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Volume 25, Issue 5

Thursday, December 25, 2014

Winters, Texas 75c



PHOTOS: JOE GERHART

Jonathan Sandoval making a jump shot.

Blizzards continue to prepare for district hoops

WINTERS ENTERPRISE
STAFF REPORT

WINTERS- The Blizzards basketball team traveled to Coleman this past Tuesday, December 16, 2014. In the JV game, the Blizzards fell 44-24. Cordale Armstrong led the Blizzards JV in scoring with 10 points. In the Varsity game, the first quarter ended in an 11-11 tie, as Johnny Sandoval came off the bench to score 4 points. In the second quarter, Coleman outscored Winters 17-5 to take a 12 point, 28-16, halftime lead. In the third quarter, Coleman extended their lead to 38-24. In the final period, the Blizzards picked up full court and rattled the Bluecats, going on a 19-6 run to cut the score to 44-43 with 1:30 left in the game. That was as close at Winters got, as Coleman made their free throws down the stretch for a 50-43 win. Jake Brock led Winters with 15 points and 14 rebounds. Daniel Gerhart had 10 points, while Luke Kraatz had an all-around game with 7 points, 9 rebounds and 4 assists. The loss drops Winters to 2-3 on the season. They travel to Eldorado on Friday. Winters will play in the Anson Tournament, December 29-30, before opening up district play against Roscoe at home, on January 2.



Daniel Gerhart goes up for a shot under the basket at the Blizzards vs. Coleman game.

Heartwarming and uplifting

Sixth annual Christmas trees exhibit brings visitors, rises spirits

RUBEN CANTU-RODRIGUEZ
WINTERS ENTERPRISE

WINTERS- An ever growing exhibit, bringing in people from all over the region and lifting the Christmas spirit in local and area residents, the sixth annual Christmas Trees extravaganza was held during this Christmas season at the Rock Hotel in Winters, Texas.

Under this year's theme "Spirit of Christmas," over 50 originally decorated Christmas trees were on display, following a tradition started in 2009 by Joyce Carbery.

"A lot of people made this possible, Kay Colburn was chair of the committee, Elaine Miller of REASON, Jamie Long, Joyce Broadstreet, most of our directors helped out to set up this year's exhibit," said Rock Hotel board of directors President Wanda Brewer.

"We had several groups and organizations putting up trees and hosting several nights, the Lutheran Church put up a tree and opened our exhibit with a Christmas carols program, Lupe and Shelley Guevara decorated our mirrors and curtains and put swags on the stairways," she added.

The outside of the hotel was decorated by Kay Colburn and Wanda Brewer. Individuals, churches and organizations participating in the display not necessarily had to put up a tree, some hosted a night of the exhibit, providing a program and finger foods, while others just helped out with the decorations.

Others hosting a night of the display were the Winters Lions Club, featuring Winters' own Elvis impersonator Harvey McFadden, the Samaritan House and Nadine Delacruz.

Visitors don't have to pay to go and enjoy the exhibit, but donations are always welcome. Another source of revenue is the Rock Hotel store, recently opened by John Long, where visitors can find all sorts of products such as books, shirts, coffee mugs, the Winters Quasiquintennial Christmas tree



PHOTO: RUBEN CANTU-RODRIGUEZ

Sarah Craig and John Long look at the Christmas tree ornament commemorating the 125th anniversary of the foundation of the City of Winters.

ornament, and more.

"We been real pleased with the outcome this year, people really liked some of the trees," Brewer said.

One of the most visited and talked about trees is the lobby tree, a giant greeting visitors with its "Holiday Memories" theme, set up by the women of the Rock Hotel.

Every year the exhibit has been bringing people from all over the area. This year the display received visitors from Abilene, San Angelo, Ballinger, Midland and more.

"People come from different places, they hear about the trees and come to Winters to see the exhibit," Brewer said.

The collection has been growing over the years, with trees and decorations donated by members of the community.

The year is not over yet but plans are already underway for next year's exhibit, hoping to raise the bar even higher with the help of more individuals and organizations.

"We hope to see more people from the community getting involved and helping to keep up the Christmas tradition, we need some younger volunteers to help out," Brewer said.

Some of the trees included in this year's exhibit are the Bride and Groom Tree, set up at the Bridal Room by the women of the Rock Hotel. The Charlie Brown



The Lobby Tree, a gentle giant put up by the women of the Rock Hotel, each year greets visitors under a different theme.

Tree, decorated by Bettye Pinkerton. A shampoo and hair conditioner bottle caps tree made out of pieces donated by Hairway 83 Salon, an Elvis tree put up by Elvis' impersonator Harvey McFadden, a Hispanic tree by Nadine Delacruz, and Christmas

art by the Winters ISD first grade students.

Something new this year are the ornaments commemorating the 125th anniversary of the City of Winters, the pieces are available to the public at Rock Hotel Gift Shop.

SEE MORE PAGE 6

Preserving history

Runnels County Historical Commission Chairperson and author Ruth Cooper held a book signing on Saturday, December 20 at the Rock Hotel, in Winters, Texas, to promote her latest publication "The Organization of Runnels County."

The book, which depicts county records and stories about the county's foundation and early beginnings, was released on December 17. The new book can be purchased by calling Ruth Cooper (325) 754 5183, Linda Duggan (325) 365 3145, Beverly Teplicek (325) 442 4841, Sally Spill (325) 754 4763. They may be purchased at Ballinger Printing, Ballinger, Texas and at the Winters Area Business and Industrial Corporation in Winters, Texas. Pictured here are Ruth Cooper (center) with her son Alan and wife J'Lynn Cooper, and grandchildren Cameron Cooper and Alanna Cooper.

PHOTO: RUBEN CANTU-RODRIGUEZ



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ROLL-UP

Runnels County

4 Winters Enterprise

Thursday, December 25, 2014

THE IDLE AMERICAN

A coach who cares...

Commentary by
Dr. Don Newbury

At Christmas time, pleasant memories — like low-hanging fruit — are ripe to be savored. Look around, though, and we see folks toiling daily on life's sharpest edges so one day others can build memories worthy of recall from vineyards that now seem so barren.

This is such an account. Don't expect a happy ending; currently, a "faith-claiming continuance" may be the best to the hoped for.

A man — sentenced to 40 years for first-degree murder — has done 12, just turned 30 and eligible for parole in 2022. The State of Texas sustains him physically. Some two hours away in Alvarado, Texas, is his high school football coach who — with family and friends — strives to sustain him spiritually, hopeful to keep Anansi Flaherty's hopes alive....

Christians to the core, Jeff and wife Amanda Dix-

on have long helped others. They've been on the receiving end, too, credit- ing kin and friends for propping them up during a life-jolting experience.

After several years of marriage, quadruplets birthed at 20 weeks were stillborn.

Unwavering in faith and commitment, the then young teachers forged on. (They now have three children — Tyler 22, Maggie 20 and Faith 8.)

They all love Anansi, a second-team running back Jeff coached on Katy High School's 2000 state championship football team. They think it miraculous that Anansi survived the streets to reach high school.

He claimed the Dixons' love — perhaps the first he'd known — at age 16. He lingered at the field house, sometimes accepting rides home and such. At other times, though, he flirted with disaster, partnering with alcohol

by age 10, with marijuana and worse stuff soon to follow. Little wonder. With no dad around and a mom away most of the time, Anansi lived alone in a tiny apartment near Katy High

for more than two of his high school years. He didn't have to look for trouble — it found him. By age 18, he was beyond adrift.

One day, Coach Dixon shuddered upon hearing a TV news bulletin about a young man found in bloodied clothing, stumbling from a knifing scene where his mother lay dead. That was on Dec. 29, 2002 — a dozen years ago....

Anansi doesn't remember details of the hideous act that haunts him daily.

The Dixons — piecing together the puzzle of his tattered life — won't let go. Jeff visited him at least weekly during his confinement at the Fort Bend County Jail and later

whenever possible at units in Beaumont, Livingston, Huntsville and Iowa Park. Without fanfare, the family provides encouragement monthly by sending money, assorted items and most importantly, Bibles. The Bibles are replaced regularly, since other inmates steal them, using the thin pages to roll marijuana smokes....

The Dixons consider themselves to be his "adopted family," praying that one day, they might have family visitation rights. They have exchanged hundreds of letters. For Anansi, they've gone from "Dear Coach" to "Dear Dad," for years signed by "Your Second Son."

"Anansi is a brother in Christ, and I am blessed by every letter and every visit," Jeff said. "We pray some day to visit Anansi as family members, as do blood kin of others incarcerated. My family and I want to hug his neck, hold his hand and pray with him — that's long been our desire."

To date, Anansi has never been visited by blood

kin — not even once....

A few months ago, Jeff and I drove to the Iowa Park prison. I was granted a press visit; Jeff, approved only for weekends, remained in the lobby. For Jeff, as well as interviewers, visits are conducted through thick plate glass and way-too-short cords for telephone intercom.

During the hour-long visit, I mostly listened, impressed by Anansi's 100 percent positive attitude and unending smile. His biblical knowledge was stunning; he quoted scripture like a seasoned theologian, citing Biblical figures who never gave up hope.

"Our intent has always been to show God's love. We've seen how God has changed his heart, and feel strongly we are in God's will to continue support of Anansi." Jeff said....

Perhaps Anansi is most symbolic of the hundreds of youngsters the Dixons have helped during their 30-year educational pilgrimage. They see hurt daily in lives cast asunder

by broken homes.

Jeff has a wonderful won- lost record in coaching. But his "life coaching" is most important. It includes caring and comforting. He's at the top of my list.

My wife and I love this family, joining them in prayer that one day soon, the Dixons can be recognized as the family Anansi has never known....

I've procrastinated in writing this piece. It pales alongside the almost full page account written by Kevin Sherrington in the Dallas Morning News almost eight years ago.

If desired, contact me and I'll forward a copy by email.

In the meantime, we are thankful for the Dixons, believing that "God with us" truths prevail in this and all seasons, particularly for the least of these, our brethren....

Dr. Newbury is a speaker in the Dallas/Fort Worth Metroplex. Inquiries/comments to: newbury@speakerdoc.com. Phone: 817-447-3872. Web site: www.speakerdoc.com.



TEXAS
COLUMNIST
Don
Newbury

GOT NEWS

We welcome your news items and photos to include in the upcoming edition of **The Ballinger Ledger or Winters Enterprise**. Choose the way that's most convenient for you

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Financial Focus

New year's financial resolutions

Now that 2015 is upon us, you may be thinking about making some New Year's resolutions. Perhaps you'll decide to take up a musical instrument, or hit the gym more often, or even learn a new language. All these are worthy goals, of course — but you could also gain some key benefits by working to achieve some financial resolutions.

Here are a few to consider: Fill "gaps" in your investment portfolio. From time to time, you — or possibly your financial advisor, if you work with one — might identify "gaps" in your investment portfolio. For example, you might find that you are making insufficient progress on a key goal, such as saving for a child's college education. Or you might discover that you need to place additional resources in a particular asset class to achieve proper diversification, which can help reduce the impact of market volatility on your portfolio. (Keep in mind, though, that diversification by itself can't guarantee profits or protect against loss.) So put "filling portfolio gaps" high on your list of New Year's financial resolutions.

Boost your 401(k) contributions. If your salary has gone up with the new year, consider boosting your contributions to your 401(k) or similar employer-sponsored retirement plan. You may not be able to afford to contribute the maximum annual amount — which in 2015 is \$18,000, or \$24,000 if you're 50 or older — but if you increase your contributions every year, you can greatly speed your progress toward your retirement savings goals. You can put this New Year's resolution into effect by contacting your human resources or benefits department as soon as you get back to work in 2015. Eliminate "unhealthy" investment habits. As part

of your general New Year's resolutions, you may have decided to cut back on "carbs" and sugar-laced soft drinks, with the expectation that these moves could help your overall health. But you can also make "unhealthy" financial moves, such as chasing after "hot" stocks (which may already have cooled off by the time you find them) or selling quality investments just because their price has temporarily dropped. Strive to focus more intently on your long-term investment strategy, as opposed to reacting to short-term stimuli.

Review your estate strategy. During any given year, you might experience major changes in your life — marriage (or remarriage), new child, new home, etc. — and these changes will have profound effects on your estate plans. But whether or not you encountered any of these events in 2014, it's a good idea to look over your estate planning documents* — such as a will, living trust, power of attorney and so forth — to make sure they are still current with your wishes. It's especially important to update beneficiary designations on your insurance policies and retirement accounts so that they are aligned with the wishes you have expressed in your will. And if you haven't drawn up your estate plans* yet, make a New Year's resolution to do so in 2015 — because it's never too soon to take the steps necessary to protect your loved ones in the future.

Unlike some New Year's resolutions, these financial ones won't require a big shift in your lifestyle. But if you can stick to them, they can make a big difference in your life.

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor. Submitted by Larry Gilbert.

Veteran's Corner

Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel announced his resignation after less than 21 months on the job. Hagel was the first former enlisted member of the military and the first Vietnam veteran to be appointed SecDef. Press reports indicate that he was forced to resign over policy differences with senior White House staff. Hagel will stay on as SecDef until a replacement is confirmed by the Senate. President Obama will nominate Ashton Carter, who did not serve in the military but joined the Pentagon in 1981 as a civilian analyst working on missile defense. He has a doctorate in physics and also served as Deputy Secretary of Defense from October 2011 to December 2013. During the Clinton Administration, Dr. Carter was Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Policy (1993-2000). For more information, contact Sandra at the Veterans Service Office at 602 Strong Ave on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., or call 365-3612.

Sandra G. Van Zant
Veterans Co. Service Officer
P.O. Box 108
Ballinger, TX 76821
PHONE (325) 365-3612

Dan Horn coming back to The Old Texas Theater

WINTERS ENTERPRISE
STAFF REPORT

BALLINGER- The Old Texas Theater and Restaurant will be hosting the return of stand-up ventriloquist Dan Horn. Three shows will be seen in Ballinger, highlighted by a New Year's Eve Special followed by encore performances on January 2 and January 3, 2015.

Dan and his "cast of several" have been entertaining audiences for over 35 years. A seasoned performer, Dan has headlined the stages of Las Vegas and America's comedy clubs and colleges, as well as having multiple appearances on national television, including an appearance on The Late Show with David Letterman.

A life-long entertainer, Dan has garnered the attention of his peers, earning recognition as the recipient of the W.S. Berger International Ventriloquist of The Year Award, in addition to developing a reputation as "the guy" in regards to technique and puppeteering.

Horn has been acclaimed as a "Fine technician and often gets so much happening with a puppet it's difficult to see how he's able to do it all," according to Mel Shields, Variety.

Horn has a lengthy resume, highlighted by headline acts at The Flamingo, The Improv cruise lines across the globe, and numerous TV appearances.

Tickets are \$25 and are available online at www.oldtexas theater.com/events or at (325) 365 5100 (please leave a message).

Show time 8 p.m. each night. Meals will be available for purchase. Attendants are asked to arrive at least 45 minutes early to dine-in.

For group rates, special requests, or more information, contact kael@oldtexas theater.com



PHOTO: FILE

Ventriloquist Dan Horn, pictured here with "cast member" Orson, will be back in Ballinger for three shows.

2014 SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS



PHOTOS: RUBEN CANTU-RODRIGUEZ
Christmas art decorating the second story, by First Grade students.



A little Grinch lurks underneath the Charlie Brown tree.



"I'll Be Home For Christmas"... The Elvis Tree by Harvey McFadden.



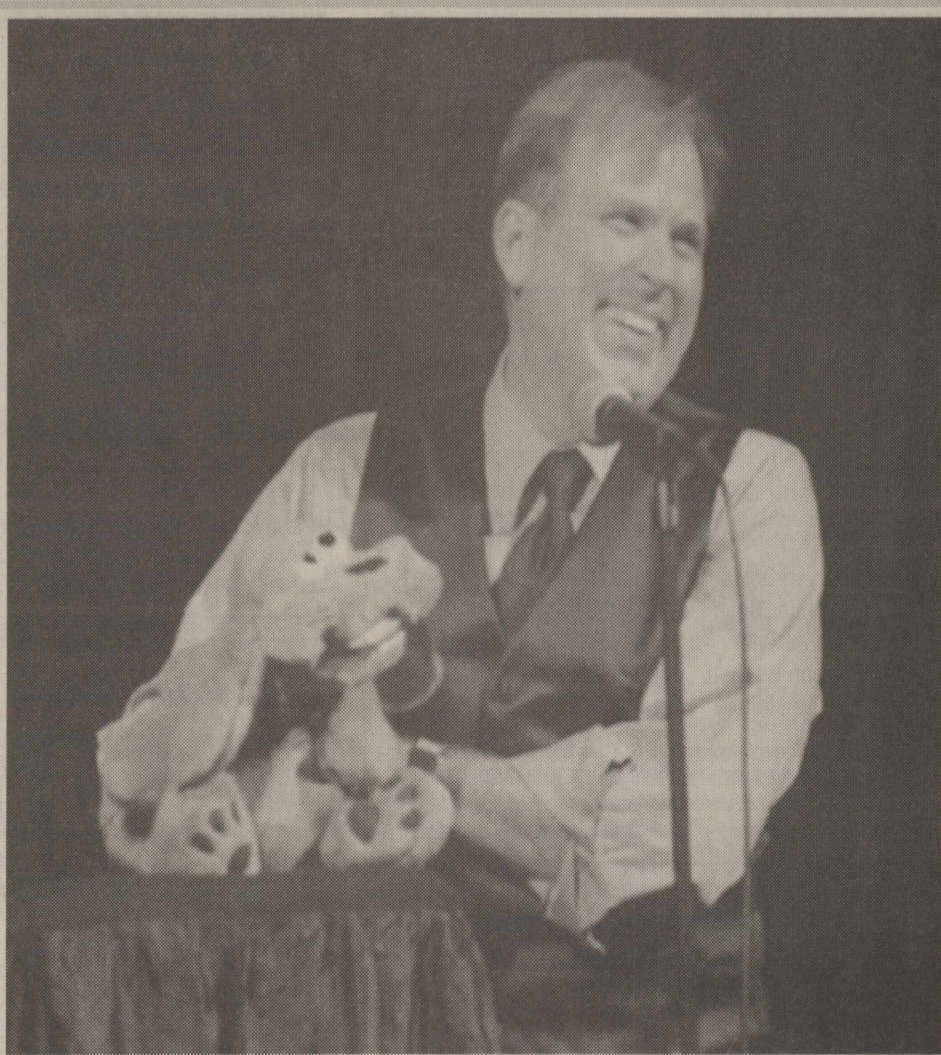
The Bride and Groom Christmas Tree set, put up where else, at the Bridal Room.



Shampoo and hair conditioner bottle caps were used to decorate this tree.



The Hispanic Tree, originally decorated by Nadine Delacruz.



"Recipient of the International Ventriloquist of the Year Award"

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COWPOKES By Ace Reid

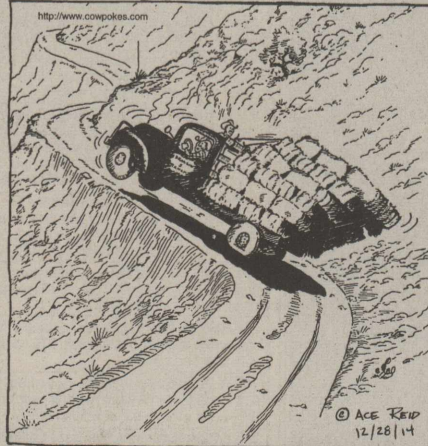
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COWPOKES® By Ace Reid



"Well, Jake, the question is--do we let her go and get fired or just quit right now?"

Pastel workshop to be held in Coleman

WINTERS ENTERPRISE
STAFF REPORT

WINTERS- A pastel workshop with instructor Ruth Ann Taylor will be held on Saturday, January 17, 2015 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Heritage Hall - 400 W. College, in Coleman, Texas.

The \$75 fee includes all supplies.

This will be a great opportunity to explore this medium of art without having to purchase supplies. If you have pastels, please bring, Ruth Ann will supply the paper as she prefers a specific pastel paper.

Participants are encouraged to bring lunch and plan to spend the day enjoying art and the company of other artists.

For more information or to reserve a space please call or email Kathy Andrews, 325-624-5544 or ckandrews@web-access.net. Also, when confirming please indicate your level or experience with pastels.