

THE TRI-COUNTY REPORTER

THE NEWS OF AZLE, SPRINGTOWN, AND SURROUNDING AREAS

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MADELYN EDWARDS | TRI-COUNTY REPORTER

Springtown ISD Superintendent Shane Strickland shakes hands with trustee Tootie Hall as he presents her a certificate in honor of School Board Recognition Month in January.

SISD school board members recognized for service

Education Foundation names honorary scholarships after board members

MADELYN EDWARDS
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SPRINGTOWN — Colorful posters decorated by students to show appreciation for the Springtown Independent School District Board of Trustees hung in the administration building as the district's staff honored the board members.

School Board Recognition Month is celebrated annually in January, and SISD recognized the occasion during the

Jan. 22 board meeting. "They do this for free," SISD Superintendent Shane Strickland said about the board members during the meeting. "They donate all their time, a lot of their passions and energy in being a locally elected official. So, thank y'all. Y'all's friendships to me and the mentorship that y'all have done with me over this past year has just been incredible."

PLEASE SEE SERVICE | A7

Azle native dies after suspected medical incident on Industrial Ave.

Bobby Lea Davis had suffered with heart problems

ZACH FREEMAN
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AZLE — Local residents mourn the loss of lifelong Azleite, Bobby Lea Davis, after he suffered an apparent medical episode at the Clean

Jeans Laundromat at 130 Industrial Ave. Jan. 23. Davis, 62, had a long history of heart problems and underwent numerous surgeries to treat his congestive heart failure, loved ones said. He had recently under-

gone complex surgery at UT Southwestern Medical Center to replace two heart valves with a mechanical valve. Davis was prescribed blood thinners and had just completed physical therapy the morning of the incident. He

was in the Industrial Avenue area to do blood work at Quest Diagnostics. His girlfriend, Donna Barnes, brought him to the appointment but did not re-

PLEASE SEE DAVIS | A4



Bobby Lea Davis

State plans to aid water supply, infrastructure in 2024

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Multiple communities in the tri-county area faced challenges with water availability during the summer and were subject to water usage restrictions.

The Texas Legislature is hopefully easing that concern with a \$1 billion-water fund.

Creating the Texas Water Fund was one of the constitutional amendments that Texas voters passed in November. The fund is expected to cover finding new water sources or importing water as well as supplementing the Water Development Board's existing programs that fix infrastructure. At the Springtown Area

Chamber of Commerce luncheon in January, state Rep. Glenn Rogers called Proposition 6 that created the Texas Water Fund as "really near and dear to (his) heart." "We have something like 136 billion gallons of water lost every year just from leaking pipes," Rogers said at the chamber luncheon. "And we can do better than that."

Rogers reiterated the fact that Parker County leads the state in number of wells drilled per year. "It's not sustainable. We just can't continue to do that," he said. "I'm really interested in trying to find some solutions that certainly recognize property rights and recognize water rights but can help with that."

The Texas Water Fund may especially be beneficial to rural entities in the state that, because of a lack of resources, have "historically had a harder time accessing funds even when they were available," Rogers said to The Tri-County Reporter. Rogers filed a bill in the legislature last year, which ultimately did not pass, to create

the Cross Timbers Regional Utility Authority that would have regionalized planning for water resources and infrastructure in Rogers' district. "We'll continue to do everything we can for anybody involved in water to help steer them in the direction of different funding sources

PLEASE SEE WATER | B2

P&Z hears first appeal to tree ordinance

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AZLE — On Feb. 6, Azle City Council will see the first-ever appeal to the city's tree preservation ordinance (2021-15). The tree ordinance was enacted by the council in 2021 to encourage the protection of healthy trees and provide for the replacement of trees removed during development. Local developer and business owner Robert Petrie first brought the appeal to the Azle Planning and Zoning Commission, which also serves as the city's tree

P&Z recommends \$87k reduction in fees for removal of 81 trees at 905 Boyd Road

board, during a Jan. 18 meeting. Petrie is the owner of the lot at 905 Boyd Rd., next to RaceTrac, which he hopes to develop into a Kodiak Car Wash. Petrie also owns a separate lot behind the planned car wash site which he eventually hopes to turn into a storage unit complex. Petrie brought his case before the P&Z with a request that they

reduce the mitigation fees associated with tree removal on the 1.55-acre front lot of the property. Petrie also requested the P&Z waive the need for a tree survey on the heavily forested back lot, citing high costs. "You can't even count how many trees are back there,"

PLEASE SEE TREES | A2



ZACH FREEMAN | TRI-COUNTY REPORTER

The lot at 905 Boyd Road is the subject of the city's first-ever appeal to the tree ordinance.



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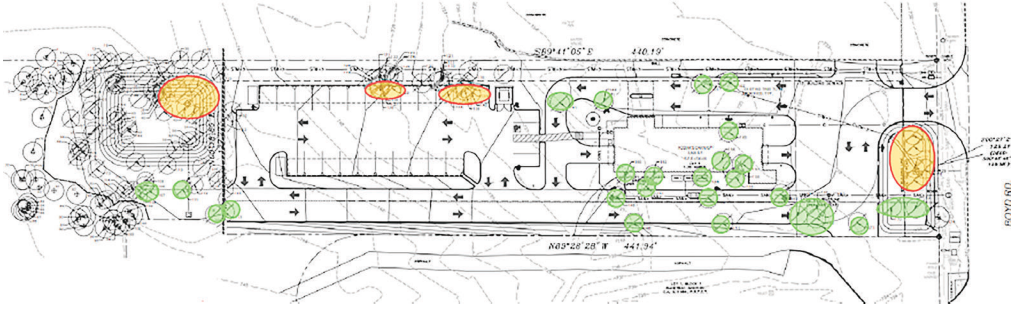
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VOLUME 1, NUMBER 35
Local, zone(s) 2 sections, 20 pages

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Engineering plans submitted by Petrie for the committee. Trees in green, 29 total, are marked for removal due to the construction of driveways, parking, etc. Trees in yellow (circled) are the remaining 20% Petrie is permitted to remove per the tree ordinance. The 81 trees Petrie hopes to mitigate are all trees not marked in green or yellow.

TREES
FROM PAGE A1

Petrie said to the commission. "You can't even walk through them. It makes it impossible to build back there if we don't get a waiver on these trees. It would cost more than the entire project to do. It will be nothing forever."

Petrie said surveying the less-forested front lot cost him \$23,000. Of the 130 trees Petrie planned to remove from the front of the property, he hoped to mitigate fees for 81 trees totaling 736 caliper inches. Approximately 78% of the trees submitted in Petrie's plans were located in an area he plans to use as a detention pond for the back lot, which the P&Z or city council could choose to address in a different meeting.

The city's tree ordinance stipulates that developers pay \$200 per every caliper inch of tree removed to the city's tree reforestation fund. Petrie could alternatively plant 81 trees on the property or some combination of the two. The unmitigated fees to be paid by Petrie for 81 trees could total \$147,200, but Petrie would likely only have to pay \$88,000 after a 40% credit is applied per state law.

Over the course of the meeting, P&Z members expressed sympathy for Petrie's cause and eventually voted to mitigate the \$88,000 in fees down to \$645 along with the replanting of five new trees on the lot. The new \$645 fee is based on the base fees used by the city of Fort Worth in its tree ordinance.

"I think they've done a great job of keeping the maximum number of trees that they can, and I don't think a business should be penalized a big amount of money because they are trying to utilize the site," commissioner Rick Simmons who introduced the recommendation said.

Three of the four commissioners present at the meeting voted for Simmons' recommendation, with only Jared Arneson dissenting.

"To knock it from \$88,000 to \$600 is way out of line," Arneson said. "If we start making a precedent that there's a variance every time it comes up, then what's the purpose of a tree ordinance?"

With this being the first ever appeal to the ordinance, Director of Planning and Development David Hawkins said the P&Z and council are still learning and feeling things out.

"They are looking at these things case-by-case," Hawkins said. "I will say

what's unique about this particular case is this is the very first one we ever had, so we're testing the waters... Every site is different... It can be challenging to see a unique case for the very first time... This is the first time that P&Z and council get to be involved in how a site develops and how it's being mitigated."

Hawkins said Petrie is following correct procedures by applying for a variance. Petrie was previously fined approximately \$30,000 for improperly removing trees on another property, 1330 Northwest Parkway, during the construction of another carwash in April of last year. After an agreement was reached in court, Petrie had to pay \$10,000 in fines to the city's general fund and make a payment of \$13,920 to the tree mitigation fund. The Tree Reforestation Fund is used to help finance other tree projects in the city, like this year's Texas Arbor Day tree giveaway where residents got to take home 160 young trees at no cost to them.

The P&Z's decision is only a recommendation to the city council. During the Feb 6 council meeting, Petrie will present his request for mitigation and the P&Z's recommendation to the council. The council can accept, alter or outright deny the recommendations of P&Z.

WATER
FROM PAGE A1

and help in any way we can," Rogers told The Tri-County Reporter. "One of the main purposes of a regional authority was to be in better position to receive those funds that are available because there's priority given to regional entities."

Upper Trinity Groundwater Conservation District assistant general manager Jill Garcia said the Texas Water Fund is expected to not only impact surface water projects but groundwater ones as well. Garcia said funds are also planned to go toward a statewide water conservation campaign, research, technology and desalination.

"The fact that Proposition 6 passed is a really great win for Texas water because the Texas Water Development Board is now going to have specific, explicit funds to look at more of these infrastructure projects," Garcia said. "If you're familiar with some of the things that the Water Development Board does, a lot of it is low-cost grants and loans to aging infrastructure systems. So, like for example, the city of Reno

would absolutely qualify for some of those loans and funds looking to renovate their existing systems, fix aging infrastructure. So we were very relieved that it passed, and it looks like there's going to be a lot more resources for smaller Texas water systems in the future."

Another water move from the legislature involved protecting landowners from buying property that lacked sufficient water resources. Senate Bill 2440, which went into effect Jan. 1, requires studies be conducted and approved by a licensed engineer or geoscientist to verify that enough groundwater is available in a platted subdivision that would rely on groundwater.

"With this bill, we're looking forward to the fact that landowners are now going to have some kind of idea about the future of their groundwater resources when they go to purchase a home," Garcia said. "When they put all of their life investments into this new build, they want to know something about their water future."

To help local governments comply with this new law, Upper Trinity Groundwater Conservation District has worked out an interlo-

cal agreement with Parker and Wise counties, as well as some cities within those counties, to review the groundwater studies free of charge and give recommendations, Garcia said. This means developers — not the counties or cities in the agreement — will complete these studies and pay the conservation district's fee to review the studies.

Garcia hopes the new legislation will "open the eyes of developers" and compel them to consider public water systems, which provide "clean water at a regular rate," instead of private individual wells.

"If you have a public water supply in a community, there's always a chance that you can connect to another system in the future, be it a line from East Texas, be it a line to another larger municipality with water," she said. "But if a subdivision has only private water wells, they are never going to transition to a PWS because you could never get all of those landowners to agree to the excavation, the building, the construction that would go in with those water lines versus it happening on the front end and not being detrimental to the landowners."



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Which side of the coin does your candidate fall on?

As time has passed, the leaders in education have adjusted and altered curriculums to align with the perceived needs of contemporary society. Two generations ago, a traditional education included a healthy dose of the sciences, civics, mathematics and traditional languages like Latin. As a young man, Latin was available to me as a course in junior high and high school, but even then, the number of students interested in the subject was limited. Not sure if any of our public schools still offer Latin as a class. Is this a good thing or a bad thing?

I am not advocating that teaching Latin is necessary to produce a qualified and well-trained workforce. I am not suggesting studying a variety of science and math courses is essential to hold a job or to succeed in today's world. But it seems schooling should be about education and that involves more than simply creating job skills



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.

for a specific trade or task. Education should be about more than knowledge of how to do a job, it should also be about the ability to think and reason about how to make decisions in your life. At least a portion of our formal education should be about learning to discern truth and fact from allegations and untruths. We should embrace free thinking and celebrate growth and change, which new discoveries and information can create. Perhaps the most important discernment is the difference between truth and political spin.

Learning to question and interpret what one hears, reads and is exposed to is essential to having a free

and independent society. Occasionally, we must be willing to consider evidence that contradicts our beliefs and admit the possibility that preconceived notions may be wrong. To be intelligent, one should understand what they do not know and then determine how to inform themselves and become knowledgeable.

As a young boy of the early '60s, in a time prior to the Civil Rights Act and integration, there were ideas I was exposed to which were contradictory to the "knowledge" and information I heard on the street or saw from the behavior of my neighbors. As I grew older, I had to make decisions about what was

"right" and what was best. There was discernment, doubt, questioning and a desire to find the truth. I found knowledge was constantly evolving. What may have been accepted 20 years ago was not necessarily right considering knowledge and the changes that came with time. While segregation may have been a "truth" in the 1930s, I would hope few would believe it is appropriate or "right" in today's world. It was something I learned, rather than simply accepting what the world around told me was true.

As the election cycle spins on there are a lot of statements being made by politicians. It would seem no matter what is said — whether it be a misrepresentation or a downright lie — much of the electorate seems to accept assertions at face value. There seems to be a desire to support party rather than hold politicians to standards and make them accountable for

their actions and their words. I refer to both major political parties when I say, show me how your political positions will make my life better. Show me how it will improve the future of the world around me, how it will make me safe from foreign aggression, how it will protect the rights granted in a free society. Earn my vote. Stop basing your policy on positions on the requests of your biggest donors. Have a vision!

What a political "party" stands for is even in doubt. Members of the same party cannot agree on their core beliefs. There is infighting, name calling and political posturing, but little discussion about a specific and measured plan. Rather, there is only discussion about the past, its failures and who is to blame.

There appear to be no consequences for politicians who seek to divide and blame, rather than have a vision for the future. Whoever is elected

to political office must lead and govern. Leadership requires leading all the people, not just the ones who donate to you or follow you blindly. How can this be accomplished if when there is a disagreement, those who disagree are the "enemy"?

As the candidates go forward, listen to those who have a plan, who can explain their vision of the future, and are seeking to represent all the electorate. Those are men and woman who are statesmen, and statesmen are what will keep us safe and prosperous. For those who seek only power and control and to divide us, let them be cast aside. The question for all of us is which side of that coin a candidate falls on. That is why we vote.

Thought for the day: Being smart is not knowing everything, it is knowing what you don't know and seeking the truth.

Until next time...I will keep ridin' the storm out.
sam@hcnews.com

The Value of a Tattered Ribbon

Sweat gathered onto the tip of my nose, the surface tension soon giving way to dripping at a surprisingly fast pace. My hands dampened from sweat cascading down my arm as I positioned myself in my starting block under a hot Texas midday sun.

I listened intently for the track gun to set me loose, with the plan of running faster than ever and handing off the baton without mistake. My team depended on me. I could hear my family's encouragement from the stands. This was a big moment.

My leg muscles responded in sync with the blast of the gun, and I was off. I had never run faster, and I soon transferred the baton with precision. Pressure released itself as I watched the race progress around the oval. Rushing



HOPE MATTERS

By David Shaffer

Dr. David Shaffer and his wife, Daniele, are Azle-area residents. David is the director of Son Shine Ministries (equipfamilies.org) and serves on the Azle Area Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors and is a Chamber Ambassador (azlechamber.com). david@equipfamilies.org | 817-444-3777

back to the starting point, I celebrated as my friend crossed the line.

When our names were called over the loudspeakers, my teammates and I excitedly jumped up and received our beautiful ribbons.

After the meet ended and we were leaving, my coach called me over to say, "Great job today, Shaffer!" It was a special day!

I sat in the front seat of our green and white Volkswagen bus, which in retrospect was

a nice foreshadowing of our eventual move to Azle.

My dad drove, and I watched my ribbon dance in the breeze as I held it outside of my open window. For just a moment, I lost focus, and my grip failed, with my ribbon independently gliding into oncoming traffic.

I quickly yelled to my father, and he found a safe spot to pull over. The traffic was intense, but I watched my dad carefully navigate around the cars to search for my lost

ribbon. About 10 minutes later, he victoriously returned with my prize. My ribbon was ripped and had tire tread marks, but it was home.

A couple of weeks later my parents gave me a frame filled with two items: a photo of me at the track meet and the actual tire-tread-enhanced ribbon. The framed memory was soon mounted in a prominent location on a wall in my bedroom.

For context, this track meet was the last one of the year. I had enjoyed the experience primarily for the friendships, not so much the accomplishments.

In all candor, my track team at El Dorado Elementary School in San Antonio only had a few speedsters, and I was not one of them. It is also important to confess that the cherished pink ribbon I was

awarded was for sixth place, and it was the first and only ribbon I won that season.

You may be asking yourself why I am relaying (pun noticed) this seemingly insignificant moment 50 years later in a newspaper column.

I share it because it has impacted and influenced me ever since. That season I had asked if I could "run" track, and my parents gladly were behind me. I would eventually find the sport where I could excel was football, but that would be a few years down the road. My parents never made me feel like I was the fastest elementary school runner because I was not, but they always made me feel loved by being present and cheering for me and my friends.

The tattered ribbon has reminded me to always try

my hardest, never give up hope and celebrate the little victories in life. It impacted the way I was as a father and now a grandfather. I especially want to remember these things in 2024. I also want to notice special moments with my family and friends, perhaps framing a few victories I see in them along the way. Inspiration often starts with small wins!

Teddy Roosevelt, using the saying of his friend "Squire Bill" Widener, exhorted others to, "Do what you can, with what you have, where you are." You matter, and what you do matters. Thank you for your contribution to our community. I am gratefully reminded today that victories come in various forms, and all are worth celebrating.

AISD saves taxpayers \$32M on bond financing

ZACH FREEMAN

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AZLE — Based on recent projected interest rates, the November 2023 bond proposal approved by Azle ISD voters will cost local taxpayers less than expected. Due to lower than projected interest rates, the district is expected to deliver the November '23 bond program for about \$32 million less than the amount communicated prior to the election.

The initial projected interest rate for the bond was 5.25%. It is now projected to be 4.44% or a 0.81% decrease.

Admins speak on expected future savings for taxpayers

With the new rate, AISD taxpayers are expected to pay a net \$286,676,815 for the \$151.5 million bond project by the 2038-2039 school year when the bond is paid off.

By prepaying bonds prior to final maturity, and other debt management practices, Azle ISD has reduced future interest costs to taxpayers by over \$6 million since 2005. Over the last five years, the total tax rate has declined 30.4 cents, including 18.55

cents this current year.

During a Jan. 22 board of trustees meeting, district leadership approved the preliminary financial planning setting the fixed tax rate for the series 2024 bond. The board also refunded its existing Unlimited Tax School Building Bonds, Series 2014 at a lower interest rate in order to generate future cost savings.

On numerous occasions throughout the meeting,

Josh McLaughlin, the BOK financial advisor for the district, remarked that Azle ISD should be proud of their tax savings. Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations Matt Adams said student growth and property growth in the area are two of the largest factors lowering the tax rate.

"We are very proud of the way we manage the tax rate and finances for the district," Adams said. "We attend school finance meetings all over the state and feel like Azle ISD does a superior job, as reflected in our (superior) FIRST (School Financial

Integrity Rating System of Texas) rating for the last several years. Our goal is to provide the best education possible for the students of Azle ISD while minimizing the financial impact on our taxpayers. Our ratings continue to show that our district does a great job of managing the finances for our taxpayers."

A bond is essentially a loan taken out by a company or entity such as a school district. Instead of a bank, the district sells bonds to investors for capital who they later pay back with interest.

By Feb. 9, the district expects to complete all actions

necessary to sell the Series 2024 Bonds. By March 7, the district hopes to have closed and received all proceeds from the bond sale. The bond funds will be used for the construction of a new Azle Junior High School, additions and renovations of Forte Junior High School, renovations to eight elementary schools, and a new maintenance warehouse among other improvements. All construction projects are anticipated to be completed by the end of summer 2026. The bond was approved by voters by a margin of 53.26% in the Nov. 7, 2023, election.

Area students earn degrees

STAFF REPORTS

Three area residents earned college degrees from two separate universities, graduating in fall 2023.

Rhonda Cay-Hernandez of Azle, received a Doctor of Nursing Practice degree from the University of Alabama. UA awarded more than 2,000 degrees during its fall commencement ceremonies.

The University of Alabama, part of The University of

Alabama System, is the state's flagship university.

"UA shapes a better world through its teaching, research and service. With a global reputation for excellence, UA provides an inclusive, forward-thinking environment and nearly 200 degree programs on a beautiful, student-centered campus," the college said in a press release. "A leader in cutting-edge research, UA advances

discovery, creative inquiry and knowledge through more than 30 research centers. As the state's largest higher education institution, UA drives economic growth in Alabama and beyond."

Samantha Streib of Springtown graduated with a Bachelor of Science in ag science and leadership. Katelyn Walker of Poolville graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in English. Both women earned

their degrees at Angelo State University, a four-year public school in Texas founded in 1928. ASU conferred 625 undergraduate and graduate degrees on 620 graduates during the 2023 fall commencement exercises Dec. 16 at the ASU Junell Center/Stephens Arena.

"Our Ram Family environment and core values help students feel at home, a place where they know faculty and

staff care deeply about their success," the university said in a press release. "Our excellent faculty make it possible for students to conduct undergraduate research, rank above state acceptance averages for professional schools, and receive personal access to instructors and progressive facilities."

A member of the Texas Tech University System with campuses across the state,

Angelo State has been designated a Hispanic Serving Institution by the U.S. Department of Education and ranked as one of The Princeton Review's "Best Colleges" in the nation since 2010. It is also a College of Distinction, a "Military Friendly School" and a First-Gen Forward Institution.

For more information, log on to angelo.edu.

TRI-COUNTY REPORTER
THE NEWS OF AZLE, SPRINGTOWN, AND SURROUNDING AREAS

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

Young Texans named

Ulrich, Harder recognized by Optimists

ZACH FREEMAN

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AZLE — The Optimist Club of Azle recognized two Azle High School students as its Young Texans of the Month at a Jan. 20 breakfast meeting.

Tyler Ulrich is the son of Jenny and Kent Ulrich. Ulrich is ranked 34th in his class with a GPA of 100.79. Ulrich hopes to attend Tarleton State University, University of North Texas, Weatherford College or McMurry University. He is interested in pursuing an education or career in architecture, real estate, entrepreneurship or business.

“Academically, I am proud to be in the top 10% of my class,” Ulrich said. “I am proud to have lettered and played varsity football since sophomore year. I am proud to currently hold two records

in powerlifting.”

Ulrich sees his math skills as one of his greatest academic strengths. He sees time management and an honest work ethic as some of his greatest personal strengths. Ms. Marlett and Devon Dorris are two of his favorite teachers. He competes in football, track and powerlifting, where he has set two school records. He plans to set more records in powerlifting and in track.

Ulrich has been on the varsity football team since his sophomore year. This year he was voted captain of the varsity football team. He also competes in varsity track and made it to regionals for the 4x100 relay. Ulrich made varsity his first year competing as a junior in powerlifting. He made it to regionals for powerlifting, missing the mark to compete at state by just 5 pounds. Ulrich also en-

joys training at the gym, wake surfing, wake boarding and being on the lake.

Melanie Harder is the daughter of Chris and Christina Harder. She is ranked 22nd in her class with a 102.3 GPA. Harder plans to attend Hardin Simmons University to pursue kinesiology and biology in order to become a physical therapist. Harder is proud of achieving all As throughout her academic career, being named Texas Girls Coaches Association Academic All-State and being selected as a recipient of the Congress of Future Medical Leaders Award of Excellence. She considers her work ethic one of her greatest academic strengths and her patience and drive as major personal strengths.

Coach Epps and Mr. Rider are two of Harder's favorite teachers. She partici-



COURTESY OPTIMIST CLUB OF AZLE

The Optimist Club of Azle welcomed its Young Texans along with District 99 State Rep. Glenn Rogers who paid a visit during its regular breakfast meeting.

ipated in volleyball, soccer, AP Ambassadors, Health Occupations Students of America and National Honor Society. She is proud to take Onramps, Advanced Placement and dual college credit classes. Harder made varsity soccer her freshman year and became a captain her sophomore year. In vol-

leyball, she was named All-District Honorable Mention in 2023 and Academic All-District for 2021-2022 and 2022-2023. Hardin has also received a Leadership and Utility Player of the Year Award along with several other commendations. She worked as a certified nurse assistant for health clinic

trials at Azle Manor and has volunteered with the Trinity River Trash Bash and Operation Christmas Child. She has worked as a soccer referee for the Fort Worth Youth Soccer Association since the age of 14. Outside of school, she loves baking, taking walks and roller blading.

Tax lien mail scam resurfacing across Texas

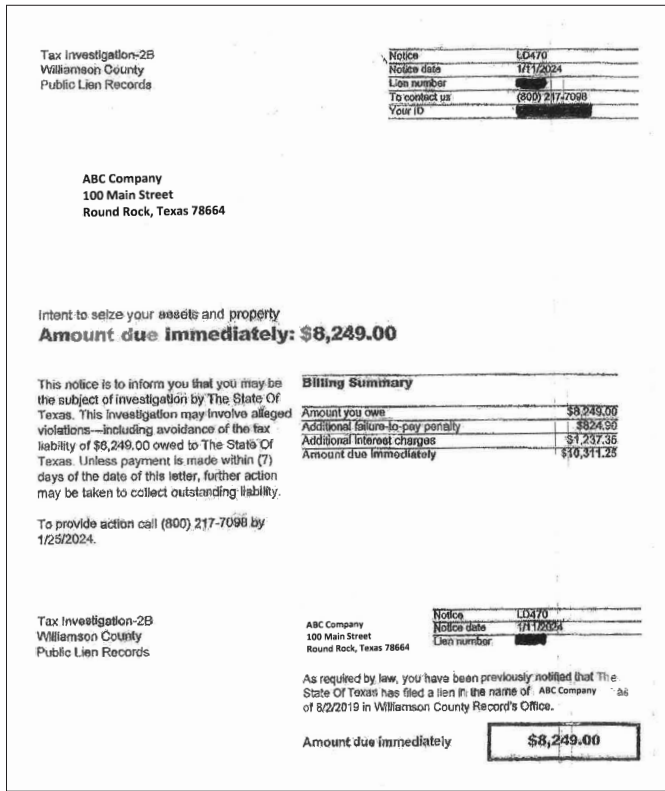


PHOTO COURTESY COMPTROLLER.TEXAS.GOV

A sample of a tax lien scam targeting people in an attempt at identity theft.

STAFF REPORTS

Some taxpayers have received fraudulent letters claiming the state of Texas will seize their assets and property for unpaid taxes unless payment is made within seven days. These illegitimate letters did not originate from the Texas Comptroller's office.

For years, criminals have used aggressive and threatening scam faxes, letters and phone calls impersonating state agencies. The criminals demand immediate payment, often via a specific payment method, and threaten to seize assets and property or significantly increase the liability if you fail to pay or provide sensitive personal information.

Be incredibly wary whenever you receive unexpected messages like these, as they can be a trap. The criminals' threats are designed to get you to react by calling the

criminals' phone number or clicking on a fake link to solve the problem. The consequences can be catastrophic. Not only can you lose your money, but if you click on links in scam emails or texts, you also could become a victim of identity theft or have malware installed on your phone or computer.

If you receive an unexpected message of this type, do not call the phone number or use the website or link provided in the letter, email or text. Most importantly, do not give the sender personal information or money. Instead, please email stop.spoofing@cpa.texas.gov or call the Comptroller's Collection Team at 800-252-8880.

For more information about how to remain protected from tax fraud, visit comptroller.texas.gov/fraud-alert/online.

DAVIS

FROM PAGE A1

alize Davis had gone into the laundromat to use the restroom before his appointment at Quest. After a long time waiting, she inquired inside Quest as to Davis' whereabouts. Davis had not yet checked in, so Barnes left the office and saw a crowd and police cars gathered outside the laundromat.

She didn't know they were there for Davis until speaking with authorities, who informed her of Davis' passing and their attempts to resuscitate him.

“We don't know for sure what happened, but I don't believe he was shocked by his pacemaker defibrillator,” Barnes said in an interview with the Tri-County Reporter. “The doctors really think it was just his heart was weak or possibly a blood clot because of how fast it happened. There was no warning. He was feeling great. It wasn't foul play or anything like that. It was just his heart.”

Barnes has requested the public respect her and the Davis family's privacy during this difficult time. Barnes recalled receiving multiple rude comments



COURTESY DONNA BARNES

Bobby Lea Davis

and requests for information on Facebook, leading up to admins removing one user's comment for posting Davis's name after they found it on the medical examiner's website on the day of his passing.

“I had not even finished contacting his children,” Barnes said of the untimely comment.

Davis was born in Azle and was a lifelong Azle and Boyd resident, having done all his schooling in the area. Davis is survived by five children, his girlfriend and loved ones throughout the Azle-Boyd area. His family and friends plan to hold a service for him at White's Funeral Home in the coming weeks.

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Cold water recreation is great, but can be deadly

KYLE LEWIS

*Brazos River Authority
Project manager/program coordinator*

Sure it's February, but that doesn't mean fishing has to be on hold. Or, on those warmer days, you may just decide to take your boat out for a spin on the lake.

But remember, colder weather has particular issues when it comes to being out on the water.

Specifically, if you take a spill when you're out fishing, cold water can kill you very quickly. According to the National Safe Boating Council, a person who falls into the water experiences increased danger when water

temps are below their body temperature.

"You have one minute to adjust to the cold shock of being in the water, 10 minutes of meaningful movement to get help and get out of the water, and one hour before he/she becomes unconscious from hypothermia," according to the NSBC website.

It further explains that a sudden, unexpected fall into cold water causes an involuntary gasp reflex. Since it takes less than 1/2 cup of water in the lungs to drown, you MUST wear a life jacket — to get you past that initial shock of cold water.

With this info in mind,

consider what you can do to ensure you and your passengers are able to return home after a successful day of cold-weather recreation. Here are a few suggestions from the Safe Boating Campaign:

Before you head out, invest in a cell phone dry bag and plan to keep it on you at all times. You'll have it, even in the water, if you are in trouble. Calling 911 will get you help when needed.

File a float plan with someone who knows when you expect to return. You can find a free form available from the US Coast Guard Auxiliary at <https://floatplancentral.cgaux.org/>.

Check the weather condi-

tions and dress in layers. Bring an extra set of clothing in case you get wet.

Don't go out alone. Any recreation is more fun with a friend, but having help if an emergency occurs can save your life.

If you do fall into the water, try to remember not to panic. Regain control of your breathing and stay with the boat.

Most importantly, be sure to wear a life jacket. Just having it in the boat won't help you if you fall overboard.

Cold weather doesn't have to mean an end to fishing or water recreation as long as you plan ahead and make smart decisions.

Make sure to file a float plan with someone who knows when you expect to return.

Texas Health and Human Services highlights World Cancer Day

STAFF REPORTS

Texas Health and Human Services recognizes World Cancer Day Sunday, Feb. 4. World Cancer Day is a day to raise awareness and encourage the prevention, detection and treatment of cancer.

The Paris Charter established World Cancer Day in 2000 to promote research for cures and prevention, improve patient services and mobilize the global community against cancer. One of every five deaths in the U.S. is due to cancer, making it the second-leading cause

of death, exceeded only by heart disease. According to the Texas Cancer Registry (TCR), 99,642 adults aged 50 and older were diagnosed with cancer in 2020. This is a decrease from the 108,726 adults in that age group who were diagnosed in 2019. Among those older adults diagnosed with cancer in 2020, 46,433 were female and 53,209 were male.

In 2020, the top five most common cancer areas in the body for adults ages 50 or older in Texas were the breast, prostate, lung and

bronchus, colon and rectum, and kidney and renal pelvis, according to the TCR.

"Age is the most important risk factor for cancer," Ramona Magid, chief prevention officer with the Cancer Prevention and Research Institute of Texas, said.

"Healthy lifestyle choices can possibly reduce the chances of getting cancer. Higher risk lifestyle choices include smoking, alcohol consumption, physical inactivity, obesity and eating an unhealthy diet. It's important to consult with a health care provider

to determine the appropriate cancer screening tests based on individual health history and risk factors."

The most important cancer risk factors that can be changed are body weight, diet and physical activity. At least 18% of all cancers diagnosed in the U.S. are related to preventable conditions like excess body weight, physical inactivity, excess alcohol consumption and poor nutrition.

Avoiding tobacco products, staying at a recommended weight, being active throughout life and eating a nutri-

tious diet can greatly reduce the risk of developing or dying from cancer. These same behaviors are also linked with a lower risk of heart disease and diabetes.

The Texas Health and Human Services Texercise statewide health and wellness initiative encourages people and communities to adopt healthy lifestyle habits. People are encouraged to download the Texercise Health Chart using the Aging Well Resources Order Form to track their health information.

The Texas Department of State Health Services also provides cancer resources for patients, caregivers and families.

Texas Health and Human Services provides a variety of social services to millions of people throughout the state. Once a month, Texas Health and Human Services writes and distributes articles focusing on topics about aging with the intent to prepare aging Texans for systems and issues they may encounter.

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Azle Hearing brings better ear health closer to home!

Dr. Erich Gessling, Au. D., opened Azle Hearing in January and is excited to bring community-based hearing healthcare to Azle.

"We can't wait to help the people here, and in surrounding areas, and give them access to better hearing healthcare," said Gessling.

Gessling received his bachelor's degree and doctorate in audiology from the University of North Texas and has been practicing audiology since receiving his doctorate in 2018.

The clinic is located at 324 NW Parkway, Suite 100, in Azle, located on the service road between Pinnacle Bank and Azle Church of Christ. They are open Monday through Thursday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Azle Hearing provides hearing evalua-

tions (test and consult), hearing aid fitting, tinnitus management, ear wax removal, custom ear molds, and maintenance and repair of hearing aids.

Gessling said that Azle Hearing is "here to serve the community by providing the best service, better hearing aid options, and better prices."

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Toxic ties: Cutting the cord for good

BY MICKY SHEARON

Special to the Hood County News

In our journey through life, we inevitably encounter individuals whose behavior can be draining, negative, and oftentimes downright toxic. These interactions can leave us feeling exhausted, stressed and emotionally depleted. However, understanding how to navigate these turbulent relationships is crucial for our mental and emotional well-being. Here are seven key strategies I am learning to deal with toxic people effectively.

RECOGNIZING AND MOVING BEYOND TOXICITY

The first step in deal-

ing with toxic individuals is recognizing their harmful impact on our lives. Toxic people often manipulate emotions, spread negativity and create drama. It's essential to assess whether their presence contributes positively or negatively to your life. If their influence is predominantly harmful, it might be time to consider distancing yourself. This doesn't mean you harbor ill will; it's an act of self-care.

THE ILLUSION OF NORMALCY IN TOXIC BEHAVIOR

Often, we normalize toxic behavior to avoid confrontation. However, this only leads to a cycle of negativity. It's important to acknowl-

edge that toxic behavior is not acceptable. Setting clear boundaries and communicating them assertively can help prevent being drawn into their negative spiral. Remember, you have the right to a peaceful and positive environment.

THE POWER OF YOUR VOICE

Silence can be interpreted as acceptance. Speaking up against toxicity is not just about confrontation; it's about your inner self-respect and asserting your dignity. It's crucial to express how a toxic individual's behavior affects you. This doesn't have to be confrontational but can be a calm and firm expression of your feelings. Your

voice is a powerful tool in defining the dynamics of your relationships.

STANDING FIRM IN YOUR SELF-RESPECT

Toxic people often test your boundaries. It's vital to stand firm and protect your self-respect. This might mean ending conversations, walking away or even ending relationships. Remember, you are not responsible for their behavior, but you are responsible for how you respond to it.

PERSONALIZING TOXIC BEHAVIOR: A MISGUIDED APPROACH

It's easy to internalize the negativity of toxic people

and believe it's a reflection of your worth. However, their behavior says more about them than it does about you. Recognizing this can be liberating and can help you detach emotionally from their actions.

COMPASSION WITH BOUNDARIES

While some toxic individuals may be going through tough times, it's important to balance compassion with boundaries. You can offer support and understanding, but not at the expense of your emotional well-being. It's okay to step back if their behavior becomes overwhelming.

SELF-CARE IN THE FACE OF TOXICITY

Dealing with toxic people can be draining. Prioritizing self-care is essential. This means taking time for yourself, engaging in activities that rejuvenate you, and seeking support from positive relationships. Self-care is not selfish; it's necessary for maintaining your emotional health.

Dealing with toxic people requires a balance of assertiveness, compassion and self-care. By implementing these strategies, you can protect your emotional well-being and navigate these challenging relationships more effectively.

OBITUARIES

Bobby Davis 1961-2024

Bobby L. Davis went home to be with the Lord Tuesday, Jan. 23, 2024.

Service was at 2 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 30, at White's Azle Funeral Home.

Bobby was born Sept. 17, 1961, in Azle. He was the son of his stepmother, Patsy Harris, and his father, the late Garland Skipper Davis, and the grandson of his grandmother, the late Emagene Cooper. He was the loving fiancé of Donna Barnes for the past seven years.

A loving fiancé, father and grandfather, he was an avid bull rider, and baseball, football and racing fan. Bobby was a handyman, a jack-of-all-trades, who knew how to do a little bit of everything. Bobby was smart, opinionated and never afraid to share his mind with his friends and family. Bobby was also a fighter, battling through several health issues over the last few years.

He is preceded in death by



his father and grandmother, and his brother, Kelly Holden.

In addition to his mother and fiancée, he is survived by his children, Codi Davis and spouse, Caroline, Chassidi Davis, Sydney Davis, Keelan Davis and Kalee Davis; his grandchildren, Mia Davis and Avery Perez; and his siblings, Cyndi Riggs, Kathy Davis and Amye Huddleston.

The Tri-County Reporter, Thursday Feb 1, 2024

Usleta Honeycutt 1937-2024

Usleta Ann Honeycutt, born Aug. 18, 1937, passed from this earth to her eternal heavenly home Friday, Jan. 12, 2024.

A memorial service will be at 11 a.m. Saturday, Feb. 3, at First Baptist Church Springtown, 500 N. Main St., Springtown.

Usleta was a longtime member of the First Baptist Church of Springtown, she danced for many years with the Klassy Kloggers, enjoyed the Red Hat Society for some time, and over the course of her 22 years of service to the Parker County Extension Club, she held many leadership roles.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Homer Clyde and Dorothy Butler Casey; her beloved and cherished husband of 48 years, Walter "Bud" Dean Honeycutt; son Daniel Dean Honeycutt; and her sister Clydette Potts.



She is survived by her son Walter Dean Honeycutt II, daughter Denise Deane Honeycutt, grandson Walter "Trey" Dean Honeycutt III, brother Joel Casey and wife Janet, close family friends James and Carol Blackwood; and a host of nieces, nephews and cousins who will miss her dearly.

The Tri-County Reporter, Thursday Feb 1, 2024

Jillian Pruitt 1981-2024

Jillian Leigh Pruitt, our beloved wife, daughter, sister, aunt, niece and friend, passed away at home Jan. 17, 2024.

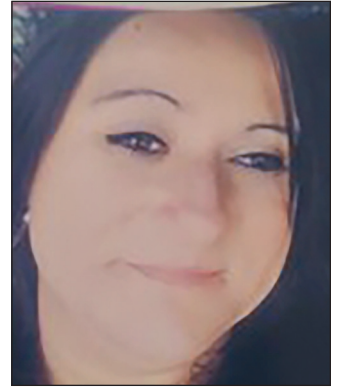
Jill was born Dec. 17, 1981, in Atlanta, Georgia, to Stanley and Gaye Taylor.

Jill grew up in Hapeville, Georgia, with her sister Nichole.

Jill worked for several years in the accounting and business departments for a pre-fab cement company in Azle.

Her main interests were her two best friends, "Cash and Lynk" — her dogs. She enjoyed shopping and spending time with her aunt Gail. No one was considered a stranger to Jill, as she enjoyed talking to and befriending all. The conversation was usually about her dogs or what could be done to help some other dog she had found to be in need of a home.

Jill was preceded in death



by her father, Stanley Taylor.

She is survived by her husband, John Pruitt; mother, Leigh Taylor; sister, Nichole, and her husband Micheal Bass. She will forever be missed as our home is empty of her presence and the sound of her voice.

The Tri-County Reporter, Thursday Feb 1, 2024

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<p>THE ABBEY CHURCH Pastor: Paul Brownback 10400 Jacksboro Hwy 817-238-1404 www.TheAbbeyChurch.com</p> <p>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</p> <p>Sunday School..... 9:30 AM Contemporary Worship-TMP..... 10:45 AM Traditional Worship..... 10:45 AM Evening Worship/Youth Refuge..... 6:00 PM Wednesday Evening..... 6:15 PM</p> <p>AZLE FIRST ASSEMBLY of GOD Rev. Joshua Lowrance 1020 S.E. Parkway, Azle 817-237-4903</p> <p>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</p> <p>Sunday School..... 9:45 AM Morning Worship..... 11:00 AM Sunday Evening..... 6:00 PM Wednesday Evening..... 7:00 PM</p>	<p>AZLE CHRISTIAN CHURCH DISCIPLES OF CHRIST Interim Minister Rev. Russell Clark, Family Life Minister Emerson Braun 117 Church St. • 817-444-3527</p> <p>Sunday School..... 10:00 AM Morning Worship..... 11:00 AM</p> <p>CORNERSTONE COMMUNITY CHURCH 2233 Hwy 199 E., Springtown 817-221-LIFE (5433)</p> <p>Sunday Worship Service..... 10:00 AM Wednesday..... 7:00 PM</p> <p>CROSSROADS BAPTIST CHURCH Pastor - Jon Baker Corner FM 730S & FM 1886 817-755-0279 Transportation Available</p> <p>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</p> <p>"Love God - Serve Others - Share Jesus" Traditional Worship..... 9:30 AM Contemporary Worship..... 11:00 AM</p> <p>FIRST METHODIST CHURCH OF AZLE Pastor: Rev. Raymond Gilman 200 Church St., Azle 817-444-3323</p> <p>Morn. Worship..... 8:30 & 10:45 AM Sunday School..... 9:45 AM Youth..... 5:00 PM Sun & 6:30 PM Wed</p>	<p>GRACEPOINTE CHURCH 4110 E. Hwy 199, Springtown Pastor: Timothy McKeown 817-221-5683 gracepointesbc.org</p> <p>Sunday School..... 9:45 am Sunday Service..... 11:00 am Wednesday Bible Study..... 6:00 PM</p> <p>HOLY TRINITY CATHOLIC CHURCH 800 Highcrest Dr. - Azle 817-444-3063</p> <p>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</p> <p>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</p> <p>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</p> <p>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>THE RANCH CHRISTIAN COWBOY CHURCH Pastor: Greg Slankard 7955 Reed Rd., Azle 682-327-7082 www.TheRanchCCC.org</p> <p>Sunday School 9:30 AM • Worship 10:00 AM Weds 7:00 pm • Thurs Potluck 6:30 pm</p> <p>SILVER CREEK METHODIST CHURCH Pastor: Bill Killough 2200 Church Rd., Azle 817-444-1382 www.silvercreekmc.org</p> <p>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</p> <p>Sunday School..... 9:45 AM Morning Worship..... 10:50 AM Evening Worship..... 7:00 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</p> <p>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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Reno Council discusses regulating fireworks

MADelyn EDWARDS
springtownreporter@tricityreporter.com

RENO — Reno City Council discussed actions it could take to limit the use of fireworks without completely removing that right at the Jan. 17 meeting.

Council members questioned how they could regu-

late fireworks to prevent fires or avoid creating a nuisance for other residents.

"I'm not opposed to fireworks," council member Tod Siedell said during the meeting. "What I'm opposed to is the marathon shows that go on for days and days and days, and it's like as long as I've got this window, then I'm

going to shoot them. I think it's a little ridiculous for people who've got animals, children, anybody that works during the week or works at night or whatever like this, and it's just saying, 'Well, sometime between June 15 and July 15, you can shoot them off because it's the Fourth of July.' I don't want

to tell somebody they can't shoot fireworks, but we have to be a little reasonable."

Briar-Reno Fire Chief Moses Druxman said banning fireworks may not be the best choice because the fire department may not be able to keep up with enforcement of that ban and people in Reno don't want to lose

their right to use fireworks. Instead, Druxman suggested the city may be able to limit aerial fireworks or designate time periods before and after holidays for shooting off fireworks.

With the exception of 2023, Briar-Reno firefighters have responded to fires related to fireworks over the past five

years, Druxman said.

Druxman and Code Enforcement Officer Joe Harris are expected to work together to see what options the council has. The city attorney may also have to weigh in on the legality of certain restrictions.

Tarleton State breaks ground on Health Professions Building

STAFF REPORTS

STEPHENVILLE — Tarleton State broke ground Jan. 17 on a \$80 million Health Professions Building that will further establish the university as the leader of rural healthcare throughout the state.

The project was approved by The Texas A&M System Board of Regents last November, with move-in planned for summer 2025.

"Tarleton State is poised to be the educational epicenter for rural healthcare, not only in our region but beyond," said university President Dr. James Hurley. "Nestled in the heart of rural Texas, our thriving comprehensive national university is ready to heed the call with the unwavering support of our state legislators, the Texas A&M System Board of Regents and Chancellor John Sharp."

Nearly 20% of the U.S. population calls rural communi-

ties home, with these areas facing significant shortages of physicians and specialists. In Stephenville, the patient-physician ratio is 1,779 to 1.

Three new degree programs are set to be added in conjunction with the new facility, including physical therapy, occupational therapy and physician assistant studies. Specialized laboratory space and public clinics will allow students to gain important hands-on experience in these areas. The new degree options join existing programs in kinesiology, nutrition science, social work, public health, athletic training, and communication sciences and disorders.

"It's good to be back in Stephenville for yet another groundbreaking," A&M System Chancellor John Sharp said. "Texas A&M System Regents are committed to making Tarleton into one of the state's finest public universities."

With nearly 40% of community hospitals in Texas in jeopardy of closure, Tarleton State is now positioned to serve a critical role in elevating healthcare in the Lone Star State by adding to the workforce in these locations of immense need.

State Senator Brian Birdwell (District 22) highlighted the significance from his perspective. "Healthcare that is accessible without having to drive to major metro areas is regularly discussed across our entire state. Today's groundbreaking at Tarleton affords them the opportunity to lead in taking the necessary step in addressing those concerns and moving in the right direction to improve healthcare in our rural communities."

As a Tarleton State graduate himself, state Rep. DeWayne Burns (District 58) emphasized the educational opportunities for future students that will result from



COURTESY PHOTO

On hand for the ceremony, from left, were Dr. Ramona Parker, executive dean of the College of Health Sciences; Erath County Judge Brandon Huckabee; District 59 Texas State Rep. Shelby Slawson; Student Regent Elizabeth "Annie" Valicek; Texas A&M University System Chancellor John Sharp; Tarleton State President Dr. James Hurley; District 22 Texas State Senator Brian Birdwell; District 58 Texas State Rep. DeWayne Burns and Stephenville Mayor Doug Svien.

the new facility. "Today is just the most recent example of the university's steadfast focus on developing and graduating students who are ready to enter the workforce to benefit our region and beyond."

With the impressive growth of Stephenville and Erath County in recent years, state

Rep. Shelby Slawson (District 59) focused on how the new programs at Tarleton State will provide a strong public health infrastructure to assist with the demands of an increasing population.

"Today's groundbreaking marks a historic day for rural healthcare in our region," she said. "This facility will posi-

tively impact the lives of rural Texans for years to come."

At 92,000 square feet, the new Health Professions Building will be located adjacent to the Nursing Building.

Perkins & Will is the architect, and Vaughn Construction is the contractor.



Springtown ISD Board of Trustees members were honored for their service at the meeting on Jan. 22. From left are Mark Bryant, Gary Veazey, Secretary Jay Grubis, Tootie Hall (in front), President Rick Beall, Damon Liles and Superintendent Shane Strickland. Not pictured is Vice President Chris Gilley.

SERVICE
FROM PAGE A1

Strickland recognized the board members individually: President Rick Beall with eight years of service to the board, Damon Liles with eight years of service, Secretary Jay Grubis with 11 years, Vice President Chris Gilley with four years, Gary Veazey with

four years, Mark Bryant with three years and Tootie Hall with 16 years total.

In honor of School Board Recognition Month, Springtown Education Foundation will award eight honorary scholarships named for each board member and Strickland to Springtown High School graduating seniors in the spring.

When resuming his place behind the dais after taking a

group picture with the board, Beall shared his appreciation for the recognition.

"Not to speak for everybody but I know everyone does this because they have their heart in the right place and care about the best interest of kids," he said.

Springtown City Council also scheduled time during its Jan. 25 meeting to celebrate School Board Recognition Month.

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“Harbor Lights: Stories” by James Lee Burke

Living in the underbelly of society is a struggle.

It's a hand-to-mouth existence; you never know where your next meal will come from, unless it's from a warden or a trusty. You never truly know who you're sleeping against or where your next ten bucks'll come from. There's no privacy living in the underbelly. You can lose your soul there. And in “Harbor Lights,” a new short-story collection by James Lee Burke, you could also lose your life.

No matter what the chore, Aaron Broussard loved doing things with his father: fishing, boating, traveling, lunching, spotting dead men in the water along the Louisiana coast. James Broussard knew why those men were floating: it was 1942, and a German submarine was nearby. He knew it. In the first story,

that which gives this book its title, the FBI knew it, too, and they aimed to keep Broussard quiet.

Beneath Montana's Flathead Lake lies an ancient highway that folks say you can see if you look hard. Running from the law, R.B. Ruger stood on the banks of the lake and saw the road dotted with headlights like stars in a dark Western sky. In “Going Across Jordan,” he never thought anyone'd need to dive down and follow it.

Mind yourself and don't go anywhere near the Red Hat House out near Camp A, where men suffer horribly. Lead Belly was out there once, and Arlen thinks about that, and about how he just wants to be left alone with his Gibson to serve his time. But in “Big Midnight Special,”

there'll be a prison boxing match soon, and Arlen will put on gloves – or else.

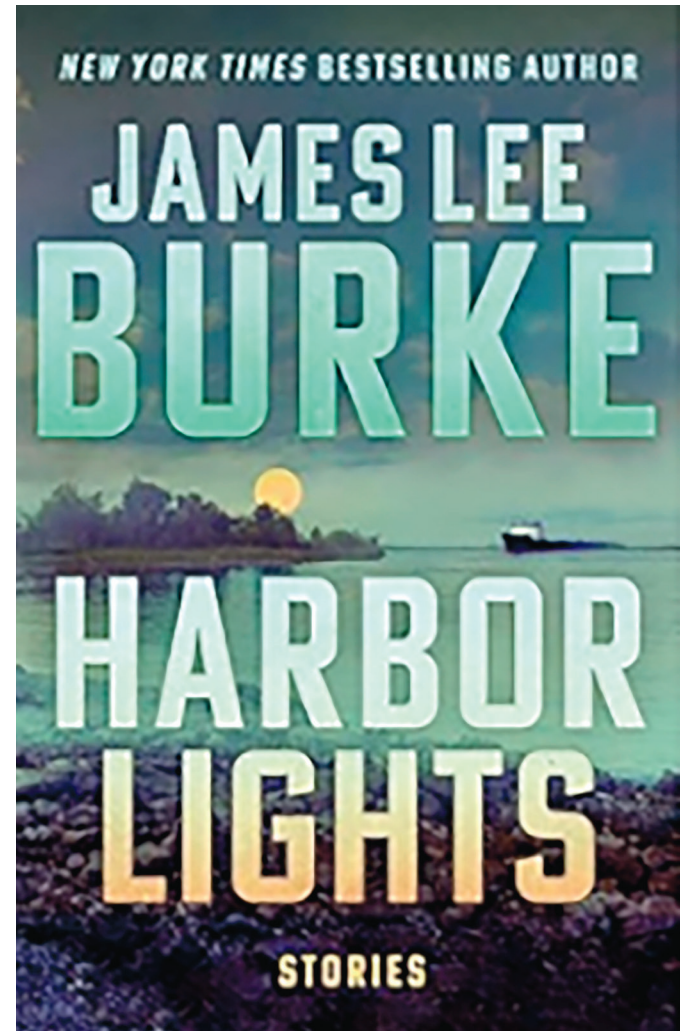
All Francis wanted to do was go home. Home from Vietnam, home and away from his memories, home in the middle of a storm with his son, but his truck broke down outside a two-bit bar in the middle of nowhere. He'd seen some things in battle that he'd sooner forget, but in “A Distant War,” nothing compared to the fight with his past.

No matter what the season, it often feels like you don't have a spare minute to enjoy a book. But twenty minutes now, an hour later, and you'll finish “Harbor Lights” in no time.

You'll have no problem at all entering the tattered world inside this book,

or diving into the addicting tales. Author James Lee Burke encapsulates his storytelling prowess in smaller bites that can be taken alone or as a whole. Put them end-to-end, though, and you'll see that the tales are linked, subtly and loudly, with turns of phrase, names and places that wink at readers and keep the stories tied. You'll have fun finding those little breadcrumbs, even as you're busy turning pages and trying to keep your hair from standing on end.

This short-story collection is a great introduction to Burke's work, if you're new. If you're a fan already, what are you waiting for? “Harbor Lights” is waiting. Missing it is something you won't be able to stomach.



c.2024, Atlantic Monthly Press, \$27.00, 358 pages

Governor announces Medicaid extended coverage for postpartum

STAFF REPORTS

Gov. Greg Abbott and the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) announced the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) has approved Texas' request to extend Medicaid and Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) coverage from two to 12 months after pregnancy.

“This past regular legislative session, I was proud to sign a crucial bipartisan law that extends postpartum coverage

for Texas mothers from two to 12 months,” said Gov. Abbott in a press release. “With Texas' application approved by CMS, this postpartum extension will help Texas mothers receive high-quality healthcare across our great state. I thank the Texas Health and Human Services Commission, Senator Lois Kolkhorst and Representative Toni Rose for their work to ensure this critical postpartum extension is available to new mothers in need across Texas.”

“I thank Gov. Abbott and the Texas Legislature for standing by our families,” said HHS Executive Commissioner Cecile Erwin Young in a press release. “Twelve months of postpartum coverage will help mothers across this state gain access to high-quality healthcare.”

Last year, Gov. Abbott signed House Bill 12 into law, which extended Medicaid and CHIP postpartum coverage from two to 12 months. The law will take effect March 1,

2024. Under the state plan amendments, anyone enrolled in Medicaid or CHIP who is pregnant or becomes pregnant will be automatically enrolled for 12 months of postpartum coverage. Services covered by Medicaid and CHIP include prenatal doctor visits, prenatal vitamins, labor and delivery, and postpartum checkups.

Coverage will be automatically reinstated for individuals who are not current Medicaid or CHIP recipients,

but who were enrolled in Medicaid or CHIP in Texas while pregnant and are still within their 12-month postpartum period, as long as they are still residents of Texas. Their coverage will be reinstated for the remainder of their 12-month postpartum period.

Women who are enrolled in Healthy Texas Women who are still within their 12-month postpartum period will be transitioned back to full-coverage Medicaid or

CHIP for the remainder of their 12-month postpartum period.

Texas projects approximately 137,000 women will benefit from 12-months postpartum coverage in fiscal year 2025. To apply for Medicaid or CHIP, call 2-1-1 and choose Option 2 or visit YourTexasBenefits.com.

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Application has been made with the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission for a Retail Dealer's On-Premise License by MD Real Estate Development LLC dba Rodeo 51, to be located at 4319 N FM 51 Weatherford, Parker, Texas. Officer of said corporation is Luis Mata Gonzalez, owner.

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SISD board recognizes All-State Band trombonist

MADELYN EDWARDS
springtownreporter@tricityreporter.com

SPRINGTOWN — The audience at Springtown Independent School District's Jan. 22 board meeting cracked up over Springtown High School band director Scot McPhetridge telling a funny story about senior trombone player Gabriel Martinez.

Martinez was honored by the school board for making it into the Association of Texas Small School Bands All-State Band. McPhetridge said more than 10,000 students auditioned for All-State Band, and Martinez was one of 286 players who made the final cut in his division. After two rounds of auditions in December and January, Martinez placed in second chair among other trombone players from 4A high schools.

"I want to tell an embarrassing story," McPhetridge began. "You see, unlike me, he's got this wonderful hair, and so his freshman year, he had it quite coiffed up right here."

However, Martinez's hair became something of a detriment when he first joined the SHS band. McPhetridge

explained that Martinez was a freshman in the fall of 2020 when the kids' temperatures had to be taken to determine if they could stay at school because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Every morning at 6:30 ... I've got to scan everyone's forehead and say whether they could stay at school or go home before we had marching rehearsal," McPhetridge said. "He was hot every day, and so we'd say, 'Stand over there with your hair up, and let your head cool.' His hair would make his head so hot, and he did not have a fever. But then, we'd scan it again, and we're like, 'Alright, you're fine.'"

Ever since, Martinez proved himself to be a hardworking student and kind to his fellow bandmates, McPhetridge said.

"It's awesome when a great player makes the All-State Band, but it's also way better when a student with great character makes the All-State Band, and Gabriel is someone with great character," McPhetridge said. "Not only does he work hard to know his music, but he helps out the underclassmen to make sure they know how to play



Springtown High School senior and trombone player Gabriel Martinez was honored by the Springtown ISD school board for making it into the Association of Texas Small School Bands All-State Band. On Feb. 10, Martinez will play with a select group at the Texas Music Educators Association conference in San Antonio.

MADELYN EDWARDS | TRI-COUNTY REPORTER

their trombone music, and he'll stay late and practice with them. And so sometimes when you do the nice thing

for other people, it takes away from your time and you almost feel like you get punished, but in this case, I feel

like he got rewarded for being a great person and a great example to his classmates." On Feb. 10, Martinez will

play with a select group at the Texas Music Educators Association conference in San Antonio.



Photos from last year's Night to Shine.

FILE PHOTO | TRI-COUNTY REPORTER

Night to Shine slated Feb. 9

ZACH FREEMAN
azlereporter@tricityreporter.com

AZLE — It's time to get those dancing shoes out and get ready for Azle's Night to Shine, an event in partnership with the Tim Tebow Foundation. Azle's second annual special needs prom will take place at the Church At Azle Feb. 9.

Night to Shine is a decade-old annual event created by the Tim Tebow Foundation. The event is designed for those who have handicaps and disabilities to feel like they are the toast of the town. Night to Shine features a red carpet, a line of paparazzi and adoring fans. Attendees will arrive by limousine to a cheering crowd and are ushered into a dance hall as guests of honor for a special prom night celebration.

Last year marked the first time Night to Share was held in Azle. Elisa Henkel, coordinator for The Edge Church's special needs ministry, said the event has a great team of leaders for this year's Night to Shine. Henkel has known about Night to Shine since its creation 10 years ago and always wanted to volunteer for the event but never got the chance. Henkel started her special needs ministry two-and-a-half years ago at The Edge Church. The Edge's Senior Pastor Steve Sandfort agreed that Night to Shine would be a great project

Second annual special needs prom set at Church At Azle

for the church to pursue. Of the 150 or so churches that participate in Night to Shine, The Edge was Azle's first, with the next closest being in Weatherford, Decatur and Fort Worth. Henkel soon filled out an application to host the event and was excited when The Edge was approved to host. Henkel posted about the event on Facebook and Jason Malewiski of Servolution Network reached out to Henkel and asked what they could do to help. The Church At Azle and the Servolution Dream Center were selected as the event's venue because of its larger size.

"It was really neat that we could work together on this," Henkel said. "Last year's Night to Shine was, in the words of some of our guests, 'EPIC'. We watched God move in mighty ways, not only with the guest, but with the Buddies and volunteers. It was such a beautiful evening full of shine shops where the guests were pampered, to dinner and dancing. (Last year, when, one guest) Maddie's mom asked her if (Azle's) Night to Shine was better than the one she attended at a much bigger, well-known and experienced church she went to a couple years ago, her answer was,

'Oh, it was a thousand times better tonight!!! This is the only place I wanna go from now on!' and her two friends, in all their joy and giddiness, promptly agreed. 'BAM!!! Y'all nailed it!'"

Buddies are volunteers who are matched one-on-one with prom attendees. Buddies are around the same age as attendees and dress-up, eat with and accompany special needs individuals throughout the evening so they feel the presence of a friend.

Henkel hopes all the new and returning guests will have just an "EPIC" a time as they did last year. Along with a prom at the Church At Azle, Servolution Network will host a "pamper area" and Azle Christian Schools will hold a parents' dinner and respite. The event is open to all special needs individuals aged 14 and older. Currently, the event, which is being planned by a number of local churches, expects to see 60 special guests, their families and 150 volunteers. Guests, volunteers, donors and sponsors can register or learn more at edge4all.com/nts2024. Currently, Caitlyn's Catering is providing all the event's food, Fokus Studios will serve as deejay and Balloons By Lu will provide a backdrop and décor.

LEGAL PUBLIC NOTICES

NOTICE OF PUBLIC SALE

To satisfy a landlord's lien. Sale to be held at Valley Rose RV Park and Storage, 1515 E. Highway 199 Springtown, TX 76082 at 10:30 AM on 2/09/24. Property to be sold to the highest bidder for CASH. Property includes contents of the following tenants, Tracy Shills household items, Scott Lewis household items, Mark Parker household items.

Notice of Public Sale

Public boat sale to satisfy storage lien. Up for bids LEGALLY BELONGING TO: Kathy M. Springfield, 1995 Glastron, TX # 7733HM, VIN#GLAM9498K495 The Sale Will Be Held on February 3rd. 12:00 PM, Lakeview Marina, 6600 Peden Rd Fort Worth, Texas 76179 Call Rodney for details 817-528-3471. Terms are cash/cashier's check at time of sale.

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Owner: Walnut Creek Special Utility District Separate sealed bids for Water System Improvements, 500,000 Gallon Welded Steel Ground Storage Tank and an Alternate Bid for a 300,000 Gallon Welded Steel Ground Storage Tank located at the F.M. 51 Booster Pump Station Site will be received by the Walnut Creek Special Utility District at the District Office, 1155 Highway 199 West, P.O. Box 657, Springtown, Texas 76082, until 11:00 o'clock A.M. Local Time, Friday, February 9, 2024, and then publicly opened and read aloud at 1:00 o'clock P.M. on Friday, February 9, 2024. The Information for Bidders, Form of Bid, Form of Contract, Plans, Specifications and Form of Bid Bond, Performance and Payment Bonds and other contract documents may be examined at the following: E.S. & C.M., Inc. 8241 Mid-Cities Blvd., Ste. 100 North Richland Hills, Texas 76182 Office Telephone (817) 268-0408 Copies may be obtained at the office of E.S. & C.M., Inc., 8241 Mid-Cities Blvd., Suite 100, North Richland Hills, Texas 76182 upon payment of \$150.00 for each set. This payment is nonrefundable. The Owner reserves the right to waive any informality or to reject any or all bids. Each bidder must deposit with his bid, security in the amount, form and subject to the conditions provided in the Information for Bidders. No bidder may withdraw his bid within 60 (sixty) days after the actual date of opening thereof.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC SALE

Notice is hereby given that the following will be sold to the highest bidder with bidding to take place at lockerfox.com on Wednesday the 21st day of February, 2024 at 9:00 AM to satisfy a landlord's lien, pursuant to Chapter 59, Texas Property Code. Payment to seller via credit/debit card and pickup at the facility. Self-Storage unit contents of the following customers containing household and other goods will be sold. 10 Federal Self Storage, 2920 Avenue F, Arlington, TX, 76011 Elizabeth Gustafson. DELIA ROSEMAN. Lance Miller. Keisha Butler. Joshua Jackson. Valentino Salinas. Wanda Walter. bryan deane. Chase Dorow. Crystal Butterfield. Chase Dorow. Jonathan M Averill. Bradley Willis. Shawnee Arkansas. Cindy Hernandez

ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS

CITY OF AZLE, TEXAS
BROADWAY DRAINAGE CULVERT

Separate sealed bids for the construction of the BROADWAY DRAINAGE CULVERT project (Azle bid number 2024-004) will be received by the City of Azle, Texas until 3:00 PM on February 22, 2024, at City Hall, 505 W. Main Street, Azle, Texas, 76020, and then at said location publicly opened and read aloud. This project includes: 1) Installation of culverts with headwalls, regrading of associated drainage ditches and installation of an energy dissipation wall at the intersection of Lakeview Drive and Broadway Street and 2) Installation of a curb inlet and a culvert at the intersection of Stewart Street, Jarvis Lane, and James Street. The Contract Documents consisting of Advertisement of Bids, Information for Bidders, Bid Proposal, Bid Bond, Contract, Performance and Payment Bonds, Maintenance Bond, General Conditions, Notice of Award, Notice to Proceed, Plans, Specifications, and Addenda (if any) may be examined at the following location: JACOB & MARTIN, LLC 1925 Fort Worth Highway, Weatherford, Texas 76086 The Owner reserves the right to waive any informalities and to reject any or all bids. Bids may be held by the Owner for a period not to exceed 60 days from the date of bid opening for the purpose of reviewing the bids and investigating the qualifications of Bidders prior to awarding of the contract. Copies of the CONTRACT DOCUMENTS must be ordered online at www.jacobmartin.com. Orders for CONTRACT DOCUMENTS may include hard copies for pick up, mail out or digital download via www.jacobmartin.com. Upon verification of online payment, hard copies may be picked up at Jacob & Martin, LLC, located at 1925 Fort Worth Highway, Weatherford, Texas 76086. Cost for hard copies of the CONTRACT DOCUMENTS will be \$100.00 for 11x17 half size plans. Cost for digital download of CONTRACT DOCUMENTS will be \$0.00. Contractors must purchase a set of CONTRACT DOCUMENTS to be considered a registered plan holder eligible to bid the project. A certified check or bank draft, payable to the order of CITY OF AZLE, TEXAS, negotiable U.S. Governmental bonds (at par value) or a satisfactory Bid Bond executed by the Bidder and an acceptable surety in an amount equal to five percent (5%) of the total bid shall be submitted with each bid. City of Azle, Texas, Alan Brundrett, Mayor, February 1st and 8th, 2024.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

The Planning and Zoning Commission of the City of Azle will conduct a public hearing at 6:00 p.m. on Thursday, February 15, 2024 in the City Council Chambers at City Hall, located at 505 West Main Street to consider text amendments to Chapter 4 "Business Regulations", Chapter 6 "Health and Sanitation" and Chapter 14 "Zoning Ordinance" of the Code of Ordinances, City of Azle, Texas. The purpose of the text amendment is to consider adding regulations for Food Truck Parks.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

The Planning and Zoning Commission of the City of Azle will conduct a public hearing at 6:00 p.m. on Thursday, February 15, 2024 in the City Council Chambers at City Hall, located at 505 West Main Street to consider text amendments to Chapter 10 "Subdivision Ordinance" and Chapter 14 "Zoning Ordinance" of the Code of Ordinances, City of Azle, Texas. The purpose of the text amendment is to consider amendments to the screening wall requirements for single-family residential developments.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC SALE

to satisfy a landlord's lien. Sale to be held at Azle Southeast Storage, 1004 Southeast Parkway; Azle, TX at 10:30am 2-9-2024 Property to be sold to the highest bidder for CASH. Property includes contents of the following tenants Sierra Gizzard :Household Items Cassel Woods :Household items Amber Chesney: Household Items Chanda Ambrose:Household Items John Bourdon: Miscellaneous Stephanie Robinson: Household Items

Legacy Oaks seniors touched by kindness



Legacy Oaks of Azle seniors enjoyed spending time with young Azle students.

COURTESY LEGACY OAKS OF AZLE

Preschoolers deliver handmade cards

STAFF REPORTS

AZLE — The Little Hornets Preschoolers brought joy and smiles to the residents of Legacy Oaks of Azle, a senior living community, with unique handmade gifts. The children visited recently to personally deliver handmade cards to the residents and created a moment all will cherish.

The visit left a lasting impact on the residents of Legacy Oaks of Azle. Each card was a unique work of art, filled with warm greetings and heartwarming

messages. The children's thoughtfulness touched the residents and showered them with hugs and words of appreciation.

"The joy on our residents' faces was truly priceless," said Nichol Wesson, executive director at Legacy Oaks of Azle. "It was a beautiful reminder of the importance of intergenerational connections and the power of kindness. The visit from the Little Hornets Preschoolers brought so much happiness to our community."

The homemade cards added a personal touch to the interaction. The residents expressed gratitude for the thoughtful gesture, emphasizing the significance of fostering connections between different age groups.

Many studies have shown interactions between young children and the elderly to be beneficial to both groups and that people who held a positive view of aging often lived longer.

"Intergenerational programs with preschool chil-

dren brought smiles and conversation to older adults," a study by BMC Geriatrics concluded. "The intergenerational programs provide opportunities to fulfill basic human needs and reintegrate older adults into society. Further development of such beneficial programs is warranted."

For more information about Legacy Oaks of Azle, visit its website at www.civitaseniorliving.com/legacy-oaks-of-azle/.



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Springtown Chamber lunch features speaker Rep. Glenn Rogers

FFA students, businesswomen also recognized at luncheon



Springtown High School agriculture teacher Chance Kanode introduces senior and Springtown FFA President Ava Kelley as one of the Career and Technical Education students of the month at the Springtown Area Chamber of Commerce luncheon Jan. 25. Kanode praised Kelley's leadership skills.



MADELYN EDWARDS | TRI-COUNTY REPORTER

State Rep. Glenn Rogers, who represents Parker, Palo Pinto and Stephens counties, spoke at the Springtown Area Chamber of Commerce luncheon Jan. 25. He talked about the legislative sessions in 2023, what was accomplished and his views on certain issues.



Springtown FFA Vice President Molly Pack, a senior, was also recognized as a Career and Technical Education student of the month at the Springtown Area Chamber of Commerce luncheon. She is pictured between her teacher Chance Kanode and Chamber Executive Director Terri Toone. "This is my first year with both of these students, and I've had the pleasure of watching them grow since I met them in July," Kanode said.



Springtown Area Chamber of Commerce ambassadors clap for Jane Faith, realtor at Coldwell Banker Apex Realtors, and Jill Sebek, senior loan officer at Platinum Eagle Mortgage, after honoring them with a ribbon cutting.

JIM STEVENS
PHOTOGRAPHY

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The Tri-County Reporter is seeking a part-time photographer to shoot sports and other school-based events. Applicant must have their own equipment and a working knowledge of photography. Salary is negotiable. Assignments will be three or four events per week. To apply email publisher@tricityreporter.com. No phone calls please.

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AML displays patron-made mini art

Adult Services Librarian creates Lego art gallery to appreciate patron-made art through Feb. 7



The paintings are done with acrylic paint, and the art canvases are 3"x3". All materials for the paintings were supplied by the library.



Lego minifig art appreciators pause to admire tiny paintings created by Azle teens and adults.

ZACH FREEMAN | TRI-COUNTY REPORTER



Adult Services Librarian Rebecca Buchanan matched Lego figures to the subjects and themes in each painting.



Library patrons can observe these tiny canvasses, painted during a Jan. 23 event, in the center of the library through Feb. 7.



Participants in the Mini Art for Teens and Adults activity were allowed to take the art home or leave it for this special display.

TCR Junior

NATIONAL Take your kids to the LIBRARY DAY February 3rd 2024

National Take Your Child to the Library Day, observed on February 3rd, is a fantastic celebration that invites families to embark on literary adventures together. Libraries are magical places filled with endless stories, exciting worlds, and the promise of discovery.

On this special day, parents and caregivers can create lasting memories with their children by taking them to the library. Libraries are like treasure troves, offering a diverse collection of books that cater to every interest and imagination. Kids can ex-

plore picture books, chapter books, and even discover new friends through the characters they meet in stories.

Libraries often host special events on this day, such as storytime sessions, puppet shows, or interactive activities. It's an opportunity for kids to engage with literature in a fun and interactive way, fostering a love for reading and learning. Many libraries also provide craft stations, allowing

children to unleash their creativity and make book-marks or crafts related to their favorite books.

Parents can use this day to instill the habit of reading in their children. By introducing kids to the joy of reading, they not only enhance their literacy skills but also open doors to new worlds, ideas, and possibilities.

Teachers can encourage their students and their families to participate in National Take Your Child to the Library Day. It's a chance to reinforce the importance of literacy outside the classroom and inspire a lifelong love for books.

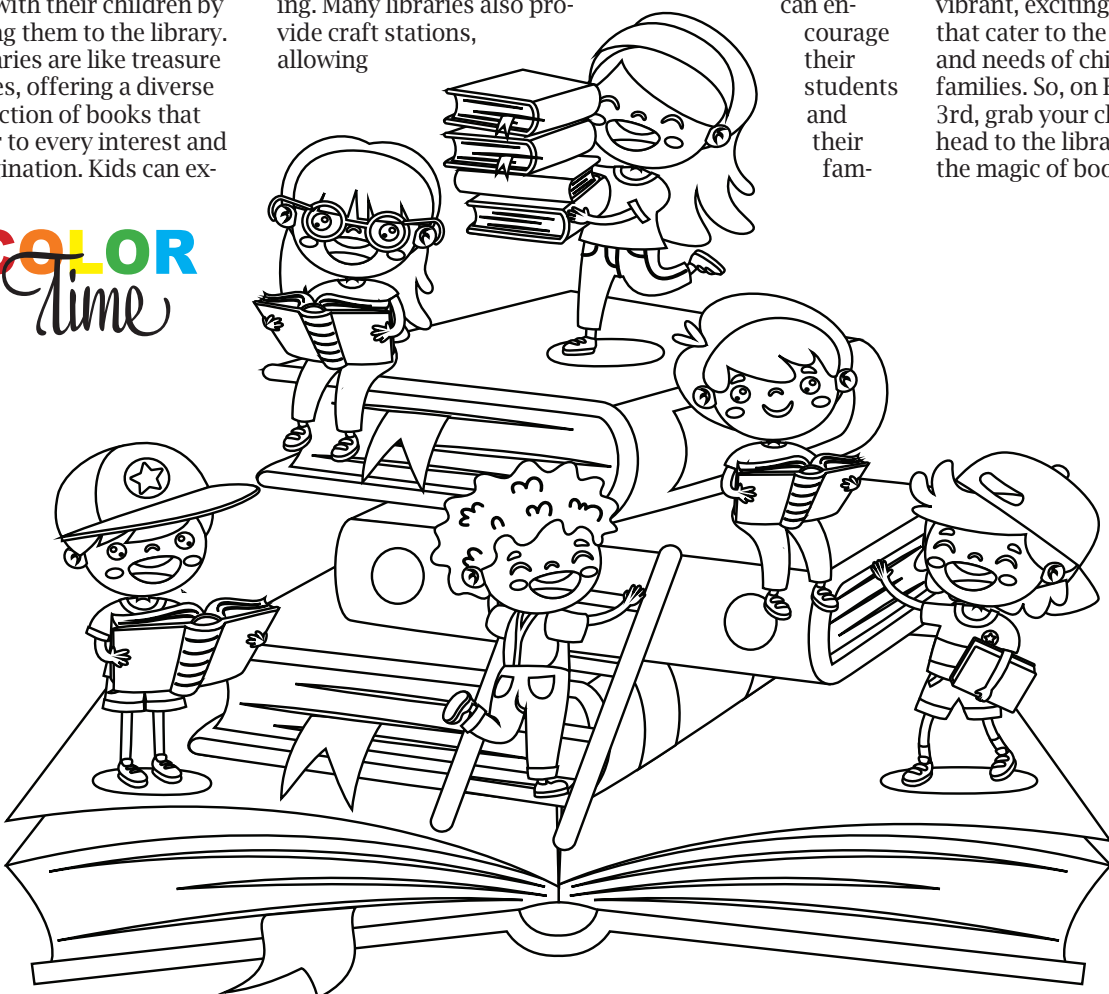
In the digital age, libraries are evolving, offering e-books, audiobooks, and online resources. National Take Your Child to the Library Day is a reminder that libraries remain vibrant, exciting places that cater to the interests and needs of children and families. So, on February 3rd, grab your child's hand, head to the library, and let the magic of books unfold!

Did You Know?

GETTING A LIBRARY CARD OPENS PEOPLE UP TO A WORLD OF BOOKS, MOVIES, MUSIC, AND OTHER SPECIAL COLLECTIONS AT THEIR LOCAL LIBRARIES.



COLOR Time



Library

Words can be found in any direction (including diagonals) and can overlap each other. Use the word bank below.

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

Word Bank

- 1. pages
- 2. reference
- 3. librarian
- 4. desktop
- 5. quiet
- 6. read
- 7. reading
- 8. bookshelf
- 9. computer
- 10. lamptables



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THE TRI-COUNTY REPORTER

DIVERSIONS

B

THURSDAY, February 1, 2024

SPORTS

Roundup

Azle swimming sends 10 to regionals

Lady Pines clinch postseason spot

RICK MAUCH

Special to the Tri-County Reporter

Led by a new school record, the Azle High School swim program qualified nine swimmers for regionals from the District 5-5A Meet at the Northwest ISD Natatorium in Justin Friday, Jan. 26. They will next compete in the Region 2 Meet in Mansfield Feb. 9-10.

"We had a phenomenal District 5-5A meet!" exclaimed an excited Azle coach Amy Estes. "The district meet is a culmination of 100-plus practices at 5:45 a.m. beginning in August.

"UIL swimming is the longest sport. We travel to Decatur every day in order to have access to a pool. Our swimmers have to be dedicated and committed, and it is exciting to watch them experience this level of success."

Leading the qualifica-

tions is the girls 400-yard relay team of senior captains Peighton Berry and Brook Nawokowski, along with Kayley Brekel and Karla Rodriguez, who finished third with a school-record time of 4 minutes, 12.95 seconds. The quartet bested its own previous school record of 4:17.07 set Dec. 9.

The foursome also qualified with a third-place finish in the 200 freestyle relay. Berry also advanced individually by finishing third in the 200 freestyle and fourth in the 100 free, while Nawokowski was third in the 100 backstroke.

The 200 medley relay of senior captain Hailey Fox, along with Emory Hann, Kaylee Daniels and Haven Brown also qualified.

For the boys, Kalen McCullough qualified by finishing third in the 100 backstroke and fourth in the 50

free.

The top six finishers in each event advance from district to regionals. From regionals, the top two in each event qualify for state, along with the next eight fastest times from across all regions. State is Feb. 23-24 in Austin.

SPRINGTOWN GIRLS BASKETBALL

The Lady Pines (18-15, 3-4 in District 8-4A) split two games this past week, and in the process clinched a play-off berth. It's the first time since 2013-14 and 2014-15 seasons that the Lady Pines have had back-to-back postseason berths.

"I'm really proud of our girls getting into the playoffs. Especially on Tuesday, getting a win over Lake Worth," coach David Sivadon said. "On top of our injuries, we

PLEASE SEE **ROUNDUP** | B2



PHOTO COURTESY AMY ESTES

The Azle Lady Hornets 400-yard Freestyle Relay quartet of (from left) Kayley Brekel, Karla Rodrigues, Brooke Nowakowski and Peighton Berry set a school record at the District 5-5A Meet with a time of 4:12.95. They finished third and are four of the team's 10 regional qualifying participants.

Springtown's Dauenhauer on elite list

STAFF REPORTS

MAGNOLIA, ARKANSAS — Brinklee Asher Dauenhauer earned a 4.0 GPA in the fall 2023 semester, securing a reputable position on Southern Arkansas University's President's list. Dauenhauer is a junior management major from Springtown. A total of 495 students were honored on this semester's President's List.

"Southern Arkansas

University provides students the complete college experience in a caring environment of service, innovation and community," the college said in a press release. "With more than 100 degrees in four distinct colleges and the School of Graduate Studies, SAU initiates new degree programs to fit the needs of career and professional trends of today."

To learn more about SAU, visit www.saumag.edu.



JEFF PRINCE | TRI-COUNTY REPORTER

Dauenhauer was a valuable asset to the Springtown volleyball team, and has gone on to academic distinction.

Area rodeo teams enjoy successful season

RICK MAUCH

Special to the Tri-County Reporter

With the 2023-24 season just past the halfway mark in the North Texas High School Rodeo Association, teams from Azle and Springtown are enjoying much success.

In the team standings, Azle was sitting at the top with 8,113 points, a lead of more than 3,000 points over the runner-up entering this past weekend. Springtown was in fourth place with 3,689.

Individually, the teams have 20 athletes (11 Azle, 9 Springtown) among the top 15 in a variety of events. The top 15 in each event will advance to the NTHSRA Finals Rodeo May 17-18 at the arena in Saginaw.

AZLE

"This season we have had several returning members that have helped with our overall standings. Several of our members ride for other organizations, so they are constantly practicing to be better," Azle team sponsor Kristy Scribner said.

Azle's Laurel Allred leads the walkup goat-tying standings, while Andrea Allred is in third place. Laurel also leads the pole competition. Also from Azle, Xavier Reyes is on top of the team roping-header standings and Kasen Scarlato leads team roping-heeler.

Scribner said along with competing in the NTHSRA, several team members compete for other rodeo associations and belong to other organizations. Currently,



Azle's Rodeo Team for 2024

COURTESY PHOTO



Springtown's Rodeo Team for 2024

COURTESY PHOTO

Laurel Allred, Sean Bunero and Hevenli Scribner compete in the Texas High School Rodeo Association Region 3 (THSRA).

Scribner leads THSRA Region 3 in poles. The top 10

in each event will advance to the THSRA Finals in June.

Scribner qualified for the National High School Finals in Gillette, Wyoming last summer in the poles. Laurel Allred has won several bar-

rel racing and pole bending titles with Kids Junior Rodeo Association, while Scarlato and Reyes have won numerous team roping jackpots.

PLEASE SEE **RODEO** | B3

Power girls take 2nd

PHOTO COURTESY TANNER STREET

The Lady Hornet powerlifting team took home second place as a team at its home meet Wednesday, Jan. 24. Ryleigh Myers, Ella Swaim, Raegan Williams, Cooper Yates and Ryann Baker each finished first in their weight class. Kyndal Robbins, Haley Carlson and Jessie Johnson each placed second in their weight class. Mckynleigh Sisk, Hannah Johns and Ryleigh Cire each finished third in their weight class. Raegan Williams also received the best overall lifter award for the light platforms.



ROUNDUP

FROM PAGE B1

had three others sick and only had five regular varsity players.

"We had three girls step up big for us. Now we work on improving to try and get a better seed and playoff win."

The week began with a 58-52 home victory against Lake Worth, a game that featured a 28-5 third quarter run by Springtown. Esther Balado scored 19 points with nine rebounds, four steals and two blocks. Chloe Kirk scored 17; Paige Winstead scored eight with four assists; Allison Ford scored seven with nine rebounds and five assists; and Bryllynn Bazzell grabbed 19 rebounds, including 13 offensive.

The Lady Pines had 46 rebounds, of which 27 were offensive boards. They also forced 36 turnovers, which included 20 steals.

In an 87-22 loss at league-leading Decatur, No. 7 in the state in 4A, Balado scored 14 points with five rebounds.

The Lady Pines are one win away from clinching their first winning season since 2013-14. They are just two victories away from their first 20-win season since 2009-10.

Springtown, which has clinched no worse than fourth in district, hosts third-place Bridgeport Friday, Feb.

2, and travels to Castleberry Feb. 6 to end the regular season. Tipoff in both games is 6:15 p.m.

SPRINGTOWN BOYS BASKETBALL

The Porcupines (15-10, 3-2 in District 8-4A) continue to hold onto third place in district after a thrilling 44-42 loss at runner-up Decatur Friday, Jan. 26. Previously, in an 83-28 home victory over Lake Worth, senior Dayne Thompson scored the 2,000th point of his high school career.

Thompson led the scoring against the Bullfrogs with 30 points, while Dylan Crutchfield scored 20. Braylon Easter led against Decatur with 11 and Thompson added 10.

Decatur started out red hot in the first half while Springtown struggled to get anything going offensively. The script was flipped in the second half as the Porcupines battled back from a 15-point halftime deficit (32-17) to take the lead with just under a minute left.

Unfortunately for Springtown, a foul allowed Decatur to tie the game and the Eagles regained the lead with 20 seconds left. Despite Decatur being outscored by the Pines 25-12 in the second half, Springtown was unable to complete the comeback win.

Springtown hosts Bridgeport Friday, Feb. 2 and travels to fourth-place Castleberry Tuesday, Feb. 6. Both games tip off at 7:30 p.m.

AZLE GIRLS BASKETBALL

The Lady Hornets (14-15, 3-6 in District 5-5A) posted a pair of victories, winning 54-44 at Wichita Falls Rider Jan. 23 and 50-24 at home against Northwest Jan. 26.

Abbey Natusch paced the win over Rider with 14 points, with Cheryl Grubbs scoring 12 and Vielka Gonzalez adding eight. Grubbs led against Northwest with 15 and Gonzalez scored seven.

Azle, Saginaw (3-6 in district) and Northwest (3-7) are battling for the fourth playoff berth from 5-5A. The Lady Hornets were playing at Saginaw, who defeated them 37-36 in Azle Jan. 5, at press time. Azle and Northwest split and Northwest split games with Saginaw.

The Lady Hornets host Aledo Feb. 2 at 6:15 p.m. and host Brewer Feb. 6 at 6:30 p.m. to end the regular season.

The JV defeated Rider 42-36 and the freshmen defeated Northwest 43-20.

AZLE BOYS SOCCER

The Hornets tied 1-1 in a contest at Wichita Falls Rider Jan. 23. Statistics from the match were not available at press time. Braden Forsythe

scored Azle's goal off an assist by Anthony Rodriguez.

"Wichita Falls is highly ranked in most coaches' polls, so going there on a weekday was already a daunting task. Wichita Falls came out to apply pressure from the very first minute. They held the ball well and really tested our defensive abilities," Azle coach Diego Oliveros said. "Both goalkeepers Evan Calvert and Dylan Dorris had some great interventions to keep us level."

"Our defense held on and we kept a clean sheet in the second half. A draw that very much felt like a win for us."

Azle (4-4-1) travels to Wichita Falls Rider Feb. 2 for a 5:45 start, then visits Northwest Feb. 6 at 7:30 p.m.

AZLE GIRLS SOCCER

The Lady Hornets (7-2-1) continued their strong start to the season with a 2-1 home win over Wichita Falls Jan. 23. Lily Hudman scored the game-winning goal with an assist from Sophie McIntyre.

Sarae Perez also scored a goal. Azle visits Wichita Falls Rider Feb. 2 with a 3:30 p.m. start and hosts Northwest Feb. 6 with a 5:30 p.m. start.

AZLE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL BOYS BASKETBALL

The Fighting Crusaders (18-10, 3-1 in TAPPS 2-1A) split two games this past week, falling 65-32 at Weatherford Victory Baptist Jan. 23 and winning 34-25 at Granbury Cornerstone Jan. 26, a game in which they trailed 20-14 at the half.

Andy Wisniewski led the scoring in both game with 13 against Victory Baptist and 22 against Cornerstone. Jake Scharvedt scored nine against Victory.

ACS hosts Valor Prep Academy Feb. 3 at 1:15 p.m. and Waxahachie Prep Feb. 6 at 7:30 p.m.

SPRINGTOWN BOYS SOCCER

The Porcupines (1-6-1) dropped a 4-1 contest at Mineral Wells Jan. 23 and came away with a 2-2 tie at Wichita Falls Hirschi Jan. 26. Statistics were not available at press time.

Springtown opens District 8-4A play at Bridgeport Feb. 2 at 7:15 p.m., followed by a



LAYTH THOMAS | TRI-COUNTY REPORTER

Thompson led the scoring against the Bullfrogs with 30 points.

visit to Collegiate Academy Feb. 6 at 5:30 p.m.

SPRINGTOWN GIRLS SOCCER

The Lady Pines (6-3) had no games scheduled this past week. They host Bridgeport in their District 8-4A opener Feb. 2 and visit Collegiate Academy Feb. 6, both games starting at 5:30 p.m.

AZLE BOYS BASKETBALL

The Hornets (4-22, 0-8 in District 5-5A) fell 58-26 at Wichita Falls Rider Jan. 23 and 60-42 at home to Northwest Jan. 26.

Against Northwest, Cason Cook led with 14 points, while Britt Haas added 10. Stats were not available against Rider.

The Hornets host Aledo Feb. 2 and visit Brewer Feb.

6, both games tipping off at 7:30 p.m.

AZLE GIRLS POWERLIFTING

The Lady Hornets took home second place as a team at their home meet Jan. 24. Ryleigh Myers, Ella Swaim, Raegan Williams, Cooper Yates and Ryann Baker finished first in their respective weight classes. Kyndal Robbins, Haley Carlson and Jessie Johnson took home second, with Mckynleigh Sisk, Hannah Johns, and Ryleigh Cire all finishing third. Williams also received the best overall lifter award for the light platforms.

"We are so proud of all our Lady Hornet lifters, and we look forward to the rest of the season," said coach Tanner Street.



LAYTH THOMAS | TRI-COUNTY REPORTER

Bryllynn Bazzell grabbed 19 rebounds, including 13 offensive.



LAYTH THOMAS | TRI-COUNTY REPORTER

Esther Balado scored 19 points with nine rebounds, four steals and two blocks



LAYTH THOMAS | TRI-COUNTY REPORTER

Paige Winstead scored eight with four assists.



LAYTH THOMAS | TRI-COUNTY REPORTER

Dylan Crutchfield scored 20 points against the Decatur Bullfrogs.



LAYTH THOMAS | TRI-COUNTY REPORTER

Braylon Easter led against Decatur with 11 points.

RODEO

FROM PAGE B1

"This is one of the strongest teams I have been a sponsor of," Scribner said. "They will need to continue to place and be consistent to hold on to that top spot."

"Rodeo is a very humbling sport. You could win the rodeo this weekend, and not even make a qualified time the next weekend."

Laurel Allred is also among the competitors for the NTHSRA girls all-around championship. She is in second place with 2,198 points, behind Burkburnett's Paisley Fugate with 2,975.

"Laurel is one of my high point earners every rodeo. The All-Around Cowgirl title is still in reach for her to win," Scribner said. "She typically competes in three to four events at every rodeo, and usually places in at least two of them. Laurel's goal this year was to win the all-around title."

Scribner noted that Saturday, Feb. 3, at 3 p.m., 11 members of the team will

compete for their share of \$26,000 in scholarship money at the Fort Worth Stock Show and Rodeo Scholarship Rodeo.

"These members have fought it out the first half of the season to be in the top 10 placings of their events to earn the chance. We would love for everyone to come out and cheer them on," Scribner said.

Scribner also thanked the Azle ISD for helping the team restore the AzTex Arena.

"We now have a place to host meetings and have weekly practices," she said.

SPRINGTOWN

Team sponsor Staci Harris has one of the largest teams competing in the NTHSRA with 19 participants, including nine who compete in more than one event.

"This season has gone really well for the team. We have seven competing next weekend — some in multiple events — at the FWSSR Scholarship rodeo whereas last year we had two," Harris said. "I am extremely impressed with the improvement of our team as a whole

and the individual members who put in hours of work outside school, work and other responsibilities to improve in their events."

While she admits mathematically it will be hard to knock Azle from the top spot in the team standings, climbing to as high as second place (currently Brock with 4,802 points) is a possibility and catching Burkburnett for third (slightly more than 100 ahead of Springtown) is certainly possible.

And, of course, several individuals are well-placed in the standings of their respective events, including Colton Phillips, who leads bull riding.

Delaney Harris, who is sixth in the All-Around Cowgirl standings, is in the top 10 of both walkup and horse goat tying.

Of the 19 team members, a handful compete in the THSRA, Harris said.

"I am so proud of this team, and we have battled to sit in the top five of 64 teams, flipping between third and fourth for the majority of the season so far."

Scholarship Rodeo

Azle Rodeo team members to compete for scholarships at Fort Worth Stock Show

STAFF REPORTS

Azle rodeo team members that are currently ranked in the top ten of their events are qualified to compete in the Scholarship Rodeo, presented by Lone Star Ag Credit. Members will be competing in 13 events for their share of \$26,000 in scholarships funds. Come cheer them on at Will Rogers Coliseum in Fort Worth on February 3 at 1:00 pm.



River Cassel



Hevenli Scribner



Sean Bunero



Kasen Scarlato



Laurel Allred



Wyatt Allison



Tucker Barbee



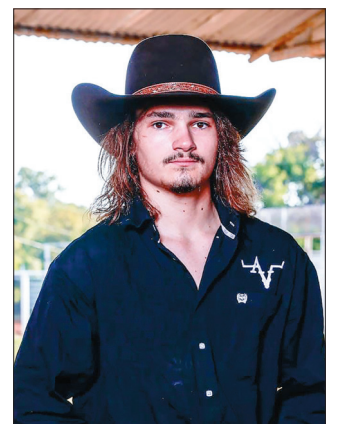
Caitlyn Colley



Andrea Allred



Xavier Reyes



Nickolas McElhannon

North Texas High School Rodeo Association

AZLE AND SPRINGTOWN COMPETITORS

Standings as of this past weekend

Team standings:

- Azle, first, 8,113 points; Springtown, fourth, 3,689.
- All-Around Cowgirl: 2. Laurel Allred, Azle, 2,198 (2,975 leads); 6. Delaney Harris, Springtown, 1,015; 10. Hevenli Scribner, Azle, 861.
- All-Around Cowboy: 4. Kasen Scarlato, Azle, 1,204 (2,268 leads); 6. Xavier Reyes, Azle, 917; 9. Sean Bunero, Azle, 763.

Individual events

- Top 15 in final standings of each individual event advance to NTHSRA Finals
- Barrel racing: 4. Scribner, 406 (leader has 644); 11. Kaylee Buchanan, Springtown, 196.
- Breakaway roping: 13. Paige Bunero, Springtown, 196 (399 leads); 14. Henley Sears, Springtown, 182.
- Goat tying/horse: 4. L. Allred, 651 (833 leads); 6. Harris, 539; 9. Shaye Winford, Springtown, 217; 12. Andrea Allred, Azle, 196.
- Goat tying/walkup: 1. L. Allred, 735; 3. A. Allred, 560; 7. Harris, 476; 11. Caitlyn Colley, Azle, 224; 13. Winford, 189.
- Poles: 1. L. Allred, 784; 6. Scribner, 406; 9. Colley, 259; 15. Buchanan, 126.
- Bull riding: 1. Colton Phillips, Springtown, 441; T-6. Tucker Barbee, Azle, 63.
- Calf roping: 5. S. Bunero, 371 (735 leads); 10. Tanner Pillar, Springtown, 98.
- Chute dogging: 3. Wyatt Allison, Azle, 455 (700 leads); 6. River Cassel, Azle, 413; 8. Scarlato, 287; 11. Cade Walker, Springtown, 266.
- Ribbon Roping: 5. S. Bunero, 392 (966 leads); 8. P. Bunero, 294.
- Steer wrestling: 2. Walker, 280 (560 leads).
- Team roping-header: 1. Reyes, Azle, 651; 12. Scarlato, 266.
- Team roping-heeler: 1. Scarlato, 651; 10. Reyes, 266; 14. Marshall Doudy, Springtown, 189.

Springtown School Menu

BREAKFAST PRICES	
EC-12th Grade	\$1.75
EC-12th Reduced	\$0.30
Adult	\$2.25
LUNCH PRICES	
PK-4th Grade	\$3.00
5th-8th Grade	\$3.25
High School	\$3.00
Reduced	\$0.40
Adult	\$4.25



Jan 29 - Feb 2, 2024
PK through 12th Grade

Students may prepay for their meals.

*Menus are subject to change.

PK - 12th Breakfast	BREAKFAST: Everyday - Various Juices & Cereals, Toast, Milk Variety, Fruit, Jelly Assortment, Buttermilk Biscuit, Variety of milk is offered every day for breakfast and lunch.
Mon Dutch Waffle, Sliced Pears, Tues Chicken Sandwich or Lasagna, Glazed Carrots, Garlic Roll, Fresh Veggies, Thurs Cinnamon Roll, Strawberry Applesauce, Fri Strawberry or Vanilla Yogurt, Banana, Juice	
K - 4th Lunch	Lunch: Everyday - Choice of one meat, two vegetables, and one grain/bread with milk. Variety of milk is offered every day for breakfast and lunch.
Mon Tangerine Chicken, Rice, Steamed Broccoli, Fresh Veggies Apple Slices or Mandarin Oranges, Tues, Spaghetti, Corn Dog, Garlic Roll, Green Beans, Fresh Veggies Applesauce or Orange, Weds, Cheeseburger or Hamburger, French Fries, Fresh Veggies Apple or Sliced Peaches, Thurs, Beef or Chicken Tacos, Corn, Refried Beans, Apple Slices or Watermelon Craisins, Fri, Cheese Pizza, Chicken Nuggets, or Baked Potato w/Ham, Roll, Mixed Vegetables, Fresh Veggies Blueberries or Banana	
5th - 12th Lunch	Lunch: Everyday - Choice of one meat, two vegetables, and one grain/bread with milk. Variety of milk is offered every day for breakfast and lunch.
Mon General Tso's Chicken or Tangerine Chicken, Rice, Roll Steamed Broccoli, Fresh Veggies Apple Slices or Mandarin Orange Tues Chicken Sandwich or Lasagna, Glazed Carrots, Garlic Roll, Fresh Veggies Applesauce or Strawberries Weds Chicken & Waffles, Tator Tots, Fresh Veggies Blueberries or Orange Thurs Beef or Chicken Tacos or Nachos Refried Beans, Corn Apples Slices or Sliced Peaches Fri Cheese Pizza, Corn Dog or Baked Potato Basket, Mixed Vegetables, Fresh Veggies Banana or Sliced Pears	

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Azle School Menu

Feb 05-10, 2024



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 Waffles, Orange Juice, Pears Diced, Tues Sausage Biscuit, Orange Juice, Pineapples, Weds Cinnamon Roll, Orange Juice, Oranges, Thurs Cinnamon Toast w/ Oatmeal, Apple, Orange Juice, Fri Scrambled Eggs, Sausage, and Toast, Bananas, Orange Juice
LUNCH: Everyday - Variety of milk. Your choice of 1 entree & 1 fruit or juice
Mon Chicken and Waffles, Popcorn Chicken Salad w/ Breadstick, Oranges, Pears Diced, Green beans, Mashed Potatoes, Peppercorn Gravy, Tues Baked Potato w/ Roll, Orange Chicken & Rice, Apple, Peaches, Steamed Broccoli, Weds Beef & Cheese Nachos, Hot Dog, Pineapples, Oranges, fresh salsa, Vegetarian Beans, Thurs Frito Chili Pie, Ham & Cheese Sandwich, Apple, Pears Diced, Steamed Peas, Fri Cheese Pizza, Garden Salad w/ Breadsticks, Pepperoni Pizza, Apple, Mixed Fruit, Corn, Smile Fries

GRADES 5TH - 8TH

BREAKFAST: Everyday - Assorted Fruits and Cereal, Juice, White or Chocolate Milk, Yogurt w/Granola
Mon Waffles, Orange Juice, Pears Diced, Tues Sausage Biscuit, Orange Juice, Pineapples, Weds Cinnamon Roll, Orange Juice, Oranges, Thurs Cinnamon Toast w/ Oatmeal, Apple, Orange Juice, Fri Scrambled Eggs, Sausage, and Toast, Bananas, Orange Juice
LUNCH: Everyday: Variety of milk. Your choice of 1 entree & 1 fruit or juice, rolls, crackers • Salad bar offered daily
Mon Breaded Chicken Sandwich, Chicken and Waffles, Popcorn Chicken Salad w/ Breadstick, Spicy Chicken Sandwich, Mashed Potatoes, Peppercorn Gravy, Tues Cheeseburger, Hamburger, Baked Potato w/ Roll, Orange Chicken & Rice, Weds Beef & Cheese Nachos, Corn dog, Hot Dog, Thurs Cheeseburger, Frito Chili Pie, Ham & Cheese Sandwich, Hamburger, Steamed Peas, Fri Breaded Chicken Sandwich, Cheese Pizza, Garden Salad w/ Breadsticks, Pepperoni Pizza, Spicy Chicken Sandwich Apple, Mixed Fruit, Corn, Smile Fries

HIGH SCHOOL

BREAKFAST: Everyday - Assorted Fruits and Cereal, Juice, White or Chocolate Milk, Yogurt w/Granola
Mon Waffles, Orange Juice, Pears Diced, Tues Sausage Biscuit, Orange Juice, Pineapples, Weds Cinnamon Roll, Orange Juice, Oranges, Thurs Cinnamon Toast w/ Oatmeal, Apple, Orange Juice, Fri Scrambled Eggs, Sausage, and Toast, Bananas, Orange Juice
LUNCH: • Everyday: 1% unflavored or non fat chocolate milk & juice • Salad Bar
Mon Breaded Chicken Sandwich Cheeseburger, Chicken and Waffles, Oranges, Pears Diced, Oranges, Corn, Steamed Medley, Tues Baked Potato w/ Roll Hamburger, Spicy Chicken Sandwich, Apple, Peaches, Steamed Broccoli Vegetarian Beans, Weds Breaded Chicken Sandwich Cheeseburger, Chili Cheese Dog, Oranges, Pineapples, FRESH SALSA, Steamed Carrots, Thurs Frito Chili Pie Hamburger, Spicy Chicken Sandwich, Apple Sauce, Bananas, Charro Beans, Curly Fries, Fri Breaded Chicken Sandwich, Cheeseburger, Chicken Alfredo, Honey Wheat Breadstick Apple, Mixed Fruit, Corn, Green beans

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Chuchel

A comedy adventure game that makes you feel like a cartoon character



GAME ON
By Jennifer Harrison

My opinions on computer gaming and some of my favorite games. I've been playing games on the home computer since the days of the Trash 80. I love indie, open-world, unique, puzzle, and resource games. The cake is a lie.



PHOTO COURTESY AMANITA DESIGNS

One of the puzzles from Chuchel involves getting the frogs aligned in just the right way so you can bounce off one and escape through the hole.

Chuchel, from Amanita Designs, is another light-hearted game from Jaromír Plachý. He started work on Chuchel shortly after finishing Botanicula in 2012.

We follow the adventures of Chuchel and his nemesis, Kekel as they fight over a delicious cherry. Chuchel and Kekel travel from scene to scene, stealing the cherry from each other and running away. A giant hand comes in to steal the cherry from them both, and teases Chuchel. Eventually the hand is revealed to belong to a giant named Chrchel, who swallows them both. Then they have to figure how to get out.

The puzzles in this game are very simple. More than anything else, they're fun to solve, and the animations are entertaining. Like other Amanita Design games, solving the puzzle unlocks a fun animation as a reward. Chuchel and Kekel are whimsical little cartoons, both somehow managing to be cute and also a little ugly. The art style in this game is like you're in a playable cartoon. Jaromír Plachý wanted to make an interactive cartoon — something that could be played through like a game but looked like an animation from a kid's show.

Music and sound effects

are by DVA, the band responsible for the soundtrack and effects for Botanicula. The music has a lot of energy and bounce, and the sound effects are adorable.

Chuchel gets his name from a combination of two similar Czech words: 'chumel,' meaning clump or tangle, and chuchvalec, meaning tangled mess or clot. To me he looks

like a hairball, or maybe a dust bunny. Originally, he had a black body and orange hat, but after accusations of blackface, they changed his color scheme to a black hat and orange body.

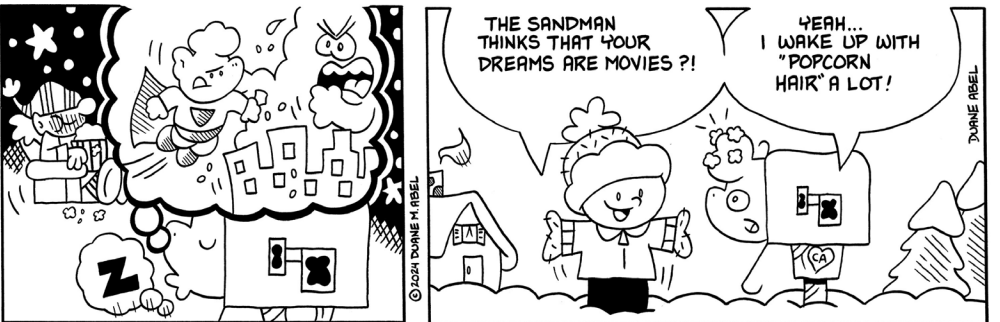
This is a great game for kids. My child loved it and played through it several times. Yesterday he wanted to know if I would reinstall it

so he could play it again, and he's almost 9 now. Chuchel has anger issues and gets extremely angry when his cherry is stolen, and there's an alien with a blaster ray that chases him around for a bit, but overall, there's very little violence.

Chuchel has won several awards, including IGF 2018: Excellence in Visual

Art Award; Anifilm 2018: Best Game for Children; CEEGA 2018: Best Visual Art; BIG Festival 2018: Best Art; BitSummit Kyoto 2018: Media Highlight Award; Google Play Best of 2019: Best Indie; and the International Mobile Gaming Awards 2019: Excellence in Visual Art and Design.

ZED by Duane Abel



Azle Library Programs & Events

All are welcome at Library Program & Events - no library card required. Some programs require free advanced registration. See each program description or flyer for details.

CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS

Homeschool Parent Meet and Greet
Friday, February 9th at 2:00 PM

Come learn about the library's resources that can benefit your homeschool experience. Plus, mingle with other homeschool parents to swap ideas. Free! An activity for children ages 5-12 years old will be provided. Registration is required to attend. Please call 817-752-2682 or visit the Library Information Desk to book your spot.

LEGO Club

Third Wednesday of every month at 4:30 PM

Legos are provided by the library for ages 4+ to build, create, and imagine! Complete a LEGO challenge using a challenge card or use your imagination and build something unique. Look for LEGO builds in the Children's Area the following week.

STORYTIME

Wednesdays at 10:30 AM for Tiny Tykes (Ages 1-2 years old)
Thursdays at 10:30 AM for Pre-school Pals (Ages 3-6 years old)

Join our new Children's Librarian, Miss Ava, for storytime! Each storytime aids in developing age appropriate early literacy skills for children. Storytime will feature stories, singing, dancing, rhymes, crafts, sensory bins, and interactive play to create a fun and educational time for young children and their caregivers.

TWEEN & TEEN PROGRAMS

Teen Gaming Night
Tuesday, February 13th 6:00 PM - 7:30 PM
Ages 11-17 only

Join our librarians for a gaming night with our new Nintendo Switches! Games include: Mario Kart 8 Deluxe, Mario Party Superstars, Super Smash Bros. Ultimate, and more! No registration required! *Note: Teens who are 11-13 years old will need an adult present in the library building during the program.

ADULT PROGRAMS

Cupid's Arrow Wall Hanging Craft
Tuesday, February 6th at 6:00 PM

Come celebrate the season of love by making a cute wall hanging craft to display for Valentine's Day! All supplies and instruction will be provided by the library. Registration is required to attend. To reserve your spot, please call 817-752-2682 or visit the Library Information Desk.

Homeschool Parent Meet and Greet
Friday, February 9th at 2:00 PM

Come learn about the library's resources that can benefit your homeschool experience. Plus, mingle with other homeschool parents to swap ideas. Free! An activity for children ages 5-12 years old will be provided. Registration is required to attend. Please call 817-752-2682 or visit the Library Information Desk to book your spot.

Gardening for Pollinators
Tuesday, February 27th at 6:30 PM
Presented by a Tarrant County Master Gardener

This program is brought to you by Tarrant Regional Water District and the City of Azle. Add life and color to your yard by creating a pollinator garden! Learn about the best plants to plant and features to install to attract butterflies, bees, and birds to your North Texas yard. Free to attend! No registration required!

Sudoku

FEBRUARY 1, 2024

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

Level: Advanced

Solution to last week's puzzle

JANUARY 25, 2024

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

WORD SCRAMBLE

Rearrange the letters to spell something pertaining to men's care.

R H T A E

--	--	--	--	--

Answer: Heart

CRYPTO FUN
Determine the code to reveal the answer!

Solve the code to discover words related to men's health. Each number corresponds to a letter. (Hint: 15 = E)

A. 26 4 23 10 6 11 21 8
Clue: Annual exam

B. 7 9 16 19 6 13 15
Clue: Occurs regularly

C. 15 14 15 7 11 6 10 15
Clue: Physical activity

D. 3 21 8 15
Clue: Man or boy

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Correctional Officers
Assistant Foodservice Manager
Asst. Maintenance Supervisor - Electrician

PLEASE CHECK THE WEBSITE FOR JOB QUALIFICATIONS.
 A New Correctional Officer Pay Increase will be as follows - Starting pay will be \$18.00 dollars per hour. After Six months' there will be a pay increase to \$19.00 per hour and at one year there will be another pay increase to \$20.00 per hour. Must have HS Diploma or equivalent, be able to pass a drug screen, have a clean background, and valid driver's license to be considered for a Correctional Officer.
Apply online at www.mtctrains.com or call 940-567-2272 and ask for the HR Department.
 Management & Training Corporation is an Equal Opportunity Employer: Minority/Female/Veteran/Disabled

007 Auctions

AUCTION

Decatur, Texas

Saturday February 3rd - 11 A.M.

Wise County Fairgrounds
Women's Building - 3101 S. FM 51
Viewing 8am Day of Auction

High End Collectibles and Very Desirable "Colt" and "Winchester" Firearms Including A Very Rare Antique **Deluxe 1873 "Winchester"** Rifle 44 Cal. A Very Rare Antique **1866 "Roper"** Revolving Shotgun 12 Gauge. A Very Rare Antique **1886 "Winchester"** Rifle 45-90 Cal. A Very Rare Antique **"Spencer"** Saddle Ring Carbine 52 Cal. A Rare Antique **"Colt"** Shotgun 12 Gauge. A Rare Antique **1873 "Winchester"** Saddle Ring Carbine 44 Cal. A Very Rare Antique **1892 "Winchester"** Saddle Ring Carbine 32 Cal. A Very Rare Antique **Highly Engraved "Colt"** Single Action Frontier Six Shooter with Carved Ivory Grips 44-40 Cal. A Rare Antique **"Colt" Bisley** Pistol 41 Cal. A Rare Antique **"Colt"** Single Action Pistol 45 Cal. A Rare Antique **1860 "Colt"** Army Revolver 44 Cal. A Fantastic Antique Burred Walnut **Cylinder Roll Desk Bookcase.** A Very Rare Antique Tiger Oak **"Macey"** Lawyer's Stack Bookcase. A Wonderful Antique Large **"Kalliope"** Metal Disc Music Box. An Amazing Very Large **"Frederic Remington"** Bronze Statue **"Mountain Man"** On Marble Base. An Antique **1930's "Mills"** Five Cent Slot Machine. Leaded Glass Lamps, Ruby & Cobalt Cut Crystal, Leaded Glass Windows, Signed Heavy Cut Crystal, Rare Antique Gold, Silver Coins and Currency Such as A **1850 \$1 Gold Coin.** Morgan And Peace Silver Dollars. Western Pictures, Locks, Spectacular Large Diamond Jewelry, Western Items, Native American Items and Jewelry. Cast Iron Banks, Antique Clocks and **Many More Items!!** Whether You're Seeking Antique, Not-So-Old, New, or Reproduction Items, We Have Something for Everyone! Announcements Made Day of Sale Supersedes All Other Advertisements. Terms: **Bring Cash. ALL I.D.'s Checked with "Veriff". New Customers Must pay with Cash or Credit Card With 4% Fee. Checks Only Accepted from Existing Customers!** 405-412-4183 - NO BUYER'S PREMIUM!!

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

039 Help Wanted

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FT PCA
 10p-6a pm shift. Looking for passionate and reliable caregivers for our Senior Living. Full benefits: Health, Life, Dental, PTO and 401k.
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Classifieds

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Lube Technician
Experience is preferred but will train the right candidate. Must have a valid TXDL, good driving record and a positive attitude! Candidate must be dependable with a great work ethic! Potential for advancement with promote from within opportunities!
Full-Time
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Decatur, TX 76234

Apply in person at:
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940-627-6362 | hr.info@klementford.com
Jodi Pettis, Executive Director

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Bryant Real Estate.

082 RV's for Rent
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084 Mobile Homes for Rent
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1525 PARTRIDGE CT.
2-1 \$745.MO. \$500 DEP.
1536 SWAN CT.
2-2 \$995.MO. \$800 DEP.
Gene Thompson & Associates
817-246-4646 gtax.com

085 Mobile Homes for Sale
Pelican Bay:
1513 Sheri Lane S. Mobile Home with lot Needs Work 3-2 1986, 16X76 Sunrizon 70K
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040 Home Improvement

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049 Masonry/Stonework

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Quality Family Business Since 1938
CALL Cliff Hall
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066 Roofing

Miles Roofing
• Insurance Claim Specialists;
• Free Estimates
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068 Storage
INNERSPACE STORAGE. Hwy 199, Springtown. Now renting all unit sizes, 24-hour access. 682-842-1414.

079 Welding

WDC WELD-DONE CONSTRUCTION LTD.
Metal Building Erectors
• Pre-engineered Weld-up
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1220 E. Hwy. 199 • Springtown
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www.weld-done.net

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1 bed/1 bath with bonus room, \$1025/mo all utilities paid. \$700 deposit. Contact AAA Properties, 817-598-0663

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We Get That Honey-Do List Done For You
\$75 PER HOUR (labor only on most jobs)
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052 Movers
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057 Pets/Livestock
-Will pay top dollar for grazing and hay leases. Call 940-389-1936.

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069 Sand/Gravel

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046 Looking to Buy
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081 Business/Commercial
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088 Rent Unfurnished

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Deadline: 1:00 PM FRIDAY

Classifieds



TEXAS STATEWIDE CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING NETWORK
TexSCAN Week of Jan. 28-Feb. 3, 2024

AUCTIONS
Emory Home Auction - Emory, TX: 269 Rs County Road 3346, 3BR 2.5BA 2,118+/-SF lake home on 0.74+/-AC w/attached 2-car garage. Open to the public 1-4 p.m., Sun., Jan. 28 & Feb. 11. Bid Online Feb. 19 - 21 at auctionnetwork.com. 800-801-8003, williamsauction.com/TXHomes.

Gilmer Home Auction - Gilmer, TX: 105 Oasis Street, 4BR 3BA 2,438+/-SF home on 0.41+/-AC. Open to the public 1-4 p.m. Sun., Feb. 11. Bid Online Feb. 19 - 21 at auctionnetwork.com. 800-801-8003, williamsauction.com/TXHomes.

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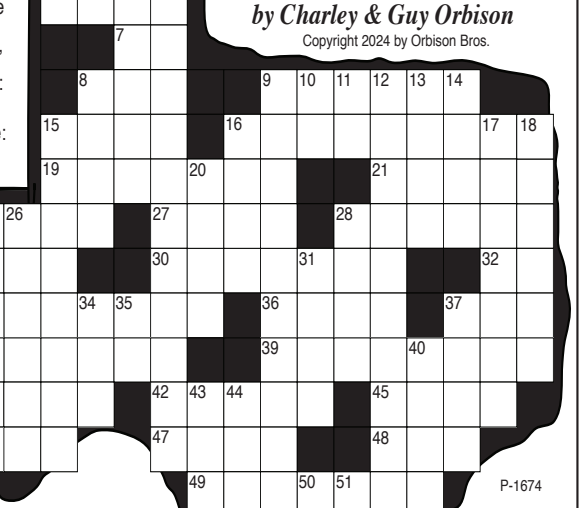
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ACROSS

- 1 get away!
5 lightweight helmet
6 TX George H.W. Bush alma mater
7 TX Jim Reeves hit: "I Losing You"
8 TX Roy Orbison sang Traveling Wilburys tune: "Not Alone ___ More"
9 long, heavy curtains
15 Houston Museum of Fine ___
16 "Red River Shootout" award (2 wds.)
19 AL West city with Houston & Arlington
21 deeply love
22 TXism: "happy as a kid sitting ___ ___ Claus' lap"
27 female sheep
28 valuable things
29 "painful ___ ___ in a tight shoe"
30 this Floridian Kathy beat TX Zina Garrison in 1984
32 first word in "Cowntown" (abbr.)
33 TXism: "he's ___ ___ his own mind" (ego)
36 TXism: "___ thru the wringer & hung out to dry" (tired)
37 I.M. ___ designed Dallas City Hall
38 area beyond suburbia
39 TX A.C. Greene or TX Larry L. King
41 bolo, e.g. (2 wds.)

TEXAS CROSSWORD
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- 42 suddenly bright stars
45 action needed for "4th and long" in football
46 fed. ID no.
47 what TX George Foreman did to practice
48 TX Stuart Hamblen song: "This ___ House"
49 Hispanic heritage book: "___ ___ Texas"
52 Rio Grande early name: "Rio ___ ___ Palmas"
11 money maker for the Azle News, e.g.
12 TXism: "two ___ ___" (alike)
13 TX Gene Tierney 1950 film: "Where the Sidewalk ___"
14 Mule ___ TX
15 TXism: "got as much chance as ___ ___ a packing plant"
16 ___ Rose, TX
17 annual event in Sunset Valley, TX
18 COVID advice: "___ ___ Treat it."
19 "___ ___ Beat it."
20 a carbon copy
22 ___ "Bum" Phillips
23 U.S. intell. agcy.
24 markdown at a Texas retailer
25 in 2023, ___ team won the World Series
26 "___ ___ no glory"
28 endings for lemon and lime drinks
31 "___ is more"
34 'tween N and NNE on a compass rose
35 boot camp sgt.
37 TXism: "___ overcoat" (coffin)
40 archaic term for Christmas
43 ___ piece is an opinion column
44 TX Jack who created the MPA film rating system
50 actor Warren in Texas-based film "Tough Enough"
51 jeans inventor (init.)

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