

# Viewpoint

## The Jasper Newsboy

Established in 1865

Texas Oldest Weekly Newspaper, Continuously Published Under the Same Name

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### Our Viewpoint Editorials

## JISD changes for good

This week, the Jasper ISD administration team made decisions that will leave long-lasting impressions on the educational process for its students.

On Monday, April 30, the district announced changes to the leadership at three of its campuses. The decision was made before the end of the school year so the students and principals could settle into their new homes for the upcoming school year.

For the students, the changes send a strong message that education is valued in this district. It also sends a strong message to the public that students come first and their learning process is important.

The decision comes on the heels of the JISD school board approving Bill "Butch" Dean as the sole finalist for the superintendent's post.

Dean said the decisions were "made in the best interest of the students and the district."

Sometimes change is hard to accept but in this instance, it was needed and we all win because of these changes.

**Roses go to....**

▼To all who participated in the Relay for Life event Friday evening.

▼Jasper's baseball squad for capturing the District 21-3A championship last Friday.

**Thorns go to....**

Voter apathy. Early voting started Monday, April 30 and turnout has been slow. Vital seats on city council and school board are available and a strong voice is needed to determine the outcome of this election.

### Guest Commentary One person's viewpoint

## Great mysteries of the universe

Does Osama Bin Ladin's office staff play Secret Pals?

Did The Beatles ever say to themselves "You know, we're just a mediocre garage band who ripped off the rockabilly and blues sounds. What's the big deal?"

Why is colon cancer never the subject of a Hallmark movie?

What human first decided to eat frog legs? Why?

If my telephone is really important to some company, why is a recording telling me that?

When you get one of those Bombay sales calls during supper, do you ever want to ask the caller if he's naked?

Don't you find the idea of snakeskin boots ironic? After all, snakes don't even have feet.

Folks at courthouses want more security. How about more security for the rest of us first?

And speaking of the rest of us, why don't we have the same health care deal as Congress?

If God really loves us, why did He inflict Princess Diana on an already-suffering world?

When Mel Gibson is ripped apart by torturers at the end of Braveheart, doesn't that just give you a warm, happy feeling?

Why do trucks have he-manly-sounding names like "Sierra" and "Avalanche" and "Scottsdale"? Why not give them authentic names, like "Cowboy Wannabe Who Lives in an Apartment," "Six Years of Notes Just to Drive This Thing to my Fast Food Job," and "Still Living With My Parents?"

So if the Electoral College is such a great institution, why don't we ever hear any-

thing about their football team, huh?

Why are tornadoes always cutting swaths? What are swaths, and why do they need cutting?

Why do tornadoes snap trees like matchsticks? Shouldn't trees snap like, well, trees? Does anyone say "Wow, that matchstick snapped like a tree!"?

Did anyone remember to tip the waiter at The Last Supper?

Why do hosts introduce guest speakers with the self-cancelling phrase "a man who needs no introduction?"

Is there any city in Iraq that isn't a holy city?

If something goes without saying, why doesn't it go without saying?

Why do newsreaders on the telly caution us that a picture is graphic? All pictures are graphic.

Why would anyone push an envelope? Unless you're actually in a box, don't you always think outside the box?

Did Stalin own a dog? Did he ever crawl on the floor and talk baby-talk to a beagle?

How do executioners become executioners? Is there a guest speaker on vocations day at school who sets up his power-point and asks "Hey, kids, would you like a great career with great pay, great hours, and a great sense of personal fulfillment?"

Did Ayatollah Khomeini take the girls out to lunch on secretaries' day?

Well, at the beginning of the day where shove goes to push the top line is that when the skinny lady sings that's what I'm saying you know?

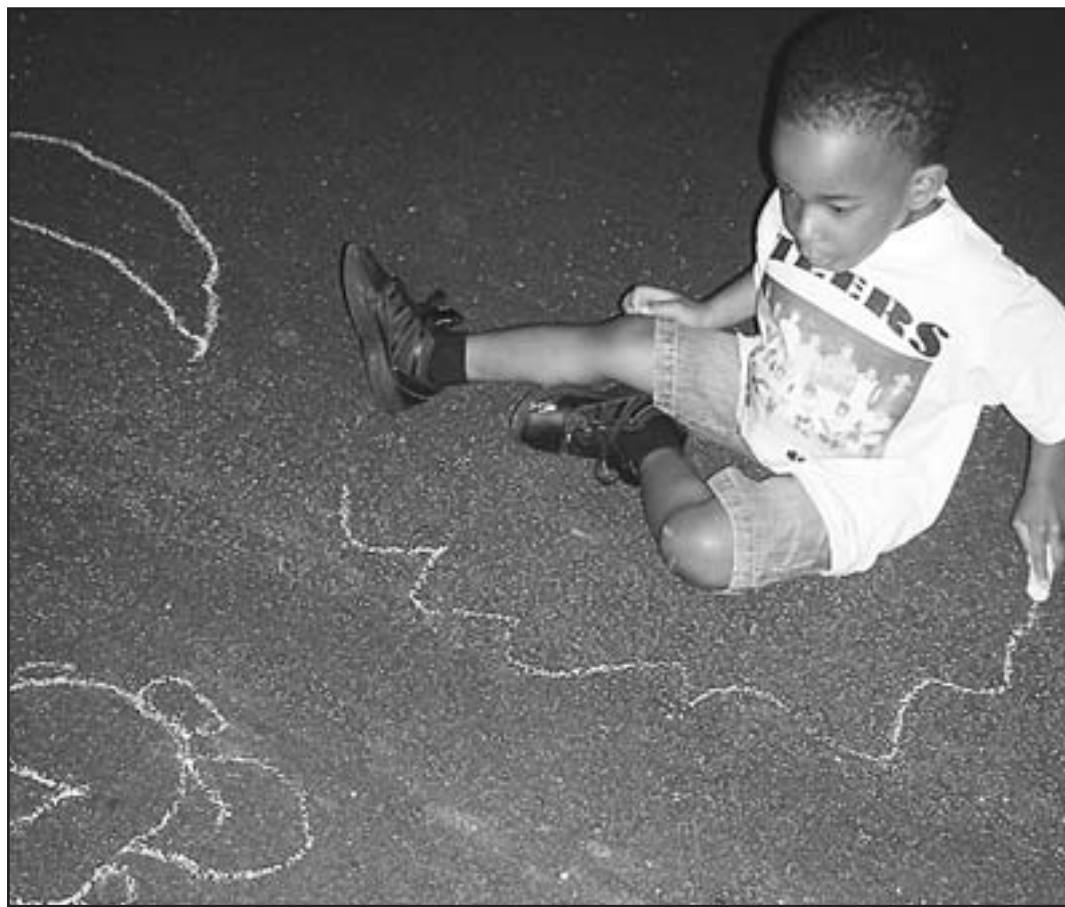
**Mack Hall is a resident of Kirbyville**



Mack Hall

## In Jasper County...

Appreciating Main Street



Newsboy photo/Charles Kerr

**THIS YOUNGSTER** took advantage of the newly paved Main Street to work on some chalk drawings during the Relay for Life event on the courthouse square Friday, April 27.

### Your Viewpoint Letters to the Editor

## Time to face the facts on racism

By WILLIE J. RAWLS  
Jasper

In last week's edition of The Jasper Newsboy, there was an article 'Racism — big deal out of small issue.'

The writer Andrew Kier said he does not think racism exists. And he also said that racism isn't racism unless Al Sharpton or Rev. Jessie Jackson says so.

Facts are black people and any other race of people know racism when they see it or hear it. And if you think the only way black people will know racism is when Sharpton or Jackson says so — then you are very wrong.

Facts are black people have common sense and wisdom to know racism when they see it.

The writer said he did not think racism played a role in the James Byrd Jr. death. Facts are they didn't drag Byrd to death because they loved him. The writer said that Byrd was just in the wrong place at the wrong time.

Facts are Shawn Berry was on 60 Minutes II television show and said while John Williams and Bill King were in prison, King had written him several letters. And Berry said that King was saying hateful things about black people. Berry said that he did not answer any of King's letters.

Facts are Berry already knew his friends King and Brewer did not like black people. So, why would he stop to give Byrd a ride?

All Berry had to do was to pass Byrd by and let him walk a safe walk home.

Facts are Byrd was in the wrong place at

the wrong time. Facts are Berry, Brewer and King took him to the wrong place at the wrong time.

Racism is what it is; when they decided to drag Byrd it was of their own will.

A life you cannot ever give back. James Byrd was killed simply because he was black.

## Letters to editor criteria outlined

The Jasper Newsboy would like to publish your thoughts and concerns about issues that are important to you. All Letters to the Editor should be accompanied with the writer's name and daytime telephone number for verification purposes.

Phone numbers will not be published, but the author's name will be.

Under no circumstances will the author's name be withheld.

All letters are subject to editing for newspaper style and clarity, without changing the meaning of the content.

Letters should be limited to 300 words. Letters endorsing or opposing political candidates are considered political advertising and will be forwarded to the advertising department.

Deadline for letters is 10 a.m. Monday to be published in the following Wednesday's publication.

Mail letters to:  
The Jasper Newsboy  
P.O. Box 1419  
Jasper, Texas 75951-1419  
or e-mail to:  
jgalvan@jaspernewsboy.com

### Capital Highlights A summary of the week's significant events in Austin

## Dozens of bills already await governor's signature

**A**USTIN - Out of those thousands of bills lawmakers have filed in the 80th Regular Session of the Texas Legislature, about 150 already are on their way to the governor, having passed both House and Senate.

Hundreds more will land on Gov. Rick Perry's desk before the Legislature adjourns on May 28. Perry will have a 10-day period following adjournment to sign, veto or ignore legislation on his desk. Bills he chooses not to sign or veto will take effect without his signature.

Here are just a few bills of general interest awaiting action by the governor.

▼ HB 5 by Rep. Leo Berman, R-Tyler, cuts the homestead property tax of the elderly and disabled.

▼ HB 1098 by Rep. Dennis Bonnen, R-Angleton, prohibits immunization against human papillomavirus as a condition for admission to public school.

▼ HB 2061 by Rep. Jim Keffer, R-Eastland, provides that a county or

district clerk is not liable for the disclosure of a living person's Social Security number contained in a document filed with the county or district clerk.

▼ SB 90 by Leticia Van de Putte, D-San Antonio, establishes a pilot program to provide ballot by electronic mail to military personnel serving overseas.

▼ SB 112 by Sen. John Carona, R-Dallas, allows a peace officer to confiscate an individual's firearms and ammunition during a state of disaster.

▼ SB 369 by Sen. Tommy Williams, R-The Woodlands, makes it a misdemeanor punishable by a fine to alter or obscure a motor vehicle's license plate.

HB 1892, which achieved Senate approval on April 27, slows down by two years the governor's plan to close the deal on the Trans Texas Corridor, a 50-year, statewide toll road-building project.

The bill, by Rep. Wayne Smith, R-Baytown, and sponsored by the Senate by Williams, passed 27-4. "No" votes were cast by senators



Ed Sterling  
Texas Press Association

who hoped to get started on plans to relieve traffic congestion, or wanted to keep all options active and on the table.

After the vote, Lt. Gov. David Dewhurst, who presides over the Senate, said, "I believe privately financed road projects play an essential role in our transportation future."

But, Dewhurst added, a two-year moratorium would give the people of Texas and lawmakers time to make sure such projects "actually work and benefit all Texans."

**Property tax protest bill passes**

The House on April 27 passed a measure to give landowners more flexibility to postpone and reschedule their property appraisal protest hearings.

HB 538 by Rep. Bill Callegari, R-Katy, allows a landowner to postpone their property tax protest at least once without showing cause, and lets a land owner make additional postponements upon demonstration of reasonable cause. The bill also increases the amount of time for the postponement of a protest hearing from 15 to 30 days.

Under current law, appraisal districts may choose to allow a land owner to postpone their appraisal protest hearing if the owner or their agent show good cause for the postponement. A hearing may be postponed by no less than five days, and no more than 15. The law does not allow additional postponements.

**House OKs govt spending site**

A proposal to create a "one stop shop" on the Internet where citizens would find a detailed accounting for all Texas state government expenditures earned tentative approval of the House.

HB 3430 by State Reps. Mark Strama, D-Austin; Bryan Hughes, R-Marshall; Corbin Van Arsdale,

R-Houston; Juan Garcia, D-Corpus Christi; and Ken Paxton, R-McKinney, is modeled after federal legislation passed last year by U.S. Sens. Barack Obama, D-Ill., and Tom Coburn, R-Okla.

"Direct citizen access to information has already created a powerful additional check and balance on government and the media," Strama said. The Web site would be accessed through TexasOnline and maintained by the state comptroller.

**Dog bite legislation is OK'd**

HB 1355 by Rep. Dan Gattis, R-Georgetown, would increase penalties to owners who fail to reasonably secure their dog, if the dog makes an unprovoked attack on a person, resulting in serious bodily injury or death.

The House passed the bill, and it has been assigned to the Senate Criminal Justice Committee for further consideration.

Ed Sterling is director of member services for the Texas Press Association in Austin.