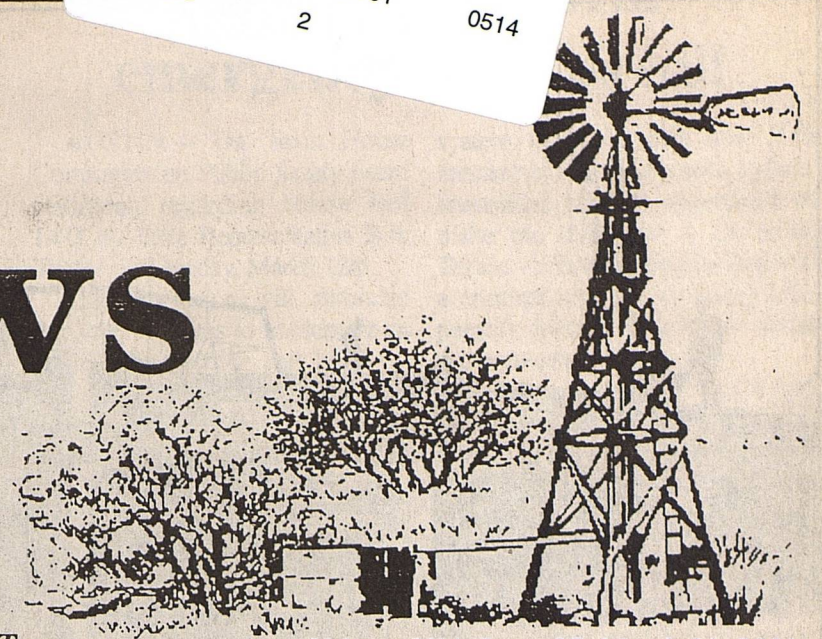


Cowboy Country News

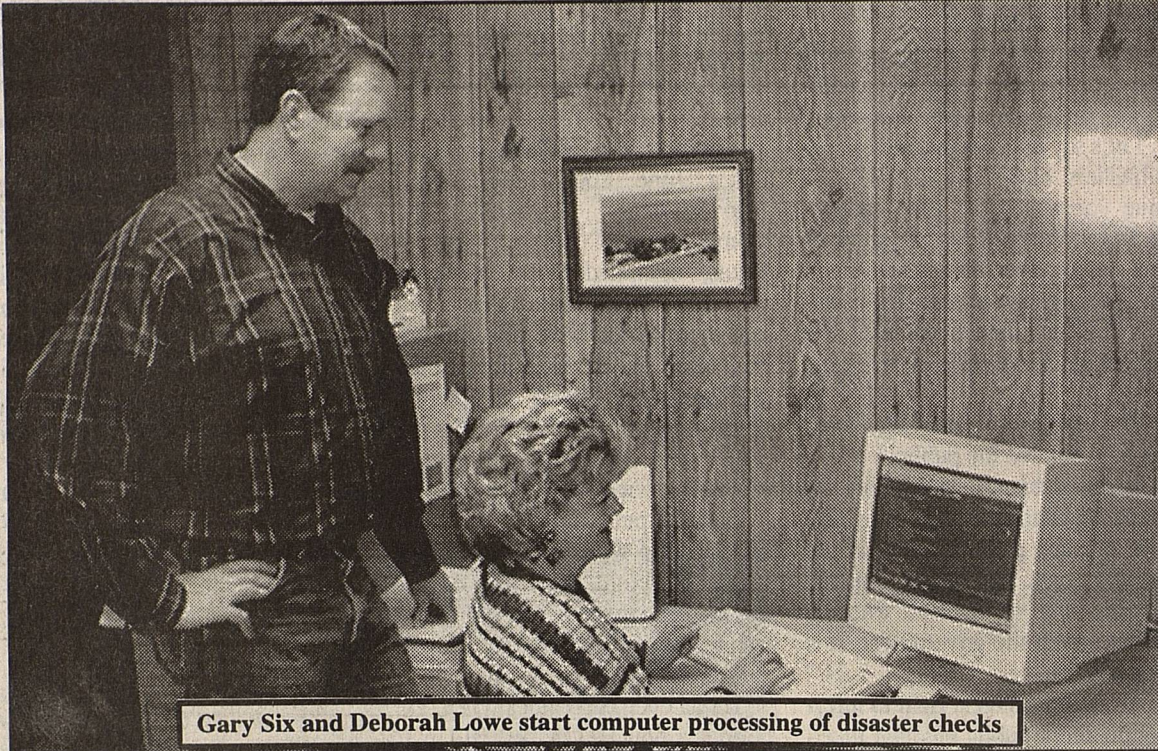
Published each Wednesday in the county seat of Yoakum County, Plains, Texas

Volume V11, Issue 27, March 21, 2001

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Crop disaster checks issued here



Gary Six and Deborah Lowe start computer processing of disaster checks

The local USDA Farm Services Agency office was busier than normal late Friday morning, when official word was received authorizing payment of production loss disaster checks to some 800 plus county agriculture producers.

Gary Six, FSA County Executive Director told CCN his office received a phone call from Washington D.C. "which allowed us to start punching computer buttons that would enable us to start disbursing well over \$7 million to producers for their crop production losses in 2000."

Six said this years Crop Disaster Program would cover all county crops with proven records of

losses in production resulting from adverse weather or other damaging conditions.

"Our County Committee has really worked long and hard recently. They are required to verify our producers production records, and must approve all applications for disaster payments," Six reported. The committee must also ensure FSA production records reflect the records of all insurance providers of disaster coverage on the producers crops. Edith Tuggle is Chairperson of the committee, and the other two members are Roy Lowrey and Bruce Lester.

Please turn to page 2, CHECKS

Prelim census figures open re-districting Pandora's Box for county officials

In a special session of Commissioner Court March 14, Portia Bosse, representing the law firm of Allison, Bass & Associates, outlined probable redistricting issues facing the county.

Ms. Bosse pointed out to the court her law firm had not received official Census Bureau population figures at that time, but the number of West Texas newspapers reporting the same population data indicated the figures were official. She also said it was quite apparent there would have to be some re-drawing of some precinct lines, which the law firm has contracted to perform here. The county would be obligated to pay the firm \$12,000 for the services.

County Judge Dallas Brewer told CCN, "Those population numbers show the county losing 1,464 residents since the 1990 census, a 16.7 percent loss. I was greatly surprised at the large decrease. I personally question the validity of the count, but we were told by Ms Bosse in Wednesday's court session there's very little if anything we can do but accept the count, when it is finally officially presented."

According to the judge, redistricting would not have been

required if the change in population figures was less than ten percent from the 2000 census.

County precinct lines in the City of Plains are currently drawn with residents represented by either Precinct 3 or Precinct 4. The same county lines in Denver City, drawn following the 2000 census, reflect all four county precincts representing residents there.

Brewer said it is too early to have any solid clues about what precinct lines will look like when the re-drawing process is complete. In all probability, he added, "There will have to be changes made in our current Justice of Peace Precinct lines." A preview of the redistricting scenario prepared by Allison, Bass & Associates includes the following information:

Minority representation established in 1990 should be maintained if possible without regression; Race may not be a predominant factor in reapportionment. Maximized minority precincts no longer required; Achieve 'one-person-one-vote' balance.

An approximate time schedule for the process includes; Obtaining official census date by April 1; May 1, review initial assessment of political bound-

aries' July 1 - formulate redistricting plans. July 30 - conduct public hearings on one or more alternative plans. August 30 - adopt final plan. September 30 - submit plan to Justice Department. January 1 - implement plan.

Both of the county towns city councils are elected at-large, and redistricting will not be an issue for either. The directors of Sandy Land Water District are also elected at-large.

Plains Independent School District may, or may not, face re-drawing lines. One of the school's districts extends into the edge of the outskirts of Denver City. A school official said until the individual district count is official there, it would be impossible to know if Plains ISD lines would have to be changed.

It is apparent the bulk of the population decrease occurred in Denver City, the result of a slump in the petroleum industry and accompanying job losses. State highway signs here continue to show the 1990 census figure of 1,422, but recently released numbers in a number of area newspapers report the population now stands at 1,450, a 28 person gain.

Criminal cases in County Court

Five cases were heard in County Court March 14, with Judge Dallas Brewer presiding. Criminal District Attorney Richard Clark represented the state.

Peter Ramon pled guilty to possession of marijuana, less than two ounces. He was sentenced to 30 days in jail with credit for 29 days served, and will surrender his driver license for one year. Deputy Kenley Powell was investigating officer, and Attorney Paul Mansur represented the defendant.

David Dwayne Folmar pled guilty to driving while his license was suspended. He was fined \$100, must pay \$210 court costs and \$100 reinstatement fee to the DPS. Arresting Officer was DPS Trooper Brad Taylor.

Walter Guillermo Ayala agreed on the state's motion to modify conditions of community supervision resulting from a prior assault causes bodily injury cause. He must serve an additional 40 hours at a community service project, under direction of the CSCD where the defendant lives.

Yolanda Martinez, aka Yolanda Garcia, pled guilty to

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'CRIME CASES'

Walker encouraged by rural affairs bill

Austin - Chariman Gary L. Walker (R-Plains) heard testimony in the House Committee on Land and Resource Management committee last week on a bill that would create the Office of Rural Community Affairs. House Bill 7, authored by Representative Warren Chisum (R-Pampa) and co-authored by Chairman Walker and a number of other representatives from rural Texas, is the cornerstone of all the rural legislation being considered during the 2001 Legislative Session.

"We've waited for this day, and I am encouraged by all the positive feedback we are getting from our rural communities," Walker said. "You can tell by how many different communities are represented at the hearing this is an important issue to us,"

In addition to hearing testimony from a number of local chambers of commerce and economic development entities, the committee heard from Commissioner of Agriculture Susan Combs, who is in support of the bill.

HB 7 was filed in response to the finding of the Select Committee on Rural Development that there is no ' focal point' on the state or federal level for rural policy. Currently, rural programs are dispersed throughout several different agencies.

"Hopefully, by creating an agency solely responsible for monitoring issues impacting rural Texans, we can increase efficiency as well as foster much needed cooperation and coordination," Chairman Walker concluded.

County asked to assist in economic development

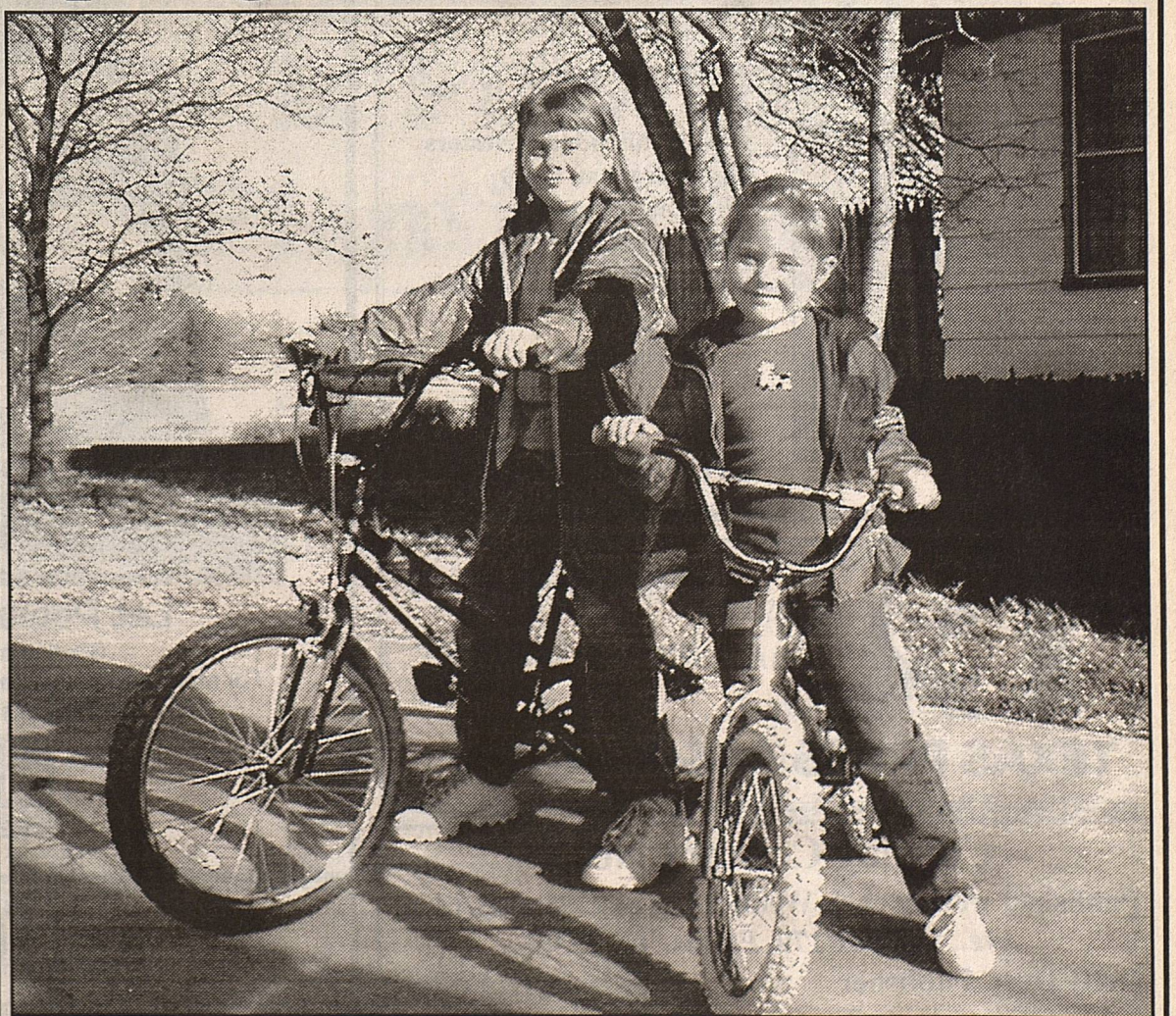
In the March 19 session of Commissioner Court, Mike Fears, recently appointed Director of the Economic Development Board in Denver City, outlined the board's goal to bring an economic boost to that city and the county. He reported the City Council of Denver City had recently committed to providing the Economic Development Board with \$24,000 to assist in meeting office and sal-

ary expenses, and promotion of development projects.

Fears said because of legal stipulations, the funds would be donated to the D.C. Chamber of Commerce, which would then allocate the funds to the development board. The D.C. City Council committed another \$24,000 in funds for the program, but those funds would

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'ECONOMY'

Spring Break is FUN TIME !



The Ray and Sonya Young daughters, five year old Raegan, front, and Katelynn, 9, were found riding their bike's last week, and Raegan was celebrating (and struggling with) her first effort without training wheels. She is a Pre-K student at Plains Elementary, and Katelynn is in third grade. When asked if they were ready to start school again this Monday, their answer was a resounding NO!



These workers braved a cold and very blustery morning last Saturday, re-roofing and repairing the roof of the Plains ISD Learning Center building.

From Page One, CHECKS

Six said payment of the over \$7 million disaster funds is an indicator of how severe crop production losses were in the year 2000 - the 1999 program paid out approximately \$2.5 million. This payment is the first of a two phase program. Later, producers with verifiable claims will be eligible to apply for disaster money based on losses from low quality of all crops, another badly needed

boost for both the producers and their creditors. The overall quality of most county crops was drastically lowered by unusually trying weather conditions, as well as insect problems.

A press release from Agriculture Secretary Ann M. Veneman's office announced more than \$1.1 billion in crop disaster payments would be made nationwide. About 450,000 applications from 160,000 farmers have been approved so far, and more are expected.

NACo addresses Ag, rural affairs issues

At the recent National Association of Counties (NACo) conference in Washington, D.C., the Agriculture and Rural Affairs Steering Committee met to consider policy recommendations to NACo's Board of Directors. Six resolutions from the steering committee were approved by the Board. They include;

1. Resolution to encourage the stabilization of fossil fuel supplies, and encourage production of alternative fuels.
 2. Protect the fiscal integrity of the family farm through elimination of the Estate Tax.
 3. Encourage the exploration of fossil fuel supplies on federal lands.
 4. Supporting the recommendations of the congressional Rural Caucus on Rural Policy.
 5. Support USDA's APHIS-ARS master plan for facility consolidation and modernization.
 6. Support clean water and conservation farming practices.
- Yoakum County Judge Dallas is a member of the Ag and Rural Affairs Steering Committee.

Viticulture Workshop Scheduled

Newsom Vineyard is hosting their annual Viticulture Workshop on Friday, March 30, at 10:30 AM at their vineyard, three miles north of Plains on Hwy. 214, according to County Extension Agent Arlon Gentry.

Speakers and their topics include; Dr. George Ray McEachern, pruning; Dr. Terry Wheeler, nematodes; Dr. Ed Hellman, cool weather and grapes; Dr. Reddy, petiole; Bobby Cox, site selection; and Kirk Williams, cost and establishment.

Lunch will be sponsored by Cap*Rock Winery, and two CEU credits will be given. Please RSVP by March 27 to 806-456-2263.

Public notice bills threaten tradition

Texas has for decades worked to fully inform its citizens by requiring that public notices be printed in local newspapers.

Several bills now before the Legislature threaten that tradition of publishing important notices while allowing exclusive publication on the Internet, at the option of state and local governments.

There is nothing wrong with using the Internet to expand public notice. That's already happening without much prompting by the state. However, for the foreseeable future, newspapers remain vital to the process of public notice.

The bills are S.B. 872 by Jon Lindsay (R-Houston) and S.B. 853 by Sen. Chris Harris (R-Arlington). Lindsay's bill would allow for Internet posting of public bid notices. Harris' bill is more sweeping and would allow publication on the Internet of all public notices required by state law.

In both bills, electronic publication could be instead of, not in addition to, publication in newspapers.

Let's say up front that newspaper publishers likely would lose revenue because of the change. However, for most daily newspapers, legal advertising represents a small percentage of revenue, usually much less than 5 percent. The percentage for weekly newspapers is higher.

The real losers if this legislation passes would be the public.

In this debate, it is essential for all to understand the underlying purpose of such advertising; it is not just functional, aimed only at public officials and contractors who do business with the government. It is for everyone.

All citizens have a right to information about public bidding, meetings, tax foreclosure sales, and



DOLPH TILLOTSON
Guest Columnist

adoption of new tax rates and budgets.

The fact is, not enough Texans have Internet access or use what they do have — at least not yet. A 1998 U.S. Department of Commerce study set Texas's statewide rate of access at only about 24.5 percent. Admittedly, that likely is somewhat higher today.

However, there remains an undeniable digital divide between those who have access to the Internet and those who don't. It appears obvious that those without Internet access are the most economically disadvantaged among us. Access also is much lower in rural than in urban areas.

The best data available seems to be a June 2000 report titled "Government Services and Computer and Internet Use in Texas," compiled by the University of Texas. It concludes that about half of all Texans have at least limited Internet access, but fully half the polling sample agreed "the Internet is insufficiently available across the state to rely on it for providing government services."

Simply put, allowing Internet-only posting would put such information off-limits to all who do not possess the money, the skills and training, the hardware or software to surf the net. That's a bad idea.

It's an even worse idea when one considers how newspapers still may serve in this area.

From Page One, 'ECONOMY'

not be transferred to the Chamber of Commerce for another year.

Fears told the Court he and the other development board members are hoping the county will also commit to the two year program.

Fears said the development project is seeking business firms to consider moving their operations to Denver City, or Yoakum County. "In our search for business candidates, we are trying to target firms or corporations whose particular field of commerce would be compatible with local available resources." He reported one clothing store firm, headquartered in Waxahachie, had expressed possible interest in the local area, and the board was working to encourage a possible site location here.

After considerable discussion, members of the court indicated they would be interested in support of the economic develop-

From Page One, 'CRIME CASES'

failing to identify a fugitive from justice. She was fined \$100 and must pay \$210 court costs. Arresting officer was DPS Trooper Brad Taylor.

Abel Marroquinn Vasquez pled guilty to assault causing bodily injury. A 90 day jail sentence was suspended and probated 12 months. He will make time payments on a \$250 fine and \$210 court costs. He must complete the 'For Kids Sake'

Habit is an important part of what newspapers offer. The state of Texas has invested millions over the years in training citizens to look for public notices in their local newspaper. We should not toss this aside without a great amount of planning and thought.

Further, a majority of Texas newspapers already have their own Internet presence. The Texas Press Association reports that more than half of the state's 550 newspapers have Internet editions. Of those, 111 Texas newspapers currently are posting legal notices to the Internet.

In many cases (including The Galveston County Daily News), legal posting on the Internet is a free service offered to enhance the value and reach of legal advertising published in the paper.

Surely there is a way to harness the power of a print-Internet partnership to serve the people of Texas better.

Some in the Texas Legislature may relish the notion of taking a small amount of revenue away from their local newspaper.

Others may sincerely believe the state should make more and better use of Internet technology. It is hard to argue with that notion. It's also logical, however, that expansion onto the Internet should be phased and appropriate to the growth in genuine Internet access and use.

The bills on the table today could essentially end access to huge quantities of public information for all but our most technologically advanced — and wealthiest — citizens.

It is an idea whose time has not come.

Dolph Tillotson is president and publisher of The Galveston County Daily News. He writes frequently on public information issues on behalf of the newspapers of Texas.

ment campaign, but wished to table the matter until they could determine all legal aspects for the county before committing to funding help.

The court approved a \$1552 bid presented by District Clerk Vicki Blundell for replacing all 20 year old window blinds and insulation in the clerk's office.

A request from Ed Rodgers and Clay Taylor, Yoakum County Hospital, was heard, asking approval of a budget amendment for the hospital operation. They reported payment collections at the hospital were sufficient to allow transfer of funds from the hospital to assist funding at the West Texas Health Center and Women's Center for Well Being in Denver City. The Women's Center would receive \$150,000 of hospital funds, and the West Texas Health Center would receive \$200,000.

County Treasurer Toni Jones reported an ending February fund balance of \$13,167,979.

eight hour program in Denver City and pay the \$25 cost, and serve 80 hours community service. He was represented by Attorney Bill Helwig.

In court March 15, Francisco Luna Hernandez pled guilty to assault causing bodily injury. He was sentenced to serve 20 days in county jail, with credit for 20 days served. He must pay \$210 court costs and a \$100 fine. A failure to appear charge was adjudicated.

Three person scramble at Y.C.G.C.

Yoakum County Golf Club will host a 3 person scramble tournament Saturday and Sunday, March 24 & 25. Club Pro Wiley Osborne said the entry fee for the 3 person team is \$150, and includes use of the practice range and lunch Saturday.

Teams will have their choice of starting times Saturday, with either 8:30 AM or 1:30 PM tee times. On Sunday, tee times will be by flights.

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Walker, Texas Rep

By State Representative Gary Walker, Dist. 80

Session will be half over on March 19, and we have much work to do. March 9 was the final day to file bills. There are 3,633 House bills and 1,749 Senate bills, a total of 5,382 bills for us to consider this session. We sure have our work cut out for us.

We have received the 2000 Census numbers. They reveal the demographics of Texas have really changed. Hispanics now represent 32 percent of the population, which is an 6.5 percent increase from 1990. The number of Non-Hispanic Whites decreased 9 percent, and the African American population decreased by only 3 percent. The most growth occurred in more urban areas such as Williamson County near Austin, and Rockwall County located near Dallas.

We will use the 2000 Census numbers to aid us in redrawing district boundaries. Unfortunately, the numbers are not in our favor. Right now the Panhandle and South Plains have 13 House members, but the new Census numbers justify only 11 members.

I am devoted to creating districts that will protect the best interests of rural West Texas. West Texas may not be populous, but the contribution it makes to the state is great.

If you come to Austin for a visit, please feel free to drop by and say hello. I would love to see you! Should you have any questions or concerns please do not hesitate to contact my office at 512-463-0678

Valley Irrigation & Pump Services Named To Circle Of Success Winner



L-R, Denton Baucum, Mogens Bay, Delaine Baucum, Heath Allen

Valmont Irrigation announced Valley Irrigation & Pump Services, Inc. in Seminole, Brownfield, and Lamesa, has earned a Valley Chairman's Circle of Success award, the highest honor given for outstanding sales performance and for delivering the highest standards of service and product support to its mechanized irrigation customers.

"Membership in the Chairman's Circle is a significant achievement," says Tom Spears, president of global sales and distribution for Valmont Irrigation. "Valley Irrigation & Pump Services, Inc. has consistently proven its capabilities over the last six years with customers and Valmont sales managers in the key areas of sales, service and parts."

The award was presented at Valmont's dealer sales meeting, held January 10-12 in Cancun, Mexico, where Valley dealers learned about the newest technology and state of the art thinking in mechanized irrigation equipment.

"Valmont Irrigation places a great deal of value in our dealer network. We're very pleased to congratulate Valley Irrigation & Pump Services, Inc. for superior customer service and leadership," says Spears.

Valmont Irrigation is the world's leading manufacturer of mechanized irrigation equipment and technology. Valmont introduced the first center pivot, the first corner arm, and was the first manufacturer to introduce computer control technology to the mechanized irrigation industry. Today, Valley products enhance food

conserving water and protecting natural resources in more than 100 countries.

Growers can obtain additional information about Valley products from Valley Irrigation & Pump Services, Inc. or by contacting Valmont Irrigation at 1-800-853-9268, or visiting Valmont on the World Wide Web at www.valmont.com.

County Commits To Employee Safety, To Receive Up To \$7,765 Incentive

Austin, Texas- Yoakum County officials took a pro-active stance on improving workers' safety by adopting a resolution to participate in a safety incentive program. The program provides for a comprehensive safety effort on the part of Yoakum County in exchange for a cash incentive of up to \$7,765 from the Texas Association of Counties Workers Compensation Fund.

This resolution was adopted by Judge Dallas Brewer, County Commissioners Woodson Lindsey, J.R.Slantz, Ty Earl Powell, Jack Cobb and also endorsed by County Sheriff, Don Corzine.

This resolution will allow administrators of Yoakum

County's self insurance pool administrators to assist department heads in the enhancement of their current safety and health programs.

A board of county officials oversees the County's partnership with over 290 other Texas counties and public entities in a non-profit Worker's Compensation self insurance pool, and authorized Yoakum County to receive up to \$7,765 in exchange for having a comprehensive safety process.

The board has invested this money with the county, confident that the efforts will pay off for Yoakum County, their employees, and other members of self insurance pool.

Intermediate Crime Scene Investigation Class Set

A class in Intermediate Crime Scene Investigation is scheduled March 28-30 at South Plains College in Levelland.

Classes will meet 8 am. to 4 pm. all three days in the Spc Petroleum Technology Law Enforcement Building, room 108.

Cost is \$36.00. Instructor is Michael Lance Scott.

Recognizing, discovering and preserving evidence are among the most important steps at a crime scene, according to Larry Nichols, professor of law enforcement technology and chairperson of the Professional Services and Energy Department. "The course will help officers learn the three main

sources of where to obtain evidence and how to develop the evidence for court presentation. Students will be given practical exercises to reinforce classroom leading experiences.

Officers successfully completing the course will receive Texas Commission on Law Enforcement Officer Standards and Education (TCLEOSE) credit for 24 hours of training.

Registration deadline is one week prior to class.

Payment in full or a purchase order number is required on the first day of class.

To pre-register or obtain more information, contact the SPC Law Enforcement Office beginning March 19 at 894-9611, ext. 2291.



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House hears rural emergency services bill

AUSTIN - The Texas House Committee on Public Safety heard testimony regarding House Bill 1471 by State Representative Bob Turner on Monday, March 12th.

This legislation will authorize the State of Texas to implement an emergency roadside call box system throughout rural Texas. Call boxes are special units designed to allow motorists to request emergency assistance or vehicle assistance from predetermined locations along the roadside.

Appearing before the Committee was Lance Lively, Executive Director of the Texas Call Box Coalition. The Texas Call Box Coalition is comprised of approximately 150 members, including County Judges, County Sheriffs, local law enforcement, 911 coordinators and city leaders.

"A common misperception over the past several years is that everyone in Texas owns a cell phone. Studies have shown that only 25 to 30 percent of Texans own cell phones and as a matter of comparison, more people own personal computers than they do cell phones. Even if every individual owned a cell phone, we are not guaranteed they would work in the vast rural areas of Texas," said Lively.

"Rural Texas will benefit from a call box system by connecting people traveling the enormous and often isolated regions of the state with safety coverage, especially in those areas without cellular service.

This extra measure of safety will ensure that our families, friends and business colleagues travel safely from one destination to the next. Response times in rural Minnesota were reduced by 43 minutes because of call boxes, a lifetime of time when minutes count," said Lively.

Also appearing before the Committee was Sherry Boyles Executive Director of the Texas Association Against Sexual Assault.

"Remote locations are valuable assets to the stranger rapist variety of sexual predator," Boyles said. "By providing a communication

system to those who may find themselves stranded is such a place, lawmakers have an opportunity to make the difference - for some Texans - between being the target of a criminal and simply being temporarily inconvenienced by a flat tire or overheated engine."

Texas averages 375 calls per month on the 104 call boxes currently in use in the state, and calls range from person's having car trouble and needing assistance, to real medical emergencies. It was reported that an armored car in the Lubbock area used a call box to request assistance when the truck broke down and their cell phone wouldn't work.

"Call boxes are an important feature in keeping our highways clear of broken down vehicles which cause congestion on our roadways,"

Turner said. "They serve as an invaluable link for people who cannot afford cellular phones to get help in an emergency situation."

Call boxes enhance local response to all types of emergencies, from overturned tankers to violent crime. They're the most dependable way to get in touch with law enforcement agencies.

Twenty-two states have some form of call box program in place. California has the most extensive with over 16,000 along California highways. They receive over 1.3 million calls a year on their call boxes.

The Texas Transportation Institute recently released the findings of a survey that show 95% of those surveyed support a call box system in Texas, and more importantly, they would be willing to support a fee placed on their drivers license's or some other vehicle to pay for the program.

Texans registered more than 17 million cars and trucks in 1999 and travel over 550 million miles per day on 79,102 centerline miles of highway. Last year the Texas Department of Transportation awarded a record \$3 billion in highway improvement project contracts.

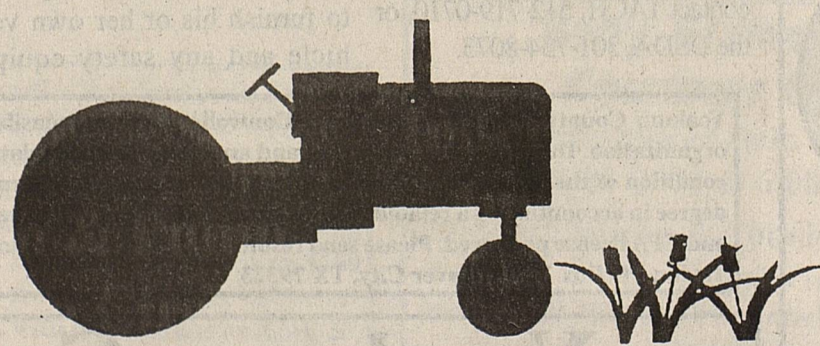
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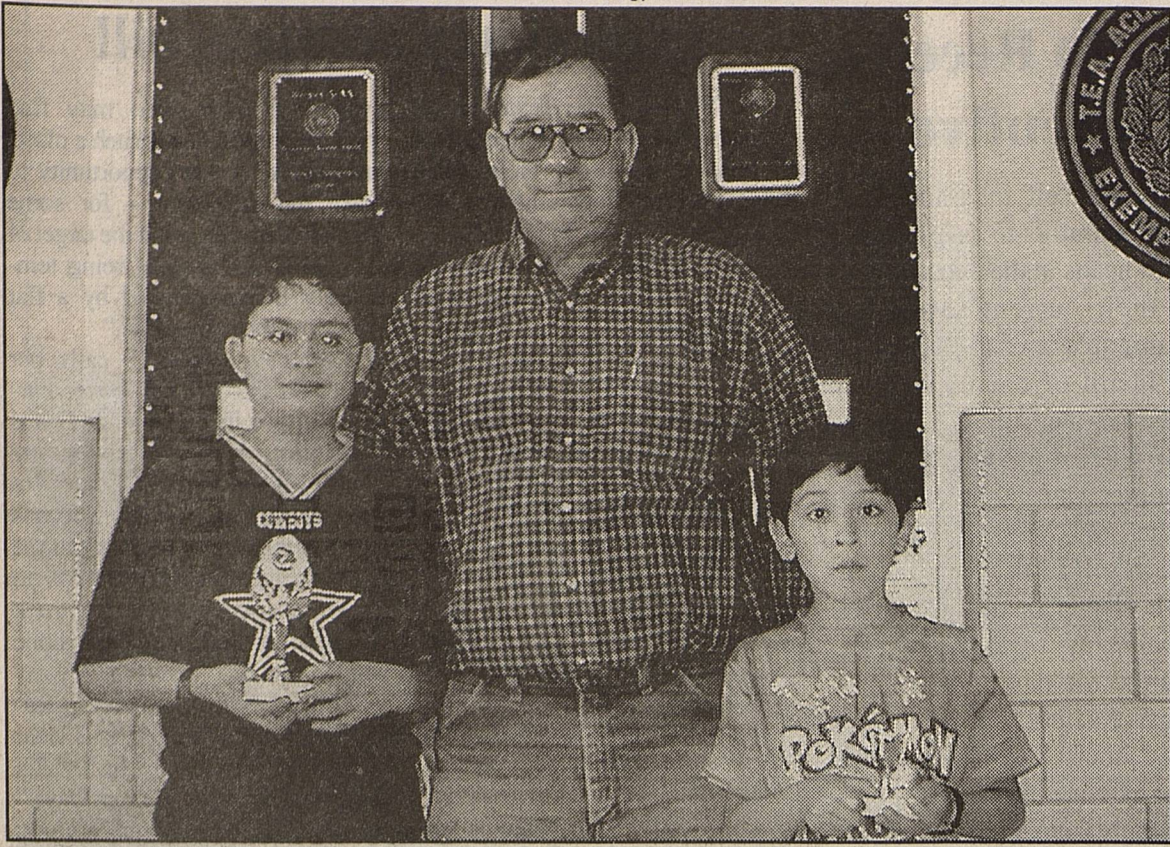
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Local YCSWCD Essay Contest Winners



Local ag producer Dan Wall, Vice-President of the Yoakum County Soil and Water Conservation District, is flanked by two Plains students who won trophies in the YCSWCD annual poster contest. The theme of this year's contest, open to students both in Plains and Denver City, dealt with the local habitat of our many natural resources. Jose Luis Gallegos, on left, won first prize for his poster. The 11 year old is a 6th grader and the son of Martha Loya. Andrew Lara, 7, is a first grader who won third place in the contest, and the son of Julian and Elizabeth Lara. The two local winners posters have been forwarded to state headquarters in Temple to be entered in state-wide competition.

Squyres competes in last year of high school rodeo

In February, PHS Senior Brett Squyres began his last semester in Region II of the Texas High School Rodeo Assn. At Ozona February 10 and 11, he had a run of 11.9 seconds, followed by a second time of 12.5 seconds to finish 9th in tie-down calf roping. He and his header, Justin Nevarez of Denver City took first place in team roping with a 6.3 second run. He next competed at Ft. Stockton, and was 9th in tie-down roping, and he and Justin finished second in team roping with a time of 8.2 seconds - first place time was 8.1 seconds. Region II finals will be held in San Angelo April 7. The top ten contestants

from the ten regions in the state will advance to the Finals at Abilene June 3 thru 9. The top four contestants in each event will advance to Nationals in July.

PHS Student of the Week

Student of the week is Jill Gray, a sophomore and the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Jim Gray. She was nominated by Miss McCravey, who said, "In the book *Positive Thinking Everyday*, Norman Vincent Peale wrote, "people who are really efficient seem to do things eas-



ily, with a minimum of effort. In so doing, they release maximum power." Jill achieves the most by making the best of her talents and time. She is a positive influence for others, demonstrating what it takes to be student of the week."

JP Court cases heard

The following is a summary of cases filed and bonds set in Precinct One Justice of Peace Court, Judge Melba Crutcher presiding.

Cases filed:
58 traffic cases, two possession of drug paraphernalia, one littering.

Bonds Set:
Two cases possession of drug paraphernalia, \$200 bonds
Two DWI, third or more-\$2500 bonds, interlock devices ordered.

Possession of marijuana- \$500 bond.

Failure to appear- \$200 bond.
Bond forfeiture, assault- \$1500 cash bond.

Bail jumping/failure to appear- \$2500 bond.

Two cases DWI- \$1500 bonds, interlock device ordered.

Two cases public intoxication- \$500 bond

Assault causing bodily injury to family member- \$3500 bond, emergency protection order.

Resisting arrest- \$1500 bond.

Theft (bond enhancement), Cooke County- \$6500 bond.

Evading detention- \$6500 bond

Motion to revoke probation- held until hearing.

DWI, first- \$1000 bond.

THAC warns of hoof-mouth disease threat

A March 19 news release from the Texas Animal Health Commission warned of possible serious Hoof and Mouth disease problems facing Texas growers of cloven footed animals.

Hoof and mouth disease has been discovered in 34 countries to date. The only continents so far free of the disease are North America, Australia, and Antarctica.

The incredibly fast moving virus spreading HMF disease could affect all cloven footed animals in Texas and other states.

Animals in Texas which are highly susceptible to hoof-mouth disease include cattle, domestic and feral hogs, sheep, deer, bison, goats, elk and llamas.

Owner/producers of these animals seeking information on preventing and eradicating the disease should contact TACH, 512-719-0710, or the USDA, 301-734-8073.

Plains Students Honored

On Monday, March 5, College of the Southwest honored area students at a reception hosted by CSW Enrollment Management. Students from Hobbs, Jal, Eunice, Lovington, Tatum, Seminole, Denver City, and Plains along with their families were among the 275 in attendance in the newly renovated Scarborough Memorial Library Atrium. Faculty and staff presented the information on degrees, scholarships, and admissions as well as student life at College of the Southwest. The evening concluded with the presentation of certificates and gift calculators to each of the juniors and seniors in attendance.

Based on school information

sent by counselors, the following Plains High School students received invitations to Honor Night and could qualify for scholarships up to \$12,000. Emily Blair, Kelsey Blundell, Aaron Cain, Martha Casillas, Lensey Cullins, Eddy Gallegos, Joel Gallegos, Amanda Garcia, Dawn Garland, Taylor Gray, Chris Gscheidle, Kari Guetersloh, Nicole Haynes, Skyler Johnson, Kimbe Jones, Armando Luna, Hilda Martinez, Grisel Molina, Eric Nixon, Maria Reyna, Gerald Rivas, Ross Rodgers, Lesli Rowe, Elva Ruiz, Lisa SanFalipo, Dustin Sellers, Dustin Six, Brett Squyres, Michaela Traweek, Roxanna Villarreal, Alexis Warren.

Legislature seeks to protect teachers from law suits

Austin - Rep. Kent Grusendorf, R-Arlington, filed last week the Teacher Protection Act, HB 2664. The Teacher Protection Act is designed to protect teachers from liability law suits and to help restore discipline in the classroom

"Fear of lawsuits has paralyzed many teachers and school districts when it come to dealing properly with disruptive students," said Peggy Venable, director of Texas Citizens for a Sound Economy, or CSE. "As a result, many classrooms are getting out of hand and are often not conducive to learning."

HB 2664 increases liability protection for teachers and other professionals engaged in educating children. It protects them from lawsuits in almost all cases except for excessive use of force when disciplining a student.

The Teacher Protection Act also helps teachers by making it a Class B misdemeanor when a student knowingly makes a false accusation against a teacher," said Venable. "This will further embolden educators seeking to regain control of their classrooms," she added.

The 48,000 Texans who are members of Texas CSE thank Rep. Grusendorf for taking this step toward restoring order to our classrooms," stated Venable.

Emergency Vehicle Operations Class Scheduled

An Emergency Vehicle Operations class is scheduled March 27-29 at South Plains College in Levelland.

The three day course is designed to train police officers how to properly handle vehicles during emergency driving situations. The course is a realistic, medium stress, competency based school that gives the student about 18 hours of actual driving time, according to Jimmy Richey, assistant professor of law enforcement technology.

Each student will be required to furnish his or her own vehicle and any safety equip-

ment, such as a helmet. Participants should expect moderate to heavy wear on tires and brakes.

Classes will be meet 8 am. to 5 pm. March 27-28 and 9 pm. to 1 am. in the SPC Petroleum Technology Law Enforcement Building, room 108, on March 29.

Cost is \$50.00.

Registration deadline is one week prior to class start date.

Payment in full or a purchase order number is required on the first day of class.

Additional classes are scheduled April 24-16 and May 29-31.

Yoakum County Hospital is seeking a Controller to be responsible for the financial operations of the organization. Duties include gathering and analyzing financial data, developing reports on the financial condition of the organization and reporting findings to administrative and management staff. Bachelor degree in accounting or a related field required. Minimum of two years experience in a health care setting and CPA license preferred. Please send resume and salary history to Yoakum County Hospital, Attn: Clay Taylor, PO Box 1130, Denver City, TX 79323.



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Engagement Announced



Mr. and Mrs. Mackey McEntire of Sterling City have the pleasure of announcing the engagement of their daughter, Ginny Cathleen, to Paul Bradley McMinn, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Larry McMinn of Plains. The couple plans to be married on Saturday, May 19, 2001, at La Escondida Guest Ranch in Helotes, Texas. The bride-elect grew up in

Sterling City and attended South Plains College. She is currently enrolled at Texas Tech University, where she is an Elementary Education Major. The prospective groom grew up in Plains, and is attending Texas Tech University with a double major in Math and Computer Science. The couple plans to reside in Lubbock after their marriage.

'Mature Driver' course offered by Senior Citizen Center

Yoakum County Senior Citizen Center and the American Association of Retired Persons have scheduled a 55 Alive-Mature driving course from 1 to 4:30 PM on Monday and Wednesday, March 26 and 28. The course was developed to compensate for age-related driving problems and review traffic tips for those 55 and older.

Those who complete the course will receive a certificate entitling them to an auto insurance discount.

The class will be taught by trained volunteers, and cost is \$10 for course materials. To enroll, visit the Senior Center, or call 592-8000.

Tsa Mo Ga Club hears importance of Water Plan

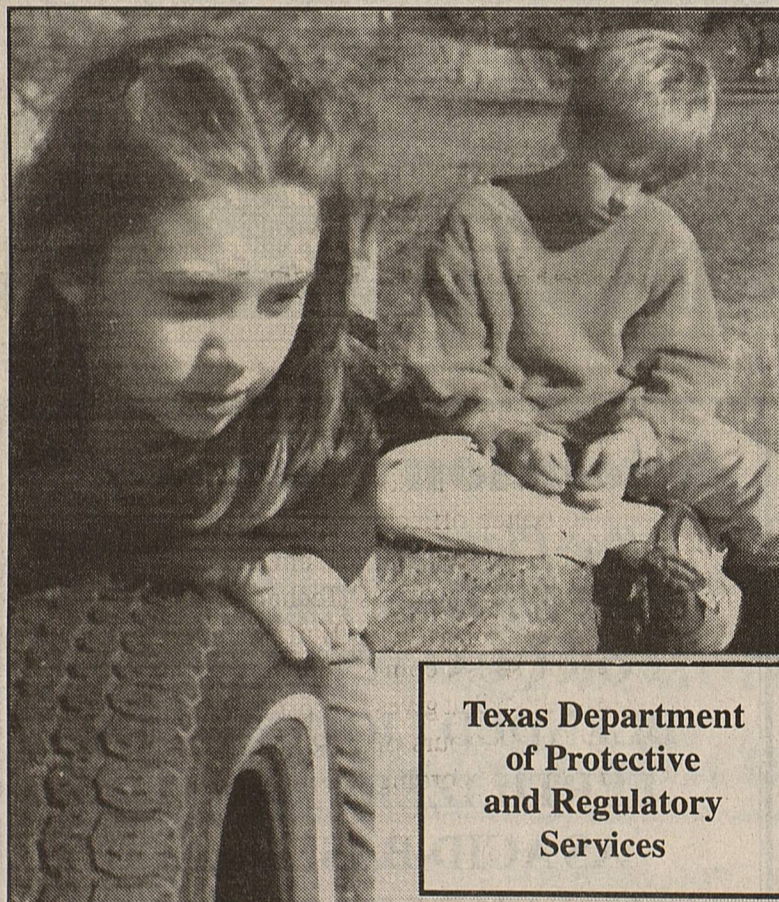


County Judge Dallas Brewer was guest speaker at the March 12 meeting of the Tsa Mo Ga Club. He described the tremendous amount of work and hours spent in creating a state mandated Regional Water Plan for this and all other areas of the state. He stressed water, and its conservation, should be high on the priority list of all Texans, and the rapid growth in population of the state continues to put additional demands on the precious natural asset.

Program Director for the meeting was Debbie Rushing, and co-hostesses were Shannon Dusek and Dolores Davis. Members and guests enjoyed sandwiches and relish plates, and strawberry short cake for dessert. The next club meeting is March 26.

Shown above are, front, Mattie Field, Anne McGinty, Debbie Rushing, Dolores Davis, Shannon Dusek, Elouise St. Romain. Back, Rhonda Carter, Sarah Shelton, Judge Brewer, Carolyn Culwell.

April is Child Abuse Awareness Month



Parent Alert!



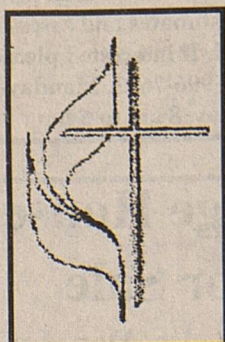
Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services

Keeping Kids Safe is Everybody's Business
It's Up To You

Denver City Art Association is coordinating the annual Yoakum County Watermelon Round Up T-Shirt Contest. It is open to all ages, in and out of school. Designs must be an original design no larger than 8 1/2 x 11" in size and must have "Yoakum County Watermelon Round Up" on it. Watermelon Willie is optional on this year's shirt. Yoakum County Connection is awarding \$100 cash for the top design picked by the judges. Entries will be accepted beginning March 23, 2001, with the deadline on April 20, 2001. For more information call Sue Holder at (806) 592-2960, after 5:00 p.m. Mail unfolded entries to Denver City Art Association at Box 854, Denver City, Texas 79323, or hand deliver to Bayer Lumber in Plains or the Chamber of Commerce office in Denver City.

First United Methodist Church
1202 Avenue G - Plains, TX.

Cordially invites you to worship and grow in Christ with us!



Sunday Schedule

Sunday School - 9:45 am
Morning Worship - 10:45 am
Youth Fellowship - 5 - 6:00 pm

Wednesday Connections

Food & Fellowship - 5:30-6:30 pm
Eve. Bible Study - 6:30 - 8:00 pm

Other Opportunities

Afternoon Bible Study - 5:15 pm Thursdays

GOD loves you and so do we!
Come grow in CHRIST with us!

Baby Shower Honoring Courtney Guetersloh

Baby daughter of Dain & Mandy Guetersloh
March 24, 2001 at 6:00 pm. in the home of
Macky & Connie McWhirter
Couples Invited
Selections: Nelson's-Brownfield, Magnolia-Denver City,
Toys R Us-Lubbock

Please join us for a Baby Shower honoring
Angie Lowrey
Saturday, March 31, 2001
2:00 to 4:00 p.m.

4908 102nd Street Lubbock, Texas

Given By: Georgia Simon, Lisa Sosa, Nancy Barnes, Tonya Patton, Tracy Lowrey, Shannon Wilson

Selections: Target and Toys R Us

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Alice Roosevelt Longworth

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202 N. Adams, Denver City, March 24,
8 a.m. to ??
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toys, lots of household items, high chair, car seats, etc

ASSE International Student Exchange Programs (ASSE) is looking for enthusiastic people in the community who like working with young people, and learning about different cultures. As an ASSE Area Representative, you provide a valuable opportunity to outstanding high school exchange students who want to experience the American way of life for a school year. By finding local families to host these international teen agers, you bring an international flavor to your community. ASSE representatives receive training, are reimbursed for expenses, and enjoy friendships with people from all over the world. ASSE invites you to join our team of area representatives. Please call 409-745-2939, or 1-800-473-0696 to find out more, or visit us on the Web at www.asse.com.

ASSE International is a non-profit, tax-exempt public benefit organization. ASSE is officially designated as an exchange visitor program by the United States Department of State.

Sulzer Hip Replacement Patients

Due to serious reactions, Sulzer Medical has announced that its subsidiary, Sulzer Orthopedics, is recalling certain lots of its Inter-Opacetabular shells for hip implants. Reactions to a residue of a lubricant used in the manufacturing process have resulted in a loosening of the artificial hip socket. If you or a loved one have had a hip replacement surgery since July, 1997, please call now to protect your legal rights.

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Director - Charles Regier

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From The Hack

I wish whoever is responsible for things would quit messing with things! I heard on the radio news last week some agricultural town in California had decided, after much soul searching, I'm sure, to change the name of their annual and famous "Prune Party" to a totally dull sounding "Dried Plum Festival". A Ho-Hummer if I ever heard one.

It's reported thousands formerly flocked to the Prune Party, 99 percent of them sufferers of irregularity. Faithful readers will recall the irregular bro-in-law who now lives deep in East Texas, but spent many years in and around Los Angeles.

He told the Bride and I once, "Man, I loved the Prune Party! Three solid days of eating prunes and meeting fellow irregulars was FUN! In the mornings, we had the usual prunes and oatmeal, lunch was stewed prunes on Melba Toast, and there was always a fancy dinner of sauteed prunes and cabbage. The very best meeting I ever attended, they had a guest speaker named Igor Sitskoot, who had developed a new process for wrinkling prunes, and it was fabulous!"

He was really wound up by then, and related, "I recall one year they had a contest and prize for the person who'd experienced the longest period of going without... uh, .. you know, being irregular. I came close, but finished second behind some clod from

Cucamonga. I still think he lied."

The radio report I listened to stated a new feature of the new Dried Plum Festival would award a fabulous prize to the grower of the deepest wrinkled prune, the theory being, the deeper the wrinkles the more their potency. To my knowledge, the afore mentioned stuff is the ONLY reason anyone would eat one of the vile and ugly critters.

A continuing saga of the Bride's treails with her back/hip/thigh/knee agonies. Last Wednesday, we were finally allowed into the hallowed halls of the third doctor we had consulted, to determine why she (1) could barely walk, (2) couldn't sleep, (3) cried incessantly, and (4) threatened me with bloody harm if I spoke above a whisper.

You probably know the current Doctor routine; You wait three weeks to obtain a 2 P.M. appointment date in Lubbock. At check-in, you fill out a nine page form questioning your legitimate birth, where, when, who were your parents, and if they are still alive, when did they die, and WHY. You are also requested to inform the staff of the health of your siblings, and if they are dead, WHY. They question your sexual preference, the amount of your tithes, how many cigarettes you puffed at 17 compared to age 21, and have you ever vandalized a Synagogue.

The check-in absorbs a mere 67 minutes. The ensuing wait consumes another 76 minutes, during which you have read every single sentence in The National Geographic, an old Baptist Standard, four copies of People, and the minutes of the last meeting of the Lubbock Society of the Blind and Mentally Disturbed Foundation.

Your patients name is finally called, you and the Bride are escorted into a tiny cubicle with the stretcher looking table, and two waiting chairs harder than Saddam's Islamic heart.

The only thing to read here, during your 59 minute wait to see the guy who really has a license to mess with you, is a four year old Church of Christ Cookbook and a Hertz Rental Car promo which expired May 1, 1983.

But then, there are the medical scenes depicted on the walls; A Pfizer sponsored, very graphic four foot tall color depiction of the human skeletal system, and an even more impressive color image of the human muscle system. Thank God I have finally learned where my Biceps Femoris is... all these years, I'd assumed it was part of my arm, but no, it's in my thigh. I also learned there are 49,798 bones in the skeletal system, all spelled with names known only to God and the Med students who cheated on their exams, and not a one starting with the consonant A. Try that if you ever get on "Who wants to be a millionaire."

The Doc finally showed, a very personable gent who originally came from England. He poked, prodded, pulled and questioned the Bride, and then, Praise Heaven and Your Lord and Master, finally said, "I don't think surgery is required. I'm going to just stick a little needle in your bottom, and I think that will do wonders for what I think is Bursitis in your hip."

I thought Bride was going to buss him with joy, and she quickly bared her bottom, about as fast as any stripper I ever saw in San Diego a few eons ago.

Now, you can believe this or not, but call Bride if you're a doubter; The Doc made her rest about fifteen minutes, whereupon she pulled her clothing back on, and walked out of the building, grinning like a lottery winner, shrieking, "It doesn't hurt, it doesn't hurt!" Absolutely true story. I may be as happy as the Bride - we won't have a surgery bill!

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Notice For Bids

The Commissioners Court
of Yoakum County will
receive bids until 10:00
A.M., Wednesday, March
21, 2001, for a County
Depository for the County of
Yoakum for a period of four
(4) years
ending sixty days from the
time fixed by law for the
next selection of a
depository.

Bids will be reviewed with
contract to be awarded in
Commissioners Court on
Monday, March 26th, 2001.

For bid forms and
specifications, please contact
the Yoakum County Auditor,
806-456-2422, P.O. Box 516,
Plains, TX, 79355 or
Yoakum County Treasurer,
806-456-8794, P.O. Box 492,
Plains TX 79355.

Sealed bids should be
marked "Bid-Depository"
on the envelope and mailed
or delivered to County
Judge, Dallas Brewer, P.O.
Box 456/Cowboy Way and
Avenue G, Plains, TX 79355.
NO FAX COPIES WILL BE
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Commissioners Court
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Legal Notice The Plains Independent School District, Plains, Texas is accepting bids for the following:

Year 2001 Improvements (Jr
High and HS School Re-
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All bids must be submitted by
10:00 am., local time, 05 April,
2001 at the Superintendent's
Office, or sealed bids may be
mailed directly to:

James Haynes, Superintendent
Plains ISD
PO Box 479

Plains, Texas 79355
Plans and Specifications are
available and may be acquired
from:

Grimes and Associates,
Consulting Engineers
PO Box 65
Wolforth, TX 79382
806-863-2462

A Pre-Bid Conference will be
held at 10:00 am., local time,
29 March, 2001. All interested
parties should meet at the
Superintendent's Office,
Plains, Texas.

The Plains Independent
School District Board of
Trustees reserves the right to
reject any or all bids, and
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