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Springtown

PHOTO BY DON MUNSCH

Deer such as these can be found grazing on grass in neighborhoods in Azle. Lots of deer are ending up dead on the sides of roadways after having been hit by vehicles. Deer are in the middle of their rutting season – mating period – right now.

Oh, deer

Deer rutting season leads to more dead deer on roads

BY MADELYN EDWARDS madelyn@azlenews.net

ave you seen more dead deer on the side of the road? That's because it's deer rutting season. The rutting season is

when deer mate, and they tend to move around more during this time, said Jesse Oetgen, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department technical guidance biologist. The peak of rutting season is in mid-November.

"They're covering more territory than they do other times of the year," said Oetgen, who is based in Weatherford. "They're maybe not as cautious crossing the roads as they're paying more attention to other bucks or other does just as part of their rutting activity."

As a result, there is an up-

tick of deer on the side of roads after being hit by vehicles, Oetgen said.

Often, deer carcasses are left on the side of the road to be cleaned up by scavengers if the deer are not causing a roadway hazard, said Sgt. Richard Hunter, a spokesman for the Texas Department of Public Safety.

Oetgen said leaving the

SEE DEER, PAGE 2

Strickland to start Jan. 1 as SISD superintendent

BY MADELYN EDWARDS madelyn@azlenews.net

Applause rang through the Springtown ISD boardroom last week when the school board unanimously approved the hiring of Shane Strickland as the new superintendent.

The applause also happened last month when Strickland was named the lone finalist for the position. Strickland is currently the district's deputy superintendent. This is his 20th year at SISD, and he has spent a total of 26 years in education. His



PHOTO BY MADELYN EDWARDS At the Springtown ISD school board meeting on Nov. 15, the

Snack Pack Ministry needs donations to help feed hungry kids

BY MADELYN EDWARDS

madelyn@azlenews.net

Being of service comes naturally for the Snack Pack Ministry at First United Methodist Church in Springtown.

A group of about nine volunteers showed up at the church before 9 a.m. on Wednesday of last week, a day earlier than usual because of the Thanksgiving holiday. They unloaded boxes of individually wrapped snacks - such as oatmeal, Pop-Tarts, Vienna sausages and apple sauce - and placed them on three tables. Then they tore the boxes open, counted a certain number of each snack and circled around the tables with plastic bags to place each snack item in the bag. The chatter among the vol-SEE SNACK PACK, PAGE 5



superintendent contract will start on Jan. 1.

After the Nov. 15 meeting, Strickland said he felt wonderful and excited. Receiving

SEE **STRICKLAND**, PAGE 3

board of trustees approved hiring current Deputy Superintendent Shane Strickland to fulfill the superintendent role starting on Jan. 1.



PHOTOS BY MADELYN EDWARDS

Springtown First United Methodist Church interim pastor Larry Van Zile, right, and Karen Bernardino sort snacks into groups. The snacks are then bagged up and given to hungry children.



PHOTO BY DON MUNSCH
2021's first place winner was the Grinch Float, driven by Lane Smith with Cindy Lou Who (Anna Smith) and the Grinch (Gary Walker.)

Springtown to ring in Christmastime with parade, tree lighting on Sunday

BY MADELYN EDWARDS madelvn@azlenews.net

To wrap up the

Thanksgiving weekend, Springtown area residents are invited to attend the city's Christmas parade and tree lighting on Sunday.

The event is scheduled to begin at 6 p.m. Nov. 27 on the Springtown Square.

Santa Claus is expected to be at the event, and snow will be provided.

The parade will travel north on Avenue D from Springtown Elementary

SPRINGTOWN CHRISTMAS PARADE ROUTE

School, west on Fifth Street, south on Main Street, east on First Street passing the square and back to the elementary school.

The city also will have an ugly sweater contest. Participants, wearing their socalled ugly sweaters, can register at the Tabernacle from 5:30-6 p.m. Nov. 27 before the parade. The contenders' photos will be posted on the city's Facebook page for the public to vote for their favorites, and the winners will be announced at Old-Fashioned Christmas on Dec. 10.

Wishing You CA HAPPY THANKSGIVING CS



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Springtown City Council approves building inspection services contract

BY MADELYN EDWARDS madelyn@azlenews.net

Springtown City Council approved awarding a contract for building inspection and plan review services to Bureau Veritas during last week's council meeting.

City Administrator David Miller said the city's building inspector on staff resigned to take a job at a private firm. Another building inspector was sought by the city, but a suitable applicant was not found, which means the city will go back to contracting out for these services.

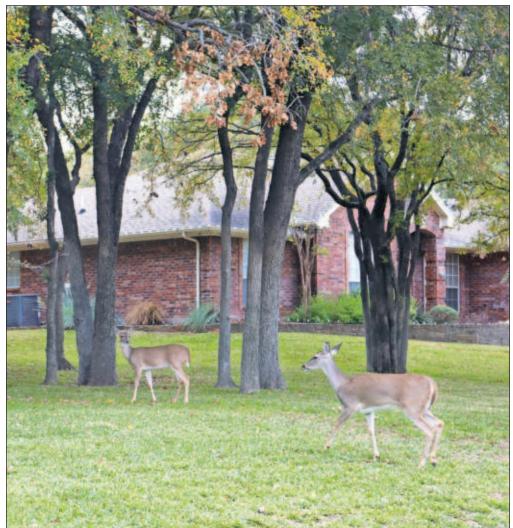
Miller said the city has had a contract with Bureau Veritas before for fill-in work. Bureau Veritas has been the city's firm since 2012, Springtown Administrative Services Director Christina Derr said, and the company serves as third-party inspectors and plan reviewers for many cities in the Metroplex.

The city received three proposals for these services, and Bureau Veritas received the best score from the scoring committee – made up of Miller, Derr, Director of Public Works Joseph McCanless and Mayor Greg Hood – based on expertise, the number of years in service, the ability to meet deadlines, types of services offered and fees.

"Because we went to bid, Bureau Veritas has lowered the rates than what we were paying previously, which helps us to save money overall," Miller said during the meeting.

Also during the meeting, the council acted as the Zoning Board of Adjustments to approve a 6-foot rear-yard setback variance request at 309 Titus Drive in the Inheritance Estates subdivision. The applicant, Richard Thorn, said the lot is narrow in the front yard, and the driveway would have to be shortened without the variance. The west building line will be set at 14 feet instead of 20 feet.

An item on the council's agenda to consider changing the zoning from Single-Family Residential 2 zoning to multi-family for a property on Avenue E was tabled for the December council meeting.





DEER FROM PAGE 1

dead deer to be cleaned up by scavengers – mainly turkey vultures – is a natural process.

"Leaving them on side of the road is the way it would happen if the road wasn't there," he said.

If the deer carcass is a roadway hazard, it may be picked up and disposed of by local animal control, Hunter said.

Oetgen and Hunter confirmed that law enforcement, such as the local game warden, should be called if a deer is injured and needs to be dispatched.

Having an increase in dead deer on roadways is somewhat beneficial to Texas Parks and Wildlife Department workers because they can collect samples from the roadkill to be tested

PHOTO BEDON MUNSCH Hitting a deer can cause seve damage to a vehicle, and TX I recommends trying to woid the animal if possible, withou causing the ger to lose contro for chronic wasting disease, which is monitored statewide, Oetgen said.

Because of the increased movement of deer, motorists may encounter deer while driving. If hit, deer can cause severe damage to a vehicle, and drivers can incur injuries or die from this kind of crash, Hunter said.

"A driver should brake to slow the vehicle down and steer to try and avoid the animal, if possible, but should avoid jerking the wheel that could cause the vehicle to lose control," he said.

If a collision with a deer does occur and there is damage to the driver's vehicle, property or the driver is injured, Hunter said the crash should be reported to law enforcement. Texas DPS usually investigates crashes with wildlife where there is injury to a person or property "If there is not going to be an investigation by Texas DPS or other law enforcement, the driver will need to take photos and document the location, time and other information so that they can report the collision to their insurance company," Hunter said.

Oetgen pointed out that if a deer is killed on the road, it is against the law to keep any part of the deer.

Hunter advises drivers to avoid distractions while driving and be focused on traveling the road. They should also slow down at night and make sure their vehicle's headlights are functioning properly "to give the driver more light to see the roadway and more time to react to emergency situations."

"Always wear your seatbelt, every trip, every time," he said.

Saturday, December 3rd • Noon - 5:00 PM

The Optimist Club, Azle Area Chamber of Commerce, and the Azle News invite you, your friends and family to join us for a wonderful community Christmas celebration.

2022 theme: "Miracle on Main Street"

Azle Christmas on Main Vendor Show W. Main Street • 12 - 5 PM

Vendor booths will be open for holiday shopping. Help us support local businesses this season.

Children's Christmas Event at 404 404 W. Main Street • 2 - 5 PM

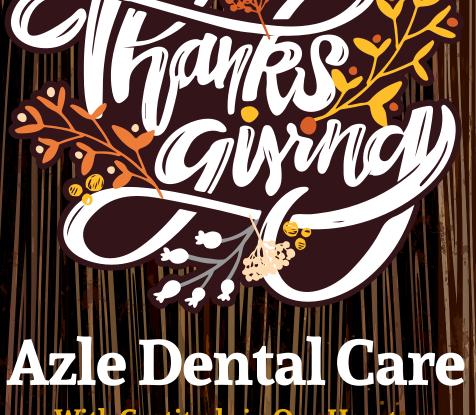
Brought to you by the Azle Optimist Club, the Azle News, and the Azle Area Chamber of Commerce this event will include activities for the children of Azle. Register for bike giveaways, pick up a cookie kit to decorate with family at home, and get a chance to see Santa. There will also be ornaments, candy canes, coloring books, and reindeer food to take home.

Simultaneous City Christmas Tree Lightings at 6:30 рм Azle Historical Museum • 124 W. Main Street Azle City Hall • 505 W. Main Street

Join the Mayor of Azle and other community leaders for the lighting of the City Christmas Tree at the Azle Historical Museum. Join other officials for the City Hall Tree Lighting.

Main Street Business Decorating Categories :

Most Christmas Spirit • Best Theme "Miracle on Main Street" Most Creative • Best Light Display • Best Overall Winners will be announced at the Azle Historical Museum at 6:15 pm.



With Gratitude in Our Hearts

we wish you and your family a bountiful Thanksgiving holiday. We are truly thankful for your business.

Call Soon! Our end-of-year cleaning: are booking up!

From all of us at Azle Dental Care 17-444-176

Tips for protecting pipes from freezing weather

FROM STAFF REPORTS

Texas Water Utilities is offering tips to help people protect their homes from freezing weather.

Water expands when it freezes, which puts pressure on pipes and can cause them to break. Texas Water Utilities recommends the following tips to prepare in case of a freeze.

· Open cabinets and keep the thermostat at a consistent temperature during the day and night.

· Leave the heat on when going away for vacation during cold weather.

• Insulate pipes and faucets in unheated areas and seal off openings in doors and air vents.

• Drain the swimming pool, shut down the sprinkler system, turn off outside faucets and remove connected hoses. • If a pipe freezes but hasn't

burst, try to thaw it out with an electric heating pad, hairdryer or towel soaked with hot water. Apply heat by slowly moving the heat source toward the coldest spot on the pipes. Never concentrate heat in one area because cracking ice can shatter a line.

For more tips and information, visit SouthWest Water Company's website at swwc. com/h2ome/learning-center/ preparing-for-cold-weather/



PHOTO BY CARLA NOAH STUTSMAN

Prepare your house for cold weather and save future frustration.

STRICKLAND FROM PAGE 1

applause from the board as well as the audience of staff members showed Strickland

that they have faith in him. "It's extremely humbling to know that they have that confidence in me and are looking forward or excited about the leadership, and they know that I'm not going to come in and disrupt everything that's been accomplished up to this point,' Strickland said. "I think there's a lot of security in that and comfort with that switch.'

The first person to congratulate Strickland after the board voted was none other than his soon-to-be predecessor Mike Kelley. The outgoing superintendent, who

and I would be very sad if over that time I hadn't identified somebody from within that I felt confident in, and I'm glad that the board agreed," Kelley said. "He has a terrific support cast, and I think the board's confidence in him is reinforced by that fact."

Moving forward, Kelley hopes to be available to aid Strickland, just as Kelley's predecessor - Andrea Hungerford - was a resource for him.

"She was always, still is, just a phone call away," Kelley said. "There are lots of things that unless you've sat in that chair, you can't possibly understand."

Strickland's initial goals as superintendent are to review and possibly restructure the leadership team. He hopes to find a replacement for the deputy superintendent position that he's vacating. One of the challenges Strickland will face as superintendent is meeting the need for more space among the district's facilities. The school board called for a bond election twice last year to add space to the intermediate school, middle school and high school and to build a new elementary school, but voters struck down those

proposals. This year, the district has hosted a series of meetings to educate the community on facility needs and gather input.

"I think just continuing seeking the stakeholders opinions and trying to come to a conclusion of what the community wants as a whole that we can get enough people to come out and vote for is extremely important," he said. "I think the community sees that we're growing and the fact that our buildings are very packed. The need is there. It's just a matter of getting people to come out and vote for it."

Kelley offered two pieces of key advice to his successor - to lean on the expertise of those on his team and to always be honest about mistakes.

"I guess probably I don't need to give him this advice

A day for everyone to give thanks, and to remember those days gone by

It is almost Thanksgiving Day. It will be my 66th Thanksgiving to celebrate and so the day conjures up a lot of memories. I imagine the same can be said for all you readers. Just the mention of the day and the brain starts to replay video of past holidays.

My remembrance focuses on being at my grandparents' little farmhouse. I would guess it was no bigger than 1,300 square feet and when four sets of aunts and uncles and seven grandchildren piled in, it was stuffed as tight as a Nathan's hot dog. Most often the weather outside was cold and forbidding, so we young ones were forced to stay inside. This led to a copious amount of scolding from our parents as the amount of noise we created rose to ever-increasing levels. Once one of the adults addressed our behavior. we would all simmer down for a short time, and then we would be back to making the same amount of racket we had created previously. Our folks were fighting a losing battle, and I

The meals were always great, and everyone had their favorites. I still see my grandmother, mom, and three aunts all helping to cook in the tiny kitchen. Nothing will ever taste as good as those meals.

Once the meal was over, the family card game would start. The Houstons played 5-point Pitch and the competition was fierce. One of the proudest moments in my life sters, and reliving memowas when I was finally old

enough to play in the adult game. It was memorable to play with the aunts and uncles who, because of distance, I seldom got to spend time with, and to attempt to beat my grandfather and dad. Both had a way of being able to "snap" a card when they threw it on the table, and the sound still rings in my ears.

There was my first Thanksgiving alone, when I had graduated and moved off to my first job. I was hundreds of miles away from my family with no vacation time off from work and little money to be able to afford to travel. I stayed in my small apartment, made Thanksgiving chili and watched football all day. I was by myself, but I did not feel lonely or alone. I was proud I had set off to make my own trail, and the experience somehow seemed like another passage from youth to adult. Having Thanksgiving by myself let me know I was no longer a child.

This year, our family will be together. There will be food to eat, stories to tell, and grandchildren to play with. We will be creating memories for the youngries for us "oldsters." I have taken the role of the patriarch of the family, the one my grandfather held for so many years. How did I come to be cast in that role? How did I become so ... so ... well ... old?

FROM MY FRONT PORCH

Sam Houston is a syndicated columnist and newspaper executive. He is

also an author, actor, playwright and entertainment producer/promoter.

By Sam Houston

Through it all, I will be thinking of the ways I have been blessed over the past year, and how thankful I am. My health is good, my marriage is strong, my grandchildren are healthy, and I have the good fortune to work with wonderful people doing something that is meaningful to our community. I have my Miss Jayne to look after, fun friends to go through life with, and the sense to know how lucky I am

I hope you all have a wonderful holiday. Stop and take a minute between bites of green bean casserole or pecan pie to acknowledge all the reasons you have to be thankful. When you do, I bet it will give you a warm feeling and a glow of contentment. It does not get much better than that.

Happy Thanksgiving! Thought for the day: There is something for everyone to be thankful about on Thanksgiving, even if it is just not being a turkey.

Attention Men and Women over 65 years old... **Do You Want To Learn How To Stay Out Of Nursing Homes FOREVER?** WITHOUT RISKING YOUR HEALTH,

think they all knew it.

is in his 25th year at SISD, announced in late September that he would retire by the end of the calendar year.

After the meeting, Kelley said he was thrilled by the board's decision to hire Strickland. Kelley has worked closely with Strickland over the years and knows that Strickland is well prepared for the superintendent role.

"I've been here 25 years,

because this is how he lives, but I think it would be always be honest, even when you've made a mistake, and that will happen because too many things come to that chair. You're not always going to get it right," he said. "When we make a mistake, we need to own up to it, and try to make sure it doesn't happen again."



PK - 12th Breakfast 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 Dutch Waffle, Strawberries Tuesday Breakfast Stick, Blueberries Wednesday Scramble Eggs, Pineapple Cup Thursday Cinnamon Roll, Strawberry Applesauce Friday Vanilla Yogurt, Blueberry Muffin

K - 4th Lunch

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 Salisbury Steak, Chicken Tenders, Mashed Potatoes, Roll, Broccoli Tuesday Spaghetti with Meat Sauce, Cheesy Breadstick, Green Beans, Glazed Carrots, Pineapple Cup Wednesday Cheeseburger or Hamburger, French Fries, Cucumber & Tomato Cup Thursday Tostadas (Beef or Chicken), Corn, Refried Beans Friday Cheese Pizza, Corndogs, Mixed Veggies, Fresh Broccoli, Banana, Apple Slices

5th - 12th Lunch

Monday Tangerine Chicken, General Tso's Chicken, Fried Rice, Roll, Green Beans, Glazed Carrots Tuesday Pasta Bar (Meat Sauce or, Alfredo with Chicken), Cheesy Breadstick, Mixed Veggies, Broccoli Wednesday Catfish Po'Boy, Ck Fried Steak Sandwich, Tator, Tots, Fresh Broccoli, Strawberries Thursday Tostadas or Nachos, (Beef or Chicken), Spanish Rice, Refried Beans, Corn Friday Cheese Pizza, Hot Dog, Baked Potato Basket, Baked Beans, Celery and Carrot Cup, Banana, Peach Cup, Variety of Milk

This menu is sponsored by ...



SAFETY, UK INDEPENDENCE?

By Balance Expert Dr. Robert Moss



Do you feel guilty that your spouse is forced to be with you all the time because of your dizziness/loss of balance?

Do you feel that your dizziness/loss of balance is always there no matter what you do?

Do you feel that you are handicapped by your dizziness/loss of balance? By Local Health Expert Dr. Robert Does your spouse stay with you in the shower so that you do not fall? Moss PT. ScD. OCS, FAAOMPT If you answer yes to any of these questions, please read further...

CDC Reports: Household Falls Are The Leading Cause of Injuries In Seniors

If you have ever seen the Life Alert commercials, then you will immediately have a picture in your mind of an elderly lady laying on the floor desperately trying to get up only to discover she is not able to. Whether she is just weak, has broken a hip or caused some other serious injury this image of helplessness is constantly on the mind of our elderly patients.

Working with seniors over many years it has become apparent that the greatest common fear is the fear of falling and not being able to get back up. This is not unreasonable as 1/3 of all adults over 65 will fall this year and each fall is potentially life changing.

Falling should not be your lifestyle

Falls often lead to hospitalizations, serious injury or the need for assisted living of some sort. In the most severe cases a fall can lead to death. If the fall, injury, and hospitalization isn't bad enough, frequent falls lead to loss of independence, limits in your daily activities, and increase your reliance on friends and family members to complete basic everyday tasks.

With the right information and the right guidance many falls can be prevented, keeping you out of the hospital and Nursing Homes. Here is what one of my patients had to say:



When I came to Moss, I had trouble walking due to no balance. I was not able to get in and out of a car, I was not able to do my activities. After my therapy I am able to walk and continue with my shopping and light house work. I can do this all un-assisted thanks to my therapy. Evelyn Tinney

If you are embarrassed or reluctant to use a cane or walker because it makes you "look old" or if you feel like a burden to those around you because you need to hold on to someone when you walk or ask them to run your errands... MOSS Rehabilitation Center has prepared a FREE Report for you "The Top 8 Secrets To Improve Your Balance And Prevent Falls".

817-220-MOSS (6677) to request the FREE Report OR if you want the report right now, please visit www.springtownphysicaltherapy. com/balance-report and you can download it instantly.

SCAN QR CODE WITH YOUR SMARTPHONE **TO DOWNLOAD THE FREE REPORT**



Springtown ISD community narrows down top priorities for school district facilities

BY MADELYN EDWARDS madelyn@azlenews.net

Added safety and security measures, more restroom space, a new elementary school and/or a new middle school.

These are the top priorities of the parents, school staff and other Springtown ISD community members who braved the cold and rainy weather last week to discuss the school district's future.

SISD has held a series of meetings this school year to educate the community on facility needs and gather input. The gathering on Nov. 14 at Goshen Creek Elementary School marked the fifth meeting of its kind.

At every meeting, Superintendent Mike Kelley has explained that enrollment is growing while space for students – classrooms as well as infrastructure like cafeterias and restrooms – is running out.

A handout from the meeting showed that 4,126 students are enrolled in the district as of October of this school year, which is a significant increase compared to enrollment in October of last school year (3,887) or at the same time during the 2020-21 year (3,619). Meanwhile, campuses are nearing their functional capacity, and without added room, some will be out of space in a handful of years, based on demographer projections.

For example, Goshen Creek Elementary School – where the meeting was held – is over its functional capacity of 600 but has been able to use portable buildings to accommodate 160 kids outside of the physical campus walls.

However, space is tight when the children have to share restroom and cafeteria space. Kelley compared kids going to a restroom space on the campus to the traffic at the intersection of State Highway 199 and Farm-to-Market Road 51.

"We've really stretched the infrastructure here at Goshen," Kelley said during the meeting. "We've maxed it out."

To remedy this issue, the school board called for a bond election twice last year to add space to the intermediate school, middle school and high school and to build a new elementary school, but voters struck down those proposals.

Multiple options were discussed at the meeting last week, such as rezoning the



PHOTOS BY MADELYN EDWARDS

Parents, school staff and other Springtown ISD community members braved the cold and rainy weather on Nov. 14 to attend a facilities planning meeting at Goshen Creek Elementary School.

elementary schools to alleviate more crowded campuses and reconfiguring which campuses would serve which grade levels. School design firm Claycomb Associates, Architects Principal Aron Lee presented options for building new schools and adding space to current campuses. Potential costs and construction timelines were also mentioned. Among the attendees' pri-

orities, there was a divide between those who expressed more interest in building an elementary school than a middle school and vice versa.

Building both new schools may not be an option. The cost of those two new campuses would be close to being unaffordable for SISD and may not leave an opportunity for other improvements, Kelley said during the meeting.

Some participants discussed options for converting certain campuses, such as building a new middle school and turning the current middle school into an elementary school. Other attendees countered that it might require extensive renovations to convert schools, and a conversion might make the elementary schools too close together.

Claycomb education consultant Mike Rhodes played a role in answering questions at the meeting and leading the group to narrow down their priorities. This is something that he's done for districts all over the state, trying to help them reach a conHe described their feedback as helpful.

"To hear their ideas, their input, based on what they've seen as needs and priorities, I believe that will be helpful for the district as they start making a plan for the future," he said. "The kids are coming. Are kids going to be safe in portable buildings?"

KEEPING THE KIDS SAFE

Out of the four high priorities, the group's No. 1 pick was safety and security measures.

During the meeting, one attendee insistently asked about how any new buildings would address security.

To that question, Lee said the alternative to building new campuses or more space is to keep children in portable buildings that are more difficult to keep secure.

As for those new buildings, Lee said some security answers can be found in technology, such as for access control on doors and security cameras, and existing campuses could be retroactively hardened. However, designers are limited in what they can do without making a school operate like a prison, he said.

. . . .

design aspect, that everything is put in place to ensure that there are layers of protection for our kiddos and our staff."

NEXT STEPS

Before they left, some community members signed up to be on the facilities committee, which will make recommendations regarding facilities to the school board. The next chance for the board to call for a bond election is in February for a May election.

School board President Rick Beall attended the meeting last week and encouraged participants to mobilize to educate the community and bring more voters to the polls.

"Yes, we need to figure out what we're going to do, but once we figure out what we're going to do, that's not where the work stops. That's where the work starts," Beall said. "We've got to get out there, and you got to tell more people about what's going on."

In the end, Rhodes said the success of a bond depends on voters showing up to polls with the best interest for the district's children and the community at heart.

"My grandparents and my



School design firm Claycomb Associates, Architects education consultant Mike Rhodes, standing, answered questions at the Nov. 14 Springtown ISD facilities planning meeting at Goshen Creek Elementary School and led the group to narrow down their priorities.

sensus about how they want their schools to look.

Rhodes, who has worked with SISD for a few years and is a retired educator himself, said the attendees last week were a good cross-section of people who had participated in the other meetings that SISD has had this school year. Rhodes assured the audience at the meeting that securing buildings is a high priority for SISD.

"I think it's of utmost concern for every one of us who are parents, who teach in buildings, who have grandchildren. We want them to be safe," Rhodes said. "We're going to make sure that in the parents paid taxes so that I could go to school, and somebody paid taxes for them to go to school," he said. "It's significantly different, but that's the responsibility in a democratic society for us to make sure that our kids receive the quality education, the best education we can afford."



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



PHOTOS BY MADELYN EDWARDS

Karen Bernardino takes snacks out of boxes and places them on the table. She volunteers with the Snack Pack Ministry at the First United Methodist Church to provide food to local kids in need.

SNACK FROM PAGE 1

unteers was minimal as they focused on their task.

"We get our exercise," volunteer Margaret Avery said, referring to the walking around the tables.

These snack bags are delivered to 114 children who attend school at either Springtown Elementary School, Goshen Creek Elementary School or Springtown Intermediate School. These kids are identified by school counselors and are anonymous to the Snack Pack Ministry.

The snack bags provide food for the kids, who usually receive free meals at school during the week, to eat on the weekend. The food items selected are snacks that children can prepare without injuring themselves, volunteer Sallie Taylor said. Some items, like oatmeal, are doubled in the snack pack when kids are away from school longer because of holidays.

The First United Methodist Church's Snack Pack Ministry started in 2013, which is when Taylor got involved.

"I'm a retired teacher, and I know firsthand the needs of children," she said.

But not every child who needs this service is able to get a snack pack from the ministry. The number of snack packs is limited based on the ministry's funding.

"We've had to say no," Taylor said. "We had to because we cannot afford to go on up."

The program is fueled by donations, mainly from the congregation. To feed the kids, it costs about \$20 per month per child. Taylor remembers when the price was about \$15 per month per child, but that cost has gradually increased over the

years.

Avery pointed out that the group does have donors outside the church.

"We did have another sponsor, but they weren't able to do that this year," Avery said. "So, we just had to pick up the slack."

Avery uses the donated money to make bulk purchases at Sam's Club. She joined the effort because she felt called to serve, and she enjoys the work.

"We're just kind of like a well-oiled machine," she said, describing how efficiently the group carries out its tasks.

Others in the group described their volunteer work as something good to do and a way to be involved.

"If there's a need, I just show up," said Lou Bernardino, the church's lay leader. Bernardino, who is retired, comes to volunteer with the Snack Pack Ministry every week with his wife Karen.



Snack Pack Ministry volunteer Betty Kempf leads the charge in bagging snacks to give to local children in need. The volunteers circle around the tables at the First United Methodist Church with plastic bags and place each snack item in the bag.



Lelia Bird, left, and Betty Kempf, right, share space at a table as they diligently work to unpack snack boxes and make snack packs for children living with food insecurity.

Volunteers are welcome to join the Snack Pack Ministry, Taylor said. The group usually meets at 8:45 a.m. on Thursdays at First United Methodist Church in the fellowship hall. "We always need more hands," she said. When asked why people should support the Snack Pack Ministry's efforts, Taylor had a simple answer. "Because there's hungry children out there that don't get enough food through the weekend," she said, adding that it is difficult for children to learn when they don't get enough food.

Donations to the Snack Pack Ministry can be sent to P.O. Box 266, Springtown, TX 76082.



Thanksgiving

This special season gives us time to reflect on all of life's blessings that make each year better than the last. At Pinnacle Bank, we have so much to be thankful for. Most of all, the relationships we've built with our customers and our community. Thank you for allowing us to be your banking partner.

Wishing you a wonderful and warm Thanksgiving, from all of us at Pinnacle Bank.

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Legislators begin filing bills ahead of session; DACA recipients urge quick congressional action

LEGISLATORS BEGIN FILING BILLS AHEAD OF SESSION

6A Springtown Epigraph

Texas legislators are off to the races, filing more than 850 bills on Monday, the first day of filing season for the 88th session, which begins Jan. 10.

The Austin American-Statesman reported the potential laws, constitutional amendments and propositions address everything from property taxes to border security, access to guns, abortion, education and health care.

Thousands more bills will be filed prior to the March 10 deadline. Gov. Greg Abbott, Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick and House Speaker Dade Phelan have not yet announced their legislative priorities.

Property tax relief is likely to be a top item, given past remarks from the state's leaders. With a hefty state surplus of \$27 billion predicted, two bills would carve into that surplus to reduce property taxes.

Other topics drawing proposed legislation:

 \cdot Democrats have filed a bevy of bills to increase gun safety and limit access to certain firearms.

CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS By Gary Borders

Gary Borders is a veteran award-winning Texas journalist. He published a number of community newspapers in Texas during a 30-year span, include ing in Longview, Fort Stockton, Nacogdoches and Cedar Park. gborders@texaspress.com.

· Eight Democratic state senators filed a bill that would create exceptions to the state's abortion ban in the case of rape or incest, as well as additional medical exceptions.

· Legalizing gambling will again be before the Legislature, as it has the past several sessions.

· Another Democratic measure would expand Medicaid benefits for women both before and after birth.

DACA RECIPIENTS URGE QUICK CONGRESSIONAL ACTION

A number of recipients of the Obama-era program known as Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) are urging Congress to act during the lame duck session to give them permanent protection against deportation.

The Texas Standard reported Austin accountant Edilsa Lopez was one of several recipients who met with Congressional leaders to tell their stories and urge them to adopt such legislation.

Nearly 600,000 children who were brought here by parents who are not U.S. citizens are protected under DACA, while another 400,000 are eligible but have been stymied from enrolling by legal challenges.

"This is my third time in D.C. flving to meet with congressmen from both sides of the aisle and they just keep on talking and talking," said Diego Corzo, 32, of Austin. "I think it's time that they finally put an importance to find a solution — a long-term solution — for the DACA recipients, for the Dreamers, so that we stop living in limbo."

RRC INSPECTORS SENT TO REEVES COUNTY AFTER QUAKE

The Texas Railroad Commission sent inspectors to Reeves County in West Texas Thursday after the area sible arrival since summer. was rocked with a 5.4 magnitude earthquake near its border with Culberson County. The agents are examining disposal activity at injection wells in the area.

Tremors from the earthquake were felt in both San Antonio and Austin.

STATE NOW BUSING MIGRANTS TO PHILADELPHIA

The City of Brotherly love is the latest recipient of migrants being bused from Texas border communities. the Texas Tribune reported. The first bus arrived in Philadelphia last Wednesday.

"Since April, Texas' busing strategy has successfully provided much-needed relief to our border communities overwhelmed by the historic influx of migrants caused by President Biden's reckless open border policies," Abbott said.

Texas has been sending busloads of migrants to Washington, D.C., Chicago, and New York in an attempt to pressure Biden to stiffen his immigration policies. Philadelphia Mayor Jim Kenney said the city welcomed the migrants and has

been preparing for their pos-"As a proud welcoming city, we will greet our newly

ty and respect," said Kenney. **SAFE DRIVING URGED DURING HOLIDAY SEASON**

arrived neighbors with digni-

The Texas Department of Public Transportation is urging holiday season motorists to exert caution and to especially not drink and drive.

The state saw 48,641 traffic crashes during the holiday season from Dec.1, 2021, to Jan. 1, 2022, with 433 fatalities and 1,695 serious injuries. Nearly a quarter of those deaths - 23% - were related to drunk drivers, according to TXDOT.

"Get together with family and friends and have a great time, but please find an alternative way home if vou choose to drink." Marc Williams, TxDOT executive director, said. "You have many options available."

Those options include a designated sober driver, calling a taxi or rideshare service, public transportation, or just staying put.

FED FUNDS SOUGHT AFTER NORTH TEXAS STORMS

Abbott has requested a disaster declaration from the U.S. Small Business Administration for Northeast Texas counties that were hit by severe weather and tornadoes earlier this month.

An SBA disaster declaration would make federal funds available for residents and business owners in Lamar. Morris, Bowie, Camp, Cass, Delta, Fannin, Marion, Red River, Titus, and Upshur counties.

The program, if approved by the SBA, would provide long-term. low-interest loans to qualifying persons who sustained damage and losses.

COVID-19 CASES RISE SLIGHTLY

The number of new cases of COVID-19 during the past week in Texas rose to 13,104, with 57 deaths reported by the Coronavirus Resource Center at Johns Hopkins University. Cases of lab-confirmed COVID-19 hospitalizations in the state stayed steady at 993, according to the Texas Department of State Health Services.







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J & E's service area is large because of its popularity. However, the business is based in Springtown, at 1825 West Highway 199, about a half-mile out past the high school.

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If you have budget concern, financing is available with approved credit.

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Thank you. That is all.

TY!

That's not a shortened nickname for my friend Tyler.

If communicate by text message, you have likely either sent or received "ty" as a message. (Because actually typing the complete two words "thank you" is incredibly time consuming and labor intensive).

Because I'm "one of those people" (you know who we are), I've created a keyboard shortcut that works on all my devices so that when I type "ty" it automatically corrects to "Thank you!"

If you send me a "ty" I'll know what you mean, but I'll silently judge you as much as if you send "k" instead of "ok.'

I'm real judgy like that.

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.discovervo

the world.

cynical, or angry.

I just want to spend a little

extra time-personally-of

gratitude in a time when we

have constant reminders of

the challenges that exist in

ness and division that it is

There is so much broken-

easy to become discouraged,

unhurried reflection and

We have a holiday coming making everyone wait while up here in the good ol' US of A that is the most abbreviat-I wax eloquent over all our ed of all the biggies, so Happy blessings. T-giving, ya'll! Let's eat!

The older I get the more I want to linger over the "Thanks" part of Thanksgiving.

Make no mistake, I enjoy the food, family, and football. I'm looking forward to being together with our kids, grands, and extended family for the feast.

he was 41 years old, had been in partnership with his father in the mercantile business, and was a part time preacher. And I know that he wrote these words: And I have no intention of "When upon life's billows

vou are tempest tossed, When you are discouraged, thinking all is lost,

world was like for Johnson

Oatman in 1897. I know that

Count your many blessings, name them one by one,

And it will surprise you what the Lord hath done. Count your blessings, name

them one by one; Count your blessings, see what God hath done;

Count your blessings, name

them one by one; Count your many blessings,

I don't really know what the see what God hath done." I grew up singing that song and I know that I have, on many occasions, had my perspective changed by intentionally reflecting in specific and unhurried gratitude.

Could it be that our attitudes and perspectives on life are largely determined by where we choose to focus? (That may or may not have been a rhetorical question).

The Thanksgiving season gives us an opportunity to shift our focus. A day or two off from work may give us time for that unhurried reflection.

I hope so.

But what about the rest of the time?

I've done something for years with my family. I'll call

it the "That is all" message. It's a quick text pause in a moment in the middle of an ordinary day that says something like, "I love you. I'm proud of you. That is all."

No response is required and everyone can get back to their day in progress. But I can't write it without meaning it. It just doesn't happen.

So maybe there are times when we don't have the time to sit and count our blessings one by one, but we have time to recognize that God is with us even in the messy middle of life.

And we can breathe a simple prayer: Thank you. That is all.

Be amazing today, my friend.

OBITUARIES

Lawrence White 1945 - 2022

Lawrence Dean White. 77, passed away Monday, November 14, 2022 in Springtown.

No service is planned at this time.

Lawrence was born March 8, 1945, in Fort Worth, Texas to Lawrence and Rosie White.

He served in the U.S. Navy for 26 years, and Coast Guard Auxiliary for 15 years. He was a member of the First United Methodist Church.

He is preceded in death by his parents; brothers, Don White and Cal White; and daughter, Teresa Anne.

Survivors include his wife, Patricia Hughes White; sister, Lynda; niece, Shawnda Hughes; nephew, Chris



Hughes and wife Jana, Brandon Hughes and wife Carlie.

> The Springtown Epigraph, Nov. 23, 2022 Edition



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Here come the turkeys: **Texas Water Utilities** launches Wishbone program

FROM STAFF REPORTS

Some families served by Texas Water Utilities will receive Greenberg Smoked Turkeys for Thanksgiving this year, as part of the company's Project Wishbone program to help needy people, according to public relations firm ECPR, in a news release.

Launched in 2012, Project Wishbone provides access to a Thanksgiving meal for Texas Water Utilities customers who may not be able to afford one.

Pre-registered customers on the Water Assist program, a payment assistance program for qualifying low-income customers, will receive a pre-cooked smoked turkey delivered directly to their home in time for the holiday, the release stated.

"This is the 11th year we have been able to help families across Texas during the holiday season through our

Project Wishbone program," said Jeffrey L. McIntyre, president of Texas Water Utilities, in the release. "We are members of the communities we serve, and it is important for us to be able to give back and make a real impact."

This year, Texas Water Utilities plans to distribute a total of 98 turkeys from Greenberg Smoked Turkeys in Tyler to customers in 23 Texas counties, including

Parker County.

Texas Water Utilities, a business unit of SouthWest Water Company, is the second largest investor-owned water and wastewater utility in Texas, providing service to more than 44,000 water connections and 17,700 wastewater connections, the release stated, noting Texas Water Utilities owns 149 water and 31 wastewater systems across 36 Texas counties.

Sheriff's office: Just hang up on arrest notification

an employee of the sheriff's dent for money to be sent lease that sheriff's personnel

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to the scammer by various means in order to lift the warrant, threatening to come and arrest the person if they

do not send the money. Parker County Sheriff Russ Authier said in a news re-

will never contact the public seeking money in exchange of lifting warrants.

"Be aware of scammers," Authier said in the release. "Simply hang up and report the incident."



ON FISHING

Rigging a fishing boat

I was asked the other day about what it takes to rig a fishing boat. A well-equipped boat may help you locate fish, but it doesn't necessarily mean you'll be able to catch more fish. Today's article will discuss how I would rig my boat. You can spend a lot of money on the latest technology and you can also get rigged sufficiently with some good equipment at a fairly reasonable cost. Nothing is cheap these days, as you all know.

I started striped bass/catfish/bass/crappie fishing many years ago out of a little old 15-foot 73 model Star-Craft Tri-hull with a walkthrough windshield. This old tri-hull caught a lot of fish once I put a few accessories on it. The good thing about striped bass/catfish/crappie fishing is that it does not re-

FISHING REPORT

for bird action to point you to active fish.

of the Katy Bridge. Look for the birds.



ON FISHING By Michael Acosta

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

help you navigate which is

critical especially with a low

ity these days are excellent,

some great choices.

lake. The quality and sensitiv-

The next item I cannot live

without is a trolling motor. It

is optional, but a good manually trolling motor will do

the trick. It costs more to get

the GPS-controlled trolling

motor, but I highly recom-

mend one as it can hold you

without using an anchor and

almost is like having a deck

hand helping on the boat. I

and I count on that feature.

have one on both of my boats

ally take a whole lot to rig it out, but there are a few items I would recommend.

The most important item on a fishing boat in my opinion is the electronics. You can spend multiple thousands to rig the boat with huge screens and multiple transducers to see below to the sides and actually see the fish e.g. Live Scope). They are nice to have and can help, but a good fish finder that can see below and to the sides with a GPS can be had for less than \$600 or so. The GPS is not required but having it will allow you to save your spots and

Comanche Creek Reservoir reports continue to be excellent for channel catfish, tilapia

and largemouth bass. Largemouth bass are good on most any presentation and you

will get catfish hitting your bass presentations. Limits of catfish are common on cut

and prepared baits. Tilapia can be caught on worms fished under a cork, though many

Lake Whitney striped bass limits continue to be common on the main lake and upstream

anglers are catching these tasty invasive species with cast nets.



PHOTO COURTESY MICHAEL ACOSTA

Acosta's current rig is a 2016 2420 GTS Blazer Bay boat, powered by a 250hp Mercury XS motor. It has a Lowrance 9HD GEN 3 GPS - Courtesy LED Lighting - Minn Kota 112 Ipolit - 8' Power Pole and accessories. It is very roomy and it has plenty of storage space.

There are several manufacturers like Minn Kota and Motorguide that many use. The electronic manufacturers like Lowrance for instance, make a trolling motor with built in transducers to work wireless with their electronics. This option is costly, but I may consider this option in the future. Any of these trolling motors will allow you to cover water quietly and efficiently. A trolling motor will

Most every bass boat out there has a trolling motor. Choose a trolling motor with sufficient thrust for your boat. It will be worth the money in the long run to get the larger motor. If you're ever on the lake in the wind, you'll know why. I also rec-

ommend a good saltwater rated trolling motor in our brackish lakes (Granbury has a high salt content).

If you are going to fish several poles with live bait as most striped bass/catfish/crappie fishermen do, vou will more than likely need some good rod holders. Losing fishing equipment in the lake is no fun. There are several types of rod holders available on the market today. Some are plastic and others are made of metal. I would recommend using good stainless steel solidly mounted rod holders. There are many different brands that are good. I personally use Driftmaster Rod holders made by Black River Tool. I personally have never lost a rod in one of these holders. You can also easily remove your pole from the holder

when a fish has it bent over in half.

Those are the main items that one would need to rig a boat for striped bass/catfish/crappie fishing. There are other accessories like live wells (many boats have these already), baitwells, radios, etc. The simple rig with a good fish finder, and a trolling motor, will work for most any kind of fishing on our area lakes. A livewell may be desired for black bass fishing, but a good ice chest/fish box is all you need for the other species (assuming of course you bring those crappie, striped bass and/or catfish home to eat).

Hope this helps on rigging a boat for fishing. Don't forget the safety items required by law such as life jackets, oar, fire extinguisher, throw cushion, etc.

Alliance to hold

Edward Jones

> edwardjones.com | Member SIPC

Granbury water temperatures have fallen to the low 60s with the recent cold snap. Striped bass fishing has turned on some on the lower ends on live bait and jigs. Crappie fishing continues to be good to excellent on jigs and small minnows. Largemouth bass in numbers has been fair to good on soft plastics fished near creek entrances and main lake points. Catfish action has also picked up on the upper ends on shallow flats. Look

allow you to fish downlines, work ledges/humps/banks, control your drift, troll and will also offer some stealth.

blood drive

FROM STAFF REPORTS

The Azle Area Ministerial Alliance will hold a Carter BloodCare community blood drive from 3:30-6:30 p.m. Dec. 5 at FUMC Azle, 200 Church St.

Residents are encouraged to give blood because donating blood helps local patients in urgent need of transfusions because of surgeries, severe trauma. cancer treatments, organ transplants, difficulties during childbirth, and agerelated health issues. Carter BloodCare stated in a news release.

"The need for blood is

nonstop, even during the holidays. In fact, every two seconds, someone needs a lifesaving transfusion," the release stated.

And as special thanks for giving in December, each Carter BloodCare donor will receive a colorful fleece blanket, available while supplies last, the release stated.

To sign up, access https://ww3.greatpartners.org/donor/schedules/ drive_schedule/127876. For more information, call Colleen Horan at 817-412-5372.

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5:00 am - 2:00 pm



BOOK REVIEW

New book shows that it's not that easy being Queen

TERRI SCHLICHENMEYER

You couldn't hide, even if you wanted to.

There'd be nowhere to go – and besides, everyone knows who you are. Your entire life has been catalogued, from the moment you were born until probably just a few seconds ago, and it will be until you're dead, plus a week or two. As in the new book, "The Queen: Her Life" by Andrew Morton, it 'reigns' on your parade every day.

Ten-year-old Princess Elizabeth was not a fan of her uncle's lady friend.

Even at that tender age, she was aware that Mrs. Simpson had turned everyone's life upside down, including that of her beloved uncle. David was once full of pranks and play, a favorite in the York household nursery, but with that woman around, everything changed. Even Elizabeth's little sister, Margaret, could understand the significance of Uncle David's decision regarding that woman. It meant, of course, that Elizabeth would one day be queen.

It was a responsibility she was never supposed to have, but she assumed it with an astounding maturity and no complaints. For the rest of her childhood, her growingup, when she was a young bride, a mother, and a negotiator of prickly family issues, Elizabeth never wavered in her solemn promise to give herself to her country.

And yet, as Morton shows, there was a side of the queen that peeked out beneath the edge of those colorful hats on a delightfully regular basis. She was "obsessed" with horses, adored her dogs, and was able to pivot cleanly whenever there was a problem; in fact, she and Prince Philip "loved" when things went wrong at events they attended. At a young age, Elizabeth had a keen sense of the absurd, and she was able to make fun out of even the biggest annoyances, at home and abroad.

Sadly, however, because of her position, her role as the leader of the Church of England, politics, and British culture, that roll-with-thepunches ability didn't necessarily extend to her family...

Considering all the coverage that was available when Queen Elizabeth II died recently, you might think you know everything there ever was to know about Her Majesty. Betcha don't. Bet you need to read "The Queen: Her Life."

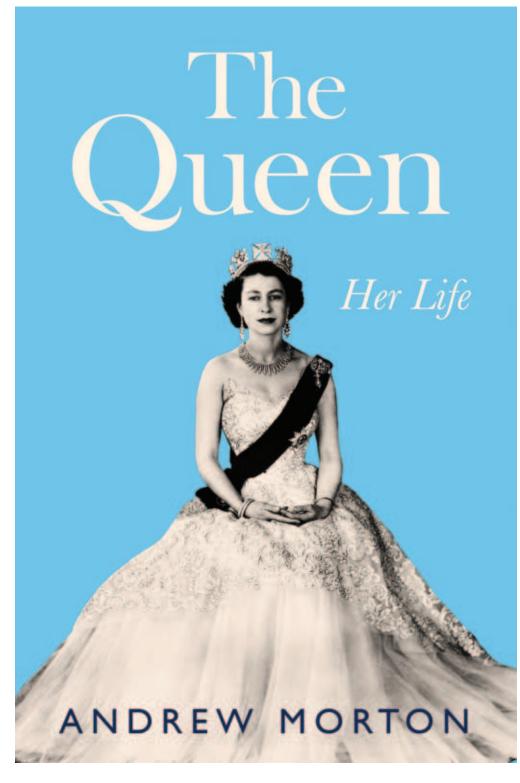
Opening with his lively introduction, author Andrew Morton surprises readers with all kinds of tidbits and tales and a humorous anecdote of an angry and vindictive 10-year-old princess and a perfectly upper-crust snit.

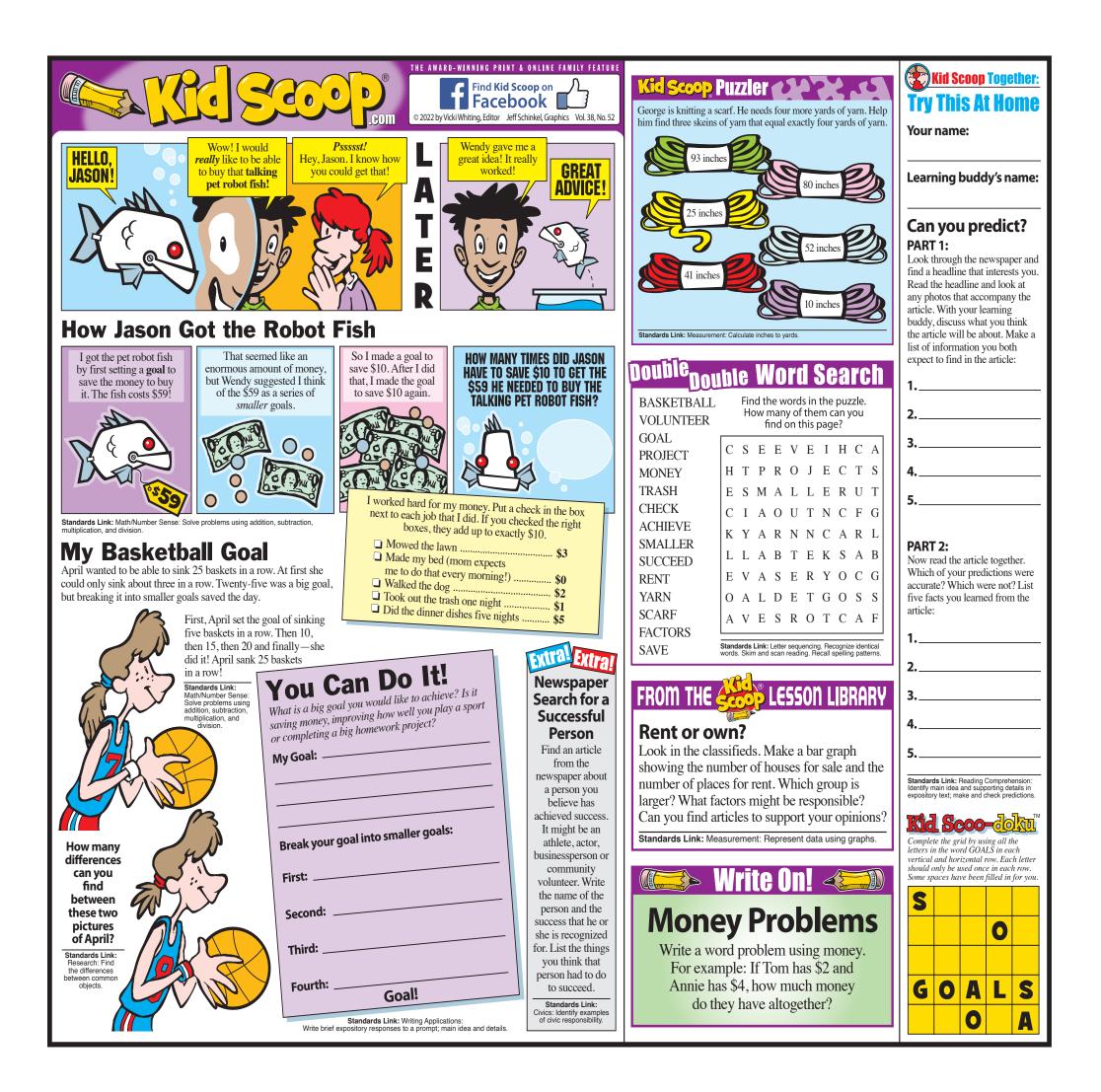
It's this kind of humanness that Morton brings to the queen's biography, to show that she was Royal by birth but Everyman at heart – although sometimes, in many places inside this book, readers might question such a sentiment. On that, Morton shows a metamorphosis that begins with resigned acceptance, continued with steely-strict rule-keeping, and culminates in the softer monarch we came to love.

Surely, this is something historians will enjoy and the most avid Anglophile should pounce on this book which, despite its heft, is a quick read. "The Queen: Her Life" will make you smile; your enjoyment will be hard to hide.

"The Queen: Her Life" by Andrew Morton

c.2022, Grand Central Publishing, \$30.00, 448 pages





2022 Springtown Christmas Parade Route



Second Street, Springtown, Texas 76082, Mark envelope in lower left corner "RFP Contract for Veterinary Services for Animals Impounded at Springtown Animal Control" so that the proposals will not be opened until the appointed hour. Proposals may also be submitted by courier, hand delivered in a sealed envelope or box to Christina Derr. Director of Administrative Services/Interim City Secretary, City of Springtown, 102 East Second Street, Springtown, Texas 76082. Proposals submitted must be received before proposal closing on mber 9 at 2:00 p.m. Faxed emailed, or USPS mailed bid pro accepted. Proposal documents may be obtained free of charge at the City of Springtown, 102 East Second Street, Springtown, TX 76082, by emailing Christina Derr, Director Administrative Services/Interim City Secretary, cderr@cityofspringtown.com. Questions regarding the Request for Proposal shall be directed to: Christina Derr, City of Springtown Director Administrative Services/Interim City Secretary, cderr@cityofspringtown.com. Questions regarding this Proposal must not be directed to other City of Springtown council, commission, committee, or staff members. Clarification requests will not be accepted by telephone. Questions pertaining to this Proposal must be received no later December 7, 2022

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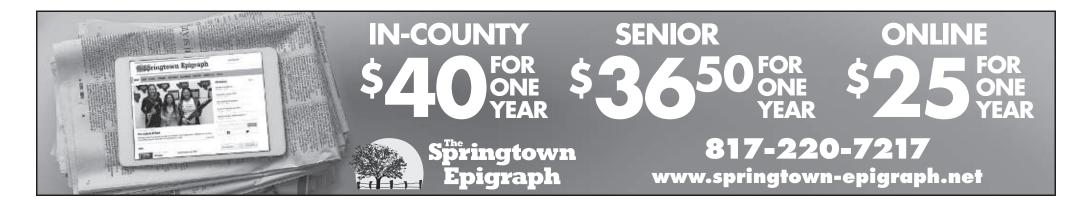
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Springtown 817-220-7217 Epigraph







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THURSDAY, November 24, 2022

Springtown basketball girls eager for action



PHOTO BY JEFF PRINCE From left, senior Ashlynn Dickey fights for a rebound despite an injured nose.

BY JEFF PRINCE jeff@azlenews.net

A collision with a basketball opponent bloodied the nose of Springtown senior Ashlynn Dickey at a recent game.

Dickey wasn't interested in resting on the bench. She stuffed cotton up a nostril

and continued playing. One of just two seniors on the roster this season, Dickey is poised to become the team's top sparkplug and playmaker.

"Ashlynn has stepped up and been a fantastic leader for us this year," said head coach Kyle Sivadon. "I can't say enough good things

about her just keeping everybody together. Her leadership this year has helped out immensely."

On Nov. 4, the Springtown Lady Pines opened their basketball season with a road game at Wichita Falls, where they lost in overtime. Four days later, they lost another road game at Arlington

Seguin.

Then, on Nov. 11, they played their home opener against Parker-Tarrant Home School and won 58-24. The Warriors roster included several tall players, and the Porcupines struggled at times for rebounds but found the basket regularly on their end of the court.

Paige Winstead, a junior, said Springtown's chemistry is improving with each game.

"We are playing good together, and it's working out for us," she said. "Everyone is friends. Everybody gets along. We have a fun time in the locker room and on the court."

She wants the team to "go

far" in district competition. Last year, as a sophomore, Winstead played on the team that finished in last place in District 7-4A.

The first-place team that year, Argyle, was 12-0 in district and 37-1 overall, losing its only game

SEE LADY PINES, PAGE 13

Springtown football wraps up season

BY JEFF PRINCE

jeff@azlenews.net

The 3-8 season record was less than expected and being knocked out of the playoffs in the first round smarted, but the Springtown Porcupines left everything on the field at every game during the 2022 football season.

That's hardnosed football, and it's something to relish.

Head coach Brian Hulett wants to win as badly as anyone, but looks beyond the record. He sees a team filled with hardworking young men who never took shortcuts or shirked responsibilities.

"They showed up every day with a great attitude and did

their best," he said. A great attitude "will take them way farther in life than any win on a football field," he said.

The season began in late August with a 41-7 loss at Alvarado. The next week, the Porcupines won their home opener 37-13 over Graham. Then, they lost to Wichita Falls Hirschi before rebounding to win against Creekview to even its record at 2-2, with two nonconference games remaining.

Springtown dropped both games and was 2-4 heading into the district portion of its schedule.

SEE FOOTBALL, PAGE 13



PHOTO BY JEFF PRINCE seasons in 2023.

Drake Doggett is one of many juniors who will return for their senior Cheerleaders, fans, boosters, parents and fellow students supported their football team all season.



PHOTO BY STEVEN MARTER

Nathan Johnson is expected to return next season as running back and linebacker.



The Porcupines won their district opener over Mineral Wells in convincing fashion, 56-22, giving hope that they had reclaimed their magic touch. The next three games, however, ended in losses.

The Porcupines made the playoffs as the final seed and was pitted against tough district champ Canyon Randall. Springtown kept the game close and trailed by just three points at halftime before faltering in the second half in a 31-7 loss.

Many of Springtown's best players are underclassmen and should return stronger and more experienced next season. Quarterback Hudson Hulett, running back Nathan Johnson, cornerback Drake Doggett, tight ends Kelby Castro and Brady McDonald, wideouts Brayden Fox and Daishune Elam, linebackers Yair Hernandez and Cameron Mashburn, and linemen Dallin Fabrizius, Ridge Westendorf, Cambryn Holbrooks and Zane Sudduth are some of the players expected to return for their senior seasons.

This year's sophomores

who made an impact and should better than ever include Braydon Butler, Hayden Nichols, Dylan Crutchfield, Darren Sweely, Landon Downes, Carson Ashley, James Snyder, Breyden Kearby and Bryce Smith.



PHOTOS BY JEFF PRINCE

Dawson Doggett is one of three freshmen to claim a spot on the varsity roster.

LADY PINES FROM PAGE 12

to Hardin-Jefferson in the state semifinals. This year, Argyle moved up to Class 5A, giving the Pines a break. Still, Springtown's district includes talented teams including Decatur, Bridgeport, Castleberry, Lake Worth and Krum.

The best of them might be Decatur, Dickey's alma mater. In the final game last season, Decatur defeated Springtown, 91-20.

"Last year, they beat us bad, but this year, we're coming for them," Dickey said with a laugh. "We are going to put some points on the board."

Dickey grew up in Decatur. Last year, her family relocated to Springtown, and Dickey was new to the town, school and basketball team — and dealing with feeling homesick. Her talent earned her a starting position, and she focused on basketball.

This year, she is pivotal on

the court and comfortable in her surroundings.

"I'm settled in pretty good," she said. "It was different at first, but you get used to it."

She considers herself a Springtown girl now and expects the Porcupines to perform well this season.

"If we keep having a positive attitude, then we are going to keep getting wins," she said.

Sivadon eyes a team filled with potential. The roster includes talented freshmen, a hard-playing foreign exchange student and a couple of valuable move-ins, including Kelsey Beaman.

Last year, Beaman played on Weatherford Christian's basketball team that won the TAPPS 2A state championship. More recently, she played on the Lady Porcupines volleyball team that reached the playoffs.

More than half of the names on this year's basketball roster are new, although a handful are familiar, such as Haylee Sanborn, Makenzee Sessums and Allison Ford, who joined the team late last season after moving to town.

"We've got almost an entirely new team from what we had last year, but they play very well together," Sivadon said. "I'm seeing a lot of good teamwork."

Like Beaman, several players are fresh off volleyball season and transitioning to basketball.

"I'm super excited our volleyball team did so good," Sivadon said. "They got to experience that success, and that success in volleyball bleeds over into basketball."

Team goals include establishing a winning record and making the playoffs. The Lady Pines haven't reached the basketball postseason since 2016.

"We still have a long way to go and a lot of things to fix, but I'm super excited about where we're at," Sivadon said.

Paige Winstead, a junior, is a returning player from last year's team.



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