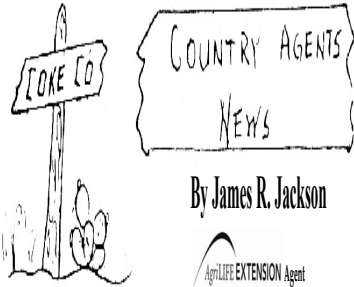




Special Olympics! Coke County Sheriff's Deputy Trey Davis takes the first leg of the Special Olympics Torch Run with his twin sons, Noah and Nicky, in the opening ceremonies of the event Saturday morning at Bronte High School.



My thoughts on the Texas Brigades Camps

The Texas Brigades hold a very dear spot in my heart being that I am a product of the camps.

In the summer of 2004, I had just completed my freshman year of high school and was getting ready to enjoy a summer of working with my Dad and any other job a high school kid could do to earn some spending money. However, there was going to be one interruption in my summer schedule. The interruption was Camp called the Rolling Plains Bobwhite Brigade which was one of the 5 camps at the time that was under the name of the Texas Brigades Camps. Looking back, little did I know what effect that week would have on me.

When I arrived at the camp I was greeted by many of the top Natural Resources Professionals in the field who had given a week of their time to educate this group of students to be the leaders for

conservation of the coming generation. The camp that I was about to partake in was unlike any other summer camp. They had the mindset that they were going to use a 6 in feathered animal (the bobwhite quail) to educate youth about anatomy, habitat management, conservation, ethics, public speaking, and leadership.

Within the week that I spent at the camp, the students were given the opportunity to interact with the professionals in the field, learning about the anatomy, habitat management and conservation of the bobwhite quail. As good as this knowledge was, the most valuable knowledge that I took away from the camp was a byproduct of learning the information listed above. These skills are the public speaking, leadership and teamwork skills acquired by the students attending the camp. I realize that not every student desires a career in a natural resource field; however, I feel that any student's future will brighten as a result of being able to speak in public, provide leadership to a group and to work as a team member to accomplish a job.

I realize that in the paragraphs above I have not mentioned the fun that a student has while attending a Camp. I know of no other

camp that will allow a student to work on their shooting skills daily while at the camp, work on a taxidermy project and meet with other students from around the state who have similar interests. If anyone knows of any student who would be interested in

attending anyone of the camps, please contact the extension office or go to <http://www.texasbrigades.org>. I cannot stress enough the effect that these camps can have on a young person - because they had it on me.

Elected officials to tackle farm bill

Local farmers are keeping a wary eye out on Washington, D.C. as Congress continues to hammer out details of a full five-year farm bill.

"We are thankful Congress granted a last minute extension during the fiscal cliff talks," said John Ross Copeland, Coke-Sterling County Farm Bureau president. "But a five-year bill will give farmers and ranchers some certainty for the long term."

John Ross said a five-year farm bill would provide a safety net for farmers and ranchers in tough times such as the current drought, and also assures a plentiful food supply for all Americans by keeping farmers on the land.

"We're hoping both parties work together to secure a bright and healthy future-not just for agriculture, but for all Americans," John Ross said.

The House Agriculture Committee passed a version of the farm bill last year, prior to the end of the session. Rep. Frank Lucas,

who serves as chairman of the House Agriculture Committee, has committed to resubmitting the same bill to the House floor for consideration in the coming weeks.

"We encourage farmers and ranchers across the nation to look at the proposed changes to the farm bill and to discuss with their legislators what is most important to them," John Ross said. "Our representatives need to hear from us."

... Water takes center stage in Texas Legislature

(Continued from page 6) rural and urban citizens to find ways to use less of the state's short supply.

"Farmers use cutting-edge irrigation techniques to be sure they only use as much water as is needed to grow their crops," John Ross said. "We want to encourage our urban neighbors to find ways that they can save, too. That can be as simple as following lawn watering restrictions or only turning on the tap when necessary."

Texas legislators are considering bills to encourage xeriscaping, drip irrigation, rainwater harvesting and other conservation techniques. During the session, farmers and ranchers also would like to see expanded financial support for water infrastructure and programs.

Attention Ladies!

We are quickly approaching that special time again -

Ladies Spring Tea!

April 20, 2013

A new venue will be announced which will provide seating for 150 ladies. You will be required to RSVP to reserve seating for you and your guests.

Please call the following number and leave a message with your name and the number of ladies in your party:

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You must be 13 years of age to attend.

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