



THE GATESVILLE MESSENGER

WEDNESDAY | Dec. 15, 2021

75¢

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Chief appraiser Fast works to ensure accuracy



JEFF OSBORNE | THE GATESVILLE MESSENGER

Coryell County Chief Appraiser Mitch Fast has held that position since 2009.

BY JEFF OSBORNE
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

For nearly 13 years, Mitch Fast has served as chief appraiser for the Coryell County Central Appraisal District, working to help ensure accurate property values throughout the area.

Although a love of math or accounting may be responsible for leading many appraisers into that career, for Fast it was actually psychology.

"I earned my degree in psychology," he said. "One thing I've always found interesting is people's moti-

vations. I know there's a lot more to life than residential real estate, but a home purchase is the biggest investment most people will make in their lifetime. I found the dynamics between the buyer and seller very interesting."

After growing up in Southwest Missouri and starting his career working for an appraisal company in Branson, Mo., Fast moved to Texas in 1999.

"Coming to Texas was really just luck," he said. "A friend of mine had gotten a job in Austin, and that appealed to me. I loved the idea of bright lights and a big city, but I got

my fill of that over 10 years. I met my wife in Austin and had kids, but was looking for a change of location."

After working for the Travis County Central Appraisal District and the Texas Comptroller's Office, the chief appraiser post opened in Coryell County.

"I applied here and got the job, and it seemed like it was meant to be," Fast said. In more than a decade in the area, he and his family have established strong roots here.

PLEASE SEE APPRAISER | A2

Welcoming families of prisoners

BY JEFF OSBORNE
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

Serving as directors of the Central Texas Hospitality House is much more than a job for Conley and Nancy Brown, it is a ministry - a way to encourage those who often have had their hopes dashed by circumstances in life and who endure the stigma of having a loved one in prison.

During a recent presentation to the Exchange Club, Conley and Nancy talked about the role of the hospitality house and what being involved with the charity means to them.

Conley quoted Hebrews 13:2-3: "Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it. Continue to remember those in prison as if you were together with them in prison, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering."

The mission of the Hospitality House is "to meet the spiritual and practical needs and offer hope and encouragement to the families of offenders, and it provides lodging, meals and fellowship for those who have come to visit family members at one of the six prisons in the Gatesville area.

Conley said the facility is open from Friday at noon to Sunday at noon, and it offers "food, a place to stay and a shower to those who have come here to visit someone in prison. We are blessed to be a part of it. God has been faithful."

He compared the situation many families of prisoners face to walking along a beach "and suddenly finding yourself in water over your head. You need God to show up."

The Hospitality House has received strong support from the community, including area churches, but Conley said they could use more volunteers to help with washing, drying and folding linens, to help with cleaning and to visit with guests.

"God is faithful to give you the words to say, and to pray with them," he said. "Also, if churches want to donate meals we would welcome that."

"The main thing is just to minister to people. Some of them have family in prison, and some of those prisoners aren't ever going to get out of prison, while others will. When you have a loved one in prison, there's a hole in your life, and there's also a stigma people face."

Nancy said she and Conley have had personal experience with loved ones in prison.

"Sometimes it's just a matter of someone making one bad decision and being in the wrong place at the wrong time," she said.

"I've had to sit across from the mother of a 17-year-old whose child was sentenced to life in prison. She told me she had no hope, and asked me what I could tell her. I told her to put God on your journey and He will help and encourage you."

PLEASE SEE HOSPITALITY | A2

CELEBRATING THE CHRISTMAS SEASON



DAVID SCOTT | THE GATESVILLE MESSENGER

Above, members of the Gatesville Riding Club head down Main Street during the annual Gatesville Christmas Parade on Dec. 11. Below, Santa Claus makes an appearance in the Gatesville Christmas parade before heading to the Gatesville Chamber of Commerce's Cotton Belt Depot to visit children.



Gatesville has a trio of its own Hometown Angels

BY DAVID SCOTT
STAFF WRITER

"Hometown Angels" began as a dream and collaboration of three Gatesville women some 20 years ago. Lorrie McDaniel, Michele Holden, and R'Lue Gribble saw the need to make a difference in the lives of children during the holidays.

Each year, a tree is placed at Rancher's Steak House with cards attached with the

names of children whose parents may be facing difficult times during the holiday season. The cards contain the first name of a child and their "wish list."

The names are provided by a reliable source and with the approval of the parents. Gatesville residents choose a card from the tree, purchase the gifts, and return them to Rancher's in time for the holidays.

"Because there are so many kids in our community that their parents lose jobs and

they just can't afford Christmas gifts, so that's why R'Lue, Michele and myself decided to step in and help," McDaniel said. "We try to divide it up so that each child gets five gifts - two outfits (of clothing), three toys and a coat. If they need a coat, we don't count that as a gift because that is not a gift," she said.

Sometimes using money out of their own

PLEASE SEE ANGELS | A2

QUESTION & ANSWER CORNER

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HOSPITALITY

FROM PAGE A1

Nancy said she was adopted through a closed process at an early age and did not know her birth family until she was in her 30s, when she was able to track them down. She said meeting her natural family was an eye-opening experience.

"I was like, 'Whoa!' I had never even smoked a cigarette and they were into drugs and deep criminal activities."

Nancy said she was later contacted and told that her brother was on death row for murders. She said while she knew he was involved in bad things, she was convinced that he was not guilty of the murders, and that DNA evidence found at the scene did not match up.

"I worked with him on an innocence case (through the Innocence Project) for 18 years. People were angry and wanted justice, but I will believe for the rest of my life that he didn't kill that family. When his

appeals were out, he was executed in 2008."

Nancy said she and Conley regularly pray that those who are innocent will not be executed.

In another instance, Nancy said she went in to witness an execution of a man whose family did not go in.

"I went into a world I never thought I'd go into," she said.

She and Conley have adopted children who have struggled because of dark circumstances in their lives and have tried to be a positive and godly influence, and she has seen the criminal justice system impact them.

"I was finally able to visit my son after two years - there were no visits because of COVID," she said. "We know what it is to be looked down on because loved ones are considered criminals. It has helped us learn to show God's love to other families going through that. God loves them, He's with them and He will help them through."

"We love being at the Hospitality House, we love this commu-



JEFF OSBORNE | THE GATESVILLE MESSENGER

Exchange Club President Alan Mathis (left) stands with Central Texas Hospitality House Directors Nancy and Conley Brown.

nity - it's so supportive, warm and friendly."

Echoing her husband, Nancy said volunteers are always welcome.

"We need your help," she said. "We have some volunteers but we could use more. We have a 95-year-old man who mops and a 92-year-old man who cleans the bathroom. I've tried to take their place and they say, 'If you don't use it (your abilities), you'll lose it.'"

Nancy said she knows the Hospitality House is making a difference in people's lives.

"It's a needed ministry," she said. "We have six (Texas Department of Criminal Justice) units here and people are incarcerated, and they and their families need your help."

The Central Texas Hospitality House is located at 708 West Highway 36 in Gatesville. More information is available at www.cthhouse.org. To ask questions, volunteer or to make a donation, email cthospitalityhouse@gmail.com or call 254-404-2260.



DAVID SCOTT | THE GATESVILLE MESSENGER

An open house was recently held for community members to visit the Central Texas Hospitality House.

ANGELS

FROM PAGE A1

pockets, Hometown Angels also furnishes stockings filled with candy, small toys, and Bibles. "We wrap everything, and we deliver the gifts to the families who put the gifts away for Christmas and let Santa Claus bring them," McDaniel said.

"We try to get between 100 and 125 kids each year. This year we asked for 75 names because we're getting older and it's hard. Every day when we get off work, we go back to work until 9 or 10 p.m. every evening separating gifts, getting stockings ready, because we have to have everything delivered by a certain date. It's hard work, but I wouldn't change it for the world," McDaniel said.

Gribble shared her thoughts on their work by saying, "The reason

I went in on this is because when I was 7 years old, if it hadn't been for the Salvation Army, I wouldn't have had a Christmas that year, so I know how it is."

A past Hometown Angels recipient, Gabriela Maniel Elizondo, said "I had been a single mother working two to three jobs for the better part of my children's lives. I remember them receiving gifts at school, which was always a blessing to me, everyone wants their kids to have a good Christmas, but I really never knew where the gifts came from. I just assumed it was a school program," she said.

Upon recently finding out that the gifts were actually from the Hometown Angels organization, she said that she was touched to find out about the program and to learn that someone out of her own community was going out of their way to bless her kids all those



COURTESY PHOTO

From left, R'Lue Gribble, Michele Holden and Lorrie McDaniel are dedicated to helping provide children's gifts for Christmas.

years ago. "I can't wait until next Christmas - I want the chance to give back to my community, 'For it is better to give than receive,' Acts

20:35."

One of the three co-founders of Hometown Angels, Michele Holden said, "It really makes you feel good,

especially when you can really tell the family is appreciative. Sometimes we walk away with tears in our eyes."

Chief appraiser urges local residents to 'open their mail'

BY JEFF OSBORNE
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

Although there are key dates when determining local property values, including deadlines for applying for tax exemptions, for paying taxes and for protesting an appraised value, there's one word of advice that Coryell County Chief Appraiser Mitch Fast urges everyone to follow.

"People need to open their mail," he said. "If you get something in the mail from a government agency, read it and see what you need to do and when you need to do it. Your life can be a lot easier

if you take care of things in a timely manner. There are deadlines and it's harder to grant people the exemptions they might otherwise be entitled to if they are late."

There can also be penalties for dealing with things late, not to mention the added stress that people may experience if they wait until the last minute or miss a deadline.

Many of the specific questions people might have about property values, how and when to apply for exemptions and how and when to protest a property appraisal can be found on the

website coryellcad.org.

But an overview indicates that Coryell County property owners should receive appraisal notices in the mail in March and April.

"An appraisal notice should be sent out to every property owner, so if people haven't gotten their notice, they can get on the website and see what they need to do or call our office" (254-865-6593).

The deadline to file to protest a property appraisal is May 15.

"It's a pretty easy process for people to do," Fast said.

Those who file a protest

will have their concerns heard by an independent appraisal review board that is appointed by a judge and is not directly affiliated with the appraisal district.

For Coryell County, there are typically five members of the appraisal review board (ARB), although larger counties may have 10 times as many people on the ARB.

Property values are typically certified in July, which can affect the tax rates set by local governmental agencies.

Tax bills are sent out in October. Fast said any property owners who did not receive the tax rates in either Oc-

tober or November should contact the Coryell County Central Appraisal District.

City and county governments are limited to a 3.5 percent increase in the tax rate, or an automatic election is called in which citizens can vote either in favor of or against the increase. Fast said school districts have a little more flexibility in determining the tax rate, however, those districts are only able to retain a certain amount before sending funds collected to the state.

The Coryell County Central Appraisal District's Board of Directors helps to determine

key decisions made by the CAD, consists of five members as of December 2021, including Justin Carothers, chairman; Brandi Diaz, secretary; Teresa Johnson, spokesperson; Inez Faison and Jay Manning. Johnson, however, is stepping down from that post and will be replaced in 2022.

The most recent Appraisal Review Board, which listens to concerns/protests regarding property appraisals, consists of Al Castillo, chairman; Cheryl Kielman, secretary; and members Joey Acafalle, Linda Makinson and Sandor Vegh.

APPRAISER

FROM PAGE A1

As for what he enjoys most about the job, Fast said it's the details of the process and how things interact.

"I've always loved the art and science of appraising," he said. "You deal with a myriad of different issues (in real estate evaluation). There's commercial, agricultural, industrial, residential ... it's very rewarding to be tasked with appraising that."

"I also enjoy helping people through the process of understanding appraisals, and taking what is sometimes a fairly negative

view and turning it into a positive. I think we have one of the better systems in the country for determining market values that are accurate."

Sometimes appraised values may be off, and Fast said finding information about that property is what helps change that.

"The reason stuff gets woefully under-appraised is there is sometimes little data available," he said. "Most of the data that is available is on residential sales. It's sometimes more difficult to determine commercial values."

In Coryell County, "five acres and a house seems to be the most desirable property option. It's a different market in Copperas Cove

compared to the rest of the county (because of a more mobile population that often stays in the area for shorter times), but it seems like interests are becoming more similar," Fast said. There's a more heavy military component to real estate in Copperas Cove compared to the rest of the county."

For residential property, low supply throughout the county, which is reflected throughout much of Central Texas, results in increased demand and higher prices.

Commercially, "There's not a lot of activity in any given year but the trend is upward," Fast said. "The national climate suggests that retail is kind of sketchy, but so far it doesn't seem like retail establishments are suffering

as much in Coryell County as they are at the national level."

Something appraisers look at when determining property values is when a home is updated, especially when extensive remodeling is done so that a property owner can maximize the price for a home being sold.

"One of the things that we also look at is determining the value of property that isn't being remodeled nearby," Fast said.

"Determining the appraisal value of a home in which \$50,000 has been spent to put in granite countertops and wood floors vs. a home next-door that hasn't been updated and still looks like it did in 1986 is interesting."



THE GATESVILLE MESSENGER

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Submit all news articles, classifieds and display advertising by 10 a.m. Friday for the Wednesday issue and 10 a.m. Wednesday for the Saturday issue.

Articles about events that have occurred 30 days prior to submission will not be accepted. However, they will be accepted as paid advertisements.

All articles and advertisements must meet our standards and

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OUR MISSION: The Gatesville Messenger shall provide news and insights to our readers through the independent and impartial presentation of information that educates, enriches and entertains. We are proud to be a community newspaper committed to the people we serve.

FUMC invites public to Christmas Eve services

First United Methodist Church in Gatesville will hold Christmas Eve Candlelight Services on Friday, December 24. Service times will be at 6 p.m. and 8 p.m.

The church is located at 2600 East Main Street. For more information, call the church office at 254-865-2520 or visit their website at <https://fumcgatesville.org>.

CCC to hold Christmas play, candlelight service

Coryell Community Church will present a Christmas play for the public on Sunday, December 19. The Christmas production will be held at 9 and 10:30 a.m. On Friday, December 24, the church will hold a Christ-

mas Eve candlelight service at 5 and 7 p.m. For more information, visit their website at coryellchurch.com. The church is located at 115 N. Levita Road in Gatesville.

Mountain Baptist Church hosts Christmas events

Mountain Baptist Church will be hosting several Christmas programs this year. On Sunday, Dec. 12, the church will have a holiday musical beginning at 11 a.m. Also on Sunday, Dec. 12, at 6:30 p.m., the church will have a drive-through live nativity event featuring Biblical characters in costume, as

well as live animals depicting the story of Christmas. On Sunday, Dec. 19, the church will have a candlelight service. Mountain Baptist Church is located at 6319 E. U.S. Highway 84 in South Mountain. For more information about these holiday events, call 254-383-2634.



CHRISTMAS COLOR ON THE COURTHOUSE LAWN: The downtown area is lit up in celebration of the Christmas season. Light displays can be seen down Leon Street and around the courthouse square. **DAVID SCOTT | THE GATESVILLE MESSENGER**

Car Show and Toy Drive scheduled Dec. 18

The Roamin Chariots car club will be hosting a car show and toy drive on Saturday, Dec. 18, at 10 a.m. in the parking lot of Bare Bones Barbeque. The event will be sponsored by S&W Products, Bare Bones BBQ and The Feed Mill.

The entry fee will be a new unwrapped toy with a minimum \$10 value. The toys collected will be distributed by Pathway Youth and Family Services.

Judging of the car show will end at 12:30 p.m. and winners will be announced at 1:30



p.m. when trophies will be awarded. Neighbors supporting neighbors is one way to describe the Gatesville community. This event shows support to some of the young neighbors for their roles they play in the community. Bare Bones Barbeque is located at 4305 S. State Hwy. 36. For more information about the car show and toy drive, please call Andy Cloud at 254-216-3201.

Gatesville Hall of Fame monthly show on hold

The monthly Gatesville Country Music Hall of Fame show has been put on hold for the time being. According to the program coordinator, Roger Viers, a concern for safety due to the COVID-19 virus is a major concern. The music series was not held from March 2020 through June 2021 due to

the pandemic. It eventually resumed, but with new cases of the virus developing, it has been decided to cancel the December and January shows. A decision will be made later in January as to when the music program will begin again.



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Pitts Memorial Scholarship now accepting applications

The Susan Patricia Pitts 2021 Memorial Scholarship is being sponsored by the John H. Reagan Chapter 325 of the United Daughters of the Confederacy. The \$250 scholarship will be available to high school seniors (including home-schooled) in Coryell and Hamilton County schools, and college-level (scholar or vocational) students whose home residence

is in Coryell or Hamilton Counties. Those wishing to participate must write an essay of approximately 750 words or more on the topic of either Holt Collier, Jeff Hamilton, or William Mack Lee. The essay must explain about how this person's life story continues to have an influence in today's society by using research to support their

thesis. Four sources minimum are required. Wikipedia will not be considered a reliable source and use of the site will be an automatic dismissal. The essays will be emailed to the membership and voted upon at their May meeting in which the final decision will be announced. The scholarship will be given to the partici-

pant as soon as a winner is chosen, and a cashier's check is printed. Completed essays must be received by April 15, 2022.

Essays received after this date will not be accepted. Plagiarism will not be tolerated and will constitute an automatic dismissal.

For essay style rules or for more information, contact Jane Pitts at 254-723-4727 or johnhreagan325udc@yahoo.com

Emergency Medical Responder Class has final meeting

Recently, the Gatesville/Coryell County Emergency Medical Responder class met for the final time. All of the students passed the class and the final examination - 16 out of 16. There will now be sixteen more sets of hands who will be able to render emergency care to the community until an ambulance arrives. Then they will be able to aid the EMT's and Paramedics who arrive on the scene with an ambulance.

The class, Extreme Education, was coordinated by Tara Felten. Those who helped as instructors were Chris Pate, Dwane Cummings, Scott Coleman, Robert Featherston, Christina Coleman, and Dylan Newsome - all of whom taught the classes without any compensation other than knowing

they were helping put capable hands in the streets to render emergency care.

Next, they will be able to take the National Registry Test for EMR's and qualify to be certified as Emergency Care Attendants by the Texas Department of Health.

The class members by their departments included: Flat Volunteer Fire Department

Firefighters: Heather Bauer, Aaron Tippit, and Tabitha Tippit

Jonesboro Volunteer Fire Department

Chief Bobby Buster and firefighters Dona Buster, Wyatt Faulkner, and Brian Taylor

McGregor Fire Department

Firefighters: Jeffery Douglas and Benjamin Janousek

Levita Volunteer Fire Department

Firefighter Ethan Jenkins

Coryell City / Osage Volunteer Fire Department

Firefighter Justice Mckenzie

Gatesville Fire Department

Firefighters: Phil Gregory, Teristin Byrd, Michael Bernquist, Miguel Mata, and Willie Joe Taylor.



The DISPATCH

The following is a partial list of activity reported through dispatchers during the period of Dec. 9-12. Persons are reminded that only emergency calls should be made to 9-1-1, while all other calls to the police department should be made to 865-2226 or to the Sheriff's office at 865-7201.

CITY OF GATESVILLE POLICE DEPARTMENT

Dec. 9
7:28 a.m., a burglary was reported in the 2900 block of S. State Hwy. 36.
11:57 a.m., a disturbance was reported in the 100 block of Gates Drive.
12:51 p.m., a fight was reported in the 200 block of S. Lovers Lane.
1:05 p.m., suspicious activity was reported in the 300 block of Hornet Way.
1:51 p.m., an accident was reported in the 1100 block of S. Lovers Lane.
6:35 p.m., suspicious activity was reported in the 200 block of N. 14th Street.

Dec. 10
6:20 a.m., suspicious activity was reported in the 300 block of S. State Hwy. 36 Bypass.
10:17 a.m., a fight was reported in the 200 block of Lovers Lane.
5:12 p.m., a hit and run was reported in the 300 block of Old Osage Road.
8:07 p.m., criminal trespass was reported in the 2400 block of Business Hwy. 36.
8:31 p.m., a disturbance was reported in the 1400 block of Westview Drive.
9:47 p.m., a theft was reported in the 100 block of N. 16th Street.

Dec. 11
10:53 a.m., a theft was reported in the 900 block of E. Leon Street.
12:24 p.m., suspicious activity was reported in the 2700 block of Business Hwy. 36.
1:51 p.m., a theft was reported in the 100 block of Byrom Street.
3:52 p.m., harassment was reported in the 300 block of Bridge Street.
5:18 p.m., a theft was reported in the 2800 block of

S. State Hwy. 36.
9:26 p.m., a disturbance was reported in the 500 block of E. Leon Street.

Dec. 12
2:46 a.m., suspicious activity was reported in the 2200 block of E. Main Street.
10:05 a.m., a disturbance was reported in the 1300 block of Westview Drive.
12:21 p.m., an accident was reported in the 600 block of S. Lovers Lane.
1:43 p.m., a welfare concern was reported in the 1500 block of W. Main Street.
2:30 p.m., a reckless driver was reported in the 5100 block of S. State Hwy. 36.
8:59 p.m., a noise disturbance was reported in the 500 block of Fieldstone Drive.

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CORYELL COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Dec. 9
12:22 a.m., a theft was reported in the 200 block of CR 239.
8:39 a.m., a major accident was reported on FM 1829 and CR 321.
9:58 a.m., a livestock complaint was reported in the 4000 block of FM 1113.
4:48 p.m., a gas leak was reported in the 500 block of CR 274.
4:53 p.m., a theft was reported in the 6700 block of Sunset Drive.
9:22 p.m., shots being fired

was reported on Oak Springs Road.

Dec. 10
2:03 a.m., a livestock complaint was reported on FM 1113 and FM 580.
7:23 a.m., a reckless driver was reported southbound on FM 116 near Pidcoke.
8:29 a.m., a livestock complaint was reported in the 4000 block of FM 1113.
8:54 a.m., a welfare concern was reported on CR 3220 and Oak Springs.
4:38 p.m., illegal burning was reported on Qual Meadow Drive.
5:06 p.m., a domestic disturbance was reported in the 800 block of Moccasin Bend Road.

Dec. 11
12:00 a.m., loud music was reported on Baird Street.
12:03 p.m., criminal trespass was reported in the 300 block of Hunter John.
4:32 p.m., a threat was reported in the 5200 block of FM 1829.
5:43 p.m., a reckless driver was reported on FM 116.
5:50 p.m., shots being fired was reported in the 700 block of Oak Woods Courts.
11:48 p.m., a reckless driver was reported northbound on State Hwy. 36.

Dec. 12
2:20 a.m., a reckless driver was reported on FM 107 and Hwy. 36.
9:53 a.m., an animal complaint was reported in the 100 block of Sarah Lane.
11:43 a.m., a reckless driver was reported on FM 116 and Hwy. 84.
2:26 p.m., an out-of-control burn was reported in the 9800 block of FM 1241.
4:46 p.m., a neighbor dispute was reported in the 9500 block of S. Hwy. 36.
9:49 p.m., a fire was reported in the 2700 block of Sikes Drive.

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300-400 lb.	170-212
400-500 lb.	160-190
500-600 lb.	150-175
600-700 lb.	135-165
700-800 lb.	125-145
No. 1 Heifers	
under 300 lb.	135-170
300-400 lb.	130-165
400-500 lb.	130-155
500-600 lb.	125-145
600-700 lb.	120-140
700-800 lb.	115-130
Slaughter Cows	
High Yielding	65-76
Low Yielding	40-47
Fats	65-72
Thin & Shelly	15-30
Packer Bulls (1250-2075 lb.)	
Yield Grade 1&2	60-98
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099 PUBLIC NOTICES

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
Notice is hereby given that original Letters Testamentary for the Estate of BARBARA ANN BURKE, Deceased, were issued on December 1, 2021, in Cause No. 21-10533, pending in the County Court at Law of Coryell County, Texas, to: MAUREEN BRELAND.

All persons having claims against this Estate which is currently being administered are required to present them to the undersigned within the time and in the manner prescribed by law.

c/o: DANIEL A. CORBIN
Attorney at Law
603 North 8th Street
Killeen, TX 76541

DATED the 9th day of December, 2021.

DANIEL A. CORBIN
Attorney for MAUREEN BRELAND
State Bar No.: 04814300
603 North 8th Street
Killeen, TX 76541
Telephone: (254) 526-4523
Facsimile: (254) 526-6711
E-mail: legal@corbinlegalteam.com
00028987

NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING TO DISCUSS OGLESBY ISD State Financial Accountability Rating

OGLESBY ISD will hold a public meeting at 4:30pm, Dec. 30, 2021 in the Oglesby ISD Board Room at 125 College Ave. Oglesby, Texas 76561

The purpose of this meeting is to discuss Oglesby ISD's rating on the state's Financial accountability system
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NEWS FROM PEARL

Scholarship Auction at Pearl Church of Christ Feb. 13



CLARK

BY BETSY CLARK

The next Pearl Bluegrass and Pearl Book Cottage Day will be January 1st. A wonderful way to welcome in the New Year is by listening to some great music at the Community Center and selecting a good book or two (or other items) at the bookstore! Then, the 5th of February will be the next date that the Bluegrass and Bookstore events occur. The Pearl Community Center opens at 7 a.m., and the Book Cottage opens from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. The Bluegrass Café opens at 11 a.m. Be sure and spread the word!

If you have a band or know of someone who does, please contact Ronald Medart at 254-865-6013 to schedule stage time. Also, there are 32 full hookups for those who wish to bring their RV's and stay awhile. 30 Amps are \$20 per night, and 50 Amps are \$25 per night. We hope you do plan to stay as Pearl is a great place to spend a Winter night or two!

February 13th will be the next Scholarship Auction at the Pearl Church of Christ. Items for bid will be out by January 30th. You are welcome to drop by the church and place bids at any time. All proceeds benefit local scholarships as well as His Kids in Lampasas. This silent auction closes at Noon on the 13th following the 10:30 a.m. services at the church. All are welcome to attend

Great News: The McDonald's are coming home! By sometime in January, Ron and Marilyn will be making their home in Gatesville. Actually, the couple was here this past weekend to view their new home and finalize plans. They stayed with the Ray's in Pearl during their visit and all that noise you heard coming from the Ray

home was the giddy laughter of a glee-filled celebration! Or, it could have been the terrified screams of Ron as he rode in the back seat while Linda drove he and Marilyn around the area. Ron said that not once did Linda look at the road, and most of their journey was spent either in ditches or riding dead center (no pun intended) along the center stripe as Linda chatted merrily to Marilyn who was seated obliviously in the front seat listening intently. (Linda explained that it is safer to drive in the bar ditches, but she didn't say safer for whom.) Fortunately, no persons were harmed during this escapade! Ron should have checked with Kay Prutt about riding with Mrs. Ray. She would have told him she had already experienced the terror of such a trip with Linda. Remember, I have told you about the time that Kay rode with Linda to deliver Christmas baskets down the country roads in Pearl and found that Linda usually takes off before the passenger gets completely back into the truck. Kay, I understand, had a few choice words to say about this driver and swore never

to ride with Linda again! But, alas, I know that Ron likes to live dangerously and will probably ride along with Linda many more times in the near future because he is a good husband and will join his beautiful wife and her dear friend wherever they decide to galivant—in the backseat praying fervently! (As a frequent flyer with Linda as the pilot, I can tell you that she has an angel on her shoulder as I always return in one piece and can't even remember how we got to our destinations. God is good!) The closing verse for this week comes from Ephesians 3:20-21—Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen. ESV To keep up with the latest Pearl news online, you can go to the "Pearl Cottage Bookstore" Facebook page or the "Pearl Church of Christ" Facebook page. Or you can contact me at betsyclark47@yahoo.com for more information or to submit any Pearl news that you might have.



DAVID SCOTT | THE GATESVILLE MESSENGER

CORKS & KEGS: The Gatesville Chamber of Commerce hosted Corks & Kegs on the Courthouse Square last Saturday. Area wineries and brew pubs were giving out sample tastings to attendants while they enjoyed live music. Local vendors were also on hand to offer shopping opportunities.

OBITUARIES

MABLE ILENE BUSH

Nov. 7, 1942 - Nov. 28, 2021



Mable Ilene Fleming Bush, age 79, passed away on Nov. 28, 2021, in Waco, surrounded by the love of her family. Funeral services were held Friday, Dec. 3 at 10 a.m. with Rev. John Rainey officiating. Interment followed in Turnersville Cemetery near Gatesville.

Mable was born on Nov. 7,

1942, in Pidcoke, to the late Charles Maurice and Juanita Manning Fleming. She attended Turnersville schools and graduated in 1961. She attended 4C Business School in Waco, and then moved to Houston to start her banking career.

On Jan. 20, 1967, she married the love of her life, Irvin Bush. Irvin and Mable were blessed with a son, Kary Bush, in 1970. The family moved from Houston to Hewitt, in 1976.

Mable worked in the banking field until her retirement from the First National Bank of Moody in 2004. Along the way, her son married Tammy Tate Bush in 1994, and she welcomed two beautiful granddaughters in 1995 and 1998. Irvin and Mable moved to Riesel in 2004 to be closer to their granddaughters.

After retirement, Mable went on to work in the cafeteria at the elementary for Riesel ISD, where many of the kids referred to her as Granny since her two grand-

daughters assured their friends they could count on her to put "extra love" in their meals. She was known throughout her family, friends, and community for her delicious cookies and pies, often meeting the girls at the school bus with treats for them and their bus drivers and friends or providing sweets for school and community events.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Charles Maurice Fleming and Juanita Manning Fleming and one sister, Lola Christine Fleming Esparza.

She is survived by her husband of 54 years, Irvin Bush of Riesel; her son and daughter-in-law Kary and Tammy Bush of Riesel; two granddaughters Kayla Mulholland and husband, Garrett, of College Station, and Emily Westbrook and husband, Clayton, of College Station; siblings, Charlotte Latham, Margie Cline, and Norris "Judge" and wife, Joann Fleming.

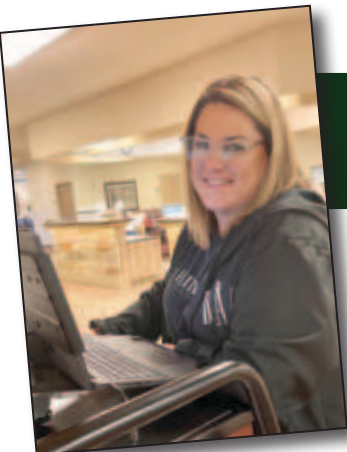
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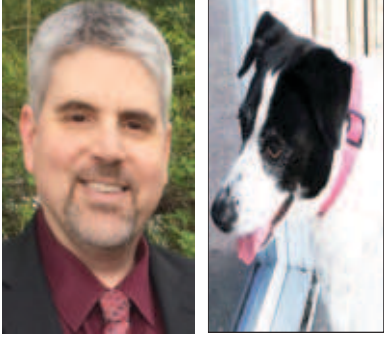


Keeping perspective this the holiday season

Jeff's Reflections & Lu's Views

By Jeff Osborne & Tallulah

Jeff Osborne is senior staff writer and editor for the Gatesville Messenger and Tallulah is his trusted border collie-Jack Russell terrier mix.



As we begin the stretch run toward Christmas, with nine days to go until Christmas Eve, a well-orchestrated sense of urgency starts to simmer. Have we gotten our loved ones enough gifts, or the right gifts?

That lingering sense of urgency is nothing new, but there's been a certain hysteria stirred up by some national media sources warning of supply line breakdowns, shortages and cargo ships a plenty off the West Coast unable to be unloaded.

The drumbeats of anxiety have been pounding for weeks if not months, and they get a little louder every day it seems, with the message that it may not be the traditional Christmas we've known for so long.

Is that really such a bad thing? Over the past several decades, what

has been billed as the traditional Christmas is actually far from it. Sure, we sing songs about peace on earth, goodwill to men and the birth of our savior, but in the holiday shopping and preparation frenzy, it's all too easy for that message to be drowned out.

I understand we all want to make our loved ones feel appreciated, but if we focus only on the material bounty of Christmas, then the message of hope, peace, love and salvation can be overshadowed, if not crowded out entirely.

If shortages and supply line breakdowns can instead lead people to focus on the true meaning of Christmas, is that really such a bad thing?

What do you think, Tallulah?

I know people get caught up in many different things during the Christmas season. It reminds me of some of my canine friends who chase their tails around and around. People laugh at those dogs, but aren't people sometimes doing the same thing emotionally, especially during such a busy time as Christmas?

I'm lucky that as a dog, I don't have to shop. My basic needs are taken care of, and the best presents I can ever get are Jeff coming home from work every day, spending time with me and taking me on walks (and of course, sharing food with me and the occasional treat or 10).

I guess dogs are easier to please, but I don't think that's such a bad thing. It doesn't take too much to send us over the moon, and I think

the fact that we keep a child-like innocence our whole lives is something a lot of people appreciate.

One of my best Christmas presents will be spending time with my human brother Sam over the holidays. That will bring me more true joy than the most impressive gift under a tree.

One of the songs my Daddy (Jeff) sang with his church choir was "Why Can't it Be Christmas All Year Long?" Well, for me and a lot of other doggies out there, it is! We never lose that sense of excitement, joy and pure ol' contentment. Finding joy in what matters most can be hard for some people, but many of you could learn a lesson or two from us dogs.

Jeff Osborne and Tallulah can be reached at jeff@gatesvillemessenger.com.

GATESVILLE CHRISTMAS PARADE



DAVID SCOTT | THE GATESVILLE MESSENGER

The Gatesville High School marching band adds music and festivity to the Gatesville Christmas Parade on Dec. 11. The event went from H-E-B to Lovers Lane.

BIG CITY MEDICINE

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DAVID SCOTT | THE GATESVILLE MESSENGER

The Coryell County Sheriff's Office float won first place for Division I entries.



DAVID SCOTT | THE GATESVILLE MESSENGER

The Hillside Medical Lodge float won first place among Division II floats.



DAVID SCOTT | THE GATESVILLE MESSENGER

Hitt Photography's float captured first place in Division III competition.

Lady Hornets split 4 games in Fairfield

BY MARK GOODSON
STAFF WRITER

The Gatesville Lady Hornets led from start to finish to hold off the Robinson Rockets in the Bronze Bracket Championship game of the Fairfield Tournament Saturday.

Gatesville then faced the Rockets Tuesday, Dec. 14 at Gatesville in a non-district matchup and will travel to China Spring Friday, Dec. 17.

Over the weekend, the Lady Hornets went 2-2 in the tournament. In the Saturday clash they won 34-31 over Robinson.

The Hornets led 7-4 after the first quarter and built the lead to 14-6 at halftime. In the third quarter, the Hornets were outscored 18-13. The Hornets held on for the three-point victory with seven points in the frame.

Kamryn Higginbotham scored 12 points to lead the scoring.

Kagen Hunt and Taylor Coward added six points each for the Lady Hornets.

Other scorers were Aliyah Trotter with four, Matti Mann three, Madison Hester two and Tamiah Miller one.

The team opened the tournament with

a 48-29 loss to China Spring, Dec. 9. China Spring pulled away in the second half outscoring the Lady Hornets, 26-10 after leading 22-19 at halftime.

Seven Hornets scored in the game.

Higginbotham led with eight points.

Others getting in the scoring column were Hunt with six, Coward five, Charlie Sommerfeld four and Laura Trejo, Tamiah Miller and Madison Hester with two each.

On Friday, Mount Vernon beat the Hornets, 59-29. Mount Vernon led 37-14 at halftime and 48-21 entering the fourth quarter.

Coward scored 12 points to lead the Lady Hornets.

Other scorers were: Laura Trejo three, Sommerfeld three, McKenzie Feldman three, Aliyah Trotter two, Higginbotham two, Hunt two, Miller two.

Gatesville defeated Marlin, 31-23. The Lady Hornets outscored Marlin, 19-2 in the fourth quarter to pull out the win.

Seven Lady Hornets scored. The scorers were: Trotter six, Hunt six, Higginbotham five, Coward four, Miller four, Trejo four and Kylie Cox two points.

Hornets' injuries lead to dropping 4 straight games

BY MARK GOODSON
STAFF WRITER

The Hornets had two key players go out with injuries in the first game of the Little River Academy Tournament Thursday.

Six-foot-four Tyler Shea and shooting guard Jack

Carroll were slowed in the opener and the team dropped all four games in the tournament.

Waco Connally ran to convincing 81-20 win on Thursday in the opener.

The Hornets were outscored 24-10 in the opening quarter.

Connally led 43-10 at halftime.

Leaders for the Hornets were: Shea with eight points and nine rebounds and Trae Miller with six rebounds.

Salado 77, Gatesville 62: Carter Williams scored 19 points and pulled down eight rebounds in the Game

2 battle.

Salado outscored the Hornets 26-6 in the first quarter.

Salado led 41-23 at halftime and 54-44 going into the fourth quarter.

Rayshon Smith scored 15 points and added five rebounds. Carroll scored 15 points.

Grandview 41, Gatesville 39: Grandview scored at the buzzer to knock off GHS.

Grandview outscored the Hornets, 14-1, in the fourth quarter.

Williams scored 16 points and led on the boards. Smith scored nine points.

China Spring 51, Gates-

ville 39: Carroll had 14 points and four rebounds in Game 4 of the tournament for the Hornets. Williams scored 12 points and pulled down nine rebounds.

China Spring led 24-23 at halftime and by three entering the fourth at 35-32.

Jonesboro takes third place in Morgan tournament

Lady Eagles fall to Chilton

BY MARK GOODSON
STAFF WRITER

Jonesboro won the third-place game in the Morgan Tournament with a 49-45 win over Cranfills Gap.

Jonesboro defeated Penelope 45-43 in the Eagles tournament opener.

In Game 2, Morgan defeated the Eagles, 63-47, to put the Eagles in third place game.

The Eagles were led by the play of Ian Shoaf and Jacob Cisneros in the tournament.

The Eagles are now 3-4.

Chilton tops Lady Eagles

The Jonesboro Lady Eagles dropped a non-district game at Chilton, 41-34, Friday.

Paiton Green had eight points and Alissa Shumate added six points.

"We can't make layups or free throws," coach Billy Wayne Massingill said.

The varsity girls were scheduled to play the Mount Calm Lady Panthers at 6 p.m. Tuesday, while the boys had a Tuesday contest vs. Chilton.

The boys were scheduled to play Perrin-Whitt at 6 p.m. Thursday.



Members of the Jonesboro Eagles are: (front roll) Jacob Cisneros #3, Jaden Domel #5, Dakota Riley #10 Costin Allison #2, Manny Torres and #22 Garrett Young. (Back row) Ian Shoaf #12, Jimmy Whatley #44, Layton Blanchard #32 and coach Chris Simon. The team ballboy is Jaxson Simons in front. Not pictured is Nat Hilliker #34.

COURTESY PHOTO

Gatesville wrestling teams expect competitive field in Bryan

BY MARK GOODSON
STAFF WRITER

Gatesville will get a chance to mix it up with some top state talent in the Bryan ISD Doc Hess Classic, Dec. 18 in Bryan.

The Bryan tournament will have 40-50 schools.

"In years past there were more than 1,000 wrestlers competing in this tournament," said Gatesville wrestling coach Robert Clater, Jr. "We have had a good start to the season. The team as a whole has greatly surpassed expectations."

The team has had multiple first-place winners in tournaments; both boys and girls.

"We have also been challenged, having a losing record in the Harker Heights tournament," Clater said. "As good as we have done, we can improve even more."

Evant Lady Elks building foundation with young team

BY MARK GOODSON
STAFF WRITER

The Evant Lady Elks were able to take some tough teams in the Zephyr Tournament over the weekend to fine tune their skills for district play.

"We were able to play a couple of tough teams before we start up again with district play and hopefully we were able to learn from our mistakes and get something we can use to help us as the season progresses," Evant coach Chad Baker said. "It was a long tournament with three games in three days and so I know the girls are feeling it, especially with only seven players. Once we figure out, we are capable of playing and competing with these better teams like May, Lometa and even Gordon last weekend, we will be all right."

"At any given time we could end up with five freshmen on the court, so considering we are a very young team, I have been pleased with our development so far

this year. **Zephyr Tournament Results**

May 51, Evant 24: In the opener, May jumped out to an early lead with a 14-4 scoring spree. By halftime, May had built a 32-6 lead.

May outscored Evant, 11-6 in the third quarter before the Lady Elks closed with a strong fourth quarter.

Emiliegh Burton led the scoring with 14 points.

Hailey Neri, Molly Waldrum, Caeleigh Burkham, Izzy Gandy and Luwi Rodriguez all had two points each.

"We really did not play well in this game," Baker said. "We let their reputation scare us and we really fell apart vs. their press. We also struggled to run offense and score in the half court. It was truly a lesson in humility."

Lometa 45, Evant 39: The Lady Elks scored 25 points in the second half to keep pace.

Burton racked up 18 points against Lometa.

Other scorers were Luwi Rodriguez seven, Hailey Neri six, Izzy Gandy four,



Emiliegh Burton is one of the standouts helping pace the Lady Elk basketball team.

MARK GOODSON | THE GATESVILLE MESSENGER

Caeleigh Burkham and Bree Ramirez with two each.

"We had a slow start and it cost us the game, because every other quarter we either outscored them, or scored

the same as them. We made a couple runs in the second half, and got within two late in the third quarter," Baker said.

"I was happy that we com-

peted with them this time and were able to bounce back from our poor outing against May."

May and Lometa played later in the tournament and

May won in the last seconds by one point.

Evant 42, Bluff Dale 37: The Lady Elks rode a 19-point game from Burton to victory on Saturday over Bluff Dale.

Evant led from start to finish, taking a 19-9 lead after one quarter. Evant led 24-19 at half and 33-27 entering the fourth quarter.

Izzy Gandy and Luwi Rodriguez scored six each. Molly Waldrum added four, Caeleigh Burkham three and Bree Ramirez two points.

"We got out to a good start and that really was the difference in this game, much like Lometa did to us the game before," Baker said.

"We got in foul trouble early, with four of seven players having four fouls going into the fourth quarter," Baker said.

Only one fouled out. "Key players had to sit early due to fouls and we let them get closer than we should have, but overall we played well, and were able to pull off the win," Baker said.