

# Paw Print Press

Proudly Serving Itasca "The Big Little Town" since 1997

Itasca, Texas 76055

Vol. 2007 Issue #33

August 17, 2007

## 95 Tomboys Win National Pony Softball Championship

Press Release



Front row (l to r) Courtney Chambers, Hallie Monkers, Danielle Hubbard, Kolbee Gray, Alexia Wheeler and Mackenzie Bay.

Second row (l to r) Brittany Ponder, Maegan Martinez, Kaleigh Lightsey, Jennifer Prnka and Nicole Hutyra.

Back row (l to r) Coaches Coz Martinez, Wes Hubbard, Kevin Lightsey, Scott Chambers and Randy Gray.

The 95 Tomboys softball team recently traveled to Round Rock for the 2007 Pony National Softball Tournament, where they captured the national championship.

Continued on page 3.

## 2002 Grad Deployed



Senior Airman Mark Strona was deployed to UI Udeid Air Force in Qatar on July 20, 2007. He is scheduled to serve an 8-month tour.

Strona has been in the Air Force for 4 years and is a specialist in Precision Guided Munitions. He has been stationed in Wichita Falls, Aviano, Italy, Qatar, Spangdahlem, Germany, Israel and Iraq. His home base is Dyess Air Force Base in Abilene, TX.

Strona and his wife Taylor are 2002 graduates of IHS. They have a 4-year-old son Logan.

## Officers Recover Firearm after Shot Fired

Press Release

On Sunday morning, August 5, 2007 at approximately 1:50 a.m., three Itasca officers and a DPS Trooper were clearing out a parking lot after a dance at the "Warehouse" in Itasca when the officers and Trooper heard a gun shot from the area of the Itasca Fire Department on West Monroe Street. As the officers and trooper went to investigate, two subjects were seen walking from the dark area on the west side of the fire hall. When the officers and trooper approached the fire hall, the subjects began running and threw an object to the ground by the fire hall. A "MAC-10" pistol and a fully loaded magazine were recovered.

Chief Griscavage said that gang members of the Crips and Bloods had been at the dance but was unable to say whether they were involved in the shooting or if the firearm belonged to either gang.

Assisting Chief Griscavage in the search were Sergeant Ted Walton and Officer Jimmy Smitherman of Itasca PD and Department of Public Safety Trooper Donald Mills, along with deputies from the Hill County Sheriff's Department and Covington police.

## Itasca Weather

By Carl Sweeney,  
Cooperator with the  
National Weather Service

This picture was taken in 1957 when Carl Sweeney began keeping records for the National Weather Service. Mr. Paukert installed the equipment on top of the pump station in downtown Itasca.



After a dry year in 2006, we seem to have a reversal this year. We have already exceeded our yearly total of rainfall to this date. We have been fortunate that we have not had many severe storms, which usually accompany wet weather. Our winter was mild, and the summer has been cool until the first week in August.

We have had only one 100° day, which occurred on August 12, 2007, the date of this report it was 101°.

Continued on page 3.

## 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>	120 W. Marrion	687-9134
<u>Shiloh Community Church</u>		254-582-0487
<u>St. John Missionary Baptist</u>	506 S. Weaver	687-2821
<u>3<sup>rd</sup> 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.	

### 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 10:30-12:00

### First United Methodist Church

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

### Itasca Church of Christ

We all start out holding the hand of God. But he gave us free will; and desiring us to grow, he allows us to turn loose and wander off. Some have gone off so far that they have forgotten the way back to God.

Those of us who have stayed close to God, or found our way back to God, are seeking our missing siblings to return to God to experience the fullness of life, and not mere existence.

Itasca Church of Christ      200 N. Aquilla  
Sunday: 9:45 a.m. & 10:45 a.m. 5 p.m.      Wednesday: 6 p.m.

### First Presbyterian Church

#### Sunday Schedule

9:00 - 9:30 Praise & Worship (Sanctuary)

Cross Roads Band

9:15 - 9:45 Fellowship Time in Barton Hall

9:45 - 10:30 Sunday School all Ages (Nursery - Seniors)

10:50 - Praise and Worship - 11:00 - Worship Service

"Hour of Power" - 7th - 12th grades

Sunday evenings 6:30 - 7:30 p.m. - Barton Hall

Exercise Classes- Senior Citizens Tues. & Thurs. 10 a.m.

Game Night - 3rd Tuesday Night - 6:00 p.m.

Angel Food Ministry Host Site - 687-2243

### Itasca Zoning Committee Meeting

2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of Month 5:30 p.m.

Municipal Court Building 136 N. Hill St.

### Itasca Ministerial Alliance Meeting

None during June, July or August

### Itasca City Council Meeting

Monday, August 20, 2007      6:00 p.m.

Municipal Court Building 136 N. Hill St.

### Itasca ISD School Board Meeting

August 10, 2007      7:00 p.m.

IISD Administration Building - 123 N College St.

### Chamber of Commerce Meeting

Monday, August 27, 2007      5:30 p.m.

HILCO Operations Building      E. Main St.

### Volunteer Fire Department Meetings

2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of Month      Business Meeting - 7:00 p.m.

3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of Month      Fire Training - 7:00 p.m.

Fire Station      Downtown Itasca

## IISD Offers Season Football Pass & Special Event Center Reserve Seating Combo

Itasca ISD Season Athletic & SEC Reserve Seating Pass is on sale in the high school office.

The pass will allow one-person entry into all HOME high school and junior high athletic events (football & basketball) as well as reserving seating in the SEC for band concerts, Spring Festival, UIL One Act Play Performance and any other school-sponsored event. The pass will not be honored at Graduation Ceremony 2008 or any event where an outside entertainer or presenter has been hired or the performance is being used as a fundraiser for an organization. The price for this 2007-2008 all seasons pass is \$75.

There are 126 seats (9 rows of 14 seats each) that are available for reservations, all located in the center section.

Mail in your check or bring it to the high school office with the attached form. Seats are assigned on a first come-first serve basis. Indicate lower seats, seats in the middle of the section or seats at the top of the section. If you are buying more than one ticket and would like them together indicate that also.

Come to the high school office to see a schematic.

#### Reserve Seating Passes

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of seats \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$75 each \_\_\_\_\_

Location (Circle preference)

Lower      Middle      Upper section

Total enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to Itasca ISD & mail to Itasca High School, 123 N College, Itasca, TX 76055.

## 95 Tomboys National Champs

Continued from page 1.

The 95 Tomboys is a select softball team from the Mansfield Girls' Softball Association. It is comprised of girls from West, Itasca, Grandview and Mansfield. The team was undefeated in the tournament, outscoring their opponents 35-11. They captured the national championship in the final game against Corpus Christi Triple Threat, 8-5.

Parents, coaches and area citizens are very proud of these young ladies and wish to congratulate them on a job well done.

## 2007 Weather Report

Continued from page 1.

Our precipitation this year is as follows: January 4.71", February 1.14", March 9.93", April 2.62", May 6.66", June 10.24", July 3.70" and August to date 3.11." For a total of 38.41," which is about 13 inches above normal. The most precipitation we have received in a year was 55.82" in 2004. The least amount was 18.95" in 1963. This is a 50-year record for Itasca. During that period, we have had only 2 summers with no 100° days.

## Time is Running Out to Submit Name for Downtown Park on the Corner



The City and the Economic Development Committee are asking citizens to submit suggestions for a name for the new park located on the east corner of Main and Hill Sts. Place your suggestions in the box located in City Hall or see Sue Comer at the water department window. The deadline for submissions is September 1, 2007.

## Don't Forget Tax Free Weekend August 17, 18 & 19

School clothing, footwear & backpacks under \$100 included

## Strike Up the Band

Reporter Mary Maddox



Waking up every morning and going to band practice at 8:00 a.m. and working outside in the hot sun until 2:00 p.m. for two straight weeks are only a small part of Itasca High School Band members' dedication. Where there were four more weeks left of summer break for most students, band members were hard at work on the 2007-2008 program.

This year the pressure is on the shoulders of new IHS Band Director John Bratton, assistant director Patrick Middleton and special consultant David Hernandez, Drum Major Maria Worth and drill sergeants Isai Coronado, Pilar Baskett, Aaron Chavez, Susie May, Andrea Ramos, Chelsea Rodriguez, Devin Corbitt and Cherri Lloyd, to prepare the band for state marching competition. It will not be an easy task as there are many more schools with their eyes on the same prize.

The band has a new theme, a new staff and what some consider the start of a new era for the Mighty Wampus Cat Band. "State bound" are the buzzwords of the students and sponsors.

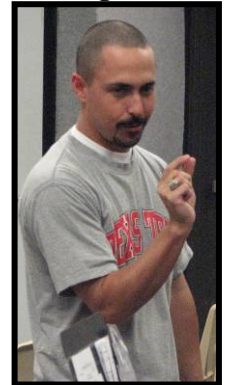
"With Mr. Bratton taking over as the new band director for Itasca, many changes have been made and we're trying different styles," Drill Sergeant Cherri Lloyd said. "I think with all the new variety everyone is more excited and willing to work harder, especially considering this is a State year."

Bratton and Middleton were excited to see over 85 students show up for band camp to participate in this year's band program.

"This is my first year to assist Mr. Bratton in directing the band," Patrick Middleton (pictured right) said. "It is very exciting and I can't wait to see the outcome of the year."

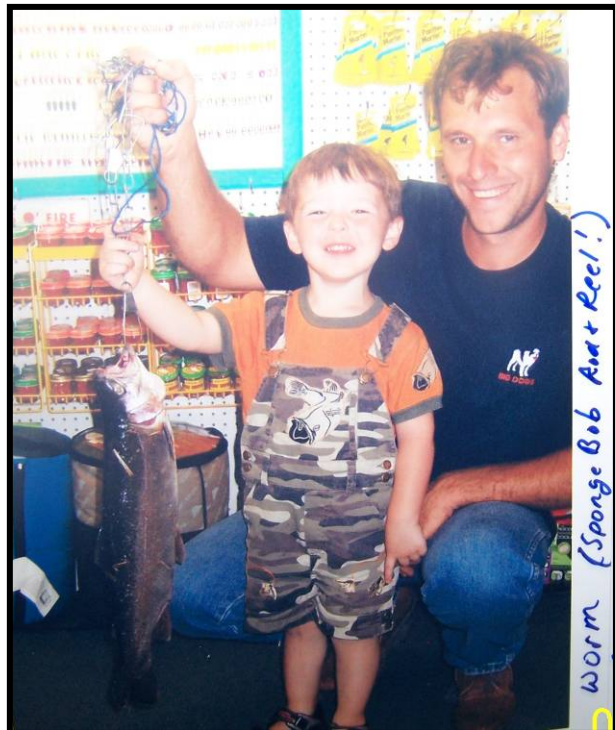
Music from the first Star Wars movie is the theme of the marching performance. It was chosen to celebrate the movie, which was filmed in 1977, making this year its 30th anniversary.

"We are all looking forward to putting on an interesting and different performance this year." Bratton said.



## Big Catch for Local Fisherman

Press Release

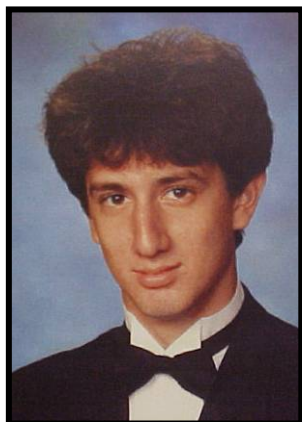


Cole Billingsley of Itasca, who will turn 3 years old on September 25, caught a "big one" in the City Pond at Red River, New Mexico on August 2.

Cole reeled in the nearly 3 pound, 20 inch trout by himself with his Sponge Bob Square Pants rod and reel. Accompanying Cole on the family vacation were his parents, Jason and Becky Billingsley; grandparents, Charles and Diane Barnes; and aunts, Katy, Jennifer, and Sara.

Cole's picture was taken with his fish at Williams Trading Post and put on their "Wall of Honor."

## Trejo - One of a Few Good Men



Leslie Trejo, 2007 IHS graduate, recently finished his 4th week at boot camp in San Diego. He will continue with 4 weeks of pre-crucible training and finish boot camp around the first week of October. If you would like to e-mail Leslie, contact his mother at HILCO for the e-mail address.

## Blessings by the Box

Press Release

Although Angel Food Ministries has been in the area for a while, we are still trying to spread the news. Angel Food Ministries is dedicated to providing grocery relief to all, regardless of financial standing. It is simply a ministry helping all families save money.

Angel Food is available in a quantity that can fit into a medium size box and costs only \$25.00 per box. The menu is different each month and always contains fresh and frozen meats and vegetables along with other items, with a retail value of at least \$50.00. A box of food will feed a family of four for about a week, or a single person for close to a month. The food is all high quality—no seconds, out of date, or damaged items. There are also specials available after purchasing a box. Specials include steaks, chicken, or pork. There is no limit to how many boxes or specials you can order and there are no applications to complete or qualifications to meet. Angel Food Ministries also accepts the Lone Star Card. You can visit [www.angelfoodministries.com](http://www.angelfoodministries.com) for more information.

To give you an idea of what you get for your \$25.00, here's the September menu: 4 lbs. Chicken Leg Quarters; 24 oz. Beef Ribs; 1 lb. Ground Beef; 2 lbs. Breaded Chicken Tenders; 6 oz. Pick Chops; 1 lb. Ground Turkey; 18 oz. Stuffed Manicotti; 12 oz. Smoked Sausage; Betty Crocker Seasoned Potatoes; 7 oz. Cheeseburger Dinner; 16 oz. Frozen Green Beans; 16 oz. Frozen Baby Carrots; 2 lbs. Onions; 1 lb. Pinto Beans; 1 lb. Rice; 7 oz. Blueberry Muffin Mix; 10 ct. Waffles; and a dessert item.

Local participating churches are:

- The Sanctuary in Hillsboro (254-580-1127)
- First Presbyterian Church in Itasca (254-687-2243)
- First Baptist Church in Grandview (817-866-4430)
- First Baptist Church in Hubbard (254-576-2539)
- First Baptist Church in Milford (972-493-2181)

Orders will be taken at First Presbyterian Church in Itasca on September 11, 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. for delivery on September 29, 2007.

## Citizen State Bank Collecting School Supplies

Don't forget that the employees of Citizens State Bank in Itasca are collecting school supplies to assist needy students. There are elementary and middle school supply list in the foyer of the bank. For more information, you may contact Patsy Bishop at Citizens State Bank at 254-687-2811.

### For Sale

Dining Room set – 6 Chairs – Round table w/ two leafs  
2 Wooden bar stools  
Call 254-687-2442

## Itasca Yellow Gold Softball Competes at State

Reporter Ashley Durham



Pictured above - The team celebrated as they received the district tournament they gave them a ticket to the State Competition.

After taking first place in the district tournament, the Itasca Yellow Gold softball team headed to state July 16-18. The state tournament was held in Rockdale, TX.

The 14 girls were more than ready to play their first game on the July 16, but before the first Itasca batter walked into the batter's box it started pouring down rain. The game had to be postponed until the next day.

After losing to the defending state champions Brownwood Crush in their first game, they went on to play Rockdale Wednesday night. They played their hardest but just could not put the runs on the board. Since they were playing in a double elimination tournament, the team headed home.

Although they lost, the experience in itself was exciting for the team and they hope to go back next season.

### 2007-08 Varsity Football Schedule

- August 18 - Itasca @ Venus Scrimmage 10 a.m.  
 24 Wampus Cats @ Palmer Scrimmage 6 p.m.  
 31 Wampus Cats vs. Tolar 7:30 p.m.  
 September 7 - Wampus Cats @ Rice 7:30 p.m.  
 14 Wampus Cats vs. Blooming Grove 7:30 p.m.  
 21 Itasca vs. Wortham-Homecoming 7:30 p.m.  
 28 Wampus Cats vs. Scurry Rosser 7:30 p.m.  
 October 5 - Open  
 12 \*\*\*Wampus Cats @ Maypearl 7:30 p.m.  
 19 \*\*\*Wampus Cats vs. Grandview 7:30 p.m.  
 26 \*\*\*Wampus Cats @ Hico 7:30 p.m.  
 November 2 - \*\*\*Itasca vs. Rio Vista 7:30 p.m.  
 9 \*\*\*Wampus Cats @ Dublin 7:30 p.m.  
 \*\*\* District Games

## Local Softball Team Attends Showcase Camp

Reporter Ashley Durham

The "Silver Streaks" a select softball team, along with their head coach Debbie Howard-Patton and assistant coaches E. C. Rosson and Turner Hennig attended the 2007 NFCA Elite College showcase and recruiting camp in McKinney on July 20-22.

There were over 150 softball teams from Texas, Oklahoma, Louisiana, Mississippi, Arkansas, Nevada, Kansas, Washington, and Colorado. The tournament was a great chance for every player to show off their softball skills in front of many college recruiters. Of course, only the seniors could actually be recruited, but for the younger players it was a chance to get their name in front of recruiters.

This was the first time the Silver Streaks had attended a college look tournament. They played their best and really bonded as a team. The team is looking forward to their next chance to play for recruiters.

### 2007 JH/J.V. Football Schedule

- August 18 - Itasca @ Venus - Scrimmage 10:00 a.m.  
 23 Itasca @ Palmer - Scrimmage 6:00 p.m.  
 30 Tolar - Away - JV - 6 p.m.  
 September 6 Rice - Home - 7th/8th/JV - 5/6/7 p.m.  
 13 Blooming Grove - Away - 7th/8th/JV - 5/6/7 p.m.  
 20 Wortham - Away - 7th/8th/JV - 5/6/7 p.m.  
 27 Scurry Rosser - Away - 7th/8th/JV - 5/6/7 p.m.  
 October 4 Open  
 11 \*Maypearl - Home - 7th/8th/JV - 5/6/7 p.m.  
 18 \*Grandview - Away - 7th/8th/JV - 5/6/7 p.m.  
 25 \*Hico - Home - 7th/8th/JV - 5/6/7 p.m.  
 November 1 \*Rio Vista - Away - 7th/8th/JV - 5/6/7 p.m.  
 8 \*Dublin - Home - 7th/8th/JV - 5/6/7 p.m.  
 \*Start times subject to change due to field availability

**Fans Come & Support the Cats in their  
 First Scrimmage  
 Saturday - 10 a.m. - at Venus**

**Reminder - All incoming 7th graders must have a physical in order to participate in athletics.**

Are you 50 years old or older & interested in taking an AARP Drivers course? It usually results in a 10% discount on your insurance premium. Call & give your name 254-687-2310

## NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING TO DISCUSS BUDGET AND PROPOSED TAX RATE

The Itasca ISD will hold a public meeting at 7:00 PM 08/27/2007 in Itasca ISD Superintendent's Office Itasca, TX. **The purpose of this meeting is to discuss the school district's budget that will determine the tax rate that will be adopted. Public participation in the discussion is invited.**

**The tax rate that is ultimately adopted at this meeting or at a separate meeting at a later date may not exceed the proposed rate shown below unless the district publishes a revised notice containing the same information and comparisons set out below and holds another public meeting to discuss the revised notice.**

Maintenance Tax	\$1.170050 /\$100 (Proposed rate for maintenance and operations)
School Debt Service Tax	\$0.109860 /\$100 (Proposed rate to pay bonded indebtedness)
<b>Approved by Local Voters</b>	

### Comparison of Proposed Budget with Last Year's Budget

The applicable percentage increase or decrease (or difference) in the amount budgeted in the preceding fiscal year and the amount budgeted for the fiscal year that begins during the current tax year is indicated for each of the following expenditure categories:

Maintenance and operations	% (increase) or	-6.603000% (decrease)
Debt service	% (increase) or	-0.847460% (decrease)
Total expenditures	% (increase) or	-6.422000% (decrease)

### Total Appraised Value and Total Taxable Value

(as calculated under section 26.04, Tax Code)

	Preceding Tax Year	Current Tax Year
Total appraised value* of all property	\$236,832,907	\$289,884,746
Total appraised value* of new property**	\$4,416,730	\$5,988,610
Total taxable value*** of all property	\$110,005,477	\$141,854,369
Total taxable value*** of new property**	\$4,235,440	\$5,243,730

\* "Appraised value" is the amount shown on the appraisal roll and defined by Section 1.04(8), Tax Code.

\*\* "New property" is defined by Section 26.012(17), Tax Code.

\*\*\* "Taxable value" is defined by Section 1.04(10), Tax Code.

### Bonded Indebtedness

**Total amount of outstanding and unpaid bonded indebtedness:\* \$2,700,000**

**\*Outstanding principal**

## Comparison of Proposed Rates with Last Year's Rates

	<u>Maintenance &amp; Operations</u>	<u>Interest &amp; Sinking Fund</u>	<u>* Total</u>	<u>Local Revenue Per Student</u>	<u>State Revenue Per Student</u>
Last Year's Rate	\$1.500000	\$0.089400*	\$1.589400	\$2,624	\$7,036
Rate to Maintain Same Level of Maintenance & Operations Revenue & Pay Debt Service	\$1.102240	\$0.113240*	\$1.215480	\$2,627	\$7,402
Proposed Rate	\$1.170050	\$0.109860*	\$1.279910	\$2,657	\$7,327

\* The Interest & Sinking Fund tax revenue is used to pay for bonded indebtedness on construction, equipment, or both.

The bonds, and the tax rate necessary to pay those bonds, were approved by the voters of this district.

## Comparison of Proposed Levy with Last Year's Levy on Average Residence

	<u>Last Year</u>	<u>This Year</u>
Average Market Value of Residences	\$67,688	\$73,362
Average Taxable Value of Residences	\$51,012	\$55,851
Last Year's Rate Versus Proposed Rate per \$100 Value	\$1.589400	\$1.279910
Taxes Due on Average Residence	\$810.78	\$714.84
Increase (Decrease) in Taxes	\$0.00	\$-95.94

Under state law, the dollar amount of school taxes imposed on the residence homestead of a person 65 years of age or older or of the surviving spouse of such a person, if the surviving spouse was 55 years of age or older when the person died, may not be increased above the amount paid in the first year after the person turned 65, regardless of changes in tax rate or property value.

**Notice of Rollback Rate: The highest tax rate the district can adopt before requiring voter approval at an election is 1.252100. This election will be automatically held if the district adopts a rate in excess of the rollback rate of 1.252100.**

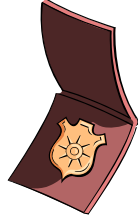
## Fund Balances

The following estimated balances will remain at the end of the current fiscal year and are not encumbered with or by a corresponding debt obligation, less estimated funds necessary for operating the district before receipt of the first state aid payment:

Maintenance and Operations Fund Balance(s)	\$120,000
Interest & Sinking Fund Balance(s)	\$0

## From the Chief's Desk

This article came from the Texas Department of State Health Services web site. It is in reference to Family Preparedness. I talked about this a while ago and some citizens have asked me about ICE.



"If you are injured because of an accident or disaster, you may be unable to speak with emergency medical technicians. In these cases, paramedics and other emergency response personnel often turn to a victim's cell phone for clues to his or her identity and emergency contact. You can make their job much easier by adding an entry in the contact list of your cell phone: ICE

ICE stands for "In Case of Emergency". Add an entry, label it "ICE", and enter the name and phone number of the person the emergency services should call on your behalf. Paramedics know what ICE means, and they look for it immediately."

Do you have a question for the Chief or a subject you would like for him to address? Contact Chief Griscavage at 254-687-2020 or the *Paw Print Press* at 254-687-2922 ext. 158.

## School Registration

### High School – Wednesday, August 22

8:00 a.m. – Seniors      9:00 a.m. – Juniors  
10: a.m. – Sophomores      11:00 a.m. – Freshmen

### Middle School Registration

5th Grade & 6<sup>th</sup> Grade -- August 13, 14 & 15  
7th Grade & 8<sup>th</sup> Grade - -August 15, 16 & 17  
8:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

### Elementary Registration

New Students - August 5 – August 17  
Monday – Thursday 8:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.  
Friday – 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon

Documents required Social Security Card, Immunization Record, Birth Certificate, previous year's report card and proof of residence in Itasca ISD school district. Students who are 4 on or before Sept 1, 2007 are eligible for Pre Kindergarten. If you attended Itasca Elementary last year, you do not need to register.

"Meet the Teacher Night" at Itasca Elementary – Thursday, August 23, 2007 – 7:00 – 8:00 p.m.

Middle School & High School "Open House" – Tuesday, September 4, 2007 - 7:00 – 8:00 p.m.

## My Trip To Fort Parker

by Chandley Sargent

Chandley and her family at Fort Parker. Bottom right - Aidan, Chandley & Ashton. Watch tower at Fort Parker.



On July 14, I went to Fort Parker with my family. It is by Groesbeck, Texas and is not

too far to drive. I learned so much about settlers and Indians. It was so cool. We learned about Cynthia Parker who was taken away by the Indians. Then she was found years later by settlers, she had forgotten how to speak English and she had married an Indian. So the settlers took her away from the Indians and shortly after she died.

We also visited the original location of Trinity University at Tehuacana, Texas. It is very old and was built in 1869, it moved to San Antonio and is still a college there today.



## Lunch Room Open During Elementary Open house

On the Thursday, August 23, the elementary school will hold its open house at 7:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. The lunch room would like for all parents to come to the lunchroom and fill out lunch applications. Everyone who fills out their applications and turns them in that night will have their name entered in a drawing. The lunchroom will also have a bag of goodies for students who bring their parents to the lunchroom.

## MAKE A DREAM A REALITY!

Families and individuals are needed IMMEDIATELY to host a special young ambassador from around the world. Student profiles arrive in August 2007, for the next academic year.

All students are between the ages of 15 and 17, speak English, and come with medical insurance. P.I.E. provides LOCAL SUPPORT for our host families.

CALL TODAY TO VIEW AVAILABLE STUDENT PROFILES

Dawna 800-637-0217 or 817-558-2337

Email: [dawna@mesh.net](mailto:dawna@mesh.net)



## Do You Remember...?—"Hill County Fox & Wolf Hunters Association"

Columnist Carl Sweeney



The sport of foxhunting originated in England, and naturally progress to the colonies in America. It was pursued in the fields and woodlands until recent times. At the present the sport has about played out in many areas.

In our area I first remember the sport in the early 1930s when our story begins.

As a young man, Mannie Turner was an avid foxhunter. We often referred to him as the godfather of foxhunting. He roamed the woods on the mountain east of Itasca, riding his horse in pursuit of the Walker Foxhounds. Some of his fellow hunters were R.D. Bailey, Wid Mead, Otho Mahurin, Charlie Ellison and later his sons, Malvin and Manton Turner. I remember Mannie's wife, Aunt Clara cooking cornbread every day for the hounds. There must have been three square feet of it in the big pans. There were a couple of local boys who hunted, too. They were Herman and Johnny Owens. These two will be in another story.

Uncle Mannie was responsible for importing red foxes to our area. There were none here before. In fact gray and red foxes are not very compatible. They also hunted what they called wolves, but I think they were coyotes. According to the Texas Game Department, there haven't been any gray or lobo wolves in our area for 75 years. Most people call a coyote a wolf. The foxes were hunted at night and the men followed the race by the sound of the hounds. Each owner could tell his hounds by their voices and the other hunters could, too. They could also tell when the hounds were close to the fox. They could tell when they sighted him, when he was treed and also when they lost the trail. They did not kill the fox and became very upset when someone's action caused it to be killed, by not controlling their dogs.

Sometimes they quit for the night when it was treed and occasionally the fox jumped out of the tree. Given a head start the race was on again. The red fox seldom treed, he usually ran until he became tired, then simply went into his den under ground.

A good Walker Hound was a prized animal, and each year the association held a bench show and box supper. That was when the club officially organized. They called it the "Hill County Fox and Wolf Hunting Assn." Joe Martin Jr. was president of the association for several years, until they ceased to be active with the shows.

Some of the hunters who came on the scene in later years were Wayne (Skipper) Laird, Otho Mahurin, Billy Jo Mahurin and Jim Mahurin hunted with them some, although Jim was not as avid a hunter as his dad and brother. It was told that when Wayne was young his dad gave him a Walker Hound they had named, "Skipper" and that is why we call him that today. He said he started going out with the hunters when he was 9 years old.

When the bench shows were held, there were as many as 80 dogs in competition and 500 people attended. The events were held on the Itasca Football field and people and dogs came from all over Texas and even out of state. I remember one year a dog owned by R. B. Beard of Taft, Texas won grand champion. There were usually different judges from time to time. Some of the judges were Charlie Dubose and J. W. Elliot from Mexia, Si Perkins from Brownwood and Allen Staller as secretary, from Brandon, Texas.

There was an article in the *Itasca Item* in 1946 pertaining to hound hunting. It is as follows;

"A wolf hunt was in the making, when Rev. Barnes and his brother of Valley Mills brought their pack of Walker Hounds. Rain and high winds prevented the hunters from running the wolves which had been molesting livestock in the Iverson community. The hunters gathered at the Ted Lewis Ranch on the mountain and spent the night hoping the weather would clear. The wind however refused to quit, so the hunters engaged in a bull session, talking about old times and hunts from the past. Charlie Ellison took the lead by bragging on his favorite hound "ole Calhoun."

There were many hunts and bench shows we could tell about, but space is limited. One other thing - There was a movie several years ago about a young man with a foxhound, he entered in competition. The story has wonderful human interest. It is titled, "Where the Red Fern Grows."

\*\*\*\*Right - Picture & caption from *The Item* - "Bain" judged Grand champion of Hill County Fox and Wolf Hunters Association's Annual Bench Show Saturday night. Joe A. Talley of Jewett, owner of "Bain" is shown accepting the trophy presented by Itasca Chamber of Commerce President Wallace Stufflebeme (at right). Mrs. Talley holds the Best in Show plaque and another smaller trophy.

- An Edney Photograph



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