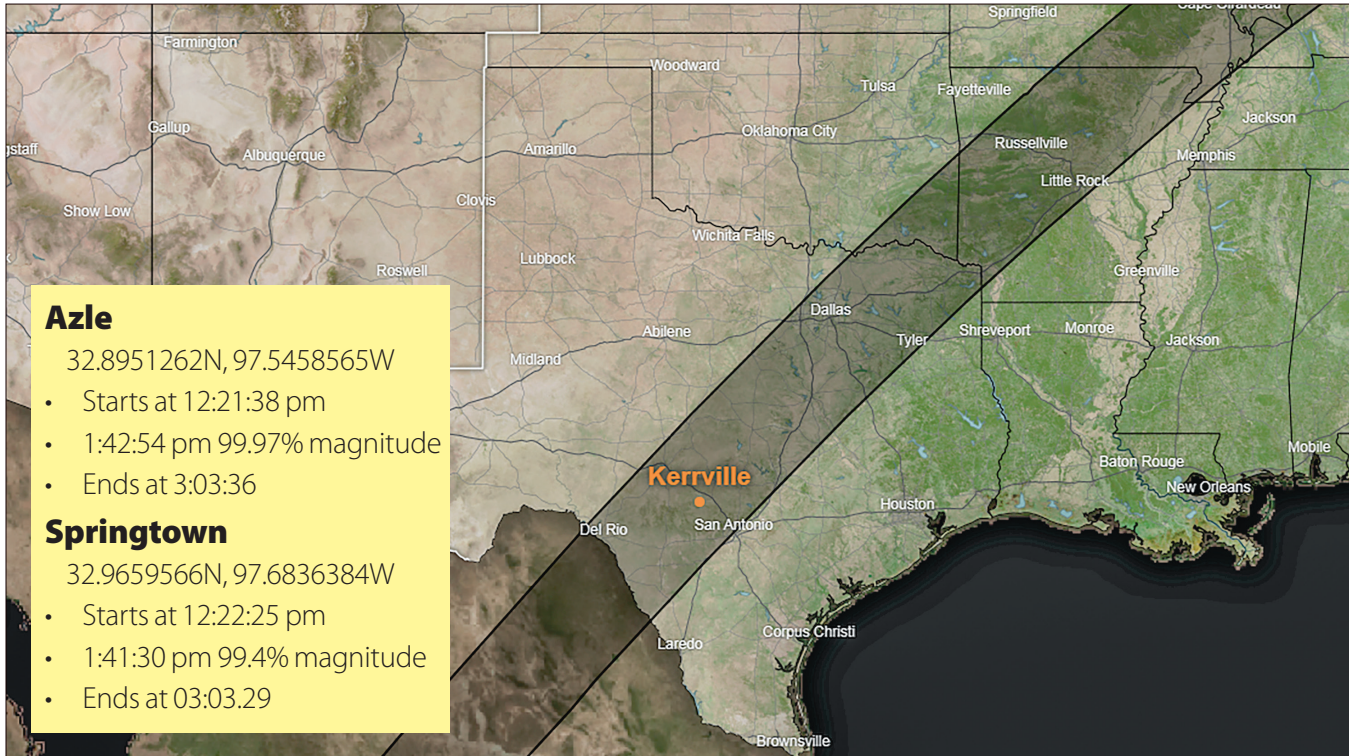


# THE TRI-COUNTY REPORTER

THE NEWS OF AZLE, SPRINGTOWN, AND SURROUNDING AREAS

THURSDAY, March 21, 2024 • \$1.00



**Azle**  
32.8951262N, 97.5458565W

- Starts at 12:21:38 pm
- 1:42:54 pm 99.97% magnitude
- Ends at 3:03:36

**Springtown**  
32.9659566N, 97.6836384W

- Starts at 12:22:25 pm
- 1:41:30 pm 99.4% magnitude
- Ends at 03:03.29

PHOTO COURTESY NASA'S ECLIPSE EXPLORER AT [HTTPS://ECLIPSE-EXPLORER.SMCE.NASA.GOV/](https://eclipse-explorer.smce.nasa.gov/)

## ECLIPSE 2024

### What is a Total Eclipse?

**ALEXANDRA MEELBUSCH**  
*Special to the Tri-County Reporter*

On Monday, April 8, a total solar eclipse will cross North America, passing over Mexico, the United States and Canada.

A total solar eclipse happens when the moon passes between the sun and Earth, completely blocking the face

of the sun.

According to NASA, "The sky will darken as if it were dawn or dusk."

For this celestial event, the longest period of darkness will occur for about two minutes, 40 seconds. The last time the U.S. saw a total eclipse was in 2017. The next

PLEASE SEE **ECLIPSE** | A9

## Oh, the places Porcupines can go

**MADelyn EDWARDS**  
*springtownreporter@tricountyreporter.com*

SPRINGTOWN — Unlike some of her peers, Springtown High School senior Stoli Cox doesn't want to leave high school, but come May, she'll have to.

Fortunately, Cox has taken control over her future path, thanks to guidance from career, college and military readiness counselor Aimee Burtnett who operates SHS' Go Center.

### SHS creates place for students to think about their futures with Go Center

Cox has planned for a career in elementary education. She wants to go to Weatherford College and get certified to teach, and then she wants to go back to school for a master's degree to be an assistant principal. While being an educator had always been Cox's goal, she recalled being confused

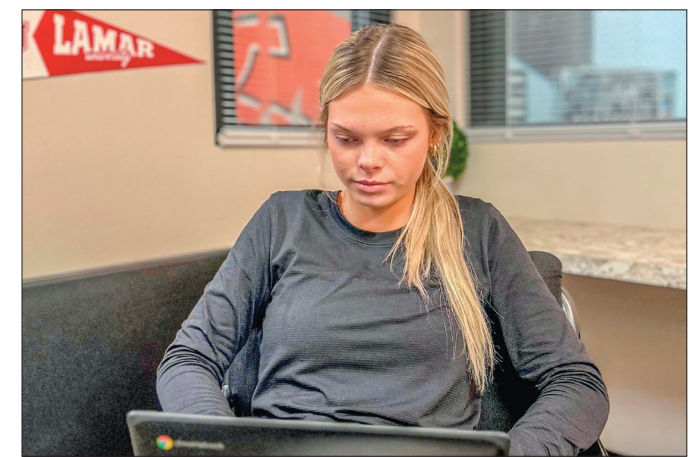
about her future when she went to talk with Burtnett. Cox said Burtnett found answers to her questions and even arranged for her to talk with a representative from Weatherford College's education program.

"She is a great human being and will listen to whatever you have to say, no matter

if it's school related," Cox said about Burtnett. "She also has a daughter who is an eighth grader, and so she understands us girls, and she understands how our brain works. . . . She's so on top of everything for us."

After she graduates from

PLEASE SEE **GO** | A4



**MADelyn EDWARDS** | TRI-COUNTY REPORTER

Springtown High School senior Stoli Cox wants to pursue a career in education and feels confident about her future thanks to the school's Go Center.



**ZACH FREEMAN** | TRI-COUNTY REPORTER

Advisor Neil Corbett and co-editor-in-chief Luke Petersen of The Sting Azle High School newspaper gave free copies to passersby at the event.

## Showcasing Azle greatness

### Azle ISD hosts annual open house event for parents and future students

**ZACH FREEMAN**  
*azlereporter@tricountyreporter.com*

AZLE — Azle ISD showed off its high school campus, new classrooms, clubs and everything the facility has to offer during its annual Showcase event March 7.

Parents and future students had a chance to check out renovations recently completed at the high school includ-

ing a brand-new science wing on the front of the building, a new welding shop space and an expanded and renovated cafeteria. Growing Career and Technical Education classes and clubs also presented on the resources and knowledge future students can utilize in their future careers.

SEE MORE **PHOTOS** | A16

## Springtown teen accused of assaulting minor with knife

**MADelyn EDWARDS**  
*springtownreporter@tricountyreporter.com*

SPRINGTOWN — Springtown police arrested a young man in connection with assault with a knife. Officers responded to a

fight between two teenagers in the town park on the afternoon of Feb. 26, according to Springtown Police Department's press release issued on Facebook. A 15-year-old, whose name was not released because of his

age, had two stab wounds, one in the area of his right ear and neck and another on his lower back. He was taken to a hospital in Fort Worth and was in a stable condition.

Police said 17-year-old Trevor Hettinger fled the

scene. An officer eventually detained Hettinger who was heading toward Springtown Elementary School.

"During this time, Springtown Elementary

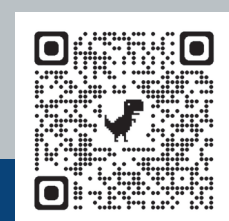
PLEASE SEE **ASSAULT** | A3

INSIDE:

### Springtown Chamber Banquet 2024



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VOLUME 1, NUMBER 42  
Local, zone(s) 2 sections, 34 pages

INSIDE  
News - A1 - A16 | Obituaries - A5-A6 | Diversions B1 - B5 | Classifieds B6 - B8



Jennifer Mello and Natasha Deramee are coordinating to make the fashion show a reality.

# 'Hot' couture?

ZACH FREEMAN

azlereporter@tricountyreporter.com

AZLE — Azle High School students are getting ready to strut their stuff and let their skills shine at an upcoming fashion show in collaboration with Future, Hope and Healing Center. Students picked out clothes and jewelry from the center's resale shop, Hope's Bazaar, Friday, Feb. 23. The show will take place Saturday, April 20, from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. in the Azle High School auditorium.

Virtually all aspects of the show will be student-directed. Azle High School's Family, Career and Community Leaders of America chapter will host the event and students from Natasha Deramee's fashion design classes will act as stylists, models, stage managers, choreographers, photographers and makeup and hair artists.

"Normally, when we do our other fashion shows, I kind of direct it, pick models and

## AHS FCCLA partners with Future, Hope and Healing Center for April 20 fashion show

all that, but with this one I really wanted the children to tap into their talents," Hope's Bazaar manager Jennifer Mello said.

All proceeds from the event are going to benefit Future, Hope and Healing Center, which is currently raising funds to eventually establish a shelter for victims of domestic violence. The FCCLA often engages in service projects to help the community and advisor Natasha Deramee thought FHHC would be a great partner for the program.

"I'm so excited the kids are getting to get out of the classroom and putting their skills and talents together for a fashion show," Deramee said.

FHHC's motto this year is "every house is a safe

house." For the fashion show, students are picking out casual wear, business wear and formal evening attire to represent all facets of day-to-day life. With the project, Deramee hopes to also teach her students how to prevent and recognize domestic violence.

Fashion industry professionals will be helping and advising students leading up to the event. Vickie Farley, who is on the FHHC fashion show committee, has a long history as a hair and makeup stylist. Amy Joe, a freelance stylist in Azle, has worked in the fashion industry as well and will similarly help students ahead of their catwalk debuts. While working and planning with students on what hairstyles they might like, Farley told

students about the history of hairstyling tools and gave fashion tips.

"As soon as I found out they were going to have them I begged them to let me go," Farley said. "I'm a retired hairstylist and I love it and I'm so excited."

The FCCLA plans to release a flyer for the event in the coming weeks. According to advisors, FCCLA events like these helps students build confidence and skills, while helping the community and giving students the chance to earn volunteer hours.

"I'm really excited for the show," junior Grace Justice said. "We're really passionate about this cause and using it as a way to express ourselves and our individuality. We're all really excited and everybody is coming up with unique ideas. I think it's a great thing to work for. I didn't even know Hope's Bazaar was a thing until this. I think it's great. It's bringing awareness to this."



Fashion design student Jesus Martinez, a sophomore, tries on outfits and accessories during the Hope's Bazaar excursion.



Junior Grace Justice spoke on her anticipation for the upcoming show.

# Let Him ARISE!

## HOLY WEEK WORSHIP

**MARCH 28**  
Maundy Thursday  
Service of Tenebrae  
**6:30 PM**

**MARCH 29**  
Good Friday Cantata  
"No Greater Love"  
**6:30 PM**

**MARCH 31**  
EASTER WORSHIP  
Celebrate Christ!  
**8:30 & 10:45 AM**

**EASTER SONRISE SERVICE**  
**7:00 AM**

**Join Us for Worship Every Sunday!**

**EASTER SUNDAY SCHOOL!**

**8:30 AM - BLENDED**  
**9:45 AM - EDUCATION**  
**10:45 AM - MODERN**

## Celebrate EASTER

with Ash Creek Baptist Church

**The Weeping Tree**  
an Easter Musical  
Saturday, March 23 - 7:00 pm  
Sunday, March 24 - 10:45 am

**Maundy Thursday**  
March 28 - 7:30pm

**Easter Egg Hunt**  
Saturday, March 30 - 10:00 am

**Easter Services**  
Sunday, March 31

8:15 am Traditional Service/Sanctuary  
9:30 am Bible Study for All Ages  
10:45 am Crossover Service/The Meeting Place  
10:45 am Traditional Service/Sanctuary

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# Friends come in all shapes and sizes

One of the true blessings in life is friendship. It is a relationship between two people and often, the underlying bond between the individuals is vague in definition. A friendship nourishes one's soul, can often rekindle memories of a different and better time, or help us to feel connected in what is all too often a world where we do not feel engaged. Friendship is a condition humans seek because it provides us with acceptance, recognition and the warmth of shared experiences.

An evaluation of our friendships tells us a lot about ourselves.

Grade school friends are generally our first relationships outside the family circle. Created on the playgrounds of youth, these relationships help us to ingratiate ourselves into a series of social norms and to pass through life's early challenges feeling supported. They



## 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.

helped us put into practice those virtues expounded by our parents about being fair, kind, sharing and forgiving. It was grade school friends who helped us to understand life in our own terms while facing whatever joys or tribulations might confront us.

When picking teams for a stickball game, friendship presented the challenge of selecting the best player for your team but to do so in a way as to artfully navigate the dilemma of failing to select a close friend because they were a poor hitter. Such a decision compelled the art of social diplomacy at a level not unlike what is utilized by ranking state department officials.

As we grew just slightly

older, our relationships evolved and the possibility of friendship with a member of the opposite sex became a possibility. Though previously looked on with disdain and contempt, it necessitated being able to recategorize girls as "human beings" instead of a species which must have come from another planet. It meant finding a common ground in which to talk and interact. I learned starting a friendship with a girl meant meeting her "halfway" and taking an interest in what she liked and learning to accept there were possibilities beyond sports and the usual things which were the heart of a young boy's life. It meant learning to accept my female

friend was different from me in many ways. Her interests were not necessarily sports, climbing a tree, or challenging each other about who could spit the furthest. It was learning to accept there was more in life than what my world had previously thought possible.

Later in life there are "activity" friends — so named because of the activity the two friends share. I have had hunting buddies, fishing buddies, going to the ball game buddies, poker buddies, lake buddies and who knows how many other kinds of buddies. While the two of us friends would engage about the other goings on in our lives, the friendship primarily revolved around an activity we participated in together. It was an activity which was the connecting force. These types of relationships can create wonderful memories, but unfortunately, usually end when participation in the underly-

ing activity stops.

There are also work friends, church friends, college friends and a host of other types of human relationships which are loosely categorized as friends. But no matter the shape or form of the connection, it is part of the thread which weaves our life into the tapestry it becomes. Sometimes positively and sometimes negatively, we are all a product of our friendships.

Our closest friendships, commonly referred to as "best friends," are often a combination of all the possibilities of friendship. They listen when a friend needs to talk. They speak out when a friend needs to be corrected. They support when there is doubt. The relationship may be a daily interaction, or it might be that the two friends do not speak for months, or even years, but the connection between them never disappears. It is a feeling

which is kindled in the very soul of the other and shared. It connects the two in such a way that no power on earth could pull it apart. These are the most cherished and treasured of relationships.

This week, stop and reflect on all your friends and how your lives are entwined with one another. Smile at the joys you have shared and the emotion you feel. It is those feelings and experiences which make you the person you have become. Give thanks to those who have endured your shortcomings, listened to your complaints and sorrows, and who have smiled and leapt in joy upon learning of your successes.

Friendship is truly one of the best parts of being a human being.

Thought for the day: "I would rather walk with a friend in the dark, than alone in the light." — Helen Keller

Until next time...I will keep ridin' the storm out!

# Why, Governor?

"Therefore, whatever you have said in the dark shall be heard in the light ..." Luke 12:3

This primary season, PACs flooded our mailboxes with junk, oversaturated the TV market with commercials, and ventured into the streaming realm to run false and misleading political advertisements. If you noticed, many of the PACs and even "nonprofits," such as "Texans United for a Conservative Majority," "Texas Family Project," "Texans for Fiscal Responsibility," "Make Liberty Win" and "Texas Gun Rights," along with the Voucher Lobby, spent all their ad time trashing Republican incumbents, without any commentary on the



## DISTRICT 60

By Glenn Rogers

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

opponent. While those ads never mentioned the names of challengers, those incumbents' challengers certainly benefited from the attack campaigns. Unfortunately, under current Texas law, the public is not privy to the financial details of these types of PACs or "dark money" support to political candidates.

While it is clear who they are against, it is hidden who they support, and that huge level of support never shows up on a candidate's public financial report.

Tim Dunn and Farris Wilks, almost exclusively, finance the most powerful PACs in Texas. Candidates who are supported by these PACs

run counter to representative government, as receiving Dunn/Wilks PAC support requires 100% compliance with their aims and 100% purity with their political doctrine.

Many of these supported fringe candidates are so toxic that the PACs must exploit these loopholes in campaign finance laws to buy elections.

A Dunn/Wilks funded political candidate will look you in the eye and say, "I don't take money from PACs." Where I am from, that's what we call "Lying like a rug."

This past session, I authored a bill that would have drastically increased transparency in Texas elections. HB 2629 was the most significant campaign transparency bill filed in the 88th legislative session. It required

certain persons or political organizations to report the candidate they support if there is a cost spent opposing another candidate in the same race.

This bill passed both chambers with flying colors. The record vote in the Senate was 31-0 and the Record vote in the House was 147-1. The only opposition was the disgraced and expelled, Dunn/Wilks-supported, Rep. Bryan Slaton.

Yet then, in the face of this overwhelming support, Gov. Greg Abbott vetoed the bill. With one swift stroke of his pen, he killed this vital, supermajority supported bill.

Why would the governor oppose PAC transparency and accountability? Has Abbott joined the ranks of

many other Dunn/Wilks-compliant state officials? How much "dark money" support has Abbott received? Did Abbott not want voters to know how much money was spent against those who stood up to the voucher lobby, supported public schools and defied the Dunn/Wilks attempt to privatize our public schools?

- It bears repeating, only two individuals opposed this much-needed campaign transparency bill: disgraced, expelled former State Rep. Bryan Slaton and Gov. Greg Abbott.

- Buying candidates and buying elections is too easy for billionaires.

- This is not the Texas way.
- Gov. Abbott owes Texas an explanation!

# God's blessing of Branson...

Hills are greening up, fiddlers are tuning up and visitors from around the globe are showing up as the entertainment mecca of Branson, Missouri, gears up for a record-breaking season in the beloved Ozarks.

It's a magical place known for musical excellence where God is honored — and where there are so many fiddlers it's difficult to predict whether "Cotton-Eyed Joe" or "The Devil Went Down to Georgia" gets more play.

Most of us can't get enough of either number, unflustered if the instruments go up in smoke as the music intensifies.

Such strains are anticipated, as are tears in the eyes of veterans, first responders, law enforcement officers, medical personnel and firefighters. They stand in response to thunderous roars



## THE IDLE AMERICAN

By Dr. Don Newbury

Dr. Don Newbury, longtime university president, writes weekly and speaks regularly throughout Texas. Contact: 817-447-3872. Email: newbury@speakerdoc.com.

of rafter-shaking thanks in the more than 100 venues at what has become what is arguably America's favorite family place. Some 11 million folks are expected to visit Branson by year's end, when Christmas shows attract masses.

I called my ancient Uncle Mort, letting him know that we had landed in Branson along with the spring-breakers, and that I was keeping count of the different types of string instruments that would include a gigantic harp. By week's end, though,

I admitted I hadn't seen a single lyre. "Well, there was at least one liar at every show you attended," Mort cackled.

The Pandemic greatly challenged Branson, but it wasn't a knock-out blow. Branson faithful held on tight, with most attractions surviving and once again thriving. Maybe it tightened the bonds of family and faith on both sides of the stage lights.

It's an understatement to say there's "something for everybody" in Branson. While this is indeed true, even more is coming. Two years from

now, they're opening a \$400 million, 320-room hotel with seven restaurants and an "immersive" water park.

We took careful notes of extremes during this visit. Specifically, we checked out places specializing in ice cream dishes. Two stood out among the dozen or so businesses offering dairy treats.

One place we'd never seen before is called "The Yard." It glistens. Also noticed in a tiny downtown location was "Boo Boo Baba's." It has a make-shift sign: "Root Beer Floats, \$1.99." We bought two.

"The Yard" is beyond upscale, capitalizing on all things bovine, including stuffed cows, calves and other animals, with milk shakes served in pint and quart jars for patrons with "hang-the-cost" attitudes.

"Hey, we're on vacation," someone said, ready to fork

over a \$20 bill for a treat that's both a culinary delight and a work of art.

A unique mood is established upon entry. A sign advises: "Live like somebody left the gate open."

The humongous desserts are indeed artfully assembled. They made me think of a favorite tie which always is a landing spot for food that misses my mouth. I don't know whether to frame it or eat it.

A fun scene at "The Yard" occurs when tykes, not yet kindergarten age, tug at their dads' pant legs, begging for one of those "big-uns." Several of the most exotic dishes would feed a scout troop.

I'll be "in and out" with many observations and suggestions concerning our trip in upcoming weeks, never claiming to be an authority

by any measure. You won't notice any reference to the many recognized golf courses in the area, simply because I don't know anything about the sport.

I agree with the guy who says too much time is spent on golf unless it is providing a livelihood, in which case, go for it.

A woman, as clueless about golf as I am, said it well. "I'm not even sure which end of the caddy to hold."

Alas, our recent trip ended too soon. We saw the blossoms appear on the Bradford pear and redbud trees but wished for additional blooms to come later.

We can dream, however, of the many wildflowers that soon will cover the mountainsides until fall and winter take over.

And we can hope for other visits up the way.

## ASSAULT

FROM PAGE A1

School personnel were notified of the ongoing incident, and any children who were outside were quickly escorted back into the school by staff for their safety," stated the press release.

Witnesses told police that Hettinger and the 15-year-old had agreed to fight at the park. The press release claims that Hettinger

stabbed the 15-year-old with a knife, but the younger teen overpowered Hettinger, took the knife and ran away to the area where he was found by police. Officers recovered the knife at the scene.

Hettinger, who resides in Springtown, was taken to a hospital in Weatherford before being escorted to Parker County Jail. He faces charges of aggravated assault with a deadly weapon, a second-degree felony, and evading arrest or detention, a Class A misdemeanor.

According to the Texas Penal Code, a second-degree felony can be punishable by imprisonment of two to 20 years and a fine of up to \$10,000. The consequences for a Class A misdemeanor are a fine of no more than \$4,000 and/or no more than one year of jail time.

Hettinger's bond has been set at \$17,000, and he is still in jail as of March 18.

Hettinger declined an interview with The Tri-County Reporter.

# Democrats' County Convention set for Saturday, March 23

## SUBMITTED ITEM

The Parker County Democratic Party will hold its 2024 county convention Saturday, March 23, to elect delegates to the state convention in June and to consider resolutions addressing party issues and values. The meeting will be held at the Emerging Technologies and Workforce

Building on the Weatherford College campus. Registration begins at 9 a.m. and business starts at 9:30 a.m. Pre-registration is encouraged by going online to [txdem.co/Convention-Preregistration](https://txdem.co/Convention-Preregistration).

County Chairperson Kay Parr encourages all local Democrats and others who are interested in the party to attend. The county con-

vention is the first step in the presidential nominating process that leads to the Democratic National Convention in August in Chicago. For information on the Parker County Democratic Party go to <https://parkercountydemocrats.org/>.

## GO

FROM PAGE A1

SHS, Cox knows she can still contact Burtnett, and that is comforting to her as she advances to a whole new world of higher education.

"Jumping in from a senior in high school to a freshman in college is just such a big, scary thing to do, and just to have someone who is back at home who understands you more than your college professors understand you or your college counselors understand you, it will help so much," Cox said.

The Go Center was established in the fall as a place for students to visit with Burtnett and prepare for their futures.

"The Go Center is for every single student in the building," SHS Principal Melissa Hutchison said. "The reason why we call it a Go Center essentially is because when they come into this center, they're going to be talking about anything that they can go in their future. So, it's not just for college."

Burtnett's job has a wide scope. She helps students figure out what they want to do in the future, coordinates field trips for them, hosts speakers to talk with the kids and oversees college testing preparations at the Go Center.

"It's trying to figure out what classes can you be in now that also can be part of the goal that you're trying to achieve when you graduate," Hutchison said. "We have three other counselors who advise our students on their graduation plan. Ms. Burtnett comes in and actually helps connect that graduation plan to post graduation essentially."

The goal is for students to graduate from SHS ready for either college, a career or military enlistment and for them to pursue a fulfilling path, Burtnett said.

"More than likely, you're going to have to work, so you might as well do something that you want to do and you enjoy and love doing instead of something that you have to do," Burtnett said about what she says to students. "It makes a huge difference. Not that every day the job is going to be great, and life is going to be perfect. But I tell them it's so much more enjoyable when you're going to do something that you love and enjoy and you're passionate about."

Burtnett also takes some of the workload off the other academic advisers who work with over 1,100 students on meeting graduation requirements as well as providing social and emotional support when needed.

"I pushed for not only the Go Center, but specifically for the CCMR counselor, because I knew that was going to take a little bit off the plate of the other counselors, but also let Ms. Burtnett really own a very, very important part of our job, which is to make

sure students feel empowered to chase their dreams and their aspirations and their goals at the same time," Hutchison said.

One of the most rewarding parts of Burtnett's job has been watching students progress from being closed-minded about post-graduation to exploring their options and then getting excited about their future. When kids are accepted to college, trade school or the military, Burtnett takes their picture, noting their accomplishment, and hangs it on the wall for all to see.

"I think sometimes it's just making them believe they can do it," she said.

Burtnett hopes to find pathways even for students who struggle in their classes.

"I tell kids all the time they have a uniqueness," she said. "There's something that they're very good at, and it may not be testing, and it may not be an academic course, but they are talented, and they have a passion for something. It doesn't matter where you are in your class or your GPA. There are still possibilities for you."

Hutchison wants kids to understand they have options. In career and technical education, there are some pathways where they can earn college credit, a certification and work experience.

"Don't say you can't go to college; you have the skill set. It's just what type of schooling," she said about her messaging to students. "I want kids to feel like they always have the opportunity, but I also want them to feel like if they want to go directly into the career workforce that they can."

### WHAT HIGH SCHOOLERS SAY ABOUT GO CENTER

It didn't take long for students to find out about the new center. In addition to spreading the word internally, Hutchison said the Go Center was intentionally placed near the cafeteria to attract students. Burtnett even offered candy as an extra incentive to stop by. Now, the center is often buzzing with students.

"If you don't shut the door, these kids are in here all the time, which is a great problem," Hutchison said.

Senior Wesley Shaw said Burtnett's office by the cafeteria is more accessible than the previous space she had as an academic counselor, and he enjoys the atmosphere of the Go Center.

"It's just so peaceful in here, just so quiet that you can actually think and get to talking, and she can help you do whatever you need," Shaw said.

Junior Mariah Price also prefers the Go Center to Burtnett's previous office, particularly the fact that she can take certain tests in the Go Center.

"I'm not a good test-taker in a big group," Price said. "Now when I go to take my (Texas Success Initiative Assessment) again, I'm going to take it in here, and (Burtnett) will provide private

testing, pretty much, so you can just test by yourself and not have to worry about it because I tend to rush when I'm around other people."

Students interviewed by The Tri-County Reporter said the Go Center (Burtnett, specifically) has been helpful to them overall. Senior Allison Ford said Burtnett has shown that she is also supportive of the high schoolers outside of career planning, such as by cheering them on at sports events.

"She's very involved in everyone's life, knows what we all want to do with our future," Ford said. "She'll ask us where we're at with that, which is nice. And if we have any questions, she always has the answer."

Burtnett said she tries to treat the students like she would her own kids.

"I want them to feel like they're always welcome and that there's no question they can't ask or that can't be answered," she said.

Shaw remembers being introduced to Burtnett as a counselor when he transitioned into high school. He credited Burtnett with encouraging him to take dual credit courses that have helped him get closer to his goal of becoming an engineer.

"Without her, I don't think I would be getting all these college credits I have now, which would be really costly without it," he said.

Having the Go Center available to freshmen and sophomores may give them the opportunity to plan ahead instead of waiting for their senior years, Ford said.

"I wasn't really familiar with applying to colleges or scholarships or any of that kind of stuff, and I feel like (I) definitely would have enjoyed being able to plan that ahead of time as a sophomore or as a freshman," Ford said. "I think upcoming freshmen will really enjoy being able to ask her questions and not wait until their senior year like I know a lot of us did because I know I did. I didn't know. I literally applied for college in her room because I had never really known how to do it."

Burtnett said she wants the younger students to utilize the Go Center so that they'll have an idea of what they want to do after graduation going into their senior years.

"It's not too young as a freshman to start talking to these recruiters, to start kind of navigating and figuring out, 'Where would I like to go or what is it that I'd like to do?'" she said.

Senior Madison Maynard, who initially knew Burtnett as an academic adviser, changed her mind about what career path she wanted to pursue a few times before finally settling on the goal of becoming a traveling labor and delivery nurse. Maynard said Burtnett was part of this process of picking the best choice for her.

"She's just assured me to follow what I'm most interested in," Maynard said.



MADELYN EDWARDS | TRI-COUNTY REPORTER

Aimee Burtnett is the career, college and military readiness counselor at Springtown High School.

Applying for college or for financial aid can be intimidating, especially for students who would be the first in their families to pursue higher education. Burtnett hopes to make the process doable by breaking it up into steps and giving kids the guidance and confidence they need to get through the applications and phone calls.

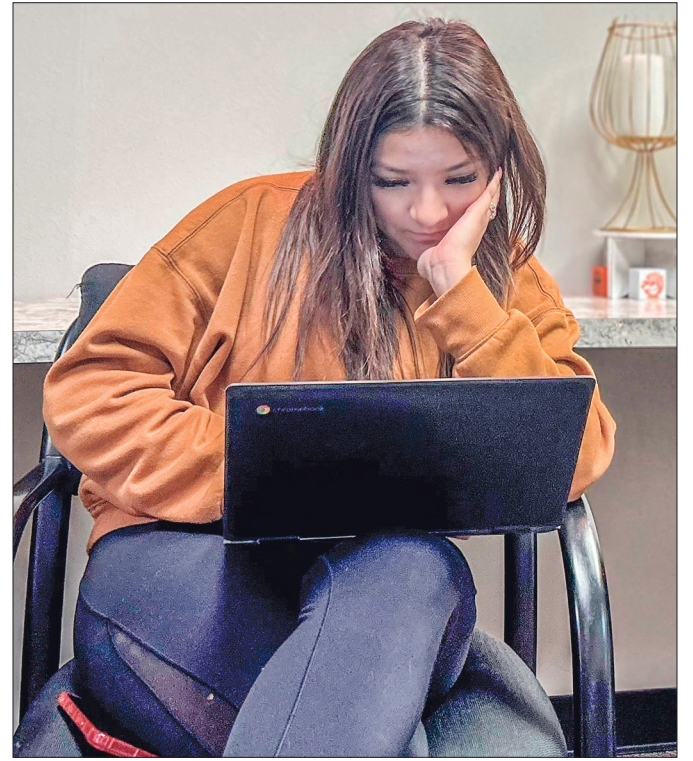
"My biggest goal is I never want a kid to say, 'Forget this. This is too complicated. This is too frustrating,'" Burtnett said.

Price is looking into a career in forensics and wants to graduate from high school with her associate degree. She has depended on Burtnett for guidance since she is the first in her family to go to college and has to focus on finding affordable options.

"Everything became real this year because I know I'm going to be able to do it and everything now," Price said. "Before, it was like worrying about if I'm going to be able to make it or not, and obviously, that's not something you want to think about because what if you don't make it? But Ms. Burtnett helped make sure that it's all set in stone. As long as I keep it going, I don't have to worry about it."

Navigating the cost of higher education can also be challenging for students, and Burtnett aims to help demystify the financial aid and loan process as well as narrow down options that are more affordable. She also tries to instill responsibility and a degree of self-sufficiency in the students.

"When they go to college, they got to be an advocate for themselves, or trade school or whatever it is," she said. "They'll always be able to contact me, and I tell them that. I will always be here for any of them. But they've got to learn because when you go to those places, they don't want to talk to mom or dad. They want to visit with that student. So, I think sometimes it's getting some of



Springtown High School senior Adriana Lopez works among other students at the Go Center.



Springtown High School senior Madison Maynard wants to become a labor and delivery nurse after she graduates.

them to get the courage to realize, 'I can handle this. I can do this. I can call and ask this question.'"

Shaw called the Go Center a "game changer" and said he was able to find out which

college to go to, what his major should be and work on getting scholarships through the center.

"Ms. Burtnett is probably the best college counselor that I'll ever have," he said.

## You're Invited to Celebrate Easter

Meals at 6:15 PM and Worship at 7:00 PM

**March 25-29, 2024**

### *A Theology of Suffering*

Sunday: Suffering is a Gift (Phillipians 1:29-30)  
Monday: Suffering is a Separation (Psalms 88:1-18)  
Tuesday: Suffering is a Choice (Hebrews 11:24-26)  
Wednesday: Suffering is a Partnership (2 Timothy 1:8; 2:3)  
Thursday: Suffering is a Better Way (1 Peter 3:17-18)  
Friday: Suffering is a Resolve (Daniel 3:17-18)  
Sunday: Suffering is a Death (Luke 22:15; 24:46; Acts 1:3; 17:3)

Suffering is not something that people generally volunteer for, but it is the very means by which Jesus saves. Listen to what the Bible says about Christ suffering. "Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead," (Luke 24:46 ESV). Also, the prophets told us that Christ would suffer "But what gold foretold by the mouth of all the prophets, that his Christ would suffer, he thus fulfilled." (Acts 3:18 ESV). The Bible tells us Jesus' suffering was necessary, "It was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead" (Acts 17:3a ESV), because the "The wages of sin is death," (Rom. 6:23), and death is what you have earned. Payment must be made for sin's wage. Either you pay in hell or Christ pays in your place. The significance of Christ suffering, being buried, and being raised from the dead, was to satisfy your debt, grant you forgiveness and give you eternal life. Those who repent and believe in Christ will unite with a local church and serve him faithfully. **What about you?**

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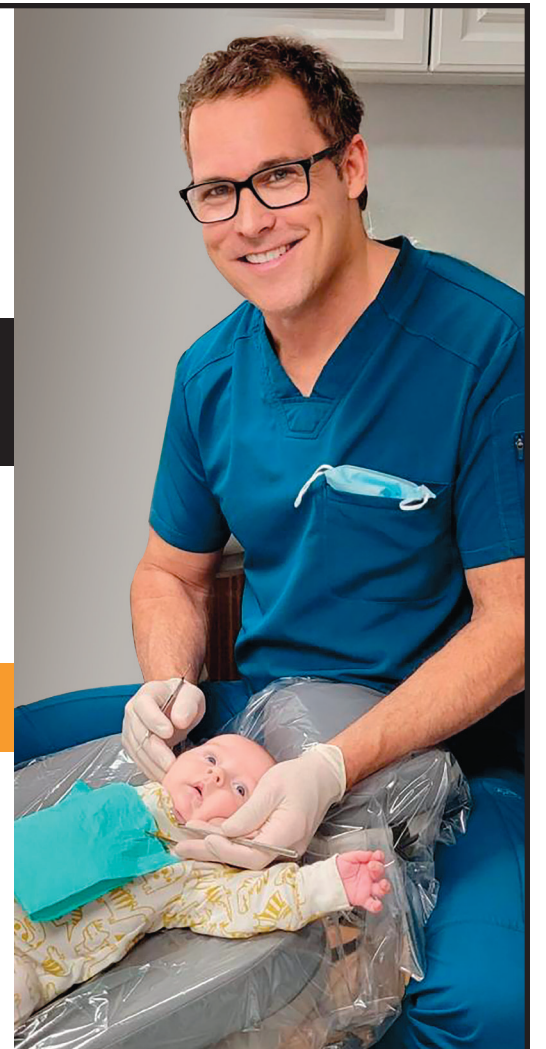
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OBITUARIES

Charles Donnell 1937-2024

A memorial service for Charles Lamar Donnell will be Saturday, March 16, at noon, at Crossroads Baptist Church, 6003 FM 1886 in Azle.

Charles was born May 9, 1937, in Graham, to William E. and Kate Spann Donnell. He departed this life March 6, 2024, at his home in Parker County.

He graduated from Azle High School in 1955. He was a longtime member of Crossroads Baptist Church and a lifetime member of Parker County Sportsman Club. He enjoyed Christian fellowship, woodworking, and trading at flea markets. Nothing made him happier than finding a good bargain.

Charles began his working career at Fort Worth National Bank in the late 1950s. He later moved on to work for Sears, Roebuck & Co. as a tool salesman where he met his wife, Barbara Clower. They were married in 1971. Charles later went to work for

Stevenson Service Company. He never completely retired as he continued reinventing himself as a wooden toy maker and the person who fixed whatever needed fixing.

He was preceded in death by his parents; his wife, Barbara; his sisters Katherine Webb, Geraldine Raper, Pauline Owens and Naomi Hearrell Stewart.

He is survived by his sons and daughters-in-law: Scott and Robin Donnell and Ryan and Amelia Donnell; his step-grandchildren: Wesley Frasier, Lara Maalouli and Ashton Jo Self; his brother, Tom Donnell (Regina); his sisters, Marian Vandergriff and Jane Stevenson (Gene); several nieces and nephews; and many friends. He will be remembered as a good Christian man and a valued family member.

The Tri-County Reporter, Thursday March 21, 2024

Nancy Holly 1940-2024

Nancy Jo (Bettis) Holly, loving wife, mother, grandmother and great-grandmother, departed this earthly life to heaven Wednesday, March 13, 2024.

A graveside service was at 10 a.m., Wednesday, March 20, at Azleland Memorial Park under the direction of Biggers Funeral Home, 6100 Azle Avenue, Lake Worth, Texas 76135.

Nancy was born June 11, 1940, in Fort Worth, to Austin and Josephine Bettis. She deeply loved her family and enjoyed any time they could spend together. She also took great delight in reading, sewing, cross-stitching and visiting with neighbors and friends.

Nancy was preceded in death by her husband of almost 63 years, Delmar.

She is survived by her children, Sharon Dignum and husband, Stanley, Gary Holly



and wife, Karen, Karen Kidd and husband, Mark, and CD Holly and wife, Tammy; grandchildren, Heather, Chance, Brian, Trevor, Tyler, Hayley and Hannah; great-grandchildren, Madison, Kanyon, Karson and Carter; her best friend of nearly 80 years, Yvonne Palmer.

The Tri-County Reporter, Thursday March 21, 2024

James Gilley 1934-2024

James Aaron Gilley, age 89, passed from his earthly home to his eternal home Saturday, March 16, 2024, while surrounded by his family.

A funeral service was at 10 a.m. Wednesday, March 20, at First Baptist Church of Castle Hills, 401 Beverly Road, Azle, where he was a longstanding member.

Visitation was from 9:30-10 a.m., at the church.

In lieu of flowers, the family kindly requests that donations be made in James' name to the Castle Hills Mission House. This gesture would be deeply appreciated and align with his cherished values.

James was born June 26, 1934, in Azle, Henry and Agnes Gilley. He remained a lifelong resident of the area.

James was a proud graduate of Azle High School, class of 1954. He dedicated over four decades of service to AMPI-Associated Milk Producer Inc., from which he eventually retired. After retirement, James found joy in serving at Castle Hills Mission House.

James had a passion for sports, which was evident in the way he enthusiastically supported Azle Athletics alongside his loved ones, R.M. Gunn and David Gilley. His devotion to his teams — the Texas Rangers, Dallas Cowboys and Dallas Mavericks — only grew stronger over time as he relished every victory they achieved.

He is preceded in death by his parents, Henry and Agnes Gilley; in-laws, Albert and Ida Mae Richardson; twin children, Danny Ray and Carla Kay Gilley; and seven



siblings, Gail Bryan Gilley, Margie (Dobbie) Tinsley, Marvin Gilley, Richard Gilley, David Gilley, Juanita Hinkle Coffee and Darlene Bernard; brothers-in-law, R.M. Gunn and Leon Richardson; and devoted friend, Larry Admire.

Survivors include his loving wife of 65 years, Patsy; his four children, Kent Gilley and wife, Cindy, Shelley Gilley Unger and husband, Scott, Chad Gilley and wife Bobbie, and Christi Gilley; and brother, Ronnie Gilley and wife, Sandi. James cherished his 11 grandchildren: Zach, Craig, Jonathan, Kristen, Rachel, Bridgette, Kaylee, Jaci, Caitlin, Renner and Austin; special friends, Waymon Smithers and Marc Markum; and a host of extended family members and friends.

He would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to Springtown Park Rehab for their exceptional compassion and care.

James will be greatly missed by all his family and friends.

The Tri-County Reporter, Thursday March 21, 2024

Cody Ross 1956-2024

Cody Joe Ross, born July 1, 1956, in Gorman Texas, passed away peacefully in his sleep at home, Saturday, March 9, 2024.

The memorial service will be held at Church of Christ located at 316 Church St. in Springtown, Saturday, March 23, at 11 a.m.

Cody moved to Springtown at a young age and went on to graduate from Springtown High School with the class of 1975. He enjoyed time with friends working rodeos, hunting and fishing.

He is preceded in death by sister Darena Sue Ross; father, Joe H. Ross; and brother Rodney Ross.

Cody is survived by his wife of 31 years, Darlene Ross; stepdaughter Jennifer and husband Tim; stepdaughter Tiffany and husband Chris; mother Nelda Sue Ross; brother Bruce Ross



and wife Kelly; brother Mike Ross and wife Tena; sister-in-law Catherine Ross; several grandchildren, great-grandchildren, nieces and nephews.

The Tri-County Reporter, Thursday March 21, 2024

Thomas Fulton 1959-2024

Thomas William Fulton, 64, passed away March 10, 2024. He was a Navy veteran and will be greatly missed by those who knew him.

Thomas leaves behind his wife, Teresa Fulton; daughter Betty Fulton; son Eric Fulton; stepdaughter Autumn Rodriguez; and stepson Matthew Dahl.

The Tri-County Reporter, Thursday March 21, 2024



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Bethel Missionary BAPTIST CHURCH 408 South Ash St. Springtown, TX 76082 All are welcome 2nd Peter 3:18 But grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen. Sunday School 9:45 AM Monday Worship 10:45 AM Evening Worship 6:30 PM Wednesday Bible Study 7:00 PM

... ATTEND THE CHURCH OF YOUR CHOICE THIS SUNDAY

Table listing church services for various churches including The Abbey Church, Ash Creek Baptist Church, Azle First Assembly of God, Crossroads Baptist Church, Cornerstone Community Church, Gracepointe Church, Holy Trinity Catholic Church, Hope Lutheran Church Elca, Legacy Church, Solid Rock Bible Church, Silver Creek Baptist Church, and The Word@Lakeside Church of God.

A church alive is worth the drive! For more information or rates on listing your church, call Jessica at 817-270-3340

# OBITUARIES

## Raymond Smith 1938-2024

Raymond William Smith, 85, passed away Wednesday, March 13, 2024, in Springtown, surrounded by his family. Funeral services were held Monday, March 18 at 1 p.m. in Alexander's Midway Funeral Home's Chapel and burial immediately followed at Springtown Cemetery.

Raymond was born Oct. 31, 1938, in Fort Worth to Leonard Lee Smith and Emma Tabitha (Bell) Smith Travis.

He was raised in Fort Worth and later served in the Army National Guard from 1955 to 1960.

Raymond married the love of his life, Wilma (Kennedy) Smith in 1956. They moved to Springtown in 1965 where they raised their four girls. He was a truck driver for over 41 years, retiring from Grief Brothers Trucking, and was a member of Legacy Church for many years.

Raymond enjoyed fishing and spending time with his family.

Raymond was preceded in death by his parents; brothers, Glin Smith and Grady Smith; sisters, Lillie Rivers and Lena May Smith; daughters, Cynthia Harnsberger



and Trina Gray; and grandson, Chase Gray.

He is survived by his loving and devoted wife of 67 years, Wilma Smith; brother, Calvin Smith and wife, Ann; sister, Doris Veneen and husband, Charlie; daughters, Kay Wilson and husband, Kenny, Melinda Black and husband, Rodney; 14 grandchildren and 25 great-grandchildren; numerous nieces, nephews and extended family. Raymond was a kind and loving husband, father and grandfather. He will be dearly missed by all those who knew and loved him.

*The Tri-County Reporter,  
Thursday March 21, 2024*

## Michael Lane 1946-2024

Michael Eugene Lane, 77, passed away Wednesday, March 6, 2024, in Weatherford.

He was born Nov. 12, 1946, in Fort Worth to Robert Ray and Dortha Ellen (Ford) Lane.

He grew up in the Fort Worth area and graduated from Tech High in 1964. He married the love of his life, Sandra, in 1965. Michael worked as a grain elevator operator supervisor, retiring after 36 years of service. He enjoyed all things outdoors and loved spending time with his family.

Michael was preceded in death by his parents; sisters, Sue Watson and Barbara Lane; and daughter, Deanna Lynn Lane.

Michael is survived by his loving wife of 60 years, Sandra Lane; sons, Michael Ray Lane and Kyle Ray Lane;



sister, Patricia Raegle; grandchildren, Hazel, Scarlett, Luke, Madison, DJ, Summer, Brandon, and Taylor; and numerous nieces, nephews, extended family and friends.

He will be dearly missed by all who knew and loved him.

*The Tri-County Reporter,  
Thursday March 21, 2024*

*To place an obituary*  
Call 817-270-3340  
or email us at:  
[info@tricityreporter.com](mailto:info@tricityreporter.com)

# Groundwater

## Native Plant Society to hear update on the state of groundwater in North Texas

### STAFF REPORT

*Native Plant Society Cross Timbers Chapter*

Water must be on just about everyone's mind these days after last summer's blistering drought.

Do we have enough, where is it coming from, how can we save and protect the resources we have?

For a status update about groundwater in North Texas, geoscientist Jill Garcia of the Upper Trinity Groundwater Conservation District will speak at the March 26 meeting of the Cross Timbers Chapter of the Native Plant Society in Weatherford.

The groundwater district covers Parker, Wise, Hood and Montague counties. It is headquartered in Springtown. Its wide-ranging mission covers groundwater (the Paluxy and Upper Trinity aquifers) including protecting wells, preventing waste and promoting conservation. The district also does water quality testing and well monitoring, and it has a state-of-the-art water

education trailer outfitted to demonstrate the water cycle that it takes to schools at no charge (teachers, take note!).

Garcia coordinates outreach events, educational initiatives and grant programs at the groundwater district's Springtown office. She holds a bachelor's degree in geology from Tarleton State University and a master's degree in geosciences with a concentration in sedimentology and stratigraphy from Texas Tech University.

The meeting will be Tuesday, March 26 at the Mount Pleasant School, 213 Raymond George Way in Weatherford. The business meeting begins at 6 p.m. followed by the program at 6:30 p.m. The public is always welcome and light refreshments will be available.

The goal of the Native Plant Society of Texas is to protect the environment through conservation, research and use of native plants. See more information at [www.npsot.org](http://www.npsot.org).

# Spotlight on BUSINESS

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# Hopwood's Tax Service & More

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Turn your taxes over to Hopwood's. Donna Hopwood and her daughter, Debi Matthews, operate Hopwood's Tax Service & More. They offer a unique blend of skills that can help you relax at tax time. They're ready to put their knowledge and experience to work for you right now, while there's plenty of time to meet that dreaded deadline.

Donna has years of experience handling tax issues for truckers, farmers, and other small businesses, with particular insight into the unique issues and deductions that apply to these fields.

Regardless of where you live, anyone needing a tax pro can find one online at [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov). There, you will find Donna and Debi with other tax pros and their levels of education with taxes.

People can now check on tax pros at the website and click the side option to see which agents in the area are educated, and others, by zip code.

So: Go to [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov) and, on the left, click on choosing your tax professional, then search the directory link by zip code.

Donna and Debi have been doing tax work together in Springtown for 18 years. Together, the Hopwood family can help individuals, business owners, farm operations, and others maximize their profits and make the most of their tax situation. They offer preparation of quarterly tax, W2's, and 1099 preparation – they even offer a public fax and notary service.

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Donna Hopwood and her daughter Debi Matthews are here to help you in their 18th tax season in Springtown. Call Hopwood's Tax Service & More at 817-220-7200.

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Hopwood's Tax Service & More has moved to its new location at 109 E 1st St. in Springtown, on the Square.

They're open from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday and 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturdays. Call 817-220-7200 and set up an appointment when it's convenient for you including after hours.

The Hopwoods make tax time "relax time" for you. Rest easy knowing that these friendly folks are here all year if you happen to need them! So call Hopwood's Tax Service today and find out how easy tax season can be!

Photo outline: Donna Hopwood and her daughter Debi Matthews are here to help you in their 18th tax season in Springtown. Call Hopwood's Tax Service & More at 817-220-7200.

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# Circus coming to Springtown March 25

## STAFF REPORTS

SPRINGTOWN — A big top circus is scheduled to be in Springtown for two shows Monday, March 25.

C&M Circus showtimes will be at 5 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. at Springtown Intermediate School on Pojo Road, according to the circus' event page on Facebook. The shows are expected to include big cats, tight rope performances, aerialists, foot juggling,

horses and daredevils.

Tickets can be purchased online at <https://cm-circus.square.site> until 10 p.m. March 24 or from the following local businesses: Springtown Flower Shop, Highland Furniture, The Community Bank, Pinnacle Bank and Miriam Hair Salon. Tickets bought before the show are discounted and cost \$13 for adults and \$8 for children ages 2-12 or

adults ages 65 and older.

Tickets purchased from the box office the day of the circus will cost \$16 for adults and \$9 for children and seniors.

Some of the proceeds from the circus will benefit the Springtown Area Chamber of Commerce, which is the event's sponsor.

More information is available at [cmcircus.com](http://cmcircus.com) online.



JIM STEVENS | TRI-COUNTY REPORTER

Christian and Zefra Loyal perform with horses when the C&M Circus came to Springtown in March 2022.

## HOMETOWN

# Happenings

- **AZLE MEMORIAL LIBRARY** will celebrate its 15th anniversary with an open house and reception from 1-3 p.m. Saturday, March 23 at the library, 333 W. Main St. There will be refreshments, door prizes and activities for all ages.
- **AZLE HIGH SCHOOL'S** Marching Green Pride will host a Ties and Tiaras Daddy-Daughter Dance, 6-8 p.m. Saturday, March 23 at Azle High School. Tickets are \$20 per couple when purchased in advance, \$25 at the door. Each additional daughter is \$5. This event benefits the MGP Indoor Drumline and Winter Guard.
- **EASTER EGG HUNT** March 31 at First Baptist Lakeside, 8801 Jacksboro Hwy. Hunts will be staggered and broken down by age group in the Preschool and Children's areas at the church. Arrive 15 minutes early. Only one hunt per child. Preschool area: 9:15 PreK-K; 9:45 age 2-3; 10:15 Babies and Toddlers; Children's Area: 9:15 5th-6th grade; 9:45 3rd-4th grade; 10:15 1st-2nd grade.
- **AZLE AREA CHAMBER** of Commerce Events: AACoC will host its annual Clay Shoot 11:30 a.m.-6 p.m. Friday, March 29 at Fossil Pointe Sporting Grounds, 7282 Farm-to-Market Road 51 in Decatur. The chamber's April luncheon will begin at 11:30 a.m. April 2 at 404 Main Place in Azle. Business After Hours is slated for 4:30-6:30 p.m. April 25 at NBT Financial, 405 Commerce St., Azle.
- **SPRINGTOWN AREA CHAMBER** of Commerce Events: SACoC will host its annual Clay Shoot at 11 a.m. Friday, April 12 at Fossil Pointe Sporting Grounds. The April chamber luncheon will be 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. April 25 at the Springtown Senior Center, 1070 N. Main St., Springtown.
- **AZLE AREA MINISTERIAL** Alliance will partner with Carter BloodCare to host a blood drive from 3:30-6:30 p.m. April 1 at First Methodist Church of Azle, 200 Church St. Sign up at the following link: [https://ww3.greatpartners.org/donor/schedules/drive\\_schedule/145185](https://ww3.greatpartners.org/donor/schedules/drive_schedule/145185).
- **LIGHTHOUSE HARBOR CHURCH**, 1960 Long Circle, Azle, will host a Grief Support Group from 4:30-5:30 p.m. Mondays from April 1 through May 6. There is no cost to attend but registration is required. Contact Kaitlin Tollison for more information at [kaitlin.tollison@psalm46counseling.com](mailto:kaitlin.tollison@psalm46counseling.com).
- **NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER** is celebrated the first Thursday of May each year. Azle Area Ministerial Alliance will host a free event from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. May 2 at The Orchard Event Venue and Retreat, 1421 Northeast Parkway, Azle. Hilltop Family Church, 1227 Old Cottondale Road, Springtown, will host a breakfast for National Day of Prayer at 7 a.m.
- **CALLING ALL BOOK LOVERS!** Springtown Public Library will host a spring book sale from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, May 4 at the annex building across from Springtown City Hall. Don't forget to bring your own bag for the \$5 Fill-a-Bag sale!

To submit your Hometown Happenings, email information to [jessica@tricityreporter.com](mailto:jessica@tricityreporter.com).

## LEGAL PUBLIC NOTICES

### Notice of Public Sale

Public boat sale to satisfy storage lien. Up for bids LEGALLY BELONGING TO: Sharon Hoppe & Brian Everett TX #3491BY 1970 49' Burns Houseboat SER# B202104234323 The Sale Will Be Held on April 13th 2024 1:00 PM, West Bay Marina, 6925 Liberty School Tap Rd. Azle, Tx 76020 (817)444-1622. Terms are cash/cashier's check at time of sale. Public boat sale to satisfy storage lien. Up for bids LEGALLY BELONGING TO: Thomas Fauver & Randy Ausbern TX #2863EB 2006 18' Ebftide Ser# ETC00376K505 the Sale Will Be Held on April 13th 2024 1:00 PM, West Bay Marina, 6925 Liberty School Tap Rd. Azle, Tx 76020 (817)444-1622. Terms are cash/cashier's check at time of sale. Public boat sale to satisfy storage lien. Up for bids LEGALLY BELONGING TO: Chisty Hussain & Robert Self TX # 3471AU 1960 36' Chris Craft SER #CXA360189H The Sale Will Be Held on April 13th 2024 1:00 PM, West Bay Marina, 6925 Liberty School Tap Rd. Azle, Tx 76020 (817)444-1622. Terms are cash/cashier's check at time of sale.

# Extra! Extra!

## Read All About It!

**IN-COUNTY**

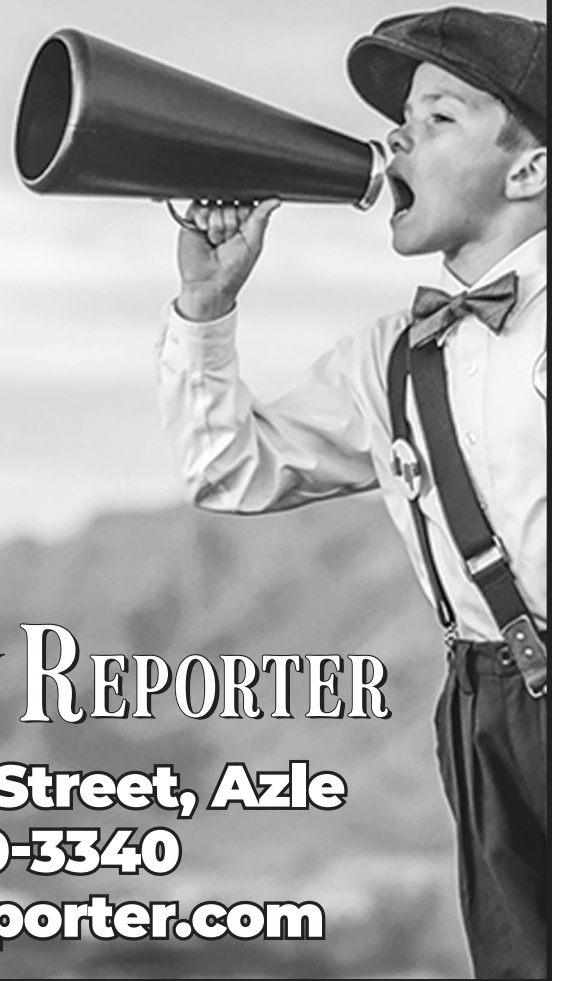
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# TRI-COUNTY REPORTER

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<p><b>Texas Health</b> Harris Methodist Hospital AZLE</p> <p><b>Volunteers Needed</b> <a href="http://TexasHealth.org/Volunteer/Our-Process">TexasHealth.org/Volunteer/Our-Process</a></p> <p><b>RAINBOW INN GIFT SHOP</b> Inside Hospital 108 Denver Trail Azle 817-444-8651</p> <p><b>ATTIC RERUNS</b> NOW OPEN! FRI 9-4 SAT 9-1 714 SE Pkwy Azle 817-270-3690</p>	<p><b>Good N.E.W.S.</b> Living at Home Block Nurse Program</p> <p><b>Volunteer Caregiver Training Classes</b> Classes open to public at no charge</p> <p><b>Our Volunteers Make a Difference!</b></p> <p>Caregiver Volunteer Meeting 1st Monday of Each Month at 6pm <b>817-444-2300</b> 412 Commerce St.</p>	<p><b>Rotary Club of Azle</b></p> <p><b>MEETS AT NOON THURSDAY</b> 412 Commerce St. (across from Azle Post Office)</p>	<p><b>The Finish Line</b></p> <p>Addiction wants to destroy you &amp; everyone around you.</p> <p><b>STOP</b></p> <p>With Jesus there is Victory over addiction.</p> <p><b>GET BACK IN THE RACE!</b></p> <p>Meetings held every Friday from 7:30pm-9:30pm at The Church at Azle 1801 S. Stewart • Azle • 817-401-8513 <a href="http://www.ourfinishline.com">www.ourfinishline.com</a></p>	<p><b>Faced with a DRINKING Problem?</b> Perhaps Alcoholics Anonymous can HELP.</p> <p>Daily meetings at Noon &amp; 6:30 pm Sunday at 3 pm</p> <p>229 S. Stewart St. • Azle <b>817-332-3533</b></p>	<p><b>Azle Lion's Club</b></p> <p>Meets 2nd TUESDAY 6:30 PM 412 Commerce, Azle <a href="http://e-clubhouse.org/sites/azle_tk/">e-clubhouse.org/sites/azle_tk/</a> Jamie Westbrook - president <b>817-550-7625</b></p>
<p><b>AZLE AREA MINISTERIAL ALLIANCE</b> UNITED IN CHRIST</p> <p>Christian Leaders partnering together with one voice to impact our culture for Christ. We celebrate unity amidst diversity as we pastor our community.</p> <p>Luncheon meetings 11:45 a.m. - 1 p.m. 2nd Tues of each month; location varies.</p> <p>See <a href="http://www.azlema.com">www.azlema.com</a> or email <a href="mailto:director@azlema.com">director@azlema.com</a> for additional information.</p> <p><b>817-200-4611</b></p>	<p>Let's build community together.</p> <p><b>SERVOLUTION NETWORK</b></p> <p>LET'S START A COMMUNITY WIDE REVOLUTION THROUGH SERVING.</p> <p>Love God. Love People. Love Your City. Dream Center open 9-3 M-F</p> <p>11698 FM730 S. Azle FOR QUESTIONS CALL: <b>833-4WE-SERV</b> <a href="http://servolutionnetwork.com">servolutionnetwork.com</a></p>	<p><b>CLUB or ORGANIZATION meeting?</b></p> <p><b>Only \$125</b> for 52 weeks of advertising</p> <p><b>Call for details: 817-270-3340</b></p>	<p><b>Optimist Club of Azle</b></p> <p>Meets every <b>FRIDAY at 6:45 AM</b> Moe's Country Kitchen 316 W. Main, Azle</p>	<p><b>Azle Lodge No. 601</b></p> <p><b>Floor School or Work 7:30 PM THURSDAY NIGHT</b></p> <p>Kenny Patrick - Worshipful Master Chris Akers - Secretary Clint Hall - Treasurer</p>	<p><b>EAGLE MOUNTAIN PREGNANCY HELP CENTER</b></p> <p>10328 Jacksboro Hwy Fort Worth TX 76135 817-237-1819 <a href="http://www.emphc.org">www.emphc.org</a> Tues 9 - 3 PM • Thurs 12-6 PM <i>SE HABLA ESPAÑOL</i></p>



MADELYN EDWARDS | TRI-COUNTY REPORTER

Stella Barnard and Preslie Collins pet a pair of alpacas, provided by Wise Alpaca Farm, at last year's Springtown Hop & Shop event.

# Springtown's Hop & Shop event coming March 23

**MADELYN EDWARDS**  
springtownreporter@tricountyreporter.com

SPRINGTOWN — The city of Springtown's annual Easter event is scheduled to take place Saturday. The Hop & Shop will take place from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. March 23 on the Springtown Square and will feature vendors, including for food, as well as photo opportunities with the Easter Bunny and a kids' coloring contest. Additionally, four Easter egg hunts will take place at Springtown Park near the Newby Pavilion behind Wells Fargo. The first egg hunt will be at 11:30 a.m. for ba-

bies who are 2 years old or younger, then 11:50 a.m. for toddlers ages 3-4, 12:10 p.m. for children ages 5-7 and finally, 12:30 p.m. for kids 8 years old and older. The "shop" part of the Hop & Shop involves a game in which participants are tasked with collecting stamps from the following places starting March 18: Springtown Flower Shop, Pojo Coffee Shoppe, Alvin Ord's Sandwich Shop, Miriam Salon, Springtown Garden Center, Hilltop Family Church, AV Ranch Western Wear, Market 76082, Parker County Beef Company, Springtown Area Chamber

of Commerce, City of Springtown Animal Control, Springtown Pharmacy, Highland Furniture, Springtown Public Library, the Open Range Kettle Corn food truck, The Corn Fed Club and Senshi Sushi & Grill. Those who get a stamp from each of the 17 businesses can turn in their stamp card at 1 p.m. March 23 at the Tabernacle and be entered in a raffle drawing for prizes. Stamp cards can be picked up at the participating businesses and Springtown City Hall. For more information about the event, contact city hall at 817-220-4834.



**Springtown Area Chamber of Commerce would like to thank the following businesses and individuals for their contribution to the Chamber 2024 Chamber Gala!**



**Special Thanks To:**

- Covered Bridge - Ricky & Chantal Davenhaver, Owners**
- Leonardo Event Group - Brooklynn Hatton**
- Springtown Flower Shop - Corn Fed Catering**
- Brookshires - NRS Feed Store**
- Springtown Independent School District**

## Section 00 11 16 INVITATION TO BID

The City of Springtown is soliciting proposals for the construction of the following project:

### Water Supply and Treatment Design for Water Treatment Plant Capacity Improvements

Sealed proposals must be delivered to:

Physical Address:

**The City of Springtown City Hall, 102 East Second St., Springtown, Texas 76082**

Mailing Address:

**The City of Springtown, P.O. Box 444 Springtown, TX 76082**

Proposals shall be received no later than April 11, 2024 at 2:00 PM. The proposals will be publicly opened and read aloud at this time and place. Bids received after this time will be returned unopened. Address proposals to **David Miller, City Administrator**.

Contract Documents and geotechnical report may be examined free of charge at the following addresses:

Engineer	Owner
Westwood Professional Services, Inc.	City of Springtown
7557 Rambler Road Suite 1400	102 Easy Second Street
Dallas, TX 75231	Springtown, TX 76082
Clint A. Bissett, P.E.	David Miller, City Administrator

Advertisement and bid phase information for the Project can be found at the following web site: <https://cityofspringtown.com/live/city-services/bid-invitations/>

Contract Documents may downloaded or viewed free of charge at this web site. It is the downloader's responsibility to determine that a complete set of documents, as defined in the Instructions to Bidders are received. Printed copies of the Contract Documents may be purchased at the website for the cost of printing. The cost for printed Contract Documents is not refunded.

This web site will be updated periodically with addenda, planholders lists, bid tabulations, additional reports or other information relevant to bidding the Project.

### **A non-mandatory pre-bid conference for the project will be held on:**

**Date: March 27, 2024 Time: 2:00 PM**  
**Location: City of Springtown City Hall**

Direct questions regarding distribution of Contract Documents for this project to Westwood. Direct questions related to the design of the project to:

Project Manager
Clint A. Bissett, PE
972-235-3031
Clint.bissett@westwoodps.com

This project consists of design improvements of the Surface Water Treatment Plant, which includes three (3) new pumps, one (1) new Trident Unit, 240 LF of 8" backwash supply line, 90 LF of 10" backwash supply line, and upgrades to the electrical equipment and controls.

Bidders must submit a cashier's check, certified check, or acceptable bidder's bond with their proposal as a guarantee that the Bidder will enter into a contract for the project with the Owner within 15 days of Notice of Award of the contract. The security must be payable to Owner in the amount of 5 percent of the bid submitted. Contractor must execute the contract, bonds and certificates of insurance on the forms provided in the Contract Documents.

Contractors for this Project must pay no less than the prevailing wage rates for the area established by the Owner and included in the contract documents.

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

Performance, Payment, and Maintenance Bonds are required.

The Owner reserves the right to adopt the most advantageous interpretation of the bids submitted in the case of ambiguity or lack of clearness in stating proposal prices, to reject any or all bids, and/or waive formalities. Bids may not be withdrawn within 90 days from date on which bids are opened.

This contract is contingent upon release of funds from the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB). Any contract or contracts awarded under this Request for Proposals are expected to be funded in part by a loan or grant from the TWDB. Neither the State of Texas nor any of its departments, agencies or employees is or will be a party to this Invitation to Bid or any resulting contract.

Equal Opportunity in Employment — All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, handicap or national origin. Offerors are required to comply with the President's Executive Order No. 11246, as amended by Executive Order 11375, and as supplemented in department of Labor regulations 41 CFR Part 60.



# Fort Worth Botanic Garden to host solar eclipse viewing

## FWBG and museum to host April 8 eclipse events

### STAFF REPORTS

Fort Worth — The Fort Worth Botanic Garden and the Fort Worth Museum of Science and History are partnering for a once-in-a-lifetime solar eclipse experience. Both venues will offer eclipse viewing areas and educational activities for guests April 8 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Free activity stations will be located outside both the garden and the museum, while guests may also purchase general admission tickets at either venue to take part in additional activities. Paying FWBG and FWMSH members will receive reciprocal free admission and free solar eclipse glasses at each location.

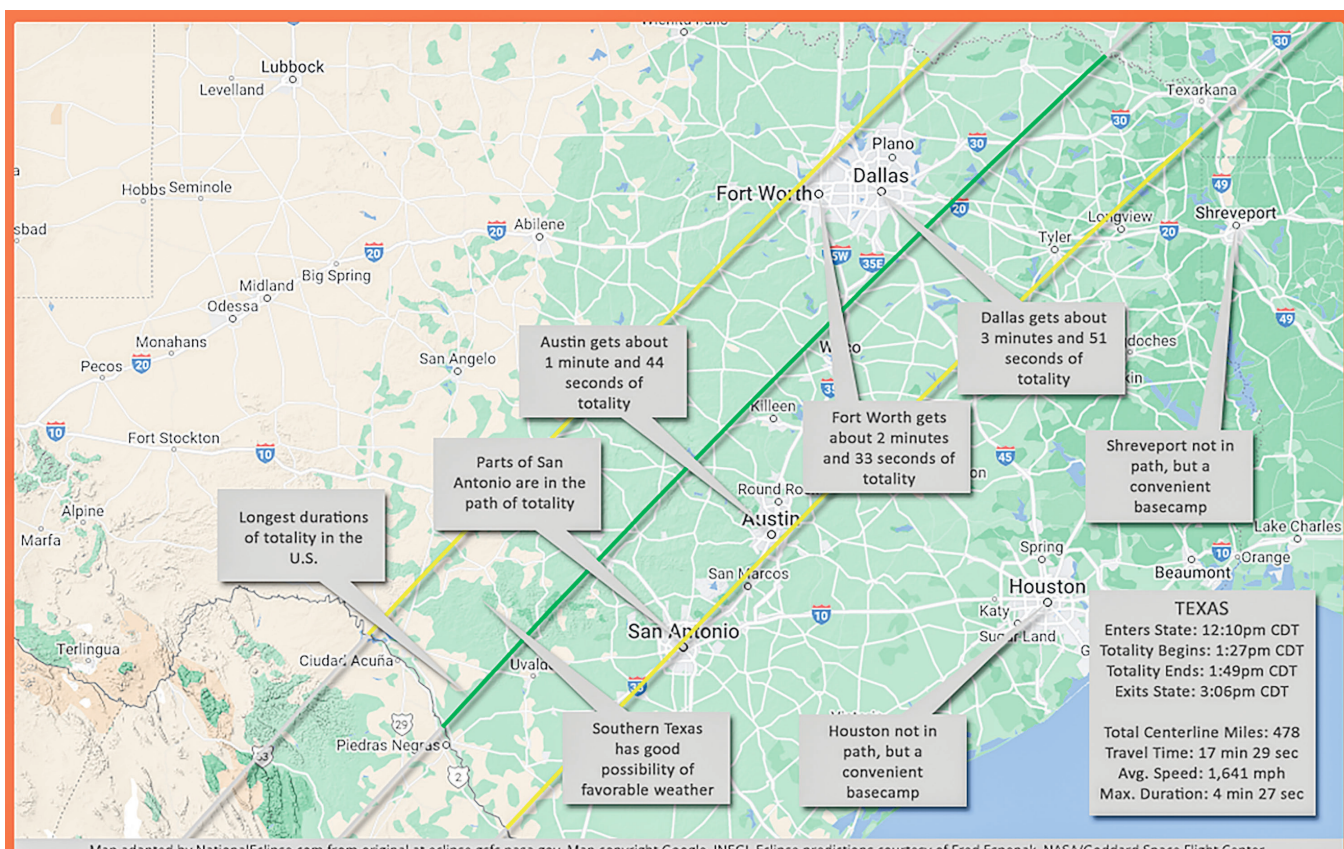
"People in Fort Worth will talk about where they were during this eclipse for years to come," said Patrick Newman, president and CEO of the Fort Worth Botanic Garden. "The garden is thrilled to have a backdrop for this monumental experience. The Botanical Research Institute of Texas, the research and conservation branch of the garden, will also carry out key research into how solar eclipses affect plants and wildlife."

Guests who choose to view the eclipse from inside the garden will be able to gather

at the expansive North and South Vistas, which offer unobstructed views of the sky. Prime eclipse viewing will also take place on the museum's front lawn. Blankets and folding chairs will be allowed. To view the eclipse, non-members will bring solar eclipse glasses or purchase them for \$3 at either venue. Both venues encourage guests to follow NASA eclipse safety guidelines during the events.

Some of the garden's activities will include "Sun Song Bingo," pinhole viewer construction, community science with members of FWBG's research team and shadow tracing. Lighthouse for the Blind of Fort Worth will have special activities available at the botanic garden for visually impaired guests. The museum will have staff from the Noble Planetarium sharing information about the eclipse and will feature a performance from the U.S. Navy Band Brass Quintet before and after the moment of totality. Guests are invited to build a pinhole eclipse viewer, create a sun print, make an astronaut souvenir, participate in "Sunshine Shenanigans," explore the eclipse with chalk art and more.

"The Fort Worth Museum of



The April 8 eclipse's path of totality.

Science and History is thrilled to invite the community to witness the awe-inspiring beauty of a total solar eclipse. Nature's grandeur is on full display, and we are honored to be part of this rare cosmic event," said museum President Regina Faden, Ph.D. "We are excited to share the spirit of exploration and discovery that defines our museum with everyone in Fort Worth and beyond."

A solar eclipse occurs when the moon crosses directly between the Earth and the sun, blocking some or all the sun's light. Solar eclipses happen on Earth two to five times a year, and total solar eclipses happen on average every 18

months. Despite the worldwide frequency of eclipses, Fort Worth has not seen one since July 29, 1878. Total solar eclipses only recur in one given place within the span of 360 to 410 years. Fort Worth will be in the path of totality, the point of the eclipse where the moon fully covers the sun to produce total darkness, for

two-and-a-half minutes starting at 1:41 p.m. Both the Fort Worth Botanic Garden and the Fort Worth Museum of Science and History are official NSTA and SSI Solar Eclipse Partners. The museum's work is supported by the Simons Foundation and is part of its 'In the Path of Totality' initiative.

## ECLIPSE

FROM PAGE A1

total solar eclipse visible from the U.S. will occur Aug. 12, 2045.

Exactly how the sun, moon and Earth align determines what kind of eclipse we see.

With a total eclipse, the moon moves directly in front of the sun and barely covers the solar disk. This allows observers in the center of the moon's shadow to briefly see the sun's outer atmosphere, the corona, which is too dim to see when the bright solar disk is not covered.

The shadow that the moon casts has two main parts, which are the darker inner shadow called the umbra, and a fainter outer shadow called the penumbra. Within the umbra, the sun's light is completely blocked. In the penumbra, the sun's light is only partially blocked.

To see a total solar eclipse, an observer must be within the umbra. Observers in the penumbra will witness a partial eclipse, with only part of the sun covered by the moon. Those outside the moon's

shadow will see no eclipse at all.

As the shadow extends away from the moon, the umbra narrows or gets smaller. By the time it reaches Earth, the umbra covers a relatively small area on our planet compared to the penumbra. That means the area that experiences a total eclipse is much smaller than the area that experiences a partial eclipse. A typical umbral path may be less than 50 miles wide, while the penumbral zone can span a thousand miles or more.

Because Earth is continuously rotating, and the moon is constantly moving in its orbit, the moon's shadow will travel across Earth's surface, tracing a path. This is called the eclipse path. Within this area is a smaller path traced by the umbra, called the path of totality. The rapid movement of the moon in its orbit causes the shadow of the moon to sweep across the face of Earth in just four to five hours. At any location along the path of totality, the total phase of a solar eclipse may last only a few minutes, or even less.

For further information, visit [science.nasa.gov](http://science.nasa.gov).

## GARDEN PATCH

# Watch the eclipse enchant gardens

### PHYLIS WEBSTER

Parker County Master Gardeners

As the moon passes between the Earth and the sun during a total solar eclipse, such as the one that will occur April 8, it casts its shadow over the land. During these rare, awe-inspiring events, gardens take on a surreal, enchanting appearance much like moonlit landscapes. The familiar suddenly becomes unrecognizable!

As the sky darkens, an eerie twilight dramatically affects how plants are viewed. For example, when the moon passes the sun, the quality of light changes, with shadows becoming sharper and deeper. Pale flowers and foliage contrast sharply against darker tones. Some colors look otherworldly.

During a solar eclipse when the moon blocks the sun, small areas of light shine through the gaps between leaves or other objects. These crescent-shaped

projections appear on surfaces, such as sidewalks, walls and plant foliage. The effect is captivating. Viewing the light projections, rather than looking directly at the eclipse, is one safe way to avoid eye damage while experiencing the phenomenon.

In addition to affecting light quality, solar eclipses can cause temperatures to cool slightly while the sun is blocked. A slight breeze or calming may occur. These changes often affect animal behavior. Insects quiet. Birds stop singing. Wildlife act confused or restless. Pets may seek shelter. Some plants, especially those that are sensitive to light, respond to an eclipse by closing their flowers. This reaction to changing light heightens the sense that one's garden has been enchanted.

The quality of light also determines the personality of a moonlit garden. In general, the moon casts a gentle glow

that illuminates flowers and foliage in soft, silvery light. Shadows create patterns on plants that move with a breeze. Darkness heightens the senses, which allows visitors to moonlit gardens to better appreciate the rustle of leaves and the chorus of insects and frogs. Sweet floral scents are more pronounced, which is why many moonlit gardens are planted with flowers that release their fragrance at night.

A moonlit garden is meant to be enjoyed from dusk to dawn, while the eclipse garden is briefly witnessed. In the eerie eclipse light, white flowers glow and silvery or textured foliage contrasts against darker scenery. The human eye sees warm colors, such as red, become gray to black tones. Shades of green and blue become more vibrant.

If planting for the 2024 eclipse or a moonlit garden, add flowering plants with white or pastel blooms, such

as periwinkle, moonflower, white mistflower, Blackfoot daisy, angel's trumpet (datura) and sweet evening primrose. Add silver or gray foliage plants, such as Texas sage (cenizo) and Russian sage. Bright red flowers, such as those produced by Texas star hibiscus will look hauntingly beautiful by moonlight or at twilight during an eclipse. Pale blue flowers, such as Gregg's mistflower and mealy blue sage, light up the garden in near-dark. Tip: Include plants that attract moths or other night-loving wildlife.

Pull up a lawn chair, bring your solar glasses and prepare to be enchanted! For answers to your horticulture questions, please call the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension, Parker County at 817-598-6168. You can find more information online by visiting <https://agrilifeextension.tamu.edu/counties/parker-county/>.

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**LEGAL NOTICE**  
 Application has been made with the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission for a wine and malt beverage retail dealers on premise permit (BG) by Lakeworth Inc. dba First Choice Food Mart, to be located at 8825 Jacksboro Highway, Lakeside, Tarrant, Texas. Officers of said corporation are Mohammad Jiwani Pres/Sec.

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# How will animals behave during the total solar eclipse?

**KAYLEE DUSANG**

Special to the Tri-County Reporter

While a total solar eclipse is an exciting experience for humans, many scientists and members of the public are preparing to capture how animals will react to the rare event.

During previous eclipses, some viewers have reported that unusual animal and insect behavior occurs once the moon passes over the sun, including claims that crickets begin to chirp, bees return to their hives and birds fall silent. Although there is only a handful of research on the topic, a study published in the journal "Animals" found that approximately 75% of observed species at a zoo in South Carolina exhibited surprising behaviors during the Great American Eclipse in 2017.

Professor Adam Hartstone-Rose at North Carolina State University, who led the study, said his team observed that many animals, including a troop of gorillas, started to engage in their nighttime routines.

"As totality set in, they started going toward their nighttime enclosure where they get their meal before they go to bed," Hartstone-Rose said. As daylight resumed, he adds that the gorillas came back out of their enclosure.

Other animals had strange

reactions to the eclipse, such as Siamang gibbons, a species of ape, who made unusual calls to each other and Galapagos tortoises who started breeding. Giraffes also galloped in what seemed like "pacing behavior" caused by stress or anxiety.

In April, Hartstone-Rose and his team will travel to the Fort Worth Zoo to learn if their research is consistent with their findings in 2017. For this study, they are enlisting help from the public by asking participants to observe animals not only at their local zoos, but also wildlife out in nature, farm animals and pets. Known as the Solar Eclipse Safari project, willing participants can submit their observations via phone, tablet or data collection sheets located on the project's website.

"We are also really interested in data that's collected, not just on the path of totality, but also in any place in North America, because one of the questions we have is — we're building an idea that some animals have a reaction to an eclipse," Hartstone-Rose said. "We're building an idea of how different animals react to an eclipse, but we're hoping to gather enough data to be able to say what amount of eclipse is necessary to cause a behavioral change."

Other citizen science projects include NASA's Eclipse Soundscapes, which aims to

collect sounds and sensory observations from the public to find how an eclipse might affect various ecosystems.

"Eclipses have always presented scientists with unique opportunities to learn about our solar system," MaryKay Severino, co-lead of the Eclipse Soundscapes Project, said in a press release. "The Eclipse Soundscapes Project is not only an opportunity for NASA to gather a large amount of scientific data, it's an opportunity for our participants to learn about the eclipse in a multi-sensory manner."

Both projects stem from a study in the 1930s that used public observations to reveal how an eclipse might affect wildlife.

With areas throughout Central and North Texas expected to experience several minutes of totality, many regional wildlife reserves and zoos plan to do their own observations on how animals in their parks will respond to the total eclipse.

Avery Elander, a spokesperson for the Fort Worth Zoo, said the zoo will be open to the public April 8. Visitors are also invited to submit their observations to Hartstone-Rose's research team.

"We expect that if changes in behavior are observed, they will likely be animals behaving like they typically would at dawn or dusk such as nest building, change in

vocalizations, increased activity/feeding, or moving toward their overnight barns," Elander said.

Director of the Cameron Park Zoo in Waco, Brendan Wiley, said they plan to closely watch the behavior of the elephants and orangutans.

"Both of those species are incredibly intelligent and perceptive, so we are naturally curious to see how they react," Wiley said.

Wiley adds that the zoo has a group of 200-300 wild black vultures that visit the facility during the day but depart once evening approaches.

"(We're) curious to see if they make an early departure," he said.

Jake Mayhew, the ranch manager for Buena Vista Wildlife Safari in Evant, said the ranch intends to conduct some visual observations of its animals.

"Most animals are fairly based on how the sun comes up — sun phases and moon phases and things like that because that's how they feed," Mayhew said. "And they're not used to sudden darkness, and that alarms them, in my opinion, is what I think happens."

Fossil Rim Wildlife Center in Glen Rose hopes to participate in the Eclipse Soundscapes Project by recording animal sounds with an audio device during the eclipse.

"The goal would be to

help contribute to the NASA (Soundscapes) project," said Warren Lewis, chief marketing officer for Fossil Rim. "We would place it in our wolf area to see how our wolves react to the eclipse."

For those interested in helping scientists study ani-

mal behavior or how nature responds during the total solar eclipse, visit Solar Eclipse Safari at [scistarter.org/solar-eclipse-safari-resources](http://scistarter.org/solar-eclipse-safari-resources) or the Eclipse Soundscapes Project at [eclipsesoundscapes.org](http://eclipsesoundscapes.org).



PHOTO COURTESY OF ECLIPSE SOUNDSCAPES

An AudioMoth recording device is placed in a protective plastic bag and left outdoors to record the soundscapes of an ecosystem during an eclipse.



PHOTO COURTESY OF SPRINGTOWN POLICE DEPARTMENT FACEBOOK PAGE

Springtown Police Department hosted "Coffee with Cops" March 13 at the new Starbucks store on East State Highway 199 as a way for officers to meet people in the community and answer questions.

## Undercover baristas

Springtown police officers mingle with public at new Starbucks store



PHOTO COURTESY OF SPRINGTOWN POLICE DEPARTMENT FACEBOOK PAGE

Springtown police officers 'blend in' as baristas at Starbucks during last week's "Coffee with Cops" meet-and-greet.

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# Legacy Oaks resident celebrated with miracle spa day

Vicki Davis, former radio-oncology nurse, chosen for LOOA Miracle Moment

**ZACH FREEMAN**  
azlereporter@tricityreporter.com

AZLE — A relaxing spa day would be a miracle for most. This is especially true for 74-year-old Vicki Davis who, March 4, received a Miracle Moment spa day at Spa 10 in Azle. Legacy Oaks of Azle (LOOA) Senior Living hosts Miracle Moments several times a year in order to treat certain residents to special experiences.

Spa 10 owner Toni Patterson was excited to help give Davis a special day after receiving a call from LOOA Activities Director Barbie

Goralski.

Davis received an hour-long massage from Rae Ann Holland, who does not work for Spa 10, but sometimes volunteers her time to give massages and sing to residents at LOOA. Davis was also treated to an hour-long facial treatment from Spa 10's April Gregory, a hair-cut from Spa 10 hairdresser D'Aun Harris, a chicken salad lunch from Crave, and a manicure and pedicure from Patterson.

"I've been doing this for 30 years," Patterson said. "I still have my same clients that I've always had so they're all in



Davis loved the stylish new haircut she got from D'Aun Harris.

ZACH FREEMAN | TRI-COUNTY REPORTER



ZACH FREEMAN | TRI-COUNTY REPORTER

Back row (L-R): Ann Holland, massage therapist; Barbie Goralski, Legacy Oaks activities director; D'Aun Harris, Spa 10 hairstylist. Front: April Gregory, Spa 10 aesthetician; Vicki Davis, Miracle Moment Spa Day recipient; and Toni Patterson, Spa 10 owner/nail tech.



Vicki Davis had a blast getting pampered and socializing at Spa 10, rocking out and "Spocking" out with massage therapist Rae Ann Holland, who planned to sing her Elvis Presley songs when she visited Legacy Oaks of Azle Wednesday.



From all of Spa 10's available polishes, Davis chose to color her toenails "Hawaiian Punch" red.

their 70s, 80s, and 90s now so I do have a lot of elderly clientele. I do enjoy that. We have a lot of customers, too, who live in Legacy Oaks. So, we've actually been up there a bunch and I used to go up there and do one of my client's nails when she lived in one of the apartments and I'd go in there and do her nails when she couldn't get out anymore, so we're real familiar with Legacy Oaks."

Spa 10 is a full-service salon offering hair, nails, facials, waxing and barber services. Patterson has also set up booths and sold jewelry during past LOOA craft fairs. LOOA is one of Civitas' largest mixed communities, and

serves independent living, assisted living, and memory care residents. Barbie Goralski has been with LOOA since August 2023 and organizes three Miracle Moments per year along with many other daily activities and special events.

"It's so awesome," Goralski said of her job, tears in her eyes. "I have this shirt that I got for activity director day. It's my favorite shirt and it says, 'Activity Director: creating memories, enriching lives.' These people tell me how much they love me every day. I can't imagine how many people go to work and they don't ever get complimented at all. It's very re-

warding. It's the most meaningful job I've ever had. I love it. I love my residents. I'm an old soul anyway so being around the greatest generation, they're my besties."

Davis said she loves Goralski and was excited when she learned she'd be getting a spa day three weeks ago.

"I'm having a great time today," Davis said feeling relaxed and refreshed. "We all appreciate (Goralski). She works so hard."

Davis was a radio-oncology nurse for nearly half a century. Originally from Illinois, she has lived in Alabama and Michigan but moved to Fort Worth in 2000. She has lived

at LOOA for two years. Davis has three children. One lives in Traverse City, Michigan, one lives in Florida, and one son lives in Azle and works for the Arlington Police Department. She has five grandchildren whose visits she loves.

"The reason I chose her is because I like her a lot, love her actually, and I get to choose," Goralski said. "She was a nurse for 47 years and I just want to celebrate her in any kind of way. It kind of came together. Obviously, anybody would want a spa day. She was a healing hand so I kind of connected the dots of well she's serving so I wanted her to have a wonderful day."

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# Reno restricts fireworks usage to certain days, times

**MADelyn EDWARDS**

springtownreporter@tricountyreporter.com

RENO — When the Fourth of July or any other firework-centric holiday comes around, people in Reno will be subject to a few new rules.

Reno City Council narrowly approved an ordinance restricting the use of fireworks in the city.

Previously, Briar-Reno Fire Chief Moses Druxman and Code Enforcement Officer Joe Harris had been tasked with drafting new fireworks rules after some council members questioned how they could regulate fireworks to prevent fires and avoid creating a nuisance for other residents. The chief told the council in January that banning fireworks might not be the best choice because the fire department would not be able to keep up with enforcement of that ban.

"I'm not opposed to fireworks," council member Tod Siedell said during the January 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. ... 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."

During the late February council meeting, Druxman presented the ordinance that Harris and Fire Marshal Rebekah Marlow had come up with. Druxman told the council there were two options — an ordinance restricting fireworks use to certain days and times or a complete ban.

The new ordinance allows people to discharge fireworks in accordance with the dates the state allows the sale of fireworks, Druxman said. Those dates include June 24 through July 5 for the Fourth of July, Dec. 20 through Jan. 1 for New Year's, May 1-5 for Cinco de Mayo, Feb. 25 through March 2 for Texas Independence Day, April 16-21 for San Jacinto Day, the Wednesday before the last Monday in May through the last Monday in May for Memorial Day, and five days before the first day of Diwali through the last day of Diwali.

The ordinance also includes rules on what time of day the fireworks can be fired off on the applicable dates — 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. Mondays through Saturdays and 1 p.m. to 11 p.m. Sundays. Regardless of the day of the week, Reno residents will be able to discharge fireworks starting at

11 a.m. New Year's Eve or July 4 and no later than 1 a.m. New Year's Day or July 5.

"The reason that those were placed in there was we want you to be able to use your fireworks on the day you celebrate the holiday," Druxman said during the council meeting. "The other days, please be respectful of the 11 p.m. curfew for fireworks."

Fireworks won't be allowed if a burn ban is in effect, Druxman said.

Mayor Pro Tem Shelli Swift pointed out that fireworks can be discharged days before a holiday, but there's not so much time afterwards, especially for people who work on holidays.

"I don't think it's fair to everybody, but I know you can't be fair in every situation," Swift said during the meeting.

Typically, the fire department sees issues when a person is shooting off fireworks way past the date of a holiday and bothers their neighbor, Druxman said.

"Really, the purpose of this is to keep knuckleheads from being knuckleheads," he said during the meeting. "We want to be able to protect what the city of Reno represents, and that's why we were so less restrictive on this ordinance."

Violation of the ordinance can result in a fine of \$100-\$500 and/or the seizure of

the fireworks, Druxman said. The fire marshal, a peace officer or code enforcement officer has discretion to decide whether to take fireworks or issue a ticket.

"Our goal is not to collect fireworks; we don't want them," Druxman said. "Our goal is to keep people safe."

In the ordinance, the sale of fireworks is still permitted in the city limits as long as all applicable laws are followed, Druxman said.

"Our goal is not to ban the sale of fireworks in the city of Reno," he said. "It's an income source for the community. It's a job for many community members."

However, because sky lanterns and bottle rockets are prohibited under the new ordinance, these items can't be sold in the city. This raised a concern from council member Joy Jenkins who feared that the rule could disadvantage a business in Reno selling fireworks.

Druxman said during the meeting that most fireworks businesses in the area do not sell these kinds of fireworks anyways.

"What's in the ordinance is actually what is in the state law about what's prohibited, so it's nothing new necessarily when it comes to prohibiting that specific type of firework," he said to The Tri-County Reporter. "It's more of a reinforcement of state law."

Bottle or skyrockets are

banned in Texas if they have "a total propellant charge of less than four grams; a casing size of less than five-eighths of an inch for the outside diameter and less than 3.5 inches in length; and an overall length, including stick, of less than 15 inches," according to the Texas Occupations Code, Title 13, Chapter 2154.003.

In addition, sky lanterns cannot be sold by fireworks retailers, according to the State Fire Marshal's Office Frequently Asked Questions page on the Texas Department of Insurance's website. The State Fire Marshal's Office discourages the use of sky lanterns, and Druxman said during the council meeting that sky lanterns are already prohibited by Reno's fire code.

Rex Nelson, owner of the Nelson's Fireworks chain that has a Reno store, wasn't too familiar with the new ordinance, but he wasn't worried about it affecting his business. Nelson said a small percentage of the store's customers are from Reno because more people usually come from Azle and elsewhere. He pointed out that because shopping for fireworks usually has to be done in person, his fireworks stores tend to bring in lots of sales tax revenue and benefit other businesses in the area.

"We're a destination," Nelson said. "They have to love us. All the cities that

we've ever been, they fall in love with us because they do the research. They say, 'Wow, y'all really are bringing in a lot of people,' and it helps all the other businesses around there. Fourth of July is generally one of the biggest selling days of the year for all these other stores."

Druxman confirmed that what is being currently sold at Nelson's Fireworks follows the city's ordinance.

The council was split on its decision to pass the ordinance. Deputy Mayor Pro-Tem Jennifer Vogle and council member Hernando Herrera opposed the ordinance while Swift and council member Tod Siedell supported it. Because Jenkins abstained, Mayor Hector Bas Jr. had to break the tie and passed the ordinance.

While Vogle called the new rules "fair and respectful," she said she didn't want to take the right to shoot fireworks away from Reno residents, as she described it as one of the benefits of living in the country. She believes that people misusing or being disrespectful with their fireworks are in the minority, and some of those issues between neighbors can be dealt with by having a conversation with them.

"I didn't want to take away the right from the majority of the citizens because a few don't care for the fireworks," Vogle said to The Tri-County Reporter.



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**BOOK REVIEW**

*Women's history books for adults*

**TERRI SCHLICHENMEYER**  
Special to the Tri-County Reporter

George Washington was the father of our country. Bill Gates co-established Microsoft. Thomas Edison improved the light bulb. Stephen King created "Cujo." Walt Whitman wrote poetry, Lyndon Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act and Bass Reeves brought bandits to justice. Notice one thing there? Those are all men, so why not flip the coin? Read these great books about women in American history...

A generation of us grew up with television doctors who were all men, but in "The Doctor Was a Woman" by Chris Enss (Two Dot, \$26.95), you'll see how Hollywood missed the mark and that women wore white coats, too. Read about a women physician who worked for the railroad, one who left her home in South Dakota to tend to farmers and their families on the prairie, a ground-breaking plastic surgeon, a female dentist in the late 1800s, and several woman doctors who worked during times of pandemic. You'll love these hidden stories that aren't hidden anymore.

Study any "woman's" magazine from the 1950s, and you'll see plenty of ads targeted expressly to homemakers. In "Housewife: Why Women Still Do It All and What to Do Instead" (Legacy Lit, \$30.00), author Lisa Selin Davis looks at why "home-making" is still mostly women's work today, even if the woman of the house is the breadwinner in a two-adult household. This is a wide and widely interesting look that, most importantly, doesn't denigrate homemakers. Instead, this book leaves women - and men - with ways to find their own comfortable (and equal) choices.

No women's history book would be complete without considering our first ladies, and in "American Woman: The Transformation of the Modern First Lady, from Hillary Clinton to Jill Biden" (Crown, \$30.00), author Katie Rogers writes about how our most modern first ladies have molded the role from one of quiet helpmate to one of activism and personal platforms. Though its focus is more contemporary, the book is overall a sweeping look at presidential wives: Rogers reaches back into his-

tory for comparison and reality-check, making this a book that will delight historians and political animals alike.

And finally, if you like a little salt with your history, look for "Unbecoming a Lady" by Therese Oneill (Simon Element, \$24.99). Despite what you might think, yesterday's women didn't always behave. Many of them were not quiet or demure or shy at all, and their place was definitely not always in the home. In this book, you'll meet some of history's loudest, most audacious women, the bravest, and the ones who saw something they didn't like and fixed it: inventor Lilian Gilbreth, Civil War doctor Mary Edwards Walker, wrongly hospitalized Elizabeth Packard, visionary Ellen G. White, Alaska millionaire Reindeer Mary Antisarlook, sideshow "fat lady" Celesta Geyer, miser Hetty Green, and others who did what they needed, or simply wanted to do!

If these books aren't enough - because you know you'll want more - check with your favorite librarian or bookseller. They've got all kinds of books to help you see that history is just as often HERstory.



COURTESY PHOTO

Women's History Books for Adults. c.2024, various publishers, \$24.99 - \$30.00, various page counts



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# Pain of loss highlights rising trend of bicycle and pedestrian crashes

## SUBMITTED ITEM

AUSTIN - Katie Parker still gets nervous just crossing the street. Eight years ago, a careless driver plowed into her and her dog, Riley, while they were out for a jog. Parker was hit with such force that she was thrown more than 60 feet. Riley, a Great Dane, was killed on what was supposed to be a pleasant morning jog.

The mental and physical toll from the 2016 crash continues for Parker. The physical scars have mostly healed, but she doesn't feel safe while walking or driving. Her story is an example of the impact crashes can have on survivors.

"The crash changed my life," Parker said. "I lost my dog, and my sense of safety when crossing the street."

## TxDOT urges drivers, pedestrians and bicyclists to follow state laws and save lives

Parker is joining TxDOT this spring during its "Be Safe. Drive Smart." campaign to remind Texans why it's important to follow traffic laws to keep pedestrians and cyclists safe.

"Too many people are killed or seriously injured every year in Texas walking, jogging or biking in their communities," TxDOT Executive Director Marc Williams said. "We want all Texans — whether you're behind the wheel, on foot or on a bike — to watch out for each other and follow the rules of the road so everyone gets where they're going

safely." In 2022, 922 people died in traffic crashes involving pedestrians and bicyclists in Texas, accounting for one of every five fatalities on the state's roadways. It's a part of a rising trend in recent years as pedestrian fatalities increased 30% and bicyclist fatalities increased 28% in the five years from 2018 to 2022. "Be Safe. Drive Smart" urges all Texans to learn and follow the laws for safe driving, walking and biking. As part of this effort, TxDOT is sending teams of walking billboards to cities around the state to put key safety

reminders in front of drivers, pedestrians and bicyclists in crash-prone areas.

### IF YOU'RE DRIVING IN TEXAS, STATE LAW REQUIRES YOU TO:

- Stop and yield for pedestrians, bicyclists and other vulnerable road users in crosswalks.
- When turning, yield the right-of-way to pedestrians and bicyclists.
- Pass bikes at a safe distance and give bicyclists room to ride.
- Always follow the speed limit and drive at a safe speed.

### IF YOU'RE WALKING:

- Cross the street only at intersections and crosswalks.
- Obey all traffic signs and signals, including at crosswalks.
- Use sidewalks. If there's no sidewalk, walk on the left side of the road, facing oncoming traffic, unless the left side is obstructed or unsafe.

### IF YOU'RE RIDING A BIKE:

- Always stop at red lights and stop signs.
- Ride in the same direction as traffic and use bike lanes or ride as near as possible to the right-hand curb.
- Use hand signals when turning or stopping.
- At night, ensure your bike has a white light on the front and a red light or reflector on the back.

TxDOT's Be Safe. Drive Smart. campaign and pedestrian and bicyclist safety initiative are key components of #EndTheStreakTX, a broader social media and word-of-mouth effort that encourages drivers to make safer choices while behind the wheel to help end the streak of daily deaths. Nov. 7, 2000, was the last deathless day on Texas roadways.

The information contained in this report represents reportable data collected from the Texas Peace Officer's Crash Report (CR-3). This information was received and processed by the department as of Dec. 1, 2023. To view additional traffic safety data, visit TxDOT's Traffic Safety Data Portal online.

# Popcorn Players to perform touching family drama

## ZACH FREEMAN

azlereporter@tricountyreporter.com

AZLE — New shows at the Popcorn Players Theater are just around the corner. The Azle Arts Association is proud to kick off its 2024 season with "Over the River and Through the Woods."

"Over the River and Through the Woods" is a play written by Joe DiPietro,

## "Over the River and Through the Woods" coming to Azle

published in 1998. The play is a slice-of-life story about changes and challenges facing the Italian American Gianelli family after son, Nick, receives a job offer across the country during the

medical crisis of a close family member. Azle Arts cast members will share sobering realities of life while never forgetting to let the humor shine through. This play is sure to make Azle audiences

laugh, cry, reflect and relate. The Popcorn Players production will be directed by Lisha Nurmela.

Popcorn Players Theater present holding performances March 22-24 with no productions Easter weekend. The show will return for a second weekend April 5-7. Friday and Saturday shows will begin at 7:30 p.m. and Sunday matinees will be at 2:30 p.m.

Popcorn Players Theater is located at 1012 Southeast Parkway in Azle, and tickets are available in-person, online at [www.azlearts.org](http://www.azlearts.org), or by phone at 817-238-PLAY. Tickets are \$15 for adults, \$12 for seniors and students and \$10 for the Sunday matinee.

The theater's resident improv troupe, the Corney Kernels, will hold its second

performance of the season Saturday, April 13 at 7:30 p.m.

### CAST

- Nicky — James Kelly
- Frank — Scott Nurmela
- Aida — Carol Braden
- Nunzio — Jerry Hall
- Emma — Rozanne Gann
- Caitlyn — Emily Ball
- Tech — Josh Holden Jr.

# Parker County Clerk implements VitalDirector to streamline access to vital records online

## STAFF REPORT

PARKER COUNTY — Parker County Clerk Lila Deakle is pleased to announce the implementation of VitalDirector, a new platform provided by Permitium, aimed at simplifying the process of ordering birth, death

and marriage certificates for the citizens of Parker County.

This innovative process allows citizens to conveniently order and pay for vital records online from the comfort of their own homes. To use the new system, go to <https://parkercountytxvitals.com>

and introduce VitalDirector to Parker County," Deakle said. "This user-friendly platform will offer a fast, easy and cost-effective way to request certified copies of birth, death and

marriage certificates online. It ensures compliance with all statutory requirements, expedites processing times, enhances security measures, and provides a seamless experience to our citizens needing essential vital records." Deakle's decision to imple-

ment VitalDirector reflects a proactive approach to meeting the evolving needs of the community.

"We commend her for recognizing the growing demand for online access to vital records," remarked Chris Lueck, Co-CEO at Permitium.

"This forward-thinking solution allows citizens to initiate requests through a unified interface, whether applying in person or online. It aligns perfectly with the county clerk's commitment to safety and superior service delivery."

**JIM STEVENS PHOTOGRAPHY**

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Boardwalk Estates, a new home community by Century Communities, recently hosted a ribbon-cutting ceremony hosted by the Springtown Area Chamber of Commerce. Century Communities is one of the top 10 homebuilders in the country. These new homes are conveniently located along State Highway 199 in Springtown. Call 817-704-4270 to schedule a tour or point your browser to [centurycommunities.com](http://centurycommunities.com) to browse available homes today.

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**May 16, 2024**

AZLE HIGH SCHOOL  
**May 23, 2024**

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# Showcasing Azle greatness

Azle ISD hosts annual open house event for parents and future students



**ZACH FREEMAN | TRI-COUNTY REPORTER**  
Azle's beloved mascot Buzzy demonstrated the green screen technology used by Azle High School's video production and tech classes.



**HOSA — Future Health Professionals, formerly known as Health Occupations Students of America students — students demonstrated their medical prowess by drawing blood from brave visitors and each other.**



The CTE halls were a veritable playground and worksite showing off the many ways in which Azle High School can prepare its students for a variety of different occupations.



AHS Criminal Justice Club members spoke with future law enforcement hopefuls about the role and resources of the club.

## Azle Arts Popcorn Players Presents

Written by Joe Dipietro

Over the River and Through the Woods

March 22-23 at 7:30 pm • March 24 at 2:30 pm

April 5-6 at 7:30 pm April 7 at 2:30 pm

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# THE TRI-COUNTY REPORTER

# DIVERSIONS

B

THURSDAY, March 21, 2024

## SHS senior's hard work pays off with San Angelo Stock Show win

**MADELYN EDWARDS**  
springtownreporter@tricityreporter.com

SPRINGTOWN — Despite her young age, Springtown High School senior Molly Pack is an old pro at showing livestock, but each time she gets in the ring, it feels like a new experience.

"Every time I go in, it's like an adrenaline rush, like you just get in your own world," said Pack, who is also vice president of Springtown FFA. "Watching from outside the ring, you can see all these other things going on, and every kid in the ring is just focused on them and their animal and the judge. It's like nothing else is going on. But every time I go in the ring, it's like for the first time again. It's so exciting and rewarding."

Even if the results don't

*Teacher calls Pack 'one of the hardest working kids in the barn'*

turn out well, Pack said the mere feat of getting an animal ready for a show and being able to walk it in the ring is an accomplishment.

This year, Pack experienced an additional adrenaline rush when she won reserve grand champion for her female Brangus at the San Angelo Stock Show. When the results were announced, she thought, "Wow, all that hard work has finally paid off."

San Angelo is a major livestock show in Texas, and like Pack, agriculture teacher/cattle supervisor Roy Stephens said just getting in the ring is an achievement.

"Just even to walk in that ring is an accomplishment with that animal, but to place in the top half or even the top 30 of your class is a big accomplishment, and then to get champion or reserve is an exceptional opportunity to showcase your hard work and an animal," Stephens said. "It's a big deal to place in a major like that, whether it's reserve or grand champion. It's a huge deal. A lot of kids will show their whole career and never even get that opportunity."

Pack has been showing live-

PLEASE SEE **PACK** | B2



PHOTO COURTESY OF SPRINGTOWN FFA FACEBOOK PAGE

Molly Pack smiles big next to her winning Brangus cow Miss Raquelle.



COURTESY PHOTO

The Springtown High School girls powerlifting team at the Class 4A Division State Meet at the Comerica Center in Frisco March 15.

## SPORTS

# Roundup

## Area lifters excel at girls state

**RICK MAUCH**  
Special to the Tri-County Reporter

**EMMA VANBECELAERE**  
sports@tricityreporter.com

Three members of the Springtown Lady Pines powerlifting team brought home bronze medals after third-place finishes in their respective weight classes at the Class 4A Division State Meet at the Comerica Center in Frisco March 15.

In all, the Lady Pines had six lifters place in the top

five of their weight class. As a team, Springtown was fifth with 14 points.

Zoey Adams placed third in the 105-pound division, lifting a total of 705 pounds (275 squat, 145 bench press, 285 dead lift). Hayley Knight was third in the 148 division with 915 pounds lifted (380 squat, 190 bench, 345 dead lift) and Ashiana Elam took third in the 198 class with 1,000 pounds (420 squat, 240 bench, 340 dead lift).

Taking fourth in their divisions were Abigail Stoner,

132 class, 930 pounds lifted; and Grace Lewis, 165 class, 935 lifted. Melissa Chavez was fifth in the 148 class, lifting 875 pounds.

Also competing for Springtown were Callee Gaston, eighth in 114 division, 705; Izzy Parker, 10th in 114 division, 675; Skyler Tyree, sixth in 123, 810; Jessica Montgomery, eighth in 123, 795; Destiny Ramirez, 11th in 165, 785; Lyndsey Shotwell, ninth in 181, 890; Addison DeGreek, ninth in 220, 875; and Isabella Medina, 10th in 242, 840.

"The state meet is just such an exciting meet. The parents and community really made us feel special as we headed to state. There were signs along the road, flags and people honking," coach Missy Castro said. "The Springtown Fire Department and police led the way out of town. Then, the Parker County Sheriff and Reno Police Department got us to Azle. This really was a special moment for the team and coaches."

The 14 state qualifiers are the most ever for the Lady Pines program.

"I am so proud of this



COURTESY PHOTO

The Azle High School girls powerlifting team pose at the 5A Division I State Powerlifting Meet at the Comerica Center March 16.

PLEASE SEE **ROUNDUP** | B3

## AHS FCCLA students state bound

*AHS public policy, parliamentary procedure and fashion construction students qualify for state contest*

**ZACH FREEMAN**  
azlereporter@tricityreporter.com

AZLE — Azle High School Family, Career and Community Leaders of America students made a great showing at the Feb. 29 regional competition in Waco.

Two Azle students, Skye Dickens and Kristina Birkeland, won second place at the FCCLA Public Policy Advocate, Level 3 contest at the Texas FCCLA Region II Leadership Conference. Daniel Villa, Jasmine Valdez, Elizabeth Villafranca and Lily "Neo" Garza won third place for Parliamentary Procedure at the contest. Carla Caldera won third place for fashion construction. Hannah Beck, who served as the 2023 Texas FCCLA Region II vice president of records, was elected to serve as Region II's vice president of community ser-



ZACH FREEMAN | TRI-COUNTY REPORTER

PLEASE SEE **FCCLA** | B2 Carla Caldera and her state-qualifying dress.

## Harris, Woods ranked in top 4 nationally in wrestling

**EMMA VANBECELAERE**  
sports@tricityreporter.com

Two Azle junior high girls are making history, ranking in the top four nationally in the sport of wrestling. Zaylyn Woods is ranked number one in 12-and-under weight class 100 pounds. Kenzie Harris is ranked number four in the 12-and-under weight class 92 pounds.

"The emotion I felt was very overwhelming and grateful. This is something I've worked toward my whole life and knowing that my hard work and consistency paid off brought me tears of joy," Woods said. "It's great to be recognized nationally for all of the time my family and coaches put into training and travel for me to compete with the



PHOTO COURTESY FELICA HARRIS

SEE **WRESTLING** | B4 Kenzie Harris and Zaylyn Woods show off their rings and medals.



PHOTO COURTESY OF SPRINGTOWN FFA FACEBOOK PAGE

Springtown FFA Vice President and senior Molly Pack won reserve grand champion for her female Brangus at the San Angelo Livestock Show.

## PACK

FROM PAGE B1

stock, mainly cows, since she was in the third grade. She got into the activity with her older sister via their extended family's Brangus cattle ranch. She and her sister even pulled in a joint win in 2017 when Pack won grand champion and her sister took home the reserve title.

"That was pretty cool," Pack said about the previous achievement.

Pack described raising cattle and getting to know each cow's personality as a rewarding experience.

"Me and my sister had 10-15 heifers at a time, and people always ask, 'They're all black; how do you tell them apart?' I mean, you spend time with the animal every day, so you get to know the animal," she said.

Pack wasn't sure how her Brangus cow, named "PP Miss

Raquelle," would fare in the San Angelo competition as she had ups and downs with the animal in previous shows. She said Miss Raquelle is a sassy cow and a picky eater who took some time to warm up to Pack.

"It's kind of funny now; you can just call her name, and she'll come up to the barn," Pack said.

Raising a cow takes time and dedication, as with any animal, but cows also tend to need more space and feed that can be more expensive, Stephens said.

Stephens has known Pack since she was in the seventh grade and has observed how she has navigated the highs and lows of livestock competitions with good sportsmanship.

"She's always handled it with grace and professionalism," Stephens said. "You could obviously see some disappointment when she didn't place as well as she wanted

to, but she never got mad about it. It just kind of motivated her and made her more driven to be more successful the next time."

As a leader in Springtown FFA, Stephens said Pack is always willing to help the younger members of the chapter and sets a good example.

"(She's) probably one of the hardest working kids in the barn that I've ever seen, and I don't think anybody would argue with that fact," he said. "You don't have to tell her to do anything. She's going to lead by example, and I think when other younger members see that, they pick up on that really quickly, and see that's what it takes to be successful in the show ring and be successful in this chapter."

After graduation, Pack wants to advance her education and possibly pursue a career in artificial insemination and sonography involving cows and other large animals.



MADELYN EDWARDS | TRI-COUNTY REPORTER

Springtown High School agriculture teacher/cattle supervisor Roy Stephens called Springtown FFA Vice President Molly Pack "one of the hardest working kids in the barn."

## FCCLA

FROM PAGE B1

vice for the 2024-25 school year. All these students will advance to the state competition April 12 in Dallas.

Dickens and Birkeland's project centers on rising phosphorus levels in Eagle Mountain Lake and encourages public participation in the design of Tarrant Regional Water District's watershed protection plan.

"We were completely shocked to actually place second," Dickens said. "The main thing we want to focus on is spreading the word more because we really didn't have much time to talk to Tarrant Regional Water District specifically about our project so we want to focus on hitting them directly and talking more to higher level people at TRWD because we only talked to the lower tier of workers and haven't really gotten to their superiors, so that's our focus."

In doing research and outreach for their project, Dickens and Birkeland noticed a lack of interest in the lake from some of their peers. Their project aims to change that and better educate the public on the issues affecting them.

"We really noticed people don't like Eagle Mountain Lake and we didn't really know why," Dickens said. "Kristina, she read a ton of scientific research papers and spent so long reading them. That's kind of where we got our goals of trying to make it more accessible for

people because it was so hard to read."

The FCCLA caters to a wide range of skills and activities. The Azle chapter's advisor, fashion design teacher Natasha Deramee is excited to see all her students do so well in their respective competitions.

"I'm extremely proud of the hard work they put in," FCCLA advisor Natasha Deramee said. "They're very passionate about the environment and how they can have a part in it. I just let them go. They were looking for things to advocate for and they just took it and ran with it. I'm very proud of them. We need to multiply them by many, many kids. I don't know what we'll do without them when they graduate."

Caldera designed and created a blue silk dress by hand, documenting the entire process for her project. Materials for the dress cost \$170.10 and countless hours to complete.

"I think I really like the skirt part of it," Caldera said. "That's what makes the dress what it is. It was really difficult to sew but it was worth it."

The parliamentary procedure team was also proud of placing third and qualifying for state. Their contest required the utmost dedication to the practice and study of proper etiquette in a professional setting.

"It's about maintaining professionalism within a meeting setting," Villa said explaining his team's contest. "It's about making sure that everything is good and fair and that you are behaving appropriately."



ZACH FREEMAN | TRI-COUNTY REPORTER

Daniel Villa, Elizabeth Villafranca, Jasmine Valdez and Lily "Neo" Garza.

"We really noticed people don't like Eagle Mountain Lake and we didn't really know why..."

SKYE DICKENS



ZACH FREEMAN | TRI-COUNTY REPORTER

Skye Dickens with her and Kristina Birkeland's state-qualifying presentation.

# Welcome Emma VanBecelaere to the Tri-County Reporter team!

**JOHN ENGLISH**

*Special to the Tri-County Reporter*

On March 4, Emma VanBecelaere embarked on a new career in journalism when she was hired as a sports writer with the Tri-County Reporter.

VanBecelaere (pronounced "Van Beesler") graduated from Tarleton State University in December with a bachelor's degree in sports communication and will cover sports in the Azle and Springtown areas.

As a student, VanBecelaere wrote for the Texan News Service (TNS) and said that is how she was introduced to Hyde Media Group Chief Operating Officer Sam Houston.

"The news editor that I worked for at the TNS, ... Austin Lewter, was able to get me in contact with Sam, and that kind of sparked an interest in writing for me," VanBecelaere said. "That really helped."

VanBecelaere has been involved with sports most of her life and said she was drawn to a career in sports journalism for a couple of reasons.

"I played sports all throughout high school," VanBecelaere said. "After I graduated from high school, I wanted to be an athletic trainer and quickly realized that wasn't for me. Once I moved to Tarleton, I really drew more of an interest in sports writing and creating



Emma VanBecelaere

media. So it was really just growing up in the sports world and being active in sports. My professors and

family members also helped me."

The Tarleton alumna played volleyball, basketball, softball and cheered in high school.

VanBecelaere's favorite sport is football and her favorite team is the Kansas City Chiefs.

"My stepmother's father (Mike Livingston) played for the Kansas City Chiefs a long time ago when they first won the Super Bowl," VanBecelaere said. "I grew up knowing all about the team, and plus, Patrick Mahomes went to my friend's high school, so I got to meet him."

Livingston actually stepped in for quarterback Len Dawson when Dawson was injured in the Chiefs'

1969 Superbowl season and led the team to a 6-0 record during Dawson's absence.

VanBecelaere is also a Texas Rangers fan and supports all Tarleton State University sports teams.

Born and raised in Quitman, which is 35 miles north of Tyler, VanBecelaere attended Tyler Junior College for two years before transferring to TSU.

She said she believes she will provide a unique perspective to the Tri-County Reporter.

"I think I bring a peppy, new, fresh sound, because I am younger, and I'm fresh out of college," VanBecelaere said. "I still have a lot of information that I learned fresh in my brain, and I know what

it takes to get a story done. I think having a positive mindset and real passion for what I'm doing really helps the newspapers as well."

VanBecelaere spends her free time reading, playing with her dog and spending time with her family.

Currently working on a master's degree in communications, VanBecelaere said she hopes to make a genuine contribution to the Tri-County Reporter.

"I'd like to gain experience and gather as much knowledge as possible," VanBecelaere said. "I'd also like to make an impact and really get to know the coaches and parents so that I can make those connections throughout the community."

## ROUNDUP

FROM PAGE B1

young team. Nine out of the 14 were first-year qualifiers. This was their first time ever competing at state," Castro said. "The girls gave it everything they had at the meet, improving in many ways."

"In the long run I think our inexperience got to us here and there. I am excited about the experience we gained with several of our freshmen, sophomores and juniors."

"Second through fifth place was just a battle and too close to call until the very end."

Beeville won with 40 points, followed by Port Lavaca Calhoun with 18 and La Fiera and Hidalgo tied for third with 15 points.

In addition to the lifting, three senior Lady Pines are academic all-state. Tyree and Montgomery were named first team and Lilly Siegel was named second team.

"Our seniors have been great leaders and definitely set the bar high for the underclass," Castro said. "We will miss having them around, but we are excited for their next chapter. Tradition never graduates."

well, proud of the girls. Really excited that the program has only one senior graduating," coach Tanner Street said.

Also for Azle, Emma Sustala placed eighth in the 181 division, lifting 900 total pounds. Ella Swaim was 11th in the 105 class, lifting 585 total. Also qualifying for state from the Lady Hornets, but not placing, was Kyndal Robbins in the 97 division.

"It was fun, but also scary seeing all the people there while I was competing," Emma Sustala said. "Having the right people supporting me like family, friends, and coaches that helped me to be successful this season."

"Going to state this year as my first year being in powerlifting was one of the biggest achievements I could've had. Just knowing that I was at state was such an amazing feeling for me," Robbins said. "Especially knowing I'm around the best of the best. Though I did not achieve the outcome I would've hoped for, I try and look at the bigger picture of how far I have come in the short couple of months."

RBI, while Tyler Vaughn also drove in a run.

In the loss, Liptow had two hits and two RBIs and Jacob McGee had a double with three RBIs.

The Hornets (11-4 overall) were playing at Saginaw at press time. They host Saginaw March 22, host Northwest March 26 and travel to Northwest March 28, all at 6:30 p.m.

**AZLE BOYS BASKETBALL**

Cason Cook of the Hornets has been named the District 5-5A Newcomer of the Year by the league's coaches. Also honored with a second-team selection was junior Britt Haas.

Seniors Gunner Crow and Kaleb Braswell are honorable mentions.

**SPRINGTOWN GIRLS BASKETBALL**

Lady Pines senior Allison Ford and junior Esther Ballado were named to the All-District 8-4A First Team by coaches. Second-team accolades went to seniors Chloe Kirk and Paige Winstead, along with sophomore Brooklynn Quintanilla and Brylynn Bazzell.

Junior Kylie Russell received honorable mention.

Academic all-district honors were earned by Bazzell, Kirk, Quintanilla, Russell, Winstead, junior Amelia Espinoza, sophomore Abby Miller, sophomore manager Megan Lejueness and freshman Makinze Nation.

The Lady Pines are coming off a 19-18 season and bidistrict appearance. It is their most victories since the 2010-11 season.

**SPRINGTOWN BOYS BASKETBALL**

Senior Dayne Thompson of the Porcupines was named the District 8-4A Offensive Player of the Year. Junior Dylan Crutchfield was selected by the league coaches for first team all-district.

Senior Kelby Castro and junior Chase Thompson were honored as second-team choices. Honorable mentions went to seniors Braylon Easter and Ty Parrott.

The Porcupines finished 19-13 and were second in district with a 7-3 record. They advanced to the playoffs, falling 71-69 to Burkburnett in bidistrict. It was their most wins since the 2012-13 season.

**SPRINGTOWN GIRLS TRACK**

Mackenzie (Mack) Flaugher of the Lady Pines is ranked No. 8 in the state in the triple jump in Class 4A and leads Region I with a 35-foot, 9-inch effort to win the Lovejoy Invitational.

Flaugher, a junior, is seeking a third consecutive berth at the 4A State Track and Field Meet this season. She finished fourth in 2023, jumping 38 feet, 3.75 inches. As a freshman she was seventh at state, clearing 37 feet, 6.25 inches.

Her career best triple jump is 38 feet, 4.5 inches at the 4A Region I Meet in 2022.

She is also third in Region I in the long jump this season, having leaped 17 feet, 0 inches.

**AZLE TRACK**

Four members of the team competed in the Texas Distance Festival in Southlake March 15-16. Leading the runners, all competing in the 1600-meter run, was Brooke Maples, clocking a time of 5 minutes, 52.04 seconds among the girls. The lone boy to compete for Azle was Eli Walker, who posted 5:53.98.

Also for the Lady Hornets, Lily Hudman had a time of 6:01.29 and Azucena Neri clocked a 6:06.86.

**RODEO**

Area athletes are among North Texas High School Rodeo Association leaders. The top 15 in each event at the end of the regular season advance to the NTHSRA Finals in May.

- Girls all-around: 2. Laurel Allred, Azle; 6. Delaney Harris, Springtown; 8. Hevenli Scribner, Azle; 15. Andrea Allred, Azle.
- Boys all-around: 4. Kasen Scarlato, Azle; 6. Xavier Reyes, Azle; 10. Sean Bunero, Azle.
- Barrel racing: 6. Scribner; 14. Kaylee Buchanan, Springtown.
- Breakaway roping: 12. Paige Bunero, Springtown.
- Bull riding: 1. Colton Phillips, Springtown; Tucker Barbee, Azle.
- Calf roping: 6. S. Bunero; 10. Tanner Piller, Springtown.
- Chute Dogging: 5. Wyatt Allison, Azle; 6. River Caswell, Azle; 7. Scarlato; 10. Cade Walker, Springtown; 11. Shaye Winford, Springtown; 13. A. Allred.
- Walkup goat tying: 1. L. Allred; 5. A. Allred; 7. Delaney Harris, Springtown; 12. Caitlyn Colley, Azle; 14. Winford.
- Poles: 1. L. Allred; 7. Scribner; 10. Colley.
- Ribbon roping: 5. S. Bunero; 6. P. Bunero.
- Steer wrestling: 2. Walker.
- Team roping/header: 1. Reyes; 12. Scarlato.
- Team roping/heeler: 1. Scarlato; 11. Reyes.

## 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

*Students may prepay for their meals.*

**March 25-29, 2024**  
**PK through 12th Grade**

\*Menus are subject to change.

<b>PK - 12th Breakfast</b>	<b>BREAKFAST: Everyday</b> - Various Juices & Cereals, Toast, Milk Variety, Fruit, Jelly, Assortment, Buttermilk Biscuit, Variety of milk is offered every day for breakfast and lunch.
<b>Mon</b> Mini Pancakes, Applesauce Cup <b>Tues</b> Chicken Biscuit Sandwich, Sliced Peaches <b>Weds</b> Eggstravaganza, Blueberries <b>Thurs</b> Breakfast Pizza, Apple Slices <b>Fri</b> No school	
<b>K - 4th Lunch</b>	<b>Lunch: Everyday</b> - Choice of one meat, two vegetables, and one grain/bread with milk., Variety of milk is offered every day for breakfast and lunch.
<b>Mon</b> Steakfingers or Popcorn Chicken, Roll, Mashed Potatoes Fresh Veggies Blueberries or Oranges <b>Tues</b> Bosco Stick or Chicken Fried Steak Sandwich, Steamed Broccoli, Fresh Veggies Apple Slices or Watermelon Craisins Juice <b>Weds</b> Chicken & Waffles, Tator Tots Fresh Veggies (Fiesta Sticks, Carrot, Broccoli), Apple or Sliced Peaches <b>Thurs</b> Pepperoni Pizza, Chicken Sandwich or Baked Potato w/ Pulled Pork, Roll, Mixed Vegetables Fresh Veggies Applesauce or Banana <b>Fri</b> No School	
<b>5th - 12th Lunch</b>	<b>Lunch: Everyday</b> - Choice of one meat, two vegetables, and one grain/bread with milk., Variety of milk is offered every day for breakfast and lunch.
<b>Mon</b> Breakfast for Lunch, Chicken or Sausage Biscuit, Eggstravaganza, Hash Browns, Fresh Veggies Blueberries or Orange, <b>Tues</b> Salisbury Steak or Three Cheese Mac., Roll, Mashed Potatoes, Fresh Veggies <b>Weds</b> Cheeseburger, Hamburger or Sweet & Sour Rice Bowl w/Pork, Tator Tots, Fresh Veggies Apple Slices or Pineapple, Variety <b>Thurs</b> Pepperoni Pizza, Pulled Pork Sandwich or Baked Potato Basket/ Pulled Pork, Fresh Veggies Sliced Peaches or Strawberry Applesauce <b>Fri</b> No school	

*This menu is sponsored by ...*

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## Azle School Menu March 25-29, 2024

<b>BREAKFAST:</b> PreK-4th Grade, 7-12th Grade \$1.55 5-6th Grade FREE 2nd Meal \$2.00 Visitors/Employees \$2.75	<b>LUNCH:</b> PreK-4th Grade \$2.55 5-6th Grade \$2.75 7-12th Grade \$2.55 2nd Meal \$3.20 Visitors & Employees \$3.75
<b>PreK - 4th</b>	
<b>BREAKFAST: Everyday</b> - Assorted Fruits and Cereal, Juice, White or Chocolate Milk, Graham Crackers, Toast	
<b>Mon</b> Dutch Waffle, Pears Diced, <b>Tues</b> Sausage Biscuit, Pineapples, <b>Weds</b> Cinnamon Roll, Oranges <b>Thurs</b> Cinnamon Toast with Oatmeal, Apple <b>Fri</b> No school	
<b>LUNCH: Everyday</b> - Variety of milk. Your choice of 1 entree & 1 fruit or juice	
<b>Mon</b> Chicken And Waffles, Popcorn Chicken Salad with Breadstick, Oranges, Pears, Green Beans, Mashed Potatoes, Peppared Gravy <b>Tues</b> Baked Potato, Orange Chicken and Rice, Apple, Peaches, Steamed Broccoli, Baby Carrots, Celery Sticks <b>Weds</b> Chicken and Cheese Crispito with Cheese Sauce, Hot Dog, Oranges, Pinepples, Salsa, Mexican Black Beans, Baby Carrots <b>Thurs</b> Frito Chili Pie, Ham & Cheese Sandwich, Apple, Pears, Steamed Peas, Baby Carrots, Fresh Broccoli <b>Fri</b> No school	
<b>GRADES 5TH - 8TH</b>	
<b>BREAKFAST: Everyday</b> - Assorted Fruits and Cereal, Juice, White or Chocolate Milk, Yogurt w/Granola	
<b>Mon</b> Dutch Waffle, Pears Diced, <b>Tues</b> Sausage Biscuit, Pineapples, <b>Weds</b> Cinnamon Roll, Oranges <b>Thurs</b> Cinnamon Toast with Oatmeal, Apple <b>Fri</b> No school	
<b>LUNCH: Everyday: Variety of milk. Your choice of 1 entree &amp; 1 fruit or juice, rolls, crackers • Salad bar offered daily</b>	
<b>Mon</b> Breaded chicken Sandwich, Chicken and Waffles, Popcorn Chicken Salad with Breadstick, Oranges, Pears, Green Beans, Mashed Potatoes with Peppared Gravy <b>Tues</b> Boneless Buffalo Wings, Cheeseburger, Orange Chicken & Rice, Apple, Peaches, Steamed Broccoli <b>Weds</b> Chicken and Cheese Crispito with Cheese Sauce, Hot Dog, Spicy Chicken Sandwich, Oranges, Pineapples, Fresh Salsa, Mexican Black Beans <b>Thurs</b> Cheeseburger, Frito Chili Pie, Grilled Cheese Sandwich, Apple, Pears, Steamed Peas <b>Fri</b> No school	
<b>HIGH SCHOOL</b>	
<b>BREAKFAST: Everyday</b> - Assorted Fruits and Cereal, Juice, White or Chocolate Milk, Yogurt w/Granola	
<b>Mon</b> Dutch Waffle, Pears Diced, <b>Tues</b> Pancake Sausage Breakfast Sandwich, Pineapples, <b>Weds</b> Pancakes, Oranges <b>Thurs</b> Biscuit with Peppared Gravy, Apple <b>Fri</b> No school	
<b>LUNCH: • Everyday: 1% unflavored or non fat chocolate milk &amp; juice • Salad Bar</b>	
<b>Mon</b> Breaded chicken Sandwich, Chicken and Waffles, Cheeseburger, Oranges, Pears, Corn, Steamed medley <b>Tues</b> Ham Wrap, Hamburger, Spicy Chicken Sandwich, Whole Wheat Roll, Apple, Peaches, Steamed Broccoli, Vegetarian Beans <b>Weds</b> Breaded Chicken Sandwich, Cheeseburger, Chili Cheese Dog, Oranges, Pineapples, Green Beans, Steamed Carrots <b>Thurs</b> Beely Mac, Hamburger, Spicy Chicken Sandwich, Garlic Bread Stick, Apple Sauce, Bananas, Charro Beans, Curly Fries <b>Fri</b> No school	

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# Springtown Middle School theater students compete in One-Act Play contest



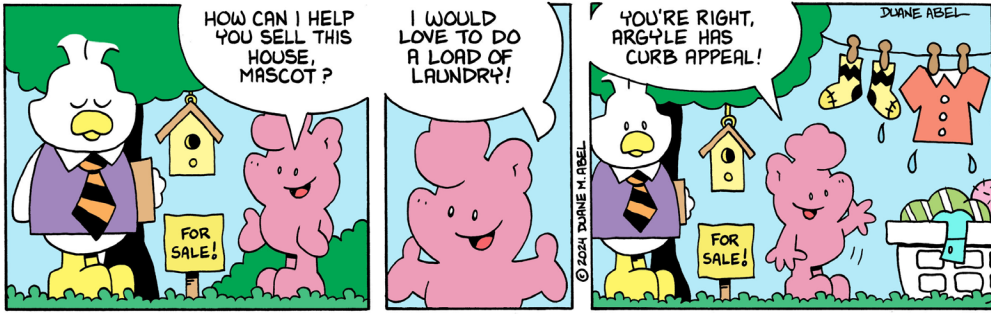
The students in Springtown Middle School's Pojo Productions competed at the UIL One-Act Play competition Feb. 16. Their play placed third.



Five Springtown Middle School students won individual awards following the UIL One-Act Play competition Feb. 16. Bri Brouillette was named Best Performer, Case Campbell and Olivia McCabe made the All-Star Cast, and Erik Carter was part of the Honorable Mention All-Star Cast. Adrian Monroe earned the tech award.

## ZED by Duane Abel

www.corkycomics.com



## Sudoku

MARCH 21, 2024

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

Level: Advanced

## Solution to last week's puzzle

MARCH 14, 2024

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

## WORD SCRAMBLE

Rearrange the letters to spell something pertaining to winter.

ACTSO

--	--	--	--	--

Answers: Coats

## CRYPTO FUN

Determine the code to discover words related to entertaining. Each number corresponds to a letter. (Hint: 21 = S)

- A. 3 10 21 26 6 21 21  
Clue: One who entertains
- B. 6 12 26 6 9 26 16 17 12  
Clue: Have people over
- C. 15 11 6 21 26 21  
Clue: Company
- D. 25 6 12 11  
Clue: Planned foods

## WRESTLING

FROM PAGE B1

best."

Woods and Harris are currently in seventh grade and have been able to compete in many events with the support of their families and the community. As they prepare to enter eighth grade next year, they cannot wait to see what the future holds.

"I felt so excited to be ranked nationally. I worked so hard to get where I am, and I am thankful for everyone that helped me. I know that I am young and have so much to learn before high school and I am ready to learn what I can," Harris said.

Woods and Harris both show dedication and drive both in and out of practice, participating in wrestling, youth football, volleyball and more.

"Football is a contact sport that requires strength, agility and consistency, things similar to wrestling. I think playing football has things that translate over to wrestling and vice versa," Woods said. "The sports are different of course, but things like aggression, body awareness and coordination help me all around to be the best athlete I can be."

The hard work and determination displayed by Woods and Harris exemplifies what being an athlete is about and is an inspiration to the younger generation.

"We are just incredibly proud of the person (Harris) is. Sports aside, she works very hard to maintain As in school and to be a great role model for her sister," Harris' mother, Felicia Harris, said. "She has always taken a special interest with some of the special needs children in the community. She is always trying to make sure they feel included in everything she

does."

Harris is involved in volleyball and in varsity choir, as well as youth football, and she also helps coach youth volleyball in Azle.

"I know that I have accomplished some of my goals, but I also know that I still have a lot of things that I want to accomplish. I do have a lot of training and preparing for the next step before I go to high school, but I am taking my time and taking it year-by-year," Harris said.

Having to compete against a teammate is hard but Harris and Woods do it with grace. Outside of sports, friendship is an example to others of what playing a sport is all about.

"Zaylyn is an incredible athlete and person. She is the hardest worker in the room and handles herself like a professional athlete," Woods' father Mark De La Rosa said. "The sky is the limit for Zaylyn with her work ethic and talent, whatever she chooses to pursue she will flourish in. We as her parents

can't express with words how proud of her we are."

Woods says her mom Montana De La Rosa, who is a Mixed Martial Arts fighter, is her biggest inspiration. De La Rosa has shown her daughter what it is like to be a wrestler.

"The dedication and hard work I put in is a full-time commitment. I am consistent year-round with rest to be able to still compete my best. I train multiple times a day along with a proper diet and recovery," Woods said. "This isn't just when I feel like it, it is all the time to continue to improve and get to my end goal of being an Olympic gold medalist. I believe my consistency is what truly separates me from my peers. My parents have to compete in the UFC at the highest level and I think it gives me the extra drive."

Even at such a young age, Harris and Woods have shown great dedication to the community with youth sports in Azle, by becoming role models to the younger athletes.



PHOTO COURTESY MONTANA DE LA ROSA

Zaylyn Woods and her parents, Mark and Montana De La Rosa, take a picture after a competition with her award.



PHOTO COURTESY FELICIA HARRIS

Kenzie Harris and her mom smile for a picture together.

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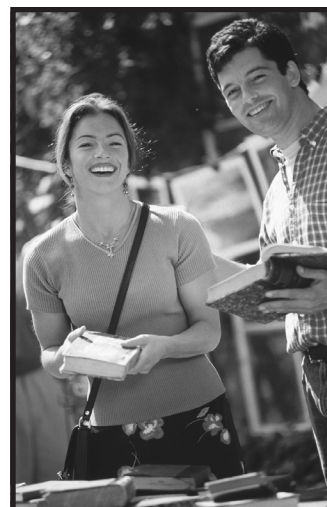
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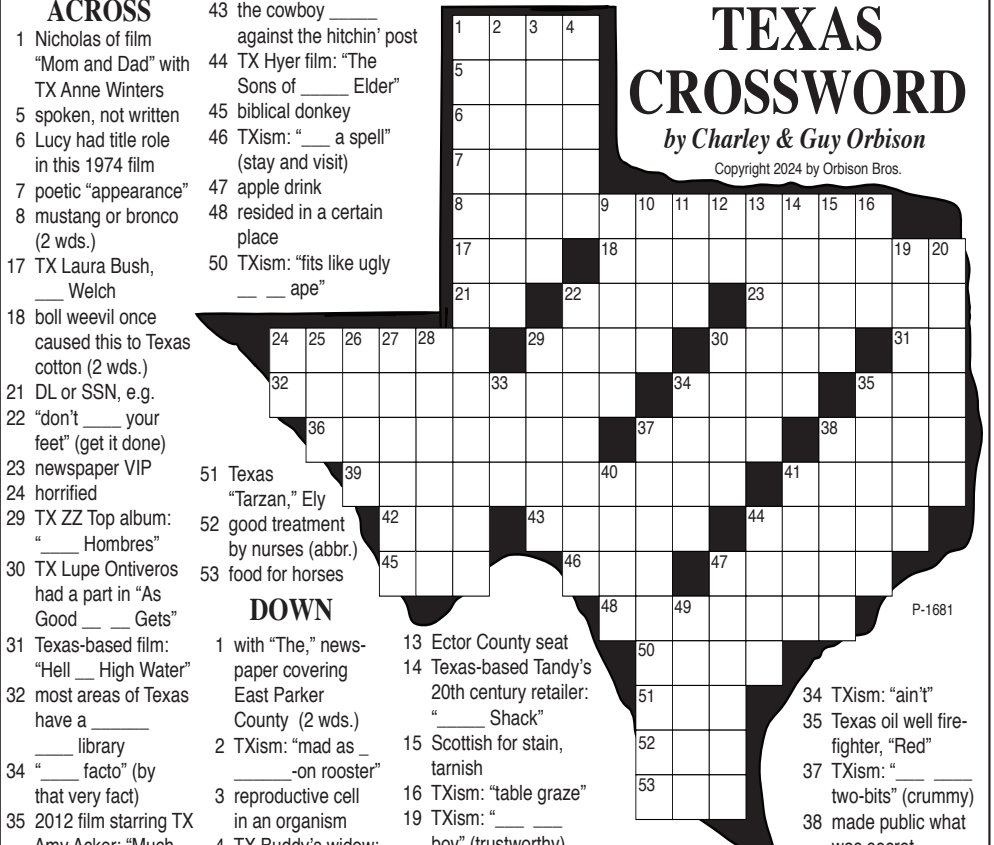


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## TEXAS CROSSWORD

by Charley & Guy Orbison  
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**ACROSS**

- Nicholas of film "Mom and Dad" with TX Anne Winters
- spoken, not written
- Lucy had title role in this 1974 film
- poetic "appearance"
- mustang or bronco (2 wds.)
- TX Laura Bush, \_\_\_ Welch
- boll weevil once caused this to Texas cotton (2 wds.)
- DL or SSN, e.g.
- "don't \_\_\_ your feet" (get it done)
- newspaper VIP
- horrified
- TX ZZ Top album: "\_\_\_ Hombres"
- TX Lupe Ontiveros had a part in "As Good \_\_\_ Gets"
- Texas-based film: "Hell \_\_\_ High Water"
- most areas of Texas have a \_\_\_ library
- "\_\_\_ facto" (by that very fact)
- 2012 film starring TX Amy Acker: "Much \_\_\_ About Nothing"
- where Jimmy and Jerry went to college
- largest continent
- boot smell?
- a tied game: "\_\_\_ your sister"
- wrestling matches 'tween two schools
- \_\_\_ Boston, TX
- the cowboy \_\_\_ against the hitchin' post
- TX Hyer film: "The Sons of \_\_\_ Elder"
- biblical donkey
- TXism: "\_\_\_ a spell" (stay and visit)
- apple drink
- resided in a certain place
- TXism: "fits like ugly \_\_\_ ape"
- Texas "Tarzan," Ely
- good treatment by nurses (abbr.)
- food for horses
- with "The," newspaper covering East Parker County (2 wds.)
- TXism: "mad as \_\_\_ -on rooster"
- reproductive cell in an organism
- TX Buddy's widow: Maria \_\_\_ Holly
- this TX Lisa was a host of "Good Morning America"
- historical periods
- TXism: "that \_\_\_ won't hunt" (differ)
- U.S. operations of this printer co. are based in Houston
- Ector County seat
- Texas-based Tandy's 20th century retailer: "\_\_\_ Shack"
- Scottish for stain, tarnish
- TXism: "table graze"
- TXism: "\_\_\_ boy" (trustworthy)
- mistakes by Astros or Rangers
- TWU has a collection of these that were worn by Texas first ladies
- Texas summer necessity (abbr.)
- "\_\_\_ long way" (travel a distance)
- TXism: "ain't"
- Texas oil well firefighter, "Red"
- TXism: "\_\_\_ two-bits" (crummy)
- made public what was secret
- "you \_\_\_ a mouthful" (good point)
- Florida's "hanging chad" county
- pottery oven noted espionage novelist, Tom
- WWII atomic bomber, "\_\_\_ Gay"

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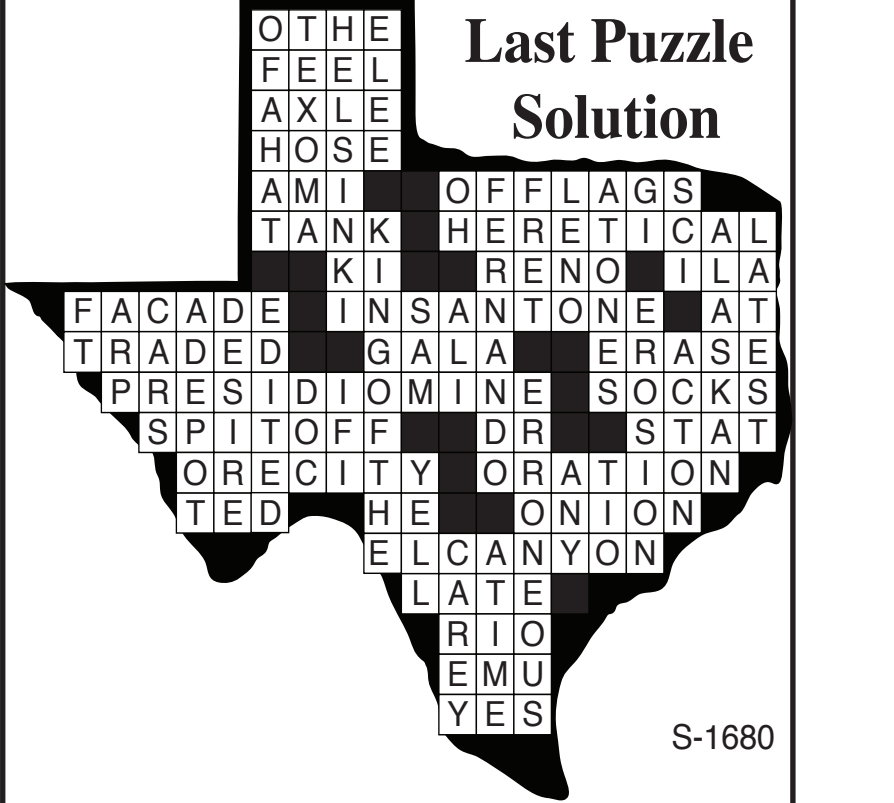
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# THE TRI-COUNTY REPORTER

THE NEWS OF AZLE, SPRINGTOWN, AND SURROUNDING AREAS





# Run for the Roses

## THE SPRINGTOWN AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE ANNUAL AWARDS GALA

THURSDAY March 21, 2024



JIM STEVENS | TRI-COUNTY REPORTER

Dr. Robert Moss presented former Springtown Area Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Amy Walker with a plaque in honor of her service at the chamber's March 1 Annual Awards Gala.

### Springtown Chamber honors former director, city's 'cheerleader'

**MADelyn EDWARDS**  
springtownreporter@tricityreporter.com

Former Springtown Area Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Amy Walker got her flowers at the chamber's "Run for the

Roses" Annual Awards Gala. Walker stepped down from her position in September to spend more time with her husband and grandchildren. "I just felt like it was time to focus on the family," she said in a previous Tri-County

Reporter article. Walker has lived in Springtown for more than 30 years. She loved the community so much she decided to get involved through

PLEASE SEE **CHEER** | C4



JIM STEVENS | TRI-COUNTY REPORTER

The Springtown Area Chamber of Commerce's former and current directors, Amy Walker, left, and Terri Toone take a photo together at the "Run for the Roses" Awards Gala.

### Gala attendees enjoyed an evening of Kentucky Derby-themed activities



Attendees at the gala played the horse racing game

JIM STEVENS | TRI-COUNTY REPORTER



Winner of the hat contest Jill Sebik

JIM STEVENS | TRI-COUNTY REPORTER

# Jennifer Conway appreciated for service as chamber president



JIM STEVENS | TRI-COUNTY REPORTER

JIM STEVENS | TRI-COUNTY REPORTER

Outgoing Springtown Area Chamber of Commerce President Jennifer Conway embraces Chamber Executive Director Terri Toone. Toone recognized Conway's service at the chamber's March 1 Annual Awards Gala. "Personally, I would like to express my gratitude for your continuous support and source of encouragement from day one," Toone said to Conway at the gala. "Today, we honor her for her outstanding service. To celebrate her contributions, it is my pleasure to present this award as a token of our appreciation. Please join me in applauding Jennifer for her exceptional leadership, dedication and the positive impact she has had on our Chamber of Commerce."

Springtown Area Chamber of Commerce administrative assistant Dene Berry and Executive Director Terri Toone presented outgoing President Jennifer Conway, middle, with a plaque in honor of her service at the March 1 Annual Awards Gala. Conway has served as president since 2021 and has been on the board since 2014. Conway expressed gratitude for the board of directors and the chamber's former and current staff members. "Overall, I'm thankful for this amazing opportunity that I was given to serve as president of the board of directors of the Springtown Chamber of Commerce," she said. "It has been an honor and a privilege to serve my community in this capacity."



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# BUSINESS OF THE YEAR The Corn Fed Club

## The Corn Fed Club wins Business of the Year

**MADelyn EDWARDS**  
springtownreporter@tricountyreporter.com

With the help of several staffers, The Corn Fed Club restaurant owners Trent and Jennifer Shaw served up plates of fried chicken, black-eyed peas and cornbread to attendees of the Springtown Area Chamber of Commerce Annual Awards Gala.

Then, chamber leaders invited them to come out of the kitchen and up to the podium to accept the award for Business of the Year.

Prior to moving to Springtown in 2016, Trent and Jennifer Shaw had built careers unrelated to owning a catering service and eventually, a restaurant. Trent's connection with food stems from helping his dad in their family donut shop in the Midwest and being a self-taught home cook experimenting with different recipes, according to Corn Fed Catering's website.

"He's always been the chef for our family gatherings, and the running joke in the family has been, 'This is the best thing I've ever eaten. When are you going to put it on your menu?'" Jennifer Shaw said of her husband. "You know, maybe this is something that I'd be really good at."

Years after moving to

Springtown, the Shaws left their careers to start Corn Fed Catering. Then in September, they opened The Corn Fed Club restaurant on the Springtown Square.

"On Sept. 7, 2023, The Corn Fed Club held its grand opening, is performing well and continues to bring in new customers from near and far every week. Trent and Jennifer continue to learn from their experiences and would love to see the square fully revitalized in the near future," the gala's master of ceremonies Brooklynn Hatton said at the event. "They never imagined they would be starting new career paths at this time in their lives, but they are sure glad they did. And can I tell you, on account of everybody in the room, that we are sure glad that you did."

Trent Shaw said receiving Business of the Year was an unexpected honor, especially because of how new The Corn Fed Club is. Shaw appreciates Springtown's support.

"It's a good feeling to know that the community feels that way about us," he said.

Getting that kind of recognition is validation of the hard work the Shaws put into opening a restaurant, Jennifer Shaw said. The Shaws have been preparing to open The Corn Fed Club for two years prior to September



**The Corn Fed Club restaurant owners Trent and Jennifer Shaw take a picture with their staff to commemorate the restaurant's Business of the Year award at the Springtown Area Chamber of Commerce's March 1 Annual Awards Gala.**

JIM STEVENS | TRI-COUNTY REPORTER

2023. They spent a year renovating the kitchen and then another year getting the front of the house ready.

"One thing we knew coming into it is Springtown didn't have a really nice date night place, and that's right

up (Trent's) alley," she said. "We're just glad that our intuition paid off. It's always scary jumping in and not knowing what's going to happen and if the community is going to accept it, and so we're very thankful."

When the Shaws accepted their award at the gala, they brought their staff to the podium as well and included them in the celebratory photo. Trent Shaw said his employees are important to the restaurant's success.

"If they're gone, then it doesn't work," he said. "That's why I wanted to make sure that they were a part of everything and get recognized just as much because we can't do anything without our team."

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## CHAMBER MEMBER OF THE YEAR Brookshire's Grocery

# Brookshire's Grocery: serving Springtown for 20+ years

Store director accepts award on business' behalf

**ZACH FREEMAN**

azlereporter@tricountyreporter.com

SPRINGTOWN —Store director Wes Richardson accepted the Chamber Member of the Year Award on behalf of Brookshire's Grocery. Brookshire's is a 95-year-old family-owned business based out of Tyler. The company currently operates more than 200 stores in four states — Texas, Louisiana, Arkansas and Oklahoma — with four distribution centers and two corporate offices. Brookshire's has served the Springtown community since 2002.

Since 2018, the Springtown team has been led by Richardson, a 23-year employee-partner, who has served in several roles in stores across Texas, including cashier, grocery manager, produce manager and assistant store manager, and has served as a store director



Brookshire's Grocery store director Wes Richardson and family.

JIM STEVENS | TRI-COUNTY REPORTER

since 2010. Richardson accepted the award alongside loved ones

and beloved colleagues. "It's an honor and a privilege to serve the city of

Springtown for the last 20-plus years for Brookshire's and an honor for me to

serve the last five years," Richardson said. "I love it. We're a family atmosphere.

We're a family-owned company. It's awesome having us all there together."

## CHEER

FROM PAGE C1

the PTA, the school board and of course, the chamber of commerce. She was also the Springtown Economic Development Corporation director and helped negotiate a

land deal that allowed for future growth, according to Dr. Robert Moss' speech honoring Walker at the gala. Walker has also won awards such as the chamber's Woman of the Year and the Texas Education Agency's "Heroes for Children."

Being the chamber director allowed Walker to interact

with and advocate for local businesses. Moss described her as being a "cheerleader" for not only the chamber but for the city as a whole.

"Just saying 'thank you' and 'we're so grateful for you' is not enough," Moss said. "But, at this point, we have to just say that we love you so much, and we're so thankful

for all the time and effort that you put into the chamber, to the city."

Walker wasn't expecting to be honored at the gala and said the gesture was sweet, especially because Moss was the one to present her with a plaque.

"Dr. Moss is just one of my most dearest, precious

friends, so it was pretty special," Walker said.

Walker's plaque was engraved with the image of a high-heeled shoe, which is representative of her style. But when the gala ended, Walker was carrying around a more comfortable pair of shoes to change into while she helped clean up after the

party. The option to not volunteer in the wake of having left the chamber's staff and getting an award didn't seem to occur to her.

"I got to get my flip-flops on and help," Walker said with a laugh.

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## CITY OF SPRINGTOWN EXTRA MILE AWARD Josh Crager



## Going the extra mile

JIM STEVENS | TRI-COUNTY REPORTER

Josh Crager, who has filled several roles within the city's public works department since 2017 and currently works in the water department, was awarded the City of Springtown Extra Mile Award at the Springtown Area Chamber of Commerce Annual Awards Gala. Crager said he is thankful for the award and tries to be helpful in his work. Public Works Director Joseph McCannless described Crager as a hard worker who often volunteers to stay late and works at the city's events. "It's the little things like that that make the biggest difference," McCannless said. "He's always willing to carry his fair share and then some of the load." Crager is pictured with City Secretary Christina Derr.



## SPRINGTOWN ISD TEACHER OF THE YEAR Jenifer Jones



## SISD alumna recognized as Teacher of the Year

JIM STEVENS | TRI-COUNTY REPORTER

Springtown Area Chamber of Commerce named Springtown Intermediate School sixth grade science teacher Jenifer Jones as the Teacher of the Year. The last time the Teacher of the Year award was given was in 2019, Springtown Independent School District Superintendent Shane Strickland said. "I'm really honored to be able to be the first one since it's come back," said Jones, who is a Springtown native. Jones has worked in education for about 17 years, and this is her fifth year teaching in Springtown. Strickland said Jones promotes student-centered learning and professional development of educators. "Ms. Jones' dedication to innovation prepares students for the future, nurturing independent thinkers and learners," Strickland said. "Her passion for meaningful learning experiences and tireless work ethic exemplify the transformative power of dedicated educators." Jones is pictured with Strickland at the March 1 gala.

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HOMETOWN HERO AWARD

Bill Foster

Bill Foster recognized as "Hometown Hero"

Family of Springtown Santa receives posthumous award

ZACH FREEMAN

azlereporter@tricountyreporter.com

SPRINGTOWN — A true friend to Springtown and its children, Bill Foster was posthumously recognized with the Hometown Hero Award at the 2024 Springtown Area Chamber of Commerce Annual Awards Gala. Teacher, bus driver, administrator and longtime Springtown Santa Claus, Foster devoted his life to education and serving his community. It's said that if Bill Foster knew you, you knew you were loved and worth something. Foster was a parent, grandparent, great-grandparent and loyal friend to many throughout Springtown.

Foster was a committed member of the First Baptist Church and donated his year-

ly Santa earnings to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering.

Foster's wife, Kandy Foster, and daughter, Rachel Moreno, accepted the award on Foster's behalf the night of March 1.

"It was an honor to accept the Hometown Hero Award, with my mother, on behalf of my dad," Moreno said. "He was a great man and served his community with everything he had for many years. We were, and are, proud of Poppy and everything he did to help others during his life. He was a man of service and had the heart of a servant. We are so proud of the man, husband and father Poppy was, and still is, to us in our hearts. We still see him everywhere; this award is a symbol of a lifetime of servitude he showed us every day growing up."



JIM STEVENS | TRI-COUNTY REPORTER

Kandy Foster, left, widow of the late Bill Foster, and Rachel Moreno, the couple's daughter, accept the Hometown Hero Award on his behalf.




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# CITY OF SPRINGTOWN PUBLIC SAFETY EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR Weldon "Chip" Procter

## Procter honored as Springtown's top cop



**JIM STEVENS | TRI-COUNTY REPORTER**  
Springtown Area Chamber of Commerce honored Springtown Police Department's Cpl. Weldon "Chip" Procter as the City of Springtown's Public Safety Employee of the Year at the March 1 Annual Awards Gala. Deputy Chief Jamie Oliver said Procter began at the police department in October 2021. "We're trying to build a bigger, better department," Oliver said. "We want certain people to work here, and he's exactly the type of officer that we want in our city. You ask him anything to do, he's going to do it without question, and he'll do it right." Procter indicated his coworkers at the police department selected him to earn the honor. "I'm grateful; I'm happy," he said. "It makes me feel good that's how my peers and everyone else feels about me, that they voted me." In the photo, Oliver, left, congratulates Procter after presenting the award.

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Signing in at the Springtown Area Chamber of Commerce Annual Awards Gala.

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# ORGANIZATION OF THE YEAR Pastoral Fellowship of Springtown

## Pastoral Fellowship graced with Organization of the Year award

MADELYN EDWARDS  
springtownreporter@tricountyreporter.com

Springtown Area Chamber of Commerce blessed the Pastoral Fellowship of Springtown with this year's Organization of the Year title at the March 1 Annual Awards Gala.

The fellowship is a group of "like-minded pastors from various denominational backgrounds" who support one another, serve the community and "share the light and salvation of Jesus," the gala's master of ceremonies Brooklynn Hatton said while introducing the organization.

Representatives from about nine churches, led by Walnut Creek Baptist Church Pastor Shane Scott, organize the annual New Teacher Luncheon each fall to welcome educators who join the Springtown school district's staff. The fellowship also hosts an annual back-to-school prayer rally.

Legacy Church Lead Pastor Gary Veazey accepted the award on behalf of the fellowship at the gala as many of the pastors couldn't attend the event. Veazey said receiving the award is an honor for the group.

"Our heart is to serve our community," he said. "We pray for our community. We have so many wonderful pastors, and their heart is not only for their church, but to serve the people in need. And then, we encourage and pray for each other, so it's a great fellowship to be part of."

Veazey said he has been part of the Pastoral Fellowship of Springtown since about the time he came to town in 1997.

"(Scott) is a great leader, and we have a great group of pastors," he said.



Representing the Pastoral Fellowship of Springtown, Legacy Church Lead Pastor Gary Veazey accepted the Organization of the Year award at the Springtown Area Chamber of Commerce's March 1 Annual Awards Gala. Veazey is pictured with Chamber Executive Director Terri Toone.

JIM STEVENS | TRI-COUNTY REPORTER

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JUDY SMERUD SPIRIT OF SPRINGTOWN AWARD

# Mistie Riviera

## Rivera embodies Spirit of Springtown

Local roofer, sandwich shop owner recognized for community pride

**ZACH FREEMAN**

azlereporter@tricountyreporter.com

SPRINGTOWN — Mistie Riviera, owner of Alvin Ord's Sandwich Shop and Rivera Roofing, was honored with the Judy Smerud Spirit of Springtown Award during the 2024 Springtown Area Chamber of Commerce Annual Awards Gala March 1. The award is presented to the person who most displayed the overall sense of community pride over the past year. Judy Smerud was a long-time resident and chamber executive director who had a special spirit and love for the Springtown community. She led the Springtown business community through periods of growth and change for over 25 years. The award was created to honor an outstanding person and friend to the community.

"It is an honor and blessing to be any part of this community," Riviera said. "It feels really good to be able to

help. I know that without our community supporting our business we wouldn't be able to give back to other businesses. I am born and raised in Springtown. I love my community. I wouldn't be able to give back if my community didn't give to me first."

Rivera is proud to be able to raise her three boys in the town where she grew up. Recently, Rivera donated the labor needed to replace the roof of Springtown's local food pantry, Neighbor to Neighbors

**JIM STEVENS** | TRI-COUNTY REPORTER

Mistie Riviera accepts her award with her husband, Gerardo "Lalo" Rivera, at the Springtown Area Chamber of Commerce Annual Awards Gala.



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# Marcia Garcia honored for service to chamber



**JIM STEVENS | TRI-COUNTY REPORTER**  
 Marcia Garcia, who served as the Springtown Area Chamber of Commerce's administrative assistant for the past four years and has volunteered for the chamber for many more, was honored for her service at the chamber's annual awards gala. Garcia recently stepped down from her position at the chamber but continues to volunteer. She has also served on multiple nonprofit boards, including the Springtown Education Foundation. "I just love Springtown, and I like the people," Garcia said. "It just feels good to be helping everybody and to be involved." Garcia is pictured with administrative assistant Dene Berry, outgoing Chamber President Jennifer Conway and Chamber Executive Director Terri Toone. In a speech at the gala, Conway said to Garcia, "Thank you for your hard work, your dedication, your positive attitude, not to mention all the laughs."

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