

Viewpoint

The Jasper Newsboy

Established in 1865

Texas Oldest Weekly Newspaper, Continuously Published Under the Same Name

702 S. Wheeler, Jasper, Texas 75951

USPS 273-140 • ISSN 0764-2824

PHONE:(409) 384-3441 FAX: (409) 384-8803

PUBLISHER

Jeffrey T. Reedy

Our Viewpoint Editorials

Seniors deserve our full support

This week is a special time of the year for high school seniors all across the United States.

This weekend, these seniors will take their first steps into the real world when they graduate from high school.

As we watch these seniors graduate, we are seeing the leaders of tomorrow, our future.

Some will go to college to further their education while others will enter the local workforce.

Either way, they will strive to become productive members of our society and are a welcome addition.

All too often the youth of today are portrayed as troubled with no direction. But as we scan across graduation ceremonies in the area, we will witness a different version of our youth.

These vibrant, energetic young people will put their brand on this world and deserve our full support on their path through life.

Hats off to the Class of 2007.

Roses go to....

▼ How about them Bulldogs? Jasper swept two games from Bellville to advance in the Class 3A playoffs.

▼ Buna and Woodville's baseball programs are also going strong in the Class 2A playoffs.

▼ Jasper Police's DARE officer Wanda Brister for her work with the program in county schools.

Thorns go to....

▼ Texas lawmakers who continue to fiddle with the school funding issue which may cause the consolidation of school districts in the near future.

In Jasper County

Starting young....



Your Viewpoint Letters to the Editor

God stayed with Jaylon all the time

By FAITH CLOTIAUX
Jasper

A few weeks ago our son Jaylon had an accident during baseball practice. He was airlifted from the ball field to St. Elizabeth Hospital in Beaumont. While this was a traumatic time for his teammates, friends and our family, God was standing with Jaylon.

One friend told me that prayers were going up for Jaylon before he ever hit the ground, and another that his guardian angel was holding him in the palm of his hand when he hit the wall, still another put out prayer request by e-mail and my-space.

By the way, I think Jaylon's angel works a lot of overtime. Praise God!

While we waited anxiously for the first 24 hours to pass after Jaylon's injury, Jasper went to their knees and prayed for one of their own. When Jaylon left the ballpark that day, parents, teammates and friend were praying as he was being lifted into the air by the Med-Air helicopter.

When we got to the hospital in Beaumont, an off-duty nurse and friend of the family came to the emergency room to help guide us through emergency room trauma procedures.

This young woman grew up in Jasper and graduated with my older son, and someone had called her to tell her Jaylon was on his way via Med-Air. Again, God's hand!

We will be eternally grateful to her for her presence that day. We had many such experiences during our time in the hospital and witnessed God's presence in every one that had contact with Jaylon, from doctors, nurses and physical therapists, to friends, family and even other baseball teams in the area.

We will be forever grateful for the love, support and prayers of this community during this crisis. It is only by the grace of God that Jaylon is still with us and able to walk across the stage during graduation this Friday night.

We are so proud to live in Jasper and the true "jewels" are the people of this town. Thanks to all for your thoughts and prayers during our family's time of need.

Decision says its okay to fail test

By ANDREW KIER
Jasper

By a 4-3 vote the Jasper Independent School District School Board chose to allow seniors who have not passed all areas of the TAKS test to be able to walk and take part of the commencement ceremonies.

This is a privilege you get when you get all of your work done, including passing these exams. This vote is ridiculous and should not be in effect. Many students work hard and get the job done and they are the students that should be congratulated and are able to take part in these activities.

The Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) test is a state mandated test that the school system spends so

much time preparing students to take.

Time is wasted during school for teachers to prepare students for this test. Tutorials are offered after school as well. This is not a test that students should fail. What are these students doing instead of taking advantage of the help that is offered to them?

After talking with someone who gives help to seniors on thin ice such as this I learned that of the students who fail, only a very small percentage of them and their parents actually show up to get things on the right track.

Since it is already proven that TAKS is not a test designed for you to fail we need to see what type of signal this sends to the students who passed and failed the exams. For the students who passed and got the job done I would like to personally congratulate you for all your hard work but evidently four members of the school board do not care. To those who have failed the test and are allowed to take part in the commencement ceremony, four members of the school board feel as if you need to be congratulated and that it is okay for you to fail.

Thanks for all the good rides

By KENNETH HODGES
Jasper

As I approach the end of my bus-driving career, I thought it would be a good time to write a thank you note to all the many students and parents of buses (53 and 64) and now 84.

Bus driving has certainly changed from 30 years ago. I've had some problems but mostly have enjoyed my driving.

I've also had good bosses and people I've worked with and I thank them also. It's been a good ride (pardon the pun).

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

Perry vetoes House version of toll road legislation

AUSTIN - On May 18 Gov. Rick Perry vetoed HB 1892, legislation that would have preserved local control over toll road projects in the North Texas and Houston regions and placed a two-year moratorium on the governor's massive new toll road plan.

Perry wants a bill that will centralize control through the Texas Department of Transportation. TxDOT would execute his Trans Texas Corridor plan, a statewide matrix of toll road projects to be built and run by Zachry, a San Antonio-based firm, and Cintra, a Spanish company.

In his explanation of the veto, Perry said HB 1892 "jeopardizes billions of dollars of infrastructure investment and invites a potentially significant reduction in federal transportation funding.

"Projects important to fast-growth communities would be placed on hold without alternative financing mechanisms to get them constructed.

Even more egregiously, the bill serves to break up the state highway system by permitting local control over state assets," Perry said.

Perry's hopes are now pinned to SB 792, a bill similar to HB 1892 but amended to address highway infrastructure issues in a manner more acceptable to him. The House passed SB 792 with amendments.

The Senate did not concur with the House amendments, so the bill will be considered by a conference committee.

The governor has threatened to call a special session if the final version of the bill doesn't suit him.

Little time left to deal with bills

Countdown to the May 28 end of the 80th regular session of the Texas Legislature is in single digits. Various deadlines governing the fate of bills come almost daily.

There is competition to get bills placed on House and Senate floor calendars before it's too late.



Ed Sterling
Texas Press
Association

Craddick, R-Midland, for that high office. Keffer suggested three terms are enough for anyone to be speaker. Craddick is completing his third term.

But Craddick, 63, made it plain he wants a fourth term, putting to rest any speculation that he feels like he has had enough time on the rollercoaster.

His wife approves. "I have talked to Nadine and I fully intend to run for speaker. The paperwork was already filed last February," Craddick said.

The announcement by Keffer

Keifer files to run for speaker

Beyond the bubbling vat of bills is a race for speakership of the House. Rep. Jim Keffer, R-Eastland, on May 15 announced his intention to challenge Speaker Tom

means a long campaign to wage until the 2009 session.

And, it is likely Keffer won't be the only House member challenging Craddick.

Names that come easily to mind are Reps. Jim Pitts, R-Waxahachie, and Brian McCall, R-Plano.

Pitts and McCall already attempted to unseat Craddick at the beginning of the present session.

Jessica's Law heads to governor

The House and Senate agreed to compromise language on HB 8, "Jessica's Law" legislation enacting new charges and tougher penalties for sexually violent acts against children younger than 14.

The bill, by Rep. Debbie Riddle, R-Houston, will make sexually violent offenders subject to penalties ranging from a 25-year minimum sentence on a first offense to the death penalty for repeat offenses.

Certain offenders also would be denied parole and subjected to GPS monitoring should they ever

be released from prison, the author said.

And, HB 8 directs the Texas attorney general's office to support local prosecutors in pedophile cases.

Gov. Perry is expected to sign the bill, which is written to take effect Sept. 1.

In a related matter, Perry already has signed another piece of legislation that requires the Department of Public Safety to collect detailed information on sexual assaults that occur in Texas.

HB 76 by Rep. Elliott Naishtat, D-Austin, and Sen. Judith Zaffirini, D-Laredo, addresses a lack in statewide statistics on sexual assault.

Under their bill, what will be collected is information about the offender, the offender's relationship to the victim, any weapons used and any injuries sustained by the victim.

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