

Paw Print Press

Proudly Serving Itasca "The Big Little Town" since 1997

Itasca, Texas 76055

Vol. 2007 Issue #6

February 9, 2007

Rev. Bates Honored as "Citizen of the Year"



Chamber of Commerce President Lance Meinzer presented Rev. Johnny Bates of St. John Baptist Church the "Citizen of the Year" award at the 22nd Annual Chamber of Commerce Banquet on January 29, 2007.

In awarding the plaque Meinzer quoted the Gospel of Matthew where Jesus said: *"But when you do a charitable deed, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing. That your charitable deed may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will Himself reward you openly."*

For years, Rev. Bates has followed this directive by doing many charitable deeds in secret. He has served the Itasca community in many ways. He has a real heart for the young people of the community and has been known to give a young person a job mowing a lawn so they can

make a little money or to take time to take some children fishing so that he might spend some time talking to them and encouraging them.

Continued on page 6.

Rev Johnny Bates organized a Drug Awareness Seminar that included law enforcement officers and religious, education and public leaders



8 Seconds to Fame Harris Hits the Road to World Championship

Reporter Megan Goff - Assisted by Alecia Evans



Bareback rider Chris Harris threw his arms up in the air at the 1998 Calgary Stampede in Alberta, Canada as the arena roared with excitement. Harris knew he had won before the judges awarded him an 89.5 score on Blue Ridge, the horse that had help Harris earned \$50,000 in the winner take all shoot out. The win was extra special to

Harris because his mother had just been diagnosed with breast cancer and he was out to prove to her that anything was possible if you believed and tried hard enough.

That exciting moment is just one of many that Chris Harris Jr. of Itasca has experienced over the last twenty years. Harris has one thrill that has eluded him and he is working hard to accomplish it this year. He hopes to bring the World Champion Bareback Rider trophy home to Itasca this year.

Continued on page 3

Itasca Pre-K Students High Point Winner

Reporter Devin Corbitt

Kevin Harris was awarded the High Point Individual plaque of the Creative Arts and Education category in the 1st grade and under age group at the Hill County Fair.

This plaque is awarded to the person with the most points in his or her age group. Kevin entered many items, but the one he remembers most are his cupcakes. Kevin is a pre-kindergartener at Itasca Elementary.



Churches of Itasca

| | | |
|--|--------------------------|--------------|
| <u>Bethlehem Missionary Baptist</u> | W. Spurgeon | 687-2800 |
| <u>Central Baptist Church</u> | 401 E. Monroe | 687-2343 |
| <u>Church of Christ</u> | 200 N. Aquilla | 687-2774 |
| <u>First Baptist Church</u> | 107 S. Lamar | 687-2783 |
| <u>First Presbyterian Church</u> | 106 N. Lamar | 687-2243 |
| <u>First United Methodist</u> | Main & King St. | 687-2475 |
| <u>Loveview Baptist Church</u> | FM 2959 East of I-35 | |
| <u>Second Baptist Church</u> | 20 W. Marrion | 687-2224 |
| <u>Shiloh Community Church</u> | | 254-582-0487 |
| <u>St. John Missionary Baptist</u> | 506 S. Weaver | 687-2821 |
| <u>3rd Day Worship Center</u> | 107 E. Adams | 214 564-2185 |
| <u>Itasca Nursing Home</u> | Sunday - 10:00 a.m. | |
| Everyone Welcome | Monday Evening 6:00 p.m. | |

First Baptist Church

The First Baptist Church invites you to get to know us through our new website: www.fbcitasca.org. The website contains basic information about our service times, sermon subjects, and upcoming studies. Also, we are making available some audio sermons for listening to at home. These sermons will be updated regularly, and are available for listening, downloading, or podcasting. This is an in-home point of contact, designed to encourage you to come and worship the Lord together with us.

Central Baptist Church

Sunday School 9:45 a.m.

Worship 10:50 a.m.

Sunday evening Bible Study 5:00-6:00 p.m.

Wednesday evening Bible Study and Prayer 7:00 p.m.

Ladies Bible Study Tuesday 8:00-10:00am

Team Kids- for K-4th grade resumes Monday, January 29, 3:30-5:00 p.m. Must have signed permission slip if new member. For more info, call 687-2620

First United Methodist Church

This Sunday's Sermon:

“Okay, You Found a Church! – but did you find the Holy Spirit?”

Come join us in our beautiful, historic sanctuary, where worship is a joyous celebration. Main at King St.
Rev. Tom Wood, Pastor Worship 10:50 a.m.

254-687-2475

WHAT SIN CAN YOU NOT FORGIVE?

Matthew 6: 9 - 13 tells us that we must forgive those who trespass against us, or our heavenly

Father will not forgive us.

Church of Christ 300 N. Aquilla

Sunday: 9:45 & 10:45 a.m. & 5:00 p.m. Wed. 6 p.m.

First Presbyterian Church

Sunday Schedule 9:30 Fellowship Time 10:00 Sunday School
11:00 Worship
Exercise Classes for Senior Citizens Tues. & Thurs. 10:00 a.m.
Game Nights – 3rd Tuesday Night – 6:00 p.m.
ANGEL FOOD MINISTRY HOST SITE 687-2243

Itasca Ministerial Alliance Meeting

March 3 – 9:00 a.m.

First Presbyterian Church

Itasca Zoning Committee Meeting

2nd Monday of Month 6 p.m.

Municipal Court Building 136 N. Hill St.

Itasca City Council Meeting

Tuesday, February 20, 2007

6:00 p.m.

Municipal Court Building 136 N. Hill St.

Itasca ISD School Board Meeting

2nd Monday of Month 7:00 p.m.

IISD Administration Building - 123 N College St.

Chamber of Commerce Meeting

Last Monday of Month

5:30 p.m.

Citizens State Bank E. Main St.

Volunteer Fire Department Meetings

2nd Monday of Month Business Meeting - 7:00 p.m.

3rd Monday of Month Fire Training - 7:00 p.m.

Fire Station Downtown Itasca

Public Notice – 3rd Posting

Abandoned & Junk Vehicles

The Office of Code Enforcement would like to inform the community concerning abandoned and junk vehicles, in hopes that it could encourage our citizens to abide by the Itasca Code of Ordinances and continue the beautification of our city.

A “Junk Vehicle,” is defined as a vehicle that is self-propelled and inoperable and does not have lawfully attached to it an unexpired license plate and a valid motor vehicle inspection certificate, wrecked, dismantled or partially dismantled or discarded, and has remained inoperable for more than 72 consecutive hours, if the vehicle is on public property or 30 consecutive days, if the vehicles is on private property.

Anyone violating this ordinance will be sent a Notice of Violation letter informing the property owner/vehicle owner to remove the vehicle(s) within 10 (Ten)-calendar days. If the vehicle(s) are not removed within the stated time and a hearing has not been requested, a citation will be issued and the vehicle(s) will be removed from the property.

Any questions regarding any of the City of Itasca Code of Ordinances, please call 687-2201 during normal business hours. Felicia Mayberry, Office of Code Enforcement

“Ride’um Cowboy”

Continued from page 1.



Reporters (left to right) Alecia Evans and Megan Goff pose with Bareback Rider Chris Harris. They will be rooting for him in December as he competes for the World Championship.

“It’s not about the money,” Chris said, “It’s for the love of rodeo and for the recognition.”

When Harris began riding at the age of nine, he rode bulls. Not being the best in the event, a friend dared him to ride a bareback horse. He took the bet and found his natural calling.

“It was the most natural thing I’ve ever done.” Harris said. “Riding barebacks includes a lot of body control and is very physically demanding. In my “younger days” I needed very little physical training but now I work out 4-5 days a week in a

gym.”

Harris rode in college and has competed in rodeos all over the United States, in Calgary, Canada and in Brazil since turning pro. He has a career earning of \$454,321. Some of his career highlights include the Texas Circuit Finals ’96, Calgary Stampede ’98, Royal Rodeo, Cowboy Capital of the World Rodeo, Caldwell Night Rodeo ’99, Star of Texas, Jaycee Bootheel Rodeo ’00, Cloverdale Rodeo, Dinosaur Roundup Rodeo, Navajo Nation 4th of July Celebration ’01, Canadian Pro Rodeo, Clackamas County Fair & Rodeo, Lewiston Round-Up, ’02 and Belton Fourth of July Rodeo ’04.

Harris’ wife, Stephanie, barrel raced for many years and has competed at some of the same rodeos as her husband.

“It’s much more enjoyable when she’s with me.” Harris said.

Harris is not only a cowboy and a husband; he is the father of a little four year old girl, Jessie James Harris, who thinks her dad is the world’s greatest cowboy.

“It is hard to leave my family for long periods of time while I rodeo,” Harris said. “It is wonderful when they are there with me cheering me on.”

In the last few years, Harris has realized that with fame comes responsibility. In February 2006, he joined with country singers Willie Nelson, Clay Walker and Lynyrd Skynyrd and cowboys Luke Branquinho and Buck Taylor in visiting wounded veterans at Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio. Harris and the soldiers shared a number of injury stories.

The 2007 rodeo finals in Las Vegas are a bright thought in Chris’ future.

“I am working hard to bring home that trophy, but I will continue to ride for a while. I am not ready to quit, but when I do stop competing I would like to start a business that includes guided hunts.”

Harris said that he has broken numerous bones and he realizes that as he gets older – he is over thirty, old for a bareback rider – the arthritis will start to slow him down, but he is not ready to quit yet. He had already been hard at work in 2007 riding in a number of rodeos including Fort Worth last week.

“The quote I have lived by throughout the years is,” Harris said, “the only death you’ll ever die is the death you die everyday by not living.”

Blood Drive

Feb. 8, 2006

12 noon – 6 p.m.

Farrow Room

Sponsored by

HILCO

Contact Bob Wilson at 254-687-2331 ext. 2210 for more information.

Free to a Good Home

2 year old Blue-Russell. Free to a good home! I have owned this very small, fast, and energetic sweetie since he was 5 weeks old. He is great with children, adults, and other animals; however, he is very dominant towards other male dogs.

Serious inquiries only PLEASE, as I will be very selective. New home should have no other male dogs, plenty of room for running, or someone dedicated to taking long daily walks for exercise. Contact Cindy @ 254-582-7063

Needing a Home

Two (2) grown boxer dogs wandered onto my property. One is a blond female and the other is a dark brown/black mixed male. They are very mild mannered calm dogs and need a good home. If they are yours or you are interested in them, call 254-580-3545 or 254-687-2748.

Senior Spotlight Javier Medina

Photographer & Reporter Sarah Evans
Caricature by Gabby Rivera



“I love food!” said 17 year old Javier Medina.” My favorites are free food, Mexican food and cheesecake (especially Strawberry Swirl Cheesecake from Wal-Mart!)

Javier has attended Itasca “forever” and has made many friends along the way.

“I don’t have a specific best friend” said Javier or Javi as he likes to be called “but my closest friends are Edgar, Jose, Lamar, Jesus, Luis, Craig, Courtney, Adam Handy, and Shelby.”

Javi has quite a few favorite memories from his school days (especially about food).

“My favorite elementary memories are getting coupons for free drinks and ice cream for having good grades and perfect attendance, and also nap time.” Javier said, “But my absolute favorite memory was getting to hang out with some of my friends and the band in New York City.”

He is the son of Judy Medina and the late Eleazar Medina. Javier is the younger brother of 22-year-old Hector and the older brother of 9-year-old Brianna.

“My role model, of course, would have to be my dad,” Javier said, “Because he was a great dad and a great man.”

“I am very active in school,” Javier said. “I compete in UIL, play in the band, a member of the Science Club, run track, cross country and play baseball. I am also a member of the National Honor Society and I am senior class president and a member of student council.”

When he is not busy with school, Javi enjoys eating, sleeping, running, telling jokes, watching Finding Nemo, or just chillin’ with some of his friends.

“After graduation” Javier said, “I plan to grow out my hair, become rich, and have a family. I am very ready to graduate, but I would like to leave everyone a bit of advice: Don’t drink or do drugs and always show up to school on time.”



Senior Spotlight Karla Ochoa

Photographer courtesy Of Mowana & Reporter Devin Corbitt
Caricature by Gabby Rivera



“Two-bits, four-bit, six-bits, a dollar! All for the black and gold stand up and holler!” Karla Bianca Ochoa is co-captain of the cheer-leading squad, helping to lead the team at football games and at competitions.

“Being a cheerleader has been responsible for my most embarrassing moment that everyone will most likely remember me by. I fell during my first pep rally and broke my ankle. But, I still love it and I’ll remember cheering forever.”

Although cheering is the only “sport” Karla participates in, she loves watching football, especially the Texas Longhorns.

Karla is very involved in her school and community. As well as cheering, she is on the yearbook staff, the senior class treasurer and secretary of the National Honor Society and participates on the science team in UIL. She has been a Cinco de Mayo dancer since she was four years old. Karla attends Our Lady of Mercy Catholic Church in Hillsboro where she is also very active.

“I’m in a lot of stuff and it gets pretty busy, but I love just hanging out with my friends.”

Karla enjoys reading, especially love and romance stories, and her favorite movie is The Notebook. She describes herself as funny, optimistic and pretty. She listens to all kinds of music, just not “that heavy metal stuff”.

“In school I love A&P. It is so is AWESOME because we get to cut stuff, and Mrs. Swilley is THE BEST!”

Karla’s role model is her grandmother, Mary Sepulveda. However, her hero is her daddy. Her parents are Carlos and Theresa Ochoa, and she has a younger sister, Marisela, 10. She loves her family very much especially her mom because she loves to laugh and she makes everything fun.

Besides graduating Karla is looking forward to a road trip she and her friends are taking after they graduate.



Continued on page 5.

Wampus Cats Hold onto 2nd in District

Reporters Eva Mayberry & Ashley Durham



Tuesday January 30, the Varsity Boys went head to head with the Keene Chargers. During the first half of the game, the Cats held the lead, but in the second half of the game, a strong Keene team caught up and jumped ahead with a small lead. The Cats and Chargers fought back and forth for the win but at the buzzer, it was the Cats on top winning 46-41.

The JV boys worked hard but they came away with a loss at the hands of the Keene JV Chargers. The Lady Cats also needed a win but although they played hard, they were unable to defeat the Lady Chargers.

At the Itasca Special Events Center Friday night, the Varsity Rio Vista Eagles came out hard against the Wampus Cats. At the end of a fast and furious (the Cat fans against the refs) first quarter the Eagles were up 15-11.

The Cats dominated the second quarter by scoring 20 points to Rio Vista's 4. The refs were still a factor as the Itasca fans were upset and very vocal over many of the refs' calls or failure to make the calls.

The game continued to be a very explosive until the final buzzer when the Cats walked away with a 62-44 win.

Senior Kendale Mayberry continues to lead the Cats on the floor and is responsible for forcing a number of Eagle turnovers as his quickness and ball handling skills keep the Wampus Cats focused on their ultimate goal – the play-offs.

Scoring for the Wampus Cats were Tralyn Harden 29, Desmond Guy 11, Kendale Mayberry 6, DeVeon Mayberry 5, Dee Marshall 5, Mikey Marshall 4 and Clayton Wienecke 2.

The Wampus Cats are second in district behind the Maypearl Panthers. Keene, Grandview and Rio Vista are scrambling for the third place spot.

February 9 @ Grandview

Overall Stats 16 - 5

District 7 - 2

JVB, VB 6:00

February 15 Hico

JVB, VB

6:00

Boys Basketball Coach: Greg Cranfill 687 - 2922 ext. 160

Senior Spotlight Ochoa

Continued from page 4.

She plans to attend UTA after graduation to major in nursing. She hopes to someday get her BSN and be a director of nurses.

"In ten years I want to be working in the E.R. and be the Director of Nurses. I also want to be married, but I don't want children yet. I would like to give underclassmen a bit of advice before I graduate: always do what you are afraid to do. Also remember he who has never learned to obey cannot be a good commander."

A Singing Soul

Kelvin McVea, junior IISD

A singing soul emphasizes many things.
Some may sing because they've overcome.

My soul sings because it has a voice that
bellows deep inside of me.

My singing soul now jumps for joy.
Because, like me, it's overwhelmed with pride
instead of anger, frustration and grief.
My soul and I have been on an amazing jour-
ney.

Even though, "parting is such sweet sorrow,"
I've let sorrow go and grabbed an abundant
amount of joy.

So now my soul sings the song of the old spiri-
tual,

"We shall overcome"

This is my story, song and truth of my singing
soul.

Darcy's Country Cuts

916 South HCR 4114

Tuesday – Friday
9 a.m. – 6 p.m.

Call for appointment
254-854-3087
(new phone number)

Paw Print Press

Stories and advertisements for publication may be sent to Paw Print Press, 123 N College St., Itasca, TX 76055 or e-mailed to bpetrash@itasca.k12.tx.us. No charge.

“Hill County Day in Austin” Scheduled

Press Release from *The Reporter*

“Hill County Day in Austin” will be held at the state capitol Wednesday, February 21. The trip gives local residents an opportunity to see their legislators at work on the floors of the House of Representatives and Senate and in committee hearings.

Activities for the day include a group picture on the south steps of the capitol, attending the opening ceremonies for the House and Senate, a Dutch-treat luncheon and presentations by representatives from various state agencies. The Hillsboro Chamber of Commerce, along with chambers from Lake Whitney, Hubbard and Itasca, is hosting the event.

For the second straight session, two buses have been chartered for the trip. Serving as gold sponsor for the trip is HILCO. Other sponsors include AT&T, TXU, Hill County Farm Bureau and Wells Fargo Bank-Hillsboro and Hubbard.

State Representative Jim Pitts and State Senator Kip Averitt are scheduled to speak at the luncheon, which will be held at Spaghetti Warehouse. The old Court of Criminal Appeals' chambers on the third floor of the capitol has been reserved for afternoon presentations.

Representatives with the Texas Department of Transportation, Texas Education Agency, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, Texas Railroad Commission and economic-development officials from the governor's office are scheduled to speak.

For those interested, special tours of the capitol complex have been scheduled for 2 p.m. and 2:15 p.m. They start near the south doors of the capitol. Buses will leave the Hillsboro Chamber of Commerce on North Covington Street at 6:45 a.m. and will return at approximately 6:30 p.m. Cost of the trip, including lunch and the bus, is \$25 per person. For individuals taking their own vehicles and wishing to attend the lunch, the cost is \$15.

Reservations can be made by contacting the Hillsboro Chamber of Commerce at 254-582-2481, Lake Whitney Chamber of Commerce at 254-694-2540, Eugene Fulton with the Hubbard Chamber of Commerce at 254-576-2050 or 254-576-2721 or Bob Wilson with the Itasca Chamber of Commerce at 254-687-2331.

All reservations, which are required by Wednesday, February 14, must be paid in advance.

November Police Activity Report

Arrests

5 Felony
13 Misdemeanor
1 Other Agency
1 Class “C”

Total Calls for Service 88

Cases Files

8 District Attorney
13 County Attorney

Traffic Citations

344 – Moving 169 - Non-Moving 105 – Warnings

Class “C” Citations

City Ordinance Violations

12 – Open Container 3 – Loud Music
1 – Public Intoxication
8 – Minor in Possession/Alcohol
1 – Minor in Possession/Tobacco
14 – Possession of Drug Paraphernalia
3 – Assault
1 – Illegal Trash Dumping

December Police Activity Report

Arrests

5 Felony
30 Misdemeanor

Total Calls for Service 109

Cases Files

5 District Attorney
30 County Attorney

Traffic Citations

361 – Moving 124 - Non-Moving 144 – Warnings

Class “C” Citations

9 – Open Container 1 – Public Intoxication
5 – Minor in Possession/Alcohol 1 – Assault
2 – Minor in Possession/Tobacco
16 – Possession of Drug Paraphernalia

Fire Department November Report

| Fire Call | City | County |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|------------------|
| Assist EMS | | 3 |
| Control Burn | | 1 |
| LZ Setup | 1 | |
| Motor Vehicle Accident | | 2 |
| Vehicle Fire | 1 | |
| Wash Down | 1 | |
| Total | 3 | 6 |
| Total Man Hours | 29 hrs. 30 mins | |
| 6:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. - 7 | 6:00 p.m. - 6:00 a.m. -2 | |
| Total mileage | 70 | Total members 16 |

Fire Department December Report

| Fire Call | City | County |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|------------------|
| Haz Mat | 1 | |
| Motor Vehicle Accident | 1 | 2 |
| Residence | | 2 |
| Other | 1 | |
| Total | 3 | 4 |
| Total Man Hours | 15 hrs. 8 mins | |
| 6:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. - 4 | 6:00 p.m. - 6:00 a.m. -3 | |
| Total mileage | 55 | Total members 15 |

Church Group, Business Honored for Service to Community



Representing Angel Food Ministries – left to right - Sally Crouch, Lynette Payne, Diane Barnes, Judy Offutt, Toni Rash, Janie Baker and Dr. Verl Childers. Accepting for Leach Trailers was Charles Ray Barnes.

The Chamber of Commerce presented the Itasca branch of the Angel Food Ministries, a non-profit, non-denominational organization dedicated to providing first-quality food to communities throughout the United States with a Service to the Community award.

Angel Food Ministries began in 1994 in Monroe, Georgia and now serves hundreds of thousands of families every month in 32 states.

In Itasca, the program is hosted by First Presbyterian Church and includes the participation of eight other churches in Hill, Ellis and Johnson counties. When the program started locally in October 2005, 91 boxes of food were distributed, but that quickly grew to 468 boxes in December 2006, distributed locally. In the last 14 months, over 4675 boxes of food have been distributed locally.

“This is making a significant impact on hunger in our community,” Chamber Director Sue Rivera said as she presented the award.

First Presbyterian Church of Itasca, the George G. and Alva Hudson Smith Foundation, Leach Trailer Sales, and the Presbyterian Children’s Home have supported the project corporately.

The owners of Leach Trailers, Doug and Davonia Leach, began the business sixteen years ago at the owner’s house and shop in Burleson. Twelve years ago they purchased land and a building in Itasca from the bank and moved the business to Itasca. The business manufactures and installs dump bed, and builds pup trailers, end dumps, and belly dumps. They employ 22 people.

The Chamber honored the business for all of the help they give Itasca. Anytime Itasca needs equipment, Leach Trailers is quick to loan the city their big trucks, backhoe or welding equipment along with the labor, many times. They also helped Angel Food Ministries get started by furnishing machinery, labor, and welding.

Citizen of the Year

Continued from page 1.

He has worked with the Ministerial Alliance for many years and serves on the Itasca Economic Development Committee. He is always a huge help with the Food for Families food drive and helps with the Angel Food Ministry distribution, getting up at 4:00 a.m. one Saturday each month to help.

Rev. Bates currently serves as vice-president of the Ministerial Alliance and is working toward his dream of a youth center for our community – a place where children can go and be tutored, learn, grow, become outstanding citizens and all of the time be in a safe environment.

Bates received a standing ovation from the attendees of the banquet.

For Sale

**2 lots 310 Mark St. Hillsboro
Call 254-659-7054 after 4 p.m.**

Country Living at Its Best

Newly Remodeled Large 2 story home
3 bedrooms 2 baths

Large kitchen/new appliances

Utility with washer/dryer connections

Lovely sunny living area

1-Year Lease Available January 12, 2007

\$800.00 per month + Utilities

Deposit \$800.00

5121 FM 67 3 miles East of Itasca

Contact: Oscar Castillo 817-781-3040 or

oscatillo@c-pts.com

For Sale

1982 Ford 1 Ton Pickup

4 Speed - Flat bed

See at 105 Beard Itasca 254-687-2345

Want to subscribe to *PPP*?

The Paw Print Press is a weekly publication that is currently in its 10th year. If you would like to subscribe send \$22 to *Paw Print Press*, 123 N. College, Itasca, TX 76055. We welcome articles and Letters to the Editor but reserve the right to shorten or refuse them if they are deemed inappropriate.

House Passes 2007 Joint Funding Resolution Increasing VA Healthcare Budget by \$3.6 Billion

U.S. Representative Chet Edwards today announced that the fiscal year 2007 Joint Funding Resolution passed by the House includes a \$3.6 billion increase for veterans' medical care under the Department of Veterans Affairs budget, \$3.4 billion overall. Edwards, Chairman of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, emphasized that while the increase is significant, the level is consistent with the need to keep up with health care inflation and the increasing number of veterans coming into the VA health care system. The House passed the bill 286 to 140.

"This increased funding level is good news for America's veterans, because it provides \$278 million dollars more a month for the VA health care system compared to the budget passed by the previous Congress. The sooner this bill is passed and sent to the president, the better, since continued funding of the VA at 2006 levels could force harmful cuts in health care services for hundreds of thousands of veterans due to health care inflation and the increasing number of veterans using the VA health care system."

As Chairman, Edwards fought for a significant increase in VA health care funding, despite the tight budget constraints enacted by the previous Congress.

"I will never understand why the previous congressional leadership refused to pass the veterans' health care funding bill, instead allowing funding to proceed for the last four months at last year's funding levels. This bill will correct that wrong," said Edwards. "Our veterans have kept their promises to our nation, and we felt it was our duty to keep our promises to them. I applaud Chairman Obey for writing a bill that clearly makes veterans our top priority."

The following are the totals for VA and military construction: Veterans Healthcare: \$32.3 billion, an increase of \$3.6 billion above the fiscal year 2006 funding level to provide service for an anticipated increase of at least 325,000 patients and to meet rising healthcare costs. VA discretionary total is \$36.5 billion, an increase of \$3.4 billion above fiscal year 2006 funding level. Fully funded pay raises (other agencies only receive 50% of pay raise). Military Construction: \$6.2 billion for military construction, \$4 billion for family housing program, U.S. Army would receive \$250 million more than fiscal year 2006 level. BRAC accounts will receive a \$1 billion increase above the fiscal year 2006 level, for a total of \$2.5 billion.

"While this bill did not fully fund the BRAC accounts for 2007, Congress will have the opportunity to address the rest of the funding requirements in the upcoming Fiscal Year 2007 Supplemental, which should be passed in the spring," said Edwards.

The bill now heads to the Senate.

Animal Control in Hill County Non-Existent

This article has been disseminated to area newspapers and Hill County Paw Pals' vast email network. (Edited by PPP)

Based on a pet population formula provided by the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS), over half American household have 1.6 dogs and/or 2.1 cats. This equates to some 11,325 dogs and 16,914 cats living in Hill County (total of 28,239 pets). These figures are estimates of household pets only and do not include the estimated thousands of unwanted dogs and cats that are "dumped" each year in our rural areas. Hill County's pet overpopulation issue is a direct result of irresponsible pet owners who do not sterilize their pets and allow them to roam and proliferate at will. We live in a county where 70% of our population lives in areas without animal control services. One pair of uncontrolled breeding dogs can produce 4,372 offspring in just four years; cats can produce 420,715 offspring in this same period.

Even with a State Law that makes it mandatory for pets to be vaccinated against the rabies virus, many owners are negligent and refuse to comply. It is not known how many pets in Texas do not get rabies vaccinations, but estimates run from 50-70% of pets being unvaccinated or not current on vaccinations. This is a significant number for Hill County. Based on our county's estimates of pet population, there are potentially 14,119-19,767 dogs and cats not vaccinated in Hill County (based on the 50-70% range estimate).

Pet overpopulation burdens each of our citizens and our community as a whole with health, economic, legal, and safety liabilities.

Push for positive change by letting your voice be heard. Write your Honorable County Judge Justin Lewis and your Commissioner at P.O. Box 457, Hillsboro, Texas 76645—these elected officials work for ALL of us, not just a select few. For more information about Hill County Paw Pals call 580-0679, email us at hcpawpals@yahoo.com or visit our website: hcpawpals.org for more information.

Do You Remember . . . ? – “Idioms or Sayings”

Columnist Carl Sweeney



Recently we have had columns about human interest, personalities, school, peddlers, etc. maybe now we should have something in a lighter vein. I think it is good to laugh at ourselves occasionally. Most of the following are things we older ones have heard over the years.

Webster says that an Idiom is a speed form that is peculiar to itself within the usage of a given, a specialized language, or jargon. In years past we called them “sayings”. No matter what they are called, they have a way of emphasizing a point that cannot be otherwise described, even by the use of six-bit words used by more learned conversationalists. Most of the

young readers have not been exposed to such quaint expressions.

Take the word, “shifty”, we knew that it meant a person you could not trust in the smokehouse with a butcher knife, or if you sleep with dogs, you will wake up with fleas, which means, if you can expect a sorry reputation if you run with sorry folks. Another is that he is studying to be a half wit, and he is halfway there and he was grinning like a mule with a mouthful of briars.

If a person was hard to pin down, he’s like trying to hem up syrup with half a biscuit. An extremely inebriated person was described as “knee walking, commode hugging drunk.” We used to idle our cars down to see whose could run the quietest. One guy said his was quieter than a mouse wetting on a bale of cotton. Now that’s quiet. Some expressions had to do with ugliness. “He was so ugly we had to hang a pork chop around his neck so the dogs would play with him.” “Don’t ever kiss an ugly girl; she will tell the whole town.” Or the ultimate of ugly was she has a smile like a wave on a slop jar, or she is as common as hog tracks.

Being raised on a farm and having spent a lot of time around animals, I remember some of animal sayings such as: “His hogs are so poor, they have to stand up twice to make a shadow.” “He was grinning like a dog eating yellow jackets.” “Even a blind hog finds an acorn once in a while.”

In describing someone with a big mouth instead of just coming right out and saying so, we would say, “He can bite through a side of bacon without greasing a gum!” Then you might describe a person’s honesty by saying, “If he tells you a hen dips snuff you will find a brush under her wing.”

We sometimes described a family’s financial situation with “Those folks are too poor to paint and too proud to whitewash.” “They don’t have a pot or a window to throw it out of.”

Other sayings in no special category or order were: “I hear you clucking, but I can’t find your nest; he was as regular as a goose goes barefoot; he came around here big eyeing around; he is as useless as hip pockets on a hog.” We used the following expressions to describe someone’s intelligence or the lack thereof. “He’s not playing with a full deck.” “His elevator doesn’t go to the top.” “He’s about a half bubble off.” “He doesn’t have both oars in the water.” To describe an attractive young lady we would say, “She is as pretty as a speckled pup under a red wagon.”

There were many more of those sayings we used in those days. Some of them I cannot list here, at the advice of my censors.

Recent Death



Woodlee, Jr. Fred - Fred Woodlee, Jr. 72 of Alvarado, passed away January 26, 2007 in a Burleson Hospital. He was born to the late Fred Woodlee, Sr. & Lillie Hutchins on April 25, 1934 in Morrison, TN.

Fred was a retired machinist with FM & S in Joshua and in his younger days he loved raising Greyhounds. He was a beloved family man and loved spending time with his family and friends.

He is survived by his loving wife of 54 years, Vera Mae Woodlee of Alvarado; sons, Kenneth Woodlee and his wife, Mia of Alvarado, Keith Woodlee and his wife, Tina of Lillian; daughter, Kathy Rayborn and her husband, Greg of Alvarado; 7 grandchildren, David Woodlee, Amy Good, Kitty Spradlin, Amber Woodlee, Kaitlynn Woodlee, Amanda Woodlee, and Jennifer Woodlee; 19 great-grandchildren; brother, Charles Woodlee and his wife, Betty of Ft. Worth; sister, Shirley Miller and her husband, Weldon of Covington; and 7 nephews.

He was preceded in death by his son, Alan Woodlee.

Graveside services were held January 29, 2007 at the Itasca Cemetery with Rev. Russ Weaver officiating. Services were conducted under the direction of Clayton Kay-Vaughan Funeral Home of Itasca.

Paw Print Press
123 N. College
Itasca, Texas 76055

Wampus Cats of the Week

Senior Basketball Girls

Reporters Ashley Durham & Eva Mayberry



Rachel Anderson (right), Ashley Swilley (middle), and Mercedes Snyder (left) are the only seniors playing for the Lady Wampus Cat Basketball teams this year. Throughout high school, these three young people have worked extremely

hard both on and off the basketball court.

Ashley Swilley has played for the Lady Cats all four years of high school. She is a post and her height and skills will be missed next year.

Rachel Anderson has played basketball for 3 years and her quickness and ball-handling skills force many turnovers for the opposing team. Rachel was nominated as one of two students to represent Itasca High for the Wendy's Heisman Award.

Mercedes Snyder came to Itasca two years ago. She had never played basketball before but has had a great time learning – Itasca style.

Special of the Week



“This would be a great car to take to college. Remember graduation is just around the corner.

'01 Taurus SES Leather, Loaded, Nice



Great Buy! Only \$5,985!!!

Lloyd Ford – Proud Supporter of the Wampus Cats