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## Clements criticized for not debating

AUSTIN (AP) — Gov. Mark White's campaign Tuesday criticized Republican gubernatorial candidate Bill Clements for declining to participate in a televised debate.

But a Clements aide said the problem was a scheduling conflict rather than an unwillingness to take part.

In a statement released in Dallas, public television station KERA said it would proceed with plans for its Oct. 23 debate despite Clements' decision not to appear.

Reggie Bashur, press secretary to Clements, said the former governor suggested three dates to the station — Sept. 30, Oct. 8 and 9. Those were not acceptable to KERA, Bashur said, adding that the station in return suggested Oct. 16 and 23.

"We just couldn't do it on those two days," Bashur said. "Clements had two major events scheduled on those days, on Oct. 16 in Dallas and Oct. 23 in Houston."

Bashur said Clements was really the one calling on White to debate.

"Clements debated his Republican opponents twice in the primary, but White never debated his opponents at all," Bashur said. "I think it is pretty clear Clements is for debates."

Dr. Richard J. Meyer, president and general manager of the public TV station, said "We sincerely hope Gov. Clements will change his mind."

White spokesman McKinnon accused Clements of ducking questions voters need to have answered.

"What's he running from?" McKinnon asked. "Is it his lack of a plan (to balance the state budget), or is it his constantly shifting position on taxes — one day for, one day against?"



## Mud Mania

George Lopez, top, and Milton Duffey compete in the Muscular Dystrophy Association mud-wrestling preliminaries at the Hall of Fame.

Lopez is in the finals tonight. The proceeds benefit MDA.

Photo by Anthony S. Casper

## Muslims flock to North Texas mosque

DENISON (AP) — It is Monday, and a hush has settled over the Islamic Mosque at Texoma. Then, slowly, softly, a mysterious voice begins to chant verses.

The air is filled with a strange melody. Words topple upon words. Suddenly the imam leans over and flicks a button. The tape halts. The imam smiles. Once again, the mosque grows quiet.

It is a scene foreign to most of Texas, where Christian houses of worship predominate. Most know nothing of mosques or imams or Islam except what filters through the media, books and movies.

Yet the imam, Dr. Fouad Ayad, an

anesthesiologist at the Texoma Medical Center, sensed the need for a place of Muslim worship even in far North Texas.

"We have a devoted Muslim, Dr. (A. Ibrahim) Sariss from Palestine," Ayad said. "We used to perform the ceremonies in his house and then we said why don't we build a mosque that we perform the ceremonies there."

Although this Islamic "church" is far less majestic than the famous temples so characteristic of the Middle East, Ayad said the building is an adequate facility for the 10 families and Muslim students who travel

from Durant, Okla., and Denton to use it.

It is a small six-sided dome, located on Highway 1417 in Denison. From its roof, a small tower, or minaret, projects into the sky.

"One criterion that each mosque is supposed to have is a minaret," Ayad said. "The minaret usually was used for a special person to go and call for prayer in — like the bell on a church."

Inside the mosque, a carpeted floor is partitioned by thick silver-taped lines. During services, the imam kneels at the front, facing northeast toward Mecca, with the men behind him. Next in line are

children, and women are positioned near the back.

Despite Ayad's adamant declaration that the Islamic religion requires women as second-class citizens, males must enter the mosque through the back door, while women come in through the front doors at front.

"That's just the way it turned out," he said.

The doctor said there are many Muslims in the Texoma area but said the mosque suits the needs of the families who would otherwise be forced to make a 60-mile trip to Richardson, where the nearest mosque is located.

## Man makes leather tooling an art

# Craftsman saddles 'em up

ROSEBUD (AP) — Whether you are interested in having a saddle fit for a king or just one for a reserve champion horse, chances are that Joe Miller can create a leather masterpiece that will suit your needs.

And for nearly 30 years, Miller has combined his knowledge of horses and leather craft to create lasting pieces of art that are not only beautiful but practical.

Miller, 49, of Rosebud, began making leather wallets and belts in high school.

He made his first saddle in 1957 as a present for his father.

What began as an interest in leather tooling soon blossomed into a full-time business.

Miller began making saddles for his friends, selling them at no more than the cost of materials in order to gain experience, he said.

Miller quickly gained a reputation for leather expertise and decided to open his first saddle shop in 1962 in Huntsville.

The shop remained open for five years, and Miller prided himself in his workmanship.

"Everything I do is self-taught," Miller said. "I never apprenticed, but I learn from everyone I come in contact with."

Miller then worked for two years for the Glennloch Farms Arabian horse ranch in Spring. It was at the ranch, Miller said, that he was introduced to the style of saddle he now makes.

Miller credits Tom McNair, horse trainer for the ranch, as being instrumental in developing this style.

A superior quality saddle is a necessity for training show horses,

Miller said. The horse and rider must become as one, he said.

Most people think horses are directed by the rider's hands, he said. But for show horses, movement is controlled by the rider's legs, and the closer the rider and saddle conform to the horse, the more control the rider has, Miller said.

Miller left Glennloch Farms to open a landscaping business in Houston, although he continued to make saddles in his spare time.

After five years in the landscaping business, Miller decided to devote full time to saddlemaking. He moved to Rosebud in 1974.

"I've continuously had saddles to make," Miller said. "Ever since I've been here, we've never been out of saddle orders."

Considering the amount of time

that is required to produce one, no wonder Miller stays busy.

The basic saddle requires 25 hours of work, he said. The exquisitely designed saddles can take up to 100 hours, he said.

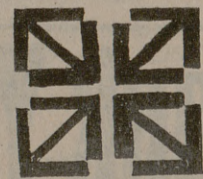
"We put out about 25 to 30 saddles a year," Miller said. "It depends on how ornate they are as to how many we turn out."

The procedure begins with a hide-covered pine tree base, he said.

The base is soaked in water when dried, it shrinks in width.

"This is what gives the saddle strength," Miller said.

After the base dries, eight to 10 pieces of hand-fitted leather are used in front of the saddle to help build the seat, he said.



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