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THE IDLE AMERICAN

A Different Drummer...

Commentary by Dr. Don Newbury

I'm glad Sisters Maggie Hession and Frances Evans--who proudly beat a drum for the Texas Rangers from reserved seats 15 rows behind home plate--didn't live to see it.

The Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word were welcomed, unlike the Houston garbage can beater who has been "drummed out of the corps." The guy with a different beat there is a link in the chain exposing the ugly underbelly of highest level cheating.

Baseball's integrity could go the way of some boxing bouts--hopefully confined to years gone by--where winners were known before combatants put on their gloves....

Unless you've been living under a rock, you are aware of headlines and broadcasts blaring about charges that many Houston Astros' home wins during the past two seasons have been tainted.

Uncovered has been a videographer in center-field who has sharply focused the camera's lens on visiting catchers, ostensibly to "catch" signs intended for pitchers' use only.

Signs, they say, were electronically transmitted immediately to the "drummer" in the tunnel near the Astros' dug-out. In turn, he beat on a garbage can, conveying auditory signals to batters concerning types of upcoming pitches. In short, batters were forewarned about what kind of pitches to expect....

Baseball Commissioner Rob Manfred has mounted a vigorous investigation, brandishing a terrible swift sword. His swath so far has resulted in immediate dismissals of

three field managers, as well as one general manager.

It's a particularly sad day for players who were NOT "in the know" about the matter. Or, did any NOT KNOW?

Whatever the case, the investigation is not over, and may lead to uncovering other fiendish sports plots in our "gotta-get-the-edge" world. To date, this is professional sports' darkest hour, right alongside a few other sporting events which were either "fixed," or where playing fields were greatly tilted to benefit a team or individual....

Media--both social and "antisocial"--are having a field day. One cartoonist sketched an Astro with the words "Houston Asterisks" emblazoned across his chest. A church marquee read, "We had a clever sign, but the Astros stole it."

I can offer few suggestions to major league baseball, or to any other leagues. Oh, there is one idea. Maybe increased security should be switched from fan entries to the gates where players and other baseball personnel enter.

I am reminded of the guy who is always certain that the government "gets things backward." The graybeard is particularly on guard against "them northerners," a term applied even to folks from the "near north" in Oklahoma. Years ago, when federal troops were sent to the Rio Grande to thwart entry attempted by swimmers, he quickly criticized the government. "Our threat isn't from the south," he contended, "It's from the north. The troops are guarding the wrong river."...

The drumbeats in Houston don't seem distant. They likely are everywhere. More than baseball is tainted. Fans aren't likely to "blackball" the sport, however, and hopefully the sound of drums won't cause us to wonder if signals are being sent.

I'd rather think of the blessed sisters. They did all the "nun things," but usually were at Rangers games to offer drum beats of cheer and goodwill. Remembered is their trip to New York City when the Rangers successfully took down the Yankees, ultimately claiming the American League pennant. Also recalled is their visit to fantasy spring training in Florida, and their drums autographed by all the Rangers.

Their lives lined up with the late sportswriter Grantland Rice's sports poem: "When One Great Scorer comes to mark against your name, He marks not that you won or lost, but how you played the game." Sister Frances died at age 90, Sister Maggie at 85. Their obituaries included "crossing home plate." En route, they lived life well. May they rest in peace, oblivious to the ugliness involving a misguided Houston can-banger and his pals....

Dr. Newbury is a former educator who "commits speeches" round about. Comments/inquiries to: newbury@speakerdoc.com. Phone: 817-447-3872. Web site: www.speakerdoc.com Twitter: @donnewbury. Facebook: don newbury.

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Reilly Springs Jamboree Comes To Town At The Roc

by Enola Gay Mathews



Mike Shing

Brightening up the winter landscape, the Reilly Springs Jamboree offered music and laughter when the show came to town on January 18, 2020. The “Opry-like” show took place on the stage of The ROC near downtown Sulphur Springs. The Gym at The ROC, or First Baptist Church Recreational Outreach Center, provided plenty of room for audience and a broad stage for the band and singers. I was blessed to emcee and blessed to have an experienced four-piece stage band, also Mike Shing as co-host, singer and sound man! This time, our regular drummer Bill Langley could not play, so Joe Clark filled in on drums. Our ‘troop’ thoroughly enjoyed coming to town to entertain!



The Running Creek Band

We were in talent up to our ears and it really showed. Also, no ripped jeans or scruffy ballcaps in sight here! In fact, the ladies took the opportunity to shine under the stage lights. Kenya Duffey Chaffer is a professional singer and performs weekly in the Metroplex, and at home offers vocal instruction and coaching to a select few students in the local community. Kenya and her husband Charles are the owners of Chaffers Place, located near downtown Sulphur Springs, a home-school offering Christian curriculum and music instruction. Kenya’s gospel voice is world-class and often described as ‘anointed’. And it was a thrill to find out she is a country singer too.



Kenya Chaffer with DeWayne Farrow

The Reilly Springs Jamboree will return to its home stage at the Reilly Springs Community Center for the next show, set for Saturday February 15, 2020 at 6pm. Speaking of good fortune, we’ve gotten a windfall of talent that’s a bit beyond our usual reach, so don’t miss this! R.J.Vandygriff will put on a country concert backed by The Running Creek Band. If you ever knew Robert Joe from his early days at Roxton, Texas or by listening to his radio hits “Big Blue Diamond” and “Say Lady” from the 1980’s, you’ll know he was a country music star back then. But if you ever watched any of the 100 episodes of ‘Walker, Texas Ranger’ where RJ appeared as Ranger Mike, or saw his Branson theater show “The Cowboy Ain’t Dead Yet”, or listened to his cowboy music on CD, then you will know that RJ has become a star in a very broad sense of the word. Come and see him in the February 15 show of the Reilly Springs Jamboree! Also that night, Amy Asbill Patrick, local DJ Norm Allen and Pastor Doyle Hays with the Monday Night Jam Band featuring Brad Davis. Get there early, enjoy a meal or snack, claim a seat and be prepared for a HUGE NIGHT OF ENTERTAINMENT back on our home stage. Til next week, I will watch for you at The Corral Gate!

Good fortune brought Janet Adams to us, and since her first Jamboree appearance in 2019, she’s been a favorite to everyone. This lady rolls beauty, class and talent into one delightful package! Patsy Cline came to life as Janet performed the golden hits. Janet is invited to come back to share Loretta Lynn, Dolly Parton and other theme shows during 2020, and you’re invited, too! On-stage, she remarked that her influence in music came through uncles who played fiddle and guitar and encouraged her to sing as a child. As an adult, singing has given her a chance for self-expression and sharing joy with people. Today, in addition to her music, Janet finds her biggest joy in being the busy full-time ‘mom’ of four siblings, her adopted grandchildren who range in age from 5-11.



Janet Adams with Hal Roper and Harry King

DeWayne Farrow is known across the area as a gospel singer, and we are discovering a broad range of other musical talent, too! DeWayne plays guitar beautifully and accompanies his three-octave vocal range. He loves traditional country music, cowboy tunes and Western Swing music, too. During this Jamboree, we found out he also plays trombone and he worked that into the show closer when he performed “He Looked Beyond My Faults and Saw My Need”. A school band instructor during his career, DeWayne is retired, lives in the Caddo Mills area, stays busy with church work and is recording a third CD of gospel music. He appears frequently for ICGMA International Country Gospel Music Association and CGMA Country Gospel Music Association events.



DeWayne Farrow with Hal Roper



Enola Gay with Gary Jones and DeWayne Farrow

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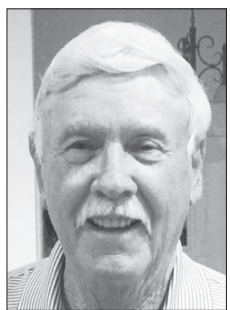
Wyvonne Bronson

Memorial service for Wyvonne Bronson, age 85, of Sulphur Springs will be held at 1:30 P.M. on Friday, January 24, 2020 at First United Methodist Church with Jason Dietze and Rev. Ed Lantz officiating. Interment will follow at Tira Cemetery. Visitation will be held from 12 to 1 P.M. in the Fellowship Hall at First United Methodist Church prior to the service. Mrs. Bronson passed away on Sunday, January 18, 2020 at her home in Sulphur Springs.

Wyvonne Eloise was born on January 18, 1935 in Austin, TX to Elias and Maybelle Owens. She married Max Bronson on December 11, 1952 in Austin, TX. He preceded her in death in 2010. Wyvonne was a homemaker and member of First United Methodist Church.

She is survived by her children, Danita Graves and husband, David of Sulphur Springs, Max A. Bronson and wife, Melody of Mesquite, Daidre Humphries and husband, Tory of Sulphur Springs; grandchildren, D'Anne Chaney and husband, Brent, Dena Irving and husband, Brent, David Graves and wife, Jennifer, Chad Bronson, Holli-Von Sawyer and husband, James, Savannah Bronson, Lauren Spataro and husband, Jocko, Ryan Humphries, April Yandell and husband, Kory, Justin Cano and wife, Brittany; great-grandchildren, Jaxon and Austin Chaney, Brynna Irving, Addison and Duncan Graves, Julianna Bronson, Logan-Kate, Layton and Lawson Sawyer, Adrielle Yandell, Remi and Paxton Cano, Autumn Pilleps and Dylan Seelhorst.

Arrangements under the direction of Murray-Orwosky Funeral Home.



Jerry Titsworth

Funeral service for Jerry Titsworth, age 78, of Sulphur Springs will be held at 2:00 P.M. on Friday, January 24, 2020 at Murray-Orwosky Funeral Chapel with Rev. Fred Lewis officiating and Shane Carrington assisting. Interment with military honors will follow at Oak Lawn Cemetery with Don Westbrook, Ronnie Parris, Thurman Littlefield, Jim Roberts and Ted Carrington serving as pallbearers and William Dodd, Randy McCoy, Cody Titsworth, Brad Sims and Samantha Sims serving as honorary pallbearers. Visitation will be held from 6 to 8 P.M. on Thursday January 23, 2020 at Murray-Orwosky Funeral Chapel.

Jerry Titsworth passed away on Monday, January 20, 2020 at Christus Mother Frances Hospital, Sulphur Springs.

Arrangements under the direction of Murray-Orwosky Funeral Home.



Jerry Elliott

Funeral service for Jerry Elliott, age 69, of Carthage, was 2:00 p.m. Wednesday, January 22, 2020 at Murray-Orwosky Funeral Chapel with Rev. Gary Hampton officiating. Interment followed at Black Oak Cemetery with Andrew Noak, Denver Tinney, Landon Lambrich, Jessie Spence, Dawson Tinney, and Lance Tinney serving as pallbearers. Visitation was 6:00-8:00 p.m. Tuesday, January 21, 2020 at Murray-Orwosky Funeral Home. Jerry passed away Saturday, January 18, 2020 at his residence.

Jerry Dale Elliott was born on October 14, 1950 in Grand Prairie, TX to Thurman Elliott and Thelma (Moody) Elliott.

He is survived by his children, James Elliott of Black Oak, TX, Jessica Noak and husband, Andrew, of Harrison, AR, Shelby Elliott of Alpena, AR; granddaughter, Brooklynn Cranford; mother, Thelma Elliott; sisters, Becky Embrey and husband, B.J., of Black Oak, Debbie Attaway and husband, Larry, of Black Oak, Sandra Elliott of Sulphur Springs, Kathy Jackson and husband, Noel, of Carthage, TX; and numerous nieces and one nephew.

Jerry was preceded in death by his father.

Arrangements under the direction of Murray-Orwosky Funeral Home.



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Join "Terrific Tuesdays"

a Sulphur Springs Respite Care Program for seniors with memory loss.

This program is open to everyone with Alzheimer's or dementia. It gives the participants an opportunity to spend each Tuesday meeting new friends and participating in cooperative activities.

It also gives the caregiver a few hours to run errands and to take care of personal healthcare needs, etc. knowing that their loved one is well taken care of in a safe and enjoyable environment.

The cost is \$20 each Tuesday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. and that includes lunch!

"Terrific Tuesdays" meets at The First United Methodist Church Family Life Center at 301 Church Street, Sulphur Springs.

BEAR CREEK: A SMOKEHOUSE WITH A HISTORY



Tumbleweed Smith

Tumbleweed Smith

"I like to think of Bear Creek as a boutique style smokehouse," says Robbie Shoults, a member of a five generation family that owns and operates Bear Creek Smokehouse in a scenic rural area north of Marshall. Robbie's mother Brenda Shoults lives in the old home place. Her husband's parents started the business 76 years ago. "They were raising cotton and couldn't make a living doing that, so someone suggested they start raising turkeys," says Brenda. "So they did. These hills were covered in turkeys. They dressed them in the back yard and scalded them in iron wash pots. They didn't have a telephone. The county agent took orders in town and he would drive the orders out here. They would dress the turkeys and deliver them in town, house to house. That's how it began."

There are several "most popular" items in the Bear Creek Catalogue; among them a smoked peppered pork tenderloin and a smoked boneless turkey breast. "It just developed," says Brenda. "One thing led to another. We added to the inventory ham, smoked chicken, bacon and salt pork. We send out truckloads of salt pork year-round."

Last year the business moved into a 10,000 square feet building with a ceiling 42 feet high and a front porch that's 100 feet wide. A general store has a bridal registry, Texas souvenirs and high-end gifts. "We design and make our own t-shirts," says Robbie. "One of them reads 'Bacon America Great Again.' These soups in jars have been real popular for us. We private label these for Neiman-Marcus and Dillard's."

Robbie has had lots of television exposure. He has judged on Bobby Flay's Food Network show 4 times and has cooked on the Today Show with Al Roker. He was on QVC with Martha Stewart. "Television helps quite a bit with brand recognition," he says. The smokehouse has become a destination. Big name bands play there (Asleep At The Wheel was to perform there the week after I did this interview). It's a wedding venue and event center in a rustic setting complete with a windmill, turkeys and longhorns. "We want it to be a place where families can come and enjoy the same place where we grew up. Some folks come to sit on the porch and enjoy the view. It's just fun being up here. We love what we do."

Bear Creek products go all over the country and beyond. Some customers take them in their luggage when they travel overseas. Bear Creek doesn't raise turkeys. They get them in by the truckloads already processed, then add what Robbie calls "the Bear Creek Magic" before shipping them out. Bear Creek has 25 employees. The number doubles around Christmas.

Robbie does most of the marketing. If you dial 800-950 2327 after hours you'll hear his distinctive East Texas voice on the answering machine.

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GUN SHOW



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and
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