

## Arts & Entertainment

# Sinking suspicions link holes and J. R. Ewing's oil

**The Nash Rambler:** Victim of circumstance Nash Rambler is shot in the shoulder by illicit tycoon Randy Ewing. Adding insult to the injury, Rambler is framed as a desperate criminal. The FBI assigns rookie Ace King to the case, but then fires him for excessive bungling. Rambler's friends Duncan Drumm, Went Thataway and Lois Terms band together in search of vigilante revenge. Along the way, they amass massive evidence of Ewing's felonious past.

### Chapter Fourteen

Went Thataway, still dressed in his bathrobe, sat in the kitchen of his bomb shelter. His hair was a mess, his eyes bleary, as he read the morning Star. All of a sudden, his Eggos popped from the toaster and he popped from his chair in quirky unison.

"Holy smoke," he exploded, waking his pet wolfhound, Klaus.

The mutt festively joined Went's stampede to the bathroom, where Went's girlfriend, Lois Terms, was carefully applying her daily face. Winning the sprint by a wet nose, Klaus jubilantly lunged into Lois' arms.

Lois almost put out an eye with her mascara brush and huffed, in the breath knocked out of her, "Boys."

"Sinkholes, sweetie. Sure as spit, sinkholes," Went exclaimed, ridiculously giddy. "Sinkholes."

Slow to catch the drift, Lois looked at the drain. "Hh?" her half-made-up face asked.

"Sinkholes," he went on. He rattled the Star open to the article he intended to quote.

But, quick as calamity, the paper was soon tattered when Klaus reared up and started playing heavyweight patty-cake. If that wasn't enough, Klaus, excitedly jumping around, fell into the filling bathtub, then drenched everyone and everything by shaking himself dry.

The news story had been adorned by a photo, which, at first glance, had looked like a dull shot of an unspectacular pothole. Closer inspection, however, revealed that the small geometric shapes to the side were the rooftops of a farmhouse, its barns and silos. The smudge in the corner was the shadow of a helicopter.

It wasn't a patch of concrete that had collapsed, but acres of Nebraskan great plain. The wire-service reporter called the sinkhole, which had appeared overnight just outside Republican City, "a phenomenon." He went on to editorialize and called it "bizarre."

Sinkholes have only sprung up, or rather down, in recent years and, until the Republican City sinkhole, have only been in Florida and Texas. Because they are so novel and rare, they make excellent tourist traps. The residents, the reporter reported, were ecstatic about the collapse of their farmland.

The writer wrote that sinkholes occur after water tables or oil fields are so drained that they can't support the earth above them. He contradicted himself, this time calling the sinkhole "an enigma," and said experts had been summoned.

But the Republican City sinkhole was no more mysterious to Went than the facts he had stumbled on the day before in the Wall Street Journal. A page-31 article stated that the half of Ewing Oil owned by J.R. Ewing had doubled its barrel production in a single day. If J.R.'s brother, who owned the other half of Ewing Oil, couldn't match the high production, the article said, Bobby would lose his share of the business in accordance with a strange clause in the Ewings' father's will.

Went had a hunch the two news items were as intimately linked as cause and effect, and he spelled his reasoning out for Lois.

"Randy Ewing, the guy who shot Nash Rambler, remember, is J.R.'s blood-grudged step-cousin," he said, enumerating his points on outstretched fingers. "He planned to reap revenge by siphoning J.R.'s oil into the Ogallala aquifer via a network of secret tunnels. The water would float the oil up through irrigators in place on the farmland he was buying up."

"Right, right," Lois said, painfully plucking an eyebrow. "Speed it up, Sherlock."

"However, if J.R. knew of the plot, he could subvert the subterfuge by revers-

ing the underground engines. Instead of pumping Texas oil into Nebraska, Nebraska water gets pumped into Texas, gushing gushers, and thereby accounting for the upped production and the sinkhole."

"Elementary."

"The question is 'How did J.R. find out?' Obviously, that FBI flunk-out Ace King must have tipped him off, for a tidy fee, and he presumably got the poop from none other than our own Duncan Drumm, thus explaining King's sudden wealth and Drumm's kidnapping."

The sudden wealth referred to was the Porsche and color-matched leisure suit he had spied King sporting about town in. The kidnapping he alluded to was what Went considered the only reason imaginable that could have stayed Duncan from his daily rounds to the bomb shelter. It was speculation, of course, but Duncan had commented, even argued, that King, a trained flunky, could be used as a pawn to draw Randy Ewing into the open.

"Hon, get dressed," Went ordered. "Klaus, we're a-goin' huntin'."

Lois didn't look too enthused. Actually, she looked quite the opposite. Klaus, on the other hand, went bonkers, leaping, bounding and wagging a savage tail amid the toilet paper he had been rabidly shredding to bits. The man and his beast left in a flurry of confetti to finish off some Eggos and then King.

David Wood

## Fox's 'Tough Enough' not good enough

By Jeff Goodwin

Back in the 1960s the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that a film was not pornographic if it had any redeeming social value at all.

"Tough Enough" is not pornographic in the usual sense, in fact a little sex might make it more appealing — but it is offensive in that 20th Century Fox has chosen to pawn this tripe off on the public as a legitimate movie. Any freshman film class at USC could make a better film than this.

Art Long (played by Dennis Quaid) is a country and western singer (a bad one at that) who can't get a break.

To make ends meet, he decides to enter a Tough Man contest — a boxing tournament for anyone who wants to enter.

Despite an average physique and marginal boxing experience, he manages to win the Ft. Worth tournament and qualify for the national finals in Detroit.

But all Art really wants to do is make it as a musician. The promoter of this competition tells him he'll give him a chance to make it musically if he goes to Detroit for the national competition.

So Art hits the road for Detroit and gets a record contract. His wife doesn't want him to go through with the contest. The promoter is afraid he'll get hurt and doesn't want him to go through with it. Guess what? You got it. He fights anyway.

Surprise! He wins, beating in the process a guy who makes Mr. T look like Tiny Tim. Will wonders never cease?

Speaking of wonders . . . it's a wonder that this movie was ever made. Secondly, it's a wonder that anybody, assuming they know what they're getting into, would ever pay hard-earned money, nay, even stolen money, to see this film.

This movie tries very hard to be like "Rocky" even to the point of aping the famous scene where he runs the steps and cavorts around while "Gonna Fly Now" is played. But any resemblance to "Rocky" — and there is none — is purely coincidental.

The acting is awful, but that's not surprising considering the script.

Remember the story about putting the monkey at the typewriter and, theoretically at least, he would write *War and Peace* in so many years?

This film is proof that they actually carried out the experiment and the monkey did it in a half-hour tops.

But I'm sure he would have done better on his second effort. Hopefully, the producers of this crime against society won't get another chance.

One refrain that runs throughout the film is the promoter's cry, "Who will be the toughest man?" My answer: Who cares?

## Americans discover pleasures of wine

By Kenneth Meier

For many years, drinking wine in this country was dominated by two equally extravagant images. On one side were the "Bowery Boys" with crumpled brown bags of port and muscatel. The other image is of Baccarat Crystal, elaborate, stuffy formality and expensive European wines from historical vineyards. Neither of these images did much to encourage most Americans to enjoy a bottle of wine.

Today, through advertising, news reports, word-of-mouth and good ole American curiosity, the two old traditional images of the wine consumer have become historical comicy. The problem has been bridged by the overall increase in America's wine knowledge. Any person in the wine business will tell you lack of wine knowledge is the only deterrent to wine consumption.

Continued on Page 5



Stan Shaw, Warren Oates and Dennis Quaid become involved in fighting for money in Tough Man contests in the new picture, "Tough Enough."