

The Gorman Progress

2006 Member
Texas Press Association

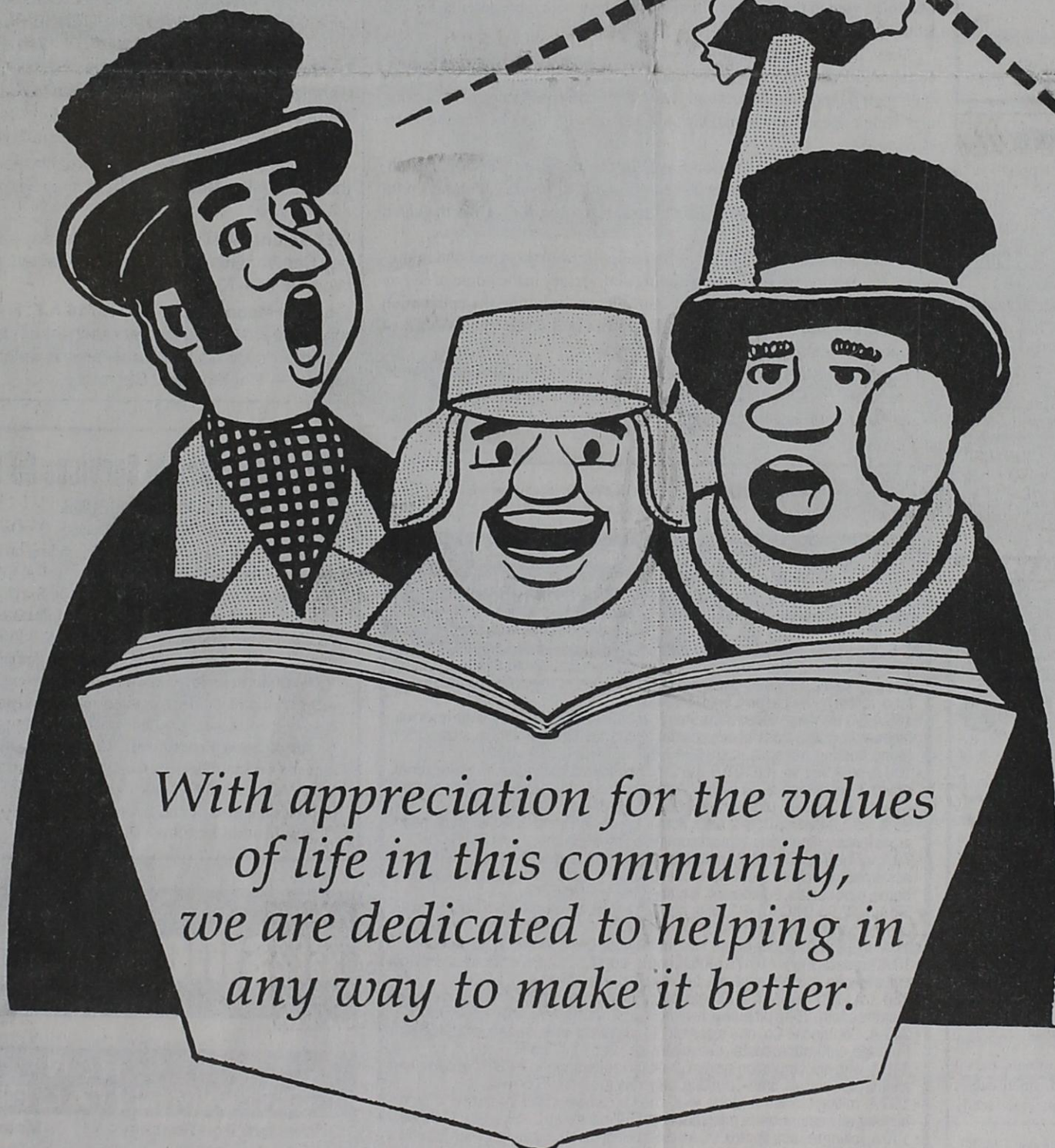
"Serving Gorman For Over 106 Years"
Gorman, Eastland County, Texas 76454

NUMBER FIFTY-ONE

DECEMBER 28, 2006

Happy New Year

A PROSPEROUS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR



Happy New Year
From Joe - Lonnie and Debra
Correspondents - Zelda Jordan and Vonnie Guthery

Press Points

By Joe Bennett

FOND FAREWELL!!!
Well it's finally come time for yours truly to bid a fond farewell to my friends and patrons of The Gorman Progress after "millions of years" of service and enjoyment of the public.

I took over the Progress in 1974 after The Kernel talked me into putting my name on the dotted line after years and years of association with one of the greatest gentlemen and "Boss" in the world.

I have truly enjoyed my time in the driver's seat. But it's time for me to step down and turn the reins over to my son, Lonnie, who has been at my side for many years after joining me in the business. He has supported me in every way in the business and deserves his right to take over the business and put "the old man" out to pasture. I will be around to get in his hair and to help out in any way I can. But the reins will be under his control and I urge everyone to support him as you have me over the years. God has been good to me and mine with all the support I have enjoyed from everyone and I hope Lonnie will receive the same fine support I have been blessed with.

It's very hard to think about retirement - - but the time has come - - and I will be relieved to have Lonnie take over. God has truly been good to me. More than I deserved.

...And remember to smile - - because God Loves You!!

Retirement Announced

On December 29, I will retire from the Postal Service. After over twenty-five years, I feel that it is time to pursue other things. Jim and I will be going into business for ourselves that will allow us to visit our grandkids and to do our thing.

Please join us on December 28, 2006 from 1:30 to 3:00 p.m. at the Post Office for refreshments and to bid you good-bye for your friendships and putting up with me for all these years.

Thanks, Donnie Rodgers

Annual New Year's Eve Singing Set At New Hope Baptist Church

The annual New Year's Eve Singing will be held at New Hope Baptist Church on Sunday, December 31 beginning at 8 P.M. This is an event for the entire community to join together to bring in the new year.

There will be a break at 10 p.m. for refreshments and visiting after which the singing will continue until midnight.

Everyone is invited to join in this special time of community fellowship and anticipation of the coming year.

Senior Citizens News

Carol Ward

We enjoyed our weekly luncheon on Wednesday, the 20th at 11:30. We only had 22 present, where are you people? The last two weeks we have seen low attendance. Hope more Seniors will come back after the holidays.

Barbara Bush called us to order and Ann Maxfield blessed our food. We sang Happy Birthday to me and Ann. I have been blessed with sharing the Lords Birthday.

Our past meeting on December 13, I could not attend. I missed greeting Wynogene Smith on her return after kneed replacement surgery. She is doing well and getting back into the swing of daily life.

Also Frank and Beth Shirley attended, always good to see them. We miss both these good ladies cooking when they can not be here.

Hope all enjoyed a wonderful Christmas with your families. I and my daughter, Becky Swanner, with her family, went to Brownwood. We gathered at my sons home there with another son that also lives in Brownwood. We enjoyed playing Chinese Christmas, always fun.

Daisy Slaton's daughter Bennie Gail is here from Alabama. I know her family all enjoyed being together over the holidays. Bennie Gail taught Demarcus Ware in Kindergarten and they have remained friends over the years. He surprised them with tickets to the Eagle game. So they were in Dallas on Christmas Day, too bad they didn't win, it would be more fun.

We will not meet on December 27 or play games until after the 1st of year. We hope to get back together on January 3rd, and resume our dinners and game night on the 4th. See you all then.

A thought for the week - "Great minds discuss ideas, average minds discuss events, and small minds discuss people."

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POOR LITTLE HOUSE - needs to hear swish of paint brush & hum of handyman. Frame house with siding, 3 BR, 1 1/2 baths, space heat, window A/C, DDCP & stg. bldg. Call for details. 08

COMFY, COZY, AFFORDABLE!
3 BR, 1 1/2 bath home on a large lot. Living dining, heat, window A/C, kitchen with ashwood cabinets, patio, SDG & 2 car carport. 04

HELP YOURSELF TO COMFORT! Enjoy life in this 3 BR, 2 bath brick home. Livingroom with F/P, dining, kitchen appliances, CH/A, covered patio, 2 car carport & storage bldg. 07

TAKE A PEEK - THEN SETTLE IN! 3 BR, 1 3/4 bath home with living, dining, CH/A, screened porch & 2 sheds. Act fast - it won't last! 011

THE GORMAN PROGRESS
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Kokomo News

By Zelda Jordan

I hope that everyone had a very nice Christmas with family and friends. Christmas is wonderful for Christians as we have Christ in our hearts and know the wonderful Savior who's birth we celebrate. If you don't know Christ as your personal Savior, I pray and trust that you will come to know Him in the New Year.

The Christmas program at the Kokomo Baptist Church was held on Wednesday night, December 20. Several Christmas Hymns were sung, directed by Woodrow Browning with Helen Browning at the piano and Glynda Bond at the organ. Then Santa entered with a Merry Christmas to all and gave a bag of fruit and candy to the large crowd attending. There were many visitors that were welcomed. The young children had pictures made with Santa, and the older youth helped pass out the gifts from under the beautiful Christmas tree. Scott Collum gave the closing prayer and offered thanks for the meal that awaited us in the fellowship hall. All enjoyed the barbecue sandwiches, chips, cold drinks and peach and cherry cobbles while visiting with one another.

Ed Rodgers was the speaker at the Christmas Eve service at the Kokomo Baptist Church bringing a very good message about God's love for us, and God's plan for all from Adam to the birth of Jesus Christ. We need to look at our own lives. Are we in the will of God? As we enter the Christmas season we need to pray that we are available to God's mold and renew our minds for His service. Visitors in the service were David, Mike, Chris and Kari Rodgers of Georgetown, Diana Dorris of Alpine, Larry and Paula Morrow of Plains, Mark, Margaret and Preston Eaves of Charlotte, NC, Randy, Deliah, Chris and Jon Lewis of Ennis, Glenn and Seth Burgess of Jourdan, Aline Garrett of Gorman, and Stacy, LaDawn and Alexis Snapp of Lewisville. "Happy Anniversary was sung to Bobby and Mary Jane Little and Charles and Carolyn Little.

There will be only one service at the Kokomo Baptist Church on New Year's Eve beginning at 10:00 a.m. Ed Rodgers will be the speaker for the service.

Oren and Norma Webb visited in Comanche on Thursday evening with Randall, Kaci, Aaron and Kaelee Suniga and attended the birthday party honoring Kaelee on her second birthday. "Dora" was the theme for the birthday cake and the party.

Oren and Norma Webb, James Webb of Granbury, Stacy and Renee Webb, Randall, Kaci, Aaron and Kaelee Suniga and Steven Bergmark all of Comanche and Misty Hugg and Jeff Champion of Fort worth visited during the weekend with Jacob and Alice Webb in Burleson for a Christmas celebration. After lunch on Saturday, Kaelee Suniga was honored with a birthday cake and family party celebrating her second birthday.

Jarad Fails of Arlington arrived on Friday night for a visit with his grandparents, Jimmy and Verna Lee Little and he and Jimmy did some hunting on Saturday. Nelda Fails of Arlington came on Christmas Eve for a couple days visit. Joining them on Christmas Eve for their family Christmas were Ray Neal and Melissa Little of Eastland, Emily Little and Mike and Kourtney Peacock of Abilene, James, Jill, Ashley and Breckley Little, Cody Fails and Courtney Butts and friends Mark and Jessie all of Arlington.

Jimmy and Verna Lee Little and Nelda Fails visited in Eastland on Christmas morning with Ray Neal and Melissa, Emily, Mike and Kourtney and with James, Jill, Ashley and Breckley to see the children with their Christmas gifts.

Those visiting with Joe and Glynda Bond during Christmas were Shannon, Stephanie, Raegan, Sydnie and Joey Bond of Copperras Cove, Brian Bond of Dallas and Glynn and Debbie Wilson of Houston.

David, Mike, Chris and Kari Rodgers of Georgetown and Diana Dorris of Alpine visited during the Christmas holidays with their parents, Ed and Ruth Rodgers.

Gary, Donna, Lesley, Melanie and Garrett Gatlin and Gary, Rebecca, Emily and Lance Browning of Graham enjoyed a Christmas celebration with their parents, Woodrow and Helen Browning on Saturday. Woodrow and Helen spent Christmas Day in Graham with the Gatlins and Gary Brownings.

Mark, Margaret and Preston Eaves of Charlotte, NC, Randy, Deliah, Chris and Jon Lewis of Ennis visited during the Christmas holidays with Delman Eaves, Matt and Amy Hawkins and children of Fort Worth visited with them on Saturday.

Linda and Don Brumbelow of Stephenville were honored with a dinner in celebration of their 42nd wedding anniversary in the home of Sylvia Buchanan on Saturday, December 23rd. Others enjoying the celebration were Sherry and Mason Wyly and Cynthia and Colby Lozano all of Stephenville and Nancy Hendricks of Gorman.

Bobby and Mary Jane Little were hosts for the Little family Christmas get together on Christmas Eve night in their home. The serving tables were beautifully decorated in the Christmas theme and a delicious meal

was enjoyed. Charles Little asked the blessing on the food. Those attending and enjoying the food and fellowship were: LaDawn, Stacy and Alexis Snapp of Lewisville, Ima Boles of Gorman, Betty Little, Karen Patterson of Eastland, Doug and Carol Little of Midland, Jimmy and Verna Lee Little, Nelda, Jarad and Cody Fails and Courtney Butts of Arlington, James, Jill, Ashley and Breckley Little, Charles and Carolyn Little, Charla Burgess of Gorman, Alan, Shellie, Justin, Ally and Emma Little, and friends, Larry and Paula Morrow of Plains and Zelda Jordan. Following the meal, movies of past gatherings of the family were shown and really enjoyed by all.

LaDawn, Stacy and Alexis Snapp remained for a visit this week with Bobby and Mary Jane.

Karen Patterson and Betty Little had dinner with Elbert and Cora Lee Bennett and family in Gorman on Saturday.

Those enjoying dinner with Betty Little on Christmas Day were Doug and Carol Little of Midland, Joe Little and Ashley Mayes of Lake Worth, David Little and Ashley Woods of Las Cruces, NM, and Karen Patterson of Eastland.

Nancy Hendricks and Doris Bradshaw of Gorman and Zelda Jordan enjoyed dinner on Christmas Day with Sylvia Buchanan.

Johnny and JoAnn Scitem, Keri, Nicholas, Kelsey and Nashton Guthery of Gorman and Troy Scitem enjoyed dinner on Christmas Day with JoAnn's mother, Verna Mae and other family members in Eastland.

Troy Scitem, Kris and Kristin Scitem and Children, Keri and Nichol Guthery and Children of Gorman, and Johnny Johnson and sons, Sem, Tyler and Josh enjoyed dinner with Johnny and JoAnn Scitem on Christmas Night.

Our community was blessed this past week with around .8 of an inch of rain, and we are praying for more soon. We really didn't ask for the cold windy weather that blew in early on Christmas morning.

A very Happy New Year to everyone. I pray for God's blessings for you all throughout 2007.

ITEMS OF INTEREST

The Order of the Eastern Star holds its regular stated meetings on the first Monday of each month at 7:30 p.m.

Gorman Senior Citizens meet Every Wednesday at 11:30 in the Gorman Senior Center. Bring Covered Dish or \$3.00 Per Plate.

Gorman Oaklawn Cemetery Donations can be sent to Aline Garrett, P. O. Box 711, Gorman, Tx 76454 or to American State Bank.

LIBRARY - Charlie Garrett Memorial Library is open every Monday thru Friday from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m., Tuesday mornings from 9 a.m. to 12 noon and Saturday mornings from 9 to 12 starting September 2nd.

FOOD BANK

New Hours - 10 - 11:00 a.m.
Second Thursday

Boy Scouts

Meeting Week
Tuesdays - 6:00 p.m.
Methodist Church

SANDRA CAGLE WILL BE IN GORMAN AT THE CITY OFFICE TO RENEW AUTO LICENSE PLATES. HER NEXT VISIT - WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 17th FROM 9 - NOON
Oakland Cemetery Association is accepting donations for the Care of the Cemetery. Donations can be sent to Oakland Cemetery Association, 503 N. Fisher, Gorman, Tx 76454, or American State Bank, Gorman, Texas 76454.

4-H - Meets Second Monday of each month at 6:00 p.m. at the First United Methodist Church Fellowship Hall - Amy Wood - 734-2973.

VET Science 4-H Project - 4th Tuesday each Month. Technology Center / Gorman Community Center. Contact Lee or Amy Wood at 254-734-2973.

Gorman Masonic Lodge No. 716 A.F. & A.M. Regular stated meetings are 2nd Tuesday of each month at 7:30 p.m. Members are urged to attend. Visitors are always welcome. Mark Wilkerson, Master - Pat Moseley, Secretary.

Comanche Special Services Co-Op/De Leon ISD

Position Title: Student Records Clerk
Location: Comanche Special Services Co-Op office in De Leon
Salary Range: Local pay scale depending on experience
Length of Work Year: 207 days
Position requirements: Experience preferred
Qualifications: 1. High school diploma or GED, 2. Certified by standards of position as required by TEA, 3. Able to demonstrate satisfactory secretarial knowledge, including computer skills.
Position description: To maintain current, complete and accurate records on student files from information gathered from eligibility folders and recorded on input documents.
Application Procedures: Complete application & return to Comanche Special Services Co-Op office at 625 S. Houston St. in De Leon. Call 254/893-2130 for further information. Application may also be submitted online at www.escl4.net.
Application Deadline: January 16, 2007.

Business Directory

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- 184A, 2-1 frame home, 6 water wells, 2 reservoirs, 3 side roll irrigation systems, 15hp pit pump, 9 acre in pecan orchard, 76 acres in coastal, 55 acres in crop land, rest in native pasture. [JK01] \$524,920
- 165A, 3-1 newly remodeled frame home, w/ office, 12 water wells, large reservoir, highway frontage, cross fences, coastal, pecan orchard, pipe corrals, storm cellar, bams, hunting, minerals. [ED01] \$549,000 REDUCED \$495,000
- 100A, w/ 4,961 sq. ft. (CAD) 5-4 1/2 2-story brick home, fireplaces, game room, office, 2-car garage, 2-car carport, underground sprinkler, swimming pool, deck w/ hot tub, 2 ponds, pipe corrals, pecan & oak trees. [FS01] \$850,000
- 80A, w/ 1,943sf (CAD) 3-2 brick home, bams and shed, 3 wells, stock pond, cross fences, steel pens, almost completed roofing arena. [CB01] \$459,000
- 70A, w/ 1,894sf (CAD) 3-2 brick home, metal roof, carport, fireplace, approx. 14 acres pecan orchard, both sides of Leon River, coastal, 2 reservoirs, 4 wells, 3 bams, pipe corrals, equipment, hunting. [BC01] \$396,500
- 52A, w/ 2,854sf (CAD) 4-3 brick home, carport, 5 water wells, 3 stock tanks, corrals, bams [LP01] \$250,000
- 11A, w/ 16'x70' mobile home, well, rural water, oak trees [TC01] \$70,000
- 10A, horse facility w/ 16x76 Mobile home, approx. 2,600sf of bams and sheds, cross fenced into four pastures, highway frontage [KW01] \$125,000
- 250 ± A, 150 wooded, 100 coastal, on Coppereas Creek, lake, stock tanks, hunters cabin, 25hp pit pump, hwy. frontage, rural water [LB01] \$850,000
- 243 A, Comanche Co, one reservoir, 14 irrigation wells, irrigation pit, highway frontage, cultivation, costal, native pasture [AB01] \$473,850
- 240A, with pivot irrigation system, 2-stock tanks, approx. 7,000sf of bams and sheds, pipe corrals, creek, hunting, minerals [LU01] \$798,500
- 158 A, rolling terrain, 2 tanks, well, coastal, native, cover for deer and turkey hunting, all weather roads, minerals, approx. 4 miles from Dublin [CS01] \$395,000
- 150A, rolling terrain, approx. 90 acres wooded, 4 water wells, irrigation pit, stock tank, excellent deer and turkey hunting. Minerals. [LO01] \$442,500
- 140A, recreational, cattle, or horse, creek running thru, water wells, good fences, hunting deer, turkey, hogs, some farm eq. available, minerals negotiable, possible owner financing. [CSK01] \$350,000
- 100A, with 5 stock tanks, water well, pipe corrals, good fences, improved varieties of coastal, native pasture, cultivation, and hunting. [MMS01] \$225,000
- 81A pecan orchard, approx. 900 improved variety trees, underground drip irrigation on, 9 wells, tractors, shaker, other equipment. [REM01] \$326,000
- 60A, stock tank, approx. 13 A wooded, coastal and hunting. [JD01] \$165,000
- **UNDER CONTRACT** - Nursing Home, [CCH01] \$39,000
- 3,925sf (CAD) Metal Commercial Building, walk-in cooler, central heat & air, office & storage areas, restrooms [BW02] \$75,000

See Pictures at: www.GilderRealty.com

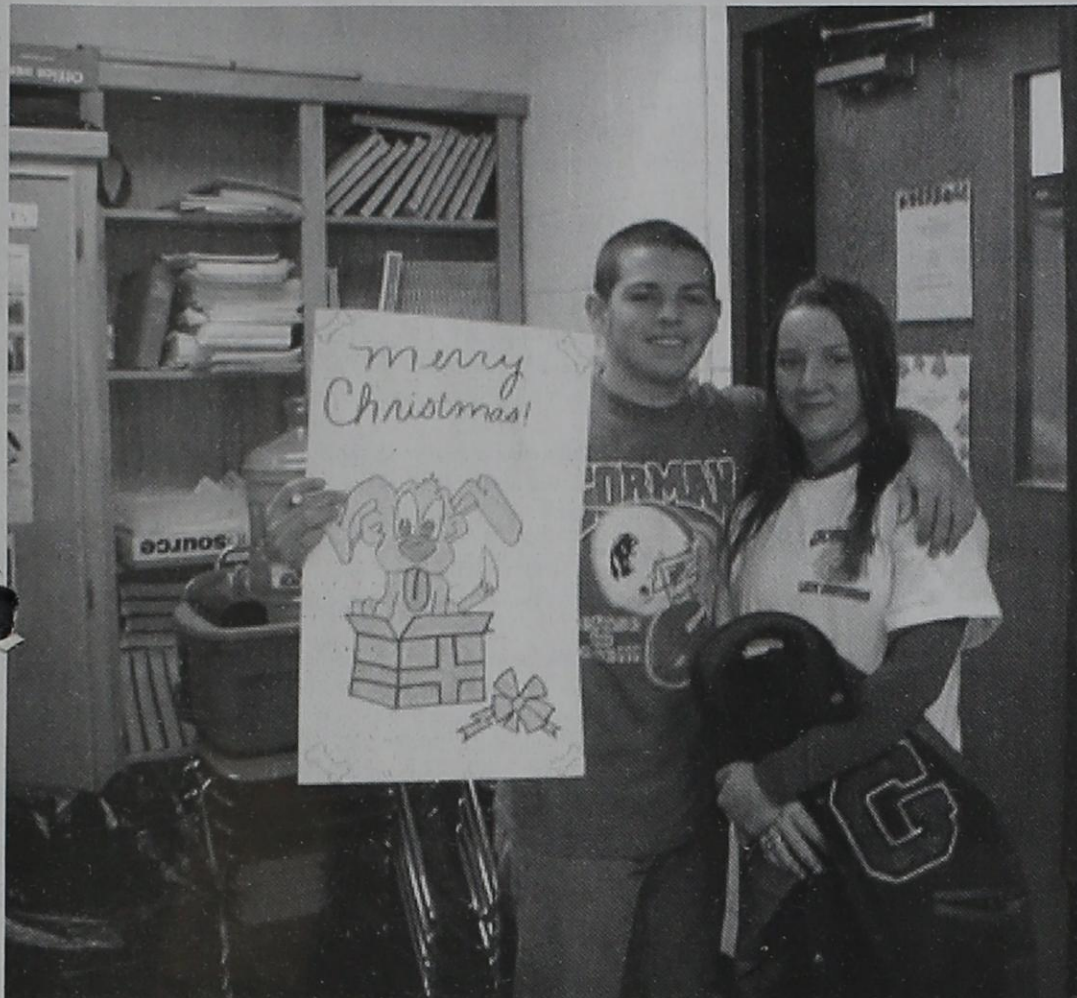
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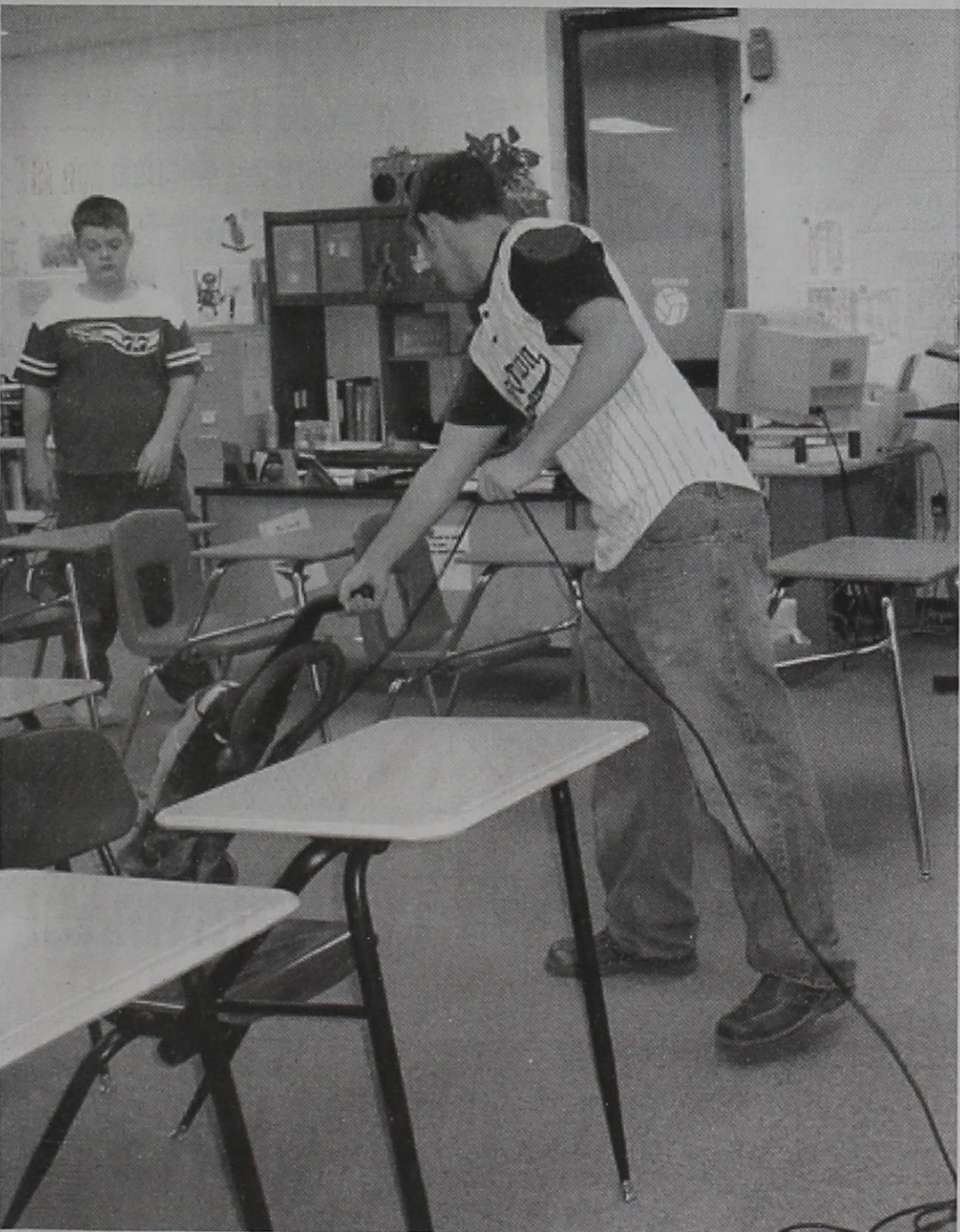
Community Service Project



Daniel Shirley and Megan Lewis – Christmas Cards made by the students were taken to the Nursing Home to display in the Resident's Rooms.



Mindy, Carrie, and Stormy – Wrapping Presents for Needy Children in Our Area.



Corey Clark displaying his Housekeeping Skills



These students went to the Gorman Oaklawn Cemetery and picked up strayed plastic flowers and also bagged 25 bags of trash piled up in the old part of the cemetery: Stetson Thompson, Brice Campbell, Maressa Gillen, Cortney Shirley and Evanjelina Sanchez.

February 2007 EXIT Level TAAS and TAKS Registration Information

TAAS Exit Level Test Administration:	
Dates	TAAS
February 20	Writing
February 21	Mathematics
February 22	Reading

TAKS Exit Level Test Administration:	
Dates	TAKS
February 20	ELA
February 21	Mathematics
February 22	Science
February 23	Social Studies

All out of school TAAS and TAKS examinees must complete a registration form. If you have any questions about which test to take or how to register, contact Mrs. Hampton at 734-2614 or call toll free, 800-552-0302. You can register by accessing the website <http://k12testing.tx.ncspearson.com> or by completing a registration form. Registration forms are due in Austin no later than 5:00 pm January 19, 2007.



The Tech*Star EMS Education and Life Care Plus EMS Education held a Holiday Dinner at ZJ's Steakhouse on Friday, December 22nd. Several of the aircraft used by the area Air Medical Providers landed next to downtown in the City Park. There are three helicopters in the photo.

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Happy New Year!!

Card Of Thanks

I would like to thank all of those who visited me while I was in the hospital. Thank you all for the prayers and flowers. I thank the elementary for their support. I miss you guys. Special thanks for the Laminack and Roemisch families. I appreciate everyone's help and support.

Teresa Granado

Senior Health News

Seniors And Insomnia

(NAPSA)—When it comes to a good night's sleep, no one is in greater need than America's seniors. Lack of sleep can lead to an increased risk of debilitating falls, diabetes and deadly heart attacks.

Sleeplessness may also be a symptom or early warning sign of disease. In their need for healthy sleep, millions of seniors are turning to safe, effective, doctor-prescribed sleep aids.

Unfortunately, rare cases involving people who abuse sleep aids are sensationalized. This can be misleading and create unfounded concerns for seniors who worry about the safety of these valuable medications.

A new report by RetireSafe's Senior Center for Health and Security examines the facts about sleep disorders and the unique risks they pose to older Americans. It also discusses remedies.

Sometimes commonsense changes in lifestyle and sleep environment aren't enough to ensure a healthy night's rest. When prescribed by a doctor and used as directed, prescription sleep aids can provide needed relief for insomnia.

Be smart. Be responsible. Use common sense. Always talk to your doctor about your prescription medications and your reactions to them.

Millions of senior citizens are able to get a good night's sleep thanks, in part, to doctor-prescribed sleep aids.

The decision to use a sleep aid should be based on factual, scientific information and what your doctor says is right for you, not a sensationalized news story.

To learn more, visit www.SeniorsForCures.org.

Entertaining Made Easy

(NAPSA)—There are a host of easy entertaining solutions that can make throwing a party easier and more fun.

Whether you focus on the multitude of food preparation shortcuts offered in food magazines and by experts, or select timesaving prepared foods from local grocery stores, you can look like a pro without the work. Try these tips:

- Have your guests bring a dish to share, whether a dessert or a bottle of wine—it's one less thing for you to fret about.

- Get your guests involved in the entire cooking process. Since parties tend to gather in the kitchen, why not give people a fun job? Ask them to stir, baste, or even shake the martinis.

- Build your menu around a whole roast or bird such as turkey or chicken that has a Pop Up disposable cooking thermometer in it. Large cuts of meat require little attention while cooking and the thermometer helps ensure that the meat is cooked to a safe temperature but not overcooked.

Even best-selling cookbook author and noted Life & Style expert Sandra Lee, of "Sandra Lee Semi-Homemade Cooking" on the Food Network, advocates choosing a roast or turkey with a Pop Up disposable cooking thermometer.

"It is a safe, accurate and convenient way of ensuring that the roast is not under- or overcooked and makes cooking easy and delicious," adds Sandra Lee.

- Make side dishes ahead of time and reheat just before serving. That way, you spend more time with your guests and less time in the kitchen.

Easy Twice-Baked Potatoes

4 medium baking potatoes
½ cup butter, cubed
¼ teaspoon garlic powder



Making these Easy Twice-Baked Potatoes a day before the party will give you more time with guests.

1 tablespoon dried parsley
1 tablespoon finely diced onions
3 tablespoons pre-packaged real bacon bits
1½ cups packaged shredded cheese (use your favorite)
¼ teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon pepper
¼ cup milk
Pre-grated Parmesan cheese

Wash unpeeled potatoes and prick with a fork. Microwave according to your microwave directions until soft. Place butter in large bowl. In separate bowl, combine remaining ingredients except milk; set aside.

Cut cooked potatoes in half. Scoop out center of the potato and add to butter. Place skins in greased shallow baking dish. Mix potatoes with the butter; add milk. Stir in cheese mixture. Spoon potato mixture into skins. Sprinkle with Parmesan cheese.

Warm in microwave or oven until cheese melts; broil 1 to 2 minutes for toasty tops. Can be made a day ahead. Serves 6-8.

Visit www.volkenterprises.com for a list of meat and poultry brands that come with the thermometers.

At Lone Star Lanes In Stephenville, Tx

Lonnie - Tim - Marly ee

Silver Coaches:

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Bronze Coaches:

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CAPITOL COMMENT



U.S. SENATOR
KAY BAILEY HUTCHISON

Revenue Sharing Will Encourage New Development

America has been blessed with bountiful natural resources, and developing these vast resources is critical to our long-term economic and national security.

Considerable deposits of oil and natural gas are sitting near our own coasts, yet we remain dependent upon foreign sources of energy because we are unwilling to utilize our own natural energy reserves.

Our country now imports 65 percent of the crude oil we use, leaving us susceptible to fluctuations in the global market. To meet our expanding needs, we are forced to rely upon volatile and politically unstable countries whose support for America's efforts in the War on Terror is benign at best.

Some of the rogue leaders who export oil and gas to the United States are in fact terrorist sympathizers. Continued dependence on these foreign sources jeopardizes our security and plainly makes no sense.

Earlier this month, Congress took a critical first step toward increasing domestic energy production by passing the Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act of 2006. This bill opens 8.3 million acres in the Gulf of Mexico for oil and gas production while providing a political path forward to accessing additional energy reserves off the Atlantic and Pacific coasts that remain off limits.

While this bill will immediately expand oil and gas exploration, a less obvious, but perhaps even more important, part of this legislation is an innovative revenue-sharing program between the federal government and states that feel the impact of such resource development. This revenue-sharing program is a model for future nationwide offshore energy exploration and development proposals.

Over the next several years, as Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama enjoy tremendous economic and environmental benefits from this bill, other states will be encouraged to allow the offshore exploration and development that our nation desperately needs.

Newly accessible areas in the Gulf of Mexico known as leases 181 and 181 South are expected to contain more than 1.2 billion barrels of recoverable oil and 5.8 trillion cubic feet of natural gas. This is enough oil to fuel 87 million cars per year and enough natural gas to heat and cool 6 million homes for the next 15 years, or six times our current annual Liquefied Natural Gas imports.

In 1981, Congress enacted a moratorium on offshore drilling, and oil and natural gas production is currently prohibited in 85 percent of America's territorial waters. This has impeded our ability to inventory undeveloped areas that likely contain untapped resources. However, state legislatures beholden to anti-exploration special interests will soon witness an influx of revenue to Gulf Coast states for environmental protection.

When production begins in the newly opened areas, Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama will receive income through federal revenue sharing. Private companies that sign production leases with the federal government will pay royalties on minerals extracted from the Gulf of Mexico. Each state will then receive an equitable share of these revenues, which must be used to protect important national ecosystems and prepare for unforeseen natural disasters. These funds will support projects such as wetlands restoration, hurricane protection, beach enhancement and infrastructure construction to preserve our coastlines.

I anticipate that millions of dollars each year will be directed to our state. Beginning in 2007, Texas will receive a guaranteed 10 percent of eligible production revenues from within leases 181 and 181 South, and beginning in 2017, Texas will receive between 21 percent and 28 percent of eligible revenues from new production in Gulf of Mexico planning areas outside leases 181 and 181 South.

Revenue sharing is a strong incentive for states to participate in resource development, because each state can earn revenues proportional to the development off its shore. For example, Virginia's Legislature has shown an interest in allowing additional access to areas off its coast.

In the Minerals Management Service's current draft for its Outer Continental Shelf oil and gas program for 2007-2012, a small area off Virginia's coast is the only non-Gulf Coast area in the lower 48 states under consideration for exploration. But with a revenue-sharing proposal such as the one created in the Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act, Virginia has an added incentive to expand this area.

Additional state legislatures, from Georgia to Maine on the Atlantic seaboard and California to Washington on the Pacific coast, will likely be more willing to consider offshore production if their state is eligible for revenues.

States that provide our nation with a secure energy supply should be compensated for doing their part. Access to undeveloped energy sources is important to all Americans, because we must become more energy independent.

To bring down the cost of gas for our cars and heat for our homes, we must promote alternative renewable sources of energy. This takes time. As we invest in new energy, we must not neglect our own resources.

New technology allows us to protect the environment by digging deeper without disrupting the surface. We now have a path to follow that will provide both tangible and obvious benefits to states and to the nation.



Congress, Then and Now

As each year draws to a close, it is traditionally the time for reflection. We take stock of where we've been, and set goals for the future.

This is a particularly useful exercise for those of us in government. The U.S. Congress adjourned in early December having achieved some notable accomplishments, while also leaving a great deal of unfinished business.

For the first time in a decade, Congress took a tentative, but serious step to reduce federal spending. I supported the Deficit Reduction Act that cut approximately \$100 billion in projected outlays over the next decade.

As that legislation was being debated, I introduced an amendment that would have addressed fast-growing entitlement expenditures such as Medicaid, Medicare and Social Security, which compose two-thirds of federal spending. Though this common-sense measure didn't pass, I will pursue it again next year.

In the session's final hours, we extended several tax measures important to Texans. One is a \$4,000 annual college tuition deduction, and another is the research and development tax credit that is vital to many businesses in our state.

Most importantly, for those who itemize deductions on their federal income taxes, we extended the state and local sales tax deduction for two years. This means residents of Texas and six other states that don't have an income tax will be on a level playing field with other states that do.

Working families are paying steadily more for health insurance and medical costs, so I was especially pleased that Congress made important improvements to Health Savings Accounts (HSA). Payments into these accounts can be made with income before it's subject to payroll taxes, so our move to raise the contribution limits would have a big impact.

There were other significant steps forward. We reduced abuse of the legal system by revising class-action lawsuit rules, updated federal bankruptcy laws to protect consumers and encourage responsible budgeting, and safeguarded Second Amendment rights by banning lawsuits directed solely at the legal manufacture of firearms.

And Texas will eventually get major benefits from the Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act of 2006, which opens more than eight million acres in the Gulf of Mexico to responsible oil and gas exploration and production. The state will begin receiving a portion of offshore royalty payments to combat beach erosion and other effects on the coastal environment.

I was most proud to help confirm two new members of the U.S. Supreme Court. Chief Justice John Roberts and Associate Justice Samuel Alito both understand well the proper role the judiciary should play in our federal system. I'm convinced they will faithfully interpret laws made by elected representatives of the people.

As we look forward to 2007 and the 110th Congress, we see a great deal of unfinished business.

Domestically, we must repair our broken immigration system and restore respect for our laws. Though we talked about this issue a great deal for two years, we did not resolve the problem. In a post-9/11 world, we need to know who is coming into our country—and right now, we don't. Furthermore, it's affecting our economy, families, and eroding traditional respect for the rule of law. This situation will only deteriorate if Congress fails to act.

Leaders on both sides have pledged to work in a cooperative manner to address matters that were bogged down in partisanship during the 109th Congress.

The bipartisanship should start with Iraq and the war on terror. Protecting the American people is our first responsibility. In my view, we will be under assault from Islamic extremists for years—even decades—to come. We must join together on a strategy to win the war against these terrorists, not simply criticize, delay, or attempt to exploit setbacks for partisan advantage.

We all want the troops home as soon as possible, but our military strategy in Iraq must be based on clear national security considerations. We owe it to all Americans to establish a strategy, and to support it—with one voice.

I am determined to work in the coming year with my Senate colleagues on common goals. For example, I've long sought to bring more Texas sunshine to Washington. So Sen. Patrick Leahy (D-Vt.) and I intend to pursue open government legislation, to improve transparency and make the federal Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) more effective.

The Congressional delegation from Texas enjoys a well-deserved reputation for working together. Republicans and Democrats, on projects that are vital to our state. If we can expand that model to the entire Congress, and help reestablish cooperation and bipartisanship once again in Washington, 2007 will indeed be a happy new year for our country.

Sen. Cornyn is a member of the following Senate Committees: Armed Services, Judiciary, Budget, Small Business and Entrepreneurship, and Joint Economic. He is the chairman of the subcommittees on Immigration, Border Security and Citizenship and Emerging Threats and Capabilities. Cornyn served previously as Texas Attorney General, Texas Supreme Court Justice and Bexar County District Judge. For Sen. Cornyn's previous Texas Times columns: www.cornyn.senate.gov/column

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