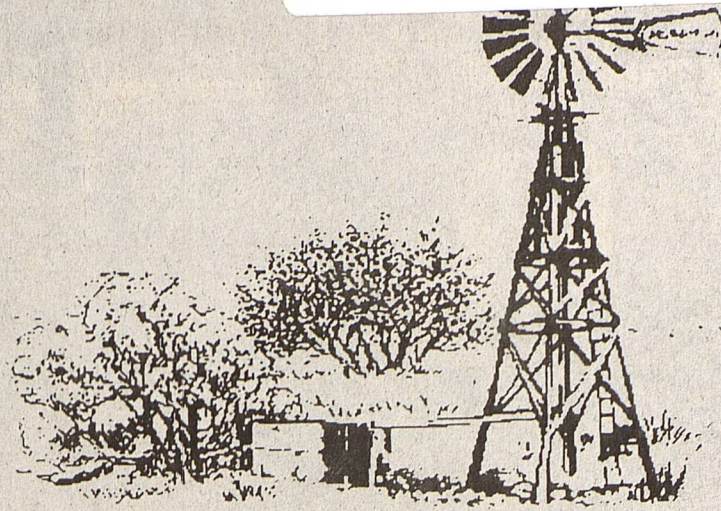


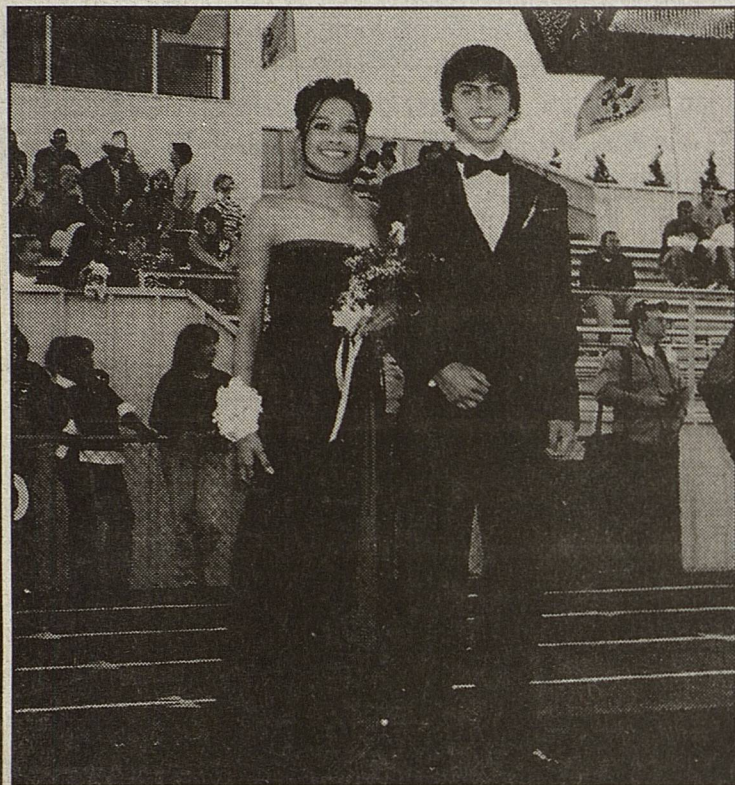
Cowboy Country News

Published each Wednesday in the county seat of Yoakum County, Plains, Texas

Volume XI, Issue 3, September, 29, 2004



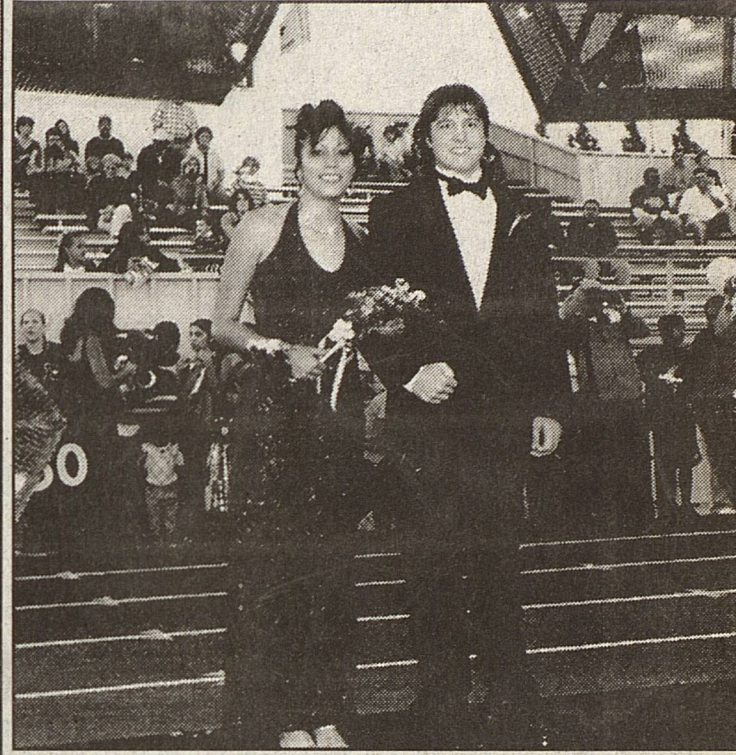
Homecoming Gala 2004



Queen Contestant Jamie Covarrubias, escorted by Abel Ramos



2004 Homecoming Queen Daniela Lazos, escorted by Roger Valles



Queen Contestant Kristian Morales, escorted by B.J. Lester

Devastating hurricanes continue pummeling Florida residents

Local disaster relief units and volunteers still on job

Last weeks issue of CCN featuring the role of local First Baptist Church volunteer relief workers helping feed hurricane survivors in Pensacola, Florida is an ongoing saga. As this is written late Friday, Hurricane Jeanne menaces the east coast of the battered state. The following story was received from the Salvation Army as a news release, and details some of the situation faced by their volunteers and full-time staff in the Pensacola area, where FBC's crew is currently preparing thousands of meals twice daily. The Salvation Army release mentions Bealls Outlet Shopping Center in Pensacola, the site where the local Baptist

crew is manning their units. We feel the press release is worthy of full reproduction here. " Betty Jeatton was hungry. So were nearly 400 of her neighbors at the Pensacola Retirement Village, a low income senior housing complex, after Hurricane Ivan roared across the Florida Panhandle the evening of September 14. Few of the residents were able to evacuate, as most did not have the financial needs or had nowhere to go, so they spent the night in the halls, listening to Ivan roar. Like most residents of the Florida Panhandle, they were without power and water. The grounds were littered with debris

and most of the cars in the parking lot were damaged. On Friday the 17th the Salvation Army had a canteen (mobile kitchen) in their neighborhood, but because it was down a dead end street littered with debris, it was hard to see. The canteen crew didn't even know the seniors were there. But Betty saw the canteen, got into her car and followed the canteen until it stopped.

" She explained to the crew, which came from Beaumont, Texas to help with the relief efforts, she and the other residents had not seen anyone since the night of Ivan's arrival. They

Turn To Page 2, HURRICANES



The disaster relief unit wash area. Tops of tables on left contain foodstuffs to be prepared at next meal. Cooking area is under awning in background of photo.

Cowboys 39-6 win over Dimmitt caps off great Homecoming

The 2004 Cowboys thrilled a large homecoming bevy of fans last Friday night by downing the Dimmitt Bobcats 39-6 for their second win of the season. While any win is tons better than any loss, the game had some bizarre moments.

The winless Bobcats took Tyler Caffey's 58 yard kickoff to open the game, and promptly stunned the Cowboys by passing and running the ball from their two yard line, and in seven plays scored on a short pass to lead 6-0.

The Cowboys didn't remain stunned long. Todd Williams carried the ball on the first rushing play, and then Caffey followed blockers around his left end and outraced the Bobcats, and broke free from the last defender to score on a 75 yard jaunt. T.J. Cordova's kick gave the Cowboys a 7-6 lead.

The Cowboy defense roared to life in Dimmitt's first possession, and big hits cost the Bobcats 13 lost yards. Their punt gave the Cowboys the ball at the 46. Williams skirted his right end for 24 yards, then Evan Cain passed to Caffey for 29 yards, and Caffey followed his left guard again into the end zone. The kick failed, and the Cowboys led 13-6.

With the ball again on their 26, the Bobcats were stuffed by big plays from Caffey, Scott Bruton, Peter Neufeld and a fumble recovery by Blake



Tyler Caffey runs behind blocking of Ramiro Martinez

O'Quinn gave the Cowboys the ball on the one yard line, from where Michael Crump bulled into the end zone to give the Cowboys a 19-6 lead to start the second period.

The Cowboys struck again quickly, Cain throwing to Daniel Parker, and Caffey skirted left end for the TD and the Cowboys 25-6 lead.

Parker, Crump and Brant Huerta played tough defense to keep the Bobcats in check, and their punt set the Cowboys in

motion at the 46. Cain took the snap, fell behind his blockers and went the distance around left end for the touchdown, and a 32-6 lead.

Cowboy defenders Adam McCravey, Crump and Huerta played hard ' D ' against the Bobcats next efforts, and with less than 3 minutes on the clock, the Cowboy offense was in gear again. On the third play, Caffey went over his right

Turn To Page 4, COWBOY GAME



WHAT DROUGHT? Rains Friday, Saturday and Sunday produced these scenes. Above, the playground and much of Stanford Park under water. Below, the rodeo grounds and arena were covered Sunday morning.



**From Page 1,
HURRICANES**

were hungry, thirsty, needed help. So, Doug McQueen, David Park and Tommy Rowlinson turned their unit around and followed Betty back to the home. They have been serving lunch and dinner there every day since.

"They rely on us now," Park said, "We've become part of their family and they've become part of ours."

"The three men have provided much more than meals to the senior residents. They have cleared debris so they could walk and drive safely. When one resident wanted to sit outside on a bench, they cut down the tree limbs hanging dangerously over the area. They even pulled one lady out of the small lake on the grounds when she slipped and fell, trying to get water so she could flush her toilet.

"After pulling her out and putting her shoes back on her, we gave her water, lots of water, so she could operate the toilet. We didn't want her trying that again!"

"On Sunday the crew held an evening devotional service. The residents enjoyed it so much they asked if they would hold one daily. And they do, everyday at 3:00, in two locations on the campus so no one has to walk too far.

"When lunch and dinner are served, they do more than hand the residents a meal from the canteen. Many of the residents have trouble walking, and with the power out, there is no elevator, trapping them in their apartments. So, several times a day, to dozens of residents, the men deliver meals, climbing to the second, third and fourth floors to ensure all have a hot meal.

"The residents show their appreciation to the crew with hugs, compliments, cards, even applause. They made a banner thanking the Salvation Army and presented it to the men.

"If you can be excited in a situation like this, said resident Priscilla Sapienza, "we're excited about these guys from Texas. I've never been in a situation like this before, and what they do for us, it brings tears to my eyes." Perhaps resident Mary Fluri summed up what Doug, David and Tommy do for them best; "They bring us everything, from faith to food!"

"For more information on disaster relief operations call 214-956-6000. The Salvation Army is requesting financial assistance for its critical relief, transitional recovery and long term recovery outreach. To make a donation in support of these services, call 1-800-SAL-ARMY or mail a check marked 'Disaster Relief' to your local Salvation Army.

CAPITOL COMMENT

U.S. SENATOR
KAY BAILEY HUTCHISON

As a fifth generation Texan, I've grown up hearing the tales of my family's heritage and their adventures in Nacogdoches and San Augustine before Texas became a state. Texas is steeped in a rich history. Throughout the Lone Star State are hidden treasures answering questions about our identity and our origins.

Today our culture continues and every day we write another page in Texas history books. As time goes by, we gain new insights and perspectives on that unique past, which is why preservation efforts are so imperative. Our nation recently took a major step towards advancing this important endeavor.

We have the Hispanic culture and history brought by both Spanish explorers and Mexican colonists. But even before that, were Native Americans. Known as a cultural crossroad to many Indians, Texas has hosted hundreds of tribes, clans and families over several hundred years.

They were as diverse in culture as the geography of our state. Sometimes tribes such as the Comanche fought against the early Texas settlers. Others like the Lipan-Apache tribe occasionally formed alliances with the Texans in campaigning against other Indians. The Tonkawas, Karankawas, Caddos and other tribes are simply known for agriculture, fishing and hunting. Some tribes still call Texas home.

Recently the Smithsonian Institution helped project this important piece of Texas and American lore by introducing its 16th museum - the National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI) in Washington, just steps from the US Capitol. The NMAI was chartered by Congress in 1989 and is dedicated to the life, languages, literature, history and arts of the Native peoples of the Western Hemisphere - the only national museum of its kind. It is also the last museum to be built on the National Mall.

Its September opening was a unique cultural moment which brought together tribes and native communities from across the Western Hemisphere. There were representatives from tribes as diverse as the Chickaloon Native Village of Alaska, the San Carlos Apache tribe of Arizona, and the Tapirape of Brazil that marched along the Mall in a dazzling display of elaborate, colorful native costumes and a cacophony of drums. The six day celebration was an emotional and triumphant milestone in their long standing quest for the national recognition they so rightly deserve.

The five story curvilinear building is made of rough limestone that evokes natural rock formations and is set in a four acre landscaped site that includes a wetlands area and 40 boulders known as "grandfather rock". The building's special features - an entrance facing east toward the rising sun, a prism window and 120 foot high atrium called the Potomac - were designed in consultation with many Native Americans over a four year period.

An electronic photo montage greets visitors in 150 Native languages, conveying the significant presence and diversity of Native peoples throughout the Americas. With 800,000 artifacts representing over 10,000 years of history and more than 1,000 indigenous people of the Western Hemisphere, there is much to appreciate.

Three major exhibitions will be compliments by a contemporary art exhibit and landmark works of art, historic and contemporary, placed throughout the building. More than 200 works of art will be displayed along with drawings, notes and sketchbooks from well known Native artists, such as George Morrison and Allan Houser. My friend, Republican colleague and renowned jewelry designer, Senator Ben Nighthorse Campbell of Colorado, has loaned the museum a collection of some one hundred pieces of his unique Native American work. The assortment includes the Painted Mesa style he originated and the bolo tie he made for President George W. Bush. Through its compilation of exhibition galleries and education programming, visitors can embrace the cultures that still lives within our nation and among our fellow citizens.

The desire to protect our heritage is a value rooted deep in hearts of Texans. The more we know about yesterday, the more we understand about today. I am committed to preserving our history to benefit this and future generations.

THANK YOU !!

The Car Show was blessed with many wonderful sponsors. We want to thank each and everyone of you for greatly helping to make the show successful.

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More Homecoming Gala Scenes



2003 Homecoming Queen Manuela Villegas escorted by brother Jose



The Queen and court rode around the track in 'Royally decorated golf carts'

Concealed handgun class set at SPC

South Plains College in Levelland will offer a concealed handgun class October 8-9. Classes will meet 7 - 10 pm Friday, October 8, and 8 am

3 pm Saturday, October 9 in the SPC Law Enforcement/Petroleum Tech Building, Room 115. Cost is \$70 for new applicants and \$35 for renewal applicants. Instructor is Joe Wise, assistant professor of law enforcement.

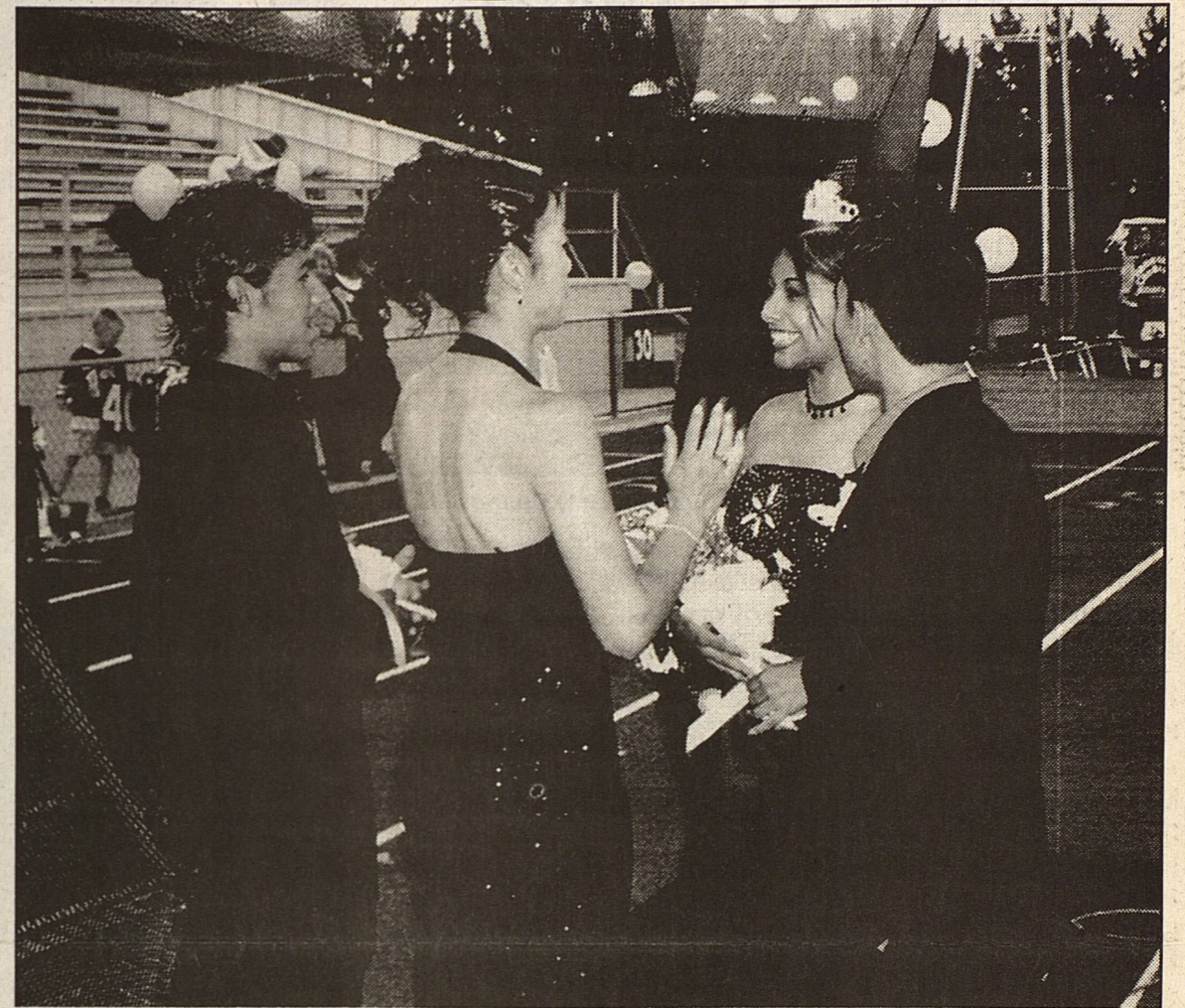
The state required introductory course is designed for new and renewal applicants and is mandatory for those who wish to carry a concealed handgun in Texas.

Advance registration is required, Payment in full is required on the first day of class. Advance registration is required, Payment in full is required on the first day of class. Maximum enrollment is limited to 15 persons.

For more information or to pre-register, contact Wise at 806-894-9611, ext. 2356.



The Cheers people whooped it up at Wednesday night's bonfire



Last years Queen Manuela congrats newly crowned Daniela



A large crowd of Cowboy boosters at the game

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From Page One, COWBOY GAME

tackle for a 53 yard burst and score, and Cordova's kick gave the Cowboys their 39-6 half-time lead.

The third quarter seemed a completely different game from the first half. The Bobcats appeared rejuvenated, and in their first possession were driving, making two quick first downs on the ground and in the air to move the ball to the 37. There, a long pass was picked off by Patrick Cotton and from the 10 yard line the Cowboys managed one first down but an errant pass gave the ball back to Dimmitt, and the score remained at 39-6 to start the final quarter.

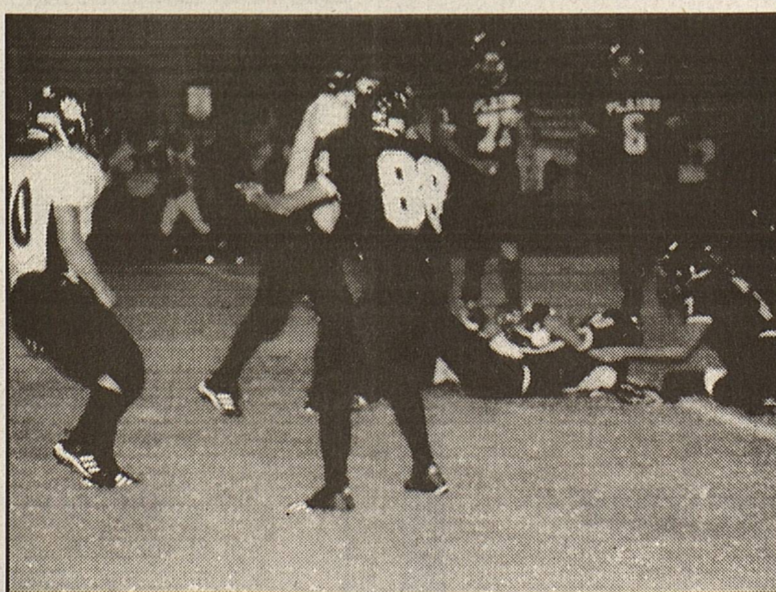
Almost unbelievably, in the finale, there were five fumbles-four by the Bobcats, with one

recovered, and one by the Cowboys, which resulted in only four first downs recorded by the two teams.

Game statistics tell an interesting story. Plains had 339 yards total offense, 288 in the first half, compared to Dimmitts 101 yard total. Cowboy defenders scored two sacks for -26 yards. Caffey had 156 yards in 13 rushing attempts, Williams 71 in 14, Cain 39 in 4, Crump 12 in 3, O'Quinn 11 in 3, and Martinez 3 in 1. An overall good effort, and the defense's hard nose work in the first half was the talk of the halftime crowd.

The Cowboys take on the always tough Wink Wildcats here October 1 - Be There!

Cowboys vs Bobcats Action Scenes



PHS student of the Week



Student of the Week is Mayra Flores, a senior and the daughter of Jose and Carmen Flores. She was nominated by Mrs. Melisa Dorsett, who said, "Mayra shows me she is goal oriented. One of her goals is to do her best in the classroom by

being on time with her assignments, completing assignments with great care, and being accurate with her work. In my classroom both last year and this year she has shown respect to me and her fellow classmates."

PISD Sports Update

Jr. High Volleyball:

7th Grade - The Lady Wranglers hosted Denver City on September 20 and came up short in the 18-25, 18-25 match. Service Points included Sydney Caffey, 9 points, Jasmine Mares 7, Victoria Valverde 2, Abigail Hernandez 2.

8th Grade- The 8th graders tamed the Denver City Fillies 25-20, 23-25, and 25-14 on September 20. Briana Conway, Heather Parrott and Kimber Williams combined for 30 points. Mari Ruiz added five points, Reyna Gallegos 4, Crystal Tarango 3 and Yesenia Loya 2.

JV Cowgirls Volleyball; On September 21, the Cowgirls JV Volleyball Team traveled to Dimmit and beat their JV in two games, 25-10 and 15-12. "Overall I thought the team did a great job passing the ball," Eddleman said. "Anytime you are able to pass and control the ball it is going to enable you to move the ball and keep their defense out of position." Coach Eddleman reported Meghan Garcia led the team in service points and serve aces. In addition Meghan and Priscilla Mares led the team in hitting. On Saturday September 25 the JV team beat the Snyder freshman volleyball team 25-15, 25-19 and 25-18. The win improved the team's overall record to 9-6, and head coach Eddleman was proud of the entire team's performance, and felt the team played extremely smart and with a lot of confidence. "I think we are playing our best volleyball of the year," Eddleman said. "The kids have worked really hard in the weight room and on the volleyball court and I feel they are starting to reap the rewards of their hard work". Coach Eddleman reported the team was led by Allison Friesen with most digs, service points and serve aces. In addition, Priscilla Mares led the team with the most kills.

JV Football:

JV Cowboys VS Dimmit; The younger Cowboys racked up a convincing 30 - 0 win over the DimmitBobcats last Thursday. Chase Guetersloh intercepted a pass on the second play of the game which led to a touchdown scored by Cody Mayes. Casson Curtis passed to J.L. Vasquez for the two point conversion. In the second period Curtis again connected with Vasquez and the Cowboys were up 14 - 0 when the extra point try failed. Curtis then intercepted a Bobcat pass and returned it 80 yards for the third score, then passed to Guetersloh for two points and 22-0 lead at the half. In the second half Curtis again passed to JL Vasquez for the score, and then threw again for two more points and the final 30-0 score.

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School retirees learn benefits of state organization

Retired educators from Denver City and Plains met for an information session with Richard Roberts, District 17 President of Texas Retired Teacher's Association. Mr. Roberts brought information packets and explained the benefits of school district retirees becoming members of their state organization. Among the most important benefits are the representation and lobbying efforts accomplished by TRTA staff on issues such as Social Security, protecting the Teacher Retirement System, TRS health insurance, and TRS annuities.

TRTA membership is open to any school district retiree teachers, administrators, maintenance workers, custodians, cafeterias workers, support staff, transportation workers, etc. Annual membership fees for TRTA are \$25.00 and member benefits include access to dental, auto, life, and professional

liability insurance, health service plans, purchase discounts for GM vehicles and Dell computers, and travel discounts.

Yoakum County educators who were present at the September 21st meeting expressed an interest in organizing a local group. In order to include more local retirees in the discussion and to expand the group, volunteers agreed to contact all potential members in Plains, Denver City, Seagraves, and Seminole. Another meeting was set for Thursday, September 30, at 11:00 a.m. at The Learning Center, 500 N. Ave. C in Denver City. All school district retirees in this two-county area are encouraged to attend. Representatives of the Terry County Retired Teacher's Association will be on hand to answer questions and assist in organizational matters.

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Senior Citizens Corner

BINGO DAY! Each Tuesday of the month is Bingo time for the second and fourth Tuesdays. On your Activity Calendar, which appears on the back of your monthly Menu Sheet, each of these activities is scheduled for you. Some of our people really look forward to Bingo Day. A ticket is given for each game won and when three Bingo tickets are accumulated, they may be exchanged for a Free Meal Ticket, so it becomes an exciting time. I say all of that to tell you about one of our very dedicated Bingo players. She is Lenore Matus. Lenore has been a part of the Senior Center family since 1988. This quiet, little lady left is for awhile to return to her native Puerto Rico, but she has returned and lives a few blocks from the Center where Monica Casa is her daytime caregiver. Today Lenore rode her motorized wheelchair to the Center because she didn't want to miss the Bingo hour. She said it took her about fifteen minutes to make the journey and it was successful because she was a Bingo winner today! Our thanks to Monica for helping with the Bingo games. Each player has taken the responsibility of helping until the room is put back in order after the Bingo sessions. We appreciate each one.

Just before the funeral service, the undertaker came up to the very elderly widow and asked, "How old was your husband?" "Ninety-eight," she replied. "he was two years older than I am." "So you're ninety-six years old," commented the undertaker. "Yeah," she responded, "it's hardly worth going home, is it?"

Our pool playing senior friends from Lovington went home with nearly all of the prizes this month. In fact they carried all of the 9-ball meal tickets home with them and left only one from the 8-ball competition. Moray Clark was the one who saved the day for us when she came in second in the ladies 8-ball. Congratulations, Moray!

The social evening the Site Council planned for us was well attended on Thursday night. The register showed about thirty names on it. Everyone enjoyed playing different table games and visiting. The snacks furnished by the Site Council were also appreciated.

We all look forward to the night they are planning for November.

The monthly board meeting was postponed because several of our members had other commitments. We will meet on Tuesday, September 28th at 12:30 P.M. All board members are encouraged to attend.

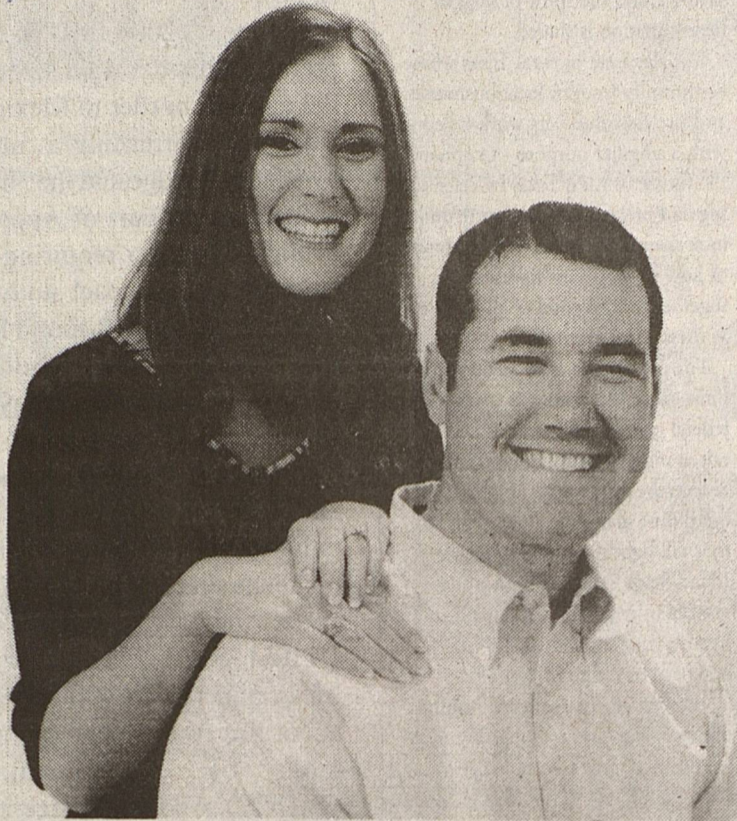
Did you hear about the college freshman who was asked what the "Roe vs. Wade" controversy was about? I'm told her quick answer was, "That is a service for seniors which makes your holiday correspondence an easy task. Other cards during December along with the others for your convenience, so shop with us when you come to the Center. This is used as a fund raiser as well as convenience, so your patronage is appreciated.

Many of you saw the photo in the Lubbock Avalanche Journal about two weeks ago which pictured the grain field with the Texas Tech logo harvested from the standing grain. What a compliment to Texas Tech and what an inordinate amount of planning and work went into that effort. At table #3, we found ourselves discussing 'crop circles' around the world a few days after that. Not being too familiar with the subject, I came home and began looking on the Internet for information. I just wanted to read a little about it so I could enter into the conversation next time. Do you know the Internet has 617,000 different sites on this subject, with some of them picturing crop circles? I share this in case crop circles are high on your list of 'things I always wanted to know.'

A telephone call from Ireta Davis indicates that she is back home after spending several weeks of 'caregiving' time with her sister in Oklahoma. She says she will come to West Texas after the autumn leaves stop falling down there. She wants to enjoy the East Texas Indian summer.

Thought for today: From Tombstone Tales: Uniontown, Pennsylvania, "Here lies the body of Johnny Blake. He stepped on the gas instead of the brake." And another from Silver City, Nevada, reads: "Here lies the Kid. We planted him raw. He was quick on the trigger but slow on the draw."

Wedding Plans Announced



Mr. and Mrs. Donald Jordan of Llano are pleased to announce the engagement and approaching marriage of their daughter Jima Lynn to Clint Montford, son of Terry Montford of Corsicana and PJ Testa of Dallas. Clint is the grandson of Betty Rushing and the late Eugene "Polly" Rushing of Plains. Jima and Clint are 2002 graduates of Texas A&M University. Jima is currently teaching ninth grade world geography for Weatherford Independent School District and is pursuing her M.Ed. in Counseling. Clint is employed by Holt Cat of Fort Worth as a Light Construction Sales Representative.

The wedding is planned for Saturday, November 27, 2004 at Lutie Watkins's Memorial United Methodist Church in Llano.

Birthday Celebration



Maurine Smith, right, is congratulated on her 92nd birthday by her sister, Joyce Brown.

Maurine Smith celebrated her 92nd birthday at the home of Joyce and Calvin Brown in Lubbock. To help her celebrate were her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren, sister, Joyce Brown and husband, Calvin, her brother-in-law, Harold Henley and wife, Zelda, cousins, nieces and nephews, great nieces and friends.

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Library Film Time

The Yoakum County Library in Plains held film-time September 22, 2004 at 10:00 a.m. Children in attendance were: Austin Robertson, Yairah Garcia, Addy Braswell, Colin Braswell and Treeny Wall. The discussion this week was about different shapes. The children played games about shapes, sang songs, and read books Buzz, Buzz Went The Bumble Bee, The Wolf's Chicken Stew

and Look Around: A Book About Shapes. Afterwards they watched a film entitled "Harry the Dirty Dog" and (back by popular demand) "Click, Clack, Moo Cows That Type." The Library has film-time every Wednesday form 10:00 a.m. until 10:45 a.m. Parents may bring their children and return after film-time to pick them up or stay and enjoy the fun!

A disease that breathes

When performing a routine medical checkup, doctors tell patients to breathe deeply as they listen to patients lungs with a stethoscope.

Oxford Medical Diagnostics, a spinoff of Oxford University, is working on a device to help diagnose diseases by testing a person's breath.

Breath contains hundreds of trace volatile organic com-

pounds, some of which are minute markers for diseases, can be detected. Doctors can already diagnose stomach ulcers by monitoring how much carbon a specific type of bacteria produces. The noninvasive breath test gives results in seconds. The company hopes to develop a desktop model for doctors use in their offices.

Wedding Shower, honoring

Mrs. Paige Lollar, Bride of
Jeffrey Lollar

Sunday, October 3, 2004, in the home of
Mrs. Tommie Brown, 1002 Third Street

Locations: Lubbock: Dillards, Target, Pier 1
Brownfield: Nelson's
Plains: Image'n That, Bayer Lumber



What about?

When you are considering pricing in a funeral service and cost is a factor for your family here are some things to consider.

Plan ahead. Talk to your family about what you want when your gone.

Gentlemen, please don't tell your family, "Oh, just throw me in a pine box and bury me." That tells your family nothing about your wishes and will only confuse their thoughts when the time really comes.

Talk to your funeral director about what your options might be. Most funeral homes will have options that can fit most any budget, without compromising your quality of the service.

Cost: The main concern for many families. Go with your spouse or children to the funeral home and make your arrangements.

This makes things so much easier for your family at the time of death. All the information is at the funeral home, the casket is picked out and most everything is done.

Another thing I have seen families do is to purchase a nice casket, but then go less expensive on the outer burial container or visa-versa. This way, thousands of dollars do not have to be spent, but the same quality is there.

Or instead of getting a Stationary Package, try going to Hallmark and purchasing a register book. Of course you will have to fill in the information yourself that way.

Or what about purchasing your own "Thank You" notes or personalizing them by making them yourselves.

Memorial folders for the actual service can be made the same way on your computer.

Instead of several nights of visitation at the funeral home, what about a reception at the church after the funeral service so everyone can visit? Or maybe have the reception at a family member's home.

If you have room at home, maybe moving your loved one to your home for visitation. Many years ago, we had a family in the country on a ranch and they brought 'dad home' where he would want to be.

All the while, saving on the cost of the funeral home being open and saving your family money.

Pre need planning. What else does it do for your family? It keeps them from using their emotions and over spending.

You plan for every other large expense. Why not funerals?

Until Next Time!

Mark A. Jones

www.majonesfuneraldirectors.com. email comments to: markajones@door.net.

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From The Hack

One of my daily chores I'm not enamored with is checking e-mail, usually more than once. It continues to astound me how many people want to send me stuff, at last count about 87.6% of which (A) I have absolutely no use for, or (B) I haven't a clue about what the offer means.

Early this morning, however, as I browsed down the web listings I happened upon "ACLU of Texas Banned Book Report." The letters ACLU usually affects me in the same manner a Mexican fighting bull is affected by a red flag in its face, so I read the thing.

Guess what - absolutely NOTHING has changed in the last fifty plus years; The number one reason the most books are banned from school libraries is, GASP, sexual content, the same prevalent reason offered when I was a semi-innocent frosh in high school.

I recall one very popular author when I was in my 'formative years', another manner in which to say young and stupid, named Erskine Caldwell, a good old southern boy who seemed hung up on writing about "THE ACT" between poor white trash males

and females in the deep south. Mind you, I cannot recall a truly nasty, ugly, forbidden word used by Erskine's lustful characters - he was a master at describing "THE ACT" in almost genteel fashion, but you still knew he was referring to "THE ACT".

It was common practice for some low life high school kid to slip an Erskine Caldwell paperback into the library at good old Pecos High, where it would cleverly be passed from kid to kid, hidden usually behind a mammoth encyclopedia, the boys with bulging eyes as they scanned the pages marked with dog ears by the owner, who had probably swiped it from his older brother or dad.

And believe me, the girls were fans of old Erskine too, and their eyes bulged when they scanned the pages too, their hearts thumping like the boys, but when they finished 'the good stuff' they would slip it to the next girl and whisper, "Oooh, how terrible! That's disgusting!"

It's quite a relief now, to know our libraries and their young patrons are being protected from this type filth. How satisfying to know our students are protected from indecent literature in the book stalls. Now, they can hustle home after school activities and flip the tube on and bring up scenes of "THE ACT", which is depicted in blazing color, not just read about it in dull black and white. And the language on the screen I am certain would make old Erskine blush.

Strange world.

Texas Yes!

Texas Department of Agriculture
Rural Texas' Past Part of Key to Future

By Agriculture Commissioner Susan Combs

As Texans, we know that we are privileged to live in a state that's like no other. Celebrating our uniqueness is what draws more visitors to rural Texas each year than to any other destination in the Lone Star State. It is here, in our rural areas, where history is experienced, heritage is savored, and the spirit of dogged determination is shared.

It is also here in rural Texas where community leaders, local businesses and tireless volunteers work together with a singular purpose - to enhance the future of rural Texas by celebrating and preserving the past. A quick look around the state reveals stories of how these Texans have rallied together for the good of all. Just look at these three examples.

The Matagorda Island Foundation built consensus among six state and federal government entities and raised more than \$1 million to restore the state's oldest operational lighthouse along the coast. The 92-foot tall lighthouse at Matagorda Island State Park now shines as a symbol of renewed interest in the history, tourism and economic potential of Calhoun County.

In Sweetwater, a national fundraising campaign and membership drive is underway now to build the National WASP World War II Museum at Avenger Field.

Founded in 1878 as a trading post for hunters, Snyder was once prime buffalo territory. The two-day White Buffalo Festival held each October pays tribute to the history and heritage of the area, drawing visitors from across the state.

Though all three communities differ in location and project, they are all bonded by the same spirit and "can do" attitude reflected by the Texas Department of Agriculture's Texas Yes! program. Learn about Texas Yes! at www.TexasYes.org.

'Driving Down Borders'

A closer look at the Pros & Cons of increased truck traffic from Mexico across our Texas border

With permission from *Fiscal Notes*, a publication of the State of Texas Comptroller office

Predictions of dangerous Mexican trucks overrunning American roads are a bit far-fetched, said Tela Mange, spokeswoman for the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS).

On June 7, 2004, a U.S. Supreme Court decision opened the nation's border to Mexican trucking, overturning a ruling by a federal judge and the Ninth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco requiring an environmental impact study.

"The media made it sound like killer Mexican trucks would be hitting our roads within days," Mange said.

Most Mexican trucks are safe, and even with the ruling, it's unlikely Mexican trucks will be on Texas roads soon, she said.

Over the last 15 years, the United States' trade with Mexico increased 400 percent, according to the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT). About 80 percent of that trade, nearly \$230 billion in goods, travels over Texas roads each year.

Before the Supreme Court decision, Mexican trucks that entered the United States were licensed to operate only in commercial zones, no more than 20 miles from the border, Mange said.

These short-haul trucks, which carry goods back and forth across the border, must meet all U.S. safety requirements, insurance and licensing standards, and are reviewed by local, state and federal officials, said John Adams, president of the Laredo Development Foundation. When trucks begin traveling further into the United States interior, they must still comply with all U.S. safety and licensing requirements, Adams said. "You have to stop at the border," Adams said. "There is no 'pass go' or special pass. We're still going to stop and inspect everything."

Because Mexican truckers were only allowed to travel in the commercial zone, a system of short-haul trucking known as the drayage system developed. Once in the U.S. commercial zone, short-haul truckers trade goods with American truckers, who bring raw materials from throughout the United States to be manufactured in Mexico. The American truckers exchange the raw materials for finished products that they then deliver to businesses in the United States.

For example, an American trucker will bring wire from Delphi Packard Electric Systems in Warren, Ohio, to be converted into electrical harnesses for General Motors cars. The American trucker will ex-

change the trailer of wire for one from Mexico with electrical harnesses, and take it to Detroit to the assembly line, said Rafael Garcia, Jr., Laredo bridge director.

Partnerships between the United States and Mexican trucking companies make this exchange quick and efficient, which keeps auto prices down, Garcia said.

Garcia expects the short-haul system to remain intact for some time after the roads are open to Mexican trucking, in part because Mexican companies will be reluctant to hire bilingual drivers and purchase more expensive trucks.

"All of this is controlled and dictated by business and the bottom line," Garcia said.

Mexican trucking companies will want to use top-of-the-line trucks when entering the United States because it is more expensive to repair a truck that breaks down in the United States than in Mexico, Garcia said.

It will also take time for Mexican trucking companies to develop new trucking contracts with U.S. businesses, Mange said.

"When they go farther into the United States, they will want to take something in and take something back," Mange said. "They can't go back empty. They will have to develop contracts in new areas."

As trucks that travel farther into the United States gradually replace short-haul trucks, Garcia said the trucking industry will adjust accordingly.

"It's a slow process, not because we want it or don't want it, it's economics," Garcia said. A booming trade with Mexico due to the 1994 North American Free Trade Agreement prompted DPS to hire additional inspectors and commercial vehicle enforcement troopers over the last few years, Mange said. She doesn't expect the trucking decision to significantly increase border crossings.

"We anticipate that when the border first opens that we're talking about fewer than 500 additional trucks a year," Mange said. "We've increased our staffing along the border by about 300, so we feel confident that we can deal with whatever is coming down the road."

TxDOT does not expect to need additional staff either, said Mark Cross, a TxDOT information specialist.

"We all don't anticipate that there will be much of an increase in spending," Cross said. "Mexican truckers get their moving authority from the U.S. Department of Transportation, so they would probably only come to us to register the ve-

hicles." So far, no Mexican motor carriers have registered with Texas, Cross said.

Through many Texas officials don't anticipate the trucking decision will have a major effect on the Texas trucking industry, the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, one of the world's largest labor unions, does not believe the decision was in the best interests of the country.

"We are opposed to the opening of the border to Mexican trucks as the rules and regulations currently stand," said spokesman Bret Caldwell. "Right now, Mexican trucks and driver's standards do not meet the requirements we have in the United States."

Though state officials say Mexican motor carriers will be held to the same standards as U.S. motor carriers, Caldwell said the standard is not enforced.

"For the drayage trucks, they are inspecting less than 5 percent of the trucks that cross the border," Caldwell said. "Nobody's putting money into this effort. It's not going to be long before people are going to figure out how to beat the system."

According to the DPS, every truck that crosses the border is visually inspected and weighed, but fewer than 10 percent are x-rayed.

The Teamsters also fear that lower wages will drive jobs away from American motor carriers, Caldwell said.

Adams disagrees that jobs will be lost to Mexican motor carriers.

"We have a shortage of drivers and a shortage of equipment," Adams said. "We are a Teamster town. We need drivers. We need trucks. And it's not like Mexico is going to make up the difference."

As the largest commercial port of entry for Mexican goods in the United States, more than 9,000 trucks cross the border at Laredo every day, Adams said. In 2003, nearly \$80 billion in goods were hauled across the border, more than twice the second-largest Mexican commercial port of entry at El Paso, which handled \$38.6 billion in trade.

With that much traffic moving through the city, Adams said, safety comes first.

"We have 58,000 kids in kindergarten through 12th grade (in Laredo)," he said. "We are very concerned about safety on our streets. It's not some Wild West town. We understand the impact of all of this."

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SOURCE: Laredo Development Foundation