



Springtown High School senior Lane Smith at the Texas State Technical College welding competition in Breckenridge. Courtesy of Springtown FFA Facebook page

## Welding champ

### Springtown High School senior places first at welding competition

BY MADELYN EDWARDS  
madelyn@azlenews.net

Springtown High School senior Lane Smith has welded since he was young, alongside his dad. His mom, Anna Smith,

remembered when he welded metal together to say, "I love Mom."

"When he was young and sweet still – and still cared about Mom instead of girls – he made me a deal that says, 'I love Mom.' He

welded it all together, and that was one of the first things that he made," Anna Smith said. "He took just little pieces of metal and cut them out, and I mean

SEE WELDING, PAGE 3A.

## For the love of art:

### Springtown justice of the peace reflects on his artwork

BY MADELYN EDWARDS  
madelyn@azlenews.net

Kelvin Miles had about nine pieces of artwork in his office, but none of them were ones he painted.

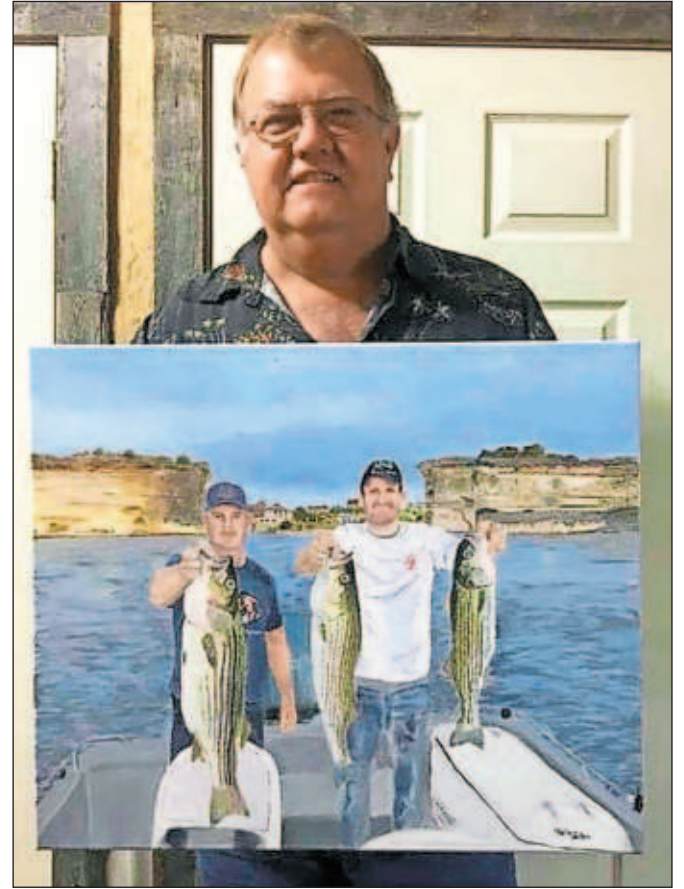
"I give all mine away," Miles said.

Springtown folks may know that Miles is the justice of the peace for Precinct 1, but he is also an artist working in the mediums of oil painting and stone art.

Miles moved to Springtown as a freshman in high school and eventually graduated from Springtown High School. He worked in the water well drilling business as well as in construction to refurbish directional drills. Then, about three years ago, Miles was sworn in as justice of the peace, a job that he enjoys.

"I don't mind going to the jail and working with people. I feel like I've got an open mind and compassion for people," Miles said.

Some of the paintings in Miles' office were made by M.C. Trotter and Kat Bryant, local artists who inspired Miles. He recalled watching Trotter paint about 40 years ago, and he took up painting without having lessons. Miles took a break from painting and picked it up again about 12 years ago by taking lessons with a Tarrant County College professor for two to three times a week for about nine months.



Springtown Justice of the Peace and local artist Kelvin Miles holds up one of the paintings he made. Courtesy of Kelvin Miles

"I learned a lot from him. I learned a lot from YouTube," Miles said.

Miles has learned to paint through "trial and error."

"The more you paint, the better you get," he said. "When you make mistakes, it's just a learning process. I don't look at it as a mistake. It's just something that didn't work."

One of his brothers, Bobby Miles, who used to own an art store, operated a Western art website and represented artists, praised

Kelvin's art and his tenacity to learn.

"I've watched Kelvin go from trying to do his best to just being exceptional," Bobby Miles said. "And, of course, I mean it was trial and error on his part, and Kelvin is just a person that doesn't give up. I mean, if he sets his mind to something, he's going to stick with it until he gets it done. He's always been that way."

Specifically, Kelvin Miles

SEE MILES, PAGE 10A.

## Springtown gives blood, saves lives



Carter BloodCare supervisor Cyra Jones prepares Springtown resident Gary Mitchell to have his blood drawn. The city of Springtown partnered with Carter BloodCare to host the blood drive on Friday, Feb. 11 at the Municipal Annex Building.

Photo by Madelyn Edwards

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PAGE 10

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# New officers pinned



Springtown Police Officer Roberta Flores is pinned by Chief Cres Salazar at the city council meeting on Jan. 27.



Springtown Police Officer Katy Lachenmayer gets pinned by her husband Ted at the city council meeting on Jan. 27.

Photos by Madelyn Edwards

# Springtown Area Senior Center moves closer to reopening

BY MADELYN EDWARDS  
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The Springtown Area Senior Center is expected to reopen soon.

Springtown Area Senior Center Committee Secretary and Treasurer Tootie Hall said the center is expected to be open by March 10. During the first week of March, the floor is expected to be polished, and furniture will be moved into the building, as well as other odds and ends tasks, Hall said.

Workers previously finished installing an air conditioning unit and the vanity in the men's room, Hall said. Workers replaced some sheetrock in a spot this week.

"It looks good," Hall said last week. "We're happy with everything being done so far, just finishing up."

The work on the center stems from last year's winter storm when two pipes burst at the center, which is located on Main Street and Old Cottondale Road. The pipes were fixed within a week, and construction to repair damage didn't start until June, Committee President Bill Dikes said in a previous Epigraph article.

One of the burst pipes was in the south wall in the dance area, and the other was in the wall separating the men's and women's restrooms, Dikes said. The whole dance floor at the senior center was covered completely with water at one point because of the burst pipes.

Hall said the work done to the bathrooms and kitchen was amazing.

"It was a pretty big mess ... after the pipe bust," she said.

The center had to close in March 2020 because of the COVID-19 pandemic and hasn't been open to the public, except as a voting site during elections. The center housed dances on Thursdays and Saturdays, and it also served as an event center, such as for the Springtown Area Chamber of Commerce's monthly luncheons.

Hall said the committee hopes to start up the dances again after the center reopens. New speakers have been installed for the dances as well.

"The dance floor is getting ready to go and everything else," she said. "We're at the end run here."

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**WELDING**, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1A.

it looked wicked, but he was little, and the fact that he could get it all to stick together, my husband was like, 'Hey, that's good.'"

Lane Smith's welding experience paid off last week when he was awarded first place in the Texas State Technical College welding competition in Breckenridge. His friend and fellow Springtown classmate Ryder Stephens won second place.

"Springtown got a good name that day (with) first and second place," Lane Smith said.

The task in the competition was to fabricate a triangle using angle iron by cutting the angles with a torch and then welding it together. The competition was judged based on the accuracy of the angles, the cuts, length of the metal pieces and the welding beads.

Before the competition, Lane Smith practiced cutting out the metal with his neighbor to prepare. He said he was surprised when he was awarded first place.

"I should've checked the length of the pieces first because they were just a little bit long, so when I cut my angles, my angles didn't butt up that good, so I was kind of worried there," he said. "So, I trimmed the pieces a little bit with the torch and ground it down and butted them up."

He added, "I knew it was good and all, but I wasn't thinking it was going to get first."

Lane Smith won a \$1,500 scholarship to Texas State Technical College, a welding helmet, an angle grinder, gloves, a wire brush, a chipping hammer and safety glasses, he said. The new tools will likely be useful because Lane takes on welding projects at home and for others.

"He was just telling us the day before, he was like, 'I really need a new pair of welding gloves.' I guess the gloves he had

(were) worn out," Anna Smith said. "So, when he got those new gloves, we were like, 'Man, those are nice.'"

Participating in the welding competition was a first for Lane Smith, who was encouraged to compete by his welding teacher David Owen, Lane's favorite teacher.

"Lane Smith is one of those perceptive students that will listen attentively to your instructions, while you are teaching him," Owen said. "I can demonstrate how to perform a welding process, and Lane will strive to replicate what I have shown him."

Lane Smith said he took welding classes during his freshman, sophomore and junior years, but he still visits the shop to make items and help other student welders. He praised his welding education at

Springtown High School.

"I was decent at welding, but the shop makes you practice every day if you go in there, and you get better and better each day, learn your flaws and learn how to do better," he said.

Anna Smith playfully teased her son for not immediately calling her to tell her the results of the competition. She expressed excitement over the results.

"It was a very proud moment," Anna Smith said.

Lane Smith said he plans to attend Texas State Technical College, and he eventually hopes to enlist in the Air Force to be an aircraft mechanic. He plans to continue welding either through his career or for personal use.

"I think he's a pretty good welder," Anna Smith said. "I think it takes a special talent to weld because not everybody can do it."



Springtown High School senior Lane Smith was awarded first place in the Texas State Technical College welding competition in Breckenridge on Feb. 7.

Photo by Madelyn Edwards:

## Reno P&Z talks cluster mailboxes, covering wells for subdivision ordinance revisions

BY MADELYN EDWARDS  
madelyn@azlenews.net

Reno Planning and Zoning Commission during a meeting last week approved subdivision ordinance amendments regarding clustered mailboxes and covering abandoned wells.

Reno City Council will have the final say on these ordinance changes.

Regarding mailboxes, the ordinance change is supposed to give developers more instructions on how to implement the mailbox clusters by adding more space for people to pick up their mail.

"One of the neighborhoods we talked about, Scenic Woods, everybody has to stop on the street, get out and then you've got cars driving while you're trying to get your mail," P&Z Commission Chairperson Christopher Reeves said.

Reeves said the idea behind the changes was to have the mailboxes placed in the right spot and out of the way for people to retrieve their mail. The cluster boxes are expected to face away from the street,

with either a pick-up lane or parking spots.

During the meeting, commission member Brian Schrader read through the ordinance that said cluster box units would be set away from the main roadway to provide a separate lane or parking spots. Centralized mailboxes need to be sufficiently away from the subdivision's entry to avoid traffic backups, and it is suggested that the units include security lighting and be covered.

The commission discussed mandating that the mailboxes should be covered by a structure, but they decided not to move forward on that because there were more questions about how the cover would be designed. Reeves said requiring mailbox covers would take more research.

For covering abandoned wells, Reeves said the city of Reno's ordinances did not address this issue, hence the need for the revision.

"Basically, if somebody came in and developed a property, there was no requirement for them to plug it or to do anything," he

said. "Now we've made it to where they have to follow the (Texas Commission on Environmental Quality) guidelines on plugging and capping wells."

During the meeting, Schrader said the wells should be inspected for proper plugging methods, and the surrounding soil should be examined for stability, subsidence and caving. For gas and oil wells and pipelines, the Texas Railroad Commission should be contacted by the developer for action and resolution.

The commission also discussed permit fees to use rights-of-way, and the conversation touched on using the rights-of-way for the purpose of fiber-optic internet. Reeves said the commission will discuss revising the fee amount.

Next, the commission is supposed to tackle ordinance revisions regarding rights of way and associated fees, fencing, impact fees and the permit fee schedule. The next regular meeting is on March 7, and a workshop is scheduled on March 1 to discuss the animal ordinance.

## Springtown city secretary graduates from Texas Municipal Clerks Certification Program

**FROM STAFF REPORTS**

Springtown City Secretary Denise Taylor recently graduated from the Texas Municipal Clerks Certification Program, which is located at the University of North Texas.

Graduation entails completing about 200 hours of individual study over a four-course curriculum and attending eight two-day seminars for 100 hours of classroom study, according to a news release. The curriculum covered texts and special readings on public administration, election

law, budgeting and finance, municipal law and personnel management.

The certification program is a university-level professional education program for city clerks and city secretaries in the state and is recognized and endorsed by Section 22.074 of the Local Government Code, Vernon's Texas Codes Annotated.

Texas Registered Municipal Clerks are known for their achievements and contributions to effective, efficient local government by city leaders, the release stated.



Denise Taylor

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# Who's on the March 1 primary ballot?

## FROM STAFF REPORTS

Area voters will go the polls to vote in primaries on March 1. Listed are the races and candidates that Parker County voters will decide. Names are listed just as they appear on the ballot. Propositions are put in quotes to indicate the exact wording on ballot.

## REPUBLICAN PRIMARY, PARKER COUNTY:

- U.S Representative, District 12: Kay Granger, Ryan J. Catala and Alysia Rieg
- Governor: Rick Perry, Paul Belew, Allen B. West, Kandy Kaye Horn, Greg Abbott, Chad Prather, Don Huffines and Danny Harrison.
- Lieutenant Governor: Daniel Miller, Dan Patrick, Trayce Bradford, Zach Vance, Todd M. Bullis and Aaron Sorrells.
- Attorney General: Ken Paxton, George P. Bush, Louis Gohmert and Eva Guzman.
- Comptroller of Public Accounts: Mark V. Goloby and Glenn Hegar.
- Commissioner of the General Land

- Office: Tim Westley, Dawn Buckingham, Jon Spiers, Victor Avila, Ben Armenta, Don W. Minton, Rufus Lopez and Weston Martinez.
- Commissioner of Agriculture: Carey A. Council, James White and Sid Miller.
  - Railroad Commissioner: Dawayne Tipton, Tom Slocum Jr., Marvin "Sarge" Summers, Wayne Christian and Sarah Stogner.
  - Justice, Supreme Court Place 3: Debra Lehrmann
  - Justice, Supreme Court Place 5: Rebeca Huddle
  - Justice, Supreme Court Place 9: David J. Schenck and Evan Young
  - Judge, Court of Criminal Appeals, Place 2: Mary Lou Keel
  - Judge, Court of Criminal Appeals, Place 5: Clint Morgan and Scott Walker
  - Judge, Court of Criminal Appeals, Place 6: Jesse F. McClure III
  - Member, State Board of Education, District No. 11: Patricia "Pat" Hardy, Joshua Tarbay, "DC" Caldwell and Rebecca Garcia.
  - State Senator, District 30: Drew Springer.
  - State Representative, District 60: Lucas Turner,

- Glenn Rogers, Kit Marshall and Mike Olcott
- Justice, Second Court of Appeals District, Place 3: Elizabeth Kerr
  - County Judge: Thomas Moorman and Pat Deen
  - Judge, County Court at Law, No. 1: Zachary Pettigrew, Kirk D. Martin and Kitty Wise
  - District Clerk: Sharena Gilliland
  - County Clerk: Lila Jean Deakle
  - Sheriff, unexpired term: Russ Authier and Marc Povero
  - County Treasurer: Rebecca McCullough
  - Justice of the Peace, Precinct 1: Kelvin Miles
  - County Chairman: Rachael McWatson and J. Scott Utley

## PROPOSITIONS:

1. "In light of the federal government's refusal to defend the southern border, Texas should immediately deploy the National Guard, Texas Military Forces, and necessary state law enforcement to seal the border, enforce immigration laws, and deport illegal aliens."
2. "Texas should eliminate all property taxes within ten (10) years without imple-

3. "Texans should not lose their jobs, nor should students be penalized, for declining a COVID-19 vaccine."
4. "Texas schools should teach students basic knowledge and American exceptionalism and reject Critical Race Theory and other curricula that promote Marxist doctrine and encourage division based on creed, race, or economic status."
5. "Texas should enact a State Constitutional Amendment to defend the sanctity of innocent human life, created in the image of God, from fertilization until natural death."
6. "The Republican-controlled Texas Legislature should end the practice of awarding committee chairmanships to Democrats."
7. "Texas should protect the integrity of our elections by verifying that registered voters are American citizens, restoring felony penalties and enacting civil penalties for vote fraud, and fighting any federal takeover of state elections."
8. "Texas should ban chemical castration, puberty blockers, cross-sex hormones, and genital muti-

9. "Texas parents and guardians should have the right to select schools, whether public or private, for their children, and the funding should follow the student."
  10. "Texans affirm that our freedoms come from God and that the government should have no control over the conscience of individuals."
- In the Democratic primary for Parker County, voters in some districts will be able to vote for a U.S. Representative – Trey J. Hunt, District 12 – and a state senator, representing District 10, Beverly Powell. The offices below are uniform across Parker County.

## DEMOCRATIC PRIMARY, ALL BALLOTS:

- Governor: Michael Cooper, Joy Diaz, Inocencio (Inno) Barrientez, Rich Wakeland and Beto O'Rourke
- Lieutenant Governor: Michelle Beckley, Carla Brailey and Mike Collier
- Attorney General: S.

- "TBone" Raynor, Rochelle Mercedes Garza, Joe Jaworski, Mike Fields and Lee Merritt
- Comptroller of Public Accounts: Janet T. Duddling, Tim Mahoney and Angel Luis Vega
  - Commissioner of the General Land Office: Sandragnace Martinez, Michael Lange, Jinny Suh and Jay Kleberg
  - Commissioner of Agriculture: Ed Ireson and Susan Hays
  - Railroad Commissioner: Luke Warford
  - Justice, Supreme Court Place 3: Erin A. Nowell
  - Justice, Supreme Court Place 5: Amanda Reichel
  - Justice, Supreme Court Place 9: Julia Maldonado
  - Judge, Court of Criminal Appeals, Place 5: Dana Huffman
  - Judge, Court of Criminal Appeals, Place 6: Robert Johnson
  - Member State Board of Education, District 11: "DC" Caldwell I, James Whitfield and Luis Miguel Sifuentes
  - Justice, Second Court of Appeals, Place No. 3: Delonia A. Watson
  - County Chairman: Kay Pierson Parr

# Springtown woman wins \$10,000 from crowd funded trivia game app

## FROM STAFF REPORTS

Julie Cooper of Springtown was one of three Texans to win money by playing the crowd funded trivia game app Givling, according to a news release.

Givling aims to raise money to help people pay off student loan and mortgage debt while playing trivia. Players who earn the most "Queue Points" get to enter the crowdfunding box and those on the app can raise money for that player, according to Givling's website.

Givling officials announced last month that three Texas residents – from Dallas, Houston and Springtown – won a combined \$20,000 by playing on the crowd funded trivia game app.

Cooper won \$10,000 and plans to use it to build a tiny home. She and her husband previously sold their home and have been living in a camper since last summer.

Cooper has been using Givling regularly since 2018 when she found out that her husband wouldn't receive his Public Service Loan Forgiveness after graduating from Texas A&M University.

"We never really 'attacked' my husband's loans

after graduation as it was not that big of a loan, it was only at 1% interest, and we were still raising our kids," Cooper said in the news release. "By the time our baby graduated from high school, we thought we only had two years until forgiveness, so we continued on the plan. After my hubby was denied PSLF, I began searching for more info on what our options were and saw an article about Givling. I figured that if we ever won, we would be able to use part of it for his loans and part for both our daughter-in-law and son-in-law's loans. Our kids did not accrue any student loan debt as our son went into the military and our daughter graduated from Texas A&M with her Civil Engineering degree debt free."

Cooper and her husband are living tiny so that "we can spend more time with family and care for my aging parents, as well as give a better future to our kids' grandkids."

Cooper called what the Givling app does as "remarkable."

"They have found a way to help people with financial burdens, as well as just have a little fun. There is a



Julie Cooper is presented with a \$10,000 check on the Springtown Square from playing the crowd funded trivia game app Givling.

Courtesy of Givling Bear Blog

need for more people in this world that have a vision to help one another overcome problems like student and mortgage debt," Cooper

said. "There is no doubt that the debt problem in America is at record levels, and it seems insurmountable."

# LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor:

I received a mailer last night, received phone calls yesterday all about some negative advertising for the upcoming primary. As for me, I really don't like the half-truths and attacks. I want to hear what they are going to do if elected!

For the current round of negative communications, most are affiliated with Empower Texas: Defend Texas Liberty PAC, Texas Right to Life, Texans for Fiscal Responsibility, Young Conservatives of Texas, Equality Texas, and Environment Texas. They obviously have a right to say whatever they want, but you need to know the source.

To gauge your agreement with their positions, check out the Scorecard for your favorite conservative, for the elected official that you know best as a fighter for our cause. Many of our conservative activists score poorly with Texas Scorecard.

Attack ads just run folks off and give "politics" a bad name, but the reality is that

"politics," elections determine who represents us at the local, state and federal levels. Don't be turned off, don't go away. Let's stand up for truth and respect in campaign advertising rather than act like folks on the other side.

To determine when and where you vote, there are links at keepParkerCountyGreat.com. Then, after the polls close on March 1, attend your precinct convention which is located at your neighborhood polling place which is identified by the three-digit precinct number on your voter registration card. There, you can vote to be a delegate to the Senatorial District Convention, submit resolutions to be considered by the Senatorial District Convention to be forwarded to the State Convention, considered for the Republican Party of Texas Platform. If you have questions about how to get involved, give me a call.

You can participate. Your matter. Your vote matters!

Zan S. Prince,  
Willow Park

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# Mostly pasture plants

Well, it looks like we received our once annual snowfall for the Parker/Tarrant/Wise county area a couple of weeks ago. Even though it takes an average of 10 inches of snowfall to equal one inch of rain, the amount of moisture added to the soil from our 2-3 inches of snow plus sleet and rain was appreciated. If you had not realized it, our soils had gotten fairly dry. We had not received any sizeable amount of precipitation since last October.

The rain, snow and sleet that falls today definitely has an effect on soil and plant growing conditions today, tomorrow and next week but also 2-3 months down the line. So even though we did get some precipitation last week we are still lacking moisture from above, which is setting up a pattern of dry weather leading into the spring. This is not a good thing agriculturally speaking.

And, while we are talking about snow here are a couple of trivial snow facts:

(1) Snow tends to add nitrogen, a major nutrient required by plants, to the soil and (2) Snow insulates the soil and plants from the colder air temperatures, which in the northern reaches of our country is very important when snow stays on the ground for prolonged



**AG 101**  
By Jack DeShazo

Jack DeShazo has decades of experience in the agriculture field.

periods of time.

Now let's change gears and get back to a topic that we started visiting about 2-3 weeks ago, classifications of plants. These are in addition to the taxonomic classification system. Part of this will be review work. We started with the growth cycle of plants, which relates to the amount of time that a plant grows from the same root system, beginning with the original seed or plant part to its own production of a seed.

Most folks think of the fleshy part of the product of a plant as being the fruit, but technically the seed is considered the fruit, just some of them are surrounded by flesh such as peaches, apples, pears, apricots, etc. The growth cycle classifications are perennial (three or more years from the same root system) biennial (two years) or annual (one growing season).

A second classification is the growing season, which obviously is the time of year that the plant does the majority of its growing and producing, with the categories being warm season and cool season. Grazing value is a

way of describing a pasture plant based on its palatability, nutritive value, volume of production, longevity, and distribution value to specific livestock and/or wildlife as a food product. The choices based on this classification are Good, Fair, Poor and Poison.

Pasture plants can also be characterized as Decreasers, Increaseers or Invaders, based on the plants' reactions to grazing pressure by livestock and/or wildlife. Decreasers are the higher quality grazing plants that are the first to decrease under grazing pressure. Next in line right behind the Increaseers are the Decreasers.

And last but not least comes the Invaders, which are basically worthless as a plant for grazing value and because of that they will take over a pasture under heavy grazing pressure as the Decreasers and Increaseers disappear. Cedars and mesquites are probably the two most common Invaders in our area.

This is why it is so important to be able to identify the plants in your pasture and

pay careful attention to the grazing pressure and conditions of your pasture plants as a pasture is being used. A couple of weeks ago I also mentioned Improved plants, which are ones that have been hybridized or crossbred, just as in livestock where different breeds are crossbred to develop a breed or variety that will perform better than either of its parents.

Now this gets us to the source of plants that classifies them as Introduced, which means they have been brought into a climate that is not their native area or Native where they are growing in an area in which they have always been found growing and producing.

Native plants naturally perform better in their native habitat. It's similar to me, a 65-year native Texas product (in fact my Azle roots go back to the 1880s) moving to Minnesota and trying to find my comfort zone.

At this point I'm just about out of space, so the next time that we visit we will finish this plant discussion including the advantages and disadvantages of Improved, Introduced and Native plants along with several species and varieties of plants that are well suited to our area.

'til next time.

# Talk about killing someone with kindness



**DEAR FRANKIE**  
By Geneva Woodruff

Frankie is a rescue dog and an emotional support animal for Geneva Woodruff. Woodruff is a retired educator.

Dear Frankie,

My brother Davy and I are Jack Russell Terriers. We are known for being hunters. Only one of us, however, acts like a Jack. Can you guess? Right, me!

First thing in the morning, our dads let us out into the yard. I immediately survey the property for geckos and snakes. God help them if there is one out there.

On the other hand, Davy plays with his ball and baskets in the sun.

When we go in for breakfast, we both get the same amount of food. I don't even get a treat for all my hard work. Do you think that's fair?

Miffed, Cheer

Dear Cheer,

I do think it is fair. Dogs and humans eat food for nourishment and fuel. Using food as a treat can be a slippery slope. I'm not opposed to an occasional treat here and there, but I have serious concerns about them being a regular part

of a dog's diet.

Have you ever noticed how many overweight dogs there are at the dog park? Many have bulked up because their owners want to please them by feeding them treats all day long. Talk about killing someone with kindness.

These dog owners mean well, but they aren't doing their dogs any favors. Obesity causes all sorts of physical and emotional issues for dogs. Fat dogs eventually have trouble breathing and walking.

Some dogs become so dependent on treats they develop all kinds of negative behavior to get their owners' attention. Barking or scratching the cabinet where the treats are, is the least of their offenses.

I'm sure your dads appreciate the efforts you make to keep the family safe. The next time you pass a mirror, enjoy seeing that svelte Jack in the reflection.

Best, Frankie

## Spotlight on BUSINESS

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Project and store manager Haley Miller brings 10 years of experience in all aspects of construction to the team. She has worked in economic development, design and architecture, and project management. Haley has worked in retail for the past five years, helping homeowners bring their visions to life.

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Texas Designer Flooring specializes in new construction and remodels. Whether you want tile, hardwood, vinyl, carpet, or natural stone, the team will work to help you create the look you want.

Over the years, Texas Designer Flooring has evolved from servicing only retail

customers to incorporating custom home build projects and larger commercial opportunities. The team's dedication and attention to detail has led them to be part of popular Fort Worth, Texas magazines, HGTV's Dream Home, and multiple other collaborations with HGTV shows. They have received multiple awards for Best Flooring in Fort Worth.

Jessie Boyd and his team of sales associates and skilled installers are what make Texas Designer Flooring your top choice flooring store. You can browse their inventory at [www.texasdesignerflooring.com](http://www.texasdesignerflooring.com).

Take advantage of their new customer special with \$1,000 off your project. Restrictions apply: Must be on material and installation projects with a \$2,000 minimum purchase. They also pass on any vendor discounts to their customers.

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Haley Miller, project and store manager for Texas Designer Flooring.

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# Obituaries

## Thelma Jones

1923-2022

Thelma Juanita (Strickland) Jones, 98, of Springtown, Texas, passed away Sunday, Feb. 13, 2022, in Springtown.

Graveside services will take place at 1 p.m., Wednesday, Feb. 16, 2022, at Hillcrest Garden of Memory in Hillsboro, Texas. Thelma will lie in state from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m., Tuesday, Feb. 15, 2022, at Marshall and Marshall Funeral Directors in Hillsboro, Texas.

In lieu of flowers, please consider donating to the nursing home to plant a tree in memory of Thelma outside the window of the room where she spent her final days, Springtown Park Rehab and Care Center, Attention J.J. for Thelma Jones Family/Thelma Tree, 201 Williams-Ward Road, Springtown, Texas 76082.

Thelma was born Sept. 27, 1923, in Axtell, Texas, to James Melton (Jim) and Maggie (Thrasher) Strickland, and attended schools in Axtell and Gerald, Texas. She was united in marriage to Maron F. (Blackie) Jones on Dec. 24, 1943, in Hillsboro, Texas and they enjoyed forty-seven years of marriage until Blackie's death.

Thelma worked for Malouf Manufacturing Company in Hillsboro as a seamstress for twenty-five years. She also worked at Grandy's in Hillsboro as a "granny greeter" for several years. After living most of her life in Hillsboro, she moved to Springtown in 2010. Thelma enjoyed working in her



flower garden, watching the Dallas Cowboys, and baking pies for her family and friends.

She was preceded in death by her parents, her husband, her son-in-law, Hugh Mathis; her sister, Inez Breikreutz and husband, Henry; her brothers, Cecil Strickland, Clifton (Bud) Strickland, Odis Strickland and wife Loraine, Bobby Joe Strickland, Jimmy Strickland, and Vernon Strickland; and her sister-in-law, Sandra Strickland.

Thelma is survived by her daughter, Gloria Mathis of Springtown, Texas; her brothers Leo Strickland of Arlington, Texas, and Will D. Strickland and his wife Kathryn of Hillsboro, Texas; sisters-in-law, Kitty Strickland of Hillsboro, Barbara Strickland of Arlington, Texas, and Dorothy Strickland of Burleson, Texas; her grandson, Brent Mathis of Springtown; her great-grandson, Dylan Mathis of Springtown and numerous nieces and nephews.

*The Springtown Epigraph*  
Feb. 17, 2022 Edition

## Elaine White

1946-2022

Elaine Walker White age 75, of Springtown passed away Jan. 15, 2022.

Funeral service will be held on Feb. 19 at 11 a.m. at Zion Hill Cemetery.

Elaine was born Feb. 17, 1946, to her parents Cecil and Ruth Walker. She married the love of her life Roger Dale White Sr. on Aug. 22, 1964, in Weatherford.

She was preceded in death by her parents and husband Roger White.

Survivors include her children and spouses: Dale and Tamara White of Fort Worth; Sherri and Jody Parker of Arizona; Andrew and Juan-



ita White of Springtown; three grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

*The Springtown Epigraph*  
Feb. 17, 2022 Edition

## J.N. Cockburn

1927-2022

J.N. "Mutt" Cockburn, 94, passed away in Springtown on Feb. 10, 2022.

Funeral service was held at 10 a.m. Wednesday, Feb. 16, 2022 at White's Chapel in Springtown. 401 N. Main St., Springtown TX 76082. Visitation was from 5 - 7 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 15, 2022 at White's Chapel in Springtown. Interment: Wednesday, Feb. 16, 2022, in Springtown Cemetery, following the funeral service.

Mutt was born on July 28, 1927 in Springtown to Jerry and Ola Mae Cockburn. He remained in this area throughout his life. He was a Christian raised in the Church of Christ. After graduating from Azle High School in 1946, he went to Weatherford College. While staying at home to help with the dairy, he had many experiences as Marshal in Springtown, some good and some scary. This may have been what made him such a great drivers' education teacher.

After graduating from what was then called North Texas State University, he started teaching and coaching in Springtown in 1958. While there, he met and married the love of his life, Mary, in the summer of 1961. They moved to Poolville where he taught and coached for many years. Both daughters were born during this time. He loved his girls and had many great adventures with them. Mutt was known for his Angus cows. He became a member of the Parker County Livestock Improvement Association and worked many hours helping with their annual Stock Show.

Over the years, Mutt touched many lives, and he will be missed by all who knew him. He would tell the best stories from his years as a teacher, coach, principal,



driver's education teacher, and counselor. He received countless awards in his life but none of them meant as much as his students. He never met a kid he didn't like. If he knew you, he liked you and if you were one of his students or athletes, please know you were loved.

He also loved two precious little girls who came along 29 and 22 years ago. His granddaughters, Jaye and Jill, showed him there was no end to the love one could feel for another. They adored him and were adored right back. They spent countless hours exploring and just having fun together. His death may have left a hole in their hearts, but all they have to do to fill it is to remember how much he cherished them.

Mutt is preceded in death by his parents, Jerry and Ola Mae Cockburn, brothers, Odus, Roger, Fyke, Ford, Charlie, and Snooks and sisters, Ala, Mary, Esmarie, and Billie.

He is survived by his wife of 60 years, Mary Cockburn; daughters Lynda Leining and husband Doug of Poolville, and Donna Ruth-erford and husband, Jerrell of Springtown; granddaughters Jaye Rutherford of Fort Worth, and Jill Rutherford of Springtown. He also loved and was loved by numerous nieces and nephews.

*The Springtown Epigraph*  
Feb. 17, 2022 Edition

## James Philips

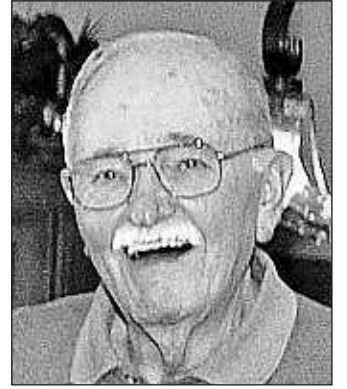
1942-2022

James Boyd Philips passed away Thursday, Feb. 10, 2022, at home surrounded by his family and friends.

Celebration of Life was at 11 a.m., Tuesday, Feb. 15, 2022 at First Baptist Church, Springtown. Interment at the D/FW National Cemetery at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations be made to the First Baptist Church of Springtown.

Boyd was born in Whiteface, Texas on April 16, 1942. He served in the Navy as a Seabee for nine years. Boyd was employed by Mitchell Energy for 20 years and retired in 1999. He was member of the First Baptist



Church in Springtown and was active in their mission programs. He was deeply loved by his wife, Elizabeth, of 36 years, and all his family and friends.

*The Springtown Epigraph*  
Feb. 17, 2022 Edition

## Jimmie Smith Jr.

1968-2022

Jimmie Joe Smith Jr., 53, passed away Sunday, Feb. 6, 2022 in Fort Worth.

Memorial service was held Saturday, Feb. 10, 2022.

Jimmie was born July 16, 1968 in Fort Worth to Jimmie Joe, Sr., and Peggy (Wester) Smith. He was a Maintenance Supervisor for the City of Fort Worth (Will Rogers Auditorium) for 26 years. He enjoyed hunting, fishing and golf.

Jimmie loved being involved with his girls' softball team.

Jimmie was preceded in death by his father Jimmie Joe Smith, Sr.

He is survived by his wife of 26 years, Sheri Smith; daughters, Shayna Phinney and her husband Jacob, Madison Smith and Dustyn Potter, Brookelyn Smith and



Avery Smith; mother, Peggy Smith; sisters, Leisa Sam-sill and her husband Tim, Jolynda York; grandchildren, Kynleigh, Makenzi, Ezekiel, Haylie and Brixlyn, due in April; numerous nieces, nephews and extended family.

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## LEGAL PUBLIC NOTICES

### NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Notice is hereby given that JUDY VENEMA has been appointed Guardian of the person and estate of CHERYL BARKER, and the Letter of Guardianship for the Estate were issued on the 24th day of January, 2022 in Cause No.21G036, pending in the County Court of Parker County Texas, to JUDY VENEMA, Guardian

Claims may be mailed to:

Soraya Joslin  
Attorney At Law  
P.O. Box 1267  
Weatherford, Texas 76086

All persons having claims against this estate are required to present them within the time and in the manner prescribed by law.

Dated this 10 day of February, 2022.

SORAYA JOSLIN, P.C.  
By: S/Soraya Joslin  
Soraya Joslin  
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# Happy Chocolate Martyr's Day!

"Roses are red, violets are blue, I was beaten with clubs, beheaded, buried under cover of darkness, disinterred by my followers, and you commemorate my martyrdom by sending each other chocolates."



## BE AMAZING

By Gerry Lewis

Azle resident Dr. Gerry Lewis guides explorers to discover their AMAZING. He is an author, musician, and speaker, and a coach-sultant for individuals, churches, and organizations. More at [www.discoveryouramazing.com](http://www.discoveryouramazing.com).

A couple of my friends shared that in a meme today (February 14).

Saint Valentine of Terni was martyred in Rome on February 14, AD 269. According to one legend, Valentinus fell out of favor with the emperor Claudius because of his commitment to the truth of Christian teaching concerning Jesus. It was illegal to aid Christians in any way and Valentine was conducting marriage ceremonies for Christian couples. Claudius commanded Valentinus to renounce his

faith or be executed.

Pope Gelasius I first established the feast of St. Valentine of February 14 in AD 496. He included Valentine among those "... whose names are justly revered among men, but whose acts are known only to God."

Another legend says that Valentinus, shortly before his execution, wrote a note to the daughter of Judge Asterius and signed it "from your Valentine."

These stories may explain the focus on Saint Valentine as the patron saint of lovers

and on the tradition of sending "Valentine cards" as expressions of love.

The gift of chocolate is because of ... well ... chocolate.

What holiday doesn't include chocolate?

And the greeting card industry is really in favor of this particular saint.

The Hallmark company sold the first Valentine's Day cards in 1913 (long before creating hundreds of made for tv movies with identical plot lines—I might have made that part up).

Approximately 145 million valentine cards are sold each year (not including the packages that kids exchange at school), making Valentine's Day the second largest holiday for sending cards.

And don't forget about the chocolate.

A few of thoughts occur to me in reflecting on Valentine's Day.

One is that we often are clueless when it comes to the history behind our traditions. We do things because we've always done them and it just seems normal. Personally, I like the idea of knowing the story behind the things that have become part of my own story. It connects my blip in time to something larger.

Certainly there is an in-

herent risk involved in learning the history behind what we do. We may discover some things we'd rather not broadcast publicly. But even those things give us an opportunity to adjust our own lives and write new histories for future generations.

Another thought that occurs to me is that almost anything can be commercialized. Some of the commercialization is harmless and fun. Chocolate, for example. Or a Valentine card to someone special that says, "I'm so glad I get to love you."

Some commercialization is not so good. I've seen Valentine's Day referred to as the day that reminds single persons of their single-

ness. The focus on romantic love can also minimize the value of compassion or deep friendships.

A final thought is that real love in all its forms (including romantic love) finds its source and definition in this truth: "God is love." (1 John 4:8).

That means that if we really want to know what love is like, look at God. And if we really want to know what God is like, look at Jesus.

In the words of the great hymn writer Charles Wesley, "Amazing love! How can it be, that Thou, my God, shouldst die for me?"

Be amazed and be amazing today, my friend.

(And it's ok to share some chocolate).

## Thinking about being called home

In the recent past, I spent a considerable amount of time in Covid-19 lockdown. Our government officials told everyone to stay home and since I have several risk factors which make me more susceptible to the illness, I did exactly that.

The people who know me understand sitting still and doing nothing is not something which I would be accustomed to. The first few days I did manage to clean up my long-neglected office and went through some boxes in the garage, of old pictures my folks had left to me. I dedicated a portion of the day to working on my next book and made significant progress towards getting it completed.

As the days rolled by, it became harder and harder to find something productive to do. With a degree of disdain, I forced myself to clean up some long-neglected bookkeeping work.

Then one day I reflected, perhaps it was time for me to put some thought into what I wanted to take place when I passed. Probably like a lot of folks, death is not something which I particularly dwell on, especially my own. I will turn 66 this next summer and as much as I would like to ar-



## MY FRONT PORCH

By Sam Houston

Sam Houston is a newspaper executive, a columnist, author, actor and entertainment promoter.

gue with the sands of time, I understand I am a whole lot closer to the end than the beginning.

For young folks, they might not understand, but there comes a time in your life, no matter your health, your state of mind, or how you feel, you must accept that in the grand scheme of things: "I'm old." Do not misunderstand. There is nothing wrong with being old. It means a person has survived the trials and tribulations of life. It means your brain carries hundreds of thousands of memories (some good and some bad) which can be opened and revisited. Hopefully, it means a person has acquired some degree of wisdom and judgment.

As I sat down and invested the time to truly reflect on my last wishes, it became a serious learning experience for me. I learned I did not care about a big funeral. I did not really care what music was going to be played during the service. I really was not that concerned about where I would

be put to rest. What I came to understand was the only thoughts that came to my heart were the relationships and people I would leave behind. I never once thought about a possession, or a piece of property. My mind and heart were focused on the human interaction I had with the world, and what mark I might have made on others. I was remorseful for mistakes I had made and joyful over blessings I had received along the way.

Someday, and without question sooner than I would wish, I will be called home, as will everyone who is reading this column. In the time between now and then, I hope all of us can appreciate the goodness around us, value the friends we have, forgive those who have wronged us, and savor these precious moments we call life. In the end, those are the things that matter.

Thought for the day: Most good judgment comes from the exercise of bad judgment

Until next time.

## United Country Real Estate opens in Springtown



**RIBBON CUTTING:** The Springtown Chamber of Commerce recently held a ribbon-cutting for United Country Real Estate in Springtown. Local real estate broker/owner Lisa Elkins announced the opening of her new United Country Real Estate Franchise in Springtown. The new franchise, United Country Real Estate/Texas Acres and Avenues, provides full real estate services in Parker County. Shown here are Cindy Jernigan, Mary Harms, Lauren Alcala, Lisa Elkins, Debby Looney, Taylor Grey, Carol Jones (back,) Damon Lyles (back,) Twanna Greathouse, Marcia Garcia (back) and Tootie Hall.

Photo courtesy Springtown Chamber of Commerce

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- AGNES INDEPENDENT BAPTIST  
350 Agnes N., Springtown  
817-523-7271
- BETHEL MISSIONARY BAPTIST  
408 S. Ash St., Springtown  
817-220-4238
- AZLE AVENUE BAPTIST  
2901 Azle Ave., Fort Worth  
817-626-5556
- BRIAR FIRST BAPTIST  
West of FM 730 N. at sign, Briar  
817-444-3484
- CALVARY HEIGHTS BAPTIST  
1 block off Hwy. 199, east of David's Patio, Springtown, 817-221-2241
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817-594-5918
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836 NW Parkway, Azle  
817-444-3752
- CHRISTWAY BAPTIST  
7673 West Hwy. 199, Agnes  
817-220-9133 or 817-220-3581
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Corner of FM 730 & Ragle Rd., Weatherford, 817-594-1154
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8780 Eagle Min. Circle, Azle  
817-237-4135
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1017 Boyd Road  
817-444-4828
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401 Beverly Rd., Azle  
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700 Charbonneau Tr., west side of Effie Morris Elementary  
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817-444-3484
- FIRST BAPTIST COTTONDALE  
1 block N. of FM 2123, Cottondale  
940-433-5539
- FIRST BAPTIST PEASTER  
FM 920 in Peaster  
817-596-8805
- FIRST BAPTIST POOLVILLE  
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817-594-3916
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5th & Main Street, Springtown  
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## ON FISHING

## Swimbait — a good choice for all seasons

If you like fishing soft plastics in the winter you may be more impressed with the swimbait in the spring and fall. Swimbait has been around for a long time and they have reemerged as a popular bait option for many species. Even the black bass anglers are using them more often.

Soft plastics used in the dead of winter are presented slow to catch most species including largemouth bass, striped and hybrid striped bass, crappie and sand bass. Due to the cold water, you don't impart much action on the soft plastic baits, which mimics lethargic baitfish. As spring quickly approaches (water warming) more action is imparted to the bait as the predators are more willing to chase. A swimbait fits this application for sure.

You can "dead stick" a swimbait using the trolling motor and the tail will move back and forth as you slowly move the bait through the area you wish to fish. The swimbait is also a great option when the fish start surfacing. The swimbait can be tossed and retrieved through the feeding fish, mimicking a fleeing shad. The tail "wobbles," much like a bait-



## ON FISHING

By Michael Acosta

As a licensed professional fishing guide, Michael Acosta shows you how to find them. He has been a licensed guide since 1998. michael.acosta@att.net

fish drawing in predators.

Many years back Paul Elias used an Alabama rig (umbrella rig with several swimbait) to catch over 100 pounds of fish, which won a major tournament in the southeast. Another example of swimbait used for black bass angling that comes to mind are the California anglers seeking trophy fish using extremely large swimbait.

There are many options when it comes to swimbait. There are premade baits like the Storm Wildeye that has the plastic bait molded on a weighted jig head. There are many different versions of these premade baits and they will do the trick for sure. All you do is take it out of the package and you are ready to go.

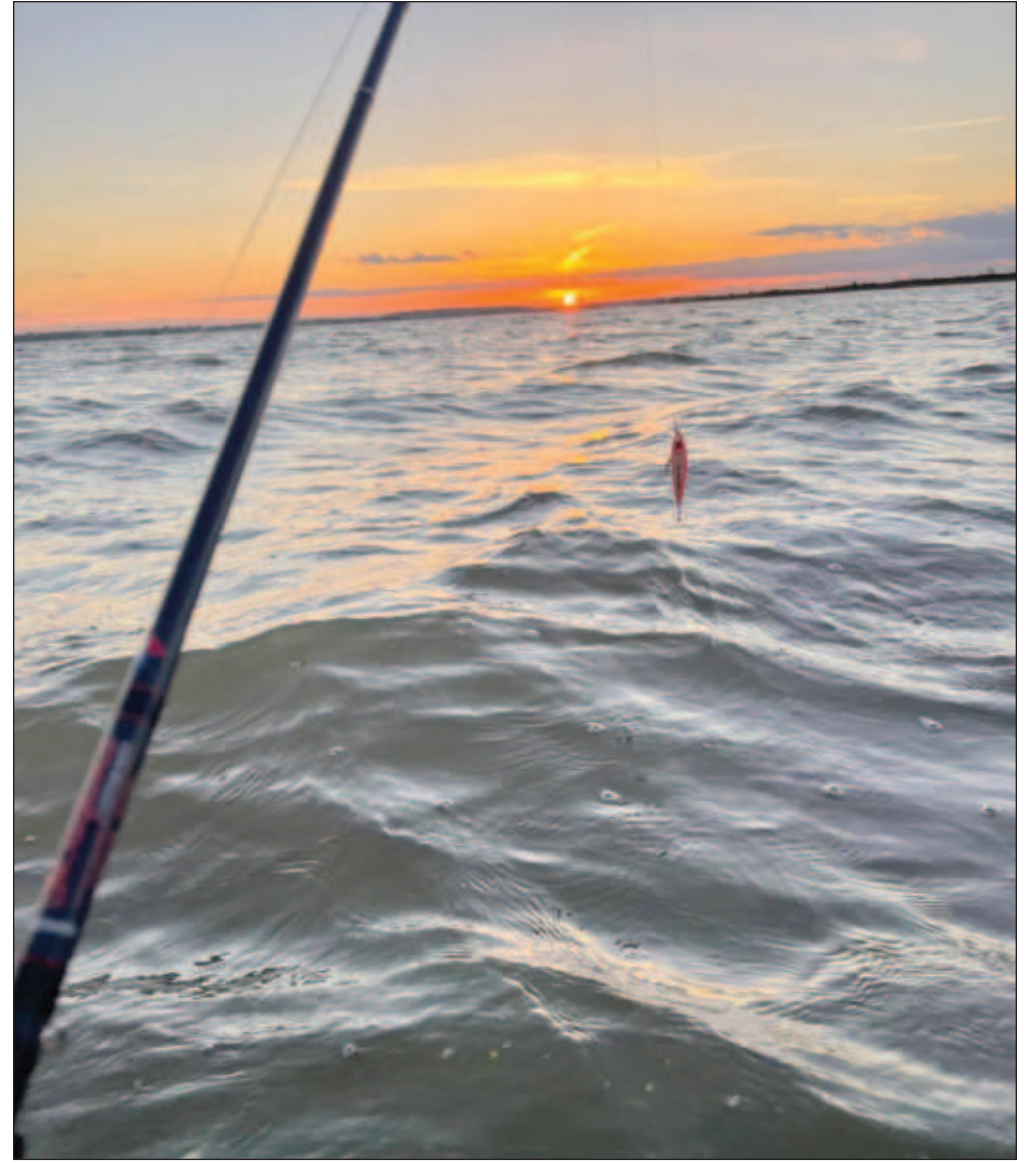
The option that I prefer is to use a swimbait body typically called a "sassy shad" type bait. This soft plastic bait is threaded on a swimbait jig head. I typically use

a 4 to 5-inch swimbait on a ¾ to 1-ounce jig head for stripers and hybrids. Smaller baits around 3 inches with a ¼ to 3/8 oz jig heads are effective on sand bass.

The colors I use the most are "glow," chartreuse (yellow) and white/pearl. The jig head can be unpainted, or at times a white/chartreuse painted jig head with a black or red eye can entice the bite. A "glow" colored sassy shad with a chartreuse dyed tail is a good option on most bodies of water.

With the present winter patterns, I like to put my bait to the desired depth where the majority of the bait fishes are holding. This can be from 15 feet down to more than 40 feet down depending on the day and the temperature. I then move through the area very slowly with my trolling motor, keeping the bait typically right off the bottom. At times you need to position the bait where the fish are holding, which means if they are suspended, then that may be the depth to focus on.

Once you locate fish willing to feed, you will feel the fish hit and you need to set the hook. Some days they will hit it hard, other days the bite will be light. Either way, you need to set the



Anglers may want to give swimbait a try, especially when the water begins to warm.

Photo courtesy Michael Acosta

hook.

If the fish are pushing bait to the surface and you are trying to catch fish "under the birds," a good winter method is to cast into the schooling fish and let your bait fall through the feeding fish. Each day is a new adventure and you might have

to experiment on how the fish want it. Some days a slow steady retrieve is desired. Other days they may want it moving fast. Typically, though, in the winter the best presentation option is slow movement. I mean real slow.

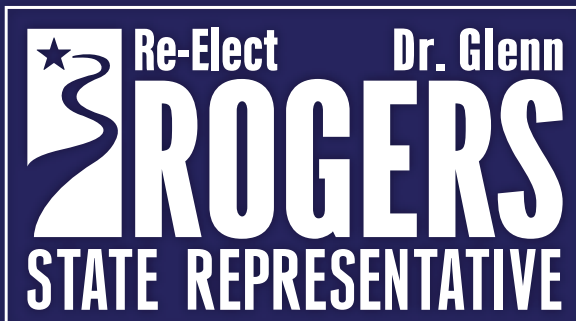
It is a good idea to keep

a few of your outfits rigged with a swimbait, especially when the water starts to warm. They are a great option throughout the year, especially in the spring and fall. If you haven't fished with this type of bait, give it a try. You won't be disappointed.

## FISHING REPORT

On other reservoirs, Lake Whitney striper action continues to be good to excellent on most days under the birds north of the Katy bridge and near the state park. Possum Kingdom Lake striped bass and sand bass are good on soft plastics fished near Costello Island. O.H. Ivie Lake out west continues to boast on lunker sized largemouth bass to 14 pounds.

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**Brian Catlin**, *Weatherford ISD School Board*

**Mike Guest**, President, *Weatherford ISD School Board*



# Giving Blood



Reno resident May Lynn Whittlock gives blood on Friday at the city of Springtown and Carter BloodCare's blood drive.



Springtown resident Joe Walker waits to finish giving blood on Friday at the city of Springtown and Carter BloodCare's blood drive.



Springtown residents Greg Maple and Amy Hubenak wait for their turn to give blood at the city of Springtown and Carter BloodCare's blood drive.

Photos by Madelyn Edwards

## MILES, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1A.

likes Western art of subjects like horses and cows. He also paints people he knows or those who have died and gives those paintings away to the subjects' families and loved ones.

"I just really want to get it right when I'm painting it because it's going to be important to whoever I'm giving it to," he said about painting portraits of people who have died.

Kelvin Miles only creates art that is meaningful to him.

"If it doesn't mean anything to me or to somebody, I can't," he said. "Time is short, because I'm giving my life away is how I look at it, my time. I'm giving something that I'm not going to get back to somebody, so it has to mean something."

Kelvin Miles said his favorite painting is one that portrays his brother Bobby dressed in cowboy gear, carrying a saddle in one hand and slinging a shotgun over his shoulder. Kelvin Miles liked the amount of detail he added to the saddle and gun in the painting.

Attention to detail is what makes a Western artist great, Bobby Miles said.

"They start really focusing on fine details, and I don't think anybody will ever be a great Western artist until they get to that point where every square inch, I mean, it's the world to them," Bobby Miles said. "When they do that, then they become great, and I think Kelvin has reached the point where he cares about every square inch of that painting."

Though he tried not to sound vain, Bobby Miles said he loved Kelvin's painting of him – which



Kelvin Miles said his favorite painting is one that portrays his brother Bobby dressed in cowboy gear, carrying a saddle in one hand and slinging a shotgun over his shoulder.

Courtesy of Kelvin Miles

is framed and hanging on his wall – and thinks his brother captured him well. He said he was impressed with his brother's ability to paint a person's face.

"I thought that him being able to do faces was incredible because even people that are considered great Western artists, a lot of them cannot do faces," Bobby Miles said. "And he's got that skill."

Kelvin Miles made it clear that he doesn't charge for his art and prefers giving it away.

"I don't do it for money," he said. "I just do it for the love of it."

Kelvin Miles also creates art with via stonework and construction. He is known for building the Crazy Train that makes appearances at Springtown

events. He also crafted the stone fountain, inspired by a Jack Bryant painting, on the Square as well as a water wheel and a fireplace, among other projects.

With stonework, Kelvin Miles enjoys seeing the finished product, going from "a stone that's just laying out in a field, and you can take a bunch on them and make something out of it, make art out of it," he said.

Kelvin Miles' sons and nephews have helped him with stonework, and they have learned the process.

"You don't have to do this for a living, but you know how," he said of his sons and nephews learning to craft stonework. "If you want to build your own stuff, you can. Plus, you'll know what it's worth."

**"I don't do it for money. I just do it for the love of it."**

**- KELVIN MILES**

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## Boy of summer, girl of soccer sign letters of intent

BY JEFF PRINCE  
jeff@azlenews.net

Signing a letter of intent to play college baseball was the culmination of many years of hard work by Springtown outfielder Seth Lopez – and many other people.

He wanted to thank them all, “especially my parents for how hard they’ve been working for me,” Lopez said during his signing ceremony on Feb. 10.

“My mom is a nurse at Parkland (Hospital) and works overnight,” he said. “Right now, in this world we’re living in with all this sickness, she has been working at the hospital. My dad has supported me throughout this whole situation. My brothers keep motivating me. They mean a lot to me.”

Lopez still has his senior year of baseball left to play at Springtown this spring. Afterward, he will be heading to Ottawa University, a Division II school in Kansas, to play on a baseball scholarship.

Springtown head coach Josh Ward praised his hard-working outfielder at Lopez’s signing ceremony in the school library.

“The last three years, this guy has showed up for work every day and had a great attitude and great effort,” the coach said. “It has been a pleasure to have you here. We are just super proud of you. We are going to follow

him as he moves on from here, but first we are going to have a big season here.”

The baseball team has begun scrimmaging, and the season begins in March.

Over in the Pojo Room in another part of the school building, Caydence Parker was signing a letter of intent to play soccer at Oklahoma Wesleyan University, a Division II school in Bartlesville.

Parker had just finished her senior season on the basketball team and is now transitioning to her favorite sport – soccer.

Springtown soccer coach Katherine Kummerfeld is glad to see Parker’s face – and feet – on the artificial turf again.

“She has a heck of a leg,” the coach said. “I’m glad to have her here in Springtown and glad she is making waves out of Texas.”

Parker has worked on strengthening her legs and field vision, and her performance has blossomed over the years, Kummerfeld said.

“She has one of the biggest kicks I’ve seen,” she said. “She has this basketball background, so she uses that a lot with her defensive abilities in the game.”

Parker grew up in Springtown but will make the six-hour drive to her new digs after graduating from high school. She plans to play soccer at college on scholarship before attending medical school and becoming an

orthopedic surgeon or neurosurgeon.

“I’m ready for it,” Parker said. “I think I’ve known my whole life that this is what I wanted to do.”

First, though, she will join her high school team midseason to compete for a playoff run. The team, 6-6 so far, has five district games remaining on its schedule.

“They have a good record already,” Parker said. “They have won good games, and they have placed good at tournament, so I have really good confidence that we could do good this year.”

Lopez, too, is eager for his final season of high school baseball to begin. In 2018, he moved to Springtown with his family after growing up in Carrollton. He excelled as a Porcupine.

“I like it here a lot, especially what we had last season with 23 wins and going into the playoffs and winning bi-district champs,” Lopez said. “Hopefully we can go further on and win state.”

Lopez appreciated moving to a smaller town to spend his high school years.

“The people in this town are really supportive throughout the games,” he said.

Once high school ends, a new chapter begins. He is ready for that, as well.

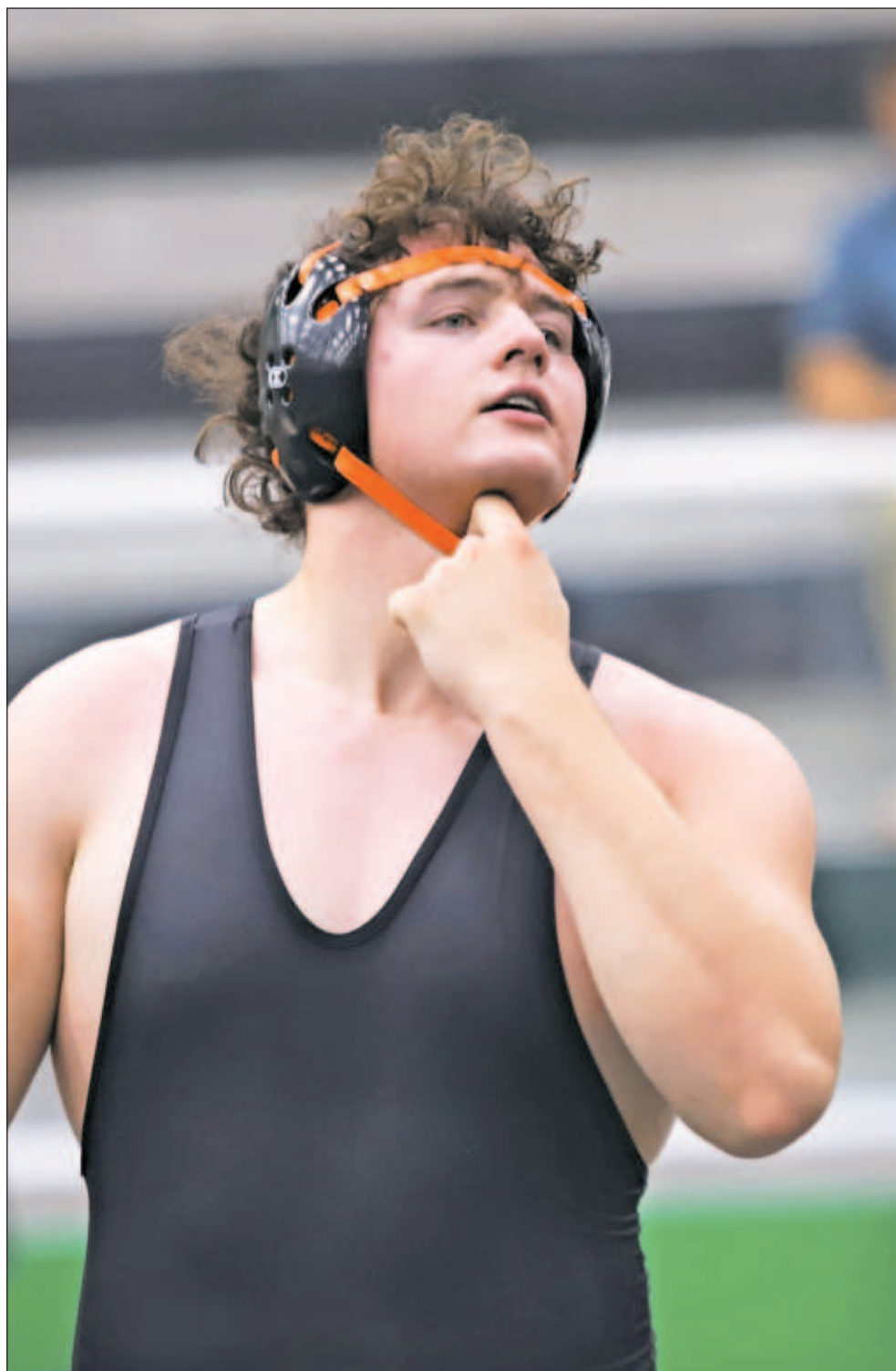
“I’m nervous and excited – excited to play baseball at the next level,” Lopez said.



Caydence Parker will play soccer at Oklahoma Wesleyan University before becoming a doctor.



Seth Lopez, flanked by dad Vidal and mom Zehida, will take his baseball skills to Ottawa, Kan. Photos by Jeff Prince



**REGIONAL WRESTLING:** Kyle Rose took fourth place at the regional wrestling meet on Feb. 12 and has qualified to wrestle at the state tournament in the 220-pound weight class. Joseph Newman placed sixth at 132 pounds but missed qualifying for state. The 2022 UIL Wrestling State Championships will be Feb. 18-19 at the Berry Center in Cypress.

## Springtown roundball girls predict 2023 turnaround

BY JEFF PRINCE  
jeff@azlenews.net

The Springtown Porcupines basketball girls had just been blown out of the final game of the season, losing 91-20 to state powerhouse and district leader Argyle.

No playoffs this year.

Sophomore Allison Ford and freshman Makenzee Sessums showed signs of disappointment in the moments following the final buzzer but agreed to discuss the team’s prospects for the future.

“Next season is going to be good,” Sessums said.

Several junior varsity players and eighth grade athletes have been making noises on the court, and those players could be joining the varsity team soon.

“There are a lot of good people coming here from the middle school,” she said.

The eighth graders won a tournament this season as the only 4A school competing against 6A teams, and the junior varsity squad won a plaque at a tournament.

“We have had a lot of successes,” said head coach Kyle Sivadon. “As long as we are taking little steps forward, and we continue



Allison Ford is the latest addition to the Springtown Lady Porcupines.

Photo by Jeff Prince

to do that, then the big steps are going to come. I like the growth that we’ve had and everything that we’re doing.”

Adding talented newcomer Allison Ford to the var-

sity roster after Christmas improved the team down the stretch. At the time, the Lady Pines were struggling after an injury to star player

SEE LADY PINES, PAGE 4B.



# Springtown soccer girls hope to sink Lake Worth on Friday

BY JEFF PRINCE  
jeff@azlenews.net

The Springtown Lady Porcupines were down 2-0 as Tuesday's first half against Castleberry was about to end, when Reagan Kelly nudged the ball to Madysen Fry, who knocked it in for a goal.

The successful kick fired up the Lady Pines as they headed into the locker room. Things were looking up. They were down by just one goal instead of two. They would be able to escape the relentlessly gusting wind for 10 minutes. And in the second half, they would have the wind at their backs.

A final bonus: Dogged defensive specialist and strong-legged Caydence Parker was back on the field after having spent the previous couple of months playing basketball. Her powerful kicks into the wind had helped keep Castleberry from swarming Springtown's net.

Castleberry drew first blood in the second half to take a two-point lead, but Parker scored a goal for the Pines a short time later. Springtown's offense took over in the final two minutes, keeping the ball near the net and firing off several shots in an inspired push to even up the score, but none of the kicks hit the mark, and Castleberry won 3-2.

Head coach Katherine Kummerfeld shouted her approval and appreciation to the girls after the game, telling them she was proud of their effort. Her words cut through the wind with clarity.

"Exciting game," she said. "High scoring. Neck and neck the whole game."

The Porcupines (6-7) play at 5:30 p.m. Feb. 18 at home against Lake Worth (6-9).

## MANAGING SOCCER, LIFE

A year ago, Rylyn Wilson was a freshman new to Springtown, just arrived from a rural area in West Texas and scared at the thought of attending a school as large as 4A Springtown.

"I came from a pretty small town," she said.

She attended middle school in Hale Center, a town with 2,000 people, compared to Springtown's 3,000. Hale Center is located north of Lubbock.

"Going from a very small school to a big change like Springtown High School – it's pretty big," she said. "There is an upstairs and everything. At my old school, we didn't have upstairs. At the high school, there were only two hallways. There are multiple hallways here."

She was anxious during those initial steps in Springtown corridors.

"I felt like I was going to get lost somehow and bump into a lot of people," she said. "It was a really big change for me."

Confidence took hold and pushed away the nerves in time. Now, she is feeling confident, she said.

"I know my way around the school," she said. "Next year, when the new freshmen come, and I'll be a junior, I can help them out and show them where classes are, where they are going to be, help with their schedule, things like that."

The best part about settling into a big new school has been forging new bonds.

"I've made lots of friends here compared to my old school; some that are like family to me," she said. "I love it here."

She was shy while growing up and still wrestles with those feelings at times but forced herself to become more social.

"When I came here, I opened up a lot more, hoping to make a lot of friends," she said. "Now I'm friends with most of the soccer team and a lot of people at the school. It was a really big change. I was really proud of myself for making that step. I went from this little small-town girl to this big school, big everything. Now, I'm more open than I could ever hope for."

## AIR BALLS

Wilson was being interviewed for this story while the girls soccer team was warming up in the end zone at Porcupine Stadium before a recent game. Kummerfeld – Coach K – walked by and reminded Wilson that she needed to air up soccer balls before the game began.

Wilson wrangled several balls, grabbed her digital air pump and began inflating them to 12 pounds of air pressure.

"Currently, this one is at 9.0, so all I have to do is air it up until it gets close to



Jocelyn Diaz attacks the ball during Tuesday's district clash with Castleberry.

12," she said.

The extra air makes the balls less mushy, and so the Lady Pines are able to "kick it pretty good," Wilson said.

Other duties for the manager include providing water to players and keeping track of statistics.

"I fulfill any of the needs that they or Coach K have," she said.

Wilson didn't know much about soccer before this year and became manager to spend time with her good friend, Reagan Kelley, who is one of the team's best players.

"I wanted to understand soccer, and I figured if I'd become manager, it would give me something to do, and I can also letter in soccer, and get my letterman for

doing it for two years," she said.

The best part about being manager is spending time with friends doing something fun. Practice, games and road trips are all a blast, Wilson said.

"Bus rides are definitely fun," she said. "And during warmups – like they're doing right now. It's always fun watching them play."

## SIDELINE VIEW

Wilson tried playing softball and basketball in middle school with little success.

"I'm not good at sports," she said. "I just love watching them."

She serves as student manager for the junior varsity and varsity girls soccer teams. The combined

responsibilities add up to plenty of hours of work each week.

Soon, she'll add sheep manager to her resume.

"I'm currently in FFA," she said. "This year, I'm going to be showing a lamb."

She will feed and water the animal in the mornings and take it for walks after school "just to make sure that it gets exercised and looks correct for shows," she said.

Next year, she is considering trying out for color guard.

"I make sure my grades are passing," she said. "They have to be 70s and above if I'm going to keep doing soccer manager."

Management seems to be a recurring theme with her. She envisions managing her

own veterinarian clinic one day.

"Currently, I want to be a vet tech and hopefully have my own vet clinic in the future when I get out of college," she said.

She plans to attend West Texas A&M and learn to work with livestock animals such as cattle, pigs and goats. Through it all, she will remember how her family's move to Springtown changed her life.

"After high school and into college, I've learned to definitely be more outgoing, more open," she said. "When you are in a big school, you've got to learn to talk to people and progress."



Girls soccer manager Rylyn Wilson airs up a soccer ball before a recent game.



Reagan Kelley prepares to fist-bump her coach after another strong effort.

Photos by Jeff Prince





Zane Bell is one of four seniors who have played their final game at Springtown High.

## Springtown basketball boys miss playoffs

BY JEFF PRINCE  
jeff@azlenews.net

The fourth quarter of Tuesday night's basketball game against Castleberry began with Springtown trailing 47-40, and a noisy, enthusiastic home crowd pushing the Porcupines forward.

Springtown's boys played like their season depended on it, because it did.

This was a win-and-in game. Beat Castleberry, and the Porcupines would finish in fourth place and earn a trip to the playoffs.

Lose, and they'd see their season end.

The scoring went back and forth, but Castleberry began to pull away as the fourth quarter passed the midway point. The Pines were behind 58-49 with three minutes remaining, but then the boys came alive. They went on a scoring spree and cut Castleberry's lead to five points. With a minute remaining, Kelby Castro's layup cut the lead to 58-55.

Castleberry's offense tried to run out the clock, passing the ball around with precision and forcing a foul. Castleberry struck out at the foul line, however, and William Gleason dribbled the ball down court to score a layup.

Castleberry led 58-57 with 13 seconds on the clock and again tried to run out the clock. Hudson Hulett fouled to stop the seconds from ticking away, and Castleberry dropped one through the net to increase its lead to 59-57.

Then, with three seconds left on the clock, Gleason stole a pass, dribbled a few times, spotted Zane Bell cutting up court and tossed the ball to him. Bell caught the pass near the visitor's sideline and fired off a long shot from three-point range as the final second ticked away.

If the ball would have hit paydirt, the Pines would have won the game in electrifying fashion, made the playoffs, made headlines and probably earned a parade. But there was never

any real chance for the ball to drop through the net. Bell shot on the run from an improbable distance with the clock down to nothing. No time to set up or take aim. The odds were slim to none, and the ball bounced off the backboard.

It's that slim part, though, that hurts.

People win lotteries despite long odds. Impossible shots sometimes find the bucket. Bell's crestfallen face seemed to resonate those thoughts.

His teammates, led by Hulett, quickly surrounded him to offer hugs and back slaps. A season doesn't hinge on one desperate Hail Mary shot in the final second of a game from no-man's land, they assured him.

In that respect — as graceful and confident young men — the Porcupines remained victors.

### HARD-FOUGHT SEASON

"I couldn't be more proud of the kids and how far they have come," head coach Nathan Purvis said after the game.

One of his best players had been lost to a football injury before the basketball season began. The Porcupines had been fighting tough odds from the first toss-up.

"Everybody counted us out," he said. "We were right there until the end. Nobody could say there is any quit in this team. Sometimes the shots don't fall, but the work was there."

### ZANE'S PAIN

Bell, one of the team's four seniors, stood out on the court all season for reasons more than his retro-looking plastic-rimmed glasses. He is a relentless worker, hustling up and down the court, creating turnovers, making passes, sinking shots and always moving.

The ball landed in his hands with a second left, and he followed his instincts as he has done all season with good results.



Head coach Nathan Purvis hugs Zane Bell, whose desperation shot missed the mark as time ran out in the game and the season on Tuesday.

Photos by Jeff Prince

"It was just a rush," he said. "You can't really think in that situation. You just got to do it. I went up with it."

The thinking began immediately after the shot.

Will this single unlikely

last-gasp shot haunt him for the rest of his days?

"I'll move forward and all that," he said. "I'll get through it. Right now, it is (tough) ... but later in life, I'll definitely get over it."

Bell, Marco Barrera, William Gleason and Collin Tidwell were the team's only seniors this year, and they have played their final game of high school basketball.

Bell plans to attend col-

lege, perhaps at Tarleton State University.

For a while, though, he plans to celebrate with his friends.

"We fought hard," he said.



LADY PINES, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1B.

Brinklee Dauenhauer ended her season prematurely.

Ford, a sophomore, moved from The Colony to Springtown. Her family wanted to live in a smaller town, she said.

"I like it," she said. "People are nice."

Still, she had grown up in The Colony and established solid friendships over the years. Moving was bitter-sweet. She misses her old friends but keeps an open mind.

"I just try to talk to people, so I can make new friends," she said.

Leaving her old hometown and friends has been "stressful but also exciting because it's something new," she said.

Ford excelled on the basketball team at The Colony and has blended in with the Lady Pines, earning a starting position on the young and developing team.

Ford brings experience to a team lacking in older players, Sivadon said. She made varsity as a freshman at The Colony, a 5A team.

"Allison is going to be a

great addition for us," Sivadon said. "The Colony went to state two years ago, so she has been in a program where she has seen and practiced against the teams that went to state. That experience of being in a program that's been to the state tournament and being a freshman on varsity is huge."

Sessums is one of the few freshman players that Sivadon has coached on a varsity team at the 4A level, and the experience has helped the tall and tenacious post player become better at defense.

"She has improved a whole lot inside," the coach said.

Ford and Sessums are expected to provide leadership in 2023 as the Porcupines try to fight their way back to the playoffs.

"Both of them work really hard and strive to improve and always bring positivity and knowledge to the game," the coach said. "I'm really excited about all our returners, and we have got some others coming up. I'm really excited about the future."



Sophomores Madison Terrell and Paige Winstead are expected to return next season with more court experience.

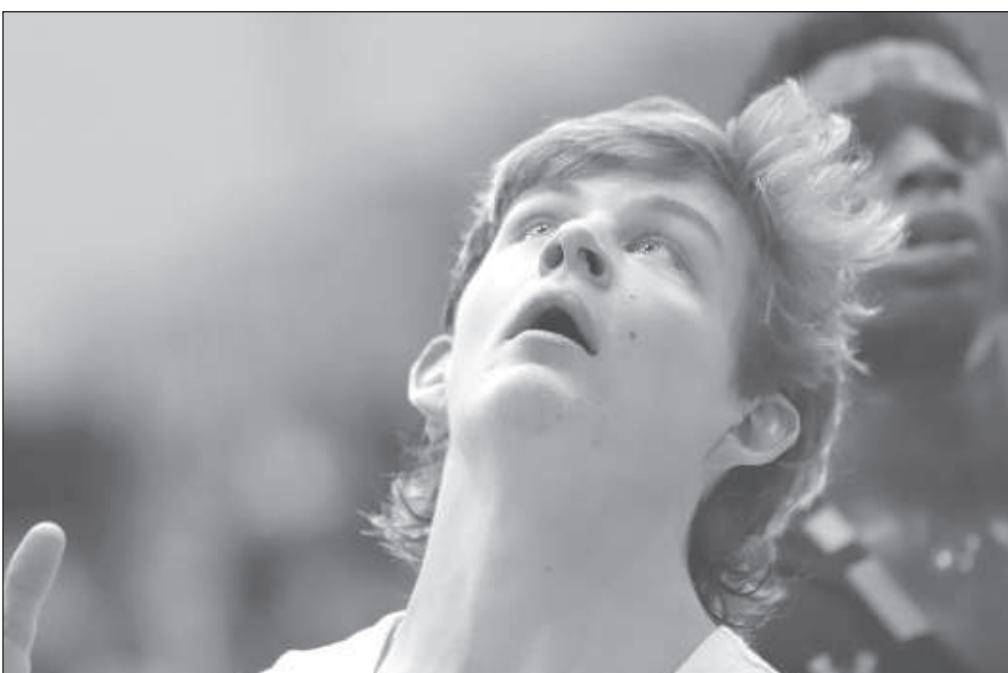
Makenzee Sessums will transition from green freshman to savvy sophomore next season.

Photos by Jeff Prince

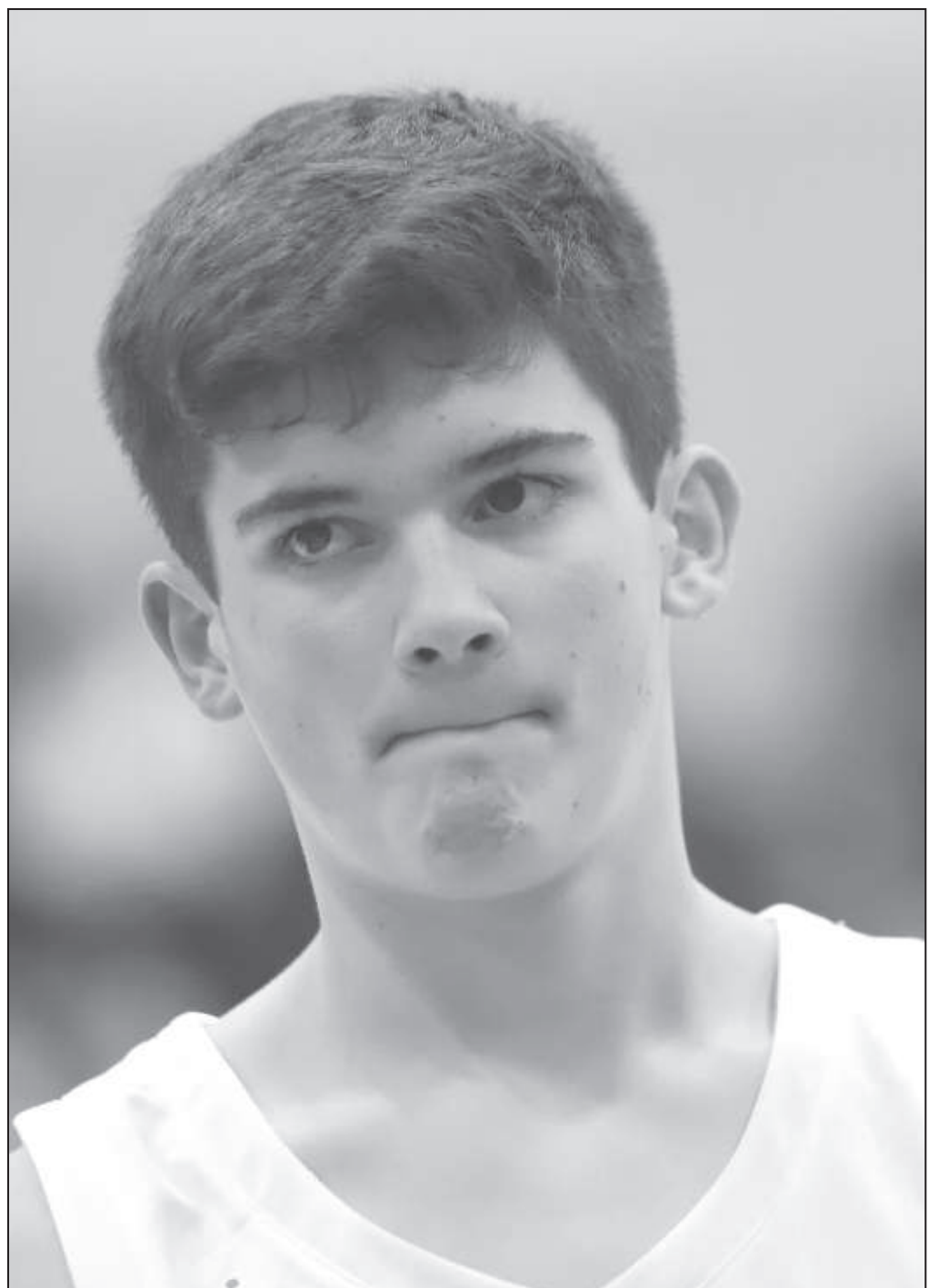
# Springtown Game Faces



Aaron Tidwell



Aiden Vickers



Jake Chaires



# All-State Recognition

Congratulations to Springtown Porcupines football stalwarts Cody Brackeen, Matt Lockard and Brodee Trejo, who earned all-state recognition from the Texas Sports Writers Association. Lockard earned second-team all-state at utility player, Trejo earned second-team all-state at tight end and Brackeen earned honorable mention at guard. Brackeen and Lockard have signed letters of intent to play football at Southwest Baptist University in Bolivar, Missouri. The Texas Sports Writers Association recognizes high school athletes for their accomplishments.



Brody Trejo



Cody Brackeen



Matt Lockard, center, with his parents Sharissa and Micheal Lockard.

Photos by Jeff Prince

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2bd 2 bth, 1505 Reef Dr. Azle. \$800 mth \$500 dep. Xtra pet dep. Rental history checked. 817-937-6282

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40x50 building For Rent, 3 miles west of Springtown. 817-713-7495.

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1161 SE Pkwy Azle 1700 SF \$1000/mo ,

1169 SE Pkwy Azle 930SF \$750/mo

817-220-2021

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Nice 1BR RV in adult RV park. Great for older person on limited income. Starts at \$550/mo. All Bills Paid. Heritage RV Park 817-444-3760.

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Deadline:  
 4:30 PM Monday

# Classifieds

**Puzzle Solution**

S-1573

- ACROSS**
- 1 movie candy
  - 5 "don't throw \_ \_"
  - 6 former Austin flower show: "Flora \_"
  - 7 Seymour AM or FM
  - 8 early internet network for Dallas' KERA-TV
  - 12 flamboyance
  - 17 Tullia's county
  - 19 rained hard
  - 21 TXism: hard \_ \_
  - 22 entryway, e.g.
  - 23 to increase something (2 wds.)
  - 28 former TX singer \_ Mae Morse
  - 29 children
  - 30 this Goldberg was in "The Long Walk Home" with TX Sissy Spacek
  - 31 TXism: " \_ \_ fancy to" (like)
  - 35 \_ Greco
  - 42 he kicked for the Oilers and the Titans
  - 36 TXism: "useless \_ \_ a pig"
  - 44 Mc \_ , TX
  - 46 deep respect
  - 48 in the middle of
  - 49 TX Forrest of S.W.A.T. (init.)
  - 50 TX-born Eric Paslay's " \_ Don't Love You"

- DOWN**
- 1 TXism: " \_ \_ \_"
  - 2 TXism: "can't make a silk purse out of \_ \_ ear"
  - 3 a graphic representation of the history of Texas (2 wds.)
  - 4 most folks born in Texas, \_ here
  - 9 former U.S. senator, Gramm
  - 10 TXism: "he'll \_ \_ funeral" (unreliable)
  - 11 teens in final year of high school (abbr.)
  - 12 environment agcy.
  - 13 TXism for "nonsense"
  - 51 religious ceremonies
  - 52 radio network started by the late Rush Limbaugh (abbr.)
  - 53 early TX Roy Orbison band: " \_ Kings"
  - 54 soap lather
  - 56 TX Stuart Hamblen wrote song "This \_ House"
  - 57 Scottish and English variant of "web"

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P-1573

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