

# THE COMMUNITY NEWS

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WILLOW PARK

## City joins mutual aid group for emergencies, disasters

### Council approves rezoning for new RV storage

**The Community News**  
By Brandi Addison

The Willow Park City Council unanimously approved the city's joining of a public network that will allow the city to provide and receive public works aid to and from participating cities in emergencies and disasters at its regular meeting on May 11.

Following the historic winter storm in February, Parker County Emergency Response Coordinator Sean Hughes recommended all cities in the county join the North Central Texas Council of Governments mutual aid group, the North Central Texas Public Works Emergency

Turn to **MUTUAL**, page 5

## Over and Above



Tristan Thurman of Aledo High School competes in the Class 5A high jump event at the UIL State Track and Field Meet on May 7, 2021 at Mike A. Myers Stadium in Austin, Texas. For results and coverage, turn to page 8.

SCOTT W. COLEMAN/THE COMMUNITY NEWS

## 'Mr. Mac' did it all during years in Aledo ISD

### Educator remembered as dedicated to education

**By Makenzie Plusnick**

The Community News



McAnally

Charles McAnally, more commonly known as Mr. Mac, left behind a legacy of dedication to education and students when he died May 1.

McAnally grew up in Parker County before going on to North Texas Agricultural College and Texas Tech University to earn a bachelor's degree in kinesiology, according to local rancher and historian Ben

Turn to **MR. MAC**, page 5

## Memories of Donna



### Donna Young went 'above and beyond' in service to family and community

**By Randy Keck**  
The Community News

For people who knew her, all you had to say was "Donna." They knew who you were talking about. She was known in the community as an avid supporter of local youth and sports — and as an orange-in-the-arteries Bearcat.

In a small community, it is the mark of a life dedicated to local athletes that Bearcat Stadium is offered as the venue to say goodbye.

Such was the case with Donna Young, who left way too early, but who lived a fuller life than most.

It might be difficult to grasp, after hearing from the people who knew her, how she managed to work, be the mother she was, and yet go above and beyond in service to her family and community.

The people who attended her service at Bearcat Stadium on March 6 each got to know a part of her — she was an aunt who decorated lockers; she was a church member at Parker County Cowboy Church; she was a lady who helped serve food to football players and coaches; she was a mom who would drive to Stephenville to wash and iron her college kids' clothes; she was someone who gave you a hug where she worked.

The common theme among anyone who talked about her was that she was a selfless, giving person.

Her life habits of doing for others started early, as her family recalled.

Her mother, Dolores Laird, said Donna rode bulls and went to horse shows in her younger years. Dolores recalled an event north of Fort Worth — Donna had reached the point where she was riding larger bulls.

"She [Donna] bowed to the bull and it just ripped her chin off," Dolores said. "We said, 'we have to get down to the emergency room in Fort Worth.' And Donna said, 'No,

I can't leave now dad — I've got to ride the barrels first."

Dolores said her husband, Van, took his handkerchief and wrapped it around her chin, tying it on top of her head.

"And then after she rode the barrels, we got to the emergency room at four in the morning," Dolores said. "And when she walked in, the lady said, 'Well, hi, Donna.' And I said, 'Well, we've been there one too many times.' That's the last of the bull riding."

Dolores said Donna always made good grades, always wanted to look her best, and had many friends.

"Oh, she was a handful," Van said. "She enjoyed life. She enjoyed doing for others."

Her sister, Drinda Beckham, agreed.

"My sister was amazing," Drinda said. "She always put everybody first. She was the last one in line whenever we had a family function. She wanted to make sure everybody else got their food first. And if somebody came and got in line again to have a second plate she always waited, stayed back and made sure they got their fill before she filled her plate. She was just a very caring, loving, selfless person."

Drinda recalled one of her favorite stories about an orange pickup when she and Donna were teenagers.

"I guess it was the year I turned 16. We got an orange stepside pickup



SPECIAL TO THE COMMUNITY NEWS

The Young Family: Donna, Garrett, Rick, and Wyatt

for a Christmas present," Drinda said. "And of course, she being the bigger sister, 'I get to drive it first.' So we get in and we're looking at all the good stuff. And then she yells out the window, 'Where's the radio, dad?' And my dad just said, 'what about the truck, Donna?' She's like, 'I love the truck. But where's the radio? Got to have the radio.'"

"She chauffeured me around places and everything. And then one day there was a little one-lane bridge and you had to slow down and make sure that there wasn't somebody else coming in. Well, she wrecked the truck. She totaled it. I never got to drive it," Drinda laughed.

It was in her younger years that Donna met her future husband, Rick.

Rick said his family moved to Willow Park when he was in the seventh grade — probably 1972, and he and Donna were in the same class.

"We moved to Willow Park and there was a girl from school a couple of houses down and Donna was spending the night with her, and we were still moving into the house. Those two girls came over — Donna and the other girl — and Donna was of course very friendly and bubbly. She jumped up in my lap and put her arms around my neck, even

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Volume 31, Number 20  
Published Weekly

### Finer Things

Aledo High School holds first-ever Fine Arts Signing Day.

PAGE 2

### Comebacks

Ladycats, Bearcats win playoff series after opening losses.

PAGE 8



### To the Clubhouse

Ladycats wrap up season at state tournament.

PAGE 8

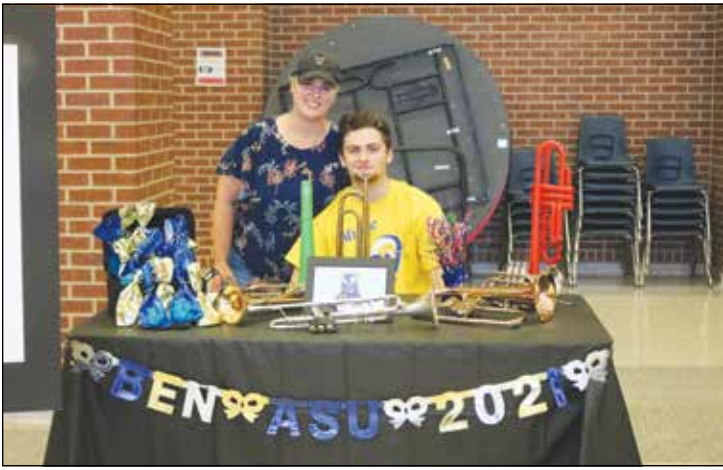
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## Signings

Aledo held its inaugural Fine Arts Signing Day on May 6. Seniors headed to college to study music, theater, and animation were featured.



**Benjamin Martin, Angelo State University, music, shown with Tammy Martin**



**Eric Thurman, Weatherford College, music, shown with Scott and Tonya Thurman**



**Natalie Durrington, Texas State University, music, shown with Vearl and Schae Durrington**



**Hudson Blake, Belmont University, theater, shown with (L-R) Vicki, Ryan and Ava Blake**



**Adlen Allegood, Stephen F. Austin State University, music, shown with Terry and Nelda Allegood**



**Alyson Kessinger, Wright State, theater, shown with (L-R) Kris, Lindley and Jeannine Kessinger**



**Brooke Lee, Austin College, theater, shown with Heather Lee**



**Amy Jasso, Ringling College of Art and Design, animation, shown with Freddy and Rosy Jasso**



**Collin Dover, University of Utah, music, shown with Mark and Nicki Dover**

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## Obituaries

### Erin Farmer

After a courageous and hard-fought battle with ovarian cancer, Erin Robbins Farmer left this earth on May 2, 2021. She danced her way into the world on April 21, 1964. When Erin was just three years old, she learned to write and let everyone know, "I want to be a dancer." She began dancing at her mom's studio, Dance, Etc..., then moved to cheerleading and drill team in high school.



Erin Farmer

She graduated from Richardson High School in 1982 and went on to earn a bachelor's degree in Performing Arts, Cum Laude, from Oklahoma City University in 1986. Erin was also a member of the Beta Omicron Chapter of Gamma Phi Beta Sorority while at OCU.

After college, Erin spent the next few years living out her dance dreams by performing on Broadway with Jerome Robbins Broadway, touring with Singin' in the Rain nationally and in Japan, dancing at Summer Stock, Casa Manana, Bass Hall, Disneyland, Walt Disney World, and many dance conventions. She also choreographed for other dancers.

Erin returned to Oklahoma City in 1995 to teach dance at OCU and then St. Gregory's University. It was there that she met the love of her life, Mark Farmer, in a Sunday School class at Crossings Community Church. They were married on June 4, 1999.

Mark and Erin moved to Dallas in 2001. In January 2002, they, along with big brother Justin, welcomed the triplets—Richard, Faith, and Hannah—into the Farmer family. It wasn't long after before they made their move to Aledo.

Erin was a stay-at-home mom for several years before starting work at Lil' Cats Preschool at the Church at the Crossing. She taught music and

dance to so many children in her community. Erin loved children so much and wanted nothing more than to share the love of Jesus with them.

While Erin was proud of her life in dance, she would tell anyone who asked that having a family and leading people to know Jesus were by far her greatest accomplishments. She truly lived out the verse, "In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven." Matthew 5:16

Erin was the shining light of God here on earth, and that light will continue to shine in those she touched.

Erin is survived by her husband and best friend, Mark Farmer of Aledo; loving children, Justin Farmer of Breckenridge, Colorado; and Richard, Faith, and Hannah Farmer of Aledo; mother, Mimi Robbins of Dallas; siblings, Vicki Peden and husband, Neal, of Fort Worth; Brad Robbins and wife, Cheryl, of Moon Township, Pennsylvania; Angel Robbins of Dallas; and many beloved nieces, nephews, and in-laws.

She is preceded in death by her father, Ed Robbins of Dallas.

A celebration of Erin's life will be held at 2 p.m. Saturday, May 15, at the Church at the Crossing in Aledo.

In lieu of flowers, a Gofundme account has been set up to benefit four organizations. Contributors can specify in the comments section which organization they would like to benefit at the Farmer Family Gofundme page: Elizabeth's Voice, Church at the Crossing, Ward Family Adoption, or Ovarian Cancer Research Alliance.

Services are in care of Winscott Road Funeral Home.

The Community News  
May 14, 2021

### TRINITY CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

# 'Master' teacher honored by Weatherford College

By Melissa Winn  
Trinity Christian Academy

If there was a picture next to a definition of a "master teacher," Kimberley DeNeeff's would be the one.

And now she has the award to prove it.

A first-grade teacher at Trinity Christian Academy, DeNeeff was one of 35 teachers from the region who was honored earlier this year by Weatherford College for its annual Jack Harvey Academy of Exemplary Teachers.

"I was really surprised and humbled," DeNeeff said after hearing she'd been nominated by TCA's Elementary Principal Dr. Steven Newby and ultimately selected.

Celebrating its 25th year, the Harvey Academy recognizes exemplary teachers in memory of Professor Emeritus Jack Harvey, a WC teacher for 23 years who passed away in 1995, was highly regarded as a "master teacher."

"Kimberley just fit the description perfectly," Newby said of why he nominated her for the honor. "She is someone who works with the children before and after class when she doesn't have to."

DeNeeff has been teaching for 21 years and is in her fifth year at TCA. She said she has always loved teaching.



SPECIAL TO THE COMMUNITY NEWS

**Kim DeNeeff was one of 35 teachers from the region who was honored earlier this year by Weatherford College for its annual Jack Harvey Academy of Exemplary Teachers.**

"I know that this is exactly what God has called me to do and He has given me the tools to not only lead the children down the roads of increasing their knowledge but to have a lot of fun as they grow," she said.

Newby said students in other grade levels and who have been taught by DeNeeff always want to stop by and say hello, some many years later.

"She doesn't mind one bit and is always very approachable," he said.

One of DeNeeff's favorite parts of teaching, she said, was building relationships with the children and their parents.

"I literally see each family as being part of my own, not only during that school year but after as well," she said. "Being on the same page with the parents and having open lines of communication helps us to work together and this allows the kids to grow academically, emotionally and spiritually."

And she added that the "hugs from current and past students are priceless!"

Newby said he was "excited" to be able to be the one to deliver the news on the award to DeNeeff, mostly because he knew she deserved it but also because he wanted to see her reaction.

DeNeeff attended a ceremony at the Doss Heritage and Culture Center where the keynote speaker was Eric Hale, a State of Texas Master Teacher, the 2021 Texas Elementary Teacher of the Year and the state representative for the 2021 National Teacher of the Year awards, to receive her honor. While Newby wasn't able to attend, he said he was glad DeNeeff got the recognition she deserved.

"Kimberley epitomizes everything we stand for at TCA and she is a jewel to have on our staff," Newby said.



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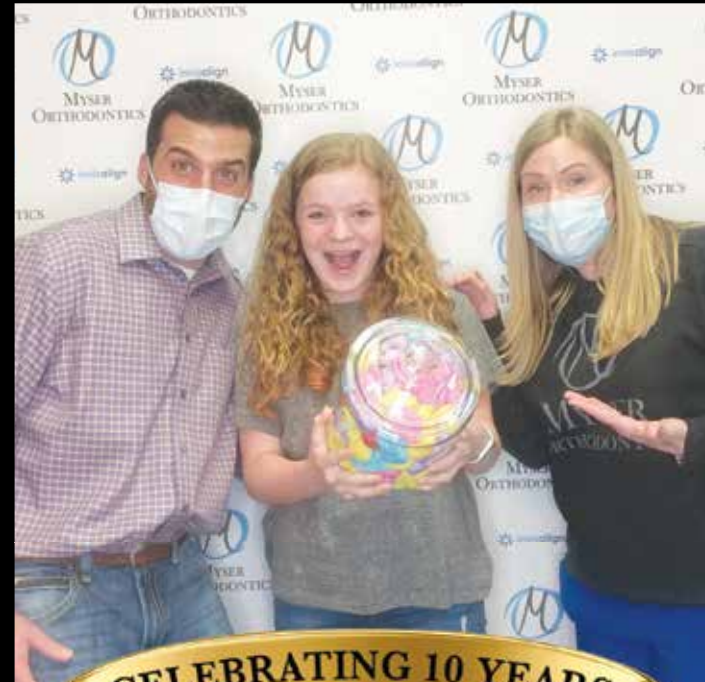
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# DONNA

from page one

though the other girl was the one that I was sweet on. I was in love with Donna at that point.”

The two started dating late in their sophomore year. Although high school sweethearts, they did not get married until four after they graduated, in 1982.

## Motherhood

Donna took to motherhood naturally after giving birth to Garrett, and later to Wyatt.

Wyatt, the younger son, graduated from Aledo High School in 2016.

“She was the best mom ever; anything you could ever ask for. She’d do anything for you. And that’s an understatement,” Wyatt said.

“My brother and I played a lot of sports — baseball, football, a little bit of basketball, I ran track, I pole-vaulted — I was one of the founders of the fishing team here at Aledo, and my mom showed up to every single one of those events,” Wyatt said. “Not just the games and tournaments, it was all the practices, too. And that was pretty special — even at high school.

While parents can often be seen at football practice and occasionally at other sports, Wyatt was not exaggerating when he said Donna went to all of his practices, even pole vault.

“And that was huge to me — how supportive she was and how invested she was; she was always involved with Booster Club,” Wyatt said. “She decorated locker rooms back when they did that for the football team. She was there for team dinners, cooking for all the boys, everything.”

Looking back to younger years, Wyatt said his mom was always one of the room moms who would give parties for the class.

Although she was there for a myriad of activities, Donna was not the stereotypical doting mom.

“She would do anything for you, and whatever you wanted to do, she’d make sure you did it the best you could,” Garrett said. “No matter: sports, schoolwork, project papers you had to write. I’ve done all kinds of different things, but she always made sure I did it the right way and finished it.

“There’s just too much to tell about mom, all the way from t-ball to pee-wee football to playing football.”

Those expectations were manifested when Garrett played pee-wee football.

“She told me I needed to be tough — get mean, Garrett said. “I wasn’t fully dressed in football pads but I think I had my helmet on, but in the backyard she came up and told me I needed to be mean. And she hit me and knocked me on the ground just like in football. Ever since then I guess I didn’t want to be defeated by anybody.

“Another thing that most moms wouldn’t do,” Garrett added, was back when I was pitching. She bought a catcher’s mitt and chest protector so I could practice pitching to her.”

Garrett started playing baseball when he got to high school, and he said it was always special to have his mom at his games, especially when he was pitching. Starting his sophomore year, he began to concentrate on football, and Donna was there to decorate the locker rooms and serve players and coaches at team dinners.

“We’re big hunters — all of us,” Garrett said. “And when nobody else would want to go to the deer lease

## Mom didn’t have to tell you that she loved you. You just felt it all the time.

- Wyatt Young

with me, she’d get in the truck and ride with me, and she’d just sit in the truck while I hunted and wait for me, just so I didn’t have to go by myself. She would take a magazine to look at.”

“Same thing, fishing, too,” Wyatt added. “I love to fish — I love to hunt, but on days that it was burning hot on the lake, she would just go and sit alone and be there.”

Wyatt said that when he meets people who were his dad’s friends from back in school, “they’re all telling me, ‘Oh, your mom was my girlfriend.’ I told dad, ‘Well, you must have done something right because she picked you over all

these guys who said that she was their girlfriend.”

One of Wyatt’s favorite memories comes from when he was very small. The family was fishing at a small pond owned by a family friend.

“My dad and my brother were catching ‘em pretty good and I was struggling,” Wyatt said. “I was getting frustrated. I was mad. And then I remember all the way across the pond my mom was just sitting on the tailgate of my dad’s truck watching us. I caught a small perch after a little while, and I remember the first thing as soon as I reeled it in I took off running towards my mom, and I still had the fish on the end of the line and I was dragging that pole with me running to my mom. I just remember her smiling and hopping down and giving me a hug. What I felt was just love. Mom didn’t have to tell you that she loved you. You just felt it all the time. I think she did an excellent job of making everybody feel like family. And she didn’t really try real hard to do that. It just came naturally to her.”

## Second mom

Donna also played a surrogate mother role to her nieces, Lindsey

Muse and Kelli Lauterbock, and her daughter-in-law, Shannon Klumpp.

“I think what made her so special is that she never let you do anything other than your best,” Lindsey said. And that applied to academics and athletics, and also to succeeding generations.

“Even with her great-niece and nephew, she would always tell them ‘you didn’t do this, or you can run faster’ because she just always had high expectations and always wanted you to do your very, very best,” Lindsey said, adding that it could sometimes be intense on the academics.

“There are definitely times that there were tears because, you know, she kept pushing, but it always ended in a good grade or a great project,” Lindsey said.

Lindsey was a cheerleader and played basketball in Aledo.

“She would help me with my locker signs in junior high,” Lindsey said. “She helped me come up with new ideas. And then when I got into high school and was on the varsity basketball team, she was at every game and would put together some kind of saying or treat, and then

Turn to MOM, page 7



Donna, right, is shown with her sister, Drinda on the left, and parents Van and Dolores Laird.

SPECIAL TO THE COMMUNITY NEWS

### TEXAS CROSSWORD

by Charley & Guy Orbison  
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**ACROSS**

1 technical college north of Waco (abbr.)

5 “Tyler Rose” Campbell

6 Superman’s vision

7 TXism: “strong as battery \_\_\_\_\_”

8 a “top dog” at a car dealership (2 wds.)

17 old designation for a confederate ship

18 TXism: “\_\_\_\_\_ run a six-legged bobcat” (fast)

21 TX soldier/actor Audie (init.)

22 TXism: “\_\_\_\_\_ loop man” (good roper)

23 TX Pride’s “Never \_\_\_\_\_ Loved”

24 horse pace

29 Lady \_\_\_\_\_ Johnson

30 famed late Austin bootmaker Charlie

31 TXism: “\_\_\_\_\_ tight he squeaks when he walks” (miser)

32 TXism: “bean counter”

34 flowerless plant

35 horse doc

36 TX Paula Prentiss film: “The World of Henry \_\_\_\_\_”

37 drying oven for TX Acme Brick

38 a baseball team

39 TX Buck Owens tune: “\_\_\_\_\_ Live Here”

41 former Aikman back-up Bernie

42 TXism: “body shops”

**DOWN**

14 Tex Beneke was with the Miller Orchestra

15 TX Larry Hagman’s “Jeannie” on “\_\_\_\_\_ Dream of Jeannie”

16 TX Tarzan Ely

19 TX Ted Cruz’s group (2 wds.)

20 TXism: “a ring tailed \_\_\_\_\_”

22 TXism: “\_\_\_\_\_ prayer” (impossible)

24 governor (1894-98): \_\_\_\_\_ Culberson

25 summer house or car cooler (abbr.)

26 late wife of late John Connally (init.)

34 TXism: “mighty \_\_\_\_\_” (okay)

35 poker or sun cap victories by TX George Foreman

38 silent signal from Dak? (2 wds.)

40 TXism: “he’s a dozen biscuits away from the circus”

41 Sulphur Springs FM before it was KRVA

44 TXism: “\_\_\_\_\_ slinger” (writer)

47 TXism: “touched in the head”

49 release shoe laces

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# MR. MAC

from page one

McCarthy. After being drafted to the Army and serving in the Korean War, he returned to Texas Tech and completed his Master's in Education in 1959.

He started his career in the district in 1954 as a seventh-grade teacher and assistant football coach.

Only a year later, he became principal of the elementary school and head football coach for the high school.

"He was a winning coach, although not like Aledo is now," McCarthy said. "He did the best with what he had."

He became superintendent of the Aledo school system in 1962. McAnally's time as superintendent was not spent behind a desk; rather, he spent his time on his feet, ensuring that student and staff needs were met, McCarthy said.

"In the old brick Aledo school, there was a coal chute. Coal was delivered to the school and in the winter, Charles would literally shove the coal into the school's furnace," McCarthy recalled.

Another example of McAnally's dedication was in the late 1960s when a school bus driver called him early one morning to let him know a battery on a school bus was dead.

"Mac called a store owner in Weatherford, got him to open up early, got the battery and then helped get it in the school bus," McCarthy said. "He, of course, apologized because the kids were barely five minutes late [to school]."

He also acted as a school counselor before the school had the money to hire one, McCarthy said. It was important to him to know students personally, which he showed through remembering their names.

"When he saw you, he said your name and in his 80s, he said that's how he kept track [of names]," McCarthy said. "See them [and] say their name!"

He and his wife Nell, who worked at the school as his secretary at one time, would chaperone school trips and attended school dances. When



CHRISTOPHER AMOS/THE COMMUNITY NEWS

In an historic school board meeting in January of 2000, Willard Stuard, Mattie Coder, Elaine Vandagriff, and Charles McAnally were present when the announcement was made that four campuses would bear their names.



COURTESY OF BEN MCCARTHY

This class photo shows Charles McAnally when he was a student at Aledo High School. He is third from the left in the back row.

he was not working at the school, he spent time working on his family's ranch just south of Springtown.

McAnally retired from his job as superintendent in the mid-1980s, McCarthy said. At a January 2000 school board meeting, the school board decided to name several schools in honor of long-time educators in the district and the intermediate school was named after McAnally.

His dedication to the district and to students will continue to stand out as an example to those in the community.

"In an old yearbook it said, 'Mr. Mac enjoys watching football and basketball and in his spare time he... well, he doesn't have any spare time,'" McCarthy said. "[This is] very true, all of his time was dedicated to Aledo Education, Aledo UMC [United Methodist Church] and his family."

# Ready, Aim, Fire!

Zebstrong clay shoot set for June 4

Zeb's Foundation will host a clay shoot starting at 9 a.m. Saturday, June 4, at Defender Outdoor Clay Sports Ranch.

Shooting begins at 9, a BBQ lunch will be served at 12, and a raffle will be held at 1 p.m.

Sponsorships are available from \$150 to \$2,000.

Zeb's Foundation was formed in memory of Aledo ISD student Zeb Montgomery to provide soccer balls to youth around the world — one of Zeb's passions.

The foundation has donated almost 7,000 soccer balls since it was founded.

For more information, visit zebstrong.com.

# MUTUAL

from page one

Response Team, which could have provided relief during the crisis.

Willow Park Director of Public Works Michelle Guelker told the council on Tuesday the network may have been able to provide generators to the city to assist with the frozen water wells during the winter storm, if any nearby cities had the resources.

The network could also assist in a widespread 1,000-acre wildfire, she confirmed to city council, though the mutual aid agreement encompasses all disasters and emergencies.

The assistance is limited to public works personal and

equipment only, and providing aid to other cities is wholly voluntary, she told the council.

The Public Works Emergency Response Team is made of 60 cities across North Texas, including Fort Worth and Dallas. It also includes Collin, Ellis, Kaufman, Rockwall, Tarrant, and Wise counties.

"After the past winter we had, I think it would be a good idea to join," Guelker said during the meeting.

The council also unanimously approved the rezoning of about 12 acres in the David Addington Survey off the Interstate 20 frontage road.

The facilities can be used for storage of RVs, automobiles, boats, trailers and similar vehicles.

# Native Plant Sale set for May 15

The Cross Timbers Chapter of the Native Plant Society of Texas is holding its spring native plant sale from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday, May 15, at Peacock's Feed and Supply, 122 W. Water St., half a mile north of the Weatherford Courthouse square. A variety of native plants will be available

including shrubs, grasses and flowering plants that attract pollinators such as butterflies and bees. Chapter members will be available to answer questions about the plants and provide educational literature about the value of using native species in the landscape. Information on the chapter's Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/events/172032341441835>.

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Dr. Riaz is excited to be in North Texas where he will be close to his family and looks forward to helping and providing its community members with exceptional care. Dr. Riaz and his wife Dr. Bismah Siddiqui are parents to one daughter and are thrilled to be starting their new chapter in life here. In his spare time, Dr. Riaz loves to travel with family and friends, enjoys music, and is also a huge soccer fan (Fan of Liverpool FC).

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## Capital Highlights

### 'Constitutional carry' bill nears completion



**Gary Borders**  
gborders@texaspress.com

It is a near certainty that Texans will be allowed to carry handguns without a license in the near future as House Bill 1927 passed both chambers and heads to a conference committee to hash out amendments added in the Senate version.

Gov. Greg Abbott has said he would sign the bill, which means Texans would no longer be required to obtain a license to carry a handgun either openly or concealed.

Ultimate passage of the bill means Texas would join at least 20 other states with similar laws.

A University of Texas/Texas Tribune poll indicates most Texans oppose unlicensed carry and support criminal and mental background checks before all gun sales.

#### Drought conditions continue to improve across state

Much-needed rain in April has continued to ease drought conditions, according to the Texas Water Development Board.

Midland, for example, received 2.2 inches last month, more than the previous six months combined. Right now, 65% of the state is experiencing drought conditions, mainly in South and West Texas.

More rainfall in early May should improve the drought situation even more, according to TWDB.

#### Oak trees still recovering from winter storm

Winter Storm Uri didn't just wreak havoc on homeowners and businesses that suffered from broken pipes and the extended power outage. The Texas A&M Forest Service notes that oak trees across the state are slow in leafing out, prompting many property owners to contact horticulturists, worried their trees have died.

Maybe so, maybe not, says veteran TFS forester Courtney Blevins. He advises property owners to wait before taking down an oak tree that still might come to life. "I think most of the oaks are going to come through okay," Blevins said. "If your tree is leafing out really late, it's obviously stressed. But most trees die from a combination of stressors, not just one thing."

Blevins and longtime horticulturist and syndicated columnist Neil Sperry both say there is no hurry to take down an oak tree, even if it is actually dead. The best time to plant is in the fall or early winter, and even dead trees rarely pose an immediate danger.

"If your tree is dead, there's no rush to take it down," Blevins said. "That's

one big mistake people are making. They're in a big hurry to take that thing down, thinking it's dangerous to leave a dead tree standing, and it's not."

#### Outreach programs aimed to boost vaccine rate

As the rate of COVID-19 vaccinations continues to slow, several outreach programs are attempting to reach Texans where they work and live.

The Texas Division of Emergency Management and the Texas Military Department have opened the State Mobile Vaccination Team Call Center. Texas businesses or civic organizations can call 844-90-TEXAS to schedule a visit from a state mobile vaccine team.

To qualify, a business or organization must have 10 or more employees, visitors or members who wish to be vaccinated.

"Vaccines are the most effective tool in Texas' fight against COVID-19, and we are committed to making COVID-19 vaccines even more widely available to Texans across the state," Abbott said. "The State Vaccine Call Center will help connect businesses and civic organizations with these life-saving shots and ensure that more Texans have an opportunity to get vaccinated."

The Texas Department of State Health Services is inviting pediatric health care providers to enroll in the COVID-19 vaccine program, in anticipation of the expansion of the Pfizer vaccine emergency use authorization to include adolescents 12 years and older.

DSHS sent a letter to more than 3,000 pediatric providers who already give vaccines to children.

With vaccine supply exceeding demand, DSHS will now fill vaccine orders as they come in and discontinue allocating the vaccine weekly. The vaccine is available more widely than ever at hundreds of Texas locations.

#### Nearly two-thirds have received at least one dose

More than 19.3 million Texans have received at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine — more than two-thirds of the state's population — while 8.59 million are fully vaccinated, according to DSHS.

The number of new cases continues to drop, with 17,999 reported in the last week, along with 364 deaths, according to the Coronavirus Resource Center at Johns Hopkins University. At its peak in mid-January, nearly 159,000 new cases were reported in a single week along with 2,311 deaths. Lab-confirmed COVID-19 patients who are hospitalized across the state remained steady last week at 2,508, according to DSHS.

*Gary Borders is a veteran award-winning Texas journalist. He published a number of community newspapers in Texas during a 30-year span, including in Longview, Fort Stockton, Nacogdoches and Cedar Park. Email: gborders@texaspress.com.*

## Slings&Arrows

### Aledo's Home rule Charter and why you should care



**Randy Keck**  
rkeck@community-news.com

The Aledo City Council voted last month to form a Home Rule Charter Commission. I want to give you an idea of what that means and why it may be important to you.

I'll get my disclaimer out of the way first. I am one of the people who was appointed to the commission. You can therefore read anything that follows through that lens.

There are two types of cities in Texas: general law cities and home rule cities. The vast majority are general law cities, and that holds here in Parker County as well, where the only home rule city is Weatherford.

There's a good reason for that. A city has to reach a 5,000 population to become a home rule city.

While Aledo is not official yet, it is anticipated that the census figures will confirm that the city has reached that milestone.

So what's the difference?

The short answer is that general law cities are only allowed to do what the Texas Legislature says they can do. Anything outside the bounds of what has been passed into law by the legislature is out of bounds for the city.

Home rule cities, however, can do anything they want, so long as it is not specifically prohibited by the legislature.

To put it in Ten Commandments terms, general law cities are confined to the "Thou shalt." Home rule cities only have to look at the "Thou Shalt Nots." Anything else is fair game.

Home rule cities have more latitude, for example, when it comes to annexing, although the legislature has curtailed that privilege in recent years.

While the city government has additional powers income rule cities, residents can have more of a say as well.

Residents of home rule cities have the right to establish initiatives, referendums, and recalls.

In a general law city, if there is something you would like to see established or changed, you are at the mercy of where the city council agrees.

In a home rule city, if there is an ordinance you would like to see passed, if you collect enough signatures it will be placed on the ballot and settled in an election. Likewise, if there is a law you don't like, you can collect signatures for a referendum election. And finally, if you don't like a particular officeholder, enough signatures will force a recall election.

The devil, of course, is in the details. All of those things, and others, will be defined by the Home rule Charter Commission. The organizational meeting was held on May 6. The only thing decided was when the next

meetings will be and what constitutes a quorum.

Anyone can attend the meetings, which are held at the Aledo Community Center. Here are the meeting dates and topics (all meetings are at 6 p.m.):

- **May 20:** Form of Government and Powers; Boundaries; and City Council
- **June 3:** Administrative Organization; Municipal Court; Financial Procedures; and Bonds, Warrants, and other Evidence of Indebtedness
- **June 17:** Taxation; Elections; and Initiative, Referendum, and Recall
- **July 1:** Franchises and Public Utilities; Planning; General Provisions; and Transitional Provisions
- **July 15:** Final Review and Approval.

If the charter is approved by the commission on July 15, it will then go to the Aledo City Council for a vote on July 22. If approved there, it will go before the voters of Aledo in the next general election.

The commission's members were chosen to represent various areas of the city. If you have questions, you can direct them to any member of the commission:

Bill McLeRoy, Chairman; Joe Bratcher; Renee Cartwright; Ben Clark; Chris Everett; Gordon Hiebert; Randy Keck; Jason Needham; Stanton Pearson; Dr. Renee Skelton; Kerby Smith; Kelly Stumbo; Stephen Watson; and Tiffany Villareal.

## Thistles & Roses

### Computer gurus needed to dispel darkness



**Richard Henderson**  
richard@rahenderson.com

The recent hacking of the Colonial gas pipeline is another instance of many such threats that are becoming more and more prevalent in our technology-dependent world today. There is a possibility of gas shortages and higher prices at the pump if it isn't fixed soon. Colonial is trying to work around the situation without paying the hackers, reported to be a Russian organized crime group.

As of Wednesday Colonial said it is re-starting operations.

One such hacking incident happened right here in Parker County in October of 2020 when the county computer systems were seized by hackers. The district and county clerks' records were compromised and e-filing of documents, which has been required by the courts for quite some time, were halted. The district and county attorneys' computers were seized. Jail records were compromised. Prisoner rosters were kept on legal pads. Parker County refused to pay the ransom to the hackers, and the records and systems were slowly and painstakingly restored.

The Parker County seizure was possibly connected to the hacking of the county's technology contractor, Tyler Industries of Plano,



whose systems were hacked in September of 2020. Tyler Industries paid the ransom. They are a Fortune 500, Dow-Jones traded company and is a major contractor to municipal and local county governments.

Fortunately, the Parker County voting systems were not affected, which could have been disastrous so close to the November 2020 general election.

Turn to **THISTLES**, page 7

## The Community News

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#### SUBMIT STORIES, PHOTOS OR IDEAS

We're always on the lookout for story ideas. To share one, call Randy Keck at 817-441-7661, ext. 207 or email [news@community-news.com](mailto:news@community-news.com). Please provide the basic story information as well as contact information in case we have questions.

We welcome letters, articles and guest opinions from our readers. Opinions expressed in this newspaper will be labeled as opinions, editorials or letters, and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the ownership. Letters should be signed, and limited to approximately 300 words. All submissions to the newspaper should

include a telephone number in case we have questions. Letters are due by Monday at noon for that week's paper. Community announcements, achievements and obituaries are due by noon Friday for the following week's paper. Send submissions to [news@community-news.com](mailto:news@community-news.com).

Photos submitted should include names of the people in the photograph. For ease in submitting photographs electronically, visit our contact form at [community-news.com/contacts](http://community-news.com/contacts).

The Community News does not charge for timely wedding, engagement and birth announcements provided they are of reasonable length. Lengthy announcements will either be edited to a reasonable length or, at the discretion of the person submitting the announcement, be charged a fee. The deadline for submitting announcements is noon Friday for the following week's paper.

# THISTLES

from page six

In May of 2020, the entire Texas appellate court systems were hacked, which included the Texas Supreme Court, the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals, and all other Texas appellate courts. Nothing could be filed because they all require e-filing. The courts refused to pay the ransom and again systems were slowly and painstakingly restored.

The hackers seem to be able to breach the electronic firewalls. They then demand ransom for the electronic keys to unlock the systems. Some give in and pay the ransom because they desperately need to get back online. Others go the hard way and refuse to pay.

There is often a lot of finger pointing after such breaches. It does seem like there ought to be a way to prevent such attacks, but these evil ones doing this dirty work seem to be very sophisticated and intelligent.

One can just imagine if the Energy Resources Council of Texas, ERCOT, who took a black eye for the February 2021 freeze disaster here in Texas, had their systems seized during a hot Texas summer or another cold winter. I can only hope they are prepared for such a cyber attack.

Our society has become dependent on technology and computers. These hackers have shown how vulnerable we are because of that dependence.

I don't have any answers, but maybe a suggestion that our computer gurus start trying to imagine the unimaginable and prepare for it. "Guru" in Sanskrit means "dispeller of darkness."

Right now we could use a little computer darkness dispelled!

# MOM

from page four

tape it to all the lockers. And she did that for every game.

"I'm very thankful that my kids got to experience her — they're nine and six right now. But she just enhanced their lives."

Lindsey said if there was a fun activity in town, like the circus, Donna wanted to make sure they got to enjoy it.

Lindsey's sister, Kelli, echoed the sentiments.

"She was just amazing all around," Kelli said. "I think why everyone loved her so much is how she made people feel — say you're at a baseball game, and she would see one person kind of off by themselves, she would go out of her way to make it a point to go say hi to that person, make them feel involved and part of the group. She just went above and beyond for people, whether they were her family, or friends, or complete strangers — she wanted everyone to feel loved and appreciated and never left out."

"She was just like my second mom. I spent every summer with her, I slept on her couch, basically slumber party all the time. But she was just the best aunt that I could have ever asked for. And she was at not only at all of her boys' baseball and football games, she came to all of my football games that I cheered at, all of my basketball games — she just made life fun when she would go above and beyond to give us special treats. You know, if it was cheerleader tryouts she would send up to the school a special good luck present. And not just for me and my sister, but for all of our close friends. It's so hard to sum her up just in a few words, but she was just the best person that has walked this earth."

Donna's motherly affection and expectations extended to Shannon.

"I met her, I'll never forget — Garrett took me to meet everyone at one of Wyatt's baseball games, and



SPECIAL TO THE COMMUNITY NEWS

Rick, Garrett, Wyatt, and Donna are shown at Garrett's graduation from Tarleton State University.

she was just over the moon because I guess I was the first girlfriend to ever meet the family," Shannon said. "I grew up military and so my mom and my dad were in the Air Force and my mom was a nurse and she worked nights, so I and my brother had to get ourselves ready and everything and so I was self-sufficient."

Which led to something of a shock when she saw how Wyatt and Garrett lived.

"She did everything for them and it just blew my mind," Shannon said. "Whenever I started teaching, she would come and help me set up my classroom. Each year, she'd always come to meet the teacher —"

"Make sure it was perfect," Garrett added.

"She'd come in, tweak a couple of things and she made sure all of us looked dressed to the nines every day and every morning."

"We were spoiled," Wyatt and Garrett both added.

"She was another mom to Shannon and they were best friends," Garrett said. They would shop together because mom never had a daughter, so she got to dress up a daughter."

She had the same expectations of Shannon that she had of her boys.

When Shannon started college, Donna tracked her grades.

"What did you make? What's your grade? What classes are you taking?" Shannon said Donna would ask. In college, I started taking life seriously and started making hundreds."

Shannon said she was excited when she reported to Donna that she made the Dean's List.

"I was, 'look mama, I got on the Dean's List,' and then Garrett got on the Dean's List, Wyatt got on the Dean's list — it was just what you did. That's what she expected and you didn't dare not meet her expectations."

### Giving of self

It didn't seem to matter whether it was family, friends, school, work, or community, Donna was seen as a giver.

She worked for Jim Griffith at his office in Aledo for about five years. "Donna was the whole reason that I came to this office," Griffith said. "Whenever I first met her, she was straightforward and so caring, she was such a real person. As I got to know her, I found out that it wasn't with just me — she was so family-oriented, and wanted everybody else to know how much she cared about them."

Griffith described her as "a mom; she was a sister; she was like your aunt and my really great friend all

wrapped into one. And I don't know how one person can contain all of that. But she did it and shined all the time. My clients, whenever they call, they always ask how I'm doing. So many of them say 'I just miss her hugs.' Because clients couldn't get out of here without 'Come here. Give me a hug.' She gave the best hugs.

"As I was going through the stuff that she had here, there's this little sticky note that she had a little post-it note, and it says, 'do more for others than anyone else does.' And I know that's a part of a quote that she picked up on somewhere. But that summed up who she was."

"Donna was was the person who, if you ever needed anything, you did not have to ask," said Aledo head football coach Tim Buchanan. "As soon as she found out that there was a need, she either did it herself to make sure you got it or she helped devise a plan on how you were going to get what you needed. She was a very special lady who cared about kids and especially the Bearcats — not just football, but the Bearcat athletic program."

Buchanan recalled her contribution when son Wyatt started pole vaulting.

"We were trying to get poles and things that you needed to be good pole vaulters," Buchanan said. "Donna did fundraisers for the track team. Same thing in football. Even before her kids got into high school she was always a part of our booster club and always a part of our schools trying to help raise money to get what our kids needed. She was the most unselfish person I've ever met. I can remember her going up and talking during public comment at school board meetings about things that our school district needed, whether it was something for the kindergarten program, or the track program, or the ag program, or the football program. If it was a need for kids. She had no problem going and fighting for our kids to get what they needed."

"She was always good, so good to people," her mother said. "She always made other people happy."

**Henry Perez**

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Invitation to Bid on construction for the City of Aledo, Parker County, Texas on: **2021 Paving Improvements**. The work is to include furnishing of all labor, materials, equipment, and performing all work necessary for the construction and other associated improvements detailed in the contract documents and specifications.

Sealed bids addressed to Ms. Deana McMullen, City Secretary, City of Aledo City Hall, 200 Old Annetta Road, Aledo, Texas 76008 will be received until 2:00 P.M., June 4, 2021 at which time and place the proposals will be publicly opened and read aloud and retained by the City for tabulation, checking, and evaluation.

Bids shall be submitted upon the blank form of proposal furnished. Sealed bids shall be marked "BID FOR 2021 PAVING IMPROVEMENTS. DO NOT OPEN UNTIL 2:00 P.M., June 4, 2021."

Plans and Contract Documents will be available beginning at 8:00 a.m. on May 14, 2021. Contract Documents, including Drawings and Technical Specifications, will be on file at that time at the Aledo City Hall and may be examined without charge. Copies may be obtained from the City of Aledo, 200 Old Annetta Road, Aledo, Texas 76008, Attention: Public Works, for a non-refundable deposit of twenty dollars (\$20.00) per set. Submit check, cashier check or money order for payment. Cash will not be accepted. Questions related to the design of the project may be directed to Ms. Gretchen Vazquez, P.E. at gretchen.vazquez@aledo-texas.com.

A majority of the work on the referenced project consists of the following:

5,280 SY	Pavement Reconstruction w/ Cement
5,280 SY	2" HMA Type D Surface Course
11,600 SY	2" Mill and Overlay

A certified check or bank draft, payable to the City of Aledo, negotiable U.S. Government Bonds (at par value), or a satisfactory Bid Bond executed by the Bidder and payable to the City of Aledo in an amount equal to at least five percent (5%) of the total amount of the proposal must accompany each Bid as a guaranty that if the proposal is accepted, the Bidder will execute the contract and furnish the required performance, payment, and maintenance bonds in the amount of one hundred percent (100%) of the contract price.

No bids may be withdrawn within (90) days after date on which the bids are opened. In case of ambiguity or lack of clearness in stating proposal prices, the City reserves the right to adopt the proposal that provided for the most advantageous contract and pricing for the City. The contract will be awarded to the lowest responsible bidder; however, the City reserves the right to reject any and all bids. The low bidder shall be prepared to submit such evidence as the City may reasonably require to establish their experience, possession of such equipment, qualification of personnel, and financial responsibility necessary to complete the work on this project in an expeditious, safe, and satisfactory manner.

Deana McMullen, City Secretary  
City of Aledo, Texas

## Three and Three



### Trio of AHS athletes bring home bronze medals from state

Aledo High School's state-qualifying track athletes are nothing if not consistent.

The trio of seniors Tristan Thurman in the high jump and Ford Maberry in the

pole vault, and sophomore Clay Murador in the 400, all placed second at the Regional Meet in Lubbock. At the UIL State Track and Field Meet in Austin last weekend, each of the athletes brought home a bronze medal.

Thurman cleared 6-6 in the high jump. The winning

jump was 7' by Kason O'Riley of Marble Falls.

Mayberry cleared the bar at 15-3 in the pole vault. Abilene Wylie's Kylor Aguilar took the gold with 15-9.

Murador finished the 400 in 48.06, less than half a second behind first-place finisher Adam Mason of Manvel.

SCOTT W. COLEMAN/THE COMMUNITY NEWS

**UPPER LEFT: Tristan Thurman of Aledo High School approaches the bar during the high jump competition at the Class 5A UIL State Track and Field Meet on May 7, 2021 at Mike A. Myers Stadium in Austin. | LOWER LEFT: Clay Murador prepares to run in the Class 5A boys 400 meter dash. | TOP LEFT: Ford Maberry makes his approach in the pole vault.**

### GOLF

## Ladycats wrap up season at state

The Aledo Ladycats competed in the UIL State 5A tournament on Monday and Tuesday, May 10-11. After one day of competition the ladies were in 11th place in a field of very tough competition. Prepped for another day of challenging golf, the ladies teed up on Tuesday, played much better and with more confidence, and moved up the leaderboard to finish in 10th place.

San Antonio Alamo Heights won the tournament, followed by Montgomery and Boerne Champion.

Aly Saunders led the Ladycat golfers individually, shooting 78-75-153.



**LEFT: Sanaa Lemen, Madison Warner, Ella Fisher, Aly Saunders, Ava Forman, Mallory Miller and Coach James Mullins | LOWER LEFT: Aly Saunders putts for a birdie to finish the day. | LOWER CENTER: Sanaa Lemen preps for her next shot. | LOWER RIGHT: Ella Fisher competed in her last high school golf tournament.**

SPECIAL TO THE COMMUNITY NEWS





BASKETBALL

# Height Advantage

Luke Carson sets records against taller opponents

By Nolan Ruth  
The Community News

In this particular part of Parker County, it's not uncommon to see local athletes go on to play at the next level. Both Aledo High School and Trinity Christian Academy have sent players on to play college sports.

While not unheard of, it is uncommon for a basketball player to come out of the Aledo-Willow Park area. Trinity Christian's point guard Luke Carson does not seem to care about that. The 5'8 senior has been shattering school records since moving to the school as a sophomore. This week, he signed his letter of intent to play for the Austin College Kangaroos in Sherman.

Admittedly, Luke did not imagine being at this point when he started playing basketball at Bethesda Christian in Fort Worth.

"I just kind of made the decision that I want to play college basketball," Luke said looking back on his first experiences. "Through seventh and eighth grade, my hopes weren't very high because I really wasn't that good yet. Then once I got to my freshman year, I kind of transformed my game."

It was in that freshman season that Luke had what his father Mark called his breaking out party. In a big game that determined playoff seeding, Luke outscored his older brother, who was the leading scorer at the time as a senior. Luke scored 34 points, while his brother only scored 15.

The next year, Luke's family decided to move him to Trinity Christian Academy in Willow Park.

"It wasn't strictly athletic or academic," Mark said about the decision to change Luke's school. "We were



RANDY KECK/THE COMMUNITY NEWS

Luke Carson drops his pen after signing his letter of intent to attend Austin College to play basketball. Shown are (front row, from left) Grace (9), Jennifer, Luke, and Mark Carson and (back row) Hope (17), Caleb (21), Samuel (14), and Faith (19).

looking for something where he could get a great education, focus on his academics, but also mix basketball in as well. We had already had connections here because of his older brother's club team, and we decided this is where he should go."

In three seasons at TCA, Luke averaged 23 points per game and is now the school's all time leading scorer with 1,749 points. He refuses to take all the credit, though. He credited multiple coaches and trainers he has played for, namely coach Dayton Sheridan at TCA and Tim Owen at Bethesda.

When asked about his size disadvantage, only being 5'8, he just shook it off, stating that he had heard it all of his life.

"I feel like if I was 6'1 or 6'2, I might have a lot more options," Luke said. "People will say that 'I play small private school ball.' Or 'Nobody comes out to Aledo to recruit for basketball programs.' But even in a small private school, my matchups are 5'11 or 6'0 and even bigger. I honestly think that made me better. I use that as motivation. You ask anybody at the school, nobody's left a legacy like me in the basketball program, and it's because the adversity challenges me to become better."

His father Mark also realizes how hard he works and how focused he is, despite the obstacles.

"He digs in," Mark said with a look of certainty. "He sets his face towards it. He has such a tremendous inner drive to win and

overcome adversity. He's that kind of guy, that's who he is or he wouldn't be where he is."

With the letter of intent having been signed, Luke will officially attend Austin College in the fall, joining the Kangaroos' basketball program. While just a freshman, Luke plans to work his way into the starting roster the same way he has done his whole life.

"I'm looking forward to playing for a good coaching staff," Luke said. "I think I will get an opportunity to play this next season. Obviously it will be competitive, it's hard for any freshman to get playing time and make an impact. But I believe I have the right people believing in me there."

TRACK

# AMS girls teams take district titles

Staff Reports  
The Community News

The Aledo Middle School seventh- and eighth-grade girls won their respective track and field district titles this season.

The seventh-grade team wracked up 195.83 points, and the eighth-grade tallied 117.33.

Two girls broke school records. Seventh-graders Madison Giselle Larsen broke the 1600m run with a time of 5:34.10 and Elizabeth Griffin broke the 2400m record with a time of 8:54.20.

SEVENTH GRADE

- 100m Dash**  
Jordyn Edington - 5th - 14.34
- 200m Dash**  
Lilly Sale - 5th - 29.96
- 400m Dash**  
Elizabeth Griffin - 1st - 1:04.70  
Jadyn Rowls - 3rd - 1:07.14
- 800m**  
Madison Giselle Larsen - 1st - 2:21.08  
Mykel Murry - 2nd - 2:23.61
- 1600m**  
Madison Giselle Larsen - 1st - 5:34.10  
Sofia Brandenburg - 2nd - 5:51.87
- 2400m**  
Elizabeth Griffin - 1st - 8:54.20
- 100m Hurdles**  
Savannah Thompson - 1st - 17.78
- 300m Hurdles**  
Mykel Murry - 2nd - 51.49  
Evangelina Revard - 4th - 54.19
- 4x100m Relay**  
Jordyn Edington - 2nd - 54.8  
Brinley Mahaney  
Scarlet Wermurth  
Savannah Thompson
- 4x200m Relay**  
Jordyn Edington - 2nd - 1:55.75  
Brinley Mahaney  
Sofia Brandenburg  
Jadyn Rowls
- 4x400m Relay**  
Elizabeth Griffin - 1st - 4:23.70  
Jadyn Rowls  
Sofia Brandenburg  
Mykel Murry
- Shot Put**  
Delaney Rosser - 4th - 30'8.5  
Adrianna Lambert - 5th - 29'8.25
- Discus**  
Adrianna Lambert - 2nd - 70'6
- High Jump**  
Alyssa Todd - 5th - 4'4
- Pole Vault**  
Breleigh Mayer - 3rd - 6'6  
Kara Overstreet - 4th - 6'0
- Long Jump**  
Savannah Thompson - 2nd - 15'3.75  
Heidi Peterson - 3rd - 15'2
- Triple Jump**  
Savannah Thompson - 1st - 32'7.25  
Addison Russ - 6th - 29'2.5

8TH GRADE

- 200m Dash**  
Addison Smith - 1st - 26.09  
Morgan Estevez - 3rd - 27.79
- 400m Dash**  
Haley Lowe - 4th - 1:07.39
- 100m Hurdles**  
Ryan Warren - 2nd - 18.58
- 4x100m Relay**  
Morgan Gomez - 2nd - 52.15  
Abigail Shiller  
Emery Thompson  
Addison Smith
- 4x200m Relay**  
Emery Thompson - 4th - 1:55.37  
Abigail Shiller  
Morgan Estevez  
Ryan Warren
- 4x400m Relay**  
Abigail Shiller - 1st - 4:21.97  
Haley Lowe  
Emery Thompson  
Addison Smith
- Shot Put**  
Ellie Kate Bussmier - 1st - 35'1.5
- Discus**  
Ellie Kate Bussmier - 5th - 75'8
- High Jump**  
Haley Lowe - 2nd - 4'8  
Morgan Estevez - 5th - 4'6
- Pole Vault**  
Maggie Kilburn - 1st - 10'6  
Madison Houser - 5th - 7'0
- Long Jump**  
Morgan Estevez - 4th - 15'9.25
- Triple Jump**  
Morgan Estevez - 2nd - 33'1.75  
Haley Lowe - 5th - 32'1

# Back in Pads

Johnathan Gray joins Frisco pro team

By Nolan Ruth  
The Community News

It's no secret that Aledo Bearcat football is the pride and joy of the town. Every Friday night in the fall, the area packs the stands at Bearcat Stadium to watch one of the greatest football programs in the state of Texas, and some of the greatest athletes.

Perhaps the biggest name that everyone remembers is Johnathan Gray. The standout running back led Aledo to three consecutive state championships from 2009-11, while amassing 205 career all-purpose touchdowns, 10,889 rushing yards and an additional 1,244 receiving yards.

After his high school career ended he went to Austin to play for the Texas Longhorns under coaches Mack Brown and Charlie Strong. Unfortunately for Gray, his career was plagued with injuries that cut his career shorter than he imagined.

Despite battling injuries, he finished his college career as the 12th-leading rusher in UT history. But it was the final injury that was the most crushing, keeping him from being drafted and putting his professional career in peril. Gray ultimately fought his way back and went to rookie mini-camp with the New York Giants and then went to camp with the Calgary Stampeders, Winnipeg Blue Bombers, and Saskatchewan Roughriders of the CFL. But he was never able to catch on.

Gray returned home and started training young athletes preparing for their careers in the sport.

However, after five years away from a competitive game of football, Gray will be returning to the gridiron this spring. It was recently announced that Gray will join the Indoor Football League's Frisco Fighters for the 2021 season.

The league includes teams stretching from Massachusetts to Arizona. The 12-team league plays a schedule that starts in late April and runs through the summer into late August. The playoffs begin a week



COURTESY OF FRISCO FIGHTERS

Johnathan Gray works out with the Frisco Fighters.

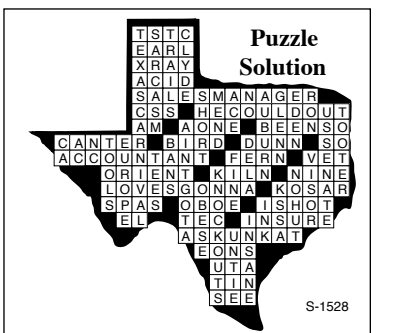
later with the championship being played in early September.

Gray is expected to play a backfield role for the Fighters this season. Home games are played at the Comerica Center at the headquarters of the Dallas Stars. The home opener for the Fighters is

Saturday, June 5, against the Duke City Gladiators out of Albuquerque, New Mexico.

"I'm just looking for an opportunity and I'm just ready to have some fun and run around again," Gray said.

"My ultimate goal is to show I never lost it, I've always had it, and I just want to show the kids that I train now to never give up on your dreams and continue to work hard and continue to fight for whatever you want in life."



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The City of Pleasanton is issuing this Request for Proposal (RFP) in order to solicit and receive Proposals from qualified firms interested in leasing a maintenance hangar for the purposes of providing A&P mechanical services at the Pleasanton Municipal Airport (KPEZ).

Please submit one (1) marked original and three (3) exact duplicate copies of your complete proposal, labeled and clearly marked Request for Proposals (RFP) for an A&P Mechanical for the Pleasanton Municipal Airport. Bids sent via courier must be sealed in a separate envelope inside of the mailer.

POINT OF CONTACT: All inquiries regarding this RFP must be made, in writing, to Andres Aguirre, at [aaguirre@pleasantontx.gov](mailto:aaguirre@pleasantontx.gov). The City shall not be responsible for any verbal communication between any employee of the City and any potential firm. Only written requirements and qualifications will be considered. The City of Pleasanton reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, to waive irregularities, and to accept the proposal deemed the most advantageous to the City.

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BASEBALL

# Bearcats come back to win bi-district

Next round Thursday-Saturday

By Nolan Ruth  
The Community News

The first round of the baseball playoffs took place last week. The district champion Bearcats traveled east to Brewer High School to take on the Justin Northwest Texans.

Things did not get off to a great start, as the Bearcats dropped game one by a score of 4-1. Things looked good when Max Belyeu tripled to lead off the game for Aledo, and when Parker Stegall drove him in with the next at bat. However, that was the lone run for the Bearcats. Northwest tied it in the second inning, and took the lead for good in the fifth.

As game two progressed the next day, it became more apparent that the Bearcats could be swept and eliminated in the first round. The Bearcats trailed 6-3 going into the fifth inning. Belyeu, Stegall, and Creed Willems managed to get on base. Hunter Rudel drove in Belyeu with a single, and Nolan Garcia walked to score Stegall.

With one down and a 1-2 count, Adrian Guzman made the play that turned everything around when he ripped a long grand slam over the left field fence to give Aledo a sudden 9-6 lead.

Northwest threatened the rest of the game, scoring two more over the last three innings, but a three-run seventh inning gave the Bearcats the extra boost to a 12-8 win.



Adrian Guzman steps on home plate as his teammates gather to congratulate him on a grand slam.

On top of the grand slam, Guzman was also credited as the winning pitcher. Willems recorded the last six outs to earn the save.

Game three followed immediately after game two.

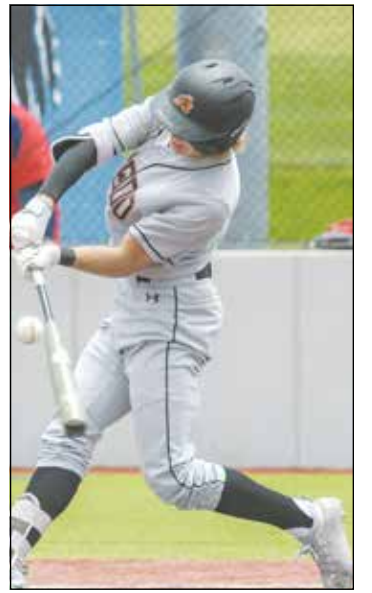
Northwest made a statement, scoring five runs in the

first two innings. However, it was clear that Aledo had found its spark. The Bearcats scored six runs in the second inning, and eight in the third to jump out to a 14-5 lead. The Texans added another run in the fourth inning, but Aledo added two. The game

ended 16-6 by run rule after the fifth inning.

Stegall and Guzman were the stars in game three for Aledo. Stegall finished 3-4, 4 RBIs, 1 R. Guzman finished the game 3-3, 1 double, 3 RBIs, 2 R.

The Bearcats move on to play the Burleson Elks at Boswell High School. Game one was scheduled for Thursday at 7 p.m. Game two will be Friday at 7 p.m. If needed, a third game will be Saturday at noon.



Parker Stegall connects for a single to keep a rally going.



Aledo left fielder Nolan Garcia stretches to make the catch though it was called a no-catch after he collided with the wall and he tried to upright himself and the ball came out of his glove.

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SOFTBALL

# Ladycats take area series after marathon 13-inning opener

Regional quarterfinal comes next

By Nolan Ruth  
The Community News

As another week of the softball season came around, the Aledo Ladycats prepared for their second round series against the Burleson Centennial Lady Spartans. The week started Thursday, May 4, in Weatherford for game one.

Marissa Powell started things off in the first inning with a sacrifice fly to center field that brought home Macy Graf. Centennial matched the run, and added two more of their own in the second inning. In the bottom of the second, Morgan Brown tripled to right field and Caitlin Beaty drove her in with the next at bat. The Ladycats trailed 3-2 until the next inning.

Claire Byars drove in Graf with a double to left to tie the game at three. Madysen Boutwell then singled in Byars, followed by Brown driving in Powell to take a 5-3 lead. Centennial tied it again in the fourth with a two run home run.

It appeared the Ladycats had jumped back in control in the fifth inning when Brown tripled home Powell, but the Lady Spartans tied it up again in the seventh inning. Five scoreless extra innings were played with the score tied at six. In the top of the thirteenth inning, Centennial got a run on a deep home run to left field, and the Ladycats were unable to respond in the bottom of the inning, dropping game one 7-6.

The next day, the teams met in Cleburne for game two. The



JACKIE HAYSLIP/THE COMMUNITY NEWS

Morgan Brown slides safely into third when she hit a triple in the opening game against Burleson Centennial.

Ladycats took the field with an eagle eye look of determination on their faces. All but one player recorded multiple hits in the game. Graf and Boutwell were both 3/3, and Presley Hull went deep in the second inning, driving in two runs herself.

Centennial kept it close at first as the game was tied 4-4 after one inning, but Aledo scored six runs in the second inning, four in the third, and one more in the fourth to take a

15-6 lead. They added five more in the seventh inning to make it a 20-7 game two win.

When both teams took the field for game three, it was obvious that neither team was willing to give an inch.

The Lady Spartans got the crucial first run in the first inning. It wasn't until the bottom of the second inning that Boutwell drilled a long home run to make the statement

Aledo needed. Centennial retook the lead in the third with another run to make it 2-1; however, the floodgates had opened.

Powell drove in Graf and Brown to give the Ladycats the lead with one out. Texas Ray then knocked in Powell with a single to left, followed by Byars singling in Boutwell on the very next pitch, giving Aledo a 5-2 lead.

In the fourth inning, Brown executed a squeeze bunt to perfection, reaching first base and scoring Graf all in once. With the bases loaded, Ray stepped in and grounded out to second, but got the RBI as Maddy Jarvis scored from third. Byars then drove in the other two runs with a single to center field, scoring Powell and Boutwell, making it a 9-2 lead.

Centennial did not score again thanks to the stellar pitching of Kayleigh Smith, and great defensive plays all around. The biggest defensive play came in the fifth inning as the Spartan batter hit a line drive to Powell. As a runner was rounding third and heading to the plate, Powell fielded the ball cleanly and threw the ball directly to the catcher, Brown. The throw could not have been any more perfect as Brown caught it easily and applied the tag for the third out with plenty of time to spare.

The game came to a stall from that point on. In the bottom of the sixth, Hull singled in Powell to make it a 10-2 lead, and that is where the score held. Smith polished off the win by striking out two more in the seventh, bringing her to a total of six for the game, and got another playoff win.

The Ladycats advance to the third round where they will play Colleyville Heritage. All three games will be played at Byron Nelson High School. Game one was scheduled for Thursday at 6:30 p.m. Game two will be Friday at the same time. If needed, game three will be Saturday at 4 p.m.

# Congrats!

Clay Murador



Ford Maberry



Tristan Thurman

Photos by Scott W. Coleman

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