



PHOTO BY JIM STEVENS

Azle came out to celebrate the holidays this weekend with a parade down Main Street, a Christmas celebration at 404 Main, and the Parade of Lights on Eagle Mountain Lake.

CHRISTMAS ON MAIN AT 404

PAGE 2A

PARADE OF LIGHTS

PAGE 13A

CHRISTMAS ON MAIN PARADE

PAGE 14A

Public gets chance to see rezoned boundaries for schools

BY DON MUNSCH
don@azlenews.net

Azle ISD's proposed new elementary school zone boundaries were introduced to the public Nov. 30, and the schools will be situated in a distinct north-south pattern for feeder schools going forward.

The rezoning, which will go into effect for the 2023-24 school year, was necessitated by the opening of Hilltop Elementary School, coming online next school year. Hilltop will join Silver Creek and Eagle Heights elementaries on the southern end of the feeder pattern and will feed into Azle Elementary and Azle Junior High School, while Cross Timbers, Liberty

SEE **BOUNDARY**, PAGE 8A



PHOTO BY DON MUNSCH

Trent Smith, consultant with Zonda, presents some information on new elementary school attendance zones to residents and school district officials and campus principals at a public meeting Nov. 30 at the district administration building. Another meeting is scheduled for Jan. 9 at the AISD administration building.

District looks for way to retain teachers

BY DON MUNSCH
don@azlenews.net

Azle ISD considers retention of teachers an important recruiting tool.

Jessica Hanson, coordinator of recruitment, retention and compensation for Azle ISD, gave a report at the Nov. 28 AISD board meeting on the district finding ways to keep teachers.

From September 2022 data provided by the Charles Butt (HEB) Foundation, 77% of Texas teachers are considering leaving the profession. The district can focus on strategies to help teachers to remain in the profession, and those top three strategies are work culture and environment, significant salary increases and autonomy as a classroom leader, the last

of which centers on ensuring teachers are in charge of their classrooms and have the freedom to teach as they were trained to teach, Hanson said.

"And so I know a lot of research out there is saying we need to be focusing on recruitment, getting new teachers into the profession, but I think a big goal for Azle ISD is keeping our staff here and what are the ways that we can focus as a district on making sure we are keeping our teachers in Azle," she said.

Providing incentives can help teachers stay here. Hanson said such incentives include a November bonus stipend - a \$1,000 stipend for all staff in the district

SEE **RETENTION**, PAGE 8A



PHOTO BY MADELYN EDWARDS

Officer Armando Gonzalez, Lt. Andrew Nalley and Sgt. Edgar Gonzalez of the Reno Police Department were presented with Meritorious Service Awards at the Reno City Council meeting on Nov. 28.

Reno police officers honored for meritorious service after high-risk arrest

BY MADELYN EDWARDS
madelyn@azlenews.net

Audience members at last week's Reno City Council meeting stood up and clapped when three police officers were honored for navigating a high-risk arrest of a man charged with possessing child pornography.

Reno Police Chief Scott Elsner and Deputy Chief Nathan Stringer present-

ed Lt. Andrew Nalley, Sgt. Edgar Gonzalez and Officer Armando Gonzalez with Meritorious Service Awards on Nov. 28.

In October, these officers arrested Steven Harsch, who is accused of possessing several hundred child pornography images, which Stringer said were found by police on Harsch's phone before the arrest.

Reno Police Department

obtained a warrant to search the suspect's home. At about 6 a.m. on Oct. 4, the officers - including Stringer - knocked on Harsch's door and announced their affiliation with the Reno Police Department. Officers breached the door when Harsch refused to answer, Stringer said.

Upon breach, the officers found the suspect pointing a handgun at them, but he did not fire the weapon,

Stringer said. Nalley deployed his Taser, and once Harsch was incapacitated, Edgar Gonzalez and Armando Gonzalez disarmed and arrested him.

The confrontation was over in minutes, but Stringer said those kinds of situations feel much longer.

"When you're standing in there, it seems like an eter-

SEE **HONORED**, PAGE 8A



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Christmas on Main Parade

PHOTOS BY JIM STEVENS

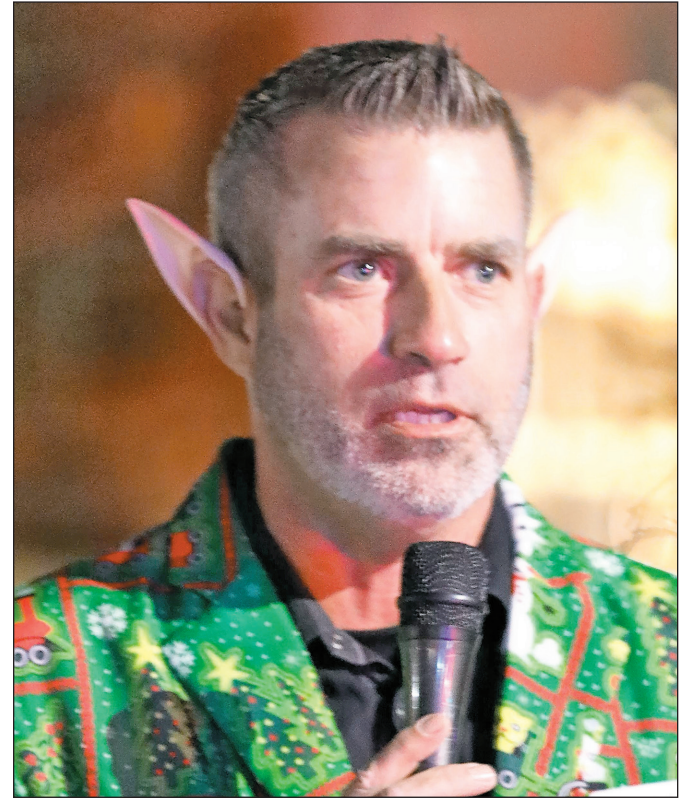
Christmas on Main Street Dec. 3 in Azle saw local residents turn out for the parade and other events that help usher in the Yuletide season.

The winners of the Main Street Decorating Contest were:

- Best Overall: Tactical Taxes
- Most Christmas Spirit: Ain't That Something
- Best Theme "Miracle on Main Street": Rural Gas
- Most Creative: Slice Dessert Bar
- Best Lighted Display: Tater Club Learning Center

Winners of the Parade Contest were:

- Best Lighted: Azle Pediatrics
- Most Christmas Spirit: 1st United Methodist Church of Azle
- Best Theme "Miracle on Main Street": Adult and Teen Challenge of Texas
- Most Creative: Scouts Troop 147G
- Best Overall: Azle ISD Bus




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Rotary recognizes Azle High School seniors



PHOTO BY DON MUNSCH

Azle High School students recognized by the Azle Rotary Club as seniors of the month for December are Alexis Scoggins, Cadence Jordan, Billy Spratt and Grant Tune.

BY DON MUNSCH
don@azlenews.net

Four Azle High School students were recognized as the seniors of the month for December by the Azle Rotary Club.

Billy Spratt, Grant Tune, Alexis Scoggins and Cadence Jordan were honored at the Rotary meeting on Dec. 1.

Spratt holds a grade point average of 100.55 and is ranked 31st in the senior class of 361. He has interest in attending University of Texas at Austin and studying astronomy or forensics or something in the science field.

He plans to Eastfield College after graduation and play baseball there. He would like to transfer to a division I school after his stint at Eastfield.

At AHS, he has played baseball and football, has wrestled and has been involved with Interact. He describes himself as a hard worker and said he got that work ethic from playing sports. In his sophomore year, he broke his finger playing baseball when

he slid into a base and suffered a compound fracture of his index finger, something that changed his digit.

"It's really fat now," he said, drawing laughs.

Tune, whose GPA is 101.02, is ranked 27th in the senior class. He plans to attend Oklahoma State University and study accounting information systems. He has taken accounting classes for all four years of high school.

He has played baseball all four years at AHS. He played on the varsity team last year.

Tune describes himself on his information sheet as "short," "intelligent" and "loud."

"I'm very passionate about everything, which kind of what makes me loud, I guess. And I just think I'm pretty smart," he said, prompting laughs.

Tune discussed his experience working at Chick-Fil-A, where he learned how to be more comfortable in his social skills.

"It was overall a pretty good experience for me," he said.

Scoggins has a GPA of

101.93 and is ranked 17th in the senior class. She plans to attend Midwestern State University and major in theater and eventually teach in high school someday.

At AHS, she has been involved in theater and Texas Association of Future Educators. In theater, she does costume design and she acts. In the recent production of "The Matchmaker," she was a costume designer and she played the lead female role. For the upcoming production of "The Wizard of Oz," she is the co-costume designer. When she designs something, she keeps in mind the person who will wear the garment and that they are comfortable.

"In costume design and costume crew, I make sure that I am always promoting body positivity, no matter the size," she said. "Everyone deserves to be loved and feel confident in whatever they're wearing. So I make sure I make my costume crew and my design be a place where everyone can feel like they're beautiful and make sure they

are proud to go out on stage like I'm proud in making the costume they're wearing."

Last year for TAFE, she went to state in lesson planning for the humanities, in which she created a lesson about research and taught to sixth grade students at Azle Elementary High School. This year, she will go to state for pre-K literature, and she wrote a book about sharing that involves a mouse and bear in which a mouse learns about the kindness of sharing from the bear and the two animals become close pals.

Jordan's GPA is 102.19 and she is ranked 14th in the class. She would like to study law and criminology. She would like to attend TCU. She is deciding between a career in law or behavioral analysis.

At AHS, her activities have included basketball, yearbook, PALs and NHS. She said Lou Burnham has been her most influential teacher.

"She pushes you so hard and at the time you hate it, but then she really makes a difference in (your learning)," she said.

Reno to host Pancakes with Santa on Saturday

BY MADELYN EDWARDS
madelyn@azlenews.net

Santa Claus is coming to Reno, but instead of cookies, he wants pancakes.

The Reno Events Committee is hosting Pancakes with Santa from 9-11 a.m. Dec. 10 at Reno City Hall.

The event is free and includes a breakfast of sausage, bacon and, of course, pancakes, as well as photos with Santa Claus along with crafts, reindeer treats and holiday cookie decorating.

Events Committee Chairperson Ted Lyon gave a report to the Reno City Council on Nov. 28 regarding planning for the event, and he opened his report with a joke.

"Santa is supposed to be here, though I have some pretty big concerns about that. With people hitting deer with their cars around

here, I think it'd be just a matter of time before somebody hits Rudolph or Dasher or Dancer, and Santa won't be able to get here," Lyon said.

On a more serious note, he said the events committee - which is paying for the event, not the city, except for the bacon - has been resourceful in pulling this holiday gathering together. The committee members are donating items needed for the event like pancake mix and sausage, and they found someone to play Santa.

"It's no expense to the city. It's all being taken care of in the events committee," Lyon said.

Lyon reported that the committee has about \$300 - the profit made from the Reno Fall Festival at the end of October - but an official bank account has not been set up yet.

UTGCD to have board meeting next week

FROM STAFF REPORTS

Upper Trinity Groundwater Conservation District's special called meeting, hearing and regular board meeting are set for 5 p.m. Dec. 15 at the district office, 1859 W. Highway 199 in Springtown, or via Zoom videoconference, according to a UTGCD news release.

In addition to the regular board meeting agenda (begins at conclusion of hearing), other items of interest include:

- Special Called Meeting to discuss the relevant DFCs

for the aquifers in Upper Trinity GCD

- Hearing regarding multiple applications for Operating Permit for commercial and/or public water systems in Hood and Wise counties.

The public is welcome and encouraged to remotely attend via online videoconference/teleconference. 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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Azle School Menu Dec 12 - Dec 16, 2022

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 Chocolate Croissant, Orange Craisins **Tues** Breakfast on a Stick, Apples **Weds** French Toast Sticks, Oranges
Thurs Apple Frudel, Strawberry Craisins **Fri** Mini Waffles, Bananas

LUNCH: Everyday - Variety of milk. Your choice of 1 entree & 1 fruit or juice
Mon Steak Fingers w/ roll, Ham & Cheese Sandwich, Tater Tots, Peaches **Tues** Tater Tot Casserole w/biscuit, Cheese Nachos, Pinto Beans, Apples **Weds** Breaded Chicken Sandwich, Garden Chicken Salad, Broccoli, Pears **Thurs** Mini Corndogs, Chicken Parmesan, Corn, Apple-sauce **Fri** Pepperoni Pizza, Cheese Pizza, Popcorn Chicken Salad, Mixed Veggies, Peaches

GRADES 5TH - 8TH

BREAKFAST: Everyday - Assorted Fruits and Cereal, Juice, White or Chocolate Milk, Yogurt w/Granola
 Mon French Toast Sticks, Orange **Tues** Egg & Cheese Tacos, Apples **Weds** Biscuit & Gravy, Applesauce
Thurs Breakfast on a Stick, Bananas **Fri** Waffles, Pears

LUNCH: Everyday: Variety of milk. Your choice of 1 entree & 1 fruit or juice, rolls, crackers • Salad bar offered daily
Mon Steak Fingers w/ roll, Ham & Cheese Sandwich, Tater Tots, Peaches **Tues** Tater Tot Casserole w/biscuit, Cheese Nachos, Pinto Beans, Apples **Weds** Breaded Chicken Sandwiches, Garden Chicken Salad, Broccoli, Pears **Thurs** Mini Corndogs, Chicken Parmesan, Corn, Apple-sauce **Fri** Pepperoni Pizza, Cheese Pizza, Popcorn Chicken Salad, Mixed Veggies, Peaches

HIGH SCHOOL

BREAKFAST: Everyday - Assorted Fruits and Cereal, Juice, White or Chocolate Milk, Yogurt w/Granola
 Mon French Toast Sticks, Apples **Tues** Egg & Cheese Taco, Oranges **Weds** Biscuits & Gravy, Applesauce
Thurs Breakfast on a Stick, Pineapple **Fri** Waffles, Applesauce

LUNCH: • Everyday: 1% unflavored or non fat chocolate milk & juice offered daily at breakfast and lunch.
 Salad Bar • Fruit of the day subject to change due to deliveries and shortages. • Fruit, hot and cold veggies
Mon Steak Fingers w/gravy & Roll, Sausage Link w/ mac & cheese, Cheese Enchiladas, Bean & Beef Burrito, Orange Chicken w/fried rice, Cheese Pizza, Pepperoni Pizza, Cheeseburger, Hamburger, Taquitos **Tues** Chicken Nuggets, Mini Corndogs, Beef or Chicken Nachos w/refried beans, General TSO Chicken w/lo mien noodles, Chicken Alfredo, Cheese Pizza, Sloppy Joe, Hot Dogs **Weds** Mac & Cheese, Beef or Chicken Tacos, Kung Pao Chicken w/fried rice, Meatball Sub, Pepperoni Pizza, Spicy Chicken Sandwich, Popcorn Chicken w/roll **Thurs** Popcorn Chicken w/roll, Breaded Chicken Sandwich, Quesadillas, Taquitos, Teriyaki Chicken w/ lo mien noodles, Max Sticks w/marinara, Cheese Pizza, Corn Dog, Chicken & Waffles **Fri** Hamburger, Cheeseburger, Tostitos w/rice, Bean Burrito, Sweet & Sour Chicken, Fried rice, Chicken Bacon Ranch Wrap, Pepperoni Pizza, Nachos

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'Tis the season for music at Azle High School

BY DON MUNSCH
don@azlenews.net

Zoey Thompson said a favorite Christmas memory occurred when she raised her young brother up toward the top of the Christmas tree so he could put the finishing touch on it.

Jack Gage recalls a good memory of the season happening when his family went to a popular amusement park.

Christmas is a time for making memories, and Thompson, a member of the Azle High School choir, and Gage, a member of the school's concert band program, recently discussed their past Christmases as both fine arts groups prepare for their free Christmas concerts.

The band concert is set for 6:30 p.m. Dec. 15 at the school, while the choir concert will be the next night at 6:30 p.m. at the school.

CHOIR

Madeleine Boivin, Caitlin Sanders, Paul Leonard and Chance Rosson joined Thompson in discussing the choir concert. Each had different levels of experience, as Zoey has been singing since she was 5 years old and Rosson just started this year. They discussed songs they liked to sing in this season along with their favorite songs to listen to.

Sanders likes to sing "The Work of Christmas," while her favorite Christmas song is "Silent Night." Boivin said her favorite Yuletide song is "Sleigh Ride."

"My favorite song to sing here is 'Wassail,'" Thompson said. "God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen" is my favorite Christmas song. And I love to sing it, too - it's amazing."

Among the Christmas memories they shared included Sanders setting up the Christmas tree her first year in Azle, in 2020. She moved here from Waco.

"My favorite Christmas

memory was the first year that my little brother was actually old enough to put the star on top of the tree, which happened to be the year that we moved here from California," Thompson said, noting that move was in the summer of 2020. She said lifting her brother, 2 1/2, to put the star on the tree was "definitely my favorite memory so far."

Patrons who attend the concert should expect energy and entertainment and a welcoming choir, students said.

"Joyous sounds," Boivin said.

Leonard said a welcoming atmosphere awaits attendees, and Rosson said people should enjoy their time.

"I feel like whenever we're on stage we have a very calm presence," Thompson said, adding that the stage provides a "very peaceful" presence.

Patrons will hear about seven selections at the concert.

"It puts you in the Christmas spirit," AHS choir director Brent McCartney said about the concert, noting people will hear "Carol of the Bells."

BAND

Band members Alyssa Anderson (clarinet and saxophone), Reece Davis (clarinet and saxophone) and Jack Gage (trumpet and euphonium) discussed the concert and some favorite songs and memories. Each has several years of experience in playing music. Anderson is in the concert band and the wind ensemble, and Davis and Gage are in the symphonic band and concert band.

Anderson said the top band plays "Sleigh Ride" annually. The top band is the wind ensemble.

"That's a lot of fun, and that's probably my favorite," Anderson said, noting it's her favorite song to play. She doesn't have a favorite Christmas song to listen to.

"I like listening to 'Carol of the Bells' - that's my favorite



PHOTOS BY DON MUNSCH

Azle High School singers Michaela Moore, Lyla Castro (top), Caitlin Sanders and Sadie Byrom practiced recently. The choir concert is next week.



Ciara Hodges and Mackenzie Hadley practice one day in the band room. The Christmas concert is set for Dec. 15.

Christmas song," Davis said, adding that the same song could be his favorite to play.

Gage likes listening to jazzy Christmas music, including from Michael Bublé,

and said he also likes playing those songs, too.

As far as favorite memories of the season, Anderson said visiting Missouri with her family is a fond memory, and

Davis said as far as school stuff, the winter concert is always fun. Gage went to Disney World with his family for Christmas six years ago, and he enjoys that memory.

At the concert, each band will play two to four selections. Playing at the concert will be wind ensemble, symphonic band and concert band.



From left, Nate Crutchfield, Dylan Hamilton and Liam Creech (bottom); C.J. Martinez, Ian Gillespie, Luiz Cruz Gonzalez and Conner Merrill; and the rest of the choir are preparing for the Christmas show.



Trombone players Aaden Holder and Fernando Antunez practice on one recent day.

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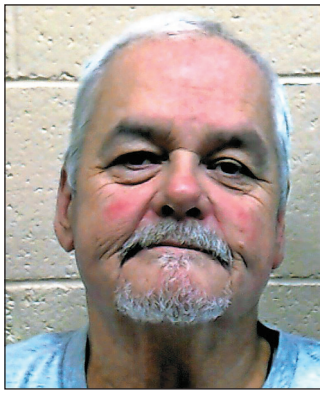
Wayne Howard 1954 - 2022

Wayne Howard, passed away unexpectedly, Monday, November 21, 2022, at the age of 68.

Memorial will be 1 p.m., Saturday, December 10, 2022 at Alexander's Midway Funeral Home, Springtown.

He moved to Azle with his family when he was four years old. After graduating from Azle High School in 1972 Wayne enlisted in the U.S. Air Force. As an adult, slow pitch softball was a huge part of his life which he played well into his forties. Wayne was a fun-loving and very kind man with a heart of gold. He did not hesitate to help anyone who needed help. He was loved by all who knew him and will be greatly missed.

Wayne was preceded in death by parents, Joan Louise and Harlan Howard; brother, Ronnie Howard; brother-in-law, Garry Jones; daughter, Megan Jones; and mother-in-law, Cheryl Jones.



Left to treasure his memory are, wife, Kimberly Jones Howard; sister, Connie Howard Jones; daughter, Jamie and husband Jim Pike; daughter, Michele and husband Johnny Ferguson; son, Brandon Jones; grandchildren, Christina O'Connor, Jimmy Pike, Kailey Hand, Chelsea Pike, John Ferguson, and Abby Ferguson; nieces, Lisa Jones Gardner and Leslie Jones Stephens.

The Azle News, Dec. 7, 2022 Edition

Clifford Edwards 1930 - 2022

We are deeply saddened to announce the death of Clifford (Tommy) Andrew Edwards from Lake Worth on November 24, 2022.

Memorial Mass is at 10:30 a.m. Wednesday, December 14, 2022 at St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic Church, 5953 Bowman Roberts Road, Fort Worth, TX 76179.

In lieu of flowers, as Tommy loved to garden and always tried to plant something wherever he visited, we respectfully ask to consider donating in his honor to the Arbor Day Foundation. (<https://www.arborday.org>)

Tommy was born in Anna, Texas on January 21, 1930 as the second-youngest of 12 siblings. The family moved to Davidson, Oklahoma and Tommy went to school in Frederick, Oklahoma. After graduation, he joined the US Army and specialized in bridge building in the Engineer Corps. He served his country for 23 years, retiring with the Rank of Sergeant Major. He served in several countries as well as in the Vietnam War.

Tommy married Sigrid in 1953 with whom he had 3 children, two daughters and a son. One daughter passed away as a young child due to cancer.

Following active duty, Tommy continued working for the Department of Defense, leading the organization responsible for the recreation of the US military personnel in Europe, Africa



and the Middle East. When Sigrid passed away, he returned to the USA.

In preparation for his return, he contacted many old friends, among those his high school sweetheart Patricia Edwards. Pat and Tommy rebuilt their friendship and when her husband passed away, they re-kindled their love. They married in February 2005. Tommy never met a stranger, loved to garden, was quick to help others and always had an open ear. He had a wonderful sense of humor and was happy when he could play a prank on others. He was active in the church community, helping with Meals on Wheels and the Knights of Columbus.

Tommy is survived by his wife Pat; his daughter, Iris; son, Roland; grandson, Heiko Andrew; stepchildren, Michael Pinska, Lin Hampton, Stephanie Wright, and their respective families.

The Azle News, Dec. 7, 2022 Edition

James Rae 1936 - 2022

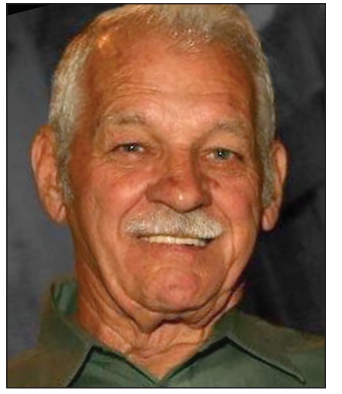
James (Jim) Martin Rae of Azle, Texas passed away peacefully to be with our Lord on December 1, 2022 at the age of 86. His battle with recent medical issues showed great courage, perseverance and faith until the end.

A funeral will be held at White's Funeral Home in Springtown.

Jim was a mechanic most of his life, a skill he taught to all three sons. In 1979 he set off on his own. He bought the old Mobil gas station in Springtown, Texas along Route 199, and started Rae's Service. In 1984 he moved to the corner of Route 51 in Springtown and remained there until he retired. His vision still remains to this day and is now owned by his son Tim.

Jim loved to travel across the country with his wife in their RV, doing woodworking projects in his shop, square dancing, and was one competitive game player.

Most of all he was a man who truly understood the redemptive power of the cross and his life was changed by his personal relationship with Jesus. He loved his family and enjoyed spending time with them. For many years it was a joy to hold the annual Easter celebration at their home and to see his grandchildren hunt for eggs. He strived to make a difference and served for seven years



at the Community Caring Center in Azle and faithfully at the First Baptist Church of Azle where he and his wife Diane were members. He will be greatly missed by his loved ones and friends who celebrate the fact that he is with His Lord and Savior and no longer bound by the constraints of an earthly body.

Jim is survived by his wife, Diane Bird Rae of 34 years, as well as six children, Michael (Tami) Rae, DeeDee (John) Anthony, Tim (Kathleen) Rae, James Rae, Jr., Doreen Rae, Stanna (Paul) Lowell and lovingly embraced three more upon his marriage to Diane, Tammy (Andy) Fulfer, Kim (Michael) Woolsey, and Bobbi Jo Evans. He was Papa to 21 grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren!

The Azle News, Dec. 7, 2022 Edition

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BHC is the only pediatric and prenatal specialty clinic within 30 miles of the Azle area. Dr. Bronson is certified in the Webster Technique for pregnant women and welcomes infants and children of all ages to her practice.

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Dr. Britton Bronson specializes in pediatric and pregnancy chiropractic care and welcomes all others under 65 years old. BHC opened its doors in October 2022. Many other chiropractors focus mostly on sports and rehab treatment. BHC is the only pediatric and prenatal specialty clinic within 30 miles of the Azle area. Dr. Bronson is certified in the Webster Technique for pregnant women and welcomes infants and children of all ages to her practice.

Bronson Heritage Chiropractic is a cash clinic. New patient exams are \$70, and adjustments are \$50. They do not bill Medicaid or file insurance.

All patients receive an Insight Scan at no additional cost. This scan shows the patient's problem areas and allows the doctor to show visual progress throughout the treatment plan.

Dr. Bronson is a fourth-generation chi-

ropractor and the ninth in the Bronson family, dating back to 1925, when Dr. Gerald Bronson and his wife Dr. Mary W. Bronson established the first Bronson Clinic in Ranger, Texas.

Today, Bronson Heritage Chiropractic continues the tradition of a family-run business. Dr. Bronson is joined by her mother, Christie, and father, Bill, as business partners to help with operations and marketing at the Azle clinic, which provides help and healing to the whole family.

From the moment a patient walks in the front door, they are greeted with a smile and loving care. Dr. Bronson has been around chiropractic care her whole life and has seen the benefits firsthand.

To schedule an appointment, visit bronsonheritagechiropractic.com, or call 888-333-0491.

Bronson Heritage Chiropractic is located at 1653 Southeast Pkwy. in Azle, next to Outdoor World. They are open Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to noon and 2 to 5:30 p.m. Special appointments can be scheduled by calling the clinic.

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OBITUARIES

LaJuana Barto 1950 - 2022

LaJuana Gail Barto, an amazing wife, mother, grandmother, sister, and friend, passed away Friday, November 25, 2022.

A Celebration of Life is at 3 p.m. Saturday, December 17, 2022 in Biggers Funeral Chapel.

In lieu of flowers please consider making a donation to Cook Children's Hospital, www.cookchildrens.org.

LaJuana was born May 8, 1950 in San Augustine, Texas. She loved nothing more than being a mom, not only to her kids but to anyone's kids. LaJuana was a selfless and giving woman always willing to do anything for anyone. She will be sorely missed by those who love her until the day they meet again.

Survivors include devoted husband of 52 years, Steve Barto, Sr. of Azle; daughter, Natalie Barto of Azle; son, Steve Barto, Jr. of Azle; granddaughter, Sloane Barto of



Azle; sister, Polly Jordan and husband, Tom of Houston; brother, Johnny Foster and spouse Joe of Springtown; sister, Coco Foster of Houston; brother, Roger Barto of Fort Worth; sister, Glenda Curry and husband, Jeff of Trophy Club; and numerous extended family members and friends.

The Azle News, Dec. 7, 2022 Edition

Amanda Blake 1982 - 2022

Amanda Kay Blake, 40, went to her forever home, Saturday, December 3, 2022.

Funeral service is 2 p.m., Thursday December 8 at Alexander's Midway, Springtown. Visitation is 6-8 p.m. Wednesday at the funeral home.

Burial is at Nelson Cemetery, Azle.

Amanda was born April 6, 1982 in Fort Worth to Wayne and Christle (Gardner) Blake. Amanda grew up in Reno and graduated from Springtown High School in 2000. She faced many challenges throughout her life, but thrived to overcome those, and lived her life to the fullest. One of her greatest accomplishments was her daughter, which was her pride and joy. Amanda never let her wheelchair slow her down. She traveled with her sister, Shannon, as often as possible. When she wasn't traveling she was working on crafts at home with her mother. Her father preceded her



in death along with paternal and maternal grandparents.

Left to cherish fond memories are her daughter, Kimber Stephens; mother, Christle Gardner Blake; sister, Shannon Blake; brother, Harold Blake, Jr.; sister, Debbie Blake; and her nephews, great-nephew and great-niece, that held a special place in her heart, Tristyn (Charlie and Sarah) and Jaysen Boone.

The Azle News, Dec. 7, 2022 Edition

Natalie Cotton 1991 - 2022

Natalie Cotton, 31, passed away November 27, 2022.

Visitation will be held from 5 to 8 p.m. on December 1 at Azleland Cemetery, 850 N. Cardinal Rd., Reno.

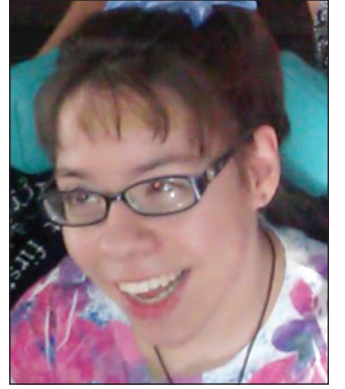
A memorial potluck will be at 11 a.m. December 10 at the Cotton home.

Natalie was born on May 5, 1991 to Buddy and Lora Cotton. She lived her entire life in Azle.

She did not let cerebral palsy slow her down. She was an adventurer who loved being outdoors and found joy in swimming and four-wheeling, and summer camp every year.

Natalie had an impact on so many lives and she will always be remembered for her adventurous spirit. She wasn't scared of anything.

She is survived by her parents, Buddy and Lora; broth-



er, Bryan and sister-in-law, Gillian Davidson; grandma, Hope Doss; aunt, Sondra Doss; uncle John Doss and wife Mari; uncle, Toby Doss and wife Rose; and numerous aunts, uncles, cousins and friends too numerous to name.

The Azle News, Dec. 7, 2022 Edition

Lonnie Richardson 1957 - 2022

Lonnie Ray Richardson, 65, of Weatherford died on November 30, 2022.

Funeral service will be at 1 p.m. on Friday, December 9 at Azleland Chapel and Cemetery.

Lonnie was born in Independence, Louisiana to Floyd and Opal Richardson. He moved to Weatherford in 1995.

He worked as an auto salesman and loved to go fishing and to work on cars and lawnmowers.

Lonnie is preceded in death by his parents; his wife, Letha Richardson; and brothers, David and Eddie Richardson.

He is survived by his brothers, Robert and Floyd Richardson; sister, Suzie Richardson; children, Vicki Richardson



of Fort Worth, Carla Richardson of Weatherford, Lonnie Richardson Jr. of Bridgeport, and Linda Garibay of Weatherford; eight grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

The Azle News, Dec. 7, 2022 Edition

Janie Franklin 1954 - 2022

Janie Diane Franklin, 68 passed away in her sleep at her home in Azle, Sunday, November 27, 2022.

Graveside Services were held at 2 p.m. Friday, December 2, 2022 at Ash Creek Cemetery, Azle.

Visitation was held from 6 to 8 p.m. Thursday, December 1, 2022 at White's Azle Funeral Home.

In lieu of flowers, donations in Janie's name may be made to the local animal shelter.

She joins her son, Michael Morris in heavenly peace.

Left to remember Janie are her husband, Ken Smith; sons, Nathan Rabalais and wife, Jennifer, Keith Morris and wife, Stephanie; step-son, Seth Smith; daughters, Lisa Franklin Davis and husband, Chris, Debbie Rabalais and stepdaughter, Melissa Rosales and husband, Dave;



grandkids, Krysta Rabalais, Nicolas Rabalais, Sammy Rabalais, Brianna Rabalais, Angela Rabalais, John Burnham, Samantha Lyons, Savannah Lyons, Dylan Davis, Owen Rosales and Jude Kurtz; great-grandsons, Dean and Jaxon Lower, and Benjamin Burnham.

The Azle News, Dec. 7, 2022 Edition

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CORRECTION

In the Nov. 30 edition of the Azle News, the obituary for Linda Coffey erroneously listed Mary Ann (Harless) Bryant Gazaway as having preceded Mrs. Coffey in death. Mrs. Gazaway is still living. The News regrets this error.

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<p>THE ABBEY CHURCH Pastor: Paul Brownback 10400 Jacksboro Highway 817-238-1404 www.TheAbbeyChurch.com Morning Worship.....10:30 AM Community Groups..... Various Times</p> <p>ASH CREEK BAPTIST CHURCH Pastor: Dr. G. Wesley Shotwell 300 South Stewart St. 817-444-3219 www.ashcreekbc.org Sunday School.....9:30 AM Contemporary Worship-TMP.....10:45 AM Traditional Worship.....10:45 AM Evening Worship.....6:00 PM Wednesday Youth Refuge.....6:00 PM Wednesday Evening.....6:15 PM</p> <p>AZLE CHRISTIAN CHURCH (Disciples of Christ) Senior Minister, Ashley Dargai, Katie Medlin, Worship Minister 117 Church St. • 817-444-3527 Sunday School.....10:00 AM Morning Worship.....11:00 AM</p> <p>AZLE FIRST ASSEMBLY of GOD Rev. Joshua Lowrance 1020 S.E. Parkway, Azle 817-237-4903 Sunday School.....9:30 AM Morning Worship.....10:30 AM Wednesday Evening.....7:00 PM</p>	<p>COMMUNITY BIBLE FELLOWSHIP CHURCH Pastor - Alton Davis 817-521-4510 1405 Reynolds Rd., Azle 817-444-7117 Directions: 730 N. to 1542 .5 mi. right on Cardinal, left on Reynolds Sunday School.....9:45 AM Morning Worship.....11:00 AM Sunday Evening.....6:00 PM Wednesday Evening.....7:00 PM</p> <p>CORNERSTONE COMMUNITY CHURCH 2233 Hwy 199 E. • Springtown 817-755-0279 (5433) Sunday Worship Service10:00 AM Wednesday7:00 PM</p> <p>CROSSROADS BAPTIST CHURCH Pastor - Jon Baker Corner FM 730S & FM 1886 817-755-0279 Transportation Available Worship Service.....10:30 AM Wed. Prayer Service.....7:00 PM</p> <p>THE EDGE CHURCH - AZLE 1313 S.E. Pkwy, Azle 817-237-4822 Missouri Synod "Love God - Serve Others - Share Jesus" Traditional Worship.....9:30 AM Contemporary Worship.....11:00 AM</p>	<p>FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH Pastors: Rev. Todd & Jenn Pick 200 Church St., Azle 817-444-3323 Morn. Worship.....8:30, 9:45 & 11 AM Sunday School.....9:45 & 11 AM Youth (UMYF).....5:00 PM Sun & 6:30 PM Wed</p> <p>HOLY TRINITY CATHOLIC CHURCH 800 Highcrest Dr. - Azle 817-444-3063 Saturday.....5:00 PM Sunday.....9:00 AM Sunday.....11 AM (Spanish) Daily Mass (M, T, Th, F).....8:00 AM Wednesday Mass Religious ED.....6:30 PM Confessions.....Sat 4 PM</p> <p>HOPE LUTHERAN CHURCH ELCA 4795 E. Hwy 199 - Reno 817-221-HOPE Follow us on Facebook for streaming services Sunday School.....9:00 AM Traditional Service.....10:00 AM</p> <p>SOLID ROCK BIBLE CHURCH 591 S. Reno Rd., Springtown, Texas 76082 Pastor - Bill Gay - 817-304-7443 Coffee and Donuts.....9:00 AM Sunday School.....9:30 AM Morning Worship.....10:30 AM Children's Church After Music Service Wed. Prayer Meeting.....6:30 PM Wed. Bible Study.....7:00 PM</p>	<p>LEGACY CHURCH Assembly of God Church Pastor: Gary D. Veazey Hwy. 199 & Jaybird Lane 817-221-2983 Morning Worship.....9:15 & 11:00 AM Kidz Zone.....9:15 & 11:00 AM Weds Evening Legacy Group Legacy Youth, Kids All Services.....7:00 PM</p> <p>SILVER CREEK UNITED METHODIST CHURCH Rev. Sheila Fiorella - Pastor 2200 Church Rd., Azle 817-444-1382 www.silvercreekumc.org Sunday School 9:30 AM • Worship 10:30 AM</p> <p>SILVER CREEK BAPTIST CHURCH Pastor: Jay Ditty Minister of Music: David Musick Corner FM 730 S. & Veal Station Rd. Church 817-444-2325 www.silvercreekbc.org Sunday School.....9:45 AM Morning Worship.....10:50 AM Evening Worship.....6:00 PM Wed. Prayer Service.....7:00 PM</p>	<p>THE WORD@LAKESIDE CHURCH OF GOD 9396 FM 1886 Fort Worth, TX 76135 817-237-5500 thewordatlakeside.com Pastors: Brandon and Kelly Bohannon Worship Pastor: Christen Moody Family Life and Young Adult Pastors: Jodie and Mark James, Kids Pastor: Katie Pearson, Student Pastors: Taylor and Sheridan Tomlin, Creative Directors: Logan and Carrie Edwards, Connections Coordinators: Preston and Ashley Larrew</p> <p>Equip Sunday School at the WORD.....9:30 AM Empower Worship at the WORD.....10:45 AM Kids at the WORD.....10:45 AM PreK at the WORD.....10:45 AM Emanate at the WORD (Special Needs Ministry).....10:45 AM Nursery at the WORD.....10:45 AM Young Adults at the WORD.....6:00 PM Wednesdays Adult Bible Class.....7:00 PM The WORD Students (6th-12th grades).....6:30 PM Awana Kids at the WORD.....6:30 PM Life at the WORD Life Groups Various Times</p>
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817-523-7271
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BOUNDARY

FROM PAGE 1A

and Walnut Creek elementary schools will be on the northern end and feed into Hoover Elementary and Forte Junior High School.

Another meeting on the new zoning will be held at 6 p.m. Jan. 9 at the Azle ISD Administration Building's Swarm Conference Room, and information from these two meetings will be shared with the board at its January meeting and then the new map will be approved in February.

A sparse crowd of about a dozen residents attended the meeting at Azle ISD's administration building. Azle Superintendent Todd Smith greeted the crowd and then turned over the presentation part of the meeting to Trent Smith, consultant for Zonda, which performs demographic analyses. Attendees, who learned the district will add about 2,000 more students in the next 10 years, reviewed data on population growth, home prices and values, new home construction and enrollments.

"The demographer helps us predict our enrollments," Todd Smith said. "They have the formulas for growth, how many students per household ... and especially on future developments, how to kind of figure what land is zoned for and how many houses it can possibly have."

The demographer gives a fall and spring update, Todd Smith said, and the demographer can help with the rezoning process.

"They can go in an actual neighborhood and they can actually say that in this neighborhood, you have 100 students that live in the neighborhood and 25 of them are first graders, and they can break them down by this many goes to Silver Creek, this many goes to Azle Elementary and this many feed into Azle Junior High, and so they are able to do with their software," Todd Smith said.

Trent Smith said he hoped people would better understand why the new boundaries were drawn the way they were. He said the Azle ISD board will ultimately decide the boundaries, and the current boundaries are likely

the ones to be proposed to board.

Under census data, from 2010 and 2020, the district grew by almost 29% in total population, from 33,609 to 43,265.

"And so when you look at those kind of numbers, that's a tremendous amount of growth in that short period of time," Trent Smith said. "And then you got the number of households that also grew by that same amount, about 27.4% (12,686 to 16,168)."

Trent Smith showed a map that revealed the student density in the Walnut Creek Elementary area.

"And so when we go to look at what's happening inside the district, it's important to be able to visualize kind of where that density is," he said. "It helps us to decide where a new school might need to be built and what needs to happen inside those zones to have that kind of density."

Another datum showed that 53% of students live in Tarrant County and 44% reside in Parker County. The rest live in Wise County or in other places. The map with the data showed the district has a little more than 7,100 students.

"In five years, we're expected to be at 8,000 students inside Azle ISD going to our schools," Trent Smith said, noting that in 2032-33, there will be 9,000 students projected here. He noted that the DFW housing market is growing in spite of the interest rate increases because of the many jobs coming in and the demand being placed on housing, Trent Smith said.

If the district didn't build Hilltop and have it ready for next year, then there would be two campuses that would be over capacity - Walnut Creek and Cross Timbers - and continuing to grow after that.

"So, it wouldn't be for just for one year, it would be continually overcapacity for the next 10 years," he said.

Hilltop will, for the most part, have current teachers from other Azle campuses, Todd Smith said. Volunteers will be asked to move to the new campus initially, he said after the meeting, and then after that period, officials will decide which teachers from the other campuses will be moved to Hilltop, but

that process has not been decided.

Attendees saw the proposed map, and Trent Smith said "this particular map actually moves the least amount of kids possible into a new campus. It's keeping as many kids as possible that are already attending some of these campuses to stay there."

He said demographers try to get data as close as possible to projections, and he compared what people in his job do to the work of weather forecasters.

"Now, obviously, 10 years out, a lot can change in the economy, things can move around - all that kind of stuff," he said, adding that the new map is the "best plan for the district."

During a Q&A session, a resident asked whether it was possible that the old Walnut Creek building - where the Pre-K Center is now - would be used as a campus if Hilltop is not ready for use by the time school started.

Todd Smith said the district is considering moving pre-K back onto campuses, with this tentative plan created:

Silver Creek Elementary - includes students zoned for Hilltop and Eagle Heights - follows proposed feeder pattern.

Walnut Creek Elementary - includes students zoned for Liberty and Cross Timbers - follows proposed feeder pattern.

Eagle Heights Elementary - Bi-lingual Program, including pre-K. The district-wide bi-lingual program is housed at Eagle Heights and will remain at that school.

The elementary's general contractor, BTC, knows the district's timeline and has assured AISD officials that the company is on track to have the Hilltop Elementary to open the first day of school next fall, Smith said. Should Hilltop Elementary not be ready by the first of school, the district would consider utilizing the old Pre-K Center/Walnut Creek building temporarily, as there is no way for the newly zoned Hilltop students (and new staff) to start out at campus and then transition to a new Hilltop after the start of school.

Man arrested for kidnapping, murder charge attended school in Azle

BY DON MUNSCH
don@azlenews.net

The individual alleged to have kidnapped and killed a young girl last week has Azle ties.

Tanner Horner graduated from Azle High School in 2009, said Amanda Moore,

director of communications with the Azle ISD.

Horner, 31, of Fort Worth is being held in Wise County Jail on a bond of \$1.5 million on charges of aggravated kidnapping and capital murder in the case of 7-year-old Athena Strand, who disappeared from the driveway

of her Wise County home on Nov. 30. Her body was found two days later near Boyd. Horner was a contract driver for FedEx and was allegedly making a delivery to Strand's home when Athena disappeared, several media reports stated.

Azle man killed in car-pedestrian crash

FROM STAFF REPORTS

An Azle man died Nov. 30 after being struck by a vehicle on Tin Top Highway (FM 2580) north of Granbury, according to the Hood County News from information provided by the Department of Public Safety.

Justin T. Burleson, 26, the

pedestrian, died at the scene.

An email from Department of Public Safety Sgt. Richard Hunter stated that just before 6:30 a.m. Nov. 30, DPS troopers investigated a crash on Farm-to-Market Road 2580, 5 miles from Granbury.

"Preliminary investigation indicates a 2005 Chevrolet

Impala was traveling south on FM 2580 when the vehicle struck a pedestrian who was walking in the roadway," Hunter said in the email, adding that the driver of the Chevrolet, Garlyn Dale Eye, 54, of Granbury, was not injured.

HONORED

FROM PAGE 1

nity," the deputy chief said.

The officers later found out from a letter on Harsch's desk that he aimed to use a police officer to kill himself, which Stringer described as "suicide by cop."

"Suicide by cop' is when someone doesn't want to shoot themselves and doesn't want to kill themselves, so

they want the police to do it," he said. "So, they will do something to cause the police to use deadly force."

Harsch was charged with possession of child pornography, promotion of child pornography, aggravated assault of a peace officer and tampering with evidence. Stringer said the U.S. Attorney's Office is handling the possession and promotion of child pornography charges while the other charges will be litigated

in Parker County.

At the council meeting, Stringer said Nalley, Edgar Gonzalez and Armando Gonzalez "embody the highest standards in law enforcement."

"This would have been a time that deadly force was justified," the deputy chief said. "However, these officers made the decision to preserve his life with great risk to their own safety."

RETENTION

FROM PAGE 1

— and increasing employee insurance benefit by \$50 per month. She said campus leaders and others on campus have been trained on Power of Positive Leadership, which can help with campus culture.

Teachers are desiring more time in planning lessons in order for them to think they are making a difference in the classroom, so more work days can be worked into the calendar for the next school year to meet that objective, Hanson said. Depending on the calendar that is selected, there should be seven more days in the upcoming school year for teacher work days. There are three days this year. That extra time to prepare is "pivotal and a game changer and needed for our teachers," Hanson said.

Another consideration being examined is a superintendent advisory council, which would provide feedback on employee needs and struggles and some goals they may have going into the future.

Hanson also mentioned a

process, started by the human resources department, called Stay Interviews in which teachers are asked certain questions, such as what keeps them here, what is the district doing right, what would cause someone to leave and if teachers had one wish, what would it be?

"I've done eight so far, and some of the things that are keeping our staff here are the support, the connection and the community that they feel in working in Azle ISD," Hanson said.

Additionally, she said, some of the areas teachers said the district does well in are communication, training, culture and Professional Learning Community work. Some ways that would cause people to leave are a negative workplace, not feeling supported and not feeling appreciated. She said seven of the eight people mentioned behavior improvements, such as improving behavior of students, or discipline.

District perks in the retention area are, among others, Azle Early Learning Center (day care for employees), life insurance, longevity pay, bereavement leave, sick leave

bank, and employment assistance program.

Hanson talked about some other areas, such as a mentor teacher program.



"One thing I just recently learned is that really a new teacher is a new teacher for about five years," she said, noting it's worthwhile to expand the mentor teacher program to make sure they're checking in our year two, three and four teachers until the district gets them to that year five.

Hanson named some other ways to implement recruitment strategies - job fairs, social media recruitment videos and a new hire website - and said there exists one particularly standout recruitment strategy: word of mouth from current, happy employees. Keeping current employees is a key to recruiting people to Azle. She also enjoyed seeing how the More Cowbell awards, which is peer-to-peer based recognition in which teammates wrote about their colleagues, was received by teachers when district officials gave out those awards this year.



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Now that you're decorating ...

In case you missed my post last week, please know that you have my permission to decorate for Christmas.

I know that you were waiting for that. Or if not my permission, at least my blessing.

Wait, you didn't need either of those?

So much for my ambition of being an influencer!

I guess the truth of the matter is that (apologies in advance of this next phrase) decorators gonna decorate.

So let's talk about another aspect of the season: Advent.

There was not, in the small country Baptist churches of my upbringing, much talk of Advent.



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.

It was all about Christmas. I was an adult before I know anything about Advent—the season of waiting and expectation in the Christian liturgical calendar leading up to Christmas.

We didn't do things like Advent or Lent or anything that seemed measured, slow-paced, or reflective because we had stuff to celebrate. We weren't thinkers, we were doers!

Ain't nobody got time for that high church, snooty stuff!

Could it be that we were just impatient?

To be clear, I'm not bitter about my religious heritage.

I've just recognized that God's family is much bigger and broader than my own experience and I've grown to appreciate expressions that are outside my own tradition and experience.

And I've learned that much of the joy in life's adventure is found in the journey itself—including the slow downs, detours and blind curves—as it is in the destination.

How we travel—the getting there—can be as meaningful as the arrival.

Which brings me back to Advent.

This is a season of deliberate waiting in anticipation of what is to come.

I picked up an Advent devotional book that I started on Dec. 1 and will finish on Dec. 25. "The Songs Tell the Story" by Janet Denison takes a brief look at the story behind 25 familiar Christmas songs.

Today's song is "Silent

Night," possibly the most beloved Christmas song of all time.

Janet writes, "Twenty-first century Christmases are anything but silent or still. It's a busy, hectic, joyfully noisy season. We can easily become overwhelmed with family, friends, and fun—and making sure it's well-documented on social media.

But celebrating Christmas wasn't always that way.

Depending on your age, you might remember when people would decorate their Christmas trees on Christmas Eve and take them down on New Year's Day. Or when Christmas was celebrated with the family and friends

who lived nearby because travel wasn't possible or feasible.

We have added so much to our Christmas celebrations today that it might not be easy to remember how it was for Mary. But we have songs like "Silent Night" to help us imagine what that first Christmas could have been like."

Here's what I'm wondering today: could it be possible for us to deliberately incorporate silence, reflection and a slower pace into our preparation for Christmas? If so, how?

Something to think about. Be amazing today, my friend.

Lots of changes over the course of 123 years — some good, some not so much

As I sit to write this column it came to me, today is my grandfather's birthday. Exactly 123 years ago he came into the world. He passed away in 1994, so he had a long and full life. We were always very close, and as thoughts of him stream to the forefront of my mind, I cannot help but think of the life he led and the changes he saw.

Being born in 1899, it was just a mere 23 years earlier that Custer fell at the Little Bighorn. Oklahoma was not yet a state, nor was Arizona, New Mexico, Alaska, or Hawaii.

He was born on the family farm where there was no electricity, indoor plumbing or running water. Those three conditions would continue for nearly 50 years until the county was electrified after World War II.



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.

He survived the Spanish flu epidemic, though a sister did not.

He lived through World War I.

He saw the automobile replace the horse as a mode of transportation.

He survived the Great Depression and witnessed farm prices drop like a rock in a well. He saw men waiting in long lines trying to find work, and families eating in soup kitchens.

He worked six days a week 11 hours a day and ranched after work for additional income to keep a roof over his

head and feed his family.

He farmed, with mules pulling the plow, and eventually saw the tractor come into use.

He was 42 years old when the attack on Pearl Harbor occurred and served on the Selective Service Board as his county filled the ranks of our nation's military.

He was thrilled with the invention of the radio and fascinated with the advent of television.

He was employed with the county road department and built roads still in use today. He saw segregation end.

He saw men go to the moon and walk upon its surface.

He raised five children and saw them all become successful, responsible citizens.

He was married to the same woman for 73 years, and he respected and appreciated her every single day.

Without question, Granddad saw a lot of changes. Changes in technology and changes in how people act and behave. Wonder what he would think about today?

He enjoyed nothing more than sitting beneath a shade tree, whittling and visiting with friends and neighbors. Not sure what he would have to say about people carrying their phones with them and being so engulfed in the information it has to offer.

He would not understand young women buying jeans that have large holes in them so they could be "stylish" —

when he worked to make sure his girls could afford jeans without holes.

He would be embarrassed for young men who let their pants sag down.

He would be bewildered that people only work a 40-hour week.

I feel like I know what he would have to say about politics. He would be dismayed at the money spent on campaigns and how elected officials seemed to do little about improving the lot of their constituents. He would also shake his head at people who have strong political opinions, but little facts to support or validate their feelings.

He would not understand why there needed to be so much paperwork in the world, and how a man's word ought to be enough to secure any transaction.

He also would not under-

stand why so many people have been married multiple times. He understood relationships could be tough, but that commitment was a huge part of success in life, especially marriage.

He would be particularly confused seeing people fail to take responsibility for themselves and their own actions.

There have been a lot of changes in the past 123 years. Lots of growth, progress and shifting in social norms. Not sure the changes in my lifetime will be as great as those in Granddad's. I do hope that whatever changes come, people stay kind, loving, generous and caring. Those traits should never change.

Thought for the day: There are many ways of going forward, but only one way to stand still.

Until next time.

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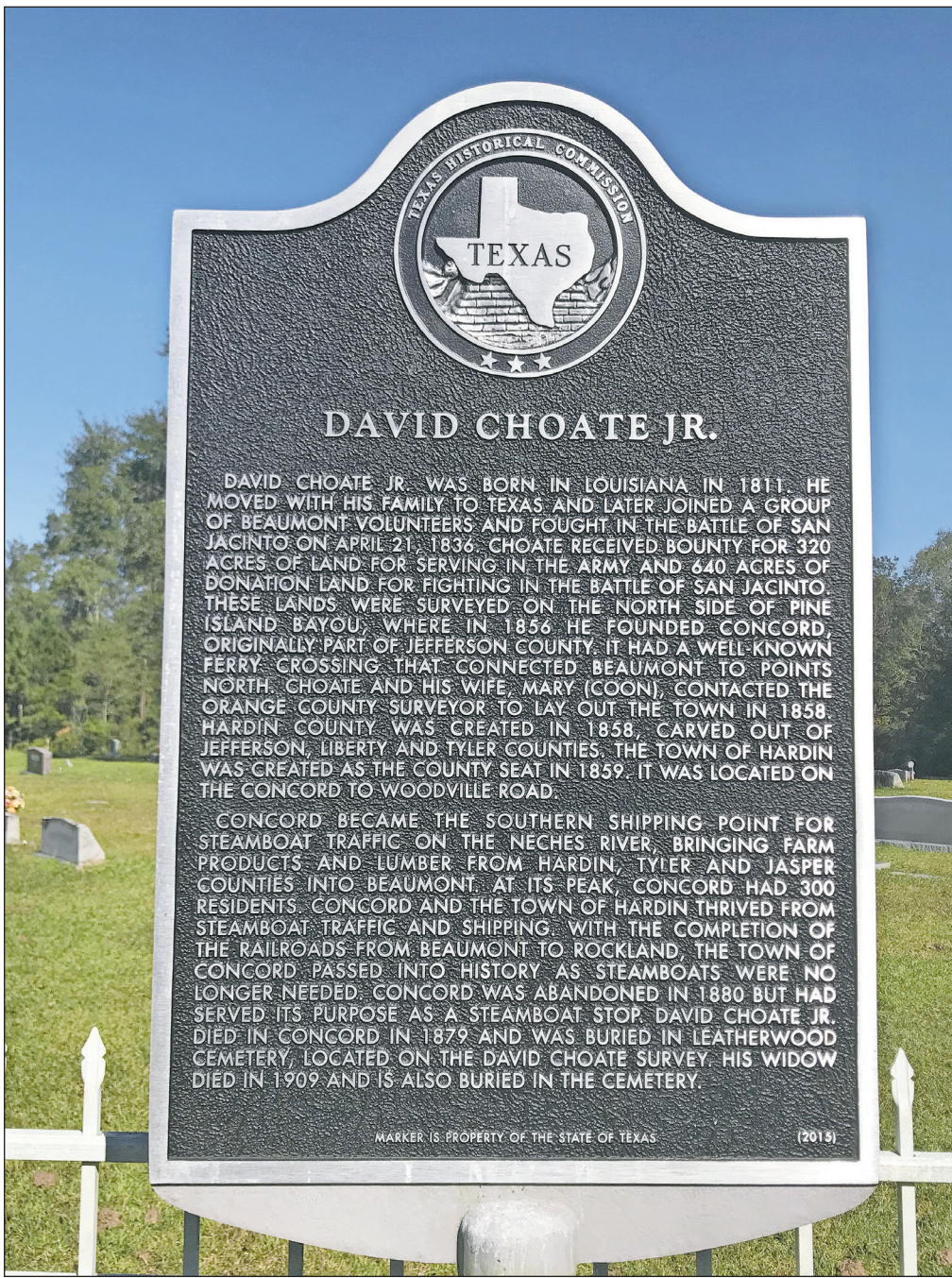
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LEGACY COMES TO LIFE

David Choate Jr.: Farmer, soldier, land speculator



Historical marker of David Choate Jr.

COURTESY PHOTO

I was born in 1811 in Louisiana in a town called Zwolle. My father's name was David Choate Sr, and my mother was Sarah Clark. My father moved the family to Texas, receiving a Mexican land grant of 4,428 acres in 1831. We settled in what is now Hardin County. I had five brothers and sisters. Our family was farming ranchers and we were good at caring for our land and livestock.

In 1836, I had heard that General Santa Anna was marching across Texas to take away some of our freedoms. I joined up with a group of men in Beaumont. We began marching west to help relieve the men who were besieged in the Alamo. Upon arriving in Liberty, I met with my brother-in-law, Stephen Jackson, who had married my sister, Susan.

Stephen told me a rider came along with a letter from Colonel William B. Travis asking all men to come to the Alamo to help the men there. The group I was with combined with the volunteers in Liberty. We were now under the command of Captain William Logan. We started to march west to Bexar to relieve the men at the Alamo. Upon arriving in San Felipe, we were met by General Sam Houston and his army. We were told that the Alamo had fallen and that we were to head back east. Stephen and I helped the families leave from San Felipe, which began what would be called the "Runaway Scrape."

Upon arriving in Harrisburg, Stephen left to return to Sour Lake to get my

EDITOR'S NOTE: David Choate is the great-great uncle of Robyn Davis. Robyn is a member and President of the Erastus "Deaf" Smith Chapter of The Sons of the Republic of Texas in Pasadena. Robyn serves the SRT as the San Jacinto, District Representative and as a committee-man on the Texian Navy Day and Logo committees.

sister and their children out of harm's way. General Sam Houston continued to take us east. Many of the men were very unhappy that we just didn't turn around and face Santa Anna and his army for what they had done to our brothers at the Alamo and Goliad.

We arrived at Buffalo Bayou on April 19, 1836 and found it flooding. General Houston confiscated the flooring in the home of Isaac Batterson to build rafts, which were used to ferry us across Buffalo Bayou. About 283 Texians had to stay behind at the Batterson place because of illness. None of them wanted to miss the battle that we all knew would happen soon, but they were too sick to fight.

After crossing the bayou, General Sam Houston settled us in a meadow just up from the marshes between Buffalo Bayou and the San Jacinto River. My company was then placed under the command of General Sidney Sherman. We were told that Santa Anna and his army were nearby, so we were on alert and ready to fight. Our orders were to attack on the left flank.

In the afternoon of April 21, we were given the order

to charge. We began marching toward Santa Anna and his army. Cannons started firing and we just ran at them shouting "Remember the Alamo!" and "Remember Goliad!" The battle only lasted a little while — and we found out later only 18 minutes. We felt good about whipping the Mexican army and avenging our family and friends who died at the Alamo and Goliad.

Eleven Texians died in the battle and 30 others were wounded including General Houston. The next day Santa Anna was captured, and he surrendered to General Houston. We had won our independence and liberty from Mexico. Texas was free!

After my service in the Texian army, I received land for helping gain Texas its independence. I began to farm the land and was somewhat of a land speculator. In 1850, I founded the town of Concord in Hardin County. We were along the stage-coach route from Beaumont, so we had a lot of visitors and trade. I also donated a plot of land in Hardin County that would become a cemetery known as Leatherwood. This is where I was buried upon my death in 1879.

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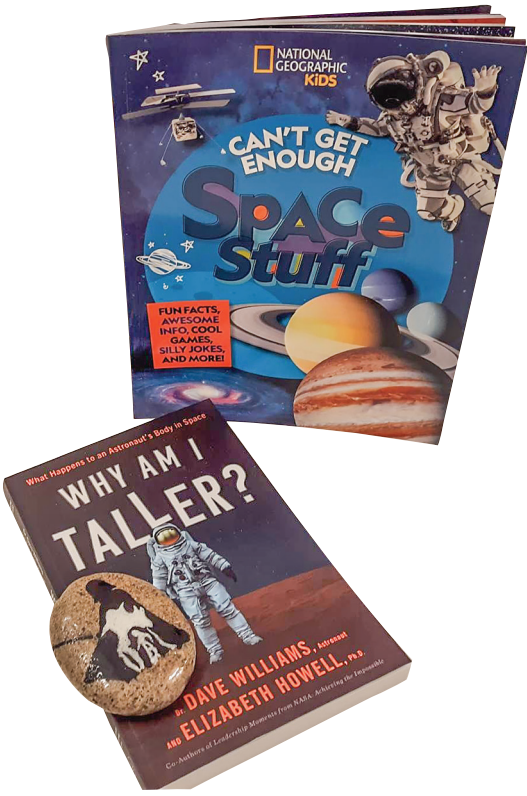
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BOOK REVIEW

Good reads that will send young stargazers into orbit

TERRI SCHLICHENMEYER

The lights on your tree kind of remind you of one thing.

Stars. All the stars in the sky, the ones you can see year 'round at nearly any time you wanna see them. Watching the stars and planets in our galaxy is almost like having the holidays every day of the year. If you dream of being up there with them, be sure to read these great books on space.

For the future astronaut in your life, "Can't Get Enough Space Stuff" by Stephanie Drimmer and Julie Beer is the perfect place to launch deep interest in what's beyond the Earth's atmosphere.

With this book, your 7-to-10-year-old space fanatic can begin with the basics, and the solar system on a page that's full-color and full of facts. A few flips away, your child will learn about black holes, the problems to overcome when living on Mars, astronaut records, and what it might be like to meet an alien. There are pages on meteorites, pages on what can be seen from a space station, and pages on how long a day is on the various planets.

But this book isn't all facts; it offers silly quizzes to take, space jokes, and plenty of easy-to-read entries that will spark any young astronomer's interest. And while "Can't Get Enough Space Stuff" is made for a second-through-fifth-grade reader, grown-ups can have fun with it, too.

Seriously, though: do you ever outgrow your curiosity about space? If the answer is a great big "NO!", then you'll want to read, "Why

Am I Taller: What Happens to an Astronaut's Body in Space" by Dave Williams and Elizabeth Howell, PhD.

So let's say you're prepared to go to the moon as soon as you're asked – but there are things you'd like to know before you start packing your suitcase. Williams, an astronaut, and Howell, a journalist focused on space exploration, have the right answers for you.

How, for instance, will prolonged space flight affect your body, your bones, and the biological systems that keep you alive? Will your mind and brain behave differently when you come back? Are there long-term effects that you should know about now and in the future? Of course, "space doctors" will keep you well-nourished and healthy, so what other benefits are there of a quick trip to the moon?

Here, you will read about astronauts who've gone before you, the things they experienced, how they learned to deal with physical issues in a moving space vehicle, what it was like to actually be an astronaut with a job to perform in a most unusual workplace, and what science can tell you about putting the human body outside this planet's atmosphere.

If these books on astronomy and space exploration don't quite put you over the moon, then be sure to ask your favorite bookseller or librarian for help. They'll help you find the book you want to solve all your questions.

In the meantime, try these. "Why Am I Taller" and "Can't Get Enough Space Stuff" will light you up.

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ON FISHING

Get set to bundle up for protection against colder weather conditions on the way

The colder lake water continues to bring on the action for crappie and striped bass. For you power plant (Comanche Creek) bass anglers, the water may be warmer but the air is still cold especially when running down the lake.

Many seasoned anglers are prepared, but even the seasoned anglers or hunters need to keep their guard up. One mistake and a tragedy can occur on the water. An accident with all the added clothing/gear/boots may make it more difficult, especially in the water.

Some people are prepared and some are not. Some days it doesn't appear to be that cold from the bank, but when you start down the lake it will be cold. It is always good to dress in layers and bring more than what you need. I know you all have heard that before, but it is a good philosophy.

It is true that once the fish start biting you will forget about the cold. However, it is real important to stay warm. Being exposed to the elements in an open boat can be tough and dangerous. Hunters have the same problem sitting in those open stands. Somehow though, the water always seems to be colder.

I recommend a set of insulated coveralls, a jacket to break the wind, some good insulated boots, something to cover the head, and some good gloves. If rain is in the forecast, make sure your coveralls are rainproof, or bring a rain suit. You do not want to be wet and cold. That can be dangerous.

Wool socks help tremendously, with a good set of boots. The first body parts to get cold for most folks



ON FISHING

By Michael Acosta

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

are the feet and the hands. If you keep them warm, you will have a great time on the water. It is a little tough to remove fish, tie knots, and do miscellaneous chores with gloves on. Some of these tasks can be mastered with gloves on, but other tasks may require removing the gloves and putting them back on as soon as possible. Keep a towel handy to dry your hands before you put the gloves back on.

The inexpensive chemical hand warmers can be placed in your shoes/boots and gloves to keep you warmer. Many folks use these religiously. I have found that it is better for me to get accustomed to the conditions

and there is less impact to me versus going from hot to cold repeatedly. If you have a good set of gloves and boots you can keep warm without the warmers. There are even battery powered clothing available to keep you warm if your budget can afford them.

The coldest weather has yet to come. When it does, there are other precautions you should take. The real cold weather may have other obstacles. Slippery icy/slick surfaces on the boat, dock and launch can be dangerous. A fall off a boat can be deadly in cold water as I alluded to earlier. Slips and falls can take you to the emergency room. Walk care-

fully, and think about every step when the conditions call for it.

Some mornings there may be fog present and you need to be careful heading out on the water. It may be prudent to stay close in, until the fog lifts. If you are to venture out in the fog, you can navigate with your GPS, but go slow and listen carefully for other boaters.

Cold, windy days on the water may be the most dangerous especially if you are fishing on an elevated deck or platform that's wet or slippery. Be careful and be methodical on every move. Better to stay in the gunnels.

Yes, you can be prepared and safe in the winter and have some of the best days chasing big striped bass. This cold weather brings on some of the best crappie, striper and sand bass fishing of the year if you are willing to get out.

FISHING REPORT

Lake Granbury water temperatures are in the middle to upper 50s and that colder weather has been bringing on the bite. Striped bass are good to 7 pounds on the lower ends in 20 to 30 feet of water on jerk baits and swim baits worked real slow. Crappie are excellent to 2 pounds on jigs fished near bridge structure and near docks near town and on the upper ends. Sand bass are fair on slabs and jigs worked in 15 to 25 feet of water near Indian Harbor and near Sandy Point.

Big blue cats are biting on cut bait fished on shallow flats on the upper ends. Black bass fishing is good on soft plastics near creek entrances and on feeding flats. Blacks to 6 pounds can be taken.

Comanche Creek power plant fishing continues to be excellent for Largemouth, channel catfish and tilapia. Largemouth bass are good on most any presentation, and catches of 50 to 70 fish per day are possible on the power plant lake. Limits of channel catfish (25 per person) are common on cut shad or prepared baits. Tilapia continue to be good on worms fished under a cork or those looking for filling their ice chest quickly can use a cast net to sack them up.

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Patrick lays out legislative priorities; Rainy Day Fund, highways get boost from oil, gas revenues

PATRICK LAYS OUT LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick outlined his goals for the upcoming legislative session, calling them "general concepts," according to the Austin American-Statesman.

With an estimated \$27 billion surplus, the Legislative Budget Board voted last week to boost the Legislature's spending capacity by 12.3% — the largest increase allowed under the state constitution. But that still leaves the Legislature having about \$14.5 billion in the piggy bank above its spending limit.

Consequently, property tax reduction is one of Patrick's priorities. He is calling for a hike in the homestead property tax exemption from \$40,000 to \$60,000, as well as an expansion of personal property exemptions for businesses, the Statesman reported.

Other priorities include strengthening the state's power grid, boosting border security and law enforcement measures, such as increasing pay for sheriffs and a 10-year mandatory minimum sentence for anyone who uses a gun while committing a crime.

Patrick stressed that the Legislature has the ultimate



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.

say. "So much of what I'm laying out today is not specific, because it's really up to the members to write the bills in the Senate and the House," Patrick said. "It's good that the Legislature is back. We have an extraordinary opportunity, like we have never had before, to chart the future of the state of Texas."

RAINY DAY FUND, HIGHWAYS GET BOOST FROM OIL, GAS REVENUES

A significant amount of the state's current surplus is coming from oil and gas industry tax revenues, with the latest contribution being \$7.3 billion split equally between the Rainy Day Fund and the State Highway Fund. A 2014 constitutional amendment mandates that 75% of oil and gas tax revenue that exceeds the amount collected in 1987 be split evenly between the two funds.

"Revenue from the oil and gas industry is what's

in the Rainy Day Fund, accounts for billions to the State Highway Fund, and contributes to state funds that pay for schools, universities, and first responders," Texas Railroad Commission Chairman Wayne Christian said.

REPORT: PRIVATE BORDER WALL COULD COLLAPSE

A U.S. Department of Justice report kept secret for more than a year and produced by the global engineering firm Arcadis concludes a private border wall along the Rio Grande in Hidalgo County is in danger of collapsing if the area receives extreme flooding.

The report, obtained by ProPublica and The Texas Tribune, concludes the wall built by Fisher Industries doesn't meet basic international building code and industry standards. Its foundation is far shallower than previous border walls built by the federal government.

The feds reached a settlement with Fisher Industries last May requiring that the fence be inspected quarterly, that bollards be removed, and that a gate be maintained to allow for the release of floodwaters.

An attorney for Fisher Industries said the company "strongly disagrees" with the report. However, several civil engineering experts say the settlement ignores the report's conclusions. Alex Mayer, a civil engineering professor at the University of Texas at El Paso, said the agreement overlooks what he termed the wall's flawed design, as pointed out by the report.

"It just shows the shoddiness of the whole effort. It worries me even more," Mayer said.

The two news organizations spent 15 months trying to obtain the Arcadis report, which confirms their earlier reporting about the privately built wall's potential flaws.

TEXAS TRAFFIC CONGESTION INCREASED IN 2021

Delays on the state's most crowded roadways grew last year, though they are still below pre-pandemic gridlock levels, according to the latest study by the Texas A&M Transportation Institute. The

institute has conducted the study annually since 2009.

This year's "winner" for most gridlocked stretch is Houston's West Loop, which held onto the title it garnered the previous year. Rounding out the top five of roadways one might consider avoiding if possible are the Woodall Rogers Freeway in Dallas; Interstate 35 in Austin; and Houston's Eastex and Southwest Freeways.

Researchers say traffic delays cost a ton of money in lost time and wasted fuel — more than \$3.8 billion on the state's busiest road sections last year, though that is about 10% lower than pre-pandemic levels.

Delays are not confined to the state's largest cities. Gridlock affects areas of all sizes, according to the institute, which has compiled a complete list of 1,860 road segments in 23 urban regions across Texas. The list can be found at mobility.tamu.edu.

Lawmakers sign NDAs to get Uvalde info

A half-dozen Texas lawmakers signed nondisclosure agreements to obtain investigative records from the Texas Department of Public Safety concerning the May shooting at Robb Elementary School in Uvalde that have thus far been kept secret from the

public.

The Austin American-Statesman reported that state Sen. Roland Gutierrez, D-San Antonio, whose district includes Uvalde, was one of the six. Others include Sens. Royce West, Juan "Chuy" Hinojosa and Paul Bettencourt, and Reps. Dustin Burrows and Tracy King, according to the DPS. Most of the agreements were signed in June or July.

Since the shooting, which killed 19 students and two teachers, parents and others have fought for investigative records that might explain the failed law enforcement response at the school. A coalition of media outlets, including the Statesman, have sued seeking the public release of information from DPS.

COVID-19 CASES RISE IN STATE

The number of COVID-19 cases in the past week in Texas rose to 21,026, with 43 deaths reported by the Coronavirus Resource Center at Johns Hopkins University. That is more than double the number of new cases reported the previous week. There are 1,750 lab-confirmed COVID-19 hospitalizations throughout the state — also an increase, according to the Texas Department of State Health Services.

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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 December 15, 2022 at 195 W. Reno Road, Azle Texas 76020-6001. The bids will be publicly opened and read aloud at 10:00 AM on Thursday, December 15, 2022 at 195 W. Reno Road, Azle Texas 76020-6001.

Bids are invited for several items and quantities of work as follows.

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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, 11/30/22 & 12/7/22

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.

2022 TxCDBG Project Implementation Manual Appendix F July 1, 2022 2
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PHOTOS COURTESY PARADE OF LIGHTS

Families gathered around Eagle Mountain Lake on Dec. 3 to watch the annual Save Eagle Mountain Lake Parade of Lights.



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Christmas at 404 Main

PHOTOS BY JESSICA MCKINNEY

Fun and festive times for all ages at Christmas on Main Street.



Santa visited with all of the good boys and girls at Christmas on Main Street.



The Azle Area Chamber of Commerce hosted its first tree decorating contest.



The Parker family was in the holiday spirit.



Over 100 bicycles were given away to kids of all ages.



Genovia White, the "bait," fights off another shark.

Azle girls setting sights on state wrestling title

BY JEFF PRINCE
jeff@azlenews.net

Finishing as runners-up in the state wrestling championship in February was a huge accomplishment for the Azle girls team.

Now, a new season is underway, and the Lady Hornets are setting their sights even higher.

"We want a state championship," said coach Seth Bell. "That's the goal."

Winning a state title would be a monumental task, but one the Lady Hornets could accomplish. Most of their best wrestlers from last season have returned, and talented new prospects have joined.

"We have some really talented girls this season," Bell said. "We have three state finalists returning, a state champion returning, a couple of state qualifiers. We've already had a girl win nationals

this year, and we had another one place at nationals."

In October, Alicen Dillard won the Super 32, a national tournament held in North Carolina that featured 100 nationally ranked wrestlers and more than 300 entries. Dillard's younger sister, Mariah Dillard, earned sixth place. Both were state finalists.

Bell discussed the team and the new season after a recent practice at the Azle mat room. The team's two-dozen roster members meet from 3:30 to 5:30 p.m. on weekdays to learn techniques and improve their conditioning. As Bell spoke about the team, he interrupted his thoughts frequently to offer advice to wrestlers who had stayed late after practice to continue working out.

"Keep pedaling!" Bell hollered at Annabelle Davis, another state finalist who was riding one of the two

new stationary bikes that the wrestling team installed over the summer. "Go! Go!"

SHARK BAIT

Included among the veteran wrestlers on this season's roster is a handful of newbies learning the sport for the first time. One was Genovia Whiteside, a sophomore who had dreamed of wrestling as a kid but didn't sign up until this year at Azle High School.

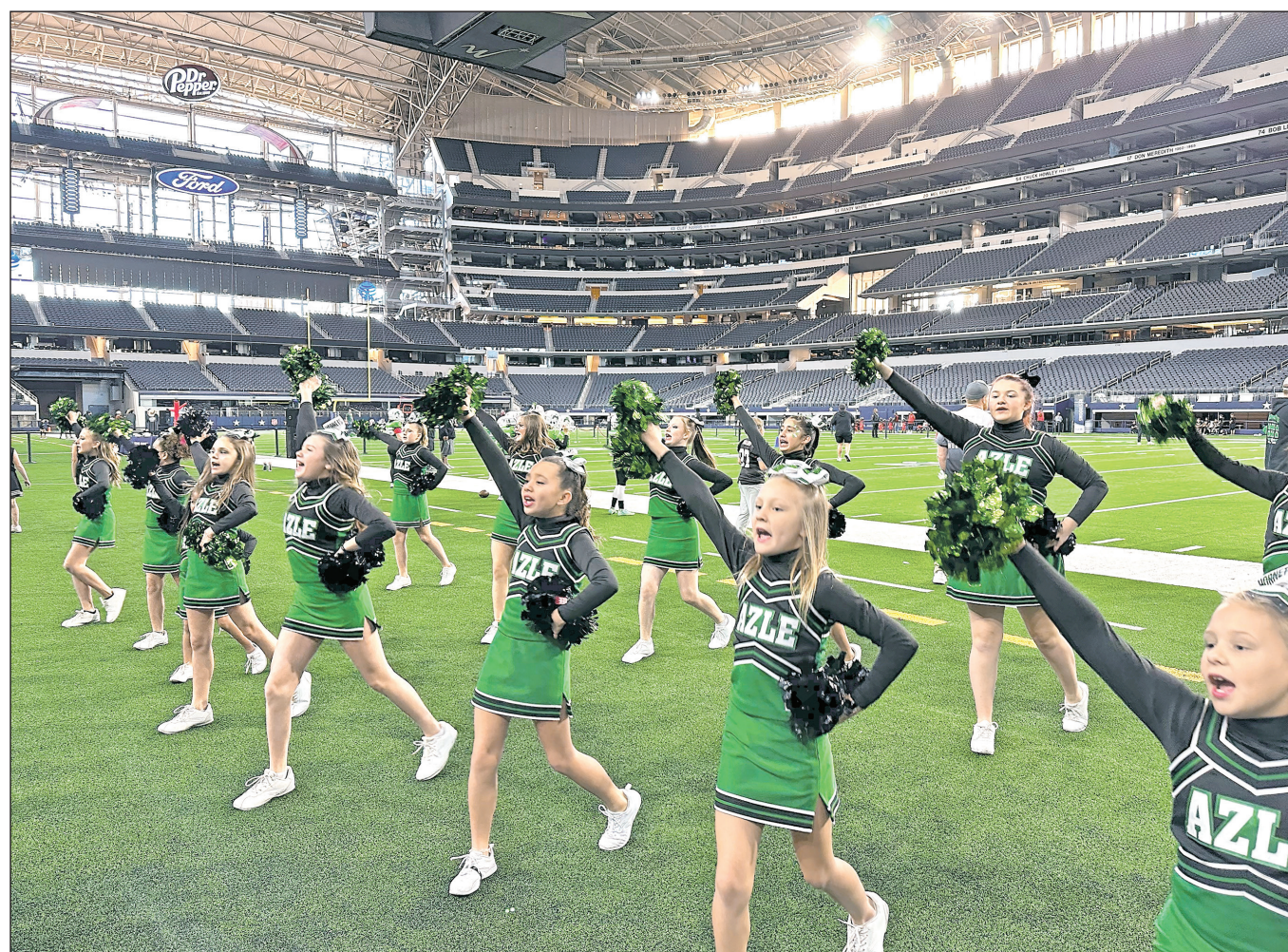
One of the toughest drills she has endured is called Shark Bait.

The drill goes like this: Five wrestlers form a group. Four are "sharks," or attackers. The fifth is "bait" trying to fend off the sharks. One by one, a shark attacks the bait. Once those two wrestlers hit the ground, the shark peels off, the bait climbs back to her feet, and the next shark attacks.

SEE WRESTLING, PAGE 3B



PHOTO BY JEFF PRINCE
From left, experienced senior wrestler Jacy Williams shows novice Genovia Whiteside a wrestling hold.



Azle Youth Sports Cheerleaders cheer on Red Zone players



PHOTOS COURTESY
Azle Youth Sports had the largest representation to the Red Zone 2022 Games recently at AT&T Stadium in Arlington. AYS Football teams played four 15 minute games while AYS cheerleaders cheered them on from the sidelines at AT&T Stadium. AYS Cheerleaders performed a routine on the 50-yard line that they have been preparing for for months. AYS organizers said, "We could not be more proud of our kiddos and our Azle Youth Sports League."

Lady Hornets dominate Benbrook



PHOTOS BY JEFF PRINCE
Faith Summers dribbles around the Benbrook Bobcats.



Cheryl Grubbs drives for a layup against Benbrook.

BY JEFF PRINCE
jeff@azlenews.net

The lopsided score could have been worse.

The Azle Lady Hornets hit the road on Dec. 2 and whipped the Benbrook Bobcats, 60-8.

The score might have been 120-8 if Azle hadn't spent most of the second half passing the ball around without trying to score. The Lady Hornets practiced setting up scoring plays but resisted taking shots.

"Since we took the good

lead, it gave us an opportunity to work on our execution of our offenses, which is something we've been needing to work on," said Azle head coach Mitzi Marquart.

The excessive passing without trying to score led to turnovers, but the coach

wasn't concerned.

"We were looking for different angles and working on different patterns, which I hope will help us further down the road," she said. "We are working hard."

The victory was particularly sweet after Azle lost a

53-52 heartbreaker to Nolan Catholic on Nov. 29.

Next up, Azle (11-4) is slated to play Eaton (4-4) at 6:15 p.m. Friday, at home.

The first district game of the season is set for Friday, Dec. 16, at home against Granbury.

UP NEXT

Friday, Dec. 16
against Eaton



PHOTO BY JEFF PRINCE
Gunner Crow, lying on his back after taking a charge, scored 8 points to help Azle defeat Decatur.

Azle basketball boys enjoying win streak

BY JEFF PRINCE
jeff@azlenews.net

Losing four of five games was a tough way to start the basketball season, but the Azle Hornets learned

from their mistakes and persevered.

They followed with a four-game win streak over Conrad, Pearce, Paschal and Decatur and then played at a Weatherford tournament

on Dec. 1-3 and racked up a couple more victories.

Their most recent victory was on Nov. 26, when they played on Nov. 26, when they played at Decatur and then played at the Decatur Eagles and came out on top 49-41. The

win didn't come easy. The Hornets were down 12-5 after the first quarter and continued to trail at halftime. Azle outscored Decatur 14-8 in the third quarter and 15-9 in the fourth to nail down

the win.

Gavin Dean led the Hornets in scoring with 21 points. Gunner Crow scored 8 points, Jayden Rollins 7, and Sawyer Dotson finished with 6. Other players scoring

included Colin Haas, Austin and Jackson Davis.

On Friday, Dec. 9, Azle is scheduled to travel to Mount Pleasant to play in a tournament.

WRESTLING

FROM PAGE 1B

For six minutes, the bait is under constant attack from all sides.

The girl serving as bait becomes exhausted but must continue fighting. Those who are slow to regain their footing hear about it from teammates.

"Get up!" they yell. "Keep going!"

Songs such as Adele's "Rolling in the Deep" are piped in at loud volume to provide additional energy and motivation.

"Let's go, let's go, let's go!" Bell hollered, walking around the room and monitoring Shark Bait.

If all that sounds exhausting, consider that the workouts are performed in a room that is heated like a sauna, and the girls are wearing sweatsuits to increase their perspiration and toughness.

After the drill, Bell called a 10-minute water break, and Whiteside sat chatting on a cushioned mat with friends. She described what it was like to be bait.

"You get no breaks," she said. "You're very tired and lightheaded. It's exhausting, especially if you don't work out constantly. It pushes us to our limits."

Bell described the drill as a method of conditioning.

"It stretches them mentally and puts them in that mindset of when they are in a match, they can push through the adversity and score points and win matches," he said. "It's a toughness thing. It expands their mental capabilities. Your mind likes to limit your body because it wants to rest, but your body can do so much more than your mind thinks it can. Little drills like that help push the girls to another level. That's what we have to do if we want to win state."

A FAMILY THING

The roster includes successful wrestlers such as the Dillard sisters (Mariah and Alicen) and Pella LaFever, the team's most recent state champion, working alongside novices such as

Whiteside. The experienced fighters become de facto coaches at times to help with the younger girls.

Bell teaches advanced techniques to older girls, and they help show basic techniques to younger girls.

"That way, we can administer to both experienced and non-experienced wrestlers," Bell said. "Slowly over time, I will put these more experienced girls with a beginner girl and that will advance that girl's technique."

During the recent practice, senior Jacy Williams spent time working with Whiteside on techniques to fend off shark attacks. Whiteside appreciated the tips.

"I love my teammates," she said. "I love my coaches. It's fun. It's exhausting, but it's worth it."

She plans to stick with wrestling throughout high school.

"It's like a family thing," she said. "The whole team feels like a family. We welcome each other and love each other. It's very warming."

QUICK START

The Lady Hornets earned first place Nov. 11 at the Arlington ISD Invitational. They fought off 22 other schools, including the 2021 6A state champs from Allen.

Head coach Megan House gave kudos to several girls who won every match by pin at the duals, including Jacy Williams, Mariah Dillard,

Alicen Dillard, Annabelle Davis and Kinzlynn Camarillo.

Most recently, the Lady Hornets finished in third place at the Girls Nest Invitational wrestling tournament held Dec. 3 in Azle. Seven of Azle's wrestlers finished in the top three in their weight classes.

Alicen Dillard (138 pounds) and Pella LaFever (152) won first-place medals. Jacy Williams (100), Kaitlynn Kirkland-lane (114) and Jazrine Nieto (132) earned second places, and Annabelle Davis (145) and Jessie Johnson (235) captured third places. Mollie Morris took fourth place at 165 pounds.

The girls have faced tough competition so far this season, and head coach Megan House reminded everyone to stay positive.

"Please continue to support your athletes no matter the outcomes of their matches," she wrote in the weekly Lady Hornet Wrestling Newsletter. "We will have a string of matches coming up that will test our girls' abilities and character. However, wins and losses should not be used to measure your athlete's success. Instead, focus on growth and commitment that your girls are experiencing and how their foundational technique and pace has improved. This mindset is being instilled in our young athletes in the mat room but also needs to be encouraged at home."



PHOTO BY JEFF PRINCE
Eileen Pisenakornkit cools off after a Shark Bait drill.



PHOTO BY JEFF PRINCE
Keira Buggar goofs around during a water break.

MEDALISTS INCLUDED:

- 100 lbs - Jacy Williams - third place
- 114 lbs - Kaitlynn Kirkland-Lane - second place
- 120 lbs - Mariah Dillard - first place
- 132 lbs - Jazrine Nieto - third place
- 152 lbs - Pella LaFever - first place

On Nov. 19, the Lady Hornets competed at the Lady Cougar Duals, taking on five teams and finishing the tournament in second place. Azle finished just a hair behind Southlake Carroll.

THE RESULTS FROM THAT MATCH:

- Azle vs Frisco Memorial - 54-6
- Azle vs Lewisville - 60-6
- Azle vs Southlake Carroll - 30-36
- Azle vs Plano West - 57-12
- Azle vs The Colony - 58-6

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Kid Scoop Puzzler

Can you find these four squares in this order on the larger grid?

Standards Link: Investigation: Find identical patterns.

Proof It!

Are you an eagle-eyed reader? Read the articles below and correct the seven spelling and grammar errors you find. The first one is done for you.

Birds Counting Birds

Every year for over a century, Christmas Bird Counts (CBCs) have been run across America during the holiday season. Counting the birds every year at the same time and in the same location gives scientists important information about birds and the environment.

In 2007, Tom Rusert of Sonoma, CA had the idea to include kidz in this important "citizen science" effort.

He launched the first Audubon CBC for Kids. It was so successful that now organizations around the country are started their own CBCs for Kids programs, following Rusert's model.

This is a wonderfully simple, healthy, hollyday celebration for almost any school, youth group or community organization.

Standards Link: Civics: Students understand the importance for individuals and society of commonly-held responsibilities such as being attentive to public issues.

Double Double Word Search

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

N	E	I	G	H	B	O	R	S	
A	P	A	R	T	M	E	N	T	
D	E	C	O	R	A	T	E	S	
K	W	A	N	Z	A	A			
K	A	F	T	A	N				
S	Y	M	B	O	L	S			
E	X	C	H	A	N	G			
F	E	A	S	T					
S	O	N	G	S					
T	R	E	E	E					
H	O	M	E						
F	A	M	I	L					
G	I	V	E						
R	E	D							

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

FROM THE Kid Scoop LESSON LIBRARY

Holiday Images

Look through the newspaper for words or pictures related to the holidays. Cut and paste these onto a sheet of construction paper to make a collage poster.

Standards Link: Visual Arts: Use a variety of media to convey meaning.

Write On!

The Greatest Gift

What is the greatest gift you could give that doesn't cost money?

T	G	I	
G	I		
	F	G	
	S	T	G
G	S		

Holiday Dot-to-Dot

Find the letters that spell each of the following words on one page of the newspaper. Use different color crayons to connect the letters in order to spell each word.

CA**N**D**L**E**S**
FE**A**S**T**
LI**G**H**T**S
FA**M**I**L****I**
CE**L**E**B**R**A**T**E**

Standards Link: Spelling: Spell grade-level appropriate words correctly.

List three ways these celebrations are alike.

- _____
- _____
- _____

People from different cultures have a wide variety of winter celebrations, many more than can fit on this page. How does your family celebrate in December? Draw it here.

Welcome to Holiday Towers, an apartment building in the big city. Take a look at how the celebrations of these neighbors are alike and different.

APT. 15C: THE ANDERSONS
The Anderson family celebrates the birth of Jesus on Christmas. They give each other gifts, sing songs and decorate their home with a Christmas tree and colorful lights.

Follow the maze to put the ornament back.

APT. 15A: THE MILLERS
The Miller family celebrates Kwanzaa, a week-long celebration honoring African culture.

They light red, green and black candles in a kinara and have a feast at the end of Kwanzaa. They also give each other small gifts.

Mrs. Miller wears a kaftan during Kwanzaa. Hold this page up to a mirror to find out what this is.

A KAFTAN IS A COLORFUL PUT-OVER ROBE

Menorahs come in many different designs. Find the two identical menorahs.

The Wald family celebrates Hannukah, a Jewish festival of light. They light a candle on a menorah each night for eight nights. They exchange small gifts each evening, sing songs and eat delicious foods. They display their menorah in their window.

CLASSIFIED

817-270-3340 - Azle - kimmy@azlenews.net

817-220-7217 - Springtown - shirley@springtown-epigraph.net

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- | | | | |
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| 4. Appliance Repair | 27. Exterminating | 49. Masonry/Stonework | 72. Sewer Service |
| 5. Arts/Crafts | 28. Farm Equipment | 50. Mobile Home Service | 73. TV/Radio |
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| 19. Cement Work | 43. House Cleaning | 65. Printing | |
| 20. Demolition | 44. Janitorial Service | 66. Roofing | |
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\$150 Half cord, delivered and stacked. Call 817-689-2424.

032 For Sale



New 7 ft Marston Caternia Pool Table. Teflon coated cloth and accessories. MSRP \$3699. Sale for \$2300 including free delivery and installation. Call 817-444-7021.

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Insured for your protection **FREE ESTIMATES**

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Azle News
Springtown Epigraph

008 Autos, Trucks

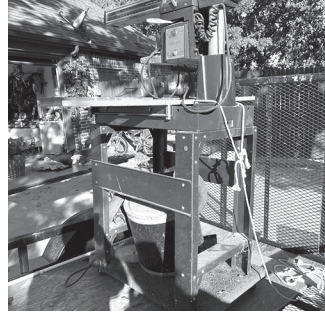


Chevy Silverado, Year 2015, 8 cylinders, new tires, runs perfect, tool box on the bed, bull bars on the front. 172 k miles, asking \$ 14,500 Cel 817-703-1261

Azle News!

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039 Help Wanted

Springtown ISD is accepting applications for Bus Drivers and Monitors. Training available. Contact the Transportation Dept. 817-220-1418.

MAINSTREAM group homes are hiring for FT/PT direct care staff. Weekday 3:30pm-8:30am shifts as well as 24-hour weekend shifts. Work 2 days a week, get paid to sleep, and have a full-time job! Paid training, benefits, bonuses, and OT opportunities. Start \$9.00/hr with quick advancement possible. Call 817-270-2747, Monday-Friday, 9am-3pm.

Azle ISD is currently accepting applications for evening custodians. Experience helpful, but not necessary. Apply online at www.azleisd.net

The City of Pelican Bay is searching for a full-time dual role position of Ordinance Enforcement/Animal Control. The Ordinance Enforcement/Animal Control performs a variety of technical duties in support of the City's local code enforcement program; monitors and enforces a variety of applicable ordinances, codes, and regulations related to zoning, land use, nuisance housing, building codes, health and safety, and other matters of public concern; and serves as a resource and provides information on City regulations to property owners, residents, and the general public and other City departments and divisions. Performs a variety of duties involved in enforcing City and state laws governing the care and upkeep of animals in the City and to impound care for, and dispose of animals. Pay is \$15/hour. For a copy of the complete job requirements and any information, please email Cynthia at cdaniels@cityofpelicanbay.com.

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KARL KLEMENT
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Growing Parts Department with advancement opportunities. TXDL and approved driving record required. Monday-Friday work week

Lube Tech
Experience a plus, but willing to train the right person. Must have valid TXDL with acceptable driving record. Must be responsible and dependable. Monday thru Friday work week

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Performs duties throughout the Body Shop. Must be responsible, dependable and have a valid TXDL. Monday to Friday work week.

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HIRING BONUS available for all skill levels! Seeking ALL LEVEL of Service Technicians; Lube Tech's to Master! Be part of our GROWING TEAM and advance within our Service Department as we offer a Competitive Salary with a full line of Benefits, including 401K. Mon-Fri, 5-day work week with paid vacation, training & holidays! **Up To \$5,000 Hiring Bonus for Skilled Technicians!**

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Deadline:
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Classifieds

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 All real estate advertising in this newspaper is subject to the Fair Housing Act which makes it illegal to advertise "any preference, limitation or discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status or national origin, or an intention, to make any such preference, limitation or discrimination." Familial status includes children under the age of 18 living with parents or legal custodians, pregnant women and people securing custody of children under 18.
 This newspaper will not knowingly accept any advertising for real estate which is in violation of the law. Our readers are hereby informed that all dwellings advertised in this newspaper are available on an equal opportunity basis. To complain of discrimination call HUD tollfree at 1-800-669-9777. The toll-free telephone number for the hearing impaired is 1-800-927-9275.

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068 Storage

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Springtown Epigraph!

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30x60 RV Spaces Available
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Continued next page...

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TEXAS CROSSWORD

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ACROSS

1 Astros, Cowboys, or Spurs

5 TX B.J. Thomas sang "___ Lone-some I Could Cry"

6 TXism: "___ mama" (waitress)

7 TXism: "costs ___ arm and a leg"

8 horse mouthpiece

9 TXism: "it ___ big loop to rope him" (obese)

15 TX Oveta ___ Hobby was 1st U.S. secretary of HEW

16 item to fasten a horse to a plow, e.g. (2 wds.)

18 subjugate

20 backs of necks

22 defensive wall

27 a few female sheep

28 Jacqueline of film "The Deep" with UT grad Wallace actress Trevor of 1941 film "Texas"

30 flight photos

32 "Alamo City" abbr.

33 with "Mae," "Cow-Cow Boogie" singer from Texas (2 wds.)

36 TX Freddy Fender's "Before the Next Tear ___ Falls"

37 once, International Telephone & Telegraph: "___, Inc."

38 in Fannin County, on highway 34

39 "___ run" (fast food)

41 fish appendage

42 TXism: panting like a lizard ___ rock"

45 TX Freddy Fender sang "You'll ___ a Good Thing" (1975)

46 Chinese sauce

47 thankfully, it's almost the weekend (abbr.)

48 Kampground found in Texas

49 resident of "Gem State"

52 rich person

53 corporate community in Irving: "___ Colinas"

54 graduate school entrance test (abbr.)

55 TXism: "fits like scales ___ fish"

DOWN

1 TX Brown who won Heisman at Notre Dame in 1987

2 "La ___" (Mexican prison mafia)

3 TXism: "hard ___" (tough)

4 seat of Titus County (2 wds.)

8 gentle tap a pitch by an Astro batter

9 TXism: "couldn't hit ___" (bad shot)

10 Coleman h.s. class

11 TX Rote, star RB at SMU, 1947-50 (init.)

12 on Memorial Day weekend: "___ Festival"

13 oceans

14 Egyptian vipers

15 most Texas colleges have a graduation ___ in May

16 assert something

17 "he ___ writing on the wall"

19 young Scot: "just ___ lad"

21 "Lone Star ___"

22 ___ Cola

15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55

34 TX Buddy Holly 1958 hit: "Rave ___"

35 border river: "___ Grande"

37 "___ girl!"

40 classic 1952 western: "High ___"

43 TXism for "against"

44 Edinburg is the seat of this county this TX Taylor was a UH All-American defensive end

51 25th governor of Texas, Colquitt (first two initials)

P-1614

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