



Hood County News

MORE THAN A NEWSPAPER | A HOOD COUNTY LEGEND SINCE 1886

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COURTESY PHOTO

Parents, students, and Granbury ISD School Board Trustees Melanie Graft and Karen Lowery stand outside of Granbury Middle School protesting after a bullying incident took place inside the school.

An interview with Dr. Jeremy Glenn, Part two Voter Approval Tax Rate Election or VATRE

BY SAM HOUSTON
Publisher

Last week the HCN presented the first half of an extensive interview with Dr. Jeremy Glenn, Superintendent of the Granbury Independent School District, which focused on the school bond issue proposition on the Nov. 7 ballot. This edition shall present the balance of Dr. Glenn's interview, focusing on the other proposition on the ballot, the Voter Approval Tax Rate Election or VATRE.

If the VATRE is approved by the community the proposal will enable GISD to secure an additional \$8.2 million in additional annual funding, while still reducing the overall school tax rate from the previous year. Due to action by the Texas state legislature, the overall GISD tax rate will decrease in the upcoming year. Rather than compress the tax rate to the maximum level allowed by law, the Board of Trustees of GISD has set the total tax rate at just over 93 cents per \$100 of assessed value.

Importantly, much of the \$8.2 million created will not be subject to the state "Robin Hood" act which allows the state to recapture money from the wealthier school districts and redistribute the money to poorer districts. In 2023 Granbury ISD sent more than 11 million tax dollars back to the state through this process.

The additional funds created by the VATRE would allow GISD to provide pay raises to teachers and staff, to add personnel thus reducing the student/teacher ratio in classrooms and to pay for security improvements on all campuses.

Opponents of the VATRE proposition believe taxpayers should receive the maximum tax reduction the legislature has provided, and while there will be a reduction if the VATRE passes, the reduction will be even more if the measure fails. There is also concern among voters that with the current economy, taxpayers should not be asked to provide pay increases to teachers when so many homeowners are suffering with rising expenses and inflation.

Publisher: Why are we having a VATRE election?

Glenn: We are trying to generate more funds so we can compete in a market where Texas has seen a teacher shortage, and we want to have money to improve security across our district. When we talk about the best practice for schools, we know the smaller the class sizes and the more one-on-one between the teacher and student tends to improve the test scores, so these VATRE funds will allow us to do these things.

Publisher: By approving the VATRE proposition the GISD will receive an additional \$8.2 million from the state annually. If the voters reject the VATRE proposition, GISD will not receive those funds?

Glenn: That is correct

Publisher: Why do teachers need a raise?

Glenn: For the school administration, we know how hard they work and how valuable an asset they are to what

PLEASE SEE **GLENN** | A7

Granbury Middle School parents protest after bullying incident

BY EMILY NAVA
Staff Writer

Granbury Middle School parents protested outside the middle school Tuesday, Oct. 3 after a bullying incident took place inside a classroom during school hours in September.

Erin Davis' sixth-grade son was hit twice in the eye and had hand sanitizer put in his eye on Sept. 13, she said in an interview with the HCN.

This led Davis to open an investigation with the Granbury Police Department on Sept. 16. She also filed a grievance packet with the district on Sept. 26 after she claimed GMS did not follow the Granbury Independent School District's code of conduct.

According to Davis, her son

has seen the attacker still in school, which indicates he or she is not at the Behavior Transition Center. BTC is a setting for students who have exhibited either serious or persistent misbehavior on the originating campus.

"We are going to stand out here every day and protest until something is done," Davis said during the protest.

Davis' child has been afraid to attend school in fear the attacker is walking the halls.

Davis and other parents

stood outside GMS this week with signs in order to draw attention to the incident and to demand the student who attacked her son be placed into BTC. GISD Trustees Karen Lowery and Melanie Graft were in attendance on Oct. 4 to hear the parents' concerns.

The HCN requested a comment from Graft and Lowery, but Lowery said, "We cannot speak on behalf of the district. We are just here speaking with parents and hearing their concerns."

Johnny Rose is one of the parents who protested outside the school, where two of his children attend. He also has two students who go to Nettie Baccus Elementary and fears for them to come to GMS.

"It seems the school district and in particular GMS

has a reputation of isolating the victim and not the bully," Rose said.

Maggie Reynolds, who is a friend of Davis, shared, "The school needs to stand with the kids."

Davis created a "Moms against Bullying" group on Facebook on Sept. 25 and hundreds of parents have joined the group.

According to Davis, many parents have confided in her with stories of bullying across the district and the parents are concerned with GMS' handling of Davis' son's incident.

The group plans to move its protest to the administration building to gain more attention; members also plan to attend the next GISD School Board meeting slated for Oct. 16.



MARY VINSON | HOOD COUNTY NEWS

Candidates running for the Granbury ISD School Board came together on Oct. 2 for a candidate forum where the community got a chance to learn more about each candidate at the Lake Granbury Conference Center.

GISD Board Trustee candidates come together for candidate forum

BY EMILY NAVA
Staff Writer

Candidates running for the Granbury ISD School Board came together on Oct. 2 for a candidate forum where the community got a chance to learn more about each candidate at the Lake Granbury Conference Center.

The event was a two-hour long forum where candidates were able to answer submitted questions from the community and connect with voters that filled the room of the conference

center.

Some in attendance included GISD School Board President Barbara Herrington of Place 1, Trustee Barbara Townsend of Place 6, and Trustee Billy Wimberly of Place 5.

Councilman Eddie Rodriguez of Place 2 was also in attendance as well as Councilman Steven Vale of Place 5.

Candidates include Mike Moore who currently serves on the board for Place 1 (hoping to be reelected), Jessica Wark and Rhonda

Rogers Williams are also running for Place 1.

Wark is running as a parent and an alumnus of the Granbury district. Williams has been serving the community for 35 years and noted that she was a part of the City of Granbury Parks and Recreation board and has worked with Mission Granbury.

Nancy Alana and Alejandra Muñoz are running for Place 2 to replace Dr. Barbara Herrington whose term expires this year.

Alana previously served

on the school board for 12 years and has served as both a teacher and principal in the district.

Muñoz came to the United States 35 years ago and is a mother of five. She expressed she is wanting to bring diversity to the community and live out the American dream.

The event began with opening statements from each candidate then moved on to questions.

The topics of the questions ranged from the proposed VATRE bond, the Homestead

Exemption Act, how the candidates will give back to educators, Senate Bill 763, the Career and Technology Program at Granbury High School, thoughts on educators carrying firearms and supporting students creating clubs, improving educational ranking, and teacher pay.

The candidates all want to focus on accountability, transparency and doing what is best for the educators of Granbury ISD if they are selected to serve as a trustee on the school board.

Voter registration informa-

tion is available at <https://www.votetexas.gov/register-to-vote/>. The last day to register to vote is Oct. 10.

Early voting begins on Monday, Oct. 23 and ends on Friday, Nov. 3. Early voting dates and times are listed below and will take place at the Hood County Annex located at 1410 W. Pearl Street in Granbury, TX 76048.

Oct. 23 to Oct. 27, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Oct. 28, 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Oct. 29, from 12 p.m. to 6 p.m., Oct. 30 to Nov. 3, from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.



137TH YEAR, NO. 97

Local, zone(s): 3 sections, 36 pages, plus supplements | State: 3 sections, 36 pages

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COMMUNITY BUSINESS

CHAMBER NEWS



Your voice matters

Register to vote and make a difference in local elections

Chamber Message

In the vibrant tapestry of democracy, every citizen's voice is a thread that weaves the fabric of our collective future. As we approach a pivotal moment in local governance with school board and city council elections on the horizon, it is imperative to understand the crucial role registering to vote plays in shaping our communities. In the state of Texas, the deadline to register to vote is fast approaching, making this the perfect time to emphasize the importance of participation in these fundamental local elections.

While national and state-level elections often dominate the headlines, it is local elections that have a direct impact on our daily lives. The decisions made by school board members and city council representatives influence our schools, streets, neighborhoods, and public services. They determine property taxes, allocate budgets, and set policies that impact the quality of life for residents.

School board elections are of paramount importance as they influence the education of our children. School boards make decisions about curriculum, funding, teacher hiring and school policies. The quality of our local schools directly affects property values, the future workforce and the overall well-being of the community. By participating in school board elections, you have a say in the educational foundation of future generations.

City councils are the heart of local governance. They oversee municipal services, zoning regulations, infrastructure development and public safety. Their decisions shape the character and development of our cities. By participating in city council elections, you contribute to the creation of safer, more prosperous, and sustainable communities.

To make your voice heard in the upcoming local elections, you must be registered to vote. In the state of Texas, the deadline to register is Tuesday, Oct. 10, 2023. The registration process is simple and can be done online at www.votetexas.gov/register-to-vote/ or by filling out a voter registration application and mailing it to your county's election office. Don't miss this crucial deadline!

Voting in local elections empowers you as a citizen. It gives you a direct role in shaping the policies and priorities that affect your daily life. Local officials are often more accessible and responsive to their constituents, making your vote even more impactful. Your participation can sway the outcome of these elections, as local races can be decided by a small number of votes.

The upcoming school board and city council elections are opportunities to make a difference in your own backyard. By registering to vote and participating in these elections, you help create the community you want to live in. Don't let others decide your future for you — register to vote by Oct. 10 in Texas and make your voice heard in the upcoming local elections. Your vote is your power, and together, we can build stronger, more vibrant communities.

We would also love you to join us Monday, Oct. 9 for our next Candidate Forum for the Granbury City Council. This candidate forum will be held at the Lake Granbury Conference Center from 6-8 p.m. Doors will open to the public at 5:30 p.m.

RIBBON CUTTINGS



Blushes Salon and Spa: Ribbon Cutting to celebrate the 40th Anniversary of Blushes Salon and Spa, located at 5464 Acton Highway.

COURTESY PHOTO



Brew Aleworks: Ribbon Cutting to celebrate the one-year anniversary of Brew Aleworks, located at 715 Autumn Ridge Dr. #106

COURTESY PHOTO



The Pan Handle: Ribbon Cutting to celebrate the Grand Re-opening of The Pan Handle, located at 106 N. Crockett Street.

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FROM MY FRONT PORCH

A teacher's "burning" lesson set a career path



BY SAM HOUSTON

Sam Houston is the publisher of the Hood County News. He is also an actor, author, playwright, performer and entertainment producer/promoter.

Recently, I was told a tale by a good friend regarding his elementary school days in Abilene.

It would seem my friend was a typical west Texas boy of the late '50s. He rode stick horses, played ball, and had a group of friends with whom he was joined at the hip. They played at the vacant lot in the neighborhood when school was out, spent the night at one another's houses, and sat close to each other in their classroom. They ate their lunch together, played at recess, and fussed and fought with each other over the usual boyhood issues. Boys being boys, they would sometimes be ornery.

One day one of the boys brought a small package of Diamond wooden matches to school with him. Since

this was a time when many people smoked cigarettes, matches were plentiful and found almost everywhere. Jimmy Jack took this box from the kitchen, where his mother used them to light the kitchen stove when she was ready to cook. The box was small but full of wooden matches and was easily concealed in Jimmy Jack's back pocket as he bounded out the door to school.

Jimmy Jack did not really have a plan on what to do with the matches, and he fully understood he was not supposed to have them in his possession. His mother had warned the 8-year-old of the dangers of matches and forbade him from playing with them lest he start a fire or burn himself. The boy was not a bad boy, and though he knew he was disobeying his mother, he weighed the

possible anger of his mother with the admiration of the other boys for bringing matches to school, and the choice was made.

While standing as a group on the playground before the school day started, Jimmy Jack could not wait to tell the other boys what he had done. When they saw what Jimmy Jack pulled out of his back pocket, there was an audible, collective "wow" of admiration and disbelief. Naturally, the urge to use one of the matches was overwhelming, so the boys went around the corner of the gym where their actions would be less visible. Jimmy Jack stuck one of the matches and lit a small pile of dried leaves on fire.

Just as the leaves caught fire, Miss Etta Mae Ewing, the school secretary, was walking up the sidewalk and smelled the smoke. She investigated, and as she came around the corner, the boys saw her and attempted to stomp out the evidence of their "crime." Unfortunately, Miss Ewing knew something

was up and told the boys to go to the principal's office.

All five of the boys walked the slow walk of death to the office, knowing they were in serious trouble. Mr. Hunsucker, the principal, was a big man and, while friendly, intimidated the students with his stature and authority. When he asked who had brought the matches, none of the boys spoke up. Jimmy Jack was silent because he wanted to avoid the consequences of his actions, and the other four, because they could not stand the idea of being a "squealer" on their buddy. Whatever punishment would be dealt out, they would rather suffer the consequences than turn on their friend.

After making several inquiries as to who was responsible and getting nothing in response but blank stares from the culprits, Mr. Hunsucker announced since no one would come forward, all the boys would get a "lick." He ordered the boys to line up, facing the wall, had them bend over, and proceeded

to go down the line and give each boy a swat on the backside with his paddle. Two licks had been delivered as Mr. Hunsucker worked down the line to Jimmy Jack. When he delivered his blow on the offender, the paddle landed exactly where the box of matches was hidden. The box ignited, creating flames and smoke coming from the backside of Jimmy Jack's britches. Seeing the smoke and feeling the heat of the incineration, the boy dropped on his backside and dragged himself on the hallway floor like a wormy dog, hoping to get away from the heat. The shocked principal scampered to put out the fire and protect Jimmy Jack from injury. The other boys screamed and shouted, unsure what had happened. It was quite a scene.

The fire was soon extinguished, and while Jimmy Jack had a small burn on his backside, no more "licks" were delivered that day. Each of the boys had to spend a day after school writing, "I will not play with matches"

200 times and could not go outside to recess for a week.

My friend claims the incident was a great educational moment. He maintains a sense of pride as all the boys protected their friend with their silence, even if it meant putting themselves in jeopardy.

Another lesson was also learned. None of the boys ever brought matches to school again, and curiously, Jimmy Jack may have been inspired to his future professional calling, as years later he became a fireman!

Educators never know what impact they will have on their students.

Thought for the day: The best teachers are the ones that tell you where to look, but not what to see.

Until next time...I will keep ridin' the storm out.

sam@hcnews.com / 817-573-7066, ext. 260



MARY VINSON | HOOD COUNTY NEWS

Amerson Meyers

Say hello to our neighbor, Amerson Meyers!

"I've lived in Granbury all 21 years of my life" said Amerson Meyers. She loves being the first smiling-faced folks checking into the Hilton Garden Inn see. She also works and loves interacting with customers and staff at the "Super-cute" Arts & Letters Bookstore on Granbury Square, where reading anything but textbooks bring her great joy. Both positions help provide her with opportunities to exercise her excellent customer service skills, which she has a real knack for. Meyers followed in the footsteps of her parents and graduated from Granbury High School in 2020, what she refers to as the "COVID class". Meyers then continued her education at University of Texas at Tyler to earn a degree in psychology with a minor in marketing. Meyers said that there is a lot she loves about life here in Hood County, it was a wonderful place to grow up, but her future plans include spreading her wings beyond the county line. Wherever her career takes her, Meyers plans to continue to check out Hood County News social media posts to keep up with latest home town headline news.

Granbury child falls victim to fatal shooting incident

BY EMILY NAVA
Staff Writer

Nayeli Carranza, an eight-year-old student at Brawner Elementary School, was shot by another juvenile on Sept. 25, in the 2900 Block of Oak Trail Shores subdivision in Granbury, according to the Hood County Sheriff's Office.

Carranza was flown

by air medical to Cook's Children's Hospital in Fort Worth and was later pronounced deceased.

According to Hood County Sheriff Roger Deeds, "The incident is still under investigation, and the District Attorney's Office is taking the lead."

The Texas Rangers also are working with the District Attorney's Office on

this investigation.

"Nayeli was the most precious little girl. She loved school, loved her teachers, and loved her friends. She came in the door every single day with the biggest smile on her face," Sandy Ruiz, Brawner Elementary School Principal said.

"Nayeli gave the best hugs. She was loved beyond measure at Brawner, and we will

never forget this precious angel and her contagious smile."

Brawner students and staff members wore purple on Sept. 29 in honor of Nayeli as that was her favorite color. An account has been set up at First National Bank to help the family with funeral expenses.

City extends moratorium through October 2024

BY ASHLEY TERRY
Staff Writer

The Granbury City Council voted unanimously at its regular meeting on Oct. 3, to extend the city's current development ban within the central, western, and eastern corporate city limits and extraterritorial jurisdiction.

"This is an ordinance that we have. There's no sense in elaborating on that," said City Manager Chris Coffman, during the meeting on Tuesday. "We've been down this road before. We still don't have the capacity, or the permit cleared from the appeal process."

A moratorium — meaning a temporary ban — was first enacted for new development in the eastern part of the city in December 2020, when there was a delay in building the second wastewater treatment plant caused by protests of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) permit application.

In September 2022, TCEQ commissioners sent the dispute to the State Office of Administrative Hearings (SOAH) for a contested case hearing, according to a previous article in the HCN. TCEQ unanimously approved the city's wastewater permit request on Oct. 5,

2022. In October 2021, city officials made the moratorium city-wide due to growth in other parts of the city and because the current wastewater treatment plant was reaching capacity. Although upgrades are currently being made to that facility, city officials say that its capacity cannot be expanded.

The city's moratorium is not a total halt to all development in the city, however. According to the city website, projects that meet certain timetables and/or conditions are allowed to proceed. This moratorium limits additional demand being added to an already overburdened wastewater

system. Once the East WWTP is constructed and operational, the system issues will be resolved.

This is the fourth time that Granbury's moratorium has been extended, from its original enactment in December 2020, to an extension on April 6, 2021, Oct. 4, 2021, and Sept. 20, 2022.

For more information or for questions on development, call the Community Development Department at 817-573-1114.

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OUR MISSION: The Hood County News 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.

COMMUNITY BUSINESS

BOARD MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Member Spotlight

Cherry Creek MORTGAGE
A Division of Guild Mortgage

Cherry Creek Mortgage
We continue to look for potential new partners with strong local teams, a history of growth and community commitments

“Cherry Creek Mortgage is a full-service mortgage bank that combines the best of both large and small lenders. We continue to look for potential new partners with strong local teams, a history of growth and community commitments.” Thank you for joining the Granbury Chamber of Commerce!

COURTESY PHOTO

BOARD MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Member Spotlight

SA
Granbury

Sage Academy
An Independent Private School in Hood County Where Learners Become Leaders

“An innovative, learner-driven approach to education that celebrates personal responsibility, creative freedom, and leadership! An independent private school in Hood County where learners become leaders.” Thank you for joining the Granbury Chamber of Commerce!

COURTESY PHOTO

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

IN FAVOR OF VATRE

Our schools have always been the heart of our community, but by failing to pass the school bond last year, the voters have constrained GISD’s ability to effectively address our population growth. Despite this, the district has done a superb job of managing our scarce resources to serve our students. This outstanding fiscal management has been recognized by the Texas Education Agency who gave GISD a score of 100% on Financial Integrity, awarding them a rare “A” score!

The board has presented a new proposition, laser focused on the immediate needs of our community. They want funds for a new elementary school, campus improvements, buses, and increases in teacher pay.

We have not built a new elementary school since 1996. Our elementary and middle schools are beyond capacity, forcing the district to house students in portables. These structures are not secure, leaving our students vulnerable. The bond would provide a new elementary school behind HEB and would expand Acton Middle School, gaining us much-needed classroom space. The bond also provides for safety enhancements and some renovation of all the elementary schools plus the 2 middle schools. This will allow GISD to better serve the students academically in a safe and comfortable environment.

Many individuals have expressed concerns about the safety and well-being of their children as they ride the buses. The beginning of the school year has been excessively hot, resulting in air conditioning and maintenance problems. This bond will provide for a new bus barn in the north part of the district and 30 new buses, thereby shortening runs, rectifying maintenance issues, and reducing travel time. The cost of this bond is a reasonable \$151.7 million.

The second proposal is for a Voter Approved Tax Rate Election (VATRE) which will provide a 10% permanent raise for all teachers and staff (custodians, bus drivers, cafeteria workers, etc.). We have lost many talent-

ed teachers and staff members to neighboring communities who offer better financial compensation. In order to attract and keep high quality teachers, we must be able to offer competitive salaries. The best part of the plan is that, if approved, the state will help fund this increase.

The bottom line for many individuals is how this will affect our taxes. The good news is that GISD demonstrates superb financial stewardship. The facilities bond (\$151.7M), is like a mortgage loan, and will not increase this year’s school taxes. When considered with VATRE the state formula permits GISD to reduce the tax rate from the current 99 cents to 93 cents per hundred. This places GISD next to the bottom of all ISDs in Northern Texas, an admirable position for our citizens and community.

I most strongly recommend voting “yes” on both Prop A, the VATRE 10% raise for teachers and staff, and Prop B, facilities to address the student growth in GISD! Let’s make these common-sense propositions happen, and God Bless Hood County!

Ron Massingill
Hood County Judge

TEXAS TAXPAYERS SHOULD NOT PROVIDE MONIES FOR PRIVATE SCHOOLS

I write this letter out of concern for the idea that taxpayers of Texas should provide monies for students to attend private schools. I am opposed to this idea for several reasons which I will outline below. I am certainly not an expert on this issue, but I do have some experienced background as all four of my grandchildren are graduates of private schools. This was possible because their mothers were faculty members at their respective schools and as such standard tuition fees were waived.

First, I think we can all agree that most students attending private schools come generally from financially affluent families. The question is whether the proposed \$8,000 an-

nual stipend will go to all students or just those whose parents would be financially challenged relative to their ability to afford private school tuition, books, extracurricular activities, etc. If it goes to all students, then the program is largely a “hand-out” to affluent folk. I hope this is not the case!

Secondly, assuming the payout is only going to students whose parents cannot afford send their child(ren) to a private school without a taxpayer funded stipend, then who might these students be? I believe it safe to assume the students will be from upper middle class working families that can afford to send their children to private schools, but the financial burden would be considerable. I also suspect that the students will need to be of above-average aptitude. If this is true, what sort of student does that leave in our public schools? And of equal importance, what “power” do the parents of the new public school student population have in terms of influencing public educational policies and associated funding? Whether we like it or not, affluent folk have greater impacts on school policies than do financially challenged parents. My concern is that the educational advocacy for public schools will further decline if we use taxpayer monies to enhance opportunities for a greater number of students to attend private schools. Concurrently, that means advocacy for using taxpayer dollars to fund public schools will decrease rather dramatically.

Finally, what funding level is going to be required by private schools to expand and upgrade private school infrastructure? Do you believe private school advocates might attempt to garner additional public funds to expand private school infrastructures? If successful in garnering such funds, I expect that will come at the expense of our public schools. God only knows what the long-term impacts of that will be. From my perspective, I believe when a government refuses to fund public schools at a reasonable and fully sustainable level, our future is rather dim as we fail to prepare

the next generation for responsible governing.

Rod Heitschmidt
Granbury

WATCH OUT FOR THOSE DRAGONS

As the whole free world knows, Donald J. Trump is a loud-mouthed bully. I normally don’t listen to anything he or his brain-dead Republican disciples say by simply changing the channels. Through news sources and social media, Trump likes to threaten people who don’t demand the kind of news coverage he does. And what can you say about social media other than it is a cesspool of questionable human behavior.

Recently, Trump threatened death to one of our national heroes, former Chairman of the Joint-Chiefs of Staff General Miley, a combat veteran who earned three purple hearts serving our country in past wars.

Trump’s mouth may yet come back to haunt the man. I remember an old saying developed from watching nighttime flights of Puff the Magic Dragon in Viet Nam in 1966. The saying went like this, “If you can’t take the heat, don’t tickle the dragon”.

Grady Smith
Granbury

GUIDELINES FOR LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Submit letters to www.hcnews.com/forms/letters. Letters must include author’s first and last name, and home address. Specific address will not be published.

Writers are limited to one letter every 30 days.

Letters should be 500 words or less. All letters are subject to editing. All submissions to the Hood County News will become the property of the Hood County News. Letters to the Editor will appear in the Saturday edition of the Hood County News.

Questions: Call 817-573-7066 or contact Publisher Sam Houston.

CALENDAR

SATURDAY, OCT. 7

TEXAS DEMOCRATIC
Women of Hood County Annual Scholarship Luncheon. Guest speaker: Gloria Campos, Retired Dallas News Anchor & Blanco County Democratic Party Chair. Silent Auction. 11:00 a.m., DeCordova Bend Estates Country Club. \$35, with proceeds benefitting local high school scholarships. Details: 254-716-5195.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN
Church of Granbury is having their fall rummage sale at 300 W. Bridge St. between 8 a.m. and 2 p.m. Don’t miss out on fabulous items at very low prices.

SUNDAY, OCT. 8

INFORMATIONAL MEETING for American Heritage Girls and Trail Life Boys at noon at Promise Point Church, Granbury. After the initial meeting American Heritage Girls and Trail Life boys will meet on the first and third Sundays of the month.

MONDAY, OCT. 9

TEXAS DEMOCRATIC
Women of Hood County monthly meeting. Program: Candidates for Granbury ISD School Board. 11:00 a.m. Spring Creek Barbeque, 317 E. Hwy 377, Granbury. Details: 254-716-5195.

THE NORTH Central Texas Civil War Roundtable will meet at 6:30 p.m. at Spring Creek Bar-B-Que, 317 E. Hwy 377. The program will be presented by one of our members, David Wells. David is a retired Marine who spent 30 years in the Corps, serving in a variety of positions, including a tour as an infantry commander in Vietnam. A graduate of the University of Texas, with graduate degrees from Georgia State University and the Naval War College, he will speak on “Marines in the Civil War.” Visitors are welcome, and there is no charge for first-time attendees. For more information, visit our website at <http://www.ncentexcwrt.com>.

LGAA GENERAL meeting at 6 p.m. at Shanley House, 224 N. Travis. Guest artist Clara Johnson who will demonstrate her silk painting technique and hold a two-day workshop. For more information, please email Sue Bagwell at LGAA-Workshops@gmail.com



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TO SUBMIT CALENDAR ITEMS

Information should be submitted at least two weeks prior to the event for consideration. The Community Calendar is a free listing in the Hood County News to inform readers of programs, special meetings and nonprofit events. The event should be open to the public and free to attend. Email the who, what, when and where. Include the meeting location and a street address for the location. The topic for the meeting, program or guest speaker must be included. Email to: calendar@hcnews.com. Calendar information runs in chronological order as space is available.



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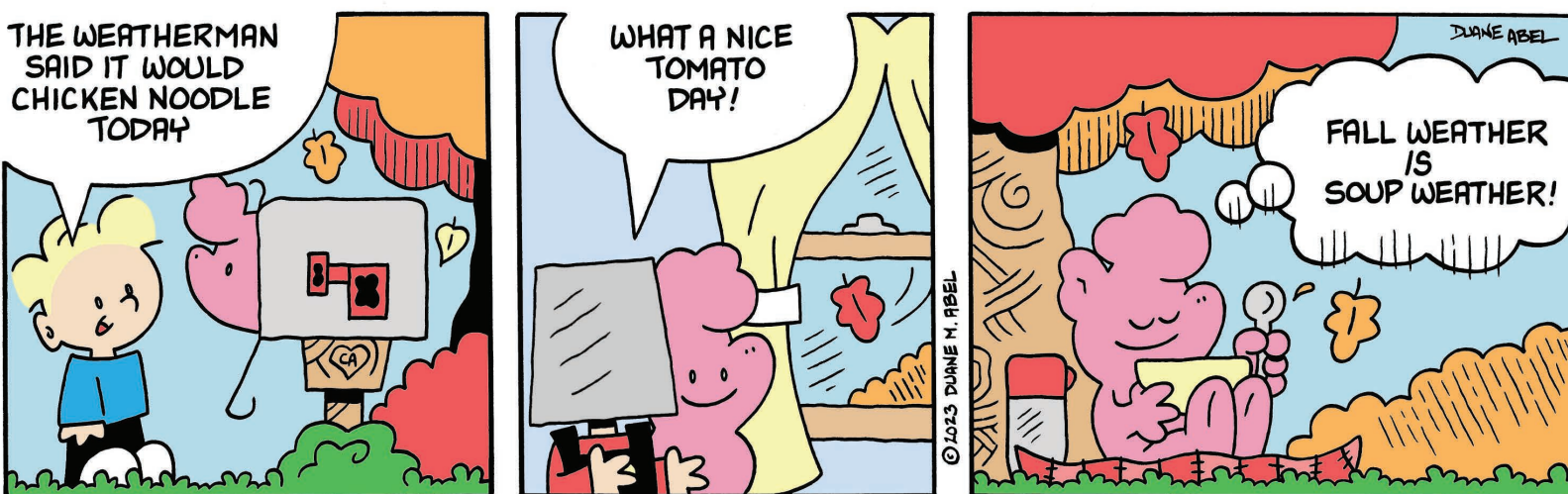
CORRECTION

Under the division of Individuals, the category of Car Salesperson, James Osborne of Mike Brown Hyundai was listed as the winner, however, we were told he had retired, and Mike Brown Hyundai is not in business, so runner up, Aaron Lemons with Van Griffith Kia, received the first-place winner certificate, and the runner up was given to Aubrey Lopez with Van Griffith Kia.

Under the division of Home Services, the category of Pest Control, there was a tie for the runner up. Wise/Chem Safe Pest Control was not listed in our section.

We apologize for the oversight.

ZED by Duane M. Abel



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Texas EMS executive director receives NCTTRAC Journey of Excellence Award

BY ASHLEY TERRY
Staff Writer

A Hood County EMS employee recently received a prestigious honor from the North Central Texas Trauma Regional Advisory Council (NCTTRAC).

Ricky Reeves, executive director for Texas EMS in Hood County, was honored with the Journey of Excellence Award in September.

According to the NCTTRAC news release, the Journey of Excellence Award is awarded to an individual, group, or organization recognized for exemplary performance and whose contribution has exhibited integrity, vision, collaboration, inspiration, leadership and a strong commitment to the mission, goals, and values of NCTTRAC.

Reeves — who has served 45 years total in both EMS and the fire service — was described by the NCTTRAC as someone who is “well-respected” and “valued” for his knowledge and expertise in “all things EMS.”

“To me, the Journey of Excellence Award says a lot (coming from) your peers,” Reeves told the HCN. “I’ve lived in EMS my entire 45 years, and I still do it. I love it. God gave me the knowledge and expertise to be able to help manage and help my community and that is giving back to the community that I love. This award comes from our North Central Texas Trauma Advisory Council, so it was a group of people from hospitals and EMS, so getting the award from your peers is just very rewarding for recognizing what you’ve worked on and achieved (is being noticed).”

Reeves’ EMS journey began when he was only 18 years old, as his servant’s heart led him to pursue a career where he could not only provide for his mother but also give back to the community of Mount Pleasant.



Executive Director of Texas EMS in Granbury Ricky Reeves, middle, was awarded the Journey of Excellence Award from the North Central Texas Trauma Regional Advisory Council (NCTTRAC) in September.

“I grew up in a very, very poor family,” he explained. “My mom and dad split when I was very young, so I was raised by my mother, who couldn’t work. I had a lot of the community help us, like churches, organizations, and mentors of mine who helped mold me. When I turned 18, I went to the local hospital and started inquiring about how you get into the medical field. They had an EMT class, so I got enrolled and then from that point, I went to medical school in Texarkana.”

Reeves said once he got his paramedic’s license, he returned to his hometown to “give back to the community” that had supported him and his family over the years.

In 1978, he started working as an EMT for the Mount Pleasant hospital district, while also serving on the Mount Pleasant Volunteer Fire Department, where he eventually moved up the rank to become a captain.

In 1992, the Texas Board of Health divided the state into 22 regions, called “trauma service areas,” and a regional advisory council (RAC) was formed in each region to develop and implement the trauma system for that region, according to texasjr.org.

Reeves then served on the F region committee for Mount Pleasant, where he eventually became chair elect and then chair — remaining as chair until 2000.

In 2000, he went to work for the Lewisville Fire Department as the EMS chief, where he became involved with that region’s RAC as the finance chair and then later the chair elect, and chair.

“I was on one of the original forming committees that created the Emergency Task Force that we have today,” he explained. “We respond to the hurricanes and the fires, and then I was on all kinds of committees with the state.” Reeves was a member of

the Texas EMS Alliance Board of Directors, as well as the Governor’s EMS & Trauma Advisory Council (GETAC) EMS Committee.

In 2015, however, an unpredictable finding from doctors changed Reeves’ life forever, when it was discovered that he had a tumor on his brainstem, leading him to have immediate brain surgery.

“It wasn’t supposed to be a very good outcome, but I actually had a blessed, successful surgery — two of them actually in one week — and they removed the tumor,” he explained. “With all that, in 2016 I was awarded the Department of State Health Services EMS Administrator of the Year Award which is one award given out in the state for that role, so I’ve received it and numerous other accolades over the years.”

He was also recently awarded the President’s Award for his commitment to EMS in Texas from the

Texas EMS Alliance (TEMSEA), a Texas EMS trade organization representing all EMS providers across Texas.

In 2018, Reeves retired from the Lewisville Fire Department as EMS division chief and moved to Granbury, where he began his role as executive director.

“I knew where Granbury was, but I never dreamed I would come to this,” he said. “I had never been down here. I had never seen it until I came and did my interview, but I just kind of fell in love with the place.”

Reeves has now been the executive director of Texas EMS in Granbury for five years — but there’s one component of the job that he wishes more residents understood.

“Texas EMS is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit,” he explained. “We do not receive subsidies from the county, city, or hospital. We are only run through our reimbursements from our transports and any donations. We are unique in that we’ve been here 22 years, and it’s one of the very few agencies in the state of Texas that has that business model.”

Texas EMS was formerly called Granbury and Hood County EMS before it was rebranded to its current name in 2006. However, Reeves explained how the name led to some misunderstandings that the city or the county owned the emergency medical service organization, which is not the case.

“It’s not financially supported by anybody, but now people think that because we say Texas EMS, they think it’s owned by the state of Texas now,” he explained. “People see that thinking we’re a big organization owned by somebody else and we’re not. We’re homegrown, we’re home owned, and we have a board of directors that manage the organization.”

Reeves compared Texas EMS to other nonprofit organizations like Ruth’s Place

and United Way of Hood County.

“We rely on donations and reimbursements to keep us flowing and it’s beginning to get harder and harder with the changes in the healthcare industry, but people need to know that the 911 ambulance service they rely on is nonprofit,” he said.

Due to the growth in Hood County, Reeves said it’s becoming harder for Texas EMS to bring in enough revenue to support the organization.

“We’re out and we ask for donations,” he said. “We have a membership that people can pay to help cover and offset the cost of an EMS ambulance ride.”

Not only does Reeves have 45 years of experience in the EMS and fire service, but he has also served over 30 years working with Regional Advisory Councils, specifically NCTTRAC, and over 15 years serving at the state level, working in support of EMS and hospitals with GETAC and other associated organizations.

“It is a long journey, 45 years,” he added. “Most medics are in the business about five years, so to be able to be where I’m at today, it’s a blessing, and it’s something that I love to do.”

Reeves said he will continue to serve in some capacity with Texas EMS for the foreseeable future until he decides he’s ready to retire.

“We have a bunch of professional men and women dedicated to making sure that everyone they come in contact with is treated like their family and gives them the best care,” he added. “That’s what I push and that’s what I believe in.”

Reeves is a resident of Granbury, where he lives with his fiancé Kathy, and stepson Kealon.

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We are very thankful for our amazing ambassador, Carrie Spivey! Carrie has served as a Chamber Ambassador for one year! When asked what she loves about being an ambassador, she said, "Being connected to my city, businesses that make this town awesome, & the opportunity to share about how incredible our town is." Fun Fact about Carrie: "I was an extra in the movie 'Born on the Fourth of July!'" Thank you, Carrie, for being an ambassador of the Granbury Chamber of Commerce!

Granbury's Volunteer Fire Department Chief works to serve the community and create a positive environment

BY EMILY NAVA
Staff Writer

Granbury Volunteer Fire Department is operated by 68 volunteers to keep the community safe every single day with three stations in Granbury.

These volunteers are certified through the State Firefighters Fire Marshal Association. Training is done through the Hood County Fire Academy in a 10-week program where a portion is done through an online class and then through hands-on work in the field.

"They cover every single part of the state curriculum. They cover tarps, ladders, to fire suppression to filling air bottles and everything in between. It's a full program. There's a ton of information we give them," Chief Matt Hohon said. "If they showed up for everything and passed all the online classes, they're eligible for their State Firefighters and Fire Marshals skills testing and written testing. Our program can be in lieu of a career academy."

The department has a wide range of ages between the volunteers with some being straight out of high school, to some retirees. This wide range gives ample opportunities for the different generations to learn from one another.

Many wonder why the department is only run by volunteers and not full-time firefighters.

"One of the hardest things to explain to the public, is a volunteer's mentality. Your volunteers are committed to this," Hohon added. "I am fully open to the challenge of explaining and defending the department in the ultimate justification."

According to Hohon many factors play into this including fiscal reasons, physical performance, and crew numbers.

Hohon said one of the biggest differences between working for a volunteer department versus a career department is being able to see the true impact of giving back to the community that same day.

"You definitely know the impact you have. I would argue that's probably the most valuable



COURTESY PHOTO BY MATT HOHON

The Granbury Volunteer Fire Department responds to a large fire.

thing I've learned from it. A volunteer fire department's impact on a community can be truly gigantic not only from the service point of view but from the fiscal," Hohon added.

As a volunteer firefighter, there are no set schedules, and the members are able to come and go as they please. A day in the life can include basic chores of the station including cleanup and making the station look presentable. Members also are expected to continually study the trucks and familiarize themselves with the equipment.

Hohon noted the average time it took a crew to get out of the station and onto a call in 2022 was two minutes, 29 seconds.

"The national standard for a career department is 90 seconds. The national standard for volunteers is 10 minutes just to get out. So, we're far exceeding the national standard," Hohon said. "Part of the reason our response times are so low is because we have a culture of people hanging out at the station."

From the beginning of this year to August the station received 1,053 calls with the medical-relat-

ed calls being the highest at 228 and the hour with the most calls being around 3 p.m.

Hohon added that on average at any given time there are typically two to six members at the station during the day and one to three members during the night.

The department has multiple squad vehicles, rescue vehicles, brush trucks, tankers, a light and air truck, engine trucks, an attack truck, ladder trucks and boat operators.

Hohon added the department is well-funded and well taken care of by the city and the county.

"You have to start looking at other cities that have career departments that are kind of like us and then you say, 'does this city have Granbury Live, does this city have an arts program, does this city have a thriving square?' You start going through it and you think how on earth does Granbury have all that? How are they even having the opportunity to consider a discussion about an arts center and wine walks? The fact of the matter is, it's that volunteer fire department allows that because we don't represent this huge fiscal chunk of the bud-

get," Hohon said.

Hohon noted it is important for the department to remain transparent with the city, and how they are operating — even when they are struggling.

Hohon added that many fire departments around the country are having a hard time getting more employees, but his department has done well with marketing and recruiting volunteers.

"I think we're on the right path because our membership numbers are up and I'm going to keep pushing it up," Hohon said.

When it comes to the future, Hohon noted his goal is to "always maintain a quality level of service to the citizens. It's all for naught if we can't provide a quality level of service."

Hohon has created everlasting memories while serving as chief. "The memories I have at the station are by far the best memories I have and there are hundreds and hundreds of them. By far the most rewarding part as Chief is knowing I'm saving the citizens a ton of tax money. The ability to set a goal and a direction for the

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County approves sewage maintenance classes for single-family homeowners

BY ASHLEY TERRY
Staff Writer

Single-family homeowners can now maintain their own septic systems upon completion of one of three qualifying classes, following a 3-1 vote from the Hood County Commissioners Court on Sept. 26.

For some, this new development has stoked fears of possible contamination of Lake Granbury and the state no longer allowing it to be a recreational lake, according to a previous article in the Hood County News.

Several questions and concerns about allowing homeowners this freedom as opposed to contracting with a knowledgeable service provider led to a few disagreements in the 30-minute discussion.

Four classes were placed on the agenda, but one was later removed by the recommendation of Hood County Environmental Health Director Jeannie Stacks, who claimed the Environmental Training Systems course was an advanced continuing education class and was not tailored for homeowners.

The three classes available for single-family homeowners who wish to maintain their own septic systems are: Texas A&M AgriLife Extension (offered as an online course), Texas Engineering Extension Service (TEEX) located in College Station, and Texas On-Site Wastewater Association (TOWA) located in Bridge City.

Precinct 2 Commissioner Nannette Samuelson said that approving these classes was a requirement based on the order that was approved by the Texas Commission of Environmental Quality (TCEQ) a few weeks prior.

Hood County Judge Ron Massingill then asked if anyone from the Brazos River Authority (BRA) would like to come up and speak on the topic.

Mike McClendon, regional manager for the BRA, explained that the BRA is an authorized agent that precludes homeowners from entering into maintenance agreements and taking care of their own systems unless they meet two qualifications: they must be a certified maintenance provider, and they must hold a class E wastewater license before being certified by the manu-



COURTESY PHOTO

Upon completion of one of three qualifying classes, single-family homeowners can now maintain their own septic systems.

facturer of the aerobic system.

"Any measures that the Commissioners Court would take that would enhance the water quality of Lake Granbury BRA will be supported," he stated.

Massingill then asked McClendon if a Hood County resident lives in "close proximity" to Lake Granbury, and if they take one of these classes, would it "adequately protect" Lake Granbury?

"It all depends on the individual," McClendon said. "But some of the organizations that you have up here are renowned for wastewater treatment, so it depends on the individual and how much they put into it in their system. There (are) some people that can operate it and that should be allowed to, but there's some that probably shouldn't."

Stacks followed by saying that residents who do live near the lake are required by the BRA to have chlorinators on their systems that would shut the entire system down if levels became too high and would remain off until the chlorination is back within the recommended levels.

"The Brazos River Authority's rules are 75 feet from lakes and streams, TCEQ's rules are 50 feet," she stated. "In that instance, the Brazos River Authority's rules are actually more stringent."

Massingill then asked for clarification from Stacks that homeowners who maintain their own septic systems must have a contract with a licensed maintenance provider.

Stacks said that was correct, until the new order took place. She explained that now homeowners who maintain their own septic systems have to have a contract with a licensed maintenance provider for the first two years.

She added that all other aerobic treatment systems, including commercial, multi-family systems, and speculative rental properties are required to have contracts with licensed maintenance providers per state law.

"If you have a duplex, you can't live in both sides of that duplex — you can only live in one side," she explained. "So, you will be required by law to have a contract. Even though you are a licensed homeowner living in one side of that duplex, you're renting the other side out."

Massingill then asked Stacks if the Hood County Environmental Health Department would be tasked with inspecting each On-Site Sewage Facility (OSSF) system to ensure that every homeowner is complying with the order.

"We have the right to enter any property that has a system every single time and inspect, so if the court requires that we inspect those systems once a year, we can do that," she explained. "Other than that, we should be going off of what the reports say. If they turn in a fault, we can go check and see what that fault is. If we receive a report from a maintenance provider that says the area goes out, we go out and initiate a com-

plaint and see if the aerator is still out, or if it hasn't been repaired."

Samuelson said that Stacks is also in the process of posting the form on the Hood County Environmental Health Department's website for residents who wish to take the class.

"(They'll) complete the form, take the class, provide evidence of the class, and sign an authorization that they are taking the responsibility for maintaining their system and that they understand what that means, as far as the frequency of testing and turning in the report, and they will file that with the Environmental Health Office," Samuelson said.

Precinct 4 Commissioner Dave Eagle recited Texas Health and Safety Code 366.0515 (g), which states, "The owner of a single-family residence shall maintain the system directly or through a maintenance contract."

"Even the state statute gives the homeowner of a single-family residence an option," he said. "But it goes further than that."

"If you've got a population of at least 40,000, if there's a violation that occurs for a homeowner that's maintaining his own system, he's written up and has 10 days to fix it. If he fixes it, fine, everybody goes down the row. But that starts a three-year clock ticking that within three years, if he gets another violation, he must go contract with a provider. He gets a warning for the first time, he fixes it,

it's fine. But if he gets another one, he has to go get a provider, and if he doesn't fix it, he has to go get a provider. So, that's the state rule right there."

Eagle continued by saying he knows there's concern about being in close proximity to a lake but said that his argument has always been for stronger regulations.

"Does it really fix anything? Maybe it does, maybe it doesn't," he said. "I think that we've got something here that matters. I would hope that's reasonable, but that's between what we have and what the state allows. I assume that people are going to do the right thing, and the government tends to assume they're going to do the wrong thing, and I just don't agree with that."

Massingill then asked Precinct 1 Commissioner Kevin Andrews if he received an email from Hood County resident Todd Garner.

"Basically, the question is, how will it benefit the quality of Lake Granbury?" Andrews said, before summarizing Garner's questions. "How many areas in the state of Texas allow homeowner maintenance? How many BRA watersheds allow homeowner maintenance? Has a recommendation come from the Brazos River Authority concerning the change in the policy and the effect that would have on Lake Granbury? Actually, I think for the two questions, the vast majority of the state allows homeowner inspections."

Following more discussion, Massingill stated that he is opposed to "any homeowner that's close to the lake maintaining their own aerobic septic system, period."

"I think that Lake Granbury is so important to Hood County and the city of Granbury," he said. "I'm totally against this, and we'll see. It may be too late to do anything about it if people do not inspect their system and do what they're supposed to do."

Samuelson then reminded the public that requirements for testing or reporting on the status of each homeowner's sewage system have not changed.

"Jeannie still has all her authority to cite individuals, homeowners, septic providers, and maintenance provid-

ers if they're not doing the job," she said. "Nothing along those lines have changed."

Massingill then asked about the current test results for Lake Granbury, as he was concerned about potential contamination.

"It is my understanding that there are three testing pods on Lake Granbury at this point," Stacks said. "One is at the 51 bridge, one is at the 377 bridge and other one is at the dam. Those are the only places that are currently being tested."

When asked if any of the three were showing problems, Stacks said the Highway 51 bridge "has been increasing" over the last few years, but she didn't have her current numbers in front of her.

Samuelson then talked about a professor from Texas A&M University, Anish Jantrania, who came to speak at a previous Hood County Commissioners Court meeting.

"He came up and talked to us a few months back when we weren't finished with the process," she said. "His comments were what he's seen across the state is that when homeowners are trained to do their own maintenance, the status actually improves so coming from someone who that's their life and their profession, that was a really good thing to hear."

Andrews chimed in next by saying an "educated homeowner is the best weapon" against a contamination problem.

"The vast majority of people I know don't want to live in their own sewage," he said. "They're willing to take care of this. There needs to be enforcement for those that don't, but let people do the right thing. I clean my house; I expect other people to do it, too."

"Only time will tell," Massingill said. "It may be too late."

Samuelson then made the motion to approve the qualifying classes excluding the Environmental Training Systems.

With Precinct 3 Commissioner Jack Wilson absent, the motion passed with a 3-1 vote, with Massingill voting "No."

ashley@hcnews.com / 817-573-1243

GVFD

FROM PAGE A6

organization and being able to have the membership em-

brace it."

Fire prevention week takes place from Oct. 8-14. The department is working with both public and private schools in

the area throughout the week to educate students on fire safety.

Hohon noted the best fire prevention tip is to make your

home has working smoke detectors and to change out the batteries every year. For traffic safety, Hohon encourages everyone to stay off the phone

while driving, as it is not only against the law but can also cause deadly accidents.

The department is always in need of volunteers; the pro-

cess requires a background check and an interview.

For those interested in learning more about becoming a volunteer, visit gvfd.org.

GLENN

FROM PAGE A1

we do. More importantly, our Board of Trustees looks around at other districts in our area, like Crowley, Burleson, Cleburne, and Weatherford. Those districts

are paying substantially more than we are paying and we have lost good, experienced teachers to those districts. It is not just in the difference in annual salary but how it affects a teacher's retirement. Teachers do not receive social security and their retirement

is based on their five highest-earning years. So, the top five years are extremely important because they determine the amount a teacher receives for the life of their retirement. When a teacher with experience starts to look at their retirement future, they

quickly understand they need to maximize their salary and thus they are inclined to move job locations for a higher paying job. We have lost quality staff to these other districts which pay substantially more, because we are not competitive. I do not think it is our goal to say Granbury pays more than anyone else, but we do need to be competitive to keep quality staff in place.

Publisher: How many teachers are in the district?

Glenn: Approximately 600

Publisher: Isn't it true a significant number of teachers left last year, and many of those losses were due to compensation issues?

Glenn: The last two years we have seen a heavy loss of staff. Teaching is a hard profession with increasing state mandates. There are a lot of ways we want to improve our culture, but it always starts with fairly compensating the staff. It is an issue that must be dealt with.

Publisher: How does the taxpayer benefit from the district receiving better facilities and retaining their best teachers?

Glenn: Parents want good schools for their kids. As a community, we want to be proud of our schools and the students they produce. We are a growing community and sometimes that can create frustration as we manage the growth. I think if you look at communities in west Texas which have seen businesses

dry up and disappear and then the schools suffer, you can see the overall loss in the community. It slowly dies.

We feel like the school is the center of the community. Good schools mean our kids have a place where they are safe, where they grow and prosper, and they have the keys to the American dream of a brighter future.

The economic reality is that good schools are a driving force in increased value for homes. Good schools also bring business to town because businesses want their employee's children to receive the benefit of quality schools. All of this improves the local business community and thus the local economy.

Publisher: I think many people wonder how we can have teacher pay increases and add more staff, and not have a tax increase. Is the school district misleading the voters?

Glenn: Absolutely not and let me be clear. Because of the action of the legislature the school tax rate will be less next year. The school board believes that not taking the maximum tax compression permitted and utilizing only a portion of it will still reduce the tax burden on our residents, but generate funds to fulfill GUSD's needs. Voters will see a year-over-year reduction. This is what the VATRE is all about... giving the school the authority to not take the maximum compres-

sion of the tax rate and using a portion of the compression to fund raises for teachers and additional staff.

Publisher: Can you summarize what both Proposition A and Proposition B are, and their impact on the tax rate?

Glenn: Proposition A is the VATRE. Approval of this proposition will generate more local and state revenue for GUSD. We will use this revenue to fund staff raises and reduce student/teacher ratios in classes and enhance security. If approved, Granbury will not decrease to the maximum school tax rate under SB2, but instead will only decrease approximately 6 cents. If approved, our overall school tax rate would be just over 93 cents. Last year the overall school tax rate was just over 99 cents.

Proposition B is a bond for school facilities. If approved by the voters, Granbury ISD will use the \$151.7 million to construct a new elementary school, and provide life cycle replacements and renovations to all other district elementary schools and both middle schools. Additionally, the bond would support a new bus hub and 30 additional school buses. The district's current I&S tax rate of 14.5 cents will remain the same if the bond is approved; however much like a home mortgage, the district will be taking out a 30-year note to pay off these bonds.

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Bringing joy to every plate

The Pan Handle celebrates 30-year anniversary, grand reopening.

BY ASHLEY TERRY
Staff Writer

For the past three decades, there has always been one gourmet tool shop that has never failed to bring magic and flavor to home-cooked meals in Hood County.

But now after 30 years, The Pan Handle has changed ownership once again, with new residents and husband-and-wife-duo Jose and Bronwyn Jimenez excited to take the reins of a store that has always served up precise culinary know-how.

The Pan Handle held its 30-year celebration and official grand reopening ribbon cutting ceremony on Sept. 29, with many community members and Granbury Chamber of Commerce staff members also present to join in the festivities.

“As a family, we thank you for welcoming us into this community,” Jose said. “We’ve been here for about a year now by way of Virginia, but it’s been a great place and a great community and outreach. All of the events here make it feel like our new home, and this is what we bring — little changes here.”

Bronwyn explained to the public that it’s “just so bittersweet when you know God gives you an edge,” mentioning how she has a 20-year background in the food service industry.

“Our number one mission here besides (keeping) kids at the table is bringing community back into your home in U.S.-made products, so

we’re about 30% there,” she said. “I just love the imports and meeting so many incredible craftsmen in this country, so you will see a lot more to come from Ohio, Chattanooga, and right here in Texas, like Spicewood and Granbury. We have a lot of great products coming in, so we hope you make us your first stop.”

HISTORY

The Pan Handle opened for business back in 1993, with then-owner, Heather Cleveland, believing the business was “more than just making a buck,” according to a 2003 article from The Hood County News.

In 2016, the business was later bought by founder of the Olde Homestead Company, Sara Monroe (who at the time was known as Sara Miskovic).

For the past seven years, Monroe has been taking care of The Pan Handle — but it wasn’t until Bronwyn walked into the store that a big change started to take place.

“I happened to come in shopping with my sons, and I went, ‘I just love this store so much,’ and we just kind of went, ‘We would really love to contribute to this, maybe they want a business partner,’” Bronwyn said. “I



PHOTOS BY ASHLEY TERRY | HOOD COUNTY NEWS

The Pan Handle, located at 106 N. Crockett St., celebrated its 30th anniversary and grand reopening celebration on Friday, Sept. 29.

left two notes and an email for Sara, and then she called me, and we got to talking. Eventually, by May 18, we were signing papers.”

“We had been looking for an opportunity, not only to be a bigger part of the community, with school and our family, but just this square has so much life that we decided when that opportunity came in to take a leap of faith,” Jose said. “We want to be here for the long run, and that really spoke to us that this has been here for so long and (has) been a big staple of the community, but that we could also continue that for our kids to show them community, hard work, and what it takes to be a success in this country.”

FINDING THEIR HOME

The Jimenez family moved to Granbury in August from a small town in Virginia called Clifton, which was the first town in the state to receive electricity, according to Jose.

“Abraham Lincoln rode the railroad through there during the Civil War,” he said. “There wasn’t a lot



The Pan Handle is Hood County’s own gourmet tool shop specializing in love with a side of coffee, home goods, and kitchenware.

there, there were no stoplights, and it was a small enclave of Washington D.C. without being anywhere near it. This community just reminded us a lot of what that brought.”

Bronwyn explained how they had been wanting to move to Texas for years, but finally decided to make the jump when they found Granbury.

“It reminded me of my childhood, a little town in northern California,” she said. “We just fell in love so quickly.”

SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE

When asked how to describe The Pan Handle for residents or tourists who haven’t yet explored the store, Bronwyn simply explained it as being the “store where you will find something you never knew you needed.”

“It could be a bag of Amish popcorn from Indiana. It could be a colander made in Massachusetts. It could be gardening supplies,” she said.

“It could be one of the

64 flavors of coffee that we have where you could grind your own beans and get your morning fix right here,” Jose chimed in.

Men have also started to frequent the store, Bronwyn said, with many showing interest in wing sauces, spices, and cutting boards.

“We’re going to do a hatch chili class, because a woman lives here now that’s from Hatch, New Mexico,” she explained. “She came in, saw one of my dips, the hatch chili bacon dip, and she’s like ‘Oh my goodness, I’m from there.’”

Live cooking demonstrations will also be held at the store as well as Homework Happy Hour, set from 4 to 5:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday.

“One of our biggest areas will be trying to not only outsource to local entrepreneurs that are here in the community, but also just U.S.-made products,” Jose said. “Just giving back to others that have worked so hard to make handcrafted items from somebody that puts their whole passion

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From the ground up

Granbury businesswoman celebrates owning and operating her salon for 40 years

BY EMILY NAVA
Staff Writer

Mary Pike is the owner of Blushes Salon and Spa in Granbury, where the salon just celebrated its 40th anniversary on Sept. 28.

Pike did not plan on owning a salon, but after a few successful businesses and a love for nails, Blushes Salon and Spa came into creation.

Originally from New Orleans, Pike never expected to be living in the small town of Granbury. After visiting once, she fell in love with the town and decided to make the move in 1980.

Pike did not start in the salon business first though, instead, she expanded a pet shop in town, adding 4,000 square feet for horses after realizing there was a need for horse care in the town. She added horse equipment and provided boarding. This was Pike's first time ever owning a business, and she had a lot of success with it, but later sold the shop to someone and kept the building.

The person Pike sold the building to left after about two months in the middle of the night and took everything inside the building.

A year later, she created a laundromat and attached a car wash to go along with it. Pike then started running nail services after adding on the building after she realized her love for nails and talent. She got her nail technician license in 1982 and was running three businesses under her belt with

Blushes opening in 1983.

"Nowhere else could you get that type of service," Pike said.

These three businesses caught the attention of WFAA Channel 8, where Pike was featured on Good Morning Texas and featured on the Ellen DeGeneres show.

The nail clients kept flooding in, and Pike had a customer once tell her they wished they could get their hair done along with their nails. Suggestions kept being made to Pike, thus the reason massages became a service, as well as facials and permanent makeup.

After the need for more space, Blushes moved to its current location out in Acton in 2001 that covers two acres and has been there ever since.

The salon serves as a hidden oasis with close to 20 rooms total in a 100-year-old house, as well as both private rooms and cabins that you get to through an outdoor walkway for hairstylists to work out of. The salon also provides manicures and pedicures, massage services, facials, and permanent makeup.

"We have just about everything you can get done. You've never seen anything like it," Pike said. "You won't find anything else like this in the country."

Pike has some stylists who have worked with her from 20 to 34 years, and she noted that the salon is a family. Pike also added that she has customers that visit the sa-



Mary Pike is the owner of Blushes Salon and Spa located in Granbury.

PHOTOS BY EMILY NAVA | HOOD COUNTY NEWS

lon that have been with Pike since she first started the salon in 1983.

The salon recently underwent some indoor renovations about four weeks ago all completed by the employees after they pitched in, while Pike has been at home after recently undergoing back surgery.

"Everything is different. I was blown away. I've pretty much done everything myself and with my husband. I've never had people just step up to offer so much help to remodel the place. It's beautiful and it's got all of the (employees') touches now instead of just what I put in there," Pike said.

Pike noted that the most rewarding part of her job is helping people.

"I really like helping people, and we help so many people," Pike said. "All of my businesses have been something that is needed to help people."

The salon recently had a ribbon cutting on Sept. 28 to celebrate its 40th



M.A.M.A Sweets Cookies brought in some sweet treats for the 40th anniversary celebration of the salon.

of the ambassador team, and so we're so proud to be here and partner with her," Randy Emerson, Vice Chairman of Ambassador of the Chamber of Commerce said.

The manager of the salon, Laura Petty, on behalf of the salon, presented Pike with an award to celebrate the anniversary.

"I want to congratulate our staff. We have a wonderful group of girls and guys here, and we wouldn't be here today with(out) you all. I appreciate everything you do," Petty said.

The celebration was a big success and gave everyone in the community a chance to talk with one another while celebrating a great Granbury achievement by Pike.

For more information on Blushes Salon and Spa, visit their website at blushessalon.com, or call 817-326-0197. The salon is located at 5464 Acton Hwy in Granbury and is open Monday through Saturday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

anniversary.

"This was the biggest ribbon cutting I've ever seen," Pike said.

Many from the community were in attendance, including Granbury Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors Diane Hedges and JC Stone. Granbury City Manager Chris Coffman and Granbury city councilman

Eddie Rodriguez were also in attendance. The Chamber of Commerce staff, including President Brian Bondy, Holly Martin, Tisa Nacapuy, and Maegan Derryberry were also in attendance.

"For us, this is extra special as ambassadors and those that have been with the Chamber (of Commerce), because (Mary) is a huge part

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Why didn't my house sell?



BY PAM KNIEPER

Pam Knieper, Broker/Owner of Knieper Real Estate, is and has been the #1 Top Producer for more than 15 years in Hood County and running. She is known as the Waterfront Expert and the Authority on Real Estate.

If your listing expired and your house didn't sell you are probably feeling frustrated. For most sellers the first and most natural assumption is that it was the REALTOR'S® fault. In some instances that may be true, as in any other profession there are good ones and bad ones. However, it is important to remember that selling your home is a Team Sport. It takes the Owner and Agent working together

to accomplish a successful sale, so here are three questions to ask yourself as you consider what to do next. Did you limit access to your house? One of the biggest mistakes you can make when selling your home is to restrict when it can be shown. Being flexible with your schedule is important when you're selling your house. It can be stressful, even annoying, to drop everything and leave

the house at a moment's notice, but minimal access means minimal exposure, and when selling the primary objective is MAXIMUM EXPOSURE. Sometimes, the most determined buyers might come from far away. Since they're traveling to see your house, they may not be able to change their plans easily if you only offer limited times for showings. So, try to make your house available as much as you can to accommodate them. It's simple. If no one's able to look at it, how's it going to sell? Did you make your house stand out? When selling

your house, the old saying matters: you never get a second chance to make a first impression. Putting in the work to make the exterior of your home look nice is just as important as how you stage it inside. Picture your home on a shelf in a store lined up alongside other homes similar in age, size, quality, and price. Will you blend in or stand out? Which one will the consumer reach for first? Pretty packaging has always been a sound marketing practice, so consider your curb appeal to be your pretty package. Freshen up the landscaping, paint the front door, sweep away the

cobwebs and do all you can to make sure yours is the one they want to see first. Were you overpriced? Setting the right price is extremely important when you're selling your home. While it is tempting to push the price, overpricing can scare away buyers. Once again comparing your home to the competition is critical. If your house is priced substantially higher than others just like it, why would the buyers even bother to look at yours until they have seen all the more reasonably priced homes that meet their criteria? Odds are they will find what they

ever get through your front door, and the longer you are on the market the harder it will be to generate interest and excitement about your property. If you have questions about why your home didn't sell, please give us a call. We would love to help. Give us a call at 817-219-0456 or visit us online at www.WeSellGranbury.com. Portions of this article were sourced, with permission, from www.KeepingCurrentMatters.com. pamk@knieperteam.com | 817-219-0456

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BY TRISH BURWELL

Trish has been an involved resident of Granbury for nearly 20 years and currently serves as a Board Member for the Hood County Senior Center (HCSC). She spent 15 years as a healthcare liaison, and in 2010 initiated healthcare networking group, Resources and Education for Caregivers of Aging People (RECAP) with the purpose of creating a better quality of life for our senior population.

It is no secret that I have a heart for the elderly. I have spent the better part of my adult career in Granbury ensuring our senior population has the resources and care they need for the best quality of life possible. Therefore, it should come as no surprise that I have been extremely proud over the past 13 years to

be involved with the Hood County Senior Center (HCSC) on various levels, most recently as a board member. The HCSC has been a hub of activity for our local seniors since 1999 at its current location on Moore Street. Previously, the Shanely House Program served our seniors beginning in 1977. There has

been an unwavering focus on serving the local senior community for nearly 50 years, and much growth has happened during that time. **MEAL DELIVERY FIVE DAYS A WEEK** Short term or long term, qualified clients who are in need can have a nutritious meal delivered by the center five days a week. Currently the HCSC delivers 280 meals per day. Local volunteers ensure those meals are delivered rain or shine. In addition, these volunteers are sometimes the only contact a client may have during the day,

which has proven over the years to be a lifeline in the event of a health crisis, or if a client needs other immediate attention. The center understands and maintains relationships with the community resources that meet those needs. **AN AMAZINGLY ACTIVE BUNCH** While delivering meals to clients is a major operation, it isn't the only service offered. Did you know there are weekly dances at the center featuring live music? The house is always packed! Also, are you aware that the center provides daily

in-house meals and other activities? Stay cool, listen to music, take a class, or just enjoy good fellowship. And let's talk field trips and transportation! There are regular opportunities for day trips to ballgames, shopping excursions, and other venues. If you need transportation to a doctor, bank or other appointments, the center provides that, too! **PROUD TO SERVE LOCAL SENIORS** If you are in your golden years, and looking for an active lifestyle, the Local Hood County Senior Center

is definitely the place to be, proudly offering a variety of activities and other services to help local seniors enjoy a great quality of life. Please feel free to join us any time! The Hood County Senior Center has been committed to providing services tailored to the unique needs of Hood County Senior Citizens for nearly 50 years. If you would like more information on client services for yourself or a family member, please contact the Center at (817) 573-5533, or donate directly online to the LOCAL Hood County Meals on Wheels Program at | Meals on Wheels Hood County (mowhctx.org).

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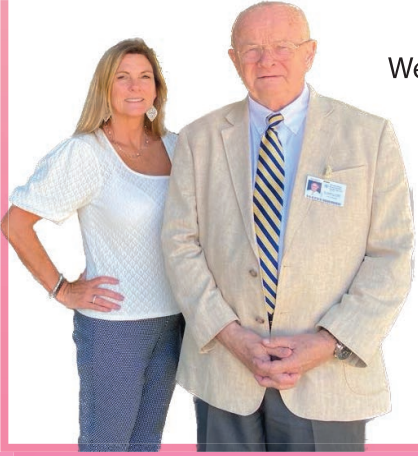
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NATIONAL BULLYING PREVENTION MONTH

COURTESY PHOTO

October is National Bullying Prevention Month.

Hood County schools work to keep students safe

BY EMILY NAVA
Staff Writer

National Bullying Prevention Month takes place during October and started as a campaign in 2006 founded by Parents Advocacy Coalition for Educational Rights (PACER) and the National Bullying Prevention Center.

The campaign initially occurred during the first week of October, but expanded to the entire month in 2010.

PACER developed the initial campaign, National Bullying Prevention and Awareness Week, to raise awareness about bullying.

"National Bullying Prevention Month is a wonderful opportunity to prevent bullying by encouraging everyone to act with kindness, acceptance and inclusion. Now more than ever, it is crucial to join together in creating communities that are kinder, more accepting and more inclusive," Julie Hertzog, Director of PACER's National Bullying Center said.

The National Center for Education Statistics found that bullying is seen most in seventh grade; sixth and eighth grades fall just below seventh.

According to the Texas

Association of School boards, the Texas Legislature adopted new requirements regarding bullying in public schools in 2021. Senate Bill (SB) 2050 built on an existing law requiring each district to have a policy that prohibits bullying, including cyberbullying.

Granbury ISD, Lipan ISD, and Tolar ISD student handbook section regarding bullying reads as follows: "The district strives to prevent bullying, in accordance with the district's policies, by promoting a positive school culture; building healthy relationships between students and staff; encouraging reporting of bullying incidents, including anonymous reporting; and investigating and addressing reported bullying incidents. Bullying is defined in state law as a single significant act or a pattern of acts by one or more students directed at

another student that exploits an imbalance of power and involves engaging in written or verbal expression, expression through electronic means, or physical conduct that:

- Has the effect or will have the effect of physically harming a student, damaging a student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of harm to the student's person or of damage to the student's property;
- Is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive enough that the action or threat creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for a student;
- Materially and substantially disrupts the educational process or the orderly operation of a classroom or school; or
- Infringes on the rights of the victim at school. Bullying includes cyberbullying. Cyberbullying is defined in state law as bullying that is done using any electronic communication device, including through the use of a cellular or other type of telephone, computer, camera, electronic mail, instant messaging, text messaging, a social media application, an internet website, and any other internet-based communication tool.

Bullying is prohibited by the district and could include hazing, threats, taunting, teasing, confinement, assault, demands for money, destruction of property, theft of valued possessions, name-calling, rumor-spreading or ostracism. The district will use an age-appropriate survey regarding school culture that includes relevant questions on bullying to identify and address student concerns. Each campus has a committee that addresses bullying by focusing on prevention efforts and health and wellness initiatives. The committee will include parents and secondary students. For more information on this committee, including interest in serving on the committee, contact the campus principal. If a student believes he or she has experienced bullying or witnessed the bullying of another student, the student or parent should notify a teacher, school counselor, principal, or another district employee as soon as possible. Any district employee aware of a report of a bullying incident will relay the report to an appropriate administrator."

GRANBURY ISD

According to the GISD website, "Granbury ISD

prohibits bullying and harassment. A safe and civil environment is needed for students to learn and attain high academic standards and to promote healthy human relationships. The district believes bullying, harassment based on a protected class (such as sexual harassment), discrimination, intimidation, violence, and other similar disruptive behavior are detrimental to the establishment of a safe and civil learning environment."

A student at Granbury Middle School was allegedly attacked inside a classroom and was hit twice in the eye as well as having hand sanitizer put in his eye on Sept. 13 according to the student's mother Erin Davis.

This led to Davis to open an investigation with the Granbury Police Department on Sept. 16; she filed a grievance packet with the district on Sept. 26 after she claimed GMS did not follow the district's code of conduct.

GMS Principal Andy Smith made a statement on Facebook on Sept. 22 that read, "GMS Families, Granbury Middle School is aware of the situation circulating on social media regarding the poor choices a few students made last week. Campus leaders

worked with students and parents to determine a positive course of action to ensure Granbury Middle School has the type of climate and culture where all students feel safe and have limitless opportunities to succeed. School administrators and local law enforcement have investigated the situation and administered appropriate disciplinary consequences according to the student code of conduct. We strive to work closely with parents to ensure all students feel safe and are supported within our schools. We encourage any parents with a concern to contact the campus directly."

The HCN requested a statement from Smith about the incident where Smith responded, "We are aware of a situation that was reported to us. GMS administration investigated the incident and issued disciplinary consequences in line with the student's behavior."

To prevent further bullying Smith noted in his response to the HCN, "As a campus we discuss social skills with our students that include anti-bullying strategies. We have videos and announcements through-

PLEASE SEE **BULLY** | B2

Lipan's Hopkins ropes in title

Submitted item

ALVA, Okla. - When Lipan resident Lauren Hopkins transferred to Northwestern Oklahoma State University a little more than a year ago, she was looking for the right opportunity.

She found it with the Alva school, and she's been proving that value early this Central Plains Region season. After finishing third two weeks ago in Colby, Kansas, she stepped it up this past weekend by winning the breakaway roping championship at the Southeastern Oklahoma State University rodeo in Durant.

"I just hit a lick toward the end of the summer rodeos and rolled it into this fall season," said Hopkins, originally from Lincoln, California, now living in Lipan, Texas. "I didn't have that great of a season last year, so I wanted to step it up. I'm more in tune with my horse, and things have been pretty good."

Hopkins stopped the clock in 2.7 seconds to place in the first round, then followed that with a 3.2-second run to share



COURTESY PHOTO

Lauren Hopkins' two-run cumulative time of 5.9 seconds helped her rope the title at the second rodeo of the 2023-24 Central Plains season. Hopkins stopped the clock in 2.7 seconds to place in the first round, then followed that with a 3.2-second run to share the championship-round victory.

PLEASE SEE **HOPKINS** | B3

Safety is priority for Lipan ISD

BY EMILY NAVA
Staff Writer

Lipan ISD held its regularly scheduled school board meeting Sept. 28 at the Lipan library.

During the meeting, the board reviewed the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) test, the End of Course (EOC) exams from 2022 and the accountability ratings.

Superintendent Ralph Carter noted the district has not received its rating because the Texas Education Agency delayed the release of ratings statewide. Ratings had been scheduled to be released on Sept. 28.

Carter said the rating is now expected to

come in around the end of October or the beginning of November and that he is eager to see how the district is rated. Carter added that for the last 20-plus years, Lipan ISD's rating has been superior.

The board also discussed installation of a new six-foot fence to wrap around a part of the campus as part of safety measures and updates. Carter noted this is currently being worked on and will be ready in the next month or so.

"It's going to keep our kids safer," Carter said during the meeting. "No one from the outside will be able to see inside. It would be good to have the perimeter completely cut off if possible."

The board also talked about upcoming construction of a roadway near the track. The district will post updates on its Facebook page and let the community know when to stay off the track.

The pitcher's mound and batter boxes at the softball field are undergoing updates, including placement of clay bricks to prevent a ditch from forming again.

Carter informed the board that two Raptor (software for school safety) tests have been done so far with the students; both went really well.

The district will conduct a safety practice at the beginning of next year, Carter said. Students, staff, faculty and parents will participate

in the drill, with students practicing going to one of three buildings designated as reunification sites in case of emergency. Parents will pick up their students as part of the practice run.

"God forbid something like that happens, but at least the students and parents will know what to do," Carter said. "We're going to have bulletproof glass put in the site rooms, not just level three ballistic glass. It costs a little bit more, but it will be safe and one of the safest places to be."

Carter also mentioned his recent emergency management meeting with Hood County, which school districts within Hood County are required to attend twice a year.

"We're looking at getting a quote for 15 Motorola high-powered radios because the county radios don't work in our district. In the event of an emergency, especially an active shooter, we need to have some way to communicate effectively," Carter said.

The board also discussed Senate Bill 763 which allows public schools to employ or accept volunteer chaplains.

"We have the option to say we don't ever want chaplains to serve in any capacity to volunteer or you can say we can hire chaplains and they can be a classroom teacher and they can take the place of counselors. I'm not going to recommend that. The third option is to just let them do what they

do and be here for catastrophic events," Carter said.

The board voted 6-0 to approve chaplains to serve only on a volunteer basis.

Finally, the board discussed injecting lime into the elementary school's foundation as well as replacing the air duct attached to the outside of the gymnasium. The board decided to look further into the foundation injections, but approved replacement of the air duct by a vote of 6-0.

The board then went into executive session for 10 minutes before adjourning the meeting.

The board's next meeting will take place on Oct. 25 at 5:30 p.m.

Tolar ISD works to improve district through campus improvement plans

BY EMILY NAVA
Staff Writer

Tolar ISD is working to improve its district and the three campuses that lie within it as part of its ongoing campus improvement plan.

For the district as a whole, the plan notes strengths in the culture and staff quality include campus leadership, campus collaborations, safety, class sizes, resources, autonomy in classrooms, and bonuses. Some of the needs are focused on evaluating the salary schedule, pay increases, benefits, and more professional development opportunities for special education.

Under curriculum collaboration, Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) testing and Texas Formative Assessment Resource

(TFAR) are highlighted while needs focus on resources, behavior training, and more STAAR training.

When it comes to family and community involvement, the district strengths include communication tools, volunteers, and the support for initiatives. There is a need though for more reliable communication tools.

The district's technology strengths include improved WiFi, having a technology person, Apple TVs and teacher iPads, with needs focused on more technology department staff, upgrading of Chromebooks, repairs and teacher laptops.

There is also a need for more clubs and organizations as well as exposure to various cultures.

Academically, the district highlights that students are

above average in region and state levels across all grade levels, test scores increased on all tests from third to eighth grade and strategies have been made for closing gaps. The district is working on growth in students with disabilities, growth in economically-disadvantaged students and to increase the number of students reaching master's level as part of STAAR testing as well as ensuring growth from meets to masters.

When it comes to district organization, it was noted campuses do well with communication with parents and their junior high and high school schedules. The need to work on increasing communication was noted.

TOLAR ISD

Superintendent Travis Stilwell highlighted what he

said are items the district is continuing to work on across the campuses for improvement including:

- Tolar HS has a heavy emphasis on improving its current health science program to provide students with an opportunity to learn skills and grow an appreciation for various medical professions.
- Tolar HS will work to increase its dual credit participation by utilizing and communicating with its students about the FAST program for economically-disadvantaged students.
- District wide, there will be a continual emphasis on character development. Tolar HS will implement the CAN DO YOU character education program for all students.
- District wide, the Parent Square mass communica-

tion tool for increased/improved communication with our stakeholders has been implemented.

- District wide, there is continued focus on all academic areas for academic growth and improvement for all students.
- District wide, all campuses will utilize MAPS testing in order to monitor student growth and plan for acceleration/remediation opportunities as needed.
- District wide, staff and faculty will continue to work internally and cooperatively with local agencies to provide for the safety and welfare of our students.
- District wide, every student has access to an electronic device for instruction (1:1 ratio)
- District wide, a creative calendar to provide teachers ample workdays

throughout the year for planning and curriculum development has been implemented.

- District wide, the ag barn has been renovated/expanded to create more opportunities for student projects and participation.
 - District wide, four portable classrooms have been installed behind the elementary school for expansion and reduction in class sizes.
- "Many of the items listed in the campus/district plans aren't very exciting for public consumption. However, we continue to focus on providing the best academic opportunities for our students as we possibly can," Stilwell said.

For more information on the district campus improvement plan and specifics on each school, visit tolarisd.org.

BULLY

FROM PAGE B1

out the year that point out how to treat each other. Our counselors do intervention groups as well to allow students to talk through issues and resolve conflicts. As a campus this year we have also implemented Capturing Kids Hearts as a way of building stronger relationships on campus."

Davis thinks more should be done.

"We just want to put pressure on Granbury to do the right thing. I don't want to

fight Granbury (ISD). All I'm asking is for GISD to follow and implement their code of conduct," Davis said in an interview with the HCN. I think (Smith) made poor choices. He's allowing people to come into his home and bully his kids. A simple 'I'm sorry, we should have looked into this more' would have sufficed me, and I would have been fine. Do the right thing and I'll shut up."

As part of National Bullying Prevention Month, the district shared on its website, "We take complaints of bullying very seriously. Learn how we identify,

prevent and investigate bullying. Our ultimate goal as a district is to eliminate bullying in all its forms, whether online or in-person. Help us curb the national issue of bullying by taking action as a community and discussing the importance of prevention with your family."

Other schools in the district are talking to students of all ages about bullying such as Brawner Elementary School where counselor, Ronda Herrin is going to hold guidance lessons for students and teach them about the importance of bullying.

Acton Elementary is also participating in becoming more aware about bullying as part of prevention month.

"Acton Elementary School has a strong character education program. We teach kids positive character traits such as responsibility, trustworthiness, respect, fairness, caring, citizenship, and decision-making throughout the year. In October, we celebrate Red Ribbon Week which focuses on making healthy choices and recognizing and resisting peer pressure," Jill Jernigan, AMS counselor said. "We teach the students how to recog-

nize bullying, the difference between bullying and teasing, and what to do if they see bullying happening. We take all reports of bullying seriously, investigate and put procedures in place to help students feel safe. We also have wonderful student leadership groups such as student ambassadors and bus leaders who help teach younger students by modeling good behavior and reporting incidents to adults. We want our students to love school, feel safe and know what to do and who to talk to if they see something unsafe happening. These are just a

few of the ways we combat bullying at our school."

To submit an anonymous bullying report to GISD visit its website at granburysid.org.

TOLAR ISD

Tolar High School Principal Clint Gardner noted he fortunately has seen very few cases of bullying while serving in his first year as principal.

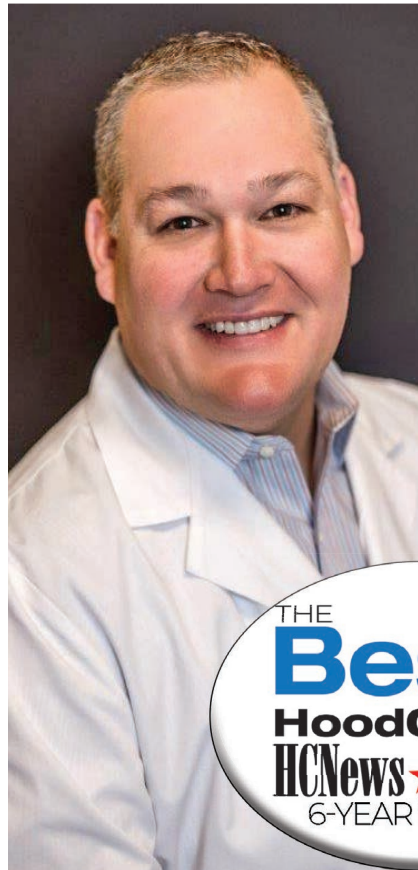
"Teachers, students, and administrators have been proactive in this regard. If they see students that are

PLEASE SEE BULLY | B6



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I'VE BEEN THINKING



COURTESY PHOTO

Edda van Heemstra Hepburn-Ruston would later be known to legions of film fans as Audrey Hepburn – the daughter of an English banker and a Dutch baroness.

“Beauty secrets revealed”

CAROL GOODMAN HEIZER



Carol Goodman Heizer is an author who recently moved to Hood County from Louisville, Kentucky. She has had short stories published in eight editions of “Chicken Soup for the Soul” books. Her column for the Hood County News will appear every two weeks.

On May 4, 1929, Edda van Heemstra Hepburn-Ruston was born in Ixelles (near Brussels), Belgium. She would later be known to legions of film fans as Audrey Hepburn – the daughter of an English banker and a Dutch baroness.

“Someone once asked Hepburn, who truly was one of America’s most beloved Hollywood actresses, to reveal her beauty secrets. She was ranked by the American Film Institute as the third-greatest female screen legend from the Classical Hollywood cinema and was inducted into the International Best Dressed Hall of Fame List.

In a culture where external beauty is of prime importance, Hepburn gave her surprising answer that described her focus on one’s inner beauty. Her response was later read at her funeral.

“To have attractive lips, speak kind words. To have a loving look, look for the good side of people. To look skinny, share your food with the hungry. To have beautiful hair, let a child cross it with his own fingers once a day. To have a beautiful poise, walk knowing you’re never alone because those who love and loved you accompany you.

“People, even more than objects, need to be fixed, spoiled, awakened, wanted, and saved; never give up on anyone. Remember, if you ever need a hand, you will find them at the end of both your arms. Then you discover that you have two hands – one to help yourself and one to help others.

“The beauty of a woman is not in the clothes she wears, in her face, or in her way of fixing her hair. The beauty of a woman is seen in her eyes because that is the door that’s open to her heart – the source of her love.

“The beauty of a woman doesn’t lie in her makeup, but the true beauty of a woman is reflected in her soul. It is the tenderness that gives love, the passion that it expresses.

“The beauty of a woman grows over the years.”

PLEASE SEE **THINK** | B4



LADY PIONEERS VOLLEYBALL

The Lady Pioneers defeated Benbrook on Tuesday, Oct. 3, 2023. Pictured is Lady Pioneer Jana Cetkovic. She reached 500 kills in her high school career (two years junior and senior year).

PHOTO BY CHRISTY DODSON



HOPKINS

FROM PAGE B1

the championship-round victory. Her two-run cumulative time of 5.9 seconds helped her rope the title at the second rodeo of the 2023-24 Central Plains season.

“I drew well, but the biggest thing is my horse,” she said of Patron, a 5-year-old sorrel gelding she’s had for a couple of years. “He’s absolutely changed my game and has been one of my biggest blessings. He was broke when I got him, but I trained him in the breakaway. We know each other really well. He reads the calf really well, and he’s solid in the box and gives me a good start every time. He makes my job really easy.”

With the win, Hopkins moved into the regional lead. That’s nice, but with eight events remaining on the schedule, the goal is to be in that same spot come the end of next April. That’s when winners will be crowned and earn their spots at the College National Finals

Rodeo, which features only the top three individuals and top two teams in the standings.

“Obviously, everybody wants to win, and for me, the goal is to win the Central Plains in breakaway and get to the college finals,” Hopkins said. “I also compete in ProRodeo, so I hope to continue to do that and have success. I have a full-time horse-training business as well, so I want to keep making that work as long as I can.”

She was among about a dozen Rangers who competed in Durant’s short round and was joined in the final performance by fellow breakaway ropers Aluxyn Hollenbeck, of Valentine, Nebraska, and Jayden Jensen, of Valentine, Nebraska, the latter of whom was 2.6 to finish in a tie for third place in the opening round. Goat-tier Dale Lee Foreman of Ree Heights, South Dakota, also earned a spot in the championship round.

Jacob Haren of Callaway, Nebraska, paced the men’s team, winning the all-around title for the second straight rodeo. Haren earned points in tie-

down roping, steer wrestling and team roping; he and teammate Kade Chace of Cherokee, Oklahoma, finished third in the first go-round. Another all-around cowboy, Tanner Meier of Garden City, Kansas, placed in both rounds and the aggregate in tie-down roping.

Kyler Altmiller, a header from Canadian, Texas, finished fifth in both rounds and the average while team roping with Cody Newell of Dodge City (Kansas) Community College.

In steer wrestling, Cam Fox of Tulsa placed in both rounds and finished second overall, while Logan Mullin of Clay Center, Kansas, collected points in both rounds and placed fourth. Sterling Lee of Goetebro, Oklahoma, was sixth overall, while Trisyn Kalawaia of Waiakea, Hawaii won the first round. Grandy Aasby of Highmore, South Dakota, joined his teammates in the short round.

“We had a lot of those (Northwestern) black vests in the short round,” Hopkins said. “I would like to think we have a good team and will continue to

be represented well at the short rounds all year.”

Hopkins began her college career at Eastern New Mexico University. She spent three years in the Southwest Region before moving over to the Central Plains. She likes Alva’s proximity to her home in Lipan, where she continues to work at her craft.

“Winning this past weekend was definitely awesome, and I feel super blessed,” she said. “I’ve been doing this for five years, and this was my first college win. I’m pretty lucky to have good horses and good friends behind me to support me.

“When I made my short-round run, I just wanted to be smart and place again. I wanted to be behind the barrier and catch my calf, and fortunately that worked out well enough to get the win.”

When it comes to success, being consistent is the biggest weapon a competitor can have. It just happens that Hopkins has that in herself and her horse.

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HOOD OUTDOORS

Striped bass fall movement



COURTESY PHOTO BY MIKE ACOSTA

Pictured is Sandra Acosta with some good Granbury fish caught this last weekend.

BY MICHAEL ACOSTA

As a licensed professional fishing guide, Michael Acosta shows you how to find them. A Granbury resident of more than 35 years, he has been fishing all of his life, and has been a licensed guide since 1998.

Several years back, I came across an interesting study done on hybrid and striped bass in Virginia. This article discussion is on the movement of striped bass on our inland lakes. As we all know, the temperature of the water drives the striped bass and hybrids in their movements along with the availability of forage.

Striped bass are moving machines, and many will start to move with the cooling temperatures. According to this article/study that used results of telemetry devices attached to the fish, striped bass move on average between 0.5 km/day to 3.0 km day. These fish tend to move more in the fall and spring, as most of us know, and tend to move slightly more at night. Another expected conclusion is that these fish are generally more active during low light periods. The same movement frequency and activity conclusions generally apply for the Hybrid Striped bass; however, movement may be greater during spring and summer than fall and winter.

Both species (Hybrid and Striped bass) exhibit a springtime spawning migration followed by movements back to deeper main-lake habitats. Apparently not all Hybrid Striped bass participate in this migration, some stay in the main reservoir throughout the year. Hybrid Striped bass migrate to spawn at about 15 to 16 degrees C (59 to 61 degrees F) which is in between the parental white bass at 13 to 15 degrees C (55 to 59 degrees F) and the Striped Bass at usually 17 to 18 degrees C (62 to 64 degrees F). Springtime flows can trigger these spawning migrations. With no springtime flow, some striped bass may abandon the spawning run and stay in the reservoir.

After spawning, these fish will stay in upstream shallow areas for 8 to 22 days prior to returning to the main reservoir body.

Another conclusion in this paper is that the mortality rate for striped bass is much higher than the hybrid striped bass, especially for larger striped bass. This agrees with what we have been told by local biologists. The striped bass is less tolerant of the heat than its cousin the hybrid striped bass. This is the reason that most of the full-blooded striped bass in Texas waters do not grow to the sizes found elsewhere in other deeper cooler reservoirs in other states.

The exact temperature preferences for the hybrid striped bass are still in question. It is this study's belief that the hybrid preference is in a zone between its parents the white bass and the striped bass (approximately 21 to 27 degrees C or 70 to 80 degrees F. White bass generally prefer 28 to 30 degree C water (82 to 86 degrees F), and striped bass generally prefer 20 to 24 degrees C (68 to 75 degrees F).

PLEASE SEE **OUTDOORS** | B9

GAME ON



SCREENSHOT COURTESY PILLOW CASTLE GAMES

A long hotel hallway with some objects that are oddly large.

SUPERLIMINAL

It's all a matter of perspective

BY JENNIFER HARRISON



My opinions on computer gaming and some of my favorite games. I've been playing games on the home computer since the days of the Trash 80. I love indie, open-world, unique, puzzle, and resource games. The cake is a lie.

In the game Superliminal, by Pillow Castle Games, you're helping Dr. Glenn Pierce test its SomaSculpt technology by going through a dream therapy program.

You wake up in a generic hotel room with a classic digital clock. At first things are pretty normal. You'll find that you can pick up objects across the room that appear small in perspective, but when you pick up an object and bring it closer to you, it grows to a ridiculous size. Or you can pick up an item close to you and cause it to shrink by placing it further away.

The premise of the game is that you're in a dream therapy session, and this is part of the therapy - a series of puzzles that can be completed by using optical illusions and forced perspective. Dr. Pierce communicates with you via a series of radios, communicating your progress, and creating a narrative for the story.

Some of the puzzles can be solved by picking up objects and making them larger, so that you can get on top of them. Some puzzles must be solved by finding the right perspective in a two-dimensional image. Once the image is complete, the object can be picked up to solve the next puzzle.

Things start to get weird when the player fails to wake up, and ends up back in the dreamworld, waking up inside the generic hotel room with the digital clock again. Dr. Pierce tells you through the radio that they have lost track of where you are in the simulation.

Eventually the AI that is running the dream therapy session tells you that you

must initiate an "Explosive Mental Overload" to trigger the "Emergency Exit Protocol" and escape the dreamworld. However, the attempt fails, and the player is trapped in the dreamworld. Eventually, you'll complete the puzzles and escape, returning to the room you started in and waking up.

All in all, it's definitely a surreal experience, and will make you feel as if there's something really creepy about these liminal spaces that you're in. A liminal space is an area that you usually see with people, that for some reason is empty. It's very much like being in an area of a hotel convention center where you took the wrong turn while looking for the bathroom. No matter how many hallways you walk down, you can never find the door that leads to the outside. Fortunately, there's no Backrooms monster to scare you in this game, it's just a series of visual puzzles.

Superliminal was developed by Albert Shih and his team with Pillow Castle Games, many of whom were recruited from the Entertainment Technology Center at Carnegie Mellon University. When those

students graduated, he had to hire more people to finish the job. It was released on Steam on Nov. 5, 2020. Five additional 'Group Therapy' maps and a cooperative mode were available as a free update in December 2021.

Shih's goal was to make a first-person game that was just 'moving cubes around.' He was inspired by the tourist photos of people pretending to hold up the Tower of Pisa. Shih wanted an open world concept with several solutions to the puzzles, so that players could think creatively about solving problems. "Superliminal is a first-person puzzle game based on forced perspective and optical illusions. Puzzles in this game give you a sense of the unexpected. Players need to change their perspective and think outside the box to wake up from the dream."

Superliminal has been generally enjoyed by players with its unique gameplay, the only complaint being that the game is too short. It was a finalist for "Most Innovative Gameplay" on Steam in 2020. Available on SteamOS for Mac and PC for \$19.99.

THINK FROM PAGE B3

Hepburn died on January 2, 1993, in Tolochenaz, Switzerland, at the age of 63.

Audrey Hepburn realized that true beauty lies within an individual, yet it can be expressed in her external features. In the grand tapestry of life, the beauty of a woman emerges not just from her physical appearance, but from the depth of her soul, the vibrancy of her spirit, and the substance of her character.

Someone once observed that true beauty is the full ac-

ceptance of who we are and the constant refinement on becoming a better human being. That principle goes far beyond our physical appearance. Instead, we can display our inner beauty by demonstrating qualities such as kindness, compassion, love, and honesty.

Hepburn was obviously speaking to women, yet the same attributes and attitudes can easily and accurately be said of men. Simply substitute the word "beauty" for the word "handsomeness." Then substitute the pronoun "her" for the word "his."

Additional qualities that

make a man "handsome" include strong character, honesty, loyalty, and a sense of responsibility.

I recently came across a list of 12 signs of people with true inner beauty, regardless of ethnicity, religion, age, or gender. Perhaps it would be good for each of us to "grade" ourselves on these listed qualities.

1. They're humble.
2. They are sincere.
3. They acknowledge everyone.
4. They are selfless.
5. They're positive (but not in a fake way).
6. They don't compare themselves to others.

7. They don't start an unnecessary conflict.

8. They're not obsessed with outer appearance.

9. They are appreciative.

10. They are not critical of others.

11. They are good listeners.

12. They are not ashamed of who they are.

In summary, I believe it would be safe to conclude that true inner beauty or handsomeness could be summed up in saying that it reflects how we behave toward others.

cgheizer@gmail.com

GRANBURY ISD ELECTION 2023 DID YOU KNOW?

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GRANBURYISD.ORG/ELECTION2023

SPORTS Roundup

Lady Pirates closing in on playoff return *Pirate golfers win in tourney honoring former player*

BY RICK MAUCH

Special to the Hood County News

After a rare absence from the playoffs in 2022, the Granbury Lady Pirates volleyball team is once again chasing a spot in the postseason.

Following their 3-2 win at home against Wichita Falls Rider on Sept. 29, the Lady Pirates (15-20 overall, 6-1 in district) entered the second half of league play with a share of the top spot in District 5-5A with Aledo and defending champion Justin Northwest. Each of the three teams had defeated the other, with Granbury defeating Northwest, the Lady Texans defeating Aledo and the Ladycats downing the Lady Pirates.

That changed on Tuesday, Oct. 3 as the Lady Pirates are now in a two-way tie for first, having defeated Saginaw for a second time, 3-0, while Aledo defeated Northwest 3-1. That left Granbury and Aledo tied for the top spot, with Northwest a match behind in the standings.

The Lady Pirates were hosting Aledo, ranked No. 25 in the state, last night. Ironically, Northwest is still the district's highest state-ranked team at No. 20, according to the Texas Girls Coaches Association.

In defeating Rider, the Lady Pirates overcame a 2-1 deficit. Rider won the first and third games 25-18 and 25-20, sandwiched around a 25-22 Granbury win. The Lady Pirates tied the match with a 25-15 win in Game 4 and carried that momentum into a 15-5 win in the deciding contest.

"I am so proud of the way the girls have been playing," Granbury coach Desiree Shahan said. "The girls are finally playing together and are on the same page."

"It has been a few years

since we have been in the race for first place, and it feels amazing."

Standouts in the win over Rider were Sienna Watts (18 kills, 7 digs) and Blakely Bleeker (9 kills, 5 blocks).

Standouts against Saginaw were Allyson McCabe (30 assists, 15 digs, 2 aces) and Rachel Poirier (12 kills).

The Lady Pirates last won a district championship in 2019, Shahan's first year at the helm, when they shared the league title with Burleson. Their last outright district championship was in 2016 when they finished the regular season tied with Cleburne and won the title in a one-match playoff.

GRANBURY BOYS GOLF

The Granbury Purple Team won the Briggs Berry Invitational this past Monday, Oct. 2, at Pecan Plantation. Granbury Purple shot a team total 330 and won by 10 shots over Brock.

Individually, Landon Womack won first place with a score of 79, beating his teammate Brayden Thackerson in a scorecard playoff. Other members on the Purple Team were Jacob Reagan (84), Caden Davis (88) and Quinn Bradley (89). Granbury Gold shot a 354. Individual scores included Jaxson Vaughn (82), Parker Jones (88), Kolton Montoya (89), Braxton Pugh (95) and Andrew Haynes (97).

Granbury Black posted a 365. Individual scores were Caden Rand (87), Kamden Aparicio (88), Will Webb (93) and Aiden Matherne (97).

Granbury Gray team total was 376 with Miller Schenewark (83), Carter Martin (90), William Farmer (96), Ashton Heimer (107) and Jeff Bowerman (108).

The four lowest individual scores comprise the team total.

GRANBURY FOOTBALL

The Pirates (3-2 overall, 1-2 in District 4-5A Division I) returned to play last night with a trip to defending district champion Midlothian (5-1, 4-0). While the Pirates had a bye week last week, the Panthers were winning 56-34 at previously unbeaten Killeen.

Next for the Pirates is a return home to host Lake Belton (5-1, 3-1 at press time). The Broncos were hosting Killeen last night.

After getting off to a 3-0 start, Granbury came into last night having dropped back-to-back games at Cleburne, 13-6, and home to Killeen, 26-13. The Broncos' lone loss through the first six games was a 38-34 shootout at home to Red Oak.

Through its first five games, Granbury's ground-based offense was averaging over 239 yards rushing per game (74 passing), led by quarterback Hayden Meyer (371 yards, 3 TD passing; 290 yards, 2 TD rushing). Running back Tyler Rodgers had 370 yards and five TD rushing, while fellow running back Jadon Rogers led the team in touchdowns with six and had 262 rushing yards.

The defense was limiting opponents to 240 yards per game (121 rushing, 119 passing). Linebacker Rylan Brenish (44 tackles) led the defense, along with end Chase Cantrell (40 tackles). Four different players had an interception and six different ones had recovered a fumble, including two by

linebacker Michael Gifford.

Lake Belton was led offensively through six games by the combination of quarterback Elijah Mascarenas (73% completion, 1,570 yards, 16 TD, 3 interceptions passing; 195 yards, 8 TD rushing) and wide receiver Micah Hudson (33 catches, 677 yards, 8 TD). On defense, the Broncos feature safety Peanut Brazzle (38), linebacker Garrett Roland (39) and lineman Garrett Combs (43) who combined for 120 tackles.

TOLAR FOOTBALL

The Rattlers, ranked No. 3 in the state in Class 2A Division I, started District 5-2A Division I play with a 38-0 victory at Hamilton on Sept. 29, their second straight road game. Last night, they returned home to host Coleman.

Next is another road trip to DeLeon (5-1, 2-0 at press time) on Friday, Oct. 13. The Bearcats were playing at San Saba at press time.

In defeating Hamilton, Tolar (4-1 overall) was led by quarterback Isaac Blessing on offense. He completed 10 of 12 passes for 99 yards and two touchdowns, while rushing 13 times for 170 yards and another score.

Matthew Behrens (3 catches, 69 yards) caught one of Blessing's touchdowns while Garrison Nation caught the other. Nation also compiled 132 yards and two touchdowns.

Defensively, linebacker Drake Owens paced the Rattlers with 11 tackles, while lineman Cutter Cain registered nine. Linebacker Jaxon Riddle and Cash Clark each had eight and linebacker Ty McClure had seven.

Brook Stone kicked a 27-yard field goal.

Through its first five games, Tolar was led offensively by Blessing (427 yards, 5 TD passing; 504 yards,

6 TD rushing) and Nation (336 yards, 5 TD rushing). Behrens had 13 catches for 200 yards and a TD.

On defense, they were being led by Riddle with 50 tackles (5 for a loss), and Owens had 41. Nation, at defensive back, had 35, Clark had 34 (3 for loss, 2 sacks), and defensive end Hunter Michels had 33.

Defensive back Clayton Stembridge had four interceptions and a fumble recovery.

With five wins in their first six games, DeLeon had already almost doubled their victory total of 2022.

TOLAR VOLLEYBALL

With only four teams in District 8-2A, the Lady Rattlers are guaranteed a playoff berth. However, coach Misty Rhodes and her team want more, a return to the top of the league, like they were in the 2019 and 2020 seasons.

That quest begins today, Oct. 7, with a trip to Hamilton to begin league play. They wrapped up pre-district play on Sept. 29 with a 3-1 victory at Rio Vista as Senne Imel led the victory with 15 kills and a pair of aces.

GRANBURY CROSS COUNTRY

The Pirates took the top spot for a second straight week as they won their own Race For The Loot on Sept. 29 at the Granbury Disc Golf Course. The Lady Pirates placed fourth.

The Granbury boys scored 54 points, outdistancing runner-up Arlington Martin with 70.

Jaxon Glenn once again paced the Pirates, taking third individually. The freshman ran the 5K course in a time of 16 minutes, 47.95 seconds.

Also for the Pirates, Alec

Wilkinson placed 11th with a time of 17:34.39, Bryan Hailey (17:40.61) was 13th, Aiden Lemens (17:43.51) finished 16th and Bryce Young (17:50.22) placed 18th.

Also for the Pirates, Aiden Turpin placed 29th and Jacob Wolfe was 40th.

Freshman Kambry Zschiesche led the Lady Pirates with a 13th-place individual finish, clocking a time of 21:10. Emery Kirby was 17th with a 22:18.

Also, Josefina Berry was 22nd; Zaeda Sedgwick, 26th; Alexia Patrick, 34th; Aubrey Ward, 44th; Karolina Berry, 46th; and Presley Davis, 63rd.

The junior varsity Pirates also won their division, with Samuel Valdez (19:47.29) placing third, Kolden Rand (20:01.55) finishing eighth and James Barber (20:06.63) was 10th.

The Lady Pirates did not have enough runners for a team score. Individually, Kimberley Martinez was 28th.

Granbury was running at the Brewer Invitational at press time. It was being held at Central Park in White Settlement, the same site as the District 5-5A Meet on Friday, Oct. 13.

LIPAN/TOLAR CROSS COUNTRY

The Indians and Lady Indians competed in the Ken Gaston Race for the Lake Invitational at Lynn Creek Park in Grand Prairie on Sept. 29.

Annslee Tarpley led all Lipan runners, taking 25th among varsity girls. Court Gaylor led Lipan boys, finishing 40th.

Tolar's top runner was Hunter Keith, who was 83rd.

Both Tolar and Lipan teams will compete in the District 11-2A Meet in Lipan on Monday, Oct. 9.



LADY PIRATE VOLLEYBALL

The Granbury Lady Pirates were victorious against the Azle Lady Hornets on Tuesday, Sept. 26, 2023, in Granbury.

PHOTOS BY LAYTH TAYLOR | HOOD COUNTY NEWS



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Ruck Forward



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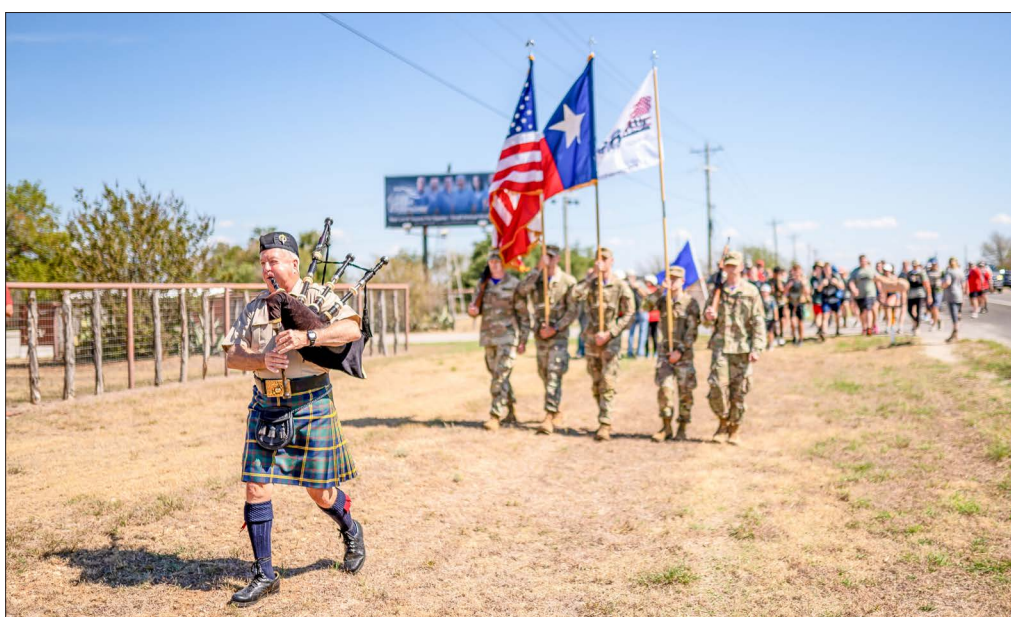
All the participants of the Ruck Forward March Saturday morning.



The Ruck begins as the participants start their 22K or 13-mile Ruck across Hood County.



The Ruck March brings the participants through the middle of the square down Houston Street.



A local bagpiper and the Tarleton ROTC Color Guard lead in the participants to the Riley Stephens Memorial Post Saturday when the 22K Ruck was finished up.



The final part of the ruck activities is a shot in honor of SFC Riley Stephens.

BULLY

FROM PAGE B2

struggling with relationships, they usually bring it up and address it head on in order to eliminate any escalation or misunderstanding that may be present," Gardner said.

The district has many activities utilized to prevent bullying such as:

- Educating students at the secondary level through utilization of the Pacer National Prevention Guide — Creating a World without Bullying.
- At Tolar Junior High School, students create slogans and information posters and utilize quick tips and short animated clips to address bullying
- Utilization of student

groups to create positive environments (Sunshine Committee)

Utilization of "club days" to allow students of differing backgrounds to meet and enjoy each other in a relaxing, fun manner

At Tolar Elementary School, the Character Strong program focuses on nine essential character traits:

- Respect, responsibility, gratitude, empathy, perseverance, honesty, cooperation, courage, and creativity.

These traits are talked about routinely in morning assembly and teachers provide activities in classrooms routinely.

Students are celebrated for standing up for others and showing positivity with a "Rattler Rave" where they can ring the bell in the hall-

way. Each six weeks, they have a "Celebration Rally" to celebrate displays of good character.

Utilization of confidential channels for students, parents, and staff to report incidents of bullying. We take each report seriously and investigate promptly.

"In today's society, bullying is an ongoing problem. This is especially true for school-age children. At Tolar ISD, one of our strategic goals is to provide and maintain safe, healthy, and nurturing environments that promote character and service to others. As part of this goal, each campus participates in numerous activities to help prevent bullying from occurring on campus," Superintendent Travis Stilwell said. "Our district's

anti-bullying efforts are aimed at creating a culture of respect, empathy, and kindness. We believe every child deserves to learn and grow without the fear of bullying. We strive daily to help our students become better students and citizens. In my opinion, each campus within the Tolar ISD does a great job with that."

If a student believes he/she has experienced bullying or has been a witness to bullying of another student, it is important for the student or parent to notify a teacher, counselor, principal or another district employee as soon as possible. For this purpose, forms are available in the elementary and junior high offices for anyone who may need to report a bullying incident. It is important

that all areas of these forms be completed accurately and completely in order for us to investigate the report appropriately. The reporter's name(s) will not be revealed in order to prohibit retaliation. Students or parents can also report bullying anonymously via the district's website at tolarisd.org.

LIPAN ISD

"We take bullying very seriously and act immediately on all reports. We use an anonymous alert system so students can report bullying anonymously and 24/7," Superintendent Ralph Carter said. "Bullying must be stopped but it takes all of us partnering together: students, staff, home, school and community. We continue

ally educate students to stop bullying."

Students or parents may report an alleged incident of bullying, orally or in writing, to a teacher, counselor, principal or other district employee. Students or parents may contact the district to obtain an incident report form that may be used to submit the complaint.

"Please note that after submission of the complaint to the district employee, the district may assign the complaint to a campus administrator to follow up on the submitted complaint and any other important matters pertaining to the complaint. We encourage you to communicate with your designated campus administrator during this time," Lipan ISD's website reads.

TARLETON STATE UNIVERSITY™

Todd Whitten wins 100th at Tarleton

Texans beat Southeastern Louisiana on road to start 4-1

Tarleton State University

HAMMOND, LA. - Already the winningest coach in program history, Tarleton State Football head coach Todd Whitten reached one of the rarest marks in coaching lore - 100 wins with a single program.

The Texans (4-1, 1-0 UAC) held off Southeastern Louisiana (0-5, 0-1 SLC) 14-13 on Saturday, Sept. 30 at Strawberry Stadium in Hammond, Louisiana.

Whitten won his 100th at the helm of the Texans, now 100-51 (.662) all-time with the Purple and White, 125-79 (.613) all-time as a college football head coach. He is just the 12th head coach among all current NCAA Division I schools in Texas to reach 100 wins with one program in the history of college football, joining TCU's Gary Patterson (181, 2000-21), Texas' Darrell Royal (167, 1957-76), Houston's Bill Yeoman (160, 1962-86), Texas' Mack Brown (158, 1998-2013), Rice's Jess Neely (144, 1940-66), Texas A&M Commerce's Ernest Hawkins (132, 1964-85), Sam Houston's Ron Randleman (131, 1982-2004), Baylor's Grant Teaff (128, 1972-92), Texas A&M's R.C. Slocum (123, 1989-2002), North Texas' Odus Mitchell (122, 1946-66), and TCU's Dutch Meyer (109, 1934-52).

"It's a great day for our

program - the 100 wins, that's awfully nice I guess, but the thing I'm most excited about is being 4-1 right now," Whitten told Tarleton Sports Network postgame. "I think this is kind of a signature win for our program right now, to come on the road here and win a close ballgame where we really had to pull our neck and anchor down and play hard, and we did."

Tarleton has started 4-1 for the second straight season, improving to 2-1 on the road with back-to-back overall wins. This was the first all-time meeting between Tarleton and SLU, and already the Texans' second win in Louisiana this season, as they won at McNeese to start the year.

Once No. 15 in the Stats Perform FCS Top 25 Poll this year, Southeastern Louisiana has lost six straight games, dating back to last season, their longest skid since 2015-16. These are unusual times for the Lions, who have been a powerhouse at the FCS level in recent years, making it to the sec-



Tarleton State Football head coach Todd Whitten reached one of the rarest marks in coaching lore - 100 wins with a single program.

COURTESY PHOTO

ond round of the NCAA FCS Playoffs three times in the last four years.

Tarleton scored all 14 points in the first quarter. Defensive back Blake Smith returned an interception for a touchdown on the first Texan defensive play of the game. Running back Kayvon Britten scored his team-leading sixth touchdown of the season on a 15-yard run late in the opening frame to give Tarleton the lead 14-7.

It remained 14-7 until the 5:17 mark of the fourth quarter. Southeastern Louisiana scored to seemingly tie the game, but the Texans blocked the extra point to cling on to a one-point lead. Tarleton refused to give SLU the ball back, bleeding out the last 5:17. After exhausting all of the Lions' timeouts, Tarleton chose to go for it on 4th-and-1 with 1:29 left at midfield. The offensive line opened a hole for Britten to power four yards to ice the victory for the Purple and White.

The Texan defense played

lights out again, proving to be one of the toughest defenses in the nation. They forced three turnovers in the game, a Smith pick-six, a Keldric Williams interception, and a forced fumble and recovery by freshman Steve Albert Jr. They also forced a turnover on downs, forced a missed field goal, plus had five tackles for loss, including a sack by Kasyus Kurns.

Jalen Carr and Kyle Taylor each led the team with nine tackles apiece, Carr adding a TFL and pass breakup, Taylor a pass breakup and quarterback hurry. Patrick Jones had eight tackles, with a second quarter fourth down stuff to give Tarleton the ball.

The Texans had entered the game with already the most defensive touchdowns across the entire FCS on the season with three. They added their fourth in five games to start 2023 with Smith's pick-six to open the defensive possession, returning it 23 yards to put Tarleton

up 7-0 with 12:05 left in the opening frame.

SLU answered back on the next possession, driving 65 yards to tie the game 7-7 with 7:55 left in the first quarter, capped off by a Bauer Sharp 19-yard scamper.

On the Lions' next possession, Tarleton's defensive line tipped Eli Sawyer's pass, and Williams came down with it for the interception at the SLU 46-yard line. Texan quarterback Victor Gabalis led them on a 54-yard scoring drive, with Britten scoring from 15 yards out.

It was all defense from there, until SLU's Zachary Clement found Darius Lewis from nine yards out to make it 14-13 Tarleton with 5:17 to play in the fourth quarter. The Texans blocked reigning Southland Conference Special Teams Player of the Week Austin Dunlap's extra point to maintain the lead.

On Tarleton's clock-bleeding final drive, Britten and Derrel Kelley III rushed a combined nine times for

three first downs to send the Texans back to Stephenville with the win.

Britten finished with 87 yards on 18 rushes (4.8 yards per carry), to go with his touchdown. Kelley had 71 yards on 16 carries (4.4 YPC). Gabalis completed 8-of-21 passes for 62 yards and an interception. Quarterback Daniel Greek led one drive in the third, going 1-for-2. Wide receiver Jaden Smith returned for his first game back since his injury at Texas Tech, finishing with three receptions for 38 yards.

The Texans now turn their attention back to conference play for a UAC showdown at Memorial Stadium on Saturday, Oct. 7, at 6 p.m. Tarleton State hosts Southern Utah in Stephenville for their Legends Game, where the Texans will honor the 2002-03 men's basketball team. Tarleton is 2-0 at home this year and 11-3 at Memorial Stadium since 2021.

Texans meet tough competition

Tarleton State University

FAYETTEVILLE, AR. - The Texans met stiff competition in their third meet of the season on Friday, Sept. 29, going up against three Power Five conference programs thus far in TCU, Texas A&M and Arkansas.

Senior Kevin Baez once again led the Texans on both sides with a top-30 overall finish.

"[I'm] proud of the way our kids ran today in some tough conditions," said coach Chase Rathke. "[The] girls battled a few injuries during the race that hurt a lot. [The] guys had a solid day and were able to knock off some conference foes in UTA, SFA, and ACU. I like where our confidence is at going forward and being able to get a little rest before conference."

WOMEN (5K) 30TH

The Texans competed in the Women Harter's Habanero 5k. Junior Sage Lancaster led the pack for the Purple and White. She finished in 78th place out of 297 runners with a time of 18:39.9.

Following behind Lancaster was a pair of Texans in junior Kailey

Sykora and senior Aimee Landers-Wilburn. Sykora finished in 189th with a time of 19:37.3. Landers-Wilburn finished four spots later in 193rd with a time of 19:39.6.

Freshman Emily Teal crossed the finish line with a time of 20:31.9 in 249th place. Rounding it out for the Purple and White in 268th place was senior Magaly Lopez 21:13.3.

MEN (8K) 16TH

After Baez made his return two weeks ago in Aggiland with a second-place finish, he once again led the Texans at the home of the Razorbacks. Baez placed 27th out of 292 in the Men's "McDonnell Memorial" 8k with a time of 24:58.5.

Just outside of the top-50 was junior Angel Contreras in 53rd with a time of 25:23.0. Accompanying Contreras in the top 100 was Freshman Kellen Frickel with a time of 26:08.8 locking up 100th place. Fellow freshman Christopher Moreno finished in 144th with a time of 26:43.3.

Junior Angel Gomez and freshman Diego Flores finished back-to-back in 156th and 157th place respective-



COURTESY PHOTO

Senior Kevin Baez once again led the Texans on both sides with a top-30 overall finish.

ly. Gomez finished with a time of 26:53.1 while Flores came in hot on his heels with a time of 26:53.5.

Rounding it out for the Purple and White were sophomores Ricky Tolentino and Alan Alfaro. Tolentino came across the finish line in 251st place with a time of 28:27.3. Alfaro wrapped it up for the Texans squad with a time of 29:03.3, placing him in 274th place.

Next up, the Texans will make their first of two trips down I-20 in October to WAC foe Abilene Christian. The Texans will compete in the ACU Naimadu Classic on Friday, Oct. 13. The meet will be held at the Wildcat Cross Country Course in Abilene.

Women's Soccer drops tight battle at Abilene Christian

Tarleton State University

STEPHENVILLE — Tarleton State Women's Soccer was unable to overcome a first half deficit and fell, 2-1, to Abilene Christian on Sunday, Oct. 1 evening at Elmer Gray Stadium.

The Wildcats improve to 7-4-1 overall and 2-1-0 in the WAC and the Texans fall to 4-6-3, 1-1-1.

Avery Harr tallied her second goal of the season in the first half to tie the match at one.

Mikayla Kendall added four saves to her WAC-leading 81.

Abilene Christian struck first on the scoreboard with Chayse Thorn scor-

ing her WAC-leading 12th goal of the season threading through the defense in the ninth minute.

Harr tied the match at one, in the 14th minute. The play originated off a pass from Jaycie Bass at midfield. Harr took the pass down field before executing a spectacular crossover to weave past two Wildcat defenders. She found herself in a one-on-one with the keeper, and she found the back right of the net to tie the match.

In the 24th minute, the Texans nearly retook the lead. Rylee Low took a free kick from just over the midfield line on the Tarleton defending half. Her kick one-

hopped the goal and just found the tips of the ACU keepers leaping hands to keep the match deadlocked at one apiece.

After a back and forth in front of the net, ACU's Amelia Leggett was able to push the ball just past Kendall to give the Wildcats a 2-1 advantage in the 37th minute of the contest.

Neither team was able to threaten in the second half only combining for five total shots and two shots on goal.

The Wildcats held the advantage, 12-3 in shots and 6-1 on goal. Once again, the Texans committed less fouls than their opponent limiting five to ACU's, 12.

Carson Gallaher leads Texans in second straight tournament at GMAC Invitational

Tarleton State University

ONEONTA, Ala. - Carson Gallaher was as consistent as they come, turning in a 73 in each of his three rounds to lead the Texans for a second straight tournament to begin Tarleton State's 2023-24 campaign.

Gallaher went +3 overall at the Graeme McDowell Invitational, the GMAC Invitational for short,

at Limestone Springs Golf Course in Oneonta, Alabama, from Sunday to Tuesday. He finished tied-35th.

Cristobal Sepulveda was tied-51st at +7 (71, 77, 75), Max Bengtsson tied-71st at +13 (78, 73, 78), and Bladen Samaniego finished 82nd at +23 (80, 79, 80).

As a team, the Texans placed 13th at +28 (296, 295, 301).

The host team, UAB, took medalist honors, as Seb Cave won a one-hole playoff after finishing -10. UAB also took the team title at -22 (290, 268, 284).

Tarleton has two weeks before their third of four fall tournaments. They'll next be at the Oregon State Invitational at Trysting Tree Golf Club in Corvallis, Oregon, Oct. 9-10.

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BOOK REVIEW

Hi ho the dairy-oh, farmer's in the dell

BY TERRI SCHLICHENMEYER

In the old children's song, the farmer's in the dell and lots of things happen. His child takes a dog, and the dog takes a cat. Rats appear, and mice arrive. It sounds like dreadful chaos in merry lyrics with a bouncy tune. Fortunately, for the poor guy, he makes one decision before he does anything else: he takes a spouse and in "The Farmer's Wife: My Life in Days" by Helen Rebanks, that's a very good thing.

She said she'd never marry a farmer.

She was going to leave her parents' home and move to the big city to be an artist. She would paint and sculpt, and the world would be hers – but when Helen Rebanks was just a teen, she fell in love with a boy named James

whose heart was back on a farm.

And oh, James tried! He followed her from city to city, they took short jaunts and weeks away from their homes in England to various parts of Europe to sample what life had to offer an artist and her man, but he was

never comfortable. Being around tall buildings and cafe society felt all wrong for someone who longed for open pastures and newborn lambs.

They argued, but they loved one another, and they married.

James took a job nearby, then two of them when their first child was born, but he struggled. She struggled, too: Rebanks was overwhelmed by motherhood, alone and depressed, and felt as though she'd lost the person she knew she was.

Things were better when the second baby came along, and by then, James' dream of farming had caught fire. He loved the land, and it was

PLEASE SEE **BOOK** | B9

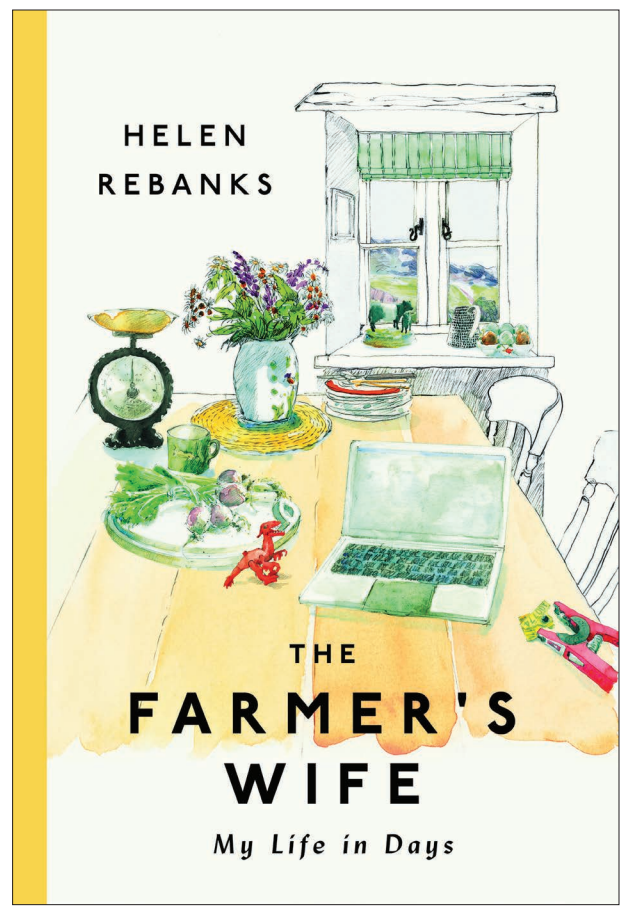


Helen Rebanks

COURTESY PHOTO

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"The Farmer's Wife: My Life in Days" by Helen Rebanks

C.2023, HARPER HORIZON, \$29.99, 312 PAGES



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SUDOKU
Solution for the puzzle on Sept. 30 (Puzzle 50).

4	8	6	5	2	7	9	3	1
2	7	1	6	9	3	5	8	4
3	9	5	1	4	8	6	2	7
5	4	8	2	6	1	3	7	9
1	6	7	8	3	9	2	4	5
9	2	3	4	7	5	1	6	8
8	3	4	9	1	6	7	5	2
7	5	9	3	8	2	4	1	6
6	1	2	7	5	4	8	9	3

Puzzle by websudoku.com

4			8	7				
						7	8	
	3						2	6
	1				8			9
9		4	2	6	3	8		5
5			1				3	
1	4						5	
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				1	4			8

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E Y P P A H B N X C
W U E H T P R I L U
P X Y B S V U G T B
V A A Y I D P W L Z

Word Bank

1. diy	2. craft	3. happy	4. glue
5. stamp	6. card	7. paper	8. birthday
9. envelope	10. greeting		

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OUTDOORS

FROM PAGE B4

Another interesting fact is that when the hybrid and striped bass are stocked in the same reservoir, they generally tend not to school together. Even when the livable habitat was small due to the summer heat, the fish congregated in their own species groups in the same general vicinity. This generally agrees with what I have experienced on Lake Tawakoni, which is stocked with both species. You tend to catch hybrids in one spot and striped bass in others.

This study also found (as

we would expect) that the fish are generally located near forage species as long as the dissolved oxygen content is sufficient. This goes along with what every striped bass or hybrid angler will tell you. Find the bait and you will find the fish.

HOOD COUNTY FISHING REPORT

Granbury water temperatures are in the low 80's. Water levels continue to be about two feet low. Crappie fishing continues to be excellent on small minnows/jigs fished near submerged structure midlake and near bridge pil-

ings. Sandbass (whitebass) are schooling on the surface on many areas of the lake to include Blue Water Shores, Decordova, and the Shores. Bigger striped bass continue to be on the lower ends are are good to 10lbs on live bait and trolling alabama rigs. Largemouth bass are good in numbers with an occasional bigger fish to 7lbs. Some good top water is reported early near main lake points. Many bigger largemouth are on shallow flats near dropoff and are best caught on crankbaits or texasrigged worms. Catfish are active and can be caught on various areas of the lake on

cut bait.

Comanche Creek (previously called Squaw Creek) reopened on Oct. 1, and numerous reports of easy limits of channel catfish are being reported. This reservoir is also known for its large population of largemouth bass and Tilapia. More reports to follow on this reservoir.

On other reservoirs, Possum Kingdom striped bass are excellent, and limits are common. The same is true on Lake Whitney. Look for birds returning to the area.

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BOOK

FROM PAGE B8

contagious, but she would have to give up her dreams to make it happen.

They looked into taking the leap.

"There are many ways to live," Rebanks says, "many ways to be a woman. I know lots of women don't want

what I want. But this is how I want to live."

Almost always, when you grab a book, you know what kind of book it is. "The Farmer's Wife" will surprise you, though, because it's many things.

First of all, it's a story of author Helen Rebanks' forebears, which is enmeshed with her own memoir. Those tales are of hard

lives and hard times, and they're made of sandpaper and steel. Then this is a dual love story, to a man and to the land he belongs on, and it was a bit of a battle; no spoilers here, but this part lends excitement to the tale. Then, it's a cookbook: readers will find relevant recipes sprinkled throughout Rebanks' narrative, with more at the end along with

meal ideas and tips.

This book is a quiet sunrise with a hot cup of coffee and early birdsong. It's a soft sunset from the door of a barn, stanchions gently clinking behind you. Yep, that's the feeling you get here, reading this book. Hi ho, "The Farmer's Wife" is a book you'll take.

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‘My determination overrode my fear’ Granbury author talks skydiving in eighth published ‘Chicken Soup’ story

BY ASHLEY TERRY
Staff Writer

Most people with an intense fear of heights usually avoid anything involving high altitudes — like, you know, falling out of a plane for instance.

But Carol Goodman Heizer isn't most people.

The 78-year-old Granbury resident was recently featured in the popular “Chicken Soup for the Soul” book series for the eighth time, in which she tells a whirlwind firsthand account of the time she got to feel like a bird in the sky.

“Chicken Soup for the Soul: Get Out of Your Comfort Zone,” by Amy Newmark, is a collection of 101 stories designed to help people overcome their fear and broaden their world — something Heizer got the opportunity to do at the age of 70 when she went skydiving for the first time.

“I have always had such a terrible fear of heights, but one of the things I wanted to do was skydive, because my daughter had done it years ago,” she told the HCN. “(My daughter) said, ‘Mom, it’s the most thrilling, but the most terrifying thing you will ever do when you fall out of that plane.’ It was eight years ago on my 70th birthday, when she said, ‘Mom, you’re going into a new decade. What special thing would you like to do this year?’ I said, ‘I



Local author and columnist Carol Goodman Heizer was recently featured in the popular “Chicken Soup for the Soul” book series for the eighth time in her career.

ASHLEY TERRY | HOOD COUNTY NEWS

want to skydive.’ She said, ‘Mom, you’re 70.’ I said, ‘Well George Bush did it at 90.’ She said ‘Yeah, but he did it dur-

ing the war. He knew what he was doing,’ and I said ‘No, I want to skydive.’ Determined to pursue this

newfound idea of hers all the way through, Heizer signed up not once, not twice, but three different times to

skydive, as unfortunate bad weather led to her first two attempts being canceled. Now, many people might

take two cancellations as a warning or a bad omen not

PLEASE SEE HEIZER | C3

Local church partners with out-of-state organization

BY EMILY NAVA
Staff Writer

Now that October has arrived, that means pumpkins are going to start popping up around the town. The pumpkin is a signature mark of the month and of fall, but how do these pumpkins get to their destinations?

First Baptist Church in Granbury is getting ready to get their shipment of pumpkins on Oct. 14. This will be the church’s second time having a pumpkin patch.

The church got in touch with PumpkinsUSA, a family-owned and operated organization that grows pumpkins.

PumpkinsUSA got started in 1974 where a church began to sell the pumpkins through Richard and Janice Hamby. There were no contracts, or legal proceedings, just a handshake and trust.

Now the organization has grown to serving over 1,000 organizations, covering 25 denominations of churches, youth groups, schools, fra-



COURTESY PHOTO BY TAMI HARLOW

Patrons walk around a pumpkin patch at First Baptist Granbury trying to find the best pumpkin during October of 2022.

ternal organizations, Knights of Columbus, Scouts, habitat groups, and other civic organizations.

“The churches and non-profit organizations trust us to grow and deliver great pumpkins. We trust those organizations to be diligent in selling their pumpkins,

honest in reporting their sales, and attentive to paying our percentage of sales. We are responsible for all the costs associated with growing, harvesting and shipping. To ensure that our partners have a successful patch, we bear all the risk of loss due to theft and spoilage. While

it is unusual in the business world, this relationship of trust has been very effective throughout the years,” part of the website reads.

Hurricane Hugo hit land-fall north of Charleston in South Carolina as a category four storm with winds of 135 to 140 miles per hour

according to the National Weather Service.

“Hugo produced the highest storm tide heights ever recorded along the U.S. East Coast, around 20 feet in Bulls Bay, South Carolina,” the NWS said.

After this hurricane hit, PumpkinsUSA moved farming operations to the Navajo Indian Reservation in Farmington, New Mexico.

“After being hit by Hurricane Hugo we moved our farming operations to the Navajo Indian Reservation in Farmington, NM. In cooperation with the Navajo Nation, we grow 1,200 acres or approximately 2 square miles of pumpkins and employ over 700 Native Americans during our harvest months of September and October. We also have a full-time off-season NM staff that is comprised of entirely Native Americans. This has a positive and lasting impact on a region with 42% unemployment,” PumpkinsUSA website reads.

First Baptist Granbury is expected to get around 800 pumpkins for this October at zero cost.

The church agrees to sell the pumpkins to the best of their ability and sells them based on the size of the pumpkin.

With last year being First Baptist Church’s first year having a pumpkin patch, church member Tami Harlow said it went really well.

“I was shocked because we had a short time to get the word out. This is such a great way for us to do something positive in the community and it’s a safe place for people to come and bring their kids. That’s why I wanted to do it,” Harlow said. “It’s a win-win for us, because (PumpkinsUSA) is allowing us to do this completely risk-free. We’re not responsible for pumpkins that don’t sell or that get damaged or stolen. We literally just report the sales and

PLEASE SEE PUMPKIN | C4

Brazos Chamber Orchestra fall series to start soon

BY EMILY NAVA
Staff Writer

The Brazos Chamber Orchestra is getting ready to kick off its fall concert series.

The series will present an eclectic blend of live orchestra to the Granbury community as well as Burleson and Cleburne.

This season the series will include, “American Spiritual Festival,” selections from “Oklahoma,” “American Civil War Fantasy” and the final piece of the concert will be “William Tell Overture” by Rossini.

“The Brazos Chamber Orchestra has been performing in Granbury for several years. We recently have expanded our concert series from three concerts to a four-concert series. We encourage anyone who enjoys the musical arts to spend an evening of live orchestra music with friends and family,” Kathy Anavitarte, marketer for the cham-

ber said. “It’s a wonderful concert with many types of musical selections. I enjoy these concerts because you never know what to expect from the director of music. He enjoys audience participation and excellence from the orchestra. It is a great venue to enjoy an evening out.”

The concert is open to the public with free admission and donations are accepted.

The series will kick off Oct. 16 in Cleburne then move to Burleson on Oct. 22, with Granbury’s taking place on Oct. 23 at the First United Methodist Church.

If you miss the fall series, you will have a chance to attend the December and winter series that kicks off Dec. 4 in Burleson and will make its way to Granbury Dec. 11 with Cleburne following the next day.

For more information on the BCO visit brazoschamberorchestra.org.



The Brazos Chamber Orchestra performs their Christmas Concert in 2022.

COURTESY PHOTO

A big 'dill'

Pickle Lady finds new customer in country music singer Ronnie Dunn

BY ASHLEY TERRY
Staff Writer

Cindy Dennis' latest pickle customer is making her want to dance the "Boot Scootin' Boogie."

For more than a decade, Dennis has been selling her locally famous hot dill pickles and other pickled food items out of her home in Granbury to other residents and friends.

But now, the "Pickle Lady" has found a "Brand New Man" who enjoys her pickles and pickled okra — Ronnie Dunn, of American country music duo, Brooks & Dunn.

Dunn — who is a family friend of Dennis' daughter Carrie Grider-Thompson and son-in-law Paul Thompson — received a couple of Dennis' jars and felt compelled to call and thank her personally for the gift.

"I had made a jar of okra and a jar of pickles, and told my daughter, 'If you don't take these to him, I'm gonna kill ya,'" Dennis said, chuckling. "I was just here one night, and I get this phone call, and Ronnie Dunn and his wife were on the phone. They said they loved the okra and (Dunn's wife Janine) said, 'You should sell these,' and my son-in-law said, 'She does!'"

Dennis said Dunn kept talking about how much he loved her okra and pickles, and it surprised her when Dunn said he wanted to purchase a case of them.

"It was just really, really neat," she said. "But after we hung up, I texted my daughter, and I said, 'Are you kidding me? Is this a joke?' But that's when they took the picture (of them holding the jar) and sent it to me. I thought 'Oh my god, this is really real.'"

But that's not all of Dennis' recent surprises.

TEXAS STATE FAIR

In August, Dennis also received eight ribbons from the Texas State Fair for her pickles, okra, cauliflower, green beans, onions, peppers, and squash.

Dennis was awarded first place for her green beans, hamburger dills, and okra; second place for her peppers



Granbury resident Cindy Dennis now has a new pickle customer — Ronnie Dunn, of the American country music duo Brooks & Dunn. For more than a decade, Dennis has been selling her homemade pickles out of her home in Granbury to other residents and friends.



Cindy Dennis, known around Granbury as "The Pickle Lady," has now won a total of 58 ribbons for her pickles and other pickled items from the Texas State Fair.

and squash; and third place for her cauliflower, dill cucumbers, and onions.

Since 2009, she has placed at the Texas State Fair every year (except in 2016 when she didn't enter due to surgeries), accumulating a total of 58 ribbons.

Dennis said she's received so many ribbons over the years that she actually ran out of room to hang them on her walls.

"I'm hanging them on the ceiling now," she said, chuckling. "And every time I tell people (I've won another ribbon), I think they're gonna be shocked, but they're not because they know me. But every year, I'm still just totally blown away."

POPULAR PICKLES

What started as a recipe from her mom in the 1970s has now grown to a huge following — not only in Texas, but also in other parts of the United States.

"My mother had a garden, and she got this recipe from a lady she worked with, so my mother started making them out of her garden," she explained. "She had enough cucumbers to make eight jars, and so everybody, all my friends started having a fit about it, like 'I love your pickles,' so I had a pickle party."

Consisting of six couples,

Dennis and her friends started making pickles using her mom's recipe — even washing the pickles in a baby swimming pool.

"Things were crazy back then," she said, chuckling.

Dennis said there are four ingredients that go in the bottom of each jar — garlic, onions, jalapeno peppers, and fresh dill.

"After I put the whole pickles in there, I just start cutting up pickles and I put little bitty chunks of the pickles on top," she said, in a previous interview with The Hood County News.

Dennis currently has her pickles in four stores locally: Willow Lane, Bridge Street Market, and Bee Healthy Nutrition Center in Granbury, and Your Personal Chef in Aledo.

"I have gotten very, very popular," she said. "I've also had two people call me — both with Stage IV cancer. This man from Aledo called me and he said that he has opened so many jars of pickles because people that have had cancer and chemo, it depletes all of their salt, so he craves pickle juice. The man said, 'I finally found the right pickles, and it's yours.'"

Dennis' pickles have gained so much traction that she was even featured on the TV show, "Texas Country Reporter," with host Bob

Phillips in 2018.

"I get people that hide them from their kids," she said. "I mean, I hear so many stories about people and how they hoard away my pickles."

She said the growing demand has also led to other stores contacting her with an interest in selling her products.

"I can be in 50 stores if I wanted to — I just can't handle it," she said.

NEVER GIVING UP

With a recent back surgery on Aug. 8, it has become increasingly difficult for Dennis to continue to make the number of pickles that she always did in the past.

"I've been having problems with making them, because of what's going on with me. But I'm still trying," she said. "It's just been really, really hard."

Although she continues to struggle with making enough pickles to curb the local — and now national — demand, Dennis doesn't give up, because she aims to satisfy her customers.

"I was going to the Texas Country Reporter Show every year, and I was selling 400 jars," she said. "I'm personally with my customers. I'm not professional with them. I try to get to know something about people, so it's not just business."

Time will tell — but for now, Dennis' pickles will continue to remain a big "dill" in Hood County for many more years to come.

ashley@hcnews.com / 817-573-1243



COURTESY PHOTO

Christian Brothers Automotive in Granbury is hosting its "cup car" campaign from Friday, Oct. 20 through Monday, Oct. 23, to generate awareness for the millions of single moms nationwide who need reliable transportation to provide for themselves and their families. Each cup on the car symbolizes how a simple coffee purchase could be better used to assist single moms with car repairs.

Cup car campaign creates customer compassion

Christian Brothers Automotive to raise money for single moms, widows

BY ASHLEY TERRY
Staff Writer

Since 1982, Christian Brothers Automotive (CBA) has sought to change the way customers think about auto service by providing honest, knowledgeable, and genuine car repairs and service — seeking to change the stigma of the automotive industry.

But now, the faith-based business is doing its part to give back to members of each community at various Christian Brothers Automotive locations, with its new "cup car" campaign, including right here in Granbury.

Through a partnership with the Hub Garage — a nonprofit organization dedicated to repairing vehicles for single moms at no cost — various CBA locations will host a "cup car" event to raise awareness and donations for the Hub Garage.

Made entirely out of colorful plastic cups resembling a life-size Volkswagen Beetle, the "cup car" is designed to remind everyone how using spare change to purchase a simple cup of coffee could be better well spent as a single donation to help single moms in need.

The car was created to generate awareness for the millions of single moms nationwide who need reliable transportation to provide for themselves and their families. While the "cup car" isn't a working car, organization officials hope this endeavor will keep single moms in the driver's seat of their lives.

"It is strictly about helping single moms," explained Mike Loter, owner of CBA in Granbury. "Its goal is to help single moms have reliable transportation, because if they don't, they can't keep their job and they aren't able to provide for their kids and family."

Since May, the Hub Garage organization has hosted its "cup car" campaign in seven states and is set to be at the CBA Granbury location from Friday, Oct. 20 through Monday, Oct. 23, in conjunction with the Granbury location's National Service Day on Saturday, Oct. 21.

Every year in October on National Service Day, CBA Granbury partners with local churches or non-profit organizations to offer a free oil change to single moms and widows in need.

"We'll do 40 to 50 free oil changes on that Saturday," Loter said. "Our team works for free that day serving single moms and widows with an oil change and often other needed repairs or service. Local suppliers of oil and filters also donate to the cause. We truly know that when we bless others, we receive a blessing as well."

CBA Granbury opened in 2012 as a "full-service auto repair shop," and has been assisting drivers of most makes and models of vehicles ever since.

"We just believe in treating people like we would want to be treated," Loter said. "We don't take advantage of them, we don't

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Grumps to host “Burgers and Badges” event to benefit Granbury police

BY EMILY NAVA
Staff Writer

Grumps in Granbury is hosting their 15th annual “Burgers and Badges” event that will help raise money for Granbury’s Police Department. The event that was previously named “Tip a Cop,” will give the community a chance to interact with the local men and women who are part of the police department.

The event was first created by Grumps’ owner, Collier Albright, and Rodney Casey.

“Albright attended the Granbury Citizen’s Police Academy in its second year, and during that time, Albright and Casey discussed the need for additional funding, Shevin Schmitt, Manager of Corporate Services for Grumps said. “With similar programs already in place in other parts of the United States, they used those as a template, made some tweaks to make it a fit for Grumps, and we’ve used that concept ever since.”

The officers will serve up burgers and sides for \$12

with the choice between a hamburger or cheeseburger, home-fried chips with ranch, and tea.

There will also be music, giant Jenga, wiffle ball, corn hole and fun for the whole family.

Tips and half of the proceeds will benefit the Citizen’s Police Academy Alumni Association that supports and helps with special programs and events created by the Granbury Police Department.

“Public servants are the heartbeat of the community. It is important to show that the community supports them, and we believe it is equally important for folks to be able to interact with and get to know these folks on a different level, rather than in an emergency situation or another scenario,” Schmitt said.

The event will take place outdoors at the Grumps pavilion on Oct. 12 from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Parking will be available off Cleveland Road as well as off Plaza East. There will be signs to lead guests to the entrance.



Burgers and Badges event in 2021.

COURTESY PHOTO

HEIZER

FROM PAGE C1

to entertain the idea any further, but Heizer was committed to her new skydiving hobby.

“We climbed to 10,000 feet in this small private plane, and on the way up, I kept thinking, ‘Why am I in my right mind going to jump out of a perfectly good plane and fall 10,000 feet to the earth?’” she said, chuckling.

Heizer explained in her story “Flying High” that, during the instructional skydiving lecture, she learned she would have a total of three parachutes on hand in the event that one or two failed.

“That thought was both comforting and terrifying and brought back my fear

of heights in full force,” her story read. “Suddenly, everything became real.”

She recounted hearing the “reassuring hum of the plane’s engine one second,” and then the next hearing only the roar caused by her body “falling at one hundred miles per hour” in tandem with her instructor.

“I felt my skin sliding backward as Mother Nature gave me a natural facelift,” her story reads.

Heizer said at 5,000 feet in the air, her body jerked violently upward as her parachute opened, followed by the surrounding of complete and utter silence.

“You can almost hear the quiet,” she said. “It was magical.”

Her story describes in detail what her experience

was like as she descended, and how the earth “became a checkerboard of farmland, subdivisions, and concrete roads.”

“I loved doing it so much,” she said. “The magic of falling, especially after the parachute opens, and it’s so quiet. Now, I know how the birds feel up there in that quiet air just going with the air currents.”

As soon as she landed and her “heels dug into the sod,” she knew she wanted to skydive again.

Unfortunately, Heizer’s next jump was not meant to be.

“The irony of it was that I landed, and I did fine. The only injury was to my blue jeans; I got a grass stain,” she said. “But two weeks later, I went to a friend’s house. I

stepped off her back porch on the edge of a concrete slab and did a total spiral break of my foot. I tore up my ankle so severely, the surgeon said, ‘I promise you, this will hurt the rest of your life,’ — and it does.”

Heizer giggled as she explained the irony in the situation of stepping six inches off a porch and doing that much damage to her ankle but falling 10,000 feet out of an airplane and not even getting a bruise.

“That’s one of the ironies of life,” she said, chuckling. Heizer said she even asked her orthopedic surgeon if she could ever skydive again, and he highly discouraged the idea and recommended she not take any chances.

“He said, ‘Well, let me put it to you this way, if you

can’t live without skydiving, I guess go ahead. But one wrong landing, and you’re going to be crippled the rest of your life,’” she recounted. “And he said, ‘You have torn up that ankle so bad, you’d have been better off if you’d have just broken it.’ So, I got to thinking about it, and you know, I’ve been there, done that. I wanted to do it. I did it. The cost could be too, too much.”

Along with her several published works in the “Chicken Soup for the Soul” books, Heizer is an eight-time published author. Her latest books include, “Losing Your Child-Finding Your Way,” “Seasons of a Woman’s Life,” and “Snapshots of Life from a Writer’s View.”

Her writing has also appeared in several publi-

cations such as Christian Communicator and Mature Living.

Heizer’s “I’ve Been Thinking” column can be found twice a month in the Hood County News.

Following her giant leap of faith — literally — Heizer recounts how she learned that stepping out of one’s comfort zone can “bring tremendous, satisfying rewards,” and how that realization gave her courage to consider trying other new adventures.

“I’m so afraid of heights,” she said. “I could no more climb up on the roof of my house. But I was so determined that I was going to (skydive), that my determination overrode my fear.”

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Judy Griffin turns 103

Mary Judith Griffin, known as "Judy," celebrated 103 years of life on Saturday, Sept. 30. Griffin was born in Waco on Sept. 29, 1920. Her family goes back generations in Texas.

Griffin's grandmother was the first Anglo woman on the Chisholm Trail to arrive in Texas in the late 1800s as detailed in the Hood County News article of Feb. 20, 2010.

Griffin celebrated at her home with her family toasting her. She originally moved to Hood County to be closer to her children.

Mary Judith Griffin, known as "Judy," celebrated 103 years of life on Saturday, Sept. 30.

COURTESY PHOTO



Camp Bluebird is a family camp for kids 6-18 and their parents who have experienced loss due to the loss of a loved one. Various activities are available for the kids to participate in from rec, games, bounce house, and painting.



PHOTOS BY LAYTH TAYLOR | HOOD COUNTY NEWS



PUMPKIN

FROM PAGE C1 then at the end, we take out our part of the profit, and write (PumpkinsUSA) a check for the rest."

This year, Harlow expects the patch to be even more successful with more time to

prepare. "This year, I'm going to have more activities for kids to do like a slide and a teeter totter, just things for them to play. I've also partnered with four food trucks for Saturday, and we're doing a joint car show. I also called all the daycares in Granbury this year for private ses-

sions before we're open to the public, that way they can bring their class out. For me I love kids, and so I'm excited about that," Harlow said. Whatever pumpkins don't sell, the church donates them to local farmers to give to their livestock. "A lot of people benefit from this activity. From

the people who grow the pumpkins, the people who sponsor all that, and all the money we raise goes straight into the children's ministry here at the church. There's literally someone in my mind from the start of the pumpkin growing until we finish who benefits. I just think it's a great way for the commu-

nity to support that, and it's just a fun activity to do with your kids," Harlow said. The pumpkin patch will be open to the public starting Oct. 16, operating Monday through Friday from 1 p.m. to 6 p.m. and Saturday and Sunday from 12 p.m. to 7 p.m. The last day of the pumpkin patch will be on

Oct. 31. First Baptist Church is located at 1851 Weatherford Hwy in Granbury. To learn more about PumpkinsUSA or get pumpkins ordered for your organization, visit pumpkinsusa.org.

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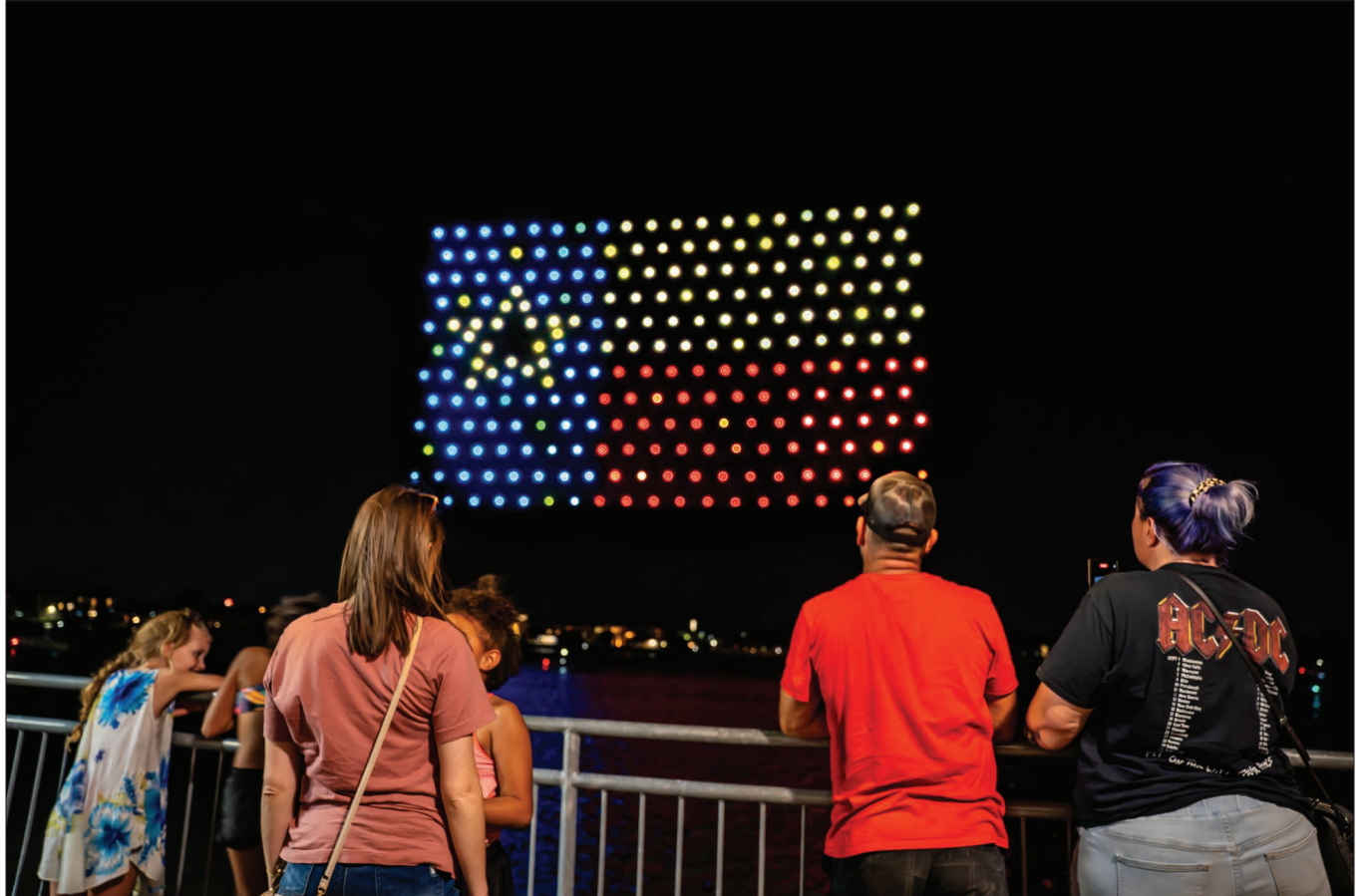
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LakeFest 2023

Lakefest was held Saturday, Sept. 30 at the Lake Granbury Conference Center. The family-friendly event kicked off at noon with all day activities for the whole family. This year, for the first time ever, the event featured a 15-to-20-minute drone show with 250 drones that included customized focused on Granbury. The Time Machine cover band performed music from the 70s to current songs. In addition, the country cover band Straight Tequilla Nights performed, who cover 90s country.

PHOTOS BY LAYTH TAYLOR | HOOD COUNTY NEWS



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7	Mission Granbury 5K/1K Ghost Run
13-15	Here's to Clue--Spooky Edition
14	Granbury Rock N Blues Bash
14	Brazos River Corvette Club Annual Charity Car Show
14	Pub Shindy
21	Monarch Celebration & Tagging Event
21-22	Dallas Spartan Ultra 50K, Beast 21K, & Sprint 5K
28-29	Harvest Moon Festival of the Arts
NOVEMBER	
4-5	World Tough Mudder Dallas Event
11	Veteran's Day Ceremonies at Memorial Lane
11-12	Tough Mudder Dallas Event - Granbury, TX
10-11	Granbury Winter Wine Walk
24	Night of Lights Lighted Christmas Parade

Information subject to change | Go to visitgranbury.com for more!

They came from far and wide for vittles and dancin'

The Texas Cowboy Symposium and Chuckwagon Cookoff makes its mark on Granbury with two day event

BY EDEN DUNCAN
GILBREATH
Special to the
Hood County News

The smells of delicious food filled the air during the days, and evenings brought live music and dancing on Friday, Sept. 29 and Saturday, Sept. 30 as The Texas Cowboy Symposium and Chuckwagon Cookoff took place at Warren's Backyard. It's the first time an event of this kind has come to Hood County.

In terms of numbers the event at least tied or possibly surpassed the largest event that Warren's Backyard ever hosted. In the first month the event was posted on social media, the venue received 76,000 social media contacts. Estimates are around 1,800 to 2,000 people attended the two-day symposium. The meal tickets sold out.

The event was the brainchild of Homer Robertson who is a lifelong resident of Granbury. Robertson competed in many such events in the 28 years since he began cooking over an open flame. Robertson found a Dutch oven at his grandmother's house which began a lifelong pursuit of outdoor culinary cooking.

In his decades of cooking, Robertson won three national championships and appeared on the Food Network. Robertson desired to share with Hood County the western way of life and cooking, but people in fact came from all over Texas for the event and even from neighboring states. Robertson said, "It got big, it's crazy how big. We were very fortunate; I was super pleased. The community really got behind us to



Competitor with his wagon at the Texas Cowboy Symposium and Chuckwagon Cookoff during the last weekend in September.

support the Hood County Youth Livestock Show and the Granbury High School (GHS) culinary department. The sponsors were great." Robertson went on laughing, "my phone has been blowing up with people wondering if we will host this again. I think we will have to, or we will be run out of Hood County."

Jim Kelley, a resident of Hood County for over three decades as well as a Dutch oven cook himself, was delighted by the event. Kelley attended on Saturday from 3:30 p.m. to the end of the event at 10:30 p.m. Kelley has lived the western lifestyle both personally and professionally in many capacities over the years. Kelley is a cattleman and horseman as well as working the stockyards as a superintendent of the Fort Worth Stock Show &

Rodeo's (FWSSR) Jr. Steer Show where he has volunteered since 1979. He is currently honorary vice president for the FWSSR.

Kelley shares, "It was just so refreshing. Old western swing music playing, folks dancing the two-step and the three-step. I saw everyone from 8 years old to 93 years old dancing. A little boy about 8 years old came dancing by with his sister. He was hearing the beat, making the steps correctly, and was having the time of his life. I complimented him and asked if the lady nearby was his grandmother. He said 'Yes, Sir,' and he said that yes, his grandmother had taught him to dance."

Friends share a fan and a laugh at the Texas Cowboy Symposium and Chuckwagon Cookoff on Saturday, Sept. 30.

Kelley was amazed to have seen so many people he has known over the years, including friends from college he hadn't seen



Attendees chitchat while the bands play through the evening at the Texas Cowboy Symposium on Friday, Sept 29.

in decades. "I was almost taken aback. It reminded me of the '70s and '80s," Kelly said. "Almost surreal, it was just that kind of wonderful, wholesome event, amazing food and great music, a bunch of friends sitting around talking. Just a great event."

The cook-off part of the

event required each of the 14 chuckwagon teams to prepare a full meal including meat, potato, beans, gravy, bread and dessert. There were youth competitors as well from Granbury High School (GHS) culinary department. Part of the money

PLEASE SEE **COOKOFF** | C7



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Sat: 11:20AM, 1:50PM, 4:20PM, 6:50PM, 9:20PM.
Sun: 11:20AM, 1:50PM, 4:20PM, 6:50PM.
Mon, Tues, Wed, Thurs: 2:30PM, 5:00PM, 7:30PM

PAW Patrol: The Mighty Movie (PG)
Fri: 12:05PM, 2:30PM, 3:00PM, 4:55PM, 7:20PM.
Sat: 10:00AM, 11:00AM, 12:25PM, 2:50PM, 5:15PM, 7:40PM.
Sun: 10:00AM, 11:10AM, 12:25PM, 2:50PM, 5:15PM.
Mon, Tues, Wed, Thurs: 2:20PM, 4:45PM, 7:10PM

Saw X (R)
Fri: 5:25PM, 8:10PM, 9:45PM, 10:55PM.
Sat: 1:25PM, 4:10PM, 6:55PM, 9:40PM, 10:05PM.
Sun: 1:35PM, 4:20PM, 7:05PM, 7:40PM.
Mon, Tues, Wed, Thurs: 2:15PM, 5:00PM, 7:45PM

The Blind (PG13)
Fri: 12:15PM, 2:00PM, 4:45PM, 7:30PM, 10:15PM.
Sat: 10:15AM, 1:00PM, 3:45PM, 6:30PM, 9:15PM.
Sun: 10:15AM, 1:00PM, 3:45PM, 6:30PM.
Mon, Tues, Wed, Thurs: 2:00PM, 4:45PM, 7:30PM

The Creator (PG13)
Fri: 1:00PM, 4:00PM, 7:00PM, 10:00PM.
Sat: 10:00AM, 1:00PM, 4:00PM, 7:00PM, 10:00PM.
Sun: 10:00AM, 1:00PM, 4:00PM, 7:00PM.
Mon, Tues, Wed, Thurs: 2:00PM, 5:00PM, 8:00PM

The Exorcist: Believer (R)
Fri: 2:00PM, 4:35PM, 7:10PM, 9:45PM.
Sat: 11:15AM, 1:50PM, 4:25PM, 7:00PM, 9:35PM.
Sun: 11:15AM, 1:50PM, 4:25PM, 7:00PM.
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Buddy is a male Doberman mix. He is approximately 5-6 years old and weighs about 55 pounds. Buddy is playful and very social. Special adoption fee of \$25! The adoption fee includes sterilization, rabies vaccination, the first round of vaccines, pyrantel dewormer, and a HomeAgain microchip.

Sammy is a neutered male domestic shorthair cat. He is approximately 8 years old. Sammy is friendly and thrives on attention. His adoption fee is \$25. The adoption fee includes his rabies vaccination, the first round of vaccines, pyrantel dewormer, and a HomeAgain microchip.

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CAR

FROM PAGE C2

sell them things that aren't needed, and we just advise them of what we found on their car. We try to address the problem they come in with, but we also make them aware of anything else that could possibly be an issue or leave them stranded on the road."

The company tagline for CBA is "Love your neighbor as yourself," — and that's exactly what Loter and his team in Granbury aim to do; both with customer

service and the "cup car" campaign.

"Our ultimate goal is to be a light in our communities," Loter said. "We just happen to do it with auto repair. Since we opened in Granbury, we have been blessed to be a part of this community and want to give back to help others when needs arise."

Hub Garage officials are encouraging everyone to follow the "cup car's" journey around the country and take a picture with the colorful car to raise awareness and donations for the organization. All proceeds

from the campaign will go directly toward car repairs for single moms in need.

"We're not just fixing cars; we're trying to break generational poverty," Hub Garage Managing Director Jonathan Carr said, in the organization's news release. "There are over 10 million single moms in the United States, and nearly 30 percent of those moms are living below the poverty line. If these moms don't have functioning transportation, it affects their ability to get to work and get their kids to school. It affects the trajectory of their lives."

To donate to the Hub Garage and see or take a picture with the "cup car," please stop by Christian Brothers Automotive Granbury at 3809 East Hwy 377 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. beginning Friday, Oct. 21 through Monday, Oct. 23.

For more information about the Hub Garage, visit thehubgarage.org online. For more information about CBA Granbury, visit cbac.com/granbury online.

ashley@hcnews.com | 817-573-1243

COOKOFF

FROM PAGE C6

raised goes to the Hood County Youth Livestock Show and the GHS culinary department. Several auction

items to that end included a pair of Klapper spurs which were auctioned for \$6,500.

"It was amazing! They knocked it out of the park. Homer was a total professional putting on this

event. Brett and Steve with Warren's Backyard made it all possible," said Tammy Dooley, executive director of Visit Granbury. "Such a great venue for this type of event — a true western

event, cowboys and cowgirls everywhere, chuckwagons. A wonderful family event! It was great looking over to see 'Sold Out' on the sign outside, that's just how well received this event was."

GO PLAY**MONDAYS****HEALTHY CONNECTIONS**

exercise classes: 9 a.m. exercise (strength and balance); 10 a.m. Tai Chi; 10:30 a.m. exercise (strength and balance); 5 p.m. yoga. 1321 Waters Edge Drive, Suite 1001. Details: 817-579-2979.

GRANBURY BRIDGE Club will hold an ACBL-sanctioned duplicate bridge game at noon each week at the Acton Methodist Church, 3433 Fall Creek HWY, Granbury, TX 76049. Entry \$8/person. All are welcome, come with a partner and compete for ACBL masterpoints! Info & reservations: 225-933-4074.

SONS OF the American Legion Post 491 of Granbury Burger Night. 5 - 7 p.m. American Legion Post, 3409 Davis Road. Funds raised are used to support veteran and community youth programs. Open to members and guests. Details: 515-554-6498.

GRANBURY CIVIC Chorus rehearsals, 7 p.m. at Acton United Methodist Church, 3433 Fall Creek Highway. Details: granburycivicchorus2001@gmail.com. December program will feature songs of Christmas from around the world. www.granburycivicchorus.org

TUESDAYS

LINE DANCING 2 p.m. Healthy Connections, 1321 Waters Edge Drive, Suite 1001. Details: 817-579-2979.

GRANBURY JAM Session 7:30-10:30 p.m. at Brock's Food and Drink, 4012 Acton Highway. Bring your instrument or get up and sing! Details: 505-710-5100.

BEGINNERS' CHAIR Yoga 45-minute Class. Tuesdays at 1:30 p.m. - Donations for Local Charities are accepted. Class will take place at Emmanuel Lutheran Church located at 2301 Fall Creek Hwy, 76049. For more information, call 817-326-2201

PEDALING FOR Parkinson's hosted by the Hood County YMCA will be from 1 to 2 p.m. at 1475 James Road. The program is led by a certified group fitness instructor and consists of a pre- and

post-fitness evaluation, and 45-minute spin/cycling session. Program will last 12 weeks. For more information call 817-624-9791 or e-mail communityhealth@ymcafw.org.

WEDNESDAYS

HAND AND Foot card game day. 10 a.m.; Dominoes (Mexican Train) 11 a.m. Healthy Connections, 1321 Waters Edge Drive, Suite 1001. Details: 817-579-2979.

HABITAT FOR Humanity of Hood County, Wednesdays and Saturdays from 8 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. We are building in the 4000 block of Sundown Trail. No experience or tools needed. Just come build with us.

THURSDAYS

HEALTHY CONNECTIONS exercise classes. 9 a.m. exercise (strength and balance); 10 a.m. Tai Chi; 10:30 a.m. exercise (strength and balance); 11:15 a.m. 1321 Waters Edge Drive, Suite 1001. Details: 817-579-2979.

CHESS CLUB, 5-9 p.m. at YMCA, 1475 James Road. U.S. Chess Affiliate, all ages and skill levels, children 10 and under must be accompanied by adult. Y membership not required. Details: HoodCountyChess.com.

GENERAL TRIVIA, 7-9 p.m. at Brew Drinkery, 206 E. Pearl Street. Prizes and fun. Use your phone to play. Free.

THE GRANBURY Disc Golf Club has Mini tournaments every Thursday at 5:30 p.m. at 600 W. Moore St. Welcoming all levels of disc golfers. Show up at least 15 minutes early to pay the \$12 entry fee and warm up.

PEDALING FOR Parkinson's hosted by the Hood County YMCA will be from 1 to 2 p.m. at 1475 James Road. The program is led by a certified group fitness instructor and consists of a pre- and post-fitness evaluation, and 45-minute spin/cycling session. Program will last 12 weeks. For more information, call 817-624-9791 or e-mail communityhealth@ymcafw.org.

SATURDAYS

HOOD COUNTY Hummers Walking Club, 8 a.m., meet every Saturday at Hilton Garden Inn, 635 E. Pearl St., for 5K or 10K walk for fun, fellowship and fitness. Details: 972-567-3278.

HABITAT FOR Humanity of Hood County Wednesdays and Saturdays from 8 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. We are building in the 4000 block of Sundown Trail. No experience or tools needed. Just come build with us.

SUNDAYS

THE GRANBURY Disc Golf Club has Mini tournaments every Sunday at 2 p.m. at 600 W. Moore St. Welcoming all levels of disc golfers. Show up at least 15 minutes early to pay the \$12 entry fee and warm up.

FIRST MONDAYS

HOOD COUNTY Amateur Radio Club meets on the first Monday each month at 7 p.m. at the Hood County Emergency Operations Center, 401 Deputy Larry Miller Drive.

LOVE KNOTS Prayer Shawl Ministry. The ministry is in need of people to crochet, knit, or use a knitting loom to make gifts to comfort the ill, bereaved, infants, etc. 1 - 3 p.m. Acton Baptist Church Fellowship Hall, 3500 Fall Creek Highway. Details: 817-326-4693.

FIRST TUESDAYS

GRANBURY DOLL Club meeting, 2 p.m. Granbury Doll House Museum, 421 E Bridge St. All doll appreciators are welcome!

SECOND TUESDAYS

GRANBURY KNITTING Guild meets to knit, learn, and share knitting tips each month at First Presbyterian Church Annex, 303 W. Bridge St. Coffee at 9:30 a.m. and meeting from 10-11:30 a.m.

FOURTH TUESDAYS

HOOD COUNTY Historical Society meets the 4th Tuesday each month (except

November and December) at 7 p.m. at the Historic Granbury Railroad Depot, 109 E. Ewell St. Contact Karen Nace 817-279-2995 for additional details.

FIRST THURSDAYS

BRAZOS RIVER Corvette Club meets on the first Thursday each month for fellowship, planning events, and other business. Dinner, if desired, at 6 p.m., meeting from 7-8 p.m. at Spring Creek Barbeque, 317 E. U.S. Highway 377. Details: bskaggs8@aol.com.

SECOND THURSDAYS

HOOD COUNTY CERT meets on the second Thursday of every month at 6 p.m. at the Emergency Operations Center located at 401 Deputy Larry Miller Dr. HoodCo-Cert@gmail.com

THIRD THURSDAYS

THE HOOD Somerville A&M Club meets the 3rd Thursday (except June, July & August) at Spring Creek BBQ located at 317 W Hwy 376 Granbury at 6 p.m., dining/social, 6:30 p.m. meeting. Other activities, fundraisers, and meeting changes can be found at hscaggies.org

SECOND SATURDAYS

2ND SATURDAY Showoff at Fuzzy's Taco Shop, 115 W. Pearl St. Car show, 8:30 - 10:30 a.m.

THIRD MONDAYS

GRANBURY QUILTERS Guild meets on the third Monday each month at United Coop Electric, 320 Fall Creek Highway, 6 p.m. Details: 817-296-8186.

LOVE KNOTS Prayer Shawl Ministry. The ministry is in need of people to crochet, knit, or use a knitting loom to make gifts to comfort the ill, bereaved, infants, etc. 1 - 3 p.m. Acton Baptist Church Fellowship Hall, 3500 Fall Creek Highway. Details: 817-326-4693.

GO PLAY calendar will feature recurring activities that are open to the public. These items will run each week along with other activities across the area. Submit Go Play listings to calendar@hcnews.com and include the day, date, time and location - including street address.

PLACE YOUR AD TO RUN IN PRINT AND ONLINE AT CLASSIFIEDS.HCNEWS.COM

HOME IN ON MORE BUYERS

PECAN PLANTATION BITS

Green Thumb Garden Club brings fall décor to Pecan



BY DIANE LONG

A Mississippi native who has been a Texas transplant for 29 years, Diane Long is a wife, mother, and former English teacher who has written Pecan Plantation Bits for 16 years cumulatively. She spends her time both gathering neighborhood news and collecting new books to read.

The members of Pecan's Green Thumb Garden Club have turned the front and back circles of our community into fall "sights to behold" for residents. Additional seasonal décor may be found at both entrances to The Retreat. Many hours of work delivered the lovely scenery as the GTGC welcomes fall following a very hot summer. Residents may partner with the GTGC both in membership and with financial contributions. For more information on the group and its activities, send email to Linda Kunzman at lindago-go@msn.com. Many thanks go to the hardworking volunteers for their efforts.



PHOTO COURTESY OF KAREN GOMEZ AND LINDA KUNZMAN

Pecan residents and members of the Green Thumb Garden Club have transformed the front and back circles with festive fall decor. Pictured are Linda Kunzman, Mark Kulcak, and Ronnie Herring at work in our community.

bookmobile.

NET NEWS

The Pecan Plantation Tennis Association will celebrate "Oktoberfest" on Friday, Oct. 13 at 6 p.m. Food (hotdogs and sausages from the grill), tennis play, and fellowship are on the menu for folks on the court.

GLOBAL EATS

"Dining around the World" will come to Pecan on Saturday, Oct. 14 when dishes representing Germany, France, Italy, New Orleans, Polynesia, and Texas will be on the menu. No passport is needed to enjoy this four-hour dining experience and entertainment at the clubhouse. Executive Chef Jordan Ray says, "There will be five mini restaurants set up in and around the clubhouse, and members and guests will be invited to eat and drink to their heart's content." Ray also adds that the evening "will be all about fun." The "tour" will begin with a champagne start in the clubhouse lobby that will include a photo opportunity with an ice sculpture. Call the clubhouse front desk for reservations: 817-573-2641.

GARAGE SALE

Pecan's fall garage sale weekend is on the calendar for Friday, Oct. 20 and Saturday, Oct. 21. Friday's sale for members only will run from 3:30 to 7:30 p.m. with Saturday's operations happening from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. and open to the public. Residents received email with a QR code allowing folks who desire to be included in the garage sale master list to add items available for purchase.

ART SCENE

The Pecan Plantation Art Guild will gather on Tuesday, Oct. 10 at the PAC when Fort Worth artist Brooke Lynne Weibe will present a demonstration and workshop focusing on acrylic paints, up-cycled canvases, exaggerated style, and retro themes with a southwestern, modern take. Attendees may register by using the QR code provided in "The Columns."

BREAKFAST CLUB

Pecan's Breakfast Club will meet again on Wednesday, Oct. 11 in the Terrace Room with breakfast service beginning at 8 a.m. and the program at 9. Attendees will hear from Dewey and Janet Powers when they present "You May Be a Birder!" The Powers have "chased birds from the west coast to Maine and led tours in search of the elusive Whooping Crane." In addition, they are amateur photographers with "a great love of birds." Breakfast Club goers are in for a treat with the Powers. Reservations for the morning are due by 12 noon on Tuesday, Oct. 10: 817-573-2641.

BOOKS TO GO

The Hood County Bookmobile will be at the PAC on Wednesday, Oct. 11 from 3:30 to 5 p.m. Patrons may both check out and return library books at the

GROWING WELL

The Pecan Plantation Community Gardens is a busy place with its first fall crop in the ground. Some of the bounty to come includes zucchini, cucumbers, carrots, and lettuce. The next workday will happen Saturday, Oct. 14, and "Happy Hour" in the garden will occur Tuesday, Oct. 17. All Pecaners are invited to visit the garden on these dates to learn of its offerings. In addition, new members are always welcome. No previous gardening experience is necessary to join the group. Applications are available at the PAC front desk, and annual dues are \$25.

INFO MEETINGS

The board of directors for Pecan's Volunteer Fire Department/Emergency Medical Service will host two town hall meetings to discuss the proposed assessment increase in 2024. Both meetings will take place on Saturday, Oct. 14 (one at 10 a.m. and the other at 2 p.m.) at the Charlie Lee EMS Building on Monticello Drive.

WOMAN'S CLUB

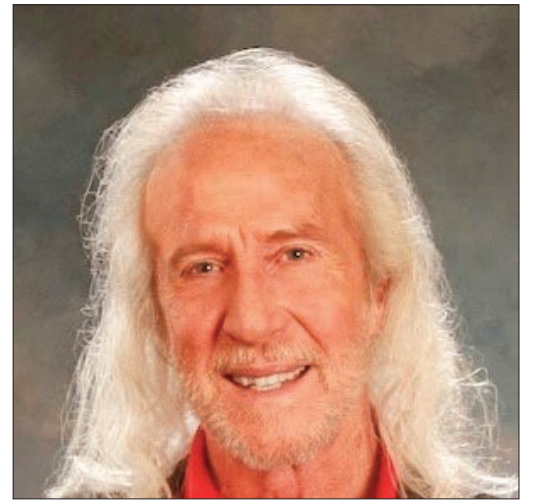
The next meeting of the Pecan Plantation Woman's Club (PPWC) comes Thursday, Oct. 19, but reservations are due by Thursday, Oct. 12 at 12 noon for ladies not on the permanent reservation list. Secure a spot by sending email to ppwcres@gmail.com.

NIGHT GATHERING

The PPWC's next evening social is on the calendar for Tuesday, Oct. 10 from 6 to 8 p.m. when ladies will enjoy a meal together, learn about

PLEASE SEE **PECAN** | C10

THE IDLE AMERICAN



COURTESY PHOTOS

Randy Brooks, left, at age 36, when he began playing Jesus in "The Promise." At right, Randy at 70, still playing and singing at venues throughout the Metroplex.

Down from the Cross



BY DON NEWBURY

Dr. Don Newbury is a longtime public speaker and former university president who writes weekly.

Randy Brooks, who portrayed Jesus in "The Promise" more than 6,000 times, is nearing the 60-year mark in Christian ministry. But he still has "the look" -- the kind that causes head-scratching when vaguely familiar faces are seen.

Randy was cast in the role in 1989, when the award-winning musical began its 34-year run at Glen Rose's Texas Amphitheater. He later appeared for years in Branson, MO, at a New York City church and numerous performances internationally before he ended the role when COVID arrived in 2020.

Long-haired since the mid-1970s, he now is free to leave his gray hair au natural, unlike most performance years when it was dyed to hide premature graying. Had one of the founding producers of the Glen Rose production not spotted Randy in a hair salon in 1989, he might never

have been featured in "The Promise."

"Can you sing?" she asked. Having been a pianist/vocalist since junior high, he quickly answered, not knowing that the producer was looking for a blue-eyed, long-haired man to play Jesus.

Then age 36, Randy--his commitment to God already strongly in place--signed on, the course of his life to be forever changed. He sang Word-produced songs such as "Closer than a Heartbeat," "It is Written" and "Shalom."

Randy says he writhed and winced with imaginary pain on the cross, but never came close to portraying Jesus' actual suffering. He remembers the challenge of holding onto nails and contorting his body to a 45-degree angle. (On the cross for 20 minutes at each performance, his total time there amounted to 83 24-hour days).

Producers were never wor-

ried about his lacking both theological and theatrical training or changing his mannerisms. He sounded "way too southern," however, so he underwent speech training to sound less so.

Throughout his career, Randy has been closely identified with gospel music, but he and his brother Bill also performed throughout the nation for corporate groups, including Amway and American Airlines. Randy also hooked up with the Stamps Quartet, which provided vocal back-up for Elvis Presley.

He also was music director on 58 episodes of TV's "Country Crossroads," and--with the Brooks Brothers Band--was named "Entertainer of the Year" in Texas for six consecutive years by the Johnnie High Country Music Revue Association, and twice honored in Branson as the "Male Entertainer of the Year."

In 2020, Randy returned to Texas, where he continues to perform, largely at churches, retirement centers and at various other venues.

PLEASE SEE **IDLE** | C10

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IDLE

FROM PAGE C9

"My body told me it was time to slow down, so I have," Randy said.

He feels that he has kept numerous providential appointments in his life, including a recent visit to Shipshewana, IN, where his brother Bill is emcee in the tiny Amish/Mennonite community's two theaters.

With three shows left to perform, Randy was helping Bill move household furniture. A large mirror slipped, seriously cutting Randy's right hand between his wrist and thumb. Fifteen stitches were needed to close the wound, but let's not race ahead.

The nearest hospital was 12 miles away, so Bill took Randy to his doctor's office. Blood gushing, Randy learned that it was the doctor's day off.

Coming through the back door, however, was the doctor, who lives 20 miles away in Goshen.

"I had this strong feeling that I should come to the office," he said.

Providence again, right? Realizing that Randy had sustained a serious injury, the doctor initially suggested calling an ambulance to take him to a hospital. Then, he remembered treating numerous victims of roadway accidents during his Indianapolis internship.

He expertly completed the treatment. Randy, claimed to be "good as new," performed the same evening and at the two closing shows the next day.

"I don't solicit engagements, but enough still come to me," particularly with Shiloh Road, a southern gospel quartet in the Metroplex. "I'll serve the Lord until I can't."

Ever the "people person," he now drives for UberEats between gigs. He hears numerous comments about his "Jesus look," and smiles.

"God is good, now and forever," he said. "With Him, I'm ready for whatever comes next."

Amen.

newbury@speakerdoc.com / 817-447-3872

GARDEN PATCH

Fall brings rose hips



BY PHYLLIS WEBSTER

Phyllis Webster earned a degree in journalism before embarking on a long career in public relations and marketing. A Granbury resident since 1998, she has been deeply involved in the community. She is an award-winning writer and photographer, as well as a Master Gardener. She has authored Garden Patch since 2001.

It was a brief, but a welcome respite from the hot, dry weather. A couple days of rain and moderated temperatures gave many landscape plants what they needed to recover.

Of course, it may be weeks or months before survivors are identified. Meanwhile, look for signs of recovery, such as fresh new buds and flowers, fruit or foliage. Roses, for instance, develop fruiting structures known as "hips." Hips are the seed pods of rose plants. They start to form in late summer when flowers are pollinated, and then ripen in fall. Typically, hips are red or orange, but a number are purple or black. Some are smaller, but average hips are about the size of cherry

tomatoes.

Rose hips are quite ornamental and are often used in dried floral arrangements. They are also edible — fit for wildlife and human consumption. If you do a little homework, you'll find that rose hips are used to make jellies and sauces, baked goods, soups and seasonings, as well as tea. They are known to be a source of vitamin C and antioxidants. Never eat rose hips or any other plant source that has been treated with pesticides. And it's always best to consult with experts when foraging for food.

Wild shrub roses, also known as beach roses or Japanese roses (*Rosa rugosa*) are known for having some of the largest, most

beautiful and tastiest hips. However, most roses can develop these lovely structures if the plants' flowers are allowed to remain on the plant. If you dead head your roses, you will not see hips.

Rose hips become sweeter as they remain on the plant, even if they wrinkle. Harvest them when they are easily removed from the stem. Hips may be used fresh, dried or frozen. Always wash them thoroughly before consuming. You'll need to cut them open or thoroughly strain them through cheesecloth to remove the seeds. Also remove the threadlike hairs growing inside. These hairs are irritating to the stomach if ingested. Consult someone "in the know" about proper preparation.

Rose hip displays are most abundant on plants with single or semi-double blooms. While all roses inherently have the ability to set hips, some types produce flowers with so many petals that they are difficult for pollinators to enter and reach the



COURTESY PHOTO

Hips are the seed pods of rose plants. They start to form in late summer when flowers are pollinated, and then ripen in fall

pollen. Without pollination, hips cannot form.

In addition to *R. rugosa*, another species rose, *R. moyesii*, also produces abundant rose hips. Hybrids and cultivars of these two species roses are reputed to do the same. If hip production is a trait you seek, consider antique shrub roses or select EarthKind™ roses known to develop hips, such as Carefree Beauty, Knock Out and Seafoam.

Remember, do not dead-head roses that are intended for rose hip production.

This may result in fewer flowers, but a longer ornamental season overall. If needed, prune hip-bearing roses in January/February. Remove dead or diseased canes or crossing growth at any time.

For answers to your horticulture questions, please call the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension, Hood County at 817-579-3280 or go online to visit lakegranburymaster-gardeners.org.

pwebsterco@gmail.com / 817-680-4849

PECAN

FROM PAGE C9

the PPWC and its presence in our community, and play trivia bingo. Send email to ppwcevening@gmail.com for reservation information.

BIG SUCCESS

The Pecan Plantation Volunteer Fire Department/Emergency Medical Service Auxiliary sends loads of gratitude to everyone who played a part in last Saturday's Fall Bazaar. Final numbers are being computed,

and every cent of profit earned benefits our emergency service volunteers.

TEAM SAFETY

Next week is "Fire Prevention Month," and Pecan residents certainly have much to be thankful

for when remembering our VFD personnel. Thank you to the men and women who keep us safe on a daily basis.

SYMPATHY

Our deepest sympathy goes to the family of Johnny Savage, who passed away

Sept. 26, to the family of Cecil Gritz, who passed away Sept. 26, and to the family of Bob Mosbarger, who passed away Sept. 27.

dianedlong@yahoo.com / 817-579-9360

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