

THE COMMUNITY NEWS

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

SOCIAL MEDIA

Aledo youth, mom lobby for protection

Take it Down Act would combat revenge posts

By Rick Mauch
The Community News

Ana McAdams will go to the ends of the earth if necessary to prevent what happened to her daughter, Elliston Berry, from happening to anyone else.

Berry is a victim of deepfake revenge porn. She and her mom began their quest by traveling to Washington, D.C. to lobby the United States Congress for legislation to provide protection from such acts. They were joined by Republican Senator Ted Cruz on June 18.

Cruz is joining with other sponsors to push a bipartisan Bill entitled the "Take It Down Act," which would make it a criminal offense to publish non-consensual intimate imagery.

Deepfake revenge porn is sexually explicit images created by artificial intelligence to harm or embarrass someone.

Last fall, as a high school freshman, Berry woke up one morning to a barrage of texts. Someone used a program to alter photos of her and her friends to be sexually explicit and then shared the images on social media.

Shocking awakening

"Oct. 2, 2023 we woke up to our phones blowing up with news that devastated our lives forever. Oct. 1, 2023 a fellow classmate decided a fate for my daughter and her nine friends that they never would've imagined for themselves," McAdams said. "He decided to take beautiful innocent pictures off of their social media platform

Turn to SOCIAL, page 5



SHUTTERSTOCK

A bipartisan Bill entitled "Take It Down Act" would make it a criminal offense to publish non-consensual intimate imagery.



CHRISTOPHER AMOS/THE COMMUNITY NEWS

Vandagriff Elementary School first-grader Wyatt Cotton keeps his eyes on the ball during Aledo's summer tennis camp. The school district also hosted camps for basketball, baseball, softball, soccer, workout, baseball, dance, wrestling and running. Turn to page 7 for more.

ALEDO

Changes coming for city operations

New city hall, library under construction

By Randy Keck
The Community News

Dirt is being moved on the west side of the Aledo Commons traffic circle as construction is now under way on the new

Aledo City Hall, which will include a library and also house a future police department.

City staff and the board of the East Parker County Library finalized details for an arrangement in which the city will receive the assets of the library in return for providing a new location within the new city hall.

Under the asset transfer agreement, all library assets — its property at 201 FM 1187, all personal property, books, furniture, computers, and other equipment will be transferred to city ownership.

The library will also transfer all of its funds to the city except for \$15,000, which

will be used to assist the library in forming a foundation for the purpose of working with the city to acquire books, materials, and funding.

On the city's part, it will take over as employer of library staff and assume most of the contractual obligations of the library.

The contract between the city and the library is expected to close before Sept. 30 pending approval of the city council at its June 27 meeting, which was after press time.

Turn to CITY, page 3

WILLOW PARK

Council votes to expand driveways

By Rick Mauch
The Community News

The Willow Park City Council voted to increase driveway approaches in the Crown Road area at its meeting on June 25.

Driveways have been a source of contention in that area lately. Following the recent work to improve the road and the drainage issues, a number of residents have complained their driveways aren't as wide as they used to be and have been showing up at council meetings to publicly speak to city leaders about the matter.

The city leaders heard, and following evaluation by city staff, it was recommended that, to ensure safety and access, the minimum standard dimensions for driveways on streets with overall width of 30 feet or more be 14 feet wide at the property line and have an approach radius of 8 feet.

In all, more than 20 driveways will be adjusted, City Manager Bryan Grimes said. The cost to the city is estimated to be between \$1,700 and \$2,100 per driveway.

"If it was my house, I wouldn't want to turn into some of those driveways as well," Place 5 Council Member Nathan Crummel said, adding that he appreciates the work and thought city staff put into the project.

Mayor Pro Tem Lea Young echoed those sentiments, saying, "I'd like to thank staff for looking into this."

Wastewater agreement with Hudson Oaks

The City of Hudson Oaks approached Willow Park city staff months ago about the possibility of Willow Park treating wastewater from Hudson Oaks once the new wastewater treatment plant goes online. At Tuesday's meeting, the Willow Park Council approved the agreement.

Hudson Oaks currently sends their wastewater to the City of Weatherford for treatment, but with both cities continuing to grow, another option is needed. Since Hudson Oaks and Willow Park already share water usage, officials from both cities decided sharing wastewater treatment also makes sense.

Turn to COUNCIL, page 5

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Content Submission Policy

We're always on the lookout for story ideas. To share one, call Randy Keck at 817-386-1469 or email news@community-news.com. Please provide the basic story information as well as contact information.

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 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.

Photos submitted should include names of the people in the photograph.

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.

Capital Highlights

Electric demand could nearly double by 2030



Gary Borders

gborders@texaspress.com

The chief of the Electric Reliability Council of Texas told state lawmakers recently that the state's power demand could nearly double in just six years. The reasons: population growth, new requests for grid connections, and a rise in requests from data centers and other heavy users.

ERCOT chief executive officer Pablo Vegas told lawmakers the grid operator has sharply increased its prediction of power demand in coming years, *The Texas Tribune* reported.

"All of that is putting together a picture of a very significant, different demand growth that is forcing us to really re-think how we're looking at planning to make sure we can meet those needs and continue to deliver on the expectations of all Texans," Vegas told lawmakers.

In a post on X (formerly Twitter), Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick said the Legislature should "take a close look" at data centers and crypto operations.

"We want data centers, but it can't be the Wild, Wild West of data centers and crypto miners crashing our grid and turning the lights off," he wrote.

Vegas also recently warned the ERCOT board that new federal emission rules for fossil fuel power plants, to take effect July 8, are "exacerbating the reliability risks given forecasted load growth," *The Dallas Morning News* reported.

Vegas said the new regulations could lead to all 10 coal plants in Texas being decommissioned as the Environmental Protection Agency places new limits on mercury and greenhouse gas emissions. Those backing the new regulations say they will help reduce air pollution and reduce climate change.

Central American Gyre could spawn more tropical storms

The first named system of this year's hurricane season made

landfall last week in Mexico, bringing significant rain to South Texas. Alice, 40 miles west of Corpus Christi, received more than 6 inches of rain, and McAllen saw more than 4 inches, the *San Antonio Express-News* reported.

Now the Central American Gyre, a persistent rotating low-pressure system, is getting close scrutiny, as it may allow formation of other tropical depressions.

Hurricane forecasters predict an especially active season this season, which runs through Nov. 30. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration predicts an 85% chance for an above-normal season. It is forecasting a range of 17 to 25 named storms this year.

STAAR scores in math, science decline

Texas student scores in math and science showed marked drops in science comprehension, according to the Texas Education Agency. The 2024 results show declining math and science scores across all tested grade levels.

Only 34% of elementary and middle-school students met or mastered grade-level science, a drop of 5.7 percentage points from last year. Math scores also dropped slightly.

"Pandemic-induced disruptions to learning exacerbated students' difficulties in mastering fundamental math concepts, TEA Commissioner Mike Morath said. "As a result, we must keep our foot on the gas to intensify efforts in providing targeted interventions and research-based education strategies to ensure that students obtain necessary foundational skills and concepts and achieve the desired academic outcomes not only in math but across all subject areas."

More detailed results for individual districts can be found at texasassessment.gov.

Seven state hospital projects announced

Bolstered by \$1.5 billion in funding passed last year by the Legislature, the Texas Health and Human Services Commission has announced seven new state hospital projects to serve people in need of inpatient psychiatric services.

"Texas continues working to increase access to critical behavioral health treatments for Texans



SHUTTERSTOCK

Electrical lines run along the side of a Texas highways. Electric demands continue to expand across the state.

in every corner of our state," Gov. Greg Abbott said.

The projects are in various stages of planning and design. They include:

- Panhandle State Hospital (Amarillo): Constructing a new state hospital to serve 75 patients in a non-maximum-security unit. Budget: \$159 million.
- Lubbock Psychiatric Center: Constructing a new state hospital with a 50-bed maximum-security unit. Budget: \$121 million.
- Terrell State Hospital: Constructing a 250-bed replacement hospital. Budget: \$573 million.
- North Texas State Hospital - Wichita Falls: Constructing a 200-bed replacement hospital. Budget: \$452 million.
- Rio Grande State Center (Harlingen): Expanding current facility to add a 50-bed maximum-security unit. Budget: \$120 million.
- San Antonio State Hospital: Renovating an existing building to add a 40-bed maximum-security unit. Budget: \$15 million.
- El Paso Psychiatric Center: Planning and land acquisition to expand the current facility by 50 non-maximum-security beds. Budget: \$50 million.

Influencers must disclose political payments

The Texas Ethics Commission will now require social media influencers to disclose if their content is a paid political advertisement, the Texas Standard reported.

The Texas Tribune previously reported that a company called

Influenceable hired Gen-Z influencers to defend Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton ahead of his impeachment trial last year.

"You know, attacking the House members who had been involved in the impeachment and overall just urging the Senate to acquit him," *Tribune* managing editor Matthew Watkins told the *Standard*. "This was silently paid for by some right-wing activists and big-money people in Texas. Those influencers did not disclose that they were getting paid."

The ethics commission did not mention the company by name while voting unanimously to require disclosure in the future of paid political content.

Military bases provide \$151.2 billion economic impact

U.S. military installations in Texas contributed at least \$151.2 billion to the state's economy last year and supported more than 677,000 jobs across the state, according to a study by the state comptroller's office.

The state is home to 15 major U.S. military installations, as well as the Army Futures Command headquarters.

Besides the economic impact, the military bases contribute to the state's culture, Texas Comptroller Glenn Hegar said.

"The installations are also vibrant and dynamic partners in the community, supporting not just business and industry but also schools, charities, youth sports and cultural events," he said.

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, Lufkin and Cedar Park. Email: gborders@texaspress.com

State Representative Update

Beatitudes In Every Classroom



Dr. Glenn Rogers

glenn.rogers@house.texas.gov

Our good neighbors to the east just passed a law to put displays of The Ten Commandments in every classroom in all Louisiana public schools. No doubt, this will be the catalyst that returns Louisiana society back to paths of righteousness as casino gambling, parimutuel betting, liquor sales, and Mardi Gras beads all become figments of the distant past.

As Texans, with a long history of turning to the Bible for inspiration, we could improve our schools (and maintain superiority over Louisiana) by going one step further and passing a bill to put the Beatitudes in every classroom! While the Ten Commandments

are indeed important, and will prove to be transformative to Louisiana, what could be better than the very words of Jesus Christ himself?

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me.

Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

-Matthew 5: 3-12 (NIV).

Delivered during his Sermon on the Mount, Jesus gave us the Beatitudes to lift our spirits, to remind us of our eternal gift, and to teach us how to be kind to those around us. The Beatitudes inform us on how to act in pure goodness. They tell us not to be boastful or arrogant, to be accountable for our actions, and place the needs of others before ourselves. Is that not something all Texans would want to teach their kids?

Whether we be in a classroom, workroom, boardroom, courtroom, the Senate Chamber or the House Chamber, everyone in Texas would benefit from reading and internalizing these timeless truths. Within the microcosm of our own state government, I can see how this would immediately lead politicians to:

- 1) Make elections about issues rather than who can spend the most money on character assassination and misleading the electorate;
- 2) Shun support from organizations whose leadership meets for hours with a neo-Nazi and holocaust deniers;
- 3) Return or refuse donations from people and groups who seek to buy political office for their own selfish gain;
- 4) Work tirelessly against those who seek to destroy our public schools and install their special brand of Theo-oligarchy.

Whether we have been hurt or have been the ones being hurtful — we all could use the Beatitudes in our daily lives to keep this great state on a good path. I look forward to seeing those who support the Ten Commandments bill to now step up (ahead of Louisiana) and file the Beatitudes bill.

Glenn Rogers is the Texas State Representative for District 60, which includes Parker County.



SPECIAL TO THE COMMUNITY NEWS

The City of Aledo recently held a groundbreaking for its new city hall. Shown are (from left) City Manager Noah Simon, city council members Shane Davis and Shawna Ford, Mayor Nick Stanley, and city council members Nelson Rowls, Christian Pearson, and Summer Jones.

CITY

from page one

Since its inception, the library has been privately funded, with only a portion of funds coming from government entities. The lion's share of those funds came from the City of Aledo and from Parker County. The absorption by the city is anticipated to provide more financial stability for the library.

Completion of construction of the new city hall is expected to take about 16 months at a cost of about \$17.5 million. Once complete, the library will move to the new facility. Aledo City Manager Noah Simon said the city has not determined what the disposition of the library property will be at that time.



Obituaries

Phyllis Gebhardt

Loving mother Phyllis Gebhardt passed away at the age of 67 on June 14, surrounded by her family.

Phyllis was born July 15, 1956, in Long Beach, California.

After moving to Texas, Phyllis attended Texas Woman's University. While in school, Phyllis realized her passion for teaching. In 1977 she graduated with her Bachelor of Science in Teaching, being one of the youngest graduates from Texas Woman's University at the time.

After graduation, Phyllis went on to become a teacher. She was passionate about teaching and serving children. In 1988, she acquired her Master of Education and her licensed professional counselor certification from The University of North Texas.

As a loyal servant of God, Phyllis spent many of her hours dedicating



Phyllis Gebhardt

her life to counseling children and family. She spent 43 years as an elementary counselor in Arlington ISD. Many of those years Phyllis served as a lead counselor over several schools, working tirelessly within the community to best support her school and students.

Even after retiring in 2020, she spent her remaining years as a guest teacher for Aledo ISD, where her grandchildren attend school. Her family is at peace knowing she is with the Lord. Those left to cherish her memory include her husband James; daughters Emilee and Claire; son-in-law Bailey; grandchildren Levi and Paislee; sister Kathy; nieces Pamela and Kimberly; great nieces Brooke and Elizabeth; and granddog Elvis.

The service was held on Tuesday, June 25, at Christ Chapel West Campus.

The Community News
June 28, 2024

WEATHERFORD

Mom and daughter awarded for finding missing person

Responded to police request

By Jolee Skinner
The Community News

Weatherford Police Department Investigations Division Commander Jason Hayes presented a citizenship award to Amber Smith and her daughter, Layla, for finding a missing person. The award was presented at the June 25 meeting of the Weatherford City Council.

Amber and Layla also received a "challenge coin," which is an acknowledgment of hard work and dedication by the police department.

Hayes told the council that on April 30, the Weatherford PD was looking for a missing person with diminished mental capacity. Weatherford PD and other first responders had been looking for the missing person all day, but to no avail.

Smith had seen a social media post made by the Weatherford PD about the missing person and kept checking for updates. Smith then picked up Layla from school and set out to find the missing person.

Smith had driven to Shirley Hall Middle School, which was near the location that first responders had been checking, to begin searching. They spotted the missing person in the tree line and called the police.

Hayes thanked Smith and her daughter for reuniting the missing person with their family.

"Thanks to the selfless actions of Amber and Layla, the missing individual was found safe and



JOLEE SKINNER/THE COMMUNITY NEWS

Amber Smith and her daughter, Layla, received the citizenship award from Weatherford Police Department Commander Jason Hayes for helping the department find a missing person. Shown are (from left) Weatherford Police Department Chief Lance Arnold, Amber Smith, Layla Smith, and Hayes.

unharmed," Hayes said, "allowing the PD to reunite her with her family, a very concerned family."

Hayes explained that the citizenship award can be given to any citizen who helps solve a crime, helps arrest an individual, or assists another citizen in an emergency.

Hayes thanked all of the citizens of Weatherford for their continued support for the police department.

"I want to take the opportunity to thank all of our citizens for their continued and unyielding support of our agency and our individual officers," Hayes said. "What makes this city special is the ownership that the citizens take in collaborating with the police department in keeping our community safe."

For more information about Weatherford city council meetings, visit www.weatherfordtx.gov

ANNETTA

City approves engineering agreement

By Jim Zimmermann
The Community News

The Annetta Town Council approved a partnership with KKM Associates, LLC to become their engineering firm for the Town of Annetta.

As one of the top assignments under their agreement, Robert McGhee, a 24-year Parker County resident, will be the representative for KKM. He will assist The Town

of Annetta with the planning and future development of the town's water system.

Also on the agenda, the council approved an agreement to with a vendor to install the generators at Water Plant No. 4 and the Lakes of Aledo Water Plant.

The council also voted to keep in place the town's investment policy. Council member Kent Stasey stated, "It's nice to know that we

have policy and procedures in place that we can rely when needed."

The 2024-2025 budget workshop was set for a time in July yet to be announced. Also, the Drought Contingency Plan was tabled for more discussion at the July meeting.

The next council meeting will be at 7 p.m. on July 19. The council meets at Annetta City Hall, 450 Thunder Head Ln. in Annetta.

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

2024

FOURTH OF JULY Celebrations

BOOMIN' 4TH
GENE L. VOYLES PARK
HUDSON OAKS, TX
STARTS AT 5 P.M.
FIREWORKS AT 9:30 P.M.

SPARK IN THE PARK
HERITAGE PARK AMPHITHEATER
WEATHERFORD, TX
STARTS AT 6 P.M.
FIREWORKS AT 9:30 P.M.

RED, WHITE & BOOTS
FORT WORTH STOCKYARD STATION
FORT WORTH, TX
STARTS AT 12 P.M.

For more information and shuttle bus parking maps visit <https://www.hudsonoaks.com/Visitors/eventscoho/July-4th-Event>

Spark in the Park
Join Weatherford Parks and Recreation for Spark in the Park 2024, 6 - 10:30 pm on Thursday July 4 at Heritage park. Come enjoy music, food, waterslides and fireworks. The Eli Young Band is headlining at the amphitheater. Following artist concerts fireworks will begin after dark, approximately 9:30 p.m. The event is FREE TO ATTEND!
<https://www.facebook.com/events/1448007752777165>

JULY 9
Dementia Support Group
Join the Dementia Support Group from 4-5 p.m. on Tuesday, July 9 at Harvest of Aledo 1043 Bailey Ranch Rd. We are honored and privileged to care for those affected by dementia. Even more so, we value the efforts of the caregivers, especially the families of our residents. This meeting will take place on the second Tuesday of every month. For more information call 682-209-0643

JULY 11
Alzheimer's Group
The East Parker County Alzheimer's Group meets

JUNE 29
Party in the Park
Make plans to join WINTON AND WAITS for Party in the Park from 2-8 p.m. on Saturday, June 29 at 208 FM-1187S Aledo, TX. Live music starts at 4 p.m. Come enjoy cocktails, food trucks and vendors market. Gather your people and come hang out!! BYOLC (BRING YOUR OWN LAWN CHAIRS!)

family fun, food and amazing fireworks from 5 - 10 p.m. on Thursday, July 4, at Gene Voyles Park, 210 Hudson Oaks Drive, Hudson Oaks, TX. The entertainment will be the Party Machine which brings the same high energy, interactive performance. Choose from a variety of delicious eats and treats from local vendors! The Kid Zone is FUN for Fireworks start at approximately 9:30 p.m. and are choreographed to music on 92.1 Hank FM.

JULY 4
Boomin' 4th
Enjoy a great evening of

ACROSS

1 TX Trini's "If ___ A Hammer"
5 Oldham County seat
6 TX Percy Foreman defended James ___ Ray (MLK killer)
7 western writer Zane
8 TXism: "fits like scales ___ fish"
9 struts
16 this Harper was in "Crimes of the Heart" with TX Sissy
18 San Antonio Zoo has big collection of these animals
21 Taylor of Texas-based "Giant" (init.)
22 ___ Sandberg said "Texas is valor and swagger"
23 Trinity High class uncommissioned officer
24 TXism: "as hollering 'snake' at a quilting bee"
34 Sally of "Back Roads" with TX Tommy Lee (init.)
35 TX rancher Norris' "___ of One"
36 Don ___ Aury was first to claim Galveston
37 this Michael was in TX Audie film "Arizona Raiders"
39 Austin bridge mammals (3 wds.)
43 WWII atom bomber ___ Gay

DOWN

1 TX Buck Owens tune: "___ a Tiger by the Tail"
2 in Robertson County on U.S. 79
3 TXism: "slippery as ___ pig"
4 this Timothy starred with TX Crystal Bernard on "Wings"
9 "Father of Texas" (init.)
10 predecessor
11 Lone ___ State

44 this TX Jack was president of the MPA
45 TXism: "good ___ boy"
46 "___ the night before Christmas . . ."
47 UT astronomers measure the distance between the ___ earth
49 chief counsel to "Red Scare" Sen. McCarthy (2 wds.)
52 Texas "Mr. Sam" (init.)

12 TX Audie Murphy
13 refer to indirectly
14 TX creek: ___ Lo Digo Creek
15 whirlpool tub
17 Aggie coach Gene (1965-71)
19 home of "Old Rip" the horned frog
20 TXism: "___ a squirrel up a tree"
24 "doesn't apply" on a form (abbr.)
25 TXism: "living high ___ the hog"
26 ex-Cowboy offensive coach, Turner (1991-93)

TEXAS CROSSWORD

by Charley & Guy Orbison
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from 1-3 p.m. on the second Thursday of each month at Aledo United Methodist Church, 100 Pecan Drive. For more information, call 817-441-8329.



County Peach Festival in #WeatherfordTX on Saturday, July 13, 2024! Come enjoy and shop the more than 200 art/craft/food & activity booths as well as the amazing shops, restaurants & boutiques

in historic downtown Weatherford. The expanded festival area makes it easy to spread out and enjoy the day! Save the date for this "peachy" family fun-filled event!
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For more information on www.peachfestivaltx.com

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COUNCIL

from page one

"This is another great step we're taking," Hudson Oaks City Manager Sterling Naron told the council and those in attendance, adding that he hopes other cities will look around and take advantage of partner opportunities with neighboring cities.

Hudson Oaks is proposing to build a transmission line from their current lift station to the new plant location. The line will be the sole responsibility of Hudson Oaks.

The Hudson Oaks City Council was meeting at press time to also vote on the partnership. If approved, Hudson Oaks agrees to pay 20% of the construction cost of the new plant (\$3,678,000 of the \$18,390,000 contracted amount), and for the next 20 years will pay 20% of the operational costs.

For this they will be allowed to send up to 150,000 gallons of wastewater to the plant daily. The plant is currently being built to treat 750,000 gallons. However, the issued permit from the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality allows up to 990,000 gallons of wastewater to be treated.

"That would allow us, with a partner, to expand," Young said.

Willow Park officials originally considered building the plant to treat a million gallons of water.

Should the plant need to be expanded in the future, Hudson Oaks reserves the right to purchase additional treatment capabilities.

"I think it (sharing water) has been mutually beneficial, and I expect the wastewater will work as well," Grimes said.

Award from NTCOG

Concerning the water sharing agreement with Hudson Oaks, Mayor Doyle Moss held up an award both cities received from the North Texas Council of Governments. The award was presented to the public works departments for their working together.

Eminent domain proceedings for King's Gate Bridge

The council voted to move ahead with approval for eminent domain proceedings for the King's Gate Road Bridge Replacement Project, should negotiations fall apart.

The City of Willow Park owns a bridge located at King's Gate Road over Clear Fork Trinity River, and this bridge is included in the currently approved off-state system federal-aid Highway Bridge Replacement and Rehabilitation Program. City officials and the Texas Department of Transportation have deemed it necessary to replace the current King's

Gate Road bridge. The project will require some additional property adjacent to the bridge.

The city has notified the property owners of its intent to acquire the property, two narrow strips of land, for right-of-way purposes. The city provided a written final offer, made 30-plus days after delivery of the initial offer, based on a written appraisal from a certified appraiser.

Final offer letters were mailed on May 3. Property owners were given at least 14 days to respond to the final offer.

Council noted in discussion the two pieces of property are valued at a little more than \$50,000 combined, and that no counter offers have been made by the property owners.

City officials noted that negotiations to purchase the properties have not been successful to date and final offers were not accepted within the given time frame. Therefore, offers are considered as having been rejected.

The city has until February of 2025 to acquire the property.

"It's not a taking," Grimes stressed. "We're still negotiating — and they'll be paid for the property."

To continue reading visit <https://www.community-news.com/stories/council-votes-to-expand-drive-ways,85124or> scan the QR code.



Weatherford DAR installs new officers

The Weatherford Chapter of Daughters of the American Revolution installed new officers for the years 2024 - 2026 at its May meeting.

District II Director Vicki McComack remembered and thanked the previous officers, then she shared a special challenge for each officer and they were each given a special pin for the occasion. Because of bad weather, Mrs.

McComack was unable to be at the meeting personally but participated through Zoom. Refreshments were served afterwards for everyone in attendance.

The Weatherford DAR chapter meets on the fourth Tuesday of every month September through May with a few exceptions for holidays. For more information about joining this genealogical and service organization, email weatherfordnsdar@gmail.com.



SPECIAL TO THE COMMUNITY NEWS

New officers for the Weatherford Chapter of Daughters of the American Revolution are (from left) Harriet Helm, Recording Secretary & Historian; Janice Knight, Librarian; Shari Groce, Registrar; Loretta Hale, Treasurer; Evelyn Baldwin, Chaplain; Beth Holst, Vice Regent; Linda Schmidt, Regent; on screen Vicki McComack, District II Director. Not pictured is Kristel Pittsford, the Corresponding Secretary.

SOCIAL

from page one

and impose nude body parts onto the pictures. Through an AI app he was able to take their images and impose nudes onto them."

McAdams said the culprit made multiple accounts on Snapchat. Then, using these accounts, she said he would friend request people and once they accepted he would blast them with the nudes of the girls.

"It is important to draw attention to the fact that he didn't take nudes and put their faces on them. Instead, he took their actual bodies and put nude body parts on them. It made the images even more real," she continued. "These images are child pornography. These girls were 14 years old. Their innocence was taken that day as these figures were

sent out over social media to their high school."

Lack of punishment

McAdams confirmed a report that the student responsible for the images, while on probation now, will have charges dropped against him when he turns 18, something that greatly concerns her.

"The guy was charged with sale/distribution/display of harmful material to a minor, but instead of having our day in court it never made it to the DA," she said. "When he turns 18 his record will be expunged because he's a minor. He will walk away from this situation unscathed. However, our girls will forever live in fear in the shadows that when they go to apply for a job or for college that these pictures might resurface," she said. "He chose a fate for our daughters that we can't change."

Still trying to figure it all out

Berry said she is still trying to wrap her head around the whole ordeal.

"Having to admit to your parents was shameful as I still felt responsible and began to blame myself," she said. "As I attended school, I was fearful of the reactions and opinions people had."

"We live in a society that is built on social media, so I had been convinced at least the whole school had seen these images. And to this day, the number of people that have seen these images or have seen them is still a mystery."

McAdams said when some of the girls' friends asked why he did it, the young man's response was that he wanted to go out with a bang and he wanted to ruin the girls.

"When asked if he was suicidal, he agreed — according to kids that interacted with him on Snapchat," she said. "In today's world, those kind of words are some of the scariest. We live with school shootings and bombings on a regular basis in this country. You could only imagine the fear those words caused the girls. Would he come to school with guns and bombs with the intent to hurt them? Would he kill himself? The girls did not want to go to school."

"We are still unclear to this day and why he did it and why he targeted our girls."

Berry said she lives in fear each day that the images will resurface, noting that even though Snapchat took them down they can still be saved on individual devices.

More on the bill

The bill, which is receiving support across the board, would also

require social media platforms to develop procedures to remove the images within 48 hours of receiving a valid request from a victim and to take reasonable steps to remove any copies. However, some members of congress are questioning how much responsibility should be given to tech companies to address the issue.

Under the bill, social media companies' failure to comply would result in enforcement action by the Federal Trade Commission.

McAdams said that a couple weeks ago Cruz's office managed to get Snapchat to take the photos down after almost nine months.

"If we had been Taylor Swift, they would have come down immediately," she said. "This is why this Take it Down bill is so crucial for moving forward in this new AI world. This bill gives a voice we didn't have before."

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SWIMMING

Local water park part of worldwide event

By Jim Zimmermann
The Community News

Splash Kingdom and many other water parks around the world are among the places to be during the summer for families to swim and enjoy spending time with one another, creating memories that can last a lifetime.

It's also the place where many take their first step in pool safety, shaking off the fear of learning how to swim and extending that lifetime of memories.

On Thursday, June 20, the Hudson Oaks water park, along with folks in 44 states and 19 countries took part in a worldwide event known as The World's Largest Swim Lesson (WLSL). The event was started 15 years ago by The World Water Association.

The WLSL is a global drowning prevention event designed to raise awareness of the risks involved with water and the critical importance of teaching kids to swim. According to the Center for Disease Control, drowning deaths have increased each year since 2020 for children between the ages of 1-4. The American Red Cross has conducted research that states children between the ages of 1-4 who learn basic water safety, along with swim lessons, reduce the risk of drowning by 88 percent.

In short, the sooner a child - or even an adult - learns to swim, the likelihood of drowning decreases. The better the swimmer, the safer someone is in the water, not only for themselves but also in the case of having to rescue someone else should the situation arise.



JIM ZIMMERMAN/COMMUNITY NEWS

Swimmers and lifeguards at Splash Kingdom participated in the World's Largest Swim Lesson on Thursday, June 20. The annual worldwide event is designed to encourage water safety.

This is the third year that Splash Kingdom has participated in this free event that includes countries from Antigua to Zimbabwe. The message: "Swimming Lessons Save Lives."

"We want to make everyone is aware that Splash Kingdom offers more than just water slides. Our first priority is water safety, and everyone is able to enjoy their experience as they spend their day

with us" explained Geno Kloibere, Director of Risk Management and Aquatics of all four regional Splash Kingdoms.

Families from all came to take part of the event. Brittany Craine and her two children, 5-year-old Harper and 3-year-old Hunter, came from Granbury to not only to take part in the event. While there, they also decided to spend

the day at Splash Kingdom having some family fun.

"I went online to explore where there was a water park that was close to us so that we could celebrate Hunter's birthday next week" Brittany said.

The event drew around 75 participants in Hudson Oaks. Worldwide, the WLSL estimated that almost 40,000 people took part on six continents.

JUNIOR GOLF

Youth compete in North Texas PGA Junior Tour

Staff Reports
The Community News

A couple of area youngsters took the top prize in their respective age groups in tournaments on the North Texas PGA Junior Tour recently.

At Hidden Creek in Burleson on June 19, Willow Park's Kylie Kirkland tied for first place in the Girls 15-18 division on the Medalist Tour, shooting a 94. Harper Price of Aledo was one stroke behind in third place with a 95.

At Cedar Crest in Dallas on June 17, Addy Hass of Weatherford took first place in the Girls 11-12 division, shooting 65 over nine holes.

On the All-American Tour, Braden Stokes of Aledo placed fifth at Tangle Ridge in Grand Prairie. He posted a 3-over-par 145 over two rounds, shooting 70 and 75.

Other area recent results include:

- Prep Tour
Timberlakes, Denton
- Boys 11-12 (nine holes): 7. Kyle Wisdom, Aledo, 62; 8. Grayson Wright, Aledo, 64. Willow Creek, Plano
- Boys 11-12 (nine holes): 18. Brayden Goodlett, Aledo 46. Medalist Tour
- Lake Arlington, Arlington
- Boys 15-18 (18 holes): 16. (tie) Austin Lavender, Weatherford, 91. Old Course at Firewheel, Garland
- Girls 15-18 (18 holes): 18. Reagan Gilliland, Willow Park, 95. Texas Star, Euless
- Boys 13-14 (18 holes): 19. (tie) Christian Moll, Aledo, 95. Girls 15-18 (18 holes): 8. Kirkland, 94. All-American Tour

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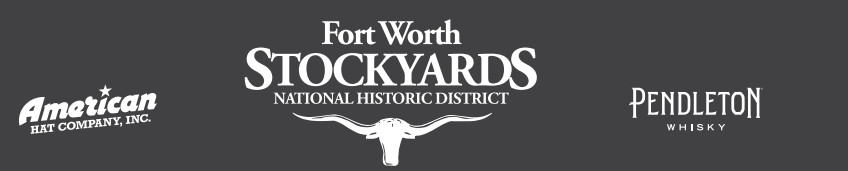
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SUMMER CAMPS

Tennis camp teaches fundamentals



McAnally Elementary School coach Scott Howell instructs Vandagriff Elementary School first-grader Will Cotton.

Among Aledo summer camps held in June was tennis camp, where youngsters learned the basics of the game. The school district also hosted camps for

basketball, softball, soccer, work-out, baseball, dance, wrestling and running. Scheduled camps for July include cheer camp and football camp. To register for the

remaining camps, visit www.aledoisd.org/summercamps.

PHOTOS BY CHRISTOPHER AMOS/THE COMMUNITY NEWS



McCall Elementary School third-grader Audrey Hyun



Stuard Elementary School first-grader Allie Dumas

PITCHER

from page 10

Last season for Weatherford, Fortenberry had a 2.74 ERA with 79 strikeouts and 10 wins in 75.2 innings played.

“Robert Fortenberry’s selection as the 2024 NJCAA DI Baseball Pitcher of the Year is no surprise,” said WC President Tod Allen Farmer. “This national award is indicative of the excellence of our baseball program and our athletic programs in general.”

The NJCAA DI Baseball All-American will continue his academic and athletic career at Mississippi State next year.

Other 2024 accomplishments for Fortenberry include:

- NJCAA DI First Team All-America.
- All-Northern Texas Junior College Athletic Conference.
- Co-Conference Pitcher of the Year.
- First Team All-Region V.
- Two-time NJCAA Region V North Pitcher of the Week.

ACADEMICS - ATHLETICS - ARTS - ALEDO

Aledo second in prestigious Lone Star Cup competition

By Rick Mauch
The Community News

The University Interscholastic League announced Aledo ISD finished in second place among 5A schools in the state in its annual Lone Star Cup competition.

The Lone Star Cup is annually one of the most sought after prizes by school districts throughout the state of Texas. The award given by the University Interscholastic League encompasses success throughout academics and athletics and all points in between.

In the 2023-24 school year final standings for Class 5A, Aledo scored 91 points. Lucas Lovejoy took the top prize with 109 points, with Frisco Wakeland third with 90.

“Finishing as the runner-up in the Class 5A Lone Star Cup means that we have had across-the-board success throughout the

2023-2024 school year in academics, athletics, and fine arts and with students in multiple grades,” Aledo Superintendent Dr. Susan Bohn said.

“This really shows how our students, staff, and community are all-in on helping our students achieve at the highest level in Aledo. The 2023-2024 school year was phenomenal for Aledo ISD. Lone Star Cup success just shows everyone else what we already know — that Aledo really is a special place.”

Leading the way athletically was the Bearcats football team, which finished 16-0 and won a second straight Class 5A Division I state championship — the program’s 12th title in all and 11th since 2009. Also, the Ladycats softball team advanced to the state semifinals, the girls and boys cross country teams

each qualified for the state meet (believed to be a first in program history) and spirit/cheerleading won the Crowd Leading Award.

Fine arts points received included the marching band and one-act play qualifying for state. Academically, the Robotics FIRST program also qualified for state.

“I knew coming into Aledo ISD a year ago that this district and community were incredible in how they support and rally around athletics, but I have seen this year how the entire Bearcat community supports everything our students are involved in whether it be athletics or fine arts or academics,” Athletic Director Brandy Belk said. “It has been exciting to see our students celebrated over and over again for success in so many different activities. We’re excited to do even better next year!”

Also advancing to the postseason in athletics were volleyball, girls basketball, boys basketball, boys and girls soccer, team tennis, and baseball, all of whom advanced to the postseason.

Numerous individuals also advanced to regional and state competition in various sports, with Lauren St. Peters winning a state championship in shot put for girls track. Also, pole vaulters Lauren Hindman and Braylon Brown each finished third at state, and Sofia Brandenburg — who also ran cross country — qualified in the 800-meter run.

Swimming featured Porter Lane placing third in state in the 100-yard butterfly, with Haley Roberson, Victoria Crews, Avery Faulkner, and Julia Gordy also reaching state. In golf, Braden Stokes advanced to state.

Academically, several individuals advanced to regionals, with some qualifying in a few events, including Jaden Delgado (calculator applications, mathematics, number sense), Cassidy Cole (editorial, feature writing and headline writing, Madison Cook (headline writing, news writing), and Joshua Wheeler (ready writing, literary criticism.)

In other classifications, Brock finished third in Class 3A with 77 points in a close competition. Holliday won with 88 and Corpus Christi London was second with 81.

Southlake Carroll won in Class 6A with 111 points, with Katy Seven Lakes second with 93. Shiner topped 2A with 69 points to 60 for Crawford, and Gail Borden County scored 69 to win in Class A over Jayton’s 66.

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OUTDOORS

Hard work leads to big catches

Area youth participate in Bassmasters event

By Rick Mauch
The Community News

The high school fishing season may be over but the fish are still biting and several area middle school and high school anglers were competing recently in a Bassmasters event on Cedar Lake in Gun Barrel City.

The highest finishing team from the area was the Weatherford duo of Ryan Stephens and Noah Camfield. They placed 14th out of 67 teams with a two-day weight total of 16.83 pounds.

Aledo's Max Moore had a two-day total of 10.79 pounds for 24th place. Moore accomplished this despite competing by himself.

"Impressive, considering the quality of anglers he fished against in the high school division," said Weatherford coach Pete Hernandez.

Hernandez praised the competition, saying, "It teaches them that you have to work hard and put in the effort and time preparing yourself for the tournament. A lot of things can happen in a tournament, you essentially 'live and die by the decisions you make during preparation and on competition day."

"This is important to learn, especially during the time we live in now, where some think everyone deserves an award even if you didn't put in the work to earn an award. The real world is not like that once you go to college and into the work force."



CHRISTOPHER MOORE/SPECIAL TO THE COMMUNITY NEWS
Aledo's Marc Cerja (left) and Miller Hill display their winnings during a recent Bassmaster competition.

Aledo's Marc Cerja, now a sophomore, competed in this event and advanced to the national championship, winning the junior division two years ago.

The competition was part of the Texas B.A.S.S. Youth Tour.

Aledo's Christopher Moore helped coach the local youth in the event. He said it is a sport that is rewarding for the youngsters, and probably more for the parents.

The youth are not allowed to drive the boats so they must have a captain. To be a captain you have to be a school official or relative.

"I captain my son Max. He told me at the regional championship on Eagle Mountain Lake last month that 'If I ever have a son, I couldn't do what you do. I couldn't be on a boat all day with him and not be allowed to fish,'" Moore said. "I

simply replied, 'If you ever have children, you'll understand why I do it and gladly do the same for yours. I get more enjoyment watching you do this than I ever do holding a rod and reel for myself.'

"As a captain, we are not allowed to fish - just drive the boat and help the kids net fish and remove hooks if needed."

Moore said the camaraderie between the young anglers and families is second to none.

"The boys have made lasting friendships through this sport. At 12:30 a.m. my son is out in the shop pouring soft plastics into molds to make fishing lures to use in the morning with Trenton Sowden, a recent graduate from Weatherford High School," he said. "It's been life changing for our son."

BASEBALL

WC's Fortenberry NJCAA DI Pitcher of Year

Courtesy Weatherford College

Sophomore Robert Fortenberry of Weatherford College has been named the National Junior College Athletic Association Division I Pitcher of the Year.

This season for the Coyotes, Fortenberry had a 2.19 ERA with 75 strikeouts and a 13-0 record with 74 innings played. His 13 wins were second in the nation, while his 2.19 ERA was 13th.

"Robert Fortenberry exemplifies excellence in every facet of life," said Jud Kinzy, WC pitching coach. "Whether on the field or off, he consistently shines and embodies the spirit of a champion in all he undertakes. When it's a Bob start day, you can count on his relentless effort and unwavering determination to get a win, regardless of the situation."

"He stands as one of the most remarkable players to don a Coyote uniform. I'll miss giving him the ball and watching him take the mound, but I look forward to what his future holds. It's been an absolute privilege to know him both as an athlete and as a person."

Fortenberry, from Frisco, had a two-year record of 23-1 for the Coyotes, helping them to a 98-26 record. This included a 53-11 mark in 2023 that was highlighted by a third-place finish at the NJCAA Division I World Series in Grand Junction, Colorado, followed by a 45-15 record in 2024.

"This is a well-deserved honor for Fortenberry," said Jeff Lightfoot,



WEATHERFORD COLLEGE FACEBOOK

Robert Fortenberry of Weatherford College was a dominant force for the Coyotes over the past two seasons with 23 wins in 24 decisions. This season he was 13-0, second in the nation, as he was named the NJCAA Division I Pitcher of the Year.

Coyotes head baseball coach. "This is a guy that shows up every day for work and competes his tail off. Robert left his mark on our program and leaves behind an example of what being a Coyote is all about."

Turn to PITCHER, page 7

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