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THE KNOX COUNTY News-Courier

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THURSDAY, MARCH 13, 2014

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'Energy ranch' proposed for Knox, King

By Geoffrey Baumgartner
The Knox County News-Courier

BENJAMIN — An Oklahoma-based green energy company has plans to develop an "energy ranch" in Knox and King counties that will harness wind, solar and natural gas for public energy use.

Ryan LLC, a subsidiary of Millennium Energy of Tulsa, a 1,600-employee company with extensive experience within the energy sector, has plans to locate a co-generation natural gas plant east of Knox City and also a solar plant and small wind energy farm in King County.

While the natural gas and solar energy plants will be developed sometime between 2015 and 2017, the King County Wind Energy project should be completed next year 2015. All of these projects together in such proximity are

known as an "energy ranch."

The 750-megawatt co-generation plant to be located east of Knox City utilizes modern technology to turn brackish (salt) water into clean water using evaporation techniques not desalination. In the process, the steam from the heated water is collected, cooled and re-used at a nearby natural gas plant.

Also, with some of the water runoff generated in the process, company officials plan a "hot house" for growing hydroponic crops, namely tomatoes.

Joe Molina, a representative with Millennium Energy, was on hand at the regular meeting of the Knox County Commissioners Court this past Monday to discuss his company, its plans for Knox and King counties and to begin finalizing the tax-abatement process.

"Beginning next month, we will finalize tax issues, and hope to begin construction on the King

County wind project by late 2014," Molina said. "We'll begin construction on the solar and co-generational plant in Knox County by 2015."

In a demonstration of commitment to the project, Molina told commissioners that grants from the Texas Enterprise Fund, as well as the Texas Water Development Board, were being used to bring these goals to fruition.

"We are long-term operators, not developers," Molina said.

Knox County's crestline, just east of Knox City, will be the site of the future project, which was met with approval from commissioners.

The project won't be Knox County's only green energy source. This summer will see the groundbreaking of the Green Pastures Wind Energy Farm being built by Austin-based Pioneer Green Energy on the Knox-Baylor county line.

Knox Notes

Events are listed free of charge as a service by this newspaper for nonprofit groups, civic organizations, churches, schools and select community events. Listings should be submitted at least two weeks in advance and will run as often as possible through the date of the event. News staff does not guarantee placement of events. Emailed submissions are preferred to kcnewscourier@gmail.com.

Sausage Dinner

The annual St. Joseph's Catholic Church Sausage Dinner will be from 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Sunday at the Knights of Columbus Hall, in Rhineland. To-go plates will be available. Country Store Gift Shop will be open. Tickets are \$12 for adults; \$6 for children. Call 940-422-4501 for information or pre-sale tickets.

Drive-By BBQ

The "Mucho Diner's" Relay for Life team of First Bank Texas-Munday will host a "Drive-by Brown Bag Meal," consisting of a barbecue sandwich, chips and dessert from 5 to 7 p.m. March 18. Cost per meal is \$7. Drive by the bank, and team members will deliver to you. All proceeds benefit the Haskell-Knox Relay for Life. For information, call Sandy King at 940-422-4522.

Relay for Life

This year's event will be May 3 at the Munday High School track. Volunteers needed. For information, contact chairwoman, Leann Harlan, at memawharlan@yahoo.com.

Noah Project

The Noah Project-North Advisory Committee will meet at noon Friday in the Jury Room at the Haskell County Courthouse. The organization's Spring Fling will be April 26 at the Haskell Memorial Civic Center, for which donations for the silent auction are still being accepted. Call 940-864-2551 for information.

Support groups

AA and Al-Anon meetings are 7 p.m. Tuesdays at the Doug Meinzer Activity Center, 203 SW Fourth St., Knox City. For information, call JoAnn at 940-658-3926.

KCAC Raffle

Knox County Aging Center members are selling \$1 tickets for a \$250 gift card to Walmart as a fundraising project. The drawing will be held during the center's Mother's Day luncheon May 11. Call the Center at 940-657-3618 for information.

Child safety seats

Knox County Hospital District can provide child car seats to low-income families at no cost. Demonstration classes are at 5:30 p.m. the first Tuesday of the month and at 10 a.m. the third Thursday of the month. Contact Linda Hearn at the Knox City Clinic at 940-657-3906 for information or to register. Classes are taught in Spanish and English.

Corrections

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

News on the go

Use your smartphone to scan the quick response, or QR, code to visit us online.

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UIL shakes up volleyball teams with redistricting plan

By Geoff Baumgartner
The Knox County News-Courier

UIL officials have recently announced several redistricting plans for high school volleyball to be implemented for the 2014-2015 academic year.

While the changes are necessary for the UIL to maintain healthy competition, Knox City and Munday will be facing several larger Class 2A teams.

In addition, for the first time in more than 20 years, conference alignments also have been restructured.

The new Region 1 District 6 will consist of Albany, Benjamin, Hawley, Knox City, Moran, Munday and Woodson. Also, Munday and Knox City will no longer be considered 1A. From now on, they will be classified in Conference 2A.

See **UIL**, Page 8

Sweepstakes!



Sheri Baty/For the News-Courier

The Knox City Greyhound Pride Band received ratings of "1" in both concert and sight-reading music at the UIL concert band contest March 4 at Anson High School. These latest accomplishments, coupled with the band's superior performance at the marching contest this past fall semester, will garner the Greyhound Pride the coveted Sweepstakes award. The Sweepstakes, according to UIL rules, is only available to a particular school in alternating years; this year just happened to be one in which the award was available for Knox City-O'Brien CISD.

Sharpnose, smalleye shiner

Comment period re-opened in light of economic report

By Wayne Hodgin

The Knox County News-Courier

The federal agency that has proposed listing two minnows native to the arid prairie streams of the Brazos River on its list of endangered species has re-opened the public comment period on the proposed rule while it also accepts comments on other portions of the plan.

Last August, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service began the process to ask for protection of the sharpnose shiner and the smalleye shiner under the federal Endangered Species Act, while also designating as critical their habitat in 11 Texas counties in the upper Brazos River region, including Garza, Knox and Stonewall.

The listing also jeopardizes proposed reservoirs planned along the upper Brazos River, including the Post Reservoir in Garza County, the Double Mountain Fork Reservoir in Stonewall County and the South Bend Reservoir in Young County. All three reservoirs are seen as critical to serving the future water needs of the roughly 50,000-plus residents currently living in and between these areas.

Public comments on the plan were curtailed after Oct. 7 but were re-opened last Tuesday when a draft economic analysis of the proposal was made available for public inspection.

Comments on both the proposed plan and the draft economic analysis now will be taken until 11 p.m. (Central Time) April 3. Comments previously submitted need not be re-submitted, as they will be fully considered in preparation for the final ruling.

Economic analysis findings

The draft economic analysis, as conducted by the scientists with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service field office in Arlington, attempts to attach a monetary value to the overall

impact the conservation efforts would have along the 623 miles of the upper Brazos River throughout the 11-county region.

Such conservation efforts included those mostly associated with water management, including flood control and drought protection; transportation activities, including bridge construction; oil and natural gas exploration and development; and utilities projects, including water and sewer lines.

According to the report, the cost of implementing the plan would cost the federal government only \$84,000 a year to implement.

Among the weighty jargon of the report, it was stated that the low figure was partly due to the vast remoteness of the area in concern and the area's relatively sparse population — about 53,000; one-third of which resides mostly in Young County.

The report goes on to state that the designation would have no significant impact on a substantial number of small business, non-profit or government entities because none of those entities would be directly affected.

Furthermore, according to the report, the designation would have little to no economic impact on private property owners — as such impacts would pertain to the federal government — because only a few people own land within the areas to be designated as critical habitat.

Background

Research indicates the populations of these two fish — indigenous to the arid prairie streams of Texas including the upper Brazos River from Possum Kingdom to Post — as well as their habitats, are in decline, said Lesli Gray, spokeswoman for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service public affairs office in McKinney.

See **REPORT**, Page 8



Scientists and researchers with Texas Tech University and the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department help collect endangered sharpnose shiners and smalleye shiners from the waters of the Brazos River west of Rule in Haskell County in this file photo from September 2011.

Texas Parks & Wildlife

HOW TO COMMENT

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will accept public comments received or postmarked on or before April 3. For information on this proposal, what to comment on, or how to submit comments, see the Federal Register notice online at fws.gov/southwest.

Written comments and information concerning the proposed listing and critical habitat proposals and draft economic analysis may be submitted by one of the following methods:

- Online via the Federal Rulemaking Portal at regulations.gov; Docket No. FWS-R2-ES-2013-0008.
- By hard copy: U.S. mail or hand-delivery: Public Comments Processing, Attn: FWS-R2-ES-2013-0008; Division of Policy and Directives Management; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; 4401 N. Fairfax Drive, MS 2042-PDM; Arlington, VA 22203.
- For further information, contact Debra Bills, field supervisor, USFW Ecological Services Field Office, 2005 NE Green Oaks Blvd., Suite 140, Arlington, TX 76006; or by telephone at 817-277-1100.

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The Knox County News-Courier

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 the 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



Letters to the Editor

Jail operations run smoothly thanks to staff

On Jan. 20, the Knox County jail was inspected by the Texas Commission on Jail Standards to determine if it was in compliance with their guidelines.

Again, the jail passed inspection, which it has for the past many years. The inspection covers not only the facility structure, but the procedures, the ever increasing amount record keeping, certifications for the jailers/dispatchers, as well as many other areas.

Inmate files are selected at random to be sure that all book-in documentation is completed properly, along with endless documentation of day-to-day activities and issues dealing with the inmate while incarcerated. It is kind of a term used at times that the jail is an adult day care center, which for the most it actually is. According to jail commission guidelines, inmates must be fed properly, housed along the commission guidelines, medically treated, clothed sufficiently, transported when arrested out of the county on local warrants, transported to medical facilities as necessary, and transferred inmates to a facility for housing sometimes 8 to 10 hours travel time away from Knox County. All the ex-

penses of the housing, transportation, medical attention, feeding, clothing, hiring and training of personnel, facility repairs and upkeep, and everything that pertains to Knox County inmates comes directly from the Knox County Sheriff's office budget and Knox county jail budget.

It's a thankless job having to operate even this small facility with unexpected numbers of inmates with a known budget. I especially appreciate the constant employees that make it a habit to do their job, show up for their regular shifts and are able to adapt to the ever changing requirements and atmosphere both in the jail and with the general public that visit the jail, most of whom are not aware of the day-to-day, minute-to-minute changing requirements that it takes to operate this facility.

Again, thank you to my employees who work diligently to make the jail inspections go smoothly and are able to deal with the requirements of a very important position within this office.

DEAN W. HOMSTAD
Sheriff, Knox County



Local farmer supports Munday volunteer firefighters with donation

The Knox County-News Courier

MUNDAY — Knox County farmer David Kuehler has directed a \$2,500 donation to the Munday Volunteer Fire Department.

Funded by America's Farmers Grow Communities, the donation will help the department purchase needed equipment.

Thanks to the support of farmers across the country, more than \$3.2 million is being directed to nonprofits in 1,289 counties in 39 states.

"The Munday Volunteer Fire Department will use this money to help purchase additional air bottles for the firefighter's SCBA air packs," said Kyle Bibb, MVFD secretary and treasurer. "It will also help purchase mounting brackets for inside the unit, to protect the bottles from harm or damage. The SCBA is a self-contained breathing apparatus, used to breathe clean air when a fireman enters a dangerous, smoke-filled environment."

America's Farmers Grow Communities works directly with farmers to support non-

profit organizations like the Munday Volunteer Fire Department, whose volunteers are doing important work in their communities. The program offers farmers the chance to win \$2,500, which is then donated to the farmer's nonprofit of choice.

The search for funding to sustain and enhance programs is a year-round job for nonprofit organizations across the country. Through America's Farmers Grow Communities, farmers have been able to support a variety of groups, such as schools, fire departments, community centers and youth organizations like 4-H and FFA.

America's Farmers Grow Communities launched in 2010, and has since donated over \$16 million to more than 6,500 nonprofit organizations across the country. America's Farmers Grow Communities, sponsored by the Monsanto Fund, is part of the America's Farmers initiative, which highlights and celebrates the important contributions of farmers like David Kuehler.

Menus: Week of Mar 17-21

Knox City-O'Brien

- Breakfast**
Monday: Biscuits with sausage and gravy or cereal bowl, toast, peaches, juice, milk
Tuesday: Cinnamon toast with sausage or cereal bowl with sausage, pears, juice, milk
Wednesday: Mini corn dogs or cereal bowl, toast, mixed fruit, juice, milk
Thursday: Pancakes with syrup or cereal bowl with sausage, applesauce, juice, milk
Friday: Cinnamon roll with sausage or cereal bowl, toast pineapple, juice, milk

Lunch

- Monday:** Beefy macaroni or antipasto salad or bologna and cheese, carrots, corn, grapes, slushy, milk
Tuesday: Chicken nuggets or fajita chicken salad or turkey and cheese, gravy, mashed potatoes, green beans, pears, slushy, milk
Wednesday: Soft beef tacos or garden pasta salad or ham and cheese, Mexican style beans, lettuce, orange, slushy, milk
Thursday: Hot dogs or zesty tuna salad, tuna salad, mashed potatoes, applesauce, peaches, slushy, milk
Friday: Pizza or chef salad or po-boy sandwich, tator tots, pork n' beans, grapes, slushy, milk

Munday

- Breakfast**
Monday: Golden waffles with syrup, honey graham, mixed fruit, slushy, juice, milk
Tuesday: Cereal bowl, honey graham, peaches, slushy, juice, milk
Wednesday: Breakfast pancake wrap, applesauce, slushy, juice, milk
Thursday: Cereal bowl, honey graham, pears, slushy, juice, milk
Friday: Breakfast pizza, honey graham, pineapple, slushy, juice, milk

Lunch

- Monday:** Spaghetti, or bologna and cheese, corn, green beans, mixed fruit, slushy, milk
Tuesday: Corn dog or turkey and cheese, carrots, pork and beans, banana, slushy, milk
Wednesday: Soft chicken fajita tacos or ham and cheese, Mexicali corn, lettuce, cinnamon apple slices, slushy, milk
Thursday: Chicken tenders or tuna salad, gravy, mashed potatoes, green beans, peaches, slushy, milk
Friday: Pepperoni pizza or po-boy, tator tots, baked beans, applesauce, slushy, milk

Knox County Aging Center

- Monday:** Swedish meatballs, parsley noodles, mixed vegetables, wheat rolls, angel food cake
Tuesday: Glazed meatloaf, red potatoes, broccoli, bread sticks, country apple crisp
Wednesday: Herb roasted chicken, potato wedges, peas, carrots, wheat rolls, strawberries with topping
Thursday: Tilapia, corn, coleslaw, hushpuppies, cherry crisp
Friday: Hamburgers, potato wedges, tomato wedge salad, melon medley

Come eat with us and support your aging center program. Please call in your orders by 10:00 a.m. to 657-3618. Orders can't be taken after 11:00 a.m. please pick up by 11:00 a.m.

USDA: Noninsurable crops deadline looms

Special to the News-Courier

KNOX CITY — Knox County USDA Farm Service Agency Executive Director Nancy Birkenfeld urges producers who want to purchase coverage through the Noninsurable Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) to do so before the sales closing date of this Saturday, March 15.

NAP provides financial assistance to producers of noninsurable crops when low yields/grazing loss, loss of inventory or prevented planting occur due to natural disasters including drought, freeze, hail, excessive moisture, excessive wind or hurricanes.

The following crops have a NAP application closing date of Saturday: sorghum forage, guar, sunflowers, mung beans, millet, pecans, black-

eye peas, watermelons, cantaloupes, pumpkins, peppers and tomatoes

"NAP allows producers to protect their investment by purchasing coverage for noninsurable crops," said Birkenfeld. "Natural disasters are an unavoidable part of farming and ranching and FSA programs like NAP help producers recover when they experience a loss," she said.

In order to meet eligibility requirements for NAP, crops must be noninsurable, commercially-produced agricultural commodity crops for which the catastrophic risk protection level of crop insurance is not available.

In the event of a natural disaster, NAP covers the amount of loss greater than 50 percent of the expected production based on the approved yield and reported acreage.

Eligible producers can apply for coverage using form CCC-471, "Application for Coverage." Producers must file the application and pay a service fee by the March 15th deadline. The service fee is the lesser of \$250 per crop or \$750 per producer per administrative county, not to exceed a total of \$1,875 for a producer with farming interests in multiple counties.

Limited resource farmers may request a waiver of the service fee at the time the application for coverage is filed. Producers must recertify their limited resource status for each year that a waiver is requested.

For more information on sales closing dates and NAP, contact the Knox County FSA office at 940-658-3537 Extension 2.

St. Patrick's Day is March 17

Save some

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Service Times:

Sunday

Sunday School: 9:45 a.m.
Worship: 11:00 a.m., 6:00 p.m.

Wednesday

Awana's, Pre-K to 6th grade:
5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.
Youth: 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Benjamin News

By Gladene Green

Finally, the snow and ice melted, and last week turned out to be a nice one, except for some pretty strong winds a day or two. We can only hope the worst of the winter is behind us, but who knows? Easter is late this year, and we will have an "Easter spell" or two before then. Anyhow, today, Monday, looks like it's gonna be a nice one. But still, no rain!

We learned this weekend of the death of former resident, Betty Mancille. Betty's health had been failing for several years, and, I believe at the time of her death, she was in a care facility in Abilene. Funeral services are pending. My sympathy to her family during this time.

Here 'n' There

The kids and their parents (and teachers) are enjoying spring break this week. Seems early to me, but it may not be — time just gets away from me once in a while. Anyway, I'm sure all concerned will enjoy a few days of sleeping late and maybe catching up on some things that have been neglected for a while. Some may even do a little visiting. Regardless of what they do, the break, I'm sure, is welcome.

The Women of Benjamin met on Wednesday night for an evening of visiting, eating, sharing each others' joys and concerns, and just having a good time of fellowship. This is something we started several months ago and to give everyone who could a chance to join us. We have no set program — just an informal get together. We have a pot luck meal — whatever one wants to bring. We all enjoy it! We are meeting at the parsonage of the Baptist Church, and we invite any and all of the women of the community to join us. We have all ages attending, so there's a variety of topics discussed. As time goes on, we plan to get more involved in community projects, so come on and fellowship with us. We meet at 6 pm on the first Wednesday of each month. We hope to see you there in April.

My family was in Dallas during the weekend with my great grandson, Dillon Keys, who was care flighted to Children's Medical Center on Saturday afternoon. He had gotten sick on Friday and spent Friday night in Seymour Hospital, and on Saturday doctors there thought he needed to be where his kidney specialist is. He has a terrible

infection in his blood and bladder, and is on very strong antibiotics. Doctors think he will be ok after several days. He is in ICU and should be about 3 days before going to a private room for a few days. His system is septic, so it will take a while to clear that up. He had pretty high fever on Saturday, but after the IVs started, it got back to normal pretty quickly, and on Sunday, when we left, he was feeling better. Just like anyone, he didn't like being hospitalized, but we all rest better knowing he is where he does get excellent, specialized care. Please pray for Dillon and his family as he recovers.

I had a chance to visit with Carol Dickson on Tuesday. She's had some rough days. Chemo does that to anyone, but she's in good spirits and knows she will be better after those treatments are over. She goes back to Houston this week to check with her doctors. Frequent tests and evaluations are very important in cases such as hers. It was so good to see her — always positive Carol. She's an amazing person, and we all love her and wish her well as she continues her treatments. And let's not forget her husband, Dick, and sister, Thelma Burt. They are right there encouraging her every step of the way. She's very fortunate, and she realizes it. Please remember them all in prayer.

Did the primary go the way you hoped it would? We had a fairly good voter turnout over here. Over 60 voted in person (both Democrat and Republican), and, of course, the early voting was pretty good as well, so seems like people wanted their voice heard. The run off will be May 27 and locally, the judge's race is all we will have on the runoff ballot. Incumbent Travis Floyd and Jim Dillon are running for that position. The winner of the runoff will be on the Republican ticket and will face Charles Griffith, the Democratic nominee, in the General Election in November. There's much confusion about who can vote in the run off. My understanding is that if you voted in the Democratic primary, you cannot vote in the run off, but if you voted in neither primary you can vote in the May 27 run off. I just checked with the Clerk's office, and that is correct. So keep that in mind and plan to cast your vote for your choice of candidate in May.

Gladene Green is the longtime Benjamin correspondent for the Knox County News-Courier.

The Paperboy

Putin: No more Mr. Nice Guy

I think it's safe to say that Vladimir Putin is playing chess while our leaders are playing checkers.

Raise your hand if you really thought that Putin, a proponent of the old guard of the USSR, would just sit in office and do what the "world community" wanted him to do. If you did, you may be as foolish as the Obama administration.



CHRIS BLACKBURN

For anyone to be surprised at the actions of Putin and Russia is a sad joke. I mean it's not like they decided to be nice in the early 1990s and give up territory. They were forced to give up territory because they were broke. They're no longer broke.

I nearly laughed when Secretary of State John Kerry acted shocked that Putin is behaving like a dictator and grabbing what he thinks is rightfully Mother Russia's. Is our government really that naive?

As someone who spent his entire school career having to get under desks during drills in case we were nuked, mark me as one who has not trusted Russia and will likely never trust Russia. For the life of me, I can't understand why someone would. They've never acted like an ally and have frequently opposed the United States on many issues in front of the United Nations and other world bodies.

The USSR did not stop being a hostile communist regime because they had a change of heart. They have not evolved. And I have a feeling that they are not going to yield in Crimea.

This "world community" fantasy the Obama administration believes in is not real. The Chinese still treat great portions of their population like slaves, countries in the Middle East keep an iron fist on women, and Russia yearns to be a super power again.

And what is the United States doing

about it? We're slashing defense spending, firing generals and admirals, and trying to be everyone's best friend.

If Obama wants to reach the world with his message, he's going to have to put down his checker board and learn some chess. Or else we'll be in the late 1970s all over again with a wrecked economy, bad troop morale and ineffective leadership. Oops ... I guess we already are.

A real quick word about being in the newspaper business:

When someone screws up, which we all do, and it ends up in the newspaper, remember how the scenario unfolded.

If you're going to go out and commit a crime, don't be surprised if your name ends up in the newspaper. And when you and your family are livid at me for making it public knowledge, perhaps you should take a long look in the mirror and figure out how the whole mess started in the first place.

I've placed the names of family, friends and loved ones in my own newspapers. Had I not done that, what message would that send to others who've ended up in print? What does it say about my credibility if I chose favorites?

These are small towns where everyone either knows everyone or is somewhat familiar with them. I get that. It's not fun when one of ours messes up and it's very easy to blame others.

Most of us, at some point, come to the realization that we are responsible for our own actions. Sometimes it happens immediately and sometimes it takes a few years. Of course, that never stops people from getting angry with the local paper and probably never will.

Chris Blackburn is CEO of Blackburn Media Group, owner of The Floyd County Hesperian-Beacon, Hall County Herald, The Hollis News, The Knox County News-Courier, The Post Dispatch, The Childress Index, Wellington Leader and The Stonevall Courier. He can be reached by email at chris@blackburnmediagroup.com and you can follow him on Twitter @WCSBlackburn.



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The 501

Continued in the checkout line

Checkout lines are like elevators. You get stuck between strangers. When you and others are progressing horizontally, conversations can happen. Such lines can be sources of



HANABA MUNN WELCH

free wisdom — especially at farm stores, if not at Wal-Mart. Not so in an elevator crowd. Everyone gazes collectively at ascending or descending numbers, staying mum. Elevator etiquette. I prefer checkout.

My most recent misadventure began with an in-line conversation at a store that sells baby chicks, trailer hitches, Amish jelly and more. I was buying cow feed. The man ahead of me was buying feed for his

goats. Easily influenced, I soon found myself switching to the type feed he was buying — supposedly better than the sacks of feed the man at the back of the store had just loaded for me on the dolly. Poor man.

Just one problem. How best to feed the more nutritious feed? The particles were smaller than the cubes I'd been dumping on the ground for our cows. The goat man said I should serve the stuff on pieces of tin (not tin per se but sheet metal commonly found on most farms — the stuff that blows off buildings and gets stored for future uses).

Hmmm. Sounded like a good plan to me. Have tin, will feed. But I envisioned our cows and the wind wreaking havoc with any unsecured lengths of metal. So, before serving the loose dry feed to our hungry herd on loose tin, I mounted the

rusty metal to frames made of old weathered lumber, mostly 2-by-4s, designing the makeshift feeders to rest on the ground, adding extensions for stability. I built three and loaded them onto the flatbed truck to haul to the feeding area. The longest was 15 feet.

If you drive a pickup through a 14-foot gate and you're carrying a 15-foot piece of anything loaded crosswise, look in your rear-view mirror to see the equivalent of a stupid video. Or just listen.

Not only did I offload the longest feeder in the mishap; all four sacks of feed went too. The dolly man would have thought justice was served.

Back to the house for tools and nails and a quick repair job.

Ultimately, I managed to pour all the feed into the ground-level feeders before the cows arrived from a distance. They

didn't mind my workmanship. I minded the fact that some of them had their feet in the feeders.

By the time all was said and done, they did about the same amount of damage to each feeder that I'd done to the unlucky one in the gate episode. Nothing that couldn't be fixed. That's the beauty of shoddy work. When things break, they're easier to repair and look no worse.

Hmmm again. Isn't designing to minimal standards an acceptable kind of engineering? Then, when things get overstressed you don't lose much in the process. Nice.

If everything breaks all at once, like the feeders, you've achieved uniform strength — a worthy engineering goal indeed.

Maybe I missed my calling.

Hanaba Munn Welch is a columnist and regular contributor to Blackburn Media Group newspapers.

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KC Baseball

Hounds come up short in Rotan tourney

By Geoff Baumgartner
The Knox County News-Courier

ROTAN — Knox City's varsity Greyhound baseball club traveled to Rotan this past weekend to compete in a weekend tournament. The Greyhounds battled hard through inclement weather conditions, but could not establish a win against Loraine or Baird, with the Baird match-up being the closer game of the two.

The Greyhounds went up against the Loraine Bulldogs on the first day of the tournament, but eventually fell short after a late-inning run streak pushed Loraine past the point of victory. Loraine won the game, but was unable to clinch the shut-out based on KC's improving offense and home-plate prowess.

The Baird game was much tighter, remain-

ing close until the end. It was the Bears that did end up getting the W but had to fight and push to maintain their lead throughout. Knox City ended up falling short to the Baird Bears by the narrow margin of 10-7.

While it was a double loss, Knox City coach Jordan Carter is witnessing noticeable improvement and seeing more consistency from his players and admires their toughness.

"The weather was brutal this past weekend but I'm proud of the way the boys kept fighting through the conditions. We put some good innings together. We just have to work on being more consistent to win games," Carter said.

Knox City will be going up against Westbrook in Rotan on Tuesday, in an attempt to establish a win before the end of the month.

The Idle American

'Flappables' twisting in the wind

One can determine much about a man by observation, taking note of the way he dresses and carries himself.

Overalls — like "duded-up" western wear — can easily deceive, however. Overalls carry no guarantee that the guy farms, nor do boots and chaps necessarily mean the man wearing them has ever mounted a horse.

An example was Bryan Wildenthal, a suit-and-tie educator who served as president of then Sul Ross State College (now University) from 1952 until his death in 1965. He exuded quiet confidence, handling problems "unflappably" that would

have set others straightway to "flapping" — or worse. He carried himself well, took the high roads and maintained dignity in all situations. "I've had lots worse burrs than this one under my saddle blanket" was a favorite expression when a problem loomed.



On one occasion, a campus security officer made a startling discovery during early morning rounds.

An effigy of the president swung in the breeze from a campus flagpole.

Forthwith, he found a ladder, cut the rope and stuffed the effigy in a closet.

When Dr. Wildenthal learned of the incident at mid-morning, his pulse rate didn't quicken. He smiled and asked to see the effigy.

"Those overalls appear to be new and about my size," he said. "Do what you will with the 'dummy,' but bring me the overalls."

That night, he presided over a backyard barbecue for students, with "first lady" Doris, prim and proper, alongside. Since only a few hundred students were enrolled in those years, word traveled fast that their beloved president had more than loosened his tie. A mentor to dozens of eventual distinguished educational leaders, Dr. Wildenthal was sporting bib overalls!

The prankster may have been served barbecue by el presidente that night, or at least heard quickly of the educator's informal attire.

For sure, there are many more "flappable" issues these days, both in education and otherwise. Soon to be tested is Lance Hindt, new superintendent of Allen ISD.

A respected educator known for handling thorny issues in exemplary fashion,

he immediately faces a king-size problem in Allen. Fact is, he may be the first superintendent in history to face such an unusual problem upon arrival.

It could be as complicated as Humpty-Dumpty's — one where all the king's horses, as well as his men — decide to seek asylum.

Who woulda — or coulda — predicted that the school's \$60 million football stadium, a Taj Mahal by all measures, would start unraveling in its second year?

With huge cracks in the concourse, it has been declared unsafe and is roped off. They'll have to find another venue for spring commencement, and what fans consider much worse, seek an alternate stadium for home games this fall.

Mess with Texas football and mess with a team that's won back-to-back state championships the last two years, and whoa!

Fingers are pointing like pennants waving from goalposts. Some folks are angry with architects; others are blaming contractors. Another huddle calls it an "act of God." I'm not convinced the Almighty gives a hoot about football, particularly since the rumor spread wildly that the hole in the Texas Stadium roof was left open for his gazing. (My Uncle Mort warns the "Allenites" not to blame Washington, D.C. — "unless they want the cracks widened.")

What with oil and gas drillers on the grill — charged with causing earthquakes by their fracking — they're on the defensive, too.

Dr. Hindt may not "hit the ground running." He may choose to begin by tracking the fracking some folks think is causing the cracking.

As a university president, I don't think I ever wore overalls — as an adult, anyway. Had I done so, I still wouldn't have known which end of a tractor to climb on.

Being hanged in effigy never crossed my mind. "Flappable" that I was, however, being hanged "for real" did.

I once heard of a bunch of farmers at a rural church. They learned they could buy custom-made overalls cheaper if they placed a single large order. They specified the denim be doubled at the knees and quadrupled in the seat. The farmers said they prayed regularly "on their knees." They lamented, though, backsliding twice as much as they prayed.

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

Baylor County Ag Day slated for April 8

By Marsha Ligon
Special to the News-Courier

SEYMOUR — It is that time of year again for Baylor County Ag Day. Ag Day is actually a time when we take the opportunity to recognize and honor the many contributions made by those in agriculture to our community.

The 24th Annual Ag Appreciation Day and Health Fair will be held this year on April 8th at the Cliff Styles Activity Center, 1205 Archer Road, in Seymour. The event is also used as an opportunity to have a Health Fair, which showcases the many valuable services the Seymour Rural Hospital provides. This regional event usually attracts 1,500-plus attendees each year.

There will be lots of activities planned starting with blood draws from 7 to 9 a.m., which requires fasting. A variety of free blood tests are offered by the Seymour Hospital. A free breakfast usually coincides with this blood draw. At 7:45 a.m. there will be a registration for an applicators training class which will start at 8 a.m., and is worth three CEU credits.

There will be 80-plus ag- and health-related booths open for viewing from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. The Texas Blood Institute will be taking blood donations until 3 p.m. in the east meeting room of the Styles Activity Center. There will be a sponsored luncheon provided to those attending the Ag Day event. The meal is served by the local 4-H'ers, and is actually their largest fund

raiser of the year.

Entertainment prior to the meal will be provided by the Earthman family, from Knox City. Emcee of the event for the 24th time will be Barry Mahler. Annual awards will be presented for: Rancher/Cattleman of the year by the FSA's County Committee; Farmer/Conservationist of the year by the Miller-Brazos SWCD; and Agri-business of the year by the Seymour Chamber of Commerce.

The speaker for the luncheon will be Shaughn Ryan, project manager of the Green Pastures Wind Farm. Mr. Ryan will be speaking on progress and plans for the wind turbine project in Baylor and Knox counties. To encourage attendance at the luncheon, three gas cards worth \$50 each, will be given away to some lucky person who is present at the end of the luncheon.

There will be drawings for hundreds of door prizes and a lot of visiting taking place all day long. Drawing for a Henry Golden Boy 22L Rifle, donated by the Farm Bureau, will be held after lunch, tickets are \$1.00 each or 6 for \$5.00. The many booths are always educational and entertaining. As a result of the booth sponsorships and support, the Ag Day Committee is able to offer a \$500 scholarship each year to a graduating senior student from Seymour High.

We invite everyone to join us and support this day long activity.

The event is being orchestrated by the Baylor County Ag Appreciation Day Committee.

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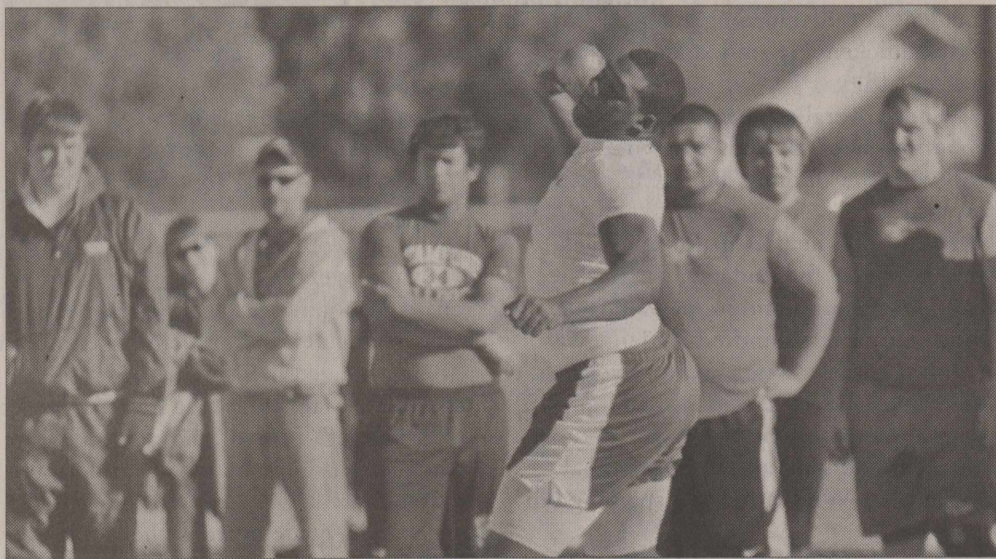


Mary Murphy Photography

The 2014 Munday Mogul varsity boys track team.

Mary Murphy/Special to the News-Courier

Stamford relays: March 6



Photos by Audra Arendall/Special to the News-Courier

Senior Mogul and recent TCU scholarship recipient L.J. Collier begins his mount-up as he is about the toss the shot-put last week at the Stamford track meet. Collier also competes in the discus throw, an event which he finished second in state in last year. Collier is attempting to win the state championship in discus this year.



Moguette Kimberly Shahan narrowly clears the high jump at the Stamford Relay's Track Meet last week in Stamford. After their Hamlin meet on Mar. 15, Munday Moguls and Moguettes will be traveling to Electra to compete in the Electra Tigers Relay Track Meet on Mar. 20.

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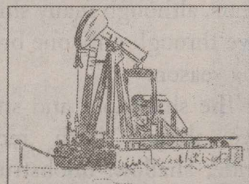
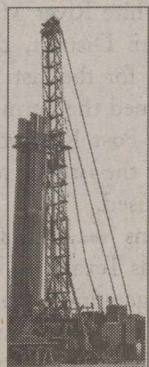
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Dixie Divas

Living the American dream

Somewhere along the line, it seems, people have stopped talking about the American Dream. I can't recall the last time I heard anyone, in person or through the media, remind folks that we live in the greatest country on Earth and that here in this land of profound freedom, opportunities abound and no one, regardless of race or level of economic upbringing, is held back from grand and lofty aspirations.



RONDA RICH

Have we become oblivious to what our forefathers came here to take for granted this land of milk and honey where there is no class or caste system to detain us and where higher education no longer

belongs only to the privileged?

I hope not. I still believe dramatically in this great country where a kid who is underprivileged or orphaned can climb his way to the top of industry, entertainment or politics. Or that same child can create a better existence and a solid, admirable middle class life by becoming a mail carrier or a utility worker or a fireman. He will have a dependable paycheck, insurance and retirement. I still sing the praises of a country where we are not destined to live solely the life into which we are born. We are restrained only by how hard we work and how long we dream.

An overnight package arrived recently and in it was an advance reading copy of the memoir written by our friend, actor Gavin McLeod. The next morning, I awoke in a pre-dawn hour, arose, made a cup of coffee and settled into a comfortable chair to read the book. Gavin, you may recall, made his mark in television in two highly successful, historic shows: The Mary Tyler Moore show where he played Murray and Love Boat where he was the stern but gentle-hearted Captain Stubing.

To know Gavin is to love him. He bursts forth with such enthusiasm, friendliness and warmth that it is like a

tidal wave of happy emotions that sweep over you whenever in his presence. He also loves the Lord with all of his heart so the unsaved should consider this fair warning: He is bound and determined that everyone he meets will hear his testimony for he wants anyone within his massive reach to know the love of an almighty God.

After reading a few chapters of this engaging autobiography This Is Your Captain Speaking, I put the book aside and began to think of the American Dream and what it meant to the people of Gavin's generation. They struggled through the Depression, fought a world war and came home to build industrial America. They took advantage of America's myriad opportunities.

My own parents managed to leave the poverty of the Appalachians behind them. Mama gratefully took a job in a hosiery mill to make ten cents an hour. It was much better than the place from where she came where refrigeration was a wooden crate plopped down in the middle of a cool creek. It kept the milk and butter from spoiling.

Gavin, the child of a poor Irish family, grew up in Pleasantville, NY on what he termed as the wrong side of the railroad tracks. A drama scholarship to Ithaca College made him the first in his family to attend college. He knew no one who had ever made a living as an actor and, of course, his mother wanted him to have steady employment. As a roofer. He followed his passion, though. Despite the hard times and often a lack of funds, he persevered. He pushed through and found tremendous success by following his heart's desire.

The American Dream. Pure and simple. Why aren't we doing more to extol it these days? Why aren't we celebrating the opportunities of a country where the poor can rise mightily?

Have we forgotten how blessed we are to be Americans?

Ronda Rich is a Southern humorist, storyteller and best-selling author of "There's A Better Day A-Comin'." Visit rondarich.com to sign up for her free weekly newsletter.

Wilder's Nature Journal



Though the bobcat prefers rabbits and hares, it will hunt anything from insects, chickens, and small rodents to deer.

By S.J. Dahlstrom

This is a bobcat looking for water at a cow tank on my Papa's ranch in West Texas. Bobcats have a really whiskered face and black tufted ears. I love the way their ears tuft out, it reminds me of my hair in the morning. I think a bobcat is one of the coolest and rarest animals you can see in the outdoors.

Although you can't see its tail here, the bobcat gets its name because their tails are stubby and looks like it's been "bobbed" off.

They also have great camouflage in the woods where I live so that you can barely see them (that is how they sneak up on their prey). Their grey, brown and mottled tan fur with black specks makes them blend into the grass on the plains and the brush in the forest.

S.J. Dahlstrom is a Garza County resident and author of the young adult fiction book series "The Adventures of Wilder Good," based on a 12-year-old boy who enjoys hunting, fishing, cowboying and just about everything there is to do outdoors.

UIL From Page 1

Although the two home teams were previously rivals, Knox City and Munday have not been paired in the same district for several years now. The new structure paves the

way for a rekindling of that cross-county rivalry, said Knox City Athletic Director Charles Steele.

Although he said he initially was apprehensive about it, Steele said this week the new realignment could set the Houndettes up for a playoff run.

"Our new district in vol-

leyball is not going to be what we have been used to," he said. "We have previously been playing most of the schools that are now in our district. The exciting thing is we have been very competitive with them. I believe that we will be right in the middle of the playoff race in our new district."

REPORT From Page 1

"These two small minnows once were found throughout the Brazos River and several of its major tributaries within the watershed," Gray said. "They currently are restricted almost entirely to the contiguous river segments of the upper Brazos River basin in north-central Texas."

This represents a reduction from the sharpnose and smalleye shiners' historical ranges of more than 50 and 70 percent, respectively, she said.

Gray said one of the biggest threats to the species are reservoirs for which river impoundments would adversely affect the fishes' life cycles, including reproductive success, and their breeding grounds.

The maximum lifespan of these species is about three years, although many shiners live through only one breeding season.

The sharpnose and small-eye shiners both require wide, shallow, unobstructed flowing waters to survive, grow and reproduce. Federal officials first identified both species as candidates for ESA protection in June 2002.

Federal wildlife officials propose designating a total of about 623 miles of the upper Brazos River basin, including adjacent wetlands areas extending beyond the river channel by 30 meters on each side, as critical habitat in the following Texas counties: Baylor, Crosby, Fisher, Garza, Haskell, Kent, King, Knox, Stonewall, Throckmorton and Young.

While the federal government's concerns about the

dwindling populations of the two species are legitimate, Tom Fulton, executive director of the White River Municipal Water District, the entity which for the last 50 years has owned the permits to build the Post Reservoir, said scope of the issue is too narrowly focused.

"As humans — and, for that matter, as Texans — we should be genuinely concerned with our planet and protecting other species from extinction. That may be one reason why the good Lord made us a little smarter," he said. "But this decision has the potential to wipe out years of planning for the water needs of our own people."

"We're in the middle of one of the worst droughts this area may have ever seen. We're hurting for water. If we don't take care of our own needs, we won't be able to take care of anything else."



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