day, November 13, 2000

News in Brief — **Cowgirl Hall of** Fame inducts 5 new members

FORT WORTH (AP) - The Nanal Cowgirl Hall of Fame has ducted five new members, in uding an animated character. Jessie, the yodeling cowgirl om the movie Toy Story 2, nagged the Hall of Fame's Entainer of the Year award. Jessie and three others were nored Friday at the Cowgirl Hall Fame induction luncheon at the enaissance Worthington Hotel Fort Worth. The event and the ductions honored the organizan's 25th anniversary. They join

49 others previously inducted. This year's other inductees e Bobby Brooks Kramer, an -year-old rancher in Billings, nt.; the late Tillie Baldwin, a ck rider who performed in ear-1900s rodeos; Rebecca Tyler ockhart, founder of the Fort lorth-based American Paint orse Association: and Pam linick, marketing director for lly Bob's Texas country music ghtclub and a longtime rodeo mpetitor.

Houston industry says new air quality standards are too tough

HOUSTON (AP) — A coalition of Houston-area chemical, oil and utility companies says state environmental officials' proposed tougher air quality standards are too ambitious and could force many plants out of business.

The Business Coalition for Clean Air, a collection of 120 Houston-Galveston-area industrial companies, will release an economic study this week estimating that retrofitting plants to cut nitrogen oxide emissions by 90 percent could climb to \$7 billion industrywide, the Houston Chronicle reported Sunday.

The smog mandate will require "a huge remodeling exercise," said Doug Deason, an Exxon Mobil official representing the business coalition.

Many companies have little or no experience with the environmental technologies the plan would demand, Deason said. The group has said most plants will have to wait until 2007, when smog-reducing technology is widespread and cheaper.

That year is also when the Houston-area must comply with federal air quality standards.

Collectively, the area's dozens of petrochemical, utility and other in-

"Smart people in a competitive *marketplace* will find a way to do it cheaper."

Jeff Saitas **TNRCC** executive director

dustrial plants are the region's largest source of nitrogen oxide, which helps create smog.

Officials with Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission, which is scheduled to publish revised

recommendations for the smog plan by Friday, remained unswaved.

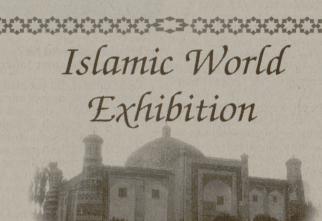
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"Smart people in a competitive marketplace will find a way to do it cheaper," TNRCC Executive Director Jeff Saitas told the Houston Chronicle in Sunday's editions.

'At this point, I haven't seen enough justification to say that 90 percent is not an appropriate requirement," Saitas said." Ninety percent wasn't a made-up number. A lot of research went into it, and we established that we believe 90 percent is achievable.

The plan, due to the federal Envi-ronmental Protection Agency before the end of the year, would bring Houston and its seven surrounding counties into compliance with federal air standards.

The 19-point plan also includes unprecedented restrictions on highway speeds and limits on when construction crews could operate heavy equipment and when homeowners could use gas-powered lawn equipment.



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Officials say Texas deserves more highway funding

STATE

FORT WORTH (AP) — Texas officials say they getting much less federal money than they ould for maintaining roadways like Interstate 35, ere free-trade-related truck traffic is blamed for rgeoning accident rates and severe crowding. Officials differ on whom to blame for Texas equal share of the highway funding: ineffective unty and state officials or political favoritism nefiting Arkansas, California and New York. Three years ago, Congress acted to distribute deral highway dollars more fairly to states. But the latest round of funding for the National orridor Planning and Development and the Codinated Border Infrastructure programs anounced Nov. 3, Texas received 6.5 percent of e funds announced by the Federal Highway dministration last week.

Almost half of the money was earmarked for udies on proposed Interstate 69, which is to run om the U.S.-Canadian border to Laredo and the Rio Grande Valley.

With federal money going elsewhere, state legislators say they are considering dipping into the state's surplus, using money earmarked for toll roads, returning appropriated money to the state's highway funds and issuing bonds to pay for future roads.

"We will reinvent the way we fund highway pro-jects," state Sen. Florence Shapiro, R-Plano, told the

"It is unacceptable that I-35 between Dallas and Austin is the most dangerous interstate in the nation."

> - Florence Shapiro Texas state senator

Fort Worth Star-Telegram on Sunday. "It is unacceptable that I-35 between Dallas and Austin is the most dangerous interstate in the nation.

The lack of highway funds in the face of increased traffic from Mexico has been blamed for accelerated wear and tear on state highways, especially along I-35 which runs from Laredo, along he Texas-Mexico border, through Dallas and Fort Worth and then up to Duluth, Minn.

I-35W in Fort Worth has more serious accidents than anywhere else in Tarrant County and I-35E in Dallas County averages one lane-closing accident every two days, transportation official said.

"I've been driving into the area for seven years and it was bad then, but nothing like the gridlock now in Fort Worth and south of Fort Worth," said David Perry, a trucker who hauls produce from Missouri to Texas for Indiana Western Express. Officials in North Texas are particularly miffed

over three rejected grants for improvements to I-35 in Dallas and Fort Worth.



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- •1/2 Price Fitness Passes!—On sale now at Member Services for \$25 Good for UNLIMITED USE for the remainder of the fall 2000 semester Pick up a fitness schedule at any of our kiosks or visit our Homepage
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