

Anderson afield

Mississippi delta no longer growing as it once was

By JOHN M. ANDERSON

If you drew a line from the south edge of Mississippi, westward across the north shore of Lake Pontchartrain to Cameron, LA, about 7,000 square miles of Acadiana would lie south of the line. All this land came from 32 interior states and part of southern Canada. For about 7,000 years, Old Man River has been carrying very fertile topsoil from these northern areas and depositing it along the Louisiana Coast. That's why our Louisiana marshes, rice fields and pastures can feed so many Cajuns, cows, catfish, ducks and deer so well.

If you go back about 20,000 years, to a period of tremendous glaciation, the glacier over a mile thick crept down to about the southern tip of Illinois. Because much of the earth's water was trapped in ice, the sea level dropped about 450 feet. Deer and rabbits could have played tag about 100 miles south of the present shoreline and never wet their feet. As the ice melted, the sea level rose and the Gulf of Mexico gradually spread northward to about its present boundary.

If we still had all the land that had been deposited by the River, plus that exposed by falling sea level, we would have about 14,000 square miles on which the Almighty Developer could raise condominiums and Nature could raise cypress. Alas! Of the 14,000 square miles that once extended far out into the Gulf, only about 7,000 remain and we are losing them at about 35 square miles per year.

I'm told that it's a woman's privilege to change her mind. If that privilege does not extend to males, then I question referring to the Mississippi as "Old Man River", or the "Father of Waters", because he, she, or it has changed course at least four times over the last 7,000 years. Each time, a huge delta was built far out into the Gulf.

The ancient Egyptians had finished the pyramids by around 4,000 B.C. Some 3,000 years before that, the Mississippi had begun building the Teche Delta which was about 60 miles wide, from the site of the present-day Houma on the east to about Abbeville on the west, and out in the Gulf to what are now known as Trinity Shoal and Ship Shoal.

Fact Finder

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and while evaluating both sides requests will keep in contact with mediator Paley. He will expect to receive statements within five days from both the board's negotiating committee and the teachers' committee, explaining what each one considers the major issues.

DiLauro will then have until October 10 to evaluate the stated issues still unresolved and to come up with a solution. His report can be accepted by both sides or rejected after they have examined it for 10 days. If it is accepted by both sides, the fact finder's recommendation becomes the settlement. If either or both sides reject the recommendation, the fact finder's report will be published.

If this occurs, the teachers could not strike for another 10 days, which could go until October 30, or if they desire, both sides could continue to negotiate with the aid of the negotiator.

After the River had occupied the Teche Delta for about 2,500 years, she jumped her bank and started building the St. Bernard Delta to the east of present-day New Orleans. By about 1,000 B.C. this delta extended eastward out beyond the Chandeleur Islands, which are really remnants of that delta.

The Mississippi moved westward and built a third huge delta known as the Lafourche. The maximum buildout occurred about 500 A.D.; about the time St. Patrick arrived in Ireland the Western Roman Empire fell.

Once again the River changed course, moved into its present channel and started forming the modern Mississippi Delta about 700 years ago. This was about the time firearms were invented, the Renaissance was beginning in Italy, and the Aztecs were building their capital at what is now Mexico City.

Unfortunately, all this delta building no longer occurs. If it did, the River would be building Louisiana marshland as fast as it erodes. Because of the levees on either side of the channel, the sediment drained from 32 interior states is now carried out into deep Gulf waters and dropped.

The subject of Louisiana wetland loss will continue to receive national attention because of the tremendous loss to the seafood industry, to say nothing of furbearers, waterfowl wintering grounds, and the thousands of people whose means of making a living are in jeopardy.

To introduce new sediment into the lower delta would be an obvious cure. But can you imagine a politician willing to let the Mississippi change her course and come down through the Achafalaya Basin? This would leave New Orleans high and dry, - and displace many homes in the Achafalaya Basin.

It would allow the River to go back into the land-building business. Can you imagine real estate developers allowing this to happen? Is "no net loss" - as promised by President Bush - possible in Louisiana?

Nature may not recognize political boundaries. But Nature is not running for office. So I suspect the River will be depositing precious topsoil far out in the Gulf for many years to come.

Elgway said the board hoped that both sides could continue their negotiations if no settlement is reached. A member of the teacher's negotiating committee also stated that the teachers also hoped all the issues could be resolved and the new contract settled.

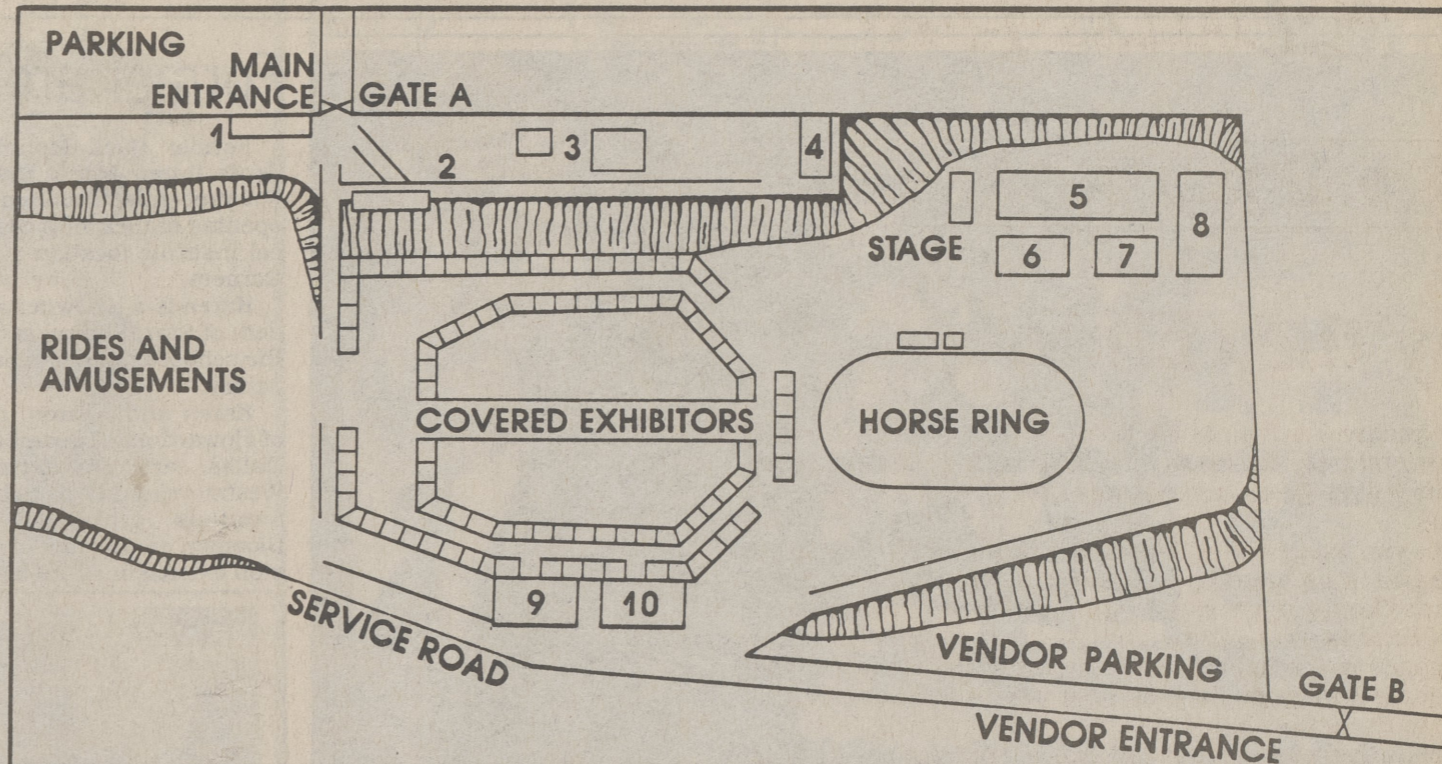
The teacher, who asked to remain anonymous, said that there would be a meeting of the education association, Tuesday, September 5.

"Most of the issues have been resolved," the teacher said, "And we are optimistic that the few remaining can be solved by the fact finder."

The Lake-Lehman Education Association has a membership of 132 teachers, who are responsible for the education of 2700 students.

An unconfirmed report is that one unresolved issue between the two sides is the size of an increase in salaries.

MAP OF THE FAIRGROUNDS



- | | | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Ticket Booth - Main Entrance | 4. Fair Office | 7. Show Tent |
| 2. Finance Trailer | 5. Cattle Barn | 8. Horse Barn |
| 3. Horseshoe Pitching | 6. Livestock Tent | 9. Arts & Crafts Building |
| | | 10. 4-H Building |

Fair briefs

Scarecrow Contest

The Scarecrow Contest is open to all clubs, groups or individuals. There is no entry fee for this contest and cash prizes will be awarded. All scarecrows must be ready for display and judging by noon on Wednesday, Sept. 6. The display will be in front of the Art's and Crafts building. Scarecrows will be judged on originality, workmanship and theme. All scarecrows are to be on display outdoors, so choose materials for construction with this in mind.

For more information please consult your 1989 Premium Guide which will be out soon or call the Fair office at 675-6448.

Who is the best Apple Pie baker?

Come to the Luzerne County Fair scheduled for September 6-10 and find out.

All entry pies are to be baked from scratch, including crust. Pies will be judged on the basis of crusts, filling, over all appearance, sensory qualities and creativity. All entries must be brought to the stage area at the fairgrounds between 1 and 2 p.m. on Sunday, September 10. Judging will be held at 3 p.m. Winners will be announced at the conclusion of the judging. There is no fee for this contest. Cash prizes will be awarded. For more information please check your Premium Guide or call the fair office at 675-6448.

Largest pumpkin/squash contest

The Luzerne County Fair scheduled for Wednesday, Sept. 6 through Sunday, Sept. 10, is looking for the largest pumpkin/squash grown in Luzerne County.

Pumpkin/Squash contest entries will be subject to the general rules found in the Premium Guide. All entries must be grown in Luzerne County. All entries must be brought to the fairgrounds by 11 a.m. Wednesday, Sept. 6, (Arts & Crafts building, Gate B). There is no entry fee for this contest. Actual weight must be permanently marked on top of the pumpkin/squash, and may be verified by judges. Please check your Premium Guide for more information, or call the fair office at 675-6448 for further information.

Fair

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formed by eight service clubs in the Back Mountain, and the Luzerne County Extension Service. Hugh Woodward is general chairman of the 1989 fair.

From 1963 until 1980, the fair was held at the Lehman Horse-show Grounds, just across and down the road from the present site. While the majority of profits from each year's fair are invested in the fairgrounds, the event still supports charitable organizations in Luzerne County. In 1988, direct donations were \$6,473 and non-profit organizations received \$7,120 worth of free display space, utilities and advertising.

LUZERNE COUNTY FAIR SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Sunday, September 3rd

5 PM-9 PM —Arts & Crafts Entries

Monday, September 4th

3 PM-9 PM —Arts & Crafts Entries

Tuesday, September 5th

12 Noon-9 PM —4-H and Small Animal Entries

Wednesday, September 6th

8 AM-11 AM —Horticulture, Agriculture and Baked Goods Entries (Perishables only)
 8 AM-12 Noon —Livestock and Horse Entries
 9 AM —Luzerne County Dairy Day
 12 Noon —Set-up Deadline for Scarecrow Contest
 12 Noon-6 PM —Open class Arts & Crafts and 4-H Judging
 4 PM —Fairgrounds Open to the General Public
 4:30 PM —High School Band (Arena)
 5 PM —S&S Amusements, Your Midway Hosts, Opens
 5:30 PM —Opening Ceremonies (Main Stage)
 6 PM —4-H and Arts & Crafts Buildings Open to the General Public
 6 PM —Dairy Day Giant Banana Split
 8 PM —Championship Wrestling (Main Stage); Featuring Mad Dog Drake, Iron Mike Sharp and others. Co-sponsored by Franklin First Federal Savings & Loan Association Free

Thursday, September 7th

10 AM —Rabbit and Poultry Judging
 4 PM —4-H Dairy Judging
 4 PM —Fairgrounds Open to the General Public
 4 PM —Sheep Judging
 5 PM —S&S Amusements, Your Midway Hosts, Opens
 5 PM —Open Group (Main Stage)
 6 PM —Fair Queen Competition (Main Stage); Master of Ceremonies, Dan Gallagher. WBRE-28. Co-sponsored by United Penn Bank
 7 PM —Hubcaps, first show (Main Stage); "One of the Best 1950's musical attractions in the USA." Co-sponsored by Franklin First Federal Savings & Loan Association Free
 9 PM —Hubcaps, second show; (Main Stage)

Friday, September 8th

1 PM —Open Class Dairy Judging
 4 PM —Fairgrounds Open to the General Public
 5 PM —Beef Judging
 5 PM —S&S Amusements, Your Midway Hosts, Opens
 6 PM —High School Band (Arena)
 7 PM —Livestock Dress up Show (Main Stage)
 7 PM-9 PM —4-H Demonstrations (4-H Building)
 8 PM —Strawberry Jam (Main Stage); "Back by popular demand" Free

Saturday, September 9th

10 AM —Horse Halter Class Judging
 12 Noon —Fairgrounds Open to the General Public
 12 Noon —4-H Horse Show
 1 PM —S&S Amusements, Your Midway Hosts, Opens
 1 PM —Horseshoe Pitching Tournament; "The President's Game"
 4 PM-6 PM —4-H Demonstrations (4-H Building)
 5 PM —Luzerne County Fair Barrel Race (Arena)
 8 PM —Great Rock Scare (Main Stage); "An annual tradition" Free

Sunday, September 10th

12 Noon —Fairgrounds Open to the General Public
 1 PM —S&S Amusements, Your Midway Hosts, Opens
 1 PM —4-H Dog Judging
 1 PM —Horseshoe Pitching Tournament; "An old favorite...now played at the White House"
 2 PM —Set-up Deadline for Apple Pie Contest
 2 PM-4:30 PM —Old Fashioned Family Day — Games Program (Arena), Co-sponsored by Slocum Insurance Agency
 3 PM —Apple Pie Contest (Main Stage)
 5 PM-8 PM —Dancing to the Music of the RPM Old Stars (Main Stage)
 6 PM —Arts & Crafts Buildings Closed
 6:30 PM —Raffle Drawing
 7 PM-9 PM —Entries Pickup

GATE ADMISSION \$3.00
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 Free Parking

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