

THE COMMUNITY NEWS

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BACK ON TOP

Bearcats bring home 11th State Championship

We should have known Bearcats would reign again

Analysis by Rick Mauch
The Community News

We should have known all along how this would end.

It's hard to imagine a team that had won nine state championships since 2009, including most recently a second three-peat in 2018-20, would feel the need to prove anything.

Yet, that's where the Aledo Bearcats found themselves after starting 0-2 for the first time since Tim Buchanan came to town as head coach in 1993. Even in his first season, in which the team went 2-8, they managed a split of their first two games.

But since then, only four other times had Aledo dropped back-to-back games. The last time it happened was in 2007, after which the Bearcats began what is now a national-record 111-game district winning streak.

So, perhaps we should have seen it coming. After all, those two season-opening losses weren't to just anybody. Dallas Parish Episcopal (a 24-17 road loss) finished 12-1 and won a fourth consecutive TAPPS Division I championship, while Denton Guyer (a 44-14 home loss) went on to go 14-1 and reach the 6A Division II semifinals, losing to eventual state champion DeSoto.

At the time, however, there was admittedly some concern that perhaps this was the year Aledo would have an "ordinary" season. After all, they still had a trip to face



SCOTT W. COLEMAN

Aledo High School Principal Angi Timms ducks as the Aledo Bearcats celebrate their 11th state championship in football. The Bearcats defeated College Station 52-14 on Saturday, Dec. 17, at AT&T Stadium in Dallas.

highly touted Denton Guyer, who was placed in the same district with the Bearcats in February's biennial UIL realignment — the time when it was also announced Aledo was moving up to 5A Division I.

Guyer was even picked by most to win district and end a string of 14

consecutive league championships by the Bearcats.

In the end, however, it was another memorable season for Aledo that ended in another state championship. They reeled off 14 consecutive victories and capped them with a 52-14 win over College Station

at AT&T Stadium, aka Bearcat Stadium East, on Saturday, Dec. 17.

"The way we started, no one expected us to be where we're at," Buchanan said. "These kids worked their tails off. They've literally gotten better every day."

It was the 11th in their history, started by one in 1998 before they began their run for the ages in 2009 with the first three-peat and followed with titles in 2013 and 2014. The 2013 squad, you will recall, remains the only team at any level,

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News Edition!**

ALEDO ISD

Trustees approve Chapter 313 resolution for 'Project Redeemer'

Next step in possible \$3.7 billion solar cell manufacturing plant on Walsh Ranch

By Ryan Wade
The Community News

The Aledo ISD Board of Trustees met in a special session last Friday, Dec. 16, finalizing approval for the Chapter 313 Value Limitation Application as part of a proposal that could see a \$3.7 billion solar panel facility erected on Walsh Ranch.

Following several months of coordination with the Texas State Comptroller, the Parker County Economic Development Council, and the Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce, the board passed the measure unanimously.

Perhaps the most significant piece of information to come out of the meeting was the revealing of the mystery company on the receiving end of the proposal. The 1,100 acres of ranch land situated to the north of I-20 and south of I-30 east of Aledo is the prospective future home to Hanwha Q Cells Americas Holding Corporations'

second U.S.-based solar panel manufacturing facility.

"This is an opportunity for us to support our community in engaging in economic development and creating the opportunities for a corporation to want to be here," said Aledo ISD Superintendent Dr. Susan Bohn following the meeting. "It's opportunities for jobs. It's opportunity for value in our system in all of east Parker County. It could be, hopefully, the start of getting more commercial development in the district."

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Artic blast forecast leading into Christmas

Experts provide tips on how to protect plants, pipes and pets

By Adam Russell
Texas A&M

An artic blast with sub-freezing temperatures forecast prior to the Christmas holiday weekend prompts the need to protect plants, pipes and pets.

The National Weather Service is forecasting an artic blast that will plummet temperatures below freezing beginning late evening Dec. 22 and continuing through Dec. 24 for much of Texas. The forecast calls for the coldest air since February 2021. Wind chills of single digits to below zero are forecast.

Though no snow or ice accumulations are anticipated, high wind gusts of 35 mph or higher are predicted and could lead to downed power lines.

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service experts have tips on how to protect your plants, pipes, and pets. The AgriLife Extension Disaster Education Network has multiple resources for Texans to access and prepare for the potentially severe winter ice storm.

Protect your plants

Frosts and freeze can damage or kill exposed plants, especially those in containers, said AgriLife Extension horticulture program specialist, Lisa Whittlesey, Bryan-College Station. Damage can vary greatly among plant varieties, so cold-sensitive plants will require more protection than hardier plants.

Plants in containers are more susceptible to freezing temperatures because they lack the insulation the soil provides. They should be moved inside the home or garage — any space where temperatures will stay above freezing.

If container plants cannot be moved indoors, put them on the south side of the house, water them well and pile on mulch, leaves, or

hay to protect the roots and/or cover them with a frost blanket. Cold-sensitive landscape plants can also be covered with similar protection.

When covering plants, drape them with cardboard or cloth material to the ground and secure it, she said. The idea is to trap enough warmer air escaping from the soil to protect plants from a killing freeze.

Stringing holiday lights around sensitive plants and covering them with a tarp can provide protection from light freezes, she said.

Watering plants and making sure they are not drought-stressed before freezing temperatures arrive can help, Whittlesey said. Watering just before the freeze can also help because water creates warmth and loses heat slowly.

Protecting pipes

When it comes to freeze damage to homes, protecting exposed pipes is critical when temperatures dip below freezing. Joel Pigg, AgriLife Extension program specialist and Texas Well Owner Network coordinator, Bryan-College Station, said homeowners should protect pipes around the house or in wellhouses now while the weather is good.

“It’s best to act early, rather than when the storm is coming in,” he said. “Prepare now because supplies of insulation and parts might be limited during a rush for items needed to protect pipes just before freezing temperatures arrive.”

Water pipes can freeze and burst when the outside temperature reaches 20 degrees or below, but Pigg said take precautions anytime temperatures dip below freezing. Pipes with northern exposure face increased risk of freeze.

Exposed pipes, including outdoor faucets, water sprinklers, water pipes in basements, crawl spaces, attics or garages, pipes that run along exterior walls, swimming pool supply lines and well houses are

especially susceptible to freezing temperatures.

Outdoor water systems should be drained and covered or allowed to drip slowly to help protect from damage, he said.

Products made to insulate water pipes like sleeves, insulation or heat tape should be applied to exposed water pipes. Many products are available at local plumbing supply retailers. Newspaper can also provide some protection to exposed pipes as long as exposure is not prolonged.

Foam faucet covers also add protection to an area susceptible to freezing, he said.

“Covers are around \$4, and insulation or heat tape are very inexpensive relative to paying for repairs,” he said. “Adding protective elements to any weak points is a good investment against short-term freezes.”

Leaving water running slightly does help during prolonged events, and heat lamps to raise temperatures in lesser-insulated spaces with pipes like well houses or basements can help prevent breaks, he said.

Protect livestock and pets

Farm animals and pets require extra attention when it is cold outside. Most livestock species are adaptable; however, it’s important to provide animals shelter to protect them from cold, blustery, and wet conditions. Once a shelter is in place, maintaining the area can ensure animals stay healthy.

The Texas A&M Veterinary Medical Diagnostic Laboratory, TVMDL, experts advise keeping outdoor animals bedding replaced will ensure they have an excellent place to escape the winter elements. Along those same lines, make sure that clean, adequate water supplies are available and will be easy to maintain during freezing conditions.

Energy and protein are important levels to evaluate

during a cold winter, which includes high calorie food for companion animals as well as quality forage for livestock. TVMDL experts advise evaluating forage before offering it to livestock.

Additional tips for pets are offered by American Humane:

- Leave your pets’ coats a little longer in the winter to provide as much warmth as possible.
- Keep your pets inside, both during the day and night.
- If dogs must be left outside for any period of time, they should have a draft-free shelter large enough to stand and turn around in, yet small enough to retain body heat. Use a layer of straw or other bedding material to help insulate them against the cold. Make sure the entrance faces away from the incoming wind and snow.
- Keep your cats indoors. Sometimes cats left outdoors in cold weather seek shelter and heat under the hoods of automobiles and are injured or killed when the ignition is turned on. Banging loudly on the hood of
- Salt and de-icers: Many pets like to go outside to romp and stomp in the snow, but people use powerful salt and chemicals on their sidewalks to combat ice buildup. Thoroughly clean your pets’ paws, legs and abdomen after they have been outside, to prevent ingestion of toxic substances and to prevent their pads from becoming dry and irritated. Signs of toxic ingestion include excessive drooling, vomiting and depression.
- Ice and snow: When you let your pets in from a walk or a romp outside, make sure to wipe their paws and undersides — get those ice balls off as soon as possible, as they can cause frostbite. Check with your veterinarian if you suspect frostbite.
- Use nontoxic antifreeze. Antifreeze is great-tasting to pets, but even a very small amount can be deadly.

FIREWOOD

from page A3

Similarly, native pathogens such as oak wilt, have killed oak trees in Central Texas in epidemic proportions.

Each of these forest pests cause severe ecological and economic impacts over time. While they can spread on their own, accidental transport by humans is one of the main ways they can move greater distances, sometimes quickly jumping state and county lines. Firewood is one of the main ways many of these pests are moved, regardless of how seasoned or old the firewood is. Even wood that looks clean and healthy may still have insect eggs or fungal spores that can start new infestations.

Limit the spread

“We can limit the spread of invasive tree pests,” said Gomez. “The best rule of thumb is to burn the firewood close to where it’s bought or picked up. Moving firewood can easily introduce insects and diseases to new areas, particularly during hunting and camping seasons.”

For diseases like oak wilt, this is critical. Transporting and storing infected wood from red oaks can spread oak wilt fungal spores to previously uninfected neighborhoods and properties. Because live oaks tend to grow in large, dense groups, oak wilt spreads quickly, and one infected tree can lead to large patches of dead and dying trees.

While firewood is an important commodity in the fall and winter, Texans can help prevent the spread of these pests and diseases by purchasing, collecting and burning firewood locally.

For more information, visit www.dont-movefirewood.org.



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PARKER COUNTY

Rainwater harvesting grant program under way

Up to 100% funding is available

By Upper Trinity Groundwater Conservation District
Special to The Community News

The Upper Trinity Groundwater Conservation District has announced a new annual rainwater harvesting grant program for Montague, Wise, Parker, and Hood Counties.

UTGCD encourages organizations within the district area to consider the addition of rainwater harvesting systems to structures and organizational buildings.

Maintained systems significantly reduce groundwater usage, utility costs, erosion, and weathering of vegetative surfaces. The State of Texas publicly supports rainwater harvesting efforts while recognizing exemplary systems each year via the Texas Water Development Board.

There is no cost to apply to the program, and multiple systems may be granted within an application year. Up to 100% of funding is available to grantees, with multiple cost sharing options available as well.

The grant application period is open now and UTGCD will accept applications through Feb. 28, 2023.

To access application documents, video guides, and resources on rainwater harvesting, visit uppertrinitygcd.com (<https://uppertrinitygcd.com/rainwater-harvesting-grants/>)

and navigate to the grant resource hub.

Administratively complete applications will be graded via a numerical scoring rubric, available to applicants as part of program transparency.

Applicants will be able to track the status of their application via the district website. Organizations that fall into the below listed categories may apply. Interested parties can reach out to UTGCD to verify their eligibility.

Eligible entities and organizations include the following:

- Cities;
- Counties;
- Independent School Districts;
- Municipal Utility Districts;
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- Emergency Service Districts;
- Volunteer Fire Departments;
- Non-profit organizations;
- Other entities that provide public service consistent with the purposes of or that otherwise benefit the District;
- Other private entities to which the public has access.

For questions regarding the application process, application materials, and status updates, call Jill Garcia with the Upper Trinity GCD at 817-523-5200 or email jill@uppertrinitygcd.com.



Read this story online

PARKER COUNTY

Man arrested after early morning pursuit

By Danie Huffman
Parker County Sheriff's Office

Parker County Sheriff's deputies arrested a man following an early morning pursuit on Tuesday, Dec. 20.

Sheriff Russ Authier said the incident and arrest stemmed from a traffic stop in the 15800-Block of South US Highway 377 shortly after 2 a.m.

Sheriff's deputies observed a white suburban with no license plate carrying a male driver and female passenger entering the Wheatland area heading east.

The driver failed to follow the deputy's instructions during the stop and fled the scene, also failing to yield to the deputy's lights and sirens. The driver led law enforcement officers in a high-speed pursuit.

The suspect driver reached speeds of 80 to 100-miles per hour while additional officers from Benbrook and Fort Worth Police responded to assist in the pursuit as the driver entered East Interstate 20.

The driver exited at Berry Street heading east, turning south on the service road and back on Berry Street, heading west. The driver continued on side streets, reaching speeds in excess of 60-miles-per-hour.

The chase continued to Meacham and Western Center, where the driver changed directions again heading south on Interstate 35.

The driver merged onto Interstate 30 as law enforcement officers set up spike strips near Chisolm Trail, where the driver ran over the strips but continued in the pursuit.

Law enforcement officers noted the driver had no front tire as he traveled past Las Vegas Trail, where a second spike strip was deployed. The driver then threw a "meth pipe" out of the vehicle's window and stopped the vehicle near West Point, where the female fled on foot. The driver continued driving on Alameda, where officers observed the suspect armed with a 9mm handgun.

The female was apprehended shortly thereafter and taken into custody by Fort Worth Police.

Officers shut down traffic at West Loop 820 and Alameda exit ramp, where they held the suspect at gunpoint in the roadway as negotiations ensued amid a standoff. The suspect surrendered around 4:30 a.m., and was taken into custody without further incident.

The driver was identified as Bradley Travis Olson, 32. He was booked into the Parker County Jail on charges of evading arrest detention with vehicle and unlawfully carrying a weapon.

Sheriff Authier extended his appreciation for the cooperation and assistance from Fort Worth and Benbrook Police Departments. The case investigation continues with additional charges pending the investigation.



Read this story online

NEWS YOU CAN USE

Prevent spread of invasive pests, diseases by not moving firewood

Accidental transport through wood is a key contributor

By Texas A&M Forest Service
Special to The Community News

Texas A&M Forest Service urges all Texans, and especially outdoor enthusiasts, to help reduce the spread of oak wilt and invasive insects by taking preventive measures and being knowledgeable when collecting,

transporting, and purchasing firewood.

As Texans travel for hunting or camping trips, they may unknowingly be bringing deadly, invasive pests and diseases along with the firewood.

"Many devastating, tree-killing pests present in Texas forests live and breed inside firewood," said Demian Gomez, Texas A&M Forest Service Regional Forest Health coordinator. "Some wood borers, such as the invasive

emerald ash borer and redbay ambrosia beetle, have already caused devastating impacts, practically wiping out entire tree species from some regions of the country."

The emerald ash borer, present in North Texas, has killed millions of ash trees across the eastern U.S. The redbay ambrosia beetle continues to spread west from the southeast, killing redbay and sassafras trees along the way.

Turn to **FIREWOOD**, page A2

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Krier still bringing his best after all these years

By Rick Mauch
The Community News

In the movie "City Slickers," Curly (Jack Palance) tells Mitch (Billy Crystal) to find "the one thing." He was referencing finding the thing you do best and do it to the best of your capability and success will follow.

Palance won an Oscar for his performance. Brian Krier, who Curly might as well have been talking about, has been winning the hearts — and stomachs — of many fans for nearly three decades as the epitome of that statement.

Brian and his wife, DeeAnna, are the owners of Baker's Ribs in Weatherford.

Raised mostly in Kansas, Brian would come to Dallas for the summers. Since he was 14 Brian was working for his uncle Joe Duncan as an apprentice.

"I became a pitmaster because of my uncle Joe. He taught me very well. He was tough on me. He taught me a work ethic like no other," Brian said.

"Brian's work and dedication is like an Olympic champion, a special gift," DeeAnna said, which prompted a quick response from the ever-humble Brian, "I don't know about that. I just love to cook. I love to see the smiles of people's faces when they are eating and enjoying their experience at Baker's Ribs."

After he graduated high school and college in Kansas, Brian moved to Dallas to learn more about the barbecue business so he could some day own a restaurant of his own, like his uncle and the original Baker's Ribs in Dallas. His plans were to move back to Lawrence, Kansas and open his restaurant there, but then he met DeeAnna Mercer, married her, and the Metroplex became his home.

Coming to Weatherford

Brian and DeeAnna lived in Dallas the first five years of their marriage before heading west.

"We were ready to move to a smaller community with less traffic and start a family," Brian said. "Uncle Joe found this location in Weatherford. It was a Colter's Barbecue that had closed, so it was perfect for us."

Joe was their partner for the first three years after the Weatherford restaurant opened in 2000, then Brian and DeeAnna set out on their own and incorporated Oink Oink inc.,

dba Baker's Ribs. In 2008 they added the Original Fried Pie Shop to sell the ever-popular fried pies that put them in a very good position for being a favorite tourist attraction.

"People love the fried pies because they evoke emotions from their childhood," Brian said. "The aroma reminds them of mom or grandma making those fried pies at home. The pies can be topped off with free soft serve ice cream. You can't beat that!"

Recent changes

After 27-plus years of smoking brisket just with hickory wood, at the suggestion of DeeAnna, Brian is serving up craft barbecue styles.

"You know, to keep up with the times," Brian said with a smile. "Barbecue enthusiasts like a lot of the new craft styles and travel all over to taste and rank them."

Brian came up with his own special seasoning mix that makes the Prime Creekstone Certified Black Angus Beef Brisket rich in flavor. DeeAnna calls it Brian's Kick'n Brisket because of the depth of flavor.

"No barbecue sauce necessary, but our sauce is excellent," she said.

The ribs and pulled pork shoulder and chicken breast have always been seasoned with the Baker's Ribs rub that founder uncle Joe created. The only meat that has been changed is the brisket, and the feedback — no pun intended — has been great, DeeAnna said.

"The public loves it! We are getting rave reviews on it. Customers come up and say, 'Wow, that was a great barbecue sandwich,'" she said.

But don't ask what's in the special seasoning, just enjoy it, Brian said.

"Now, you know all seasonings are a secret. But, obviously salt, pepper, garlic just to name of few," he said.

Faith and family

The Kriers credit the success of Oink Oink Inc. and Baker's Weatherford largely to their deep religious faith, community involvement (DeeAnna's specialty), and a loyal staff, which includes a management team that has been with them for almost two decades.

Turn to **KRIER**, page A5



ALAN MERCER

Brian Krier became a pitmaster nearly three decades ago and he and wife DeeAnna are still serving up delicious barbecue and more at Baker's Ribs.

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STATE

from page A1

from peewee to the NFL, ever to score more than 1,000 points in a season.

It was also the eighth championship as a head coach for Buchanan, who dubbed himself “Eight-Time Timmy” at the press conference following the recent title game. He is only the fifth coach in Texas history with that many championships, tying G.A. Moore and trailing only Gordon Wood, Jerry Burkhart and Scott Surratt with nine each.

In fact, Surratt won his ninth last week as Carthage captured the 4A Division II championship with a 42-0 win over Wimberley, prompting someone in the press box to suggest Aledo and Carthage play in the near future.

While it has become a cliché statement, there is a solid truth in “taking it one game at a time.” That’s what the Bearcats did, not letting the results of the first two games weigh them down in opening district with a 49-20 victory at Justin Northwest, which also reached the playoffs. From there, the victories just kept piling up, along with the confidence and determination.

Another cliché is “never underestimate the heart of a champion.” However, nothing else seems suitable when describing this season’s Bearcats.

“Coach Buc says take care of the little things and winning will take care of itself,” said senior defensive lineman Ansel Din-Mbuh, who is headed to play at Washington State University.

That championship heartbeat grew stronger and louder with each step closer to proving naysayers wrong, to show that all other programs should still look up to Aledo as the epitome of success. It was referenced by players after they were an underdog at Burleson Centennial but left with a 64-21

victory, then again when they were underdogs but won 35-21 at Denton Ryan.

In those two games quarterback Hauss Hejny showed that he is a championship leader, accounting for almost 750 yards of offense and nine touchdowns. He would go on to be named offensive MVP of the state championship game, while his top receiver, senior Jalen Pope, set a 5A championship game record with eight catches for 228 yards and three touchdowns (which tied another mark).

Junior defensive back Jake Gillespie was the state title game defensive MVP.

Even in the state semifinals the Bearcats found themselves underdogs before knocking off previously perfect and No. 1 ranked Longview (14-1), overcoming an 11-point halftime deficit for a 17-14 win. The game featured a two-hour delay for lightning as play was stopped with only 56 seconds left in regulation.

Offensive lineman Isaac Sohn, who missed the final few games of the season with an injury, said he knew his team was on a mission that wasn’t going to end until they held another trophy high.

“It’s amazing. It’s next man up,” said the University of Texas-San Antonio commit. “We all had the same desire.”

Buchanan said each championship is special, but this one — which was not expected, given how the season began — is extremely so.

“The kids never quit, the coaches never quit,” he said, adding that such determination will make them “very successful in life.”

Yep, we should have known how this would end.

Read more about the state championship on page B1. The Community News will publish its 11th State Championship Section in mid-January.



Read this story online

PROJECT

from page A1

Q Cells is also considering locations in South Carolina and Georgia, where its flagship U.S. manufacturing facility sits in Dalton.

A second site in DFW was also being considered. However, the board was informed that deal fell apart prior to the meeting on Friday when Dallas ISD revoked their proposal due to disagreements on future tax receipts with neighboring school districts.

The proposal set forth by AISD will limit the tax value for maintenance and operations (M&O) purposes to \$80 million annually. Meanwhile, the portion of the project designated for interest and sinking (I&S) purposes will remain fully taxable if the proposal is accepted by Q Cells.

Should the company accept the offer to build the new facility on Walsh Ranch, the district will not experience any loss in tax revenue as state revenue will make up the difference.



Read this story online

Who is Hanwha Q Cells?

Hanwha Q Cells (<https://www.hanwha.com/en.html>) was founded in 1999 in Thalheim, Germany, known then simply as Q Cells. Early

in its inception the company sought to revolutionize solar panel technology to make panels more efficient and cost-effective.

Still hemorrhaging losses suffered during The Great Recession of 2008, Q Cells filed for bankruptcy in 2011. Just a few months removed from bankruptcy, the Hanwha Group — a South Korean business conglomerate — purchased Q Cells in August 2012. The original headquarters in Thalheim is still home to the company’s engineering offices.

Since 2012 Q Cells has expanded its global reach with manufacturing facilities in Qidong, China; Cyberjaya in Malaysia; two facilities in South Korea located at Eumseong and Jincheon; and the lone facility in America residing in Dalton, Georgia.

Q Cells has become the world’s largest manufacturer of photovoltaic solar panels. The company increased total sales to \$60.6 billion in 2021 up from \$55.8 billion in 2020. The company expects sales to top \$66.3 billion in 2022 according to the company website.

According to the company website, Q Cells solar panels have an average lifespan of 25 years in real world conditions.

KRIER

from page A4

“DeeAnna is the face of Baker’s Ribs and I’m the behind the scenes guy, which are both necessary,” Brian said.

In 2008 the Kriers were moved to give Bibles away in the foyer of the restaurant. To date they have given away more than 15,000. No purchase necessary.

“DeeAnna and I pray over those Bibles to touch people’s lives and bless them,” Brian said.

Their family has grown to include daughter Heather, 33, from Brian’s first marriage, a Navy veteran of more than eight years; and daughter Hannah, 20, who they adopted at birth from A Place for Grace Children’s Home. Though not officially adopted, Brian and DeeAnna consider

Hannah’s three birth brothers family: Hayden (24), Christopher (23), and Ethan (21), all of whom have worked at the restaurant.

“All my staff are my family and I am one very blessed man,” Brian said.

Brian and DeeAnna opened their second Baker’s Ribs in Mineral Wells. It lasted five years before it was destroyed by a fire. They sold the building and opted to focus all their attention on the Weatherford location, albeit with a few new employees.

“The managers from Mineral Wells came to Weatherford and are still here today,” Brian said.

And that’s not all

With their 23rd anniversary just around the corner in March, they decided to add a full bar with


cocktails, frozen margaritas, and five tap beers. They also added bar tables and a few additional country decorations. They call it Baker’s Comfy Corner Bar.

“I must say the patrons are telling us our draft beer is the coldest in Parker County,” DeeAnna said excitedly. “It holds 25 people and is a great place for private gatherings. We are getting lots of compliments.”

As for the future of Baker’s Ribs Weatherford, Brian said simply, “I’m going to keep smoking meats until the good Lord tells me otherwise. Everything I do is through the prompting of the Lord. I am so grateful for this opportunity to serve my community.”



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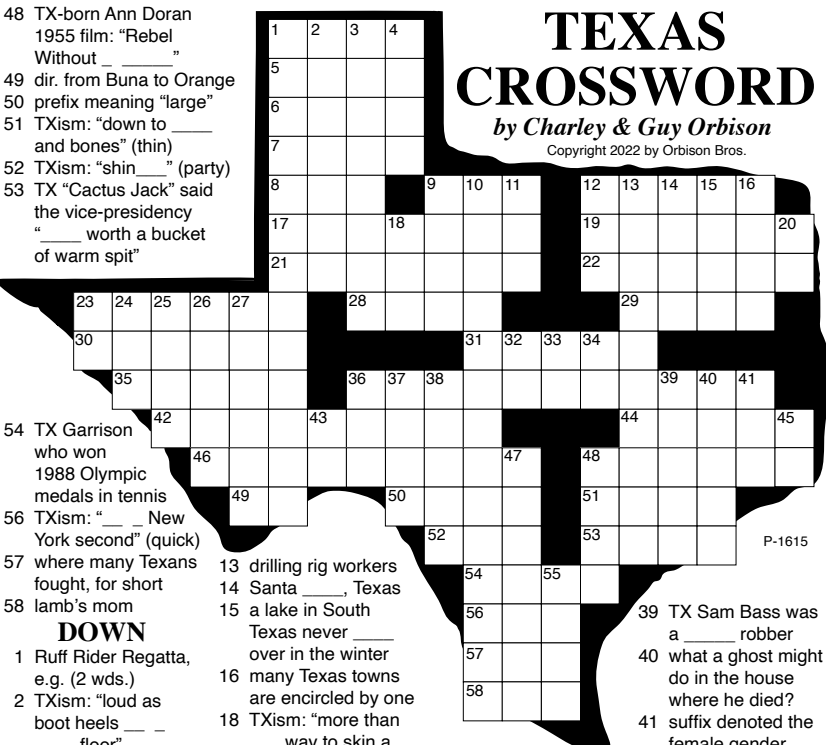
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TEXAS CROSSWORD

by Charley & Guy Orbison
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ACROSS

1 Garden City is seat of Glass _____ County
5 archaic "soon"
6 softest mineral found in Texas
7 TXism: "got _____ in the oven" (pregnant)
8 British mother
9 org. for academic psychology
12 TXism: "skinny as _____"
17 "trees" in Spanish
19 military NCO
21 Stamford's "Texas Cowboy"
22 TXism: "tight enough to pick a _____" (good fence)
23 Texas tennis teams can raise funds with a "_____ -thon"
28 ooze
29 catch one's breath
30 Queen Elizabeth II had _____ of 70 years
31 audience reaction at a comedy club
35 TXism: "got _____ under his saddle" (irritable)
36 "The Big Tree" at Goose Island is the _____ state (live oak)
42 TXism: "numerous as ants on _____"
44 rub out
46 TXism: "about _____ Red River mud" (confusing)

DOWN

1 Ruff Rider Regatta, e.g. (2 wds.)
2 TXism: "loud as boot heels _____ floor"
3 seat of Colorado County
4 Corpus Christi FM 9 falsehood (2 wds.)
10 TX Patrick Swayze was this periodical's 1991 "Sexiest Man Alive" (2 wds.)
11 fed. ID no.
12 Texas "fire _____"

48 TX-born Ann Doran 1955 film: "Rebel Without _____"
49 dir. from Buna to Orange
50 prefix meaning "large"
51 TXism: "down to _____ and bones" (thin)
52 TXism: "shin _____" (party)
53 TX "Cactus Jack" said the vice-presidency "_____ worth a bucket of warm spit"

13 drilling rig workers
14 Santa _____, Texas
15 a lake in South Texas never _____ over in the winter
16 many Texas towns are encircled by one
18 TXism: "more than _____ way to skin a cat" (alternative)
20 Texas "Monkee," Nesmith (init.)
23 "Alamo City" init.
24 Astro Verlander stat.
25 country singer McEntire
26 "widow" in Spanish
27 fancy word for "exit"
32 TXism: "old _____ sin"

33 Longhorn univ. in Austin
34 U.S. Army soldier
36 "O" of IOU
37 good farming soil
38 a Houston doctor who had a national television spot: "_____ Duke"

39 TX Sam Bass was a _____ robber
40 what a ghost might do in the house where he died?
41 suffix denoted the female gender
43 state I.D.
45 boot width
47 on highway 496, ten miles northwest of Fort Worth
48 largest continent
55 TXism: "he's on a first _____ basis with the bottom of the deck" (card cheat)

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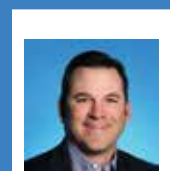
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Capital Highlights

Most Texas pregnancy deaths preventable



Gary Borders
gborders@texaspress.com

A long-awaited state report concludes most pregnancy-related deaths in Texas in 2019 were preventable and disproportionately affected Black women.

The report, issued by the Texas Department of State Health Services and the Texas Maternal Mortality and Morbidity Committee, indicated deaths were mainly attributable to hemorrhage, mental health conditions, and blood clots. Also playing a role were discrimination and violence, according to a Dallas Morning News analysis of the report.

DSHS issued the report after months of delay, which drew criticism from members of the committee and maternal health advocates, as well as Democratic lawmakers.

Fourteen women died during pregnancy over the study period, while another 45 died up to a year after giving birth. The Legislature in the coming session is again likely to consider extending post-partum Medicaid assistance from six months to one year, the News reported.

The “consistence of maternal health disparities” was noted by the committee as a key theme that runs through the report. Black women are twice as likely to experience serious health issues during childbirth.

“The report makes clear that state leaders must do more to prevent maternal deaths and support healthy pregnancies among Texas women of all backgrounds, regardless but particularly among Black women,” said Diana Forester, Director of Health Policy for the advocacy group Texans Care for Children.

Tornadoes cause millions in timber damage

A series of tornadoes throughout northeast Texas in November damaged timber on 13,000 acres, causing an estimated \$10 million in damages, according to a survey by the Texas A&M Forest Service.

Storms that swept across that area on Nov. 4 resulted in seven tornadoes, five of which affected timberland in Bowie, Cass, Henderson, Morris, and Red River counties, according to the forest service. A storm in Morris County resulted in one death.

Damaged trees were uprooted, snapped off below the crown, or left leaning significantly. Most of the damage to timber was on private property, according to the report.

“We’ve developed protocols for rapidly assessing timber damage following major disasters that have become a model for similar efforts across the South,” said Dr. Aaron Stottlemeyer of the forest service. “Our agency performance this work as a service to the people of Texas.”

Drought having considerable economic impact

The state’s ongoing drought has cost the Texas economy nearly \$7.62 billion in direct agricultural

losses, according to the Texas Water Development Board. With very little rainfall during the planting season, this year’s drought could have a similar effect next year on West Texas farmers and ranchers, who sustained serious losses in 2022. That’s according to a recent report from the state comptroller’s office.

Currently about 15% of the state is experiencing extreme or exceptional drought conditions, while nearly 90% of the state still is abnormally dry, the report said.

“The state continues to work on improved management of its water resources as it continues to experience rapid growth in the urban areas, which potentially can compete with agricultural interests for a finite resource,” the report said.

“Whether in times of drought or flood, responsible water management ensures Texans see water as a resource — not a crisis. Texans around the state are employing innovative strategies to turn our water challenges into opportunities,” said Texas Comptroller Glenn Hegar.

A welcome piece of news is that November was wetter than usual across much of the state.

Storage of the state’s water supply reservoirs is at 70% of capacity, 11 percentage points below normal for this time of year. Despite the bit of relief Texas experienced in November, drought conditions are expected to expand over the next few months, according to Dr. Mark Wentzel, hydrologist with the Texas Water Development Board.

Wentzel wrote that La Niña conditions, which are largely responsible for the current drought,

are expected to dissipate by spring, which may bring much-needed relief to drought-affected areas.

‘Seizing the moment’ in higher ed

Texas Commissioner of Higher Education Harrison Keller has called on leaders in higher education, industry, philanthropy, and government to “seize the moment” to meet three challenges facing Texas higher education today. Those areas are educational attainment, workforce education, and research and development.

Speaking to nearly 300 attending this year’s Texas Higher Education Leadership Conference, Harrison said the foundation is in place because of added funding after the pandemic radically changed how higher education met the needs of its students.

“The heart of the matter is that expectations for higher education have changed, faster than anyone expected,” said Commissioner Keller. “Now, there is a significant disconnect between the scale of our needs in each of these areas versus what our higher education institutions and policies were designed to do.”

West Texas quake prompts RRC response

Another 5.4 magnitude earthquake, this time about a dozen miles north of Midland, prompted the Texas Railroad Commission to send inspectors to the area on Friday evening to “protect public safety and the environment.” RRC inspectors

are examining disposal activity at injection wells near the site of the earthquake.

This comes after a similar-sized temblor was reported in Reeves County, near Pecos. That quake spurred the commission to implement several revisions designed to reduce the occurrence of such events, generally believed to be caused by water injected into disposal wells during oil and gas operations.

The goal, according to the RRC, is to “address the intensity and frequency of earthquakes in the area.”

The West Texas area that will come under the restrictions has been expanded northward to the New Mexico border. There are 78 active disposal wells in that area, according to the RRC.

New COVID-19 cases rise slightly

The number of new COVID-19 cases reported in Texas during the past week inched up to 29,557, with 84 deaths reported by the Coronavirus Resource Center at Johns Hopkins University. The Texas Department of State Health Services reported 2,181 lab-confirmed hospitalizations across the state as of Sunday, also a slight increase.

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.



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Your Views

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Congressional action needed on cancer issues

Like most of us this time of year, Congress has a lengthy must-do list and at the top of that list should be passing policies to save more lives from cancer and improve patient care for those who are diagnosed with the disease.

As an advocate on cancer issues, I want Congress to pass critical legislation increasing federal funding for cancer research and prevention, creating a pathway for Medicare coverage of multi-cancer early detection tests once they’re FDA approved and clinical benefit is shown, and improving patient quality of life across all stages of the disease by expanding access to palliative care.

This must-do list is not a wish list. These policies are all essential, proven ways Congress can positively impact the lives of millions of American cancer patients, survivors, and their families this year and for years to come.

There are few lists more important than this one and the end of the year the best time to get things done. I urge Rep. Kay Granger to work with her colleagues to ensure these important cancer policies get passed in any final year-end legislation.

- *Cindie Pierce Volunteer, American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN)*
Aledo



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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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Dr. Michelle Parker has been in practice for 12 years, and has built a remarkable team of healers who deal holistically with their patients, providing the only pediatric certified chiropractic clinic in Parker County, family chiropractic care, pre-natal massage, cranio-sacral therapy, myofascial release, modern day sensory gym, shockwave for scar tissue, breastfeeding support, functional nutrition guidance, and Kinesio Taping®.

If you have been frustrated with chronic illness, Dr. Parker has been through the same struggle.

“I had a history of multiple autoimmune conditions plus Chronic Lyme and my oldest son had suspected Tourette’s and PANDAS at one point in time,” Dr. Parker said. “I was on a mission to try to figure out everything I could for our brain and body.”

In the process of finding answers for her son, she found answers for herself as well.

“I found answers for the root cause of why my body was more prone to autoimmunity, ways to help my body heal, and now living a vibrant life,” Dr. Parker said. “Everything about our facility is trying to educate and empower families about living and raising healthy families.”

There are three female doctors and one massage therapist at the facility. “All of us are very trained with pregnant women and children, but we do see a lot of dads and grandparents,” Parker said “and each of our doctors is very much skilled in something a little bit different.”

Dr. Parker, in addition to being a Doctor of Chiropractic, has three additional certifications. She is a Diplomate in Pediatrics, an International Board Certified Lactation Consultant, and has a Fellowship in Childhood Neurodevelopmental Disorders.

Dr. Leslie Hasbini is trained in something called Injury Recall where she is able to determine if an area of pain in the body is from an old injury or potentially something emotional. She is a firm or gentle adjuster.

Kayla Ahlfinger is knowledgeable in high quality nutrition, muscle rehab for sports injuries, and Detoxing the body.

Massage therapist Rachel Gabsi has been certified in prenatal and postpartum for 18-plus years.

“Collectively 15 women work under this one roof together. And all of us are on a mission to live healthier lives and walk a path of peace,” Parker said. “And so doing it together has proven to be much more successful and is more fulfilling.”

Parker said all 15 learn from each other, and also learn their patients who may find information and share it with them.

“Which then allows us to take that information for another patient that may change their life,” Parker said. “I want to just let people know that we are here and the place to come for hope when a lot of people can’t find answers. There is nothing worse than being on this path of trying to make your body or your child’s body healthier and feeling like nobody understands what you are going through.”

The Chiropractic Place for Mommy and Me is located in the blue building tucked off-street at 203 E. Oak Street directly behind The Flower Shop in Aledo. For more information, call 817-441-1921, email DrMichelleParker@gmail.com, or visit the website at www.thechiropracticplaceformommyandme.com

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FOOTBALL

Buchanan notches eighth, Bearcats win 11th state title

Pope sets one record, ties another

By Rick Mauch
The Community News

On a day when their top wide receiver was setting one state championship game record and tying another, the Aledo Bearcats extended a record they already owned with their 11th state football championship.

This time it was College Station who was the victim as Aledo controlled the game from start to finish en route to a 52-14 victory in the Class 5A Division I final Saturday at AT&T Stadium in Arlington.

Jalen Pope caught eight passes for 228 yards and three touchdowns. He set a 5A record for most yardage in a game and tied the mark for most TD receptions with scores of 7, 51, and 76 yards.

The previous yardage record of 220 was shared by Jalen Preston of Manvel and Cade Saustad of Dallas Highland Park in a game against each other in 2017. Pope joins six other players with a trio of TD catches in the title game.

"Jalen is another one of those kids who's been a program guy," Aledo head coach Tim Buchanan said. "He's continued to grow — literally — bigger, stronger, faster every year."

College Station coach Stoney Pryor, who is in his first season as Cougars head coach, said of his team's inability to cover Pope, "He's really good, there's one difficulty. Their staff did a really good job of

scheming against us. Aledo has a lot of weapons that make them the danger they are."

Eight-time Timmy

Buchanan joined elite company as only the fifth high school coach in Texas with eight or more state championships as Saturday was his eighth leading the Bearcats. Steve Wood won titles in 2014, 2016, and 2018 when Buchanan stepped away to be solely the athletic director.

Buchanan is tied with G.A. Moore for fourth. They are one behind Gordon Wood, Jerry Burkhart, and Scott Surratt, who won his ninth Friday by leading Carthage to the 4A Division II crown with a 42-0 win over Wimberley.

At the post-game press conference Buchanan made a reference to a conversation he had with Dallas South Oak Cliff head Coach Clifton Todd. Todd jokingly said to call him "Two-time Todd" after the Bears repeated as 5A Division II state champions with a 34-24 win over Port Neches Groves Friday.

Like Buchanan, Todd's Bears overcame a slow start (0-3) to go undefeated the rest of the season for the title.

As a closing line to his press conference, Buchanan said with a smile to call him "Eight-time Timmy!"

Domination from the start

Five minutes into the game the only thing College Station fans had



SCOTT W. COLEMAN

The College Station defense spent the day playing catch-up to Aledo senior wide receiver Jalen Pope (11), who scored three touchdowns, matching the state championship game record, and setting a new record for most yardage.

to look forward to was the band at halftime. As Professor Harold Hill might say, it was domination with a capital D and that rhymes with T and that stands for another title.

This game was about as close as Padre Island and Bismarck, North Dakota, as Aledo was never really

threatened. In fact, the Bearcats' first drive began at the Cougars' 49 after Gavin Olenjack's opening kickoff return of 31 yards and ended with a 30-yard touchdown run by quarterback Hauss Hejny.

A forced fumble by Jake Gillespie was recovered by Davhon Keys to

set up Keys' own short touchdown run. Then, Gillespie returned a punt 51 yards to put Aledo in business at the College Station 15, followed shortly after by a 21-0 lead when Keys scored again heading into the second quarter.

Turn to BEARCATS, page B2

Buchanan to be honored

Named to Texas High School Coaches Association Hall of Honor

By Rick Mauch
The Community News

Shortly before leading his team to an 11th state championship, Aledo Bearcats football coach Tim Buchanan received news that he will be inducted into the Texas High School Coaches Association Hall of Honor next summer.

Buchanan is one of five coaches who will be honored at the THSCA Hall of Honor Banquet sponsored by Balfour at 7 p.m. on Saturday, July 15, at the Marriott Marquis Hotel in Houston. The banquet is held in conjunction with the annual THSCA Coaching School and Convention, which will take place July 16-18 in Houston.

Tickets will be available March 1.

Buchanan has coached the Bearcats to eight of the program's state-record 11 championships, the most recent coming Saturday when they defeated College Station 52-14 for the Class 5A Division I title at AT&T Stadium in Arlington. After the game, Buchanan jokingly asked to be referred to as "Eight Time Timmy!"

"I am extremely honored to be a member of the THSCA Hall of

Honor Class of 2023. It is the ultimate honor for a high school coach in Texas," Buchanan said. "However, I know that the great coaches and players that I have been surrounded by during my career are the reason for my success and induction."

Aledo Athletic Director Steve Wood, a winner of three state championships coaching the Bearcats (2014, 2016, 2018) said the honor for Buchanan is long overdue.

"If anyone ever deserved to be in there, it's him," Wood said. "There has never been a more deserving coach. I'm probably partial, but I'm very proud of him. How could you not be?"

Buchanan attended Abilene Christian University on a football scholarship for one semester before transferring to Southwest Texas State University where he received his Bachelor of Science degree in Education. He received his Master's from Texas A&M in College Station.

Of his 39 years of experience in education, the last 29 have been at Aledo ISD, where all of his head coaching has been. He began his coaching career as an assistant in Florence in 1983. He also coached as an assistant at Bastrop, The Colony, Killeen Ellison and A&M Consolidated.

During his tenure at A&M Consolidated, he was the defensive

Turn to HONORED, page B3



MERCEDES MAYER/ALEDO ISD

Aledo High School head football coach Tim Buchanan celebrates with his players after the Area Championship against Lubbock Cooper this season.

BEARCATS

from page B1

By halftime the advantage was 35-0 on the strength of two of Pope's touchdown catches.

The offense racked up almost 500 yards, almost twice as many as the defense surrendered. The defense registered seven tackles for loss and three sacks, along with forcing three turnovers.

And special teams, a part of the game of which most coaches preach importance, was a big factor. Along with the two long kick returns setting up touchdowns, Clay Murador kicked a 37-yard field goal and was 6-for-6 on extra-point kicks, while Cole Crawford was perfect on his lone PAT kick.

"We put really good players out there," Buchanan said. "We work a bunch on special teams. A lot of people give lip service, but we work a bunch."

Back to familiarity

A season that began in the most unfamiliar of ways ended up in what has become a usual fashion for the Bearcats.

Aledo opened 0-2 for the first time since Buchanan took the helm in 1993. They fell 24-17 at Dallas Parish Episcopal, followed by a 44-14 home loss to Denton Guyer.

Then came a string of 14 consecutive victories that culminated in another state title for Aledo, their 10th in the past 14 seasons. It is also their fourth in five seasons.

"It starts in practice. Even when we were 0-2, we're out there practicing hard. We play as one," said senior defensive lineman Ansel Din-Mbuh.

"Coach Buc always talks about the state championship winner is going to be the one who practices



SCOTT W. COLEMAN

Jake Gillespie (0) was all over the field on offense and defense. Named Defensive MVP, Gillespie forced a fumble, had an interception, had five tackles, and returned a punt for 51 yards.

the hardest," added fellow senior and defensive lineman Lawson Moore.

Buchanan often referenced those two opening losses weren't to just any opponents. Episcopal would go on to win its fourth consecutive TAPPS Division I state championship and is 45-4 over the past four seasons. Guyer would finish 14-1 and reach the Class 6A Division II state semifinals, along with being ranked among the top teams in the nation.

"There's no doubt this is extremely special," Buchanan said of the championship. "The kids just never quit, the coaches never quit."

This is the second time the Bearcats rebounded from a slow start to win state. In 2011 they were 1-2 after a 62-35 loss to Lake Travis, but also won their next 14 to take the title.

Saturday's win was also a little payback. The only time since 2009

Aledo did not win a state championship after reaching the title contest was in 2017 when they lost 20-19 to College Station.

Offensive MVP

Once again Hejny played his best when the stage was the biggest.

The junior capped his first season as the starting quarterback with touchdown runs of 30 and 58 yards and TD passes of 7 and 51. He finished the game with 10 carries for 143 yards and completed 11 of 15 passes for 175 yards with no interceptions.

His performance gave Hejny a final season total of 1,278 yards and 15 TD rushing, along with 1,951 yards and 19 TD passing with six interceptions.

Defensive MVP

Gillespie, a junior defensive back, was a force in a variety of ways. His



BRELEIGH MAYER/THE COMMUNITY NEWS

Big D: The Aledo defense smothered College Station the entire game. Shown are Skyler Frank (42), Jake Gillespie (0), and Cooper Bobbitt (48).

early forced fumble set the Bearcats up at College Station 37-yard line for a TD and a 14-0 lead. Then, he had a punt return of more than 51 yards to the Cougars' 15, which led to another TD and a 21-0 advantage.

Then as the third quarter was coming to an end he intercepted a pass in the end zone that he returned 20 yards.

Oh, he also posted five tackles, including one for a loss of 4 yards.

Big farewell for Pope

The senior wide receiver bid adieu to Aledo in a big way. Not only did he set one record and tie another, he wrapped up his final season with the greatest game of his career.

Pope finished his season with 64 catches for 1,245 yards and 14 touchdowns.

He will next be playing for the Air Force Falcons.

Most dominant to date

Aledo's scored a lot of points in state championship games. However, this was the Bearcats' most dominant performance on both sides of the ball.

The 38-point margin of victory is the biggest, surpassing 35 in 2010's 69-34 win over LaMarque.

As lopsided as the final score was, the game was nowhere near even that close. The Bearcats punted only once and were in position to score on their first 10 possessions and did score on eight, only missing a pair of long field goals.

College Station ended their season 13-3, while Aledo's season record was 14-2.

Class 5A Division I final
Aledo 52, College Station 14
AT&T Stadium, Arlington

College Station	0	0	0	14	14
Aledo	21	14	10	7	52



SCOTT W. COLEMAN

Aledo running back Davhon Keys (3) extends the ball above the College Station defenders and across the goal line on a touchdown run.



SCOTT W. COLEMAN

Aledo running back Hawk Patrick-Daniels (1) is tripped up by College Station defensive back Tony Hamilton (4) on a carry.

- A — Hauss Hejny 30 run (Clay Murador kick)
- A — Davhon Keys 3 run (Murador kick)
- A — Keys 1 run (Murador kick)
- A — Jalen Pope 7 pass from Hejny (Murador kick)
- A — J. Pope 51 pass from Hejny (Murador kick)
- A — Hejny 58 run (Murador kick)
- A — Murador 37 FG
- A — J. Pope 76 pass from Brant Hayden (Cole Crawford kick)
- CS — Paden Cashion 23 pass from Arrington Maiden (Cashion pass from Maiden)
- CS — Cashion 11 pass from Maiden (no PAT attempt)

Team statistics
First downs: Aledo 19, CS 15.
Rushes-yards: Aledo 45-240, CS 31-98.
Passing yards: Aledo 257, CS 171.

Turn to BEARCATS, page B3



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Going to the Hauss: Aledo quarterback and Offensive MVP Hauss Hejny races to the end zone for one of his two rushing touchdowns. Hejny also threw for two more TD. He ran for 143 yards and passed for 175 more.

Caught-thrown-intercepted: Aledo 13-17-0, CS 17-29-1.
Fumbles-lost: Aledo 0-0, CS 2-2.
Penalties-yards: Aledo 5-49, CS 2-19.
Punts-average: Aledo 1-0 (blocked), CS 4-38.0.
Third-down conversions: Aledo 9-of-14, CS 1-of-12.
Fourth-down conversions: Aledo 1-of-1, CS 3-of-5.

College Station: Cashion 6-64, 2 TD;

Blocked kicks



Aledo ISD Superintendent Dr. Susan Bohn (right) presents the state championship trophy to Head Coach Tim Buchanan. Also shown is Aledo High School Principal Angi Tims (left).

Bearcats wrangle Rough Riders in district opener


Saginaw came out firing, establishing an early lead on their home court. On the other end of the floor, Aledo struggled to get shots to fall in the opening moments as Robinson was forced to call his first timeout of the contest midway through the first quarter with his team trailing 8-2.



Drew Clock puts up a shot against Saginaw on Dec. 20.



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Drew Clock 20, Brandon Fields 12, Jack Sawyer 6,
Exavier Anderson 2, Brant Tubbs 2



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PHOTOS BY BRELEIGH MAYER

LADYCAT OF THE WEEK




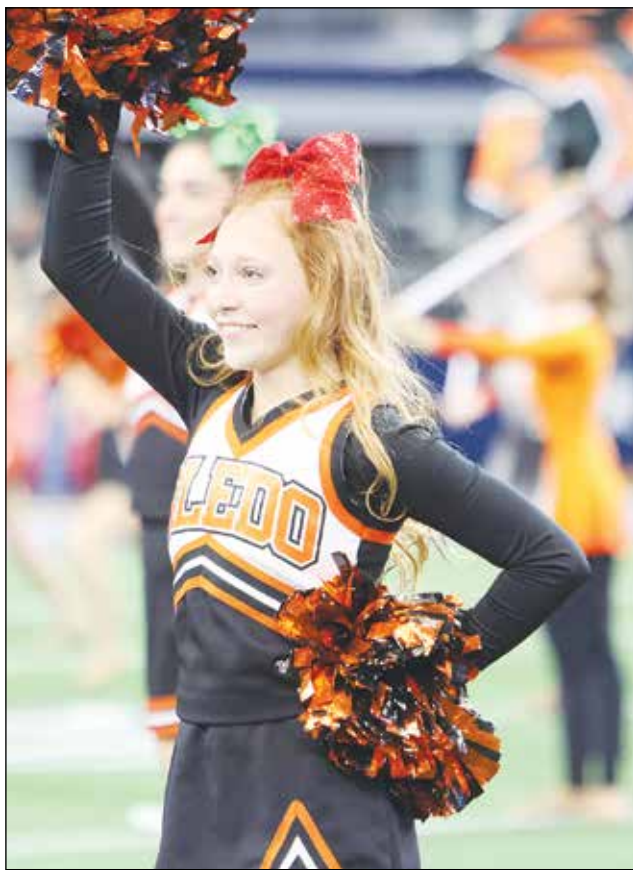
Avery Kernan, Wrestling
Wrestling in the 107-pound division, she posted a fifth-place finish in a tournament in Burleson on Dec. 10 and came back to win by a pin in only 49 seconds in her match against Benbrook at home on Dec. 13.

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BEARCAT OF THE WEEK



Jalen Pope, Football
The senior wide receiver set one state record and tied another as Aledo defeated College Station 52-14 Saturday for the Class 5A Division I state championship. Pope caught eight passes for a 5A championship-game record 228 yards. His three touchdowns tied a 5A title game mark.

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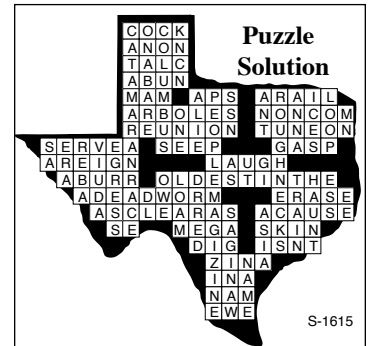
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More records for Roberson as SwimCats compete in Mansfield

The Ladycats took 5th place in the 200-yard medley relay with Hutson, Roberson, Satterfield and Crews.

Aledo recently competed in a tri-meet for Senior Night at the Wilkerson-Greines Activity Center in Fort Worth at press time. They will return to competition for the district meet Jan. 20 at the NISD Aquatic Center in Justin.

This season's team began the season 0-2 for the first time in Buchanan's career. They then reeled off 14 consecutive wins.

Buchanan will be joined in being inducted by former Galena Park North Shore coach David Aymond, former Sanford Fritch head coach Don Cumpton, former San Antonio Roosevelt coach Bryan Dausin, and former Brenham coach Glen West.

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BASKETBALL

Comeback comes up short for Ladycats on the road

By Ryan Wade
The Community News

SAGINAW – Much like Clark Griswold, the Ladycats may be asking where the Tylenol is on their Christmas vacation following a highly contentious and physical matchup on the road against the Saginaw Lady Rough Riders on Tuesday. Saginaw held off the fourth-quarter rally by the visiting squad from Aledo just long enough to pick up a 63-57 win.

With the loss, Aledo moves to 1-2 in 5A Region I District 5 play, and 10-10 on the season.

“We didn’t do a lot of the little things, and it caught up to us,” Aledo head coach Nikki Hyles said after the game. “We’ve got to be able to handle pressure a little bit better and be able to finish around the basket. Honestly, we’re still the better team. We just didn’t play well today.”

Trailing by nine heading into the fourth quarter, the Ladycats outpaced Saginaw 20-17 offensively in the final frame. Aledo was able to saw Saginaw’s lead down to just four points several times in the waning moments of action.

With little more than three minutes left in the contest senior Presley Hull knocked down a jumper to bring her team within four of the Lady Rough Riders. Claire Byars duplicated the feat at the 2:51 mark as she played a layup off the glass to cut Saginaw’s lead at 52-48. Kenzie Grau laced a late three-pointer with two ticks left on the clock to cut the score to 61-57 in favor of the home team.

Unfortunately, that is as close as Aledo would get as the game came to a close. The Ladycats committed

the desperation foul on the ensuing inbound pass to send Jasmine Wilcox to the charity stripe shooting two with just three-tenths of a second left on the clock and her team in the double bonus. Wilcox sank both free throws to produce the final score while capping off a 15-of-28 performance from the line for the Lady Rough Riders on the night.

The two teams juggled the lead back-and-forth several times in the first quarter of action. Aledo landed on the board first before the Lady Rough Riders gained an early advantage. Midway through the first the Ladycats came roaring back when Byars sank a layup just over three minutes into the contest giving her team a 10-9 lead.

Saginaw answered back with a quick bucket of their own to regain the lead at 11-10. With 3:06 left in the opening stanza Grau drilled a shot of her own from behind the arc to put Aledo up by a pair, 13-11.

Lady Rough Rider forward Tatum Stone cinched the game at 13-all after knocking down a pair of free throws. With just over a minute left in the first quarter of action Stone dialed up the long-range jumper from just inside the arc securing the final lead change of the contest at 15-13.

Down by a lone point heading into the second frame, the Ladycat offense struggled in the second quarter, giving Saginaw an opportunity to put distance between the two teams on the scoreboard. Aledo entered the intermission trailing by eight, 34-26.

The third quarter was close yet again with the Ladycats tacking on 11 points across the span of eight



LEFT: Kenzie Grau and Kandle Boggus provide tough defense against Saginaw
RIGHT: Kandle Boggus is fouled in the lane at Saginaw on Tuesday..

minutes of play. Not to be outdone, Saginaw tacked on a dozen points of their own to enter the final quarter of action up by nine, 46-37.

“Our district is pretty solid across the board,” Hyles added. “Any team can beat any other team on a given day. We just didn’t bring our ‘A’ game today.”

Looking ahead, the Ladycats will take a few days off to enjoy the holidays before getting back to the grind next week. Aledo will play four games



RYAN WADE/THE COMMUNITY NEWS

in two days (Thursday and Friday) as they participate in the Fredericksburg Tournament.

Ladycats vs. Saginaw Varsity

Aledo	16	10	11	20	57
Saginaw	17	17	12	17	63

Aledo scoring: Kenzie Grau 16, Claire Byars 14, Presley Hull 10, Kandle Boggus 7, Caroline Browning 5, Kinley Elms 3, Reagan Davis 2.

Junior Varsity

Aledo	26	11	19	6	62
Saginaw	4	4	4	0	12

Aledo scoring: Elizabeth Griffin 23, Savannah Salas 8, Kinley Evans 7, August Carlone 2, Breleigh Mayer 6, Brenna Clock 5, Maddox Lucas 5, Peyton Flores 2.

Ladycats vs. Northwest Varsity

Aledo	20	13	9	5	47
Northwest	17	8	10	21	56

Aledo scoring: Presley Hull 17, Kenzie Grau 11, Claire Byars 9, Kandle Boggus 5, Reagan Davis 5.

Junior Varsity

Aledo	10	14	10	7	41
Northwest	0	6	6	7	19

Aledo scoring: Elizabeth Griffin 21, August Carlone 7, Breleigh Mayer 7, Brenna Clock 4, Rebekah Jarrell 2.

Freshmen

Aledo	11	7	5	12	35
Northwest	5	9	2	0	16

Aledo scoring: Jordyn Edington 9, Mesoma Emekaokoye 7, Jenna Haussler 6, Lily Heckathorn 5, Alyssa Todd 5, Jaylee Owens 2, Mackenzie Bullard 1.

Ladycats vs. Wichita Falls Rider Varsity

Aledo	13	12	20	17	62
Rider	6	19	6	12	43

Aledo scoring: Kenzie Grau 11, Caroline Browning 11, Claire Byars 11, Reagan Davis 8, Natalie Anderson 7, Presley Hull 6, Kinley Elms 4, Ella Isbell 2, Taylor Paetzold 2.

Junior Varsity

Aledo	26	13	118	58
Rider	7	8	56	26

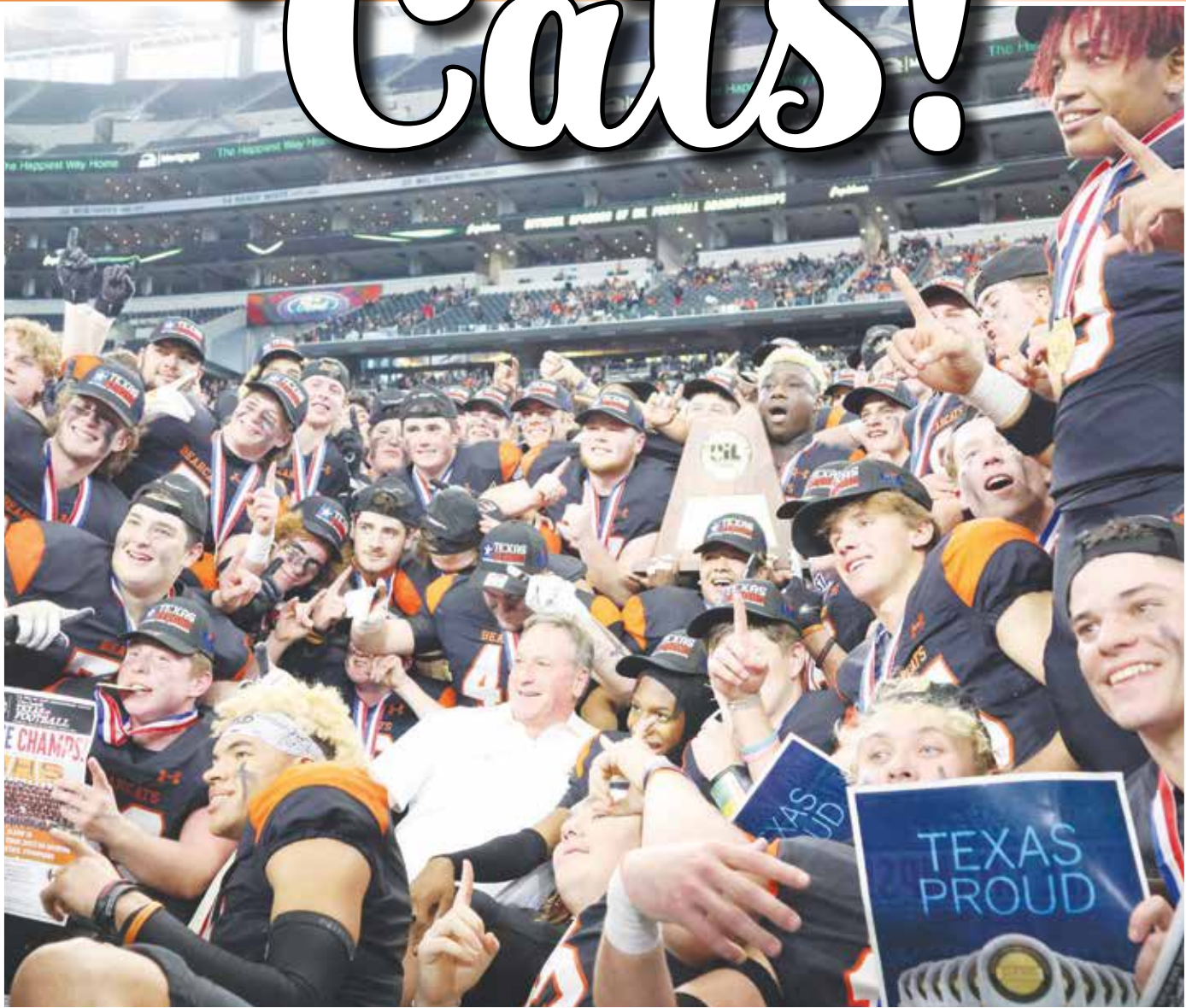
Aledo scoring: Elizabeth Griffin 27, Brenna Clock 10, Savannah Salas 6, Breleigh Mayer 5, Peyton Flores 4, August Carlone 2, Rebekah Jarrell 2, Kinley Evans 2.

Freshmen

Aledo	10	12	63	31
Rider	6	0	102	12

Aledo scoring: Alyssa Todd 12, Jaylee Owens 7, Kayna Atchinson 2, Lily Heckathorn 2, Jordyn Edington 2, Natalie Brown 2, Mesoma Emekaokoye 2, Tori Culler 1, Jenna Haussler 1.

Congrats
to the
‘Cats!



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