

THE COMMUNITY NEWS

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New mayors set to take posts in Aledo and Hudson Oaks

By Rick Mauch
The Community News

Though still a relative newcomer to the city council, Nick Stanley has now been elected as the top government official in Aledo.

Meanwhile, down the road, Tom Fitzpatrick has been a staple in Hudson Oaks government for more than two decades.

Both won their races handily, and each will now be working with their opponents in the race. Stanley won by a 59-41 percent margin over fellow councilman Shane Davis (Place 1), and Fitzpatrick by a 65-35 percent count over his fellow councilman Brian Lixey (Place 2).

Nick Stanley

"I am honored that the people of Aledo have chosen me to be the next Mayor of Aledo," Stanley said. "I believe that I was successful in winning the election because the issues that I am focused on are representative of the same issues that are priorities for the residents of Aledo."

Stanley, 38, will replace long-time Aledo Mayor Kit Marshall, who announced she would not seek re-election so she could run for Texas House District 60. She had been mayor since 2006 after having previously served four years on the Aledo council.



Fitzpatrick



Stanley

"Mayor Marshall has served the citizens of Aledo honorably over the last two decades. Kit loves Aledo and her passion is indisputable. My goal is to continue that service by building on the strong foundation

that she has left after her many years of faithful leadership," Stanley said.

The short time Stanley has been on the council has been a busy time. For example, the council has prioritized the repair and reconstruction of Bailey Ranch Road, which is currently underway, and the Phase I portion (FM 1187 to Champions) is set to be fully reconstructed by the end of 2022 or first of 2023.

Stanley has been a staunch advocate for the current updating the city's Unified Development Code (UDC) to include utilizing form-based codes, in addition to conventional zoning, to ensure high

standards for developments, restaurants, retail, and manufacturing.

He has also been a proponent of studying how to best fund an Aledo Police Department in a fiscally responsible way, including exploring grant funding.

Stanley also advocated for the implementation of wastewater winter averaging to save residents on their wastewater charges, which is being phased in. This practice compiles water use during the winter and is used to determine maximum sewer charges for the upcoming year.

Turn to **MAYORS**, page A3

Branch to Hope closes on 22-acre Aledo-area property

By Randy Keck
The Community News

What began as a dream has become a reality for Mary Jean (MJ) Bentley and the board of directors of the new Branch to Hope Community Center just outside of Aledo.

The original plans, as reported in the Feb. 18 issue of The Community News, was the development of a legacy community center. The original vision was that the physical facility would be a for-profit operation, while ministry and other activities would be nonprofit.

However, as plans moved forward, Bentley realized that the entire organization needed to be a nonprofit. Her original partners needed a for-profit organization, so they parted ways.

The resulting Branch to Hope (BTH) Community Center is located on 22 acres just southwest of Aledo. The board of directors envision a place where youth and families can meet for enrichment activities.

According to materials from the center, the fast-paced nature of our world combined with over-scheduling, overuse of electronics, and communication on social media create "an atmosphere of anxiety, depression, suicide ideation, ADHD, and physical illnesses."

Branch to Hope aims to provide "a place to slow down, unwind, enjoy time away from the hustle and bustle and experience the beauty of caring attitudes and God's nature."

Toward that aim, BTH plans classes and recreational events for all ages, including recreational sports, mini petting zoos, gardening, horseback riding, sewing, fishing, baking, cooking, game nights, crafts, tutoring, and events like dances, songwriters in the round, fishing competitions, Valentine dance, Easter Egg hunts, pumpkin patches, and other events.

Done Deal



RANDY KECK/THE COMMUNITY NEWS

The board of directors of the new Branch to Hope gathered recently in the entrance to the welcome center. Shown are (from left) Brad Manning, Brad Hunstable, Aaron Valencia, Stacy Lynch, MJ Bentley, Bobbie Cox, and Robert McCarthy.

DAY OF HOPE

Branch to Hope Community Center will host the inaugural Day of Hope from 4-8 p.m. on Sunday, May 22, at its new facility at 699 Susie Lane in Aledo.

Activities during the event will include fishing, food trucks, music, a mini rodeo, petting zoo, horses, community booths, and face painting.

For more information, email branch2hope@gmail.com or visit branchtohope.org and click on "Community Center."

Phase I of the plans have been set in motion. The board recently closed on the property and took possession last week. Their next step is to improve the road to the facility to two lanes and create a sand volleyball court.

Phase II includes a 23,000 square-foot event center, a school/chapel, and a parking lot.

The facility already has stables, and Phase III includes adding animals and caretakers to the mix, along with an olympic swimming pool facility.

Bentley serves as the chair of the board. The vice chair is Fort Worth businessman Robert McCarthy, Sr. Bradley Manning, a

CPA who lives in Hudson Oaks, is the secretary/treasurer.

Additional board members are Kevin Bentley, who works with a physician management company; Bobbie Cox, developer of the Branch to Hope app; Brad Hunstable, CEO and co-founder of Linear Labs; local real estate broker Stacy Lynch; and realtor Aaron Valencia.

Next week *The Community News* will look at how Branch to Hope came to be, and the motivations of its founding board.

ALEDO

Bonds approved for new city hall

Council delays action on Dean Ranch

By Randy Keck
The Community News

The Aledo City Council voted unanimously to issue tax and revenue certificates of obligation totaling \$18.5 million for the purpose of constructing a new city hall and police station.

The council voted vote was taken at a special meeting on Wednesday, May 18. In a related matter, the council voted to authorize new City Manager Noah Simon to sign contracts with Randall Scott Architects for design work on the new structure.

It is anticipated that the bonds will sell in August, and that construction of the new city hall would begin in the spring.

Additionally, the council voted to delay by one week (until its regularly-scheduled council meeting on May 26) any action on a Dean Ranch Development Agreement. The city received an additional 243 acres of extraterritorial jurisdiction from the City of Fort Worth last year from north of Sonic to Bankhead.

"It [the delay] was specifically for a little more specificity in the design standards," Aledo Mayor Kit Marshall told *The Community News*. "All of the other nuts and bolts are great. It's a wonderful development. It's a great deal. There just needed to be a few more details regarding the amenities."

Developer D.R. Horton purchased the acreage, and it is assumed that with a development agreement the city will then annex the property.

The council also approved the results of the May 7 election.

Nick Stanley was elected mayor. Christian Pearson was elected to City Council Place 2 and Nelson T. Rowls was elected to City Council Place 4.



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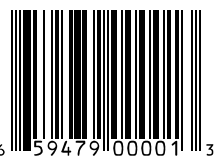
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In & Around Parker County

Second Sunday program builds relationships

The Church at the Crossing in Aledo is a congregation that works outside its walls.

One example is the Refugee ministry, which supports families that have been invited to the US to escape war-torn areas from around the world.

Teri Kubosh, Ministry Assistant at the church, said the ministry is aimed toward refugees that come to the US after helping our military or our government in some way. The refugees live in Fort Worth.

“Our government gets them out of whichever country they’re from and brings them here. And they have to reestablish life here,” she said. The church helps with getting them basic household necessities.

“At school, we do backpacks and school supplies, that kind of thing,” Kubosh said. Recently the church organized a book drive for the refugees.

“We asked our church members to bring new or gently used books, and we had a great turnout, great response, and they were able to take those over last Sunday and give those to the children over there,” Kubosh said. “There also is a literacy program that teaches English to the people when they come over. And they always need volunteers for that. We help for that, as well.”



In addition, the youth of the church visit the refugees every second Sunday for service.

Hilary Bodiford, Girls Youth Director at the church, said the refugees come from Africa, the Middle East, and Asia.

“We take our students in our student ministry (grades 7-12) and we invite all the kids in the neighborhood,” Bodiford said. “So we’ve seen kids as young as two or three and up to their teenage years; they come and we hang out, we play some games, we’ll have a snack, and then we will read a story to the kids that stick around — usually, it’s the younger ones.”

Bodiford said they want to make sure every story has a message to it,

whether a gospel message or a positive message that encourages them.

“The purpose of our Second Sunday is to build relationships with the kids in the apartment complex,” Bodiford said. “Because in the summer we do a week long VBS and our hope is to share the gospel of Jesus Christ with them and prove that



we’re not just ‘one and done’ — that we are here and we care about their lives and their hearts and whatever the Lord has for them.”

Upcoming Events:
Adventure Week June 27-30
CrossYth summer camp June 12-18
Kidz Kamp July 7-11

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MAYORS

from page A1

“As mayor, my priorities are planning for the formation of an Aledo Police Department to better protect our residents, increasing transparency and communication with our citizens, enacting economic development policies, and updating our zoning ordinances to allow for smart and intentional development that will bolster a strong local economy, increasing our communication and cooperation with the Aledo ISD to better work together on issues that are of mutual impact, and improving our mobility, transportation, and other critical infrastructure that will support a healthy and vibrant city as we continue to grow,” he said.

Stanley takes over as the city prepares to move forward with a new governmental format, one that will now have a city manager leading the day-to-day operations, a change he has pushed for. For years that has been the job of the mayor.

“The move to a council-manager form of government was something that I petitioned for before being elected to council, so naturally I am a big proponent of operating in this form,” he said.

With the voters approving the Home Rule Charter and thereby adopting that form, the city hired a full-time city manager, Noah Simon. He started Monday, May 16.

“He comes to us with a wealth of experience, and I could not be more optimistic about our future with him at the helm,” Stanley said.

Stanley previously held a position as outreach director, working for U.S. Congresswoman Kay Granger in the 12th U.S. Congressional District in Texas.

Tom Fitzpatrick

Fitzpatrick, 63, has been serving on Place 4 on the Hudson Oaks City Council since first being elected in 2001 as a write-in candidate. Much of that time he has also served as mayor pro-tem (2006-18 and again in 2021).

He replaces Marc Pavero, mayor since 2018, who announced he would not seek re-election in favor of running for Parker County Sheriff.

His two-plus decades on the council have included such milestones as:

Fixing the city’s water problems by connecting the north and south sides of the city. “That was a huge, big improvement,” he said. “I couldn’t get one hose with one sprinkler enough (pressure) for the sprinkler to go around.”

- Upgrading to a fully professional police department.
- Professionalizing city staff, including hiring a city manager.
- Bringing high-speed internet and Nextlink to the city.
- Bringing businesses such as HEB and Walmart Supercenter to town.
- Maintaining zero property tax. “And we don’t intend to have one,” he said.

“We’ve been very stable and having a 21-year councilman as mayor is indicative of that,” Fitzpatrick said.

As for his goals as mayor, Fitzpatrick said, “You can’t stop progress. You try to plan for it and not be surprised.”

He added that dealing with traffic on Interstate 20 is a challenge his and neighboring cities Willow Park and Weatherford are going to have to contend with as well.

“How do we keep Hudson Oaks the community everyone wants to live in?” he asked.

ALEDO ISD

New members of the Bearcat Leadership Team announced

By Mercedes Mayer
Aledo ISD

Aledo ISD recently named seven new members of the Bearcat Leadership Team, including the director of special programs, the associate principal of the new AISD Early Childhood Academy, an instructional technology coordinator, a math coordinator, and three instructional specialists.

“We are excited to build upon what is already a strong Bearcat Leadership Team with these experienced educators,” Superintendent Dr. Susan Bohn said. “These new Bearcats fill important roles and will impact students everyday. I look forward to learning from them and watching them grow in these roles.”

Margaret Bloodworth will be the district’s new Director of Special Programs. Bloodworth has been the Special Education Facilitator for Carroll ISD since 2021. Prior to that, she was an educational diagnostician in the Eagle Mountain-Saginaw ISD from 2008 to 2021. Bloodworth was a middle school inclusion and resource reading teacher at Stevens Middle School in the Crowley ISD from 2002 to 2004, a middle school inclusion teacher at Austin Middle School in the Irving ISD from 2000 to 2002, and a middle school resource math and language arts teacher at TJR Middle School in the Nacogdoches ISD from 1999 to 2000. Bloodworth has a bachelor’s from TCU and a masters in special education from Texas Woman’s University.

“I am thrilled to join the Bearcat Leadership Team as the new Director of Special Programs,” Bloodworth said. “This district has a reputation of excellence that has been evident throughout the interview process. I am excited and committed to developing relationships and building on the district’s current successes. It will be my honor to serve the students, staff and families



Bloodworth



Tolbert



Huynh



Torres

in Aledo ISD and the Special Programs department as we work together to carry out the vision and mission of #growinggreatness in the district.”

Christy Tolbert has been named the Associate Principal of the new Early Childhood Academy. In this role, Tolbert will also lead the district’s English as a Second Language (ESL) and summer programming. Tolbert has been an assistant principal at Kings Manor Elementary in New Caney ISD since 2016. Prior to that, she was a Pre-K, kindergarten and second-grade teacher at Kings Manor (2004-2016) and also at Second Baptist Church, Brookridge Day School and Rayville Elementary. Tolbert has a bachelor’s from the University of Louisiana-Monroe and a masters in bilingual education with an emphasis on ESL education from the University of Texas-Rio Grande Valley.

“I am so thankful for the incredible opportunity to join Aledo ISD and the Early Childhood Academy,” Tolbert said. “It is so exciting to know that I will be able to work with staff and families to provide experiences that allow our youngest students and ESL students to develop a love for learning and foundation for future success.”

Tim Huynh has been named as an instructional technology coordinator. Huynh has been a digital learning coordinator for the Denton ISD since 2020. Prior to that, he was an instructional technology trainer in the Eagle Mountain-Saginaw ISD from 2018 to

2020 and an instructional technology specialist in Denton ISD from 2017 to 2018. Huynh also taught sixth grade science at McMath Middle School in the Denton ISD from 2012 to 2017. Huynh has a bachelor’s from the University of North Texas and a masters of education in educational leadership from Texas Woman’s University.

“My family and I are beyond excited to be joining an exceptional school district and being part of the Bearcat family,” Huynh said. “This opportunity is such an honor for me, and something I feel passionate about. I am excited to help drive Aledo ISD’s instructional goals in a digital context to positively impact our students’ learning experience.”

Deanne Torres has been named as the district’s math coordinator. Torres has been a middle school (6-8 grade) math interventionist for Aledo ISD since 2021. Prior to that, she taught math at McAnally Intermediate from 2014 to 2021, and she was a fourth grade math and science teacher at Spicer Elementary in the Birdville ISD from 2012 to 2014. Torres has a bachelor’s from the University of Texas at Arlington.

“I am thankful for the opportunity to serve Aledo ISD students and staff as the Math Curriculum Coordinator,” Torres said. “The foundation that our math department has is solid, and I am excited to help build upon our tradition of excellence. I look forward to working

Turn to **TEAM**, page A8

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Obituaries

Noah Hudson Bates

Noah Hudson Bates, age 11, passed away peacefully on Sunday, May 15th, 2022, following a tragic UTV accident.

Noah was born on October 18, 2010, in Plano to parents Glenn and Katy Bates.



Noah Bates

There are no words to adequately capture the spirit of Noah Bates. A boisterous and happy child, Noah was followed everywhere by the laughs he gifted to those around him. He was lively, outgoing, and funny; he never let an opportunity for fun pass him by. Noah enjoyed hunting, fishing, riding dirt bikes, and shooting guns. He lived his daily life to the fullest, ensuring the happiness of everyone around him.

Noah loved to be outside, especially playing Bearcat football and Fort Worth Cats baseball. Noah loved all kinds of music, from rap to Christian, vintage cars and trucks, and especially spending time with his family and friends. Noah's infectious smile, outgoing nature, and love for those around him will be carried in the hearts of everyone who knew him. Noah adored his family, he was the brightest spirit in every room, and he will be immeasurably missed, by all.

Noah is survived by his parents, Glenn Allen Bates and Katy Rae Bates of Aledo; sister Skylar Lambert of Aledo; sister, Lindsey Rodgers and husband Austin of Edmond, Oklahoma; grandparents, Lowell and Patty Holder of Aledo; great-grandmother, Mary Jane Pannell of Denton; great-grandmother, Flora Steen of Fort Worth; and numerous aunts, uncles, and cousins. Noah is preceded in death by, grandparents John and Effie Bates, Uncles Maynard Bates, Donald Bates, William Bates, and Luke Holder.

The memorial service is set for 1:30 p.m. Monday, May 23, at Christ Chapel Bible Church-West, 3910 E I-20 West Freeway in Willow Park.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks for donations to the Noah Bates Memorial Foundation – please, no flowers. This foundation will bridge a gap of financial support for children aspiring to achieve success at the collegiate level. Donate via Venmo: @NoahBatesMemorialFoundation or by contacting First Financial Bank Account# 8211008296.

The Community News
May 20, 2022



CHRISTOPHER AMOS/THE COMMUNITY NEWS

The Aledo High School Wind Ensemble, Choir, and AHS Colorguard combined to perform the annual Night at the Pops on May 13 and 14 with a "Road Trip" theme.



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Robby Sloan



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Spencer Thompson



Owen Gutierrez



Wren Schneider

As a part of the Aledo ISD's new character education program - the Positivity Project or P2 - the district has launched Aledo Bearcats of Character that recognizes the good character on display by students across the district. In April, Aledo ISD Trustees recognized Bearcats of Character with Enthusiasm! P2 says that someone displaying enthusiasm approaches life with excitement and energy and also energizes others around them.

Congratulations to the following students:

Aledo High School: Kaden Thompson, 12th grade

Kaden always has a smile on his face. He is appreciative, kind and always willing to step in and help. He makes everyone feel like they are important. Kaden's positive energy is contagious.

Aledo Learning Center: Keshawn Stewart, 11th grade

Keshawn has shown his enthusiasm for learning and

about finishing his courses and graduating early. The ALC staff also share they have seen Keshawn share this enthusiasm with fellow students. When someone is struggling with a concept in class, Keshawn will often take the time away from his own studies to help.

Daniel Ninth Grade: Thaddeus Keller, 9th grade

Thad exhibits great enthusiasm in various ways. As an active member of the DNG Student Council, Thad is always coming up with great ideas on how to make others happy and our campus a joyful place for all students. He recently put together a presentation on how to incorporate activities to bring forth Fun Fridays to the DNG campus. Thad was very enthusiastic about sharing this presentation with others. His teachers have also shared that he always brings joy to classes and his peers. Thad is very vocal in class with positive and encouraging comments. At the beginning

of the year, Thad would even stand in the hallway outside of one of his classes and greet students as they entered the classroom. He is an outstanding young man who is always eager to please and always very willing to serve others.

Aledo Middle School: Robby Sloan, 8th grade

Robby comes to school happy every day. He always greets AMS staff as well as other students with a smile. He works hard and is a quiet leader for everyone to follow.

McAnally Intermediate School: Frank Belanger, 6th grade

Frank exemplifies enthusiasm by cheering on his classmates and encouraging them every day. Frank has the best smile, has never met a stranger and welcomes any new students. On McAnally's house party celebration days, Frank is filled with spirit and his energy lights up the room! Frank has no shortage of ENTHUSIASM!

Annetta Elementary School: Sadie House, 2nd grade

Sadie is always eager and willing to learn and try new things. She is so passionate about her love for learning and can often be found sharing her wealth of knowledge with others. She gives 100% in everything she does and her enthusiasm often sparks others to think, speak, and act with more positive energy. If a student around her is struggling, she is the first person to cheer them on with words of encouragement. You will often hear her saying, "You can do this!" and "I believe in you!". Her energetic and upbeat attitude is contagious! When Sadie's peers were asked to describe her, they said "She is always excited and willing to help people."

Coder Elementary School: Spencer Thompson, 5th grade

From Mrs. Young, Spencer's 5th grade teacher: "Spencer was chosen for the enthusiasm award because

he shows up to school every day eager to make others smile. Spencer lights up the classroom with his smile, his positive sense of humor, and enjoyment for each and every part of the school day. I am so glad to have Spencer in class this year because of his pure happiness he shows every single day. Spencer has also been such a role model for our Pre-K students. He loves to work with the littles, and they love to be with him."

McCall Elementary School: Owen Gutierrez, 4th grade

Owen's teacher says "As I write this I have tears in my eyes. Owen has been through more than what most kids his age have gone through. After his cancer diagnosis, he has always stayed positive. He never once complained or said it was not fair. He came to school each day after surgery and still made his friends laugh and encouraged them and cheered them on. Enthusiasm is just one way I would describe him. Mrs.

Reynolds, McCall School Counselor, says, "Owen is also an amazing Student Council leader! In visiting with his mom about this honor - they both wanted to share that Owen had surgery before Spring Break that went very well and, despite a six-week recovery period, he is doing well and expected to make a full recovery. Owen returned to school a week after his surgery and comes in daily with a smile, amazing manners, and excitement to learn. He even gets to continue playing football, which we know fills him with enthusiasm!"

Stuard Elementary School: Wren Schneider, 5th grade

Wren's classmates said that she is always happy for what we do, is always excited for her classmates and always makes them feel good. She gives her all in all she does! Staff also recognize Wren's cheerfulness on a daily basis. Mrs. Adair, Stuard School Counselor, said, "Wren is always quick to greet everyone

Turn to BEARCATS, page A8

Vote in the Republican Primary Runoff!

Runoff Election Day: **Tuesday, May 24** Vote Early: **May 16 - 20**



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Commentary

MAY 20, 2022
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Capital Highlights

Early runoff voting ends Friday



Gary Borders
gborders@texaspress.com

Early voting in the May 24 primary runoff elections ends Friday, May 20. Under state law, voters who cast ballots in either party's primary election must vote only in the same party's runoff election. Voters who did not cast ballots in the primary may vote in either party's runoff election.

Topping the runoff ballots are runoff elections for attorney general. Incumbent Republican Ken Paxton faces George P. Bush, the current land commissioner. On the Democratic side, former Galveston mayor Joe Jaworski faces Rochelle Garza, a Brownsville civil rights attorney.

There are also statewide runoff races for lieutenant governor, land commissioner, comptroller and railroad commissioner, as well as several congressional seats and spots on the state board of education. See the full list of runoff races at: <https://tinyurl.com/43bz9v6>.

ERCOT urges Texans to conserve power

After six power generation plants went offline Friday during the start to an unseasonably hot weekend, the Electric Reliability Council of Texas urged Texans to conserve power, the *Austin American-Statesman* reported.

As temperatures soared into the 90s and even 100s in some parts of the state, residents were urged to set thermostats to 78 degrees or higher and avoid using large appliances such as dishwashers, washers and dryers between 3 p.m. and 8 p.m. The hot weather is sparking record electricity demand across the state.

And it's only May.

Abbott's use of COVID funds on border mission probed

The inspector general for the U.S. Treasury Department has opened a review into how the state spent federal COVID-19 aid funds, with approximately \$1 billion in relief funds shifted to the crackdown on the Texas-Mexico border, the *Washington Post* reported. The aid was intended to help local governments pay front-line COVID-19 workers, purchase protective equipment and for other public health costs.

Richard K. Delmar, the deputy inspector general, issued a statement citing his office's mandate "for monitoring and oversight of the distribution" of the stimulus spending, which Texas received under a federal initiative known as the Coronavirus Relief Fund, the Post reported.

"In exercise of that responsibility," Delmar said, "we are currently conducting a review of Texas's uses of CRF monies." A spokesman for Gov. Greg Abbott defended how Texas used federal funds received under the Cares Act.

More than 900 migrants sent to D.C.

Under Abbott's direction, the state has sent 35 chartered buses with 922 migrants to Washington, D.C. since mid-April, *The Dallas Morning News* reported. The governor has called it a "fun" way to get President Joe Biden's attention, harshly criticizing the president for the administration's border policies. However, *The Morning News* reported the impact on the nation's capital has been minimal, with the migrants being processed and sent to live in different cities until their cases can be heard in court.

"He's [Abbott] no longer even making a big deal about it. You're not seeing it on the nightly news. It's a dud," said Abel Nuñez, executive director of the Central American Resource Center, one of the groups helping migrants who arrive from Texas. "It's happening in silence now. This is not giving him the political win that he wanted."

The state of Arizona has also begun busing migrants to Washington, D.C.

Drought conditions persist across state

As a hydrologist for the Texas Water Development Board put it, "April wasn't great" in terms of rainfall. However, about a sixth of the state did get abundant rainfall, in parts of Central Texas, North Texas, and South Texas. Dr. Mark Wentzel wrote that rainfall received in May could be key to getting through the summer without widespread severe drought.

"May, historically, has been the wettest month for Texas," Wentzel wrote. "We get an average of 3-1/3 inches of rainfall in that month, making it the wettest month of the year for us. We want to be cautiously optimistic."

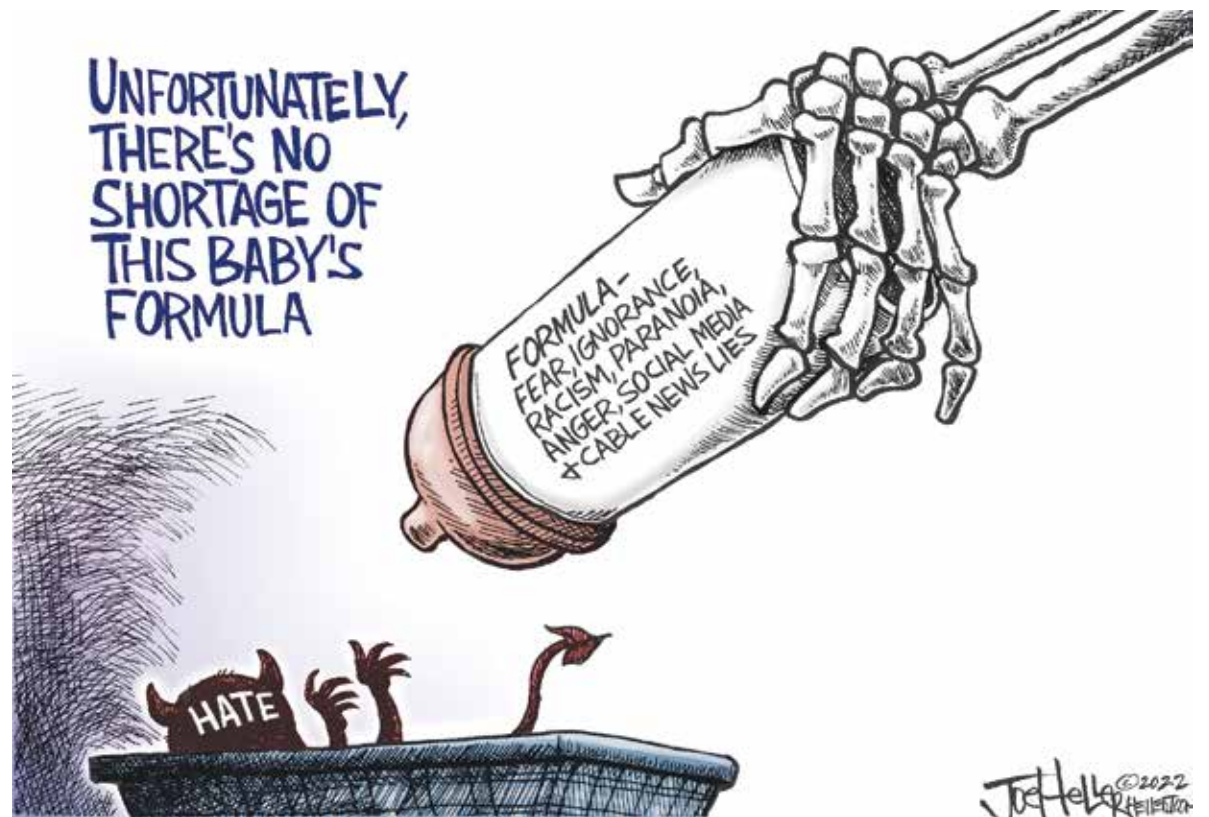
The most severe drought conditions are found in the Panhandle and High Plains and in the Big Bend area. April showers in much of East Texas brought both May flowers and an easing of drought conditions, according to the U.S. Drought Monitor.

COVID-19 cases again rise slightly

The number of new COVID-19 cases in the state during the past week rose slightly to 24,092, according to the Coronavirus Resource Center at Johns Hopkins University, with 73 new deaths reported — also a slight increase. Once again, the number of lab-confirmed COVID-19 hospitalizations in Texas stayed steady, with 772 reported by the Texas Department of State Health Services.

The number of Texans who are fully vaccinated now stands at 17.641 million, or 60.5% of the state's population; 6.821 million Texans have received a booster dose, according to DSHS.

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



Your Views

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Support Education - Support Glenn Rogers

If you can read this, thank a teacher! We cannot take a chance on letting Mike Olcott and his friends win this election. Their views on public education and teachers are disturbing to me and they should be to you. Our school district is the engine that runs our town and protects the value of our homes. People don't move out here because of high taxes; but, they do move here for the reputation of our school district.

What can we do? We can support our educators! I am also asking for every administrator, staff member, teacher, and retiree to join me in voting for Glenn Rogers. Your vote is needed to ensure that we keep him in Austin working for us. Glenn will listen and be a voice for education. He has proven that he knows how to get things done in Austin. When is the last time our retirees received additional compensation? Thank Glenn for your 13th check!

Glenn is a former local school board member and the

son of a public school teacher. He understands that the future of Texas is in public education.

Do not let low voter turnout decide this election! If you forgot to vote or have not voted, early voting ends May 20 and May 24 is election day! You can vote in this election even if you did not vote in the primary. Also remember that if you voted for Mike Olcott in the March primary and have since changed your mind, you can vote for Glenn Rogers.

- RHONDA TORRES
ALEDO

Slings&Arrows

The grip of dark money



Randy Keck
rkeck@community-news.com

As of the end of this month, I will have been the owner of *The Community News* for 27 years. During that time, I have never endorsed a candidate for political office, although there was one local race several years ago when I warned people about one of the candidates.

As a community we are sitting through an unprecedented political campaign — the Republican primary for our representative in Texas House District 60 between Mike Olcott and Glenn Rogers.

Below I'll take a look at this race from the standpoint of how a functioning representative democracy should work but we have to dispense with a couple of details.

First, let's acknowledge that labels like "conservative" and

"liberal" can be very subjective based on where you stand on the political left-right spectrum. If you are way out at the extreme as a liberal, then pretty much any Democrat will be seen as not liberal enough (see Sanders, Bernie).

Likewise, if you are way out at the extreme right, anyone standing to your left will be seen as not conservative enough (see Green, Marjorie Taylor).

Recognizing that, then second, I think if we look at traditional definitions of "liberal" and "conservative" there is no question that both candidates are conservatives, although to different degrees.

So I'm going to remove both candidates from the equation and look at the race in a different light.

Because of the enormous amount of money being spent on this one race for one out of 150 seats in the Texas house, I have deep concerns as they relate to the functioning of a healthy republic.

After this primary election is over and all the reports have been filed, I am convinced that

two billionaires will have spent more money to influence your vote than both candidates combined, and the two billionaires don't even live in this district.

Heck, they don't even spend their money in this district. Pre-runoff, their PAC spent more than \$600,000 with Political Communications Advertising in New York City and another \$472,317 with a Salt Lake City political advertising firm.

So I'm going to make this about the two billionaires.

Taking the names of the candidates out of the equation, let's say that the two billionaires' candidate wins. If that happens, who will he be beholden to? Will he go to Austin to represent us or them?

Even if he has the purest of motives, when it comes down to voting on bills, I can guarantee that he will take the position his two backers want. Because if he doesn't, he knows that when the next election cycle begins, they will do the same New-York-based attack campaign to him that they are doing to his opponent today.

Turn to **SLINGS**, page A8

The Community News

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SUBMIT STORIES, PHOTOS OR IDEAS
We're always on the lookout for story ideas. To share one, call Randy Keck at 817-441-7661, ext. 207 or email news@community-news.com. 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.

Events

MAY 20, 2022
THE COMMUNITY NEWS

WWW.COMMUNITY-NEWS.COM

More events can be found at www.community-news.com/events

MAY 22

Day of Hope

The Branch to Hope Community Center will host the inaugural Day of Hope from 4-8 p.m. on Sunday, May 22, at its new facility at 699 Susie Lane in Aledo. The Branch to Hope Community Center is a multi-generational recreation and event center focusing on restoring hope and bringing the community together through engaging activities for all life stages. Activities during the event will include fishing, food trucks, music, a mini rodeo, petting zoo, horses, community booths, and face painting. For more information, email branch2hope@gmail.com.

JUNE 3

Safe At Home Program

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service Parker County will conduct a "Safe @ Home" class from 10-11:30 a.m. on Friday, June 3, at the Parker County Extension Office, 604 North Main Street in Weatherford. Safe @ Home will provide instruction for youth on how to be safe inside the house, outside the house, online, and with others when they are home alone. It will cover safety habits, how to handle emergencies, and making a call to 911. This class is for youth who will be in grades 4-6, or ages 9-12. The class will equip them to be safe when they are home alone. The cost to attend is \$20 per child, which includes a booklet and snack. To register your child, call the Parker County Extension Office at 817-

598-6168. Pre-registration is required, and space is limited.

Aledo Summer Blast

The annual Aledo Summer Blast will run from 6-10 p.m. Friday, June 3, in the Aledo High School south parking lots. The event features numerous free activities for families and children in addition to food trucks, live music by Sonny Burgess and Jolie Holliday Burgess, and a fireworks show after dark.

JUNE 14

Cancer Support Group

A support group to create a space for those who have battled or are battling cancer meets at 6:30 p.m. the second Tuesday of each month at Aledo United Methodist Church, 100 Pecan Dr. in Aledo. For more information, email Joan.Ward@jcjkat1959@gmail.com.

JUNE 21

Safe Sitter Course

Texas AgriLife Extension will conduct a Safe Sitter course from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Tuesday, June 21 at the Parker County Extension Office, 604 North Main Street in Weatherford. Safe Sitter is a medically-accurate program that teaches boys and girls ages 11 and up how to handle emergencies when caring for children. The class teaches safe and nutrition childcare techniques, behavior management skills, and appropriate responses to medical emergencies. CPR basics will be covered but will not be a certification course. The cost of the program is \$50 that will cover mate-

rials and lunch. Any youth who would like to take the class can sign up by calling the Parker County Extension office at 817-598-6168.

JUNE 28

Let's Cook - for kids

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension will host a cooking class for kids 5 - 8 from 9:30 a.m. to noon on June 28 and 29. The classes are targeting young children and will focus on My Plate, safety in the kitchen, easy healthy foods to prepare and fitness activities. The cost for the two-day class is \$30 per person. Sign up by calling Parker County Extension Office at 817-598-6168.

JULY 9

Parker County Peach Festival

The 37th annual Parker County Peach Festival will run from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, July 9, in downtown Weatherford. Peachy treats are always featured, including homemade peach ice cream, peach cobbler, peach pie, peach tea, peach smoothies, ice cream topped with fresh peaches, or just regular peaches. In addition to the vendors, many antique and specialty stores will have specials throughout the day. Two entertainment stages will feature local celebrities and entertainers. For easy transportation to the festival, air-conditioned shuttles will run from three locations. Admission is \$10 for adults, \$5 for ages 5-12, and free for younger than 5. For more information, visit <https://www.parkercountypeachfestival.org>.

ACROSS

1 James Bowie was carried across the Alamo line on this (2 wds.)

5 if you add an "h" it's a 9-time Grammy winner from Texas

6 gunfighter's "quick ____"

7 TX "Tarzan" Ely, et al.

8 father children? (2 wds.)

17 Scottish "little"

18 Six Flags has 300-foot-tall one (2 wds.)

21 TX George H.W. to George W. (abbr.)

22 data trans. for optical fiber(abbr.)

23 actress Bacall of "Duke's" last film "The Shootist"

24 emphasis typeface

29 Canyon High football class

30 male deer

31 TX Nolan Ryan has record for ____hitters

32 burger option: "put a ____"

34 Santa Anna's San Jacinto disguise

35 a meeting between a teacher, mom, and dad (abbr.)

36 raider, plunderer

37 Davy's home st.

38 TX Roddenberry's "Star ____"

39 Florida resort complex (2 wds.)

41 male pigs

42 TXism: "play possum"

43 "Big Texan" will not charge for a 72-ounce steak if you can ____

44 they mark navigation lanes near Galveston

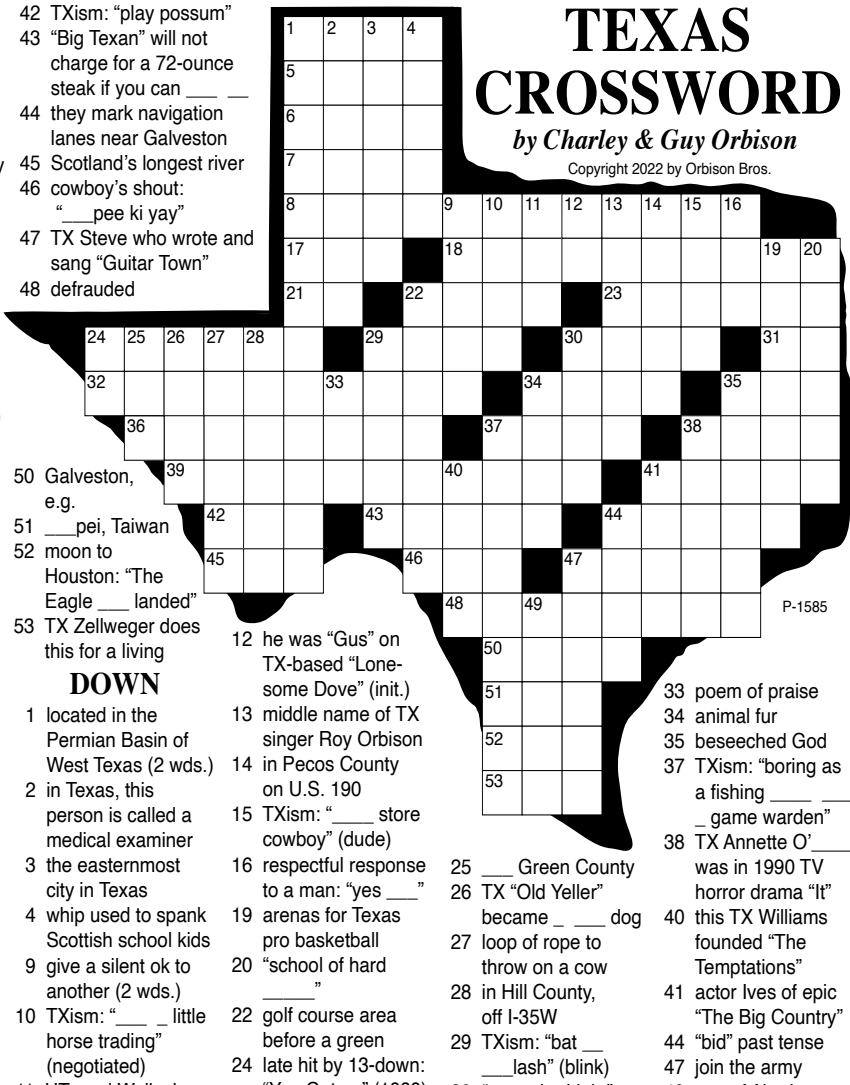
45 Scotland's longest river

46 cowboy's shout: "____pee ki yay"

47 TX Steve who wrote and sang "Guitar Town"

48 defrauded

TEXAS CROSSWORD
by Charley & Guy Orbison
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DOWN

1 located in the Permian Basin of West Texas (2 wds.)

2 in Texas, this person is called a medical examiner

3 the easternmost city in Texas

4 whip used to spank Scottish school kids

9 give a silent ok to another (2 wds.)

10 TXism: "____ little horse trading" (negotiated)

11 UT grad Wallace

12 he was "Gus" on TX-based "Lonesome Dove" (init.)

13 middle name of TX singer Roy Orbison in Pecos County on U.S. 190

15 TXism: "____ store cowboy" (dude)

16 respectful response to a man: "yes ____"

19 arenas for Texas pro basketball

20 "school of hard ____"

22 golf course area before a green

24 late hit by 13-down: "You Got ____" (1989)

25 ____ Green County

26 TX "Old Yeller" became ____ dog

27 loop of rope to throw on a cow

28 in Hill County, off I-35W

29 TXism: "bat ____ ____lash" (blink)

30 "____ the Light"

33 poem of praise

34 animal fur

35 beseeched God

37 TXism: "boring as a fishing ____ game warden"

38 TX Annette O' ____ was in 1990 TV horror drama "It"

40 this TX Williams founded "The Temptations"

41 actor lves of epic "The Big Country"

44 "bid" past tense

47 join the army

49 son of Abraham

Entries sought for Peach Festival Art Contest

The Parker County Peach Festival and the Weatherford Art Association have announced the annual Peach Festival Art Show May 26 to July 21 at the Doss Heritage and Culture Center, 1400 Texas Drive in Weatherford. The contest associated with the art show has adult categories in Works on Canvas (oil/acrylic), Works on Paper (watercolor, pastel,

graphics, pencil sketch, pen and ink), Photography (digital and manipulation), and Experimental (non-traditional, mixed media, three-dimensional). Student categories are divided by grade: 1) K-third grade; 2) Grades 4-6; 3) Grades 7-9; 4) Grades 10-12. Registration will be from 4-7 p.m. on Thursday, May 19

and from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, May 21. Cash awards will be provided in all categories. For additional rules and information, download <http://www.weatherfordart.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/2022-WAAPeach-Festival-Art-Show-Prospectus-Registration.pdf>.

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SLINGS

from page A6

If his voting record fails in any way to be 100% “pure” in the eyes of the billionaires, next time around you’ll have your mailbox flooded with mailers calling *him* a liberal.

And if you as a constituent leave a message in his Texas House office because you have a concern, and he also has a message from one of his out-of-district billionaire backers, whose call do you think he is going to answer first?

In a republic, the people we elect should be answerable to the residents in their districts. In a situation where one or two individuals have the resources to literally overwhelm voters with their messaging, that is unhealthy for our system of government.

So I’m not telling you who to vote for, but if we in any way treasure our right to vote, this type of campaigning must be overwhelmingly repudiated.

If you’ve been sitting on your hands, you need to go vote.

If you are discouraged from voting because of all the negativity arriving in your mailbox, you need to go vote.

If you think you can’t make a difference, you need to go vote.

To the extent we feel we are losing our democracy, voters have the power to fix it — but we have to go vote.

Now I’ll bring the two candidates back into the conversation for a brief moment because there is a particular issue that is crucial for local voters.

The excellence of education found in the Aledo Independent School District has made the AISD the number one driver of economic development in eastern Parker County.

Period.

If you moved here for the schools, then you especially need to be paying attention to this race.

And you need to go vote.

Summer Reading Program registration begins

Registration is underway for the Summer Reading Program at the East Parker County Library.

With a theme of “Oceans of Possibilities,” the program will run from June 3 to July 30 at the

library with regularly-scheduled programs.

Each participant will keep a reading log over the summer, and can pick up rewards at the library’s

circulation desk when milestones are reached.

For more information, visit the East Parker county Library at 201 FM 1187 in Aledo, or call 817-441-6545.

TEAM

from page A3

alongside teachers and staff to continue #growinggreatness in Aledo ISD.”

Paula Vidaurri, Michelle Whitehead and Cathy Williams have been named instructional specialists for Aledo ISD.

Vidaurri has worked in Aledo ISD since 2002 most recently as an English/language arts intervention specialist and previously as a middle school English/language arts teacher. Vidaurri also taught ninth grade American history in the Owasso ISD in Owasso, Oklahoma, from 2001 to 2002. Vidaurri has a bachelor’s from the University of North Texas.

“I am so grateful for the opportunity to be part of the Curriculum and Instruction team as an Instructional Specialist,” Vidaurri said. “I am thrilled to serve our middle school Bearcat students at both campuses next year, and I cannot wait to collaborate with and support some phenomenal reading/language arts teachers as we perfect literacy instruction, empower students, and build our professional capacities as educators and members of our professional learning community.”

Whitehead has been an intervention specialist at AHS and Daniel Ninth Grade Campus since 2021. Prior to that, she was a math teacher at the Early College High School in Carrollton-Farmers Branch ISD (2020-2021), at Fossil Ridge High School in the Keller ISD (2017-2020), at Brewer High



Vidaurri



Whitehead



Williams

School in the White Settlement ISD (2016-2017) and at Harvest Christian Academy (2011-2016). Whitehead was also a math specialist at Bransom Elementary in the Burleson ISD from 2008 to 2011. Whitehead also has adjunct math faculty experience at Tarrant County College (2005-present), Texas Wesleyan University (2018-2021), the Chicago School of Professional Psychology (2019-2020), Crown College (2019-2020) and The King’s University (2018-2019). Whitehead has a bachelor’s from Texas A&M University and a master’s in math and math teaching from Texas Woman’s University.

“The educators of Aledo ISD and the Aledo community have been so supportive and welcoming to me this year, and I have quickly grown to understand that the wonderful people of Aledo are the reason why this is such a sought-after and growing community,” Whitehead said of her first year in the district. “I hope to use my 20 years of math teaching and leadership experiences, educational background and passion for serving others to continue supporting teachers and helping students grow! I am grateful for the opportunity to be part

of the Curriculum & Instruction Team in Aledo ISD, and I look forward to another amazing school year.”

Williams has been a department chair and history teacher at Aledo High School since 2017. Prior to that, she was an assistant principal at Pine Tree High School in the Pine Tree ISD from 2014 to 2017. Williams was also a history teacher at Pine Tree High School from 2007 to 2014, a history teacher at Calallen High School in the Calallen ISD from 2005 to 2006, a high school history teacher and coach in the Bossier Parish Schools district in Bossier City, Louisiana, from 2003 to 2005, and a middle school teacher and coach in the Baton Rouge Parish Schools district in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, from 2001 to 2002. Williams has a bachelor’s from Murray State University and a master’s of education in administration from Lamar University.

“I am so excited for this wonderful opportunity to work with Stuard Bearcat students and to collaborate with and support the amazing teachers at Stuard Elementary as they continue to grow greatness in our littlest Bearcats,” Williams said.

BEARCATS

from page A5



Jackson Burton



Peyton Ruddick

she sees, strike up a conversation, and spread her positivity no matter what the situation. She gives her all in class, in student council, and with her friends. Wren is the type of student you can count on to brighten your day and spread joy. Wren’s Stuard Family is incredibly proud of her!”

Vandagriff Elementary School: Jackson Burton, 4th grade

Jackson is always happy and has a smile on his face. He is eager to be helpful and enthusiastic about new tasks or projects. He is helpful without being prompted. Jackson is inclusive of his classmates and positive about being supportive to both classmates and teachers.

Walsh Elementary School: Peyton Ruddick, 4th grade

From her homeroom teacher, Mrs. Presnall, “When I think of enthusiasm, I think of Peyton. No matter what she is working on, big or small, she always puts her best attitude forward and completes her assignments with excitement. You can tell that she is pumped up and it - in turn - energizes those classmates around her as well. Her enthusiastic energy is contagious and loved by all who know her.”

Knowledge will give you power, but character respect.

- Bruce Lee

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- Lucas Turner - Former Texas House candidate and Aledo Graduate
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TRACK AND FIELD

Aledo sophomore narrowly misses two medals at state meet



SCOTT W. COLEMAN

LEFT: Sophomore Lauren St. Peters of Aledo High School placed fourth in both shot put and discus at the state track and field meet. | **RIGHT:** Maggie Kilburn vaults at the UIL State Track and Field Meet in Austin.

By Rick Mauch
The Community News

Aledo Ladycat Lauren St. Peters came as close as person can come to medaling at the University Interscholastic League Class 5A State Track and Field Meet on the May 14 weekend at the University of Texas in Austin.

The sophomore placed fourth in both of her events, narrowly missing out on bringing home a pair of bronze medals. In the process, though, she had the best performances of her career in both events.

St. Peters had a throw of 44 feet, 10.25 inches in the shot put. She also threw the discus 144 feet. That

bested her throw of 44-10 to win the Region I shot put title and blew away her winning regional throw of 138-07 in the discus.

For St. Peters, competing on the big stage was fulfilling after almost reaching state as a freshman.

“Great year for her!” exclaimed Ladycats coach Mike Pinkerton.

The Bearcats had four competitors on their 800-meter relay that finished sixth with a time of 1 minute, 26.44 seconds, breaking a school record that had stood since 2013. The quartet featured senior Samuel Staffe, sophomores Aven Lawrence and Hauss Hejny, and junior Clay Murador.

For Murador, it was his second consecutive appearance at state. He placed third in the 400 as a sophomore.

“We look to build upon that success next track season when we return three of the four members

Turn to **TRACK**, page B2

CONGRATULATIONS CLASS OF 2022

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bright





SCOTT W. COLEMAN

Aven Lawrence of Aledo prepares for the baton exchange from Sammy Steffe in the Class 5A boys 800-meter relay.

TRACK

of the relay," Bearcats coach Robby Jones said.

Two sophomores who were alternates on the relay will also return, Jalen Pope and Jaden Allen.

"Hopefully next year we can stay healthy at the end of the season and compete at our best in the state meet," Jones said.

Also for the Ladycats, freshman Maggie Kilburn and sophomore Taylor Hindman tied for seventh in the pole vault. Each cleared 10-06.

"Although it was not their best performance, they both learned what it takes to make it to state, as well as how they need to prepare and compete at the state meet," Pinkerton said. "Overall, I am extremely pleased with all three girls and their performances. Best of all - they all have at least two more years - Maggie has three!"



SPECIAL TO THE COMMUNITY NEWS

The Aledo girls golf team at the state golf tournament; shown are (from left) Kayla Morales, Sana'a Lemen, Madison Warner, Mallory Miller, Aly Saunders, and coach James Mullins.

GOLF

Ladycats 10th in state

By Rick Mauch
The Community News

Continuing a longstanding tradition, the Aledo Ladycats competed at the Class 5A Girls State Golf Tournament Monday and Tuesday at White Wing Golf Club in Georgetown.

Aledo finished 10th with a two-day total of 691. The Ladycats improved from 11th place after shooting a 349 on the first day, posting a 342 on the second day.

Alyssa Saunders led the Ladycats with a 159 over two days. The University of Texas at Tyler-bound senior shot a 78 on the opening day and finished with an 81.

This is the eighth time the Ladycats have qualified as a team for state since 2011, but the first time since 2018. Their best finish in that span was second in 2015 and fourth in 2014, led in both seasons by now LPGA player and two-time state champion Cheyenne Knight.

There was no state tournament in 2020, though the Ladycats did win the Region I preview and were projected for a third-place finish at state.

Austin Anderson won the team championship, shooting 600 (305-295) rallying on the second day to edge defending state champion San Antonio Alamo Heights Blue by a stroke (298-303 = 601). Farah O'Keefe of Anderson won the individual title, posting an eight-under-par 144 (66-70), five strokes ahead of Julia Vollmer of Alamo Heights Blue (69-72 = 141).

Defending state champion Mason Lewis of Granbury tied for seventh after shooting a 150 (77-73).

Also for Aledo, junior Mallory Miller posted a 173 (92-81), junior Madison Warner a 179 (88-91), sophomore Kyla Morales a 183 (91-92) and junior S'Anaa Lemen a 184 (95-89). The four lowest scores in each round comprise the team score.

"The team reached our ultimate goal this year, which was winning the regional championship. Going to state is icing on the cake, though we would have like to have finished better than we did," Ladycats coach James Mullins said. "State is like all other tournaments we play in throughout the year, the team that puts together two solid days has a chance at finishing top three."

"We can't be disappointed in a district and regional championship year. This program continues to grow in the right direction and I'm very proud of what they accomplished this year."

The Ladycats were preceded at the state tournament by the Bearcats, who finished 12th on May 9-10. It's the first time since 2017 that both the girls and boys have qualified teams for state, something they also did in 2015.

Almost every member of both top squads are expected to return next season, with Saunders being the lone senior.

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RODEO

Several from area atop NTHSRA final leaders

By Rick Mauch
The Community News

The North Texas High School Rodeo Association ended its 2021-22 season this past weekend with its annual rodeo at the NTHSRA Arena in Saginaw, and several Aledo and Weatherford competitors turned in performances that left them in the top 10 for the season.

Topping the list was Savannah Letson of Weatherford, who took the top spot in poles competition. She entered the finals ranked first in the regular season standings and successfully held her ground.

Caden Farrell of Weatherford came close to a pair of championships, but settled for second in both steer wrestling and chute dogging. He entered the competition in second place in the regular-season standings in both events.

Aledo's top finisher was Tyson Douglas, who placed third in chute dogging. He improved two spots from his regular-season standing of fifth.

Also from Aledo, Caylee Akins took fifth in breakaway roping, up four spots from her ninth place in the regular season.

Other top five finishes were from Weatherford participants Carter High, third in bull riding, and Clayton Praytor, fourth in ribbon roping. High was fourth in the regular season and Praytor was fifth.

Other top-10 finishers included:

- *Mason McElroy, Aledo, sixth in saddle bronc.
- *Praytor, seventh in calf roping.
- *Adrianna Ruckteschler, Aledo, eighth in barrel racing.
- *Hayden Smith, Weatherford, ninth in calf roping, 10th in ribbon roping.
- *Ashtyn Coufal, Aledo, ninth in walk-up goat tying.



TRINITY CHRISTIAN ACADEMY
Ben Camp won a gold medal in the discus at the TAPPS state track meet.



TRINITY CHRISTIAN ACADEMY
Kennan Dowling won gold and silver medals in hurdles.



LIZ PARKE
Sophie Scott (left) competes in the 400-meter relay.

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SOFTBALL

Ladycats continue march back to state

By Nolan Ruth
The Community News

The Aledo Ladycats softball team is another step closer to their return to Austin and the Class 5A State Tournament, where they finished as state runners-up last season. On Thursday, May 12 and Friday, May 13, the Ladycats (30-2) took on Colleyville Heritage (27-5) in the third round of the playoffs and had no trouble getting the sweep in two games with scores of 4-1 and 10-0.

Aledo will play Abilene Wylie (23-7) in the Region 1 semifinals at Tarleton State University in Stephenville. Game 1 is set for 6 p.m. on Thursday, May 19. Game 2 will start at 2 p.m. Friday, May 20 with a third game to follow immediately after, if needed.

"They're going to be able to move the ball around the zone pretty well," head coach Heather Myers said about Wylie. "We're going to have to be very disciplined at the plate. We just need to stay within ourselves and do what we do."

In the series with Colleyville Heritage, Kayleigh Smith got the start in the circle for Aledo in the opening game and went a full seven innings, only giving up one run on four hits.

"Kayleigh has never been one to get all of the strikeouts," Myers said after the game. "Don't get me wrong, she loves striking people out but she is more than willing to go out there and let her defense play behind her."

The Ladycats jumped into the driver's seat from the start, as Texas Ray and Madysen Boutwell worked their way into scoring position, setting up Presley Hull's hard hit down the third-base line, scoring both runners.

Ana Flores drove in Hull in the next at-bat with a triple to center field to make it a 3-0 Aledo lead after one inning.

Heritage got a run back in the third inning on a fielder's choice, but it was their only run of the game.

The Ladycats made it a three-run lead again in the fourth inning when Macy Graf hit a sacrifice fly into left field and Claire Byars was able to just come in under the tag to bring the tally to 4-1.

The final three innings became a defensive showdown, and thanks to Smith's pitching, the stellar infield play of Graf,



Lilliana Flores rounds second en route to a triple during the first game against Colleyville Heritage High School.

JACKIE HAYSLIP/THE COMMUNITY NEWS

Boutwell, Ray and Ana Flores, the Ladycats shut out Heritage the rest of the way, sealing the victory.

"I'm always pleased with our defense," Myers gave credit after the game. "That's something that we have worked and worked and worked on. At this point we're just going to do the fundamental things."

The following day, Aledo traveled to Colleyville and put on an offensive display. Hull broke things open early with a home run that gave the Ladycats a 3-0 lead in the first inning.

Sophomore Brenlee Gonzales got the start at pitcher and shined, only allowing one hit in the ballgame and striking out three.

Aledo added four more runs in the second inning, including a two run blast by Ray to straightaway left field.

The final four runs came in the fourth inning to bring the tally to 10-0. With Gonzales' performance and the Ladycat defense behind her, Heritage was held scoreless and the game ended by run-rule after five innings.

"Every adjustment we had to make from game one, we made," Myers said of the offensive performance in Game 2. "The girls went into the game knowing what adjustments they had to make and what they had to do at the plate and they did it."



KIRSTEN GALLON

Aledo starting pitcher Hunter Rudel pitched six solid innings to come away with a Bearcat win over the Burleson Elks.

BASEBALL

Bearcats advance behind strong pitching of Rudel

By Nolan Ruth
The Community News

Playoffs can be an unforgiving and unpredictable time in the sports world.

In the case of the Aledo Bearcats baseball team, two lost coin flips created an obstacle in the second round of the Class 5A playoffs. Despite playing a single-game playoff at the home field of their opponent, the Bearcats defeated Burleson 6-4 behind an excellent pitching performance by Hunter Rudel.

Aledo will play Burleson Centennial in a best-of-three series in Round 3 at Boswell High School in Saginaw. Game 1 will start at 7 p.m. Thursday, May 19. Game 2 is set for 7 p.m. the following day, May 20. If the series is tied after two games, a third game will take place at 1 p.m. Saturday, May 21.

Turn to **BASEBALL**, page B6

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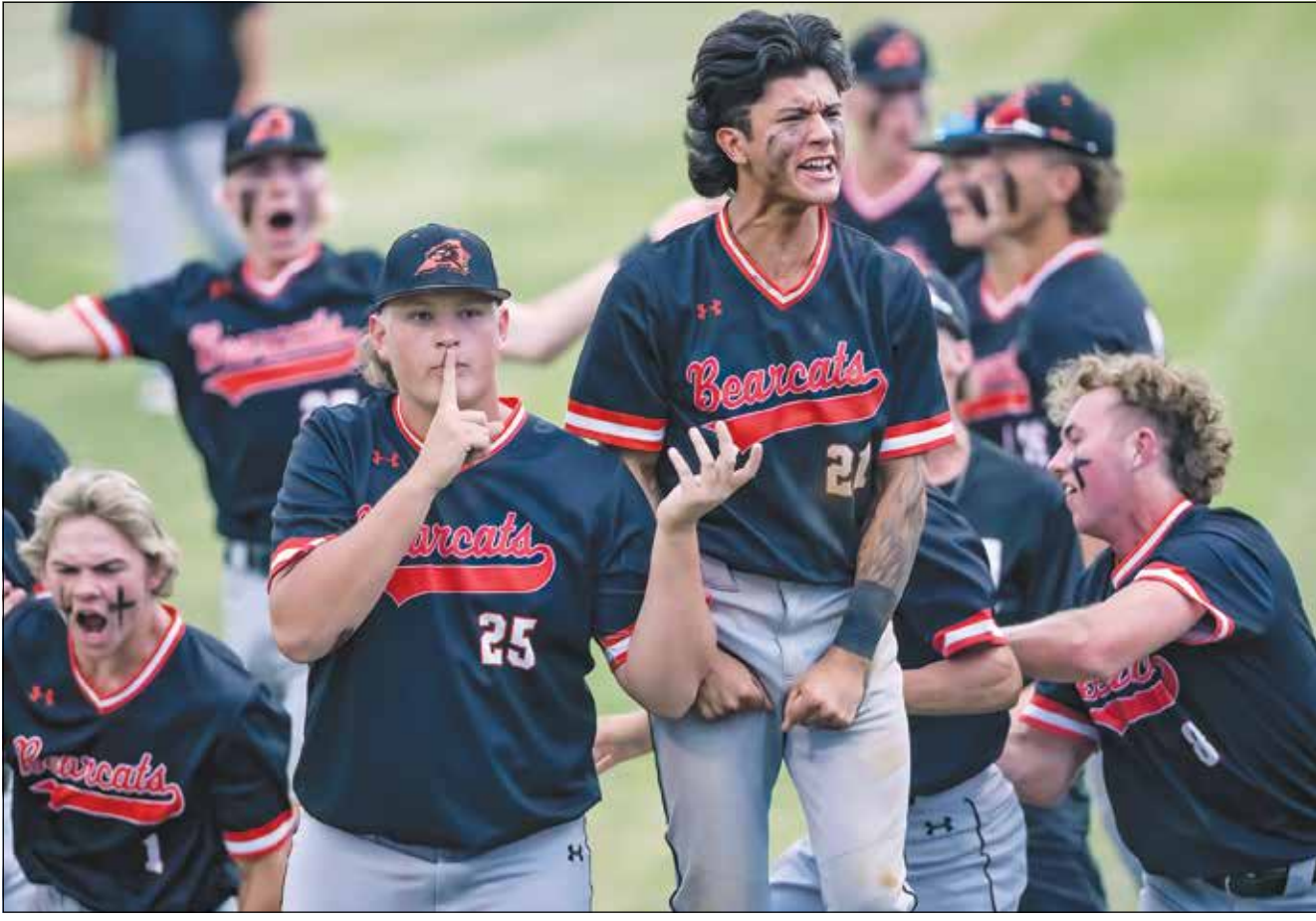
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Preston Clark came in to close out the game in the seventh inning.



Aledo first baseman Bosten Dwinell waits on the ball as he tries to pick off the runner at first.

Bearcats celebrate and silence the Elks crowd after a three-run home run by Ethan Jaques against Burluson.

KIRSTEN GALLON

BASEBALL

from page B5

"They've outscored their opponents something like 42-6," Aledo coach Chad Barry said of Centennial. "Their bats are hot at the right time. That definitely presents a big challenge for us on the mound, trying to minimize their hits."

The game with Burluson got off to a rough start as a three-run home run in the first inning gave the Elks an early lead.

The Bearcats responded in the third inning. David Jones started things off with a single to left field. Trace Mazon drove in Jones in the next at-bat. Ethan Jaques then came

up with the big play as he ripped a long fly over the left-field wall to tie the game at 3.

Cade Pulido added to the big inning with a bases-loaded single to score Andrew Cambre and Colton Whitmire. Rudel finished the Aledo scoring with a sacrifice bunt to score Adrian Guzman making the Bearcat lead 6-3.

"They say sometimes hits are contagious," Barry said. "I think we got on a roll and got a little momentum. Jaques tying it up kind of set us on our way and then the middle of the order was coming up so it didn't get any easier for [Burluson]."

After the big inning, Rudel settled in on the mound and the

defense stood tall behind him. Aledo worked out of every jam they faced, including one in the fifth inning. Burluson worked the bases loaded with two outs and the potential go-ahead run at the plate. Rudel threw three straight strikes right by him to keep the Elks down.

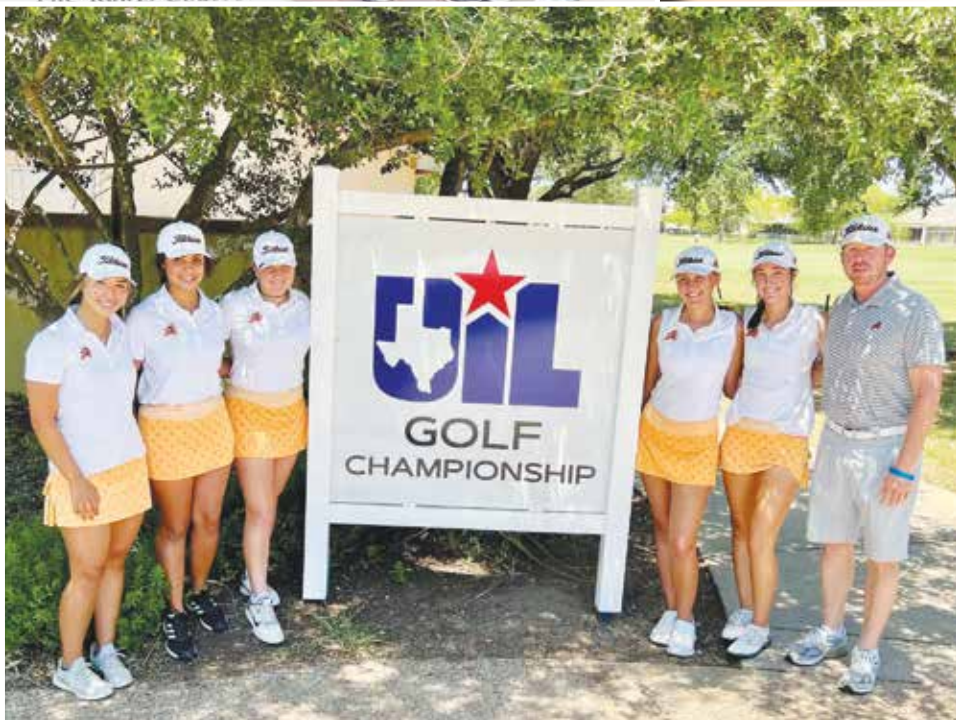
Burluson got one more run in the sixth inning following a Bearcat error, but they could not manage another hit the rest of the game.

Rudel was pulled after six full innings, 103 pitches, and seven strikeouts. Preston Clark came in to close the game out and put down the final three Elk batters in order, striking out two and preserving a 6-4 win.

"We discussed throughout the game who would come in," Barry recalled about the pitching situation. "If now who is it going to be, if later who is it going to be? We were

talking about it all game. Preston is a kid that came in last week and slammed the door and he's done that several times. So I felt like he had earned that spot."

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