## The Merkel Mail

10,000 bales already ginned this season, harvest continues


Too many weekends ... more

Ten thousand plus bales have We have been working around the looks teriffic. She said cotton already been ginned at the clock for more than two weeks grades there were improving and
Farmers Co-Op Gin here and and the quality of the cotton is said some had been graded Trent Gin as the cotton harvest staying its middlin light spot and strict white. continues. quality cotton and we are getting Both local gins were working less and less bark." around the clock to get the cotton At TRent Gin 5,300 bales have
processed last week. processed last week. starying steady and said most of At the Farmers Co-Op Gin here, told The Mail "We have at least stamford Bennett Massey told The Mail 300 to 400 modules waiting and The cotton ginning activity will Monday We have ginned about there are trailers everywhere, it
5,500 bales so far and there is probably 1,500 bales on the yard.
President, principal, pupil explain goals of Academic Boosters

| A Citizen: <br> As a citizen of this community with three young people in our public schools, it is gratifying to know of the emphasis placed upon academic excellence by our school board, administor, principals and many fine teachers. <br> Last year the very first Academic Banquet was held in our community, honoring those students who had excelled in academic excellence. At that time, 37 special academic jackets were awarded and 87 young people received academic medallions. This even was a real tribute to our great young people, their parents and the Merkel school system. <br> Following last year's banquet, an "Academic Booster Club" ed citizens, was formed to help in a continuing effort to promote academic excellence at Merkel High School. Many parents and citizens signed up that very evening before leaving the banquet, to be "Academic Boosters". would like to encourage you as a citizen of the community and as parents of students in Merkel High School to become an academic booster today. You may do this by submitting a ten dollar check to "Merkel Academic Boosters" and drop it off at the high school office or malling it addressed to the high chool office. <br> Friends, being a Merkel Academic Booster simply states to | our young people "we believe in you, and we support you in your continuing strive for achievement." <br> Please join the Academic Booster Club today, an investment in a young person's education always pays great dividends. <br> Bob J. Brandon President <br> Merkel Academic Booster Club <br> A Principal <br> When students come to school with an attitude of trying and when there is support and encouragement from home and school to make the most of what the sctiool has to offer, students have the best chance of finding school worthwhile and meaningful. Thus, if students, parents and teachers all have high expectations for success, then success is best assured. <br> Merkel High School seeks to reward successful academic students. An academic recognition program is the cornerstone to rewarding these students. An honor roll certificate is issued each six weeks for those students who demonstrate success in studies. <br> On February 22, 1986, an Academic Honor Banquet will be held. Those students who have maintained a cummulative average of 93 points or above shall be honored with a "letter jacket" Those students with a cummulative average of 85 points or above will be honored with a medallion. | The more we all expect and give, the greater will be the success of our students. <br> Larry Curry <br> Principal <br> Merkel High School <br> A student: <br> Academics are very important In twenty years, few people will remember what kind of grades their classmates had. However, a strong academic background is the key to a successful future. An academically sound student more likely to be the business leader of tomorrow. Academics are the cornerstone of the Ameri can dream. With some motivation and hard work, everyone can have a solid head start. in the work force. <br> The motivation factor comes from educators who take the time to work with students. They are not just information banks to make withdrawals from, they are friends. The teachers who make learning easier are those who listen to suggestions and listen to problems. By stressing the importance of schoolwork, they make a potentially unfavorable situation seem like an experience to be remembered. |
| :---: | :---: | :---: |

Lost ring, memorable day, gins busy ... more


The Scientists Tell Me
What's Happening to Farmland With Agriculture in Turmoil

By Robert L. Haney
TAES science Writer

Conversion of farmland to urban uses in the United States has become a some is the adequacy of food and fiber production in the not-so-distant furure Many people, aware of the steady decline of farm nurt bers over the pas three decades and the current economic turmoil in agriculture, are con-
cemed with what's happening to the cerned with what's happening to the State and Nation's land supply, ac
cording to agricultural economist with the Texas Agricultural Experi ment Station.
In Texas, during the 1970's, population and employment grew at more
than twice the rate of the U.S. The than twice the rate of the U.S. The
State added over three million peopl in the 1970's.
This rapid increase in population politan areas of Dallas-Fort Worth Houston, Austin, San Antonio, E
Paso, and the Lower Rio Grande Val Paso, and the Lower Rio Grande Val
ley. Sixty-eight percent of this popul ley. Sixty-eight percent of this populaState's 254 counties.
As mefropolitan areas expand in
population and econ agricultural land is converted to nonagricultural uses. Most future expan sion of the highway system, airports,
industrial expansion, housing conindustrial expansion, housing con-
struction, parks and recreational de velopment will be in these metropolitan areas.
The loss of prime farmland in these areas will depend on the intensity an proximity of this growth to farmlands
especially cropland. And, as one econ especially cropland. And, as one econ-
omist observed, once converted to nonagriculural use, an acre seldom rever to food and fiber production Agricultural land-use policy ontroversial issue. Debate over land conomic and environmen social are pursued, each in competition with each other, observes Dr. Lonnie
Jones, an agricultural economist for the Texas Agricultural Experimen Station.
Some of Jones' research has been used for decision making by both legislature and various governors.
To discourage the conversion agricultural lands to non-agricultura uses, governments at all levels hav enacted a variety of programs For example, differential assess ment programs, which provide tax used to protect agricultural land Another Station economist, Dr. John Stoll, who made a study of the effect of such devices concluded that they might delay conversion but that they didn't prevent it.
In 1966, Texas approved a constitu special assessment of agricultura land for property tax purposes. Only agricultural land was eligible for the program and the basis for assessing farmland was its "agricultural use value. This legisiation wastended to forest and open space. It also liberalized the requirements for coverage and allowed more landowners to qualify. What impact have these deferred taxation laws had on agricultural land use in Texas? The study by Sto implies
impact
impact. The year-to-year changes in total agricultural land use remained about the same. The deferred taxation laws have not produced an increase of the agricultural lan u a petterns.
affected land use
In assessing trends in Texas farm land by type, agnicultural economists
use data taken from the U.S. Census use data taken from the U.S. Censing
of Arriculture. the Crop Reporting

Board and the Conservation Needs million acres, whereas cropia
tuated between 36.4 and 39.4 millio
The analysis of data, for each ce sus year from 1959 through 1982 , shows that during this period, total says. Pastureland acreage fluctuated

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## How to find THE COMET explained

 the horizon. Be sure to start from the "true horizon," or eye level. This means sighting horizontally and counting up from there, regardless of buildings, trees, or other objects in the way.
Look at the example above. Here the comet is shown for D cember 23rd. As 1 am
demonstrating, it is 4 Finding hands to the right of south and 6
the horizo
4. Now find this spot in the sky. The comet will be there. If it's not
visible right away, scan the general area carefully with binoculars

The Big Dipper and the th Star (as seen from
the northern U. S.I.


> The handiest optical aid for looking at the sky is a pair of bin oculars. They're a lot easier to use than a telescope and show you a larger part of the sky at once. This is a big advantage for finding Halley's Comet. Any binocular will give a better view of the comet than the naked eye. Use whatever pair you may have around the house. If you decide to buy binoculars to view Halley, be sure to get a reputable brand; this is your best assurance of quality. For best performance on the comet - and for sky-watching in general - the front lenses should be as large as possible. Magnifi-

Starr says thanks for Christmas party help

[^0]to gratefully acknowiedge our dend to everyone that helped Santa.
Tiends that 50 lovingly tok to contribute to the success of the and serve all our friends, your prosperous New Year ever residents' Christmas Party.

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[^0]:    to gratefully acknowledge our delicious goodies, we thank you,

