

News Digest

By The Associated Press

Nelson outlines FarmAid plan; no funds targeted for lobbying

CHAMPAIGN, Ill. — Willie Nelson has outlined a five-point FarmAid spending plan that would provide counseling and cash for financially troubled farmers, and spread the word about their plight.

Nelson, the driving force behind the star-studded FarmAid benefit concert scheduled to be in Champaign Sunday, set aside no funds for lobbying Congress on farm legislation, according to a release from his office near Austin, Texas.

Nelson said he thinks the millions of dollars expected from the all-day event and related fund-raising efforts should be used for direct cash payments to needy farmers, legal assistance, "transitional" help, such as counseling and job placement, for those who have lost

their farms or risk losing them, a nationwide hotline to direct farmers to service agencies best able to help them and for improving public awareness of the financial plight of many U.S. family farmers.

Nelson had indicated earlier that some FarmAid money might be used to lobby Congress for enactment of one version of the hotly disputed 1985 farm bill that would call for a referendum on federally mandated crop reduction.

"Farmers need it desperately. They have to have it to survive," Nelson said Sept. 5 after a meeting with farmers.

The idea immediately drew fire from the American Farm Bureau, and Nelson's decision to drop it was hailed by spokesman Dennis Vercler of the Illinois Farm Bureau.

Fifty country and western, rock, blues and bluegrass performers are lined up for FarmAid at the University of Illinois football stadium, including Nelson, John Cougar, Neil Young, Bob Dylan, the Beach Boys, Glen Campbell, Lacy J. Dalton, Waylon Jennings, Billy Joel, Joni Mitchell and B. B. King.

The nearly 80,000 tickets for the concert were sold out in three days. The Nashville Network is televising 12 hours of the concert to cable subscribers and has syndicated a three-hour segment to more than 100 television stations, including superstation WGN-TV of Chicago.

FarmAid already has drawn at least \$1.8 million in corporate donations, an aide to Illinois Gov. James R. Thompson said Wednesday.

In Brief

Violent crime in state higher in '84

OMAHA — Nebraska law enforcement authorities reported increases in most types of violent crime in 1984, but reports of property crimes declined from the previous year, a Nebraska Crime Commission report shows. The total number of reported crimes in 1984 was 7.1 percent below the 1983 figure.

The statistics are contained in an annual report compiled by the crime commission. The report includes data provided by 168 Nebraska law enforcement agencies and police in all towns with populations of more than 1,000.

The law enforcement agencies reported 55,215 crimes in 1984, 4,192 fewer than in 1983. Of the total, 93.5 percent were crimes against property and 6.5 percent were violent crimes.

Fifty-three murders and manslaughters were reported across the state last year, an increase of 26.2 percent from 1983. Murders or manslaughters were reported in 15 of Nebraska's 93 counties.

The figures show smaller increases for two other types of violent crime. The number of rapes increased 11.6 percent in 1984 while felony assaults rose 7.8 percent.

Robbery was the only violent crime that showed a decline in 1984, the report shows. Reports of robbery dropped 12.8 percent, from 791 to 690.

Show aims to stimulate math interest

NEW YORK — With President Reagan and many educators giving America's students failing grades in math, the makers of "Sesame Street" are producing a new television series designed to stimulate math interest in children 8 to 12, while looking a lot like MTV and SCTV combined.

The Children's Television Workshop, creators of public television's "Sesame Street," "The Electric Company" and "3-2-1 Contact," announced Thursday that production will start in early 1986 on what CTW calls the most expensive single project for children in TV history.

The Count, "Sesame Street's" numbers freak, would go wild counting off the show's \$16 million funding budget that comes from such disparate sources as the U.S. Department of Education, the National Science Foundation, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and IBM.

The untitled 30-minute program is scheduled to premiere on public TV weekday afternoons in January 1987. The producers hope the series will be used in classrooms and are giving teachers permission to tape the programs.

Report warns of possible epidemic

BOSTON — An outbreak of rare, fatal infections among people who received human growth hormone raises "the ominous possibility of a burgeoning epidemic," government researchers report.

In the past year, four people have died from the rare illness, known as Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease. Experts believe they were victims of a slow-acting virus, which may take years to develop, that unknown to scientists was contained in their hormone shots.

The growth hormone, derived from the pituitary glands of cadavers, has been given to 11,000 people during the past 22 years to prevent severe short stature. Patients take two or three shots a week for several years.

Federal authorities suspended distribution of the hormone in April after it appeared that some of it had been tainted with the virus that causes Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease, which progressively attacks the central nervous system and is inevitably fatal.

NRD to use prisoners for projects

LINCOLN — The Lower Platte South Natural Resources District has approved a contract that will give Nebraska prisoners a chance to work.

Since January 1983, a crew of inmates has done maintenance work in the NRD's watershed structures, public access areas and stream channels in Lincoln, said District Manager Glenn Johnson. All the inmates are trustees.

The district provided tools, transportation and wages for the inmates, which was \$3.29 a day, while the state paid the supervisor. To cut costs, the state terminated the agreement last month.

Under the new agreement, which was reached Wednesday, the district also will provide wages and benefits to the inmates' supervisor and the state will pay transportation costs.

Last year, the district paid \$8,250 for the inmate crew. The NRD's additional cost for the supervisor's wages and benefits will be about \$21,930.

"In the past two years, through the use of the inmate crew, the district has been able to catch up on a very large backlog of needed operation and maintenance work," Johnson said.

Bolivia declares state of emergency

LA PAZ, Bolivia — The Bolivian government declared a state of siege Thursday and arrested labor leaders who refused to end a 16-day-old general strike against a wage freeze intended to fight inflation of 14,000 percent.

Tanks and hundreds of troops took up positions before dawn in this Andean capital, in other cities and on highways. Violence was reported in some parts of La Paz.

Pentagon tests reporting pool

WASHINGTON — Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger announced Thursday that an exercise testing the Pentagon's plan to cover national military emergencies with a pool of reporters began Thursday morning.

Weinberger said the pool was activated at 2 a.m. CDT and sent to Fort Campbell, Ky.

The exercise was a test of a Pentagon system, created in response to criticism of the Defense Department's handling of news coverage of the invasion of Grenada, under which selected news organizations will provide coverage of future military actions.

The system is designed to balance the Pentagon's need for secrecy and the public's right to information about military activities.

Weinberger said organizations participating in Thursday's exercise were The Associated Press, United Press International, Cable News Network, Los Angeles Times, the Long Island newspaper Newsday, Time magazine, Mutual Broadcasting System and the Newhouse newspaper organization.

Hollywood joins in AIDS battle

LOS ANGELES — From rock star Cyndi Lauper to former film star Ronald Reagan, Hollywood joined the battle against AIDS Thursday night as it aimed to raise \$1 million in a glittering "Commitment to Life" benefit.

Scheduled performers included Lauper, Rod Stewart, Carol Burnett and Sammy Davis Jr., with a finale featuring Bette Midler, singing from Germany via an audio and video hookup and accompanied by the Gay Men's Chorus of Los Angeles.

President Reagan sent a message of support during the \$250- to \$500-a-plate, black-tie affair at the Bonaventure Hotel.

Rock Hudson, the movie and television leading man whose battle with the

lethal immune-system disease has gained worldwide publicity, was too ill to attend. Hudson, whose illness helped generate interest in the event, promised to be with his friends in spirit. "I am not happy that I have AIDS, but if that is helping others, I can, at least, know that my own misfortune has had some positive worth," Hudson wrote in a letter to be read by actor Burt Lancaster. It was his first public comment about the illness, for which there is no known cure.

Talk-show host Phil Donahue and his wife Marlo Thomas were to make a pitch for contributions from the more than 2,500 people in attendance, and former first lady Betty Ford was to receive a Commitment to Life Award,

presented by Elizabeth Taylor, a key organizer of the benefit.

The fund-raiser was to benefit the AIDS Project Los Angeles, with the money to support AIDS victims and pay for education about acquired immune deficiency syndrome.

In his letter, which was revealed Wednesday, Hudson said he was pleased by the show-business support.

"I am particularly proud to learn that there is such a significant turnout of people from my industry present, and extremely proud of my good friend, Elizabeth Taylor, who organized this event," said Hudson, 59, a star of television's "Dynasty" and "McMillan and Wife."

'Megabucks'

Book traces starts of self-made millionaires

NEW YORK — They hustle frozen french fries with valleys and peaks, helpful computers and chocolatey chocolate-chip cookies. They are among the legion of the self-made super rich who feed us, fly us and give us fun, and who peddle everything from pizza to running shoes to floppy discs. The names are familiar: Pizza Hut, Winnebago, Honda, NIKE, McDonald's, Toys 'R' Us, Celestial Seasonings, Mrs. Field's Cookies and Chun King.

Tales of how these makers of megabucks rose from obscurity and sometimes poverty to fame and fortune retold in a new book by A. David Silver, "Entrepreneurial Megabucks." It is the story of 100 great entrepreneurs of the last 25 years, and will be published next month by John Wiley & Sons.

Of the self-starters named, 29 are involved in the computer industry. Others made their fortune in cars, electronics, community psychiatric centers, investment banking, adver-

tising to the black community, direct mail, motel chains, same-day mail services, cable TV, pharmaceutical companies, toy chains and movie companies.

Some began with loans, Lane Nemeth borrowed \$25,000 from family and friends to begin her Discovery Toys company in 1977. Today, sales amount to \$40 million a year.

Others used their own money to make their marks. Mary Kay Ash parlayed her life savings of \$5,000 to create the \$450 million Mary Kay Cosmetics, William G. McGowan used \$50,000 of his own money to start MCI Communications Corp. Leonard Samuel Shoen started The U-Haul System in Scottsdale, Ariz., in 1945 with \$5,000 in savings.

Masaru Ibuka and Ako Morita sold a dilapidated Datsun truck for \$500 in 1948 to start a company that would focus "on highly sophisticated technical products of great usefulness in society." The company became Sony

Corp., a firm now worth \$3.5 billion.

Silver, who formed a venture capital investment banking firm in 1970, says one thing that entrepreneurs greatly value is time. Entrepreneurs also tend to sleep and eat little, check no baggage, wear no jewelry and never get sick, Silver says. Some entrepreneurs start young, bitten at an early age by the success bug. Jack R. Simplot earned \$7,800 from feeding and selling hogs in 1927. Now 76, Simplot has become the largest potato processor in the United States with a patent on frozen french fries.

Rose Blumkin bribed her way past a Russian border guard and came to the United States on a peanut boat in 1917. She had no money. By the age of 43, she had borrowed \$500 and started a business in the basement of a pawnshop, selling quality furniture at lower prices than her competition. Now 91, she heads the Nebraska Furniture Mart in Omaha, which was acquired by Berkshire Hathaway in 1983 for \$60 million.

Newsmakers

A roundup of the day's happenings

John DeLorean says he's recovering slowly from a disease called egomania, which devoured his fortune, broke up his marriage and dragged his name through the courts in a celebrated criminal trial.

A Phillippine mountain tribe priestess fed 72 followers porridge laced with insecticide, killing 69 of them, and then stabbed herself to death because she failed to make money grow on a tree, a top Phillippine military commander says. There were no first-hand accounts of the incident, which reportedly happened about 11 days ago.

Pope John Paul II has summoned all 152 cardinals of the Roman Catholic Church from 56 countries to a meeting on Nov. 21 through 23. There is speculation that the cardinals will discuss proposed changes in the Curia, the church's administrative body.

The 1985 Albert Einstein Peace Prize will be awarded to former West German Chancellor Willy Brandt, the group sponsoring the award has announced. Brandt is chairman of his country's opposition Social Democratic Party. His efforts for friendlier East-West relations brought him the Nobel Peace Prize in 1971.

The biggest problem in American education is "the perpetual parents' strike," the Rev. Jesse Jackson says. "When children are watching five hours of television a night, choosing entertainment over education, the parents are on strike . . . And nobody can increase reading and writing and comprehension levels when there is a massive parental strike in that school system." A federal study released Wednesday found that 27 percent of 9-year-olds watch more than six hours of television a day.

A former baby sitter and her nephew, charged with sexually abusing and taking pornographic pictures of 14 children in the woman's care, have been ordered to stand trial in Nevada. Martha Felix, 37, and Francisco "Paco" Ontiveros, 33, are accused of performing sexual acts on children as young as 8 months old.

The fate of Philadelphia caterer Curtis Strong, 39, characterized by a federal prosecutor as "a traveling salesman of cocaine," was handed to a jury of nine women and three men who must decide if he dealt drugs to major league baseball players on 14 occasions.