

THE COMMUNITY NEWS

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POLITICS

Mendolia files for JP 4

Special to The Community News

Tim Mendolia has filed to run for Parker County Justice of the Peace, Precinct 4. Mendolia has been a resident of Parker County for more than 40 years, graduating from Weatherford High School in 1986, a year ahead of his wife, Kim Tilley Mendolia, also a Weatherford High School graduate.

Tim and Kim have been married for 22 years and have raised their children, Coby Talley, AJ Mendolia, and Randi Mendolia in Parker County since 2003. Coby graduated from Aledo High School in 2015, AJ graduated from All Saints Episcopal School in 2020, and Randi is a junior at Aledo High School.



Mendolia

Mendolia earned his bachelor's degree from the University of Texas at Arlington in 1990 and his Juris Doctorate degree from Baylor University in 1994. He was licensed in 1994 to practice law in Texas in 1994 and has since practiced in the United States Districts of Northern, Southern, and Eastern Texas. He started his own practice after a short stint with a small firm in Dallas in 1995. Since then, he has managed his firm at Mendoliaes with up to three offices, 12 attorneys, and 25 staff members.

Mendolia moved his office to Willow Park in 2001 and then moved across the highway to his current Aledo location in 2016 when he partnered with Zach Pettigrew to form M&P Law Offices. He has tried hundreds of criminal and civil cases in his 27 years of practice in Federal and State District Courts, County Courts and Justice Courts throughout Texas, and based upon his contributions to the legal profession and commitment to the legal community, he was nominated and elected to the Texas Bar Foundation, which is one of the highest honors that can be bestowed upon a member of the State Bar of Texas.

Mendolia has been active in the community through his involvement with youth sports. Since moving back to Parker County with his family in 2003, he organized and operated a youth baseball organization, the North Texas Bulldogs, which had as many as five teams, comprised mostly of local youth, at different age levels in a single season. Through this organization and coaching teams within it, he assisted more than 50 players in achieving their goals of playing baseball at a higher level, most of which was college baseball, but some have gone on to professional baseball as

Turn to JP4, page 2

Service for the service



RANDY KECK/THE COMMUNITY NEWS

Rally Project Chairman Doug Pruitt leads a prayer at the 9/11 ceremony held in Willow Park in September.

North Texas organization commits to honoring military service members and first responders

By Brandi Addison
The Community News

Hundreds of American flags lined the fields in Willow Park earlier this year in remembrance of the 20th anniversary of 9/11.

They came from a local organization called the RALLY Project, which celebrates the

lives of service members and first responders all-year-long.

Based in Granbury — but soon to be Arlington — the organization is one-of-a-kind, also offering a 24-hour-seven-day-a-week crisis hotline, housing, and emergency assistance and fellowship opportunities to veterans.

Fellowship opportunities

Founding Chairman Doug Pruitt said one of the most impactful parts of the project is the camaraderie it offers for individuals who share similar experiences from their time in service.

“One of the things we say is, we try to help people build a new tribe,” Pruitt said. “We just want to get these warriors together in a healthy manner.”

As part of its crisis management program, the organization has launched “warrior-to-warrior” peer groups for service members, veterans, first responders, and family members.

The idea is to unite service members with shared struggles, so they can inspire but also depend on one another.

Turn to RALLY, page 2

2021 - THE YEAR IN REVIEW



JAN. 8

Aledo ISD was one of 12 Texas school districts recognized for an outstanding, ground-breaking program with the release of *Texas School Business* magazine's 14th Annual Bragging Rights special issue. Aledo ISD was chosen for its Employee Crisis Fund that is funded through a partnership with the Aledo Education Foundation.

Parker County received

its first allocation of COVID-19 vaccinations from the State of Texas, but the initial allotment — about 2,000 doses, was rapidly used.



SPECIAL TO THE COMMUNITY NEWS

The limited snow that fell didn't prevent enterprising sculptors from building snowmen. Shown are Amber Birdwell (AHS class of 2020 and freshman

at USC) and Michael Birdwell (AHS class of 2022). From the Jan 15 issue.



JAN. 15

The City of Willow Park cleared two more hurdles in its efforts to bring Fort Worth water to the city. At its regular meeting on Tuesday, Jan. 12, the Willow Park City Council voted to issue Certificates of Obligation not to exceed \$6.5 million to cover a shortfall in the construction bid

provided by Halff and Associated in its estimate of costs associated with the El Chico storage tank and pump station.

Weatherford College began seeking nominations for its 2021 Alumnus of the Year and Distinguished Alumnus awards.



JAN. 22

The Aledo Bearcats football team won an unprecedented tenth straight

UIL state championship.

Tarrant Area Food announced its intent to expand here with a 20,000-square-foot food distribution center.

Both Aledo High School soccer teams won the championships in their divisions at the Moritz Kia Tournament of Champions in Aledo.

JAN. 29

Parker County's total COVID-19 case count hit 10,336 cases as the disease continued to spread throughout the country and the world. Deaths associated with COVID-19 reached 129 in the county.

One of those on the front lines battling the disease was Lindsey Kangas, a 2014 AHS graduate who attended the TCU nursing

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Obituaries

Lisa Alexander Bransom

Lisa Bransom passed away at her home on Thursday, December 16th, 2021. Her death was sudden and tragic to her family and friends as she was a source of love and strength for everyone she touched. She was an amazing wife, mother, grandmother "LiLi", daughter, sister, cousin, aunt, niece, and best friend to many.



Lisa Bransom

Lisa was born October 28, 1961, in Lovington, New Mexico, to U.S. and Wanda Alexander, and was the little sister to her oldest brother Mark and twin brothers, Paul and Keith. In high school, she ran track, winning state titles in several events. She still holds several track records. She also played varsity basketball in addition to various other activities.

She attended Texas Tech University, receiving her Bachelor of Business Administration in Finance. At Tech, she met lifelong friends and even introduced her brother to her now sister-in-law, of which she was very proud. After college, she went on to work in the insurance industry for almost four decades.

Lisa met Charlie in 1984, all starting with a blind date set up by Lisa's now sister-in-law. They built a life together in Fort Worth before moving their family to Aledo, where they became active members in their community.

Together, they raised their two children, Alex and Lauren. They were Lisa's pride and joy in life. She was deeply beloved and the rock of her family. Lisa's newest chapter was becoming a grandmother. Her granddaughter, Landry, brought her immeasurable happiness, and she was so looking

forward to meeting her next grandchild, Lucy. While she only got one year of this special time, it was full of laughter and love.

Family and her faith meant everything to Lisa. She was a devout member of her church that lived by the convictions of her faith every day. She enjoyed reading and spending quality time with her friends and Woman's Club groups. Lisa always put others before herself. She didn't have a jealous bone in her body and had a patient and forgiving heart. Lisa was brave and wore her heart on her sleeve. She lived a full life, never leaving anything unsaid or undone.

Lisa was preceded in death by her father, U.S. Alexander, mother-in-law Shirley C. Bransom, and father-in-law Dub Bransom.

She is survived by her husband of 32 years, Charlie; son Alex and wife Mallory; daughter Lauren; granddaughters Landry and Lucy (expected January 2022); mother Wanda Alexander; brother Mark Alexander; brother Paul Alexander and wife, Tricia; brother Keith Alexander and wife, Michele; brother-in-law Sonny Bransom and wife, Elisa; sister-in-law Amy Reese and husband, Steve; and numerous aunts and uncles, cousins, nieces and nephews.

Visitation is scheduled from 4-6 p.m. on Sunday, December 26, at Aledo United Methodist Church, 100 Pecan Drive in Aledo.

The funeral service was on Monday, December 27, at Aledo United Methodist Church.

The Community News
January 7, 2021

Robert Alan Breaux

Robert Alan Breaux passed away Friday, December 24, 2021.

Robert was born December 17, 1961, in Crowley, Louisiana, to Earl and Joyce Moore Breaux. He was a Quality Inspector for Parker Hannifin Aerospace. Robert was an avid cyclist, loved working out at the gym, and he loved working with computers.



Robert Breaux

Robert is survived by his Wife, Patricia Breaux of Willow Park;

Son, Travis Breaux of Willow Park; Sister, Ina Breaux Lunney of North Carolina; Brother, Lynn Breaux of Fort Worth; and Brother Earl Breaux.

A Memorial Service will be planned at a later date. In lieu of flowers the family requests donations to the American Heart Association, or for memories, take a bike ride or walk on the Trinity Trails or a trail close to you.

The Community News
January 7, 2022

RALLY

from page one

But it even goes beyond shared struggles, Pruitt said.

For instance, Operation Degataga — which means "standing firm together" — gives veterans the opportunities to connect with one another through common interests, including rucking, fishing, camping, and hunting.

The project also gives service members opportunities to learn new trades such as leather working, blacksmithing, and woodworking.

"We rely a lot on our veterans and our first responders that we serve to really be our advisors," Pruitt said. "We want them to tell us what they like, what they wish that they could do, and fun activities to keep them plugged in."

One guy, Pruitt said, wanted to learn to build dog collars and leashes for veterans with service dogs.

"So, we started building these, and we got them in a couple of retail stores," Pruitt said. "It's actually really phenomenal."



RANDY KECK/THE COMMUNITY NEWS

CJ Napier and Kaitlynn McKenzie listen to the Aledo band as they wait for the Ruck to begin at the Sept. 11 observance held in Willow Park.

Assistance

In addition to fellowship, the RALLY Project also provides emergency assistance to service members and first responders.

The organization also collects rucks (military backpacks) to fill with basic hygiene items, universal clothing, a sleep system, utility gear, and non-perishable food items.

But most unique to the RALLY Project, Pruitt said the organization builds small homes for veterans out of reclaimed and recycled materials — complete with all furnishing, appliances, and other amenities.

"It's been really fun doing this," Pruitt said.

For more information about the Rally Project, visit rally-project.com or call 817-770-0425.

WEATHERFORD COLLEGE

Spring registration deadlines approaching

Weatherford College staff members are back in the office as registration deadlines for the Spring 2022 semester approach rapidly.

The deadline for new students to apply to the college for the spring is Monday, Jan. 10. The deadline for current students to register for the spring is Friday, Jan. 14.

"We expect heavy traffic between now and those deadlines," said Kay Landrum, WC

executive dean of student services. "The sooner students start the process, the more likely they will finish prior to the deadlines with the schedules they need."

Last year's spring semester registration topped 5,000 students, and college officials expect a similar number this year.

New students may go to wc.edu and click on "Apply Now" to get started. Advisors are also available to speak to students face-to-face.

Landrum said registration for the summer and fall semesters is also right around the corner.

"Our office is preparing now for the 2022-23 academic year, and we look forward to what could be a record number of students," she said. "Registration will begin in April, but new students will be able to apply for the Fall 2022 semester as early as Jan. 24."

JP4

from page one

well. Mendolia also coached and was on the Board of Directors of Aledo Youth Football for many years..

Mendolia has stayed active in the community through his involvement with the Business Development Group of Aledo (BDGA), as a Member, Officer,

Director and Director of its charitable foundation, and spent a couple of years as a member of the Board of Directors of the Doss Heritage Foundation in Weatherford.

With the opening of the Justice of the Peace, Precinct 4 position, Mendolia said he could continue his community service in an area which he has considerable experience, the law. He has

always liked the idea of a Justice Court being a people's court where local residents could bring disputes without the expense of hiring lawyers and fully litigating, and continues in his practice to advise clients in that direction as applicable to their fact situation. He said he has the needed education and experience to be a fair, even-handed Justice of the Peace, Precinct 4 of Parker County.

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2021 - THE YEAR IN REVIEW



Two Aledo High School students were named to the Texas Music Educators Association All-State Band. Junior Daniel Lasater (left) was named to the All-State 6A band. Junior Gavin Daves (right) was named to the All-State 5A Band. From the Jan. 22 issue.



After many months of dirt work, utility installation, and road construction, the new Willow Park Baptist Church started to take shape. From the Feb. 12 issue.

RANDY KECK/THE COMMUNITY NEWS



unprepared in terms of electric supply.

Also suffering from long-term power outages, Aledo residents were issued a boil water notice as the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality faced concerns with a loss of water system pressure.



FEB. 26

Aledo ISD began repairing the damages caused to facilities by the winter storm the week of Feb. 15. Several different parts of the district were dam-

Turn to page 5



program and began work at Harris Southwest Hospital in Fort Worth. She was profiled in The Community News.

FEB. 5

Following a series of community voices that strongly opposed the rezoning of three lots in the Lasater addition, the Aledo City Council took no action at its regular meeting on



Thursday, Jan. 28. The issue died due to lack of a motion on the part of the council, although residents expressed concerns that the history, character, and charm of their neighborhood would be diminished with the changes.

The Weatherford College Board of Trustees approved the 2021-26 academic, technology and facilities strategic plans during the

board meeting on Thursday, Jan. 14.

Bearcat JoJo Earle was the recipient of the Tom Landry Award.



FEB. 12

A nearly \$20 million water project — divided into a 52-48 cost split between Willow Park and Hudson

Oaks, respectively — was started. The project was to include a 24-inch approach water main, wholesale water meter station, storage tank, and pump station.

Chris Rawley, an Aledo man who created Harvest Returns in 2016, saw his company raise more than \$10 million in capital for farmers and ranchers.

FEB. 19

Winter storm Uri brought disaster conditions all across Texas leaving millions of Texans without power for days. As power began to be restored, water supplies were limited in numerous areas due to pipe breaks, frozen wells, and frozen pipes. The storm caught the state



MICAH MCCARTNEY/THE COMMUNITY NEWS

Claire Byars goes to the basket in traffic against Lake Dallas in the Ladycats' bi-district loss. Byars had 10 points in the game. From the Feb. 19 issue.



RANDY KECK/THE COMMUNITY NEWS

Sophomore Xavier Anderson is fouled going to the basket during Aledo's bi-district game against Birdville. From the Feb. 26 issue.

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"We work hard to take good care of our customers and we are committed to building our business with sound principles and ethics in mind," said Tim Green, one of the owners. "We strive to be a helpful and positive influence in the community, to be fair and honest in our business practices and to always make our decisions based on what is in the best interest of our customers, our employees and the community while maintaining a healthy company."

Many of us are cutting back, and being careful about what we spend in this economy. We want to save money on household necessities, but when it comes to services around our home, we don't want to sacrifice our peace of mind to save a few dollars. We want our service providers to be honest and dependable, worthy of our trust.

Billy Green is that kind of man, and he raised his son, Tim, to treat others with respect. He encouraged and developed Tim's heart of service. Watching his father, Tim had an example of great moral character and strong work ethic. Together they are a glowing example of honesty, reliability and self-sacrifice. When you have the opportunity to visit with them, you instantly feel at ease. Their positive attitudes are contagious, and you will leave with a smile.

Together, Billy and Tim started Atex Trash Service as a way for them to serve their community - their neighbors. Being able to make a living serving others is a dream come true for Tim. Atex Trash Service has been helping area residents save money on their residential trash pick-up since July 2010. Tim and Billy Green are the dynamic duo of father and son teams, proving that you can provide Superior Quality Service at the Lowest Price.

Atex provides weekly trash pick-up for a flat rate of \$35 a month for their standard service. "We realize however, not every family's needs are the same," said Tim, "We are able to customize plans for smaller and for larger families." They serve Parker, Tarrant, and Wise County areas

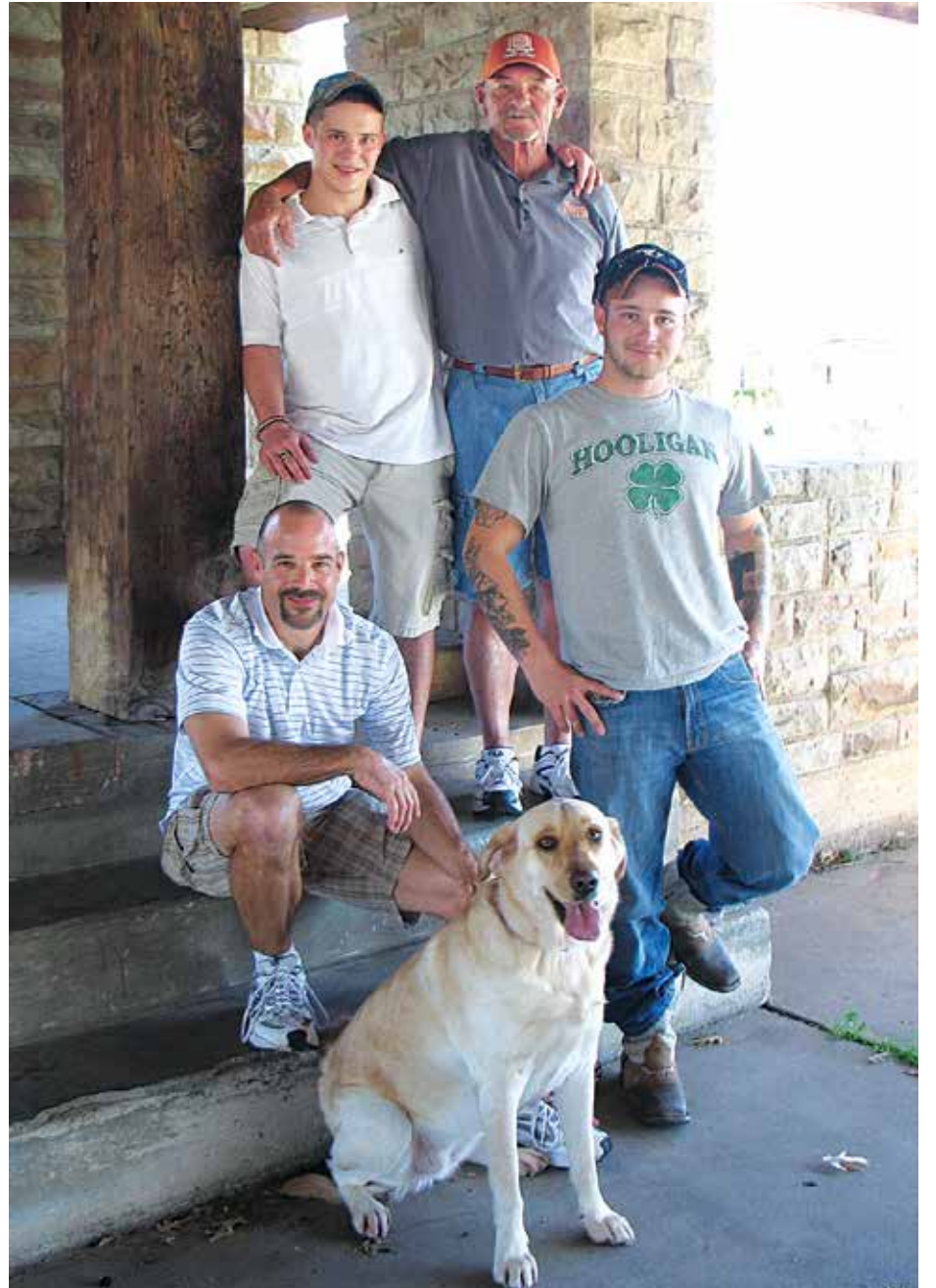
outside of Azle, Springtown, Weatherford, Poolville and Aledo, and the area continues to grow! Just call and see if they can help you. Since they are a local, family-owned company, you know who will answer the phone when you call. Tim and Billy are available Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. and later if you need them. Just call 817-344-8464.

You can also contact Atex through their website 24 hours a day at www.atextrash.com. It's an easy-to-navigate website where you can contact Tim, sign up for new service, and even securely pay your bill online. You can also see what others have to say on their Testimonial Page or look them up on Facebook.

Operating this business means the whole family can work together! Tim's sons Laken and Gaige have grown up, and they're now the third generation with Atex helping to take care of the community.

"I'm happiest when I am doing for others," said Tim, "and to be able to build something positive with my family, well, I simply couldn't ask for anything more."

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2021 - THE YEAR IN REVIEW

aged, including McAnally Intermediate School, Aledo Middle School, Bearcat Stadium, and the Baseball and Softball Complex.

After two silent public hearings on Feb. 23, Willow Park city council voted to establish fees for storm water drainage, hoping that it will help put an end to the city's history of drainage issues.

Kamryn Kupper, Maddie Edwards, Ava Willis, and Breanna Olivieri qualified for the state swim meet.



MAR. 5

The Aledo City Council unanimously voted to annex and zone the Bluffs subdivision on Feb. 25, signaling the go-ahead to begin the construction phase. The Bluffs subdivision has been developed to include 202 single-family residential lots with eight open tracts, which will be utilized for green space, a requirement for development. The largest tract of 36 acres will be used for a mountain biking and hiking trail.

Texas Gov. Greg Abbott's



RANDY KECK/THE COMMUNITY NEWS

The weather was enough like spring for members of the Curious George class at Aledo United Methodist Church Children's enrichment Days to go kite flying. Eason Chapman runs to get his kite off the ground. March 5 issue

decision to lift all mask mandates in Texas, and increasing the capacity of all businesses and facilities to 100 percent, brought both cheers of support and expressions of concern from around the state.



MAR. 12

The Aledo ISD partnered with Parker County for Covid-19 vaccines and the school district issued a letter to parents and guardians of the district announc-



RANDY KECK/THE COMMUNITY NEWS

Aledo senior pitcher Elliot Flaherty is shown in the surreal foggy scene at Raymond Curtis Field in Weatherford on Saturday, Feb. 27. March 5 issue

ing that it would continue its COVID-19 health and safety protocols.

Residents across East Parker County were set to receive a credit to offset the water used during the winter storm from continually dripping faucets and minor leaks.



RANDY KECK/THE COMMUNITY NEWS

Students from Coder Elementary School visited the Aledo High School ag barn to read to the animals and learn about ag programs. March 12 issue



MAR. 19

The Aledo ISD Board of Trustees voted unanimously to approve new attendance zone boundaries for elementary students for the 2021-2022 school year and for middle school students starting in August of 2022. The attendance zones were recommended by the district's Attendance Zone Committee, a group of 39 citizens appointed by the board.

The Parker Station subdivision in Aledo again



RANDY KECK/THE COMMUNITY NEWS

Workers far below ground level on the Beggs Ranch side of I-20 install the line that will eventually bring water from Fort Worth to Willow Park and Hudson Oaks. Willow Park city officials hope to be able to draw water from Fort Worth by mid to late summer. March 19 issue

became a focus of interest as the city council scheduled a vote on an item that proposes 500 Old Annetta Road to become a commercial property.

MAR. 26

Following the untimely death of Parker County Sheriff Larry Fowler, the Commissioners Court voted to appoint Chief Deputy Russ Authier as the new sheriff.

Authier was sworn into office on March 15 by District Judge Craig Towson.



The Willow Park City Council unanimously approved their 2019-2020 audit. The report was based on the fiscal year that ended on Sept. 30 and showed the city's net position increased by \$778,747.



RANDY KECK/THE COMMUNITY NEWS

LEFT: Morgan Brown put down an almost-perfect bunt that just rolled foul March 19 issue

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JANUARY 7, 2022
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QUOTABLE

“For last year’s words belong to last year’s language
And next year’s words await another voice.”

T.S. Eliot

ACROSS

- 1 TXism: “sitting in high cotton”
46 pigpen
5 former Fort Worth red light district: “Hell’s Half _____”
6 TXism: “_____ light idea” (inspiration)
7 TX George Strait’s “_____ Really Shouldn’t Be Doing This”
8 engine surge
9 OPEC member: Saudi
15 burrowing pest
16 describing a defect in some horses (hyph.)
19 “_____ it for the biscuit” (take a chance to benefit)
21 fishing net
22 TXism: “_____ in the saddle” (reliable, genuine)
27 TX Strait’s “If I _____ Me” (1991)
28 stinky smell
29 blacktip in the Gulf (2 wds.)
30 African antelopes
32 Santa’s word
33 in Dallas County on U.S. 80
36 in Wise County on U.S. 287
37 most Texans love _____-B-Que
38 TXism: “sling it on _____ and see if it sticks”
39 banned insecticide
41 TXism: “call _____ day” (stop working)
42 Mc _____ County

- 45 Texans may use a credit union for a car _____
47 TXism: “_____ a bull give milk?” (no)
48 TXism: “couldn’t find an _____ under a sitting hen” (ignorant)
49 puzzles that require thought: “brain _____”
52 TX-born Carolyn Jones was this Morticia on TV

- 53 1970s Houston Oilers slogan: “_____ Ya Blue”
54 not harmful to environment: “_____friendly”
55 TXism: “_____ pilot” (preacher)

DOWN

- 1 TXism: “burned some boot leather”
2 “Blue Bell” is Texas-made _____ cream
3 Foard County seat
4 TX Clay Allison’s grave marker: “_____ a _____ man who did not need killing”
8 cinnamon _____
9 TXism: “_____ out of _____ water”
10 this TX Ely was TV’s “Tarzan” (init.)

TEXAS CROSSWORD

by Charley & Guy Orbison
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11 TXism: “frisky as unsaddled horse”
12 TX Larry McMurtry wrote these (2 wds.) it came before TX 7-11’s Slurpee
14 TXism: “_____ to” (similar)
15 our solar system’s galaxy (2 wds.)
16 a benefit that gives stocks to employees (abbr.)
17 bind up
18 removal of a cow’s head projection
20 TX Gary Morris sang “The Love She Found _____”
22 laugh word
23 feminine suffix
24 TXism: “park your tongue” (_____ up)
25 TXism: “_____ hide” (spank a boy)
26 this TX Cobb was the “Wild Man of the Tenor Sax”
28 “_____ difference”
31 “tender” or “sir” ending (cut of meat)
34 it provides care to veterans (abbr.)
35 TXism: “_____ hat and no cattle” (fake)
37 “no _____, just fact”
40 TXism: “let sleeping _____ lie”
43 TXism: “_____ lick” (none)
44 growths on East Texas pine trees
50 in Fannin County on highway 56
51 “Hook” _____ Horns!”

Capital Highlights

Twenty-nine new laws take effect



Gary Borders
gborders@texaspress.com

More than 20 new state laws went into effect as Texans rang in the New Year, with another half-dozen to go on the books on Jan. 18, the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram* reported. Those laws include a ban on transgender athletes competing on sports teams that reflect their gender identity and penalties for illegally restraining dogs.

Other new laws:

- Require landlords to disclose to potential renters if a property has ever flooded or is in a flood plain. Texas becomes only the second state in the nation with such a requirement, joining Georgia.
- Allow homeowners to take a homestead exemption in the same year they buy their home, instead of having to wait until the following year, potentially saving on property taxes.
- Require people accused in Texas of a violent crime to post a cash bond. Before, a judge could agree to release the accused on a personal bond that does not require a cash payment.
- Provide a slate of new benefits for Texas veterans and their families, including exempting new veteran-owned businesses from paying the franchise tax.

A full listing of new laws can be found at the Legislative Reference Library’s website.

Abbott seeks more testing sites, antibodies

Texas is seeking more federally funded COVID-19 testing locations and additional federal allocations of monoclonal antibodies used to treat the virus in six counties facing increased cases because of the omicron variant: Bexar, Cameron, Dallas, Harris, Hidalgo, and Tarrant.

“Testing sites, additional medical staff, and continued shipments of therapeutics from the federal government will help us continue to save lives and mitigate the spread of COVID-19,” Gov. Greg Abbott said in making the request.

The Texas Department of State Health Services has also requested additional allocations of an antibody therapeutic proven effective in fighting the omicron variant, as well as other treatments used to reduce hospitalizations. DSHS also requested three teams of medical personnel to support urban hospitals that don’t have DSHS-contracted health-care staff.

COVID-19 cases double in state from previous week.

The number of new Texas cases of COVID-19 has more than doubled in the past week to 108,719, according to the Coronavirus Resource Center at Johns Hopkins

University. A total of 422 new deaths were recorded, up 58% from the previous week’s total of 266.

The Texas Department of State Health Services reported as of Sunday there were 5,523 COVID-19 patients in Texas hospitals, up nearly 64% from the previous week.

The total number of Texans who are fully vaccinated now stands at 16.45 million, according to DSHS, which is 56.7% of the total population. In addition, 4.678 million of the state’s residents have been vaccinated with a booster dose.

First phase of election audit completed

The initial review of the 2020 general election results in four Texas counties showed relatively few discrepancies between electronic and hand counts of ballots. The *Dallas Morning News* reported that out of the 11.3 million votes cast statewide, Secretary of State John Scott found potentially 509 cases where people may have cast ballots both in Texas and another state, and 67 possible cases of votes cast in the name of dead people.

The audits are being performed in Dallas, Harris, Tarrant and Collin counties. During the next phase, officials will conduct “a comprehensive records review to ensure election procedures were properly followed in 2020.”

Former president Donald Trump called for the audit in September, despite having handily won the state. Trump has pressured the governor to add an election audit to a

special legislative session, but Abbot thus far has not done so.

It rained fish in Texarkana last week

Instead of cats and dogs, it rained fish in Texarkana last Wednesday. The *Texarkana Gazette* reported that as strong thunderstorms moved through, residents in at least four locations reported fish falling from the sky. In a Facebook post, city officials explained the rare phenomenon.

“Animal rain is a phenomenon that occurs when small water animals like frogs, crabs, and small fish are swept up in waterspouts or drafts that occur on the surface of the earth,” officials wrote in the post. “They are then rained down at the same time as the rain. While it’s uncommon, it happens, as evidenced in several places in Texarkana today.”

At a used-car dealership, fish up to 5 inches long were scattered throughout the parking lot and at a tire shop next door. A *Gazette* reporter counted several dozen fish in a small section of the dealership’s parking lot.

Now that’s some fish story.

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

Sometimes all the pieces just don’t fit



Randy Keck
rkeck@community-news.com

I often hear that we don’t do things here at *The Community News* the way they are done at other newspapers.

That’s not good or bad — it’s just different. We strive to be a unique voice in the community.

It’s not necessarily that my way of doing things makes life any easier — in fact, it’s often the contrary. An artist friend of mine once gave me a small sign that pretty much sums it up: “Wait - there might be a harder way!”

One business reality that all newspapers must follow is that there is a given amount of pages that can be allocated in a given week.

So traditionally the way most newspapers handle this is to pre-plan where the stories are going to go and how much space they will allocate. When a story is assigned, an editor will often tell the reporter “I need x-number of words.”

Here’s where I make it harder — for me.

When I work with a reporter for the first time, he or she will inevitably

ask how many words I need.

I tell them I need how ever many words it takes to tell the story.

When it comes time to lay out the paper in this jigsaw-puzzle/tetris combination, I often find myself out of space.

So typically, if something is not time-critical, I’ll hold it to a future issue. There are slow news times of year (such as the first couple of weeks of January) and that gives me an opportunity to hopefully give stories that got delayed for some reason appropriate space to tell them.

There are also stories that happen at a given time — like this week’s story on the Rally Project — that lend themselves to the Good News issue.

Additional good news is that we still have additional Good News stories to share with you.

I’ve seen a lot of memes joking about how bad 2020 and 2021 were. But in the midst of the problems of those years, a lot of good things still happened.

So stay tuned. We’ll share them as we can, along with a look back overall at 2021. It’s been interesting pulling year in review material. A lot that seems like it was more than a year ago — but fun to explore.

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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. 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.

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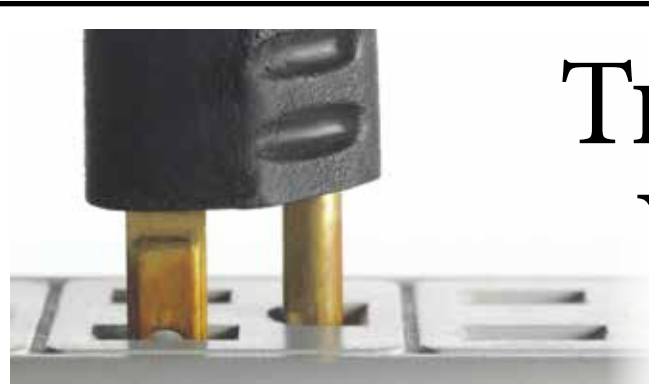
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Sports

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NOLAN RUTH/THE COMMUNITY NEWS

The Aleo Bearcats soccer team had plenty of competition at the 18th annual alumni game on Thursday, Dec. 30.

SOCCER

18th Alumni Game ties up varsity, alumni

Bearcats off to 1-0 start

By Nolan Ruth
The Community News

The boys soccer season is officially underway, and the Aleo Bearcats have started off the season the way they always want to. On Thursday, Dec. 30, the team held its annual Alumni scrimmage where all former Bearcat soccer players are invited to come out and scrimmage the varsity squad of that year.

The event has happened 18 times as of this season with a dead even record of 7-7-4 between the varsity and the alumni.

"It's awesome," head coach Derek Vierling said after the event. "We've got an alum that is now a doctor, he's married, got three kids, and he

scored a goal today. It's fun seeing that stuff, they're great men. And it gives us a great chance to see where we are as a team."

Due to the success in football, Vierling admitted that schools sometimes have a vendetta against Aleo in soccer scrimmages.

"Something I have noticed in the past five or six years, the other schools are so upset with us that they want to play a scrimmage against us like it's the World Cup Final. They're just killing us and we'd get hurt physically. We scrimmaged Weatherford and we had a kid go to the hospital with a broken nose. So this scrimmage is a good relief as well as it is fun."

Early in the second half, Vierling's son Reid scored a goal that neither one of them will forget.

"It always feels good to score a goal," Reid said with a chuckle. "Especially against my dad's team, that's always fun."

Reid has watched the program grow as he grew up and sees how special it is for the program to be where it is now.

"I think this is his 22nd year," Reid said. "He started the program back in the day when it was just a small little town, and a town that's built on winning. He's definitely built a program that knows how to win here."

Just days after the scrimmage, the Bearcats took the field for their first action of the year against the Abilene Wylie Bulldogs.

Aleo dominated most of the match, only giving up a few shots on goal and spending most of the time in the Bulldog end of the pitch.

However, first game jitters appeared to hinder the team's performance as multiple shots went awry, leaving it a 0-0 score at the half. Taylon Kessler had multiple opportunities but just couldn't drive it home.

In the second half, the Bearcats continued their possession domination creating even more chances. Harvey Keene got in the shot column multiple times but could not find the net. In the 43rd minute, a foul by Abilene Wylie gave Aleo a penalty kick opportunity. Clay Murador took a nice stutter step and buried the shot in the back of the net to give Aleo a 1-0 lead.

The rest of the second half was much like the first, with both teams battling for possession and the Bearcats trying to find their footing offensively. After an injury to Murador took him out of the

game, Cooper Trice checked in and scored in the 76th minute when Keene's initial shot was blocked and the bounce brought it right back to Trice.

From there, Wylie was in desperation mode and could not get anything going by the time the clock hit zero.

"We should have scored a lot more in the first half," Vierling said after the match. "I think there was one that was not offside but they called it offside, and if we scored that one, it would have probably gotten out of hand. But we got the win, the shutout, and we got Clay back in."

The Bearcats start off 1-0 on the new year and will be playing in the Colleyville Heritage tournament this weekend.



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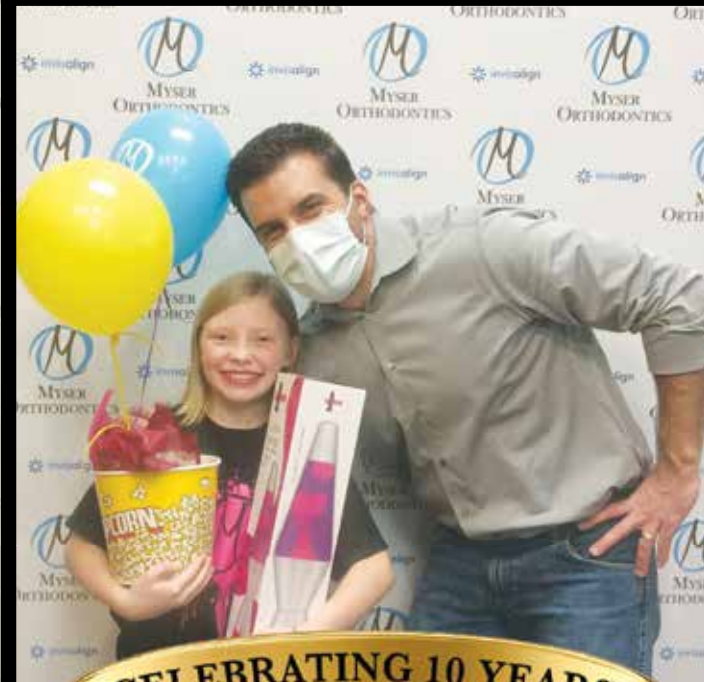
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SOCCER

Bearcats, Ladycats looking for deep playoff runs

Strong senior leadership on both squads

By Nolan Ruth
The Community News

Winter is officially upon us, which means it is now time for winter sports. With wrestling already underway, the soccer season is the next one up. After early exits in the playoffs in 2021, both the Bearcats and Ladycats are looking to bounce back and make even deeper runs this year.

The boys had a bit of a tough go of it last year, finishing fourth in district and claiming the last district playoff spot before falling to Colleyville Heritage in the first round in extra time.

Head coach Derek Vierling has been at Aledo since the start of the soccer program and has built it into what it is today. With his experience in taking the Bearcats to the state championship match twice, and him coaching the kickers for the football team, he knows what is expected in Aledo and is up to the challenge.

“We’re young,” Vierling said before the start of the season. “We’re playing in three tournaments before district rolls around to get that experience. I think with someone like Clay [Murador], he can take over a game. He did last year in the playoffs but we just fell short in penalties, but if we win that game, it could have been us playing for the regional final. You just never



RANDY KECK/THE COMMUNITY NEWS

Clay Murador advances the ball during the championship game of the Moritz Kia Tournament of Champions in 2021.

know how the ball is going to bounce, I’m excited to see what we can do.”

Murador will no doubt be the anchor of the Bearcats team this year, as he led the team in goals and assists last season. Taylon Kessler will take on the role of striker for Aledo with Jace Sims supporting Murador in midfield. All three players were named the captains of the team in 2022. Junior forward Harvey Keene, who moved in from Venezuela, is also expected to have a strong year as a forward, while the three freshman Cole Crawford, Austin Randriamahafa, and Adam Averett will look to make an impact as the young bucks on the squad.

Junior Zach Taylor is expected to take the most minutes in goal, but sophomore Deagan Dietz is

also expected to get some playing time as the season progresses.

Ladycats expect good year

The Ladycats fared better in 2021, finishing as district runners-up behind Wichita Falls Rider. Going into the playoffs with a 13-4 record, it was expected that the Ladycats were going to make a deep playoff run, but a second round match with Burleson Centennial saw the season come to an abrupt end after a hard-fought game.

Girl’s head coach Bryan Johnson expects this year to be even better and hopefully a much deeper run in the postseason.

“We’ve got our core group back,” Johnson said about his team. “I feel like we

Turn to **SOCCER**, page 10

WRESTLING

AHS athletes compete in Quad meet at Azle

Last week Aledo boys and girls wrestling teams participated in a Quad meet at Azle High School against Azle, Springtown, and Saginaw.

The boys beat Saginaw and Springtown, and made progress against Azle, losing by 12. In their first meeting, Aledo lost to Azle by 4-6.

The girls came out 1-2 with a squad depleted by illness.

138: Cole Bohnen (Ale) over Joe Newman (Spr) (Fall 0:32)

145: Grant Butler (Spr) over Zachary Attaway (Ale) (Fall 0:50)

152: Ty Hand (Ale) over (Spr) (For.)

160: Daren Leatherwood (Spr) over Jason ‘Colonel’ Douglas (Ale) (Fall 0:49)

170: Hunter Binz (Spr) over Bryce Vonasek (Ale) (Dec 11-10)

182: Joel Bird (Spr) over Britton Collins (Ale) (DQ)

195: Jack Green (Ale) over Dallin Fabrizius (Spr) (Fall 1:24)

220: Daniel Bunting (Ale) over (Spr) (For.)

285: Bryon Moreno-Wheeler (Ale) over Christian Nolan (Spr) (Dec 4-3)

113: Chad Thomas (Ale) over Victoire Kabongo (Sag) (Fall 3:44)

120: Jackson Rudnick (Ale) over (Sag) (For.)

126: Ryan Nigo (Sag) over Jacob Ellerbusch (Ale) (Fall 4:30)

132: Enrique Santacruz (Sag) over (Ale) (For.)

138: Cole Bohnen (Ale) over Jonathan Breigenzer (Sag) (Fall 3:05)

145: Leonardo Chavez (Sag) over Zachary Attaway (Ale) (Fall 1:28)

152: Ty Hand (Ale) over Charles Loving (Sag) (Fall 3:38)

160: Jason ‘Colonel’ Douglas (Ale) over (Sag) (For.)

170: Bryce Vonasek (Ale) over John Salazar (Sag) (Fall 5:42)

182: Britton Collins (Ale) over (Sag) (For.)

195: Jack Green (Ale) over (Sag) (For.)

220: Daniel Bunting (Ale) over (Sag) (For.)

285: Bryon Moreno-Wheeler (Ale) over (Sag) (For.)

106: Rylan Luttmir (Sag) over (Ale) (For.)

106: Double Forfeit

113: Chad Thomas (Ale) over (Spr) (For.)

120: Jeremiah Duvall (Spr) over Jackson Rudnick (Ale) (Fall 5:56)

126: Jacob Ellerbusch (Ale) over Juan Najera (Spr) (Fall 4:20)

132: Double Forfeit

119: Kyra Wright (Ale) over (Spr) (For.)

128: Lilly Grigsby (Ale) over Hayleigh Jenkins (Spr) (Fall 2:59)

138: Double Forfeit

148: Kylie Wear (Spr) over Caroline Gartner (Ale) (Fall 1:16)

165: Elizabeth McCarley (Ale) over (Spr) (For.)

185: Texas Ray (Ale) over (Spr) (For.)

215: Katherine Barrett (Ale) over (Spr) (For.)

119: Kyra Wright (Ale) over Iyana Harris (Sag) (Fall 1:36)

128: Rose Hill (Sag) over (Ale) (For.)

138: Lauren Jones (Sag) over Madison Mares (Ale) (Fall 0:46)

148: Mariam Mohamed (Sag) over Caroline Gartner (Ale) (Fall 1:27)

165: Elizabeth McCarley (Ale) over (Sag) (For.)

185: Texas Ray (Ale) over Kathy Kamkui (Sag) (Fall 5:00)

215: Bianca Cardenas (Sag) over Katherine Barrett (Ale) (Fall 3:58)

95: Double Forfeit

95: Taylor Bailey (Az) over (Ale) (For.)

102: Jacy Williams (Az) over (Ale) (For.)

110: Kaitlynn Kirkland Lane (Az) over (Ale) (For.)

119: Kyra Wright (Ale) over Amelia Peterson (Az) (MD 10-2)

128: Jazrine Nieto (Az) over (Ale) (For.)

138: Caroline Gartner (Ale) over (Az) (For.)

148: Annabelle Davis (Az) over Madison Mares (Ale) (Fall 0:56)

165: Mia Rodriguez (Az) over Elizabeth McCarley (Ale) (Fall 1:26)

185: Texas Ray (Ale) over Zoe Weaver (Az) (Fall 1:23)

215: Katherine Barrett (Ale) over (Az) (For.)

119: Kyra Wright (Ale) over (Spr) (For.)

128: Lilly Grigsby (Ale) over Hayleigh Jenkins (Spr) (Fall 2:59)

138: Double Forfeit

148: Kylie Wear (Spr) over Caroline Gartner (Ale) (Fall 1:16)

165: Elizabeth McCarley (Ale) over (Spr) (For.)

185: Texas Ray (Ale) over (Spr) (For.)

215: Katherine Barrett (Ale) over (Spr) (For.)

Aledo 18 vs Saginaw 30

102: Double Forfeit

110: Aliana Cintron-Gonzalez (Sag) over (Ale) (For.)

119: Kyra Wright (Ale) over Iyana Harris (Sag) (Fall 1:36)

128: Rose Hill (Sag) over (Ale) (For.)

138: Lauren Jones (Sag) over Madison Mares (Ale) (Fall 0:46)

148: Mariam Mohamed (Sag) over Caroline Gartner (Ale) (Fall 1:27)

165: Elizabeth McCarley (Ale) over (Sag) (For.)

185: Texas Ray (Ale) over Kathy Kamkui (Sag) (Fall 5:00)

215: Bianca Cardenas (Sag) over Katherine Barrett (Ale) (Fall 3:58)

95: Double Forfeit

Aledo 22 vs Azle 36

95: Taylor Bailey (Az) over (Ale) (For.)

102: Jacy Williams (Az) over (Ale) (For.)

110: Kaitlynn Kirkland Lane (Az) over (Ale) (For.)

119: Kyra Wright (Ale) over Amelia Peterson (Az) (MD 10-2)

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SOCCER

from page nine

should finish pretty strong. My thought is we should win the district. We'll find out pretty quickly as we've got our first tournament in Waxahachie coming up. That's going to be a big teller."

Senior goalkeeper Emma Davis, who is sitting on 300 career saves, is considered to be the strongest part of this Aledo team. Up front, Ashlyn Laughly, the senior forward, is just 26 goals shy of breaking the school record for goals. She and junior McKenna Vela will be leading the charge in creating scoring opportunities for the Ladycats. Despite having a relatively new infield, Johnson is confident.

"I feel like my starting eleven is really solid," he said. "I feel like we've got two or three pretty decent subs, and that's who we're going to go to war with."

The Ladycats only have a roster of 19 players, which is low compared to past rosters. However, the future looks bright.

The Bearcats started their season on Tuesday, Jan. 4, against Abilene Wylie and will play in the Colleyville Heritage tournament this weekend. The girls will open the season in the Waxahachie tournament this weekend for a fresh start. District play will start for both teams on Friday, Feb. 4, against Brewer. The girls will be at home, while the boys will be at Brewer.

FOOTBALL

Bearcats had a record-breaking season

By Nolan Ruth
The Community News

As the calendar turned to 2022 and we looked back on the year that we had in 2021, it was an eventful 365 days of sports in Aledo. Most strange was how the football team played two different seasons in one calendar year. On Jan. 15, 2021, the Bearcats defeated Crosby 56-21 for their record breaking tenth state title. Seven months later, the football season started on normal time to kick off another record breaking season.

The season started off at home with a win over cross-county rival Weatherford 47-7. In front of a sold out crowd, the Bearcats proved that they do not rebuild, they reload. That became even more evident the next week against Frisco Lone Star. Aledo jumped out to a 28-7 halftime lead before Lone Star stormed back to pull within three. But a late touch-down pass from Brayden Fowler Nicolosi to Hauss Hejny widened the gap, and a forced fumble by Cap Mooney was recovered by Sammy Steffe to seal the 45-35 win.

In the final week of non-district play, the Bearcats shutout Fort Worth Arlington Heights to advance to 3-0. The next week brought an anticipated match up with Burleson. Despite Burleson having a rather underrated team, the Aledo defense stood tall. The game was epitomized by a 99-yard interception return by Taylor Kessler. After beating Burleson 56-14, the Bearcats continued their roll with a 51-7 homecoming win over Everman. Despite not having Nicolosi at quarterback, Hejny and Brant Hayden combined to lead the offense to the win.



Sammy Steffe and Taylor Kessler get dinner at the Bearcats annual football banquet on Jan. 3.

NOLAN RUTH/THE COMMUNITY NEWS

Coming out of a bye week at 5-0, Aledo got right back into it by shutting out Joshua 55-0. The win put the Bearcats district winning streak at 99 games. One week later, the Bearcats fought tooth and nail against Mansfield Timberview. Despite having the running game held, the Bearcat defense made the clutch stops, and the passing game was run to near perfection to reach the record setting 100 win mark.

The final three games of the regular season flew by with ease as Aledo defeated Waco University, Arlington Seguin, and Cleburne to finish at a perfect 10-0.

In the playoffs, the Bearcats easily defeated Dallas Hillcrest at home in the Bi-District round to mark the 26th consecutive year that Aledo has made it past the first round. The next week, in Denton, the Bearcats played a highly touted Frisco Liberty team, and once again stood tall winning 57-14.

The next week, the run came to an end to eventual state champion Dallas South Oak Cliff. The Bearcats trailed 27-14 at halftime, but fought back to take a 28-27 lead early in the fourth quarter. South Oak Cliff mounted one last drive to retake the lead. Aledo almost put together a game winning drive, but it was not to be. For the first time since 2012,

Aledo was held out of the regional final, and the month of December.

Despite an earlier exit than hoped for, the Bearcats had a great season and honored the season with a banquet at Christ Chapel West in Willow Park on Monday, Jan. 3. The event was complete with dinner, a silent auction, a live auction, team awards, and a video presentation commemorating the season.

On Thursday, Feb. 3, the new season will take shape as the UIL will realign, the 2022 schedule will be made, and the community can look forward to another great season of Aledo Bearcat football.

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