



PHOTO BY JIM LOWE

Traffic Officer Dean Werlinger gathers information for a report, while firemen J.P. Harris and Josh Straley attend to an accident victim Friday.

U.S. Highway 281 South accident sends two to Lampasas hospital

A two-vehicle collision early Friday afternoon near the Hancock Park entrance sent two people to Rollins Brook Community Hospital. The accident occurred at 1:08 p.m.

Traffic Officer Dean Werlinger of the Lampasas Police Department gave the following account.

A 1997 Nissan Sentra driven by Jessica Holt was westbound on E.E. Ohmmeiss Drive when it came to the intersection of Ohmmeiss Drive and U.S. Highway 281 South.

Ms. Holt stated that she stopped at a stop sign, as she was preparing to turn south onto U.S. 281. Ms. Holt said when she pulled out into the intersection, she did not see a southbound 2008 Ford Expedition driven by Donna Benton.

Ms. Holt and a right front passenger in the Sentra, Amanda Dawson, were taken by Capital Ambulance to Rollins Brook for treatment.

Mrs. Benton, a friend and six girls were headed to a movie in

Marble Falls at the time of the accident.

Police cited the driver of the Sentra for failing to yield the right of way at the stop sign.

The four-door Nissan was totaled, while Mrs. Benton's vehicle sustained considerable damage to its front end.

Lampasas Fire Marshal Reece Oestreich, Chief of Police Tim Angermann and Assistant Chief of Police Sammy Bailey assisted Werlinger at the accident scene.



PHOTO BY JIM LOWE

A Lampasas Fire Department ladder truck sits outside the front entrance of Hanna Springs Intermediate School on Sunday afternoon, as fire, police and school officials converge on the scene to assess damage. Earlier, two juveniles were apprehended after a vandalism spree.

Hanna Springs vandalism forces school's closure

Students re-routed temporarily to other campuses

By JIM LOWE
Staff Writer

Vandalism at Hanna Springs Intermediate School on Sunday forced the closure of the campus Monday and the re-routing of students to two other local campuses.

In the meantime, cleanup operations, which were expected to cost several thousand dollars, continued at the school located at 604 East Avenue F.

Two male juveniles -- ages 11 and 13 -- were taken into police custody late Sunday afternoon. At press time Monday, they were scheduled for a hearing with the Lampasas County Juvenile Probation Office.

Earlier, the youths -- both local students -- were released to their parents for medical attention, Assistant Chief of Police Sammy Bailey said.

The juveniles had breathed in dust from dry-powder fire extinguishers, which they discharged in hallways and several classrooms during the vandalism spree. In all, 10 fire extinguishers were used.

Authorities received a call Sunday at 4:30 p.m. During the incident, a fire alarm activated, and within a short time, school, fire and police officials rushed to the campus.

When Assistant Principal Russell Merket arrived, the two male subjects came out of the building, and Merket detained them.

It is believed the juveniles broke a window at the school the night before and then gained entry the next day through the window, Ms. Bailey said.

One particularly hard-hit area, it appeared, was the eastern lower story of the sprawling school facility, where powder was thick on the floor. The corridors lay in a thickened haze from the powdery substance.

"The school will have to do a major cleanup," said Lampasas Fire

Chief Terry Lindsey late Sunday afternoon, as he stood near a long ladder truck parked in front of the building.

Three fire units and 12 firemen converged on the scene. A fan was placed near the front door of the building to improve the ventilation inside.

Patrol Cpl. Jase Herring of the Lampasas Police Department said of the two male subjects: "They caused a lot of damage in there."

Of the juveniles, Lindsey said, "They can't deny it, because they have it (powder from the extinguishers) all over them."

School administrators later decided to close the campus Monday and re-route third- and fourth-graders to the Lampasas Middle School gymnasium. Fifth- and sixth-grade students were sent to Bozarth-Fowler Gymnasium at Lampasas High School.

Hanna Springs, like other campuses within the Lampasas Independent School District, was closed last Friday because of the Lampasas County Youth Livestock Show.

A six-man environmental cleanup crew out of Waco worked throughout the night after Sunday's vandalism, said Tony Peter, LISD's assistant superintendent for human resources. Because of damage, carpets at Hanna Springs were removed.

Upwards of 20 "lead" teachers, paraprofessionals, maintenance officials and central office staff worked past midnight Sunday to make adjustments in curriculum and work out logistics for the next day.

Among their concerns: serving breakfast and a hot lunch at the middle school and high school cafeterias to Hanna Springs students, adapting lesson plans for the day, and making sure there were enough paper supplies, pencils and

the like on hand at the temporary locations.

"What we did is all work together to say: 'We're going to have school for our kids,'" -- despite the inconvenience of the relocation Monday, Peter said.

Since the schools are mandated to do a bus evacuation drill during the school year and physical fitness testing, plans were made to include those requirements on Monday.

Peter was quick to note a bright spot in an otherwise gloomy situation. "We had good response from our Fire Department. Both the Fire Department and the Police Department have been good working with the school -- both for training and for response time," he said.

Added Peter: "I'm really grateful that we have a Fire Department and law enforcement like we do. All my dealings with them have been positive."

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Building projects top 2009 agenda for school district

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tions of the new campus will be completed before others.

Moving LMS to the old high school campus will be the final hurdle because the Broad Street campus will have to be cleared out prior to its occupancy. "It's a pretty involved process," said the superintendent.

"It's exciting to see the work at both campuses," he continued. "And at the new high school, watching the track being readied and the outer buildings coming together is great. The south-side exterior of the building is completed, and everything is moving right on schedule."

A downside to the new year is a decrease in enrollment. The LISD finished the 2007-08 school year with 3,402 students, and the most current count shows the district is down about 100 students. Myers attributes some of that loss to the recent hike in gas prices which, he said, likely forced parents to commute farther to schools.

"It's disconcerting. I know it's related to the economy, and we've lost kids because of it. Our enrollment is tied to our funding, and if we lose kids, we lose funding. We're going to have to really keep an eye on that."

Construction aside, Myers said big issues this year will be keeping teachers happy when readjustments

take place after new campuses open and grade levels shift. "We want our teachers to be happy. Obviously, if the teachers are happy, they teach better. And we are going to do the best we can to make them happy."

Addressing the LISD's tax cap of \$1.50 per \$100 valuation is a topic taxpayers don't like to discuss, said Myers.

"This issue has hamstrung the district for a long time. No one likes to pay taxes. I understand. I am a taxpayer, too," he said. "But people have to realize what a few additional pennies of tax can do for this district. The tax cap limits us. It's been there since 1962. It was fine in that antiquated system, but it just doesn't work now."

"As much as people don't like it, we are going to have to address the issue."

On a personal note, the superintendent said he has neglected the students over the past year and a half to keep up with building projects. "I feel more like a building manager than a superintendent. I miss being in the classrooms and visiting with the kids and teachers. I can't wait until I can get back to doing that again."

His New Year's resolution: "To get the 2009-10 school year started walking on new floors."

But first he'll have to deal with several prior objectives: "Construction, construction and more construction."

Cooper Springs land donation expands access to wildlife

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U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service representatives later toured Cooper Springs, prepared an inventory of flora and fauna, and developed a plan to present to Preservation Lampasas for developing a butterfly sanctuary. Because cattle and deer had overgrazed the property, the officials said the group would have to build a high game fence in order to protect plants that provide bird and butterfly habitats.

The cost of fencing the entire property delayed plans for a bird and butterfly area, but Mrs. Johnson still hopes Cooper Springs one day will attract bird watchers.

"They're people who can really take advantage of it once it's set up for them to get in," she said.

The recently approved memorandum of understanding ap-

proved by the City Council calls for brush clearing to begin this month. Cooper Springs, which occupies about 1,000 square feet, has become heavily silted, but the Johnsons believe it might flow again if city crews cut away overgrowth in the marshy area.

"With some selective clearing, it can be an attractive area," Mrs. Johnson said.

A metal historical sign will mark the location of the spring.

At former City Councilman Fred Cummings' suggestion, a half-mile jogging path will connect with the jogging path in Campbell Park to give visitors a total one-mile exercise route.

The Johnsons also have given the city an easement on a lot they own off Third Street. The couple hope the easement can be used in the future to connect the trails at

Campbell Park and Cooper Springs to Sulphur Creek and Hancock Springs.

Because the park is close to Hanna Springs Intermediate School, Mrs. Johnson -- a former kindergarten teacher -- hopes teachers can incorporate nature walks into their science lessons.

"Kids love that and, unfortunately, parents today often don't have the time just to take their children out for a nature walk," Mrs. Johnson said.

The Cooper Springs land, with a mixture of wooded and open areas, features a variety of plant and animal life, including deer, raccoons, possums, nutria, Turk's cap, honey mesquite, chinaberry and gum trees, and Japanese privet.

"We think it will be a real asset for the citizens, young and old," Johnson said.

Gem Society sets meeting on Saturday

Highland Lakes Gem & Mineral Society will meet Saturday at 10 a.m. at the Church of Christ in Marble Falls, Broadway and U.S. Highway 281.

Please enter through the back door in the lower hall.

The program will be on local rocks and minerals. Visitors are welcome.

For information, phone Robert Poteet at (325) 379-1227.

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Carlton Nathaniel Jones

Carlton Nathaniel Jones, age 93, went to be with his Lord on January 7, 2009. He was born the fourth of five children, March 3, 1915, to Newberry and Fannie Hatley Jones in Izoro, Lampasas County, Texas on land that was purchased by his grandfather upon arrival from Alabama.

Carlton was married to Velma Lorede Beavers on October 27, 1935, in Hobart, Oklahoma. He loved the Lord and was a member of the Congregational Methodist Church all his life. He served diligently as Sunday school superintendent and church deacon for 45 years.

Carlton's wife of 72 years, Velma, preceded him in death in November, 2007. Carlton's absence from his loved ones is temporary, leaving one son, Don Jones and wife Kay of Lampasas; one daughter, Martha Jones Witcher and husband Bob of Ganbury. He also leaves five grandchildren, Michael Jones, Glen Jones, Donna Jones, Brent Witcher and Heather Witcher; and seven great-grandchildren, Kyle Grizzle, Kramer Jones, Summer Brown, Noah Brown, Nathan Witcher, Garrett Witcher, and Landon Witcher and a number of nieces and nephews. One daughter, Bobbie Jean Jones, also preceded him in death as well as his parents, Newberry and Fannie Hatley Jones; three brothers, Walker Jones, Luke Jones and Bertram Jones; and one sister, Laura Jones Attaway.

As a devoted husband, father, and grandfather, one of Carlton's greatest joys was having his children and grandchildren gather at his home for a meal and to visit. He lovingly taught his family about God, the Bible, the meaning of integrity and character, and that a man's word was a promise not to be broken. He always believed in treating everyone fairly, and subscribed to the adage, "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you."

Carlton was a gifted farmer and was closely attuned to the land and his growing crops. He loved his chosen lifetime profession of farming and his knowledge and skills were respected within the community. He and his wife Velma continually worked alongside each other, in the daily operation of their farm and ranch in the Unity Community for approximately 60 years.

Carlton served for many years as a director of the local Farm Bureau, and as a Community Representative for the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service, now known as the Farm Service Agency.

Pallbearers were grandsons, Michael Jones, Glen Jones, and Brent Witcher; nephews Monty Jones and Darrell Jones; and cousin Bethel Henslee. Honorary pallbearers were Henry Langford, Robert Straley, Barney Groves, Burke Brown, Troy Jones, Jimmie Henslee, Asa Langford, Henry John Langford, Benhart Frank, Hanie Casbeer, and Mark Langford. Officiating were Rev. Jerry Perkins, Rev. Kenneth Green, and Dr. Cleta Jones.

Memorial services were held at Sneed Funeral Chapel, 201 East Third, on Saturday, January 10, 2009, at 2:00 p.m.

Family visitation was at Sneed Funeral Chapel from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., Friday. Burial was held at the Straley Cemetery in the Adamsville community immediately following the memorial service.

Memorials may be made to Foster's Home for Children, P.O. Box 978, Stephenville, TX 76401, (254) 968-2143.



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