



FROM UKRAINE TO GRANBURY

Looking for refuge in a small town



MARY VINSON | HOOD COUNTY NEWS

Oksana Tyshchenko, her husband Max Grabov, and their son Yegor enjoy a stroll through Shanley Park.

BY EDEN DUNCAN GILBREATH
Special to the Hood County News
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It's hard to imagine what it would be like to have your life turned upside down by war. Even the most empathetic among us struggle to imagine what being displaced would feel like. So much of our identities come from where we call home.

Oksana Tyshchenko had never considered moving from her home country of Ukraine before the word "war" became more than an ugly word but a devastating reality in her life. As Ukraine became the discussion of people around the world, the Tyshchenko family had to consider some heavy choices.

"I never wanted to live in another country and never thought about moving, so leaving my home was very difficult. But on reflection, it was still easier than realizing and accepting that there was a war in your country and that things will never be the same as

before. Because the war has changed everyone, including me," Tyshchenko said.

Tyshchenko remembers the moment she decided her family would leave Ukraine.

"It seems to me that it will forever remain in my memory. While we were in Ukraine, even though we lived quite far from the combat zone, there were periodic massive missile attacks. And one such attack occurred 400 meters from us.

"We were walking at a playground, we had to run, we managed to hide just as windows began to

blow out of buildings and shrapnel started flying ... my son was 3 years old.

"I thought it hadn't affected him until we went to my parents' house and during a walk, an air raid siren went off nearby, ringing very loudly. Suddenly, my child started to run chaotically in the street, screaming and crying that we needed to hide because rockets were coming and they were going to kill us.

"I remember thinking to myself, 'I don't know where, but we are leaving.'"

Tyshchenko and her husband, Max Grabov, decided to seek refuge in the United States, bringing their young son Yegor, now 5, with them. The choice meant leaving people and places that were

PLEASE SEE **REFUGE** | A5



Oksana Tyshchenko at her desk at the Hood County News, her work program with Workforce Solutions North Texas is nearing its end.

EDEN DUNCAN GILBREATH | HOOD COUNTY NEWS

County hires engineering firm to conduct Bitcoin sound study

BY ASHLEY TERRY
Staff Writer
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The Hood County Commissioners Court recently voted 3:2 to commission an engineering firm for a sound study on the bitcoin data center.

Following an hour-long discussion, the court declared HGC Engineering: Noise, Vibration & Acoustical Consulting Services to be the most qualified firm to conduct the study, with expenses from the study not to exceed \$6,500.

The decision came immediately after the court

approved a resolution seeking legislative action to address the acoustical and noise pollution, destruction of property values, and the demand on the Texas energy grid caused by the cryptocurrency mining.

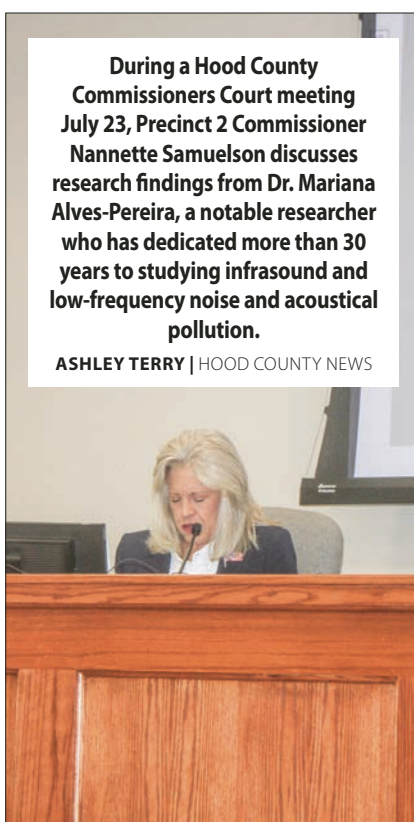
For more than a year, residents have complained about the sound emanating from the bitcoin data center owned by Marathon Digital Holdings LLC. According to residents, the low-frequency hum has greatly impacted their lives and health, with many complaining about vertigo, migraines, hearing loss and nausea.

The idea for a sound study was previously brought to the court by Precinct 2 Commissioner Nannette Samuelson during the July 9 meeting but was eventually tabled to allow for more research and information.

A major setback in passing the agenda item during the last court was due to a question posed by resident Tina Brown regarding the legality of using the county's taxpayer dollars to fund a sound study.

At that time, County Attorney Matt Mills said he

PLEASE SEE **STUDY** | A7



During a Hood County Commissioners Court meeting July 23, Precinct 2 Commissioner Nannette Samuelson discusses research findings from Dr. Mariana Alves-Pereira, a notable researcher who has dedicated more than 30 years to studying infrasound and low-frequency noise and acoustical pollution.

ASHLEY TERRY | HOOD COUNTY NEWS

Hood County commissioners approve comprehensive IT audit amid debate

BY LAUREN DAVIS
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The Hood County Commissioners Court has decided to hire an external IT consulting firm to conduct a thorough audit of the county's IT infrastructure.

The goal is to ensure the county's IT practices align with generally accepted procedures, covering network performance, security, incident responses and employee procedures. The decision was reached Tuesday, July 23, after extensive discussions and a 4-1 vote in favor of the audit.

The proposal, introduced by Commissioner Dave Eagle, was met with mixed reactions. Chief Information Officer Drew Wiederkehr expressed his frustration

PLEASE SEE **AUDIT** | A6



COMMUNITY BUSINESS

CHAMBER NEWS

In partnership with Leadership Granbury, are you ready to learn more about our community?

Granbury Chamber of Commerce

How well do you know your community? How well do you know how it runs? Streets, water, health care, education ... in your mind, do all these things just "happen?" You would be surprised at how many people have no clue where their water comes from; they also have no idea where their water goes ... to most, it just disappears. Building roads seems like an easy thing to do, but maintaining roads takes time and planning and, of course, money. For all the comments made about health care in our community, do you really understand how important it is to recruit and retain top health care professionals?

Leadership Granbury has been helping educate businesspeople



and members of the community for almost 30 years. The nine-month program focuses on public safety, education, health care, government and infrastructure, tourism, history and much more. Of the session about public safety, one previous class member remarked, "I had no idea that this is what it takes to keep our community

safe." Another learned about the value of reverse osmosis water at the Granbury water plant. There is so much more to education than what you see in social media, and Leadership Granbury pulls back the curtain on amazing elementary, middle school and high school educators (and students) who are working to build better lives.

Have you ever worked side by side on a project with another community member for the betterment of a local nonprofit? There are so many needs with these organizations and Leadership Granbury provides the opportunity to apply leadership principles to class projects. If you have ever visited with an alumnus of the program, you know they have learned so much and want to give back to their community.

So, what's keeping you from becoming a part of the next class of Leadership Granbury? An investment in yourself and your community can pay amazing dividends — even if you're just learning more about the community where you live. While the chamber doesn't run

this amazing program (it's a 501(c)(3) tax exempt organization), we believe Leadership Granbury helps raise the bar of knowledge about how our community works. Now, it's your turn to apply and become a class member for 2024-2025; go to <https://leadershipgranbury.org> and fill out the application, submit it and get ready for an incredible learning experience. We've seen firsthand how class members make friends for life, get more involved in their community and even run for public office. When you invest in learning more about Granbury, you begin to truly understand why this community is a great place to work, play, retire, raise a family and build your business. Become a part of it today!

NEW MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

granbury CHAMBER

New Member Spotlight

HP HYDROPROS

HydroPros
"At HydroPros, we understand that when it comes to irrigation systems and hydromulch installation, experience matter."

New Member Spotlight is HydroPros. "When you hire HydroPros, you can have peace of mind knowing your project is in capable hands. Our experts will work closely with you to understand your needs and develop a customized solution that meets your specific requirements." Thank you for joining the Granbury Chamber of Commerce!

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New Member Spotlight

ONE EIGHTY IT

One Eighty IT, LLC
"Our focus is on your business goals and how we can help you achieve them by using technology."

New Member Spotlight is One Eighty IT. "Our proven systems and processes can enable complicated systems to become more streamlined. Whether you need a planned network design, an implementation plan or someone to sit at the table as an owner representative with your best interest in mind, we have you covered." Thank you for joining the Granbury Chamber of Commerce!

AMBASSADOR SPOTLIGHT

granbury CHAMBER

AMBASSADOR OF THE MONTH

Daniel Hernandez

Business:
95.9 FM The Ranch

Time as an Ambassador:
2 years

95.9 FM THE RANCH THE SOUND OF TEXAS
92.1 HANK FM REAL COUNTRY
KHIS 95.5 CLASSIC HITS

Ambassador of the Month is Daniel Hernandez with 95.9 The Ranch. We are so thankful for our amazing Ambassador Daniel! When asked why he loves being an ambassador he said "Being an ambassador allows me to stay connected with my community and always stay in the loop with what's happening and what's new in Granbury. I'm very fortunate to be a part of such a great group of people!" A fun fact about Daniel is "... I have an award winning Bloody Mary. I used to do cookoffs and one of the categories at a competition was Bloody Marys. I took home first place!" Thank you, Daniel, for being an ambassador of the Granbury Chamber of Commerce!

GPD to enhance safety with new Axon body camera system



Granbury Police Department Patrol Officer Chris Collins addresses Granbury City Council about approving the purchase of Axon body cameras and in-car cameras during a regularly scheduled meeting July 16.

BY ASHLEY TERRY
Staff Writer
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The Granbury City Council recently approved an upgrade to the Granbury Police Department's camera systems — aimed at improving officer safety and boosting operational efficiency.

In a new partnership with Axon, the technological leader in global public safety, the contract will provide GPD officers with new body cameras and in-car cameras, with estimated expenditures of up to \$180,000 each year over a five-year contract, totaling \$900,000.

According to patrol officer Chris Collins, the upgraded equipment is an urgent need for GPD because the current body camera/in-car camera system is not working.

He said video files will not upload and there are numerous software bugs that have not been resolved by the vendor, which has caused issues with patrol operations and judicial processing.

"We looked at doing this system, and this system is a lot more proven. I call it the Cadillac of body cam systems," Collins said during the Granbury City Council meeting July 16. "Some of the differences in this system is in the form of the body camera perspective on our current

body cams. If an officer is having an issue, there's no way for a sergeant or someone to see. With the Axon system, the sergeant can actually view what the officer is seeing before he arrives on the scene, so it allows an increase in safety from that perspective."

He added that adopting the same body camera system used by Hood County will also help alleviate ongoing problems in the judicial process. With the department currently relying on a system that costs \$40,000 annually — plus additional expenses for maintenance and backups — Collins said putting the order in for Axon before the renewal dates in March and April will ultimately save the city around \$60,000.

"Those renewals are budgeted for fiscal year '24, so that's the other purpose of putting this order in sooner because Axon is actually doing a white glove service where they will transition both environments to their environment," he said. "That will give them enough time so we won't have to pay those renewals."

There is currently a 90-day delay from order date for the body cams, and a 60-day delay for the in-car camera system, according to the agenda report.

The five-year contract with Axon also includes body cam replacement

at month 30/60 and an in-car camera replacement at month 60. All hardware is fully warranted for the duration of the contract. Additionally, three days of onsite training have been provided at no cost as well as the initial installation of all equipment.

City Manager Chris Coffman clarified that while the plan was to allocate funds for the upgrade in the next budget cycle, the council will introduce a budget amendment at the next meeting. He explained that to issue a purchase order legitimately, funds must be appropriated. Therefore, the city will allocate the necessary funds from this year's budget but won't actually spend the funds until next year.

"This is just a paper trail for our auditor to make sure we're following all the rules," he said. "You shouldn't issue a purchase order without (appropriating the funds) so that's where we're at."

Place 3 Councilmember Bruce Wadley made a motion to approve the purchase of the Axon body cameras and in-car cameras for the Granbury Police Department, with expenditures of up to \$180,000 each year over a five-year contract period.

Following a second by Place 6 Councilmember Greg Corrigan, the motion passed unanimously, 6-0.

SAME PAPER

AT YOUR FINGERTIPS

FROM MY FRONT PORCH

Can we please agree, no more resolutions!



BY SAM HOUSTON

Sam Houston is the publisher of the Hood County News. He is also an actor, author, playwright, performer and entertainment producer/promoter. sam@hcnews.com | 817-573-7066, ext. 260

Politics is all about posturing. The word “politics” itself is neutral and refers to the art or science of government and political principles. However, it can carry a negative connotation when associated with activities characterized by artful and often dishonest practices. Maybe it is just me, but it seems like for the last 20 or so years the dishonest practices seem to far outweigh the “artful.”

Public perception of politics can vary widely. Many Americans have a highly negative view of politics, citing feelings of exhaustion when thinking about the political climate and process which they believe is domi-

nated by special interests and partisan warfare. While politics can be a source of frustration and contention, it is also a necessary part of societal governance and can be a force for positive change when conducted with

integrity and a focus on the common good. Many times, the perception of politics as negative can depend on one’s view of human nature and the potential for political systems to improve or deteriorate.

One of the recent political ploys that has been utilized by more and more politicians on both sides of the aisle, is the “resolution.” This is a called vote taken by a government body, expressing a position about a particular political matter. For example, it might be a motion for the school board to express an opinion whether it disagrees (or agrees) with a mandate created by the legislature. A motion is made, the resolution is read, and the board members vote. The resolution itself has no authority or power. It does not change the status of any perceived injustice, nor does it affect any change. What it does is allow the proponents to use the resolution as a “talking point” on the campaign trail. I can hear the candidates preaching, “I voted in support of the resolution to end the man-

date made by the legislature.” Sounds good, doesn’t it? Seems like a candidate is showing where they stand on an issue. The problem is the “resolution” itself is meaningless. It does nothing but blow hot air at an issue and confuses the unknowing voting public into thinking something is being done, when it is not.

The fact that the motion has no demonstrative effect, except for publicity, is what makes the entire process so meaningless and such a waste of time. For example, if the school board passed a resolution saying it believes all registered voters should be allowed to vote in the next election, the motion would have no effect. State law and certainly parts of federal law ensure that all registered voters are allowed to vote in an election. So why would such a resolution be made in the first place? For some politicians I suggest it is so they can state to the voters, “I supported the resolution stating all registered voters be allowed to vote in the next election.” Sounds good, doesn’t it? Who wouldn’t

support a candidate who is in favor of free elections? The point is the right for registered voters to vote in an election already exists. A resolution by the school board or some other political board whether it be the housing board, water board or the library board has no authority or jurisdiction to make any changes in existing law regarding voting rights. The resolution is an act by “politicians” to make a gullible public believe they are actually doing something. The truth is they are simply creating fodder to be used on the campaign trail.

Instead of having all these resolutions decrying a certain political position, why don’t the politicians get to work and do those things that are within their power? Why don’t they work to affect positive change instead of spending meeting time on pomp and circumstance?

There is an old cowboy saying that refers to a city dude who moves to Texas and buys a cowboy hat and attempts to get people to believe he is a cowboy. This sort of fellow is described as

“all hat and no cattle,” meaning he may have the trappings of being a cowboy, but when all is said and done, he has no cattle and would not know what to do with a herd if he had one. So it is with a bunch of our politicians. They have the “hat” of office holder, but not a care or concern about affecting positive change for the benefit of the public. They view their role as being about posturing, spin and perceptions.

Let’s drop the resolutions unless there is one for office holders to start working together, to serve all the people in their constituency, and to take action that makes the citizens life easier, safer, healthier and happier. Now I can support that!

Thought for the day: “Under democracy, one party always devotes its chief energies to trying to prove that the other party is unfit to rule — and both commonly succeed, and they are right” H.L. Mencken

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



Folks around town

MARY VINSON | HOOD COUNTY NEWS

Maria Butler

Say hello to our neighbor, Maria Butler!

Maria and her close-knit family of four moved back to Texas from Colorado about a year ago. Maria, her husband Shannon, and their two kids, Dylan and Eden, aged 18 and 14, have always been passionate about outdoor activities and enjoyed a self-sustainable lifestyle on their 80-acre property in Colorado. Although the whole family is originally from Fort Worth, they found a perfect home in Hood County due to their love for nature. Their youngest child, Eden, is into competitive dance while their eldest, Dylan, works at Fossil Rim and is looking forward to future opportunities there. Maria is the director of first impressions — also known as a receptionist — at Mission Granbury, but it’s much more when you work for an incredible organization like Mission Granbury. Her favorite quote, “Be the change you wish to see in the world,” reflects her work philosophy. She is adept at recognizing and addressing people’s needs. “I love helping people, that’s how I know I’m in the right place here at Mission Granbury.” Maria stays informed about local news and events by reading the Hood County News online.

County adopts resolution urging legislative action on Bitcoin noise

BY ASHLEY TERRY
Staff Writer
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The Hood County Commissioners Court has taken a significant step to address the growing concern from residents regarding the constant low-frequency hum emanating from the bitcoin data plant.

In a unanimous decision July 23, the court voted to adopt a resolution seeking legislative action to address the acoustical and noise pollution, destruction of property values, and the demand on the Texas energy grid caused by the cryptocurrency mining.

RESOLUTION

According to the resolution, ERCOT CEO Pablo Vegas gave testimony to the Texas Senate Committee on Business and Commerce hearing June 12, that within only six years, the Texas power grid needs to grow from 85,000 to 150,000 megawatts. The testimony stated that crypto miners and

data centers will be responsible for over 50% of the added growth.

As the hearing concluded, Lt. Governor Dan Patrick emphasized the need for a critical examination of cryptocurrency mining and data center industries. He released the following statement June 12 via X: “We need to take a close look at those two industries. They produce very few jobs compared to the incredible demands they place on our grid. Crypto mining may actually make more money selling electricity back to the grid than from their crypto mining operations. Texans will ultimately pay the price. I’m more interested in building the grid to service customers in their homes, apartments and normal businesses and keeping costs as low as possible for them instead of for very niche industries that have massive power demands and produce few jobs. We want data centers, but it can’t be the Wild Wild West of data centers and crypto miners crashing our grid and turning

the lights off.”

Additionally, the resolution states there is a body of research concerning the effects of low frequency acoustical sound on the human body, as indicated by Dr. Mariana Alves-Pereira, a notable researcher who has dedicated more than 30 years to studying infrasound and low-frequency noise and acoustical pollution.

The resolution also quoted local ENTs Dr. Salim Bhaloo and Dr. Stephen Krzeminski, who were both quoted in a TIME Magazine article last month.

Bhaloo said he sees patients with symptoms potentially stemming from the bitcoin mine’s noise on an almost weekly basis. Bhaloo was also quoted as saying he’s seen an uptick since the new year in patients whose ailments — including ringing in their ears, vertigo and headaches — could be related to the mine.

Krzeminski referred to the residents near the Marathon Granbury cryptocurrency data center saying the noise

is “detrimental to their health and anxiety.” Krzeminski also says he believes the mine is causing mental and physical health issues.

Due to the numerous media outlets who have published pieces on the situation — and due to the documented evidence of destruction of property values in Hood County as a direct result of the sound — the Hood County Commissioners Court officially called on the Texas Legislature to take action.

The resolution states that the Texas Legislature should modify its Health and Safety Code Chapter 343, Section 011 to include noise nuisance in the definition of public nuisance and to also modify noise nuisance penal code 42.01 to allow escalation of repeated offenses.

Furthermore, the resolution urges the Texas Legislature to reintroduce and enact Senate Bill 1751 that passed the Senate 31-0 in the 88th Legislature, which relates to

PLEASE SEE **NOISE** | A4

Pancake Fly-In takes off at Granbury Regional Airport

From Staff Reports

Aviation enthusiasts and breakfast aficionados are gearing up for a culinary and aerial treat at the upcoming Pancake Fly-In, set to take place Saturday, July 27, at the Granbury Regional Airport (KGDJ). Whether you fly, drive, bike or walk, you can come in for some pancakes and planes! A suggested donation of \$8 per person ensures access to the delectable spread of pancakes and other breakfast delights.

Located at 840 Archer Drive in Granbury, the event promises a feast of fluffy pancakes alongside a showcase of aircraft and camaraderie among local pilots. The fly-in breakfast, which will commence at 8 a.m., will offer attendees the chance to indulge in a hearty morning meal served in the newly constructed Fixed Base Operator (FBO) building.

For more information or to confirm attendance, interested parties can contact event organizers at 817-579-8533 ext. 1450, or visit: <https://www.visitgranbury.com/event/pancake-fly-in/20285/>

The Pancake Fly-In celebrates the love of aviation. It fosters community spirit, making it a must-

attend event for aviation enthusiasts and families looking to enjoy a memorable morning in Granbury.



PHOTO COURTESY OF AFRICA STUDIO, ADOBESTOCK.COM

The Pancake Fly-In is set to take place Saturday, July 27, at the Granbury Regional Airport (KGDJ).

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Republican Women's Club votes to disband amid political strife

BY ASHLEY TERRY
Staff Writer
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The executive board of the Hood County Republican Women's Club voted earlier this week to disband — bringing an abrupt end to a decades-long legacy of community service.

According to a statement submitted to the Hood County News by President Mary Hattox, the board's decision to dissolve the organization was a result of political pressures and the desire to maintain the club's integrity.

"There are those in our community who see our club as a pawn in the game of whether you are Republican enough and, through self-appointment, believe they could turn the Hood County Republican Women's Club into a mirror of the executive committee," Hattox said in the statement. "We felt strongly that it was time to stand up for Republicans against those who believe it is their right to judge someone else's beliefs. Rather than risk the decades-long legacy of being fair-minded and serving our community, the executive board decided to disband the

club. It was a tough decision, but it was one that the majority of the board felt necessary."

The Hood County Republican Women's Club — formerly called the Republican Women of Hood County — has been serving the community since the 1970s by offering scholarships and supporting local candidates. Most importantly, Hattox said, the club was an organization where individuals could come and "just be a Republican."

"No one questioned you or castigated you if we all didn't believe the exact same way; we all were just

Republicans," she said.

Hattox said despite backlash from local officials, members of the club "care deeply" about the upcoming election and will work to help former President Donald Trump and other candidates on the ballot win their elections.

"We know today's decision will not stop the threats by elected officials to retaliate," she said. "We have planted our flag and taken a hard stand, making hard decisions not to allow our club to be manipulated and molded into something we have never believed in."

County pursues alternative video options for commissioners court

BY ASHLEY TERRY
Staff Writer
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Hood County residents may soon experience a new way of viewing Hood County Commissioners Court meetings, as officials move forward with potential plans to change how these sessions are broadcasted.

During a regularly scheduled meeting July 23, the court officially asked the IT and purchasing department to seek alternatives for a more efficient method to record and publish commissioner court videos, such as software or services.

Precinct 2 Commissioner Nannette Samuelson said her goal was to come up with a more "seamless"

method, as IT Chief Information Officer Drew Wiederkehr and Assistant Chief of Information Technology Owen Curnutt spend approximately four to five hours each meeting to record the videos for commissioners court.

"Maybe the county clerk would have the control with an iPad or something that would free these guys up to do all the important things that they do all the time," Samuelson said. "How can we save money and at the same time free up our IT staff to do the important things that they need to be doing?"

Wiederkehr mentioned he has contacted other counties to inquire about their meeting recording procedures, noting that the majority

handle the process "in-house," similar to Hood County.

Precinct 4 Commissioner Dave Eagle suggested for Wiederkehr to observe the videos from the Parker County website, as the setup allows the camera to capture the entire court from behind the podium. He explained that when someone steps up to speak, their image appears in a separate window within the frame alongside the commissioners. Eagle said he found this approach effective because it minimizes the need for constant monitoring.

"It's very effective because once they get through, they're done with it. I mean, it's live streamed that way, but then when they finish the commissioners' court, they're done,"

Eagle said. "You might take a look at what they're doing. I don't know exactly what software they're using or our service or what, but I liked it because you didn't have to sit here and it was kind of self-serving."

Eagle assured Wiederkehr he would also provide him with the correct contact information for Parker County to gather further details about their video setup.

Following the end of discussion, Samuelson made a motion to ask the IT and purchasing department to seek alternatives for a more efficient method to record and publish commissioners' court videos. Eagle seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

NOISE

FROM PAGE A3

the regulation and tax treatment of facilities in the ERCOT power region that demand a large load of interruptible power.

Additionally, the resolution calls on the Texas Legislature to enact legislation similar to Arkansas Senate Bills 78 and 79, which were both passed in May, to "create requirements for noise reduction in the operation of a digital asset mining business," and to "provide for the regulation of digital asset mining business."

The resolution also calls on the Hood Central Appraisal District to address the loss in value of the homes impacted by the noise and acoustical pollution.

Copies of the resolution will be delivered to state Sen. Brian Birdwell, state Rep. Shelby Slawson, the Hood Central Appraisal District, the Hood County News, and any other entity or governmental body selected by the Hood County Commissioners Court.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

Before the resolution was passed, several residents spoke in favor of the agenda item during the public comment period, highlighting their concerns and advocating for legislative action to address the impacts of cryptocurrency mining on the community.

Resident John Highsmith mentioned several media outlets who have covered the bitcoin sound issue, including TIME Magazine, Fort Worth Star-Telegram, Houston Chronicle, Austin American-Statesman, and KERA. He also noted international coverage from media outlets in Germany, India, Australia and the UK.

"Why are so many media outlets covering this?" he asked. "It's a classic story of human damages from greed ... This negative media coverage will make any decent company considering Hood County to look elsewhere, so please vote in solidarity



Precinct 2 Commissioner Nannette Samuelson reads a resolution seeking legislative action to address the acoustical and noise pollution from the bitcoin mining plant during a regularly scheduled Hood County Commissioners Court meeting July 23.

with people of Hood and Somervell counties who are suffering from this noise assault."

Resident David Blankenship said he moved to Granbury in 1987 to start his career in law enforcement at the Granbury Police Department. While he is now employed at the Johnson County Sheriff's Office, he said he continues to live in Hood County because Granbury is his "favorite town."

"Since I moved here, it's been my favorite," he said. "I lived in Pecan and wanting to pursue my dream, I bought 10 acres where I'm currently living just prior to the bitcoin noise start. Had I known that was going to happen, I would definitely have not bought those 10 acres because the noise has been lynching."

Blankenship stated the constant sound is a public health issue, and has reported medical issues with doctors unable to find any underlying causes.

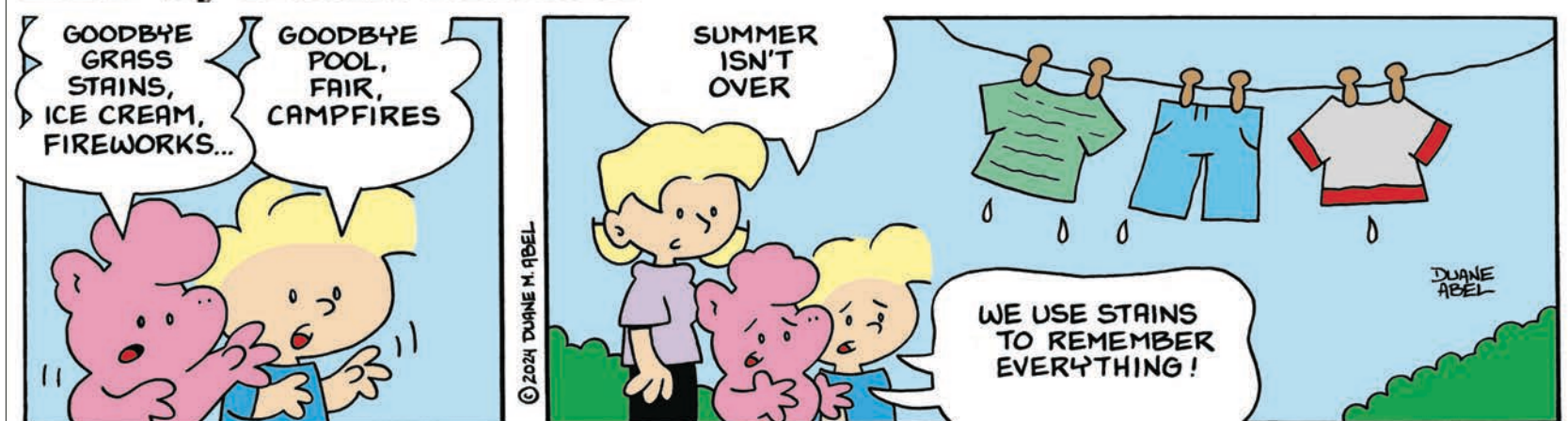
"Believe me, I work narcotics, I've worked major crimes, I've served in Iraq from 2006 to 2008. I know stress, and I don't normally have issues with that, but I never had this issue until the bitcoin started. I'm not saying it's related to that, but I'm having them now," he said. "What we're asking here, as many of us get up and talk about this is that as a group, just because it's happening in one commissioner's precinct, as a whole, it's a public health issue. We should be one family. If it's affecting one of us, it should be affecting all of us."

Somervell County resident Jenna Hornbuckle explained that as an employee of the Comanche Peak Nuclear Power Plant in Glen Rose, she has to undergo routine medical tests as an operator. She said for the past 10 years, her health data has showed that she is completely healthy — but last year, she was diagnosed with heart failure. She explained that both her and her children's hearing have significantly deteriorated.

"The bitcoin issue has not been directly correlated to health issues yet, but according to my ENT, and my children's ENT, the low frequency noise is a big problem with hearing," Hornbuckle said. "How do you go

PLEASE SEE NOISE | A6

ZED by Duane M. Abel



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CALENDAR

ONGOING

FORWARD TRAINING

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

MONDAY, AUG. 12

TEXAS DEMOCRATIC

Women of Hood County monthly meeting. Guest speaker: John DeLorme, State Democratic executive committee member, Congressional District 25. 11: a.m. Spring Creek Barbeque, 317 E. U.S. Highway 377, Granbury. Details: 254-716-5195.

SATURDAY, AUG. 31

JOIN FORWARD

Training Center for the August Granbury Airport Breakfast fundraiser from 8-0 a.m. See the runway in action with arriving and departing aircraft. Questions? Call 817-573-6677 or email info@forwardtrainingcenter.org.

TO SUBMIT

CALENDAR ITEMS

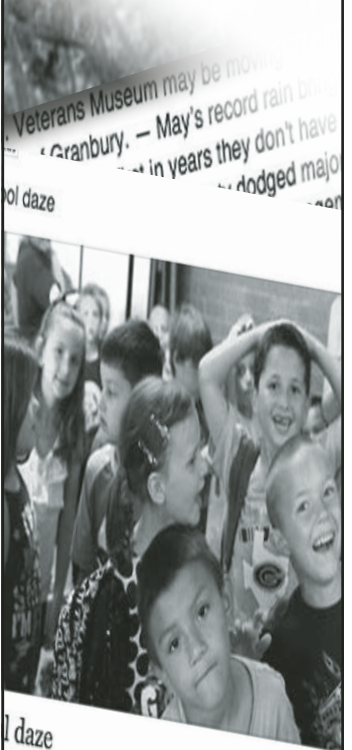
Information should be submitted at least two weeks prior to the event for consideration. The

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



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“My morning starts with reading news in Ukraine. When the war in Ukraine started, many channels were created for all cities so that news could be tracked in real time. Therefore, I even know when they (her family) are under missile attack.”

OKSANA TYSHCHENKO
Ukrainian Refugee, Hood County News Employee

REFUGE

FROM PAGE A1

precious to them, though technology has helped to ease the separation.

“I talk to my mom every day, and less often with my dad,” Tyshchenko said, explaining that her dad is more quiet but that her mom, Svitlana, shares their daughter’s news with her dad, Oleg.

Keeping the bond close between Yegor and his grandparents is important to Tyshchenko.

“My mom wakes up every day at 5 a.m. to read fairy tales to Yegor. We have an eight-hour time difference, so when it’s evening for us, it’s early morning for them. If he gets tired of listening to fairy tales, they have heartfelt conversations.

“Time passes, he’s growing up, and I believe that the involvement of grandparents in a child’s life plays a significant role.”

Part of new life in the United States for the Tyshchenko family and others like them is finding employment. In her home country, Tyshchenko held a degree in international economics, and worked as a teacher at a university.

Once in the United States Tyshchenko pursued temporary work with Workforce Solutions for North Central Texas, where she was placed in a position at the Hood County News. Max is pursuing an education through the Workforce program.

According to its website, the mission of Workforce Solutions is to advance business-driven solutions that promote economic growth, opportunity and a skilled workforce.

As a participant in the Workforce program, Tyshchenko has worked for the past six months in the front office of the local newspaper where she assists with classified ads, circulation and other office concerns. Pretty impressive, considering she is still working to master the English language.

English is known to be one of the hardest languages to learn. Fortunately Tyshchenko knew some English prior to coming to the U.S. and admits it has been one of the main struggles.

“Learning English as a process is not hard, but it’s difficult to remember everything, and most importantly, to use it in my speech. The other thing, I find very confusing that the same word can have multiple meanings depending on context.

“When I was coming to America, I thought I knew English at a basic level. I studied it in school, and then at university. But when I arrived here, I realized that I absolutely couldn’t understand what people were saying. In school, you learn academic language, which isn’t really suitable for everyday communication. It was my personal disaster.

“Now I can hear people, understand what they are saying, but not always. My English learning continues, I learn new words every day, read, listen ... and try to speak. It’s a matter of time ...”

Tyshchenko keeps notes cards of any new word she may learn or when she hears a word used in an unfamiliar context.

Yegor attended preschool during the last school year in Granbury schools. The language barrier was a more significant struggle than Tyshchenko was prepared for.

“We thought he would pick up the language quickly and that it would be easiest for him, but it turned out not to be the case. It also took him time.

“He’s very emotional and sociable, and of course, he ran to the children and wanted to play with them. But when he realized that he



Yegor imitates his grandfather, Oleg Tyshchenko, in their native Ukraine.

COURTESY PHOTOS

didn’t understand them, he would burst into tears and didn’t want to learn words.

“When I saw this, I was slowly dying inside. After all, I left everything behind and moved so that he could have a happy childhood, but it turned out that he was experiencing difficulties and was very upset about it.

“For the first six months at school, he told me every day that he didn’t want to go to school because ‘he was dumb’ — he didn’t understand the children and what they were saying. As a mother, it was incredibly painful to hear. But he had a wonderful teacher, Mrs. Kelly, who gave him the most important things — love and support.”

After the New Year’s holidays, the situation changed.

“... by the end of the year, he received a tablet for his reading achievements and we received a letter saying ‘His car has finished the race.’ I don’t know what it means but nothing bad I hope. I couldn’t help but be happy about this. He’s not afraid to speak, he’s understood. And people don’t demand perfect English from him because he’s a child.”

Every visitor to the Hood County News is greeted



Yegor and his grandmother, Svitlana Tyshchenko, when in Ukraine. The pair now speaks on the phone daily since Yegor moved to the United States with his parents.

mate and a friend to the war.

“If we are talking about my closest ones, then no. Thank God, he protects me and my family. But speaking of friends, one of my classmates died at the hottest spot near Bakhmut. Another

their service was needed. Tyshchenko expressed the anguish families feel when their loved ones are called to service. Evgenii is married and the father of daughter Zlala, age 7.

A cousin of Tyshchenko’s

laborious.

Tyshchenko’s husband Max left his brother, Artem, and their father, Anatoliy, in Ukraine. Max’s youngest brother Nikita moved to Canada with his wife Alevtyna and their daughter

“When I was coming to America, I thought I knew English at a basic level. I studied it in school, and then at university. But when I arrived here, I realized that I absolutely couldn’t understand what people were saying. In school, you learn academic language, which isn’t really suitable for everyday communication. It was my personal disaster.”

OKSANA TYSHCHENKO
Ukrainian Refugee, Hood County News Employee

with the warm smiles and greetings of the front office staff, including Tyshchenko. One would never guess that Tyshchenko’s day started differently than most.

“My morning starts with reading news in Ukraine. When the war in Ukraine started, many channels were created for all cities so that news could be tracked in real time. Therefore, I even know when they (her family) are under missile attack.”

Tyshchenko lost a class-

friend with whom I grew up also died there. These are people I knew personally. And I want to say that you perceive the loss of someone you knew personally in a completely different way than the loss of someone you’ve only heard about.”

Tyshchenko’s only sibling, a brother, Evgenii (Eugene) was required to serve in the Army when war broke out because of his police experience. All police were previously trained to serve in case

and a lifelong friend, Svitlana, is counted among the many people that Tyshchenko misses. Svitlana is a cardiologist, now 29 years old; she entered the medical field at the age of 15.

At one time Svitlana would have been allowed to leave Ukraine, but many that could leave at one time are not allowed to immigrate now. Svitlana stayed in Ukraine to best serve her country; additionally, starting over with her education would be too

Nicole.

The Tyshchenko family came here with the Uniting for Ukraine (UFU) program. Their sponsors, David and Jennifer Orcutt and family, are Granbury residents, thus Granbury became the destination for the Tyshchenko family.

“Four months before our arrival here, our friends had come, and we lived with them initially. They told us what needed to be done, as they had already been

through this process before.

“We needed to understand how everything works: healthcare, insurance, taxes. Because in Ukraine, everything is absolutely different. Probably, these are the (would be considered) difficulties. To be honest, I still don’t fully understand how everything works.”

Donations from local churchgoers helped the Tyshchenko family feel welcome.

“I know that people (Lakeside Baptist Church) brought things — bedding, beds and everything for the home — which really helped the Ukrainians who came here. There is huge support felt everywhere.”

Tyshchenko was most surprised by the scale of the United States,

“I was impressed by the scale ... the scale of everything. The distances are very large, it’s a very big country. Texas alone is the size of all of Ukraine, even though Ukraine is the largest country in Europe.”

She also notes surprise at the distance between things, the lack of sidewalks and the fact that Americans don’t travel by foot very much the way they do in Europe.

Tyshchenko has been well liked at the Hood County News. Coworker Nancy Pricer in the classified ads department has enjoyed working with Tyshchenko and the bond they have shared.

“I’ve been fortunate enough to spend a lot of one-on-one time with Oksana. We talk about a wide range of subjects, from kids to world politics. She is smart, funny, kind and very inquisitive. She loves learning and inspired me to learn more about the history of Ukraine, Russia and surrounding countries. Oksana is about my son’s age, and I call her my ‘international work daughter.’”

Pricer recalls wanting to make Borscht, a beet soup that is popular in Tyshchenko’s part of Europe,

“I told her I was going to make it one day and she had her husband drive all the way to the office to deliver bay leaves and whole all spice, since I didn’t have them. She is very special to me. I know we will stay connected for years to come — God willing!”

For her part, Tyshchenko is glad her family landed in Granbury and has enjoyed her time at the HCN. This time is coming to a close this month as she approaches the end of the work part of her program.

“I don’t just like working in the news; I am infinitely in love with this place, or rather, with the people I have the good fortune to work with. Initially, of course, I needed to get used to the staff, and they to me, but now, after quite some time, I simply adore the team I work with. And I am endlessly grateful and thankful to Sam Houston, that allowed me to become part of this team.”

The Uniting for Ukraine program that the Tyshchenko family takes part in initially granted two years in the United States, that was then extended by two years. Tyshchenko does not anticipate that they will return to Ukraine, at least not permanently.

“I am very glad that my family and I ended up in Granbury. I could not have imagined more warm-hearted, open people who are ready to help in any situation. I can say that the people in Granbury are simply amazing, they have won my heart. I’m not joking.”

For information on Uniting for Ukraine see uscis.gov/ukraine. For information on Workforce Solutions for North Central Texas go to dfwjobs.com.

Beaming with pride



COURTESY PHOTO

Precinct 3 Commissioner Jack Wilson and Judge Stephen Barnett generously funded the installation of a sturdy flagpole and a solar light at Hood County Acton Annex.

Commissioner Wilson, Judge Barnett donate new flagpole to Acton Annex

BY ASHLEY TERRY
Staff Writer
ashley@hcnews.com

The Hood County Acton Annex recently received a new makeover in patriotism, thanks to the collaborative efforts of Precinct 3 Commissioner Jack Wilson and Judge Stephen Barnett.

As a way to ensure that the U.S. and Texas flags never lose their pride — or their shine — the pair generously funded the installation of a sturdy flagpole and a solar light, totaling \$404.66.

“They had a flag on a piece of PVC pipe with a piece of rebar in the ground to put out there in front and then they’d have to take (the flag) in every night,” Wilson told the Hood County News. “This way, it’s out there and it can be seen at all times.”

The flagpole was ceremoniously installed and dedicated Monday, July 15, with a solid concrete foundation securing it in place.

“We have good flags on it, both Texas and U.S. with the light on top, so we can easily go to half-staff when the need arises, so it’s up there and it’s good,” Wilson said.

The process took approximately two months to complete, since the Hood County Commissioners Court didn’t approve the project until June 21.

“Facilities maintenance did an excellent job on the concrete pad,” Wilson said. “And I’ve actually got pictures at nighttime too, because I wanted to see how well (the flags) were illuminated.”

Wilson said he “feels great,” getting to contribute to such a meaningful community project — especially in light of what happened

during the assassination attempt of former President Donald Trump Saturday, July 13.

“It was monumental to be able to install (the pole) and have it in full mast from the get-go; it’s a big deal,” Wilson said. “Patriotism feels like it’s starting — not just in Hood County — but that it’s coming back all across the country.”

Wilson emphasized that both flags are “U.S. made” and highlighted that the flagpole also originated from a veteran-owned company based in the United States — both of which served as driving factors behind the project.

He noted the Acton Annex has been in Hood County since the 70s, and this was just something he felt he had to do.

“I was surprised that there wasn’t a permanent flag out there,” Wilson said. “But now there is.”

AUDIT

FROM PAGE A1

about the proposal being added to the agenda without prior consultation.

“I have no problem with an audit,” Wiederkehr said. “What I don’t understand is why this was thrown on the agenda without even bringing it up to me. That is, again, my burn.”

Supporters of the audit, like Eagle, emphasized the importance of regular and comprehensive reviews. “We can’t put blinders on or ignore potential improvements in IT to protect county assets,” he said.

Public comments also highlighted the value of external assessments. Richard Hoefs, an IT veteran, stressed the importance of having “external eyes looking over our shoulder” to ensure robust IT



COURTESY GRAPHIC

security.

During the debate, questions arose regarding compliance with Criminal Justice Information Services requirements. It was clarified that anyone accessing CJIS data must be fingerprinted and authorized.

Eagle proposed an amendment

to the motion, requiring that any external audit firm must comply with these security clearance requirements. “The RFP must include the fact that the auditors have to be cleared to be able to deal with the level of CJIS,” he stated. This amendment was accepted without objection.

Despite some concerns about the cost and necessity of the audit, the motion was put to a vote and passed.

The court directed the purchasing department to solicit and recommend an external IT consulting firm to conduct the audit to ensure the county’s IT infrastructure remains secure and efficient.

“We have to comply with state and federal rules to have access to that information,” Eagle emphasized. “Ultimately, this audit will help us identify both strengths and areas for improvement.”

NOISE

FROM PAGE A4

from 10 years of having a healthy heart and having no problems with your health history to having heart failure? It doesn’t make sense.”

Contrary Creek resident Daniel Lahey attributed the widespread health issues to a single cause — stress. He highlighted insights from acoustical engineers regarding the severe effects of noise-induced stress, linking it directly to various health ailments such as heart disease, immune disorders, fatigue, headaches and sleep disturbances.

“Almost every disease, every illness that anybody has, they’re reporting that it can be related to stress, and that can be related directly to the low frequency noise, so there’s the connection,” Lahey said. “There is a health issue, and it is a severe one ... If people were getting sick from the water, we would do a water study. We would want to know why people are getting sick and we would do everything we could to cure the water. This is coming through the air; it’s the same thing, and we’re all getting pelted by it.”

Mitchell Bend resident Chris Brooking — speaking on behalf of herself and Tom Meeks, who couldn’t attend due to recovery from recent surgery — described plant owners Marathon Digital LLC as a bad neighbor. She said representatives of the company attended a town meeting in February, where residents expressed their concerns and grievances surrounding the noise.

“A good neighbor would have listened to these citizens and come up with a reasonable, immediate response. A bad neighbor would continue to blast the noise and show disregard for those who are affected. Sadly, we were saddled with a bad neighbor,” she said. “Bad neighbors don’t care that noise pollution causes hearing loss, sleep disruption, anxiety, stress and cardiovascular issues. A bad neighbor doesn’t care that Tom just spent nine days in the hospital with a saddle pulmonary embolism. The blood clot that caused that embolism cannot be traced to any physical actions such as a fall, an accident or previous surgeries. Could the cause of the noise pollution have caused the stress that caused Tom to have this situation? It’s very possible. Can it be proved? No, it can’t be proved. But it cannot be disproved either.”

Precinct Chair 211 Shannon Wolf then touched on the broader impact of the bitcoin facility on Hood County property values, noting significant declines reported by residents such as Cheryl Shadden. She also expressed concern that Granbury’s reputation will be overshadowed by the extensive negative publicity surrounding the bitcoin plant.

“We have the honor of being the Celebration Capital of Texas and we have been named the Best Historic Small Town in America for a few years in a row. This is how we want to be known, but that’s not our reputation,” Wolf said. “Today, Granbury is synonymous with a bitcoin facility that is causing children to go deaf. It is stealing the health of an entire community, while Hood County says that nothing can be done. I’ve heard members of this court express sincere empathy towards this community, but you also say that your hands are tied, and there’s nothing you can do about this. Today, you have an opportunity to sign a resolution ... Precinct 211 is watching today, Hood County’s watching but more than

that, folks, the world is watching today. Please sign the resolution.”

Resident Joe Weber expressed his support for the resolution as well as the proposed sound study. He highlighted his personal struggle with noise from the bitcoin mine, likening it to the persistent drone of low-flying airplanes, which triggers his PTSD from 9/11. Weber also urged the court to reconsider the need for a sound study — an agenda item that had been previously discussed in prior courts.

Resident Laurie Walston emphasized the disruptive impact of noise from the Marathon facility on residents in the Mambrino Highway area of Hood County. She noted discrepancies in noise limits set by Texas regulations and occupational safety standards, highlighting that residents experience constant noise exposure without breaks, unlike workers with scheduled eight-hour shifts. Walston also cited guidelines from the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, indicating that prolonged exposure to noise levels exceeding 85 decibels is hazardous.

Sarah Rosenkranz, who lives half a mile from the bitcoin facility, expressed deep concerns about the health impacts her family has endured due to the noise. She said her daughter has suffered numerous ear infections, missed school and even had a recent seizure with no known cause, resulting in significant medical bills.

“It is so loud in her room,” Rosenkranz said. “We read 65 decibels at 3 a.m. She has to sleep in our room because it’s so loud she can’t sleep. It’s 24 hours a day, seven days a week. She can’t play outside anymore because it’s so loud ... We’re stuck living a nightmare and sometimes we go and stay in an Airbnb or hotel for a week just to get relief ... It’s just truly unbearable and y’all can do something about it. You’re the only ones that can do something about it. Please help us. We’re literally dying. My daughter lost half of her first school year over this. We just really need y’all to help us.”

Following the conclusion of public comments, Precinct 2 Commissioner Nannette Samuelson said she has learned a lot about sound wave acoustics and vibration over the past year. She thanked Giovanni Catanzaro, the deputy regional director for Sen. Ted Cruz, as well as Slawson’s District Liaison Meredith Fraser for coming to the meeting to listen to residents’ testimonies.

“I was contacted just yesterday by a person that is a gubernatorial appointee that has worked over several years on getting legislation passed, and she wants to be involved and help us,” Samuelson said. “This resolution will be very important in getting the information to our legislators in Austin, so that we can enhance or change laws that will help all the issues that you’ve heard today ... We want to be able to give our law enforcement and our county attorney tools that will ensure our citizens can peacefully enjoy their property.”

“I think the state is conducting a study into this,” Hood County Judge Ron Massingill said. “They’re looking at it. I think it’s a good idea and I hope that they continue to look at it. I’m in favor of the resolution myself.”

Samuelson proposed adopting the resolution, which was seconded by Precinct 4 Commissioner Dave Eagle. The motion passed unanimously.



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Shaquettia Sonya Carter

COURTESY PHOTO

Shaquettia Sonya Carter sentenced to prison in death of Hayley Darnell

From Staff Reports

On July 16 in the 355th District Court of Hood County, Shaquettia Sonya Carter, 40, was sentenced to 14 years in the Texas penitentiary for the manslaughter death of Hayley Darnell. Carter will be eligible for parole after serving half her sentence.

The case was presented by District Attorney Ryan Sinclair and Assistant District Attorney Max Lisle. Carter pleaded guilty to the charge. According to Texas law, the punishment for manslaughter is from 2-20 years. Carter was also eligible for probation.

DETAILS OF THE CASE

According to a press release from the Hood County District Attorney's Office, Hayley Darnell of Glen Rose spent the day of June 2, 2020 with her sons Brennan, 21, and Brody, 12. They had built their mom a patio set that day. Later that day Darnell took Brody to Acton for baseball practice.

Darnell then planned to buy groceries at H-E-B during Brody's baseball practice, while Brennan dined out with a friend.

Darnell did not make it back to pick up Brody from practice because Carter struck Darnell's vehicle while chasing another vehicle on Farm-to-Market Road 4.

Carter was in pursuit of a vehicle driven by her boyfriend who Carter suspected had been unfaithful. Carter passed several cars on the left and then on the right, and drove in the center turn lane in an attempt to pass cars. As Carter drove into the turn lane, she lost control of her vehicle and traveled into oncoming traffic, the press releases said.

An eyewitness said Carter was traveling close to 100 mph when the crash occurred.

When his mother did not arrive to pick him up and was not responding to his calls, Brody contacted his brother Brennan.

Brennan left the restaurant to pick up Brody and saw the accident on his way to the practice field. Brennan exited the vehicle and approached the scene saying, "I have to make sure that is not my mother."

Brennan was informed by the Justice of the Peace that the victim had perished. Long time family friend Cliff Andrews identified the body, the district attorney said. Andrews took Brennan to the baseball park to deliver the news to Brody.

"This was a horrific crash, and a tragic case. Hayley was very loved by her family and friends. The defense attorney pushed for probation, but the jury sentenced her to prison. I'm glad the Darnell family received justice, and hope this will help them in some meaningful way as they grieve their tremendous loss," said Sinclair.

Courthouse Christmas Lights discussed at Commissioners Court

BY EDEN DUNCAN GILBREATH
Special to the Hood County News
eden@hcnews.com

The County Commissioners Court Tuesday, July 23 discussed the proposal for decorative Christmas lights to be installed on the corners of the Historic Granbury square. The successful bid will be presented to the Commissioners Court and the City of Granbury prior to the award of the bid.

The agreement would be to authorize the county to collaborate with the Granbury Beautification Council and the City of Granbury with an interlocal agreement to share the remaining cost, if necessary, after the grant of funding from the Granbury Beautification

Council.

Though the courthouse has been decorated with lights for many years, the city does not have proper equipment to safely install or repair the lights. Therefore City Manager Chris Coffman brought the issue of seeking a bid for the installation.

"I'm happy to take instruction from the court and move forward and advertise their bids, and bring back some work with the judge, and bring back estimates that we get."

Coffman said the city heard complaints about the lack of lights last year.

"The lights on the trees last year were funded by the beautification

council, and they really miss those other lights and raise money, and we'll see what we can do. But I know that y'all have expressed an interest in continuing that program to be done safely."

"So we don't want anybody injured, but it could be nice to do it, and the beautification council is willing to do something. So I move that we go forward in allowing the city to get some bids. Let's see what it is, let's see what it would cost, and let's see how Hood County can partner with the city of Granbury," Hood County Judge Ron Massingill said.

The motion passed to seek a bid to have the lights professionally installed on the Hood County Courthouse.

"One of the issues, of course, is if they do a study in August, and it says they're making a lot of noise, and we have a citation from February. Arguably, a lawyer can say, 'Look, this isn't relevant to what happened in February,' so there's evidentiary issues and things that a judge can weigh in on. But I don't know what the sound study says. I don't know if it goes further into, 'OK, this is how it impacts health,' or 'This is just how we measure decibels.' I don't know the nature of it, but if it gets into the difference between the dBA, dBC all that stuff, it could have some relevance if we subpoenaed them. We'd have to pay them more, of course, if we want to bring them in for trial."

MATT MILLS
County Attorney

STUDY FROM PAGE A1

was unsure whether the county could legally fund an independent sound study but said he would like to discuss the situation further with Austin lawyer David Brooks. In the meantime, the court was asked to conduct more research to figure out who to hire for the project.

During the regular meeting July 23, Mills said he received confirmation from Brooks that it is legal for the county to pay for a study under public health and safety provisions.

Hood County Judge Ron Massingill asked Mills what he would do with the sound study findings if it shows the bitcoin mining operation exceeds 85 decibels. Mills said the findings could potentially be used as a witness for a future trial, as they could be relevant to the case.

"So, you could use the study?" Massingill asked.

"It's possible," Mills said. "One of the issues, of course, is if they do a study in August, and it says they're making a lot of noise, and we have a citation from February. Arguably, a lawyer can say, 'Look, this isn't relevant to what happened in February,' so there's evidentiary issues and things that a judge can weigh in on. But I don't know what the sound study says. I don't know if it goes further into, 'OK, this is how it impacts health,' or 'This is just how we measure decibels.' I don't know the nature of it, but if it gets into the difference between the dBA, dBC, all that stuff, it could have some relevance if we subpoenaed them. We'd have to pay them more, of course, if we want to bring them in for trial."

Massingill also asked Mills if he would have the jurisdiction to abate the noise following the results of the sound study. Mills stated under the Health and Safety Code Chapter 343,

there are 13 definitions of what a public nuisance is — ranging everywhere from abandoned vehicles to high weeds. However, he said there is nothing in the code about noise.

Massingill expressed sympathy for those affected by the bitcoin sound, particularly resident Sarah Rosenkranz's daughter, who has suffered numerous ear infections allegedly caused by the plant. While he questioned the selection of HGC Engineering to be the "most qualified firm" for the sound study, he added he was also unsure how the study will benefit residents.

"I don't know what the \$6,500 is going to do," Massingill said. "There's nothing that Mr. Mills can do with that study, as far as giving these people any type of relief. They want relief from the noise ... I'm really glad about the resolution. I hope the state comes back and does something for the benefit of everybody here, but what I'm saying is, I don't see how this \$6,500 is going to do anything to give any relief to you people right here. Ultimately, no relief is going to come from it."

During the citizen comments portion of the meeting, resident Richard Hoefs expressed gratitude for the court for passing the previous resolution and empathized with those directly affected by the noise from the bitcoin plant. He also emphasized that legislative change is necessary to address the issue effectively.

"We've started a journey together with this resolution — but it's not a short trip," he said. "Because we have to get the legislature to change the law. The legislature only meets periodically, but they're going to need our help. This isn't the end; it's about one step and a very important step. Going forward, we have to have proof and help them to craft the law that will protect all of our citizens — and that means we need some expert information ... For that reason, I encourage you to fund

the sound study."

Ron Liddell, drawing on his extensive background in mathematics and physics, shared insights on the complexities of sound waves and decibels. He emphasized that decibels are not linear but rather rhythmic, with a three-decibel change indicating a doubling of energy. He also highlighted how resonances can amplify wave effects, akin to the Tacoma Narrows Bridge collapse in 1940 due to wind resonance.

"That bridge was built in 1940 and never made it a few months," Liddell said. "This was the third largest suspension bridge in the world, but a 35-mile-an-hour wind hit it and put it into resonance. It was vibrating 20 feet this way and 20 feet that way and destroyed the bridge. The military never marches in unison over a bridge because you can put the bridge into resonance. A sound does the same thing. A sound is just another wave out there."

Resident David Blankenship noted that while the state is examining the impact on the grid, there remains a need to thoroughly address the noise issues affecting Hood County. He also stressed the significance of the \$6,500 sound study, as it is extremely important to the residents to find the root cause.

"We want the noise to stop, but if there are further issues with low frequency noise in sounds that affect our health, (we need to know)," Blankenship said. "We need the sound study to take this all the way across."

Somervell County resident Jenna Hornbuckle asked the court why some did not see the need for a sound study and asked if any of their family members were affected by the issue. She expressed frustration over why the concerns are only now gaining attention after several years of operation and why it has taken so long for action from the county and state levels.

PLEASE SEE **STUDY** | A8

Maureen Karl,
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- Scroll down the Public Feedback and Registration section.
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PO Box 819
Granbury, TX 76049
Phone: 817-573-2471

STUDY

FROM PAGE A7

"Why is it that we have to work so hard among ourselves to even get to the point that we're at today?" she asked. "Why are we not getting the help that we need from you guys from the county, from the state or anybody? We're literally begging for help at this point. We don't know what else to do. Why can we not bring this company in? ... Let's get something done. It's not just for Hood County; it's for the state of Texas."

As resident Sarah Rosenkranz began her comments, she shared a statement from bitcoin plant owner Marathon from a CBS news article in response to community concerns about the data center. The statement reads: "When evaluating the impact on the local community, it's important to bear in mind that this is an industrial area and has been for years prior to the existence of the digital asset data center. MARA did not build the digital asset data center. The data center was originally built by Compute North, and until recently, it was operated by US Bitcoin Corp/Hut8. MARA only took ownership of the site and its operations at the start of this year, well after it was constructed and began operating."

Rosenkranz continued reading the article, stating: "The company said shortly after taking over, the site has commissioned multiple sound studies from third party acoustic experts which determined the site is operating within legal limits."

"In my opinion, that's why it's very important that we get this sound study, because Marathon is publicly stating, in writing to CBS News, that they've conducted third party sound studies and everything's OK, and everything's within legal limits," she said. "I think independently, as a community, it's important ... that



Somervell County resident Jenna Hornbuckle addresses the court regarding the bitcoin sound study during a regularly scheduled Hood County Commissioners Court meeting July 23.

ASHLEY TERRY | HOOD COUNTY NEWS

we get a sound study so that way, we're protected, and that way, the numbers are coming from you guys, an independent source and not Marathon, who's the company that's hurting us who just lost \$138 million lawsuit in California for violating a contract. That's how this company is. I just really want us protected as a community."

Before the next speaker presented her comments, Precinct 1 Commissioner Kevin Andrews chimed in, raising concerns about the practical implications of conducting a sound study and expressed his skepticism about the study's ability to address all community concerns.

"I'm struggling mightily with this issue," he said. "One of my biggest concerns here is, what do we do with this data? ... I understand that there could be things going on here, but is this symbolism over substance? What can we do with this data? Where do we take it? What's the next step? ... It's not about the number of people that are affected. I do believe that this is affecting the entirety of Hood County for various reasons, but

where do we go from here? What do we do with this info?"

Samuelson responded that the court would provide the sound study to the legislators as data points. She said a committee has already been formed in the Texas Senate to look at the bitcoin sound issue.

"This will be another independent data source that can help them understand what is going on from experts that do this every day. This is their job all over the world ... This is scientific data that will help our legislatures understand the issue with cryptocurrency not just in Hood County in Granbury, but in the state of Texas."

Resident Tina Brown then proposed a pragmatic approach and asked whether the court had established a policy governing expenditures on projects that benefit only a few or fall outside its jurisdiction.

"It seems that the court turned down an arts council last year for \$1,000 because you didn't think it was part of your job title or job description," Brown said. "So maybe this court should come up with a policy for

how much you will spend on projects that are not part of something you can do anything about."

Precinct 211 Chair Shannon Wolf responded to Andrews' concerns about the significance of the sound study and clarified its importance based on recent discussions with state Rep. Shelby Slawson.

"I met with Shelby Slawson a few weeks ago, and in her office; she said she needed the sound study," Wolf said. "Marathon has a sound study. If the citizens in Precinct 2 pay for a sound study, it would be one sound study against another. If this court asked for a sound study, this sound study would not be viewed as partisan; it would be viewed as an independent, unbiased sound study. She wants that sound study so that she could base legislation similar to what was just passed by you and the rest of the court to form legislation. They need the sound study, not from us, but from you."

Wolf also addressed Brown's comment about how the sound study was a "project."

"We are not a project; we

are citizens of Hood County that need your help. We need legislation to stop people from going deaf, from people having to be in the hospital, from property values plummeting, from wildlife leaving an area," she said. "Hood County has a problem ... Everybody in this room has a problem, and I'm asking for a sound study from this court to alleviate the problem and to give our legislators the information that they need in order to form legislation that will end the problem."

Precinct 4 Commissioner Dave Eagle highlighted previous county investments in projects like Stroud Creek and Old Granbury Road, noting that while the projects were located in different precincts, they affected the entire county.

"My question for \$6,500 at this stage is why not do a sound study?" he said. "They may come back and say, 'Everybody that came up here today is crazy out of their mind. They don't know what they're talking about. They're all imagining things' ... That could happen, right? But the flip side of that is they actually might find

some issues ... The sound study reached a certain point in decibel. There's all kinds of data out there that talks about health issues in certain decibel levels, so I don't understand what the problem is. Why not do that with the many people that's being affected by it?"

Samuelson then talked about research findings from Dr. Mariana Alves-Pereira, a notable researcher who has dedicated over 30 years to studying infrasound and low-frequency noise and acoustical pollution. She explained that she specializes in Vibro-Acoustic Disease (VAD), a documented condition affecting those exposed to prolonged low-frequency noise.

"One of the things she says is, 'It's not just the sound you can hear that impacts you; it's the sound you can't hear that's impacting you.' She says hearing loss is the least of your worries," Samuelson said. "What your body does is it builds fibro cellular structures around your veins and your capillaries to protect itself from the onslaught of the vibration and the acoustical sound, so your body is constantly working to protect itself from this constant noise and sound vibrations that are attacking the body ... This is a real thing. This isn't something these people are imagining."

Before the court voted on the agenda item, Andrews continued to express his hesitancy about whether the sound is a public safety issue, adding that he was still struggling with the idea.

However, Andrews ultimately cast the deciding vote and shifted the balance in favor with a last-minute "Aye," despite his persistent reluctance throughout the discussion.

The motion passed 3:2, with Massingill and Precinct 3 Commissioner Jack Wilson voting, "No."

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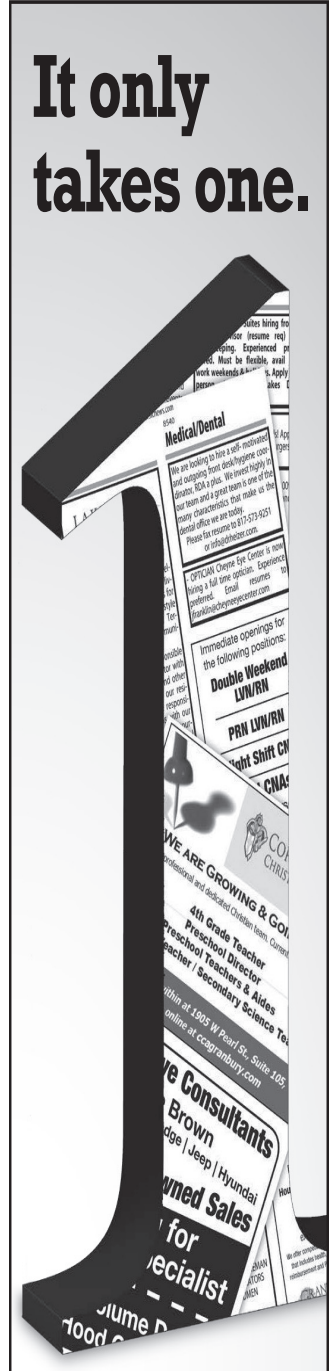
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The Public Housing waiting list will close permanently and no applications will be accepted after July 31, 2024 for all bedroom sizes (0,1,2&3).

Waco Housing Authority will open the waiting list for the units under the voucher program pursuant to their policy. When the waiting list is open, a public notice announcing the opening and application procedure will be advertised. (817) 573-1107 julia@granburyhousing.org

Application has been made with the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission for a Mixed Beverage Permit and Food and Beverage Certificate by BXB LLC dba Brick by Brick, to be located at 804 E Pearl St, Granbury, Hood County, Texas, 76048. Officers of said LLC are RH VENTURES LLC, Manager. TANA E ROGERS, Manager of RH VENTURES LLC. SBH Heritage LLC, Manager of RH VENTURES LLC. Kyndal R Hall, Manager of SBH Heritage LLC.

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
Notice is hereby given that Letters Testamentary for the Estate of William Harold Price, Deceased, were issued on June 25, 2024 in Cause No. P10395, pending in the County Court of Hood County, Texas to Executor William H. Price Jr., Independent Executor.
The address of record for William H. Price, Jr. is 5309 Comanche Vista Trail Granbury, Texas 76049.
All persons having claims against this Estate are required to present their claims within the time and in the manner prescribed by law.
DATED on this the 17th day of July, 2024.
James R. Pratz, Attorney for Executor
Texas State Bar No. 24032967
P.O. Box 6759
Granbury, Texas 76049
Tel. (817) 573-7300
jamespratz@protonmail.com

CITATION BY PUBLICATION
THE STATE OF TEXAS: To all persons interested in the Estate of Wilson Antonio Jimenez Sanmartin, Cause No. P10469, County Court of Hood County, Texas.
Richard Patricio Jimenez Sanmartin in the above numbered and entitled estate filed an Application to Determine Heirship and for Letters of Administration and declare who are the heirs and the only heirs of the said Estate of Wilson Antonio Jimenez Sanmartin, deceased, and their respective shares and interests in this Estate.
Said application will be heard and acted on by said court at 10:00 o'clock a.m. on the first Monday next after the expiration of ten days from date of publication of this citation, at the County Courthouse in Granbury, Texas.

All persons interested in said estate are hereby cited to appear before said Honorable Court at above mentioned time and place by filing a written answer contesting such application should they desire to do so.
Given under my hand and seal of said court at office in Granbury, Texas on the 23rd day of July 2024
Christine C. Leftwich
Hood County Clerk
P.O. Box 339
Hood County, Texas 76048
By /s/ Jamie Barfield, Deputy

Public Notices
9031
CITATION BY PUBLICATION
THE STATE OF TEXAS: To all persons interested in the Estate of MEGAN HALEY TAYLOR, Cause No. P10464, County Court of Hood County, Texas.
Sherry Lynne Taylor in the above numbered and entitled estate filed an Application for Independent Administration, for Letters of Administration and to Determine Heirship and declare who are the heirs and the only heirs of the said Estate of MEGAN HALEY TAYLOR, deceased, and their respective shares and interests in this Estate.
Said application will be heard and acted on by said court at 10:00 o'clock a.m. on the first Monday next after the expiration of ten days from date of publication of this citation, at the County Courthouse in Granbury, Texas.
All persons interested in said estate are hereby cited to appear before said Honorable Court at above mentioned time and place by filing a written answer contesting such application should they desire to do so.
Given under my hand and seal of said court at office in Granbury, Texas on the 19th day of July 2024
Christine C. Leftwich
Hood County Clerk
P.O. Box 339
Hood County, Texas 76048
By /s/ Jamie Barfield, Deputy

Granbury Independent School District is soliciting proposals for CTE Instructional Supplies and Equipment under CSP# 2024-9 & Athletic Trainer Supplies, Equipment, Uniforms/Clothing under CSP 2024-8.
The specifications are available online on https://granbury.ionwave.net. Proposals will be accepted until closing on August 20th, 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@granburysisd.org.

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
Notice is hereby given that on June 4, 2024, Letters of Guardianship of Estate were issued to Judy Campbell Nelson by the County Court of Hood County, Texas, in the case styled In the Guardianship of Mary Campbell, an Incapacitated Person, under Cause No. G00511, pending on the probate docket of the Court.
All persons having claims against this Estate are required to present them to the undersigned within the time and in the manner prescribed by law.
Dated: July 18, 2024
Judy Campbell Nelson
Guardian of the Estate of Mary Campbell
c/o Christian & Christian PLLC
1405 W. Pearl St.
Granbury, TX 76048
/s/ MarJoe D. Barnhart
State Bar No. 24045498
Email: marjoe@christianandchristianlaw.com
1405 W. Pearl St.
Granbury, TX 76048
(682) 936-4003
Attorney for Judy Campbell Nelson

PUBLIC NOTICE
Hood County, Texas will begin an on-line auction for the sale of a 2013 GMC SIERRA, 1983 OLDSMOBILE DELTA, 2003 HYUNDAI, 2002 FORD EXPLORER, 2006 FORD F150, 1999 FORD 150, 2009 NISSAN MURANO, 2001 DODGE 2500 TRUCK, 2013 KIA SOUL, 2001 ECLIPSE MITSUBISHI, 2015 TOYOTA RAV4, BOAT CARESMA, 2005 VW JETTA, 2011 HONDA CR-Z, 2014 ICEB MOTORCYCLE, 2020 JIAN MOTORCYCLE, 2005 WELLS CARGO MCI UTILITY, 2015 CHEVY TAHOE, 2017 CHEVY TAHOE, 2018 CHEVY TAHOE, 2014 CHEVY TAHOE, 2-TRAILERS, PC's, MONITORS, PRINTERS, LAPTOPS, IPHONES, TV's, MITEL PHONES, CHAIRS, LOCKERS AND MISC ITEMS that have been declared surplus property of Hood County. Hood County online auction is with Rene Bates Auctioneer Inc. and will begin August 7, 2024 and run until August 21,2024. Interested bidders can access the auction at www.renebates.com. Questions concerning this online auction should be directed to Hood County Purchasing Department 817-408-3440.

CITATION BY PUBLICATION
THE STATE OF TEXAS
TO: RONALD DALE HERRING, Respondent:
GREETINGS:
NOTICE TO RESPONDENT: "You have been sued. You may employ an attorney. If you or your attorney do not file a written answer with the clerk who issued this citation by 10:00 a.m. of the first Monday next following the expiration of 20 days after the date you were served this citation and petition, a default judgment may be taken against you."
The petition of SHERYL RENEE HERRING Petitioner, was filed in the DISTRICT Court of Hood County, Texas on the 11 TH of JUNE, 2024, against RONALD DALE HERRING Respondent, numbered D2024134 and entitled "In the Matter of the Marriage of SHERYL RENEE HERRING and RONALD HERRING". The suit requests: ORIGINAL PETITION FOR DIVORCE as is more fully shown by the Petition on file in this suit.
"The Court has authority in this suit to enter any judgment or decree dissolving the marriage, providing for the division of property, which will be binding on you."
Issued and Given under my hand and the Seal of Said Court at Granbury, Texas, this the 15TH day of JULY A.D. 2024.
ROBERTA ZAMARRON
CLERK OF THE DISTRICT
Hood County, Texas
By: Susan Ashmore, Deputy

Public Notices
9031
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
Notice is hereby given that Letters Testamentary for the Estate of Gerald Dale Marsh, Deceased, were issued on July 12, 2024, in Docket Number P10437 pending in the County Court of Hood County, Texas, to Michael Dale Marsh, Independent Executor. All persons having claims against this Estate are required to present their claims within the time and in the manner prescribed by law, c/o Paul E. Hanson, Attorney at Law, P.O. Box 101896, Fort Worth, Texas 76185. DATED the 12th day of July, 2024. SIGNED Michael Dale Marsh, Independent Executor.

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS FOR ENGINEER, BOND COUNSEL, AND FINANCIAL ADVISOR
The City of Granbury, Texas (the "City") requests the submission of qualifications statements, which will lead to the possible award of contracts to provide services for a project involving the City's waterworks system.
Scope of Work
Services to be provided by Engineer: professional engineering services associated with proposed (a) planning, permitting, environmental, design and construction management phase services and other additional services associated with the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) Drinking Water State Revolving Fund Emerging Contaminants (DWSRF-EC) Water System Improvements Project; and (b) assistance in application preparation and documentation to federal, state, and other possible funding sources.

Services to be provided by Bond Counsel: assist in obtaining loan and/or grant funding and to provide legal opinion with respect to validity of any debt obligations issued by the City for capital financing; preparation of resolution authorizing and securing the debt and/or authorizing any grant or principal forgiveness agreements, as necessary.
Services to be provided by Financial Advisor: strategic financial planning; analysis of market conditions; recommended investments of bond and grant proceeds; provide recommendations to the City for financing through programs established by the TWDB, including loan, grant, and principal forgiveness funding.

Guidelines for Content of Qualification Statements
DO NOT INCLUDE COST INFORMATION with the qualification statement. Responses that include cost or pricing information will be rejected and will not be considered by the City.
Detailed instructions on preparation of the qualification statement must be obtained from the City. For more information on preparing and submitting the qualification statement, contact the Director of Public Works Chester Nolen at (817) 573-7030 ext. 1754 or CNolen@granbury.org. This information should be requested as soon as possible to allow time to prepare the document and comply with the procedures.
Submittal Deadline
One (1) copy of the qualifications statement must be received by the City by no later than 4:00 PM (Central) on August 16, 2024, at the offices of the City of Granbury, Public Works Department, 401 N. Park Street, Granbury, Texas 76048, Attn: Chester Nolen, Director of Public Works.

Minimum Qualifications and Selection Criteria
The City will evaluate the proposals to determine which firm has the best qualifications.
Contract Terms and Negotiation Schedule
Consultants for Bond Counsel, Financial Advisor, Engineering services are expected to negotiate an agreement for services which is acceptable to the City. If an acceptable contract cannot be negotiated, the City may formally end negotiations and begin negotiating with the next highest qualified person or firm.
Contracts are contingent upon release of funds from the TWDB. Any contract awarded under the Requests for Qualifications (RFQs) are expected to be funded in part by a loan from the TWDB. Neither the State of Texas nor any of its departments, agencies, or employees are or will be a party to the RFQs, or any resulting contract. These RFQs are issued in accordance with Section 2254 of the Texas Government Code (Professional Services Act) and Title 40 Code of Federal Regulations, Part 31 (Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments).

This contract is subject to the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Program, which includes EPA-approved fair share goals toward procurement of Minority and Women-owned Business Enterprise (M/WBE) firms. EPA rules require that applicants and prime contractors make a good faith effort to award a fair share of contracts, subcontracts, and procurements to M/WBEs through demonstration of the six affirmative steps. For more details of the DBE Program and the current, applicable fair share goals, please visit www.twdb.texas.gov/dbe.
Equal Opportunity in Employment - All qualified Applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, age, handicap, or national origin. Bidders on this work will be required to comply with the President's Executive Order No. 11246, as amended by Executive Order 11375, and as supplemented in Department of Labor regulations 41 CFR Part 60. Small, minority, and women-owned business enterprises are encouraged to respond.

Public Notices
9031
PRIME CONTRACTORS
Prime contractors are required to comply with EPA's good faith effort policy when awarding sub-agreements for construction, supplies, equipment, and services. A complete version of TWDB document, "Guidance for Utilization of Small, Minority, and Women-Owned Businesses in Procurement", is available at: www.twdb.texas.gov/financial/instructions/doc/TWDB-0210.pdf
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
The following Public Hearings will be considered by the PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION of the City of Granbury on Monday, August 12, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. The Public Hearings will also be considered by the GRANBURY CITY COUNCIL on Tuesday, September 3, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. All Public Hearings will be held within the Council Chambers of Granbury City Hall, 116 W. Bridge Street, Granbury, Texas.
1. SUP-2021-12 Specific Use Permit for Dwellings, Single Family, Attached use in Central Business zoning; located at 210 E. Ewell St.
2. SUP-2024-04 Specific Use Permit for Daily Outdoor Display in Heavy Commercial zoning; located at 3617 FM 4.
3. Z-2024-04 Amend the Planned Development/Light Commercial (PD/LC), Adopted Ordinance 23-01, to revise the development plan; located at 5260 E US Hwy 377.
4. Z-2024-05 Zoning Change from Residential - 7,000 (R-7) to Planned Development/R-7 (PD/R-7); located at 1001 Loop 567.
5. Z-2024-09 Zoning Change from Interim Holding to Planned Development/R7 (PD/R7); located at 3000 Weatherford Hwy.
6. PL-2024-13 Replat of Lot 1R Blk 5 The Shores located at 105 Bahama Ct.
7. O-2024-04 Amend Section 11.2.D Parking Table of the City of Granbury Zoning Ordinance. The general purpose is to add parking ratio for pickleball court.
For more information, contact Community Development at 817-573-1114, Granbury City Hall, 116 West Bridge St., Granbury, TX 76048.

Public Notices
9031
PUBLIC NOTICE
Pursuant to Chapter 59, Texas Property Code, Guardbox Storage in Granbury, which is located at 1400 Weatherford Hwy., Granbury, TX 76048, will hold a public auction of property being sold to satisfy a landlord's lien online at www.Storagetreasures.com. The auction will end on or around 11:00 A.M. on August 12, 2024. Property will be sold to the highest bidder. A \$100.00 cash deposit for removal and cleanup will be required. Seller reserves the right to withdraw property from sale. Property being sold includes contents in spaces of the following tenants: Lonnie Day- household items, misc. outdoor, kid's toys.
Contact Guardbox Storage-Granbury 817-573-2416

PUBLIC SALES
Granbury 76048
Garage Sales 76048
PEOPLE HELPING PEOPLE
Rummage Room Open Tues & Thurs, 8am-2pm, First Sat. of the month 9am-1pm 306 Kings Plaza. 817-573-7801.
New Beginnings Resale Shoppe & Boutique
MISSION GRANBURY
817-964-3445
1204 Water's Edge Dr., (Across from the Movie Theatre) #heretohelp
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ENERGY

Backup power – peace of mind. Get a standard warranty of 7 years, \$849 value. Call 888-925-0261, Briggs & Stratton Energy Solutions.

Prepare for power outages today with a Generac Home Standby Generator. Act now to receive a FREE 5-Year warranty with qualifying purchase. Call 1-855-704-8579 today to schedule a free quote. It's not just a generator. It's a power move.

HOME IMPROVEMENT

Jacuzzi Bath Remodel can install a new, custom bath or shower in as little as one day. For a limited time, waving ALL installation costs! (Additional terms apply. Subject to change and vary by dealer. (Offer ends 8/25/24.) Call 1-855-965-0841.

LEGAL ASSISTANCE

Wesley Financial Group, LLC Timeshare Cancellation Experts. Over \$50,000,000 in timeshare debt and fees cancelled in 2019. Get free informational package and learn how to get rid of your timeshare! Free consultations. Over 450 positive reviews. Call 855-501-6864.

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thee
's class of 2015 raised their hooked hands W long Thursday evening at the Fort Worth Con Hood County News

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OBITUARIES

Patsy Ruth Morrison

July 15, 1936 - July 9, 2024

Patsy Ruth Morrison, nee Compton, 87, went to be with her heavenly father on July 9, 2024, after a long and beautiful life.

Born in 1936 in Hood County, she is remembered by her loved ones for her warmth and enduring spirit. Pat graduated from Lipan High School as valedictorian in 1954. During her high school years, she was known as a fierce competitor playing on the Lipan Indians women's basketball team. Following high school graduation, she attended business school in Fort Worth.

In 1955 she married her high school sweetheart, Leon. They were married for 65 years. In 1968 Pat, Leon, and their two sons, James and Bryan, moved to Ennis, Texas, where Pat worked with Leon for Trophar Trophy Manufacturing until they established Lone Star Trophy and Ribbon Company.

After they retired and moved to Pecan Plantation, Pat and Leon began making new friends. They immediately joined Acton Baptist Church, where they served as leaders and faithful witnesses. During her illness Pat was lovingly supported by members of the Agape Class. A voracious reader, Pat participated in starting the "No Hassle, Let's Go to Lunch" book club, adding another group of friends. Pat's competitive nature continued to grow her circle of friends through golf. She frequently was described by these friends as "only playing golf on days ending in 'Y.'" She served as president of the Nutcrack-



er Ladies Golf Association in 1999, and the Pecan Ladies Golf Association in 2005.

Pat and Leon always had room in their hearts for more friends. They loved to have their friends at "their piece of heaven," and served as hosts to numerous family events and gatherings of friends.

Pat was preceded in death by her husband, Leon; parents, Coy and Blondy Compton; and sister, Vicky Palmer.

She is survived by her sons: James (Judy), Bryan (Rita); Three grandchildren: Jamie Morrison, Spencer (Jayci) Morrison; Travis (Maria) Morrison; three great-grandchildren: Luca, Callahan, and Veronica; and three sisters: Judy Kirkpatrick, Celia Yowell, and Jimmie Borum.

Pat's Celebration of Life Service was at Acton Baptist Church on July 26 at 11 a.m. Visitation preceded the service at 10 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall of the church.

In lieu of flowers, love donations may be made to Acton Baptist Church, or IRC Ministries, PO Box 614, Buna, TX 77612.

Joy Paris

April 25, 1939 - July 18, 2024

Joy Paris passed peacefully from this world July 18, 2024. Joy was born April 25, 1939, in Mount Barker, Western Australia to Alma Rose Simpson Burkitt and Robert Christopher Burkitt. Joy's life was one of art, beauty, and adventure. During her time here she was an accomplished model, artist, and real estate broker as well as a proud mother, grandmother, great-grandmother and friend. Joy moved from Western Australia to Texas in 1973

then moved to her home of Granbury, Texas in 1983. She opened Joy Paris Realtors in 1987, which eventually became Remax Lake Granbury. Joy was a lifelong artist with a passion for painting, singing, whistling, home décor, gardening and was self-taught in piano. To anything Joy set her mind, she became successful. She was a philanthropist and generously served the community she loved. She was involved with the United Way of Granbury as well as Hood County Children's Charities. Joy loved animals and was known for caring for birds, dogs, cats, horses, and even a kangaroo. She was rarely seen without her beloved dog, Pierre.

In recent years, she was known as Nanny to her grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Joy was an excellent role model of strength and independence, and she leaves a lasting legacy of love, art, and beauty behind.

Joy was preceded in death by parents Alma Rose Simpson Burkitt, Robert Christopher Burkitt, and sister Dawn



Burkitt. Joy is survived by daughter Kim Pepper Alexander and husband Jeff, step-daughter Tanya Paris, grandchildren Morgan Alexander Weisser (husband David), Dylan Burkitt Alexander (wife Marissa), Victoria Grace Alexander (husband Nick), great-grandchildren Anna Joy and Grant Weisser, niece Nicole Dutton, nephews Shawn Dutton (wife Kutrina), Carl Freedman (partner Robert Cappellin) and many beloved friends and relatives.

Graveside Service: 11 a.m., Thursday, July 25, 2024, Acton Cemetery, Visitation: 5 - 7 p.m., Wednesday, July 24, 2024, The Wiley Center.

A celebration honoring the life of Joy Paris was held at DeCordova Country Club Ballroom from 2 to 6 p.m., Thursday, following the graveside service.

Services under the direction of Wiley Funeral Home.

In lieu of flowers consider a donation to Hood County Children's Charities (https://hoodcountychildrenscharity.com/) or Horses of Hope (https://horsesofhope.com/)

Louise Hidalgo

November 11, 1930 - July 11, 2024

Louise Hidalgo is off on her greatest adventure yet, as she passed to her heavenly home, July 11, 2024. She squeezed an extraordinary amount of life into her 93 years. Of the many adventures in her life, she was Mom to six children, LeRoy, Casey, Mike, Paula, Melody and James. She was Grandma, MaMa Nanny, Bamaw Weez, and Gma to 21 grandchildren, great-grandmother to 42, great-great-grandmother to 15 and their 27 spouses/partners. She was married to Chester Hidalgo for 39 years until his death in 1992, then had a long-standing friendship with Daniel Havelka until his death in 2022. Louise taught 8th-grade language arts and drama at Granbury ISD for over 25 years, touching thousands of lives. In her 70s, Louise was riding in hot air balloons and slowed down just enough to learn to paint. Louise became a prolific painter, holding several art shows and being honored with the Lake Granbury Art Association, "Artist of the Month" award. In her 80s Louise went zip lining through a rain forest, riding in a motorcycle sidecar and took a trip to Europe. She always had a dream of writing



books and in her 90s published a children's book, "Roscoe, the Rascally Rooster," based off of the real-life events of the next-door neighbor's rooster. Louise was an absolute force of nature, who never slowed down and never backed away from ANYTHING. She was a "tough old broad," who survived the Great Depression, World War II, and her greatest challenge, being the matriarch of the large Hidalgo clan.

A funeral service will be held from 11 a.m. to noon on Aug. 3, 2024 at Saint Francis Cabrini Catholic Church, 2301 Acton Hwy, Granbury, TX 76049. A reception will be hosted by the family that same afternoon at Lakestone Terrace Senior Living at 2 p.m. followed by a Celebration of Life at 3 p.m.

PLEASE SEE OBITS | A12

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.

Cameron Coy Roach

October 27, 1999 - July 1, 2024

Cameron was a son, a big brother, an uncle, a best friend, and a protector of his family. He always stood for what was right and had no tolerance for BS! He held a special bond with his mother, one that all moms would want with their son! He guided and protected his sisters with unfiltered advice, whether they wanted it or not, and loved to make his niece laugh with funny sounds and faces! A lover of music, Cameron's taste ranged from rock to rap (and some country if it was with his brother-in-law Kobe). His pastime was and probably his most favorite thing to do was gaming, he was extraordinarily gifted at winning in the gaming world! He was always up for a good movie whether at the theater eating a triple dipper with his siblings or at home on family movie night. Cameron you are deeply missed, we lift you



up with countless memories and celebrate your life with the same love and laughter you have blessed ours with. Love you son!

Cameron is survived by Holly Roach - Mother, Ayra Roach - Dad, Kinley Roach - Sister, Madison Black - Sister, Kobe Black - Brother-In-Law, and Wrenlee Black - Niece.

Service: 2 p.m., Saturday, Aug. 3, 2024, Martin's Funeral Home. Services under the direction of Martin's Funeral Home.

Odis Lynch

December 2, 1942 - July 22, 2024

Odis Lynch of Granbury passed away Monday, July 22, 2024. Services will be

Wednesday, July 31, 2024, at 2 p.m., Wilson-Little Funeral Home, Purcell, OK.

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 by Charley & Guy Orbison
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ACROSS

- 1 book by TX game hunter Buck: "Bring 'em ___ Alive"
- 5 TXism: "liquid ___" (perfume)
- 6 on the Gulf
- 7 Fort Worth's Cullen was found not guilty in death of this Farr
- 8 Heisman winner Brown from Dallas
- 9 Kelvin Martin left Cowboys in 1993 for this Seattle team
- 17 hair cutting action
- 19 racetracks have to pay ___ fees
- 21 popular "emergency" TV show
- 22 this actor Busey was TX Buddy Holly
- 23 TXism: "couldn't find hide ___ hair of him"
- 24 TX Charlie Dunn was first to put ___ roses on boots publication: Texas Farm & ___
- 34 Green Bay Packers' home state (abbr.)
- 35 TX Armstrong was stripped of his ___ France titles
- 36 TX outlaw booty
- 37 TXism: "counts his money with ___ measure" (rich)
- 39 TXism: "___ as a coyote with a rubber chicken"
- 43 cheerleader cries
- 44 former U.S. Congressman, Ortiz
- 45 TXism: "let ' ___ rip!"
- 46 Valley ___ vera plant
- 47 neither's sidekick
- 48 football rally
- 50 TX O'Connor: "Land does ___ away, dollars do"
- 53 Bevo's school (abbr.)
- 54 TXism: " ___ broke I couldn't change my mind"
- 55 TX Willie's "Turn Out the Lights the ___ Over"
- 56 a thing without equal
- 59 TX Orbison's "That ___ You Feelin' Again"
- 60 "red as a ___"
- 61 April 15 agcy.
- 62 pos. of Rangers' Corey Seager
- 13 " ___ you can"
- 14 TX-born jockey Shoemaker (init.)
- 15 TXism for relatives
- 16 road equipment not seen in South Texas (2 wds.)
- 18 flavor of 3-down: ___ cream
- 20 past winning Miami QB Bob
- 24 TXism: "keep ___ under your hat"
- 25 approving head bob
- 26 former Astro outfielder, Gonzalez (1990-95)
- 27 fire crime
- 38 Goddess of Liberty atop Texas Capitol is aluminum ___
- 40 after lunch (abbr.)
- 41 TX V.T. Hamlin's comic: Alley ___
- 42 TXism: "got the ___" (clumsy)
- 49 "cement pond"
- 51 sarcastic insult
- 52 an "Achy Breaky" Cyrus (init.)
- 57 noted 1960s UT linebacker, Tommy
- 58 Denton's historic hardware store (now closed)

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How should you respond to market cycles?

TONY MOBLY
 Edward Jones
 Financial Adviser

The movement of the financial markets can seem mysterious — and yet, if we look back over long periods, we can see definite patterns that consistently repeat themselves. As an investor, how should you respond to these market cycles?

To begin with, it's useful to know something about the nature of a market cycle and its connection to the business or economic cycle, which describes the fluctuations of the economy between periods of growth and contraction. Issues such

as employment, consumer spending, interest rates and inflation can determine the stage of the business cycle. On the other hand, the market cycle refers to what's happening in the financial markets — that is, the performance of all the different types of investments.

The market cycle often anticipates the business cycle. In other words, the stock market may peak, or hit bottom, before the business cycle does the same. That's partially because the

financial markets are always looking ahead. If they foresee an event that could boost the business cycle and help the economy, such as the Federal Reserve lowering interest rates, they may become more "bullish" on stocks, thus driving the market up. Conversely, if the markets think the business cycle will slow down and the economy will contract, they may project a decline in corporate earnings and become more "bearish" on stocks, leading to a market drop.

Once you're familiar with the nature of market cycles, you won't be surprised when they occur. But does that mean you should base your

investment strategy on these cycles?

Some people do. If they believe the market cycle is moving through a downward phase, they may try to cut their perceived losses by selling stocks — even those with strong fundamentals and good prospects — and buying lower-risk investments. While these "safer" investments may offer more price stability and a greater degree of preservation of principal, they also won't provide much in the way of growth potential. And you'll need this growth capacity to help reach your long-term goals, including a comfortable retirement.

On the other hand, when investors think the market cycle is moving upward, they may keep investing in stocks that have become overpriced. In extreme cases, unwarranted investor enthusiasm can lead to events such as the dotcom bubble, which led to a sharp market decline from 2000 through 2002.

Rather than trying to "time" the market, you may well be better off by looking past its cycles and following a long-term, "all-weather" strategy that's appropriate for your goals, risk tolerance, time horizon and need for liquidity. And it's also a good idea to build a diversified portfolio containing U.S.

and foreign stocks, mutual funds, corporate bonds, U.S. Treasury securities and other investments. While diversification can't protect against all losses, it can help protect you from market volatility that might primarily affect just one asset class.

Market cycles often draw a lot of attention, and they are relevant to investors in the sense that they can explain what's happening in the markets. Yet, when it comes to investing, it's best not to think of cycles but rather of a long journey — one that, when traveled carefully, can lead to the destinations you seek.

KNIEPER REALTY

Are you ready to buy a home? Questions to ask yourself first



BY PAM KNIEPER

Pam Knieper, broker/owner of Knieper Real Estate, is and has been the #1 top producer in Hood County for more than 15 years and running. She is known as the waterfront expert and the authority on real estate.

If you're trying to decide if you're ready to buy, there's probably a lot on your mind. You're thinking about your finances, mortgage rates and home prices. While housing market conditions are a factor in your decision, your own personal situation and finances matter, too. As an article from NerdWallet says: "Housing market trends give important context. But whether this is a good time to buy a house also depends on your financial situation, life goals and readiness to become a homeowner."

Instead of trying to time the market, focus on what you can control. Here are a few questions that can give you clarity on whether you're ready.

DO YOU HAVE A STABLE JOB?

Buying a home is a big purchase, and you're going to sign a home loan stating you'll pay that loan back. That's a big commitment. Knowing you have a reli-

able job and a steady stream of income coming in can help put your mind at ease when making such a large purchase.

HAVE YOU FIGURED OUT WHAT YOU CAN AFFORD?

If you have reliable paychecks coming in, the next thing to figure out is what you can afford. To be sure you have a good idea of what to expect from a number's perspective, start by talking to a trusted lender. They'll be able to tell you about the pre-approval process and what you're qualified to borrow, current mortgage rates and your approximate monthly payment, closing costs to anticipate, and other expenses you'll want to budget for.

DO YOU HAVE AN EMERGENCY FUND?

While it's not fun to think about, a financial cushion that can cover several months of living expenses, including mortgage pay-



COURTESY PHOTO BY ALISAAA, ADOBESTOCK.COM

While housing market conditions are a factor in your decision, your own personal situation and finances matter, too.

ments, in case of unforeseen circumstances such as job loss or medical emergencies, is a very good idea.

HOW LONG DO YOU PLAN TO LIVE THERE?

Buying a home involves some upfront expenses. And while you'll get that money back as you gain equity, that process takes time. If you plan to move too soon, you

may not recoup your investment. For example, if you're planning to sell and move again in a year, it might not make sense to buy right now. As Lawrence Yun, chief economist at the National Association of REALTORS®, explains: "Five years is a good, comfortable mark. If the price of your home appreciates, then even three years would be fine."

So, think about your future. If you plan to transfer to a new city with the upcoming promotion you're working toward or you anticipate your loved ones will need you to move closer to take care of them, that's something to factor in.

Finally, finding a trusted LOCAL agent and lender who can walk you through your options and help you decide

if you are ready to take the plunge is the best place to start. The buyer's agents at Knieper Realty stand ready to help you, so please give us a call at 817-219-0456 or visit us online at www.WeSellGranbury.com. We would love to hear from you.

Portions of this article were sourced, with permission, from www.KeepingCurrentMatters.com.

BLOTTER

FROM PAGE A12

3:22 p.m.: burglary on Canvasback Drive
4:14 p.m.: noise disturbance on Tahiti Drive
8:59 p.m.: loose livestock on N.E. Loop 567
One major accident, one minor accident and 18 traffic stops occurred this day

JULY 18

1:14 a.m.: suspicious activity on Watson Way
8:49 a.m.: criminal tres-

pass on E. U.S. Highway 377
9:55 a.m.: shots fired on Kessler Drive
5:30 p.m.: theft under \$100 on E. U.S. Highway 377
5:35 p.m.: assault of a public service officer on Reunion Court
6:59 p.m.: theft on E. U.S. Highway 377
9:19 p.m.: reckless driver on E. U.S. Highway 377
9:28 p.m.: noise disturbance on White Cliff Road
Four minor accidents and 17 traffic stops occurred this day

JULY 19

8:13 a.m.: suspicious activity on Donna Circle
9:41 a.m.: suspicious activity on Spring Ridge Circle
10:44 a.m.: suspicious activity on E. Bridge Street
11:55 p.m.: suspicious activity on S. Morgan Street
Two minor accidents, a warrant service and 10 traffic stops occurred this day

JULY 20

1:31 p.m.: disorderly conduct on E. U.S. Highway 377
1:45 p.m.: theft of property

on E. U.S. Highway 377
8:17 p.m.: loose livestock on Loop 567
One major accident, three minor accidents and 16 traffic stops occurred this day

JULY 21

12:07 a.m.: underage drinker on Bobbie Ann Court
12:24 p.m.: suspicious activity on Weatherford Highway
11:52 a.m.: terroristic threat on E. U.S. Highway 377
1:27 p.m.: property dam-

age on Mickelson Drive
7:41 p.m.: theft over \$100 and under \$750 on E. U.S. Highway 377
10:03 p.m.: possession of a controlled substance on S. Morgan Street
11:05 p.m.: noise disturbance on W. Pearl Street
Fourteen traffic stops occurred this day

JULY 22

2:48 a.m.: suspicious activity on N. Meadows Drive
10:18 a.m.: disturbance on S. Hawthorne Street

1:12 p.m.: driver with an invalid driver license on W. Pearl Street
4:36 p.m.: theft under \$100 on E. U.S. Highway 377
4:44 p.m.: obstructing justice on S. Morgan Street
10:20 p.m.: intoxicated driver on E. U.S. Highway 377
There were also two minor accidents, a warrant service and five traffic stops

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John Hill battles for self and others

BY RICK MAUCH
Special to the Hood County News

Life's most — and literally, the most — challenging moments have served as an inspiration for John Hill to serve others in their wake.

In 2011 Hill suffered a massive heart attack. Six months later, after surgery, he started one of the most successful businesses in Texas, the Good Contractors List. It helps folks find honest and dependable contractors when needing home repairs.

Now, after undergoing a heart transplant July 30, 2022, he's at it again. The 55-year-old and his wife Cindy have started ALTARed Life, a company that specializes in Christian clothing with inspirational messages.

The title of the company is a play on words. Hill's life has been "altered" and the spelling refers to his worshipping at the "altar" of God.

BOUNCING BACK

Of course, it wasn't always that way for Hill. He recalled a time when, if left up to him, he'd just as soon have bid farewell to this world.

But realizing that wasn't what God had in store for him, his vision changed. He knew after surviving the heart attack, he wanted to help bring joy to others.

He didn't know how he was going to do it, but he was determined.

"I started The Good Contractors List just six months after my heart attack

PLEASE SEE **JOHN** | B2



PHOTO COURTESY OF JOHN HILL

John Hill, with his wife Cindy and their horse Miracle, has survived numerous heart problems which led to a transplant in 2022. Through it all, he has thrived, inspired by his faith, starting a pair of successful businesses.

Lipan school board names interim superintendent

BY LAUREN DAVIS
Staff Writer
lauren@hcnews.com

Lipan — During a meeting Monday, July 22, the Lipan ISD school board named Jimmy Dobbs from Poolville interim superintendent, confirmed Trina Wartes, Lipan ISD business manager. Dobbs, a retired superintendent from Poolville, has extensive experience in interim roles.

The board also accepted Ralph Carter's resignation. After six years with Lipan ISD, Carter will move to Hereford ISD.

George Kazanas, division director of the Texas Association of School Boards' executive search and field services, and Rick Howard, TASB field representative, outlined the superintendent search process. Kazanas, a retired educator

with 32 years' experience, expressed gratitude for leading the search and shared his educational background.

Kazanas emphasized the importance of backward planning from the transition date around Christmas. He detailed the recruitment timeline, including community involvement through online surveys and staff interviews during in-service days. "We send lots of reminders along the way," Kazanas noted, mentioning the typical receipt of 20-25 applications.

The deadline for candidate applications is set for Oct. 6, including resumes, cover letters, transcripts, recommendation letters and a video component. "Everything's fair game in that second round," Kazanas said, highlighting the importance of compatibility checks and site visits.

Howard, an education consultant, emphasized the

value of staff and community involvement. "All people are valued or valuable in this process," he said, stressing the benefits of online surveys for gathering feedback. Howard also highlighted the need for a firm timeline due to candidates' schedules. "We electronically do it as well, meetings through things like LinkedIn," he added.

As Lipan ISD searches for a new superintendent, community involvement is crucial. Kazanas' and Howard's plan ensures thorough candidate evaluations and values input from everyone. Community engagement and feedback will be vital in shaping the district's next chapter.

"The school board is excited about the process," said Wartes, highlighting the positive outlook for Lipan ISD's future.



GHS expands dual credit, certification programs; updates GPA system



PHOTO COURTESY OF YVES ADOBESTOCK.COM

GHS offers a variety of a industry-based certifications

BY LAUREN DAVIS
Staff Writer
lauren@hcnews.com

Granbury High School offers 11th and 12th grade students continuing opportunities to earn college credits while still in high school. These programs include dual credit and dual enrollment options to help students accelerate their academic and career paths.

Principal Jamie Robinson highlighted the benefits of dual credit classes, which allow students to earn both high school and college credits simultaneously. These courses, taught by instructors with at least a master's degree and employed by a college as adjunct faculty, require students to maintain their grades as they become part of their college

transcripts. "Taking dual credit classes also prepares students for college-level courses," Robinson said.

In contrast, dual enrollment classes allow students to decide at the end of the semester whether to include the grade on their college transcript.

GHS uses the University of Texas at Austin's OnRamps program for its dual enrollment students. Since its inception in 2012-2013, OnRamps has provided high school students with authentic college experiences and the chance to earn college credit while staying in the familiar high school setting. Research has shown that completing dual enrollment courses can significantly increase students' chances of earning a bachelor's degree.

A recent grant has allowed

students to take dual credit courses through Tarrant County College (TCC) for free, offering substantial financial relief to families. "When students can do it, it's a fabulous break to the families," Robinson noted. "The grant was a great surprise, and we hope that more opportunities like this will occur in the future."

In addition to these academic opportunities, GHS offers a variety of industry-based certifications. These certifications allow students to gain credentials in fields such as automotive technology, healthcare, and many more, potentially reducing the time and cost required to complete college or trade school and increasing their readiness to join the work-

PLEASE SEE **CREDIT** | B6

A night to remember

City staff shines following successful July 4 celebration

BY ASHLEY TERRY
Staff Writer
ashley@hcnews.com

With the city successfully wrapping up another spectacular July 4th celebration, it's clear to everyone involved that team work really does make the dream work.

For this year's dream, the Granbury Chamber of Commerce, city staff and Hood County residents all hoped for an unforgettable 50th anniversary — and that's exactly what happened.

During a regular Granbury City Council meeting July 16, City Manager Chris Coffman acknowledged the hard work and dedication that went into the four-day celebration, noting that city staff did what he called a fantastic job.

"Our people worked literally tens of hundreds of hours in the pre-planning stage ... and the leadership in this room had a big part in that," Coffman said. "Then after the fact, you drive down the street after the parade the next day and it's clean (because) the staff had been at work. It's just incredible — all the teamwork that goes into a big event like that."

Coffman noted it's also the first year that the city has been able to utilize cell phone data to calculate how many people watched the parade from the street. While the exact figures will be given at a later date, Coffman said the data points showed Granbury had a tremendous crowd.

Even the behind-the-scenes efforts did not go unnoticed, as Coffman made a point to

highlight how local police officers monitored traffic and watched videos to ensure the safety of residents and visitors.

"It's just incredible all the teamwork that goes on for this event," he said.

With the July 4th celebration being one of the largest events in the city, the event also brought in many tourists and bolstered local businesses, as families and friends flocked to restaurants, hotels and grocery stores in the area.

"Even the vendors on the square that are there for the event prospered, so it all works together," Coffman added. "We couldn't do it without our valuable staff. I just want to thank each and every one of them."



PHOTOS BY MARY VINSON | HOOD COUNTY NEWS

Chuck wagon in the 2024 July 4th parade passing the Hood County historic courthouse.



Kids enjoying the 2024 4th of July Parade, and getting a nice cool-down with a splash of water from one of the floats.



The 2024 Granbury 4th of July fireworks show marked the end of another successful Fourth of July Celebration.

JOHN FROM PAGE B1

with no money, no history in leadership, and only the desire to follow Jesus as he led me through life," Hill said. "I went from praying that God would kill me, to truly submitting to the leading of the Holy Spirit.

"I knew that if I was going to be here on earth, that my purpose had to be greater than my own comfort and selfish desires."

Over the past 13 years since his heart attack, Hill has led what he began calling an "ALTARed Life." He describes it as "a place where you lay down your life to follow Jesus — no matter what that looks like. I can tell you that it has been the most amazing journey and beyond anything I had ever dreamed or hoped for."

Cindy Hill said her husband's battle with heart issues has allowed others to see his resilience and trust in God. She said just being around him inspires her daily.

"John has gone through so much in regard to his physical health, and he rarely gets down about it, and has also rarely let his health get in the way of all he does and has done physically," adding with a laugh, "sometimes much to my disapproval."

"He does more than doctors have ever thought he

could do — now and when he barely had heart function to do anything. John has never laid around and accepted his diagnosis, even when he had a pump placed in his arm. He has always relied on God's promises."

INSPIRATION FROM DONOR

The Hills met the family of his heart donor recently, an impactful event.

"We went through the process of using a third party to pass letters of interest to each other. We sent out a letter to the donor family asking for the opportunity to meet them," he said.

However, due to a lack of response, John Hill said he and his wife had given up on the idea. Then, after nearly six months they finally got a letter back.

"Apparently our letter never reached them until months later and it was nearly two months since they had replied," he said. "We were not allowed to give away any identifying information in our communications. However, they had given a few details that Cindy was able to put together and it was a matter of minutes before we had found them on Facebook and reached out to them through Messenger."

"They were very excited, and we met the next week. They live in Tomball, Texas."

Cindy Hill called meeting the donor family a "beautiful yet sad moment, knowing

they had to lose such a precious son/brother/uncle for John to be saved.

"There was a huge mix of emotions that day, and we instantly felt like family. We share all of John's milestones —

name of my hero, the donor, is Christian Wachal.

"Wachal is Bohemian for 'watchman.' I received the heart of a Christian Watchman, quite literally. It is enough to



stones and life updates with them, and they are as grateful as we are for the relationship — the donor's father calls us family now."

John Hill said that meeting helped inspire the company ALTARed Life.

"It was one of the many miraculous things that encouraged me to keep following the voice of the Holy Spirit. God has a way of getting his point across," he said. "The

make you want to remain 'ALTARed.'"

THE TRANSPLANT

Always one to stay busy, John Hill recalled multiple incidents where his defibrillator shocked him, saying, "But it was always because I was doing too much."

Following his heart surgery in 2011, he got into bodybuilding, even at the competitive level and having

success. It was an activity he enjoyed doing with his daughter, Ashley.

While he worked himself into great shape, it hindered his ability to be high on the heart transplant list.

Until a change was forced. "They would never put me on the transplant list

because of my physical abilities. However, I started to go downhill and, upon getting the flu in 2022, I had a heart incident that pushed me to the top of the list," he said.

"I got the call to come in for the transplant on day 22, which by the way, was my donor's favorite number and was tattooed on his body."

John Hill is back in the gym, even doing things he couldn't do previously, he said.

"My stamina and endurance is much higher with a new heart and no congestive heart failure," he said.

MOVING TO THE COUNTRY

A few years ago, John and Cindy Hill moved from Burleson to Hood County, near Pecan Plantation. A major reason was to be closer to their horses instead of having them boarded.

"I realized that I love taking care of them and just being with them more than I enjoyed riding and showing them. They are like my children and I am so happy that I was able to provide a place where I could see them

every day just enjoying being a horse," he said.

"They now have six full-sized horses, two miniature horses, two miniature donkeys and a pair of long-horn steers. The move to be closer to them also brought John Hill to a place he dearly loves.

"I'm hoping to live out the rest of my days here in Hood County," he said, to which Cindy Hill added, "We look forward to spending time together and growing closer as a couple. We also look forward to enjoying our grandchildren and children, and many more vacations together!"

EPITOME OF A TURNAROUND

John Hill smiles humbly when he's called the epitome of someone who has turned his life around. In fact, he doesn't spend much time reflecting on the past, he said, other than to remind himself of where he was and the blessings he has now.

"Since I began truly following him (Jesus), I don't look backward and I don't cling to this life or the future. Even with the new heart, I know that what he has planned for me after this life is far greater than this life could ever be," he said. "It removes all fear, and I trust that no matter where He takes me, it is for a real purpose."



SAME PAPER

AT YOUR FINGERTIPS

THE IDLE AMERICAN

Lessons in holding on ...



BY DON NEWBURY

Dr. Newbury, longtime public speaker and university president, continues to speak and write. His column, begun in 2003, is Texas' longest in syndication. Contact: 817-447-3832. Email: newbury@speakerdoc.com. Website: www.speakerdoc.com.

I'm not sure who the TV weather guy was, which city he served or exactly what he said, but if his observation passed down through the ages is even close to accurate, it still has wide application today.

The man must have had his news antenna aimed far beyond the weather. He was a philosopher as well.

This Ohioan not only predicted the weather, but also included an account of the colorful president of Ohio University. And, it was during flood conditions, for crying out loud ...

President Roger Alden, unquestionably an icon in both education and business, called on his remarkable conciliatory skills when students went on a rampage about the university cafeteria. He calmed them; order was quickly restored.

But wait! Cafeteria personnel were miffed that stu-

dents were critical of their food, so they threatened to strike. Again, President Alden quickly "charmed" them and once again reigned supreme.

Hours later, the campus was crippled by flood waters that all but engulfed university buildings before subsiding ...

Here's what the weather guy allegedly said: "Earlier this week, students protested the Ohio University food service, and President Alden quickly allayed their concerns. Then, cafeteria workers balked, but again, President Alden was equal to the situation."

Then came his classic line about the flood, perhaps rubbing right up against verbatim.

"Today, God tried to close Ohio University, and President Alden is holding his own." ...

Stories about about folks

"holding their own," and this holds true throughout the world. Fingernail prints are everywhere, left by folks trying to hang on.

To sharpen our focus, the community of Branson, Missouri, has dreamed big, even when staring straight into the squinty eyes of adversity. Case in point: Opening of its world-class, multi-million-dollar aquarium coincided with COVID's arrival. So much for a grand opening.

It held on, as have dozens of other venues in this vacation destination that is gradually regaining a foothold following the pandemic ...

Thankfully, much about Branson is predictable. Folks at the more than 100 shows and attractions are as happy to see visitors as Minnie Pearl was in her weekly half-century comedy routine at The Grand Ole Opry: "I'm just so proud to be here."

Shows are top quality, clean, patriotic and generally "priced right."

We landed at the Pierce Arrow Theater on a recent visit. Three take-aways: Producer Dan Britton can really hit the low notes, now in-

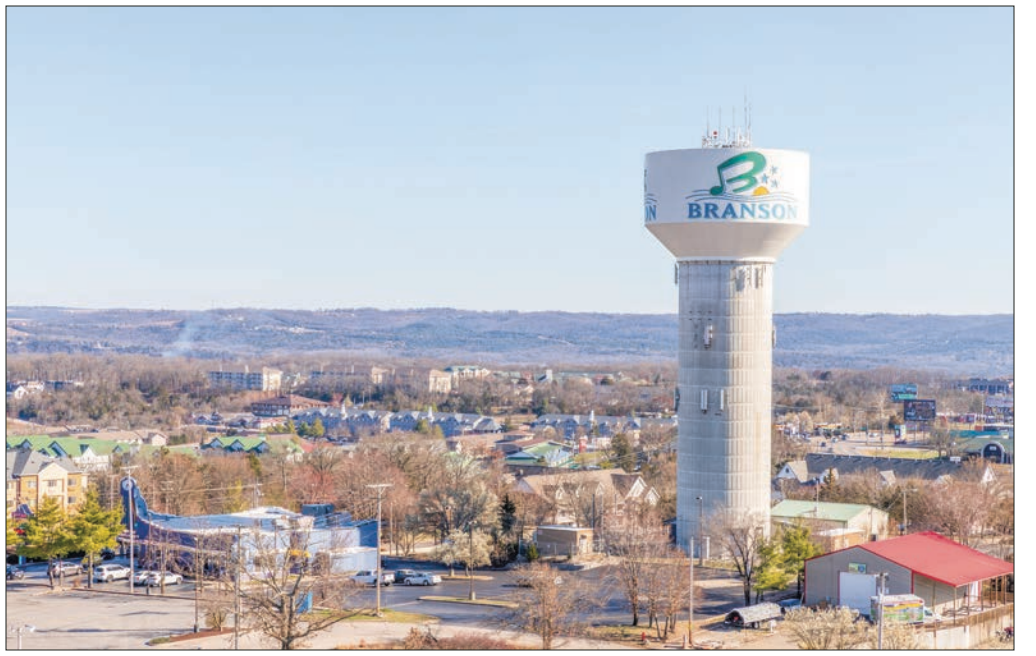


PHOTO COURTESY OF CHAD ROBERTSON ADOBESTOCK.COM

The water tower in Branson, Missouri around the entertainment district.

cluded in the Guinness Book of Records. Baritone Michael Cole is an absolute phenom, springboarding to fame 15 years ago with a high finish in network TV's America's Got Talent. And comedian James Sibley remains one of the funniest guys on the planet ...

It is noteworthy that Cole can't remember when he wasn't singing, having busted loose at age 4 in his church choir in rural New York state. A five-sport star in high school, he chose music, or maybe it was chosen

for him.

"I don't remember ever going anywhere in the car without the radio blaring music, and I sang along with the artists." He, his brother and sister were "back seat harmonizers" later to be recognized on national TV.

He joined Pierce Arrow three years ago and loves life in Branson with his wife and two sons, ages 12 and 3. His mom and dad have moved their ministry to nearby Hollister, his brother is in marketing for Silver Dollar City and his sister is an area

realtor ...

Sibley, appearing in overalls that may have been custom-made by the Acme Tent and Awning Company, is a humor genius.

Most of his comic jabs are self-inflicted. One great story revealed a lie he told his grandchildren. He said when the ice cream truck came by playing music, it meant they were out of ice cream. He admits to being one year younger, since his parents held him back one year!

Long live Branson! May it ever hold on! ...

VETERAN'S VOICE

Goodwill job placement specialist connecting with veterans



BY LINDA MALLON

Linda Mallon, a retired Army master sergeant, found her niche working with veterans and their families in Granbury. She is a former claims administrator for Blue Shield of New Jersey and later senior personnel sergeant, taking care of soldiers' careers for more than 20 years. linda.mallon@co.hood.tx.us | 817-579-3292..

Goodwill Veteran Job Placement Specialist Andrea Johnson reached out to us recently to remind us of Vetworthy, its new program designed to provide veterans the tools they need to succeed in the workplace. The program's comprehensive support includes enrolling veterans for services that align with their career interests. These services include assistance with resume updating, basic computer classes, developing interview skills and assistance with job search strategies for individuals who have criminal backgrounds.

Vetworthy connects veterans with employment opportunities through employer networking and offers job search classes and assistance with online applications. After employment, it provides ongoing support to help veterans retain employment and connect veterans to community resources, counseling, food assistance, transportation, legal aid and more. The goal is to offer veterans an opportunity for success regardless of their character of service discharge. Whether just leaving the service, unemployed or looking to change careers, it's important for veterans to take advantage of every opportunity and resource available, and Vetworthy sounds like a great place to start.

For more information, contact Andrea Johnson at 817-332-7866 X 3312 or her cell at 682-785-1718. She is very knowledgeable and passionate about this program and we are excited to share it with our Veteran Community. Feel free to pass this information on to organizations you belong to so we have widest dissemination.

We were very happy the PACT Act was passed, which expanded compensation and services to veteran who were exposed to toxic substances in the military. However, the Department

of Veterans Affairs recently communicated to lawmakers that increases in veterans benefits, personnel and drug costs contributed to a shortfall estimate of \$15 billion dollars for the remainder of FY 2024 and 2025.

The PACT Act added over 710,000 veterans to the VA Health Care System, and since it passed in August 2022, 1.5 million additional claims were filed and 694,000 veterans and survivors have been awarded benefits. I don't know how this will impact our veterans, if manpower will be reduced, if Congress will make up the shortfall somewhere, or what challenges this may pose on health care and claims management; we have to see. Hopefully this will not impact our veterans care or compensation.

If you have any questions about this, feel free to contact U.S. Rep. Roger Williams office at 682-218-5965 with your concerns about how Congress will resolve this without compromising care for veterans. As always, our office will continue to review rating decisions that veterans believe are not adequate and assist with providing any medical evidence needed to support the claim. Issues with VA Health Care appointments should be addressed to Calen Bullard, patient advocate at the Granbury Clinic at 817-964-6079 or Monique

Sklar at the Fort Worth VA outpatient clinic at 817-730-0145. The Hood and Somervell County Veteran Service Office will be closed

from Aug. 12-16. Feel free to call and leave a message or email for a quicker response.

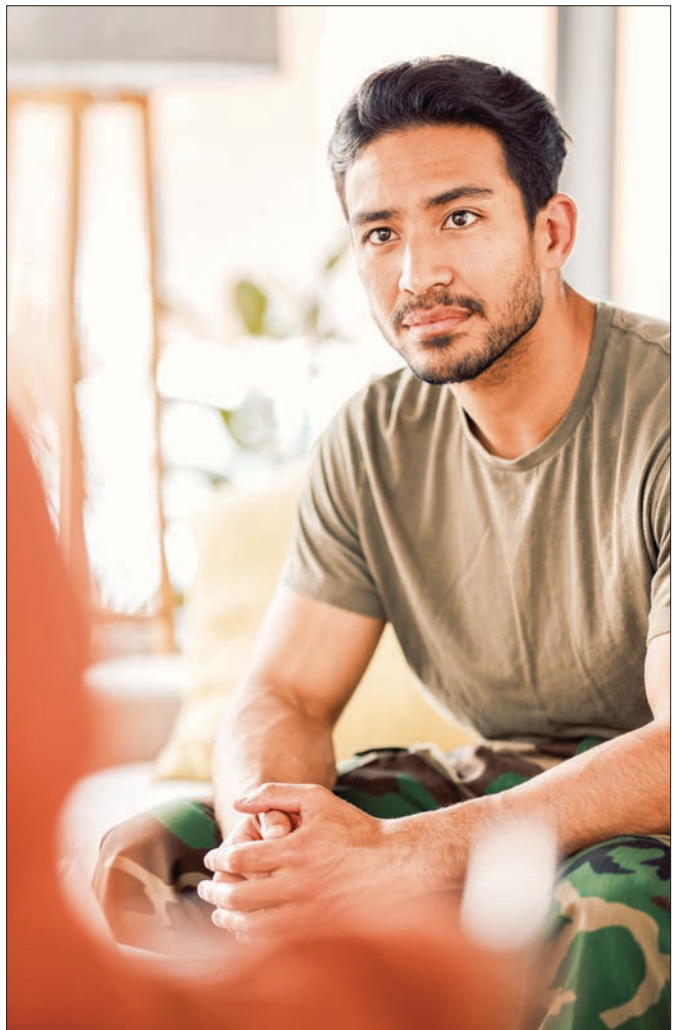


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Vetworthy connects veterans with employment opportunities through employer networking and offers job search classes and assistance with online applications.

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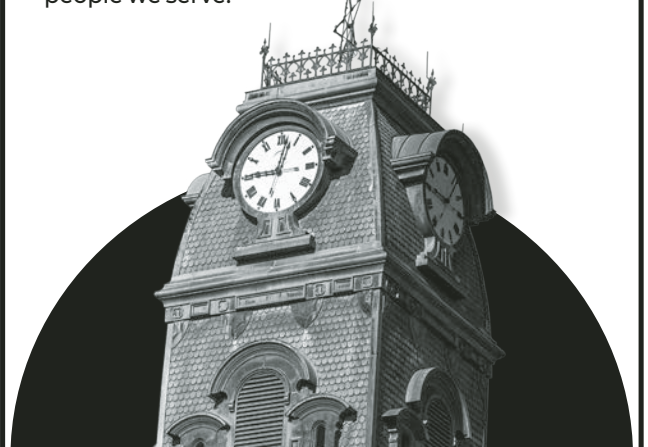


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OUR MISSION
The Hood County News shall provide news and insights to our readers through the independent and impartial presentation of information that educates, enriches and entertains. We are proud to be a community newspaper committed to the people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



REMEMBERING HOOD COUNTY FALLEN OFFICERS

PHOTOS BY MARY VINSON | HOOD COUNTY NEWS

On Sunday evening, July 7, the family of Deputy Larry John Miller sponsored a Fallen Officers Remembrance at Memorial Lane and Jim Burks Firefighters Memorial Park to pay homage to law enforcement officers who gave their lives in the line of duty. After attendees settled in their seats, family members of Jailer Dusty Wren and Deputy Larry Miller were escorted in. Granbury Police Department Deputy Chief Garrett Wiginton served as master of ceremonies, and Granbury Mayor Jim Jarratt welcomed attendees and participants. The invocation was presented by Chaplain John Hosea, and Tolar PD Officer Scott Daily led the Pledge of Allegiance. County Judge Ron Massingill offered an official proclamation, and Hood County Sheriff Roger Deeds was the keynote speaker. One of many emotional moments in the ceremony came when Deeds presented the Wren family with a memorial flag. As TAPS was performed, a flag ceremony performed by Deeds and Granbury Police Chief Mitch Galvan while a representative of the Texas Department of Public Safety simultaneously placed a wreath. Granbury PD Lt. Russell Grizzard and Granbury PD Chief Deputy Steve Smith took turns at the podium for the roll call. Chaplain Steve Quinn ended with a closing prayer. For full gallery go to hcnews.com.



First Annual DCBE-Acton VFD Fish Fry Fundraiser

PHOTOS BY MARY VINSON | HOOD COUNTY NEWS

Good food, good company and a good time was had by all at the First Annual DCBE-Acton Volunteer Fire Department Fish Fry Fundraiser that took place Saturday, July 13 at Revolver Brewing. The menu featured fried catfish, chicken, chicken tenders, fries, coleslaw, beans and more. Popular musician Zack Crow delivered a fabulous performance on the Revolver Stage to a huge crowd. The event saw a big show of support and perhaps a little friendly rivalry from fellow volunteers from Hood County's eight other fire departments, showing that firefighters and great food always go hand in hand.



I'VE BEEN THINKING

Generational names and their differences

CAROL GOODMAN HEIZER



Carol Goodman Heizer is an author who recently moved to Hood County from Louisville, Kentucky. She has had short stories published in eight editions of "Chicken Soup for the Soul" books. Her column for the Hood County News will appear every two weeks. cgheizer@gmail.com | 502-396-0972.

Generations are often shaped by specific events of their time, and their labels reflect their characteristics and attitudes. These names, beginning with the early 1900s, were often assigned after the period they represent.

A QUICK SUMMARY OF THOSE GENERATIONS FOLLOWS:

- Greatest Generation: b. 1901 - 1924
- Silent Generation: b. 1925 - 1945
- Baby Boomers: b. 1946 - 1964
- Generation X: b. 1965 - 1980
- Millennials: b. 1981 - 1996

- Generation Z: b. 1997 - 2012
 - Generation Alpha: b. 2013 - 2025
- Before beginning, please understand these names are generalizations, and not all members of each generation exhibit their specific characteristics.
- The Great Generation** people came of age during the Great Depression and World War II. American journalist Tom Brokaw coined the term when he said they were "men and women who fought, not for fame and recognition, but because it was the right thing to do." These individuals experienced social and economic problems that shaped their values and

worldview. The three basic pillars of their generation were a belief in the American Dream, a sense of community and responsibility, and respect for authority.

The Silent Generation term was made popular by a 1952 Time Magazine article that described them as silent in comparison to being caught between their parents and the following generation who were known for their outspoken and often demanding attitude. Because they lived under the influence of their parents, they wanted a sense of stability, a continued respect for authority and loyalty to their employer.

Baby Boomers is a term attributed to a 1963 article by Leslie Nason and refers to the great increase of births during that time, resulting in an increase in future college enrollments. This generation had a desire for change and progress, a focus on personal fulfillment, and a thirst for access to technology.

"Generation gap" became a popular term as these individuals began challenging the values and beliefs of the previous generations. This group of individuals is often referred to as "the sandwich generation" that will be discussed in a future column.

Generation X folks developed a mentality after World War II that ran contrary to their elders. Because they were first to become "latch-key kids," they challenged authority, wanted to think for themselves, and had great independence. They had technological savviness and strived to achieve a balance between their work and personal lives.

Millennials coined their name from Neil Howe and William Strauss in their 1991 book titled Generations: The History of America's Future, 1584 to 2069. These individuals became enterprising entrepreneurs because of the challenging job market. They did not want to be tied to a desk during the tradi-

tional 9-5 workday, and they focused more on spending than on saving for a home.

Generation Z (also called Zoomers) was the first generation to use widespread access of the internet and technology from a young age. As a result, they are often referred to as "digital natives" or "screenagers" because they grew up looking at screens with laptops, tablets and smartphones. They have shorter attentions spans and suffer more depression and anxiety. They are considered the most ethically and racially diverse generation in history.

Generation Alpha is composed of the first children to be born in the 21st century. Since this generation is still young, it is believed it is too early to label their characteristics accurately. However, we know they have a digital intuitiveness and see humans plus artificial intelligence as working collaboratively in all aspects of their lives. They are expect-

ed to be even more diverse than Generation Z with a wide range of ethnic and cultural backgrounds while prioritizing self-expression, self-reliance and personal fulfillment. They do not see technology as an additional "tool" to be used for their benefit, but rather as an indispensable, primary and full part of their everyday lives.

Finally, we have the "cuspers" who are those persons born on the cusp (or verge) of two different generations, thus showing a mixture of the two generations. As a result, they do not closely resemble those individuals born in the middle of either of the adjoining generations.

As we have seen the differing aspects of past and present generations, that knowledge may give us a sense of excitement for the future of individuals. Or it may give us an unsettled feeling for the future of humanity in general.



LAYTH TAYLOR | HOOD COUNTY NEWS

Levi Johnson Competing in the 2023-2024 North Texas High School Rodeo Association event.

SPORTS Roundup

BY RICK MAUCH

Special to the Hood County News

The Granbury SEALS are enjoying another solid summer of competition, as evidenced by their performance at the recent Texas Amateur Athletic Federation Region 4 Swim Meet in Southlake.

The SEALS had swimmers finish in the top three of their respective event 96 times. Their 46 gold medals won topped the list of all 14 teams entered, as did the 21 bronze medals they captured. They also claimed 29 silver medals.

In all, the SEALS had 121 top five finishers. For swimmers ages 14 and under, the top five finishers in each event qualified for state, while any swimmer age 15 and over who participated qualified to advance.

The TAAF Summer Games of Texas are being held this weekend in Brownsville.

Texas Amateur Athletic Federation Region 4 Meet at Elise Cerami Aquatic Center, Southlake

SEALS results (Distances in yards)

Males

8-Under

50 Free: 1. Elijah O'Brien, 40.02

25 Back: 1. O'Brien, 23.26

25 Breast: 1. O'Brien, 26.83

9-10

50 Free: 1. Zane Frasier, 33.26

25 Back: 2. Frasier, 20.72

25 Free: 3. Frasier, 16.31

100 IM: 1. Frasier, 1:30.67

11-12

200 Medley Relay: 1. Connor Spence, Jude Ward, Mason Prince, Noah Wagnon, 2:21.65; 2. Jace Esquivel, Herbert Baker, John Stone, Asher Beatty, 2:34.95

200 Free Relay: 1. Wagnon, Stone, Spence, Ward, 2:04.23; 5. Prince, Esquivel, Kallen Rogers, Beatty, 2:31.53

100 Free: 2. Stone, 1:10.12; 5. Spence, 1:13.67

50 Back: 2. Wagnon, 36.56

50 Breast: 5. Baker, 44.96

50 Fly: 1. Ward, 31.00; 2. Prince, 34.06; 4. Spence,

40.33

50 Free: 1. Ward, 27.41; 2. Wagnon, 30.28

100 IM: 1. Ward, 1:09.47; 3. Prince, 1:21.61

13-14

200 Medley Relay: 1. Kyle Brawner, Logan Crowe, Sean Kim, Adler Snow, 2:00.80

200 Free Relay: 1. Kim, Brawner, Snow, Crowe, 1:48.54

100 Free: 1. Crowe, 55.24; 2. Kim, 56.24

50 Back: 1. Crowe, 29.51; 3. Brawner, 31.99

50 Breast: 3. Brawner, 36.04

50 Fly: 1. Kim, 26.89; 2. Crowe, 27.08; 4. Brawner, 30.47

50 Free: 1. Kim, 25.46

100 IM: 1. Crowe, 1:01.74; 2. Kim, 1:03.54; 4. Snow, 1:13.61

200 Free: 1. Brawner, 2:13.19

15-17

100 Free: 1. Cameron Ward, 52.94; 3. Lee Stuart, 55.65; 4. Colby Parker, 55.71

50 Breast: 4. Stuart, 33.02

50 Fly: 1. Ward, 26.83; 5. Parker, 28.24

50 Free: 1. Ward, 25.15

100 IM: 1. Stuart, 1:03.36

200 Free: 2. Stuart, 2:08.21

18-24

100 Free: 3. Tyler McDermott, 56.93

50 Breast: 2. Zane Herndon, 30.44; 3. McDermott, 30.95

50 Fly: 2. Herndon, 29.33; 3. McDermott, 29.40

50 Free: 4. McDermott, 26.96

100 IM: 2. Herndon, 1:07.92

18-Over

200 Medley Relay: 4. Rocky Blutworth, Tyler McDermott, Zane Herndon, Caleb Prince, 2:12.37

200 Free: 3. Blutworth, 3:07.47

40-44

100 Free: 3. Caleb Prince, 1:10.08

60-64

100 Free: 3. Rocky Blutworth, 1:14.50

50 Back: 3. Blutworth, 42.53

50 Breast: 2. Blutworth, 44.65

50 Free: 4. Blutworth,

32.50

100 IM: 3. Blutworth, 1:28.44

Females

8-Under

50 Free: 3. Eliana Sanchez, 45.90

9-10

25 Back: 1. Leah Citzler, 19.29

25 Breast: 2. Citzler, 22.22

100 IM: 1. Citzler, 1:30.72

100 Medley Relay: 3. Addison Limon, Aurora Stephan, Citzler, Aubrey Snow, 1:32.16

11-12

200 Medley Relay: 1. Lilli McKelvy, Elizabeth Zieschang, Annabel Ross, Harper Fox, 2:25.41

200 Free Relay: 2. Fox, Ross, McKelvy, Zieschang, 2:12.25

100 Free: 1. Zieschang, 1:07.66; 2. Fox, 1:08.95

50 Back: 1. McKelvy, 35.86; 4. Fox, 37.17

50 Breast: 2. Zieschang, 40.56

50 Fly: 1. Zieschang, 34.90; 2. Ross, 34.96; 4. Fox, 35.23

100 IM: 1. Zieschang, 1:18.54; 2. Fox, 1:21.26; 5. Ross, 1:25.90

13-14

200 Medley Relay: 2. Carmen Citzler, Burkley Massey, Bailey Stone, Allie Parker, 2:15.60

200 Free Relay: 1. Autumn Stuart, Abigail Beatty, Parker, Stone, 1:59.77

100 Free: 2. Citzler, 1:01.74; 5. Stuart, 1:06.04

50 Back: 2. Citzler, 32.31; 3. Beatty, 35.44; 4. Stone, 37.14

50 Breast: 3. Beatty, 40.63

50 Fly: 2. Citzler, 31.71; 5. Beatty, 32.86

50 Free: 1. Citzler, 27.53; 5. Parker, 29.41

100 IM: 1. Stuart, 1:16.15

200 Free: 3. Stuart, 2:28.14; 4. Stone, 2:34.12

15-17

200 Medley Relay: 1. Bethany Crowe, Jina Kim, Hannah Ward, Bailey McDermott, 2:03.74

200 Free Relay: 1. Crowe, Kim, Ward, McDermott, 1:55.01

100 Free: 1. Crowe, 57.69

50 Back: 1. Crowe, 31.32

50 Breast: 2. Crowe, 35.07;

3 Kim; 35.70; 4. McDermott, 37.55; 5. Ward, 37.61

50 Fly: 1. McDermott, 30.38; 2. Ward, 31.18

50 Free: 1. McDermott, 27.81; 5. Kim, 29.75

100 IM: 1. Crowe, 1:06.55; 2. Ward, 1:10.96; 4. Kim, 1:14.91

200 Free: 1. McDermott, 2:17.54

18-24

100 Free: 1. Kori Brawner, 1:03.29; 3. Olivia Bedgood, 1:15.32

50 Back: 1. Brawner, 32.46; 3. Bedgood, 42.27

50 Breast: 4. Bedgood, 50.98

50 Free: 3. Brawner, 28.80

18-Over

200 Free: 1. Brawner, 2:17.65

Mixed

18-Over

200 Medley Relay: 1 Kori Brawner, Tyler McDermott, Zane Herndon, Olivia Bedgood, 2:06.33

15-17

100 Free Relay: 1. Jina Kim, Leander Stuart, Hannah Ward, Colby Parker, 51.77

200 Medley Relay: 1. Bethany Crowe, Leander Stuart, Cameron Ward, Bailey McDermott, 1:58.82

200 Free Relay: 1. Parker, Crowe, McDermott, Ward, 1:45.26

HOOD COUNTY FLYERS

The Flyers had 30 athletes compete at the TAAF Region 4 Meet, with 15 state qualifiers. The top five in each event qualified for the TAAF Summer Games of Texas in Brownsville July 25-28

TAAF Region 4 Track Meet Flyers results (Distances in meters)

Boys

12U

Wylie Barstow: First in 80 hurdles, first in high jump, fourth in long jump

14U

Brendan Thorne: First in 800, first in 1200, first in 3200

16U

Luis Morales: Fourth in 800

Ethan Garcia: Fourth in high jump

Girls

8U

Moriah Marciniak: Fourth in 800

10U

Lyric Gillespie: Second in high jump

Bella Marcum: Fourth in shot put

4x400 Relay (Aurora Stephan, Lauren Gray, Journey Fromm, Kenzie Black), third

12U

Rylie Wiginton: Second in high jump

Aubrey Ross: Fourth in 1600

Annabel Ross: Fifth in 1600

4x400 Relay (Riley Wiginton, Elly Thorne, Aubrey Ross, Annabel Ross) fourth

NATIONAL JUNIOR HIGH FINALS RODEO

Levi Johnson of Tolar competed in chute dogging at the National Junior High Finals Rodeo in Des Moines, Iowa, recently. He finished 76th in aggregate results out of 133 competitors.

Also competing was Clay Watkins of Bluff Dale. He placed 25th in aggregate results in boys goat tying.

JUNIOR GOLF

Quinn Bradley of Granbury placed second in the Boys 15-18 division on the Northern Texas PGA Junior Golf Medalist Tour at Cowboys Golf Club in Grapevine, shooting a 74, one stroke out of first place. Tying for third in the same division was Grady Molder of Granbury with a 77.

Also on the Medalist Tour, Lipan's Lucas Skalak finished fifth in the Boys 13-14 age group at Squaw Creek in Willow Park, shooting 125.

On the Texas Junior Golf Tour, Granbury's Nic Merkle was the runner-up in the Boys 11-14 division at The Club at Sonterra in San Antonio. He shot a 185 with rounds of 94 and 91.

PIRATE TD CLUB GOLF TOURNEY

The Granbury Pirate

Touchdown Club Golf Tournament will be played Aug. 9 at Pecan Plantation. The tournament will have a 1:30 p.m. shotgun start and 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

Purchasing tickets for Granbury Pirate football games is now digital. Cash and checks are no longer accepted.

Season tickets are available 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 also go on sale Aug. 5 and are \$10 for ages 55 and older, also available by credit only.

Contact Amber Nikzad at amber.nikzad@granburysd.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

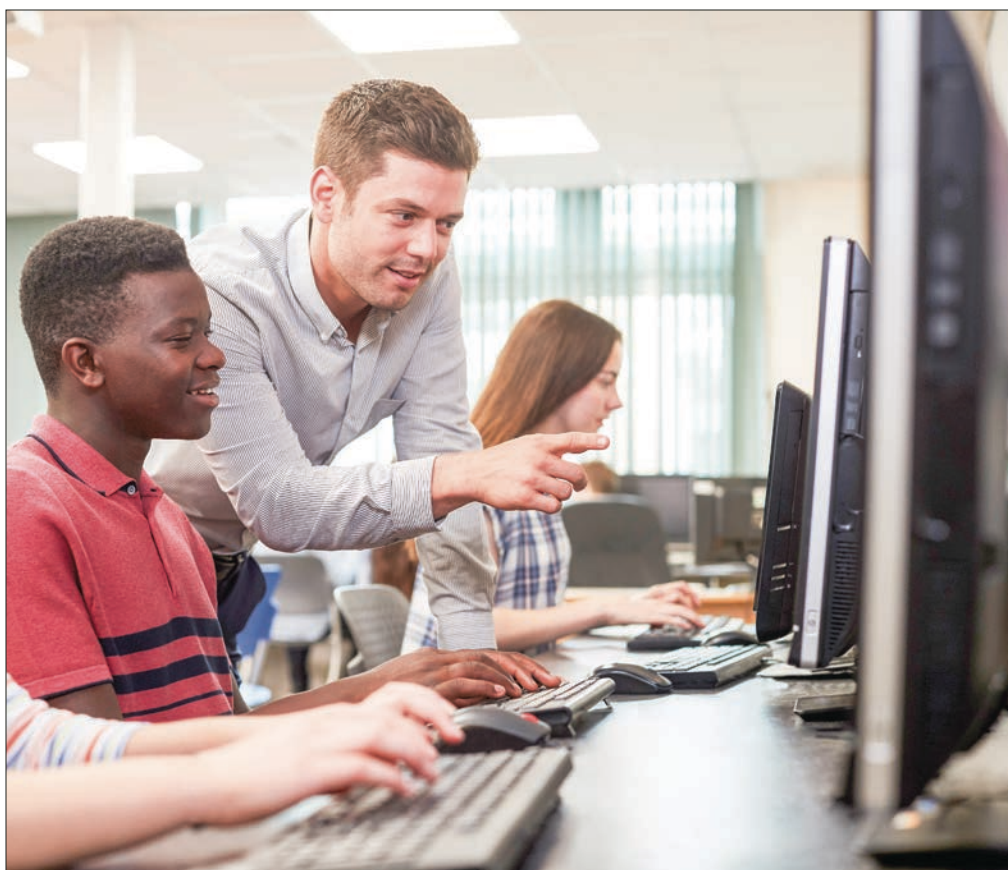


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Industry-based certification courses prepare GHS students for a career immediately after high school.

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FROM PAGE B1

force. Certified students can earn more money immediately after high school than those without such training.

GHS INDUSTRY-BASED CERTIFICATIONS

- Adobe Certified Professional: Photoshop, Illustrator, InDesign, After Effects, Premier Pro
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- AWS Certified Welder
- Certified Nursing Assistant
- Certified SolidWorks Associate
- Certified Veterinary Assistant

- Educational Aide 1
- EKG/ECG Technician
- Emergency Medical Technician

- Google Analytics Individual Qualification
- Pharmacy Technician
- Private Pilot License
- QuickBooks Certified User
- Remote Drone Pilot
- ServSafe Manager and Food Handlers
- Student Social Media Marketing
- TSFA Floral Skills certification

REVISED GPA SYSTEM

GISD is also implementing a new GPA system starting with this year's ninth-grade class (Class of 2028). The revisions, based on the evaluation of policies from 10 similar districts, aim to update the district's outdated GPA policy. The new system is designed to encourage participation in college, career, and military readiness, career and technical education, dual credit, and advanced placement courses.

The new GPA system includes four tiers on a 5.0 scale and provides weighted credit for advanced academic courses, aligning with what similar school districts are doing across the state. The college board's rebranding of pre-AP courses as honors courses is also reflected in this system.

Robinson emphasized the updated policy aims to provide more appropriate and aligned GPA calculations, meeting district goals and the TEA's A-F Accountability Systems standards. The new system is also more transfer-friendly and focuses on SAT/ACT preparedness.

For more information about advanced courses, industry-based certifications, and the GPA system visit: https://ghs.granburysd.org/apps/pages/index.jsp?urec_id=3766605&type=d&prec_id=2442356.

TARLETON STATE UNIVERSITY™

Tarleton State picked to finish 2nd

Britten tabbed UAC Preseason Offensive Player of the Year, 5 total Texans named Preseason All-Conference

Tarleton State University

ARLINGTON — To open the United Athletic Conference Media Day in Arlington July 23, the UAC announced the results of its preseason polls, with Tarleton State earning some of the top honors heading into the 2024 campaign.

The Texans were picked to finish second out of nine teams in the UAC this upcoming season. Running back Kayvon Britten was named the UAC Preseason Offensive Player of the Year, and he was one of five Texans to earn a spot on the Preseason All-Conference teams. Wide receiver Darius Cooper and center Tuli Teuhema joined Britten on the Preseason All-Conference Offensive Team, defensive lineman Brandon Tolvert made the Preseason All-Conference Defensive Team, and return specialist Deangelo Rosemond was voted on the Preseason All-Conference Specialist Team.

Britten, Cooper and Rosemond were unanimous selections.

The preseason coaches' poll and preseason all-conference players poll were voted on by head coaches across the United Athletic Conference. All nine UAC head coaches submitted votes on who they think the top players are entering the 2024 campaign, and they were not allowed to vote for their own players. They also ranked the teams in their opinion on how they'd finish this upcoming season. They were allowed to rank for their own teams.

The Texans slated narrowly behind the preseason favorite Central Arkansas. The Bears led the field with 77 points, earning five of nine first-place votes, while the Texans secured 74 points and three first-place votes. There was a large separation from the top-two teams and the rest of the field, with Southern Utah in third at 54 points. Austin Peay netted the other first-place vote, finishing fifth in the poll. Last season, the Texans were slated sixth in the preseason poll, but they proved the rest of the league wrong and took second at 8-3 overall, 4-2 in conference play.

Britten was a UAC First Team All-Conference running back a season ago, also logging 2023 FCS Football Central All-American Third Team and Phil Steele FCS 2023 All-American Fourth Team accolades. He was one of the best running backs in the nation, finishing with 1,150 yards on 183 carries (6.3 yards per rush) and 16 rushing touchdowns. Britten scored in 10 of Tarleton's 11 games, averaging 104.6



PHOTO COURTESY OF TARLETON STATE UNIVERSITY

The Texans were picked to finish second out of nine teams in the UAC this upcoming season.

rushing yards per contest, plus he added 106 receiving yards and a touchdown on 11 catches, finishing with 17 total touchdowns on the season. Conference-wise, Britten was first in rushing touchdowns (third in the FCS) and total touchdowns (tied-fifth in FCS), second in total rushing yards (ninth in FCS), second in rushing yards per game (tied-11th FCS) and second in yards per rush (21st in FCS). Across Texan Football program history, he had the sixth most rushing yards in a single-season and the eighth most rushing yards per game in a single-season. Since 1977, he finished with the tied-third most rushing touchdowns in a single-season in program history, tied with Gaylon Bowser's 16 rushing scores in 1987, only behind Xavier Turner's 22 touchdowns in 2018 and Derrick Ross' 22 touchdowns in 2004.

This marks the second straight season Cooper has earned a spot on the Preseason UAC All-Conference team. Last year, despite missing four games due to injury, he was a UAC Second Team All-Conference wide receiver, as he finished with the tied-most receiving touchdowns on the team (five), the second most receiving yards (622) and the second most receptions (28). His 88.9 receiving yards per game was best on the Texans, the best in the United Athletic Conference, and the 11th

most in the FCS.

Teuhema earns the Preseason UAC All-Conference spot at center after UAC First Team All-Conference accolades in 2023. Last year, he started all 11 games, helping lead the No. 1 rushing offense in the UAC, with the Texans posting 201.7 rushing yards per game, 12th most in the FCS. The team also rushed for 25 touchdowns (most in UAC, 16th in FCS) and averaged 5.2 yards per rush (second in UAC, 17th in FCS). Overall, the Texans averaged 33.3 points per game (second in UAC, 13th FCS), 430.5 yards per game (second UAC, 14th FCS) and 6.4 yards per play (first UAC, 11th FCS). Teuhema and the Texan offensive line allowed just 14 sacks all season, the tied-third fewest in the UAC and the tied-18th fewest in the FCS. The team allowed just 3.91 tackles for loss per game, second fewest in the UAC, 10th fewest in the FCS.

Tolvert had a solid comeback season in 2023, as he led all Texan defensive linemen in total tackles with 36, 18 solo stops. He was third on the team in tackles for loss with six, with two sacks and seven quarterback hurries (second most on the team).

Running back Rosemond was a UAC Second Team All-Conference player last year at returner and receives the preseason nod this season. He served as Tarleton's pri-

mary kick returner all season, averaging 25.7 yards across 18 returns (462 total yards). Rosemond had three returns go for 50-plus yards, two for 60-plus yards, with a season-long kick return of 65 yards against North Alabama on Sept. 9. He had the most total kickoff return yardage in the UAC and averaged the second most. Besides Rosemond, only one other player in the UAC had a kickoff return go for 60-plus yards, and Rosemond posted two of them.

This is the first time Tarleton State has had a player voted for preseason offensive player of the year in its NCAA Division I era, and its five total honorees matches the most it has had at the D1 level (2022, Western Athletic Conference).

There were 27 players honored across all preseason awards. Tarleton State had the tied-second most honorees with five behind Central Arkansas (six), tied with Abilene Christian.

THE FULL RESULTS OF THE PRESEASON UAC POLLS CAN BE FOUND BELOW:

2024 UAC Football Preseason Coaches Poll
Central Arkansas (5), 77 points
Tarleton State (3), 74 points
Southern Utah, 54 points
EKU, 53 points
Austin Peay (1), 46 points
Abilene Christian, 43 points

North Alabama, 26 points
Utah Tech, 19 points
West Georgia, 13 points

PRESEASON OFFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE YEAR:

*Kayvon Britten (Tarleton State)

PRESEASON DEFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE YEAR:

Edwin White Schultz (North Alabama)

PRESEASON ALL-CONFERENCE OFFENSIVE TEAM

QB *Will McElvain (Central Arkansas)
RB *ShunDerrick Powell (Central Arkansas)
RB *Kayvon Britten (Tarleton State)
WR *Takairee Kenebrew (North Alabama)
WR *Darius Cooper (Tarleton State)
TE Hunter Brown (EKU)
OL Alan Hatten (Abilene Christian)
OL Chandler Kirton (Austin Peay)
OL Will Diggins (Central Arkansas)
OL Payton Collins (EKU)
C Tuli Teuhema (Tarleton State)

PRESEASON ALL-CONFERENCE DEFENSIVE TEAM:

DL Hosea Knifeley Jr. (Austin Peay)
DL *David Walker (Central Arkansas)

DL Rylen Sua-Filo (Southern Utah)

DL Brandon Tolvert (Tarleton State)
LB Cirby Coheley (Abilene Christian)
LB Darius Moore (Abilene Christian)
LB Demetrius Charles (Central Arkansas)
LB Kohner Cullimore (Southern Utah)
DB Elijah Moffett (Abilene Christian)
DB TaMuarion Wilson (Central Arkansas)
DB Mike Smith Jr. (EKU)
DB Edwin White Schultz (North Alabama)

PRESEASON ALL-CONFERENCE SPECIALIST TEAM

K Patrick Nations (EKU)
P Grant Nickel (Abilene Christian)
RS Deangelo Rosemond (Tarleton State)
LS Ryan Kean (Utah Tech)
*Denotes unanimous selection
NOTE - Ties in voting resulted in 12-member Defensive Team

PLAYERS MENTIONED

#6 Darius Cooper
WR 6' 0" Junior
#39 Deangelo Rosemond
RB 5' 8" Sophomore
#93 Brandon Tolvert
DL 6' 1" Redshirt Sophomore
#4 Kayvon Britten
RB 5' 7" Junior
#50 Tuli Teuhema
OL 6' 2" Junior

TSU's Lue Williams signs professional basketball contract

Tarleton State University

STEPHENVILLE - Former Tarleton State Texan guard Lue Williams has signed a contract to play professional basketball with Lahti Basketball in the Korisliiga League, the highest tier league in Finland.

Williams becomes the fifth Texan in the last two years to sign a pro contract joining Shakur Daniel, Tre Gipson, Tahj Small and Rod Bown in the professional ranks.

"Great news to hear about Lue and the contract," said head coach Billy Gillispie. "It is every player's dream to play at the professional level and Lue is very deserving of this opportunity. He has been a great Texan. Lue has helped his team win a lot of games, played in the postseason both years and earned a degree from Tarleton State University.

This is an honor well deserved and the first step of having a fabulous career. Congrats Lue!"

After spending a pair of seasons in the Stephenville, Williams left his mark on the Texan program. He played 69 games while starting 61 for the Texans. He averaged 11.8 points and 3.8 rebounds per game. The prolific shooter led the team in triples in his first season and totaled 86 made three-pointers while shooting at a 36.1% clip from deep in his career.

During his career with the Texans he ranks in the top five in seven career categories during Tarleton's D1 era. He holds the D1 era record with 289 made field goals and ranks second in three-pointers made with 86. He ranks third in free throws (153) and points (817). Williams is fifth in Texan

D1 era with 72 steals and 20 blocks and sixth in games started with 61.

"Playing professionally has always been my dream since grade school," Williams said. "God has blessed me beyond measures to be in this position to have finally made it happen. I am very excited to see that what was once a huge dream all my life come true. I know my pops is looking down at me smiling; and I know my mama, family and friends here are so proud of me!"

Lahti Basketball competes in the Korisliiga League, the highest tier league in Finland. Located in Lahti, Finland, Williams' new home is nearly 4,000 miles from Stephenville. In Finland, the two languages most widely spoken are Swedish and Finnish.



PHOTO COURTESY OF TARLETON STATE UNIVERSITY

Former Tarleton State Texan guard Lue Williams has signed a contract to play professional basketball with Lahti Basketball.

HOOD OUTDOORS

Chumming to entice the bite



BY MICHAEL ACOSTA

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

Summertime is a great time to “chum,” especially when the fish won’t cooperate. Many folks are familiar with “baiting a hole” for catfish. Striped bass anglers including myself do essentially the same thing to try to get fish in the feeding mode. Baiting a hole or “chumming” can be used for several species of fish in freshwater and saltwater and can make the difference in getting the fish to bite.



COURTESY PHOTO

April Friesenhahn, who is visiting family in Granbury, with two huge Lake Granbury striped bass caught last weekend.

When I talk about “chumming,” I am referring to using some kind of bait, food or scent that will attract or entice the fish to bite.

Many catfish anglers will use soured maize or milo to bait a hole for catfish. The catfish have a great sense of smell and are drawn to the baited hole. Carp anglers may toss corn in an area to congregate fish. Saltwater anglers generally use diced or ground up oily baitfish/fish leftovers to bring in feeding fish. Saltwater striped bass anglers may chum so heavily at times they create essentially a “oil slick” which the fish follow into the boat. Striped bass do have a sense of smell even though they are mainly sight feeders.

Chumming in freshwater is not much different than in saltwater. Most striper anglers/guides will cut up dead baitfish and toss it in an area where the fish are expected to be. Many times, if the fish are not biting and you can see them on your graph, you may be able to change their mind.

You also have to consider that chumming an area may bring in other species that you may or may not want. Chumming with cut or ground up baitfish may bring in other species such as sand bass, gar, drum and catfish.

You do not want to over chum an area as you may be feeding the fish that you are trying to catch. You want to entice the bite but



COURTESY PHOTO

Pictured is Granbury resident Marco Wolf displays his limit of big striped bass caught last weekend on Lake Granbury.

not fill them on chum. This is where a meat grinder works well. The ground up baitfish is not substantial enough to get a bite on but will still offer a good scent. Some anglers will take this ground up dead bait and freeze them in blocks and place these in areas to be fished. The block of frozen stuff will start to thaw and release the chum attractant as it melts.

If you have a lot of current or the wind is high, chumming may not be effective. Chumming is generally more effective when you can keep the chum in the general vicinity of where you are fishing. If the wind is up, you may opt to use a chum dispenser hung over the side of the boat. This will release the chum and the fish may follow it to the boat.

Chum dispensers are widely available down on the coast as the primary market is there. There is very little market inland for these dispensers. You can however order them on-line.

Generally, my preferred method is to use shad I have on the boat the day I am on the water. I keep a cutting board and knife to cut them up and toss them upstream so that they drift down under my boat. You can also use a pair of stainless-steel scissors to cut up the fish. Remember, it is always a good idea to follow the chum-throwing with a thrashing of the surface of the water to mimic feeding fish.

HOOD COUNTY FISHING REPORT

Lake Granbury is full and

water temperatures vary from the middle 80s to the low 90s. Some recent rains have cooled the surface bringing a little relief. Sand bass are slow to fair on slabs and spinners from Decordova to Indian Harbor. Striped bass are good to 12 pounds on live bait and trolled Alabama rigs. Largemouth bass are slow to fair on crankbaits and soft plastics worked near main lake points and near shaded docks later in the day. Catfish are good on cut bait fished mainly at night, however many are being caught on shallow humps mid-lake. Crappie continue to be good on small minnows and jigs fished near suspended timber mid-lake and near bridge pilings.

BOOK REVIEW

Are sharks really as bad as they seem?

BY TERRI SCHLICHENMEYER

Oh, those teeth!

Your finger practically bleeds just looking at them: three rows of perfect, razor-sharp white triangles that you know are gonna hurt. They’re inside a mouth made for swallowing you whole, that’s obvious, but when you think about it — are sharks really as bad as they seem? As you’ll see in the new book “Sharks Don’t Sink” by Jasmin Graham, maybe dentism isn’t the problem. In studying them, maybe racism is.

Growing up near the ocean by Myrtle Beach, Jasmin Graham fell in love with the water early in her life. She fell in love with the creatures there when she was 10, with her father, fishing — something her forebears had done on local piers for decades.

She knew then that she wanted to be a “shark scientist.”

She was 18 when she first held a live shark, and that cemented her dream.

Not long afterward, though, Graham felt like she “had burned out completely.” She’d been trying to make it in “a toxic, white, male-dominated ... environment laced with ... casual and overt sexism and racism ...” and it was harming her well-being. She was about to quit when she found a few other Black women who were shark scientists, too, and who were going through the same thing. Graham received instant support and it was life-changing.

Two weeks later, the new friends had decided to mobilize. They met a Miami investor who lent resources and who helped them found Minorities in Shark Science (MISS), an organization that gives BIPOC young women an introduction to shark science. By then, Graham had decided to become a “rogue

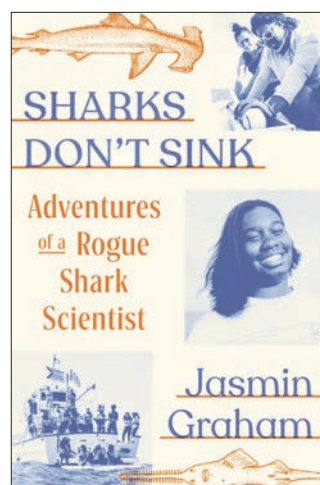
scientist” — one without academic backing, but whose research on sharks is essential in the field.

Sharks, says Graham, are not always the fearsome creatures that Hollywood wants us to believe. Yes, some sharks attack humans, but others are “kinda silly” sometimes, and some are “cutie-pies.” And there’s still a lot we don’t know about them.

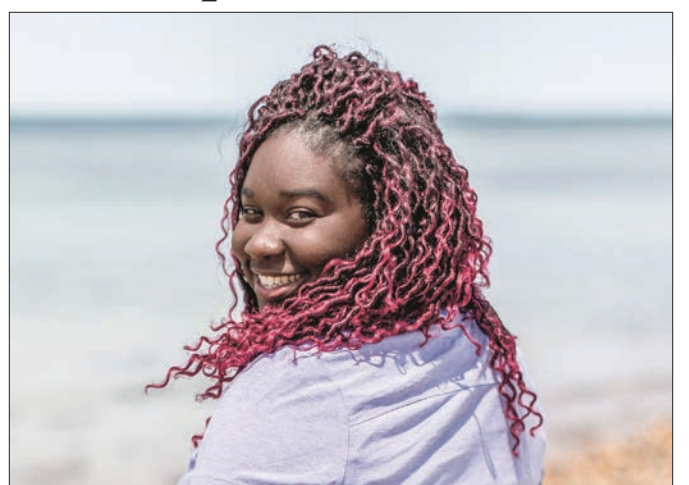
Says Graham, “So many questions. But that’s where science begins: with questions.”

Alright, here it is: the STEM book you can share with your young adult, a book that’s not stuffy or academic but that’ll teach you something truly interesting. Here: all the things you wanted to know about all kinds of sharks, in plain words that are friendly, thorough, smart, awed and easy-to-understand. Right here.

And if the shark sci-



“Sharks Don’t Sink: Adventures of a Rogue Shark Scientist” by Jasmin Graham, c.2024, Pantheon Books, \$28, 213 pages and Jasmin Graham



COURTESY PHOTO

ence doesn’t fascinate you enough, author Jasmin Graham uses “Sharks Don’t Sink” to draw analogies between freedom and bias and between shark lives and Black lives. That’s done in the sweetest of ways, through Graham’s own story

and that of her ancestors who steadfastly, fiercely stood up to racism and big business through the years. We also meet Graham’s father, an easy-going man who makes you want to sit on a quiet front porch with some sweet tea and a church fan.

Ahhhhh. Find this book for yourself, loan it to your 14-to-18-year-old and be sure to ask for it back. “Sharks Don’t Sink” is the kind of book you’ll want to bite into twice.



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SUDOKU
Solution for the puzzle on July 20

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

Puzzle by websudoku.com

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

PECAN PLANTATION BITS

Pickleball tournament brings competitive play and successful day

BY DIANE LONG



A Mississippi native who has been a Texas transplant for 29 years, Diane Long is a wife, mother, and former English teacher who has written Pecan Plantation Bits for 17 years cumulatively. She spends her time both gathering neighborhood news and collecting new books to read. dianedlong@yahoo.com | 817-579-9360

The Pecan Plantation Pickleball Association held its most recent tournament last weekend, and the event brought folks both ready to compete as well as have fun. Many thanks go to the organizers of the day, the players and participants, and the PAC staff. Congratulations to the medal winners of the event: John Tirsch, Jodi Davis, Clarie and Kevin Downing, Joe Huahula, Lisa Moore, Gary Bullard, Jeanie Tirsch, Tammy and Randy Barrett and Deanna and Everett Berry.

SHOW TIME

A very exciting summer activity for the students of Pecan happened this past week when the Missoula Children's Theater troupe arrived. Rehearsals have been ongoing since Monday, the culmination of which happens today with showings of "Hercules" at 2 and 4 p.m. at the PAC. Tickets are available at the door.

TASTE TEST

A cupcake/cake pop camp for bakers ages 8 and over will take place Monday and Tuesday, July 29-30 from 2 to 3 p.m. at the PAC. Instructor Donna Swarb of

11th Green Bakery will lead participants in piping icing and shaping cake pop dough. Sign up at the PAC: 817-573-7952.

CAMP OPPORTUNITIES

The final session of Golf, Tennis and Swim Camp is set for July 30-Aug. 2, and one more session of Tennis and More Sports Camp will happen July 23-26. Sign up for these events in the tennis shop: 817-579-9412.

SWEET STRINGS

Another session of guitar lessons for adult students begins Thursday, Aug. 1. Interested musicians may sign up at the PAC: 817-573-7952.

TINY TRIBE

The next Tiny Tribe play day is on the calendar for Monday, Aug. 5 from 1-2 p.m. at the PAC for children ages 4 and younger. Play activities are designed to boost cognitive skills and improve children's development.

TWINKLE TOES

Enchanted Summer Dance Camp is coming Aug. 8-10 from 1:30-3 p.m. to the PAC, and the days will include girls dressing as princesses,

ballet lessons, tap dancing, crafts and singing. Ladies should bring princess accoutrement and tap shoes to the gatherings. Sign up at the PAC.

PARTY MACHINE

Reservations for the next "Mystery Bus" event opened last week, and residents received email with a sign-up link. This very popular event is scheduled for Wednesday, Aug. 14, and spots will fill up fast.

EVENING SPARKLE

Wednesday, July 31 will bring a special evening to the clubhouse when Executive Chef Jordan Ray will present a meal served with Champagne Bollinger, the "007" of champagnes. The front desk is currently receiving reservations for the event: 817-573-2641.

BREAKFAST CLUB

Ron Liddell has hosted Pecan's Breakfast Club for more than four years, and he is ready to enjoy retirement from facilitating the bi-monthly meeting. Therefore, a new host for the group is needed. A number of speakers have already been booked for 2025 to make the transition easier. Ron describes the post as a "very fun job" at which he is able to "sit with interesting people and chat over breakfast." Ron thanks everyone who has supported Breakfast Club, and folks interested in leading the group may send email to pecanbreakfast@gmail.com.



COURTESY PHOTO

The Pecan Plantation Pickleball Association recently hosted a tournament at the Pecan Activities Center. The day brought both competition and fun with several players receiving award medals. The pickleball community in Pecan is growing with daily designated play in the PAC gym and on outdoor courts, always available. Pictured are (L-R): silver medal winners Kevin Downing and Clarie Downing, and gold medal winners Jodi Davis and John Tirsch.

WELCOME HOME

The next new member orientation will happen Saturday, Aug. 3 at 10 a.m. in the Terrace Room. The event welcomes new residents of Pecan as well as long timers who would like a "refresher" session on the amenities of our community. Send email to Sarah Lord to reserve a spot: sarahlord@ppoaweb.com.

NEW SLATE

Congratulations to Pecan's Tennis Association board officers who were elected earlier this summer and have now taken office. Serving are Dee Wilcox, president; Jay Hammond, first vice president; Pat Newberry, secretary; Sherry Bernhoft, treasurer; and of course, John Ingram III, Pecan's "ambassador of tennis," who attends all board meetings and facilitates tennis events in our community. May you all have a very successful tenure.

ART SCENE

The Pecan Plantation Art Guild meets the second Tuesday of each month

(which puts the next gathering Aug. 13) at 10:30 a.m. at the PAC. Pecaners interested in art are invited to join the meeting, as well as the PPAG, whose dues are \$35 per year. For complete information on the guild, folks may visit pecanplantationartguild.com.

The work of artists' of the month, as well as the work of other neighborhood artists, may be viewed in the hallway leading to the ballroom in the Pecan clubhouse, in addition to various other places of the clubhouse and the PAC. All pieces are priced to sell. Upcoming dates on the PPAG calendar include Gallery Night planned for Sept. 27 and a pop-up art show Nov. 9.

CHIT CHAT

The final Chit Chat luncheon for the Pecan Plantation Woman's Club will happen Thursday, Aug. 8, and reservations are due by noon Thursday, Aug. 1. To reserve a spot, send email to ppwres@gmail.com or call 361-215-4599.

Furthermore, dues for the 2024-2025 PPWC year are now being accepted with a

deadline date of Thursday, Aug. 1. Ladies may join or renew membership by visiting www.mypwpc.com.

RECYCLING SPOTS

Pecan's collection station for recyclable items, branches and bulk trash continues its designated collection day of the final Saturday of the month (today, July 27) from 8 a.m. to 12, as well as each Wednesday from 4 to 6 p.m. for branches and recyclables only.

In addition, Pecan's tennis shop recycles aluminum cans with proceeds benefitting our community's tennis program. Rinsed cans may be delivered to the tennis shop during operating hours.

WELL DONE

The Little Artisans Camp held earlier this month found attendees having big fun as well as creating a fabulous project each day with the T-shirts being a personal favorite. Many thanks to Kate Little for hosting as well as young Pecaners for participating.

HCN Junior
National Bagpipe Appreciation Day
July 27, 2024

New Word
spor-ran
a small pouch worn around the waist so as to hang in front of the kilt as part of men's Scottish Highland dress.

During the first world war, and even the second, Scottish soldiers would often march into the war to the tunes of bagpipes.

COLOR Time

bagpipe music takes center stage. Kids can discover how bagpipes have been used in ceremonies, festivals, and military marches throughout history.

For hands-on fun, children can get creative with DIY bagpipe projects using simple materials like cardboard tubes and balloons. Building their own makeshift bagpipes allows kids to appreciate the mechanics of the instrument and gain a deeper understanding of how it produces sound.

Bagpipe Appreciation Day is not only about celebrating the music but also honoring the traditions and stories woven into its melodies. It's a day to recognize the enduring legacy of this ancient instrument and the cultural connections it fosters around the world.

So, on July 27th, let's come together to appreciate the stirring tunes and timeless charm of the bagpipes. Whether listening to the haunting strains of Scottish airs or dancing to lively jigs, Bagpipe Appreciation Day is a celebration of music, heritage, and the universal language of melody.

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GARDEN PATCH

Use research-based plants

BY PHYLLIS WEBSTER



Phyllis Webster earned a degree in journalism before embarking on a long career in public relations and marketing. A Granbury resident since 1998, she has been deeply involved in the community. She is an award-winning writer and photographer, as well as a Master Gardener. She has authored Garden Patch since 2001. 817-680-4849.

Since the 1980s, Texas A&M University has used research-proven techniques to develop and market outstanding plants for Texas landscapes. Two of the University's better known horticultural programs are supported by Texas AgriLife Extension — Texas Superstars® and Earth-Kind® Landscaping. The extension service is a unique agency with a state-wide network of educators, trained volunteers and county offices. For more than 100 years, the agency has sought to improve lives through education. Its network, which

includes master gardeners, delivers innovative, science-based solutions. Through its outreach programs, it educates community members on matters of health, agriculture, horticulture and the environment. Earth-Kind Landscaping uses research-proven techniques to preserve and protect the environment while also providing maximum garden/landscape enjoyment. The idea is to combine the best of organic and traditional gardening and landscaping principles to create a horticultural system based on

real world effectiveness and environmental responsibility. Tenets include landscape water conservation, reduction of fertilizer and pesticides, landscaping for energy conservation and reduction of landscape wastes entering landfills. Earth-Kind is a designation given to select plants that have been tested and proven to be especially well suited for the varied and challenging environmental conditions of Texas. These plants are typically low-maintenance, disease resistant and water efficient. Some of the Earth-Kind plants recommended for 2024 include roses, such as 'Belinda's Dream' and 'Mutabilis'; lantanas, including 'New Gold' and 'Trailing Purple'; and crape myrtles, such as 'Natchez' and 'Muskogee.' Other Earth-Kind plants include annuals, perennials, shrubs, trees

and specialty plants, such as 'Balsamic Blooms Basil,' 'Natchez' blackberry and 'Celebrity' tomato. For more information on Earth-Kind plants, visit <https://aggiehorticulture.tamu.edu> and look for the plant selector. Texas Superstar plants are rigorously tested in locations representing the many Texas ecoregions, which vary in cold, heat and rainfall. Plant experts from around the state collaborate in evaluating the candidates for this prestigious designation. Chosen plants are known for their beauty, durability and ability to adapt to the state's challenging climate. They include such garden stalwarts as crossvine, red yucca, lantana, several salvias, purple cone-flower, vinca, pentas, zinnias, vitex, possumhaw holly and Chinese pistache. For more information on Texas Superstars, visit <https://tex-assuperstar.com>.



PHOTO BY PHYLLIS WEBSTER

Texas Gold Columbine, a native perennial, earned both Texas Superstar and Earth-Kind designations.

Even the most durable plants need the right conditions to get a good start. To begin, evaluate your site and note sun exposure, soil type, slope, prevalent winds and moisture availability. Cross match your site's characteristics to plant needs, such as full sun plants for a full sun site. Next, prepare the soil to ensure it is well drained. Amend it with organic matter if needed to ensure drainage and fertility. Know that drought toler-

ant plants require regular moisture for about a year after planting. Thereafter, water deeply and less frequently to encourage deep root growth. Always mulch the area around plants to conserve moisture and suppress weeds. For answers to your horticulture questions, please call the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension, Hood County at 817-579-3280 or online at lakegranburymastergardeners.org.

GRANBURY CULTURAL ARTS COMMISSION

Back-to-school thoughts : the importance of arts in school

BY STACEY WATKINS-MARTIN AND CORA WERLEY

Stacey Watkins-Martin and Cora Werley are local artists and members with several others of the Granbury Cultural Arts Commission. Both work diligently with many other people and organizations to promote Granbury as the exciting arts destination it has become.

It's almost August and ... time for school thoughts. You are probably already buying supplies and first-day outfits. But have you thought about making sure your students are getting all they can out of their educa-

tion by enrolling them in arts classes of all kinds? The Arts Education Partnership meta-analyzed 62 studies which revealed as a whole that studying music increases scores in math, reading, cognitive development and even the verbal SAT. It also showed a positive impact on children's ability to organize their writing (and thus, thoughts and plans, right?) and interpret complex texts by using visual arts. These are not isolated studies but reveal contemporary wisdom on something that's been around forever. Just ask your kids ... In fact, Granbury is a great place to encourage all gen-

erations to develop their interest in the arts. We have several well-established arts organizations who are really stepping it up right now. The Lake Granbury Art Association (LGAA), which has been around for decades and is located in the historic Shanley House next to the library, has almost doubled its membership and sponsored multiple juried and membership shows that draw in artists and viewers from around the country. Its summer camp for kids had a wait list and its robust workshop schedule of professional artists is always well-attended. Granbury Arts Alliance (GAA), which was instrumen-

tal in the establishment of the Granbury Cultural Arts Commission (GCAC), has recently updated its website, added events to its calendar (including the wildly popular Dinner in White and the Dan Coates Art Show and Sale), and increased its presence in art fundraising with the successful Moon Sales at the Harvest Moon Festival of the Arts. Most importantly, the funds being raised are being shared with other local organizations, which draws us all together. The Bridge Street History Center puts on the Ramay-Macatee Speaker Series to inform the public of our interesting past in an easily ac-

cessible way ... including its own YouTube channel. The Writers' Bloc, the local writers' group, holds events at Arts and Letters and other venues to invite new authors to our city and put us on the map for creative minds to come together and be encouraged. And your own Granbury Cultural Arts Commission (GCAC) has multiple plans for expanding Granbury's public art, of course. It's sometimes a slower process than we'd like but you will hopefully see results soon. The art on utility boxes we highlighted last month is moving forward and we will soon be seeking approval for

the first boxes to be completed. Their voice for peace and beauty will be felt when driving or walking through our community. In addition, we anticipate a unique and iconic piece for the new airport terminal to bring the community together and be a first impression for people flying into our city. But there's always more, so come back next month to hear what's going on in Granbury's rapidly growing music scene. And as always, feel free to contact us with news and ideas.

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THE Best of Hood County HCNews 7 STRAIGHT YEARS



Yogi Jones, champion of veterans

BY LAUREN DAVIS
Staff Writer
lauren@hcnews.com

Yolanda (Yogi) Jones has dedicated her life to supporting veterans. For the last three years, she has been president of the Riley Stephens Memorial Post

7835 VFW Auxiliary. Jones fosters community spirit by organizing fundraisers, community gatherings and support services for veterans and their families.

Steadfastly, Jones has worked her way up the chain over the past eight years, starting as a guard and even-

tually becoming junior vice president, senior vice president and president.

Originally from Hico, Jones has lived in Granbury since 2012. She has four children from a previous marriage and 10 grandchildren — nine of them boys.

Her involvement with the

VFW Post 7835 Auxiliary began through her husband, Paul Liles, a native of Granbury and an auxiliary member. "With my family's deep military roots, supporting veterans has become a personal mission," Jones said. This mission is evident in her efforts to rejuvenate

Burger Night, a weekly event that had waned due to volunteer fatigue.

BURGER NIGHT

Jones created a competition to revive Burger Night, attracting local teams and sparking community interest. "We now have groups

like the Twisted Disciples Motorcycle Club participating, and we serve around 100 burgers every Wednesday," she noted, adding, "Other volunteer teams are named after their lead cooks, like Team Dawn and Team

PLEASE SEE **YOGI** | C2

Love rings true sparkling legacy continues



Maryn Heil, wearing her Grammy's ring on her wedding day.

COURTESY PHOTOS BY ISABELLE GALAN

BY LAUREN DAVIS
Staff Writer
lauren@hcnews.com

Hood County News readers may recall the recent heartwarming story of a lost two-carat diamond ring. The cherished heirloom belonged to the late Faye Dodson and symbolized her improved life circumstances after years of hardship as a single mother.

Dodson left the ring to her daughter, Karla Martin, when she passed away in 2001. Martin's granddaughter, Maryn Heil, asked to wear the ring for her upcoming wedding, believing it would add special significance to her wedding day.

Martin took the ring to Dave's Jewelry for cleaning and repair to prepare for her granddaughter's big day. However, the store mistakenly handed the ring to another customer in a mix-up.

Overwhelmed with distress, Martin feared the irreplaceable ring was lost — it held deep emotional value, especially considering her granddaughter's request.

Dave of Dave's Jewelry made every effort to locate the ring, including posting security camera footage on social media. The Granbury community rallied behind

PLEASE SEE **LOVE** | C5



Newlyweds Mr. and Mrs. Jones on their wedding day in New Mexico.



MARY VINSON | HOOD COUNTY NEWS

Newly appointed Rev. Father Brandon LeClair sits in a pew in Granbury's St. Frances Cabrini Catholic Church.

LeClair appointed pastoral administrator for Granbury's St. Frances Cabrini Catholic Church

BY LAUREN DAVIS
Staff Writer
lauren@hcnews.com

The Rev. Father Brandon LeClair is the newly appointed pastoral administrator of St. Frances Cabrini Catholic Church and St. Rosa Lima Catholic Church. He was ordained in May 2023 and brings a fresh perspective and a deep commitment to his new roles in the community.

LeClair described himself as "a bit of a newbie," referring to his recent ordination. He explained that priests are not given the title of pastor until they have gained some experience, and he hopes to be named pastor next May.

Before his assignment to St. Frances Cabrini, LeClair served as the parochial vicar at St. John the Apostle in North Richland Hills for a year, where he was essentially the assistant to the pastor.

Along with shepherding the flock at Granbury's St. Frances Cabrini, LeClair conducts mass at St. Rosa Lima in Glen Rose Thursdays and Sundays. The congregation is small, and there are currently no office hours. He noted these are the only times he is present there.

LeClair's journey to the priesthood began in Sioux City, Iowa, where he was born. His family moved to Mansfield, when he was 2-and-a-half years old. He grew up in Mansfield, attending public schools and actively participating in church activities.

"I went to seminary about three years after high school," LeClair said. "Since I was very young, I had a list of careers that I might want to do, and on that list, the first was to be a teacher, the second was to be a police officer, the third was to be a chef, and the fourth was a priest."

LeClair's varied interests led him to study at Tarrant County College, where he explored teaching, criminal justice and culinary arts. Despite excelling in these areas, he felt unfulfilled and eventually pursued his true vocation.

In 2015, he entered St. Joseph's Abbey and Seminary College in Covington, Louisiana, a Benedictine monastery. His studies in philosophy and theology solidified his calling.

"My parents were fully supportive," he recalled. "I am an only child, but they said, 'Whatever makes you happy and whatever works for you, we'll be okay with.'"

LeClair credits several mentors for guiding his path to the priesthood. One key figure was the Rev. George Foley, the parish pastor where LeClair grew up. "Father Foley was fantastic with people. He loved them, and it showed through his ministry," LeClair said.

Another major influence was Dr. Jan Norton, the wife of deacon Vic Norton, who ran the religious education program at the parish where LeClair taught. "They were also very big supporters of mine," he noted. Although the Nortons have since moved to Denton and are now part of St. Mark's in Argyle, Dr. Norton remains an important part of LeClair's life, offering ongoing guidance and friendship.

During a retreat session, LeClair recounted his vocational journey to a class of middle and high school students. Reflecting on his earlier aspirations, he mentioned the list of careers he had considered before entering seminary.

To his surprise, a keen student noticed a curious pattern among the initial choices: they all seemed to converge toward the path he ultimately embraced as a priest. LeClair

PLEASE SEE **CHURCH** | C4

Foxtrotters whoop it up in Granbury, celebrate friendship and legacy



COURTESY PHOTO

The Foxtrotters 'in their heyday' in 2014. (From left) Glynes Foster, Judy Smith, Ginger Rich, Coach Blackwell, LouAnn Shafer, Jan Stockton, and "Shaggy" Pappan.

BY LAUREN DAVIS
Staff Writer
lauren@hcnews.com

A group of spirited and determined women known as the Foxtrotters are redefining what it means to stay active and competitive in their golden years.

The Foxtrotters, a cherished senior women's basketball team, recently held a reunion in Granbury.

Established in 1997, the Foxtrotters officially retired in 2017, but the bonds of camaraderie and the spirit of competition they forged remain strong. Reflecting on their journey, Glynes Foster

noted, "We played together for 20 years, competing all over the U.S. in senior tournaments and the Senior Olympics. Our medals attest to our reputation."

Foster, formerly the executive director of human resources for Rio Rancho Public Schools in Rio Rancho, New Mexico, is now retired.

Foster moved to Granbury in 2017, and another teammate followed. Together, they hosted the reunion. Five of their teammates planned to travel from Albuquerque for the reunion, however at the last minute only three made the trip — travel time has always been a fun part of

their adventures.

Coach Chris Blackwell, who joined the team in 2012, shared his unique journey with the Foxtrotters. "I moved from Washington State to New Mexico in 2010. I was working at a Jewish community center and decided to move to New Mexico," he explained. Initially, the Foxtrotters were not part of the JCC, but they did train there — (with) coaches like Michelle McKenzie, Sally Marquez, Jessica Corley, Jay Jacobs and Tom Gallagher.

"When Gallagher left, they asked me if I would be their coach. They got me with 'cookies and brownies and

stuff.' I said, 'I gotta do this,'" Blackwell added.

"I was coming out to Texas for a Marine Corps reunion, and since I was going to visit Glynes, we decided to have a Foxtrotters reunion. It's always great to reconnect with these amazing women," Blackwell said.

Doris Goodman, a long-time member, vividly recalls the team's transformation. "When we started over two decades ago, we were known as the Twisters. Later, Glynes and Ginger got together and came up with the name Foxtrotters, and we all loved it," she said.

Goodman, who currently

resides in Albuquerque, reflected on her time with the team, stating, "The 15 years I played with the Foxtrotters were the best years of my life." She described basketball as "an essential outlet and a renewed sense of purpose during a challenging period."

Unfortunately, Goodman had to leave the team due to hip surgery and shoulder issues. She noted, "They played another five years, I believe, after I had to drop out." Despite her desire to stay with the team, she acknowledged, "I was unable to."

"She (Doris) was a key

player, and she and I both enjoyed the pick and roll, scoring every time. Doris was our 'horse,'" Foster fondly remembered.

The Foxtrotters' story is not just about basketball but the unbreakable bonds formed on and off the court. The team has navigated personal hardships together, including health challenges and losing beloved members. "We lost one player to death, Arlene Rimson, a very dear friend," Goodman shared somberly.

These experiences have only strengthened their resolve and commitment to

PLEASE SEE **LEGACY** | C5

YOGI

FROM PAGE C1

Harley."

Funding for Burger Night is managed through donations and volunteers, and members and non-members of the VFW play a crucial role.

"Our volunteers come from all over, including billiard and cornhole tournament participants," Jones explained. The event, which runs from 5:30-7:30 p.m. Wednesdays only, has become a staple; a burger and homemade fries meal is about \$7-\$7.50 with proceeds supporting the continuation of these community gatherings."

VFW Post 7835's facilities include the back hall, canteen and a beer garden, which can easily accommodate large gatherings of 100

people.

BLUE BRANCH HISTORIC RANCH

In addition to her VFW role, Jones is the detail manager and quality control inspector at Camping World in Fort Worth. She also serves as the property manager at Blue Branch Historic Ranch, a veterans' and first responders' retreat under the management of Kolton Krottinger.

Veterans can camp for free at the ranch, and there are ample provisions for cooking, relaxation, and recreational activities. "The ranch provides a supportive environment for veterans to unwind and connect," Jones said.

NATIONAL HOME

One of Jones' most pas-

sionate projects is organizing the annual luau, a fundraiser for the National Home, a nonprofit supporting veteran families. "We raised \$10,000 one year for the National Home, which provides financial assistance, housing and education for up to four years after the loss of a service member," she said.

The National Home, based in Eagle Rapids, Michigan, offers comprehensive support to veteran families, positively impacting their lives.

Despite the challenge of raising funds for a facility outside Texas, Jones' efforts have been highly successful. "It's hard to get people to donate to a place not in Texas, but the impact is immense," she said. The funds support

PLEASE SEE **YOGI** | C3



MARY VINSON | HOOD COUNTY NEWS

Granbury's Riley Stephens VFW Post 7835 Auxiliary President Yogi Jones wears a T-shirt for the annual Home Luau and Benefit raising funds through T-shirt sales promoting RUCK Forward, the Blue Branch Historic Ranch, and VFW National Home and the VFW auxiliary.

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Thurs: 3:00PM, 5:40PM, 8:20PM

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YOGI
FROM PAGE C2
the Texas House within the National Home, benefiting numerous families yearly.

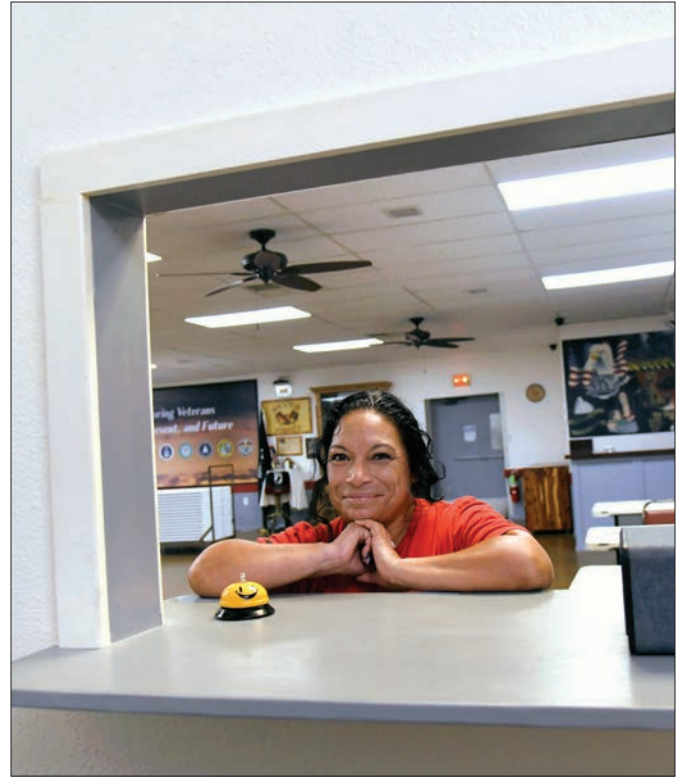
RUCK FORWARD
Jones' dedication extends to hosting various VFW events, including musical performances, barbecue cook-offs, and the upcoming RUCK Forward event, organized by Cathy Castro and the Stephens family.
"RUCK Forward is scheduled for Sept. 28," Jones explains, "It's a 5K and a 22K walk through the city with participants carrying rucksacks and attracts around 300 people. We walk and remember our beloved veterans."

ANTHONY PRICE
Riley Stephens VFW Post 7835 will also host Anthony Price, a rising star in the country music scene. His performance is scheduled for Oct. 12. At just 16 years old, Price has already secured a record deal with the

Country Music Association and has appeared on major platforms like Good Morning America. The event is open to the public with no cover charge.

With an unwavering commitment to the VFW and veterans in general, Jones plans to continue serving as president. She emphasizes the importance of volunteer support for the VFW's activities. "New people bring new ideas, and volunteer support is crucial for our busy post," she states.

Her efforts have not gone unnoticed, and she continues to find ways to engage the community and support veterans. "We give little incentives to keep volunteers coming back, and they have a lot of fun," Jones said. She looks forward to future collaborations to promote events and initiatives, ensuring the VFW's activities remain vibrant and impactful. Jones' initiatives provide essential resources and create a network of support and camaraderie. Her dedication ensures veterans and their families receive the recog-



MARY VINSON | HOOD COUNTY NEWS

President of the Granbury Riley Stephens VFW Post 7835 Auxiliary Yogi Jones at the post's "Burger night" window.

ognition and assistance they deserve.
For more information about the VFW's events and

how to get involved, visit its website at <https://vfw7835.org/di/vfw/v2/default.asp>.

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 (Mexican Train) 11 a.m. Healthy

Connections, 1321 Waters Edge Drive, Suite 1001. Details: 817-579-2979.

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

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 Barbecue, 317 E. U.S. Highway 377. Details: bskaggs@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 Barbecue 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.

Serving pancakes and smiles: Granbury Pancake House opens



MARY VINSON | HOOD COUNTY NEWS

The interior of the new Granbury Pancake House. Construction included an emphasis on accessibility. Included in the interior are photos of family and the locally famous. Ceiling tiles were salvaged from Walnut Springs.

BY EDEN DUNCAN
GILBREATH

Special to the
Hood County News
eden@hcnews.com

A new homestyle restaurant has opened in Granbury at 1302 S. Morgan St. But the Granbury Pancake House houses so much more than pancakes.

The new restaurant creates nearly all its culinary delights from scratch. Its signature dish will be the "1866" which was created to honor the city of Granbury.

Owner Kevin Fitzgerald explains, "The dish was created to honor the city of Granbury when it was established."

A dish as big as Hood County lore, Fitzgerald describes the dish, "The 1866 will be served on a 21-inch by 15-inch platter, and comes with two pancakes, a Belgian waffle, two eggs, toast, coffee and juice as well as your choice of bacon or sausage and a biscuit!"

You can order the "1866" any time of day as breakfast is on the menu from open to close.

The Granbury Pancake House is a true family restaurant in decor, relaxed atmosphere and the friendly

folks that own and operate the venue.

"The most important part of my life is my parents," says Fitzgerald, who mentions the large portrait of his parents that greets each patron.

"After losing Dad nine months ago, mom now resides with us in Granbury. She has her own booth, and helps with silverware, talking to guests and is fully engaged daily at the young age of 81."

His mom is not the only Fitzgerald to enjoy visiting with guests.

"You will see Cassandra, mom and me a daily basis. My children, Rocco and Roxy, are in the restaurant as well as their photos and named menu items. The reason I do this is for our family and our community."

Photos of Hood County and Granbury historical sites are arranged along the walls along with photos of the sheriff, chief of police and mayor.

Fitzgerald says the staff gets along well. "Both front of house and back of house have jelled rather quickly. We all have learned the menu, kitchen, service standards and what we are all about and that's taking care

of our customers as one big family."

A connection to the community being key to the vision, a partnership with Granbury High School's culinary department is a good fit for that goal.

"We have hired five of their current and past students who are extremely talented individuals. Finally, we are going to give them a scholarship award each year in my late brother's name to the culinary program."

"We treat and take care of our employees as family. This includes being paid an above average wage. They receive free meals and drinks during their shifts, as well as a weekly 50% discount while dining with their families on their days off."

Fitzgerald says they wish to be known as a pancake house first and foremost. Doggie pancakes are dog bone shaped pancakes that help support local animal adoption with \$1 from every \$3 purchase going to the cause. "This has already been a big hit," shared Fitzgerald.

Partnering with local businesses has been important as well. Local pecans are used in the pecan waffles and they get many sup-



The Fitzgeralds welcome patrons to new Granbury Pancake House.

plies from local vendors in Granbury as well as having contracted with local businesses for the remodel.

Fitzgerald says his family was waiting for just the right opportunity.

"We have looked at many different opportunities in Granbury until this space became available. We have heard all the rumors about this spot, but we had the

building blessed with prayer and holy water and started on July 7 with our new armor and it's been a blessing."

With his late brother Michael as inspiration, Fitzgerald hopes to offer great hospitality to the residents of and visitors to Hood County. "It's a place to dine casually, (enjoy) conversation and get spoiled by our staff. I am a huge hospitality

and 'of service' operator. "We love God, staff, community, youth and patrons."

The space and catering will be available for special events. The owners have taken special care to make the establishment convenient for those in walkers or wheelchairs. For special events email homeofthe1866@gmail.com.



MARY VINSON | HOOD COUNTY NEWS

Newly appointed Rev. Father Brandon LeClair sits in a pew in Granbury's St. Frances Cabrini Catholic Church.

CHURCH

FROM PAGE C1

listened as the teen connected the dots, pointing out how the first three careers on LeClair's list led into his fourth choice—his true calling.

LeClair shared, "He said, 'So, teacher, you teach the faith, right? Police officer, you guard the flock — you shepherd the flock. Culinary — three, you bring everybody to the table of the Lord, the Eucharist.' He pointed out that it led to the priesthood."

In addition to his pastoral duties, LeClair enjoys cooking, particularly baking. "My specialty is baking cookies, cakes and pastries," he said. "But my favorite is bread."

Growing up, LeClair was always involved in choir, which cultivated his love for singing. His interest continued into his seminary years,

where he spent a semester with the Scola Cantorum, the seminary's version of a choir, performing occasionally in Latin. "I do like to sing during Mass here and there," he said, highlighting how music remains a cherished aspect of his religious practice.

LeClair looks forward to uniting the diverse communities at St. Frances Cabrini and St. Rosa Lima. There may be challenges, but LeClair remains optimistic. "It takes time, intentionality and earning the people's trust," he said. "I'm here to serve all of them, love them and bring them all to Christ. That's my ultimate goal."

With the foundation of religious faith and education beginning at home with the parents, LeClair notes a decline in effective catechesis over the past century, where families may attend church services but do not actively engage with their faith out-

side of Sunday mass.

LeClair believes that while youth programs are important, there should be a stronger focus on encouraging parents and those preparing for marriage or baptizing their children. Parents should actively teach and practice their faith at home. He reflects on his upbringing, crediting his consistent attendance at church and religious education throughout his school years to his parents' influence.

LeClair's journey to the pulpit reflects his dedication to serving the community and his faith. His varied experiences and commitment to bringing people together will undoubtedly enrich the congregations of St. Frances Cabrini and St. Rosa Lima.

For more information, please visit the church's website at <https://stfrances.net>.



SAME PAPER

AT YOUR FINGERTIPS

HCNEWS.COM

The transformative power of positive self-talk

BY MICKY SHEARON

Special to the Hood County News

Show of hands. How many of you reading this have ever gotten discouraged because it seemed every time you thought you would get ahead, something unexpected happened, and now, instead of getting ahead, you're further behind? Sound familiar? It's easy to let life get you down. After all, life comes at all of us.

But have you ever noticed how much easier life feels when, despite your current circumstances, you believe in yourself? That's because self-belief is like a secret superpower. The best part? You can train your mind to harness this power with daily affirmations.

Think of affirmations as a workout for your brain. Just like your muscles, your mind needs consistent training to grow stronger. Let's dive into the world of affirmations and see how they can transform your life.

THE MAGIC OF DAILY PRACTICE

So, what exactly are affirmations? They're positive statements you repeat to yourself to challenge and overcome self-sabotaging and negative thoughts. When you repeat them often, and believe in them, you can start to make positive changes. It's not just about saying nice things to yourself; it's about reprogramming your mind to focus on positivity and possibility.

Here are a few affirmations to get you started:

"I cannot control everything that happens; I can only control how I respond to what happens. In my response is my power."

"I will stop focusing on how stressed I am and remember how blessed I am. Complaining won't change my reality, but a positive attitude and taking action will."

"Making mistakes is always better than faking perfection."

"I will never be as good as everyone tells me when I win, and I will never be as bad as I think when I lose."

"All my small victories are worth celebrating; it's the small things done well that make a difference in the end."

WHY AFFIRMATIONS WORK

Affirmations work because they help you replace negative thoughts with positive ones. Just like every muscle in your body, your mind needs to be exercised to gain strength. When you practice affirmations regularly, you build a mental habit of focusing on what you can control and what's positive in your life. This mental strength helps you handle challenges more effectively and makes you more resilient to stress.

COPING WITH LIFE'S CHALLENGES

Life throws curveballs at all of us. Whether it's a demanding project at work, a disagreement with a loved one, or an unexpected setback, how you cope with these challenges makes all the difference. Affirmations are a powerful coping mechanism. They help you stay grounded,

maintain a positive outlook, and find effective ways to manage stress.

For example, let's say you're overwhelmed with a daunting task at work. Instead of panicking, you can use affirmations to calm your mind and remind yourself that you can handle it. "I will focus on making myself better, not on thinking I am better," can be a great affirmation to keep you motivated and focused on improvement rather than perfection.

A HEALTHY MINDSET

Maintaining a healthy mindset is about more than just positive thinking. It's about being open to your feelings, even the uncomfortable ones, and finding healthy ways to cope. Avoiding or denying your emotions can lead to unhealthy coping mechanisms like overeating or excessive drinking. Instead, use affirmations to face your feelings head-on. When you acknowledge and accept your emotions, you can deal with them more effectively and move forward.

Imagine you've lost a loved

one. It's incredibly painful, and your first instinct might be to avoid dealing with the pain. But by using affirmations like, "I will accept whatever comes my way, and the only important thing is that I meet it with the best I have to give," you can find strength and peace even in the most difficult times.

TOXIC OPTIMISM: WHAT THIS ARTICLE IS NOT ABOUT

It's important to distinguish the practice of affirmations from toxic optimism. Toxic optimism is the relentless pursuit of a positive mindset, to the extent that it denies and invalidates the real emotions and challenges people face. This article isn't about ignoring reality or plastering a fake smile over genuine problems.

Affirmations are tools for building resilience, not for pretending everything is perfect. They help you acknowledge your struggles while reminding you that you have the strength to cope. Affirmations encourage you to face difficulties with a con-

structive mindset, rather than avoiding or denying them.

CELEBRATE YOUR SMALL VICTORIES

One of the most powerful aspects of affirmations is their ability to help you recognize and celebrate your small victories. Life is made up of countless small moments, and each one is an opportunity for growth and happiness. When you take the time to acknowledge your achievements, no matter how small, you build a foundation of positivity and self-belief that can carry you through even the toughest times.

In conclusion, affirmations are a simple yet powerful tool for building self-belief and resilience. By incorporating them into your daily routine, you can train your mind to focus on the positive, handle challenges more effectively, and celebrate the small victories that make life meaningful. So why not give it a try? Start with a few affirmations today and watch how they transform your mindset and your life.

Arts & Letters Bookstore to celebrate Harry Potter's birthday with festivities

From Staff Reports

GRANBURY — Arts & Letters Bookstore is extending a special invitation to all wizards and muggles to join the exclusive celebration of Harry Potter's birthday July

27 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. The free event will feature a costume contest, wizard-themed treats, and special merchandise.

Participants can also pre-order the highly anticipated

upcoming books "Christmas at Hogwarts" (out in October) and "Impossible Creatures" (out in September).

"This party has quickly become our most popular event each year," said Brandy

Herr, inventory manager. "We are so excited to bring this back for the fifth year."

Staff and guests are encouraged to wear wizarding costumes. The costume contests for children and adults

will be held via Facebook, allowing participants to arrive anytime during the event. Additionally, attendees can take selfies in front of Harry Potter's iconic closet under the stairs.

Arts & Letters Bookstore is located at 113 E. Bridge St. on the Granbury Square. For more information, visit its Facebook page at www.facebook.com/artsandlettersbooks or call 682-936-2824.

LEGACY

FROM PAGE C2

one another. Judy Smith, another dedicated player, shared her journey with the team. "I played on a team previously, but the Foxtrotters were always better. When Doris couldn't play anymore, they asked me to join them. It was one of the best days of my life. I've never looked back," she said.

Ginger Rich, one of the original organizers, reflected on the team's beginnings. "We started by playing at Sandia Prep High School and the JCC. We saw what other groups were doing and thought, 'We could do that, too.' While many of us had prior basketball experience, some had never played before. It was through connections and our shared interest that everything came together."

Before retiring, Jan Stockton worked as a safety and risk management manager in the construction industry, a role that involved extensive travel. Despite the demands of her career, her love for basketball remained unwavering.

Now living in Albuquerque, Stockton reflected on the life lessons learned from basketball. "Competing in a sport like basketball teaches the value of staying in shape and how to compete in life," she said. "To all you young ladies, learn the game and never be afraid to sweat. You are never too old to play."

For LouAnn Shafer, the journey began with a newspaper article. "They were looking for other players, and we all joined the same day. We were all basically the same age and just went



COURTESY PHOTO

The Foxtrotters gathered together for a reunion at Foster's home in Granbury. Now, all are in their eighties, with the youngest member 80 and the eldest 86. (From left) (on the paddle) Doris Goodman, Glynnes Foster, Judy Smith, Ginger Rich, Coach Blackwell, LouAnn Shafer, Diana "Shaggy" Pappan, and on the paddle is Jan Stockton.

that day to see what it was all about," she explained. Not all ladies had the same opportunities to play when they were young. "The only basketball I ever played was church league basketball for six weeks because my school said girls didn't play," she added.

Diana Pappan, whose late husband was a catcher for the Cleveland Indians, found solace and community with the Foxtrotters. "I have always been athletic, and I love being athletic. When I heard about the Foxtrotters, I interviewed them and joined the team. It was awesome. I loved it. I still love it," she said.

"We started as a team in 1997 and attended our first Nationals competi-

tion in Florida that year. We got a taste of the 'competition' and wanted to be a part of that 'world,'" Foster reflected.

After their debut in 1997, the Foxtrotters began the challenging process of becoming a recognized non-profit organization in New Mexico. Fundraising became a significant part of their efforts, with activities such as the Outback Sunday dinner, where they sold tickets and held silent auctions with donated prizes, and their annual garage sale, which became quite popular. Foster noted, "We held fundraising activities all the time. One of our biggest was our Outback Sunday dinner. Outback let us have all the proceeds." These activities helped

sustain their passion for basketball and their commitment to the community. Foster shared, "Foxtrotters needed funds to travel all over the U.S. to participate in tournaments, so we also dug deep into our own pockets."

In their late 50s, they achieved great success and became well known among senior women's basketball competitors. Their last National Senior Olympics was in Ohio in 2015.

Throughout their journey, they had several dedicated coaches. Blackwell stuck with them. His dedication and inspiration were invaluable. When he mentioned he would be passing through on his way to Austin for a military function, they seized the opportunity to organize

a Foxtrotter reunion. "This last coach, Chris Blackwell, adopted us for the long haul — says we inspire him," Foster said.

The team officially retired after its last game in San Antonio in February 2017. Foster announced her retirement after that game, citing her inability to keep up with the physical demands. "I had lung problems all my life. I told the gals after that game (while hyperventilating) I would have to quit," Foster recounted.

The other team members also had their own issues, and they collectively decided to hang up their jerseys. Without their leadership, "A League of Their Own" soon disbanded, though senior women's basketball contin-

ues through other leagues and teams.

"We made great friendships with other teams from all over the United States," Foster said. "They will still remember, if any of them are still playing, they will still remember the Foxtrotters."

Doris highlights the importance of resilience and perseverance. "Hey girls, keep on keeping on. I'll never give up. Just keep on putting one foot in front of the other."

"Our uniforms are boxed up, and my basketballs have lost their air," Foster said with nostalgia; as though hearing the hardwoods call, she added, "But, oh, how I would love to respond."

LOVE

FROM PAGE C1

Martin and shared the post widely.

The question loomed: would the ring ever be recovered in time for Heil to wear on her wedding day?

Heil, who had lived in Granbury since her sophomore year in high school, moved to Wichita Falls for college. She graduated from Midwestern State University (MSU) with a degree in mass communication.

While working as a receptionist at a Dodge dealership in town, Heil met Tucker Jones who started to work

at the dealership two weeks after high school. They dated for two-and-a-half years before getting engaged July 6, 2023. Heil now works in marketing for Greenline Automotive, managing social media ads for car dealerships nationwide. Jones works as a finance manager at a local Dodge dealership.

In November 2023, with the wedding date set for July 7, 2024, Heil asked her Grammy if she could wear her great-grandmother's ring for her wedding.

She planned to incorporate various family heirlooms into her bridal jewelry, including necklaces, earrings, rings and a bracelet. Heil

knew her family had beautiful pieces and aimed to create a cohesive look by piecing them together.

Heil and Jones decided on a destination wedding. "We settled on New Mexico for its mountainous beauty; Colorado was just a bit too far for our family, it's an 11-hour drive," Heil explained. "We just found a venue — Sandia Golf Club — we loved it and chose Albuquerque."

A few months later, after confirming with Heil that she still wished to wear the ring at her wedding, Martin decided to get it cleaned, which led to its disappearance. The day Martin called with the news that the ring was miss-

ing, Heil was devastated. "My heart sank to my stomach. I was so sad. I felt terrible because I was the reason! Grammy got it cleaned so I could wear it. So, I was beside myself," Heil said.

"I was terrified that the ring might be lost forever," Heil recalled. The search for the ring gained a lot of attention on Facebook, and she noticed a comment suggesting that someone's neighbor might have it. "Grammy confirmed the next day. She officially told me, 'We have found the ring. I'm going to pick it up today.'"

The Heil-Jones intimate wedding hosted 35 close family members and friends,

creating a cozy, personal atmosphere. The couple's lively reception featured a DJ and what Heil described as "the best Mexican food ever." Despite the small guest list, the dance floor was packed all night, making the celebration unforgettable. Heil wore her Grammy's cherished ring, a sparkling reminder of family love and legacy, throughout the day, the ceremony, and into the evening.

The new Mrs. Jones shared her thoughts about marriage. "I've always wanted to get married and have a best friend and a partner for life," she said. "Many people have told me — because I've asked people for advice —

the number one thing people have said is to pick your battles. The grass isn't always greener. And just enjoy every day and every moment and laugh with your partner. That's what we've tried to do, you know, these last few days, just starting our lives together."

The journey of Faye Dodson's ring from a symbol of success to newfound love to a treasured heirloom, almost lost and then miraculously found, speaks volumes about the strength of family bonds and the power of community.

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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.

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 1 John 4:12

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Romans 8:28

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Jeremiah 29:11

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Smooth sailing with Shipwreck Casserole

BY NANCY PRICER
Special to the Hood County News
classads@hcnews.com

My husband and I have a full-size upright freezer for just the two of us. Honestly, we don't need all that food for the two of us. But, it does come in handy since I really don't like going to the grocery store. Plus, I like to buy in bulk when certain freezable things go on sale. Every now and then I will do an inventory of what is in our freezer. Even though the freezer is always full, it doesn't take long. I have a "basket" system: a basket for beef, one for chicken, one for pork, one for bread, one

for veggies, etc. I just have to take out the basket, write down the contents, put the basket back in the freezer and get another basket. Then I cross items off the list as I use them. Recently 80/20 ground beef was on sale at a local grocery store and I bought 20 pounds. My husband made a bunch of hamburger patties that we could throw in the freezer. I packaged the rest in one-pound bundles to freeze. Needless to say, when I did my inventory, I had lots of ground beef to use up before freezer burn set in. I surveyed our refrigerator and pantry, typed the ingredients we had and I wanted to use into good ol' Google

and a recipe for "Shipwreck Casserole" popped up. I've been reading cookbooks like novels for years and have never seen any food dish with the word "shipwreck" in the name of the recipe. I was intrigued. Apparently, it's a thing. Google the name and you'll see for yourself. There are numerous ways to make it, but that's the beauty of it. You can make it with what you have on hand. I took the best parts of some of the recipes and used what I had on hand to come up with my own version here. It's one of those dishes that will probably be different every time you make it. You can use kidney beans, frozen mixed veggies, canned diced

tomatoes, etc. One recipe said to add shredded sharp cheddar before serving. When you make it, make it your own. I made mine in an electric pressure cooker (Ninja Foodie), but I'm sure you could bake this in the oven, on the stovetop, or in a slow cooker; although I can't vouch for cooking times with the ingredients I have listed. I tried to find times and temps for you, but there are so many options. I'll let you go down that rabbit hole. Nancy's Shipwreck Casserole (electric pressure cooked)
1 pound ground beef
1 cup diced onion
1/2 tsp garlic salt
1 cup beef broth

1/4 cup uncooked white rice
2 medium Russet potatoes, peeled and sliced into quarter-inch rounds
1 cup peeled and sliced carrots
4 cups chopped green cabbage
4 stalks sliced celery
1 Tbsp minced onion flakes
1/2 tsp pepper
1 tsp salt
1 tsp garlic powder
1/4 tsp dry mustard
1 tsp chili powder
1 Tbsp apple cider vinegar or white vinegar
1 Tbsp Worcestershire sauce
1 (8 oz) can tomato sauce
1-2 cups shredded cheddar cheese (optional)

Turn pressure cooker on and set to saute setting. Add ground beef, onion and celery and cook until beef is done. Drain grease now if you so choose. Add garlic salt and broth. Deglaze pot. Turn off. Sprinkle rice on top. Add potatoes on top in one layer. Add carrots and cabbage. Sprinkle onion flakes, pepper, salt, garlic powder, dry mustard, chili powder, vinegar and Worcestershire sauce on top. Pour tomato sauce over all. Put pressure cooker lid on and set to "sealing." Set pressure cooker to two minutes. Do a natural release for 5-10 minutes. Stir gently. Add shredded cheese if desired.

Hearing what we mean: mastering effective communication

BY MICKY SHEARON
Special to the Hood County News

In today's world, where everyone seems to be talking but few are genuinely communicating, mastering the art of effective communication is more crucial than ever. As Simon Sinek aptly says, "Communication is not about saying what we think. Communication is about ensuring others hear what we mean." This statement reminds us that the essence of communication lies in understanding and being understood.

UNDERSTANDING EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

Effective communication is more than just exchanging words. It involves understanding the emotions and intentions behind the information being conveyed. According to HelpGuide.org, true communication re-

quires active listening, where one not only hears the words but also grasps the feelings and intentions behind them. This approach helps make the other person feel heard and understood, fostering deeper connections and reducing misunderstandings.

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

Active listening: Engaging fully with the speaker, showing genuine interest and providing feedback that confirms understanding. This goes beyond merely hearing words to interpreting and responding to the emotional undertones of the conversation.

Nonverbal communication: Our body language, facial expressions and gestures play a significant role in how our messages are received. Inconsistent body language can create confusion, while positive nonverbal cues can enhance the clarity and im-

essential to manage stress and remain calm during interactions to maintain clear communication. Distractions, such as multitasking or checking your phone, can also hinder effective communication. Staying focused on the conversation and avoiding distractions can help in fully understanding the message being conveyed.

Moreover, body language that contradicts our words can lead to distrust and confusion. Ensuring that our nonverbal cues align with our verbal messages is critical for effective communication.

Practice active listening: Focus on the speaker, avoid interrupting and provide feedback that shows you are engaged and understand the message. Pay attention to nonverbal

OVERCOMING BARRIERS TO COMMUNICATION

Several barriers can impede effective communication, including stress, lack of focus, and negative body language. Stress can lead to misinterpretation of messages and reactive responses. Therefore, it is

essential to manage stress and remain calm during interactions to maintain clear communication.

Distractions, such as multitasking or checking your phone, can also hinder effective communication. Staying focused on the conversation and avoiding distractions can help in fully understanding the message being conveyed.

Moreover, body language that contradicts our words can lead to distrust and confusion. Ensuring that our nonverbal cues align with our verbal messages is critical for effective communication.

PRACTICAL TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

Practice active listening: Focus on the speaker, avoid interrupting and provide feedback that shows you are engaged and understand the message. Pay attention to nonverbal

signals: Be mindful of your body language and facial expressions. Ensure they are consistent with your words to reinforce your message.

Be clear and concise: Use simple and straightforward language. Avoid unnecessary details that might distract from the main message.

Show empathy: Try to understand the other person's perspective and respond with empathy. This builds trust and openness in communication.

Manage stress: Stay calm and composed during conversations, especially in high-stress situations. This helps in thinking clearly and communicating effectively.

Ask questions: Clarify any doubts by asking questions. This shows you are interested and ensures you fully understand the other person's message.

Provide constructive feedback: Offer feedback that is specific, helpful and encouraging. This helps in improv-

ing future communication.

CONCLUSION

In an era where effective communication is more critical than ever, focusing on ensuring others hear what we mean can transform our personal and professional relationships. By practicing active listening, paying attention to nonverbal signals, and showing empathy, we can overcome common communication barriers and connect more deeply with others. As we navigate a world filled with constant chatter, the ability to communicate effectively stands out as a vital skill for success and harmony.

For more insights and tips on effective communication, visit resources like HelpGuide.org, SkillsYouNeed.com and DaveFleet.com. These platforms offer comprehensive guides and practical advice on honing your communication skills.

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Miles of memories: The Great American Road Trip

BY MICKY SHEARON
Special to the Hood County News

A few weeks ago, I had to take a quick road trip all the way to northern Wisconsin and back. As I rolled through the states of Oklahoma, Kansas, Missouri, Iowa, Minnesota, and finally, into Wisconsin, I started to get really nostalgic about the family vacations my family went on when I was a kid.

When I hear the old Roger Miller song "King of the Road," my dad is who I picture. Until he was well into his 60s, he had never flown on a plane, and, to my recollection, that one time may have been the only time. He never took a bus or a train. Most of the world he saw was from a ship during his time in the U.S. Navy during World War II. But man, my dad LOVED TO DRIVE. He loved to drive more than any other person I've ever known. He was the undisputed King of the Great American Road Trip.

I suppose that's where I get it from. I hate flying. HATE IT! But give me a vehicle and the open road, and I'm in heaven. I have such fond memories of seeing so much of the United States from the backseat of our 1966 Plymouth Belvedere. I remember the mighty roar of that 383 4-barrel car engine, the rhythmic thump of tires on asphalt, the whoosh of passing cars, and the clanging bell of a gas station pump as you pumped your gas.

Of course, this was before the proliferation of fast-food chains, so most of your meals were eaten out of a Styrofoam ice chest on the side of a road or, if you were lucky, at a roadside rest stop. I can proudly say I've eaten a sandwich on the side of the road in probably 38 of the lower 48 states!

I also remember the literal thrill of pulling into a Holiday Inn Motel after a long day of driving. All it took was to see that big Holiday Inn sign from the highway, glowing like a beacon with the yellow-tinted lights, and somehow, all was right with the world because it meant two things: a good dinner in the restaurant and a nice swimming pool!

There is no question in my mind that the baby boomers who grew up in the 1950s, 1960s, and early 1970s were the witnesses to and beneficiaries of one of our most uniquely American institutions: the Great American Road Trip!

When I got home from my most recent road trip, I decided to research the term "Great American Road Trip" a little more to learn its history. What I found was really interesting.

The term "Great American Road Trip" emerged from the cultural significance of automobile travel in the United States. Beginning in the early 1900s, the invention and mass production of affordable cars, such as the Ford Model T, made car ownership and travel accessible to many Americans.

In the 1920s, the establishment of the U.S. Highway System in 1926 provided a network of roads connecting various parts of the country, encouraging long-distance travel.

The post-World War II era during the 1950s-1960s saw a boom in car culture and the construction of the Interstate Highway System, starting with the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1956. This period also witnessed the rise of roadside attractions, motels and diners, all catering to road travelers.

The spirit of the road trip even worked its way into popular culture. Indeed, literature, music and films



COURTESY GRAPHIC

The term "Great American Road Trip" emerged from the cultural significance of automobile travel in the United States.

played a significant role in romanticizing the road trip. Jack Kerouac's "On the Road" (1957) and the film "Easy Rider" (1969) are iconic examples that captured the spirit of the road trip and embedded it in American culture.

The term "Great American Road Trip" itself likely gained traction as a way to encapsulate the allure and adventure associated with

cross-country travel by car. It represents a sense of freedom, exploration and the discovery of America's diverse landscapes and cultures. The exact origin of the term is difficult to pinpoint, but its popularization can be attributed to the confluence of automotive advancements, infrastructure development and cultural expressions throughout the 20th century.

So, the next time you plan a trip, why not make it a road trip? There is so much to see in this great country of ours. But you'll have to change your mindset a bit. Be okay with getting off the Interstate and taking some of the lesser traveled roads. That's where you see the really cool and memorable stuff!

And be OK with not keeping a schedule. Drive until

you come across something you want to see, and then take the time to stop and enjoy. As they say, the joy is in the journey, and the Great American Road Trip is one of the best ways I know of to bring some joy into your life!

What are some of your fond memories of road trips you took as a kid? I'd love to hear them!

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