

ET CETERA

Complaints bared by sunbathers

Associated Press

AUSTIN — Construction work at Hippie Hollow, a long-time nude beach area on Lake Travis, is spoiling the natural beauty of the area, sunbathers complain.

"We come out here to get away from the asphalt," said a sunbather who asked to be identified only as Marvin. "But now you come here and see the same thing," he said while standing in the middle of a new, paved parking lot at Hippie Hollow.

A grant from the Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission and nearly \$400,000 in Travis County bond funds are being used to pave a parking lot, put in two restroom buildings with decks, build a ticket booth and grade a 4,700-foot lakeside trail.

The county leases Hippie Hollow from the Lower Colorado River Authority.

It was the trail that sunbathers grumbled about most over the weekend.

"It's a highway," a man identified as Gary told the Austin American-Statesman. "It just looks like overkill. The trail is within 10 feet of the waterline at some parts. You used to could look up and see green trees. Now you see more rocks."

The work isn't finished, said Travis County Commissioner Bob Honts, who is coordinating the project.

"It's going to be put back in a very natural form," Honts said.

The changes are designed to make Hippie Hollow cleaner and safer, he said. In recent years, more beer cans and bottles than sunbathers have lined the rocky banks of the hollow, officials said.

Trash has been thrown down the hill and, when it rains, the trash washes into the lake, said Sueann Brady, Honts' assistant.

Before the new trail was cut through Hippie Hollow, the trash had to be packed out of the park, she said. One weekend last summer, workers hauled two tons of trash out of the beach area, she added.

"You literally couldn't keep it from being a trash receptacle," Honts said. "We're still digging bottles out of there that have probably been there 10 years."

The trail will also make Hippie Hollow more accessible to emergency vehicles when a swimmer is injured, Brady said.

Slouch

By Jim Earle



"Could you explain what 'dead week' is to me? Is it a week when we don't have to come to class?"

Willie sings new tune

Associated Press

AUSTIN — There were no hoots, hats or longneck beers. Not even a chorus of "Whiskey River." The audience didn't mind when Willie Nelson appeared live, on stage, in church.

Nelson, the country singer with an outlaw reputation, doesn't play churches very often, but Rev. Gerald Mann, pastor of Austin's Riverbend Baptist Church, got him into one.

Mann turned down an offer of \$1,000 for two tickets to the Sunday night service, and he didn't even pass the collection plate.

"The main purpose is for the world to see the other side of Willie," Mann said before the service, explaining how he lured Nelson into a free appearance to help mark the dedication of the new church building.

"Willie is a spiritual person," Mann said. "All that's ever advertised is the outlaw image and the seamer side of his life. I love Willie. He's a kind and gentle man and a deeply spiritual man. Most people don't know that."

Nelson devilishly threatened to sing "Whiskey River."

Mann threatened to preach his topic of humility but the two men reached a compromise.

After Nelson sang "In God's Eyes," Mann recited an earlier duet between the two performers.

Mann: "Have you been to church since?"

Nelson: "No."

Mann: "Do you send money?"

Nelson: "I've been sending it somewhere."

Man chooses land instead of money

Associated Press

OLD OCEAN — John Holland Bannister turned down an offer to buy his old slave cemetery, plantation house and some woods and ranch land that others would have found hard to refuse.

But to the man who spent 30 years in the oil business and gave up a big house in Houston to move to the country, choosing land over money came easily.

"Now what would I do with all that money," Bannister says. "I don't want a big house. I had all that, and I gave it up. I want the land. You're never poor if you have land."

Bannister, 62, had another good reason to look past the seven-figure offer from Phillips Petroleum — a reason deeply rooted in history.

He is the great-great-grandson of one of the first Anglo settlers in Texas, John Sweeny, who was given the land in 1833 by Stephen F. Austin.

Austin gave Sweeny 50,000 acres, which Sweeny split among his nine sons. John Sweeny Jr. received the bulk of the land, 15,000 acres, which he turned into a plantation.

Sweeny's descendants over the years have sold all but the acreage now owned by Bannister, his brother and a cousin. Bannister moved back to the old homestead in 1981, and this is where he says he's doing to die — just like John Sweeny Jr.

Part of the once-fertile land that for so many years produced cotton and sugar cane now accommodates a Phillips petrochemical complex.

In the mid-1970s Phillips approached Bannister about selling the remaining 1,000 acres for future plant expansion.

"The idea of selling the land just turns me off," Bannister says. "My ancestors settled here when all this was forest. They had to clear the trees out before they could farm the land. They didn't come to speculate but to start a new life."

Another man shares Bannister's attachment to this land. This is where the parents of Thomas Jefferson Ellis Jr. were laid to rest, and this is where Ellis, better known to friends as T.J., says he wants to be buried in the old slave cemetery.

The cemetery lies across the road from a massive maze of pipes, water coolers and storage tanks — a meeting of history and progress in this western Brazoria County community.

About 100 slaves are buried in un-

marked graves on this green patch of land that has changed little since the first years ago. The descendants of the plantation slaves still bury their dead here.

"There is a lot of history here," says Ellis, 78, who has been caretaker here for seven years. "I'm going to keep it going as long as I can."

Ellis is a retired farmer and Phillips employee. He grew up on a nearby farm and recalls playing ball as a child on the plantation.

He remembers the row of long, narrow slave houses that once stood where cattle now roam, the schoolhouse and the church, and the pecan trees that once lined the dirt road to the plantation house.

Ellis, who has spent most of his life and reared five children here, says the physical reminders of an era when people were bought and sold do not bother him.

"That's history, and this is the present," he says. "We're all friends now."

About 50 descendants of the plantation slaves still live in the area. The only requirement for burial in the cemetery, Ellis says, is to be one of those descendants.

No one knows exactly where the slave graves are located because they were either never marked or the markers have been lost or deteriorated over the years.

The plantation that surrounds the cemetery was converted to a ranch in the 1940s, and most of it is now leased as pasture. Bannister reserves a small section for his own 30 head of cattle. This way, he says, he can have a piece of steak anytime he wants without going to the supermarket.

The original plantation house remains in good shape. Bannister leases the building to a family who maintains and repairs it in lieu of rent. The house has been expanded over the years, but has retained its original grandeur and most of the nails, wood and bricks slaves used to build it in 1837.

The two-story house is far too big for Bannister and his wife, Nancy. The couple live in a smaller house on Texas 35.

Geologist to mine lost ore lode

Associated Press

HOUSTON — A Houston geologist hopes to pick up where prospectors in the late 1800s left off when he goes hunting for silver in the Colorado mountains.

A.H. Wadsworth Jr. of Wadsworth Oil Co. says he will be digging into an untouched portion of an ore lode believed to have been separated by a geological fault millions of years ago.

The operation will be an extension of the old Moose Mine, 16 miles south of Breckenridge and two miles from Hoosier Pass on the Continental Divide.

The mine was one of Colorado's largest producers of silver until it was mined up to the fault and closed in 1893.

Early-day miners believed an extension of the Moose Mine ore deposit existed somewhere beyond the fault. But, Wadsworth said, they could not find it with their simple equipment and 19th-century knowledge of geology.

"We got in only a month of core drilling last year before water set in and closed the roads," Wadsworth said.

The mine is in an area where access roads are under 50 feet or more of snow in winter.

During last year's exploration, tests showed that the ore deposit extended for about 1,700 feet from the fault, he said.

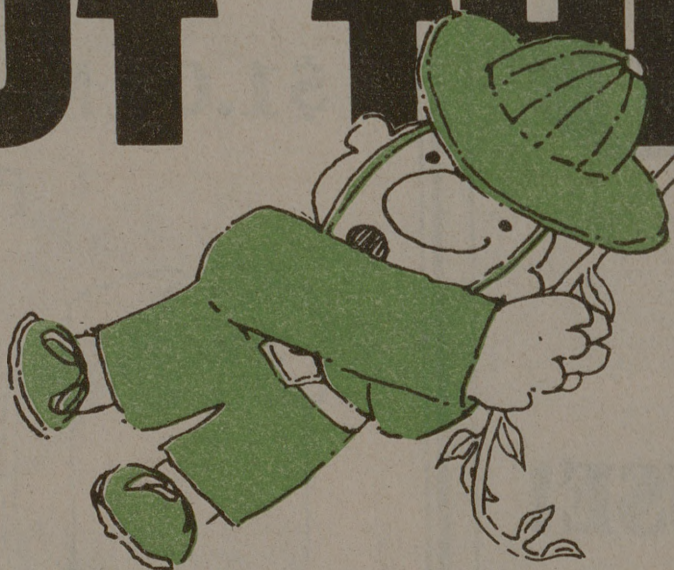
Wadsworth said the new strike's 1,700 feet length should produce silver which, in the refined state, is now selling on the market for about \$6.45 an ounce.

Aside from Moose Mine, Wadsworth's lease acquisition includes 4,000 acres of mineral properties containing 15 mines having past production of gold and silver. He has a completely equipped mine with gold, silver and lead ore that can operate year around and a 250-ton per day ore mill at the town of Alma.

Wadsworth said he bought the leases for \$3 million and has spent about \$500,000 so far.

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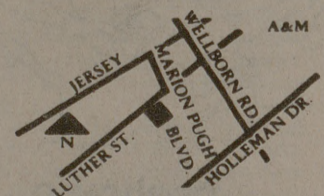
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Cong splits rebel

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A Democratic-controlled House of Representatives on Monday rejected a Reagan proposal for direct military aid to agents seeking to overthrow the government of Nicaragua. The resolution was approved by a 217-197 vote, the Republican-led House earlier.

Combined, the continuing debate allowed Reagan to press his case for the resolution. In both houses, additional support was pledged to repeal the Sandinista government's Democratic policy toward Nicaragua.

Reagan also pressed the money for military aid of the current Sept. 30.

The House vote was three on aid to the two remaining aid projects to be much taken Wednesday.

One choice was Democrats would \$14 million be sent to the United Nations of Red Cross for Nicaragua to enforce an embargo on the countries in the area.

The second alternative House Republican Michel of Illinois the president, would the Cont non-lethal aid to United States Agricultural Development. In the Senate, 40 Democrats voted aid proposal; 37 Democrats voted John East, R-N. Cause he is in the

Specifically, the an appropriation paramilitary operations.

But Reagan presented to Senate Robert Dole only the vote that he would only for non-lethal rest of the fiscal 80.

Low

Editor's Note: in a two-part industry and how state's economic

By KEVIN TRENT Staff

Pete Wilson's budget have on

Texo by '8

By CARM

Tornado se Monday were sighted Monday, the Service issued 77 counties in

In Olney, a "exploded" S hit by a tornado 88-year-old n wife and n were found n

The month June are active does and hurr

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