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Frankly Speaking –

First Class by a Haulin’ Ass!

by Frank Jordan

No professionals are more admired than those who deliver the U.S. mail through rain, sleet and snow. But in yesteryears the mail moved in much different ways prior to airlines, railroads, trucks and, to be I think correct – mail persons.

The most glamorous was the Pony Express with the image of rider and horse galloping at full

speed with mail saddlebags in tow. Then came the stagecoach with regular routes and stops. These stages were usually pulled by what was termed a six-up hitch. Three pairs of horses were hitched up in line to pull the heavy coach and multiple passengers. Which pair was most important? Was it the lead team pair at the front, the middle team called the swingers, or the so-called wheel team closest to the coach and big stage front wheels?

Most guess the front lead team, but in fact they were the least important. The wheel team was comprised of the largest and strongest horses that had to start the coach rolling, in addition to being the best trained and disciplined of the group. The swinger horses were not as large as the wheelers, with the lead team the least trained and smallest, held in check by the four in back.

In Texas the need arose for a smaller mail delivery wagon using only a two animal team. The answer was development of what was named “Jackass Mail.” Two mules were hitched as a pair for more flexibility, less expense and the ability to move faster and

deliver the mail on time. The mules, usually at high trot to deliver the mail, caused people in a hurry to be equated to the mail-pulling mules and thus similar to a first class mail – “haulin’ ass!”

This form of delivery was soon dropped as the mules were frequently non-responsive to drivers’ instructions, instead traveling in directions and at speeds chosen by the mules rather than the men who just thought they were in charge. Instead of being “haulin’ asses” with the mail, the untrainable mules were hauled into pastures for early retirement!

Let’s return again to the stagecoaches. Do you remember the movie bandits coming out of the rocks at full speed on horseback to overtake the stage, shooting repeatedly with dozens of shots from six-shooters! While riding at high speeds, the bad guys were able to accurately shoot the armed guard and then halt the coach to rob the passengers, including the beautiful young heroine dressed to the nines returning home after years away somewhere in the east.

NOT! Roy, Gene and Hopalong appeared able to nail a fly at

90 feet with a six-gun while riding rapidly in the dust behind a speeding coach and then daringly jumping among thundering tons of the hitch team horses to bring the run-away coach to a stop. Just ain’t true, folks.

Try shooting anything while riding a horse at any speed and you know hitting a target from horseback for most is a rare lucky shot. Don’t even think about jumping to stop six racing horses weighing tons. In fact the hold ups of stages in that era were usually on a steep slope causing the stagecoach to slow significantly. The highwayman and accomplice would simply step out in front of the slow moving coach, point a shotgun – not a pistol – at the stage driver and guard, demanding all to “stick’em up” and throw down the mail pouch.

In the real west the thieves carefully grabbed the mail pouch also containing valuables, took the passengers’ stuff and disappeared – you guessed it – haulin’ ass! Frankly speaking, it’s been a fascinating journey back in time to when “first class” referred to different forms of mail on the trail!

Dayton Rotarians take a USA History Quiz

DAYTON - The Dayton Rotary Club enjoyed a fun and interactive USA History Quiz to celebrate the nation’s 250th anniversary. Dr. Luke Chachere put together and led the engaging program. He asked 57 questions, inviting club members and their guests to pool their knowledge.

The quiz covered topics like American presidents, national landmarks, geography, government, historic events, and national symbols. The questions ranged from the original 13 colonies and the American flag to the country’s capitals, presidents, national parks, and major monuments throughout U.S. history.

Members had a great time competing in the friendly trivia challenge, trying to guess the answers before they were revealed along with interesting historical facts. The event sparked lots of laughter, lively conversations, and friendly rivalry around the room. Chachere also mentioned that some questions would be straightforward, while others might be a bit more thought-provoking. Some of the questions/answers on the trivia quiz included:

• **What is the highest mountain in the United States?** Denali in Alaska and was formerly known as Mount McKinley, standing 20,310 feet above sea level.

• **Who are the four presidents on Mt. Rushmore?**

George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Teddy Roosevelt, and Abraham Lincoln

• **Who are the two non-presidents that have been on our currency (bills)?** Benjamin Franklin (\$100 bill) and Alexander Hamilton (\$10 bill)

• **What is the national bird?** Bald Eagle

• **What is the national mammal?** American Bison

• **How many presidents were assassinated while in office?** Four (Lincoln, Garfield, McKinley, Kennedy)

• **How many presidents died (not assassinated) while in office?** Four. (William Harrison died in 1841 from pneumonia; Zachary Taylor in 1850 after suffering a severe gastrointestinal illness; Warren Harding in 1923 from a heart attack; and Franklin Roosevelt in 1945 after suffering a cerebral hemorrhage.)

• **How many presidents died on July 4?** Three. (Thomas Jefferson and John Adams both passed on the exact same day, July 4, 1826, and James Monroe on July 4, 1831.)

• **Who was the first woman appointed to the Supreme Court?** Sandra Day O’Conner

• **Who was the King of England at the time of the American Revolution?** King George III (He ruled from 1760-1820.)

• **What does “E pluribus unum” mean?** “Out of many, one.” On July 30, 1956, President Dwight D. Eisenhower

signed a joint congressional resolution. This law established “In God We Trust” as the nation’s first officially codified national motto. Before this, “E pluribus unum” had only served as the de facto (unofficial) motto since the 1780s.

In celebration of the upcoming 250th anniversary of our nation, members received small American flags at the end of the presentation. After the program, Rotary Club President Elizabeth Robertson introduced a new member activity called Rotarian Spotlight. Members shared why they joined Rotary and what they hope to achieve through the organization. Their responses highlighted a passion for community service, fellowship, building business relationships, and helping others. Several members expressed a desire for the club to grow so it can take on more projects and make an even bigger impact in the Dayton community.

The meeting wrapped up with members reciting Rotary’s Four-Way Test, which asks whether the things Rotarians think, say, and do are truthful, fair, beneficial, and likely to foster goodwill and stronger friendships.

The Rotary Club of Dayton meets every Thursday at noon at the Dayton Community Center. Community members who are interested in service, fellowship, and making a difference are always welcome to join us.

Register now for the MCCS Marksmanship Challenge

CONROE - Register now to participate in the upcoming Marksmanship Challenge sponsored by Multi-County Crime Stoppers. The Challenge will take place Sunday, August 23, at the Saddle River Range, 4280 FM 1488. Participation will be limited to a maximum of 30 team with novice and experienced competitors welcome.

Check-in begins at 4:30 p.m. followed by the opening ceremony and safety briefing at 5:30 p.m. Competition gets underway at 6 p.m. The event will

conclude with dinner and awards at 8 p.m. Due to limited space, only registered competitors may attend.

Entry is \$500 per two-person team or \$250 per individual.



Ammo, gift bag, dinner and beverage are included. Competitors may provide their own pistols (center fire) or pistol rentals will be available at the Saddle River Range.

Sponsorship levels ranging from \$250 to \$10,000 in support of the event can be found online along with competition registration. Visit multicounty-crimestoppers.org.

Donations are tax-deductible. Multi-County Crime Stoppers is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.



Scan to learn more about Multi-County Crime Stoppers

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ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS AND AL-ANON

LIBERTY - Are you or someone you know struggling with alcohol addiction? Find help and support at Alcoholics Anonymous. Meetings are held Sunday evenings at 7 p.m. in the main hall of St. Stephen’s Episcopal Church. Anyone with a desire to stop drinking is welcome.

Al-Anon is a mutual support group for the family members and friends of individuals affected by alcohol or drug use. Meetings are held Sunday evenings at 7 p.m. in the library of St. Stephen’s Episcopal Church. The church is located at 2041 Trinity Avenue. For more information, call 936-336-3762.



PAUL SPELLMAN

LIBERTY GAZETTE
936-336-6416

nor Jim Hogg and oilmen Walter and Jim Sharp, David Beatty and Joseph Cullinan.

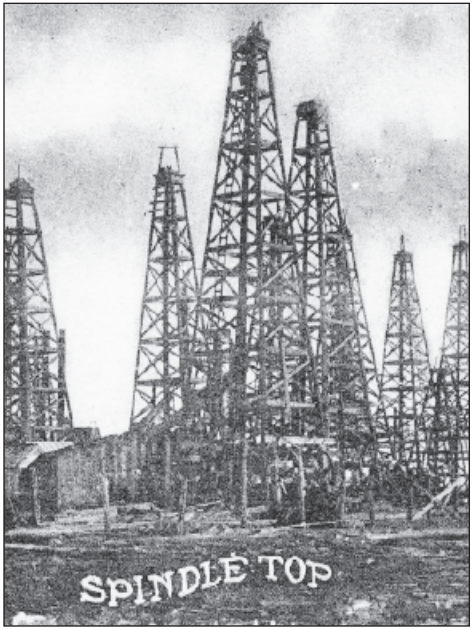
Dr. Spellman is retired after 33 years teaching Texas and American history at the college level. He has degrees from Southwestern University, University of Texas-Austin, Southern Methodist University, Texas A&M-Corpus Christi and his PhD from the University of Houston. He is a member of the Texas State Historical Association and the Texas Historical Commission, the Fort Bend Historic Commission and the Western Writers of America. He has published 15 books and numerous articles on Texas history.

This event is free and open to the public at the Sam Houston Center, located at 650 FM 1011 in Liberty. No registration required. Contact the Center at (936) 336-8821 or samhoustoncenter@tsl.texas.gov for more information.

The Sam Houston Center is a component of the Texas State Library and Archives

Commission and serves as the official regional historical resource depository for the 10 Southeast Texas counties of Chambers, Hardin, Jasper, Jefferson, Liberty, Newton, Orange, Polk, San Jacinto and Tyler. The Center’s primary mission is to collect, preserve and provide access to historically significant state and local government records and publications of the designated region and secondarily to serve as a library of Texasana and genealogical resources.

The Texas State Library and Archives Commission provides Texans access to the information needed to be informed, productive citizens by preserving the archival record of Texas; enhancing the service capacity of public, academic and school libraries; assisting public agencies in the maintenance of their records; and meeting the reading needs of Texans with disabilities. For more information, visit www.tsl.texas.gov.



Andrew McClusky, Daisetta alderman, like all the attendees at the Daisetta Community Center, was having a great time in this beautiful new building.

City of Liberty contractor tragically loses life

The City of Liberty confirms that a contractor working on the Minglewood Wastewater Project lost their life today after the ground collapsed beneath them.

The worker was standing next to a protective box that had

been placed in the ground for worker safety when the ground underneath gave way. First responders from the Fire Department, Police Department, and Public Works recovered the individual. The name of the worker is being withheld pending

notification of the family.

“We thank God for our public servants from Fire, Police, and Public Works,” a City of Liberty spokesperson said. “They do difficult work and see things no one should have to see. Our thoughts and prayers

are with the family, friends, and coworkers of the person who lost their life.”

The City of Liberty is cooperating fully with the ongoing investigation. No further details are available at this time.

Liberty Church of Christ

Bryant Perkins, Minister

Join us this Sunday for Bible Classes for all ages at 9 a.m. and stay for Worship at 10 a.m.

We meet Sunday night at 5 p.m. and Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m.

We meet at 3201 North Main Street and have a parking space just for you.

We’d love to see you soon. We’ve saved you a seat!

3201 N. Main St., Liberty • 936.336.2213 • libertycofc.org