

## Rainy day portrait

Drops of rain were evident everywhere following the thundershowers late Monday night. With the rains came a breath

of unseasonably cool air - a relief from the hot summer weather.

# Superman myth lives in the real Metropolis

United Press International METROPOLIS, Ill. — Bob sterfield says he still believes Superman, despite a dose of kryptonite that nomic

shed hopes of a multimillion llar theme park in the "Man Steel's" hometown a decade

"He's as real as God made egreen apples," said Wester-d, a self-described promoter otalks faster than a speeding

'I have seen him take adults make kids out of them. I've in him with the mentally rerded and become their hero. e seen the eyes of kids widen ter they see someone who can and who can't be hurt by ngs," Westerfield said. "He ust be alive.

The vision of turning Metrolis, a city of 7,000 perched on olling hills along the Ohio Riv-, into a major tourist attraction very much alive in the early

as a m

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In January 1972 Metropolis

— the only town bearing that museum closed and its contents name in the U.S. Postal Service's were put up for auction. directory - officially adopted Superman as a resident.

The Rev. Charles Chandler, a Baptist minister, donned the caped costume and performed several stunts before national newspaper, television and radio

reporters. "We got excited about that and said, 'Well, what else can we do?" said Clyde Wills, editor of

the weekly Metropolis Planet. In 1973, a corporation made up mainly of residents purch-ased \$250,000 worth of stock to create a venture called "The Amazing World of Superman." They began planning a museum, shopping complex

and theme park. They paid \$50,000 for the use of Superman's name and, in the summer of 1973, a museum was opened in a converted skating

Three months later, the corporation ran out of money, the

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"Things just pretty much died after that," Wills said. "Everybody was upset about losing the money they invested, and Superman was just pretty much a dirty word around here for several years. Wills said most of the bitterness about the failed venture among the townspeople has Superman still adorns died.

were put up for auction.

signs leading into and out of town and on the city's water tow-er. There is a big "S" outside the Planet office, the chamber of commerce has a talking Superman telephone booth, and there is an annual "Superman Celebration" on the second weekend of June

United Press International DALLAS — Texans use the Lone Star state flag to stir martinis, hawk real estate and top oil derricks and skyscrapers. They even fly them on Cadillacs.

Youngest blackbelt ever

United Press International SCOTT DEPOT, W.Va. — Matt Hodges, who six years ago

became the youngest karate blackbelt in the world, appears

to be the winner over an even

At the age of 6, he was in the Guinness Book of World Re-

cords and appeared on the "Mike Douglas Show" and "To Tell the Truth". The "Karate King" had fans around the globe

who sent him letters — more than 20,000 of them — filled

especially in his neighborhood. Matt's future looked bright.

During the day, Matt com-peted in a Marshall University

karate tournament. That night, he lay on his back in the Charles-

ton General Hospital, using all

his strength and concentration

'My little boy lay motionless

against a cancerous brain tumor.

Little Matt Hodges was a star,

But all that came to an abrupt

with praise and affection.

halt on April 2, 1977

more difficult challenger

cancer

"If it's not there you get a naked feeling," says business-man Lou Kronberg.

Flag makers and promoters say no other state has such a fixation on its most visible symbol.

"You can't go down the street without seeing the flag," businessman Lou Kronberg said of the flag. Other state flags are an

"impossible complex of scales

or figures of justice," said Kronberg, owner of Flags and Flagpoles, a firm stocking one of the nation's largest flag inventories. But the Texas flag "is a very powerful graphic design in strong colors."

He said he sells customers tiny flags for martini glasses

and

Boy wins cancer fight

like a human vegetable with tubes running out of his head, his mouth and nose. His eyes

were popping out of his head

which was three times its normal

The doctors acted quickly to

size," Pam Hodges, his mother,

drain the fluids expanding

Matt's brain. But the release o

pressure caused a mass of blood

clots. Matt was in bad shape. He made it through the five

perations needed to extract the

"They were as big as baseballs, but I made it," said Matt, 12.

After recovering from the re-

sulting paralysis and loss of speech, he underwent yet

another operation to remove the

When the tumor was re-

moved, doctors gave him a year to live and told his mother to

expect the tumor to grow back.

That was six years ago, but the

showed no trace of cancer. He is

Matt's most recent checkup

tumor has not returned.

said.

plood clots.

tumor.

Texas flag stays

30-foot-by-50 tlags, which can cover a house and must be displayed from 100-

tion treatments. His hair has grown back. His

memory has greatly improved, and his feet have grown four at all for four years.

"I'm very lucky," he says. 'You've got to have courage. Courage is only one of the qualities Matt possesses.

'Matt has never been depressed or sad throughout all this, he is always happy. It never seemed to faze him," said his mother.

Matt's doctors said he should swim every day to combat the degeneration of his muscles caused by the temporary para-lysis. Unable to afford a pool for her son, Ms. Hodges, bought

him a pony. Ms. Hodges says overcoming the ignorance of his peers and the prejudice of society is be-

not on medication and no longer needs chemotherapy or radia-Matt grows older.

For now, Matt's cousin, Michael, 10, and sister, Chastity, 9, take care of any bullies, his shoe sizes in the past seven mother said. But one day Matt months, after having not grown will have to face it alone. And when that day comes, his mother believes he will be ready.

> "I believe one day Matt will be completely well," she said. "When he gets older he will take it upon himself to build his body back up. I told the doctors that when he first became sick. They thought I was in a fantasy world

The "Bionic Kid," as Matt be-came known to his doctors, is came known to his doctors, is very busy these days. He goes bowling every weekend with his classmates from Winfield Elementary Special Education School, and he is learning to ride. "Pad" his new popul

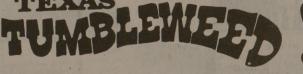
"Red", his new pony. "I'll always try something once," he said.

"You must remember that

ar

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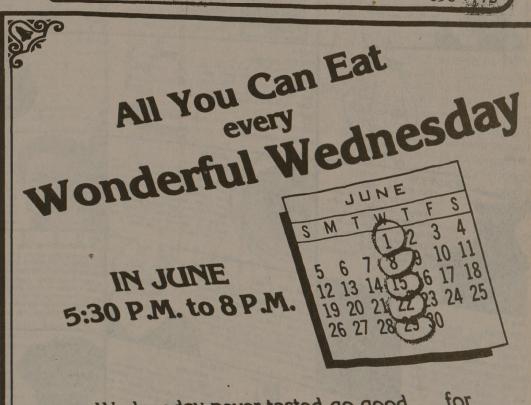
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