

TODAY'S WEATHER Partly sunny; a couple of afternoon thunderstorms. High 94, low 74.

LOCAL/STATE Collectors marvel at marbles in Texas show. PAGE 4A

SPORTS Border patrol to deploy rescue teams. PAGE 3A

Passing of Tropical 400 could be testy. PAGE 1B

THE VICTORIA ADVOCATE

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Flights of emotion

Flying has often been an emotional experience for me. Let me explain. From high above the land, for as many years as I can remember, looking down on the creations of God and man has evoked the whole range of human emotions in me.

I used to fly with a friend who was a pilot, back when I lived in Grand Junction, Colo. We'd go up in his little Piper and fly wherever we pleased, through narrow rock canyons and wide river valleys and green, green forests of fir and spruce. I've never known such exhilaration, such freedom, doing anything else.

Way back in the early 1970s, I was in the Air Force and had to take a flight instructor's course at a base in Mississippi. The old C-47 we were on could climb the south from your mouth, but the worst part of the flight came when we flew through a violent thunderstorm over Louisiana.

The plane pitched wildly. Equipment flew around. My harness strained against the violent motion of the old propeller aircraft. We made it through, but I've never felt so small and helpless, before or since.

There, on a DC-10 headed for Hawaii, I stood for a long time as a witness that ran from the floor to the ceiling. Thirty thousand feet above, while crews were rushing this line on the deep-sea, yet for hours the ocean continued its routine motion below me.

We flew for 4,000 miles over those waters, and when I landed that day, the journey from the West Coast to Honolulu is only a small portion of the Pacific. It was easy to believe in a powerful God.

On that same trip, I took to the skies again on a short flight to the "Golden Gate" in San Francisco. I was into the air yet again, this time on a helicopter ride to the Golden Gate. Our tour guide and pilot called it the wettest spot on earth, and in fact it was raining as he carefully lowered us into the mouth of this perfect volcano.

Inside was the most beautiful growth of flowers and grasses I've ever seen. We could almost see the water below. It was another flight to the East when I passed over the enormous Shreveport-Monroe River. For days before the flight, I had seen news coverage of the suffering that I knew was going on below me. It was so sad. I prayed for those whose very lives had been swept away by that mighty river that equally gives life to those it saves.

And there was so many others — a sea of lights sparkling at night, making the big cities look clean and peaceful. The Grand Canyon awaiting its hordes, making your breath away. The Smoky Mountains in autumn — beyond human description.

Still perhaps the most memorable flight I ever took was one that, strangely, I don't remember much about. I had boarded a flight from my home in Denver to Houston on my short vacation. My mother was very ill. My mind was much on her that I only remember one point in the flight. On my approach to Hobby Airport, we passed over the Ben Franklin Monument, the seating emblem of Texas pride.

Again, it was so emotional. It reminded me that although my home was not in Texas at that time, I would always be a Texas. And, more importantly, I would soon be able to sit beside my mother's bed and hold her hand. All those emotions, all those memories, and all of them the same while that carrier rose. I wonder what's waiting for me to there next time.

Three killed at Coleto

Two boats collide in late night accident

Victoria Fire Department divers had already pulled three survivors from the water about 11:15 p.m. Friday.

PAT HATHROCK
The Victoria Advocate

Three people were killed Friday night when two boats collided in Coleto Creek, Texas. The 38-year-old Todd William McCoy, 36, his wife, Vicki, 34, and Todd Matthew Eastley, 34, were killed when a 21-foot boat they were on collided with a 37-foot boat about three-quarters of a mile south of the Highway 622 bridge in Victoria.

The operator of the 27-foot boat was Robert West, 41, of Victoria. He said he used a cellular telephone to call them about the accident just after 11:15 p.m. Friday. Texas Parks and Wildlife officials, the Goliad County Sheriff's Department, the Goliad Fire Department, the Mission Valley Volunteer Fire Department, Parris Volunteer Fire Department, the Victoria Fire Department and a Coast Guard search-and-rescue helicopter from Corpus Christi all took part in the search for victims.

Chase warden Jesse Garcia, who is conducting the investigation, said an autopsy examination was available Saturday night.

Victoria Fire Department divers had already pulled three survivors from the water about 11:15 p.m. Friday. Their identities were not known late Saturday. West McCoy's body was found at 8:15 p.m. Saturday.

Todd Fitzsimmons of the Victoria Fire Department said his dive team worked from 10 p.m. Friday until 3 a.m. Saturday and again from 7:30 a.m. Saturday until the body of Vicki McCoy was found at 8:15 p.m. Saturday.

The larger boat was sitting on the bottom of the lake in about two feet of water. The other boat was almost submerged in 8 feet of water, with only a small part of the bow above water.

Eastley was the proprietor of Eastley Paint and Body in Victoria. His funeral services are pending at Colonial Funeral Home.

Services for the McCoy are pending at Rosewood Funeral Home.

Chase warden Jesse Garcia, who is conducting the investigation, said an autopsy examination was available Saturday night.

Victoria Fire Department dive team members, above, search the water of Coleto Creek Lake for victims of a Friday night boating accident. Two bodies were located around 2:30 a.m. and the third body was located around 8 p.m. Saturday. Life jackets and debris, right, float on the water of Coleto Creek Lake after the collision between two boats about three-quarters of a mile south of the Highway 622 bridge. Three survivors were pulled from the water following the accident.

Change in definition

Law may affect sales of manufactured homes

KATIANA CASTANEDA
The Victoria Advocate

More than half the homes sold in Victoria over the past two years were manufactured homes, but a new law going into effect in January may make manufactured housing less attractive.

In 2000, 53 percent of the homes sold in the Victoria area were manufactured homes, and in 1999, the figure stood at slightly over 49 percent, according to the Texas Manufactured Housing Association.

Sales of manufactured homes in Victoria totaled approximately \$19.8 million in 2000, according to the city of Victoria's Building and Environmental Inspections Department.

Manufactured homes once were known as mobile homes, although those in the industry say that present-day manufactured housing is higher quality than the older mobile homes. The homes are built in a factory and moved to a lot rather than being built from the ground up, known as site-built.

Manufactured homes have been often purchased through financing similar to that of a car or a boat rather than through long-term mortgages used for site-built housing. A new state law will change that when it goes into effect Jan. 1. The law redefines manufactured homes as real estate rather than personal property.

See MANUFACTURED HOMES, Page 8A

Nursery to become a 'Robin Hood' district

Advocates Staff Report

NURSERY — With a new tax assessment figure adding money to the district's wealth, school officials here must now decide how to operate as a "Robin Hood" district.

The issue will be discussed during a regularly scheduled school board meeting at 6 p.m. Tuesday in the school district library.

Superintendent Linda Lockhart said that because of increased property value this year and a new assessment the school has been forced into Chapter 41 status.

Chapter 41 of the Texas Education Code, known also as "Robin Hood," forces schools with more wealth than allowed by the Texas Education Agency per pupil to send a portion of its tax revenue back to the state to be distributed among schools with less funds on hand.

Schools are also not allowed to receive certain state funds under Chapter 41 such as transportation and all-day kindergarten aid.

The small school district between Victoria and Cuero educates about 80 students in kindergarten through fifth grade on one campus. Students attend Cuero schools after the fifth grade.

The superintendent said the higher tax assessments came about partly because of new construction in subdivisions in the district which added on to the property tax total.

"Once we are a small school, the superintendent said the higher tax assessments came about partly because of new construction in subdivisions in the district which added on to the property tax total.

"The meeting Tuesday will help us to decide what we must do to continue to educate children here under the new financial constraints," Lockhart said.

The TEA forces schools under Chapter 41 to formulate a specific money-saving plan to continue to operate.

Some of the options available to districts to cut costs under the plan include salary freezes, combining classes, less use of substitute teachers and lower beginning salaries.

GOOD MORNING

Today

Chuckle

We pass this way but once unless, of course, you're following your spouse's direction.

Index

Category	Value	Change
Oil	20	↑
Gold	320	↑
Silver	11.10	↑
Platinum	1,400	↑
Commodities	140	↑
Stocks	1,200	↑
Bonds	100	↑
Real Estate	100	↑
Commodities	140	↑
Stocks	1,200	↑
Bonds	100	↑
Real Estate	100	↑

See LOTTERY RESULTS, Page 2A

Christian recovery outreach to target substance abuse

JANET WHITEHEAD JONES
The Victoria Advocate

On a July day in 1987, Billy T. Cattan realized that he could no longer hide from his addiction to cocaine.

He checked himself into a rehabilitation facility in Phoenix. When he got sober, he recommitted himself to God and stayed on a successful path until his death in 1999.

His vision for helping others did not die. It is being carried out by others who have the same desire to see chemical dependency treated soberly — and in a Christ-based way.

For two years, a group of ministers with varying church backgrounds have been meeting and sharing ideas that have jelled into the Billy T. Cattan Recovery Outreach Inc. The ministry has set its goals and formed its mission statement and is in the process of raising funds in the hopes of hiring a director by September.

Supporters say the center will fill a large gap in service locally. Some 40 ministers from a variety of Christian churches have signed a resolution in support of the center that cites a "severe" chemical addiction problem in the area and says that "70 percent of all the deaths in the area involve some form of chemical addiction or drug abuse."

Susan Cattan, president of the board for the outreach ministry and widow of Billy Cattan, struggles to find — in simple

Stevens and Billy Cattan pose in this family photo taken before Billy's death in 1999. The widow of a man who fought drug addiction and was the president of the board for Billy T. Cattan Recovery Outreach Inc., a group intent upon creating a healing center to help those struggling with chemical dependency. Photo contributed by Susan Cattan.

See OUTREACH, Page 7A

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