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McNett Serves in Operations Enduring and Iraqi Freedom



Kyle McNett, a 1998 Gruver High School graduate, inspects an F-16 Fighting Falcon aircraft.

by John B. Dendy IV

For the son of a Gruver couple, the view from the back yard holds sights most people have to pay a small fortune to see - the Italian Alps, lush vineyards and the gorgeous countryside of northeastern Italy. On top of that, it's just a day's drive or less away from dozens of beautiful and historic European locations.

But Air Force Airman First Class Kyle F. McNett, son of Dean and Sandra McNett, Gruver pays rent for these choice digs in more than just dollars.

McNett and other members of the 31st Fighter Wing soon realize that life in Italy is far from a European vacation as they found themselves as major players in Operations Enduring and Iraqi Freedom, as well as helping keep the peace in places like Bosnia and Kosovo. At any given time, Aviano airmen can find themselves drilling with troops in Israel, hunkered in the field for a Nato inspection or involved in operations that span most of southern Europe, the Middle East and northern Africa, said the tactical aircraft

maintenance technician. "I work in the phase dock where I conduct 300, 900, and 1,600 flying hour inspections on all of the unit's F-16 Fighting Falcon aircraft, the 1998 Gruver High School graduate said. "Each inspection determines the combat readiness of both the jets and the airmen who maintain them. The jet doesn't just sit when it comes here - it's much like performing surgery on a \$40 million piece of equipment. I completely tear each jet apart and fix all discrepancies or problems that I find."

The end of the Cold War should have eased tensions at NATO bases, such as Aviano, but the breakup of Yugoslavia and other Soviet satellite states, ethnic hatreds soon flared and blood shed throughout the region brought new and even more critical missions. Construction cranes and buildings rising from once vacant pastures show that a U.S. presence in the region is far from over.

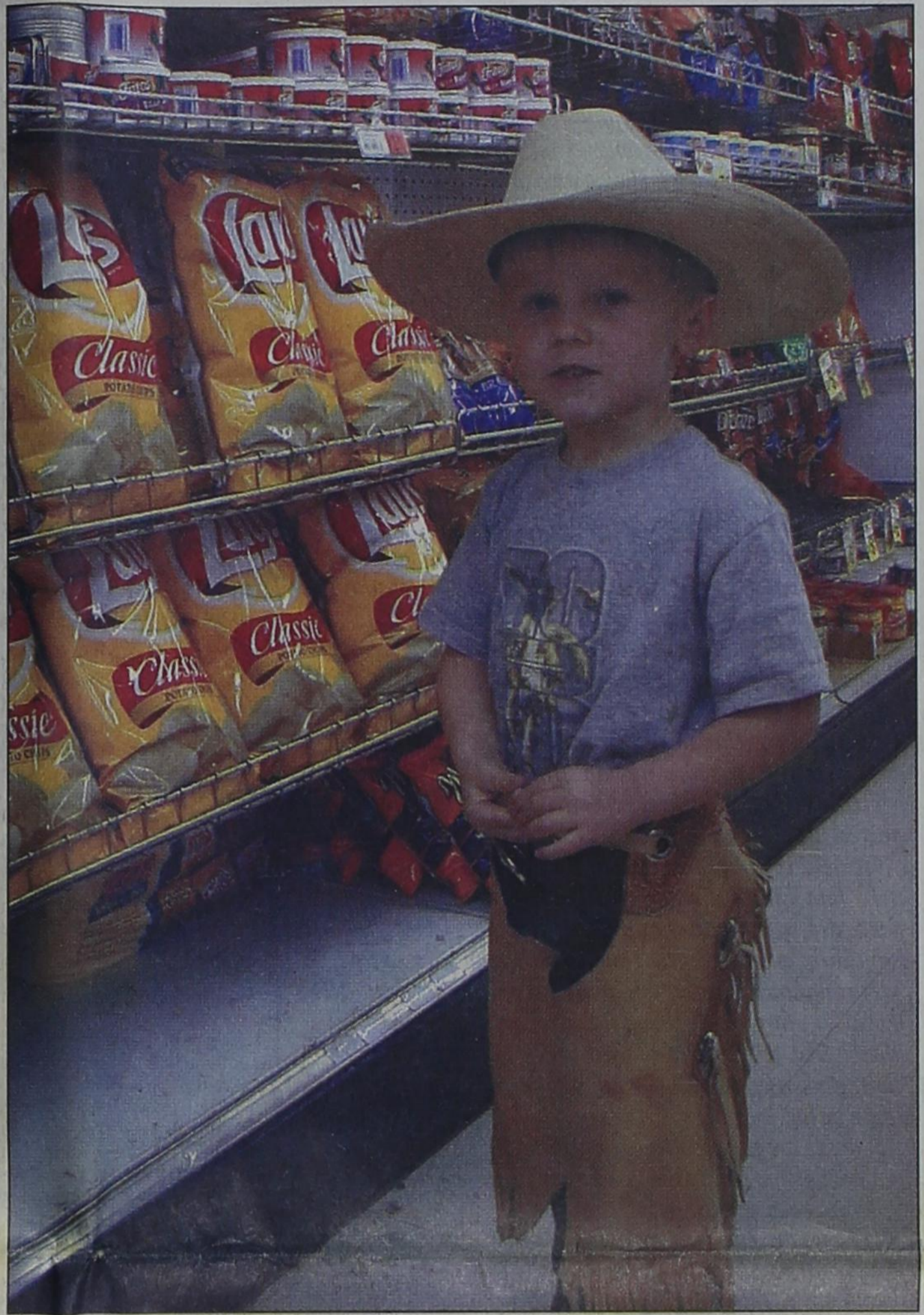
"I believe the new dormitories and gymnasiums will help improve the morale and physi-

cal readiness of the airmen and non-commissioned officers of Aviano," McNett said. "The Air Force is spending a lot of money to upgrade the base, and when it's done this will be a great place to live and work."

Between plotting trips to ancient Rome, Switzerland or any other of the many culturally-rich locations easily within his reach, McNett said he loves experiencing the different language, culture, sights and sounds of living in a foreign locale.

"I love my job and doing it in Italy is great," he said. "I learn all aspects of my job, but the same time I learn the Italian way of life and how their culture is different from the American way of life. The Italian people are very friendly and nice to be around."

When he has the time, McNett enjoys taking it easy enjoying the many sights, sounds, and tastes that Italy has to offer, but when the rent comes due on this European dream, He's off to make the U.S. and the world a safer place.



Chaps and chips are a favorite of TJ Nef who was shopping with his mom Monday. The little cowpoke is the son of Janice and Trent Nef who have recently moved here from Oregon.

March 9th Republican Primary

With February 26th and March 4th both scheduled for late night balloting in the Republican primary, Hansford County residents will have fewer excuses for not voting.

Polls will be open from 5-7 p.m. both Thursday, February 26, and Thursday, March 4 at the County Clerk's Office in the Hansford County Court House, according to Kim Vera, county clerk.

Any registered voter of Hansford County, regardless of precinct, may vote at the court house with identification.

Early balloting for the March 9th Republican primary will run through March 5.

Voters of any precinct may vote at Gruver City Hall or Hansford County Courthouse during regular business hours. March 1st is the last day applications may be submitted for an early ballot by mail for the primary, runoff and the general elections. Ballots will be mailed beginning January 24th.

The primary election day is Tuesday, March 9, 2004. Polling places will be open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. at the following locations: **Precinct 1:** City Hall, 30 SW Court, Spearman; **Precinct 2:** Renner Ranch, 10175 Co. Rd. H, Spearman; **Precinct 3:** Cristo-Redentor Catholic Church, 202 Hwy. 15, Gruver; **Precinct 4:** Gruver High School Library, 405 Garrett, Gruver; **Precinct 5:** Assembly of God Church, 214 SW 6th, Spearman; **Precinct 6:** Spearman High School, 403 11th, Spearman; **Precinct 7:** Oslo Lutheran Church, 8605 Co. Rd. F, Oslo; and **Precinct 9:** Morse Community Building, 301 Main, Morse.

Two candidates are running for the Hansford County Judge position. Benny Wilson, who was appointed by the Hansford County Commissioners Court to fill the unexpired term of Judge Jim Brown, and Cody Cazares.

Four candidates are running for the Hansford County Sheriff position, including Deputy Pete Ochoa, Deputy Gary Evans, Deputy Lance Swan and Spearman Police Officer Edward Mayfield.

Two candidates are running for the Tax Assessor/Collector position. They are Linda Cummings, currently serving as assistant tax assessor/collector, and Jackie Reed Nelson, an employee at First State Bank.

Three candidates are running for the Precinct 3 County Commissioner seat. They include Tim Stedje, who was appointed to fill the unexpired

term of Kent Guthrie, as well as Charlie Bell and Ty Williams.

Butch Reed, County Commissioner for Precinct 1, County Chairman Tammy Kay Batton, County Attorney John L. Hutchison, 84th Judicial District Judge William D "Bill" Smith and 84th Judicial District Attorney Clay Ballman are all running unopposed in the primary election.

No democrats filed for Hansford County.

Other candidates on the ballot include: Presidential Nominee: George W. Bush; U.S. Representative, District 13: Mac Thornberry; Railroad Commissioner: Robert Butler, Victor G. Camillo, Douglas G. Deffenbaugh and K. Dale Henry; Justice, Supreme Court, Place 3: Harriet O'Neill; Justice, Supreme Court, Place 5: Paul Green and Steven Wayne Smith; Justice, Supreme Court, Place 9: Scott Brister; Judge, Court of Criminal Appeals, Place 2: Guy James Gray and Lawrence "Larry" Meyers; Judge, Court of Criminal Appeals, Place 5: Cheryl Johnson and Patricia Noble; Judge, Court of Criminal Appeals, Place 6: Michael E. Keasler and Steven M. Porter; State Senator, District 31: Kel Seliger, Bob Barnes, Lee Gibson, Kirk Edwards, Don Sparks and Jesse Quackenbush; State Representative, District 85: Warren Chisum; Justice, 7th Court of Appeals District, Place 4: Jim Campbell



Dirty driving was the rule of the day Thursday, February 19 when a dust storm reminiscent of the dust bowl days hit Hansford County.

Editorial

by Harletta Carthel

It isn't often that an employee asks that his wages not be raised. But that was just the case at the January meeting of the Spearman ISD Board of Trustees when Superintendent Rodney Sumner requested that he be given no raise or additional compensation.

Sumner, whose contract with Spearman Schools expires June 30, 2008, cited the poor budget year as reason for the request.

The superintendent has shown his dedication to Spearman schools in numerous other ways. Last year he completed his 100th visit to the homes of Spearman students. With each visit being made on the superintendent's own time.

Attending virtually every event in which Spearman students participate, Sumner is often seen with camera in hand. The pictures he takes or clippings of the student's accomplishments from the newspaper are sent to students and their families along with a note of congratulations.

Sumner keeps an open line of communication with the public. His office is a place where community members and parents are welcome. He furthers the open dialogue by writing informing articles from time to time for publication in the Reporter/Statesman.

For his dedication to Spearman schools, Sumner is most deserving of the community's esteem and gratitude.

INSIDE THIS WEEK'S PAPER

Letter to the Editor - Pg. 2

Manor Grants Wish - Pg. 6

Tax Assessor-Collector Candidate Profiles - Pg. 7

Hansford County School News - Pg. 8

Commissioner Candidate Profiles - Pg. 9

If You Want To Vote, Don't Forget Your Voter Registration Card

Voters are advised that they must bring their voter registration certificate or other form of identification when voting. Ballots will not be given to individuals without proper identification.

Other forms of acceptable identification include a driver's license, a birth certificate, US citizenship papers, a US passport, official mail addressed to the voter by name from a governmental entity or a copy of a current utility bill, bank statement, government check, paycheck, or other government document that shows the name and address of the voter.

The Gruver Grapevine

by Harletta Carthel

Lady Hounds Named to All District Team

Cassie Myatt was named the Most Valuable Player of District 1-A with two other Lady Hounds making the all district list and one named to the honorable mention list.

Laina Grotegut, junior, and Liz Lopez, sophomore, were named to the all district roster with sophomore Lindsey Clift selected to the honorable mention list.

Stratford, Vega, and Gruver all had three all district picks with White Deer and Sunray having two on the list and Booker, one.

Community Care Concerns

Buck Tidwell had surgery last Thursday in Amarillo. He has returned home and is doing well.

I have only now learned of the recent hospitalization of Elizabeth Holt. Elizabeth is home and hopefully feeling much better.

Former Residents Attend Playoff Games

Former Gruber Superintendent and now superintendent of Pampa Schools, Barry Haenisch, was in attendance at the Gruver girls playoff game in Pampa on Monday night, February 16.

Former residents Roger, Linda Pat, and Blake Ferguson were also among the Gruver fans at the Gruver/Claude girls playoff game.

Blake, who is in the Air Force, will be stationed at Abilene. He is a 1997 graduate of GHS.



Engagement Announcement

Dene and Carolyn Meyer of Borger wish to announce the engagement of their daughter, Tamara Meyer to William Bransgrove of Spearman. William is the son of Eleanor Bransgrove and the late Weldon Bransgrove of Perryton.

The couple plan a May 8, 2004 wedding at the Church of Christ in Borger.

Tamara graduated from Phillips High School, Frank Phillips College and Panhandle State University. She is employed by Frank Phillips College.

William is a graduate of Perryton High School. He received a BS in Agricultural Business and Economics and an MBA in Accounting from West Texas University. He is employed by Hansford County Feeders.

Among The Neighbors

by Helen Fisher

We would like to extend our sympathy to Shirley Stafford and her family in the loss of her sister, Oleta Strughan, after a brief illness. Strughan's memorial service was Friday, February 20, in Woodward, OK.

Spearman graduate Jason Villines, a member of the 25th Division, currently stationed in Wahia, HI, has received word that his division will be deployed to Afghanistan to conduct patrols, provide continued force protection, and give humanitarian assistance. The deployment will be two six-month rotations, and Villines will be part of the second six-month rotation, set to deploy in September, 2004.

The mission is the first large-scale mission for the 25th Division since the Vietnam War and will utilize 3,500 troops.

The division will be part of the ongoing war against the Taliban and al Quida terrorist.

Villines is a member of the 125th Signal Battalion, a unit of the 25th Infantry Division (Light). He joined the Army in

May 2002. He was promoted to the rank of Specialist effective December 1, 2003.

He is the son of Tony Villines of Spearman and Teresa Eakins of Borger. He and his wife, the former Rebecca Howard, have three children, Triston, 5, Dawson, 3, and Payton, 11 months.

Rebecca is the daughter of Rick and Jan Howard of Spearman, and Andy and Darric Francis of Perryton.

Jason address is SPC Jason Villines, 237 Bennett St. #103 Wahia, HI 96786.

Your neighbor will be back soon---thank you for your patience!

If you have information you would like to include in this column, you may call Helen Fisher at 659-3468, Merry Sparks at 659-5849, or submit it at the Hansford County Reporter-Statesman, 213 Main Street, Spearman, TX 79081; or you may call (806) 659-3434; fax (806) 659-3368; or e-mail to cathsmith@antden.com.

Out At The Lake

by Dorothy Hudson

Lake Level--February 23, 2004--26.64 feet (-0.11)

Fishing picked up last week. Vic White had two nice blue catfish with the larger weighing 10-pounds; Kent Ruble had five with the largest weighing 13-pounds, and Max Taylor had two with the larger weighing 19.5-pounds and the smaller 12-pound.

Jim did a little research and going by when the pictures of big fish began to be printed, the dates were usually in the first week of March. The warmer days have brought out more fishermen.

Part of the eagles seemed to have moved on, but Jim counted 8 one day last week. He said a couple had driven up from Amarillo three or four times hoping to see the eagles with out any luck.

The cardinals are one of the species that he has noticed increasing. He and Mandy have 5 or 6 pairs of these lovely birds using their feeder now.

As we come into late winter-early spring, we sometimes get stretches of warm weather that can bring out a few rattlesnakes. I have wondered since we printed the picture from the Gary Evans family of the rattlesnake swallowing the starling, if it

was true that snakes could hypnotize small animals and birds. Daughter Nancy saved a letter from a December 1999 Texas Parks and Wildlife magazine for me that proves that at least Charlie Totten thinks so.

As a boy from 3 to 10 years he lived in southeastern Colorado on a farm 20 miles south of Lamar where his father had homesteaded in 1917.

Rattlesnakes were plentiful, and when his dad switched to a disc plow it made sausage links out of thousands of them.


Trees were planted later, but most of their birds were ground nesting ones.

Three different times they saw a bird flying in a circle about 10 feet in the air, and each time they ran to look. Each time there was a rattler with his head up in the air about 6 inches following the bird as it made the circle. They would wait until the bird was fluttering on the ground unable to fly away. Before the snake could strike or grab the bird, they would drop a small piece of cowchip on the snake, and instantly the bird would be off like a shot. He suspected that the snake had eaten the baby birds or eggs in the nest and had gotten the birds attention that way.

A Mi Padre

A Dios doy gracias por ser mi padre
 Por tus reproches y consejos
 Por el bien que mi enseñaste
 y de mi ser siempre cuidaste
 Por enseñarmenobles valores
 el amor, rectitude y compasion
 justicia, disenteres, trabajo
 caridad, verdad y el perdón
 Por tus desvelos.
 por tu amor paternal.
 Hombres como tu hay pocos
 Eres un padre ideal.
 por cumplir con tus deberes
 porque nunca me fallaste.
 Por todo esto padre, te aprecio
 y a Dios de nuevo agradezco
 por en mi vida teenerte a ti.


Feliz Cumpleanos De parte de tu esposa
 hijos, hijas & nietos



You are invited to a
Wedding Shower
 honoring
Cortney Walker
 bride-elect of Tye Womble
 on Saturday, March 6, 2004
 from 10:00-11:30 a.m.
 at the Morse Baptist Church

You are invited to a
Baby Boy Shower
 honoring Matthew, the son of Kyla Ortiz
 on Saturday, February 28, 2004
 from 10:00-11:30 a.m.
 in the home of Cheryl Harper
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TAMMY GAIL BACKUS
 November 26, 1983 - February 17, 2002



I'll lend you for a little while, A child of mine," God said. "For you to love the while she lives, And mourn for her when she's dead.
 It may be six or seven years, Or forty-two or three; But will you, till I call her back, Take care of her for me?
 She'll bring her charms to gladden you, And (should her stay be brief), You'll have her lovely memories, As a solace for your grief.
 I cannot promise she will stay, And try to understand, But there are lessons taught below, I want this child to learn.
 I've looked the whole world over, In my search for teachers true; And from the things that crowd life's lane, I have chosen you.
 Now will you give your love? Nor think the labor vain? Nor hate me when I come to take, This lent child back again?"
 I fancied what I heard Him say - "Dear Lord, Thy will be done. For all the love Thy child will bring, The risk of grief we'll run.
 We will shelter her with tenderness, We'll love her while we may - And for the happiness we've known, Forever grateful stay.
 But should Thy angels call for her, Much sooner than we've planned, We'll brave the bitter grief that comes, And try to understand.
 We love and miss you very much!
 Mom, Larry, Amanda and Amber; Papa and Mama; Paul and Kim; Victor, Patty, Gunner and Victoria

Bridal Registry

Courtney Walker & Tye Womble - March 6 (Morse)
 Meg Woolley & Ben Walton - March 13
 Christi Sultemeier & Bill Jack Pittman - March 20
 Jess Anne Fernandes & Michael Lusby - March 27
 Jennifer Laxson & Aaron Langston - March 27
 Jessica Hrencher & Martin Sanders
 Landree Woodward & Russell Steadman

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 Jennifer Laxson & Aaron Langston - Mar. 27
 Grace Davis & Justin Calvert
 Meg Woolley & Ben Walton

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 at two o'clock in the afternoon
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Manor Matters

by Merry Sparks

Monday mornings were made to shake off cobwebs from the weekend, so we started by shaking the cobwebs out of our minds with the current news program. It was very interesting. There was one article about a 420 million-year-old millipede discovered in Peru. Made us all feel really young.

Monday afternoon was spent in a very interesting manner. It was the afternoon allotted for Chatter Club. Since it also was President's Day, I called Cody Cazares to come lead the Chatter Club. Cody was very informative and interesting. Since he has worked with our current President, George W., he knew lots of inside information.

One of my favorite questions was about the President's twins. Cody just kinda rolled his eyes and said yes, he was familiar with them. He said that past Lady Barbara Bush told President George W. in regard to the twins that he certainly deserved to have one child like her - it is just paybacks for his raise.

Cody was very gracious to the residents and answered all of the questions asked of him. It was very apparent that he was comfortable in a speaker's position and the residents thoroughly enjoyed his visit.

Tuesday morning we limbered up to the music of Musercise. It gets pretty loud around here on musercise day. When you get castanets, tambourines, bells, sticks and spoons going to the beat of the music - sometimes it raises the roof.

Afterwards, residents were in the living room to view a video of the Sheriff's Forum taken the night before. Many of the residents are integrally involved in community affairs.

That afternoon we did manicures in the activity room. Thank you to Ann Whitaker for

donating her time to help. The more hands that you have working, the more that you can do.

On Wednesday morning, Ann Whitaker came to deliver a Bible study with the residents. Thank you, Ann!

That afternoon residents worked on decorations for the bulletin board in the dining room for March. Cotton balls and tissue paper were everywhere! Thank you to Cassidy Taylor and Timberly Thomas for coming to help with crafts.

On Thursday morning, residents lined up to practice the bean bag toss, horseshoes, and basketball in preparation for the upcoming Winter Olympics. We have many competitors here that thoroughly enjoy sports.

That afternoon the auxiliary hosted bingo. Thank you to the auxiliary for your valuable help. If you have just a little time to spare, please get in touch with the auxiliary president, Judy Nelson. They do many worthwhile activities.

Friday morning was spent practicing stand up basketball and dartboard.

That afternoon, we had Bible Trivia. What a great way to refresh our minds on the Word of God! The residents are good at it and much was learned about Peter and Paul.

I visited Ms. Blankenship's high school class in preparation for the upcoming Bridging the Gap Interviews. We are looking forward to the students coming to the Manor to develop life stories on the residents that signed up. It was great fun to visit the classroom. The young are so fresh and invigorating!

It will make a very good match between the young and the elders. Both generations will benefit greatly from the upcoming experience.

Spearman Chamber of Commerce

On Thursday, February 12, 2004, the Spearman Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors met at noon at Tongs. Members present were Jason Cantrell, Steve Hartgraves, Robert Patrick, Martina Miller, Diana Bynum, Mark Murray, Anna Fishburn, Cindy Scribner,

Lenny Pecha, Judy Yarbrough, Jeanette Hodges, and Gina Gillispie.

President Jason Cantrell called the meeting to order. The minutes of the last meeting were approved, as were the financials.

It was approved that Kevin McDonald's position on the board will remain vacant as the

board has enough members. His position has one more year, and will be replaced next year when the new board is elected.

After much discussion about the upcoming Chamber Banquet, it was decided that the banquet committee would meet again at noon on Tuesday, February the 17th at Grammy's.

Jason passed out a duty sheet for the banquet and urged the board to be in attendance. Hungry Cowboy will cater the meal, and tickets will sell for \$20 per person. He also stated that the invitation letters were mailed last week.

Women's Division: Judy Yarbrough reported that the WD had met and discussed decorating for the chamber banquet. The theme will be "Casino" and they will meet Friday at 5 p.m. to decorate.

Retail Merchants: Gina reported that the Retail Merchants had met February 4th and discussed the upcoming events for the year.

Gina welcomed all the new members to the board of direc-

tors. Jason reported that Keith Hight, new executive vice-president, was unable to attend today's meeting, but would begin working at the Chamber on March 1st. He also stated that Keith will be at the banquet.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

City of Gruver

The Gruver City Commission met in regular session February 11, 2004 with commissioners Chad Logsdon and Johnnie Williams, city manager Linda Weller, director of public works Robert Blount, and city secretary Mark Washburn.

Ordinance #299 Adopting a New Personnel policy was passed. The order for a General Election for may 15, 2004 was also passed.

Other motions approved were an inter local Agreement for Central Dispatch with Hansford County and a jail contract with Hansford County.

Severe Weather Awareness Week Set

Gov. Rick Perry has proclaimed February 29 - March 6 Severe Weather Awareness Week in Texas.

Gov. Perry joined with the National Weather Service and the Governor's Division of Emergency Management to urge all Texans to be prepared for severe storms.

"Severe Weather Awareness Week underlines the importance of planning ahead to ensure that Texans are prepared for threatening weather situations," Perry said. "Together we can take steps to reduce harm, ensure safety and ultimately save lives."

The spring season often brings the potential for violent weather events. Severe Weather Awareness Week helps build public awareness about preparedness. Texans are advised to put together a "readiness kit" of important supplies, to keep a battery-operated radio or television set to receive important information during storms, to designate a place to go in case of evacuation and to develop an emergency plan for communicating with relatives and friends in other areas.

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First Wish Comes True at Hansford Manor

by Merry Sparks

The winner of our very first Make a Wish drawing was Irene Edwards. Her wish consisted of a desire for her sister, Florene, and her niece, Kay to spend a day with her in Perryton where they would visit the Museum of the Plains among other things. She also requested that Merry Sparks be their driver and spend the day with them.

The trip was arranged for Feb. 9th. We left the Manor at Spearman at 10:00 in the morning. We went straight to the Museum since that was Irene's main focus. She wanted her sister and niece to visit the museum since they had never been there. Irene had visited there in June of 2003 when we took a tour north of Perryton to the sod house. The Museum of the Plains in Perryton is an excellent museum for our area. Many exhibits are on loan from outside people as well as many things that have been donated. They had many new exhibits this visit too. There is an outstanding sculpture out of a solid

piece of walnut of a herd of horses stampeding. We took our time at the museum and enjoyed all of the exhibits.

While we were there, Florene's granddaughter, great granddaughter and a great-great granddaughter came to visit with Irene and family. When we left the museum we had a very relaxed and delicious lunch at the Smokehouse. Afterwards, Merry took them to the Taylor's Old Tyme Shop. They had never been there and thoroughly enjoyed the uniqueness of the store. They were just in awe at the number of different items on display there, some new, some old. Before leaving we were visited by the owner, Gary Taylor and enjoyed visiting with him.

We all thoroughly enjoyed the day together and were satisfied and tired on the way home. Thus, our very first wish has come true. We will soon draw out our next wish. It will be exciting to find out what the next wish will be.

National Honor Roll Announced

Six students from Hansford County qualified for induction into the Spring 2003 National Honor Roll.

Those students qualifying were: Gruver - Kristie Balderrama; and Spearman - Rossilyn Bulls, Jentry Edwards, Jessica Freeman, Deremy Randall and K'lee Ratzlaff

The National Honor Roll recognizes high-achieving high school and middle school students. "Young people like these inductees, who work hard to attain academic success, deserve to be congratulated," says Lynn Romeo, Publisher of the National Honor Roll. "Honoring their achievements provides motivation and encourages them to continue striving. We're proud to include them in the National Honor Roll."

The National Honor Roll contacts potentially qualifying students after reviewing information about their academic performance. Each student is asked to submit information about his/her GPA, interests, activities, and future goals. Only students with a B or better average are eligible. 61% of the inductees in the Spring 2003 National Honor Roll averaged an A- or better; 39% averaged B through B+. 27% were seniors, 38.5% were juniors, 22% were sophomores, 12% were sophomores, and .5% were in middle school.

For more information, visit www.nationalhonorroll.org.



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Saturday, February 28th at the O'Loughlin Center, 502 Brandt
Betting on Spearman's Future

Silent Auction provided by Chamber Member's Donations - 6 p.m.

Meal begins at 7 p.m.

Presentation of Awards - 8 p.m.

Texas Hold 'Em Poker Tournament & Black Jack following Banquet

Master of Ceremonies: Jason Cantrell, 2004 Chamber of Commerce President

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Please mail payment to: PO Box 161, Spearman, TX 79081;

fax to (806) 659-5923, or e-mail to spearman@arn.net

Your RSVP by February 24th will be greatly appreciated!



IRA Contribution Deadline is
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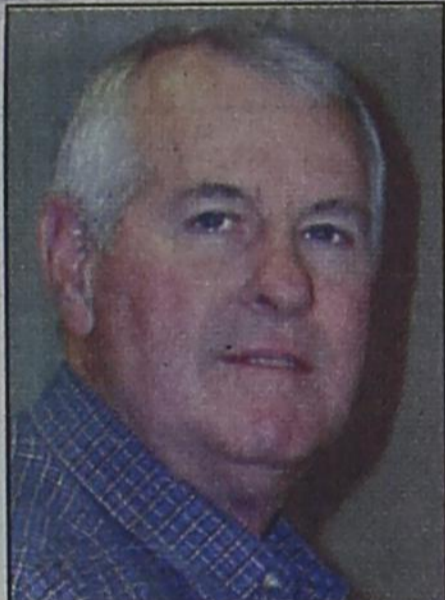
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HANSFORD COUNTY TAX ASSESSOR-COLLECTOR



Linda Cummings

Family Members: Douglas Cummings married 26 years, two sons and their wives Christopher married to Laura Ontiveros, Andrew married to Denise Paschel

Occupation: Chief Deputy of the Hansford County Tax Assessor-Collector Office

What organizations/clubs are you a member of? Rushing Wind Emmaus, Boy Scouts of America

Church Affiliation: First United Methodist Church, where I teach the Jr Hi Sunday school.

Background/Education: My Great Granddad came to Hansford County in 1930 and the family is still here. I was born in Spearman on May 19, 1960 to Frank and Shirley Buzzard. We moved to the farm when I was 4. I graduated from Perryton High School in 1978.

Hobbies/Interests: I enjoy sewing, playing piano, working with the church youth.

What do you think the biggest problems are facing Hansford County? As a candidate for Tax Assessor-Collector, the tax base is a concern. The

fluctuations of the oil and gas valuations cause hardships for all taxpayers. As a citizens of Hansford County I am concerned about our youth and the challenges they face everyday.

What changes or improvements would you seek as Hansford County Tax Assessor-Collector? During my campaigning I have been asked about accepting credit cards, Internet vehicle renewals and the possibility of a substation in Gruver. I will seek information about these items. I also would like to see all taxing entity's taxes collected in the Hansford County Tax Assessor-Collector office.

What do you view as the role of a Tax Assessor-Collector? I view the tax assessor-collector as stated in the Texas Constitution Article 8 Section 14. "The county tax assessor-collector shall assess and collect taxes for the county." The Tax assessor-collector is also and agent for the Texas Department of Transportation and the Secretary of State. Because of the wide range of responsibilities performed by the tax assessor-collector, most citizens deal with this county official more often than any other office. The tax assessor-collector serves the citizens of Hansford County.

What do you like best about Hansford County? The people. I enjoy meeting people, visiting with them and having friendships that last forever. Hansford County is a good place to raise a family.

What special qualities or qualifications do you possess which would make you an efficient Tax Assessor-Collector? I began working in the Hansford County tax office

October 1980. I believe 23 years experience has qualified me to be a knowledgeable and effective tax assessor-collector. I also am friendly and helpful. A large part of being a tax assessor is serving the residents. The tax assessor-collector office has many "hats" outlined and many "hats" that are unwritten.

Comments: If elected, I will be honored to serve as Hansford County Tax Assessor-Collector. I pledge to each of you to run an efficient office to the best of my ability. I will check into consolidation of all property taxes into the courthouse, credit card pay options, Internet renewals, and a license renewal substation. After gathering the information, I will work with the commissioners' court on implementation of the feasible upgrades as budget constraints allow. We must make sure any implementations are beneficial to all concerned. I want to Thank You in advance for your support in the March 9 Primary Election for Tax Assessor-Collector.



Jackie Nelson

Family Members: I'm married to Tim Nelson. We have one daughter, Brittney. My parents are Thomas and Rita Reed, one brother John Reed of Spearman, three sisters Judy Reed of Fritch, Joann Schneider of Spearman, and Janet Williams of Gruver.

Occupation: Data Processing Department at First State Bank

Church Affiliation: United Methodist Church

Background/Education: I grew up in Spearman, graduated from Spearman High School in 1981.

Hobbies/Interests: Camping, spending time with my family, and watching Brittney play sports.

What do think are the biggest problems facing Hansford County? Slow economic growth, shrinking population. Peer pressure on our young children.

What changes or improvements would you seek as Hansford County Tax Assessor-Collector? New ideas, new questions, the determination to see the best way to save tax dollars. Also be a team leader, you can accomplish more as a team than as one.

What do you view as the role of a Tax Assessor-Collector? To work for the taxpayer of Hansford County. Setting a budget, motor vehicle registration, collecting taxes, reporting tax collecting, voter registration, and bond and motor registration.

What do you like best about Hansford County? The caring people, hardworking people that make Hansford County look great. Great school system, great place to raise your children, Great hospital and Manor district, no traffic jams or road

rage, and you can usually get to work in five minutes or less.

What special qualities or qualifications do you possess which would make you an efficient Tax Assessor-Collector? Years of bookkeeping, budgeting and data processing in business and banking. Supervising and working with employees as a team. Generally serving the great people of Hansford County for over 27 years.

I'm honest, reliable, and hard-working.

Comments: An elected official is hired by the people of the county, my goal is to be elected as your new tax assessor/collector. I will be honored and grateful for your vote in the March 9th primary.

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Primary Functions of Elected County Officers

Tax Assessor-Collector

The major tax duty of the assessor-collector is the assessment (calculation) of taxes on each property in the county and collection of that tax as established by the State Property Tax Code. In addition, as an agent of the Texas Department of Transportation, the assessor-collector is responsible for the registration and licensing of motor vehicles owned by residents of the county.

Another duty of the county tax assessor-collector is that of voter registrar. In most Texas counties, a person would register to vote through the office of county tax assessor-collector. In a few counties, the commissioners court has designated the county clerk or an elections administrator to provide this function. The county tax office voter registration responsibilities include accepting applications for voter registration, issuing voter certificates, maintaining voter registration lists, verifying petitions for local option elections and submitting required reports to the Secretary of State's Office.

The county tax assessor-collector is also responsible for the collections of special fees imposed by the county and state on coin-operated vending machines and the sale of alcoholic beverages.

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Lady Hounds Take Bi-District Crown

by Harletta Carthel

The Lady Hounds ambushed the Claude lady Mustangs to take a 45 to 28 win in a bi-district shootout, Monday, February 16, at Pampa High.

With stifling defense, the Lady Hounds only allowed the Lady Mustangs, two points until late in the first quarter. The accuracy of the Gruver shooters amassed a nine-point lead before Claude narrowed the margin to its closest of the night, 11-7, at the quarter's end.

Laina Grotegut, who hit a three pointer early in the opening period, had 10 points for the night while Lindsey Clift, who hit a jumper and an under-the-basket shot in the first quarter, totaled nine points in the game.

The second quarter was a three point lesson by Cassie Myatt who hit a trio of threes back-to-back in the second quarter to bolster the Lady Hounds' lead to 10, (22 - 12) at 2:04 in the second quarter.

By half-time, the quick-shooting Lady Hounds held a 2-1 (26 - 13) advantage over Claude.

Regrouping at half-time, the Lady Mustangs returned in the third quarter to pull within nine points. Clift answered the challenge by nailing a driving lay-up and encoing with a foul shot. With another basket by Clift and then Grotegut, the Lady Hounds were nine up (33-24) at the end of the third period.

With domination established, the Lady Hounds shot freely and easily in the final period with Cassie Myatt swishing her fourth three-pointer of the night, and Grotegut bombing her second and third three-pointers.

With point guard Liz Lopez accounting for several steals and post Lauren Urban snagging rebounds, the Lady Mustangs were stifled in the last ditch efforts to salvage the game. Lindsey Clift's driving lay-up and following free point shot provided the lady hounds last hurrah.

Score by Quarters: Gruver 11 26 33 45; Claude 7 13 24 28
Individual scoring: Cassie Myatt 14 (4 three-pointers), Lindsey Clift 12, Laina Grotegut 11, Lauren Urban 2, Samantha Myatt 2, Rachelle Holt 2.

Lady Hounds End Season As Bi-District Champs

by Harletta Carthel

The Sudan Lady 'Nets won the area basketball title, 32-29, but not without a battle royal by the Lady Hounds.

"It was a great game," Coach Steve Myatt of the Lady Hounds said. "They were number two in the state, but we stayed with them the whole game."

The Lady Hounds biggest lead was three points while the Lady 'Nets' largest lead was five points in the defense battle.

"We had a chance to win," Coach Myatt said. "We made them turn the ball over, but we didn't connect in points."

The speed of the Lady Hounds made them formidable foes for the 'Nets.' Gruver's relentless defensive pressure slowed down the Sudan scoring machine and resulted in several turnovers.

The versatility of the Lady Hounds made it turnover for them to score when the 'Nets shut down the inside. game.

"We were able to hit outside shots, including several three-pointers," Coach Myatt said.

The Lady Hounds, who have one freshman, two sophomores, one junior, and one senior in the starting lineup will be formidable foes not only in district but also state competition. The lone senior on the team is Myatt's daughter Cassie.

Score by quarters: Gruver 6 17 24 29, Sudan 9 18 28 32
Individual scoring: Lindsey Clift 10 (two three-pointers) Lauren Urban 2, Laina Grotegut 3, Laci Fitzgeard 5, Liz Lopez 3, Rachelle Holt 2, Cassie Myatt 5

Lynxettes 2 Much for Lady Indians

by Harletta Carthel

It was anyone's game for four quarters, but the Spearman Lynxettes made it their game in overtime with a 47-45 win over the Quanah Lady Indians for the area title.

With never more than a three-point difference at the end of any period, the Lady Indians led by three at the end of the first and second quarters while the Lynxettes led by three at half-time.

With the score knotted at 38 at the end of the fourth quarter, the see-saw battle came to an end in overtime with the Lynxettes up by two points.

"Anytime you win this time of the year, you have to make some big play, which we did," Coach Short said. "We feel fortunate to win, the game could have gone either way."

Jocelyn Whitefield had 16 points, and Sami Cazares, 14, to lead Spearman.

Coach Short expressed his appreciation for the Spearman fans and their support.

"We are team Spearman - When you play one of us - you play all of us."

Score by quarters: Spearman 5 17 32 38 47, Quanah 8 20 29 38 45

Individual Scoring: Lindsey Short 3, Keilee Goodheart 4, Cayla Smith 2, Ashlee Flowers 3, Kelcie Rex 3, Sami Cazares 14, Tonya Hart 2, Jocelyn Whitefield 16

Lynxettes Advance To Area Playoff Game

by Harletta Carthel

Battling a feisty Floydada team, the Spearman Lynxettes claimed the bi-district title by downing the Lady Winds 49-39.

The Lynxettes, jumping to an early lead in the game with a sizzling three point shot by Ashlee Flowers, and went on to mount a 19-12 first quarter lead.

Flowers swished two additional three-pointers before half-time, and at one point, the Lynxettes led by ten, 24-14.

While the Lady Winds were able to tighten the game 27-23, Lynxettes, by the end of the first half, Flowers added nine points in 3's in the third quarter to score all but two of Spearman's points for the period.

"We came out strong in the second half, and solid defense in the second half were keys," Coach Short said.

With the Lady Winds and the Lynxettes posting near even points in the final stanza, Spearman's scoring blitz in the third quarter proved to be the winning edge.

Score by quarters: Spearman 19 27 38 49, Floydada 12 23 29 39

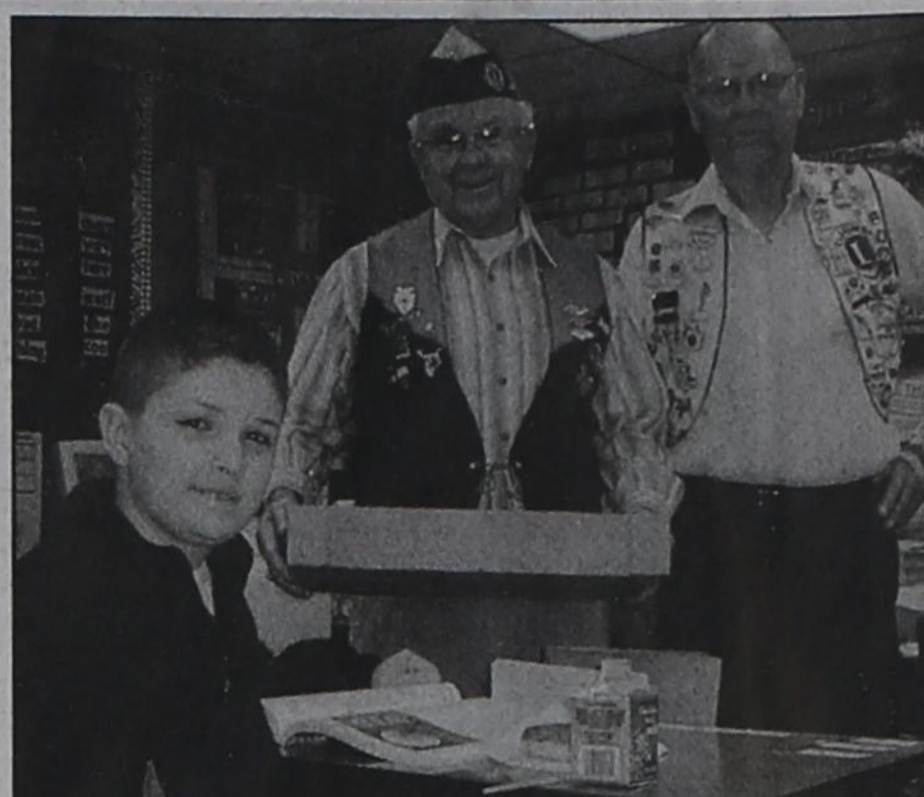
Individual Scoring: Lindsey Short 5, Keilee Goodheart 10, Ashlee Flowers 23, Samantha Cazares 8, Jocelyn Whitefield 3.

Three point-goals: Ashlee Flowers 6, Lindsey Short 1, Jocelyn Whitefield 1

Rebounds: Spearman 29, Floydada 25 (Keilee Goodheart 8)

Assists: Spearman 10 (Goodheart 5)

Fouls: Spearman 14, Floydada 17; **Fouled Out:** none; **Technical:** none



Brandon Wells accepts a donut from Spearman Lions Club members James Cunningham and Harry Stumpf.

Spearman Lions Club Shares Donuts with Elementary Students

The Spearman Lions Club provided donuts and milk to the students at Gus Birdwell Elementary in Spearman during the third week of February. Lions Club members delivered 396 donuts and 380 half-pints of milk to pre-school through fifth grade students.

In addition to providing snacks, Lions Club members provided information on the service organization and the programs they support. Some of the programs include the Crippled Children's Camp, Leader Dogs for the Blind, providing eye glasses for local children and adults, the Recycle for Sight and the local Lions Club Scholarship. Another service the local club provides is the distribution of Lynx/Lynxette flags. This service is provided for \$45 per year, and Lions Club members put the flags out in support of high school sports, academic and other school related activities.

Lions Club members distributing donuts included Harry Stumpf, Alton Ellsworth and James Cunningham.

SHS Academic Teams Compete

The Spearman High School Academic Teams traveled to South Plains College in Levelland, TX on Wednesday, February 18th to compete in the Area 4 Small School Academic Contest.

The Purple Team consisting of Jeff Brock, K'Lee Ratzliff and Lisha Whitefield placed third after a tie-breaking round with Muleshoe High School.

Placing First and winning by a margin of almost fifteen question was the White team whose members include Russell Sheets, Michel Huffaker and Tanner Hand. All team members received medals and brought back between \$1,500 and \$1,800 in scholarship money. These students will be attending the State Meet at Mary Hardin Baylor in Belton in March.

Congratulations academic students and to the outstanding work of their many teachers.

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SCHOOL NEWS

Hansford County
The Spearman, Gruver, and Pringle Morse School districts' Spring Break will be March 15-19.

The Houston Livestock Show and Sale will begin March 10th and continues through March 21.

The TAAS Writing Retest will be given Tuesday, February 24th; the TAAS Math Retest will be given Wednesday, February 25th; the TAAS REading Retest will be given Thursday, February 26th.

The TAKS 9th grade Reading test and the TAKS 10th & 11th grade English test will be given Tuesday, February 24th.

Gruver High School
GHS weight lifter Sammy Pena competed in the regional practice meet recently. It is not known at present if the Gruver lifter will be advancing to regional competition, according to Coach Bruce Bryant.

GHS will compete in the Sunray Track Meet February 27 and 28.

Hutch Reed and Cecilia Rosales will be the March 3 guests of the Gruver Lions Club.

Members of the FCCLA will be traveling to Midland for the Region I annual meeting on Friday, March 5.

Lubbock.
Lynx golf will be in Booker March 3.

Cheerleader tryouts will be held at 1:30 p.m. on Wednesday, March 3.

The Spearman thinclads will compete in the Canadian tourney March 5 and 6.

Spearman Jr. High
Junior high thinclads will compete in the Sunray Track Meet, February 27 and 28.

The second track meet of the new season will be March 5 and 6 in Canadian.

February 12th will be the end of the fourth six weeks.

Gus Birdwell Elementary
Third graders will be taking the Reading TAKS test March 3.

Valentine parties will be February 12

Pringle-Morse CISD
The Pringle-Morse Pee Wee Basketball Tourney will be held February 26, 27, and 28.

The 7th grade will be taking the TAKS Writing test March 4.

Gruver Jr. High
The first track meet of the year will be February 27 and 28 at Sunray.

The second meet of the season will be March 5 and 6 at Canadian.

Gruver Elementary
The third grade will be taking the TAKS reading test Wednesday, March 3.

A districtwide English as a Second Language conference will be held at 7:30 p.m.

Jump Rope for Heart is slated for Friday, March 12.

Spearman High School
The first track meet of the year will be February 27 and 28 at Sunray.

The Spearman thinclads will compete in the Canadian tourney March 5 and 6.

Lynxette golf is slated for Friday February 27 and Saturday February 28.

The district National Forensics League Student Congress Tourney will be Friday, February 27, in

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PUBLISHED TUESDAYS

Byrd 'Catches' Dream



Lt. Cmdr. Robert "Gene" Byrd is pictured above with a 47-pound catfish caught on Brown Lake

80 or so ponds at the plant that are similarly stocked because he's "going for the big ones which are in Brown Lake."

Often arising at 4 a.m. on workdays to lay out up to 20 jug lines, Byrd is almost always accompanied by his wife, Joy, who loves to fish as much as he does.

She helped him pull in a 47-pound flathead catfish he caught on a jug in Brown Lake in July.

He recently received a certificate from the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation recognizing him as an "Oklahoma master angler and state fish record holder" for landing a 5.60-pound short-nose gar at Brown Lake.

The largest fish he's caught to date are pretty impressive: two 42-pound flatheads; one 32-pound blue catfish and a 25-pound flathead. All were caught on Brown Lake and returned.

Besides Oklahoma, he's also fished in Arizona, New Mexico, Colorado, Texas, Mississippi, Louisiana, Alabama, Florida, Illinois and Wisconsin. Domestically, Byrd has caught salmon in the Pacific Northwest, salmon and trout in the Great Lakes, and sturgeon in the Sacramento River.

A 25-year U.S. Navy career has taken him to exotic places worldwide to match his skills against the world's finest fish. Some of the more exotic fishing sites he's been to are the Indian Ocean, Tasmania (off the southern coast of Australia), and the Persian Gulf.

Gene is a 1975 graduate of Spearman High School, and the son of Red and Jean Byrd of Spearman. He has a twin brother, Dean, who lives in Amarillo, and a sister, Tuwana Trout, who lives in Elkhart, KS.

Lt. Cmdr. Robert "Gene" Byrd loves to fish. Stationed at McAlester Army Ammunition Plant (MCAAP) in McAlester, OK as the Navy Liaison for the Defense Ammunition Center, Byrd considers himself fortunate. Though Oklahoma is a land-locked state, it is abundant in lakes and a prime resource for fishermen. Since being assigned to DAC in October 2002, Byrd has focused his fishing efforts on 600-acre Brown Lake that is stocked with catfish, black bass and crappie. He rarely fishes the

Cazares, Wilson Address local Clubs

submitted by Cody Cazares

Cody J. Cazares, candidate for Hansford County Judge, recently spoke to a joint meeting of the Spearman Rotary and Lions Clubs, where he addressed areas of concern as well as plans to solve these pertinent issues.

"It is absolutely imperative that the next judge of Hansford County make economic development and strengthening our schools a priority. Education resources and economic growth have long been overlooked in our community, and we need to change that attitude," Cazares told the audience of local community business and civic leaders.

Cazares addressed the problem of a constant downturn in population each year and an increase in drug activity and underage drinking.

"I am running against the idea that everything is okay in this county. The special interest of good ol' boy go-along-to-get-along politics has got to stop. We need a leader with a positive vision, and not someone who is going to put their finger up in the air to see which way the wind is blowing," Cazares said. "Sometimes you have to do the right thing for the good of the community and run the risk of offending your group of friends"

While Cazares spoke of how he will address the problems facing the county, Wilson his only opponent, who was also in attendance left much to be desired in the area of vision, motivation and leadership.

"Even now that he has been in office for a while all he had to say was he is learning the job. There was no vision and no plan for what he will do in office to help the people of Hansford County. Frankly, this county deserves a leader," Cazares said.

GHS Hosts Chess Tournament



Gruver High School junior Lance Williams was the winner of the 1st Annual Gruver High School Chess Tournament. He is a Junior at GHS, son of Todd and Janet Williams.

high school library, she never dreamed she was starting a school-wide event.

"Two students saw the chess board and asked me if they could play," Gillispie said. "Soon the idea began for a school-wide chess tourney."

Thirty-five students signed up for the tourney and were divided between two brackets with the bracket winners playing each other for the overall winner's title.

Junior student Lance Williams won the contest when he played bracket winner Cass Cooper in the finals. While Williams said he had learned to play on his own, some of the students had learned to play in Gifted and Talented classes in junior high.

Always up to a challenge, high school principal Mike King, made it to the quarter-finals of play before being eliminated.

While no plans have been made to make the event an annual tourney, Gillispie says it has been a learning and fun experience.

When librarian Kathy Gillispie brought a chess set for display and decoration at the

Primary Functions of Elected County Officers

County Commissioner

Four commissioners, each elected from a quarter of the county's population, serve along with the county judge on the commissioners court. Among other responsibilities, the commissioners court:

- * Sets the yearly property tax rate and approve the budget and employment level for the county;
- * Sets commissioners and justice of the peace precinct boundaries;
- * Calls, conducts and certifies elections, including bond elections;
- * Sets employment and benefit policy;
- * Establishes long-range thoroughfare, open space, land use, financial and law enforcement/jail needs plans;
- * Acquires property for rights-of-way or other uses determined to be in the public's best interest;
- * Reviews and approve subdivision platting and wastewater treatment for rural areas;
- * Provides rural ambulance services and subsidizes rural fire protection;
- * Oversees the construction, maintenance and improvement of county roads and bridges;
- * Appoints non-elected department heads and standing committees;
- * Supervises and controls the county courthouse, county buildings and facilities;
- * Adopts a county budget;
- * Determines county tax rates;
- * Fills vacancies in elective and appointive positions; and
- * Has exclusive authority to authorize contracts in the name of the county.

School Board Candidate Workshop Scheduled

Area school board candidates and interested citizens can learn more about the demands and rewards of school board service at a candidate workshop on Thursday, March 11, 7-9 p.m. at the Region 16 Education Service Center (5800 Bell St., Amarillo).

The workshop, cosponsored by the Region 16 Education Service Center and Texas Association of School Boards (TASB), will provide interested community members and individuals thinking about running for the board with a better understanding of what is involved in being elected and serving as a local trustee. Experienced school board members will explain board members' key responsibilities and outline the qualities necessary for effective service.

Topics to be covered include what it's like to be a trustee, key responsibilities of the board, division of authority with staff, how to campaign constructively, and where to find more information. Participants will also view A Call to Service, a TASB video highlighting many aspects of board service and featuring several experienced school trustees.

The workshop is open to anyone and admission is free. For more information about the workshop, call Brenda Canul at TASB, 512-467-0222, or 800-

580-8272, extension 6104, or check the TASB website at www.tasb.org for other dates and locations.

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Please vote for me, **Tim Stedje**, for County Commissioner, Precinct 3 in the March 9th Republican Primary. My name will be third on the ballot.

Thank you,
Tim Stedje

- Past chairman Appraisal review board
- College graduate
- Life long resident of Hansford County
- Experienced
- Active in Church and community affairs
- Father of three
- Conservative
- Hardworking
- Open minded
- Landowner
- Dedicated to the Future of Hansford County

ELECT

Tim Stedje

COMMISSIONER - PCT 3

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Benny Wilson OR Cody Cazares

Hansford County Reporter - Statesman

Thursday, February 19, 2004

▶ Question Asked To Benny Wilson and Cody Cazares:

“What do you think is the biggest problem facing Hansford County?”

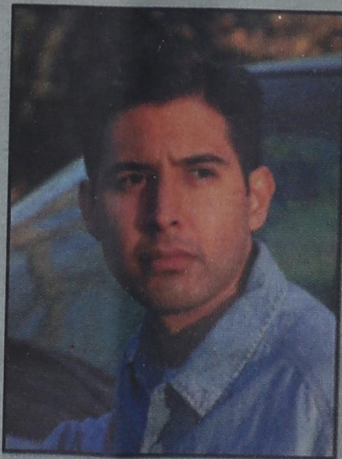
▶ Wilson's Answer:

Of course our slow agricultural economy is **probably** our biggest concern, but the growing drug problem in the county is something we can do the most about.

▶ Cazares' Answer:

I am very concerned about the county's declining economic status. Crime and underage drinking is on the rise. Most importantly, there is a status quo that says that these things are okay and nothing needs to be done. There needs to be an attitude change concerning these issues. The first question that needs to be asked when faced with a decision should be: "Is this the best thing for Hansford County?"

It is time we elect someone who will step up to the plate and take on **ALL** challenges that face our county.



Hansford County Should **NOT** Have To Settle For **PROBABLY**.
On March 9th, Vote For Cody J. Cazares



www.codyjcazares.com

Political Advertisement Paid for by Cody Cazares Campaign - Roy Mayhew, Treasurer