

WEST TEXAS Country Trader



The West Texas Country Trader is a Supplement of:

Abernathy
Weekly Review
The Canyon News

The Castro County News
The Clarendon News

The Lorenzo
EXAMINER
HEREFORD BRAND

Plainview Daily Herald
Ralls Reporter-News

Thursday, August 11, 1994

The Slatonite
The Tulla Herald

Fun spot:

Silverton: Quaint ranch town hangs out hospitality sign year round

Briscoe's 102nd Birthday is Saturday

By GORDON ZEIGLER

AgReview Writer

SILVERTON — There will not be a better time to enjoy a rare brand of West Texas fun than Saturday!

That's when Briscoe County celebrates its 102nd birthday. *See Celebration, Page 4*

Discovering the flavor, hospitality of the 'Old West'

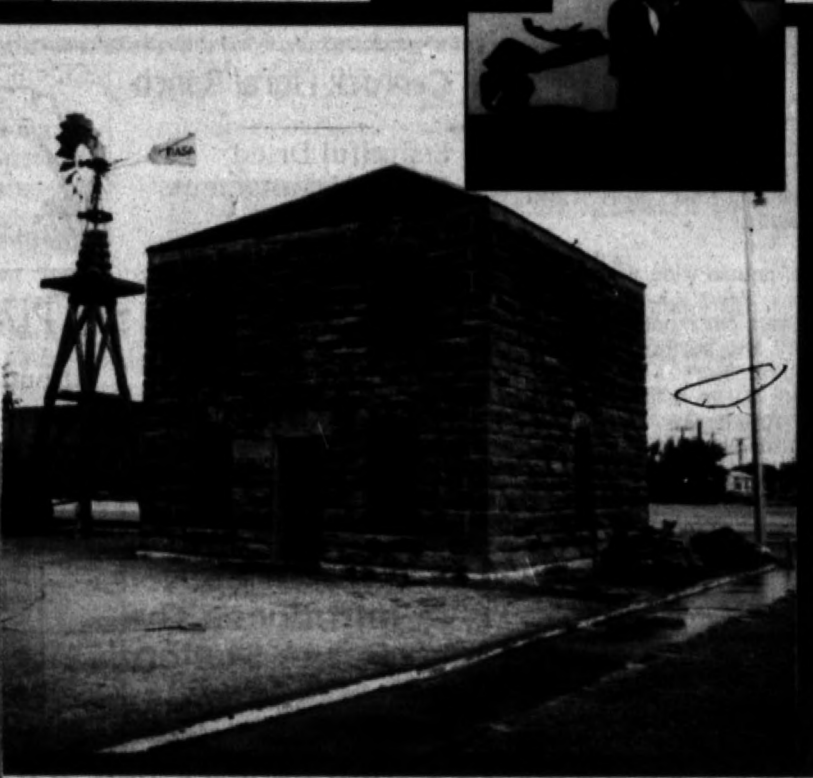
J. Christopher White to open shop for Briscoe County Birthday

Silverton 'treasures' include its world-renowned wood carver

SILVERTON — J. Christopher White first visited rugged ranch country near here as a Tech biology student doing a census on golden eagles.

The wildlife science major turned-artist is now a master carver who scours the Caprock for 2,000-year-old juniper stumps to *See White, Pg 3*

J. Christopher White's animals — all carved from plains juniper.



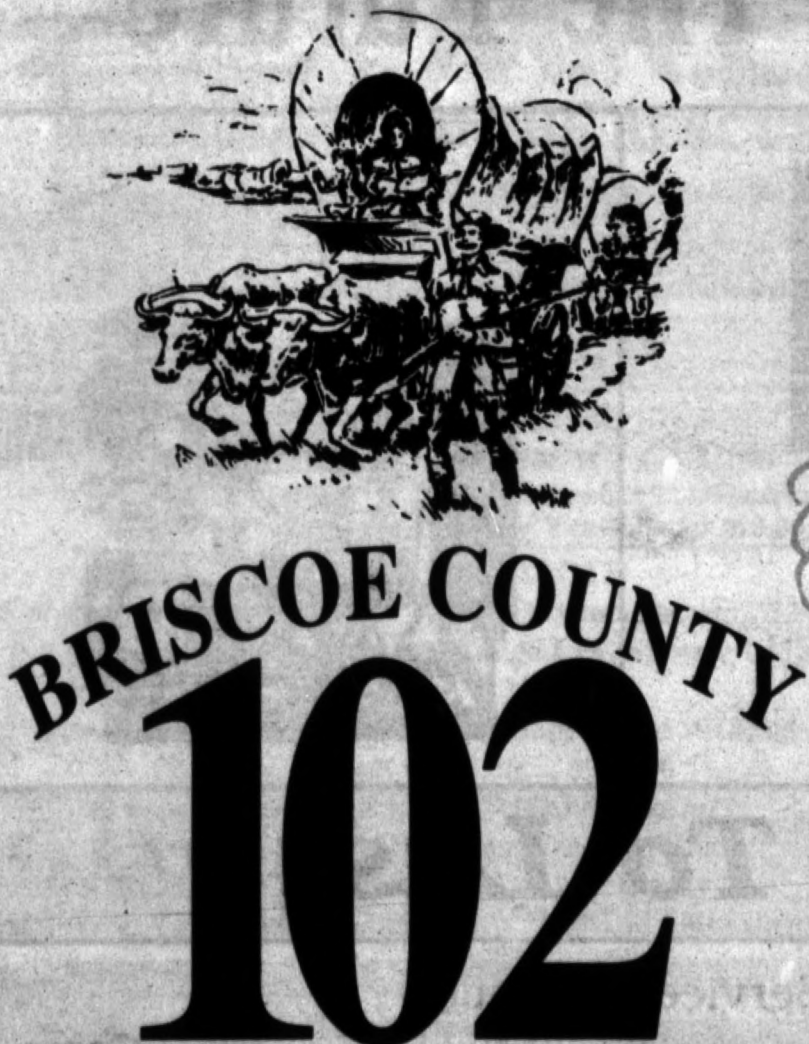
TRAILS TO SILVERTON — A music mecca to the 400 West Texans drawn to its Caprock Jamboree monthly, Silverton is also a popular stopover for travellers enroute to its two major nearby tourist attractions, Caprock Canyons State Park & Trailway and Lake Mackenzie. Texas' Sesquicentennial Wagon Train (right) drops by in 1986.

1986 Plainview Herald photo/Doug McDonough

Rock Jail turns 100

Laquita Sessums/AgReview

Historic jail will be open for Briscoe County's Birthday Saturday. The Silverton chamber's Gerald Smith (inset) holds schedule of events.



BRISCOE COUNTY
102

Birthday Celebration

AUGUST 12 -13, 1994

For More Information Call The
Silverton Chamber of Commerce
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Downtown Silverton August 13

Entertainment provided by Caprock Jamboree Performers
Parade, 3:30 Barbeque, 5:30 p.m.

Caprock Jamboree is Silverton's monthly 'population builder'

By GORDON ZEIGLER
AgReview Writer

SILVERTON — Silverton has found a secret to make every civic-minded community very jealous.

That's because the town has discovered a way to dramatically boost its population again and again almost effortlessly now — and it happens once a month like clock-work.

Silverton, population about 800, can count on swelling its numbers by hundreds each month when 400 toe-tapping music

lovers trek to the Briscoe County Showbarn for monthly performances of Caprock Jamboree, a unique event bringing musicians together to jam, have fun and entertain.

Success of the jamboree, which started over five years ago, still surprises one of its primary founders, John Francis, a retired farmer and lifelong musician.

"It started on a wing and prayer and went pretty good," he says. "It's grown from just a little thing to a real good thing. Why, we've held it every Saturday since then but two. Once we called it off for an

ice storm."

Francis and his wife, Maebelle, were among those who promoted the very first Jamboree.

He remembers it well. It was held in an open air setting the first Saturday in May of 1989 in Caprock Canyons. More than 400 persons attended, he recalls.

Former Briscoe County Judge Jimmy Ross had scheduled a media day to boost the newly designated Caprock Canyons State Park.

The idea was to have some musicians set up on an impromptu bandstand, built on the back of a 16-foot trailer and entertain the crowd.

The Francis, who call themselves Grammy and Pop, were among the performers.

It went off well, and became an almost instant success.

With Silverton people pretty well involved in the event, many decided to begin having the event the first Saturday of every month in the county showbarn. The idea was patterned after similar music jam-

bores seen in the Central Texas area. The idea stuck.

"We always serve mesquite grilled hamburgers to start off the evening," explained Francis. "We have just good family music . . . no tapes, just live music."

"It brings in 400 to 500 people, and lots of times you have to bring your own folding chair to find a seat."

Francis believes the reputation of the event has built the following.

"It's worth going to," he said. "It's just good clean family entertainment. We sit around toe tapping and listening to good music."

An unexpected spinoff of its success has been the beneficial aspects of allowing various civic clubs to alternate as sponsors of the concessions at Jamboree.

"It is a vehicle for civic clubs and organizations to make some money for their activities," Francis said. "In a smaller town, you make the rounds of businesses time after time. This way, we don't have to go out and do that so much."

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Aug. 12-13

Silverton, Tx.

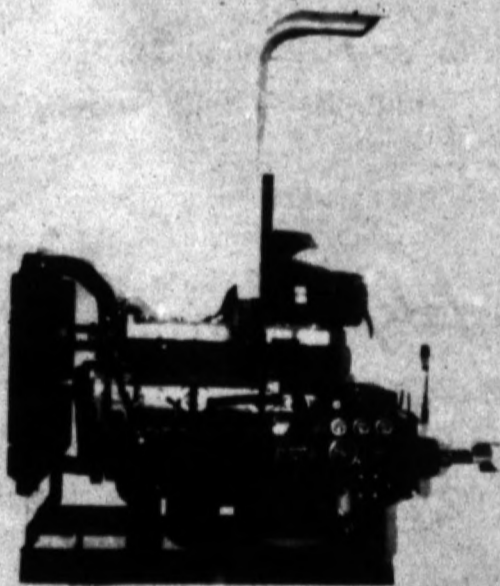


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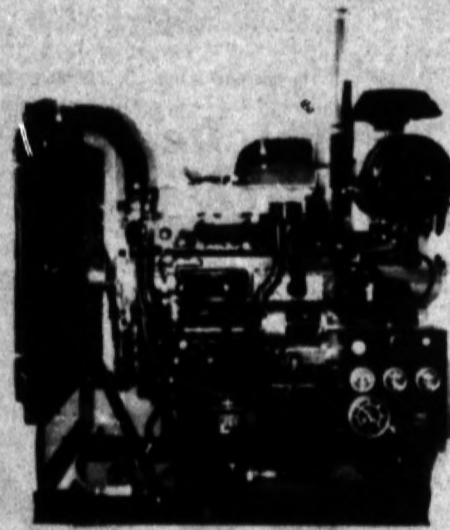
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White, From Pg 1
serve as the medium for his art.

Folks in Silverton look up to White as a local hero, because he has brought much acclaim to this hometown.

They're good folks, very genuine, very friendly.

And White, active as a chamber of commerce director and promoter of the town, is impressed with his fellow citizens with whom he threw in his stake over a decade ago when he decided to move here from Lubbock.

"They're good folks, very genuine, very friendly," volunteers the soft-spoken White.

White has brought much publicity to his home town via his artistic talents.

A case in point was his recent sweeping of Best of Show honors at a national show with a near life-sized bust of an Indian warrior and small girl.

Like most of his work, it was sold prior to the contest and portrayed an Indian man holding a bow and touching the shoulder of a young Indian girl.

Chosen for top honors in

the International Wood Carvers Congress recently in Davenport, Iowa, this piece is a classic work of White, featuring his unique signature.

His next scheduled show will open soon in the Square House Museum in panhandle.

His work is truly unique. For one thing, his ability to shape and carve 400-pound chunks of juniper into smoothly formed objects was thought impossible by his teachers at Mexico's National Institute of the Arts in San Miguel de Allende.

"My carving teacher in Mexico deemed it totally uncarvable," White recalls. "I knew it had potential, with its really tight grain and pretty color that grows naturally in interesting shapes. But he deemed it as the wrong medium to carve."

Yet White disproved that.

Now he routinely hunts for juniper material across the Caprock region — from the ranches of Silverton to rugged oil fields around Fluvanna south of Post, where he has found some

stumps weighting as much as 400 pounds that have been estimated to be approaching 2000 years in age.

White admits that the abundance of this juniper is a major reason he became interested in returning to Silverton a decade or more ago.

But, it was also the unique cultural qualities he saw in the town and surrounding area.

"I grew up in Lubbock," White explains. "I started coming down here in 1972 as part of a biology course at Texas Tech. We came up to check out the eagle population."

Not long afterward he became an avid hiker of the canyons and started carving some of the unusual juniper logs he found.

"This is the only place in the world you can find it, West Texas juniper," he said. Its also among the densest wood in the world, weighing about 44 pounds per cubic foot.

White likes the rural character of Silverton, but he spends most of his time talking about its people and positive aspects for raising

his family and making for an almost idyllic life.

"The people are what is so outstanding," White said. "They are still real genuine here."

White theorized that Silverton is one of the few places you can still come and see a lot of the Old West lived out daily.

"We are surrounded on three sides by working ranches," White said. "Well, they're not just right up to town, but all around us."

He recalls meeting a woman from another state who appeared almost moon struck on spying her first 'real cowboy' at a stopover in "One lady, in here from Main, told me she had seen the 'strangest thing'," White recalls.

"I saw cowboys herding their cattle with horses," the obviously shocked woman told White.

Chamber of Commerce manager Gerald Smith said what Silverton area residents take for granted, out of towners view as unreal.

During a recent interview with AgReview, White related from his cellular phone that he was sitting on the edge of a highway

watching the traffic while nine cowhands ran cattle from one point another along a Briscoe County roadway.

"There are enough ranchers and cowhands around here to give the town its western flavor," said White.

White speaks of Silverton's rural flavor, which he likes.

"There are only 1,100 registered voters in a 900-square-mile county," explains White. "We have primarily two major towns, Quitaque, with about 450 residents, and Silverton, which has about 780."

Looking at those numbers, White believes it is outstanding that Silverton has managed to augment its own population one Saturday a month by crowds of 300 to 400 — many of them from surrounding counties — who

attend the Caprock Jamboree.

Tourism is a natural for the Silverton area, believes White.

"The unspoiled, rugged beauty of the Canyons is impressive," he said. "There are a lot of real nice drives," he said. "And, Texas 207 is probably the prettiest highway in Texas. It goes through Palo Duro Canyon, Tule Canyon, White River Canyon and then drops off into the Brazos River Canyon on its way to Post."

He speaks of Briscoe County's own attractions, both located almost wholly within the county.

"We have Lake Mackenzie, which is a good skiing and fishing lake," he said. "It's just very scenic with the big red cliffs coming up out of the water. And, Caprock Canyons State Park is really, in my

See White, Page 5

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August 12-13

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Celebration, From Pg 1
102nd Birthday.

It's been a tradition in recent years to roll out the red carpet during this celebration of history, with the town prepared to welcome an influx of citizens from many of the surrounding Panhandle/South Plains who annually come here to join the fun.

Through a progressive chamber of commerce organization, organized just one and one-half years ago, Silvertown stays busy much of the year these days encouraging Texans of all ages to come to town, join in the fun, and enjoy some things that are uniquely Silvertown's.

What's drawing 'em to Silvertown this year?

TOURISM:

Silvertown is showing off many newfound attractions which are beginning to make it one of Texas newfound quaint and unusual travel stops on the way to nearby major Texas tourist stops. It has benefitted in recent years from growing popularity of Briscoe County tourist meccas like Caprock Canyons State Park and Trailway to the west and nearby Lake Mackenzie recreation area.

SCENIC ROADS:

It has also seen welcomes many travellers enroute to popular Palo Duro Canyons State Park to the north and its summer musical TEXAS—situated on a main north-south route to Palo Duro Canyon, a scenic highway travelled by fun seekers from across the nation.

MUSIC:

One of the biggies being offered especially for out-

of towners this weekend is music — the well known Caprock Jamboree gang (which holds Caprock Jamboree each month here) plans to stage periodic music jams on the courthouse square.

ART:

Silvertown's resident artistic wood carver J. Christopher White will hold an open house at his downtown Silvertown art workshop/studio. The nationally acclaimed craftsman has won major honors for his renditions of people and wildlife carved from juniper wood — all gleaned from the Caprock area.

ARTS & CRAFTS:

An outstanding array of area crafters will be represented at the traditional arts and crafts mall on the Briscoe County Courthouse square.

HISTORY:

The heritage of Briscoe is also in the limelight, especially this weekend. Heritage buffs will get a chance to tour the quaint and historic rock jail, a Briscoe County icon which marks its 100th birthday this year.

SOCIALIZING:

The Briscoe County pioneers will hold get togethers along with numerous Silvertown High School graduating classes gathering for homecoming reunions.

RODEO:

One of the best TCR-sanctioned rodeos in the Texas Panhandle is set Friday and Saturday nights.

DANCING:

The country band Blue

Denim Band will play for special post-rodeo dances Friday and Saturday.

PARADE:

The Briscoe County Birthday Parade will begin at 3:30 p.m. Saturday.

B B C:

Highlight of the final rodeo night will be serving of a traditional chuck wagon barbecue at 5:30 p.m. Saturday.

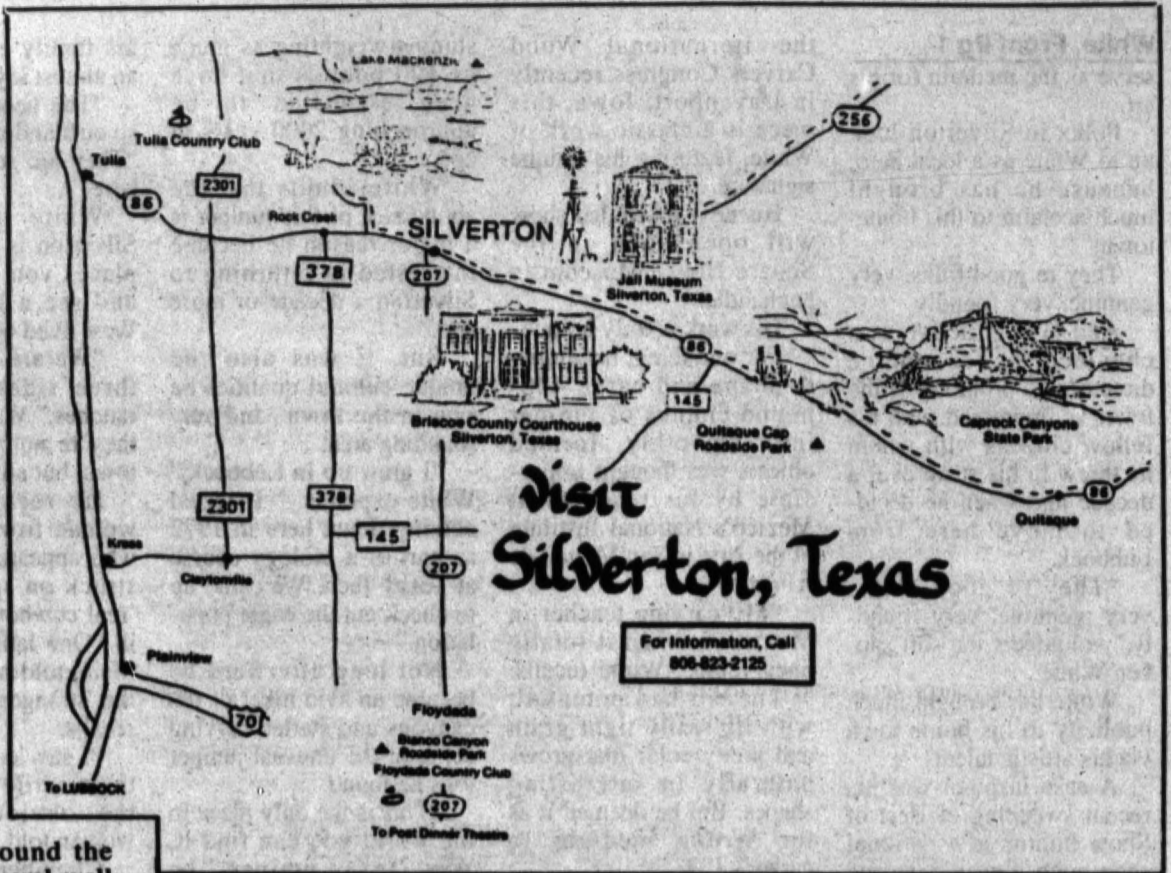
CUISINE:

Palate pleasing selections of all types will be offered at special purpose food booths around the town square. Several well known city restaurants will offer up their special items.

COFFEE:

Tapping into the growing gourmet coffee craze sweeping the nation, a group of Silvertown women will operate an Espresso Coffee Shop on Main Street between Nana's Neighborhood and J. Christopher White's Studio.

A benefit event of the local L.O.A. study club, it will offer unique flavored coffees from 8:30 a.m. to 10 a.m. including amaretto, Irish cream, hazelnut, cappucino, espresso and lattes. From 2:30 to 3:30 p.m. the booth will dispense homemade ice cream and lemonade.



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Harvest Days kickoff set today in Dimmitt.

Special to AgReview

A weekend of fun in Castro County begins today as part of Harvest Days. Fair and quilt entries are due today and team roping will be held tonight at 7 p.m. in Dimmitt Rodeo Arena.

Events on Friday will include an arts and crafts show; quilt and fair exhibits; pet show; "Youth Sews" fashion event; a youth Star Search contest; an "Accessorize to Minimize" demonstration; a poker run and card challenge; and the first performance of the rodeo.

Activities Saturday include the arts and crafts show, quilts and fair exhibits; the annual parade; early settlers reunion and class reunions at the Senior Citizens Center; Dimmitt Car Show, swap meet, model car contest and antique tractor show, sponsored by DATA; food booths around the Expo area; outdoor games including pillow fights, a dunking board, horseshoe and washer pitching, water polo, volleyball and tug-of-war, open house at the Castro County Museum; cow patty bingo; kids games; guided tours of American Maize-Products; Top

of Texas Cloggers; barbecue supper, square-dancing; the second rodeo performance; and a street dance featuring Rowdy Ace.

Arts and crafts show:

An arts and crafts show will be held from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Aug. 12 and 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Aug. 13. Booths were still available for rent inside the Expo Building, in the quonset barns south of the Expo Building, and outside. Booth spaces are \$35 (more for extra large outside spaces) and may be reserved

By calling 647-2524 or going by the Dimmitt Chamber of Commerce office at 115 W. Bedford.

Persons renting booths will receive \$5 of their registration fee back upon clean up of their booth area. Persons renting booths will be furnished a 30 inch by 8 foot table and two chairs. Electrical outlets are limited and extension cords are not provided.

Food booths must be approved by the fair committee.

See Harvest Days, Page 7

White, from Pg 4

opinion, one of the more scenic Canyons you will find.

Historic ranches lay in all directions of Silverton.

"There's the J.A. Ranch, which used to be one of the biggest in the world, plus the Tule Ranch, which is I believe about 13,000 acres," he added.

White first put down roots in Silverton when he

began renting a house here in 1978.

Now married and raising his children in Briscoe County, White thinks he has chosen the best possible place to settle.

"There is a real sense of community here," he said. "This is where we wanted to raise them."

Silverton's rural culture is advantageous in many ways, he believes.

"It is things Silverton doesn't have that makes it attractive," he says. "We don't have gangs, or crimes to speak of."

His interest in the eagle population of the Briscoe County area has continued since his college days.

"In 1972 I think the Caprock area had 22 nesting pairs," said White. "I'd say it has probably risen some since then."

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Things to do, what to see in Silverton:

CAPROCK JAMBOREE:

Held the first Saturday evening of each month in Briscoe County Showbarn. Bring folding chair and blanket.

ROCK JAIL MUSEUM

Briscoe County's 100-year-old jail does not house prisoners any longer. Instead it is a local museum. It will be open for Briscoe County Birthday activities.

It held prisoners as late as the 1950s. G.L. Lamar of Hale County won the bid to build it of hand cut stone form Tule Canyon. Construction contract was for \$2,487.

NANA'S NEIGHBORHOOD AND NANA'S ATTIC:

A gift shop and perpetual garage sale owned by Spud and Betty Nan Tiffin. It is open Thursday

at Caprock Floral Ranch: This unusual floral firm, owned by Margaret Smith and Rhenda Burson, makes its own hand made wreaths out of native wildflowers harvested in Briscoe County. A favorite is green and burgundy-dyed broom weed which is woven into wreaths.

SCENIC DRIVES:

A favorite scenic route for highway travel is Texas 256 from Silverton to Clarendon.

CAPROCK CANYONS STATE PARK:

This park, which features modern hookups or primitive camping, plus fishing at Lake Theo is located east of Silverton 21 miles west on Texas 86, then north of Quitaque on FM 1065.

CAPROCK CANYONS STATE TRAILWAY:

Beginning near South Plains in Floyd County, this new hike and bike trail winds across the Caprock all the way to Caprock Canyons State Park. It includes Clarity Tunnel, one of Texas only remaining railroad tunnel dug through a portion of the Caprock.

LAKE MACKENZIE:

Lake and recreation area is located 11 miles northwest of Silverton on Texas 207. It is formed by the highest earthen dam in Texas, measuring 185 feet at its peak.

RV camping: Silverton offers six free trailer spaces in its city park on Texas 86.

MARY JOHN'S FLOWERS AND GIFTS:

A city floral and gift shop.

J.R. STEELE:

A cabinet maker and furniture refinisher.

THE MALT SHOP:

Preserving the look and feel of the old corner malt shop, this Silverton business features noon specials including catfish, steaks and Mexican food specialties. It is owned by Doug and Jeanetta Bradford.

THE PIZZA BOX:

Owned by Norberto Garcia, the restaurant offers pizza and Mexican food.

GARCIA'S:

A restaurant featuring general menu offerings.

HUNTING:

Just about any type of hunting available in the area is offered on the Tula Ranch, one of the largest in the area.

Burson Cattle Company, east of Silverton, also offers hunting guide services and lodging.

NANCE'S FOOD STORE:

One of the last remaining small town, independent grocery stores of its type in the country. Wayne Nance features complete butcher services.

CACTUS COVE MARINA:

Located on Lake Mackenzie, the firm offers all types of services and food items for lake patrons.

Brown Hardware:

Owned by Carol and Mary Davis, Brown Hardware serves the city's general mercantile and hardware needs.

Kent Carpenter Guide:

Kent Carpenter, a Silverton area hunting guide, specializes in the recently popular practice of wild hog hunting. Russian bore is found on area ranches. Its meat is a popular gourmet item.

TURNER SPORTS

Wholesale manufacturer of weight training equipment.

WALTER ARNOLD GUIDE:

Arnold, a former world champion rodeo roper, offers hunting guide services.

FARMING:

Briscoe County is cut diagonally by the Caprock Escarpment. Areas above the caprock, and some on rolling lands below it, offer some of the richest farm lands in the area.

TIFFIN'S DEPARTMENT STORE

A city general merchandise store, owned by the same family operating Tiffins Bed & Breakfast. Other outlets in Earth, Crosbyton.

SILVERTON CHAMBER:

Formed in 1992, the Silverton Chamber of Commerce is headed by Gerald Smith, president; Beverly Bowman, secretary; Betty Nan Tiffin, treasurer; and W.D. Rowell, vice president.

FARM IMPLEMENTS:

Two of the larger implement companies in the Texas Panhandle are located in Silverton. They include Brown/McMurtry Case IH Farm Equipment and Briscoe Implement.

BED & BREAKFAST

Tiffins Beds, located in a three-bedroom home in Silverton, caters to tourists as well as out of town visitors.

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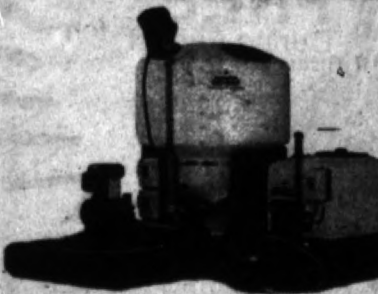
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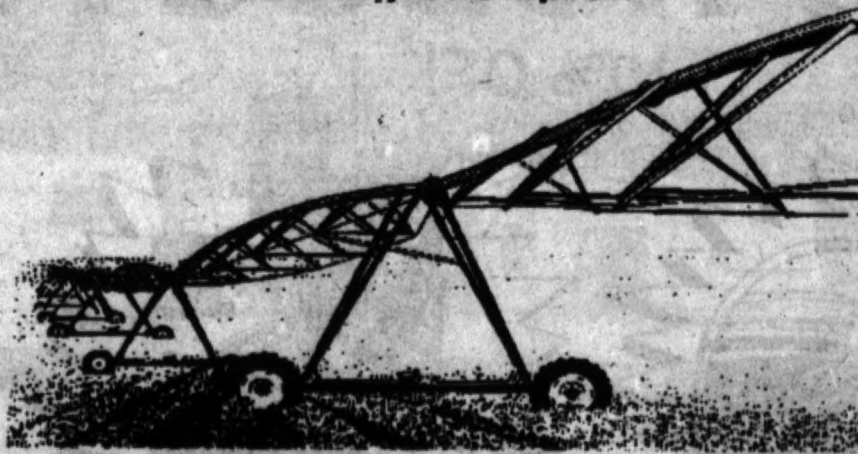
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SILVERTON TEXAS

Ancient biblical riddle solved by the 'tunnel' scholars

By JOHN NOBLE WILFORD
c. 1994 N.Y. Times News Service

Under the oldest part of Jerusalem, the area known as the City of David, a maze of tunnels and shafts runs through the rock and deep into biblical history. In ancient times, the people

inside the city walls depended on this system to deliver water from the ever-flowing Gihon Spring outside, thus ensuring a dependable water supply in both war and peace.

But nearly everything else about the old underground waterworks, especially its recorded role in two pivotal events in the history

of ancient Israel, has left scholars shaking their heads in puzzlement.

Archeologists and biblical scholars have long wondered if it was these dark, subterranean passages that enabled King David to capture Jerusalem 3,000 years ago.

Biblical accounts suggest that David's general, Joab, surprised

the Jebusites, or Canaanites, by sneaking in through a hidden passage. But did any of these tunnels exist at this early time? Were the Canaanites or anyone else then capable of such excavations?

Engineers have long noted that whoever built these passages seemed to go about their task in the most curious way, with no

logic in the choice of some routes, slopes and dimensions of the tunnels and many ostensible mistakes in design.

According to the Bible, King Hezekiah, expecting an attack and possibly a long siege by the Assyrians in the eighth century B.C., had a tunnel built to bring water from the spring.

Dimmitt, from Pg 5

Harvest Days parade:
The parade will be at 10 a.m. on Saturday. Members of the Dimmitt Lions Club will be setting up the parade beginning at 9 a.m. on parade day. Entry deadline is noon Thursday for everything except bicycles. Bikes don't have to be pre-registered.

Divisions will be provided for floats and vehicles. Antique, hot rod, classic and low-rider vehicles will participate in the parade and the DATA car show later in

the day. Quilt show: Dimmitt's Friendship Quilters Guild will sponsor the Quilt Show. The show has been held since 1987 and featured 55 quilts by county residents and guild members last year. Quilts will be displayed at the Expo Building, and a knowledgeable quilter from the region will judge the quilts. Awards will be given in several categories, with special awards going to the best of show, judge's award and people's choice.

Tug-of-war
The annual tug-of-war FOR SALE: 1982 Road Ranger, 28 ft., clean, ready for road; 1972 Starcraft pop-up, must see to appreciate. Call (806) 795-3101. 41-tfc

will be sponsored by the Dimmitt Volunteer Fire Dept. Six t-shirts and a team plaque will be given to the first-place team.

The team should consist of no more than 1,300 total pounds, with weigh-in 15 minutes prior to pull time. A team coach is allowed, but the team will be disqualified if the coach gets within the pulling area or touches the rope or any pulling contestant during the pull.

Car and tractor show
Poker run and card challenge

Dimmitt Alumni of Technical Arts (DATA)
1984 Chevrolet Tra-Tech Conversion Van. Excellent condition. New Michelin tires; 1980 Blazer. New motor, new Michelin tires. 806-652-3697

Club will hold its fourth annual car and tractor show and swap meet Saturday, and its annual poker run and card challenge on Friday.

Registration for the poker run, which measures a team's ability to follow directions and find specific locations, is \$5 and may be

made to DATA, c/o Tammy Heard, 719 Cleveland, Dimmitt. Registration for a swap meet booth, and car, model car and tractor entries may also be made by calling Heard at 6474592. Registration forms are also available at the chamber office, fire sta-

tion and W&W Communications.

Annual rodeo
The fifth annual Harvest Days Rodeo will be held Friday and Saturday, sponsored by the Dimmitt Roping Club. The rodeo will be produced by Blackwell Rodeo Co.

USED
12, 14 & 16' Offset Disks
Big 12 grain buggy\$975
4-seat drag spray\$775
Ox 8' Hyd. Blade\$1275
IH 295 cotton stripper\$3750
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Bronco 3-pt seeder\$495
Onion Blade 9'\$651
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VEHICLES

reasonable monthly payments. Call Kim Humphrey in the Credit Dept., Friona Motors, 806/247-2701. 17-1tc/ccn

VEHICLES

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Ford Pickups

1980-1986 Fullsize Pickups (Shaded)	\$98 ⁰⁰
1980-1986 Fullsize Pickups (Tinted)	\$92 ⁰⁰
1987-1993 Fullsize Pickups (Shaded)	\$98 ⁰⁰
1987-1993 Fullsize Pickups (Tinted)	\$92 ⁰⁰
Ford Ranger & Bronco II (Shaded)	\$98 ⁰⁰

Dodge Pickups

1974-1993 Fullsize Pickups (Shaded)	\$125 ⁰⁰
1974-1993 Fullsize Pickups (Tinted)	\$100 ⁰⁰

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Vacationing in family car saves cash

By DAN REED

c.Fort Worth Star-Telegram

They still give away "dream vacations" on television game shows, at department store openings, even in newspaper promotions.

That is further validation of two essential truths: First, lots of Americans still dream of traveling to exotic, fun-filled spots for some sorely needed R&R; second, most of us cannot afford the kind of vacations we dream about.

That does not mean we have to stay home and paint the house during our two weeks off. It just means we have to learn to travel on a budget.

Not that a shortage of capital would stop us. Americans have shown they are willing to sacrifice many things — even their savings — before giving up vacations.

This year, 73 percent of U.S. residents plan to take a pleasure trip

at least 100 miles from home, according to a travel industry survey. That number is up from last year, which, in turn, was up from the year before.

And with the economy improving, travel experts predict a vacation boom.

"Consumer confidence, by all measures, is up," said Shawn Flaherty, a spokeswoman for the Travel Industries Association of America in Washington, D.C. "And just as was the case after the end of the last recession in the early 1980s, when travel got back up on its horse and took off, we expect this to be a boom year for summer vacation travel. Back then, once people satisfied their demand for the more durable goods that they'd held off purchasing, travel really took off," Flaherty said.

In a recent survey conducted by TIAA, respondents said they plan to spend, on aver-

age, about \$990 on their family's vacation this year.

That helps explain why 80 percent of vacation travel is done by family car, truck or recreational vehicle. Air fares, in a historical context, are low, especially during fare sales. But with less than \$1,000 to spend on vacations, most families still opt to spend more time on the road so they can afford to do more when they reach their destinations.

The vast majority of people do not go far, either. Most travel fewer than 250 miles for a vacation.

But there are other ways to stretch a travel dollar, especially for Texans: Stay in Texas.

It is one of only two states where more than half of all tourists are in-staters, says Stan Hodge, research coordinator for the Tourism Division of the Texas Department of Commerce.

The primary reasons

for such Lone Star loyalty: Texas' sheer size, its varied environments and its value.

"Texas is a real bargain, no question about it," says Hodge.

According to figures for 1992, Texas tourists spent an average \$78.50 per day per person, \$1.20 less than the national average, and more than \$25 less per day than hot spots on the coasts.

"The facilities, such as hotels, are still cheaper in Texas, as are some of our bigger destinations," Hodge said. "If you go to New York City, you're just not going to find prices anything like what we have here, even at our more expensive tourist destinations.

"People are finding, especially in Texas, that there's an awful lot they can do within 250 miles. They don't have to go way far away to find something totally different from what they experience where they live."

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