

THE COMMUNITY NEWS

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HUDSON OAKS

Council unites with neighbor

Wastewater agreement approved

By Jim Zimmerman
The Community News

Following up on a decision by Willow Park's City Council two nights earlier, Hudson Oaks City Council moved forward with a new wastewater facility usage agreement. The council solidified the union at its meeting on Thursday, June 27.

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 their June 25 meeting, the Willow Park Council approved the agreement.

Hudson Oaks and Willow Park were already sharing water usage.

Hudson Oaks agrees to pay 20% of the construction cost of the new plant (about \$3,678,000), 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.

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

"One of the main contributing factors for Hudson Oaks to proceed with this endeavor was the city's AA credit rating. With this rating, the city was able to obtain bonds, money, at a very low interest rate," explained Hudson Oaks City Administrator Sterling Naron.

He noted this also keeps Hudson Oaks a property tax-free city.

Location

The facility is already under construction. Willow Park is responsible for the design, engineering and construction of the facility.

The new facility is located in Willow Park on JD Towles Road. Hudson Oaks will be responsible for the transmission line to get Hudson Oaks' wastewater to the facility.

"With this new facility in place, it allows both cities to grow and ensures that all residents get to rely on their corresponding cities to provide for their needs" explained Naron.

Summer Foam Fun



CHRISTOPHER AMOS/THE COMMUNITY NEWS

Young and old enjoy laughter and foam during a party at Camp Fire Day Camp held at Walsh Elementary School. The camp is one of several summer camps in the area providing fun and educational activities during the break from school. Special activities and field trips are scheduled throughout the summer weeks, including a bubbly foam party.

PEACH FESTIVAL

World's largest cobbler highlight of 2024 event

Parker County Peach Festival to break many records

By Rick Mauch
The Community News

The Parker County Peach Festival is always a big thing - and this year it's going to feature a treat unlike any other the world has ever seen.

The Weatherford Chamber of Commerce has announced plans to create the world's largest batch of peach cobbler - and yes, it will be available for consumption by anyone who visits the Peach Festival in downtown Weatherford on Saturday, July 13.

"The Parker County Peach Festival has always been a celebration of our rich agricultural heritage and our love for peaches. Breaking the world record for the largest peach cobbler is a fun and ambitious way to showcase our community spirit and highlight the delicious peaches that our region is known for," Weatherford Chamber President Tammy Gazzola said. "It's also a fantastic way to bring people together and create lasting memories."

"We have talked about doing the cobbler for a couple of years, but one of our local businessmen, Zack Smith with Buffalo Rental, heard we were considering the attempt and he took the initiative to formulate the plan to execute it. He really is the brains behind this huge undertaking."



WEATHERFORD ISD AG. MECHANICS

This large pan created by the Weatherford ISD Career and Technical Education department will hold the world's largest peach cobbler to be made and served at the Parker County Peach Festival on Saturday, July 13 in downtown Weatherford.

Shattering the record

Gazzola said the current world record for the largest cobbler is held by some folks in Louisiana who baked 2,251 pounds worth. She said plans are to shatter that record by creating more than 5,000 pounds.

"We don't want there to be any question that's it's the biggest!" Gazzola exclaimed.

The cobbler will be constructed off-site, just two blocks away from downtown. It will be constructed on Friday and moved to the festival Saturday morning. Local non-profits will be working the cobbler booth to sell tastings of the huge cobbler and all the

proceeds will go directly to local non-profits.

In the works for a while

Gazzola said this project has been in the works since last September when the chamber reached out to the folks at Guinness and put the plan in to action.

Candice Lambdin of Fire Oak Grill has been perfecting the recipe. Smith has been securing the equipment needed for mixing,

Turn to PEACH, page 3



CHRISTOPHER AMOS/THE COMMUNITY NEWS

Michael Martin Murphey entertains at the Texas Press Association convention June 21. The artist took the audience on a musical journey, blending songs with history, family experiences and folklore.

WEATHERFORD

Michael Murphey Institute to expand Doss Center

Research building and outdoor theater planned

Christopher Amos
The Community News

Michael Martin Murphey is best known for decades of writing and performing music with subjects of nature, culture, and the soul of western life. Parallel to his passion for

music is his joy of learning and sharing western history and the stories of the characters who lived it.

The library wing

The idea for an outlet to share his vast Western history collection began to take flight with a conversion he had with Weatherford College President Dr. Tod Farmer

Turn to MURPHEY, page 3

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In & Around Parker County

Call on Atex Trash Service

Atex Trash Service is a locally owned, family owned business that prides itself on excellent service for an affordable price. After 11 years in business, Atex Trash Service is building an outstanding reputation as a company that is truly here to build something simply by helping others, and it is that hometown business model philosophy that has quickly made them one of the fastest growing businesses in the community.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Give Atex a call and see how they can help you. You'll be glad you did!



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PEACH

from page one

transporting, building the oven and cooking. Texas Butane is helping with propane for cooking.

The Weatherford ISD Career and Technical Education program built and constructed an 11-by-20-foot pan to hold the cobbler.

"The oven will be constructed Thursday and burners placed. The pan will be weighed and placed Friday," Gazzola explained. "Friday afternoon the ingredients are weighed and mixed by the Weatherford Young Business Leaders. The cobbler will cook all night under the watch of the YBL and be moved to its place in the festival for Saturday morning."

Careful documentation

Gazzola said the chamber has been in contact with Guinness but has not received confirmation as to

whether they will be sending someone. However, she said everything in the process is being recorded carefully.

"We are moving forward and documenting the process and certifying the weight of ingredients and pan. We are using certified scales at Dillard's Feed to make sure it is all recorded correctly," she said. "Following the festival we will submit the record attempt and fully expect to smash the record."

Lots more

The Parker County Peach Festival, started in 1984, continues to captivate visitors from all over with its charm, bounty of locally grown peaches and over 200 art, craft, food and activity vendors. Attendees can indulge in an array of peach-themed delicacies, from peach cobbler (more than ever this year), peach juleps, peach pie, peach ribs to peach ice cream.

The food competition has quickly become a local favorite. The judges of this fun event are in for a real treat as they savor anything and everything peachy.

More than 200 quality arts and crafts, produce, activity and food vendors will line the streets of downtown Weatherford, with the historic Parker County Courthouse as the backdrop.

Visitors can pull up a seat, sit back and relax at one of two entertainment stages featuring local talent.

The annual Peach Pedal Bike Ride, also taking place that day, will feature over 2,000 cyclists. To get more information on this popular bike ride visit www.peachpedal.com.

For easy (and free) transportation to the festival, hop on one of the air-conditioned shuttles from the Weatherford ISD Ninth-Grade Center, Weatherford College, or Heritage Park.

Tickets

Cost is \$10 for adults, \$5 kids ages 5-12 and under age 5 are free. Tickets can be purchased at www.peachfestivaltx.com.

Also, visit facebook.com/parkercountypeachfestival for more details.

"Each year, we strive to enhance the festival experience with new attractions, entertainment, and of course, our world-class peach cobbler," Gazzola said. "This dedication to quality and innovation continues to attract growing numbers of attendees, making it a highlight of the summer for many."

Lindley Kessinger was named Peach Queen for 2024-2025. She also won the photogenic award. She is the daughter of Kris and Jeannine Kessinger and will be a senior at Weatherford Christian School. The Parker County Peach Festival will be in Weatherford on July 13.

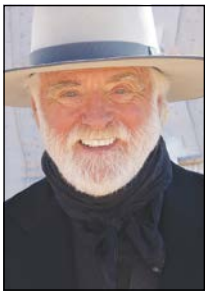


PHOTO COURTESY OF KRISTOPHER KESSINGER

MURPHEY

from page one

while Murphey was a guest at a college event. That meeting led to volumes of Murphey's collection arriving at the campus in 2022 and eventually the Michael Martin Murphey Western Heritage Institute collection opening in the Speaker Jim



Michael Martin Murphey

Wright Library on the Weatherford College campus March of 2024.

The wing features more than 1,600 significant volumes, most of which can be checked out, with rare and irreplaceable volumes available for study in the library.

Library Director Valorie Starr was tasked with cataloging and presenting the vast collection.

"She is one of the greatest assets Parker County has, I can tell you that," Murphey said of Starr. "She studied and looked up the value of every single book and decided how it all fits into the library system."

Starr said patrons do not need to be a Weatherford College student to access the Murphey Western Institute collection but can obtain a library account if a resident of Parker, Palo Pinto, Wise, Jack or Hood counties.

The institute

Murphey has a history of not only promoting western history, but helping people and organizations in need, especially in Texas. Murphey Western Institute, a 501(c)(3) non-profit with principal board members Mark Gregston, Frank

Goodrich and Murphey, have benefited projects such as the Home on the Range Cabin project in Athol, Kansas, and the Colorado Trail project.

The organization has also raised money for cattle ranchers affected by Hurricane Harvey in 2017, the 2008 Texas wildfire, and, with a concert co-starring Texas musical artist Lyle Lovett, raised \$100,000 in aid for the largest Texas wildfire in March 2024.

"We help build buildings and we help people in times of disaster," Murphey said.

The Doss-Murphey vision

There is much more on the horizon for the Murphey Western Heritage Institute after the music artist approached the Doss Heritage & Culture Center in Weatherford. Loraine Crutcher, Doss director of development, said the board was

excited to partner with Murphey and build what will be the largest western heritage complex in the U.S.

"This is a beautiful way to keep connecting all of our organizations and missions together because we already work very closely with Weatherford College," Crutcher said. "When we met Michael Murphey at a Weatherford College event, it all came together. It really is a fantastic way for us to partner and be very concentric around western heritage and culture."

"We think being in Parker County is the perfect place to be," Murphey said between concerts. "We will always have the Murphey Western Library wing there at the college, and when the Murphey Western Heritage Institute is built, the Doss Center will have a fantastic research center, library and archive.

Plans are for the property from the Doss Heritage & Culture

Center at 1400 Texas Dr. east to Weatherford College to have the Murphey Western Institute, a research center with archive and an amphitheater concert arena. The creek area on the property will be developed into greenspace and walking trails.

"Eventually, 11,000 books I have will be at the new library and many available in an immense archive," Murphey said.

Part of Murphey's collection includes major western writers and historians and an extensive western art collection. He also plans to contribute a selection of historic material about Cynthia Ann Parker, wife of Comanche Chief Peta Nacona, who was captured as a child and assimilated into Comanche life.

To learn how to contribute to the Murphey Western Institute, visit murpheywesterninstitute.org.

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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

Fire safety urged for July 4 weekend



Gary Borders

gborders@texaspress.com

With the Fourth of July bringing a possible four-day weekend for lucky Texans, the Texas A&M Forest Service urges outdoor enthusiasts to exercise fire safety outdoors, especially when using fireworks or starting campfires to roast hot dogs and toast marshmallows.

Approximately 90% of wildfires are caused by humans and their activities, and the Fourth of July is one of the top days for reported wildfires, according to the forest service.

Large wildfires generally are not expected, and none are prevalent currently, but north and northeast Texas has received little to no rainfall since early June. That reduces moisture content and increases the potential for wildfires to start.

"As we start to observe typical summer weather with conditions becoming hotter and drier, we anticipate wildfire activity to increase," said forest service chief Wes Moorehead. "State and local firefighters are prepared to respond quickly, but we need Texans to be careful and prevent wildfire ignitions while conditions are hot and dry."

Anyone considering using fireworks is urged to comply with any burn bans in place, follow the warning labels on fireworks, use only under close adult supervision and keep them away from structures, dry grass and brush.

Cornyn bill would increase security for judges

Legislation sponsored by U.S. Sen. John Cornyn would, if passed, establish a new resource

center that would monitor threats to local judges and provide training for both judges and staff at state and local courts, *The Dallas Morning News* reported.

At a panel held recently at the University of North Texas law school, participating judges and prosecutors expressed support for the measure, which passed the Senate unanimously in mid-June and awaits consideration in the House.

A consultant for the nonprofit National Center for State Courts said attacks and threats against members of the federal judiciary increased 400% from 2015 through 2021. In Texas, security incidents involving local judiciary have increased four-fold on average since fiscal year 2017, though the number dropped slightly last fiscal year.

"This isn't partisan. It's just common sense," Cornyn said during a news conference after the roundtable discussion.

Top 10 state parks listed by TPWD

With summer in full swing, Texas' 89 state parks are expecting an influx of visitors. Texas Parks and Wildlife Department recently released the top 10 parks in terms of visitors. The top 10 in reverse order are, according to the *Austin American-Statesman*:

10. Ink Lakes State Park, Burnet County

9. Dinosaur Valley State Park, near Glen Rose in Somervell County

8. Brazos Bend State Park, Fort Bend County

7. Enchanted Rock State Natural Area, between Fredericksburg and Llano

6. McKinney Falls State Park, Travis County

5. Ray Roberts State Park Isle du Bois, Denton County

4. Cedar Hill State Park, Dallas County

3. Ray Roberts Lake State Park, Sanger Unit, Denton County

2. Palo Duro Canyon State Park, Armstrong County

And the top state park for visitors: Garner State Park, located in Uvalde County, which hosted more than 475,000 visitors in 2023.

Paxton probe appears headed to grand jury

A federal appeals court appears to have cleared the way for officials in Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton's office to testify before a grand jury probing alleged corruption, the *Houston Chronicle* reported.

While the case before the 5th Circuit of Appeals remains under seal, last week the court last rejected an unnamed state agency's attempt to stymie federal investigators from calling top officials.

While the case is under seal, the *Chronicle* reported, "the dates and details line up with those in the years-long federal probe into allegations by Paxton's former top deputies, who say the attorney general took bribes to benefit Nate Paul, an Austin developer who is a friend and donor of Paxton's."

The court said that the AG officials may have evidence of a potential crime, and that the Department of Justice can invoke the "crime-fraud exception" to get around potential attorney-client privileges.

Paxton did not respond to requests for comment.

Fewer students seek financial aid after FAFSA glitches

Nearly 30,000 fewer Texas students have filled out the federal form this year to apply for financial aid after a new rollout was beset with complications and delays, the *Texas Tribune* reported.

A revamped Free Application for Federal Student Aid has resulted in hurdles that have led to fewer high-school students seeking financial aid for college, with FAFSA completion rates for Texas students dropping by 8.8

percentage points. That decline is sharper than what the state experienced during the COVID-19 pandemic.

"These are by far the steepest declines that I have observed," said Bill DeBaun, the senior director of data and strategic initiatives at the National College Attainment Network. "It's going to take a really significant push this summer to continue to connect students with the FAFSA completion support they need and keep them on track for the post-secondary pathways to which they aspire."

The U.S. Education Department was ordered by Congress to revamp FAFSA in 2020 to make it simpler to fill out, but the new form's release came out three months late, cutting the time high school counselors had to help students with the form. Glitches were reported by many students attempting to complete the form, *The Tribune* reported.

Abbott appoints new PUC member

Gov. Greg Abbott has appointed Courtney Hjaltman to the Public Utility Commission of Texas, filling the final vacancy on that board. The PUC regulates the state's utility industries — electric, water, wastewater, and telecommunications.

Hjaltman has been chief executive and public counsel for the Office of Public Utility Counsel since December 2022. She has worked in state service for more than 17 years.

"Courtney Hjaltman's long-time service to the State of Texas and extensive legal expertise makes her the ideal choice to serve on the Public Utility Commission," Abbott 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

The Unabomber Party? Texans Deserve Better



Dr. Glenn Rogers

glenn.rogers@house.texas.gov

"Ban Democrat Chairs!" has been the battle cry of the Dunn/Wilks faction of the Republican Party of Texas for several House legislative sessions. This effort, closely aligned with the Speaker's race, seems to now be gaining momentum. Past Texas House leadership has viewed this issue differently, in line with a rich history and deep tradition of professional and civil political decorum.

Texans have a long history of relative congeniality and civility when conducting legislative business. Unlike Washington, where lawmakers have not even been able to arrive at enough consensus to approve a federal budget since 2020, Austin lawmakers traditionally sit together, eat together and carry-on a semblance of civil discourse, even when in complete disagreement. Civil discourse and friendship, even with intense disagreement, is vital for a well-functioning governing body. Ironically, Speaker candidate Tom Oliverson recently complimented a Democratic

colleague saying, "I see a chairmanship in your future."

Contrary to divisive rhetoric on news outlets and social media, the overwhelming majority of bills considered and passed, both in the federal and in our state government, are bipartisan. The actual work and progress occur near the ideological center, where most Texans and Americans reside. Extremism, on both sides, has exploded to the point that vocal fractions of the populace believe that one's final destination, after briefly passing through this life, is dependent on whether you chose the Republican or Democrat Party. Are all Republicans (or Democrats) destined for Heaven and all Democrats (or Republicans) destined for Hell? As crazy as this notion may appear to most rational, reasonable citizens, this is the mindset and bubble created by the hate mongers that thrive on chaos and outrage for some sort of personal gratification and/or financial gain.

Selecting a limited number of Committee chairmanships from the minority party has been a long tradition in Texas state government. After Reconstruction, there was a period of around one hundred years when there were very few Republicans in Texas. In 1973, Speaker Price Daniel gave Republican Chairmanships to a few subcommittees and in 1975, Speaker Billy Clayton



PHOTO BY ANDREW PATRICK ON PEXELS

gave Committee Chairmanships to some Republicans. The first Republican Speaker since Reconstruction, Tom Craddick, appointed between nine and fourteen Democrats as Chairs in each of his four sessions as speaker. This unique Texas tradition, which has kept our state out of political gridlock, has been in place for over fifty years.

Make no mistake, the Republican party is currently in control of both the Texas House and Senate. The last two legislative sessions have been the most conservative in Texas history. Every one of the 34 House committees has a Republican majority. Bills are assigned to committees by a Republican Speaker. The Calendars Committee, controlled by a Republican Chair, determines which bills are to be

placed on the House Calendar for a vote. The most powerful committees, such as State Affairs and Appropriations, are chaired by Republicans. Anyone claiming Democrats have control of the Texas House will not be able to name a single Republican priority bill killed because of a Democrat chair.

Representative Ryan Guillen, a long-time border Democrat and conservative, at the end of the 87th session switched parties and became a Republican. This would never have happened without his involvement in leadership and close interactions with Republicans.

In debate over banning Democrat chairs in the 87th House legislative session, Representative Briscoe Cain

Turn to TEXAS, page 10

Look at it This Way

Dressing the part for fighting poverty



Rick Mauch
sports@community-news.com

The Hope Chest celebrates 10 years

he gets an internship despite showing up for the interview in ragged clothes wearing only an undershirt with paint in his hair and having spent the night in the jail for unpaid parking tickets (they came to his apartment and arrested him while he was painting).

The scene does feature a great line, however. When asked what he would think if someone were hired after showing up to an interview without a shirt, Smith's character responded, "He must have had on some great pants."

Those pants, by the way, can likely be found at The Hope Chest.

And while children aren't on the job market, parents and guardians do want nice, quality clothes for their youngsters. Again, we're not talking about looking like Richie Rich, but if a child can get that in-style pair of shoes or item it just gives them a boost of confidence.

Along with clothing, The Hope Chest has a plethora of other items to help make life more enjoyable despite a challenging budget. Life just seems better when you have a comfortable living area, and when you can get the things that make this possible for a fraction of their original cost, well, that just makes the feeling even better.

And, perhaps the greatest benefit of The Hope Chest is that it gives people from all walks of life a chance to help others. If you're donating or purchasing, it's a circle of kindness that moves the organization forward in its battle against poverty.

"First and foremost, this is God's store," said Heidi Rodosta, The Hope Chest manager, emphasizing the store's mission.

Remember, the two greatest commandments are love the Lord and love each other. Donating and buying from places such as The Hope Chest fulfill both of these commandments because, guess what, if you are loving others you are also showing a love for God, whether you realize that or not.

Over the past decade, the store has become a valuable resource to the community, providing much more than a place to shop. The store's purpose is multifaceted: to help clothe those in need, to provide an internship to those needing work skills, and to provide funding for the Center's operations.

Since its inception, the Center of Hope notes that The Hope Chest has received donations from more than 53,000 individuals, stocking the store with a wide variety of items. This outpouring of generosity has enabled the store to raise millions of dollars, which in turn has supported thousands of Parker County families struggling with poverty.

"This is not only a place where community shops and donates, but we are also helping families get back on their feet. The funding we receive can serve as a lifeline for those needing food or financial assistance, or even open pathways to education and career development opportunities," Rodosta said.

"When you understand the purpose of the store, it makes coming to work that much more fulfilling."

Saturday, June 22 was the official celebration of the 10-year milestone for The Hope Chest. It was also the first day of additional hours for the store.

From now on, the store will continue to operate during the week from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. And now you



CHRISTOPHER AMOS/THE COMMUNITY NEWS

Heidi Rodosta manages The Hope Chest, the Center of Hope's upscale resale store that has been helping the organization battle poverty in Parker County for a decade.

can stop in on Saturdays from 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

So, drop in and find a cool bargain. Everyone has that something we never thought we could afford but would love to have. There's a good chance it might be at The Hope Chest.

Or if you have some clothing that just doesn't fit anymore because you are now doing more of a different kind of crunching on the sofa instead of in a gym, it will still fit someone.

Even if you're just tired of looking at something, be it a piece of clothing or a piece of furniture, believe me, it will be the most beautiful thing on earth to someone else.

Many of you already know this. After all, the store wouldn't still be in business, even surviving COVID,

and doing so well if you weren't helping out.

"The story of The Hope Chest serves as a testament to the power and compassion of the Parker County community. It is a shining example of how a shared vision and collective effort can create a lasting change for so many in our community who are struggling," Center of Hope CEO Staci Markwardt said. "I couldn't be more thankful to each person who has shopped, donated, or volunteered."

There are still plenty of opportunities to do one, two, or all three of those things. Here's to 10 more years times 10 and then some for Center of Hope and The Hope Chest.

The store is located at 1318 Clear Lake Road in Weatherford.

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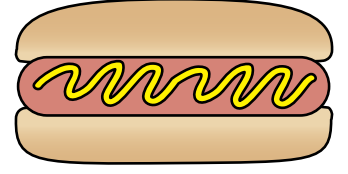
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Kid Scoop Together:

Fourth of July by the Numbers

Use this code to reveal some incredible Independence Day facts:

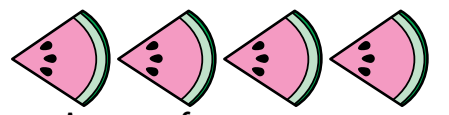
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|--|-----|--|-----|
| | = 0 | | = 5 |
| | = 1 | | = 6 |
| | = 2 | | = 7 |
| | = 3 | | = 8 |
| | = 4 | | = 9 |



Number of hot dogs that are eaten by Americans on Independence Day:



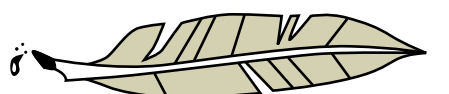
million



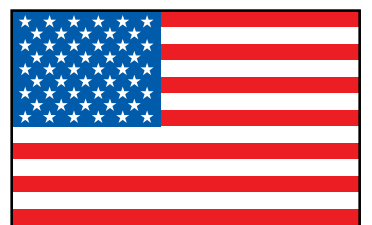
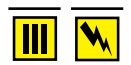
Amount of money spent on watermelon for the July 4th holiday:



million



Number of people who signed the Declaration of Independence:



Percentage of Americans who own an American flag:



%

Sources: History.com, WalletHub.com

America's Independence Day

Too Bad, King George!

On July 4, 1776, people living in the American Colonies declared their independence. They wanted to be independent, or free, from the rules of King George III of England. They wanted to form their own country.

They wrote a document to send to King George. It was called the Declaration of Independence, signed on July 4, 1776. This famous document says that all people are created equal and with certain rights.

Unscramble the words to discover the rights mentioned in the Declaration of Independence.

EFLI _____
BILTEYR _____

PINESPHAS _____

Parade Puzzle

Can you find the letters L-I-B-E-R-T-Y hidden here?



How many stars can you find below?

BONUS:
How many stars can you find on this page?

Which two picnic pictures are the same?

Extra! Extra! POP! BOOM! ZING!

Onomatopoeia describes words that sound like the sound they make when you say them. For example, when you say, "Pop!" it sounds a bit like a pop. Look through the newspaper. Can you find three to five examples of onomatopoeia?

Standards Link: Language Arts: Vocabulary development.

Kid Scoop Puzzler

Founding Father Favorite Food

One of the original signers of the Declaration of Independence visited Europe and fell in love with pasta. He brought back a machine to make macaroni and later, he became the first president to serve macaroni and cheese as part of an official state dinner. Which Founding Father was this? Circle every fourth letter to find out!

ASDTFJKHDZMOVWYMLNR
 AQMPSLWBJVCTEKOLFQDN
 FTRYELOSRGBXSUTROMBWN

★ ☆ T H ☆ ★

Double Double Word Search

Find the words in the puzzle. How many of them can you find on this page?

MACARONI
 ENGLAND
 SIGNERS
 PARADE
 FATHER
 CHEESE
 GEORGE
 PEOPLE
 RULES
 PASTA
 EQUAL
 WORDS
 KING
 FREE
 LIFE

E	I	N	O	R	A	C	A	M	P
G	S	C	C	E	L	D	E	A	E
R	I	B	H	R	P	N	R	A	O
O	G	R	E	H	T	A	F	T	P
E	N	U	E	E	D	L	S	T	L
G	E	L	S	E	A	G	G	T	E
F	R	E	E	U	H	N	E	F	A
O	S	S	Q	U	I	E	F	I	L
R	T	E	H	K	S	D	R	O	W

Standards Link: Letter sequencing. Recognize identical words. Skim and scan reading. Recall spelling patterns.

FROM THE Kid Scoop LESSON LIBRARY

We the People

The Preamble to the U.S. Constitution starts with "We the People..." Find examples in the newspaper of people working together to improve something or accomplish a goal in your community.

Standards Link: Civics: Understand how a constitutional government has shaped America.

Why does the Statue of Liberty stand in New York Harbor?

ANSWER: Because she can't sit down.

Write On! My Best Birthday

Write about the best birthday you have had. What made it feel so special? Be sure to give at least five details.

Standards Link: Write descriptively using main idea and supporting details.

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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 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.

JULY 13

Parker County Peach Festival
Mark your calendar to come celebrate the 39th Annual Parker 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



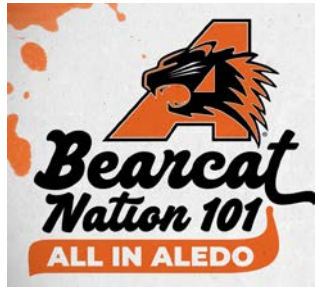
in historic downtown Weatherford. The expanded festival area makes it easy to spread out and enjoy the day! Save the date for this "peachy" family fun-filled event!
\$10.00 for adults
\$5.00 children 5-12
Under 5 are free
For more information on www.peachfestivaltx.com

JULY 14

After Peach Party
Join us for our 2nd annual After Peach Party from 11



a.m. - 3 p.m. on Sunday, July 14 at the Historic Downtown Weatherford. Shop the local shops & vendors and enjoy some peachy treats & deals. Listen to live music! Enjoy great food & more!



AUGUST 3

Bearcat Nation 101
Attention, Bearcat Nation! Aledo ISD will be hosting its annual Bearcat Nation 101, a free event that brings the Aledo community from 9a.m. - 12 p.m. on Saturday, August 3, 2024, in the McAnally Middle School cafeteria at 14700 Old Weatherford Road.

ACROSS

- 1 "___ Texas" by Jimmie Rogers
- 5 ___smith drummer Joey Kramer has lived in Texas
- 6 ABC affiliate in San Antonio
- 7 tall Italian volcano
- 8 TXism: "never ___ in the glow of a neon light"
- 17 Greenville road in Dallas, e.g. (abbr.)
- 18 actor/comedian in Texas-based 1992 "Sidekicks" (2 wds.)
- 21 TX Buddy Holly's "That'll ___ the Day"
- 22 Astros & Rangers get three an inning
- 23 TXism: "too lazy to ___ flies"
- 24 "___ Lake in Martin County
- 29 in Jasper County on U.S. 96
- 30 Texas-based insur. co. for the military
- 31 TX-born actress, Robin (init.)
- 32 a type of Texas tycoon (2 wds.)
- 34 TX Jordan Spieth won 2015 U.S. ___ dir. from Elgin to Yoakum
- 36 some RVs
- 37 "It's ___!"
- 38 "gotta ___ with the punches"
- 39 fix a mistake? (3 wds.)
- 41 defamation
- 42 OJ's judge, Lance
- 43 TXism: "wipe the ___ clean" (erase)
- 44 this TX-born Alvin was a noted dancer
- 45 Mavericks rival, the Pelicans (abbr.)
- 46 TXism: "windy"
- 47 stomach issue caused by stress
- 48 TXism: "she ___ him like a hot horseshoe"

DOWN

- 1 TXism: "___ to rope him" (large man)
- 2 cheerful and jolly
- 3 easternmost city
- 4 in Fisher County on highway 70
- 9 TXism: "dainty as ___ bride"
- 10 TXism: "___ lick" (none)
- 11 TXism: "does a wet dog stink?"
- 12 this Tom was a Traveling Wilbury with TX Roy (init.)
- 13 TXism: "she threw a ___ fit"
- 14 TXism for "I declare" (2 wds.)
- 15 UT was 2015 ___ football champ
- 16 TXism: "___ half a mind to" (inclined)
- 19 "___, sage, rosemary & thyme"
- 20 TX "___ Twins" sang on Lawrence Welk show
- 22 TX Larry McMurtry was able to ___ many other authors
- 24 init. of Houston's Olajuwon before he was Hakeem
- 25 TXism: "___ out" (left quickly)
- 26 Austin PBS station
- 27 upcoming series for TX William Jackson Harper: "___ Full" (Netflix)
- 28 "___ rest" (buried)
- 29 big farm buildings
- 30 "put ___ shut up"
- 33 teacher labor union
- 34 instrument in the Dallas Symphony
- 35 TXism: "___ as a judge in court"
- 37 branch of an artery
- 38 TXism: "___ up" (very angry)
- 40 early Texas attacks: Indian ___
- 41 TXism: "walking dandruff"
- 44 Europe mountains
- 47 "night owl" (2 wds.)
- 49 in Young County on highway 79

TEXAS CROSSWORD
by Charley & Guy Orbison
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ways to help your child thrive by connecting with fellow Bearcats and learn more about our schools, programs and community resources. You'll see firsthand what being ALL IN is all about. Come out in style wearing your orange and black at this free event!

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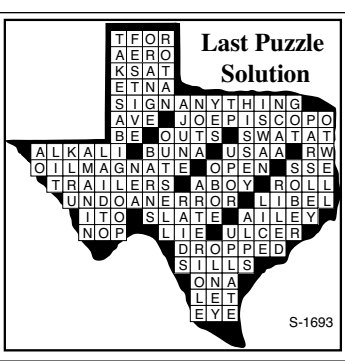
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TRACK AND FIELD

TCU's Morris competes in Olympic Trials

By Geoff Heppes
Aledo Community News

Recent TCU graduate and track phenom Gracie Morris competed in the U.S. Olympic Trials at Hayward Field in Eugene, Oregon, Thursday evening, June 27 in the 1,500-meter run.

The Aledo native competed against the top female long-distance runners in the nation, which is something she will cherish.

"Competing at the trials was truly a dream come true," Morris said. "I've been saying since I first started track that I wanted to make an Olympic team, and this was a major step forward to accomplishing that. Stepping on the line with those ladies and actually being able to be in the race showed me I belong there and that, with time and patience, my time will come."

Morris was not able to qualify for the Olympic Games this year, but that didn't stop her from posting a blazing time of 4:18.32 in her best event on the track. The race was competitive from top to bottom as first and last place (38th) were separated by only 13 seconds.

"Although I wanted more at this meet, I'm still extremely grateful that I was able to get into the meet," Morris said. "Being accepted into this meet was a huge accomplishment for me this year because I had to run a standard and get into the top 36 of the United States, which I was able to do at the qualifying meet in Portland a few weeks ago with a time of 4:08.94."

Moving forward, Morris is armed with confidence and eager to continue perfecting her craft one step at a time while both continuing to increase recognition for long-distance runners coupled with her own rigorous self improvement disciplines.

"This meet definitely showed me that maturity plays a huge part into distance running and with time I'll become stronger," Morris said. "But, also being able to get into the atmosphere has made it a lot less intimidating for next time. I'm planning on transitioning to professional running this summer. No major decisions have been made yet but the plan is to run through the rest of the summer if my body is still feeling up to it."

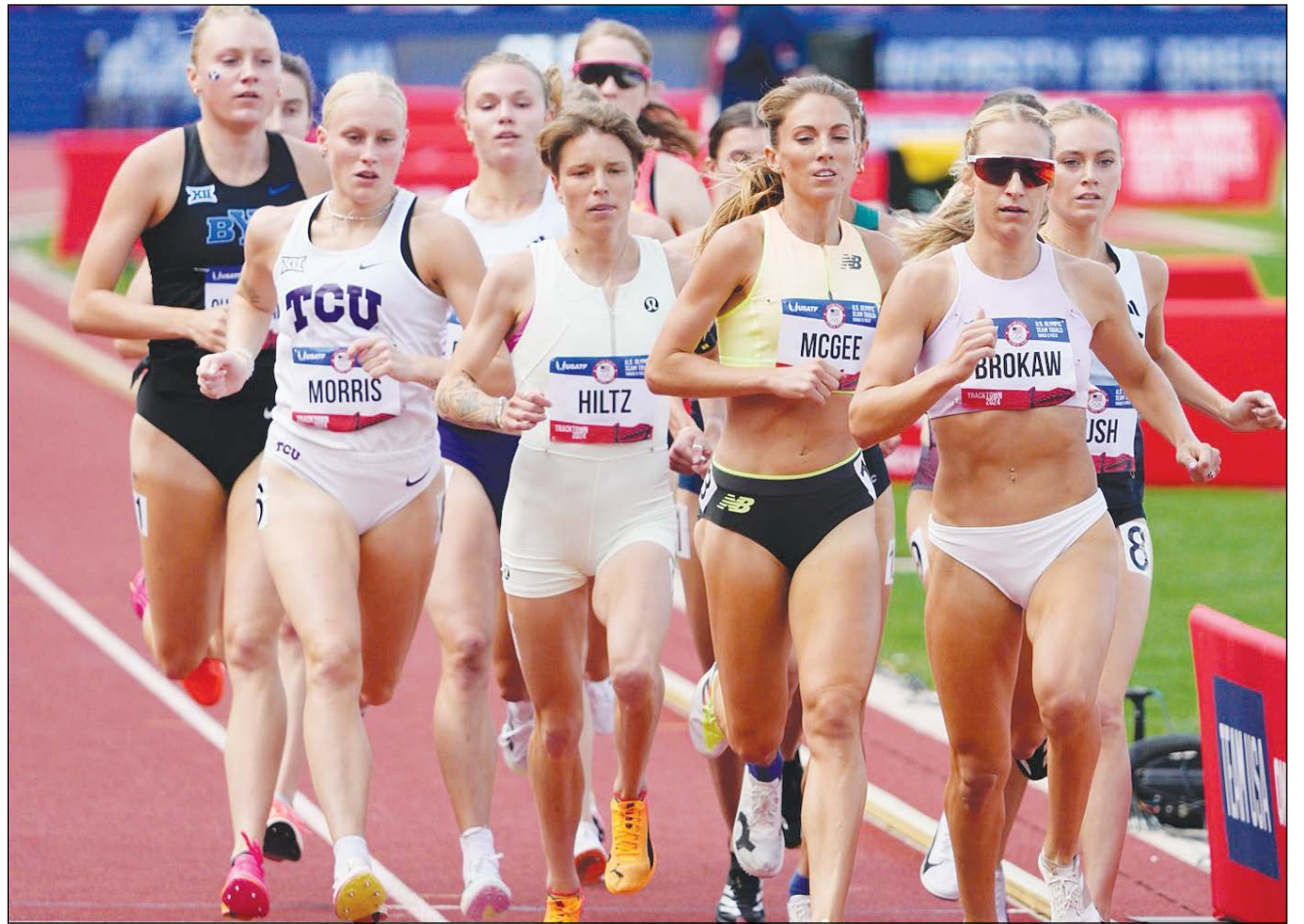


PHOTO COURTESY USA TRACK AND FIELD
Former Aledo Ladycat and TCU runner Gracie Morris competed in the U.S. Olympic Trials on June 27 in Eugene, Oregon.



GEOFF HEPPES/THE COMMUNITY NEWS

Weatherford Wild swimmers dive into the water during competition at a recent meet. The Wild is enjoying a strong summer, which includes winning 24 gold medals in a recent meet at Flower Mound.

SWIMMING

Wild finds gold at Flower Mound

By Rick Mauch
The Community News

The Weatherford Wild competed in their second meet of the 2024 Texas Amateur Athletic Federation summer season in Flower Mound recently. The team brought home 24 gold medals (13 females, 11 males), along with 15 silver (8 females, 7 males) and eight bronze (5 females, 3 males).

Leading all performers with three medals each were Mackenzie Oligschlaeger (Girls 13-14), Brooklelyn Nowakowski (Women 18-24) and Harrison Gentry (Boys 9-10). Winning two gold medals were Chloe Brumfield (Girls 9-10), Blair Mezger (Girls 11-12), Corbin

Lane (Boys 13-14) and Kody Burlison (Boys 13-14).

Flower Mound Swim Meet Weatherford Wild results Distances in yards

Mixed

15-17 200 Medley Relay: 2. Zach Edwards, Hali Hughes, Kade Burlison, Kayley Brekel, 2:14.90.

Girls/Women

8-Under 50 Freestyle: 3. Miriam Tumulty, 51.88.

8-Under 25 Breaststroke: 5. Tumulty, 32.48.

9-10 50 Freestyle: 2. Andi Burse, 41.58; 5. Reagan Richey, 46.23.

9-10 25 Backstroke: 1. Chloe Brumfield, 21.07.

9-10 25 Breaststroke: 2. Brumfield, 23.65.

9-10 25 Butterfly: 3. Richey, 24.12.

9-10 25 Freestyle: 1. Brumfield, 17.91; 4. Burse, 18.45.

11-12 50 Butterfly: 1. Charlotte Borme, 35.84; 4. Savannah Israel, 44.20; 5. Jordyn Butler, 57.73.

11-12 50 Backstroke: 1. Blair Mezger, 36.20.

11-12 100 Freestyle: 2. Madison Balaban, 1:18.17; 4. Karmyn Chaires, 1:24.78.

11-12 50 Breaststroke: 3. Mezger,

Turn to SWIMMING, page 10

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A Big Dill

Pickleball Awards



SPECIAL TO THE COMMUNITY NEWS

Shirley Sylvis and Joyce Bishop won gold medals in intermediate pickleball competition at the Fort Worth Chas Haws Recreation Center June 14. The athletes play at various Parker County locations and consider the gym at The Church at the Crossing in Aledo to be their home court.

SWIMMING

from page 9

- 41.78.
- 11-12 50 Freestyle: 1. Mezger, 30.49; 2. Borme, 30.52; 5. Balaban, 34.73.
- 13-14 200 Medley Relay: 2. Avery Meek, Mackenzie Oligschlaeger, Emma Circelli, Campbell Hord, 2:25.87.
- 13-14 100 Freestyle: 1. Oligschlaeger, 1:01.94; 4. Lynleigh Bruno, 1:12.10.
- 13-14 50 Breaststroke: 2. Meek, 40.11; 4. Circelli, 43.82; 5. Sydney Vidal, 44.98.
- 13-14 50 Backstroke: 1. Meek, 36.57; 2. Bruno, 37.46.
- 13-14 50 Butterfly: 1. Oligschlaeger, 30.91; 4. Elizabeth Walter, 39.87.
- 13-14 50 Freestyle: 1. Oligschlaeger, 27.89; 4. Meek, 31.05.
- 15-17 50 Freestyle: 3. Brekel, 30.22.
- 15-17 100 Freestyle: 2. Karla Rodriguez, 1:06.64; 5. Hughes, 1:10.46.
- 15-17 50 Breaststroke: 1. Kristen Thomas, 33.47; 3. Hughes, 39.48.
- 15-17 50 Butterfly: 4. Brekel, 35.59; 5. Rodriguez, 36.13.
- 18-24 50 Backstroke: 1. Brookelyn Nowakowski, 33.07.
- 18-24 50 Breaststroke: 1. Nowakowski, 38.82.
- 18-24 50 Freestyle: 1. Nowakowski, 30.23.

Boys/Men

- 6-Under 25 Freestyle: 2. Frankie Galvan, 29.69.
- 6-Under 25 Backstroke: 1. Galvan, 28.67.
- 9-10 50 Freestyle: 2. Samuel

Balaban, 40.09; 5. Max Borme, 42.16.

- 9-10 25 Backstroke: 4. Balaban, 22.72; 5. Vincent Circelli, 22.93.
- 9-10 25 Breaststroke: 1. Harrison Gentry, 21.54; 2. Borme, 23.90; 3. Circelli, 25.39; 5. Nicholas Enriquez, 28.47.
- 9-10 25 Butterfly: 1. Gentry, 19.13.
- 9-10 25 Freestyle: 1. Gentry, 16.76.
- 11-12 100 Freestyle: 1. Bowen Judd, 1:07.03.
- 11-12 50 Backstroke: 1. Judd, 34.76.
- 13-14 200 Medley Relay: 1. Corbin Lane, Kody Burlison, Max Gentry, Rafe Haugen, 2:17.81.
- 13-14 100 Freestyle: 4. Jaxon Edwards, 1:17.56; 5. Kyah Williamson, 1:19.76.
- 13-14 50 Backstroke: 1. Lane, 33.63; 3. Haugen, 36.39; 4. Ethan Kilbourne, 37.57.
- 13-14 50 Breaststroke: 1. Burlison, 38.26; 2. Haugen, 38.54; 4. Lane, 39.50.
- 13-14 50 Butterfly: 1. Samuel Warden, 31.64.
- 13-14 50 Freestyle: 2. Kilbourne, 28.73; 3. Haugen, 29.30; 3. Lane, 29.30.
- 15-17 100 Freestyle: 5. Michael Spillers, 58.93.
- 15-17 50 Backstroke: 5. Judah Balaban, 44.70.
- 15-17 50 Breaststroke: 1. Spillers, 33.91; 2. Zach Edwards, 36.80.
- 15-17 50 Butterfly: 2. Kade Burlison, 30.56.
- 25-39 100 Freestyle: 1. Matt Williams, 1:03.12.

TEXAS

from page 4

spoke against the bill after asserting his long-standing conservative voting record. He stated, "I cannot vote for this amendment, not because I support the values of the Democratic Party, not because I disagree with the concept found in this amendment. I cannot support this amendment because the amendment takes us one step closer to looking like Washington, D.C. This chamber exists so that we may deliberate ideas, work the process, and work hard to pass and kill bills on behalf of our constituents. We don't need to have Republican-only chairs to do that. We never have in the past; we don't need them now."

Radical, fringe elements of the Republican party, financed primarily by Tim Dunn and Farris Wilks, have strategically used the Democrat chair issue to sow chaos and division by opposing a tradition that has served Texans well. Their puppeteers, such as Matt Rinaldi, Michael Quinn Sullivan, Luke Macias, and Jonathan Stickland, have long railed against what they call the "Uniparty" in Texas. Newly selected Party Chair Abraham George is continuing the effort.

There is no Uniparty in Texas. However, the *Unabomber* Party the Dunn/Wilks faction seeks to create, if unchecked, will lead to the demise of Republican control and result in a Democrat-controlled Blue state. If enacted, the ban will make our state legislature more dysfunctional (like Washington, DC) and result in long term negative consequences for true conservative governance in Texas. We need the Republican Party to thrive, not implode in on itself. Citizens are weary of ineffective, hyper partisan government. Banning Democrat Chairs is simply another dirty political power play for Dunn/Wilks control and domination of the Texas House, getting in line with the Texas Senate.

For the good of Texas, this must be vigorously opposed.

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