

NEWS

Residents oppose dump site

HEREFORD — Residents of this Panhandle community said they showed the government "they're vitally interested" in its selection of Deaf Smith County as a possible site for the nation's first high-level radioactive waste dump.

They did so, they said, by turning out in large numbers at a briefing on the repository.

"We have to show them we care, we're concerned, and we did that tonight," said Wayne Richardson, the owner of a seed farm who has property included in the Department of Energy's proposed dump site.

A nine-square-mile area about 26 miles north of Hereford has been named by the DOE as one of three "preferred sites" for the controversial dump. The other sites are in Nevada and Washington.

More than 400 people attended Tuesday's meeting, the purpose of which DOE officials said was "principally tutorial."

DOE officials outlined the reasons a radioactive waste repository is needed, how the government selected its three preferred sites and what steps would be taken next in the agency's preparation to have a nuclear waste dump in operation by 1998.

Many of those attending Tuesday's briefing said they didn't believe it was informational.

But they echoed Richardson's sentiment that a statement was made to the DOE.

"We have to come in these large numbers so that they know we're not just going to sit back and take this thing," said one woman, who asked that her name not be used.

Tonya Kleuskens agreed. "It's not just a few people with an interest now," she said. "This turnout signifies to us and it should say to them that we're concerned."

DOE officials also were pleased with Tuesday's turnout.

They stressed throughout the session that its purpose was to help residents better understand the DOE process and its documents so that they could make "substantive comments" when public hearings are held.

"I was pleased here, said Jeff Neff, manager of the agency's salt repository project office in Columbus, Ohio. "It seemed to be a broad attendance." 8602A representative of Gov. Mark White's office, Steve Frishman, said Tuesday's attendance showed that "the (DOE) has finally gotten the people's attention. And it's good. They need to be interested. It is now, finally, a community issue."

Although a final decision on the dump location is five years away, the DOE could begin construction on exploratory shafts at the three preferred sites within the next two years if the areas are approved by the president.

If the Deaf Smith County site is approved as a preferred site, the DOE probably would spend \$1 billion in studying it, officials said.

A presidential decision on whether to begin exploratory work at the three DOE-recommended sites is expected later this year.

Police charge man in kidnap of two children

RICHLAND HILLS — A third suspect in last week's kidnaping of two children has been charged after police discovered he was already in jail on another offense.

Police had believed the man was still at large after two other suspects were arrested Sunday with the two kidnapped children in their car, Richland Hills Police Chief Barbara Childress said.

But on Tuesday, police discovered the third man had already been questioned about the kidnaping and transferred to Dallas County on an unrelated charge.

Edwardo Olivas, 20, was charged Tuesday with aggravated kidnaping and is being held in lieu of \$25,000 bond.

Olivas was questioned by a Richland Hills detective Sunday night and transferred to the Lew Sterrett Justice Center in Dallas when police discovered an outstanding theft charge, police said.

Alphonso Martinez, 20, remained in the Richland Hills City Jail in lieu of \$500,000 bond on one charge of aggravated kidnaping. A 16-year-old also charged in the kidnaping was at the Tarrant County Juvenile Detention Center.

The three are accused of kidnaping at gunpoint Sammy Ranco, 6, and his 2-year-old sister, Teresa, from their Richland Hills home last Thursday.

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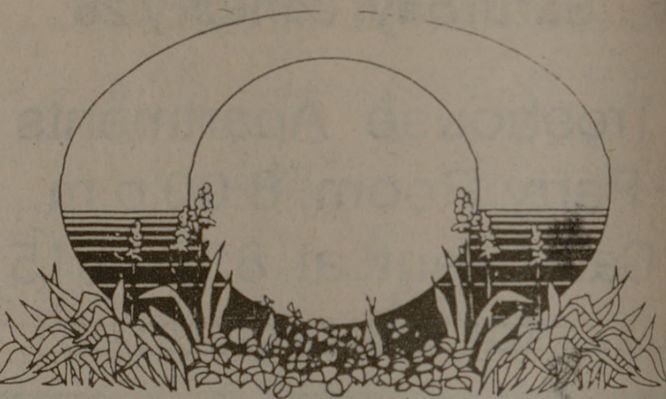
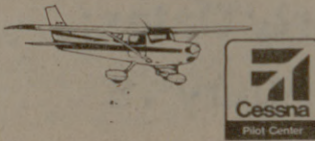
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