

## Will Muenster and Gainesville hospitals merge?

**Enterprise staff report**  
On Saturday, August 11 voters of the Muenster and Gainesville Hospital Districts will decide whether the two districts will dissolve and merge to become the Cooke County Hospital District or if they shall remain separate for at least another year. Some say that if the merger does

not pass, the Muenster Hospital will close. Others maintain that it still might be saved by downscaling services. Many are confused and have yet to determine who to trust and which way to vote. *The Enterprise* hopes to assist those who have yet to decide with the following information.

What happens if both

districts vote to dissolve and to merge on Aug. 11 and when will the new County District begin operating? Gainesville Memorial Hospital Administrator Andy Anderson said, "Officially it begins after the canvassing of the votes, but what will probably have to happen that immediate week following the vote, should it be an affirmation to merge, we'll have an agenda ready to go to canvass the votes. We'll put that out ahead of time because we'll have to canvass the votes one way or another. Then at that date set up a mutually agreed upon date should the merger vote go through

positive, or should it go through in a way where the merger takes effect, we'll set up a date to where that first board will meet. Preliminarily that date is set for the 21st of August."

Enabling legislation (HB 3132) was passed by the Texas House on April 20, 2001 and by the Texas Senate on May 15, 2001. It named an interim board to serve the new district until an election can be held in May 2002. That board consists of five members of the GMH board and four from the MMH board. Those are: David Hutcherson, Karla Metzler, Harrison Wellman, Dave Sanders,

and Jerry Parr. Don Flusche, Gerald Hess, Charles Bayer, and Werner Becker Jr.

### Tax rate

The tax rate being promised by GMH is .18 cents per \$100 property valuation. When that first board meets on August 21 should the merger go through is when Anderson said that the tax rate for the new district will be set. "We can do nothing more than assure the community that that rate will be .18 cents," he remarked.

Some contend that being a new board and with a new district, there's nothing to say they have to do that. Anderson said that with the

interim board consisting of members already serving on both boards. "You've got continuity there. Certainly the five members from the Gainesville Hospital District have no intention of having there be anything other than the 18 cents tax. We have committed that to the people of this community and they're really serious about this."

According to the enabling legislation, the tax rate can be set any where up to .75 cents, which is the tax cap. Anderson agreed, "That's right, the board can set that first rate, but again how do you go in the future? You can give people assurances, but when the new board is not intact yet you can't contractually say, 'We're really not going to go higher than the 18 cents.' The board is committed. They are elected people from this community serving on the present boards and they are serving for this community and we have made a big push over this whole county saying that this tax rate would be .18 cents. We didn't do that to lie. That's for the purpose of building this new hospital."

Once a tax rate is in place it can be raised only a certain amount per year without being subject to a possible rollback election. Cooke County auditor Gloria Parrish explained, "If it (tax increase) exceeds eight percent then you are subject to a rollback. It doesn't mean you'll get it, but you are subject."

Auditors for GMH from the firm Parrish, Moody & Fikes have said that the .18-cent tax rate should support GMH after its new hospital is built. Michael Oatman of that firm said, "Based on the information See MERGER, Page 11

## Proposed MMH budget awaits Saturday's vote

by Dave Fette

Muenster Memorial Hospital Administrator Jack Endres presented the results of fiscal year 2000-2001 to the Board of Directors Tuesday, July 24 showing an overall profit for the district of \$34,832.00 as of June 30, 2001. But his projected budget for next year was much less favorable, predicting a loss of \$400,000.00. On the revenue side, Endres expects a large increase in deductions.

Increased expenses in the areas of salaries, employee benefits and insurance combine to predict the loss for the district.

Last year's budget projected a profit of \$71,000.00 and came within six-tenths of one percent of being correct, so Endres feels that he is about right in suggesting the loss for 2001-2002.

Saint Richard's - Villa showed a loss of \$63,644.00, only half as bad as the \$121,000.00 loss projected last year. Administrator Wes Fuson predicts a loss of \$73,000.00 in the coming fiscal year. He described some of the problems that Saint Richard's has had in maintaining a high-quality level of care. "None of these problems like the drops in reimbursements and the wage war were anticipated when MMH bought Saint Richard's Villa, in a nutshell, we're trying," Fuson said.

The projected budget for Muenster Hospital District will not be adopted until the next regular meeting and could be significantly changed as the Board directs. But Endres asked the Board to consider the tax rate to be charged by the district since the Tax Appraisal District requires it soon to begin assessment procedures for next year.

He told them because of increased property values in the district, the effective tax rate would be .23818, a decrease from the current .27119 rate. Though the

increased tax income would do little to assuage the predicted deficit, Endres recommended raising the effective rate to just short of the rollback level or up to about .257.

Board members Angelo Nasche and James Walterscheid objected to this because they had not seen the projected budget before and solidly objected to more than a three percent increase in taxes levied. After discussion the Board agreed unanimously to take no action on the budget or the tax rate until a meeting at noon on Tuesday, August 14, where they will also canvass the results of the August 11 election on merger of the Muenster and Gainesville Hospital Districts. (See paid advertising on page two of this issue which shows a projected Hospital District budget which Board members Aytes, Nasche, and Walterscheid hope to get accepted).

If the vote for merger passes, the interim county hospital board takes over. They have promised repeatedly a tax rate of .18 but are governed only by the statutory cap on property taxes, in this case, a rate of up to .75.

Other board meeting items included:

- Early voting for the merger question is at Muenster City Hall 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. and 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. beginning July 25, 2001 to August 7, 2001 except Saturdays and Sundays.

- Endres reported that hospital employees Misty Hartman and Joie Reed had resigned, but Jason Endres had decided to stay at MMH.

- Endres reported that patient statistics stayed about even for the year-to-date but revenue had made a large gain of about \$174,000.00 due mostly to a catch-up in Home Health payments and Medicare cost settlement of \$196,000.00.

## Local police called to Saint Richard's Villa

by Dave Fette

The controversy over hospital merger seemed to be heating up more in Muenster last Friday morning and the hot spot was at Saint Richard's Villa. Administrator Wes Fuson said that local police were called when Angelo Nasche, Carol Aytes, and Tara Bayer insisted on taking some nursing home residents to City Hall for early voting on the merger without following correct permission and sign-out procedures. Fuson said "We have policies and procedures that must be followed for the safety and security of our residents. I have stipulated at (Hospital) board meetings - please don't come in unless you check at the office first."

Nasche, a new member of the MMH Board, said that they intended to sign out while Bayer was helping the residents into the car, but the situation got a little out of hand when tempers flared between himself, Aytes and assistant director

Rita Russell. "I checked with the Secretary of State before we went to pick the residents up and it wasn't hot yet being early in the morning (about 9:30 a.m.). Saint Richard's had a notice posted on doors and at the office that application had been made to vote by mail for all residents to avoid potentially dangerous heat stress by doctor's advice.

Nasche said "There was no physical abuse, no one touched anyone."

Muenster Police Chief Bob Stovall said there have been no charges filed and as far as he knew, the incident was over with. He observed no anger or confrontation when he arrived at Saint Richard's Villa, and the two residents who went to vote had their registrations and did vote.

Nasche and Fuson both indicated later that for the good of the residents it was best to let the incident die. Nasche said they would be careful to follow all policies and procedures in the future.



The Sacred Heart Tigers began the 2001 football season Wednesday morning with the usual workouts and drills. Twenty-six high school students repoted to practice under the direction of Head Coach Kris Hogan, pictured. Janie Hartman Photo

## First harvest begins at Oak Creek

Now that the summer fruits and berries in Texas have been harvested and we have all had just about our share of blueberry pie, peach cobbler and canning plums in a hot kitchen, Texas wine grape harvest approaches. The local grower, Oak Creek Vineyards will have their second harvest in approximately two weeks. Their Black Venus grapes were harvested on July 21 since they are the earliest to ripen of the varieties planted at Oak Creek. Black Venus is actually a table grape that makes a unique and, some say, superb port-style wine. When the berries reach a brix level (unit measurement of sugar) of approximately 24° the grapes are ready to pick from the vines, then crushed and separated from the stems, pressed, then allowed to ferment into wine.

The second phase of harvest will be the Cabernet Sauvignon. The last phase, sometime in late August will be the Merlot, Mourvedre, Syrah and Chardonnay.

On the morning of harvest at approximately 6:00 a.m. the pickers, owners, Howard and Amy Davies, their sons and anyone else they can find with a strong back and willing to work, will gather at the vineyard with gloves and pruning shears in hand. They will spend the next six to eight hours clipping the grape clusters from the vines. These clusters will weigh anywhere from one to two pounds apiece, with each vine holding anywhere from one to eighteen clusters depending upon the age of the vine. When the Davies bought the property in January of 1999, the vineyard had been abandoned and neglected for several years. There

were oak trees growing in the rows with seven-year growth rings. The greenbriar was so thick a person could not walk down most of the rows. Many of the vines had finally given up their battle against the heat, the drought and the choking from the greenbriar. What was not pulled completely out from the ground had to be pruned back, some all the way to the ground. The new growth

requires a team of four people. First, the grapes are loaded into a device, which separates the berries from the stems. The device looks like a sideways auger inside of an elongated cone-shaped tub. The stems fall out one end while the juice and berries run out the other. One person keeps dumping the stems into a trailer to be hauled off to a compost pile. Another keeps buckets rotating under the juice and

Next comes testing of the juice, or "must" as it is called at this stage. Specific sugar, sulfur dioxide and acidity levels are needed in order to make wine. Adjustments will be made according to the winemaker's requirements. Once this is done, yeast is added to the must, which will allow the fermentation process to begin. The temperature of the must is regulated in order for the yeast to work properly. As carbon dioxide forms and is released, the skins will separate from the juice and float to the top. This is called a "cap" and has to be punched down into the juice twice a day. Punching down aerates, recharges the yeast, inhibits bacteria and helps to develop color.

After a couple of weeks the must gets tested for the proper Balling degree which tells the winemaker how dry the wine is. It is measured in a hydrometer, just as the Brix is measured but at this point instead of 24° Brix he will want to see 2° to -2.5°. Once the winemaker has determined that the juice has reached the level of Balling he wants, he will direct the pressing of the must. This process will remove all solids from the juice. The winery for these grapes uses a traditional wooden wine press with a wire mesh installed that allows the juice to flow through slats of wood while the top of the device is cranked, pressing everything down. The juice flows fast and freely and is poured into a stainless steel tank where it will undergo its next stage of fermentation.

After a period of time determined by the winemaker, the wine is tested for alcoholic content and acidity. Once any See OAK CREEK, Page 16



Howard Davies of Oak Creek Vineyards shows off the grapes at the veraison (changing of color, texture and sugar) stage of ripening. The first crop of the vineyard was picked two weeks ago. Courtesy Photo

has been strong and this year's crop will bear witness to the care this vineyard has received under the Davies' management.

As yet, there is no winery at the vineyard so the grapes will be stored in air conditioning on the day of harvest and then will be driven during the cooler temperatures of evening to a winery about 30 miles away. There, the winemaker will direct the crushing, pressing and fermenting of the juice. The first process, crushing,

berries while another pours the juice and berries into a holding tank. A fourth person operates the controls of the crusher so that no one person is overwhelmed at any time. Crushing can take several hours, especially with this year's harvest, which is expected to be two tons of grapes. Obviously, this is an outdoor operation because, yes, it makes a huge mess. Hose spray-down of equipment and patio surface is required after this job.



# Letters to the Editor



The Muenster Volunteer Fire Department was called to a grass fire on South Main Street last Thursday. The fire was ignited when workers were cleaning up scrap metal. There was no property loss. Fire Chief Herbie Knabe noted that Cooke County is very near to being put under a burn ban, when the KBDI (forestry gauging index used to forecast burning potential) gets to 600. "So far, we've had just little stuff, the biggest on July 4th of 10 acres, and not too many." The MVFD is preparing for their annual barbecue and auction on Saturday, Aug. 11, at City Park.  
Janie Hartman Photo

## Letter to the Editor

There has to be a better offer! The Muenster Memorial Hospital is a business. There have been other businesses in Cooke County that have closed for various reasons. When faced with difficulties, owners have looked for ways to cut expenses and improve operations. When they could no longer operate, they made a business decision to close for the best offer. But not one gave up title to land, building, equipment, property or the future option to re-open his business if he so chose.

The hospital merger is asking us to give up everything for a countywide district. Is this a good business decision? There has to be a better offer! The countywide plan does not have a definite location, an exact cost, a secure method of funding, or a final

building plan. Are we to give the hospital district a blank check to do with as it pleases? And are we to do this and then have only a minority representation, at best, on the countywide board? Does it make good business sense to buy into a financial deal as unclear as this? All we have so far are unsupported promises. There are too many unanswered questions and unclear issues to make a decision as important as this. No businessman would give up a personal business under these circumstances. There has to be a better offer!

We know what we have and what is needed to operate our hospital. Let's hold on to what we have until all issues become clear and we know what we can expect. This voting issue cannot be reversed once the district is dissolved. Let's wait for a better offer. Why jump into this without concrete answers and definite facts? This does not add up to a good business deal.

Rudy Koesler  
P.O. Box 455  
Muenster, Texas 76252  
*Paid Letter to the Editor*

## Dear Editor:

I would like to use this letter to encourage everyone to vote for the merger. I also want to reconfirm my stand for the merging of the Muenster and Gainesville Hospital Districts as stated in my previous letter to the editor (Feb. 16, 2001).

In last week's Muenster Enterprise the three letters by Duane Knabe, Lynn Klement, and Gary Fisher should answer many questions for anyone who is in doubt about merging. They put many actual facts before us.

Also the "Citizens for

Better Healthcare" are doing an excellent job of providing us with the true facts and information we need. I would like to thank them for all their efforts and hard work.

After giving it careful consideration I believe merging into a county hospital is of utmost importance for improved health care for everyone here and in the entire county.

Sincerely,  
Werner Becker, Jr.  
1739 County Rd. 318  
Gainesville, TX 76240  
*Paid Letter to the Editor*

NEW BOARD MEMBERS WANT TO KEEP OUR DISTRICT, OUR HOSPITAL AND ST. RICHARD'S VILLA  
AYTES, NASCHE & WALTERSCHEID — ASK  
GIVE US A CHANCE MERGER IS FOREVER WE CAN MERGE ANYTIME IN THE FUTURE  
OUR PROPOSED BUDGET FOR 2001-2002 FISCAL YEAR HAS A SUBSTANTIAL TAX DECREASE AND NO DEFICIT  
GIVE US A CHANCE TO SHOW IT CAN BE DONE  
MUENSTER HOSPITAL DISTRICT  
HOSPITAL AND ST. RICHARD'S BUDGET PROJECTION

REVENUE & EXPENSE	Hospital & St. Richard's ACTUAL COST JULY 1, 2000 JUNE 30, 2001	Hospital & St. Richard's PROJECTED BUDGET JULY 1, 2001 JUNE 30, 2002
Operating Revenue		
Inpatient Revenue	\$ 2,128,855.00	\$ 2,200,000.00
Outpatient Revenue	\$ 2,908,954.00	\$ 3,050,000.00
Home Health Revenue	\$ 488,427.00	\$ 510,000.00
Other Operating Revenue	\$ 483,769.00	\$ 350,000.00
St. Richard's Villa	\$ 1,251,524.00	\$ 1,310,000.00
Deductions	\$ (1,959,537.00)	\$ (1,959,537.00) #1
<b>Total Operating Revenue</b>	<b>\$ 5,301,992.00</b>	<b>\$ 5,460,463.00</b>
Tax Revenue	\$ 388,122.00	\$ 317,952.00 #2
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$ 5,690,114.00</b>	<b>\$ 5,778,415.00</b>
Operating Expense		
Salaries	\$ 2,680,576.00	\$ 2,680,576.00 #3
Employee Benefits	\$ 500,702.00	\$ 500,702.00 #4
Physician Guarantees	0	0
Depreciation	\$ 238,496.00	\$ 252,000.00
Audit/Collection Expense	\$ 32,300.00	\$ 40,000.00
Medical Specialist Fees	\$ 591,695.00	\$ 599,000.00-
Fees-Other	\$ 79,462.00	\$ 68,000.00
Medical & Surgical Supplies	\$ 138,791.00	\$ 140,000.00
Drug Expense	\$ 185,352.00	\$ 201,000.00
IV Solutions Expense	\$ 3,894.00	\$ 5,000.00
Office Expense	\$ 45,499.00	\$ 49,000.00-
Department Supplies & Exp.	\$ 227,285.00	\$ 220,000.00-
Linens & Bedding Expense	\$ 5,996.00	\$ 7,000.00
Food Expense	\$ 105,433.00	\$ 122,000.00
Utilities	\$ 152,946.00	\$ 162,000.00
Miscellaneous Expense	\$ 27,659.00	\$ 30,000.00
Miscellaneous Maintenance	\$ 9,588.00	\$ 8,000.00
Purchase Maintenance	\$ 67,569.00	\$ 71,000.00
Dues, Subscrip. & Purch Serv	\$ 88,698.00	\$ 90,000.00
Travel Expense	\$ 12,987.00	\$ 14,000.00
Insurance / Interest	\$ 166,588.00	\$ 166,588.00 #5
Home Health Expense	\$ 282,519.00	\$ 290,000.00
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 5,644,035.00</b>	<b>\$ 5,715,866.00</b>
Tax Collection Expense	\$ 11,247.00	\$ 12,000.00-
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 5,655,282.00</b>	<b>\$ 5,727,866.00</b>
<b>Profit/ (Loss)</b>	<b>\$ 34,832.00</b>	<b>\$ 50,549.00</b>

#1 Bad debts, unpaid bills, Insurance adjustments were less than projected for Fiscal year 2000-2001. We used that year experience for the 2001-2002 projection, as the Hospital patient days have also decreased.

#2 We propose a \$19818 tax rate for fiscal year 2001-2002 which is 20% reduction from the effective tax rate of \$23818 and 29.5% reduction from the current tax rate of \$27119

#3 & 4 We show no increase overall in Salaries and Employee benefits. Salaries and Employee benefits will be balanced against employee attrition.

#5 Insurance, Interest cost was \$36,000 less than projected for fiscal year 2000-2001. We will project the same cost experience in fiscal 2000-2001 for the 2001-2002 budget.

Once Again, this is not the MMH District Proposed budget presented to the board on July 24.

It is the projected budget of Nasche, Aytes, and Walterscheid  
Political Advertising Paid for by: Muenster Hospital Support Group  
John G. Aytes, P.O. Box 209, Muenster, TX 76252

Think ... Think ... Think...  
A BIRD IN THE HAND IS WORTH TWO IN THE BUSH.  
VOTE TO KEEP  
MUENSTER HOSPITAL DISTRICT

## City Council Agenda

The following is the agenda for the regular meeting of the Muenster City Council to be held at 7:30 p.m. in the City Hall meeting room on Monday, August 6, 2001.

1. Call meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.
2. Opening prayer.
3. Approve minutes of the regular meeting on July 2, 2001, and special meeting on July 20, 2001.
4. Recognize visitors and invite them to attend the entire Council meeting and to discuss their business.
5. Consider any other business to come before the Council.

### OLD BUSINESS:

1. Consider and act on opening of Second Street between Maple and Ash Streets.
2. Discuss disposition of old library building and sale of shelving units. Take action as necessary.
3. Review Texas Municipal League's letter regarding 2002 Municipal Contribution Rate, which includes changes adopted by Texas Legislature. Take action as necessary.
4. Receive quarterly police activities report.

### NEW BUSINESS:

1. Consider and act on rescheduling date of September council meeting, due to September 3 being Labor Day holiday.
2. Set date for budget workshop.
3. Consider and act on TMC Notice for employee insurance for October 1, 2001 through October 1, 2002.
4. Consider and act on merit increase for city employees.
5. Consider and act on approving hiring of new employee.
6. Consider and act on swimming pool closing date of August 12.
7. Consider and act on a resolution to nominate candidates for Board of Directors of the Cooke County Appraisal District.
8. Receive information update on city projects.
9. Information review of budget summary.
10. Review and act on monthly bills.
11. Adjourn.

# MUENSTER ENTERPRISE

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## 2-WEEK EVENTS CALENDAR

Sunday, August 5, 2001 Muenster Museum Open 1-4 PM Temple Reunion, noon, City Park	Monday, August 6, 2001 Texoma Cattle Women Meeting, 7 PM, Grayson Co. Farm Bureau, Sherman Bereaved Parent/Grandparent Support Group Meeting, 7 PM, Home Hospice Office	Tuesday, August 7, 2001 Exercise Class, 10:30-11:30, S.N.A.P. Center Storytime, 10:30 AM Lindsay High School Registration 1-3 PM	Wednesday, August 8, 2001 Exercise Class, 10:30-11:30, S.N.A.P. Center Library open 2:30 - 5:30 PM MISD Elementary New Student Registration, 10 AM-3PM	Thursday, August 9, 2001 Exercise Class, 10:30-11:30, S.N.A.P. Center Muenster Museum Open 1-4 PM Library open 10 AM - 6:30 PM MISD Elementary Parents Night, 6 PM Kiwanis Family Swim Night, 7-9 PM	Friday, August 10, 2001 Muenster Museum Open 1-4PM MISD Staff Development	Saturday, August 11, 2001 Merger Election Day MISD 5th/6th Grade Orientation, 9-11 AM Muenster VFD Barbecue
<b>MUENSTER HORNET BAND SUMMER SESSION 1 - 3 PM</b>						
Sunday, August 12, 2001 Muenster Museum Open 1-4 PM	Monday, August 13, 2001 MISD Teacher Work Day Lindsay ISD Kindergarten Registration, 6:30-7:00 PM, 7th/8th grade, 7:00 PM VFW #6205 Meeting, 8:00 PM	Tuesday, August 14, 2001 Exercise Class, 10:30-11:30, S.N.A.P. Center Library open 10 AM - 6:30 PM MISD 1st Day of School	Wednesday, August 15, 2001 Exercise Class, 10:30-11:30, S.N.A.P. Center Library open 2:30 - 5:30 PM	Thursday, August 16, 2001 Exercise Class, 10:30-11:30, S.N.A.P. Center Muenster Museum Open 1-4 PM Library open 10 AM - 6:30 PM	Friday, August 17, 2001 Muenster Museum Open 1-4 PM SH vs. Thackerville, T, TBA	Saturday, August 18, 2001

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## Letter to the Editor.

I was visited in our home by a group of pro-merger citizens, all of whom are long time friends who I respect and admire, to explain to me their reasons for merging M.M.H. and G.M.H. to Cooke County Hospital District. We had a very cordial visit, and I'll admit when they left they had me on the top rail of the fence, not sure on which side to climb down. I was telling another friend about my indecision, and he asked me if I had read H.B. 3132, which is the legislation for merging M.M.H. and Gainesville hospitals. He convinced me to get a copy and read it, and as I read it red flags started flying. On page 4 line 6-13 to 6-23, about the 75 cents per

\$100.00 valuation. We've been told from the get-go that M.M.H.'s tax is 27 cents. Gainesville's tax is 18 cents, and if we merge the two hospitals our tax would be 18 cents or less. Why should we give them a blank check for 75 cents? A lot of the homes in the community are close to or over a hundred thousand dollars, and it makes me shudder to think we may have to pay 4 - 5 - 6 - hundred or more dollars tax just for the hospital alone.

Page 7 lines 12-16 to 13-1 about all the administrators and assistants they are allowed to have, threw up another red flag.

Page 9, lines 18-8 to 18-24 states the district shall continue to operate an acute care hospital facility in the

City of Muenster UNTIL the district constructs a new hospital facility to serve the residents of the City of Muenster. In other words the way I read it, after the district hospital is up and running, the district is not obligated to keep any medical facilities in Muenster. Its at the discretion of the hospital board. The present M.M.H. board is made up of honest concerned citizens who would keep the facility open, but hospital board members change from year to year.

Also on page 3 lines 4-9 to 4-13, states if the merger is not approved, another election can be called after a year has passed.

Ray Voth  
1719 S. FM 373  
Muenster, Texas 76252  
**Paid Letter to the Editor**

See Letter References to Legislation on Pages 12 and 13

## Dear Editor,

It is the policy of St. Richard's Villa, and of most nursing homes, that any resident who leaves the building has the consent of his or her family and/or guardian before they are allowed to leave the home. A competent, responsible resident may, of course, sign themselves out. Our policy states that "The resident or the responsible party must sign the Leave of Absence Form before the resident can leave the premises." In addition, "There must be a written physician order."

It is also our policy that the nursing home staff be made aware of a resident's departure, and that the resident is checked in and out of the building. This is

done for obvious reasons, especially for the safety of our residents. We are very concerned about the safety and wellbeing of our residents, and are very aware of the trust that many families place in us to take care of their loved ones. We feel privileged to be allowed to care for so many families.

As Medical Director and Administrator of St. Richard's Villa, we would like to apologize for an incident that occurred on July 27 when two residents were taken from the home by people who have no connection with the nursing home beyond occasional volunteer work. Fortunately, no one was injured and the residents

were safely returned.

Evidently, these people were not aware of, and did not inquire into, normal protocols for removing people from a nursing home. We would like to reassure our residents' families about the safety of our residents. We will make every effort to ensure that this sort of thing does not happen again. All residents must be checked in and out of the home, and informed consent obtained for the absence. We hope that no one loses confidence in St. Richard's Villa because of this unfortunate incident.

Sincerely,  
Wes Fuson,  
Dr. Audrey Morrill  
St. Richard's Villa  
Muenster, TX

## Dear Editor,

How lucky we are to live in a world of specialized medicine! Exciting research and medical breakthroughs occur on a daily basis, and although this complicates healthcare for patients, we all benefit. Emergency medicine is included in this area of exciting change. Emergency physicians and nurses are trained to specifically treat trauma and life-threatening illness.

GMH currently offers a full service emergency room staffed with such professionals. Due to less demand, MMH does not. And while we have been fortunate to have wonderful doctors and nurses at MMH, we do not have the luxury of employing specialized emergency health providers working within an emergency department twenty-four hours a day; nor do we have the diagnostic equipment, monitors, and around-the-clock lab that GMH can boast.

Many citizens are worried about losing their emergency room. But the fact remains that MMH is not a trauma center and should not be perceived as such. This is why Care Flite sightings over Muenster are common. Additionally, there is no guarantee that the physician on call will be at the hospital at the time of a patient's arrival. And if arrival is in the evening or nighttime hours, the same goes for the laboratory and x-ray technicians.

Opponents to the proposed merger have claimed that in the event of a heart attack, a trip to Gainesville may be "the rest of your life" - a slogan which closely imitates an advertisement used by Denton Community Hospital to promote their new heart center and deter patients from traveling to Dallas. Maybe borrowing the slogan was not such a good idea since MMH does not have a heart center or provide definitive treatment for heart attacks. Our physicians stabilize patients and then transfer them to a facility that provides the necessary cardiac care under the supervision of a cardiologist. But what many do not realize is that a patient can be stabilized in the back of an ambulance, a Mobile Intensive Care Unit, while in route to our new county hospital which will offer definitive treatment of heart attacks. The drugs that they receive from the

skilled paramedics are the same as would be given in our local emergency room. In fact, the standards for stabilizing a patient with acute cardiac abnormalities are set by protocols ordained by the Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS) system. Emergency room staff as well as paramedics in the field follow these procedures, which include monitoring with an EKG and the administration of cardiac drugs. In fact, paramedics even have the ability to insert an artificial airway and place patients on a ventilator while in the ambulance, and all are done while communication with the hospital's ER is maintained.

According to the American Heart Association, care for victims of heart attacks and other emergencies should follow their Chain of Survival guidelines. These guidelines include: (1) calling 911, (2) beginning CPR, (3) use of an Automated External Defibrillator (AED), and (4) transfer to advanced care. Thanks to our local Volunteer Firemen, we can easily follow these guidelines. They arrive at the scene with great speed, armed with their AED to shock the heart back into a life-sustaining rhythm. The American Heart Association states that defibrillation with the AED in the first 5 minutes of cardiac arrest increase the chance of saving the victim's life by 50%. Depending on location, our firemen can usually meet this specification with time to spare. The last step of the Chain of Survival is where the EMS team comes into play and initiates ACLS to give cardiac drugs. These actions help the heart respond to defibrillation and then maintain a more normal rhythm. **With or without** a local ER, this Chain of Survival continues. The time period for initiating ACLS does not change because the system calls for an ambulance to provide transport to the ER, and ACLS begins with the arrival of the paramedics on the scene.

Citizens for Better Healthcare want to ensure that the people of our community have access to the best medical care possible in urgent situations. That care will be provided in a new, state of the art medical facility that

is equipped with specialized emergency physicians, nurses, equipment, and medications. This commitment to better healthcare also includes a continued effort to secure an ambulance service in our community, thus ensuring up-to-date medical care in the most timely manner possible. While heart attacks and other life-threatening situations are certainly frightening, citizens of Muenster must educate themselves in life-saving methods such as CPR, and have confidence in our local firemen and EMS. More information on the Chain of Survival and ACLS can be found on the American Heart Association's website. Muenster's union with Gainesville will allow transport to a full service ER, save trips in the Care Flite, and allow patients to recover in a first-class facility only twelve miles away from home. The future of healthcare is full of exciting life-saving changes. Muenster should be a part of these changes.

Kimberly Walterscheid  
P.O. Box 252  
Muenster, TX 76252  
**Paid Letter to the Editor**

Dear Editor:

I have not commented or responded to the various allegations and statements made by the opponents of the hospital merger in their anonymous "newspaper" since most of them dealt with silly personal attacks against me and certain members of the MMH Board of Directors. In the latest issue (the one with the cartoon of St. Richard's on the front), however, there was one factual story reprinted from the High Plains Journal - The Farmer-Rancher Paper that dealt with Coon Memorial Hospital in Dalhart, Texas. Apparently, the purpose of the story was to suggest that we did not need to merge because Coon Memorial Hospital was doing so well. As usual, the opposition group compares apples to oranges without any explanation of the differences between the two hospitals. I have listed below just a few of the more important facts not mentioned by the opposition group.

### Coon Memorial Hospital

1. Is located in the county seat of Dalhart, Texas, which has over 7,200 residents.
2. The next closest hospital is 40 miles away in Dumas, Texas. The next closest hospital in the state after Dumas is almost 80 miles away in Amarillo.
3. The hospital district which owns Coon Memorial covers two entire counties, Dallam and Hartley, which are ranked 13th and 8th respectively of the counties in the state in per capita income.
4. The tax rate for Coon Memorial is \$0.22 per \$100 of taxable value and generates in excess of \$1.2 million in tax revenue each year.
5. Coon Memorial Hospital is designated as a sole community provider for Medicare purposes which significantly increases Medicare reimbursement.
6. Coon Memorial Hospital is only nine years old and is designed for maximum efficiency in today's healthcare environment.

### Muenster Memorial Hospital

1. Muenster is not the county seat and has approximately 1,600 residents.
2. The next closest hospital is only 15 miles away in Gainesville. In addition, there are seven other hospitals within 50 miles of Muenster.
3. The Muenster Hospital District covers only the western third of Cooke County. Cooke County is ranked 64th in the state for per capita income.
4. The tax rate for Muenster is \$0.27 per \$100 of taxable value and last year generated \$388,122 in tax revenue. We would have to raise our tax rate to \$0.75 to generate the same amount of support that Coon Memorial gets.
5. Muenster can not be designated as a sole community provider hospital for Medicare purposes because we are located too close to Gainesville Memorial Hospital.
6. Muenster Memorial Hospital is over 37 years old and is not designed to operate efficiently in today's healthcare environment.

The above information regarding Coon Memorial was obtained from Mr. Leroy Schaffner, the CEO and Administrator of Coon Memorial Hospital. As always, I encourage every voter to cast their vote based on the facts. If you have any questions or need any further information, please don't hesitate to call me.

Sincerely, Jack R. Endres, 605 North Maple, P.O. Box 370, Muenster, Texas 76252  
Administrator (940) 759-2271 Fax (940) 759-5080  
Muenster Memorial Hospital  
**Paid Letter to the Editor**

## Dear Fellow Voters;

First, we would say, we, the people of Muenster did build a top-notch hospital in the year 1963.

As voting citizens in the Muenster Hospital District we have a few questions to pose to the citizens who are concerned about our COMMUNITY, its HEALTHCARE and its HOSPITAL DISTRICT. Why does Gainesville want us? Why do they want those particular board members on the interim board? What kind of DEAL was made? Why would the voters of Muenster Hospital District who chose anti-merger candidates to represent them want pro-merger people on a board not even in existence yet? Who do we trust anymore? What if Gainesville's new hospital doesn't bring in the Doctors? How many specialists will there be? What if something happens to delay completion for years? Look at Denton's State of the Art Hospital. How many years was it empty? . . . not passing inspection?

Another question we pondered. Why did the Muenster Hospital District buy the Nursing Home (St. Richard's). If the Muenster Hospital was losing money? Why should we think Gainesville will keep a losing enterprise such as St. Richard's Villa?, the Clinic? Or ANYTHING ELSE that goes with the "merger deal"? Aren't contracts broken everyday? Don't lawyers always make sure the fine print contains loopholes or clauses enabling them to interpret it the way they see fit? And what about bills and laws that are signed and put into effect by legislation every day? They are subject to rewrite.

Who is waiting to pick up the pieces of a discarded Nursing Home if it is not feasible for a new district to support it? Who would be the enterprising owners of the clinic if it too becomes a burden for a new district? We could go on and on with questions. Too many promises and supposed to be's are in this proposition of merger. Too many who at

one time reaped the harvest of the good times of the Hospital have pushed for merger. Where is their true STEADFAST Muenster Community Spirit. The SPIRIT that built the CHURCH, the SCHOOLS, the CITY OF MUENSTER, the HOSPITAL, the PARISH HALLS, the different PARKS, the LIBRARY, ETC. If all those who push so hard for the merger NOW would push to make our hospital work, we would not even need a vote on August 11, 2001.

We ask all to think about these questions. We both have thought them over and asked many pro and anti merger factions these same and many more questions. We have come to the conclusion that we will be voting to KEEP OUR DISTRICT for now. We sincerely hope you will do the same!

Sincere Thanks!  
Arthur J. and Frances  
Bayer  
136 S. FM 373  
Muenster, TX 76252  
**Paid Letter to the Editor**

## MERGER DECISION IS FOREVER !!!!!

**THIS IS NO TIME TO MERGE ~ THE HOSPITAL HAS JUST COMPLETED THE SIXTH YEAR WHEREIN SURPLUS TAX MONEY IS LEFT OVER, PROVING WE CAN OPERATE OUR DISTRICT WITH LOWER TAXES.**

**WE CAN WAIT 2 OR 3-YEARS TO SEE EXACTLY WHAT WE GET IN THE NEW HOSPITAL PACKAGE. HB 3132 ALLOWS ALL THE TIME WE NEED. WE CAN RE-VOTE EVERY YEAR IF WE WANT TO. TOO MANY UNCERTAINTIES NOW! NOTHING POSITIVE!**

**STATE LAW ALLOWS A HOSPITAL DISTRICT TO PLACE A CAP ON ALL INDIGENT CARE. NO RUINOUS INDIGENT CARE COSTS ARE THREATNING. THAT WAS JUST ANOTHER UNTRUTH.**

**YOU CAN HELP US LOWER TAXES ~ LET'S LOWER HOSPITAL TAX TO 19.8-CENTS..... THAT IS OUR RECOMMENDATION TO THE M.H. BOARD!**

**DOOMS DAY IS APPROACHING, LET'S ALL VOTE AGAINST DISSOLUTION!**

Political Advertising Paid for by: Muenster Hospital Support Group  
John G. Aytes, P.O. Box 209, Muenster, TX 76252

See More Letters  
on Pages 2 & 6







CITIZENS FOR BETTER HEALTH CARE are UNITING for a HEALTHY FUTURE

We, the undersigned, believe MERGING our District into a UNIFIED COOKE COUNTY DISTRICT, is the best way to provide QUALITY HEALTH CARE into the 21st century.

We urge you to vote FOR "The Dissolution of the Muenster Hospital District and Creation of the Cooke County Hospital District..." on Saturday, August 11, 2001.

Handwritten names in the first column: David Martin, David H. ...

Handwritten names in the second column: Dennis ...

Handwritten names in the third column: Bill ...

Handwritten names in the fourth column: Rose ...

Handwritten names in the fifth column: ...

Handwritten names in the sixth column: ...

HELP BUILD A STATE OF THE ART HOSPITAL CLOSER TO YOU THAN WAL-MART. VOTE FOR MERGER

A COUNTY-WIDE DISTRICT ASSURES YOU OF A GREATER NUMBER OF SPECIALISTS NEARBY.

A TAX RATE OF 18 CENTS CAN EASILY PAY OFF THE NEW HOSPITAL WITH THOUSANDS LEFT FOR INDIGENT CARE.

POOLING OUR RESOURCES ENSURES THE BEST MEDICAL CARE FOR ALL RESIDENTS.

GMH MADE \$485,000 (no tax money included) SO FAR THIS YEAR. MMH LOST \$290,000 (no tax money included) IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS.

GHD IS DEBT FREE MHD HAS A \$500 THOUSAND DEBT

WHAT GOOD IS A HOSPITAL DISTRICT WITHOUT A HOSPITAL? VOTE FOR MERGER TODAY!

ANOTHER CHANCE NEXT YEAR? DON'T COUNT ON IT! VOTE FOR MERGER TODAY!

LOOK WHO'S TALKING. A BROAD SELECTION OF OUR DISTRICT'S LEADERS ENDORSE THE MERGER.

A UNIFIED COUNTY HOSPITAL DISTRICT IS THE BEST WAY TO PROVIDE QUALITY HEALTH CARE INTO THE 21st CENTURY.

Our sincere thanks goes out to the many voters who have pledged their support but for personal or business reasons opted not to have their signatures published.

VOTE FOR MERGER! with a checkmark icon

Advertising paid for by CITIZENS FOR BETTER HEALTHCARE At Felderhoff - Chairman Jimmy Jack Biffle - Treasurer PO Drawer L, Muenster, TX 76252



# Letters to the Editor

## Letter to the Editor,

Our hospital board provides excellent doctors, nurses, staff, medical equipment and facilities at Muenster Hospital with fees and taxes. But the hospital board has no control over two critical areas: low patient load and declining federal medical reimbursement? (1) Patient load is often determined by insurance with many insurance companies excluding MMH from their network. Thus, it remains low. (2) Federal reductions in medical reimbursements have resulted in MMH paying medical expenses previously paid by MEDICARE/MEDICAID.

MMH and Gainesville districts receive less federal reimbursement because two hospitals compete for federal dollars in a small county. Merging hospital districts will result in larger federal reimbursements, reducing the demand on taxpayers and higher fees. Is there an option to defeat the hospital merger this year and vote again next year? Yes, but the huge cost to the community is most merger benefits may disappear. Assuming Gainesville Hospital board builds a new hospital and then Muenster voters approve a merger, there may be no guarantee of

Muenster representation on the Cooke County Hospital board of directors; jobs for MMH doctors, nurses, and staff; a medical clinic in Muenster; continued operation of St. Richard's Villa, etc. Without a job guarantee, some of the current medical staff may apply for positions at the new hospital. The MMH tax rate may increase dramatically while the hospital district seeks to stay solvent. For these reasons, we will vote YES to merge the hospital districts now.

Steve and Kay Broyles  
407 West Ninth Street  
Muenster, TX 76252  
**Paid Letter to the Editor**

## To the Editor:

Each time I drive into Muenster, my foot gets heavy on the pedal! There's no place like home! Even though I have been gone from Muenster for over forty years, my heart yearns to return. I often find myself wondering if you all know just how blessed you are to live in such a special place as Muenster! It's such a clean and neat little town, and everyone knows everyone else, and people speak to you on the street or wave to you, as you pass them on a country road.

I want to urge each one of you to get out and vote on the 11th of August. If you do not vote, then don't ever comment on the results. One of the letters to the editor today said that her heart tells her to vote against the merger, but her mind tells her to vote for it. It has taken me a long, long time, but I have learned that one is much happier in life, if they follow their heart! I think—the TLC received at the Muenster Hospital far outweighs all the high tech machines, etc. found in some of the larger hospitals. I know that the hospitals in Denton have some wonderful and dedicated nurses because some of them are people that you and I know and love, but I also know that many lives are lost in the larger hospitals due to nurses being overworked and the hospital being understaffed. As an example, my cousin, Johnnie Sue Hogan, is a respiratory therapist at Lubbock's largest hospital. I went with her one day to pick up her schedule, and was shocked to see she was given 70 people for an 8-hour shift. Now let's figure that out: 8X60=480. 480 divided by 70 means that every 6.8 minutes she is suppose to give a breathing treatment to a patient. That would be humanly impossible, and to make it even worse, she has to cover three different buildings. Now, would you feel more comfortable in a hospital that is this overworked and understaffed, or would you feel more comfortable in a hospital that has nurses and staff members who know and love you? I'm sure that there are numerous times when a nurse in Muenster goes to church and remembers one of her patients in prayer; thus, asking the greatest of all physicians to help her patient with His tender, loving care! Susie had to decide which ones to treat and which ones to neglect! What a terrible burden to bear!

GO VOTE! LISTEN TO YOUR HEART! See how you feel in a year, and if you feel differently, then you can vote differently. Sincerely, Judy Hartman 818 Stanley St. Denton, TX 76201-2494 **Paid Letter to the Editor**

Dear Mr. Fette, Editor to the Muenster Enterprise

I feel the merging of the two Hospital Districts carries more emotion with it than any other aspect of the plan. Many of you were here when the Hospital was created. It started with a dream as were so many of the businesses in Muenster and Cooke County. A number of businessmen and women and citizens of Muenster formed a group and went out to sell the idea to others in the area. Donations were sought and the good people in Muenster who worked hard for their money saw the good in having their own hospital. After the funds were raised and a loan was secured from the Hill Burton Act, the Hospital was built and doctors came in to take care of the patients. The patient load was not adequate to take care of the debt load and operating expenses, so the Board of Directors sought a way of providing funding to keep the Hospital afloat. This was accomplished by creating a Hospital District that enabled the collection of ad valorem taxes. This was not well received by the taxpayers. Many long, hard hours were spent to accomplish this important project. Boundary lines had to be set and many of these came with opposition where compromise and negotiations were necessary. After a few years with a tax base helping with the expenses, the Hospital was blessed with good Doctors like Drs. Kralicic, Antonetti, Juarez and Knight, who were willing to work long, hard hours to make the Hospital self sufficient. These Doctors did everything from small lacerations to extended surgery. After the Hospital debt was paid off, the ad valorem tax revenue was dropped and the income from month to month operations kept the Hospital afloat and gained a sizable savings account.

My family enjoyed the benefit of the Hospital in many ways. I had several surgeries here myself. My Dad and Mother not only were patients on many occasions, but also helped in gathering funds and gave a sizable donation at the onset. I returned home from the Navy when the Hospital was at the beginning stages of being developed. My Dad told me of the importance of the Hospital and I too made what I considered to be a large donation. By today's valuation my donation probably is being carried around in my pocket as change. But, in those days it was a sizable sum, and I was proud to be able to do what I did.

Later on I felt the need to ask for a position on the Board as I could see the Hospital was in a desperate situation. My position and goal was to save the Hospital at all cost. I had no idea at the time what, if anything could be done. However, I felt the need to do something. Sure enough I received enough votes to fill a seat. A learning process had to be accomplished in a short period of time if things were to be changed. Herman Carroll was the administrator at the time and we had several conversations about the Hospital, about the changes in the way a Hospital was run and how a Hospital was reimbursed for its services. Most of which I had little knowledge and some of which I did not understand. Herman later decided he could better serve the Hospital as its full time CRNA rather than trying to cover the Hospital's anesthesia needs and also serve as Administrator at the same time. That left a big hole in the day-to-day operation of the Hospital that was soon filled with the hiring of Jack Endres.

After one year on the Board I was elected President and have held that position for the last 8 years. When I became a Board Member the Hospital had a sizable bank account that was rapidly being depleted by amounts of between \$35,000 and \$100,000 per month. This led to the reestablishment and the renewed collection of the ad valorem tax. At one time the Hospital didn't have enough money in the bank to make the payroll. By some miracle we received a check for medical services and the first payment for the ad valorem tax arrived just in time and a loan was not required.

The Board was busy deciding what additional services to offer and what equipment to purchase to make things better and the all-important question was HOW TO PAY FOR THE EQUIPMENT AND SERVICES?

Finally, the Board decided to resume providing obstetric services. To get this done, new equipment had to be purchased and rooms remodeled to meet the new codes as required by various governmental agencies. Then the question was how are we going to pay for this? A drive was set up to ask for donations from the community. Here once again the good people of Muenster and surrounding area came to the rescue and gave their hard earned money to carry on the needs to keep the Hospital afloat. I don't think we would be here today if we had not been able to raise this money for our new birthing rooms.

Dr. Currier has been a great salvation for our Hospital by sticking it out with us. He has turned in his resignation many times and yet he is still here. 'Why, I don't know. I guess he is just too proud to leave something falter that he helped start. He has told me personally and has told the Board, that his staying is not because he is making money, in fact it is quite to the contrary.

Let us also not forget the dedicated, willing and hard work by Doctors Advincula and Morrill. They are doing an outstanding job with full schedules every day along with taking ER call. The newest of quality and important services are from the Nurse Practitioners, Mary Endres and Melissa Trubenbach.

And, we couldn't operate without all of the dedicated Technicians, RN's, LVN's, Nurses and Aides along with Home Health, Physical Therapy and Nursing Home staff. Dietary, Housekeeping, Clerical and Plant personnel are equally important. Many times I have had the occasion to visit the Hospital after hours and have found these employees at work finishing their daily chores.

Changing the Hospital from a full service inpatient facility to a unified County Hospital was not an easy decision and the Board has not made this decision hastily. We have considered several opportunities and alternatives. We studied leasing to different large for profit hospital companies. I sincerely believe and feel we have studied every conceivable alternative. The joining of the two Hospital Districts and the construction of a new hospital to serve Cooke County is the only idea that really makes good sense.

Some here want to close the Hospital, keep the District and do a joint venture with the Gainesville District. The Board and I cannot see how this would be a good deal for our people. It certainly does not make good business sense to retain the hospital district without a hospital. There are a lot of reasons, one important fact being the tax expense. As I've said before, I feel there are a lot of emotions rather than good proper planning and solid ideas behind the alternative joint venture idea. Emotions have a way of getting in the way of making good decisions.

Just look at how many lives this Hospital has touched through the years. I can see our ancestors, the elderly, the active hard working people, the children in school, and the babies that are just being born and raised here. Emotions run high with all of the former employees as well as the present employees. However, emotions do not pay the bills and emotions do not always guide us to using the present facility and local doctors. The Board and I have emotions as well, and we have tried to see through them to make good business decisions for all of our constituents. We are making these decisions because we were elected by you to make these decisions. I personally feel we have done a good job. I hope you see this as well.

It has been said "Nothing has been more constant than Change." I see the merging of the two Hospital Districts and the construction of a new hospital as the best hope for the future of health care in Cooke County. I see this merger as planning ahead. I see this merger as something we can be proud of in the future. We must be responsible to the generations that follow us.

I am asking you to support your Board of Directors so that we can ensure that the residents of Muenster and Cooke County have the best health care possible not only now but for future generations as well.

Thank you...  
Don Flusche, President  
Muenster Memorial Hospital  
Muenster Hospital District

**Think ... Think ... Think...**  
Learn what is **TRUE**  
in order to do what is **RIGHT**.  
**VOTE AGAINST MERGER**

## LETTERS POLICY

THE MUENSTER ENTERPRISE welcomes letters of up to 150 words on any public issue. Any letter that exceeds the word limit may not be considered for publication. We publish only original letters addressed to The Enterprise. An address must be included so the author's identity can be verified. All letters are subject to editing. The Enterprise reserves the right to decline publication of any submission. Letters must be signed. Letters written in the promotion of political candidates or propositions will not be considered for publication unless they are scheduled for publication one month or more prior to the election. Candidates or their supporters may purchase advertising space during the period just prior to the election in support of candidates or propositions. Letters written as cards of thanks may be charged classified ad rate and be placed in classified section of newspaper, at editor's option.

## FACTS VS OPINIONS

I would like to thank Mr. Duane Knabe CPA for his free tax analysis in last week's paper. It was very accurate and informative. I would however like to point out that he is the one that is trying to pass off his opinion as fact. Two years ago it was said that we could have a new hospital built in Gainesville for an estimated \$20 million. This is an estimate not a fact. If you built a new building and moved in most of the old equipment, I am sure it could be done for that amount, but then this would not be State of the Art like we keep hearing about. It would only be what we already have in a new location with a lot of debt. If we are really talking about

State of the Art, then estimates for one of this range up to \$1 million per bed and we are talking about a 66-bed facility. If you use these figures in Mr. Knabe's calculation it is easy to see that taxes must go up to \$.45+ per \$100 as compared to his \$.18 figure. If you think that you are getting a State of the Art 66-bed hospital in Gainesville for \$20 million and taxes will stay at \$.18 then you should vote against merger because it won't happen. If you more realistically think that you are getting a State of the Art 66-bed hospital in Gainesville for \$50 million and that taxes will go up double or triple and you want the largest tax supported indigent care

facility between Dallas and Oklahoma City, then by all means vote for merger because that is what you will be getting. AS ANYONE CAN SEE WE REALLY DON'T KNOW WHAT WE ARE GETTING WITH MERGER. HB3132 SAYS WE CAN MERGE LATER IF NECESSARY. OUR MUENSTER HOSPITAL HAS SHOWN A FINANCIAL GAIN EACH YEAR FOR THE LAST 6 YEARS. TAXES COULD BE LOWERED HERE. THE ONLY PRUDENT THING TO DO IS VOTE AGAINST THE MERGER, AT LEAST FOR NOW.

Sincerely,  
James Walterscheid  
2919 FM 302  
Muenster, TX 76252  
**Paid Letter to the Editor**

## Dear Editor,

This letter is not so much about being for or against the dissolution of the hospital district. I respect everyone and their opinion. I have no ill feelings against anyone. What has happened

to the Biblical verse "Let them know we are Christians, by our love for one another?" I feel the Citizens For Better Healthcare have answered and explained the

issue quietly, truthfully and with dignity. Yes, I definitely am voting for the merger. Respectfully,  
Louise Trubenbach  
2691 FM 1198  
Gainesville, TX 76240  
**Paid Letter to the Editor**

## LOOK WHO'S TALKING...



"I hate to see the hospital close, but it's inevitable. We're going to have to look at it as far as what's good for the community, what's good for the district..."  
HERMAN CARROLL, *Former MMH Administrator*

"By participating in the Gainesville project, you have more control of the direction of healthcare in Muenster than by opting out."  
MICHAEL L. OATMAN, *C.P.A. Parrish, Moody & Fikes, p.c.*

We are not looking to do bad things for Muenster. The reason for being in favor of merging is to have improved care for everyone here and in the entire county."  
WERNER BECKER, *Current and Long-Time MMH Board Member*

"The hospital business is a volume business and rural hospitals cannot generate enough volume - you can't run on 3 or 4 patients a day."  
KEVIN REED, *Legal Counsel for MMH and TORCH*

"I personally support and recommend that you vote for and support the merger of the two districts as the most reasonable method to improve medical treatment and facilities in this area."  
EARL J. FISHER, *Former Mayor and President of Muenster State Bank*

"Though it is difficult to let go, we realize where the hospital can't continue with its present problems and lack of patients. So we feel the best for Muenster is to join together for the erection of a modern and well-equipped Cooke County Hospital..."  
MARTIN AND BETTY KRALICKE, *Longtime MMH Physician and Wife*

"I will vote for the merger of the two hospital districts ... I am convinced this merger offers the best vehicle for the provision of care not only to the citizens of Muenster and Gainesville but to all people in and around all the other communities of Cooke County as well ... I can easily envision the complete loss of medical facilities in Muenster if continuance of the Muenster Hospital District is mandated."  
DAVID BRIGHT, *Former MMH Administrator*

"To continue providing quality healthcare in our community, I support the merger with Gainesville Hospital District and the creation of a unified county hospital district ... I will vote FOR the merger."  
JOAN WALTERSCHEID, *Former MMH Director of Nursing*

"Consider the merging of the two hospitals. Muenster will still have its clinic."  
C. WILLIAM HERMES, *Long-Time MMH Board Member*

"Even though my heart cries to oppose the hospital district merger, my mind demands that I support it."  
JUANITA BRIGHT, *Wife of Former MMH Administrator*

"We urge you to look to the future and help provide quality healthcare for all current and future residents of Cooke County."  
AL FELDERHOFF, *35 yr. MMH Board Member*

"In my heart, I really do not want to see the hospital discontinue inpatient care, but I understand the situation and feel that the merger of MMH and GMH is the best option ..."  
ELEANOR FELDERHOFF, *15 yr. MMH Bookkeeper*

"I don't understand how anyone thinks we can keep going on the way we are now..." "This merger will definitely affect the lives of our children and grandchildren."  
JIMMY JACK BIFFLE, *12 yr. MMH Board Member*

"If one only considers the facts I believe the best way to save our hospital is through the proposed merger."  
DUANE KNABE, *CPA and Longtime MMH Board Member*

## SHOULDN'T WE BE LISTENING?

Advertising paid for by CITIZENS FOR BETTER HEALTHCARE  
Al Felderhoff - Chairman, Jimmy Jack Biffle - Treasurer,  
PO Drawer L, Muenster, TX 76252

## Letter to the Editor,

I have read and listened to the debate on the merger of the hospital districts. In the beginning, I was in favor of the merger, but after I have gathered more facts, I do not think that would serve our best interest.

It has been very disturbing to me to read how certain people have been ridiculed when they questioned decisions the board has made. When questions can't be answered in a courteous way, it looks as if the truth has not or cannot be told. Our heritage has taught us to be self-sufficient, hard working, pay our bills and not to rely on others, except family. To me, merger means to go the opposite way.

Most of us own our homes, our business, and land. I feel we should keep our district and operate it like we do our own business. We have made a good start by electing three new members to our board. After reviewing the financial statement, I feel with a little common sense and hard work, we can provide adequate health care for the citizens of our district.

I vote to keep our district.  
Kenneth Klement  
8857 FM 1198  
Gainesville, TX 76240  
**Paid Letter to the Editor**



## Thomas Bright promoted



Col. Thomas Bright

On July 20, 2001, Thomas Bright was promoted to Colonel in the United States Marine Corps. The ceremony was held at the Medal of Honor Golf Course on the Marine Base at Quantico, Virginia. Major General Terrance Murray, USMC presided over the ceremonies, first, summarizing the achievements and highlights of Colonel Bright's military career. Gunnery Sergeant Glasper read the warrant. Col. Bright then repeated the Marine Oath of Office. General Murray invited Thomas' wife, Denise, and their oldest son, Nicholas, to pin the eagle insignia on his collar as their two-year-old son, Thomas Logan, looked on.

During his remarks, Col. Bright presented beautiful bouquets to his wife and mother, acknowledging their contributions to his successes in life and his military career. He also noted the support and encouragement received from his father, brothers

and sisters, superiors, fellow officers and enlisted personnel.

A reception, affectionately referred to as a "wetting down," immediately followed the promotion ceremonies.

Attending from Muenster were his parents, David and Juanita Bright and his brother, Lt. Col., USAF (Ret.) Joseph Bright. Another brother, Sam Bright, from San Antonio was also there, as well as many of Thomas' friends with whom he had served over the years, even as early as 1980 when he was assigned as a Second Lieutenant in Okinawa, Japan. Colonel Bright and his family are in transfer from Quantico, Virginia to MacDill Air Force Base, Tampa, Florida. Colonel Bright's new assignment will be deputy director for current operations at United States Central Command (USCENTCOM) which focuses primarily on the Middle East, Horn of Africa, and the former states of the Soviet Union.

## 3 new exhibits outstanding at Morton Museum

The Cooke County Heritage Society is pleased to announce the opening of three new summer exhibits at the Morton Museum of Cooke County. The exhibits are: "Summer Fun!"; "The Life & Times of Tom Hickman"; and "A Woman's View of: Life in a Log Cabin."

"Summer Fun!" examines many different activities that people have enjoyed during the summer months both in the past, and in some cases, today as well. Within the display are artifacts from the Gainesville Community Circus; items from some of the theaters that once existed in the county; baseball memorabilia; traveling and vacation artifacts including a pennant from the 1936 Texas Centennial; and swimming and fishing items including a wool bathing suit. A special case displays numerous fans from the museum's collection — an important item for a person to have in the days before air conditioning. "The Life & Times of Tom Hickman" explores the life of Tom Hickman — Texas Ranger and cowboy — who was born in Sivells Bend. Numerous items that belonged to Mr. Hickman are on display. "A Woman's View of: Life in a Log Cabin" is located within the 1870s log cabin which is erected inside the museum. Two early pioneer women left descriptions of living in a log cabin and many of their comments are included in the display for visitors to see.

The exhibits will be on display through the first part of September. For more information, call the Morton Museum at 940/668-8900.



Tom and Lora Hennigan received recognition from Keep Muenster Beautiful for having an outstanding yard. She is shown here with her sons, Ryan and Garrett. Lora says that the yard is a family project that all of them enjoy. To nominate your friend or neighbor for yard-of-the-month, send your email to maryleex@aol.com or eaglephant@ntin.net.

Courtesy Photo

## New Arrivals

### Mitchell

Kristil Mitchell of Collinsville announces the birth of a daughter, Elexus Brienne Mitchell, in Muenster Memorial Hospital on July 24, 2001 at 5:03 a.m., weighing 5 lb. 14 oz. and measuring 17 inches in length. She joins a brother Kendrick Mitchell, 6 years old and Brittney Mitchell, 3 years old. Grandparents are Ben and Sharon Earl of Lake Kiowa and Jerry Mitchell of Collinsville.

### Levingston

Patty and Shawn Levingston of Gainesville are parents of a daughter, Brandi Marie Levingston, born in Muenster Memorial Hospital on July 24, 2001 at 12:46 a.m. weighing 5 lb. 2 oz. and measuring 17 1/2 inches long. She joins two brothers Johnathan Greenhaw, six years old, and Mathew Morris one year old, and a sister, Haylie Morris, three years old. The grandfather is John Greenhaw of Gainesville.

## Temple reunion set for Aug. 5

Descendants of Joe and Kaite Lowe Tempel and families of Jake, John, and Luke Tempel, Lena Trubenbach, Mary Otto, and Minnie Eberhart will hold a family reunion on Sunday, August 5 at the Muenster City Park, beginning at noon. Covered dishes for the noon meal, cold drinks for their families, comfortable folding chairs, etc. and hopefully family pictures for reminiscing, should be brought by those attending.

## Jocelyn is one!

Jocelyn Catherine Grewing, child of Brandon and Abbie Grewing, celebrated her first birthday Saturday, July 7, 2001. Her actual birthday was July 8. The party was held in Leonard Park with family and friends, who were served hamburgers, hot dogs, and cake. Everyone enjoyed watching her open her gifts. Jocelyn also celebrated her birthday at daycare with her friends by sharing cupcakes.

Guests attending were her parents; grandparents, Will and Catherine Bezner, Kellye Hess, and Donnie Grewing; great-grandmothers, Edna Klement and Theresa Grewing; aunts, Brooke Hess and Ellen Bezner; uncles John Bezner and Chad Hess; great-aunt and uncle Rosemary and Jim Schindler, Mike Bezner, Mitch and Linda Rains,



Jocelyn Grewing

Katrina Grewing, Mark and Carol Grewing; cousins Kim, Sheldyn, Kennedy, and Kamryn Schindler, Nicole Rains, Rebecca and Blake Grewing, and Ashley and Brooke Grewing; and friends Andrea Luster and Stephanie Stoffels. Jocelyn's great-grandmother, Margaret Bezner, was unable to attend.

The art of being wise is the art of knowing what to overlook

Don't ever slam a door you might want to go back in.

Sister Mary Lin Hoester C.D.P.

will be honored with a Come-and-Go Observance of her Golden Jubilee

on Sunday, August 5, 2001 2:00 - 4:00 p.m.

in Sacred Heart Community Center Everyone Invited!

727-2

## Seatbelt campaign revealed

"Buckle Up Texas. Every time. All the time." is the new public awareness effort by the Texas Department of Transportation. (TxDOT) encouraging drivers and passengers to buckle up.

According to a study conducted last spring by the Texas Transportation Institute, pickup drivers and teenagers are the worst offenders when it comes to not using safety belts.

TxDOT is providing grants to more than 70 communities in Texas to help pay the costs of increased enforcement of the state's occupant protection laws.

"The point of our Buckle Up Texas initiative is simple really," Bryant said. "We want Texans to get the message to buckle up to avoid serious injuries and lost lives."

Based on 1999 statewide statistics, the Texas Department of Public Safety reports that 1,026 drivers and front-seat passengers killed in traffic crashes were not wearing safety belts.

## Illinois Bend sets cemetery assn. meeting

The Illinois Bend Cemetery Association will have their annual meeting Aug. 4 at the cemetery. The meeting is always the first Saturday of August. The meeting will begin at 11:00 a.m., followed by lunch at noon.

Much work has been accomplished and there is much more to do. All people associated with the cemetery are encouraged to show their interest and concern. Your presence is important. Everyone is asked to bring food, a hearty appetite, good ideas, and good will.

## Cooke County Ballet Academy

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Fall Registration

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Saturdays: Aug 11 & 18 — 9:00-5:00

Classes will start Aug. 20, 2001



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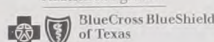
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12:20 & 5:20 P.M.



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**SMART BUY**  
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| CORN CHIPS PRE-PRICE \$3.29<br>Tostitos ..... <b>2\$5.00</b>                                | BUTTERMILK OR SWEET MILK<br>Shurline Biscuits ..... <b>4\$1.00</b> |
| POTATO CHIPS PRE-PRICE \$3.19<br>Ruffles ..... <b>2\$5.00</b>                               | SHURFINE<br>Vegetable Oil Spread ..... <b>99¢</b>                  |
| MAZOLA<br>Corn Oil ..... <b>5\$99</b>   | ASST. SHURFINE<br>Orange Juice ..... <b>79¢</b>                    |
| ASST. HUNT'S 4 PACK JUICY GELS OR<br>Snack Pack Pudding ..... <b>99¢</b>                    | COMET<br>Wonder Rice ..... <b>99¢</b>                              |
| LUZIANNE FAMILY SIZE<br>Tea Bags ..... <b>1\$39</b>   | HEINZ<br>Tomato Ketchup ..... <b>99¢</b>                           |
| ASST. CHEF BOYARDEE<br>Pasta with Meat ..... <b>99¢</b>                                     | SHURFINE APPLE<br>Juice or Cider ..... <b>99¢</b>                  |
| LIBBY'S REG. OR CHICKEN<br>Vienna Sausage ..... <b>2\$00</b>                                | MOTT'S BEEFMAID, REG. OR PICANTE<br>Clamato ..... <b>1\$99</b>     |
| ASSORTED<br>Colgate Toothpaste ..... <b>1\$99</b>   | ZEST ASSORTED<br>Bath Soap ..... <b>1\$79</b>                      |
| ASSORTED SUAVE<br>Shampoo or Conditioner ..... <b>79¢</b>                                   | ASSORTED SHURFINE<br>Cream Soup ..... <b>2\$1.00</b>               |
| 15 OZ. VAN CAMP<br>Pork & Beans ..... <b>3\$1.00</b>  | 1 LB. FOLGERS ASST. (LESS DECAF)<br>Coffee ..... <b>1\$89</b>      |
| 32 OZ. BAMA<br>Grape Jelly ..... <b>99¢</b>   | MARDI GRAS<br>Paper Towels ..... <b>79¢</b>                        |
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Stuffed Boneless Skinless Chicken Breasts ..... **2\$69**  
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FARM RAISED BREADED  
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MARKET CUT WISCONSIN RED RIND LONGHORN  
Cheddar Cheese ..... LB. **2\$49**  
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Sliced Bacon ..... 1 LB. PKG. **1\$39**  
JENNIE-O  
Turkey Ham ..... LB. **1\$59**

**PEPSI** ..... **2\$49**  
12 OZ - 12 PK

## Garden Fresh Produce

**CELLO PACK Lettuce** ..... **2\$1**  
for

**Russet Potatoes** ..... **2\$3**  
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**DOLE CLASSIC**  
Coleslaw ..... 1 LB. **79¢**  
NEW CROP CALIFORNIA  
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Dole Salad ..... 10 OZ. **1\$99**  
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**FRESH**  
Watermelons ..... EA. **2\$99**

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# Sports

## Attention MISD athletes! Get your physicals now

All incoming 7-12 grade athletes must have a UIL physical before participating in any sport. These physical forms can be picked up at the high school office from

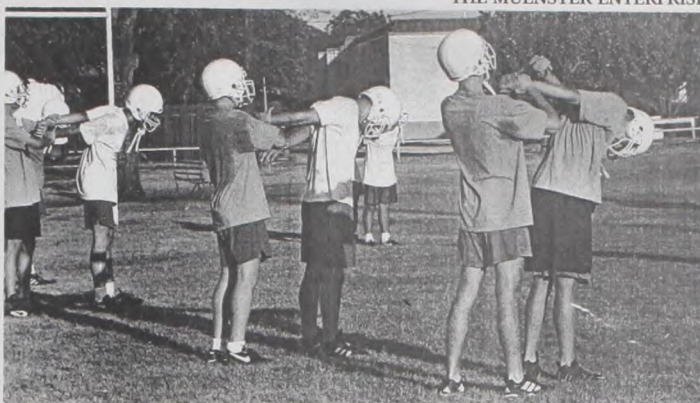
8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. The physical exam can be done by your family doctor or at the Muenster Hospital Clinic.

## Boys football league sign-up being accepted

The Association of Boys Club and Campfire of Cooke County are now taking football sign-ups for the upcoming season for grades 3-4 league and grades 5-6 league. Applications are being accepted until Aug. 28. Membership is \$15 per

child with a \$40 football fee. Cheerleaders are also accepted for both leagues for a cost of \$35 plus the \$15 membership fee.

For more information call 665-6527 or come by 315 W. Hird Street in Gainesville.



The Sacred Heart Tigers do a stretching exercise Wednesday morning as they began this year's football season.

Janie Hartman Photo

Laughter is a tranquilizer with no side effects.

Success is never final and failure never fatal.

Criticism is the one thing that most of us think is more blessed to give than to receive.

The right to do something does not mean that doing it is right

## Opening dove season

Dove season is a big deal because it is usually the first wingshooting of the fall. And almost everyone is on hand for opening day.

A good dove gun is a big help for bagging a limit. The best gauges are 12, 16 and 20. Leave the 28 gauge and the .410 bore to the experts. Most say modified choke is best all-around. However, on opening day, with rusty shooting skills and doves that aren't yet too wary, improved cylinder might be a better bet. Avoid super-lightweight guns, their recoil can be punishing if there's lots of shooting.

Autoloading shotguns weigh a bit more than other repeaters and operate by using powder gases to cycle their action. Both factors reduce recoil. However, any reliable repeater will work for dove shooting.

One ounce of shot is a good opening-day load and is available in 12-, 16- and 20-gauge loads. Shot sizes of No. 7 1/2 or 8 provide good dense patterns for the small, fast targets.

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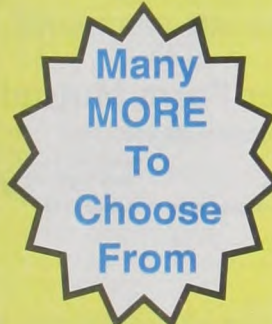
2000 Contour SE, 4 Door  
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RY644



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2000 Mercury Grand Marquis, LS, Cloth Interior  
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RY703K



2000 Explorer XLS, 4 Door, Cloth  
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2000 Lincoln LS, V8  
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## Muenster Jaycees Wednesday Trap Shoot

Aug. 8, 15, 22, 29

6:00 pm, Flusche Farm

Location: North on 373, 4 miles take right on CR 449, left on 448 approx. 2 miles

For More Info Jeremy 759-2203 Eric 759-2887

## MUENSTER VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

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**SATURDAY, AUGUST 11, 2001 MUENSTER CITY PARK**

ADULTS -- \$6.00 CHILDREN -- \$3.00 (UNDER 12)

MEAL BEGINS AT 6:00 P.M.

AUCTION BEGINS AT 7:30 P.M.

RAFFLE DRAWING AT 10:00 P.M.

FREE ADMISSION TO SWIMMING POOL

POOL OPEN FROM 7:00 - 9:00 P.M.

Golf Tournament September 9, 2001

at Turtle Hill Golf Course in Muenster.

**EVERYONE WELCOME**

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### AUCTION LIST 2001

- Ace Hardware - Lawn Mower
- Sylvia's Creations - Flower Arrangement
- Hess Furniture - End Table, Log Lawn Rooker
- Fleitman Backhoe - 16 yards gravel (10 mile radius)
- Lora's Flowers/Hamrics Tuxedo's - Large Silk arrangement
- Vickie's Cut-N-Up - 2 Haircuts
- Harvey & Della Schmidt - 2 Planter Baskets
- Nails by Dianna - Full Set of Nails
- Muenster Building Center - Portable Butane Heater
- Felderhoff Drilling - 300 ft. 5" Drilling Pipe
- Glenn's Paint & Body - \$100 Truck Accessory Gift Certificate
- Bart Henschel - Trip to Kanger game for 3 people
- Virgil Henschel - Crappie Filets
- JAWS - Bumper Winch
- J.H. Bayer & Sons - Deer Corn
- G & H Backhoe - 16 yards crushed rock (10 mile radius)
- Monday's Backhoe - 16 yards creek gravel (10 mile radius)
- Cooke County Co-op - Security Light
- "Buchshot" Hess - Putter
- Community Lumber Company - BBQ Grill
- Joe & Laura Pagel - Coleman Lantern
- Fred Koessler - Hope Chest
- Rohmer's Restaurant - 2 Steak Dinners
- Uniflex - 4 Chairs
- Structures - Outdoor Fireplace
- Gehrig's Hardware - Solar Radio
- Jerry Fleitman - 5 Large Sudan or Rye Hay
- R&R Pipe - 200 ft. 1" Square Tubing
- Gus Ashley - Tow Rope
- Henmigan's Auto Parts - 12 Volts Battery
- Christie's Jewelry - Seraphim Angel with Fireman
- Sister's - Citizen's Watch
- Crafty Olde German - Fireman's Quilt
- Tony's Seed & Feed - 500 lbs. Horse Pellets; 500 lbs. Deer Pellets
- Flusche Enterprises - 9" Dewalt Grinder
- Roy & Carol Klement - 4 Round Bales Wheat Hay
- Cory & Brenda Klement - Brinkman Electric Smoker
- Brown Motor Company - Oil Change for Gas Engine
- Bobby Joe, Bert, Rossie, Alcuin, Brent, JT, Billy Frank, Bob Baker, Little Red (Tim), Kenny Ray, Virgil - 2 Night Fishing Trip to Texoma for 2 People
- Muenster Garden Center - 2-Cycle Oil Starter Kit
- DI One Stop - 20 Hamburgers and Fries
- Brookes-Reynolds - Oriental Rug
- Muenster Milling - 500 lbs. Calf Creep; 3 Bags "Muenster Natural" Dog Food

### CASH DONATIONS

- 1st National Bank, Saint Jo - \$1,000
- Muenster State Bank - \$500
- WFV Well Service - \$150
- Neil's Phillip 66 - \$100
- Bob's Auto Service (Bob & Linda Walterscheid) - \$75

### RAFFLE

- \$500 Savings Bond - EMW Insurance (Gary Fisher)
  - 1/2 Beef plus processing - Muenster Volunteer Fire Department
  - 1/2 Hog plus processing - Muenster Volunteer Fire Department
  - 50 Gallons Gas - Country Korner
  - \$100 Savings Bond - Farm Bureau Insurance (John Bartush)
  - \$100 Savings Bond - Catholic Life Insurance
  - \$100 Savings Bond - D&B Construction (Bert & Dale)
  - \$20 Gift Certificate - The Center Restaurant
- If anyone has items to donate, please call:  
Bert or Delanne at 759-4785



# School News

## State acts to reduce accidents

According to the National Transportation Safety Board, automobile crashes are the leading cause of death among American teens, accounting for 38% of all deaths for 16 to 18 year-olds. Starting September 1, the laws which govern these teenage drivers will be a bit tougher because of a bill co-authored by Rep. Phil King (R-Weatherford) and passed by the Legislature. Basically, there are some new requirements and restrictions for drivers under age 18. While these restrictions, known as a graduated driver's license, have not been popular among teen drivers, they have been shown to significantly reduce the number of accidents in which teenage drivers are involved.

"I've got a new teenage driver at home who, though understanding, is not particularly pleased with the new restrictions. But, as a father with teenage drivers I know this was the right thing to do," Rep. King explained.

Under the new law, an instruction permit holder must have their permit for at least six months before applying for a driver's license and their supervising driver must be at least 21 years of age. Additionally, during the first six months of actual licensure the new driver is not allowed to drive between

midnight and 5 a.m., except for employment, school-related activities, and medical emergencies, and they are not allowed to have passengers in the car that are under 21, except for family members. However, this new law is only a secondary enforcement provision, which means that a driver cannot be stopped solely to check for a possible violation of these restrictions.

A Department of Public Safety report shows that in 1998, 348 teens aged 15-18 died in motor vehicle crashes. Another 40,324 were injured and in 1999, 407 Texas teens aged 15-18 died in motor vehicle crashes. Texas teens make up 4.3% of all licensed Texas drivers but over 10% of drivers in crashes - 8.2% in fatal crashes, 9.7% in injury crashes, and 11.2% in property damage crashes. The teen driver crash rate in Texas rose 22% from 1996-1998. At the same time, the crash rate for all other Texas drivers dropped.

"As a former police officer, I know first hand that teenagers as a group are more willing to take risks, underestimate hazardous situations, and are less likely to use safety belts. Our intent with this law is to give these new drivers a chance to gain some valuable and lifesaving experience before they are

given the full privileges of driving," explained King.

Studies in other states on a graduated driver's license law show huge reductions in the crash rate during the first six months of unsupervised driving. Accident rates for teens drop with each successive month of experience and additionally 250 miles driven.

## Special meeting called ... MISD meeting Aug. 8

The Muenster ISD Board of trustees have scheduled a special meeting on Wednesday, August 8 with the architects that have evaluated the district facilities and projected needs of the total school plant. They will present several rough estimates on

needed roof repairs and offer preliminary drawings of a cafeteria and field house.

The public is invited to attend. The meeting will be held in the administration building and begin at 6:30 pm.

## Who to contact & how to do it

There are a number of ways to contact your elected representatives. Here are some tips on reaching them by phone or mail.

**Telephone**  
To find your representative's phone number, you can call the U.S. Capitol Switchboard at 202-224-3121 and ask for your senator's and or representative's office.

Remember that telephone calls are often taken by a staff member, not the member of Congress. Ask to

speak with the aid who handles the issue on which you wish to comment.

After identifying yourself, tell the aide you would like to leave a brief message, such as: "Please tell Senator/Representative (name) that I support/do not support the (whatever) bill.

You will also want to state reasons for your support or opposition to a bill. Ask for your senator's or representative's position on the bill. You may also request a written response to your telephone call.

**Writing**  
The letter is the most popular choice of communication with a congressional office. If you decide to write a letter, this list of helpful suggestions will improve the effectiveness of the letter:

Your purpose for writing should be stated in the first paragraph of the letter. If your letter pertains to a specific piece of legislation, identify it accordingly.

Be courteous, to the point, and include key information, using examples to support your position.

Address only one issue in each letter, and if possible, keep the letter to one page.

**Addressing Correspondence To a Senator:**  
The Honorable (full name)  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510  
Dear Senator:  
**To a Representative:**  
The Honorable (full name)  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515  
Dear Representative:

## Prime Outlets observes third sales tax holiday

For the third consecutive year Texas consumers will receive a major break on purchases of apparel and footwear in time for back-to-school shopping. Again this year Texas comptroller Carol Keeton Rylander announced the three-day sales tax holiday that will be observed over the weekend of Aug. 3-5, 2001. Consumers can maximize their savings at Prime Outlets at Gainesville.

Most individual items of clothing and footwear priced at less than \$100 will be exempt from State and Local sales tax. The tax break will apply regardless of how many items are purchased; however, any single item that is priced above \$100 will be taxed on its full price.

While clothing and footwear that are used primarily for athletic activities or for protective wear such as golf cleats and football pads are considered exempt from the sales tax holiday, apparel commonly used as street wear, i.e. golf shirts, tennis shoes, jogging suits and baseball caps will not be taxed.

Accessories such as jewelry and watches, handbags, briefcases, wallets, and backpacks will be taxed as usual.

At Prime Outlets, where manufacturer brand names are regularly sold at 20%-

65% below traditional retail prices, the extra exemption of 8.25% sales tax will mean substantial savings. Information will be posted at each center to help customers identify specific merchandise that can be purchased tax-free August 3-5.

Prime Outlets-Gainesville is located on IH-35 in Gainesville, 65 miles north of Dallas and Fort Worth. The center is open Monday-Saturday 10:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m. and Sunday 11:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. On Friday August 3 and Saturday, August 4, select Prime Outlets-Gainesville merchants will open at 9:00 a.m.

## Oktoberfest readies for its 21st year

Oktoberfest of Fredericksburg is now in its 21st consecutive year. Since beginning in 1981, Oktoberfest continues to grow in popularity and size every year.

Visitors entering Fredericksburg during Oktoberfest on Oct. 5, 6, and 7, and driving up Main Street will see large tents, hear German music, smell great food, and soon be waltzing. With 21 years experience, the town knows how to have a good time. For more information, call 830-997-4810.

## Car Accident Recently?

North Texas - A new free report has recently been released that reveals information every car accident victim should have. Research shows that even a "fender bender" can cause pain, headaches, and even arthritis. Many car accident victims worry more about their car than they do their health. If you have been involved in an auto accident, you need this information. To receive your free report call toll-free 1-888-969-0616. 24 hour recorded message. 727-4

I would like to thank the Board of Directors, employees, and all of the members of Cooke County Electric Co-op for sponsoring the Government-in-Action Youth Tour Contest. It was a wonderful experience. I will never forget the memories and great friends I made.

Thank You,  
Krystal Hale

# TEXAS STATE OPTICAL

All Frames 1 Year warranty  
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Buy 1 Pair of Glasses & Get 1 FREE

Buy 1st pair from regular frame selection and receive 2nd pair from Manufacturer collection absolutely FREE! (Min. 1st frame purchase for \$125.00, 2nd pair will have clear, plastic, single vision or FT 28 bifocals lenses.)

Our FREE Frames are what others sell!

One Complete Pair of Plastic Single Vision Glasses <b>\$49<sup>00</sup></b>	One Complete Pair of Daily Wear Contacts <b>\$37<sup>00</sup></b>	Contact Lenses Eye Exam Any Type <b>\$60<sup>00</sup></b>
<small>FT 28 Bifocals \$26.00 Extra (All frames from Manufacturer Collection) *Exam Not Included - Prescription Required</small>	<small>Includes 1 pair (2 lenses) of (in Back) Clear Contacts and Follow-up Care *Exam Not Included - Prescription Required</small>	<small>Includes 1 pair of clear disposable lenses and follow-up care.</small>

All doctors prescriptions accepted. Offers may not be combined with any other coupons, discounts, insurance's, or sales. Some restrictions apply.

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## MISD welcomes 3 new teachers

The staff at Muenster Elementary School welcomes three new teachers this school year: Kim Budish, second grade; Brad Budish, physical education; and Jim Van Vleet, Learning Lab, history, and Spanish.

Kim Budish graduated from East Central University in Ada, Oklahoma. She has a degree in elementary education with an endorsement in science and social studies. Her teaching experience includes one year in Garland and two years in Allen.

Brad Budish graduated from Bemidji State University in Minnesota. He is certified to teach physical education kindergarten through grade twelve. His experience includes two years at Allen and two years in Garland.

Jim Van Vleet graduated from Wheaton College in Wheaton, Illinois. He is a certified elementary teacher and English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher. He taught ESL in Gainesville for five years.

Returning Muenster Elementary School staff includes: Pre-kindergarten, Jill Reiter; Kindergarten, Sharon Ledbetter, Kay Hickey; First Grade, Rosemary Dankesreiter, Danna Fredrick; Second Grade, Kim Budish, Lou

Heers, Gifted/Talented, Carol Ann Hess; Grade Three, Amy Anderle, Dianne Endres; Grade Four, Deb Klement, Cheryl Presnall; Resource, Dana Coleman; Computer, Lisa Hettler, Gifted/Talented; Science, Leigh Hale; Language Arts, Kristi Schneider, TAAS Coordinator; Mathematics, DaLana Chism, Learning Lab, History; Learning Lab, Jim Van Vleet, Spanish, History; Physical Education, Brad Budish; Speech Pathologist, Deborah Lawson; Diagnostician, Ken Heilman; School Nurse, Marlene Fisher; Custodian, Mike Hellingner; Teacher Assistant, Patsy Bayer; Administrative Assistants, Patsy Fleitman, Janie Hennigan; Principal, Gwen Trubenbach.

## Muenster Elementary "pre-" school events

Students who did not attend Muenster Elementary School during school year 2000-2001 may register on Aug. 8 from 10:00 to 3:00 in the school office. To complete registration, parents must bring copies of school records, immunization records, social security card, and birth certificate.

Parent Night for all Muenster Elementary pre-kindergarten through grade four students is Aug. 9. The pre-kindergarten Parent Night presentation begins at 6:00 p.m. Presentations for the remainder of the grades immediately follow the pre-kindergarten presentation in fifteen-minute increments.

On Parent Night, parents have an opportunity to meet their child's teacher and learn about the grade level requirements regarding discipline, homework, curriculum and classroom procedures. Each teacher gives a brief presentation followed by a question and answer period. Parents may bring their child's school supplies with them to parent night.

Muenster Elementary Orientation for all fifth and sixth grade students is Aug. 11, Saturday from 9:00 to 11:00. Orientation gives parents, students and teachers an opportunity to get to know each other. After a brief orientation explaining the classroom procedures, parents and students cover textbooks and store school supplies. Students and parents complete orientation by locating lockers, walking through the daily class schedule, and visiting with friends.

Muenster teachers will begin the new school year with a staff development day on Aug. 10. The staff development day on Aug. 10 includes a welcome from superintendent, Clyde W. Steelman, followed by sessions concerning technology, University of Interscholastic League, mentor teachers, crisis management, Professional Development and Appraisal System and gifted students.

Teachers will work in their classrooms on Aug. 13. Classes begin on Aug. 14 at 8:00 a.m.

What may seem to be the end of the road may well be a new beginning. One reason for doing the right thing today - is tomorrow.

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Muenster Hospital District, Texas  
(Distrito del Hospital de Muenster, Texas)

SPECIAL ELECTION  
(ELECCIÓN ESPECIAL)

ON THE DISSOLUTION OF MUENSTER HOSPITAL DISTRICT AND THE CREATION OF COOKE COUNTY HOSPITAL DISTRICT  
(EN LA DISOLUCIÓN DEL DISTRITO DEL HOSPITAL DE MUENSTER Y LA CREACIÓN DEL DISTRITO DEL HOSPITAL DEL CONDADO DE COOKE)

August 11, 2001  
(11 de Agosto 2001)

OFFICIAL BALLOT  
(BOLETA OFICIAL)

INSTRUCTION NOTE (NOTA DE INSTRUCCIÓN)

Place an "X" in the square beside the statement indicating the way you wish to vote. (Marque con una "x" el cuadro al lado de la frase que indica la manera en que usted quiere votar.)

FOR (EN PRO)

AGAINST (EN CONTRA)

The dissolution of the Muenster Hospital District and creation of the Cooke County Hospital District, providing for the levy of a tax not to exceed 75 cents on each \$100 valuation on all taxable property in the Cooke County Hospital District, and providing for the transfer to and assumption by the Cooke County Hospital District of all outstanding bonds and indebtedness issued or refunded for hospital purposes by the Muenster Hospital District and the transfer of the existing Muenster Hospital District's assets to the Cooke County Hospital District.

(La disolución del Distrito del Hospital de Muenster y la creación del Distrito del Hospital del Condado de Cooke para la exacción de tributos de un impuesto para no exceder 75 centavos en cada \$100 valuar para toda propiedad imponible en el Distrito del Hospital del Condado de Cooke y en proporcionar para la transferencia a una suposición por el Distrito del Condado de Cooke de todos bonos y la deuda pendiente o reintegraron para el hospital los propoición per el Distrito del Hospital de Muenster y la transferencia de los activos existente del Distrito del Hospital de Muenster al Distrito del Hospital del Condado de Cooke.)

SAMPLE



# Will the hospitals merge?

we have at this time, yes, I believe that they could build a hospital and maintain that rate." Anderson noted, "There's even debt reserve on top of that even at the 18 cents."

Oatman confirmed that his firm assisted GMH with finding that rate. "We looked at projected financial results and based on that developed the tax revenues that needed to be in there. Honestly, they did the computations to come up with the rate, but we were given the number they were working towards."

Also included in that rate was equipment cost. "The equipment is built into the projections, not only in the new hospital, but continuing," said Oatman. "Hospitals need equipment as time goes on so those things have been considered. I can't guarantee you that it's all the high tech equipment that something new won't come on the market and the doctors won't come in and say, 'We'd like for you to do this.' What we've done is based on the historical purchase patterns - it's taken this much equipment to run the hospital and that's been built into the feasibility."

Members of the Muenster Hospital Support Group have expressed doubts that the tax rate to support the new hospital can be kept at the proposed .18 cents. John Aytes, recently elected to the MMH board of directors and member of the Muenster Hospital Support Group, offered his concern. He said that recently he'd conversed with a prominent Gainesville resident with similar concerns. Aytes described the person as having his finger on the Gainesville pulse. According to Aytes the man remarked, "The new hospital is supposed to cost \$20 million, but I'm afraid it's going to wind up costing twice that much." Aytes concluded, "I can't argue with projections other than to say what I just said that even Gainesville people do not expect the projection to be the projected \$20 million dollar to be that close to an accurate figure. Their estimating probably twice that much."

### Job Security

A major issue for some is that employees of MMH get to keep their jobs, seniority, and other benefits. In a Joint Memorandum of

Understanding (MOU) signed by the board presidents of MMH and GMH on Nov. 4, 1999 it stated, "Every good faith effort will be made during the consolidation process to assure that no employee of Gainesville Hospital District or Muenster Hospital District will lose their employment due to the consolidation. Further every good faith effort will be made to assure that the employee benefits available to employees of the consolidated entity will be equivalent to the benefits currently available to the employees of the Gainesville Hospital District and the Muenster Hospital District."

The MOU is not a part of the enabling legislation, but is a good faith agreement between the two entities on general principles for the current management and ultimate consolidation of the two districts.

Anderson noted, "I know there are some who say you can't give guarantees, but we have guaranteed that all employees will have jobs. The truth of the matter is after the merger that hospital (MMH) stays intact. It's not until we build a new hospital do we then shut down the inpatient care from that facility. Even up until that time everyone's got a job because everyone's needed. We don't really have a lot of extra staff. Now we're going to try to do some consolidation through attrition. You know we don't need two business offices and staff like that. We're going to have a job for everyone to do. We made that promise. We made that commitment. It's a commitment of ours." Asked how employees would be selected for job positions and if all would have equal opportunity Andersons said that it would be by qualifications.

"We're in a business where if you're a nurse on the floor you can work either (hospital), Anderson explained. "We'll make sure that the salary range is the same in both so we can move people back and forth. I think it's going to be kind of an adventure for them. I really do. I think it's just wonderful for the staff. We're really working hard as to be here for the people of this community and that includes the staff, as well as the patients and the community we serve. It

serves no purpose to try to do somebody in. It's all for the purpose of serving this community. To grow in health care together, it makes so much sense to do that."

Aytes questions the financial drain that keeping all of MMH's employees, in addition to GMH's. MMH has an annual payroll of \$2 million dollars, he said. (Since the board has been unwilling to come up with a dollar figure or number of transfers to Gainesville, I've had to use my own figure," Aytes remarked. He decided on \$1.5 million in payroll as the figure being transferred away from Muenster.

"I'm not going to try to justify it whether it's one and a quarter million or one and a half million or anything other than that," Aytes continued. "I'm just saying they will not furnish us anything in an estimate. They refuse to look at it at this point. They say it is too early so I've used the figure in front of them and I will continue to use it. One and a half million dollars has to come off of the profit per annum to keep those people employed other than "normal attrition". "Normal and natural attrition" are the terms that they use. So if we start out with \$1.5 million per annum and there is attrition then that will be reduced. But they're starting at a level of \$1.5 million dollars per year and that's coming off of the bottom line and that puts them in a financial bind from the beginning."

Aytes said that meant, in his opinion, that they would speedup "natural attrition".

### Bonds

Another concern expressed by some in the county is the ability of GMH to use revenue bonds to finance the building of a new hospital. Anderson said there is no problem.

"We can sell them tomorrow, but we don't like the rates, Anderson noted. "The whole healthcare business is in kind of a slump for getting bonds of any kind because insurers don't want to touch healthcare facilities. But we can get them and we've had a number of them come in here and say, 'Yes, we want them.' But we're looking for the right rate. We want to do revenue bonds. We've promised the people on revenue bonds and we are trying to find the bonds that can give us the best possible rate."

Oatman was asked if he thought there might be a problem. He responded, "That's kind of up to the lenders, but the ones that I've talked to have seemed to be enthusiastic about using revenue bonds. None of them have said, 'No, we the lenders won't do it that way.'"

John Aytes remarked that Jimmy Jack Biffle had been the most enlightening at a meeting in Rosston recently. He said that Biffle did not deny that there are problems bringing bonds to market. He said Biffle explained that banks are looking at solving that problem. "That means that they either will buy the bond issue rather than going to the general public to sell. It makes sense that the banks be major contributors to the effort since they will participate as much or more than anyone else in the revenue growth in that area. It remains to be seen whether the banks solve the problem or whether there are further problems."

### If we don't merge

In the enabling legislation allows that the board cannot call for another election on the question of dissolution of the district and creation of the Cooke County Hospital District until one year after the most recent election concerning the dissolution of the district and creation of a new county district. That means not before August 11, 2002.

Asked if that were feasible, Anderson remarked, "I can't speak to that because I don't really know that answer. You can speculate a lot of that I guess the question is if the people of Muenster don't want the merger, will they want it in a year? How do you answer those kinds of questions? We don't want to predict out there. Surely from our standpoint, is it right to do it now? Yes it's right to do it now. Because we want Muenster, the people of Muenster, the leadership of Muenster, the board of Muenster involved. We want them to actually have a say so in building this hospital. If we're going to go ahead as alone and build this new hospital, then you'll feel like you've never really had a say so."

At a town hall meeting, Administrator Anderson said that GMH would work with Muenster even if the merger vote fails. Asked if that were still possible he said, "Well, we want to work with the people of this

community and I don't know really what to tell you on that. Obviously there have been some people that are using that to the advantage of trying to make this a negative thing for merging. Well, the hospital will work with us anyway even if we don't merge." It won't be the same. We want to always serve this county as much as we possibly can and we want to serve the people of this community so we are just trying to keep that focus of doing what we can to serve the people of this county, not just Gainesville, this whole county."

Would it still be possible to work together so that each hospital got sole provider benefits? Anderson noted that each hospital couldn't get sole provider status. "We are competitors and we are too close to each other," he said. "It has to be something where we are one organization or something else has to happen because you can't be two competing acute care facilities as close as we and qualify for sole provider status."

Questioned as to the possibility of working together as a satellite hospital or something similar, Anderson explained, "Well it would have to be the same provider number as us. It really would not be a possibility without the merger from the standpoint that keeping an acute care hospital open in Muenster is really cost prohibitive. The patient population is too low because if you're in an acute care hospital you have to have so much technology over there. It's really hard to fund two facilities with the kind of technology it takes to provide high quality care for a patient population load like Muenster has as inpatients."

Some have talked about MMH downgrading to a critical care or a skilled nursing hospital. Anderson was asked if that would make working together and getting sole provider status without merging a possibility. "Those are possibilities," he said. "Anything is a possibility. To me the best possibility is merger because it is the best for this community. For the community it's the best possible solution. If that does not happen are we going to look for other solutions? Of course we're going to look for something. It's not going to be the best and actually the people will suffer because of it. I believe they will. At the same time

we'll always keep our focus of trying to do the best for this county anyway."

Some say that we could keep the hospital if we went from an acute care facility to a critical access or a skilled nursing facility.

Oatman, auditor for both MMH and GMH was asked about MMH becoming a critical access hospital. He responded, "That has potential. Jack (Endres) has asked us to look at that in the past. The hospital is just now finishing its fiscal year and normally we update those once we complete our audit work and update the cost report. Jack has asked us to go back and look at that again based upon the most current data. When we looked at it in the past it didn't seem conclusive that it would pull the hospital out of the hole that it's in. Maybe this year with another year and some and some things have changed in the Medicare world it may be more attractive or it may not be. You give up some things when you become critical access. It does help some financially, but you have to limit the length of stay of the patients, you have to give up some hospital beds. It doesn't come completely without strings. Jack's asked us as soon as we wrap up these cost reports to go back and revisit critical access and see what the numbers look like this year."

### Building site

Yet another concern has been that should the merger be voted in, Gainesville might buckle to pressure from residents in the eastern part of the county and relocate the building site for the new hospital. Anderson was asked if there was a real possibility that the new hospital wouldn't be built at the Hwy. 82 location. "No possibility what so ever," he stated. "That's the piece of land that we got. We haven't looked at any other piece of land. That is the most excellent site. If you took a map and you put it dead center in this county you would put it probably right on that property that we have. There is no better site. Once we established that, once we bought it, there has never been one thought in any of our minds over here to put it anywhere else. I have not heard one single person complain to me about where it is."

Aytes said that he didn't know if there were any problems with the actual See MERGER, Page 16

## Thanks, very much!

Once again we must say THANK YOU to all the caring and generous people of Muenster. Your generosity is truly overwhelming. The pickup raffle and auction were a great success thanks to all of you. Thanks to each and every one of you who purchased a raffle ticket. Thanks to all who donated items for auction and purchases those items the night of the auction.

Special thanks to Bobby Walterscheid, Joe Walterscheid, and David Felderhoff for helping with the raffle and ticket sales. We greatly appreciate all your time spent helping. We know you spent a lot of time selling and helping. Thank you so much.

A big thank you goes to Herky Biffle for his auctioneer expertise. He did a great job. Also Herky, thanks from Laura for the special gift you bought and gave her at the auction. Thanks goes to Joe Hoedebeck and Wayne Klement for helping Herky as Auction Spotters. You also did a great job. Thanks to Bert and Delanne Walterscheid for their help at the auction.

Thanks to Milton Knaf for setting up the lights and electricity down at the park for the auction. Also thanks to Duane and Mary Linn Knabe for the use of their P. A. system at the auction.

Thanks also goes to the Muenster Jaycees for allowing the raffle and auction to be held in conjunction with the golf tournament. Everyone seemed to enjoy the food and drink. Thanks for the time and generosity.

A very special thanks goes to Hoss Knabe for thinking of having the auction and raffle for Laura. We are quite sure it took a lot of time and work organizing and gathering items to be auctioned. We can never say THANK YOU enough. Also thanks goes to your wife, Reneta for helping out. We also thank Roger and Susan Harn, co-owners of Ponderosa Pools and Landscape for helping Hoss with the auction. We really appreciate everything. Your generosity and thoughtfulness is so very appreciated.

Laura is presently doing really well. We recently received some good news from our insurance company. We can now have Laura evaluated and placed on the transplant list in Dallas. We were not looking forward to being in Minnesota, a thousand miles away from family, friends, and home at the time of transplant. Please continue to pray for Laura and our family. We know with your prayers and the wonderful doctors we have in Dallas the transplant will be a success.

Again thanks to all the generous, wonderful and caring people from Muenster for all the donations, concerns and prayers you have given to us during the past several months and over all the years. You have all made a difficult time a little easier. God Bless.

Thank you and our love to all of you,  
The Taylors  
Steve, Doreen, Nicholas, Laura, and Adam

83-15

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83-1



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23



# Merger election enabling legislation H.B. No. 3132

H.B. No. 3132

AN ACT relating to the dissolution of the Gainesville Hospital District and the Muenster Hospital District and the creation of the Cooke County Hospital District.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS: ARTICLE 1. CHANGES RELATING TO GAINESVILLE HOSPITAL DISTRICT

SECTION 1.01. Chapter 211, Acts of the 64th Legislature, Regular Session, 1975, is amended by adding Section 1A to read as follows:

Sec. 1A. On the dissolution of the Gainesville Hospital District and the approval of the creation of the Cooke County Hospital District, a reference in this Act or in any other law to the Gainesville Hospital District means the Cooke County Hospital District.

SECTION 1.02. Chapter 211, Acts of the 64th Legislature, Regular Session, 1975, is amended by adding Section 18A to read as follows:

Sec. 18A. DISSOLUTION OF DISTRICT IN EVENT OF DISSOLUTION OF MUEENSTER HOSPITAL DISTRICT AND CREATION OF COOKE COUNTY HOSPITAL DISTRICT. (a) Notwithstanding the provisions of any other section of this Act, the Gainesville Hospital District may be dissolved as provided by this section.

b) The board of directors may order an election on the question of the dissolution of the Gainesville Hospital District, creation of the Cooke County Hospital District, transfer of the Gainesville Hospital District's assets and obligations to the Cooke County Hospital District, and assumption by the Cooke County Hospital District of the Gainesville Hospital District's outstanding debts.

(c) The board shall order an election if: (1) the board has reasonable grounds to conclude that the board of the Muenster Hospital District will order an election under Section 20c, Chapter 477, Acts of the 59th Legislature, Regular Session, 1965; or

(2) the board receives a petition requesting an election on the question of the dissolution of the Gainesville Hospital District, creation of the Cooke County Hospital District, and transfer of assets that is signed by at least 15 percent of the registered voters in the Gainesville Hospital District.

(d) If the board of directors orders an election under this section, it shall promptly notify the board of directors of the Muenster Hospital District of the election order.

(e) The election shall be held not less than 45 or more than 60 days after the date on which an election is ordered and shall be held on the same date that the separate election in the Muenster Hospital District is held. The board of directors shall cooperate with the board of directors of the Muenster Hospital District in setting the date of the elections. Section 41.001(a), Election Code, does not apply to an election ordered under this section.

Reference Voth Letter 6-13 to 6-23 (f) The ballot for the election shall be printed to permit voting for or against the proposition: "The dissolution of the Gainesville Hospital District and creation of the Cooke County Hospital District, providing for the levy of a tax not to exceed 75 cents on each \$100 valuation on all taxable property in the Cooke County Hospital District, and providing for the transfer to and assumption by the Cooke County Hospital District of all outstanding bonds and indebtedness issued or refunded for hospital purposes by the Gainesville Hospital District and the transfer of the existing Gainesville Hospital

District's assets to the Cooke County Hospital District."

(g) Except as provided by Subsections (e) and (f) of this section, the election shall be held in accordance with the applicable provisions of the Election Code.

(h) The Gainesville Hospital District is dissolved if:

(1) a majority of the voters in the Gainesville Hospital District voting in the election held under this section favor the proposition; and

(2) a majority of the voters in the Muenster Hospital District voting in an election held on the same date under Section 20c, Chapter 477, Acts of the 59th Legislature, Regular Session, 1965, favor the dissolution of the Muenster Hospital District, the creation of the Cooke County Hospital District, the transfer of the assets of the Muenster Hospital District to the Cooke County Hospital District, and the assumption of the assets and obligations of the Muenster Hospital District by the Cooke County Hospital District.

(i) The Gainesville Hospital District is not dissolved and the board of directors shall continue to administer the Gainesville Hospital District if a majority of the voters in either the Gainesville Hospital District or the Muenster Hospital District do not favor the proposition on which they voted.

(j) If the Gainesville Hospital District is dissolved under this section, the board of directors shall orderly transfer the assets and obligations of the Gainesville Hospital District to the Cooke County Hospital District not later than the 180th day after the date of the election.

(k) The board of directors may not hold an election on the question of dissolution under this section and the creation of the Cooke County Hospital District before the first anniversary of the most recent election held under this section concerning the dissolution and the creation of the Cooke County Hospital District.

ARTICLE 2. CHANGES RELATING TO MUEENSTER HOSPITAL DISTRICT

SECTION 2.01. Chapter 477, Acts of the 59th Legislature, Regular Session, 1965, is amended by adding Section 1A to read as follows:

Sec. 1A. On the dissolution of the Muenster Hospital District and the approval of the creation of the Cooke County Hospital District, a reference in this Act or in any other law to the Muenster Hospital District means the Cooke County Hospital District.

SECTION 2.02. Section 20b(e), Chapter 477, Acts of the 59th Legislature, Regular Session, 1965, is amended to read as follows:

(e) If a majority of the votes in the election favor dissolution, the Board shall find that the District is dissolved. If a majority of the votes in the election do not favor dissolution, the Board shall continue to administer the District, and another election on the question of dissolution under this section may not be held before the first anniversary of the most recent election held under this section to dissolve the District.

SECTION 2.03. Chapter 477, Acts of the 59th Legislature, Regular Session, 1965, is amended by adding Section 20c to read as follows:

Sec. 20c. DISSOLUTION OF DISTRICT IN EVENT OF DISSOLUTION OF GAINESVILLE HOSPITAL DISTRICT AND CREATION OF COOKE COUNTY HOSPITAL DISTRICT. (a) Notwithstanding any other provision of this Act, the Muenster Hospital District may be dissolved as provided by this section.

(b) The Board of Directors may order an election on the question of the dissolution of the Muenster Hospital District, creation of the

Cooke County Hospital District, transfer of the Muenster Hospital District's assets and obligations to the Cooke County Hospital District, and assumption by the Cooke County Hospital District of the Muenster Hospital District's outstanding debts.

(c) The Board shall order an election if: (1) the Board has reasonable grounds to conclude that the board of the Muenster Hospital District will order an election under Section 20c, Chapter 477, Acts of the 59th Legislature, Regular Session, 1965; or

(2) the Board receives a petition requesting an election on the question of the dissolution of the Muenster Hospital District, creation of the Cooke County Hospital District, and transfer of assets that is signed by at least 15 percent of the registered voters in the Muenster Hospital District.

(d) If the Board of Directors orders an election under this section, it shall promptly notify the board of directors of the Gainesville Hospital District of the election order.

(e) The election shall be held not less than 45 or more than 60 days after the date on which an election is ordered and shall be held on the same date that the separate election in the Muenster Hospital District is held. The board of directors shall cooperate with the board of directors of the Muenster Hospital District in setting the date of the elections. Section 41.001(a), Election Code, does not apply to an election ordered under this section.

Cooke County Hospital District, transfer of the Muenster Hospital District's assets and obligations to the Cooke County Hospital District, and assumption by the Cooke County Hospital District of the Muenster Hospital District's outstanding debts.

(c) The Board shall order an election if: (1) the Board has reasonable grounds to conclude that the Board of Directors of the Gainesville Hospital District will order an election under Section 18A, Chapter 211, Acts of the 64th Legislature, Regular Session, 1975; or

(2) the Board receives a petition requesting an election on the question of the dissolution of the Muenster Hospital District, creation of the Cooke County Hospital District, and transfer of assets that is signed by at least 15 percent of the registered voters in the Muenster Hospital District.

(d) If the Board of Directors orders an election under this section, it shall promptly notify the Board of Directors of the Gainesville Hospital District of the election order.

(e) The election shall be held not less than 45 or more than 60 days after the date on which an election is ordered and shall be held on the same date that the separate election in the Gainesville Hospital District is held. The Board of Directors shall cooperate with the Board of Directors of the Gainesville Hospital District in setting the date of the elections. Section 41.001(a), Election Code, does not apply to an election ordered under this section.

(f) The ballot for the election shall be printed to permit voting for or against the proposition: "The dissolution of the Muenster Hospital District and creation of the Cooke County Hospital District, providing for the levy of a tax not to exceed 75 cents on each \$100 valuation on all taxable property in the Cooke County Hospital District, and providing for the transfer to and assumption by the Cooke County Hospital District of all outstanding bonds and indebtedness issued or refunded for hospital purposes by the Muenster Hospital District and the transfer of the existing Muenster Hospital District's assets to the Cooke County Hospital District."

(g) Except as provided by Subsections (e) and (f) of this section, the election shall be held in accordance with the applicable provisions of the Election Code.

(h) The Muenster Hospital District is dissolved if: (1) a majority of the voters in the Muenster Hospital District voting in the election held under this section favor the proposition; and

(2) a majority of the voters in the Gainesville Hospital District voting in an election held on the same date under Section 18A, Chapter 211, Acts of the 64th Legislature, Regular Session, 1975, favor the dissolution of the Gainesville Hospital District, the creation of the Cooke County Hospital District, the transfer of the assets of the Gainesville Hospital District to the Cooke County Hospital District, and the assumption of the assets and obligations of the Gainesville Hospital District by the Cooke County Hospital District.

(i) The Muenster Hospital District is not dissolved and the Board of Directors shall continue to administer the Muenster Hospital District if a majority of the voters in either district do not favor the proposition on which they voted.

(j) If the Muenster Hospital District is dissolved under this section, the Board of Directors shall orderly transfer the assets and obligations of the Muenster Hospital District to the Cooke County Hospital District not later than the 180th day after the date of the election.

Reference Voth Letter 4-9 to 4-13 (k) The Board of Directors may not hold an election on the question of dissolution under this section and the creation of the Cooke County Hospital District before the first anniversary of the most recent election held under this section concerning the dissolution and the creation of the Cooke County Hospital District.

each year on the first Saturday in May, and the appropriate number of successor directors shall be elected for three-year terms.

(b) Notice of each election shall be published in a newspaper of general circulation in the district in accordance with Section 4003, Election Code. Any person desiring to have the person's name printed on the ballot as a candidate for director shall file an application with the secretary of the board of directors. The application shall be filed with the secretary at least 60 days before the date of the election. The application must specify the commissioners precinct the candidate wishes to represent or that the candidate wishes to represent the district at large.

(c) Vacancies in office shall be filled for the unexpired term by the remainder of the board of directors.

SECTION 3.06. A person may not be appointed or elected as a member of the temporary or permanent board of directors unless the person is a resident of the district, a qualified voter, and, if elected from the commissioners precinct, a resident of the precinct. The following persons are not eligible to serve as a director:

(1) an administrator;

(2) any other employee of the district; or

(3) an individual who was employed by the district within 24 months before the date of election or appointment.

SECTION 3.07. (a) The district authorized by this article to be created shall take over and there shall be transferred to the district title to all land, buildings, improvements, and equipment pertaining to the hospitals or hospital system that may be located within or outside the district and owned by Cooke County or a municipality in the district, and after that date the district shall provide for the establishment of a hospital system by the purchase, construction, acquisition, repair, and renovation of buildings and equipment, equipping the buildings, and the administration of the district for hospital purposes.

ARTICLE 3. CREATION OF COOKE COUNTY HOSPITAL DISTRICT

SECTION 3.01. (a) In accordance with Section 9, Article IX, Texas Constitution, this article authorizes the creation, establishment, administration, maintenance, operation, and financing of a hospital district in this state with boundaries coextensive with the boundaries of Cooke County as they existed on November 15, 1999.

(b) The district is to be known as "Cooke County Hospital District," and it has the rights, powers, and duties provided in this article.

SECTION 3.02. (a) The Cooke County Hospital District may not be created unless the creation, the assumption of debt, and the levy of taxes are approved by a majority of the voters at an election held in the Gainesville Hospital District and by a majority of the voters at a separate election held in the Muenster Hospital District.

(b) The election in the Gainesville Hospital District and the election in the Muenster Hospital District shall be held on the same day and must be held before the fifth anniversary of the effective date of this Act.

SECTION 3.03. (a) If the Cooke County Hospital District is created in accordance with Section 18A, Chapter 211, Acts of the 64th Legislature, Regular Session, 1975, and Section 20c, Chapter 477, Acts of the 59th Legislature, Regular Session, 1965, the following nine persons shall serve as temporary directors of the Cooke County Hospital District:

(1) David Hutcherson;

(2) Karla Metzler;

(3) Harrison Wellman;

(4) Dave Sanders;

(5) Jerry Parr;

(6) Don Flusche;

(7) Gerald Hess;

(8) Charles Bayer; and

(9) Werner Becker, Jr.

(b) A vacancy on the temporary board of directors shall be filled by the Commissioners Court of Cooke County.

(c) The temporary board shall serve as the directors of the Cooke County Hospital District until elected directors take office.

SECTION 3.04. (a) If the Cooke County Hospital District is created, directors shall be elected at an election to be held on the first Saturday in May following the date the Cooke County Hospital District is created.

(b) The temporary directors may postpone the election date for one year or until a subsequent uniform election date if the temporary directors determine that there is not sufficient time to comply with the requirements of law.

(c) Two directors shall be elected from each of Commissioners Precincts Numbers 1, 2, 3, and 4 of Cooke County, and one director shall be elected from the district at large.

(d) At the initial election of directors following creation of the Cooke County Hospital District, the two candidates receiving the highest number of votes from each commissioners precinct are the directors for that precinct, and the candidate receiving the highest number of votes from the district at large is the director for the district at large.

(e) The directors elected at the initial election of directors following creation of the Cooke County Hospital District shall draw lots to determine which three directors shall serve two-year terms, and which three directors shall serve three-year terms.

SECTION 3.05. (a) After the initial election of directors following creation, an election shall be held

each year on the first Saturday in May, and the appropriate number of successor directors shall be elected for three-year terms.

(b) Notice of each election shall be published in a newspaper of general circulation in the district in accordance with Section 4003, Election Code. Any person desiring to have the person's name printed on the ballot as a candidate for director shall file an application with the secretary of the board of directors. The application shall be filed with the secretary at least 60 days before the date of the election. The application must specify the commissioners precinct the candidate wishes to represent or that the candidate wishes to represent the district at large.

(c) Vacancies in office shall be filled for the unexpired term by the remainder of the board of directors.

SECTION 3.06. A person may not be appointed or elected as a member of the temporary or permanent board of directors unless the person is a resident of the district, a qualified voter, and, if elected from the commissioners precinct, a resident of the precinct. The following persons are not eligible to serve as a director:

(1) an administrator;

(2) any other employee of the district; or

(3) an individual who was employed by the district within 24 months before the date of election or appointment.

SECTION 3.07. (a) The district authorized by this article to be created shall take over and there shall be transferred to the district title to all land, buildings, improvements, and equipment pertaining to the hospitals or hospital system that may be located within or outside the district and owned by Cooke County or a municipality in the district, and after that date the district shall provide for the establishment of a hospital system by the purchase, construction, acquisition, repair, and renovation of buildings and equipment, equipping the buildings, and the administration of the district for hospital purposes.

(b) The district shall assume the outstanding indebtedness incurred by the Gainesville Hospital District or the Muenster Hospital District to provide medical care for residents of the district before the creation of the district.

SECTION 3.08. (a) The board of directors, both temporary and permanent, shall organize by electing one of the members as president and one as vice president. A secretary, who need not be a director, shall also be elected. Officers shall be elected for a term of one year and vacancies shall be filled for the unexpired term by the board.

(b) When a quorum is present, a majority of the members of the board of directors voting must concur in a matter pertaining to the business of the district. A quorum of the board shall be required to transact the business of the district. A majority of the members of the board constitutes a quorum.

(c) All members of the board of directors and officers shall serve without compensation, but may be reimbursed for actual expenses incurred in the performance of the member's official duties as approved by the board and reported in the minute book of the district or other records of the district.

SECTION 3.09. (a) The board of directors shall manage, control, and administer the hospital system and the business of and all funds and resources of the district, and the operating, depreciation, or building reserves shall be invested in accordance with Chapter 2256, Government Code.

(b) The district, through its board of directors, may sue and be sued and adopt rules governing the operation of the hospital, hospital system, and the district's staff and employees.

(c) The board of directors shall appoint one or more qualified persons as administrators of the hospital district and may appoint one or more assistants to the administrators. The administrators and assistant administrators, if any, serve at the will of the board and receive compensation as may be fixed by the board. Each administrator shall, on assuming the administrator's duties, execute a bond payable to the hospital district in an amount set by the board but not less than \$5,000 conditioned on the faithful performance of the duties required of the administrator and containing other conditions as the board may require. The board may pay for the bond with district funds. The administrators shall supervise all the work and activities of the district subject to the limitation prescribed by the board.

(d) The board of directors shall have the authority to appoint to the staff any doctors the board considers necessary for the efficient operation of the district by circumstances. The board shall have the authority to employ and may delegate to the administrators the authority to employ persons for the district, including technicians, nurses, fiscal agents, accountants, architects, persons providing professional or staff assistance, and other necessary employees.

Reference Voth Letter 12-16 to 13-1

(c) The board of directors shall appoint one or more qualified persons as administrators of the hospital district and may appoint one or more assistants to the administrators. The administrators and assistant administrators, if any, serve at the will of the board and receive compensation as may be fixed by the board. Each administrator shall, on assuming the administrator's duties, execute a bond payable to the hospital district in an amount set by the board but not less than \$5,000 conditioned on the faithful performance of the duties required of the administrator and containing other conditions as the board may require. The board may pay for the bond with district funds. The administrators shall supervise all the work and activities of the district subject to the limitation prescribed by the board.

(d) The board of directors shall have the authority to appoint to the staff any doctors the board considers necessary for the efficient operation of the district by circumstances. The board shall have the authority to employ and may delegate to the administrators the authority to employ persons for the district, including technicians, nurses, fiscal agents, accountants, architects, persons providing professional or staff assistance, and other necessary employees.

(e) The board of directors may contract with any other political subdivision or governmental agency for the district to provide investigatory or other services as to the medical, hospital, or welfare needs of the residents of the district. The district may contract with any county or municipality located outside the district's boundaries for the care and treatment of the sick, diseased, or injured persons of the county or municipality, and may contract with the state or agencies of the federal government for the state or federal government to reimburse the district for the treatment of the sick, diseased, or injured persons. The board may delegate to the administrators the authority to contract with a person for the district.

SECTION 3.10. (a) The district shall operate on the basis of fiscal years established from time to time by the board of directors, provided that a fiscal year may not be changed during the time revenue bonds of the district are outstanding or more than once in any 24-month period.

(b) The board of directors shall cause an annual audit to be made of the financial affairs of the district, which shall be open to inspection at the principal office of the district.

(c) The administrators shall prepare an annual budget for approval by the board of directors. The budget shall contain a complete financial statement of the district showing:

(1) all outstanding obligations of the district;

(2) the cash on hand to the credit of each fund of the district;

(3) the amount of money received by the district from all sources during the previous year;

(4) the funds available from all sources during the ensuing year, with balances expected at year end of the year in which the budget is being prepared; and

(5) estimated revenues and balances available to cover the proposed budget and the estimated tax rate that will be required.

(d) A public hearing on the annual budget shall be held by the board of directors after notice of the hearing has been published one time in a newspaper of general circulation in the district at least 10 days before the date set for the hearing. Any person residing in the district shall have the right to be present and participate in the hearing.

(e) The budget, as proposed by the administrator, shall be acted on by the board of directors. The board shall have authority to make changes in the budget as



# Merger election enabling legislation H.B. No. 3132

the board determines the law warrants and the interests of the taxpayers demand.

(f) The annual budget may be amended from time to time with the approval of the board of directors.

**SECTION 3.11. (a)** The board of directors shall have the power and authority to issue and sell bonds in the name and on the faith and credit of the hospital district for:

(1) the purchase, construction, acquisition, repair, and renovation of buildings or improvements;

(2) equipping the buildings and improvements for hospital and health care services related purposes; or

(3) acquiring and operating a skilled nursing unit, convalescent facility, nursing home, assisted living facility, or other related health care facility.

(b) At the time bonds are issued by the district, a tax shall be levied by the board of directors sufficient to create an interest and sinking fund to pay the interest on and principal of the bonds as the bonds mature, provided that the tax together with any other taxes levied for the district may not exceed the limit approved by the voters at the election authorizing the levy of taxes.

(c) Bonds may not be issued by the district except for revenue or refunding bonds until authorized by a majority of the electors of the district.

(d) The order for a bond election shall specify:

(1) the nature and date of the election;

(2) the location of the polling places;

(3) the hours during which the polls will be open; and

(4) the amount of bonds to be authorized and the maximum maturity of the bonds.

(e) Notice of a bond election shall be given as provided by Section 1251.003, Government Code, and shall be conducted in accordance with the Election Code, except as modified by the provisions of this article.

**SECTION 3.12. (a)** Refunding bonds of the district may be issued for the purpose of refunding and paying off any outstanding indebtedness the district has issued or assumed.

(b) Refunding bonds may be sold and the proceeds from the bonds may be applied to the payment of outstanding indebtedness or may be exchanged in whole or in part for not less than a similar principal amount of the outstanding indebtedness.

(c) If the refunding bonds are to be sold and the proceeds from the bonds are to be applied to the payment of any outstanding indebtedness, the refunding bonds shall be issued and payments made in the manner specified by Chapter 1207, Government Code.

**SECTION 3.13. Bonds** issued by the district must:

(1) mature not later than the 40th anniversary of the date of issuance;

(2) be executed in the manner provided by Chapter 618, Government Code;

(3) bear a rate of interest that does not exceed the amount prescribed by Chapter 1204, Government Code; and

(4) be subject to the requirements of Chapter 1202, Government Code.

**SECTION 3.14. (a)** In addition to being granted the power to issue bonds payable from taxes levied by the district under Section 3.12 of this article, the board of directors may issue and refund any previously issued revenue bond to:

(1) purchase, construct, acquire, repair, equip, or renovate a building or improvement for hospital and related purposes;

(2) acquire a site for hospital purposes; or

(3) acquire and operate a facility described by Section 3.11(a)(3) of this article to assist the district in carrying out the district's hospital purposes.

(b) Bonds authorized under this section shall be payable from and secured by a

pledge of all or any part of the revenues of the district to be derived from the operation of the district's hospital system, and may be additionally secured by a mortgage or deed of trust lien on any part or all of the district's properties.

(c) Bonds shall be issued in the manner and in accordance with the procedures and requirements specified for the issuance of revenue bonds by a county hospital authority under Chapter 264, Health and Safety Code.

**SECTION 3.15. (a)** The board of directors has complete discretion as to the type of buildings, both in number and location, required to establish and maintain an adequate hospital system and the type of equipment necessary for hospital care. The hospital system may include:

(1) domiciliary care and treatment of the sick, wounded, and injured;

(2) outpatient clinics;

(3) pharmacies;

(4) geriatric domiciliary care and treatment;

(5) convalescent home facilities;

(6) necessary nurses, domiciliaries, and training centers;

(7) research centers and laboratories; and

(8) any other facilities determined by the board to be necessary for hospital and related health care.

*Reference Voth Letter 18-8 to 18-24*

(b) Notwithstanding

Subsection (a) of this section, the district shall provide full-time health care services and facilities in the city of Muenster, including, at a minimum, physician offices and services, outpatient medical care, comprehensive laboratory services, and comprehensive radiology services, including ultrasound, mammography, and computerized tomography, at Muenster Memorial Hospital or its successor facility and nursing home care at St. Richard's Villa. If the district does not construct a new acute care hospital facility, the district shall continue to operate an acute care hospital facility located in the city of Muenster until the district constructs a new hospital facility to serve the residents of the city of Muenster.

(c) If a resident of the district prevails in an action brought against the district for the district's alleged failure to comply with Subsection (b) of this section, the resident is entitled to recover reasonable attorney's fees from the district.

(d) The district, through its board of directors, may enter into an operating or management contract with regard to all or part of the district's facilities or may lease all or part of the district's buildings and facilities on terms and conditions considered to be in the best interest of the residents of the district. A lease under this subsection may not be for a period that exceeds 25 years.

(e) The district may sell or otherwise dispose of any property, real or personal, or equipment of any nature on terms and conditions found by the board of directors to be in the best interest of the residents of the district.

(f) The board of directors may prescribe the method and manner of making purchases and expenditures by and for the district and may prescribe all accounting and control procedures.

(g) A contract for construction may be made only after competitive bidding as provided by Subchapter B, Chapter 271, Local Government Code.

(h) The provisions of Chapter 2253, Government Code, relating to performance and payment bonds apply to construction contracts let by the district.

(i) The district may acquire property, facilities, and equipment for use in the hospital system and may mortgage or pledge the property, facilities, or equipment acquired by the district as security for the payment of the purchase price.

(j) The board of directors shall name one or more

banks to serve as depository for the funds of the district. All funds of the district, except those invested as provided in Section 3.09(a) of this article and those transmitted to a bank for payment for bonds or obligations issued or assumed by the district, shall be deposited as received with the depository bank and shall remain on deposit. Nothing in this subsection may limit the power of the board to place a portion of the board's funds on time deposit or to purchase certificates of deposit or other investments permitted by Chapter 2256, Government Code.

(k) Before the district deposits the district's funds in a bank in an amount that exceeds the maximum amount secured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, the bank must execute a bond or other security in an amount sufficient to secure from loss the district funds that exceed the amount secured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation.

**SECTION 3.16. (a)** The board of directors may provide retirement benefits for employees of the district by establishing or administering a retirement program or electing to participate in the Texas County and District Retirement System or in any other statewide retirement system in which the district is eligible to participate.

(b) The board of directors may institute a suit to enforce the payment of taxes or to foreclose liens to secure the payment of taxes due the district.

(c) The district, subject to the approval of the board of directors, may provide primary care, emergency services, preventive medical services, and other health-related services outside the boundaries of the district, provided the services serve the purpose of the district as established by this article.

(d) The board of directors may also contract with the state or agencies of the federal government to be reimbursed for the treatment of sick, diseased, or injured persons.

(e) The district may contract with, affiliate with, or enter into another arrangement with a managed care system, a preferred provider organization, a health maintenance organization, another provider of alternative health care or delivery system, or a private hospital to jointly administer or deliver health care services. The district may spend district funds to establish and maintain partnerships, corporations, or other entities involved in the delivery of health care services.

(f) The district may sponsor and create a nonprofit corporation under the Texas Non-Profit Corporation Act (Article 1396.101 et seq., Vernon's Texas Civil Statutes) and may contribute funds to or solicit funds for the corporation. The corporation may use funds, other than funds paid by the corporation to the district, only to provide health care or other services the district is authorized to provide under this article.

The board of directors of the hospital district shall establish adequate controls to ensure that the corporation uses its funds as required by this subsection. The corporation may invest corporation funds in any manner in which the district may invest funds, including investing funds as authorized by Chapter 2256, Government Code.

(g) The board of directors may spend district funds, enter into agreements, and take other necessary action to recruit physicians and other persons to serve as medical staff members or employees of the district, including:

(1) advertising and marketing;

(2) paying travel, recruitment, and relocation expenses;

(3) providing a loan or scholarship to a physician or a person currently enrolled in health care education courses at an

institution of higher education who contractually agrees to become a district employee or medical staff member; or

(4) contracting with one or more full-time medical students or other students in a health occupation, enrolled in and in good standing at an accredited medical school, college, or university, to pay the student's tuition or other expenses in consideration of the student's agreement to serve as an employee or independent contractor for the district.

(h) The board of directors may spend district funds, enter into agreements, and take other necessary action to conduct, participate in, or otherwise assist in providing health care educational programs for current or prospective medical staff members or employees of the district.

**SECTION 3.17. (a)** The board of directors shall annually levy a tax in an amount not to exceed the limit approved by the voters for the purpose of paying:

(1) the indebtedness assumed or issued by the district; or

(2) the maintenance and operating expenses of the district.

(b) A tax levied under this section may not be levied to pay the principal of or interest on revenue bonds issued under Section 3.14 of this article.

(c) In setting a tax rate under this section, the board of directors shall consider the income of the district from sources other than taxation. On determining the amount of tax required to be levied, the board shall make the levy and certify the levy to the tax assessor-collector.

**SECTION 3.18. (a)** Bonds issued and indebtedness assumed by the district are a legal and authorized investment of a bank, savings bank, trust company, savings and loan association, insurance company, fiduciary, trustee, guardian, or sinking fund of a municipality, school district, or other political subdivision of the state, and for all public funds of the state or an agency of the state, including the state permanent school fund.

(b) Bonds issued or indebtedness assumed by the district is eligible to secure the deposit of public funds of the state and the public funds of a municipality, school district, or other political subdivision of the state, and is lawful and sufficient security for those deposits to the extent of the value of the bonds or indebtedness when accompanied by all unmaturing coupons.

**SECTION 3.19. (a)** The district has the right and power of eminent domain for the purpose of acquiring by condemnation any and all property of any kind and character in fee simple, or any lesser interest in the property, within the boundaries of the district if necessary to the exercise of the rights or authority conferred by this article in the manner provided by the general law with respect to condemnation by counties.

(b) The district is not required to deposit in the trial court money or bond as provided by Section 21.021, Property Code.

(c) In a condemnation proceeding prosecuted by the district, the district is not required to:

(1) pay in advance or give bond or other security for costs in the trial court;

(2) give any bond otherwise required for the issuance of a temporary restraining order or a temporary injunction; or

(3) give bond for costs or for supersedeas on an appeal or writ of error.

**SECTION 3.20. (a)** The board of directors may levy taxes for the entire year in which the district is established as a result of the initial election provided under this article.

(b) The Tax Code governs the appraisal, assessment, and collection of district taxes.

(c) The board of directors may provide for the appointment of a tax assessor-collector for the

district or may contract for the assessment and collection of taxes as provided by the Tax Code.

**SECTION 3.21. (a)** The district shall provide without charge to a patient residing in the district the medical care and treatment that the patient or a relative of the patient who is legally responsible for the patient's support cannot pay.

(b) Each operating year, the district shall adopt an application procedure to determine eligibility for assistance as provided by Section 61.053, Health and Safety Code.

(c) An administrator may cause an inquiry to be made regarding the financial circumstances of a patient under Subsection (a) of this section residing in the district and admitted to a district facility and of the relatives of the patient legally responsible for the patient's support. If the patient or relative is found to be able to pay for all or part of the care and treatment, the administrator shall issue an order directing the patient or the relative to pay to the district for the care and support of the patient a specified sum each week in an amount that the individual is able to pay. The administrator may collect sums under this subsection from the estate of the patient or a relative who is legally responsible for the patient's support in the manner provided by law for collection of expenses in the last illness of a deceased person.

(d) In the case of a dispute regarding the ability to pay, the board of directors shall call witnesses, conduct a hearing, and issue a final order. An appeal from a final order of the board under this subsection shall be made to the district court in Cooke County. The substantial evidence rule applies to an appeal under this subsection.

**SECTION 3.22.** The board of directors, on behalf of the district, may accept donations, gifts, and endowments to be held in trust and administered by the board for purposes and under directions, limitations, and provisions prescribed in writing by the donor that are not inconsistent with the proper management of the district.

**SECTION 3.23. (a)** If the board of directors declares that funds are not available to meet the lawfully authorized obligations of the district and that an emergency exists, the board may borrow money at a rate not to exceed the maximum annual percentage rate allowed by law for district obligations at the time of the loan.

(b) To secure a loan, the board may pledge:

(1) revenues of the district that are not pledged to pay the bonded indebtedness of the district;

(2) district taxes to be levied by the district during the 12-month period following the date of the pledge that are not pledged to pay the principal of or interest on district bonds; or

(3) district bonds that have been authorized but not sold.

(c) A loan for which taxes or bonds are pledged shall mature not later than the first anniversary of the date on which the loan is made. A loan for which district revenues are pledged shall mature not later than the fifth anniversary of the date on which the loan is made.

(d) The board of directors may not spend money obtained from a loan under this section for any purpose other than the purpose for which the board declared an emergency. If taxes or bonds are pledged to pay the loan, the board may not spend the revenue other than for the purpose for which the taxes were levied or the bonds were authorized.

**SECTION 3.24. (a)** After the district is created, a county, municipality, or political subdivision in or partly in the district may not levy taxes or issue bonds or other obligations for hospital purposes or for providing medical care for the residents of the district.

(b) The district shall assume full responsibility for the operation of all hospital facilities and for the furnishing of medical and hospital care for the district's needy residents.

(c) When the district is created and established, the county and all municipalities located in or partly in the district shall convey and transfer to the district title to all land, buildings, improvements, and equipment that pertain to a hospital or hospital system located in the district owned by the county, municipality, or other governmental entity.

(d) Operating funds and reserves for operating expenses that have been budgeted by the county, municipality, or other governmental entity in which the district is located to provide medical care for residents of the district for the remainder of the fiscal year in which the district is established, taxes levied for hospital purposes for the current year, and all funds established for payment of indebtedness assumed by the district shall be transferred to the district.

**SECTION 3.25.** The support and maintenance of the district may not become a charge against or an obligation of the state. A direct appropriation by the legislature may not be made for the construction, maintenance, or improvement of any of the facilities of the district.

**SECTION 3.26.** In administering this article, the district is performing an essential public function, and any bonds issued by the board and the transfer and the issuance of the bonds, including any profits made in the sale of the bonds, are exempt from taxation by the state or any municipality or political subdivision of the state.

**SECTION 3.27.** Proof of publication of the notice required in the enactment of this Act under the provisions of Section 9, Article IX, Texas Constitution, has been made in the manner and form provided by law pertaining to the enactment of local and special laws, and the notice is found and declared proper and sufficient to satisfy the requirement.

**ARTICLE 4. EFFECTIVE DATE**

**SECTION 4.01.** This Act takes effect immediately if it receives a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this Act takes effect September 1, 2001.

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Janie Hartman at [jhartman@mac.com](mailto:jhartman@mac.com)

Lifestyle, County News, Political, Health,

School and Gardening to:

Janet Felderhoff at [jfelderhoff@mac.com](mailto:jfelderhoff@mac.com)

Weddings, Obituaries and Circulation to:

Elfreda Fette at [elfredafette@mac.com](mailto:elfredafette@mac.com)

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### Legal Notices

#### NOTICE TO ALL PERSONS HAVING CLAIMS AGAINST THE ESTATE OF MARY JOYCE SPAIN, DECEASED

Notice is hereby given that original Letters Testamentary for the Estate of **Mary Joyce Spain, Deceased**, were issued on July 30, 2001, in Cause No. #15,309, pending in the County Court of Cooke County, Texas - Probate Division, to the following named co-executors whose mailing address is listed below:

LAWRENCE E. BANKS and  
SHERYL J. NETTE BANKS  
3737 Jubilee Trail  
Dallas, TX

All persons having claims against this estate which is currently being administered are required to present them within the time and in the manner prescribed by law.

Dated this 30th day of July, 2001.

Respectfully submitted,  
/s/Russell Duncan, P. C.  
P. O. Drawer 1219  
Gainesville, Texas 76241-1219  
(940) 665-1671  
Bar Card No. 06219000  
Attorney for the Estate

#### NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Notice is hereby given that original Letters Testamentary for the Estate of **Elmer W. Medford, Deceased**, were issued on July 30, 2001, in Cause No. 15315, pending in the County Court of Cooke County, Texas, to: D.A. Medford.

All persons having claims against this Estate which is currently being administered are required to present them within the time and in the manner prescribed by law to the following:

**H. MACK BARNHART**  
Lawyer For The Estate of Elmer W. Medford, Deceased  
P.O. Box 1298  
Gainesville, Texas 76241-1298

DATED the 30th day of July, 2001.

/s/H. MACK BARNHART  
Lawyer for the Estate  
State Bar No.: 01788000

#### NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Notice is hereby given that original Letters of Administration for the Estate of **NETTIE FAIRCHILD, Deceased**, were issued on July 18, 2001, under Docket No. 15273, pending in the County Court of Cooke County, Texas, to: **DONNA JEANNE CARROLL**.

Claims may be presented in care of the attorney for the Estate addressed as follows:

Cindy Stormer  
102 E. Elm  
Gainesville, TX 76240

All persons having claims against this Estate which is currently being administered are required to present them within the time and in the manner proscribed by law.

DATED the 18th day of July, 2001.

/s/CINDY STORMER  
Attorney for the Estate

Muenster Independent School District is accepting bids for obsolete computer and electronic equipment. Included in the lot is all or part of 1 - 286 class machine, 16 - 386 class machines, 20 - 486 class machines, and 6 Pentium class machines. All machines are missing one or more components that are required for operation. Also included in this lot are 43 VGA monitors, 9 printers, a number of keyboards, and several non-working televisions. Sold as a lot only (all or none). Please contact Clyde Steelman or Jerry Eckart at MISD - 759-2281.

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Page.

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# Farm & Ranch

# County Agent's Report by Craig Rosenbaum

## Texas Agricultural Extension service changing name, keeping commitments

The Board of Regents of The Texas A&M University System approved changing the name of the Texas Agricultural Extension Service to Texas Cooperative Extension.

"The new name ties the agency's roots to the broader services it currently offers and will offer in the future," said Chancellor Howard Graves. "Our hope is that more Texans will take advantage of the variety of programs and services available through Extension."

Cooperative Extension, explained that the change was necessary to maintain and improve service to all Texans.

"Our mission always has been to provide education to help farmers and ranchers increase their productivity, to help families succeed, to empower young people to grow into productive citizens, and to help communities develop economically," Hiler said. "But some people, especially in our urban centers, never realized we offered all those opportunities because our name seemed to emphasize only one area."

Despite the change in the name, Extension leaders affirmed that the agency's commitment to Texas' \$15 billion agriculture industry will remain as strong as ever.

"Throughout our history, agriculture has been an integral part of what we do, one of the primary reasons for our work and that won't change," Deputy Director Chester Fehlis said. "However, our mission has always been broader than just agriculture, and we want all Texans to feel comfortable requesting assistance for the wide array of Extension educational programs designed to serve their needs."

Why the word "cooperative"? Texas Cooperative Extension is an agency founded on the cooperation of federal, state, and county governments, Fehlis said.

"The U.S. Department of Agriculture, The Texas A&M University System, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas are the funding partners that make Extension possible. We are

also part of the national Cooperative Extension System found in every state and U.S. territory."

To find out about Extension education opportunities locally, contact the nearest county Extension office or visit the Texas Cooperative Extension web site: <http://texasextension.tamu.edu>.

### Stocker calf workshop

Mark your calendars for Tuesday, August 21 and Monday, August 27 for a Stocker Calf Workshop to be held at the Cooke County Farm Bureau Building on Highway 82 at Gainesville. Topics to be covered include health management, pasture selection, and economics for calves, pasture and marketing alternatives.

### Prussic acid

Once again it appears that we are in another summer drought. This plant stress has caused producers to be more aware of prussic acid poisoning in livestock. This past week I visited with a dairyman who lost one cow and had several cows go down before he saved them with an antidote. These cows were eating a bale of freshly cut hay.

Grazing of certain drought stressed pastures and forages could lead to prussic acid poisoning in livestock.

Although many plants contain the toxic material that causes poisoning, those causing the highest mortality in livestock when grazing after they have been stressed and wilted are

Johnson and Sudan grasses and sorghum or hybrids of these.

The most dangerous time as far as the grazing of these plants is concerned is following weather extremes like drought or frost. Livestock should not be allowed access to the wilted material until it has dried completely. New plant growth usually becomes nontoxic and can be grazed within ten days to two weeks following a rain, and sunlight.

As far as prussic acid poisoning is concerned, the poison acts rapidly and can kill animals within minutes. In most acute cases, animals become affected within 10-15 minutes after eating toxic material and can die in two to three minutes. Symptoms may

include a brief period of stimulation followed by depression and paralysis. Signs of colic may be present. Stupor (loss of sensibility), difficult breathing and frequent convulsions may result. Death is caused by suffocation since oxygen remains in the blood and is not exchanged to the tissues. This also causes the blood to appear bright red.

To prevent prussic acid poisoning in livestock, follow these steps:

• Allow plant material affected by drought to dry thoroughly before baling.

• Feed animals hay or a supplement before turning them in on plants that may contain prussic acid. Animals that are not hungry will not be affected as seriously by toxic material since their intake will be limited.

• Remove all animals from the pasture if one in the herd shows any signs of poisoning.

• Call a veterinarian immediately if an animal appears to be poisoned. An antidote to treat affected animals is highly efficient if given early. This product is available from veterinarians.

The overall key to prevent prussic acid poisoning in livestock is to be aware of plant materials that may cause poisoning and then to keep cattle from grazing such plants until a safe period has passed.

### Maximizing limited rainfall for forage growth

In nature, there is a water cycle where moisture goes in to clouds by evaporation from moist soil, and/or water surfaces (oceans, lakes, etc.) and by transpiration from plant (evaporation of water from the leaves of a plant). Rainfall from these clouds to the ground returns water to the earth's surface. Rainfall can either go into the soil, or run off the soil surface in to creeks, rivers, lakes, and eventually the ocean. Water going into the soil profile refills soil pores. Soils saturated with water will allow excess to percolate through the soil into groundwater or aquifers, or drain into natural waterways. The rainfall held in the soil profile is the water used for forage plant growth and production.

Although in a drought there is a need for rainwater run off into tanks and lakes for animal drinking water, most rainwater is needed in the soil for plant use. Even though we cannot control the amount of rainfall we get in a drought year, we can affect how much limited rainfall goes in to the soil. We can also manage to reduce soil evaporation, which will hold soil moisture for a longer time, hence maximizing the rainfall's usefulness for plant growth.

Research has shown that dry soil without mulch or ground cover does not absorb rainfall readily. Bare, dry, compacted soil will only allow from 5 percent to 25 percent of rain to go into the soil profile. Infiltration rates vary with rate and duration of rainfall. The other 75-95 percent is runoff.

Think... Think... Think...  
You don't know what you've got  
Until IT'S gone. (Muenster Hospital District)  
**VOTE AGAINST MERGER**

## Funds available for erosion control practices

The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in Texas will soon receive approximately \$1.5 million in cost-share funds for a new program called Soil and Water Conservation Assistance (SWCA).

SWCA is a voluntary effort for farmers and ranchers that provides cost-share payments to address erosion problems.

Under SWCA, contracts range from five to ten years, and the total payment per participant shall not exceed \$50,000. The federal cost-share will be 75 percent of eligible practices. Land users that were not

successful in obtaining an EQIP contract in non-priority areas should consider this program.

Landowners can sign up for SWCA under a continuous sign-up period, but all funds must be obligated by Oct. 1, 2001.

As with all USDA programs, participation is open to all persons without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital and family status.

For more information and to sign up for SWCA, contact the NRCS office in Gainesville at 940-668-7794 ext. 3.

## Ag Briefs

In research, yearling steers dehorned and then put on feed gained weight much more slowly than steers that were dehorned as calves.

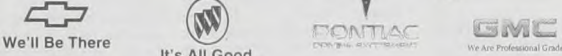
Hispanic Americans drink more milk per capita than any other ethnic group, according to USDA reports - about 18.51 gallons per person, compared to the US average of 16.93 gallons.

Pork demand is good, but larger supplies will push hog prices lower.

Transporting heifers creates stress, causing animals to eat less. To help heifers 2 months and older resume eating after transport, give them access to feed after arrival, but wait 30 minutes before allowing them to fill up on water.

When working outside, and you see lightning or hear thunder, head for a building or vehicle. You are close enough to the storm to be struck by lightning.

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<p><b>Feeder Steers (per lb.)</b> 200-300 lbs.: No. 1, 1.20-1.40; Nos. 2 &amp; 3, 1.00-1.17; 300-400 lbs.: No. 1, 1.10-1.37; Nos. 2 &amp; 3, 1.00-1.10; 400-500 lbs.: No. 1, 98-116; Nos. 2 &amp; 3, 90-98; 500-600 lbs.: No. 1, 93-101; Nos. 2 &amp; 3, 85-93; 600-700 lbs.: No. 1, 86-96; Nos. 2 &amp; 3, 75-86; 700-800 lbs.: No. 1, 81-90; Nos. 2 &amp; 3, 72-81.</p> <p><b>Feeder Heifers (per lb.)</b> 200-300 lbs.: No. 1, 1.10-1.20; Nos. 2 &amp; 3, 98-110; 300-400 lbs.: No. 1, 98-109; Nos. 2 &amp; 3, 90-98; 400-500 lbs.: No. 1, 93-105; Nos. 2 &amp; 3, 85-93; 500-600 lbs.: No. 1, 89-94; Nos. 2 &amp; 3, 82-89; 600-700 lbs.: No. 1, 81-90; Nos. 2 &amp; 3, 71-81; 700-800 lbs.: No. 1, 79-86; Nos. 2 &amp; 3, 63-79.</p> <p><b>Slaughter Cattle (per lb.)</b> Slaughter bulls: yield grade 1-2, 2.00-2.05 lbs.; 45-615 Slaughter cows: #1-3, 41-495; Cutter, 21-41.</p>	<p><b>Stocker Cows (per head)</b> Pregnancy-tested, 3- to 9-year-olds - large frame, \$600-\$730; medium frame, \$500-\$600. Cow-calf pairs/calves under 250 lbs. - large frame, \$750-\$880; medium frame, \$550-\$750. Holstein baby calves, \$75-\$115; Crossbreds, \$115-\$205.</p> <p><b>Barrows &amp; Gilts:</b> US #1, 230-270, 45-46; US #2, 220-280, 42-45.</p> <p><b>Feeders (per head):</b> 100-175 lbs., \$40-\$75; 250-90 lbs., \$30-\$50.</p> <p><b>Sows:</b> Feeder, 400 or less, 32-34; Light wt., 400-500, 36-40; Med wt., 500-600, 40-42; Heavy wt., 600-up, 42-44.</p> <p><b>Boars:</b> 300 lbs., up, 16-200-300 lbs., 20-22; Light wt., NT.</p> <p><b>Sheep (per lb.):</b> Feeder lambs: 40-60 lbs., 75-80; Light lambs: 60-90 lbs., 65-75; Fat lambs: 90-120 lbs., 60-65.</p>	<p><b>Barbados (per head)</b> Lambs: \$30-\$45. Ewes: \$25-\$40. Bucks: \$50-\$150.</p> <p><b>Ewes:</b> Stocker, 40-45; Thin, 25-30; Fat, 38-40.</p> <p><b>Bucks:</b> Thin: NT, Fat, 40-42.</p> <p><b>Goats (per head)</b> Kids: 20-35 lbs., \$15-\$25; 35-55 lbs., \$25-\$45; 55-75 lbs., \$45-\$75; Yearlings: 75-120 lbs., \$70-\$90.</p> <p><b>Nannies (per head)</b> Stocker, \$40-\$50; Milk Type, \$40-\$60; Slaughter, Thin, \$25-\$40; Fat, \$50-\$60.</p> <p><b>Billies (per head)</b> 120 lbs-up Breeders, \$60-\$80; Slaughter, \$55-\$75.</p> <p><b>Boer Goats (per head)</b> 1/2 Nanny, NT; 3/4 Nanny, NT; Full Nanny, NT. \$75-\$100; Full Nanny, NT. Boer Goats (per head) 1/2 Billy, NT; 3/4 Billy, NT; Full Billy, \$100-\$125.</p>
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## From My Side of the Fence by Ed Cler

While gazing over the *Gainesville Daily Register* of 7/24/01 a small headline caught my eye. It mentioned a man, Harley Sewell of Saint Jo, Texas, that I had come to know in the summer of '48.

I spent a great deal of that summer helping my brothers, Ray and Werner, with their grain harvest and haying. During the threshing season I ran a bundle wagon, one of eight that were required to keep the machine running steadily.

One of the other wagons was run by a big strong friendly young man named Harley Sewell, who hailed from our neighboring town to our west, Saint Jo.

After finishing the old Cler farm near Muenster, the rig was being moved to the north place. It didn't take long for the equipment, other than the tractor and thresher, to get over the six miles of graveled road, so the bundle wagons were soon loading, and all four of the bundle pitchers were busy.

Harley and I were the last wagons to unload, so when we got to the field on the north place, we began loading our own wagons. This is a sort of slow process, so I asked Harley why I didn't pitch his load, and he mine. He liked the idea and climbed aboard his wagon. He had loaded a few bundles from a shock and I soon pitched up the remainder and started to move forward to the next shock when it seemed that

something was trying to pull me back. It was then that I saw a huge diamond back rattler, its body and head drawn back, ready to strike.

I really don't know what I did next, except that my body reacted to a danger, and while jumping back, I speared my fork at the reptile.

It was then that I first heard the buzzing of its rattles. This also got Harley's attention, as well as that of the horses. I don't believe anyone could drive a fork accurately enough, in a thousand tries, to place the center tine through the center of a reptile's head, and pin it to the ground, such as happened here.

As Harley leaned over and saw what was likely the largest rattler either of us had ever seen, outside of captivity, he said, "Boy, I'm glad you came over here when you did!"

Few of our modern highly paid athletes would bother to do work such as Harley did, but like I said he was a real nice guy, and I think the foregoing is why I remember him so well.

I thought the article, as I read it in the *Gainesville Daily Register* might be of interest to some.

*Ed Cler received permission from the Gainesville Daily Register to reprint the following release on Harley Sewell:*

**Sewell to enter college football Hall of Fame**  
SOUTH BEND, Ind. - Harley Sewell, a former Saint Jo High School and

University of Texas football standout, will be enshrined into the College Football Hall of Fame on Aug. 10-11 in South Bend, Indiana.

Considered one of the best linemen in Texas football history, Sewell was a tough-nosed competitor who garnered First Team All-America recognition in 1952 after leading the Longhorns to a 9-2 season.

Sewell was a first team All-Southwest Conference selection in 1951 and 1952 and helped propel the Longhorns to SWC championships in 1950 and 1952. He starred in the 1953 Cotton Bowl, earning Defensive Most Valuable Player honors. After the Cotton Bowl, Sewell went on to play in the 1953 Hula Bowl and now is a member of the Texas Hall of Honor.

The Detroit Lions drafted Sewell in 1953 with the 13th pick overall. He went on to play for the Lions from 1953-62 and then for the Los Angeles Rams in 1963. He was a four-time Pro Bowl selection and earned championship rings in 1953 and 1957.

Sewell is currently a college scout for the St. Louis Rams and resides in Arlington. He is the 13th Longhorn to be inducted into the Hall of Fame.

Other 2001 Hall of Fame inductees include former Michigan offensive tackle Dan Dierdorf, former Stanford quarterback John Elway, and former Southern California running back Marcus Allen, among others.



Howard Davies (on tractor) clears the vineyard when first purchased in January 1999. Patrick Davies is pictured at left. Courtesy Photo

## Honor a lost loved one with a gift of life

If you have lost a loved one to lung disease, including asthma, emphysema, and bronchitis, then you know firsthand the suffering lung disease causes.

Every year, lung disease kills nearly 26,000 Texans and nearly 350,000 Americans. It is the nation's number three killer, responsible for one in seven deaths. In Texas alone, there are currently more than 2.2 million people suffering from some form of lung disease. Your gift can help improve the quality of their lives, and possibly save their lives.

If you would like to honor your lost loved one on his or her birthday or the anniversary of their death, please donate a memorial gift to the American Lung Association of Texas.

please contact the American Lung Association at 1-800-LUNG-USA, or visit THE website at [www.texaslung.org](http://www.texaslung.org).



Black Venus grapes right before this summer's harvest, picked July 21. Courtesy Photo

## OAK CREEK

Continued from Page 1

adjustments are made and/or additional fermentation time is taken, the winemaker will blend the wine with other wines he has made. This is where the true craftsmanship of winemaking comes in. If the winemaker has started with good grapes, has followed the winemaking process precisely and has the ability to taste the subtle flavors produced from different grapes, he will create delicious wines that will enhance our meals and our lives.

The Davies believe that the location of their vineyard, their selection of grape varieties, commitment to proper vine nutrition and vineyard management will produce the best wine grapes in Texas. Their vineyard is located off of Hwy 677 5.8 miles north of Saint Jo. For a detailed map and more information, please visit [www.oakcreekvineyards.cc](http://www.oakcreekvineyards.cc).

## MERGER

Continued from Page 11

ground which someone had said was a possibility. "It has been stated and we do not know if it is factual," he said. People from the east of I-35 in the county have complained about the site saying it should be to the east side of Gainesville, according to Aytes. "There seem to be strong feelings," he said. "At least that's what we're getting reports of people who are talking directly to Lake Kiowa residents. They feel like the site location is the wrong site. That may be more of a problem in the end than any problem of physical nature. I do not know that it will turn out to be a problem of magnitude."

The location of the new hospital is agreed upon in the MOU.

### Why?

Oatman explained that many small hospitals are in financial trouble in Texas. There are others with two hospitals in one county who are considering merger as a solution. Oatman continued, "It's unfortunate that the federal government is shifting the burden of healthcare for federally mandated programs like Medicare back to local communities, but that's what's happened since they changed the rules back in 1997. Consequently people are being forced to make choices that aren't always palatable. It's a question of it is better to have a hospital over in Gainesville that we have input in or do we run the risk of losing

our facility or control of our facility to somebody outside of our community. It's not fair that the federal government has put you in that position.

"We look at this from the outside and from a financial perspective. That's what our role has been. Given the history and what we know about the hospital and healthcare industry in Texas, what do we think the future financial results may be? I know it's certainly contentious between some of the people in Muenster and Gainesville about merging the hospitals. That's a community issue that they have to decide what they think is best for them."

The entire enabling legislation can be found on pages 12 and 13 of this week's *Muenster Enterprise* of on the Internet by searching for Texas House Bill 3132. Also available at *The Enterprise* is a copy of the Memorandum of Understanding.

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**DINING AREA - WHEN YOU NEED A BREAK, TWO DRIVE-THRU WINDOWS - WHEN YOU'RE IN A RUSH**

The date was March 1, 1964. That was the day Muenster Memorial Hospital had its first emergency patient. A few weeks before that, the hospital had its first regular patient. Both received excellent care and recovered. Through the years many people have had excellent medical care in our hospital. Hopefully, we will not be setting the date for our last regular patient and our last emergency Muenster Memorial Hospital on August 11.

If you are undecided or confused about how to vote, vote against the merger because once our district is merged with Gainesville it is gone forever. However, we do have the option to vote to merge again next year and in the coming years.

**VOTE  AGAINST THE DISSOLUTION OF THE MUESTER HOSPITAL DISTRICT**  
Paid for by Janie Weinzapfel, Box 201, Muenster, Texas 76252

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