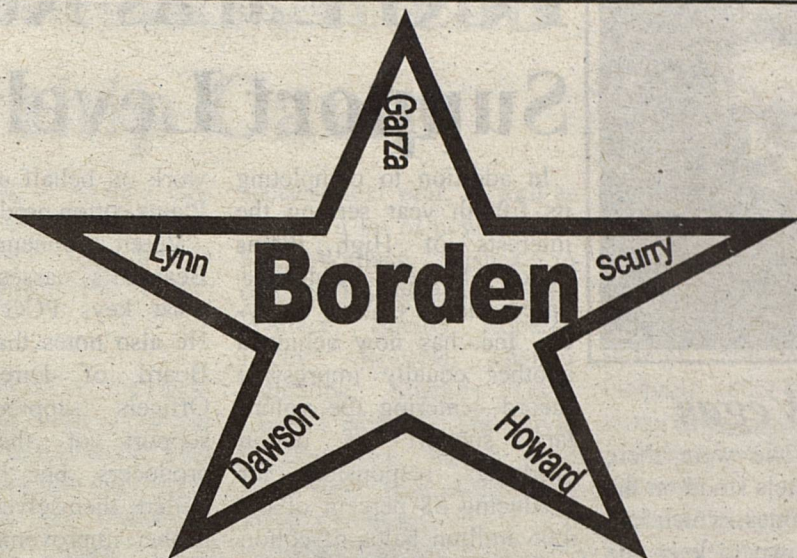


THE

Volume XXXV



STAR

July 4th, 2007

Serving the Counties of Borden, Dawson, Garza, Howard, Lynn & Scurry

Lions and Tigers and Bears, Oh My!!

After getting end of the year tests behind them, the kindergarten, first, and second grades were ready for a day of fun. On May 22nd they explored the Abilene Zoo.

The students enjoyed feeding the fish, giraffes, and birds and being licked by the giraffe's big black tongue.

The kids found a small rat snake in the gopher pen. After alerting a zoo keeper, they were allowed to pet the snake before it was released in a proper place.

These children met up the third, fourth and fifth grades who had been visiting Frontier Texas. They all had

lunch from the Dairy Queen at the zoo's playground area. After some exercise the students returned to Borden County just as the school day was ending.

The students had a great time and thank Mr. Thomas and Mr. McMeans for making their field trip possible.



Mrs. Miller's first grade class enjoys visiting the Abilene Zoo. Pictured are (top row L. to R.): Trace Richey, Nick Proulx, Brian Torres and (bottom row L. to R.) Morgan Wilson, Veronica Hernandez, and Thadd Basquez.

Local Ranch Receives State-Wide Honor

The Gray Ranch in Borden County, in family operation for over a century, was recently recognized by the Texas Department of Agriculture.

In ceremonies held June 8 in the Texas Senate Chamber, the Gray Family was honored among those who have kept their farms and ranches in continuous agricultural production for 100, 150, and 200 years.

"The farm and ranch owners we are honoring have an incredible

agricultural legacy to share, one that has spanned generations and seen dramatic changes over the last century," Agriculture Commissioner Todd Staples said. "These families have faced challenges head on and persevered to make Texas agriculture what it is today—an \$85 billion economic engine."

Isaac Gray, who served with General Robert E. Lee and was in Pickett's Charge at Gettysburg, moved his family to Borden County in

1904.

In 1906, he bought 3,491 acres from W. R. Harris and raised cotton, grain sorghum, and beef cattle.

Isaac and wife Maria had eight children—Newt, Thomas, J. Wiggins, Young C., Robert Lee, Eugene W., John and Ikie (Gray) Patteson.

Son Robert Lee "Bob" Gray acquired title to the land in 1916. During his ownership, he added 4,480 acres to the ranch.

Bob was an early breeder

of Hereford cattle, and some of his first customers were the Winston Brothers in Snyder and Walter Trammell in Sweetwater.

He was an expert horseman as well and sold horses to the U.S. Army. Bob also kept a herd of dun mares whose descendents are still on the ranch today.

Bob and wife Aubrey had five children—Borden, Murray F., Margaret (Gray) West, William G., and Robert E.

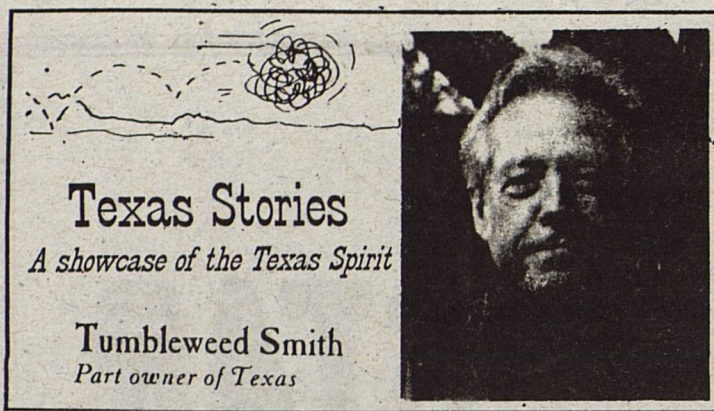
Borden acquired

ownership to parts of the ranch in 1949, 1951, and 1974. By sending cattle to a friend's ranch in South Dakota, he survived the 1950s drought.

Active in county affairs, Borden served as county commissioner from 1947-1964. It was during this time that the town of Gail and the Borden County School secured a permanent supply of water.

Borden and his wife

Cont. to pg. 4



Getting Around In Las Vegas

We hadn't been in Vegas for a couple of years. Earlier this month I mentioned we went there to see my college roommate make his debut at a comedy club. When we landed at the airport after a two-hour flight, we took a shuttle to our hotel. It cost 11 dollars for a couple, the same as cab fare.

The monorail is a good way to get around in the entertainment capital of the world. You can get two rides for 9 bucks. A slower, less glamorous way to go from one place to another is by double decker bus. It's also cheaper. For \$5 you can get an all day pass and ride as much as you want to. If you prefer, you can take a single ride for \$2. The bus goes from one end of Las Vegas Boulevard to the other, from the strip to downtown. The bus is fun. You see all types of people enjoying themselves. One bus driver we had was named Al. He sang and made jokes all the time we were on his bus, which he named Al's Double Decker With Cheese. When we passed the fancy water and dancing fountains at the Bellagio, Al announced they had changed the name to Al's catfish pond.

At night the bus is really fun if you ride on the top deck and get the front seat. It's like seeing the lights of Vegas from a picture window.

We could not believe all the changes that had been

made since we were there last. New hotels stood on the sites of old ones, which had been torn down to keep the glitter glowing. Las Vegas seems to get things done in a hurry. During sunset at the Wynn, while enjoying the lake and a drink, we watched workmen building a high rise a couple of blocks away. They worked all night. Even the workmen don't sleep in Vegas. No wonder they get a lot done in a short amount of time. Las Vegas has nearly 150,000 hotel rooms. The hotels are huge and guests usually have to stand in line to register.

We spent most of our time on the strip going to our favorite places (Paris, New York, Venetian, Wynn). We took a bus downtown and didn't spend a lot of time there. The first stop downtown a man was taking a leak on the sidewalk.

All of our trips to Vegas have been to see entertainers or shows. The night after we saw my college roommate we went to Spamalot, the Monty Python spoof of Camelot. I've never seen such elaborate scenery and scene changes. The digital world is alive and well in theater.

John O'Hurley (Seinfeld, Dancing with the Stars, Family Feud) played the part of King Arthur. Funny man. Like most entertainers, he has a solid background of accomplishment. He has starred on Broadway, written

PCG Earns Record Support Level in 2006

In addition to completing its fiftieth year serving the interests of High Plains cotton farmers, Lubbock-based Plains Cotton Growers, Inc. has now achieved another equally impressive record—entering the voluntary support of cotton producers responsible for producing 88 percent of the 4.05 million bales of cotton produced in the organization's 41-county service area in 2006.

PCG Executive Vice President Steve Verett notes that High Plains cotton producers and ginners continue to recognize the significant value they receive from supporting PCG.

"Achieving an 88 percent membership rate among the High Plains cotton producers that voluntarily support this organization is a milestone that every member of this organization who supports this organization through their local gin should be proud," says Verett.

PCG Chairman of the Board Richey Bearden of Plains, Texas attributes PCG's ability to earn the support of producers to three key elements: A Gin Based Leadership Structure; Being Proactive; and Communication. Bearden notes that each of the three components compliments the others and improves PCG's ability to

a best-selling book and composed a piano piece that reached the Billboard charts. After the performance, we had dinner at a restaurant across from the theater. John O'Hurley was there, dining with his family. When we told him we enjoyed the show, he said, "You were a wonderful audience."

work on behalf of the High Plains cotton producer.

Verett concurred with Bearden's assessment of what keys PCG's success. He also notes that the PCG Board of Directors and Officers appreciate the support of their fellow producers, but have committed themselves to even further improvements to fill in the few holes that currently exist. "Earning the respect and support of every High Plains cotton grower will always be PCG's ultimate goal," concludes Verett.

Long admired for successfully representing the interests of its producer membership, PCG is also known as one of the most effective regional cotton producer organizations ever formed.

Among the many issues PCG deals with on a daily basis, without a doubt the most high profile item on the list at the present time is reauthorization of U.S. farm policy and the ongoing process of developing what will eventually become the 2007 Farm Bill.

The PCG farm bill efforts are a sterling example of the organization's willingness to operate in a proactive fashion to shape the debate and achieve beneficial results for its producer membership.

In addition to working directly with members of Congress to advance issues important to the High Plains, PCG's efforts also include taking a leadership role in the development and support of the new Southwest council of Agribusiness, a broad coalition with more than 50 members organizations that include

commodity groups, financial institutions, and businesses with agricultural interests throughout the Southwest region.

Through the SWCA, PCG has built a close working relationship with former Chairmen of the House Agriculture Committee Congressman Larry Combest. Combest recently joined forces with former House Agriculture Committee staff member Tom Sell to form Combest Sell & Associates which has immediately become one of the most respected agriculture lobbying firms operating in Washington, DC.

Through Combest-Sell and the SWCA, the legislative priorities of the High Plains cotton industry are being communicated directly to the key Congressional leaders that are working to shape the 2007 Farm Bill.

Key areas of PCG activity include promoting the value and quality of High Plains cotton at home and abroad to textile mill buyers through support of Cotton Council International and Cotton Incorporated; development and promotion of sound risk management options for producers though the federal crop insurance program; and working closely with allied industry representatives to insure that every phase of the cotton production, processing, handling and merchandising chain have the best possible understanding of the impact each individual segment has on the others.

The best advice I was ever given was on my twenty-first birthday when my father said, "Son, here's a million dollars. Don't lose it."

—Larry Niven

Gail FFA Students Attend Area Leadership Camp

Seven members of the Gail FFA chapter have recently returned from an exciting trip to the Area II Leadership Camp. This event, which was sponsored by Howard College in Big Spring, hosted over 300 FFA members from 40 plus schools in Area II.

Students attending the camp received high energy Leadership training from a dynamic Area Officer team who were assisted by 3 State FFA Vice Presidents. The students attended several workshops but still had time for recreational competition and fun in the areas of volley ball, dodge ball, and Ag. Olympics. Team awards in these areas were presented during an official dress banquet that took place during the last evening of the camp. Social and devotional events were also held

each evening of the three day camp which allowed students to meet new friends and compare camp experiences.

The Gail FFA members came home with a strong foundation of training to help in propelling the Gail FFA Chapter in its leadership

success next year, as well as making a lot of new friends. Mr. Wallace wishes to express his thanks to Kate Wallace, Shelby Roberts, Lacey Roberts, Miller Valentine, Sharelle Gass, Chelsea Minnick, and Shylo Rinehart for taking time from their busy summer to attend the camp.



Those attending Area II Leadership Camp are Sharelle Gass, Shelby Roberts, Kate Wallace, Miller Valentine, Lacey Roberts, Shylo Rinehart and Chelsea Minnick.

Simplicity, clarity, singleness:
these are the attributes that give
our lives power and vividness
and joy.

—Richard Halloway

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Gail FFA Meat Sale Items Available

The Gail FFA Chapter still has several meat items left from their 2006 -2007 sale. Anyone interested in purchasing these items can contact Buddy Wallace (home) 806/756-4478 or (school) 806/756-4313 or email at bwallace@bcisd.net.

Items available are as follows:

Tailgate Party Pack- \$14.00
Smoked Sausage Kolaches- \$15.00
Peppered Bacon- \$14.00

Smoked Bacon- \$14.00
Sausage Patties- \$12.00
Smoked Turkey Breast- \$16.00
Golden Chicken Tenders- \$18.00
Pork Tamales- \$15.00
Chicken Fajita- \$13.00
Beef Fajita- \$13.00
Cajun Meat Pies- \$15.00
Smoked Turkey- \$20.00
Pit Ham- \$23.00

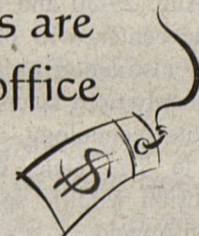
The Gail FFA Chapter wishes to thank everyone for their fund-raiser support.

ON SALE NOW!!!

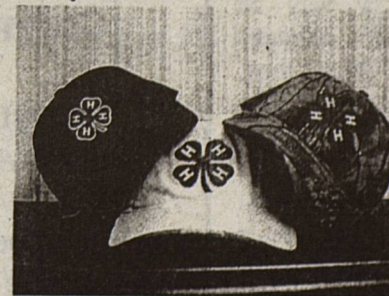
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Have a Safe and Happy 4th of July

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GIS to Help Ranchers Manage Natural Resources

By Cody Hill-Borden County Extension Agent

Texas Cooperative Extension will present an introductory Geographic Information System workshop at 8:30 a.m. July 12 at the Texas A&M University System Agricultural Research and Extension Center in San Angelo.

The workshop, titled "Geographic Information Systems for Natural Resource Managers in West Texas: Exploring the Possibilities," will introduce the technology to range managers.

Two later workshops, set for Aug. 29-30 and Sept. 19 at the center, will offer in-depth instruction on several commonly used facets of the satellite technology, according to Dr. Dale Rollins, Extension wildlife specialist at San Angelo.

"Back in 1997, we introduced the concept of selective brush control, what we now call 'Brush Sculpting,' as a way to enhance wildlife habitat," Rollins said. "Back then, Brush Sculpting meant lots of flagging tape to define the areas for brush removal. Today it means a global positioning unit and a computer on the bulldozer or on the spray plane doing the control work."

A global positioning system - commonly known as "GPS" - is usually a hand-held unit that uses satellite technology to pinpoint geographical positions, Rollins said. And a Geographic Information System incorporates GPS and other databases for "a communication support-type interface."

"Simply put: GPS is the 'bullet,' component of the system and GIS is the

'rifle,'" Rollins said.

Topics at the July 12 meeting will concentrate on how to develop and implement brush sculpting and range monitoring plans.

"We'll also discuss how GIS has opened new windows relative to counting wildlife and managing a quail-hunting operation," Rollins said. "They've even got a GPS unit for bird dogs that allows the hunter to keep up with the whereabouts of up to 15 dogs simultaneously."

Individual pre-registration, which includes lunch, is \$15 by July 10 and \$25 at the door.

The Aug. 29-30 workshop is an introduction to ARC/GIS software. Individual registration is

\$375. The training is an Environmental Systems Research Institute - certified training in ArcView 9.2. Environmental Systems Research Institute markets ArcView.

The Sept. 19 daylong "Geospatial Field Day" will feature hands-on training on various equipment used in the field. Individual registration which includes lunch, is \$25 in advance and \$35 at the door. Consult the TeamQuail Web site <http://teamquail.tamu.edu> to view the workshop's agenda.

For more information on any of the three workshops, call Rollins at 325-653-4576 or Steve Sturtz, Extension agent in Tom Green County at 325-659-6525.

Local Ranch Receives Honor

Cont. from pg. 1

Gussie Marie Collett had two children—Borden, Jr., and Dana Marie (Gray) Anderson.

Today, Borden Gray, Jr., and his wife Dorothy along with their son Glen and his wife Lisa own and operate the land.

Gray Ranch now totals 8,140 acres and includes 2,522 acres owned by the founder.

Borden and Dorothy's daughter Dana is also active in the operation of the ranch.

The family maintains membership in the Borden County Junior Livestock Association, Texas Cattle Feeders Association, and the Texas and Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association.

(Information provided by Borden Gray, Jr.—great-grandson of Isaac Gray).



Agriculture Commissioner Todd Staples recently recognized Borden Glen Gray and Dana Marie Gray of Gray Ranch at the Family Land Heritage ceremony in Austin at the Capitol. Gray Ranch in Borden County was honored for their acceptance into the Family Land Heritage Program for 100 years of agricultural operation. Gray Ranch has been in continuous agricultural production since 1906 by the same family.

FSA County Committee Elections

August 1 is the deadline to get your name on the FSA County Committee election ballot. Visit your local FSA office or USDA Service Center to learn how you can have a voice and take a seat on your area Farm Service Agency County Committee.

Visit us online: www.fsa.usda.gov for nomination forms and more information.



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4-H News

District 2 Trap and Skeet Shoot

Raylea Underwood and Matthew Roberson traveled to Lubbock this past weekend to compete in the District 2 Trap and Skeet Shoot.

Friday's competition saw windy conditions, but that didn't seem to effect Borden Counties performance. Raylea, who competes in the Sr 1 Division, placed second with a score of 97 targets out of a possible 100 and received a monogrammed shooting bag. Matthew, who competes in the Intermediate Division, placed 4th with a score of 69 targets out of a possible 75 and he also received a monogrammed shooting bag. There were 41 Sr 1's and 60 Intermediates competing on Friday.

Saturday's weather conditions were calmer for shooting skeet. Raylea shot a 49 out of a possible 50 and won 1st place. She received a belt buckle. Matthew shot 29 out of 50 and placed 2nd in Class B of the Intermediate Division. There were 25 Sr 1's and 39 Intermediates.

Raylea won High Overall with a total score of 146 out of 150 targets. She received another belt buckle for being High Overall in the Sr 1 Division.

District 2 awards a traveling trophy to the county that scores the most points. Points are calculated by the placings that each 4-H shooter receives. Matthew and Raylea reclaimed the traveling trophy for Borden County. The last time that Borden County received the traveling trophy was in 1997. Congratulations on this accomplishment!

Dean & Tracy Roberson and Ray Don & Jana Underwood also attended this event.



At Home At Last! Pictured with the Traveling Trophy are (left) Raylea Underwood and Matthew Roberson.

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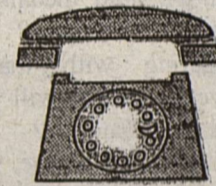
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Old Annuals

If you attended Borden School in any one of these years: 59, 60, 65, 79, 82, 87, or 97 and have your picture in the annual and did not get one and will call 806/698-1171, we will arrange for you to have one if you are the first to call. There will be no charge for the annual.

*Living
Well*

Summer Educational Programs

Join us for educational programming that will help improve your lifestyle and overall well-being to begin "Living Well in 2007."

Home Water Conservation

Our most precious resource is something we cannot imagine living without. However, we must conserve today in order to have a water source for tomorrow. Join us as we learn about basic practices that you can easily implement in your home to conserve water today.

Monday, July 16th @ 6:00 p.m. in the Community Room

Saving the Fruits of Summer

Have you always wanted to "put up" a few vegetables from your garden or the farmer's market? Now is the perfect opportunity to learn about up-to-date canning, freezing and drying techniques through this hands-on opportunity. Join us as we preserve some of the fruits of the summer garden. There will be a cost of \$10 per person to cover supplies (participants will get to take home the items that they preserve). The favor of a reply is requested to help plan for materials and supplies.

Monday, August 13th @ 6:00 p.m. in the Community Room



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Once upon a time, you had to do something pretty remarkable—and be dead for at least 10 years!—just to be considered for U.S. postage. Now you can join George Washington and Ben Franklin and other American heroes on the front of your next envelope!

Customized Postage is a creative new way to give your email a personal touch. Simply log on to one of three authorized websites—photo.stamps.com, pictureitpostage.com or zazzle.com. Have a digital file of the image you want to use ready, and don't worry—they accept all of the common image formats. You can crop, enlarge, rotate—tinker with the image until you get it just the way you want it, and then pick a border color. Decide how many you want to buy, and pay up. Your new "George Washington ain't the only hero 'round here!" sheets of postage will be printed and sent to you through the mail.

During a market test that runs through July 16, 2007, businesses can even create their own postage featuring company logos, products or slogans. Business owners, here's a great new way to jazz up your envelopes and enhance your customer

message. And don't worry—regardless of what happens after the market test, Customized Postage will always be worth its face value for use on your mail.

Customized Postage can be printed in a variety of denominations, so you can use it on postcards, First-Class Mail envelopes, direct mail, packages, and more. All of the companies offer sheets of 20 stickers; Stamps.com also makes them in rolls to fit on your business' mailing equipment.

Of course, you can't use just any photo. The images must be created by you,

belong to you or your business, or not violate copyright laws in any other way. They also must not be inappropriate or offensive. See the company web sites for more information.

What are you waiting for? The folks in Stockholm to send you the long-deserved Nobel Prize in Physics? Forget about it! You no longer have to be a rocket scientist to get your own postage!

DRIVE SAFELY

Watch-out for Our Children Playing!

Mandatory Public Notification Language Notice of Drinking Water FLUORIDE Violation

August 2006

The Texas Commission On Environmental Quality (TCEQ) has notified the Borden County Water System that the drinking water being supplied to customers had exceeded the Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) for FLUORIDE. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) has established the MCL FLUORIDE at 4mg/L, and has determined that it is a health concern at levels above the MCL. Analysis of drinking water in your community for FLUORIDE indicates a level of 5.3 mg/L in 2005 and 5.5 in the 1st quarter of 2006 and 5.6 mg/L in the 2nd quarter of 2006.

This is not an emergency. However, some people who drink water containing FLOURIDE in excess of the MCL over many years could get bone disease, including pain and tenderness of the bones. Fluoride in drinking water at half the MCL or more may cause mottling of children's teeth, usually in children less than nine years old. Mottling, also known as dental fluorosis, may include brown staining and/or pitting of the teeth, and occurs only in developing teeth before they erupt from the gums.

You do not need to use an alternative water supply. However, if you have health concerns, you may want to talk to your doctor to get more information about how this may affect you.

We are working to correct the problem by investigating the possibility of connecting to another system.

Please share this information with all the other people who drink this water, especially those who may not have received this notice directly (for example, people in apartments, nursing homes, schools, and businesses). You can do this by posting this notice in a public place or distributing copies by hand or mail.

For further information contact the County Judge's Office, Borden County Courthouse, 117 E. Wasson, Gail, Texas 79738, phone 806/756-4391.

Van L. York, County Judge
Public Water System ID#0170010
P.O. Box 156
Gail, Texas 79738

Notice of Impoundment of Estray

On the 22nd day of June, 2007, I impounded the following estray:

Kind of animal: Cattle

Number of head: 1

Breed: Angus

Color: Black

Sex: Female

Age: 2 years old

Brands, ear marks: -R on left hip, cropped left ear

And, on the 22nd day of June, 2007, I filed a Notice of Estray in the Estray Book of Borden County, Texas.

I have made a diligent search of the register of the recorded brands in Borden County, Texas, for the owner of said estray but the search did not reveal the owner.

Notice is hereby given that, if the ownership of said estray is not determined by the 6th day of July, 2007, said estray will be sold at public auction at Big Spring, Texas.

Witness my hand this 22nd day of June, 2007

Billy J. Gannaway

Sheriff of Borden County, Texas

Mandatory Public Notification Language Notice of Drinking Water ARSENIC Violation

August 2006

The Texas Commission On Environmental Quality (TCEQ) has notified the Borden County Water System that the drinking water being supplied to customers had exceeded the Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) for ARSENIC. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) has established the MCL ARSENIC at .01 mg/L, and has determined that it is a health concern at levels above the MCL. Analysis of drinking water in your community for ARSENIC indicates a level of .026 mg/L in 2006.

This is not an emergency. However, some people who drink water containing ARSENIC in excess of the MCL over many years could experience skin damage or problems with their circulatory system and may have increased risk of getting cancer.

You do not need to use an alternative water supply. However, if you have health concerns, you may want to talk to your doctor to get more information about how this may affect you.

Borden County Water System is installing equipment to lower the level of ARSENIC to below the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) standards.

Please share this information with all the other people who drink this water, especially those who may not have received this notice directly (for example, people in apartments, nursing homes, schools, and businesses). You can do this by posting this notice in a public place or distributing copies by hand or mail.

For further information contact the County Judge's Office, Borden County Courthouse, 117 E. Wasson, Gail, Texas 79738, phone 806/756-4391.

Van L. York, County Judge
Public Water System ID#0170010
P.O. Box 156
Gail, Texas 79738

Borden County Students Enjoy Day at Zoo



Enjoying a day at the zoo. Mrs. Gray's kindergarten class are pictured (top row L. to R.) Katie Gray, Kenley Dean, Russell Wilks and (bottom row L. to R.) Brooke Swaffer, Emma Key, and Macie Turner.



Taking it all in: Mrs. Spencer's 2nd grade class stops for a rest while touring the Abilene Zoo. Pictured are (top row L. to R.) Tanner Freeman, Brice Turner, Mattie Benavidez, Hayley Gray, (bottom row L. to R.) Quinton Kimmel, Avery Price, and Dylan Murphy.



We're Cleaning House

The Borden Star has lot's of old pictures that have been published in past issues. If you would like to come & go through these call Kerri Dean at 756-4313 ext. 275. Mondays and Tuesdays only

The Greenhouse Renovations Add Space & Items to Inventory

By Regina Crutcher
Lamesa Press-Reporter

In 2001 when Gerry Brown decided to sell his Greenhouse, located at 905 North Lynn Avenue in Lamesa, he thought he had it sold soon after the word spread.

Randy and Verna Adcock were going home to Borden County from Lubbock when Verna mentioned to Randy that Gerry's Greenhouse was for sale.

"Randy just darted into the parking lot," she remembered. "But Gerry said he'd already sold it. Randy told Gerry that if that deal fell through to give us a call. But Gerry was pretty sure he had sold The Greenhouse."

Adcock had retired as a mechanical foreman from Texaco after working there 20 years. He then worked for W.T. Gas in the oilfield, but he was looking for something different.

"I told God that if he wanted us to have it (The Greenhouse), then I'd leave it up to Him. Three days later, Gerry called and said the first deal had fallen through," Adcock said, "It was a God-send thing."

The Adcocks had always enjoyed working in their yard and garden every year, but they still had a lot to learn.

The Greenhouse covers 2,800 square feet. And, before the Adcock's started renovating The Greenhouse, it consisted of four greenhouses and a little awning area for conducting business.

The Adcocks converted one greenhouse and the



GREENHOUSE OWNERS

Verna and Randy Adcock made some changes at The Greenhouse Nursery and Landscaping, located at 905 North Lynn Avenue, in Lamesa. A remodeled greenhouse now features gift ideas, waterfalls, and plants suitable for homes, hospital patients or funerals.

LPR photo

covered awning into a store where the couple has expanded the business items. Many of the items are Texas-based.

"We have lots of new fountains, benches, bird-houses, and green plants for

funerals, gifts, or hospital patients," said Verna.

She hopes to expand the sale and decoration items for the Christmas holiday season.

Adcock feels very

Cont. to pg. 8

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Preparing for What Nature Throws Our Way

By U.S. Sen. John Cornyn

Throughout our state's history, the extremes of our weather have been a preoccupation of Texas everywhere. If friends are talking about the wicked slap of an Arctic front—a fast-moving “norther”—they soon agree that any bitter cold is vastly superior to the Texas heat in August.

Texans have always been optimistic, even about events that threaten agriculture, the indispensable industry that carried Texas into modern times. Some early Texans even found an upside to periodic drought conditions.

O.M. Addison wrote his brother from Fort Bend County in 1848 that a “great benefit of the drought is dry roads; this is more favorable on me than the farmers.

“You have no idea of the state of the roads in wet weather; and if you remain in ignorance on this point, you will lose nothing.”

Agriculture remains a vital part of the Texas economy today. So rain is always a welcome blessing here. But in the vastness of our state, excess precipitation is also a danger.

This spring, 10 people were killed in a storm that hit Eagle Pass. In late March, the biggest tornado outbreak in nearly 60 years walloped the Panhandle, particularly Donley, Gray, Hemphill and Lipscomb counties.

Now the focus is shifting to the Gulf Coast. The official 2007 hurricane season began this month, with scientists from the

National Weather Service again predicting a potentially active year.

Of course, the same experts made similar predictions for last summer that proved to be...overblown. An El Nino wind pattern suppressed hurricane formations in the Atlantic late in the season.

But we all learned a lesson in 2005. Coastal residents in Gulf Coast states suffered through Katrina, Rita and Wilma, with significant human costs and loss of lives, and billions in damages.

Texans respect the power of nature. We are confident we can handle whatever is thrown at us, and we usually do. But as our state grows and develops, we've learned there is no substitute for planning, both by government and by individuals.

There are some events that we'll never be completely ready for. One of the worst natural disasters in American history occurred on Sept. 8, 1900 when a hurricane hit Galveston. As many as 8,000 Texans perished, many trapped by severe flooding.

Hurricane dangers aren't limited to the coast. In 1979, Tropical Storm Claudette dumped 45 inches of rain near Alvin, Texas. Twenty-two years later, 36 inches of rain fell in Harris County in the wake of Tropical Storm Allison.

Texas now benefits from committed emergency management staff at the local and state levels. With their

federal counterparts, they learned from the 2005 hurricanes. Future storms will pose new challenges, but recent lessons will be applied in the years to come.

Part of their official job is making certain we are all prepared individually for natural disasters. The government is playing an increasing role in emergency management, but there is no substitute for individual preparation.

Actions can be as simple as stocking as “emergency kit” in your car. Consider including everything from vital prescription medicines, important documents you would need if displaced (such as copies of insurance policies, proof of residency, maps and ID cards), cash, special supplies for babies, seniors and pets, personal products and non-perishable food, water and blankets. If appropriate, look into purchasing flood insurance.

The federal government spent more than \$200 billion recovering from the 2005 hurricanes. Every year, the government spends millions more in Texas on flood control, emergency responder preparedness and training, storm tracking, rebuilding coastlines and other assistance.

But, as Texans have always known, there is no substitute for our own careful, sound preparation and planning. Government effort is important. But personal responsibility will always be part of our Texas heritage.

The Greenhouse

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fortunate when it comes to his employees.

“One of the stipulations to the deal (with Brown) is that I kept Bill and Janie Flores. And I'm glad I did,” said Adcock.

Mrs. Flores is a talented florist and re-potter.

“I've got salesmen from Dallas and El Paso who tell me that Janie's pots (potted plants) are the best of any of their other nursery customers,” said Adcock.

Customers often bring their small, medium, or large pots for Mrs. Flores to re-plant and repot for the seasons.

When Adcock expanded the sprinkler systems and landscaping to the business, he hired Ben Sanchez and David Hilburn.

“We travel all over for that part of the business — Seagraves, Seminole, lots in O'Donnell, Ackerly — and

those guys work hard,” said Adcock.

The Adcocks believe that having a business in a town with a large market in the surrounding smaller towns is also a service.

The Greenhouse has helped sponsor different school and community projects with gift certificates.

“We want to keep doing the little things,” said Adcock. “It's important to us. We want to work with the community.”

The Adcocks, their employees, and their daughters pitch in to help make the business a success.

“We started in busy time of the year and it hasn't let up yet,” said Adcock.

The Greenhouse is open six days a week, Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Saturday, 9 a.m. to 12 noon.

Summer Fun Recipe

Ice Cream in a Baggie

- ½ c. milk
- ¼ c. half and half
- 1 Tbsp. sugar
- ¼ Tsp. vanilla extract
- 2 sandwich size Ziploc bags
- 1 one gallon size Ziploc bag
- 2 cups ice
- 1 Tbsp. coarse salt

Put one small Ziploc bag inside the other and add the milk, half and half, sugar, and vanilla extract

to the inside bag. Seal both bags securely, removing excess air. Add ice and salt to larger bag and place smaller bag inside. Seal firmly. Let the kids shake themselves silly—shaking, tossing, and turning the bag. Ice cream will be soft and ready to eat in 5 to 10 minutes.

Source: ParentingHumor.com

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.

—Margaret Mead
