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# THE KNOX COUNTY News-Courier

THURSDAY, MAY 16, 2013

KCNEWSCOURIER.COM

75 CENTS

## Teacher DeVille elected KC mayor

By Hanaba Munn Welch  
The Knox County News-Courier

In Goree and Knox City, the only places with contested races for municipal offices in Saturday's municipal elections, voters chose to put new people in office.

In his first official go at politics, Knox City school teacher Kent DeVille garnered enough votes in the mayoral race to win by a comfortable 74-45 margin over Steve Pepper.

Pepper, a City Council member whose term was expiring, and newcomer DeVille cast their hats in the ring after incumbent Jeff Stanfield chose not to run for another term.

"I'm excited and privileged to have

the opportunity to work for the people of Knox City," DeVille said Monday. "I've been down at City Hall going through the issues. Looks like there are some issues coming up where we're going to have to make some hard decisions."

DeVille acknowledged that water is a primary issue.

"Ask the people to pray for rain," he said.

In a three-way race for two at-large places on the Knox City council, incumbent Dr. Ezekiel "Zeke" Duke fared best with 106 votes. Greg Oliver won the other place with 69 votes, followed by Danny Lewis with 53.

Goree voters chose Brenda Burns and Caroline Garcia to fill the two at-

large places on the City Council. Burns got 30 votes and Garcia, 21. Incumbent Glenna Decker ran a close third with 17 votes, followed by Art Ramos, 7, and incumbent Tammie Trainham, 2.

Trainham had announced late in the race she was throwing her support to Burns and Garcia and campaigned accordingly.

"I suppose the public spoke," Burns said Monday. "I was pretty pleased with the outcome. We'll just get in there and see what we can do."

Burns is a former employee of the city of Seymour, and Garcia previously worked for the city of Goree.

"I've just been the secretary," Garcia said. "At this point, this is where the work starts."



Hanaba Munn Welch/The Knox County News-Courier  
Twenty-nine votes was enough to put Kent DeVille over the top of challenger Steve Pepper in the Knox City mayoral race.

## Knox Notes

Events are listed free of charge for nonprofit civic organizations, schools and community events. Submit listings at least two weeks ahead of the date. Listings will run through the date of the event. Emailed submissions are preferred to kcnewscourier@gmail.com.

### Pet clinic

The annual Benjamin Pet Vaccination Clinic will be from 8 to 10 a.m. May 18 at City Hall. Dr. James Gober of the Haskell Veterinary Clinic will administer the event. Benjamin city registration also will be conducted at the vaccination clinic. For information, contact Tam Gaddis at 940-459-3131.

### Class reunion

The Munday High School Class of 1963 will have a 50th reunion May 25 at the New Grand Hotel in Wichita Falls. For information, contact Rick Couch at warlord161@verizon.net (972-571-5899) or James Earp at jamesjamesearp@cs.com (940-368-2475).

### Alzheimer's support

Meetings of the Haskell County Alzheimer's Support Group have been canceled indefinitely until a facilitator can be recruited. Anyone interested in facilitating the meetings may contact the Haskell County Extension Office at 940-864-2546.

### Class reunion

The Knox City High School Class of 1978 invites all alumni and the community to a class reunion from 5 to 11 p.m. July 6 at the Community Center. A golf tournament is planned, as well as a barbecue and dance with live music. All proceeds benefit the group's scholarship fund for high school seniors. Enter the golf tournament by May 1 by RSVP'ing to Jimmy Don Moore at 813-269-1331. Cost is \$100 for the two-person scramble. Tickets to the barbecue and dance cost \$10; contact Michelle Stanfield at 940-256-0318 or Patti Lain Currie at 325-721-3001 for information.

### Tour of Homes

The Knox County Visioning Group is seeking local homes to feature in the annual tour of homes in December. For information, call 940-459-4121.

## Corrections

If you spot an error of fact, contact Editor Wayne Hodgins at kcnewscourier@gmail.com.

## News on the go



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## Cities face tougher water restrictions State meet success

By Hanaba Munn Welch  
The Knox County News-Courier

Recent area rains haven't fallen in the right places to bring up the level of Millers Creek Reservoir.

Tighter restrictions are all but certain for towns and communities served by North Central Texas Municipal Water Authority.

The district board met Tuesday night in Munday. The day before the meeting, David Kuehler, general manager, said the continuing worsening of the situation would force the board to move to stage 3 in the district's drought contingency plan. It's a step that will all but force participating municipalities to move into stage 4 of their own water conservation plans.

"They don't have to," Kuehler said. "It's not mandatory."

But the water authority will take measures designed to make its customers cut back water use by 25 percent. The reduction will be calculated month by month based on each user's five-year average for the month at issue.

The district's guidelines has teeth: If customers don't comply with the reductions, costs go up incrementally.

"As you go over more and more, it gets cost-prohibitive," Kuehler said.

Ben Benton, supervisor of the water treatment plant at Millers Creek, was in Kuehler's office. A Haskell resident, he's already lost trees in his own yard. He knows the tightening of the restrictions will be a hardship but believes increases in water rates are the only way to make the plan work.

"People try to cut back if they think they're going to have to pay for it," Benton said.

Benton and Kuehler agreed a massive hurricane could change things dramatically for all of West Texas — not good for the Texas Coast, but good for breaking the prevailing drought in the more arid parts of the state.

"Draw a line from Wichita Falls to Abilene to the Rio Grande," Kuehler said. "Every system west of that line is in trouble. To get enough water to do any good over a wide part of the state, it's going to take the remnants of a hurricane to come to this part of the state and stall out."

Short of praying for a hurricane, prayers for the Millers Creek Reservoir watershed are in order. The area starts just north of Haskell and includes the Matson community.

Kuehler and Benton agreed a good rain at Matson is what it will take to bring up the level of Millers Creek Lake.

Since October 2010, Kuehler has been checking the lake level weekly. On only five occasions has he seen increases from the previous week's readings.

"In 2000, the fifth of July we got six foot in our lake," Benton said. "It just happened overnight. You never know when something will hit just right."

A comparable increase this July would change things considerably.

See WATER, Page 9



Terry Messer/For the News-Courier  
Munday High School athletes attending the state track meet in Austin last weekend and their coaches: (top) Jake Myers, Tyrone Dockins, L.J. Collier, Garrett Weaver, Roddrick Taylor, Xavier Bulliner; (bottom) Coach Welch, Coach Corcoran, Coach Lowrance, Trey Stinnett, Dee Paul, Ryder Cude, Coach Clark, Alphonso Nunez



Above: Knox City's Chasity Tolson, Essence Ward, Jordyn Eaton and Caitlyn Baxter placed third in the 800-meter relay event last weekend at the state track meet in Austin.

Left: Knox City's Tylyne Eaton placed third in the discus with a throw of 151 feet.

## Local athletes fare well at state track meet

The Knox County News-Courier

Knox County athletes representing their schools at the state track meet last weekend in Austin fared well.

Munday High School senior Dee Paul placed first in the long jump and in the 300-meter hurdle event.

In the discus event, three Knox County student athletes placed in the top four, including Munday's

L.J. Collier at second, Knox County's Tylyne Eaton at third and Xavier Bulliner at fourth.

Munday's Trey Stinnett placed third in the long jump and sixth in the triple jump.

Munday's Tyrone Dockings placed third in the shot put.

In team events, the Houndette relay team of Chasity Tolson, Essence Ward, Jordyn Eaton and Caitlyn Baxter placed third in the 800-meter.

No other information was available.

## Two die in three-truck crash on U.S. 277



Wayne Hodgins/The Knox County News-Courier  
DPS Trooper Brody Moore walks by the wreckage of a semi-truck after it exploded May 9 in a three-truck crash on U.S. 277 near Bomarton.

By Hanaba Munn Welch  
The Knox County News-Courier

BOMARTON — A three-truck, two-fatality crash May 9 on a two-lane stretch of U.S. 277 near Bomarton, between Seymour and Goree, sent black smoke billowing and closed the

highway for hours.

Traffic was detoured on a Farm to Market loop to the south.

Killed were Jerry Keith Jones, 56, of Noble, Okla., driver of an eastbound one-ton Dodge flatbed, and Kermith Claus Johnson, 65, of Abilene, driver of a westbound Peterbilt semi-truck tow-

ing a tanker trailer.

The lone survivor of the accident was Randy West of Adamsville, Tenn., headed west in his 2002 Kenworth and carrying a load of oil field pipe when Jones, towing an empty flatbed trailer, sideswiped West's rig front to

See CRASH, Page 9

**Office**

111 E. B St., Munday  
P.O. Box 151, Munday, Texas  
76371

Email [kcnwscourier@gmail.com](mailto:kcnwscourier@gmail.com)

**PUBLISHER**

William C. Blackburn

**EXECUTIVE EDITOR**

Wayne Hodgins

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It is the mission of this newspaper to promote the rights of individualism in the American Declaration of Independence. The right of life, liberty and ownership of property are the cornerstone of freedom. Government's sole purpose is to enhance our liberty and freedom. Therefore, we hold every elected and appointed agent of government accountable to that standard.

**DEADLINES**

Advertising: 5 p.m. Fridays  
Editorial: Noon Mondays

**SUBSCRIPTIONS**

\$30 a year in the county  
\$35 a year outside the county



**Deaths**

**Juanita Grimes**

WEINERT — Juanita Grimes, 91, passed away Sunday, May 12, 2013, in Munday Nursing Center. Juanita was born April 8, 1922, in Haskell County to Rube and Pearl Lackey.

Juanita was a lifelong resident of the Haskell and Weinert areas and attended

Weinert Baptist Church. She is survived by one son, Rick Hambleton and wife, Susie, of Weinert; one daughter, Kathy Patterson and husband, Tommy, of Mineral Wells; one grandson, Scottie Hambleton and wife, Mindy, of Dallas; one granddaugh-

ter, Katrina Patterson and husband, Dale, of Mineral Wells; sister Frieda Fry of Baird; and several nieces and nephews.

Graveside services were Wednesday at Gillespie Cemetery under the direction of McCauley-Smith Funeral Home of Munday.

**The Paperboy**

**Can we reverse a disturbing trend?**

What sets Americans apart from citizens of other countries? To me, one of the things which makes us unique is our volunteerism. From scouting to booster clubs to the American Red Cross and Lions Club - we've always stood together for the greater good.



CHRIS BLACKBURN

Are we as giving of our time as we once were? I fear we are not. I sincerely hope it is a trend we can reverse.

When you think of your community and those worker bees behind the scene, who comes to mind? Is it the same few people who do all the work?

Volunteerism is one of those things, that I consider an acquired taste. You may not like it until you've tried it a couple of times.

When I moved to the small town from college as a single man, I had no choice when it came to volunteering for things. Seniors I knew and respected were very quick in convincing me of what I needed to be doing to help my community. At the time, I thought everyone volunteered for things.

As I've matured, I now understand that only a few of us get involved and step up to the plate.

Now, it's looking like small towns are becoming apathetic. When the voters stop voting and people stop running for local office, I see that as a negative. When 20 volunteers are needed on a worthwhile project and you only get eight workers, that's a problem.

I understand time is precious. I understand life is stressful. But hasn't that always been the case?

Our society - one in which we lack the proper respect for our elders and one which has seen the end of the nuclear family - is in trouble. And guess what, without

some intervention and some volunteerism, it's not going to get any better.

The United States has changed a great deal since the 1970s when divorces became commonplace. That's about two generations ago now and we've seen the trend continue. Along with a high divorce rate, we have a growing number of babies born out of wedlock. Friends, something has to give.

Guess what? If we, as a society, do not step forward with love in our hearts and begin to reach out to our youth, particularly young men, we will never heal and strengthen our communities.

We need programs beyond sports which enable stable men to mentor and spend time with our younger male counterparts. Whether it's a school endeavor or begins at the grassroots level, we need the men of small town America to step forward. Dear reader, it most certainly does take a village when it comes to our society. The youth in our communities have a tougher row to hoe than at any time I can think of. It is up to volunteers to sacrifice time and effort and reach out.

When this is done, and you see the difference you've made in a young person's life, it will be one of the most gratifying experiences of your life.

I encourage as many as possible to set the course for involvement before the start of school next year. Through our schools, churches and youth programs, we can turn apathy into energy. We can shed the light on the importance of community involvement. Most importantly, we can raise the kind of men our society needs and change the face of our communities for the better.

Gentlemen, if you've read this column and are in agreement, and there are programs in your respective communities which allow you to get involved with local youth, I implore you to volunteer. Society needs good men to take control of their communities and make a difference. The alternative is no longer acceptable.

Chris Blackburn is publisher of The Stonewall Courier and CEO of Blackburn Media Group.

**Knox County Aging Services**

**Menus for May 20-24**

**Monday:**  
Beef and noodles, mixed vegetables, whole-wheat roll, fruit cup.

**Tuesday:**  
Chicken tenders with gravy, garlic mashed potatoes, mixed vegetables, whole-wheat roll, Mandarin oranges.

**Wednesday:**  
Polish sausage,

cabbage, pinto beans, cornbread, peaches.

**Thursday:**  
Barbecue chicken, mashed potatoes, carrot and raisin salad, cornbread, fruit.

**Friday:**  
Hot dog, baked potato, broccoli, pineapple Jell-O

**Johnson honored with wedding shower**

Special to the News-Courier

Erin Johnson, bride-elect of Jordan Carter, was honored with a wedding shower May 5 in the home of Scott and Lawri Lynn. Calling hour was from 2 until 3 p.m. in the afternoon.

Special guests at the shower were the honoree; Jordan's mother, Paula Carter; and Sandra Chambers, grandmother of the prospective bridegroom. Other special guests were Kurstin Draper, the bride-elect's friend; and Cassidy

Carter, Jordan's sister.

A red cloth with an ivory crocheted overlay covered the serving table, which was centered with an arrangement of red and ivory flowers. Refreshments of petits fours, cookies, fruit, brownie bites, tortilla pinwheels and almond punch were served. Appointments were of crystal and silver.

Hostesses were Marla Hawkins, Lawri Lynn, Sammie Offield, Wanda Phipps, Sequoyah Reynolds, Carolyn Sloan, and Ann Tankersley.

**McMurry student honored with academic award**

Special to the News-Courier

Leah Vanderpol of Benjamin has received an academic honor at the 2013 McMurry University Academic Honors Reception held recently. She received the award for Who's Who.

McMurry students have a proven track record of academic excellence. Recent graduates have been accepted for advanced study at Harvard, Yale, Princeton, Duke, Rice, Carnegie-Mellon, the Mayo Clinic, Wake Forest, Vanderbilt, Notre Dame,

Washington and Lee, Purdue, Emory, Baylor, SMU, TCU, Texas Tech, the Law, Medical, and Dental Schools of the University of Texas, and a number of other prestigious institutions.

McMurry University is committed to providing opportunities and experiences to ensure that every McMurry student achieves their maximum potential in their careers, their personal relationships, and in their roles as moral citizens and contributing members of society.

**USDA: Farm payments scheduled to resume**

Special to the News-Courier

U.S. Department of Agriculture officials have announced farm payments, which had been temporarily suspended due to sequestration, resumed May 8.

This includes payments for the 2011 Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments Program (SURE), the Noninsured Crop Assistance Program (NAP) and the Milk Income Loss Contract Program (MILC).

"I'm pleased to announce that farmers and ranchers can expect to begin receiving their payments beginning today, May 8," said Farm Service Agency administrator Juan Garcia. "We appreciate the producers' patience during the delay. We're work-

ing diligently to get these payments out as quickly as possible."

On March 4, FSA began a temporary suspension of FSA program payments in order to assess the impact of sequestration and determine the least-disruptive process possible for carrying out required cuts.

The department will use the secretary's limited authority to transfer funds to avoid reducing these program payments.

Producers should be advised that program sign-up periods currently underway have the following enrollment deadlines: 2013 Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE) Program - June 3rd; 2011 SURE - June 7; and the 2013 Direct and Counter-Cyclical Program - August 2nd. Producers should contact their local Farm Service

Agency office as soon as possible for appointments to enroll in these programs before the deadlines.

USDA has made a concerted effort to deliver results for the American people, even as USDA implements sequestration - the across-the-board budget reductions mandated under terms of the Budget Control Act.

USDA has already undertaken historic efforts since 2009 to save more than \$828 million in taxpayer funds through targeted, common-sense budget reductions. These reductions have put USDA in a better position to carry out its mission, while implementing sequester budget reductions in a fair manner that causes as little disruption as possible.

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1,473 lb/ac	35.2	3.7	32.0	\$0.5589

**NG 1511 B2RF - Terry County, Texas**



YIELD	STAPLE	MIC	STRENGTH	LOAN
1,848 lb/ac	36.0	4.5	30.7	\$0.5759

**NG 4012 B2RF - Dawson County, Texas**



YIELD	STAPLE	MIC	STRENGTH	LOAN
559 lb/ac	36.2	4.19	32.4	\$0.5730

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**JOHN DEERE**  
FINANCIAL

## USDA announces Conservation Reserve Program sign-up

Special to the News-Courier

Farmers and ranchers are reminded the U.S. Department of Agriculture will conduct a four-week Conservation Reserve Program general sign-up beginning Monday and ending June 14.

Also announced was the restart of sign-up for continuous CRP, including the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program, State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement Initiative, the Highly Erodible Land Initiative, the Grassland Restoration Initiative, the Pollinator Habitat Initiative and other related initiatives.

Sign-up for continuous CRP will continue through Sept. 30.

"As always, we expect strong competition to enroll acres into CRP, and we urge interested producers to maximize their environmental benefits and to make cost-effective offers," said U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Tom

Vilsack.

CRP is an important program for protecting environmentally sensitive lands from erosion and sedimentation and for ensuring the sustainability of groundwater, lakes, rivers, ponds and streams.

Through the voluntary participation of farmers and ranchers, CRP helps protect natural resources, preserve wildlife habitat and bring good-paying jobs to rural America related to hunting, fishing, and outdoor recreation.

Vilsack encouraged producers to look into CRP's other enrollment opportunities offered on a continuous, non-competitive, sign-up basis.

CRP has a 27-year legacy of successfully protecting the nation's natural resources through voluntary participation, while providing significant economic and environmental benefits to rural communities across the United States.

Producers enrolled in

CRP plant long-term, resource-conserving covers to improve the quality of water, control soil erosion and develop wildlife habitat. In return, USDA provides participants with rental payments and cost-share assistance. Contract duration is between 10 and 15 years. Currently, 27 million acres are enrolled in CRP through 700,000 contracts on 390,000 farms throughout the United States, with enrollment in 49 states and Puerto Rico.

Contracts on an estimated 3.3 million acres will expire on Sept. 30. Enrollment authority for all types of CRP, which had expired Sept. 30, 2012, was extended through 2013 by the American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012.

On the web  
For more information on CRP and other FSA programs, visit a local FSA service center or fsa.usda.gov.

## Local business owner honored



Courtesy photo

A representative of Ruidoso, N.M.-based Stroud National Agency recently presented Bill Stewart of Bill Stewart Insurance Services of Knoxville with a cash reward for writing the most new farm insurance policies during the month of March. More than 700 other independent agents throughout the United States who produce farm business for Stroud National competed in the contest. Bill Stewart Insurance Services has been in business in Knoxville for more than 20 years and has been a client for Stroud National since 2003. Knoxville Floris also delivered a fresh arrangement for the occasion.

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Courtesy photo

Texas Tech has combined the former Wind Science and Engineering (WiSE) research center and the Texas Wind Energy Institute into one entity. The National Wind Institute will better support the interdisciplinary research and educational opportunities in wind science, engineering and energy.

## Texas Tech combines wind research, education into National Wind Institute

By Sally Logue Post  
Special to the Courier

Texas Tech University has created the National Wind Institute to better support the interdisciplinary research and educational opportunities in wind science, engineering and energy.

The announcement May 6 from Texas Tech officials at the American Wind Energy Association WIND-POWER 2013 Conference and Exhibition in Chicago.

The institute combines the former Wind Science and Engineering (WiSE) research center and the Texas Wind Energy Institute into one entity. For NWI Director John Schroeder, the move strengthens the already solid interdisciplinary approach to all things wind.

"Wherever wind is in-

involved, there is a strong link between the engineering disciplines and atmospheric science," he said. "Texas Tech has focused on this link with decades of organic interdisciplinary research and educational activities. Recently, we've added economists, lawyers, policy experts, cyber security experts and business professionals to broaden our team even farther."

All of the university's wind-related educational opportunities will now fall under the new institute. WiSE created the first doctorate in wind science and engineering. TWEL offers the only Bachelor of Science degree in wind energy as well as a variety of graduate and professional development certificates.

"Texas Tech's wind re-

search dates back to 1970. Following a May 11 tornado that killed 26 people and destroyed large sections of the city, faculty representing the university's civil engineering department and atmospheric sciences group began to think what could be done to minimize the effects of severe wind events such as tornadoes and hurricanes on lives and structures.

In the past 15 years, Texas Tech has expanded into the wind energy sector, but continued to provide a strong focus on the inherent link between engineering and atmospheric science. Current projects include measuring wind farm complex flows, evaluating turbine-to-turbine interaction, enhancing wind turbine power performance, grid integration, and next-generation energy storage.

NWI has also formed a major partnership with Sandia National Laboratories; Vestas, a leading turbine manufacturer; and Group NIRE, a clean energy company providing project development, finance and consulting services to create the Scaled Wind Farm Technology Facility to focus on wind plant optimization.

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## Benjamin News

By Gladene Green

After a pretty busy weekend, we begin another work week. Still have not had any rain but have had a few threatening clouds in the area. Maybe some day before long we will get a little moisture.

### Regarding Our Ill

Jan Carver continues her recovery in the Knox County Hospital after surgery on her leg in Abilene. She's doing pretty well but still doesn't know when she may come home. Maybe it won't be too long. Her mother-in-law, Dorothy Carver, is also back in the Knox County Hospital after several weeks in a rehab facility in Fort Worth following a recent stroke. She's holding her own, and hopefully progress back to better health is on its way. Please remember them both in prayer.

Randolph Barnett was in Abilene on Thursday to see his doctor regarding his knee problem. I'm not sure what he learned, but I did see him today (Sunday), and he was having quite a bit of trouble with it. Think the pain comes and goes, and when it's bothering him it does hurt a lot.

### Supper Held

The First Baptist Church in Benjamin hosted a dinner for the three graduating seniors of Benjamin High School, their parents, class sponsor Susan Spake, and the superintendent and her husband on Wednesday night.

The dinner was held at the parsonage, and the menu included lasagna, green salad, a relish tray, garlic bread, tea, and topped by banana splits for dessert.

Following the meal, Gene Gloria brought a short devotional followed by a period of visiting.

Seniors (and their parents) attending were Matthew Acree, Jonathan Rainwater and Jasmine Padgett. The graduates and their sponsor received a gift from the church.

### Here 'N There

Barbara Ryder returned home Saturday night after several days' visit with her sister Elaine and her husband in Lubbock.

Shannon Propps of Amarillo spent the weekend at her home here and visiting relatives and friends.

Sean and Mary Widmer and Hannah of Coppell spent Mothers Day weekend with her mom, Reyes Barrientez.

Imagean Young and Deann Lamb were in Seymour on Thursday for a late birthday get together for Deann's daughter-in-law, Jessica Lamb. Jessica has bought and moved into another house in Seymour, and they were glad to get to see it after she has gotten pretty well settled into it.

Debi Moorhouse and I were in Childress on Tuesday for a graduation party honoring my granddaughter, Ashlee Evans. Ashlee is the daughter of Diane and Mike Evans and is hopefully progress back to better health is on its way. The party was held in the bank building, and a variety of party snacks and punch was served the guests.

Lonnie Bohannon of Abilene and his sons, Chance and Chase of Eastland, spent the weekend with his mom and dad, Roger and Betty Bohannon.

Linda Jones (Mrs. Tim) spent a couple of days in a Wichita Falls hospital early last week after suffering a fall from the back of her pickup. She has no lasting effects of the accident, but doctors thought she needed to be checked, which was an assurance that all was OK. It's good to get that report.

Charles and Linda Griffith spent Mothers Day with their daughter and son-in-law, Lori and Ricky LaShomb in Lubbock.

The end of school activities are taking place, and graduation is now right around the corner. Commencement here is May 31, and baccalaureate is May 26 at the Church of Christ.

Congratulations to the Munday and Knox City students who participated in the state track meet. We're proud of all who placed in the competition and also congratulate Munday (as a team), who brought home the gold for the third straight year. You make us all proud.

## Click It or Ticket campaign gears up

Special to the Courier

AUSTIN — Texans wear their belt buckles with a certain Lone Star pride, but it's the buckles in their vehicles that could save their lives.

More functional than fashionable, life-saving seat belts first debuted 45 years ago when Lyndon B. Johnson's National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act and The Highway Safety Act went into effect.

To honor President Johnson's pioneering dedication to safety, the Texas Department of Transportation last week launched its 12th annual Click It or Ticket campaign at

the LBJ Library in Austin with a car show demonstrating the progression of seat belts through the ages.

"The cost of not wearing seat belts is far greater than a ticket or fine," said Phil Wilson, TxDOT executive director. "Simply put, a seat belt could save your life. Public awareness is working, but we still see some teenagers, pickup truck passengers and rural Texans who aren't buckling up."

When the Click It or Ticket campaign began in 2002, only 76 percent of Texans buckled up. Today, 94 percent are wearing seat belts.

The National Highway Traffic Safety

Administration estimates the Click It or Ticket campaign has saved nearly 3,700 lives and prevented more than 50,000 serious injuries since its launch. The increase in seat belt usage also has saved an estimated \$10 billion in wages and productivity losses, medical expenses, insurance premiums, taxes and other costs.

By Texas law, all occupants of a vehicle, including back seat passengers, must wear a seat belt. Each unbuckled occupant faces a ticket and fines up to \$200, plus court costs. Last year, more than 21,200 seat belt citations were issued during the Click It or Ticket campaign.

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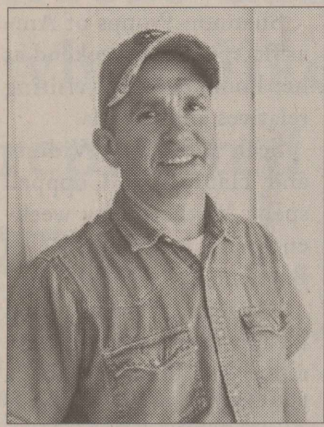
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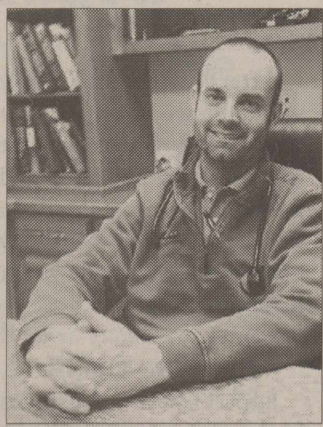
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## Election results



**Danny Lewis**  
Knox City Council



**Dr. Ezekiel Duke**  
Knox City Council



**Caroline Garcia**  
Goree City Council



**Brenda Burns**  
Knox City Council

## River on the rise



Chris Blackburn/The Knox County News-Courier

The Salt Fork of the Brazos River meanders in northern Stonewall County. Recent area rains should have the Brazos gaining some momentum. The area remains desperate for rain.

# Earthquake felt northeast of Snyder

By **Wayne Hodgin**  
The Post Dispatch

A magnitude 2.6 earthquake last week about 17 miles northeast of Snyder apparently did little damage in northern Scurry County.

According to the U.S. Geological Survey, the quake was recorded a few minutes after 8 a.m. May 6. Reports listed the quake as one of 25 recorded worldwide that day by the USGS and one of 11 recorded in the continental United States.

The quake isn't the first to be recorded in the area. In September 2011, residents in northern Scurry were rocked by a modest 4.3-magnitude quake that was felt as far north as Lubbock and as far east as Louisiana.

Arthur McGarr, a geophysicist with the USGS in Menlo Park, Calif., said the earthquakes in the area are attributed to substantial increase in oil and gas pro-

duction.

"These types of earthquakes are what we refer to as 'induced,' meaning they are not naturally occurring," McGarr said.

While some people would attribute these induced quakes to hydraulic fracturing, commonly known as fracking, McGarr said, it's not the procedure itself that causing the phenomenon but more accurately the process of injecting water into the reservoir to stimulate oil production.

"Fracking technology has been a phenomenal success all across the country, but particularly in your area, where these companies are having to bust through large amounts of shale in order to extract more oil and gas," McGarr said. "In order to push more of the oil that's trapped in those shale formations up to production level, vast amounts of water are being injected into the area."

While the oil industry-related earthquake phenomenon isn't completely

understood, scientists believe the water actually helps shift usually stationary portions of the earth's lithosphere.

"Water is a natural lubricator," McGarr said. "When large amounts of water are pumped underground like that, it finds its way to a fault. Tectonic stress normally prevents those plates from slipping, but the water lubricate them. When that happens those plates begin to shift, and that causes the earth to quake."

McGarr said induced earthquakes attributed to the oil and gas industry are rare and quite benign.

"Only recently have we begun to take count of these induced earthquakes as the oil and gas industry has really picked up over the last several years," he said.

A magnitude 2.6 is considered to be at the bottom end of a scale of an earthquake that can be felt, according to the USGS, which estimated that around 900,000 earthquakes of 2.5 or lesser are recorded each year.

## TxDOT launches distracted driving campaign

AUSTIN, Texas - It happens every day. You get a text or a phone call and you feel the need to respond immediately, even when you're driving. But what you may not know is a simple text or call can cost you your life or someone else's.

"Distracted driving is unacceptable, and it's something that is preventable," said John Barton, Texas Department of Transportation's (TxDOT) deputy executive director. "If you reply to or send a text while driving, you are putting your life or someone else's life at risk."

Distracted drivers are making Texas roads more dangerous. According to TxDOT crash data, to date, there were 90,378 crashes in Texas in 2012 that involved distracted driving - distraction, driver inattention or cellphone use, an 8 percent increase from 2011. Of these crashes, 18,468 resulted in serious injuries and 453 resulted in deaths. From 2011 - 2012, there was a 9 percent increase in traffic fatalities caused by distracted driving on Texas roadways.

According to the Texas A&M Transportation Institute (TTI), almost half of all Texas drivers in 2012 admit to regularly or sometimes talking on the cell phone while driving. However, 84.9 percent of Texas drivers think driving while talking on a cell phone is a very serious or

somewhat serious threat to their personal safety.

In another just-completed study, TTI researchers found that 10 percent of Texas drivers are using their cell phone at any point in time during the day. The finding represents the first time that actual cell phone use by Texas drivers has been measured, rather than self-reported use, and was based on observations of drivers at 190 intersections in 22 counties across the state.

TxDOT is also partnering with AT&T on this year's distracted driving effort.

"In today's tech-connected age, people are relying on text messages and smartphones to stay in touch, but texting while driving is something that carries profound, very real risks. In the United States, someone is killed or injured once every five minutes on average in a crash that happens while a driver is texting and driving. It's time we worked together to change behaviors, attitudes, hearts and minds," said Dave Nichols, President, AT&T Texas. "We can each commit not to text and drive. We can lead by example. That's why we're pleased to join the Texas Department of Transportation in its Text. Talk. Crash. effort and why we continue to raise awareness through our AT&T's own It Can Wait campaign."

As part of the campaign, TxDOT is asking Texans to do their part by making a simple commitment to focus on driving when they get behind the wheel.

Barton notes, "Use of cell phones while driving isn't the only action that can lead to serious injury or death. Other actions, such as reading the newspaper, eating or smoking while driving, are also distractions. Keeping drivers safe is our priority."

Although all the age groups are represented in the total number of traffic crashes caused by distracted driving, of the 90,378 traffic crashes in 2012 in Texas, the top two age groups are: 28,443 ages 16-24 and 23,784 over the age of 45.

This year's campaign announcements will demonstrate to Texans how hard it is to complete any simple task like walking when distracted. The goal is to show that if people cannot text and walk without having an accident, they surely should not text and drive. Texans can watch campaign videos on YouTube.

The Texas Department of Transportation is responsible for maintaining 80,000 miles of road and for supporting aviation, rail and public transportation across the state. Find out more at [www.txdot.gov](http://www.txdot.gov)

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## Idle American Going in circles

The world would have been short-changed (OK, in some cases, "long-changed") had the wheel not been invented many moons ago.

Geometry would have been incomplete, wagons could not have been circled and there'd have been no tune called "Roll Out the Barrel." We'd have missed "going in circles," and chariot rides would have been rough even for the toughest gladiators.

Caissons in the Army's chorus would have moved along in some other manner. We'd have needed some symbol other than "zero" to denote lowest test scores at school, and the Arctic would have gone "circleless."

On top of that, we wouldn't have had rolling pins — a foothold for male chauvinism — and one

Dale Scarth might not have been able to graphically convey to the former Helen Marie Johnson the way to his heart was indeed through his tummy.

Scarth, who rose through the ranks of what was then Texas Electric Service Co. from engineer to president (1949-1989), in his youth dug postholes for Kansas rural electric lines. The year was 1947; he was freshly discharged from World War II military service. Soon, Scarth was smitten with his true love. He looked forward to walking her home after work each day.

His workday ended 90 minutes before hers, so he often whiled away the time in a Fredonia cabinet shop. He's always been handy with his hands, and in retirement has made hundreds of wire "doo-hickies" handy for engaging those pesky top buttons on dress shirts. His invention provides yet another use for welding wire.

As the courtship advanced, Scarth decided to make Helen a rolling pin. He wasn't about to be the object of fun-poking that inevitably would have been offered by friends in town if he carried it on their walk to her home. Without an auto of his own, he carefully placed it on the back seat of her dad's car parked nearby.

The same evening following dinner, he and Helen cozied up on the front porch swing

— a frequent pastime. This setting beckoned when the weather was nice, fireflies cavorted and things were right for sweet nothings to be shared by the light of the silvery moon.

Scarth popped the question, and she accepted. Immediately, she raced back inside to tell her folks about the marriage proposal. Helen's dad responded in a deep, gruff voice. "Does that thing in the back seat of the car have anything to do with that thing on your finger?"

It probably did. Dale and the Scarths' four children agree she was a world-class baker. The couple was married for 64 years, ending with her death in 2011.

My Uncle Mort identifies with rolling pins, even though their use has diminished greatly in recent decades. Mostly, they are seen now in museums and rarely in kitchens.

"When I was a kid, my dad always urged me to search for a 'working wife,'" my almost 101-year-old kin told me. Mort asked his dad how in the world he could be sure, and was told to go over to the girl's house "of a morning." There, he could go straight to the woodpile out back to learn if her mom was a "working woman." Mort still was puzzled.

"If there's biscuit dough hanging from the ax handle, a working woman lives there," Mort's dad said.

Some years ago, my wife made one of her occasional trips to Canton for the community's heralded "First Monday" sale. Brenda was gone for a couple of days, hurrying from booth to booth at the big attraction.

While she was away, I decided to do something I'd rarely done before — clean house. I buffed, painted, vacuumed and mopped — the whole deal. I fully expected to be lavished with praise when she saw all I had done. Upon her return, I escorted her into every room, expecting thankful comments. Instead, she was stone silent, saying nothing. Finally, I asked, "Isn't there something you'd like to say?"

Pausing, she finally responded, "Yes, it's a thankless job, isn't it?"

I have to give her credit, though, for her emphasis on healthy meals.

Nowadays, she's pushing blended diets. Last night, we drank a chicken.

Don Newbury, former chancellor of Howard Payne University, is a humorist and motivational speaker.



DON  
NEWBURY

## Local HSU student presents paper at conference

Special to the News-Courier

Hardin-Simmons University student Sarah Clower of Benjamin was recently chosen to present her study of Christian author C.S. Lewis during the 16th annual meeting of the C.S. Lewis & Inklings Society.

Clower presented "Mythological Fact: C.S. Lewis' Ideas on Mythology."

She wrote the paper as part of a 2012 fall semester class, Thought and Fiction of C.S. Lewis, which was taught by HSU professor of English Larry Fink.

The C.S. Lewis & Inklings Society, which upholds and promotes the advancement of scholarship, teaching, writing and other professional activities related to the life and works of C.S. Lewis and the Inklings, sponsored the event held late March, at LeTourneau University in Longview.

Fink, a long-time student of Lewis' writing, also presented a paper: "C.S. Lewis' The Abolition of Man and Sylvan Tompkins' Affect Script Psychology." He teaches Thought and Fiction of C.S. Lewis every other fall semester, and this year.



SARAH CLOWER

Fink was also elected president of the C.S. Lewis & Inklings Society for the 2013-14 academic year.

Fink has also served as president of the Southwest Conference on Christianity & Literature, and directed a meeting of the C.S. Lewis and Inklings Society on the HSU campus in 2007.

## The 501 Cattle Calls

Human beings communicate with huge vocabularies that require dictionaries to record all the nuances of word meanings. Cows keep things simple.

That's my observation. I could be wrong. But no matter what, I'm pretty sure cows don't have dictionaries.



HANABA  
MUNN  
WELCH

When a mama cow bellers for her calf (my computer doesn't think "beller" is a word), the calf knows his mama is looking for him and it's time for them to get together so the little one can nurse and so mama can be sure the calf is secure.

My smarty computer would have let me say the mama cow "bellows" for her calf. Too pretentious. We'll stick with "beller", my grandmother's word.

Besides, people bellow our orders, usually imperiously. Cows beller, not imperiously but with the natural authority that comes with motherhood.

Enough stage setting. Now the story.

It's been the weak calf week. Sunday morning I saw the little heifer calf by herself near the watering tanks, alone. Not good. At church, I got advice from the preacher. Dust pneumonia was his diagnosis. He told me which drugs work and which cowboy to call.

When an animal gets pneumonia, it seems it always gets called "dust" pneumonia, even when the disease is brought on more by hot and cold weather extremes than dust in the air. We've had both.

The cowboy came. His name is Greg and, like any good cowboy, he has a skill set that makes him a good substitute for a vet, especially on a Sunday and when wrangling is required. If I'd really wanted to save money, I could have gone to a farm supply store, bought the antibiotics and a syringe and caught the calf and shot her myself, but whatever injuries I might have incurred would have required treatment not allowable under IRS rules as business expenses. It was easier to call Greg.

That was Sunday. Today is Thursday. The calf seems to be a little better. I'm cautiously optimistic.

On Tuesday, the sickly calf tried unsuccessfully to nurse its mama and to follow her to the pasture. The calf ended up on the wrong side of a fence, where it spent all afternoon. My impression was that mama had decided the calf wasn't going to live and she couldn't be bothered.

As the adoptive mama, I took the calf water in a bucket. It didn't drink. Oh well.

At the end of the day, I happened to be with the calf when its mama seemed all of a sudden to have an overwhelming concern about her calf. I hid behind a tree. She was belling and trotting away from the herd, although not really in our direction. I mooded back, doing my best little calf moo. She corrected her course and headed our direction. Finally, the calf did a single moo. Ultimately the two got together and the little calf nursed. I like to think I helped. I'm not a bellerer, but I'm a pretty good mooer. Maybe I'll write a cow dictionary.

Hanaba Munn Welch is a columnist and contributor to the Stonewall Courier.

## TxDOT reminds motorists to drive sober

AUSTIN — Spring — March 1 - May 31 - marks the most dangerous season on Texas roadways for alcohol-related traffic crashes, which is why the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) is reminding motorists to line up a P.A.S.S., or Person Appointed to Stay Sober, because even "buzzed" driving is drunk driving.

In 2011, spring accounted for 26 percent of all alcohol-related traffic crashes in Texas, according to TxDOT, more than any other season. At the same time, weekends continue to claim too many lives — more than half (58 percent) of all alcohol-related crashes occurred on a weekend in 2011. With spring break and holiday weekends approaching, TxDOT wants motorists to know that consuming just a few drinks can still impair a person's ability to drive, and it has launched a public safety campaign to let them know of the effect alcohol has on driving.

State law makes it illegal for someone with a blood alcohol content (BAC) of 0.08 percent or higher to drive a vehicle. However, drivers can be arrested with a BAC below .08 when a law enforcement officer has probable cause, based on the driver's behavior.

"People often don't recognize the impact that one or two drinks can have on their ability to operate a vehicle," said John Barton, TxDOT's deputy executive director. "Alcohol slows your reaction time, reduces your ability to properly gauge speed or distance from other objects and makes it difficult for you to focus on the road. It takes less alcohol than you think

so don't take a chance. Always plan ahead for a sober ride home."

TxDOT will be traveling in March to entertainment districts and college campuses throughout the state to remind motorists that "buzzed driving is drunk driving" and to always line up a P.A.S.S. — every weekend, every season. Events in the entertainment districts will conduct hands-on demonstrations that illustrate how consuming alcohol can impair one's ability to drive, while at college campuses students will see what it's like behind bars through an interactive backdrop display. Students will be able to share their photos and encourage friends to plan ahead for a P.A.S.S. The college tour will also screen the premiere of Tx-

DOT's new informational video that features Texans recounting their personal, real-life stories of the terrible consequences of being charged with a DWI.

The Texas Department of Transportation is responsible for maintaining 80,000 miles of road and for supporting aviation, rail and public transportation across the state. TxDOT and its 11,000 employees are committed to working with others to provide safe and reliable transportation solutions for Texas by maintaining a safe system, addressing congestion, connecting Texas communities and being a Best in Class state agency. Find out more at [www.txdot.gov](http://www.txdot.gov). Fan us on Facebook, at [www.facebook.com/txdot](http://www.facebook.com/txdot); and follow us on Twitter, at [www.twitter.com/txdot](http://www.twitter.com/txdot).

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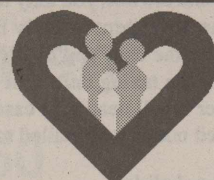
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"Thanks Dr. Banez!"  
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DIE0312

## Not much freeze-damaged wheat likely to be replanted to cotton

By Robert Burns  
Special to the Courier

Texas cotton-planting intentions may be affected by the replanting to cotton of freeze-damaged wheat acreage, but a Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service expert doesn't expect the change to be significant on dryland wheat acres.

"Most of the shift will occur on irrigated wheat fields lost to late spring freezes in the Rolling Plains and Northern High Plains," said Gaylon Morgan, the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension state cotton specialist. "The optimum planting window for cotton has passed in South Texas and the Blacklands."

However, cotton planting has just begun in the Rolling Plains, South Plains and Panhandle regions, but there are other factors — not the least of which are precipitation expectations — that will limit producers replanting to cotton, he said.

"Many of the production regions where wheat had severe freeze damage are not major cotton acre regions, so we won't see a big shift there," Morgan said. "And the other factor is that if things remain dry, there's not a lot incentive for guys to go in with another crop. Finally, it will depend on the multi-dimensional aspects of crop insurance for both the wheat and cotton, which may be different for irrigated and dryland fields."

Spring finally arrived throughout the Rolling Plains over the last week with temperatures reaching into the high 80s to low 90s.

All crops in this area were

severely stressed due to lack of moisture, though pastures and rangeland were in fair condition. However, without any adequate moisture producers feared grazing would run out very quickly.

A lot of wheat was being baled for hay. One AgriLife Extension county agent reported producers selling truckloads of hay at \$180 per ton.

Cotton farmers continued to prepare fields for planting, but with dry conditions they were not optimistic about this year's crop. Soil moisture levels remained very low, even after the light rains of the past few weeks.

The major factor across the state, however, continues to be the weather, Morgan said. With forecasts not predicting a turnaround of drought conditions anytime soon, things are looking "pretty bleak for the Southern High Plains where most of our cotton is grown."

In the Rolling Plains, a rough estimate is about 50 percent of wheat was lost because of the late freezes, Morgan said. But with the region still suffering severe to exceptional drought, replanting wheat acres to cotton is really only a viable option for those with sufficient irrigation capacity to make a cotton crop.

In March, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Prospective Plantings report predicted Texas intended cotton plantings to be 5.5 million acres, which represented a 16 percent drop from actual cotton plantings of 6.55 million acres in 2012. The National Cotton Council predicted a more severe drop of 25 percent to 4.91 million acres.



## Study: 1950s drought worse than recent one

By Kay Ledbetter  
Special to the Dispatch

Scientists with Texas A&M University and Texas A&M AgriLife Research had a unique opportunity to compare recent patterns of drought-induced woody plant mortality on the Edwards Plateau in Texas to the extended drought of the 1950s.

Bill Rogers, an associate professor in the Texas A&M ecosystem science and management department, said it is important to understand how climatic extremes such as drought cause shifts in vegetation.

These shifts can alter semi-arid ecosystems, potentially affecting the abundance of

forage and browse available for livestock and wildlife, as well as land/atmosphere feedbacks, carbon and water cycles, and disturbance dynamics, Rogers said.

A recently completed study led by two doctoral students from Rogers' research lab, Dirac Twidwell and Carissa Wonkka, examining the effects of severe drought on woody plants in Texas will be featured in the international journal, Applied Vegetation Science.

"This is one of the first assessments of the effects our recent drought has had on native vegetation," Rogers said. "It is also particularly novel because we are able to compare our findings to a study that was conducted at

the same research site during the drought of the 1950s."

The research site was the Texas A&M AgriLife Research Station in Sonora, managed by Charles "Butch" Taylor. Following the drought from 1951-1957, a study was conducted at the site to quantify rates of dieback for various woody plant species.

In 2011, during the most severe drought on record since the 1950s, the study was repeated in the same long-term grazing treatments established in 1948. The primary species they looked at were southern live oak, scrub oak or sandpaper oak, persimmon, and Ashe juniper or blueberry juniper.

Twidwell said the study, in addition to comparing the patterns of drought-induced woody plant dieback to that from the extended drought of the 1950s, was designed to determine if composition of the woody plant community shifts consistently across the landscape following dieback, or if shifts depend on differences among species, soils, land use and plant demography.

The study showed the recent severe droughts across Texas resulted in high levels of woody plant dieback in areas that have for decades experienced woody encroachment, he said. Periodic drought events since 2000 killed nearly 25 percent of woody plants and decreased woody plant cover 18 percent.

However, measurements taken after the 1950s drought ended showed woody plant cover had decreased 44 percent compared to pre-drought estimates taken in 1949, Twidwell said.

"Based on weather records from the research site dating back to 1919, the drought of the 1950s was more prolonged and severe than any other period from 1919-2011," he said. "While recent droughts have been severe, historical records at this site show the seven-year drought of the 1950s was worse and lasted considerably longer."

"Woody plant die-off was almost three times worse in the 1950s than in our 2011 study. This gives us an indication of how vegetation may continue to change on the Edwards Plateau if the current drought continues for a number of years."

Neither drought, however, resulted in widespread shifts from one woody plant community to another, Wonkka said.

"Even with reductions in cover of 44 percent and 18 percent following the droughts of the 1950s and 2000s, respectively, woody plant communities did not transition to a grassland or savanna or an alternate woody-dominated plant

community," she said. "Rather, the system remained as an oak savanna following the 1950s and a juniper woodland interspersed with clusters of oak in 2011."

A unique finding in this study is that long-term livestock management practices have the potential to influence the direction of vegetative change following drought, Twidwell said.

High mortality rates of mature juniper trees in deep soils, combined with the recruitment of oak species where cattle, goats and deer had been excluded on the research site for the last 60 years, caused shifts in vegetation from a juniper woodland to a live oak-dominated overstory with a diverse understory, he said.

Because many areas on the Edwards Plateau have been heavily browsed by goats and deer for decades, the study suggests that drought-induced shifts on deep soils away from juniper woodland and toward a plant community more similar to the oak savanna occurring prior to juniper encroachment is unlikely to be realized unless the drought becomes worse.

"Juniper will likely continue to dominate the woody plant community on both shallow and deep soil areas on much of the Edwards Plateau following the most recent drought, albeit at lower densities," Twidwell said.

He said the widespread changes in land management on the Edwards Plateau from mostly livestock production to wildlife and hunting enterprises may sufficiently decrease browsing pressure in some areas to cause the shift from juniper woodland to a diverse shrub understory.

"To improve our understanding of climate-induced vegetation change, modeling projections need to be down-scaled to a finer spatial resolution that is relevant to land managers," Twidwell said. "Many regional planners rely on predictive climate-vegetation models to understand potential shifts in vegetation that may result from short- and long-term changes in climate."

In this study, specialized responses to drought were observed as a result of complex localized interactions, such as ecophysiological differences among soil types, plant water-use strategies, density-dependent relationships among plants, and legacy effects of livestock management, he said.

"Studies such as this play an important role in improving these models and projecting how drought will impact the types of vegetation important to land managers," Twidwell said.

### Property Tax Protest and Appeal Procedures

The law gives property owners the right to protest actions concerning their property tax appraisals. You may follow these appeal procedures if you have a concern about:

- the market or appraised value of your property
- the unequal appraisal of your property
- the inclusion of your property on the appraisal roll
- any exemptions that may apply to you
- the qualification for an agricultural or timber appraisal
- the taxable status of your property
- the local governments which should be taxing your property
- the ownership of property
- the change of use of land receiving special appraisal
- any action taken by the chief appraiser, appraisal district or appraisal review board that applies to and adversely affects you.

#### Informal Review

For informal review process please call Laura McCanlies, Deputy Clerk at 940-459-3891 to set up an appointment.

#### Review by the Appraisal Review Board

If you can't resolve your problem informally with the county appraisal district (CAD) staff, you may have your case heard by the appraisal review board (ARB).

The ARB is an independent board of citizens that reviews problems with appraisals or other concerns listed above. It has the power to order the CAD to make the necessary changes to solve problems. If you file a written request for an ARB hearing (called a notice of protest) before the deadline, the ARB will set your case for a hearing. You'll receive written notice of the time, date and place of the hearing. If necessary, you may request a hearing in the evening or on a Saturday or Sunday. Prior to your hearing, you may ask to review the evidence the CAD plans to introduce at the hearing to establish any matter at issue. The law provides that before a hearing on a protest or immediately after the hearing begins, you or your agent and the CAD shall each provide the other with a copy of any written material intended to be offered or submitted to the ARB at the hearing. To the greatest extent practicable, the hearing will be informal. You or a designated agent may appear in person to present evidence or you may send notarized evidence for the ARB to review at your hearing. The CAD representative will present evidence about your case. You may cross-examine the CAD representative. The ARB will make its decision based on the evidence presented. In most cases, the CAD has the burden of establishing the property's value by a preponderance of the evidence presented.

### Deadline for Filing Protests with the ARB\*

#### Usual Deadline

On or before May 31 (or 30 days after a notice of appraised value was mailed to you, whichever is later).

Late protests are allowed if you miss the usual deadline for good cause. Good cause is some reason beyond your control, like a medical emergency. The ARB decides whether you have good cause.

Late protests are due the day before the ARB approves records for the year. Contact your appraisal district for more information.

#### Special Deadlines

For change of use (the appraisal district informed you that you are losing agricultural appraisal because you changed the use of your land), the deadline is not later than the 30th day after the notice of the determination was mailed to you.

In certain protests where the owner has submitted an independent appraisal before the hearing, the chief appraiser has the burden of proving the property's value by clear and convincing evidence. You can get a copy of a protest form from the appraisal district office at

Knox County Appraisal District Office  
County Courthouse  
100 West Cedar  
940-459-3891 Benjamin, Texas 79505

Note: You shouldn't try to contact ARB members outside of the hearing. The law requires ARB members to sign an affidavit saying that they haven't talked about your case before the ARB hears it.

#### Review by the District Court or an Arbitrator or SOAH

After it decides your case, the ARB must send you a copy of its order by certified mail. If you're not satisfied with the decision, you have the right to appeal. If you choose to go to court, you must start the process by filing a petition within 60 days of the date you receive the ARB's order. In certain cases, as an alternative to filing an appeal in district court, you may file, not later than the 45th day after you receive notice of the ARB order, a request for binding arbitration with the county appraisal district. In certain cases originating in certain counties, as an alternative to filing an appeal in district court, you may appeal to the State Office of Administrative Hearings (SOAH). An appeal to SOAH is initiated by, not later than the 30th day after you receive notice of the ARB's order, filing with the chief appraiser of the county appraisal district a notice of appeal. Appeals to District Court, Binding Arbitration, or SOAH all require payment of certain fees or deposits.

#### Tax Payment

You must pay either the amount of taxes due on the portion of the taxable value not in dispute or the amount of taxes due on the property under the order from which the appeal is taken.

#### More Information

You can get more information by contacting your appraisal district at

Knox County Appraisal District  
County Courthouse  
100 West Cedar  
Benjamin, Texas 79505 940-459-3891

You can also get a pamphlet describing how to prepare a protest from the appraisal district or from the State Comptroller's Property Tax Assistance Division at P.O. Box 13528, Austin, Texas 78711-3528.

For ARB changes (the ARB has informed you of a change that increases your tax liability and the change didn't result from a protest you filed), the deadline is not later than the 30th day after the notice of the determination was mailed to you.

Mineral Protest Deadline is June 3, 2013  
Real Estate Protest Deadline is June 6, 2013

If you believe the appraisal district or ARB should have sent you a notice and did not, you may file a protest until the day before taxes become delinquent (usually February 1) or no later than the 125th day after the date you claim you received a tax bill from one or more of the taxing units that tax your property. The ARB decides whether it will hear your case based on evidence about whether a required notice was mailed to you.

\* The deadline is postponed to the next business day if it falls on a weekend or holiday.



# Dinosaurs headed to Childress

Special to Courier

Prehistoric life forms from around the world will take residence at the Childress Fair Park Auditorium beginning Tuesday, May 21 and leaving on the evening of May 23. Over \$150,000 worth of exhibit items will be on display with animals from almost every time period. An incredible display of skulls, including one of the largest T-rex skulls on earth.

"Dinosaur George" Blasing is a self taught paleontologist and animal behaviorist with more than 35 years of study and research. Blasing is a public speaker, writer and television personality who has performed live to over 2 million people and has lectured in over 2800 museums, schools and public events. Experts on hand with over 60 years of knowledge to answer all of your questions will be avail-

able and the public is welcome to bring in any fossils they have found so that we can help identify them. All displays are large, easy to read signage in both English and Spanish.

Dinosaur George has spent over 17 years teaching Elementary, Intermediate and Middle school students about the amazing creatures that once ruled our planet. And with the addition of his latest program, Museum in the Classroom, he is now able to bring an entire museum to the schools he visits.

The displays will be open to the public from 10 a.m. - 7 p.m. each of the three days and is free for the public to attend. The Dinosaur George Exhibit is being sponsored in full by the Childress County Heritage Museum and the Childress Chamber of Commerce. For information please call, 940-937-2261 or 940-937-2567. When Di-

nosaur George is not visiting schools or performing in public events, he volunteers hundreds of hours appearing in children's hospitals and youth oriented events throughout Texas.

In 1997 George Blasing quit his lucrative retail career and dedicated his life to educating children and adults about the amazing creatures that once ruled our planet. In August of 1997, he opened his own chain of retail stores called "Dinosaur World". Through these science/education based stores Blasing was able to dedicate more time to public speaking.

In 2006 he closed "Dinosaur World" and began speaking full time. Using an enthusiastic and often humorous approach to speaking, Dinosaur George soon became one of the most sought after public speakers in Texas.

In 2007 he co-created,



Courtesy photo

An incredible display of skulls, including one of the largest T-rex skulls on earth, will be on hand Fair Park Auditorium in Childress May 21-23. The displays are open to the public from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. daily and are free of charge.

wrote and hosted a 12 part series for The History Channel called Jurassic Fight Club and is currently involved in the creation of a several new television projects.

In 2009 he was named

as a member of the Board of Directors for the Proctor Museum of Natural History in Houston Texas.

In 2010 he was honored with an appointment as "Guest Curator of Paleontol-

ogy" for the Witte Museum, located in San Antonio. In 2011 he set out on a tour of Texas libraries to promote reading. He performed in 67 libraries and spoke to nearly 10,000 children and adults.

## CRASH

From Page 1

back, from the breather on the driver's side of his cab to the last wheel on his trailer.

In his rear-view mirror, West saw what happened when Jones, continuing on his deadly trajectory, ran head-on into Johnson.

"I looked in the mirror, and I saw that tanker turn over and burst into flames," West said. "This makes me want to quit trucking. It makes you think."

Also coming from the east was a minivan carrying a family from Midland — a father, mother and two young daughters.

Bomarton resident Junior Livingston heard their account of what happened. He gave the family refuge at his house, knowing it would be better, especially for the children, for the family not to remain at the accident site.

Before the accident hap-

pened, the driver of the minivan had planned to pass the tanker truck, which was not traveling at the speed limit. He had moved enough to his left to see the pickup headed across the centerline toward the other truck. When the collision and explosion ensued, he and his family exited their vehicle and ran away from the fire.

"I got the mom and dad and two little girls and took them to my house," Livingston said.

Emergency vehicles from Baylor County and Knox County arrived at the scene, but it was apparent to all observers that no one could have survived the fiery crash.

"Nobody was transported," said Trooper Brody Moore of the Texas Department of Public Safety, who was investigating the wreck. "We're just trying to ID."

Firefighters stood by as the black smoke rose sky-

ward. A prevailing breeze from the south blew the smoke away from nearby highway workers who were just across the way involved in the construction of two new lanes that eventually will turn the section of two-lane highway into a four-lane.

The accident happened at 12:59 p.m., according to a report from DPS spokesman Tony Fulton. Firefighters didn't try to extinguish the fire until about 3:15 p.m., when they trained hoses onto the flames.

Initially, the cargo of the tanker was unknown. Later reports said it was lube oil.

West theorized that Jones could have fallen asleep or had a heart attack. He didn't suspect he was texting on a smart phone.

"I see a lot of them (texters) on the road," West said. "They go back and forth."

When Jones crossed the center stripe, he wasn't weaving, West said.

Monday showed the elevation at 1,318.02 feet, Kuehler said. "That's 22.6 percent conservation storage," Kuehler said.

If the percentage falls to zero, a solution could be to install a lower-level intake system to pump water to the existing intake point — some-

thing the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality might not allow.

"There's nothing that says they have to," Kuehler said.

Without Millers Creek Reservoir as a water supply, municipalities totally dependent on the source would be out of water.

## WATER

From Page 1

"It wouldn't fix the problem, but it would buy us another year's worth of water," Kuehler said.

At the dwindling Millers Creek Reservoir, the reading

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### Property Owners Can Protest Property Appraisal Values

Property owners who disagree with the Knox County Appraisal District's appraisal of their property for local taxes or for any other action that adversely affects them may protest their property value to the appraisal district's Appraisal Review Board (ARB).

A property owner must file a written notice of protest before June 1, 2013 or within 30 days after the appraisal district mails the taxpayer a notice of appraised value, whichever is later. The ARB will begin hearing taxpayer protests on June 30, 2013 for Real Estate and June 21, 2013 for Mineral. Need to call ahead for appointment.

After the ARB completes its hearings and approves final property tax appraisals, local governments will use these appraisals to set 2013 property tax rates.

The ARB is a group of citizens who live in the appraisal district and are appointed by the appraisal district's board of directors, except in Harris and Fort Bend Counties where a local administrative judge makes the appointments. Property owners may protest any of the following issues to the ARB:

- the appraised or market value of the property;
- unequal appraisal of the taxpayer's property compared to similar property in the district;
- inclusion of the property on the appraisal records;
- denial of a partial exemption, such as a homestead exemption;
- denial of special appraisals, such as agricultural or timber productivity appraisal;
- determination that agricultural or timber land has had a change of use and is subject to a rollback tax;
- identification of the taxing unit or units in which the property is located;
- determination that the taxpayer is the owner of the property; or
- any other action of the appraisal office that adversely affects the owner.

The ARB schedules a hearing and sends the protesting property owner written notice of the date, time and place of the hearing. The law contains specific timelines and procedures for both the owner and the ARB throughout the appraisal protest process. These are detailed in the state Comptroller's publication, *Property Taxpayer Remedies*.

Copies are available from KNOX COUNTY APPRAISAL DISTRICT office P.O. Box 47 Benjamin, Texas 79505 940-459-3891. The publication is also available on the Comptroller's website at [www.window.state.tx.us/taxinfo/proptax/](http://www.window.state.tx.us/taxinfo/proptax/) or by calling (800) 252-9121 and press "2" to access the menu and then press "1" to contact the Information Services Team.

# Dixie Divas Paying for my raising

Mama's favorite phrase when I was growing up — particularly during the defiant teenage years, especially when I sassed her — was "you're gonna pay for your raising one day, little lady. Let me assure you of that. You just wait until you have children and see how they behave." She repeated it so oft it became ingrained in my



RONDA RICH

subconscious, and I began to worry over that. Life is full of enough problems without volunteering to bring more upon yourself. So I decided to outsmart Mama and the powers of fate by not having children. After all, if you don't have children, how can you possibly pay for your previously childish ways?

Lately, though, I've been thinking perhaps I've outsmarted myself. Perhaps I've missed a good opportunity to leave behind wisdom and lessons of experience that my children could have passed on to their children and they to their children. Perhaps something I've learned down this journey of life would have helped

someone two generations from now.

All this started playing in my mind when I wrote my latest book, "There's A Better Day A-Comin'." Those words were the mantra of my parents passed down to them from their folks, those hard-working, barely-getting-by people of the Appalachian foothills. For generations, the only way my people could make it when the skies refused to rain and crops lay dying was to assure one another, "There's a better day a-comin'. Just wait and see."

Mama and Daddy lived by that promise and I learned — finally — that better days do come again. They always do. No matter

how hard or sad times are, better days always return. And sometimes a better day arrives when you least expect it.

As I wrote this book with its stories of promise and people who refused to give up when adversity rolled with the weight of a dump truck over them, I found that repeatedly I quoted Mama and Daddy. I shared their wisdom, so pure, so true and sometimes so simple.

"Be careful what you tell your best friend," Mama opined. "She may not always be your best friend. And when she's not, she'll tell your secrets."

"A man who lies to you will steal from you," Daddy said adamantly, tossing a forefinger meant to put a period on the end of that and stop any further debate.

"The best a man will ever treat you is before he

marries you," Mama often counseled to any young woman seeking her counsel. "If you don't like it now, you're sure not gonna like it later."

"When you pray about something, put it in the Lord's hands and walk away from it," Daddy lectured. "Don't keep pestering him with it. Pray about it, release it then stand on your faith."

This barely scratches the surface of their wisdom. They were thinkers who watched life, studied on the human behavior of others and assimilated observations from it all. Repeatedly, I quoted them because often there was the moral to a story that could be summed up in a quote from them.

Equally, though, I quoted myself taking away from experiences — both personally and those of others — bits and pieces of wisdom. From Mama and Daddy, I

learned every situation has a "take away," some things to be remembered and learned from including some actions never to be repeated.

"It only takes one yes to wipe out a thousand no's," is a self-penned mantra I developed when first trying to capture the attention of New York publishing.

"Courage comes by choice and not by chance," was learned while observing heroes up close and personal. It inspired a chapter about the ones who taught me. As I proofed the book, I realized I had outsmarted myself.

Sure, I don't have to pay for my raising, but I've also missed the opportunity to pay it forward.

Ronda Rich is a Southern humorist, storyteller and best-selling author. Her latest book, "There's A Better Day A-Comin'," is available at rondarich.com.



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**2006 Chrysler PT Cruiser, Black/Gray Cloth, 4 Cyl, Auto, 80K, #50636 ..... \$7,250**

**2007 Chevrolet Equinox V6 LS, Maroon/tan cloth, #50945 ..... \$8,900**

**2007 Dodge Durango SLT 4x4, gray/gray leather, all power, V6 Auto, 78K, #50695 ..... Reduced \$13,800**

**2008 Chevrolet Tahoe 4x4 Z71, Blue Granite-Gray Leather, 2nd Row Buckets, LT3 Tahoe, DVD, Sunroof, Navigation, 23K, #50958 ..... \$31,700**

**2008 Toyota Camry 4DR SE, red/black cloth, 4 Cyl, Auto, Sunroof, 50K, #50905 ..... \$14,800**

**2008 Chevrolet 2500HD 4x4 L/B, White-Gray Leather, Diesel, Auto, Bedliner, Pwr Windows/Locks, #50943 ..... \$17,850**

**2008 Chevrolet 1 Ton SRW 4x4 Crew Cab, Black-Gray Leather, Flatbed, Duramax Diesel, 125K, #50153 ..... \$27,000**

**2008 Chevrolet Colorado Crew Cab 2WD, red/ebony cloth, 1LT, 71K #50606 ..... Reduced \$13,550**

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**2009 Chevrolet 1 Ton SRW Crew Cab 4x4, Black-Black Leather, LTZ, Sunroof, Duramax Diesel, Front Bumper Replacement, Rhinoliner, 58K, #50937 .... \$37,500**

**2009 Pontiac G6 GT Sedan, Gray-Black Cloth, V6, Auto, Aluminum Wheels, 55K, #50498 ..... \$13,500**

**2010 Chevrolet 1500 2WD Crew Cab, Silver-Charcoal Cloth, 5.3 V8, Pwr Seat, Steering Wheel Controls, 27K, #50819 ..... \$24,900**

**2010 Chevrolet Avalanche 2WD, black/black leather, bucket seats, Texas Edition, heated seats, 82K, #50840 ..... \$21,500**

**2010 (2) Chevrolet Impalas LT, V6, 26,000 miles, goldmist/charcoal cloth ..... \$18,075**

**2010 Chevrolet 1500 Crew Cab 2WD, White-Gray Cloth, 5.3 V8, Auto. Front Bucket Seats, LT1 Equipment Pkg., 31K #50836 ..... \$27,000**

**2011 Chevrolet 1 Ton Dually 4x4 LTZ, Blue-Tan cloth, Duramax Diesel, Rearview Camera, DVD, 9K, Bedliner ..... \$45,000**

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**2011 Chevrolet Malibu 1LT, White-Gray Cloth, V6 Auto, 47K, #50939 ..... \$13,850**

**2011 GMC Sierra Denali Crew Cab AWD, diamond white/tan leather, 6.2L V8 Auto, Bose stereo, 16k, Like New, #50827 ..... \$40,500**

**2011 Ford F150 Crew Cab 4x4, White-Gray Cloth, V6, EcoBoost, RhinoLiner, 86K, #50931 ..... \$22,000**

**2012 Chevrolet Avalanche LTZ 4x4, White Diamond-Tan Leather, DVD, Sunroof, NAV, 32K, #50944 ..... \$41,500**

**2012 GMC Acadia 2WD, Silver/Gray Leather, 15K, SLT-1 Pkg, 2nd Row Buckets, Rear View Camera, Remote Starter, #30099 ..... \$31,000**

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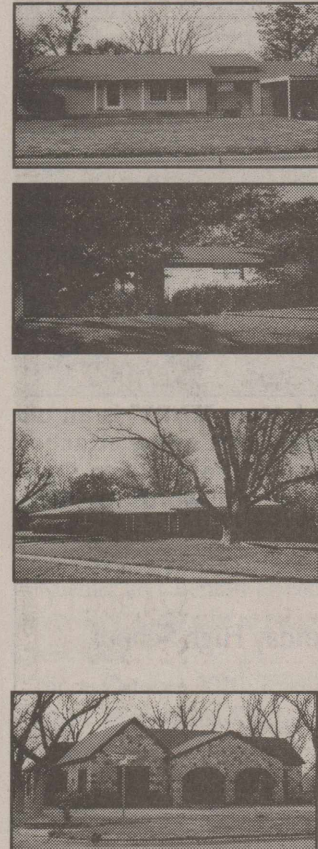
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### Cemetery Series

# 'Old Mexican Cemetery' recognized by state

By Hanaba Munn Welch  
The Knox County News-Courier

High on the south bank of the Salt Fork of the Brazos River, downstream from Rhineland, is a small cemetery two to three acres in size where the surnames of the people buried there are mostly Hispanic.

At one grave, a small marker bears the name "Everett." Even in that case, the barely legible words scratched into the concrete are in Spanish, with the month of death noted as "Julio."

Instead of green grass cut by a mower, the vegetation is wild, grazed by cows that trespass onto the burial ground through holes in the fences. Irises, holding the promise of blooms in time, grow near many of the graves, lending a touch of civility to soften the wildness of the setting.

The graves that can be discerned are in the southernmost part of the cemetery. All visible markers indicate the plots are oriented north and south with headstones to the south.

Near the center of the cemetery, a tall crucifix faces the graves. The concrete cross features a metal sculpture crafted by Deprato, a company known for creating statuary for Catholic churches, cemeteries and other religious sites.

The remote country cemetery is much the worse for wear, thanks in part to errant cows, no doubt. But both the cows

and drought have kept vegetation from encroaching, and the fence, even in disrepair, defines the space.

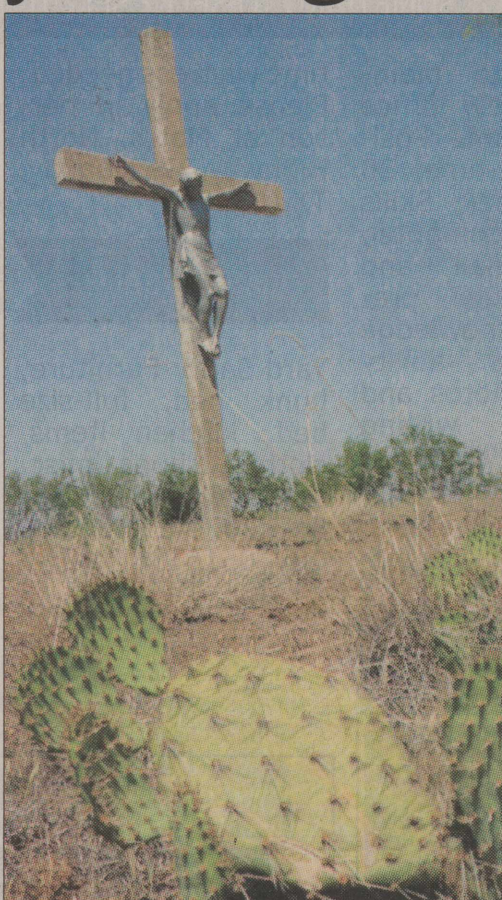
The cemetery has been recognized officially by the Texas Historical Commission as a Historic Texas Cemetery and was the first in Knox County to receive the designation.

On the website of the historical commission is this general explanation: "The HTC designation was developed in 1998 to help protect historic cemeteries by recording cemetery boundaries in county deed records to alert present and future owners of land adjacent to the cemetery of its existence. The HTC designation is the first step toward preservation of a historic cemetery."

The name on the 2009 Historic Texas Cemetery certificate, viewable at the Wichita Brazos Museum in Benjamin, says "Rhineland Cemetery, Knox County." Credit for the designation goes to Geron Hite, now retired, a former overseer of the cemetery division of THC.

Hite took the initiative to note the existence and location of the cemetery and to gather as much information as possible about its history. The results of his research are on file at the museum.

Hite's quest to learn the name of the cemetery came up with no other name than "the Old Mexican Cemetery at Rhineland." If ever the special cemetery had any other name, it's been lost in time.



Photos by Hanaba Munn Welch

Jesus on the Cross reigns over the cemetery near Rhineland called "the Old Mexican Cemetery." The concrete cross is apparently a replacement for a wooden cross that now lies abandoned nearby. Both prickly pear and irises, a blend of native and planted vegetation, grow in the small cemetery near the Salt Fork of the Brazos River.

Gene and Frieda Brown carefully hold together the pieces of a broken metal cross that marks a grave in the old Mexican Cemetery near Rhineland. Cows have pushed their way through holes in the fences on three sides of the cemetery, no doubt one reason some of the markers are broken and lying on the ground. The Browns own adjoining property and maintain a road that leads to the cemetery. Keys to gates across the road are available from the Browns and from the priest at St. Joseph's Church at Rhineland. Seldom does anyone seek to visit the remote site.



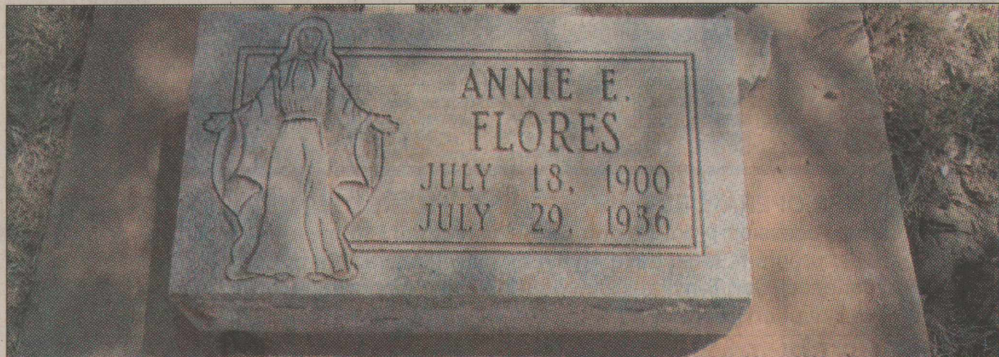
On the back of the sculpture of Jesus on a concrete cross in the Old Mexican Cemetery northeast of Rhineland is the emblem of the manufacturer -- Daprato Statuary Co. of Chicago and New York. The word "orbronze" is Daprato's word for copper-plated zinc, but if the statue ever had any copper plating, no traces are visible now.



Frieda Brown drags her finger through the dirt, unearthing an inscription at the base of a crucifix in the Old Mexican Cemetery near Rhineland. Scrutinizing the inscription with her is her husband, Gene Brown. Written in the concrete is "11-12-77 by John and Pat Garcia." In 1977, November 12 fell on a Saturday, a logical day for work at a cemetery and the day after Veterans Day, a time when ceremonies at cemeteries honor military veterans.



A traditional cemetery fence surrounds the grave of Patrisio Garcia, 1889-1926, at the Old Mexican Cemetery near Rhineland. Flowers are evidence someone visited the grave in the last few years.



In a cemetery where cows wander and graze, a stone marker that lies flat on the ground tends to escape damage. The marker of Annie E. Flores is in better condition than most markers at the Old Mexican Cemetery near Rhineland. If the cemetery has another name, research has not revealed it, and no sign marks the entrance gate.



Lying on the ground but still carrying a plaque with the letters "INRI" is an old wooden cross that must have once carried the figure of Jesus that's now attached to a concrete cross standing nearby at a central point in the Old Mexican Cemetery near Rhineland. The letters are an abbreviation for the Latin words for "King of the Jews" -- "Iesus Nazarenus Rex Iudaeorum."

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Knox County Hospital District

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