



Republican committee divided *District clerk nomination sparks controversy as Graft secures win over Zamarron*

BY ASHLEY TERRY
Staff Writer
ashley@hcnews.com

Hood County's most recent election proceedings have stirred contention and division among residents.

During a meeting held entirely in executive session June 26, the Hood County Republican executive

committee conducted a ballot voting for the positions of county clerk and district clerk. The Republican nominees for both positions will appear on the ballot for the general election this November.

Christine C. Leftwich — who has been serving as the interim county clerk since Katie Lang's retirement in May — was unanimously selected as the county clerk.

While the county clerk nomination process was smooth sailing, tensions unfolded following the district clerk vote.

The two nominees were Roberta Zamarron, who has been serving as the interim district clerk following the passing of Tonna Newman in February, and Melanie Graft, cur-

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ASHLEY TERRY | HOOD COUNTY NEWS
The Hood County Republican Party executive committee convened into an executive session June 26 to conduct a Republican ballot vote for the positions of Hood County district clerk and county clerk.

A new chapter in tourism

City acquires Granbury Square Plaza for historic preservation, economic growth

BY ASHLEY TERRY
Staff Writer
ashley@hcnews.com

As of last week, Granbury Square Plaza is officially under new ownership.

City Manager Chris Coffman recently confirmed to the Hood County News that Granbury Historic Properties closed on the purchase of the building June 25.

Granbury Historic Properties is a subcomponent of the city for historic preservation. According to Coffman, GHP also owns Granbury Opera House and the Granbury Doll House Museum.

"It was kind of like a three-legged stool of why we bought it," Coffman explained. "Historic preservation (is one). It's the front door to our historic square and it's an old building that needs to be preserved."

Granbury Square Plaza first held its grand opening celebration in 2009 in the former First United Methodist Church building. Located at 201 E. Pearl St., the plaza became an iconic location on the Historic Granbury Square.

"We didn't try to reinvent the building," Developer Ken Hackett told the HCN in 2009. "Instead, we're adapting it for a new use."

The new use included space for 20 to 25 businesses, from 200 square feet and up. A 1,700-square-foot second floor meeting room also overlooked the square.

For more than a decade, the plaza has served the community by providing retail and office space for businesses, as well as an outdoor area for events like weddings, birthday parties, bands and other intimate gatherings.

Under the ownership of Hackett — who was also the former president of the Historic Granbury Merchants Association — the building was recently foreclosed. It was later confirmed by current HGMA President Cheshe Langford June 11 that the organization will continue to operate out of the plaza, but that a transition will soon be taking place.

"It's going to belong to somebody else next week, so we don't know exactly what that entails really, but we have a lease through the end of December 2025, so we're kind of stuck in that right now," Langford previously said. "But we're going to try to maintain that office."

A member of the HGMA also asked Langford if the building was then owned by the city. She said, "Not yet, but soon."

As a major historical landmark was suddenly left with no owner, the city immediately sprang into action to acquire the property.

Coffman explained that through the city's purchase, the plaza will continue to contribute major economic development benefits to the city. Additionally, the success of Visit Granbury largely depends upon the visitor center remaining at its current home.

"Visit Granbury's there and they're our shining marketing tool for the city. We want to keep them front and center," Coffman said. "The building's pretty much rented right now, but as tenants churn through, there's a need for temporary office space for those companies that we're trying to attract to come to town to create jobs. They need temporary office space until they are able to get their building built."

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Couch Surfer Ministry leader Michael Reed (right) provides outreach support to an individual.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF COUCH SURFER MINISTRIES

Hope on hold for the homeless community *Couch Surfer Ministries 'on the brink'*

BY LAUREN DAVIS
Staff Writer
Lauren@hcnews.com

When Michael and Alysha Reed founded Couch Surfer Ministries in November 2019, their mission was clear: to provide shelter, food and spiritual guidance to people experiencing homelessness in Hood County. What began as a small endeavor inspired by their faith and a burning desire to serve God has become a vital resource for the community's most vulnerable members. Now, as the shelter faces the heartbreaking prospect of closing its doors, the impact of its work and the void it will leave behind become all the more evident.



LEFT: Michael and Alysha Reed.

individuals and families who were homeless and asking for help with shelter," explained Dusti Scovel, executive director of Mission Granbury. "Six were single women, two were single men, and three were families with children. Of those, one of the single men planned to go to Couch Surfers today. We helped the others in a variety of ways." She added, "Despite what some may think, homelessness in Hood County exists and is not going away and we have very limited resources to serve them."

Stonewater Church Central Operations Director Ken Freeman highlighted the broader chal-

COMMUNITY REACTIONS

"Last week alone, our case managers received 11 calls from

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FROM MY FRONT PORCH

July 4: A special celebration of the human spirit



BY SAM HOUSTON

Sam Houston is a syndicated columnist and newspaper executive. He is also an author, actor, playwright and entertainment producer and promoter.
sam@hcnews.com | 817-573-7066, ext. 260

Holidays come and go throughout the year and I do not think I am making an overstatement by saying people look forward to the unique customs and traditions connected with each event. Whether it be hanging a Christmas stocking, hiding eggs at Easter, or serving special foods at Thanksgiving, each one of our traditions reminds us of all the holidays we have experienced in our past and the special people and family we share the holidays with.

Granted, we cannot attempt to equate the significance of religious holidays like Easter and Christmas

with Halloween. Two of them have deeply religious significance and the other is a commercial event created for

fun, frivolity and consumerism. Yet, each holiday seems to have its own traditions and rituals.

I commonly mark the comings and goings of holidays by my calendar. Anymore it is impossible to judge the change by my surroundings because the Halloween items are on display at Walmart seemingly before the kids start back to school. Heck, Christmas stuff is up in the stores just about the time you would expect to see the Halloween items. It can be confusing!

This week we celebrate the Fourth of July and what a special day that is. It is full of cookouts and barbecues, parades, hotdogs and fireworks. My memories include smoldering ribs, ice cold

watermelon, homemade ice cream and my favorite, fresh corn on the cob. On July 4 it was tradition to have a roasting ear firmly gripped in my hands with butter delicately rolling down my chin. I will never forget the sensation or the taste. It's one of my favorite Fourth of July memories.

My memory takes me back to the bicentennial when the USA was 200 years old and what a big celebration that was. Now the USA is getting closer and closer to 250 years old! Uncle Sam and I have both aged these last 50 years. We have seen a lot of change and suffered through some crises and challenges. Through it all, there is something still special about a Fourth of July parade, seeing

the flags unfurled, the bunting hanging from the businesses lining the street while the band plays the "Stars and Stripes Forever."

Sometimes I wonder if people stop and think how our forefathers created a nation out of nothing but wilderness; how they defeated one of the mightiest military forces in the world to win our freedom, and then our brilliant forefathers had the smarts to create a new form of government which had previously never existed. It allowed individuals to be free, while ensuring domestic tranquility and peace. They were sure a smart bunch of guys. I hope we stay grounded and honor their memory while maintaining the sacred trust which has

been passed down to us.

Let us not forget a nation is formed by the willingness of each of us to share in the responsibility for upholding the common good. As a nation, we are only as good as we allow our weakest citizen to suffer and endure. We are a country that has liberty as a statute! Think about that for a moment and give thanks for where you live and who you are. Now that is worth celebrating.

Thought for the day: "Humanity has won its battle ... liberty now has a country." — The Marquis de Lafayette, French citizen and American Revolutionary War hero.

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

Folks around town



MARY VINSON | HOOD COUNTY NEWS

Amber Tatum

Say hello to our neighbor, Amber Tatum!

Amber, the stylist, owner, and operator of the Brazos Beauty Bar & Barber on West Pearl Street, spends her days bringing out the beauty of locals. Running a small business is demanding, but Amber always makes time for her family. Her 16-year-old daughter, Halle Huber, and 20-year-old son, Ashtin Huber, are her highest priority. While growing up, Amber and the kids loved lake life and spending time on the water. Ashtin will be a daddy in about seven weeks, and Amber is excited to welcome her first grandchild into the world. Amber loves the feeling of safety here in Hood County and appreciates our rich history. Amber enjoys the balance of good news, not just bad news, that the Hood County News provides. She thinks it's great that the Hood County News still publishes its newspaper. Amber said, "My friends, some fellow small business owners, and I have done well after working with the marketing and advertising department at the Hood County News."

Cresson resident sentenced to life in prison for sexually abusing granddaughter

From Staff Reports

On Thursday, April 25, a Hood County jury sentenced Bruce Allan Tucker to life in prison for the charge of continuous sexual abuse of his 6-year-old granddaughter. According to a press release from the Hood County District Attorney's Office, for several years, Tucker's family visited him at his home in Cresson. During those visits, Tucker began molesting his granddaughter when she was 6 years old. The abuse continued for several years until August 2019. The victim was 11 years old at that point and made an outcry to her mother about the abuse. Upon learning this information, the mother immediately

removed her family from Tucker's house, and returned to Washington a few days later. Upon arrival in Washington, the victim's mother reported the crime to NCIS; an NCIS agent then opened an investigation on the case. But because the offense occurred in Hood County, NCIS eventually transferred the investigation to the Child Exploitation Unit (CEU) in the Hood County District Attorney's office. Pete Wilkerson was the lead investigator assigned to the case in the DA's office. Wilkerson and the CEU team thoroughly investigated the allegations, and ultimately arrested the defendant on

the charge of continuous sexual abuse of a child, according to the press release. On April 22, District Attorney Ryan Sinclair and Assistant District Attorney Stacy Jewett presented the case to the jury in the 355th District Court. After the jury returned a guilty verdict, Sinclair and Jewett argued that Tucker deserved to be sent to prison for the rest of his life. The jury agreed and handed down a life sentence for Tucker. Under Texas law, Tucker will never be eligible for parole. "I'm glad we were able to see that justice was done for this young lady and her family," Sinclair said. "When someone hurts children in



COURTESY PHOTO
Bruce Allan Tucker

our county, justice will be served. Mr. Tucker got the justice he deserved: life behind bars."

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FROM PAGE A1
rent Granbury Independent School District board member and Precinct 408 chair. Members of the Hood County Republican Party executive committee voted for the district clerk nominee by way of a secret ballot. Approximately 14 voting members were present during the meeting. During the voting portion of the executive session, Zamarron and Graft found themselves deadlocked in a 7:7 vote. After a revote, Graft emerged victorious with an 8:6 vote, which immediately sparked discussion on social media. Following the result, many Hood County residents took to Facebook to complain about the transparency and fairness of the electoral process. Some expressed concerns that the meeting was not held in open forum while others stated how it was "unfair" to allow Graft to vote as a member of the executive committee when Zamarron was not a member of the board. Comments also stated that Graft should have recused herself during the vote. Zamarron herself took to

Facebook June 28 to address the recent election results. She started out by thanking Judge Bryan Bufkin for appointing her to the position in March. "We have made some amazing progress to update past-due accounts and bring the office current," she said. "I would like to thank Matt Mills, Ryan Sinclair, Rob Christian, and many more of my supporters for trying to inform the executive committee why I was the better choice being a conservative Republican AND having the knowledge and experience necessary to be the district clerk and better serve the constituents of Hood County. "I will continue to update you on the progress of the district clerk's office through the next few months. This team has worked very diligently to restructure this office to better suit the needs of the public who we serve daily." Bufkin also took to social media June 28 to "lay out the facts as clearly and fairly" as he could regarding the district clerk nomination process. He explained that since Newman passed away in the middle of her term, the law states that Bufkin was in

charge of filling the vacancy and that his choice would immediately step in to be the district clerk until the next election. "I took my job very seriously," Bufkin said. "I reviewed many applications and interviewed several candidates. As a conservative judge, I was looking for a conservative person who was eminently qualified to do the job. At the time of the vacancy, due to the prolonged illness of Mrs. Newman, the District Clerk's office badly needed somebody who could come in immediately, get caught up, and bring some stability. My main concern — as it always is — was the pursuit of justice for all. I chose Roberta Zamarron. She stepped into the role, hit the ground running, and has done a great job. She has made me look good. I am extremely thankful to her for the job she has done." Bufkin stated that due to the timing of the vacancy, the window for filing to be in the Republican Primary had already closed. In this situation, he states, the law lays out that the Hood County Republican Party executive committee must vote on who to put on the ballot as the Republican candidate for the general election in

November. "The end result is that the person I choose will be the District Clerk for the remainder of the year, and the person the executive committee chooses will be on the ballot as the Republican nominee," he explained. "Whoever wins in the general election in November is District Clerk for the remainder of the term." Bufkin explained how the voting portions of the meeting were held in executive session and since he is not an officer, he could not be in the room for those portions. He confirmed that both Zamarron and Graft were nominated for the position. "I will note that Mrs. Graft did not apply during my interview process, so she was not one of the people I interviewed," he said. "Each person was allowed to speak and could have others speak on their behalf. As a judge with ethical requirements preventing public endorsement of a candidate, I did not speak on behalf of either person at the meeting. As I understand it, there were 14 voting members present at the meeting. The votes were made by secret ballot. After the first vote, there was a 7-7

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Hood County News
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Publisher
SAM HOUSTON
sam@hcnews.com

Vice President of Operations
DARREN CLARK
darren@hcnews.com

Staff Writer
EDEN GILBREATH
eden@hcnews.com

Staff Writer
ASHLEY TERRY
ashley@hcnews.com/Digital

Staff Writer
LAUREN LAFLAMME-DAVIS
lauren@hcnews.com

Designer
HILARY McALLISTER
hilary@hcnews.com

Photographer/Designer
LAYTH TAYLOR
layth@hcnews.com

Designer
JEREMIAH FLORES
jeremiah@hcnews.com

hcnews.com

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USPS 249-520
P.O. Box 879, Granbury, Texas 76048
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Fax: (817) 279-8371

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FROM TRASH TO TREASURE

PHOTOS BY ASHLEY TERRY | HOOD COUNTY NEWS

The Hood County Citizen Collection Station recycles anything from paper and plastic to cardboard and metal.

Acton Nature Center goes 'green' during community lecture July 7

BY ASHLEY TERRY
Staff Writer
ashley@hcnews.com

The Acton Nature Center will be taking its environmental efforts to the next level with its upcoming community lecture series centered around recycling.

Scheduled for 2 p.m. tomorrow, July 7, at the Opal Durant Acton Community Center at 6430 Smoky Hill Court, Hood County residents will undergo a deep dive on all things "green."

Featuring Hood County Director of Environmental Health Jeannie Stacks as guest speaker, the lecture will focus on recycling opportunities in Hood County and the Citizens Collection Station — the county's only recycling center.

Since the Citizens Collection Station was created in 2009, Hood County residents have been able to recycle paper and plastic and dispose of bulky unwanted items properly, rather than dumping them on the side of the road.

The facility is located at 244 Bray St., off Coke Court from U.S. Highway 377 west of Granbury, and features two different types of fees for items: recyclables and bulk waste.

RECYCLABLES

Hood County residents can dispose of any recyclable item at the Hood County Citizens Collection Station like paper, plastic, cardboard, glass and metal.

Boxes must be broken down and glass bottles or jars need to be cleaned with the lids removed. Most metal items are accepted, like aluminum cans, stoves, grills (with propane bottles removed) washers and dryers, water heaters, lawn mowers, weed eaters (gas and oil removed) and metal patio furniture (webbing and fabric removed).

Items not accepted include: pesticide containers, plastic bags, plastic wrap, dry cleaning bags, shipping air bags and bubble wrap; Styrofoam and other brands of plastic foam including packing peanuts and egg cartons; wax cartons such as juice boxes and broth



Pictured from left are Hood County Citizen Collection Station employees Tim Boyes, Jeannie Stacks, Brandon Swanson and Tracy Sawyer.

cartons; oil or antifreeze containers; wet, soiled/greasy or painted cardboard; mirror or window glass, tempered glass or glass tabletops; and any type of aerosol cans, hairspray and spray paint.

"There are certain items that we do try to recycle for people," Stacks said. She explained how she will save cat toys for Second Chance Farm — a local nonprofit animal rescue and rehab — and will send specific items to Hood County Animal Control, depending on need.

BULK WASTE

Bulk waste includes anything from sofas and love seats to mattresses and TVs, with fees varying in prices depending on the load size.

"We take batteries, used oil, antifreeze, and we take the first four passenger-sized tires for free," Stacks said. "We do not want tires with rims; that has been discussed that we want a machine to take them off the rim because I probably have close to 300 on the rim right now and they charge 10 bucks a tire to come get them, so we're trying to get that worked up."

Bulk waste fees largely depend on the size of items. A \$5 fee applies to smaller bulk items like a recliner, TV, or a computer if brought as a single item. A \$10 fee applies to large bulk furniture like couches, love seats, and mattresses.

"The bulk is what we

charge for," Stacks said. "You bring a battery, it's free. You bring metal, it's free. Glass, paper, plastic and cardboard are all free; we charge for the bulk."

If disposing of several bulk items, the prices depend on the size of the load. Passenger car loads and SUV loads are \$15, a van load is \$20, a pickup truck filled to at bed level is \$20 and a pickup truck filled above bed level is \$25. Additionally, trailer loads average in price from \$25 to \$100, depending on the size.

Items not accepted include: shingles; sheetrock; household garbage such as food waste, kitchen waste, and bathroom waste; liquids of any kind; medical waste including medications and used needles; household hazardous waste; masonry items like bricks and concrete; commercial waste from contractors or businesses; fuel or fuel containers; paving stones and rocks; construction debris (contractors of businesses); paints, paint thinners, stains and pesticides; ceramic, marble or concrete countertops; hot tubs, unless cut into manageable sections; ceramic tiles, tubs, toilets and/or sinks; boats, ATV or motorized vehicles of any kind; Freon, fluorescent lights and chemicals of any kind.

Stacks explained that after the salvage yard closed, she had to figure out what to do to dispose of any item

containing Freon. She said currently, Stephenville Iron and Metal will bring a large container and will dispose of the Freon properly.

"We get money for the metals, the appliances and the batteries, but everything else, even though it's recycled, they charge us," she explained. "In order to take recycling to one of the big plants in Fort Worth, they charge \$101 a ton to accept the recycling, which I didn't know that until last court, so it's kind of a learning experience out here."

WASTE VOUCHERS

Hazardous waste vouchers for the Fort Worth Environmental Collection Center are also available at the Citizens Collection Station.

Stacks explained that when residents receive a voucher, they load up their vehicle with items they would like to dispose of, and travel to the Fort Worth ECC, located at 6400 Bridge St.

"When you pull into that facility, you stay in your car, they'll tell you to go here and pop the trunk, they'll unload this, then they'll tell you the next station to go to," she explained. "It's free to Hood County residents. You get one a year, but the facility in Fort Worth charges the county \$95 for each one."

While most residents typically follow the rules for what they can and cannot drop off, Stacks said she has

had a few instances where the Citizen Collection Station received a few odd items.

"They gave me a whole hot tub," she said. "We've had them bring whole bears. But in that instance, yeah, we also had someone dump the sail of a boat."

But the most bizarre drop off, Stacks said, occurred one afternoon when a huge fire suddenly engulfed one of the dumpsters.

"It had to be sometime in 2020," she said. "This little car pulls in and dumps something in a white plastic bag out of the trunk of the car into the dumpster. The attendant looked up and it's smoldering up there, so he grabs a fire extinguisher and tries to put the fire out ... We had the fire department out here two, maybe three times that evening, so it had to have been on a Wednesday. They said there were flames shooting 18 feet high. Whatever it was, it combusted, so I guess that is the weirdest thing we've had."

According to Stacks, between 120 and 140 people come through the Citizens Collection Station daily, but the biggest problem, she said, is awareness.

"The people don't know about us," she said.

The Hood County Citizens Collection Station is open Mondays, Fridays and Saturdays from 8 a.m.-1 p.m. and Wednesdays from noon-five. The station is closed on Tuesdays, Thursdays, Sundays, and during inclement weather.

The station is only open to Hood County residents, so an ID and proof of residency is required. The station will also only accept cash and check payments.

For more information, visit the Hood County Citizens Collection Station on the Hood County website at co.hood.tx.us/498/Citizens-Collection-Station or call 817-579-3288.

To register for the Acton Nature Center Zoom link, visit actonnaturecenter@gmail.com

CALENDAR

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FORWARD TRAINING

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

SUNDAY, JULY 7

GRANBURY JAZZ Orchestra Free Concert, 3 p.m. at Granbury Baptist Church, 1200 Weatherford Highway.

MONDAY, JULY 8

TEXAS DEMOCRATIC

Women of Hood County monthly meeting. Program: Meet the Juneteenth Essay Contest Winners and our high school senior TDW scholarship recipients. 11 a.m. at Spring Creek Barbeque, 317 E. U.S. Highway 377, Granbury. Details, call 254-716-5195.

FRIDAY, JULY 12

SPECIAL CALLED meeting of the Hood County Hospital District board at noon for renewal of directors and officer liability insurance. Location is the Annex I Meeting Room, 200 Deputy Larry Miller Drive, Granbury. Questions? Call: 817-579-3200.

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.

HAVE A HAPPY AND SAFE FOURTH OF JULY WEEKEND!



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COMMUNITY BUSINESS

CHAMBER NEWS

A 50th anniversary celebration only comes along once!

BY BRIAN BONDY
Chamber President/CEO

If you are reading this article, we are officially halfway through our 50th Anniversary Hometown 4th of July Celebration! But there's still a whole lot of celebration left between Saturday and Sunday. Before we get to that, I would be remiss if I didn't stop and thank the 118 parade entries ... and the almost 1,000 parade participants for making this year's event one for the ages. I'd also like to take a moment and thank Joe Overstreet and the 40-plus parade volunteers who got up early Thursday morning to help get the show on the road. The floats were grand; the music was awesome and the crowds along the parade route reinforced why nobody does July 4th like Granbury!!

An event like this takes a huge amount of behind-the-scenes planning and work to pull off. Chamber staff has been putting in lots of hours since the beginning of February, and along with all the help we've had along the way from the City of Granbury, Visit Granbury, Hood County, Granbury I.S.D., the chamber's board of directors and so many others, we're pretty sure it would have been impossible to make it happen without this team. We also want to tip our hats to the Granbury Police Department and Hood County Sheriff's Department for their assistance on Thursday and Thursday night ... crowd control is never easy while maintaining a positive presence, but they continue to be outstanding partners and we're proud to work with them.

Our vendors will be open and selling merchandise and services

today and tomorrow. The stage at Granbury Square Plaza will have family entertainment and music all day today and more family entertainment on Sunday. If you haven't seen the military equipment on the grounds at the Langdon Center, you still have today and tomorrow to see these amazing machines. Thank you to the Hood County YMCA and our famous hometown band, Mysterious Scoundrels, for helping coordinate an entire weekend of live music and performances ... including tonight's street dance on Bridge Street from 7-9 p.m. We'll follow that up with our very first 4th of July Laser Light Show starting at 9:30 p.m., also on Bridge Street, presented by Laser Encore, so grab your chairs, get a cold beverage and enjoy the show.

This 50th Anniversary Hometown 4th of July Celebration doesn't happen without sponsorship support ... say what you want but we owe a huge thank you to our Ultimate Stars and Stripes Sponsor, Marathon Digital Holdings; our Stars and Stripe Sponsors, Glenn Aire Heating & Cooling, H-E-B, the City of Granbury, Hood County, Granbury ISD, and our other key sponsors Lake Granbury Medical Center, Lakeside Physicians, Aviva Senior Living, Mike Huddleston Roofing and One Eighty IT LLC. Thanks to all their support we are able to provide all the events at no charge. And finally, the previously mentioned chamber staff ... Holly, Bethany, Tisa, Tristand and Claire ... words can't describe the sincere gratitude I have for their tenacity, energy, enthusiasm and attitudes. It takes a village, and we're seeing why this weekend. Enjoy the rest of yours.

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COURTESY GRAPHIC

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

granbury CHAMBER

Member Spotlight

Mi Familia

MEXICAN RESTAURANT

Mi Familia Mexican Restaurant

"Mi Familia has become firmly entrenched as a restaurant where families gather, teams celebrate, important occasions are remembered, and everyday life is enjoyed."

COURTESY GRAPHIC

Member Spotlight: Mi Familia Mexican Restaurant. "Mi Familia Mexican Restaurant has become firmly entrenched as a restaurant where families gather, teams celebrate, important occasions are remembered, and everyday life is enjoyed." Thank you for joining the Granbury Chamber of Commerce!

Local farmers receive 'Farmer of the Year' conservation award

From Staff Reports

Hood County residents Paydon and Mariah Mercer of Cherokee Lakes Farm were honored with the Farmer of the Year award for conservation given by the Brazos Valley Soil and Water Conservation District and the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board.

Every year outstanding conservationists are recognized by district. The Mercer family was the only award recipient in this area.

"The members of the board and myself are very proud of the hard work the Mercers put into conservation on their farm to receive this award," said Dawn Noland, district clerk for the Brazos Valley Soil and Water Conservation District.



COURTESY PHOTO
From left, Grady Gibson, president of the Central Texas Association of Soil and Water Conservation District presents the Farmer of the Year Award to Mariah and Paydon Mercer of Cherokee Lakes Farm.

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DUTY CALLS! MILITARY SENDOFF FROM TOLAR

Elle Rodriguez knew that these young men from Tolar were humble and not seeking attention. However, she believed that the community would want to honor her sons, Jaden (Navy) and Julien Rodriguez (Air Force), along with Alexander Gould (Marines), Tristan Gauge (Marines), and Casey Wells (Army) for their decision to serve the country. Friends and supporters opened the send-off to the public at The Feed Lot in Tolar on Saturday evening, June 22, to meet them and offer well wishes and prayers. Casey and Tristen had already reported for service and were unable to attend. Hope Community Church Pastor Lowell Ercanbrack, who volunteers for the fire department, led a prayer for the young men, and Riley Stephens Memorial Post 7835 members also showed up in support. The event featured entertainment by Hayden Huse, Addysyn Spencer, and DJ Joseph Pilgrim. There was a bounce house for the kids, and the Tolar Volunteer Fire Department proudly displayed the American flag. Elle Rodriguez made sure to mention that local businesses Sno Time, Sandi Beaches, Taqueria Crucita, Wearhouse on 377, Braces On the Brazos, All About Sports, and Dope Spice deserved a lot of credit for help in sponsoring the event. [View the full gallery at hcnews.com.](#)



PHOTOS BY MARY VINSON | HOOD COUNTY NEWS

From the far left, Bennie Herd, Jaden Rodriguez, and Alexander Gould, with Julien Rodriguez and Michael Johnson seated. Bennie and his wife Linda are neighbors with Jaden and Julien and have enjoyed watching them mature into fine young men. Bennie's sound advice and car mechanic lessons are sure to serve Jaden, Julien, and even Alexander well as they serve our country.



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27-28	Texas Cowboy Symposium - Texas State Championship Chuckwagon Cook-off and Western Swing Festival
28	HANK FM Lake Fest
OCTOBER	
3-27	The Sleepy Hollow Experience - Langdon Grounds
4-6	Oktoberfest
5	Romancing the Monarch Butterfly Festival

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



ASHLEY TERRY | HOOD COUNTY NEWS

The city of Granbury recently acquired Granbury Square Plaza, located at 201 E. Pearl St.

PLAZA
FROM PAGE A1

Even with the change of ownership, Coffman said the leases are still viable, but he intends to keep the cash flow coming to help with finances. "I showed the building last week to a company that's considering building here that's going to create jobs, and they need office space for their (certified public accountant) quickly, so we may have somebody moving in on that soon," he said. "But it's mostly rented; it's about 75% occupied, so the cash flow pays its way right now."

Coffman said the goal is to turn the plaza into a "shining star" — something that attracts tourists to Granbury when they first pull into town and see it.

"It's really in a demise condition right now," he said. "We're working to repair the air conditioning, the roofing, the painting, and some structural woodwork needs to be taken care of on that old plaza area itself, where the wood's rotted. It doesn't give us a good look, so we want to clean it up and make it really attractive."

So far, city crews have landscaped the area to make it appealing for the Fourth of July — but Coffman said the city has a "long way to go" to restore the plaza back to its pristine condition. "We're trying to save the building at the same time as keep the occupancy," he added.

As far as future plans, Coffman said the city has talked about potentially expanding the current parking lot and has also envisioned creating an economic development incubator system to help provide resources and services to new and growing businesses.

"There would be workspace available for new startup businesses through grants and other things to help fund that to get them up and going," he said. "We don't have the vacancy yet to start that incubator program yet, but that's kind of what we're doing."

For more information about Granbury Square Plaza or for booking details, go online to VisitGranbury.com.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF COUCH SURFER MINISTRIES

Couch Surfer Ministries President and Pastor Michael Reed preaches to shelter visitors.

HOMELESS
FROM PAGE A1

allenges facing the homeless in Granbury, with the domestic violence center and Couch Surfers being the only available shelter options. "We've seen about two or three homeless individuals a week needing assistance," he said. "With limited shelter options, we do what we can, including offering transportation to metroplex shelters, gas vouchers and food assistance."

The individual seeking assistance must call the shelters directly, as they will ask several personal questions to assess qualifications if a spot becomes available. "Once the person has identified a place with available space where they would like to go, we (the church) can provide transportation services to the designated shelter," Freeman explained.

Scovel echoed the sentiment. "The number of homeless seeking our services has grown by

over 75% in recent years," she said. "We partner with various nonprofits to assist them, but the lack of affordable housing and public transportation makes achieving self-sufficiency difficult."

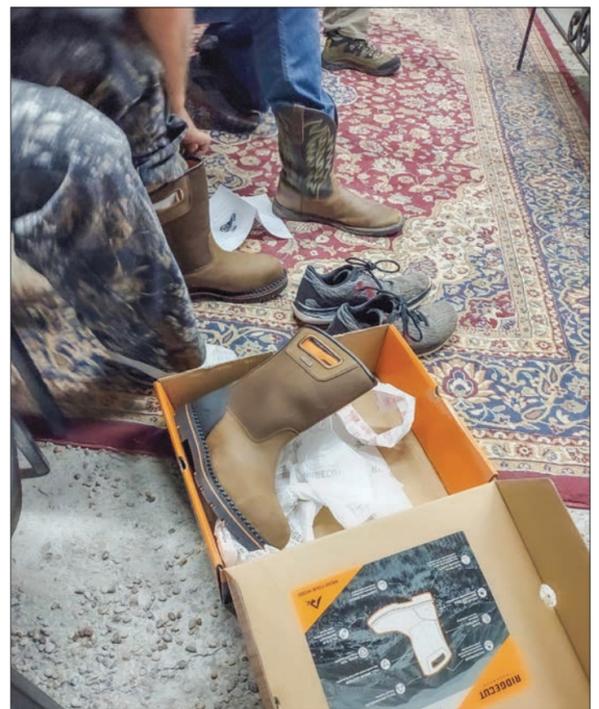
Hood County Sheriff Roger Deeds and Granbury Police Chief Mitch Galvan also recognize the importance of organizations like Couch Surfer Ministries. "Our deputies sometimes help with rides or money," said Deeds. "We refer individuals to churches and shelters when we can."

Galvan added, "We get them in touch with social services organizations, including Couch Surfers, to provide the assistance they need."

A MISSION BORN OF FAITH
Michael Reed recounts the

PLEASE SEE **HOMELESS** | A13

Couch Surfer Ministries provides boots for residents who just obtained work.



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DIVIDED

FROM PAGE A3

tie. Then, as I understand it, there was a re-vote and somebody changed their vote from Mrs. Zamarron to Mrs. Graft, which gave Mrs. Graft eight votes. As a result, Melanie Graft will be on the ballot as the Republican nominee for District Clerk in November.”

Bufkin added that he “believes in — and must trust — the process,” and that he is proud of the choice he made in appointing Zamarron as district clerk.

“There is a process in place to ensure that when there is a vacancy, I immediately fill it so that justice is not affected,” he said. “There is a separate process that allows a candidate to be placed on the ballot as a Republican by the executive committee. The executive committee is made up of the county chair and precinct chairs all voted on by the individual precincts. The people select them to make choices like this. Now that the process is complete, I accept the results and move forward for justice. I have reached out to congratulate Mrs. Graft on her nomination.”

Bufkin said as a judge, he stays above the fray on political disputes and says this was a unique situation in which he had to make a choice with political ramifications.

“Since we still have an upcoming general election, I do not want to presume anything. But to whomever is the district clerk on Jan. 1, 2025: I will do everything in my power to make this a smooth transition and pledge to work well with that person to the best of my ability,” he said.

He added that he has known both Graft and Zamarron on a personal level for the past few years and that he has had talks about God with both of them.

“Even though all three of us are very different people, we all need the love of Jesus. These are my Christian sisters,” Bufkin added. “Let’s not forget the humanity of everybody involved when we engage in the discourse. As always, I covet your prayers for our justice system. I care for it so deeply.”

The Hood County News reached out to Republican Party Chair Greg Harrell and asked several questions regarding why the meeting was held in executive session and why Graft was allowed to vote for the district clerk nomination. Harrell did not respond to those questions.

“We’re trying to bring people together is what we’re trying to do,” Harrell told the HCN.

He added that the meeting was a “representative form of governance” and that the Hood County Republican Party executive committee “discharged their duties properly.”

“They were faithful and I’m very proud of them,” Harrell said. “Now, we will go out and we will elect Republicans in November.”

Treasurer McCoy honored by TAC for commitment to county investment education

From Staff Reports

Hood County Treasurer Leigh Ann McCoy was recently recognized by the Texas Association of Counties for five years of outstanding dedication to county investment education. The honor was presented during the 2024 Conference of the County Investment Academy held June 10-12 in Irving in Dallas County.

McCoy stood out as one of 30 officials in the state to be honored for five years in the program. A special luncheon was held June 11 to commemorate this pursuit of excellence in investment education, where 50 other officials were also recognized for their own milestones of five, 10, 15, 20 and 25 years.

The Texas Public Funds Investment Act requires county commissioners courts to appoint a county investment of-

ficer to invest county funds. These officers and their investment staff need to possess a comprehensive understanding of sound investment policies and adhere to the act’s stringent requirements.

Since 1992, TAC has been providing formal education for county investors through its County Investment Academy, formerly called County Investment Officer training. Participants become members of the academy by completing the Basics of County Investing Course.

The County Investment Academy provides for the needs of officials and staff involved in public funds investing at the local level by hosting the June conference and the Texas Public Funds Investment Conference in November.

TAC is a nonprofit organiza-



COURTESY PHOTO

Hood County Treasurer Leigh Ann McCoy was recently recognized by the Texas Association of Counties for five years of outstanding dedication to county investment education.

tion that, since its creation in 1969, has played a crucial role in supporting the efforts and needs of counties across the state.

Barbara Townsend earns Master Trustee designation

BY LAUREN DAVIS
Staff Writer
Lauren@hcnews.com

Barbara Townsend, a trustee of Granbury Independent School District (GISD), has been awarded the prestigious title of Master Trustee after completing the TASB program, an initiative sponsored by the Texas Association of School Boards. Townsend and 32 other school board members from various Texas school districts achieved this designation by fulfilling all program requirements, marking the highest recognition offered by TASB.

During a board of trustees meeting June 24, GISD Superintendent Jeremy Glenn congratulated Townsend, stating, “Over the weekend, our Board President Barbara

Townsend completed her year-long education with the Texas Association of School Boards, graduated from Leadership TASB, and became a Master Trustee.”

“This is a voluntary program, and I am only the third GISD trustee to ever graduate from it,” Townsend shared. “The other two are Dr. Barbara Herrington and John Mark Graves.” The Leadership TASB program, which accepts up to 35 participants annually, aims to enhance trustees’ skills. Applicants must have served

PLEASE SEE **TOWNSEND** | A9

COURTESY PHOTO

President of Leadership TASB Shelli Conway (right) presents the Master Trustee certification to Barbara Townsend.



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OBITUARIES

Carolyn Fisk Kagy

November 12, 1954 - June 19, 2024

Carolyn Fisk Kagy, age 69, passed away on June 19, 2024 in Clifton, Texas. Carolyn was born on Nov. 12, 1954 in Fort Worth, Texas. Carolyn was a cherished member of the community and a beloved family member.



Fisk as well as eight nephews and nieces.

Carolyn attended Cedar Hill High School and Tarleton State University. She was a long-time resident of Granbury where she was the marketing manager at the Granbury CVB. Carolyn retired to Clifton, Texas after working for the City of Rosenberg as the manager of the Rosenberg Civic Center.

Carolyn enjoyed the outdoors, traveling, and hunting. She was an extraordinary Siamese cat mom.

Carolyn is survived by siblings Dana Comeau, Julie Comeau, and David

No services are scheduled per Carolyn's request and donations can be made to the following charities:

ORCA-orcahope.org, Austin Siamese Rescue-austinrescue.org, Weatherford Whiskers-weatherfordwhiskers.org.

Jesse J. Franklin

December 29, 1944 - June 29, 2024

Jesse J. Franklin, 79, of Lufkin, Texas died Saturday, June 29, 2024 in a local hospital. Cremation arrangements are under the direction of Carroway Funeral Home.

Jesse was born Dec. 29, 1944 in Lamesa, Texas to the late Billie (Hurst) and H.P. Franklin.

Jesse resided in Granbury, Texas for 44 years before moving to Lufkin in 2019. He was an automotive mechanic his entire life, retiring from the United States Post Office Vehicle Maintenance Division. Jesse was a veteran of the United States Army, proudly serving in Vietnam.

Survivors include his daughter and son-in-law, Gini Franklin and Celso Rodriguez; former wife, Aliene Franklin; and stepson and daughter-in-law, Kurt and Robin Jones.



He was preceded in death by his parents; maternal grandparents, Jesse and Willie Hurst; paternal grandparents, James and Hallie Mae Franklin; and wife, Bobbie Stanley Franklin.

Memories and condolences may be added at www.carrowayfuneralhome.com.

Carroway Funeral Home, Lufkin, directors.

BRIDGE STREET HISTORY CENTER

The Black Ranch story

BY RALPH WALTON JR



Ralph H. Walton Jr. and his wife, Patsy, have resided in Hood County since 1974. He is a retired Senior District Judge for the 355th District Court of Hood County. He served as judge of that court for more than 27 years and continues to serve as a visiting judge when needed.

The John R. Black Ranch is located on State Highway 4, approximately five miles west of Granbury. It has been in the Black descendants' ownership for many years.

When the late John R. Black and his wife began to put ranch properties together in Hood County many decades ago, they established as their agricultural objectives the following:

To leave their land better than they found it;

Make two blades of grass grow where one grew before;

Make running water clear; Keep soil erosion under control; and

Produce quality livestock.

The ranch is not only the largest in Hood County, but also is the largest ranch between Fort Worth and San Angelo. The ranch originally encompassed 25,000 acres.

Some of the early landowners of the ranch land were: Dan Cogdell, Tom Jones, W.R. Ross, Sherman McElroy, Thurman Brooks, R.W. Simmons, Bert Johnson and Sonley Cooke, among others.

The ranch is comprised of two physiographic areas: Grand Prairie soils and West Cross Timbers soils. More than 70 varieties of native grasses make up most of the plant inventory on the ranch. Through the years the operation has consist-

ed of a three-phase live-stock program: purebred and commercial Hereford cattle, Angora goats and Rambouillet sheep.

Some of the persons who worked on the ranch over the years included: Jack Brown, J.D. Bird, William McReynolds, W.M. Wells, Roy Hickey, Harold Spencer, Gage T. Nelson, N.J. Rogers, Aubrey Ackorage, Jerry Bird, Miguel Z. Hernandez, Ollie Donahoo, Adolpho and Louisa Elizondo, Lee Moss, Mrs. Glenn Long, Mrs. R.W. Perry, Nelda Bird and Alfred Green, who worked on the ranch longer than any other employee.

In the 1950s, Clyde Wells became the ranch manager of the Black Ranch. Wells was a graduate of Texas A & M University and had a distinguished career in ranching and also in education and politics. He was director for the Texas and Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association, the

Southwestern Exposition and Fat Stock Show, and the Texas A & M Research Foundation. Wells was appointed to the governing body of the Texas A & M University system in 1961 by Governor Price Daniel. He served until 1985 and was the school's longest serving regent, being reappointed by four governors. He was chairman of the board of Texas A & M for 12 years. Dedicated in 1980, the Clyde H. Wells Fine Arts Center on the Tarleton State University main campus in Stephenville is named for Wells. Wells Hall, on the campus of Texas A & M University is also named in honor of Wells. Wells and his wife, Marie White Wells, are interred in Stephenville Cemetery near the campus of Tarleton State University. The owners of the Black Ranch are the children of the three deceased children of Mr. and Mrs. John R. Black Sr.

TOWNSEND

FROM PAGE A8

as a trustee for at least 18 months. Townsend detailed her experience, stating, "Some of my master classes included topics like how policy impacts opportunities for at-risk students, communication skills to build consensus, and what to expect from the 89th Legislative Session. We also visited school districts across the state to learn from their strengths and weaknesses."

The Leadership TASB class met with TASB's Summer Leadership Institute in Fort Worth, attracting more than 1,000 school leaders. The institute provided comprehen-

sive training on effective board governance, featuring keynote speeches from education experts and offering district showcases and networking opportunities.

"Our class designed four courses for new trustees," Townsend explained. Leadership courses included Trustee Onboarding — How to Incorporate New Trustees into The Team of Eight, School Finance Basics, The Relationship between the School Board and the Superintendent, and Best Practices for Board Operating Procedures.

These courses aim to provide essential knowledge and skills to new trustees, ensuring effective governance and leadership in

their respective districts.

On June 13-15, the Granbury board of trustees, along with Townsend, participated in summer leadership courses in San Antonio. The program focused on five critical issues in Texas public education: equity in funding, teacher retention, student mental health, technology integration in classrooms, and enhancing parental engagement.

Following the graduation ceremony June 22, Leadership TASB participants joined more than 1,000 school board members statewide as alumni.

Reflecting on her experience, Townsend said, "I now have 32 trusted friends from diverse dis-

tricts across the state who are as passionate about public education as I am. They are my sounding board and resource for bringing new concepts to our board to improve the governance of Granbury ISD. I am more passionate than ever about the importance of public education as the great equalizer and its role in ensuring democracy flourishes."

TASB, established in 1949, is a voluntary, non-profit association serving local Texas school boards. The school board members, the largest group of publicly elected officials in Texas, represent districts serving more than 5.5 million public school students.

SUBMITTING AN OBITUARY

Obituaries are submitted online at obituaries.hcnews.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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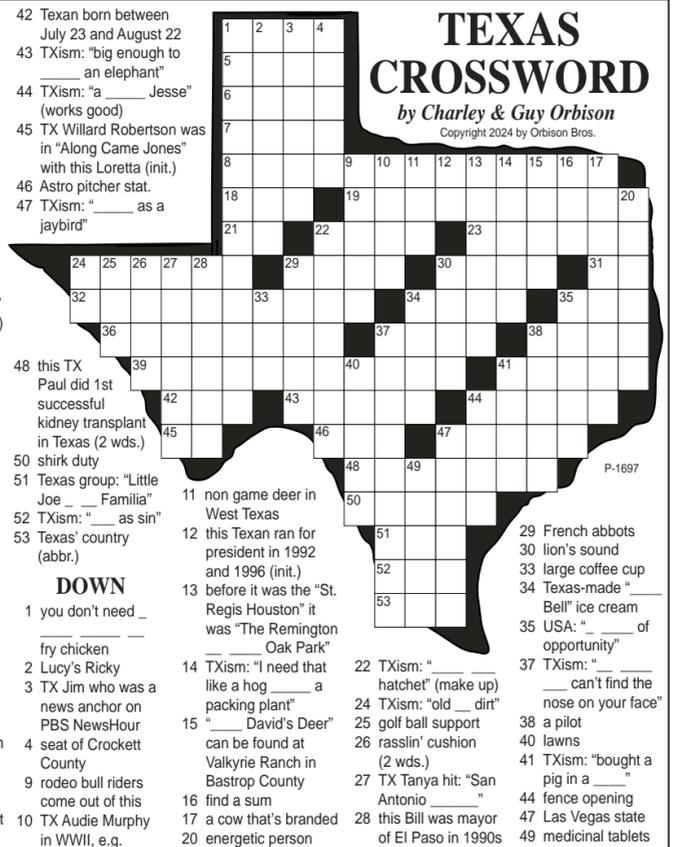
- this Guthrie played at eight of TX Willie's "Farm Aids"
- "ten" in Mexico
- Eden newspaper
- "___ your keep"
- TXism: "lonely as a ___ day"
- Texas voted for this pres. four times
- Texas flag being flown upside down (2 wds.)
- "Oh, Pretty Woman" singer, TX Roy (init.)
- ___ burnett, TX in Wichita County
- Texas Rangers were first paid \$1.25 ___
- pecan pie is ___ dessert
- Texans must get this registration renewed each year
- Texas-filmed "Two ___ Together"
- hosp. nurse
- Mexico's 9th month
- TXism: "ramrod"
- 24-across is even better ___ mode
- brother of Lee Harvey Oswald's killer (2 wds.)
- Venetian blind part
- con game: ___ flam
- TXism: "___ shorts in a knot" (calm down)
- city where Pizza Hut is headquartered
- Texan born between July 23 and August 22
- TXism: "big enough to an elephant"
- TXism: "a ___ Jesse" (works good)
- TX Willard Robertson was in "Along Came Jones" with this Loretta (init.)
- Astro pitcher stat.
- TXism: "___ as a jaybird"
- this TX Paul did 1st successful kidney transplant in Texas (2 wds.)
- shirk duty
- Texas group: "Little Joe ___ Familia"
- TXism: "___ as sin"
- Texas' country (abbr.)

DOWN

- you don't need ___ fry chicken
- Lucy's Ricky
- TX Jim who was a news anchor on PBS NewsHour
- seat of Crockett County
- rodeo bull riders come out of this
- TX Audie Murphy in WWII, e.g.
- non game deer in West Texas
- this Texan ran for president in 1992 and 1996 (init.)
- before it was the "St. Regis Houston" it was "The Remington ___ Oak Park"
- TXism: "I need that like a hog ___ a packing plant"
- "___ David's Deer" can be found at Valkyrie Ranch in Bastrop County
- find a sum
- a cow that's branded
- energetic person
- French abbots
- lion's sound
- large coffee cup
- Texas-made "___ Bell" ice cream
- USA: "___ of opportunity"
- TXism: "___ can't find the nose on your face"
- pilot
- lawns
- TXism: "bought a pig in a ___"
- fence opening
- Las Vegas state
- medicinal tablets

TEXAS CROSSWORD

by Charley & Guy Orbison
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fund, consider these questions:

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The size of your emergency fund should be based on several factors, including your income, your spouse's income and your cost of living. However, for most people in their working years, three to six months of total expenses is adequate. Once you're retired, though, you may want to keep up to a year's worth of expenses in your emergency fund — because you don't want to be forced to cash out investments when their price may

be down, and you may not be replenishing these accounts any longer.

HOW CAN I BUILD AN EMERGENCY FUND?

Given all your normal expenses — mortgage, utilities, food, transportation and others — you might find it challenging to set aside some extra money in an emergency fund. But you do have opportunities. If you're working, you could set up a direct deposit so that part of your paycheck goes directly into your emergency fund. You could also save a portion of any extra income you receive, such as bonuses and tax refunds.

WHERE SHOULD I KEEP THE MONEY?

An emergency fund has two key requirements: You need to be able to access the money immediately and you need to count on a certain amount being available. So, it's a good idea to keep your emergency fund in a liquid, low-risk account that offers protection of principal. For this fund, you're less interested in growth than you are in stability. But because interest rates have recently changed, you may be able to get a reasonable return without sacrificing liquidity or safety.

What types of emergencies should I prepare for
Your emergency fund

could be needed for any number of events: a job loss or early retirement, housing or auto repairs, unreimbursed medical bills, unexpected travel, and so on. But this fund may also be needed to help you cope with other threats. Consider this: In 2023, the U.S. saw a record 28 weather and climate disasters, each of which resulted in at least \$1 billion in damages — and often many times this amount — according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Depending on where you live, your home or business may be susceptible to tornadoes, floods, wildfires, hurricanes and extreme heat and cold

waves. These events can, and do, result in property repair and relocation costs, higher insurance premiums and even price increases for basic goods, such as groceries and prescription medications.

One final word about an emergency fund: It takes discipline to maintain it and to avoid tapping into it for everyday expenses or impulse purchases. The name says it all — this is a fund that should only be used for emergencies. By keeping it intact until it's truly needed, you can help yourself weather many of the storms that may come your way.

Classifieds

Deadline: Saturday issue, 10 a.m. Wednesday

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<p>Real Estate for Sale</p> <p>1010 Acreage for Sale 1020 Cemetery Lots 1030 Commercial for Sale 1040 Duplexes for Sale 1050 Homes for Sale 1060 Waterfront Homes 1070 Lots for Sale 1080 Mobiles for Sale 1090 Waterfront Mobiles 1100 Real Estate Notes 1110 Townhomes & Condos 1120 Property For Trade 1130 Want To Buy</p> <p>Real Estate for Rent</p> <p>1510 Apartments for Rent 1520 Commercial for Rent 1530 Duplexes for Rent 1540 Homes for Rent 1550 Mobiles for Rent 1560 Rooms for Rent 1570 Roommates Wanted 1580 Spaces & Lots 1590 Townhomes & Condos 1600 Want to Rent</p> <p>Vehicles</p> <p>2010 Automobiles 2020 Parts & Accessories 2030 Big Trucks & Trailers 2040 Classic Automobiles</p>	<p>2050 Four-Wheel Drive 2060 Motorcycles 2070 Pickups & SUVs 2080 Vans & Campers 2090 Trailers 2095 Heavy Equipment</p> <p>Farm & Ranch</p> <p>3010 Corrals & Fencing 3020 Farm Equipment 3030 Feed & Pasture 3040 Stock Trailers 3050 Related Items</p> <p>Finance</p> <p>4010 Business Opportunities 4020 Insurance 4030 Investments 4040 Mortgages & Notes</p> <p>Home & Business Services</p> <p>5010 Adult/Elderly Care 5020 A/C Heating Repair 5030 Appliance Repair 5040 Automotive Services 5050 Bulldozer Services 5060 Business Services 5065 Carports 5070 Cement/Concrete 5075 Chimney Sweeping 5080 Child Care 5090 Cleaning Services 5100 Computer Services</p>	<p>5110 Construction 5120 Clock Repair 5130 Dock repair/Rebuild 5140 Electrical 5150 Electronics Repair 5160 Exterminating 5170 Fencing 5180 Floor Coverings 5190 Health Care 5200 Home Improvement 5210 Home Services 5220 Landscaping/Tree Service 5230 Interior Design 5240 Masonry 5250 Mobile Home Service 5260 Moving/Hauling 5265 Plumbing 5270 Sand/Gravel/Soil 5280 Roofing 5290 Painting 5295 Pressure Washing 5300 Septic/Sewer 5310 Small Engine Repair 5320 Secretarial/Office 5330 Storage 5340 Tractor Service 5350 Welding</p> <p>Sports & Recreation</p> <p>6010 Boats & Water Sports 6020 Recreation 6030 Golf 6040 Guns 6050 Hunting/Fishing 6060 Pools & Spas</p>	<p>6070 RV's/Travel Trailers 6080 Sporting Goods</p> <p>Merchandise</p> <p>6510 Antiques 6520 Appliances 6530 Arts & Crafts 6540 Building Materials 6550 Computers 6560 Electronics 6570 Firewood 6580 Furniture 6590 Health 6600 Air Conditioners 6610 Lawn Equipment 6620 Miscellaneous 6630 Musical Instruments 6635 Pocket Stuffers 6640 Portable Buildings 6650 Tools 6660 Trees 6670 Wanted</p> <p>Education</p> <p>7010 Tutor/Instruction 7020 Music 7030 Computer 7040 Art Instruction</p> <p>Livestock & Pets</p> <p>8010 Livestock 8020 Livestock Lost & Found 8030 Pets 8040 Pets Lost & Found</p>	<p>Employment</p> <p>8510 General 8520 Construction 8530 Food Services 8540 Medical/Dental 8550 Office Employment 8560 Professional 8570 Sales 8580 Salon Personnel 8590 Employment Wanted 8600 Employment Information 8610 Carpool Information</p> <p>Notices</p> <p>9010 Happy Notes 9020 Free 9030 Public Notices 9040 Notices 9050 Personal Lost & Found 9070 Card of Thanks</p> <p>Public Sales</p> <p>9570 Auctions 9580 Flea Markets 9590 Out of Town Sales Garage Sales 76035 Garage Sales 76048 Garage Sales 76049 Garage Sales 76462 Garage Sales 76476</p>	<p>Business Hours Monday - Thursday, 8am-5pm Friday, 8am-1pm</p> <p>Deadlines Saturday issue, 10am Wednesday</p> <p>Special Offers Pocket Stuffers Free classified ads. Miscellaneous items up to \$100. Some restrictions apply.</p> <p>Wheels & Deals Place your ad with photo of your vehicle for only \$65.95. the ad will run until it sells or up to 2 months.</p> <p>Place your ad online at www.hcnews.com, call 817-573-7066, or visit us at 1501 S. Morgan St.</p>	<p>Classified Advertising Cost Classified ads for the Saturday edition are \$17.60 per week for 4 lines or less. Your ad will also appear on www.hcnews.com during the ad run.</p> <p>Error Responsibility Customers are asked to check their ad immediately after it appears in the paper and report at once any error found. Claims for adjustment should be made at that time. The Hood County News is responsible for an incorrect ad only the first time it runs, so check your ads carefully</p>
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817-573-4277

EMPLOYMENT

General

HOUSE PARENTS needed at North Central Texas Academy. Both live-in and shift positions available. Apply online at: <https://happyhillfarm.org/residentparents/>

FRONT GATE ATTENDANT needed at North Central Texas Academy. Please pick up an application at our front gate located at 3846 N. Hwy. 144, Granbury, TX 76048.

RANCH HANDS Ranch hands needed to live on a ranch in Tolar/ Paluxy. We offer a salary and free rent in a three bedroom, two bath home.
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The Hood County News is hiring responsible, committed part time help in our insert room. Job duties include labeling, bundling and preparing papers for shipment.

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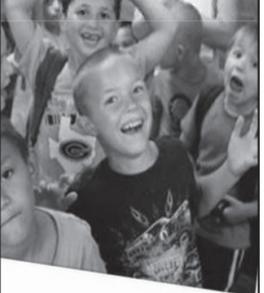
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...y's class of 2015 raised their hooked hands w
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...r, it must have been difficult Monday
students to wait for the final bell. Mary

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NOTICES

9031
Public Notices
LEGAL AD
Hood County Commissioners' Court has received an application to consider a revision of the plat for:

OLD WD RANCH, SEC D, Lots 38R-1 through 38R-7

The Hood County Commissioners' Court will meet to consider the application and to hear any protest to the revision on Tuesday, July 23rd, 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.

LEGAL AD
Granbury Independent School District is soliciting proposals for fences and gates under RFP# 2024-6.

The scope of work and specifications are available online on <https://granbury.ionwave.net>. Proposals will be accepted until closing on July 9th, at 2pm.

All questions regarding the bid should be asked inside the bidding system.

If you have trouble connecting to ionwave please contact purchasing office at 817-408-4087 or Bradee.watson@granburyisd.org.

Hood County Hospital District board of directors will hold a special called meeting for renewal of directors and officers liability insurance on Friday, July 12, noon, at Hood County Annex I meeting room, 200 Deputy Larry Miller Dr., Granbury.

Tolar ISD is accepting bids for LP Gas for the 2024-2025 school year. To obtain bid documents, interested parties should contact:

Tolar Administration Office
Tolar ISD
P.O. Box 368
Tolar, Texas 76476
254-835-4718

Bids will be accepted at the office of the Superintendent until 3:30 pm on July 17, 2024. Bid will be awarded at the regular meeting of the Board of Trustees to be held on July 22, 2024, at 6:30 pm at the Tolar Board Meeting Room. Tolar is an equal opportunity employer.

Public Notices

Advertisement to Bid
City of Granbury

The City of Granbury is accepting sealed competitive unit bids for the following:
Purchase 1500 KVA Transformer RFP No. 23-24-08 until July 18, 2024 at 2:00pm CST, at which time they will be opened publicly at 401 N Park St. Granbury, TX 76048. Bids should be mailed, or hand delivered in a sealed envelope addressed to:

City of Granbury Municipal Service Center
Attn: Purchasing Department
"City of Granbury 1500 KVA Transformer RFP No. 23-24-08"
401 N. Park Street
Granbury, TX 76048

Bid packet and documents will be available on the City of Granbury website <https://www.granbury.org/72/Purchasing> starting July 1, 2024 at 2pm. Specific information regarding this bid shall be requested from Purchasing Manager at 817-573-7030 or crussell@granbury.org. Any Bids received after the closing date and hour will not be accepted and will not be returned. The City reserves the right to reject any and/or bids and to waive any formality in connection therewith.

Tolar ISD is accepting bids for diesel fuel for the 2024-2025 school year. To obtain bid documents, interested parties should contact:

Tolar Administration Office
Tolar ISD
P.O. Box 368
Tolar, Texas 76476
254-835-4718

Bids will be accepted at the office of the Superintendent until 3:30 pm on July 17, 2023. Bid will be awarded at the regular meeting of the Board of Trustees to be held on July 22, 2024, at 6:30 pm at the Tolar Board Meeting Room. Tolar is an equal opportunity employer.

Public Notices

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the Estate of Major Wesley Lackey Jr., Deceased

Notice is hereby given that the Original Letters Testamentary for the Estate of MAJOR WESLEY LACKEY JR., Deceased, were issued on June 06, 2024, in Cause No. P10416, pending in the County Court of Hood County, Texas to:

Pamela Suzanne Lackey Joyce, 8314 Summeret Dr., Dallas, TX 75249

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.

The Law Office of David R. Moss, PLLC
101 Nursery Lane, Suite 359
Fort Worth, Texas 76114

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Notice is hereby given that original Letters Testamentary for the Estate of TODD WOLF, Deceased, were issued on June 5, 2024 in Cause No. P10329 pending in the County Court of HOOD County, Texas, to: JULIE EDLIN WOLF.

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: Representative, Estate of TODD WOLF
Melinda Owens Law Office
1023 W. Pearl St.,
Granbury, Texas 76049
DATED June 27, 2024
Melinda Owens
Attorney for Julie Edlin Wolf
Bar no: 24076602
Office Phone: (682) 936-4005
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ADVERTISEMENT TO BID CITY OF GRANBURY, TEXAS

The City of Granbury will receive competitive sealed Bids for the **Calinco Drive Improvements Project** until **2:00 p.m.** local time on **Thursday, July 25, 2024**, at the City Service Center, located at 401 North Park Street, Granbury, Hood County, Texas 76048. Bids will be publicly opened and read aloud at this time, at the City Service Center conference room.

Bids shall be addressed to the Public Works Director, Chester Nolen. Bidding Documents and Contract Documents, including Drawings and Technical Specifications, may be examined at:

CITY OF GRANBURY
SERVICE CENTER
401 N. PARK STREET
GRANBURY, TEXAS 76048

ENPROTEC / HIBBS & TODD, INC.
402 CEDAR STREET
ABILENE, TEXAS 79601

Bidding Documents and Contract Documents, including Drawings and Technical Specifications, are available from the engineer via CivCast.

Please visit www.civcastusa.com.

Each Bid shall be accompanied by a Cashier's Check or Bid Bond, acceptable to the Owner, in an amount not less than five percent (5%) of the total amount bid, as a guarantee that the successful bidder will enter into a proper Contract and execute Bonds on the forms provided in the Contract Documents. Bid sureties will be returned to all but the three lowest acceptable bidders within ten days after the opening of Bids. Remaining bid sureties will be returned after complete execution of the Contract.

The surety company providing the Bid Bond must conform to the same requirements for surety companies providing Performance and Maintenance Bonds, and Payment Bonds described below.

The successful proposer must furnish Performance and Maintenance Bond, and Payment Bond on the forms furnished with the Contract Documents in the amount of one hundred percent (100%) of the total Contract price, from a surety company holding a permit from the State of Texas to act as surety. The surety company must have a minimum Best's Key Rating of "B" or better. The surety company, the agency and agent issuing the Performance and Maintenance Bond and Payment Bond must be authorized to issue such bonds in Texas in an amount equal to or greater than the total contract price.

Date Issued: July 6, 2024
By: Chester Nolen, Public Works Director
City of Granbury, Texas

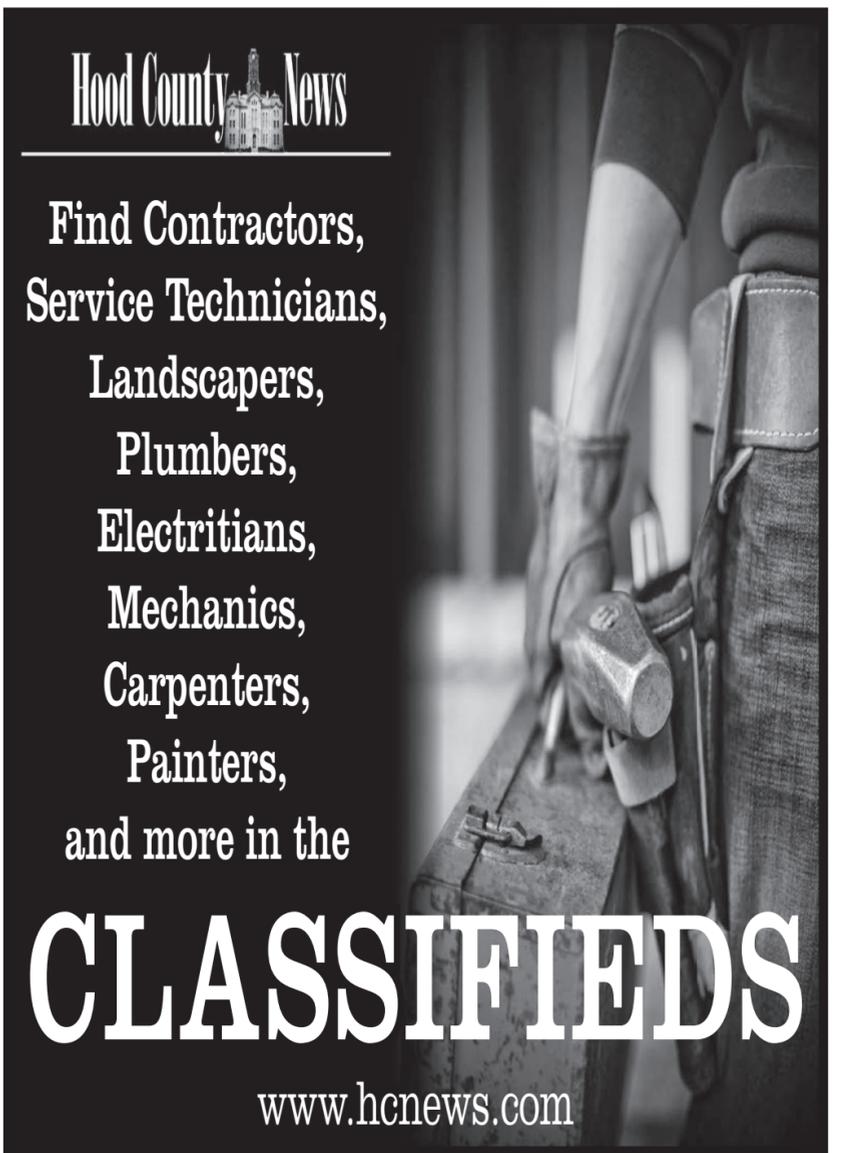
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HOMELESS

FROM PAGE A7

Reed said. "Without our shelter, some individuals may resort to desperate measures, potentially leading to increased crime."

A CALL TO ACTION

As Couch Surfer Ministries prepares to close its doors, Reed remains hopeful that the community will intervene and turn the situation around. However, he affirms, "Even if we close, our mission to serve will continue. We will still offer outreach and provide tents, showers, clothes and food. Maybe God has a different plan for us, or this is a call for others to step up and help."

Reed advises other organizations to "Be a 'hand up,' not a handout. Support organizations that hold individuals accountable and truly help them improve their circumstances."

The community of Granbury has undoubtedly benefited from Couch Surfer Ministries' dedicated service. As the Reeds navigate this difficult transition, they remain committed to their faith and believe that "God's will is being done, and for His glory, not ours."

Donations to support Couch Surfer Ministries can be sent to 4428 Old Granbury Road, Granbury, TX, 76049. The ministry faces closure without support, with monthly operating costs for the building and necessities for about 20 homeless clients totaling approximately \$5,000. Since operating hours vary, it's recommended to call ahead at 817-663-5384. Your contributions can help keep the ministry's doors open and provide essential services to those in need.

According to Reed, Hood County has consistently shown generosity whenever Couch Surfer Ministries requests items such as shoes, boots, food, personal hygiene products and cleaning supplies. However, the ministry is currently facing financial hardship specifically related to covering the costs of the building and utilities. This is where the organization is most in need of support.

LAKE GRANBURY MEDICAL CENTER

Decoding headaches: Seasonal allergies may not be the culprit



According to an analysis of 72 headache studies in Neurology, two common springtime headaches — cluster headaches and migraines — may be closely linked to our sleep/wake cycle.

COURTESY PHOTO BY ADAMAN-TIUMSTOCK, ADOBESTOCK.COM

BY LAKE GRANBURY MEDICAL CENTER

Between the increase in sunlight and the occasional storm the spring and summer aren't always nice to your noggin. And while we might be quick to blame seasonal allergies, there could be another reason you're experiencing more headaches in the spring.

Not only does the change in sunlight in spring affect your circadian rhythm, but so do two hormones — cortisol and melatonin — which signal to our bodies when it's time to go to sleep and when it's time to wake up. Unsettling your sleep/wake cycle can lead to headaches, which can, in turn, lead to sleep deprivation and

cause even more headaches.

According to an analysis of 72 headache studies in Neurology, two common springtime headaches — cluster headaches and migraines — may be closely linked to our sleep/wake cycle.

Cluster headaches are more common in men than women. Symptoms of these headaches include severe pain around the eye, usually occurring at the same time of day and being triggered by alcohol, smoking, foods with nitrates (like bacon) and weather changes. Several studies suggest more than 70% of people who suffer from cluster headaches experience a spike in symptoms during seasonal changes, and most occur late at night or early in the morning.

Another type of common springtime headaches, especially among women, are migraines. Across eight studies, migraine sufferers reported that their migraines were worse between April and October, as well as between the hours of 11 p.m. and 7 a.m. Symptoms can include nausea, sensitivity to light or scents and auras — visual distortions that look like zigzags, blind spots or sparkles.

Migraines also can be triggered by food and hormonal fluctuations. A springtime culprit is the change in barometric pressure, which often fluctuates when the seasons change. In one study, 75% of people reported migraine attacks just before storms, when the barometric pressure drops.

"There are a variety of interventions," mentions Dr. Richard Porter, an Osteopathic Manipulative Medicine Physician at Lakeside Physicians. "I focus on a manipulative approach that can help provide relief without medications; however, sometimes medications are necessary."

Headache prevention aligns with healthier living, including exercising, getting enough sleep, staying hydrated, lowering stress and reconsidering your dining habits when it comes to things like red wine, chocolate and artificial sweeteners.

If your headaches seem frequent, it might be time to consider scheduling a visit with your doctor. Persistent

headaches shouldn't be taken lightly, especially if a headache is also accompanied by fever, numbness or difficulty speaking.

Remember, your healthcare provider can assist you in navigating symptoms, triggers and treatment options. Just keep track of triggers you've noticed and the location where you've experienced the headache pain (one side of your head, behind the eye, etc.) and discuss it during your appointment.

For more information or to schedule an appointment with Dr. Porter, please call his office at 817-573-5994 or visit him online at <https://lakegranburymedical.com/RichardPorter>.

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Camp El Tesoro: A legacy of adventure and learning

BY LAUREN DAVIS
Staff Writer
Lauren@hcnews.com

Established in 1934, Camp El Tesoro celebrates 90 years of outdoor education and adventure for children in North Texas, with the highlight of the celebration camp weekend coming Sept. 27-29. The camp is operated by Camp Fire First Texas, a nonprofit organization established in Fort Worth in 1914. Initially renting property on Lake Worth, the council sought to create a permanent camp home, leading them to purchase 90 acres on DeCordova Bend in 1934 for \$12 per acre.

"We wanted a camp that we owned," said Sara Mitchell, director of marketing for Camp El Tesoro, which means "the treasurer." "Our board scoured North Texas, finally settling on this beautiful spot, which honors the land's history and traditions, Mitchell added." Today, the camp at the bend of the Brazos River at Fall Creek has expanded to 223 acres.

"We're hosting an extraordinary 90th anniversary weekend in September," Mitchell said. She encourages the community to come out and visit for the day. Camp alums will be present to share camping memories from long ago. "We had a lady visit who had been to camp in the 1940s. She was in her 80s. It was neat to meet and talk to her; she remembered," said Mitchell.



An El Tesoro camper climbs a wall.

PHOTO COURTESY CAMP EL TESORO

SUMMER AND YEAR-ROUND PROGRAMS

Camp El Tesoro's keystone program is its traditional summer camp in June and July. Campers can choose from a four-day, six-day or 13-day session. According to El Tesoro's recent media alert, program activities include nature studies, horseback riding, archery, crafts, woodshop, high and low ropes challenge course, yoga, canoeing

and kayaking, fishing, hiking and outdoor cooking, to name a few; all are designed to challenge and engage campers in a supportive atmosphere. The camp also features a nature program focused on different educational themes weekly, such as water ecology and entomology. During the school year, the Texas Outdoor Education Center coordinates various field trips with schools, offering day trips or multi-day outings

for fifth graders. These trips include hands-on outdoor laboratory learning, enhancing students' educational experiences.

SPECIALTY CAMPS AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Camp El Tesoro has grown over the years. Now, the vast retreat includes a variety of year-round opportunities such as family camping, spring break events, group retreats and outdoor educa-

tion for students. At the end of the summer season, there is a specialty weeklong camp called "El Tesoro de la Vida," meaning "The Treasure of Life." This program supports children who have experienced significant losses, providing a safe space to connect with peers who face similar challenges.

COMMITMENT TO SAFETY AND INCLUSIVITY

Initially known as the

Campfire Girls, the organization evolved into 'Camp Fire First Texas' in 1975, reflecting its inclusive mission. Today, Campfire invests in North Texas communities with many co-ed youth camping and outdoor experience programs. Outdoor learning activities like horseback riding, archery and canoeing, for example, expose youth to nature beyond their urban environments.

PLEASE SEE **CAMP** | B2

Running Wolf Ranch saves animals on its own dime



PHOTO COURTESY RUNNING WOLF RANCH

Leslie Faries-Williamson in 2009 with Lakohata Moon, one of many horses she and her family have rescued at Running Wolf Ranch Equine Rescue and Exotic Sanctuary.

BY RICK MAUCH
Special to the
Hood County News

Seventeen years ago, Leslie Faries-Williamson made a new friend — a four-legged one, to be exact.

Rambo would be the inspiration for the creation of Running Wolf Ranch, an equine rescue and exotic wildlife sanctuary. It could be said he led to the saving of the lives of many animals, including his own.

And yes, Faries-Williamson still has Rambo on the ranch located between Weatherford and Granbury that she started in 2008.

"He's our forever 'my little pony,'" Leslie said with a smile. "Our motto is 'No hoof, wing or paw left behind. We will help any animal in need, or we will reach out to other organizations to help us with an animal."

"We took in Harley, a little bat and helped her until the Bat Sanctuary came to get her."

HOW IT STARTED

Leslie went with a friend to help her load up some

horses the friend bought. As they were leaving, they noticed a little tiny pony in what Leslie described as horrible condition.

"She immediately stopped and pulled over. We went up to the door to let them know their pony was showing issues and needed help immediately," Leslie recalled. "The guy responded it was dropped off by his daughter and he refused to do anything for the horse. He didn't want him there in the first place."

"I immediately said I'll take him if you don't want him. In the end I carried Rambo to the truck and we immediately left to the vet with him."

Leslie said that opened her eyes to rescuing horses and she made a promise to him to help those who needed her.

"Rambo has now spent his lifetime with us. Our whole rescue was built on this little guy," she said.

HOW IT WORKS

Running Wolf is not a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization. However, it is also not about profit, Leslie said.

Everything it takes to run Running Wolf comes out the pockets of herself and her husband Tracy, she stressed.

"Our family has stepped up with free labor, occasionally tack and stuff they acquire," she said. "This isn't about us, but about making sure the animal gets a lifetime forever home. And we don't charge ridiculous animal adoption fees, because we aren't in the business of getting rich off of some poor baby's life."

There is a charge of \$50 for small animals, \$85 for farm animals, \$5 for chickens and ducks and \$300 for horses. Leslie said every dime immediately goes back to buy items such as hay, feed, worm medication, fly spray and medical supplies for emergency.

"We pay for this out of our own pockets, so we do charge an adoption fee to show proof that you're willing to commit to the animal's lifetime commitment," she said. "These animals depend on us."

The animals spend a mini-

PLEASE SEE **RANCH** | B2

The summer work of Granbury ISD's custodians and maintenance crew

BY MICKY SHEARON
Special to the
Hood County News

As the summer sun blazes over Granbury, the dedicated maintenance and custodial teams of Granbury ISD are hard at work, ensuring the district's facilities are in top-notch condition for the upcoming 2024-25 school year. With the first day of school fast approaching, these teams are in full swing, undertaking a plethora of projects to guarantee a smooth and welcoming start for students and staff alike.

Led by maintenance supervisor Scott Campbell, the maintenance crew is on a mission, moving from one campus to another to tackle

an extensive list of tasks. "We're refinishing walls and floors across the district, including a major overhaul at Baccus Elementary where we've removed lockers to give the floors a fresh look," shared Emmett Whitefield, a spokesperson for Granbury ISD. "We're also completing interior painting requests from various campuses and changing HVAC filters to ensure optimal air quality."

One of the standout projects this summer involves relocating a portion of the ESL program to Baccus Elementary. "This move is a significant undertaking," Whitefield noted. "Our facility team is responsible for moving teachers and their classrooms to new buildings,

making sure everything is set up and ready for the next academic year."

Meanwhile, the custodial team, under the leadership of Director of Support Services Bryan Johnson, is performing a deep clean of the district's facilities. "Our custodial crew is stripping old wax off floors, recoating surfaces, and extracting carpets at each campus," Whitefield explained. "They're doing all of this while accommodating summer school students and staff."

Granbury ISD spans over 1.3 million square feet of building space across 424 acres at its 10 campuses, presenting a significant challenge for these dedicated

teams. Despite the vast area they cover, their commitment never wavers. "Our teams take immense pride in their work," Whitefield emphasized. "The first day of school is special for everyone, and we want our campuses to look and feel clean and updated to provide a memorable first day experience."

Whitefield's appreciation for the maintenance and custodial crews is evident in his praise. "The facility and custodial teams at Granbury ISD are top-notch. Our district couldn't operate without the work they do," he said. "From daily maintenance requests to keeping our campuses smelling, looking and feeling clean, they do a

tremendous job of giving our students and staff a safe and healthy learning and working environment."

The summer heat in Texas is relentless, yet these teams push through to ensure Granbury ISD remains a beacon of excellence. "Our crews are working hard all summer long in this Texas heat to help make Granbury ISD the best it can be," Whitefield remarked. "So the next time you see one of our hard-working team members, tell them thank you for all they do for our students and staff."

Indeed, the work of the maintenance and custodial teams often goes unnoticed, but their impact is felt by everyone who steps

into a Granbury ISD school. Their dedication to creating a clean, safe and welcoming environment is a cornerstone of the district's success. As the new school year approaches, the fruits of their labor will be on full display, reminding us all of the vital role they play in the educational experience.

So, as we prepare to welcome students back to school, let's take a moment to acknowledge and appreciate the unsung heroes who work tirelessly behind the scenes. Their efforts ensure that each school year begins on a bright and positive note, paving the way for another year of learning and growth at Granbury ISD.

HOOD OUTDOORS

Holiday boat traffic – be courteous



BY MICHAEL ACOSTA

As a licensed professional fishing guide, Michael Acosta shows you how to find them. The Granbury resident of 30 years has been fishing all his life and has been a licensed guide since 1998.

As is the case most every weekend this summer on the water and especially holiday weeks/weekends, you will more than likely have to deal with numerous boats on the water. Some will be experienced boaters and others will be new to the water. The best policy on the water is to be courteous and respect the rights of others.

Lake Granbury Brazos River Authority requires you maintain a minimum of 100 feet from other boaters. The state law requires 50 feet, however there are differences on some reservoirs. Many folks are not aware of the differences on Lake Granbury. These distances are put in place to protect you.

With all the traffic, the anglers and pleasure boaters are both out. Be considerate of each other. Your wake/wave can interfere with the angler. Please respect other boaters and anglers on the water. There is plenty of room so you don't have to crowd oth-

ers. This is common courtesy.

There are also several "no wake" areas on Lake Granbury including under the bridges near town. Numerous folks have been issued tickets for not slowing down in these "no wake" areas under the bridges. Read the buoys as they will tell you if you are in a no wake area. There are also numerous no wake areas in many sloughs and subdivisions. Please abide by these no wake zones. They are there to protect people and property.

There are many laws and requirements associated with personal watercraft on our bodies of water. Consult the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department for all boating/ personal watercraft laws and regulations. Some of the basic law requirements for personal watercraft are listed below. All equipment requirements for regular motorboats apply to personal watercraft with some additions. I witnessed the Brazos River Authority



COURTESY PHOTO

Granbury residents Matt, Doug and Jeremy Wilson with their catch of Granbury striped bass last weekend. Dad and his two sons had a great day on the water.

writing tickets last weekend targeting the inappropriate use of a personal watercraft.

Each occupant must wear a life jacket (inflatable life jackets are not approved for use on personal watercraft.

If the personal watercraft is

equipped with a cutoff or kill switch it must be attached to the operator.

Children under 13 years of age are specifically prohibited from operating a personal watercraft unless accompanied on board by a person at

least 18 years of age.

It is unlawful to operate a personal watercraft at night (sunset until sunrise).

It is also unlawful to operate a personal watercraft and jump the wake of another vessel recklessly or unneces-

sarily close.

The rules of having alcohol on board differ some from automobiles. You can have an "open container" in the boat while you cannot have an

PLEASE SEE HOOD | B3

RANCH

FROM PAGE B1

mum of a year at Running Wolf before adoption. Some stay until their lifetime is over and then they are buried with respect and dignity, no matter the animal.

Leslie said the year minimum involves 30 days in quarantine, three weeks to start decompressing, another three weeks to adjust to the animal's new environment and another three weeks to start seeing if the animals can trust those now caring for them.

"Not us trusting them, but they have to start trusting us," she said.

It takes up to six months to get the animals' medical, farrier and nutritional needs on track, and then the assessment of their training levels is done.

"I have to know without a doubt that the animal has been set up for success once it leaves our home," she said. "I've had some that left at the one-year mark, some that were finally able to leave after five years and some that stayed with us their lifetimes."

There is also an extremely tough adoption process for the protection of the animals. This is the result of seeing a pair of horses almost meet their ultimate demise after being adopted, Leslie noted.

"Mike and Molly taught us to press charges on adopters who break their contracts. We had to go pick them up from Bowie — a kill pen — after they wound up there," she said. "If you haven't

owned your own land for 10 years, haven't had the same job for three-plus years, proof of vet, equine dentist, farrier, that your previous animals have had all their shots and routine care, that you're stable and can provide emergency care, then we will not let one of our animals be adopted.

"These animals have been through enough. They deserve to find a forever home with a family who can and will provide for them."

TRAINING

Leslie said the animals are only trained with a soft voice, soft touch, body language approach. Each animal is different, each need is different, so the same type of approach or training does not work on every animal.

"It depends on the level of trauma and abuse they've been through," she said. "But they all get to decompress and learn to trust us, then love us before we start worrying about training or retraining out bad habits they've been allowed to keep."

THE DONKEYS

Tracy remembers well the time they took in some donkeys.

"The donkeys were the best part of it all. I loved my donkeys," he said with a smile. "The horses, the dogs, the wolves, the other animals, they come and go, but the donkeys got my attention. They would line up at the fence each day I arrived home from working, waiting on their hot fries. Feeding time with them was interest-



PHOTO COURTESY CAMP EL TESORO

El Tesoro campers gather around the firepit for "Circle time."

CAMP

FROM PAGE B1

As an American Camp Association (ACA) member, Camp El Tesoro adheres to over 300 safety and well-being guidelines. The camp undergoes regular inspections to ensure high camper-to-counselor ratios, equipment safety and kitchen hygiene standards. A medical professional is on-site 24/7 to handle any health needs.

Inclusivity is a core value at Camp El Tesoro. The camp strives to ensure that all children feel welcome and has facilities that meet and exceed diverse needs. Through year-round fun-

draising efforts, scholarships are available to support families.

DEDICATED STAFF AND UPGRADED FACILITIES

According to Mitchell, Camp El Tesoro boasts a high counselor retention rate. The camp's staff includes about 80% returning counselors, many of whom grew up attending the camp. The Counselor-in-Training program for high school juniors and seniors fosters leadership and personal growth. "We look for counselors who bring fun and joy while prioritizing safety," Mitchell said.

The camp also welcomes various organi-

zations for retreats and events throughout the year, including churches and community groups. Additionally, Camp El Tesoro hosts family camp weekends in October and February, open houses in the spring, and a fundraising trail ride event. The upcoming 90th anniversary celebration in September promises to be a special occasion for alums and the community.

According to its site, Camp El Tesoro's features include 20 modern air-conditioned cabins with full bathrooms, a dining hall with seating for 300 people, a 12,000-square-foot covered equestrian center, two swimming pools, two

archery ranges, a sports court, a high ropes climbing tower with a 300-foot zipline, and miles of wooded trails.

Camp El Tesoro has extensively upgraded facilities over the past decade, including adding a lake for controlled water activities. Over the last decade, beginning in 2008, Campfire launched a capital campaign program and raised more than \$11 million, leading to comprehensive upgrades across the camp's facilities. "This included constructing new cabins, a new dining hall, and enhancing every building in one way or another," Mitchell revealed. "As part of these investments,



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HOOD

FROM PAGE B2

open container in a vehicle. If you are to operate the boat, you should probably refrain from drinking alcohol. The penalties for being prosecuted for "boating while intoxicated," or BWI, are similar to a DWI. Your driver's license (for your car) may be if you are convicted on a BWI, along with fines, jail sentences, etc. It's just not a good idea to consume alcohol and operate a boat.

A little common courtesy goes a long way on the water. We don't want anyone to get hurt. It is only going to get busier on our lake in the fu-

ture, so be careful out there.

HOOD COUNTY FISHING REPORT

The lake is full and the water is hot: upper 80s in the a.m. and low 90s in the afternoon. Thermocline is between 15 to 20 feet down. Crappie fishing continues to be good on jigs and small minnows on submerged structure from the Peninsula to Water's Edge. White bass (sand bass) are good on spinners and trolling pet spoons near the thermocline. Look for sand bass schools chasing bait in open water. Striped bass are good to 14 pounds but can be hit and miss. Striped bass continue to be best on

trolled Alabama rigs and live shad fished near ledges and drop offs on the lower ends. Largemouth bass are good near deeper docks and near main lake points with structure. Crankbaits and soft plastics are your best choice. Catfish are good on cut and prepared baits fished mainly at night. Channel catfish are abundant on shallow humps on cut bait fished near DeCordova.

COURTESY PHOTO

Granbury residents Ronnie Hurd, Roy Kelley and Matt Beilstein with their catch of Granbury striped bass caught last weekend.



COURTESY PHOTO

Brianna Faries-Williamson (L) and her mom Leslie Faries-Williamson with Rambo, the pony that started it all at Running Wolf Ranch Equine Rescue and Exotic Sanctuary.

RANCH

FROM PAGE B2

ing and entertaining." Tracy said they had 23 donkeys arrive in one trailer load, then 27 arrived in the second trailer. They already had four donkeys: Larry, Mo, Kevin and Pipsqueak.

"We were known as the donkey couple for a long time," he said with a laugh.

FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

Brianna Faries-Williamson, Leslie's youngest daughter at age 18, remembers being a young child when her mom started the rescue. Rambo was her first horse.

"I've grown up in the rescue and I've learned people can be really cruel — that animals are nice, they have feelings, yet they just want to love us and be loved," she said.

"People are the real monsters, not animals. I trust them, I don't trust humans. They (animals) taught me hard work, how to build a fence, a shelter, and how to care for them. They taught me respect and gratitude."

Leslie's brother, Jarrett Robertson, has also helped on the ranch — or, as he jokingly referred to it, "the zoo."

"I helped bring home a few rescues, did medical care, feeding, hauling in water, etc. I'll say that was an interesting job," he said. "They (animals) were family."

"And while most of it is horses, other animals do come and go. We've had dogs, we've had cats. We've had chickens, we've had wolves. I believe they've even had a snake or two and a bat. It's just a blessing though to be a part of running Wolf Ranch."

REWARDS/CHALLENGES

Echoing Brianna's thoughts, Leslie said humans are the biggest challenges, and more than the ones who immediately come to mind.

"Not only the ones who do the cruelty in the first place, but those who sit behind their keyboards attacking rescue and rescuers," she said. "Rescuing is brutal, hard work, day-in and day-out. We are in the trenches 24/7 dealing with horrific situations, and humans don't make it easier on us."

She said the biggest reward to her is seeing the animals give their trust and love and seeing them in their forever homes.

"Being one of the 'I survived' stories," Leslie said. "We can't save them all, but for the ones we do, we mean the world to them. We do this for them."

"We are the small private rescue just trying to make a difference."

To which Tracy added, "If not, we always say 'Bring them back. So far we've only had one brought back."

BOOK REVIEW

Forget about figuring out the end of this mystery

BY TERRI SCHLICHENMEYER

Something's missing. And — wait, didn't you just put it down?

Funny how that happens, isn't it? You lay something in a safe place you're sure you'll remember but nope. It's missing now but, like your mother used to say, it didn't grow legs and walk off. As in the new novel, "Don't Let the Devil Ride" by Ace Atkins, it's around here somewhere.

Dean McKellar had left again. It happened a couple years ago, but then, as his wife, Addison, remembered, he was only gone a few days. This time, it was a week with no contact. His phone went unanswered. His secretary offered no information. Addison's brother, who worshiped the ground Dean walked on, had nothing to share. When she went to Dean's office, Addy learned that another business rented that spot. How long could she protect their children, 14-year-old Sara Caroline, or 9-year-old Preston, from Dean's unexplained absence?

Better question: how well did she know her husband? Because it seemed like everybody knew he had girlfriends "all over the place." Exactly how clueless was she?

As the best-known detective in Memphis, Porter Hayes had seen everything, so when Sami Hassan called about his daughter's problems, Hayes didn't think twice. He'd known Hassan back when Memphis was a small town. It was still small enough for Hayes to quickly learn that Dean McKellar's business never existed and that McKellar's "secretary" was just a woman at some call-center. Dean McKellar might not, in fact, even be "Dean McKellar."

And, according to Hayes' contacts at the Memphis Police Department, word was that a lot of people had been hanging around town, asking a lot of questions. One seemed to be bluffing. One of them broke into Addison's house and threatened her and her son. One lived in an old-Hollywood universe. Obviously, Dean was in some kind of deep trouble.

That is, if he was even still alive ... When you read a thriller or mystery, it's human nature to try to have things all figured out before the detective does. Don't count on that in "Don't Let the Devil Ride."

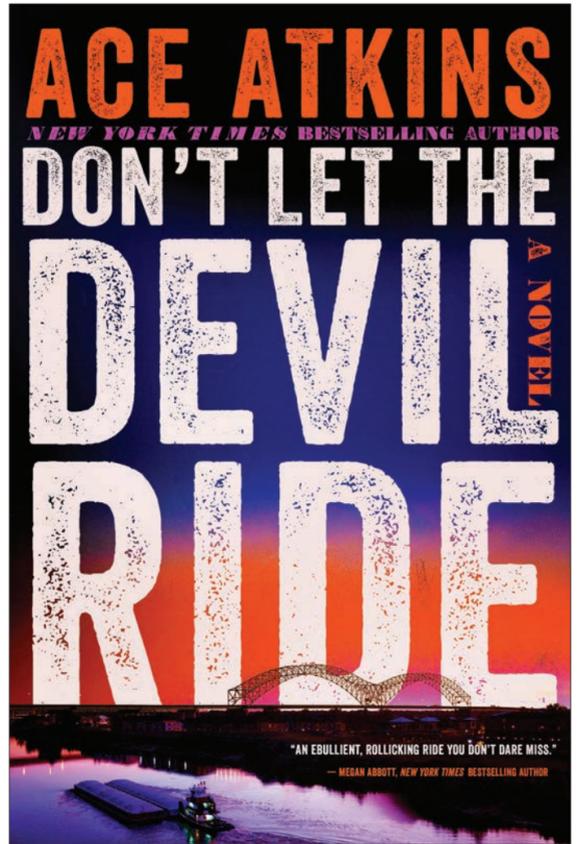
Readers may, in fact, be thrown off-kilter with the way this story is told: in many such books, the detective takes the front-seat in the plot but author Ace Atkins doesn't do it that way. Hayes is hired to find the truth, but he's not the guy to watch. No, chaos leads this story and we aren't told a lot about the other characters, which is important to note. The aging actress, the FBI guy, the Russian, they're enigmas, mostly. They're important to the tale but they behave like walk-on roles in a large movie cast — in and out and in — which is to say that you'll want to keep track of what's going on but forget about figuring out the end. It ain't happenin'.

If you're on the search for a book for vacation, you can just stop here. "Don't Let the Devil Ride" is the one you want. You won't be able to put it down.

COURTESY PHOTOS

TOP: "Don't Let the Devil Ride" by Ace Atkins, c.2024, William Morrow, \$30.00, 384 pages Cns Hilary,

RIGHT: Author, Billy Dabney



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

Puzzle by websudoku.com

4	6			5	7	3			
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CAMP
FROM PAGE B2

the final addition was the creation of a two-acre lake in the middle of the camp, which is now stocked with fish."

SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

"Registration will open in September for next summer. We work to fundraise year-round to help make the camp experience happen for those in need. We usually can assist approximately 50 families with full or partial scholarships," Mitchell explained, "There's an application process for families. Our committee assesses the applicants based on household income and needs. They make the decisions."

MAKING CONNECTIONS

"We've got rock climbing and archery and lots of other activities," Mitchell said, "but it's about connection, it's about friendship, it's about meeting new people and trying new things. I think being away from your television and video games is an opportunity to be yourself," Mitchell adds. "You don't know these people, and you might not see them again, so there's no need to pretend to be the cool kid that you are in junior high."

"As a third-generation Campfire camper, I understand the profound impact of these programs," said Mitchell. "Sharing a program that shaped me as a child is

incredibly rewarding. My mother and grandmother attended Camp El Tesoro; now, my children do, too. Seeing campers discover their abilities and gain confidence is a rewarding experience."

With a summer staff of 65 and a full-time team of around 20, Camp El Tesoro continues to thrive. "Campers receive a list of items to bring like bedding and clothing, but the most important thing they need to bring is their spirit of adventure and openness to new experiences," Mitchell said.

When asked about a memorable 'camp' moment, Mitchell shared, "I would say any moment where a camper realizes they can do it. Like when children are learning to shoot archery for the first time, and there are some technical skills that they need to master, but there's also a mindset that you've got to master," she explained, "Watching a camper put those two things together, and find their confidence after learning the skill, and succeeding — and that look of joy on their face that just says 'I did it.' Parents frequently report significant positive changes in their children after attending camp, noting increased independence and confidence," said Mitchell.

For more information or to get involved, visit Camp El Tesoro's website or attend one of its open houses. Camp El Tesoro - Camp Fire First Texas (campfirefw.org)



PHOTO COURTESY CAMP EL TESORO
Campers enjoy the trails on horseback at Camp El Tesoro.

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. at 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, Mondays 7-9 p.m. at Acton Methodist Church, 3433 Fall Creek Highway. Concerts in May and December. See www.granburycivicchorus.org for schedule and activities. Questions: granburycivicchorus2001@gmail.com. Come join us!

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 weightwatchers.com); 9 a.m. yoga (private class, reservation only); 10:30 a.m. yoga (private class, reservation only); 1:30 p.m. line dancing; 5:15 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 (Mex-

ican 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.

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, 6-9 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 BELLS singers of Granbury, women's choral group, seeks new members who love to sing 3-part harmony, especially first or second soprano. Also seeking experienced piano accompanist. Weekly Thursday rehearsals for Christmas concert season start Aug. 29, 10 a.m. to noon, at First Presbyterian Church Memorial Hall (the Annex), 301 W. Bridge St. Concerts performed during first two weeks of December. For more information, 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.

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 Loving Hands 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.

MONTHLY MEETING of the Granbury branch of the Mid-Cities Stamp Club at the Bentwater Activities Center, 1800 Emerald Bend Court at 7 p.m. Questions? 817-910-8174.

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 Bar-

beque, 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 Emergency Operations Center located at 401 Deputy Larry Miller Dr. HoodCo-Cert@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 Somervell 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.

THE HOOD County Democratic Club meets each month at 1410 Pearl St., Annex #1 at 7 p.m. Questions? Call 817-233-5453.

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 Loving Hands 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
MARINE CORPS League Detachment 1297 meeting at the American Legion Hall, 3409 Davis Road, Granbury. Chow is at 6 p.m., meeting at 7 p.m.

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.

Super hero skate night

PHOTOS BY MARY VINSON | HOOD COUNTY NEWS

The Lakeside Baptist Church's Student Ministry hosted a unique, yet nostalgic event called Super Hero Skate Night at the Granbury Skating Rink. Everyone was welcome to attend, and those who came enjoyed prizes and snacks. See more photos at <https://www.hcnews.com/stories/sper-hero-skate-night,42062>.



CIVIL WAR ROUNDTABLE

Civil war round table plans for fall programs



BY BILL DYESS

William Dyess, a retired attorney, has lived in Granbury since 2007, and has had an interest in the American Civil War since childhood. He is a member of the steering committee of the North Central Texas Civil War Round Table.

The North Central Texas Civil War Round Table does not meet during the months of June, July and August, and is now finalizing its plans for the fall and winter programs. Our next meeting will be Sept. 9. Follow this column for more information about the September program.

JULY IN THE CIVIL WAR

The "Seven Days" campaign, which saw the Confederate Army drive the Union forces back down the Virginia peninsula and secure Richmond, ended July 1, 1862, when a Southern assault on Malvern Hill, approximately 25 miles east of Richmond, failed. While small battles and skirmishes occurred almost daily across the nation, from Arizona (see below) to the east coast, there were no major battles during the month of July. The Confederate Army of Northern

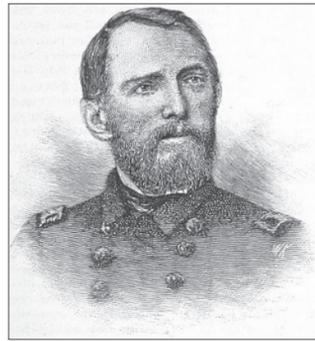
Virginia, under Gen. Robert E. Lee, continued to face the Union army under Gen. George McClellan south of Richmond. McClellan and the higher command in Washington, D.C. were undecided as to advancing again on Richmond or returning the forces to the Washington area. Of growing concern to the Confederacy was the Union's newly designated Army of Virginia, under Gen. John Pope. This army, which included the forces under Gen. Irvin McDowell that had been held in the Washington area by Confederate Gen. Stonewall Jackson's Valley Campaign, was again viewed as a threat to move against Richmond, and the Confederacy lacked the forces to oppose it and at the same time hold McClellan at bay on the Virginia Peninsula.

July did see a rare success for the southern naval forces on the

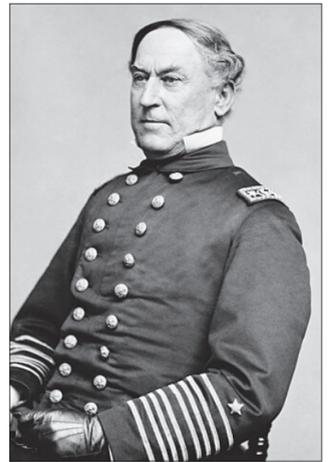
Mississippi River. On July 15, The C.S.S. Arkansas, a newly completed Confederate ironclad, commanded by Commodore Isaac Brown, steamed down the Yazoo River and engaged the Union fleet, under Adm. David Farragut, badly damaging three Union ships and inflicting more than 70 casualties. Although damaged itself, the Arkansas anchored safely under the bluffs of Vicksburg, Mississippi.

DID YOU KNOW

Confederate soldiers were not the only enemy Union forces faced during the Civil War. In the July 15-16, 1862, Battle of Apache Pass, in what is now southeastern Arizona, a Chiricahua Apache band estimated at 150 to 200 warriors, led by Cochise and Mangas Coloradas, fought a two-day battle against approximately 150 Union soldiers commanded by Capt. Thomas L. Roberts, of Company E, 1st California Infantry. Roberts' command was the lead element of the 2,500 man "California Column", under Col. James H. Carlton. This column was advancing from California to southern New Mexico, to assist in securing that state for



Isaac Newton Brown



COURTESY PHOTOS

Admiral Farragut

the Union. The force led by Roberts, although it suffered losses, succeeded in driving the Indians from a necessary water source.

The North Central Texas Civil War Round Table meets the second Monday of each month, except June, July and August, at 6:30 p.m. at Spring Creek Bar-B-Que, 317 E. U.S. Highway 377 in Granbury. Guests are always welcome. There is no charge for first time attendees. For more information, please refer to our website: WWW.ncntextcwr.com, or call David Wells

at 817-579-5769, or Bill Dyess at 817-326-8216. Civil War Round Tables exist in cities and communities worldwide. All are independent and share a common objective in promoting and expanding interest in the study of the American Civil War.

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Uncorking the success of D'Vine Wine

BY LAUREN DAVIS
Staff Writer
Lauren@hcnews.com

At 107 E. Bridge St., in the heart of Granbury, stands D'Vine Wine, a winery that epitomizes community spirit, entrepreneurial creativity and destiny. It is co-owned by Dr. Tony Hedges, his wife, Diane Hedges, and Joshua Winters. This is a tale of D'Vine intervention — strangers brought together at the perfect moment to discover their shared dream of owning a wine business.

In December 2003, at the annual Christmas gala hosted by the Littlefield Chamber of Commerce, the Hedges' decision to bid on a 'unit' would eventually lead them to Granbury. The gala, a cherished event in Littlefield, featured an auction to raise funds for community initiatives. Among the auction items was a getaway package generously donated by the late Dutch Wilkinson, owner of Granbury's charming Plantation Inn.

The getaway package for four included lodging at the Plantation Inn, tickets to the Opera House and Granbury Live, a riverboat cruise and several rounds of golf. Tony Hedges seized the opportunity and purchased the package. However, life kept the couple busy, and it wasn't until almost a year later, in November 2004, that the Hedges and friends finally made their way to Granbury to redeem the weekend package.

THE FIRST VISIT

The trip started with torrential rain, dashing any hopes of golfing. Nevertheless, Diane Hedges, a former nurse, and her husband, a Littlefield physician, became enchanted with Granbury as the group enjoyed the other activities included in the package — the performances at Granbury Live and the Opera House, as well as the riverboat ride. During this lucky weekend, a casual suggestion from one of the four changed everything: "Let's go see what a lake house would cost."

Curious and with time on their hands, the group walked into a Century 21 office on the square and met Walter Hardin, the agent on duty. Despite having no appointment, Hardin graciously agreed to show them around. Their interest was piqued when they toured a beautiful lake house with a boat dock owned by a man going through a divorce and eager to sell. The wife of the Hedges' friends, an interior decorator, was particularly impressed with the home.

Initially, the Hedges considered buying the house as an investment to flip. However, as soon as they walked out the door, Diane Hedges felt a solid connection to the property and spontaneously said to the agent, "We'll take it." Her husband was surprised but went along with the decision. With inheritance money Diane had received from her mother, the Hedges purchased the property.

Their first night in the lake house, sleeping on an air mattress in the living room, marked the beginning of a new chapter. "Tony was a different person here, more relaxed and happier. I knew then we wouldn't sell this house," Diane recalled.

Whenever Diane Hedges encountered Wilkinson, she fondly recalled the events that led them to Granbury. "This is all your fault, Dutch," she would jokingly tell him. "If you hadn't donated that auction weekend, we wouldn't be in the middle of this wonderful adventure."

A BOTTLING WEEKEND

Their journey into the wine business began serendipitously on one of the Hedges' weekend forays to their lake house in Granbury. During one of these visits, they stumbled upon D'Vine Wine on the square, which had been operating for about a year-and-a-half. Originally from Haltom City, young Joshua Winters was the wine store's vintner. The owners had recently told Winters of their plans to sell the shop. They had given him a grace period to come up with the capital to buy D'Vine wine, but time was quickly running out.

Tony Hedges had ordered a batch of wine, and Winters assisted the couple in their bottling party at the shop. "So, Diane and Tony are bottling their wine, and Tony just kind of off-hand says, 'This is the coolest thing I've ever seen, and I've always wanted to own a business like this,'" 27-year-old Winters recalled and said, "Well, let's do it! It's for sale. Let's buy it, and Tony says, 'Yes! I'm in!'"

"Josh mentioned the place was for sale and wanted a partner," Diane Hedges said. "From across the room, I hear Tony yell, 'Sold!'" "You can't just yell 'sold,' Tony, you've had a bit too much to drink!" Winters remembers Diane Hedges saying, "We're having a good time, but let's not get this young man's hopes up." That was the Saturday of Labor Day weekend 2006.

BLENDED THEIR EFFORTS

The Hedges' spur-of-the-moment decision that



From left: Dr. Tony Hedges, Diane Hedges, and Joshua Winters enjoy the atmosphere at D'Vine Wine in Granbury.

COURTESY PHOTOS

Saturday led to a whirlwind of events. By Monday, with D'Vine wines books on the seat next to him, Winters made the five-and-a-half-hour drive from Granbury to Littlefield to discuss the business. After consulting with a CPA, weighing and praying about their options, Tony and Diane Hedges and Winters decided to take the plunge. In September 2006, they purchased D'Vine Wine from the original owners, former County Commissioner Butch Barton and his wife Karen, and Ross and Charlene Merriweather.

Winters, a former manager at Outback Steakhouse, had been working at D'Vine Wine since 2005. Married to Amy Winters, the father of five had a keen interest in the wine industry but no prior experience in winemaking; Winters learned the craft from the shop's previous owners. "I knew a lot about wine but had never made it," Winters said. "Most of my learning has been trial and error." His passion for wine and people is a driving force behind the winery's success. "I love wine, but it's really my avenue to talk to some cool people," he said. "I enjoy making the wine, but I love to share it and talk about it."

Owning a winery was a leap into the unknown for the Hedges. Although they had run a clinic in Littlefield and understood the intricacies of running a small business, they needed to gain a back-

ground in winemaking. They relied heavily on the previous owners' guidance and Winters' growing expertise. "We learned much from the former owners, Josh, and trial and error. We had to educate ourselves about the industry," Diane Hedges said. She and Winters took specialized courses or workshops related to winemaking and running a tasting room. The classes were put on by the Texas Agriculture Department.

TIME TO CRUSH IT

Despite the challenges, their dedication paid off. The Hedges eventually moved to Granbury full-time in January 2011. Winters, now a seasoned vintner, handles the day-to-day operations and winemaking, ensuring each bottle meets their high standards.

"The small franchise we are a part of has a crush factory in Thousand Palms, California," Winters shared. Unlike traditional wineries that bottle only once a year, D'Vine Wine is free from concerns about local weather affecting their crops; they can produce wine year-round. "We buy grapes from various sources," he said, "but all fermentation, blending, bottling, corking and labeling happens in-house."

D'Vine Wine's approach sets it apart from other wineries in the region. "We make over 20 different varieties of wine ranging from sweet to dry," Diane Hedges explained,

"We do not grow grapes; instead, we source high-quality grapes from trusted vineyards in California, Oregon and other states, ensuring the best quality grapes for our wines. Because we're getting grapes year-round, we are constantly bottling and have the equipment right here, and anybody could come in," she said. "During the middle of the week, Tuesday through Thursday, we usually do the production. We're open, and people can come in and watch what we're doing."

Grape growers send samples, which encourages new winemaking. The Hedges and Winters taste them and have their regular customers sample them as well to see if it's something they want to produce. As a result, occasionally, D'Vine Wine had wine which was only available for a short time because it didn't hit the mark. "Sometimes, it can be a good wine, but not what Granbury wanted," said Winters, "Tastes have changed significantly from 2006 until now. The town has changed so much that we've had to rethink how we make our wine."

D'Vine Wines are either sweet or dry. Initially, 80 to 90% of their wines were sweet because that is what people wanted. However, as the town grew, people began to prefer bolder wines. D'Vine Wines had to adapt to this change, aging more to add depth to some of their reds.

BRANCHING OUT

The Hedges decided to open a D'Vine Wine in Manitou Springs, Colorado, near Colorado Springs, around 2008. They had a minor partner, an older gentleman, and the three took turns traveling out there for a week to keep the store running.

As they set up the business, the economy took a downturn. That issue, coupled with the long-distance drive, posed significant challenges for the Hedges. These difficulties ultimately made them decide it was too much to handle, so they sold the business. Remarkably, the store is still there and continues to operate.

Reflecting on the Colorado experience, Diane Hedges shared, "It was fun because we got to build it from the ground up." She also acknowledged the strategic location of their first store, saying, "Being on the square in Granbury is the best place that D'Vine Wine could be. I will tell you, anywhere else, and we wouldn't have near the business that we have."

UNCORKING CREATIVITY

The winery offers diverse wines, from sweet to dry, with names inspired by Texas culture and local landmarks. "When we do blends and fruit wines, we have to get creative with names," Diane Hedges explained, adding, "We want to make wines people enjoy

PLEASE SEE WINE | B12



Granbury's D'Vine Wine store on the square.



D'Vine Wine Vintner Joshua Winters.



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PECAN PLANTATION BITS

Pickleball and swim camp brings fun activity to pecan's youth



COURTESY PHOTO

The Pecan Plantation Pickleball Association held a "Pickleball and Swim" camp recently where nine young men had a fantastic week both on the courts and in the pool. Many thanks both to the attendees and the volunteers for making the event such a success.

BY DIANE LONG



A Mississippi native who has been a Texas transplant for 30 years, Diane Long is a wife, mother and former English teacher who has written Pecan Plantation Bits for 17 years cumulatively. She spends her time both gathering neighborhood news and collecting new books to read. dianelong@yahoo.com | 817-579-9360

The Pecan Plantation Pickleball Association recently facilitated a pickleball and swim camp that found nine young men both on the courts and in the pool for a fantastic week.

Kudos to these gentlemen, as well as their parents (and grandparents) for participation, and many accolades to the volunteers who made the week happen: Maurene Romanowski, Jan

Burch, Susan Harris, Sandy Hayenga, Jill and Tommy Hosek, Jodi Davis, Tracy Davis, Sam Butler, Beverly and Gary Bullard, and of course to Joi Keahey and the PAC staff.

BAKE OFF

A cookie decorating class with a Fourth of July theme for chefs ages 8 and older is today, Saturday, July 6 with two time slot options: from 10 to 11:30 a.m. and from 2 to 3:30 p.m. Participants will learn beginner cookie deco-

rating skills and will take home the delicious bounty of their labor. Instructor Donna Swarb will lead the class, and registration at the PAC is required: 817-573-7952.

TINY TRIBE

Another gathering of "Tiny Tribe Soft Play" is set for Monday, July 8 from 1 to 2 p.m. at the PAC for children ages 4 and younger. This activity provides a chance for parents and children to come together and experience a comprehensive ap-

proach to child development that will boost cognitive skills and enhance social interaction. For more information, contact Ashley Archie at conehead049@gmail.com.

ART CLASS

Summer artistic expression classes led by Anita Lloyd, Ph.D. have three spots on the PAC calendar. Watercolor painting classes both for adults and youth (ages 8-15) will take place weekly beginning Tuesday, July 9 (youth from 2 to 3

p.m. and adults from 4 to 5:30 p.m.), and oil painting will begin weekly gatherings Tuesday, Aug. 6. For more information or to register, call the PAC front desk: 817-573-7952.

SUMMER FUN

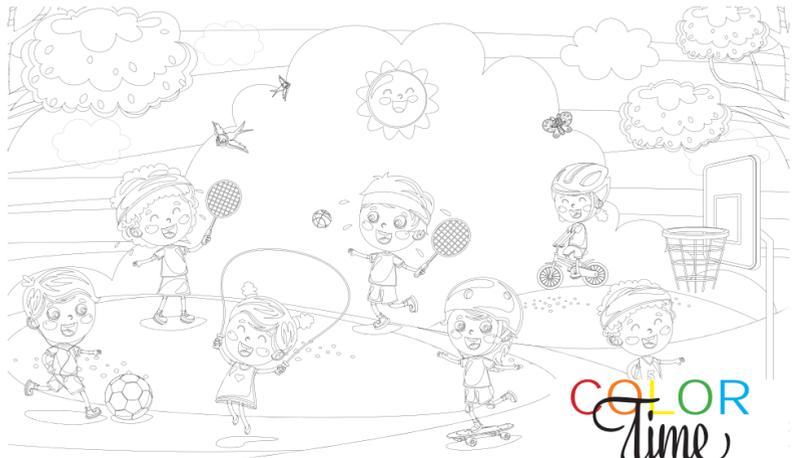
Buffet and Bingo return to the clubhouse Tuesday, July 9 with dinner service beginning at 5:30 p.m. and bingo at 7. Folks may reserve a spot at the clubhouse front

PLEASE SEE PLAY | C7

HCN Junior

National Hop A Park Day

July 6, 2024



How they SAY that in...

ENGLISH: Park

SPANISH: Parque

ITALIAN: Parco

FRENCH: Parc

GERMAN: Park

"National Hop a Park Day" is a playful celebration encouraging families and kids to hop from one park to another, exploring the outdoor wonders each park has to offer. This day, often observed on July 1st, encourages a day of outdoor adventures, physical activity, and appreciation for the beauty of local parks.

For kids, National Hop a Park Day is an exciting opportunity to embark on a park-hopping adventure. Families can plan a route to visit different parks in their community, discovering new playgrounds, scenic spots, and recreational areas. It's a day to engage in various activities, from playing sports to having a picnic, fostering a love for the outdoors and promoting an active lifestyle.

Parents and caregivers can make this day educational by sharing information about each park, its history, and the importance of preserving green spaces. Kids can learn about the diverse features of parks, from wildlife habitats to community gathering spaces, enhancing their appreciation for the environment.

National Hop a Park Day emphasizes the benefits of spending time outdoors, enjoying the fresh air, and connecting with nature. Families can document their park-hopping journey with photos, creating a scrapbook or journal to capture the memories made throughout the day. So, on National Hop a Park Day, lace up those sneakers, pack a picnic, and hop from one park to another with family and friends. It's a day filled with outdoor exploration, laughter, and the simple joys of discovering the treasures each park holds.

Did You Know?

MANY NATIONAL PARKS ARE LOW OR NO COST TO ENTER AND OFFER A NUMBER OF DIFFERENT ACTIVITIES.



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LAYTH TAYLOR | HOOD COUNTY NEWS

Members of the Granbury SEALS swim team await instructions during an early season practice.

Seals prep for regionals with another strong showing

BY RICK MAUCH

Special to the Hood County News

The Granbury SEALS swim team wrapped up its pre-regional competition with its final Texas Amateur Athletic Federation regular-season swim meet. Competing in Grapevine, SEALS swimmers won a total of 86 medals, including 43 gold, 19 silver and 24 bronze.

Next up for the SEALS is the TAAF Region 4 Meet July 13-14 at the Carroll ISD Aquatics Center in Grapevine.

Grapevine Swim Meet Granbury SEALS top results (distances in yards)

Individuals
Male
 Hub Baker, 11-12: Third in 50 breast, 51.58
 Collin Baysinger, 6-Under: Third in 25 Back, 40.99
 Rocky Bludworth, 40-Over: Third in 50 back, 49.40; first in 50 breast, 48.27
 Kyle Brawner, 13-14: First in 50 back, 36.01; third in 50 free, 30.80; first in 200 free, 2:32.92
 Logan Crowe, 13-14: First in 100 free, 1:03.98; first in 50 breast, 37.93; second in 50 free, 28.93
 Zane Frasier, 9-10: First in 50 free, 38.57; first in 25 free, 18.85; first in 100 IM,

1:47.75
 Zane Herndon, 18-24: First in 50 breast, 33.16; first in 50 fly, 30.96; first in 100 IM, 1:13.78
 Reid Holdridge, 8-Under: Third in 50 free, 53.64; third in 25 back, 28.56; first in 25 free, 22.50
 Sean Kim, 13-14: Second in 100 free, 1:06.14; first in 50 fly, 30.54; first in 50 free, 28.73
 Elijah O'Brien, 8-Under: First in 50 free, 48.18; first in 25 back, 26.78; second in 25 breast, 31.76
 Colby Parker, 15-17: Third in 100 free, 1:04.60
 Caleb Prince, 40-Over: Third in 100 free, 1:22.38
 Mason Prince, 11-12: Third in 50 fly, 43.01, second in 100 IM, 42.85; first in 50 free, 1:38.99
 Adler Snow, 13-14: Second in 50 fly, 34.78
 John Stone, 11-12: Third in 100 free, 1:21.29; third in 50 back, 44.73; third in 50 free, 38.35
 Noah Wagon, 11-12: First in 50 back, 42.85; first in 50 free, 34.42
 Jude Ward, 11-12: First in 100 free, 1:07.87; first in 50 breast, 41.45; first in 50 fly, 35.05
Female
 Kori Brawner, 18-24: Second in 100 IM, 1:21.29
 Carmen Citzler, 13-14: First in 50 back, 35.50; first

in 50 fly, 34.48; first in 50 free, 31.11
 Leah Citzler, 9-10: Third in 50 free, 40.92; third in 25 back, 23.01; third in 25 breast, 25.25
 Bethany Crowe, 15-17: First in 100 free, 1:05.14; first in 50 breast, 38.55; first in 200 free, 2:26.77
 Harper Fox, 11-12: First in 50 back, 39.12; first in 50 fly, 37.58; first in 50 free, 34.36
 Jina Kim, 15-17: Second in 50 breast, 41.01
 Burkley Massey, 13-14: First in 100 free, 1:07.43; first in 100 IM, 1:20.71
 Lilli McKelvy, 11-12: Third in 50 back, 42.59.
Top individual performances
Relays
Mixed
 18-Over 200 medley relay: 2. Kori Brawner, Zane Herndon, Tristan Stuart, Rocky Bludworth, 2:54.25
 18-Over 200 freestyle relay: 1. Kori Brawner, Caleb Prince, Colby Parker, Jina Kim, 2:07.26
Female
 11-12 200 medley relay: 1. Lilli McKelvy, Elizabeth Zieschang, Annabel Ross, Harper Fox, 2:45.74
 13-14 200 medley relay: 1. Autum Stuart, Allie Parker, Bailey Stone, Burkley Massey, 2:32.53
 15-17 200 medley relay: 1. Bethany Crowe, Jina

Kim, Hannah Ward, Carmen Citzler, 2:20.72
 11-12 200 freestyle relay: 3. Lilli McKelvy, Eleanor Uribe, Abby Parker, Leah Citzler, 3:00.00
Male
 6-Under 100 medley relay: 3. Jason Conn, Elijah O'Brien, Reid Holdridge, Colin Baysinger, 2:50.20
 9-10 100 medley relay: 3. Jaxon McKelvy, Zane Frasier, Davis Moore, Cutter Plash, 1:59.55
 11-12 200 medley relay: 1. Noah Wagon, Jude Ward, Mason Prince, John Stone, 2:42.82
 13-14 200 medley relay: 1. Kyle Brawner, Logan Crowe, Sean Kim, Adler Snow, 2:15.30
 11-12 200 freestyle relay: 2. Mason Prince, Kallen Rogers, Jameson Plash, Herbert Baker, 3:15.00

JUNIOR GOLF
 Tolar's Alyssa Lester won the Girls 13-14 age division in a North Texas PGA Junior Tournament at Prairie Lakes in Grand Prairie recently. Competing on the Medalist Tour, she posted an 18-hole total of 79 to win by seven strokes.
 Also at Prairie Lakes and on the Medalist Tour, Landon Womack of Granbury placed third among Boys 15-18. He

finished with a 77.
 At Meadowbrook in Arlington, Granbury's Townes Chaveaux tied for second in the Boys 9-10 division on the Prep Tour. He shot a nine-hole score of 37.

PIRATE TD CLUB GOLF TOURNEY
 The Granbury Pirate Touchdown Club Golf Tournament is scheduled for Aug. 9 at Pecan Plantation. The tournament, which will have a 1:30 p.m. shotgun start, will include dinner.
 Cost to enter is \$500 for a four-person team. Sponsorships are also available in the following packages:
 Cart sponsor — \$100, logo/name on a cart
 Hole sponsor — \$300, logo/name on a lawn sign at the teebox or green
 Scoreboard sponsor — \$250
 Scorecard sponsor — \$1,000
 For more information, contact Christine Summers at 817-995-0448 or Sarah Riley at 817-279-2203

GRANBURY FOOTBALL
 Granbury ISD has made a change with its ticketing process by going completely digital, which means cash and checks will no longer be

accepted.
 The 2024 Granbury Pirate football season tickets will become available for everyone to purchase starting July 22 and lasting through Aug. 5. Season tickets are \$40 per seat, plus additional processing fees for five home games. Season tickets will only be purchased online.
 Gold Cards will go on sale Aug. 5 and are \$10 for ages 55 and older, also available by credit card only.
 Contact Amber Nikzad at amber.nikzad@granburysid.org or call the athletic office 817-408-4020 for more information.

GRANBURY CAMPS
 Upcoming Granbury ISD summer sports camps, all at Granbury High School, include:
 Football — July 29-31, grades 7-9, 8-11 a.m. Cost \$75
 Volleyball — July 29-31, grades 7-9, 8-10 a.m. Cost \$75

TOLAR CAMPS
 Upcoming Tolar summer sports camps, all at Tolar High School, include:
 Football — July 29-Aug. 1, grades K-9, 6-8 p.m. Cost \$40
 Volleyball — July 29-31, grades 7-9, 8-10 a.m.; grades 4-6, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. Cost \$50

The world of dinosaurs

PHOTOS BY MARY VINSON | HOOD COUNTY NEWS

On June 28th and 29th, the Hood County Library hosted a prehistoric adventure. Dinosaur Valley State Park educators led an exploration of the world of dinosaurs on June 28th, where attendees got to learn about the park's famous dinosaur tracks, create art projects, and even take part in a hands-on fossil dig. The next day, on Saturday, June 29th, aspiring young paleontologist Noah Hill, known as The Fossil Kid on Facebook, displayed his incredible mini-museum at the library. Visitors of all ages had the chance to hold real dinosaurs, prehistoric reptiles, and prehistoric animal fossils, inspiring and engaging everyone who attended. See more photos at <https://www.hcnews.com/stories/prehistoric-adventures-at-the-hood-county-library,42140>.



TARLETON STATE UNIVERSITY™

Texas A&M System Chancellor John Sharp to retire June 30, 2025



COURTESY OF TARLETON STATE UNIVERSITY

Texas A&M System Chancellor John Sharp, middle, announced Monday he will retire as chancellor in 12 months. Sharp is the longest-serving chancellor in the history of the Texas A&M System.

Tarleton State University

BRYAN-COLLEGE STATION — Porter Garner jokes that he is not sure John Sharp ever sleeps.

"It's not uncommon to get a text from John late at night, or at four in the morning," said Garner, longtime president of The Association of Former Students at Texas A&M University. "He has some new idea or concept he'd like to discuss. Ultimately, it is about A&M, to benefit our students, our former students our university."

"He's the best chancellor we've ever had," Garner added. "No chancellor in history has ever advanced Texas A&M and the Texas A&M University System like John Sharp has."

Garner is among the Texans praising the era of the longest serving chancellor in the history of the Texas A&M System. Sharp announced Monday he will retire as chancellor in 12 months.

"Texas is grateful for Chancellor John Sharp's unwavering commitment to improving higher education in the State of Texas," Gov. Greg Abbott said. "His extraordinary leadership throughout his time as Chancellor of the Texas A&M University System provided young Texans with the tools they need to thrive in our booming economy."

Sharp, who became Chancellor in September 2011, sent a letter Monday thanking past and present regents, system employees and elected officials for their years of support.

"Leading this grand en-

terprise has been one of the great privileges of my life," Sharp said. "I feel a deep sense of gratitude to all of you who have shown confidence in me and contributed to our collective endeavor. Together we have lifted the Texas A&M System to historic heights."

The board of regents will conduct a national search in the coming months for Sharp's successor, said Chairman Bill Mahomes.

"It's an understatement to say we have giant boots to fill," said Mahomes, a regent since 2015. "John Sharp is an Aggie icon — bigger than life — and we all are the beneficiaries of his bold leadership. He has made the system smarter, more innovative, and more responsive to the needs of Texans in every corner of the state."

Phil Adams, who served on the board of regents during the first 10 years of Sharp's tenure, applauded the breadth of Sharp's accomplishments.

"The A&M System has become a dynamo nationally since John Sharp became chancellor," Adams said. "He has had more vision, energy, and know-how than anyone else. Every year he had a big idea, and it got done."

Some of the Sharp era achievements:

A historic building boom with \$11.4 billion for 306 projects that improved facilities at all 11 system universities and eight state agencies.

The Chancellor's Research Initiative built up key research fields by recruiting elite faculty. With additional support from the Governor's University Research Initiative, the ef-

fort has led to a five-fold boost in faculty who are national research leaders as evidenced by membership in the elite National Academies in engineering, science and medicine.

The transformation of Riverside Campus into Texas A&M-RELLIS, a high-tech hub of research labs and test ranges to innovate for national defense and a variety of other needs. With backing from the U.S. Army Futures Command and numerous other outside stakeholders, the system and the state invested over \$1 billion at RELLIS in the past eight years. The campus also includes an innovative academic component.

The acquisition and growth of the Texas A&M School of Law, which has risen faster in national rankings than any law school in history. It is now considered No. 2 in Texas.

The construction and renovation of athletic facilities throughout the system, most notably Kyle Field. Reopened in 2015 with more than 102,000 seats, it is the fourth biggest football stadium in the nation and the biggest in the SEC.

The 10-year agreement to co-manage the Los Alamos National Laboratory, helping with lab management, nuclear operations and national security and scientific research.

A more detailed list of accomplishments is available here.

"Chancellor Sharp has left an incredible legacy with The Texas A&M System and at Tarleton State," said Tarleton State President Dr. James Hurley. "His sup-

port and friendship over the years has helped to elevate our university in countless ways, leaving a lasting impact for generations to come. We are grateful for John's service and leadership and wish him and his wife Diana the best in retirement."

Sharp has overseen 19 construction projects on the Tarleton State campus funded by hundreds of millions of dollars.

In his letter, Sharp noted proudly that "Texas A&M, in particular, has grown to become the school of choice, with one of the biggest enrollments in the nation" while "our culture, our traditions, and the patriotic fervor of our students remain intact. We reflect the great traditions and culture of the state of Texas."

Sharp earned a bachelor's degree in political science from Texas A&M in 1972. He was a member of the Corps staff of the Corps of Cadets, and he was elected student body president.

Before becoming chancellor, he had decades of public service, beginning in 1978 when he was elected to the Texas House of Representatives. He later was elected to serve in the Texas Senate, on the Texas Railroad Commission and twice as state comptroller.

Twice Sharp played critical roles in debates on the future of taxation and state finance in Texas.

In 1991, with the state government facing looming deficits, Sharp, as the newly elected Comptroller of Public Accounts, issued a performance report (Breaking the Mold) that found billions of dollars in efficiencies to side-

step the crisis.

Again in 2006, Sharp — by then out of office — was called by his old college friend and political rival, Gov. Rick Perry, to lead a tax reform commission and resolve a school finance crisis that threatened to close public schools. The commission created a business tax in lieu of an income tax.

"I killed the income tax twice," Sharp said.

Perry was not the only governor to call on Sharp.

In 2017, Gov. Greg Abbott named Sharp as the leader of the Commission to Rebuild Texas in the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey. Sharp accepted the challenge and the unpaid position while continuing to serve as the chancellor of the A&M System.

"Chancellor Sharp rose to the occasion and helped ensure victims received all the necessary resources to recover," Abbott said.

Later, the state decided to improve coordination of disaster response by adding the Texas Division of Emergency Management to the A&M System as its eighth state agency.

"I thank Chancellor Sharp for his dedication to chartering a brighter future for Texas," Abbott said, "and I am proud of the work we achieved together for students across our great state and for all Texans."

Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick called Sharp "a Texas institution."

"Throughout his 45 years of public service in many different roles, Chancellor Sharp learned and perfected how to get things done in Austin," Patrick said. "In his years as Texas A&M Chancellor he was a fierce

advocate for the Aggies and will leave an indelible mark on higher education in Texas long after his retirement. Chancellor Sharp is ever a maverick; he managed to keep me on my toes throughout my time as a public servant. I always enjoyed our meetings and dealings. He is truly one of a kind and I thank him for his public service."

State Rep. Greg Bonnen, who chairs the House Appropriations Committee, placed Sharp in the pantheon of Aggie leadership.

"Texas A&M has had many great leaders like Sul Ross and James Earl Rudder, each leaving behind a legacy that reverberates through the character and values of Texas A&M," Bonnen said.

"As John Sharp's tenure draws to a close, he steps into the history pages of this elite class of Aggie leaders, adding an indelible chapter of transformational advancement and life-changing achievements. His practical and enthusiastic guidance, driven by the spirit of the 12th Man, has forever changed Texas A&M and made our state and country safer and more prosperous for generations to come. I am grateful to Chancellor Sharp and his family for his many years of service to this great institution and the State of Texas."

In his letter, Sharp said, "While I am retiring from this job, I will find ways to continue to serve the great state I love."

He added, "One thing is for certain, I will never be too busy or too old to help Texas A&M and the Texas A&M System."

Tarleton State summer commencement set for July 26

Tarleton State University

STEPHENVILLE — Tarleton State University will confer diplomas during summer commencement exercises at 9 a.m. Friday, July 26, at Memorial

Stadium on the Stephenville campus.

Graduates from the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, Dr. Sam Pack College of Business, College of Education, Mayfield College of

Engineering, College of Health Sciences, College of Liberal and Fine Arts, and College of Science and Mathematics will be recognized.

The ceremony will include both graduate and undergrad-

uate students. Tarleton State President Dr. James Hurley will preside.

For more information or to watch the proceedings live, go to www.tarleton.edu/graduation. A link for the live stream

will be posted prior to the event. For directions to Memorial Stadium or maps of the Stephenville campus, including parking locations, visit www.map.tarleton.edu.



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Isaiah 41:13

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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 be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

Isaiah 41:10

DEVOTIONAL

A guide to Granbury-area churches.

No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.
 1 John 4:12

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- ASSEMBLY OF GOD**
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- Elm Grove Assembly Of God
 3630 Hill City Hwy., Tolar
 254-835-4755
- Faith Assembly Of God
 300 Granbury Court
 817-326-2270
- BAPTIST**
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 254-646-9926
- Bible Baptist
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 817-579-5424
- Brazos River Baptist
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 817-663-5384
- Dennis First Baptist
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 817-565-9027
- Exalted Redeemer Baptist
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- Fairview Baptist
 5041 Weatherford Hwy.
 817-573-8968
- Faith Baptist Of Hill City Hwy. 56
 254-965-3840
- First Baptist
 7600 Fm 1189, Lipan
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Romans 8:28

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THE IDLE AMERICAN

'We have met the enemy and he is us'



BY DON NEWBURY

Dr. Don Newbury is a longtime public speaker and former university president who is Texas' longest-running syndicated columnist, writing weekly since 2003. newbury@speakerdoc.com | 817-447-3872

Walt Kelly is most remembered for his comic strip published more than a half-century ago.

Its central figure, Pogo — campaigning to fight world pollution — made an incisive statement that still rings true.

You remember it: "We have met the enemy and he is us." It's about money. The golden rule has become twisted, however. Now, "them" who have the gold rule.

Coach Jim Schlossnagle's leaving Texas A&M to head the baseball program at the University of Texas provides additional supporting data, but most of the financial

implications concerning his move are far beyond salary implications ...

Hurt to the core minutes after playing for the national baseball championship, he committed two colossal errors in a news conference. They were the kind resulting in "bench banishment" if his players had made such goofs.

He shouldn't have accused a sportswriter of being selfish, and it would have been the better part of wisdom if he had omitted his passionate "heart and soul" description of his efforts.

Millions of others are equally committed without

\$1.35 million annual compensation. (To be fair, at his first UT news conference, his first order of business was to offer an apology to the reporter he had offended earlier.) ...

That said, he is a great coach — proven, committed, successful — and yes, well compensated. But additional "wants" projected for the future at A&M already are in place at UT. Perhaps most importantly, his long friendship with the UT athletic director — with whom he worked during his 17-year tenure at TCU — is immensely important.

Texas A&M is a great university, and most Aggies are good folks. Understandably, many feel stunned and left out to dry by Schlossnagle's departure. (As my Uncle Mort said the other day, they're probably designing a "bubble-head" doll of Schlossnagle, perhaps com-

plete with a needle for Aggie fans given to voodoo activity. He points out that bubbles can float skyward when the Aggies score, but can sometimes wander aimlessly off course.) ...

Now, back to Pogo. We are the enemy, because we have shown TV giants that we have insatiable sports appetites.

TV has responded accordingly. It calls the shots, the NCAA carries them out and the public buys in.

We should not blame Schlossnagle. His decision — untimely as it was — simply focuses on what big-time sports has become. When we hear, "It's not the money, it's the principle of the thing," we can be sure of this: Mostly, it's the money, whether salary, facilities or equipment ...

Big-time college sports is out of control. It's a mess. Trustees and regents should

work toward the re-establishment of sports being an integral part of education. For the real "biggies" in college sports, let them go their way. The rest could then get on with what intercollegiate athletics should be about.

But they won't.

Back to Schlossnagle: Stefan Stevenson wrote a definitive piece for the Fort Worth Star-Telegram. Schlossnagle clears up many details, most of which are believable and understandable ...

I fondly recall when sports was an integral part of the educational process, long before the current "tail-wagging-dog" approach favored at many schools.

Two of my all-time favorites were Baylor's Grant Teaff and Texas A&M's R. C. Slocum, both football coaching legends. The former spent 21 years at Baylor, signing on for \$25,000 and

receiving \$50,000 in his final year. I once asked Slocum about his agent. His response was sharp, "I never had an agent!" That was then, and this is now. The Aggies are grimacing, devoid in national championships in football, basketball or baseball since 1939 ...

My mind flits back to a quarter-century ago, when there were moments when the Lone Star State's TWO flagship universities sometimes cooperated. One example involved a valued friend, Dr. Kenneth Ashworth, former commissioner of the Higher Education Coordinating Board.

Upon retiring, he taught doctoral classes, once weekly, at both UT and A&M.

His business cards were printed in maroon on one side and burnt orange on the other ...

PECAN

FROM PAGE B7

desk: 817-573-2641. In addition, Saturday, July 13 brings karaoke to the 19th Hole. Both participants and spectators are welcome.

BREAKFAST CLUB

Pecan's Breakfast Club will gather again Wednesday, July 10 with breakfast service beginning at 9 a.m. and the program at 10 a.m. PPVFD/EMS Chief Michael Barrett will update attendees on news and recent changes concerning our community's emergency service groups. All Pecaners are invited to attend, and reservations are due by noon Tuesday, July 9: 817-573-2641.

ALL ABOARD

The inaugural "Mystery Bus" dinner and ramble

was such a success that a repeat outing is scheduled for Wednesday, July 10. Members who have registered for the event will begin the outing at 5 p.m. at the clubhouse.

BOOK TIME

The Hood County Library's bookmobile will be in the PAC parking lot Wednesday, July 10 from 3:30 to 5 p.m. at which time patrons may both check out and return materials.

NIGHT MEETING

The Pecan Plantation Woman's Club's evening social group meets the second Wednesday of each month, so the next gathering date is July 10. Ladies will convene at 6 p.m. at the clubhouse for dinner followed by line dance instruction by Kim Wallin.

DAY MEETING

The next Chit Chat luncheon for PPWC ladies will be Thursday, July 18, and reservations are due by Thursday, July 11: ppwcres@gmail.com or 361-215-4599.

SWEET STRINGS

The next session of beginner guitar lessons at the PAC commences Thursday, July 11 with instructor Carolyn Troland leading the six-week course. Adult students should attend all meetings and bring a guitar with new strings on it. Call the PAC front desk for more information or to sign up: 817-573-7952.

FREE FLICK

The next drive-in movie at the PAC will be Saturday, July 13 beginning at 9 p.m. with "Wonka" as the featured film. Popcorn will be free to movie goers, and the PAC

will be open for snack purchases and restrooms. Golf carts and blankets for lawn picnics are welcome.

PAINT EVENT

The next "Pecan Paint-Along" with artist and instructor Kathy Yoders is scheduled for Sunday, July 14 from 1 to 4 p.m. at the PAC. Participants should bring a photo of what they desire to paint, and the session will encompass step-by-step instruction. No previous painting experience is necessary for the afternoon when an acrylic painting will be completed for artists to take home. All supplies are included, folks should wear an old shirt or apron, and "bring your own beverage" is part of the day. Register at the PAC.

BOARD WORKSHOP

Pecan Plantation's board of directors reminds folks

that the BOD/committee workshop holds its regular meeting on the third Monday of every other month, which means the next gathering will be Monday, July 15 at 6 p.m. at the clubhouse. The workshop provides an opportunity for the Pecan membership to hear updated information concerning plans and activities about all our community's committees in one meeting, and residents are encouraged to attend.

GAME TIME

Pecan's First Wednesday Bridge Group is a fun bunch of ladies who gather the first Wednesday of each month in the Terrace Room of the Pecan clubhouse with registration beginning at 9:15 a.m., play commencing at 9:30, lunch served at 11:30, and the day finishing by 2:30 p.m.

Membership in the club is

\$20 per year, which includes a free lunch at the December meeting. The cost to play is \$2 per month, most of which goes to the payouts for the top four to six players. Lunch options consist of a designated entree or a salad, dessert with coffee, and tea service all day. Lunch is charged to each person's member number.

Visitors are welcome to join this group once to play and to consider joining the club. Reservations are needed, so for more information or to reserve a spot, please contact Vicki Leggett at vleggett19@gmail.com or 903-388-2200.

GOOD SWING

Golf camp for the youngest competitors of Pecan is on the calendar for July 24-26, and registration is happening now at the golf pro shop: 817-573-2645. Camp runs from 9 to 10 a.m. each day.

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DAYDREAM ACHIEVER

The hidden fees associated with Travel



BY ZAC WILSON

Zac Wilson is a Certified Travel Advisor, ASTA Verified Travel Advisor, CLIA Master Cruise Counselor, and owner of Daydream Vacations Travel Agency in Granbury. www.DaydreamVacations.com

How many times have you seen advertising that looks like this: "Only \$99 + Tax." Technically, the ad shows the correct price; the price of the item is \$99. But then you must add the tax so it's not really showing the full and exact price of what you will pay. The travel industry has long used this pricing model in its advertising. They show you the price of the hotel room, flight or

cruise fare, but don't immediately list the tax, hotel fees, port charges, baggage fees, surcharges, etc. This practice easily deceives the traveler when making their decisions.

A great example is booking a hotel in Hawaii. In the fine print of your hotel booking in Hawaii it will show a \$50 per night hotel fee to be collected upon check-in. If you don't notice this detail when you book your hotel you will

be quite surprised that your six night stay costs an additional \$300, Surprise! As a travel advisor, I review all these details with my clients prior to booking and remind them prior to travel. Full disclosure is important, so these surprises don't ruin your Daydream Vacation.

The U.S. House of Representatives passed the No Hidden FEES Act June 11, a bill that will ensure transparency of extra fees for travelers booking all types of accommodations in the United States. The bill was a major legislative priority of the American Hotel & Lodging Association (AHLA), and the organization advo-

cated for it since it was first introduced in July 2023.

"It makes sense for all lodging businesses — from short-term rentals to online travel agencies, metasearch sites, and hotels — to tell guests up front about mandatory fees," said AHLA Interim President and CEO Kevin Carey.

The bill will now be sent to the Senate for approval, and if approved, it will be sent to President Biden, who will then enact it into law.

What about cruise line fees?

An important change to California's consumer protection law will go into effect July 1. This change may have

a broad impact on the way cruise lines, travel agents and other travel suppliers advertise, display or offer products to travelers. Royal Caribbean recently sent an update to clearly explain the steps it is taking to comply with California's new law.

Starting July 1, Royal Caribbean International and Celebrity Cruises will comply with California's new law — and will do so nationally.

This means whenever Royal Caribbean International and Celebrity Cruises advertise, display or offer pricing to consumers on any channel, anywhere in the United States, the price shown will include the cruise fare as

well as any taxes, fees, and port expenses guests will be required to pay as part of their cruise.

But what if other cruise lines only comply in California and don't apply this to their national advertising? Many travelers may be confused thinking Royal Caribbean is higher priced than its competitors, when in fact they are more transparent while others are still surprising you with hidden fees.

What can travelers do to have confidence they are getting the best price for their travel plans? Use a professional travel advisor!

WINE

FROM PAGE B6

in a comfortable, relaxed atmosphere. We are not your snooty winery." She said, "We love it when a guy says, 'I don't drink wine; I just like beer.' I'll say, 'Just try this,' and he says, 'I can drink this!'"

Wines like Peach Chardonnay, named Lone Star Gold, Blackberry Merlot, dubbed Lone Star Onyx, and the popular Bridge Street Blues reflect D'Vine Wine's Texan pride. They even have a Cabernet named Cigars and Cars in honor of the late Chad Ramsey, a friend and excellent local photographer. This past year, the com-

pany created a new label called The General, featuring General Granbury's picture. D'Vine Wine has improved significantly since it started. Initially, all its labels looked precisely the same and were quite unattractive, according to Diane Hedges. Despite having a great product, the labels only had the grape variety and name typed at the bottom, mirroring the franchise's style — that is when they engaged Amy Winters.

Amy Winters owns Trevo Creative and has significantly contributed to designing many of the wine shop's labels — Cigars and Cars, for instance. The winery also offers personalized labels for special occasions, a nod to its

customer-centric approach.

HARVESTING CONNECTIONS

D'Vine Wine is an active local community member, participating in the Granbury Historic Merchants Association, the Granbury Chamber of Commerce, and the Opera Guild. Diane Hedges plays a significant role in community engagement and social media management. Officially, she is the community liaison. The wine company participates in events, supports local charities, and offers the winery as a venue for fundraising. "Once a month, a charity can use our space, and they get a percentage of the sales that day," Diane Hedges said. "It

becomes a nice event with raffles and volunteer sign-ups."

One of its notable collaborations is with Fossil Rim Wildlife Center in Glen Rose. D'Vine Wine produces unique labels for Fossil Rim, donating 25% of sales to the center. "We have wines like Rhino Red and Giraffe White, which support Fossil Rim's conservation efforts," Diane Hedges explained.

"Tony was in the military when we married. I think it's good to move around and get a feel for the nation and the world. We lived in Germany for three years, and that's where I learned to like wine," said Diane Hedges. Dr. Tony Hedges continues his medical practice, albeit at a slower

pace, while Diane Hedges and Josh Winters manage the winery.

"We love what we do. It's a fun job, and we get to meet people from all over," Diane Hedges said. D'Vine Wine has become a staple in Granbury, known for its lively events, including karaoke nights, live music and community gatherings. The winery's success results from dedication, passion and a love for bringing people together. As Winters aptly said, "My favorite part of my work is people. I get to share what I make with people and then talk about it. That is one of the best parts of this business."

The store's upcoming Fourth of July celebration will

include releasing its famous watermelon wine. The Hedges and Winters look forward to welcoming locals and visitors to their cozy, welcoming space on the square.

As the owners continue to pour their hearts into D'Vine Wine, their story reminds us that sometimes, the best ventures begin with spontaneity and a lot of passion. Winters revealed, "Diane and I are trying to run a business, and Tony is trying to throw the best party."

For more information, visit D'Vine Wine at 107 E. Bridge St., Granbury. Visit its website at Home - dVine Wine Granbury, or check out its social media for upcoming events and special releases.

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