



Hood County News

MORE THAN A NEWSPAPER | A HOOD COUNTY LEGEND SINCE 1886

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Galloping through Granbury history *The Mangold Toy Factory*



MICKY SHEARON | HOOD COUNTY NEWS

Cody Martin, left, and Jake Caraway, sitting on the porch of the last remaining building from the Mangold Toy Factory.

BY MICKY SHEARON
Special to the Hood County News

Once upon a time, in the sleepy little town of

Granbury, Texas, a wonderland of playful equines was born in the humble abode of Mattie Landers Mangold. Who could have imagined that stick horses, those cher-

ished companions of children's make-believe adventures, would gallop from this very town to conquer hearts across the globe?

The story begins with a

simple act of love: a mother crafting toys for her children. It was 1918, and Mattie, having recently married R.P. Mangold — a pioneer driller of the local

Paulson oil well near Tolar — began creating the first stick horses.

Fast forward to the bustling '40s through the swinging '60s, and the Mangold Toy Factory was shipping an incredible 600,000 stick horses annually from Granbury, employing the talents of up to 60 locals. The factory, which started in the Mangold residence on North Travis Street, expanded to back buildings and a prominent spot on the north side of the Granbury Square, a testament to a dream that swelled beyond its walls.

The journey from home hobby to international sensation wasn't a simple trot. During the lean war years, Mattie, the matriarch and salesforce behind the venture, rummaged through broom factories for discarded handles, transforming them into stick horses. The heads, crafted from oilcloth, were hand painted with the loving details that brought each horse to life. Due to the material shortages during World War II and the demand being so high, not all orders could be fulfilled, a testament to the magic that Mattie's horses brought to children everywhere.

In the factory's heyday, one could find factory employees meticulously sewing together the machine-cut headpieces, now adorned with silk-screened faces.

Factory workers were paid about \$2 an hour, a wage tied to the number of heads they completed. This process soon became a community effort, with many local women sewing the heads in their own homes and contributing to the war effort in their own unique way.

Innovation galloped in post-war, thanks to Mattie's nephew, J.C. Mangold, who engineered machines to speed up production. One such invention was a machine that could stuff the heads in one swift puff, replacing the more laborious and time-consuming hand stuffing method. Even the wooden dowels were given a dip of paint and stripes while turning before finally being united with their heads.

Mangold stick horses pranced in simplicity, initially just a stick and head, until a plush saddle was added for those young, more sophisticated riders who were seeking extra comfort. These toys were not just sticks and fabric; for kids growing up in the '40s, '50s, and '60s, they became steeds of dreams, companions in endless tales of bravery and imagination.

Cody Martin Sr. and J.C. Mangold, true to their entrepreneurial spirit, showcased their charming cavalry at the New York City Toy Show each year, impressing retailers across North and South

PLEASE SEE **GALLOP** | A3

Roberta Zamarron new district clerk



COURTESY PHOTO

District Judge Bryan Bufkin officially appointed Roberta Zamarron to be the new district clerk for Hood County on Tuesday, March 12.

BY ASHLEY TERRY
Staff Writer
ashley@hcnews.com

District Judge Bryan Bufkin officially appointed Roberta Zamarron to be the new district clerk for Hood County Tuesday, March 12.

Zamarron will fill the position previously held by Tonna Hitt Newman, who passed away Feb. 18.

"It's very hard to lose somebody like Tonna Newman," Bufkin told the Hood County News. "It's been hard for the district clerk's office. We miss her. It's hard to replace her — who's a legend in the courthouse — but according to state law, when there's a vacancy in that office, I fill it."

Zamarron has worked for the county attorney's office since May 2017. She became office manager in 2019. Bufkin explained that the 355th District had a pool of qualified candidates, but he chose Zamarron specifically for a number of reasons.

"One, she's a strong, conservative woman who I think

PLEASE SEE **CLERK** | A4



COURTESY PHOTO

An artist rendition of the renamed David Southern Lake Granbury Conference Center.

City renames conference center in honor of late David Southern

BY ASHLEY TERRY
Staff Writer
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There was not a dry eye in Granbury City Hall March 19, following a unanimous decision by the Granbury City Council to honor a remarkable city leader.

During a regularly scheduled meeting, the council approved a petition from the Bridge Street History Center to rename the Lake Granbury Conference Center after the late David Southern.

Southern, who passed away in December 2022, was reportedly the

longest-serving elected leader in Granbury's history. He served 15 years as mayor of Granbury and led the city through projects that enhanced the quality of life for residents.

According to a previous article in the Hood County News, Southern increased the city's appeal as a tourist destination. He also advocated for development regulations that — while sometimes controversial — were designed to enhance the city's beauty and give it a cohesive appearance.

During his time as a city leader, two prominent historical buildings were constructed: Granbury City Hall and

the Lake Granbury Conference Center (LGCC). Because of Southern, the Hilton Garden Inn was constructed next to the conference center as a partnership intended to enhance the LGCC's marketability and local tourism.

Southern's vision for what Granbury could be also led to the creation of the Moments in Time Hike and Bike Trail and City Beach Park. He also pursued the expansion of Granbury Regional Airport and brought that dream to fruition with help from grant funds from the Texas Department of

PLEASE SEE **SOUTHERN** | A8



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Local, zone(s): 3 sections, 32 pages, plus supplements | State: 3 sections, 32 pages

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GRANBURY ISD JOB FAIR

Saturday, April 6, 2024 • 9 AM - 1 PM

GISD Administration Building - 217 N. Jones St.

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COMMUNITY BUSINESS

CHAMBER NEWS



Swing into action: Annual Chamber Golf Classic returns

Granbury Chamber of Commerce

On Friday, April 19, the manicured fairways of Harbor Lakes Golf Club will once again play host to the Granbury Chamber of Commerce's much-anticipated Annual Golf Classic Tournament. Kicking off with a shotgun start at 9 a.m., this event promises a day of friendly competition and camaraderie, all made possible by the invaluable support and continued partnership of our title sponsor, First National Bank of Granbury.

As golfers gather on the pristine course, excitement builds for a day of strategic swings and sporting prowess, all with the shared goal of bolstering our local business landscape. With each swing, participants contribute not only to their own enjoyment but also to the betterment of our community.

We express our deepest gratitude to our title sponsor, First National Bank of Granbury, for its steadfast support in our efforts to strengthen the business fabric of our community. Moreover, we extend our sincere appreciation to all our sponsors, teams, tee box sponsors and volunteers for their indispensable contributions. Their dedication ensures the smooth operation of this event, allowing us to further our mission and support local businesses.

- Title Sponsor: First National Bank of Granbury
- Golf Ball Sponsor: Taco Casa
- Golf Cart Sponsor: Baylor Scott & White Surgicare
- Golf Gun Sponsor: Glenn Aire Company
- Hole in One Sponsor: Lake Granbury Conference Center
- Breakfast Sponsor: Town Square Title
- Lunch Sponsor: First Financial Bank
- Drink Cart Sponsor: Clear Path Home Care & Skyview Ranch Resort

To our participating teams, we commend your enthusiasm and sportsmanship. Your involvement not only adds to the competitive spirit of the tournament but also helps drive economic vitality within our area.

To our tee box sponsors, your presence adds an extra touch of hospitality and professionalism to the event. Your support exemplifies your commitment to the growth and prosperity of our local business community.

To our volunteers, the backbone of our event, we extend our heartfelt thanks. Your tireless efforts ensure that the tournament runs seamlessly, enabling us to further our mission effectively.

For those eager to be a part of this remarkable event, team registrations are still open. Whether you're interested in registering a team, becoming a corporate or tee box sponsor, or volunteering, there's still time to join us for a day of networking, fun and support for the Granbury Chamber of Commerce's mission. Visit www.granburychamber.com, call us at 817-573-1622 or email Maegan at maegan@granburychamber.com to secure your spot.

As golfers tee off and navigate the scenic course at Harbor Lakes Golf Club, they do so with a shared purpose — to bolster our local economy and business community. Here's to another successful tournament filled with friendly competition, networking opportunities and perhaps a few memorable birdies along the way.

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

granbury CHAMBER

WOMEN IN BUSINESS COMMITTEE

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Jennifer Patrick

Business:
Mason-McDuffie Mortgage Corporation

Years on WIB Committee
2 years

Mason-McDuffie Mortgage Corporation
Since - 1887

Women In Business Committee
Spotlight: Jennifer Patrick

It's... Thankful Thursday!!

We are very thankful for our Amazing Women In Business (WIB) Committee Member & WIB Summit Committee Member Jennifer Patrick with Mason-McDuffie Mortgage Corporation.

When asked why she loves being on the WIB Committee & on the WIB Summit Committee, she said, "I love networking with Women in the community. Being a part of the committee and helping to plan fun events for women fills my creative side and gets me even more involved with this great community of strong successful women!"

Fun Facts about Jennifer: She has 2 JR Pro wakeboard daughters. She is a dog mom. And she started her career as a 1st grade school teacher.

Thank you Jennifer for being a WIB Committee Member of the Granbury Chamber of Commerce!

New Chamber Members & Renewals

Welcome to our new chamber members who joined in January!

- New American Funding**
- Anchor Fellowship Church**
- Marathon Digital Holdings**
- Suzanne Parker - Texas Home**
- Realty Group - Simply Texas**
- byeXp**
- Chaplin Construction**
- Mills Real Estate Group**
- AV & Security Solutions**

Thank you to the following members who renewed their chamber membership in January!

We appreciate your continued support!

- IHC Specialty Benefits - Sharon Kelley**
- Extra Comforts**
- Lake Granbury Area Beautification**
- Rock Solid Masonry**
- Town Square Title**
- The Kuban Firm**
- Good2CUTexting**
- The Hand to Shoulder Center**
- Clear Path Home Care**
- Tarleton State University**
- Granbury Executive Transport**
- Free2BU**
- Granbury Family Medclinic**
- Vintage Floors**
- Thomas Myers Auto Repair**
- Daydream Vacations**
- Dominique Inge**
- Brazos Pregnancy Clinic**
- Bella Rosa**
- Raven Aerial Solutions**

- Billy Harris Roofing**
- Acton Nature Center**
- Lamar Advertising**
- Best Western Dinosaur Valley Inn & Suites**
- Edward Jones - Audrey Dake**
- Coleman Aerobic Septic**
- Staged by Jessica Johnson**
- Hood County Substance Abuse Council**
- Mattressville**
- The Beverage Ranch**
- CFX Photo**
- Berry Wealth Group**
- Military Officers Association of America**
- Stuff & Nonsense**
- The Center for Cancer & Blood Disorders**
- Triple Cross Cowboy Church**
- Mayfield Paper Company**
- Shottenkirk Toyota Granbury**

- Shottenkirk Chrysler Dodge Jeep**
- Shottenkirk Ford Granbury**
- Shottenkirk Hyundai Granbury**
- Courtyards at Lake Granbury**
- Legacy Financial Group**
- Granbury Education Foundation**
- The New Granbury Live**
- Edward Jones - Ty Andrew**
- Fairway Independent Mortgage**
- Berry & Berry Dental**
- Law Office of Pamela A. Walker, P.C.**
- Bowden & Tanner, LLC**
- Brazos Metal Building Systems**
- PJ's Lawn Care**
- Wellington State Bank**

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FROM MY FRONT PORCH

Friends come in all shapes and sizes



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

One of the true blessings in life is friendship. It is a relationship between two people and often, the underlying bond between the individuals is vague in definition. A friendship nourishes one's soul, can often rekindle memories of a different and better time, or help us to feel connected in what is all too often a world where we do not feel engaged. Friendship is a condition humans seek because it provides us with acceptance, recognition and the warmth of shared experiences.

An evaluation of our friendships tells us a lot about ourselves.

Grade school friends are generally our first relationships outside the family circle. Created on the play-

grounds of youth, these relationships help us to ingratiate ourselves into a series of social norms and to pass through life's early challenges feeling supported. They helped us put into practice

those virtues expounded by our parents about being fair, kind, sharing and forgiving. It was grade school friends who helped us to understand life in our own terms while facing whatever joys or tribulations might confront us.

When picking teams for a stickball game, friendship presented the challenge of selecting the best player for your team but to do so in a way as to artfully navigate the dilemma of failing to select a close friend because they were a poor hitter. Such a decision compelled the art of social diplomacy at a level not unlike what is utilized by ranking state department officials.

As we grew just slightly older, our relationships evolved and the possibility of friendship with a member of the opposite sex became a possibility. Though previously looked on with disdain and contempt, it necessitated being able to recategorize girls as "human beings" instead of a species which must have come from another planet. It meant finding a common

ground in which to talk and interact. I learned starting a friendship with a girl meant meeting her "halfway" and taking an interest in what she liked and learning to accept there were possibilities beyond sports and the usual things which were the heart of a young boy's life. It meant learning to accept my female friend was different from me in many ways. Her interests were not necessarily sports, climbing a tree, or challenging each other about who could spit the furthest. It was learning to accept there was more in life than what my world had previously thought possible.

Later in life there are "activity" friends — so named because of the activity the two friends share. I have had hunting buddies, fishing buddies, going to the ball game buddies, poker buddies, lake buddies and who knows how many other kinds of buddies. While the two of us friends would engage about the other goings on in our lives, the friendship primarily revolved around an activity we partici-

pated in together. It was an activity which was the connecting force. These types of relationships can create wonderful memories, but unfortunately, usually end when participation in the underlying activity stops.

There are also work friends, church friends, college friends and a host of other types of human relationships which are loosely categorized as friends. But no matter the shape or form of the connection, it is part of the thread which weaves our life into the tapestry it becomes. Sometimes positively and sometimes negatively, we are all a product of our friendships.

Our closest friendships, commonly referred to as "best friends," are often a combination of all the possibilities of friendship. They listen when a friend needs to talk. They speak out when a friend needs to be corrected. They support when there is doubt. The relationship may be a daily interaction, or it might be that the two friends do not speak for months, or

even years, but the connection between them never disappears. It is a feeling which is kindled in the very soul of the other and shared. It connects the two in such a way that no power on earth could pull it apart. These are the most cherished and treasured of relationships.

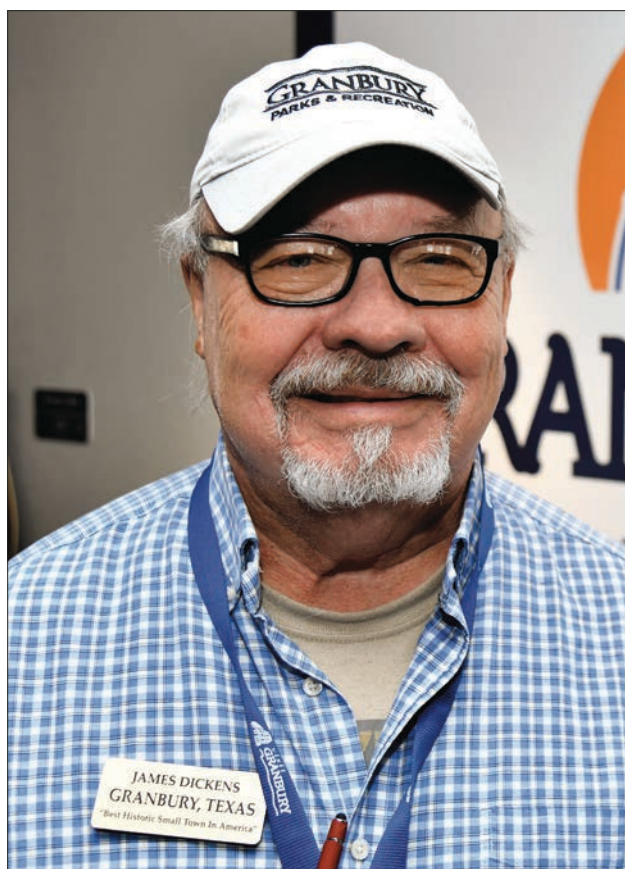
This week, stop and reflect on all your friends and how your lives are entwined with one another. Smile at the joys you have shared and the emotion you feel. It is those feelings and experiences which make you the person you have become. Give thanks to those who have endured your shortcomings, listened to your complaints and sorrows, and who have smiled and leapt in joy upon learning of your successes.

Friendship is truly one of the best parts of being a human being.

Thought for the day: "I would rather walk with a friend in the dark, than alone in the light." Helen Keller

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

Folks around town



MARY VINSON | HOOD COUNTY NEWS

James Dickens

Say hello to our neighbor, James Dickens!

James and his wife Marsha bought their home in Thorp Spring in 2010, and they moved to Hood County in 2013. James had a long and fulfilling career as a civil engineer, city councilman, and mayor pro tem (1999-2007) for the City of Irving. He and Marsha enjoyed taking road trips to the Texas Hill Country and East Texas, but Granbury kept drawing them back. James loves the rich history of Granbury and how there are lots of activities and events that are free to the public. He says that the parking is free in Granbury and the musical venues and theater productions offer top-notch entertainment at much lower costs than what you would find in the Metroplex. The Brazos River and Lake Granbury are his playground for fun in the sun. Even in his retirement, James still enjoys putting his engineering and block grant funding skills to work as the chair of the Granbury Park Board. You might recognize James from his part-time job at the Visitors Bureau where he enjoys meeting and greeting visitors and "selling" Granbury. James says that the Hood County News is a reliable source of information for the readers, and they are spot-on when it comes to reporting on people, events, and issues, both big and small.

GALLOP

FROM PAGE A1

America, and even trotting as far as Australia and Puerto Rico by 1960. Mangold's dedication to the factory and its global reach was unyielding; he stepped into management in the late '50s, a reign that continued until the factory's last neigh.

In the mid-1950s, the Humble Oil Company (present-day Exxon) came to Granbury and filmed a five-minute promotional movie about the magic of the Mangold Toy Factory. In those days, the Texas-based oil company produced a television show reminiscent of the 4 Country Reporter. The clip they filmed, which can still be found on YouTube, showcased a band of jubilant kids gallivanting on their stick horses, among them descendants and neighbors of the Mangold legacy.

Two of the kids featured in the film, Cody Martin and Jake Caraway, are still in Granbury and have lived here their entire lives. Cody is the co-owner of Martin's Office Supply, and Jake is the senior vice president of the First National Bank in Granbury. "If you watch the Humble Oil movie, that's me at the beginning of the film lying on the floor watching the TV," said Martin. "I was probably only 2 or 3 years old when they came to film the movie, so I don't remember a lot of details. I do remember the director telling me to pick up my toy six-shooter and act like I was shooting the camera! Then we got to go outside and play with our stick horses!"

"I think most of my scenes ended up on the cutting room floor," joked Caraway. "We were all pretty young and didn't really understand what was happening at the time. However, I am in one scene right at the very end. I'm the kid in the white cowboy hat riding my stick horse with the other kids in

the yard. I think the most notable thing about the stick horse factory is its reach back in those days. If you look closely at the film, there is a scene of someone putting a label on a box that is being shipped out. That shipping label says 'Lima, Peru.'"

Today, the original Mangold house still stands as part of the Travis Street Cottages bed-and-breakfast at 512 N. Travis St. All that remains of the old toy factory is the building where the sticks were painted. Today, that building, lovingly restored by its owners, Jim and Pennie Gehring, is known as the "Stick Horse Saloon" and is part of the bed-and-breakfast, which has recently been placed on the market.

Some of the original stick horses made at the Mangold Toy Factory, along with other memorabilia, are on display at the Hood County Museum, located at 208 N. Crocket St.

Mattie Mangold, Cody Martin's grandmother, wasn't just a dreamer; she was a shrewd businesswoman, a beacon of enterprise in Granbury. She worked hand-in-hand with R.P. Mangold, a man of many hats, including county judge and city councilman. Their combined vision and tenacity crafted more than toys; they wove a narrative of innovation, community and the purest form of joy: childhood play.

The echo of children's laughter that once filled the halls of the Mangold Toy Factory may have quieted with its closing, but the legacy trots on. For in every vintage stick horse that survives today, there lives a piece of Granbury history, a strand of imagination, and a whisk of Mattie's dream, reminding us all that sometimes, the simplest joys can lead to the grandest adventures.

The contributions of the Hood County Museum to this story are gratefully acknowledged.



MICKY SHEARON | HOOD COUNTY NEWS

The paint room. The last remaining building of the old Mangold Toy Factory.



COURTESY PHOTO

The old Mangold home located at 512 N. Travis. The toy factory was built on to the back of the house.



COURTESY PHOTO

Jake Caraway in the Humble Oil promotional film from 1957 about the Mangold Stick Horse Factory.

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Saturday issue:
10 a.m. Wednesday

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

POLICE BLOTTER

Granbury Police Department Criminal Activity Report

The following is a breakdown of activity reported through the Granbury Police Department during the period of March 12-18. While there were many incidents, this is a partial list of more significant activity.

MARCH 12
2:55 a.m.: intoxicated driver reported on E. U.S. Highway 377
3:36 p.m.: assault reported on Reunion Court
3:57 p.m.: hit-and-run accident reported on E. U.S. Highway 377
8:48 p.m.: drug possession reported on Lipan Highway
11:03 p.m.: shots heard on Kessler Drive
11:29 p.m.: minor in possession of tobacco reported on E. U.S. Highway 377
One minor accident, one warrant service and 49 traffic stops occurred on this day

MARCH 13
12:50 a.m.: suspicious activity reported on N. Crocket Street
9:41 a.m.: theft reported on E. U.S. Highway 377
4:17 p.m.: disturbance reported on W. U.S. Highway 377
5:54 p.m.: property found on W. Atchley Drive
11:29 p.m.: intoxicated

driver reported on E. U.S. Highway 377
*Two major accidents, two minor accidents, a warrant service and 32 traffic stops occurred on this day**

MARCH 14
1:51 a.m.: possession of a controlled substance reported on W. Pearl Street
6:13 a.m.: missing person reported on Sunflower Lane
6:50 a.m.: evading arrest in a vehicle occurred on W. U.S. Highway 377
11:46 a.m.: criminal trespass reported on E. U.S. Highway 377
12:43 p.m.: theft less than \$100 reported on E. U.S. Highway 377
1:25 p.m.: theft over \$100, under \$750 reported on E. U.S. Highway 377
1:52 p.m.: hit-and-run accident reported on N. Houston Street
Two minor accidents and 37 traffic stops occurred on this day

MARCH 15
5:09 a.m.: suspicious activity reported on E. U.S. Highway 377
4:40 p.m.: hit-and-run accident reported on W. Pearl Street
4:56 p.m.: disturbance reported on Pirate Drive
8:40 p.m.: hit-and-run accident reported on E. U.S.



MARY VINSON | HOOD COUNTY NEWS

Highway 377
10:44 p.m.: driving without a license reported on Contrary Creek Road
Two major accidents, three minor accidents, a warrant service and 41 traffic stops occurred on this day

MARCH 16
12:03 a.m.: suspicious activity reported on Jacinth Lane
5:13 p.m.: reckless driver reported on E. Bridge Street
6:47 p.m.: suspicious activity reported on N. Houston Street
9:48 p.m.: assault reported on E. U.S. Highway 377
11:33 p.m.: suspicious activity reported on N.E. Loop 567.

One major accident, two minor accidents and 15 traffic stops occurred on this day

MARCH 17
3:08 a.m.: possession of a controlled substance reported on W. Pearl Street
3:31 p.m.: criminal trespass reported on E. U.S. Highway 377
7:28 p.m.: assault reported on Sunflower Lane
8:28 p.m.: suspicious activity reported on E. U.S. Highway 377
8:57 p.m.: harassment reported on N. Travis Street
9:56 p.m.: property found on E. U.S. Highway 377
One minor accident and 12 traffic stops occurred on this day

CLERK

FROM PAGE A1
will serve the citizens of Hood County well," he said. "Two, she has worked in the courthouse for around seven years in the county attor-

ney's office and she gets along with everybody well. She leads the team as the office manager there well, so I think she will lead the team in the district clerk's office well. Most importantly, I was just very impressed with her."

Buflin said he believes Zamarron will be accessible to the public, transparent and proficient with the duties of the district clerk. "It's a hard position," he explained. "That district clerk position is vital to the administration of jus-

Every file that comes to that office represents a very important court case, so it's very important that we have somebody there who is transparent, and I believe that Roberta can do those things. Ultimately, it just came down to some-

body that I think will do well for our county and move us forward."
Zamarron was sworn in at 4 p.m. Wednesday, March 20 in the 355th District Court.

Farewell to The Square Café: Granbury's historic dine-out bids goodbye

BY MICKY SHEARON
Special to the Hood County News

As the sun sets on The Square Café, a beloved Granbury dining spot, the community feels the ripple of its closure. The café closed its doors Sunday, leaving behind a legacy and a trail of memories in the heart of the downtown Historic District.
The Square Café, previously the old Nutshell Eatery, was rejuvenated by Roxanne Laney in April 2021. Laney, a local businesswoman who has also owned "Books on the Square" since 2019 and the "Shoot Smart" gun range chain with her husband since 2010, envisioned a revitalized space where the aroma of coffee and the sizzle of bacon could continue to invite locals and tourists alike.
In our exclusive interview, Laney reflects on her journey with The Square Café with a blend of pride and resignation. "I've loved owning the oldest building on the Square," she shares, her eyes glimmering with the reflection of the historic walls that have housed countless stories. Her attachment to the site goes beyond business — it's a chapter of her life steeped in community service and passion.
However, a blend of post-

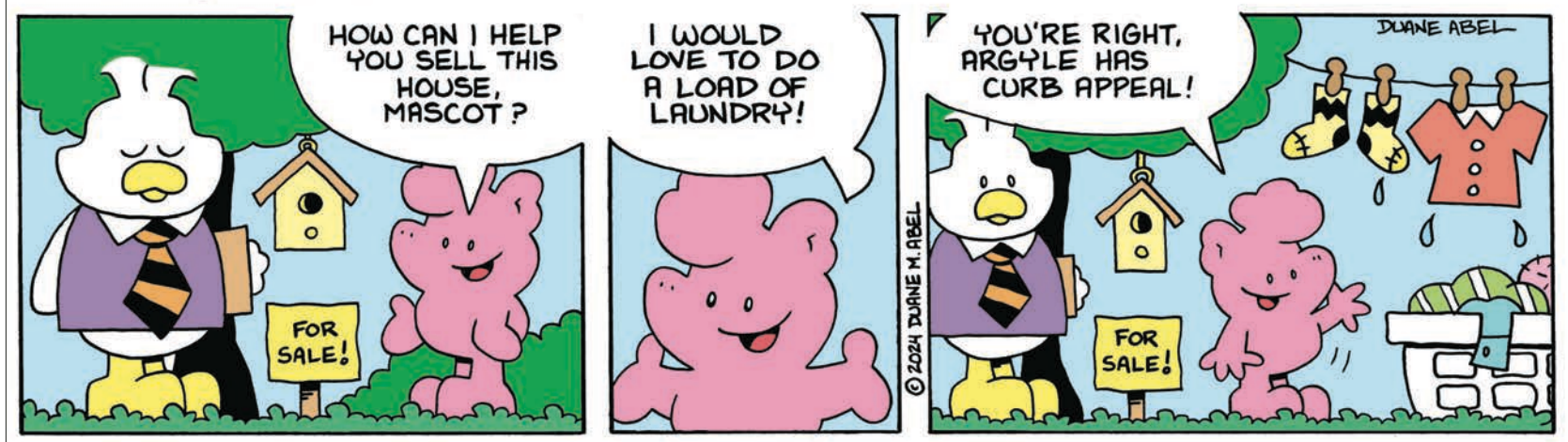
pandemic challenges has led to the difficult decision to close the café. Laney opens up about the hurdles: the daunting task of finding and keeping a reliable team post-COVID, the spikes in labor costs, the cost of complying with city codes, and the soaring prices of ingredients. A prime example she cites is the cost of a slab of bacon, which almost doubled from \$79 to a staggering \$149. "Food costs have just killed us. Although costs are coming down somewhat now, the damage has already been done," Laney laments.
Moreover, Laney's venture has been a victim of fluctuating foot traffic. "When the Square is busy, we do pretty well. But when there isn't much traffic on the Square, we just don't get a lot of business." This inconsistency, paired with the skyrocketing costs, painted a harsh financial reality for The Square Café.
The last brunch has been served, the last coffee poured, and as the page turns, Laney now looks forward to having more time and resources to devote to Books on the Square. Laney also has a hopeful spirit for what's next for the historic location, and she hints at the future, suggesting a boot store might be the new occupant, to which she warmly

says, "I sincerely wish them the very best."
Though the café has concluded its service, Laney's entrepreneurial spirit is unwavering. She believed in the necessity of a place like The Square Café, stating, "I really felt like the Square needed a restaurant called 'The Square Café.'" Her efforts to maintain the culinary spirit of the Granbury Square, though now ceasing, have not gone unnoticed. "I loved The Square Café, and I ate there all the time," said Sarah Harvey, a café regular. "It was my go-to breakfast place when volunteering for HGMA events on the Square. I'm sad it's closing, but as a fellow small business owner, I understand the struggles of owning a small business in these times."
As we bid farewell to The Square Café, Laney's experience serves as a testament to the struggles small businesses face and their resilience and adaptability in the face of changing economic landscapes. It also underscores the importance of supporting our locally owned and operated small businesses. Granbury's Historic Square will surely miss the presence of The Square Café, but the community remains eager to see what new stories will unfold within its aged walls.



MICKY SHEARON | HOOD COUNTY NEWS
The Square Café, previously the old Nutshell Eatery, closed this month

ZED by Duane M. Abel



www.corkeycomics.com

CALENDAR

ONGOING

FORWARD TRAINING Center "Beginner Typing Skills" class. Call 817-573-6677 or email info@forwardtrainingcenter.org

TUESDAY, MARCH 26

MID CITIES Stamp Club meeting at the Bentwater Activities Center, 1800 Emerald Bend Court at 7 p.m. Subject is "The Olympics then and now." For questions call 817-910-8174.

JOBS FOR Life classes at Forward Training Center begin. Classes are Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. and run through May 16, with graduation May 17. Email info@forwardtrainingcenter.org or call 817-573-6677.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 27

WORKFORCE SOLUTION Job Fair 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Workforce Solutions, 1030 E. U.S. Highway 377, Ste. 202, Granbury. For questions call 817-776-8046.

SATURDAY, MARCH 30

OPEN HEARTS Holistic Fair 12-6 p.m. Psychic readings, reiki sessions, spiritual guidance and life coaching, psychic gift activation, energetic clearings. 817-559-3333. 616 Fall Creek Highway, Granbury. Questions call 817-559-3333.

TUESDAY, APRIL 2

OPERA GUILD OF GRANBURY monthly meeting, De Cordova Country Club, 5301 Country Club Drive. 10 a.m.: social/check-in. 11 a.m.: entertainment: "Variety Show" requested by Shirley Ludwick - Matt Mills, Mickey Parson, Cara and Daniel Hernandez, Lois Akers, Stan McBroom and Ray Scott. Short business meeting: 11:30 to noon. Optional lunch \$18. Reservations required no later than Friday, March 29, 2024, send an email to granburyog@gmail.com or call 817-776-2898. General membership, single \$25, joint \$35, business membership \$35. The Opera Guild of Granbury is an all-volunteer organization whose mission is to support the Granbury Opera House and its allied arts.

SATURDAY, APRIL 6

THE FRIENDSHIP Cemetery Association will be conducting cemetery maintenance 9 a.m. to noon, with lunch for participants to follow at the Tolar Church of Christ Fellowship Hall. We will be leveling and leveling headstones and cleaning up limbs and brush as needed. Friendship Cemetery is a small family and/or community cemetery about halfway between Granbury and Tolar on Friendship Road just off U.S. Highway 377. Check our Facebook page "Friendship Cemetery of Hood County." Email if more info is needed friendshipcemeteryhood-county@gmail.com.

TO SUBMIT CALENDAR ITEMS

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

Visit Granbury ‘Rocks the Eclipse’

Submitted Item

On the heels of being named the official Celebration Capital of Texas in 2023 and being recognized for the wide array of special events and celebrations, both time-honored and new, that add greatly to the city’s distinctive charm and sense of community both residents and visitors have come to enjoy, “Granbury learned we were in the direct path of a once in a lifetime total solar eclipse” said Tammy Dooley, director, City of Granbury Convention and Visitors Bureau — Visit Granbury.

According to Dooley, “being in the direct path of a total eclipse is like hitting the jackpot in tourism.” Visit Granbury has been hard at work promoting the eclipse, coordinating the many events happening in and around town, and presenting to community stakeholders about how they can maximize eclipse opportunities. Visit Granbury has also coordinated possible logistical impacts on the community including concerns about traffic, timing of the eclipse and even automatic lights and sprinkler systems that could be affected. Dooley noted that logistically, there are many people handling safety and logistics and Visit Granbury’s focus has been

heavily visitor and tourism driven. To add to the fun, Visit Granbury has hidden 50 specially engraved black eclipse rocks in and around town. Rocks are engraved with “Granbury” (in orange) on the rock face. There is a QR code on the back of each rock, directing the lucky finder to the Visit Granbury website to see how they can return the rock to Visit Granbury and receive a once in a lifetime souvenir “On the Edge of Totality” T-Shirt or a pair of eclipse glasses, while supplies last. Two rocks have already been claimed.

The total solar eclipse will occur Monday, April 8. VisitGranbury.com/eclipse has information about what visitors can expect and how to prepare for the event. It includes viewing locations, scheduled events, special offers and hotel deals along with locations to purchase souvenir merchandise. The premier event will be the Lunch in Black, hosted by the Historic Granbury Merchants Association and sponsored by Visit Granbury Monday, April 8 from 11 a.m.-2 p.m. Guests will be treated to a special box lunch, a bottle of local souvenir eclipse wine, wine glass and eclipse-approved viewing glasses, along with entertainment

provided by JetBlacq. Tickets are \$100. The event will take place around the historic courthouse square. Guests at this VIP event are encouraged to dress in all black to enhance the experience.

“Being in the direct path of a total eclipse is like hitting the jackpot in tourism.”

TAMMY DOOLEY

Director, City of Granbury Convention and Visitors Bureau — Visit Granbury

The total eclipse will begin at 12:21 p.m.; totality will begin at 1:39 p.m. and last two minutes, seven seconds, while the total eclipse itself will end at 3 p.m. To purchase tickets online go to visitgranbury.com/eclipse. Limited seating is available.

Other events include educational experiences at the Acton Nature Center, an Eclipse Tiki Cruise on Lake Granbury — a one-of-a-kind way to experience this rare event — and many others. According to NASA, in 2017, the Total Solar Eclipse found 22 million adults traveled to viewing destinations. Granbury is within the 108-122 mile-wide path of totality as the shadow travels

across the country, but is “On the Edge of Complete Totality.” The next total solar eclipse that will be visible in the U.S. will take place in 20 years, Aug. 23, 2044, and will not be in Texas. It will be followed by another Aug. 12, 2045 that will be widely visible across the U.S.

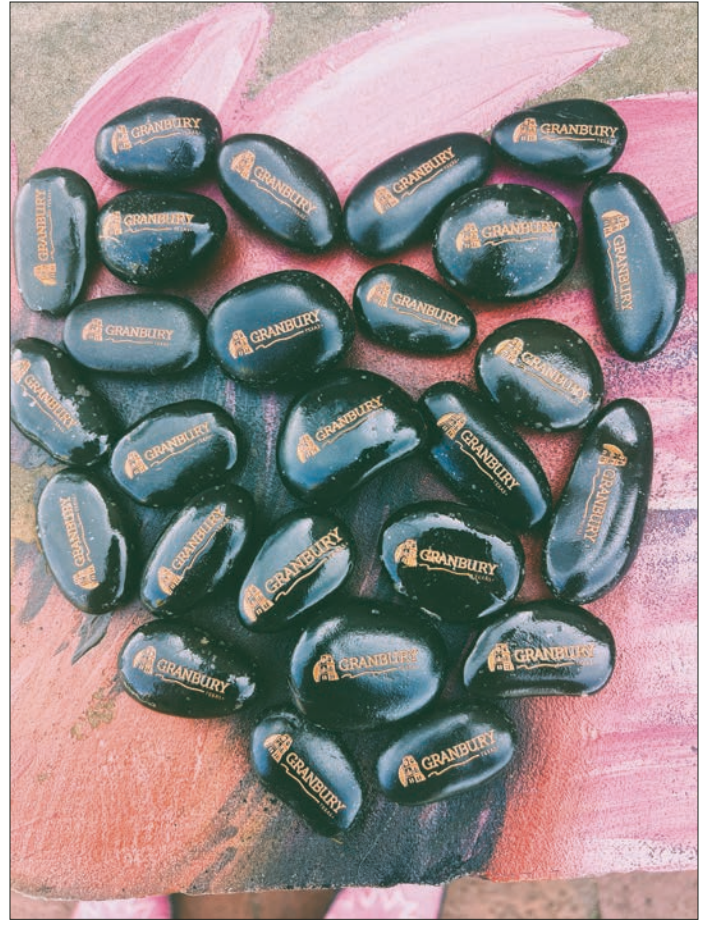
Hotel rooms and vacation short-term rentals are filling up fast, and many have been booked for months. The eclipse falls on the Monday after a weekend of Oink-Oink Festival fun. “What better way to celebrate the Ttal eclipse, than in the ‘Celebration Capital of Texas,’” Dooley continued. “This is something we will talk about for years to come and say ‘where were you?’ during the 2024 Eclipse.”

For anyone wanting eclipse information, lodging availability or more contact Visit Granbury at 817-573-5548 or go to www.visitgranbury.com/eclipse.

COURTESY PHOTOS BY VISIT GRANBURY

Top, Visit Granbury has hidden 50 specially engraved black eclipse rocks in and around town.

Bottom, these unidentified Granbury residents have found and redeemed two of the eclipse rocks.



How will animals behave during the eclipse?



COURTESY PHOTO

Scientists state that unusual animal and insect behavior occurs once the moon passes over the sun.

BY KAYLEE DUSANG
Staff Writer

While a total solar eclipse is an exciting experience for humans, many scientists and members of the public are preparing to capture how animals will also react to the rare event.

During previous eclipses, some viewers have reported that unusual animal and insect behavior occurs once the moon passes over the sun, including claims that crickets begin to chirp, bees return to their hives, and birds fall silent. Although there is only a handful of research on the topic, a study published in the journal “Animals” found that approximately 75% of observed species at a zoo in South Carolina exhibited surprising behaviors during the Great American Eclipse in 2017.

Professor Adam Hartstone-Rose, a professor at North Carolina State University who led the study, said his team observed that many animals, including a troop of gorillas, started to engage in their nighttime routines.

“As totality set in, they started going toward their nighttime enclosure where they get their meal before they go to bed,” Hartstone-Rose said. As daylight resumed, he adds that the gorillas came back out of their enclosure.

Other animals had strange reactions to the eclipse, such as Siamang gibbons, a species of ape, that made unusual calls to each other and Galapagos tortois- es that started breeding.

Giraffes also galloped in what seemed like “pacing behavior” caused by stress or anxiety.

In April, Hartstone-Rose and his team will travel to the Fort Worth Zoo to learn if their research is consistent with their findings in 2017. For this study, they are enlisting help from the public by asking participants to observe animals not only at their local zoos, but also wildlife out in nature, farm animals, and pets. Known as the Solar Eclipse Safari project, willing participants can submit their observations via phone, tablet, or data collection sheets located on the project’s website.

“We are also really interested in data that’s collected not just on the path of totality, but also in any place in North America, because one of the questions that we have is - we’re building an idea that some animals have a reaction to an eclipse,” Hartstone-Rose said. “We’re building an idea of how different animals react to an eclipse, but we’re hoping to gather enough data to be able to say what amount of eclipse is necessary to cause a behavioral change.”

Other citizen science projects include NASA’s Eclipse Soundscapes, which aims to collect sounds and sensory observations from the public to find how an eclipse might affect various ecosystems.

“Eclipses have always presented scientists with unique opportunities to learn about our solar system,” MaryKay Severino, co-lead of the Eclipse Soundscapes Project,

said in a press release. “The Eclipse Soundscapes Project is not only an opportunity for NASA to gather a large amount of scientific data, it’s an opportunity for our participants to learn about the eclipse in a multi-sensory manner.”

Both projects stem from a study in the 1930s that also used public observations to reveal how an eclipse might affect wildlife.

With areas throughout Central and North Texas expected to experience several minutes of totality, many regional wildlife reserves and zoos plan to do their own observations on how animals in their parks will respond to the total eclipse.

Avery Elander, a spokesperson for the Fort Worth Zoo, said that the zoo is open to the public on April 8. Visitors are also invited to submit their observations to Hartstone-Rose’s research team.

“We expect that if changes in behavior are observed, they will likely be animals behaving like they typically would at dawn or dusk such as nest building, change in vocalizations, increased activity/feeding, or moving toward their overnight barns,” Elander said.

Director of the Cameron Park Zoo in Waco, Brendon Wiley, said they plan to closely watch the behavior of the elephants and orangutans.

“Both of those species are incredibly intelligent and perceptive, so we are naturally curious to see how they react,” Wiley said.

Wiley adds that the zoo has a group of 200-300 wild black vultures that visit the facility during the day but depart once evening approaches.

“(We’re) curious to see if they make an early departure,” he said.

Jake Mayhew, the ranch manager for Buena Vista Wildlife Safari in Evant, said they intend to conduct some visual observations of their animals.

“Most animals are fairly based on how the sun comes up - sun phases and moon phases and things like that because that’s how they feed,” Mayhew said. “And they’re not used to sudden darkness, and that alarms them, in my opinion, is what I think happens.”

Fossil Rim Wildlife Center in Glen Rose hopes to participate in the Eclipse Soundscapes Project by recording animal sounds with an audio device during the eclipse.

“The goal would be to help contribute to the NASA (Soundscape) project,” said Warren Lewis, Chief Marketing Officer for Fossil Rim. “We would place it in our wolf area to see how our wolves react to the eclipse.”

For those interested in helping scientists study animal behavior or how nature responds during the total solar eclipse, visit Solar Eclipse Safari at scistarter.org/solar-eclipse-safari-resources or the Eclipse Soundscapes Project at eclipsesoundscapes.org.



A total solar eclipse is about as bright as the full moon — and just as safe to look at. But the sun at any other time is dangerously bright. View it only through special purpose solar filters that comply with the transmission requirements of the ISO 12312-2 international standard for filters for direct viewing of the sun.

What is a Total Eclipse?

BY ALEXANDRA MEELBUSCH
Staff Writer

On Monday, April 8, a total solar eclipse will cross North America, passing over Mexico, the United States and Canada.

A total solar eclipse happens when the moon passes between the sun and Earth, completely blocking the face of the sun.

According to NASA, “The sky will darken as if it were dawn or dusk.”

For this celestial event, the longest period of darkness will occur for about two minutes, 40 seconds. The last time the U.S. saw a total eclipse was in 2017. The next total solar eclipse visible from the U.S. will occur Aug. 12, 2045.

Exactly how the sun, moon and Earth align determines what kind of eclipse we see.

With a total eclipse, the moon moves directly in front of the sun and barely covers the solar disk. This allows observers in the center of the moon’s shadow to briefly see the sun’s outer atmosphere, the corona, which is too dim to see when the bright solar disk is not covered.

The shadow that the moon casts has two main parts, which are the darker inner shadow called the umbra, and a fainter outer shadow called the penumbra. Within the umbra, the sun’s light is completely blocked. In the penumbra, the sun’s light is only partially blocked.

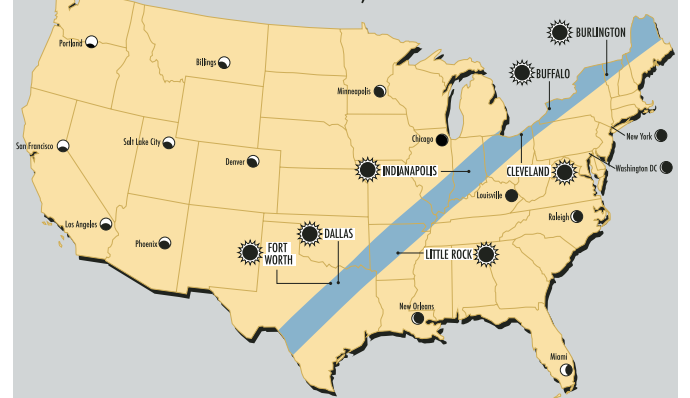
To see a total solar eclipse, an observer must be within the umbra. Observers in the penumbra will witness a partial eclipse, with only part of the sun covered by the moon. Those outside the moon’s shadow will see no eclipse at all.

As the shadow extends away from the moon, the umbra narrows or gets smaller. By the time it reaches Earth, the umbra covers a relatively small area on our planet compared to the penumbra. That means the area that experiences a total eclipse is much smaller than the area that experiences a partial eclipse. A typical umbral path may be less than 50 miles wide, while the penumbral zone can span a thousand miles or more.

Because Earth is continuously rotating, and the moon is constantly moving in its orbit, the moon’s shadow will travel across Earth’s surface, tracing a path. This is called the eclipse path. Within this area is a smaller path traced by the umbra, called the path of totality. The rapid movement of the moon in its orbit causes the shadow of the moon to sweep across the face of Earth in just four to five hours. At any location along the path of totality, the total phase of a solar eclipse may last only a few minutes, or even less.

For further information, visit science.nasa.gov.

TOTAL SOLAR ECLIPSE PATH
APRIL 8, 2024



The April 8 eclipse area of totality, represented by the blue band, will pass over Granbury and other parts of Texas. Those in the area should expect the sky to darken to a dusk-like brightness.

'Filling in the GAP'

Salvation Army foster program adds new services

BY ASHLEY TERRY
Staff Writer
ashley@hcnews.com

For the past seven years, one local program has been bridging the GAP — literally — for teens who are turning 18 and aging out of the foster care system.

But recently, Hood County's foster mentoring program has added three new services to help teens reach their true potential.

The GAP foster program was developed in 2017 by the Granbury Service Extension Unit of The Salvation Army to offer various types of support to help foster teens successfully transition into adulthood.

Mentors help teens transition through high school and prepare them for independent life after graduation, whether they decide to head to college or choose a career field.

NEW PROGRAMS

While the program has been successful since the beginning, GAP Director Mary Flores recently came up with the idea of bringing in special speakers to educate the mentors on specific topics, like scholarships and finances.

"It really opened up the volunteers' eyes that if we educate these teens now, how far off they will be when they're in their 40s and 50s," she explained. "But they had to learn about it, so those kinds of speakers have helped our volunteers to better serve our teenagers."

Another change for 2024, Flores said, is for the program to assist individuals who are a part of kinship placements, in which Child Protective Services places a child with a kinship caregiver (relative or an adult who has a significant relationship with the child), according to the Arizona Department of

Child Safety.

"When they're in that home, sometimes they stay in that home, they close those cases, and they're not seen anymore. But sometimes the deputies are getting calls about grandmas who don't know what to do," she explained. "I want to make sure we have support for these families, grandmas or aunts and uncles, where these mentors can come and take the teens to the movies, or take them to learn about work, banking, savings and budgeting. These people need that extra help. That's why it's called the GAP program. We're filling in the gap wherever there is a need in our community."

Flores said 355th District Judge Bryan Bufkin and Child Protection Judge David Barkley also started allowing herself and GAP administrative assistant Carol Grigson to go into the courtroom to witness some of the foster teen proceedings.

"We were kind of keeping our distance from that because that's what CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates) does, but it also helps us all partner up and get to know what's going on with the families," Flores said. "We'll all be on the same page."

HISTORY

In 2017, Flores and friend, Sally Timmons, went out into the community and researched for a way that the Salvation Army could "fill in the gap," so to speak. After interviewing nonprofits, organizations and churches, they found that the top need was foster kids aging out of the foster system with no support — essentially, they were becoming homeless.

According to the National Foster Youth Institute, the child welfare system is sometimes described as a highway to homelessness.

An estimated 20% of young adults who are in care become homeless the moment they're emancipated at the age of 18. And nationwide, 50% of the homeless population spent time in foster care.

"What we can do to prevent them from being homeless is what our goal is, especially when they don't have family or any kind of support if they aged out," Flores previously told the Hood County News. "We need more time invested in the kids to make sure that we have a plan when they age out, that they have a place to stay, they have identification, if they should be on Social Security, disability and Medicaid. That's our goal — making sure that they don't fall through the system, making sure they have housing."

After the pair spent a year advocating for and presenting the program, the GAP program was approved Feb. 2, 2018. Eleven volunteers were trained June 6, 2018, and the GAP program received its first teen Nov. 8, 2018.

Since then, several teens have gone through the program, with the longest being about four years, Flores said.

"They stay in the program for a long time until we feel like those needs are being met and we graduate them out," she explained. "Or if they get adopted, we graduate them from the program because they're done."

The program has two components: Pre-GAP, which encompasses teens ages 13-18 in grade eight through their senior year, and the GAP program, for teens ages 17 in grade 12 to age 23.

"We do mentor younger teens, like preteens, and it's trying to build that relationship," Flores said. "We don't want to wait until they're 18 and they're already ag-



Training to become a GAP mentor for Hood County foster teens consists of trauma training, CPR, AES (automated external defibrillator) an overview of the foster system and Safe from Harm.

COURTESY PHOTO

ing out of the foster system. We want those relationships to start building a little bit younger."

GAP MENTORS

Each foster teen is paired with two volunteer mentors who provide guidance support. Mentors commit one year of dedicated service to helping teens. They help the teen navigate situations many take for granted, including basic life skills like finding a job, getting a driver license, opening a bank account and much more.

Flores explained that she came across a foster teen who was living at the homeless shelter in Oak Trail Shores and had no identification. However, with the help of Sen. Brian Birdwell, the GAP Program was able to get him the extra help and attention he needed until he turned 23.

"That was a cut-off age

for him," she explained. "Because of his disability, we extended his time a little bit longer than most kids."

The day of his graduation from the program, Flores said he only asked for one thing: a "forever family" — something that the GAP Program unfortunately could not provide.

"That's one thing we couldn't give him because he wasn't adopted," Flores said. "But we told him, 'If you do get married, you can invite us, and we'll be a part of your life as long as you want us to be.'"

Mentors in the GAP foster program also have access to scholarship funds that may be used to assist with the teens' extracurricular activities, clothing, personal hygiene, and medical and dental assistance, based on the teens' goals. Each scholarship has a set, limited amount per year.

A GAP mentor gets to know a foster teen and everyone involved in the teen's life to advocate for the teen's best interests while in the foster care system. Good mentors do not take this responsibility lightly and work to become invested in the success of the teen. By volunteering a few hours a month, mentors can make a tremendous difference in a teen's life.

Flores said one teen who was adopted out of the program about a month ago wrote a heartwarming note about two of the volunteers and how they taught her life skills. She wrote, "They made me feel very special and always put my wants first. Both of them inspired me to pretty much go forward into law and encouraged me to continue my passion about art and reading, even doing the hard things when I don't really

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Procession of Palms & Passion Narrative

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Foot Washing and Eucharist

Good Friday | March 29 | 12:00pm

Easter Sunday | March 31 | 10:00am
Easter Eucharist

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'A dream come true'

Granbury resident legally adopts stepdaughter after 50 years



COURTESY PHOTO

Mendy Torres, middle, was legally adopted by her stepfather Kevin Tipton, left, on Feb. 16. Also pictured is Torres' mother, Angie Tipton, and Judge Bryan Bufkin.

BY ASHLEY TERRY
Staff Writer
ashley@hcnews.com

"You're never too old to be adopted."

These were the exact words spoken by 55-year-old Granbury resident Mendy Torres after her stepfather, Kevin Tipton, officially adopted her Feb. 16.

Torres — who was extremely close with her birth father until his death — has always viewed Tipton as a second dad.

"He's been my stepfather since I was 6 and I had wanted to be adopted for a long time," Torres told the Hood County News. "He just came up to me a couple months ago and he said, 'Hey, did you still want to be adopted?' I said, 'Yeah, I would love to,' and of course, I'm crying that he had thought about it, and then he said, 'Well, it's something that should have happened a long time ago — but better late than never.'"

In Texas, one adult can adopt another under certain circumstances. Legally, it is as if the adopted adult is the child of the adoptive parent. Adopted adults can inherit from and through their adoptive parents, according to texaslawhelp.org.

Torres said her mother, Angie, broached the topic with Kevin months ago and

informed him that Torres still wanted to be adopted, but Kevin didn't know it was possible.

"We didn't know anything about it," Kevin said. "But Mendy and I both had the idea and we figured it was time for her to be adopted after so many years."

On Feb. 16, Torres and Kevin filled out the paperwork, paid the filing fee, and went before Judge Bryan Bufkin for the adoption hearing.

"It was also really special because Judge Bufkin was my children's bible study teacher, so it was really neat that we knew him also," Torres said. "It just made the (day) even more special."

Torres said while many people will remember the exact date of their wedding and anniversary, the day of her adoption will be one date she will never forget.

"Just because you're grown up doesn't mean that you don't still want to be theirs," she said. "In my heart, I was his but now legally I'm his, and it just kind of makes everything complete."

"She's my daughter that I love so much," Kevin said. "She's always been a big part of my life and I'm so glad to have her officially adopted."

Torres and Kevin both recommend anyone considering

adoption for themselves or a loved one to do their research and go for it because it is "definitely worth it."

"Just look into what the requirements are in your state," Torres said. "It's really simple. You just pick up paperwork from the courthouse and go before the judge. They ask your parent if they want to adopt you and they say 'Yes,' and then they ask you if you're this person and you sign the paperwork that you want to be adopted, and that's it. They swear you in and it's done. It's very simple."

She said oftentimes many stepparents don't want to approach the topic of adoption for fear of offending their biological children or overstepping their boundaries.

"A lot of times they're just afraid to ask the question, but if it's something that you want to do, don't be afraid to ask those questions and just do it because it's such a truly loving gesture as an adult to be adopted," Torres said. "It was wonderful."

"Anybody who's thinking about adoption, whether it's for a child or adult, they should go ahead and get it done because it's a very pain-free process and it makes everybody feel better," Kevin said. "I just recommend that they go ahead and get it done. The sooner the better."

Torres said she is excited to officially be a daughter to Kevin and a sister to his biological daughter, Melanie.

"You're never too old to be adopted," Torres said, in a Facebook post following the adoption. "Your heart doesn't lose its desire to become theirs with time. Adult adoption is just as magical as childhood adoption; maybe more in some ways. Today was a dream come true. I love you, Keith Tipton, aka Dad."

GAP

FROM PAGE A6

want to do. Everyone deserves to have amazing mentors, like I did with these wonderful ladies."

"One of the things that she said on here was that 'They helped me emotionally connect with God again,' and as victims, even myself as a survivor, some of the things that I witnessed, I didn't believe in God," Flores said. "Because you think if there was a God, then why was I in that situation? But when I gave God a chance, that's what makes me help kids, is because of what I went through. I don't want them to feel like that's it. There is hope at the end of the dark tunnel. There are ways that you can give back to the community — and that's what I do."

To be eligible to serve as a GAP program mentor, volunteers must be at least 30 years old, they must pass the Salvation Army and CPS background checks, and they must participate in required mentor training.

GAP program volunteers will be assigned a partner (if one is available) or they may find or choose their own partner. They also must agree to several commitments before becoming a mentor, like:

- Committing to at least one year of mentoring
- Communicating effectively in both oral and written forms
- Meeting with a teen at least once a month
- Turning in monthly volunteer time logs

To become a mentor, volunteers will need to submit an application to the Salvation Army website at salvationarmyusa.org. Once they submit an application, a background check will be conducted. Following approval of the background check, volunteers will then be required to undergo training.



COURTESY PHOTO

GAP program mentors help foster teens successfully transition into adulthood. To become a mentor, volunteers must participate in various training classes to learn about child and adult safety techniques.



COURTESY PHOTO

Mentors of the GAP foster program created by the Granbury Service Extension Unit of The Salvation Army must undergo various training classes before officially becoming a mentor to foster teens.

"Training consists of trauma, CPR, AED, (automated external defibrillator) an overview of the foster system and Safe from Harm," Flores said. "Those are your main ones, but then they continue having training throughout the year."

Currently, there are 26 volunteers in the program who are either mentoring or preparing to graduate from their training.

Last year, Flores said GAP program mentors had logged a total of 821 hours, 44 minutes to assist their teens, which she said is astounding considering that many of the teens live as much as six hours away.

"It's not easy," Flores said, in a previous interview with the HCN. "I mean, these mentors are taking on these kids and they really become part of a family."

Flores added that her main goal is to have a GAP program in every county in Texas.

"Salvation Armies are everywhere in the United States," she added. "We're blessed with Granbury having the funding to support the program through Salvation Army."

For more information about the GAP program, visit salvationarmyusa.org online.

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ASHLEY TERRY | HOOD COUNTY NEWS

Dominique Inge, patron of Hood County arts and culture, speaks during the Granbury City Council meeting on March 19 in support of renaming the Lake Granbury Conference Center after the late David Southern.

SOUTHERN

FROM PAGE A1

Transportation's Aviation Division.

In a previous article in the Hood County News, Southern shared that one of his proudest achievements as mayor was getting a non-smoking ordinance passed.

"The reason for my pride in that ordinance is that studies show that in cities with strong non-smoking ordinances, 40% fewer kids start smoking," Southern had said.

Southern also volunteered on various nonprofit boards. He served as president of the Northwest Central Texas Housing Finance Corporation and was first vice president of the Texas Association of Local Housing Finance Agencies. Both organizations promote affordable housing.

He served on the board of Veterans Freedom Retreats, which helps veterans and their spouses cope with post-traumatic stress disorder.

Southern served for a decade as chair of the Granbury Cemetery Board and spent a couple of years on the city's Planning and Zoning Commission. At the

time of his death, he was vice chair of the Granbury Cultural Arts Commission and a member of the Lake Granbury Kiwanis Club.

During the Granbury City Council meeting, City Manager Chris Coffman explained that the Bridge Street History Center had been working with the city for nine months to get the name change petition submitted.

"There was a petition submitted to council to consider renaming the Lake Granbury Conference Center to the new name of the David Southern Lake Granbury Conference Center," Coffman said. "That petition states many facts about David's life as a council member, a mayor and as a board member with the city for about 50 years of service in his life."

Coffman also noted that an individual private donor had offered to fund the costs associated with the new signage at the LGCC. The cost for the signage is estimated to be between \$13,000-\$15,000.

The council then opened the public hearing for anyone wishing to speak about the agenda item.

Dominique Inge, a promi-

nent patron of Hood County arts and culture, spoke in strong favor of the decision. She explained that Southern was Granbury's "longest-serving mayor," and that he was a "visionary, gifted leader, an astute businessman and urban planner."

"His vision was always to promote Granbury," she said. "I would like to point out that we owe this beautiful building, this city hall, to David Southern. As I go back into the hinterlands of memory, I recall the days when the city council meetings were held in a building — I think it was a furniture store nearby — and the councilman had folding tables with metal chairs. The audience was also seated in folding metal chairs, there were maybe eight or possibly a dozen of the folding chairs there against a wall. So, these beautiful chambers are owing to David Southern's vision to have a city hall right in the center of town."

She explained that the development of the conference center was all due to Southern's business acumen and exceptional negotiating skills — even though it took 11 years for the building to be constructed.

"David Southern was a passionate supporter of historic preservation, and he did everything he could to support the efforts and the beautiful homes that are here," Inge said. "During his term, there was the Candlelight Tour of Homes that was started. He saw the possibilities of Granbury and what it could become."

Inge said Southern was also a supporter of the arts, as he began what was called the Granbury Mayor's Choice Award, where the mayor could choose a work of art that would be displayed in the Granbury City Hall for the public to view.

Additionally, Inge said "The Wall Street Journal" published a front-page article "above the fold" about Granbury in 2006, classifying the town as a "micropolis."

"They use the term to de-

scribe a city that was a big, little city near a metroplex that had so many of the amenities that a larger city would have," she said. "I remember David Southern was enormously proud of this article."

Inge ended her remarks by telling an anecdote about Southern, in which he used his resonant baritone voice. She said she was having an animated conversation with the former mayor about acting when Southern revealed he had previously acted in a school play.

"I asked him, 'Oh, what role did you play?' and he said, 'The voice of God,'" Inge said, as chuckles sounded throughout city hall.

"This concludes my remarks," she added. "I hope you will approve this measure and I give you my full and unreserved endorsement. I believe this would be tremendously important to David Southern."

Tom Hamilton, director of the Bridge Street History Center, said he echoed Inge's statements and asked the public to stand up if they were in favor of the resolution. Almost every attendee stood in Southern's honor.

Granbury resident Faye Landham said Southern's name was one of the first names she heard when she moved to Granbury.

"I heard he was a mover and a shaker," she said. "David did so much for our town, and he served in our many nonprofits. I know he also donated so much to nonprofits. His generosity speaks volumes; therefore, I recommend renaming the conference center after him."

Mary Hattox, vice chair of the Historic Preservation Commission, said Southern loved his Lord, and devoted his life's work to the improvements around Granbury.

"He was my friend, and I would be so proud for him to have this conference center renamed; it was one of his dreams," she said.

Hattox also took the time to thank Coffman, as she explained how heartbroken she was when she first learned of

Southern's passing and had come to speak to Coffman about naming a city building in his honor.

"He said, 'Well, you know, Mary, we don't have any guidelines or anything written to allow us to name anything after anyone in the city. It has never been done,'" she told the public. "But he said, 'I'm gonna take that challenge, I'm gonna take it to the mayor and I'm going to take it to the council and see if we can get some guidelines approved, so that in the future we can honor such people as David.' Chris, I thank you for getting that job done. I know it was a lot of work on you, so thank you."

Following his wife, Attorney Richard Hattox spoke about Southern's pride, hope, and optimism.

"David was a lot of fun and he brought joy in my life," Richard said. "I just want the council to recognize the fact that David loved the community, he loved the people, and he loved his family but more importantly, he loved this town and he touched everything in it."

Mickey Parson, a member of the Granbury Cultural Arts Commission, also spoke about Southern's involvement with the Brazos River Authority, the Granbury Opera House, and the Bridge Street History Center.

"I'm in support of the petition presented by the Bridge Street History Center, and I will tell you that the way we ended up with that was because of David Southern," Parson said. "He worked with the citizens that were on that street and David created that Bridge Street building. He was a large part of the beginning of the success of that. I want to thank my friends with the Bridge Street History Center for their efforts and thank them for writing this petition for it. I support it. Please vote for it."

Mayor Jim Jarratt then closed the public hearing and allowed council members to give their opinion on the resolution.

Place 2 Councilman Eddie Rodriguez said there are 28

photos of the Granbury City Council and Southern is in 11 of the photos.

"He served as a council member, a mayor and as a board member of several of the city boards," Rodriguez said. "Having his name on the conference center is the least I can do. He served 10 years on council, 15 years as mayor, and also many other years as a board member. It is hard to sit up here and just give him that recognition. I mean, he deserves more."

Place 5 Councilman Steven Vale explained that Feb. 7, 2023, the council developed a policy to establish a procedure for the renaming of any street or any city-owned facility. He said there are five guiding principles, and four criteria to consider when naming a facility after an individual.

"I had the opportunity to meet and talk with David over the years and Claudia as well," Vale said. "He had a passion for our community. He served not only in city council and as mayor, but he continued his involvement, even after office, serving on boards and commissions. As I read back through the five guiding principles, and the four items to consider when naming individuals, I think David certainly meets those criteria from my perspective. Granbury is where Texas history lives and I think we can see David's hand in many projects in our city — from the conference center, city beach, city hall, Moments in Time, et cetera — and I think David is one of those individuals that helped shape history for the betterment of Granbury."

Following comments from council members, Place 6 Councilman Greg Corrigan made a motion to approve the petition from the Bridge Street History to rename the Lake Granbury Conference Center to the David Southern Lake Granbury Conference Center.

The motion passed unanimously.

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OBITUARIES

William H. Price

November 4, 1927 - March 2, 2024

W. H. "Bill" Price, 96, beloved father, grandfather, great-grandfather, uncle, and friend, passed away Saturday, March 2, 2024, surrounded by friends and family.

Services celebrating his life will be private.

Bill was born on Nov. 4, 1927 in Olney, Texas to W. E. Price and Mary Ellen Price. He joined the Navy in 1945, graduated from TCU in 1948, and graduated from the SMU school of law in 1951.

Bill worked as an attorney and oil and gas operator up and until his last day. When he was not working he followed all TCU sports. A lifelong Texas Rangers fan, Bill got to see his team win the 2023 World Series. He was an avid boater and fisherman. He once drove his fishing boat straight across the Gulf of Mexico from Galveston to Progreso and then on to Cozumel.

Bill is survived by two sons, Bill Jr. and wife



Mindy, and Mike Price; grandchildren Jenny Turner, Trey Price and wife Lisa, Ryan Price and wife Janet, Jeffrey Price and wife Alden, Phebe Price, Conner Price, and Annika Price; great-grandchildren Cathryn, Ella, Emma, Holt, Natalie, and Rhett; his companion Wanda Berry and many friends and extended family members.

Bill was preceded in death by Lynn Price, his wife of 59 years, son David Price, daughter-in-law Linda Price, and too many others to mention.

Toby Weber

November 27, 1949 - March 14, 2024

Celebrating the life of Toby Guy Weber, we honor a beloved husband, father, grandfather, brother, and friend whose light shone brightly in the lives of those he touched. Born on Nov. 27, 1949, Toby entered eternal peace in his sleep on March 14, 2024.

A native of Oklahoma, Toby was a proud alumnus of Oklahoma State University, where he graduated in 1972. Beginning his career in Tulsa, Toby's professional path took him to Dallas before he established a distinguished career in the insurance industry in Abilene, where he earned respect and admiration from colleagues and clients alike.

Upon their move to Pecan Plantation in Granbury in 2001, Toby and Nancy integrated seamlessly into the community, finding not just neighbors but a family. Their spiritual journey flourished at Anchor Fellowship Church in Acton, where they engaged with the community and deepened their faith. Toby was known for his kind spirit and tender heart, often moved to tears by touching commercials, TV shows, or movies. He was an enthusiastic sports fan, sharing his love for the games with family and friends.

Toby was preceded in death by his parents, Oliver Fred Weber and Esther Mae Williams Weber. He is survived by his loving wife, Nancy Weber, and was a cherished father to his three sons: Tyler Weber and wife Amy of Crowley, Payton Mayes and wife Andrea of Southlake, and



Matthew Mayes and wife Sandy of Coleman. He took immense joy in his role as 'Pops' to Merritt, Channing, Aiden, Stella, and Berkley, who will miss him dearly.

He also leaves behind his sister, Malinda, and her husband, Lonnie Eggleston, of Oklahoma City, and their family, who share in the family's grief and remembrance of Toby's gentle soul and generous heart.

Toby's presence will be profoundly missed by all who knew him, but his legacy of kindness, integrity, and devotion to his loved ones will forever remain in the hearts of those he touched.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made to Pecan Plantation VFD & EMS (9518 Monticello Drive, Granbury, TX 76049; https://pecanplantationfireandems.org) or a charity of your choice in Toby's memory. A Celebration of Life service will be held from 2-4 p.m., Saturday, May 11, 2024, at the Pecan Plantation Club House. You were loved beyond words and will be missed beyond measure.

Dan J. Loomis

August 31, 1944 - March 13, 2024

Dan Loomis, 79, passed away on March 13 at his home surrounded by family. Dan was born on Aug. 31, 1944, in Clare, Michigan to Harold and Ida Mae Loomis. After high school graduation, his parents encouraged him to attend college. But Dan had other plans. He joined the Air Force to begin 20 years of service to our country. Serving in Turkey, Okinawa, Vietnam, and various sites across the nation, Dan specialized in the repair and maintenance of aircraft electronics. He worked on the EC-47 gooney bird, F-111, F-4, and B52 aircrafts. Dan received two Meritorious Service Medals along with many other awards during his Air Force service. Upon retirement from the Air Force, he joined the Bell Helicopter test facility. He taught the operation and maintenance of helicopter electronic systems to students from all over the world. He also earned that long-awaited college degree from LeTourneau University during his time at Bell. After retirement, he enjoyed fishing every morning. He also taught classes at Tarrant County College, acted as a fishing guide on Lake Granbury, led several veterans' groups, taught at Christian Women's Job Corp, and led a Sunday school class.

Dan married Pat March 16, 1968, in Orem, Utah. They enjoyed the next 56 years sharing accomplishments and disappointments. Their three children were the light of his life. He attended all their activities, games, and performances. He was a boy scout leader and a baseball coach for the boys' teams and an enthusiast supporter of his high school mascot daughter. In retirement, Dan and Pat RVed through all the continuous states, Canada, and Alaska. They also traveled to the United Kingdom, Switzerland, France, Austria, Germany, Australia, New Zealand, Italy, and Greece.



Dan is survived by his wife Pat; his children Steven (Cat), Brian (Tara), and Debbie (Jarman); grandchildren Grant, Emma, Owen, Sydney, Dane, and Clifton. He also leaves behind a sister Kay (Terry) and several nieces and nephews.

Services will be held on Monday, March 25, at 10 a.m. at Acton Methodist Church, 3433 Fall Creek Hwy, Granbury. A private burial ceremony will follow at the Dallas-Fort Worth National Cemetery. If anyone wishes to honor Dan's memory, in lieu of flowers a donation to Tunnel to Towers, t2t.org, would be appreciated.

Betty Ann Knox

September 28, 1944 - March 10, 2024

Betty Ann Knox, 79, passed away Sunday, March 10, 2024 in Granbury. Celebration of life was held Saturday, March 16, 2024 at 10:30 a.m. in the First United Methodist Church in Graham, TX. Burial followed in Pioneer Cemetery under the direction of Morrison Funeral Home.

Betty was born Sept. 28, 1944 in Uvalde to the late Jack and Bonnie (Beavers) Aycock. She married Jim Lee Knox April 1, 1980 in Arlington. "Cats welcome, dogs by appointment only" is a sign that graced the home. Betty loved animals since her upbringing. After retirement she accomplished her life-long dream to own race horses with her supporting husband. All of the family enjoyed being a part of her dream and enthusiasm. Her beautiful spirit will be greatly missed.

Survivors include: husband, Jim Knox of



Granbury; daughters, Hollye Knox of Denton and Angela Jack and husband, Michael of Springtown; son, Benjamin Knox and wife, Renee of College Station; sisters, Jo Martinson and husband, David of Arkansas and Mary Sebesta and husband, Bill of San Angelo; brother, David Aycock and wife, Blenda of San Angelo; grandchildren, Gwen Knox, Zachary Getz, Hannah Getz Corral, and Noah Getz; six nieces and two nephews.

Alta Beth Sillivent

February 13, 1943 - February 23, 2024

Alta Beth Harper-Sillivent, 81, passed away Friday, Feb. 23, 2024 in Granbury. A loving wife and mother, married to Gordon for 64 years. Mother to Alisa K Sillivent-Borek, Gregory F. Sillivent, George C. Sillivent, and Joe A. Sillivent. She was also NaNa to 11 grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren. Alta strived every day to make people happy and be a positive influence. Her toughness during adversity was remarkable. She loved hummingbirds and wildflowers and she was a very creative and artistic soul. She most



loved spending time with her family. A celebration of Alta's life will be held in Granbury, at her oldest son's home on March 23.

SUBMITTING AN OBITUARY

Obituaries are submitted online at obituaries.hcnnews.com. Advance payment is required and you may do so online when placing the obituary. Obituaries should come from the funeral home. Obituaries placed by next of kin must be verified with the facility handling the body or the church where service will be held. You must provide the contact info for verification when submitting the obituary. The Hood County News deadline for obituaries is 10 a.m. Wednesday for the Saturday paper. Deadlines are subject to change during holidays.

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ACROSS

- 1 slang for "athlete"
- 5 vera
- 6 TXism: "suits me to a fare-thee-"
- 7 Metroplex Tex-Mex eatery: "___ Fenix"
- 8 Madigan of Texas-based 1985 film "Alamo Bay"
- 9 TX Meat Loaf's first album: "___ of Hell" (1977)
- 15 San Antonio-based military insurer. co.
- 16 TXism: "exciting as a fire at the ___"
- 19 TXism: "jumped from the frying ___ the fire"
- 21 residences for old folks: nursing ___
- 22 1970s male hair style (2 wds.)
- 27 this McEntire was "Ma Tex" in "North"
- 28 cut in half
- 29 TX John Wesley Hardin, e.g.
- 30 TXism: "put on the ___" (eat)
- 32 a shoe width
- 33 TXism: "he rides ___ over everybody"
- 36 TXism for "nonsense" or "lies": "hog ___"
- 37 Texas-based "Steak and ___"
- 38 where you find sodas in a hotel room
- 39 diet goal: _ __
- 41 Gulf shrimp snare
- 42 Chisholm Trail was also known as "___ Trail"
- 45 "Devil's Sinkhole" State Natural ___
- 46 Texas-based ___ Southwest" is now "Frontier Southwest"
- 47 frontier lawman, Wyatt
- 48 smallest Hebrew letter
- 49 most toasty
- 52 descendant of wealth
- 53 "___ Miserables"

DOWN

- 1 TXism: "___ cracker" (dentist)
- 2 TXism: "good ___ boy"
- 3 city of the "Chronicle and Democrat-Voice"
- 4 "Kelly Field" in San Antonio was formerly "___ Base"
- 8 TXism: "tough ___ old boot"
- 9 Bing's role in 1959 film "Say One For Me" with TX Debbie Reynolds (2 wds.)
- 10 TXism: "old ___ dirt"
- 11 TXism: "up ___ snuff"
- 12 TxDOT was "The Department ___ and Public Transportation"
- 13 flying saucers abbr.
- 14 TXism: "spends his ___ looking for shade" (lazy)
- 15 TXism: "run ___ flag" (give up)
- 16 Dolly recorded a cover of McCartney's "Let ___"
- 17 this "Cece" Kizer is a forward for the Houston Dash
- 18 admiration, respect
- 20 ___ ville, Texas
- 22 "___ long" (goodbye)
- 23 noted epic 1959 film: "Ben ___"
- 24 abandoned Texas SSC was to be a giant ___ smasher
- 25 repairing a broken vase, e.g.
- 26 TXism: "attracted like steel to a ___"
- 28 Rangers' sport: ___ ball
- 31 prohibits
- 34 outlaw Bass (init.)
- 35 TXism: "___ on the hoof" (hog)
- 37 the Texas flag has ___ stripe
- 40 jogging pace
- 43 crow cries
- 44 prophets
- 50 TXism: "___ on up to the trough" (join in)
- 51 Edward of "Fight Club" with TX Meat Loaf" (init.)

PLEASE SEE OBITS **A10**

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How can you manage student loan payments?

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Edward Jones
Financial Advisor



Taylor Mobly these payments do represent a real challenge, you may need to adjust your budget and spending habits as best you can. However, there might be other steps you can take to help ease the burden or possibly reduce the repayment time. Here are a few suggestions to consider:

SIGN UP FOR AUTOPAY

Falling behind on your student loan payments can lead to late fees, and if you were to become truly delinquent, you could face even bigger troubles, such as wage

REFINANCE YOUR LOAN

With a steady income, a reasonably good credit score and a manageable number of other debts, you might be able to refinance your student loan and reduce your interest rate, which will en-

able more of your monthly payments to go toward the principal.

LOOK FOR EMPLOYER BENEFITS

Some employers — typically the larger ones — offer student loan repayment help to employees, so check with your human resources department.

MAKE EXTRA PAYMENTS

If you feel strapped just making your regular student loan payments, you may not be able to make extra ones. But if you can afford to add to your payments consistently, you could pay off your

loan earlier than you had thought. But just because you make an extra payment, the money doesn't necessarily go toward reducing your principal — student loan services generally apply payments first to late fees and then to accrued interest. If you pay online, you should have an option to apply extra payments to the principal. Your loan servicer could also provide you with other ways of paying more toward principal.

CHOOSE A PAYOFF STRATEGY

If you have multiple student loans, and you can make more than the minimum payments, you may want to be

strategic in how you pay off your loans. You could choose the "snowball" method by getting rid of the smallest loans first — a technique that can give you feelings of momentum and satisfaction. Or you could take the "avalanche" approach by first going after the loans with the highest interest rates. Either route could save you more money in the long run.

It can certainly be challenging to deal with student loan debt. But with patience and diligence, and by exploring all your repayment options, you may be able to help yourself make progress toward putting these loans to rest.

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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 Highway, 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 noncontact 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.

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

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 and 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 to paige.kitchens@stonewaterchurch.com.

EVERY FRIDAY

PUNCHIN' PARKINSON'S in Granbury. 12:30-1:30 p.m. A noncontact 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.

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 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.

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.

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.

OBITS CONTINUED FROM | A9

Ruby Viola Dowdy

November 23, 1947 - March 11, 2024

Ruby Viola Dowdy, 76, of Granbury, passed away on Monday, March 11, 2024. Viola was born in Coleman, Texas on Nov. 23, 1947 to the late George and Ruby Lancaster.

She loved to garden and always had beautiful flowers planted and was a great seamstress and loved to sew and make quilts for her children and grandchildren. Her grandchildren and great-grandchildren were the joys of her life.

Viola's wishes were that her body be donated to science. Family will be having a private memorial to celebrate her life at a later date.

Besides her parents, Viola was preceded in death by her siblings, grandchild, Cooper Mitcham, daughter, Charlene Martin, and a granddaughter by marriage, Bailey Mitcham.

Viola is survived by her daughters, Darlene Mitcham (Steve), Rita Wade



(Mike), Rosa Warren (Gary) and Raeleen Moughon, 13 grandchildren and spouses, 11 great-grandchildren and several extended family members who she loved dearly.

Viola was a Christian and her family knows they will see her again. She worshipped God in the Baptist faith and was a member of Acton Baptist Church.

Viola's family wish expressions of sympathy be made in the form of donations to charities of your choosing.

Janetta "Kay" Ables

February 9, 1962 - March 16, 2024

Janetta "Kay" Ables, 62, beloved wife, mother, and grandmother, of Granbury, passed away early on Saturday, March 16, 2024, in Fort Worth, Texas.

Kay was born on Feb. 9, 1962, in Wichita, Kansas to the late "Mac" and Mary McCleskey. On May 17, 1980, Kay married Jimmy Ables and together had three children, Jeremy, Candace, and Chad. Kay enjoyed working as a home-health aid for over 25 years. Kay enjoyed doing crafts including painting and making wreaths and centerpieces. She also enjoyed decorating - especially for Christmas. Additionally, she enjoyed gardening, shopping, jewelry and antiques. Most of all, Kay cherished time spent with her family - particularly with her grandchildren.

Kay is survived by her husband, Jimmy, of nearly 44 years; her children, Jeremy, Candace and husband Mackenzie Lawrence, and Chad and wife Jaimie Ables; her grandchildren, Riley, Kayden, Madelynn, Zoey, Cassidy, and Greyson; and by her sisters, Charlotte Hartwell, Mary Graves, Ann Walker Boyd; and by her brother, Donald Walker.



In addition to her parents, Kay was preceded in death by her sister, Cheryl Ables.

Cremation has taken place and all services will be held at a later date.

HCNEWS.COM

Golden Trowel



COURTESY PHOTO

Saturday evening March 16, Brother Lee Shifflett, PM was presented with the Masonic Golden Trowel Award during a dinner/ceremony at Granbury Lodge No. 392. The Golden Trowel Award is the highest and most prestigious award any Lodge can present to an individual member on behalf of the members of the Lodge and the Grand Lodge of Texas. The award is for outstanding service to the Fraternity, the community, Brother Masons and their families. Pictured here is William Myers, PM of Granbury Masonic Lodge #392 and Brother Berney Beckworth PM presenting the award to Brother Lee Shifflett.

Procurement Month



ASHLEY TERRY | HOOD COUNTY NEWS

The Granbury City Council issued a proclamation declaring March 2024 Procurement Month in Granbury during a regularly scheduled meeting March 19. National Procurement Month is an opportunity to acknowledge and celebrate the vital function purchasing and materials management professionals serve within our government and educational institutions.

Autism Awareness Month



ASHLEY TERRY | HOOD COUNTY NEWS

The Granbury City Council issued a proclamation declaring the month of April 2024 Autism Awareness Month in Granbury. About one in 36 children has been identified with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). ASD is a developmental disability that can cause significant social, communication and behavioral challenges.

National Vietnam War Veterans Day



ASHLEY TERRY | HOOD COUNTY NEWS

The Granbury City Council issued a proclamation declaring March 29 National Vietnam Veterans Day in the city of Granbury. More than nine million Americans served in the Armed Forces between Nov. 1, 1955 and May 15, 1975, and nearly 3 million served in the Vietnam War. Of those, more than 58,000 Americans were killed and thousands more were wounded or determined to be missing.

Child Abuse Prevention Month



ASHLEY TERRY | HOOD COUNTY NEWS

The Granbury City Council issued a proclamation declaring the month of April 2024 Child Abuse Prevention Month in the city of Granbury. Mayor Jim Jarratt urges the community to join Mission Granbury and CASA of Hood and Somervell Counties by participating in "Paint the Town Blue" during the month of April and displaying a blue ribbon or light, or sponsoring a CASA blue flag.

Sexual Assault Awareness Month



ASHLEY TERRY | HOOD COUNTY NEWS

The Granbury City Council issued a proclamation declaring the month of April 2024 Sexual Assault Awareness Month in the city of Granbury. Sexual Assault Awareness Month provides an excellent opportunity for citizens to learn more about preventing domestic violence and to show support for the organizations, such as Mission Granbury, that provide critical advocacy, services and assistance to victims..

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INVITATION FOR BIDS

The Housing Authority of the City of Granbury, Texas (hereinafter called the "PHA") will receive sealed bids for a single construction contract for the window replacement including demolition and all work specified and/or shown on the drawings until:

Bids are to be delivered or mailed to the Housing Authority:

THURSDAY, APRIL 25th, 2024, at 2:00 PM
at the HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF GRANBURY
503 N. CROCKETT
GRANBURY, TEXAS 76048

All bidders are to join in person at the Granbury Housing Authority or via teleconference.
Bid results will be announced in person and via teleconference and email.

A PRE-BID CONFERENCE will be held
Thursday, April 11th, 2024, at 2:00 PM

Digital Copies of the contract documents may be on file at plan rooms in various cities of the state and may be obtained upon request to the Architect at candicep@qarch.com, (817) 546-6309 and unless otherwise specified, will be emailed in digital format and at no cost. Procurement and cost of printed bid documents are the responsibility of the Contractor.

The Housing Authority of the City of Granbury, Texas (hereinafter called the "PHA") will receive sealed bids for a single construction contract for the GFI outlet and Smoke Alarm replacement including demolition and all work specified and/or shown on the drawings until:

Bids are to be delivered or mailed to the Housing Authority:

THURSDAY, APRIL 25th, 2024, at 3:00 PM
at the HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF GRANBURY
503 N. CROCKETT
GRANBURY, TEXAS 76048

All bidders are to join in person at the Granbury Housing Authority or via teleconference.
Bid results will be announced in person and via teleconference and email.

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HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE
CITY OF GRANBURY, TEXAS
Julia Richardson, Executive Director
(817) 573-1107

EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY

LEGAL AD

Hood County Commissioners' Court has received an application to consider a revision of the plat for:

LAKEWOOD HILLS ESTATES, SECTION ONE, LOT 2-R, BLOCK 1

The Hood County Commissioners' Court will meet to consider the application and to hear any protest to the revision on Tuesday, April 9th, 2024, at 9 a.m. in the Central Jury Room of the Ralph H. Walton Jr. Justice Center, 1200 West Pearl Street, Granbury, Texas 76048.

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Notice is hereby given that original Letters Testamentary for the Estate of Roger Dean Fellers, Deceased, were issued on March 8, 2024, in Cause No. P10306, pending in the County Court of Hood County, Texas, to: Russell Dean Fellers.

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

c/o: Robert T. Christian
Attorney at Law
1405 West Pearl Street
Granbury, Texas 76048
DATED the 11th day of March, 2024.
Robert T. Christian
Attorney for Russell Dean Fellers
State Bar No.: 00798106
1405 West Pearl Street
Granbury, Texas 76048
Telephone: (682) 936-4003
Facsimile: (682) 936-4024
E-mail:
robert@christianandchristianlaw.com

CITATION BY PUBLICATION

THE STATE OF TEXAS: To all persons interested in the Estates of MARY LINDA BURKEHOLDER, Cause No. P10282, County Court of Hood County, Texas.

Emily Akins in the above numbered and entitled estate filed an Application to Determine Heirship and declare who are the heirs and the only heirs of the said Estate of MARY LINDA BURKEHOLDER, deceased, and their respective shares and interests in this Estate.

Said application will be heard and acted on by said court at 10:00 o'clock a.m. on the first Monday next after the expiration of ten days from date of publication of this citation, at the County Courthouse in Granbury, Texas.

All persons interested in said estate are hereby cited to appear before said Honorable Court at above mentioned time and place by filing a written answer contesting such application should they desire to do so.

Given under my hand and seal of said court at office in Granbury, Texas this on this the 15th day of March 2024

KATIE LANG
Hood County Clerk
P.O. Box 339
Hood County, Texas 76048
By /s/ Jamie Barfield, Deputy

NOTICE TO ALL PERSONS HAVING CLAIMS AGAINST THE ESTATE OF CARLA M. DRIVER

On March 8, 2024, original Letters of Administration were issued to Daniel Riffe, by the County Court of Law of Hood County, Texas, acting in Cause No. P10252, styled In the Estate of Carla M. Driver, Deceased, and in which court the matter is pending. Daniel Riffe now holds those Letters of Administration, and administration of the Estate of Carla M. Driver has commenced.

All persons having claims against the Estate of Carla M. Driver are notified to present those claims to Daniel Riffe, Independent Administrator of the Estate of Carla M. Driver, Deceased, at 115 N. Graham St., Ste. 201, Stephenville, Texas 76401, within the time prescribed by law.
DATED this 11th day of March, 2024.
Respectfully submitted,
MCKETHAN LAW FIRM PLLC
115 N. Graham St., Ste. 201
Stephenville, Texas 76401
Telephone No: (254) 965-5855
Facsimile No: (254) 965-3316
By: Stephen Mckethan
STEPHEN MCKETHAN
State Bar No. 24061132
smckethan@stephenvilllawfirm.com
Attorney for Independent Administration

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

The following Public Hearings will be considered by the PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION of the City of Granbury on Monday, April 8, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. The Public Hearings will also be considered by the GRANBURY CITY COUNCIL on Tuesday, May 7, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. All Public Hearings will be held within the Council Chambers of Granbury City Hall, 116 W. Bridge Street, Granbury, Texas.

1. Z-2024-02 Zoning Change from Interim Holding [IH] to Planned Development/Light Commercial [PD/LC]; located at 2101 W US Hwy 377.
2. Z-2024-04 Amend the Planned Development/Light Commercial [PD/LC], Adopted Ordinance 23-01, to revise the development plan; located at 5284 E US Hwy 377
3. SUP-2024-01 Specific Use Permit for a Manufactured Home in Interim Holding [IH] District; located at 1020 Valley View St.

For more information, contact Community Development at 817-573-1114, Granbury City Hall, 116 West Bridge St., Granbury, TX 76048.

LEGAL AD

Hood County Commissioners' Court has received an application to consider a revision of the plat for:

MILO'S CREEK ADDITION, LOTS 1R - 3R

The Hood County Commissioners' Court will meet to consider the application and to hear any protest to the revision on Tuesday, April 9th, 2024, at 9 a.m. in the Central Jury Room of the Ralph H. Walton Jr. Justice Center, 1200 West Pearl Street, Granbury, Texas 76048.

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the
's class of 2015 raised their hooked hands w
ong Thursday evening at the Fort Worth Com
Hood County News



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

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Lots of high end/vintage home
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Fri, Mar 29, 9-2; Sat Mar 30, 9-2.
502 Mary Lou Ct

1301 N Meadows- Multi-Family Sale:
Sound system, shelf, shoe rack, lots of
misc! 1301 N Meadows. Saturday ON-
LY, March 23, 8am-5pm.

GARAGE SALE: 2310 Marseilles Court-
Harbor Lakes, Household Misc,
Clothes, Collectibles, Linens, Bedding,
Puzzles, To much to List Friday & Sat
March 22 -23rd, 9am-1pm.

Granbury 76049

Garage Sales 76049

ESTATE SALE: GRANBURY 4301
Mockingbird Dr- Granbury Tx Large
Tool sale, Heavy duty truck and au-
to mechanic tool estate sale. Ford
tractor, riding lawnmower, special-
ty tools, chains, lots of tools. Mar
14,15,16 8:00 am to 4:00pm

DECORDOVA RANCH
COMMUNITY SALE Sat, March 23
8am-4pm
Entrance is on Davis Rd.

Lakewood Hills Community multi
garage sale. Starts at 204 Vista Dr, Fri,
Mar 22, 8am-4pm; Sat, Mar 23, 8am-
2pm.

ESTATE SALE
9615 Monticello Dr- Estate/moving
sale. Large appliances, beautiful din-
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sets. And much more! Fri. 3/22 & Sat.
3/23. 8am-5pm

GARAGE SALE: GRANBURY 6826
Smoky Hill Ct- Home decor, kitchen
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23 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

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New Custom Home on 1.5± Ac, Gilmer, TX, March 28. Selling at or above \$450k. TargetAuction.com, 800-476-3939.

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Chisholm Trail 100 Club presents Wren family benevolence funds



COURTESY PHOTO

The Chisholm Trail 100 Club presented the family of fallen Hood County Sheriff's Office Corrections Officer Dusty Wren a check for \$5,000.

Submitted Item

The Chisholm Trail 100 Club presented the family of fallen Hood County Sheriff's Office Corrections Officer Dusty Wren a check for \$5,000 in benevolence funds at a ceremony Monday, March 18 at the Hood County Emergency Operations Center.

"On behalf of the Chisholm Trail 100 Club, our board of directors, members and our entire first responder family, we are so sorry for the loss of Officer Wren and are honored to be able to present this benevolence in remembrance of his service to his community," said Chisholm Trail 100 Club past President Bonnie Davis. "We want you to know that the Chisholm Trail 100 Club is so very thankful for Officer Wren's service to Hood County for the past 16 years; and we will continue to honor and remember him and his service. Please know that you and your boys are now part of the Chisholm Trail 100 Club family."

Wren, a 16-year active member of the sheriff's office, passed away Feb. 29 after a long battle with cancer. Wren is survived by his wife Diane and their five young sons — Hayden, Brett, Ethan, Zachary and Hunter. Wren held several positions while he was employed at the sheriff's office including shift sergeant and shift lieutenant and is remembered by his co-workers as a hard worker dedicated to God, his family and his job.

Several members of Hood County's leadership attended the presentation to support the Wren family. Attendees included: state Sen. Brian

Birdwell, Hood County Commissioner Jack Wilson, Brenda Massingill, Hood County Judge Ron Massingill, Mel Birdwell, Hood County Sheriff Roger Deeds, Pastor John Knox and Cresson Volunteer Fire Department Chief Ron Becker. Also representing HCSO were Eric Turbeville, Jon Berry, Shaun Kellum and Jacob Shelly.

The CT100 Club, whose service area includes Johnson, Somervell and Hood counties and the City of Mansfield, consists of just over 2,000 first responders and provides benefits for on-duty accidental death and serious injury. The Chisholm Trail 100 Club's sole mission is to "Stand in the gap for our first responders and their families in times of tragedy." The Club's benefits cover all active first responders in the club's service area.

In addition to the \$5,000 benevolence disbursement to the family of any fallen off-duty (active) first responders who serve within the club's service area, the club also provides on-duty accidental death and dismemberment benefits to each and every first responder in its service area.

Chisholm Trail 100 Club's Vice President and Disbursement Committee Chairman Michael Erinakes said, "We are proud to now provide \$80,000 in benefits to our first responders who are seriously injured or killed on-duty. We worked diligently during the fall of 2022 to increase the benefits from \$50,000 to \$80,000 per first responder. This new AD&D policy (which went into effect Jan. 1, 2023) allows the club to support the 2,000 first responders who serve our community.

If a first responder is seriously injured or killed on-duty, 'we've got your six'. We want all of our hometown heroes to know that the entire Chisholm Trail 100 Club's membership is backing each and every one of them."

In addition to these benefits, the club also provides various scholarship opportunities for the dependents of active first responders within the club's service area. The club is governed by a 24-member board of directors and is comprised of nearly 1,000 members (individuals, small businesses and corporations) who support the area's hometown heroes.

Executive Director Cara Ellison said the club is in the process of forming local Chisholm Trail 100 Club committees in both Hood and Somervell counties to help promote awareness of the club's mission, as well as to help with local fundraising efforts. "If you are interested in getting involved with a proven grass-roots organization that supports our local heroes, we would love to have you get involved," said Ellison.

The Chisholm Trail 100 Club was founded in 2009 and was modeled after the many independent 100 Clubs across the nation. The first 100 Club was founded in Detroit, Michigan in 1952. The Chisholm Trail 100 Club feels it is important to be prepared in the event of a tragedy, to "stand in the gap" before state or federal benefits come into effect, if there are any. For more information about the Chisholm Trail 100 Club, visit ct100.org or contact Executive Director Cara Ellison at 866-888-3085.



COURTESY PHOTO

The Hood County Senior Center would not be able to serve seniors without the dedication of more than 250 volunteers

Meals on Wheels Hood County seeks drivers

BY TRISH BURWELL
Executive Director, Hood County Senior Center

Since 1977, the Hood County Senior Center has been serving local seniors who need a nutritious warm meal, fellowship and a friendly smile. From its humble beginnings at the historic Shanley House, service at the center has thrived, and through its current location at 501 E. Moore Street, the Center is now serving more than 75,000 meals annually to seniors aged 60 and older.

The center would not be able to serve seniors, however, without the dedication of more than 250 volunteers, who assist with a variety of activities, but are most known for helping with the Meals on Wheels Hood County program. The program currently delivers more than 22 routes to homebound and isolated clients, which equates to roughly 6,000 meals per month. The program continues to grow and is expected to double in the next couple of years.

"Our volunteers are the lifeblood of our service programs," said Trish Burwell, executive director of the center. "Not only does this program serve meals to clients who are homebound and unable to drive, but this daily visit, Monday through Friday, may be the only wellness check some of our more fragile clients experience each day."

Burwell went on to say there have been many instances over the years in

which a delivery driver has been instrumental in saving the life of a client. "There have been several times just in the past year that emergency services needed to be called to transport a client to the hospital due to a fall or other health concern and the life of that client was saved. Had those daily contacts not been made by our volunteers, the stories might have been very different."

Volunteers are always needed for the Meals on Wheels program, whether it be for a regular route, backup delivery or during the holidays and in summer. Civic groups and businesses can serve as a team, guaranteeing alternates when a regular driver is unable to serve. Whether you have time to drive once per week, occasionally, or once per year, any service is appreciated by the center, and especially by the clients. You can make a difference in the life of our local seniors. If you are interested in volunteering, please call the center at 817-573-5533 and ask to be referred to the volunteer coordinator.

The Hood County Senior Center has been committed to providing services tailored to the unique needs of Hood County senior citizens for nearly 50 years. If you would like more information on client services for yourself or a family member, please contact the center at 817-573-5533, or you can donate directly online to the LOCAL Hood County Meals on Wheels Program at MealsonWheelsHoodCounty.org.

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Ultramarathon man

Granbury resident completes marathons in all 50 states, several countries

BY ASHLEY TERRY
Staff Writer
ashley@hcnews.com

From Alaska to New Jersey to Canada, Granbury resident Peter Beauvais has traveled thousands of miles — and most of them have been on foot.

Beauvais — a true example of an ultramarathoner — has successfully completed a marathon in all 50 states and several countries.

"I don't really take many breaks," he explained. "I'm sorta addicted to running."

The 62-year-old athlete didn't even set out to run a marathon until he reached his 40s. Although he considered himself a runner, his only long-distance experiences stemmed from P.E. classes and 5K and 10K runs.

"It wasn't really something that I had set out to do, but my bucket list item had been to run a marathon for much of my life," Beauvais explained. "I was somewhat apprehensive about it. It kind of scared me a little bit as it was much farther than I had ever run before."

Beauvais started out training for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society's Most Beautiful Bike Ride — a 100-mile ride that provides breathtaking views of Lake Tahoe and its surrounding wilderness. The annual ride also raises funds for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society to explore new paths to cures.

"I completed that 100-mile bike ride and during that time, I also met some people who were just marathoners and I talked with them about it and kind of asked them which is more difficult: a 100-mile bike ride or running a marathon," he said. "Kind of unanimously they said, 'Oh, running a marathon. It's much harder.' It was a scary thing for me to hear."

After researching and more training, Beauvais set out to run the Dallas Marathon in 2004. Unfortunately, after he pulled a calf muscle, he realized his goal would have to be put on hold.

"My goal had always been to run a marathon, but with injuries, I decided maybe I would have to pick a

different marathon," he said.

In 2005, his new goal involved completing the Marine Corps Marathon in Washington, D.C., using a new training method: American Olympian Jeff Galloway's run/walk method.

According to verywellfit.com, the run/walk method involves switching between running and walking at timed intervals. The idea is that the planned walk breaks are a form of active recovery and can be a simple and effective way to avoid injury, boost motivation for running and improve endurance.

After Beauvais successfully completed the Marine Corps Marathon, his primary goal of finishing a marathon was officially checked off his bucket list.

However, he didn't feel like retiring his running shoes just yet.

Although he had finished a marathon — and had completed the race in under four hours — Beauvais still wanted to accomplish another goal: qualify for the Boston Marathon.

"I missed qualifying for the Boston Marathon by two minutes and 40 seconds, and in getting that close, I said, 'I have to try this again,'" he said.

And it didn't take long.

Six weeks later, Beauvais participated in the Dallas White Rock Marathon and successfully qualified for the Boston Marathon — even though it wasn't his proudest race.

"I didn't follow my training plan at all," he explained. "I made all the rookie mistakes. I went out way too fast, I didn't follow my run/walk plan like I had been training, so by the time I finished that marathon, I was more tired than I had ever been in my entire life. But I qualified for the Boston Marathon."

Of course, Beauvais couldn't just qualify for the Boston Marathon and not participate, so in April 2006, he did just that — finishing the race in three hours, 11 minutes and 21 seconds.

Before long, his passion for marathon running had reached new heights. In only two years, Beauvais had completed marathons in 14 different states.

"I thought, having done this many, I should set my sights on running a marathon in all 50 states since I had no intention of stopping," he said. "I really enjoyed it and so I started looking at different times in different states trying to come up with a schedule, and that was when I was running about six to eight marathons per year."

Finally, in 2018 — after 13 years — Beauvais completed his 50th race by finishing the Atlantic City Marathon in New Jersey.

But even after accomplishing such a rare feat, he now has his sights set on a new goal: finishing marathons in other countries.

"I've already finished marathons in Canada, England and Germany," he said. "In September, I'm planning to run the Sydney Marathon (in Australia)."

Beauvais said while he keeps changing the number of countries he plans to run marathons in, he doesn't plan to shoot for all 189 countries.

"At this point, I'm looking for an interesting place to run," he said. "I'd really like to visit Israel sometime as they have the Jerusalem Marathon, which sounds interesting, and possibly Kenya, as they have the Kilimanjaro Marathon."

As for now though, Beauvais is trying to take a break from running — even if the break is only lowering his training days from five days a week to three.

He said what keeps him going is the inspiration he has gotten from watching other runners succeed, like the long-ago race in which an 84-year-old completed the Fort Worth Cowtown Marathon in a little over four hours.

"That was a defining moment for me," Beauvais said. "That's the guy I wanna be like when I'm 84 years old, still out there running a marathon."

He encourages other aspiring marathon athletes to give it a shot, even if they're not the fastest runner.

"Obviously, I'm partial to running a marathon, but I think it's a good goal for anybody because it gives a sense of achievement," he said. "It doesn't matter how fast or slow



COURTESY PHOTO

Peter Beauvais — a true example of an ultramarathoner — has successfully completed a marathon in all 50 states and several countries.

you run. Anybody who completes a marathon has accomplished a tremendous goal. I admire the people who run for six or seven hours to complete a marathon because just being out there for that long shows a tremendous amount of commitment."

Beauvais is also a member of a small running club in Granbury called the Running Bear Run Club, which meets at Hewlett Park every Saturday morning at 7:30 a.m. He encourages other Hood County residents to join the club if they're interested.

"It's a very supportive organization and group of people," he said. "It's small, but we always welcome new runners."

Beauvais added he hopes he can encourage more individuals to give marathon running a chance.

"It doesn't make any difference how fast or how slow you are," he added. "If you're putting one foot in front of the other, you're a runner."



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GISD Assistant Superintendent Jimmy Dawson announces retirement

BY ASHLEY TERRY
Staff Writer
ashley@hcnews.com

After 30 years of serving in public education — with 20 of those years at Granbury ISD — Assistant Superintendent Jimmy Dawson has officially announced his retirement effective June 30.

"I'm excited to turn the page on the next chapter while I'm still young," Dawson told the Hood County News. "I've always said I don't want to work till I'm old and then retire with not much life left in me, so being younger and having the opportunity to draw retirement and then go and serve in other capacities is what I want to do. I'm retiring from one career, but that doesn't mean I'm not gonna



COURTESY PHOTO

Granbury ISD Assistant Superintendent Jimmy Dawson

have other opportunities." Dawson graduated from Canyon High School in 1988 and later attended Abilene Christian University.

"Going into Abilene Christian, I knew I wanted to do something in the field of education of some sort," Dawson told the Hood County News. "In the summer times, I worked camps, so I was a camp counselor at a couple different camps: Camp Olympia down by Trinity, and then I did some camps at ACU — and I enjoyed the energy and fun around the camps."

He obtained his degree in kinesiology, as he was constantly active — and it's ultimately what inspired Dawson to pursue a career in education.

Following his graduation from ACU in 1992, Dawson accepted his first coaching and teaching position in Borger ISD, in the Texas panhandle.

"I was familiar with Borger, but my wife was not," Dawson said. "She was from the metroplex, so she was not familiar with the panhandle of Texas, and my story goes, thank goodness she said, 'I do' because when we married, she followed me and I dragged her into Borger, Texas."

While in Borger, Dawson said a coaching friend talked him into obtaining his master's degree and his administrator's certification.

"I really didn't know if I

wanted to do that or not because, again, I love sports, I love coaching, but he talked me into it," he said.

He earned his master's degree at West Texas A&M University and completed post-graduate work at Texas Tech University.

"Before I knew it, I was an administrator pretty quick," Dawson said. "I spent two years there as a teacher and coach and four years there as an assistant principal and teacher."

Dawson said Borger was a great small town where families really "embraced the young." To this day, he said he is still friends with a multitude of people as he and wife, Leah, had developed such deep-rooted friendships.

"I actually had to drag Leah out of Borger because we had so many people that really loved us," he said.

In 1999, Dawson received a job offer to become an elementary principal in Planview. He accepted the job and served as principal there for four years.

Once the Dawson's had their two children, Drew and Delaney, they started looking for jobs around the metroplex to move closer to Leah's family. Dawson's parents had coincidentally just purchased a home in Granbury. During a church service, they had been introduced

PLEASE SEE **DAWSON** | B6



COURTESY PHOTO

Granbury ISD Assistant Superintendent Jimmy Dawson pictured with his wife, Leah, his two children Delaney, 21, and Drew, 24, and two dogs, Molly and Pilot.

Another season, another title Indians' championship might be most unlikely yet

BY RICK MAUCH
Special to the
Hood County News

When the 2022-23 basketball season ended and the Lipan Indians were once again on top of the Class 2A basketball world, a reality sat in for coach Brent Gaylor and the Lipan faithful.

They would enter the 2023-24 season with absolutely no returning starters from a two-year run that resulted in a 77-2 record, a state championship and a runner-up finish. In fact, they had almost no returning players from the roster.

Hence, the team's motto for this season: "Something to prove." While in any other

season those words might sound strange in connection with a perennial power like Lipan, they certainly appeared to make sense heading into the 2023-24 campaign.

"Anyone who saw us last summer understands what this team accomplished," Gaylor said. "But they believed in each other and just kept getting better."

Only sophomore Darius Steed and senior Tyson Tarpley were back from a season ago. However, Steed was the Newcomer of the Year in District 11-2A in 2022-23 and Tarpley was honorable mention all-district, so there was a nucleus around which to build —

provided the newcomers to the varsity stepped up.

They did, most notably freshman Court Gaylor, who was named the MVP of the state tournament after scoring 50 points in two games, going 10-of-22 from 3-point range.

Tarpley, it turned out, was the lone senior on the Indians' roster this season. He had several key plays in the tournament, including a clutch 3-pointer in the 47-36 championship game win over Shelbyville that turned the game around.

Steed was also named to the all-tournament team.

PLEASE SEE **LIPAN** | B3



LAYTH TAYLOR | HOOD COUNTY NEWS

The Lipan Indians during a time out early in the season Dec. 12, 2023 at home.

Passion defines Rutkowski Cinch bullfighter owns Four freestyle world titles, a love for the game

Submitted Item

The climb sometimes is most of the fun when trying to reach the mountaintop. The labor of love can become grinding work once the goal is reached.

Cinch endorsee Weston Rutkowski found himself there after three straight years of dominating freestyle bullfighting in upstart Bullfighters Only. He was the organization's first world champion in 2016 and followed that with title belts in 2017 and '18. Through each phase, he battled the challenges and the challengers, all while facing aggressive fighting bulls destined to play his dangerous game.

He had his skull opened one year and suffered three facial fractures the

next, and he still laid claim to being one of the best ever.

"I told (wife) Avery that I hit a pretty hard wall a couple years ago," said Rutkowski, originally from the tiny hamlet of Haskell, but now living in Granbury with his bride of a year-and-a-half. "In 2019 and 2020, I wasn't fighting bulls good at all. I'd lost all the fun. I didn't know why I was doing it, what I was doing and what my goals were. I was just going through the motions."

"I told her, 'If I can't find what makes this fun, I'm done.'"

Despite some early struggles in 2021, he found the joy again. He found the love affair with the intensity of the competition, the battle with himself as much as the battle with the bulls.

"I went back to the basics and fundamentals, just making sure I was doing everything right that I could control," he said. "I realized I was putting so much pressure on myself to keep winning, I'd lost the fun. I realized how fun it is and how blessed I am to do something I love. That's when things switched. I don't know how long I'm going to do this, but I'm going to enjoy every minute of it."

That mindset made all the difference in the world to Rutkowski, who won his fourth BFO world title that year. His pedigree is the culmination of a lifelong passion and an unrelenting work ethic. When he's not

PLEASE SEE **CINCH** | B10



PHOTO COURTESY OF JAMES PHIFER

Cinch bullfighter Weston Rutkowski gets a bull's attention to help draw the animal away from the fallen bull rider during one of the 23 performances of the Fort Worth Stock Show and Rodeo. This was the first year the Texas-born man has worked the Fort Worth Rodeo.

Granbury's Cayden Zunk punches his way to regional victory

BY JOHN ENGLISH

Special to the Hood County News

When Cayden Zunk showed up at the One More Round boxing gym in Granbury six years ago, he had no idea how his life would change.

Now a junior at Granbury High School, Zunk defeated Gabriel Contrera and Sabastian Green to win the Fort Worth Regional Championship in early March and said winning a regional title and competing in front of such a large crowd at the Golden Gloves Tournament was a lot of fun. "It's exciting," Zunk said. "There's a lot of adrenaline. I'm used to fighting in front of smaller crowds."

Zunk, 17, is 7-3 as an amateur and his next fight is coming up in April.

Though the Granbury fighter plans to pursue a career in the sport of professional boxing, things got off to a shaky start. Zunk joined One More Round in 2018 and worked out for more than a year before he had his first fight. The day of his first scheduled boxing match was the same day as the global shutdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Zunk was devastated. It was the first time in his young life he wanted something so badly, only to have it taken away at the last moment.

But the Granbury boxer kept his chin and his grades up and continued to train.

When boxing resumed, he cut nine pounds over three-and-a-half weeks only to learn that his next opponent



COURTESY PHOTO

Now a junior at Granbury High School, Cayden Zunk defeated Gabriel Contrera and Sabastian Green to win the Fort Worth Regional Championship in early March

did not show up. The opposing club did offer Zunk a fight against a larger, taller, older and more experienced fighter if he was willing.

Zunk promptly accepted. While he lost the fight by split decision, the Granbury teen stepped out of the ring that night with a smile on his face and pride in his heart.

A young man who struggled with anger issues, and who was transitioning between junior high and high school, Zunk had been headed down the wrong path and admits that when it came to boxing, it took him a while to hit his stride.

"The hardest part for me was staying on a positive

track," Zunk said. "Just being good, and not doing bad things and messing off with friends. I used to act dumb with my friends and stuff. It definitely distracted me from boxing and not taking advantage of the time I had with it."

Enter coach Dan Trumble — a patient man with a strong sense of accountability and someone who believed in Zunk from the outset.

Trumble remembers some of those more challenging times, but always felt his young fighter showed great potential.

"He's gotten in trouble at school, and the principal

would give me a call and I go and pick him up," Trumble said. "He would just love to be leaving middle school and see me driving up and think, 'Oh boy, coach is here to pick me up,' because we would usually come to the gym and work out."

Trumble recognized the raw talent Zunk possessed and loved his willingness to learn.

"He has great coachability," Trumble said. "He listens to me. We treat each other like family. He is really like one of my own kids. He has been with me for six years, and he listens to everything I say to him. He knows it works and he listens. He

might complain a little bit, but I'm used to that with some of the kids. Overall, he does what we say, he goes out and wins and he does really good for us."

Trumble said Zunk's style is also difficult for other fighters to figure out.

"He's a controlled, aggressive fighter if that makes sense," Trumble said. "He has a very aggressive style, but I am able to keep him under control to where he uses his brain. He's not just out there going crazy. He is able to use his aggression to his advantage in the ring."

Zunk, a boxing fan himself, said he has a couple of fighters he looks up to at the

moment.

"I like Terrence Crawford, but I wouldn't say that I fight like Terrence," Zunk said. "I fight more like Tank (Gervonta Davis). I focus on not getting super tired and on trying to pace myself. Then I try to break down the body of my opponent and not just try to hit up top."

Zunk, who fights at 132 pounds, said the hardest part of training is cutting weight and he trains about two hours daily, with most of his time focused on cardio.

"I feel like people don't realize how hard we train, or how much we have to give up," Zunk said. "Going out and partying is out of the question. We can't really do that because we have to get enough sleep and get ready for our fights."

Zunk said he thinks his friends like it that he is a boxer and he invites them to his matches, hoping they leave his fights with a certain feeling.

"I'd like for people to feel hyped up and in the moment," Zunk said. "I like to make my fights very intense for other people to watch."

Trumble said professional boxing is on the horizon for his younger fighter, but in the meantime, he would like for Zunk to continue to gain experience.

"I'm just going to try to run as many fights for him before he turns 18 and kind of see where we are," Trumble said. "I'd like for him to turn pro at 18, but if we have to wait a little bit longer, that's fine. He's come a long way in the last few years. He's put in a lot of hard work."

Opera House performer receives national honor

BY DARREN CLARK

Special to the Hood County News

In the summer of 2023, Benny Brown performed as the Elvis-like Pharoah in "Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat" on the Granbury Opera House stage. In April, Brown, a theatre student at Tarleton State University, will take the stage at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. as part of the American College Theater Festival after being recognized for "Outstanding Performance by an Actor." Brown was one of only three students nationwide to be recognized for the prestigious honor.

"The Kennedy Center honor means so much to me. It's so validating and yet intimidating to be recognized at a

national level" Brown said.

Brown portrayed Elizabeth "Lizzie" Borden in Tarleton's production of "Lizzie," a rock opera that tells the story of Lizzie's life and the murder of her father and stepmother. The production is not the typical musical like "Oklahoma," "My Fair Lady" or "The Music Man." The music is loud and is highly influenced by the female heavy-metal bands of the 1980s. The show resembles a storytelling rock concert more than a golden age musical.

Tarleton's show was one of four college productions invited to the regional level of the American College Theater Festival. At the regional level, students get to showcase their work and receive professional development opportunities in all areas of theatre.

Following the regional festivals, of which there are eight, the Kennedy Center invites 125 students to the National Festival each year. The National Festival takes place each April and features workshops with theatre professionals, productions and the chance to connect with other theatre students from all over the country.

After college, Brown plans to perform at every opportunity. "I would also like to dip my toe into the theater education field," Brown said. Doing so would put Brown following in their parents' footsteps.

Brown grew up in a theatre family. Their father, H. Russ Brown is currently the theatre director at College of the Mainland near Houston. Their mother, Elizabeth Brown is a public school

theatre teacher, and their brother is a performer who has traveled worldwide pursuing his craft.

"Watching my older brother on stage was a huge inspiration for me," Brown said.

Brown hopes to perform on the Opera House stage again in the future. Their college class schedule often conflicts with rehearsals and shows in Granbury. They recently attended My Fair Lady at the Granbury Opera House and were very appreciative of their experience in Granbury. "My experience with [Granbury Theatre Company] has hands-down been my favorite company to work with. From the space to the people, to do what they do for the community is so incredibly awesome." Brown said. "I adore GTC with all my heart."



COURTESY PHOTO

Benny Brown



COURTESY PHOTO

Rebecca Franco, as Emma Borden, and Benny Brown, as Lizzie Borden, perform in "Lizzie" at Tarleton State University.

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Celebrating half a century: The GHS Class of 1974 marks its 50th reunion

BY MICKY SHEARON
Special to the Hood County News

In the Spring of 1974, the world was a vibrant tapestry of groundbreaking entertainment, pivotal political shifts and iconic pop culture moments.

It was the year when the American public was glued to their television sets, watching President Richard Nixon resign in the wake of the Watergate scandal, an event that would forever change the political landscape of the United States.

Meanwhile, 1974 was the year of the disaster movies in Hollywood, with "The Towering Inferno," "Earthquake" and "Airport 1975" all scoring big at the box office. The music scene

in 1974 was dominated by the likes of Elton John, the Eagles and an exciting new band called Queen.

It was a year of bell-bottoms, disco balls, and the Rubik's Cube — a time when the world seemed to be riding the wave of change and innovation.

Locally, Granbury was still in the infancy of the change that was on its way, but it had begun to grow by 1974, thanks to the opening of Lake Granbury just five years earlier in 1969. In many aspects, though, Granbury was still a sleepy little town between Fort Worth and Stephenville. The Granbury Opera House was almost a year away from reopening, and many of the stores on the Granbury Square were still boarded up.

However, one sure sign of

things yet to come was the brand-new Granbury High School that had just opened. Legendary Granbury educator Willie Crossland was the high school principal, and the Class of 1974 — all 85 of them — was preparing to be the very first class to graduate from the new GHS.

Fast forward 50 years, and the spirit of 1974 is set to be rekindled by the Granbury High School Class of '74 as it gears up for its 50th class reunion. This golden anniversary is not just a milestone but a celebration of lifelong friendships, memories and the journey that has brought them to this moment.

The reunion committee, comprising Gwen Coker, Bonnie Espin, Diane Snyder, Randy Frederick and Tweety Strain Jones, has been working tirelessly to ensure this

event is nothing short of spectacular. Each member brings a unique touch to the planning process, promising a reunion that will be remembered for years to come.

The festivities kick off Friday, May 31, with a cocktail mixer at Hotel Lucy, offering a chic and elegant start to the weekend. This will be an evening of laughter, reminiscing and perhaps a few tears as classmates reunite, some for the first time since graduation. The mixer is designed to be a relaxed, informal gathering where everyone can catch up, share stories, and enjoy each other's company.

On Saturday, June 1, there will be an Alumni Luncheon at Granbury Middle School starting at 11 a.m. Later that evening, the grand finale of the reunion weekend is

the Alumni Reception at Warren's Backyard, starting at 6 p.m. Set against the backdrop of a beautiful Texas sunset, this event promises to be the highlight of the celebration. Warren's Backyard, known for its warm and inviting atmosphere, will serve as the perfect setting for an evening filled with music, dancing and good food. It will be a time to celebrate the journey, the achievements and the enduring bond of the Class of '74.

As the Granbury High School Class of 1974 comes together to mark this significant milestone, the reunion is more than just a celebration of the past; it's a testament to the enduring nature of friendship and the shared experiences that bind its members. It's a re-

minder that no matter how far we travel or how much time passes, there's no place like home, and there's nothing quite like the memories we share with the people who were there from the beginning.

So, here's to the Class of '74 — may your 50th reunion be a joyous celebration of the past, present and future. Cheers to 50 years of memories and to many more yet to come!

For more information on Alumni activities for the GHS Class of '74 Reunion, contact Diane Snyder at 817-559-5596 or Gwen Coker at 817-578-5360. Be sure to watch the Hood County News for more "Where are they now" articles about the GHS Class of 74.

LIPAN

FROM PAGE B1

FIGURING IT OUT

Coach Gaylor, in a press conference following a 40-39 semifinals victory against New Home, noted something he tells his players.

"If you want to play in front of thousands, put in the work in front of nobody," he said.

He was referencing practices and working out when no one is watching, the thing many will attest creates programs such as Lipan.

"We had a couple moments here and there where we could see they were starting to figure things out," coach Gaylor said.

He said a turning point came in the Tenaha Tournament, annually among the toughest tourna-

ments around. The Indians defeated Martin's Mill, No. 1 in the state at the time, 41-38.

"For the first time all year we played four quarters at both ends of the court," he said. "I realized we're pretty good after all."

Two days earlier the Indians had lost 69-50 to Hooks. It would be their final loss of the season as they ended the season with a 21-game winning streak.

SOME CLOSE CALLS

That is not to say the Indians didn't have some close calls on their way to the championship. The closest of all came in the state semifinals.

With Lipan leading by a point and .03 seconds remaining in overtime, New Home was inbounding the

ball. At first glance it appeared as if their player made a miraculous shot as time expired, ending the Indians' season in heartbreak.

However, after officials reviewed the play it was determined that even though the backboard lit up while the ball was in the air, signifying the shot was good, the actual game clock expired before he could get the shot off.

"There's not much to say. I've been on their side a few times," coach Gaylor said, praising New Home and adding that in 10 years they will realize how special it is to reach state.

And he should know, having led the Indians to six state tournaments in his 10 seasons at the helm, including four straight trips.

The Indians had other

close playoff calls, defeating Seymour 69-63 in double overtime in the third round. They also escaped North Hopkins in the Region II semifinals, 45-42, in a game that was every bit as close as the score indicates.

Some regular-season close contests included a 32-31 win over Gordon, 33-30 and 51-45 over rival Tolar, and 37-33 and 31-25 over district runner-up Poolville.

"All season long somebody made a big play or somebody was making a shot," coach Gaylor said.

CARRYING ON THE TRADITION

This was the Indians' 15th state tournament appearance and their sixth state championship. It was also the second time they've post-

ed back-to-back titles, also doing so in 2017-18.

In addition, they won state title in both 1994 and 2005.

Combine the Indians' success with that of the Lady Indians — who reached the Region II championship game before falling to state runner-up Nocona. It ended the Lipan girls' bid for their own repeat championship.

In fact, in the 2022-23 season, the Indians and Lady Indians won state championships. It was the first time since Nazareth did so 16 years earlier that boys and girls teams from the same school brought championships home.

It was the Lady Indians' third championship — also winning in 2016 and 2021, all under coach Amber Branson. The Lipan girls have 10 state tournament

appearances of their own, eight with Branson at the helm — and she was a player on the very first Lipan girls team to reach state in 1995.

The community loves every basket, rebound, dribble and celebration, coach Gaylor said.

"The whole town bleeds blue and gold (team colors)," he said.

As for the few from town who could not make the trip to San Antonio — they were at a watch party at the Cowboy Church.

"Our community really is incredible," coach Gaylor said. "There is not a better group of fans and supporters anywhere."

With a roster that featured three juniors, three sophomores and four freshmen, optimism is already high for next season.



LAYTH TAYLOR | HOOD COUNTY NEWS
Court Gaylor with a big layup against Tolar Jan 12.



LAYTH TAYLOR | HOOD COUNTY NEWS
Tyson Tarpley driving down the court vs Tolar Feb 6.



LAYTH TAYLOR | HOOD COUNTY NEWS
Darius Steed with a lay up during the playoff game Feb. 19.



LAYTH TAYLOR | HOOD COUNTY NEWS
Alberto Andreatta with a lay up at the regional finals against Munster March 2.



LAYTH TAYLOR | HOOD COUNTY NEWS
Payton Cornelius with a 3 pointer against Shelbyville in the state final March 9.

Riders brave bucking bulls, boisterous rain at beach bonanza

BY ASHLEY TERRY
Staff Writer
ashley@hcnews.com

Rain may have been pouring, but bulls were still bucking during the 10th annual Bull Riding on the Beach event Saturday, March 16.

Bull Riding on the Beach — known locally as Bulls on the Beach — is an event produced by Chute 2 Productions and held annually as part of the Founder's Day Celebration.

"Bull Riding on the Beach is always a fun and exciting event," Kelly Clark, event coordinator and owner of Chute 2 Productions told the Hood County News. "Everybody loves coming here to the show and it's so unique being here on the beach."

The Granbury City Beach Park is one of the most popular bull riding locations for Chute 2 Productions, according to Visit Granbury. Featuring professional bull riders and mutton bustin' for kids in an arena full of sand, Bull Riding on the Beach pro-

vides spectators with a bull riding event they have never seen before.

"It's a family show that we put on together," Clark previously told the HCN. "It consists of bull riding, some comedy acts, you know, the rodeo clown, and three shows. This is one of our biggest shows that we do. We've had as many as 82 bull riders enter the event."

This year, there were 80 bull riders, with Waxahachie rider George Talavera coming in first with 88 points.

"We had a great bull riding event," Clark said. "We had a really good bunch of riders."

While he still considers the event a success, the rain did manage to put a damper on some aspects of the event — especially considering the number of attendees was significantly lower than normal.

"It rained a little bit. We had some loyal fans to say the least, but it wasn't what we're accustomed to," Clark said. "We normally have about 4,000 people and we had about 500 people, which is not what we're used to having. I mean, this thing is

pretty much a staple here. It was a great show and all that, but it would have been really, really impressive if it hadn't have rained."

Bulls on the Beach — a name that was later changed to Bull Riding on the Beach due to an unintended trademark infringement — has been a Hood County staple since it first began in 2013.

For the past 10 years (excluding 2020 because of the COVID pandemic) Clark and his family — wife, Charlene, and joining later, son Ky — have hosted this event as one of several bull riding festivals that Chute 2 Productions puts on each year.

"We do about 10 of these shows across North Texas, and people are asking me, you know, 'When's a good time to have it?' I mean it's Texas," Clark said, chuckling. "We've been here on a Saturday when it was 83 degrees and beautiful weather. We stayed the night at the Hilton, came out Sunday morning, and there was sleet on the horse's back in the arena out

there. It's Texas weather."

Although the arena eventually became "soupy," due to the rain, attendees still enjoyed a performance of "Horsepower," by young Ava Goble and the comical performance of Clark as a rodeo clown.

"I don't believe the rain dampened anybody's spirits," Clark added. "I hate the saying 'It is what it is,' but that's what happened. Everybody still worked really hard to make it a good event and a good show."

To liven up the event, Clark said there's a possibility that a recording of Granbury's Bull Riding on the Beach will be available on Cowboy Channel Plus.

"It's a really cool deal for us, for Granbury, for everyone involved," he said. "We promote the city of

Granbury, and we've been doing that for five years. We love Granbury."

Even though the rain did limit attendance of Hood County's popular event, Clark said he doesn't plan to let the rain "dampen" his mood for 2025.

He added, "We'll be rolling back

here next year wishing for blue skies and daffodils."



BULLS ON THE BEACH

PHOTOS BY LAYTH TAYLOR | HOOD COUNTY NEWS

An integral part of the Founder's Day Celebration, Bull Riding on the Beach always brings a crowd. This year the rain didn't stop the cowboys from doing what they do best, and the fans from showing up. The bulls were mean, the cowboys were tough, and the crowd was excited Saturday, March 16 at the City Beach Park.

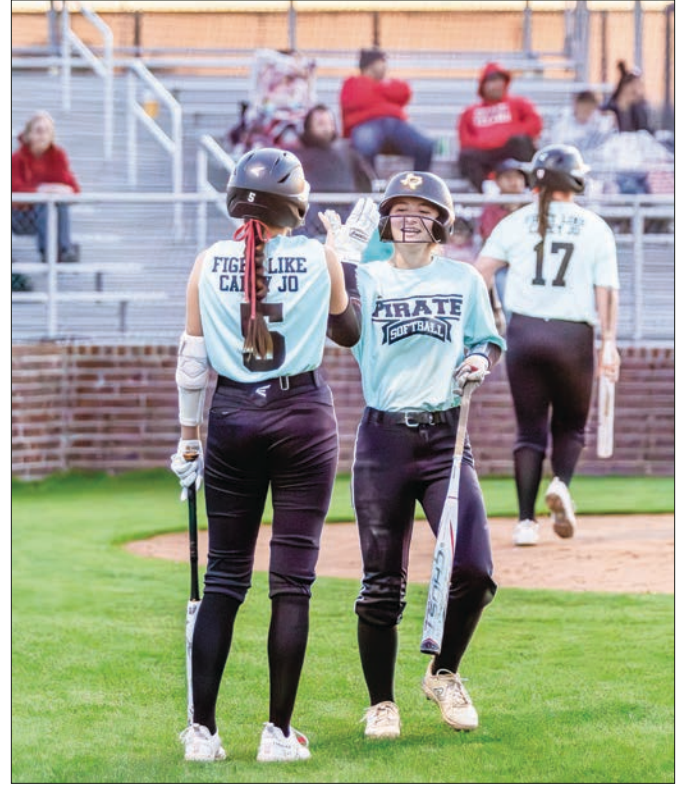


Granbury High School Sports



PHOTOS BY LAYTH TAYLOR | HOOD COUNTY NEWS

The Lady Pirates finished the season strong with a 3-1 victory over Aledo Tuesday, March 19.



PHOTOS BY LAYTH TAYLOR | HOOD COUNTY NEWS

The Granbury Pirates took on the Wichita Falls Rider Raiders March 19.

LAYTH TAYLOR | HOOD COUNTY NEWS

The Lady Pirates took on the Northwest Texans March 19.



LAYTH TAYLOR | HOOD COUNTY NEWS

The Lady Pirates took on the Northwest Texans March 19.



LAYTH TAYLOR | HOOD COUNTY NEWS

The Pirates took on Aledo Tuesday, March 19.



LAYTH TAYLOR | HOOD COUNTY NEWS

The Pirates took on Aledo Tuesday, March 19.



EMMA VANBECELAERE | HOOD COUNTY NEWS

Granbury High School men's golf team competed at Sugar Tree Golf Course for the district 5-A preview.



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Texans take down recently ranked Roadrunners squad

Tarleton State University

STEPHENVILLE - The Texans kept things rolling March 9 with no end in sight, facing one of their toughest opponents yet and still emerging victorious.

Tarleton State (9-1) remained perfect at home (5-0) with a 4-3 victory over UTSA (9-5), who was ranked as high as No. 62 just two weeks ago in the Intercollegiate Tennis Association (ITF) NCAA Division I Women's Rankings. Last week the Roadrunners were No. 70.

The Texans will now have gone at least a full calendar year without losing in Stephenville, as they next play March 19, and they last lost at home March 19, 2023. This is the second straight season Tarleton has upend-

ed UTSA, as it also won 4-3 last year in San Antonio.

The Texans remain atop the Western Athletic Conference in winning percentage (.900) and they have the fewest number of losses (one). This marked their third straight victory.

"What a match!" said head coach Elianne Douglas-Miron. "We knew this match would be tough and talked about how it would take everyone showing up for us to win. We took care of doubles and that momentum helped us start strong in singles. Noelia came out on fire and kept her energy up her whole match to get us a singles point quickly. Martha and Elsa played at an elite level today. They competed hard and I'm proud of them leading our team to victory."

Tarleton State had to

make a solid comeback in the doubles point to take it, which proved to be the difference on Saturday afternoon. All three pairs trailed midway through, but two duos emerged victorious in back-to-back fashion to clinch. UTSA's Ekua Youri and Magda Tuells first defeated Elsa Boisson and Clara Sobius 6-2 on Court 2. Then Tarleton's Noelia Lorca and Emma Persson came back to win 6-4 over Aleksandra Zlatarova and Vittoria Baccino on Court 3. The Texan duo of Martha Makantasi and Maretha Burger followed with a 6-4 win over Fatima Gutierrez and Cassie McLay to clinch the doubles point.

Tarleton and UTSA split the six singles matches, which is all the Texans needed to take the team victory.



COURTESY PHOTO

The Texans kept things rolling March 9 with no end in sight, facing one of their toughest opponents yet and still emerging victorious.

First, Makantasi made it 2-0 Texans with a 6-3 6-1 win on Court 3 over Baccino. Makantasi improved to 9-1 in singles with the victory, all between Nos. 2-3.

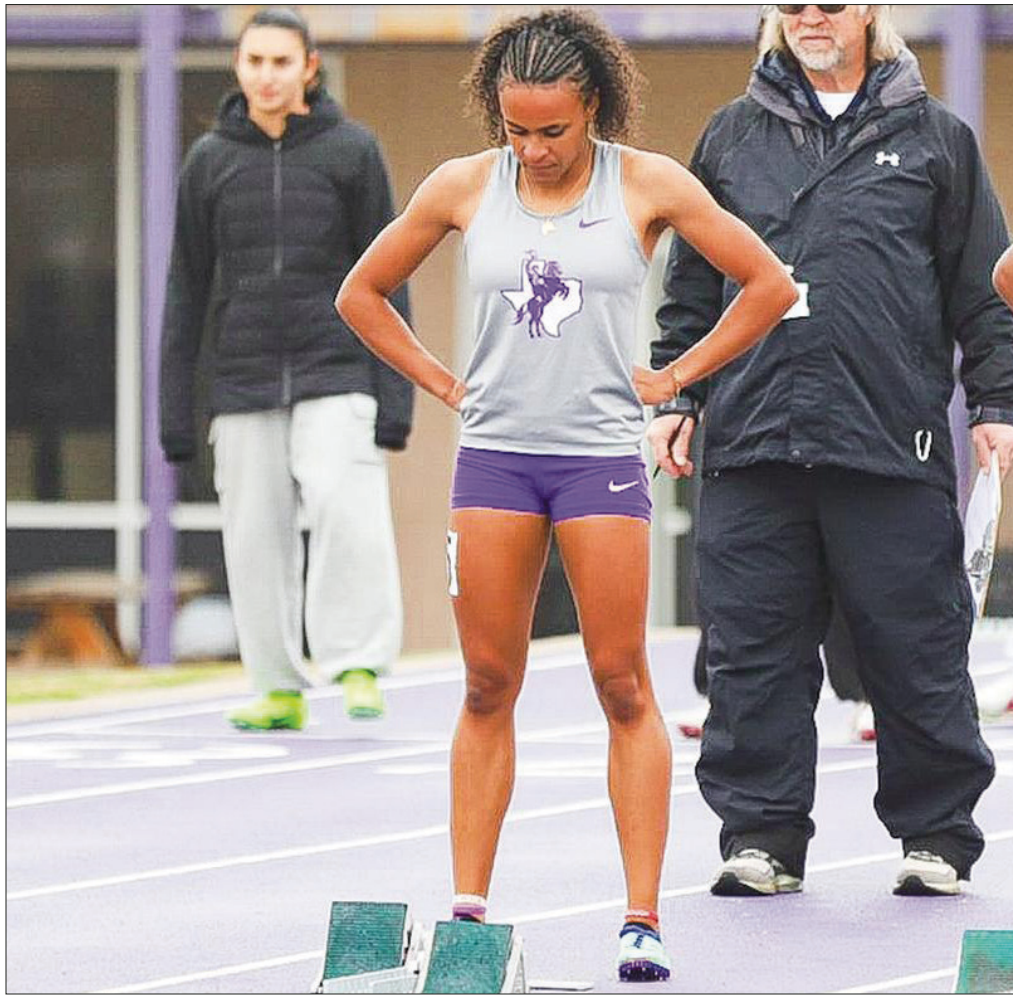
UTSA got on the board next on the top court, as Gutierrez defeated Persson 6-1 6-3.

Lorca boosted Tarleton to a 3-1 team lead as she remained perfect in singles play, now 10-0, with her 6-1 6-3 win over McLay on No. 4. UTSA's Youri beat Sobius 6-3 6-4 on Court 5 to make it a 3-2 Texan lead.

Boisson clinched the team victory for Tarleton on

Court 2, as she took down Zlatarova 6-3 6-7(5) 6-2. Boisson has won six of her last seven singles matches, improving to 7-3 on the year.

The Roadrunners took the final singles match to make it 4-3 overall, as Eva Beyebach beat Adeliya Mukhutdinova on Court 6.



COURTESY PHOTO

Tarleton State came home with a handful of medals after 11 athletes placed in the top three at the 2024 Wes Kitley Invitational.

Tarleton Track and Field has 11 top-3 finishes

Tarleton State University

ABILENE - Tarleton State came home with a handful of medals after 11 athletes placed in the top three at the 2024 Wes Kitley Invitational.

Three gold medal finishes highlighted the Texans' time in Abilene as Brya Davis took the Women's 100 meter dash, Summer Croxton took the Women's 200 meter dash and the Women's 4x100 meter relay team consisting of Anayas Copeland, Croxton, Amandine Estival and Davis took home the top prize Saturday.

TRACK

The track is where the Texans found most of their success having eight of their 11 top finishes in-between the lanes. In the Women's 100 meter dash the Purple and White made a clean sweep collecting gold, silver and bronze. Davis took home

the top prize, winning the event with a time of 11.89 seconds, followed by teammate Estival who finished with a time of 11.97 seconds earning her second place. Danielle Thomas rounded things out taking third with a time of 12.15 seconds.

In the Women's 200 meter dash the Texans took the top-two spots, earning the fourth and fifth medals for Tarleton State. Croxton crossed the finish line first with a time of 24.55 seconds, earning the second gold medal for the Purple and White. Copeland wasn't far behind, finishing second with a time of 24.78 seconds.

In the Women's 4x100 meter relay, the Texans squads took first and third, earning the third and final gold medal for the Purple and White. The team of Copeland, Croxton, Estival and Davis took home gold with a time of 46.45 seconds. Bronze

was won by the team of Anna Hudson, Danielle Thomas, Alessa King and Aaliyah Rifort-Delem after they turned in a time of 47.55 seconds.

The final athlete to earn a top-three finish was Justin Raines on the men's side as he placed second in the Men's 100 meter dash with a time of 10.44 seconds.

FIELD

The Texans took home three silver medals in field events across three different events. Kylee Willis earned the first silver in the Women's High Jump with a leap of 1.55 meters. In the Women's Hammer Throw, Bonnie Clifton earned silver after a throw of 46.41 meters. Mason Hill rounded things out with a silver medal finish in the Men's Shot Put after a throw of 16.09 meters.

Baseball defeated in Game 3 at Grand Canyon

Tarleton State University

PHOENIX, Ariz. - Tarleton State Baseball ended the weekend 1-2 against the Lopes after dropping the final pair of games to Grand Canyon.

Tarleton State (11-10, 2-4 WAC) was shut out by Grand Canyon (11-8, 5-2 WAC) in the final game of the weekend series with a 14-0 final in seven innings.

Jake Burcham (L, 0-2) got the start for the Texans giving up four runs on four hits, one walk and one strikeout in 2.1 innings on the mound.

Connor Mattison (W, 3-0) gave up no runs on four hits with four walks and five

strikeouts in 5.0 innings pitched.

The visitors fell at the mercy of the Lopes after three four-run innings.

Tarleton State compiled no runs on four hits. GCU tallied 14 runs on 17 hits with a pair of home runs and three doubles.

In the top of the first with two outs, Cris Enriquez claimed the first hit with a single through the left side. A pair of walks saw Austin Russell and Trace Morrison on to load the bases, but a fly out to centerfield left three Texans stranded.

The Lopes were first on the board with a pair of runs in the bottom of the first after a single to left field and a

two-run home run.

Grand Canyon caught fire at the plate in the third with a double and a walk to see a pair of runners on. A homer over the right field wall gave the home team a 5-0 lead. A couple of singles and an error on the visitors saw another run come in for GCU, unearned.

The home team saw another four-run inning in the bottom of the fourth with three singles, one double and three Lopes walked for a 10-run lead.

Another four-run inning in the bottom of the sixth from GCU ultimately sealed the deal. Four singles, one double and one walk tallied 14 runs for the Lopes to



COURTESY PHOTO

Tarleton State Baseball ended the weekend 1-2 against the Lopes after dropping the final pair of games to Grand Canyon.

shut out the visitors.

Tarleton State will return to Stephenville to host California Baptist for the

third weekend of conference play. Friday will see a 6 p.m. start. Game 2 will take place Saturday, March 23 at

3 p.m. and the final game of the series will take place at 12 p.m.



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HOOD OUTDOORS

Springtime crappie is now upon us

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.

North Texas water temperatures are rising slowly this year and the crappie will be making a late transition to the shallows for their spawning effort. Many crappie are still being caught in deeper water, but that is sure to change. Granbury boasts of a decent population of crappie as well as many other local lakes like Benbrook, Bridgeport and Proctor (just to name a few). Knowing their patterns will help you locate active fish.

In our area waters we have two species of crappie, namely the black and white crappie. Black crappie can get a bit larger than their white counterparts but all are great eating. I believe the world record black crappie is around six pounds and the white crappie is around five pounds. If you catch crappie in the two-pound

range you are on some big crappie. Crappie limits in Texas are 25 per person per day and they must be a minimum of 10 inches in length.

Crappie tend to relate to shade and structure and they prefer little or no current. In the spring these fish will move into real shallow water to spawn. When I say shallow, they can be in less than a foot of water. Locations in the backs of creeks with a lot of reeds can be a good choice. In the winter, these fish are best located on deep dumps and ridges.

A couple of really well-known crappie lakes include Lake Lewisville, Lake Benbrook and Lake Fork. Some of the bigger crappie catches have been reported in these bodies of water.

Probably the best-known bait for spring crappie in the shallows is a small min-

now fished under a cork. A 10-foot or longer pole is used by many to place their bait offering in the shallow structure. The best-known artificial bait for crappie is a multitude of small jigs. There are so many variations. White, green, black and chartreuse are a few of the popular colors. You'll just have to try a few different colors to see what they will bite. Use darker colors in stained water.

Springtime crappie can be spooked in the shallows. I would be careful approaching the area you are going to fish and let your bait sit for a while especially if you think you may have spooked some fish. Crappie bites can be hard to detect at times depending on the size of the fish. It is recommended that you use a small float which will sense even the smallest of movement. I have had days fishing for crappie that the only way that I could sense a bite was when the float would stop momentarily moving in the wind. The point here is to be alert for anything that

looks different.

As most of our area lakes are full from the recent rains, spawning locations in the shallows will be larger in area and you may need to work around the areas. Look for shallow flats with some structure (weeds, stickups etc.) and you will likely find these tasty devils. Shaded areas under docks that still have some water, of course, may be great choice as well.

HOOD COUNTY FISHING REPORT

Water temperatures are see-sawing around the low to middle 60s. Recent rains have stained the backs of some creeks. Lake Granbury has been releasing water and there are constant flows through the lake. Watch for floating debris, especially on the upper ends. The best fishing reports are for catfish on the upper ends on cut bait. Some really large blue and yellow cats to 30-pounds-plus are possible. Striped bass fishing is slow to 10 pounds fished from Blue Water Shores to DeCordova. Sand bass are fair on roadrunners and



COURTESY PHOTO

North Texas water temperatures are rising slowly this year and the crappie will be making a late transition to the shallows for their spawning effort.

small minnows fished on the upper ends. Crappie catches are still best on submerged structure, however many are being caught in the river near Tin Top. Largemouth bass are slow to fair to seven pounds on spinner baits and shallow diving crankbaits near main lake points and creek entrances.

Comanche Creek (formerly

Squaw Creek) black bass action continues to be good on soft plastics (worms and centipedes) worked near spawning beds. Power plant lake warmer water is also producing limits of eater-sized channel catfish on prepared baits. I have not received any Tilapia reports lately, however they are abundant in this power plant lake.

BOOK REVIEW

George Washington was the father of our country

BY TERRI SCHLICHENMEYER

Bill Gates co-established Microsoft. Thomas Edison improved the light bulb. Stephen King created "Cujo." Walt Whitman wrote poetry, Lyndon Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act and Bass Reeves brought bandits to justice. Notice one thing there? Those are all men, so why not flip the coin? Read these great books about women in American history...

A generation of us grew up with television doctors who were all men, but in "The Doctor Was a Woman" by Chris Enss (Two Dot, \$26.95), you'll see how Hollywood missed the mark and that women wore white coats, too. Read about a woman physician who worked for the railroad, one who left her home in South Dakota to tend to farmers and their families on the

prairie, a ground-breaking plastic surgeon, a female dentist in the late 1800s, and several woman doctors who worked during times of pandemic. You'll love these hidden stories that aren't hidden anymore.

Study any "woman's" magazine from the 1950s, and you'll see plenty of ads targeted expressly to homemakers. In "Housewife: Why Women Still Do It All and What to Do Instead" (Legacy Lit, \$30.00), author Lisa Selin Davis looks at why "homemaking" is still mostly women's work today, even if the woman of the house is the breadwinner in a two-adult household. This is a wide and widely interesting look that, most importantly, doesn't denigrate homemakers. Instead, this book leaves women - and men - with ways to find their own comfortable (and equal) choices.

No women's history book

would be complete without considering our first ladies, and in "American Woman: The Transformation of the Modern First Lady, from Hillary Clinton to Jill Biden" (Crown, \$30.00), author Katie Rogers writes about how our most modern first ladies have molded the role from one of quiet helpmate to one of activism and personal platforms. Though its focus is more contemporary, the book is overall a sweeping look at presidential wives: Rogers reaches back into history for comparison and reality-check, making this a book that will delight historians and political animals alike.

And finally, if you like a little salt with your history, look for "Unbecoming a Lady" by Therese Oneill (Simon Element, \$24.99). Despite what you might think, yesterday's women didn't always behave. Many of them were not quiet or

demure or shy at all, and their place was definitely not always in the home. In this book, you'll meet some of history's loudest, most audacious women, the bravest, and the ones who saw something they didn't like and fixed it: inventor Lilian Gilbreth, Civil War doctor Mary Edwards Walker, wrongly hospitalized Elizabeth Packard, visionary Ellen G. White, Alaska millionaire Reindeer Mary Antisarlook, sideshow "fat lady" Celesta Geyer, miser Hetty Green, and others who did what they needed, or simply wanted to do!

If these books aren't enough - because you know you'll want more - check with your favorite librarian or bookseller. They've got all kinds of books to help you see that history is just as often HERstory.



COURTESY PHOTO BY TERRI SCHLICHENMEYER

Women's History Books for Adults. c.2024, various publishers, \$24.99 - \$30.00, various page counts

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SUDOKU
Solution for the puzzle on March 16 (Puzzle 74).
Puzzle by websudoku.com

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

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

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SAME PAPER

AT YOUR FINGERTIPS

I'VE BEEN THINKING

'Easter's victory'



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.

There are many customs in many lands that have developed over the years to celebrate the Spring Solstice. Different groups of people refer to the celebration by many names. But the underlying theme is the same throughout the world when various cultures celebrate Easter. The theme is "rebirth and rejuvenation."

Christians around the world celebrate Easter on the first Sunday after the first full moon following the first day of Spring in the Northern Hemisphere. During this sacred religious holiday, Christians will take time to reflect upon the meaning of Easter; it is a time to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ, God's only begotten Son.

Many visual symbols are associated with Easter. An empty cross reminds Christians

that the resurrected and living Christ is their eternal hope. The display of white Easter lilies is a reminder of Christ's life of purity. Candles represent him as being the "Light of the World." And the lamb? This quiet and lowly animal, known for its obedience to the shepherd, again represents Christ's life as he obediently followed his Father's will.

During the difficult days of Holy Week, Christ was ordered to stand trial before Pontius Pilate (the man who saw no wrong in Jesus' life, yet permitted his crucifixion because of peer pressure). He was scourged (a debacle that occurred on a knee-high post while the victim was beaten with strands of leather into which were attached bits of stone and ground pottery). Such an inhumane experience often caused the victim to lose his mental faculties as he

endured the beating's agony.

This was followed by a mandatory carrying of his own heavy cross through the streets of Jerusalem as he struggled toward Calvary. As he approached the place of Calvary's hill, other experiences awaited him. He was stripped of his clothing. His hands and feet were nailed to the cross. He was given vinegar to drink. He had a sword thrust into his side. He was mocked and ridiculed. And he endured a death that was reserved for the vilest of criminals.

Being crucified was privately torturous and publicly humiliating. The Roman officials in charge of the crucifixion were experts in their field, and they prolonged the victim's suffering as long as humanly possible. Crucifixion was an excruciating death caused primarily by suffocation rather than blood loss (as many people believe).

Written records indicate that victims could live as long as nine days on a cross! The pain, the thirst, heat's torment, hunger, the sense of separation, and the desire simply to die and end the suffering — each had



COURTESY PHOTO

During this sacred religious holiday, Christians will take time to reflect upon the meaning of Easter; it is a time to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ, God's only begotten Son.

to be intense beyond our imagination.

In his work titled "Easter Tidings," J. Harold Gwynne reminds us of the blessings of Easter when he writes the following:

Easter is a Miracle — the miracle of newness of life.

Easter is a Glory — the glory of resurrection power.

Easter is a Triumph — the triumph of love over hate.

Easter is a Promise — the promise of unending fellowship.

Easter is a Victory — the victory of life and death.

Easter is a Hope — the hope of eternal life.

As pointed out in the poem titled "One Solitary Life (author unknown), this man of Galilee had his beginnings in the most humble of circumstances, never owned a

business or real estate, never wrote a best-selling publication, never traveled far from home, and never told people what they wanted to hear. He spoke the truth — not fantasy. Yet his life changed the course of history and an eternal destination for millions of people around the world. One life ... yet consider what it accomplished.

HCN

Junior

WORLD MATH DAY

March 23, 2024

COLOR Time

Did You Know?

MATH IS THE BASIS OF MANY DIFFERENT SUBJECTS, INCLUDING MUSIC AND, IN SOME INSTANCES, SCIENCE.

Math

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

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

Word Bank

1. algebra	2. coordinate	3. percentage	4. division
5. fractions	6. addition	7. multiply	8. geometry
9. equations	10. subtraction		

World Math Day, celebrated on March 23rd – a day where kids around the world embark on a mathematical journey filled with excitement, challenges, and fun! This global event transforms the world of numbers into a playground of learning and discovery.

World Math Day invites kids to explore the magic of mathematics through online competitions, games, and interactive challenges. It's like a virtual math festival where children from different countries join forces to celebrate the wonders of numbers. Whether you're a math whiz or just starting your mathematical adventure, World Math Day welcomes everyone to the party!

One of the coolest features of this day is the friendly competition. Kids can engage in math battles, solving problems and earning points that contribute to a global leaderboard. It's not just about finding the right answers; it's about embracing the joy of problem-solving and celebrating the achievements along the way.

Teachers play a crucial role in making World Math Day a fantastic experience for students. They incorporate math challenges into their lesson plans, turning classrooms into vibrant hubs of mathematical exploration. Parents also join the celebration by encouraging their kids to participate in the online events, cheering them on as they tackle mathematical puzzles and games.

World Math Day goes beyond textbooks and classrooms; it's about showing kids that math is a dynamic and exciting part of our daily lives. From calculating scores in games to measuring ingredients in recipes, math is everywhere!

So, on March 23rd, let's come together as a global community of young mathematicians. It's a day to celebrate the beauty of numbers, the thrill of solving puzzles, and the joy of learning. Whether you're exploring basic addition or tackling complex equations, World Math Day is an opportunity to showcase your math skills and, most importantly, have a blast doing it!

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SAME PAPER

AT YOUR FINGERTIPS

Barefootin'

BY EDEN DUNCAN

GILBREATH

Special to the Hood County News

"To the pond!" is the rally cry as children excitedly scamper to a new adventure. Young explorers of every age dive into the banks of the pond while their parents bring up the rear, hauling their children's equipment.

Group leader Trenna Kelley shouts for help measuring the body of water as her son, Beckett, age 12, and his friend, Charlotte Sorrells, age 13, bravely cross the pond on foot with measuring tape held overhead.

First the estimates are given — or perhaps they are mere guesses — as voices shout out various numbers. When the official measurement is declared there are celebrations among those who guessed closest.

Next up is the collection of specimens. Laughter and squeals echo from each side of the pond as living creatures are discovered and studied.

These young explorers have gathered as members of Barefoot University. Similar scenes play out throughout the country weekly. Barefoot University is a national program utilized by some in the home school community. Currently there are groups

in 16 states and individual memberships are available to homeschool families without a local Barefoot community.

The Barefoot program was started in 2019 by two moms who were looking for a community to walk alongside them — a community that could support their children's love of the outdoors while also providing support navigating homeschooling, parenthood and life.

Barefoot University's mission is to connect families to nature and each other. Its forest schools, according to its website, "aim to nourish the holistic health and education of children. Through child-led learning, STEM-based nature activities, and community service projects, (it) intend(s) to create communities and equip families to observe and explore the natural world."

"Each year there is a different theme or Rhythm: Earth, Fire, Water, Sky and Barefoot. This year was Rhythm Water and next year is Rhythm Barefoot. Each one has a different focus. Rhythm Water focused on basic water science, water eco systems, and aquatic life. We also did a lot of watercolor nature journaling. Rhythm Barefoot will focus on animal homes, outdoor tools and cultures as well as physics. Every week is some-



Asher Tracy speeds around the bend at a recent Barefoot University event.

EDEN DUNCAN GILBREATH | HOOD COUNTY NEWS

thing different," said Kelley.

Kelley elaborates, "Each group is run by two trained volunteers. Barefoot provides them with the curriculum and they in turn lead families in the lessons or activities each week. Each family, though, teaches and leads their own children. It is a family-based program and not a drop off school. We meet once a week for a few

hours, no matter the weather, 36 weeks out of the year from August through May."

Many of the supplies used by the group are provided in the sign-up fee. This year some of the supplies included watercolor journals, pencils, aquariums, nets, prisms, a fish to dissect and more. Some supplies are for the families to keep, and some are for group use. Participants say the cost is minimal and good value for supplies received and activities planned.

Several parents mentioned the community that happens alongside the learning. "Barefoot University is a great example of learning about the world through experiences. It brings together interesting topics with hands-on learning and lots of outdoor play. It often sparks interest and joy in learning, and helps our curriculum come alive for our son. I also love how B.U. has helped us build a great community. We have made lasting friendships and often get together outside of 'class,' especially over the summer," explained parent Tiffany McGuffin.

Parents love the learning opportunities and community Barefoot University builds, and also the fun it provides. Certainly, fun is the foremost interest of the children.

"I like being able to go and hang out with my friends while learning about nature and getting to explore and play in the outdoors with my friends," shares Beckett. Beckett's favorite memory was when the group went to Camp El Tesoro on a field trip. They were given an opportunity to build their own fires to cook over. He says the best part of that day was the One-Match Fire Starting Competition.

Fun is the name of the game according to Charlotte,

as well, and she loves the way it stirs creativity. "I love it because it gets me outside having fun and inspires my creativity in the way we build things and play imaginative games."

"My family decided to homeschool partially in order to give our children the opportunity to have a richer, more natural education. Barefoot helps me open up the natural world and teach my children concepts and appreciation for God's beautiful design. It helps us slow down and notice, wonder, explore, investigate and question," offered Charlotte's mother, Brigit Sorrells.

Sorrells continued, "We also get to connect with friends who value the world in a similar way, but who also bring their own expertise, observations and insights."

"Catching tadpoles and fairy shrimp, climbing trees, going to the pond, digging burrows and making friends," topped the charts for Ellie Nelson, age 8. Ellie gushes, "I changed my mind . . . I love everything! It's the best day of the week! When are we going again?"

Ellie's sister Hazel, age 6, pipes in, "I love all the pond monsters, and my friends." Ellie and Hazel are joined by little brother Henry, age 4. "Children learn best when they are engaged," explains Brezie Nelson, mother of Ellie, Hazel and Henry. "Sit a kid outside and let them learn, and they will show you the world around them. Barefoot gives us the opportunity every week to meet with friends, spend time outdoors and teach each other. The sheer excitement from seeing a live fairy shrimp or every stage in a frog's life cycle, that they captured themselves, keeps them engaged and asking for more."

"For three weeks now, we

have discussed the life cycle of frogs, their place in the ecosystem, how pollution affects their development, how invasive species can help or harm them, and the importance of one tiny being in a community. Ellie told me yesterday that something small can make a big difference in the world, and that one tiny frog can save her from thousands of mosquito bites. All from playing in the pond," Nelson said.

Nelson offers a quote from Dr. Karyn Purvis. "Scientists have discovered that it takes approximately 400 repetitions to create a new synapse in the brain, unless it is done with play, in which case it only takes 10 to 20 repetitions."

Nelson expounds on the thought: "Now take that play outdoors . . . and it becomes a core memory. My husband also comes with us most weeks. Now we're making these core memories and learning as a family. This is what homeschool is about to us, and Barefoot helps with that."

Community, learning and fun are echoed by each parent and leader. Key developmental areas are strengthened through Barefoot. "The program is child led and encourages exploration, make-believe and risk taking, all of which are developmentally necessary for kids to grow and develop in self-awareness and confidence," Kelley shares, adding that these are excellent ways to support home school families.

"It's quite the community we have through our Barefoot group, I wouldn't trade it," exclaims Sorrells.

Registration for Barefoot University is through BarefootUniversity.org. Enrollment for fall beings April 15.



EDEN DUNCAN GILBREATH | HOOD COUNTY NEWS

"Barefooters" gather to show off their footwear or lack of same at Barefoot University.

CINCH

FROM PAGE B1

fighting bulls, he's training to fight bulls. When he's not doing that, he joins other BFO shareholders in helping with aspects of the business it takes to produce the thrilling, action-packed shows for which the organization is known.

It's not just freestyle; the competition that pits man against beast in an all-out gladiator-type event. Points are awarded on a 100-point scale with half the score based on how aggressive and agile the bulls are and their willingness to stay in the fight and the other half based on how close bullfighters get while maneuvering around or over the animals while staying millimeters from harm's way.

No, Rutkowski also stays busy helping his wife and her business ventures, the primary one being the release of Axa Cosmetics, a line she developed. Avery Greene Rutkowski is also marketing director for a Million, an equine-sports showcase,

as well as a makeup artist and model. When she needs him, her husband is always there.

"I met her at the Hooley Party during the 2015 (National Finals Rodeo)," Weston Rutkowski said. "She college rodeoed, and we very much have the same interests and love the same way of life. She's everything I'd ever wanted. I chased her for years, and she finally just gave in. Her dream and her passion was to own a cosmetics line. She's been doing wedding makeup for 10 years. She does contract work for the BFO as their production manager, where she calls the show and writes the show."

They work well together, even when he's working a rodeo as a protection bullfighter. Weston Rutkowski has expanded that portion of his business. He's spending this time of year working the 15-day Rodeo Austin in the state's capital city. Two months ago, he was at Dickies Arena during the 23 performances of the Fort Worth Stock Show and Rodeo.

"This was my first year getting to work that rodeo after Evan (Allard) retired,"

he said. "I got the call to fill in his spot. When you go from 15 performances compared to 23, it feels like you work a whole other rodeo. It was cool to get to work that many performances in a row. It was a battle and a lot of learning. You learn what your body can take and what you can push through."

While it's still bullfighting, working in tandem with other men to protect cowboys during bull riding is very different from the high-adrenaline phenomenon that is freestyle bullfighting.

"The cool thing about protection is it takes all the pressure off me to compete for money," Rutkowski said. "I've got a paycheck coming. Now, I'm working with my buddies, working with a team. The movements I make reflect on what moves my partners make. We're doing a job together. How can we control this wreck and all step away cleanly? If someone's supposed to be hit, it's going to be me. How can I excel and keep a wreck from happening, and how can I get in and also get out?"

He doesn't work two of the

biggest rodeos in his home state by being a freestyle world champion; he gets those jobs because the bull riders and other bullfighters respect the work he does in protection. For Rutkowski, though, the work goes hand-in-hand.

"Bullfighting is a crossover between a Western sport and an action sport, and you combine the two," he said. "I know walking into the office every day, there's a collision that's going to happen. My job is to be as close as possible as long as possible and not get caught in freestyle. In protection, my job is to make sure the bull rider steps away safe and my partners step away safe."

His resume reflects the accomplishments that many bullfighters would love, but his work is not complete. By the time he takes off his cleats for the last time, he'd like to add another BFO world title, maybe two, all while being in the middle of the organization's development.

"Freestyle is now at the biggest level it's ever been," Rutkowski said. "The cool thing about the BFO is we've

never regressed. The hardest year we faced was 2020, but that just allowed us to sit back and look at what we did good, what we did wrong and adjust. It's just gotten better. This year we've got three brand new events with over \$200,000 in prize money, the Ranch Fuel Bull Battles. We've never fought for money like that."

He'll be in the mix, all while building his own game for the next phases of his life.

"Bullfighting is such a mental battle that you have to be able to face everything your mind's telling you that you don't want to do," he said. "It's a competition against myself, going against an animal that has a mind of its own. I have to conquer my mind before I can conquer anything. I'm in constant pursuit of perfection."

In May, Rutkowski will turn 35. His lifestyle has left him beaten, battered and bruised. He's run toward rampaging bulls with 16 staples in his head and with a face that burned because of the multiple fractures he'd suffered just days before.

He's pushed through the

grind that is his business, and he's continued to find a love affair that envelops everything that's right in this world. He shares that love with a beautiful redhead, who not only works beside him but with him, and they carry their passions together. He'd love to keep fighting bulls into his 40s, maybe longer. His body will tell him when it's time to put the cleats on a shelf.

"Fighting bulls for this long and just the physical grind of what it takes to stay in shape and compete at a high level, I love being in the gym," Rutkowski said. "I have never pursued it, because I don't want to take away from what it takes for me to compete. I'd love to push the personal training. I want to work on buying a couple of properties, building them up and renting them out."

"I'm very much a guy who wants to pursue a lot of things, just like my wife. We just want to work for ourselves."



COURTESY PHOTO

Bruce Glatzel was born in New York March 18, 1924, and celebrated his 100th birthday at Warren's Backyard on Saturday March 16.

World War II veteran celebrates 100th birthday



BY ASHLEY TERRY
Staff Writer
ashley@hcnews.com

Granbury resident and World War II veteran Bruce Glatzel celebrated his 100th birthday at Warren's Backyard Saturday, March 16, with the party of the century

literally.

Featuring a taco bar, fruit, cupcakes and a "Happy Birthday" rendition from Glatzel's great-grandson Toby Hutchison, the venue was filled with loving family and friends who gathered to celebrate his momentous occasion.

Glatzel was born in New York March 18, 1924. Months before his birth, his parents migrated to the U.S. from Germany;

Glatzel notes he was "almost a European citizen."

When he was 18, he enlisted in the Army Air Corps (Air Force) in 1942. He served as a Texan AT6 fighter plane pilot instructor, training pilots state-side during the war.

After four years in the Army Air Corps, Glatzel retired from the military and started working for New Jersey Power & Light. Later, he worked as an

accountant for Texas Electric Service Co/ONCOR before retiring in 1989.

When asked how it feels to be 100, Glatzel simply responded with, "tiring."

Glatzel was previously an avid golfer and bowler. He started golfing in 1950 and just only retired from his Granbury senior bowling league last year.

While he has since given up these two activities, he said

his main goal now is "trying to keep up with the kids."

Glatzel has four daughters: Kathy, Maryanne, Margie, and Marylynn — two of whom are identical twins. He also has 10 grandchildren, three great-grandchildren, and 10 great-great-grandchildren.

The secret to longevity, Glatzel said, is to "just stay happy" and have "no controversies."

Lake Granbury Kiwanis to host Bible Trivia Contest March 30

BY ASHLEY TERRY
Staff Writer
ashley@hcnews.com

This Easter, Hood County residents have an opportunity to compete for more than just candy-filled eggs, as they prepare to put their Bible knowledge to the test.

Lake Granbury Kiwanis Club is hosting a Bible Trivia Contest at 1:30 p.m. Saturday, March 30, at Granbury Live, 110 N. Crockett St. — just in time for Easter.

The event will serve as a fundraiser for Kiwanis, where one contestant from various local churches will compete to see who knows the most Bible trivia.

"We had a board meeting a few months ago and had more projects we wanted to fund in our yearly budget than we had expected revenue, so I tried to think of something I could do in the spring that wouldn't be too close to our other events," Matthew Mills, event organizer, told the Hood County

News. "It's something I enjoyed putting together."

The first round will consist of a multiple-choice written test. The top finishers will then be on stage with buzzers for a question-and-answer session.

The final round will be in the style of Jeopardy, where contestants will wager their points and write down an answer to a final question.

Mills said the questions will be from both the Old and New Testaments and explained that the questions

will be phrased in a way in which the translation from one testament to the other will not hinder the contestants from getting an answer correct.

Currently, there are 15 contestants from local churches, but Mills said since Kiwanis is not printing playbills for the event, new entrants can sign up "almost up to the day of the event."

"We're hoping to get as many contestants as possible, but only one per church," he said. "If someone

wants to participate, they can contact Kiwanis through Facebook or send me an e-mail."

The winner from the Bible Trivia Contest will receive \$400 for his/her church. Additionally, the church that brings the most people to the event will also receive \$400.

"If we have a nice turnout, we'll make this an annual event," Mills said. "I'm excited to see multiple denominations coming together on Easter weekend to raise

money for a good cause."

Tickets are \$20 each and can be purchased by going online to thenewgranburylive.com and searching "Bible Trivia."

All proceeds from the Bible Trivia Contest will benefit the charitable work of the Lake Granbury Kiwanis Club.

For more information, message the Lake Granbury Kiwanis Club on Facebook, or email Mills at millsie77@yahoo.com.

DeCordova, Pecan Plantation set to compete in pickleball battle

BY ASHLEY TERRY
Staff Writer
ashley@hcnews.com

In a battle like never before, two local communities will go head-to-head in a historic duel that will leave attendees wanting more.

For the first time ever, residents of Pecan Plantation and DeCordova will compete in a pickleball tournament beginning at 8 a.m. Saturday, April 6, in the Pecan Activity Center, 9145 Plantation Drive.

Pickleball is a fast-paced sport that combines the qualities of tennis, badminton and ping pong. In 2023, the Sports and Fitness Industry Association (SFIA) deemed it the fastest-growing sport in America for the third consecutive year. They estimate that about 36.5 million people have played the game at least once in the year.

"It's not an old person sport — it's a sport that older people can play," Tracy Davis, event organizer and Pecan

Plantation board member said. "The way the rules go, they can even up the odds a little bit. You don't have to hit the ball hard."

The Battle on the Brazos — also known as the Pecan/DeCordova Pickleball Championship Cup — will feature a series of 17 riveting matches, pitting the formidable players of Pecan Plantation against the spirited team of DeCordova.

"We just thought it would be a cool, friendly competition where pickleball players from DeCordova meet pickleball players from Pecan Plantation and maybe we go to tournaments together," Davis said.

Inspired by the camaraderie and competitive edge of the Ryder Cup (the biennial men's golf Cup), the Battle on the Brazos is set to become a celebrated tradition in the pickleball community.

"(Pickleball) is the most addictive thing I've ever done in my life, and I think that's why

it's so catchy," Davis said. "At first it sounds weird, but once they start playing, it's highly addictive because you see yourself getting better at it. It's not hard to play, there's only a few simple rules, but yet it's challenging."

According to Davis, the Battle on the Brazos will consist of 34 participants from each community who will participate in one match. Each match is worth one point and will consist of three games total. The first community to reach nine points will be declared the winner.

"The losing GM (general manager) of either DeCordova or Pecan Plantation will have to hand the winning GM this trophy, and it's gonna be passed down every year," Davis said. "We're just gonna make a real big deal out of it, and you know, hopefully we'll get more players attracted to this sport."

As the teams prepare for the April 6 showdown, excitement continues to build with-

in both communities. Both teams have been honing their skills and strategies, knowing that every match is crucial to securing the championship title.

"I didn't realize it would actually draw the excitement that it has," Davis said. "But anything, win or lose, I guarantee there will be that camaraderie, like when the other team can make a good shot and you say, 'Great shot, man,' that doesn't happen in football, baseball, tennis, hockey, nothing else. The camaraderie is just unmatched."

The competition will also consist of age categories: under 60, over 60 and over 70, and with three categories of men's, women's and mixed.

"There will be people who don't play who will come out and be cheering people on," Davis said. "Hopefully, they'll be loud and have fun. We're just looking to have a good time and to make this an annual event."

The Battle on the Brazos isn't just a test of individual talent; it's a testament to the power of teamwork and the collective passion for pickleball. Who will emerge victori-

ous in this historic face-off? Head to Pecan Plantation April 6 to witness the birth of a new tradition and cheer on your favorite team as they vie for the championship title.



COURTESY PHOTO

"It's not an old person sport — it's a sport that older people can play"



Granbury opera House prodly presents "Liverpool Legends: A Tribute to The Beatles"

COURTESY PHOTO

Liverpool Legends return to the Granbury Opera House

BY MICKY SHEARON
Special to Hood County News

Set off on your own Magical Mystery Tour in Granbury next weekend! Step into a world of timeless music and nostalgia as the Granbury Opera House proudly presents "Liverpool Legends: A Tribute to The Beatles" for an exclusive engagement March 29-30.

This unique one-of-a-kind Beatles show is narrated by George Harrison's sister and has received many awards, including a Grammy nomination and the 2023 Travelers' Choice Award, putting it in the top 10% of attractions worldwide.

Experience the magic of The Beatles like never before as the Liverpool Legends take you on a mesmerizing journey through the band's legendary career, from its earliest hits to its members' solo ventures.

With an unwavering commitment to authenticity, the group brings each song to life with meticulous detail, employing vintage instruments, stunning costume changes and breathtaking special effects. This is not just a concert; it's "The Complete Beatles Experience," offering a unique opportunity to witness the rebirth of the most influential band in music

history.

The magic unfolds at the historic Granbury Opera House with performances scheduled for 7:30 p.m. Friday, March 29, and two shows Saturday, March 30, at 2 p.m. and again at 7:30 p.m. "It's become a great tradition for Liverpool Legends to come to Granbury," said Marty Scott, guitarist and band manager for Liverpool Legends. "It's one of our favorite stops on our tours!"

Whether you're a lifelong fan or discovering the magic of The Beatles for the first time, these performances are an unforgettable journey through the legacy of four lads who changed the

world of music forever.

Tickets are your passport to reliving the wonder of The Beatles, with floor seating available at \$50 and balcony seating at \$45, plus online and box office processing fees. Purchase your tickets online at www.granburytheatrecompany.org or contact the Granbury Theatre Company box office at 817-579-0952.

Don't miss this chance to be part of history, as Liverpool Legends brings the spirit and the songs of The Beatles back to life in an evening of unforgettable entertainment.

Granbury entrepreneur shares bankrupt-to-millionaire success story

BY ASHLEY TERRY
Staff Writer
ashley@hcnews.com

Ten years ago, Heidi Easley and her husband, Bobby, were left completely bankrupt and homeless following an unexpected job loss.

But today, Easley is a successful, millionaire entrepreneur who uses her own rags-to-riches story to encourage others to grab life by the horns and shape their perfect future.

Easley was in her 20s when her world came crashing down. As a young teacher making \$22,000 a year and a new resident of Florida, she wasn't sure how she and her husband could make ends meet.

But with an artistic talent and a burst of inspiration, Easley began painting wooden surfboards to cope with the added stress.

"I had 850 students a week come through my classroom, and every time those kids saw those surfboards, they were like, 'Mrs. Easley, paint my name on a surfboard.' and I'm like, 'No, I'm just doing this on my lunch break,'" Easley said. "But they just kept asking and finally, after about the 150th kid asked, I was like, 'Oh, maybe this is something I could sell.'"

In two months, one surfboard quickly turned into 1,000, as Easley was left speechless that her new hob-

by had turned into a small business.

"It just changed the whole direction of my life," she said.

The Easleys eventually moved back to Texas to live closer to family and ended up choosing Granbury as their home.

Since the surfboard business isn't exactly booming in North Texas, Easley started hosting paint parties, where individuals get together, drink wine and learn how to paint a specific image.

"One day my mother-in-law was like, 'What if people don't come to your paint parties?' and I was just like, baffled. I was like, 'Why? Why would they not?' I didn't even think of that being a possibility," she said. "But I'm so glad she said that because then it sent me on this direction of 'OK, how can I safeguard our family?' So I just started looking at how people become millionaires and how you make extra money, so it led me on this whole online adventure."

With her former online business already set up due to COVID-19, it was easy for her to set up her current endeavor — teaching paint parties online.

"I'm almost like the teacher for them," she said. "I provide them the paintings they can use and the step-by-step



COURTESY PHOTO

Granbury resident Heidi Easley is pictured with her daughter, Pixie, in Times Square in New York City where a billboard advertises Heidi as an Amazon bestselling author.

PLEASE SEE **SUCCESS** | C5

Lake Granbury Kiwanis presents

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Fri: 2:00PM, 4:35PM, 7:10PM, 9:45PM.
Sat: 11:25AM, 2:00PM, 4:35PM, 7:10PM, 9:45PM.
Sun: 11:15AM, 1:50PM, 4:25PM, 7:00PM.
Mon, Wed: 2:05PM, 4:40PM, 7:15PM.
Tues, Thurs: 2:00PM, 4:35PM, 7:10PM

Cabrini (PG13)
Fri: 2:00PM, 5:15PM.
Sat: 1:50PM, 5:05PM, 8:20PM.
Sun: 1:00PM, 4:15PM, 7:30PM.
Mon: 2:00PM, 7:35PM.
Tues: 2:00PM.
Wed, Thurs: 3:05PM

Dune: Part Two (PG13)
Fri: 3:00PM, 6:35PM, 10:10PM.
Sat: 11:50AM, 3:25PM, 7:00PM.
Sun: 11:30AM, 3:15PM, 7:00PM.
Mon: 3:15PM, 7:00PM.
Tues: 2:55PM, 6:35PM.
Wed, Thurs: 3:00PM, 6:45PM

Ghostbusters: Frozen Empire (PG13)
Fri: 2:00PM, 3:40PM, 4:40PM, 6:20PM, 7:20PM, 9:00PM, 10:00PM.
Sat: 10:30AM, 11:00AM, 1:05PM, 1:40PM, 3:40PM, 4:20PM, 6:15PM, 7:00PM, 8:50PM, 9:40PM.
Sun: 11:00AM, 11:30AM, 1:40PM, 2:10PM, 4:20PM, 4:50PM, 7:00PM, 7:30PM.
Mon, Wed: 2:00PM, 2:30PM, 4:40PM, 5:10PM, 7:20PM, 7:50PM.
Tues: 2:00PM, 4:35PM, 4:50PM, 7:10PM, 7:30PM.
Thurs: 2:00PM, 2:30PM, 4:35PM, 7:10PM

Godzilla x Kong: The New Empire (PG13)
Thurs: 4:20PM, 7:00PM

Kung Fu Panda 4 (PG)
Fri: 2:00PM, 4:25PM, 6:45PM, 8:30PM, 9:10PM.
Sat: 12:00PM, 2:20PM, 4:40PM, 7:00PM, 9:20PM.
Sun: 11:40AM, 2:00PM, 4:20PM, 6:40PM.
Mon: 2:05PM, 4:35PM, 5:15PM, 7:05PM.
Tues: 2:30PM, 4:10PM, 5:10PM, 7:30PM.
Wed: 2:10PM, 4:35PM, 7:00PM.
Thurs: 2:00PM, 5:05PM, 7:25PM

Kung Fu Panda 4 - Sensory Friendly (PG)
Sat: 11:30AM

Winnie the Pooh: Blood and Honey 2 (NR)
Tues, Wed, Thurs: 7:00PM

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The roads we travel

BY MICKY SHEARON
Special to Hood County News

With a state the size of Texas, it's probably no huge surprise that Texas has more highway miles than any other state in the nation — nearly 700,000 miles, to be exact. From behemoth metropolitan freeways, like the Katy Freeway in Houston, with its 26 lanes in some spots, to the statewide system of little two-lane Farm-to-Market roads that run like ribbons of asphalt across the Texas countryside, these thoroughfares carry life as we know it along. Many of our state's roadways have a storied past and colorful history. Consider, if you will, the old Route 66, which originally followed

an east-west line across the Texas Panhandle from Glenrio, New Mexico, and Texas to Texola, Oklahoma. A more recently constructed roadway with a clear historic connection is the Chisolm Trail Parkway, a 26-mile-long toll road that connects downtown Fort Worth to the nearby city of Cleburne in Johnson County. It was named after the famous cattle drive route known as the Chisolm Trail. Here in Hood County, we have our own network of roadways that are far more than mere asphalt and concrete. U.S. Highway 377, State Highway 144, Farm-to-Market Road 51 and Farm-to-Market Road 4 are the main arteries through which the lifeblood of Hood County flows, connecting us not just to destina-

tions, but to each other and to the stories of our past. In our hurried existence, where one moment blurs into the next, we seldom pause to consider the paths beneath our wheels: where they lead, their origins and terminuses, the reasons for their construction, and the history they have silently witnessed. Yet, these roads are the common ground on which we all travel, regardless of our backgrounds, occupations or socio-economic status. They are silent witnesses to our life's journeys, a metaphor for the diverse yet unified paths we navigate through life. In this article, I wanted to take a moment to reflect on the shared journey these roads represent, reminding us that despite our differenc-

es, we are all travelers on the same path, moving forward together in the journey of life.

UNITED STATES (US) HIGHWAY SYSTEM
The U.S. Numbered Highway System, commonly known as U.S. Routes or U.S. Highways, weaves an intricate tapestry of roads and highways across the contiguous United States, all neatly organized within a national grid. Born from a collaborative effort among states, these highways often earn the moniker "Federal Highways." However, it's the state and local governments that have rolled up their sleeves to build and maintain these vital pathways since their incep-

PLEASE SEE **TRAVEL** |C4

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 Highway, Granbury, 76049. Entry \$8/person. All are welcome, come with a partner and compete for ACBL masterpoints. Information and 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.

FORWARD TRAINING Center "Cisco" classes from 6-8:30 p.m. To sign up email info@forwardtrainingcenter.org. or call 817-573-6677.

TUESDAYS

HEALTHY CONNECTIONS classes: 8:30 a.m. Weight Watchers (join at weight-watchers.com); 9 a.m. yoga (private class, reservation only); 10:30 a.m. yoga (private class, reservation only); 1:30 p.m. line dancing; 5:15 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.

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.

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 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.

MELODY BELLES SINGERS, women's choral group, weekly rehearsals for spring concert season. New members who sing first or second soprano welcome. 10 a.m.-noon at First Presbyterian Church Memorial Hall (the Annex), 301 W. Bridge Street. For details, please call 817-999-1364.

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., meets every Saturday at Hilton Garden Inn, 635 E. Pearl St., for 5K or 10K walk for fun, fellowship 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.

SECOND MONDAYS

MEETING OF the Lake Granbury Art Association at 224 N. Travis St. at 6 p.m. Meeting includes business and a monthly demonstration from local and visiting artists. For questions call 361-510-6820 or email simanek1@charter.net.

FIRST TUESDAYS

GRANBURY DOLL Club meeting, 2 p.m. Hood County Library, 222 N. Travis St., Granbury. 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 fourth 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 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 the second Thursday of every month at 6 p.m. at the Emer-

gency Operations Center located at 401 Deputy Larry Miller Dr. HoodCoCert@gmail.com.

THE GRANBURY EWMA, Chapter P motorcycle group meets at Spring Creek Barbeque 317 W. U.S. Highway 377. Dinner and fellowship is 6 p.m. informal meeting at 7 p.m. Group of pleasure riders who love to ride in Texas and beyond. Many Goldwing riders, also 2 and 3 wheel, any and all riders are welcome.

THIRD THURSDAYS

THE HOOD Somerville A&M Club meets the third Thursday (except June, July and August) at Spring Creek BBQ located at 317 W. U.S. Hwy 377 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

SECOND 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 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. U.S. Highway 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 7 p.m.

CHECK IN and social at 10 - 11 a.m. Entertainment by Bobby Ray Adams. The short business meeting is at 11:30 a.m. The \$18 optional lunch will be pork medallions, roasted potatoes, broccoli, house salad, break, apple crisp and coffee/tea/water. General membership is \$25 for single and \$35 for joint, business membership is \$35. Reservations are required no later than Friday, Feb. 2. Contact granburyog@gmail.com or call 817-776-2898.

GO PLAY calendar will feature recurring activities that are open to the public. These items will run each week along with other activities across the area. Submit Go Play listings to calendar@hcnews.com and include the day, date, time and location - including street address.

Founders day

PHOTOS BY MARY VINSON | HOOD COUNTY NEWS

Over the weekend, despite the rainy weather, a large number of people gathered at Granbury Square, Langdon Center grounds, and Granbury Square Plaza to celebrate Granbury Founder's Day. The festival was filled with exciting activities, delicious food, and top-notch BBQ and beans. The events on Saturday began with a downpour and the St. Paddy's Day Parade on the square, followed by the coronation of Vicki Risinger as the 2024 Bean Queen and her husband Carey Risinger as the Rib King at the Langdon Center grounds. Festival-goers indulged in unique activities, shopping, and entertainment that only Granbury has to offer.



TRAVEL

FROM PAGE C3

tion in 1926, ensuring that America stays connected from coast to coast. In Texas, the Texas Department of Transportation is charged with maintaining the U.S. Highway System.

Expansion of the U.S. Highway System continued until 1956 when the Interstate Highway System was laid out and began construction under President Dwight D. Eisenhower's administration.

HOOD COUNTY'S U.S. HIGHWAY

U.S. HIGHWAY 377

U.S. Highway 377 is a 478-mile-long north-to-south United States highway. Originally formed as a short spur to connect Denton, with Fort Worth, it has since been extended to Oklahoma and Mexico.

The southern terminus is in Del Rio, at an intersection with U.S. Route 90. The highway's northern terminus is in Stroud, Oklahoma, at an indeterminate point somewhere between old Route 66 (now Oklahoma State Highway 66) and modern Interstate 44.

In 1930, the birth of U.S. Highway 377 brought a new chapter to Texas' transportation tale, filling a crucial gap for Fort Worth by providing a direct northern link that it previously lacked, unlike Dallas, which was already connected to the north and south by U.S. Highway 77. U.S. Highway 377 stitched together U.S. Highway 77 in Denton with U.S. Highway 81 in Fort Worth, creating a vital parallel pathway between Denton and Hillsboro, where U.S. Highway 81 and U.S. Highway 77 converged. This network was further revolutionized with the advent of the Interstate Highway System, introducing Interstate 35, which mirrored

the Dallas-Fort Worth divide. I-35 branched into I-35E, tracing the route of U.S. Highway 77 through Dallas and I-35W, which followed the paths of U.S. Highway 377 and U.S. Highway 81 through Fort Worth, seamlessly integrating the historic routes into the modern era of travel.

Up until the mid-1960s, U.S. Highway 377 turned into Pearl Street and followed the same route through town that Pearl Street follows today. However, the construction of the DeCordova Bend Dam and the opening of Lake Granbury in 1969 brought waves of lake-goers to the area, and with them came both residential and commercial development.

By the late 60s, it was quite apparent that the crush of traffic now passing through what had been a sleepy little town square just a few years earlier was going to be problematic.

By the early 70s, the U.S. Highway 377 Bypass had been constructed, which provided an optional route to bypass what, at that time, was still a largely boarded up and deserted Courthouse Square.

Today, almost 54,000 vehicles travel U.S. Highway 377 through Hood County each day.

STATE HIGHWAY SYSTEM

The Texas state highways are a sprawling web of roads under the stewardship of the Lone Star State itself. At the helm of this colossal network, TxDOT ensures every mile is in top-notch condition, overseeing the system's operations and upkeep. Boasting the title of the largest state highway system in the United States, Texas' roadways are steeped in history, tracing their origins back to the founding of the Texas Highway Department on April 4, 1917. This extensive network is more than just asphalt and signs; it's a testament to Texas' commitment

to connectivity and progress.

HOOD COUNTY'S STATE HIGHWAYS

STATE HIGHWAY 144

State Highway 144 begins at an intersection with State Highway 22 in Meridian. The route travels northwest to Walnut Springs before turning in a more northerly direction. It enters Glen Rose, where it has a one-mile concurrency with U.S. Highway 67. After separating from U.S. Highway 67, the highway resumes its northward journey to Granbury, where it intersects the U.S. Highway 377 Bypass. The SH 144 designation ends at an intersection with Business U.S. Highway 377 in central Granbury.

SH 144 was designated March 17, 1930, from Glen Rose to Meridian.

On July 12, 1933, it was extended north to Granbury and then northwest via Lipan to Brandon's Bridge.

FARM-TO-MARKET ROAD SYSTEM

Nestled within Texas' scenic landscapes lies a network of charming rural routes, a testament to visionary politicians and TxDOT's dedication from yesteryears. Its mission was simple yet transformative: "getting the farmer out of the mud." This initiative aimed to pave the way — quite literally — for farmers to transport their produce to market more efficiently, replacing dirt tracks with smooth asphalt for the first time. The journey of these farm-to-market roads began in 1936 with a pioneering stretch between Mount Enterprise and Shiloh in Rusk County. However, it was in 1949 that this mission was cemented into history through the Colson-Briscoe Act. This landmark legislation earmarked a generous \$15 million in state funds annually for the construction of these

vital roads, a figure that has only grown to accommodate the evolving needs of Texas' agricultural heartlands.

In total, 3,550 routes are designated within the Farm-to-Market (FM) system, 3,370 of which are FM and 180 of which are Ranch-to-Market (RM).

As urban sprawl has absorbed much of the countryside, many farm-to-market roads (and ranch-to-market roads) have come to serve as remnants of our more agrarian past — and as byways for harried commuters trying to get to the office.

Every single day, nearly 70 million miles are logged on these primarily rural roads.

HOOD COUNTY'S MAJOR FARM-TO-MARKET ROADS

FARM-TO-MARKET 4

Farm to Market Road 4 runs between the cities of Grandview and Jacksboro. The route was designated in March 1942. At 116 miles, Farm-to-Market Road 4 is one of the longest Farm-to-Market roads in the state of Texas.

The southern terminus of FM 4 is at Texas State Highway 81 in Grandview. FM 4 proceeds through the city and passes the Grandview Cemetery. It then passes through several small communities, including Sand Flat, before reaching the city of Cleburne, where it has a concurrency with State Highway 171/State Highway 174. FM 4 passes Cleburne Municipal Airport before exiting the city at its junction with U.S. Highway 67. It then proceeds through Acton, Granbury, Lipan, Santo and Palo Pinto before reaching its northern terminus in Jacksboro.

The route was designated on March 26, 1942, between Santo and U.S. Highway 80, replacing Spur 40. On July 11, 1945, it was extended north to the end of Farm-to-Market



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Come Easter and celebrate the risen Lord with an inspirational message straight from the Bible delivered by Dr. Doug Cecil of Christ Chapel Bible Church.

PLEASE SEE TRAVEL | C7

SUCCESS

FROM PAGE C2

instructions, so they can all most grab and go.”

Today, Easley teaches 3,000 people all over the world how to host paint parties. Most of Easley’s students are in the U.S., but some are even as far away as Scotland, Australia and the UK.

“Paint parties are still relatively new in other parts of the world, so a lot of these people are introducing this for the first time, which is really cool,” she said.

Easley is now a million-dollar business owner with an unbelievable story — one she eventually decided to share with the world.

“My mom died a year ago, but she had always said that I needed to write a book,” she said. “It’s kind of been on my radar for a long time, and then I finally just decided. I was like, ‘OK, I’m not gonna tell anybody, but I’m either going to do it and get it done, or I’m not going to do it.’”

Using old blog posts and stories she had written in the past, Easley compiled several writings together with the goal of turning them into a novel.

“My whole thing is like, trying to show people the underdog who’s been trying to run a business forever and you know, the ups and



Heidi Easley with her daughter, Pixie, and her husband, Bobby.

COURTESY PHOTO

downs and the roller coasters,” she said. “Anybody who’s been an entrepreneur knows that it’s extremely hard. It is not for the weak.”

Easley released her novel, “Your Dreams Don’t Die... They Haunt You” Feb. 6 on Amazon. In the book, she takes readers on her journey from bankruptcy to becoming a million-dollar business owner.

“I just wanted to almost write this as like, a love letter to the underdog,” she explained. “Like, if you just keep showing up, if you just keep being persistent, eventually it’ll happen and that’s why it’s called, ‘Your Dreams Don’t Die... They Haunt You,’ because if you’re a true entrepreneur-type person, you can push those dreams down and go get a corporate job like I have in the past, but eventually it’s going to come back.”

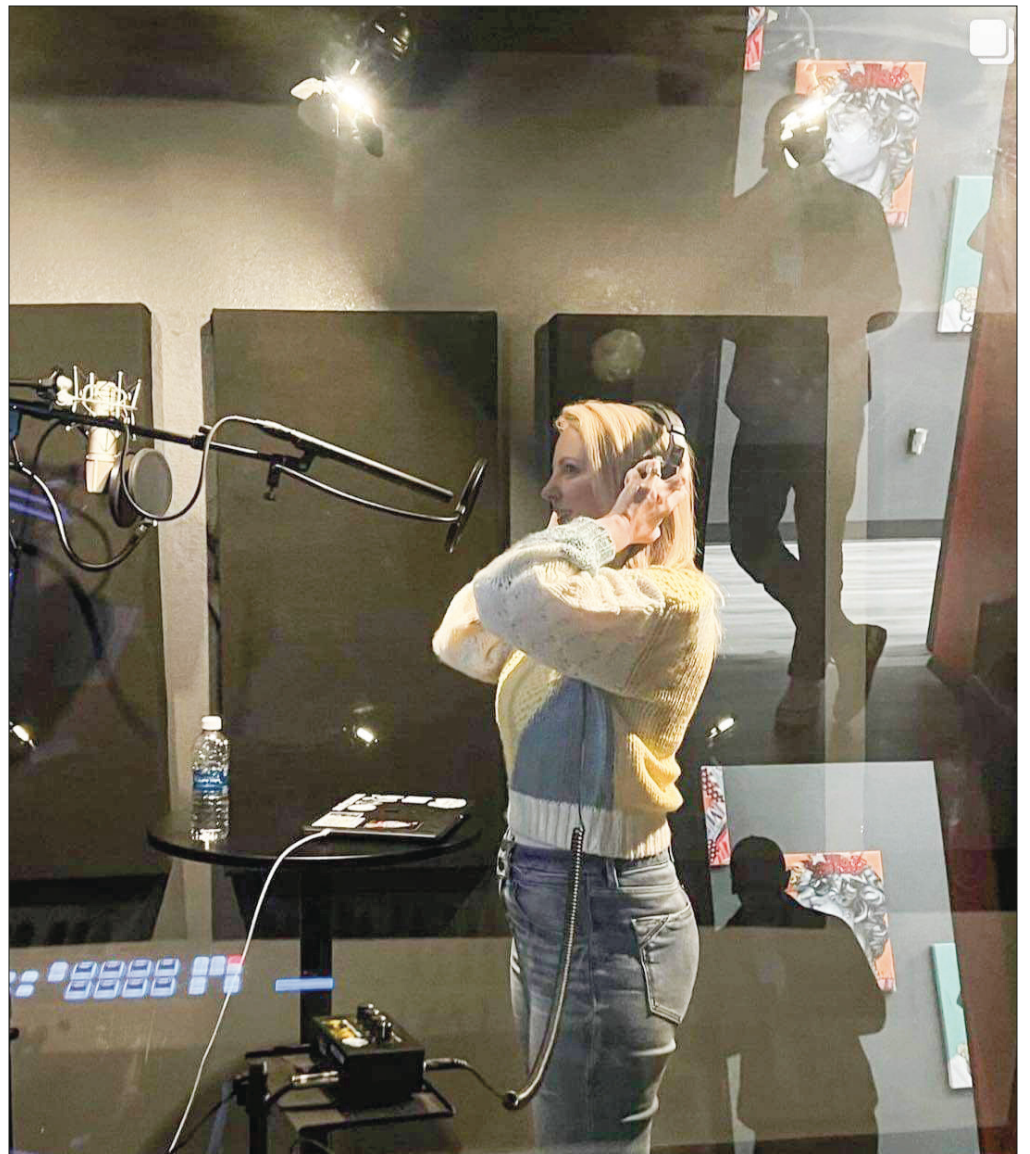
Filled with short chapters and takeaways at the end of each section, Easley’s book aims to guide readers on

how to act through fear to create the life they desire.

“If they’re struggling, they can read about all my failures and all my secrets of failing,” Easley said, chuckling. “The book is really short, so the feedback we’re getting is, ‘Oh my gosh, I never read books and this one I finished in one day.’ There’s places where I have them actually write so it’s like, ‘Let’s take action,’ of basically taking that story and then helping pull out their own story for each section. It’s almost like an interactive book to help them get to their next level.”

Easley said the goal for “Your Dreams Don’t Die... They Haunt You” is for readers to understand that real life is not what’s shown in today’s world of Instagram and Facebook — that success does not happen overnight.

“If you see anybody that has any kind of success in something, that has happened over years and years of consistency and things



Heidi Easley is pictured recording the narration of her book “Your Dreams Don’t Die... They Haunt You.”

COURTESY PHOTO

that they’ve done where nobody has seen them,” she explained. “There’s all these different things that can happen where you might take two steps forward and 10 steps back. But if the pursuit is worth going for, then you need to keep going for it.”

The paperback of “Your Dreams Don’t Die... They Haunt You,” is available on Amazon, along with the eBook, the hardback and — more recently — the audiobook. It is also listed as an international bestseller on Amazon.

“Me and my daughter, Pixie, we actually were in Times Square (in New York

City), and there was a picture of me on a billboard in Times Square with the book,” she said. “It was amazing.”

She said while her mom always encouraged her to publish a novel, she credits her husband for giving her the courage to officially take the leap.

“Bobby believes in me more than I believe in myself,” Easley said. “And then a big part of the success of all of this is because I’ll think I can’t do it, and he’s like, ‘Yeah, you can.’ I’m very, very grateful for him.”

Recently, Easley re-released another book on Amazon called, “Paint Party Business,” in which she gives

step-by-step instructions on how to host a paint party.

“If you’re gonna learn how to do a paint party business, this book will show you how,” she said. “There’s no fluff; it’s just straight to the point.”

While Easley now has two books published, she says she has no clue if there will be more books in the future.

“I don’t even know if I have another book in me,” she said. “But you never know what God will throw at you.”

For more information about Easley and her paint parties, visit her website at texasartandsoul.com.



COURTESY PHOTO

Heidi Easley holds up copies of her international bestseller novel, “Your Dreams Don’t Die... They Haunt You.”

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	<p>March 29th, 2024 7:30pm Chad Prather <i>An American conservative political commentator, comedian and internet personality</i></p>
	<p>March 30th, 2024 7:00pm DALLAS BOSTON XPERIENCE <i>TRIBUTE TO BOSTON</i></p>
	<p>April 5th, 2024 7:30pm “Satisfaction” <i>The International Rolling Stones Show</i></p>
	<p>April 6th, 2024 7:00pm Bob Wills Texas Playboys <i>UNDER THE DIRECTION OF JASON ROBERTS</i></p>
	<p>April 12th, 2024 7:30pm FOREVER SIMON & GARFUNKEL <i>A SIMON & GARFUNKEL Tribute</i></p>
	<p>April 13th, 2024 7:00pm A Jerry Lee Lewis Tribute & Much More! <i>JARED FREIBURG & The Vagabonds</i></p>
	<p>April 20th, 2024 7:00pm Big Little Town <i>Little Big Town Tribute</i></p>
	<p>April 26th, 2024 7:30pm Double Vision <i>The Foreigner Experience</i></p>

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APRIL	
5-7	Oink! Oink! Fest - Authentic German-Style Pig Roast
8	On the Edge TOTAL ECLIPSE 2024 – see website for list of events
20	Lake Granbury Master Gardeners Annual Plant Sale
25-27	Granbury Wine Walk
MAY	
4	International Firefighters Day
11	National Police Week
TBA	BCEperiences
24-27	Memorial Day Weekend Celebrations
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A guide to Granbury-area churches.

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- Granbury First Baptist
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- Iglesia Bautista La Hermosa
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- Mambrino Baptist
 1625 Mambrino Hwy.
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- Mission Bautista El Buen
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- Oak Trail Baptist
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 817-279-6430
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 817-573-4041
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 Hood Pentecostal
 3100 Beechwood St.,
 817-279-0363
- Calvary Church of Granbury
 4800 Glen Rose Hwy
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 817-326-3573
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 682-990-8551
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 18553 South Hwy. 377,
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- Brazos Covenant Ministries
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 817-579-0968
- Calvary Family
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 314-606-1211
- Center Point
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 817-573-0457
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 917-326-5501
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 200 S. Crook St., Cresson
 817-886-9577
- Fellowship Church Of Hood
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 2401 Cedar Crest Dr.,
 817-579-9332
- Generations Church Of
 Granbury
 5718 E. Hwy. 377,
 817-326-5378
- Hope Community
 3206 W. Hwy. 377
 254-243-0350
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 205 West Lipan Dr., Lipan
 254-396-3162
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When I thought, "My foot slips," Your
 steadfast love, O LORD, helped me up.
 When the cares of my heart are many, Your
 consolations cheer my soul.

Psalms 94:18-19

So do not fear, for I am with you; do not
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Isaiah 41:10

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PECAN PLANTATION BITS

Widows and widowers club celebrates one year reorganization

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.

Pecan's Widows and Widowers Club will gather again Tuesday, March 26 at 5:30 p.m. in the clubhouse ballroom where the evening will spotlight Pecan's Executive Chef Jordan Ray demonstrating how to make egg rolls, followed by his presentation of a Chinese entrée dinner. Folks may also pay 2024 dues at the meeting. For complete information on the Widows and Widowers Club, contact Caryl Mahaffey at caryl.mahaffey@charter.net.

At its Feb. meeting, the group celebrated its one-year reorganization at which 57 attendees enjoyed a beautiful cake.

GROWING GREEN

The Pecan Plantation Community Gardens is holding a workday today, Saturday, March 23, at its location on Plantation Boulevard adjacent to the walking track. Folks interested in the gardens are invited to stop by.

BOOT DRIVE

The Pecan Plantation Volunteer Fire Department/Emergency Medical Service Auxiliary is holding its spring boot drive today, Saturday, March 23 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at both Pecan entrances. Every penny collected goes to support our community's emergency personnel.

Next on the auxiliary's agenda is the advent of selling of tickets for raffle prizes in advance of its annual golf tournament, which is com-

ing up Saturday, April 20. The raffle prizes are quite spectacular, ranging from themed baskets containing gift certificates for products and services, gadgets and nonperishable foods, to a lake house getaway, an aerial excursion of Fort Worth, a Weathertech gift card, and handmade quilts, among many others.

Raffle tickets vary in price depending on the item sought, and more information about dates and locations for ticket purchasing will be forthcoming. For now, Pecaners may contact Julie Logan at 727-252-3702 or Seleta Webster 806-646-0656 to donate additional raffle prizes or purchase tickets.

Last year, raffle ticket sales garnered more than \$12,000, so this part of the golf tournament is significant to the auxiliary's fundraising efforts.

WESTERN EVENT

The Pecan Plantation Woman's Club's annual "Boot Scootin'" Boots and Bluebonnets charitable fundraiser happens tonight, Saturday, March 23, with doors opening at 5:30 p.m. The night will hold dinner, dancing (with music from the Randy Tatarevich Band), a silent auction, a Big Tex auction and a cash saloon. Folks who have purchased tickets and will attend are encouraged to don Western wear for the evening.

LIFE SAVING

CPR classes are available this spring at the PAC March

23, April 27 and May 18, with each day's hours running from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Each class accommodates 20 students, and registration at the PAC is required. Pecan's EMS is partnering with the American Heart Association to offer both informational classes and certification classes on these dates.

BREAKFAST CLUB

Pecan's Breakfast Club will gather again Wednesday, March 27, and the morning's start times have changed. Breakfast service now begins at 9 a.m. and the program at 10 a.m. Attendees will enjoy hearing from Mary Flores, Crime Victim Liaison with the Hood County Sheriff's Office. Reservations are due by noon Tuesday, March 26: 817-573-2641.

GOOD READ

The Hood County Library's bookmobile will be at the PAC Wednesday, March 27 from 3:30 to 5 p.m. Patrons may both check out and return library materials at the bookmobile.

GOLF NOTE

The Men's Golf Association will enjoy "Texas Scramble" play Thursday, March 28, and the Ladies' Golf Association has its first 18-hole guest day on the calendar for Tuesday, April 2. Golfers may visit the pro shop for complete information on these play days: 817-573-2645.

EGG HUNT

Pecan's annual Easter egg hunt commences Saturday, March 30 at 10 a.m. sharp at the PAC. Participants ages 1 through 12 will be divided into age-based groups and should bring a basket for collection. Door prizes and an appearance by the Easter



COURTESY PHOTO

Pecan's Widows and Widowers Club celebrated its one-year reorganization last month with dinner and cake at the clubhouse. Pictured at the event are (left to right): Peggy Wetle, co-leader; Dale Heid, board member; Caryl Mahaffey, leader; and Dan Crise, board member.

Bunny will also be part of the day.

In anticipation of the egg hunt, "egg stuffers" are needed Tuesday, March 26 at 10 a.m., and "egg distributors" Saturday, March 30 at 8 a.m. Students may volunteer for community service hours.

NET NEWS

The Pecan Plantation Tennis Association will enjoy its spring barbecue Friday, April 12 at 4 p.m. at the Planeview Park hangar when the event will include food, music and fun. In addition, the next session of junior tennis begins Wednesday, April 3, and summer camp dates are set and published in this month's edition of "The Columns." Finally, USTA league play is happening now. Good luck to all Pecan's competitors.

WELCOME ABOARD

Last week held a reception for the newest members of Pecan's board of directors, DeeDee Urbano, Mark Massey and Mike Hall, who were sworn in at the annual meeting earlier this month. Pecaners had the opportunity to get to know the new additions to the aboard while enjoying hors d'oeuvres prepared by the clubhouse staff. Furthermore, neighbors were able to thank Thomas Mead, retiring board member who served as both vice president and president during his tenure.

COMMITTEE WORK

Pecan's board of directors and management team hosted a committee workshop and fair last week where neighbors had the opportunity to see how the Pecan committee structure works as well as sign up to serve. With our new board members sworn in and the

new club year beginning, so comes the time for Pecaners to volunteer. Folks who are interested in joining may complete paperwork sent via email or visit the clubhouse front desk and fill out requests. Prospective committee members' information will be reviewed and vetted as committee members are chosen and groups formed. The deadline for committee applications is Monday, April 1 at 5 p.m.

BOARD MEETING

The next collective meeting of Pecan's board of directors comes Thursday, March 28 at 6 p.m. in the clubhouse ballroom.

SYMPATHY

Our deepest sympathy goes to the family of Larry Johnson, who passed away March 9.
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THE IDLE AMERICAN

God's blessing entertainment of Branson...



BY DON NEWBURY

Dr. Don Newbury is a longtime public speaker and former university president who writes weekly.

newbury@speakerdoc.com | 817-447-3872

Hills are greening up, fiddlers are tuning up and visitors from around the globe are showing up as the entertainment mecca of Branson, Missouri, gears up for a record-breaking season in the beloved Ozarks.

It's a magical place known for musical excellence where God is honored — and where there are so many fiddlers it's difficult to predict whether "Cotton-Eyed Joe" or "The Devil Went Down to Georgia" gets more play.

Most of us can't get enough of either number, unflustered if the instruments go up in smoke as the music intensifies.

Such strains are anticipated, as are tears in the eyes of veterans, first responders, law enforcement officers, medical personnel and firefighters. They stand in response to thunderous roars of rafter-shaking thanks in the more than 100 venues at what has become what is arguably America's favorite family place. Some 11 million folks are expected to

visit Branson by year's end, when Christmas shows attract masses.

I called my ancient Uncle Mort, letting him know that we had landed in Branson along with the spring-breakers, and that I was keeping count of the different types of string instruments that would include a gigantic harp. By week's end, though, I admitted I hadn't seen a single lyre. "Well, there was at least one liar at every show you attended," Mort cackled.

The Pandemic greatly challenged Branson, but it wasn't a knock-out blow. Branson faithful held on tight, with most attractions surviving and once again thriving. Maybe it tightened the bonds of family and faith on both sides of the stage lights.

It's an understatement to say there's "something for everybody" in Branson. While this is indeed true, even more is coming. Two years from now, they're opening a \$400 million, 320-room hotel with seven res-

taurants and an "immersive" water park.

We took careful notes of extremes during this visit. Specifically, we checked out places specializing in ice cream dishes. Two stood out among the dozen or so businesses offering dairy treats.

One place we'd never seen before is called "The Yard." It glistens. Also noticed in a tiny downtown location was "Boo Boo Baba's." It has a makeshift sign: "Root Beer Floats, \$1.99." We bought two.

"The Yard" is beyond upscale, capitalizing on all things bovine, including stuffed cows, calves and other animals, with milk shakes served in pint and quart jars for patrons with "hang-the-cost" attitudes.

"Hey, we're on vacation," someone said, ready to fork over a \$20 bill for a treat that's both a culinary delight and a work of art.

A unique mood is established upon entry. A sign advises: "Live like somebody left the gate open."

The humongous desserts are indeed artfully assembled. They made me think of a favorite tie which always is a landing spot for food that misses my mouth. I don't know whether to frame it or eat it.

A fun scene at "The Yard" occurs when tykes, not yet kindergarten age, tug at their dads' pant legs, begging for one of those "big-uns." Several of the most exotic dishes would feed a scout troop.

I'll be "in and out" with many observations and suggestions concerning our trip in upcoming weeks, never claiming to be an authority by any measure. You won't notice any reference to the many recognized golf courses in the area, simply because I don't know anything about the sport.

I agree with the guy who says too much time is spent on golf unless it is providing a livelihood, in which case, go for it.

A woman, as clueless about golf as I am, said it well. "I'm not even sure which end of the caddy to hold."

Alas, our recent trip ended too soon. We saw the blossoms appear on the Bradford pear and redbud trees but wished for additional blooms to come later.

We can dream, however, of the many wildflowers that soon will cover the mountainsides until fall and winter take over.

And we can hope for other visits up the way.

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March 28 - 6:30 pm

Good Friday
March 29 - 12:30 pm and 6:30 pm

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TRAVEL
FROM PAGE C4

Road 130 in Lone Camp. On Sept. 6, 1945, it was extended to U.S. Highway 180, replacing Farm-to-Market Road 130. On Oct. 23, 1949, it was extended southeast to Granbury, replacing Farm-to-Market Road 7.

FARM-TO-MARKET 51

Farm-to-Market Road 51 was designated April 29, 1942. It starts at Farm-to-Market Road 372 in Gainesville, then goes south-

west through Decatur and Weatherford. Continuing south, it passes through Granbury and Paluxy, ending at U.S. Highway 67 in Glen Rose.

Farm-to-Market Road 51 was originally built to run from Gainesville to Era, a distance of 11 miles. On May 19 of that year, three more sections were added: one from Decatur northeast, 4.8 miles to Slidell Road, one from State Highway 114 to Springtown, and one from Weatherford north, 4.0 miles. On Aug. 22, 1944, it was ex-

tended from 4.0 miles north of Weatherford to Springtown and from 4.8 miles northeast of Decatur to the Denton-Wise County line, closing one gap and partially closing another. On June 5, 1945, another section was added from the Parker-Hood County line to Granbury. Today, it has a total mileage of 114.3 miles.

Some may also be interested to know that Farm-to-Market Road 51 did not always connect directly to Houston Street as it does today. At one time, old Farm-to-Market Road 51 actually

ran behind the Granbury Cemetery north of town, intersecting with Moore Street further to the east rather than running in front of the cemetery and sharing a concurrency with Houston Street as it does today.

So, there you have it! It's probably far more information than you will ever need on the roadways on which we travel in Hood County each day. But the roads we travel are so much more than marvels of transportation. They connect us with our past and lead us to our futures.

GARDEN PATCH

Watch the eclipse enchant gardens

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.

As the moon passes between the Earth and the sun during a total solar eclipse, such as the one that will occur April 8, it casts its shadow over the land. During these rare, awe-inspiring events, gardens take on a surreal, enchanting appearance much like moonlit landscapes. The familiar suddenly becomes unrecognizable!

As the sky darkens, an eerie twilight dramatically affects how plants are viewed. For example, when the moon passes the sun, the quality of light changes, with shadows becoming sharper and deeper. Pale flowers and foliage contrast sharply against darker tones. Some colors look otherworldly.

During a solar eclipse when the moon blocks the sun, small areas of light shine through the gaps between leaves or other objects. These crescent-shaped projections appear on surfaces, such as sidewalks, walls and

plant foliage. The effect is captivating. Viewing the light projections, rather than looking directly at the eclipse, is one safe way to avoid eye damage while experiencing the phenomenon.

In addition to affecting light quality, solar eclipses can cause temperatures to cool slightly while the sun is blocked. A slight breeze or calming may occur.

These changes often affect animal behavior. Insects quiet. Birds stop singing. Wildlife act confused or restless. Pets may seek shelter. Some plants, especially those that are sensitive to light, respond to an eclipse by closing their flowers. This reaction to changing light heightens the sense that one's garden has been enchanted.

The quality of light also determines the personality of a moonlit garden. In general, the moon casts a gentle glow that illuminates flowers and foliage in soft, silvery light. Shadows



COURTESY PHOTO

During a solar eclipse when the moon blocks the sun, small areas of light shine through the gaps between leaves or other objects. These crescent-shaped projections appear on surfaces, such as sidewalks, walls and plant foliage. The effect is captivating.

create patterns on plants that move with a breeze. Darkness heightens the senses, which allows visitors to moonlit gardens to better appreciate the rustle of leaves and the chorus of insects and frogs. Sweet floral scents are more pronounced, which is why many moonlit gardens are planted with flowers that release their fragrance at night.

A moonlit garden is meant to be enjoyed from dusk to dawn, while the eclipse gar-

den is briefly witnessed. In the eerie eclipse light, white flowers glow and silvery or textured foliage contrasts against darker scenery. The human eye sees warm colors, such as red, become gray to black tones. Shades of green and blue become more vibrant.

If planting for the 2024 eclipse or a moonlit garden, add flowering plants with white or pastel blooms, such as periwinkle, moonflower, white mistflower, Blackfoot daisy, angel's

trumpet (datura) and sweet evening primrose. Add silver or gray foliage plants, such as Texas sage (cenizo) and Russian sage. Bright red flowers, such as those produced by Texas star hibiscus will look hauntingly beautiful by moonlight or at twilight during an eclipse. Pale blue flowers, such as Gregg's mistflower and mealy blue sage, light up the garden in near-dark. Tip: Include plants that attract moths or other night-loving wildlife.

Pull up a lawn chair, bring your solar glasses and prepare to be enchanted!

Attend the LGMG Plant Sale Saturday, April 20, 8 a.m. - noon (or until all plants are sold), LGMG Demonstration Garden, 1410 W. Pearl St., Granbury.

For answers to your horticulture questions, please call the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension, Hood County at 817-579-3280 or online at lakegranburymastergardeners.org.

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