

THE TRI-COUNTY REPORTER

THE NEWS OF AZLE, SPRINGTOWN, AND SURROUNDING AREAS

THURSDAY, April 25, 2024 • \$1.00



2024 National Day of Prayer in Azle

Thursday, May 2, 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m.
The Orchard Event Venue & Retreat
1421 Northwest Parkway, Azle

STAFF REPORTS

One of the most special days of the year in Azle falls on the first Thursday in May - the National Day of Prayer. This annual event entrusted to the Azle Area Ministerial Alliance is a cherished time of unity.

The National Day of Prayer May 2 has a new venue this year - The Orchard Event

Venue & Retreat at 1421 Northwest Parkway in Azle (you'll see the turnoff for the Orchard off State Highway 199 just west of Azle).

The 90-minute event begins at 11:30 a.m. with a breathtaking opening that includes the National Anthem of the United States sung by the

PLEASE SEE PRAYER | A6

Local superintendents skeptical about automated grading on STAAR

MADELYN EDWARDS

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AUSTIN — Texas Education Agency is using automated grading to determine scores on open-ended questions in the state's standardized test, and local superintendents are concerned.

Texas public school students are tested using the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (or STAAR) every year, starting in third grade. The tests aren't just used to measure an individual child's academic performance or allow them to graduate high school but also to determine how well the campuses and school districts are doing to educate students. In TEA's accountability system that relies in part on STAAR scores, the state can take over school districts that receive poor

ratings.

According to TEA's slideshow "Hybrid Scoring Key Questions" from March 2024, the state agency recently redesigned STAAR tests to better align with classroom instruction. This resulted in the tests for reading/language arts, science and social studies having more open-ended questions, called short constructed responses and extended constructed responses. Because of this increase, TEA justified the use of "hybrid scoring," which uses automation.

"The significant increase in written responses required the move to hybrid scoring to meet budget and timeline limitations," according to the slideshow. "With (six to seven times) more constructed responses to grade annually for STAAR, maintaining full human scoring would have cost \$15-20 (million) more

PLEASE SEE TEA | A8



Bonnets in Bloom Winner

Barbara Boardman

Tri-County area gives back during Servolution's semi-annual blitz

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RENO — At first, Tammy Rezabek didn't think her life would change much after her husband got sick, but that was not the case.

Her husband, Lewis, was diagnosed with cancer last fall, and Rezabek's life became hectic. First of all, she got sick with bronchitis and had to reschedule Christmas cele-

Volunteers address homes across Azle, Springtown, Reno, Lake Worth

brations with their kids. After the holidays, she went back to work, but because of her husband's illness, she had to drive him to get treatment in the afternoons. She would leave her job in Lake Worth to pick him up at her home in Reno, take him to Fort Worth, then go back to work while he received treatment, and leave work to pick him up when

he finished before heading home.

On top of managing illnesses, Rezabek's roof caved in around the end of November, which is one of the reasons she applied for help from Servolution Network. Rezabek also said her air conditioning has been out for

PLEASE SEE BLITZ | A12



ZACH FREEMAN | TRI-COUNTY REPORTER

Good Neighbors volunteers help fix Suzanne Pritchard's leaky roof.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Servolution Network's semi-annual Good Neighbors Blitz recruits volunteers to serve their neighborhoods by making home repairs for locals in need. Blitzes tend to be a big event for Tri-County Reporter writers and photojournalists, who visit as many homes as possible to document the work being done. While we didn't visit every home being worked on during the April 12-13 blitz, we covered most of them and brought our readers stories from each location. Find out more about the people who sought help from Servolution and the volunteers who answered the call.



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VOLUME 1, NUMBER 47
Local, zone(s) 3 sections, 34 pages

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Top guns

Clay shooters win awards at Springtown Chamber's annual contest



KIM WARE | TRI-COUNTY REPORTER

Mark Murphey and his team — John Woods, Lacy Murphey, Rhett Goodnight and Lonnie Culley — won first place as a team at Springtown Area Chamber of Commerce's sporting clay shoot earlier this month at Fossil Pointe Sporting Grounds.



KIM WARE | TRI-COUNTY REPORTER

Casey Williams placed first in the Springtown Area Chamber of Commerce's 2024 sporting clay shoot with 93 points. Williams is pictured with Chamber Executive Director Terri Toone.



KIM WARE | TRI-COUNTY REPORTER

Springtown Area Chamber of Commerce hosted its 13th annual sporting clay shoot April 12 at Fossil Pointe Sporting Grounds in Decatur. The winners of the clay shoot were Stephen Kirkland in third place, Mark Murphey in second place and Casey Williams in first place. Mark Murphey, John Woods, Lacy Murphey, Rhett Goodnight and Lonnie Culley made up the champion team.



KIM WARE | TRI-COUNTY REPORTER

On April 12 in Decatur, Mark Murphey scored 92 points and took home second place at the Springtown Area Chamber of Commerce's annual clay shoot. He got his picture taken with Chamber Executive Director Terri Toone.

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When you only know one side of a story, you are only half-smart

Last year the Dallas Mavericks traded for Kyrie Irving. Though he had previously won an NBA Championship and was highly regarded as a talent, the trade was viewed with a great deal of skepticism and disdain by many of those in the media. One major sports broadcasting entity graded the trade as a "D" suggesting that Irving was tough to get along with, was inconsistent in his play, was a bad teammate, and because of his antics he would never be able to achieve the level of success he once had. It was their contention that the Mavs had thrown their assets overboard and taken on a player who would be nothing but a problem. He would never play well nor co-exist with the Mavs' superstar Luka Doncic. As a result, the team was going to flounder. Here we are a year later, and the Mavs are one of the



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.

hottest NBA teams, winning 16 or 18 games just prior to heading to the playoffs. Irving is playing at a true superstar level. What had historically been a poor rebounding and defensive team, had become one of the better teams in the league, seemingly making stops at will and rebounding every missed shot. Watching a game about two weeks before the season ended, the Mavs were down by three with 10 seconds left with the opposing team shooting two free throws. Miraculously, the player missed both charity shots, the Mavs rebounded and moved the ball up the

court to hit a three-point shot to send the game into overtime. In the extended period, the Mavs swept the opposition off the court. The telling part of the OT win was as soon as the final buzzer sounded, Irving and Doncic, the other Mavericks superstar, embraced each other at midcourt. This was not some ordinary, routine celebration; you could tell by their expressions they were excited and very pleased with what they had just accomplished. They put their arms on the shoulder of the other, and called over all their teammates to join them at center court so they could celebrate

as group. It was clear to anyone who saw this spontaneous emotion that the team was a tightknit group, and at the center of the leadership was Irving. Were the reports from last year wrong? It sure looks that way. No telling how many people were influenced by the reports and determined Irving was a "loser" who was going to be a problem, simply because someone had made some huge assumptions. The public nor the reporter truly knew what issues had caused problems with his prior teams nor if Irving was the one responsible. Even if he was to blame, it did not mean he was going to behave the same way in Dallas. We only knew one side of the story and assumed. Currently, anybody could look at Irving's play and body language and know he is excelling and happy to be a part of his team.

His team is happy he is there. We have the same sort of thing happening in our local politics. Citizens make hip pocket comments about issues, especially on social media, which are not based on anything but personal emotions and assumptions with no evidence or facts to support them. Seems like folks want to respond with vitriol rather than trying to talk with the opposition, becoming more informed with facts before making decisions on important issues. What would be the problem in listening to those with opposing views and trying to see if there is some degree of validity in their positions? Why not work to find solutions instead of causing conflict? Wouldn't it be wise to find the ground where both sides can be comfortable and then work toward answers? As we near election time,

let us be reflective and analytical as we formulate our decisions. Vote not just with our hearts, but use our brains to seek out facts, question bold assertions and do not take every representation as being true before investigation. Look at the whole picture, not just the part which is in focus because it is what you already believe. People, nor a community can grow if they don't have the courage to challenge in the light of day, their ideas and preconceived notions. Making assumptions about people or ideas is nothing but a recipe for failure. Ask the teams that have had to play the Mavs recently. Thought for the day: "It is useless to attempt to reason a man out of a thing he has never reasoned into." - Jonathan Swift. Until next time...I will keep ridin' the storm out. sam@hcnews.com

Proposition to ban propositions

Long lines outside the Primary Election Day polling sites are common here in Texas. Everyone knows what is to blame — those confusing ballot propositions. Voters frequently stated as they left the polls, "That was a lot of reading, and I didn't understand half of it!" or "I wish someone would have warned me about those propositions!" In the March primary, not only did the 13 propositions slow down the process, but they also generated much confusion. Many voters thought they were Constitutional Amendments. The truth is, the propositions are nothing more than an opinion poll for the Republican Party, paid for by Texas taxpayers. In other words — it is a waste of your tax dollars. Throughout the recent legislative session and this past primary season, pundits, lobbyists and politicians often referred to the Republican

primary proposition results, especially in arguments for school vouchers. They think this "statistic" strengthens their argument. However, these questions are deceptively biased and designed to get a yes vote. With only around 20% voter turnout and questions designed by the State Republican Executive Committee (SREC) to confirm some of its radical views, the results are hardly a positive referendum for anything. Since the early 1990s, every ballot proposition has passed with flying colors, and all but one by a super majority. In the world of research, it is extremely rare to obtain such resounding results that are truly representative of the entire population. Yet the Republican primary propositions? In 2022 all 10 of them resulted in 75-95% of respondents selecting "Yes" and in 2024 all 13 had at least 70% or higher selecting "Yes." For example, take Proposition 9



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.

(school vouchers) from 2022, which had 88% "Yes." Any expert researcher or professional surveyor would seriously question the accuracy of that high number. It is also unfair to contribute the results to all Republicans. Voter turnout in primaries is typically much lower than the total voter population. This year, statewide turnout was up slightly, and the percentage that answered "Yes" for the question dropped. The wording and structure of the voucher proposition is flawed. Professional surveyors suggest that to receive the most genuine responses, questions should be asked one-at-a-time. The

proposition fails to follow this fundamental rule of questionnaires by asking two questions at once and only allowing for a single "Yes" or "No" response. It stated, "Texas parents and guardians should have the right to select schools, whether public or private, for their children, and the funding should follow the student." The inclusion of "and" indicates that this prompt has two parts, yet there is no selection choice that allows for responding "Yes" to the first part and "No" to the second part. Quality questionnaires seek to eliminate any potential bias in their prompts. When words like "should"

are exclusively used, a reader may feel as if that is the way they should feel. They may feel obligated or pressured to answer in a certain way. An unbiased and more direct way to ask the proposition might have looked like this: "Texas parents should or should not be allowed to choose where their children attend school? Select 'Should' or 'Should Not.'" Then a separate question, "Taxpayer dollars should or should not follow a student to their parents' school of choice? Select 'Should' or 'Should Not.'" An alternative biased question could have been, "Do you support providing taxpayer funding of private schools with no accountability." Same subject (vouchers) but likely an entirely opposite result. The current Republican party leadership is deceptive, crafty and knows how to effectively weaponize shoddy research against legislators who refuse to do the bidding of a few billionaires. In truth,

that is all the propositions are: tools to be used against independent thinkers in the Texas House that actually represent their districts. Voucher advocates from Corey DeAngelis (lobbyist for Betsy Devos) to Gov. Greg Abbott have constantly used the misleading ballot proposition pseudo data from 2022 in their argument for an expensive voucher entitlement program that would raise taxes and defund public schools. Perhaps the Texas GOP should start paying for its own surveys, or better yet, this voter harassment should be outlawed. Texas needs to stop wasting taxpayer dollars for political manipulation. So, here is my proposition, as the Texas GOP would write it: "The State of Texas should stop the wasteful spending of your tax dollars on political opinion polls that create long wait lines at polling sites and only serve to bolster the views of the most extreme elements of the Republican Party."

April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month and Child Abuse Prevention Month in Azle

ZACH FREEMAN

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AZLE — The Azle City Council recognized two big issues at the beginning of a recent April 16 council meeting. April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month and Child Abuse Prevention Month. Mayor Alan Brundrett met with representatives from Freedom House of Parker County and the Alliance for Children and presented each with a written proclamation acknowledging the occasion. Freedom House is a non-profit focused on providing safety and services to domestic violence and sexual assault victims. The local branch of the organization is headquartered in Weatherford at 1149 Fort Worth Highway, and has a satellite office in Springtown at 121A E. First St. The organization has been recognized by the council in the past for its efforts as well. The Parker County location began out of a volunteer's house almost 30 years ago. Now the organization serves about 40 to 50 Parker County residents per month, many of them first-time visitors and some

coming from as far as Mineral Wells. Alliance for Children is a Tarrant County nonprofit that counsels and provides resources for abused youths. The organization works with local law enforcement and counselors to help protect kids, reduce trauma and bring abusers to justice. The group served its first child in August 1992 and since then, 70,000 kids have walked through its Fort Worth center located at 3609 Marquita Drive. "I just want to add, too, Alliance for Children is just a great organization. I had a chance to go to your open house when you had it in Lakeside," Mayor Brundrett said. "It just really cuts down on the trauma from kids that are being abused and everything. From counseling and interviewing at one stop instead of five different organizations interviewing the kids helps reduce that trauma. Then even going in and redoing those kids' bedrooms and decorations and things like that. It makes it a little bit easier for that child to be in different surroundings and not have all those



Julie Evans of Alliance for Children received a written proclamation from Mayor Brundrett for Child Abuse Prevention Month.

memories." The organization's Chief Executive Officer Julie Evans received the proclamation from Brundrett and spoke about the role the Azle Police Department serves for the

organization. "Our county is growing, and the reality is, unfortunately, there is nobody that's void from this. We see people from every town, every walk of life," Evans said. "The



Nishna Mendez and Britney Oaks of Freedom House received a written proclamation from Mayor Brundrett for Sexual Assault Awareness Month.

organization) has seen big growth in the last couple years. I just want to say, your police department here is stellar to work with. I was reaching out to my team that works with your detectives

specifically and I was like, 'anything I need to know as I see Chief Hall?' You should read the texts they sent back, just about the teamwork, the camaraderie and just the dedication they show."

Community rallies behind beloved former AISD employee fighting breast cancer

JOHN ENGLISH

Contributing writer

Amanda Allphin has always been there when people need her.

A former assistant nurse at Azle High School who has put three children — Hunter, Haylee and Hank — through the Azle ISD, Allphin has assisted with everything from athletic events to bond elections and many other activities along the way.

But now she could use some help of her own, and the Azle community has responded.

"I was really kind of shocked because we've always been the kind of family that helps people," Allphin said. "Whenever I was first told, I was just amazed. I'm just in awe. Seeing the love and support and hearing people say 'Let Azle help you, since you've helped so many people,' means so much to me and my family."

On Feb. 13, Allphin was di-

agnosed with Stage 2 breast cancer for which she is currently receiving chemotherapy, and Dinosaur Land Children's Museum in Azle is holding a fundraiser to help defray Allphin's medical costs.

Sarah Martinez-Cantu, co-creator of the Dinosaur Land Children's Museum, said when she learned Allphin was fighting breast cancer, she knew she needed to help.

"We opened a business in 2017, and her family has been coming to every business we've owned since then," Martinez-Cantu said. "They've always been really loyal. When I found out she had cancer this year, I wanted to support her in her time of need. When we were new, they helped us. Now that she is having trouble, we'd like to give back to her."

The Dinosaur Land Children's Museum is located at 12175 Jacksboro Highway, Fort Worth, TX, 76135 and the two-day event will be held

between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m. April 27-28.

If visitors wear a pink ribbon or tell the front cashier they are there to support Amanda, the museum will donate that park admission to Allphin.

For Allphin, who remains in good spirits as her treatment moves forward, said she is up for the fight.

"I'm doing well," Allphin said. "Just staying strong. I do have my days. I will get really tired, but I have not had any major side effects, like getting sick and stuff like that just yet. But chemo is going to last until at least September. I'm in a good positive place because I have a big army here in Azle."

Part of that army is her former employer, the Azle Independent School District, and Azle ISD Superintendent Todd Smith said the Allphins have meant a lot to the district.

"Amanda is a former employee here, but she has

always been a strong supporter of Azle ISD, her and her family," Smith said. "Her husband (Koy) and his family are from here, and Amanda had a daughter who graduated a couple of years ago who was an outstanding athlete, and just a great student and pleasure to be around. Then, of course, she has a son who's in the eighth grade, so they've been a big part of this district."

Smith said he is not at all surprised by the level of support for Allphin.

"It follows with what we've seen in the past," Smith said. "The Azle community as a whole is good about coming together in times of need for their families, and I think this is just another example of that. The community is coming together to show support for this family because she has been very supportive of Azle ISD as a parent and an employee."

Smith said he hopes Allphin realizes just how much he and the students, teachers and staff within the Azle ISD are behind her.

"I think it's extremely important that she knows," Smith said. "She has always been there for us in times of need, and always been a supporter of Azle in different ways. She has always cared a great deal about the school district and our efforts. So I think it's great that many of our folks are rallying behind her to show support to her and her family. She has definitely been there for others."

Allphin, whose son, Hank, and his friends wear pink every Tuesday when she receives her chemo treatments, became emotional when she described what the communi-



COURTESY PHOTO

Haylee Allphin (left) with her mom, Amanda Allphin at a recent mother/daughter day event at Tarleton State University.

ty and district support meant to her.

"They mean the world," Allphin said. "It was the hardest thing to leave the school district this year. I'm on medical leave, of course, but I now work at Medical City-Alliance. I did that to help push further in my schooling and medical knowledge and be more hands-on. I've always had a heart for helping people."

Allphin's oldest son, Hunter, was a dedicated member of the Azle High School band and is now a band director himself at Burleson ISD.

Allphin has a long road ahead, with treatment that includes "a lot of chemotherapy," followed by a double mastectomy, and then preventative chemo followed by

reconstruction.

The Azle woman said she is extremely grateful for the fundraising event.

"Having this benefit will really help since I am not working," Allphin said. "Plus I have a kid at home still and medical bills. Then there is summer stuff, and I don't want to take a lot away from him (her son Hank). He's very involved and active in sports."

The Azle resident has been in the medical field since 1999, and when it comes to her own prognosis, she is confident in her course of treatment.

"I should be able to beat it," Allphin said. "It's just going to be a very long fight. No, there's no should. I will beat it... this has taught me that I'm stronger than I thought."



COURTESY PHOTO

From l-r: Amanda's oldest son Hunter, Amanda, her son Hank, her daughter Haylee, and her husband Koy Allphin.

Spotlight on BUSINESS

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OBITUARIES

Sammy Brookshier 1937-2024

Sammy Don Brookshier of Azle, 86, passed peacefully from this life into the loving arms of our Lord April 13, 2024. He was a beloved father, husband and friend who will be deeply missed by all who knew him.

Celebration of Sam's life will be at 1 p.m., Saturday, April 27, at Victory Christian Center, 737 Boyd Road in Azle. He will be laid to rest at White Oak Cemetery in White Oak, where a small, private family service will be held at a later time. Funeral arrangements are under the direction of Biggers Funeral Home, 6100 Azle Ave., Fort Worth, Texas 76135.

Sam was born to Henry Sanford and Gladys Brookshier Dec. 12, 1937, in Gladewater. He grew up in White Oak and graduated from White Oak High School in 1956. After high school, Sam enlisted in the U.S. Navy where he served his country for four years. After completing his service, Sam attended Kilgore Junior College and then Texas Tech University, graduating in 1964 with a degree in industrial engineering. He enjoyed a successful career and the respect of his colleagues, retiring with the U.S. government at General Dynamics in Fort Worth.

Sam was an avid golfer and sports enthusiast. If he were not on a golf course, you could find him watching



a sports game. He loved his alma mater and especially watching Texas Tech football.

Throughout his life, Sam cherished God and family above all else. His love, guidance, and unwavering support will be treasured by his family and friends forever.

Sam was preceded in death by his parents, Henry Sanford and Gladys Brookshier; wife of 49 years, Jeri Brookshier; and sister Jeanine Barnhill.

He is survived by his wife of 11 years, Betty Brookshier; sister, Betty Chronister; son, Bruce Brookshier and wife, Janie Brookshier; daughter, Tammy Sharp and husband, Jared Sharp; grandchildren, Kailey, Brandon, Morgan, Aleshia, Tony and Ken; and many more loving family members.

The Tri-County Reporter, Thursday April 25, 2024

Emily Magnuson 1952-2024

Emily (Seaberry) Magnuson passed away at home Tuesday, April 16, 2024, in Azle at the age of 71.

Memorial Service is at 11 a.m. Saturday, May 4, at White's Azle Chapel.

In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to the Azle Animal Shelter at 727 Park St. in Azle.

Emily was born May 24, 1952, in Bryan and grew up in Azle. Emily was known for her love of family, especially her children Brian, Lara and Brady.

Emily enjoyed spending time in the kitchen, experimenting with new recipes making dishes for family and friends. She loved to travel, trying new restaurants, her garden, going to movies and followed several chefs on networks and social media.

Emily's educational journey included attending Azle High School (class of 1970) and Baylor University where she earned her Bachelor of Science degree in home economics in May 1974.

She pursued a career as a teacher starting at the Corsicana State Home in Corsicana. Emily taught content mastery at Weatherford High School in Weatherford for 13 years, and finished her career from 2006 - 2012 teaching family and consumer sciences at Azle High School in Azle. She retired from teaching in 2012 and enjoyed her retirement until God called her home in April 2024.



Emily was proud of her family and her family history. She was a descendant of the Tucker and Woody families as heritage from her mother, Bessie Lou Tucker (Seaberry). She was the treasurer for the Silver Creek Heritage Society and the ongoing support to the historic Tucker House on Tucker Road in Weatherford. Emily and her husband Jim were married at the Tucker House in July 2004.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Bessie Lou Seaberry, John Seaberry; and her older brother, John Allen Seaberry.

Emily leaves behind her beloved husband, Jim; her children, Brian, Lara, and Brady; and her older brother, Steve.

May Emily be remembered for her loving years with her husband Jim, dedication to her family, passion for cooking and her proud family heritage.

The Tri-County Reporter, Thursday April 25, 2024

Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor - On April 11, the Vintage Motor Car Club of America toured the Azle High School Automotive Technology Center. We had individuals from all over the USA with us on this tour. What an amazing visit we had!

Dr. Suzanne Murr, Mr. Bob Herring and Mr. Z really laid out the red carpet for us. The students were also wonderful with many questions and comments about our cars. Many had never heard of or seen a 1931 Packard, or a 1931 Marmon V-16, or a 1969 Oldsmobile Toronado, or a 1969 Pontiac GTO and many others. It was a great experience for the students and for us owners. We love talking about our cars.

Everyone on the tour was amazed at how well the center was equipped with new

equipment and technology. We were shown how some of the equipment operated.

We were given explanations of the teaching methodology to take the students through the program and an automobile "bumper to bumper."

The citizens of Azle, the Azle ISD, the administration and the students should be proud of the Automotive Technology Center.

Since a lockdown happened during our visit I think we will call the year's tour "The Lockdown 2024 Tour."

A big THANK YOU and shout out to everyone who made this happen!

Leonard and Debbie Wheeler
Bill and Betty Shores
Tour Directors

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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.

Pastor:
Brandon Hall
Ashley Hall

Sunday School 9:45 AM
Sunday Worship 10:45 AM
Evening Worship 6:30 PM
Wednesday Bible Study 7:00 PM

NELSON CEMETERY ASSOCIATION
Annual Business Meeting & Lunch
Sunday, May 19 at 11:00 a.m.
Please bring a covered dish for a potluck style lunch. Ice and tea will be provided.

LOCATION:
Nelson Cemetery 1351 Nelson Rd., Azle TX 76020
Come and Join Us!!!

CEMETERY CLEAN-UP DAY
Saturday, May 4 at 9:00 a.m.
Any help would be appreciated

For further information, call Debbie at 817-228-4200
email: d.vesti1@gmail.com or selnix@peoplepc.com

If unable to attend, you may send donations to:
NELSON CEMETERY ASSOC.
Debbie Vesti, Secretary/Treasurer
4736 Washburn Ave. Fort Worth, TX 76107

Galbreath-Pickard FUNERAL CHAPEL
817-594-2747 • FAX 817-596-7803
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... ATTEND THE CHURCH OF YOUR CHOICE THIS SUNDAY

<p>THE ABBEY CHURCH Pastor: Paul Brownback 10400 Jacksboro Hwy 817-238-1404 www.TheAbbeyChurch.com Morning Worship..... 10:30 AM Community Groups..... Various Times</p> <p>ASH CREEK BAPTIST CHURCH Pastor: Dr. G. Wesley Shotwell 300 South Stewart St. 817-444-3219 www.ashcreekbc.org Sunday School..... 9:30 AM Contemporary Worship-TMP..... 10:45 AM Traditional Worship..... 10:45 AM Evening Worship/Youth Refuge..... 6:00 PM Wednesday Evening..... 6:15 PM</p> <p>AZLE FIRST ASSEMBLY OF GOD Rev. Joshua Lowrance 1020 S.E. Parkway, Azle 817-237-4903 Sunday School..... 9:30 AM Morning Worship..... 10:30 AM Wednesday Evening..... 7:00 PM</p> <p>COMMUNITY BIBLE FELLOWSHIP CHURCH Pastor - Alton Davis 817-521-4510 1405 Reynolds Rd., Azle 817-444-7117 Directions: 730 N. to 1542 .5 mi. right on Cardinal, left on Reynolds Sunday School..... 9:45 AM Morning Worship..... 11:00 AM Sunday Evening..... 6:00 PM Wednesday Evening..... 7:00 PM</p>	<p>AZLE CHRISTIAN CHURCH DISCIPLES OF CHRIST Interim Minister Rev. Russell Clark, Family Life Minister Emerson Braun 117 Church St. • 817-444-3527 Sunday School..... 10:00 AM Morning Worship..... 11:00 AM</p> <p>CORNERSTONE COMMUNITY CHURCH 2233 Hwy 199 E., Springtown 817-221-LIFE (5433) Sunday Worship Service..... 10:00 AM Wednesday..... 7:00 PM</p> <p>CROSSROADS BAPTIST CHURCH Pastor - Jon Baker Corner FM 730S & FM 1886 817-755-0279 Transportation Available Worship Service..... 10:30 AM Wed. Prayer Service..... 7:00 PM</p> <p>THE EDGE CHURCH - AZLE 1313 S.E. Pkwy, Azle 817-237-4822 Missouri Synod "Love God - Serve Others - Share Jesus" Traditional Worship..... 9:30 AM Contemporary Worship..... 11:00 AM</p> <p>FIRST METHODIST CHURCH OF AZLE Pastor: Rev. Raymond Gilman 200 Church St., Azle 817-444-3323 Morn. Worship..... 8:30 & 10:45 AM Sunday School..... 9:45 AM Youth..... 5:00 PM Sun & 6:30 PM Wed</p>	<p>GRACEPOINTE CHURCH 4110 E. Hwy 199, Springtown Pastor: Timothy McKeown 817-221-5683 gracepointesbc.org Sunday School..... 9:45 am Sunday Service..... 11:00 AM Wednesday Bible Study..... 6:00 PM</p> <p>HOLY TRINITY CATHOLIC CHURCH 800 Highcrest Dr. - Azle 817-444-3063 Saturday..... 5:00 PM Sunday..... 9:00 AM Sunday..... 11 AM (Spanish) Daily Mass (M, T, Th, F)..... 8:00 AM Wednesday Mass Religious ED..... 6:30 PM Confessions..... Sat 4 PM</p> <p>HOPE LUTHERAN CHURCH ELCA 4795 E. Hwy 199 - Reno 817-221-HOPE Follow us on Facebook for streaming services Sunday School..... 9:00 AM Traditional Service..... 10:00 AM</p> <p>SOLID ROCK BIBLE CHURCH 591 S. Reno Rd., Springtown, Texas 76082 Pastor - Bill Gay - 817-304-7443 Coffee and Donuts..... 9:00 AM Sunday School..... 9:30 AM Morning Worship..... 10:30 AM Children's Church After Music Service Wed. Prayer Meeting..... 6:30 PM Wed. Bible Study..... 7:00 PM</p>	<p>LEGACY CHURCH Assembly of God Church Pastor: Gary D. Veazey Hwy. 199 & Jaybird Lane 817-221-2983 Morning Worship..... 9:15 & 11:00 AM Kidz Zone..... 9:15 & 11:00 AM Weds Evening Legacy Group Legacy Youth, Kids All Services..... 7:00 PM</p> <p>THE RANCH CHRISTIAN COWBOY CHURCH Pastor: Greg Slankard 7955 Reed Rd., Azle 682-327-7082 www.TheRanchCCC.org Sunday School 9:30 AM • Worship 10:00 AM Weds 7:00 pm • Thurs Potluck 6:30 pm</p> <p>SILVER CREEK METHODIST CHURCH Pastor: Bill Killough 2200 Church Rd., Azle 817-444-1382 www.silvercreekmc.org Sunday School 9:30 AM • Worship 10:30 AM</p> <p>SILVER CREEK BAPTIST CHURCH Pastor: Jay Ditty Minister of Music: David Musick Corner FM 730 S. & Veal Station Rd. Church 817-444-2325 www.silvercreekbc.org Sunday School..... 9:45 AM Morning Worship..... 10:50 AM Evening Worship..... 6:00 PM Wed. Prayer Service..... 7:00 PM</p>	<p>THE WORD@LAKESIDE CHURCH OF GOD 9396 FM 1886 Fort Worth, TX 76135 817-237-5500 thewordatlakeside.com Pastors: Brandon and Kelly Bohannon Worship Pastor: Christen Moody Family Life and Young Adult Pastors: Jodie and Mark James, Kids Pastor: Katie Pearson, Student Pastors: Taylor and Sheridan Tomlin, Creative Directors: Logan and Carrie Edwards, Connections Coordinators: Preston and Ashley Larrew</p> <p>Equip Sunday School at the WORD..... 9:30 AM Empower Worship at the WORD..... 10:45 AM Kids at the WORD..... 10:45 AM PreK at the WORD..... 10:45 AM Emanate at the WORD (Special Needs Ministry)..... 10:45 AM Nursery at the WORD..... 10:45 AM Young Adults at the WORD..... 6:00 PM Wednesdays Adult Bible Class..... 7:00 PM The WORD Students (6th-12th grades)..... 6:30 PM Awana Kids at the WORD..... 6:30 PM Life at the WORD Life Groups Various Times</p>
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A church alive is worth the drive! For more information or rates on listing your church, call Jessica at 817-270-3340

Parker County 2024 appraisal notices to be released

SUBMITTED BY PARKER COUNTY APPRAISAL DISTRICT

Property owners will soon receive their 2024 Notice of Appraised Value from the Parker County Appraisal District (PCAD).

However, not all property owners will receive a notice this year. This year, PCAD mailed approximately 50,000 notices to property owners compared to 85,000 last year.

All property owners have the right to file a protest. For most, the deadline to

file a protest is May 15. Property owners can file a protest online at www.parkercad.org, in person or by mail at 1108 Santa Fe Drive, Weatherford, TX 76086. Mailed protests must have a postmark date on or before the deadline. PCAD is open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Additional information about protesting can be found by visiting the "Protest Process" menu located on the left side of PCAD's website at www.parkercad.org.

Dove mortality occurring across Texas due to Trichomoniasis

SUBMITTED ITEM

The National Wildlife Health Center has confirmed several doves collected across Texas, including the Trans Pecos and Rolling Plains, tested positive for Trichomoniasis.

Trichomoniasis is an infectious disease affecting birds caused by a protozoan (single-celled) parasite, Trichomonas gallinae. It affects mostly pigeons and doves, but other species, such as finches, may also become infected. In addition, birds of prey feeding on infected doves may also become infected. The disease does not always cause mortality. Trichomonas gallinae does not pose a human health risk.

Generally, sick birds appear weak and have a "fluffed up" appearance. The parasite causes inflammation of the linings of the crop and mouth. As the disease progresses, affected birds have difficulty swallowing or breathing as the inflammation creates plaques which affect the airways and esophagus. Food and water sources, such as backyard bird feeders and birdbaths, can become contaminated from the mouths of infected birds.

TPWD recommends practicing appropriate biosecurity protocols to reduce wildlife contact with backyard flocks. If landowners see sick or dead doves or pigeons on their property, TPWD recommends discontinuing the use of bird feeders or bird baths until affected birds are gone from the area.

As a general best-practice, all bird feeders and baths should be cleaned frequently using a weak solution of household bleach (10% solution of sodium hypochlorite, or one part bleach to nine parts water). Feeders and baths should be rinsed well and dried before re-use. It is recommended to periodically clean and disinfect bird feeders and bird baths, even if sick or dead birds have not been seen on property, as this can help prevent future disease outbreaks.

Use bird feeders that prevent the seed from getting wet. Bird seed exposed to rain or that becomes wet provides a more suitable environment for parasite survival.

Those who locate birds with signs consistent with Trichomoniasis should contact their local TPWD wildlife biologist.

PRAYER

FROM PAGE A1

Azle High School Chorale.

A variety of delicious Jason's Deli lunch boxes and waters will be available free of charge for those attending.

The program, as you would expect, is anchored in prayer led by community leaders, with a keynote address preceding the time of prayer. It also fittingly includes a beautiful solo by Catherine Carlson of the song "The Prayer."

Roger Jackson will deliver this year's keynote address. A former Fort Worth police officer, Jackson eventually became a special agent with the United States Secret Service. He served under Presidents Ford, Carter and Reagan.

After transitioning from the Secret Service, Jackson moved into executive security, directing the oversight of protection, threat analysis and complex investigations for U.S. and international concerns. This led to overseeing security for the Bass family of Fort Worth.

He will be speaking about the role prayer has had in his life over his varied

careers.

David Shaffer, National Day of Prayer in Azle chair, remarked, "This year's keynote speaker is one of the most incredible people I have met. His resumé reads like the bio of a lead character in a movie, and he credits the Lord with anything good he has done. Roger's balance of confidence with humility is refreshing. I can't wait for people to hear him."

Shaffer added, "One of the things I love about this event is that it is approachable. While distinctly Christian, the people who are leading various parts of the program have all been asked ahead of time. No one else will be asked to lead a prayer at the event. When I first started working with this event, I often heard from people who did not attend because they were concerned about having to pray in front of other people. When I told them that would not happen, I could see them instantly relax. We want people to enjoy a special, stress-free, unifying and highly encouraging community event."

Everyone is invited to attend this free, annual Azle-area event. No pre-registration is required, and all are welcome.

May 4 Election

Sample ballots

Tarrant County

Joint General and Special Elections Elecciones Generales y Especiales Conjuntas
May 4, 2024 4 de mayo del 2024
Tarrant County Condado de Tarrant

Page 1 of 1 Página 1 de 1
Precinct 4065-068 Precinto 4065-068

Please use a black or blue ink pen to mark your ballot. To vote for your choice in each contest, completely fill in the box next to your choice.
 Favor de usar una pluma de tinta negra o azul para marcar su boleta. Para votar por su selección en cada carrera, llene el espacio cuadrado a la izquierda de su selección.

Tarrant Appraisal District General Election
Elección General de Tarrant Appraisal District

Board of Directors - Place 1
 Consejo, Lugar 1

Sayeda Bilqees Syed
 Trae Fowler
 Eric Morris

Board of Directors - Place 2
 Consejo, Lugar 2

Callie Rigney
 Eric B. Crile

Board of Directors - Place 3
 Consejo, Lugar 3

Chuck Kelley
 Lee Henderson
 Matt Bryant

Azle Independent School District General Election
Elección General del Distrito Escolar Independiente de Azle

School Trustee - Place 4
 Regente Escolar - Colocar Cuatro

Brandon Geary
 Kelsey Massey

School Trustee - Place 3
 Regente Escolar - Colocar Tres

Tim Brown

Azle ISD

GENERAL ELECTION
May 4, 2024
Parker County, Texas
 ELECCIÓN GENERAL
 4 de mayo de 2024
 Condado de Parker, Texas

Precinct - B56
 Precinto - B56

Page 1 of 1
Página 1 de 1

Please use a black or blue ink pen to mark your ballot. To vote for your choice in each contest, completely fill in the box next to your choice.
 Use un bolígrafo negro o azul para marcar su boleta. Para votar por su selección en cada contienda, rellene completamente la casilla provista a la izquierda de su selección.

PARKER COUNTY APPRAISAL DISTRICT
 DISTRITO DE EVALUACIÓN DEL CONDADO DE PARKER

PARKER COUNTY APPRAISAL DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTOR - PLACE 1
 DISTRITO DE EVALUACIÓN DEL CONDADO DE PARKER
 JUNTA DIRECTIVA - LUGAR 1
 Vote for none or one
 Vote por ninguno o uno

DONNA DICKINSON

PARKER COUNTY APPRAISAL DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTOR - PLACE 2
 DISTRITO DE EVALUACIÓN DEL CONDADO DE PARKER
 JUNTA DIRECTIVA - LUGAR 2
 Vote for none or one
 Vote por ninguno o uno

WILLIAM S. SHATFORD

PARKER COUNTY APPRAISAL DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTOR - PLACE 3
 DISTRITO DE EVALUACIÓN DEL CONDADO DE PARKER
 JUNTA DIRECTIVA - LUGAR 3
 Vote for none or one
 Vote por ninguno o uno

JOE TISON
 MONICA GRIZZARD

AZLE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
 DISTRITO ESCOLAR INDEPENDIENTE DE AZLE

AZLE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
School Trustee - Place 3
 DISTRITO ESCOLAR INDEPENDIENTE DE AZLE Regente Escolar - Colocar tres
 Vote for none or one
 Vote por ninguno o uno

Tim Brown

AZLE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
School Trustee - Place 4
 DISTRITO ESCOLAR INDEPENDIENTE DE AZLE Regente Escolar - Colocar cuatro
 Vote for none or one
 Vote por ninguno o uno

Brandon Geary
 Kelsey Massey

Walnut Creek to hold second public hearing on drought plan

MADELYN EDWARDS
springtownreporter@tricountyreporter.com

SPRINGTOWN — Walnut Creek Special Utility District's board of directors decided to give customers another chance to ask questions or comment on the Water Conservation and Drought Contingency Plan updates.

The conservation and drought contingency plan includes data about the district and instructions on what to do during water shortages. The last time it was updated was in August 2019. Currently, the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality requires retail public water suppliers with over 3,300 connections, irrigation water providers and wholesale public water suppliers to submit updated plans every five years. This year's deadline is May 1, according to TCEQ's website.

Walnut Creek SUD already had one public hearing on the Water Conservation and Drought Contingency Plan in March, but the board decided to call for a special meeting at 4 p.m. April 29 to give customers a second opportunity to share their thoughts.

Board members approved calling for an additional public hearing after customer Jane Galvin claimed that not all the changes were reviewed in the March meeting, that pages in the latter half of the document weren't covered.

"It is an injustice to the customers of the water

district not to really have the ability to review and speak out about pages 15 through 33," Galvin said to the board at the April 15 meeting.

The changes to the plan consist of updated information, including numbers consistent to the district's growth as well as grammar and wording. The following details were also changed to say:

- The SUD plans to increase the water treatment plant's capacity by four million gallons per day by the end of the year. The district is also looking into building a plant on Eagle Mountain Lake in the next five to eight years.

- In case of an emergency, Walnut Creek SUD will get water from the Community Water Supply Corporation and the city of Springtown.

- When drought response stages are implemented, the SUD will notify the public using two of these three options: posting to its website, sending out a mass notification or placing the notice in public areas.

- There is no longer an exception to the water use restrictions during droughts for establishing new hydro mulch, grass sod or grass seed.

- For Stage 2 water restrictions, wholesale customers will be notified and instructed to implement the drought measures.

The SUD board plans to approve the Water Conservation and Drought Contingency Plan during the April 29 meeting.

May 4 Election

Sample ballots

Azle ISD/City of Azle

GENERAL ELECTION
May 4, 2024
Parker County, Texas
ELECCIÓN GENERAL
4 de mayo de 2024
Condado de Parker, Texas

Please use a black or blue ink pen to mark your ballot. To vote for your choice in each contest, completely fill in the box next to your choice.

Use un bolígrafo negro o azul para marcar su boleta. Para votar por su selección en cada contienda, rellene completamente la casilla provista a la izquierda de su selección.

PARKER COUNTY APPRAISAL DISTRICT
DISTRITO DE EVALUACIÓN DEL CONDADO DE PARKER

PARKER COUNTY APPRAISAL DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTOR - PLACE 1
DISTRITO DE EVALUACIÓN DEL CONDADO DE PARKER

JUNTA DIRECTIVA - LUGAR 1

Vote for none or one
Vote por ninguno o uno

DONNA DICKINSON

PARKER COUNTY APPRAISAL DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTOR - PLACE 2
DISTRITO DE EVALUACIÓN DEL CONDADO DE PARKER

JUNTA DIRECTIVA - LUGAR 2

Vote for none or one
Vote por ninguno o uno

WILLIAM S. SHATFORD

PARKER COUNTY APPRAISAL DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTOR - PLACE 3
DISTRITO DE EVALUACIÓN DEL CONDADO DE PARKER

JUNTA DIRECTIVA - LUGAR 3

Vote for none or one
Vote por ninguno o uno

JOE TISON

MONICA GRIZZARD

Precinct 400-BS14
Precinto 400-BS14

Page 1 of 2

Página 1 de 2

AZLE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
DISTRITO ESCOLAR INDEPENDIENTE DE AZLE

AZLE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
School Trustee - Place 3
DISTRITO ESCOLAR INDEPENDIENTE DE AZLE

Regente Escolar - Lugar tres

Vote for none or one
Vote por ninguno o uno

Tim Brown

AZLE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
School Trustee - Place 4
DISTRITO ESCOLAR INDEPENDIENTE DE AZLE

Regente Escolar - Lugar cuatro

Vote for none or one
Vote por ninguno o uno

Brandon Geary

Kelsey Massey

CITY OF AZLE
CIUDAD DE AZLE

CITY OF AZLE
CITY COUNCIL PLACE 1
CIUDAD DE AZLE

Concejal, Lugar 1

Vote for none or one
Vote por ninguno o uno

Derrick Nelson

CITY OF AZLE
CITY COUNCIL PLACE 2
CIUDAD DE AZLE

Concejal, Lugar 2

Vote for none or one
Vote por ninguno o uno

Amy Estes

Jake Falcon

GENERAL ELECTION
May 4, 2024
Parker County, Texas
ELECCIÓN GENERAL
4 de mayo de 2024
Condado de Parker, Texas

CITY OF AZLE
CITY COUNCIL PLACE 5
CIUDAD DE AZLE

Concejal, Lugar 5

Vote for none or one
Vote por ninguno o uno

Rouel Rothenberger

Precinct 400-BS14
Precinto 400-BS14

Page 2 of 2

Página 2 de 2

Senior Spotlight

JACKIE "JJ" JOY
Special to the Tri-County Reporter

AZLE — There is fun for all at the Azle Adult Activity Center! You are invited to join us at 601 Southeast Parkway in Ash Creek Park for fun, food and fellowship. If you like competition, we have lots of competitive games and activities available.

Thank you, John Webster, for hosting us at your Webster Ministries program Friday, April 12. We had so much fun seeing all the wonderful music videos and being your live audience for the Facebook program. Having Ms. Elle Grey and Cowboy Dave join us was a thrill, and you even provided pizza!

Earlene Gardner is doing a great job getting folks involved in the craft department. The various quilts are coming along great, and

we are anxious to see the end products. The things being made for the Indoor Sale are looking great as well. Thank you, too, Georgene Appling for using your crocheting skills.

Mark your calendar for our Open House and Indoor Sale Friday, May 3 starting at 9:30 a.m. Various companies will be on hand to offer information about things that concern our "seasoned" population. Door prizes will be given away followed by a nutritious meal from Meals On Wheels, Inc., of Tarrant County. (Please pre-register for a meal by 9:30 a.m. the morning before.)

The Silver Sisters will perform for us again this year so please watch for other upcoming events.

For further information, call 817-444-0070 or come see us at 601 Southeast Parkway in Ash Creek Park.

Azle ISD/Walnut Creek SUD

GENERAL ELECTION
May 4, 2024
Parker County, Texas
ELECCIÓN GENERAL
4 de mayo de 2024
Condado de Parker, Texas

Please use a black or blue ink pen to mark your ballot. To vote for your choice in each contest, completely fill in the box next to your choice.

Use un bolígrafo negro o azul para marcar su boleta. Para votar por su selección en cada contienda, rellene completamente la casilla provista a la izquierda de su selección.

PARKER COUNTY APPRAISAL DISTRICT
DISTRITO DE EVALUACIÓN DEL CONDADO DE PARKER

PARKER COUNTY APPRAISAL DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTOR - PLACE 1
DISTRITO DE EVALUACIÓN DEL CONDADO DE PARKER

JUNTA DIRECTIVA - LUGAR 1

Vote for none or one
Vote por ninguno o uno

DONNA DICKINSON

PARKER COUNTY APPRAISAL DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTOR - PLACE 2
DISTRITO DE EVALUACIÓN DEL CONDADO DE PARKER

JUNTA DIRECTIVA - LUGAR 2

Vote for none or one
Vote por ninguno o uno

WILLIAM S. SHATFORD

PARKER COUNTY APPRAISAL DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTOR - PLACE 3
DISTRITO DE EVALUACIÓN DEL CONDADO DE PARKER

JUNTA DIRECTIVA - LUGAR 3

Vote for none or one
Vote por ninguno o uno

JOE TISON

MONICA GRIZZARD

Precinct 105-BS18
Precinto 105-BS18

Page 1 of 1

Página 1 de 1

AZLE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
DISTRITO ESCOLAR INDEPENDIENTE DE AZLE

AZLE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
School Trustee - Place 3
DISTRITO ESCOLAR INDEPENDIENTE DE AZLE

Regente Escolar - Colocar tres

Vote for none or one
Vote por ninguno o uno

Tim Brown

AZLE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
School Trustee - Place 4
DISTRITO ESCOLAR INDEPENDIENTE DE AZLE

Regente Escolar - Colocar cuatro

Vote for none or one
Vote por ninguno o uno

Brandon Geary

Kelsey Massey

WALNUT CREEK SPECIAL UTILITY DISTRICT
DISTRITO DE SERVICIOS ESPECIALES DE WALNUT CREEK

Walnut Creek Special Utility District
Director

Directora del Distrito de Servicios Especiales de Walnut Creek

Vote for none, one or two
Vote por ninguno, uno o dos

Robin L Corder

Bill Roesicke

Mark Green

David DeSoto

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TEA
FROM PAGE A1

per year.”

The Texas Tribune also reported that the TEA will need about 4,000 fewer human scorers to grade STAAR tests than last year while using an automated scoring engine. TEA claims the scoring engine is not artificial intelligence because it doesn't use progressive learning algorithms, but The Texas Tribune reported the technology is a "building block of artificial intelligence chatbots."

"I firmly believe that you cannot replace the authenticity of a professional teacher contracted by TEA, grading written answers," Springtown Independent School District Superintendent Shane Strickland said. "There is such a negative view of the STAAR exam already, and I believe that this form of grading will only make that worse."

The change in how tests are graded has been brewing since at least August 2022 when the TEA commissioner testified to the Texas House of Representatives Public Education Committee that automated scoring is necessary. Then the change was announced, and a scoring process document was released in the latter half of 2023.

According to the Scoring Process for STAAR Constructed Responses document, hybrid scoring is when an automated scoring engine grades the students' test responses, but at least 25% of test answers for each grade/subject and course are graded by human scorers. The exception to this new rule is that the Spanish STAAR is only graded by humans.

"This set of second scores by human scorers is used to monitor the (automated scoring engine) scoring and is similar to what is done in human scoring to examine how often scorers agree with one another," reads the scoring process document.

TEA detailed in the document how humans and the automated scoring engine are trained to grade the test answers, and the results are "monitored daily to ensure that scores consistently align to the scoring rubrics." Human raters, who are required to have a college education and teaching experience, are assigned a specific grade-level/subject or course depending on their background and must demonstrate that they understand the rubric. Those who don't pass the qualification exam aren't allowed to grade STAAR tests.

The automated scoring engine is supposed to mimic how human scorers would grade the students' responses and "agree with human scorers at the same rate human scorers agree with one another," according to the scoring process document. The TEA slideshow reported that 3,000 student responses from field testing graded by humans were used to program the engine.

The engine determines how confident it is that the score it develops would be the same one given if graded by a human. It also assigns "condition codes" if the student response is blank, doesn't use enough words, duplicates text, is in a different language, uses vocabulary that wasn't in the training or includes language patterns that could be

off-topic or off-task, among other situations. Human scorers grade responses if the engine gives a condition code to a student response or it has low confidence in its score.

"The low confidence responses are often those responses that are on the border between two score points," the scoring process document stated. "The purpose of this routing is to ensure that unusual or borderline responses receive fair and accurate scores."

A school district's testing staff can request that a student's open-ended response to a test question be scored again by a human for a fee if there are concerns. The fee is waived if the score changes during this review.

Strickland said "extensive research" should take place before implementation.

According to TEA's slideshow, the agency conducted a study using data from STAAR Spring 2023 before starting hybrid scoring and also applied the technology on STAAR December 2023 results. Both cases show the automated scoring engine is functioning the way it's supposed to, according to TEA.

"As superintendent, I want what's best for our students, and I just don't know that this is one of those things," Strickland said. "As always at Springtown ISD, our students are more than just a score."

Azle ISD's Superintendent Todd Smith also weighed in, expressing his concerns about artificial intelligence in education.

"AI is growing in use and has its place; however, with assessing student learning, there is too much at stake, especially with the importance TEA places on testing," Smith said. "Our teachers put in a lot of time and effort teaching, ensuring our students learn. Our students deserve the opportunity to show what they have learned."

Over the last few years, states have gradually adopted legislation and official guidelines for the use of AI in schools and in other sectors of life. According to a February 2024 state-by-state legislative snapshot from international law firm Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner LLP, only 17 U.S. states have enacted legislation concerning AI overall.

Over the last few years, some forms of AI and hybrid systems have been welcomed as a useful in-classroom tool. According to an October 2023 Forbes Advisor survey 41% of educators have utilized automated grading and feedback systems, 51% have utilized AI-powered educational games, and 60% of educators use AI in their classrooms. While many recognize its place in education, Smith worries that moving to integrate AI into certain roles too quickly may ultimately disadvantage some students or not give them the attention they deserve.

"If AI can support both efforts (assessing student learning and giving students the opportunity to show what they have learned), it is worth investigating. If not, then our state assessment system needs to be re-evaluated," Smith said. "In my opinion, if students are going to be asked to provide written responses and the results of their writings determine the possibility of them having remediation requirements and campus/district accountability ratings, their product deserves trained humans scoring their work."

May 4 Election

Sample ballots

Springtown ISD/City of Reno/Walnut Creek SUD

GENERAL ELECTION

May 4, 2024

Parker County, Texas

ELECCIÓN GENERAL

4 de mayo de 2024

Condado de Parker, Texas

Precinct BS20

Precinto BS20

Page 1 of 2

Página 1 de 2

Please use a black or blue ink pen to mark your ballot. To vote for your choice in each contest, completely fill in the box next to your choice.

Use un bolígrafo negro o azul para marcar su boleta. Para votar por su selección en cada contienda, rellene completamente la casilla provista a la izquierda de su selección.

PARKER COUNTY APPRAISAL DISTRICT
DISTRITO DE EVALUACIÓN DEL CONDADO DE PARKER

PARKER COUNTY APPRAISAL DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTOR - PLACE 1
DISTRITO DE EVALUACIÓN DEL CONDADO DE PARKER
JUNTA DIRECTIVA - LUGAR 1

Vote for none or one
Vote por ninguno o uno

DONNA DICKINSON

PARKER COUNTY APPRAISAL DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTOR - PLACE 2
DISTRITO DE EVALUACIÓN DEL CONDADO DE PARKER
JUNTA DIRECTIVA - LUGAR 2

Vote for none or one
Vote por ninguno o uno

WILLIAM S. SHATFORD

PARKER COUNTY APPRAISAL DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTOR - PLACE 3
DISTRITO DE EVALUACIÓN DEL CONDADO DE PARKER
JUNTA DIRECTIVA - LUGAR 3

Vote for none or one
Vote por ninguno o uno

JOE TISON
 MONICA GRIZZARD

CITY OF RENO
CIUDAD DE RENO

CITY OF RENO
Council, Place 1
CIUDAD DE RENO
Concejal, Lugar 1

Vote for none or one
Vote por ninguno o uno

Kevin Vandenberg

CITY OF RENO
Council, Place 3
CIUDAD DE RENO
Concejal, Lugar 3

Vote for none or one
Vote por ninguno o uno

Shelli Swift

CITY OF RENO
Council, Place 5
CIUDAD DE RENO
Concejal, Lugar 5

Vote for none or one
Vote por ninguno o uno

Joy Jenkins
 Justin Williams

WALNUT CREEK SPECIAL UTILITY DISTRICT
DISTRITO DE SERVICIOS ESPECIALES DE WALNUT CREEK

Walnut Creek Special Utility District
Director
Directora del Distrito de Servicios Especiales de Walnut Creek

Vote for none, one or two
Vote por ninguno, uno o dos

Robin L Corder
 Bill Roesicke
 Mark Green
 David DeSoto

GENERAL ELECTION

May 4, 2024

Parker County, Texas

ELECCIÓN GENERAL

4 de mayo de 2024

Condado de Parker, Texas

Precinct 105-BS20

Precinto 105-BS20

Page 2 of 2

Página 2 de 2

SPRINGTOWN INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
DISTRITO ESCOLAR INDEPENDIENTE DE SPRINGTOWN

SPRINGTOWN INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
Board of Trustees, Place 6
DISTRITO ESCOLAR INDEPENDIENTE DE SPRINGTOWN
Junta Directiva, Lugar 6

Vote for none or one
Vote por ninguno o uno

Mark Bryant

SPRINGTOWN INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
Board of Trustees, Place 7
DISTRITO ESCOLAR INDEPENDIENTE DE SPRINGTOWN
Junta Directiva, Lugar 7

Vote for none or one
Vote por ninguno o uno

Elizabeth "Tootie" Hall
 Cody Bryant



IN-COUNTY	OUT-OF-COUNTY	OUT-OF-STATE	ONLINE
\$50 FOR ONE YEAR	\$70 FOR ONE YEAR	\$80 FOR ONE YEAR	\$40 FOR ONE YEAR

Live more sustainably this Earth Day and beyond

KAYLEE DUSANG
Special to the Tri-County Reporter

While many might recognize the terms "go green" or "eco-friendly," Earth Day provides an important reminder that there are opportunities to put those phrases into action.

Every year, Earth Day is observed on April 22. The purpose of the event is to raise awareness about environmental concerns and encourage people to take part in more sustainable practices.

Although the first Earth Day did not take place until the 1970s, the seeds of the environmental movement started in the 1960s following the publication of Rachel Carson's bestselling book "Silent Spring," which highlighted the link between pollution and public health.

When former Wisconsin senator Gaylord Nelson launched the first Earth Day alongside activist Denis Hayes, the founder of the official EarthDay.Org, on April 22, 1970, around 20 million people from across the nation stepped out in support of more environmental regulations. This led to the establishment of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as well as the passing of several pieces of legislation to protect the environment, including the Clean Air Act and Clean Water Act.

Now, the worldwide movement aims to inspire others to not only become more environmentally conscious, but also act on issues such as climate change, plastic pollution, extinction of species, among others.

This year's Earth Day theme, Planet vs. Plastics, highlights the organization's goal to reach a 60% reduction in the production of all plastics by 2024.

Plastics are not only harmful to plants and wildlife but have also been linked to health problems in humans. According to recent studies listed on EarthDay.Org, commonly used plastic products are known to carry toxic chemicals that can lead to serious health issues if ingested or inhaled, including cancer and birth defects.

"Plastic is not just an environmental issue, it is also a human health issue," said Aidan Charron, director of EarthDay.Org's End Plastic Initiatives. "It's important to recognize it now. We don't want it to end up becoming the next lead, or the next tobacco, and the next smoking of our generation. We want to stop production from ramping up and we want to protect people's wellbeing as best as we can."

While there are several ways to reduce environmental impacts, Charron offers a few practices individuals can start using to limit the use of plastics and live more sustainably:

PHASE OUT SINGLE-USE PLASTICS

Charron recommends starting with a plastic audit of your home to see what kind of plastic you use on a daily basis. Phasing out plastics can start small, such as swapping to reusable water bottles, glass or stainless-steel food containers, or using reusable bags at the grocery store.

"Those tiny things do add up and they do help, and they also push the market in a certain direction," Charron said.

AVOID FAST FASHION

According to the EPA, the fashion industry is one of the leading causes of carbon emissions - it is estimated that 14.5 million tons of textiles, mostly clothing, were landfilled in 2018. Clothes created from synthetic materials like polyester can also cause shedding of microplastics into the environment.

Charron explains that synthetic materials might not only contain dangerous chemicals, but they also tend to break down easier, leading to the need to purchase more clothing. Choose more sustainable fashion options, such as thrifting or purchasing clothes made of natural fabric, such as cotton, wool, and hemp fibers.

REDUCE, REUSE, AND RECYCLE

One of the best ways to limit waste and save money is by repurposing or reusing items such as clothing, furniture, or appliances. The EPA also recommends borrowing or sharing items like party decorations or tools or donating any unused food to food banks.

PUSH FOR LOCAL LEGISLATION

Local legislation that encourages bans on plastics will not only encourage a cleaner environment but can also save the community money due to keeping local streets and parks clean. According to new research published in the Journal of the Endocrine Society, endocrine-disrupting chemicals (EDCs) in plastics pose a serious threat to public health and cost the U.S. an estimated \$250 billion in increased health care costs in 2018.

"Reducing plastic overall, and calling for plastic bans where you can, is going to save everybody in the nation money and everybody in the community money," Charron said.

ATTEND A LOCAL CLEAN UP

Volunteering to pick up trash or attending a local clean up in your community is one of the best ways to contribute to a cleaner and healthier community. Find a local clean up in your area by visiting www.earthday.org/earth-day-2024/



Cross Tire & Automotive

Cross Tire & Automotive celebrated its grand opening at 637 Northwest Parkway in Azle with a ribbon cutting ceremony April 16, hosted by the Azle Area Chamber of Commerce. Kaleb and Victoria Cross opened the Azle location in March 2024 making it their sixth location. Cross Tire & Automotive is having a special until May 31: free tire rotations and \$1 alignments. Stop by, take advantage of their great specials and welcome them to Azle!

May 4 Election

Sample ballots

Springtown ISD/City of Springtown

GENERAL ELECTION

May 4, 2024

Parker County, Texas

ELECCIÓN GENERAL

4 de mayo de 2024

Condado de Parker, Texas

Precinct BS17

Precinto BS17

Page 1 of 2

Página 1 de 2

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Use un bolígrafo negro o azul para marcar su boleta. Para votar por su selección en cada contienda, rellene completamente la casilla provista a la izquierda de su selección.

PARKER COUNTY APPRAISAL DISTRICT

DISTRITO DE EVALUACIÓN DEL CONDADO DE PARKER

PARKER COUNTY APPRAISAL DISTRICT

BOARD OF DIRECTOR - PLACE 1

DISTRITO DE EVALUACIÓN DEL CONDADO DE PARKER

JUNTA DIRECTIVA - LUGAR 1

Vote for none or one

Vote por ninguno o uno

DONNA DICKINSON

PARKER COUNTY APPRAISAL DISTRICT

BOARD OF DIRECTOR - PLACE 2

DISTRITO DE EVALUACIÓN DEL CONDADO DE PARKER

JUNTA DIRECTIVA - LUGAR 2

Vote for none or one

Vote por ninguno o uno

WILLIAM S. SHATFORD

PARKER COUNTY APPRAISAL DISTRICT

BOARD OF DIRECTOR - PLACE 3

DISTRITO DE EVALUACIÓN DEL CONDADO DE PARKER

JUNTA DIRECTIVA - LUGAR 3

Vote for none or one

Vote por ninguno o uno

JOE TISON

MONICA GRIZZARD

CITY OF SPRINGTOWN

CIUDAD DE SPRINGTOWN

CITY OF SPRINGTOWN

Council Member, Place 1

CIUDAD DE SPRINGTOWN

Miembros de Concejo, Lugar 1

Vote for none or one

Vote por ninguno o uno

Ted Martinez

CITY OF SPRINGTOWN

Council Member, Place 3

CIUDAD DE SPRINGTOWN

Miembros de Concejo, Lugar 3

Vote for none or one

Vote por ninguno o uno

David Martin

Walter Roberson

CITY OF SPRINGTOWN

Council Member, Place 5

CIUDAD DE SPRINGTOWN

Miembros de Concejo, Lugar 5

Vote for none or one

Vote por ninguno o uno

Scott Richardson

Jessica Castro

GENERAL ELECTION

May 4, 2024

Parker County, Texas

ELECCIÓN GENERAL

4 de mayo de 2024

Condado de Parker, Texas

Precinct 120-BS17

Precinto 120-BS17

Page 2 of 2

Página 2 de 2

SPRINGTOWN INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

DISTRITO ESCOLAR INDEPENDIENTE DE SPRINGTOWN

SPRINGTOWN INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Board of Trustees, Place 6

DISTRITO ESCOLAR INDEPENDIENTE DE SPRINGTOWN

Junta Directiva, Lugar 6

Vote for none or one

Vote por ninguno o uno

Mark Bryant

SPRINGTOWN INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Board of Trustees, Place 7

DISTRITO ESCOLAR INDEPENDIENTE DE SPRINGTOWN

Junta Directiva, Lugar 7

Vote for none or one

Vote por ninguno o uno

Elizabeth "Tootie" Hall

Cody Bryant

LEGAL NOTICE

Walnut Creek Special Utility District will hold a public hearing the Water Conservation & Drought Contingency Plan on Monday, September 29, 2024 at 4:00 pm. This meeting will be held at 1155 Highway 199 West, Springtown, Texas 76082.

Metal Supermarkets to give away \$10,000 in trade school scholarships

Deadline to apply is June 28

SUBMITTED BY METAL SUPERMARKETS

Metal Supermarkets — the so-called “convenience stores for metal” — announced the kick-off of its third annual trade school scholarship program in honor of National Welding Month in April.

Four \$2,500 scholarships will be awarded to eligible trade school students in the United States and Canada for studies in 2024.

The scholarship was established in response to the shortage of skilled trade workers across North America. For example, 336,000 new welding professionals are projected to be needed by 2026 while about 84,000 positions are expected to be filled by next year, according to the American Welding Society. The United States Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates that skilled trades have millions of unfilled positions. Similarly, a Canadian government report cited that more than 256,000 new apprentices are also needed in the com-

ing years to meet the 2026 demand for skilled trades workers in Canada.

A Metal Supermarkets-commissioned study also indicated that young people are not aware of potentially lucrative skilled-trades careers; over 62% of high school respondents said they lacked knowledge about trade school opportunities.

During National Welding Month, Metal Supermarkets is raising awareness about this growing deficit of skilled trade workers by offering scholarships to the next generation of trade industry workers. Metal Supermarkets

is providing trade school students with financial support in the form of a scholarship to help continue their education and grow their knowledge in their chosen field. This valuable financial aid is offered in response to the desperate need for skilled trade careers and to combat the nationwide shortage of skilled trade workers.

“With the third year of our scholarship, we are striving to continue to support students who are pursuing careers in the valuable trade industries,” Metal Supermarkets President and CEO Stephen Schober said.

“We are also pleased to see more diversity in the traditionally male-dominated trades, as over 35% of our past scholarship winners are female. Yet there is still a growing need for these essential skilled trade workers, and Metal Supermarkets remains committed to fostering awareness of trade industry careers for young people.”

To qualify for the scholarship, students must be accepted to and currently attending a post-secondary trade school program with a semester beginning in 2024 and must be enrolled in the upcoming semester. The

scholarship is open to citizens, permanent residents and resident immigrants legally residing in the United States or Canada with a high school diploma, GED certificate or equivalent.

Scholarship applications can be submitted online at <https://www.metalsupermarkets.com/trade-school-scholarship/> through June 28. Metal Supermarkets will contact each winner by email and phone by July 31 using the contact information provided by the entrant during the application process.

HOMETOWN

Happenings

APRIL

- **GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP:** 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.
- **GAMERS UNPLUGGED: EVERY** Tuesday from 6:30-7:30 p.m., Springtown Public Library invites kids to play board games, card games, any “unplugged” game you like!
- **MINI ROOMS CRAFT:** 6 p.m. Thursday, April 25 at Azle Memorial Library, 333 W. Main St. Teens 12-18 are invited to build miniature rooms, complete with furniture, at this fun craft event. All supplies and instructions will be provided. Reservations are required. Call 817-752-2682 to save a spot!
- **AZLE CHAMBER EVENTS:** Business After Hours is slated for 4:30-6:30 p.m. April 25 at NBT Financial, 405 Commerce St., Azle.
- **GARDENING FOR BUTTERFLIES:** 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, April 30 at Azle Memorial Library. Learn how to create your own butterfly garden with tips from a Tarrant County Master Gardener at this free event. Brought to you by Tarrant Regional Water District and the City of Azle.
- **SPRINGTOWN CHAMBER EVENTS:** 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.

MAY

- **NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER:** 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.
- **AZLE CHAMBER EVENTS:** AACoC 19th Annual Golf Tournament is Friday, May 3 at Cross Timbers Golf Course. Lunch and team check-in begin at 11:30 a.m. and tee off is at 1 p.m. Registration deadline is April 24. Monthly chamber luncheon, sponsored by NBT Financial is 11:30 a.m. — 1 p.m. Tuesday, May 7 at 404 Main Place. The City of Azle will present an economic development basic training program. Catering by Red’s Burger House. Visit azlechamber.com to pre-register.
- **MUSIC IN THE PARK:** The City of Azle Special Events Council presents Music in the Park from 8 - 10 p.m. every Friday in May and June at Azle Central Park. The series kicks off with Poo Live Crew on May 3. Visit the Azle Special Events Facebook page for the full music series lineup.
- **SPRING BOOK SALE:** 10 a.m. Saturday, May 4 at the Springtown Courthouse Annex, 101 E. Second St. The Springtown Public Library will host its Spring Book Sale, including a \$5 fill-a-bag sale. All proceeds benefit children’s programs at the library.
- **GAMERS UNPLUGGED: EVERY** Tuesday from 6:30-7:30 p.m., Springtown Public Library invites kids to play board games, card games, any “unplugged” game you like!
- **TEDDY BEAR PICNIC:** Bring your favorite stuffy pal and have a picnic at 10:30 a.m. Wednesday, May 8, at the Azle Central Park pavilion. Enjoy stories, snacks and songs with friends! Hosted by Azle Memorial Library. Open to children ages 2 to 6 and their caregivers. Bring a blanket and chair. Registration is required; call 817-752-2682 to save a spot.
- **TEEN MOVIE AFTERNOONS:** 2 p.m. Saturday, May 11, at Springtown Public Library, 626 N. Main St. The library hosts Teen Movie Afternoons once a month. Movies will be rated up to PG-13. Call 817-523-5862 to find out the monthly movie. Snacks will be provided, so bring a drink!
- **LEGO CLUB: AZLE** Memorial Library hosts Lego Club at 4:30 p.m. the third Wednesday of each month in the library community room. All ages welcome. Legos provided by the library.
- **SHINE LIKE STARS** Banquet: 6 p.m. Thursday, May 16 at The Church at Azle. The banquet benefits the Adult & Teen Challenge of Texas Azle Men’s Campus. The evening includes dinner, a silent auction and program. Tickets and sponsorship opportunities are available. Call 817-406-4441 for more information.
- **COFFEE WITH FIRST** Responders: Join the Azle Area Chamber of Commerce and Texas Designer Flooring for coffee and conversation with local first responders 8:30-10 a.m. Friday, May 17 at 500 B N. Stewart St., Suite 1, Azle.
- **MAIN STREET BOOK** Club: 6 p.m. the third Tuesday of each month at Azle Memorial Library. The book club will meet May 21 to discuss “Hello Beautiful” by Ann Napolitano. Refreshments will be provided.
- **SPRINGTOWN CHAMBER EVENTS:** SACoC will host its monthly luncheon 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. Thursday, May 23 at Hilltop Family Church. Visit springtown-chamber.org to register by May 21.
- **GROWING CONNECTIONS: LEGACY** Oaks of Azle hosts a networking breakfast 9-10 a.m. the fourth Tuesday of the month at 1364 SE Parkway, Azle. This monthly meet-up is a chance for professionals to share ideas and promote their businesses with integrity and compassion. RSVPs are appreciated, email Kelly Case crd@legacyoaksazle-sl.com.

LEGAL PUBLIC NOTICES

ADDENDUM NO. 2
APRIL 10, 2024

Walnut Creek Special Utility District

Major Water Distribution System Between the Keeter Elevated Storage Tank and Jay Bird Booster Pump Station” Engineer’s Project No. 537-066

Please be advised that this Addendum No. 2 changes the Bid Opening date from April 18, 2024 to May 2, 2024.

This Addendum No. 2 will accordingly modify the following documents:

ADVERTISEMENT FOR BID
NOTICE FOR BIDDERS

The Bidder should incorporate this Addendum No. 2 and acknowledge same in his Bid Submittal to the Walnut Creek S.U.D.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC SALE

Pursuant to Chapter 59, Texas Property Code, TMS STORAGE, LLC which is located at 9910 Hwy 199 W., Poolville, Texas 76487 will hold a public auction of property being sold to satisfy a landlord’s lien. Sale will be at 10:00 a.m. on May 6, 2024 at 9910 Hwy 199 W., Poolville, Texas 76487. Property being sold includes contents in space of following tenant, TENANT’S COMPLETE NAME as shown on rental agreement: Michelle Marie Cohoon Unit E51: misc. household.

REPLAT PROPOSAL

City of Reno will have replat proposal for address 440 Miller Rd, Azle, Texas 76020. Partin Pastures Lot 1 & 2, Block 1: Document 202146048.

P&Z meeting will be on May 6, 2024, at 7:00 PM. Council Meeting will be May 20, 2024, at 7PM

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR GRANDFATHERED USE PERMIT

SUBMITTED TO THE NORTHERN TRINITY GROUNDWATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
The City Pelican Bay of 1300 Pelican Circle, Azle, TX 76020, applied on October 31, 2023, to the Northern Trinity Groundwater Conservation District a Grandfathered Use Permit to authorize the operation of a water well system screened to the Antlers formation, located within the city’s CCN service area, requesting to produce 43,427,100 gallons annually for PWS purposes of use. For additional information about the application or the permitting process, please call the District’s office at (817) 249-2062. The Applicant may be contacted at the above address.

GRAND OPENING

April 27th • 10 am - 3 pm

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VMCCA brings classic cars to AHS

ZACH FREEMAN

azlereporter@tricityreporter.com

Students get to see rare classics, club tours high school

AZLE — Students at Azle High School were treated to their very own classic car show after members of the Vintage Motor Car Club of America stopped by 1200 Boyd Road April 11 during the club's national tour.

Starting Monday, April 8, club members began their tour, traveling 100 to 200 mile stretches at a time. Cars and drivers from Wisconsin, Minnesota, Nevada, Colorado, New Jersey and more came to AHS as part of a collaboration organized by a local "tour guide" club member and Azle ISD Career and Technical Education Director Suzanne Murr. The group's guide is not a two-wheeler, four-wheeler, or sixteen-wheeler — it's Leonard Wheeler.

Wheeler is an Azle native, an AHS grad, and serves as chairman of Azle's Planning and Zoning Commission. The club started its day on Veal Station Road, traveled to Hollow Hills Event Center in Weatherford and then stopped at Azle High School until about 4 p.m. before moving on to its next destination.

"We are just, we're all common guys and girls with the same interest in old cars and touring," Wheeler said of his fellow club members. "We take backroads. We seldom get on an interstate so we can see generally the beauty and the roads and signs and all that. We'll do that through Friday then everybody will either drive their own car home or put it on a trailer and tow it home. As you can see, we've got a bunch of older vehicles here and sometimes they don't like the long trips."

What sets VMCCA apart from other car clubs is the age and rarity of some of the vehicles in its fleet. The cars visiting the high school that day included a 1931 Packard, a 1931 Marmon Sixteen, a 1969 Oldsmobile Toronado and a 1969 Pontiac GTO along with about 22 other golden oldies. These classic cars set up shop in Robert Herring's auto tech class. While there, club members went on a guided tour of CTE facilities. Ultimately, Wheeler

hopes these interactions engage young people and get them interested in vintage cars.

"If it inspires one of these kids, that helps," Wheeler said. "We try to give back. We're more about going outside instead of keeping everything inside. Part of this, too, is these kids see this. Who knows, maybe in a few years they'll join the club because we have to have younger members to keep us sustained. I guarantee most of them have probably not seen the LaSalle, they probably have not seen a Packard that old. I guarantee one they've never seen is this black one, it's a '31 Marmon. It is very much a luxury car. It only gets six miles to the gallon, but it has a V16 engine."

Along with its tours, the group also fundraises and offers scholarships for college and vocation school to members' relatives and other young people with an interest in cars. Supporting and taking care of one another is a



An overhead view of the auto shop during the VMCCA's visit.

ZACH FREEMAN | TRI-COUNTY REPORTER



ZACH FREEMAN | TRI-COUNTY REPORTER

AHS auto tech teacher Robert Herring, students Emiliano Lopez, Adrien Vega, and Principal Nate Driver. "We tell kids all the time whatever they're passionate about we want to find them an avenue for that," Driver said. "The auto tech industry and car industry are just one way to highlight and show the kids that they have a pathway here. It's something really unique that not everyone gets to experience."

critical aspect of the VMCCA, members said. Club member Carrol Butler recalled Wheeler putting in great effort to locate an unaccounted-for club member just the night prior.

"We take care of each other," Wheeler said. "If somebody has a problem, we work on it; we get it done. We have one gentleman, he always drives a truck but he's a tow truck. If somebody has a problem, he'll get it fixed or take them somewhere to get it fixed. I can literally say I've got friends all over the U.S. that share the same interest. We enjoy traveling and if it takes two or three days it takes two or three days. We have fun with it. That's the main thing."

With cars that have been out of production for decades, it's likely students will never again get a chance to see some of them. While dozens, if not hundreds, of students toured the shop to get a look at these cars that afternoon, Skills USA students led

the charge. Skills USA team members Adrien Vega and Emiliano Lopez were two of those students in attendance.

"I definitely think it's a once-in-a-lifetime experience because they're not on the road anymore," Vega said. "It's definitely an experience to remember."

"What's the chance of seeing a V16 in a car that runs," Lopez asked.

There's more car fun to come for AHS auto tech students. May 5 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., the school will hold a car show in its front parking lot with students acting as judges. The event is free to the public and \$20 to register a vehicle. Approximately 100 cars have already registered, Herring said. At the end of the show students will hand out awards to the best cars in several categories.

The group plans to publish information about its tours and its excursion to AHS in its upcoming VMCCA magazine, The Bulb Horn. While preparing to leave the school,

VMCCA members were unexpectedly ushered back inside for another half hour after an anonymous call was made to the Azle Police Department. The caller alleged that an individual was inside a school bathroom with a gun and a bomb. After the building was deemed safe, club members were allowed to drive their classic cars out the back entrance down Boyd Road. One couple said it was the most excitement they had had in a long time.

"It was a good experience for our students," Murr said. "They raised the hoods and asked questions, and it was a wonderful experience for those people who brought the cars. They were so impressed with our facilities and our students. We talked about giving them some Azle swag but we just didn't get it together, but we gave them something from Azle they'll never forget because we gave them a lockdown drill about the time they were getting started to leave."

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ZACH FREEMAN | TRI-COUNTY REPORTER

Volunteer kids help clean Suzanne Pritchard's backyard.

BLITZ
FROM PAGE A1

about two years, and she had made do with window units and fans.

Rezabek has known about Servolution ever since she worked for the Azle Area Chamber of Commerce before the COVID-19 pandemic. Asking for help from Servolution, people she knew, was difficult for Rezabek, but she figured "all they can do is say no." To her surprise, her home was first on the list for this year's Spring Blitz.

Servolution volunteers' tasks at Rezabek's home during the April 12-13 blitz included installing a new roof, heating/ventilation/air conditioning unit, a new light ballast in the bathroom and a new oven and dishwasher as well as underpinning, ceiling repair in the bedroom, building new back steps, sealing the front porch and cleaning up inside and out of her home.

"My husband (Lewis) is a veteran, and he has throat cancer, and I was just like, we can't do it," Rezabek said. "We're using all of our savings. He just started disability, so we're using all our savings to pay bills... I'm working full time, but still, I don't make enough to pay all the bills."

While she has been involved with Servolution before, Rezabek has never volunteered for one of the blitzes, but she hopes to pay it forward in the future. Having the help of Servolution made her feel "a little overwhelmed, but very blessed, very grateful."

Representatives from the organization Vets Forever, which aims to help veterans access and manage their disability benefits, helped the Rezabeks out by volunteering during the blitz. When Vets Forever marketing and public relations manager Holly

Griffeth was invited to serve, she didn't hesitate.

"It's amazing," Griffeth said. "It just shows you if you just kind of ask people, they can come together (for) one day, maybe two."

She added, "You don't always have to give money. Time is actually more valuable sometimes than your money."

Griffeth said blitz volunteers from Vets Forever had asked to work on a veteran's home, and so she and Vets Forever CEO and co-founder Trinidad Aguirre found themselves at Marine veteran Lewis Rezabek's house. Aguirre said the Vets Forever team wants to focus on giving back to the community. He also enjoyed being able to be of service during the blitz.

"My skill sets in the military kind of translate into this home repair," Aguirre said. "I was an electrician and did a lot of demo work. And it's just good to put those skills to use, so I'm not in front of a monitor. I'm out using what I learned and applying them to help other vets in need."

—Madelyn Edwards

Trouble in paradise

AZLE — Walking into Suzanne Pritchard's backyard brings to mind any countless number of Jimmy Buffett songs. A sandy volleyball pit, tiki-bar, and Snoo Dogg figurines all contribute to a real island feel. While it had been a popular place for Azle kids to hang out and play volleyball over the years, it had come to need some serious repairs. Pritchard formerly ran Keepsake Mums for 30 years but is now going to school to become a radiology technician.

"Our roof had a beam that was breaking, and it was leaking like a waterfall feature for about 10 years," Pritchard said. "It just so happened

that someone on Facebook was like, 'if you could have anything and didn't have money for it (comment what it would be)' and I said 'sure, why not' and then somebody answered me and said you need to contact Servolution Network and I said 'sure, why not' and after I sent in the info, I started getting texts saying send me video. I said, 'you know what I'm not doing all that, I'm done.' Then they happened to call, and they recognized the name of my business, and they knew where I was, so they showed up. When they showed up it turned out their family comes and plays volleyball in my backyard. His daughter is best friends with my granddaughter. They actually spend tons of time together."

When Pritchard first heard she might be able to get her home repaired during a Good Neighbors Blitz, she was skeptical. Then she learned

she already knew Servolution Network's director, Jason Malewiski, through his daughter who had previously come to play volleyball at her house.

Pritchard's own children attended Azle ISD in the past and with her backyard being a veritable beach, it was always a popular spot for local kids. With help from Good Neighbors, she is excited to begin allowing kids to safely utilize the space again.

"It's overwhelming. It's awesome. I feel quite humbled," Pritchard said. "Even in the back we have trees that are falling apart and we have a lot of kids that come here — about 70 that come and play volleyball during the summer. Just the safety for them because we don't have insurance, they won't insure this house, and I would open it up to everybody, but we can't because if somebody gets hurt that's the end of that. We feed them and make sure they have water, and they stay until 3 o'clock in the morning."

— Zach Freeman

Springtown widow finds needed home repairs, peace of mind through Servolution Blitz

SPRINGTOWN — Widow and single mom Patricia Hurst didn't need to do any work while Servolution Network volunteers cleaned up and made repairs to her home, but that didn't feel right to her.

"They keep telling me to sit down, you don't need to be doing anything, but I just can't do it," Hurst said.

Servolution's Spring Blitz, which organizes people to

make home repairs for those in need, took place earlier this month and included Hurst's home in Springtown. Volunteers, including children, worked on cleanup and repairs inside and outside her house April 12-13. Hurst needed a new roof and deck, flooring, plumbing and yard cleanup.

Since her husband died just before Christmas in 2022, Hurst has had to raise her 11-year-old son on her own.

"I had to get two jobs to pay the bills," she said. "My house was falling apart, so I really needed some work done."

At first, Hurst said she was too prideful to ask for help from Servolution but changed her mind after falling through her floor. Her roof wasn't in good shape either; a whole pan filled with water during a recent rainstorm before the repairs.

"The ceiling was fixing to fall through," Hurst said. "Just stuff that I don't make enough money to pay for. Being a single mom, it's really hard."

Getting the work done by Servolution made Hurst feel grateful, like the weight of worry being lifted from her shoulders.

"I know I was stressing because I couldn't have enough time because I'm working so much trying to take care of my child," she said.

Hurst grinned when asked about the seventh and eighth graders from Azle Christian School helping out at her home.

"They keep telling me how much fun they're having," she said. "They're all just having fun and helping each other out. They're all just pitching in. They feel good because I think they feel like we're doing the service for this person that really needs help, and I think they feel good about it. I mean, that's how I feel

when I do something for somebody."

Hurst wasn't wrong in her assessment of the students' attitudes.

"I thought it's a great experience," seventh grader Abigail Smith said. "I kind of wish we did it more than just twice a year."

Seventh grader Landon McGuirk also appreciated being part of the work and was proud of his school for joining the volunteer event.

"Having all of us come together, it's beautiful," Landon said.

According to Abigail and Landon, Azle Christian School students moved furniture out of the way, pulled up carpet and tile to make way for new flooring, and cleaned up the yard.

"I definitely learned my own strength today of being able to lift heavier things," Abigail said.

Abigail's favorite part of the day was seeing Hurst react to the work they were doing.

"She's smiling so much because we're getting to help her home and relieve that stress off of her of having to fix the carpet or having to take down some of the cabinets," she said.

This was Abigail's and Landon's first year participating in Servolution's Blitz, and they said it opened their eyes to the needs of people in their community, that having a nice, well-functioning home isn't a given. The seventh graders also agreed that having a good team, made up of their peers and adults, was essential during the blitz.

"Not one person could do this alone," Landon said.

—Madelyn Edwards

Here's to you, Mrs. Robinson

AZLE — Azle's own mayor, Alan Brundrett, led the charge on fixing up The Servolution Network's 300th house during the 15th Good Neighbors Spring Blitz April 12-13. In total, Servolution Network has tended to 316 houses since the project began. Linda Robinson, an 80-year-old resident of Castle Hills in Azle, has had a hard time keeping up with repairs in her home of 30 years. The single retired nurse became emotional and choked up speaking about the help offered to her by Servolution organizers and volunteers.

"I have a neighbor over here that y'all helped, Vic Moore, he's a good friend," Robinson said. "He kind of informed me what y'all do and everything. Then I made the application. I didn't really know if I'd get accepted or not but I'm thankful to God that I am. I do appreciate everything that y'all are doing. It's such a blessing. In tears. I'm old

PLEASE SEE BLITZ | A13



MADelyn EDWARDS | TRI-COUNTY REPORTER

Azle Christian School students Sarah Tuggle, Nevaeh Colson and Gia Pickett volunteer for Servolution Network.

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ZACH FREEMAN | TRI-COUNTY REPORTER

BLITZ
FROM PAGE A12

and I can't work anymore. I worked all my life. I've never been on assistance of any kind, any kind of help. I've never had anybody help me ever. So, I'm not used to it. It was very much a blessing. Y'all are just like angels that descended from heaven."

Volunteers installed a new roof, soffit and fascia, and made repairs to a back fence, gutters, ceiling, flooring, lights and cabinets. Robinson recalled being pleasantly surprised when individuals even showed up to pressure wash her house in the rain the day prior and sees the repairs as instrumental in improving her quality of life going forward.

"There was the roof and the gutters and there's just no way I could afford to have the roof put on and new

gutters and just really everything, everything, everything," Robinson said. "With the fence, the privacy fence in the back, I was having an issue and anyway that will help me to get out in the yard a little bit more because I can't do much anymore like I used to, but I used to have a lot of flowers. I loved digging in the dirt."

Robinson was one of 13 blitz-ees over the age of 65 that day. Good Neighbors Blitzes are a biannual event with the next one scheduled for October 11-12.

"My son lives in Azle and he's got a lot of health problems and other problems, so you know, just less worry about how things get done," Robinson said. "I don't have to worry about stuff anymore. I'm so thankful, I just can't tell you how thankful I am. I highly recommend Azle."

- Zach Freeman

Springtown Navy veteran, wife receive much needed home repairs during Servolution Blitz

SPRINGTOWN — The experience of having Servolution Network volunteers work on her home felt overwhelming and humbling to Teri Smesrud.

"I don't know how to express it, and I don't cry hardly ever, but I would be crying if I could," Smesrud said. "It's just an overflow of blessings."

Retired married couple Gene and Teri Smesrud knew about Servolution through their friends and have even volunteered with the organi-

zation before.

"We really like what they do, and now we know more than ever how important it is," Teri Smesrud said.

On Friday, April 12, Servolution volunteers started working on a variety of maintenance repairs at the Smesruds' home, including building an accessibility ramp.

Despite being so well connected, the Smesruds didn't immediately reach out to Servolution when they needed help. Gene Smesrud, 81, prided himself on being able to handle household repairs, but when his wife needed an accessibility ramp, he found his limit.

"(Adrienne Malmberg, who works at Servolution) has been pestering me ever since we moved in to put a handicap ramp up for Teri, and I have done that before, done it myself," Gene Smesrud said. "I know what a job it is, and I know the expense. We couldn't afford it. She

talked to me for quite some time about putting in an application to have it done by Servolution, and she finally talked me into it."

For context, Gene Smesrud estimated that the cost for ramp materials, not including a new porch, would cost about \$1,500 at least.

Teri Smesrud added that because of her husband's health issues, he can't always do what he used to do. Gene Smesrud said if he takes on a big project, he has to break it up into small bites and will take longer to complete it.

"There's lifting and stuff like that on certain things that he can't do anymore that he has to ask for help," Teri Smesrud said. "And most of our good friends at church are older."

Getting the work done on their home is expected to "make a big difference," Gene Smesrud said.

Before getting the ramp and new deck, Teri Smesrud said there were about six

steps outside her front door leading to the lawn and driveway. She described difficulty using the steps, especially since she carries a portable oxygen concentrator when she leaves home.

"When I have that in my hand and I need to hang on to the railing, there's not a whole lot else I can carry, and the more stuff I strap around my arms and shoulders, the more off kilter I am," Teri Smesrud said. "So, (the new ramp) will kind of free me up to be a little more independent."

Some of the other projects included floor repair so the Smesruds wouldn't feel like they would fall through their floors and installation of insulation under their home, which is expected to help with their electricity bills that can cost hundreds of dollars.

"The insulation under the house, we feel like will be (able to) keep the heat and

PLEASE SEE **BLITZ** | A14



MADELYN EDWARDS | TRI-COUNTY REPORTER

Marine veteran Chase Hudgens waits for instructions on what to do next while volunteering for Servolution Network in Springtown.

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BLITZ
FROM PAGE A13

cold in and not be losing so much energy," Teri Smesrud said. "We had an electric bill last year of \$975."

Of the volunteers at the Smesruds' home, some came from Fort Worth Navy Week, where sailors participate in educational and community outreach events. Since Gene Smesrud is a Navy veteran, Chief Petty Officer Jonelle Eldredge presented him with a U.S. flag to honor him. Eldredge, who has been in the Navy for 20 years, said she had never heard of Servolution before, but now, she'll never forget it.

"That's what the Navy is all about, humanitarian efforts, both domestic and international, small scale and large scale. So, this is right up the Navy's alley but also just a part of me personally, things I've done in the past," Eldredge said.

The chief petty officer said the fact that the Navy Week participants volunteered at

the home of a Navy veteran was meant to be.

"I think it was definitely like God's saying, 'Let's go ahead and have them there to bless him and his family but also to be a part of a bigger picture just to represent the Navy as well,'" Eldredge said. - Madelyn Edwards

Disabled veteran receives help from Servolution Network after tornado damages roof

AZLE — After a tornado damaged his roof, a 70-year-old disabled U.S. Air Force veteran got the help he needed during a recent Good Neighbors Blitz. Volunteers repaired a damaged ceiling, added insulation, replaced several windows and a water heater. The group also cleared up brush in the backyard, cleaned an old garage, repaired a plumbing

leak, sealed trim, replaced the front door, and gave the house a new paint job.

Students from Azle Christian School were a critical force in these efforts, doing much of the labor needed in the yard and on the house's exterior.

"It's just because as a Christian school we really love to serve God and our community," freshman volunteer Haylee Malewiski said. "So, it's really just a moment for us to go and be able to get out of our school and go and help the community instead of just praying over it, doing the actions toward it and helping other people, not just ourselves. I think a lot of us have definitely enjoyed our time here. A lot of us have done this more than once, more than twice, more than three times. A lot of us have done it just once and it's definitely eye opening."

The Portwood Road homeowner was thrilled to watch and chat with volunteers as they did a near complete remodel on much of the outside of his house.



ZACH FREEMAN | TRI-COUNTY REPORTER

Jerry Allen sits on his porch while volunteers clean and repair the space around him.



ZACH FREEMAN | TRI-COUNTY REPORTER

Haylee Malewiski and other Azle Christian School volunteers chopping vines behind Orrin "Bubba" Janvrin's house.

"It's a great service, it really is," homeowner Orrin "Bubba" Janvrin said. "I'm really, really, very appreciative, really. When you're on social security it's kind of hard to do all this stuff so it's very appreciated." - Zach Freeman

The porch that my father built

AZLE — "The cow is a keeper," 65-year-old Jerry Allen said.

Allen sat on his porch and watched as Servolution Network volunteers sifted through a life's worth of trash and treasures, saving what was important.

"That's a keeper." "Nah, you can throw that away."

Allen's father had built the porch he was sitting on and in 1987 purchased the mobile home in which he now lives with his 75-year-old wife.

"I've been here since 2003," Allen said. "Anyway, it's time

for some renovation work to be done to it. They've done a lot of good work today. . . (The porch's roof has) been leaking since May and they're repairing it."

"Servolution is doing a great job taking care of everything," Allen said. "I'm just a disabled vet and not able to take care of this stuff anymore. I'm on oxygen 24 hours a day. I get quite wind-ed. I just have a shortness of breath all the time. It's hard for me to do anything."

With his trailer and yard cleaner and safer, Allen thinks it'll be easier for him to move around, live and handle the day-to-day upkeep.

"It's going to be better than it was," Allen said.

Along with refastening the metal roof, Servolution Network repaired several leaky or broken faucets and pipes, replaced siding and fascia, and helped install some Americans with Disabilities Act compliant features around the house. - Zach Freeman

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THURSDAY, April 25, 2024



PHOTOS COURTESY SPRINGTOWN ISD

Shayne Greenwood passes the baton to Hannah Chenault in the 4x100 Relay.

SPORTS Roundup

Springtown qualifies half-dozen for state track

RICK MAUCH

Special to the Tri-County Reporter

Austin is nice this time of year. Just ask Springtown junior triple jumper Mackenzie Flaucher, aka Mack, who is making her third consecutive trip to the Class 4A State Track and Field Meet. She is one of six from the Springtown track program who will compete May 2 at the University of Texas in Austin.

Flaucher qualified by winning the Class 4A Region I Meet at Texas Tech University in Lubbock this past weekend. It was her third consecutive regional championship in the event. She finished fourth at state last year and seventh as a freshman.

Jumper Flaucher makes third straight trip

Joining her will be a pair of boys relays.

CLASS 4A REGION I TRACK MEET

April 19-20
Running distances in meters, field events in feet and inches.

Top two finishers in each event qualify for state, along with the best third-place finisher in each event across all four regions.

SPRINGTOWN RESULTS

Boys
Team score: 47 points, fourth place
Top finishers

- 4x200 relay: 1. Brayden Fox, Riley Jackson, Kamryn Cleveland, Braydon Butler, 1:28.94 (state qualifier)
- 4x100 relay: 2. Fox, Jackson, Caden Rogers, Butler, 42.67 (state qualifier)
- 110 hurdles: 4. Cleveland, 15.54. 5. Darren Sweeley, 15.56
- 4x400 relay: 5. Fox, Cleveland, Dillion Kates, Jackson, 3:29.56
- Discus: 6. Kelby Castro, 133-10
- Long jump: 8. Jackson, 20-09.75; 11. Cleveland, 20-01.75
- 3200: 9. Wesley Payne,

- 10:32.74
- Pole vault: 9. Devan Hair, 32-00
- 1600: 13. Payne, 4:52.60

Girls

- Team score: 15 points, 11th place
- Top finishers
- Triple jump: 1. Mackenzie (Mack) Flaucher, 37-10.5 (state qualifier); 5. Tyree, 34-07.25
- 200: 6. Marleigh Perales, 26.62
- 4x200 relay: 6. Perales, Brianna Shreves, Flaucher, Hannah Chenault, 1:48.11
- Long jump: 7. Tyree, 16-06.25
- 4x100 relay: 8. Shayne Greenwood, Chenault, Shreves, Skyler Tyree, 52.16
- Shot put: 8. Natalia Del Valle Gonzalez, 33-08.25;

- 12. Dezrae Robinson, 31-05.5
- Discus: 10. Kylee McNeely, 89-07
- 4x400 relay preliminaries: 12. Perales, Greenwood, Emily Salas, Flaucher, 4:22.84

SPRINGTOWN BASEBALL

The Porcupines (18-7, 8-2 in District 8-4A) won 6-2 at Bridgeport April 16 and 12-2 at home against the Bulls April 19 to end league play in a three-way tie for first place with Krum and Decatur.

The teams met in a seeding tournament in Sanger. The Porcupines defeated Decatur 3-1 April 22 and lost 10-0 to Krum that evening to finish second in district.

Hitting vs. Bridgeport, Game 1: Carson Cox two hits,

RBI; Brayden Fox two hits, double, RBI; Yair Hernandez two hits, RBI.

Pitching vs. Bridgeport, Game 1: Keegan Martinez seven innings, gave up five hits, no earned runs, 10 strikeouts, four walks, hit batter.

Hitting vs. Bridgeport, Game 2: Hernandez four hits, double, three RBIs; Trent Solis three hits, walk, three RBIs; Logan Murrell three hits.

Pitching vs. Bridgeport, Game 2: Caleb Elmore six innings, three hits, two runs (one earned), 11 strikeouts, three walks.

Hitting vs. Decatur: Ryan Kirk two hits, double, RBI;

PLEASE SEE **ROUNDUP** | B3



Mack Flaucher receives her gold medal for the 3rd consecutive year as the 4A Region 1 triple jump champion.



Darren Sweeley and Kamron Cleveland compete in the 110 hurdles. Kam finished 4th, Darren 5th

Tootie Hall

School Board Candidate • Springtown ISD

PLACE 7

First on Your Ballot, First For Our Teachers, Admin, and KIDS!



Azle teams recognized at school board

ZACH FREEMAN

azlereporter@tricountyreporter.com

Parents and students hear commendations for state qualifying teams

AZLE — Azle ISD's board of trustees saw a full house at the most recent meeting at the administration building, April 15. Parents, families and school staff filled the room for more than 40 minutes of student recognition. Walnut Creek Elementary students and Principal Stephan Garretson led the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Azle High School archery team was the first to be introduced by sponsor Lisa Helm. The team recently attended its sixth National Archery in Schools state tournament in Belton.

"I couldn't be more proud of these kiddos," Helm said. "They put in some after school practices. We were consistent throughout the school year and these kids wanted to practice more and more each week. We're very blessed in Azle ISD. Not many people know we have an archery team. We teach it in the classroom, and we also have an afterschool program. We competed with 1,000 other archers in the state of Texas and competed for over \$60,000 in scholarship money. I've actually had colleges call me and inquire about our archers after the state tour-

nament. We're very excited about the opportunities and all the hard work that these students put in."

The AHS swim team was the second group to be presented with commendations, along coach Amy Estes. Athletic Director Becky Spurlock spoke about the swimmers' hard work through the semester.

"These young men and young women get on a bus every morning at 5:45 a.m. and drive to Decatur to swim for an hour-and-a-half then come back, get ready and go to class," Spurlock said. "So just that alone is worth a round of applause."

Estes then spoke about the team's success and thanked AHS teacher John Epps for driving the students to their practices each day from August to February.

"I'm blessed to work with some great student athletes," Estes said. "This year we qualified 12 to regionals. We had an excellent year, and this is the most we have ever had graduate. We broke two school records this year. Going into the year I didn't

think we were going to do that, but I shouldn't have second-guessed this group."

AHS girls' bidistrict championship soccer team was next on the docket with coach Hannah Smith saying "This group of young ladies, as they stand before you, placed third in district, then they went to bidistrict and won the bidistrict championship. So, this is your bidistrict championship ladies soccer team. I just want to firstly say how proud I am of each and every single one of these girls standing here today. We had 11 seniors in this group. It's the largest graduating class we've had in the last four years that I've been here. So, we're very proud of how hard they worked in these four years to get from where we started to where we finished. This goes for the juniors, sophomores and freshmen; they've all had a lot of roles that they played. They work hard every practice, every weightroom, every morning and every day after school, they put in all the effort. So, all the hard work, all the appreciation goes to them."

Smith also thanked Epps for assisting the team and driving for the group.

While AHS FFA teams were away at state competition that evening, Career and Technical Education Director Suzanne Murr introduced some of the other teams under her purview. Future Business Leaders of America returned from its state competition in Galveston Friday and was the first to be introduced by Murr. Sponsor Tracey Knoll spoke alongside three of her students. A junior, Luke Petersen, placed first in business management and is going to the national competition the last week of June in Orlando, Florida. Petersen placed eighth in last year's national competition in the same category.

Family, Career and Community Leaders of America returned from the state competition Sunday afternoon. Advisor Natasha Deramee spoke about the group.

"We had a few of our members make it to the top five at state, 14 went to region," Deramee said. "We're so

excited. They have grown a lot. Thank you so much for letting them come. We really enjoy it."

After describing a recent car show hosted by this group at AHS, Murr introduced the school's SkillsUSA team.

Sponsor Robert Herring introduced his team that returned from state competition in Corpus Christi the week before.

"These are some of the hardest working young people that I know," Herring said. "I am blessed every day that I get to cross paths with these young people. These guys are the best of the best. They do the best that they can. In fact, they would meet every morning four days a week in most cases from 6 o'clock to 8 o'clock and practice, practice, practice, their speeches, their marching. They have to walk the same, they have to look the same, if Mr. Brown has a hair out of place so does Jacob, they all got to have a hair out of place. So, it's got to be that perfect. First of all, these young adults are extremely proud of what they've done. Everyone of them brought home gold medals when they went to compete at the state level."

Texas Public Safety Association advisors

Samantha Brown and Officer Steve Stutsman were the last to recognize their teams.

"Like anybody else here, we're extremely proud of all the youngsters here and all the hard work that they put in," Stutsman said. "I also want to make sure that our school board understands how important the CTE program is. This and all the other students you've seen are our future and it's money well spent. What you're looking at here are future firefighters, police officers, forensics, anthropology, lawyers, corrections. I'd like to also give a big shoutout to the Azle ISD Police Department and the Azle Fire Department. They helped us every week to train these youngsters and prepare for their competition. This year at our regional competition, they absolutely dominated. They were sick and tired of hearing, 'first place Azle, first place Azle, first place Azle.' State competition was extremely competitive and we did take home third place in our cell extraction team. We're very proud and can't say enough. Both of them that (competed in) individual events had their personal best at state, they did not slack off, they did their best times."



The AHS archery team.

ZACH FREEMAN | TRI-COUNTY REPORTER



The AHS swim team.

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AHS Texas Public Safety Association teams.

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Walnut Creek Elementary students leading the room in the Pledge of Allegiance.

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The AHS SkillsUSA team.

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The AHS FCCLA team.

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The AHS girls' soccer team.

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The AHS FBLA team.

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Fun on Church Street

Azle Christian Church hosts community block party



Fourth grader Dean Blomer gets a dragon face painting from Smiley Cheeks artist Carol Morgan.

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The event featured animals from BFF's Mobile Petting Zoo like these silkies, a special breed of chicken.

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Local music act Left on Re(a)d (left) and Azle Christian Church Worship Minister Jessie Button (right) performed at the event.



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Kids and kids collided on the church grounds.

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The event featured awesome animals from BFF's Mobile Petting Zoo.

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Azle MGP Indoor Drumline ranks 13th at world finals

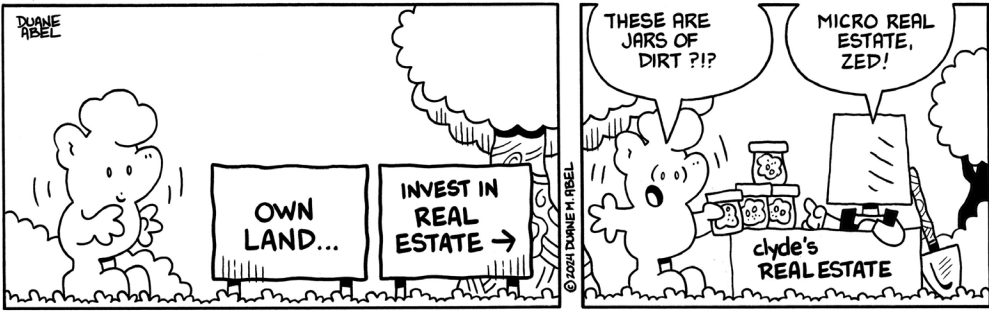
PHOTOS COURTESY OF AZLE MGP

The Azle High School Marching Green Pride indoor drumline competed at the Winter Guard International finals Saturday, April 20, in Dayton, Ohio, and ranked 13th overall. A total of 44 groups performed in their division preliminaries. "I am incredibly proud of the students and staff, and this group has advanced the skillset and prowess of our percussion program substantially," said Greg Davis, AHS band director.



ZED by Duane Abel

www.corkycomics.com



AISSD Hall of Fame nominations close May 3

Azle Athletics is accepting nominations for the 2024 Hall of Fame through Friday, May 3. To nominate a deserving former Azle Hornet, complete the Hall of Fame nomination form online at <https://azlesports.rankone.com/>. The nomination criteria are that the athlete or team must be an Azle High School graduate, they must be out of school at least 10 years, and they must have been held in high respect during their time at AHS and as an adult. The Hall of Fame induction ceremony is scheduled for Saturday, Oct. 5.



Sudoku

APRIL 25, 2024

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

Level: Intermediate

ROUNDUP

FROM PAGE B1

Solis two hits, double, two RBIs.

Pitching vs. Decatur: Fox seven innings, two hits, one earned run, 11 strikeouts, four walks, hit batter.

Hitting vs. Krum: Kirk, Solis, Murrell hit and walk each.

The Porcupines will play bidistrict May 2-4 against the third-place team from District 7-4A.

AZLE TRACK

The Hornets' Josh Montelongo came close to landing a berth at state, but narrowly missed out in the 400. His time of 49.70 seconds was third at the Region I Meet in Lubbock, but not enough to give him a wild-card berth.

Class 5A Region I Meet

Texas Tech University, Lubbock

April 19-20

Azle results

Boys

- 400: 3. Josh Montelongo, 49.70

- Pole vault: 11. Tyson Schreier, 13-00

Girls

- 400 preliminaries: 12. Raegan Williams, 1:01.00

- 4x400 relay prelims: 16. Khloe Warner, Yasmeen Tejada, Reese Jeter, Noah Kovach, 4:22.85

- Triple Jump Region I-5A - Finals

AZLE BASEBALL

The Hornets (14-11, 3-7 in District 5-5A) fell 7-3 at home to Aledo April 16 and 5-1 at Aledo April 19.

Hitting vs. Aledo, Game 1: Garrin Graves two hits, two walks, two RBIs; Ethan Hardaway two hits.

Pitching vs. Aledo, Game 1: Carter Landon six innings, three strikeouts.

Hitting vs. Aledo, Game 2: Ryland Liptow home run, RBI.

Pitching vs. Aledo, Game 2: Cole Webb 5.2 innings, six hits, one earned run.

The Hornets finish the regular season with a home-and-home against Brewer this week. They were playing at the Bears at press time and host them April 26 at 6:30 p.m. They need wins in both games to keep their playoff hopes alive.

SPRINGTOWN SOFTBALL

The Lady Pines (13-13-1, 5-5 in District 8-4A) fell 3-1 at home to Krum April 16 and won 5-3 at Bridgeport April 19 to end the regular season.

The Lady Pines, fourth in district, will compete in bidistrict against District 7-4A champion Sanger in a best-of-3 series. Game 1 will be in Springtown April 25 at 6 p.m. Game 2 will be in Sanger at 5 p.m. with a third game, if necessary to follow.

Hitting vs. Krum: Haylee Sanborn hit, RBI.

Pitching vs. Krum: Kylee Spray seven innings, six hits, three runs (zero earned), 11 strikeouts, five walks, hit batter.

Hitting vs. Bridgeport: Spray three hits, double, two RBIs; Cheyanne Atchley two hits, double, two RBIs; Ava Fernandez two hits, double, walk; Kelsey Brandt triple.

Pitching vs. Bridgeport: Spray seven innings, six hits, three runs (one earned), 12 strikeouts, two walks.

AZLE SOFTBALL

The Lady Hornets (19-11-1, 9-3 in District 5-5A) gave Aledo, No. 3 in the state, a scare before falling 4-3 at home to the Ladycats April 16. They won 5-1 at Brewer April 19.

Azle finished second in district and will compete in bidistrict April 25-27 against the third-place team from District 6-5A.

Hitting vs. Aledo: Torrie Johnson hit, two RBIs.

Pitching vs. Aledo: Morgan Terrell 1.1 innings, no hits, no runs, one strikeout, no walks, hit batter; Adrianna Wiedeman 5.2 innings, four hits, four runs (one earned), five strikeouts, four walks.

Hitting vs. Brewer: Allison Smith two hits, double; Bella Tipton two hits, double, RBI. All nine hitters in the lineup had at least one base hit.

Pitching vs. Brewer: Terrell two innings, two hits, one earned run, four strikeouts, one walk; Corynne Barone five innings, five hits, three strikeouts, one walk.

AZLE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL BASEBALL

The Crusaders (5-4 in TAPPS District 2-1A) dropped a doubleheader at Abilene Christian April 19 by scores of 10-0 and 11-0.

They finished second in district and were facing Wylie Preparatory High in bidistrict at press time at Fort Worth Castleberry High School.

Standouts against Abilene Christian were Andy Wisniewski, Jakob Rollins and Nehemiah Crowell.

AZLE GIRLS ALL-DISTRICT SOCCER

A dozen members of the Lady Hornets were named to the All-District 5-5A Team by the league's coaches, including two superlative honors.

Senior Rebecca Marx was named Defensive MVP and sophomore Emma Nelson was selected Goalkeeper of the Year.

First-team accolades went to seniors Sarae Perez and Melanie Harder, along with sophomore Sophie McIntyre. Named to the second team were seniors Eliana Tejada and Anahipatricia Colmenero and sophomore Lily Hudman.

Receiving honorable mention were senior Eva Solorzano, junior McKenzie Roberts, sophomore Yasmeen Tejada and freshman Rachel Harder.

The Lady Hornets enjoyed one of their best seasons, posting a 14-8-2 overall record, finishing third in district and advancing to the second round of the playoffs.

AZLE BOYS ALL-DISTRICT SOCCER

Senior Braden Forsythe was selected first-team All-District 5-5A, while senior Adan Sandoval was named to the second team. Receiving honorable mention were seniors Anthony Nguyen and Juan Pulido, along with juniors Yair Macias and Stephen Sim.

AZLE FOOTBALL

Hornets head coach Devon Dorris said the program will hold spring workouts this season.

"We have decided to take advantage of the UIL allowing us to train an hour outside the school day and work skills during the period. This will afford us the opportunity in the fall to start a week earlier and have two scrimmages before we start the season," he said.

"With only two nondistrict games and having a nine-team district, we like the idea of having an extra scrimmage before we start the season."

Solution to last week's puzzle

APRIL 18, 2024

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

WORD SCRAMBLE

Rearrange the letters to spell something pertaining to soy.

IMKL

--	--	--	--

Answer: Milk

CRYPTO FUN

Determine the code to reveal the answer!

Solve the code to discover words related to letter writing. Each number corresponds to a letter. (Hint: 1 = E)

A. 2 1 15
Clue: Writing device

B. 2 19 2 1 16
Clue: Thin sheet material

C. 20 1 24 21 26 19 16 6
Clue: Part of a computer

D. 10 5 26 8 17 5 10 14
Clue: Cognitive processes

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Place your ad here today! 817-270-3340 tricityreporter.com

TRI-COUNTY Electric Cooperative, Inc. "A Commitment to Service and Savings" Actively Supporting our Communities!

Call Jessica for details 817-270-3340

Advertise Here Contact us for details. 817-270-3340 tricityreporter.com

Your Ad Here Newspaper Advertising Works!

Call Jessica for details TODAY 817-270-3340

ADVERTISE YOUR BUSINESS WITH US and maximize your visibility! Contact us about advertising solutions. 817-270-3340

classified@tricountyreporter.com
817-270-3340 or 817-220-7217

Ad Classifications

- | | | | |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|
| 1... Air Condition/Heating | 24..... Electrician | 46..... Looking to Buy | 69..... Sand/Gravel |
| 2..... Antiques | 25..... Equipment & Tool Rental | 47..... Lost & Found | 70..... Septic Tanks |
| 3..... Appliances | 26..... Excavating | 48... Maintenance/Repairs | 71..... Sewing/Alterations |
| 4..... Appliance Repair | 27..... Exterminating | 49..... Masonry/Stonework | 72..... Sewer Service |
| 5..... Arts/Crafts | 28..... Farm Equipment | 50... Mobile Home Service | 73..... TV/Radio |
| 6..... Asphalt Paving | 29..... Fencing | 51..... Motorcycles | 74..... Tractor Service |
| 7..... Auctions | 30..... Firewood | 52..... Movers | 75..... Upholstery |
| 8..... Autos, Trucks | 31..... Free | 53..... Musical Instruments | 76..... Vacuum Cleaners |
| 9..... Auto Repair Service | 32..... For Sale | 54..... Music Lessons | 77..... Wanted |
| 10..... Backhoe Service | 33..... Furniture | 55..... Miscellaneous | 78..... Well Drilling |
| 11..... Boats, Motors | 34..... Garage & Estate Sales | 56 Party Planning/Events | 79..... Welding |
| 12..... Bookkeeping | 35 ... Garden/Mowing Svc | 57..... Pets/Livestock | 80..... Lots/Acreage |
| 13..... Business | 36..... Hauling | 58..... Piano Service | 81..... Business & Commercial Property |
| Opportunity | 37..... Hay | 59..... Pool Service | 82..... RV's for Rent |
| 14..... Campers/Trailers | 38..... Health/Fitness | 60..... Professional Services | 83..... Houses for Sale |
| 15..... Carports/Patios | 39..... Help Wanted | 61..... Personal | 84..... Mobile Homes for Rent |
| 16..... Equipment Repair | 40 ... Home Improvement | 62..... Plumbing | 85..... Mobile Homes for Sale |
| 17..... Carpet Service | 41 House Leveling | 63..... Public Notice | 86..... Mobile Home/RV Lots |
| 18..... Catering | 42..... House Cleaning | 64..... Photography | 87..... Rent Furnished |
| 19..... Cement Work | 43..... Hunting | 65..... Printing | 88..... Rent Unfurnished |
| 20..... Demolition | 44..... Janitorial Service | 66..... Roofing | 89..... Wanted to Rent |
| 21..... Child Care | 45..... Job Wanted | 67..... Recycling | |
| 22..... Cosmetics | | 68..... Storage | |
| 23... Computers/Services | | | |

RATES

16 Words or Less:
Only \$10.00 per week!

Over 16 words, add 20 cents per word
 Extras such as Bold, Center & Border are available for a small fee

Classified boxed display ads also available for \$9.00 per column inch

(All ads must be paid in advance unless you have previously established credit)

CLASSIFIED AD DEADLINE: 1:00 PM FRIDAY

Most ads require payment in advance, but we do accept VISA, MASTERCARD, DISCOVER OR AMERICAN EXPRESS by phone.



Reach more than 8,000 households with advertising in THE TRI-COUNTY REPORTER

Nobody does it better!

006 Asphalt Paving
BYRUM CONSTRUCTION
 Asphalt and Concrete Paving
 Driveways • Parking Lots
 Asphalt Repairs & Sealcoating
 Asphalt Millings • Gravel
 Bruce Byrum, Azle, TX 817-690-2429

026 Excavating
REED EXCAVATING
 • SITE PREPARATION • GRAVEL ROADS
 • LOT CLEARING • PARKING LOTS
 • LEVELING • DEMOLITION
 • FINAL GRADE • STOCK TANKS
 • LAND EROSION
 Dump Truck Hauling 817-919-3696

Save a Shelter Animal. Find your furever Friend

039 Help Wanted
 SILVER DOLLAR CUSTOMS
 HELP WANTED
 2 Mechanics needed and 2 Body Technicians Experience a must and tools a plus! Mechanics We work on all types of vehicles; we specialize in classics. From full restorations, modifications, rebuilds and upgrades, maintenance, and repairs but not limited to. Hours: Monday - Friday 8:00am to 5:00pm Occasional Saturday Body Shop Technicians Metal work, fabrications, welding, body working, sanding, grinding, and sand blasting. Hours: Monday - Friday 6:00am to 2:30pm Occasional Saturday Pay Negotiable Contact: Elizabeth @ 817-752-2165 or Come by: 408 Commerce St Azle, TX 76020



Don't Break The Poor Little Piggy!
 Find the money you need in our Classified Section today!
 16 words for \$10

007 Auctions

ON-SITE REAL ESTATE/ESTATE AUCTION

Saturday, April 27th at 10:00 am
 1725 Salt Creek Road, Springtown, TX 76082

Partial Listing of Items to be Sold: Ford 6610 tractor with 2426 QT loader and bucket, Ford 1910 4 wheel drive tractor with loader, 2017 Honda CRV (86,000 miles), 2008 Dodge Ram 2500 Cummins HD 4 door (136,000 miles), 2011 Honda CRV, 29ft. Coachman camper, 2007 Polaris 700 atv, 16ft. goose-neck landscaping trailer, flatbed trailer, 8ft. utility trailer, 40ft. storage container, Hay King 7ft. disc, cattle panels, chop saw, t-posts, Stihl weed eater and chainsaw, meat slicer, wire, building materials, tin, old screen doors, scaffolding, post auger, 6ft brush hog, guns, ammo, fishing items, shooting table, game feeders, 3 compartment hunting dog box, perch traps, hog trap, shop table, fans, grinder on stand, 2 kayaks, 6ft. box blade, hay ring, troughs, chickens, 2 goats, tools, toolboxes, cutting rig, shop vacs, compressor, nail gun, gas cans, Troybilt tiller, ladder, patio furniture, birdbaths, garden décor, iron fencing, shelving antique glassware and collectibles, primitives, Western art, Kitchenaide refrigerator, electric stove, 2 leather swivel rocker recliners, paper shredder, 1100 lb. safe, 65 in. Samsung tv, cast iron, housewares, Blackstone grill, BBQ grill, silverplate flatware, bar, and much, much more!!!

Real Estate to be offered - Beautiful, 158.719 acres, long county road frontage on 2 sides, abundant wildlife, electricity and water on property, and any minerals owned will convey with the sale of this property. "Real Estate subject to seller's confirmation/no buyers premium on Real Estate"

Auction Preview: Saturday 8:00 a.m. till auction
10% Buyer's Premium/Cash or check only
 Concessions Available
www.beardauction.com
 Auctioneer: Wesley Beard TXS 9613 903-586-7952 | Broker: Patrice Stine/License #518299

035 Garden/Mowing Service
LEON'S TREE SERVICE
 Expert take downs
 Stump Grinding
 Residential/Commercial
 Licensed & Insured • Free Estimates
817-371-8597

Lawn Care by Rubio
Tree Trimming
Other Lawn Care
 Call for FREE ESTIMATE
682-262-4905

Chad's Tree Service
 Trimming • Removals • Stump Grinding
 Systemic Feeding • Brush Chipping • Cable Bracing
817-221-2201 • 817-246-5943
817-800-6059 CELL
 Insured for your protection **FREE ESTIMATES**

036 Hauling
DORADO TRANSPORT LLC
 AZLE, TEXAS
We Haul: Auto, Power Sports, Equipment and Freight
817-789-2519
DoradoTransportLLC@Yahoo.com

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

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

039 Help Wanted
 High End Wood Parts Manufacturer in Haltom City, TX. Hardwood cut-out tech, must read drawings. Must have some experience.
 CNC Router Operator/ Programmer, looking for someone who wants to learn and grow into a professional career.
 Professional shop, good wages, paid vacation and holidays.
 Contact customerservice@clmillwork.com or 817-605-0002

019 Cement Work
Allen Chesney Concrete
 All Types of Concrete Work
 Residential - Commercial
 Foundations, driveways, sand, gravel, demolition, haul-off, retaining walls
 817-271-4541

029 Fencing
 BOBBY'S FENCE. All types, Free Estimates, Over 26 years experience. 817-444-3213.
 KILEY CHESNEY CONSTRUCTION
 All Types Fences - Tractor Work
 817-846-6645

034 Garage & Estate Sales
 HUGE Yard Sale benefiting Azle High School 2027. Over 30 houses donated. Something for everyone. Men, women, children, & baby.
 900 Rosebud Dr. Azle
 Friday 4/26 8:30a-5pm & Saturday 4/27 8:00am-3pm

Concrete Services, Patios, Driveways, Sidewalks, Retaining Walls, Foundations, Stone Walls. Free Estimates. 817-371-8597.

Kiley Chesney Construction
 Dirt & Concrete Work
 Driveways • House Slabs • Garages • Add-ons
 Small Land Clean-ups • Gravel Driveways
 Kiley Chesney, Owner
 Springtown, TX • Mobile 817-846-6645

032 For Sale

King size bed, mattress, nightstand, chest of drawers, dresser & mirror.
\$600 817-454-3798

ASHWOOD PARK AZLE COMMUNITY GARAGE SALE
 MULTIPLE FAMILIES PARTICIPATING
APRIL 26 TO APRIL 28 8 AM - 3 PM
 RAIN OUT DATE MAY 3 TO MAY 5

024 Electrician
 BULLDAWG ELECTRIC CO.
 All types of electrical services and MH hook-ups.
 Free Estimates. 817-675-4921
 www.bulldawgelectric.com.
 TECL#25253.

035 Garden/Mowing Service
 COWBOY LAWN CARE.
 Handyman services, residential, farm, , landscaping, tree trimming. Free Estimates. 817-271-0450. Spring Specials.

STUMP GRINDING
 Don't dig it! Grind it!
 1 or 100 - We can do it.
 \$85 minimum within 5 mi.
817-237-5592

Find a Job in the classifieds!
 TRI-COUNTY REPORTER

Excavator Operator
 Pay based on experience, some benefits offered after 90 days.
Call 214-802-5157 for more info

Only \$29.95

 Need to sell your horse trailer? Call today and ask about our 3-MONTH SPECIAL! The Tri-County Reporter 817-270-3340

Advertising Works!

817-270-3340

Deadline:
1:00 PM FRIDAY

Classifieds

<p>039</p>  <h2>KARL KLEMENT</h2> <p>Service Technician</p> <p>Seeking to hire ALL levels of Automotive Service Technicians to join our team! Compensation based on experience and certifications. Must have a valid TXDL, be dependable and responsible with a good work ethic. To apply, please send resume via Indeed ad or come by our office located at 605 N. Business 287, Suite 102 in Decatur. Full-Time, Monday-Friday</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Help Wanted</p>  <p>Sales Associate</p> <p>If you are looking for an exciting and rewarding career; join our team as an Automotive Sales Associate. Previous auto sales experience preferred; however, exceptional, and in-depth training, of vehicles and technology are offered to candidates that demonstrate a commitment to providing exceptional customer service. In addition to paid training and opportunities for growth, we offer a competitive compensation & benefits package.</p> <p>Apply in person at: 605 N. Business 287, Ste 102, Decatur, Texas or call Human Resources 940-627-6362 hr.info@klementford.com Jodi Pettis, Executive Director</p> <p>All full-time positions offer growth opportunities & a full benefits package including Medical, Dental, Vision, Life, 401(k) & more. EEOC</p>	<p>079 Welding</p>  <h2>SOLID STEEL SOLUTIONS</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Metal Buildings • Steel Components • Welding Supplies • Concrete Supplies • Fabrication Supplies • Pipe Fencing • Deer Blinds • Deer Feeders <p>8894 W Hwy 199 • Springtown 817-220-0008 www.SolidSS.com Open to the Public</p>
<p>KLEMENT DISTRIBUTION, INC. (Hershey Ice Cream Distributor)</p> <p>No Positions Available at This Time</p>	<p>Karl Klement Properties, Inc.</p> <p>No Positions Available at This Time</p>	<p>owner Rodney Vick 817-220-3044 fax 817-523-7639 cell 817-253-1614</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>R & E Construction</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Metal Building Specialist</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weld Ups/ Bolt Ups • Pipe Fencing • Concrete • Horse Barns • All Types Fencing • Metal Roofs <p>Compare Pricing NO JOB TOO SMALL</p>

040 Home Improvement

BOBBY MCWILLIAMS PAINTING
817-821-6377
Interior/Exterior Painting
Residential & New Homes.
50 years experience.
bobbymcwilliamspainting.com

052 Movers

U.S. Army Retired-but not tired!
Careful moving-Cheap.
Call Big Jim @ 817-237-5151.

055 Miscellaneous

Fair buyer (running or not), cars, trucks, boats, campers, trailers, & farm equipment. 817-629-7531
Weatherford.

057 Pets/Livestock

Will pay top dollar for grazing and hay leases. Call 940-389-1936.

062 Plumbing

LANDERS Plumbing Co.
940-233-2862
M-10078

066 Roofing

Miles Roofing
• Insurance Claim Specialists;
• Free Estimates
817-797-3420

066 Roofing

AT HOME ROOFING & METAL BUILDINGS
817-304-4224

Tired of always replacing your roof?
Call us for a metal roof quote.
We'll be here after the storm.

068 Storage

INNERSPACE STORAGE. Hwy 199, Springtown. Now renting all unit sizes, 24-hour access. 682-842-1414.

069 Sand/Gravel

Hall's Sand, Dirt & Gravel
QUALITY FAMILY BUSINESS
Since 1938

CALL CLIFF HALL
(817) 228-6293

We go the extra mile to ensure you get more for your \$.
On House Pads, Driveways, Lot Clearing & Tractor Work, Etc.

Rescue your Ballerina from the Shelter and give her a Furever Home



Ash Creek Storage

Convenient Location
Corner of Main St. & Locust • Azle
817-444-3292

Advertising Works!

Kevin's Handyman Services
40 Years Experience

- Carpentry
- Drywall & Painting
- Tile & Laminate Floors
- Doors & Windows
- Decks & Stairs
- Cabinets & Countertops
- No Job Too Small

Springtown and Surrounding Areas
231-445-1221

Devin's Handyman Service

- Carpentry
- Cement
- Rock
- Granite
- Tile
- Painting
- Siding
- Insulation
- Kitchen/Bath
- Roof & Gutters
- Powerwashing
- Decks

SPRING SPECIAL 20% OFF with this ad!

Call Devin at 817-629-9608

046 Looking to Buy

Looking to buy a home, 1200-2000 square ft., 3-2, pre-owned, garage, .75+ acre lot, Springtown area. Will consider houses needing repair, remodel, or vacant building site.
Text 817-996-6351

066 Roofing

ANDERSON ROOFING & REMODELING

Roofing • Siding • Windows
Painting • Fences • Gutters

Fort Worth BBB A+ Rating

817-705-3656 817-230-9215

079 Welding

WDC WELD-DONE CONSTRUCTION LTD.

Metal Building Erectors

- Pre-engineered Weld-up
- Barns/Shops
- Arenas/Hangars
- Fencing

1220 E. Hwy. 199 • Springtown
817-220-2150
www.weld-done.net

Our Business is Metal Buildings - And We're Good!

DESIGN FABRICATION ERECTION

Cozart METAL BUILDING SYSTEMS

Fabrication and erection of quality metal buildings at reasonable prices, any size - any design

Office **817-237-2282**
Fax 817-237-0904
Mark Cozart Jeremy Cozart
817-233-6668 817-237-2028

049 Masonry/Stonework

Silva Masonry, L.L.C.
CONCRETE COMMERCIAL • RESIDENTIAL
Landscape Designs, Outdoor Kitchens
Patios, Retaining Walls, Mailboxes

All Types Stone & Brick Work Free
New Construction • Remodels Estimates

817-308-6512
email alvarosilva@verizon.net

DIAMOND ROOFING & CONSTRUCTION

Commercial & Residential

- Roofing
- Metal Roofing
- Carports
- Metal Buildings
- All General Contracting

417 N. MAIN ST • SPRINGTOWN
817-523-4137
Here Before The Storm. Here Long After.

THANKS FOR SHOPPING & DINING LOCALLY!

ONLY \$29.95



TAKING A ROAD TRIP?

Find that Perfect Vehicle in the Classifieds.
OR
You can Sell your Auto in the same section.
Call for more info on our
3 MONTH SPECIAL
Call 817-270-3340
TRI-COUNTY REPORTER

SELL IT IN THE CLASSIFIEDS!

PLACE YOUR AD ONLINE:
WWW.TRICOUNTYREPORTER.COM

817-270-3340

Deadline:
1:00 PM FRIDAY

Classifieds



TexSCAN Week of
April 21-27, 2024

ACREAGE
Affordable Owner Financed Land. We have some of the best in Texas. Hill Country, South Texas, West Texas. 800-876-9720, texasranchland.com.

AUCTIONS
Farm, Ranch & Construction Equipment, Cattle & Surplus from Bellville ISD Auction - Sat., April 27 at 9 a.m. 1036 S. FM 331, Sealy, onsite & online bidding. Tractors, trucks, trailers, livestock equip., construction equip., misc. Bellville ISD surplus will sell online - (2) buses, (2) zero turn mowers, tools (7) Smart Boards, cafeteria equipment, (19) CPU, (23) computer monitors & more. www.switzerauction.net, 979-885-2400.

CHARITY
Donate your car, truck, boat, RV and more to support our veterans! Schedule a FAST, FREE vehicle pickup and receive a top tax deduction! Call Veteran Car Donations at 1-855-808-4152 today!

CELL PHONE SERVICE
Switch and save up to \$250/year on your talk, text and data. No contract and no hidden fees. Unlimited talk and text with flexible data plans. Premium nationwide coverage. 100% U.S. based customer service. For more information, call 1-855-493-3803.

ENERGY
Prepare for power outages today with a Generac Home Standby Generator. Act now to receive a FREE 5-Year warranty with qualifying purchase. Call 1-855-704-8579 today to schedule a free quote. It's not just a generator. It's a power move.

EVENT
Lamesa - Chicken Fried Steak Festival, April 26-28, Lamesa, TX. More than 100 booths, live music Fri & Sat., volleyball tournament, car & motorcycle show, children's story time, pet costume contest, petting zoo, parade, 5K run, worship service, carnival games, team roping, tumblers & dancers, Mister and Miss Chicken Fry Pageant. For registration forms and more information go to www.ci.lamesa.tx.us or call 806-872-2124 ext. 322.

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NOTICE: While most advertisers are reputable, we cannot guarantee products or services advertised. We urge readers to use caution and when in doubt, contact the Texas Attorney General at 800-621-0508 or the Federal Trade Commission at 877-FTC-HELP. The FTC web site is www.ftc.gov/bizop.

HOME IMPROVEMENT
Jacuzzi Bath Remodel can install a new, custom bath or shower in as little as one day. For a limited time, we're cutting installation costs in half and offering a FREE safety upgrade! Additional terms apply. Subject to change and vary by dealer. Offer ends 3/31/24. Call 1-855-965-0841.

LEGAL ASSISTANCE
Wesley Financial Group, LLC - Timeshare Cancellation Experts. Over \$50,000,000 in timeshare debt and fees cancelled in 2019. Get free informational package and learn how to get rid of your timeshare! Free consultations. Over 450 positive reviews. Call 855-501-6864

MEDICAL
Portable Oxygen Concentrator May Be Covered by Medicare! Reclaim independence and mobility with the compact design and long-lasting battery of Inogen One. Free information kit! Call 866-747-9983.

DENTAL INSURANCE from Physicians Mutual Insurance Company. Coverage for 400 plus procedures. Real dental insurance - NOT just a discount plan. Do not wait! Call now! Get your FREE Dental Information Kit with all the details! 1-855-901-0467 www.dental50plus.com/texpress #6258

OIL & GAS RIGHTS
We buy oil, gas & mineral rights. Both non-producing and producing including Non-Participating Royalty Interest (NPRI). Provide us your desired price for an offer evaluation. Call today: 806-620-1422. Lobo Minerals, LLC, PO Box 1800, Lubbock, TX 79408-1800, LoboMineralsLLC@gmail.com.

WATER DAMAGE
WATER DAMAGE CLEANUP: A small amount of water can lead to major damage to your home. Our trusted professionals dry out the wet area and do repairs to protect your family and your home's value! If you have water in your home that needs to be dried, call 24/7: 1-877-727-3027. Have zip code of service location ready when you call!

PLACE YOUR AD
OVER THE PHONE:
817-270-3340



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



TEXAS CROSSWORD
by Charley & Guy Orbison
Copyright 2024 by Orbison Bros.

ACROSS

- Performance Hall in Fort Worth
- TXism: "best I ever wrapped ___ around"
- French explorer in Texas: Sieur ___ Salle
- George H. W. to George W.
- LBJ choice for chief Justice of Supreme Court: ___ Fortas
- TXism: "covered like fur ___"
- type of Dr. Pepper
- TXism: "worthless as ___ flush"
- divided by two (2 wds.)
- TXism: "never let ___ you sweat"
- box with perforated top for perfume
- what Christ said on the cross meaning "My God"
- unemployed Texan ___ job
- TXism: "___ shooting" (certain)
- TXism: "use your head for something besides a ___"
- TX Janis Joplin died of this (abbr.)
- TX Larry McMurry wrote "___ Grave"
- cole
- Larry, Curly & ___
- TXism: "run it by a ___" (finalize)
- persistence
- entrants at Texas Motor Speedway, e.g.
- TXism: "you're preaching ___ choir"
- "Giant" actress (init.)
- roof overhang
- Gen. Robert ___
- historic "Opera House" in Columbus
- fully grown Texan
- TXism: "busy ___ bartender on pay day"
- Dallas suburb: ___ Colinas
- deer-like animal in West Texas
- TXism: "___ hill for a stepper" (doable)
- gold symbol
- content of small Texas stream (2 wds.)
- Fort Worth based ___ Brick company
- chore
- TXism: "___ dog stink? (yes)"
- TXism: "he's got ___ of arrows in his quiver" (capable)
- relieve again
- good shooter
- what the Texas legislature can enact (2 wds.)
- Gov. Preston (init.)
- "yep" or "si," in France
- coffee container
- TX cowboy Gay & actress Patricia
- fancy appetizer
- read quickly
- dark pub beers
- Tex Ritter hit: "___ Whiskey"
- TXism: "about as clear as ___ River mud"
- small contribution
- TXism: "playing with a ___ deck" (unlucky)
- fancy "adios"
- in Jasper County on U.S. 96
- flat container for "rot gut"
- extra play for the Mavericks (abbr.)



SUBSCRIPTION SPECIAL

Check one:

\$50.00 IN-COUNTY
Tarrant, Parker & Wise only

\$70.00 OUT-OF-COUNTY
In Texas

\$40.00 ONLINE ONLY
View an online replica of the paper without receiving a printed copy

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

County _____ Daytime ph. _____

Mail to:
321 West Main Street, Azle, Texas 76020

TRI-COUNTY REPORTER

PLACE YOUR AD ONLINE:
www.tricountyreporter.com
or EMAIL:
classified@tricountyreporter.com

Last Puzzle Solution

S-1865

YARD SALE

16 WORDS FOR ONLY \$10

Deadline: Mondays by 4:00 pm

NEED AN AD?
817-270-3340
The Tri-County Reporter

SERVICE DIRECTORY

AIR CONDITIONING AND HEATING

SERVING THE SPRINGTOWN, AZLE, WEATHERFORD & FORT WORTH AREA SINCE 1970

J & E Air Conditioning and Heating Inc.

Sales • Service
Residential • Commercial

SPRINGTOWN
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www.jandea.com

Texas Air Conditioning Contractor License: TACLA014745E

TRASH/WASTE SERVICE

OVER 14 YEARS IN BUSINESS

ATEX TRASH SERVICE

Proudly Serving The Community We Live In

\$40 PER MONTH WEEKLY PICKUP

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AIR CONDITIONING AND HEATING

IS YOUR SYSTEM WINTER READY?

FALL & WINTER HEATING TUNEUP \$65

COMMERCIAL & RESIDENTIAL

Southwestern COMFORT 11345 FM 730N, Azle
817-696-6421

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Tom Samples Pest Control

YOUR COMPLETE PEST CONTROL SERVICE

Family owned and operated. Over 70 years of service.

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★ U.S. ARMY ★
retired but not tired!

MOVERS
Courtesy ★ Punctuality ★ Care

Full Service Moving - Gun Safes
Pianos - Auto - Antiques
Packing & Storage - Large or Small
Local & Long Range

Please call Jim at
817-237-5151

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TRANSMISSION

Rainwater's The Transmission Shop

We do our own transmission rebuilding here in house, ASE Certified Rebuilder, saving you money. Most others don't! Others buy from suppliers and auto part stores.

682-615-7250 • 817-766-3852



Mike's Westside Rental has the equipment you need

Spring is the perfect time to get started on your project list before the summer heat hits. Whether it's rejuvenating your landscaping, prepping for a vegetable garden, or installing a new sprinkler system, Mike's Westside Rental in Azle has all the equipment you need to get those jobs done.

Mike's Westside Rental offers rentals on zero-turn mowers, walk-behind trenchers, lawn aerators, garden tillers and more. If it's a tool that will make your project go faster and smoother, they have it.

Looking to start some in-home projects like retiling the bathroom or redoing your hardwood floors? Mike's Westside Rental has the tools for that, too. They offer floor sanders, nailers, tile strippers and cutters, just to name a few.

Not sure what you need? Everyone at Mike's Westside Rental is here to help you find the tools you need for your next project. They offer

every type of tool for every kind of project. You can also rent appliance dollies, paint sprayers, ladders, nail guns, scissor lifts and drain augers to help check things off your to-do list this spring.

Mike's Westside Rental is a great resource for the small contractor or weekend warrior. Whatever the project, they will help to make sure you have all the things you need to get it done. They

are also a full-line dealer for SCAG mowers, Echo Power Equipment, and Toro Mowers, sales, parts and service.

No matter how big or small your home projects are this spring, the team at Mike's Westside Rental will help you get them done. Follow them on Facebook and visit their website www.mikesrental.com to check out any upcoming specials.



Mike's Westside Rental is located at 1363 Northwest Parkway in Azle.



Bert Thompson of Mike's Westside Rental can help you find what you need for your weekend project.

Let NBT help you plant the seeds to success and watch your business GROW!





NBT

405 Commerce Street
Azle, TX 76020

www.nbt.bank | 817.759.9001

Member FDIC



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METRO CREATIVE CONNECTION

Gardening sparks a level of creativity among enthusiasts, and that can help to alleviate stress by lowering levels of the hormone cortisol.

Gardening offers more than a day in the sun

STAFF REPORTS
Metro Creative Connection

Millions of people embrace opportunities to get back in their gardens each spring, and they might be reaping more rewards from that activity than they realize. According to the American Institute of Stress, gardening sparks a level of creativity among en-

thusiasts, and that can help to alleviate stress by lowering levels of the hormone cortisol. In addition, authors of a 2022 study published in the journal Urban Forestry & Urban Greening concluded that gardening during the COVID-19 pandemic helped people cope with coronavirus-related stress through outdoor activity.

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Overcome seasonal allergies

STAFF REPORTS

Metro Creative Connection

Seasonal allergies crop up at certain times each year, particularly in spring and fall. In 2021, approximately 81 million people in the United States were diagnosed with seasonal allergic rhinitis, according to the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America. The Canadian Allergy, Asthma and Immunology Foundation says between 20 and 25 percent of Canadians suffer from allergic rhinitis.

Tree and grass pollen are notable contributors to allergies, as is mold. Verywell Health says allergies can be worse in certain areas. In the U.S., certain areas of the East Coast have high rates of allergies, while cities on the West Coast tend to be less harsh on those with allergies. Since allergies can make life

uncomfortable, people want to know all they can do to overcome seasonal allergies. These strategies can help.

- Know the pollen count. Information is key, and knowing when pollen or mold counts are particularly high can help people take certain steps to avoid allergic reactions.

- Close the windows. When pollen levels are high, closing windows to prevent breezes that can bring pollen inside a home can be an effective strategy. You also can utilize a HEPA filter on the home's air conditioning system.

- Remove clothes worn outdoors and shower to rinse pollen off of skin and hair.

- While it can reduce energy usage, hanging clothing to line dry during high pollen counts can cause pollen to stick to freshly laundered items.

- Avoid gardening or other outdoor activities when pol-

len is high. If you must be outdoors, wear a mask.

- Try an antihistamine product that will reduce your body's reaction to the seasonal allergen. WebMD says butterbar as well as a plant-based Phleum pratense could be natural alternative antihistamine products.

- Use a nasal rinse to clean allergens out of your nose. This can help ease congestion and itching. Select sterile saline solutions or carefully follow directions for preparing rinses in neti pots.

- Corticosteroid nasal sprays can improve nasal symptoms. Speak with a doctor about how to use these products and how long to use them.

- Consider allergy shots, also known as allergen immunotherapy. These shots can help desensitize the body to common allergies by using very small amounts of aller-



METRO CREATIVE CONNECTION

Keep track of the pollen count so you can take steps to avoid allergic reactions.

gens over time. Eventually the immune system will produce a reduced reaction to the

allergen. Allergies can be troublesome. However, various strat-

egies can help to diminish the often unpleasant effects of seasonal allergies.

Tips to revitalize a garden this spring



METRO CREATIVE CONNECTION

Discard dead plants and prune any dead branches.

STAFF REPORTS

Metro Creative Connection

Gardening is a rewarding hobby that pays a host of significant dividends. Many people love gardening because it allows them to spend time outdoors, and that simple pleasure is indeed a notable benefit of working in a garden. But the National Initiative for Consumer Horticulture notes that gardening provides a host of additional benefits, including helping people get sufficient levels of exercise, reduce stress and improve mood.

With so much to gain from gardening, it's no wonder people look forward to getting their hands dirty in the garden each spring. As the weather warms up, consider

these tips to help bring a garden back to life.

- Discard the dead weight. Winter can take its toll on a garden, even in regions where the weather between December and early spring is not especially harsh. Discard dead plants that have lingered into spring and prune any perennials that need it. Branches that fell during winter storms also should be removed at this point if they have not previously been discarded.

- Test the soil. Soil testing kits can be purchased at local garden centers and home improvement retailers. Such tests are inexpensive and can reveal if the soil needs to be amended to help plants thrive in the months to come.

Mulching benefits a garden by helping soil retain moisture and preventing the growth of weeds. Various garden experts note that mulching in spring can prevent weed seeds from germinating over the course of spring and summer. That means plants won't have to fight with weeds for water when the temperature warms up. It also means gardeners won't have to spend time pulling weeds this summer.

- Inspect your irrigation system. Homeowners with in-ground irrigation systems or above-ground systems that utilize a drip or soaker function can inspect the systems before plants begin to bloom. Damaged sprinkler heads or torn lines can deprive plants of water they will need to

bloom and ultimately thrive once the weather warms up.

- Tune up your tools. Gardening tools have likely been sitting around gathering dust since fall. Serious gardeners know that tools can be expensive, so it pays to protect that investment by maintaining the tools. Sharpened pruners help make plants less vulnerable to infestation and infection. Well-maintained tools like shovels and hoes also make more demanding gardening jobs a little bit easier, so don't forget to tune up your tools before the weather warms up.

It's almost gardening season, which means gardeners can start on the necessary prep work to ensure their gardens grow in strong and beautiful this spring.

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Watch out for these poisonous backyard plants

STAFF REPORTS

Metro Creative Connection

Spending time in the backyard can be restorative and relaxing. Is it any wonder why homeowners are increasingly improving their homes so that they can blur the lines between the indoors and outside and enjoy more recreational moments in nature?

Part of what makes a landscape inviting is the bevy of plants dotting suburban landscapes. Individuals may take painstaking pleasure in mapping out landscapes that are both functional and appealing. When selecting foliage, it's wise for homeowners to familiarize them-

selves with certain plants that may not be very welcome in their entertaining areas - particularly those that are dangerous. Poison ivy, oak and sumac may be some of the better-known poisonous plants, but there are others that can prove problematic as well.

· **Hogweed:** This is an invasive plant that grows throughout North America but is particularly well-known along the Atlantic coast. The sap in the leaves can cause phytophotodermatitis, which is a chemical reaction after exposure to sunlight. Painful, severe blisters can form on the skin wherever it touches, and hogweed sap may cause

blindness if it gets into the eyes.

· **Lily of the Valley:** This plant is known for delicate, bell-shaped flowers and a sweet scent. While Lily of the Valley is not poisonous to touch, if ingested, toxic glycosides in the flowers, berries, leaves, and stems may cause a host of problems, including disorientation, vomiting, blurry vision, and rashes.

· **Bleeding Heart:** Native to woodlands, this perennial loves the shade. It produces unique flowers that resemble tiny pink or white hearts with drops of blood at the bottom. Roots and foliage of Bleeding Heart contain alkaloids that are toxic to animals if ingest-



PHOTO COURTESY TEXAS PARKS AND WILDLIFE

Poison ivy, *Toxicodendron radicans*, grows in Texas all year round. All parts of the plant are toxic in all seasons. Burning leaves of Poison Ivy are particularly dangerous because the toxin is carried in the smoke and can cause serious respiratory damage if inhaled.



PHOTO COURTESY OF CHARMAINE RICHARDSON

Texas Bullnettle, also known as Bull Nettle, Tread-softly, Spurge Nettle (*Cnidioscolus texanus*) Leaves are alternate, 2-4 inches long, typically 5-lobed, crinkled in appearance and covered with stinging hairs. If one brushes against the leaves, one will feel the "sting" for 30-45 minutes.

ed in high quantities.

· **Nerium Oleander:** All parts of this beautiful shrub are extremely poisonous. It should definitely be kept away from pets and treated with caution or avoided altogether.

· **Foxgloves:** Adored among pollinators, Foxgloves produce towering pink and white trumpet blooms in early summer. The whole plant is toxic if eaten, however. People who eat any part or attempt to

make tea may find their heart rate slowing down or becoming irregular.

· **Stinging Nettle:** Brushing up against Stinging Nettle can be a painful experience. The plant has tiny stinging hairs on its leaves and stems.

· **Wild Hemlock:** This is a very poisonous member of the carrot family. If consumed, Wild Hemlock, which looks like parsley, can cause health problems. Toxins also can be absorbed through the

skin.

· **Deadly Nightshade (Belladonna):** A beautiful plant that produces shiny, black cherry-like berries, this contains a poison that can paralyze the gastrointestinal muscles and eventually the heart. The Royal Horticultural Society says that even rubbing up against it can irritate the skin.

Many plants, however beautiful, can be dangerous if ingested or touched.

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What to know about installing a pool at home

STAFF REPORTS

Metro Creative Connection

Summer is a season of relaxation when school is not in session, vacation season is in full swing and people everywhere are getting outside and soaking up the summer sun. It's hard to imagine how that can get any better. But it can for people thinking of installing a pool in their backyard.

Pools definitely have a wow factor that's hard to replicate. Homeowners considering pool installation can take note of these factors as they try to decide if a pool is right for them.

COST

The cost to install a pool depends on a host of factors, including which type of pool homeowners are considering and where they live. According to the online home improvement resource Angi (formerly Angie's list), the average cost to install an above ground pool in the United

States in 2022 was \$3,322, while the average inground pool installation in the same year was \$55,000. That's quite a disparity in price, and homeowners should know that the average cost of each project is higher in certain regions and under certain circumstances. Potential ancillary costs, such as excavation and plumbing relocation, will add to the final cost of the project. The erection of fencing around the pool if no fencing currently surrounds the area where the pool will be located also will add to the final cost.

POOL TYPE

As noted, above ground pools, on average, require a considerably smaller financial investment than inground pools. This is an important consideration, but which option may ultimately prove the better investment is worth researching. Homeowners can speak with a local real estate profes-

sional to determine if an inground pool or above ground might yield a significantly higher return at resale. If an inground pool is likely to increase property value by a substantial amount, it could be well worth the extra up-front costs.

MAINTENANCE

Pools are undeniably fun, but they still require maintenance. The experts at Better Homes & Gardens note that vinyl liners in pools last approximately six to 10 years,

while painted concrete may require a fresh coat of paint every five years. Plaster finishes may last as long as 15 years, while cement-coated products can last a lifetime. Pools also need periodic cleaning, and chemicals to keep the pool operating safely and cleanly will require an additional, if somewhat minimal, financial investment. Homeowners investing in a new pool should be aware of the maintenance required to keep the pool clean and be willing to do that

maintenance. And though homeowners typically can open and close pools on their own, it's also possible to hire someone to do it for a relatively small fee each season.

LOCATION

A survey of the land in a yard can reveal how smoothly a pool installation may or may not go. Though it's possible to install a pool in just about any yard, some spaces might require greater preparation and pre-installation effort than others. Sloped

backyards, for example, may require the services of a landscape architect to prepare the space, which can extend the time it takes to complete the project and add the overall cost.

These are just some of the factors that merit consideration when mulling a pool installation. A homeowners' best resource might be a local pool company who can visit a home, provide an estimate and point out any challenges that may arise during the install.



METRO CREATIVE CONNECTION

Pools definitely have a wow factor that's hard to replicate.

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How to keep your lawn looking green

STAFF REPORTS

Metro Creative Connection

Homeowners' fascination with a lush, green lawn is something that has developed over time and is still 'growing' strong. According to a 2019 survey conducted on behalf of the National Association of Landscape Professionals, 81 percent of all Americans had lawns and 79 percent said a lawn is an important feature when buying or renting a property.

Even though lush lawns are still coveted, due to drought, the financial climate and even invading insect populations, many people are taking inventory of their landscapes and deciding if a lawn is a priority, even going so far as to reinvent their spaces with lawn alternatives. Still, there are ways to keep properties green no matter which route is taken. Here's a look at some environmentally friendly ways to address a landscape.

IRRIGATE FROM BELOW

There are many ways to water landscapes, but homeowners may want to take their cues from the commercial farming industry. Drip irrigation systems utilize a network of valves, pipes and tubing close to the roots of plants or under the soil. Such systems are more efficient than surface irrigation options, helping to save water and nutrients in the soil.

WATER EARLY

Scotts Lawn Care suggests watering a lawn in the morning before 10 a.m. when it is cooler and winds tend to be calmer. This ensures water can be absorbed into the soil and grass roots before evaporation occurs. Watering midday may cause the water droplets on the lawn blades to heat up and actually scorch the lawn.

PLANT A NEW GRASS TYPE

Homeowners can experiment with eco-friendly grass

seed blends that mix native grasses and may not require as much water nor ideal growing conditions.

UTILIZE GREEN ALTERNATIVES

Rather than focusing solely on grass, some homeowners are turning to alternatives like clover and even moss, particularly if their landscapes do not have the most pristine growing conditions. This may reduce the need for chemical fertilizers and herbicides. The result is still a green, inviting yard.

WATCH THE LAWN HEIGHT

Mowing too frequently or at too low a height may compromise the lawn's ability to thrive. Grass cut to the proper height develops a deep root system to better locate water and nutrients in the soil. That means homeowners may not have to water as much or as frequently. Taller lawns also shade the soil and the roots, reducing some evaporation.



METRO CREATIVE CONNECTION

Green landscapes are possible with a few tips that help conserve water and maximize natural resources.

COMPOST

Leave the clippings on the lawn to break down and further feed nutrients to the lawn, helping it look greener and thrive. Furthermore, rely on supplementation with

compost to reinforce the nutrient profile in the soil. The National Resources Defense Council says composting is the natural process of recycling organic matter, such as leaves and food scraps, into a

valuable fertilizer. It doesn't take much to nurture compost in a yard.

Green landscapes are possible with a few tips that help conserve water and maximize natural resources.

Wood floor cleaning guide

STAFF REPORTS

Metro Creative Connection

Wood floors are coveted for a number of reasons, not the least of which is their aesthetic appeal. Many people prefer wood flooring because dust and dirt do not become trapped as they would in carpet fibers, seemingly making wood flooring easy to clean.

Most floors endure a lot of wear and tear. However, with care, wood flooring may last for decades. Part of that care includes understanding how

to properly clean and maintain wood floors so they look their best. The following are some steps for keeping wood floors as pristine as possible.

- Remove shoes. It's a good idea to remove shoes, particularly heels, when walking on wood floors. Sharp heels, cleats and other shoes can scratch or dent wood flooring. All shoes can track in excess dirt, which can contribute to a lack of luster as well.
- Sweep or vacuum frequently. The experts at The Spruce suggest sweeping,

vacuuming or dust mopping wood floors daily. Dirt and dust make floors more slippery, and dirt or sand particles can lead to scratches on the floor.

- Learn your flooring type. Wood flooring is broken down into three main categories: solid hardwood flooring, engineered hardwood flooring and laminate wood flooring. Traditional hardwood is made of planks or strips of any hardwood covered in a wood stain. Engineered flooring is manufactured by gluing

together several thin plies of hardwood. Laminate flooring looks like wood but generally is a veneer or a photographic image of wood covered by a thick layer of melamine resin over fiberboard.

- Skip harsh cleansers. Regardless of flooring type, most are covered by a sealant that can become streaky or dull if the wrong cleanser is used. Avoid chlorine bleach, ammonia, pine oil, or undiluted vinegar. Instead, choose a cleanser that is specifically recommended for the floor-

ing type. Do not allow water or solutions to sit on the floor, as that can contribute to staining and warping. With laminate flooring, avoid wet mopping unless the flooring is specifically marked as being able to be wet. The underlayers of laminate flooring can warp if it gets wet.

- Damp is better than wet. When cleaning wood flooring, use a damp rather than a soaking wet mop. Better Homes & Gardens says standing water can damage wood surfaces.

- Use the hard floor setting. When vacuuming, adjust the vacuum to a hard flooring setting, which will not engage the brush rollers on the vacuum head. Rollers can scratch wood and laminate flooring, advises The Home Depot.

- Use repair products as needed. Scratch and repair kits can fill in small scratches. Wood floor polish and wood waxes also can revitalize worn floors. Again, check that the product is safe for your particular flooring before use.

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STOP IN TODAY!

Make a yard less attractive to ticks

STAFF REPORTS
Metro Creative Connection

Backyards are ideal places to spend warm afternoons soaking up some sun. Lazy days in the yard are a big part of what makes warm weather seasons like spring and summer so appealing. But those afternoons can quickly go off the rails when an unwelcome visitor makes its presence known.

Ticks can be found throughout the world, but the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention notes that only a select few types of ticks transmit bacteria, viruses and parasites, or pathogens, that cause diseases in people. But even if the number of tick species that transmit diseases to humans is relatively low, ticks that can infect humans are a notable threat. Such ticks carry pathogens that the CDC notes can cause a number of diseases, including Bourbon virus, Ehrlichiosis and, of course, Lyme disease, among others.

Human beings can come into contact with ticks in their own backyards. But humans can take various steps to make their lawns less welcoming to ticks.

- Cut your grass short and keep it that way. Black-legged ticks are transmitters

of Lyme disease, which the CDC notes is the most common vector-borne disease in the United States. Lyme disease also poses a growing threat in Canada, where data from the Public Health Agency indicates human-reported Lyme disease cases increased from 144 in 2009 to more than 2,100 in 2022. Black-legged ticks do not like environments that are dry and hot, so short grass makes lawns less attractive to this type of tick. Consumer Reports advises homeowners who have let their grass grow a little too high (around five or six inches) to bag their clippings when cutting the grass. Lots of clippings on the grass can provide a respite from the heat for black-legged ticks.

- Create a tick barrier if your property abuts woods. Woods provide a cover from summer heat that black-legged ticks crave. So properties that abut the woods may be more vulnerable to these unwanted guests than yards that do not border woodlands. A barrier of dry mulch made of wood chips between a property and a bordering wooded area can help repel ticks, who won't want to settle in often dry, hot mulch beds.
- Plant with infestation prevention in mind. Some



METRO CREATIVE CONNECTION

Keep your lawn short to discourage black-legged ticks. They do not like environments that are dry and hot, so short grass makes lawns less attractive to this type of tick.

plants can help to repel ticks because they boast certain characteristics that ticks cannot tolerate. The fragrances, textures and oils of plants like garlic, mint, lavender, marigolds, and others create

less welcoming conditions for ticks. Homeowners can speak with local garden centers for advice on tick-repellant plants that can thrive in their particular climate and on their properties.

- Remove yard debris. Piles of wood, leaves and brush can make for good conditions for ticks that transmit disease. After raking leaves and gathering brush, discard the resulting piles immediately.

These measures will not necessarily prevent all ticks from establishing themselves on a property, so individuals are urged to inspect their bodies and the bodies of their pets after a day in the yard.

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What to know about reseeding or replanting your lawn

STAFF REPORTS

Metro Creative Connection

Spring marks the return of flowering plants and warm weather. And homeowners know that spring also ushers in the return of home renovation season.

Homeowners undoubtedly have an extensive list of projects on their to-do list this spring, and that may include helping their lawns and gardens recover after a long winter. Unpredictable weather, which can include drought and excessive rainfall and everything in between, can take its toll on a lawn. In certain instances, the best solution may be planting new grass. But homeowners can consider these tips before they begin the process of reseeding or replanting their lawns.

· Scarify the lawn. Scarifying a lawn can help to create a clean slate, but the timing must be right.

Various lawn and garden experts, including those at BBC Gardeners' World Magazine, recommend scarifying in spring or early autumn. But don't jump the gun when scarifying in spring by scarifying before the lawn has started to grow after a dormant winter. Scarify when the soil is a little wet and the grass is once again actively growing. Scarifying can remove any lingering weeds from last season and also pull up any moss that might have taken hold over the winter. Without weeds and moss to contend with, freshly planted seeds are in better position to thrive.

· Work with a landscaping professional. Homeowners with manageable lawns can likely scarify their own lawns with a relatively inexpensive plug-in scarifier. However, scarifying can be a strenuous physical activity, particularly for homeowners with

large lawns. In such instances, homeowners can benefit from working with a qualified landscaping professional. Such a professional can scarify the lawn and subsequently reseed or replant new grass. The latter task is not so simple, as the lawn care experts at Scotts™ note that choosing the correct seed is a vital part of reseeding or replanting a lawn. Choosing seed may sound simple, but it's a potentially complex decision that requires knowledge of the existing grass, including when to plant it. Certain grasses are best planted in spring or early fall, while others are best planted in summer. A qualified landscaping professional can identify the existing grass and plan the seeding or planting around this important detail.

· Prepare to water the lawn. Watering is vital to the long-term success and health of freshly planted grass seed.

Scotts™ urges homeowners to keep the top inch of soil consistently moist, but not soggy. That requires a daily commitment, and setting a multi-function hose nozzle or sprinkler to the mist setting once per day or more if it's hot outside can increase the chances grass will grow in thick and strong. Scotts™ recommends keeping the top two inches of the soil moist until the new grass reaches a mowing height of roughly three inches. Once that benchmark has been reached, watering frequency can be cut back to about twice per week, but now the soil should be deeply soaked instead of misted. The soaking will help roots grow deep into the soil.

Spring is a great time for homeowners in various regions to reseed or replant their lawns. With the right approach, homeowners can enjoy a full and lush lawn throughout summer.



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Scarifying a lawn can help to create a clean slate, but the timing must be right.

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How to keep animals safe outdoors

STAFF REPORTS

Metro Creative Connection

Fresh air and sunshine can do wonders for the body and even the soul. People realize this, which is why outdoor activity is encouraged; staying indoors all the time can quickly sap energy levels and diminish mood.

What is good for human beings also may be good for pets - within reason, of course. Domestic companion animals can benefit from time in the great outdoors. It provides them new sights and sounds, opportunities to explore, and new ways to exercise. Their owners just need to take precautions to make outdoor ventures safe for domesticated animals. The good news is there are steps to make time outdoors safer for pets.

MAKE THE YARD PET-FRIENDLY

Those who have the benefit of a yard will want to fence it in. Fences stop pets from running away, and they can limit the probability that predators will get inside the yard.

The yard should routinely be inspected for dangers,

including poisonous plants (poison ivy, mushrooms) that pets may ingest, as well as other hazards.

INSTALL A PET DOOR

A pet door can provide convenient access to the outdoors when pets would like to get outside. Doors can be purchased with radio-signal locks that will disengage when a pet wearing an electric collar tries to go through; otherwise, the door stays closed for security reasons.

PREVENT PARASITES

Work with your veterinarian to get a prescription for parasite preventatives. This includes flea and tick medication and worm medication. Pets may get heartworms from the bites of mosquitoes. Therefore, limit the number of mosquitoes on your property by draining standing water and potentially using repellents if mosquitoes are a nuisance.

WATCH THE WEATHER

Pets will need ways to cool off or warm up when spending time outdoors. Extreme heat or cold could be dangerous, so avoid having pets spend prolonged periods of

time outside if the weather is especially harsh.

CHECK IN FREQUENTLY

Pets should not be left entirely to their own devices outdoors. Fences may keep some predators out, but those that can fly or climb (or burrow) can make it inside. Keep tabs on pets while they are outside. Do not keep a dog tied up for a while, as the animal may get tangled and choke.

USE A LEASH

Walks around the neighborhood are made much safer with the use of leashes, or leads as they are sometimes called. A leash enables pet owners to restrain their pets if need be and prevent them from running loose and getting lost.

AVOID HIDDEN POISONS

Antifreeze, oil and even discarded trash can be dangerous to pets if ingested. Pet owners need to exercise caution on walks.

EXERCISE CAUTION IN STORES

Certain retailers have relaxed their policies about letting pets inside. Others have not but seemingly turn a



METRO CREATIVE CONNECTION

There are ways to make time spent outdoors safer for pets.

blind eye when pets come inside. By and large, only certified service animals are legally allowed to be in most retail stores. Bringing an 'emotional support animal' or another pet in the store can compro-

mise the ability of trained animals to properly provide care because they may become distracted by other pets. Non-service animals also may become injured by shopping carts or get under

feet of shoppers if they are not properly leash-trained. Pet owners can safeguard domesticated animals and pets in various ways when spending time outdoors.



METRO CREATIVE CONNECTION

Native plants help combat water shortages by reducing the need to water.

The benefits of planting native species

STAFF REPORTS

Metro Creative Connection

Spring and summer present ideal growing conditions for many plants, making these seasons an ideal time to tend to lawns and gardens. Though it's easy to succumb to the temptation of exotic plants, avid gardeners and eco-conscious planters recognize the significance of native plants.

Novices may not realize that native plants are much better for a landscape and the local ecosystem it calls home. Recognition of the many benefits of native plants can make for healthier lawns and gardens and a healthier planet as well.

Native plants are built for local climates. One of the issues gardeners who plant exotic plants run into is keeping

those plants thriving when weather turns harsh. For example, exotic plants may require extra watering in areas that experience drought or even long periods without precipitation in spring and notably summer. The United States Environmental Protection Agency reports that at least 40 states anticipate water shortages by 2024. Planting native plants can help to combat those shortages by reducing the need to water plants if conditions become dry in late spring and summer.

Native plants save money. It's also important to note that native plants save homeowners money. Because they're capable of thriving in local conditions, native plants tend to require less watering, which can help homeowners

reduce their utility costs. But native plants also require less upkeep, which means homeowners can save on potentially costly, not to mention eco-unfriendly, pesticides and other amendments in order to maintain the look of exotic plants. And though it's not always the case, exotic plants tend to cost more at nurseries than natives.

Native plants save gardeners time. In addition to saving money, native plants don't require as much attention. Though spring and summer is a great time to be in the yard, it's also a great time to be out and about. Because native plants thrive in local conditions, gardeners won't need to spend much of their free time tending to them. Exotics tend to require a lot of extra attention and effort,

especially when conditions become harsh. Spending more time outdoors in harsh weather does not appeal to most gardeners.

Native plants blend in with an existing landscape. Native plants look natural within an existing landscape, adding some instant aesthetic appeal without breaking the bank. When planting exotics, homeowners may feel a need to redesign their entire gardens to create a certain look (think Japanese garden). That can quickly consume a budget and take up a lot of free time in both the short- and long-term.

Planting season marks a great time to revitalize a landscape. Choosing native plants is the best choice for homeowners and the planet they call home.

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Create your native plant garden

STAFF REPORTS

Metro Creative Connection

Gardening is a worthwhile endeavor that not only passes the time, but can be a form of exercise and relief from the daily grind. Gardens also provide ample opportunity to experiment, as individuals can produce everything from vegetables to bountiful blooms.

Recent years have witnessed a growing emphasis on eco-friendly gardening that aims to reduce reliance on chemical fertilizers and pesticides in an effort to protect the planet. One way to do so is to rely on native plants.

WHAT ARE NATIVE PLANTS?

Native plants are indigenous to particular regions. The National Wildlife Federation says native plants grow in habitats without human introduction or intervention. Native plants have formed symbiotic relationships with local wildlife over thousands of years, which the NWF notes makes them

the most sustainable options. Native plants help the environment and thrive with little supplemental watering or chemical nutrients.

NATIVES VARY BY REGION

Native plants vary by region. In arid climates, certain succulents may be native because they don't need much rainfall to thrive. In lush wetlands, succulents might be out of place.

START NATIVE PLANTING

The NWF offers native plants for 36 different states that can be shipped right to customers' doors to help replenish native varieties. In addition, gardeners can visit local gardening centers to select native plants. Small and independently owned centers often feature knowledgeable local staff whose expertise can prove invaluable to individuals seeking native varieties.

It's important to keep in mind that native varieties may look less cultivated than more exotic blooms and

foliages designed to sell for their unique appearances. Wildflowers and native grasses may be the types of native plants found in abundance, which may grow up and out quickly. These other tips can help the process.

- Plan and prepare the site by removing weeds and turning over the soil. This will give seedlings an opportunity to take root without competition from weeds. Seedlings will give gardens a faster head-start than waiting around for seeds to germinate. However, gardeners can start seeds indoors and then move them outside once they are seedlings.

- Avoid planting native plants in rows, as that's not how they're likely to grow naturally. Vary the placement so the plants look like they sprouted up haphazardly.

- Gardeners can still exert some control over native gardens prone to growing a little wild. Borders and paths can better define the growing areas.



METRO CREATIVE CONNECTION

One of the benefits of using natives is that you can limit water use unless conditions have been especially dry.

- Grow Native!, an initiative from the Missouri Prairie Foundation, suggests planting two to four species in broad sweeping masses or

drifts. Mix grasses with flowering plants. The grasses produce dense, fibrous roots that can prevent weed growth.

Native plants should require minimal care. Keep an eye on them and supplement with water if conditions have been especially dry.

A guide to various types of home awnings

STAFF REPORTS

Metro Creative Connection

Homeowners recognize that upgrades can improve the functionality and comfort of their homes. Improving outdoor spaces has proven particularly popular of late. The National Association of Home Builders reports that outdoor living has been propelled to the top of homeowner wish lists. Plus, a recent survey conducted by the New Home Trends Institute found connection to the outdoors/nature and outdoor

entertaining ranked high among desired home designs.

One way to make outdoor spaces more accommodating is through the installation of awnings. Many homeowners would like to enhance their homes with awnings but do not know where to begin. Learning about the various types of awnings can help homeowners determine which option best suits their needs.

FIXED AWNINGS

Fixed awnings are stationary on a building's exterior. While the awnings are gener-

ally stable, they can be damaged by snow or wind. It's key to find an installation expert to make sure the awning is installed correctly so that it can withstand weather and other issues. It's also important to know that fixed awnings remain in the same position and orientation, so its best to know exactly where to place it beforehand.

RETRACTABLE AWNING

Retractable awnings are the most popular type of awnings because they can be extended when necessary to keep a space cool or protected, then

rolled or folded up when not in use. These awnings are advantageous because they can be retracted when bad weather hits to prevent damage.

MOTORIZED RETRACTABLE AWNING

Motorized retractable awnings offer the utmost convenience. Standard retractable offerings require a handle or hand crank to manually extend or fold up the awning. Motorized awnings can be operated with a sensor, remote or even motion trigger. Even though they cost more, they're a favorite among

homeowners.

AREAS OF USE

Awnings can be installed in various locations. Patio awnings are much preferred because of their large coverage area, which typically spans entire patios. Door awnings are installed above the exterior door of an entryway to protect visitors and occupants from precipitation and to improve the home's look. Window awnings can add additional shade and privacy. There also are side awnings, which are essentially wall-like structures that run across

a patio, garden or balcony for wind or sun protection. They're also utilized to improve privacy.

Homeowners can choose from various types of awning materials, including fabric, metal, glass, and others. Working with a reputable awning company is the best way for homeowners to peruse possible products and find awnings that will suit their needs.



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How to make outdoor living spaces more comfortable

STAFF REPORTS

Metro Creative Connection

Private backyards are now go-to spaces for recreation and entertainment and great places to recharge the body and mind.

One ripple effect of the COVID-19 pandemic was more time spent outdoors, even if it was predominantly on one's own property. OnePoll, in conjunction with the lawn care company TruGreen, surveyed 2,000 American homeowners and found participants spent 14 hours outside every week in 2021, which was three hours more than prior to the pandemic. In addition, respondents admitted that time spent outdoors was therapeutic.

A separate survey conducted for the International Casual Furnishings Association found that people now spend more time relaxing, gardening, exercising, dining, and entertaining outside than in years past. Though COVID-19 may no longer dominate headlines,

the desire to enjoy outdoor spaces has not waned.

While enjoying outdoor living areas, homeowners can do all they can to make these spaces comfortable and welcoming. The following are some good starting points.

GET ALL LIT UP

Outdoor spaces can be enjoyed no matter the hour when there is ample lighting. That could be why the International Casual Furnishings Association reports those who plan to renovate their outdoor spaces list outdoor lighting as a priority. Outdoor lighting not only sheds light on entertaining spaces, but also makes spaces safer and more secure.

INCREASE PRIVACY

No matter how friendly homeowners are with their neighbors, there comes a time when privacy is paramount. Fencing, whether it is wood or vinyl, or even a natural fence made from closely planted hedges, can ensure residents feel comfortable venturing outdoors to swim, take a cat nap or even star

gaze in private.

ADDRESS THE ELEMENTS

Homeowners should note the direction their backyard faces and the typical daily conditions of the space. For example, a yard that faces southwest may get plenty of strong sun during the day, requiring the addition of shade trees, covered patios or arbors to cut down on the glare and heat. If the yard is often hit by winds, trees or bushes planted strategically as windbreaks can help.

SIT COMFORTABLY

High-quality comfortable seating increases the likelihood that homeowners will want to stay awhile in their outdoor spaces. A deep seating set complete with plush chairs, outdoor sofa or love seat and chaise lounge chairs gives people more opportunity to sit and stay awhile.

TAKE A DIP

A pool can be the perfect gathering spot on a warm day, while a spa/hot tub can bridge the gap to cooler weather. According to the



METRO CREATIVE CONNECTION

Make your back yard a comfortable oasis.

Family Handyman, soaking in hot tubs can relax tired muscles after a long day, loosen up stiff joints, improve cardiovascular health,

and reduce the time it takes to fall asleep.

BITE BACK AT BUGS

Homeowners may want to

consider using a professional exterminator to get rid of ticks, mosquitoes and other nuisance insects from outdoor spaces.

Maintaining a lawn routinely roamed by pets

STAFF REPORTS

Metro Creative Connection

While many treatments can be applied to lawns to help them thrive, animal waste is not among them. Pet owners who aspire to have beautiful lawns will have to take a few extra steps to ensure lawns can persevere despite the presence of furry companions.

RESEED WITH A DAMAGE-RESISTANT GRASS

There are many different types of grass, and some are more resilient than others. Tall fescue, Kentucky bluegrass, perennial ryegrass, and Bermuda grass are just some of the grass varieties that can capably handle pet traffic. If replacing the entire lawn is

not possible, consider reseeding or addressing the areas that pets frequent.

STRENGTHEN THE ROOT SYSTEM

It may be tempting to cut the lawn short, particularly if dogs or cats like to nibble on longer blades of grass. But that approach could be doing the lawn a disservice. According to The Home Depot, letting the lawn grow to at least three inches will help keep moisture in the soil and prevent evaporation. That moisture will strengthen the roots, creating a healthier lawn for pets and people.

CREATE PET PATHS

Various materials can be used in these high-traffic areas to minimize the sights and signs of pet

traffic. Mulch or crushed stone can establish these pet highways and look like intended features.

SET BOUNDARIES

Pet urine contains high levels of nitrogen, which can burn grass and turn it brown. It's not possible to water down urine or pick up solid waste immediately every time a pet goes outdoors, so designate a pet-friendly spot for potty time. Use fencing or a dog run to separate this area and help mitigate 'land mines' all over the lawn. Fencing also can keep pets out of vegetable gardens and away from potentially toxic plants.

AVOID CHEMICAL LAWN TREATMENTS

When pets use the yard and rest

on the lawn, you'll need to eliminate products that can be harmful to them. Choose all-natural fertilizers and weed and pest preventatives.

LOOK FOR ALTERNATIVES

If maintaining a lawn with pets seems like an uphill battle, consider swapping out your landscape with a variety of materials. Scale back on grass, and incorporate groundcover, hardscape materials like pea gravel, or extend the patio. Artificial turf also is an option, as it won't brown and wither. Some turf products can even be quickly and thoroughly cleaned with water.

It can take some trial and error for pet parents to protect their lawns from their furry friend.



METRO CREATIVE CONNECTION

Pet waste can damage lawns, but there are ways to mitigate some of that damage.

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