

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

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Our Viewpoint Editorials

City needs to step up, help with skate park

For the last two months, Jasper's city council has placed an item on their agenda to prohibit skateboards and similar devices on city sidewalks. Since skateboards are already illegal on city streets, this would literally outlaw the popular device from the city of Jasper.

Skateboarding has grown in popularity over recent years with the advent of several professional skateboarders such as Tony Hawk. The sport has risen through the ranks to become one of the fastest growing sports around.

But still the sport has a big black eye with Jasper officials.

Many claim the skateboards, which have taken to the sidewalks around businesses to practice their sport, have destroyed personal and business property.

Owners also believe they may have an increased amount of liability if one of these skateboarders were to seriously injure themselves in front of their property.

While both sides of the coin are arguable, the city needs to step up and help out what could become a firestorm of an issue.

While there may be some "bad apples" in the skateboarding community, there are many that plainly enjoy the sport and need a place to practice their sport. They long for stretches of concrete that will allow them to work on the moves they see on television.

It's easy to outlaw the sport and say the problem is cured. The more challenging position would be for the city to work in partnership with businesses to create a skate park at the city's park so that these young athletes can have a place to play. Grants are available for projects such as this.

The city provides a basketball court now for those interested in that sport. What is wrong with a skate park?

Step up, city leaders - our youth are depending on you.

In Jasper County

World of creation...



Courtesy photo

JASPER JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL students Jacob Clark and Dion Beard put the finishing touches on their model of the earth for science. The solar system 5-mile scale model will be viewed by bus tours from Azalea Festival, March 15.

Guest Commentary One person's viewpoint

The superior species

That whacky - of charity, let us call him Stultus Cibus - Stultus Cibus is at it again, swimming naked with the alligators in Florida. Oh, sure, some writers say he was swimming nude with the alligators, but if you've seen a picture of that ugly ol' boy you will understand that he was nekkid. Indeed, he looks as if he traded his last few brain cells and his last bar of soap for a marijuana joint back in 1968 or so.

The last time Stultus got naked with the alligators back in '06 one of them ate a fair amount of him, including his left arm and part of his sit-upon. This Circle of Life event would have been completed, and Stultus digested, except for the fact that Polk County deputies were pulling on one end of Stultus while the 'gator was pulling on the other.

One would expect a self-respecting alligator who was raised by loving parents to eat a healthier diet than ol' Stultus.

Maybe next time the deputies can just sort of, you know, accidentally let go.

One wonders if to alligators humans taste like chicken.

Stultus spent months receiving taxpayer-funded care that apparently some of our war wounded are denied, and returned to driving around in his pickup truck and consuming meth and marijuana.



Mack Hall

Well, one can't keep a one-armed village idiot down. Last Friday Stultus was once again swimming naked with the alligators, and once again Polk County deputies saved his life.

Like the ever-optimistic Charlie Brown, the alligators were hoping Lucy wouldn't yank the human away this time.

Or perhaps the alligators were reluctant to take a bite out of Stultus because they were afraid

he was processed in China and might contain bacteria or sewerage or weird chemicals.

And aren't there laws against feeding alligators unsanitary food?

This last encounter was on a Friday, and as we all know from the respected theologian Jack Chick the Pope mandated that alligators eat humans on Fridays for the sake of the Italian alligator-shoe industry.

Stultus' next career may be as an announcer for National Public Radio, another taxpayer-funded and brain-dead entity. Barring that, he could stumble around the mall with a tin cricket in his ear and barking obscenities to himself.

Let's see if Stultus really has guts - let's see if he'll swim naked with Rosie O'Donnell next go-round.

Mack Hall is a resident of Kirbyville

Your Viewpoint Letters to the Editor

Polish the Jewel

By CHRIS LANIER
Jasper

As a businessperson and as someone who grew up in Jasper, I'd like to offer an observation to my fellow Jasperites as it relates to the "buzz" of alcohol sales within the city limits.

Certainly, Jasper is in dire need of incremental sales tax for many reasons. I don't believe anyone disagrees that our chances of luring some additional chain restaurants does probably weigh on the ability to sell alcoholic beverages to those that wish to partake.

It would also keep some spending dollars within the Jasper area as many of us do the long drive to a Beaumont or Lufkin in pursuit of dining options. Makes economic sense.

What is of concern is what could become of Jasper's "Jewel" status should we pass the version that would permit beer and wine sales at local stores. Many years ago, there was an emphasis not only of our tag line but also the cleanliness of the area.

I've traveled most of North America for years and have seen the ill effects of cities that have failed in their attempt to have a Jewel type appearance. Trash, unkept properties and lack of civic pride in general makes a lot of urban America very unappealing. As a business owner, I now encourage visitors from these same Americas to visit Jasper. Many comment on the simplicity and native beauty of this area (although I try to avoid our unattended areas during my tours with them). The addition of beer stores, even in conjunction with general merchandise sales, will

lead to unneeded neon and additional trash around Jasper. Just look at the discarded lottery tickets at your local convenience store as an example of what can be. Those of us living in the Beech Grove area see the reality of tossed alcohol containers and cartons from those that are buying outside of Jasper County, yet feel compelled to use our roadsides as their personal dump.

Let's polish the Jewel, not let it be tossed aside as well.

Letters' criteria

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.

"Thank You" letters will not be published and will be transferred to the advertising department for an advertisement. 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

March 4 Texas primaries draw record voters

AUSTIN - More than 4.2 million people voted in the March 4 Texas primaries.

This was a record-breaking turnout, far surpassing the previous record of 2.7 million in 1988.

The Republican primary, with its one person, one vote, no-caucus method, quickly yielded a winner: U.S. Sen. John McCain of Arizona with 51 percent of the vote to former Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee's 38 percent.

McCain received 80 delegates to Huckabee's 16 and Huckabee dropped out the race, as McCain had accumulated enough GOP state delegates to win the nomination.

U.S. Rep. Ron Paul of Clute, who got five percent of the Texas Republican vote, also ended his race for the presidential nomination.

The Democratic Party, on the other hand, revealed how engaging but messy democracy can be in actuating its "Texas Two Step" primary election process.

The state's chief election offi-

cial, Secretary of State Phil Wilson, on March 4 said his office received many calls from people confused over the Democratic Party's process.

Democrats who cast ballots on March 4 or in early voting were allowed to participate in a post-election precinct caucus. Caucus goers, according to party rules, proved they had voted as Democrats by showing the party stamp on their valid voter registration card.

Next, they signed their name and address on a sign-in sheet. Along with their name, they were asked, but not required, to declare in writing the presidential candidate of their choice.

Precinct chairs and secretaries applied a formula to the candidate declarations to calculate the number of Clinton or Obama delegates and alternates who will attend county party conventions later in March.

U.S. Sen. Hillary Clinton of



Ed Sterling
Texas Press
Association

New York won the popular vote with 51 percent to Illinois U.S. Sen. Barack Obama's 47 percent. The precinct caucus delegate count wasn't complete until March 7. Clinton won 65 delegates to Obama's 61.

Many thought winning Texas was a do-or-die situation for Clinton, but she bolstered her bid for the Democratic presidential nomination by also winning Ohio.

Challengers replace

incumbents

Eight incumbent members of the Texas House of Representatives lost their primary races. Their names are below, with the new nominees in parentheses:

- Kevin Bailey, D-Houston, House District 140 (Armando Walle);
- Juan Escobar, D-Kingsville, House District 43 (Tara Rios Ybarra);
- Pat Haggerty, R-El Paso, House District 78 (Dee Margo);

- Thomas Latham, R-Dallas, House District 101 (Mike Anderson);

- Nathan Macias, R-Bulverde, House District 73 (Doug Miller)

- Borris Miles, D-Houston, House District 146 (Al Edwards)

- Paul Moreno, D-El Paso, House District 77 (Marisa Marquez)

- Corbin Van Arsdale, R-Tomball, House District 130 (Allen Fletcher)

Incumbent members continue in office until their term expires on Dec. 31. Each will face opposition in the November general election.

Runoffs will decide seven nominees

Five state house districts and two U.S. congressional districts will elect nominees by runoff on April 8. Those are:

- Republicans Bryan Daniel and Doyle Hobbs, HD 52 (east half of Williamson County);
- Republicans Ralph Sheffield and Martha Tyroch, HD 55 (most of Bell County);
- Republicans Tyron Lewis and Buddy West, HD 81

(Andrews, Winkler and Ector counties);

- Republicans Angie Button and Randy Dunning, HD 112 (part of northeast Dallas County);

- Republicans Ken Legler and Fred Roberts, HD 144 (part of southeast Harris County);

- Republicans Pete Olson and Shelley Sekula-Gibbs, CD 22 (part of Fort Bend, Galveston, Brazoria and Harris counties);

- Democrats Steve Love and Eric Roberson, CD 32 (part of north, northeast and central Dallas).

The winners of those runoffs will face opponents in the November general election.

DPS warns spring break drivers

The Texas Department of Public Safety said more patrols would be watching drivers in South Texas and the Rio Grande Valley as students on spring break flock to the beaches.

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