



Growing the district

DON MUNSCH | AZLE NEWS
As the district continues to expand, Hilltop Elementary School is undergoing construction and is scheduled to open this fall.

SEE STORY
PAGE A2

Azle police, city officials remember long-time officer

BY DON MUNSCH
don@azlenews.net

A former Azle Police Department police officer who spent more than three decades here died last week. Sgt. Bob Spohn died Jan. 13. He had retired from Azle PD

on Jan. 3 and had been dealing with an illness. He was 57. “We are all grieving Sgt. Spohn’s passing,” Azle City Manager Tom Muir said in an email. “He admirably served the community for almost 35 years with distinction. He touched the hearts

of so many citizens as well as every member of the Police Department.” Muir said he expected Spohn’s services to be held next week. APD Chief Ben Hall said in an email that Spohn was the longest-standing member of

the department and “was as proud to serve this community on his last day here as he was on his first. He enjoyed a lengthy history and with this agency and was really our tie to where we came from as a department. He was a mentor, friend and leader.”

He added: “It is impossible to summarize a 30+ year career with any degree of accuracy. His last position is an administrative sergeant had him keeping the wheels on the bus in a business that is complex and ever changing. He was our TCOLE

(Texas Commission on Law Enforcement) training coordinator and accreditation manager and supervised dispatch (and) all critical components of our organization.” Spohn’s impact on the de-

PLEASE SEE **SPOHN** | A10



PHOTO COURTESY OF TORY ROEBER

Tory Roeber takes a picture with her 6-year-old son Isaac. Isaac was attacked by two dogs about a week and a half before Christmas.

Reno parents file lawsuit after young boy is attacked by dogs

BY MADELYN EDWARDS
madelyn@azlenews.net

About a week and a half before Christmas, two dogs attacked a Reno Elementary School kindergartener while he was walking home from the school bus stop. Now his parents, David and Katherine “Tory” Roeber, are suing the dogs’ owner. Tory Roeber said the incident began when her 6-year-old son Isaac saw that two dogs — a Lab mix and a shep-

herd mix — were loose and coming after him. She said he hid in a bush, but the dogs found him, dragged him away from the bush and bit him multiple times. Roeber said the dogs had been a problem for years, and she had been in contact with the Reno Police Department about the issue. On the day of the attack, Isaac was dropped off at the bus stop after school later than usual because of a road closure. The bus driver called

Tory Roeber after dropping him off to make sure he made it home. When Roeber sent her older son to check on Isaac, he couldn’t find Isaac and said it appeared that something was going on at the home with the problem dogs on Carmen Street. At that point, Roeber promptly sprang into action. “I literally just jumped in my car, no shoes on, nothing, and drove up to the dog

PLEASE SEE **ATTACK** | A8

AISD schools have life-saving devices at the ready

BY DON MUNSCH
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Emergency personnel had minutes to revive Buffalo Bills safety Damar Hamlin when he collapsed at Paycor Stadium in Cincinnati two weeks ago during a Monday

Night Football game. What’s true about Hamlin when he went into cardiac arrest is true for any team personnel and medical staff when an athlete enters cardiac arrest. An AED — or automated external defibrillator — was used for Hamlin

as part of his treatment and is used when necessary by school staff in Azle ISD. Hamlin survived and recovered and is in rehabilitation. Evan Poer, Azle ISD athletic trainer, discussed the district’s use of AEDs last week. As explained by OSHA.com,

the Occupational Safety and Health Association website, an AED is a medical device designed to analyze the heart rhythm and deliver an electric shock to victims of ventricular fibrillation to restore the heart rhythm to normal.

“Ventricular fibrillation is the uncoordinated heart rhythm most often responsible for sudden cardiac arrest,” OSHA.com stated. “Sudden cardiac arrest occurs when ventricular fibrillation takes place or when the heart stops beating al-

together. Without medical attention, the victim collapses, lose consciousness, becomes unresponsive and dies. Many victims have no prior history of heart disease and are stricken without

PLEASE SEE **AEDS** | A3



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Growing the district

Public gets second chance to evaluate school boundaries

BY DON MUNSCH
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Parents and residents had another chance to view proposed new boundaries established for the Azle ISD elementary school campuses during a meeting Jan. 9 at the Swarm Conference Room at Azle ISD's administration building.

Parents and residents had another chance to view proposed new boundaries established for the Azle ISD elementary school campuses during a meeting Jan. 9 at the Swarm Conference Room at Azle ISD's administration building.

Hudson Huff, consultant from Zonda, led a presentation about demographics and showed the proposed boundaries in a PowerPoint program.

About 12 residents/parents attended the meeting. A previous public meeting on the proposed boundaries was held in November. Hilltop Elementary School, the sixth AISD K-fourth campus, is undergoing construction and scheduled to open this fall just off FM 730 South. The school will be located between 730 and South Stewart Street.

The district will present the new map to the school board for its review at the Jan. 23 meeting and then the board will vote on the map at its Feb. 27 meeting.

Azle ISD Superintendent Todd Smith told attendees at

sale price in Azle ISD has risen 111% since 2011, an increase of \$229,682. The average existing home sale price within Azle ISD has increased more than 70% over the last 11 years, rising \$141,255.

Attendees also saw information on new home starts and closings and active building subdivisions and future subdivisions. They also saw information about student density and enrollment projections for all campuses, elementary through secondary. The district is expected to grow by nearly 1,000 students in five years and nearly 2,000 in 10 years. This fall, AISD had 7,113 students, and enrollment grew by 224 students.

"As much as you have grown over the last several years, the district has been very thoughtful in trying to evaluate when those boundary adjustments would be made," Huff said.

He noted there have been just three specific years over the last 20-plus years in which the district has made any significant shifts or changes related to school boundaries.

"This is just part of growth, it's part of what districts have to deal with and manage, and that's part of being a part of a growing district," he said.

Smith explained that Hilltop will be staffed with

current Azle ISD staff with other campuses for the most part. The campus already has named its principal — Amy Rollmann, formerly principal at Eagle Heights Elementary School and district intervention principal.

Attendees also learned about feeder patterns for the elementary campuses, as schools in the southern end — Eagle Heights, Silver Creek and Hilltop — will be in a zone with Azle Elementary and Azle Junior High School and the northern tier elementary students — Cross Timbers, Walnut Creek and Liberty — will attend Hoover Elementary and Forte Junior High School. Policies have been devised allowing current third and seventh graders to stay at their respective campuses for next school year if attendance zone changes affect them, but they must provide their own transportation. Siblings of current third graders may be eligible to stay at their campuses if they meet the district's intra-district transfer criteria.

At the end of the presentation, Smith took questions from attendees about the proposed zoning changes,



DON MUNSCH | AZLE NEWS
At a public meeting Jan. 9, Azle ISD Superintendent Todd Smith makes a point during a discussion. New school boundaries are being produced for next year because of the opening of Hilltop Elementary School, which will be located between FM 730 South and South Stewart Street.

such as specific feeder patterns for the elementary campuses.

Parents Lindsey Hepler and Kim Cox told the News that they can live with the new boundaries. Hepler said she will have a child in high school and a child at Walnut Creek Elementary School next year.

"I kinda wanted to hear just the questions that people asked," she said about the meeting, hoping that people understand "that change is good sometimes."

Cox said she wanted to find out whether then proposed map was a finalized plan.

"And it kinda seems like it's pretty final — there's no other options," she said, adding that she was aware it is not formally approved but is a final product.

Her son is in fifth grade and will have to change schools next year, but she understands there has to be a boundary somewhere.

"I'm kinda OK with it," she said.

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Azle School Menu Jan 23 - 27, 2023

BREAKFAST:
PreK-4th Grade, 7-12th Grade \$1.55
5-6th Grade FREE
2nd Meal \$2.00
Visitors/Employees \$2.75

LUNCH:
PreK-4th Grade \$2.55
5-6th Grade \$2.75
7-12th Grade \$2.55
2nd Meal \$3.20
Visitors & Employees \$3.75

PreK - 4th

BREAKFAST: Everyday - Assorted Fruits and Cereal, Juice, White or Chocolate Milk, Graham Crackers, Toast
Mon Cereal Bar w/string cheese, Apple **Tues** Cinna Mini, Orange Craisins
Weds Kolache, Orange **Thurs** Breakfast Pizza, Cheery craisins **Fri** Strawberry Cream Cheese Bagel, Banana

LUNCH: Everyday - Variety of milk. Your choice of 1 entree & 1 fruit or juice
Mon Sun butter & Jelly w/string cheese, Max Sticks w/marinera, Broccoli, Applesauce, **Tues** Chicken Tacos, Beefy Mac w/ roll, Peas **Weds** Chicken Nuggets w/roll, Turkey &, Cheese Sandwich, Mashed potatoes w/ gravy **Thurs** Spaghetti w/ meat sauce & roll, Chili Dog **Fri** Pepperoni Pizza, Cheese Pizza, Chicken Fajita wrap w/ tortilla, chips, Crinkle French Fries

GRADES 5TH - 8TH

BREAKFAST: Everyday - Assorted Fruits and Cereal, Juice, White or Chocolate Milk, Yogurt w/Granola
Mon Breakfast Pizza, Apple **Tues** Sausage Patty, Eggs, Toast, Peaches **Weds** Cinnamon Roll, Orange **Thurs** Peach Parfait, Applesauce, **Fri** Pancakes & Sausage Patty, Banana,

LUNCH: Everyday: Variety of milk. Your choice of 1 entree & 1 fruit or juice, rolls, crackers • Salad bar offered daily
Mon Sun butter & Jelly w/string cheese, Max Sticks w/marinera, Broccoli **Tues** Chicken Tacos, Beefy Mac w/ roll, Peas **Weds** Chicken Nuggets w/roll, Turkey &, Cheese Sandwich, Mashed, potatoes w/ gravy **Thurs** Spaghetti w/ meat sauce & roll, Chili, Dog **Fri** Pepperoni Pizza, Cheese Pizza, Chicken Fajita wrap w/ tortilla, chips, Crinkle French Fries, Peaches

HIGH SCHOOL

BREAKFAST: Everyday - Assorted Fruits and Cereal, Juice, White or Chocolate Milk, Yogurt w/Granola
Mon Breakfast Pizza, Apple **Tues** Sausage Patty, Eggs & Toast Peaches
Weds Cinnamon Roll, Applesauce **Thurs** Peach Parfait, Orange **Fri** Pancakes & Sausage Patty, Banana

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Mon Steak Fingers w/Roll, Cheese enchiladas, Cheese, Pizza, Cheeseburger, Stir fry, Veggies, French Fries **Tues** Chicken Nuggets w/Roll, Chicken Nachos, General Tso, Chicken Alfredo, Sloppy Joe, French Fries **Weds** Managers Choice, Beef Tacos, Kung Pao Chicken, w/Rice, Spaghetti & Meatballs w/Roll, Spicy Chicken Sandwich, French Fries **Thurs** Popcorn Chicken w/Roll, Taquitos, Teriyaki Chicken, Max, Sticks w/Marinera, Corn Dog, French Fries **Fri** Tater Tot Casserole w/ Biscuit, Bean Burrito, Sweet & Sour Chicken, Pepperoni Pizza, Hamburger, Green Beans, Pinto Beans, Peas **SPONSORED BY**

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STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA
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IN THE FAMILY COURT FOR THE NINTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT DOCKET NO. 2022-DR-10-1608 SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES VERSUS Rayia L. Brown, Travis Smalls, Joshua Forrestier, Joel Mackey II, Oscar Moultrie, Christine Bennett, and Mercedes Jefferson DEFENDANTS. IN THE INTERESTS OF: MINOR CHILDREN BORN 2020, 2012,2015, and 2021 TO DEFENDANT: Joel Mackey II YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED and required to answer the Complaint in this action filed with the Clerk of Court for Charleston County on June 3, 2022. Upon proof of interest, a copy of the Complaint will be delivered to you upon request from the Charleston County Clerk of Court, and you must serve a copy of your Answer to the Complaint on the Plaintiff, the South Carolina Department of Social Services, at the office of its Attorney, Daniel A. Beck, Legal Department of the Charleston County Department of Social Services, 3685 Rivers Avenue, Charleston, S.C. 29405-5714 within thirty (30) days of this publication, exclusive of the date of service. If you fail to answer within the time set forth above, the Plaintiff will proceed to seek relief from the Court. Daniel A. Beck, SC Bar #104335, 3685 Rivers Avenue, Charleston, S.C. 29405, (843) 953-9625.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

The Town of Lakeside Planning & Zoning Commission will hold a public hearing on Monday January 23, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. at 9830 Confederate Park Rd, Council Court Room. The Town of Lakeside City Council will hold a public hearing on Thursday February 9, at 6:30 p.m. at 9830 Confederate Park Rd, Council Court Room. Request for new and unlisted use classification (Zoning Ord. 151.014). Matthew Vernio with Texas Custom Liner LLC, 9015 Jacksboro Hwy, Fox Place block 1 lot 1 Plat-D214051379 requests Automotive -General - be added to the permitted land used table non-residential (commercial) 151.012.

Notice of Public Sale

Self storage auction on January 21st, 2023 at 10am, Sandy beach self storage 1109 Liberty School Rd Azle, Texas Michael Hopp unit number 135, Wade Jenkins unit number 171, Brandon Stein unit number 54, Josh Welch unit number 32, Patricia Hoskins unit number 34, Judith Eller unit 110, Dennis Tichavsky unit number 92, Household, Misc items.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC SALE
A-Z STORAGE 817-237-7972

A-Z STORAGE wishing to avail themselves of the provisions of Texas Revised Civil Statutes Article 523b and Texas Property Code, Ch. 59, Self-Service Storage Facility Liens Article 44, hereby gives Notice of Sale under said act to wit: On Sat., February 4, 2023, at A-Z Storage, 5824 Azle Ave., Lake Worth, TX, between the hours of 10AM - 12NOON of that day, A-Z Storage will conduct a sale to the highest bidder for the contents of units:
30 rented by Jean Carlos consisting of misc.,
92 rented by Kenny Hawkins and/or Karen McMorris consisting of misc.,
At A-Z Storage, 5824 Azle Ave. at NW Loop 820, Lake Worth, TX. 817-237-7972 This sale is being held to satisfy a landlord's lien. The Public is invited to attend. Dated this 4th day of January, 2023. Void if lien satisfied in full before date of sale. Mailing address only: A-Z STORAGE, PO BOX 136369, FORT WORTH TX 76136.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC SALE

To satisfy a landlord's lien. Sale to be held at Azle Southeast Storage, 1004 Southeast Parkway; Azle, TX at 10:30am 1-27-2023 Property to be sold to the highest bidder for CASH. Property includes contents of the following tenants Chris Goff; Household Items Jeremy Martinez; Household Items Nazareth Zeytounian; Household items.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC SALE

On February 3, 2023, at 8 a.m., A&A Mobile Homes Transport Inc. will be holding a public auction on the homes listed below. Any persons with any interest in this home needs to contact our office at 817-237-1370. The sale will be held at 12125 Jacksboro Hwy. Fort Worth, Texas 76135. 1) 1996 CMH MANUFACTURING INC. HUD #HWC0230101/102 CURRENT OWNER JANET DOVE, POSSIBLE OWNER MEGAN GUILLORY.

AEDS

FROM PAGE A1

warning. Chances of survival from sudden cardiac death diminish by 7-10% for each minute without immediate CPR or defibrillation. After 10 minutes, resuscitation rarely succeeds."

The Texas Education Code requires each school district to make available at each campus in the district at least one automated external defibrillator, as defined by Section 779.001, Health and Safety Code. Additionally, the Code dictates, a campus defibrillator must be readily available during any University Interscholastic League athletic competition held on the campus. There are also other rules concerning AEDs, such as them being available at practices on campus and athletic events held outside campus.

Poer is in his fifth year with the district and has been a trainer for nearly 30 years, working previously in the Keller and Carroll ISDs. Poer was an athlete in high school, and he enjoyed science classes, so he decided to blend his love of sports with science in his career.

AHS has 11 AEDs dispersed throughout the campus, in-

side and outside the main school building, Poer said. There is one AED in the field house, and AEDs are taken to the fields when teams are practicing and playing. There is one AED at each athletic venue.

"We have one with us wherever we're at a venue," Poer said. "We travel with one. We have one on our the sideline at, say, football games and soccer games. We have one on us at all times."

Every coach is trained in first aid CPR and AED, and that includes junior high school coaches and PE teachers at elementary schools and nursing staffs, Poer said. By law, coaches have to know how to use an AED.

Regarding AEDs, Poer has had to administer them twice in his career, including once at Azle High School last academic year, when a coach from an opposing football team had to be helped during a game at Hornet Stadium. He recovered. The other time Poer supervised the use of an AED was during a track meet when Poer was in Keller. A runner coded after running past the finish line on a 400-meter event but was OK. She also recovered.

Poer explained how training works when administering the AED, as personnel

would approach the athlete and try to communicate with him or her and determine whether the athlete is conscious.

"If they don't make any indication that they're conscious or can respond to us, then we'll go ahead and activate that plan right then," he said, noting 9-1-1 will be contacted and someone will be sent to retrieve the AED and will apply the pads if they are needed. Proper medical procedures are followed and then the AED can be used if needed, if the person is unconscious. The machine provides step-by-step directions and can indicate whether a heartbeat is detected. No medical background is necessary to use one.

"The machine, thank goodness, is foolproof — it tells us how to apply the pads and it tells when a shock is advised and it's constantly analyzing for heart rhythm," Poer said. "So, they're really, really simple to use and we're very, very lucky to have that."

AHS student trainers are conversant with AEDs, Poer said, pointing out that students by law have to be exposed to CPR and AED procedures before they graduate. If an athlete collapses during an event or game, more often than not an adult staffer will



DON MUNSCH | AZLE NEWS

Shown here with an AED is Evan Poer, AISD Athletic Trainer. AHS has 11 AEDs dispersed throughout the campus. There is one AED in the field house, and AEDs are taken to the fields when teams are practicing and playing. There is one AED at each athletic venue.

oversee the usage of the AED if it is needed. Crowd control is "very important" when an AED is used because there can be high noise, stress and panic when the athlete is being treated, Poer said.

Poer praised local EMTs

and paramedics, and an emergency action plan exists for each of the athletic venues, including junior highs, when an emergency happens.

When using AEDs, the user should keep in mind one piece of advice, Poer said.

"The biggest thing in an emergency is do not panic," he said, explaining he gives that advice to students and coaches, adding that they just follow the steps on the AED.

UTGCD to hold meeting, hearing next week

FROM STAFF REPORTS

Upper Trinity Groundwater Conservation District's public hearing and regular board meeting are set for 5 p.m. Jan. 26 at the district office located at 1859 West Highway 199 in Springtown, or via Zoom videoconference. In addition to its regular board meeting agenda, which begins at conclusion of hearing, other items of interest include a hearing regarding multiple applications for Operating Permit for commercial and/or public water systems in Parker and Wise counties.

The public is welcome

and encouraged to remotely attend via online videoconference/teleconference. Join Zoom Meeting at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82615012690>; 1 (346) 248-7799; Meeting ID: 826 1501 2690

The mission of UTGCD, established in November 2007, is to develop rules to provide protection to existing wells, prevent waste, promote conservation, provide a framework that will allow availability and accessibility of groundwater for future generations, protect the quality of the groundwater in the

recharge zone of the aquifer, ensure that the residents of Montague, Wise, Parker and Hood counties maintain local control over their groundwater, respect and protect the property rights of landowners in groundwater and operate the District in a fair and equitable manner for all residents of the district, according to a news release.

For more information about UTGCD, including meeting dates and well registration forms, visit its website at www.uppertrinitygcd.com or call the district's office in Springtown, 817-523-5200.



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Reno City Council looks for solutions to 'tight budget'

BY MADELYN EDWARDS
madelyn@azlenews.net

"I don't see us making it this year."
That is what Reno City Administrator Scott Passmore said during a sobering moment at last week's budget workshop. He told the City Council that revenue from permits has kept the city afloat for the past two years, but that account is now being depleted each month. Without new permits and if the fund pares down to \$50,000, the city will have to lay off some employees. Passmore clarified after the meeting that the city won't run out of money. He hoped his statement would motivate the council to act. "It's just going to be a tight budget — very tight this year," Passmore said after the meeting. Mayor Sam White said inflation has been a big part

of the city's current budget hardship. "Inflation has really hit hard," White said after the meeting. "You look at what inflation has done to us, the whole country. Fuel doubled — that hurts us right there. We're a small city at this point. So, inflation has played a big factor. Now, we don't have enough commercial to keep us going. We're a large city but small population for the size we have. That's the other thing." White also said that the city will need to be careful in deciding how to cut back on city services. Council member Shelli Swift kicked off the budget workshop on Jan. 11 by challenging some of the city's purchases. Swift brought a small box of tissues with her to illustrate her point. She said the city had bought those tissues in a package of three boxes twice, which cost

almost \$29 one time and almost \$32 the other time. "I think that that's excessive," Swift said. "I don't think that we're trying to save money if we're spending \$32 on six boxes of Kleenex." Swift brought up similar concerns with how the city purchased 12 ink pens for \$21 multiple times, though she acknowledged some of these concerns as piddling. Then, she brought up some more costly expenses — \$984 spent on 100 police challenge coins used to recognize officers, almost \$210 for supplies for the police department's banquet and a \$900 bill from a Springtown barbecue restaurant for that party. Deputy Chief Nathan Stringer, who attended the budget workshop, said these purchases were approved by White, who responded that he was aware of the challenge coins purchase but not the cost. Passmore said

the city went into a spending freeze in November, but Stringer said that he wasn't aware of the freeze until late December. "I don't even know why we put a budget together because we don't follow it," council member Jody Works said during the meeting. "We don't hold anybody accountable to the line items." Swift said if the city isn't careful about spending, then taxes will need to be increased. To eliminate questions about purchases, White suggested that the city should establish a system in which city employees can seek approval to make purchases beforehand. "I want to see a purchase order system like corporate America uses," White said after the meeting. "A person wants supplies. You put in a request into your supervisor. Then the supervisor ei-

ther OKs it if it's within their signature value, and if not, it goes, just like corporate, up the next latter." As far as bringing in revenue, White said the council should reconsider the Reno Vista subdivision development that would've been mostly made up of half acre lots. Developers were trying to annex property north of Reno into the city limits and build these homes, which would've been served water from Walnut Creek Special Utility District. However, it was revealed last month that the property may be turned into a sandpit instead. At the Jan. 11 meeting, Passmore confirmed that the property has not been turned into a sandpit yet. "It's something to consider (and) not just say, 'We don't want to consider it because it's less than one acre,'" White said. However, Swift and Deputy

Pro Tem Hernando Herrera were skeptical of the idea that a new subdivision would solve the city's budget issues. "We know one new development is not going to fix the budget," Swift said. "Scenic Woods didn't fix it. Rocky Top didn't fix it. Donna's Place didn't fix it. It's this part right here that has to fix it, not bringing in one more development. We've got to start with this right here." Mayor Pro Tem Katie Tucker said the council should consider increasing the tax base, especially to avoid raising property taxes for residents. "If we do not increase our tax base, we're going to have to increase taxes on all those people sitting out there and all these people sitting up here in Reno," Tucker said. The council is expected to further discuss a purchase order system at a future meeting.

Former Reno P&Z chair says goodbye to commission

BY MADELYN EDWARDS
madelyn@azlenews.net

The former Reno Planning and Zoning Commission chairperson showed up for his final meeting last week. Christopher Reeves resigned from his spot on the commission during its Jan. 9 meeting, saying he had too many businesses going on. He served on P&Z for two years. "It's just been nice to be involved and get to know people in the community," Reeves said about his time on the commission. "I tried to help out." Reeves said he initially joined

the P&Z to combat the city's reputation of not functioning well and to help the city become more organized. He feels like the city has made progress toward that goal. "I think it's happened. If you've noticed over the last few years, you've been watching, it's changed a lot," Reeves said. "Still a lot of problems, but it's going to take time to fix it." Current P&Z Chairperson Brian Schrader invited the attendees at the P&Z meeting to join in showing appreciation of Reeves' service, which garnered applause. "I would like to personally


thank Chris for his service on the P&Z," Schrader said at the Jan. 9 meeting. "He guided me. He was the chair of the committee, and I would like to thank him very much." Moving forward, Reeves said he hopes the P&Z will continue improving the subdivision ordinances and water infrastructure. "That's been the biggest struggle is the water in Reno," Reeves said. "Hopefully, they can get a hold of that and make it more stable." The process for refilling Reeves' P&Z spot is for the Reno City Council to appoint an

applicant. At last week's meeting, such an applicant was filling out the form to be considered for the commission. Justin Williams has lived in Reno for about nine months and wants to help in the community. "If I can make a difference in the county and the city, I will," Williams said. To any future Reno P&Z commissioner, Reeves has some words of advice. "Just be ready to learn, to dig in and to fight the battles that need to be fought," he said. "Just be ready for that, not just accept the way things are."



MADELYN EDWARDS | AZLE NEWS
Former Reno Planning and Zoning Commission chairperson Christopher Reeves resigned from his seat on Jan. 9.

AZLE'S



Peoples Choice AWARDS BALLOT

The Azle Area Chamber of Commerce would like your vote for the following Nominees...
ONLY CHECK ONE IN EACH CATEGORY

Favorite Azle ISD Employee

- Stephen Smith - AHS Teacher, Baseball Coach
- Lori Eagleton - Literary Specialist
- Teresa Bagwell - Walnut Creek Intervention Counselor
- Hollee Reed - Crisis Counselor

Favorite Baker

- Crave
- Maw-Maw's Treats
- Brookshire's
- Slice Dessert Bar

Favorite Non-Profit Organization

- Azle Area Ministerial Alliance
- Azle Optimist Club
- Servolution
- Future Hope & Healing Center

Favorite Roofer

- March Roofing
- Lighthouse Residential Roofing
- RS Roofing
- Reimagined Remodeling & Roofing

Favorite Boutique

- Crush
- Southern Honey Giftique
- Angels & Arrowheads

Favorite City of Azle Employee

- Jason Castro - Azle Police Department
- Jimmy Duvall - City of Azle Public Works Street/Stormwater Division
- Clinton Kierych - Azle Fire Department
- Jessie Williams - Azle Animal Control Officer

Entries must be on original newspaper ballots, no machine copies will be counted.

Return ballot to the Azle Area Chamber by February 1, 2023

Winners will be announced at the 61st Annual Awards Banquet on February 16, 2023

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College fraternity procedure provided valuable life lessons in scrutiny, criticism

It seems like many years ago – which, of course, it is – but while at college I joined a fraternity.

There are those of you who may think being in a fraternity is nothing more than a drunken four-year party, but my experience was far from such. I attended a small men's college, and the fraternity houses were the source of all college life. Admittedly there was drinking involved, but for my experiences in a fraternity house, there were a lot of positives that helped shape me and my future.

For one thing, it brought a bunch of young men together who had different values, different backgrounds and different beliefs and by the very nature of living together, compelled them to learn how to get along and survive their collegiate experience. Many times, it was peer pressure in a good way. If a guy



FROM MY FRONT PORCH

By Sam Houston

Sam Houston is a syndicated columnist and newspaper executive. He is also an author, actor, playwright and entertainment producer/promoter.

did not clean his room, do his laundry or study, there were a host of "brothers" to let him know he was off the beaten path.

It forced all of us to learn about the world other than the limited one we knew from our high school experiences and home. It broadened our horizons and helped us to make choices about what we wanted to do with our lives and make of ourselves.

We were supportive of each other when one of us was down, tough on each other when needed to be, and always emotionally tied to one another. Some 45 years later I look back and know there will

never be people in my life to whom I am any closer.

One of the unique and special things about our chapter meetings is we had a time that was called Scrutiny and Criticism. It came at the end of the meeting. The roll was called and each man in turn had to take the center of the room and stand there while the rest of the group could say anything they wanted – and I mean anything. It was a time of confrontation for bad behavior and special recognition if you had performed admirably.

You would be told you acted like a horse's behind at the last social, you regularly

left the bathroom counter a mess, your personal hygiene was a wreck, or a host of other things. It also offered the opportunity to say something personal and supportive. The person being criticized could not respond, only listen. This process continued until everyone in the room had taken a turn in the center.

This system could be purifying while at the same time it was both humbling and terrifying. It gave men a chance to speak man to man, in front of each other, and deal with problems straight out. When it was my turn to stand, there were times when I was told of transgressions. Initially I may have thought the comments were unfair or undeserved, but upon reflection, I realized the words were not said to wound, but to resolve disputes or make me a better person and a better man.

I cannot express how frank

and direct some of these confrontations would be, and when the roll had been called and the exercise was completed, we would all say in unison, "What you see, what you hear, when you leave, leave it here." In other words, no grudges, no backstabbing, or infighting – just reflection and growth.

I have come to know of the power of Scrutiny and Criticism. I wish in today's world, such a process would be replicated and utilized. It would compel people to be honest with each other, it would correct a lot of behavior in folks and teach people to accept and learn from criticism. Maybe people would not be so sensitive and have their feelings hurt when everything does not go their way. Maybe people would be told when their behavior was inappropriate or destructive. There are those who might

say social media allows us to do this, but they would be incorrect. Social media is exactly the opposite of what Scrutiny and Criticism was about because it allows people to say just about anything without having to have the fortitude to say it to someone's face. All too often the posts are self-serving or demeaning, rather than intended to promote good and harmony.

Social media has its place, but we would all be better off if we spoke eye to eye when there is an issue, rather than speaking through the prism of social media.

Thought for the day: Remember to not only say the right thing in the right place, but far more difficult still, to leave unsaid the wrong thing at the tempting moment.

Until next time, I will be riding the storm out.

Scholarship applications are now available to journalism students

FROM STAFF REPORTS

Journalism students are now eligible to apply for two \$1,500 scholarships from the North & East Texas Press Association (NETPA) and the Texas Press Association.

NETPA has helped college-bound journalism students with tuition and books through this scholarship program, which is funded by private donations and through an annual auction

held at their yearly convention. This year, the convention will be held April 27-29, 2023, in Nacogdoches.

Applicants must be from the geographic area served by NETPA and have a de-

clared major in journalism/communications/photography, but preference is given to print majors. Application deadline is March 25, 2023.

Scholarships will be made

payable to the registrar of the college/university upon proof of enrollment as a full-time student majoring in journalism.

Applications may be downloaded from the NETPA web-

site at www.netpa.org.

For more information contact Jim Bardwell at 903-845-2235.

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Tim is also a member of the National Association of REALTORS. Along with owner and broker Sam Berube, the team brings a high level of passion and service to each and every client.

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ICTR has its main office in Grapevine but the Azle location has been open for a little over a year.

The team is available day or night. Got a question about your options first thing in the morning? Call anytime 24/7 to get an answer. You can reach the office at 817-217-6993.

The Azle office is located at 1355 Northwest Parkway in Ash Creek Plaza.

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OBITUARIES

Donald Summers, Sr. 1941-2022

Donald Gene Summers, Sr. was born March 10, 1941, and went to be with his Heavenly Father on November 19, 2022, at his home.

He was born in Longview, Texas, but did not reside there very long. His father was an evangelist/preacher/pastor at many churches over the years, so the family moved accordingly.

Don was a loving son, brother, husband, father, uncle, nephew, cousin and friend.

Don was a very successful business owner starting from scratch that began in a storage building many years ago. It grew very fast and became a strong and integral part of the building inspection industry. His employees included many of his family members, which gave true meaning to the phrase "Family Owned and Operated". His gift of gab contributed to his success as he never met a stranger. He would start up a conversation with anyone and everyone he met. When asked "how do you know that?" about the person he just met, he would simply reply "I asked them". There were so many things that was so special about him. He had the voice of an angel and used it often in the many churches that his dad and his brother pastored.

Don's passion was anything cars, mostly classics. He repaired and rebuilt cars and trucks his entire life. He had many projects going that kept him going. Although unable to complete some of them, he would talk about how he wanted them to be finished. Being an avid racing fan, he always claimed to be a "Nascar driver in another life". His sister remembers him as a relentless tease as only a brother and sister could share. Don's immediate family will miss his life's



funny stories he shared at special mealtimes together.

Don was adamant about helping the less fortunate and, even in his death, was an organ donor for, as he always said, anything useable. He had many issues with several types of cancer. He was home with family that loved him very much when the Lord called him home. Don will be missed by everyone that knew him.

He is preceded in death by his father, Lester Summers, his mother, Mary Summers, his father- and mother in-law, Herman and Lois Hicks, daughter-in-law Joyce Summers, and ex-son-in-law Mason Kervin, as well as extended family members.

He is survived by his wife of 61 years and 7 months, Johnnie Hicks-Summers, two children, Donald Summers, Jr and Jonna Summers-Kervin, 4 grandchildren Patricia Summers, Samuel Summers, Lauren Kervin and Christopher Kervin; 2 great grandchildren, Kaydence Rodriguez and Layla Kervin-Lee. A sister Helen Jones and Paul, 2 brothers David Summers and Louise, Robert Summers and JoAn and many nieces and nephews.

His love and devotion to his wife and family went beyond words.

The Azle News
January 18, 2023 Edition

Dayla Pate 1931-2023

Dayla Pate, age 91, of Saginaw, TX passed away on January 11, 2023.

Graveside Service was held at 10 a.m., Monday, January 17, 2023 at Saginaw Cemetery, 200 W. McLeroy Blvd. in Saginaw, Texas.

Visitation was 2 - 4 p.m., Sunday, January 15, 2023 at Biggers Funeral Home, 6100 Azle Ave., Lake Worth, Texas.

In lieu of flowers, the family respectfully request donations can be made to the The Alzheimer's Association of Fort Worth. North Central Texas Chapter (alz.org)

Dayla was born November 6, 1931 in Donna, Texas, the daughter of Hermila Cuellar and Hilario Leal. She faithfully served in the United States Air Force at the rank of A/1C(P) and was the first female police officer at Tarrant County College.

She will be forever remembered as a generous, loving sister, mother, and grandmother. Her family was her greatest joy, and she particularly cherished the time spent with her grandchildren.

Dayla was preceded in death by her husband, Eddie; mother, Hermila; father, Hilario; sister, Elida Cruz



(Moises); brother, Erasmo Lopez (Belen); brothers-in-law, Jesus Rodriguez and Jerome Pate; sisters-in-law, Eleanor Shurr and Becky Hollingsworth.

She will be remembered and missed by her sons, Ray (Darla) of Weatherford, Patrick (Teresa) of Saginaw, and Lance (Amy) of Fort Worth; grandchildren, Jeffrey (Amanda), Cristina Calk (Bonham), Eric, Ashely, Baylor, Connor, Natalie; great-grandchildren, Jayna, Barrett, George, Cecilia, Presley, Grant, Blair; sister, Estella Lopez Rodriguez; and numerous nieces, nephews and friends.

The Azle News
January 18, 2023 Edition

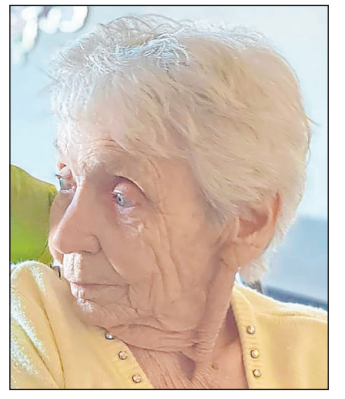
Carole Albin 1942-2023

Carole Ann (Scarbro) Albin, 80, passed away peacefully January 12, 2023, in Springtown.

She was born March 28, 1942, in Fort Worth to Willie Lee and Merdie May (Stone) Scarbro. She was a chef for the U.S. Navy for 20 years and traveled the world with her husband as he served. Her husband retired as a Senior Chief in the U.S. Navy. After retirement the couple returned to Azle to enjoy weekend barbecues with family.

Carole was preceded in death by her parents and her husband of 50 years, Edwin Ferris Albin, Sr.

Carole is survived by daughters, Patricia Wright, Theresa Reusch and her spouse Joyce; son, Edwin F. Albin Jr.; seven grandchildren and five great-grandchildren,



extended family and friends.

She was a loving wife, mother, and grandmother who will be dearly missed by all who knew and loved her. In lieu of flowers please consider a donation to the Azle Animal Shelter or shelter of your choice.

The Azle News
January 18, 2023 Edition

Barbara Brech 1951-2022

Barbara Kay Brech, 71, an amazing mother, grandmother, sister, and friend passed away Tuesday, December 13, 2022.

A celebration of life for Barbara will be held February 11, 2023, at 2 pm at the Azle Deer Cove.

Born on October 11, 1951, in Granbury, Texas, Barbara was the daughter of William and Mary (McReynolds) Mitchell. She was a long-time Haslet resident and had recently moved to Azle to be closer to family.

Barbara held several careers over the years, where she touched many lives. In retirement, she delighted in being "Mimi" and teaching her grandkids to crochet and bake.

She loved playing board games and dominos, listening to the oldies, restoring old furniture, and curling up on the coach with her dog, Bodhi, while watching true-crime documentaries.

She is preceded in death by her parents William and



Mary, and brother John Mitchell.

Left to treasure her memory are her three children Lisa Asbury and husband Derek, Chris Stuart and wife Cally, Courtney Allen and husband Jacob; grandchildren Alex, Ashley, Connor, Kailyn, Zoey, Jaxon, Jace, and Peyton; twin sister Brenda Clifton and husband Charles; and brother Tom Butler.

Barbara will be deeply missed by all that knew and loved her.

The Azle News
January 18, 2023 Edition

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FIRST UNITED METHODIST 200 Church St., Azle 817-444-3323
LIGHTHOUSE FELLOWSHIP 7200 Robertson Rd., Fort Worth 817-237-2758
SILVER CREEK UNITED METHODIST 2200 Church Rd., Azle 817-444-1382
FIRST UNITED METHODIST Hwy. 51 N & 3rd Street, Springtown 817-523-7874
GARVIN UNITED METHODIST 3 miles West of Boyd on C.R. 4699
POOLVILLE UNITED METHODIST 1 block W. of FM 920 (behind Poolville Post Office) 817-599-3601
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THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS 1010 Timberroaks, Azle 817-237-5075
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SOULS HARBOR 11701 Jacksboro Hwy., Azle 817-726-2065
WESTERN HARVEST FELLOWSHIP CENTER 6577 Old Springtown Rd., Weatherford 817-523-2855 or 817-995-9087
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ATTACK

FROM PAGE A1

house," she said. "When I got there, my son's book-bag was lying in the middle of the road, and my son was nowhere to be found. I started screaming, 'Where's my son?'"

A man at the home was standing in the driveway and told her that her son was sitting inside his truck.

"My son was crying and bloody and had an already black, swollen eye," Roeber said. "I just scooped him up and told my older son, 'Toss your bike off the road. We're going to the ER,' and I put my son in the car and drove off, like I didn't even ask questions."

Following the attack, Isaac had a puncture wound on his skull, and he needed stitches on his arms and legs. Roeber said Isaac is healing well from his physical injuries, but the mental trauma from the attack still lingers.

"He's now afraid of every dog he sees," Roeber said. "We went hiking at (the) nature center on New Year's Day, and any dog that came by him, he immediately hid behind his father and I. This is a kid that always welcomed animals and wouldn't be afraid to walk up to a strange dog and ask if he could pet it."

She added that Isaac used to play outside and is now afraid to go outside by himself if the gate at his home is open.

During the past five years, Roeber said the issues with the dogs escalated from them chasing her horses to chasing her children. She said her older son, who also goes to Reno Elementary, used to carry an air horn with him to scare away the dogs if he encountered them on his way home from the bus stop.

"I'd go over there (to the dog owners) and said, 'Look, I don't care that your dogs are

on my property. Like I really don't, but I care that they're chasing my livestock,'" she said. "And then they started chasing my kid, and then I really cared."

Roeber argued that the city could have prevented this incident by holding the dog owners more accountable for the dogs' behavior.

"There needs to be consequences for the irresponsible pet owners," she said.

Reno Police Deputy Chief Nathan Stringer said the dog owners were issued citations for the dogs being at large and for not displaying a rabies tag. The dogs were euthanized and tested negative for rabies.

Stringer refuted the notion that the attack could have been prevented by animal control because the department didn't receive a call about loose animals before the attack. He also said sometimes animals are difficult to track down even when the department has received a call.

"To my knowledge, we didn't have a call that day of loose animals until the actual dog bite occurred," Stringer said. "This could have been prevented by the owners keeping the dogs put up like they're supposed to."

THE LAWSUIT

The Roebers are asking for no more than \$1 million in their lawsuit against the dogs' owner and the property owner. They want to be compensated for Isaac's past and future physical pain, mental anguish, physical impairment, disfigurement as well as his past and future medical expenses until he turns 18 years old.

The lawsuit accuses Brian Campbell, who is a tenant of a home on Carmen Street and an owner of the dogs, of allowing large aggressive dogs around the public, failing to properly use a leash to prevent attacks, not paying enough attention to the dogs to ensure that they were not

a danger to the public, failing to keep the dogs on the property and prevent them from escaping as well as failing to stop or call the dogs, or intervening once realizing that the attack had begun.

The Epigraph attempted to contact Campbell in a variety of ways, including visiting his home, but he could not be reached for comment.

The four others named in the lawsuit — described as property owners — were accused of failing to remove the dogs after being notified of their dangerousness and viciousness, not exercising care in property management and not applying care in the confinement of the dangerous dogs on the property.

Property owner Leonel Garcia sympathized with the Roebers but maintained that he shouldn't be held responsible for the dogs and wasn't aware that they were chasing people. Garcia did say that the dogs had chased his cows, and he had previously heard from a neighbor that the dogs were on their property.

To evict the dog owner, Garcia said he would have needed a written complaint and directive about the dogs from the police department — which he claims he didn't have — and then he would have to notify the tenants in writing to get rid of the dogs. If the tenants ignored the landlord's order, then Garcia said he would have been able to go to court and force the residents to move out.

While Garcia said he understands the Roebers' choice to sue the dog owner, he defended one of the residents against the claim that nothing was done to intervene during the attack.

"The thing is that an old man that lives there opened up the gates to be able to drive outside through the driveway with his truck. Right at that moment, the kid was (passing by), and the dogs got out," Garcia said. "He



PHOTOS COURTESY OF TORY ROEBER

Pictured is 6-year-old Isaac Roeber after he was attacked by two dogs. Following the attack, Isaac needed stitches on his arms and legs.

put (Isaac) inside his truck because he wasn't able to control those dogs, and he grabbed the kid, put him inside the truck. And I think on the (lawsuit), they say no one did anything to help him."

Furthermore, Garcia said some of the other defendants named in the lawsuit have nothing to do with the property.

"It's not fair for (the Roebers) to pay hospital bills and things like that because

of someone else's dogs. I understand that, but suing everybody, I don't think that's going to be much help, especially for the kid," Garcia said.

Still, Tory Roeber defended the choice to name four defendants as property owners in the lawsuit.

"Since the dog owners were renters, we named both the dog owners and property owners. It's possible one or both are without the proper insurance," Roeber said.

"Also, the property owner had been warned by several of us that his renters had aggressive dogs that often got out of the fence and on to other properties."

If there's a lesson to be learned from this situation, Garcia said it's for pet owners to keep dogs on their properties.

"If you know you got a pretty aggressive dog, be careful," he said. "Don't let him go out."

CONSTRUCTION

Advertisement and Invitation for Bids

The City of Reno will receive bids for the project "Chloramine Conversion and Booster Pump Addition" until 10:00 AM on January 26, 2023 at 195 W. Reno Road, Azle Texas 76020-6001. The bids will be publicly opened and read aloud at 10:00 AM on Thursday, January 26, 2023 at 195 W. Reno Road, Azle Texas 76020-6001. Bids are invited for several items and quantities of work as follows.

Bid items:

1. Mobilization
2. Supply and Installation of LAS Systems at Water Plants 1-7
3. Installation of two (2) 250-gal Booster Pumps at Water Plant 1
4. Provide and install electrical equipment including, but not limited to, electrical service equipment and structure, panelboards, controls, conduit, wire, and all ancillary devices as shown on construction drawings, complete in place.

Alternative items:

1. Supply and Installation of 3,000-gal Hydropneumatic Pressure Tanks at Water Plants 1-7

Bid/Contract Documents, including Drawings and Technical Specifications are on file at Cobb, Fendley & Associates, Inc., One Ridgmar Center, 6500 West Freeway, Suite 300, Fort Worth, Texas 76116.

A bid bond in the amount of 5 percent of the bid issued by an acceptable surety shall be submitted with each bid [for those contracts that exceed \$100,000]. A certified check or bank draft payable to the City of Reno or negotiable U.S. Government Bonds (as par value) may be submitted in lieu of the Bid Bond.

Attention is called to the fact that not less than, the federally determined prevailing (Davis-Bacon and Related Acts) wage rate, as issued by the Texas Department of Agriculture Office of Rural Affairs and contained in the contract documents, must be paid on this project. In addition, the successful bidder must ensure that employees and applicants for employment are not discriminated against because of race, color, religion, sex, sexual identity, gender identity, or national origin.

The City of Reno reserves the right to reject any or all bids or to waive any informalities in the bidding.

Bids may be held by the City of Reno for a period not to exceed 60 days from the date of the bid opening for the purpose of reviewing the bids and investigating the bidder's qualifications prior to the contract award.

City of Reno Scott Passmore, City Administrator, 1/11/23 & 1/18/23

All contractors/subcontractors who's System for Award Management (SAM.gov) registration is not active or that are debarred, suspended or otherwise excluded from or ineligible for participation on federal assistance programs may not undertake any activity in part or in full under this project. The City of Reno is an equal opportunity employer.

<p>Concerned about someone with an addiction?</p>  <p>Al-Anon Family Groups Help & Hope for families & friends of alcoholics</p> <p>Meetings Mon & Fri 6:30 PM 229 S. Stewart St. (left door) Azle www.al-anon.org azlesanctuaryafg@gmail.com</p>	<h1>Azle Area CLUBS AND ORGANIZATIONS</h1>	
<p> Texas Health Harris Methodist Hospital AZLE</p> <p>Volunteers Needed TexasHealth.org/Volunteer/Our-Process</p> <p>RAINBOW INN GIFT SHOP Inside Hospital 108 Denver Trail Azle 817-444-8651</p>	<p>Good N.E.W.S. Living at Home Block Nurse Program</p> <p>Volunteer Caregiver Training Classes Classes open to public at no charge</p> <p>Our Volunteers Make a Difference!</p> <p>Caregiver Volunteer Meeting 1st Monday of Each Month at 6pm 817-444-2300 412 Commerce St.</p>	<p>Rotary Club of Azle </p> <p>MEETS AT NOON THURSDAY 412 Commerce St. (across from Azle Post Office)</p>
<p>ATTIC RERUNS NOW OPEN! FRI 9-4 SAT 9-1 714 SE Pkwy Azle 817-270-3690</p>	<p>Faced with a DRINKING Problem? <i>Perhaps Alcoholics Anonymous can HELP.</i></p>  <p>Daily meetings at Noon & 6:30 pm Sunday at 3 pm</p> <p>229 S. Stewart St. • Azle 817-332-3533</p>	<p>Azle Lion's Club </p> <p>Meets 2nd TUESDAY 6:30 PM 412 Commerce, Azle e-clubhouse.org/sites/azle_tk/ Jamie Westbrook - president 817-550-7625</p>
<p>The Finish Line </p> <p>Addiction wants to destroy you & everyone around you.</p> <p>With Jesus there is Victory over addiction.</p> <p>GET BACK IN THE RACE!</p> <p>Meetings held every Friday from 7:30PM-9:30PM at The Church at Azle 1801 S. Stewart • Azle • 817-401-8513 www.ourfinishline.com</p>	<p> SERVOLUTION NETWORK</p> <p>LET'S START A COMMUNITY WIDE REVOLUTION THROUGH SERVING.</p> <p>FOR QUESTIONS CALL: 833-4WE-SERV 833-493-7378</p> <p>VISIT: WWW.SERVOLUTIONNETWORK.COM</p>	<p> Azle Boy Scout Troop 243</p> <p>Meets Mondays 7 PM Azle First Assembly of God 1020 Southeast Parkway troop243azle.org</p>
<p> AZLE AREA MINISTERIAL ALLIANCE UNITED IN CHRIST</p> <p>Christian Leaders partnering together with one voice to impact our culture for Christ. We celebrate unity amidst diversity as we pastor our community.</p> <p>Luncheon meetings 11:45 a.m. - 1 p.m. 2nd Tues of each month; location varies. See www.azlema.com or email director@azlema.com for additional information.</p>	<p> Azle Lodge No. 601</p> <p>Floor School or Work 7:30 PM THURSDAY NIGHT</p> <p>Wayne Wood - Worshipful Master Rocky Gralla - Secretary Clint Hall - Treasurer</p>	<p> EAGLE MOUNTAIN PREGNANCY HELP CENTER</p> <p>10328 Jacksboro Hwy Fort Worth TX 76135 817-237-1819 www.emphc.org Mon 12-6 PM Thurs 12-6 PM SE HABLA ESPAÑOL</p>
<p>Optimist Club of Azle </p> <p>Meets every FRIDAY at 6:45 AM Moe's Country Kitchen 316 W. Main, Azle</p>		

I. Don't. Know.

Do you ever wonder if the person to whom you're speaking is a wise person (as opposed to a wise guy)?

Here's a tip: How easy is it for that person to say "I don't know"?

I have a standard wise guy response that I often use in the following scenario:

Unsuspecting person: I have a question.

Wise Guy Me: I have an answer.

Unsuspecting Person: I haven't even asked the question.

Wise Guy Me: I didn't say it would be a good answer.

It's actually that last response that starts to shift me from wise guy mode to wisdom-seeker mode be-



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.

cause, as I have grown in my life experiences, I find it much easier to say, "I don't know."

I must admit that in my youthful insecurity I was threatened by questions I couldn't answer. I became a senior pastor of a church at the age of 26. I thought that meant I was supposed to have all the answers. I was, after all, a seminary graduate. Certainly my professors had taught me everything I

needed to know about leading a church and teaching/preaching the Bible!

Ah, the certainty of youth. It didn't take long for me to figure out that formal education is only a small percentage of the education necessary to succeed in life. In fact, I'd suggest that there are several "classrooms" that we enter over the course of our lives.

There is, of course, the classroom of formal educa-

tion. We learn (or at least memorize) facts, principles and perhaps a few skills. Hopefully, we at least learn how to study and do research.

There is also the classroom of life experiences. Here we learn how those facts, principles and skills work — or don't — in the real world. We even learn that the laboratories of formal education are much more controlled environments than our workplaces and neighborhoods. We learn things that can ONLY be learned by hands-on experience.

And then there's the classroom of hard knocks and dumb mistakes. Here's where we learn how to recov-

er when the stuff we learned in school doesn't work or we fail in our understanding or implementation. Here's where the people we work with "bob" when we expected them to "weave."

I recently heard someone say that "healthy" people are not those who never get sick. Health is measured by how quickly you recover.

I think the same is true of "wisdom." Wise people are not those who never fail or make mistakes. Wisdom is measured by what you learn that enables you to recover and move forward.

"So don't bother correcting mockers; they will only hate you. But correct the wise, and they will love you.

Instruct the wise, and they will be even wiser. Teach the righteous, and they will learn even more." (Proverbs 9:8-9)

Some of my greatest learning has come from questions that I absolutely could not answer. When I found the freedom to say, "I don't know" it opened the door to the wisdom of saying, "let me do a little exploring."

We have so much to learn from each other if we'll get over our fear of appearing ignorant.

Practice it with me: I. Don't. Know. (But I'm willing to learn).

Be amazing today, my friend.

City officials happy with tax payment numbers

BY DON MUNSCH
don@azlenews.net

Azle city officials have cheerfully rung in the new year with positive data regarding tax payments.

The January 2023 general sales tax payment is \$316,713.88 and represents a \$24,229.61 (8.28%) increase as compared to January 2022, according to a news release from the city.

Of this amount, \$253,371.10 is General Fund revenue and \$63,342.78 is Street Maintenance Sales Tax Fund revenue. Current

period collections increased \$20,207.66 (7.08%) as compared to January 2022. This is the highest January payment in the city's history and the first time the January payment has exceeded \$300,000, the released stated.

Assistant City Manager Lawrence Bryant told the News that 8.28% is a healthy increase but is not uncommon for Azle.

"The December 2022 payment was actually a 16.6% increase over December 2021," he said in an email. "I would expect that other cities similar in size to Azle with a simi-

lar commercial base are performing similarly to Azle."

Bryant said it is "hard to compare sales tax performance based alone on the size of the town," noting a city's commercial base will be "the major driving force in its sales tax collections."

For example, he said, the Town of Trophy Club has roughly the same population as Azle, but its January 2023 general sales tax payment is \$223,793.06 - approximately one-third less than Azle.

"Conversely, the city of Lake Worth has a population less than half of Azle and its

January 2023 general sales tax payment is \$772,983.62 - almost 2.5 times greater than Azle," he said. "Additionally, Trophy Club's January 2023 payment was down 0.02% over last year and Lake Worth's January 2023 payment was up 9.72% over last year."

The January 2023 Crime Control and Prevention District sales tax payment is \$62,750.83 and represents a \$5,350.59 (9.32%) increase as compared to January 2022. Current period collections increased \$4,215.49 (7.46%) as compared to January

2022. This is the highest January payment in the CCPD's history and the first time the January payment has exceeded \$60,000.

The January 2023 Municipal Development District sales tax payment is \$65,797.29 and represents a \$5,341.16 (8.83%) increase as compared to January 2022. Current period collections increased \$4,344.01 (7.32%) as compared to January 2022. This is the highest January payment in the MDD's history; however, it is the second time the January payment has exceed-

ed \$60,000. January 2022 was the first time this payment exceeded \$60,000.

"I believe the takeaway is this: Azle is a desirable place to be as evidenced by the number of people moving into and around Azle and the number of businesses that have moved into Azle," Bryant said. "Recent additions to our business community include QuikTrip, Discount Tire, Wing Stop, and Saddleback Leather and there are more that have either already committed to coming to Azle or that are currently considering it."



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Speaker open to resort-style casinos in state; House rules allow Democrats to chair committees

SPEAKER OPEN TO RESORT-STYLE CASINOS IN STATE

House Speaker Dade Phelan, R-Beaumont, told The Dallas Morning News and other media outlets that he is open to bringing resort-style casinos to Texas. But don't expect to find slot machines in 7-Eleven stores if casino gambling is legalized.

"What I don't want to see is to walk into every convenience store and see 15 slot machines," Phelan said. "I want to see destination-style casinos that are high quality and that create jobs and that improve the lifestyle of those communities."

The gambling industry is preparing for another strong push to bring gaming to one of the few major markets that doesn't allow it. But other state leaders seem more hesitant, including Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick, who said in December that he "doesn't see any movement on it."

Gov. Greg Abbott has softened his once-strong opposition to legalized gambling, echoing Phelan's support for casinos that also feature golf courses, luxury hotels and other amenities.

The Morning News report said the Dallas-Fort Worth area would be a top location because of its strong convention and tourism industry,



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, including in Longview, Fort Stockton, Nacogdoches and Cedar Park. gborders@texaspress.com.

as well as access to major airports.

HOUSE RULES ALLOW DEMOCRATS TO CHAIR COMMITTEES

New House rules adopted in the first week of the legislative session allow the appointment of Democrats to chair certain committees, despite being in the minority in that chamber. The Texas Standard reported that was a victory for Phelan, who defied Republicans wanting to ban Democrats from holding chair positions.

In Phelan's first speech after being reelected speaker, he talked about the importance of both parties working together.

"After watching Congress attempt to function last week, I cannot imagine why some want Texans to be like D.C.," Phelan said, referring to the protracted battle over electing a U.S. Speaker of the House.

Another provision is aimed

at stopping legislators from skipping sessions to break quorum by levying fines every day they are absent without leave. During the 2021 session, House Democrats left Texas for 38 days in an ultimately unsuccessful attempt to block passage of a slate of voting restrictions.

WILDFIRE DANGER RETURNS TO STATE

A series of dry cold fronts sweeping through the next this week bring the potential of increased wildfire risk to parts of the state, according to the Texas A&M Forest Service. On Jan. 11, the service responded to five requests for assistance on wildfires that burned more than 740 acres across the state. The largest of these was the Cellers Hill Fire in Throckmorton County.

As of Sunday, the only active blaze was the 23-acre Grub Hill Fire in Wise County, which was 90% contained. Currently, 69 counties

are under burn bans.

PRISONERS LAUNCH HUNGER STRIKES OVER SOLITARY CONFINEMENT

A large-scale hunger strike protesting the state's solitary confinement practices began last Tuesday, with about 300 people in Texas prisons reportedly participating, according to the Texas Standard. The prisoners are protesting the state's practice of placing inmates in solitary indefinitely.

Michele Deitch, director of the Prison and Jail Innovation Lab at the University of Texas at Austin, said prisoners have gone on hunger strikes to push the Texas Department of Criminal Justice to meet months-long demands for change. Besides ending indefinite solitary confinement, also called restrictive housing, the prisoners want to move to a behavioral-based system rather than a status-based system. Under the latter, prisoners can be placed in solitary simply by being labeled a gang member, not necessarily for breaking any rules.

"I do believe that it is something that the agency should take a very hard look at, whether there are ways that they could be approaching this issue that are both

safe and more appropriate," Deitch told the Standard.

FROM LA NIÑA TO EL NIÑO? POSSIBLY

The 2022 drought didn't turn out to be as severe as that of 2011, but it still caused widespread economic damage to crops and livestock, as well as shrinking water-supply reservoirs. As the state heads into 2023, Dr. Mark Wentzel, hydrologist with the Texas Water Development Board, is among forecasters predicting an end to the conditions that resulted in reduced rainfall and warmer temperatures for the last few years.

"The National Weather Service is expecting that La Niña will dissipate, and then, possibly by the summer to next fall, we might actually be in El Niño conditions, the opposite to La Niña. And those conditions (could) actually bring Texas a wetter and cooler winter than is normal," Wentzel wrote.

The most severe drought now is centered in the Texas Hill Country, in Kendall and surrounding counties, and in the extreme northern boundary of the Texas Panhandle. Drought conditions have ended in East and Southeast Texas.

Wentzel wrote he expects

"some easing" of drought conditions this spring.

WILDLIFE VACCINE BAIT AIRDROP UNDERWAY

The Texas Department of State Health Services has renewed its battle against rabies along the Texas border by airdropping vaccine bait from planes leaving Edinburg, Del Rio and Alpine.

"Our goal is to vaccinate wildlife, with target species being coyotes and gray foxes, along the border to maintain herd immunity and to keep past variants from being re-introduced or new variants from entering Texas," said Dr. Susan Rollo, director of the Oral Rabies Vaccination Program. "We will be delivering vaccine baits to 18 counties this year."

About 814,000 oral rabies vaccine baits will be dropped in the 29th year of the program.

COVID-19 CASES RISE SLIGHTLY

New cases of COVID-19 in Texas in the past week rose to 35,632 with 148 deaths, according to the Coronavirus Resource Center at Johns Hopkins University. DSHS reported 3,427 lab-confirmed COVID-19 patients in Texas hospitals, also an increase.

SPOHN

FROM PAGE A1

partment was "significant," Hall said.

"He loved this department with all his heart and gave us all he could," Hall said. "While he left to retire a few weeks ago, he was still well connected and will forever be part of this PD and city family."

A Reading, Pennsylvania, native, Spohn served in the Air Force and was discharged in 1988, when he joined the Azle Police Department.

"When I got out (of the military), Azle was the first job I came across," he said in a Veterans Day supplement story that ran in the News in November. "I cannot say enough good stuff about the people in this community. We've started a lot of counseling initiatives, domestic violence initiatives, and done a lot of good things."

He said a lot of his friends work for larger agencies like Fort Worth, but said "the thing I always enjoyed about Azle was the fact that I actually got to know people in the community. I made a lot

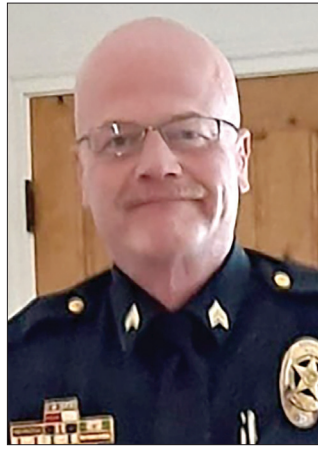
of friends."

Spohn and wife Nancy didn't have children but planted roots in the city and the police department, Spohn told the News.

"The agency has become an extension of my family," he said.

In addition to being a sergeant at APD, Spohn had been a police field training coordinator for the Police Department.

"Azle has always been my city," he told the News. "The community has always been my people. I've been blessed by this community."



Bob Spohn

PHOTO COURTESY

Filing begins this week for AISD board

FROM STAFF REPORTS

Two Azle ISD board members will be up for election this spring as their terms expire.

Brenda Reed, Place 1, and Sarah Bennett, Place 2, are up for election. Reed has been on the board since 2020 and Bennett has been a trustee

since 2018.

Filing for school board begins Jan. 18 and ends Feb. 17. People may mail or file an application in person at the Azle ISD administration building at 300 Roe St., Azle TX 76020. They may also send an application by fax to 817-270-2255.

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TEXAS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Who is keeping score?

My great-great grandfather, Dr. Edwin Clay Rogers of Fannin County, served in the 5th Congress of the Republic of Texas in 1840-41. He served alongside Sam Houston, who had termed out in his first tenure as president of the Republic and was elected as a congressman from Fayette County. These were one-year terms.



DISTRICT 60
By Glenn Rogers

Representative Glenn Rogers is a sixth generation Texas rancher, where his family has deep ranching roots in Palo Pinto County going back to the 1890s. He represents District 60 in the Texas House of Representatives.

In the Fannin County Historical Museum in Bonham, there is an exhibit of old medical textbooks and instruments used by Dr. Rogers. One instrument, a small, brass bell-shaped device, was used to examine Sam Houston's ear. You might say Doc Rogers had ol' Sam's ear ...

Sam Houston once declared, "Texas has yet to learn submission to any oppression, come from what source

it may." Since Texas achieved her independence from Mexico, Texans have long lived by this proclamation. As the 88th Legislature began this January, Houston's words were on my mind. I will strive to represent our district without succumbing to any oppressive force.

My short time as a public servant has been eye-opening, revealing to me that there are forces that seek to oppose the truth, that wish for Texas to fall out of the hands of the people, and that seek to undermine lawmak-

ers who refuse to follow orders. My first obligation is to serve my House District 60 constituents.

Property tax relief and securing the border are at the top of the list this session. People in Parker, Palo Pinto, and Stephens counties also need policies that improve infrastructure, such as water systems and roads. Law enforcement, educators and social workers request improvements made to mental health care. Teachers desire deregulation from the TEA and more substantial sup-

port from the state. Citizens yearn for local control over their own affairs. There are a multitude of non-partisan issues that the Legislature must address this year and I am devoting myself to taking proper care of my home district FIRST.

Doing so will not make me the most popular legislator with certain elements within my own party. It certainly will not earn me great ratings from "scorecard" results that will undoubtedly fill mailboxes next election cycle with hit pieces.

As has been the consistent practice of Empower Texans (now Defend Texas Liberty PAC), there will be a series of what are termed "Scorecard Votes." That is, legislation designed by hyper-partisan political agents for the exclusive purpose of creating at-

tack ads for the next election cycle. Usually, these are bad policies that pose as conservative legislation. Most of the time, they are meaningless votes. Unfortunately, there are legislators who will vote simply to earn the favor of a scorecard — but not me.

In accordance with Houston's declaration, I have yet to learn submission to any oppression. I am always going to vote to improve my community and to protect our conservative ideals, always in accordance with the United States and Texas constitutions. I will vote in ways that support limited government — both federal and state, and local control. I will help craft legislation that will have a positive impact on the people in my district. I will support public schools as required of legislators by

Article 7, Section 1 of the Texas Constitution.

Politics is often energized by hate. That will not be the case in our office. If you live in the district, my office will be there to serve you, regardless of whether we agree on every issue.

My pledge is this: I will make votes after prayerful consideration and always seek what is best for people of this district, not as directed by special-interest PACs or phony scorecards. My staff and I will strive to remain positive throughout the session, even as things get tough or intense. When faced with opposition, I will cling onto the Truth and will remember who I serve — God, my country, the Great State of Texas and House District 60.

info@rogersfortexas.com

Filing starts for elections in Reno

BY MADELYN EDWARDS
madelyn@azlenews.net

Election Day for municipal races is fewer than four months away.

On May 6, residents in the Reno area will have the chance to pick out their future mayor and city council members.

Before voters can hit the polls, candidates — both new and incumbents — will need to apply to run for open places on the council. The candidate filing period started this week on Jan. 18 and will continue until the Feb. 17 deadline.

In Reno, a general election

is expected for the mayor's seat, Place 2 and Place 4, which are currently held by Mayor Sam White, Deputy Pro Tem Hernando Herrera and Mayor Pro Tem Katie Tucker, respectively. Reno will also have a special election for Place 1. Council appointed Jody Works to this seat after the death of council member Granville "Randy" Martin III.

Places for city council and mayor have two-year terms. Candidates running for city of Reno places may file at Reno City Hall at 195 W. Reno Road.

Early voting will take place from April 24 through May 2.



FILE PHOTO
Reno City Mayor Sam White



FILE PHOTO
Reno City Council Deputy Pro-Tem Hernando Herrera



FILE PHOTO
Reno City Council Mayor Pro-Tem Katie Tucker



FILE PHOTO
Reno City Council member Jody Works

To vote by mail, voters must deliver applications by April

25 to the Parker County early voting clerk at 1112 Santa Fe

Drive in Weatherford and by email at elections@parker-

countytx.com. Ballots can be mailed to the same address.

THE AWARD-WINNING PRINT & ONLINE FAMILY FEATURE

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Kid Scoop Puzzler

Dragon Doubles

Only two of these dragons are exactly alike. Can you find them?

Cause and Effect Matchup

Work with a family members to draw lines to connect each CAUSE with its EFFECT.

- My cousin told me a funny joke.
- I was late for school.
- I left my popsicle in the sun.
- Birds splashed and chirped happily.
- I had a bad dream.
- I missed the bus.
- I got an A!
- I read a spooky story last night.
- I laughed and told it to my friends.
- I filled the bird bath with fresh water.
- I studied each night before the big test.
- It melted.

What Happened and Why: Cause and Effect

News articles tell about the cause and the effect of things that happen. News articles report on something that happened and explain why. The headline tells what happened — or the effect. The article gives more details and tells why it happened — or the cause. A good headline sparks your curiosity and makes you want to read the article to learn more.

Caution! This article is not real news! It is just for fun!

Discovering Cause and Effect

Read this silly article to answer these questions.

WHAT happened? This is the EFFECT.

WHY did it happen? This is the CAUSE.

Think about something that happened at your school this week. What was the CAUSE and EFFECT?

CAUSE: _____

EFFECT: _____

Dragon Burp Burns Ball

BLAZETON — Karly Kindling sparked surprise in the people watching last night's basketball game between the Southside Scorchers and the Eastside Embers at Flaming Torch High School.

"I ate a burrito just before the game," said Karly. "I overdid it with the hot sauce I added. The burrito caused my stomach to be a bit upset when I started the game."

The burrito caused stomach gas to form in the belly of the star forward for the Eastside Embers. Just as she caught the ball from a teammate, she burped.

The burp caused a burst of flame to shoot out of her mouth, burning the basketball to a crisp.

"Karly took it well. She took a big breath and got right back in the game, shooting a three-pointer with a new ball moments later," said coach Coalsworth.

"But from now on," said Coalsworth, "our players will be sticking with orange slices and ice water before a game!"

Double Double Word Search

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

BASKETBALL	J	C	A	U	S	E	J	G	K	O
BURP	X	L	D	E	T	A	I	L	S	R
CAUSE	I	W	A	T	E	R	E	K	S	D
DETAILS	S	R	E	B	M	E	F	N	E	E
DRAGON	H	A	P	P	E	N	F	I	M	R
EFFECT	K	Y	S	Q	J	F	E	H	A	S
EMBERS	J	H	D	A	E	R	C	T	L	W
FLAMES	S	W	B	U	R	P	T	X	F	E
HAPPEN	Z	L	H	N	O	G	A	R	D	N
NEWS	B	A	S	K	E	T	B	A	L	L
ORDER										
READ										
THINK										
WATER										
WHY										

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

FROM THE Kid Scoop LESSON LIBRARY

News Cause and Effect

Select an article in the newspaper. After reading the article carefully, write a summary of the effect or what happened. Then write the cause or why it happened.

Standards Link: Language Arts: Summarize main ideas in writing.

Write On!

What's your scoop?

Write a sentence or short paragraph that tells the who, what, when and where of some news happening in your school.

Scrambled Story

Look at the pictures below. They tell a silly story of cause and effect. But they are out of order. Number the pictures to show the correct order.

Before and After

The cause of something happens before the effect. Look at a photograph in the newspaper. Try to imagine what happened before the picture was taken. Why do you think that?

Standards Link: Identify cause and effect using visual cues.

Rotary honors Azle High seniors of the month

The Azle Rotary Club honored four Azle High School students as seniors of the month for January last week.

BY DON MUNSCH
don@azlenews.net

Ashtyn Kay, Trinity Thornton, Oliver Lorenz and Adam Derda were honored at the Rotary's Jan. 12 meeting.

Kay is ranked 20th in the senior class of 361 students and has a grade point average of 101.46. She plans to attend Texas A&M University and will study psychology.

"I specifically want to do pediatric psychology, so I can focus more on little kids," she said. "Growing up, I had a lot of big emotions, but I didn't really understand them."

She wants to help kids learn healthy coping mechanisms that they can take into adulthood, and understand what healthy relationships look like.

At AHS, she has been involved in athletic training for the past four years. Kay has also been involved in PALs, National Honor Society, and powerlifting.

Thornton has a GPA of 100.38 and is ranked 35th in the class. She plans to attend Baylor and study kinesiology and nutrition. Her involvement in physical fitness and sports sparked her interest in studying kinesiology.

"Getting into school and

being able to get into sports, I've just loved every part of that, and I wanted to help people in their journey of going into sports and help them find the right ways to train so they don't get hurt and (find) healthy living," she said. "And so that's also tied into nutrition because everything we put into our body also goes with that. And I just want to help people get through journey."

At AHS, she has been involved in soccer for all four years and has been a varsity captain. Thornton also has participated in powerlifting. Some of her other activities have included NHS, Health Occupations Student Association and track. Trey Thornton, her twin brother, was an Azle senior of the month for Rotary in September.

Lorenz has a GPA of 100 and is ranked 40th in the senior class. He hopes to attend the Air Force Academy or Tarrant County College. He wants to major in manufacturing and desires to be in manufacturing management someday. The AFA is on his radar because his father attended AFA and served 22 years in the Air Force.

He has participated in wres-



The Azle Rotary Club honored, from left, Oliver Lorenz, Ashtyn Kay, Trinity Thornton and Adam Derda as the students of the month for January last week. Standing with the students at left is AHS Principal Nate Driver.

DON MUNSCH | AZLE NEWS

ting for all four years at AHS. "First year, I (weighed) 106 - I was this itty-bitty guy," he said. "I got to varsity by wrestling one of our seniors, so I feel proud of myself for that."

He described his journey in the sport, including how he is at the 138-weight class now. "I'm going for state this year, trying to take the No. 1 spot," he said.

Lorenz said she appre-

ciates teacher and coach Tyler Harrison, someone he called "an amazing teacher" who can be a friend to the wrestlers.

Derda has a GPA of 100.69 and is ranked 29th in the class. He has been accepted into Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University and will attend the school in Daytona Beach, Florida. He will study aeronautical

science. He wants to have a civilian job and then fly for a military reserve unit, such as a guard.

At AHS, he has participated in UIL, AP Ambassadors, NHS and student council. Outside school, he likes to run, including in marathons, and ride bicycles. He was also involved in Civil Air Patrol.

His most influential teacher at the school is Kelsie Jones,

his accounting teacher, who brings a lot of "real world examples" into class lessons. He sees relationships between flying and other disciplines.

"Flying has a lot to do with numbers and understanding things," he said. "It is becoming more computerized, but you still have the human factor in this."



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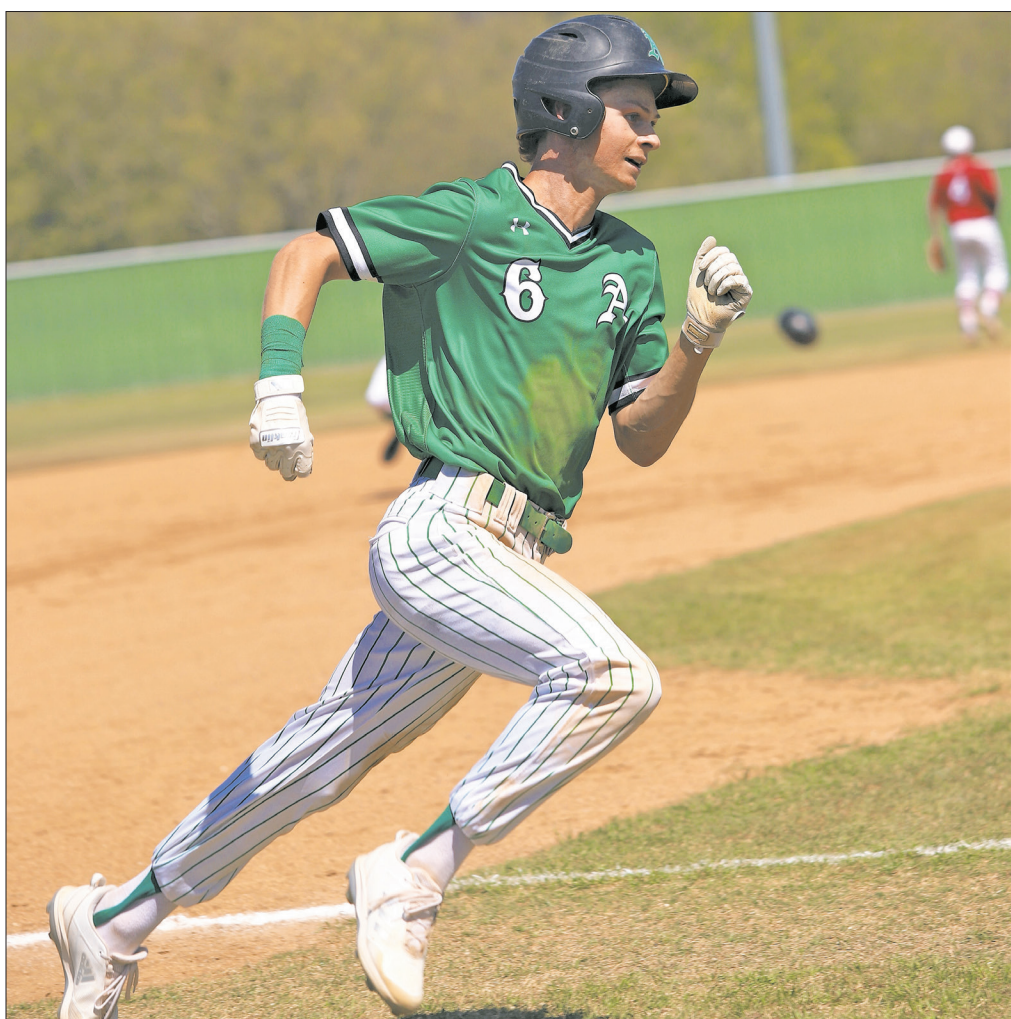
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JEFF PRINCE | AZLE NEWS

Senior Jayden Rollins is playing basketball now but will transition to baseball soon.



Cole Webb made the varsity team as a sophomore in 2022 and should be ready to shine at tryouts again this year as a junior.

BATTERS UP

Azle to hold baseball tryouts next week

BY JEFF PRINCE
jeff@azlenews.net

Move over Taylor Swift – the hottest ticket in town is Azle High School baseball.

About 100 boys are expected to try out for the 2023 team after the Hornets claimed a district trophy for the first time since 2006 and made the playoffs last season. Competition for roster spots will be tough. And making the team means facing more adversity. Tryouts are Jan. 20-23.

The Hornets play in District 5-5A, one of Texas' toughest. "We will probably have the regional champion or state champion come out of our district," said Stephen Smith,

AHS head coach.

About 65 kids will make the cut and earn a position on varsity or one of the school's junior varsity teams. A developmental squad includes six or seven other boys. Their presence keeps the competition stiff throughout the season. Varsity and JV athletes can lose their positions if they don't play hard, keep up their grades or meet conduct standards.

"If you don't take care of business, there is somebody competing with you," Smith said. "It keeps competition going. If you just have your team set and there is no other group of guys, some guys might stop working."

In most cases, motivation

isn't a problem. The kids are eager to play and happy to be there.

"We are excited to see our young guys coming out and see what they have," the coach said. "They are ready to go."

At least eight new spots are available on the varsity team. Eight seniors graduated last year, and competition will be fierce to replace them. Five of the graduates have gone on to play college ball, so filling their cleats won't be easy.

"We have got a lot to replace, but we feel like we've got a good young core," Smith said. "Every (team) in

PLEASE SEE **TRYOUTS** | B3

Azle cheer ready to herkie into nationals after placing at state

JEFF PRINCE
jeff@azlenews.net

Watch out, they're here. Everybody, stand clear. Let's shout, let's cheer. Victory is near ... for Azle Cheer and Hornet Muscle as they head to nationals.

The Azle cheer squad is riding a well-rehearsed routine into the contest season and bringing home hardware already. On Jan. 12, the Hornets earned fourth place at the UIL Spirit State Championship at Fort Worth Convention Center.

"I could not be more proud of their hard work and dedication this year," said coach Haley Hopkins, adding thanks to parents, alumni, the Azle community, teachers, administrators and other schools for supporting the Hornets.

"It was a great day, and we are so thankful to be bringing home fourth place in the

state," she said.

An even bigger contest looms.

On Jan. 21-22, the varsity and junior varsity teams are set to compete at the NCA Nationals at Kay Bailey Hutchison Convention Center in Dallas.

Azle cheerleader Kamryn Crawford is excited to participate but has bittersweet emotions. The senior knows this is her last year to don the green and white uniform, wave pom-poms, fly high during stunts and fire up crowds during games.

"It's kind of sad, but it's been a great experience," she said. "I feel good."

Crawford missed the state and national contests during her sophomore year after the events were canceled because of COVID-19. She competed at contests last year as a junior.



JEFF PRINCE | AZLE NEWS

PLEASE SEE **CHEER** | B4 Alex Perez hoists a cheerleader during a stunt.

SPORTS Roundup

JEFF PRINCE
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AZLE HIGH SCHOOL BOYS BASKETBALL

The Azle Hornets followed their exciting, close win over Saginaw on Jan. 6 with another big victory versus Aledo on Jan. 10. Azle prevailed 53-50 over the Bearcats to even its district record at 2-2.

On Jan. 13, Azle missed a chance to go 3-2 when it hit the road to Fort Worth to take on the only undefeated team in District 5-5A competition, big bad Brewer. The game remained close in the first half, but the Bears pulled away in the second half to win 56-41.

Gavin Dean led the Hornets in scoring in each of the three games. Dean, a senior guard, is having a breakout year on the court, drawing attention from college recruiters while leading his Hornets into battle in a tough district.

Dean's recent performances earned him statewide recognition. On Jan. 13, Dean was named the Chicken Express Mr. Texas Basketball Player of the Week.

Head coach James Crafton expressed pride in Dean's hard work and said it's a reminder that "great things in sports are never done by one person — they're done by a team of people."

AZLE HIGH BASKETBALL GIRLS

An injury-riddled Lady Hornet squad played courageously but came up short against two district opponents recently.

On Jan. 10, only seven Lady Hornets were healthy enough to play, meaning just two substitutes were available all evening when Azle squared off against tough district foe Aledo.

Several Azle players were wearing street clothes to go along with various casts and slings, telltale signs that high school basketball is played hard and tough.

"We have had some injuries, but we are getting them evaluated and will know more later," said head coach Mitzi Marquart. "We will make decisions on personnel after we know more on the injuries. Right now, we have seven healthy players."

Over on Aledo's bench, more than a half-dozen substitutes were in uniform and ready to relieve tired starters at any moment.

Despite the disadvantage in womanpower, the Lady Hornets played with passion from the opening tipoff. The girls took a 14-10 lead in the first quarter and stretched it to 31-18 by halftime through strong play led by Karlee and Kendall Locke.

Aledo, seeing Azle's depleted bench, pressured the Hornets all night and wore down the girls in green in the second half. Final score: Aledo 47, Azle 38.

On Jan. 13, the still-limping Lady Hornets traveled to Fort Worth to take on Brewer and fell 50-34.

The girls enjoyed a rare open date on Tuesday, which allowed the players extra time to recover from aches and pains.

The Lady Hornets play next at 6:15 p.m. Friday at Granbury.

AZLE CHRISTIAN BASKETBALL BOYS

The basketball boys at Azle Christian High School have been beating opponents near and far. On Jan. 13, the Crusaders traveled to Irving to take on StoneGate Christian Academy and tamed the Lions 56-16. Azle Christian controlled the game for four quarters.

"It was a fun game as I was able to play all 11 guys a lot of minutes," said head coach Ryan Rollins.

Camden Logan scored 31 points, followed by Zach Miles (9) and Jake Skartvedt (5).

Three days earlier, Azle Christian played Waxahachie Prep at home and walloped the Warriors 51-32. The scoring went back and forth in the first half and was 26-24 at halftime. In the second half, the Crusader defense played "amazing" and held Waxahachie to 6 points, Rollins said.

Logan scored 26 points, followed by Miles (13), AJ Rollins (7) and Skartvedt (4).

The victories put the Crusaders in a tie for second place in TAPPS District 2-1A with an 8-8 record overall and 3-2 in district. The top three teams go to the playoffs.

"We control our own destiny," Rollins said.

The team is trying to overcome injuries with Drew Skartvedt dealing with a fractured foot and Andy Wisnieski out for the season. Rollins has relied on younger players.

"It's been a crazy season between all the injuries and sickness we have had, but it's next man up mentality," the coach said. "These kids battle and keep playing. They all play two or three sports, so we are tough. They put in 12-hour days up here. I am proud of these boys. They are good Christian young men and are having fun."

AZLE HIGH WRESTLING GIRLS

On Jan. 13-14, the Lady Hornets squared off against tough competition and finished in seventh place among 21 schools at the Caprock Invitational in Amarillo.

What makes the finish even more impressive is only eight girls from Azle participated.

In the varsity gold bracket, Annabelle Davis earned first place at 145 pounds. She was voted Most Outstanding Wrestler by the coaches at the tourney. Azle head coach Megan House characterized the award as a "huge honor."

Earning second place were Jacy Williams (100 pounds) and Pella LeFever (152 pounds). Katilynn Kirkland Lane earned fourth place at 120 pounds.

In the varsity silver bracket, Hayli Ross earned second place at 107 pounds.

District competition begins in a little more than two weeks, and House and the team are ready for war.

"These girls are working incredibly hard to compete each week and getting ready for our big district, regionals and state battles coming up," the coach said.

AZLE HIGH WRESTLING BOYS

The Hornets finished as runners-up at a recent tournament, and five of Azle's wrestlers won first place.

On Jan. 14, Azle wrestlers competed at the Highway 5 Invitational in Anna. Melissa won the tourney with 257 points, and Azle finished second with 192.5 points. Third-place Amarillo earned 167 points.

Hornet wrestlers who won championships in their weight classes included Braxton Cates, Dominick Evans, Landin Evans, Wyatt Hicks and Billy Spratt.

Oliver Lorenz earned second place, and Chase Yancey took third place.

AZLE HIGH SOCCER BOYS

The Azle Hornets won four games in three days to earn a championship at a recent tournament.

On Jan. 13-15, the Azle soccer boys competed at the Springtown Invitational Soccer Tournament, beating Springtown 3-0, Venus 3-1, Graham 4-0, and Godley 5-0. Next up, Azle plays at 7:30 p.m. Friday at Western Hills in Fort Worth.

District competition will begin Jan. 27 on a road trip to Granbury.

AZLE HIGH SOCCER GIRLS

Two wins in two days makes for a good weekend.

On Jan. 14, the Lady Hornets cut down Cedar Hill 2-0. A day earlier, they had beaten Denton Ryan 3-1.

The victory made the Lady Hornets a perfect 5-0 this season.

On Jan. 19-20, the girls will compete in a tournament at Chisholm Trail.

District competition begins Jan. 27 at home against Granbury.

Azle players who scored goals were Mckenzee Roberts and Sarae Perez. Sophie McIntyre logged an assist. Goalkeeper Emma Nelson earned a shutout with help from her back line.

AZLE JUNIOR HIGH BASKETBALL GIRLS

On Jan. 11, the seventh grade girls A Team beat Irma Marsh 30-13. Leading scorers were Angel Sifuentes (14 points), Finley Hard (7), Rylie Berkel (6), Madison Holloman



JEFF PRINCE | IN HOUSE

From left, A.J. Rollins drives for a bucket to help Azle Christian remain in contention for a playoff spot.



COURTESY CHAPA PHOTOGRAPHY

Dominick Evans tosses his opponent on the way to winning first place at the Highway 5 Invitational.

(2) and Ella Booten (1).

"The girls played a great game," said coach Neosha Beach. "So proud of my team's effort."

The eighth grade girls B Team also came out on top against Irma Marsh. The Lady Hornets worked hard on defense, played as a team and pulled off a 14-12 victory. Top scorers were Serenity Valdez and Nicole Johnson with 4 points apiece, Rylie Auvenshine with 3 points, Natalie Gorman with 2, and Ellie Bennett with 1.

FORTE JUNIOR HIGH BASKETBALL GIRLS

On Jan. 12, the seventh grade Green Team came out ready to play against Chisolm Trail. Running a new offense, Paige Harvey scored 10 points, and Kelly Gomez was close behind with 8. Kaylee Creacy and Charlie Horton played lockdown defense, keeping the game close.

Chisolm Trail pulled ahead in the final minutes, and the Hornets lost 30-25.

The swarming seventh grade White Team was relentless on defense, allowing just 2 points the entire game. Mckynlee Walden led the team in scoring with 18 points. Kimree Johnston, Danna Lopez, and Belle Edwards also made an impact on the scoreboard. Jonlyn Meissner delivered big with 8 assists and incredible post defense throughout the game.

"The seventh grade White Team is firing on all cylinders and looking forward to some redemption in Mineral Wells next week," said girls coordinator Jason Jones.

The eighth grade Green Team girls fought hard against Chisolm Trail but came up short by 3 points. Destoney Roper led the team with 8 points and 2 rebounds. Brianna Ramirez had her best

game of the season with 7 points and 3 rebounds. Rylee Russell and Alexis Grummert both helped the team by putting 4 points each on the scoreboard. Avery Rodriguez-Smithers led the team with 5 rebounds.

"The girls never gave up, and fought hard," Jones said. Final score: Chisolm Trail 26, Forte 23.

Also losing by a close margin to Chisolm Trail was the eighth-grade girls White Team. The Lady Hornets worked well together all the way through the fourth quarter. Andrea Segovia Alvarez and Parker Neely led the team with attempts and points. Valencia Saenz showed her post skills by snagging the most rebounds. "The girls were also successful with their press break multiple times, which allowed them to put the highest number of points on the board this season," Jones said.



JEFF PRINCE | AZLE NEWS

Abbey Natusch drives toward the bucket while being fouled by an Aledo player on Jan. 10.



JEFF PRINCE | AZLE NEWS

Gavin Dean is the new Chicken Express Mr. Texas Player of the Week.



COURTESY PHOTO

From left, Phoebe Mosley and the Azle swim team are set to compete at the district meet.

Azle swimmers ready to dive into district

JEFF PRINCE
jeff@azlenews.net

Amy Estes is busier than ever now that she is representing Place 2 on the Azle City Council in addition to leading the Azle swim team to natatorium glories. Estes doesn't mind. She enjoys the challenge.

"It's a juggling act, but it is no different than any other year," she said. The swim coach added city councilmember to her resume in May of 2022. Her term runs to 2024. During the day, she teaches school at Azle High in addition to coaching. "I have to be a master

of time management and work intentionally on city issues, academics and swimming-related topics," she said. The swim team hasn't suffered from their coach's additional responsibilities. The team's 19 members have competed in eight meets since September, and the re-

sults have been impressive. Phoebe Mosley has set three school records, and Steven Manley, Kalen McCullough and Brooke Nowakowski have excelled, as well. The team is young with just three seniors and a large contingency of freshmen, so the future looks promising. Eleven swimmers returned

from last year, and they have continued to gain experience. Varsity members include Taylor Barton, Peighton Berry, Haven Brown, Joshua Carmona, Laci Clark, Trystin Ellis, Hailey Fox, Emory Hann, Steven Manley, Madison Martin-Wallace, Kalen McCullough, Phoebe Mosley, Brooke Nowakowski, Isaiah

Nunn, Karla Rodriguez, Gianna Schroeder, Isaiah Shelton and Joshua Wiedemann. Azle swimmers will compete at the district meet at 11:30 a.m. Friday at the Northwest ISD Aquatic Center. "We have had a great season, and we are ready and fit for district," Estes said.

Azle rodeo members to vie for stock show scholarships

JEFF PRINCE
jeff@azlenews.net

Nine members of the Azle rodeo team qualified to compete at the annual Fort Worth Stock Show Scholarship Rodeo presented by Lone Star Ag Credit in Will Rogers Coliseum at 1 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 22. About 75 teams participate in the North Texas High School Rodeo Association, and the top 10 riders in each event are selected to compete in the scholarship rodeo. Rodeo team officials are

encouraging friends, family and members of the North Texas High School Rodeo Association who are not competing to attend the rodeo and stock show. General admission tickets will include the rodeo and entire stock show, midway rides, trade show and exhibits except for the Dickies Arena. Tickets can be bought at all entrances to the grounds. Adults, \$12; children ages 6 to 16, \$6; children age 5 and under get in free.

COURTESY JO H PHOTOGRAPHY

Wyatt Allison and the Azle Hornet rodeo team will be vying for scholarship money at a Stock Show rodeo.



TRYOUTS

FROM PAGE B1

our district has at least two or three Division I-type pitchers. There could be three teams in our district that won't make it but could probably make a run in the playoffs if they were in another district." As Smith spoke, he sat in a chair in the high school gym watching a boys basketball game. Several of the roundballers will transition to baseball once the basketball season ends, and Smith likes to let them know he has their backs.

"Playing other sports is important," he said. "I come out and watch them just so they know I'm supporting them with the other things they do in life." Baseball tryouts rely on a point system that involves grading players on hitting, throwing, running and fielding, as well as considering academics and citizenship. "It's a well-rounded thing," Smith said. "It's not all athletics. You've got to take care of your academics because, if you are ineligible, you can't play." Kids who struggle overcome their issues and succeed many times, Smith said.

Seeing that happen is one of the joys of coaching. "I've been really pleased with some of our guys and the steps they've taken to become academically sound kids," he said. "At the end of the day, it's not about baseball or athletics. It's about getting your education. It's exciting to watch how those guys have started to figure out the high school part of life." Tryouts are held over a short stretch of days rather than just one day. Coaches want an opportunity to test and observe athletes on multiple occasions under tryout pressure. One bad day won't

kill a player's chances if he excels on the others. "We give them three days to show what they can do," he said. The Tom Hanks character in the movie "A League of Their Own" said there's no crying in baseball, but there is plenty of heartbreak when it comes to cutting a player after tryouts. Most coaches dread having to cut players, and most of them hate being cut. "The hardest three or four days of a baseball coach's year is tryouts," Smith said. Some kids try out all four years and never make the cut. Some fight and claw their way

onto JV but never advance to varsity. Smith has seen it all, and he tries to create opportunities for success. The developmental squad offers hope to a handful of kids, and other boys find other ways to become involved. "They end up being our manager, or we try to find niches for them," he said. "We just don't say, 'You're done.' I like to see guys that keep trying." Smith recalled a recent graduate who tried out for the team all four years and never made the cut. The boy served as manager while continuing to work out with the team during the athletic

period. "His first year, he couldn't do a pullup and couldn't bench his body weight," Smith said. "At the end of his fourth year, by being in the class, he was doing 18 pullups and could bench his body weight 10 times. That was a kid that just kept trying and trying. That's what you want to see. He found his niche by being our manager. He helped us out during our games. He helped us with practice. He wanted to be a part of it. We find ways for that." Tryouts will be held Jan 20, 21 and 23 at Azle High.



JEFF PRINCE | AZLE NEWS

A cheer squad takes a break during halftime at a recent basketball game.

CHEER
FROM PAGE B1

"It's stressful at times, but it's super fun," she said. "You meet so many people." Being a cheerleader requires hours of practice and can be difficult, especially since Crawford also takes college-level classes in high school. Cheer practices last an hour during school and two hours after classes. Hopkins is glad to have Crawford leading the team, calling her an "amazing" performer.

MUSCLE MEN

Crawford is a flier, or someone who is hoisted high in the sky during stunts before falling into her teammates' waiting arms on the way down. Those arms are beefed up with muscle to make the ascents impressive and the descents safe. In 2015, then-junior Ruben Perez founded Hornet Muscle, a group of strong guys to provide a foundation during stunts. Ruben went on to cheer at college after leaving high school, and now, his younger brother Alex is a Muscle member.

bad himself. He joined the team as a junior and has polished his craft ever since. "My brother always wanted me to join," Alex said. "I was already doing stunts at home with him." Hopkins, the cheer coach, graduated from Azle in 2015 and spent her senior year cheering with Ruben during his inaugural year of Muscle. "Alex is exactly like his brother — so outgoing and kind to everybody and super-inclusive," she said. "You can tell their skills run in the family. Alex showed up last year and on his first day was already doing some stunts that usually take a while." After joining, Alex had to face a familiar backlash. Guys who join cheer report being kidded by their friends and family members about joining a "girl sport." Perez heard the cracks but ignored them. He encourages other boys to try out for cheer.

"If you want to do it, do it," he tells them. He shakes off the jokes. "I don't care at all," he said. "If it's something you enjoy and love doing, then just go for it and don't care what other people think. It's all about believing in yourself." Elias Ramirez is a senior in his first year on the cheer squad. He, too, heard cracks after announcing his decision to try out. Ramirez is one of the high school's best athletes and a crucial member of several sports teams. "I do wrestling, football, soccer and all these sports," he said. "They're like, 'Dude, you're going into a girls sport? C'mon.'" Last year, he took a class taught by Hopkins, and she

encouraged him to try out for cheer as a senior. He resisted. "I didn't want to join," he said. "A lot of my guys were making fun of me because I was thinking about joining. Later on during the year, it interested me, and I was like, you know, I'll give it a shot." He attended a practice and enjoyed his time with squad members. Learning stunts was especially fun because of the "adrenaline you get when you throw a girl and catch her," he said. Catching a girl comes with pressure to prevent injuries. It requires more than strength, and Ramirez is continuing to improve. "I have the strength," he said. "I just don't have the technique. A guy who doesn't have strength but has awesome technique can outshine me any day. It's a hard skill to get down. You have to practice, practice, practice." Hopkins has watched him practice hard all season and said he is better than he thinks. "He does a lot of other sports, so he has got the strength," she said. "We just had to teach him the technique. He has picked it up really quickly and seems to really like it. He could do it in college if he chose to." Perez, too, is a strong athlete. He excels on the powerlifting team in addition to playing in the marching band. "A lot of our boys are in multiple sports," Hopkins said. "That helps bring in new people. A lot of people don't really know what to expect when they hear of boy cheerleaders or even just the girls in general. Once they see that other athletes are a part of it, they can see what we do and how hard these kids work."



Kamryn Crawford flies high with help from cheer mates during a basketball game in January.

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



Kamryn Crawford cheers from the sideline during a football game in 2022.



Congrats to Azle Cheer and Hornet Muscle!

On Jan. 12, the Hornets earned fourth place at the UIL Spirit State Championship at Fort Worth Convention Center.

On Jan. 21-22, the varsity and junior varsity teams are set to compete at the NCA Nationals at Kay Bailey Hutchison Convention Center in Dallas. Good luck Azle Cheer!



JEFF PRINCE | AZLE NEWS
Kamryn Crawford's hair bow says it all.



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ACROSS

1 TXism: "he's got the morals ___ alley cat"

5 Andrews of 1944 "Laura" with TX Gene Tierney

6 Texas legume: black-___ pea

7 TX Dan Jenkins novel: "___-Tough"

8 TXism: "poke the bear" (3 wds.)

18 TX Tanya's "One Love ___ Time"

19 oil rig workers

21 it promotes physical fitness in school (abbr.)

22 double reed instrument in the Dallas Symphony

23 member of "the Corps" at A&M (2 wds.)

24 a Texas "snipe hunt," e.g. (2 wds.)

29 country FM licensed to Port Lavaca

30 marching band percussion: ___line

31 elected county prosecutor (abbr.)

32 soldier on a horse

34 winter garment

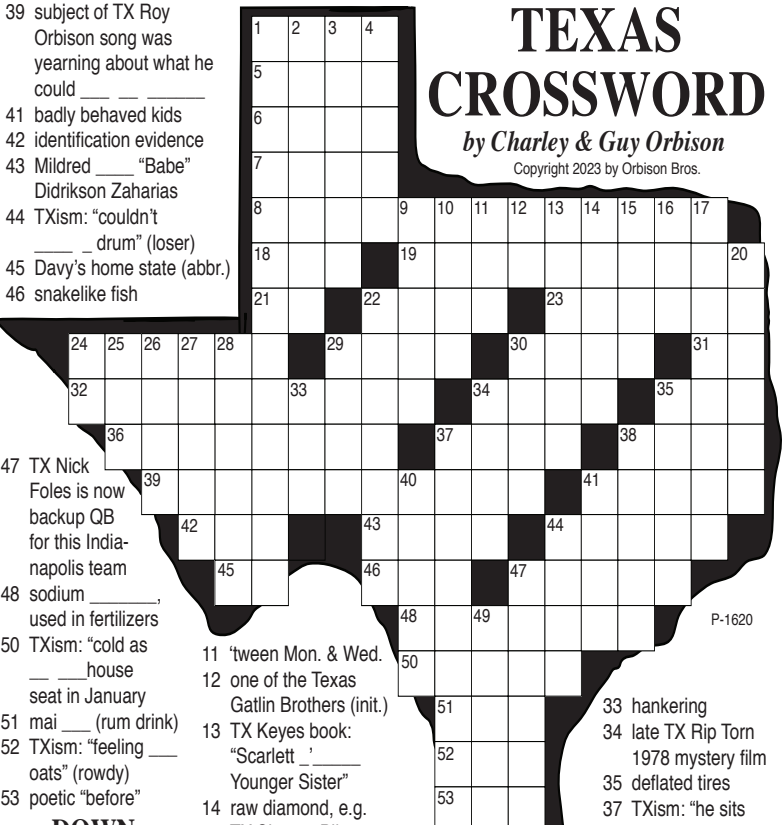
35 TX O. Henry story: "A ___ in Santone"

36 first Texas cattle brand was "AR" for "Alamo ___"

37 "it'll make your ___ curl"

38 statement in a crossword puzzle

TEXAS CROSSWORD
 by Charley & Guy Orbison
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39 subject of TX Roy Orbison song was yearning about what he could ___

41 badly behaved kids

42 identification evidence

43 Mildred ___ "Babe" Didrikson Zaharias

44 TXism: "couldn't ___ drum" (loser)

45 Davy's home state (abbr.)

46 snakelike fish

11 'tween Mon. & Wed.

12 one of the Texas Gatlin Brothers (init.)

13 TX Keyes book: "Scarlett ___ Younger Sister"

14 raw diamond, e.g.

15 TX Simone Biles won bronze on the balance ___ in 2016 and 2020

16 electronic crystal display (abbr.)

17 "___ ___ living" (struggled to get by)

20 theatrical platforms

22 TXism: "tighter than bark ___ ___"

24 July cooler (abbr.)

25 ___ well, Texas

26 bird class

27 was furious

28 TX Tommy Lee Jones 1994 legal film: "The ___"

29 sports AM serving Midland-Odessa

30 TXism: "___ a bull give milk? (no)"

33 hankering

34 late TX Rip Torn 1978 mystery film

35 deflated tires

37 TXism: "he sits ___"

38 wooden box

40 TX Buddy's widow: Maria ___ Holly

41 "hit below the ___"

44 TXism: "that ___ won't float"

47 you can sail on one out of Galveston

49 surface- ___ missile

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