

Check Out Coke County Library!

The winners for the weekly drawing for July 7-10 at the Coke County Library are Anthony Ramirez, Caitlyn Cerritos, Ellah Holik, and Kelan Waggoner.

Once again, this summer, the Coke County Library will be hosting magician, the Amazing Mr. K! Mr. K. will be performing on Wednesday, August 5, 10 am at the large rec hall in the park. Please make plans to attend. All ages are invited.

Library hours are Tuesday 8-12, Wednesday 8-4, Thursday 1-5, and Friday 8-12.

Texas ranchers rebuilding herds, lower beef prices to come

Despite recent flooding rains wreaking havoc on Texas farmers, there is a bright spot for agriculture and consumers.

Ranchers across the state, including County, are now working to rebuild their cattle herds. The heavy rains will help Texas pastures recover from the many years of drought and fill soil profiles with water.

The greener pastures on the horizon are good news for consumers, too.

"Years of drought devastated pastures, leaving virtually nothing for cows to eat," said Coke County Farm Bureau President John Ross Copeland. "Ranchers were forced to sell cattle, which resulted in low

numbers and higher beef prices for consumers."

With help from record-breaking rainfall in May, pasture conditions statewide are the best since 2007 and above the national average.

"This was just what was needed to recover from the drought," said. "It's the key ingredient to rebuilding the largest beef herd in the nation."

The overall beef supply should increase as Texas ranchers restock their herds, and consumers will eventually see a drop in beef prices. Although, noted, the lower prices won't happen overnight.

Final water rule adds risk, uncertainty for Texas

A final rule by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) will expand its authority under the Clean Water Act and could leave Texas agriculture mired in regulation.

After months of debate, thousands of comments from farmers and ranchers—including 1,200 from Texas—and direction from Congress, EPA moved forward on their interpretation of the rule.

"The agency will have more power to regulate farmers, ranchers, landowners and other businesses under this final Waters of the U.S. (WOTUS) rule," County President John Ross Copeland said. "It's troubling for County agriculture and local businesses."

An initial review of the 88-page rule shows that EPA, under broad interpretations, can regulate most anything—farm ponds, ditches and fields—as waters of the U.S. This could allow the agency to dictate land-use decisions and farming



District Championship! Casey Skipworth of Robert Lee retired the Royals in order in the bottom of the sixth Saturday evening in Bangs in a battle of tournament unbeaten sending the Blizzards to the championship game Saturday night. The Blizzards then had an opportunity for the district championship and a berth in the state tournament. Late Saturday night, the Hurricanes defeated the Blizzards, 17-16, to force a second championship game at 2:00 p.m. Sunday.

As the all-Winters Championship game of the Texas Teen-Age Baseball District 3 Boys 12U Open Base Tournament broke out, the eleventh - and final - blast determined the survivor. The Blizzards stunned the Hurricanes, 3-2, to capture the TTAB district championship. With the victory, the Blizzards also earned a spot in the TTAB Boys 12U Open Base State Tournament in Hillsboro, Texas.

practices.

Farmers and ranchers could be required to obtain a permit for many farming practices. Fertilizer and pesticide applications might also be affected.

"We do have hope that Congress will send EPA back to the drawing board and tell them

to ditch the rule," said. "The U.S. House and the Senate Environmental and Public Works Committee recently passed legislation telling the agency to start over. We have high hopes the full Senate will pass that legislation, too."

The measure—the Federal Water Quality Protection Act, S

1140—would force EPA to drop its interpretation of the Clean Water Act and craft a new rule that would meet congressional intent, taking into account the concerns of farmers, ranchers and others affected by the rule.

Additional information on Ditch the Rule can be found at <http://ditchtherule.fb.org>.

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