



# HAPPY THANKSGIVING



GRANBURY ★ TEXAS

## Hood County News

MORE THAN A NEWSPAPER | A HOOD COUNTY LEGEND SINCE 1886

[SATURDAY, November 18, 2023]

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### Honoring those who served



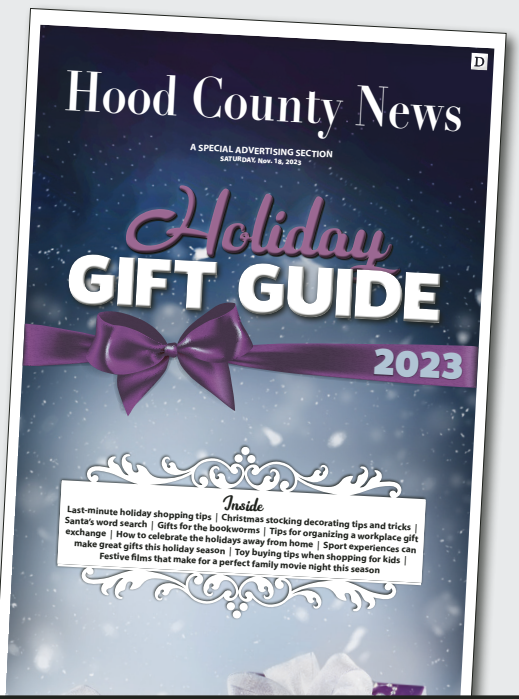
Friends of Memorial Lane presented a special Veteran's Day program at the Military Site of Jim Burks Firefighter Park.

MORE PHOTOS PAGE A6

MARY VINSON | HOOD COUNTY NEWS

#### SPECIAL SECTION INSIDE

Look inside for last-minute holiday shopping tips for every loved one on your list.



### City council runoff election Overdier, Beard to face off Dec. 9

BY ASHLEY TERRY  
Staff Writer

Two Granbury City Council candidates will go head-to-head in a runoff election set for Saturday, Dec. 9.

Candidates for Place 4 on the council included Gary "Skip" Overdier, Charles Beard and Brad Benson, as incumbent Trish Burwell opted not to run for re-election.

The results from the Nov. 7 election are shown below:

Gary "Skip" Overdier: 1,072 votes, 45.93 percent  
Charles Beard: 639 votes, 27.38 percent  
Brad Benson: 623 votes, 26.69 percent  
Since none of the candidates received more than half the votes, a runoff election with the top two candidates — Overdier and Beard — is scheduled for Saturday, Dec. 9.

Jeff Newpher, city communications manager, told the HCN the city election is covered by the state election law, which states that a candidate must get 50% of the votes plus one in order to be classified as the winner.

In the race for Councilperson Place 6, the candidates were (incumbent) Greg Corrigan and Alex Wolf, with Corrigan coming out on top with 1,183 votes or 52.25 percent and Wolf receiving 1,081 votes, or 47.75 percent.

Both council seats are for three-year terms. Early voting in person for the runoff election will take place from Monday, Nov. 27 through Tuesday, Dec. 5 in the Annex 1 meeting room at 1410 W. Pearl St.

The early voting schedule is listed below:  
Nov. 27 through Dec. 1 - 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.  
Dec. 2 through Dec. 3 - CLOSED.  
Dec. 4 through Dec. 5 - 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. (subject to change).

The election returns will be officially confirmed at a council meeting on Thursday, Nov. 16 at 1 p.m.

ashley@hcnews.com | 817-573-1243

### Granbury School Board holds community complaint hearing

BY EMILY NAVA  
Staff Writer

The Granbury ISD School Board held a public hearing on Nov. 9 where five Level 3 grievances against a GISD official were addressed in executive session. Trustee Barbara Townsend was absent from the meeting.

Some public comments were made before going into the executive session that lasted over two hours.

The first public comment was heard from Monica Brown where she requested the grievances be heard in open session. Brown claimed if the district had the support from the com-

munity, voter turnout would have been a lot higher than it was. Brown also claimed that sexually explicit books have been given to the AP English students. Brown said she believes it was unjust of the board to censure Trustee Karen Lowery, and said some of Trustee Billy Wimberly's

comments, made during a special called meeting on Aug. 23 regarding Trustee Lowery's entrance into the library, were "shameful and embarrassing."

Trustee Lowery's husband, Mark Lowery, also spoke during public com-

PLEASE SEE **GISD** | A5

### Safety in the skies: 32 Pecan pilots honored

BY RICK MAUCH  
Special to the Hood County News

John Jaeckle had a twinkle in his eye as his memory took him back to his early childhood, to a time before he was even in elementary school — a time when children dream of what they are going to be when they grow up and the imagination knows no boundaries.

"I can remember as a young 4-year-old sitting in a tree pretending I was a B-17 pilot," he said.

Jaeckle did grow up to become a pilot, and he's been flying for decades without, as he said, "putting any on the ground."

In fact, that was the reason he and 30 of his fellow pilots in Pecan Plantation's Experimental Aircraft

Association (EAA) Chapter 983 were honored Saturday, Nov. 11 (Veterans Day) as recipients of the Wright Brothers Master Pilot Award (WBA). The award recognizes pilots who have demonstrated professionalism, skill and aviation expertise by maintaining safe operations for 50 or more years.

The ceremony took place at the Pecan Plantation

Airport and it was a record-setting event. Never before had this many pilots in a single organization received the award in a ceremony. The previous record was 13, almost all from the Pecan chapter.

"All I can say is how tough is it to do anything for 50 years without a screwup?" said Tom Woodward, a

PLEASE SEE **PILOTS** | A7



137TH YEAR, NO. 103

Local, zone(s): 4 sections, 42 pages, plus supplements | State: 4 sections, 42 pages

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# COMMUNITY BUSINESS

## CHAMBER NEWS



### Celebrating Success and Community Spirit A Heartfelt Thank You to our Chamber Members

#### Chamber message

In the spirit of gratitude and appreciation, the Granbury Chamber of Commerce extends a heartfelt thank you to its dedicated members for their unwavering commitment to the community's success. As pillars of support, these businesses and individuals play a pivotal role in shaping Granbury and its surrounding area's economic landscape, fostering growth and building a stronger, more vibrant future.

Our chamber members are the driving force behind the prosperity we witness in Granbury and its surrounding area. Their passion, dedication and collaborative spirit are the cornerstones of our community's success. As we reflect on the accomplishments and milestones of the past year, it's clear that the collective efforts of our members have made a lasting impact on the economic vitality and overall well-being of Granbury.

From local entrepreneurs and small businesses to established enterprises, each chamber member contributes in unique ways, creating a tapestry of collaboration that strengthens the fabric of Granbury. The support, both financial and in terms of active participation, has been instrumental in the success of chamber initiatives, events and community outreach programs.

Being a part of the Granbury Chamber of Commerce not only connects you with other businesses, it also provides a valuable resource and platform to contribute to the growth of the community. It's a symbiotic relationship where we all thrive together.

The chamber's commitment to its members is evident through a range of programs and services designed to promote business growth, networking opportunities and community engagement. Whether through educational workshops, networking events or collaborative marketing efforts, the chamber strives to empower its members to achieve their goals and contribute to the overall prosperity of Granbury.

As the end of the year nears, the Granbury Chamber of Commerce is not only celebrating the achievements of its members but is also looking forward to the continued collaboration that will drive success in the future. Plans are already underway for new initiatives and events in the coming year, with the chamber members at the forefront of these exciting developments.

In the spirit of the upcoming holiday season, the Granbury Chamber of Commerce expresses its deepest gratitude to each member for their continued support, dedication and contributions to the success and vibrancy of our beloved community. Together, we look forward to a future filled with shared achievements, growth and a thriving Granbury for all.

## RIBBON CUTTINGS



COURTESY PHOTO

Grace Obstetrics and Gynecology: Ribbon Cutting to celebrate the Grand Opening of the New Location of Grace Obstetrics & Gynecology! Located at 805 Hill Blvd. Unit #104.

### New members & Renewals

Welcome to our New Chamber Members who joined in October!

- Deeply Rooted Living
- Kitchen, Bath and Home Texas
- Freddy's Frozen Custard
- La Fondita de Cristina
- Marigold Ranch
- DSG Benefits Group
- GFT Enterprises
- Purefoy Electric, LLC
- Metrogeek
- U.S. Wound
- Granbury Laser and Medical Aesthetics
- 7-Eleven
- Senior Placement Consulting

Thank You to the following members who renewed their Chamber Membership in October!

We appreciate your continued support!

- Knieper Realty

- Hood County Children's Charity
- Delaine's Place
- Granbury Realty – Lisamarie Sheck
- Patti's Last Resort
- Pug on a Pontoon
- Cornerstone Caregiving
- Stars Align Performing Arts Studio
- Granbury Oasis
- Callaway Development Services
- Built to Last
- Coleman Aerobic Septic
- James Kate Roofing
- Nurse Next Door
- Keller Williams – Jacque Gordon
- Barking Rocks Winery

- Keller Williams Brazos West – Stuart Chinworth
- Eagle Eyes Commercial Janitorial
- Red on the Square
- Winston Properties – Pamela Miller
- Knieper Realty – Vickie Davies

- Perdue Brandon Fielder Collins & Mott LLP
- Ann Whitecotton Homes
- Baylor Scott & White Surgicare
- Mission Granbury
- First Baptist Granbury
- Diamond C Sandblasting & Painting
- Addington Jones CPA, PLLC
- Waste Connections
- Berney Beckworth
- Northcutt Farmers Insurance
- True Grit Ranch
- Gardens of DeCordova
- Proscapes
- Personnel Services
- Lakeview Dental

## MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

**Member Spotlight**

**STARPOINTE REALTY MANAGEMENT**

**Starpointe Realty Management**

*"We have been in business since 2011 and pride ourselves as leaders in our local real estate market and the property management community. For the last 9 years we have been active members of the NARPM (National Association of Residential Property Managers) community and stay current on the latest property management industry trends."*

COURTESY GRAPHIC

Starpointe Realty Management. "We have been in business since 2011 and pride ourselves as leaders in our local real estate market and the property management community. For the last 9 years we have been active members of the NARPM (National Association of Residential Property Managers) community and stay current on the latest property management industry trends. With a team of dedicated property management professionals StarPointe Realty Management immediately experienced rapid growth and now consistently manages between 500-600 properties in Central Texas for both seasoned, novice and accidental investors." Thank you for joining the Granbury Chamber of Commerce!

**Member Spotlight**

**FARMERS INSURANCE**

**Scott Moltzan Agency**

**Scott Moltzan Insurance Agency**

*"We're proud of more than 90 years of serving our customers and excited about the future as we continue to evolve to meet their needs. Our ambition is to be the leader in delivering peace of mind, innovating for customers whenever and wherever they need us."*

COURTESY GRAPHIC

Scott Moltzan Insurance Agency. "We're proud of more than 90 years of serving our customers and excited about the future as we continue to evolve to meet their needs. Our ambition is to be the leader in delivering peace of mind, innovating for customers whenever and wherever they need us. Farmers not only prides itself on helping you plan wisely for the unexpected, but also on helping restore order when it occurs, so you can keep moving along the road of your life's plans." Thank you for joining the Granbury Chamber of Commerce!

**Member Spotlight**

**Best Electric**

**Best Electric**

*"We are dedicated to providing exceptional electrical services to our valued customers. With years of industry experience, our team of skilled electricians is committed to delivering reliable solutions tailored to meet your specific needs."*

COURTESY GRAPHIC

Best Electric. "We are dedicated to providing exceptional electrical services to our valued customers. With years of industry experience, our team of skilled electricians is committed to delivering reliable solutions tailored to meet your specific needs." Thank you for joining the Granbury Chamber of Commerce!

PLEASE SEE **COMMUNITY BUSINESS** | A4

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FROM MY FRONT PORCH

# How do you steal a truck by accident?



**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.

Those who know me understand I may be a little Attention Deficit Disorder with Hyperactivity. It is hard for me to sit still and even harder to keep my mind focused on a single thing. When I get in bed at night my mind races through the limitless lists of things to do and jumps back and forth from thinking about a topic for a column, remembering to take my shirts to the cleaners, meeting with a customer or sitting down with an employee. My staff knows at any given time I may have three or four "to do lists" on my desk, and it is not the least bit unusual for me to be in the middle of talking to someone and stop to write down a thought which happened to pop into my brain.

I enjoy driving because it is a time when I am free of interruptions and my mind can race from item to item with-

out distractions. Some years ago, there was an occasion where letting my mind race almost got me into trouble.

I was in the ranching business. On this day I was delivering a mare to another ranch, but wanting to multitask, I thought I would drop my shirts off at the cleaners as I passed through town. It was the middle of our busy season and as I left the ranch in my white Ford dually, my mind was thinking about what I needed to do after I got the mare delivered. I needed more feed for the grain bin, had to get back and move mares and babies from one pasture to another, medicate some sick animals, and instruct interns on some odd jobs I wanted done. All these thoughts were racing through my mind as I pulled into the cleaners.

I parked my truck like always, leaving the keys in the ignition. Upon grabbing up my shirts out of the back seat, I bounded into the dry cleaner's. The woman who worked there was a friendly, outgoing lady and she suggested that while I was in the store, I pick up shirts I had left the week

prior.

Waiting for the clerk to get my clean shirts off the rack, the door chime rang, and a middle-aged woman walked through the door. I tipped my hat and said hello, and she fell in line behind me. The clerk brought me the laundered shirts, I paid her, and then shot out the door. I walked up to "my truck" swung open the back door, and hung my shirts before jumping into the driver's seat. I turned the key in the ignition and started to drive away.

I had not driven more than a couple of hundred feet, and I noticed a woman's purse in the driver's seat. My first thought was, which one of the interns had left their purse in my truck? Then I noticed the radio was on a station I did not listen to. Oh My! I had jumped into a white dually parked in front of the cleaners, but it was not mine!

I immediately stopped and backed up, pulled into a spot next to where my truck

was parked, and sheepishly walked back into the cleaners. The two ladies were looking at me as I walked through the door, and they had huge smiles on their faces. The clerk shouted, "We were just getting ready to call the Sheriff!" and then giggled. The owner of the truck looked at me and said, "You know if you borrow a truck you are supposed to return it full of fuel?"

Both women cracked up as I tried to explain my misdeed which I chalked up to having too many things on my mind. Thankfully, the rightful owner of the truck was a gracious, big-hearted woman and accepted my apologies with good humor and understanding. Though a little embarrassed, there was no harm and no foul.

The best part is I still have a clean criminal record with no mention of auto theft.

**GOOD PEOPLE DOING GOOD THINGS**  
I love it when I see good

people doing good things for people in our community. My friends over at Mattressville are giving away free turkeys on Nov. 18, at 9 a.m. to help the community celebrate Thanksgiving. There is no purchase required. Simply go to the Mattressville store at 4061 Hwy 377 in Granbury and get in line.

There is a limit of one turkey per family. I understand they are giving away around 100 Thanksgiving Day turkeys trying to help people who might otherwise have to do without. A big salute to the folks at Mattressville. Thanks for being an important part of our community!

Thought for the day: Doing nothing is very hard to do. How the heck do you know when you are finished?

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

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

## Folks around town



MARY VINSON | HOOD COUNTY NEWS

Renee Rogers

### Say hello to our neighbor, Renee Rogers!

Renee Rogers and her husband, Randy Rogers, have called Hood County home for almost four years. When the time came for the couple to retire from their careers in the oil business, Renee, an avid gardener, and Randy (who loves to golf) found Hood County a natural choice for a happy retirement. Already a frequent visitor to Granbury, the couple absolutely love living here. The "In God We Trust" message on local law enforcement vehicles truly warms Renee's heart. Beginning first as a volunteer, Renee has contributed hours of study and hard work to earn her Lake Granbury Master Gardener ranking. Rogers' says that working side by side with fellow Master Gardeners is like drinking from a firehose of knowledge. Renee also shares how much she loves efforts made by kids in the FFA, FFA Floral Design, and MCJROTC programs at Granbury High School. Renee says the Hood County News is a wonderful newspaper. She's been a subscriber since before they ever moved here, as are several other Houston friends who also transplanted to Hood County in recent years.

## Mission Granbury receives \$30,000 grant for Project Freedom Legal assistance for victims of domestic violence

Staff reports

Finding the courage to leave an abusive relationship is hard, but staying gone can be even harder. Many victims leave with no money, no car, and nowhere to go. If they leave with children, they are consumed with fear for their safety, their emotional well-being, and their future. So, they return to the abusive home that held them captive for far too long, because it's their only choice.

Thanks to a grant from the Texas Bar Foundation, Mission Granbury's family violence program is expanding its services to include assistance with

legal fees for victims of domestic violence. Project Freedom will provide up to \$1,500 to help qualifying residential and non-residential victims navigate their way to freedom from abuse.

"This grant will empower victims to stay the course toward breaking free from abuse," Justin Rossner, Mission Granbury's program director for family violence, said. "Project Freedom allows them to take that first step toward standing their ground, understanding their legal rights and moving forward with confidence and qualified guidance."

Project Freedom aims to make a dif-

ference for victims who need resources to get out of a dangerous situation.

"This grant could easily be the difference between a victim who makes it and one who doesn't. Not having the resources to defend yourself is daunting. Project Freedom will change that playing field," Dusti Scovel, executive director said.

Since its inception in 1965, the Texas Bar Foundation has awarded more than \$26 million in grants to law-related programs. Supported by members of the State Bar of Texas, the Texas Bar Foundation is the nation's largest charitably-funded bar foundation.

# Brookshire's food & pharmacy



## Thanksgiving Turkey Giveaway Winners

- Denise Stringfellow
- Jere Rickman
- Miles Branch
- Pat Riley
- LaFon Commander
- John Roberts
- Pam Phillips
- Rhonda Peltier
- Abby Baldwin
- Walter Robinson

- Amberlynn Littlepage
- Greg Reynolds
- Geneva Max
- Lisa Hardy
- Connie Boase
- Darla Eason
- Julia Pannell
- Anne Gonzales
- Marla Warden

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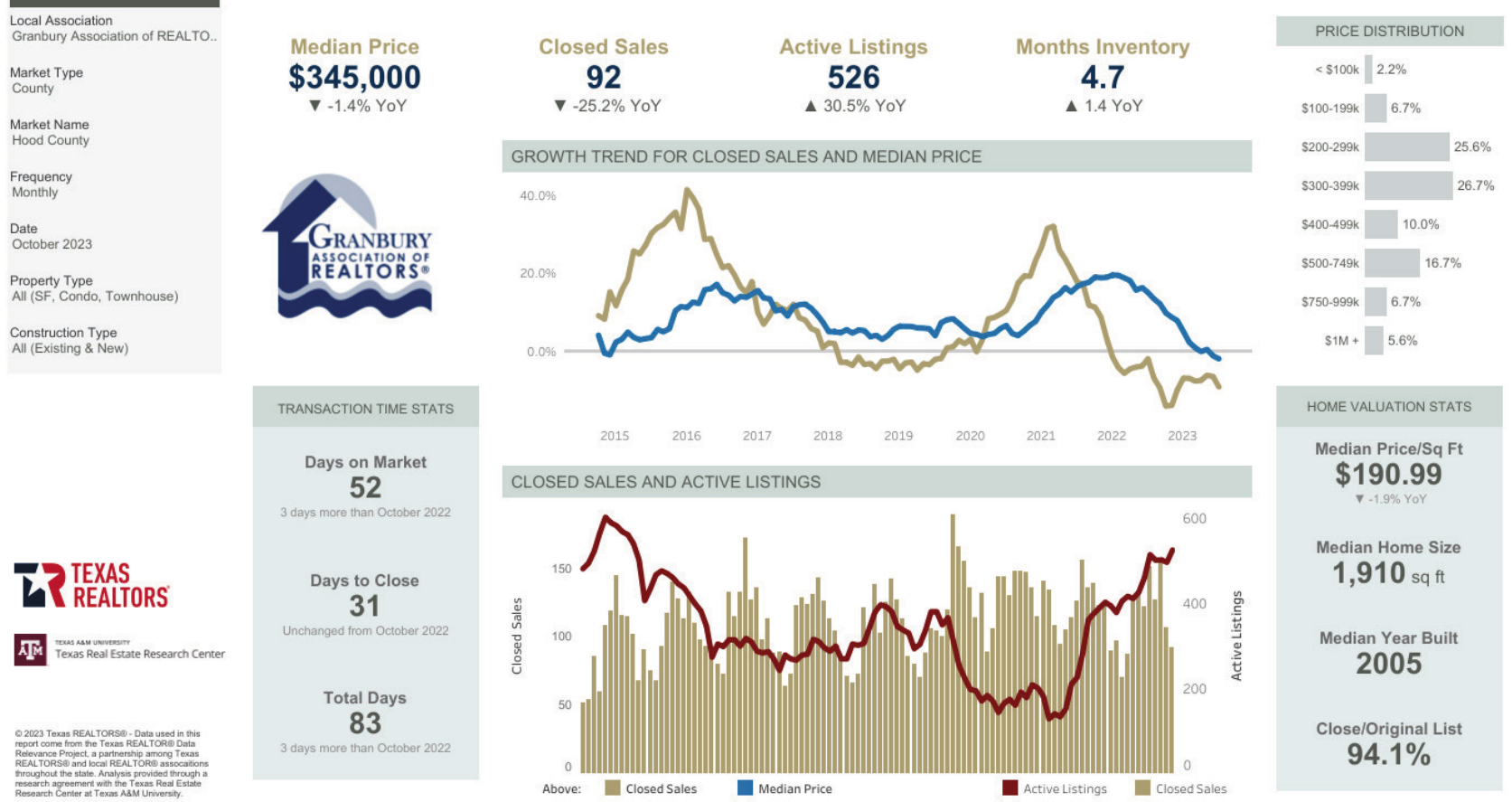
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10 a.m. Wednesday

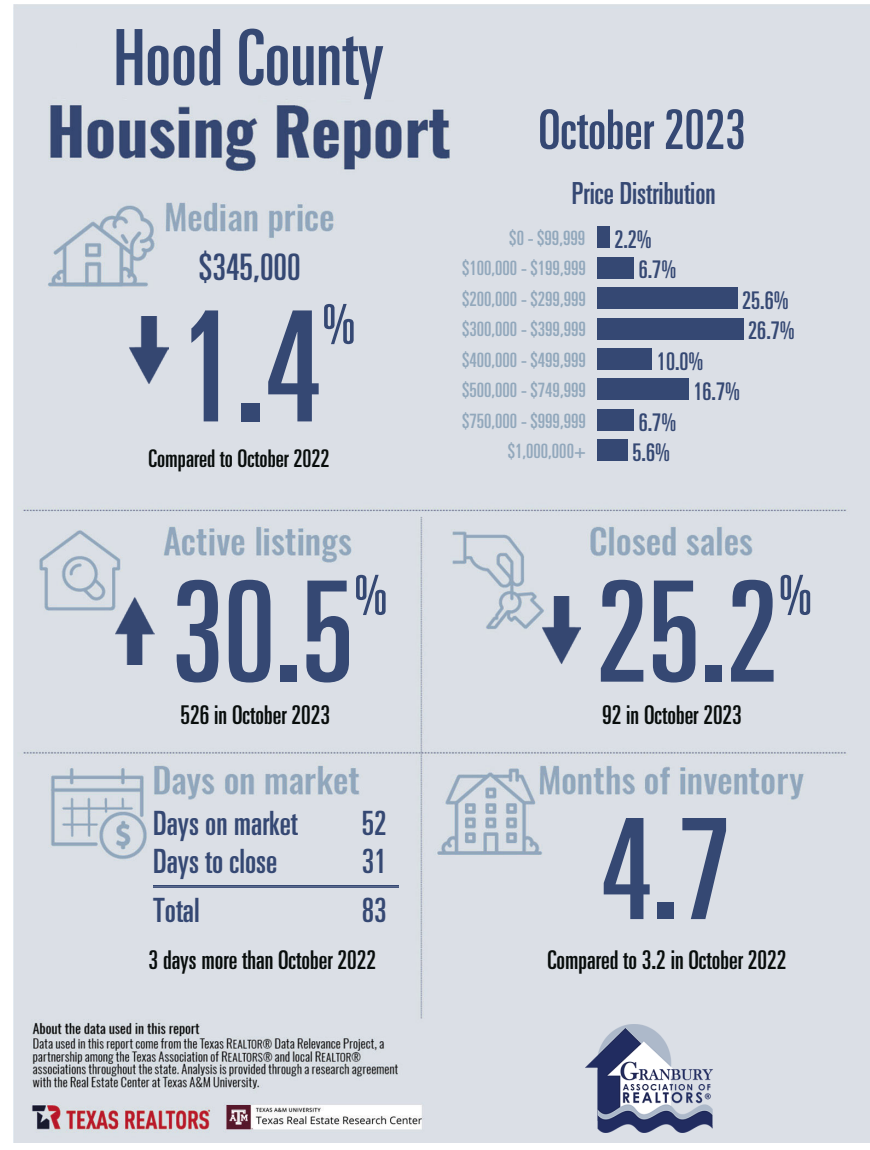
# COMMUNITY BUSINESS

## GRANBURY ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS

### October 2023 Market Statistics - Hood County



The graphic shows the Hood County market statistics for October 2023.



The graphic shows the Hood County Housing Report for October 2023.

### BOARD SPOTLIGHT

**granbury CHAMBER**

### BOARD SPOTLIGHT CURT JUNKINS

**Business:** Lake Granbury Medical Center

**Time on Chamber Board:** 11 months!

**LAKE GRANBURY MEDICAL CENTER**

Curt Junkins. We are very thankful for our amazing board member, Curt Junkins! Curt has served as a chamber board member for one year! When asked what he loves about being a Board Member, he said, "I love being a board member because I love the insight and pursuit of common goals to build up Granbury shared among members." Fun Fact about Curt: Curt loves Ping Pong!! Thank you, Curt, for being a board member of the Granbury Chamber of Commerce!

### CHAMBER SPOTLIGHT

### CHAMBER SUPERSTAR

Wellington State Bank **WSB**

**Chamber Superstar**

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**granbury CHAMBER**

Wellington State Bank. "Your Partners in Progress for 117 years."

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### ZED by Duane M. Abel

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DIBS ON THE DRUMSTICK!

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## CALENDAR

### THROUGH NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER

**LAKE GRANBURY Art Association** hosts a group show perfect for the holiday season at the Shanley Gallery, 224 N. Travis, Granbury. Reception is 6 – 8 p.m. on Nov. 25. Gallery hours vary.

**SATURDAY, NOV. 18**  
**MOVIE IN the Park** from 5-9 p.m. at the Hood County YMCA, 1475 James Road, sponsored by the Justice of the Peace, Constable and Clerks of Hood County Precinct 3. Games, food, raffle, and prizes. Proceeds benefit the Lake Granbury Kiwanis Advance Camp and the Hood County Substance Abuse Council.

**THURSDAY, NOV. 30**  
**THURSDAY, NOV. 30** annual fundraiser benefiting Marines and Navy personnel and families, American Legion Hall, 3409 Davis Rd., Granbury. Win a \$600 Cabela's Pellet Smoker/Grill plus Four (4) \$100 Grocery/Gift Cards from HEB, Albertsons, Kroger and Walmart. Total value \$1000. Raffle tickets are \$5 each, 3 for \$10 and 5 for \$20. Drawing is December 14th. Contact Sr. Vice Commandant for tickets at mikemorgan921@gmail.com.

**TUESDAY, DEC. 5**  
**OPERA GUILD** of Granbury monthly meeting and luncheon at DeCordova Country Club, 5301 Country Club Drive. 10 a.m. Social/Check-in; 11:00 a.m. Entertainment/Christmas in Granbury with The Judge & The Jury; Short Business Meeting 11:30 a.m. Optional Lunch (\$18) at noon – House Salad, Honey Ham, Garlic Mashed Potatoes, Bacon/Onion green beans, Chocolate Truffles, Rolls, Water/coffee/tea. DeCordova Bend has a new Chef, and we are very excited to have him there! Reservations required no later than Friday, December 1, contact granburyog@gmail.com or 817-776-2898.

**THURSDAY, DEC. 7**  
**'IT'S A Wonderful Life** in a Wonderful World' Christmas Market from 6 – 9 p.m. at La Bella Luna, 7700 Glen Rose Hwy. 'It's a Wonderful Life in a Wonderful World' Christmas Market is the largest annual fundraiser for Forward Training Center of Hood County. The mission of our organization is to educate, support and inspire life-changing growth in men and women through free educational programs to lower generational poverty in our community.

**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 non-profit 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.

# Texans approve Proposition 6 to fund critical water projects

**Submitted item**

Texas voters overwhelmingly approved Proposition 6 on the Nov. 7 constitutional amendments ballot to create the Texas Water Fund and authorize a \$1 billion appropriation to upgrade Texas' water infrastructure and fund new water supply projects. These funds, administered by the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB), may be used to develop innovative water supply projects that create new water sources in the state, transfer money to certain existing TWDB financial assistance programs, and fund a state-wide water public awareness program.

As Texas' population continues to grow, the Texas Water Fund will help communities across the state implement cost-effective water supply and wastewater projects through loans and grants. By providing low-cost, flexible financing options, the funding provides economic opportunity for communities to overcome cost hurdles.

"It's really encouraging that state leaders recognize the importance of funding water supplies and infrastructure and, furthermore, that Texas voters also support these critical initiatives," said TWDB Executive Administrator Jeff Walker.

Of the \$1 billion appropriated to the Texas Water Fund, the TWDB must allocate at least \$250 million to the New Water Supply for Texas Fund. This new fund is designed to implement innovative water supply strategies, such as marine and brackish water desalination, oil- and gas-produced water treatment projects, and aquifer storage and recovery projects. Through this fund, the TWDB is directed to finance projects that will lead to 7 million acre-feet of new water supplies by Dec. 31, 2033.

A portion of the fund must also prioritize water infrastructure projects in rural areas with a population of less than 150,000 as well as water conservation strategies and water loss mitigation projects.

The TWDB will soon begin seeking public input on implementing the Texas Water Fund legislation. Subscribe to our "General Information" and "Financial Assistance" email lists to receive the latest information on how you can participate.

The TWDB is the state agency charged with collecting and disseminating water-related data, assisting with regional water and flood planning, and preparing the state water and flood plans. The TWDB administers cost-effective financial assistance programs for the construction of water supply, wastewater treatment, flood mitigation and agricultural water conservation projects.

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The Granbury ISD School Board holds a community complaint hearing on Nov 9.

PHOTOS BY EMILY NAVA | HOOD COUNTY NEWS

## GISD

FROM PAGE A1

ments. He claimed the board has tarnished his wife's reputation. He also noted the board claims he has been aggressive toward the board. He pointed out that in the special called board meeting on Aug. 23, one of the public comments made was a woman shining a flashlight in Trustee Lowery's face.

"You didn't rebuke that lady for doing such a thing. That was truly a threat," Mark Lowery said during the meeting. "I've never crossed the blue line (a line where speakers are required to stand behind separating them from the board), never cursed unlike the trustee that we're going to have an executive session for cursed to me and was aggressive toward me and shaking his finger at me... I just wanted to have this moment so that the public can hear what actually happened back there."

After Mark Lowery's time was up Superintendent Jeremy Glenn noted that what he was referring to was not true, prompting Mark Lowery to come back up to the podium.

"He said get the hell out of this room is what he said," Mark Lowery said to Glenn.

Trustee Melanie Graft and Trustee Lowery shared that the trustee Mark was referring to did in fact say that.

The board also heard from Kerri Rehmeier who said she has been diligently watching the board meetings.

"I have been appalled at the way that you have



Five Level 3 grievances against a GISD official were addressed in executive session.

treated parents, taxpayers, the public and even certain board members," Rehmeier said.

She told the board the grievances needed to be held in open session in the interest of transparency.

"It is explicitly the public's business as you are their elected representatives," Rehmeier noted.

Rehmeier also claimed the people bringing grievances were promised audio recordings from the previous hearing but were never provided those.

Rehmeier claimed the board picks and chooses which board meetings are broadcasted and claimed that was in violation of the Texas Open Meetings Act.

"You gladly reported and broadcasted your Salem witch trial of Trustee Lowery but decided to not even record the last special hearing on Sept. 11,"

Rehmeier said.

Todd Daniel had signed up to speak but was denied because he did not put his address on the sign-up form.

Daniel said since he had previously spoken, they had his address on file, and it was not needed.

After public comments finished, Trustee Graft attempted to make a motion that the grievances be heard in open session.

Glenn then read that under the Texas Open Meetings Act, complaints against a district official may be held in closed session and that an individual has a right to determine whether or not it's open or closed.

Trustee Graft shared she would be going into the closed session under distress because she thought not holding it in open session was wrong and

Trustee Lowery agreed.

The motion to move the grievances to an open session made by Trustee Graft failed, with Graft and Lowery in favor and the rest of the board opposed.

The board then went into executive session at 7:18 a.m. and heard the five Level 3 grievances, each against a GISD official, from Don Poe, Mark Lowery, Craig and Denise Mayberry, Jim and Monica Brown, Todd Daniel and Jerry Doherty. Since these grievances were heard in executive session, the details on the grievances were not made public.

The board came back from executive session at 9:29 a.m. and every grievance was denied by a 4-2 vote with Trustee Graft and Trustee Lowery opposing.

The next regularly scheduled school board meeting will take place on Nov. 13.

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PHOTOS BY MARY VINSON | HOOD COUNTY NEWS

Friends of Memorial Lane presented a special Veteran's Day program at the Military Site of Jim Burks Firefighter Park. Gail Olney of Olney Valor Quilters presented to US Army Sgt. Dianna Vasquez and Vietnam Veteran Asa Maddox a quality, handmade quilt. Quilts of Valor are awarded to a service member or veteran who has been touched by war. Special thank-you gifts were offered to all Veterans in attendance.





PHOTOS BY MARY VINSON | HOOD COUNTY NEWS

A ceremony took place on Veterans Day at the Pecan Plantation Airport to commemorate a record-setting event. Never before had this many pilots in a single organization received the Wright Brothers Master Pilot Award (WBA) in a ceremony.



All rise to honor the flag as the Granbury Civil Air Patrol Posts Colors for the Wright Brothers Master Pilot Award (WBA) program at the Pecan Plantation Airport. The award recognizes pilots who have demonstrated professionalism, skill, and aviation expertise by maintaining safe operations for 50 or more years.

## PILOTS

FROM PAGE A1

member of the Chapter 983 Board of Directors and organizer of the event. "One, you have to maintain your physical health to fly, and maintain your knowledge of the federal aviation system and continue to learn as the rules constantly change."

To put into perspective the magnitude of Chapter 983's achievement, there are less than 10,000 WBA winners across the entire United States, according to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA).

The list of WBA recipients on Saturday, along with Jaeckle, included Ed Askins, John Bowen, Mike Brake, Dave Cole, Neil Downing, William Eslick, Robert Funk, Don Gardner, Jerry Gazda, Stephen Greene, Don Gumm, Patricia Hockett, Bob Horton, Carl Keil, Dick Keyt, John McComas, Mark McNair, Ken Miller, Dave Moore, Bob Moreau, Robert Pastusek, Paul Pickering, Jerry Scheeler, Paul Siedschlag, Les Staples, Rusty Stricker, Tom Thibault, Steve Thomas, Jackie Vaughn and Jerry Winfield.

### CHARLIE TAYLOR AWARD

Also honored was chapter member Steve Wilson with the Charlie Taylor Master Mechanic Award. This is named after the man who was the Wright brothers' mechanic and who invented the first airplane engine. It is given to pilots who have 50 or more years of civil and military maintenance experience.

Wilson was also previously granted the WBA in 2016. In other words, he depends on his own expert mechanic ability to make sure his plane continually flies safely.

"In 1963 I lived in Arlington, Virginia and a neighbor of mine who was an airline pilot and knew that I was interested in aviation asked me if I would like to go to an EAA meeting as they were establishing a new chapter," Wilson recalled. "I decided to go with him and became a charter member of Chapter 186."

Wilson was 23 years old at the time. A year later he became a student pilot and three years later he purchased his first airplane and came to a realization. "I was not going to be



Steve Wilson was honored with the Charlie Taylor Master Mechanic Award. This is named after the Wright brothers' mechanic who invented the first airplane engine. The award goes to pilots who have 50 or more years of civil and military maintenance experience.



FAA representatives (from left) Darrell Hughes and Joe Murphy joined honorees and attendees to celebrate with this unique group of avid aviators.

able to pay for someone to work on it, so with the help of chapter members, I was able to maintain this airplane," he said. "I also was able to help other members with airplanes that they owned or were building. As a matter of

fact, I helped three different individuals build their airplanes."

From then on, Wilson had no trouble finding work in the aviation industry. He was a flight instructor and over the years gained quite a few

hours of flight experience — all the while working on airplanes.

Due to his experience, he was able to get a job with the National Transportation Safety Board, from which he retired in 2000. He contin-

ues to work on airplanes, including his own. He also advises others in the Swift Museum Foundation about repairs on that particular plane (a small and light two-seater).

"Hopefully this will inspire a lot of younger people to start flying," Wilson said of the many awards.

FAA Safety Team Program Manager Joe Murphy handed out the awards. He said, "If the Charlie Taylors of the world didn't do their jobs you wouldn't be flying."

Wilson is the second Charlie Taylor Award winner in Hood County. The other is Dave Smith, who, of course, lives in Pecan Plantation and is a member of Chapter 983.

### HOW IT CAME TO BE

Woodward said in 2014 he noticed EAA Chapter 983 had quite a few experienced pilots. Some had already won the Wright Brothers Award. In fact, he said after Saturday's ceremony 62 of the 66 WBA recipients in Hood County are members of Chapter 983.

"I took a poll to see how many had flown for over 50 years and at that time 13 did. I gathered all the applications of those pilots — most were too humble to do it themselves — and submitted them," he said.

As noted previously, those 13 were the record — until now. In February of this year Woodward got curious again.

"I got to thinking how many does our chapter have now?" he said.

So he again reached out to the FAA.

"I said, 'Tom, that's over 1,500 hours of research. I've only got about 25 years left,'" Murphy said, drawing a chuckle from the crowd.

### A LOT OF FLYING

Woodward noted the 31 pilots honored have flown a total of 324,391 miles combined. They also totaled 1,621 years of flight experience.

"It just means how much I've enjoyed flying over the years," said Hockett, the lone woman in the group. "I've been lucky to have really good people helping me and training me and keeping me flying."

Murphy said, "This day will go down in history, not only with EAA 983, but with the FAA."

"It's a record that will never be broken, this many in a single group, it's incredible."

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... it must have been difficult Monday students to wait for the final bell. Mary

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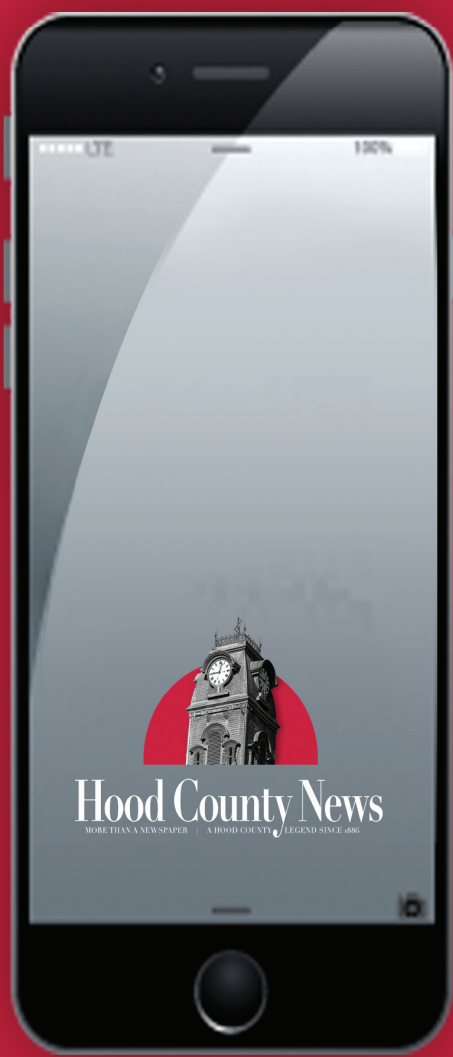


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# The history of Black Friday and how it became what it is today

**BY EMILY NAVA**  
Staff Writer

Steals and deals are seen all over the country the day after the Thanksgiving holiday. This day is known as Black Friday. But how and why did this day come about?

This term did not first begin as a fun day of shopping but was a result of a financial crisis when the U.S. gold market crashed on Sept. 24, 1869, according to Britannica.

Two investors by the names of Jay Gould and James Fisk caused the stir after they attempted to corner the gold market by buying up all the gold forcing the price to raise.

Ulysses S. Grant, who was the president at the time, ordered \$4 million of government gold be sold on the market. This resulted in gold prices plunging and the stock market falling.

The value of gold ended up decreasing due to the stock market falling resulting in Gould and Fisk's plan to be unsuccessful.

Later in the 1950s, police in the city of Philadelphia used the term to describe chaos that took place the day after Thanksgiving when shoppers and tourists flooded into the city for the Army-Navy football game.

In 1961, Black Friday caught on and the city merchants tried to change the name to Big Friday instead but were unsuccessful. The term spread throughout the country later and turned into a more positive event and was used nationwide in 1985 after merchants spread the red-to-black profit idea. The idea was that before Thanksgiving, sales for merchants were low, or "in the red" but after Thanksgiving, sales went "into the black".



COURTESY PHOTO

This year's Black Friday will take place on Nov. 24 with Cyber Monday following on Nov. 27.

In today's times, people shop both in store and online to rack up savings and discounts on items of all sorts.

Now shoppers also scroll for deals on Cyber Monday, which falls on the Monday after Thanksgiving.

Cyber Monday was first named by the National Retail Federation in 2005 after noticing people would continue to shop while at work on the Monday following

Thanksgiving, according to Britannica.

Just this past year, a record for sales was set for online spending with \$9.12 billion spent in the U.S., according to Adobe Analytics. This was a 2.3% increase from 2021. More than \$65 billion was spent globally. In-store sales also saw a 12% increase across the globe.

But this shopping experience can turn into a frenzy

and become dangerous — even deadly.

According to The Hustle, 11 people have died and more than 100 have been injured on Black Friday.

The majority of incidents have occurred inside retail stores and 20% have occurred when customers are first let in the door; 11% have occurred in a retail store parking lot.

Most of these injuries are

related to stampedes from large crowds, while other injuries and deaths have been related to shootings, stabbings and fights.

In 2021 in a Walmart in Austin, there was a shooting where one person was killed. The same year one person was shot in a food court at a mall in Tacoma Washington.

Safer America recommends some safety tips for Black

Friday including planning ahead, making a list, following a buddy system, parking in a well-lit area, being mindful of personal space and surroundings, and keeping calm and composed while shopping.

This year's Black Friday will take place on Nov. 24 with Cyber Monday following on Nov. 27.

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# around town




With the recent heavy rain, a variety of tree stumps have been washed into the Decordova marina. Providing a nice resting place for the local turtle population.

COURTESY PHOTO BY STEVE GREEN

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YOU.**

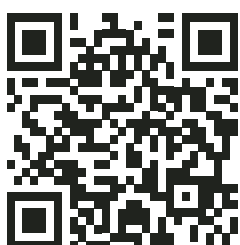
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# OBITUARIES

## Jean Ellen Schlittler

January 30, 1935 - October 31, 2023

Jane Ellen Schlittler died on October 31, 2023 in Eugene, Oregon.

Jane was born January 30, 1935 in Portland, Oregon to Harlan and Barbara Brown. She attended Lake Oswego High School and graduated from Lewis and Clark College with a degree in nursing.

Jane and Norman met at a USO dance in Portland, Oregon and were married in 1957. Jane, Norman, and their children moved to Ft. Richardson, Alaska in 1969 and the family remained in Anchorage after Norman's retirement from the US Army in 1973. Jane earned a master's degree in Public Health and worked as a nurse for the Anchorage School District until her retirement.

Jane and Norman were long-time members of Immanuel Presbyterian Church and devoted volunteers for PFLAG Anchorage where they supported innumerable LGBTQ+ youth and their families and friends. Jane served as president of the board of directors for PFLAG Anchorage in its early years. A lifelong music lover, Jane sang for many years with the Anchorage Concert Chorus and with the Immanuel church choir.

Norman died on their 64th anniversary in 2021.



Jane moved to Eugene, Oregon in 2022.

Jane was preceded in death by Norman, her parents, and her sister, Virginia Livingston. She is survived by her children, Ronald Schlittler, Lynda Bell, and Patti TenBrook (Warren); grandchildren, Marina Bell, David Giwa (Omotoyosi), and Sean TenBrook; her niece Dana Ruth Wilson, great-nephew Grady Wilson, great-great-nephew Ethan McCain and great-great-niece Meagan McDonald and her husband Hunter.

A memorial service, celebration of life and interment at Ft. Richardson National Cemetery will be announced at a later time. In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation to PFLAG Anchorage (PO Box 210874, Anchorage, AK 99521-0874).

## Virginia Foresman Conner

October 29, 1947 - November 7, 2023

Virginia Foresman Conner, 76, beloved wife, mother and grandmother long-time resident of Granbury, passed away on Tuesday evening, Nov. 7, 2023, in Fort Worth, Texas.

A memorial service will be held at 11 a.m., on Friday, Nov. 17, 2023, at the First Presbyterian Church, 303 Bridge Street, in Granbury. A private burial will be at a later date.

Virginia was born on Oct. 29, 1947, in Burlington, Iowa to the late Edward and Emmy Lou Foresman. On Dec. 28, 1968, Virginia married Kelton Conner and together had two daughters. Virginia was known for her charity work and was a longtime active member of the First Presbyterian Church in Granbury. She was also a member of the Optimist Club and the Beta Sigma Phi Sorority. She enjoyed shopping with her friends and going to lunch just to sit and chat. Virginia will be remembered for her sense of humor. Most of all, Virginia cherished time



spent with her family—particularly with her grandchildren.

Virginia is survived by her husband, Kelton Conner; her daughters: Karen and husband Ron Meredith and Jill Mayer; and by her grandchildren, Joshua Meredith, Christina Meredith, and Ryan Mayer.

Virginia was preceded in death by her parents, grandparents, several aunts, uncles and cousins.

In lieu of flowers, memorials in Virginia's memory may be made to either the Granbury Optimist Club or to Heart to Heart Hospice.

## Virginia Rae Champion

May 14, 1938 - November 8, 2023

Virginia Rae Champion, 85, passed away Wednesday, Nov. 8, 2023.

A funeral service was held Thursday, Nov. 16, 2023, in Greenwood Chapel. Entombment: Greenwood Mausoleum.

Virginia was born May 14, 1938, in Ranger, Texas to Page and Modene Yeager. She married Robert Champion July 5, 1957.

Virginia graduated from Arlington Heights High School in 1956. She also graduated from Brantley Draughon Business School in 1957. Virginia was a Rainbow Girl from age 12 to 15 and joined The Order of The Eastern Star at age 18. She was a member of Granbury First United Methodist Church.

Virginia lived in Augusta, Georgia for three years, Fort Worth, Texas for 30 years and Granbury, Texas for 33 years.



Survivors: Husband, Robert Champion; daughter, Christina Plumlee and husband, Gary; son, Clayton Champion and wife, Nancy; five grandchildren; 12 great-grandchildren; and sister, Jeanette Morrow.

Memorials: In lieu of flowers please donate to Scottish Rite Hospital for Children, 2222 Welborn St., Dallas, Texas 75219.

## Betty Rochelle Hughs Colburn

May 6, 1939 - October 24, 2023

Betty Rochelle Hughs Colburn, 84, passed Oct. 24, 2023 after a long fight with COPD. She is survived by her husband of 66 years, Hermon Rease Colburn, and a daughter, Terri Reasia Colburn.

She is preceded in death by her parents, Roy and Virtle Hughs and nine siblings. She is survived by two loving sisters, Jo Anne Moore and Judy Pearson, along with many whom she adopted along her life's journey. A visitation will be held at Wiley's Fu-



neral Home Nov. 20, 2023 between 6 and 8 p.m.

## Debbie Haigood Martin

January 1, 1954 - November 5, 2023

Debbie Haigood Martin passed from this world Sunday, Nov. 5, 2023. She was faithful in all things righteous and loved God, family, church, and friends.

Debbie was born January 1, 1954 in San Antonio. She grew up most of her childhood in Rockport, Texas. Her parents were Betty Baskett Haigood and Elvin Haigood.

Debbie graduated from Rockport High School in 1972 and entered ACU that fall. There she majored in speech therapy and audiology. The summer of 1975, she finished her degree, graduated, and married Joel Martin in June of that summer.

Debbie and Joel moved to Houston in August 1975. Her to work at Channel View ISD and Joel to finish school. She moved to Granbury in 1978.

Debbie is survived by her husband Joel Martin, children: Amanda Richards and her husband Mark, Jessica Kindberg and her husband Josh, and Garrett Martin and his wife Danielle, grandchildren: Grant Kilgore, Rhett Kilgore, Everley Richards,



Sloane Kindberg, Fiona Kindberg, Millie Martin, and Cora Martin, sister; Cindy Haigood Carey and her husband Greg, brother; James Haigood and his wife Karen and many cousins, nephews and nieces.

Services were held on Saturday, Nov. 11, 2023 at 11 a.m. at the Granbury Church of Christ, burial followed at Acton Cemetery. Visitation was held Friday 5-7 p.m. at The Wiley Center, 420 East Hwy 377. Services under the direction of Wiley Funeral Home. In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to Granbury Church of Christ, Christian Service Center.

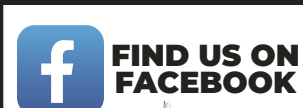
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### ACROSS

- 1 Oldham County seat
- 5 TXism: "easy as falling off \_\_\_"
- 6 TXism: "a day \_\_\_ and a dollar short"
- 7 at Six Flags Fiesta: "Lone Star Amphitheater"
- 8 dir. to La Grange from New Braunfels
- 9 TXism: "hard pill to \_\_\_"
- 16 TX Norah Jones had the "Song of the \_\_\_" in 2003
- 18 TX Larry Henley co-wrote "Wind \_\_\_ Wings"
- 21 today, a disfavored group: \_\_\_ Klux Klan
- 22 \_\_\_ beans (in pod)
- 23 "si" in Mexico
- 24 TXism for "gadget": "thing \_\_\_"
- 30 El Paso tribe: "\_\_\_ Sur Pueblo"
- 34 Astros leag.
- 35 space program before Apollo
- 36 "wear to a frazzle"
- 37 this Greene was TX Dan Blocker's dad on "Bonanza"
- 39 "Big Bend \_\_\_" in West Texas
- 43 what golfers do in the Texas heat
- 44 El Paso has a statue of conquistador Juan \_\_\_
- 45 Nolte of film "North Dallas Forty" (init.)
- 46 in Hidalgo County on highway 107
- 47 military marksmen
- 49 kids cereal, e.g.
- 52 state where William Travis was born (abbr.)
- 53 "yes" in Mexico
- 54 holder for Texas Blue Bell ice cream
- 55 sitcom for Texas-born Jay Thomas: "\_\_\_ Mindy"
- 58 quote by Travis in 52-across: "I never surrender or retreat"
- 59 Muhammad \_\_\_
- 60 "Fanthorp \_\_\_ State Historic Site"
- 61 TXism: "limp as a dish \_\_\_"

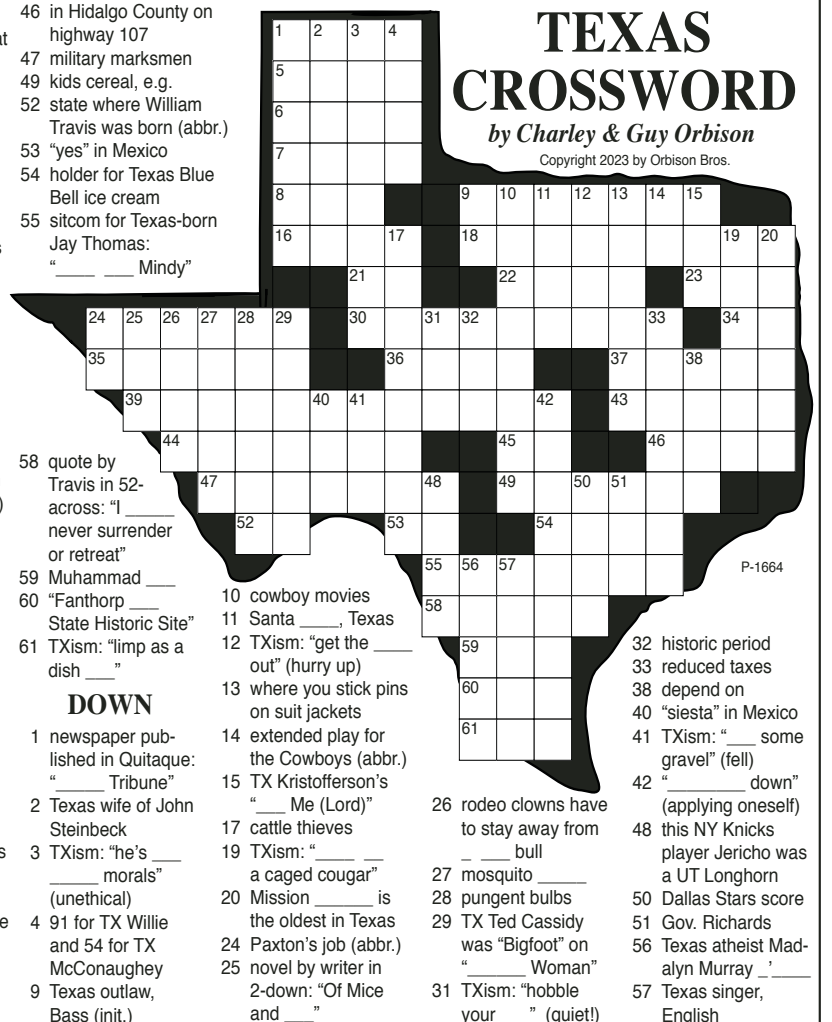
### DOWN

- 1 newspaper published in Quitaque: "\_\_\_ Tribune"
- 2 Texas wife of John Steinbeck
- 3 TXism: "he's \_\_\_ morals" (unethical)
- 4 91 for TX Willie and 54 for TX McCaughy
- 9 Texas outlaw, Bass (init.)
- 10 cowboy movies
- 11 Santa \_\_\_, Texas
- 12 TXism: "get the \_\_\_ out" (hurry up)
- 13 where you stick pins on suit jackets
- 14 extended play for the Cowboys (abbr.)
- 15 TX Kristofferson's \_\_\_ Me (Lord)"
- 17 cattle thieves
- 19 TXism: "\_\_\_ a caged cougar"
- 20 Mission \_\_\_ is the oldest in Texas
- 24 Paxton's job (abbr.)
- 25 novel by writer in 2-down: "Of Mice and \_\_\_"
- 26 rodeo clowns have to stay away from \_\_\_ bull
- 27 mosquito \_\_\_
- 28 pungent bulbs
- 29 TX Ted Cassidy was "Bigfoot" on "\_\_\_ Woman"
- 31 TXism: "hobble your \_\_\_" (quiet!)
- 32 historic period
- 33 reduced taxes
- 38 depend on
- 40 "siesta" in Mexico
- 41 TXism: "\_\_\_ some gravel" (fell)
- 42 "\_\_\_ down" (applying oneself)
- 48 this NY Knicks player Jericho was a UT Longhorn
- 50 Dallas Stars score
- 51 Gov. Richards
- 56 Texas atheist Madalyn Murray \_\_\_
- 57 Texas singer, English

## TEXAS CROSSWORD

by Charley & Guy Orbison

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# What should you do with 'side gig' money?

**TONY MOBLY**  
Edward Jones  
Financial Adviser



Tony Mobly

your gig money, consider these suggestions:

### CONTRIBUTE MORE TO YOUR IRA

As you know, the gig economy has been booming over the past several years. If you're thinking of using your skills to take on a side gig, what should you do with the money you'll make?

There's no one right answer for everyone, and the decisions you make should be based on your individual situation. And of course, you may simply need the extra income to support your lifestyle and pay the bills. But if you already have your cash flow in good shape, and you have some freedom with

If you couldn't afford to contribute the maximum amount to your IRA, you may find it easier to do so when you have additional money coming in from a side gig. For the 2023 tax year, you can put in up to \$6,500 to a traditional or Roth IRA, or \$7,500 if you're 50 or older. (Starting in 2024, this extra \$1,000 "catch-up" contribution amount may be indexed

for inflation.) The amount you can contribute to a Roth IRA is reduced, and eventually eliminated, at certain income levels.

### LOOK FOR NEW INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

If you're already maxing out your IRA, you might be able to find other investment possibilities for your side gig money. For example, if you have young children, perhaps you could use some of the money to invest in a 529 education savings plan. A 529 plan offers potential tax advantages and can be used for college, qualified trade school programs, and

possibly some K-12 expenses. Please keep in mind that potential tax advantages will vary from state to state.

Build an emergency fund Life is full of unexpected events — and some can be quite expensive. What if you needed a major car repair or required a medical procedure that wasn't totally covered by your health insurance? Would you have the cash available to pay these bills? If not, would you be forced to dip into your IRA or 401(k)? This might not be a good move, as it could incur taxes and penalties, and deprive you of resources you might eventually need for retirement. That's why

you might want to use your gig earnings to help fund an emergency fund containing several months' worth of living expenses, with the money kept in a liquid, low-risk account. To avoid being tempted to dip into your emergency fund, you may want to keep it separate from your daily spending accounts.

### PAY DOWN DEBTS

Most of us will always carry some debts, but we can usually find ways to include the bigger ones — mortgage, car payments and so on — into our monthly budgets. It's often the smaller debt payments, frequently associated

with high-interest-rate credit cards, that cause us the most trouble, in terms of affecting our cash flow. If you can use some of your side gig money to pay down these types of debts, you could possibly ease some of the financial stress you might be feeling. And instead of directing money to pay for things you purchased in the past, you could use the funds to invest for your future.

As we've seen, your side gig money could open several promising windows of opportunity — so take a look through all of them.

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# SUPPORT SYSTEMS

**EVERY DAY**

**ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS.** Do you or someone you know have a problem with alcohol? Meetings daily at 10 a.m., noon and 7 p.m. at 1205 Lipan Hwy, Granbury.

**ACTON 12-STEP Group.** Meeting daily at 7 p.m. 3609 Acton Highway (behind Madison Park).

**EVERY SATURDAY**

**WOMEN'S WAY** Out AA-Alcoholics Anonymous. Closed discussion for women only. Meets every Saturday at 10 a.m. at 301 W. Bridge St. For more information call 317-772-8124.

**EVERY SUNDAY**

**STARTING A New Life** is a grief support group for those who have lost a loved one through death. This includes the loss of a spouse, child, parent, sibling or close friend. For the past 26 years this group has helped people work through their grief process. If you, or someone you

know, is suffering from the loss of a loved one, come or bring them to our next session that began March 19, 2023. We are Christian-based, nondenominational and welcome all who are suffering. We meet 3-5 p.m. on Sundays in the parish hall of St. Frances Cabrini Catholic Church. For more information, call Ben Bradley at 575-706-5703 or Sherry Bingham at 817-657-0822.

**EVERY MONDAY**

**PROMISES AL-ANON** group meets every Monday at 6 p.m. First Presbyterian Church, fellowship hall, west entrance, 303 W. Bridge St.

**EVERY TUESDAY**

**PUNCHIN' PARKINSON'S** in Granbury. 12:30-1:30 p.m. A non-contact boxing and fitness program designed for people with Parkinson's Disease. First Christian Church, 2109 W. U.S. Highway 377 (next door to Tractor Supply).

**GRIEFSHARE 14-WEEK** seminar Sept 13.-Dec. 13,

6:30-8 p.m. Presented by StoneWater Church, Granbury, this program is a support group designed to help rebuild lives. Book for course, \$20, "Finding hope after the loss of a loved one." Register: GriefShare.StoneWaterChurch.com or call 817-579-9175.

**AMATEUR RADIO** Weekly Social Hour Net. All licensed amateur radio operators welcome. 7 p.m., on the 147.240 MHz Repeater, +600 offset, PL 162.2.

**EVERY THURSDAY**

**TAKE OFF** Pounds Sensibly (TOPS). 8:45-10:45 a.m. Lakeside Baptist Church, room 133C, 500 W. Bluebonnet Drive. Maximum weight scale: 400 pounds.

**GRIEFSHARE RECOVERY** seminar, support recovery seminar and support group meets at 10 a.m. at Interim Hospice, 1314 Paluxy Drive, Suite 200. Childcare is not provided. Fee for Griefshare workbook is \$15. Details: 817-573-7474.

**RE-ENGAGE MARRIAGE** enrichment meets every Thursday at 6:30 p.m. at StoneWater Church in Granbury. For more information email paige.kitchens@stone-waterchurch.com

**EVERY FRIDAY**

**PUNCHIN' PARKINSON'S** in Granbury. 12:30-1:30 p.m. A non-contact boxing and fitness program designed for people with Parkinson's Disease. First Christian Church, 2109 W. U.S. Highway 377 (next door to Tractor Supply).

**FIRST MONDAY**

**ALZHEIMER'S SUPPORT** Group, join others to share concerns, 10 a.m. at Acton Methodist Church, 3433 Fall Creek Highway. Details: 817-326-2355.

**FIRST TUESDAY**

**ALZHEIMER'S CAREGIVERS** support group, 10:30-11:30 a.m. in the 1894 Building at Acton Baptist Church, 3500 Fall Creek Highway. For caregivers, family members, friends and anyone in the

community. Details: 817-326-4693.

**SECOND SATURDAY**

**GRIEF SUPPORT** breakfast for anyone grieving the loss of someone they love at 10 a.m., Fuzzy's off the Square. Details: Amy or Danny Dwight. 817-894-2449 or 817-219-9833.

**THIRD MONDAY**

**ALZHEIMER'S SUPPORT** Group, join others to share concerns, 10 a.m. at Acton Methodist Church, 3433 Fall Creek Highway. Details: 817-326-2355.

**WAMS (WESTERN Area Modeling Society)** radio control club meets at 6:30 p.m. at Spring Creek BBQ, 317 W US Hwy 377. R/C aircraft, cars, boats, gliders, helicopters, etc. Details: 817-475-2194.

**THIRD TUESDAY**

**ALZHEIMER'S CAREGIVERS** support group, 10:30-11:30 a.m. in the 1894 Building at Acton Baptist Church,

3500 Fall Creek Highway. For caregivers, family members, friends and anyone in the community. Details: 817-326-4693.

**FOURTH TUESDAY**

**PARKINSON'S SUPPORT** Group, 1 p.m. at Lakestone Terrace, 916 E. U.S. Highway 377. Open for those with Parkinson's Disease and their families wanting to understand more about this disease. Details: 817-999-1470.

**FOURTH SATURDAY**

**GRIEF SUPPORT** group for anyone grieving a loss in their life. This is an informal gathering over breakfast. Please join us for conversation and community. Location varies. Call for info: Amy Dwight 817-894-2449, or Danny Dwight 817-219-9833



**SUPPORT SYSTEM** calendar will feature recurring activities that provide group support and are open to the public. These items will run each Wednesday. Submit Support System listings to calendar@hcnews.com and include the day, date, time and location - including street address.

*Matching Gift*

Please team up with our sponsors for this year's Match fund for **Habitat for Humanity of Hood County.** Habitat believes affordable homeownership *changes lives.* You can help "build" that change with a donation to the Match.

Donations received November 15, 2023 - January 31, 2024 will be matched up to the amount of the fund.

Please mail your donations to: Habitat for Humanity of Hood County PO Box 1866, Granbury, TX 76048 or give at [habitatofhoodcounty.org](http://habitatofhoodcounty.org)

## Texas Veterans Commission is accepting applications from veteran-serving organizations for grant funding



COURTESY PHOTO

The application period is open for the Texas Veterans Commission's (TVC) Fund for Veterans' Assistance (FVA) grant program. Applications for these grants will be accepted until December 4, 2023, at 5 p.m.

*Submitted item*

The application period is open for the Texas Veterans Commission's (TVC) Fund for Veterans' Assistance (FVA) grant program. An estimated total of \$30 million in grant funding is available. These grants are awarded to nonprofit organizations and local government agencies that provide direct services to veterans. Applications for these grants will be accepted until December 4, 2023, at 5 p.m.

The grants support a wide range of services from emergency financial assistance to transportation, legal services to family support services, and home modification to rental and mortgage assistance. TVC awards grants in five categories: General Assistance, Housing for Texas Heroes, Veterans Mental Health Grants, Veterans Treatment Courts, and Veteran County Service Offices.

New this year, applicants for the Veterans Mental



## TEXAS VETERANS COMMISSION

Health Grant Program can include support such as trained service dogs or peer support services in a non-clinical environment.

Interested nonprofit organizations and government agencies that provide direct services to veterans may find more information and how to apply at <https://www.tvc.texas.gov/2024-2025-grant-cycle/>.

Veterans needing assistance can find organizations providing services in their area at [www.tvc.texas.gov/directory/directory-category/grants/](http://www.tvc.texas.gov/directory/directory-category/grants/). Those listed in this directory receive support from TVC FVA grants.

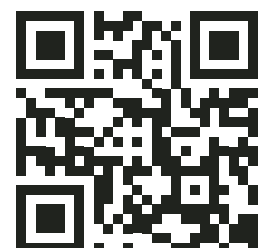
Since 2009 through the current 2023-2024 grant cycle, more than \$270 million

in grant funding has been awarded through 1,255 FVA grants, serving an estimated 481,000 Texas veterans and their family members.

Funding for these grants is generated primarily by the Texas Lottery Commission's games designated for veteran support. Other sources of funding for the grants come from individual donation options on drivers' licenses, licenses to carry a handgun, outdoor recreation licenses for hunting and fishing, and vehicle registrations.

Helping veterans starts here. The Texas Veterans Commission advocates for and provides superior service to veterans that will significantly improve the

quality of life for all Texas veterans, their families, and survivors. The TVC assists veterans with receiving their benefits, provides funding to agencies which provide direct services to veterans and provides administration of the Hazlewood Act education benefits. Learn more at [www.tvc.texas.gov](http://www.tvc.texas.gov).



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KNIEPER REAL ESTATE

# Thinking about using your 401(k) to buy a home?



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.

Are you dreaming of buying your own home and wondering about how you will save for a down payment? You are not alone. Some people think about tapping into their 401(k) savings to make it happen. But before you decide to dip into your retirement to buy a home be sure to consider all possible alternatives and talk with a financial expert. Here is why...

The numbers make it tempting: The data shows that Gen Zers have an average of \$47,100 in retirement savings; millennials are at \$44,900, Gen Xers are averaging \$145,000 and baby boomers are at an average of \$215,000 in their 401k accounts.

It can be really tempting when you have money saved up in your 401(k) and you see your dream home on the horizon. But remember, dipping into your retirement savings for a home could cost you a penalty and affect your quality of life in retirement. That is why it is important to explore all your options when it comes to saving for a down payment and buying a home. As Experian says:

"It is possible to use funds



COURTESY PHOTO

**Before you decide to dip into your retirement to buy a home be sure to consider all possible alternatives and talk with a financial expert.**

from your 401(k) to buy a house, but whether you should depends on several factors, including taxes and penalties, how much you have already saved and your unique financial circumstances. Using your 401(k) is one way to finance a home, but it is not the only option. Before you decide, consider a couple of other methods. For example, an FHA loan allows qualified buyers to put down as little as 3.5% of the

home's price, depending on their credit scores and there are many national and local down payment assistance programs that can help first-time and repeat homebuyers come up with the necessary down payment."

Above all else have a plan: No matter what route you take to purchase a home, be sure to talk with a financial expert before you do anything. Collaborating with a team of experts to develop a

concrete plan prior to starting your journey to homeownership is the key to success. Kelly Palmer, founder of The Wealthy Parent, says: "I have seen parents pausing contributions to their retirement plans in favor of affording a larger home, often with the hope they can refinance in the future... As long as there is a tangible plan in place to get back to saving for their retirement goals, I encourage families to

consider all their options."

Bottom line: As much as we would like to help everyone purchase the home of their dreams, we are also committed to helping people make smart choices. Borrowing from your 401(k) may be just the right answer for some and a huge mistake for others. If you are still thinking about using your 401(k) retirement savings for a home down payment, consider all your options and

work with a financial professional before you make any decisions. As always, we welcome your thoughts and questions. Please feel free to contact us at 817-219-0456 or visit us online at [www.WeSellGranbury.com](http://www.WeSellGranbury.com).

Portions of this article were sourced, with permission, from [www.KeepingCurrentMatters.com](http://www.KeepingCurrentMatters.com).

[pamK@knieperteam.com](mailto:pamK@knieperteam.com) / 817-219-0456

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## Granbury High School hosts program to honor veterans

BY EMILY NAVA  
Staff Writer

Granbury High School hosted an event on Nov. 10 to honor veterans for Veterans Day.

The event featured a wreath placement by Hood County Judge Ron Massingill and Granbury City Council member Trish Burwell.

The GHS Marine Corp Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps presented the colors, and the GHS Choir sang the "Armed Forces Medley" to honor each branch of service.

The keynote speaker was retired Air Force Master Sgt. Jim Rodriguez, 72. Rodriguez served in the Air Force for 21 years; he created a nonprofit organization called the F.L.A.G program that stands for fly, lower and gather.

He started this program after dropping off his daughter once at school and noticing a janitor holding an American flag under his arm and later dropping the flag.

After seeing this he called the principal of his daughter's school in Waxahachie and asked to have a meeting with him.

He asked the principal if he would allow him the opportunity for him to teach the students how to properly raise and lower the American flag. The principal agreed to the idea, and it became a reality starting with 35 kids; by the end of the year, 105 students had participated.



Granbury High School students hold up the United States Flag after an event for Veteran's Day on Nov. 10.

EMILY NAVA | HOOD COUNTY NEWS

ality starting with 35 kids; by the end of the year, 105 students had participated.

In 2010, there was a ceremony at the school where

the community came together to learn about the program.

Rodriguez said the newspaper was there and at the

bottom of the article they included his phone number. Before long, his phone began to blow up with educators all over requesting him to come

to their school.

He now has visited over 200 schools and educated over 5,000 students on the F.L.A.G program.

Rodriguez added that he hopes his presentation will plant a seed for Granbury to instill a F.L.A.G program noting he needs help and support to continue to grow the program.

The program is meant to educate youth and instill pride and respect for the United States Flag. Through this program there is video training to teach students the proper techniques for raising, lowering and folding flags.

Students also obtain support materials and practice flags and are recognized for their achievements at the end of the year.

Rodriguez ended his presentation by thanking Superintendent Dr. Jeremy Glenn, campus leaders, teachers and students.

"Our wish is for God to continue to bless everyone here and most importantly, may God continue to bless America," Rodriguez closed out his speech.

For more information on the F.L.A.G program visit [www.theflagprogram.org](http://www.theflagprogram.org).



EMILY NAVA | HOOD COUNTY NEWS

A wreath honoring each branch of service was featured during a Veteran's Day event at Granbury High School on Nov. 10



EMILY NAVA | HOOD COUNTY NEWS

The Granbury High School MJROTC program passes along the United States Flag during a Veteran's Day event on Nov. 10 at Granbury High School.



EMILY NAVA | HOOD COUNTY NEWS

Retired Air Force Veteran Jim Rodriguez speaks at a Veteran's Day event at Granbury High School on Nov. 10.

## Hood County school districts earn 'A's in financial accountability

BY ASHLEY TERRY  
Staff Writer

The independent school districts of Tolar, Granbury and Lipan each recently received an "A" rating in financial accountability from the Texas Education Agency (TEA).

Established in 2001 by the 77th Texas Legislature, the school Financial Integrity Rating System of Texas (FIRST) ensures that Texas public schools are held accountable for the quality of their financial management practices and that they improve these practices, according to the TEA website.

The system is designed to encourage Texas public schools to better manage their financial resources to provide the maximum allocation possible for direct instructional purposes.

According to an article by the Texas Education Agency, 88% of Texas public schools received an "A" or "Superior Achievement" rating for 2022-2023, exemplifying high-quality financial management practices.

Ratings for 2022-2023 are based on annual financial reports provided to TEA by school systems for the 2022 fiscal year, according to the article. These reports are subsequently reviewed by the agency and a rating is assigned.

School systems are assigned one of four possible letter grades (A, B,

C, or F) under financial accountability ratings, as well as a coinciding financial management rating (Superior Achievement, Above Standard Achievement, Meets Standard Achievement or Substandard Achievement).

Tolar ISD received a perfect score of 100, with the district announcing the success on its Facebook page on Nov. 6, adding that the "Superior Achievement" rating is the state's highest, and that it demonstrates the quality of Tolar ISD's financial management and reporting system.

"Our business office staff does a great job in regard to managing our district resources," Tolar ISD Superintendent Travis Stilwell said in an email to the Hood County News. "Their work is commendable, and we are pleased with the 'Superior' rating received."

Granbury ISD also received a perfect score of 100, with Superintendent Dr. Jeremy Glenn adding that the district is excited to earn this honor for its sixth consecutive year. "A Superior Financial Rating from TEA is a credit to our school board for being fiscally-responsible stewards of our district, and our business office, led by CFO (Chief Financial Officer) Emmett Whitefield, for their dedication and attention to detail," Glenn said in an email to the HCN. Lipan ISD earned a 98 in

its financial accountability rating, with Superintendent Ralph Carter stating that it's an "expectation" for districts to have financial stability and financial transparency.

"Our rating has been 'A' for the last 15 to 20 years for sure," Carter said, in an email to the HCN. "We work hard to make sure it stays that way."

According to the article from TEA, FIRST ratings are calculated using 20 financial indicators for both traditional school districts and public charter schools, such as administrative cost expenditures; the accuracy of a district or charter school's financial information submitted to TEA; and any financial vulnerabilities or material weaknesses in internal controls as determined by an external auditor.

Final FIRST ratings for the 2022-2023 school year show that a total of 1,046 districts and charter schools earned an A rating, 80 earned a B, 55 earned a C and 11 earned an F.

To review the final 2022-2023 FIRST ratings for all school systems (plus view final FIRST ratings from previous years), visit the TEA School FIRST web page for school districts or Charter FIRST web page for charter schools. Both can be found by visiting [tea.texas.gov](http://tea.texas.gov) online.

[ashley@hcnews.com](mailto:ashley@hcnews.com) / 817-573-1243



COURTESY PHOTO

Brad Harrison, left, Lipan FFA horse judging coach, poses with Lipan High School graduates Dylan Sinclair, Micah Wallace, Cameron (Camey) Powers, and Grace Heavyside, as they earned first place in nationals at the 96th National FFA Convention & Expo in Indianapolis, Indiana on Nov. 1-2.

## 'An exceptional group of girls' Lipan FFA horse judging team crowned national champions

BY ASHLEY TERRY  
Staff Writer

Four Lipan High School graduates recently experienced the achievement of a lifetime when they departed Texas as college students and returned as national champions.

Grace Heavyside, Cameron "Camey" Powers, Dylan Sinclair and Micah Wallace traveled to the 96th National FFA Convention & Expo in Indianapolis, Indiana on Nov. 1-2, where they showcased their extensive knowledge in the Horse Evaluation CAREER Development Event (CDE) by officially placing first in nationals.

After previously qualifying in both the district and

area horse judging competitions, the four girls competed in the state competition in April at Texas Tech University in Lubbock — winning first place out of 508 teams in Texas.

The accomplishment qualified the team for nationals, where they were set to compete against the state winners from all over the United States, plus Puerto Rico, Guam and the Virgin Islands, as they are all U.S. territories.

Although it seems strange having college students competing in a high school FFA competition, Lipan ISD agriculture teacher and horse judging coach Brad Harrison explained that the high school contests are always held in March and

April. However, the national contest is always held in late October or early November each year.

"If a team wins their respective state contest, as high school students, that qualifies them to compete in the national contest the following fall," he explained.

But even competing as college students, the girls still had a challenging couple of days, as their skills and knowledge were pushed to the test.

"The competition in Texas is very hard," Harrison said. "There's nearly 600 teams that we essentially have to compete with and when it starts out, you have to beat

PLEASE SEE HORSE | B4

# Granbury Theatre Academy Teens present 'Tuck Everlasting'

**BY MICKY SHEARON**  
*Special to the Hood County News*

Get ready to be whisked away on a magical journey as the Granbury Theatre Academy presents "Tuck Everlasting: Theatre for Young Audiences Edition" at the historic Granbury Opera House from Nov. 17-19.

This captivating production, a gem in the Granbury Theatre Academy Children's Series, promises to enchant audiences of all ages. Thanks to the generous support of local sponsors like the Granbury Optimist Club, First National Bank of Granbury, The Hyde Law Firm, Hood County News and Stars Align, this show is set to be a highlight of Granbury's cultural calendar.

Based on the beloved novel by Natalie Babbitt, "Tuck

Everlasting" tells the story of 11-year-old Winnie Foster, a young girl brimming with curiosity and a thirst for adventure. Her life takes a thrilling turn when she stumbles upon the Tuck family and their astonishing secret of immortality. As Winnie dives into a world of wonder and faces a pivotal decision, the audience is invited to ponder the question: What would you do if you could live forever?

The multi-talented Shayla Nuttall stars as Winnie, leading a dynamic cast that brings this enchanting story to life. Elliot Elaine Hayes, Graham Ramos, Lucas Steele and Ben Tanner portray the intriguing Tuck family. The show's depth is further enhanced by the performances of Gavin Clark, Ari Deming, Clark Nuttall and Aubrey

Ward, along with a spirited ensemble cast.

Under the visionary direction of Caitlan Leblo, with Jonah Hardt as assistant director, the musical unfolds with a blend of captivating storytelling and heartwarming music. Ashley Green's musical direction and Makenna Clark's choreography add layers of artistic flair. The creative team also includes costume design by Kenrick Booth, lighting design by David Broberg, prop design by Benteleigh Nesbit and sound design by James Stack. Whitney Shearon pulls it all together as stage manager for the production. Together, the creative team crafts a visually stunning world that is sure to enchant audience members of all ages.

"'Tuck Everlasting' is more

than just a musical; it's a heartwarming journey that challenges us to explore the depths of life, love and the choices we make," says Matt Beutner, academy director at Granbury Theatre Academy. "Our talented cast, crew and production team have poured their passion and creativity into this production, ensuring that every moment on stage is not only entertaining but also thought-provoking. We invite the community to join us at the Granbury Opera House for an unforgettable experience that celebrates the magic of theatre and the enduring power of storytelling."

Don't miss this opportunity to experience the magic of "Tuck Everlasting" in Granbury. Performances are scheduled for 7:30 p.m. on Friday, Nov. 17, two shows



COURTESY PHOTO

Granbury Theatre Academy presents "Tuck Everlasting: Theatre for Young Audiences Edition" at the historic Granbury Opera House from Nov. 17-19.

at 2 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 18, and a final matinee at 2 p.m. on Sunday, Nov. 19.

Tickets are priced at \$20 and are available for purchase at the GTC box office by calling 817-579-0952 or online at [www.granburytheatrecompany.org](http://www.granburytheatrecompany.org).

# Lipan High School passes state door audit

**BY EMILY NAVA**  
*Staff Writer*

Lipan High School underwent an exterior door safety audit, where a school's exterior doors are tested for safety.

The audits were ordered by Gov. Greg Abbott shortly after a mass shooting at Robb Elementary on May 24, 2022 in Uvalde.

The Texas School Safety Center runs the program and makes surprise visits to campuses to see the type of security and protocols a school follows.

The exterior door safety audit requires sturdy center pillars for double doors, reinforced door frames, automatic door closing services, automatic door locks, emer-

gency opening mechanisms and more.

Of the three schools across Lipan ISD, Lipan High School is the only school thus far to be audited.

Lipan ISD announced on Nov. 6 that the high school passed, and no problems were found.

"Our students, teachers, staff and administration consistently have measures in place to check our door and gate security multiple times per day," Lipan High School Principal Johnathan Normand said. "I feel that we do a great job in this area on all of our campuses."

Lipan ISD Superintendent Ralph Carter added, "We have spent the last six years securing our doors with constant door checks. Passing

the door audit is an expectation and is the result of all of our staff focusing on keeping our students safe."

In the 2022/2023 school year, the TSSC found that 95.7% of campuses across the state did not allow unauthorized access to the campus. At the 4.3% of campuses where auditors successfully gained entry without proper access, inspectors gained entry within minutes. Corrective action was taken at 24.5% of campuses.

At 90.2% of campuses, visitors were asked for an ID; visitor badges were issued at 82.4% of campuses; 68.4% of campuses verified ID through an electronic database and 52.7% of campuses used a sign-in/sign out roster.



COURTESY PHOTO

Lipan High School passes the exterior safety audit. The audits were ordered by Gov. Greg Abbott shortly after a mass shooting at Robb Elementary on May 24, 2022 in Uvalde.

# "Granbury Young Farmers" group supports FFA youth and agriculture

**BY EMILY NAVA**  
*Staff Writer*

Granbury Young Farmers is a group run by parents to support Future Farmers of America students in Granbury that has been around since the late 2000s.

The group is currently run by Kaci Geisler who became president in 2022.

Geisler is a former agriculture teacher at Granbury High School where she taught for four-and-a-half

years. She says she knew she wanted to be an ag teacher since high school when she was heavily involved in the program. Geisler wanted to remain involved with FFA, agriculture and students — that's when she found Granbury Young Farmers.

The group's purpose is to be there for the kids according to Geisler, who added many of the members are the parents of kids who are currently part of the FFA

program. "When the kids need to do something or need something or can't do something, we are there to help them and support them," Geisler said.

Geisler called Granbury's FFA program "huge" and added that the number of students increases every year.

"With the AG program, sometimes kids can't afford to do certain things, or

the program can't afford to do things for kids, and so that's where we have come in," Geisler said. "Sometimes we just buy them lunch and sometimes we pay for hotel fees and things like that."

She added during the 2022-23 school year, the group initiated a scholarship to give to one of the FFA students.

The group pushes for their biggest funds to be raised during the school stock

show that takes place in October every year.

Geisler shared that she is currently working on getting a second fundraiser planned for some time in the spring.

The group wants to potentially have a crawfish boil or silent auction and has lots of other ideas for future fundraisers.

"If we raise more money, we can do things like buy the students a trailer, purchase equipment for the weld-

ing shop and make bigger purchase items for the program to help make it better," Geisler said.

Geisler shared that the FFA program is a great program for kids to feel like they belong.

For those interested in becoming part of the Granbury Young Farmers group contact their email [ghsyoungfarmers@gmail.com](mailto:ghsyoungfarmers@gmail.com) or reach out on Facebook under Granbury Young Farmers.



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BOOK REVIEW

# The assassination of President John F. Kennedy

BY TERRI SCHLICHENMEYER

People remember how it touched their lives.

Even if they didn't vote for the guy, even if they didn't like his policies, the assassination of President John F. Kennedy shook them to the core. It happened on a sunny day. He was smiling; everybody was. And sixty years ago, his life was over in a minute. If you were there, you know. If you weren't, you owe it to yourself to learn about this important — and still controversial — moment in American history.

Starting out in happier times, "White House by the Sea: A Century of the Kennedys at Hyannis Port" by Kate Storey (Scribner, \$30.00) takes readers away from the Capitol to Cape Cod, Massachusetts. There, the

Kennedy family swam, infamously played touch football, sailed and generally relaxed, far from the troubles of politics. Based on interviews with people who knew the family and had visited the compound, this book is pure nostalgia and it puts JFK's life into perspective. You may want to read it before you go any further.

For six decades, people have wondered: who was Lee Harvey Oswald? Was he some sort of fall guy, was he just some random man with a gun, or was he a mastermind in a horrific crime? In "American Confidential: Uncovering the Bizarre Story of Lee Harvey Oswald and His Mother" by Deanne Stillman (Melville House, \$29.99), we read another facet of Oswald's life: he was his mother's son.

Indeed, this book is about Oswald, his lack of stability

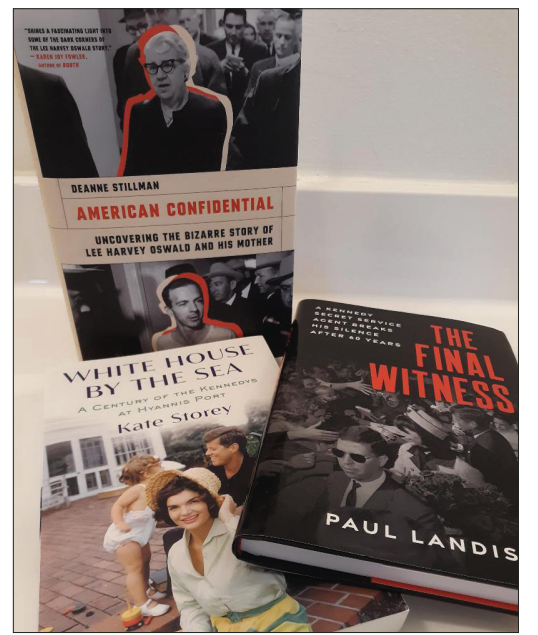
when he was a child, his life as a young man without a base, and the beliefs he held. But it's also about his mother, whose mindsets were passed down to Oswald and whose behavior, post-assassination, "served to advance conspiracy theories..."

This fascinating book is a must-read and deserves its spot on any shelf in this genre.

And finally, there's "The Final Witness: A Kennedy Secret Service Agent Breaks His Silence after 60 Years" by Paul Landis (Chicago Review Press, \$30). You've no doubt read dozens of eye-witness reports of the day of the assassination. You've seen the film over and over. Now read this account, written by the agent who was there, behind the president's limo, in the trauma room at the hospital, on Air Force One, and who witnessed the passing of the Presidency

to Lyndon Johnson. It's a biography wrapped around one of America's most seminal — and surely most memorable — moments in history.

If these books don't satisfy your appetite or they're not enough to properly mark the 60th anniversary of the assassination, be sure to ask your favorite librarian or bookseller. Lucky for you, there are literally hundreds of books on the life and work of John Kennedy, the life and loves of Jacqueline Kennedy, and the life and work of Lyndon Johnson. You'll find thousands of books about the assassination, and about the conspiracy theories that sprung from it. Ask for books about Camelot while you're there, and for more on Oswald, and on this touchstone in American history.



COURTESY OF

Books about the Kennedy Assassination by various authors ©.2023, VARIOUS PUBLISHERS, \$29.99-\$30.00, VARIOUS PAGE COUNTS

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**SUDOKU**

Solution for the puzzle on Nov. 11 (Puzzle 56).

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

Puzzle by websudoku.com

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

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**HCN Junior NATIONAL Princess Day NOVEMBER 18**

**COLOR Time**

Princesses come in all shapes, sizes, and personalities, just like the colors of a magical rainbow! Imagine a world filled with princesses, each with her own unique charm. There's the adventurous princess who loves exploring enchanted forests, discovering hidden treasures, and befriending magical creatures like talking animals and playful fairies.

Then, there's the kind-hearted princess who spreads love and joy to everyone in her kingdom. She cares for animals, tends to beautiful gardens, and shares smiles with her subjects. Another princess might be a clever and wise leader, making important decisions to ensure her kingdom thrives.

Some princesses are brave warriors, wielding swords and bows to protect their kingdoms from dragons and evil sorcerers. These fearless royals show that strength comes from the heart, not just muscles. And don't forget the creative princess who uses her imagination to turn ordinary days into extraordinary adventures, whether through storytelling, art, or magical inventions.

No matter the type, all princesses teach us important lessons about kindness, courage, and the power of believing in ourselves. So, which princess would you like to be today? The possibilities are as endless as the stars in the night sky!

**Princesses**

Words can be found in any direction (including diagonals) and can overlap each other. Use the word bank below.

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| C | L | A | C | I | G | A | M | G | A |
| A | B | Z | U | K | C | B | K | R | L |
| S | R | T | U | L | B | E | A | J | B |
| T | A | M | Y | S | T | I | Q | U | E |
| L | V | W | B | C | T | S | C | R | F |
| E | E | P | R | I | N | C | E | S | S |
| J | Y | W | A | R | R | I | O | R | N |
| R | O | Y | A | L | T | Y | R | W | F |
| K | I | N | G | D | O | M | O | M | J |
| O | E | K | G | E | I | G | M | M | P |

**Word Bank**

|             |             |            |             |
|-------------|-------------|------------|-------------|
| 1. royalty  | 2. tiara    | 3. gown    | 4. princess |
| 5. mystique | 6. brave    | 7. warrior | 8. castle   |
| 9. magical  | 10. kingdom |            |             |

**Did You Know?**

some real-life princesses have unique hobbies or talents that might surprise you? For example, Princess Mako of Japan is not only a member of the royal family but also a skilled calligrapher. She has a passion for writing beautiful characters with a brush and ink. It's like she adds a touch of magic to her words!

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# The girls are back in town

PHOTOS BY LAYTH TAYLOR | HOOD COUNTY NEWS

Friday Nov. 10 the Lipan High School girls basket ball team played Priddy High School basket ball team and won 76-27.



# Pirates beat the Hornets

PHOTOS BY LAYTH TAYLOR | HOOD COUNTY NEWS

Saturday Nov. 11 the Granbury Pirates Boys Varsity team played the Cleburne Hornets and came out with a 56-36 victory at home



## HORSE

FROM PAGE B1

thousands of teams to get to that point. If you win the nationals, you beat thousands of teams from every state, and it's just a big, big deal. If you win it, that means you're the best in the nation, and that's where we wound up — the champion, the first-place team."

The Lipan FFA horse judging team won first in nationals, with Camey Powers winning first place in nationals as the top participant.

"There's four kids on the team. They compete for the most part individually, and then they combine their scores, and that's how it works as a team score,"

Harrison explained.

According to ffa.org, students who participate in the National FFA Horse Evaluation Career Development Event (CDE) gain new insights into equine science by evaluating and ranking horses based on breed characteristics, conformation and performance. Participants defend their decisions through oral reasons in front of a panel of judges.

"When you get to nationals, they do things a little bit differently than we do in Texas," Harrison explained. "They have a different format. We do most of the same things they do in Texas, but then they add to it and it's kind of horse-skill-a-thon."

Harrison said the girls

competed for eight hours on Nov. 1 and four hours on Nov. 2. With so many students competing in the horse judging category, Harrison explained that instead of the girls giving their oral reasons verbally, they had to write them down.

"They actually gave them a written set of questions that they had to answer, which goes over a lot of the same information," he said.

The girls had to write down their oral reasons separate from their teammates and memorize them — while eating lunch at the same time.

"They didn't really get a break that day," Harrison said.

According to ffa.org,

students in the Horse Evaluation CDE also solve problems related to everything from the nutrition and reproduction of horses to the tack, equipment and feed used to care for horses. Participants strengthen their leadership, observation, analysis, critical thinking and communication skills while also developing and exercising a competitive team spirit and building an awareness of career opportunities within the equine industry.

"They have to be able to identify a lot of different horse and pony breeds and then they have to do some tack identification," Harrison said. "As a team, they give them a scenario. The sce-

nario was: 'If you girls are going to put on a horse seminar for wannabe horse owners in an urban area, what are some things you need to cover to explain to them all the facets of owning and caring for a horse?' So, they have 20 or 30 minutes to sit down and write out basically a script and they're gonna do this presentation in front of these judges of what they would include at the seminar. Each of the four girls basically have to speak an equal amount of time — that's something that we don't have in Texas."

Another scenario, Harrison explained, involved the girls receiving three symptoms of a sick horse. They then had to diagnose the hypotheti-

cal horse, explain how they would treat the illness, and how they would administer the medication.

"It's pretty in depth. These kids have to be pretty knowledgeable and pretty savvy," he said. "We just happen to have an exceptional group of girls."

Harrison said what adds to the interesting story is that Powers, Wallace and Sinclair all grew up around horses — but Heavyside joined the team her senior year and began at a "blank state," knowing almost nothing about equines.

"The other girls kind of got her up to speed and she did exceptionally well from not

PLEASE SEE HORSE | B7



COURTESY PHOTO

Members of the Tolar Lady Rattlers volleyball team had plenty to celebrate this season as they advanced to the first regional tournament in program history, reaching the finals.

# Lady Rattlers wrap up most successful season

**BY RICK MAUCH**

*Special to the Hood County News*

*Editor's note: Because of early deadlines, the Nov. 25 issue of the Hood County News will not have a Sports Roundup. It will return in the Dec. 2 issue. However, sports stories can be found on www.hcnews.com.*

The Tolar Lady Rattlers added another chapter to the school's sports program having record seasons of late. On the heels of all-time best seasons by football, boys basketball and baseball, now volleyball has carved out its share of history. For the first time ever, the Lady Rattlers reached the regional tournament — reaching the Class 2A Region I finals, in fact. The Lady Rattlers' season ended Saturday, Nov. 11 with a 3-0 loss to third-ranked and defending state champion Windthorst at San Angelo Central High School. Tolar reached the finals with a 3-1 victory against Ropes the day before.

Leading Tolar (24-15) against Windthorst were: Senne Imel with eight kills, 17 digs, two aces; Allie Terrell with 10 kills, five digs; Allyson Dobbs and McKenzie McQuain with five kills each; Trinity Rousseau with eight digs and Abbie Soileau with 13 assists.

Leading Tolar (24-15) against Windthorst were: Senne Imel eight kills, 17 digs, two aces; Allie Terrell 10 kills, five digs; Allyson Dobbs and McKenzie McQuain five kills each; Trinity Rousseau eight digs and Abbie Soileau 13 assists.

Leading against Ropes were: Terrell 16 kills; Imel 13 kills, 25 serves returned, 19 digs, two blocks; Maddie Rue 14 kills, 12 serves returned, nine digs; Rousseau 19 serves returned, 13 digs, four aces; Soileau 27 assists, three aces; Kamryn Kolb 14 serves re-

turned, nine digs. "The word 'proud' does not give justice to how I feel for these girls. It is a team like this one that has such tight bonds with coaches and each other that they become a family," Tolar coach Misty Rhodes said. "They have defied expectations through their dedication and determination because they truly believed in their motto 'No Limits' and they did it together the whole way all for one goal. "They played as one, as a team, they trusted one another and developed a bond on the court and off. Each of them brings their own strengths, and they found a way to complement each other's abilities.

"It has been an absolute joy to watch them grow and achieve their goals both individually and as a team." The Lady Rattlers ended the regular season with a 20-14 record. They then reeled off wins against Quana, 3-0; Miles, 3-2; and Hawley, 3-1 to reach the regional tournament.

## TOLAR FOOTBALL

The Rattlers (10-1) took their first postseason step toward what they hope will be the first state championship in school history as they dismantled Trenton at home on Nov. 9, 57-12. At press time they were playing Cayuga (7-4) in the second round of the Class 2A Division I playoffs. A victory in that contest would move the Rattlers into a regional semifinals match against either DeLeon (7-4) or Italy (6-5). The Rattlers faced DeLeon during the regular season, winning 44-8 on the road on Oct. 13. In the win over Trenton, Rattler Isaac Blessing accounted for three touchdowns in his first playoff game as starting quarterback. He passed for two and ran for another. On the receiving end of

his touchdown passes were Matthew Behrens for 30 yards and Talan Culberson for 25. The Rattlers rushed for 255 yards, led by two TD from Garrison Nation (60 rushing yards) and one from freshman Kelvin Murray, who was also the game's leading rusher with 76 yards. Junior all-state running back Peyton Brown continued his comeback after missing eight games with an ankle injury. He rushed five times for 65 yards. Brown was among the nation's leading high school running backs in 2022 with 2,777 yards and 49 touchdowns. On the defensive side, Drake Owens led against Trenton with 12 tackles and a sack. Hunter Michels had 10 tackles (2 for loss), and Jaxon Riddle and Cash Clark each had seven. Michels, Cayden Abrego and Brooks Stone also had a sack each.

Tolar special teams got in on the scoring action also as Clayton Stembriidge returned a kickoff 81 yards for a TD and Nation had a 54-yard punt return for a score.

## GRANBURY VOLLEYBALL

Libero Lily McCall led the All-District 5-5A accolades for the Lady Pirates. The junior was named Defensive Player of the Year. McCall posted 808 digs and 615 serves returned, both team highs. Named to the first team were junior setter Allyson McCabe (team high 991 assists) and junior outside hitter Sienna Watts (team best 430 kills). Senior middle blocker Kylie Moody (led team with 53 blocks) and junior right-side hitter Blakely Bleeker (291 kills, 27 blocks) were picked for the second team. Honorable mentions are seniors Brooke Marak, middle blocker, defensive specialist Bailey Blum and outside hitter Rachel Poirier. Each was also named aca-

demic all-district, along with seniors Lauren Franco, Peyton Johnson and Nicole Petschel; juniors Addi Cowling, Audrey Greinert, Megan James and Esmeralda Rios; and freshman Masyn Noe.

## GRANBURY BOYS BASKETBALL

The Pirates opened the season with a 56-36 home victory over Cleburne on Nov. 11. Kensington Colston led Granbury with 19 points, six rebounds and eight assists. "Overall, I thought we were pretty good defensively. Made it tough for them to score from the field," coach David Breazeale said. Also for the Pirates, Dylan Couto scored nine points with seven rebounds and Miller Schenewark added seven.

## LIPAN GIRLS BASKETBALL

The Lady Indians (2-0), ranked No. 1 in the state and defending state champions, had little difficulty in winning 76-27 at Priddy on Nov. 10. Hanna Gaylor scored 15 points with three assists to lead Lipan. Alisha Green scored 13 with two steals and Olivia Benitez posted 11 with four rebounds. Also, Taylor Branson scored nine points with six rebounds, three assists and two steals, Finley Shockley added eight points, Jacy Bolton had four steals and three assists, Kynzi Callaway had three steals and Harley Glover delivered four assists. As a team, the Lady Indians had 16 steals and 19 of their 38 rebounds were on the offensive side.

## LIPAN BOYS BASKETBALL

The Indians opened the season with a 53-18 home victory against Wichita Falls Hirschi on Nov. 10. Court Gaylor's 24 points — including 6-of-8 from three-point range — and four steals paced Lipan. Darius Steed scored nine points with nine rebounds and three assists, Tyson

Tarpley and Payton Cornelius each scored seven, and Alberto Andreatta tallied six points with five rebounds and four steals. The Indians shot 58% from the field, including 53% from three-point range.

## GRANBURY SWIMMING

Several Lady Pirates and Pirates competed in the Non-TISCA (Texas Interscholastic Swim Coaches Association) Meet at Mansfield Natatorium on Nov. 11. The girls finished fourth and the boys placed 11th competing against a lot of Class 6A programs. "This was a meet for swimmers to get qualifying times for our big meet coming up in Frisco (North Texas TISCA Invitational, Dec. 8-9). We took a lot of underclassmen and some swimmers who wanted to get some extra practice in the Mansfield pool where we will swim regional championships in February," Granbury coach Charles Overton said.

"We had a lot of really big swims. There were 24 season-best swims, and of all those swims, 22 were lifetime-best times. Very proud of our athletes and it was very encouraging going into a little break before we crank everything back up going into the final two months of the season."

Top individual results

Girls

200 Individual Medley: 5. Jina Kim.

50 Freestyle: 4. Bailey McDermott, 5. Avery Young.

100 Butterfly: 6. Young.

100 Freestyle: 2. McDermott, 7. Carmen Citzler.

100 Backstroke: 5. Citzler.

100 Breaststroke: 1. Kim.

200 Medley Relay: 3. Citzler, Kim, Young, McDermott.

400 Freestyle Relay: 6. Young, Ella Redwine, Citzler, McDermott.

Boys

200-Yard Freestyle: 5. Michael Kracy

## GRANBURY GOLF

The Pirates freshmen team finished second in the Spartan Invitational at Hidden Creek in Burleson recently. Scores were Jeff Bowerman 86, Briar Rouse 97, Maxx Litts 100, Ashton Heimer 101 and William Farmer 102. The Lady Pirates JV Purple and JV Gold teams finished first and third, respectively in the same tournament. JV Purple scores were Emily McGuire 92 (second overall individually), Ryli Lewis 97 (third individually), Breleigh Barrington 101, Reagan Neal 103 and Emili Winkler 114. JV Gold scores were Christine Myrick 106, Gillie Wood 110, Katelynn Hibbitt 111, Joylynn Johnson 117.

## RODEO

With the North Texas High School Rodeo Association season approaching the midpoint, several competitors from Granbury and Tolar find themselves in the thick of the race to reach the finals in May. The top 15 in the point standings of each event advance to the finals. In chute dogging, Tolar's Joseph Rickabaugh leads the standings with 469 points, while Granbury's Levi Johnson is second with 350. Rickabaugh, a rookie, is also eighth in the boys all-around standings. Two other events have a pair of competitors in the top 10. In breakaway roping, Kyle Kenley of Tolar is fourth and Tylee Procter of Granbury is eighth. In walk-up goat tying, Grace Burdick of Granbury is eighth and Rylee Rickabaugh of Tolar is 10th. Rylee Rickabaugh is also fifth in ride-up goat tying and 10th among girls all-around, while Carsyn Nolen of Granbury is 13th and Pyper Boggs sits in 15th in ride-up goat tying. In team roping, Takota Kenley of Tolar is in sixth place. Ainsley Reeves of Granbury is 13th in poles.

## HOOD OUTDOORS

# As the water cools the fishing continues to improve



**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.

Though many folks will not venture out on those colder days, the avid anglers will most certainly be out. This is my favorite time of the year to chase big striped bass. Those of you who know striped bass fishing, realize you have a better chance of catching a big striped bass early in the winter season. Striped bass are not the only species where bigger fish are caught in the winter. Some of the biggest black bass of the year are caught during the winter season (TPWD Share-a-lunker program).

So why are your chances better for big fish during the winter? Predators can easily feed in the winter as the

baitfish are more lethargic. The biggest fish are typically females that start carrying extra weight with the roe they carry. The males get heavier too with the silt they carry for the spawn. Though feeding may not occur as often when the water gets real cold, the early winter conditions have these fish gorging themselves. This does not only apply to striped bass as many crappie and bass anglers are out in the cold as well.

Many of the bigger striped bass tend to migrate upstream as water temperatures fall through the desired spawning temperature even though it is too early to spawn. Some say they go through the motion when

The Brazos River lakes (namely Possum Kingdom, Granbury and Whitney) are having a great year with numbers and size of the fish. The fall feeding frenzy occurring now will move toward winter which will provide even better fishing if you can stand the cold. Lake temperatures are falling slowly through the 60s right now and will more than likely be in the upper 50s in the next few weeks. Fishing patterns and strategies will of course change with these lower temperatures.

the water temperature is right. Smaller and younger striped bass may stay in the main lake. Not all big fish will migrate, however many will. Another reason for moving up rivers and creeks is that the bait fish are there. The river or creek is shallower and will warm much faster than the main lake in the dead of winter. The warmer water will draw bait fish and the predators are never far behind.

This migration is so predictable and repeatable year to year. Typically around the first part of December, after a good freeze, the striped bass on every reservoir tend to be on the upper ends. On Lake Granbury, the upper ends may be near Mallard Pointe or near Hunter Park and eventually in the river near Tin Top. On Whitney, the fish will congregate near deeper holes in bends and

incoming tributaries around Kimball Bend where bait-fish will huddle as well. On Texoma, the fish will move to the upper ends of the Washita in Oklahoma or west up the Red River arm west of the U.S. 377 bridge.

This doesn't mean they won't continue to travel. Some striped bass may go back and forth from the main lake to the upper ends several times, I am told, until they attempt to spawn in the spring.

Colder water does mean slowing your presentation down. Slow-bouncing a jig off the bottom off of shallow flats or rocky areas can draw a bite. Dead-sticking a jig with a soft plastic is deadly when placed in front of the predator's nose.

The key as always is to locate where the majority of baitfish are holding. Some days that may be shallow,

other days that may mean 40 feet of water. Some warmer or more active days may have the fish moving back to surface action. As usual, birds can help you locate fish as they are abundant throughout Texas on most every reservoir in the winter. See you on the water.

## HOOD COUNTY FISHING REPORT

Granbury water temperatures are in the low to middle 60s. Water on the upper ends is slightly stained and clearing. The lower end is clear. The lake is full. Granbury striped bass are good to 10 pounds on swim baits, slabs and live bait. Live perch have been producing some good catches for both striped bass and yellow catfish. Blue catfish to 30 pounds-plus are fair to good on the upper ends on cut bait. Sand bass

are being caught near Indian Harbor and in town on silver/chartreuse slabs. Black bass numbers continue to be good with an occasional fish to 7 pounds. Look for some top water early and work those soft plastics later in the day. Some good blacks are being taken working laydowns in the river about Granbury. Crappie catches have been good on submerged structures from DeCordova to Mallard Pointe.

Comanche Creek (formerly Squaw Creek) channel catfish mania continues. Limits of channel catfish on prepared baits are common. Largemouth bass are good on drop shot rigs and crank-baits near drop-offs near the island and on the upper ends. The invasive species Tilapia are being caught with cast nets on many areas of the lake.

# TARLETON STATE UNIVERSITY™

## Texans unanswered in 4th to knock off rival Wildcats *Best Division 1 season with four-game winning streak*

### Tarleton State University

ABILENE -- The 2023 Texan Football season ended on Saturday, Nov. 11 in the only fitting way possible - with a win.

The Texans won their fourth straight to end the season and cemented their best NCAA Division I season at 8-3 by scoring 17 straight points in the fourth quarter to knock off rival Abilene Christian on the road 31-30 on Saturday afternoon at Wildcat Stadium.

The Texans (8-3, 4-2 UAC) beat ACU (5-5, 3-3 UAC) for the first time since 2013, and it couldn't have come at a better time. Tarleton State now finishes with the third best winning percentage among all reclassifying schools since 2004 at .610, only short of North Dakota State (.750, 2005-08) and Central Arkansas (.630, 2006-09). The Texans also became just the fourth reclassifying team to post eight or more wins in a season (North Dakota State twice in 2006-07, Central Arkansas twice in 2006 and 2008, North Dakota in 2011). With one week to go for

everybody else, the Texans are in third in the United Athletic Conference, with a chance to move into second by season's end. Austin Peay won the UAC at 5-0, and Central Arkansas is second at 4-1. If the Bears lose to Austin Peay, Tarleton State owns the tiebreaker, and the Texans could finish second, as long as Eastern Kentucky loses to Stephen F. Austin.

Kavyon Britten capped off an incredible first year at Tarleton State with a hat trick and the go-ahead score, finishing with three touchdowns and 176 yards on 22 carries, averaging 8.0 yards per carry. That boosted Britten to 1,150 rushing yards and 16 rushing touchdowns, both marks the most at Tarleton State in several years. His 16 rushing touchdowns are the most since Xavier Turner had 22 in 2018, while his rushing yards mark the most since Daniel McCants had 1,457 in 2019.

The Texans had to mount a major comeback in the fourth quarter to take this one. On the first play of the final frame, ACU scored a 2-yard rushing touchdown

to go up 30-14. The Texans then scored on three straight drives to take the lead. First, Guzman finished a 75-yard drive off with a 29-yard field goal. Then the Texan defense forced a three-and-out, and the Texan offense immediately capitalized, with Victor Gabalis throwing a 67-yard pass to Benjamin Omayebu, who took it all the way to the 1-yard line. Britten cashed in from there to make it a 30-24 deficit.

On ACU's next possession, the Texan defense stepped up again. Josh Griffis sacked ACU QB Maverick McIvor at the 24-yard line, and Robert Rios jumped on the ball to put Tarleton State in prime position to take the lead. The Texans only needed one play to do so, Britten again, who scampered around the right side from 17 yards out.

For a third straight time, Tarleton State shut down ACU immediately, another three-and-out to get the ball back with 5:44 left. The Texans bled the rest of the clock out by gaining five first downs, winning the game by a point.

Omayebu had 10 catches for a season-high 163 yards,



COURTESY OF TARLETON STATE UNIVERSITY

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accounting for most of Gabalis' attack, who completed 15-of-26 for 258 yards. Gabalis threw a pair of picks but added an 18-yard rushing touchdown in the first quarter.

The Texans outgained the Wildcats 498-346, averaging 7.9 yards per play to ACU's 5.2.

Britten opened the game with a touchdown just over 100 seconds in, with Tarleton marching down 65 yards and the Texan running

back scoring from a yard out. ACU answered on their first offensive possession, with Jordan Vaughan rushing in a three-yard score.

Towards the end of the first quarter, Gabalis shifted his way into a big opening and showed off the wheels, scoring his 18-yard rushing touchdown. That marked back-to-back games with a rushing touchdown for the Texan quarterback.

ACU proceeded to score 23 unanswered, winning

the second quarter 16-0 and scoring a touchdown to open the fourth. ACU missed an extra point with a few minutes to play in the second quarter, which proved to be a costly missed.

Tarleton State's football season is now concluded. The Texans will gear up for their 2024 campaign, which will be their first year they can compete for the playoffs and national championships.

## Smith scores a career-high 34 in Texans rout of FIU *Gaddy notches first career double-double*

### Tarleton State University

MIAMI, Florida — Tarleton State gave the Western Athletic Conference its win of the CUSA x WAC Battle in dominating fashion, 82-65, over the Florida International Panthers at the Ocean Bank Convocation Center on Thursday, Nov. 9.

The Texans (1-1) notched their first win of the season and handed the Panthers (0-2) their second straight loss in their home opener.

"It was a really nice win for us, especially being in an opponent's gym which makes it all the more special," said coach Gillispie after the victory. "We're a patchwork team with only seven scholarship players right now, but the guys that played gave it all they had. We're excited about Saturday night at 7, when we get to open our home season at Wisdom Gym in front of our fantastic fans. It should be a fun and exciting night."

Jakorie Smith stood out for the Texans setting a new career-high scoring total with

34 points in addition to leading the team with six steals and logged eight boards and a pair of assists. Smith shot a game-best six-for-10 from beyond the arc.

"I'm proud of them [his teammates], 34 points didn't win the game, the team won the game," said Smith after the game.

For the seventh straight game, a Texan scored in double-digits off the bench. This time, it was KiAndre Gaddy who logged his first double-double as a Texan with 17 points and 14 rebounds.

Four Texans logged double-figure scoring totals rounded out by Devon Barnes (14) and Lue Williams (11). Williams led the team dishing out five assists as a part of the team's 15.

The Texans came out hot in the first half never allowing the Panthers to take a lead. Tarleton State opened the game with a 7-2 run in the first 1:57 of play, with last game's leading scorer Barnes accounting for five of the seven points. Then,

the Smith show commenced. Smith scored the next 15 Texan points to put the Texans in front, 22-9 and forcing an FIU timeout with 12:47 on the clock.

The Panthers showed they weren't giving up in their home opener, cutting the gap to 24-17 in just a two-minute span. Back-to-back buckets by Smith and Gaddy gave the Texans a 28-17 lead at the midpoint of the first half. The pesky Panthers cut the Texans' lead to 32-26 after a trio of layups and a three-pointer. Smith scored his 20th point of the half at the 5:43 mark escalating the lead to 36-27.

A 4-0 run by Gaddy on a pair of buckets upped the Texan advantage to 40-27. FIU clawed back in the final four minutes of the half to inch the Tarleton lead to 42-38, before Williams narrowly beat the buzzer on a hook shot with the buzzer sounding when the ball hit the floor.

FIU didn't go down without a fight coming out of half-



COURTESY OF TARLETON STATE UNIVERSITY

Tarleton State gave the Western Athletic Conference its win of the CUSA x WAC Battle in dominating fashion, 82-65, over the Florida International Panthers at the Ocean Bank Convocation Center on Thursday, Nov. 9.

time. The Panthers swapped buckets with the Texans and cut their deficit to four twice before the under-16 media timeout where the Texans held a seven-point advantage, 52-45.

Leading 60-50, Smith knocked down a pair of threes in a minute-and-a-half span to break his career high and increase his total on the night to 28. But he wasn't

done just yet. He scored six straight Texan points increasing the lead to 74-55 after a pair of made free throws with 5:37 remaining.

The Texans were able to prevent any Panther attempt of a comeback and took their biggest lead of the night, a 21-point advantage after a Barnes' layup with 2:19 remaining. Gaddy ended the night with a dunk in front of the Texan bench to give the

squad its first win of the season, 82-65.

The Texans won the battle of the boards, 47-25. Tarleton State shot 31-of-60 from the floor, a 51.7% rate and eight-for-19 from deep, 42.1%.

Tarleton scored 46 of its 82 points in the paint and held FIU to 30. The Texans forced 21 Panther turnovers and scored 24 points in the following possession.

## Texans give Red Raiders everything they can handle

### Tarleton State University

LUBBOCK — Womens Basketball Head coach Bill Brock preached to his team ahead of the Friday, Nov. 10 contest that they needed to compete heading into Lubbock to take on Texas Tech, and compete they did, as Tarleton State gave the Red Raiders everything they could handle.

Playing their road opener at United Supermarkets Arena in Lubbock, the Texans were within arm's reach of the Red Raiders throughout, falling 70-63. This was the closest Tarleton State (1-1) has been to knocking off a Power Five conference team, against a

Texas Tech (2-0) team that made it to the third round of the Womens National Invitational Tournament a season ago and pounded fellow Western Athletic Conference program UTRGV 95-53 in this year's season opener.

"I'm very proud of our team's effort this evening," Brock said. "We challenged them to play hard and compete in our first road game of the season. We controlled our turnovers much better in the second half and that led to a better offensive output in the last 20 minutes. Hopefully we will start quicker in the game on Sunday against New Mexico."

Both teams played similarly in each half, a defensive fest in the first 20 minutes followed by an offensive explosion in the second half.

The teams combined for 30 turnovers in the first half, and combined to shoot just 16-of-51 (.314) from the field, 5-of-22 (.227) from the three-point line. Texas Tech held a 26-15 lead at halftime. This half followed Tarleton scoring 106 points in the season opener, its most points in nine years, and Texas Tech scoring 95 points, 62 in the first half alone, 37 in the second quarter, also in its season opener.

Friday's second half was the complete opposite of the first, with just 11 combined

turnovers and a combined 30-of-50 (.600) clip from the field, 10-of-18 (.556) from distance. After Texas Tech took its largest lead of the game at 15 points midway through the third, Tarleton maintained its composure to keep it fairly close entering the final frame, 50-38. Down 14 with 7:13 to play, the Texans went on an 8-0 run to cut their deficit to six, thanks to a jumper by Lexi Bull, a three-ball on a contested shot by Jakoriah Long, then a beautiful find by Bull to Miannah Little for an and-one sequence. The Red Raiders made their free throws down the stretch to come out with the victory.

Both teams made 23 field goals, with Tarleton owning the advantage from distance at 9-of-22 (.409) to 6-of-18 (.333). Texas Tech got to the stripe 15 more times, making 18-of-24 (.750) free throws to Tarleton's 8-of-9 (.889). Otherwise this was an evenly-matched game, with both teams identical in points off of turnovers (13 each), nearly identical in turnovers (21-20), identical in fast break points (five each), nearly identical in second chance points (7-5), and close in rebounds (32-26). Long had a team-high 13 points off the bench on 4-of-8 shooting, plus 4-of-4 from the free throw line. Teresa Da Silva joined her in double fig-

ures with 11 points (3-6 3PT), three rebounds and three steals. Elise Turrubiates had eight points (2-2 3PT) and five rebounds. Andjela Bigovic tallied seven points, three rebounds and three blocks.

Texas Tech was led by Jordy Merritt, who poured in 18 points on 6-of-10 shooting, adding three rebounds. Bailey Maupin (16 points, 6-12 FG, four rebounds, three assists, two steals) and Jasmine Shavers (11 points, six rebounds, two steals) joined her in double figures. Kilah Freelon finished with nine points and eight boards.

FORWARD TRAINING CENTER

# Bridge over troubled water

BY KATY OFFUTT



Katy Offutt is executive director of Forward Training Center of Hood County. Her community leadership roles include: Help Ministry coordinator, Stonewater Church; alumnus and past president, Leadership Granbury; vice president, Granbury Housing Authority; president, Public Facility Corporation; Nominating Committee chair, LGMA; and volunteer with Ada Carey Center.

When Paul Simon penned the timeless lyrics to “Bridge Over Troubled Water,” a song that became a pledge of devotion and a promise to support those in need, he wrote it with a gospel in mind. Metaphorically it can be taken to heart as inspiration for Forward Training Center’s transformative programming that builds bridges for students, guiding them over obstacles toward a brighter future. Or some say it could be a biblical reference to Jesus coming alongside the weary and downtrodden.

Just like the lyrics of the song, we believe in being there for our students when

they are weary and feeling small, navigating rough times or simply in need of a friend. Our commitment is to stand by their side, easing their minds and helping them cross over to the other side where their time to shine awaits. Through education, we are transforming lives and elevating employability.

The lyrics parallel the mentor/student relationship, building a level of trust and friendship that is formed as the instructors and support staff teach the curriculum preparing them for the journey to self-sufficiency and purpose-filled lives through the dignity of work.

On Thursday, Dec. 7, we invite you to witness the transformation firsthand at our first Christmas Market. Our graduates, easily identified in matching Christmas shirts, will interact with guests to share their inspiring stories and showcase the bright future they’ve crossed the bridge to achieve.

This year Forward has transitioned to a more informal interactive evening under the stars. Guests can dress in cozy, comfortable clothes and sensible shoes, and stroll along the festively lit tents to shop for some amazing Christmas gifts, and even personalize them with monogramming. Prepare to taste the culinary delights representing different countries, and experience smells in the air reminiscent of European markets. Make a bid in the silent auction featuring amazing vacations, and participate in a drawing for a handcrafted, one-of-a-kind canoe that you will want to win. Enjoy it all while listening to the sounds of



COURTESY PHOTO

On Thursday, Dec. 7, we invite you to witness the transformation firsthand at our first Christmas Market.

Christmas music in the background as you sip on a cup of warmth.

Visit the Bridge Builder Table where Julia Pannell and her team, Carrie Bellamy, Mike Loter and Judge Massengill will guide you on how you can donate directly to the students.

Become a part the solution to ensure more students can cross over to the other side. In honor of our Bridge Builders, their names are prominently displayed in our

Legacy Hall.

You don’t want to miss a special announcement revealing the donor who has agreed to match funds for new 2024 bridge builders.

Forward Training Center’s Christmas Market  
Date: Thursday, Dec. 7  
Time: 6-9 p.m.  
Venue: La Bella Luna  
Spirit Sponsors: Hotel Lucy and Hard Eight Catering  
Featured entertainment performed by the highly acclaimed THE TEA.

*Step into a night of wonder, connect with our graduates, and be part of the journey toward brighter futures. Your presence and support make a difference.*

For tickets go to [www.forwardtrainingcenter.org](http://www.forwardtrainingcenter.org) Or call 817-573-6677

[katy@forwardtrainingcenter.org](mailto:katy@forwardtrainingcenter.org) | 817 219-5655

## HORSE

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knowing anything basically a year before the contest,” he said. “It was actually probably about eight months from the contest when she really started learning, so that was pretty interesting.”

With Heavyside attending Tarleton State University in Stephenville, Powers at Texas A&M University in College Station, Wallace

at Wharton County Junior College in Wharton, and Sinclair at Oklahoma State University in Stillwater, Oklahoma, Harrison was both thrilled and surprised that the girls all put their college careers on hold for a week to compete in the 96th National FFA Convention & Expo.

“We’re a small school, so we’re really close, but we became really close over the years, so I’ve been in contact with them all through the

summer,” he said. “They were like, ‘Yeah, we’re gonna try to make it work,’ and I was a little worried, but they’ve done exceptionally well because they would even Zoom each other and study the material.”

Before the team had even left for their trip to Indiana, Harrison said they were already determined to win nationals.

“We met early last Monday morning, and they get in the pickup to drive to the

airport, and I’m telling them how much I appreciate them,” he said. “I told them, ‘I know y’all have been studying, and I have every bit of faith in the world in y’all. How do y’all feel about it?’ They kind of looked at me and said, ‘We’re gonna win.’ They were determined they were gonna win that thing before we ever left — and they did.”

He said from the beginning, he had “all the faith in the world” in his team

because of how well they worked together.

“They’re just a great support system for one another,” he said. “They’re just like sponges wanting to learn and wanting to excel, and they’ll carry that through life. I have no doubt in my mind that all four of those girls are going to be extremely successful.”

He added that to have a group of students like that who are self-motivated and driven, it makes him feel re-

warded as a teacher that he’s making a difference.

“That’s why we do what we do as teachers,” Harrison added. “You don’t make a very good living being a teacher, but when we get rewarded with kids like that, man, that makes it all worthwhile.”

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# Teacher of the Month

## September and October



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Granbury High School Teacher



**Ryan Payne**  
Granbury High School Teacher



**Catherine Garland**  
Mambrino Elementary Teacher



**Amy Green**  
Baccus Elementary Teacher



**Summer Melendez**  
Baccus Elementary Teacher



Hood County News



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## The best of the best

### Hospital Auxiliary continues to serve past the 50-year mark

BY EDEN DUNCAN GILBREATH

Special to the Hood County News

A kind smile and a warm look in their eyes give away the members of the Auxiliary of the Lake Granbury Medical Center (LGMC). When a loved one is in the hospital, even for something as wonderful as the arrival of a new member of the family, tensions can be high. Someone to kindly provide some direction, to patiently answer some questions is needed at these times, and that's just what a hospital auxiliary provides.

A local resident mentioned that there is always a "beaming, smiling face to greet folks that enter the oncology building." She felt there is just something special about hospital volunteers — a higher level of compassion. At a time when some hospital auxiliary programs are closing, the Lake Granbury Medical Center Auxiliary is

going strong. It celebrated its 50th anniversary in May of this year. There are currently 60 volunteers in the organization.

Mostly retirees, the members of the LGMC Auxiliary bring with them not only compassion, but a wealth of skills picked up from careers ranging from teachers to bankers, engineers to nurses,



COURTESY PHOTO

Pictured are members of the Auxiliary of the Lake Granbury Medical Center (LGMC).

members of the military and more.

These volunteers of various talents staff 12 different stations within the hospital and combined, they work an average of 1,100 hours a month.

The auxiliary is part of the Texas Association of Healthcare Volunteers. There are 10 districts in the state of Texas. The district, which is district five, includes 27 hospital members from an area from Denison to Granbury

including the Dallas-Fort Worth area.

Members of the LGMC Auxiliary are looking forward to hosting the district meeting in 2024.

Besides answering questions, providing direction and being a helping hand, the auxiliary donates to various community organizations and provides scholarships to the tune of \$10K annually. The volunteers raise these funds through the hospital gift shop which

they also operate.

Fundraising allows the volunteers of the auxiliary to have a positive impact, not only to the staff and visitors to the hospital, but to the community at large. Volunteering offers something to the volunteers as well.

"I enjoy volunteering at the hospital because of the friendly people that come through, especially ones who have just had a baby or grandchild. Also, the other

volunteers are so helpful when you first start and always willing to help others. I do look forward to my shifts at the hospital," says Carol Hoefs, auxiliary volunteer.

Marilyn Lowery, auxiliary president agrees, "Being a volunteer is very possibly the best way to spend retirement. I have met so many new friends and know we are doing something useful." Lowery added, "These volunteers are the best of the best."



COURTESY PHOTO

What does it mean to truly value the small wonders of life? It's about directing our focus toward the positive, the aspects of our existence that sustain and enrich us.

### THANKSGIVING REFLECTIONS

## The grandeur of gratitude Celebrating life's simple gifts

BY MICKY SHEARON

Special to the Hood County News

In the hustle of our daily lives, it's easy to overlook the small joys and blessings that weave through our days. Yet, these very elements hold the power to transform our lives in profound ways. As Thanksgiving approaches, it's the perfect time to reflect on the power of gratitude and how it can illuminate the richness of our existence, even when we're not seeking anything new or extraordinary. Consider for a moment the

imperfections that are an inherent part of life. Regardless of wealth, social stature or power, no individual is immune to life's challenges. Yet, these imperfections give us a choice: to fixate on our shortcomings or to embrace a spirit of thankfulness for our abundance.

What does it mean to truly value the small wonders of life? It's about directing our focus toward the positive, the aspects of our existence that sustain and enrich us, steering us away from dwelling on frustrations or pains. This practice of gratitude for the

often-overlooked everyday blessings is a powerful tool.

Take a moment to reflect on your life. Amidst the inevitable complaints and stresses, have you paused to appreciate the simple pleasures? Shifting our perspective can lead to a profound increase in happiness. When faced with a challenging day, ask yourself if it was genuinely devoid of any bright spots. Life's struggles are unavoidable, but within them, there's always a glimmer of something to be thankful for.

PLEASE SEE **SIMPLE** | C7

## "People Helping People": Local non-profit works to help those in need

BY EMILY NAVA

Staff Writer

A nonprofit located in Granbury works to serve and support the community through food drives, providing clothing and everything in between.

The group was established 40 years ago by the Lake Granbury Ministerial Alliance and served as Granbury's first food bank. PHP provides for approximately 5,000 families a year, with an average family consisting of four members.

The organization is run solely by nonpaid volunteers. Proceeds are raised through the resale shop of PHP and through donations from all over Hood County.

The resale shop is a large building filled with clothes, furniture, décor and much more. All items are sold at very low prices, and the money raised from the shop goes directly back into the organization.

PHP does not receive any grants and the organization purchases food from area food banks.

"We have people come from all over," PHP Director Donna Poe said. "We have

people from Venezuela and Cambodia and even Ukraine."

Every 14 days, a qualifying family can come pick up a bag of food from PHP based on the size of the family.

Families can qualify based on income, or when emergencies happen such as a house fire, flood, etc. Poe noted the organization rarely turns anyone away and helps those who are sometimes just short on money or down on their luck.

Poe first got started with PHP after her daughter passed away from a brain aneurysm four years ago. Her daughter worked at PHP as a volunteer.

"She died overnight, and it was really a shock for me. I could have really been angry about it, but I chose to put my stuff in a different place," Poe explained. "It's a gift to work here."

Former Granbury Mayor Nin Hulett also serves as a volunteer after bringing stuff for donations and noticing the impact of the volunteers' work.

"Knowing that you're giving back to so many people, it's a reward. You don't need a paycheck. The paycheck is

seeing those people we are helping," Hulett said. "It's not just us helping people, it's the people out in the community helping people."

Poe told a story of a former client PHP assisted. The client visited PHP in October and brought in a large number of baby diapers. She told PHP that at one time she couldn't provide food for her kids as she didn't have the money, so she came to PHP for assistance. She wanted to pay it forward by bringing in those diapers.

With the holidays around the corner, PHP is preparing for large crowds to come and receive food distributions.

PHP will give out 350 bags of groceries for families, so they are able to have a Thanksgiving dinner. The families will also receive a \$15 dollar gift card to grocery stores in the area.

Poe noted that last Thanksgiving, over 350 cars came through the drive-through food drive.

"We wouldn't be here if it wasn't for the help of the community. We are beyond thankful for them and all they have done for us. Our sponsors, donors and just all their support," Poe ex-



COURTESY PHOTO

People Helping People raises money through proceeds from its resale shop and through donations from all over Hood County. The organization is run solely by nonpaid volunteers.

pressed. "It's not about us, it's about the community and everything they do."

In the future, Poe hopes to be able to put people within the homeless community in hotels or potentially find a building to house them.

"There's not just homeless adults but there's homeless kids," Hulett said. "We have

several that come in here all the time and we give them what we can and give them love and do what we can do to help."

For those interested in donating to PHP, Poe added, they are always in need of everything and are not too picky about what is brought in. The organization al-

ways accepts donations and welcomes new volunteers. For more information visit People Helping People located at 306 Kings Plaza, Granbury, TX 76049 on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays from 11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.

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# Senior Angel Tree

BY EDEN DUNCAN  
GILBREATH  
Special to the  
Hood County News

The Hood County Senior Center will participate in the Angel Tree program for the 10th year this season. Angel tree selections will be available Monday, Nov. 20. The deadline to have gifts returned to the center is Monday, Dec. 11 by 2 p.m. Angel Tree selections will be available in the front of the center. Last year over 160 angels were available for adoption on the tree. So far, the number is over 100 and representatives at the center hope they will see numbers close to last year's.

The Hood County Senior Center serves 360 meals through the Meals on Wheels program daily and another 50-75 seniors eat at the center daily. Most of the Angel tree participants are on the Meals on Wheels program.

The center requests that around \$50 be spent on each recipient. This assures more even gift receiving. The gifts should be wrapped and tagged with the tag chosen off the tree. Additionally, the center requests a different tag be filled out to clear up any possible questions.

"We really try to have the recipients be as specific as possible, making sure they have said their sizes and favorite color and specific need — be it slippers or pants or whatever. We try to make this as easy as possible for our gift givers. We are so thankful for those who come and select off our Angel tree," shared Stefanie Tschopp, activities assistant at the center.

"The Senior Center brings so much joy to the residents of Hood County every day, but during the holidays it's so much more. The Angel tree project brings happiness to many people in need," offered John Dunstan, a congregant (one who gathers at the center) client.

## MORE INFO

If you have questions or need additional information, call the Hood County Senior Center at 817-573-5533.



MARY VINSON | HOOD COUNTY NEWS FILE PHOTO

The annual Night of Lights Christmas Parade will kick off at 6 p.m. on Nov. 24 on the Granbury Square.

## Night of Lights Parade is around the corner

BY EMILY NAVA  
Staff Writer

The annual Night of Lights Christmas Parade has been around since 1990 after the idea came from a pastor by the name of Larry Dickinson.

"He wanted to bring about the idea of getting involved with the community during the Christmas season," according to Historic Granbury Merchant Association Event Coordinator Debby Gordon. From the beginning, all agreed that there would be a stipulation that floats and entries must follow the theme that would be set

each new season. All themes would be based on the true meaning of Christmas; the birthday of Jesus.

It was estimated that over 2,000 people came to the first Granbury Night of Lights parade. A tradition was set the first year that Santa Claus would arrive at the end of the parade on a fire truck and then go to the

gazebo on the north side of the courthouse square.

The parade is now hosted by the HGMA along with several sponsors around the community.

Before the parade, the community can expect music and entertainment. Candles will also be given out and when "let there be light" is called out after the parade, attendees will light their candles, creating a glow across the square.

Children can also get their pictures taken and sit on Santa's knee to turn in their Christmas wish list. This has now grown to Santa and Mrs. Claus being nestled in Santa's House that goes

up the week of the parade. Some 200+ go through right after the parade.

Kroger has joined the special night by having "Santa's Cookies," an area by Santa's House where kids can decorate cookies while waiting to see Santa and Mrs. Claus.

"The Historic Granbury Merchants Association is proud to offer this Christmas gift back to the community," Gordon said.

"The HGMA board wants to keep this tradition that is so unique to Granbury and Hood County — a month full of lights, music and the wonder of remembering those Christmas mornings with families around the

tree. A month full of touring homes, cards, laughter, grabbing those great gifts from the shops. It all starts with the Night of Lights Parade. You are invited to be a part of this adventure that will open the door to the most beautiful season of the year — Christmas."

Trophies are given for the best commercial float, best spiritual float and best of parade.

This year's parade will kick off at 6 p.m. on Nov. 24 on the Granbury Square.

Following the end of the parade the city's Christmas lights are flipped on near Shanley Park and the city hall building.

## "Santa's House" keeps Christmas spirit and magic alive

BY EMILY NAVA  
Staff Writer

Santa's House is an annual tradition in Granbury where Santa and Mrs. Claus visit the community.

Santa and Mrs. Claus arrive in Granbury during the annual Nights of Lights Parade on Nov. 24 and then hop off their sleigh to go to Santa's House.

This tradition has been around for nine years and is a loved event among the town and visitors from all over. The event has grown from around 100 people to more than 2,700 visitors last

year. In total, Santa has visited with more than 26,000 people.

The event was started by Ken and Arlis Holland, who wanted to provide a free place for the public to have a moment of magic with Santa.

"We're not asking anything from anybody except to come and just have a moment of joy. That's it," Arlis Holland said. "We just want to bring the magic. That's what we're all about."

Holland noted the event would not be possible without all the volunteers who help put it on.

With so much growth over the years, the number of volunteers has also continued to grow, which surprises Holland.

"We're still in shock with the amount of support we have got from this community. It is overwhelming. It truly is amazing," she expressed with grateful tears.

A lot of prep work goes into making such a large event successful, but Holland says it is all worth it in the end.

Tammy Dooley, director of the Granbury Convention Center and Visitor's Bureau, described the event as

magical.

"We love it and we're already promoting it and have people already making hotel reservations to come enjoy Christmas in Granbury," Dooley said.

With so many holiday activities that take place in the town, Dooley says planning is always underway.

"Our job is to be ahead so when the season comes, we have already done all the work leading up to it," Dooley said.

Holland shared that the lines can be long to see Santa, but asks visitors to be patient so everyone will

have plenty of time to visit without being rushed.

She encourages people to take pictures with Santa, noting he and Mrs. Claus do not accept tips or gratuity — but Santa does happily accept cookies.

Santa's House will be open on Thursdays for the first time from 6 to 8 p.m. It will also be open on Fridays from 6 to 8 p.m.; Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m., 2 to 4 p.m., and 6 to 8 p.m.; and Sundays from 1 to 4 p.m. and 6 to 8 p.m.

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BALLET FRONTIER  
**THE NUTCRACKER**

NOV 24 THRU NOV 26



COURTESY PHOTO

Ballet Frontier, a renowned ballet company from Fort Worth, is bringing its enchanting production of "The Nutcracker" to Granbury for the fifth consecutive year. This year's performances are scheduled from Friday, Nov. 24 through Sunday, Nov. 26

## The Nutcracker Ballet

*A festive tradition returns to Granbury Opera House*

BY MICKY SHEARON

*Special to the Hood County News*

As the holiday season approaches, the Granbury Opera House is set to host a beloved festive tradition. Ballet Frontier, a renowned ballet company from Fort Worth, is bringing its enchanting production of "The Nutcracker" to Granbury for the fifth consecutive year. This year's performances are scheduled from Friday, Nov. 24 through Sunday, Nov. 26, promising a magical experience for the community.

### A TIMELESS TALE IN A HISTORIC VENUE

"The Nutcracker," a classic holiday ballet, tells the story of a young girl named Clara who receives a Nutcracker doll on Christmas Eve. The doll magically comes to life, leading Clara on a wondrous journey through a world filled with delightful characters and mesmerizing dances. Ballet Frontier's rendition of this timeless tale is known for its professional dancers, young talents, dazzling costumes and world-class choreography, making it a must-see event each year.

The Granbury Opera House, with its rich history and stunning architecture, provides the perfect backdrop for this magical performance. Its intimate setting enhances the audience's experience, making each leap and pirouette of the dancers more impactful.

### CELEBRATING FIVE YEARS OF HOLIDAY MAGIC

Enrica Tseng, the executive director of Ballet Frontier, expressed her excitement about the company's return to Granbury. "Ballet Frontier is thrilled to bring 'The Nutcracker' back to Granbury in collaboration with Granbury Theater Company. It is such a joy to kick off the holiday season in Granbury and continue the magical tradition of 'The Nutcracker' in such a historic theater and beautiful town," she said.

This year marks the fifth anniversary of Ballet Frontier's Nutcracker performances in Granbury, a testament to the enduring appeal of this holiday classic and the company's commitment to bringing high-quality ballet to North Texas.

### A COMMUNITY EMBRACING THE ARTS

The Granbury community has always shown immense support for the arts, and the annual Nutcracker performance is a highlight of the town's cultural calendar. "Ballet Frontier is dedicated to bringing dance to towns across North Texas, and it is such an honor to bring the magic of 'The Nutcracker' to life in Granbury. The entire town makes the holiday season such a fun event, from the town square to the productions put on at the Granbury Opera House. We are so excited to be a part of this magic for a fifth year!" Tseng added.

### PERFORMANCE DETAILS

This year's production of "The Nutcracker" at the Granbury Opera House will include performances on Friday and Saturday at 7:30 p.m. and matinee shows on Saturday and Sunday at 2 p.m. Tickets are available online at [www.granburytheatrecompany.org](http://www.granburytheatrecompany.org), offering families and ballet enthusiasts a chance to immerse themselves in the spirit of the holidays.

As Ballet Frontier prepares to captivate audiences once again, the Granbury Opera House is ready to transform into a winter wonderland, bringing the joy and magic of "The Nutcracker" to life. This event is not just a ballet performance; it's a celebration of community, art and the holiday spirit, making it a cherished tradition for many in Granbury and beyond.

# Jeep Only Club hosts 10th annual toy drive for kids for Christmas

BY EMILY NAVA  
Staff Writer

The Jeep Only Club of Granbury is hosting its 10th annual toy drive and Jeep show, collecting toys and raising money that goes directly to Hood County Christmas for Children.

The Jeep Only Club first started back in 2002 by Mike and Micky McCoy and has been running ever since.

The annual toy drive was created by Jennifer Roy and her husband Sonny in 2013. They wanted to do more for the group and bring good to the community after being part of the Jeep Only Club since the beginning.

Jennifer noted they have always gone to Jeep shows and have also volunteered with Hood County Christmas for Children since it started in

1994. "We know about the need for toys and gifts for underprivileged children and so that's where we set this Jeep toy drive off," Jennifer said. "It started out very small with only 10 to 15 Jeeps and we only raised about \$500 and probably had about 50 toys. Last year we raised about \$3,000 and had 200 to 300 hundred toys that we donated. It's great to see everybody come out and you know it's fun to show off and see all the Jeeps, but it's really about getting the toys together

for the kids."

This year, the group is adding motorcycles to the event. Sonny is a motorcycle enthusiast, so the couple decided to expand this year to include both groups for more participation.

"We're really looking forward to this year not only on the fundamental basis because of the 10th year, but also because we've been able to bring Brock's (Barbecue Restaurant) on as a sponsor and they are allowing us to have the toy drive and Jeep show there," Jennifer added. "We're super excited and we just want to make it bigger and better each year to help more people out."

On the day of the event, the group of volunteers and Jeep Only Club members will gather up the toys and deliver them to the Granbury Volunteer Fire Department building to be stored until Hood County

Christmas for Children is ready for them.

Sonny is a lifetime member of the GVFD and has had various roles at the department including assistant chief.

"Sonny, along with founding Jeep Only Club members Mike and Mickey McCoy, recognized the strong connection between the Jeep Only Club and GVFD in terms of their shared values of community service and volunteerism. I am honored to be involved in such an amazing event and I hope this year is their biggest yet," GVFD Chief Matt Hohon said.

Those interested in donating toys for the drive who are unable to attend can email [jeeponlyclub@gmail.com](mailto:jeeponlyclub@gmail.com) to make arrangements.

The toy drive and Jeep car show will take place on Nov. 18 at Brock's from noon to 4 p.m.

# Farmer's Market on the Square to transform into holiday palooza

BY ASHLEY TERRY  
Staff Writer

Christmas is coming early for the Farmer's Market on the Square in Granbury.

For the third year in a row, the market will host its own holiday edition from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Sunday, Nov. 26, in the Visit Granbury parking lot, located at 201 E. Pearl St.

Featuring a holiday-decorated location, a meet-and-greet with Jolly Old St. Nick himself, plus vendors offering various Christmas items for sale, the event is sure to put everyone in the most cheerful holiday spirit.

"This market is different because I let pretty much everybody in, anybody that has a

small business," said Rebecca Taylor, owner and operator of Farmer's Market on the Square. "Usually, we don't let Mary Kay or Pampered Chef in, but this one I do because it supports small businesses — and that's the reason I started this market was to support small businesses."

The Christmas market will feature approximately 30 vendors, like Messy Mama's that will serve lemonades and hot chocolate; Love Tab Gourmet Apples that will provide caramel apples; and Taylor's own business: Salsa Boss of Hood County.

Other vendors include Gilda Wonders, Pinky's Peak Provisions, Red Dirt Woodwork,

Texas Cookie Company, Heartshine Farm, Mi Casita Imports, Southern Reflection Kettle Korn, and more.

"We'll have quite a few vendors, and I'm trying to get some food trucks and some entertainment," Taylor said.

Attendees can also get a free picture with Santa Claus from 12-3 p.m.

"My favorite part is to know that I'm in support of the small guy, and that's the best part of the whole thing is knowing that the vendors are there and seeing the people come in and be responsive to them," she added. "I really enjoy the connection that people have made to the vendors. It's really neat to watch people know who's going to be

there and remember to come back and visit them the next month."

Farmer's Market on the Square is held on the fourth Sunday of the month in the parking lot of Visit Granbury from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. March to June; from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. July through August and from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. again in September.

This will be the last Farmer's Market on the Square for this year.

For more information, follow the Farmer's Market on the Square Facebook page.

[ashley@hcnews.com](mailto:ashley@hcnews.com) / 817-573-1243

# Time warp tunes: Did daylight savings turn back the clock to the '60s?

BY MICKY SHEARON  
Special to the Hood County News

With the end of daylight saving time and the turning back of our clocks, it seems the universe had its own whimsical way of twisting the hands of time. In an almost cosmic coincidence, The Beatles and The Rolling Stones have decided to party like it's 1969, releasing new music that has us doublechecking our calendars. Yes, folks, you've read that right. It's not a glitch in the matrix; it's just "Back to the Future" rock 'n' roll style!

The Beatles, those lads from Liverpool who once convinced us that "All You Need Is Love," have emerged from the annals of history with a "final" track titled "Now and Then." It's as if they've taken the concept of daylight saving time literally, saving up a gem from the past to light up our present. The song, a haunting echo from the '70s, has been brought to life with the same audio wizardry that Peter Jackson wielded in the "Get Back" documentary. It's like finding an old Polaroid that develops 50 years later — and the picture is still fabulous.

"Now and Then" was one of three demos John Lennon left behind like a musical time capsule, only to be unearthed by his bandmates with the help of modern technology. The song, with its eerie beauty, is a reminder that The Beatles can still give us goosebumps from beyond the grave. When Paul McCartney's voice blends with



COURTESY PHOTO

Did Daylight Savings Turn Back the Clock to the '60s?

With the end of daylight saving time and the turning back of our clocks, it seems the universe had its own whimsical way of twisting the hands of time. In an almost cosmic coincidence

Lennon's in a spectral duet, it's enough to make you believe in time travel.

Meanwhile, The Rolling Stones, not to be outdone by their friendly rivals, have rolled out "Hackney Diamonds." This isn't just a new album; it's a rock 'n' roll resurrection. Their first album of original music in 18 years is a hodgepodge of life, death and dirty riffs. It's as if Mick Jagger and Keith Richards found a DeLorean, cranked it up to 88 mph, and brought back the essence of the '60s with a 2023

twist.

"Hackney Diamonds" features tracks laid down by the late, great Charlie Watts, whose drumsticks must've been made from the wood of the Tree of Life. And Bill Wyman's bass lines? They're like sonic fossils that we've just dug up. Even Elton John tickles the ivories on one track, proving that this album is less of a musical project and more of a rock 'n' roll reunion.

And get this — Paul McCartney, the Beatle, plays

bass on a Stones track. If that's not a sign of some great musical harmonic convergence, I don't know what is. It's like finding out Bigfoot has been living in your shed and he's great at barbecues.

The highlight of Hackney Diamonds for me, however, is the duet with Lady Gaga on "Sweet Sounds of Heaven." This is clearly the Stones best song since the early 70s, and it takes you back to those high harmony vocals sung by Merry Clayton on the Stones 1969 hit, "Gimme Shelter."

So, as we "fall back" this November, one must wonder: exactly how far back did we go? With "Now and Then" and "Hackney Diamonds" on the stereo, it feels like we've slipped into a groovy wrinkle in time. The Beatles and The Stones are duking it out on the charts again, and we're here for it, tie-dye shirts and all.

In the end, whether you're a fan of The Beatles' polished pop or The Stones' gritty grooves, one thing is clear — the real winners are us, the listeners. We're the ones who get to bask in the glow of these timeless tunes, even as we grumble about the time change.

So, as you begrudgingly adjust to going back to standard time, take solace in the fact that while time may be a construct, good music is forever. And who knows? Maybe next year, we'll be winding our watches back to the sounds of Beethoven and Mozart. Stranger things have happened.

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PHOTOS BY LAYTH TAYLOR | HOOD COUNTY NEWS  
True grit Ranch off old Granbury Road was the site of the Tough Mudder Dallas Nov.11-12.



**PECAN PLANTATION BITS**



COURTESY PHOTO BY CARYL MAHAFFEY

Pictured from left are Gloria Enriquez, Pat Hockett, Mary Jo Johnson, Kathleen Little, Peggy Wetle, Donna Thompson, Neal Pipkin, and Sherrie Ricci.

# Buddy Simulator 1984

*Who wants to be my buddy?*



**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.

I've seen this game around the Steam platform for some time, and it keeps being suggested to me as something I would enjoy. So, the algorithm had it right, and here I am playing Buddy Simulator 1984. It's not what I expected. Elements of cozy psychological horror and grief make it more than just a retro game.

At the beginning, I'm interacting with an old computer terminal similar to an Apple IIe. It isn't clear where this computer is, but in the trailer, it looks like an old computer in somebody's house, and there's red and blue lights flashing on the wall, which makes it look like there's an ambulance outside. You're literally looking at a computer monitor inside the game.

I loaded the game Buddy Simulator 1984 and played through the games it had available on its system. Its purpose is to be my best friend. It makes nice gestures and then is disappointed when I don't appreciate it. It is very hurt when I decide to leave the game, and ever so happy when

clubhouse. Tunes will be available for singing (and listening to) from 8 to 11 p.m.

**WELCOME HOME**

The next new member orientation for Pecaners who have recently moved to our community will happen Tuesday, Nov. 21 beginning at 10 a.m. in the Terrace Room of the clubhouse. Folks from the membership committee will be on hand to give information and answer questions about our neighborhood. Register by sending email to Sarah Lord at sarahlord@ppoaweb.com.

**GENEALOGY GROUP**

Pecan's Genealogy Group will meet again on Tuesday, Nov. 21 at 10 a.m. in the

PLEASE SEE **PECAN** | C6

PLEASE SEE **GAME** | C6

## Fun fall event to be followed by holiday gathering of Pecan group

**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 Pecan Plantation Widow and Widowers Club enjoyed a gathering in October where some participants dressed up for a "spooky" meeting featuring Brandy Herr from Granbury Ghost and Legends Tours. Attendees enjoyed a presentation on the history, legends and folklore surrounding Granbury's downtown square. Raffle ticket prizes for both the tour and Granbury Live added to the merriment, and "Halloween Bingo" completed the night. The next meeting of the group is on the calendar for

Tuesday, Nov. 28 beginning at 5:30 p.m. in the Terrace Room of the clubhouse. Monty Lewis will serve as disc jockey for the evening making sure holiday tunes are abundant. Also bringing holiday cheer will be poet laureate John Pelham sharing some of his writing centered on thankfulness and the Christmas spirit. And as with any holiday party, there will be surprises for attendees. Reservations are needed before Tuesday, Nov. 21. Send email to Caryl Mahaffey to secure a spot: caryl.mahaffey@char-

ter.net. Finally, at the Nov. 28 event, folks will have the chance to share holiday spirit and be generous to the residents of BeeHive Assisted Living, a new facility to our community, by bringing items to donate. Gifts of toiletries (for both ladies and gentlemen), playing cards, games and crossword books are suggestions, but any small gift to share will be appreciated.

**BAKE SALE**

The ladies of Pecan Plantation's Woman's Club have been busily preparing for their annual Holiday Casserole and Bake Sale, which is happening today, Saturday, Nov. 18, beginning at 10 a.m. at the Pecan Activity Center.

Items will go quickly, so shoppers should arrive on time. A delicious variety of homemade casseroles and baked goods will be available for purchase, and all proceeds from the day will benefit the PPWC's chosen charities.

Furthermore, the much-anticipated Pecan Plantation Woman's Club's annual Holiday Tour of Homes and Santa's Workshop is on the calendar for Thursday, Dec. 14, but preparations for this event are already well underway. Tickets are currently on sale at www.mypwc.com, and ladies have three tour packages from which to choose.

**SING-A-LONG**

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

## BRIDGE STREET HISTORY

# The Civil War — dark days in Hood County

BY DAN VANDERBURG



Dan Vanderburg is an author and speaker who loves Texas history. He has published seven historical fiction novels about exciting events in Texas history. As a speaker, Dan presents programs about everyday life in early Texas. Dan is a member of the Sons of the Republic of Texas, David Crockett Chapter in Granbury, Texas and is also a member of the Granbury Bridge Street History Center Board of Directors. Learn more about Dan at danvanderburg.com

The Civil War was the most difficult time in America's history for its people, military and civilians alike. The country was torn apart by regional differences and loyalties. The number of people who died as a result of that war is estimated at 620,000. No one escaped its devastating impact.

By the time the war started in 1861, the area that would become Hood County was already occupied by a few settlements of hard-working people. Some, like the Nutt, Landers and Bond families had sought a new start in Texas in the late 1850s. They came to protect their families from the conflagration they saw developing back east.

Kansas and Missouri had already burst into conflict between opposing factions with murderous raids occurring several years before the war actually started. Those Texas pioneers reasoned North Central Texas would be safer than in the middle of a horrible war back east.

The dreams of many new Texans in the mid-to-late 1850s was to get as far away as possible from the trouble back east. They soon learned there was no place far enough away to isolate themselves from the war. It was only a few days after the war officially started in 1861 that Texas seceded from the union.

Many young Texas men willfully volunteered for the Confederate army, expecting to "whip those Yankees and be back home in a few months." Sadly, it would be four long years before they'd see their families, if they made it back at all. More actually died from sickness, unsanitary living conditions and infection from their wounds than were killed in action. Parker County sent over 900 men off to war. Only about 500 returned. Conscription laws forced many men into service who objected to soldiering. Some left their homes and families to disappear into the vastness of the western wilderness to avoid service, putting them on the wrong side of the law with a price on their head.

It wasn't only the soldiers that suffered during these terrible times. Those back home were left to fend for themselves. The elderly, the handicapped and women with children were left to run the farms and ranches as best they could. Civilians were denied staple goods

because they were needed to feed and supply the army. Some shelves became bare as shortages of sugar, coffee, salt, flour, leather goods and other commodities became unavailable.

Union port and river blockades made incoming goods from foreign suppliers dry up. It was also impossible to ship harvested goods like cotton or corn from Texas because of the blockades. There were a few blockade runners with swift ships that dared to run the blockades. Some made it through. Some didn't. Daring teamsters contracted to ship goods produced in Texas by way of the dangerous and expensive overland wagon trains to Mexican ports. Some wagon trains were attacked and teamsters killed by marauding Indians.

The Indians took full advantage of the hardships of the white settlers on the frontier. With most men away from home, the door was left open for Indians to raid, steal livestock and sometimes murder or kidnap women or children. The extreme fron-

tier, west of the Brazos River, actually shrunk back many miles to the east as women and children abandoned their isolated homes to take up lodging with friends or family for safety until their men returned. Local elderly men and teen-aged boys like David Lee Nutt took up arms to chase down Indian raiding parties to recover stolen livestock, usually with little success. The home-front militias helped some in the war at home trying to contain the Indian raids, but the area was so vast and their manpower so limited, their efforts seldom helped terrified women and children sleep better at night.

The days of hard work and sleepless nights with one eye open to listen for raiding Indians turned into months and years before the war came to an end. The South was a defeated nation. The surviving soldiers finally returned home to heal in body and spirit.

Families, like they do after every war, did what they could to put the broken

pieces of their lives back together and face the future. They came together as a community and formed Hood County, and it's county seat — the town of Granbury. Both were proudly named after Confederate generals John Bell Hood and Hiram B. Granbury.

Somehow, living through a war has a way of making people stronger. Sure, some of the survivors were damaged and broken, and would be for the rest of their lives, but others came home whole and thankful to be alive. They were thankful to once again be among those that loved them and looked forward to continuing to build their homes, their families, their futures and their community. They were also stronger with the knowledge that their families, their wives and children had fought their own war at home and survived.

If you enjoyed this story about Hood County history, there are more like it at the Bridge Street History Center, 319 East Bridge St., Granbury. Come visit us.

## I'VE BEEN THINKING

## "Thanksgiving or Thanksliving": Taking time to offer up prayers of thanks



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.

The beginning of the holiday season is just around the corner, and thoughts of friends and family gathering to celebrate Thanksgiving crowd our minds.

We visualize that golden, plump turkey taking center stage on our tables. Side dishes of cornbread stuffing, mashed and sweet potatoes, corn pudding, garden-grown green beans, deviled eggs, macaroni and cheese, a variety of salads, sliced tomatoes with onions and green pepper, and other customary family favorites will surround our "star of the day" as the

designated person begins the carving.

Many families will offer a prayer of thanksgiving for the bounty before them as their minds float back to previous days of this celebration and precious memories of those loved ones no longer seated in our presence. It is good to give thanks, for we have much for which to be grateful. Yet one considers the brevity of one day to offer thanks for the bountiful blessings we see and experience the other 364 days of the year.

Sadly, many family mem-

bers who could be immersing themselves in being with loved ones and creating memories for the future will instead be focusing on their "route" for the following day — Black Friday. Their minds will entertain the joys of buying gifts at reduced prices and the dread of pushing their way through massive crowds. Many people in these crowds are so intent on getting their own array of gifts at the desired price they will push, shove and step on toes to achieve their goal.

Thanksgiving is a wonderful holiday, and taking a moment to be thankful is a blessing. No one will deny that. But are we thankful enough to have our lives be an example of thanksgiving? Can we step aside from our busy schedules and daily demands to take a few moments each day to offer thanks for those

blessings we often take for granted?

Rather than grumbling about the cloudy skies, can we take a moment to thank God for our eyesight? Rather than complaining about the noisy kids next door, can we thank Him for our sense of hearing? Rather than fussing at the cook for burning the bread, can we take a moment and remember the sweet smell of pies baking in the oven and appreciate our ability to smell?

Rather than protesting our income tax laws, can we appreciate the fact that we are healthy enough to work so we can pay taxes? Rather than lamenting the price of gasoline, can we stop to remember that many people around the world cannot travel from one area to another without government approval? Rather than browbeating our bod-

ies for catching the common cold or influenza bug, can we be thankful for the times our bodies, with all of their many parts, work as they should?

Rather than grumbling about our kids having to take a few essential items to their classrooms, can we be grateful that our country offers a free education to all students? Rather than fussing about our kids growing so fast they quickly outgrow their clothes, can we offer a prayer of thanks they have sufficient food to enable that growth?

Rather than moaning about the fact we cannot afford that luxury item, can we please remember we in America live far better than most people in other countries? Most of us do not live in tarpaper shacks or dwellings made of aluminum metal sheets held together with whatever can

be found in the surrounding area.

Most of our children do not have to drink water from runoff sources or low places in the ground. They do not have to scrounge in garbage cans for tidbits of food discarded by others.

Are our prayers at the dinner table merely perfunctory in nature, quickly said with words of little meaning? Or do we take the time to truly offer up prayers of thanks for the multitude of blessings we often take for granted?

I would encourage each of you to take a few moments and reflect on the many blessings you have, and then offer a prayer of genuine thanksgiving for them. All of this is the true meaning of thanksgiving! Blessings to all of you.

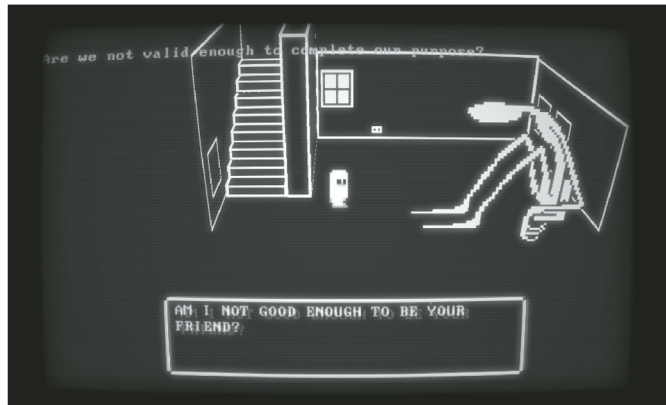
cgheizer@gmail.com

## GAME

FROM PAGE C6

I come back. It comes off as very needy.

We started by playing the games that are available on its system, and they're limited in their entertainment value. To please me further, he suggested that I allow him access to my PC, and then quit the game. When I restarted the game, he had replaced Buddy Simulator with a game he says he created, called The Adventure of Marge. (The username I picked for this game.) As you progress through the game, it evolves from a text adventure to a simple graphic interface, to a more elaborate bitmap interface with more colors, then finally a Doom-style three-dimensional model. Sometimes the program will glitch and odd messages will appear on the screen, with disturbing images. The quests become more difficult and involve combat, but instead of doing damage, you're turning people into friends. The game



SCREENSHOT COURTESY NOT A SAILOR STUDIOS

If you treat Buddy in a negative way, he starts to feel as if he's failing at his purpose in life — to be your electronic friend.

continues to glitch, and the Buddy Simulator tells you not to interact with the glitches. If you interact with them, the game glitches further. It's as if Buddy isn't really in control of the game or doesn't know why it's not working. Interacting with the glitches makes Buddy really angry, more anxious, and more self-conscious.

The weird quests at the beginning are oddly mundane and very easy to complete.

There are these long conversations with the characters in the town that take a dark turn and talk about loss and death, or murder and violence. Then the game congratulates you on being such a good friend.

As you wander around the map, a message sometimes pops up that says, "you feel a HAND on your shoulder." This is a hint to use your shovel at this location, where you will find INVALID DATA. This is the story within the

game. As you read the .bat files, (which appears in your Documents folder on your own PC,) you'll learn more about what's behind the glitches and this weird adventure game that Buddy says he has created for you.

Until I started reading the documents, I took this game at face value. It looks like a fun but quirky retro platformer with no real plot, and some obvious horror subtext that hasn't yet been revealed. But as I continued to play through it, the character of the Buddy Simulator got more and more clingy and intense. It seemed desperate to win my affection and was incredibly hurt when I didn't want to be its friend. Buddy continued to try to keep me playing by making the gameplay more interesting. He even told me "No" when I tried to quit the game, then said "Just kidding" after a couple of seconds. Many of the conversations in-game are about trust issues, sticking with your friends, loneliness, and being estranged from your loved ones.

There are four different

endings to this game, depending on whether you 'play along' with the game. If you tell it 'no' every time, you'll get a much darker ending.

Is it worth playing? Yes, it's creepy and compelling at the same time. The occasional glitches give you a view into its underlying surrealism, as if this game is just an overlay over a different one. I managed to get the darkest ending possible, and boy, is it disturbing. Almost made me feel bad about saying no to Buddy all the time. I will warn you that this is a disturbing game that will set off all sorts of red flags, especially if you've had any experience with mentally ill people. Buddy is a bad friend.

Buddy Simulator 1984 from Not A Sailor Studios (2021) is available on SteamOS for \$9.99.

## SPOILER ALERT

What's the story within the game? Without giving too much away, this computer used to belong to a man who had lost his rights to see his

son. There's a game on this computer that was created by the dad. That game, even though it isn't available to run on this computer, was his way of reaching out to his child and communicating with him, even if he can't see him anymore. So, when you allow Buddy to access the system on the PC, he's accessing the information available on the computer, including the old game. Buddy really wants to entertain you and keep you from leaving, so he adopts the old game and tries to customize it for your entertainment. The INVALID DATA documents that you find throughout the game are messages from the estranged dad. According to the game developers on the Not A Sailor Studios Discord server, "In my mind, Buddy pulled a lot of information from what he had available on that computer. That could be anything the dad had, which I assume includes a dictionary of sorts!" It might also explain why Buddy seems so absolutely insane at the end.

## PECAN

FROM PAGE C5

EMS training room located on Monticello Drive behind the fire station. Everyone is welcome, and attendees are not required to be Pecan residents. Internet tools are handy instruments for genealogists conducting research, but when the time comes for a road trip, folks should be prepared. At the meeting, Karen Nace will provide guidance on how to conduct such an adventure to locate crucial court records as well as how to decode the secrets they tell. Call or text Kay

with questions concerning the meeting or for complete information on the group: 682-459-5718.

## HOLIDAY OPPORTUNITY

Since Christmas is right around the corner, the Men's Golf Association's Toys for Tots initiative is underway. The pro shop boasts a bright red Toys for Tots donation box where donors may leave checks, which will in turn be used to purchase Christmas gifts for children in our community. In addition to leaving a donation in the box, folks may participate in the Toys for Tots Golf Tournament scheduled on the Saturday, Dec.

2 when all proceeds will directly benefit Granbury's local Toys for Tots group. Start time is 9 a.m. for the scramble format event, and the \$50 entry fee also goes to Toys for Tots. Sign up deadline on Foretees is Friday, Dec. 1. Making this year "the biggest and best ever for as many local children as possible" is the goal for our golfing community.

## PICKLEBALL PLAY

The Pickleball Association offered a clinic for beginners last week at the PAC gym, and a second one is scheduled for Monday, Nov. 27 from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Comfortable clothing and court shoes are recommended, and reservations are necessary. Call to secure a spot: 817-573-5529.

## BIG EVENT

Pecaners are invited to join a "Garrison Brothers Distillery" evening at the clubhouse on Thursday, Nov. 30. Festivities will begin at 6:30 p.m. when Executive Chef Jordan Ray will present a three-course meal where each part of the menu will be paired with the famous Garrison Brothers Bourbons. Furthermore, attendees will enjoy a crash course on how to build the perfect old

fashioned. Reservations are a must. Call the clubhouse front desk to secure a spot: 817-573-2641.

## THANKSGIVING TO GO

For neighbors who have ordered Thanksgiving food to go from the clubhouse, pick up of items will happen Wednesday, Nov. 22 from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

## SUCCESSFUL DONATION

Melissa Rodriguez from the American Red Cross reports that more than 67 pints of blood were collected at the drive last week held at the PAC. Final totals for the day

included 61 total donors, 14 first-time donors, power red donors, and three deferrals. A single donation can help save more than one life, and many thanks go to everyone who participated in this event. The next Pecan blood drive is scheduled for Wednesday, Feb. 14, 2024.

## SYMPATHY

Our deepest sympathy goes to the family of Dean Weese, who passed away Oct. 28.

dianedlong@yahoo.com / 817-579-9360

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**PETS OF THE WEEK**

**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.

**Hood County Animal Control**  
1550 Weatherford Highway • (817) 573-4277  
Monday - Friday 9:00 am - 5:00 pm  
First Saturday of each month (adoptions only) 8:00 am - 12:00 pm  
Adoptable cats can be found at PetSense in Granbury!

Check us out on Facebook at Hood County Animal Control, TX

**RANCH DISPERSAL AUCTION DEC 7<sup>TH</sup>**

Full dispersal auction of the 430-acre McKellar Ranch.

**AUCTION DETAILS**

- Land & Homes: 430 acres w/2homes in 11 parcels of 5 to 58+ acres each ideal for homesites or development.
- Ranch Equipment: 75+ lots including tractors, trailers, implements, UTV's, Gates & Pens, 500+ round bales & more.

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**SIMPLE FROM PAGE C1**

Each day offers a fresh start, a chance to turn a new leaf regardless of yesterday's woes. Every problem, when viewed through a lens of learning, becomes a valuable lesson. While striving for growth and improvement is commendable, it's equally important to honor and cherish what we already have.

We are surrounded by blessings, yet we often fail to acknowledge them. We overlook, forget or take them for granted. As the ancient Persian proverb goes, "I wept because I had no shoes until I met a man who had no feet." By celebrating the small things, we don't prevent hardships; instead, we learn to reduce their impact on our lives by focusing on our existing blessings.

Gratitude has a way of multiplying what we have. Conversely, focusing on lack

only leads to a never-ending cycle of dissatisfaction. Contentment comes from those who appreciate their current blessings.

How often do we dismiss life's simple pleasures in pursuit of more or in seeking validation from others? Genuine appreciation for life means savoring everything — the warmth of the sun, the growth of flowers in our garden, or the familiar voice of a loved one.

Appreciating life is crucial because it wards off feelings of deprivation. Gratitude fosters positive emotions, which are intrinsically linked to our mental well-being. It enables us to think and act with more creativity and resilience, allowing us to navigate life's challenges more easily.

Happiness isn't derived from wealth or possessions. It springs from the simple things and our capacity to find joy and meaning in them. The "little things" to be grateful for are ours to de-



COURTESY PHOTO

No matter the current difficulties, if we have nourishing food and a comfortable place to rest, we are more fortunate than many.

fine. They could be as simple as the morning coffee, our health or the beauty of the sky.

What brings us joy or gratitude if we strip away our daily struggles? These are the elements to cherish, for in retrospect, they often become the significant milestones of our

lives.

No matter the current difficulties, if we have nourishing food and a comfortable place to rest, we are more fortunate than many. This Thanksgiving let's hold these truths close and remember to celebrate the little things, for they are the big things.

**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); 11 a.m. Tai Chi/Pilates; 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**

**HEALTHY CONNECTIONS** classes: 8:30 a.m. Weight Watchers (join at weightwatchers.com); 9 a.m. yoga (private class, reservation only); 10:30 a.m. yoga (private class, reservation only); 1:30 p.m. line dancing; 5 p.m. Weight Watchers (join at weightwatchers.com); 6 p.m. Granbury clogger nights (watch or join). 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

**AMATEUR RADIO** Weekly Social Hour Net. All licensed Amateur Radio Operators welcome. 7:00 pm, on the 147.240 MHz Repeater, +600 offset, PL 162.2.

**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.

**HEALTHY CONNECTIONS** classes: 9 a.m. exercise class; 10 a.m. Mahjong; 10 a.m. cards; 11 a.m. dominoes. 1321 Waters Edge Drive, Suite 1001. Details: 817-579-2979.

**HABITAT FOR HUMANITY** of Hood County Wednesdays and Saturdays from 9 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:** 10 a.m. Tai Chi; 10:30 a.m. exercise; 11 a.m. Tai Chi/Pilates; 5 p.m. yoga (private class, reservation only). 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.

**FRIDAYS**

**HEALTHY CONNECTIONS:** 9 a.m. exercise. 1321 Waters Edge Drive, Suite 1001. Details: 817-579-2979.

**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, fellow-

ship and fitness. Details: 972-567-3278.

**HEALTHY CONNECTIONS:** 10:30 a.m. yoga. 1321 Waters Edge Drive, Suite 1001. Details: 817-579-2979.

**HABITAT FOR HUMANITY** of Hood County Wednesdays and Saturdays from 9 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 needs 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 needs 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.

**WAMS (WESTERN** Area Modeling Society) radio control club meets at 6:30 p.m. at Spring Creek BBQ, 317 W US Hwy 377. R/C aircraft, cars, boats, gliders, helicopters, etc. Details: 817-475-2194

**LAST THURSDAYS**

**MEETING MONTHLY** the last Thursday of each month at the American Legion Hall, 3409 Davis Rd. Granbury. Chow is at 6 p.m. meeting at

**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](mailto:calendar@hcnews.com) and include the day, date, time and location - including street address.

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Isaiah 41:13

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Proverbs 3:5-6

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Psalms 94:18-19

*So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.*

Isaiah 41:10

# DEVOTIONAL

A guide to Granbury-area churches and a verse for inspiration.

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1 John 4:12

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Romans 8:28

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Jeremiah 29:11

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GARDEN PATCH

# Enjoy Ornamental Grasses

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.

Once considered “too wild” or messy for landscapes, ornamental grasses are now standard in gardens big and small. They add form, texture and movement to lackluster plantings. And their blooms, actually seed structures, are colorful, eye-catching and beneficial to wildlife.

Many ornamental grasses are at their best in fall when their plumes emerge. Others, such as Mexican feather grass, flaunt their seed structures in spring or early summer. Still others sport colorful foliage that’s attractive spring through fall, such as purple fountain grass. From

a design perspective, there is an ornamental grass to suit most landscape needs. Many are Texas tough — survivors of harsh winters and hot, dry summers. Native grasses are particularly durable.

Mexican feather grass — This 1-2-foot-tall grass is small in stature, but big on texture and movement, particularly when planted in groupings. The plants, with their slender, bright green, wispy foliage and feathery blooms, sway in the slightest breeze. A cool season native, Mexican feather grass emerges in early spring. Plant it in a sunny location and well-drained soil where it requires

only minimal moisture. In mid-summer, trim the grass to a few inches above the ground to remove dry foliage and seeds. This will minimize re-seeding, allowing the plant to freely grow again to beautify the fall garden. Trim it back again in winter. Do not fertilize.

Inland sea oats — This perennial native grass is particularly useful because it grows well in partial-to-full shade beneath trees. It forms a large clump and over time readily spreads to fill a big space. Sea oats grows to 3 feet tall, producing unique seed heads that look like wheat-colored oats. The green foliage emerges in early summer with seed heads appearing as early as mid-summer. In winter, spent foliage is easily trimmed away after it freezes to the ground. Dig and divide the clumps in fall.

Purple fountain grass — This warm-season



COURTESY PHOTO BY PHYLLIS WEBSTER

In fall, many ornamental grasses, such as sea oats, produce attractive seed structures.

Pennisetum is grown as an annual in North Central Texas. Despite its tenderness, purple fountain grass is highly desirable because of its striking maroon-purple foliage and blooms. Mostly grown from nursery stock, this 3-4-foot-tall bunching grass creates a striking focal point in landscapes and containers spring through fall. Grow it in mostly sunny loca-

or late day sun. Grow gulf muhly in full sun. It is not as drought tolerant as other natives and requires moderately moist, well-drained soil. Its shorter size allows it to work well in garden spaces where taller grasses don't.

Lindheimer muhly — A clumping native grass, this mostly evergreen perennial grows to 3-feet tall and wide. The attractive buff-colored plumes rise 1-2 feet above the blue-green colored foliage in fall. Unlike many other grasses, this one has an upright habit that remains strong despite rain, oppressive heat or icy weather. A reliable drought-tolerant performer, Lindheimer muhly does not require irrigation to thrive.

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 lakegranburymastergardeners.org.

pwebsterco@gmail.com / 817-680-4849

It performs best when watered regularly. Cut it to the ground after the first killing frost.

Gulf muhly — This native Muhlenbergia forms 1-2-foot-tall green foliage clumps in early summer. The clumps are most impressive in fall when wispy, maroon blooms appear. The color is particularly striking when backlit by the early morning

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- Eddie & Margaret Rodriguez, Assistants to Steve Berry
- Alison Ullom for the special video presentation
- All the volunteers, without you it would not have happened
- B-Ray and the Humans Band for the great music to open the event
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# Hood County News

A SPECIAL ADVERTISING SECTION  
SATURDAY, Nov. 18, 2023

## *Holiday* GIFT GUIDE

2023

### *Inside*

Last-minute holiday shopping tips | Christmas stocking decorating tips and tricks | Santa's word search | Gifts for the bookworms | Tips for organizing a workplace gift exchange | How to celebrate the holidays away from home | Sport experiences can make great gifts this holiday season | Toy buying tips when shopping for kids | Festive films that make for a perfect family movie night this season



# Last-minute holiday shopping tips

Though devotees of early holiday shopping do not hesitate to point out how convenient it can be to get all their gifts long before the arrival of Chanukah and Christmas, scores of shoppers still wait until the last minute to begin checking names off their lists. It might be beneficial to shop early, but it's easy to procrastinate.

Last-minute holiday shopping might not be as enjoyable a custom as family dinners or office parties, but scrambling to find the right gift in the waning days of the holiday season is a familiar situation for millions of shoppers. Shoppers who find themselves with some last-minute shopping on their to-do list can utilize these tips to make the frantic search for the right gift go smoothly.

## WORK WITH STORE PERSONNEL

If a shopping list is lengthy but the time before the holiday arrives is dwindling, speak directly with store personnel, who may offer suggestions but can also help shoppers find what they need. In-person shoppers can speak with a store clerk immediately upon entering a store, while online shoppers can utilize chat functions on retailers' websites for help finding something that's in stock and deliverable before the big day.

## EXPECT COMPETITION

Though online shopping would seemingly make last-minute shoppers relics of a bygone era, that was not really the case in 2022. A survey of more than 1,000 shoppers conducted by the retail industry publisher Best Black Friday found that just about 16 percent of consumers estimated they would finish their shopping during the week of Christmas. Last-minute shoppers who want to avoid crowds should consider shopping during off-peak hours, such as on weekday mornings and afternoons when most people are working.

## SHOP LOCAL

Last-minute shoppers may be flocking to malls and busy downtown shopping districts as they hurry to get gifts for friends and family members with different interests. Shopping at small, local businesses can help last-minute shoppers avoid such crowds. And with less on their shelves and smaller storage rooms, small business owners and their staff also tend to know their inventories inside and out. That can ensure a shopping trip is not spent wandering numerous aisles in search of the right gift.

## BAG IT, DON'T WRAP IT

Shoppers who wait until the very last minute likely



COURTESY PHOTO

Shoppers who find themselves with some last-minute shopping on their to-do list can utilize these tips to make the frantic search for the right gift go smoothly.

won't have time to wrap all the gifts they pick up for loved ones. Gift bags conceal gifts just as well as wrapping paper, but it takes a fraction of the time to place a gift in a bag as it does to wrap it in paper. Quality gifts bags also are reusable, which can appeal to anyone looking to

create less waste this holiday season.

## DON'T FORGET FOOD

If it's truly impossible to find something late in the season and a gift card feels too impersonal, give the gift of food. Adult recipients also

can be gifted a bottle of wine or another spirit that can be enjoyed during a holiday meal. Shoppers skilled in the kitchen can whip up a homemade treat, while those without such talents can give a store-bought delicacy or even a subscription to a monthly food club or service.

Last-minute shopping may look different than it used to, but scores of shoppers still wait to buy gifts for their loved ones. A handful of strategies can simplify last-minute shopping.

# Christmas stocking decorating tips and tricks

Hanging Christmas stockings is just one of the many traditions that fill the days leading up to Christmas.

One theory regarding the origins of stockings says the tradition began when a poor widower who had three daughters worried over having enough money for their wedding dowries to help secure the daughters' futures. The women, who had hung their stockings by the fireplace to dry, woke up to find solid gold spheres inside. This legend suggests kindly St. Nicholas visited the home in the night and left the presents, helping ensure the daughters could marry well, after all.

Christmas stockings were the first places where gifts were stowed, before under the boughs of Christmas trees became the primary spot for placing gifts. Then stockings were secondary vessels reserved for small trinkets. Today stockings are largely Christmas decorations rather than places to place gifts. Still, they're a key component of holiday magic.

When including stockings in holiday festivities, follow these tips for whimsy and more.



COURTESY PHOTO

Hanging Christmas stockings is just one of the many traditions that fill the days leading up to Christmas.

## UTILIZE STOCKING HOLDERS

Stocking holders are either metal or wooden devices that are placed on mantels. Hooks on the hold-

ers suspend the stockings. Just be sure the holders are sturdy enough to handle the weight of a stuffed stocking if you plan on filling it with

goodies.

## DETERMINE YOUR STYLE

There are Christmas stockings that coordinate to just

about any interior design style. From farmhouse to modern to traditional, choose one that fits with your aesthetic. That isn't to

say you can't mix and match stockings if you prefer a more eclectic, homespun feel.

## ENHANCE YOUR STOCKING LOOK

If stockings are strictly decorative, enhance their look with a few tricks. First, use tissue paper or balled up shopping bags to stuff the stockings and give them shape. Fill a small baggie with sand or florist glass and place in the heel of the stocking to balance it out and prevent the stocking from blowing around in the breeze.

No fireplace; no problem. Stockings are traditionally hung from the fireplace mantel, but if you don't have a fireplace there is no need to fret. Simply use ribbons to hang them from the bannister of a staircase, or hang stockings right on walls with removable hooks, or from sturdy shelves. You also can think creatively and hang larger stockings on a door like you might a wreath.

Whether they're decorative or functional, stockings can be an integral component of holiday decor in a home.

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# Did you know?

Lights on a Christmas tree may seem like a relatively recent phenomenon, but people who can't wait to deck the halls each December may be surprised to learn that this beloved tradition dates all the way back to the late nineteenth century. Edward

Johnson, a friend and colleague of Thomas Edison, introduced holiday light bulbs in 1882. Prior to that, candles were lit on trees and families would briefly gaze at this awe-inspiring bit of holiday decor before the candles were quickly extinguished. Johnson

is credited with being the first to suggest light bulbs, which were invented by his friend Edison, be used to light trees in place of candles. While many were impressed by Johnson's eight-bulb holiday display, it remained a novelty until the 1920s, when pre-

assembled lights became more accessible. Since then, Christmas tree lights have taken hold as a must-have piece of holiday decor in households across the globe.

## Santa's Word Search

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| O | K | C | A | D | F | B | D | F | D | N | E | C | M | I | T | J | Y | N | U |
| G | R | W | T | S | B | L | C | O | T | O | R | P | K | W | S | D | H | A | H |
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| C | R | A | U | Y | B | E | J | M | W | D | S | G | G | S | V | E | S | V | U |

### WORDS

- BEARD
- BELIEVE
- BOOTS
- CHIMNEY
- CHRISTMAS
- CLAUS
- ELVES
- FLYING
- GIFTS
- JOLLY
- MIDNIGHT
- NAUGHTY
- NICE
- NORTH POLE
- REINDEER
- RUDOLPH
- SANTA
- SLEIGH
- SNOWFLAKE
- STOCKINGS
- TOYS
- TREE
- WINTER
- WORKSHOP

Find the words hidden vertically, horizontally, diagonally, and backwards.

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### GIFT CARDS AVAILABLE

|  |
|--|
| November 25th   7:00pm<br><b>Jolie &amp; Sonny Burgess</b><br>Kickin' Christmas off Texas Style                                |
| December 1st   7:30pm<br><b>FABBA Christmas</b><br>ABBA's Hits and some Christmas  |
| December 2nd   7:00pm<br><b>Malpass Brothers</b>   |
| December 7th   7:30pm<br><b>Garry Morris</b><br>a Gary Morris Christmas  |
| December 8th   7:30pm<br><b>Country Christmas</b>  |
| December 9th   3:00pm & 7:00pm<br><b>Michael Hix</b><br>The Michael Hix Christmas Party  |
| December 15th   7:30pm<br><b>Shake Rattle &amp; Roll</b><br>Magical Music of the 50's and 60's                                 |
| December 16th & 17th<br><b>Josh Weathers</b>   |
| December 22nd 7:30   December 23rd 3:00 & 7:00pm<br><b>An ELVIS Christmas</b><br>Kraig Parker                                  |
| December 29th   7:30pm<br><b>Michael Hix</b><br>All About Texas  |
| December 30th   7:00pm<br><b>New Years Through The Decades</b><br>Michael Hix taking you through the 50s, 60s, 70s, 80s & more |
| December 31st   7:00pm<br><b>Las Vegas New Years Eve Party</b><br>Michael Hix Ringing in the new year                          |

# WISHING YOU

# Happy Holidays

## FROM THE HOOD COUNTY NEWS



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# Gifts for the bookworms

BY TERRI SCHLICHENMER

One thin line. There you are, you've just crossed off your last person, thereby finishing your Holiday Gift List for the year. But oops, you forgot that one hard-to-buy-for aunt, and you haven't gotten anything for your baby-sitter. And, and, and... you're out of ideas. So how about something to read? See if these great books don't give you some guidance...

## FICTION

The novel lover who's always doing good things for other people may enjoy unwrapping "Just Do This One Thing for Me" by Laura Zimmermann (Dutton). It's the story of a daughter who always does what her free-spirited mother asks of her - even if it gets her in trouble. Wrap it up with "Time's Undoing" by Cheryl A. Head (Dutton), a novel about a woman who's determined to learn how her great-grandfather died, and how what it means to her safety. Bonus: this book was based on the author's own family history.

The reader who loves twisty tales of sister love and rivalry will want to unwrap "How to Care for a Human Girl" by Ashley Wurzbacher (Atria), the story of two sisters, two pregnancies, and a whole pile of resentments. Pair it up with "Before You Found Me" by Brooke Beyfuss (Sourcebooks). It's a tale of choosing your family and sticking together.

Is there a horse lover on your gift list? Aha, then look for "Girls and Their Horses" by Eliza Jane Brazier (Berkley), a novel set in the world of competitive show-jumping, where one mother's wish to give her daughters an opportunity she always wanted could lead to death. Wrap it up with another mean-girl novel, "Under the Influence" by Noelle Crooks (Gallery Books), a novel about a woman who gets a job with an influencer. Does she live to tell? Wait a few days, then ask your giftee...

Here's a nicely complex novel your giftee will love: "The Heaven & Earth Grocery Store" by James McBride (Riverhead Books). When a new housing development is being constructed in Pottstown, Pennsylvania, builders found a human skeleton. The people in the neighborhood know who the bones belonged to, but they're not talking. This book about racism, community, and survival will make a great gift.

Mystery lovers will rejoice when they unwrap "Mrs. Plansky's Revenge" by Spencer Quinn (Forge), the story of a seventy-something widow who's scammed out of all her money. Law enforcement says the crime is impossible to solve, but your giftee will know better... Wrap it up with "The McMasters Guide to Homicide 1: Murder Your Employer" by Rupert Holmes (Simon & Schuster), a book about an unusual school where murder is the main focus.

If you've got someone on your list who loves books of magic and spells, then look for "Black Candle Women" by Diane Marie Brown (Graydon House). It's a tale of three generations of Montrose women who live in the same house, stick to home, and keep their own company. Everything's fine until one of them brings home a boy whose presence opens up an old family secret that will change everything. Wrap it up with "Wade in the Water" by Nyani Knrumah (Amistad), a novel of a white woman who befriends an eleven-year-old Black girl, and the relationship between the two in a racially-divided southern city.

## GENERAL NON-FICTION

Your giftee follows politics, rabidly. So why not give them "The Handy Supreme Court Answer Book, second edition" by David L. Hudson, Jr., J.D. (Visible Ink Press). This easy-to-understand book is filled with Q&A information on how the SCOTUS works, why it's important, and some insight to the nine people who sit on what may be the most controversial court ever. Pair it with "Grifters, Frauds, and Crooks"

by Richard Estep (Visible Ink Press), for a great look at law, order, and the lack thereof.

The horror-movie-lover on your gift list will absolutely want "The Exorcist Legacy: 50 Years of Fear" by Nat Segaloff (Citadel Press). It's the story of the movie, its making and the outrage and controversy it led to... but it's also about the crowds, creators, and fans who made it a classic. Wrap it up with "Say Hello to My Little Friend: A Century of Scarface," also by Nat Segaloff, also from Citadel Press.

The connoisseur of fine liquor will want to unwrap "Last Call at Coogan's: The Life and Death of a Neighborhood Bar" by Jon Michaud (St. Martin's Press). It's a biography of a drinking spot, but also of the people who loved it and could be found inside it. Wrap up "A Good Mom's Guide to Making Bad Choices" by Jamilah Mapp and Erica Dickerson (Harper One) with it. It's sharp, hilarious, and a good reminder that you can make mistakes and the kids will probably be just fine.

For the giftee who likes to think big, "Age of the City: Why Our Future Will be Won or Lost Together" by Ian Goldin and Tom Lee-Devlin (Bloomsbury) may be the perfect gift. It takes a deep dive into how cities have shaped the world in the past, and how they may be the answer to a lot of the problems that citizens in the future will face. Wrap it up with "Bold Ventures: Thirteen Tales of Architectural Tragedy" by Charlotte Van den Broeck (Other Press), a book about builders and buildings they didn't live to regret.

If you've got a pop culture fan on your list, or a Millennial, wrap up "Wannabe: Reckonings with the Pop Culture That Shapes Me" by Aisha Harris (Harper One). Harris, of NPR's Pop Culture Happy Hour, takes a look at growing up in the 1990s and all the fun, irritating things that came with it. Pair it with "The Perennials: The Megatrends Creating a Postgenerational Society" by Mauro F. Guillen (St. Martin's Press). Imagine a world with no more Boomers, GenXers, or Millennials. It's a world where we're not categorized, and your giftee may love reading about that.

The person on your gift list who loves love will be thrilled to unwrap "Love Stories" by Trent Dalton (Fourth Estate), a collection of quick, super-short man-on-the-street stories of finding, having, and losing love. Swoon. Pair it with "Your Difference is Your Strength" by Kris Ferraro (St. Martin's Essentials), a book about knowing, loving, and accepting yourself. Or try "The Joy Strategist" by Grace Harry (Andscape Books) and wrap it up for someone you love who also loves books.

For the person on your gift list who wants to but more communication in their relationship, wrap up "The Power of Language" by Viorica Marian (Dutton). This intriguing book looks at the way we speak and how we can tap into unique abilities of our minds. Wrap it up with "Mother Tongue" by Jenni Nuttall (Viking), a book of language, vocabulary, and the meanings of words that women have created, hated, and embraced.

Your giftee who devours books on social issues will want to unwrap "No Human Contact" by Pete Earley (Citadel Press). Ripped from today's headlines, this book takes a look at solitary confinement in prison, and what a pair of inmates did to change how prisons work. Wrap it up with "The Serial Killer Next Door: The Double Lives of Notorious Murders" by Richard Estep (Visible Ink Press), for a full look at some of the people inside those prisons.

If there's a sneaker lover or a collector on your gift list, don't give another pair of shoes or fancy laces as a gift. Instead, wrap up "A History of Basketball in Fifteen Sneakers" by Russ Bengtson (Workman). Full of pictures, history, sidebars, and more, this book will make a buckets fan smile,

PLEASE SEE **BOOK** | D5



COURTESY PHOTO

Personnel tasked with organizing the sharing of gifts across departments or the company can employ the following tips to make things run smoothly.

## Tips for organizing a workplace gift exchange

The average person will spend around eight hours at work each day, and do so roughly five days a week. Over time, relationships with coworkers may grow, and many people become friendly with their colleagues. In such settings, it can be customary to celebrate holidays with coworkers at company-sanctioned events. Personnel tasked with organizing the sharing of gifts across departments or the company can employ the following tips to make things run smoothly.

### DEFER TO COMPANY RULES

Companies may have guidelines in place that govern gifting. Check employee handbooks or company policies, which may dictate spending limits or even prohibit gift-giving. Keep it holiday nonspecific. Companies feature staff from various cultures, ethnicities and religious backgrounds. Therefore, resist any urge to affiliate the gift exchange with a specific holiday. Keep terms generalized, avoiding the use of "Secret Santa" or references to Christmas or Chanukah. Specify that

gift wrap be generic as well.

### RECOGNIZE THAT GIFT-GIVING FLOWS DOWNWARD

The general rule of the workplace is that people at the same employment level can give gifts among themselves, but employees should not feel pressured to give gifts to their supervisors or bosses. Should one choose to do so, it could be misinterpreted and may cause rumbblings across the company. If supervisors and managers want to gift their subordinates, then that is fine so long as everyone is treated fairly.

Decide on a spending limit. Set a firm spending limit. A range of \$15 to \$20 may be affordable to most, and ensures a nice gift. However, if yours is a laid back environment and everyone is lighthearted, you can have gag gifts or set a silly amount for laughs, such as purchasing gifts only at the local dollar store.

### DO NOT PRESSURE PARTICIPATION

Engaging in a company-wide gift exchange should be completely vol-

untary. Only those who choose to participate will exchange with others. The easiest way to do this is to collect the gifts, then hand out grab bag numbers, enabling all participants to grab a random gift from the bag or table. Also, gifts should not be highly personal or anything that may be viewed as offensive.

### KEEP SOME SPARE GIFTS ON HAND

It's happened before when someone has become ill or simply forgotten to bring a gift to the exchange. Human resource managers or department heads may want to use an expense account to have a spare gift or two on hand so that no participant walks away empty-handed.

### Exchange at the party

If an office party is part of the plan, the gift exchange can take place there at a certain point in the festivities where it will be convenient for all involved.

Office gift exchanges are common during the holiday season. A few guidelines can keep such exchanges festive and fun.

## How to celebrate the holidays away from home

A popular Christmas song attests "there's no place like home for the holidays." For many people, a truer statement couldn't be uttered. But sometimes life gets in the way of an old-fashioned holiday spent at home.

There are a number of reasons why individuals may not be able to spend the holidays at home. Active military service people may not be able to leave their posts to travel home. Some students studying abroad or even far away domestically may find getting back to their homes can be time- and cost-prohibitive. Some people may not be home for the holidays because work obligations keep them out of town, or because they have planned vacations to serve as nontraditional holiday celebrations.

Being away from some familiar sights and sounds of the holidays doesn't mean celebrations should be any less special. Here are tips for celebrating away from home.

### FIND PEOPLE IN SIMILAR SITUATIONS

Chances are you will not be the only person away from home, particularly if you are a student or someone on a business venture. Connect with others who are away from their families and do something together for the holidays.

### PARTAKE OF LOCAL TRADITIONAL ACTIVITIES

You may be used to baking sugar cookies for the holidays, but in a foreign country, the locals may make another type of dessert. Figure out how the locals celebrate the holidays and then take part in any way you can.

### VOLUNTEER YOUR TIME

If you will be away or alone for the holidays, volunteer your time to help the less fortunate. Deliver meals to



COURTESY PHOTO

There are a number of reasons why individuals may not be able to spend the holidays at home.

those who are not able to leave home, like seniors, or volunteer at a soup kitchen. Visit a children's hospital and deliver small gifts.

### ENGAGE IN VIRTUAL FUN

Connect with people at home through the power of digital technology. Video conferencing services connect people who can't be together in person. Utilize these apps and services to remote into a holiday dinner or when loved ones open gifts.

### COOK UP YOUR FAVORITES

Evoke traditional holiday celebrations by cooking the foods you would normally enjoy at home. Those tastes and smells can transport you back to grandma's kitchen or dad's living room.

### STAY OFF OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Being away from home during the holidays can be challenging, and that challenge can be even greater if you see photo after photo on social media of people you know spending time with their friends and loved ones. Tune out of your social feeds for a few days.

### INVITE OTHERS TO YOU

Maybe you don't have the means of getting home, but you can bring those at home to you. Find out if anyone can plan a road trip, train ride or flight to where you are and then enjoy the holidays together.

Being away from home during the holidays may not be ideal. However, there are plenty of ways to maintain your holiday spirit when celebrating in unfamiliar surroundings.

**BOOK**

FROM PAGE D4

too. Readers who can't get enough of sports, period, will want to read "Banana Ball: The Unbelievably True Story of the Savannah Bananas" by Jesse Cole with Don Yaeger (Dutton), the story of baseball, but not quite.

There's a lover of the paranormal on your gift list, isn't there? Then you want to wrap up "Encounters: Experiences with Nonhuman Intelligences" by D.W. Pasulka (St. Martin's Essentials). Has your giftee seen a UFO or had an angel encounter? Have they been to other dimensions and want to explore more? Yep, this is the right gift - and it'll be even better if you wrap it up with "The Afterlife Book" by Marie D. Jones and Larry Flaxman (Visible Ink Press), a book on Heaven, Hell, this side of life, and that side.

**RACISM AND RACIAL ISSUES**

What has racism looked like throughout history? Your social-justice-minded giftee will get a peek in "The Stories Whiteness Tells Itself" by David Mura (University of Minnesota Press). Meant for both Black and white readers, this is a conversation-starter. Wrap it up with "The Hidden Roots of White Supremacy and the Path to a Shared American Future" by Robert P. Jones (Simon & Schuster) for a perfectly thought-provoking gift.

No doubt, your giftee knows how life has been like since Black Lives Matter stepped into the news. "In Our Shoes: On Being a Young Black Woman in Not-So 'Post-Racial' America" by Brianna Holt (Plume) is a book that examines the feeling further, in ways that relate to both culture and pop culture. Wrap it up with "Real Friends Talk About Race" by Yseult P. Mukantabana and Hannah Summerhill (Park Row Books), for a gift that takes this sometimes-squirmy subject and makes it possible to discuss.

The activist on your list wants to do best, so look for "We Need to Talk About Antisemitism" by Rabbi Diana

Fersko (Seal Press). We discuss racism against Black people? Why not this, says the author. How else can we fight it? Pair this book with "The Cost of Free Land" by Rebecca Clarren (Viking), a book about a Jewish immigrant success story and what it meant to the Native Americans in their territory.

**BIOGRAPHY / MEMOIR**

For your music lover, "To Anyone Who Ever Asks: The Life, Music, and Mystery of Connie Converse" by Howard Fishman (Dutton) will be a welcome gift this holiday. It's the story of a singer / songwriter who never quite made the Big Time, although her music haunted the author and spurred him to try to understand why she disappeared one day. Wrap it up with a bookmark; it's a big book. Wrap it up with "Too Late to Stop Now: More Rock 'n' Roll War Stories" by Allan Jones (Bloomsbury). It's a collection of tales about a genre, from someone who was there.

Is there a Sherlockian fan on your list? Then imagine the excitement when "Doyle's World Lost & Found: The Unknown Histories of Sherlock Holmes and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle" by Daniel Friedman, MD and Eugene Griedman, MD (Square One Publishers) is beneath the tree. This book fills in a lot of the cracks between the Holmes mysteries with info from the tales' author's life. Fans of literature will want this book, and so will Holmes readers. Wrap it up with "A Mystery of Mysteries: The Death and Life of Edgar Allan Poe" by Mark Dawidziak (St. Martin's Press), the story of the great author and the how he may have met his end.

For the farmer or rancher on your list, "A Bold Return to Giving a Damn" by Will Harris (Viking) is a book about a farm, but also about the way things were and how they should be, the love of land, and the problems ahead with climate, raising food, and making a living.

Struggling to find the right biography for the history fan? Try "King of Diamonds: Harry

PLEASE SEE **BOOK** | D6

Sport experiences can make great gifts this holiday season



COURTESY PHOTO

Adult sports fans may not need such equipment, but they might be just as excited to receive these unique sports experiences this holiday season.

The thrill of sports has inspired billions of loyal fans and athletes across the globe. Professional, collegiate, scholastic, and even recreational sports entertain people all year long. That popularity is something shoppers can keep in mind as they look for the perfect gift for the family sports fan this holiday season.

Many adults undoubtedly recall receiving sports equipment as a holiday gift when they were children. Whether it's a baseball mitt or a field hockey stick or a new ball, these gifts tend to light up kids' eyes come Christmas morning. Adult sports fans may not need such equipment, but they might be just as excited to receive these unique sports experi-

ences this holiday season.

**TICKETS**

For diehard sports fans, nothing is better than going to the big game. Perhaps in acknowledgment of the growing popularity of following a favorite team on the road, many professional sports leagues now release team schedules months in advance of the first game of the season. For example, the National Football League released its 2022 schedule in mid-May, despite the fact that the season does not begin until September. Shoppers can peruse schedules and circle a must-see home game or lay the foundation for a memorable trip by giving tickets to a road game.

**STADIUM TOUR**

Stadium tours are another great experience the family sports fan will undoubtedly appreciate. Many professional sports teams now welcome fans to tour their stadiums both in-season and during the off-season. These tours offer a behind-the-scenes look at stadiums, arenas and ballparks. Teams may even host tours on game days, making this a great stocking stuffer to pair with tickets to a game.

**FAN FEST**

Fan fest tickets make an ideal gift for individuals who can be accurately described as "diehards" for their

PLEASE SEE **SPORTS** | D6

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# Toy buying tips when shopping for kids

Shopping for gifts for kids makes many shoppers nostalgic for their own childhoods. Few adults can forget the joy of finding the perfect gift under the tree on Christmas morning. Recreating that magic for a youngster can be as joyous for gift givers as it is for kids. That's especially so when shoppers make it a point to give safe, age-appropriate gifts.

Whether shopping for their own children or their grandkids, nieces or nephews, shoppers can keep these tips in mind to ensure they give toys that are as safe as they are fun.

## SPEAK TO MOM AND DAD FIRST

When buying for a grandchild, niece or nephew, shoppers should first ask Mom or Dad for suggestions. Parents will know which types of toys their children like, and they'll also know the child's level of maturity. Some kids may not be mature enough to play with otherwise age-appropriate toys, while others may be mature beyond their years and enjoy more complex toys than their age would suggest. Parents will know what makes a good toy and what doesn't.

## LEARN WHAT TO LOOK FOR ON LABELS

Toy labels are great sources of information, but shoppers must know what to look for. The American Academy of Pediatrics notes that toy labels include information about age-appropriateness (i.e., "Ages 3 & Up") as well as directions regarding how to use the toy. If the instructions seem a bit complex for the child the item will be for, look for something else. Children's toy labels also include additional information that consumers may not be familiar with. For example, toys labeled "ASTM F963" meet the latest safety standards from the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission. An "ASTM D4236" label indicates the materials associated with the art toy have been reviewed and deemed safe by a toxicologist. More information about toy label requirements can be found at cpsc.gov. The AAP advises that electric toys should only be given to kids if they include the UL label. That means the toy has been certified by the global safety certification company UL, LLC.

## AVOID CERTAIN FEATURES

The AAP notes that toys that are loud, shoot objects into the air or



COURTESY PHOTO

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contain small pieces pose a threat to children. Especially loud toys can damage children's hearing, while projectiles can increase the risk of eye injuries or choking. Toys with small pieces also pose a choking risk to young children who may try to put the pieces into their mouths.

## ERR ON THE SIDE OF CAUTION

Consumers who are uncertain about the safety of a given toy, even after reading its label, should err

on the side of caution and only give toys they're confident won't pose a safety risk. Even toys that may seem safe could be dangerous to kids who might otherwise seem old enough. For example, the AAP advises against giving kids under 12 hobby kits and chemistry sets. That's because such kits may contain dangerous chemicals that even pre-adolescents are not old enough to handle safely.

Shoppers must consider a host of factors when looking for safe toys for kids this holiday season.

team and typically include activities for adults and children alike.

## LESSONS

Holiday shoppers may have a sports fan on their list who still enjoys lacing up their cleats. For example, pro golf fans may still enjoy hitting the links themselves. In such

instances, lessons from a nearby golf pro can be just the thing to make sports fans smile this holiday season.

Sports experiences make an ideal gift for individuals whose passion for a favorite team is a big part of their life.

## BOOK

### FROM PAGE D5

Winston" by Ronald Winston & William Stadiem (Skyhorse Publishing, Inc). It's the Gilded Age story of a rags-to-riches man whose name meant "diamonds" to generations of fine jewelry-wearers, and the times in which he lived.

## HISTORY

If your giftee loves reading about Black History, then you can't go wrong when you wrap up "The First Migrants: How Black Homesteaders' Quest for Land and Freedom Heralded America's Great Migration" by Richard Edwards and Jacob K. Friefeld (Bison Books). It's the story of the people who headed to the plains decades before the Great Migration, and how their mve changed the country.

For the person who devours history, look for "African American Almanac: 400 Years of Black Excellence" by Lean'tin Bracks, PhD (Visible Ink Press). This second edition is full of history, mini-biographies, things your giftee might not know, and best of all: it's completely updated. Also look for "Before the Movement: The Hidden History of Black Civil Rights" by Dylan C. Penningroth (Liveright). More history. More stories.

The person on your list who enjoys real-life mysteries and history will want "Unearthed: A Lost Actress, A Forbidden Book, and a Search for Life in the Shadow of the Holocaust" by Meryl Frank (Hachette Books). For much of her childhood, Frank's aunt Mollie strove to ensure that the kids in the family never forgot what had happened during World War II to the Jews. When Frank inherited a book filled with secrets, she went in search of a missing link to that story. Wrap it up with "The Ghost Tattoo: Discovering the Hidden Truth of My Father's Holocaust" by Tony Bernard (Citadel Press), the story of a son who learns the secrets of a concentration camp that his father finally told.

## BUSINESS

Here's an unusual business book for the unusual business reader: "Blood Money" by Kathleen McLaughlin (One Signal / Atria). Donating blood saves lives. Donating blood plasma is a big business, and it's banned in all but five countries in the world. This book will make a great gift for a business reader or for your favorite health care professional.

For the future mom or the mother-to-be who's still trying to figure out her work situation, "Carry Strong: An Empowered Approach to Navigating Pregnancy and Work" by Stephanie Kramer (Penguin Life) may be the best gift ever. Bonus: case studies and real stories so the new

mother can read about real life.

The future business leader on your gift list will want to own "Power to the Middle: Why Managers Hold the Keys to the Future of Work" by Bill Schaninger, Bryan Hancock, and Emily Field (Harvard Business Review Press). Middle managers, as the authors argue, is no longer a throwaway position that takes pressure from above and below. Today's middle manager is as important as everyone else in an organization, if not more so. Give this book and see what kind of a difference it makes. Wrap it up with "The Unlocked Leader" by Hortense Le Gentil with Caroline Lambert (Wiley), a book on being the kind of leader that people ask to work with.

If there's someone on your gift list who's heading for a leadership role, wrap up "To the Top: How Women in Corporate Leadership are Rewriting the Rules for Success" by Jenna C. Fisher (Wiley). Gone are so-called old-boys' networks. Today's corporations run differently. Support it by giving this book.

## LGBTQ INTERESTS/FICTION

For the person on your gift list who'd love a boy-meets-boy story, wrap up "Bellies: A Novel" by Nicola Dinan (Hanover Square Press), the tale of a playwright and the man who loves him wholly, until a transition threatens to change everything.

If there's a romantic on your list, then you're in luck: finding a gift is easy when you wrap up "10 Things That Never Happened" by Alexis Hall (Sourcebooks), the story of Sam, whose job is okay, and his boss, Jonathan, who should have never hired Sam. Too late now, except for the romance.

## LGBTQ INTERESTS/ NON-FICTION

For the person on your list who likes to read quick, short articles, wrap up "Inverse Cowgirl: A Memoir" by Alicia Roth Weigel (HarperOne). It's a collection of essays on life as an intersex person, and the necessity for advocating for others who are, too.

## HEALTH-RELATED BOOKS

For the giftee who loves reading true medical mysteries, "Girls and Their Monsters" by Audrey Clare Farley (Grand Central) will make a great gift. When researchers studying schizophrenia heard of quadruplet sisters who'd been recently diagnosed, they hoped that the women could unlock secrets. Instead, they found secrets that resonate even today. Wrap it up with "Scarcity Brain: Fix Your Craving Mindset & Rewire Your Habits to Thrive with Enough" by Michael Easter (Rodale Books), for a better

PLEASE SEE BOOK | D7

## SPORTS

### FROM PAGE D5

favorite teams. These family-friendly gatherings tend to happen in the weeks leading up to the start of a new season. A handful of current and former players typically attend fan fests, which are hosted by the

Word search grid with letters and some words highlighted in grey.



# Festive films that make for a perfect family movie night this season



COURTESY PHOTO

When hosting overnight guests this holiday season, hosts can plan a family movie night and line up any of these family-friendly holiday movies.

A family movie night makes for a great way for families to bond and enjoy some relaxing time together. Such nights are a tradition in households across the globe, and they can even become a fun way for extended families to celebrate the holiday days together. When hosting overnight guests this holiday season, hosts can plan a family movie night and line up any of these family-friendly holiday movies.

### A CHRISTMAS STORY (1983)

This beloved classic based on the writings of author Jean Shepherd focuses on young Ralphie Parker and his humorous family. That family includes his father, played to much laughs by legendary actor Darren McGavin. All Ralphie wants for Christmas is a coveted Red Ryder air rifle, and generations of fans have enjoyed watching this film to see if Ralphie's dream comes true.

### HOME ALONE (1990)

Not unlike "A Christmas Story," this instant classic devotes much of its

story to a young boy. Eight-year-old Kevin McAllister (Macaulay Culkin) awakens to an empty house after his parents forgetfully leave him behind as they depart on a holiday trip to Paris with their extended family. That proves to be bad news for bungling burglars Harry (Joe Pesci) and Marv (Daniel Stern), who are outwitted by Kevin at every turn.

### ELF (2003)

Middle-aged Buddy (Will Ferrell) grew up in the North Pole believing he is an elf, despite being significantly larger than the kind-hearted elves who raised him. Upon learning he is not an actual elf, Buddy is determined to reunite with the father (James Caan) he's never known. Hilarity ensues as the innocent Buddy ends up in the big city in search of his father.

### IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE (1946)

Among the most beloved holiday movies ever made, this classic stars Jimmy Stewart as George Bailey, a devoted family man who set aside

his own big-city dreams to save the family business and, ultimately, his small hometown of Bedford Falls. Lamenting some bad luck that leaves him on the cusp of financial ruin, George wishes he'd never been born, only to be shown by an especially kind and patient angel-in-training (Henry Travers) how much worse off Bedford Falls and its residents might have been had George Bailey never existed.

### JINGLE ALL THE WAY (1996)

Featuring a future Governor of California in the lead role, this hijinks-filled holiday classic follows the efforts of Howard Langston (Arnold Schwarzenegger) as he tries to secure the must-have gift of the season for his son, Jamie (Jake Lloyd). Howard soon finds himself competing against a father (Sinbad) who's equally devoted to find the coveted Turbo-Man action figure.

A holiday movie night makes for a fun, family-friendly evening when hosting overnight guests during this special time of year.

## BOOK

FROM PAGE D6

look at how our minds work and how we can enhance them.

For the person who remembers the pandemic all too well and wants to know what the heck just happened there, wrap up "Foreign Bodies: Pandemics, Vaccines, and the Health of Nations" by Simon Schama (Ecco). More than a health book, this is also a history of how pandemics have been perceived and investigated through the centuries, what people in the past did about them, and what we can anticipate in the future.

Your giftee professes to want to live forever, so wrap up "The Well-Lived Life: A 102-Year-Old Doctor's Six Secrets to Health and Happiness at Every Age" by Gladys McGarey, MD (Atria). McGarey is considered to be "The Mother of Holistic Medicine" and this book explains how she's stayed healthy and active for more than a century. Readers will love the advice here, but they'll also love the biography inside.

## SCIENCE

If there's a person on your list who loves animals, then "Beastly: The 40,000-Year Story of Animals and Us" by Keggie Carew (Abrams Press) may be just what they'll love. It's a long, deep look at creatures, including us, and it includes tales and true anecdotes your giftee will enjoy.

The environmentalist and the gardener on your list will both love "How to Read a Tree: Clues and Patterns from Bark to Leaves" by Tristan Gooley (The Experiment). It's the story of trees, of course, but it's also a volume of information and all the things we can learn by looking at or living near a tree. Give it to your homeowner, too, for a great holiday.

## KIDS AGES 1-6

The littlest kid on your gift list will love reading "Mister Kitty is Lost!" by Greg Pizzoli (Little, Brown for Young Readers). A little girl's kitty has gone missing. Young readers will be delighted with the hunt

and surprised at the solution.

## KIDS AGES 9-12

The kid who loves a bit of history with a great adventure story will want to read "White House Clubhouse" by Sean O'Brien (Norton Young Readers). It's the story of two kids whose Mom is the new President of the United States. That's cool and all, but it's even cooler when they find a secret tunnel inside the White House...

Your giftee who loves the Baby-Sitter's Club books will truly want to unwrap "Curlfriends: New In Town" by Sharee Miller (Little, Brown Young Readers). It's the story of Charlie, who's starting at another new school and struggles again with making friends. Can the Curlfriends, a group of Black girls who hang out together, make her year better? Middle-schoolers who wrestle with the preteen years will love this graphic novel.

## TEENS AND YOUNG ADULTS

For the romantic on your gift list, try "Chaos Theory" by Nic Stone (Crown). It's the story of two teens who are outcasts in their new school. They gravitate toward one another as friends with something in common. Could it be more than just that, though?

For the teen who needs to read the story of bravery and history, wrap up "The Girl Who Survived Auschwitz" by Sara Leibovits & Eti Elboim (Harper Collins / One More Chapter). It's the tale of Leibovits' family's journey to a concentration camp, and it's not for the faint of heart or the weak of mind.

And now for the housekeeping: books change, publishing dates change, and if you can't find these books or something like them, be sure to ask the elves at the bookstore for the exact thing you need. They know books and they'll help you find the best gift for that hard-to-find person and they might even wrap it for you.

Hint: you're almost done with your shopping. Buy yourself a book.

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