



THE GATESVILLE MESSENGER

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Local fires rage

BY JEFF OSBORNE
SENIOR WRITER & EDITOR

Evacuations, warnings and billowing clouds of smoke weighed heavily on Coryell County residents as a trio of grass fires on Fort Hood merged into one large fire and threatened area homes.

The fire, dubbed the Crittenden Complex fire, scorched more than 33,000 acres and officials ordered the community of Flat to be evacuated on Sunday afternoon. By late Sunday evening, Flat residents were able to return home.

Firefighters from several local departments, along with personnel from Fort Hood and the Texas A&M Forest Service battled the blaze.

Meanwhile, the local 9-1-1 system was overwhelmed by people calling to ask about the fires.

Gatesville and Fort Gates were not evacuated, and the Gatesville fire and police departments posted messages on their Facebook page updating residents.

PLEASE SEE **FIRES** | A2



The sun peeks through a huge cloud of smoke from a large wildfire which threatened parts of Coryell County.

DAVID SCOTT |
THE GATESVILLE
MESSENGER

Medical robots assist at Coryell Health

BY JEFF OSBORNE
SENIOR WRITER & EDITOR

They aren't the types of robots you might see in a science fiction movie, but two medical robots help to ensure patients get state of the art surgical care at Coryell Health.

People don't have to travel to Dallas or Houston to receive this type of treatment - it's available right here in Gatesville.

One robot is Da Vinci, which specializes in gallbladder surgeries, hernia repairs and colon procedures. The other robot, ROSA, specializes in joint procedures - specifically knee surgeries. An addition to ROSA is expected in the coming months which will allow the robot to be used in hip surgeries.

The robots themselves are not actually in control during the surgeries, they are merely extensions of the doctors who use the tools to ensure the most precise treatment possible.

Two of those who work regularly with the robots are Michele Lehnert, director of surgical services at Coryell Health, and Michelle Knight, a charge nurse in the operating room at the hospital.

"Our community is small but having these resources here saves people from having to go outside the area to a different hospital for these services," Lehnert said.

Although there may be some type of waiting period depending on the pre-surgical regimen, "We try to get people in as quickly as we can," she said.

While many surgical procedures nationwide came to a halt during social distancing early during the COVID-19 pandemic, Knight said Coryell Health wasn't as impacted as larger communities.

"It was especially beneficial during COVID that while many hospitals stopped elective surgical procedures (such as some of those which use the robots), we did not," she said.

Coryell Health has had Da Vinci for almost a year, while ROSA has been on site for about two years..

One of the big benefits to involving the robots in the surgical procedures is much greater precision.

"The robots are able to operate in smaller areas so that means smaller incisions and fewer incisions," Lehnert said. "There's not



JEFF OSBORNE | THE GATESVILLE MESSENGER

Da Vinci is one of two medical robots used during some surgical procedures at Coryell Health to improve precision.

as much risk for infection, and patients are able to get back home sooner."

"There's a shorter hospital stay," Knight added.

Bariatric surgeries, which can be part of a weight loss regimen, are among the surgeries Da Vinci is involved in. Lehnert said those surgeries were performed at Coryell Health before the robot arrived, but now it is involved in the operation.

Dr. David Gochnour performs the weight

loss surgeries, while Dr. John Bawduniak does most of the gallbladder operations and hernia repairs at Coryell Health. Dr. Jacob Battle works with ROSA during joint operations.

"They can do these surgeries without the robots with good results, the robots just allow the incisions to be more precise," Lehnert said.

"ROSA is more of a navigation system to determine the best focal points during the

operation)," Knight said.

Before the doctors use the robots, there is a training process, and those who are just starting to use robots during surgeries work with other doctors in different locations to gain experience. The training times vary depending upon the types of surgery involved.

Not only Coryell County and Central

PLEASE SEE **ROBOTS** | A2

Local daycare celebrates World Down Syndrome Day

BY SABRINA ANDERSON
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

People all over the world celebrated World Down Syndrome Day on March 21, including the New Beginnings daycare in Gatesville.

The inspiration behind the party was to bring awareness to Down Syndrome in Gatesville.

New Beginnings has two students with Down Syndrome, including Meghan Killen's daughter, Kelsey, so the celebration was especially

meaningful.

For context, everyone is born with 23 pairs of chromosomes, but people born with Down Syndrome have an extra chromosome on position 21, resulting in three chromosomes.

March 21 is marked as World Down Syndrome Day because March is the third month, symbolizing the three chromosomes, and the 21st day of the month symbolizes the position.

"People don't know a lot about

"We just try to spread awareness so people aren't scared when they're either having a kid with Down Syndrome or if they meet somebody (with it)."

Meghan Killen

Down Syndrome unless they know somebody with it," said Meghan Killen. "We just try to spread awareness so that people aren't scared when they're either hav-

ing a kid with Down Syndrome or if they meet somebody with Down Syndrome."

With the help of Killen, New Beginnings had a day full of fun ac-

tivities for all the children, including coloring and painting Down Syndrome themed coloring pages and wearing blue and yellow, which are the colors that represent Down Syndrome.

Similarly, the children participated in an activity called "Rock Your Socks," where people wear mismatched, brightly colored socks, which symbolizes how chromosomes appear to resemble socks.

PLEASE SEE **EVENT** | A2

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FIRES

FROM PAGE A1

"Gatesville and Fort Gates are not being evacuated!" stated a post on the Gatesville Police Facebook page. "The fires around us are on Fort Hood Base, Comanche County, and Bosque County. Please do not call the police department and ask. If you have a need for police, fire, or EMS, then do not hesitate to call, otherwise if there are notices to be sent for a larger population, we will use CODE RED, and social media platforms as well as personnel to make the announcements. Our phone lines are being inundated with calls asking about evacuations which is inhibiting our communications officers from handling the emergency calls."

The Gatesville Civic Center, Coryell Community Church, New Oasis Worship Center and Righteous Roots were among the locations that had been opened to welcome evacuees.

Dry conditions and high winds elevated the fire dangers. The state's

drought monitor indicates that while most of Central Texas was experiencing at least extreme drought conditions, Coryell, Hamilton and Bosque counties were labeled as being in exceptional drought conditions - an even more dangerous level.

A post from the U.S. Army Garrison Fort Hood stated:

Fort Hood DES fire personnel along with supporting civilian and military units continued firefighting operations March 27 to suppress and contain the Fort Hood range fires.

The fire did jump East Range Road earlier in the day and fire crews aggressively responded to that threat.

"Through the use of both air and ground assets from federal, state and local authorities the immediate threat to civilian homes and personnel in Flat, Texas, has been mitigated," Col. Chad Foster, U.S. Army Garrison Fort Hood, said.

"We are grateful for all the support Fort Hood is currently receiving from firefighting and law enforcement agencies."



Smoke from fires at Fort Hood fill the air above Coryell County on Sunday.

DAVID SCOTT | THE GATESVILLE MESSENGER

Getting clean is just a part of life

In the grand scheme of things, there are a lot of things a dog enjoys - chasing squirrels or cats, taking nice long walks, just about any type of snack, spending time with loved ones, and a nice rub down. But one of the things some dogs don't enjoy is the dreaded bath.

While bath time is necessary, especially when dogs roll around where they shouldn't, it doesn't make the ordeal any easier to accept. That's definitely the case for Tallulah, who shies away from the bathtub with the same determination and apprehension that a human might seek to avoid a colonoscopy (good thing Lu doesn't know what those are!)

After a recent joyous roll in the dirt of our backyard, one in which she got even dirtier than usual, it was clear that there would be no avoiding the bath this time.

The event begins with "the chase." Lu knows she's in for it, so she will attempt to flee the inevitable and put off the watery plunge as long as she can. With the sliding glass door still open, Lu proceeded to spring into the backyard to avoid her bath, then rambled back inside looking for a hiding place, jumped on the couch and finally tried to make herself limp as she was lifted and carried to the awaiting bath tub.

After a few half-hearted attempts to climb out of the tub (she was finally beginning to realize that there will be no escape) she finally settled down and begrudgingly accepted her fate.

My admonishment to her - "DON'T ROLL IN THE DIRT" - fell on deaf ears on one particular Saturday. Unfortunately I was too mo-

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.



bilized and focused on getting her clean to take a "before" picture, but it was a scary sight, indeed.

There are a variety of dog shampoos you can use, but I learned from a groomer that one of the best is the original Dawn dishwashing soap. Tallulah has been acquainted with the scent of Dawn on multiple occasions, including one in which she and her South Texas sister, Nova (a black Lab mix) survived a tussle with a skunk. Dawn came to the rescue then, and Dawn would again make the house safe and make Tallulah clean. At least there wasn't a skunk involved in this caper.

After the nice warm water began to cascade down Tallulah's back, she began to realize that the experience wasn't quite so bad after all, so she settled down and let herself



A WET DOG: Tallulah sits on her pillow after surviving a recent bath, something that she doesn't enjoy very much.

JEFF OSBORNE | THE GATESVILLE MESSENGER

be washed clean.

A few years ago, when we lived in Temple, Nova got a bath in the backyard, but two adults and a child were unable to capture Tallulah. She was not going to accept a hose down and would squirm, wiggle, battle and struggle to get away no matter what it was going to take.

We have since learned the key is to be every bit as stubborn as Tallulah is - not an easy prospect sometimes.

Trips to a pet groomer in South Texas helped Lu to realize that a

nice bath wasn't going to kill her, and in fact it wasn't such a bad experience after all.

That helped make this most recent bath merely a struggle instead of Mission: Impossible.

I suppose I've given enough details about Lu's bath. I will note that her baby brother, a Corgi named Oreo who lives in South Texas, got a bath that same day, and he apparently was well-behaved from start to finish.

Lu, do you have anything to say?

Lu: No! I am sitting this one out. Oh the indignity of a forced bath.

OK, I admit it wasn't that bad. When I finally relaxed, it was actually kind of nice. But I probably shouldn't give you the satisfaction of telling you that.

Jeff: Well Lu, too late. Getting clean is just a part of life.

Lu: Well, it's one that I could easily learn to live without!

Jeff: Not in my home, Lu.

Lu: Ohhhh ... I guess since you put it that way, I can learn to live with it.

Jeff: That's the spirit, Lu!

EVENT

FROM PAGE A1

According to the 3-21 Foundation, Down Syndrome International created this idea to highlight the idea that everyone has their own different and colorful abilities.

"We just want to teach people that Down Syndrome is not scary, and she's just a regular kid," said Killen.

Because of their condition, people with Down Syndrome are delayed in their cognitive abilities to a certain extent, such as a 4-year-old being the mental age of an 18-month-old.

Additionally, other health issues are very common. For instance, people with Down Syndrome are up to 40% more likely to have leukemia. These statistics make the culture around Down Syndrome appear scary, but on the inside, children and adults with it are just like everyone else.

Killen's family recently moved to Gatesville from Killeen, saying she found Gatesville to be more sup-



COURTESY PHOTO

Kelsey Killen and her class enjoyed a special celebration March 21.

portive and inclusive for her daughter. She's especially thankful for the all-abilities park located on the hill at Coryell Community Church, where she says they visit at least three times a week.

"I want to thank whoever

put that together because Kelsey can go and swing and slide like she is any other kid," said Killen. "This is the first time we've had swings where she can fit in, and not worry about her falling out."



JEFF OSBORNE | THE GATESVILLE MESSENGER

ROSA is a robot used during joint procedures at Coryell Health.

ROBOTS

FROM PAGE A1

Texas residents have benefited from the medical robots used at Coryell Health, but people from outside the area, as well. "There's a good mix of people locally

and also from outside the area, especially for bariatrics and total joint (operations)," Knight said. "We've had people come here from San Angelo."

Although the surgeries didn't stop because of COVID-19, they did slow down for a while. "COVID set us

back some - there was a backlog with elective surgeries but we're catching back up," Knight said. "We did a lot better than a lot of other facilities did."

Any of the procedures the robots are involved in can also be performed without them, Lehnert said.



THE GATESVILLE MESSENGER

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Submit all news articles, classifieds and display advertising by noon Friday for the Wednesday issue and noon 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.

Bake sale to benefit Nancy Warren

A bake sale to benefit Nancy Warren will be held on Saturday, April 16 from 9 a.m. or until sold out. The bake sale will take place at Vintage Royalty which is located at 2401 S. Highway 36, Suite 100.

All proceeds from the sale will go to benefit Warren in her fight with leukemia. She is currently at M.D. Anderson Hospital in Houston where she is undergoing medical treatments. Warren will probably be treated at the hospital for the next six months or longer.

Any donations or baked goods will be appreciated. For more information about the bake sale, please



Warren

contact Kay Branham at 254-223-3888.



COURTESY PHOTO

OPERATION STAND DOWN: James Marques, Paul Bertrand and Damien White, pictured left to right, were among those from First Baptist Church of Gatesville who represented Coryell County in Operation Stand Down in Central Texas on March 19. Although a nationwide event, the OSDCT local office in Copperas Cove assists the homeless and veterans families who are struggling in their communities with services and free giveaways. White, Bertrand and Marques transported people back and forth to the Killeen Conference Center where the event was held. This was the sixth annual event, which occurs twice a year, that OSDCT has operated in the region.

Fish fry fundraiser to benefit SWARM team

A fish fry fundraiser will be held on Sunday, April 10 to benefit SWARM Baseball 13U. The fundraiser will be held at the Gatesville Fire Department from 11 a.m. until 2 p.m. - or until sold out. The cost will be \$10 per plate.

The menu will include fish, beans, coleslaw, potato salad and hush puppies. Tea and water will be available on location.

All proceeds will support the local SWARM Baseball 13U team. The Gatesville Fire Department is located at 109 S. 23rd Street.

TUMBLEWEED SMITH

South Africans find a home in Texas

TUMBLEWEED SMITH

A restaurant in Winnsboro serves the traditional menu items like steaks, seafood and smoked chicken but also serves some South African dishes. Jackie and Phillip Strydom have the restaurant called Liefie (Lee-Fee), a popular Afrikaans word meaning sweetheart. They came to the U.S. in 1999 after running a successful real estate business in Johannesburg, a city with a high crime rate. The Re-Max Company invited them to Dallas for training with the idea of going back and opening Re-Max offices in South Africa. They considered the offer. "We were young and ambitious, and our kids were small so we thought it was a wonderful opportunity," says Jackie.

They got to the U.S. after a 21-hour flight. "We landed

in New York with two babies and eight suitcases, and we were really tired. We found out the plane tickets to Dallas were \$800 apiece. And if you convert that into South African money, that's a lot of money. We took the Greyhound bus to Dallas and enjoyed the trip because it gave us a chance to rest and see the countryside. It was a beautiful ride."

Jackie says in Dallas, they started a real estate business and after a few years, the kids became thoroughly Texanized and spoke English fluently. "We just couldn't stand the thought of taking them back." At a South African Dutch oven cooking festival in 2009, they met a man with South African roots who invited the family to his farm near Winnsboro. "My kids

had such a good time on the farm and in the little town. On the way back to Dallas, my 15-year-old daughter said, 'Mama, you know we're gonna have to move there.' I told her I would love to but it's too far from Dallas where we make a living. She said, 'Mama we just have to follow our hearts and God will provide.'"

They did move to Winnsboro in 2010, bought a home and a downtown building that they turned into a small mall. They set up a real estate office in the front of the building. "We went to Canton and solicited successful vendors with funky apparel, furniture and home décor to rent space in the mall," says Jackie. "Eventually we started serving wine and cheese plates. That just sort of

morphed into the restaurant. We didn't plan to open a restaurant, it just happened. We added a kitchen and patio, and Phillip got out his smoker and started smoking chickens. It's one of our best menu items. Phillip manages the cooking, and our son Jet helps." They opened the restaurant in 2012 and don't plan to go back to South Africa. "What we do now is get enough money together and send it over to our friends and family. They come here, and we all go places we have not been."

Liefie has been called the best restaurant in East Texas. It seats 44 inside and 44 outside. Musicians entertain on weekends. It's open Thursday through Saturday from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. Reservations are recommended



Smith

(903 347-1111). Jackie grew up in the Kalahari Desert where her mother had a large general store. In college, she waited tables. She and Phillip always liked the rural areas, preferring them over big cities. "Maybe God wants us here."

CONGRATULATIONS RYAN SMILEY GOLD MEDALIST



RYAN SMILEY

GHS SENIOR RYAN SMILEY WON GOLD

at the Texas High School Powerlifting Association state meet in Abilene.

Smiley totaled 1,880 pounds:
815 in squat
456 bench press
610 deadlift

Ryan won the silver medal a year ago.

CONGRATULATIONS ON A GREAT SEASON



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COURTESY PHOTO

3RD PLACE WINNERS: 4-H Plant ID Team members pictured with Houston Rodeo and Stock Show official are, pictured left to right, Levin Lynch, Mia Conley and Marcy Conley.

County 4-H Houston Livestock Show Results

The number three was lucky for the locals in Houston this year as the county judging teams and livestock exhibitors competed. With 246 teams competing, the Senior Livestock Judging Team consisting of Samuel Belt, Kinsey Gardner and Matti Mann placed third high team. Another third place finish came from the Senior Livestock Quiz Bowl Team with team members Samuel Belt, Jeret Burks, Cayleigh Coursey and Lane Kinsey. Not to be

outdone, the Junior Plant Identification Team placed third consisting of Mia Conley, Marcy Conley and Levin Lynch.

Our number switched to four on the show side with both Thiele Alvarado (Dorper) and Hadleigh Ament (Southdown) exhibiting 4th place sheep. Samuel Belt placed fourth with his Brangus heifer. Also placing were Cooper Sutton with his sixth place Beefmaster heifer, Steven Bomar with his ninth

place Berkshire gilt and Jacy Archie showed her ninth place Fine wool sheep. The Senior Horse Judging Team placed 10th with team members: Kacy Maurer, Irena Murphy and Ludwika Rodriguez.

Major stock show season will wrap up next week with the Austin Livestock Show. Judging Team Contests, Share the Fun and 4-H Speaking events will be up next for our county 4-H members.

Local author to hold book signing

Local author Clay Reeves will be having a book signing to introduce his new book, "Dog Days with Aggie & Pepper," on Saturday, April 2. The signing will take place from 1-3 p.m. at the 1854 Mercantile located at

409 Highway 36 Bypass. The public is invited to attend. Clay Reeves, a former Gatesville High School math teacher, retired in May of 2021 after 55 years of service teaching. His first book about his

dogs, entitled "Aggie and Pepper," was published in 2020. His second book, entitled "Dog Days with Aggie & Pepper" was published in 2021.

The DISPATCH

The following is a breakdown of activity reported through dispatchers during the period of March 23 -25. While there were many calls to the dispatcher, this is a partial list of more significant activity. 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

- Mar. 23**
 8:50 a.m., animal cruelty was reported in the 2000 block of Waco Street.
 9:58 a.m., an accident was reported in the 2800 block of S. State Highway 36.
 3:56 p.m., suspicious activity was reported in the 2600 block of E. Main Street.
 4:51 p.m., criminal mischief was reported in the 100 block of Surrey Lane.
 9:20 p.m., a theft was reported in the 2300 block of Business Highway 36.
 10:05 p.m., a disturbance was reported in the 2300 block of Bridge Street.
- Mar. 24**
 6:36 a.m., suspicious activity was reported in the 2200 block of Bridge Street.
 7:20 a.m., a burglary was reported in the 100 block of Magaldi Street.
 12:33 p.m., a reckless driver was reported in the 2600 block of E. Main Street.
 12:34 p.m., suspicious activity was reported in the 600 block of S. 7th Street.
 2:46 p.m., criminal trespass was reported in the 300 block of Mulberry Street.
 7:40 p.m., suspicious activity was reported in the 2300 block of Business Highway 36.
- Mar. 25**
 1:51 a.m., an assault was reported in the 1500 block of W. Main Street.
 8:15 a.m., a structure fire was reported in the 2500

- block of Oak Drive.
 1:14 p.m., a theft was reported in the 2800 block of S. State Highway 36.
 1:16 p.m., animal cruelty was reported in the 1600 block of E. Main Street.
 3:31 p.m., a theft was reported in the 3300 block of S. State Highway 36.
 4:04 p.m., an accident was reported in the 900 block of E. Main Street.

36.
 8:02 p.m., a civil matter was reported in the 100 block of Knowles Road.
- Mar. 24**
 8:31 a.m., a stolen vehicle was reported in the 500 block of E. Leon Street.
 11:06 a.m., shots being fired was reported in the 2700 block of Mountain View Road.
 12:31 p.m., an animal complaint was reported in the 100 block of Harrel Drive.
 3:42 p.m., a livestock complaint was reported on Highway 84 and Highway 281.
 7:07 p.m., a grass fire was reported in the 1100 block of Kubitz Road.
 11:33 p.m., a prowler was reported in the 200 block of Thackston Road.
- Mar. 25**
 3:10 p.m., a livestock complaint was reported in the 2800 block of Mulberry.
 4:12 p.m., a possible fire was reported in the 1200 block of FM 931.
 4:31 p.m., shots being fired was reported in the 2700 block of Mountain View Road.
 5:20 p.m., a livestock complaint was reported on Harmon Road near Tablerock.
 8:30 p.m., an accidental shooting was reported in the 2600 block of Twin Hills Road.
 8:58 p.m., shots being fired was reported in the 1000 block of Bluestem.

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CORYELL COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

- Mar. 23**
 11:45 a.m., a civil matter was reported in the 3500 block of River Road.
 1:15 p.m., an animal complaint was reported in the 500 block of E. Circle Drive.
 2:04 p.m., a livestock complaint was reported on FM 116 between Perryman Creek and Tablerock.
 2:30 p.m., a welfare concern was reported in the 11000 block of FM 116.
 3:37 p.m., a traffic hazard was reported on N. Highway

PEARL NEWS

Kids' bands are always welcome at Pearl Music Festival



BETSY CLARK
 The next Pearl Music Festival will be April 2, at the Pearl Community Center. Acoustic gospel, country/western, and bluegrass bands are welcome to play on the stage for free. Kids' bands are always welcome as well. Please call Ronald Medart at 254-865-6013 to schedule your time on the stage. The Community Center opens at 7 a.m. until 5 p.m. Since the purpose of the kitchen is to help to raise funds to pay the expenses of the Community Center, no ice chests are

allowed in the center during the bluegrass events. However, you will enjoy the delicious foods the kitchen offers right along with the great music and fellowship. Y'all come!
 The annual Pearl Flea Market will be on April 23 from 8 a.m. until 2 p.m. Vendors, personal Junk-in-Your-Trunkers, booths, and vegetable/fruit markets are invited. All sellers will park outside around the Community Center on a "first come-first park" basis. A small fee of \$5 will be charged for each booth/vendor/trunk to benefit the Pearl Community Center. The kitchen will be open for something new - the first Meet and Greet in Pearl. Needed are volunteers to work the kitchen. Bring your favorite snack to donate to the kitchen to sell to benefit the Community Center. If you wish to sign up to volunteer for "kitchen duty" that day, please call Linda Ray at 254-865-9282. Bring your favorite desserts, snacks, or breakfast/lunch items. Everyone is invited. For more information or to volunteer to work in the kitchen, please call Linda Ray at 254-865-9282.
 Sunday, April 3, Jake Hooker will be at Pearl Community Fellowship Church at 9 a.m. Everyone is invited to attend. Mark your calendars.
 The Pearl Baptist Church asks that you join them at the

Evant School for prayers for the school and the teachers/staff at 7 a.m. on April 8 and May 13. Meet at the Prayer Tree in front of the school. Everyone is invited.
 The next Pearl Community Center Board Meeting will be April 25 at 6:30 p.m. at the Community Center. This reflects a change in meeting times from the first Monday to the fourth Monday in January, April, July, and October (quarterly). The time and location remain the same - 6:30 p.m. in the Pearl Community Center. Everyone is invited to attend.
 Pearl Church of Christ will have Vacation Bible School from June 6-10 this year. The five-day event starts at 9 a.m. and ends at noon. The theme this year is "The Chosen - Jesus and His Disciples." The annual VBS at Pearl Church of Christ is a life-changing event, and you don't want to miss it. Invite friends, family, and strangers on the street. Also, be in prayer for this year's VBS. You never know whose life might be changed through the power of this program and the grace of God.
 Update on the Itty Bit-

ty, Teeny Tiny, Turquoise Greeny, Stringy Bikini: As of right now (subject to change at any moment, though), the dratted thing is still in its assigned location at the Pearl Cottage Bookstore. However, strange groanings are still heard by select persons during their visits to the room in which the framed bikini is located. Not everyone can hear those strange sounds, though (clearing throat, David Scott). I heard the tale that Ron McDonald is one of those lucky ones (wink, wink) who hears the atrocious attire loudly and very clearly when he enters the room. Ron now refuses to get near the belligerent bikini. It seems that this atrocious attire is very angry with Ron because his beautiful wife, Marilyn, will no longer fit into the troublesome thing. No, not what you're thinking - Marilyn is actually too small for this galling get-up! Apparently, Ron is blamed for her petite stature, and retaliation is on its feeble mind. So, in order to make peace with Ron, Linda Ray is planning on selling that ridiculous rig again so that The Pearl Cottage Bookstore will once

again be a peaceful place to shop for everyone, even Ron! You are probably wondering how in the world Linda could possibly sell such an outrageous outfit. Well, Kay Pruett, who always tells it like it is, has said many times that Linda can sell sand in the desert and a fur coat to a skunk when she puts her mind to it. I know from experience that these statements are true, so we will see what the plan is both to profit from the sale of the bikini and to help Ron enjoy peaceful visits to the bookstore. Go, Linda! We are rooting for you! There's no place like Pearl!
 This week's Scripture - Micah 6:8: "He has shown you,

O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with her your God." NIV
 Pray for rain!
 To keep up with the latest Pearl news online, you can go to the "Pearl Cottage Bookstore" Facebook page, the "Pearl Church of Christ" Facebook page, or the Pearl Community Center, Texas Facebook page. Or contact me at betsyclarke47@yahoo.com for more information or to submit any Pearl news.

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COMMERCIAL AND RESIDENTIAL

Pre-K strong foundation for children

Pre-kindergarten is a voluntary classroom-based preschool program for children below the age of five in the United States. Pre-kindergartens play an important role in early childhood education. They have existed in the United States since 1922, provided by school districts or private organizations. The pre-K attempts to prepare children to succeed in school by focusing on building a child's social development, physical development, emotional development, and cognitive development.

At Gatesville Independent School District, Pre-K students must be four years-old by Sept. 1 of that year to enroll. Students must also meet

financial criteria through the Federal Nutrition program, or language criteria, or be from a military family.

"Our Pre-K program at Gatesville Primary provides a strong foundation for students and ensures that they are ready for Kindergarten," Primary principal Mashara Streater said. "According to research, attending Pre-K improves student's language development, motor skills, and helps them gain self-confidence."

This year, the pre-K Roundup will be on Wednesday, April 13. "We encourage parents to come to the pre-K Roundup. We are expecting our pre-K enrollment to keep increasing each year,"

Streater said.

The Roundup will take place at the main entrance of the Primary School (the north entrance facing the football stadium). Registration will take place on Wednesday, April 13 from 4:30 p.m. until 6 p.m.

Parents/guardians are asked to bring the child's social security card, birth certificate (with raised seal), shot record, copy of parent's license, proof of residency, proof of income, GISD or military identification.

Kindergarten Roundup will take place on Tuesday, April 12 from 4:30 p.m. until 6 p.m. at the Primary school.

Gatesville's citywide garage sales are slated for April 9

The City of Gatesville Convention and Visitors Bureau has announced that the Junk & Disorderly Market and Citywide Garage Sale event will be held on April 9.

Registration is now open for vendors who are interested in reserving a space at the Gatesville Civic Center and

for individuals and groups holding garage sales in and around Gatesville.

Vendor spaces at the Civic Center range from \$50 for an indoor booth to \$25 for barn and parking lot spaces. There is no fee to register a garage sale. Those will be listed on the VisitGatesvilleTX.com

website and Facebook page and will be posted at the Civic Center.

Online registration is available at VisitGatesvilleTX.com/junk-disorderly. For questions, contact Cheri Shepherd at (254) 499-0102.

DEAR FRANKIE

Who's the smartest dog?

GENEVA WOODRUFF
Frankie is a rescue dog and an emotional support animal for Geneva Woodruff. Woodruff is a retired educator.

Dear Frankie,
I am a 7-year-old poodle. When I was just a pup, I began competing in agility trials. I am now one of the top competitors in the field. At the competitions, it's not uncommon for a fan to comment on my intelligence. On occasion, one will say I'm just as bright as those Australian herding dogs. This comparison never ceases to annoy and frost me. Sheepdogs live outside under brutal weather conditions and spend their life moving a flock of smelly and dumb sheep from one corral to another. I live in temperature-controlled environments,

sleep in a soft bed, and have lots of free time to relax and get my hair and nails done. You must always look your best when you are in the ring. So, I ask you, which dog do you think is the smartest?
Skipper

Dear Skipper
Isn't your question more about the rewards a smart dog deserves than which dog is the smartest? Dogs who become agility champions and herding dogs are both highly intelligent canines. You believe the compensation should be a life of comfort, public recognition and blue ribbons. I'm not sure a herding dog would agree or trade places with you, if given the opportunity. The reward for a herding dog is a tremendous sense of pride in living a meaningful life and



Frankie

playing a vital role in keeping thousands of sheep safe. There's a saying, "To each his own," in your case, it means what may be rewarding for one dog may not be rewarding for another. Although the rewards for champions and herders are different, isn't it great how much pleasure they bring each of you?
Best,
Frankie

OFF THE SHELVES

National Library Week is April 3-9



FAYE NICHOLS
Library Director

Join us April 3-9 as we celebrate National Library Week. This is a time to celebrate our nation's libraries, library workers' contributions and to promote library use and support.

First sponsored in 1958, National Library Week is sponsored by the American Library Association and observed in libraries across the country each April. All types of libraries - school, public, academic, and special - participate. According to data published by the Institute of Museum and Library Services, 65,948,000 Texans visited the 544 public libraries in our great state in 2019. If you were one of those Texans, thank you and please come back soon. If you have not visited a library lately, we invite you to come by and see what your local library has to offer.

Library events for April:
Monday, April 4, 3 p.m.,

Fiber Arts for Everyone - Are you experienced in your medium, just beginning or want to learn? Come gather, visit, and work on projects. Share ideas and expertise. Knitters, crocheters, quilters and all other forms of fiber artists are welcome.

Tuesday, April 5, 6 p.m., Mystery Book Club - The group will be discussing Thursday Murder Club by Richard Osman.

Wednesday, April 13, 11 a.m., Regular Storytime and Easter Egg Hunt (bring your Easter basket)

Friday, April 15, Library Closed for Good Friday

Saturday, April 16, Library Closed for Easter Holiday

Monday, April 18, Fiber Arts for Everyone

Tuesday, April 19, 6 p.m., Colors and Coffee coloring group for adults.

Tuesday, April 26, 10 a.m., Books Sandwiched in Book Club - Reading Fallen Stones by Diana Marcum

Every Wednesday, 11 a.m., Storytime. Join us for stories, songs & crafts. Groups for PreK and elementary ages.

Every Wednesday, 1 p.m., Mad Matters plarn party. Anyone is welcome to join this group who crochets plastic grocery bags into sleep mats for the homeless. The bags are cut into strips and joined together to make "plarn" for crocheting.

New nonfiction books this month

From strength to strength: finding success, happiness, and deep purpose in the second half of life by Arthur C. Brooks

You, happier: the 7 neuroscience secrets of feeling good based on your brain type by Daniel G. Amen

The oldest student: how Mary Walker learned to read, by Rita L. Hubbard

Great new fiction reads: The missing piece: a novel by John T. Lescroart.

Gwendy's final task by Stephen King.

Run, Rose, run by Dolly Parton & James Patterson

For these and more great reads, come by the library. We also have a great selection of eBooks and eAudio available in our digital collection. Download the Libby by Overdrive app and never pay for an eBook again.

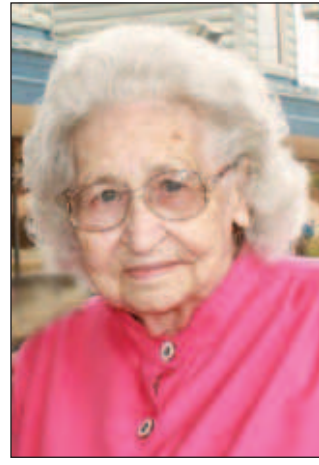
We have several reading challenges going on for all ages, from PreK- Adults. Download our ReadSquared app for logging your reading to have fun competing with your friends and start winning prizes.

Be sure to keep an eye on our website at gatesvilletx.com/library for more great reads and our events calendar. You can also follow us on Facebook and Instagram @gateslib. For questions or more information, please call the library at 254-865-5367 or email me at fnichols@gatesvilletx.com.

OBITUARIES

JOHNNIE JENKINS

June 11, 1924 - Mar. 22, 2022



Johnnie Jenkins, age 97, of McGregor, went to be with her Lord and Savior, on Tuesday, March 22, 2022, in McGregor.

Funeral services were held at 2 p.m. Monday, March 28, 2022, at Scott's Funeral Home Chapel. Interment followed at Seaton Cemetery in Leon Junction.

Johnnie was born on June 11, 1924, in the Mound community of Coryell County, to the late Tom and Ella McDavid Smith. During her childhood years, her father was a sharecropper, which took them from home to home,

following the farm work. She, along with her parents and siblings, spent many hours in the fields picking cotton and other crops during the late 1920s and 1930s. She attended school at Caufield Mountain and Mound. Although dreaming of attending high school, she, like many other children of the Depression era, left school after the eighth grade to work in the fields full-time to help support their families. Johnnie was determined her parents would not have to move again. So, at an age when she was old enough, she went to work in Waco at a candy factory for several years in order to make the final payment on her aging parent's home near Leon Junction. She married Bobby Jenkins, Jr. on Feb. 13, 1943. She was a homemaker and worked for several years at the Duke & Ayers Variety Store in Corsicana. She was a member of College Avenue Baptist Church in McGregor and Rebekah Lodge #128 in Corsicana. She enjoyed fishing, needlework, word puzzles, listening to classic country music, traveling with her husband, and spending time with her family. She will be remembered most by her infectious

laughter and will be cherished by those who knew and loved her.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Bobby; daughters, Linda Jenkins Holley, Celia Jenkins Sharp; brothers, Calvin Smith, Robert Smith; sisters, Irene Fellers, Myrna Curry, Leona Hartsell, Goldie Montgomery, Stella Woodul; three grandchildren, Bobby Joe Loreille, Donna Johnston, and Jeffrey Niswanger.

Johnnie is survived by a daughter, Mary Dockery and husband, Gary (Doc), of Oglesby; son, Robert (Bud) Jenkins and wife, Lauralee, of Gatesville; son-in-law, Ronnie Sharp of Burleson; grandchildren, Laura Ann Cryer and husband, Rory, Wayne Holley, Steven Holley, Larissa McLean, Jennifer Rodriguez, Bobby Jenkins and wife, Melissa, Tim Jenkins and wife, Dorothy, Ronda Beyeaux and husband, Bill; numerous great-grandchildren and great-great grandchildren.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that memorials be directed to the Seaton Cemetery Association, c/o BancorpSouth, 905 E. Main St., Gatesville, TX 76528.

SUSIE BALES

Nov. 26, 1922 - Mar. 23, 2022



Sue Bales, age 99, of Gatesville, passed away at her home and joined her Lord and Savior on Wednesday, March 23, 2022.

Graveside services were held at 2 p.m. Sunday, March 27 at Gaines County Memorial Cemetery in Seminole, Texas.

Susie Pearl Bales was born on Nov. 26, 1922, in Cooper, Texas in Delta County. She was the daughter of the late Mose and Susie Shepherd James. She married Floyd Bales and lived in Denver City, Midland, Seagraves, Lubbock and Gatesville. Sue loved living in west Texas and raised her six children there. She came from a hardworking, Christian family and raised all her children to know God. Sue was the last sibling of her family of 10 to go to Heaven. Her strong faith and reliance in God, made her a role model for her family.

She was preceded in death by her husband Floyd Bales; son, Donald Bales; granddaughter, Kim Bales; daughters-in-law, Ellen Bales and Clara Bales.

Her legacy continues and consists of her surviving sons, Morris Bales and friend, Shirley, of Wimberly, Earl Bales and wife, Loretta, of Neosho, Missouri; daughters, Sue Ann Locke and husband, Tony, of Cooper, Sharon Campbell and husband, Ken, of Gatesville, Carol Bradley and husband, Stephen, of Emory; 13 grandchildren; 30 great-grandchildren; and one great-great grandchild.

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600-700 lb.	125-140
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00029149

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060 GARAGE SALE

25 CENT SALE! Tues, 03/29 - Sat, 04/02. Boys & Girls Club Resale Shop, 1706 E. Main.
00029135

ESTATE SALE of Evelyn Bohne, 751 Bohne Road, Coryell City, Texas, 8am-4pm, Fri., Sat., Sun., April 1-3. Many years of collecting. House full. Info at McCoy's Estate Sales—Facebook.
00029195

101 Homestead Dr., April 1 & 2, 8am. Lots of guy stuff, power and hand tools, household items, clothing - men and women, garden equipment.
00029196

6532 E. US Hwy. 84, backhoe tractor, TV, trailer hitches, drywall lift, scaffold, 3-wheel bicycle, antique office chairs, heavy duty animal sheers, Saturday, 9am-6pm.
00029197

060 GARAGE SALE

Vintage & Garage Sale...250 FM 116, Saturday, 7:30am-2pm. Lots of great vintage items & home decor. Freezer, fridge, 1950's stove, beds, other furniture & project pieces, and much more. Hardbar-gain Market.
00029199

Multi-Family Garage Sale- Patio furniture, counter top table/4 chairs, corner hutch, dishes, collector Barbies, lots of misc. home decor, men's things, landscaping bricks, concrete blocks, lots of left-over tile, misc. construction tools, kayak, troll motor, men's and women's clothes, bedding, much more. Worth the drive! Thursday, Friday and Saturday. Gate opens at 8:00 a.m., 5109 FM 116, 6 miles out. Watch for sign and balloons. No checks.
00029200

MONSTER YARD SALE! So many nice items priced to sell. Kitchen appliances, collectables, furniture, jewelry, brand name clothes for adult \$1.00, kids' clothes 50¢, baby clothes 25¢, all sizes! Shoes for everyone. All priced LOW! Too much to list. Friday, April 1 & Saturday, April 2, 112 Hillcrest Dr., 9am-4pm, **NO EARLY BIRDS!!!**
00029202

Levita Community Yard Sales, April 2, 8am-3pm. Fire Dept. Fish Fry 10am-2pm. Signs posted. Items: clothes, dishes, jewelry, wood crafts, flower arrangements, tools, too much to list.
00029203

070 LAND & LOTS

PUBLISHER'S NOTICE:

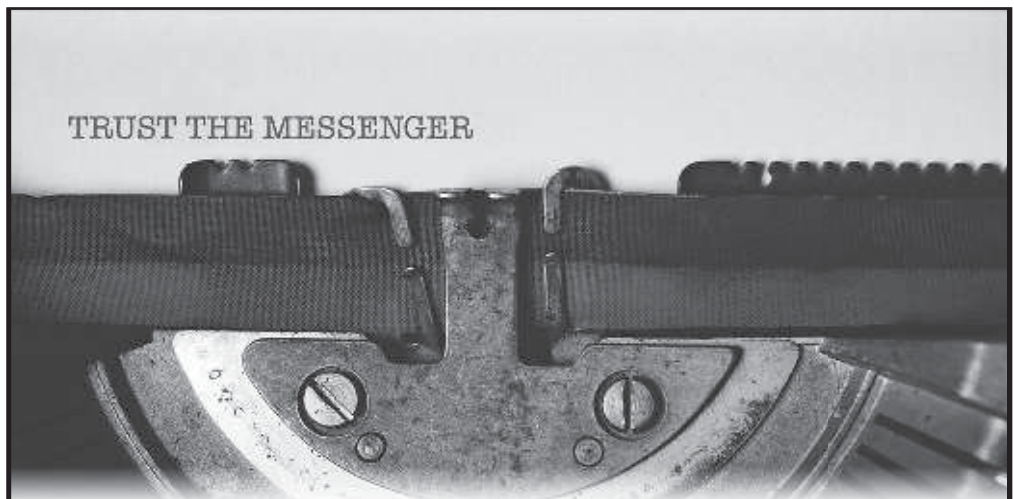
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00029150

TPWD approves hunting regulations changes

AUSTIN - The Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission approved hunting regulations for the 2022-23 season at its public meeting held March 24 in Austin.

Commissioners adopted the following modifications and clarifications to the 2022-23 Statewide Hunting Proclamation:

- Establish mandatory buck and antlerless white-tailed deer harvest reporting in Collin, Dallas, Grayson and Rockwall counties during white-tailed deer season.

- Modify the definitions of "buck deer" and "antlerless deer."

- Modify the proof of sex requirements for harvested buck deer.

- Create definitions for two types of commercial cold storage facilities.

- Modify tagging and proof of sex requirements, log procedures and destination regulations for commercial cold storage facilities.

- Expand mule deer antler restrictions to an additional 21 counties in the Panhandle.

- Extend the general mule deer season in 15 southwestern

- Panhandle counties from nine to 16 days and add a special archery season.

- Establish a mule deer antler restriction in Terrell County within the Trans-Pecos.

- Establish a veterans and active-duty special waterfowl hunting season to occur concurrently during youth-only season in all duck zones.

- Modify the West Zone for goose hunting to open a week earlier than current goose hunting regulations.

- Remove the daily bag limit

- restriction (two) on hooded mergansers.

- Combine the separate merganser and duck daily bag limits into a single aggregate daily bag limit of six per day.

- Reauthorize the requirement to possess a Federal Sandhill Crane Hunting Permit while hunting that species due to an administrative error.

- Close the turkey season east of IH-35 in Ellis County to support ongoing restocking efforts along the Trinity River.

- Hunters hitting the field in the

upcoming season should make note of these changes and follow all regulations set for species, tagging, bag limits, counties, season dates and means and methods.

Hunters can check the Outdoor Annual for complete and updated regulations. Information currently in the Outdoor Annual reflects last season's information.

More information regarding season dates for the 2022-23 hunting seasons can be viewed on the TPWD website as of May 13.

Texas anglers add 2 more ShareLunkers to list

The list of ShareLunkers grew by two over the weekend, running the season total at the time to 22, including seven during the first three weeks of March in the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department's (TPWD) 2022 Toyota ShareLunker collection season.

Lake Daniel returned to the spotlight Friday evening for the second time this season thanks to Mike Ybarra from Odessa who reeled in a new pending lake record. ShareLunker 629 topped the scales at 15.66-pounds to become the 39th biggest largemouth bass in Texas. Ybarra's Legacy Lunker is also the fourth fish this season to crack the top 50 all-time list.

O.H. Ivie Lake continued its incredible two year run Saturday courtesy of angler Tim Manley from Brownwood. Manley's ShareLunker 630 registered at 14.46 pounds on the scale while measuring 23 inches in girth and 23 1/4 inches in length. The fish is also the 11th from the waterbody this season and remains one away from equaling its 2010 and 2021 totals of 12.

At this time, TPWD Inland Fisheries personnel have made the decision to halt the transport of ShareLunker's across the state for the remainder of the 2022 season. However, Legacy Class ShareLunker submissions will still be processed on site by TPWD, meaning biologists will meet the angler to take measurements, record official weight and collect genetic samples for analysis. Anglers can then return their fish to the lake.

Anglers submitting Legacy Class Lunkers will still receive a catch kit filled with merchandise, a 13+ pound Legacy decal for their vehicle or boat, VIP access to the Toyota ShareLunker Annual Awards event and a high-quality replica mount of their Lunker fish from Lake Fork Taxidermy. Anglers will also receive entries into two separate drawings - a Legacy Class Drawing and the year-end Grand Prize Drawing. Both drawings will award the winner a \$5,000 Bass Pro Shops shopping spree and an annual fish-

ing license.

"March has been exciting for the 2022 collection season with seven Legacy Lunkers already collected," said Kyle Brookshear, Toyota ShareLunker Program Manager. "We saw another top 50 fish recorded and a new pending lake record. O.H. Ivie has certainly been in the spotlight again this season, but we continue to see fisheries like Lake Daniel emerge as ShareLunker producers."

Ybarra and his friend were originally going to fish Hubbard Creek in Breckenridge, but another friend invited them both down to fish Lake Daniel. Ybarra had never fished the lake before and decided to give it a shot.

"We arrived at the lake around 1 p.m., put the boat in the water and worked the ramp area before heading over towards the dam," Ybarra said. "I started with a Carolina Rig, but I got it hung up and it broke off. I switched over to a Bait Ball Umbrella rig and caught a four-foot stick on the first cast. Three casts later I felt something heavy after I set the hook and thought I had another stick. It was coming in real slow when suddenly it jerked back about four times and jumped out of the water. I could tell she was a pretty nice fish."

The battle to bring her in started with the fish making multiple runs to try and get away. The fish then avoided the net a couple of times, but Ybarra got the fish back up to the boat again and this time the fish was safely secured.

"The ironic thing is the night before my friend sent me an article from TPWD about the hot streak for Lunkers in Texas," Ybarra added. "I've been fishing for a long time and have prayed and wished for a double-digit fish. I was telling my wife about the article, the ShareLunker program and everything that comes with catching a Legacy Lunker. Less than 24 hours later I reeled in a 15.66-pound fish of my own. TPWD personnel came out to collect the DNA samples, take measurements and then I turned her loose. They were great to work with and what a blessing it was

catch a fish like this to be part of the ShareLunker program."

Manley was fishing in the Bass Champs Tournament on O.H. Ivie and early in the day secured a couple smaller fish quickly. At around 10 a.m. Manley had one get away and at about 1 p.m. he and his fishing partner went back to where they caught those fish earlier in the morning.

"It felt like around 1 p.m. everything started moving around a little bit," Manley said. "We were fishing near some hardwoods and flipping at those, and we still weren't getting much. We moved to some shallower water, and I just happened to see some bass swimming around. We moved again and saw another one on the bed. I could tell she was a good fish, but I never knew she was that big. My partner just missed catching her, so we moved to another spot before turning around and coming back."

In between that time Manley caught a 5.5-pounder before spotting his eventual Legacy Lunker again.

"She was just sitting there in about 6-7 feet of water, so I put on a caffeine shad bait and flipped in there over a salt cedar limb," Manley added. "I initially caught a 4 1/4-pound male and told my fishing partner I'm fixing to catch her. About the second cast after I caught the male fish, I flipped in there and set the hook and brought her up to the top. She made a run to the back of the boat, I turned her around, kept her on top of the water and scooped her up. I put her on the scale and realized she was a ShareLunker. You fish all your life, and it was just one of those meant to be deals. To accomplish it in a tournament made it even more special."

During the first three months of the season (Jan. 1 through March 31), anglers who reel in a 13+ pound bass can loan it to TPWD for the ShareLunker selective breeding and stocking program. These anglers can call the ShareLunker hotline at (903) 681-0550 to report their catch 24/7 until April 1.

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Weekly Writing Corner

World of Worms

The world just wouldn't be the same without worms.

What can we learn from a worm?

While we are quiet and shy, we are good to have around. We don't have eyes, ears or legs, yet we provide an important service.

Worms are master recyclers!

Professor Worm's Amazing Worm Facts

Add up the numbers to discover each answer.

How long was the longest earthworm ever found?
9 + 6 + 7 = feet

How strong are earthworms? They can push things up to 3 + 3 + 4 = times their own weight. That would be like you being able to push four refrigerators at one time!

Yum! Love that Garbage!

Garbage is for worms! You might think it is gross, but certain kinds of worms think garbage is yummy. Instead of tossing leftover salad, melon peels and apple cores into the trash or disposal, build a worm bin and start raising worms to eat your garbage.

Double Double Word Search

Find the words in the puzzle. How many of them can you find on this page?

RECYCLERS	W K O G N O R T S N
DISPOSAL	D R S I R B E D R D
GARBAGE	E A E L R G C S E I
SERVICE	W D I V A I Y E T S
STRONG	F O U B O D C N S P
DEBRIS	S E R V I C E O A O
STONES	L A W M O R R T W S
BURROW	G M W O S G S S R A
WASTE	W O R R U B L D S L
WORMS	
GROSS	
COVER	
SOIL	
DARK	
DIG	

Standards Link: Letter sequencing. Recognize identical words. Skim and scan reading. Recall spelling patterns.

FROM THE Kid Scoop LESSON LIBRARY

Recycle Poster

Look through the newspaper for names and addresses of agencies involved in recycling. Make a poster encouraging students to recycle and list where different items can be recycled. Post this in your school.

Standards Link: Research: Students use the newspaper to locate information.

Write On!

Why read? Send your story to:

Why is it important to know how to read? Describe to other students the reasons reading is important and entertaining.

Deadline: May 1 Published: Week of May 29
Please include your school and grade.

Amazing Worm Facts

Replace the missing vowels to learn more about earthworms.

B_by worms_re not b_rm, but h_tch from c_coons sm_ller th_n a gr_in of r_ce.

An_arthw_rm br_ath_s thro_gh its sk_n and has f_ve h_rts.

_lm_st all _f the _rthw_rms in N_rth Am_ri_ are n_t_n_tive, but w_re intr_d_wr_fm the_ld W_rld.

none cre, th_re can be m_re than a m_ll on e_rthw_rms.

Standards Link: Life Science: Know that all organisms cause changes in their environments and these can be beneficial or detrimental.

Extra! Extra!

Now You See It

Scientists must be observant, watching things very carefully. Try this game to improve your powers of observation.

- With a partner, pick a newspaper picture. Study it for one minute.
- Cover the picture and write down everything you remember about it. Who can remember the most details?

Standards Link: Science/Investigation: Follow instructions for an investigation.

Ryan Smiley gets powerlifting gold

BY TRISTON MCGEHEE
STAFF WRITER

Gatesville High School senior Ryan Smiley has ended his powerlifting career with a bang, winning gold at the THSPA State Powerlifting Championships on Saturday, March 26 in Abilene.

Smiley won gold in the 275-pound weight class out of 18 competitors squatting 815 pounds, benching 455 pounds, and deadlifting 610 pounds. This totaled 1,880 pounds on the day. In each category, Smiley reached a personal best. Smiley also bested his performance from last year's state

meet, where he placed third, lifting 175 pounds more this year than last. Last year, he totaled 1,705 at state.

"Well, it was really awesome to see his success." GHS powerlifting coach Jason Moffett stated in an email. "It took a whole lot of work and dedication from him to make it happen."

Smiley told Moffett a year ago that he was going to win the whole thing his senior year, and he kept his word. Moffett and Smiley both concluded that if he could squat over 800 pounds and deadlift over 600 pounds that they "felt no one could beat us."

Moffett claimed that Smiley won by a landslide, and no one

was close to him. The second-place finisher was 105 pounds behind Smiley, totaling 1,775 pounds.

Smiley was not the only one that competed for GHS at the state meet. Caden Brister made his first state appearance, placing 11th. Brister competed in the 123-pound weight class, squatting 315 pounds, benching 185 pounds, and deadlifting 305 pounds, totaling 805 pounds. On the bench, Brister hit a personal best.

"This was Caden's first state meet," Moffett said. "He was a little bit nervous early on, but he handled it really well for a first-timer."



TOPS IN TEXAS: Ryan Smiley (center) stands with coach Jason Moffett and coach Jacob Hunter after winning the gold medal.



Cayden Mata was awarded a \$1,000 scholarship by the THSPA.



Caden Brister finished 11th in his first state powerlifting meet.

COURTESY PHOTOS

Hornets top Tigers, 8-5

BY TRISTON MCGEHEE
STAFF WRITER

A strong start for the Gatesville Hornets baseball team early guided them to an 8-5 victory over their District 6-4A opponent Glen Rose on Friday, March 25.

The Hornets rebounded after being shot down 12-1 by Stephenville on Tuesday, but this game was a different game. The Hornets struck early, having two runs in the third and fourth inning, keeping the Tigers without a run. Glen Rose retaliated in the fifth inning, rounding the diamond four times. Gatesville closed the game with a run in the sixth and three in the seventh, winning the game.

GHS head coach Chase Smith praised the Hornet team for rebounding after a tough loss the game before.

"It was a big win for us," Smith said. "We came back this week and have worked extremely hard and really have come together as a team."

Smith was keen on Kason Herbelin's performance on the mound. According to Smith, Herbelin only allowed one run the entire game. The first 12 batters did not fare well against Herbelin's pitches because he got them out, "setting the tone for us defensively."

Cayden Mata hit well for the Hornets, going 3-for-4 driving in four runs in for Gatesville. He hit a double in

the seventh inning that drove in three runs to help the Hornets secure the win.

The Hornets are scheduled to face Lampasas on Tuesday in a District 6-4A game. The Hornets defeated the Badgers handily in their first outing, defeating them 10-0 through five innings.

Smith thinks that the Hornets will face a different Badger team this time because of their play since the game in Gatesville. Smith noted that the Hornets must eliminate mental mistakes and focus their efforts on all innings.

The Hornets improve to a 7-9 overall record and improve their district record to 2-2.

Hornet soccer teams finish season in bi-district games

BY TRISTON MCGEHEE
STAFF WRITER

The Gatesville High School boys' and girls' soccer teams were defeated in their Bi-District playoff games at Robinson High School on Thursday.

The boys lost 2-1 to the Mexia Black Cats after a goal was scored with 49 seconds left in the game. The lone scorer for the Hornets was Hector Silva Hernandez. The girls fell

to Lorena, 2-0. The game was tough for the girls, as the Lady Leopards invaded their territory countless times to put themselves into scoring positions.

"I like the fight and the character that I saw," GHS soccer coach Scott Campbell said. "They didn't stop fighting."

The boys finish their season 10-8-1 overall record, while the girls will finish with a 14-6-2 overall record.



ON THE MOVE: Andrea Ortiz advances the ball for the Lady Hornets. The GHS girls fell to Lorena, 2-0, in bi-district while the GHS boys lost to Mexia, 2-1, in bi-district.

TRISTON MCGEHEE | THE GATESVILLE MESSENGER

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