Jan. 24 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. It is recommended that

participants bring a sack lunch due to time constraints.

This basic hunter education class is required for all hunters born on or after Sept. 2, 1971. The minimum age for certification is 9 years old. Hunters ages 9-16 must successfully complete the hunter safety course or be accompanied by an adult, while hunt-

ers age 17 and older must successfully complete the course, or purchase a one-time only exemption, or be accompanied.

The Texas hunter education certification is honored by all other states which require hunter education, but you must carry your card with you.

Jenkins to receive Old Tom Morris Award

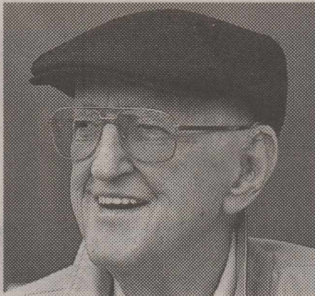
SAN ANTONIO--Dan Jenkins, one of a handful of writers in the World Golf Hall Fame and someone who covered each of the sport's major championships for more than 60 years, will be the recipient of the 2015 Old Tom Morris Award from the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America here on Feb. 25 in the opening session of the Golf Industry Show.

The award has been presented annually since 1983 to an individual, who through a lifetime commitment to the game of golf, has helped to mold the welfare of the game in a manner and style exemplified by Old Tom Morris. Morris, a four-time British Open winner, was the long-time superintendent at St. Andrews in Scotland until his

death in 1908. Jenkins will be the first media member.

In addition to writing about golf for the last 40 years in his own biting, honest and often hilarious prose for Sports Illustrated and now Golf Digest, Jenkins has also published more than a dozen books, with his most famous being the football-themed "Semi-Tough" in 1972, to this year's "His Ownself: A Semi-Memoir." Jenkins has covered all the greats: Hogan, Byron Nelson, Arnold Palmer, Jack Nicklaus and Tiger Woods.

"There are few in the media who have ever written more compellingly about golf than Dan Jenkins," said Keith Ihms, CGCS, GCSAA president. "Through his words, we have all felt closer to the greats of the game."



"I'm honored to win this award, especially named for a guy who I'm almost as old as," Jenkins quipped in reference to Old Tom Morris. "It's terrific. I didn't know a lot about grass, but I knew a lot of superintendents all around town. The profession has made a lot of progress. Courses nowadays are so consistently wonderful with all the things they can do with them."

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Swing Shirt helps teach 'connection'

HOUSTON--Some of the game's top teachers have endorsed the Swing Shirt, invented by PGA professional Fred Colins of Houston.

Tim Hobby, director of instruction at the Club at Sonterra in San Antonio and the Southern Texas PGA teacher of the year in 2013, joined a list of teachers using the Swing Shirt. "It allows golfers to blend the movement of their bodies with the swing of their arms," he said.

"It's the very best training aid," noted Jim Hardy, the 2007 PGA Teacher of the

Year and the author of the Plane Truth of Golf. "It's like having your own swing coach with you every time you play or practice."

Chris O'Connell, a Golf Digest top 100 teacher who is the swing coach for Matt Kucher, agrees with Hardy: "The Swing Shirt ties your upper arms into your body for a simpler more repeatable golf swing."

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Golf takes its place amid nature's splendor in Costa Rica



No. 17 at Reserva Conchal

By James McAfee

The small country Central America country of Costa Rica, which has made a name for itself as a natural paradise where visitors can experience nature in its most pristine state, enjoy adventure activities in a natural environment not available back home or just relax on one of the many beaches, now has achieved another important milestone, receiving the 2014 Golf Destination of the Year Award for Latin America and the Caribbean from the prestigious Association of Golf Tour Operators.

With six 18-hole championship courses and some nice 9-hole layouts, Landy Blank of Costa Rica Golf Adventures, who started bringing tour there in 1996, believes that this is just the right amount of good golf to create a memorable golfing experience when combined with the year-round climate, the beauty of the country and some superior places to hang their hats at night.

The country offers two international airports, one near the capitol city of San Jose in the Central Valley, and the other on the Northwest Pacific Coast in the Guanacaste region. "Ideally, you arrange your itinerary to land in one and depart from the other in order to experience the amazing variety of activities that Costa Rica has to offer," added Blanks.

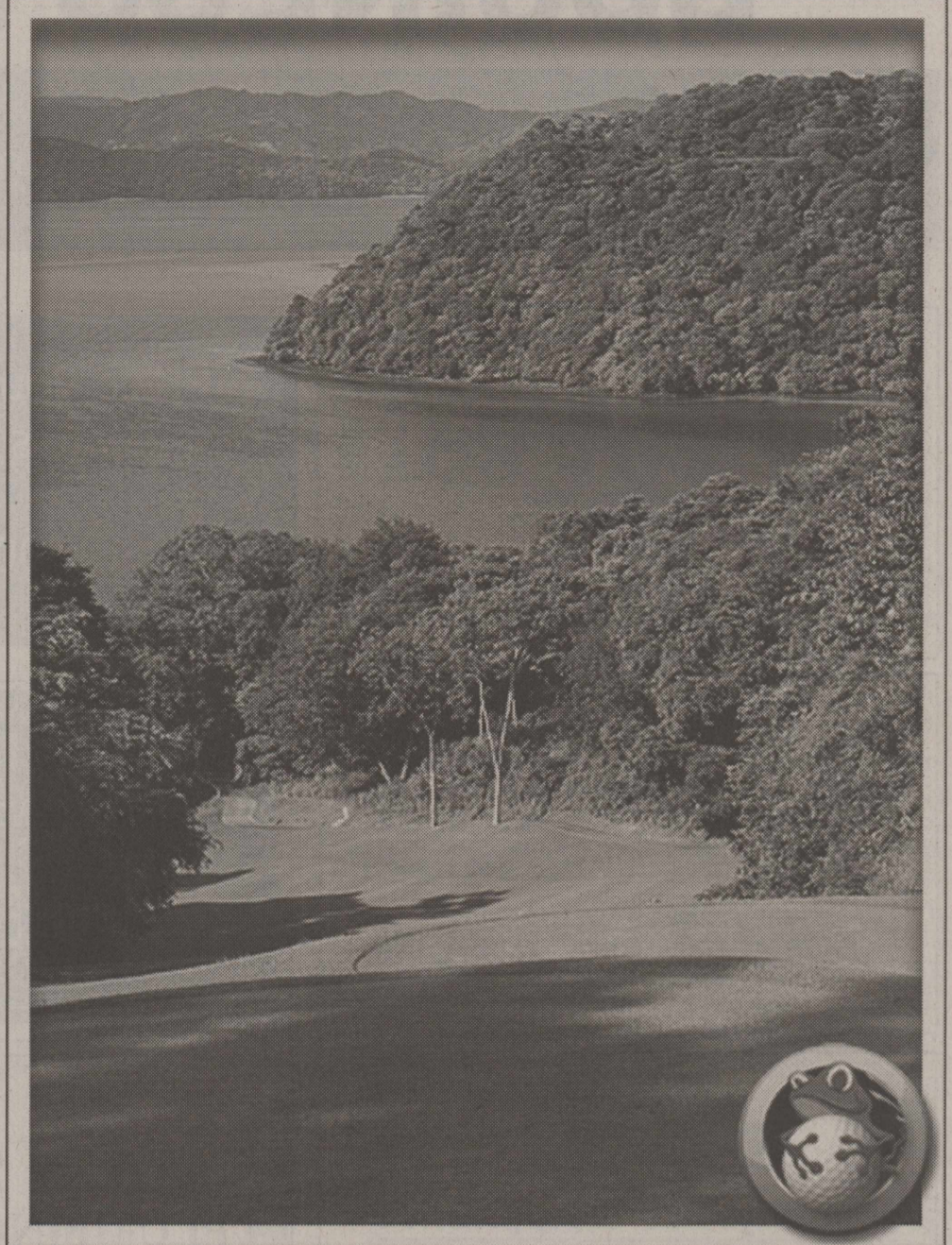
Arriving at the Daniel Oduber Quiros International Airport in Liberia, gives golfers the opportunities to play three of the best golf courses in the country within an hour's drive.

Without a doubt, the Arnold Palmer design at the Four Seasons Costa Rica at Peninsula Papagayo is the crown jewel and the No. 1 course in Costa Rica. It sits atop one of the highest plateaus at Peninsula Papagayo, overlooking Bahia Culebra, and provides spectacular views of the Pacific Ocean on 14 of the 18 holes. Natural elevation changes create unforgettable holes, including a nice mix of long par 4s with short tricky ones. Perhaps the most dramatic hole has to be par 4 No. 6 with a 200-foot drop to a valley-shaped fairway, definitely the signature hole. The course plays 6,788 yards from the championship tees, but is accessible to golfers of all levels with four other tees, including the forward tees at only 4,880 yards. The course used to be open to hotel guests only, but new director of golf Randall Viquez, now says it is open to others. The fees are a little pricey at \$230, but as someone who has played many of the top 100 in the world, I guarantee it will be worth

it. It's not a course you can walk, but there are some interesting rides through the rainforest to the next tee that will be worth it.

About 40 minutes south is the Reserva Conchal Golf Club at the all-inclusive Westin Golf Resort & Spa. The Robert Trent Jones Jr. design is one of my all-time favorites since I played it more than 500 times in the three years I spent there as the director of golf from 1998 to 2000. A few years back, the Robert Trent Jones Jr. course was reduced to a par 71 when some property next to the ocean was used for a beach club, resulting in the loss of the par 4 16th and the old tee box on the par 3 17th. A new par 3 was added, now the 15th, and a new routing for the last six holes resulted. You now play to the 17th green from new elevated tees on another side of the water. "It's even better now," added Blank. I agree it's more challenging as my first shot didn't make it over the water on a return visit recently. I did hit the green on my second try from the whites and caught the bunker on a third try from the blues. The 18th is one of the best risk/reward finishing holes I've ever played. Water comes into play down the entire left side. After a good drive from the whites, I took the risk with a 3-wood from 200 yards to get to the back of the green and just missed an eagle putt from 12 feet. There's "mucho agua" to avoid in other places on the course, too, and a lot more elevation changes than you might expect, including a 100-foot drop from the 12th tee to a narrow fairway with woods and out of bounds on the left and a lateral hazard on the right. Director of golf Carlos Rojas points to the par-5 No. 4 with views of the ocean as the signature hole. Fees range around \$150 for 18 holes and lower for 9 holes or with twilight rates.

Just over 20 minutes away is Hacienda Pinilla, a Mike Young design built on an old cattle ranch amid a dry tropical forest. You have plenty of room off the tees with wide fairways, but the real test is getting your approach shots on the bunker-guarded greens, including some pot bunkers like the ones you might see in Scotland, and a few greens with false fronts. "The greens are sneaky fast," said Director of golf Jason Bauer. He adds that the wind adds to the challenge, especially from January to March. A magnificent view of the ocean awaits from the tee on the par 3 15th hole. Fees for 18 holes are around \$150. Your options for accommodations range from places on property like La Posada or the J.W.



Signature hole at Marriott course

Marriott to the more active scene in the nearby town of Tamarindo Beach.

Most visitors still enter Costa Rica through the capital city of San Jose, actually the Juan Santamaria Airport in the nearby city of Alajuela, located at an elevation of 4,000 feet, with cooler conditions than those along the coast. There are two quality championship courses available, the Cariari Country Club and Valle del Sol, with green fees in the \$100 range.

The private Cariari Country Club carried the banner as the best course in Costa Rica for many years after being built in 1975. George Fazio did the design and nephew Tom Fazio built it on an old coffee plantation. Short by today's standards at 6,590 yards, it's no pushover, especially when wet, with tall trees bordering most fairways, putting the premium on straight drives. Otherwise, chipping back to the fairway is sometimes your only option. Approach shots must be accurate from the whites, it can be challenging. One thing I always enjoy is that you can walk and have a caddy, who could be very helpful on the tricky greens. The mandatory caddies also go along with those riding carts. Some of the hotels can get guests on the course, but the best bet is to check with Blank, who also runs the golf shop here with his wife, Susan.

If time permits, don't overlook Valle del Sol where architect Tracy May renovated an original nine holes and built another nine holes between 1997 and 2001. It can be stretched to 7,017 yards from the tips, but you have more room off the tees, allowing the big hitters to rip it and not worry about being in trouble. It's player-friendly from the other tees where most visiting golfers play. You will have interesting wa-

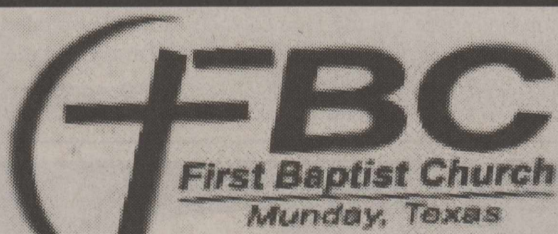
ter features and some great mountain views. "If you are suffering from winter rust, it's a great place to work out the kinks," added Blank.

Taking a scenic 90-minute drive, you arrive on the central Pacific Coast and the Los Suenos Marriott Ocean and Golf Resort near the beach in Jaco. The centerpiece of this ocean-front resort is the La Iguana Golf Course, designed by Ted Robinson. The course rests between the ocean and a tropical rainforest and is landscaped with exotic native plants. Director of Golf Jose Quesada says this gives golfers a chance to view lots of native wildlife, getting close to Mother Nature. While it can be challenging from the back tees at 6,698 yards, it's player friendly from the other tees, especially the whites at 5,896 where I played recently. Adding to the experience, each group is accompanied by a forecaddie, who also serves as a guide to identify what you are seeing and to help find your errant golf shots. One of the nice new additions is a GPS system on the golf carts that lets you know your yardages and gives tips on how to play each hole.

If visiting Tabor on the southern Nicoya Peninsula, the Los Delfines Golf & Country Club is a good 9-hole test that you might want to play.

To get around Costa Rica, my wife and I rented a car since we were visiting four other golf resorts outside San Jose, but Blank recommends to his clients to travel via transfers he arranges. "Enjoy your vacation, leave the driving to others who know the roads," he said.

Costa Ricans or "Ticos" are likeable and pleasant hosts, wanting guests to enjoy the pure life or "Pura Vida" when they come down for an unforgettable holiday.



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Some people who drink water containing trihalomethanes in excess of the MCL over many years may experience problems with their liver, kidney, or central nervous systems, and may have an increased risk of getting cancer.

You do not need to use an alternative water supply. However, if you have health concerns, you may want to talk to your doctor to get more information about how this may affect you.

We are taking the following action to address this issue: Continue to monitor on a quarterly basis.

Please share this information with all people who drink this water, especially those who may not have received this notice directly (i.e., people in apartment, nursing homes, schools, and businesses). You can do this by posting this notice in a public place or distributing copies by hand or mail.

If you have any questions regarding this matter, you may contact Sam Watson at 940-658-3313

Posted/Delivered on 01-6-2015

Public Hearing Notice City of Goree

Texas Community Development Block Grant Program Disaster Relief Grant

Date of Publication: January 8, 2015

The City of Goree will hold a public hearing at 6:00 PM on January 13, 2015, at City Hall in regard to the submission of an application to the Texas Department of Agriculture for Texas Community Development Block Grant (TxCDBG) Program funds for Disaster Relief. The purpose of this meeting is to allow citizens an opportunity to discuss the citizen participation plan, the development of local housing and community development needs, the amount of TxCDBG funding available, all eligible TxCDBG activities, and the use of past TxCDBG funds. All citizens are encouraged to participate in the development of this application and to make their views known at this public hearing. Citizens unable to attend this meeting may submit their views and proposals to City Hall during regular office hours. Persons with disabilities that wish to attend this meeting should contact City Hall to arrange for assistance. Individuals who require auxiliary aids or services for this meeting should contact City Hall at least two days before the meeting so that appropriate arrangements can be made.

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Atmos reminds of dangers from Carbon Monoxide

DALLAS— Atmos Energy reminds customers to take steps in their homes to help prevent carbon monoxide poisoning.

Carbon monoxide is a colorless, odorless gas that is produced by incomplete combustion in home heating systems, gas ovens, dryers, fireplaces and automobile engines. Prolonged exposure to carbon monoxide can be fatal.

The symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning are flu-like and often include headache, sleepiness, weakness, vomiting, dizziness and tightness in the chest. If you or your family experiences these symptoms:

- Leave the premises immediately and seek fresh air.

- Call 911 or seek emergency medical attention.

- Call Atmos Energy's Emergency hotline at 1-866-322-8667. Do not use a suspected appliance or furnace until it has been inspected, serviced and determined to be safe by a qualified plumber or a heating contractor.

Help prevent carbon monoxide poisoning:

- Hire a qualified heating system professional each year to inspect your natural gas furnace, appliances and venting systems in your home to ensure that everything is working properly. Atmos Energy customers can find qualified plumbers and contractors by visiting www.atmosenergy.com

- Install carbon monoxide detectors in the home on all floors where bedrooms are located. Detectors identify traces of carbon monoxide in the home and sound an alarm when carbon monoxide is detected.

- Do not idle a car in an attached garage. Doing so allows a large amount of carbon monoxide to enter the home. Instead, back the car completely out of the garage and close the garage door while the vehicle warms up.

- Make sure your chimneys and flues are clean and unobstructed and that gas appliances have proper ventilation systems.

- Remove clutter from around gas furnaces and water heaters to ensure an adequate supply of fresh air. Change furnace filters regularly.

- Do not use natural gas ovens as a heating source. The burning of natural gas produces carbon monoxide that is safely ventilated when the oven door is closed, but is released into the kitchen when the door is open.

- Do not use charcoal indoors for either cooking or heating. Burning charcoal releases carbon monoxide.

- Make sure kerosene and other portable heaters are vented to the outside.

Mac's Views

I got the chance recently to see the movie "Unbroken" on a weekend trip to Wichita Falls after hearing a lot about it from those who had read the best seller of the same name by Laura Hillenbrand.

It's definitely an inspirational movie worth seeing, telling of the survival story of Louis Zamperini, who spent 47 days floating 2,000 miles on the endless expanse of the Pacific Ocean after his airplane crashed and then more than two years as a POW in Japan.



JAMES MCAFEE

Not many men could have survived the torture and psychological abuse as evident from the fact that a third of all POWs under control of the Japanese during World War II died.

However, most who have also read the book, including my minister Wayne Speer and my cousin Eldon Tarver, left the movie a little disappointed, feeling it left out some interesting parts from the book.

For example, there was no mention of Louis' brief encounter with Hitler after running the last lap of 5,000 meters in the 1936 Olympics in 56 seconds to finish in eighth place. Also, there was nothing included about how the POWs saw the atomic bomb explosion in Tokyo that eventually ended the war.

Zamperini made a promise to God to serve him if he let him live while on the raft, but he returned home an angry man, who became addicted to alcohol and cigarettes and who also verbally abused his young wife. He eventually did live up to that promise after attending a 1949 Billy Graham crusade, but that was not part of the movie either. As Hillenbrand tells it in her book, Louis came home after the crusade, poured his alcohol down the drain, threw out his cigarettes, was reconciled to his wife and became a new man because he had asked Jesus Christ to be his savior. He even went to Japan to forgive those who had tortured him, but never got to meet with his chief tormentor, The Bird.

You only have two hours to tell the story in a movie, but the screen writers may wish they had gotten more in about the faith issue, which has been attracting high ratings and large ticket sales for other movies with this theme.

I did hear from Shirley Gass that Angelina Jolie, the actress-turned-director, con-

verted from being an atheist to a Christian after getting involved with the project.

I do know that I am now going to read Hillenbrand's book and also pick up Louis' own autobiography, "Don't Give Up, Don't Give In."

If you are having trouble keep New Year's Resolutions, here are some suggestions:

- *Focus on one resolution at a time.
 - *Create accountability by having a companion to help you monitor them.
 - *Persist until you achieve the goal.
- A friend of mine told me he had a sure-fire method of handling the situation. "I just don't make any resolutions."

The Masters was on the mind of Dallas Cowboys Coach Jason Garrett when he made a crucial decision in the Cowboys' playoff victory over the Detroit Lions on Sunday. Explaining to the media after the come-from-behind 24-20 win over the Detroit Lions about why he kept his offense on the field for a crucial fourth-and-sixth from the Lions' 42-yard line, Garrett said: "One of the things that kept going through my mind is that when you get a chance to go play at the Masters, you don't lay up. You go after it." The bold call worked as the Cowboys converted that fourth down and then scored the winning points on a Tony Romo pass to Terrance Williams with less than three minutes left to earn the right to advance to play the Green Bay Packers. They are going to have to protect Romo better and slow down Aaron Rodgers if they want to keep winning.

Thirty-eight bowl games is just too much as far as I am concerned. I didn't even watch a complete game this year, not even the College Football Championship semifinals. Based on attendance at most of the games, the games are mainly for television audiences, not real fans. Oregon definitely seems the best team around, but Ohio State showed it belonged in the final four with its win over Alabama. TCU probably had a legitimate beef about being overlooked, but Baylor didn't after losing a 20-point fourth quarter lead in falling to Michigan State. The bowl games did show that the SEC was not as strong as it has been in the past.

Vote for favorite state dining place

AUSTIN—Building on last year's theme of Texas Top 40 Destinations, Texas Highways magazine begins 2015 by once again inviting readers to vote — this time for their Top 40 Comfort Food Destinations in the Lone Star State.

"We had a very enthusiastic response from readers last year when we asked them to vote for their Top

40 Texas Destinations in celebration of the magazine's 40th anniversary," said Editor Jill Lawless. "This year, we're asking them to once again vote for something that is near and dear to Texans' hearts, namely Texas comfort food establishments."

This year, nominations will be collected over a period of several months with

all 40 dining destinations being revealed in a single Texas Highways issue next fall. Votes and suggestions can be submitted at texashighways.com/comfort or letters@texashighways.com. Submissions also may be mailed to P.O. Box 141009, Austin, TX 78714-1009.

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