



TUESDAY

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PHOTO BY GAYLE LANG

Grand champ

Karleigh Vann and her exotic steer earned top honors at the Lampasas County Youth Livestock Show Saturday. Miss Vann, right, is pictured with Molly Lesley, representing Colorado River CattleWomen. A complete winners' list and photos from last week's show will appear in Friday's edition of the Dispatch Record.

Building projects top 2009 agenda for school district

By LISA CARNLEY
Staff Writer

Ask Dr. Brant Myers what the hot topics for 2007-08 were, and the Lampasas Independent School District superintendent will say, "Construction, construction and more construction."

Then ask the same question about the 2008-09 school year, and Myers' reply will be, "Construction, construction and more construction."

If there is a trend here, it comes as no surprise to area residents who, along with Myers, have anticipated the opening of two new campuses in the district in time for the start of the 2009-10 school year.

In looking back over 2008, Myers notes the top projects -- aside from the new high school and Taylor Creek Elementary -- include renovations to Kline Whitis Elementary and to the current high school campus to ready it for occupancy by middle school students (grades six through eight) for the next school term.

All that renovation culminates with the completion and opening of the gymnasium at Kline Whitis on Monday.

"Finishing all these projects allows a lot of folks to get back to concentrating on what's best for the kids -- education," said the superintendent.

Myers is pleased with the first half of the current school year, saying an increase in test scores has everyone's spirits on the rise.

But the focus continues to be on new facilities. "This is the biggest thing in Lampasas and will be for some

time to come," said the superintendent. "It's something we deal with on a daily basis."

Recently completed is the structuring of three zones for elementary attendance. "We get calls on a daily basis from parents asking where their kids will go to school next year, and that's OK," said Myers. "We are glad to answer those questions. They can just call us if they are not sure where the boundaries are, and we will help them."

Myers hopes a Web program later on will help clarify the boundary lines for district residents.

For this year, the superintendent anticipates completion of the Kempner-area elementary school in May, with move-in scheduled early in the summer.

The high school will be a more complicated move and will be done in stages, Myers said, because some por-

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**-- Dr. Brant Myers
LISD superintendent**

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Work progressing on historic Lampasas Colored School

By LISA CARNLEY
Staff Writer

Where once stood a gaping hole and a building overflowing with dirt and garbage, now stands four solid walls -- part of a building being molded into a historically accurate replica of the Lampasas Colored School, which has played a vital part in the community's past.

The refurbishment is a testament to residents whose hope to share the community's roots have spurred continued work on the former school.

The project is being guided by Preservation Lampasas Inc., and Mayor Judith Hetherly is the group's liaison with the Texas Historical Commission.

The THC has provided funding that recently facilitated completion of concrete flooring. Next up is replacement of the roof.

Ms. Hetherly said the roof work should use up the remainder of the



PHOTO BY LISA CARNLEY

Grants have allowed refurbishments of the Lampasas Colored School, and additional funding is being sought to complete the project.

THC grant funds, but she is confident a second round of funding is available.

"THC is very interested in our project," she said. "They realize how important it is and what an investment it is in our community."

If approved, grant funding will be used for inside electrical work, insulation and walls.

If for some reason the grant is turned down, Ms. Hetherly said fund-raising events will continue in the community.

One such fund-raiser on the horizon is a production by Lometa's One-Act Play cast. The group will host performances May 2 in Lampasas to raise funds for the Colored School project. Tickets will go on sale soon.

Ms. Hetherly noted that all facets of Lampasas County have become involved in efforts to refurbish the former schoolhouse. "I feel really good about it. It is a project that everyone seems to

support, and it is bringing our community together for a common goal."

The mayor remarked that work done thus far has been of superior quality. "Our contractors are doing a wonderful job. We couldn't have asked for any better. Mike Hail and Ron Ischy have worked hard for us."

Ms. Hetherly also is pleased with the support shown in a recent fund-raising effort that offered the public a chance to purchase a window -- eight were available initially -- in memory or in honor of a former student of the Colored School. All but one window is sold, she said.

"I hope someone will purchase the final window in honor of one of the school's former principals, Billy Orman," said Ms. Hetherly.

Anyone interested in making a donation to the fund may contact Preservation Lampasas Inc. at 556-5266 or send a check to P.O. Box 1632, Lampasas, TX 76550.

Cooper Springs land donation expands access to wildlife

By DAVID LOWE
Staff Writer

Cooper Springs, along with the oaks, pecan trees and white-tailed deer that fill the site, now belongs to the city of Lampasas, and donors Rex and Linda Johnson couldn't be happier.

The Lampasas City Council recently approved an agreement with the Johnsons for the transfer to city ownership of 16.23 acres across Hackberry Street from Campbell Park. The Cooper Springs land will be developed into a public nature and recreation area.

"I think it will be good, not only for the citizens, but I also think it will attract people to Lampasas," Johnson said.

Cooper Springs will become the third spring in Lampasas, along with Hanna Springs and Hancock Springs, open to the public.

"It gives you some historical areas that I think people might be inter-

ested in," Johnson said.

Cooper Springs is named for the Cooper family, who lived in the Lampasas area in the 1870s. A flood in 1873 destroyed much of the area around Hanna Springs, and the Galveston News reported that Lampasas used Cooper Springs temporarily as a secondary source of water.

The Cooper family deeded the property in 1878 to John Hanna, and a resort hotel was built on the land near Hanna Springs.

The Johnsons acquired the Cooper Springs property, along with the land where Hanna Springs and Hanna Springs Intermediate School, in 1992 from former Lampasas Mayor Henry Campbell, trustee for the Lula Key Campbell Management Trust.

When exploring the land, the Johnsons found a variety of headstones -- some dating back to the 1890s -- scattered across the southern section of the property. After

researching the headstones, the couple learned the markers do not point to any graves on the land. More likely, they were discarded by a headstone manufacturer.

When construction is complete, access to the park will be available on Hackberry Street, where a permanent sign will be located. The recently donated land will be named "Rex and Linda Johnson Park."

"Now that was [city officials'] idea," Johnson said of the name for the park. "That was not our idea."

Mrs. Johnson became interested in opening the Cooper Springs land to the public several years ago, when members of Preservation Lampasas broached the idea of a bird-watching area and butterfly garden. Businessman Harrell Clary set up a model of such a site on his ranch for the group to view.

"It was just a great place for getting out in nature and enjoying the birds and butterflies," Mrs. Johnson

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PHOTO BY DAVID LOWE

Rex and Linda Johnson recently donated Cooper Springs land to the city of Lampasas.

WEATHER

Date	High	Low	Rain
Jan. 8	78	38	
Jan. 9	80	43	
Jan. 10	65	29	
Jan. 11	60	26	

2009 rainfall to date: .30 inches. Same date last year: 0 inches. Courtesy of KCYL Radio, a National Weather Service observer station.

Dress code

Community forums will be held Jan. 22 and Feb. 12 at 6:30 p.m. at the Lampasas High School library for presentations, to see research and share opinions on the district's consideration of changing to a standardized dress code. The public is invited to share their opinion and to become informed on the issues, according to the group's chairman.

Conaway

A member of Congressman Mike Conaway's Llano office staff will be in Lampasas Wednesday to visit with constituents from 1:30-3:30 p.m. at the Lampasas County Courthouse's commissioners courtroom.

Constituents may share concerns, request help on a federal issue or ask any other question of the staff.

Lometa ISD

The Board of Trustees of the Lometa Independent School District will meet Thursday at 6:30 p.m. at the school library to consider and evaluate the contract of Superintendent David Rice.

Other agenda items include a public hearing on the Academic Excellence Indicator System and reports from the principal and superintendent.

Kempner

Kempner City Council will meet tonight at 7 p.m. in City Hall Council Chambers to discuss a joint election agreement with Lampasas County, an Arbor Day proclamation for the Browning Community Garden Club, a report on racial profiling from the police chief, and recognition of Boy Scout Troop 90 for its Adopt-a-Highway project.



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