

# Cowboy Country News

Published each Wednesday in the county seat of Yoakum County, Plains, Texas Volume XI, Issue 21, February 2, 2005



## 2005 LIVESTOCK SHOW



Danny Williams presents 2005 Queen Chelsey - Anne Bearden, Denver City FFA, contestants Skylar Keese, Plains FFA, T.J. Kitchens, Denver City 4-H, and Natalie Butler, Plains 4-H More photos inside



Yoakum County Livestock Assn. officers and directors Danny Williams, Jimmy Bearden, Casey Clark, Chris Chambliss, Kevin Gibson, Rick Gibson, Carlos Howell, Brady McConal, Mike Roberts, Bill Rowe, Lanny Wood, Arlan Gentry, Joe Pierce, Lesa Wood

### The State Of Education In Texas

An editorial by James Haynes, Plains ISD Superintendent

I just finished reading the Governor's State of the State Address. It was very interesting. He talked about additional money for education, but only if there is improved performance. Texas Public Schools have been steadily improving for years. We have progressed from the TABS test to the TEAMS test to the TAAS test and most recently to the TAKS test. Every time the state has added additional accountability, the education system has met the mark. I guess because we have been so successful the governor and the legislature have determined they can set any standard, no matter how lofty, and public education will be able to meet it.

The governor stated, according to a study by Achieve Incorporated, Texas is the first state to make a college-prep curriculum the standard course work in high school. My concern is not that we are providing the college-prep course work; it's the state has mandated every student meet this challenge. This college-prep curriculum the governor refers to is otherwise entitled the Recognized Graduation Plan. There are many students in the public school population who are not college bound. How does this plan help them? Would it not better suit the needs of those students and our state if they left high school with a vocational skill? I realize there are students who leave high school and go to a trade school, but I would argue there are many students who leave high school and go directly to work. If students have no plans for continuing

their education after high school, will they be willing to do the academic work required to pass a college-prep curriculum, or will they drop out?

The governor and legislature have an answer for the dropout problem as well. Their answer is to tell schools they will not receive a favorable report card should the school not reach the new dropout goal number. This would then result in withholding state money from those schools. The bottom line is, setting goals is a good thing, but the goals must be reachable and realistic. Human beings are all different and all learn at different rates. Unfortunately, some cannot achieve as much academically as others. I am afraid we have set the goal for student achievement so high only our college bound students can reach the mark.

The governor said in his speech new money should be tied to performance. The expected performance can never be reached if the student/teacher ratios are not kept low. The added burden of providing every student with a college-prep course of study means students are asked to learn and pass an increasingly difficult list of courses. Students who do not speak English well, who are not gifted academically, or who are not motivated to go to school need to be in classrooms with a low student/teacher ratio. Individual attention from a qualified teacher will give these children a better chance of achieving at the higher level required by the state. The money to pay for more teachers must come before the higher levels of accountability can be reached.

Now the governor and legis-

lature are attacking the problem of school funding in the state. The plan that seems to be emerging is a state property tax. This course of action would require a constitutional amendment. The plan requires all of our local property tax be sent to Austin and then redistributed to each Texas school district. To get an idea of how well this type plan works, check the public school systems of New Mexico and California where local tax money has been redistributed by the state to each school district. Their levels of student performance are extremely low.

I believe this funding plan has evolved for two reasons, neither of which have a thing to do with education of students. First, the lawmakers want to be able to say they lowered property taxes; secondly, they want to get out from under the court ruling which says our current school finance system is unconstitutional. The plan to tie all money back to performance could be catastrophic unless new money is provided immediately to reach the goals set by the legislature. Our new focus should be on what the children of Texas need most which is being prepared after graduation with a saleable skill for the workforce, or for entrance into a trade school or a college depending on what meets the capabilities and needs of each individual student.

The fate of Texas depends on a well educated and motivated work force. Will students be motivated if they drop out of school because they are frustrated by a college-prep level of

Turn To Page 2,  
EDUCATION

### Mission to Sri Lanka eye opener for tsunami survivors and Baptists

First time visitors to Plains First Baptist Church Sunday, January 30 may have been puzzled at the opening agenda; an overhead photo display of the church disaster relief team's recent trip to Sri Lanka, narrated by team leader Tim Willis.

Pastor Bill Wright and wife Linda, Willis, Jerome Head, Gale McDonnell, Connie McWhirter and Karen Bearden were joined by Joe Hennard, Gib Webb and Donovan Phipps from other area Baptist churches and flew to the Tsunami ravaged nation, planning to help feed thousands of homeless.

Instead of working over cooking pots and pans, the volunteers primary chore was cleaning out and sanitizing water wells - and virtually every dwelling has its own well. The group sanitized over 200 wells in their area.

Willis said a bureaucratic mixup prevented the group from carrying out their planned mission, but they found plenty to keep them busy. An ongoing civil war in the island nation was another problem faced by the scores of relief volunteers in the area. The predominant Buddhist nation also has a growing Moslem populace, which made for an uneasy situation. Willis said many of the Moslems think the United States is at war with their race and religion. "We did our best to tell all of the people we were there not to represent our government, but our church and God."

Linda Wright, because of her experience on other disaster relief missions, was the guiding hand around what little food

preparation the group performed, and many of the people served declared "Her cooking is better than ours!"

Willis reported the only church in their area was too small for services, and Pastor Bill Wright preached one sermon outdoors. "Many of the Moslems stayed outside the fenced in church, listening but not coming on the grounds," Willis said, "but a number of their children ventured inside to meet the team."

They were constantly warned of the dangers associated with the ongoing war; land mines, roving 'Tamel Tiger' forces warring with government troops. They were told emphatically to stay out of certain areas because of the danger.

In Sunday's services, Wright praised the group's efforts and Willis' leadership in a difficult mission. "There's a bad atmosphere there because of the war, and the hostility of some of the moslems. It's normally a tranquil, quiet country, and we all learned to speak a bit more gently. Women are held generally in low esteem. You can actually buy wife beating sticks in some stores, and I threatened Linda with getting one", he joked, "but she didn't seem a bit scared." He spoke of the horrific number of homeless children. "We learned about effectiveness; we bought and passed out paper and crayons and were literally mobbed by kids. We visited one school trying to care for 600 children, all without parents after the tsunami."

During Sunday's service, Wright introduced two men and their families from First Baptist

Church in Sundown. The men will soon join another relief crew from the Dallas area going to Sri Lanka. Their objective is not feeding the survivors, but building housing for the thousands of homeless. He said a quick, and economical method of framing up a structure has been developed allowing the church volunteers to build small quarters fast and economically. "They don't have to worry about the roofs, all the houses have thatched roofs the people can easily put up."

Wright said "I suppose it will be sometime before we know how effective we were on our mission. This was a new way for us to reveal Christ, in a strange land. I do know all of us on the mission are better off for it."

### District Court Case

In District Court January 24, Judge Kelly G. Moore presiding and Criminal District Attorney Richard Clark representing the state, Marcelo Orona Acosta pled guilty to the lesser included offense of assault causes bodily injury to family member, a Class A misdemeanor. A one year jail sentence was suspended and probated 24 months. He must pay \$321 court costs and \$25 time payment fee. He will serve 160 hours community service and pay \$50 monthly supervision fees. He must complete the batterers prevention program. The state agreed not to refer defendant to the US Border Patrol. Bill Helwing served as his attorney, and Eddie Bishop, Denver City Police, was investigating officer.





As great as America is, there are always areas we need to address to manage changes in our economy and society. To that end, I recently joined my Senate colleagues to announce a "top ten" legislative agenda for the 109th Congress to set goals for the next two years to try to make our country a better place.

First, we are going to beef up our national security and support our military families. I am committed to expanding our resources to respond to bioterrorism and to acquire better technology to help the Department of Homeland Security to detect, prevent and apprehend terrorists. The families of those soldiers making the ultimate sacrifice for freedom deserve our eternal gratitude. So we will work to increase the military death benefit to \$100,000.

Our top domestic priority is to preserve and strengthen Social Security for future retirees. According to the 2004 report of the Social Security Board of Trustees, beginning in 2018, the program's benefits payments will exceed the amount of payroll taxes being collected. The time to act is now, because every year we delay makes the cure more painful. I support President Bush's plan to offer younger Americans voluntary, personal accounts and we will consider other proposals to ensure this vulnerable program is there for generations to come.

Also high on our list is legislation to make our tax code fairer, more efficient, and much simpler. Over the past decade the length of the tax code has increased by 48 percent, requiring the average American to spend 23 percent more time filing the forms. We must do better. Adopting a less complex tax system will achieve greater tax fairness and be a significant boon to our economy.

Promoting strong families is another priority. When we passed family tax relief in 2001, including a greater child tax credit and relief from the marriage penalty, we did so under the constraints of a 10 year limit. Those tax cuts were among the most effective ever passed and generated significant economic growth. Working families really saw the difference in their disposable income. So we want to make this permanent. People need to know, in 2011, they're not going to have to pay \$1500 more on average, because the marriage penalty is back. As a Texan, I will also work to keep the sales tax deduction from federal income taxes.

No list of legislative goals would be complete without a comprehensive energy bill. To boost our national and economic security, we must increase domestic energy production as well as our energy efficiency. A good start would be to enhance incentives for alternative energy such as wind, solar and clean burning coal.

We also want to sustain the job creation momentum we started with passage of tax relief in each of the past four years. Congress should make these tax cuts permanent to reduce the tax burden on individuals and small businesses, and free up investment creating new employment opportunities for all Americans.

Our fellow Americans also need to be prepared to compete in the 21st Century. Learning is a life-long process. From pre-school Head Start programs to improvements in primary and secondary education, we want to encourage accountability and results. Addressing the cost of higher education and providing incentives for Americans to enter teaching professions are key aspects of our agenda as well.

An additional item on our list is to rein in out of control class action lawsuits, which prop up costs for consumers and harm the economy. This legislation would establish federal jurisdiction where the amount in controversy exceeds \$5 million and any member of the plaintiff class is a citizen of a different state than the defendant.

An additional list on our agenda is our health care system. This includes measures to make vaccines more readily accessible, improve public health preparedness and increase the availability of affordable health care coverage through association health plans and expanded health savings accounts.

We want to promote families and protect children. The Child Custody Protection Act would strengthen state parental modification laws by making it a federal offense to transfer a minor over a stateline to circumvent these statutes.

We have a lot to do in the 109th Congress. Together, we can get the job done, which is why my number one priority is always listening to my Texas constituents and representing their views in Washington D.C.

**MEMBER 2005**

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## City of Plains Election Scheduled

The City Council for the City of Plains has called for a General Election to be held in the City of Plains Saturday, May 7, 2005. The election will be held at the City of Plains City Hall located at 1015 Ave. F in Plains, Texas. The purpose of the election will be to elect three (3) Councilmembers.

Those with expiring terms are Councilmembers Steve Alldredge, Christy Brink and Dan Wall.

The first official day for filing an application for a place on the ballot is Saturday, February 5, 2005, but city offices are closed on weekends. The filing date is moved to **Monday, February 7, 2005 and the filing deadline is 5:00 PM Monday, March 7, 2005.** Applications for a place on the ballot can be picked up in the Plains City Hall during regular working hours.

From Page 1, EDUCATION

study when they are much more interested in a vocational field? Will students be motivated if they do not receive a high school diploma because they cannot pass the courses mandated by the state's college-prep requirement? I am afraid somewhere along the way we have determined the only way our students can be successful is with a college diploma. I hope the governor, the legislature, and the people of this state will someday realize any task, career, or vocation doin well by a person should be recognized as success for the person. Every individual should be respected for the career choices they have made. When this happens, Texas will be able to reach the goals set out for having a truly great and prosperous state.

## State Rep Jones gets committee assignments

State Representative Delwin Jones, R-Lubbock, District 83, will serve on two committees of the Texas House of Representatives during the 79th Legislative session now meeting in Austin. Jones will be Vice Chairman of the Corrections Committee and on the Licensing and Administrative Procedures Committee.

Committee assignments were announced January 27 by Speaker of the House Tom Craddick.

The Vice Chairman for the Corrections Committee is a new responsibility for Jones, but he has served on the Licensing Committee in previous legislative sessions including the last one. "I am eager to get into the work of these committees and to deal with the many important issues coming before the House this session," Jones said.

Jones is in the 25th year of service as a State Representative. House District 83 includes a portion of Lubbock County, and all of the counties of Cochran, Hockley, Gaines and Yoakum.

## Stock Show Results

First 3 Places

NOTE:  
RBC - Reserve Breed Champion  
BC - Breed Champion  
\* - Grand Champion  
\*\* - Reserve Champion

### LAMBS

Finewool:  
1BC- Chelsy Anne Bearden  
2RBC- T.J. Kitchens  
3- Logan Wood  
Finewool Crosses:  
1BC- Chelsy Anne Bearden  
2RBC- Chelsy Anne Bearden  
3 T.J. Kitchens  
Medium Wools:  
1BC- Marty Roberts  
2RBC- Marty Roberts  
3- Marty Roberts

### GOATS

Class 1:  
1 - LaNae Loyd  
2 - Shelby Roberts  
3 - Jasmine Rivers  
Class 2:  
1 - Paige Williams  
2 - T.J. Kitchens  
3 - Paige Williams  
Class 3:  
1\* - Logan Wood  
2\*\* - T.J. Kitchens  
3 - T.J. Kitchens  
Class 4:  
1 - Logan Wood  
2 - Logan Wood  
3 - Lisa Williams

### STEERS

\* 1 - Skylar Keesee  
\*\* 2 - Skylar Keesee

### RABBITS

Sr. Fancy Does:  
1\* - Kandice Toney  
2 - Callie Howell  
3 - Kandice Toney  
Jr. Fancy Bucks:  
1 - Kevin Gass  
2 - Callie Howell  
3 - Shyann Vantine  
Sr. Fancy Bucks:  
1 - Kevin Gass  
2 - Callie Howell  
3 - Shyann Vantine

### Sr. Commercial Does:

1 - Kevin Gass  
2 - Cody Mayes

3 - Sara Horn

### Jr. Commercial Bucks:

1 - Cody Mayes

### Sr. Commercial Bucks:

1 - Kameran Loya

2 - Kevin Gass

3 - Sara Horn

### SWINE

#### GILTS

#### Durocs:

1\* - Chase Gibson

2\*\* - Austin Bachman

3 - Rowdy Brumley

#### Hampshires:

#### Lt. Wt.

1\*\* - Cassidy Moore

2 - Justin Riley

3 Hannah Lowrey

#### Med. Wgt:

1 - Hannah Sutton

3 - Makenzie Patton

#### Hvy. Wgt.

1\* - Kaitlyn Moore

2 - Sierra Harrel

3 - Randon Lance

#### Yorkshires:

#### Lt. Wgt :

1 - Jack Tedford

2 - Austin Bachman

3 - Halee Lowrey

#### Hvy. Wgt.

1\* - Holden Sutton

2\*\* - Julie Hix

3 - Ivan Parra

#### Light OPB:

1\* - Jacky Parra

2\*\* - Wyatt Beard

3 - Chelsy Anne Bearden

#### Dark OPB:

1\* - Chelsy Anne Bearden

2\*\* - Hagen Lowry

3 Randon Lance

### CROSSES

#### Lt. Wgt:

1\*\* - Marretta Trent

2 - Sierra Harrel

3 - Colby Wilmeth

#### Med. Wgt:

1\* - Makenzie Patton

2 - Marretta Trent

3 - Matthew Ellis

#### Hvy. Wgt:

1 - Harley Brasuel

2 - Kaitlyn Moore

3 - Michael Therwhanger

### BARROWS

#### Durocs-

#### Lt. Wgt:

1 - Blake Parrish

2 - Rowdy Brumley

3 - Kandice Toney

#### Hvy. Wgt.

1\* - M'Leah McKenzie

2\*\* - Kinsey Beard

3 Rowdy Brumley

#### Hampshires-

#### Lt. Wgt:

1 - Jack Tedford

2 - Blake Parrish

3 - James Madison

#### Med Wgt:

1\* - Leo Sellers

2 - Kerry Sisson

3 - Rifle Collingsworth

#### Lt. Hvy. Wgt:

1 - Troy Parrish

2 - Matthew Ellis

3 - Chelsy Anne Bearden

#### Hvy. Wgt:

1\* Michael Therwhanger

2 - Cassidy Moore

3 - Matthew Merritt (McConal)

### YORKSHIRES

#### Lt. Wgt:

1 - Marretta Trent

2 - Sierra Harrel

Chelsy Anne Bearden

#### Hvy. Wgt:

1\* - Sage Lovelace

2\*\* - Kandace Toney

3 Jarod Galvan

### DARK OPB

1\* - Wyatt Beard

2\*\* - Hartley Brasuel

3 - Cassie Coronel

### CROSSES

#### Lt. Wgt:

1 - Kandace Toney

2 - Sierra Harrel

3 - Rifle Collingsworth

#### Med. Wgt.

1\*\* - Matthew Ellis

2 - Michael Therwhanger

3 - Adriana Ponce

#### Hvy. Wgt:

1\* - Kaitlyn Moore

2 - Callie Howell

3 - Matthew Merritt (McConal)

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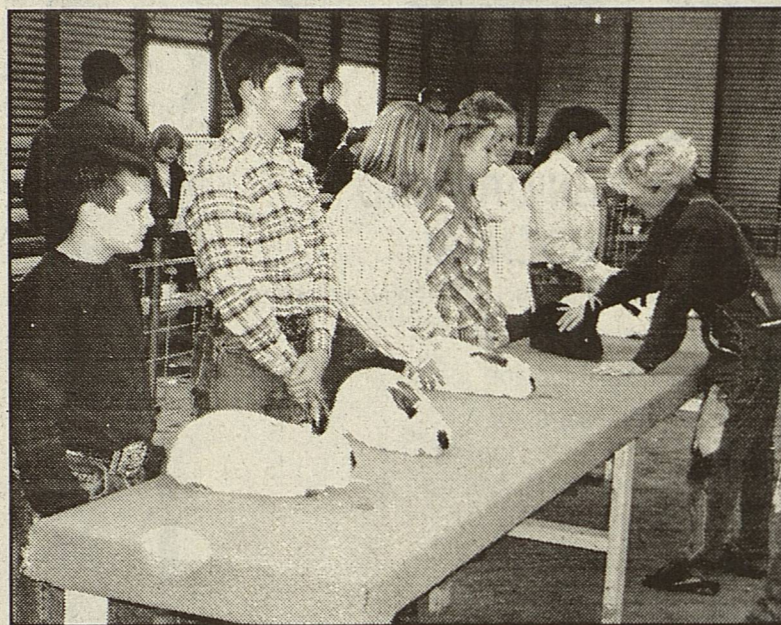
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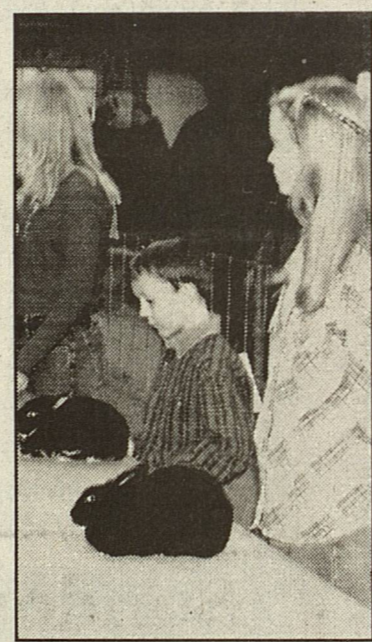
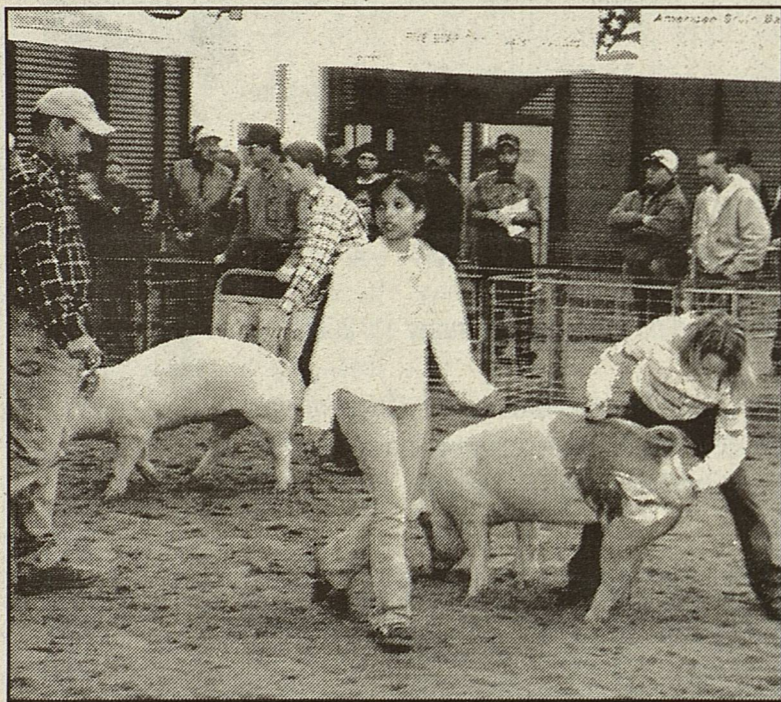
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## 2005 Stock Show Scenes



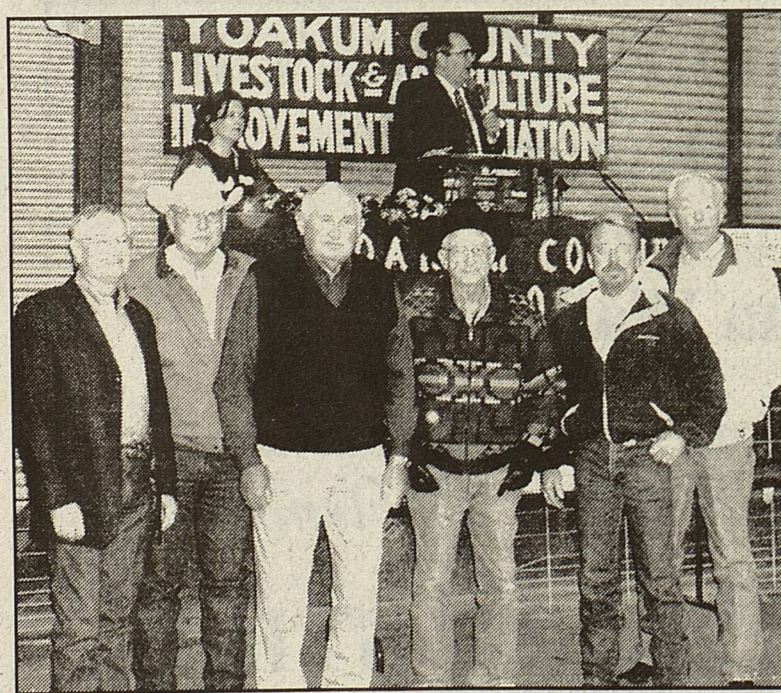
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For more information contact Suzie Brown at the Cooperative's Lovington office at 396-3631 or (800) 510-5232. You can now apply on line at [www.leacountyelectric.coop](http://www.leacountyelectric.coop)! Applications are also available at your high school or any LCEC office. Applications due by February 15, 2005.



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## ATTENTION

### HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS AND COLLEGE STUDENTS!

Lea County Electric Education Foundation is currently accepting applications for scholarships to be awarded for the Fall 2005 semester. The Scholarships are renewable up to 8 consecutive semesters, for a total of \$4,000.00!

Eligibility criteria are as follows:

Available only to active members (and immediate family) receiving service from LCEC.

Applicant must maintain a 2.50 GPA on a 4.00 scale and be considered a full-time student.

Applicant must submit two letters of reference (see application for important details) and demonstrate a coherent degree plan.

Applications must be received no later than February 11, 2005.

For more information contact Suzie Brown at the Cooperative's Lovington office at 396-3631. You can now apply on line at [www.lea-countyelectric.coop](http://www.lea-countyelectric.coop)! Applications are also available at your high school or any LCEC office.

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# Lifelines & Styles

## Senior Citizens Corner

Beautiful floral arrangements were placed throughout the dining room Monday from the Ray Roberts funeral. Our thanks to the family and to Claudia Sue Ferguson who rearranged floral sprays into bouquets for the dining room.

We have news this week that Moray Clark is at home once more after lengthy hospital stays. We look forward to the time when she is able to join us again at the Center. Reports have Walt Holland in the local hospital at this time. We wish for him a speedy recovery so he can be at home.

Names appearing on our visitor list this week include Lucy Aguilar, Sandra Holt, Stacy McGinnis, Rosa Larrea, Lionda Delarosa, A.J. Branson, R.G. Matthews, Molly Flores,

Marysun Robles, Josephine Salaz, Ester Rocher, Kevin Bruton, Pastor Jon and Donna Humbert, and Linda Stallings. Most of these names were from our 'under 60' list. We enjoy these young people who come to spend time with us.

Over one hundred people gathered in the dining room for 'turkey' day this time. Our kitchen staff always outdoes themselves on that special day, and we all look forward to it. There were half that many home-delivered turkey dinners which went out on that day also. If you've not tried the Senior Center on turkey day, it is a must! Mark it on your calendar. If you have not picked up a monthly menu, check us out on the TV. The daily menus are posted there.

We all hear about the economic conditions around us on a continuous basis and each of us endeavors to economize in every way we can. This is not only necessary but is an admirable trait in anyone. I believe there is a limit, however, to which we should go to save money. The following story is such an example: Morris and Esther went to the state fair for years and each time he would say, "I'd like to ride in that airplane." Esther would say, "I know, but it costs \$50, and \$50 is \$50!" Many years later the couple again visited the fair and Morris said, "Esther, I'm eighty-five years old. If I don't ride in that airplane, I might not get another chance!" "Morris," Esther replied, "the airplane ride costs \$50, and \$50 is \$50."

The aircraft pilot heard them and said, "Hey folks, I'll make you a deal. If you can stay quiet for the entire ride, not say a word, I won't charge you anything; but if you say just ONE word, it's \$50." The

couple agreed and away they flew into the wild blue yonder. The pilot did all sorts of maneuvers including turns, rolls, dives, and loops but never heard a word from the couple in the back seat. When they landed the pilot turned to Morris and said, "By golly, I did everything I could think of to get you to yell but you never did!" "Well, Morris replied, "I was going to scream back there when Esther fell out, but 50 bucks is 50 bucks!"

I noticed that Saint Valentine has peeked around the corner already at the Center. The "year around" Christmas tree display area shows valentines hanging from the branches, among the glittering lights. Our thanks to the Site Council ladies for this timely display area.

A special note of appreciation is due those who so faithfully attend the registration desk week after week. Maurine Wehrend, Charlie Gillis, Harley Evans, and Layne Black are some who have recently taken a turn. Thanks, also, to those from the Board of Directors and the Site Council who make themselves available to help count the lunch money and make the report each day.

We have a wonderful little lady among our Senior group who surprises (and challenges) us with the things she finds to do.

This week, she has begun working on calendars for next year. She orders the piece of work along with the sequins, beads, thread, etc., from a handcraft company then sets about making beautiful wall hangings on which we can read the dates as the year progresses. It is intricate and tedious work for anyone to undertake. She sets about it in her usual 'no nonsense' style, without eye glasses of any kind, and before we know it, she brings a new treasure to share with us that is all completed and ready to be given to some lucky recipient. We admire her ninth decade, and we are all proud to call her 'friend'.

A good group gathered to share a time of '42' on Tuesday afternoon. I saw folks from Hobbs and Seminole who had come to participate in the fun and fellowship time. Remember that each Tuesday is '42' time, and Thursdays are saved for Bingo. Come join in the fun, and win a prize.

Thought for today: "Common sense in an uncommon degree is what the world calls wisdom." Colridge

## Tsa Mo Ga tours Literacy Center

Tsa Mo Ga members traveled to Denver City January 24 to tour the Yoakum County Family Literacy Center for the club's "Furthering Your Education" program.

President Debbie Spears introduced Kathy Clark, director of the facility, who gave a power point presentation of services offered through the program and then gave members a tour of the classrooms and computer labs.

Located at 500 Avenue C, the center follows the Denver City ISD calendar and offers services for GED preparation, English as a Second Language/citizenship, computer skills, parenting education, life skills and early childhood education. There is also workforce training, college preparation and computer office applications. The computer lab is open to the public and provides internet access. It is open

during the day and on Tuesday evenings.

"No matter how much we know, we can know more," Clark said. "People are choosing to be here."

Classes are offered to families in the county, and Clark says people drive from Seminole and Seagraves to use the facility. The Spartan van is available for the program.

During the 2003-2004 year, 105 adults and 61 children were served, and 65 more adults in the evenings. The purpose of the program is to provide early intervention to break the cycle of illiteracy and reduce the number of children who enter schools with inadequate literacy, Clark said. "Our staff likes to refer to themselves as the 'dream team'," Clark said. Hostesses for the evening were Wilma Powell and Mary Jo St. Romain.

## Locals named to SPC Dean's List

Recently named to South Plains College Fall 2004 Dean's Honor List were Chase Howell, Kenia Molina and Helen Neufeld, all former PHS students

## Lea County Electric Cooperative

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## LEUKEMIA

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What about?

I have written about Traditional Funeral Services and Non-Traditional Funeral Services, but what about the family that wants more form a service.

They are a family who really wants to make a positive experience out of a time of morning?

The Celebration of Life Funeral Service is about personalization. During a special visitation time, many times we have refreshment for your guests.

This creates an atmosphere of a 'reception' and more relaxed than just a 'visitation'. Most people prefer this type of visitation when given the choice.

This type of 'reception-visit' with refreshments gives everyone time to pay their respects, meet with the family members and share stories about the deceased.

People free to visit and just be themselves. When most people come into a funeral home, they feel it has to be all whispers and silent stories. This makes things much more memorable for the family.

Another thing that is popular with the Celebration of Life services is special readings of funny stories about the deceased during the actual funeral service and individuals sharing at the graveside.

Sharing special moments they have had with the person who has

passed on.

Pictures and memorabilia around the casket as well as in the funeral home also helps to cultivate the mourning process, but in a positive way.

Sometime back we served the family of a musician. His family brought in instruments he had played during his lifetime. It was so very interesting to 'get to know' the one who had passed away.

Beth and I were also amazed at the number of people in the community that didn't know many of the stories shared during those times.

For more special memories, we are working to providing music video tributes. The videos are made from pictures the family would provide backed by music.

These wonderful tributes are then saved to CD's for the family to have as keepsakes. Many funeral homes run these videos during visitation in the lobby or staterooms.

Then before, after or even during the funeral services the video is again played for all to remember.

Not long ago, our funeral possession involved 5 semi-trucks. The person who had passed away was a truck driver. This person had lived and breathed trucks of all kinds!

At the cemetery, when the service concluded, the truckers sounded a final farewell to their comrade with those big air horns.

Until Next Time!

Mark A. Jones

## \*\* NURSES NEEDED \*\*

Yoakum County Hospital is seeking LVN's or RN's for day and evening shifts, 7am until 7 pm and 7 pm until 7 am. \* Free membership to West Texas Lifestyle and Rehab Center \* Two week vacation \* Annual leave days \* Great Insurance \* Shift differential. Great working environment  
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# From The Hack

I am almost afraid to put this in writing. It could once more infuriate the ACLU to the point of attacking and suing me, but with my assets, I may be safe. At the very top of the 555 foot Washington Monument in the nation's capitol city an aluminum plate is inscribed with the words LAUS DEO. The two Latin words mean very simply, "Praise be to God!"

With the American Civil Liberties Union running amok across the nation attacking virtually anything public pertaining to God or prayer, is the monument in danger?

Visitors to the monument can trudge to the top observation level, with 50 landings to pause and rest on the way. Many of the landings have memorial stones engraved with messages, including a prayer from the city of Baltimore, a memorial from Chinese Christians, another presentation from Sunday School students quoting passages from the Bible. Even the cornerstone of the monument, laid on July 4, 1848, contains the Holy Bible presented by the Bible Society.

This information makes me very uneasy. With ACLU watchdogs always on the prowl, to sue and destroy virtually any THING smacking of biblical origin or belief, are they going to mount a courtroom attack to reduce the monument to rubble? Before you laugh, digest this - the monument over looks the entire city of Washington, District of Columbia, and the original design of the layout was created by Frenchman Charles l'Enfant, in the perfect design of a cross!

Will the ACLU be content to just raze the monument of everything faintly smacking of organized religion, or will they be so infuriated it must be torn down entirely. Of course, with the monument gone, the foam at the mouth ACLU attorneys will eventually realize. "Hey, the whole city is designed like a CROSS! We gotta do something about that too!"

Sound ridiculous? Consider these tidbits: Recall the school prayer debacle. Don't forget the furor over 'One Nation Under God.' The Boy Scout organization has been banned from using Balboa Park in San Diego, and has recently been kicked-off US military bases - they want to ban the Scouts, but support a proposed children's nudist camp in Virginia.

Also consider this - the ACLU is prospering, thank you very much, at the expense of US, the taxpayers. The Civil Rights Acts of 1988 allowed victims of civil rights violations to have legal representation. The ACLU has effectively exploited this arrangement. Unelected but appointed judges seldom deny attorney fees to ACLU attorneys, no matter how frivolous the case.

Cases have been filed, and WON, by ACLU lawyers to remove the Ten Commandments from the Alabama courthouse, yet remain on the doors of the U.S. Supreme Court. A huge lawsuit was filed by the ACLU in California because one single driver was offended by a single Cross he had to look at as he passed by to work. A number of California towns have had to redesign their official seals because they contained a Cross.

The congressional sessions in both the House and Senate always commence with a formal prayer, yet those exalted solons cannot seem to find the backbone to legislate an end to the feeding frenzy of the ACLU - denying them taxpayer dollars for attorney fees for ridiculous causes would do the trick, I suspicion.

Whew! That's quite a load off my skinny chest!

In the January 19 issue I sent friendly greeting to four lawyer friends. They are friends because I owe them no money, and they owe me none. One of the four I frequently play golf with. I recently presented him with six brand new, fabulously expensive custom built golf balls. He couldn't figure out why, and asked several times why my sudden generosity.

Well, I played with him just the other day, after he'd read the Jan. 19 paper. He glared at me when we met, and in his most intimidating attorney voice growled, "NOW I know why you pester me with these cheap and inferior balls! You are a SCOUNDREL!"

Now, hear and believe me, the next is absolute gospel. My lawyer friend was talking to a fellow golfer who has kin about to graduate from law school, and was asking how tough passing the Bar exam was. My attorney friend rumbled, "Well, it's very tough, but absolutely imperative - it doesn't matter if he or anyone else graduates from law school, if they can't pass the Bar, they are dead in the water, absolutely DEAD!"

The guy asking the question half jokingly said, "And I guess a bit of lying and cheating wouldn't help him get by, would it?" My friend adamantly responded, "Oh, for Heavens sake NO. That comes AFTER he passes the Bar and gets his official license!"

Again, I swear this conversation took place on the Number 4 tee box, and I have three witnesses to prove it. Yes, I know, their total combined character is worth about eleven cents in Guadalajara, Mexico, but they DID hear the remark!!

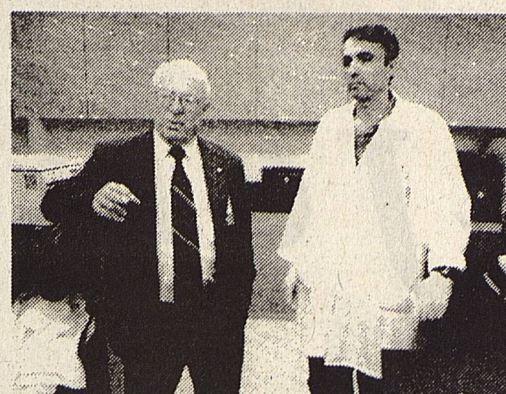
With the elections just past, it's wise to remember the old political saying; "Politicians should remember, voters are their ultimate danger, and a good politician will develop the fine art of saying, 'Good Doggie, Good Doggie', until he can find a rock or a gun".

With the Legislative session underway at full steam, it's good to recall why the capitol rotunda is perfectly round - it's one place in the capitol legislators can't be cornered.

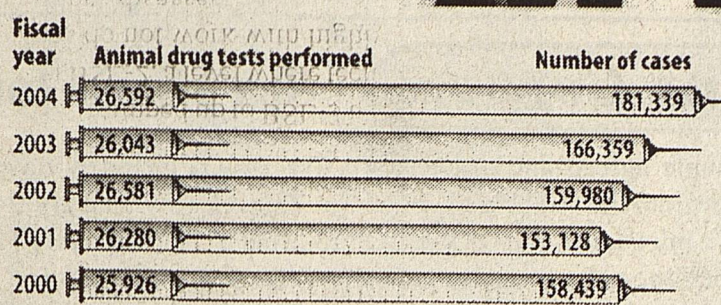
## Outrunning An Outbreak

### Testing, testing

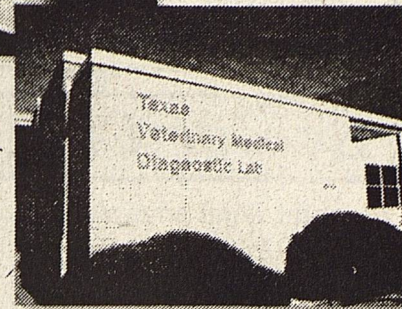
One of the world's busiest veterinary diagnostic laboratories, the Texas Veterinary Medical Diagnostic Laboratory (TVMDL) received more than 181,000 requests for tests in fiscal 2004. Since 2001, the number of cases, or requests for the lab's services, increased 18 percent.



Dr. Lelve Gayle (left), executive director of TVMDL, and molecular geneticist Erdal Eral tour a new animal disease laboratory.



SOURCE: TVMDL, 2004.



The lab also tests thousands of racing animals for illegal drugs.

PHOTOS: Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts

A small laboratory on the outskirts of Texas A&M University's College Station campus boasts a new line of defense against the world's most deadly animal diseases.

In August 2004, the Texas Veterinary Medical Diagnostic Laboratory (TVMDL) opened a \$1.4 million laboratory capable of working with mad cow, foot and mouth and other deadly livestock diseases.

The lab is the result of a \$2 million grant the TVMDL received in 2002 from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). TVMDL is one of five veterinary diagnostic laboratories in the nation that received federal funding as part of the USDA's National Animal Health Laboratory Network (NAHLN), said Dr. Lelve Gayle, TVMDL's executive director.

The USDA created the network to detect and report animal diseases that could be introduced into livestock by terrorists.

Designated as the state's only Bio-Safety Level 3 (BSL-3) lab, it can safely work with the most dangerous animal diseases.

The lab is critical to helping the state respond quickly to an animal disease outbreak, said James Grimm, executive vice president of the Texas Poultry Federation. "It's extremely important to all animal agriculture, not only poultry," said Grimm. "We're extremely pleased that Texas was given the federal funds to put it in place."

Located adjacent to TVMDL's main lab, the 1,890 square foot BSL-3 lab has a leak counters that bear sophisticated computers and testing equipment. At \$650 per square foot, the lab was expensive to build because of its safety features, which include an air filtration system that filters air twice to remove bacteria and viruses before releasing it outside the lab, Gayle said. The lab has its own water collection system and its own generator, in case of a power outage.

During a November 2004 tour, visitors could enter the lab in street clothes because the lab was not fully ramped up to BSL-3 but was at BSL-2, a level where technicians do not work with highly infectious diseases.

When the lab is fully operational at BSL-3, expected by January 2005, technicians will enter the lab through a 'red zone' that includes men's and women's locker rooms, where they will remove street clothes, shower and don laboratory clothes, Gayle said.

In November 2004, TVMDL expected the USDA to send materials that would allow techni-

cians to work with diseases like foot and mouth by January, Gayle said.

Although there hasn't been an outbreak of foot and mouth disease in the country since 1929,

it is one of the most feared livestock diseases because it can spread rapidly, killing vast numbers of cattle and swine with severe economic consequences, according to the USDA. The USDA designated several other livestock diseases as diseases of 'national interest,' including highly pathogenic avian influenza and Exotic Newcastle disease two contagious, fatal viral diseases that affect poultry.

If an outbreak of these diseases occurs, within two hours TVMDL could bring the BSL-3 lab fully online and limit it to only technicians cleared to enter.

Having a BSL-3 lab also can help a state or region regain the confidence of other countries that banned that state's exports following an outbreak, said Dr. Jose A. Linares, resident director of TVMDL's poultry diagnostic laboratory in Gonzales.

When a Gonzales farm had an outbreak of avian fluenza in February 2004, more than 40 countries banned Texas poultry exports and continued to ban them as late as May 2004. By December 2004, several months after a second avian influenza outbreak hit Sulphur Springs in May, Mexico continued to ban all poultry exports

from Texas.

TVMDL is a state agency that is part of the Texas A&M University System and operates main labs in College Station and Amarillo and poultry labs in Center and Gonzales. It serves the state's animal industries by testing specimens from live and dead animals, identifying disease outbreaks and providing drug testing to the horse and greyhound racing industries. Its fiscal 2004 budget was \$11.2 million, and 51 percent, or \$5.7 million, came from fees paid by animal industries, with the remainder paid by the state.

TVMDL handled testing adequately during the avian influenza outbreaks of 2004, but it does not have enough trained laboratory personnel to handle a large outbreak of foot and mouth or a similar disease, Gayle said.

Gayle is working with state agencies and universities to develop a reserve force of about 225 trained technicians who, in the event of an outbreak, could staff the BSL-3 lab in College Station in shifts. Two teams of three technicians would work six hour shifts for 18 hours a day to clean and restock the lab. This reserve force would cover the lab for at least 30 days, giving the state time to determine the outbreak's extent and to get help from the USDA if needed, Gayle said.

### NOTICE TO BIDDERS YOAKUM COUNTY AIRPORT TXDOT CSJ #0405PLAIN

A "Notice To Bidders" is issued for the construction of airport improvements at the Yoakum County Airport to: Rehab and mark apron, taxiways and runway 17-35; relocate lighted wind cone and segmented circle; construct and mark new runway 3-21; Construct and mark taxiways A, B, C, & D; install MIRLS and PAPI-2 on runway 3-21; scarify and remove existing runway 8-26 and south taxiway. install erosion/sedimentation controls and install perimeter fence. Sealed proposals need to be addressed and delivered to the Honorable Dallas Brewer, Yoakum County Judge, Yoakum County Courthouse, Cowboy Way and Avenue G, Plains, Texas 79355, phone number 806-456-7491. Proposals will be received until 2:00 PM, February 15, 2--5, then publicly opened and read. Any proposal received after closing time will be returned unopened.

You may view and obtain plan sets, free of charge, at our website, [www.dot.state.tx.us/business/avncontractorinfo.htm](http://www.dot.state.tx.us/business/avncontractorinfo.htm). Or you may buy plan sets from the Reproduction companies that are listed on the Aviation website.

Please call Amy Slaughter at 512-416-4519 for questions concerning the bid document or further information. Technical questions concerning the specifications and plans should be directed to James Tompkins, P.E. with the West Texas Consultants, Inc., at 432-523-2181.

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