

MOTLEY COUNTY TRIBUNE

VOICE OF THE FOOTHILL COUNTRY

Where History is Pride

Flomot Matador Northfield Roaring Springs

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Wildfire of 2011

By Carol Campbell
Motley County Tribune

The heroes emerge

After the most devastating fires in recent memory ravaged 34,294 acres of grassland and engulfed everything in its path in flames — one thing is certain: we fought for the land with no stake in the outcome except to do good.

Following a chorus of interviews with public officials, law enforcement, firefighters, ranchers and farmers, the true heroes emerged — and it is you.

From the first responders that moved into action with road graders before the official declaration, to the food brigade that prepared and served food and brought water to weary firefighters (some working 30 hours straight); and to the hundreds of volunteers in and outside our community that pitched in to help — these are the heroes of the Fire of 2011.

Double duty

"There were no homes lost, no loss of life, and no major injuries," County Judge Jim Meador said.

In addition to running a motorgrader for the first response team, Judge Meador also managed to get "blanket coverage" for state assistance from TxDOT and DPS. In close coordination with acting Emergency Management Coordinator Lee Jones, he requested a State of Emergency Evacuation on the southwest side of town, and then directed the local DPS trooper to coordinate an evacuation of homes.

"Local citizens responded quickly and effectively," Meador said, naming Jeremy and Brad Jameson as an example of two private citizens who moved motorgraders into the area in a timely way.

The judge will be filing for a Disaster Assistance Agricultural grant, working with the USDA-Farm Service Administration for assistance for ranchers for fencing, emergency feed, and grazing through the Crop Rotation Program (CRP). "This will help the small rancher who can rent grass in CRP at a low price," he said.

The judge is asking that all expenses be turned in to the FSA office or the Fire Department to help the county qualify for disaster relief. "We are about \$1.5 million short on damages," he said.



Command Central was set up by law enforcement officials from Paducah in downtown Matador on the east side of the courthouse square. A trailer equipped with radio communication equipment housed the Incident Commander, Lee Jones, who handled all the logistics of the fire.

First responders

Meanwhile, scouting teams were reporting fire all over the county; and more heroes emerged. "Everyone that pitched in a hand was a hero," James Gillespie aptly stated. Gillespie is a "go-to guy" for Fire Chief and EM Coordinator Lee Jones. Everyone in Matador wears many hats and one of Gillespie's hats is to serve on Lee Jones's scouting team.

The first calls came from Roaring Springs at about 2:10 p.m. on Sunday afternoon, February 27, Jones said. "We had seven additional 911 calls following that." First responders went to Roaring Springs where a raging grass fire southeast of the city threatened grassland south and east of SH70. Then the call came about 3:00 p.m. that there was a rolling fire west of Matador between Mott Creek Ranch



Pictured (L to R) are County Judge Jim Meador, Deputy Clerk D'anna Russell, Extension Agent Ryan Martin, and DPS Trooper, Chad Overton. The courthouse crew looks over a map of the county furnished by the USDA office that outlines the parameters of the fire that took 34,294 acres of grassland in Motley County.

"We are a good county, who all pull together in times like this." -Frances Taylor

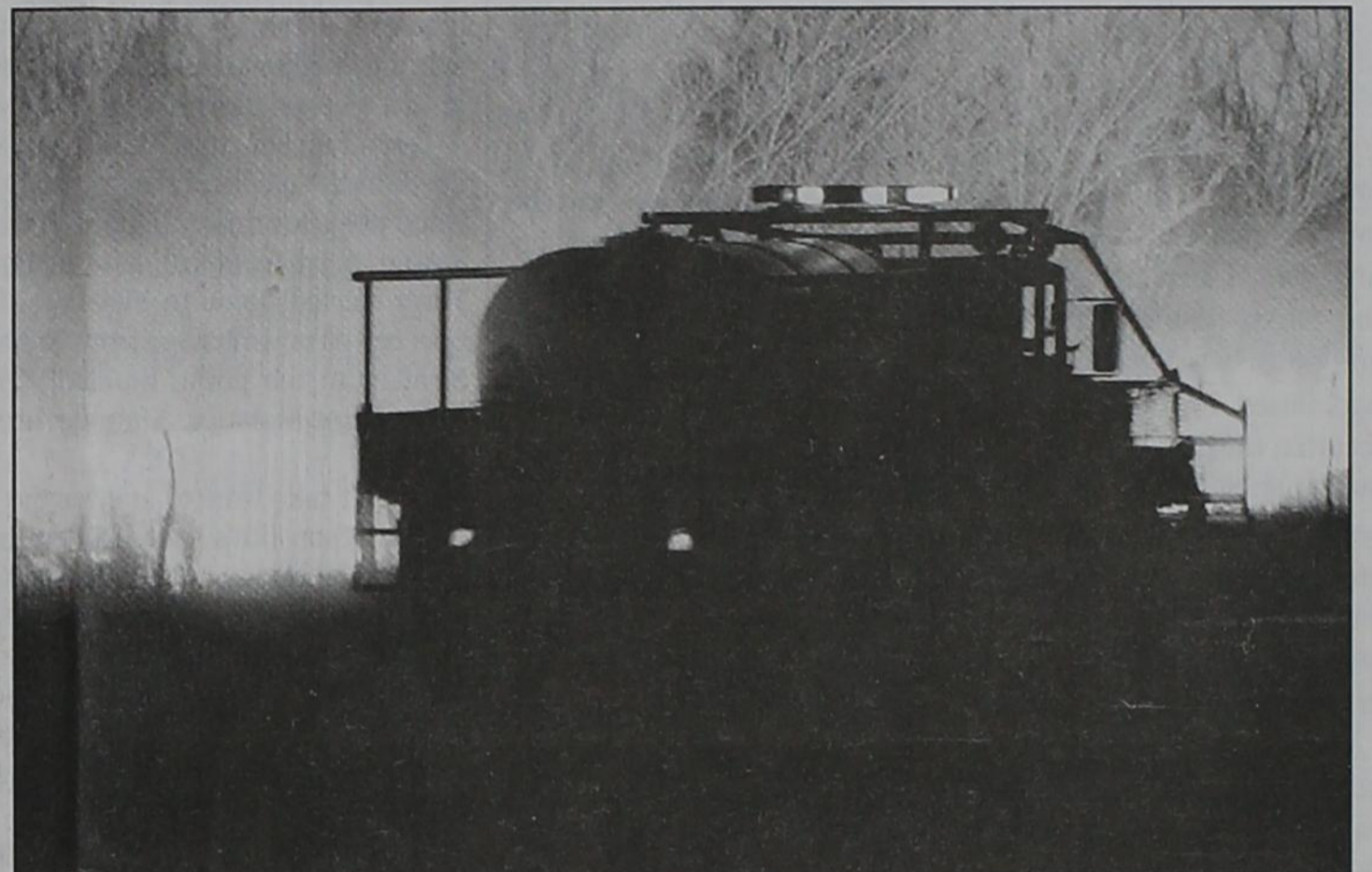
and Potts Composites.

"I sent Craig Turner and James Gillespie to scout it out," Jones said. The fire leaped US70 and headed to Matador proper. "We tried to push it around town, and with the help of TxDOT, the County road hands, and other volunteers, we were successful," Jones said modestly.

Chad Overton, local DPS Trooper, Sheriff Chris Spence and Deputy Sheriff Chad Ware went door-to-door evacuating the homes north and south of Walton Road. "We also had eight troopers from other coun-

ties helping," Overton said, naming officers from Post, Crosbyton, Dickens, Floydada and Paducah. They evacuated about 60 people to the Motley County School that had been designated as a "safe area." Later, troopers from Vernon showed up for duty, he said. The Red Cross provided meals and cots for evacuees. Law Enforcement closed the roads in and out of Matador because the smoke was so dense it presented a danger to traveling motorists. Residents were asked to evacuate to Paducah, 30 to the miles east.

Our neighbors to the east had another special responsibility — housing the most vulnerable of the population, residents of Hackberry Creek Care Center. Cottle County took evacuees from the Center for overnight lodging, sparing them the effects of smoke inhalation from the fires.



The Hamilton homestead, located about 1/2-mile west of Matador, was in the direct line of an uncontrollable fire that roared like a freight train through the west part of Matador. First responders moved into action with water trucks and road graders. The Hamilton family cut fences to save horses and wildlife. (Photo by John Hamilton).

Marshall. Craig was in charge of the dozers and maintainers; and Brent was in charge of trucks," he said.

"It was a migrating situation — we adapted as it developed," he said. "I'm the only person that stayed put. We had to plan far enough ahead to get ahead of the fire. We stopped it with a fire guard on Sunday night.

"I had to make 1/2-second decisions; there was no other way, so if people saw bulldozers in their backyard it was a decision to improve the chances of saving barns, mowers, and homes," he said.

Lee credits his family with saving him countless hours of research and leg work to find the right locations to relocate equipment pouring into downtown Matador. He would announce a location to Van and Rob Francis and Ronnie and Don Cox, and then they would lead the equipment to the right location. "It takes know-how and a familiarity with the county," Jones said.

Agencies involved were TxDOT, Texas Forrest Service, DPS, and Motley, Floyd, and Cottle counties; "and many private citizens had resources like dozers and water trucks," he said. Our neighbors came to the rescue, Jones said. All the surrounding towns sent law enforcement, equipment, and volunteers. In addition to Floyd and Cottle, other resources from Flomot, Dougherty, Dickens, Spur, Crosbyton, Turkey, Quitaque, Lockney, Plainview, and Lubbock invaded the city to help.

Equipment included 10 bulldozers (five of those were from TxDOT); and 19 maintainers (TxDOT had 12); four county maintainers; plus three private citizens that cut the rough guard, Jones said.

Global Front Line Solutions were in the county working with the Matador Ranch on a controlled burn. These were experienced fire fighters that lent a hand, Jones said. Then on Monday, "we had Strike Team 10 from Marble Falls that came in. They patrolled the guards; and it was the first time my guys had had any rest — most had been running for 30 straight hours,

some up to 45 hours. I sent my guys home, but they came back to work at 6:00 a.m. the next morning," Jones said proudly.

An unnatural wind and narrow escape

Linda Roy, the El Matador Hunting Lodge Manager, stood firm in her domain — watching the smoke from the west porch of the lodge. Her mother was calling on the scanner, encouraging her to evacuate, but she felt safe. She minimized the danger, she said, because there was smoke but no flames. She turned off the air conditioners, moved her car to the east side of the lodge, and watched and waited.

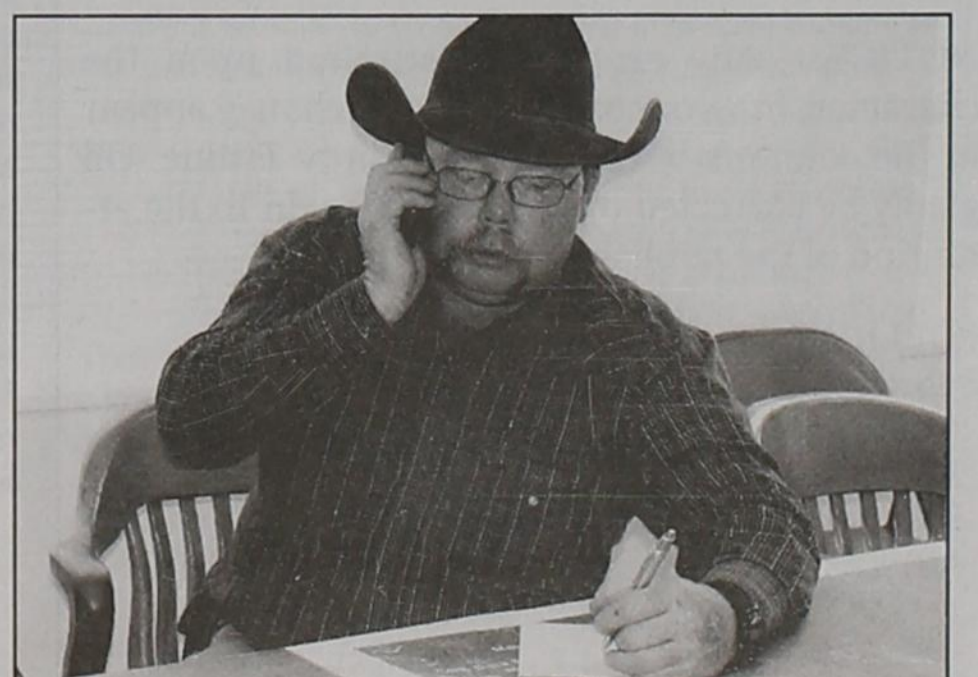
Then suddenly, she said, it hit: "I didn't think it was that close when actually, it was everywhere," Roy said. "The first indication that the fire was close was an unnatural wind that blew

shrapnel-like debris on the west windows. This is the firestorm ahead of the fire," she explained. The wind hit and the prairie exploded in fire.

Matador Ranch hands Deanna and Tim Washington showed up, instructing her to leave everything and escape. "As I was pulling out, I looked over my right shoulder, and the fire was racing toward headquarters," she said.

The Washington's were cutting fences to let horses and cattle escape, just as the firefighters arrived. They turned on the sprinkler system at the lodge while maintainers were cutting fire guards. The firepit shack on the west side of the lodge burned, while a propane tank sitting dangerously close remained intact. The fast-moving fire swept over the tank and raced to the historic headquarters, Roy said.

continued on page 6



Fire Chief Lee Jones and Assistant Fire Chief Craig Turner were on the first scouting teams to 911 calls that set in motion one of the largest fire response efforts in Motley County history.

Foothill Country

Connections

Community, Diversity, Art
When you have history, you have pride.



By Larry Vogt

Someone asked me what price the gasoline would have to be to make me change my lifestyle. I had always used the \$4.50 figure in the past and so that is what I said. I had based my figure on the fact that the gasoline would be available but then I remembered the 1973 oil embargo and should have said that when the gas is available we will sit in line, pay the price, or stay home.

That conversation took place before the unrest in Libya and the consequent rises in fuel at the local pumps. Now we are all faced with "lifestyle" changes. That \$4.50 price seems just around the corner and may continue to rise past that. I don't even have a horse or a bicycle to fall back on. A

quick search on the Internet reveals that electric vehicle research and development is in full swing. There are hybrid cars and trucks, all electric cars, scooters, bicycles, ATVs, small trucks, and bigger trucks.

Problem for most of us is price. That Chevy Volt is a hybrid that seems to fill the bill for efficiency and smart technology but it costs more than all comparable sized gas powered sedans, even with the tax perks. Is the selling price of a vehicle like that going to be within the range of the average driver before the gas gets to be \$6.00 per gallon? Tune in next week/month/year for the answer to that one. Meanwhile, we will have to adjust, make fewer trips, and pay at the pump whatever the price.

The idea of an electric bicycle seems silly but maybe the idea has merit. The kit to convert an existing bike into a rechargeable vehicle seems priced to compete and maybe some younger folks could do that in a pinch. Anyone who lives more than ten miles from the grocery store and has no public transportation handy could be in a bind. Maybe I should start looking for a horse.

WRITING COMMUNITY

Firestorm engulfs emotions

by Marisue Potts

Rumors flew faster than the fire that started on Sunday afternoon in a ditch off Highway 62/70. My daughter Christy called from Houston because she'd read on Facebook that our house had burned down. Others called my sister-in-law, Lou Bureson, to tell her that they'd heard Jim's house had burned or the asphalt plant had caused the fire or it had started from the electrical lines hitting together or someone had dropped a cigarette at the rest stop.

The truth (as I know it) is that around 2:30 or 3:00 p.m. Jill and Larry Jones saw a fire, cause undetermined, in the ditch on the north side of the highway and called it in to 911. The west wind jumped it across the road to the Campbell's as it continued outside the fireguard on Mott Creek Ranch side until it reached the top of the hill going east.

Terry Fincher and I had been working down in the creek all day, planting cottonwood poles for turkey habitat. It was about 4:30 p.m. when we came to the house and Terry started home to Floydada. I picked up a cell phone message from Ronald Clay. Straight to the point, he said, "There's a fire west of Matador. Marisue, are you all right?"

I didn't take time to answer the call but called my son Jim's house to alert them. Jay said he couldn't see any smoke, the sand was blowing too hard, he said. As I started up the hill to our entrance, I met Terry Fincher coming back because he had seen the smoke and flames coming over the hill above our gate. "We've got to move the Excavator. It's in direct line of fire," he said.

I borrowed Fincher's cell phone and called Jim's house again and Neal listened as I said, "There's a fire on the ranch. You need to look out and see where it is and then you need to make a plan and go north if you have to. You may have to evacuate." At that word Neal hung up and I hoped he was off and running.

Fincher started the big trackhoe and slowly pulled out of the direct line of fire as I pointed my compact pickup across the pasture that was freshly grubbed and full of pockets of holes and clods.

"Are you ready to run for your life if you have to?" I asked, wondering about my good judgment in trying to cross such rough ground with small tires. I determined to abandon the fuel tank not wanting to be pulling it if I got stuck or the flames overtook

me. The Excavator crawled across the pasture and Fincher parked it on a gravel road between two caliche hills. We watched as the flames on either side of the highway were pushed by high west winds and waited for an explosion or flare up from the fuel tank. The flames raced on leaving a burning fire line on both sides of the road. The fire line continued to eat our way and eventually we moved the Excavator to the asphalt plant and gravel staging area where it was safe.

Meantime, unknown to us, Jim had sized up the situation and gone to get his tractor with a blade. However, first he had to change the big back tire on the 1960's Massey Ferguson before he headed off to blade a fire break between his house and the fire on the ridge. The old tractor didn't have gauges that work and he soon ran out of fuel so he sprinted down the rugged terrain to his shop, got his pickup and fuel tanks and started for Mott Camp where we had diesel. When he got back, a motorgrader had followed his lead and was blading a firebreak west to east, parallel to the fire that was creeping north through our Bull Cod Pastures.

Our neighbors on the west, Albert and Gwen Thrasher, showed up when the fire was jumping across our entrance road and the smoke was so dense we couldn't see down the gravel road. The Thrashers offered their help, Gwen was already praying mightily. Albert went to get their heavy equipment to bring it across from their gravel pit to the fire line and like the cavalry the Thrashers showed up just in time to help widen and push new fire guards as the fire continued to push north toward Duinink's asphalt and gravel plant.

Then, before the fire guards were tested, the wind shifted, blowing from the north to the south. The pressure on our ranch was lessened, but the fire fighters faced a new long front to fight as flames devoured the dry grass on the south side of the highway. From different hilltop positions we watched the flames, helpless and out of communication to even know what was happening elsewhere. About 12 a.m. we drove down the highway and there was a line of flames on both sides of the highway from our place all the way to Matador. It looked like the world was burning up with no end in sight.

About dawn the next morning, February

28, I drove the 12 miles to Matador feeling like I was in a war zone. Devastation on both sides of the highway was complete, except for an occasional clump of grass or cedars burned half-way up. It appeared as the fire traveled it got hotter and burned more completely. I stopped at Chillerz where the Dickens fire truck was refueling. My friends from Dickens, Will and Matt Humphreys, were getting a bite to drink and eat before going back out on the line. They were weary from being up all night, Will's eyes were ringed with soot, and his long tall frame sagged with exhaustion.

"We were at the Matador Ranch Lodge," he said, "when the fire storm came over. We couldn't see anything and we couldn't breathe. I didn't know if we were going to get out of it." But the rolling flames parted and went around the new hunters' lodge burning only the outdoor barbecue patio. Will, Matt, and the other volunteer fire fighters who had only the protection of their coats pulled over their heads and the water they could spray on themselves were brave beyond words and so lucky.

When I heard his story, I was so emotional, so touched. Here were these boys and others who put their lives on the line for the people and property of Motley County, a place they have no stake in, but they came to help us.

Our neighbors, Albert and Gwen Thrasher and their sons, who put themselves and their equipment in harm's way, and Wes Campbell, who was directing the Dougherty fire fighters, undermanned and under-equipped but never short on Moxy or determination, were also there when needed.

On Monday the wind shifted again and our ranch was threatened from another side, the east. Jim was widening the gravel road but flames were licking right up to the fire guard. Again, help arrived just in time from a Floyd County motorgrader. The operator bladed right in front of the flames, throwing up a line of dirt to contain the new assault. Then he headed for Hamilton's fire to the northeast of us and soon it too was contained.

There are many ways to serve your country, and I believe these volunteers, like our military warriors, have chosen to unselfishly serve others. What a tribute to America. What a blessing to Motley County. Thank you, friends.

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A Different Kind of Heroes

by Dinah Young

Since the fires, there has been lots of talk about heroes -- and there were many -- I have been reminded of a different kind of heroes. Speaking to a friend of mine who lives at Hackberry Care Center, I was very moved hearing her story of how the evacuation went during the fires that surrounded Matador. She spoke so highly of the personnel there -- telling how each resident was treated with the utmost care and respect. What could have been a traumatic, messy episode turned into a pleasant adventure.

I also spoke with the interim administrator, Jan Schow, who said it was indeed an amazing experience. She has worked in many facilities and says she has never seen such professional care given to the folks in a care center. Because of her dedication, she and her husband were driving from Abilene heading to Paducah to meet the Hackberry residents, and came upon what looked like a parade with the sheriff in front, lights flashing, heading up the procession of two vans full of our sweet elders, then 30 cars behind them with staff, friends, and family.

Mildred said Diane, Seab, and Theresa Washington helped to load the residents -- reassuring them everything would be all right. She also said there was no fussing or complaining even in all that wind and smoke. "Old folks

can be pretty nice!" Mildred said with a smile. As usual, the Washington's put in an enormous effort to see that everyone was comfortable. Diane also called every resident's family to let them know they were safe and being cared for. Jan Schow said this freed up her time to do other necessary work and was very grateful. They loaded up the vans at 5 PM Sunday, so no one had been able to eat. The center provided sandwiches and drinks for the two vans.

When the first van arrived at Paducah -- familiar faces were there to greet them. Several had worked at Hackberry and knew the residents. Volunteers helped our Care Center's staff to get the folks settled in. They were unloaded with their charts and meds and made to feel at home. The next van with 11 residents were taken to Childress and our staff and their's again unloaded and helped the folks settle in for the night. As the administrator put it "the staff at Hackberry went above and beyond the call of duty to see that all residents were given the best of care".

Jan also said "the bottom line is, they couldn't have done what they did without the firemen!" Our community is so blessed to have such dedicated men and women to show up in time of crisis. They are indeed heroes. Someone said many of them were up 56 hours fighting

these fires to assure our safety. Fox News called Matador "The luckiest town on earth". I said to my husband -- that was not luck. It was God looking after the town of Matador and those brave fire fighters. Driving there Tuesday morning -- signs of fire encircling the entire town tells quite a story of the miracle in Matador.

The Hackberry staff had foremost in their minds the safe keeping and well being of their residents. Mildred said Monday when they were loaded in the van to return home to Matador, there was a jubilant feeling. Music was playing for the residents and many were singing. By 3:30 PM everyone was in house and settled back in.

Folks, we are so blessed to have a care center like this in our community. Perhaps all of us should be praying for the staff and residents and encouraging them when we see them. It takes a special kind of person to do this work. One of the therapist told me the center is really doing well and wished she wouldn't hear false reports and gossip. As she put it "If we'll leave them alone, they will do their job and do it well".

I hope this article will make people think about what a professional and caring place we have there in Matador -- and thank God for the staff and residents, the board and volunteers -- all heroes in my book. Hurrah for Hackberry!

Matador Wildfire, a reflection

by Linda Russell Roy,
Matador Ranch
Lodge Manager.

Smoke and dust obscured the flames, but I was startled by a sudden unnatural wind pelting shrapnel against the window.

Mom had twice called telling me to leave the lodge. Curiosity and stubbornness bid me stay just a little bit longer.

One minute fire was not there; the next minute fire was everywhere. It was as if the dry winter grass behind the lodge spontaneously combusted. Energized not only by the driving winds, but also by a gale of its own making--a force foreign to my experience. No wonder creatures of the field are caught in its clutches, lulled by my self-same naive reluctance and wonder. How do you escape spontaneously?

My advantage was the shelter of a wall and the quick rev of a Volkswagen engine to spirit a quick escape.

Experiencing wildfires leaves you breathless but wiser and opens new landscapes of contemplation.



Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor,

The Roaring Springs Community Volunteers met on Thursday evening for the purpose of planning an appreciation supper for everyone who volunteered to help contain the fires in the county on Sunday, February 17, 2011.

A date was set for this at the Roaring Springs Community Center on Tuesday evening, March 22, from 6:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. We will be preparing seven briskets and all the trimmings.

This is not a fundraiser but a "Thank You" from the people of Roaring Springs for those who fought the fires and their families. Invitations will be sent to other fire departments, ranchers, farmers, cowboys, and all those who came to our

aid: TXDOT, Motley County road crews, those who provided water, vehicle fuel, tractors, graders, dozers and all those who provided any help. If you fail to get a written invitation consider this your invitation. It will be difficult to compile a complete list.

Anyone who didn't help the fires but would like to come out to express their thanks, make a donation, provide desserts or help with the serving will be welcome.

There will be a notice in the *Motley County Tribune* next week as a reminder of this event. We are looking forward serving a large number of volunteer firefighters and their families. Ya'll come!

Respectfully,
Corky Marshall
Mayor of Roaring Springs

Thank You

A huge thank you to our great volunteer fire department our county workers, the TXDOT crew, our local law enforcement, neighbors and friends who battled the wildfires Sunday. Your quick response and hard work saved our homes and our community and we are extremely grateful. Also, a special thanks to the many area fire fighters who came to our aid. What a great, caring place to live. Many God bless each of you.

Sincerely Roy and Joanie Stephens

Thank You

We want to thank everyone, who contributed in anyway, for protecting our home and property during the recent wildfire. Your efforts were very much appreciated.

Wayland and Betty Moore

Thank You

We would like to thank each one of the firemen, neighbors, and friends for their help and dedication to putting out the fire that threatened our home. Without your help we would have lost our home. I would like to thank each one by name but there were so many that I would not want to leave out anyone's name. Please know that I am so very grateful to you all for anything that you did to save my home.

We would also like to thank the volunteers that make up our Fire Dept. for your constant vigil over this county. You have worked and trained thru the years to protect this community and it showed. You have worked and trained thru the years to protect this community and it showed. You had the near impossible to do in protecting the town and rural homes and you were successful. We are deeply grateful by your sacrifices and dedication.

Thank you to all the different Fire Depts. that came to the support our firemen, some of which came long distances to help in this tremendous fire. We do appreciate your efforts and sacrifices to come to help us. We had all kinds of extra law enforcement as well as Tx-Dot maintainers and firemen aiding in this effort. WE are thankful to each and every one of you for your help. May God bless you all.

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Roaring Springs Lions Club meets

By Corky Marshall, Secretary

The Roaring Springs Lions Club met Thursday, March 3, 2011, at the Windmill Café. There were 13 members and two guests present.

County Judge Jim Meador spoke about the wildfires at Roaring Springs and at Matador. He told us about the many people who were involved in fighting the fire. Many were local people, our Roaring Springs Fire Department, the Matador Fire Department as well as fire departments that came from

other counties to help contain the fires and saved the towns of Roaring Springs and Matador and the historic Matador Ranch house and property.

The RS Lions Club participated in distributing 21 boxes of groceries from the Lubbock Food Bank. Forty-two flags were distributed to honor our presidents on President's day. Eight of our members went to Hackberry Creek Care Center and played bingo with nine residents. Everyone won some quarters of the \$35.00 in quarters the Lions Club furnished.

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Hackberry Friends are requesting donations of brownies, cookies and other easy-to-eat goodies for the sixth annual concession stand at the Boondockers race. Goodies are needed by Sunday, March 20. Please contact Shane Jones or Dianne Washington for more information.

Matador Grand Prix set for March 19-20

By Dianne Washington
Motley County Tribune

The West Texas Boondockers will host the sixth Annual Matador Grand Prix Saturday and Sunday, March 19-20, 2011.

New for 2011 are a Saturday afternoon race and a fundraiser spaghetti supper. The spaghetti supper is a joint fundraiser for Motley County Senior Citizens and Hackberry Friends. The supper will be held at the Motley County Senior Citizens building beginning at 6:00 p.m. Saturday March 19. Everyone is invited to come out and enjoy spaghetti, salad, garlic bread and dessert.

Various organizations and businesses will have food concessions all day Sunday. The Motley County Senior

Citizens will serve smoked brisket sandwiches, rodeo wraps, and various sweets in the Senior Citizens building.

The Catholic Church will be selling Frito pies and nachos on the north side of New to You. Hackberry Care Center will be selling mesquite grilled hamburgers, chips, and various sweets for the sixth year on the north side of the courthouse square.

If other organizations or businesses plan to have food booths or any other type of booth please contact Dianne Washington at 806-347-2636 or 269-1388 or Shane Jones at 347-2820 by Saturday afternoon March 12 to be included in the newspaper article. To be included on the flyers all information must be received by noon Tuesday, March 15.

Lighthouse to Award Scholarship and Trip to Washington, D.C. to Two Area Students

Again in 2011, for the 47th consecutive year, Lighthouse Electric Cooperative will sponsor two area high school students on the all-expense paid Government-in-Action Youth Tour to Washington, D.C. This year's tour is scheduled for June 9 to June 17. The winners will also receive a \$500 Lighthouse Youth Tour Scholarship.

As participants in the Youth Tour, the local students will join other winners from across the state to travel by air to Washington where they will spend seven days touring places of historical interest, visiting members of Congress, and getting a first-hand view of their government in action.

The two winners will be selected from participants in the co-op's Youth Tour Speech Contest to be held March 10. Participants will be required to appear before an independent

panel of judges to present their speech and answer questions relevant to the Youth Tour and electric cooperatives. Winners are chosen based on their knowledge, speaking ability, appearance and poise.

Over the past 46 years, Lighthouse has sponsored 96 area students on the tour. Winners in recent years have been:

2002, Skyler Cornelius of Floydada, Jalee Dietrich of Lockney, and Cydni Waldon of Turkey

2003, Addie Foster of Lockney and Spencer Schacht of Floydada

2004, Kami Keaton and Jana Miller of Lockney and Kittie Campbell of Matador

2005, Rebekah Thornton of Plainview and Daniel Houchin

of Petersburg

2006, Krista Rasco of Lockney and Maddie Ramsey of Quitaque

2007, Josh Fowler of Plainview and Britnee Brotherton of Floydada

2008, Leah Ford of Lockney and J.C. Simpson of Floydada

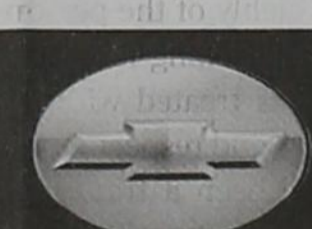
2009, Daryn McCarter of Lockney and Lauren Young of Quitaque

2010, Jonathan Ramirez of Petersburg and Luis Trujillo* of Plainview* won scholarship, was unable to attend trip

For information on entering the contest, contact Larry Ogden at Lighthouse Electric Cooperative, (806) 983-2814, 1-800-657-7192, or e-mail lar-ryo@lighthouse.coop.

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OVERWHELMED?

 There are times when all of us feel overwhelmed. It is no wonder with all that goes on in our lives. There may even be times when we feel defeated and spiritually discouraged. It is in these moments that we are at our weakest in our walk with Jesus. What's the problem?
 Usually it is our busy schedules. Our lives have become so crowded that there is little time for spiritual development. It is so easy to give in to complacency regarding a time set aside for regular reading and study of the Word of God. The Bible tells us "faith comes by hearing the word of God." It seems then from that verse in Romans 10 that we ignore the Holy Scriptures at our own peril. It is difficult to live very well without the guiding principles of the word of God. "Overwhelmed" becomes our reality.
 We need time to interact with the Word and therefore gain the faith to enable us to live the lifestyle that Jesus set before us. The Apostle Paul wrote in Acts 20:32, "I commend to God and the word of His grace which is able to build you up..." We need the word of God in our lives and on a regular basis. With it comes the relief from that terrible feeling of being overwhelmed. For we can "...do all things through Christ which strengthens me."
Roaring Springs Church of Christ
Michael G. Crowley, Sr.
BIBLE STUDY 10:00 a.m. Worship 9:00 a.m.

NEWS AROUND MOTLEY COUNTY

Roaring Springs News

By Monta Marshall

On a personal note

Bookkeeping and taking care of farm business with bright spots of bird watching have been my occupation this past week. At least the bird watching doesn't put more strain on my brain! I have seen birds that I don't see in the summer; I guess they are just passing through. Today I saw a different species of finch than I most often see. We've had a robin visit our feeder for several weeks, even during the extreme cold weather. The robins are still here for I hear a 'cheer-up' pretty often. A red-winged blackbird was another bird which stopped briefly for water food and rest.

Bill Manney reported the other day that he had seen a purple martin scout. It seems too early but last year they weren't right on schedule either. Usually we see them first a little later. Some years we have noticed the ones who nest here nearly always arrive by March 21 or 22; since we don't watch birds all the time they may have arrived and we didn't happen to see them. Corky cleaned out the purple martin house the first warm day after the cold spell; we are ready for bird renters!

RSCV planning "thank you" celebration for firefighters and volunteers

The Roaring Springs Community Volunteers need help listing as many of the people helping control the fires as possible. They plan to send out invitations to all who helped. It will likely be difficult to get a complete list. If you know of anyone who helped or if you, yourself helped, please let someone know. I believe I heard that some women brought snacks and refreshments to give the firemen a boost. I am on the invitation committee as well as Deanette Gullede. My

phone number is 348-7000, the Windmill Café number is 348-7256. We would like to have each and every name.

In the community

J. T. Swim would like for his friends to know that he now has a phone at Hackberry Creek Care Center where he is taking some re-hab treatments following his recent hospital stay. His number is 347-2648. He would appreciate calls and visits.

J. N. Fletcher hosted the Roaring Springs Community Volunteers at his home to plan an appreciation dinner for the wildfire fighters. Those attending were: Jo and Walter Trammell, Zella Palmer, Deanette Gullede, Don Stuckey, Alex Crowder, Corky and Monta Marshall, Pearl Patten.

Lorene Jordan was able to be at church on Sunday. She is taking chemo treatments at home.

Don Moore of Wellington, Texas, filled the pulpit on Sunday at the First Baptist Church. He was accompanied by his wife, Linda.

Norman Frede of Houston hosted a dinner for some of the Matador Ranch personnel week before last at the Travelers Inn.

Anna Buckner and baby, Tyler visited the Daniell's last week. She came on Monday and stayed until Thursday. They are doing well.

Devonne Dillard had word today that both her nephew as well as her nephew-in-law are now under hospice care. Ronald Carpenter, the son of the late J.M. Carpenter and Janelle Brooks Carpenter has been very ill and is now requiring help from hospice. She didn't know as much about her niece's husband, Harry, only that he had been placed under their care also.

Flomot News

By Earlyne Jameson

Overheard

A good friend who has lived in Motley County for many years said she did know half the residents or their names living here now, so she just calls everyone "Honey" and lets it go at that.

Community News

Visitors in the home of Donnie Rogers Sunday night were Bobby and Margaret Edwards, Lonnie Payne, Kyle McWilliams and Bobby McWilliams of Quitaque and his houseguest, daughter, Natalie Rogers of Williamsburg, Virginia.

Trent, Trevor, Tylee Barclay of Matador visited the weekend with grandparents, Jerry and Sandra Barclay.

Justin Calvert and daughter, Betty of Dumas visited the weekend with his grandmother, Mrs. Mary Jo Calvert and uncle, Glen Calvert.

Donnie Rogers accompanied his mother, Mrs. B. Rogers to Lockney, Tuesday for a medical appointment.

Visiting the weekend with Jack and Nada Starkey were daughter, Mrs. Jackie Lynn Davis and son, Michael Davis of Fritch.

Orville Lee was in Lubbock, Monday for medical tests. His wife, Ruth Lee had a medical appointment in Plainview, Monday.

Mrs. Judy Renfro of Matador visited Sunday afternoon with her aunt, Mary Ellen "Dude" Barton.

Doris and Roger Vinson visited in Lubbock Sunday with son and family, Dana and Crystal Vinson, Allyson, Christopher and Elise. They celebrated the 3rd birthday of Christopher with all the trimmings.

Wilburn Martin attended to business in Plainview Tuesday.

Everett Shorter was admitted to the Mangold Hospital in Lockney Thursday where at news time he was still hospitalized. Visiting him is his sister, Mrs. Elsie Beard of Dallas. She is also visiting Kathy and Clois Shorter.

Matador News

New Hackberry Creek Care Center resident, J. T. Swim, formerly of Roaring Springs, would appreciate visits or phone calls. His number is 347-2648.

Fire hazard alerts in Motley County

Dry conditions in February put Motley County under a fire hazard all month and it materialized Sunday, February 27, 2011, burning thousands of acres and grassland.

The temperatures had drastic changes. The first week in February entered with sub freezing temperatures, an arctic front and extremely low wind chill factors made its exit February 28, 2011, with a mild wind and temperature of 71 degrees!

Winter wheat is in poor

condition and maturity levels were minimal. Ragland not burned is in fair condition. Cattle are in good condition and supplement feeding continues.

Motley County National Service Volunteers registered the total moisture for February: Buzz Thacker, Roaring Springs, 0.38; Ronnie Bailey, Matador, 0.50; Lawrence Allen, Whiteflat, 0.60; Clois Shorter, Flomot, 0.59; and Betty Simpson, Northfield, 0.52

Member recalls treasured keepsakes memories at Do Gooders Club meeting

Mrs. Waydette Clay recalled memories of treasured keepsakes she had on display at the Do Gooders' Club Tuesday afternoon March 1, 2011.

She was hostess at the club meeting and presided at a table laid with a beautiful pieced feed sack quilt her mother, the late Mrs. Opal Marin had closely stitched. Crocheted and ceramic angels centered the table that friends had given her. A miniature lighthouse and a large porcelain pan used for canning that had been in her family as far back as she could remember

was placed on the table. She served refreshments of crackers and assorted dips, apricot cake, fruit punch and coffee.

Waydette conducted the short business session. Mrs. Anna Beth Clay read the minutes that were approved. They then quilted on the club's Homecoming and Bazaar quilt.

Those attending were Mesdames Nada Starkey, Barbara Payne, Erma Washington, Kathy Shorter, Waydette Clay, Anna Beth Clay, Mary Jo Calvert and Cora Gail Johnson.

Thank You

We would like to thank the Roaring Springs and Matador fire department for saving our home and animals from being destroyed by fire Sunday. Thanks to Craig Turner and the others for telling us it was close to our house. Thanks to Russell Alexander and Dean Osborn for cutting a fire guard around our house several weeks ago. Thanks to all the crews that worked so hard to fight all the fires in Motley County.

Thanks,
Yancy, Daphne and Parker Meredith

Thank You

The City of Matador would like to take this opportunity to thank the many organizations and individuals that helped save the town and the citizens of the City of Matador. The efforts by all involved were awesome to see. We were truly blessed by the hand of God protecting our community that day.

Thank You

We would like to express our sincere thanks to the Roaring Springs and Matador Fire Departments for Saving our Property and Equipment. Also we want to thank Don Whitaker for all his help. Once again thank you from the Meredith Family.

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Thank You

We want to thank all who were involved for working so diligently to contain and extinguish the fire at the Moore Place. We appreciate each of you so much and are greatly indebted to you for all your many hours of service. How blessed we are to live in Motley County. You are the best.

Kenny and Olivia Barton

"Let's all pray for steady spring rains to open the dormant seeds and bring summer flowers and fresh tender grass for the cattle in Motley County."

- Jan Hamilton

This Week's Local Forecast

Thursday Mostly Sunny 73/37	Friday Mostly Sunny 74/42	Saturday Partly Cloudy 65/39	Sunday Partly Cloudy 69/38	Monday Few Showers 73/41	Tuesday Partly Cloudy 74/41	Wednesday Mostly Sunny 78/42

Weather Trivia

Can weather satellites be used to study insects? **?**
Answer: Scientists are determining when locusts hatch by using these satellites.

Weather History

March 10, 1989 - Thirty-four cities in the central and southwestern United States reported new record high temperatures for the date. The high of 85 degrees at Hanksville, Utah was a record for March, and Pueblo, Colo., equaled their March record of 86 degrees.

Moon Phases

First 3/12	Full 3/19	Last 3/26	New 4/3

www.WhatsOurWeather.com

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YOU ARE INVITED!

WHAT: **SPRING GOSPEL MEETING**

WHERE: **Matador Church of Christ
Matador, Texas**

WITH: Carroll Sites, Evangelist of Higdon, Arkansas, in a Series of Biblical Lessons

WHEN: **Sunday, March 20th through Wednesday, March 23rd**

Sunday Bible Class - 10:00 a.m. "God's Life Line to Man"

Sunday Morning Worship - 11:00 a.m. "Expressions of the Heart"

Please stay and enjoy a potluck meal with us following the morning worship service

Sunday Evening Worship - 6:00 p.m. "Expanding our Faith"

Monday Evening - 7:00 p.m. "Man's Life Line to God"

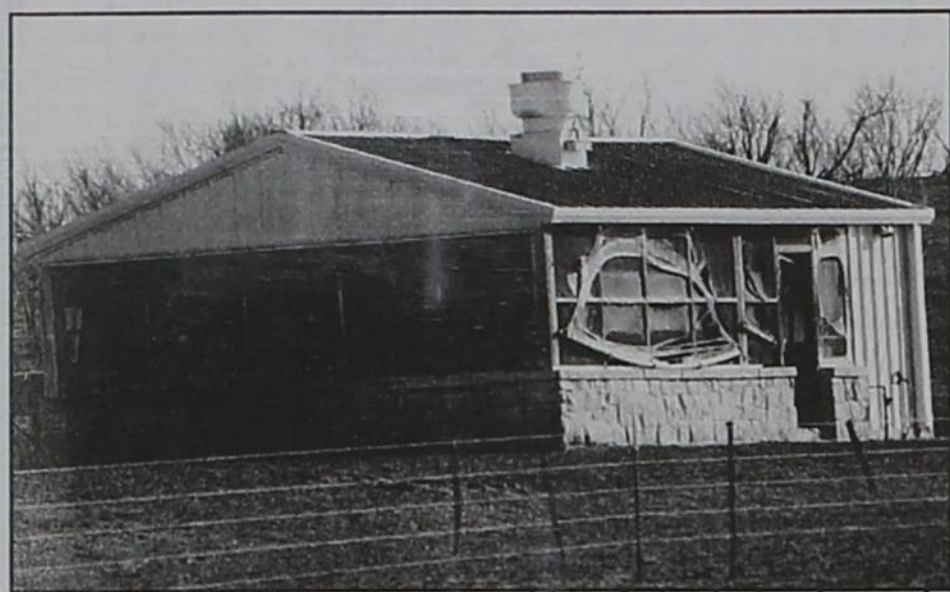
Tuesday Evening - 7:00 p.m. "Take Time to Be Holy"

Wednesday Evening - 7:00 p.m. "Spiritual Success"

A WARM WELCOME AWAITS YOU!

Wildfire of 2011

continued from page one



The firepit shack on the west side of the lodge burned, while a propane tank sitting dangerously close remained intact. (Photo by John Hamilton).



The fire advanced rapidly, and swept within inches of the historic Matador Ranch headquarters. The Matador's took a big hit, accounting for more than one-half (20,000 acres) of the scorched land in Motley County. (Aerial photo by Carolyn Wilson).



The fast-moving fire swept over the firepit shack and a propane tank at the Hunting Lodge and raced to the historic Matador Ranch headquarters. (Aerial Photo by Carolyn Wilson).

Back at the ranch

Meanwhile, back at the famed Matador Ranch, the fire was raging, narrowly missing the new El Matador Hunting Lodge, taking out the outdoor fire pit shack west of the lodge, then sweeping within inches of the historic ranch headquarters. The Matador's took a big hit, accounting for more than one-half of the scorched land in Motley County at about 20,000 acres, Ranch Manager Bob Kilmer said.

Looking for a hero? Bob and Wanda Kilmer have the answer: "The good Lord is the hero on this deal," he said. While "God wrapped His arms around Matador Ranch Headquarters," as Janie Campbell, Ranch Office Manager, so aptly stated, Bob was also quick to give credit to the ground crews that worked on fire guards to protect the property - TxDOT, the county employees, the emergency management people, private citizens and more. "We appreciate all our friends - everybody rose to the occasion," Bob said.

The Kilmers were returning home from Albuquerque just entering Muleshoe, Texas, when they got a call that a fire was on Matador Ranch. Roadblocks had already been set up, diverting traffic, but Bob found a way home via the Hole-in-the-Wall pasture, snaking his way through the back way to the headquarters. "God spared our house and the Lodge. We feel very blessed and thankful there was no loss of life," he said.

All three Line Camps were fine, Kilmer said, the closest fire stopping about a mile from Gilbert and Zacha Guerrero's home. "We lost the old Dutchman Camp, located about six miles south and west of headquarters, but that house was unoccupied, and in a bad state of disrepair," he said.

The 10 head of Akaushi cattle at the headquarters survived the fire, he said. But the big herd, northwest of the Dutchman, took a direct hit. The ranch is very proud of these first generation purebred Akaushi born on the ranch. The cattle breed is originally from Japan and produces high quality beef.

"I was very concerned about the Akaushi that were in the path of the fire. We got one bull burned pretty badly," Kilmer said, - singed pretty bad up over his back and side. What really worries me is burned feet. If the fire burns the coronary band right above the hoof, then it is very hard to heal. We have the bull up in a pen, and he is getting attention.

"We don't think we have a lot of damaged cattle," he said. We are short a few, because we downed gates and cut fences, but I'm sure they will show up.

"From a wildlife perspective, we fared well," Kilmer said. "Les Woolsey and J.D. Russell flew over the ranch on Wednesday - other than a few dead wild hogs, no deer had been killed. I also think the turkey, quail and deer got out of the way and moved out.

"Fire is actually good for the rangeland," Kilmer said. "Before the white man showed up, fire was a common event."

"We will have to delay some hunts at the lodge, but for the most part, we are also on track with our hunting program, he said.

When the going gets tough, the tough get going, they say. "Every ranch hand helped," Kilmer said. Luckily, "we had just bought some new "skid units." Skid units are water units that handily slide onto the bed of a pickup truck, he explained. These little units are "mop-up rigs," Kilmer said. We followed the fire guard and kept the perimeter wet.

"Life First, Think Way Ahead, and Stay Calm"

- Lee Jones, Fire Chief and Motley County Emergency Management Coordinator

Matador Ranch had an outpouring of offers for help. The Tongue River Ranch manager drove over to headquarters and offered to bring in a crew. Bob got calls from New Mexico, Panhandle, and even Dallas. "It was humbling and touching to have this outpouring of concern. I have been in some bad fires before," Kilmer said. "But this was the worst I have been in or ever hope to see again."

A perfect firestorm

"It kept bearing down on us," John Hamilton said. "We didn't have cell service so we couldn't call for help." Hamilton, his wife, Tamara, 10-year-old son Clark; and 12-year-old daughter Channing, along with his brother Brent and cousin, Cy Barton, took a courageous stand to save the homestead, 1/2-mile west of town.

"We had fire at the house and at the ranch," Hamilton said, so the Hamilton brothers split up and the eldest, Tom, his son Rob, and brothers Dick and Harry Hamilton were on the ranch fire, moving equipment and diesel tanks, while John stayed on the home front with his hands - his family. They armed themselves with shovels and hoses from the house and lined up to make a stand, making plans for a backfire if worse came to worse. And it got worse.

"The conditions were perfect for a perfect firestorm," John said. He credits his good luck in saving the home place to the quick action of Jeremy Jameson.

"Hours before the fire got to the house, Jeremy took his motor grader out and cut about a three quarter mile fire break south and east of the house. This initial fire break was the one that the Dickens Fire Department used to stop the fire from going north and getting the Hamilton house and the one that TxDOT used to stop the fire from going east and northeast to Ross Bearden's house, and up behind



The fire was burning a triangle that kept getting smaller and smaller; then suddenly, the colts bolted out of the area - followed close behind were several feral hogs. "Every single hog in the fire picture made it out," John Hamilton said. (Photo by John Hamilton).



"The conditions were perfect for a perfect firestorm," John Hamilton said. He credits his good luck in saving the Hamilton home place to the quick action of Jeremy Jameson. (Photo by John Hamilton).

Allsups and Billie Dean's Restaurant.

"To say that resources were scarce on Sunday is an understatement," John said. "Jeremy took a "shoot first" and "ask questions later" approach in regards to cutting these fire breaks earlier in the day and by him doing that, it gave the Dickens Fire Department and TxDOT just enough of a head start to put this thing out where and when they did," John said.

This family of Hamilton heroes proceeded to save horses and wildlife. "The Matador Ranch horses were right at our fence," John said. "We cut the fence and let the horses run through to our pasture that was still intact. As soon as we cut the fence about 15 horses ran past. We went back, and a couple of disoriented colts lost the herd and headed back into the fire. We tried to go after them, but there was nothing we could do. The fire was burning a triangle that kept getting smaller and smaller; then suddenly, the colts bolted out of the area - came right out," he said. Following close behind were several feral hogs. "Every single hog in the fire picture made it out," he said.

Fence-building camp

"I was talking to my kids earlier about summer camp," John Hamilton said. After the crisis, "I told them that they were going to the Tom, Dick and Harry Fence-building Camp this summer. We lost about 1,000 acres and about five miles of fence.

"On behalf of the Hamilton family I'd like to express our sincere gratitude to those that helped protect our family's property and all the volunteers that helped put this fire out," he said.

Historic home saved

Leo and Joy Archer's ranch, located west of Matador and south of US70, close to the top of the Caprock, lost all the grass



Dink Wilson and his wife, Carolyn, both pilots, took a photographic tour of Matador after the fires. This photo is a shot of the start of the fire, heading east toward Matador. The western fire raced toward Matador, but not before wiping out 3 1/2-sections of grassland on the Leo and Joy Archer Ranch. (Photo by Carolyn Wilson).



Heading west, two fires converge in open pasture, pushing livestock to the center before seeking more fuel for its foothills rampage.

on 3 1/2-sections of land. All that was left standing was their house and barn on two acres of land.

"The barn was saved and our house that is over 100 years old," Joy said. But she watched in horror as "it all burned down." I am 79 years old, and I've never seen anything like this, I watched the whole place burn down."

A caring neighbor called Joy and told her to "get out of the house" that fire was headed her way. "I couldn't find Leo and the cell phones quit working," Joy said. "I got the car started but I couldn't get the dogs in the car. The flames were moving fast toward the house. Leo showed up and said we couldn't get out, that the road was completely blocked with fire on both sides.

Earlier, Leo had called the fire department and they came out with two maintainers and cut a fire guard. The fire circled the two-acre island. "Thanks to the Matador Fire Department, we got a fire guard that saved our house and barn," she said. They watched the flames until 4:00 a.m. on Monday morning. "We have no fences left, no nothing," Joy said. "It all burned but the two acres we live on."

The cows and calves were saved, too, she reported. They cut the fences on four pastures and all the cows and calves went to Dutchman Creek. Interestingly, she said, when Guy Campbell and Craig Turner showed up with hay the next day, the cattle were all co-mingled in the creek bed. After they put out hay, the cattle "sorted themselves" into their previous pasture pecking order.

People helping people

Marisue Potts Powell, owner of the historic Mott Creek Ranch located directly north of the Archer Ranch lost corals at the shipping pens, three

miles of fencing, and 800 to 1000 acres of grassland. "We didn't take as big a hit as our neighbors south of US70," Marisue said. All structures, animals, and equipment were safe, she said, including a fuel tank. "The fire was traveling so fast it just whipped right by the fuel tank." Thanks to her son Jim Potts, a county maintainer on the fire line, and a good Samaritan that lives in Floyd county, all the fires on Mott Creek were contained.

Albert Thrasher of Thrasher Gravel Pit brought his family and four pieces of equipment to the rescue. "He just saw the fire and came," she said.

"Albert showed up and asked me, "What can I do? Do you need a dozer?" He graded about three miles of fire guard, working until about midnight Sunday night. By 1:00 a.m., the wind has changed direction. On Day 2, a second fire came from the east, Marisue said.

She is extremely grateful for her neighbors. "There was so much community cooperation," she said. "People fighting for your property assets - for land that they have no stake in - people helping people," she said.

Allsups donated food for the fire fighters, Chillerz offered free coffee and drinks; and Billie Dean's served free breakfast to the firefighters, she reported.

Marisue has been thinking a lot about a plan to protect the homestead. "Gillespie (James) has always said the best weapon we have in fighting fires is a blade. It proved correct again on the second day's fire when grass was burning back east from the Hamilton fire. A maintainer from Floyd County got in front of the fire in our Polecat Pasture; while Jim kept widening the road and fire guard."

Wildfire of 2011

continued from page 6



Looking east, this photo shows the beginning of the fire, located in a ditch close to Mott Creek Ranch, then leaping over US70 to the Campbell Ranch on the south.



On Tuesday, March 1, the winds changed to the north, and fires were still smoldering with new outbreaks in evidence. Matador Fire Department responded to this outbreak on Mott Creek Ranch.

Engulfing Flames

Bundy Hal Campbell Ranch is located about eight miles west of Matador on the north and south sides of US70. Bundy Hall headed to his northwest pasture when he heard about the fires. His son, Brent, was with him. "When we reached the cattle, they were standing next to a fence on Highway 70," he said, pushed as far as they could go by the fire. "We ran to cut the wires and let them out on the highway, but the fire engulfed us."

"It was unbelievable how fast it moved, all you could do was get out of the way. We never got the fence cut, we ran for our lives," Campbell said.

Bundy Hal lost about 2,100 acres of grassland, sustained damage to his corrals, and lost three trailers, 12 tires and a barn. "All my cows and calves went through the fire," he said.

According to the County Extension agent Ryan Martin, cattle escaping fire death may have secondary injuries. Bundy Hal's herd is experiencing some of these injuries. "The cow's udders were burned and they have kicked off the calves," he said. Damage to udders will prevent calves from nursing and they are at higher risk of becoming doggie calves. He moved most of his herd to Quitaque to his son's ranch and to other property on the Plains.

It burned everything in its path

"We lost about 2,000 acres, and had damage to a lot of fences," Kenny Barton said. The Barton land is located southeast of SH70, north and east of the David Keith ranch. His cattle were grazing wheat at a different location with a plan to move them to grass mid-March. Olivia and Kenny learned about the fire when she noticed an ambulance at the school and increased traffic in the neighborhood.

"A patrolman came by and suggested we evacuate," Olivia said. So, they did what most rugged individuals would do, they drove straight-away to their land to see if it was on fire. "We were also very worried about the Ken Marshall and Joel Spray homes, both in the direct path of the fire," Olivia said.

"The Forrest Service ran three caterpillars east and west on the south end of our place, three blades wide," Kenny said. Like

their other land neighbors, they praised the highway department, firemen, county employees, and volunteers that worked to keep the southwest part of town from burning down.

The Barton's stayed in their pickup truck watching the fire until 4:30 a.m. Monday morning. "It took two days to go completely out," Kenny said. "It burned everything in its path."

Flomot FD saves the day

The Tommye and David Keith Ranch, located about 2-1/2 miles south, and east of SH70, watched the fire come all the way up to the north side of the old Keith home, but a watchful and efficient fire department saved the day. "I have never seen a wildfire like this one, it moved very fast," Tommye said.

"Flomot Fire Department kept the fire off the house," she said. "We lost about 400-450 acres, but we kept most of the Southside grass. We had 21 cows, one bull and five calves on the land, but they are all okay."

Tommye is known for her keen sense of humor. "We had grubbed and piled mesquite last year, and now we got some good mesquite control."

Family first, then cattle

Guy and Di-Ann Campbell were on a Sunday outing in Plainview when they got a call that the Ranch was on fire. Before it was over, they had lost 3,000 acres of pasture, saved 5,000 acres on the Western front, close to the historic headquarters, and lost only one calf - thanks to the quick thinking of Blair Fowler, his ranch hand, Guy said.

Fowler had been instructed to call if any problems advanced that concerned the Campbell Ranch. While Blair may be a novice rancher, Guy said, he takes instruction very well, "and if you tell Blair once, that is all you need to do."

He had instructed his young protégé that in the case of fire: "family first, then the cattle - because that is our livelihood." Also, Blair has a lot of common sense, Guy added. He cut fence and honked the cattle into safe areas. By Monday morning most of the herd was well on their way to greener pastures.

The Family First motto brought the Campbell clan home to help. "All the kids showed up," Guy said. His son, Heath, has a ranch southwest

of McKinney, Texas. He brought in trailers and moved the herd to wheat fields in McKinney. They sent pictures back to Guy and Di-Ann showing the cattle happily grazing in "cow heaven," Di-Ann said. But not all the Campbell cattle fared that well.

Twenty-one cows, 19 calves, and one prize Limousin bull lived through the wildfire, located about five miles southwest of US70. "I don't know how they lived," Guy said. These prized cattle were trapped - no one was there to cut a fence or open a gate - his guys had their hands full on the headquarter's fire-line. So, he expected the worst when he checked his Limousin pasture - "but when those cattle saw me, they came running."

Now the work really begins - damaged udders of the cows and burned feet mean extra care - checking animals daily, applying emergency procedures to make sure the calves can nurse, and culling the ones whose health disorders are so severe they can't be salvaged. He is feeding cattle every other day. But this is a rancher's life, Guy said.

"We live in an area where hardship is a part of life," he said. Some problems won't show up right away, he said, so he will be monitoring the bull and other injured cows and calves for weeks to come," he said.

But there is always a happy baby calf story - the one that survived on that terrible night the prairie burned.

"We had penned 71 cows and calves in a lot with a barn at the headquarters," he said. The next morning, the gate was down and the cattle had scattered, and had to be rounded up again. "We were one cow short in our count. We counted again. I said the cow was either gone to have a calf, or was hunting a calf that had been left behind."

Later, Blair found the cow and a little calf some distance from headquarters. The calf was all curled up in a patch of grass that was completely surrounded by scorched earth - one tiny little island of grass, a small safe haven, and one small calf survived.

Guy fought fire all night Sunday night, getting a few hours of sleep in the early dawn, before fighting fire again. He stood on a hill and watched the Cottonwood trees on Dutchman Creek explode in fire, one at a time. This eerie scene caused some worry before he realized it was trees and not the Joy and Leo Archer home. The Archer's historic home survived on Dutchman Creek. He helped his neighbors feed their cattle the next day.

"I think the fire was strategically handled very well," Guy said. "We needed a dozer, and we called for one and it came. And every time I looked up, I saw Dougherty Fire Department," he said. "The Matador Fire Department saved the town, and they are to be commended," Guy said, adding, "I got so many calls from people that wanted to help, words cannot express how grateful we are for our neighbors and friends."

Disaster Relief

According to the FSA office, about 256 miles of fence was lost in the county. Amy Hackler, the Motley County Executive Director for the USDA Farm Service program has an important message for the reading public: "Producers affected by the fire need to come see me," she said.

Since last Tuesday, March 1, Hackler and her team have been gathering data on losses in the county in order to compile a report to the state office to request Emergency Conservation Program (ECP) monies. Even if you do not plan to use the cost-share program, you still need to come by the FSA office and report the losses on your property, she said. "I need to know what was

affected for good statistics which will help in asking for cost-share for your neighbors who do want to participate," she said.

"The program offers help in restoring fences - it is a cost-share program," she said. The money available will vary by producer, after a spot check is done to verify the age of the fence prior to destruction, she said.

"The ECP program requests are for boundary fences lost during the fire," she said. The cost-share may be 60 to 75 percent with the producer paying 25 to 40 percent of the costs depending on the age of the fence.

"There will be a short sign-up period, if approved. In the meantime, producers will have to patch and make-do," Hackler said.

There is also an Emergency Grazing program request made for grazing on the Crop Rotation Program (CRP) lands. If successful, then producers that have lost all their grazing can use the CRP land until their pasture recovers, she said.

She has identified about 15 producers outside of Matador Ranch, consisting of about 30 farms that may be eligible for these funds.

And on the bright side, Amy had a hopeful message: "The producers who lost their grass will reap the benefits after a good shower - even though at this time it seems devastating, it will get better," she said.

Finding a perspective

It's not easy finding a perspective when you have injured cattle, no fences, and no grassland, James Gillespie said. But in the big scheme of things, "there are 550,000 acres of rangeland in the county, and 34,295 acres burned," he said.

Gillespie wears many hats in the county, including an important role in fire fighting, but on his day job he serves as a conservationist for the USDA-Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS).

The NRCS is applying for funds through the Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) to help pay for cross-fencing on the 256 miles of fencing lost in the county.

"We can get money to pay for cross-fencing at a 90-percent rate," he said. "We may also qualify for deferment, so producers can keep their livestock off the land until the range can recover."

"If we can get boundary funding through the Emergency Conservation Program (ECP), then the interior funding for cross-fencing will come from the EQIP program, plus deferment," he said.

While the "Cavalry is on the way" with hardworking professionals trying to find emergency funding for the county, Gillespie had a few comments about the recent heroic efforts of the citizens of Matador and Motley County.

"Firefighters in Matador saved the houses off of Walton Road," he said. "We were dousing fire before the graders even made it to cut the fire guard," he said.

"Everyone that pitched in a hand was a hero."

Caring for livestock and donations

Ryan Martin, Motley County Extension Agent, said the biggest obstacle right now will be sick livestock. "The next few weeks will be critical," he said. "Animals will be suffering from smoke inhalation, traumatic stress disorders, respiratory problems, and other injuries," he said.

"We only lost about six head of cattle that I have heard of and 18 piglets," he said. But the real problem with animals now, he



Amy Hackler, the Motley County Executive Director for the USDA Farm Service program has an important message for the reading public: "Producers affected by the fire need to come see me." The FSA team stands in front of a map of the wildfire that ravaged Motley County. Pictured (L to R) are: Shonda Elliott, Sherry Seago, Amy Hackler, and James Gillespie.

said, is that "they will be disoriented, dazed, and confused." After all, "they were pushed out of their homes."

"It is very important that landowners go to the FSA offices and tell them about any losses you have had or damages for the purpose of applying for outside assistance," Martin said. Also, "we are setting up a staging area at Matador Motor and Implement to ask for donations for hay, feed, fencing, and supplies," he said.

With Sheriff Chris Spence as point person, on Saturday, March 5, four Good Samaritans showed up at Matador Motor and Implement with 34 round bales of hay to add to the eight bales already donated by Larry Ferguson, Floydada, Texas.

Ronnie Westberry's son watched the fire reports on television in his home in Springtown, a community close to Weatherford, Texas, and told his dad, "we need to help these people."

Ronnie, a retired firefighter, organized a crew consisting of Steven Ward, Roy Myrick, and Michael Cornelius, and they drove four hours straight

to deliver a donation of hay by John Maddux, Denison, Texas, and Ronny Howell and the Flying V Cattle Ranch, Springfield, Texas. Ronnie furnished all the fuel for the three large trucks.

Local volunteers Colton Russell and Devin Ballard unloaded the hay. Ranchers are encouraged to call Tim Ward or Ryan Martin on the donation pickup.

While it admittedly looks bleak right now, Martin added his own bit of wisdom to the situation: "Some people got free mesquite control," he said. "We need fire to revive the land." His friend, Craig Turner, added thoughtfully, "We are just one rain away from the Garden of Eden."

Martin also had advice about the wildlife in a fire disaster: Do not corner wild animals or try to rescue them; do not approach wild animals that have taken refuge in your barn; beware of an increased number of predators; and do not attempt to move a dead animal. "Be careful," Martin warned, "there will be more wildlife on the highways."

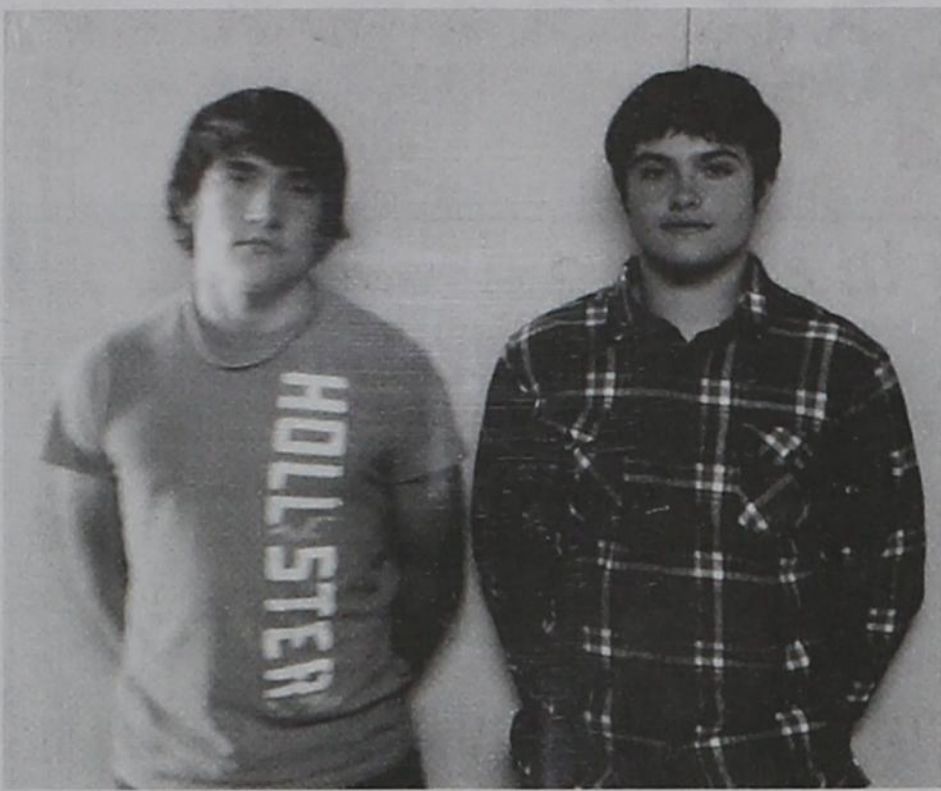


Gillespie wears many hats in the county, including an important role in fire fighting, but on his day-job he serves as a conservationist for the USDA-Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS). The NRCS is applying for funds through the Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) to help pay for cross-fencing on the 256 miles of fencing lost in the county. photo by Carol Campbell



Pictured (L to R) Ronnie Westberry, a retired firefighter, organized a crew consisting of Michael Cornelius, Roy Myrick, and Steven Ward and they drove four hours straight to deliver a donation of hay by John Maddux, Denison, Texas, and Ronny Howell and the Flying V Cattle Ranch, Springtown, Texas. Ronnie furnished all the fuel for the three large trucks. Local volunteers Colton Russell and Devin Ballard unloaded the hay. Ranchers are encouraged to call Tim Ward or Ryan Martin to pick up the donated hay.

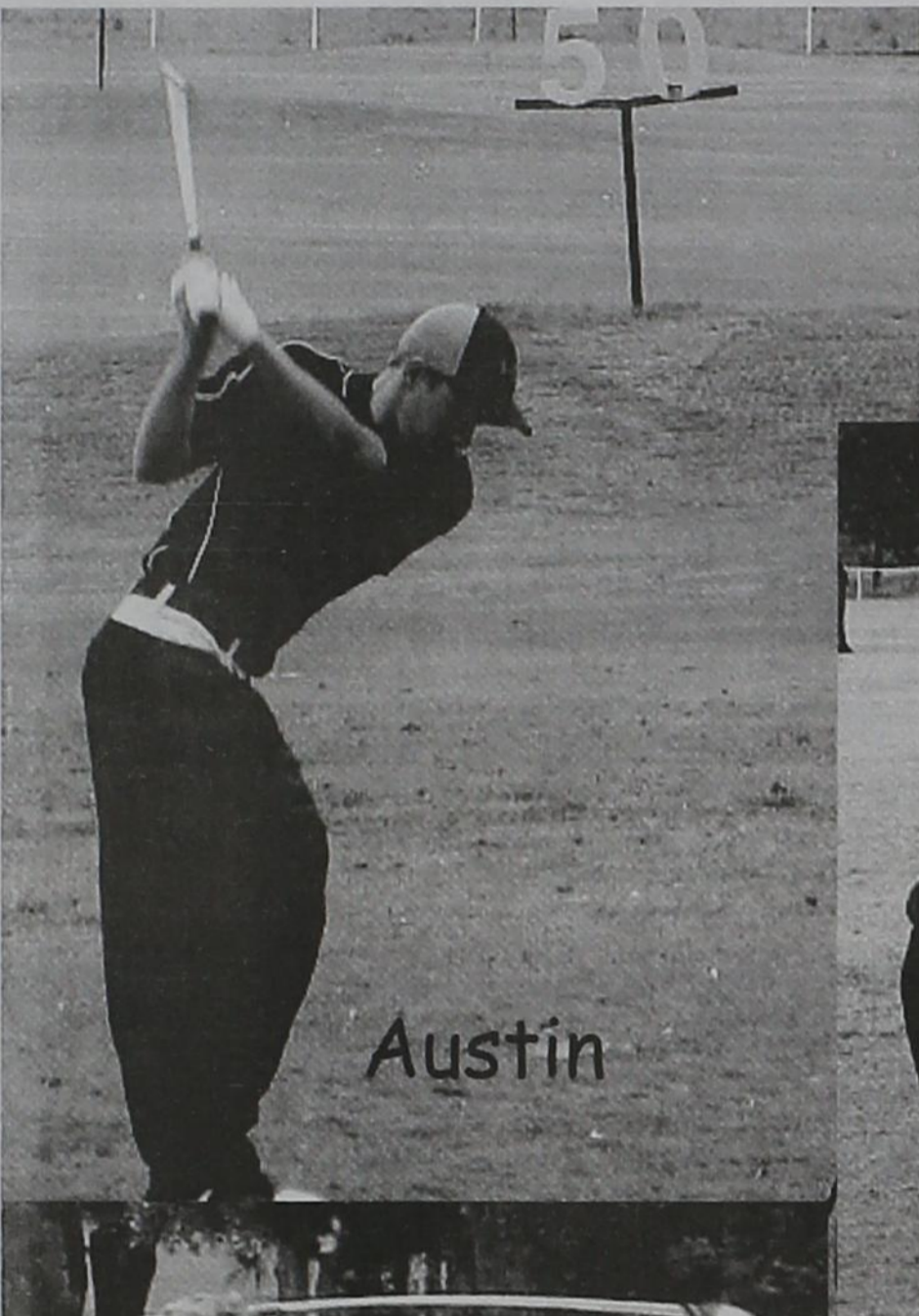
Tennis



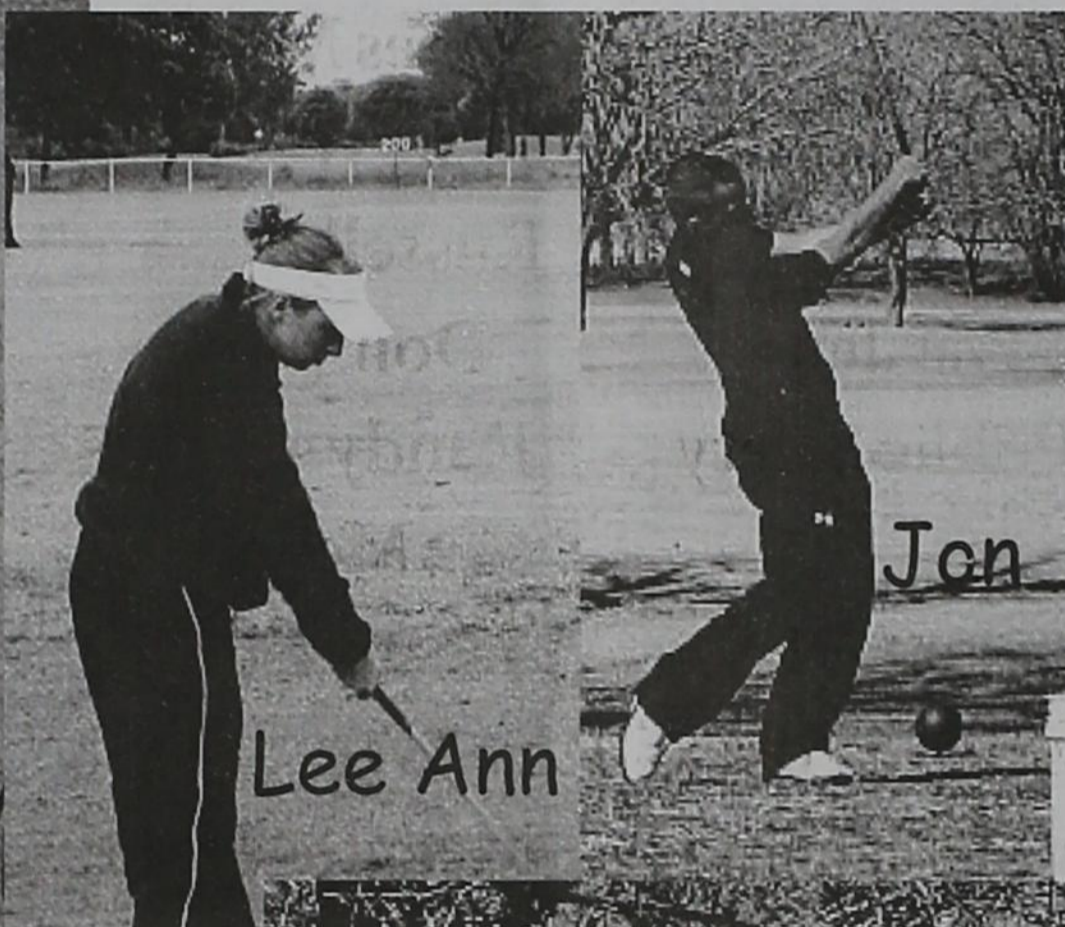
"Braden Manson and Coby Cochran received first place in tennis at Levelland. Braden is in the A division and Colby is in the B division."



Back Row: Coach Richards, Coach Cooper, Jacob Woolsey, Skyler Tomlinson, Christian Brooks, Cody Martin, Austin Taylor, Coby Cochran, Jon Osborn, Jeffery Reyes, Coach Bigham. 2nd Row: Reagan Elliott, Britt Simpson, Augy Chavez, Braden Mason, Juan Flores, Mark Quintero, Conner Mason. Front Row: Lexi Osborn, Sabra Pope, Virginia Gutierrez, Jaci Zingerman
photo by Walter Taylor



Austin



Lee Ann



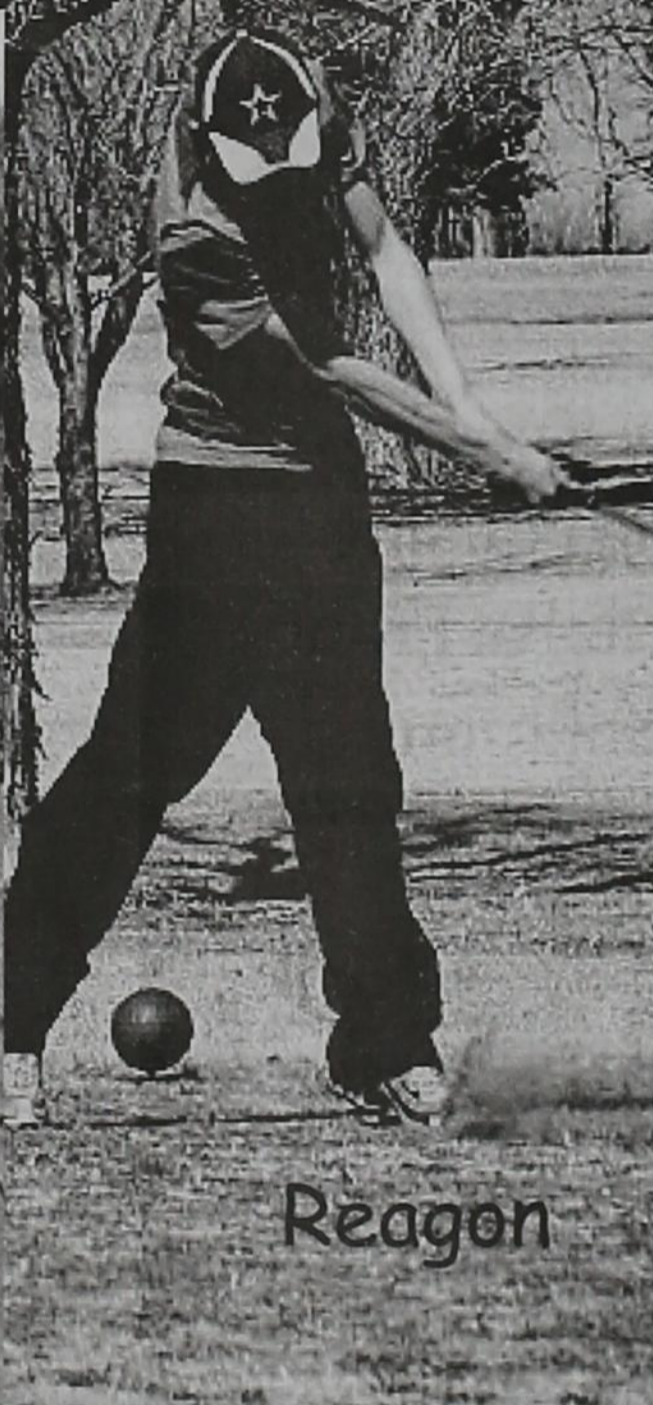
Jon



Lexi



Kayla



Reagon

Track

Golf

By Kay Bingham
Motley County Tribune

The Motley County boys and girls teams are off and running this season. They have played in tournaments in Memphis and Shamrock. At the Girls Tournament in Memphis on Feb. 22nd the girls team placed 3rd. Members of the girls team this year are: Kyla Simpson, Leanne Jameson, Lexi Osborn and Jaci Zingerman.

The boys played the following day on February 23 and placed 2nd. Members playing in that tournament were: Christian Brooks, Reagan Elliott, Jon Osborn, Britt Simpson and Austin Taylor, Jamie Jameson.

The following week the teams traveled to Shamrock with the Girls Team playing on March 2 and placing 3rd against some strong competition. The Boys Team played on March 3 and placed 2nd. Boys Teams members that participated in the Shamrock Tournament were: Christian Brooks, Austin Taylor, Reagan Elliott, Jon Osborn, Britt Simpson, Juan Flores, Jacob Woolsey, Jeffrey Reyes and Aaron Woodruff, Jamie Jameson.

This week the teams will be traveling to Paducah on Monday, March 7 with the Boys and Tuesday, March 8th with the Girls. The golf teams are coached by Coach Kay Bingham.



2011 Girls Golf Team: Jaci Zingerman, Leanne Jameson, Kyla Simpson, and Lexi Osborn

photo by Tammy Simpson

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City of Matador City of Roaring Springs County maintainer hands County Officials County Employees EMS Tx DOT Maintenance Crew from Matador, Ralls, Floydada, Plainview, Dickens, Crowell,	American Red Cross, Paducah Nursing Home, Global Front Line Solutions		

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EVENTS CALENDAR

- March**
- 9 Hospital Bd meets in EMS building, 7am
 - 10 Matador City Council
 - 10 Matador Chapter of the Eastern Star, Floydada, Meal at 6:30pm, meeting at 7:30 pm
 - 14 Commissioners' Court
 - 14 Roaring Springs City Council
 - 14 HCCC Board
 - 15 Matador Lions
 - 17 Matador Masonic Lodge, 6:30 pm
 - 19 Spaghetti Supper at the Senior Citizens. Sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce for the community and for guests that will be flooding in for the Boondocker's Race.
 - 19-20 West Texas Boondockers Motorcycle Races
 - 21 MCISD School Board, 7:30 pm
 - 21-23 Computer Class, Library, TBA
 - 28 American Legion Post 337

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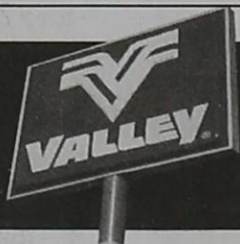
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