



Staying alive

Lloyd's Candies seeks to stay open in Springtown



Lloyd's Candies manager Crystal Bird at the candy store on 904 E. State Highway 199. Photo by Madelyn Edwards

BY MADELYN EDWARDS
madelyn@azlenews.net

When Crystal Bird found out that Lloyd's Candies was in trouble, she reached out to her customers.

During the Christmas season, Bird became aware that Lloyd's Candies, where she is the manager, would have to close because the store wasn't making enough

money to cover the cost to keep the store open. She made a Facebook post and talked with customers individually.

Bird's plan worked. People came to the store and referred other customers. By the end of the Christmas season, Lloyd's Candies was able to whittle about \$22,000 needed to keep the store open to \$3,000.

"People want us here, and they want us to succeed because it's the one thing that Springtown doesn't have, and people would like to see stay," Bird said. "So that was super awesome to hear how disappointed and sad that they were, afraid that we might have to close down."

Despite how Bird took charge of the situation, she said she didn't think Lloyd's Candies would pull

through.

"I was afraid of losing my job and us not having the store here available for people," Bird said.

Lloyd's opened in March 2021, and Bird has been the manager for the entire time. The store is owned by Lloyd Cooper of Cooper Candy Company, the Weatherford candy manufacturer.

One of the business challenges

for Lloyd's Candies is visibility. Though Bird has tried to advertise as best as she knows how, people seem unaware of the store's existence.

"When we first opened, I was going from business to business, giving out business cards, just different things like that, and people

SEE LLOYD'S, PAGE 8A.

Operation Texas Strong helps homeless veterans 'rebuild'

BY JESSICA MCKINNEY
azlereporter@azlenews.net

Peggy and Bobby Crutsinger embarked on a mission in January 2021 to help unhoused veterans rebuild their lives.

The couple, along with their children RJ, Caty, Jay and Chris, began communicating to their community for help in getting RVs for veterans. That's how Operation Texas Strong got started.

Bobby and Peggy said they were tired of seeing homeless veterans on the street and wanted to change that.

"We wanted to give back to the veterans because they served our country, and we want to serve them and help them get off the street ... we can help provide them a place to live and rebuild their life one RV at a time and it is their RV to call home," Bobby said.

The Crutsingers have been working with the homeless for



Peggy and Bobby Crutsinger started Operation Texas Strong in 2021 with a goal of helping to house all Texas homeless veterans with donated RVs. Photo courtesy

SEE TEXAS STRONG, PAGE 2A.

Sod situation

Springtown football commissioner addresses planting sod in his own yard instead of on the football field

BY MADELYN EDWARDS
madelyn@azlenews.net

Springtown Lions Club Football Commissioner Kyle Goin addressed why he planted grass sod – sod that was donated to the Lions Club – in his own yard.

His action raised some eyebrows from people in the youth athletic group.

Former Lions Club Baseball/Softball Commissioner Josh Bertschy said he was made aware of the sod situation in December from another Lions Club member. Bertschy said he went to the Springtown Garden Center and had a center representative fill out a form for the donation. The form, which Bertschy shared on Facebook and includes a signature from Springtown Garden Center Vice President Michele Dunn, indicated a donation of "sod for football

field" worth \$358 on Aug. 27.

Dunn said the donation was made in "good faith," and the center does not verify whether the donation is used as intended.

"I just have good faith that the person is doing what they said, that we're donating to a good cause, that we're giving back to the community," she said.

During a Lions Club executive board meeting on Feb. 20, Goin said he had approached the Springtown Garden Center about donating some sod for the Springtown Middle School football field in lieu of a sponsorship. Planting the three pallets of sod was delayed by rainy weather, and by the time it could be planted, it was too close to the start of the football season, he said.

"At that point, we had one week to install it before kids started play-

SEE SOD, PAGE 5A.



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Theatre in Our Schools Month



Gentry Phillips, Springtown High School student and International Thespian Society state officer, takes a picture with Mayor Greg Hood in honor of Theatre in Our Schools Month. Hood proclaimed that March 2022 is Theatre in Our Schools Month at the city council meeting on Feb. 28.

Black Balloon Day



Mayor Greg Hood proclaimed March 6, 2022 as Black Balloon Day to bring awareness to overdose deaths and drug abuse at the city council meeting on Feb. 28. Hood took a picture with Jessica and Joe Castro, who lead the local overdose awareness group "We ARE our brothers Keeper."

Photos Courtesy of Christina Derr

TEXAS STRONG, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1A.

seven years, feeding and giving away tents.

The first RV they were able to give went to a three-time war veteran who had been homeless for 26 years. A week before Christmas 2020, they were able to give him "his first home that he can call his," Bobby said.

It was an emotional moment for Bobby.

"I started the whole program with \$100 — \$50 to the driver (who picked up the RV) and \$50 in diesel."

To date, Operation Texas Strong has received 79 RVs from donors to be fixed up and given to unhoused veterans. Many of the RVs are moved by volunteers, most of them veterans themselves.

The nonprofit organization, which has a 501(c)(3) status, asks the community to donate any RVs that can be fixed up and made livable for veterans, plus any building materials, household goods, clothing and food to go along with them.

Right now, Operation Texas Strong is focused on veterans in Texas, with

one of their RVs going to a veteran in El Paso just last week.

According to a report by Continuum of Care to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, there were nearly 2,000 homeless veterans in Texas in 2020. Nationwide, the number of homeless veterans is over 37,000.

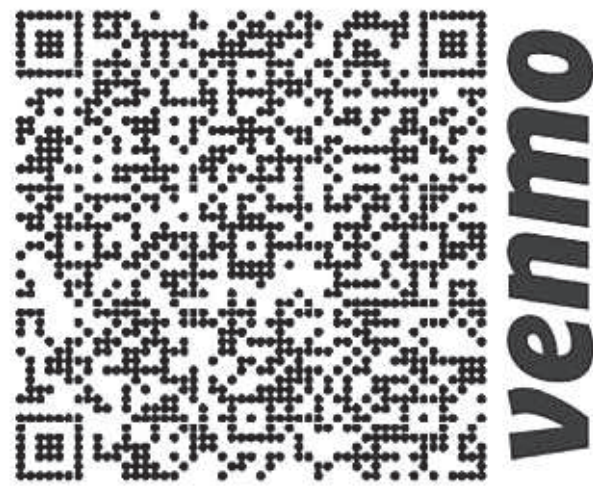
"We want to be working in other states soon, but we need people to help us," Bobby said.

People can send donations to the organization's address, 111 West Josephine St., Weatherford, Texas, 76086.

The organization also has a Venmo account set up for donations: @operationtexasstrong.

"My wife's dad is a Vietnam veteran that went to heaven four years ago, and we promised we will get all homeless veterans off the street in honor of him," Bobby said.

"He got tired of seeing homeless veterans on the street. Our veterans should never be homeless."



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Springtown ISD passes wage payments resolution; parent talks to board about technology issues

BY MADELYN EDWARDS
madelyn@azlenews.net

The Springtown ISD board passed a resolution on Feb. 28 to authorize wage payments to employees for emergency school closings.

Schools were closed for inclement weather for about three days last month as well as for two days in January because of staff shortages and rising COVID-19 infection rates. Some employees were still able to work virtually, but others, like cafeteria workers and bus drivers, couldn't work.

"What the resolution is, is that we be allowed to in those instances where employees were idled, not able to work in spite of their desire ... to be able to pay them through the bud-

get," SISD Superintendent Mike Kelley said.

Kelley also said the resolution isn't expected to have a great negative impact the district's budget.

The resolution said, "the board concludes that continuing wage payments to all regular employees – contractual and noncontractual, salaried and non-salaried – who suffer a loss in pay due to an emergency closing serves the public purposes of maintaining morale, reducing turnover and ensuring continuity of District staffing when schools reopen."

The board also approved the 2022-23 calendar and the district's Local Innovation Plan.

Also during the school board meeting, Kyle Kepple, who is the parent of a

Springtown Intermediate School sixth grader, addressed the board about the use of technology for his student's assignments. He described the district's digital systems Skyward and Schoology – which contain grades and assignments, among other features – as "not very parent-friendly."

"We're trying to help them locate things and find schoolwork and stuff on it, and we can't find it, and we're like kind of throwing our arms up," Kepple said to the board.

Kepple described other issues, like difficulty finding the program iStation that his student needed to use for class and his student having to complete work on both paper and digitally.

He also said there should

be a better way to limit his child's activity on YouTube through the school-issued Chromebook, after his child was found to be watching videos unrelated to classes.

SISD Digital Learning Director Amanda Lanicek addressed Kepple's concerns after he spoke. Regarding YouTube, Lanicek said safety and security protocols are set up on devices and accounts through Google Admin Console, and only videos approved by SISD can be viewed. Another platform, GoGuardian, helps with filtering, monitoring and device management.

"Additionally, GoGuardian alerts administrators when a student attempts to access an explicit or self-harm website," she said. "As part of an instructional

plan, teachers can utilize GoGuardian as a classroom management tool. Through the teacher platform, teachers can lock a student's screen into a list of websites needed for the lesson. These resources are helpful in preventing some misuse of devices in the classroom."

After he spoke at the meeting, Kepple described a difficulty using Schoology specifically. As far as training on the digital systems, he recalled receiving a packet and a few emails.

"I have two engineering degrees. I'm pretty tech-savvy on things. I get on Schoology, and I feel like I've just never seen a computer before," he said.

Lanicek said parents are given access codes to Schoology. Each class is

supposed to contain three folders on Schoology, and the one labeled "learning" should contain assignments. Teachers have autonomy on how they organize materials inside the learning folder, and Lanicek acknowledged that the folder may be confusing to navigate for parents who haven't received introductory information about it.

Lanicek said the district is working on creating a Parent Portal that would include information on navigating Schoology as well as other resources. She also said there are plans to have a campus level or district-wide parent night next school year to inform parents on what learning resources students use and how to access the resources from home.

Addisen Weber presents oral reading speech



Springtown Intermediate School fifth grader Addisen Weber presented her oral reading speech at the Springtown ISD school board meeting on Monday evening. She placed first in oral reading at the District Academic UIL Meet that took place at the end of January.

Photo by Madelyn Edwards

Springtown ISD not expected to need to use bad weather make-up days

BY MADELYN EDWARDS
madelyn@azlenews.net

If anyone is concerned about how Springtown ISD students will make up class time after the school had to close a few times this year, fear not. SISD Superintendent Mike Kelley said the district will have enough minutes to meet the state's requirements.

Schools closed early on Wednesday last week and all day on Thursday because of inclement weather. Schools also had to close for two days in early February because of inclement weather and for two days in January because increased

cases of COVID-19 and other illnesses led to significant staff and student absences.

Previously, the school district would have to submit a waiver for the closures to the state or the class days would have to be made up. Now, schools are required to be in class for a certain number of minutes, and Kelley said schools should be able to meet that target without make-up days.

"Our calendar includes enough time that we will meet that threshold, that 76,500 minutes, in spite of having had to close for five days now through the course the year," Kelley

said. "So, at this time, there will not be a need for our students to return for those two bad weather days that are on our calendar."

On the SISD 2021-22 calendar, there are two bad weather/ teacher make-up days, one on May 16 and the other on May 31.

Kelley said the decision to close schools comes with significant responsibility because when schools close, the city of Springtown and local daycare centers will usually follow suit.

"We don't take that lightly," he said, adding that there are times that, "it's in the best interest of all of our stakeholders to close."

SPRINGTOWN SCHOOL MENU

March 7-11, 2022
PK through 12th Grade

*Menus are subject to change.



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EC-12th Reduced	\$0.30
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5th-8th Grade	\$3.25
High School	\$3.00
Reduced	\$0.40
Adult	\$4.25

Students may prepay for their meals.

PK - 12th GRADE BREAKFAST: Everyday - Various Juices & Cereals, Toast, Milk Variety, Fruit, Jelly Assortment, Buttermilk Biscuit, Variety of milk is offered every day for breakfast and lunch.

Monday Pancake bites, Toast, Variety of Cereal, Fruit, Juice **Tuesday** Chicken Biscuit, Toast, Variety of Cereal, Fruit, Juice **Wednesday** Scramble Eggs, Toast, Variety of Cereal, Fruit, Juice **Thursday** Breakfast Pizza, Toast, Variety of Cereal, Fruit, Juice **Friday** No school

PK - 8th GRADE Lunch: Everyday - Choice of one meat, two vegetables, and one grain/bread with milk. Variety of milk is offered every day for breakfast and lunch.

Monday Grilled Turkey and Cheese, Corn Dogs, Fresh Broccoli, Tater Gems, Blueberries **Tuesday** Chicken & Waffles, Fiesta Sticks, Broccoli, Applesauce **Wednesday** CK Fried Steak Sandwich, Green Beans, Fresh Baby Carrots, Strawberries **Thursday** Cheese Pizza, Popcorn Chicken, Cucumber & Tomato Cup, Chili Style Beans, Roll, Banana **Friday** No school

9th-12 GRADE Lunch: Everyday - Choice of one meat, two vegetables, and one grain/bread with milk. Variety of milk is offered every day for breakfast and lunch.

Monday Grilled Turkey and Cheese, Crispy Chicken Sandwich, Fresh Baby Carrots, Green Beans, Apples Slices, Blueberries **Tuesday** Chicken & Waffles, Corn Dogs, Broccoli, Chili Style Beans, Grapes, Pineapple Cup **Wednesday** Steakfingers, Popcorn Chicken, Mashed Potatoes, Roll, Cucumber & Tomato Cup, Blue Applesauce, Mandarin Oranges **Thursday** Cheese Pizza, Hamburger, Glazed Baby Carrots, Fresh Broccoli Florets, Orange Smiles, Blueberries **Friday** No school

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NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Notice is hereby given that original Letters Testamentary for the Estate of SCOTT KELLY TOMPKINS, Deceased, were issued on February 16, 2022, in Cause No. 21P535, pending in the County Court of Parker County, Texas to: COREY TOMPKINS.

The address of the Resident Agent to accept service of process is in Parker County, Texas, and the name of the Resident Agent and the post office address are:

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

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

Dated this 16 day of February, 2022.

SORAYA JOSLIN, P.C. By:/S/Soraya Joslin

Soraya Joslin State Bar No. 00792408 P.O.Box 1267 Weatherford, Texas 76086

Telephone: (817) 386-8500 Facsimile: (817) 599-7005

ATTORNEY FOR THE ESTATE

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Notice is hereby given that original Letters Testamentary for the Estate of PHILOMENA LOGAN, Deceased, were issued on February 16, 2022, in Cause No. 22P022, pending in the County Court of Parker County, Texas to: RYANN SHEA LOGAN.

The address of the Resident Agent to accept service of process is in Parker County, Texas, and the name of the Resident Agent and the post office address are:

Soraya Joslin Attorney At Law

P.O.Box 1267 Weatherford, Texas 76086.

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

Dated this 16 day of February, 2022.

SORAYA JOSLIN, P.C. By:/S/Soraya Joslin Soraya Joslin State Bar No. 00792408

P.O.Box 1267 Weatherford, Texas 76086

Telephone: (817) 386-8500 Facsimile: (817) 599-7005

ATTORNEY FOR THE ESTATE

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

NOTICE TO ALL PERSONS HAVING CLAIMS AGAINST THE ESTATE OF JOHN ALBRIGHT BIARD, DECEASED:

Notice is hereby given that original Letters Testamentary for the Estate of JOHN ALBRIGHT BIARD, Deceased, were issued to KIMBERLY K. FLOYD on the 16th day of February, 2022, in Cause No. 22P029, County Court of Parker County, Texas, which is still pending, and that KIMBERLY K. FLOYD now holds such letters.

All persons having claims against said estate are required to present the same within the time and in the manner prescribed by law. Claims should be billed to KIMBERLY K. FLOYD, Executor, at the Law Office of Wendi E. Andino, PLLC, 1005 Fort Worth Highway, Weatherford, Texas 76086, care of Wendi E. Andino, Attorney.

Dated this 23rd day of February, 2022.



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Springtown City Council approves rate increase for solid waste disposal services

BY MADELYN EDWARDS
madelyn@azlenews.net

Springtown residents are expected to see an increase in their sanitation bills starting this month.

The Springtown City Council approved a rate increase with the city's solid waste disposal company Frontier Waste Solutions at the meeting on Feb. 28.

Residents' bills are expected to increase by about

\$1 if they have one hand cart, from \$14.48 to \$15.51, and those with an additional cart are expected to see an increase of less than \$2, from \$23.44 to \$25.28. This doesn't include applicable sales tax.

The rate increase takes place March 1 and will show up on customers' March bills, according to the council's agenda background document. The change is applicable to both residential

and commercial hand-cart customers.

Frontier asked for a rate increase because of increases in fuel costs and consumer price index. The company asked for a 9.86% raise, but the city of Springtown's financial consultant decided that a 9% increase would be more appropriate because the city uses "a longer timeframe to calculate the percentage increase for (consumer price index),"

according to the council's agenda background document.

"Frankly, with inflation being the way it is, with the fuel costs being the way it is, especially in diesel, these numbers are fair," City Administrator David Miller said.

Per the city's contract with Frontier, the council is not obligated to approve rate increases, but if they reject a rate increase request, then the council must articulate

the facts as to the reasoning for the objecting to the rate increase, Miller said.

"Council, I don't like rate increases, but unless you guys can give me some reasons, I can't give you a reason why you shouldn't (accept the rate increase)," he said.

During the council meeting, council member Bill White

praised Frontier's service. "Since they have been doing this, I have not seen one piece of trash on the

ground," White said. "I think they're doing an outstanding job, and I, for one, think they deserve a raise."

Miller said the city has gotten complaints about missed trash pickups and a truck leaking hydraulic fluid, which the company treated, but Frontier hasn't had as many complaints as the previous trash service provider. Frontier is currently in the second year of a three-year contract.

Cruising back to Alaska as COVID fog lifts

One of the most popular vacations in the United States is an Alaskan cruise. After having no visitors for two cruise seasons (2020 & 2021), the ships are returning to Alaska ports this summer. The Alaska cruising season is May through September, with options being variable during the start-up and closing weeks every year.

There are two basic itineraries for Alaska: first, sailing the inside passage. This is usually a seven day cruise that is round-trip from Seattle, Washington. This voyage follows what is called the Inside Passage as it weaves its way through islands just offshore from the mainland. Stops are routinely in Ketchikan, Juneau (the state capital), Skagway, and Victoria, British Columbia. This itinerary has been expanded by some cruise lines (e.g. Princess) to include a ten-day round trip from San

BY LEW WOODARD
lew@newvistatravel.com

Lew Woodard is a travel advisor with New Vista Travel. www.newvistatravel.com 817-270-8357

Francisco.

Second, there is the northbound seven-day cruise from Vancouver, British Columbia, to Anchorage, Alaska. This route can also be taken southbound, starting in Anchorage and ending in Vancouver. These voyages visit the same ports as the Inside Passage cruises but include closer looks at glaciers along the way. Many will include the jewel of this area, Glacier Bay National Park.

The one-way voyages are designed to allow the traveler to add a land tour segment to the beginning or end of the cruise, usually at the northern end in Anchorage. These voyages are called

Cruisetours. For example, after cruising from Vancouver to Anchorage, one can board a train or motor coach and go inland to Denali National Park, site of the highest mountain in North America, Denali, at over 20,000 feet high. Cruise lines often own the trains and wilderness lodges where visitors spend anywhere from three to 10 nights and cruise amenities may be included. All of this can be purchased as a single vacation adventure.

Visiting towns along the Inside Passage gives visitors a chance to see glaciers up close, meet sled dogs (and pups), see bears and moose, fish for salmon, watch lumberjack demonstrations, hike into the wilderness, learn about the cultures of people native to the area and participate in a variety of other adventure experiences. The entire trip includes watching for whales and for glaciers



Cruise ship (Holland America Line, Zaandam) in front of glacier in Glacier Bay.

State of Alaska/Reinhard Pantke

that may be 'calving' (large sections of ice breaking off into the ocean).

Life in some of these towns relies almost entirely on visits from cruise ships, so the past two years have been extremely difficult for their economies. You can be sure the local population

will be happy to see you and share what life is like in Alaska.

Because of Alaska's short cruise season (May - September), one should book in the fall months for the next Alaska season. Reservations peak during January and February, but there is still

time to find a great deal on an Alaskan cruise. In 2022, there are plenty of ships to choose from as some major cruise lines are positioning four or more ships to Alaskan itineraries. Now is the time to make a reservation to cruise this spectacular wilderness area.

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Center of Hope calling for candy donations, families to assemble Easter baskets

BY MADELYN EDWARDS
madelyn@azlenews.net

The Center of Hope in Springtown is asking for the community to help make Easter baskets for families in need.

The Springtown Cen-

ter of Hope, located at 350 Agnes North, is a Christian organization that helps with groceries, assistance with medical needs and utility bills, career development, adult education, mental health needs and resources for those living in domestic

violence situations.

In the month of April, families receiving groceries can pick up an Easter basket for their kids or grandkids, Center of Hope Community Engagement Manager Michelle Buchanan said. The baskets will include candy-filled eggs

along with sticker activity booklets that tell the Easter story of Jesus' resurrection.

"We really think that Jesus is what changes lives," Buchanan said. "That's why we're doing that as we want our families to know Jesus."

Buchanan said the Spring-

town Center of Hope aims to make 350 baskets. To accomplish this, the center will need lots of small candy that can fit inside eggs. The center is asking the community to donate candy by March 24.

From 10-11:30 a.m. March 26, families are invited to

help put the baskets together, and it's an opportunity that children have to volunteer at the Center of Hope, Buchanan said. To volunteer for this, families need to sign up at centerofhopetx.com/familyservedays/.

SOD, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1A.

ing on it," Goin said, adding that it sat in his driveway for two weeks. "We were trying to figure out what to do with it."

The sod, which Goin said "looked dead," was installed at Goin's home, he said during the meeting.

Goin said though three pallets were donated, only two were used.

When asked about what happened to the third pallet of sod, Dunn had a difficult time recalling the incident, but she said it's possible that the entire order of sod was not picked up.

Goin said that he came to this decision and agreement with three other people on the football board.

Former Lions Club Vice President 1 Shane McFarland said there were more than three people on the football board that could've been consulted about what to do with the sod.

McFarland said the usual donation procedure is that

the executive board issues a donation form, then that form is taken to the company donating to sign the form. Both the Lions Club and the business receive a copy of the form. Though this procedure isn't mentioned in the Lions Club bylaws, McFarland said this is how donations have been handled in the past. The club's bylaws do not appear to include instructions on taking donations.

The executive board of the club sent a statement to the Epigraph, explaining that the majority of the board members thought the situation wasn't handled appropriately initially, but board members thought there were "good intentions in replacing after the donation had become unusable. We determined we did not have a policy in place addressing the receipt of donations or how to properly disperse of goods that have been donated or purchased by SLC

when they have expired or have no further use.

"We felt the best course of action was to issue an agreement affirming intentions with a set date along with acknowledgment of how to handle similar issues in the future, and created new policies and procedures to address these issues for the future," read the statement.

The incident was discussed by the executive board previously, and Goin vowed to replace the two pallets of sod.

"In the future, if something like that ever happens, we will then discuss it as our board, executive board and figure out what to do with it," he said.

Bertschy said he saw the recently planted sod in Goin's yard and reported the situation to a member of the executive board.

"That was intended for the kids, so that's theft from the children," Bertschy said.

Bertschy said if the sod

couldn't be used, then it should not have been accepted.

Goin said he never denied where the sod was and struck down claims that it was a theft.

"Two pallets of sod, if I was stealing it, I would've gotten the third," he said at the Feb. 20 meeting.

Goin added, "We agreed as a group this wouldn't survive with the multiple kids running on it every day, including track kids that are at the school running on it every day. It would be a waste of our resources and money that we have limited funds with for our football account and that we would install it next year on my dime."

Goin said he didn't pay the Lions Club for the sod in advance because he wasn't sure of the exact cost and didn't want to underpay. He did not answer further questions after the Feb. 20 meeting.

McFarland said he ques-

tioned why the sod wasn't repurposed to a different Lions Club facility.

"It was donated to the Lions Club. It could've been used here at the gym; we could've had a little nice grass walkway right here," McFarland said. "You could've used (it) maybe out here on the baseball fields. You're talking, 'It's not time for it to seed,' but you can tell, with three months these fields have been sitting here, they could've used the grass."

During the Feb. 20 meeting, Springtown ISD Superintendent Mike Kelley compared the sod situation to the earlier conversation at the meeting about what to do with expired concession items. Kelley clarified to the Epigraph that his analogy "was simply to point out that some sort of record keeping would have been helpful in this situation."

Kelley also said that the school district did not re-

quest sod for the middle school's football field. He said he didn't know about the donation previously and wouldn't expect the club to report that information to him. The Lions Club has previously made improvements to the middle school football field, but they generally do not report improvements to SISD.

"The Lions Club has spent a lot of time and energy updating the old football field with new paint, wiring and some dirt work. They are taking good care of it as well as their baseball fields," Kelley said. "Had I been asked, I would have discouraged planting the sod in August as it's not likely a good root system would be in place by the time practices began. I'm not sure how we've gotten to this point but knowing what the commissioner has put into the old stadium, I do not think he would have taken anything from the club or the kids."

Spotlight on BUSINESS

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For 37 years, C&M Circus has been providing quality, local family entertainment. Tickets can be purchased in advance at That's So Fetch Boutique, Springtown Flower Shop, City of Springtown, The Community Bank, Wells Fargo Bank and Pinnacle Bank.

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WALK-INS WELCOME!

The Circus is Coming Culpepper & Merriweather Circus

The Culpepper & Merriweather Circus is coming to Springtown on Monday, March 21 to Springtown Elementary School at 416 E. Third St. with 90-minute shows at 5 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. The circus is sponsored by the Springtown Chamber of Commerce.

For 37 years, C&M Circus has been providing quality, local family entertainment and has been featured on the A&E Special: Under the Big Top, Nick News: On the Road with Circus Kids and OETA's Big Top Town. The circus is very excited to bring the audience a brand new 2022 performance featuring Big Cats presented by Trey Key, our Aerialists Extraordinaire Simone and Kelly, 10th generation Loyal Bareback Horse Riders, the Perez Daredevil Duo on the Tight Rope and Wheel of Destiny, Circus Clown Leo Acton, Brandon Ayala on the Rola Bola and a very special presentation of beautiful rescued & rehabilitated Cockatoos by Logan Jimenez.

The tent raising and tour will take place

at 9:30 a.m. on March 21 for people to tour the grounds, learn all about life on the road, see the animals and learn about their care, and get a circus behind-the-scenes look. The Midway will open at 4 p.m. and includes pony rides, Moon Bounce, giant slide, face painting and concessions.

Tickets are \$15 for adults and \$8 for kids ages 2-12 and for seniors 65 and older. Advanced tickets are \$12 for adults and \$7 for kids ages 2-12 and for seniors 65 and older, and tickets can be purchased in advance at That's So Fetch Boutique, Springtown Flower Shop, City of Springtown, The Community Bank, Wells Fargo Bank and Pinnacle Bank. A higher percentage of advance tickets goes back to the sponsor.

For more information, visit the website cmcircus.com, Facebook at Culpepper & Merriweather Circus, Instagram @cmcircus, e-mail at cmcircus@gmail.com or call 580-326-8833.

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Obituaries

Martha Culwell

1948- 2022

Known by many....Loved by all....It is with great sadness that the family and partner of Martha Culwell announce her passing on Jan. 26, 2022 at the age of 73 in her home.

In remembrance of Martha a "Celebration of Life" will be held on Sunday March 6, 2022 in Weatherford, Texas at 103 E. Lee at 2 p.m. Please join us and we would love to hear if you have a story or fond memories to share about Martha.

Flowers: Weatherford Florist has been willing to open on Sunday and deliver if anyone would like to send flowers. 817 613 1919.

Martha was born to Mable Clair and Wes Culwell on Oct. 18, 1948 at Springtown, Texas. Martha's favorite past time was reading and watching old movies and animal shows on TV and she enjoyed going to theatre plays. She traveled many places in her younger years and Martha loved music and to sing, she always wanted to be a singer. In high school she won a UIL Medal for a special solo. Martha loved animals and most of all she loved family and being around people.

A caring heart of gold that would help anyone in need if she could. She volunteered for Meals on Wheels and she worked at American Airlines for 12 years until she hurt her back. In her later years Martha and her partner Clea settled in Springtown, Texas on two acres of land and built their forever home. They had a pecan orchard and lots of birds and critters to feed. Martha enjoyed watching the birds and all the critters that would come up to the feeders and before long ended up getting over run by the raccoons....those raccoons would come right up to the back door and want their dinner. So Martha said dinner left overs had to come to a halt for those raccoons.

Martha was a joy to be aroundalways a smile and a laugh and full of compliments when she saw you. Martha enjoyed the simplest of pleasures in life with a beautiful smile and caring heart and loved being around her family, nieces, nephews, cousins and friends. A precious soul that will be missed by all.

*The Springtown Epigraph
Aug. 5, 2022 Edition*

Kathleen Eyerman

1951- 2022

Kathleen Marie Eyerman, 70, of Springtown, Texas, passed away on Feb. 25, 2022, with her family by her side.

Services will be Thursday, March 3, 2022 at Azleland Memorial Park; 850 N Cardinal Rd. Azle, Texas. 76020. Visitation at 1 p.m. followed by a graveside service starting at 2 p.m.

Donations can be made in her name at Breast Cancer Research Foundation (www.bcrf.org).

She was married to Thomas Eyerman for over 50 years. They lived together in Springtown, TX, for the past 20 years and built a beautiful life together throughout that wonderful time. Kathy was a Pharmacy Technician for CVS for 35 years before her retirement.

A beloved wife, mother, grandmother and friend to everyone she met. Helpful, caring, giving, loving and immensely proud of her family. Behind her she leaves nothing but beautiful memories, a smile that could light up the room and a love for life that is



beyond compare. If there was ever a Saint in this world she was it.

Kathy is survived by her husband Thomas Eyerman; her brother Douglas Smith and wife Patricia; her son David Eyerman; daughter Tammy Loucks and husband Keith; and Bobby Nettles. As well as her grandchildren Amanda Fleming and husband Timothy, Dallas Eyerman, Justin Milligan, Cody Milligan, Bobby Nettles III, Katelin Nettles, Jacob and Cameron Nettles. She is also survived by multiple great-grandchildren and many more that she called family.

*The Springtown Epigraph
Aug. 5, 2022 Edition*

Lamentations of a service dog



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 mom has always been high-strung. Her doctor suggested getting an emotional support animal to help her feel calmer and more secure. She chose me to be her support dog because of my gentle and easy-going disposition.

Firecrackers, thunder, cats, you name it, have never bothered me. When my mom and I first started traveling about ten years ago, the passengers at the airport carried on about how cute and well-behaved I was. Even the TSA agents were impressed that I could walk through the metal detector on my own and sit and wait on the other side until my mom joined me.

However, in the last three years, the reaction of some passengers towards us has been downright hostile. One person glared at us on our previous trip to show his disapproval, and another shook her head in disgust.

One guy had the nerve to ask my mom why she needed an emotional support animal? Do you think he asks wheelchair-assisted travelers why they need a wheelchair? I doubt it.

I can't tell you how upsetting this has been for my mom. I am afraid if these kinds of encounters continue, the stress will be too much for her to travel by air.

Travel Wearied, Pal

Dear Pal,

I am genuinely sorry that you and your mom had to be the object of such insensitive and ignorant behavior.

I can't imagine the audacity of anyone asking a person with a disability why they required assistance. The airlines are not even allowed to ask a traveler to

disclose their diagnosis.

People in airports who are rude to emotional support dogs and their owners have no idea what it takes these days to get permission from the airlines to travel. Airlines today require these passengers to submit an up-to-date letter from their physician, usually a psychiatrist, stating they have prescribed an emotional support animal for their patient.

Additionally, they need a current letter from the dog's veterinarian, saying the dog's shots are up-to-date, and the dog is healthy and well behaved. The airlines had to tighten their requirements for passengers traveling with an ESA because too many people tried to pass off their dog as an ESA.

Finally, the airlines got wise to them and stopped their dishonest shenanigans. So, the days of fake ESA certificates and peacocks, pot-bellied pigs, and snakes traveling as an ESA are over.

I think the airline's new restrictions will eventually become public knowledge, and travelers in airports will become more respectful.

In the meantime, I suggest that when you travel with your mom, you sit close by her side and do whatever you can to keep her attention focused on you - yawn, offer her your paw, indicate you want to sit on her lap, lick her face.

You want to distract her as much as possible from seeing or listening to the other travelers. I know if you can get through the TSA security check on your own, figuring out how to keep your mom occupied before you board the plane will be a walk in the park.

Best, Frankie

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Waiting, watching, praying, and trusting

Good grief!

If I put those words together with a face palm emoji, I'm describing my response to circumstances several times every single day.

Can I just admit up front that I am clueless about so many things going on in the world right now?

Yes, I can.

Do I wish a whole lot of other people would admit that they are clueless rather than spouting nonsense that just perpetuates the ridiculous opinions of knuckleheads?

Yep.

There are a couple of common problems that skew our perspectives and confuse our responses when we look



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.

at the current state of affairs — whether we're talking about what's happening on the other side of the world or across the street.

One problem is that we look for logical explanations for how we got here. We think somehow that if we can gather enough information to create a timeline and sequence of events, we'll be able to get a handle on the reason why things happen the way they do.

I think we shoot ourselves in the foot sometimes with the belief that "everything happens for a reason."

Is it possible that sometimes the reason is that some wackadoodle did something outhouse-rat-crazy?

Or maybe everything does happen for a reason and we are just not privy to the reason.

I'm clueless. I can't explain it and I'm not going to try.

Another problem is that we don't just need a logical explanation and sequence of events — we need a focus of blame. We LOVE blame.

We especially love blame if it reinforces our own biases. If we can identify a sequence of events that casts our political opponents in an unfavorable light ... well, woohoo! Gotcha!

Therefore, depending on who you listen to, the blame for the current situation in Ukraine — along with the accompanying complications around the world — can be laid primarily at the feet of Donald Trump ... or Joe Biden ... or Bob Jones.

Actually, I made that last one up. In our family, we've been blaming our dear de-

parted friend Bob Jones for eating the last cookie and other minor infractions for over 30 years.

I just needed a moment of levity in the middle of all of this mess.

That doesn't mean that I take it lightly. I've been to Ukraine four times since 2010 and had another trip planned for this year. I have friends there and have seen God move in amazing ways in the hearts of people through this music ministry/mission trips.

I'm praying for peace, for safety, for provision, for changed hearts.

My heart is heavy and I'm asking God to intervene miraculously.

It's hard to watch and wait.

It's easy to blame, pontificate and posture.

This morning, I read this: "You are my strength, I watch for you; you, God, are my fortress, my God on whom I can rely." (Psalm 59:9-10).

The Message renders that verse this way: "Strong God, I'm watching you do it, I can always count on you. God in dependable love shows up on time ..."

For most of us, all we can do right now is wait, watch, pray, and trust.

Perhaps that's what most of us ought to be doing.

Perhaps that's what is actually best.

Wait. Watch. Pray. Trust. Be amazing today, my friend.

City of Springtown gives update on FM 51, SH 199 intersection

FROM STAFF REPORTS

The city of Springtown is expecting about three to four additional weeks until the Farm-to-Market Road 51 and State Highway 199 intersection is complete, according to a city news release.

The completion estimate was given by the Texas Department of Transportation, which manages the entire, multi-phased FM 51 project. Springtown city officials do not have authority over the project, and other than for portions of the project related to the relocation of city utilities, city officials do not make decisions about the direction, scope or timing of

the project.

This project began in October 2019 and has included:

- the complete reconstruction of FM 51 from Texas Drive to Old Cottdale Road with the relocation of all utilities (city and franchise)

- the installation of a 10-foot by 6-foot storm drain box underneath the roadway from Walnut Creek to Fifth Street

- additional underground storm drain improvements from Fifth Street to Pojo Road

- the installation of a new signal light at First Street

- the installation of sidewalks from State Highway

199 to Pojo Road on both sides of FM 51

- the reconstruction of the FM 51 and SH 199 intersection

The city explained that the delay in completing the FM 51 and SH 199 intersection "centers around the traffic signals themselves and is partially related to the need for a synchronization study for the lights as well as other engineering items that are outstanding. There has been no substantiation to the rumors that the new bridge failed inspection and therefore must be rebuilt," according to the news release.

"The City of Springtown understands the continued

inconvenience the delay in opening this intersection has caused our residents and local business owners," according to the news release. "Since the project is a state project and not a local project, the City is limited on its ability to move the project forward; nonetheless, the City has been in contact with TxDOT as well as our elected officials on the state level to encourage them to open the intersection as quickly as possible and will continue to do so."

City Administrator David Miller questioned why TxDOT had not figured out light synchronization earlier. "My question to them was

real simple: You knew these lights were going to have to operate eventually, (so) why are we just now doing that?" Miller said during the Feb. 28 city council meeting. "Honestly, we haven't gotten any clear-cut answers. We just haven't."

Miller said Springtown's state representative and state senator have been contacted in hopes that they can help speed up the process. He said he doesn't know whether the SH 199 and FM 51 intersection will be open in a few weeks as is currently estimated.

Miller said city officials have asked that SH 199 be opened to four lanes, but that

hasn't happened yet.

"I want our citizens to know that we're trying. I want our citizens to know that we feel their frustration. I also want our citizens to know that there's nothing this body around this dais can do about it other than what we're doing," Miller said, referring to the city council. "We ask for patience and we ask for understanding that we are pushing it as hard as we can possibly push it."

City officials plan to continue posting updates about the project and can answer questions on social media or calls to city hall at 817-220-4834.

Kid Scoop

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Kid Scoop Puzzler

Color each shape with a shamrock green. What is hidden in this box?

Standards Link: Reading Comprehension: Students follow simple written directions.

How to Draw a LEPRECHAUN

THINK GREEN!

Happy St. Patrick's Day!

Although it began in Ireland, St. Patrick's Day is celebrated in countries around the world. People with Irish heritage remind themselves of the beautiful green countryside of Ireland by wearing green and taking part in the festivities.

Standards Link: Social Science: Students compare the beliefs, customs, traditions and social practices of various cultures.

Shamrocks!

In Ireland, clover leaves are also called **shamrocks**. Fields of clover or shamrocks are part of what make Ireland's countryside so green.

Most shamrocks have three leaves. But sometimes one grows with four leaves. This is called a lucky four-leaf clover. Can you find one on this page?

Standards Link: Classification: Visual Discrimination.

Shamrock Shoe Search

The leprechaun Seamus O'Scoop has hidden 10 shoes in these shamrocks. Can you find them all?

How Big Are Leprechauns?

Can you read three shoe-lengths of news? Put your shoes end to end to measure three shoe lengths. Mark the length on a piece of paper. Now read a news story in today's newspaper. Using your measure, find the length of your news story. Did you read the length of a leprechaun?

Standards Link: Math: Measure the length of given objects.

What Comes Next?

Look for a pattern in each row. Draw the picture that comes next in the box at the end of each row.

Standards Link: Math: Students identify and extend simple patterns.

How Did Leprechauns Get Their Gold?

Stories from Ireland tell about magical little people called **leprechauns** who make shoes for fairies. Fairies wear out their shoes quickly because they dance all night. Leprechauns sell a lot of shoes to fairies and the fairies always pay in gold. This is what the stories say. What do you think?

The leprechaun's shoe shelf has toppled. Can you match the pairs of fairy shoes?

Standards Link: Math: Classify objects, sort and classify objects.

Extra! Extra! Abbreviations

"St." is an abbreviation for the word Saint. Clip six examples of abbreviations from the newspaper. Write the whole word for each abbreviation.

Standards Link: Writing Conventions: Identify and correctly use abbreviations.

Double Double Word Search

Find the words in the puzzle. How many of them can you find on this page?

SHAMROCK	H A L A C I G A M Y
IRISH	S P P H Y S N S A K
HERITAGE	K I N T S L E D C C
GREEN	C R S Y E I E O A U
FAIRIES	I E G A T I R E H L
SHOES	R V F D I M G I T S
SAINT	T O R I A N F O U R
CLOVER	A L C H I K T S L D
GOLD	P C S E I R I A F D
MAGICAL	
LUCKY	
FOUR	
LEAF	
PATRICKS	
DAY	

Standards Link: Letter sequencing. Recognize identical words. Skim and scan reading. Recall spelling patterns.

FROM THE Kid Scoop LESSON LIBRARY

Lucky Shamrock Adjectives

Clip five words from the newspaper to describe St. Patrick's Day. Paste the words on a green shamrock. Write a sentence using each adjective. Select your favorite sentence and use it as the main idea for a paragraph.

Standards Link: Grammar: Identify and use adjectives correctly in writing.

Write On!

Four-leaf Clover

I knew my luck would change when I picked up a four-leaf clover.

Finish this story.

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LLOYD'S, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1A.

still to this day don't even know that we're here," she said. "Or they think that we're a candle store, and we don't carry candles because of the fact that the scents get into our candy."

Bird acknowledged that running a business in a small town and introducing new businesses to Springtown can be difficult. She still keeps trying to spread the word about Lloyd's Candies.

She has connected with the local banks and the Springtown Area Chamber of Commerce, attended local events as a vendor and has tried to use Facebook and word of mouth to promote the business.

Bird mentioned that Springtown chamber Executive Director Amy Walker was one of the people who supported Lloyd's Candies when they were in need.

"We want all of our businesses to be successful and just try to get the word out of where they're located and what they're selling and do anything we can do to help," Walker said.

Bird would like to move the store from its current location at 904 E. State Highway 199 to the Springtown Square, but she said openings on the Square are quickly filled.

"We're trying to find a place on the Square, but as soon as something opens up, somebody's always grabbing it," she said. "When those roads get fixed, that's where it's going to be booming at. We're trying to find somewhere on the Square or a little bit more into the Springtown general main area."

Walker said visibility can be a challenge for other businesses as well.

"(Lloyd's Candies has) a great concept in there, and people just need to find them," she said. "That's the tough part. You would not believe how many of our businesses in town say they had a first-time customer that says, 'I didn't even know you were here.'"

The chamber of commerce promotes businesses through Facebook and a weekly email newsletter, Walker said.

Keeping Lloyd's Candies afloat has still been a challenge after Christmas. Bird said sales "are not high at all" and that business has been "super slow."

"I just keep praying and hoping that Springtown pulls through because it's the one thing that we don't have that I think could be beneficial," she said.

For Bird, the consequences for the store closing would mean difficulty in finding another job, particularly one that would help her balance certain duties of motherhood. Bird is a mom to eight kids.

"If (the store) goes under, it's going to be hard for me finding a job. I have a 5-year-old that sometimes requires a little bit of special attention, and so, she has to come sit with mom at work," she said.

Lloyd's Candies, which sells brittle, candy, fudge, popcorn and other items, is changing to become a one-stop shop, where items like hats, shirts, balloons, ice cream, coffee mugs and knickknack items are sold,



Lloyd's Candies manager Crystal Bird at the candy store on 904 E. State Highway 199.

Photo by Madelyn Edwards

Bird said. The goal is to sell unique items, she said.

"Our goal here is to carry stuff that you can't find ev-

erywhere else to keep people coming back here," Bird said.

Bird emphasized that Lloyd's Candies is a family-

oriented place.

She added, "I want people to know that this is a friendly place and that they're more

than welcome to come here. I want kids to know that they're welcome."

Lorena Parker honored by Parker County Commissioner's Court



PARKER COUNTY Sheriff Russ Authier presented a Life Saving Award to Lorena Parker in a recent Commissioner's Court Meeting for her heroic actions in saving the life of 7-year-old Conner Landers when he was viciously attacked by a dog on Jan. 21, 2022. Parker witnessed the attack occurring and was able to beat the animal off of Landers, even after the dog came after her, until she was able to get him to safety.

Photo courtesy PCSO




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Springtown's iron pushers rarin' to go for regionals



Ethan Jackson squat-lifts 410 pounds at the district powerlifting meet on Feb. 25.

Photo by Jeff Prince

BY JEFF PRINCE
jeff@azlenews.net

Springtown powerlifter Ethan Jackson wrapped his knees tightly – so tightly he walked stiff-legged toward the weight station where he would attempt to squat lift 410 pounds.

His push for glory was playing out Feb. 25 at regular season's fi-

nal qualifying meet at Boswell High School. Jackson had squatted 380 on his first of three attempts and would add a little more to the bar each time.

"He is really doing well," said his father, Olen Jackson, who was watching with other spectators from behind a roped-off area.

About 100 boys from several schools competed to see who

would qualify for the upcoming regional meet. Each athlete would have three attempts at squat-lift, dead-lift and bench press.

The 12 powerlifters who compile the most points over the course of the season qualify for the regional tournament in each weight class.

"He's an all-around good kid," Jackson said of his son. "A hard worker. I'm proud of him."

Ethan Jackson began powerlifting as a freshman. He qualified for regionals as a sophomore and came close to making it to the state meet.

COVID-19 restrictions ruined his junior season but he used the free time wisely, training on his own and at school. This year, he has won best lifter recognition at a previous meet and is ranked

among Texas' top 10 powerlifters in the 123-pound class.

STATE TITLE DREAMS

In addition to powerlifting, Jackson plays baseball. He had skipped baseball practice to participate in the district powerlifting meet even though he had qualified for region-

SEE POWERLIFTERS, PAGE 2B.

Springtown's seasoned softball girls hope to reach playoffs

BY JEFF PRINCE
jeff@azlenews.net

Eight girls have returned to the Springtown Porcupines softball team from last year's squad that reached the playoffs.

Six of those eight girls were starters.

"This group was young last year and so far this season has matured

in some keys areas," said head coach Scott Mann. "We definitely can be contenders for the playoffs and a possibility of a district championship, which would be the first for softball."

The returning roster members include Cheyanne Atchley, Lauren Brandt, Summer Conway, Promise Crews, Karley Haynes, Angelina Ray, Katrina Ray and

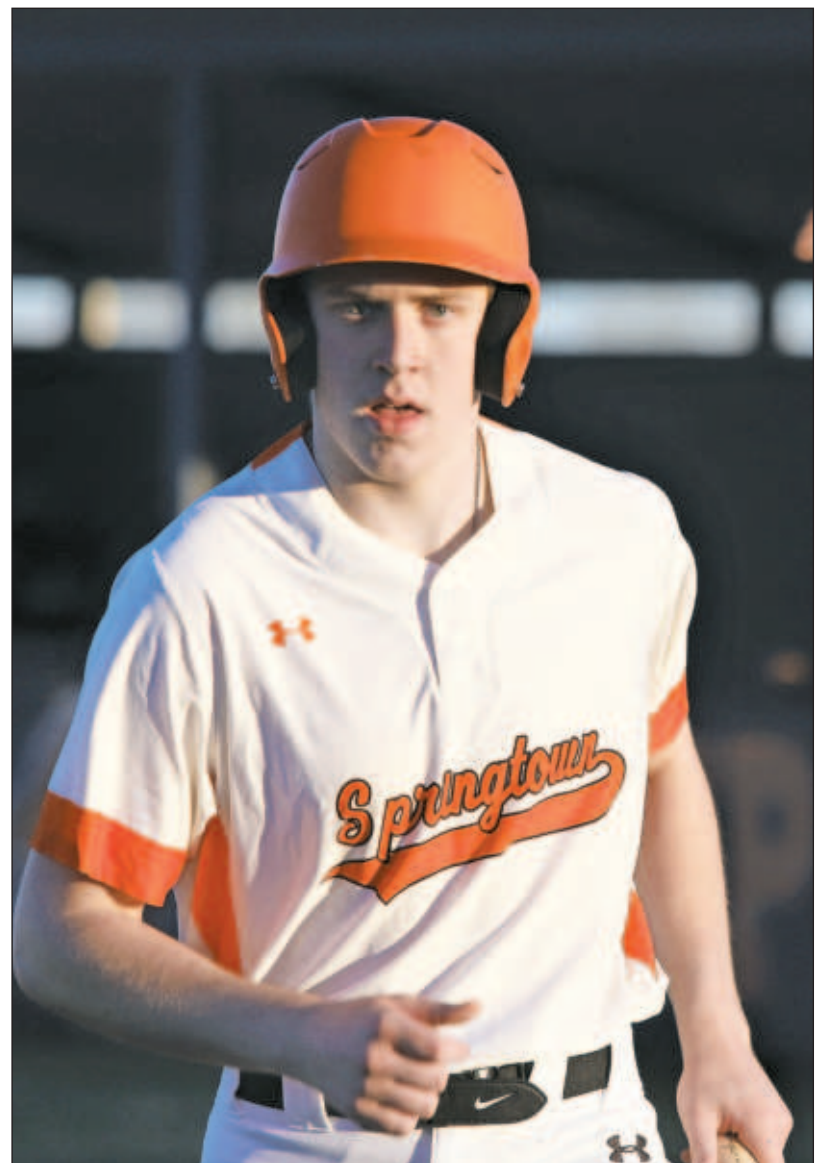
Haylee Sanborn.

"The six starters coming back with some additions, they all have the capability to really be key for us to be successful this year," he said.

Others on the roster include juniors Noelle Fernandez, sophomores Blaize Flood and Madison

SEE SOFTBALL, PAGE 2B.

Porcupines win season opener



AARON TIDWELL and the Springtown Porcupine baseball team were victorious in the season opener against the Graham Steers, winning 5-0 on the road. The Pines scored their runs on three hits and a Graham error, with pitcher Cristian Hernandez earning the win. The Porcupines play several more games on the road in the coming weeks before returning home for their district opener at 7:30 p.m. March 15 against Lake Worth.

Photo by Jeff Prince

Rose going to state UIL



CONGRATULATIONS TO Kyle Rose for making it to the Texas UIL state wrestling tournament, as he was Springtown High School's lone wrestler to travel to Berry Center in February in Cypress and compete at the championship battle. Battling in the 220-pound class, Rose qualified to advance out of the district and regional meets to get to state. "Kyle competed well," SHS head wrestling coach Sawyer Cooper said. "I was very proud (of) what he was able to accomplish this year. Making it to the state tournament is very hard to do any year."

Photos by Jeff Prince

POWERLIFTING, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1B.

als already and didn't need the points.

"I chose the meet (over practice) because it's a competition," he said.

Jackson has a competitive streak, and something about powerlifting appeals to those instincts.

"The energy," he said. "The atmosphere. Lifting heavy weights. Competing. I train every day — in school, out of school. I've come to love it."

Jackson grew up in Springtown. Both he and the city have grown.

"Springtown has been great," he said. "It's been a small town. It's starting to grow, though. A lot more people are moving in here."

He loves the rural feel.

"We've got lots of country to hang out in," he said. "I hunt, fish — pretty much everything of that sort."

He hopes to land a powerlifting scholarship and attend college. If not, he will go to trade school right out of high school and become a diesel mechanic. He loves engines.

"I work on them all the time," he said. "It's definitely something that's needed."

First, though, he would like to earn a state title.

"I'm trying to bring it home," he said. "It would be some history for the school."

OLIVER'S STORY

Autumn Reed huddled with her son, Oliver Hobbs, after he had successfully squat-lifted 395 pounds on his first attempt.

He would have two more attempts at squats and planned to add 20 pounds each time, trying for personal bests.

"Remember your form," his mom said. "Do your best."

Poor form had cost Hobbs at an earlier meet, she said after her son had walked away.

"When he did the Azle meet, he leaned forward too much, and he didn't recover," she said.

Reed advises her son to visualize his lifts.

"If you tell yourself, 'Oh, man, I'm not going to be able to lift that,' then you're not going to do it," she said. "But if you say, 'Oh, I know I can do that,' and you visualize it and follow through, then you can be successful."

Powerlifting has given her son a spark.

"He is really enjoying it," she said. "He is just more excited. His coaches are paying more attention to him. He likes that attention."



Back row, from left, Oliver Hobbs with Zane Sudduth, Jeremy Morrow and Aaron Bowen relax between events at the district meet. On the front row are Eli Hansen and Caden Haidusek.

She is proud of Hobbs' work ethic at school and sports.

"He is an honor kid doing dual credit," she said. "He is a good kid. I don't have to stay on top of him to do his homework or get things turned in. I don't have to tell him, 'Hey, go to bed on time.' He just does it."

He worked part time as a dishwasher at a restaurant, then was hired at another restaurant recently as a waiter. The second employer wanted him to start right away, but his mom told him he needed to give his first employer a two-week notice.

For two weeks, Hobbs worked both jobs.

"He has been saving his money," she said. "He bought his own truck, which we helped out with."

FAMILY SUPPORT

Hobbs' younger sister, Bailey Reed, 7, was at the district meet rooting for him with Hobbs' stepfather and grandfather. In between bites of pizza, Bailey shared her feelings about her older sibling.

"He is the best brother in the world," she said.

Back when Hobbs was a youngster, he was bullied. In middle school, he became active in sports, and the bul-

lying dwindled.

"Sometimes, people just have a rough life, and they want to get other people down," he said. "There are always going to be people like that no matter where you go, so you've just got to make the best of what you're doing."

Gaining strength through sports increased his confidence. Teammates provided a support system. Brothers from other mothers had his back.

"A lot of my friends here at the powerlifting meet make life a lot better," he said.

Hobbs was preparing to make his second squat lift. His first lift of 395 was "better than anything I've ever done before," he said.

He decided to go for 415. Adding 20 pounds rather than 10 or 15 was a gamble, but Hobbs wanted to qualify for regionals and was attempting to reach his maximum.

At a meet a week earlier, he had been unable to squat-lift 395 pounds.

"I just hope I make my family proud," Hobbs said.

"That's it. My stepdad and my mom are over there. So is my little sister and my granddad. As long as they are proud of me, and as long as I do my best, I am going



Oliver Hobbs set a personal record with this lift of 415 pounds.

Photos by Jeff Prince

to be happy tonight."

The announcer called his number, and Hobbs strolled over to the weight station to shoulder the bar with 415 pounds.

He lifted it with ease.

"It was nice hitting a personal record," he said afterward. "I think I could have done more."

What changed?

"I had better form this time," he said.

After high school, he plans to attend college, earn a law degree, become an attorney and follow in the footsteps of several relatives.

"I've got two uncles who are judges and some other

family members who are

lawyers, and they've always told me I could argue with a brick wall," he said. "I'll argue with just about anybody. You can ask my mom. I figured it would be a good career to try out."

JACKSON BEST LIFTER

After the Boswell meet ended, points were compiled, and Jackson won his 123-pound weight class and was named best lifter.

Springtown head coach Stacey Alexander described Jackson's performance as the "highlight" of the meet filled with good performanc-

es.

"We had a lot of young men that lifted and competed very well all season with a singular purpose of being stronger every time out," he said. "It was easy to see them gain strength over the last six weeks, and we are proud of them and their efforts."

The Class 4A Springtown's team lifts in Region 6, Division 1, where seven of nine teams are larger Division 1 Class 5A or 6A schools. The regional meet is set for March 8 at Kennedale High School, with the National Anthem and bars loaded at 3 p.m.

SOFTBALL, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1B.



Terrell and freshmen Ava Fernandez and London Smith.

Last season, the Lady Pines won a program record 21 games, including two playoff games.

"I am very pleased with our work ethic and how our hitting has really improved at the plate," the coach said. "Defensively, we have filled some key positions that we lost last year, and I think as they get more game reps, it will only make us stronger as we get closer to district."

Springtown lost 4-3 at home Tuesday to Ponder.

ANGELINA RAY, a returning Springtown softball player, swings at a pitch during a game last season. File photo

Varsity soccer senior night



From left, Erick Barroso and Jose Espinoza, who play for the Springtown Porcupines varsity soccer team, fell to Ranchview 1-0 on a cold Friday night at Porcupine Stadium. The loss marked the team's fourth consecutive district defeat, but the game was a festive occasion, as senior players were celebrated. (The above picture is from another game.) Seniors make up more than a third of the Porcupines team, and Feb. 25 was Senior Night. Seniors being honored included Barroso, Emmanuel Castillo, Adan Hernandez, Frankie Martinez, Brian Murillo, Matthew Ross and Jonathan Sanchez. Springtown (5-8-1) is scheduled to play at 7:30 p.m. March 4 at Argyle (11-6-1).

Photo by Jeff Prince



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LEON'S TREE SERVICE. Split Oak and Pecan wood. Pickup or delivery. 817-371-8597.

Ruben's YARD SERVICE Stump Grinding Tree Service • Yard Clean-Up 817-513-0233

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Karl Klement Properties, Inc. Motorcycle Restoration Tech Restoring Bultacos. Full or Part time hours available. Maintenance Helpers Show us you have what it takes! On the spot job offers. No experience required.

020 Demolition

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032 For Sale

Free 60x20 Building to be moved, located between Azle and Springtown. 817-980-3066.

LEON'S TREE SERVICE Expert take downs Stump Grinding Residential/Commercial Licensed & Insured • Free Estimates 817-371-8597

Electrical Contractor - hiring Journeyman, Apprentice Electricians. Training program available. Must have reliable transportation. Some overtime available. Rate of Pay based on experience. Forward resumes to: info@mitchellassociate.com

For consideration of all positions apply to: Alyssa Jacobs, Assistant H/R Manager 605 N. Business 287, Suite 102, Decatur, Texas hr@klementford.com 940-627-6362 We offer Benefits, Paid Holidays, Vacation & Training

024 Electrician

BULLDAWG ELECTRIC CO. All types of electrical services and MH hook-ups. Free Estimates. 817-675-4921 www.bulldawgelectric.com. TECL#25253.

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039 Help Wanted

Looking for mature people to work with small animals. Must have reliable transportation. Call for more information 817-926-3300.

MOTEL 6. Help wanted for full-time Housekeeping. 817-270-4207.

WANTED Property Maintenance Labor/Person Gene Thompson & Associates 817-246-4646

035 Garden/Mowing Service

Need your lawn mowed, trimmed or cleaned up? Need your trees trimmed or cut? Any job big or small give Scooter a call. Free Estimates. 817-766-3834.

Auto Techs and Transmission Rebuilders and R&R Men, Top Pay for Top Skills. Call or come by 201 E. Hwy 199, Springtown, 682-615-7250. Rainwater Transmission & Auto Repair.

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WISE OUTDOOR SOLUTIONS. Fall Clean ups, Underbrush Removal, Tree Trimming, Stump Removal, Animal Burials, Tractor Work. 940-399-1677.

Need residential electrician, 817-939-0102. Wanted: Contractor to build home on my property, call Harold Young 817-444-1993.

Help wanted continued on next page...

817-270-3340 - AZLE
817-220-7217 - SPRINGTOWN

Deadline:
 4:30 PM Monday

Classifieds

039 Help Wanted

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 Academic Instructors • Assistant Maintenance Supervisor •
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New Correctional Officer Pay is \$15.00 per hour.

PLEASE CHECK THE WEBSITE FOR JOB QUALIFICATIONS.
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087 Rent Furnished

3-2 DW on 1 acre in Briar, Azle Schools, \$1200mo \$1200dep, no pets. 817-980-3066.

088 Rent Unfurnished

2021 Home in Azle. 3BR, 2BA, 2-Car Carport with attached 10x20 Storage. \$1,600/mo. \$1,600 deposit, Credit/Background Check, No Pets. Available March 1st. 817-980-3066.

3-2 Duplex for Rent in Springtown. \$1,200/mo. \$600 deposit, no pets. Available Feb 1st 817-980-3066.

1-1 No pets, non-smoker, \$600mo. 817-296-6169

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Tack Sale Begins at 6:00 PM
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068 Storage

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3-2 Duplex, just refurbished, quiet area, no pets, close to shopping \$1300/mo. 817-444-3636

3-2-1 Brick home in Springtown, fenced yard with storage shed. \$1250mo, \$1250dep, no pets, non smoking. 940-390-1164.

Studio Apartment for rent suitable for 1 adult, no pets. \$500mo \$500dep utilities included. 817-565-7145 Ask for Bob.

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081 Business/Commercial

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

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 Hwy 199 Frontage Near Hospital

1161 SE Pkwy Azle 1700 SF \$1000/mo ,
 1169 SE Pkwy Azle 930SF \$750/mo
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079 Welding

owner Rodney Vick
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084 Mobile Homes for Rent

2-2 SW Springtown, \$800mo. \$800dep, no pets. 817-980-3066

086 Mobile Home/RV Lots

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817-270-3340 - AZLE
817-220-7217 - SPRINGTOWN

Deadline:
 4:30 PM Monday

Classifieds

TEXAS CROSSWORD

by Charley & Guy Orbison
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ACROSS

1 TXism: "want it so ___ could spit"

5 "The eyes of Texas are ___ you . . ."

6 roller ___

7 captures ___

8 Texas' big oil ___ was 1894 to 1935

9 "drum" swimmer in the Gulf of Mexico

16 a small child

18 what Apollo 13 communicated to Houston on 4/13/1970

21 ___ Campo, TX

22 sharp & salty cheese

23 TX Strait hit: "___ Let Herself Go"

24 tote with scales of justice imprint (2 wds.)

30 a Texas Tech athlete (2 wds.)

34 Texas Mexican restaurant: ___ Fenix

35 Lee Greenwood hit: "God Bless ___"

36 Abel's brother

37 part of a flower

39 UT's Lydia Jacoby won this 100 meter swim event in Tokyo

43 TXism: "wipe the ___ clean" (erase)

44 TX B.J. Thomas' "___ Somebody Done Somebody Wrong Song" (1975)

45 TX Strait's "All My ___'s Live in Texas"

46 TXism: "best I ___ laid eyes on"

47 red blood cell deficiency

49 gave the meaning of a word

52 many parents learn the ___ of their child early

53 TX Blue Bell ___ cream

54 all-time record low for Texas oil was three ___ a barrel in 1902

55 investment profits

58 she was married to the 27th Texas governor: ___ Culp Hobby

DOWN

1 city named for Texas revolution president, David G.

2 group of beehives

3 TX Joe ___ of "Walking Tall"

4 lake near 1-down

9 first two letters of 55-across answer

10 constructed a wall to confine a river

11 H-E-B department

12 TX Gipson, writer of "Savage Sam"

13 "___ you had to be there"

14 dir. to Port Lavaca from New Braunfels

15 Gen. Schwarzkopf of "Operation Desert Storm" in 1991 (init.)

17 type of many ovens

19 TXism: "was hornswoggled"

20 book by 12-down: "Old ___"

24 ___ Gov. Dan Patrick

25 this Belo founded the Dallas Morning News (init.)

26 fictitious sisters of Ima Hogg: Ura & ___

27 "___ dias" (good morning)

38 covers with asphalt

40 ___ Colony, TX

41 TX Dan Jenkins book: "___-Tough"

42 death penalty

48 nacional airline: "___mexico"

50 along with the CCC, first relief org. of the New Deal

51 "Fanthorp ___ State Historic Site"

56 town on the border of Coryell and Hamilton counties

57 former TX company: Ling-___-Vought

Puzzle Solution

S-1571

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Indian Arrowheads Wanted - Point Type: Clovis, Yuma, Firstview & Eden. Must be old, authentic & unbroken. Absolute TOP DOLLAR paid - up to 5 figures for one point. I am a very serious high-end collector. Call 979-218-3351.

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EVENTS

Southeast Texas Boat, Sport & RV Show - March 4-5-6, Ford Park, Beaumont, Texas. THE Place to buy your new Boat or RV! See 50 Boat and RV Brands in 1 Location! SouthEastTexasBoatRVShow.com.

Golden Triangle Home & Garden Show - March 4-5-6, Ford Park, Beaumont, Texas. EVERYTHING FOR THE HOME! See a multitude of Home Improvement Professionals in 1 location! GoldenTriangleHomeAndGardenShow.com.

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