

Residents angry about 'hunger county' label

Associated Press

VERNON — Retired ranch hand Stanlee says "nothing has been kicked up as much dust" in Wilbarger County as the announcement that it's a place where people go hungry.

A report compiled by a Harvard-led research group and released Tuesday by the Harvard University School of Public Health and Physicians Task Force on Hunger named Wilbarger as one of 150 "hunger counties" across the United States. Texas has 29 hunger counties, the report said.

Hunger counties are those where 10 percent or more of the residents live below poverty level but at least one-third of the eligible participants do not receive food stamps, the report said.

That report made us mad," Stanlee said. "This is not a hungry county. This is not a poor county. I'd like to be pretty darn hungry to get food stamps."

Stanlee's sentiments are reflective of those of many of the 16,000 residents of the largely rural county in north central Texas. While they acknowledge that there are

people who need help, and some who could use more to eat, they resent being labeled a "hunger county." Residents complain that the report ignored their efforts at taking care of their own.

"Here we are doing all of this stuff here. We think we are doing a great job. We are trying to provide any program that we can," Wilbarger County Judge Bob Arnold told the Fort Worth Star-Telegram.

Besides food stamps, food programs offered in Wilbarger County include the Meals-on-Wheels program that serves 62 people daily with another 10 to 12 on a waiting list; Red Cross; a meals program provided by the local senior citizens group; and free and reduced lunch and breakfast programs at the school that serve about 870 students daily.

The county also has a federal commodities subsidy program that provides cheese, butter and dried foods to about 1,000 people monthly; food closets provided by churches and the ministerial alliance; the Women, Infants and Children's Program; and the Salvation Army.

"If someone needs help, all they have to do is ask," Arnold said.

Barbara Evans, spokeswoman for the Department of Human Services, said that an average of 815 people in Wilbarger County receive food stamps every month. She said that more people are probably eligible, but there are many reasons they don't take them. People in the rural counties are independent, she said.

"We find that people in these rural counties are the last ones to apply for food stamps. . . . They have food pantries and other programs that serve them, too," she said.

Social service agencies said they don't know of anyone who is hungry and not receiving some form of help.

Kathleen Hindman, director of the local Meals-on-Wheels program, said it is not uncommon to find people who will participate in that program but not seek food stamps or accept government commodities.

"Usually they are old. . . . They grew up during the Depression when everyone was hungry and they can't ask for a handout now," she said.

What's up

Monday

MSC VARIETY SHOW: applications are available in 216 MSC and are due Feb. 14. For more information contact Staci Parkman, 846-6348.

MSC TRAVEL: is showing "We've Never Been Licked" at 9:30 p.m. in Rudder Auditorium. Admission is \$1.50. For more information call 845-1515.

OFF CAMPUS AGGIES: will meet at 6:45 p.m. at Rudder Fountain.

ALPHA PHI ALPHA: will hold a program celebrating Dr. Martin Luther King's birthday beginning at 7:30 p.m. in 601 Rudder. For more information contact Edward Hasikin at 260-7701.

MSC TRAVEL: is taking applications for Mardi Gras and spring break trips. Call 845-1515 for more information.

CLASS OF '86: Elephant Walk party pictures are available Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. in 216H MSC. For more information contact Sheila Michalski at 845-1515.

Tuesday

LITERARY ARTS: will meet at 7:00 p.m. Those interested are to check the MSC monitor for room number. For more information contact Susie Boyer at 696-1264.

INTER-VARSITY CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP: will have a New Year's Eve celebration at 7:00 p.m. in 201 MSC.

Residents vote for truck stop incorporation

Associated Press

CARL'S CORNER — Neighbors of the popular Carl's Corner truck stop have voted to incorporate the area as a town, making a dream come true for Carl Cornelius, the business owner.

The business drew attention when Cornelius began building a trucker's paradise.

The truck stop has a 24-hour restaurant, two saunas, swimming pool and a park area with a pond. A trucker's drive-in theater is in the works, designed so drivers won't have to leave their rigs for the show.

The 58 people who went to the polls at the truck stop make up about 75 percent of the registered voters in the 1,200-acre area. The votes will be canvassed, and the Hill County judge will then call an election for city officials.

Cornelius said he has been asked to run for mayor, but "I don't know if I will. I'm tired."

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Applications are available in the SCONA cubicle 216 MSC and are due January 24, 5:00 p.m.

These positions are open to all TAMU students.

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