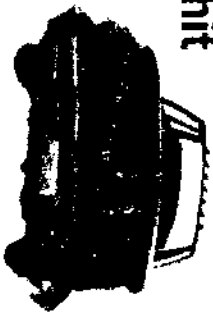


Smash hit

Demolition derby pleases fans and drivers / 1D



Gently down the stream

The Brazos looks different when you're in a canoe / 1E



Also inside

- ▶ Another Waco principal leaving / 1C
- ▶ Neighbor Plus visits Westphalia / 4C
- ▶ T-shirts display Waco pride / 8E

SUNDAY

July 11, 2004

Single copy \$1.50

www.wacotrib.com

Waco Tribune-Herald

Nobody's Fool co-sponsors feel heat

Some weary of criticism of sex-ed event support

By TERRI JO RYAN

Tribune-Herald staff writer

Local businessman Peter Kullgen's pens are being used as "swords" by those opposed to his continued underwriting of the annual sexual education conference known as Nobody's Fool.

"We give them a box of pens," said Kullgen, president of Bird-Kullgen Ford

Inc. "Then I get all these people chewing on me for helping Nobody's Fool. It's an annual ordeal."

Underwriters and sponsors of the Planned Parenthood of Central Texas event, which marks its 15th year Thursday, have come increasingly under fire in recent years for their support of the conference that some conservative Christians find offensive.

One entity that co-sponsored last year's event, the Bluebonnet Council of the Girl Scouts of America, was thrust into the national spotlight earlier this

■ Carlos Sanchez column/10A

year when John Pisciotta, a co-leader of Pro-Life Waco, instigated a boycott during a fundraising organization's annual fund-raising cookie drive. Within weeks, after Scout troops dissolved and rival troops were formed, the Bluebonnet Council's leadership voted to disassociate itself from Planned Parenthood, citing the best interests of the girls in its care.

Emboldened by the success of the boycott, Pisciotta said he has set his sights on some of the other "high profile"

co-sponsors and underwriters of Nobody's Fool.

The Web site of Pro-Life Waco lists the following organizations as having dropped their affiliation with the event: Boys and Girls Clubs of Waco, Texas Cooperative Extension, Brazos Area Health Education Center, Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Central Presbyterian Church, Central United Methodist Church, Lakewood Christian Church and Bird-Kullgen Ford Inc dealership.

See FOOL, Page 8A

"We give them a box of pens. Then I get all these people chewing on me for helping Nobody's Fool. It's an annual ordeal."

Peter Kullgen, Bird-Kullgen Ford Inc.

FOOL

Sponsors provide event volunteers

■ From Page 1A

Planned Parenthood executive director Pam Smallwood on Thursday disputed Pisciotta's list, as did several of the groups mentioned. Smallwood contends Planned Parenthood gained many other supporters.

"The only organization I know of or can say with any certainty we lost over the boycott is the Girl Scouts. That's public knowledge," she said.

Some previous co-sponsors may be taking a hiatus from the event because the organization had a recent change in leadership, like Central United Methodist; or they didn't meet the publication deadline for publicity materials, like Lakewood Christian, Smallwood said.

A co-sponsor, she explained, is a nonprofit organization that does three things: It agrees to have its name and/or logo used in publicity materials; it provides at least two volunteers the day before or the day of the event; and it agrees to distribute information on Nobody's Fool.

Underwriters are agencies, individuals or businesses that provide cash or in-kind donations to make the \$10,000, two-day event possible, Smallwood said.

More than 70 households and businesses are aiding the cause, Smallwood said. These entities have little trouble signing on "because our mission is similar to their own for youth. Education empowers," she said.

Volunteer labor

The Boys and Girls Clubs of Waco is neither a "sponsor" nor a participant, according to executive director Bubba Myers. But the organization has provided volunteer teen labor in the past, and would do so again if asked.

"We are not anti-Nobody's Fool, and we haven't pulled our support at all," despite Pisciotta's claims, Myers said. He has never met nor spoken to Pisciotta, he added.

"I spoke to Pat Stone (Planned Parenthood's education director) last week and she asked us to put out some brochures, and we did. Our whole viewpoint is

Nobody's Fool '04 Parent Preview and Dinner

When 6 to 7:30 p.m.
Wednesday
Where Waco Convention Center
Cost \$5 per family. Register at 759-5777, ext. 230
Purpose Meet the faculty, tour the classrooms, review the materials and the books that will go home with the children -- *It's So Amazing* and *It's Perfectly Normal*, by Robie Harris.

15th annual Nobody's Fool Dating, Love, Sex and HIV

When 8:15 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Thursday
Where Waco Convention Center
Cost \$4 per child (which includes T-shirt, books and lunch)
For Boys and girls 11 to 15 years old

it is up to the parents of the kids who are here to decide," Myers said.

Chester Fehlis, director of Texas Cooperative Extension, in a May 12 press release said the agency decided to withdraw from participation in the 2004 Nobody's Fool because the event had "drawn criticism recently, prompting us to review our involvement."

Kathleen E. Myers, executive director of the Brazos Area Health Education Center, declined to discuss the reasons why her organization dropped its involvement in Nobody's Fool.

The *Waco Tribune-Herald* has been an underwriter of Nobody's Fool in excess of a decade, said Ann Roznovsky, marketing director. The newspaper donates ad space, just as it does for events conducted by the McLennan County Collaborative Abstinence Project, "to alert the public and let the public make their own decision to send their children to it or not," she said.

The Rev. Rebecca Whitaker, pastor of Central Presbyterian

Church, said the congregation's name was erroneously included in the Nobody's Fool flier last year. While she served as an underwriter, the church itself was not a sponsor. She personally supports the event, as do many in her flock, Whitaker said.

She has never spoken with Pisciotta, she added. And she said she is weary of the men and women at Planned Parenthood being vilified for their work in the field of sexual education.

"(Pro-Life Waco) did not chase us off. For many of us, the support is even stronger this year," Whitaker said.

The Tejas Council of Camp Fire USA, one of the original co-sponsors of Nobody's Fool, is still on board with the event, said board president Steve Pringle. He said he's never discussed any withdrawal with Pisciotta.

Pringle added that his wife and daughter take part in the program each year. "Anything we can do to help our youth cope with growing up, to me is beneficial," he said.

Pisciotta said he will maintain his pursuit to drive Planned Parenthood out of business, and will continue the campaign to "educate" other organizations on what that support may cost them.

"We will be present the day of Nobody's Fool, and privately and publicly will be communicating with businesses that want to associate with them," he said.

Doel Garcia, Waco Right-to-Life's new chief, said earlier this week his entity will join with other local anti-abortion organizations in "picketing a couple of businesses that just won't budge."

Meanwhile, Kultgen, whose dealership remains listed as an underwriter on the Nobody's Fool publicity materials, said he is now convinced that "no good deed goes unpunished."

"I offer the other side the same deal," he said. "If they want a box of pens, they can come and get them."

Terri Jo Ryan can be reached at tjryan@wacotrib.com or at 757-5746.