

WEST TEXAS Country Trader

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Abernathy
Weekly Review
The Canyon News

The Castro County News
The Clarendon News

The Lorenzo
SEABER
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The Slatonite
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Thursday, December 16, 1993

'Ring of Fire' burns up the screen at Omni

■ Science spot moves to new Lubbock site

Special to AgReview

LUBBOCK — Lubbock's new Omnimax Theater and its wide-screen, up close and personal look at volcanoes entitled "Ring of Fire" is burning up the screen with excitement this month — just in time for holiday enjoyment.

The Omnimax wide screen theater added a new dimension to the long popular Science Spectrum facility recently when it was co-located with other facilities in the all complex, which opened recently at 2579 S. Loop 289.

A giant dome screen spanning 58 feet in diameter and tilting 30-degrees to the horizon envelops its audience completely. Behind the scenes are 12,000 watts of audio power which move viewers across the theater in a sense-stirring experience.



New Science Spectrum/Omnimax Theater

Also on tap for Lubbock are audiences is the unique "Mission to Mars" module, which has entertained numerous school classes and groups with its real-to-life simulation of interplanetary excursion.

The \$1.8 million Mission to Mars exhibit is the first travelling exhibit to arrive at Science Spectrum's new location. It was made possible by grants from the National Science Foundation,

Apple Computer, Inc., and Battelle Memorial Institute and through the collaboration of COSI, Pacific Science Center.

The centerpiece of the exhibit is Mars Base 1, a giant spacecraft simulator standing 12 feet tall, 14 feet wide and over 65 feet long.

Other free-standing exhibits include a mock up of space station Freedom, the Great Astronaut Fitness Test, Docking

with Phobos, Low Gravity Chair and others.

Via multi-media computers, visitors are able to take on various mission roles as they operate computers to explore the Red Planet.

Science Spectrum is a non-profit museum for science education. It's new home features an expanded science arcade and theater where visitors can manipulate gadgets

and gizmos to explore light, energy, sound, electricity, magnetism and gravity.

A larger Kidspace exhibit is in place where preschool children and adults can mix and measure in Waterworks, be a star on televisio news or try their hand at computerized music.

New permanent exhibits include The Money Center, donated by AT&T and locally sponsored by American State Bank, which demonstrates money concepts and the free enterprise system.

Visitors have access to the Science Shop for purchase of science-related books and gadgets and to a snack bar.

Information about Holiday scheduling for groups, or any other information about Science Spectrum offerings, is available by calling

745-2525.

Currently, Ring of Fire is showing at 1, 4 and 5 p.m. Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, at 4, 5 and 7 p.m. on Thursday, 1, 4, 7, 8, 9 and 10 p.m. Friday, at 11 a.m., 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8 and 9 p.m. Saturday and 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 p.m. on Sunday. Prices are \$5.50 for adults, and \$3.50 for students and seniors over 60. Science Spectrum hours are 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday through Friday; 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday and 1 to 5:30 p.m. Sunday. Prices for museum are \$5.50 for and \$4.50 for students and seniors.

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AgReview



South Plains Ag News

Dec 16-17

**LUBBOCK
USDA
SUSTAINABLE
AG MEET** —
USDA will hold a Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education/Extension on Cotton Production Research Review at Holiday Inn Civic Center.

Jan. 10-11

**IRRIGATION
CONFERENCE**
— A two-day conference sponsored by the Texas Agricultural Irrigation Association and the A&M Extension Service will include discussion of critical issues impacting irrigated agriculture.

Cargill now taking applications for \$1,000 college scholarships

MINNEAPOLIS — The Cargill Foundation will sponsor \$1,000 scholarships for 250 high school seniors from U.S. farm families for the ninth year this spring.

The Cargill Scholarship Program for Rural America is open to all high school seniors who will graduate in the spring. The seniors must come from families that derive at least half of their income from farming. Scholarship candidates must enroll full-time next fall at an accredited two or four-year college, university or vocational-technical school.

"The program has helped to honor academic achievement among rural students," said Bill Pearce, president of the Cargill Foundation. "It's an endeavor that has received an enthusiastic reception in rural communities. We are committed to this scholarship program."

The Cargill Foundation established the program in 1986 to recognize and encourage academic achievement, accomplishment and talent among rural youth. Thus far, the Cargill Foundation has presented 1,503 awards for a total of \$1.75 million.

The national FFA selects the scholarship winners, although applicants do not have to be members of FFA. The organization bases its selections on academic record, leadership, extra-curricular accomplishments and financial need.

"The FFA has a long history of administering scholarship programs for agriculturally-based companies," said Gladys Tripp of Cargill Community Relations. "Because it is a national organization that is part of the curriculum in many rural high schools, it is ideally suited

to manage the program."

Information and application forms can be obtained at any Cargill office or high school FFA department. Students also may request forms from the Cargill scholarship coordinator, National FFA, P.O. Box 45205, Madison, Wis., 53744-5205. Application deadline is Feb. 15, 1994.

Cargill is a privately held merchandiser, processor, transporter and warehouse of agricultural and other bulk commodities, based in Minnetonka, Minn. The company employs more than 69,705 individuals in 58 countries.

USDA set to assist small rural towns

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Agriculture Department is beginning a \$3 million program with seven land-grant universities to develop jobs and income-producing projects for underdeveloped rural communities.

"The intent of this project is direct, hands-on jobs creation in traditionally agricultural-dependent communities," said Bob Nash, USDA's undersecretary for small community and rural development.

The agreement will establish pilot projects to provide technical assistance to communities and small businesses in such communities over an 18-month period.

Loans now available for pivot systems

LUBBOCK — Low-interest agricultural water conservation equipment loan funding is still available for qualified producers who wish to upgrade their current irrigation system to a Low Energy Precision Application (LEPA) center pivot sprinkler system.

The Texas Water Development Board in Austin has just extended the High Plains Water District's current ag loan contract through January 1994.

"This extension of our contract by the Texas Water Development Board will give producers time to complete their 1993 harvest

and then consider any improvements they may wish to make to their existing irrigation system for the 1994 growing season," says Becca Williams, Water District Director of Administration.

Water savings from an upgrade in the irrigation application and distribution systems can be significant.

Cumulative water savings from the beginning of the Water District's pilot ag loan program (in 1986) through September 1990 amount to about 43,880 acre-feet — enough water to supply a city of 200,000 for one year!

The elimination of 21.5 miles of open, unlined ditch as a result of the ag loan program saves an estimated 1,491 acre-feet of water per year. Water savings due to improved system efficiencies total about 14,713 acre-feet of water per year.

Additional water savings data is contained in the free Water District report, Agricultural Water Conservation Equipment Low-Interest Pilot Loan Program Establishment, Guidelines, Loans and Water Conserved. Both full-length and summary versions of the report are available from the Water District

office.

Under the current contract, the District can lend money to qualified producers at 6.8 percent interest.

There is a \$250 loan initiation charge, and all applications are reviewed by the five-member Water District County Committee in the county where the sprinkler system is to be located. The County Committee then recommends approval or denial of the ag loan application to the District's Board of Directors.

Loans are limited to a maximum of 75 percent of the purchase price of the above-ground, recoverable

portion of a LEPA center pivot sprinkler system or a low pressure center pivot system equipped with drop lines that are no more than four feet above the land surface.

The cost of non-recoverable portions of the irrigation systems (pivot pad, electrical work, underground pipelines and labor) are not included in the loan proceeds.

Twelve borrowers have purchased 18 LEPA systems under the current TWDB contract.

"Loans have been made

See LOAN, Page 3

Environmentalism costly for Lorenzos of this world

By W. Wayne Wyatt

Manager, High Plains Water District

LORENZO — Federal and state regulatory agencies are paralyzing ordinary citizens with phobic fears about the dangers of environmental contamination. All too often, regulations set down by these agencies in an attempt to solve a perceived environmental "crisis" carry exorbitant price tags for compliance—which ultimately are passed along to water users.

Take the City of Lorenzo, for example. With a population of 1,208, it is larger than many other small towns in the High Plains of Texas. It has an annual operating budget of \$410,884. According to Mayor Tommy Fondren, 37 percent of the city's population is classified as low moderate income, 48 percent as low income, and the rest are "definitely not rich folks."

The main functions of city government of a town like Lorenzo are to oversee the operation of a landfill, operate water and wastewater systems, and provide police/volunteer fire/ambulance services. The city may also have an underground storage tank of gasoline to fuel its vehicles.

Yet, Fondren and others in city government must find means to comply with four major federal environmental acts—the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) Subtitle D, Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA), Clean Water Act (CWA) and RCRA Underground Storage Tank (UST). Complying with these four environmental acts could not impact the small town of Lorenzo any harder than if the federal and state governments had drawn a circle around the town and targeted it with a smart bomb.

The repercussions of environmental regulations are not limited to small towns in rural states—although the economic impact on a per resident basis is much greater in small towns. City governments of large cities in California, Texas and



WYATT

Guest Viewpoint

South Carolina and local officials from Ohio and Alaska are grappling with the same problems. It is a national problem.

State agencies are not just another interest group; they are the building blocks of federalism. "States are not merely subdivisions of the United States," wrote Justice Sandra Day O'Connor. "State governments are neither regional offices nor administrative agencies of the federal government."

The problem here is that environmental extremists, the mainstream media and bureaucrats brainwash the public into believing that more environmental protection is needed when, in fact, it may not be needed at all.

There are six principal reasons that we have an over-regulation crisis and that changes may be made before the small cities and towns of America are bankrupted:

1. Environmental rules are too often written to a one-size-fits-all standard. Standards are written by people residing in the Washington D.C. area who are ignorant of or ignore the vast ecological differences in our country. Utah is nothing like Connecticut, nor is East Texas anything like West Texas.

2. Environmental regulations appear to be developed without consideration of other requirements being developed. Even individual offices within EPA clearly operate on their own time schedules. Landfill and drinking water regulations can arrive more or less simultaneously—with either having the capacity to exhaust the financial resources of a small town.

3. Environmental rules and procedures are inflexible, not allowing for differences in specific situations. For example, petroleum-contaminated soil where the ground water is five feet below sandy soil needs to be cleaned up before cleaning up an area where ground water is 1,500 feet below shale. State officials have been given some authority to prioritize, but not the authority to waive the cleanup. And federal grants cannot be transferred from one environmental medium to another. A western state with its drinking water in jeopardy, but with few

or no air quality problems, is not allowed to shift federal money from air to water.

4. Increasingly, environmental standards are not accompanied by the necessary funds to implement them. For example, under the law, drinking water must be tested for 25 new chemical parameters, but the approximate \$10,000 cost per analysis falls entirely on the community. Unfunded mandates by Congress administered through federal agencies give the illusion that Congress is doing great things to protect the environment, when in fact a community may be overburdened financially with little or no improvement in its environment.

5. The cost of compliance with environmental regulations is not considered in the development of regulations by federal agencies, and each mandate is given equal weight for compliance. When finite resources have to be expended on lower-priority problems at the expense of higher-priority risks, society lacks the funds to attack real problems.

6. As the federal government faces increasing budget problems, most of the financial burden is being shifted to the states. States, such as Texas, that have their own budget problems shift the burden of cost to local government through fees and fines levied by State agencies. The local government has no choice but to increase its fees for services and/or its local taxes. The local residents hurt the most are the blue collar workers and retired people living on fixed, limited incomes from social security.

The irony of this whole bureaucratic mess is that the retired citizens of our small cities and towns are being hurt the most. They are the ones that built our small towns and cities through hard work and sacrifice. They are also the parents and grandparents of those writing the regulations which are making their retirement years increasingly difficult. Maybe it is time we sat down with our children and grandchildren to teach them a little common sense. Certainly, we all need to contact our legislators and encourage them to fix the problem.

Mayor Fondren would be pleased to provide details on how his town is attempting to cope with each of these regulations and the economic impact it is having on its residents.

TDA NOTES

Farmers due refunds

AUSTIN — The Texas Department of Agriculture, through the Texas Agricultural Finance Authority, is processing refund claims for those who do not wish to pay a \$5 farm motor vehicle fee used to finance a Young Farmer Loan Guarantee Program.

The refunds had been processed by the state Comptroller until Aug. 29, when authorization was transferred to TDA. About \$1.7 million has been raised for the program from farm motor vehicle fees that were collected beginning Jan. 1, 1992, through Aug. 29.

Filing for a claim requires writing TAFSA, P.O. Box 12847, Austin, Texas, 78711. Claim forms are available at county tax assessor-collectors offices. Claims must be filed within 30 days of paying the fee.

Texas utilities asked to lead solar quest

AUSTIN (AP) — A Public Utility Commissioner has called on Texas electric utilities to get in the forefront of converting solar energy, saying the technology is "a necessary ingredient in today's energy production mix."

Commissioner Karl Rabago said Wednesday that he has asked

all investor-owned and cooperative electric utilities in Texas to report to the PUC on what they are doing to develop solar.

"Texas must stay in front of the action to take advantage of the economic opportunities and economic development potential of photovoltaics," he said.

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Prices for a turkey dinner

This Thanksgiving, consumers can expect to pay only about 20 cents more per serving than last year due to slightly higher prices for such items as cranberries, sweet potatoes and dinner rolls.

Turkey Dinner 1993	Prices Paid By Consumers	Farmer's Share
Turkey, 8 oz	\$ 0.45	\$ 0.23
Stuffing, 1 serving	0.25	0.02
Green beans, 4 oz	0.13	0.02
Pecan pie, 1 slice	0.63	0.10
Pumpkin pie, one slice	0.50	0.05
Cranberry sauce, 2 oz	0.14	0.02
Potatoes, 4 oz	0.09	0.03
Sweet Potatoes, 4 oz	0.20	0.07
Dinner roll, one	0.08	0.01
Green salad, 1 serving	0.28	0.09
Salad dressing, 1 serving	0.18	0.02
Total for one meal	\$2.93	\$0.66

Source: Texas Agricultural Extension Service
Graphic: Agricultural Communications, The Texas A&M System



Statewide Ag News

Ag bank profits up

AUSTIN — The Farm Credit Bank of Texas and the 66 Federal Land Bank and Production Credit Associations in the 10th Farm Credit District have reported a combined net income of \$76.3 million for the nine-month period ending Sept. 30, 1993, compared with net income of \$21.8 million for the same period a year ago.

Arnold Henson, FCBT chief executive officer, attributed the \$54.5 million increase in earnings to several factors: lower funding costs, reduction in nonearning assets, successful collection efforts, a decrease in loan loss reserves and a \$6.9 million increase in net gains on the sale of acquired properties.

Also contributing significantly to the increase in earnings was a \$20 million charge incurred in 1992 to comply with changes in how postretirement benefits are reported.

Reviewer recommends 'Finishing Touch'

By MARY KATE TRIPP
Book Reviewer

Some combinations of book and author are so right as to seem inevitable.

That's the case for this history of cattle feeding in the U.S. Who would be better qualified to write it than Charles E. Ball, award-winning editor of farm magazines and Executive Vice President of the Texas Cattle Feeders Association from 1972 to 1988?

Ball has done a predictably excellent job of tracing the history of cattle feeding back to its colonial origins and through modern developments, proving that history does, indeed, repeat itself.

Readers in any way familiar with the importance of the cattle feeding industry in Texas and the Southwest may be surprised to learn that Ball's is the first book ever written on "The Finishing Touch" in the progress of beef from range to retail outlet.

Ball was himself surprised to find that, although a good many books have been written on cattle husbandry, cattle breeds, marketing, processing, and the general history of the industry and everything to do with cows,

Book Review:

Title: The Finishing Touch
Author: Charles E. Ball
Publisher: Texas Cattle Feeders Association
Price: \$35.00

cowboys and ranches, no book has previously been written about cattle feeding.

Readers of his book also are likely to be perpetually surprised to discover some hitherto unfamiliar aspect of the subject.

For example, having read, written and edited many short stories about agriculture and stock raising in the Texas Panhandle, this reviewer was surprised to learn that D. L. McDonald, who drilled the first irrigation well in Deaf Smith County in 1910, also established the first feedyard in the county in 1912.

The Finishing Touch not only introduces many such stories, it also enriches the presentation with rare photographs and reproductions of artists' versions of cattle feeding operations first printed long before the birth of photo journalism.

Ball takes his subject back to times when cattle feeding ranked with whiskey making as a means of marketing grain. He tells of the first feeding boom in post-Civil War years when cattle from

Texas ranges were driven north to new railheads and proceeded from there to finishing pastures and feeding pens.

He reminds readers, through stories of such feeders as Tom B. Simmons Jr., of Lubbock, of how early-day feeders made use of byproducts of the cottonseed milling process and how new concepts of feeding were born even while the industry scratched for survival during the Great Depression.

The book includes thumbnail biographies of all presidents of the Texas Cattle Feeders Association, a listing of employees of the association during its 25-year history, and a good index and comprehensive bibliography.

(Mary Kate Tripp is Book Review Editor of the AMARILLO GLOBE NEWS. Reprinted with permission of the AMARILLO GLOBE NEWS.)

LOAN

From Page 2

for one 18-tower; one 15-tower; one 13-tower; four 10-tower; eight 8-tower; and three 7-tower LEPA center pivot systems," says Williams.

She says interest in the program has been good. "The Water District has made loans in seven of the 15 counties in its service area. These are Castro, Crosby, Deaf Smith, Hockley, Lamb, Lubbock and Parmer counties."

She adds that the recent ratification of the annexation of the rest of Hale County into the Water District may spark additional interest in the ag loan program.

"The Board of Directors encourages producers in the newly-annexed portion of Hale County to contact the District office for information about the ag loan program," says Williams.

Ag loan guidelines, applications and copies of the pilot ag loan report are available by contacting Becca Williams at the High Plains Water District office, 2930 Avenue Q, Lubbock, TX 79405-1499

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It's a ranch like any other, but no men

By ART CHAPMAN

© '93 FW Star-Telegram

ALPINE — In the early morning darkness, the activities around the B-C Ranch look pretty much like those at any other ranch in this expansive country.

Shadows move between trucks and trailers, whippers carry like full voices in the dark, and the screen door bangs like a bass drum across the prairie.

Eggs and bacon are filling the ranch house with welcoming smells, though there will be only a moment when everyone can sit and eat. The last gulp of coffee will be taken on the run. The sun is breaking over the Del Norte and Glass Mountains.

The hands are dangerously close to the unconscionable sin of ranching: They are about to burn daylight. They still have to load feed for the cattle, hook up trailers and gather the saddles and bridles for the horses.

But it's not until the West Texas sun illuminates this beautiful valley just north of town near the Big Bend country that the B-C outfit becomes distinctive.

There are no men.

No cowboys with jingling spurs, no cheeks bulging with tobacco.

The B-C Ranch is run by women, employs only women. It is time for fall roundup, and additional

hands are needed. They, too, will be women.

There is no outright prejudice against men, just bad experiences. At the B-C, the cattle are handled gently. They are coaxed, not prodded, and sometimes cowboys have a hard time dealing with that.

These women don't. They have worked together for years, bound by friendship and common attitudes toward the livestock.

Charlene Atkinson, a retired Red Oak schoolteacher, comes in from her home in Odessa. Margo Lauderdale and Pat Drake, also retired teachers, drive in from Jayton.

Dellalene Baker, a veterinarian from Denison, and her assistant Pat McCormish travel the 600 miles from North Central Texas. J'Lynn Johnston arrives from around Whitesboro near the Oklahoma border.

They join forces with the ranch's regular hands: owner Becky Smith, Cathy Fortenberry and Karen Waggoner. The women range in age from their 20s to their 60s. All are single, some divorced. All but Drake have been coming to the roundup for years.

As they begin herding the purebred Herefords toward the pens on the 5,000-acre ranch, the long hair dangling beneath some of the riders' straw hats is the only visible mark of gender.

Today, they are

cowhands first and women second.

It has been that way on the B-C for the past 12 years, since Perry Cartwright turned the roundup chores over to Smith.

Cartwright and his family started the ranch near the turn of the century. He and his father came to the area in the late 1890s, the 62-year-old Smith says. They camped out all over the country, looking for the best place to settle.

Eventually, after carefully judging the grass and the local rainfall, they settled on the site that now sits on the border of Alpine's city limits.

Cartwright died in 1981. He was 91.

"He left me the ranch," Smith says. "I went to work for him in the 1970s and he taught me everything he knew. Being a registered nurse, I quickly found out that when the calving is taking place, they go through the same stages of labor that women do; that was a help. But as far as management — how to choose the bulls, how to select the keeper heifers for your own replacements, what grasses we had, how to care for the windmills and that kind of thing — all of that came from him."

Smith began her career as a nurse in Alabama and went into the Air Force Nurse Corps in 1955. After the service, she entered pre-veterinary studies at

Oklahoma State University in Stillwater. She says: "I came down with something God-awful and had to drop out. My health wasn't good and I couldn't take it."

She had visited Alpine, liked it and decided to move there.

She worked at the hospital for a while and then moved to the Alpine Veterinary Clinic, where she eventually met Cartwright.

"Our friendship began when he gave me a doggie calf (one whose mother isn't giving enough milk)," she remembers. "It was 1967, and before it was over he had given me eight. He told me later that he was impressed with the way I took care of them."

"He was fantastic. I wish you could have met him. Instead of a cowboy, he was a cowman."

Smith went to work for Cartwright. He also hired Fortenberry. In 1981, he asked them whether they could handle the roundup by themselves.

"He saw how gentle we were with the cattle," Smith says. "He didn't like the way they had been handled by previous people — and I'm not going to mention any names — he didn't like the way they were being hit with 2-by-4s to get them to go in the chutes, and hit with hotshots every time you turned around."

"He was a very gentle man, and a compassionate

man. He upped and asked me one day — he was 90 years old — he said, 'Becky, do you think you and Cathy can get enough people together and do the roundup yourselves this year?'

"I told him I thought I could. I'd just have to try. That's how this all started. I got on the phone and started calling all the friends I had known."

Over the years, 15 or so women have traveled to Alpine to work on the roundup. Some come twice a year, for spring and fall roundups; others come when they can.

They kid with one another as they work, the kind of good-hearted jabbing common among cowhands. On the first morning, Atkinson, who goes by "Charlie," inspects the horse she is to ride. It's a small sorrel borrowed from a nearby ranch.

"You wouldn't believe what they told me about this horse," she says. "They told me the last man to ride it was 95 years old, and after I finished with it, they were going to put it to sleep, it was so old."

The sorrel was anything but decrepit; its spirits were certainly high enough when Atkinson put the saddle blankets on. The others watched with devilish smiles, but Atkinson soon calmed the excited animal and rode off without incident.

There are four horseback riders through most of the roundup. The B-C is not a particularly big ranch by local standards. It is evenly divided, with four sections (2,560 acres) on the east side of Texas 118 — the road to Fort Davis — and four sections on the west.

The east pasture is rolling hills of native bluestem and grama grasses. The west pasture is flatter, more punctuated with mesquite and cat claw. Both are easily accessible by truck, and it is from the ranch pickup that Smith acts as the trail boss.

"If you all get up there and spook 'em, I'm going to whip you," she hollers as two of the women walk up a nearby hill to look for cattle. They back off slowly.

Smith can laugh and joke as quickly as any of them, but when it comes to her cattle, she is nearly dictatorial. She wants them worked one way: gently. That's the only way she will abide.

"Back in 1985, Cathy had to have major back surgery," she says, "and I had to have some help. There's all kinds of cowboys around here, all you'd want to hire. Perry never would hire them, and the first time I was on a roundup on somebody else's ranch I saw why."

"It was get out there and

See WOMEN, Page 3

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Roots tug bachelor brothers back to ranch

By JOHN MCCONAL
© '93 FW Star-Telegram

MINERAL WELLS — William Henry McMillan Jr. admits that he likes to visit the big cities. But those trips are not for long. "I always like to head her back this way," he said.

"This way" is the McMillan ranch, which has been continually operated and in the family for 100 years. He and his brother, Joseph, both retired teachers, admit a deep fondness for the land originally settled by their grandfather, Peter Hampton McMillan, in 1889.

"This is where our roots are," Joseph said. "We thought we could make a million out there. We didn't and we always came back to this sandy land."

Both are huge men with thick abdomens, long faces and noses. They look like the kind who would live in the rugged country in which the ranch is embedded some 10 miles northeast of Mineral Wells and 40 miles west of Fort Worth.

Bill talks in a loud, booming voice. Joe is

quiet. On this day, he talked while we waited for Bill's arrival.

He told about the frame house in which they live. It was completed by their grandfather in 1892.

"The foundation is on post oak stumps," Joseph said. "They're still there. And, this wood, oh, it's hard lumber. We've done some remodeling and you can't hardly drive a nail in those boards."

He showed a photograph of grandpa Peter: a huge man with huge hands, a full mustache and a stern look.

"He died in 1913. Right in here. Sitting in a chair," Joseph said. "And right outside, you can still see the old Fort Belknap trail."

He pointed out a window. And there were the ruts worn by horses and wagons. Then Bill arrived, greeting us in a loud burst of words. He declined to tell his age and said: "We both live here. Married? No. We never have been. We are just two old bachelors."

Their father was Henry. Their mother was Cleo, and many of her paintings hang on the wooden walls that reach to the towering

wooden ceilings.

I'm no art critic. But, believe me, these are impressive. There's one of the heads of three horses. You can almost smell the spittle coming from their mouths as they pause before exploding into a gallop.

"She painted for two years and then she started her family. That was time to quit painting. She never painted again," Bill said.

She was a nice woman, said a neighbor, Charlsie Polk Sanders.

"When we were girls, we'd be walking by and

would be awfully thirsty and Mrs. Cleo always had something cool for us to drink," she said.

We walked through the house full of antique furniture. Many items were built by grandfather McMillan, a master carpenter.

They showed us a pair of women's high-top leather shoes once worn by their grandmother, Francis Elizabeth. And close to them is a sidesaddle she rode.

"She rode that saddle the day she died," Bill said. "She was pregnant and began hemorrhaging and bled to death. That was in 1893."

We walked outside to the porch. Bill showed the original brass dinner bell. He remembered it well.

"I would be in the field working with the mules and mother would ring that bell. The mules would go to nickering and crying and be as happy as I was at hearing that. They knew they were going to get a rest and I knew I was going to get to eat," he said.

We drove into the pasture to a line of old horse-drawn farming equipment. Bill showed a walking cultivator pulled by mules. His father nailed a seat to the tongue.

"I would ride on that while Daddy worked," he said. "I'd put my feet on those springs and when we hit a bump, they'd pinch my toes."

The smell of rain came from the northeast, where thunder growled. Huge clouds gathered and looked like the old large quilts that once covered beds.

We looked at those and sniffed the change in weather. We knew why Bill and Joe always have and always will head her back here.

(Jon McConal is a columnist for the Fort Worth Star-Telegram.)

WOMEN

From Page 4

whoop and holler, sling ropes, whip and spur, run them. You're asking for your cattle to lay down and die before you get them to the pen.

"But I needed help, and I hired a cowboy. It didn't work out," Smith says.

"When I interviewed him, I asked him if he could take orders from a woman and he said he could. But every time I sent him out to do a job, I'd go check it, and instead of doing it the way I told him to do it, my way, he did it his way. ... When Cathy got back on her feet, I fired him."

There are no disagreements on this drive. The women share the same philosophy about working the cattle. They can call some of the cows by name. They urge them on quietly.

The cattle are penned. There are 200 head from the west pasture, 160 from the east. The first-year heifers, those expecting their first calves, are split off the main herd and driven into chutes to be pregnancy-tested, vaccinated and wormed.

The next morning, calves are separated from the cows and heifers split from the steers. Smith watches closely so she can select a few heifers to replace some of her aging cows.

It is an important part of the roundup, because Smith is insistent on keeping her herd pure, healthy and productive. She steadfastly refuses to crossbreed any of her cattle.

"Perry had the Herefords, and he sold me on not crossbreeding," she says. "I won't do it. These

cattle are gentle, and they know us. If you start crossbreeding or bringing in all Angus, or all Brahman or all something else, then you're asking for wilder cattle for women to handle. It's not worth it."

With bandannas over their faces to block out the heavy dust, the women continue separating the calves. They are in a hurry because the buyer is expected at any time.

About two hours after they began, he arrives, and they are ready. In less than two full working days, they have gathered the cattle and prepared them for shipping.

When the buyer arrives, he confirms the success of Smith's methods. He contracted for her cattle back in July, and he's happy with what he's bought.

"They're the kind of

cattle that will make you a living," he says.

The roundup was accomplished without incident and without accident. There wasn't an electric cattle prod on the place. There were no 2-by-4s.

"The first couple of years, it was work. It would take us four or five days to get everything done. Now it's a set schedule. It's a lot faster," Baker says at the end.

"I've been here every year; I feel very fortunate. I love it. I love working the cattle, I love the country."

As the buyer looks over his new herd, Smith walks away from the pens, wiping the dust from her face and neck with a towel. Her crop is in, and it's a good one.

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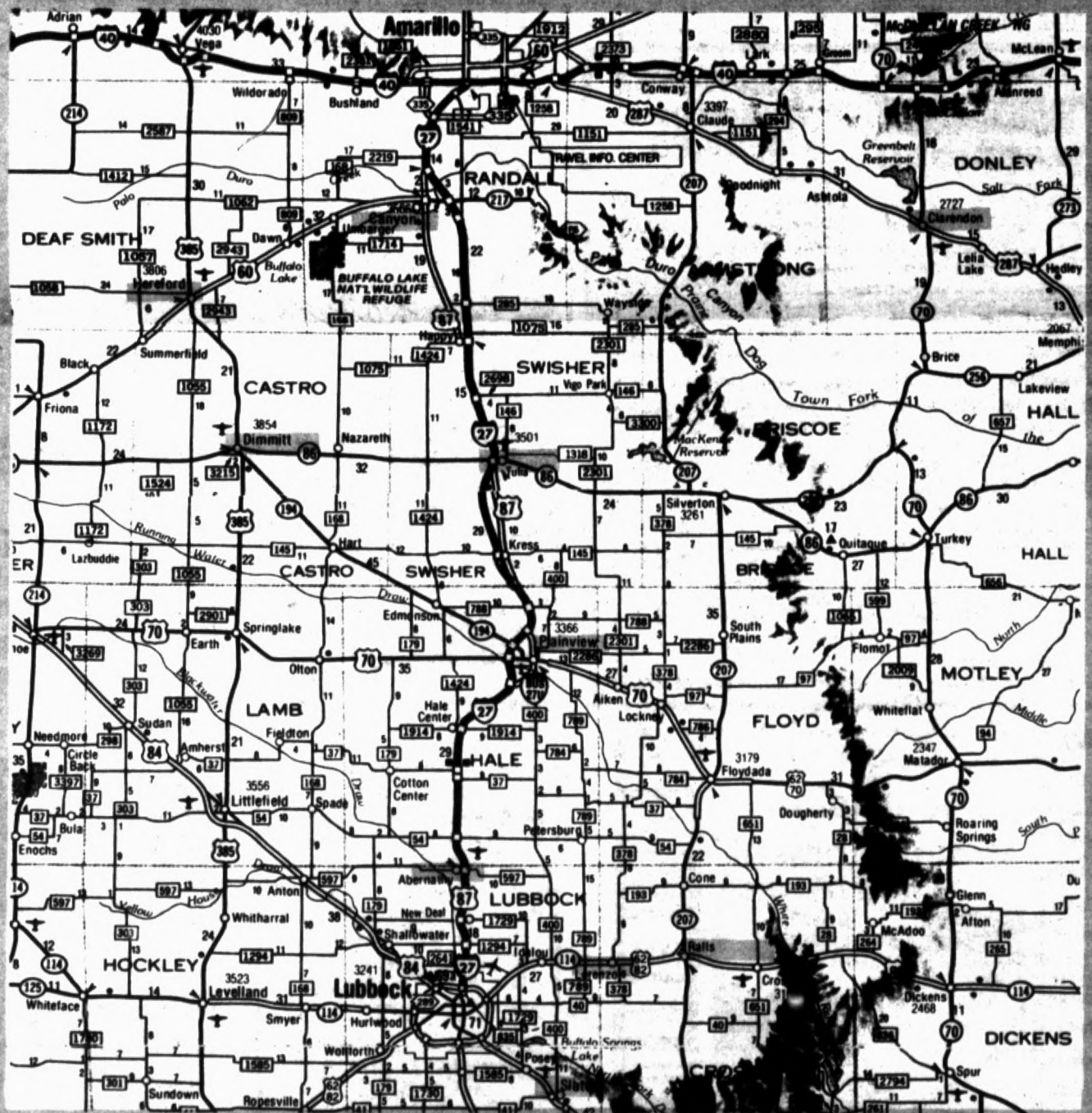
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Ranch recreates Kansas of a century ago

By JOHN PETERSON

© '93 Kansas City Star

INDEPENDENCE — Bluestem and other native prairie grasses cloaked the ranks of rolling hills, and clumps of blackjack oak and hickory stood guard over what is known locally as the Buffalo Ranch.

"You can come here and see some vistas," said Doug Blex, a field supervisor for the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks, as he gazed out over the expanse that gave no hint of human intrusion. "You can picture what it was like 100 years ago. You can almost see a covered wagon coming."

Thanks to the generosity of Independence businessman Lynn Berentz, who died two years ago and left money in his will for a southeast Kansas wildlife preserve, that same view will be available to anyone willing to walk into the countryside.

The nearly roadless 1,360-acre tract is in an isolated area near the Montgomery-Chautauqua

county line, southwest of Independence.

Once the ranch had a herd of buffalo grazing on it. The owner also operated a summer dance hall and an occasional rodeo. Buffalo burgers were on the menu.

That didn't last long, but the name Buffalo Ranch stuck.

"We found it hard to locate a block this size," Blex said. "It hasn't been spoiled by any kind of development or oil."

The property probably won't be fully open to the public until next fall when some preliminary work is expected to be completed.

The Buffalo Ranch, now officially known as the Lynn Berentz-Max Dick Wildlife Area in honor of the benefactor and the man from whom the property was purchased, will offer visitors more than just scenery.

A 7-acre water supply pond, built as a federal Works Progress Administration project during the Depression, will provide fishing. Hiking and horseback trails, primitive camp-

sites, plots of wildflowers and a variety of trees also will be available, and possibly limited hunting.

Blex, who also is in charge of the nearby Elk City State Park, the Montgomery County State Fishing Lake and other wildlife areas in the region, said that across the hills and along the ravines with their Dakota sandstone outcroppings visitors might be able to spot prairie chickens, deer, coyotes, rabbits, wild turkeys, ducks, geese and squirrels. A variety of birds, including red-tailed hawks, may be in evidence.

With its wildlife and virgin prairie, the Buffalo Ranch was a natural.

When Lewis Bambick of Fredonia, Kan., executor of the estate of nearly \$1 million, outlined Berentz's desire to establish a wildlife area in southeast Kansas, Tom Kirker, chief of staff in the Topeka office of Wildlife and Parks, went to work.

Kirker said his goal was to create a project that would become a model for future acquisitions in an era

of tight state money.

Except for some Wildlife and Parks employees who will oversee the area's operations, the estate will provide not only the land but also money for its perpetual operation — all without state tax dollars.

Kirker developed a plan that called for spending about \$440,000 to acquire the land. Some \$100,000 more was made available from the estate for immediate capital improvements, such as repairs to the pond's dam, parking and toilets.

An additional \$200,000 is to be funneled into a trust fund with the interest from it, estimated at \$15,000 to \$20,000 a year, to be used to support operations and to pay the taxes on the land.

Last April, the details of the project were outlined at a public meeting. Nearly all the reaction was positive.

However, the Resource Conservation and Development Project Inc. of Chantute, Kan., an economic development group, raised some questions about possible damage to the area.

Blex said that after the meeting, the organization's opposition evaporated.

State Rep. Cindy Empson of Independence said she backed the project because it may bring tourist money to the county as well as preserving wildlife habitat.

Steve Clark, an area rancher, grazes some of his cattle on the Buffalo Ranch and it has a special meaning for him.

His great-grandfather came to Kansas in a covered wagon in 1882 and settled on the land. His family owned it until the late 1940s, and he's leased

it for grazing for almost the last decade.

Clark said he had mixed emotions about seeing the land sold and given to the state.

"It was a little bit of a tough deal for me," he said. "But I think it's kind of a wave of the future."

"If they can do all the things they are talking about, I think it will work out fine."

Future land acquisition may depend on public donations, which include operating support, because of the shortage of state funding.

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