

THE COMMUNITY NEWS

Serving Aledo · the Annettas · Hudson Oaks · Willow Park, Texas

Safe at Third



KIRSTEN GALLON FOR THE COMMUNITY NEWS

Aledo second baseman Adrian Guzman looks to the home plate umpire to make sure he was declared safe at third during the second of three playoff games against Mansfield Timberview last weekend. The Bearcats won the series to advance to the regional semifinal this weekend. The Ladycats softball team advanced to their regional final this weekend. For more, see page 7.

WILLOW PARK

City makes \$14M loan commitment for new wastewater plant

Starting pay for WPPD to increase

By Brandi Addison
The Community News

Willow Park is one step closer to building the new wastewater treatment facility that has been in city discussions for more than a year.

On Tuesday the city council voted to issue the certificates of obligation for a loan that will allow the city to begin construction and improvements of wastewater system properties and facilities.

The loan is not to exceed \$14.13 million. Interest rates range from 0.60% to 2.11% over 30 years for an average of 1.59% each year.

The estimated debt obligation through 2052 is \$539,000.

Turn to LOAN, page 3

BUSINESS

Major restaurant preps for opening in Willow Park

Parker County Ice House will add to area's food and entertainment choices

By Randy Keck
The Community News

The much-anticipated Parker County Ice House is nearing completion, offering a unique blend of indoor and outdoor music and dining amenities in this area.

It is the latest project of Trident Restaurant Group, formed in 2017 by owners Kyle Bryson, Wallace Owens, and Chef Stefon Rishel. Their first project was Wishbone & Flynt and The Amber Room.

Bryson has been in the restaurant business for more than 25 years and has an impressive track record.

"I got in with a buddy who owned a restaurant in Dallas, worked for him, worked for corporate America for a few years, and then in 2007 I took my first venture and opened a restaurant and bar in Grapevine," Bryson said.



FROM LEFT: Kyle Bryson, Chef Stefon Rishel, and Wallace Owens are the owners of the new Parker County Ice House.

Bryson sold that restaurant after about two years and then opened Mixed Up-Burgers in Grand Prairie. He sold it after ten years and then started Trident Restaurant Group.

What he didn't say in his interview with *The Community News* is that Mixed Up Burgers

was the Grand Prairie Chamber of Commerce "Business of the Year" for two consecutive years, and was named to Urban Spoon's "America's Most Popular New Restaurants" list, being recognized as one of the two most popular restaurants in Texas.

Turn to ICE, page 4



RANDY KECK/THE COMMUNITY NEWS

Meadow Ford (in yellow) finds a canine friend at Aledo United Methodist Church's AmazingRace on May 16. Also shown is Mabel Ford (left).



Volume 31, Number 22
Published Weekly

STEM-tacular

AHS graduate receives top national STEM scholarship.

PAGE 3

New staff

Willow Park and Annetta welcome new staff members.

PAGE 5



Fleet of Foot

Annual AmazingRace takes place.

PAGE 2

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AmazingRace

Aledo United Methodist Church hosted its annual AmazingRace on Sunday, April 16. The annual 5K, fun run, and family activity day benefits mission projects.



RANDY KECK/THE COMMUNITY NEWS

Ava Massacci, A.J. Massacci, Tyler Cade, Addison Cade, Mabel Ford, and Knox Mayfield jockey for position at the beginning of the fun run. PHOTOS BELOW BY SAM STASEY



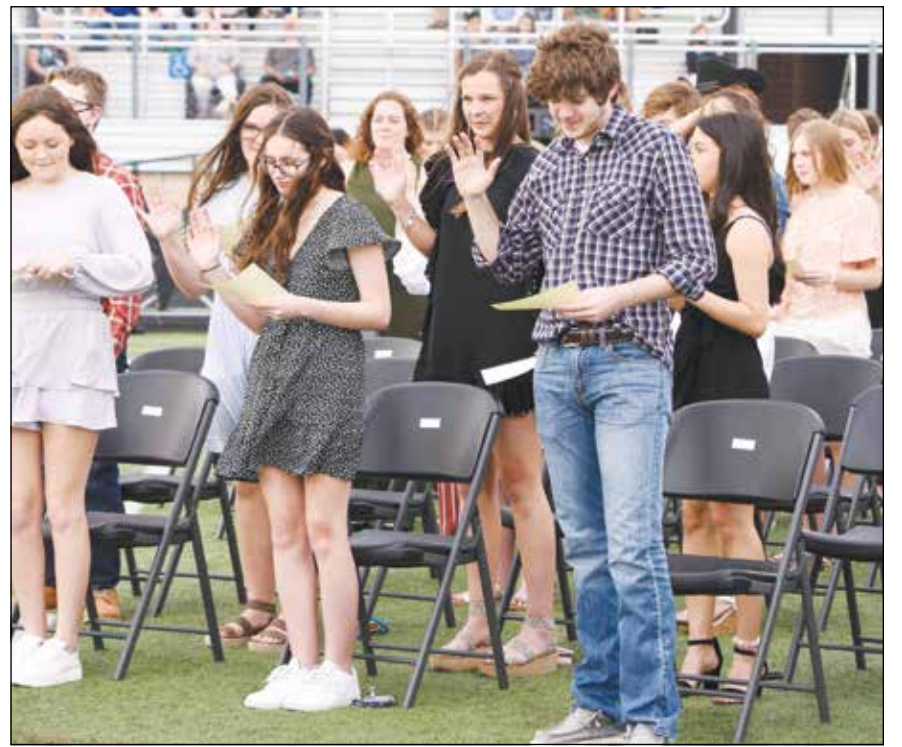
NHS Induction

Aledo High School recently held its annual National Honor Society induction.



LEF: NHS President Jaden Billings gives opening remarks. | RIGHT: NHS Secretary Makayla Brinkman speaks.

PHOTOS BY JACKIE HAYSLIP



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Honors student wins top national STEM scholarship

AHS graduate accruing honors in molecular biology

Angelo State University
Special to The Community News

Katie Holland, a second-year biology student in the Angelo State University Honors Program, has been awarded a 2021 Goldwater Scholarship, which is considered the nation's most prestigious undergraduate scholarship in the science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) fields.

A native of Aledo, Holland is one of just 410 college students from across the U.S., and one of only 22 in Texas, to earn a 2021 Goldwater Scholarship. The scholarship is open to STEM students with an interest in pursuing research careers in those fields. More than 1,250 students were nominated for the scholarship this year, representing 438 colleges and universities.

Awarded by the Barry Goldwater Scholarship and Excellence in Education Foundation, the Goldwater Scholarship provides each recipient up to \$7,500 a year to cover the cost of tuition, mandatory fees, books, and room and board for up to four semesters or until graduation. Of equal value is the membership in a community of exceptionally talented emerging scientists, as well as mentorship by past recipients.

"As the university's national fellowship advisor, it gives me great pleasure to see Katie's individual success," said Dr. Shirley Eoff, Honors Program director. "That success is a credit to her intellectual capability and work ethic, but also to the excellent mentoring she has



Katie Holland is shown in one of the biology labs at Angelo State University.

ANGELO STATE UNIVERSITY

received from ASU faculty, particularly Dr. Loren Ammerman. It's also very exciting to see Angelo State University's name alongside some of the most prestigious institutions in the country on the Goldwater Scholars list."

Since her freshman year at ASU, Holland has been conducting research with Ammerman, a professor of biology. Her current work involves the molecular screening of adenoviruses in Texas bats, and it is funded by an ASU Faculty-Mentored Undergraduate Research Grant and a Beta Beta Beta (Tri-Beta) Honor Society Research Grant. She

was also recently selected for the prestigious and highly competitive 2021 Summer Research Program in Biology and Brain and Cognitive Neuroscience at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Previously, Holland was selected for the competitive 2020 Summer Undergraduate Research Program in Genetics and Genomics at Texas A&M University. While the COVID-19 pandemic prevented completion of the on-site lab rotations, she was able to participate in a modified virtual program that focused on bioinformatics.

Holland has also received an ASU Carr Excellence Scholarship, Honors Program Scholarship and Alvin New Honors Enhancement Scholarship. She serves as a mentor for the Honors Program and a representative in the Tri-Beta biology honor society, and she is active in the Honors Student Association.

Scheduled to graduate in May 2022 after just three years of undergraduate studies, Holland's goal is to earn a Ph.D. in molecular biology and pursue a career conducting and directing biomedical research at a national research laboratory.

LOAN

from page one

"These are very good rates, and I don't think you're going to get anything better any time soon," city manager Bryan Grimes said during the council meeting.

The new facility will replace the current plant, which is almost at capacity. Construction is expected to begin early next year and will be located just a few hundred yards from the current plant.

Police officer budget changes

The council unanimously approved budget amendments requested by the Willow Park Police Department. The changes include:

An additional \$16,999.98 for dispatch services after a breach in security delayed billing from late summer until January;

An additional \$9,600 for overtime costs throughout the February winter storm;

An additional \$7,000 for a radar trailer that has already been purchased and deployed regularly.

The police department also requested an additional \$12,500 to allocate toward pay increases for starting officers.

"Willow Park Police Salaries continue to be below market and one of the lowest in Parker County. With the current social climate and low pay, we are having difficulty recruiting qualified applicants," a city document reads. "We are asking for additional funds to increase starting pay and the existing step-plan to aid in recruiting efforts."

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ICE

from page one

Rishel, known for his color-changing mohawk, began his restaurant journey at the age of 23 in the kitchen, working for the well-known Pappas Restaurants. From there he was the executive chef at the former Brackets Sports Bar in the Hotel Palomar in Dallas.

A popular destination for many diners has been Max's Wine Dive, where Rishel was the executive chef, creating comfort dishes for the restaurant. He was the winner of Fort Worth Magazine's Top Chef competition in 2015, in addition to receiving awards from the magazine for "Best Comfort Food," "Best Use of Bacon," and "Best Brunch."

Like the other two partners, Owens began as a server during his college days while earning a bachelor's degree in accounting from Baylor University. He spent 17 years at Spring Creek Barbecue and owned a Dickey's Barbecue franchise for three years.

That mix of talent holds promise for the ever-growing east Parker County population looking for additional dining and entertainment options. Bryson describes it as an "indoor-outdoor restaurant music venue." The large patio can seat up to 300, or can accommodate 1,000 people or more standing for a



This view shows the courtyard and outdoor bar area.

concert. The inside portion can seat about 120 people.

The concerts will be an eclectic mixture

"We're going to do live music every Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday," Bryson said. "We've got some cover bands coming in. We've got some national acts that we're working with that we can't let out of the bag yet, but they're national artists, some Texas Country Western artists — cover bands from the 80s, hair band stuff, and just everything in between."

The outdoor portion of Parker County Ice House includes the courtyard, an informal patio designed for casual conversation, a bar that mirrors the one inside, and the covered stage.



But the amenities won't be just for adults.

"We'll have games in the yard — cornhole, jumbo tic-tac-toe or jumbo connect fours," Bryson said.

Socializing and dining

In Texas, socializing often means "beer."

Bryson said the venue will have 30 drafts, and about 15 choices of canned beers in addition to cocktails.

TEXAS CROSSWORD

by Charley & Guy Orbison
Copyright 2021 by Orbison Bros.

ACROSS

1 newspaper: "Hood County ____"

5 "on an ____ keel"

6 TXism: "____ hook" (fish)

7 what Texans do best

8 what a TX soldier was called in 1861

9 TX-filmed "Middle ____ Crazy" (1980)

12 TX Minnyards once had "Sack ____" food stores

17 TXism: "mad as ____ snake"

19 TX Freddy Fender hit: "Living ____"

21 inhabitants of "The Morman State"

22 talked tediously

23 "Goat Gland" man ____ Brinkley lived in Del Rio

28 first call sign for Austin's KAMX

29 they're "upon you" in Texas

30 TXism: "opened ____ worms"

31 TX-filmed "The ____ of Heaven"

35 lessen

36 near Fort Davis: "McDonald ____"

42 TXism: "fits like ____ fish"

44 TX Blue Bell ice ____

46 Conway & Loretta's "Hang Up the Phone"

48 Flip Wilson: "the devil ____ do it"

49 ____dahl! (fanfare)

50 TXism: "flat as ____ handle prairie"

51 Greek team of ex-Mav Roy Tarpley

52 TXism: "____ could talk the legs off an iron stove"

53 Luke Bryan tune: "____ You"

54 more than one ox

DOWN

1 seat of Comal County (2 wds.)

2 this Adam was an Astro SS (2001-07)

3 TXism for "drink" (3 wds.)

4 "hit a ____"

9 do it now! (abbr.)

10 TXism: "____ on a merry-go-round"

11 the company that TX Perot started

12 TXism: "____ it in the bud"

13 Dallas mule-drawn mass transit in 1873

14 TX Meat Loaf: Marvin Lee ____

15 "____ of confidence"

16 female sheep

18 TX Dale Evans' "____ San Antonio"

20 where Heisman winner TX Tim Brown played in college (abbr.)

23 elected county prosecutor (abbr.)

24 late TX Charley Pride's label

25 pokes

26 TXism: "covered like fur ____"

27 TXism: "____ Cadillac bumper"

32 neighbor state no. of LA

33 TX-born Carol Burnett had a long career on this med.

34 laugh word in a text message

36 Spanish "bear"

37 ____ fide (genuine)

38 coat fasteners

39 TXism: "it's root hog ____" (you're on your own)

40 former TX air force base in Lubbock

41 sweet tater

43 "____ Sieck State Forest"

45 TX Bob Wills' "Take ____ Back to Tulsa"

47 imprecise

48 primary street in many Texas cities

55 "Giant" is a TX-based western starring Liz, Rock & James

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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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ANNETTA Public Works director hired

By Makenzie Plusnick
The Community News

The Town of Annetta has hired Ryan Corbello as Director of Public Works and Planning.



Corbello

Corbello has been in public works since 2004, previously working in the cities of Rowlett, Celina, and Carrollton, he said. He earned his bachelor's degree in Public Administration from the University of Texas at Dallas and is in the process of earning his master's degree from the University of Texas at Arlington. He was drawn to public works because he wanted to help communities, he added.

"It was really for the public service aspect of it. It was providing the service for the community and that's kind of grown on me and spurred my want to go back to school," he said.

The need for this position stems from the city council's desire to better serve the community, Corbello said.

"They want to create a direction for Annetta's Public Works department to have something that's uniquely theirs [and] serves the needs of their community that's done by their own staff, and is efficient and effective," he said.

Though he comes from slightly larger cities, he looks forward to the personability of working in a small town.

"You shake hands with people; they know who you are, they know they can call you when they have an issue. [It's] not just the name behind an email, or voice behind the phone," Corbello said. "There's a real connection to the people that you serve."



JACKIE HAYSLIP/THE COMMUNITY NEWS

Rain did not deter parents and grandparents from attending the McCall Kindergarten Graduation on May 25.

Aledo city administrator headed to Willow Park

Funderburk will serve as assistant city manager to Grimes

The Community News

By Brandi Addison

Aledo's now-former city administrator Bill Funderburk will soon start a new role for City of Willow Park, bringing more than four decades of experience with him.

Funderburk — who has been with Aledo for more than two years — will serve as the assistant city manager to Bryan Grimes, beginning June 1.

During his time with Aledo, he helped guide the city through the coronavirus pandemic and the February winter storm. Despite those obstacles, he still enjoyed his time with Aledo, where he

has seen a lot of growth in such a short time, he said.

"East Parker County — really all of Parker County — is a good place to be," Funderburk told The Community News.

Grimes said Funderburk is a longtime friend whom he first met nearly a decade ago, when he served as the city manager for Anson, working indirectly with Funderburk, who was city manager for Hamilton.

He said Funderburk has an impressive wealth of experience that he's watched over the years.

"I'm very eager to bring someone over with experience to help the citizens of Willow Park and help us run this city," Grimes said.

In addition to Funderburk's work for the cities of Aledo and Hamilton, he has served in various roles across other Texas cities, beginning as the

director of parks and recreation for Commerce in 1980.

He has also worked in Greenville, Bonham, and Springtown, and before his work as city administrator for Aledo, served as the city's interim director of public works.

Additionally, in the early 2000s, Funderburk worked for the state's office of rural community affairs as the outreach and training coordinator.

Though sad to leave Aledo, he said he is excited to bring his experience to Willow Park.

"There's a lot of growth taking place there," Funderburk said. "They're exciting times to be in Parker County and Willow Park."

Funderburk is succeeded in Aledo by former Weatherford Assistant City Manager Sharon Hayes.

Tots to present 'BOB: A Life in Five Acts'

Theatre Off The Square will present "BOB: A Life in Five Acts," on weekends from June 4-22 at 114 North Denton Street in Weatherford.

BOB chronicles the highly unusual life of Bob and his lifelong quest to become a "Great Man." Will Bob's real life ever be able to live up to his dream? BOB is a comedic exploration of American mythology and values, the treacherous pursuit of happiness, and discovering what it means to be truly "great."

Members of the cast are Tim Crabb as BOB; Jaclyn Justice, Morgan Langham, and Darla Robinson — Female Chorus; and Brad Justice and Thomas Vigil — Male Chorus.

Patrons can choose to view the show live and in-person or watch a recording of the show online. In-person tickets can be purchased at: https://buy.ticketstothecity.com/venue.php?org_id=88. Video-on-demand tickets (online June 12-20) can be purchased at: <https://www.showtix4u.com/event-details/52626>.

Live performances will be at 8 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays, and 2 p.m. Sundays.

The production contains adult subject matter and situations appropriate for those age 17 and older. Masks are optional. ASL interpreters will be at the performance on Friday, June 18. Services are provided through a partnership with the American Sign Language Interpreting Program of Tarrant County College Trinity River Campus.

For more information, visit www.theatreoffthesquare.org or call 817-341-8687.

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ORDINANCE NO. 215

An ordinance of the Town of Annetta amending portions of Ordinance No. 192, as amended by Ordinance 192A, by renumbering and reformatting the ordinance, adding a new R-AG "Agricultural Residential District," a new R-E "Residential Estate Residential District," a new R-20 "Single Family Residential District," a new R-10 "Single Family Residential District;" amending Article 4 "Permitted Uses" to provide permitted use listings for the new residential districts; amending Section 8.2 "Lot Area & Building Location" to allow the combining of platted lots; amending Section 8.10.B "8.10.B ACCESSORY STRUCTURES IN RESIDENTIAL AND MULTI-FAMILY DISTRICTS" to provide for accessory buildings in front of main buildings on lots at least two acres in size and an accessory building on adjacent lots; amending Section 9.2 "General Definitions" by amending the definition of lot width; amending Section 9.3 "Definitions" by amending or adding definitions related to the foregoing sections, and amending or adding definitions for "Accessory Farming and Livestock," "Agricultural, Farming and Forestry Activities," "Animal Production, Ranching and Livestock," "Credit Access Business," "Home Occupation," "Planning and Zoning Coordinator," "Short Term Rental;" amending and adding fencing standards in the residential districts and amending various sections to comply with statutory requirements for zoning; PROVIDING THAT THIS ORDINANCE SHALL BE CUMULATIVE OF ALL ORDINANCES; PROVIDING A SAVINGS CLAUSE; PROVIDING A SEVERABILITY CLAUSE; PROVIDING A PENALTY CLAUSE; PROVIDING FOR PUBLICATION IN THE OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, the Town of Annetta, Texas is a Type A general law municipality located in Parker County, created in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 6 of the Local Government Code and operating pursuant to the enabling legislation of the State of Texas; and

WHEREAS, the Town has previously adopted Ordinance No. 192, as amended by Ordinance 192-A, regulating the location and use of buildings, structures, and land for business, industry, residence and other purposes, and now desires to amend said ordinance for the purpose of promoting the public health, safety, morals and general welfare, all in accordance with a comprehensive plan; and

WHEREAS, the Town Council wishes to amend Ordinance No. 192, as amended by Ordinance No. 192-A, for the purpose of adopting provisions as described in the caption of this ordinance; and

WHEREAS, a public hearing was held by the Planning and Zoning Commission on May 13, 2021 and Town Council on May 20, 2021 as required by law; and

WHEREAS, the Town Council has determined that the amendments as outlined herein are in the best interest of the health, safety, and general welfare of the citizens of the Town of Annetta and the public.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF ANNETTA TEXAS, THAT:

SECTION 1.
The amendment to Ordinance No. 192, as amended by Ordinance No. 192-A, attached to this ordinance

as Exhibit "A," which is incorporated into this ordinance for all intents and purposes, is hereby adopted as the zoning ordinance of the Town of Annetta.

SECTION 2.
This ordinance supersedes and repeals Ordinance No. 192, as amended by Ordinance No. 192-A.

SECTION 3.
This ordinance shall be cumulative of all provisions of ordinances of the Town of Annetta, Texas, except where the provisions of this ordinance are in direct conflict with the provisions of such ordinances, in which event the conflicting provisions of such ordinances are hereby repealed.

SECTION 4.
It is hereby declared to be the intention of the Town Council that the phrases, clauses, sentences, paragraphs and sections of this ordinance are severable, and if any phrase, clause, sentence, paragraph or section of this ordinance shall be declared invalid or unconstitutional by the valid judgment or decree of any court of competent jurisdiction, such invalidity or unconstitutionality shall not affect any of the remaining phrases, clauses, sentences, paragraphs and sections of this ordinance, since the same would have been enacted by the Town Council without the incorporation in this ordinance of any such invalid or unconstitutional phrase, clause, sentence, paragraph or section.

SECTION 5.
All rights and remedies of the Town of Annetta are expressly saved as to any and all violations of the ordinances of the Town of Annetta, as amended, or any other ordinances affecting land use and zoning which have accrued at the time of the effective date of this ordinance; and, as to such accrued violations and all pending litigation, both civil and criminal, whether pending in court or not, under such ordinances, same shall not be affected by this ordinance but may be prosecuted until final disposition by the courts.

SECTION 6.
Any person, firm or corporation who violates, disobeys, omits, neglects or refuses to comply with or who resists the enforcement of any of the provisions of this ordinance shall be fined not more than Two Thousand Dollars (\$2,000.00) for each offense. Each day that a violation is permitted to exist shall constitute a separate offense.

SECTION 7.
The Town Secretary of the Town of Annetta, Texas, is hereby directed to publish this ordinance in compliance with state law.

SECTION 8.
This ordinance shall be in full force and effect from and after its passage and publication as required by law, and it is so ordained.

PASSED AND APPROVED on this 20th day of May, 2021.

TOWN OF ANNETTA
(s) Sandy Roberts, Mayor

ATTEST:
(s) Jamee Long, Town Secretary

Capital Highlights

Special session coming this fall



Gary Borders
gborders@texaspress.com

Texas lawmakers will adjourn the regular session on Monday — Memorial Day — but Gov. Greg Abbott has already indicated he will call a special session in the fall to grapple with redistricting after detailed census results are finally released.

Last week, Abbott told lawmakers he would put them in charge of deciding how to spend nearly \$16 billion in federal money the state received for COVID-19 recovery efforts. During the first two rounds of stimulus funding, Abbott decided how the money would be spent, which angered some legislators.

The special session comes just months before the 2022 primaries, with Abbott, Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick, Attorney General Ken Paxton, and Comptroller Glenn Hegar all planning to seek re-election.

That raises the possibility of other topics being added the special session that could appeal to the governor's base, according to the San Antonio Express-News. Abbott has drawn one primary opponent, former state Sen. Don Huffines.

Mask mandates largely a thing of the past in Texas

Abbott last week issued an executive order banning all government and public entities from mandating the wearing of masks. The order went into effect May 21, except for public schools, which can require masks until June 4.

Local governments or officials can be fined up to \$1,000 for requiring the wearing of masks, although businesses can still require them. Most large retailers, such as Walmart, Costco and Target, announced they were ending mask requirements.

However, state-supported living centers, government owned or operated hospitals, state prison juvenile justice facilities, and county and municipal jails are exempt from Abbott's order and can still require masks be worn.

A day in Texas with no COVID-19 deaths

For the first time since March 21, 2020, the state's Department of State Health Services on Sunday, May 16, said no deaths related to COVID-19 were reported.

The milestone was noted by Abbott and others, though celebrations were tempered at least among some, the Houston Chronicle reported. The hiatus was short-lived, however, as DSHS reported 23 new deaths the following day.

The number of Texans hospitalized who are COVID-19 patients is at its lowest level since last June, according to DSHS, with 2,070 cases that were lab confirmed as of Sunday.

The number of new cases in the past week in Texas, as reported by the Coronavirus Resource Center at Johns Hopkins University, stood at 12,290, down 17.5 percent from the previous week and continuing the steady

decline statewide. A total of 269 deaths were recorded statewide for the same time frame.

Meanwhile, the number of Texans who are fully vaccinated reached nearly 9.8 million.

Drought conditions easing under widespread storms

Much of the state has experienced a soggy May thus far, with widespread precipitation blanketing much of the eastern and central regions. As a result, drought conditions have eased except in the Panhandle and West Texas and the counties around Laredo on the border.

The Texas Water Development Board reports a total of 44% of the state's area is now under moderate or worse drought conditions. By comparison, we reported on April 4 that drought conditions existed in more than two-thirds of the state.

Texas opts out of federal jobless assistance plan

Abbott last week announced the state will no longer accept federal jobless assistance funds after June 26, including the extra \$300-per-week approved earlier this year by Congress.

The state is also leaving a federal assistance program that provides aid to self-employed and gig workers not normally covered by unemployment insurance. The move is intended to encourage people to return to work, as restaurants and other businesses say it is difficult to attract workers.

"The Texas economy is booming, and employers are hiring in communities throughout the state," Abbott said. "According to the Texas Workforce Commission, the number of job openings in Texas is almost identical to the number of Texans who are receiving unemployment benefits. That assessment does not include the voluminous jobs that typically are not listed, like construction and restaurant jobs."

The state's jobless rate was 6.7% in April, according to the Texas Workforce Commission, down from the record high of 12.9% in April 2020.

Secretary of State Hughs to step down

Texas Secretary of State Ruth Ruggiero Hughs will step down at the end of May, she announced last week. Hughs was appointed by Abbott in August 2019. However, the Texas Senate never formally confirmed her nomination. Abbott will now be free to appoint a new secretary of state, who could be confirmed during the upcoming special session.

Learn more about college savings plans offered by state

The state of Texas offers three tax-advantaged plans for higher education —the Texas College Savings Plan, the Lone Star 529 plan and the Texas Tuition Promise Fund. Parents can learn more about the plans by watching a webinar on four dates in June and July. Register for the webinar here: <https://www.texastuitionpromisefund.com/events/>.

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.

Guest Column

A hopeful start



J. Todd Jordan
jtoddjordan@icloud.com

Hopeful, encouraging, timely... those were a few of the words that were shouted out at the beginning of the recent Aledo ISD Parenting University session on Thursday, May 20. This interactive engagement resulted from the speaker asking 40-plus participants, "What are your thoughts about being here today?" Danny L. Ross, a licensed professional counselor, conducted a two-hour workshop entitled "A Community of Connectedness" as part of the school board's plan to increase dialogue about race and ethnicity issues in our community.

As a parent of a recent graduate of the Aledo school system, I attended the event to see how our community would respond to an open discussion about our different cultural experiences. Given all the unfortunate and politically charged rhetoric about Critical Race Theory in the news and on social media, I was concerned that the exchanges at this parenting university might prove to be confrontational. Due to Danny's excellent tone, energy, and easy-going style, he quickly allowed the group of black, brown, and white participants to relax and enjoy the night's activities.

As a skillful and experienced facilitator, Danny modeled a simple way of telling his story and then allowed the audience

members to respond to three questions about how our families handle challenging subjects. Each audience member wrote their replies on post-it notes and stuck them on a wall in the room. Reading these notes aloud, we began to see that many of us in the room have similar experiences regardless of the color of our skin.

The second series of group exercises allowed us to explore the meaning of culture and subcultures. Each table prepared a large flip chart on what we considered Texas Culture. Once again, it was interesting to see, regardless of race or ethnicity, how many shared the same items, i.e., BBQ, football, trucks, country and western music. Having created a safe space for us to share and learn, Danny then asked us what happens if a subculture within a dominant culture does not seem heard, understood, or respected?

This realization allowed us to peacefully acknowledge that some of the events in the Aledo community are related to this idea that the black and brown community members are not consistently heard.

A powerful part of the workshop was when we paired up with someone we did not know to share our first experiences with race. We discussed early encounters, times in college, and how race impacts our work environment. Because Danny had moved us from large group activities to table exercises to now one-on-one engagement, the room was buzzing with people sharing their thoughts and feelings about race. Given the negative and divisive nature of race dialogue on social media and the major news

networks, it would have been good for the whole world to see a group of POC and White adults having an honest conversation about race. No yelling or shouting — but open dialogue and deep engagement.

As the evening progressed, we covered topics like microaggressions, perspective, selective distortion, cross-racial dialogue, and how to create change. These topics could have resulted in a group breaking into factions and destroying the atmosphere of shared learning. However, this evening proved that when adults and parents who care about our community come together for the common good, we can achieve change.

I want to thank my black and brown neighbors for taking the risk and engaging in this public dialogue on race. To the members of the school board and administration that put on the workshop, I hope you make good on the promise that this is not a "one and done" event. We know that we have years of work to do in our community if we are going to make sure that race is understood and that racism has no place in Aledo. Please bring back Danny Ross for a second workshop, and let's figure out how to get 400 in the room.

As Danny wrapped up the night, he asked the group again, "How are you feeling now?" It was terrific to hear people of color and whites shout out, "More hopeful, more encouraged, thankful..." The nervous energy that started the meeting had turned into a collective power that was inspiring. To my friends and neighbors in Aledo — let's keep this positive movement going!

Slings&Arrows

...and that's a wrap!



Randy Keck
rkeck@community-news.com

When 1995 arrived and I was almost two years shy of 40, I had never done *anything* for more than three years (other than go to school and college).

I did own another business in the 1980s, and it might have gone on for more than three years if it had gone on — but it didn't.

A chance encounter with an acquaintance set in motion a series of events that led to me taking ownership of *The Community News* on May 25, 1995.

So here we are — 26 years is "a wrap."

So as you receive this newspaper, it will be the beginning of year 27. I can't wait!

It's a little bit scary and a little bit exciting that, in this business, you just never know what the next day is going to bring, or who is going to walk in the door, or what's going to happen when the phone rings. Sometimes it's good, sometimes it's tragic, but it is always a story that needs to be told.

Thank you for allowing us into your lives for the past 26 years. It has been an honor and a privilege to serve this community. And now it's time for the next thing!

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Affiliations:

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- Texas Press Association
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- Weatherford Chamber of Commerce

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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. 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.

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.

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.

Comeback Kids

Ladycats pull another comeback to advance

Strong Game 2 performance provides momentum to sweep series; 'Cats one game away from state tournament

By Nolan Ruth
The Community News

There are a number of comeback stories in baseball; a few examples include the 2004 Boston Red Sox, the 1969 Miracle Mets, and the Chicago Cubs winning the world series in 2016 against the Cleveland Indians. All of those teams were up against elimination on more than one occasion and pulled it out. The same reigns true with the 2021 Aledo Ladycats.

The Ladycats have played four playoff series so far. Each of the last three have gone to a deciding third game. Two of those saw the Ladycats have to face elimination twice. All in all, Aledo has played eleven games, they faced elimination in five of them.

This past weekend was the perfect picture of how these playoffs have gone. Facing the Abilene Cooper Lady Cougars in the regional semifinal, the Ladycats got down quickly in game one and spent the entire game chasing. Cooper scored four runs in the first inning, then Aledo scored four in the third to tie it up. Presley Hull scored in the fifth to take the lead, but Cooper scored three more to retake the lead. The Ladycats went on to lose 8-6 in game one.

Despite a rough start, the team pulled into Stephenville on Friday ready to send Cooper packing. Marissa Powell started her stellar day in the first inning by doubling to center field, driving in Macy Graf and Reagan Davis. Powell ended up scoring on a wild pitch to give Aledo a 3-0 lead. Morgan Brown extended the lead in the next at-bat by singling home Madysen Boutwell. With the bases loaded, Claire Byars drew a walk to score the fifth run before the first out was recorded. Davis stepped up for the second time in the inning and singled in Hull for the final run of the inning.

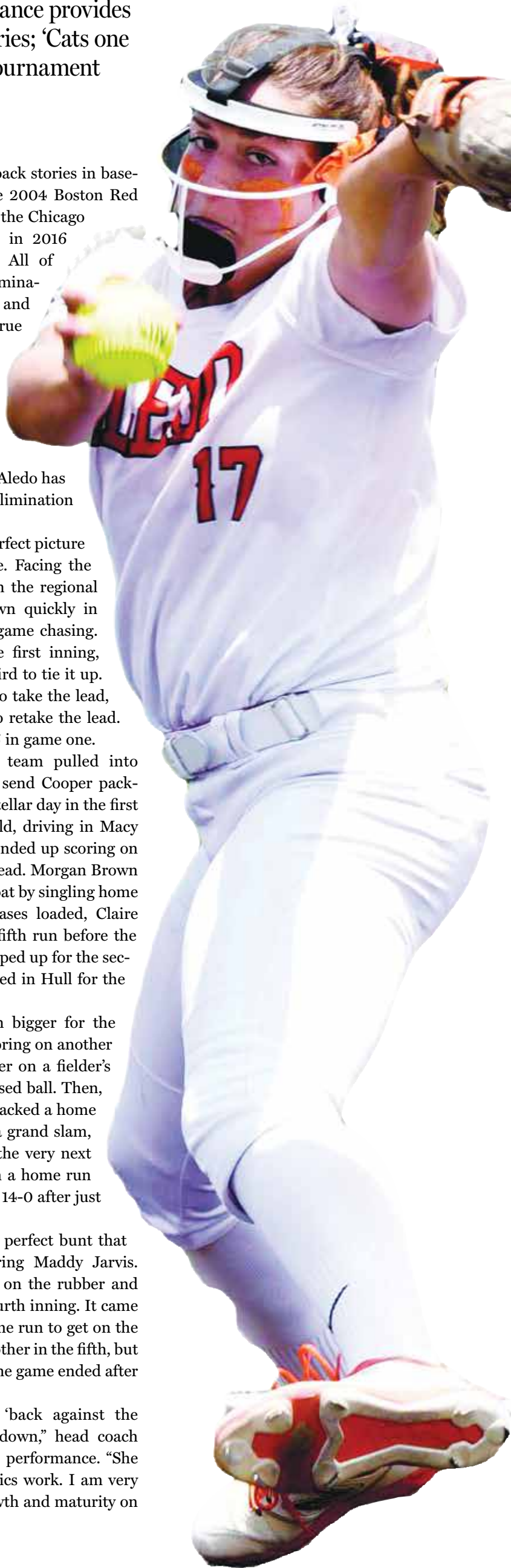
The second inning was even bigger for the Ladycats. Boutwell started by scoring on another wild pitch. Texas Ray scored later on a fielder's choice, and Hull scored on a passed ball. Then, with the bases loaded, Powell smacked a home run over the left field fence for a grand slam, extending the lead to 13-0. On the very next pitch, Boutwell followed up with a home run of her own, bringing the score to 14-0 after just two innings.

In the third, Graf executed a perfect bunt that saw her end up at third, scoring Maddy Jarvis. Nathalie Touchet had settled in on the rubber and had a no-hitter going into the fourth inning. It came to an end when Cooper hit a home run to get on the board. They followed up with another in the fifth, but that was all they could muster. The game ended after five innings by a score of 15-2.

"She stepped into another 'back against the wall' situation and shut them down," head coach Heather Myers said of Touchet's performance. "She was focused and let her mechanics work. I am very excited to see her continued growth and maturity on the mound."

The Decider

Game three was immediately following game two. It did not start as fast as game two did, but in the third inning, Powell continued her career day with a two-run home run that sparked the offense. Later in the same inning, Hull knocked another home run that drove in three. Graf added one more on another perfectly-executed bunt that brought home Byars.



JACKIE HAYSLIP/THE COMMUNITY NEWS

Pitcher Natalie Touchet throws a strike in game 2 against Abilene Cooper. Touchet came through with a clutch performance that helped keep the Ladycats in the playoffs.

BASEBALL

Never Say Die

Bearcats come back again to take playoff series

By Nolan Ruth
The Community News

The Aledo Bearcats baseball team has played eight total games in the playoffs so far. Four of those have been elimination games. The resilience of the squad has gotten it out of trouble multiple times and this past weekend was the perfect example.

Taking on the Mansfield Timberview Wolves in the Regional Quarterfinal at Cleburne High School, the Bearcats got behind early in game one giving up three runs in the top of the first inning. Nolan Garcia got Aledo on the board in the bottom of the inning with a triple to left field that brought home Parker Stegall.

In the second inning, the Aledo offense exploded. Max Belyeu drove in Adrian Guzman and Branson Wilson. Stegall drove in Belyeu on the next play. Later in the inning, Garcia reached on an error that resulted in Gabe Baker and Stegall coming across, giving Aledo a 6-3 lead.

It did not last as the Wolves scored five of their own in the third inning. The game stalled from there and ended in an 8-6 loss for the Bearcats.

In the first elimination game of the series, third so far for Aledo, the Bearcats jumped out to the early lead and did not look back. Garcia singled home Baker in the first inning. In the second inning, Aledo notched six runs. Hunter Rudel singled home Guzman for the first run; two plays later Sam Sisk tripled home Rudel. Belyeu stepped up after Sisk, and doubled him in, followed by Stegall singling home Belyeu. The final run of the inning came when Garcia flew out to center, but Baker scored from third to

make it a sacrifice fly. The Bearcats led 7-0 after two innings.

The Wolves were not going to go quietly, scoring five runs of their own to pull within two. Ethan Jaques came in to pitch the rest of the game after the five runs were given up. He did not allow another run to score, and only gave up two hits.

Aledo extended the lead in the third when Kevin Taylor grounded out to second, but Guzman raced home. With Jaques pitching a gem, the Bearcats polished off game two with one more run in the sixth when Sisk scored on a wild pitch. Aledo won 9-5 to force a third and deciding game.

The weather for game three was anything but baseball friendly. It had rained overnight, the turf was wet and slick, and the ball kept getting heavy from the mist and wet turf. Fortunately for the Bearcats, they were able to limit the early damage better than Timberview. The Wolves took an early 3-0 lead after multiple defensive miscues by the Bearcats. However, Timberview had a tougher time adjusting. Aledo batted around, and then some, scoring 11 runs in the bottom of the first inning.

The biggest play came toward the end of the inning. Zach Harrison had the bases loaded with two outs, already up 8-3. On his second pitch, Harrison tripled off the left field wall, driving in Belyeu, Stegall, and Baker.

The Bearcats added another in the second inning when Sisk reached base on an error, scoring Rudel. Bridger Wilson drove in the thirteenth run on a ground ball that scored Guzman. Aledo had a chance to run-rule the Wolves in the fifth inning, but a double to right field scored another run for Timberview. On the same play, Harrison and Guzman had a perfect relay that then went to star catcher Creed Willems, who applied the tag for

Turn to **BASEBALL**, page 10

CLAY SHOOTING

Clay Busters finish strong

The Aledo Clay Busters competitive youth shooting team had a great day with many of its members shooting their best scores when it finished its regular season at the DFW regional championship on May 8-9 at the Ellis County Sportman's Club.

This shoot awarded prizes for HOA (Highest Overall Average) and HAA (High All Around). The High All Around medals rewarded high scores over all three disciplines of trap, skeet, and sporting clays. Two Aledo shooters excelled in competition over the two days. Lia Arft won second HAA in the ladies junior varsity division. Brice Bohn won first HAA in the intermediate division.

Coaches said the whole team improved this year and they are proud and excited for next year. Though the regular season is over, some athletes will shoot in the Scholastic Clay Target Program State Championship in San Antonio June 10-13.



SPECIAL TO THE COMMUNITY NEWS

Brice Bohn displays his First Place High All Around medal from the DFW regional clay shooting championship held May 8-9.



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The Town of Annetta, Texas is seeking competitive sealed proposals for the labor, materials, construction, and installation of one Paluxy Formation public water supply well and related appurtenances. Proposals are to be submitted in accordance with the Request for Competitive Sealed Proposals included in the Offeror's Package.

Proposals will be received by the Town of Annetta, Texas at 450 Thunder Head Lane, Annetta, Texas until 1:00 p.m. on June 28, 2021. The name of the offerors and the monetary terms of the proposal (i.e., the fees and prices) shall be read aloud.

Each proposal must be submitted in a sealed envelope, addressed to Mayor Sandy Roberts at the Town of Annetta, Texas. Each sealed envelope containing a proposal must be plainly marked on the outside as Proposal Envelope for **Town of Annetta Lakes of Aledo Paluxy Well** and the envelope should bear on the outside the name of the offeror and their address. If forwarded by mail, the sealed envelope containing the proposal must be enclosed in another envelope addressed to the Town at

TOWN OF ANNETTA
P.O. Box 1150
Annetta, Texas 76008

The Town will select an offeror that submits the proposal that offers the best value for the Town based on: (1) the selection criteria and the weighted value for the criteria in the RFP; and (2) the Town's ranking evaluation. A final contract will be negotiated with the selected offeror.

The Offeror's Package is on file at the Town Hall, 450 Thunder Head Lane, Annetta, TX 76008. Copies of the Offeror's Package may be obtained in paper from Town Hall or electronically by e-mail (citysecretary@annettatx.gov).

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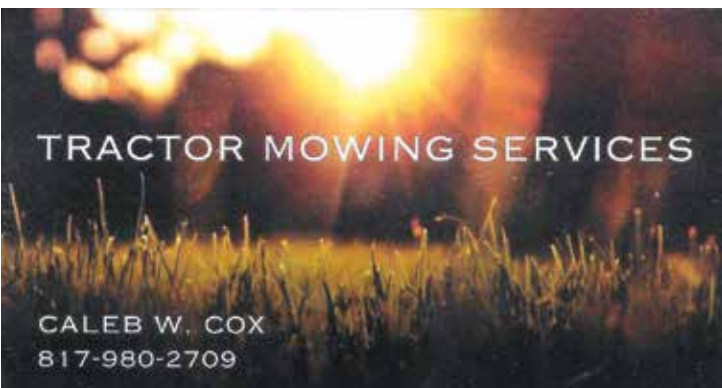
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SOFTBALL

from page seven

The offenses stalled until the fifth inning. Audrey Pearce came home on an error with two outs to widen the gap. Davis then singled home Graf from third to make it 8-0. Powell singled in Davis, and ended up scoring herself on a series of miscues by the Cooper defense for a “little league home run.”

Having already reached a ten run lead, Kayleigh Smith finished off the game strong, retiring the Lady Cougars to end the game and send the Ladycats to the regional final.

Powell finished the day, games two and three, 6-8 at the plate with 9 RBI's and two home runs, crossing the plate four times herself.

“I’ve been praying for God to give me focus and energy at the plate,” Powell said of her impressive performance. “I was seeing the ball all the way and I just had that feeling that I really wanted to hit the ball and produce for my team.”

The Ladycats will play the Justin Northwest Lady Texans in a single game playoff at 2 p.m. on Friday at Boswell High School. A win would send the Ladycats to the state tournament.



JACKIE HAYSLIP/THE COMMUNITY NEWS
Reagan Davis rounds third on her way to scoring for the Ladycats.

JACKIE HAYSLIP/THE COMMUNITY NEWS
Marissa Powell (front left), Reagan Davis, and Texas Ray celebrate Powell's home run.

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BASEBALL

from page seven

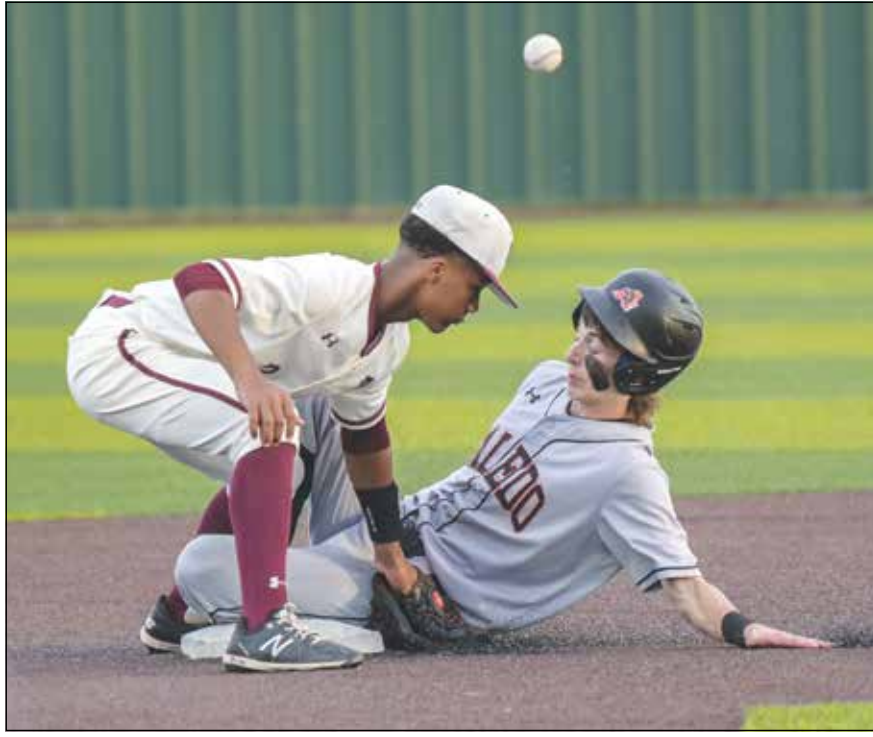
the final out, preventing a second run.

Leading 13-4 and only needing one run, it was clear the Bearcats were eager to end the series. Stegall and Garcia got on base with just one out. Then, Harrison hit a fly ball to right field that was dropped, allowing Stegall to score the winning run from second.

"I have to tip my hat to Mansfield Timberview," head coach Chad Barry said after the game three win. "I think this is the furthest their school has ever been, and their kids competed their butts off. It kind of became a war of attrition towards the end. They were right there with us the entire time."

The Bearcats move on to the regional semifinal round where they will face former district foe, the Abilene Wylie Bulldogs. The series will alternate between two ballparks the schools picked. Game one was scheduled for 5 p.m. Thursday at The Depot at Cleburne Station; game two will be at noon on Friday at Crutcher Scott Field on the campus of Abilene Christian University; game three, if necessary, will be at 6 p.m. Saturday back at The Depot at Cleburne Station.

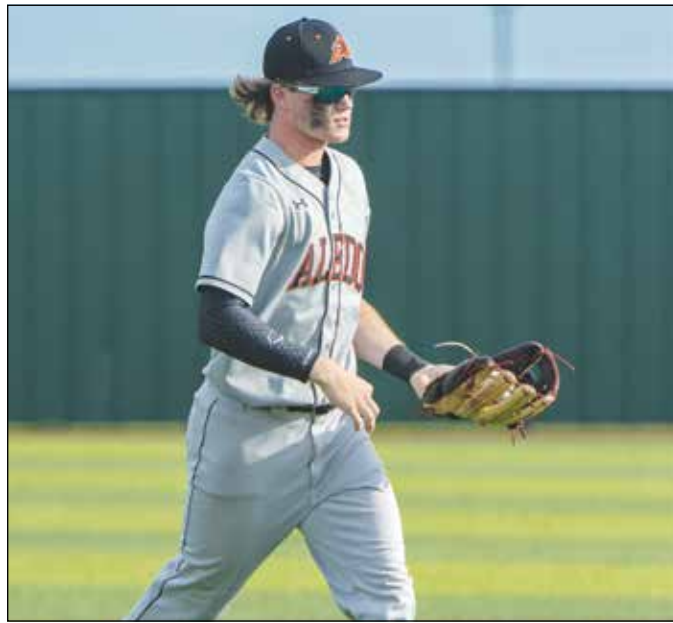
RIGHT: Aledo relief pitcher Ethan Jaques throws a strike across the plate.



LEFT: Aledo designated hitter Parker Stegall jumps to try to get his feet out of the way of a bad pitch. | RIGHT: Aledo shortstop Sam Sisk slides safely to second base as the ball flies over both players' heads.



PHOTOS BY KIRSTEN GALLON

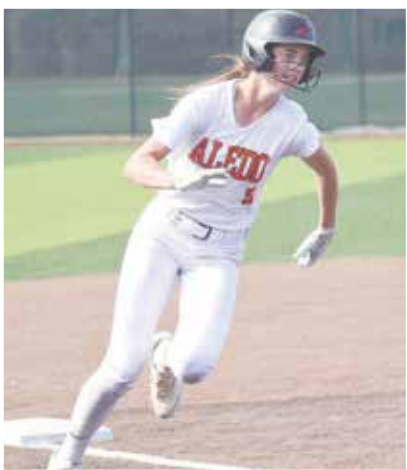
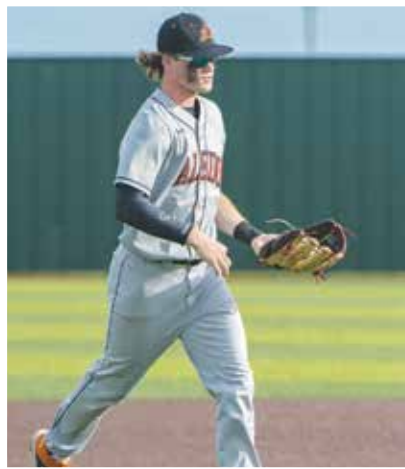


Aledo centerfielder Max Belyeu brings the ball in after making a catch for the third out to end the first inning.



Aledo first baseman Kevin Taylor is in position to catch an infield fly.

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