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50¢



Three LISD schools earned Honor Roll status

Three Lindale ISD campuses have performed in the top 12 percent of schools in the state of Texas, making the 2023 Honor Roll list, said district spokesperson Courtney Sanguinetti.

Lindale High School, Lindale Junior High School and Velma Penny Elementary were honored by the Educational Results Partnership.

This annual Honor Roll recognizes successful schools that are preparing students to be successful in the workforce and in life.

With 835 schools on the Honor Roll, this places these three among the top 12 percent of eligible schools in the state.

Results are based on data of student outcomes on the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness from 2019 through 2023.

This is the ninth year that ERP has completed the Honor Roll list, which recognizes top public schools, school districts and charter schools in Texas that have outperformed their peers in closing achievement gaps, particularly among higher-poverty and historically disadvantaged student populations.

The Honor Roll shines a positive light on schools that are driving

Continued on Page 8

Hearts and Hands of East Texas continue doing God's work

By Brynna Williamson

Heart and Hands of East Texas may or may not be something you've heard of, but with the good work it's doing it won't be long until it is well known around the region.

The organization, which is a registered 501c3, offers a wealth of services to those in Lindale and around East Texas.

In fact, they even have had some students as far as Winnsboro, Hawkins, or Holly Lake Ranch. The group offers GED classes, computer training, job placement, interview skills training, a nursery room, a free clothes closet for professional clothing, and more.

And if that isn't enough, staff members consider themselves "definitely a ministry."

"That's our desire; I mean we do our job readiness, but our heart's desire is for those who don't know Christ to find Him during our semester, and to come to know Him; and for those who do know Him, to know Him deeper," said DeAnne Hainlen, one of the two executive directors of the ministry along with Rose Cade.

"That's the whole point; I mean, without Christ, we're simply just existing," agreed Cade. "With Christ, we're living."

For the Heart and Hands program, this means that they integrate an appreciation of Jesus into all of their job readiness training. To them, growing in skills, in confidence, and in knowledge means also growing in a knowledge of Jesus.

"(We're) just pulling all of that in around everything that we do," said Hainlen with a smile. "And having that conversation about, 'He's Who supplies, and He's Who gives them their strength.'"

Despite having seen lots of students with fear about entering into a new program, or fear about putting themselves out there in the job market, Hainlen and Cade say that the "God-fidence" they teach in the program helps students a lot.

"Godfidence," Hainlen explained, is knowing that God will help us even (or perhaps especially) when we don't have the strength to carry ourselves.

The programs Heart and Hands offer are co-ed as of 2022 and are held on Tuesdays and Thursdays for 12 weeks, two semesters a year.

Although the men's programs are new as of 2022, Heart and Hands has been around for a while – long enough to have more than 100 graduates of the program.

Each and every graduate is treated to a real, blow-out ceremony at the end of their semester: "Cause we want them to shine!" said Cade.

Cade and Hainlen noted that the program has an application and interview process in order to attend. This, Cade said, is to make sure that the program is a "good fit" for the applicant, and vice versa.

"(We interview/have an application process) because we've had people say, 'Well, I don't want to come to the Bible study; I only want to come for the computer classes,'" said Hainlen.

"It doesn't work that way," broke in Cade with a laugh.

Heart and Hands also has a "Next Steps" program for students who have already graduated from the program. They partner with local colleges, employers, and career assessment programs to give students ongoing options.

It might sound like your average "skill yourself up" opportunity, but Heart and Hands of East Texas is anything but ordinary or humdrum. They partner with numerous local organizations,



The 2024 graduating class of Hearts and Hands of East Texas.

Courtesy photo

and spend lots of time to perfect their program, to ensure that all their students receive a holistic preparation for life – preparation that enables them to feel the "Godfidence" that Hainlen and Cade talk about.

Attending the program costs \$30. Cade and Hainlen said that if an attendee is unable to pay the sum up front, they are more than welcome to pay it over the course of the 12 week program.

To get in touch with the organization, contact 903-918-7314, go to its website at www.hearthandhandsofeasttexas.org, or contact them on Facebook at @hearthandset.

Commissioners hold initial budget workshop

Smith County Commissioners held their initial workshop to discuss the first working draft of the Smith County Budget for Fiscal Year 2025 during a special meeting on Tuesday, June 25, said Communications Director Casey Murphy.

Additional workshops and public hearings are scheduled before the budget takes effect on Oct. 1, 2024.

This year's theme is "Breaking Ground."

"Of course, this is due to all the

Continued on Page 8



Courthouse fencing going up July 8

Construction fencing is to go up Monday, July 8, around the site of the new Smith County Courthouse, said Casey Murphy, county information officer. Traffic will continue to flow around the existing courthouse and annex building, but there will be street closures and lane modifications around the block of Spring Avenue, Erwin Street, Fannin Avenue and Ferguson Street.

The following road closures and route changes will be in effect for one year for the first phase of the courthouse construction project: Erwin Street, from Spring Avenue to Fannin Avenue, will be completely closed; Fannin Street, from Erwin to Ferguson Street, will be completely closed; Ferguson Street, in front of the Annex Building, will remain open to drivers but the parking spaces will be inside the construction fencing. No parking will be available in front of the Annex on Ferguson; Most of Spring Avenue, between Erwin and Ferguson, will be blocked off and closed, but one lane will remain open for people driving around the courthouse; Spring Avenue next to the Smith County Jail, from Erwin to Elm Streets, will reverse to southbound only, for driving and parking.

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OPINION/COMMENTARY

Gary Borders Capital Highlights



Fire safety urged for Fourth

With the Fourth of July bringing a possible four-day weekend for lucky Texans, the Texas A&M Forest Service urges outdoor enthusiasts to exercise fire safety outdoors, especially when using fireworks or starting campfires to roast hot dogs and toast marshmallows.

Approximately 90% of wildfires are caused by humans and their activities, and the Fourth of July is one of the top days for reported wildfires, according to the forest service.

Large wildfires generally are not expected, and none are prevalent currently, but north and northeast Texas has received little to no rainfall since early June. That reduces moisture content and increases the potential for wildfires to start.

“As we start to observe typical summer weather with conditions becoming hotter and drier, we anticipate wildfire activity to increase,” said forest service chief Wes Moorehead. “State and local firefighters are prepared to respond quickly, but we need Texans to be careful and prevent wildfire ignitions while conditions are hot and dry.”

Anyone considering using fireworks is urged to comply with any burn bans in place, follow the warning labels on fireworks, use only under close adult supervision and keep them away from structures, dry grass and brush.

Cornyn bill would increase security for judges

Legislation sponsored by U.S. Sen. John Cornyn would, if passed, establish a new resource center that would monitor threats to local judges and provide training for both judges and staff at state and local courts, The Dallas Morning News reported.

At a panel held recently at the University of North Texas law school, participating judges and prosecutors expressed support for the measure, which passed the Senate unanimously in mid-June and awaits consideration in the House.

A consultant for the nonprofit National Center for State Courts said attacks and threats against members of the federal judiciary increased 400% from 2015 through 2021. In Texas, security incidents involving local judiciary have increased four-fold on average since fiscal year 2017, though the number dropped slightly last fiscal year.

“This isn’t partisan. It’s just common sense,” Cornyn said during a news conference after the roundtable discussion.

Top 10 state parks listed by TPWD

With summer in full swing, Texas’ 89 state parks are expecting an influx of visitors. Texas Parks and Wildlife Department recently released the top 10 parks in terms of visitors. The top 10 in reverse order are, according to the Austin American-Statesman:

10. Ink Lakes State Park, Burnet County
9. Dinosaur Valley State Park, near Glen Rose in Somervell County
8. Brazos Bend State Park, Fort Bend County
7. Enchanted Rock State Natural Area, between Fredericksburg and Llano
6. McKinney Falls State Park, Travis County
5. Ray Roberts State Park Isle du Bois, Denton County
4. Cedar Hill State Park, Dallas County
3. Ray Roberts Lake State Park, Sanger Unit, Denton County
2. Palo Duro Canyon State Park, Armstrong County

And the top state park for visitors: Garner State Park, located in Uvalde County, which hosted more than 475,000 visitors in 2023.

Paxton probe appears headed to grand jury

A federal appeals court appears to have cleared the way for officials in Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton’s office to testify before a grand jury probing alleged corruption, the Houston Chronicle reported.

While the case before the 5th Circuit of Appeals remains under seal, last week the court last rejected an unnamed state agency’s attempt to stymie federal investigators from calling top officials.

While the case is under seal, the Chronicle reported, “the dates and details line up with those in the years-long federal probe into allegations by Paxton’s former top deputies, who say the attorney general took bribes to benefit Nate Paul, an Austin developer who is a friend and donor of Paxton’s.”

The court said that the AG officials may have evidence of a potential crime, and that the Department of Justice can invoke the “crime-fraud exception” to get around potential attorney-client privileges.

EDITORIAL

Happy Birthday divided, complex United States of America!

Former Prime Minister of England Margaret Thatcher once profoundly said: “Europe was created by history. America was created by philosophy.”

Today might be a good time to reflect on that founding philosophy and pledge more than allegiance but sincere commitment to the ideals this country was built on.

First and foremost must be Thomas Jefferson’s words penned in the Declaration of Independence: “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness.”

We are supposed to value the sanctity of life in this country. We value freedom and we sometimes too enthusiastically and selfishly embrace our individual right to the Pursuit of Happiness.

Yes, we need to go to the writings of our Founding Fathers and remind ourselves that in the original 13 colonies there was a great philosophical divide between federalism and anti-federalism. But the men of the constitutional convention came together and based on commonly held ideals built a bridge to create the greatest nation of HOPE to ever be carved out of world history.

‘We the People’ ...

You know we take ‘it’ for granted. The ‘it’ that is at the heart of being an American, our personal freedom.

We assume we have the right to express our opinions about everything, everywhere almost all the time, and loudly. And lately we seem to have lost any semblance of good manners when doing so.

We sometimes scream about OUR rights, OUR feelings and don’t hesitate to point out what is wrong with everyone else. If we paused long enough to draw a breath and consider the cost and sacrifice that won us such freedom maybe, just maybe we would expend our opinionated expression in more valuable ways on more important issues.

Consider the questions:

What are you willing to fight for? What are you willing to die for?

The first generation of Americans expended 4,435 lives in the battle to create a nation free from tyranny. Farmers stood shoulder to shoulder with muskets and faced down the greatest military on the face of the earth and triumphed.

Yes, to you historians out there, we do owe much to Lafayette and the French but that doesn’t take one iota of heroism away from those farmers at battles like Lexington, Concord, and Bunker Hill where the proud English found that conviction and minutemen were a lethal combination. And yes, tyranny was a perception but self-rule was the costly prize that is still prized today.

We repaid our debt to Lafayette many times over during World War I and World War II, especially on D-Day, June 6, 1944.

Which leads us to the next big question:

Would you die for someone else’s freedom? Well, would you? In WWII, 291,557 Americans lost their lives in combat and another 113,842 from war-related events. Casualty lists throughout our history from all over the globe should be remembered when we celebrate freedom. Sometimes the sacrifice is from declared War or a police action, sometimes from covert missions where only a star on a wall in an agency stands to memorialize the sacrifice. But sacrifice is what this country has been built on and we need to look to our heritage of sacrifice for inspiration.

We have a dear friend who is still haunted by Vietnam and it presses at the edge of his life daily. I have former students who left for the Middle East as patriotic boys and came back forever changed men. We didn’t wring our collective national hands over those boys, because after all, they volunteered. As if that made a difference in the sacrifice between the eras of Vietnam and the Gulf War to the present.

There are those soldiers/airmen I know in intelligence who are a computer stroke ahead of the bad guys protecting us from attack and the uniform they wear might as well have a target on it 24/7.

So what are these ideals that are still worth fighting, dying and living for? Let’s start with the 45 most important words that every American should not just know by heart, but work to preserve every single day:

“Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a

THE FIRST AMENDMENT: Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of all the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.

We need to model their example of compromise and civility today. We need to celebrate our convictions, their brilliance, and the sacrifice of so many over the history of this country to ensure freedom.

Let’s study carefully what the authors of the Constitution wrote as the introduction to the Constitution. Their statement of principles that our history and culture is built upon is a great lesson in real patriotism.

“We the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.”

It is time to come back together as a nation and work to solve the challenges we face from the local to the national level.

If our Founding Fathers could work together and face down the greatest empire in the world to build a nation based on ideas that became the inspiration to the rest of mankind surely we can work together for a better tomorrow for our posterity.

I know we can. Let’s get started. That is the best birthday gift we can give our great nation.

Happy Birthday America!

The Best of Suzanne Bardwell



redress of grievances.”

And yes, you do get this first amendment lesson from me on a somewhat regular basis. Do you know why? Because when we don’t know what our rights are any longer we will lose them.

Then the convenience of government limiting information to the masses, pressing special interest agendas or protecting others ‘for their own good’ will haunt us for our unwillingness to protect freedom and the blood of heroes throughout our history will have been wasted by a lethargic and self-centered generation who worried more about their own comfort than the future.

So what do we do to ensure that we aren’t that generation? We move to the preamble of the most important document in our nation’s history of course.

“We the People...”

That includes, you, me, everyone who is a citizen or is becoming a citizen. This country is ours not just to enjoy but to protect. We at the *Gladewater Mirror* work diligently to cover meetings, boards and events that matter to your every day lives. Mundane decisions that address your pocketbook, how your taxes are being spent and how you are being represented.

Information is indeed power. What citizens do with that information writes the future.

We all routinely stand and say the Pledge of Allegiance, but do we mean it? Really deep down, do something about it ‘mean it’? Do we mean it enough to get in the trenches in our city, our schools, our county, our state and our nation?

I guarantee you this, if you do not educate yourselves to issues and become an active citizen-participant in government at all levels, others who often believe that they know what is best for the rest of us will make the decisions for all of us, in spite of our desires and against our convictions.

Whether it is the president of the United States, or a Glade-water city or school official, the job description requires service to citizen over self. That is a tough path to choose and these men and women are to be congratulated for their service while “We the People...” are challenged to support, question and hold them accountable.

On this birthday of the United States of America I hope that you and your families have a memorable day filled with celebration. Just make sure that you carve out just a little bit of time to remember all those who have served and those who have died so that we may grumble, worship and protest as we see fit. And, please consider serving your community in some aspect. It can be as simple as asking questions and encouraging those in positions of power? Are you informed?

Are you making a difference?

A lot of people have sacrificed everything for the opportunities that we squander daily. Isn’t it time that “We the People...” stepped up? Again.

After all, that is our heritage. It is what Americans have been doing for 248 years.

The Lindale News & Times

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Another superstar reaches baseball firmament

It's hard to imagine that one of the giants of baseball stood just 5-feet, 10-inches and weighed a pedestrian 170 pounds.

But make no mistake: despite these measurements, Willie Mays was one of the five greatest players (in this humble opinion) to ever pull on a baseball uniform and has a place on the Mount Rushmore of major league ballplayers.

His passing a couple of weeks ago at age 93 brought forth wave after wave of accolades and remembrances from the baseball world and each one of them deserved.

A 24-time (!) all-star, Mays began his career as a 20-year-old on Leo Durocher's 1951 New York Giants. He was Rookie of the Year from that '51 season and earned Most Valuable Player honors in 1954 and 1956.

He led the National League in WAR (Wins Above Replacement) nine times and five times he led the NL in OPS (On Base Plus Slugging) average.

Born in Westfield, Ala., on May 6, 1931, Mays was one of dozens of players in the 1940s and '50s who found their way to the Major Leagues via the Negro Leagues.

He signed at 17 with the Birmingham Black Barons in 1948 and after graduating high school he signed with the Giants in 1950. The door to the majors had been pried open for African Americans by Jackie Robinson in 1947 but the majority of major league teams shunned black ballplayers.

Luckily for Giants' fans – and baseball fans everywhere – owner Horace Stoneham was able to outbid the Boston Braves and Brooklyn Dodgers for the budding superstar and signed him for \$4,000.

He began his Giants tenure with their Class B team in Trenton, N.J. where he hit .383. This earned him a promotion to the Triple A Minneapolis Millers where he hit .477 in just 35 games.

On May 24 the Giants, knowing he was ready for the ma-



jors, summoned him to New York. Mays, however, wasn't sure he could hit major league pitching and was reluctant to accept the promotion. Yet feisty manager Durocher called the rookie personally and convinced him otherwise.

Durocher put him in centerfield on May 25 against the Philadelphia Phillies. Mays went hitless in five trips that day and followed that with two more games without a hit.

But on May 28 in the Polo Grounds, Mays belted the first of his 660 career home runs off future Hall of Famer Warren Spahn in the bottom of the first.

In addition to Mays' debut, the 1951 season was one of the most remarkable in National League history and the Giants were smack dab in the middle of things.

By the first of June, the league-leading Dodgers were steadily building their lead over the second place Giants by the week and in early August, Brooklyn had an 11.5-game lead.

No one in their right mind could conceive of what was to transpire the rest of the way.

Beginning with the first game of a doubleheader on Aug. 12 against the Phillies in the Polo Grounds, the Giants rattled off 16 straight wins to close the gap with the Dodgers to five games.

By Sept. 1, Brooklyn owned a six game lead but the dogged Giants kept chipping away until the margin had been reduced to three on Sept. 17.

This two-team sprint to the finish continued until the Giants caught Brooklyn on Sept. 29 with a 3-0 win over the Braves in Boston.

The two tied for the pennant then split the first two games of the three-game playoff.

Then came Bobby Thomson's "Shot Heard 'Round the World" homer in the bottom of the 9th of game 3 to lift the Giants to the pennant.

The Giants would lose the World Series to the Yankees that year but in 1954, they swept the Cleveland Indians in four games. The highlight of that series, as most baseball fans know, is Mays' catch in deep, deep center field in the Polo Grounds off the bat of Vic Wertz in the 8th inning of game one.

With the game tied at 2, Larry Doby of the Indians walked and moved to second on a Al Rosen single. Wertz, who had hit a two-run triple in the first, came in against the Giants' Don Liddle, who had replaced starter Sal Maglie.

Wertz jumped on a 2-2 pitch and drove it some 420 feet to the cavernous center field of the Polo Grounds.

Mays sped towards the ball and with his back to the infield, made a spectacular catch but more importantly, kept one of the runners from advancing with an equally amazing throw to the infield.

By then, Mays' career was on a superstar trajectory, characterized not only by his otherworldly skills, but his ebullience on an off the field.

His pure joy of playing baseball radiated in every game he played and created millions of lifelong fans.

No one will ever replicate the "Say Hey Kid."

Anniversary celebration complete with fireworks

Today marks my 31st year as a columnist for Lindale News and Times. And of those 31 years, I've been expectin' a pink slip for the past 30. To celebrate I am rerunnin' one of my most requested stories. I know the story says it's about New Year's Day, but it's really about Janet and me and fireworks. Hope you enjoy.

Remember kids; don't try anything you read here. You see, back when I was a kid, we used to do some really stupid stuff with fireworks. I know, that's hard to believe, me bein' the upstandin' citizen I am and all, but it's true. Well, sort of.

Now, every kid looks forward to Christmas, but for me New Year's Eve and the Fourth of July were just as excitin' because of the fireworks. Most every kid back then was the same way.

Well, at least the boys were.

Girls couldn't care less. Maybe not every girl, but I know my wife Janet would fall into that category. Oh, she likes to watch them, but I'm talkin' about settin' off fireworks. Why, if we had kept separate diaries about New Year's back when we were kids, it probably would have been somethin' like this.

Dear Diary, I'm so excited because today is New Year's Eve and I get to stay up until midnight. Janet

Dear Diary, WHOOPEE! New Year's Eve! Man, I can't wait 'til tonight. I'm gonna blow somethin' away. Rusty

Dear Diary, All of my friends are coming over and I'm going to wear my new furry earmuffs and furry hand muffler when we go out to watch the fireworks. Janet

Dear Diary, Let's see, there'll be me, my cousin Coy, my cousin Rex, my cousin Ted, Greg Hunt, Little Rusty, Wee Whoa, and his dog Bones. Let the games begin. Rusty

Dear Diary, Daddy promised I could hold a sparkler. I can't wait. Janet

Dear Diary, My cousin Ted said that if you would

Rusty Mitchum Life & Times



lay a firecracker in the palm of your hand and leave your hand open that it won't hurt when it goes off. Sounded reasonable to me. Rusty

Dear Diary, Holding the sparkler was scary, but it was beautiful. When I waved my hand around, it looked like one long string of light. Janet

Dear Diary, I don't think I'll ever get the feelin' back in my hand. Ted is so stupid. Rusty

Dear Diary, My friend Karen's sparkler made little back spots on her new sweater. She was very upset. Janet

Dear Diary, My cousin Coy decided to tear open a chaser to get the whistle out. He got gunpowder all over the front of his T-shirt while he was tearin' into it. Guess what? There weren't no whistle in there. How'd they do that? Life's sure a mystery. Rusty

Dear Diary, Good news! My mother was able to get the spots out of Karen's sweater. My mom is the greatest. Janet

Dear Diary, Poor Coy. He lit a firecracker to throw at Rex and a spark fell on his T-shirt right where that gunpowder was. I didn't know Coy could run that fast. He looked like a giant sparkler. It was kinda purdy though. Rusty

Dear Diary, Daddy drove us out in the country so we could watch him and my brothers shoot off some bottle rockets. You wouldn't believe what we saw. It looked like a boy that was on fire running down the road. Surely not. Janet

Dear Diary, Well, we finally got Coy put out. But that T-shirt of his is history. I think he is OK, but one of those things on his chest now looks like it is winkin'. Rusty

Dear Diary, Daddy stuck some Roman candles in the

ground and we all counted the little balls of fire as they came out. Boy, now that was fun. Janet

Dear Diary, Durin' our Roman candle war, Ted thought he had shot all six rounds. The dummy looked down the barrel just as number seven emerged. It hit him right between the eyes. I've never laughed so hard in all my life. Rusty

Dear Diary, Daddy made all of us stand back when he set off the bottle rockets. He said it was for safety's sake. Janet

Dear Diary, Man, Rex had the biggest bottle rocket I've ever seen. We decided to send an extra payload up with it. We duct taped firecrackers all around the bottom of it. Man, I bet when it goes off, it'll make a mushroom cloud. Rusty

Dear Diary, The bottle rockets were so exciting. We screamed when they exploded up in the air. Janet

Dear Diary, The firecracker payload must have been a little too much for that bottle rocket. Oh, it went up all right, but only a couple of feet. Then it just sort of hung there like it was strainin' to go higher. All of a sudden, it sort of leaned over, and here it came. I turned and started runnin'. I looked back and it was gainin' on me. I turned back and tried to pick up some speed, but I tripped over Wee Whoa's dog Bones. I landed face first on the ground. My face was smashed, but fortunately that trip probably saved my life. 'Cause that rocket zoomed right over me just as I hit the ground. Unfortunately, everybody that was runnin' in front of me weren't as lucky. That rocket bounced off of Little Rusty, then Wee Whoa, and finally Greg Hunt. It looked like a giant pinball machine ball as it ricocheted around. Finally, it stuck nose first

in the ground right in the middle of all of us. We got up to run, but we were so banged up that all we could do was hobble. Then the rocket exploded. And exploded. And then exploded some more. Those duct-taped firecrackers were blown everywhere. One of them landed in the sack that held all of the rest of our fireworks. Man, you've never seen such a show. We tried to get up and run, but we'd get hit with a bottle rocket or a fire ball from a Roman candle or who knows what else. Rusty

Dear Diary, The sky over where we thought we saw the boy that was on fire lit up with quite a fireworks display. It was wonderful. I bet those people were having the time of their lives. Janet

Dear Diary, Finally, the last firecracker popped. We didn't move for a while just to make sure. Finally, we all tried to get up. Injuries were numerous. Coy was shirtless and his chest was still smolderin'. Ted had a big red dot between his eyes. Rex's hair was smokin', and Greg, Little Rusty and Wee Whoa all had huge bruises on various parts of their bodies. My nose was bleedin' and I had dirt caked up under my eyelids. Bones, the dog, was the only one of us to escape injury. Rusty

Dear Diary, Well, after the fireworks, we headed home. This was the best New Year's ever. Janet

Dear Diary, Despite our injuries, we were all able to crawl back home. Boy Howdy! This was the best New Year's ever. Rusty

Janet and I would like to wish you a Happy Fourth of July and I would like to thank all of y'all for readin' my column. Without y'all, well, I'm pretty sure they would have given me that pink slip.

And I'd like to thank everyone at Lindale News and Times, past and present, for allowin' me to get rid of some of these voices in my head, by publishin' this junk I write. Y'all are the greatest. I love all of you.



Rotary installs officers for 2024-25

The Lindale Rotary Club installed new officers for 2024-25 during its regular meeting this past week at First Methodist Church. Doug Lowe will be the incoming president and the installation ceremony was led by Mike Grooms, DG Nominee Diane Cavannah, Jason Beard and Doug Lowe.



EDITOR'S NOTE: This column comes from the archives of the Lindale News and Times, which is available online for \$2.99 per month. Call 903-882-8880 to set up your online subscription.

ONE YEAR AGO, July 6, 2023

The Smith County Commissioners Court held its initial workshop to discuss the first working draft of the Smith County Budget for Fiscal Year 2024 during its regular meeting in the county courthouse.

Additional workshops and public hearings were planned before the budget was to take effect on Oct. 1, 2023.

"Working together as a community has never been more important as we move forward with construction of a new courthouse and parking facility," said County Judge Neal Franklin. "I have challenged our employees to work together as we are faced with continual growth in Smith County."

FIVE YEARS AGO, July 4, 2019

Smith County Tax Assessor-Collector Gary Barber was honored by the Tax Assessor Collector's Association of Texas with its Distinguished Service Award.

"It is a tremendous honor to be recognized by your fellow professionals," Barber said.

Prior to becoming the county's tax assessor-collector in 2005, Barber served as president of the association in 2010-11 and received the President's Award in 2009.

10 YEARS AGO, July 3, 2014

Lindale High School softball standout Heather Gilbert, a four-year starter for the Lady Eagles, was named by the Texas State Girls Coaches Association to the Class 4A All-State Academic Team.

Gilbert graduated in May with a 104 GPA and signed a letter of intent to play for the University of Texas at Dallas.

The attain academic all-state status, a player must have a GPA of 94 or above, must be a team member in good standing and be nominated by their coach.

This statewide recognition comes a few weeks after being named as the Most Valuable Defensive Player for District 16-4A by the league's coaches.



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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

I happened to be in the library last week and witnessed the magic program our library offered for the community.

In my 70-plus years, I have seldom seen a performer hold children from pre-school to teens in the palm of his hand from the first moment of the program. It was extraordinary to watch.

Our library has a long history of

bringing quality programs to the community, both during the summer reading period and throughout the year. While, historically, libraries are expected to provide interests for children, our library has programs for all ages.

If you haven't taken advantage of all that is offered, stop by the library and pick up a monthly calendar or check out the Facebook page. Included are programs that include people of all

ages learning from each other-the yarn club, the acoustic music gathering, and so much more.

I appreciate the individuals and businesses that make it possible for Lindale to enjoy an excellent library with programs for all.

And that includes the Lindale News and Times' long-standing support of the library from its inception to today.

Donna Edwards
Lindale

OBITUARY

Nell Praytor Cox

Nellie Elizabeth was born on Dec. 2, 1936 in Lindale to Weldon and Mildred Praytor. She passed away on June 18, 2024 at her home in St. George, Utah.

She graduated from Lindale High School in 1955 and began a career in sales that continued until her retirement. She worked for several companies, living in Texas, Arizona

and California over the years.

She is survived by her son Rocky Cox and wife Jill and daughter Rhonda Hendricks. Grand-children Mitchell Cox and wife Shelby, Steven Cox, Christopher Ramos and Brandi Hendricks and great-grandchildren Bennett,

Macie, Andrew and Rylee and sisters Sue Wortham and Shirley Abbott.

She was loved by many nephews, nieces, extended family and friends. Nell was preceded in death by her parents, husbands Larry Cox and Jim Hyde; brothers Mitch Praytor and Bud Praytor and sisters Eloise and Louise Praytor, Pat Streetman and Laura Alvey.

There will be a graveside service at Hopewell Cemetery at a later date

PET OF THE WEEK



This week's Pet of the Week as supplied by Lindale Animal Control is one-year-old Copper, a mixed terrier male.

Since he's barely out of his puppyhood, Copper is a high-energy fellow who loves playing tug-of-war and loves being in the water, as today's photo indicates.

He's been at Lindale Animal Control since February and is heartworm negative and has been neutered.

If he's the pup you are looking for call the facility at 903-882-6861. There are other pets who need forever homes as well.

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793 CR 313W Tyler TX 75706
903-597-6131
Pastor Stephen Nipp

Bethel Baptist Church
FM 16 West, Lindale, TX 75771
903-882-8275

Bible Baptist Church
16173 CR 431, Lindale, TX 75771
903-882-1454

Carmel Baptist Church
10969 CR 481, Lindale, TX 75771
903-882-3852
James Cheatham

Central Baptist Church
13745 FM 16 East, Lindale, TX 75771
903-882-3179
Byron Howard

Damascus Baptist Church
17052 CR 4105 Lindale, TX 75771
903-882-3392
Bennie Portwood

Dover Baptist Church
21166 FM Road 1995, Lindale, TX 75771
903-882-5106

Duck Creek Baptist Church
Lindale, TX 75771
903-882-9558

East Foothills Missionary Baptist Church
810 E South St, Lindale, TX 75771
903-497-4674
Pastor Craig Kearby

Fairview Baptist Church
Van Highway, Lindale, TX 75771
903-882-9500

First Baptist Church
Hwy 69 (in Swan) Lindale, TX 75771
903-882-6432

First Baptist Church of Lindale
110E Hubbard St. Lindale, TX 75771
903-882-3396
Tom Buck

Foundation Baptist Church
715 S Main St. Lindale 75771
903-881-9490

Garden Valley Baptist Church
17816 CR 442, Lindale, TX 75771
903-882-7671

Greater Hopewell Baptist Church
10480 CR 492 • Tyler, TX 75706
903-882-4726

Hopewell Baptist Church
11804 CR 494, Lindale, TX 75771
903-882-5381



Hopewell Valley Baptist, Church No 1
CR 429 • Van, TX
903-882-5136

Mt. Sylvan Baptist Church
13073 Hwy 110 N • Lindale, TX 75771
903-882-3890
Bruce Rudd

New Harmony Baptist Church
10251 FM 724, Tyler, TX 75704
903-593-5811

Red Springs Baptist Church
Red Springs, TX
903-858-2365

St Mary Baptist Church
12050 CR 452., Lindale, TX 75771
903-882-8066

Thompson Hill Baptist Church
14657 CR, Lindale, TX 75771
903-882-0849

Walnut Springs Baptist Church
211 Walnut Springs., Lindale, TX 75771
903-882-7858

Wood Trails Baptist Church
11804 CR 494,
Lindale, TX 75771
903-882-5381

CATHOLIC

Holy Family Catholic Church
16314 FM 849,
Lindale, TX 75771
903-882-4079
Rev. David Bailey, Pastor

St. Joseph the Worker Tridentine Latin Mass
5075 FM 14, Tyler, 75712
903-593-5055
Rev. Joseph Valentine, FSSP

CHURCH OF CHRIST
Church of Christ – Lindale
211 W. Hubbard, Lindale, TX 75771
903-882-6455

Church of Christ – South Main
2425 S Main St, Lindale, TX 75771
903-882-8933

Church of Christ – Swan County
Road 471, Lindale, TX 75771
903-882-8009

EPISCOPAL

St Luke's Episcopal Church
16292 FM 849 Lindale, TX 75771
903-882-8118
Rev. John Carr

LUTHERAN

First Century Christian Fellowship
10119 Gina Rd., Lindale, TX 75771
Dr. Lawrence Zillmer

METHODIST

ChristPoint Methodist Church
402 W Hubbard St • Lindale, TX 75771
903-882-8506
Michael Peschke

Harris Chapel Southern Methodist Church
17069 CR 452 Lindale TX
903.253.3175
John Roach, Pastor

Mt Sylvan United Methodist Church
Mt. Sylvan • 903-882-5479

Swan-Wood Springs Methodist Church
Hwy 69, Tyler, TX 75706
903-882-6382

NON DENOMINATIONAL

Clearview Church
13933 Hwy 110 N Lindale, TX 75771
903-882-8949

Community Christian Fellowship
15704 Hwy 110 N Lindale, TX 75771
903-882-8501
David Hickey

Cross Brand Cowboy Church
11915 FM 2015, Tyler, Texas 75708
903-535-9155

Crossroads Community Church
20465 US Highway 69 North
Lindale TX 75771-4206
903-881-9844
Tim Letsch

Bethesda Church
2401 S Main St
Lindale, TX 75771
903-882-7597
Steven & Camilla Charles

Friendship CME Church
20428 CR 482
Lindale, TX 75771
903-882-7269

Garden Valley Bible Church
17117 FM 1253
Lindale, TX 75771
903-882-9665

Grace Community Church
15567 Wood Springs Rd
Lindale, TX 75771
903-882-3323

Hide-A-Way Lake Community Church
1115 Lake Cross Rd
Lindale, TX 75771
903-882-6966

Life Source Community Church
1601 S. Main, Lindale
Pastor John Offutt

Lone Star Cowboy Church
23425 FM 1995
Lindale TX 75771
615-480-0289
Jayc Harold

River's Edge Church
18492 Hwy 69 North,
Lindale, TX 75771
903-882-0555 • Phil Brown

Trinity Fellowship Church
Shady Lane Lindale, TX 75771
903-882-3885 • Ben Steen

PRESBYTERIAN

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903-882-3861 • Dr. Everitt Nix

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903-881-5260

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Lindale Police Department call logs for June 21-27

FRIDAY, JUNE 21: Public Service, 3500 block South Main Street, Settled at Scene; Assist Smith County, 13700 block FM 16 West, Settled at Scene; City Ordinance Violation, 900 block Mt. Sylvan Street, Citation Issued; Criminal Trespass, 17700 block CR 4112, Arrest; Parking Violation, 600 block Fruitdale Street, Settled at Scene; Motor Vehicle Crash, 200 block South Main Street, Report; Motor Vehicle Crash, 100 block East Centennial Blvd., Settled at Scene.

SATURDAY, JUNE 22: Counterfeit, 13300 block IH-20 East, Report; Civil Matter, 600 block East Hubbard Street, Settled at Scene; Verbal Disturbance, 17800 block U.S. Highway 69, North, Settled at Scene; Fraud, 700 block North Main Street, Arrest; Public Service, 18300 block Timber Oaks Drive, Settled at Scene; Suspicious Circumstance, 3500 block South Main Street, Settled at Scene; Assist Smith Co SO, 12900 block CR 499, Settled at Scene; Motor Vehicle Crash, 552 IH-20 East, Report; Assist Smith Co SO, 15300 block FM 849, Settled at Scene.

SUNDAY, JUNE 23: Suspicious Vehicle, 17000 block IH-20 West, Settled at Scene; Suspicious Vehicle, 13400 block IH-20 East, Unable to Locate; Cruelty to Animals, 100 block East Centennial Blvd., Unable to Locate; Public Service, 600 block East South Street, Settled at Scene; Welfare Concern, 500 block South Main Street, Unable to Locate; Suspicious Person, 1100 block Wood Springs Road, Unable to Locate.

MONDAY, JUNE 24: Verbal Disturbance, 500 block Abbey Road, Settled at Scene; Public Service, 100 block East



Centennial Blvd., Settled at Scene; Public Service, 14200 block South Main Street, Settled at Scene; Motor Vehicle Crash, 13300 block IH-20 East, Citation Issued; Attempt to Serve, 3500 block South Main Street, Settled at Scene; Suspicious Circumstance, 500 block Pierce Street, Report; Criminal Mischief, 600 block East South Street, Settled at Scene; Motor Vehicle Crash, 1400 block South Main Street, Report; Burglary, 1200 block South Main Street, Settled at Scene; Suspicious Vehicle, 500 block South Boyd Street, Settled at Scene.

TUESDAY, JUNE 25: Motorist Assist, 17000 block IH-20 West, Settled at Scene; Criminal Trespass, 3500 block South Main Street, Warning Issued; Motorist Assist, 3400 block South Main Street, Settled at Scene; Welfare Concern, 3200 block South Main Street, Settled at Scene; Motor Vehicle Crash, 3200 block South Main Street, Report; Public Service, 200 block Margaret Street, Settled at Scene; Civil Matter, 13900 block FM 2710, Settled at Scene; Public Service, 600 block East South Street, Settled at Scene; Driving

While Intoxicated, 552 IH-20 East, Arrest.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 26: Motor Vehicle Crash, 1200 block South Main Street, Report; Residential Alarm, 300 block Corrigan Trails Blvd., Settled at Scene; Public Service, 200 block East Hubbard Street, Settled at Scene; Suspicious Vehicle, 200 block West Centennial Blvd., Unfounded; Motor Vehicle Crash, 800 block South Main Street, Report; Motor Vehicle Crash, 3500 block South Main Street, Report; Public Service, 100 block Ballard Drive, Report; Suspicious Person, 200 block Cannery Row, Settled at Scene.

THURSDAY, JUNE 27: Suspicious Person, 400 block Husky Drive, Settled at Scene; Suspicious Vehicle, 800 block Lindale Industrial Parkway, Settled at Scene; Motorist Assist, 554 IH-20 East, Settled at Scene; Suspicious Circumstance, 300 block Bowers Street, Settled at Scene; Suspicious Circumstance, 700 block Linus Lane, Settled at Scene; Motor Vehicle Crash, 13900 block FM 849, Report; Traffic Control/Direct, 500 block North Main Street, Settled at Scene; Suspicious Circumstance, 400 block Noah Lane, Unable to Locate; Public Service, 100 block Ballard Drive, Settled at Scene; Motorist Assist, 3500 block South Main Street, Settled at Scene; Motor Vehicle Crash, 555 IH-20 West, Report; Public Service, 100 block Ballard Drive, Settled at Scene; Motor Vehicle Crash, 556 IH-20 East, Report; Threats, 400 block South Main Street, Settled at Scene; Theft, 100 block East Centennial Blvd., Arrest; Traffic Hazard, 554 IH-20 East, Unable to Locate; Criminal Mischief, 200 block Cannery Row, Unable to Locate; Suspicious Vehicle, 3500 block South Main Street, Settled at Scene; Attempt to Serve, 3500 block South Main Street, Unable to Locate; Racing/Evade Arrest, 100 block South Main Street, Arrest.

Angelina County man gets fed prison term in firearms case

A Lufkin man was sentenced to federal prison for firearms violations in the Eastern District of Texas, said Davilyn Walston, spokesperson for U.S. Attorney Damien M. Diggs.

Johnathan Edward Brandt, 38, pleaded guilty to possession with intent to distribute methamphetamine and being a prohibited person in possession of a firearm and was sentenced to 188 months in federal prison by U.S. District Judge Marcia A. Crone on June 27.

According to information presented in court, in early 2023, law enforcement agents made multiple undercover purchases of methamphetamine from Brandt. Agents were also able to purchase a firearm from Brandt during one of the undercover purchases.

In March of 2023, Brandt was arrested after law enforcement responded to a report of individuals wearing ski masks and carrying flashlights at a Lufkin business. Brandt was found in possession of a stolen firearm and had an outstanding warrant. Further investigation revealed Brandt drove to the location in a stolen vehicle which also happened to contain another 13 firearms, a large amount of ecstasy pills, methamphetamine, alprazolam, a large amount of cash, and ammunition and magazines. Brandt admitted to trading narcotics for the firearms. A search of Brandt's residence resulted in the seizure of methamphetamine, digital scales, ecstasy, marijuana, firearms, and a stolen vehicle. Brandt has prior felony convictions for multiple felony thefts, multiple burglary of a habitation

offenses, possession of a prohibited weapon, and multiple felony possession of a controlled substance offenses. As a convicted felon he is prohibited from owning or possessing firearms or ammunition.

This case was prosecuted as part of the joint federal, state, and local Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN) Program, the centerpiece of the Department of Justice's violent crime reduction efforts. PSN is an evidence-based program proven to be effective at reducing violent crime. Through PSN, a broad spectrum of stakeholders work together to identify the most pressing violent crime problems in the community and develop comprehensive solutions to address them. As part of this strategy, PSN focuses enforcement efforts on the most violent offenders and partners with locally based prevention and re-entry programs for lasting reductions in crime.

This case was investigated by the Texas Department of Public Safety; Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives; Angelina County Sheriff's Office; and the Lufkin Police Department. This case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Donald S. Carter.

Richmond man receives 7 years for illegal firearms possession

A Richmond man was sentenced to federal prison for firearms violations in the Eastern District of Texas, Walston

said.

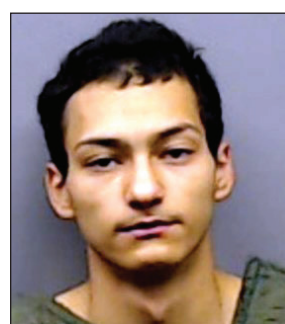
Aaron Martinez, 33, pleaded guilty to being a prohibited person in possession of a firearm and was sentenced to 87 months in federal prison by U.S. District Judge Marcia A. Crone on June 27.

According to information presented in court, on August 3, 2021, Martinez was stopped for a traffic violation in Vidor. During the stop, it was discovered that Martinez had an outstanding felony warrant. A search of the vehicle revealed a loaded firearm and ammunition. Further investigation showed Martinez to be a convicted felon and prohibited by federal law from owning or possessing firearms or ammunition.

This case was prosecuted as part of the joint federal, state, and local Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN) Program, the centerpiece of the Department of Justice's violent crime reduction efforts. PSN is an evidence-based program proven to be effective at reducing violent crime. Through PSN, a broad spectrum of stakeholders work together to identify the most pressing violent crime problems in the community and develop comprehensive solutions to address them. As part of this strategy, PSN focuses enforcement efforts on the most violent offenders and partners with locally based prevention and re-entry programs for lasting reductions in crime.

This case was investigated by the Vidor Police Department and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives. This case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Rachel Grove.

Tyler man arrested for Sunday murder



Smith County Sheriff's Deputies arrested Melvin Guevara, 21, of Tyler for the alleged shooting death of a Tyler man on Sunday, June 30, said spokesman Larry Christian.

The alleged shooting occurred at approximately 6:30 p.m. in the 8900

block of CR 4136 just northeast of Tyler. Upon arrival at the house, deputies found Kelly Eduard Torrez who had been shot several times in a bedroom of the house.

Deputies tried CPR and other lifesaving measures until the arrival of an EMS unit, but Torrez was pronounced dead a few minutes later after being taken to a hospital emergency room.

After an arrest warrant was received from County Court at Law Judge Clay White deputies, who had received a description of the suspect's vehicle, began their search. Tyler Police located the vehicle near Highway 31 East and Loop 323 at a car wash.

The suspect was arrested without incident and booked into the county jail. Judge White set his bond at \$500,000.



County employees honored for service

By Casey Murphy
Smith County
Communications Director

Wilma Ray was honored Tuesday, June 25, during Commissioners Court for three decades of service in the Smith County Tax Office prior to her retiring from her post on June 28.

"I like working with the public and helping them get the proper paperwork to get a title for their vehicle," Ray said. "It has been a real pleasure working under Mr. Gary Barber. He is a great boss. After working in the Tax office for 30 years, I feel as if I am leaving my family. The ladies I work with are really nice. Since I was the oldest in the office, they gave me a lot of respect and that means a lot."

Ray said after retirement, she plans on spending more time with her grandchildren, working in her garden and possibly traveling.

"I will miss coming into the office every day, but I think the time has come in my life to do some different things. Thank you, Smith County, for the memories," she said.

Barber said Ray is an example of an employee everyone would like to have working in their office. The auto dealers she works with call her a "rock star," because she does quality work and more importantly, because she is a quality person.

"We appreciate everything she has done for our office," he said.

Ray began working for Smith County in June of 1994. Since she started, the way the Tax Office works has changed considerably.

"We have come from using manual typewriters and old-fashioned cash



Smith County Commissioners honored Wilma Ray recently for her 30 years of working for the Smith County Tax Office for Chief Appraiser Gary Barber. (Courtesy photo)

registers to high-speed internet and programed computers," she said.

Amber Massenburg was recognized for 10 years of service to Smith County.

County Clerk Karen Phillips said Massenburg became the misdemeanor department manager in 2016, and in 2017 was promoted to assistant chief deputy for the entire clerk's office.

She called her a self-motivated problem solver and a hard worker who is cheerful and compassionate.

Massenburg was scheduled to transfer to work as the criminal court coordinator for County Court-at-Law Judge Jason Ellis this week.

April Fox was honored for 15 years of service to the District Clerk's Office, where she serves as the accounting supervisor and criminal consultant, District Clerk Penny Clarkston said.

"April has dedicated her life to our family," Clarkston said, adding that she is sweet and gets the job done.

Stephanie Landeros was recognized for 10 years of service to the District Clerk's Office, where she serves as assistant chief deputy.

Clarkston said she is a caring person, is very customer oriented and works well with attorneys. She said she will one day be running the office.

Marilu Martinez was honored for 10 years of service in the District Attorney's Office.

"She is exactly the kind of employee every department in the county wants," District Attorney Jacob Putman said. "She loves working on cases ... She cares about the victims and those outcomes. We are very grateful to have her."

Tyler Wessling was recognized for five years of service in the Adult Probation Department.

Supervisor Mandy Zehren said Wessling supervises felony cases in the intensive unit. She said he is a quiet achiever who stays to himself unless he is discussing sports. "We are honored to have him in Adult Probation," she said.

Other employees celebrating work anniversaries who were not in Commissioners Court include:

25 Years: Joniesha Pierson and Marisa Ramos Duran, Juvenile Services;

20 Years: Edna Glenn, Juvenile Services

15 Years: Angie Butler, Sheriff's Office

5 Years: Mathis Wells, Road and Bridge; and Jerry Ramsey and Kashuna Williams, Sheriff's Office.

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Yard of the Month

The yard belonging to Carla Bailey, 1222 B Forest Trail Drive in Lindale has been selected as Yard of the Month for June. (Courtesy photo)

Region's unemployment at 3.5 percent

East Texas unemployment numbers rose slightly in May compared to April according to figures released this past week by the Texas Workforce Commission.

In the Tyler/East Texas Metropolitan Statistical Area, the unemployment rate was 3.5 percent for May compared to 3.3 percent in April, according to TWC statistics.

Out of a combined labor force of 116,000 there were 112,200 who were employed from May's reporting period. There were 3,800 unemployed in April, according to TWC figures.

Meanwhile around the state, Texas set a record-high level for jobs for the 10th straight month, and the number of employed Texans and the state's civilian labor force have each reached new highs for the last five months.

Texas' seasonally adjusted total nonfarm employment increased to 14,195,600 after 41,800 jobs were added over the month in May, reflecting monthly growth in 47 of the last 49 months and annual growth for 38 consecutive months.

Texas' annual nonfarm employ-

ment expanded by 2.3 percent which outpaced the nation by half a point, as the state added 316,700 jobs since May 2023.

Texas' seasonally adjusted civilian labor force grew by 35,900 people in May to reach a new high of 15,262,600. This included the addition of 32,500 employed Texans over the month. The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate registered at 4.0 percent, which was equal to the national unemployment rate.

"More than 200,000 people have joined the Texas workforce since May 2023, and we continue to lead the nation in year-over-year growth," said TWC Chairman Bryan Daniel. "TWC provides a number of tools for both job seekers and employers as we continue to grow the Texas workforce."

Trade, Transportation, and Utilities added 13,300 jobs, registering as the industry with the largest over-the-month increase. Another 6,900 positions were added in Leisure and Hospitality.

"Texas continues to outpace the nation in nearly all industries and continues to increase the number of employed

Texans," said TWC Commissioner Representing Labor Alberto Treviño III. "With job opportunities increasing, students and job seekers have multiple resources to help navigate the job market and create a career pathway."

The Midland Metropolitan Statistical Area had the lowest unemployment rate among Texas MSAs with a not seasonally adjusted rate of 2.4 percent in May, followed by the Amarillo MSA at 2.8 percent, and College Station-Bryan MSA at 3.0 percent.

"The Texas Workforce Commission strives to meet the evolving needs of both employers and their workforce through innovative programs like the Lone Star Workforce of the Future fund," said TWC Commissioner Representing Employers Joe Esparza. "With more than 40,000 jobs added in the state, I encourage Texas employers to utilize TWC resources to propel their workforce to new heights."

Employment estimates released by TWC are produced in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics. *All estimates are subject to revision.

Smith County Treasurer White honored by state officials



Smith County Treasurer Kelli R. White was recognized recently by the Texas Association of Counties for 20 years of

outstanding dedication to county investment education, publicity officials said.

The honor was presented during the 2024 Conference of the County Investment Academy, held June 10-12 in Irving.

White stood out as one of only two officials in the state to be honored for 20 years in the program.

A special luncheon was held June 11 to commemorate this pursuit of excellence in investment education, where 50 other officials

were also recognized for their own milestones.

The Texas Public Funds Investment Act requires county commissioners courts to appoint a county investment officer to invest county funds.

These officers and their investment staff need to possess a comprehensive understanding of sound investment policies and adhere to

the Act's stringent requirements.

Since 1992, TAC has been providing formal education for county investors through its County Investment Academy, formerly called County Investment Officer training.

Participants become members of the Academy by completing the Basics of County Investing Course. The County Investment Academy

provides for the needs of officials and staff involved in public funds investing at the local level by hosting the June conference and the Texas Public Funds Investment Conference in November. TAC is a nonprofit organization that since its creation in 1969 has played a crucial role in supporting the efforts and needs of counties across the state.

Swallowtail butterfly colorful garden visitor

By Greg Grant

Smith County Horticulturist

East Texas is home to a wide array of fascinating wildlife, including the giant swallowtail butterfly.

Known for its impressive size and striking appearance, this butterfly is a frequent visitor to our gardens.

The giant swallowtail butterfly is the largest butterfly in North America, with wingspans ranging up to 6 inches. Its distinctive coloration makes it easy to identify: the upper wings are primarily black with yellow bands (some call it a big yellow "smile") while the lower wings are mostly yellow with black outlines highlighted with a few blue and brick-red spots.

Therefore, it looks completely different depending on whether the wings are open or closed.

Understanding the life cycle of the giant swallowtail can help gardeners create a supportive environment for this butterfly. The life cycle consists of four stages: egg, larva (caterpillar), pupa (chrysalis), and adult.

Egg: Female butterflies lay their tiny, spherical eggs on the leaves of host plants in the citrus family. In East Texas, the host plants include native Hercules club (toothache tree) and wafer ash (hop tree) along with cultivated citrus and rue.

Larva: Upon hatching, the larvae, known for their unique appearance, resemble bird droppings, a clever adaptation to avoid predators. As they mature, the caterpillars grow to



Giant swallowtail butterflies gathers nectar on Phlox paniculata. (Courtesy photo)

about 2 inches long and develop distinctive patterns of white, brown, and green.

Pupa: The caterpillars then form a chrysalis, where they undergo metamorphosis. The chrysalis can be brown or green, blending in with its surroundings to avoid detection.

Adult: After about two weeks, the adult butterfly emerges, ready to continue the cycle. On average, adults live only one to two weeks.

Creating a butterfly-friendly garden involves providing both nectar sources for adults and host plants for larvae. Here are some tips to make your garden a haven for giant swallowtails:

Plant Hosts: Incorporate host plants such as citrus and rue while preserving Hercules club and wafer ash on fence rows and in woodlands. These plants are essential for the butterfly's reproductive cycle, as they provide the necessary

foliage for caterpillars to feed on.

Provide Nectar Sources: Adult giant swallowtails feed on nectar from a variety of flowering plants including butterfly bush, lantana, phlox, vitex, and zinnias. These plants not only attract giant swallowtails but also support other pollinators.

Create a Water Source: Butterflies need water to stay hydrated. A shallow dish filled with water and pebbles can serve as a drinking spot. Be sure to keep the water fresh and clean.

Avoid Pesticides: Pesticides tend to be indiscriminate insect killers and can be harmful to butterflies in all stages of their life. Choose natural pest control methods to maintain a healthy garden ecosystem.

Provide Shelter: Butterflies need shelter from predators and harsh weather. An assortment of dense shrubs and perennials can offer the necessary protection.

The giant swallowtail butterfly is a dynamic insect that brings beauty and ecological benefits to our East Texas gardens. By understanding their life cycle and providing the right environment, we gardeners can help support the population of these showy butterflies.

Whether you are a seasoned gardener or just starting, creating a butterfly-friendly garden is a rewarding way to connect with nature and contribute to the conservation of these captivating creatures.



Yields are up, and Texas watermelons should be especially sweet due to the hot, dry weather. (Sam Craft/Texas A&M AgriLife)

Summer heat produces sweet watermelons

By Susan Himes

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service

Texas watermelon growers are reporting very good yields and high quality this year, according to Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service experts.

Producers in both of the state's primary growing regions, the Rio Grande Valley and Winter Garden, report a strong season with minimal issues producing the summertime-favorite melon.

"Overall, we are seeing more pounds per acre this year," said Juan Anciso, Ph.D., AgriLife Extension horticulture program leader and associate head of the Texas A&M Department of Horticultural Science based at the Texas A&M AgriLife Research and Extension Center at Weslaco. "Quality is also very high this year with good sweetness levels."

Weather, prices good for watermelon growers

Anciso said the season started with producers getting much higher prices per pound than last year, in the low 30-cent-per-pound range. But prices have since declined, and producers are getting between 18-22 cents per pound. That is slightly down from this same time last year, but Anciso said prices overall have been on par with last season.

A few producers had pest or disease issues or suffered losses from hail, but for the industry as a whole, it was a very good growing season, said Larry Stein, Ph.D., AgriLife Extension horticulturist and professor in the Department of Horticultural Sciences, Uvalde.

The heat has helped producers realize more weight per melon than in past years, Stein said. The hotter weather also helped the melons develop good brix counts, which weren't as good last year because of untimely rains. Brix is the measurement of sugar in fruit.

"Watermelons love the heat," Stein said. "We have had what they call 'watermelon weather,' and as long as producers have the water they need, that makes for good production and excellent melons."

Harvesting of watermelons

The Rio Grande Valley has been dry for most of the growing season, which led to a later and longer harvest than usual, with watermelons still being picked last week. The drier weather and limited irrigation water in the Valley shifted some production to the Winter Garden.

"Our production is actually up in the Winter Garden this year because of the lack of water in the Valley," Stein said. "We have had some production coming up to us because of the water shortage there, and our plants are do-

ing well."

Harvest in the Winter Garden comes later than the Valley harvest. Watermelons in the Winter Garden are mostly grown under center pivot irrigation whereas most Valley watermelons are grown on plastic with drip irrigation. The plastic heats up the soil, which ripens watermelons faster, Stein explained.

"So, we are always later on harvest because it takes the melons in the Winter Garden region a bit longer to get going," Stein said. "That is typically good for producers who want to go to market closer to the Fourth of July holiday."

Rio Grande Valley and Winter Garden production

Anciso said the lower prices will likely rise with demand going into the Fourth of July weekend.

"I believe consumers will pay a little bit more than they did last year as a whole, but there's plenty of Texas watermelons to be had for the holiday," Anciso said.

Both Stein and Anciso said consumers can buy their Fourth of July watermelons anytime the week before the holiday. Unlike some other fruits, watermelons will not ripen further once they are off the vine.

That said, the sweetness of a melon is determined by when the melon is picked. The sugar content increases the longer the melon is on the vine.

Those who prefer sweeter melons should look for a creamy-yellow belly and listen for the deeper sound when "thumping" to check ripeness. A hollow or flat thud, or too much yellow, however, indicates a melon may be mealy and past its prime. Texas seedless watermelons are also good options for consumers who prefer a sweeter taste overall.

Once purchased, watermelons can be kept in the refrigerator to keep them cool and prolong their quality. Those left on a counter should ideally be eaten within several days.

For the East Texas region AgriLife District reporters found producers in the district taking advantage of the dry week by cutting and baling hay as quickly as possible with some producers starting their first cutting of the season.

Houston County, however, received as much as 2 inches of rain in 1-2 hours with flooding occurring in pastures and hay meadows. Pasture and rangeland conditions were good with adequate soil moisture.

The fly population was increasing to problematic levels, and producers were controlling feral hog and gopher populations. Livestock conditions were good with cattle prices remaining strong.

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LEGAL NOTICE

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Notice is hereby given that Letters Testamentary for the Estate of Knorvin E. Ledford, Deceased, were issued to Margarette Starleigh Ledford, as Independent Executor on June 24, 2024, in Cause No. 48361P, County Court at Law No. 3, Smith County, Texas. All persons having claims against this Estate should present them to the Independent Executor, c/o Adams & Coker, P.C., 4540 Kinsey Dr., Tyler, Texas 75703, within the time and in the manner prescribed by law

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Notice is hereby given that Letters Testamentary for the Estate of Billie M. Chamness, Deceased, were issued to Kenneth S. Baxter, as Independent Executor on June 24, 2024, in Cause No. 48348P, County Court at Law No. 3, Smith County, Texas. All persons having claims against this Estate should present them to the Independent Executor, c/o Adams & Coker, P.C., 4540 Kinsey Dr., Tyler, Texas 75703, within the time and in the manner prescribed by law.

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Notice is hereby given that Letters Testamentary for the Estate of Quintan P. Chamness, Deceased, were issued to Kenneth S. Baxter, as Independent Executor on June 24, 2024, in Cause No. 48349P, County Court at Law No. 3, Smith County, Texas. All persons having claims against this Estate should present them to the Independent Executor, c/o Adams & Coker, P.C., 4540 Kinsey Dr., Tyler, Texas 75703, within the time and in the manner prescribed by law.

CAUSE NO. 48263P
ESTATE OF § IN THE COUNTY COURT
LARRY L. HOFFMAN, § AT LAW NO.3
DECEASED § SMITH COUNTY, TEXAS

NOTICE TO ALL PERSONS HAVING CLAIMS AGAINST THE ESTATE OF LARRY L. HOFFMAN

Notice is hereby given that an Order Granting Letters of Administration to KENNETH E. RANEY was signed by the Honorable Clay White on the 28th day of May, 2024, pending in the County Court at Law No. 3 of Smith County, Texas in Cause No. 48263P.

The office of the Administrator is in Tyler, Texas, and the address claims may be submitted is:
 KENNETH E. RANEY
 1902 Sybil Lane, Suite 101
 Tyler, Texas 75703

All persons having claims against the Estate of LARRY L. HOFFMAN are required to present them within the time and in the manner prescribed by law.

DATED this the 28th day of June, 2024.

Respectfully submitted,
KENNETH E. RANEY, P.C.
 1902 Sybil Lane, Suite 101
 Tyler, Texas 75703
 (903) 561-8456
 (903) 561-7692 (fax)
 ken@raneylaw.net

BY: **KENNETH E. RANEY**
 State Bar No. 16541550

Administrator for the Estate of Larry L. Hoffman

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CITATION BY PUBLICATION

THE STATE OF TEXAS § Attorney of Record:
Paula G. Hartsfield
COUNTY OF SMITH § 3300 S BROADWAY STE 101
TYLER TX 75701
903-533-1651

TO: ALL UNKNOWN HEIRS IN THE ESTATE OF WILLIAM FREDERICK TUPPER, DECEASED:

On the 3rd day of May, 2024, **JENNIFER WHITMAN** filed an **APPLICATION TO DETERMINE HEIRSHIP** in a proceeding styled **IN THE ESTATE OF WILLIAM FREDERICK TUPPER, DECEASED** and bearing the number **48299P** in the County Court at Law #3 of Smith County, Texas.

The Court will hear the aforesaid **APPLICATION TO DETERMINE HEIRSHIP** on the Monday next after the expiration of ten (10) days from the date of publication of this citation, in the Courtroom in the County Courthouse Annex of Smith County, in Tyler, Texas.

All persons interested in the aforesaid Estate are commanded to appear at or before the time set for said hearing by filing a written contest or answer to said Application.

Said written contest or answer shall be filed in the office of the County Clerk of Smith County, Texas in Tyler, Texas.

In compliance with the law, this citation shall be served by publication once in a newspaper of general circulation in this, the County in which such proceeding is pending, not less than ten (10) days before the return date hereof, exclusive of the day of publication, and the date of publication said newspaper bears shall be the day of publication.

If this citation is not served within ninety (90) days after the date of issuance, it shall be returned unserved.

Issued and given under my hand and seal of office, the 3rd day of May, 2024, at the office in Tyler, Texas.

KAREN PHILLIPS, COUNTY CLERK
Smith County, Texas

By: **Shanae Howell**, Deputy Clerk

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Notice is hereby given that original Letters Testamentary for the Estate of John Murphy, Deceased, were issued on June 17, 2024, in Cause No. 48,255P, pending in the County Court at Law No. 3 of Smith County, Texas, to: CATHERINE JARVIS.

All persons having claims against this Estate which is currently being administered are required to present them to Catherine Jarvis, c/o Kyle G. Waggoner, Attorney at Law, at PO Box 1152, Mineola, Texas, 75773.

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Notice is hereby given that original Letters Testamentary for the Estate of Avis Walker, Deceased, were issued on the 17th of June, 2024, in Cause No. 48,294-P, pending in the County Court at Law #3 in Smith County, Texas, to: Leslie Walker.

All persons having claims against this Estate which is currently being administered are required to present them to the undersigned within the time and in the manner prescribed by law.

c/o: **Stephen Hubbard**
Attorney at Law
100 E. Ferguson St.
Suite 714
Tyler, Texas 75702

DATED the 25th day of June, 2024.

Stephen Hubbard/10140515
 Attorney for Leslie Walker
 100 E. Ferguson St.
 Suite 714
 Tyler, Texas 75702
 (903) 533-0018
 (903) 597-7702 (F)
 shubbard@hubbard-lawfirm.com

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LEGAL NOTICE

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Notice is hereby given that original Letters Testamentary for the Estate of Josephine Moore, Deceased, were issued on the 24th of June, 2024, in Cause No. 48,356-P, pending in the Probate Court at Law #3 in Smith County, Texas, to: Sherrie Evans.

All persons having claims against this Estate which is currently being administered are required to present them to the undersigned within the time and in the manner prescribed by law.

c/o: **Stephen Hubbard**
Attorney at Law
100 E. Ferguson St.
Suite 714
Tyler, Texas 75702

DATED the 25th day of June, 2024.

Stephen Hubbard/10140515
 Attorney for Sherrie Evans
 100 E. Ferguson St.
 Suite 714
 Tyler, Texas 75702
 (903) 533-0018
 (903) 597-7702 (F)
 shubbard@hubbard-lawfirm.com

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Notice is hereby given that Letters Testamentary for the Estate of Mary Ione Fitzgerald Stewart, Deceased, were issued to Shelia Stewart Hardin and Glyn Fitzgerald Stewart, as Independent Co-Executors on June 24, 2024, in Cause No. 48362P, County Court at Law No. 3, Smith County, Texas. All persons having claims against this Estate should present them to the Independent Co-Executors, c/o Adams & Coker, P.C., 4540 Kinsey Dr., Tyler, Texas 75703, within the time and in the manner prescribed by law

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Notice is hereby given that original Letters of Dependent Administration for the Estate of Kathryn Lou Lowe, Deceased, were issued on June 3, 2024, in Cause No. 48,194P, pending in the County Court at Law No. 3 of Smith County, Texas, to: FRANKLIN C. LOWE.

All persons having claims against this Estate which is currently being administered are required to present them to Franklin C. Lowe, c/o Kyle G. Waggoner, Attorney at Law, at PO Box 1152, Mineola, Texas, 75773.

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Notice is hereby given that original Letters Testamentary for the Estate of Vida Mae Johnson, Deceased, were issued on the 21st of June, 2024, in Cause No. 44,352-P, pending in the Probate Court at Law #3 in Smith County, Texas, to: Ella Starks.

All persons having claims against this Estate which is currently being administered are required to present them to the undersigned within the time and in the manner prescribed by law.

c/o: **Stephen Hubbard**
Attorney at Law
100 E. Ferguson St. Suite 714
Tyler, Texas 75702

DATED the 1st day of July, 2024.

Stephen Hubbard/10140515
 Attorney for Ella Starks
 100 E. Ferguson St.
 Suite 714
 Tyler, Texas 75702
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Dr. Ray Perryman THE ECONOMIST



Foreign Direct Investment ...

Investments in the United States by companies from other countries is a significant, though often overlooked, source of economic activity and expansion. Foreign direct investment (FDI) enhances US productivity growth, increases export volumes, and creates high-paying jobs for American workers. Foreign-owned business operations in the United States account for about 7.9 million direct jobs (many more when spillover effects are included) in a wide variety of industries, as well as substantial research and development expenditures. These companies also account for about 23% of US exports.

The motivations for foreign investment in the US economy are many and varied. The American economy and consumer market is by far the largest, with gross domestic product of \$25 trillion and a population of 335 million. Although only about 4% of the world's population resides here, US households account for nearly one third of global household consumption. Even beyond this massive domestic market, there are 20 other countries interacting with the US through free trade agreements, thus opening additional opportunities.

A business-friendly regulatory environment, a stable democracy with strong political and economic institutions, the dominant world currency, and a transparent and predictable legal environment are further US advantages. We have a large and diverse workforce, and American workers are among the most productive (higher interest rates have provided an added boost). The list goes on.

It's little surprise that the United States has been ranked as the top destination for foreign direct investment for 12 consecutive years. The level has surged to almost one-third of the global total in recent times, as compared to about 18% before the pandemic. Over the same period, China's share has fallen from 7% to 3%.

For two decades, Texas has been the leading US destination for FDI expenditures. About 660,500 jobs in the state are directly supported by majority foreign-owned affiliates, and more than 1,900 foreign corporations have ongoing operations. The top investing country is the United Kingdom with 19% of projects, followed by Germany (8%), Canada (8%), Japan (7%), and France (5%). More recently, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Egypt, and Mexico have also begun to invest in earnest.

Top industry sectors by projects in Texas include software & IT services, business services, industrial equipment, renewable energy, and transportation & warehousing. Much of this activity is naturally concentrated in the largest metropolitan areas, but notable investment is also occurring elsewhere.

FDI is a win-win, offering foreign companies access to US markets, workforce, and resources. Simultaneously, these investments enhance domestic economic growth and prosperity. Texas is a clear winner, with projects ranging from energy to technology to aviation and everything in between adding significantly to the state's dynamic economy, enhancing opportunities for Texans, and increasing future growth potential. Stay safe!

Dr. M. Ray Perryman is President and Chief Executive Officer of The Perryman Group (www.perrymangroup.com), which has served the needs of over 3,000 clients over the past four decades.



The Texas Baptist Men volunteers were honored this past week by the Smith County Commissioners with the Community Hero Award.

Courtesy photo

Texas Baptist Men honored by county

Smith County officials awarded volunteers with Texans on Mission Disaster Relief Team with a Smith County Community Hero Award on Thursday, (June 27) after the group helped more than 100 residents clean up their properties damaged by the severe weather in late May and early June, said County Information Officer Casey Murphy.

Texans on Mission Disaster Relief Team, historically called Texas Baptist Men, has worked all over Smith County for the past three weeks.

Incident Commander Jim Lawton, of Waxahachie, said they received 140 work orders from people requesting help clearing downed trees on their property. Several teams have worked to complete 100 of those work orders and will complete as many more as possible before they leave Smith

County on Saturday.

Chainsaw teams from Tyler and Athens were joined by volunteers from Katy and Pittsburg, Texas, as well as from Louisiana and Arkansas, he said.

County Judge Neal Franklin and Emergency Management Coordinator Brandon Moore presented the group with the award Thursday morning.

"We appreciate you and the driving force behind your hard work helping the citizens of Smith County," Franklin said.

Texans on Mission is a Christian ministry that was founded in 1967, and helps clean up disasters throughout Texas, according to www.texansonmission.org.

Team members who don't live in the area have stayed at the First Baptist Church in Whitehouse.

Commissioners hold initial budget workshop

Continued from Page

construction taking place, but it also represents some new business relationships we have forged," Smith County Judge Neal Franklin said. "My promise when I ran for county judge was to make this county a better place for the citizens and the employees of Smith County. For the citizens, my goal is always to keep the taxes at a reasonable level while providing the high level of services the citizens expect and demand. For the employees, my goal is to provide them with a living wage and benefits in addition to a work environment in which they feel appreciated and respected."

Franklin said this year's budget focuses on three areas:

-- The remainder of the

debt service comes from the "voter approved" courthouse and parking facility bond.

-- Cover the cost of the insurance increase for our employees, which is about \$100 per employee.

-- Raising the contracts for the county's indigent defense contract attorneys working in the district courts.

The contract indigent criminal defense attorneys' salaries will go from \$95,000 to \$125,000 each. These are in the 7th, 114th, 241st and 475th. The 7th, 114th and 241st District Courts will each get an additional contract attorney. The total increase is \$696,860.

"Keeping these positions filled and our justice system moving forward is critical," Franklin said.

Kari Perkins, Smith County's new budget officer, gave a detailed view of the working draft budget.

The FY24 adopted tax rate is 34.7264 cents. Perkins said it is too early to tell what the FY25 proposed tax rate will be until more information is collected, including the Smith County Appraisal District's certified tax roll that will be provided in late July.

They also will not find out the no-new-revenue rate until August.

The Smith County Appraisal District is not part of Smith County government, and, while the Smith County Commissioners Court sets the tax rate, the Appraisal District independently sets property values for all taxing

jurisdictions.

Various departments requested a total of 31 new vehicles. The working draft budget includes purchasing 11 vehicles for the following departments: one for Constable 3, one for Constable 4, three for the Sheriff's Office, one for Animal Control, one for the Jail and four for the Road and Bridge Department.

There were 39 new employees requested but only nine are included in the working draft budget. They include one for Information Technology, one for County Court-at-Law 3, one for Facility Services and six for the Jail.

The second budget workshop is scheduled for July

30, and elected officials and department heads will have a chance to address their budget requests during that meeting.

The deadline to file the proposed FY25 Budget is August 26. Public hearings for the proposed budget and tax rate will be held August 27, and the Commissioners Court is scheduled to vote on the proposed budget and tax rate on September 3.

To watch the Commissioners Court Budget Workshop or view the presentations from the meeting, visit: www.smith-county.com/i-want-to-search/commissioners-court-records or www.facebook.com/SmithCountyTexas

Three LISD schools earned Honor Roll status

Continued from Page 1

a culture where students learn the fundamental skills that employers value and look for. Furthermore, the annual Honor Roll is part of the national Campaign for Business and Education Excellence.

The Campaign engages business leaders in recognizing successful schools and educational systems that are preparing students to be successful in the workforce and in life.

Other Smith County schools to be honored included:

- Troup ISD Middle School;
- Tyler ISD Early College High School;
- Tyler ISD Birdwell School;
- Tyler ISD Caldwell Arts Academy;
- Tyler ISD Woods Elementary;
- Whitehouse ISD J.W. Hollway 6th Grade School;
- Whitehouse ISD Junior High School;
- Whitehouse ISD Cain Elementary School;
- Whitehouse ISD Mozelle Brown Elementary School;
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