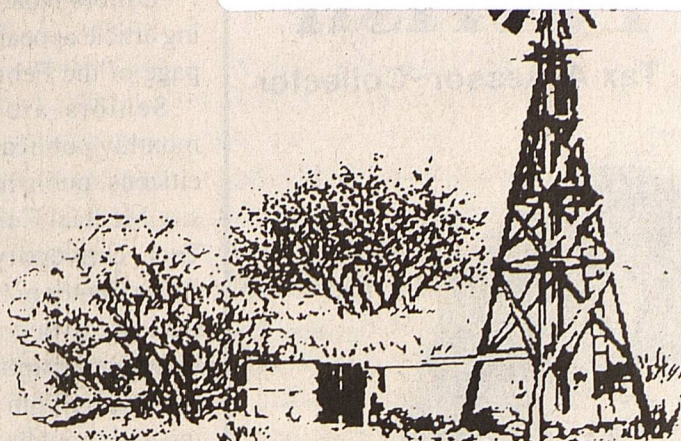


Cowboy Country News

Published each Wednesday in the county seat of Yoakum County, Plains, Texas

BAZE, BOOKBINDING
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Volume X, Issue 22, February 11, 2004

Public School Funding In Texas

By James Haynes, Plains ISD Superintendent

I returned last Thursday after spending four days at the Mid-Winter Superintendents Conference in Austin. At these conferences superintendents receive the latest information needed to help support the operation of the school they represent. The main topic of discussion at this conference was school funding. The governor addressed the group to announce his new plan for improved funding of education for the future.

When I returned home, CCN Editor Gary Dyer had received some press releases concerning the governor's announcements and asked me what I thought. The releases were quite lengthy and to some individuals, sound like they would work. As a school superintendent, I am very concerned about his entire proposal. There seems to be an assumption made by the governor and many legislators that schools are not held accountable for the performance of our students. As I look back at the accountability standards that have

been set forth by the Legislature I remember the TABS test, TEAMS test, TAAS test, and now the TAKS test. The first three sets of tests were each introduced as a way to determine where students were performing and then to determine if the schools were doing the job of providing a good education for the students. Each new test built on the previous test and provided tougher standards for the students and the school districts to meet. The school districts of the state have excelled every time to help students meet the new levels of accountability required by each test. Through all the tests the number of low performing schools dropped every year and the number of schools meeting the high levels of performance rose.

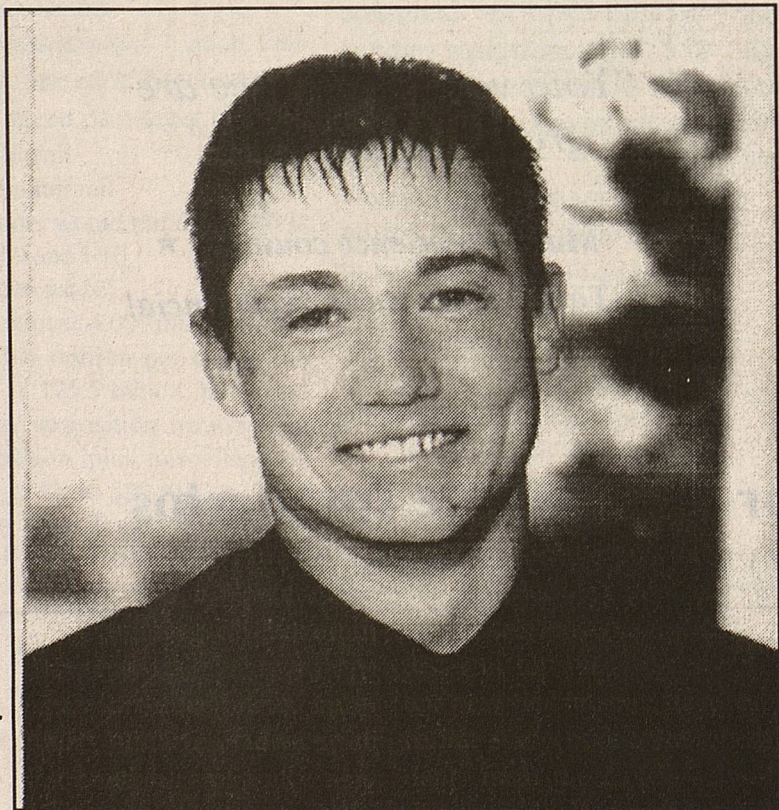
The discussion about whether the state needed the next level of accountability test (TAKS) can be saved for another time, but it is ironic the governor and many legislators still want to sell the same story, teachers

aren't doing their jobs, and districts are wasting the taxpayers money. That is simply not true. The governor's new incentive plan would provide very little extra money for any school district and most of the money provided would only be at the high school level. He said the amount of increase to public education would be about \$500 million. Texas public schools population is growing about 72,000 students a year. That \$500 million will barely cover the cost of education for the 72,000 students alone. All of that money is focused at the high school level. How will that help train existing teachers or hire new teachers at the middle and elementary schools to meet the rigors of the Recommended and Distinguished high school graduation program? Education is a building process. If basic principles are not taught early on, the more advanced subjects cannot be mastered.

The governor has stated the average amount spent on a student in Texas is over \$10,000. Simple math will explain the 4.2 million students in Texas public schools multiplied by \$10,000 would mean the budget for education in Texas would be in the 42 billion dollar range. The reported budget for funding education in Texas is 27 billion. The average cost for educating a student in Texas is a little over \$7,000 per student. Any person can go to the Texas Education Web-site and compare their district's expenditures per student to the state average expenditure. I am extremely concerned the governor should use valid figures to support his new programs. The governor also felt the districts were not being held accountable for the way the money was being spent in the districts. He neglected to mention last year the FIRST (Financial Integrity Rating System of Texas) was used to evaluate the way districts spent their tax dollars. After using the the system with all the public school districts in Texas the overwhelming majority performed extremely well, according to the areas measured.

The governor stated to the superintendents at the annual convention held in Austin the end of January that since 1999 over \$7.1 billion had been added to the budget for public education. The fact he did not include was, over ninety percent of the amount came from local tax increases, not from money raised at the state level.

Neugebauer nominates Hansen to Naval Academy



Congressman Randy Neugebauer announced last week he has nominated CHRIS Hansen of Plains to attend the U.S. Naval Academy.

A native of Plains and current student at Angelo State University, Chris is the son of Edward and Terri Hansen. He was a member of FCA throughout high school and lettered in football his Junior and Senior years. Most recently he was voted most valuable Division III rugby sideback by his team at ASU.

"It's important to me we keep sending out the youth of the 19th District to do great things, then we want to bring them back again. West Texas is full

of talented youth. It's my pleasure to recommend Chris to our nation's Naval Academy," said Neugebauer. "He is the cream of the crop among students.

Military service academies evaluate nominations from Congress, and then offer appointments based on the students merits. The academies will announce their selections for appointment this Spring.

Applications for military services academies are available on Congressman Neugebauer's web site at www.house.gov/neugebauer or by contacting Mary Whistler in the Neugebauer Lubbock office at 888-763-1611.

'Reforestation The Park Forest'



Lubbock's Tom's Tree House employees are shown mechanically trans-planting an elm tree in Stanford Park last week. The crew were digging the trees from CRP land north of town and transporting them to the park. The workers reported some 21 trees would be planted, replacing dead trees around the park.

Criminal cases in District, County Court

In the February 2 session of District Court, Judge Kelly G. Moore presiding, Rudy Jason Gallegos pled guilty to possession of methamphetamine, one gram or more but less than four grams. A seven year prison sentence was suspended and probated seven years. He was fined \$1,500, must pay \$283 court costs, \$400 appointed attorney fees, \$140 restitution to DPS, and \$25 time payment fee. A charge of marijuana possession was adjudicated. He will serve 200 hours community service, surrender his license 180 days, complete the drug offender education program, pay \$50 monthly community service fees, and complete the TAIP program. Investigating officer was Brad Taylor, DPS, and his attorney was Paul Mansur.

Jimmy Lamar Dawson pled guilty to cocaine possession, one gram or less, in a drug free zone. A seven year prison sentence was suspended and probated seven years. He was fined \$750, must pay \$223 court costs, \$288 restitution to DPS, serve 160 hours community service, surrender his license 180 days, and complete the drug offender program. His attorney was Warren New, and investigating officer was Lisa Switzer, Llano Estacado Drug Task Force.

Turn To Page 3, COURT CASES

City Calls For General Election

The City Council for the City of Plains has called for a General Election to be held in The City of Plains on Saturday, May 15, 2004. The election will be held at the City of Plains City Hall located at 1015 Ave. F in Plains, Texas. The purpose of this election will be to elect one (1) Mayor and two (2) Councilmembers.

Those with expiring terms are Mayor Shane McKinzie and Councilmembers Bonnie Earnest and Pam Redman.

The first official day for filing an application for a place on the ballot is Saturday, February 14, 2004 but city offices are closed on weekends and will be closed Monday, February 16, 2004 for President's Day. The filing date is moved to Tuesday, February 17, 2004 and the filing deadline is 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, March 15, 2004. Applications for a place on the ballot can be picked up at the Plains City Hall during regular working hours.

Public hearing scheduled on Trans-Texas Corridor

The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) will hold a public hearing on Wednesday, February 25 at 10 AM in the Yoakum County Library, 901 Avenue E, Plains. The purpose of the hearing is to discuss the Trans-Texas Corridor and to give the public an opportunity to submit comments on potential routes.

Governor Rick Perry introduced the Trans-Texas Corridor several years ago to address Texas' pressing transportation problems. The corridor is a new type of transportation network that includes roads, rail and a utility zone designed to move people and goods faster and safer, keep hazardous material

out of populated areas, and improve air quality.

The Trans-Texas Corridor is an all-Texas transportation network of corridors up to 1,200 feet wide. The 4,000 mile corridor will include separate highway lanes for passenger vehicles and trucks, high-speed passenger rail, high-speed freight rail, commuter rail, and a dedicated utility zone.

For more information call Penny Mason at 806-748-4337 or e-mail at pmason.dot.state.tx.us. Also, check the TxDot website, www.dot.state.tx.us for more information on the Trans-Texas Corridor Plan. (See more data on Page 3)

Chamber of Commerce 19th Annual Banquet Friday, Feb. 20, 7 PM, School Cafeteria. Dinner by Johnnie's Barbecue, \$7 per person. Guest Speaker Dr. Steven Smith. Door Prizes are needed and may be delivered to City Hall

Turn To Page 3, SCHOOLS



Elect

Jan Parrish

for Tax Assessor-Collector



If elected, I pledge to bring to the Tax Office:
 * Experienced Office Management
 * Budget and Accounting Experience
 * State and Federal Reporting Compliance experience

Vote March 9

Republican Primary

Political Ad Paid For By Jan Parrish, Plains, Texas

From Peter's Desk

By Peter Laverty

**** Editors Note -** The following article appeared on the front page of the February issue of "Seniors are Special", a monthly publication for senior citizens, published by University Medical Center and Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center in Lubbock. With the furor over constantly escalating prescription drugs, we consider it both very interesting and thought provoking.

"If you think the United States prison system is overcrowded now, just wait until the federal government tries to put the state of New Hampshire and the City of Boston in jail. That's going to be some serious overcrowding.

"Live Free or Die is the bold state motto of New Hampshire. And in that spirit, NH Governor Craig Benson announced last month that his state will defy federal law and purchase prescription drugs directly from Canada for Medicaid recipients and prison inmates. The estimated savings would top \$1.5 million.

"On the same day, Boston's Mayor Thomas Menino told

reporters beginning this summer his city will buy Canadian drugs for city employees, creating a projected savings of \$1 million per year.

You can be sure the FDA isn't one bit happy about all this. But what are they going to do? Put Boston and the entire state of New Hampshire in jail?

"We are watching the beginning of an extraordinary game of chicken between the states and our elected officials in Washington. It seems we have a "dirty dozen" cities and states strategizing different ways to defy Congress' ban on drug importation. Washington and the FDA know if the states succeed, U.S. Drug companies will no longer be able to charge Americans up to twice what foreigners pay for the same U.S. drugs. States are taking this seriously- ten met last month with Canadian pharmacies to discuss doing business. Illinois alone estimates its savings at \$94 million. Could this be why Big Pharmacy is a very generous donor to the political campaigns of both parties?

"The new Medicare law cleverly allows U.S. citizens to bring back drugs from Canada and through the mail - but only if the Food and Drug Administration deems them 'safe', which it has stated it won't do.

I don't believe grandma returning from a bus trip to purchase drugs from Canada will be handcuffed by our administration; it would just be bad public relations. But states are another matter. They would be huge purchasers of drugs if they purchased them for their employees, retirees, Medicaid patients and prisoners. Once they

start purchasing drugs from Canada the ban becomes meaningless.

"Remember, Big Pharmacy isn't like most businesses. The U.S. taxpayers believing medical drugs are a good thing has allowed their government to use their tax dollars to give Big Pharmacy huge subsidies in the development of new and exciting drugs. What's more, a new medicine enjoys many years of patent protection - during which time its maker has the exclusive right to sell it for what ever price they feel the market will pay.

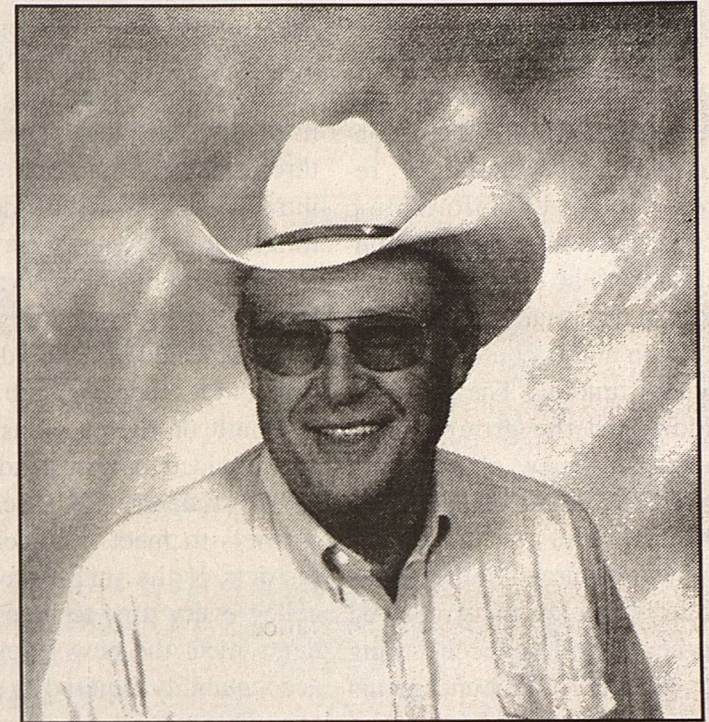
"In review, there is no point pretending a prescription drug is like a new tire - where a price

can be set by true market forces. Our elected officials in Washington need to sit down with Big Pharmacy and work out a new arrangement for pricing drugs. Until this is done we will see this very strange, un-American phenomenon of our citizens begging a foreign government for relief on the price of American made and American subsidized drugs.

"A couple of centuries ago a certain tea party in Boston helped trigger a revolution. Keep your eyes open for a harbor full of Lipitor, Vioxx and Viagra!"

I use the term Big Pharmacy much the same way we used Big Tobacco to represent all tobacco companies.

Por favor Someta Su Voto Para Reelegir Ty Earl Powell



Comissionado de el Precincto Numero 3

Sujeto a la Eleccion Primario
 9 Marzo 2004

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Vote For Karen Bearden



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Republican Candidate
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Think Texas

by Agriculture Commissioner SUSAN COMBS

Nearly a hundred years ago, the Texas Legislature established the Texas Department of Agriculture as a state agency. The year was 1907, when a loaf of bread cost less than 10 cents. The primary functions of the young agency, which had only four employees at the time, were to gather statistics and publish agricultural information.

Clearly, plenty has changed over the years.

TDA has since carved out its own important role in history, paving the way for agricultural progress and responding to the changing needs of the industry. Most recently, TDA's mission has grown to include unprecedented initiatives in rural economic development and nutrition. Rooted in agriculture, these issues have always been important to us. With the addition of the Rural Economic Development and Food and Nutrition divisions, TDA has tackled these issues with gusto. So it's fitting that, while our mission has evolved, so should our mission statement.

We recently unveiled the new statement - a true reflection of the agency's philosophy and goals in today's ever-changing society: Making Texas the nation's leader in agriculture, while promoting excellence in children's nutrition, rural economic development and providing efficient and extraordinary service.

TDA is no longer a four-person agency with limited functions. In the last few years, we have evolved to include progressive new programs - programs that affect the daily lives of all Texans.

Elfida Lazos Winkler



(Pol. adv. paid for by Elfida Lazos Winkler, 309 N. Washington, Denver City, Texas 79223)

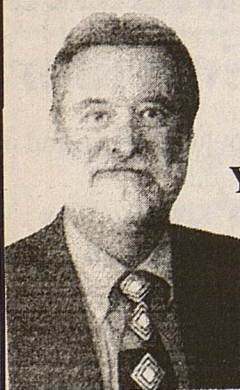
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Texas Department of Transportation
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
Trans-Texas Corridor

The Texas Department of Transportation will hold a public hearing to discuss the Trans-Texas Corridor.

Date: Wednesday, February 25
Place: Yoakum County Library
 901 Avenue E.
 Plains, Texas
Time: 10 a.m.

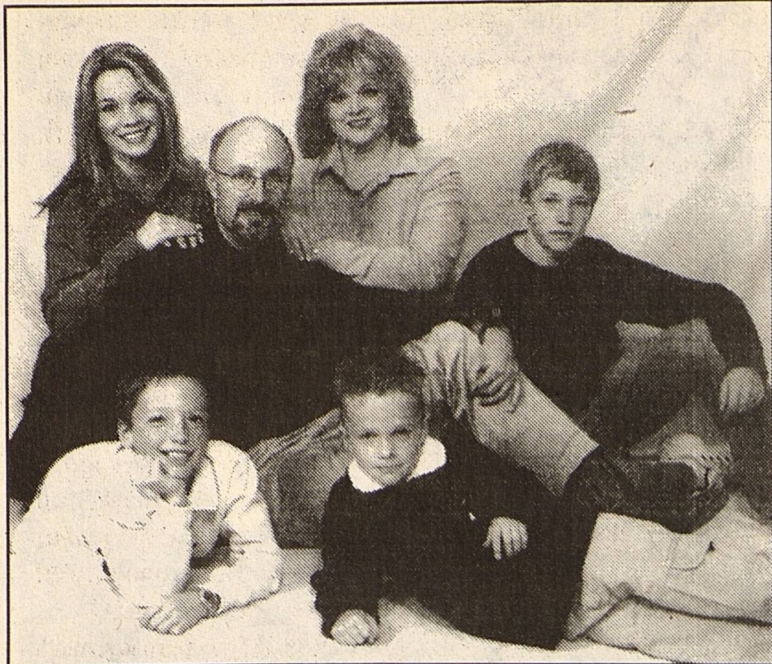
Purpose: To provide the public an opportunity to submit comments on potential routes of the Trans-Texas Corridor.

Project Description: A new type of transportation network that includes roads, rail, and a utility zone designed to move people and goods faster and safer, keep hazardous material out of populated areas, and improve air quality.

For more information on the public hearing contact: Penny Mason at 806 748-4337.

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 E-Mail us at ccn@crosswind.net
 ID# 017574 Ph. 806-456-8451 FAX 806-456-2010



Plains Chamber of Commerce Banquet Guest Speaker Dr. Steven L. Smith is shown with his family in a recent photo. Surrounding Dr. Smith are his wife Tonya, daughter Jessica, age 20 and a home health nurse, Jacob, 12, 7th grader at Cooper Jr. High, Joshua, 11, 5th grader at Cooper Intermediate, and Joel, 9, a 3rd grader at Cooper Elementary. Smith is a 1980 PHS graduate, and has achieved an outstanding medical career.

Precinct One to move headquarters

In the February 9 session of Commissioners Court, Pct. 1 Commissioner Lindsey sought the court's approval to purchase the old Clay Tank property located on Hwy. 214 some three miles north of Denver City. Lindsey said he had negotiated for some time with the owners, who originally asked \$70,000 for the property. Lindsey finally offered \$60,000, subject to the Court's approval of the sale, and the sellers agreed. The new location, roughly five acres and fence enclosed, will provide more space for equipment, and

a newer, larger barn/shop building. The Court unanimously approved the purchase. Since the present location in Denver City also serves as an election polling place, it cannot be sold until after the November election.

In other routine business, the deputation of Cindy Gray, part time employee in the County Clerk office, was approved. Cooperative Extension Agent-Ag Arlan Gentry's request to purchase \$200 livestock equipment used in 4-H and FFA livestock projects was approved.

FROM 1, COURT CASES

In County Court February 4, Judge Dallas Brewer presiding, Jerry Wilks pled guilty to first DWI, open container, b.t. .233/247. An 180 day jail sentence was suspended and probated 24 months. He was fined \$600, must pay \$226 court costs, \$114 restitution to DPS, and \$25 time payment fee. He must attend weekly AA meetings, complete the DWI first offender program, and \$50 monthly supervision fees. Robert Smith, DPS, was investigating officer.

Justin Elijah Henderson pled guilty to criminal mischief, more than \$50 damage, less than \$500. He will spend seven days in jail with credit for two served. He was fined \$200, must pay \$256 court costs and \$133 restitution to Tony Brooks c/o Chaparral Apartments. Investigating officer was Patricia Valdez, Denver City Police.

From Page 1, SCHOOLS

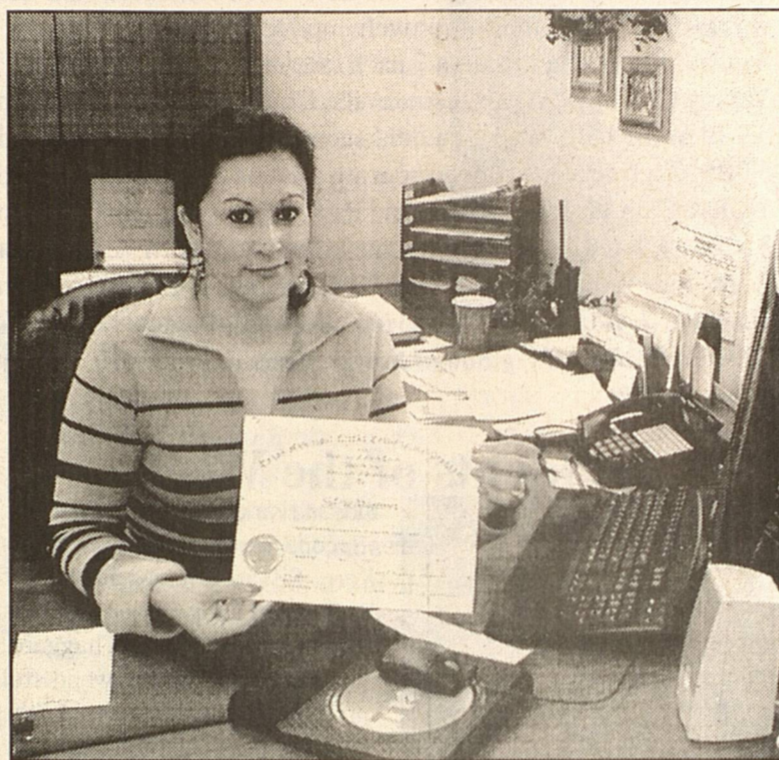
the legislature need to focus on is how to equitably fund all the schools of the state.

As a superintendent I would like to see a new funding system for the state focus on the following areas: It must be fair to the taxpayers; every Texan benefits from education either directly or indirectly, and everyone should help pay for educating the students of the state, not just the property owner. Districts must be allowed to determine how they want to enhance their schools over and above the basic system provided by the state. Districts must retain local control over their systems; that will not happen if the state provides all the money. The new funding system must be flexible enough

to allow for growth in student numbers and increased demands from the state for accountability, which mean more money. Every business owner knows a growing business requires more money to support. The public education system of Texas is growing by 72,000 students yearly, and the legislature continues to demand improved performance, which means additional money is needed.

I believe our governor, his advisors, and those who side with him on this issue are woefully out of touch with the realities of what they think is happening and what is actually happening. They are unwilling to come to grips with the need for the additional funds needed to build on the great strides in education that have been made in our state.

Sylvia Martinez Certified In Municipal Clerks Programs



Sylvia Martinez, Utilities Billing Clerk, City of Plains, recently graduated from the Texas Municipal Clerks Certification Program. Graduates complete approximately 200 hours of individual study over a four course curriculum and attend eight two day seminars for additional 100 hours of classroom study. The curriculum includes selected texts and a number of special readings on the topics of public administration, election law, budgeting and finance, municipal law, and personnel management.

The Texas Municipal Clerks Certification Program, located at the University of North Texas, Denton, Texas, is a university level professional education program for city clerks and city secretaries in Texas. The program is the third oldest of thirty three such programs in the country.

Texas Registered Municipal Clerks are recognized for their achievements and contributions to effective, efficient local government by their mayors, city administrators, city councils, and the citizens of their communities.

Seniors Corner

As we pause, next week, to celebrate the one hundred ninety-fifth birthday of the country lawyer who became the central figure in the wildest storm that ever shook the American Republic and whose leadership guided the United States through the Civil War, we pause to reflect on some unusual facts about this man's life and the life of another young President who followed in his wake a century later. Abraham Lincoln was elected to Congress in 1846; John F. Kennedy was elected to Congress in 1946. Abraham Lincoln was elected President in 1860. Both were particularly concerned with civil rights. Both wives lost their children while living in the White House. Both Presidents were shot on a Friday. Both Presidents were shot in the head. Lincoln's secretary was named Kennedy; Kennedy's secretary was named Lincoln. Both were assassinated by Southerners. Both were succeeded by Southerners named Johnson. Andrew Johnson, who succeeded Lincoln, was born in 1839; Lyndon Johnson, who succeeded Kennedy, was born in 1908. John Wilkes Booth, who assassinated Lincoln, was born in 1839; Lee Harvey Oswald, who assassinated Kennedy, was born in 1939. Both assassins were known by their three names. Both names are composed of fifteen letters. Lincoln was shot at the theater named 'Ford'. Kennedy was shot in a car called 'Lincoln' made by 'Ford'. Lincoln was shot in theater and his assassin ran and hid in a warehouse; Kennedy was shot from a warehouse and his assassin ran and hid in a theater. Booth and Oswald were assassinated before their trials. L.W. and Jane Sparks, from

Hobbs, NM, joined us one day for lunch as guests of Jean Sparks, while on another day Cleo Gonzalez and Leo Butka from Gillette, Wyoming, found their way to our Center to share a Texas cooked meal as they toured this part of the country.

Anna Taylor was a welcome guest at lunchtime on Tuesday. As always, she had interesting news to share about ways we can enhance our lives. The subjects this month concerned diet and sanitation.

We had a good group of Bingo players on Tuesday who stayed after lunch to try their luck. There were seven different winners, with three of those having more than one victory. Burce Greer was our willing number caller this week.

We appreciate every senior who participates in our Senior Center in any way. Our daily lunch hour brings many of the local seniors together for a time of food and fellowship. The rules from SPAG (South Plains Association of Governments), who is our sponsor, states that all seniors attending must be independent and self sufficient; otherwise they must be attended by someone. Home delivered meals are available for those who no longer meet these requirements. Alternative action in these circumstances may be that a family member or a volunteer accompany the disabled person.

From the philosophy of a friend in Arizona: 'Life is an adventure in the greatest "amusement park" you can imagine. Your entry has been paid; you are in it; and there are so many choices. If you choose Jesus, as is explained in the Holy Bible, you will have the best guide, the best rides and the most enjoyment. You will also exit at the right gate.'

ADHD WORKSHOP

Do you have a child with ADHD? Would you like to learn ways to help your child succeed? West Texas Parent Education Network will be providing a workshop for parents, "Understanding ADHD", on February 17, 7:00 PM, at Groves Library, 5520 19th Street, Lubbock, Texas. There is no charge for this workshop! For more information contact: Amy Kreller, Regional Coordinator, WTXPEN, at 806-762-1434 or 877-762-1435 or email: wtxpen16&17@sbcglobal.net. Funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of Education, Washington D.C.

Logistics of Trans-Texas Corridors

Roadways:

Passenger vehicle lanes - 3 separate 12 ft. lanes in each direction

Truck Lanes - Two 13 ft. lanes each direction

Rail component- (each two tracks, one each direction);

High speed passenger rail

Freight rail

Commuter rail

Corridors would parallel I-35, I-37, I-69 and I-10.

Cost estimates:

Approximate 4,000 mile corridors at \$31.4 million per centerline mile, \$ 125.5 billion, plus right of way acquisition from \$11 to \$38 billion, plus miscellaneous costs at \$8 to \$20 billion. Total cost of Trans-Texas Corridor from \$145 billion to \$183 billion.

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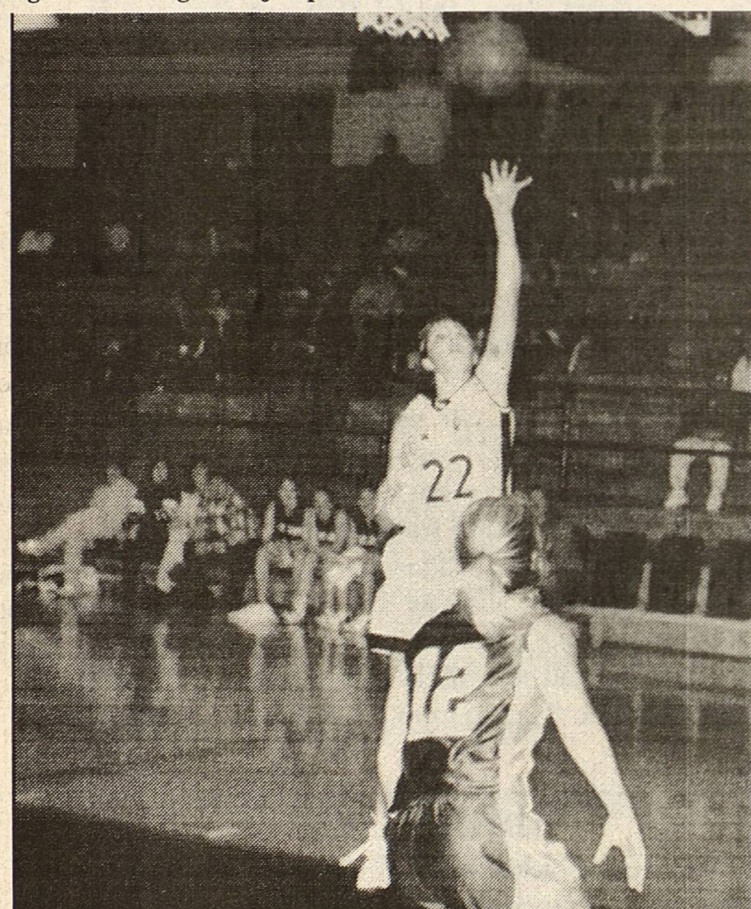
Cowgirls, Cowboys Basketball Action



Yesenia Suarez tries to work the ball inside against Whiteface



Regina Morales gets off jump shot



Desiraye Broome lays in 2 points. Whiteface defender #12 is Leah Ruthardt, the Editor's granddaughter.

PISD Sports Review

Jr. High:

7th Girls- The Whiteface Lady Lopes slipped by the 7th girls February 2, 27-24. Brianna Conway led scoring with 8 points, Mari Ruiz had 6, Lydia Whitzel and Heather Parrot 4 each, Kimber Williams 2.

8th Girls- The Lady Wranglers downed Whiteface 47-31. Joani Bell topped scoring with 17 points, Lauren Davis had 13, Katie Winn 7, Reyna Gallegos 5, Lauren Hise 2.

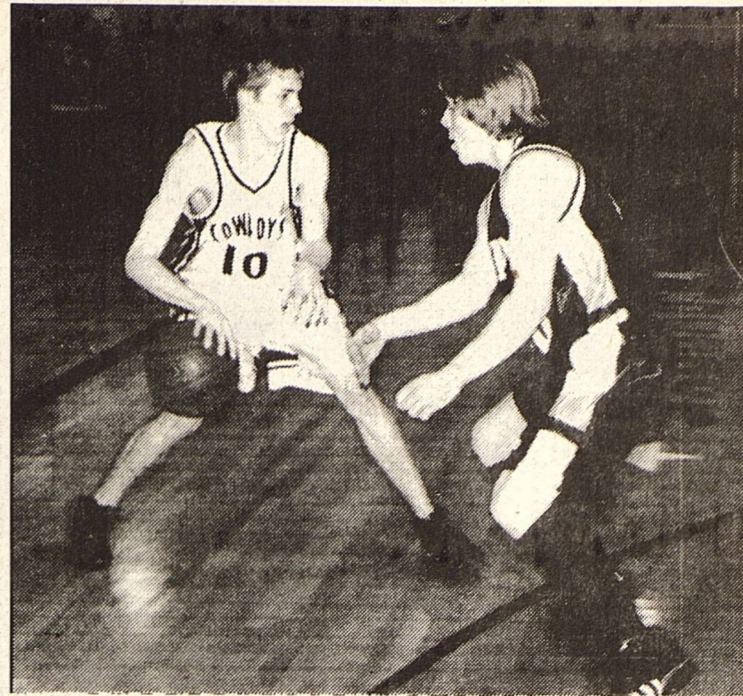
8th Wranglers: The older Wranglers played good offense and defense against Whiteface and won 50-43, to extend their record to 12 wins 3 losses. Zach Ramos had 11 points, Cody Mayes and Rudy Gonzales 8, Mario Sigala 7, Juan Lara 6, Chase Guetersloh and Elias Carrillo 5 each.

JV Cowboys; The Cowboys enjoyed a night of hot shooting, including ten 3 pointers, and downed the Anton Bulldogs 67-46. Scott Addison scored 24 points, followed by TJ Cordova 19, John Wagon and Breck Hamm 6, Landon Craft 4, Blake Parrish and Brant Huerta 2, Scott Bruton 1. They continued their win streak by beating Whiteface. TJ Cordova topped scoring with 13, Landon Craft had 12, Scott Addison 10, Abel Ramos and Todd Williams 5, Scott Bruton 4.

Varsity Cowgirls: In a hard fought game, the Cowgirls were downed by Anton 57-47. Regina Morales topped scoring with 18 points, Desiraye Broome 13, Jesenia Suarez 9, Sandra Gandara, Moriah Traweek and Sarah Martinez 2, Meghan Garcia 1. The first game between the Cowgirls and Whiteface ended with the Lady Lopes on top 63-13. Last week they played much better but were again downed 50-37. Coach Thaggard said she was very proud of their improvement. Desiraye had 13 points, Sandra, Jesenia and Regina 7 each, Sarah 2, Daniela Lazos 1.

Varsity Cowboys: Against Anton the Cowboys were only down 33-29 at the half, but had a cold second half and were downed 57-35. Zach broome topped scoring with 16, Richard Diaz had 14, Eva Cain 12, Kerry Sisson and Payton Bean 4, Blake O'Quinn 3, Cody Flores 2. In a good game going into overtime here last week, they fell to Whiteface 41-39. Richard had 13 points, Zach 10, Evan 7, Cody 4, Brandon Hise, Kerry 2, Payton 1.

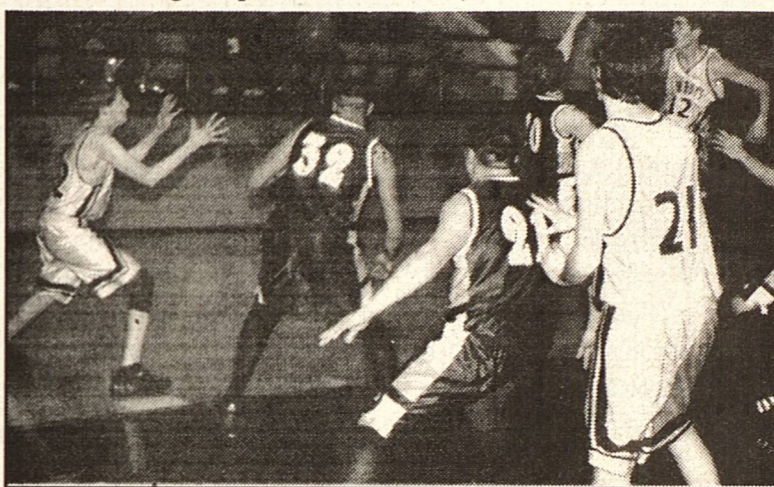
NOTE: Friday's JV game at Smyer starts at 4:30 PM, Varsity game follows



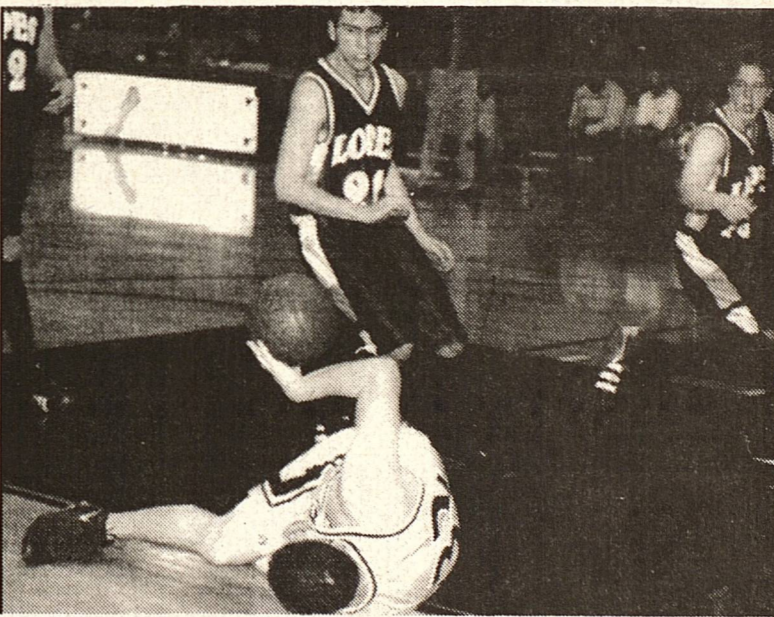
Evan Cain tries to get past Antelope defense



Zach Broome goes up for shot

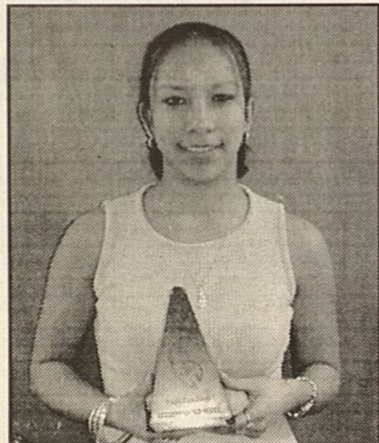


Blake O'Quinn, left, about to take pass from Payton Bean



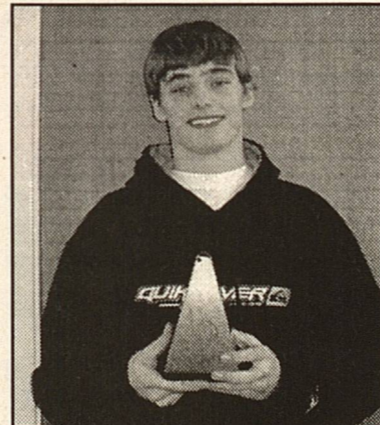
Cody Flores having small problem with the ball

Students of the Week



First student of the week is Araceli Mendoza, a freshman and daughter of Manuel and Lucy Mendoza. She was nominated By Mrs. O'Quinn, who said, " Motivation is when you put on work clothes. Araceli believes in hard work. She set the tone for her high school career during the first semester because she isn't afraid to put on those work clothes. Not only is she a hard worker, she also exhibits a great atti-

tude and is a kind, considerate person. Second student of the week is Kerry Sisson, a junior and son of Wayne and Judy Sisson. He was nominated by Coach Thaggard, who said, " He has the wonderful qualities of compassion, sympathy, tender of heart, and tolerance. He is sixteen years old but is wise beyond his years. He is a joy in class, works hard, is very involved in school and church activities."



PHS Team 'Sweeps' UIL Meet.

The PHS Math and Science team competed in the South Plains College UIL practice meet February 7, competing with Class A, AA and AAA area teams, and finished first in overall sweepstakes. The Numbers team placed first, Calculator was first, Mathematics team second, Science team second. Individual results shown here indicate how the students finished within their grade level.

- Nolan Newsom - NS 10, Math 12, Science 1st
 - Evan Cain - NS 6, Cal 3, Math 9, Science 8
 - Breck Hamm - NS 7, Math 6, Science 4
 - Brandon Hise - NS 1, Cal 2, Math 1, Science 2
 - Kerry Sisson - NS 2, Math 7
 - David Aldredge - NS 1, Math 9, Science 10
 - Allison Friesen - NS 5, Cal 1, Math 1
 - B.J. Lester - NS 11, Cal 2, Math 12
 - Ramiro Martinez - NS 9, Math 8
 - Blake O'Quinn - NS 4, Cal 7, Math 6
 - Todd Williams - NS 9, Math 13
 - Joe Luis Gallegos - Science 3
 - Angelica Mendoza - NS 7, Cal 4
- Nolan Newsom had the highest chemistry score on the science test in the entire A-AAA division.

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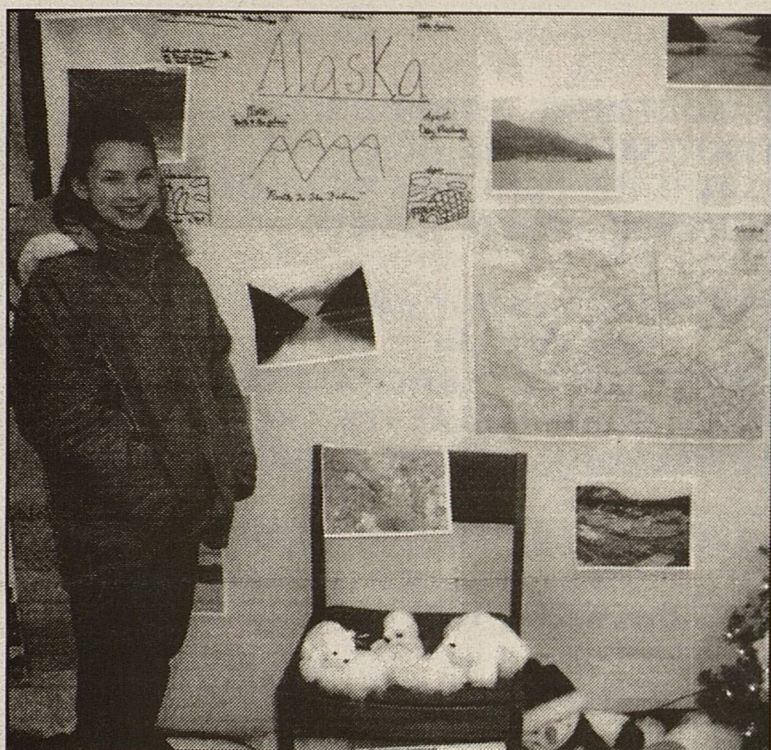
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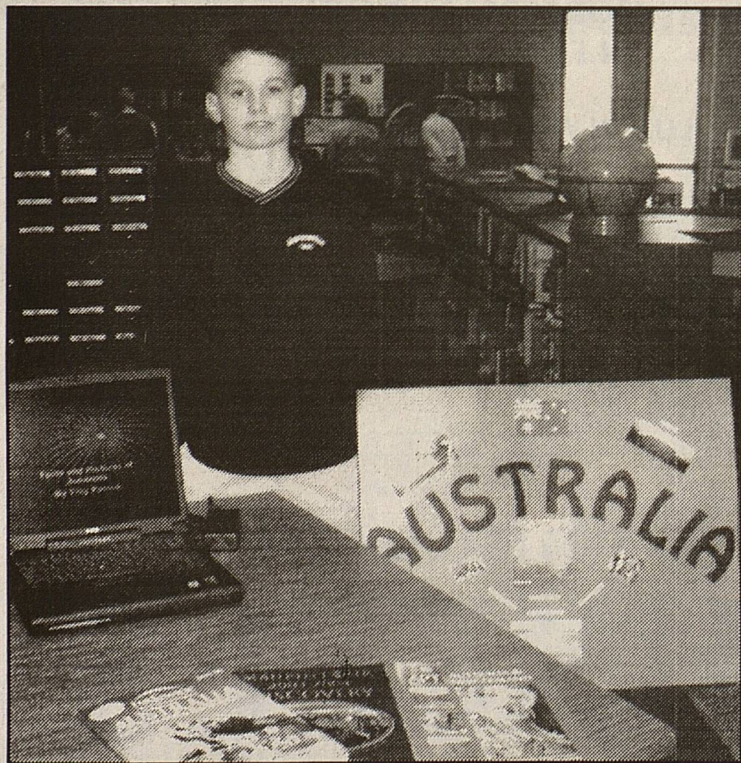
GT Students Present Travel Fair



Natalie Haynes - Trinidad



Stephanie Addison - Alaska



Troy Parrish - Australia



Shyann Vantine - Japan

Students from grades 5 and 6 Gifted and Talented Classes presented a Travel Fair in the Schools Resource Center. The exhibits were open January 21-23 from 2:50-3:30. Students had exhibits made from research on a state or country of his or her choice, Nathan McCravey presented a Power Point exhibit on Egypy. Troy Parrish also had a Power Point presentation on Australia. Natalie Haynes relaxed within her exhibit to the sounds of music from Trinidad, while ShyAnn Vantine, dressed in a red kimono, answered many questions about Japan. Forrest Booth displayed an example of entertainment from Nevada, and Cody Freisen presented facts about Colorado. Hunter Welch presented information about Hawaii while Chase Ortega answered questions about Florida from underneath an artificial palm tree. Stephanie Addison, bundled in Eskimo fasion, exhibited pictures and information about Alaska. Lary Lobster attracted much attention at the Maine exhibit prepared by Hannah Crump. Mrs. Cynthia Blair taught these Gifted and Talented students and promises another travel fair next school year

Conservation Poster Contest Winners



Each year, the Yoakum Soil & Water Conservation District sponsors a Conservation Poster Contest for ages 12 and under in the Plains and Denver City Schools. The District furnishes poster board for the contest and awards ribbons to the 1st, 2nd, 3rd place finishers along with Honorable Mention ribbons to other deserving posters. Themes for the contest were "The Living Soil" and "Food For the Future"

Winners at Plains Middle School are (L to R): 3rd place place - Lee Dearing, son of Marvin Dearing and Terri Dearing ; Sandra Foster, teacher; 2nd place - Jessica Lazos, daughter of Melinda and Ernie Lazos; and 1st place - Abel Casillas, son of Marie and Cosme Casillas.

"On behalf of the Yoakum SWCD District Board of Directors, I would like to congratulate these students for their outstanding winning posters and to thank all the kids for participating in the contest this year," said Donald Burgess, Chairman of the Yoakum SWCD. "We would also like to thank the Mr. Buddy Mock, 5th grade science teacher at Denver City Intermediate and Sandra Foster and Linda Powell from Plains Middle School, who made the effort to get the kids involved and the administration for allowing us to bring vital importance of conservation to the classroom."

Art Association Meets

The Yoakum County Art Association met on February 3, 2004 in the Club Room of the Old Courthouse. Jeanette Head presided over the meeting. The minutes from the last meeting were read by Thelma Cheatham. Betty Estep gave the treasurers' report.

A nominating committee will be appointed at the next meeting. Uvonne Morgan has agreed to be chairman of the art show. Lisa Gentry volunteered to be chairman of the scholarship committee. The scholarship will be awarded to a senior in Plains High School.

Eileen Phillip won the door prize donated by artist of the month, Susie Powell. Then Susie Powell introduced Carol Peterson of Lubbock who demonstrated watercolor painting on paper that had been painted with gesso. Nancy Long was also visiting from Lubbock.

Following the demonstration, refreshments were served by hostesses Lisa Gentry and Thelma Cheatham. The next meeting will be on March 2. LaWanda Murfee of Lubbock will be the guest artist. Anyone interested in art is encouraged to attend the meeting.

BROWNWOOD-Plains native Elizabeth Wilmeth, a student at Howard Payne University, was named to the Honor Roll for the 2003 fall semester. Students must earn a 3.5-3.64 grade point average to be named to the Honor Roll.



What about? HE'S BACK! HE'S BACK! That's right, Keith's back in the United States and not

in Iraq! On Thursday, Beth got a call that said, "Mom, this is your son." And then he repeated it.

She greeted him and they talked awhile and she asked, "Where are you? He replied, "In Spain waiting on a plane to come home!" Boy were we elated!! He is not in Texas, but he IS out of Baghdad!

Now he calls us every day or so from Ft. Bragg, NC! He'll be in Seagraves sometime in mid February.

Well, the Jacksons are at it again. Now, another one with a sex scandal on her hands.

Isn't something that a person can expose themselves on national TV and in a planned and rehearsed event but no one knew about it? Come on people!

How dumb do they think the American public really is? (pretty dumb I guess?)

I am so thrilled to hear the FCC is finally getting back on track with their hunts for obscenities.

When Beth and I watched the "I Love Lucy Show", it is so tame. I often wonder how something so wholesome and entertaining got to be so popular and

remains so today. Those people never even got into bed with each other!

And Carol Burnett. Why in the world did a major network do a whole weekend of her shows. She didn't have to show any of her body to keep us watching.

Of course she did have Tim Conway, my favorite comedian! I can watch him and the antics he gets into all day long. Especially the very hysterical dentist skit.

And again, no nudity, foul language, or gestures. And no one was killed, maimed, or assaulted.

How could they be so popular today?

Oh well, they call today's TV entertaining, exciting, and educational. I guess it is.

Especially if you want to know how to blow someone up. Chop off their arms and murder them. Or kidnap them and make them 'disappear' for a while and even get away with it.

And if your love life isn't what it needs to be, just turn on a comedy and they will probably not only explain it to you, they will probably show you how before too many episodes go by.

Oh, the 'good ole' days' of TV! Until Next Time!

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 "Its hard to stop a TRANE"

From The Hack

For the first time in a long, long time, I actually finished all of this issue before even thinking of tackling this column. My sense of humor, or even sarcasm, has really been on the wane. It most certainly did not improve when I had to go to Hobbs to develop film recently. Any village idiot knows the week end is not the best time of choice to do Wal Mart. After locating a parking space just slightly closer than 30.06 range, I made it through the savage hordes to the One Hour miracle machine, only to learn it was convulsing or hemorrhaging, the clerk wasn't sure which, and was even more vague as to when it could be restored to functional life. I'm not sure, but it's quite possible I uttered unacceptable oaths as I returned to the car and sped off to Walgreen's. Praise the Almighty, their One Hour machine was purring right along. Problem was, the clerk explained as she beat furiously on her register machine, "This dam thing has gone crazy and locked itself up!"

She did what all over-worked, under paid employees are

trained to do - she called her supervisor. He looked maybe 22, a bit dull-eyed, and when the problem with the register was explained to him, he yawned, then muttered, "Oh Expletive! It's my breaktime! Just write everything down on a sticky note till I get back, I'll fix the sucker or kick it out the back door."

Awed somewhat by his flare for managerial skills, I realized I was abysmally near Furr's Cafeteria. Cursing myself for not being in Lubbock, or Clovis, or even Quitaque, where a Furr's wouldn't be so near a One Hour thing, I saw it was early enough I might miss the century like wait in the inch along serving line.

There were only 17 people in front of me. Unfortunately, 12 of them were much, much older than ish, three I would guess about my age, the other two were in those motorized scooter things. Boy, a healthy, invigorating atmosphere will really hone your appetite to razor sharpness. I shall, as FDR said, recall "This Day Of Infamy" when the old guy riding the ultraslow Mo-Ped deliberated seven minutes between the liver & onions or baked fish... he kept asking the server person, "You're sure that ain't baked CARP? Real Sure??"

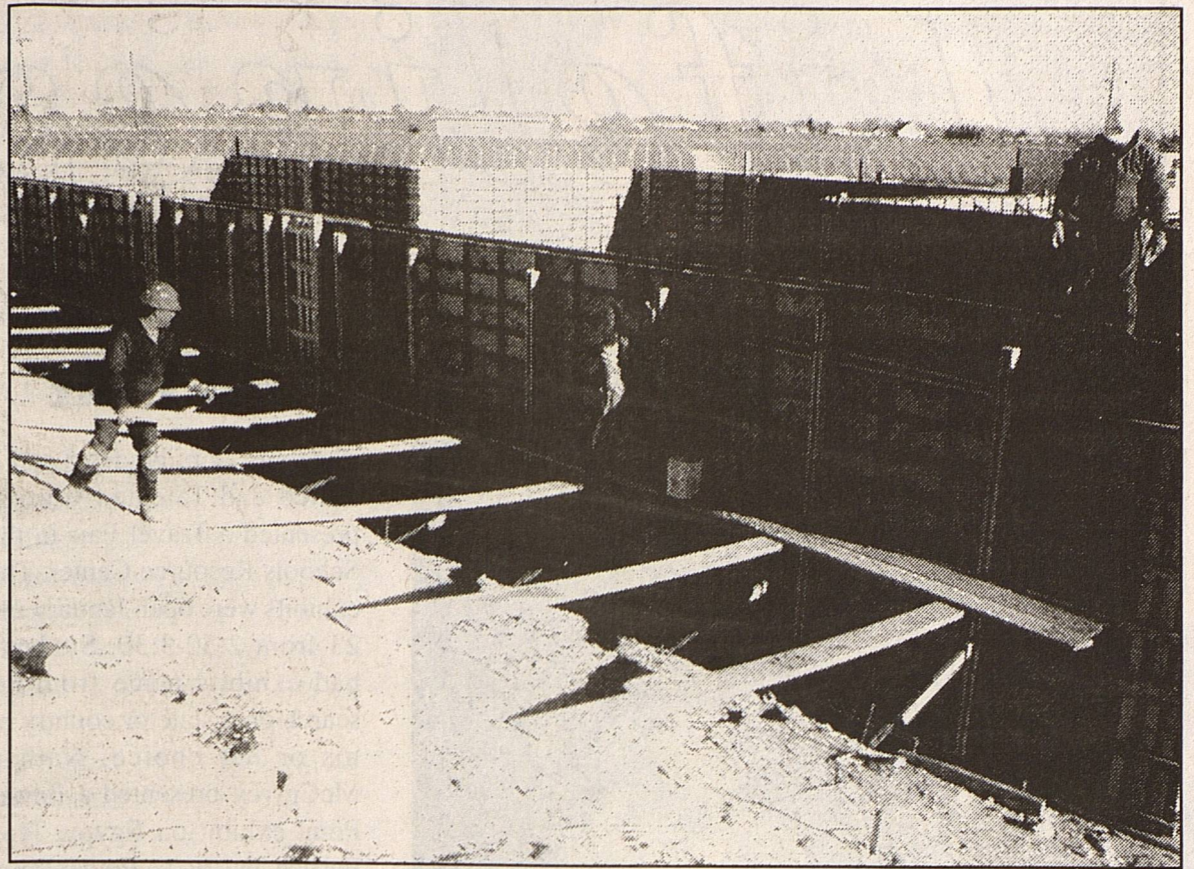
I finally made it to the desert section, and of course by now,

my hot stuff was cold, and I was getting hot! I searched, and screamed, NO CHESS PIE! I was by now scathingly furious and pretty mad too. A wait person was doing something behind the pie section, and I, scathing furiously, demanded, "Where's the CHESS PIE?!" He studied me a bit, blowing a bubble with his gum, and said, "Hey man, how you expect me to know, I just work here, maybe they run out of chesses!"

I finally slid the tray to the check-out lady, thinking if I wanted to be a truly honest, trust worthy customer, I would tell her I was a Senior, and worthy of their small discount, granted from the fullness of their hearts, you know. She quickly glanced at my tray, punched a button, and then scribbled something on the ticket. On the way to my table, I glanced at the ticket. She had *twice* underlined the words Senior Citizen! I could feel heartburn setting in before I pulled my chair out.

I finally settled in at a table, glared at the cocoanut instead of CHESS PIE, and only then became aware of the old guy in the slow Mo-Ped. He stuck his plate out to me, and demanded, "Smell this... You think it's CARP??"

L.C.E.C.'s Work In Progress



Lasco Construction employees work to remove forms from the basement walls on the new headquarters building for Lea County Electric Co-op's in Lovington. The 23,000 square foot, \$2.1 million facility is scheduled for completion in August, 2004

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