

# THE COMMUNITY NEWS

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



COMMUNITY LIFE

## Willow Park hosting evening of safety and fun

### National Night Out is time for neighbors to mingle and learn

By Rick Mauch  
The Community News

Fun, mingling, and education will be in the spotlight on Tuesday, Oct. 1 as Willow Park will host National Night Out from 5-8 p.m. at Kings Gate Park.

The event focuses on police and community relationships. According to the NNO website, millions of neighbors take part in such an event across all states and U.S. territories on either the first Tuesday of August or the first Tuesday October annually.

"The Willow Park Police Department began hosting a centralized NNO celebration a few years ago as a way to bring members of our community together in one place to get to know each other and the men and women who help keep our community safe," said Rose Hoffman, City of Willow Park Communications and Marketing Director/Public Information Officer.

"This year we are excited to move the party to Kings Gate Park, which allows us to expand the event."

The evening will include fun activities such as bounce houses and games for children, music, and food vendors. There will also be a limited supply of free T-shirts

"It's also a really fun night for all involved - this year we are bringing back DJ John Henry, who did a great job entertaining and energizing the crowd last year, and we are welcoming food trucks from Flavor on 51 and Donut NV," Hoffman said. "We also have several bounce houses and other inflatable attractions for the kids as well as games and goodies."

Willow Park Police Chief Daniel Franklin praised the move from the police department to King's Gate Park.

"We had a pretty good turnout at the PD, so we decided why not move it to King's Gate Park where you have the playground for the kids and a lot more room for everyone?" he said.

The event is free for everyone - with the exception of the food trucks, Hoffman stressed, thanks to the generosity of sponsors, including The Community News, The District at Willow Park, Par-Tee Carts, Texas Elite Disposal, JW Mechanical, Wilks Development, Bearcat Sports Bar, and the Parker County Chamber of Commerce.

Turn to NATIONAL, page 2



Mia Mateo reacts to being named the 2024 Homecoming Queen for Aledo High School on Sept. 20 at Tim Buchanan Stadium. BRELEIGH MAYER/THE COMMUNITY NEWS

WEATHERFORD

## Council approves tax rate and budget

### Moves commercial development forward

By Randy Keck  
The Community News

The Weatherford City Council went through a short but weighty agenda at its Sept. 10 meeting, approving a budget

and tax rate for the coming year, and authorizing a major development agreement.

After a public hearing, the council voted unanimously to approve a tax rate of .3984, a slight decrease from the 2023 rate. However, because of rising property values, the new rate would add about \$37 per

year to the average homeowner's tax bill.

The council also approved the budget for the coming fiscal year.

Dawn Brooks, Chief Financial Officer for the city, said the new budget anticipates revenues of about \$77.5 million

Turn to BUDGET, page 2



Council member Zack Smith read a mayor's proclamation designating Sept. 17-23 as Constitution Week in the City of Weatherford. Stepping forward for the proclamation were members of the local Daughters of the American Revolution. Shown are (from left) council member Luke Williams, Regent Linda Schmidt, Jennifer Edwards, Beth Holst, Shirley Godfrey, Harriet Helm, council member Zack Smith, and Mayor Paul Paschall. RANDY KECK/THE COMMUNITY NEWS

WILLOW PARK

## Council moves to obtain land around King's Gate Bridge

### Set to start eminent domain proceedings if necessary

By Rick Mauch  
The Community News

After negotiations to acquire the land around King's Gate Bridge have proved unsuccessful, the Willow Park City Council voted to move forward with eminent domain proceedings at its meeting on Tuesday, Sept. 24.

The city owns a bridge located at King's Gate Road over the Clear Fork of the Trinity River. It has become necessary to replace the bridge, which requires the purchase of property.

A small amount of property on the east side has been bought with no difficulty. However, negotiations with the landowners to acquire the right-of-way on the west side have been unsuccessful to date.

Therefore, city officials opted to adopt a resolution authorizing the use of the power of eminent domain to acquire the tract of land containing approximately 0.0807 acres (3,514 square feet). The land is generally located northwest from the intersection of King's Gate Road and Interstate Highway 20 Frontage Road at 4200 E. Interstate 20 Service Road South.

"He's not responded at all or communicated with us," Willow Park City Manager Bryan Grimes said, noting that both sides are working through their respective attorneys.

Assistant City Manager Bill Funderburk told the council that a 30-day notice to reach an agreement will expire on the Sept. 30. After that, a final notice of 14 days will be issued and if that expires with no settlement, the eminent domain proceedings can begin.

FlashVote

Council approved a contract with the company FlashVote to conduct community surveys for the 2024-25 fiscal year.

The agreement is designed to help the city meet requirements for certain grant funding, stating that

Turn to COUNCIL, page 3

### NEWS BRIEFS

Aledo resident Brecken Alyse Roquemore graduated With Honors from the University of Central Oklahoma (UCO) with a Master of Science degree in Forensic Science-Chemistry as a part of the summer 2024 class, which included 311 students.

The 31st annual Coyote Chase Race 5K and 1-mile run will take place Saturday, Nov. 16, at Weatherford College. For more information, including online registration, visit the event website at <https://wc.edu/about/foundation/coyote-chase-race.php>.

A suggestion for trick-or-treaters is to take them to nursing homes. The residents love to see the kids in their costumes. Check ahead with the home to confirm this is available.

Applications are being accepted for Parker County residents interested in serving on the Appraisal Review Board (ARB) for tax year 2025.

The ARB is a group of private citizens authorized to hear appeals and determine protests for ad valorem tax purposes. The ARB is a separate authoritative body and

are not employees of the Parker County Appraisal District (PCAD). To be eligible for appointment, an applicant must have been a Parker County resident for two (2) years, current on taxes, along with other eligibility restrictions provided in Texas Property Tax Code Section 6.412.

ARB service is a full-time commitment during May, June, and July. Per diem compensation is in the amount of \$200 per full-day.

If you are interested in service, applications for potential ARB members will be accepted by the Parker County Taxpayer Liaison Officer. Submit completed applica-

tions by email to: [tl@parkerad.org](mailto:tl@parkerad.org). ARB member applications can be found on the PCAD website ([www.parkerad.org](http://www.parkerad.org)) under the downloads and forms menu.

Completed applications may also be hand delivered or mailed to: Parker County Appraisal District ATTN: Taxpayer Liaison Officer 1108 Santa Fe Drive Weatherford, TX 76086

New Faith Baptist Church is having a Grand Opening of the new sanctuary at 11 a.m. on Oct. 6, 3303 W FM 5, Aledo, TX. The community is invited to attend.



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MILESTONES

# Grace First Presbyterian Church celebrates 150 years

## Weatherford was only 16 years old at beginning

By Christopher Amos  
The Community News

Friendship is contagious at Grace First Presbyterian Church of Weatherford. Guests are showered with greetings, smiles, and conversation while walking the halls or attending a service.

Warm greetings were even more plentiful at the congregation's 150th anniversary celebration Sept. 15.

The City of Weatherford was just 16 years old when Grace First Presbyterian was established in 1874. Back then, reaching a wooden courthouse from the east was done on horse or in a wagon over Town Creek with no bridge. The automobile would not be invented for another 12 years, the same year the current courthouse was built in 1886.

Now, a century and a half later, the congregation carries on its primary mission focused on faith, service, and acceptance.

The church was founded in 1874 at a building that still stands on the west side of South Main Street, one block south of the courthouse. The congregation built their current facility at 606 Mockingbird Lane at the intersection of S. Bowie Drive in 1974.

Elder Dave Kaiser performs multiple duties, including communications, audio/video for the services, and singing in the choir.

"We are the little church that could," Kaiser said. "We are not a large congregation, but we act like it. We try to do as much as we can serve the Lord and to serve the community. We have our hands in almost everything."

The church helped establish the Weatherford Child Advocacy Center, has volunteers at Manna Storehouse, and helps build homes



Pastor David Slyter teaches a mini-sermon to students and children on the steps of the altar during the 150th anniversary service.

CHRISTOPHER AMOS/THE COMMUNITY NEWS



Myrlan Coleman, Susie Bossert, and Valerie Froehlich look through church scrapbooks. Froehlich found Coleman's wedding announcement in the archives.

CHRISTOPHER AMOS/THE COMMUNITY NEWS

for Habitat for Humanity. The annual Habitat for Humanity Mike Munson Service Award is named for a member of the church.

Pastor David Slyter, who came to Grace First Presbyterian in 2009, said women of the church present hand-sewn prayer shawls to every new Habitat for Humanity family.

"The most important things in this church are what happens outside of its walls," the pastor said. "We encourage being in the

community, being part of the community, and making a difference in people's lives."

Betty Mills is one of the many members that have been part of Grace First for more than 50 years. She was born into the church at its original building on South Main.

"This is a wonderful church to raise a family," the life-long Weatherford resident said. "I grew up in this church and I raised my children in this church."

## BUDGET

from page one

in the coming year, with expenses totaling about \$77.6 million. The city has about 124 days of operating reserves.

The council approved a development agreement with Retail Partners, LLC for a 7.9-acre tract of land at the corner of Interstate-20 and Center Point Road. Retail Partners has agreed to close on the land, zone, plat, and annex into the City of Weatherford. The developer will receive a sales tax rebate of 70% not to exceed specified amount for a period not to exceed five years. In exchange, Capital Partners will make a capital investment of at least \$20 million.

In other business, the council approved new water, sewer, and electric rates that will go into effect Oct. 1. Residential and commercial water rates will gradually rise yearly until 2028 under the new plan; and updated building permit fees.

## Proclamations

At the beginning of the meeting, City Council Member Luke Williams read a proclamation honoring John Hale.

Hale served in the U.S. Army from 1962 to 1967 and then initially served as a history teacher before joining the Texas Department of

Protective Services in 1975, where he dedicated 23 years to investigating cases of child abuse, neglect, and elder abuse.

In 2003 Hale became office manager for Precinct 4, later becoming a county mail carrier and additionally Veteran Services Officer in 2012. He served veterans and their families as a member of the American Legion post 163 and a Disabled American Veterans, contributing significantly to veteran causes during the time. He has received numerous awards for his service to veterans.

Council member Zack Smith read a mayor's proclamation designating Sept. 17-23 as Constitution Week in the City of Weatherford. Stepping forward for the proclamation were members of the local Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR).

The DAR distributed about 2,000 Constitution booklets to fifth graders all over Parker County in honor of Constitution Week. They rang bells at City Hall on Sept. 17 at 3 p.m. in honor of Constitution Day. Bells rang from the churches in Philadelphia after the Constitution was signed in Independence Hall on Sept. 17, 1787. People heard the bells and knew that it was completed. Since that day, it has been a tradition to ring the bells in honor of the Constitution at 3 p.m.

## NATIONAL

from page one

"And we'd like to be sure and thank them. Without their involvement, we would not be able to bring this important evening to the community," Hoffman said.

But the most important part of the evening is strengthening and reinforcing the connection between police departments and the communities they protect, Franklin said.

"We've got a good connection with our community, but like anything that can always grow," he said. "A lot of people in the community don't know the officers. They see the cars and know we're out there protecting them, but this is a chance for them to get to know us and for us to get to know them."

Hoffman added, "We talk a lot in emergency management and public safety about 'blue sky' situations and establishing relationships during peaceful moments. Often, the first time someone might meet a member of the police department is when they're having a pretty rotten day - perhaps they've been involved in a traffic accident or been the victim of a crime.

"National Night Out gives the people who live and work in Willow Park a chance to get acquainted with their officers under good circumstances, which helps build trust and community. It also gives neighbors a chance to get out and get to know each other. Those things go a long way towards strengthening our community and making it a safer place for all of us."

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RODEO

# Ranch Rodeo events thrill fans

## Competition features real ranch workers

By Christopher Amos  
The Community News

One does not have to be a rodeo fan to enjoy the different events experienced only at a ranch rodeo, and the annual Parker County Sheriff's Posse Ranch Rodeo did not disappoint fans Sept. 13-14.

Some events are slight variations of common professional rodeo while others are completely unique. However, the biggest difference is ranch rodeo competitors are not touring professionals, but real ranch workers.

Professional team roping takes typically around 10 seconds to snatch a single calf and complete, whereas ranch rodeo cowboys must quickly divide a calf from a herd, rope around the neck and back hoof, then flip and tie down the animal to complete — a feat which can take 1-2 minutes to complete.

Rodeo announcer Bary Clower has seen hundreds of rodeos in his 21 years at the microphone, as well as being a rancher himself.

"These are real cowboys doing what they do on the ranch," Clower said. "About ninety percent of the



CHRISTOPHER AMOS/THE COMMUNITY NEWS

Ranch rodeos have distinct events such as wagon races, bison riding, and team wild cow milking.

contestants come from real working ranches."

Some events are a throwback to the earliest days of ranching, like team wild cow milking. Two contestants, often a man and a woman, must rope a wild cow out of a herd, contain it, and milk it.

Wagon races and buffalo riding are reflective of homemade entertainment of early ranching days.

Michael Martin Murphey entertained fans after Friday's

rodeo and Texas Swing artist Jake Hooker was the featured artist after Saturday's event.

Parker County Sheriff's Posse member Blaine Peacock is the chairman of the 2024 ranch rodeo. Peacock was busy throughout the night as problem solver, schedule checker, gofer, and even helped corral livestock.

"This is a lot of fun but it takes a ton of work," Peacock said at the close of the evening, adding with a smile, "For me, the best part is when it is finally over."



CHRISTOPHER AMOS/THE COMMUNITY NEWS

This is the 15th Parker County Ranch Rodeo for veteran chuck wagon cook-off competitors Gene Kotzure and Kenneth Kickendahl of Goliad. After visiting, the friends compete against each other from different wagons. Kotzure is the 2017 and 2018 first-place all-around chuck wagon cook.

## Obituaries

### Bob Underwood

Bobby (Bob) Dean Underwood, 85, of Weatherford, Texas, peacefully departed this world on September 5, 2024.

Born in Brady, Texas, on December 18, 1938, Bob was the youngest of Alice and Louie Underwood's two children. He spent his entire youth in Brady, Texas where he played cornerback for Brady High School's football team, the Brady Bulldogs.

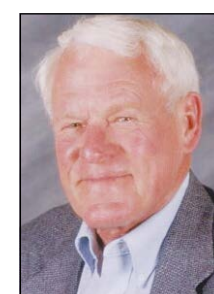
Bob graduated from Texas A&M in 1961 with a Bachelor of Arts degree and continued his education at the University of Washington where he received his Bachelor of Science degree. He later went on to obtain his Master of Science degree in Meteorology from the University of Michigan. Bob was the first person in his family to attend and graduate college.

After college, Bob honorably served his country for 21 years in the United States Air Force and retired as a Lieutenant Colonel. Following his military career, Bob worked as a Software Test Engineer for General Dynamics, which later became Lockheed Martin. After his tenure with General Dynamics, he and his wife, Sherry, worked together as realtors before retiring for good.

Bob was preceded in death by both parents and nephew, Perry.

He is survived by his cherished wife, Sherry Underwood, and five children, Bobby D. Underwood, Jr., Tamara James, Rick Underwood, Joey Shephard, and Candice Nettles and her husband, Sam; six grandchildren, Chandler, Cameron, Braedyn, Bryle,

Tate and Tyler; and three great-grandchildren, Ryland, Rylee, and Reid. He is also survived by his sister, Dee Sims of Rising Star, Texas, and her three remaining children, David, Shirley, and Roger.



Bob Underwood

When he was able, Bob enjoyed being outside, cleaning the pool, mowing the yard, washing and waxing his cars, and repairing what needed repaired. His real passions were fishing,

watching sports — particularly college football — and gambling at the casinos. He also liked to laugh out loud at his own, sometimes corny jokes, which the family always thought was hilarious.

Bob was extremely proud of his service to his country and being a military man. He was also proud of his affiliation with Texas A&M — he was definitely an Aggie for life. The numerous sweaters, blankets, t-shirts, sweats, socks and hats he collected through the years are proof of that.

Bob was loved dearly by his family and friends; all who knew him lead richer lives just for knowing him. He will be missed beyond words.

Galbreath Pickard Funeral Chapel hosted a visitation service on Wednesday, September 11, 2024, and a formal funeral service on Thursday, September 12, 2024.

A graveside burial service with military honors will be held at Romney Cemetery in Romney, Texas. Pallbearers will be Ray Pearson and Bob's five grandsons: Chandler, Cameron, Braedyn, Tate, and Tyler.

The Community News  
September 27, 2024

## COUNCIL

from page one

public surveys allow city leadership to make data-driven decisions based on scientifically sound public sampling.

"They basically do it start to finish for us," Willow Park Communications and Marketing Director Rose Hoffman said. "In 48 hours we'll have easily understandable results."

FlashVote notes three ways it helps city leaders:

1. Short automated scientific surveys.
2. Do more with less and prevent mistakes.
3. Serve the many, not just the noisy.

Hoffman noted that a one-year agreement with FlashVote would allow the city to take six sample surveys in a year, giving a chance for feedback on not just parks, but other areas.

"If I had my perfect strategy we would lead with a general survey, then dive down into specifics from there," she said.

Hoffman added that the system would reinforce to the community that their input is important in decision-making. She said it will go into effect on Oct. 1 and folks in the community will be informed via a campaign how they can sign up to participate.

"This is a far more sophisticated way of getting community input," Grimes said.

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More events can be found at [www.community-news.com/calendar](http://www.community-news.com/calendar)



**OCTOBER 1**

**National Night Out 2024**

Free block party with the Willow Park Police Department from 5 - 8 p.m. on Tuesday, Oct. 1 at Kingsgate Park, Willow Park, TX 76087.

Join us to meet the men and women who protect our community and have some fun while you're here! Bounce houses, kids games, DJ John Henry, food trucks and more!



**OCTOBER 4 - 31**

**Clark Gardens Pumpkin Patch**

Clark Gardens Pumpkin Patch will be open daily Monday - Saturday from 8 - 5 p.m. and Sunday 10-5 p.m. Our Pumpkin Patch is the perfect place for a cozy, family-fun filled, fall experience.

Choose from pumpkins of all shapes and sizes to purchase and take home Enjoy pumpkin ring toss, pumpkin bowling, and other festive games

Model Trains: View Model Trains at the Clarks Station Garden Walks: Stroll through our gardens and enjoy Fall in full bloom Purchase snacks and refreshing beverages in our

admissions booth Make Clark Gardens a stop on your Fall bucket list! Admission: \$10 adults, \$8 Senior, \$5 children, 3 and under FREE \*additional fees apply for pumpkin purchases.

**OCTOBER 6**

**Sanctuary Grand Opening**

New Faith Baptist Church is having a Grand Opening of the new sanctuary at 11 a.m. on Oct. 6. 3303 W FM 5, Aledo, TX. The community is invited to attend.

**OCTOBER 8**

**Dementia Support Group**

Join the Dementia Support Group from 4-5 p.m. at Harvest of Aledo 1043 Bailey Ranch Rd. 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

**OCTOBER 10**

**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.



**OCTOBER 12**

**Aledo UMC Lord's Acre Fall Festival**

Gather the family for a fall bucket list event y'all won't want to miss from 10

a.m. - 3 p.m. on Saturday, October 12th AUMC will host its annual community fall fest with kid's activities, food, vendors, silent and live auctions, live music performances, and community fun. The money raised helps support AUMC's mission efforts in Aledo, surrounding areas, statewide and around the world. Forward this event to all your friends and follow us on our page to stay in the loop on all the fun things we have planned!



**OCTOBER 17**

**Burgers & Bingo**

Parker County Committee on Aging - Meals on Wheels and The Senior Center is having Burgers & Bingo benefitting Meals on Wheels and the Senior Center from 5:30-8 p.m., on Thursday, October 17. Dinner will be served from 5:30-6:30 p.m. which includes a hamburger dinner (burger, chips, drink, and dessert). Following dinner, we will play Bingo for your chance to win locally donated prizes. Tickets are limited to 200 guests. Additional Bingo cards will be available for purchase at \$5 a piece, while supplies last (limit 1).

**OCTOBER 19**

**2024 Aledo Fest**

Aledo fest will be from 10 .m. - 2 p.m. on Saturday,

**ACROSS**

1 short crazes  
5 TXism: "I smell \_\_\_" (suspicious)  
6 rattling sound made by unhealthy lungs  
7 TXism: "that gets my dander up"  
8 Texan guard Kenyon Green was \_\_\_-\_\_\_ twice  
18 TXism: "\_\_\_ earned his spurs" (achieve)  
19 TXism: "limp \_\_\_"  
21 Faye of 1978 "Eyes of Laura Mars" with TX Tommy Lee Jones (init.)  
22 Dallas community college: "Mountain \_\_\_"  
23 "\_\_\_ it" (do it quicker)  
24 "\_\_\_ quarter, call someone who cares"  
29 camping shelter  
30 cat with a mane found in zoos  
31 TX Dabney Coleman 1990 film: "Where the Heart \_\_\_"  
32 TX Jack Johnson defeated "the \_\_\_ hope" (1910)  
34 TXism: "thinking \_\_\_ doing"  
35 swab the floor  
36 "Staked Plains" in NW Texas: "Llano \_\_\_"  
37 woman's purse (2 wds.)

**DOWN**

1 "Charlie's Angel" from Texas (2 wds.)  
2 TXism: "mad as \_\_\_ on rooster"  
3 "Big D"  
4 newspaper in Daingerfield: "\_\_\_ County Bee"  
9 Shirley Mac \_\_\_ starred in Texas-based "Terms of Endearment"  
10 \_\_\_ of dominoes has 28 pieces  
11 JD Vance's grandmother: "Mee \_\_\_"

**TEXAS CROSSWORD**  
by Charley & Guy Orbison  
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12 Harris of Texas based 1985 film "Alamo Bay"  
13 \_\_\_ Star, TX in Eastland County  
14 "this \_\_\_ a drill" (real danger)  
15 former Cowboys coach, Gailey  
16 in Smith County on highway 135  
17 "Davy Crockett \_\_\_ Forest"  
20 Oak Ridge Boys sing country and \_\_\_ music  
22 what Gov Abbott did with a bill he didn't like? (2 wds.)

33 ten-gallon \_\_\_  
34 it's placed at "Lone Star Park" (2 wds.)  
35 Texas has Bigtooth \_\_\_ trees  
37 TXism: "happy as a kid in \_\_\_"  
38 TX Bobby who co-founded Black Panther Party  
40 fork prongs  
41 thrust a knife  
44 TXism: "cough \_\_\_" (pay me)  
47 Joan of "Gunpoint" with TX Audie  
49 \_\_\_-and-error



October 19 in downtown Aledo. It will feature live music and activities for kids of all ages.

Meet your local businesses at vendor booths, do some gift shopping, and get a little something for yourself!

Come hungry for a variety of food trucks on-site for good eats & autumn treats!

Vendor and sponsorship applications are available now - please visit our website. <https://www.aledotx.gov/AledoFest>



**OCTOBER 26**

**Fall Fest Willow Park North**

Join Willow Park North and The Shops at Willow Park for the second annual Fall Fest. This family-friendly event is free to the public.

**Mayor Roberts' Second Annual Seed Ball Event**

Town of Annetta will host the Seed Ball Event from 9a.m. - 12 p.m. on Saturday, October 26, at Annetta

Town Hall, 450 Thunder Head Lane, Annetta  
Join us in making milkweed seed balls to help "grow" the population of the Monarch Butterflies. Your seeds will grow next spring and help nourish the butterflies during their migration next year.

Bring your family and meet your neighbors! Call (817)441-5770 or email [info@annettatx.gov](mailto:info@annettatx.gov) to RSVP. A box lunch for participants will be provided. Take home the seed balls that you make to plant in your gardens prior to Halloween.

Event Submissions - Send [events@community-news.com](mailto:events@community-news.com)

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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

### Voter registration deadline nears for November election



Gary Borders  
gborders@texaspress.com

Eligible Texans planning to vote in the November general election have until Oct. 7 to register, Texas Secretary of State Jane Nelson reminds folks. The registration deadline applies to both early and election day voting.

"Texans have just a few short weeks left to register to vote, and I want to ensure all eligible Texans who want to make their voices heard are registered and prepared to do so," Nelson said.

Instructions on how to register to vote and how to update existing voter registrations can be found at VoteTexas.org. To be eligible to vote, you must be a U.S. citizen, a resident of the county where you register and at least 18 years old on Election Day.

Texas officials say they have scrubbed voter rolls of more than 1 million voters deemed ineligible. The routine process culls people who have moved out of state or are dead. Voters can ensure they are registered by going to the My Voter Portal on the secretary of state's website, <https://teamrv-mvp.sos.texas.gov/MVP/mvp.do>

Early voting begins on Oct. 21 and ends Nov. 1. The last day to apply for a ballot by mail is Oct. 25. Election Day is Nov. 5.

### Venezuelan gang designated terrorist organization

Gov. Greg Abbott and state officials have labeled the Venezuelan gang Tren de Aragua as a "foreign terrorist organization," the *Austin American-Statesman* reported.

The gang originated in Venezuela's prison system a decade ago and first operated from the state of Aragua, from which it derives its name. Its criminal activities include drug trafficking, human smuggling, kidnapping, extortion and illegal mining, according to the report. State officials believe the gang is operating in Texas.

"Our goal is to defend Texas from the growing threat of the gang," Abbott said. "We will not let them use Texas as a base of operations to terrorize our citizens."

Abbott has said El Paso is a locus of illegal activity by members of Tren de Aragua. A law passed in 2023 to target smugglers of undocumented immigrants will be used against gang members, he said.

### Judge tosses Paxton suit against Bexar County

A state district judge last week threw out a lawsuit filed by Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton against Bexar County's plan to mail voter registration forms to country residents, *The Texas Tribune* reported. Since the forms have already been mailed, District Judge Antonia Arteaga ruled the case was moot.

Paxton sued the county to attempt to block the mailing of the forms. He asserted that the efforts in Bexar County, as well as in Harris and Travis counties, are a violation of state law and risk adding noncitizens to voter rolls. Bexar county commissioners called the claims misleading and unfounded.

A similar suit against Travis County has been moved to federal court, where county officials are also challenging Paxton's efforts to stop voter registration efforts. In addition, Jolt, a nonprofit that is pushing for increased Latino

participation in the electoral process, has sued Paxton after being targeted in a separate investigation into its registration efforts.

### Project 2025 data shows little evidence of voter fraud

Data compiled by the Heritage Foundation, architect of the controversial Project 2025, indicates noncitizen voting in Texas is not a widespread problem, the *Texas Newsroom* reported.

A database maintained since 2017 houses state data since 2005. Only three instances of noncitizens casting ballots have been found since 2012, the database indicates.

The Heritage Foundation has recently sounded alarm bells about potential noncitizen voting in the upcoming general election. The American Immigration Council cited the foundation's own data as proof that noncitizen voting is not a widespread problem.

"The lessons to take from Heritage's own database are that noncitizen voting is not a serious problem and that to the extent rare cases occur, they would be best addressed by better training government workers to recognize immigration documents and follow procedure," wrote Aaron Reichlin-Melnick, a senior fellow at the council.

### PUC urged to more closely vet plant loan applicants

The Public Utility Commission has drawn criticism after initially approving a power plant project in the Rio Grande Valley for a company whose CEO was convicted of embezzlement seven years earlier.

The application has since been canceled, the *Texas Standard* reported. Earlier this month, the Senate Finance Committee grilled agency leaders, who are tasked with approving loans out of a \$5 billion fund approved by lawmakers to boost the state's power grid.

"The role of your organization has changed dramatically," state Sen. Paul Bettencourt, R-Houston, told PUC Chair Thomas Gleeson. "We're expecting more from you. You're not just a [electricity] rate organization anymore."

Gleeson said the PUC would review its processes and has penalized Deloitte, the firm hired to administer the Texas Energy Fund, by cutting its contract by 10%. The agency is under pressure to finish loaning the \$5 billion by the end of 2025, according to the legislation.

### Time for flu, COVID-19 vaccines

Autumn has officially arrived, which means it's the season to consider booster shots for the flu, COVID-19 and other immunizations, such as shingles or pneumonia. The Statesman reported healthcare providers say it's OK to get both the flu and COVID-19 shots at the same time, but people should first check with their healthcare provider.

The federal Food and Drug Administration has approved three updated COVID-19 boosters, and the agency urges people of all ages to get vaccinated. The vaccines typically become effective in two weeks, healthcare authorities say. Most insurance plans cover the cost of the vaccines.

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](mailto:gborders@texaspress.com).

## Thistles&Roses

### 'A Day Without a Mexican' merits thought



Richard Henderson  
richard@rahenderson.com

"A Day Without a Mexican" is a movie released in 2004. It was cowritten by Yarieli Arizmendi and Sergio Guerrero, and directed by Segio Arau. It is a satirical, surrealistic look at what would happen if all of the Mexicans disappeared one day from California.

It seems apropos today with the controversy regarding aliens from Hispanic countries. We are dependent on this labor. We need a way to work together to solve the problem. We really can't function without them.

In the movie, a dense fog descends on the entire border of California and the Mexicans suddenly vanish.

Some of the scenes are stereotypically funny.

A leaf blower is spinning in space, the worker has vanished.

A restaurant owner comes into his restaurant and there are no workers. Dishes are piled high in his kitchen. The man has to wash his own dishes.

A low rider is hopping down the street without a driver.

Another lead character is in a drive-through line to get his breakfast burrito when the attendant disappears. Cars are suddenly without their Mexican drivers in the line, a complete traffic jam.

There is a riot at a car wash.

An owner of an orange grove at the height of harvest suddenly has no one to pick the crop.

There are other crops that aren't harvested. People start hoarding fresh vegetables.

A black market develops. Drug dealers start selling tomatoes.

The disappearance doesn't affect just the average worker.

One of the characters is a TV news anchor of Mexican birth and he disappears. Other professionals are suddenly gone.

Of course housekeepers are gone, and the nannies. The upper middle class has to make their kids' lunches and drive them to school.

The border patrol has nothing to do so they begin PR campaigns begging them to come back.

Yes, this movie is a piece of political satire, but during this Hispanic Heritage Month, it is worth a look, and a laugh, and maybe some thoughtful contemplation.

The full length movie can be found free of charge on YouTube.

## Idle American

### Austin in crosshairs



Dr. Don Newbury  
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The arrival of the football-playing Coleman triplets at the University of Texas in Austin for 2025's fall semester may break several records before they even meet BEVO, the Longhorns' beloved mascot.

When have three guys weighing a half-ton ever played as teammates in any collegiate sport, anywhere?

Stars at Cedar Hill High School, seniors Isaiah, 6-2, 260; Devin, 6-4, 340, and Jordan, 6-5, 350, together are only 50 pounds shy of 1,000 pounds right now. If they exceed the "freshman 15" by just 10 percent, they'll weigh a half-ton when they gather 'round the Thanksgiving table next year. (If "freshman 15" warrants explanation, that's the average number of pounds freshmen gain during colleges' first semester while dining in the cafeteria they complain about.)

Many of us--admitted "sports nuts"--are often unsure about much, but don't let our uncertainties lessen our frequent outcries.

I'm off the fence, ready to join football fans who are groaning about the sad effects of instant replay, and the ongoing efforts to "get calls right."

How much did both teams lose in Fort Worth recently when the most exciting final two-minutes were marred by a delay of four minutes and 35 seconds to determine whether a fumble occurred? Bands often complete halftime shows in this time span. The University of Central Florida eked out a win in the final seconds over the Texas Christian University Horned Frogs, who blew a three-touchdown lead.

Maybe it is a weak segue from football to the Texas State Fair, where a judge has ruled that only peace officers will be

allowed to bear firearms on the fairgrounds during its three-week run.

Who can predict? There'll probably be squabbles at the fair on this very topic. However, shoot-outs should be minimized.

I rarely think of state fairs without recalling a yarn heard years ago. At one fair, long lines waited to board the Ferris Wheel, which often had seats shared by riders who'd never seen each other previously. One night, the wheel lurched to a stop, allowing one couple to exit and another to board. At the top of the wheel, one guy says, "Ten years ago tonight, I became enraged when the wheel stopped with me at the top. I pummeled a fellow rider whom I'd never seen. My final shove sent him falling into the night, seriously injured. I have spent the past decade in a mental institution; I was released just today." The other man, cowering in his side of the seat, whimpered, "I remember you."

Referencing Dallas at this time brings to mind the sudden resignation of Dallas Police Chief Eddie Garcia, whose three-year-plus tenure in "Big D" has been widely lauded, with "best ever" plaudits expressed by many. (He's going to Austin to become Assistant City Manager to T. C. Broadnax, who formerly was Garcia's boss in Dallas before Broadnax signed on as Austin City Manager a few months ago.) At the time, Garcia said he would "run through a wall" for Broadnax.

I don't recall ever reading or hearing so many positive comments about the departure of a public servant, particularly in a major city. One such commentary was provided by the Dallas Morning News' Sharon Grigsby, one of the Metroplex's finest writers.

In one sentence, she captured the essence of the views of thousands: "How many folded flags can a police chief hand to a grieving family before he has had enough?"

To continue reading visit <https://www.community-news.com/stories/austin-in-crosshairs,94152>



FOOTBALL

## Bearcats burn Hawks behind sizzling Beard



BRELEIGH MAYER/THE COMMUNITY NEWS  
Linebacker Ben McElree (22) scooped up a fumble and returned it 32 yards for a touchdown to open the game's scoring.

### QB returns for near-perfect night

By Rick Mauch  
The Community News

It was a hot night at Tim Buchanan Stadium on Friday, Sept. 20 when the Birdville Hawks came to town to play the Aledo Bearcats. Temperatures at the 7 p.m. kickoff were in the upper 90s.

But even as the sun was going down, things remained hot on the field as Bearcats quarterback Gavin Beard was on fire. The junior was near-perfect throwing the ball with a 13-of-14 night for 196 yards and three touchdowns with no interceptions as Aledo won 56-0 in its homecoming.

The Bearcats improved to 3-1 overall and 2-0 in District 3-5A Division I. Birdville fell to 2-2 and 1-1.

Aledo also improved to 5-0 all-time against Birdville.

Beard had missed the past two games with an upper back injury. In his absence, sophomore backup Nash McElree led the Bearcats to two victories, including his own near-perfect night (11-of-13, 202 yards, 3 TD, 0 interceptions)

in a 64-0 win over Brewer the week before.

"I was really excited to get back with my team. I was frustrated not being able to play," Beard said. "Nash did a good job in those two wins."

Beard looked as though he hadn't missed a single snap.

"I was just ready to play and get everybody involved tonight," Beard said.

"That's what we were expecting out of him," Bearcats coach Robby Jones said. "That's what Gavin is capable of doing any time he steps on the field."

Jones also praised Beard for giving props to McElree's performance the previous two outings.

"It shows a lot of character," Jones said. "But we're a team, we pull for each other."

"And Nash did do a good job. We got two wins."

In fact, McElree had a 7-yard touchdown pass in this win to Lincoln Tubbs to end the evening's scoring.

### Friend to friend

Beard's completions went to four different receivers, with the bulk going to fellow junior and

longtime friend Kaydon Finley, who hauled in seven for 104 yards, including touchdowns of 40 and 35 yards. The first made the score 14-0 after the opening quarter and the second increased the advantage to 42-0 in the third.

"Me and Gavin, we grew up together. Our first year together was fourth grade," Finley said. "The chemistry is definitely there."

Then, upon hearing of Beard's statistics, Finley added, "That's crazy! I knew he was having a great night, but wow!"

Jones added, "Those two guys really compliment one another. They had a big night together. You get the ball to your playmakers."

Beard's other touchdown pass went for 53 yards to Blake Burdine.

### Defense stands out again

For a second straight game the Bearcats posted a shutout. In fact, the defense even got in on the scoring.

To continue reading visit <https://www.community-news.com/stories/bearcats-burn-hawks-behind-sizzling-beard,93888>

## SPORTS BRIEFS

Staff Reports  
The Community News

### Aledo subvarsity football

The Bearcats took three out of four games against Birdville last week. Freshman Orange won 35-0. Freshman Black won 43-0. Junior varsity Black won 50-0. JV Orange lost 28-12. JV Black improved to 4-0, while all others are 3-1.

### WC's Morris wins national VB award

Weatherford College volleyball player Abby Morris won the National Offensive Player of the Week award from the National Junior College Athletic Association for Sept. 11-17. Morris, a freshman from Huntington, Utah, had 68 kills, a .220 hitting efficiency and four kills per set during a five-match trip to Salt Lake City. She was named to the all-tournament team at the UFirst Intermountain Invitational. She had two matches with 21 kills against Eastern Arizona and the College of Southern Idaho, not to mention six aces, six blocks and 34 digs.

### WC golfers tie for second

In the first tournament of the new year, the Weatherford College men's golf team tied for second place out of 15 teams at the Waco River Classic played Sept. 16-17 at Bear Ridge Golf Club. WC finished 11-over-par and got better throughout the three rounds, shooting 8-over in the first round, 2-over in the second and 1-over in the third. Weatherford's top individual was Giovanni Vezza, who placed ninth out of 99 golfers at 1 under. Dawson Langan was 12th at 1 over. The WC women's golf A-team finished sixth out of 10 teams. WC's Corrina Haros was 18th out of 63 golfers.

### Aledo JV girls third in varsity CC meet

The Aledo Ladycats junior varsity cross country team placed third in the varsity girls division in the Prowl in the Park in Benbrook, hosted by Fort Worth South Hills. Both races for the girls and boys were 5K. The Bearcats placed ninth. Ladycat runners were:  
4. Kjersten Loy, 19:52.03.  
8. Paula Redondo, 20:28.94.  
18. Carley Couch, 20:59.08.  
23. Sadie Williams, 21:44.44.  
24. Ashlynn Durnil, 21:55.00.  
41. Maggie McQuatters, 26:19.08.  
47. Lilla Kovacs, 27:12.73.  
Bearcat runners were:  
16. Landon Eaton, 18:13.97.  
36. Andrew Walsh, 19:31.65.  
56. Ethan Matthews, 20:58.87.  
58. Dylan Hoover, 21:21.19.  
65. Zachary Rivas, 22:00.12.

FOOTBALL

## Eagles capture first victory

### TCA takes down Gorman in homecoming

By Geoff Heppes  
The Community News

After falling in their first three contests of the 2024 season, the Trinity Christian Academy Eagles football team made a stand at home and secured their first win of the season. Behind a productive offensive attack and an opportunistic defense, the Eagles soared past the Tyler Bishop Gorman Crusaders for a 42-27 homecoming victory Friday night at Eagle Stadium.

"We had a tough game last week where we really got smacked in the mouth - we came out of that game having to figure out who we were," Eagles head coach Cody McKenzie said. "We took the good from the bad, realized how physical we could be and I think we realized we can step on the field and play with any level of physicality. We moved some players around, they made some

great plays, they're starting to tackle and we're starting to figure out who we are as a football team."

The Eagles responded mightily to its 56-18 road loss to Era by flying fast out of the opening gates. Trinity scored on its first possession of the game and followed that touchdown with two pick-six interceptions on consecutive defensive possessions by Pearson Kuykendall and Owen Coates. With 25 ticks remaining in the first quarter, the Eagles were up by three scores at 21-0.

Then, the Bishop Gorman Crusaders got on the board.

The visitors got three touchdowns on screen passes to senior wideout Manuel Lozano to cut the deficit to 21-20 at halftime due to Gorman missing the extra point on its final second-quarter touchdown. Gorman took a 27-21 lead in the third quarter, but TCA did not run out of steam. Instead, the Eagles took things in stride and held true to their halftime adjustments.

Turn to TCA, page 7



RYAN WADE PHOTOGRAPHY  
Trinity Christian Academy celebrated with their first win of the season.

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CROSS COUNTRY

# Aledo competes on state course

## Goal is to return for title run

By Rick Mauch  
The Community News

To say the Aledo cross country teams are familiar with the course at Old Settler's Park in Round Rock would be an understatement akin to saying the Dallas Cowboys couldn't stop the running game of a fifth-grade football team.

After all, the Aledo program has been sending runners to state on a regular basis for years, including qualifying both the girls and boys last season, believed to be a first for the elite program.

And they regularly compete in the annual McNeil Invitational at Old Settler's Park, which is, of course the same site at which they hope to return on Nov. 2 for yet another appearance at state.

For a second straight time, the Ladycats placed second on the course. They were state runners-up at state in the fall of 2023.

Meanwhile, the Bearcats finished 28th as a team.

Both teams qualified to compete in the Gold Division, the toughest

of all divisions in the elite meet. The division featured a field of 33 teams and 265 runners among the boys, along with 32 teams and 244 runners among the girls, all considered to be some of the best high school runners in the state.

The top overall finisher for Aledo was Jack Fink, who placed 20th individually for the Bearcats. He clocked a time of 15 minutes, 55.62 seconds over the 5K course.

Leading the Ladycats was Molly Garrison, who finished 21st individually. Her time over 5K was 18:43.42.

Also for the Ladycats: Micah Neal, 33rd, 18:53.89; Mykel Murry, 44th, 19:03.70; Sophia Brandenburg, 86th, 19:54.81; Madison Larsen, 116th, 20:18.46; Mayden Mitchell, 190th, 21:22.81.

Also for the Bearcats: Tyler Connelly, 41st, 16:20.21; Dominick Barrera, 203rd, 17:45.95; Ian Robbins, 209th, 17:50.06; Thatcher Pettit, 238th, 18:12.51; Luke Schabel, 242nd, 18:16.25; Reed Murray, 253rd, 18:32.40.

The Ladycats and Bearcats will hit the road again this week. They travel to Fayetteville, Arkansas



CHRISTOPHER AMOS/THE COMMUNITY NEWS

Tyler Connelly

to compete in the Chili Pepper Festival, hosted by the University of Arkansas. The junior varsity was running in the Reunion Run in Decatur at press time.

## SPORTS BRIEFS

### AMS cross country

Aledo Middle School hosted its first cross country meet on Sept. 18. The seventh- and eighth-grade boys teams each came in first, while the seventh- and eighth-grade girls teams each came in second.

Standout runners were:  
Seventh-grade girls: 1. Austyn Wiatrek, 4. Piper Sweeney, 5. Avery Williams, 14. Blythe Hayes, 16. Jewel Mayes.

Seventh-grade boys: 1. Levi Lund, 2. Jayden Smith, 3. Maxwell Troung, 6. Ethan Miller, 7. Isaac Gideon, 9. Colin Oligschlaeger, 12. Lincoln Sloan.  
Eighth-grade girls: 1. Holland Gladchuk, 4. Ashley Lawrence, 11. Stella Lamb, 14. Karson Green, 22. Lily Elgin.

Eighth-grade boys: 2. Jonah Clary, 3. Josh Fink, 4. Brody Bruno, 6. Nathan Hubley, 20. Austin Quinn

### Weatherford Hall cross country

Medalists from the Poolville Meet were:

Seventh-grade girls:  
Anna Wyatt, fourth out of 112 runners.

Seventh-grade boys: Jayden Hendrix, seventh out of 73 runners.

Eighth-grade boys: Ian Edwards, 15th out of 82 runners.

### Weatherford Hall cross country

Medalists from the Poolville Meet were:

Seventh-grade girls:  
Anna Wyatt, fourth out of 112 runners.

Seventh-grade boys: Jayden Hendrix, seventh out of 73 runners.

Eighth-grade boys: Ian Edwards, 15th out of 82 runners.

### Weatherford Tison cross country

Aiden Houghton placed third among eighth-grade in the Poolville Meet. Aaliyah Dixon was ninth among seventh-grade girls.

### Weatherford Hall football

The seventh-grade A team defeated Granbury 30-6. Carlito Richards was named player of the game and Henderson Gaylord is the offensive lineman of the game.

The seventh-grade B team won 32-22 over Acton. Gage Seal and Ayden Troutman were players of the game.

Eighth-grade A won 34-20 with

Mason Toombs named player of the game.

Eighth-grade B defeated Acton 16-0. Players of the game were Steven Peterson with a TD catch and Hunter Smith with an interception returned for a TD.

### AMS football

Aledo Middle School swept Arlington Howard.

Seventh-grade: A won 37-0, B won 47-0. Both teams are 2-0.

Eighth-grade: A won 32-13, B won 16-6. Both teams are 3-0.

In a crossover pickup game, McAnally C defeated AMS 6-0.

### Weatherford High freshman football

The Kangaroos freshmen Blue team defeated Royce City

12-6. Players of the game were Devin Walls and Haidyn Olson.

### Aledo JV volleyball

The Ladycats swept Saginaw on Friday, Sept. 20. They won the first set 25-4 and the second 25-7.

### AMS vs. McAnally Middle School volleyball

Seventh-grade: McAnally A won 25-18, 22-25, 15-10; AMS B won 25-9, 21-25, 15-8; AMS C won 19-25, 25-9, 15-3.

Eighth-grade: AMS A won 25-21, 25-13; AMS B won 25-18, 25-14; AMS C won 21-25, 25-9, 15-3.

### WC volleyball

The No. 7 Weatherford College volleyball team swept Vernon College on Saturday, Sept. 20 at the Betty Jo Graber Athletic Center to improve to 2-0 in conference play.

WC won the first two sets in dominating fashion, 25-10 and 25-13. Vernon put up a fight in the third set, but the Coyotes prevailed, 25-23.

Kiama Souza was a force on defense, registering 23 digs in the match. Weronika Urbanksa led WC in kills with 11 along with 10 digs. Abby Morris had 10 kills and seven digs.

WC improved to 15-5 overall, having won 14 of its last 15 matches.

### Weatherford Tison volleyball

The Tison eighth-grade A team won the Bronze Bracket at the Eagle Mountain Saginaw Tournament on Saturday, Sept. 21. Player of the day was Isabella Hale.

## LADYCATS

from page 12

on the court can they score and what do they have to do to score?"

Todd led the offense with 13 kills to go with 12 digs, four aces and two blocks. Elms poured in seven kills while Lowe added six kills and four blocks. Setters Ava Reding and Sophie Frank combined for 26 assists while Kailey Hamilton added five assists. Senior libero Kenrie Pruitt anchored the backline defense with a team-high 23 digs while senior Ella Meador had 14 digs. Kosse and Isbell combined for five blocks.

The Ladycats (21-7, 3-0) were defending their home court once more while going for their 11th straight victory as they were hosting Azle at press time. To this point, Aledo has won nine sets in their three matches against zero losses.

They will follow that match by traveling to Chisholm Trail on Tuesday, Oct. 1 for a 6 p.m. match.

## TCA

from page 6

"We've kind of been a two-quarter team for a while here, but we went into the half, made some adjustments and they came out finding a way to win," McKenzie said. "We are inexperienced out there with some young guys, but we got some older guys out there to help contain those screen plays. They were running in a box style where they send a guy vertical to take our safety out of the play, so we just got a bigger boy out there to take care of that play."

On the first play of the fourth quarter, the Eagles found paydirt on a short rushing touchdown to reclaim the lead for good at 28-27. The Eagles padded the lead with a late 6-yard fumble return for a touchdown, then another interception set up Canaan Kaznowski's 1-yard run to put the game out of reach.

"When we needed to finish off that game by running the ball down their throats," McKenzie said. "Our two backs got behind our offensive line and they were able to get through those arm tackles, which opened up our passing game. They played well tonight."

Oates led all runners with 87 yards and a TD on eight carries, while Kuykendall picked up 54 yards on 13 carries with a score. Kaznowski rushed 10 times for 63 yards and a TD and complete three passes - all to Braxton Lewis - for 70 yards.

Defensively, Maxwell Johnson led TCA with 15 tackles, while Kuykendall had, Coates six (two for a loss) and Micah Harless registered five tackles with a sack and a fumble recovery for a TD. Lewis and Dane Southworth also had interceptions.

Trinity (1-3) will take the field once more at 7 p.m. Friday at All Saints Episcopal.

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Any person wishing to comment on this application, either for or against, may file written comments with the Texas Department of Banking, 2601 North Lamar Boulevard, Austin, Texas 78705-4294, within fourteen (14) days of the date of this publication. Such comments will be made a part of the record before and considered by the Banking Commissioner. Any person wishing to formally protest and oppose the proposed branch establishment and participate in the application process may do so by filing a written notice of protest with the Texas Department of Banking, 2601 North Lamar Boulevard, Austin, Texas 78705-4294 within the fourteen (14) days of the date of this publication, together with a filing fee of \$2,500. The protest fee may be reduced or waived by the Banking Commissioner upon a showing of substantial hardship.

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Any person wishing to comment on this application may file his or her comments in writing with the Regional Director of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation at its regional office, 1601 Bryan Street, Dallas, Texas 75201, not later than October 13, 2024. The non-confidential portions of the application are on file in the regional office and are available for inspection during regular business hours. Photocopies of the non-confidential portions of the application file will be made available upon request.

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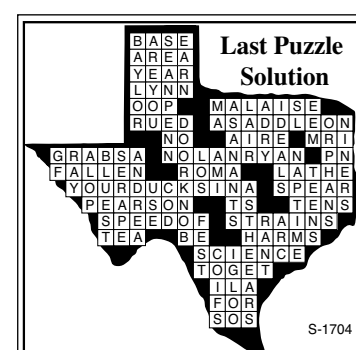
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FOOTBALL

# Doing double duty

## Blake Burdine saw no reason to choose

By Rick Mauch  
The Community News

Aledo High School senior Blake Burdine is too young to have seen it, of course, but in the mid-1990s there was a Pizza Hut commercial featuring Dallas Cowboys owner Jerry Jones and Deion Sanders. It was about not having to make a choice when ordering a pizza.

Jerry then asks Deion, "What'll it be? \$15 million, \$20 million?" to which Deion smiles and replies, "Both." Sanders had just signed a \$35 million contract with the Cowboys.

Burdine, were he to Google it, would likely chuckle. While not a monetary decision, he was also faced with a choice as he entered high school and he, likewise, did not single out one.

Burdine said he has played baseball "ever since I could walk." He started playing football in seventh grade.

While his twin brother Brooks chose to focus solely on baseball in high school — a decision that led to him being offered a scholarship to play for Air Force — Blake opted to continue playing football and baseball.

And why not, he's good in each sport and he loves each one.

"I just never saw a reason to stop playing either one," Blake said. "My dad said, 'If you love both, play as long as you can.'"

## Athletic bloodline

His dad, Landry Burdine, knows a thing or two about sports success. A standout in both baseball and football in high school — just like Blake — Landry settled on football and played for TCU from 1996-99 and was part of the Horned Frogs' turnaround at the turn of the century.

In fact, Landry is still friends with the catalyst of that turnaround, NFL Hall of Fame running back LaDainian Tomlinson.

"They're actually really close. I've met him a few times," Blake said. "I went to his Hall of Fame induction and met a lot of his teammates and cool people."

## Triple-duty standout

Blake, who is a utility player seeing mostly action in the outfield for the Bearcats baseball team, is also one of the football team's top receivers. He was first-team all-district in baseball this past spring and second-team all-district in football in 2023.

This football season he has risen to another level. He burst through for four catches for 118 yards and two TD in a 64-0 win over Brewer, along with returning a kickoff for 40 yards. Last week he hauled in a 53-yard TD pass.

"It's what we expect out of Blake. He's a senior, he's got really good speed, he's able to stretch the field," Aledo Football Head Coach Robby Jones said. "If he gets the ball, he can make a lot happen."

Oh, he also advanced to the state track meet in 2023 as part of the team's 4x400-meter relay. He was joined by Adam Averitt, now a senior, and the since-graduated Aven Lawrence and Hauss Hejny, the latter who is now playing for the TCU Horned Frogs.

"It was super cool. I never thought I would have made it. I was with some super fast teammates," he said.

## Bouncing back

Blake's high school football career could have come to an end even before it began. He broke his collarbone on the opening kickoff of his first freshman game.

However, he fought back after surgery and as a sophomore was called up for the football playoffs. The Bearcats won their 11th state championship that season and, of course, followed up with a perfect 16-0 season and their 12th title last season.

In fact, it wasn't until the opening game of this season, a 35-30 loss at Denton Guyer, that Blake knew what it was like to lose a varsity football game.

"I didn't like it," he said with a grin.

In his recovery, he recalled some advice from his dad.

"He told me not to take a back-seat to anybody. He got hurt and couldn't play baseball," Blake said. "He got a football scholarship his sophomore year (at TCU) and was captain his senior year."

## Staying busy

Simply put, Blake stays busy. In addition to all he does athletically, he's a solid student.

And, remember, he has spent his time going back and forth between track and baseball. For example, he would find himself finishing a baseball game, then scurrying to a track meet in time to compete in the 4x400 relay, which is often the final event.

"It was hard. I had to miss some baseball games and showed up late for some baseball practices," Blake said. "It tells you that (baseball) coach (Chad) Barry is a big multi-sport guy."

Blake said he's uncertain if he'll run track again in 2024.

Jones praised him for also being able to balance offseason football workouts and a summer baseball schedule that took Blake and Brooks to camps in places such as Arizona, Florida, and California.



BREILEIGH MAYER/THE COMMUNITY NEWS

Blake Burdine picks up yardage at Brewer.

"Blake would come to summer workouts Monday through Thursday, then travel all over," Jones said. "You've got to be willing to put in the work. It takes a lot of self-motivation and determination."

"You've got to put in a lot of work to do it all."

## An inspiration

Blake is a rarity in that he plays both football and baseball in Aledo, but he's hoping to be an inspiration for others to do the same. Jones noted that in 2014, when the Bearcats won a state baseball championship, seven of their nine regular starters were also on the football team.

"A lot of my buddies did play both my freshman year, but a lot of them said they had a fear of injury. You can't play football with a fear of injury," Blake said. "I want to be an inspiration because both sports are so much fun and both sports are great at winning here."

Jones recalled his own son playing

both sports and how much fun they had.

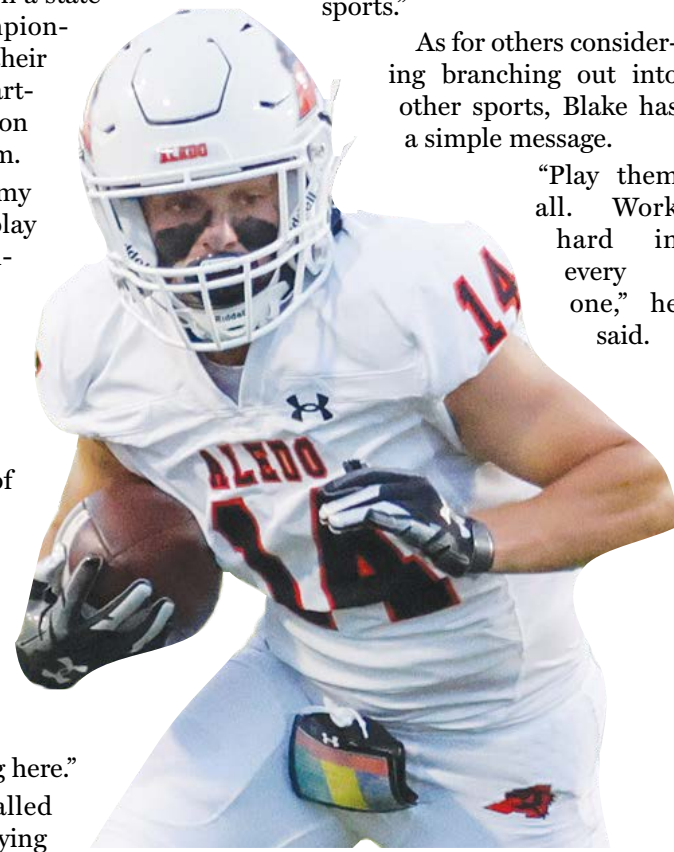
"I was taking him to those games. It was a special time for us," he said.

He added that the devotion it takes to be good at multiple sports is something that impresses him greatly. That determination to succeed is going to cross over, he said.

"You can see the competitive nature and you know it's going to carry over," Jones said. "I like being able to go to a baseball game or a track meet and seeing kids I have a relationship with succeed in those sports."

As for others considering branching out into other sports, Blake has a simple message.

"Play them all. Work hard in every one," he said.



SCOTT W. COLEMAN

Blake Burdine runs a leg of the 1600-meter relay for Aledo at the UIL State Track and Field Meet on Thursday, May 11, 2023 in Austin.

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# LADYCAT OF THE WEEK



**Alyssa Todd**  
**Volleyball**

The junior outside hitter led the way as the Ladycats swept Granbury 3-0, followed by a 3-0 homecoming victory against Saginaw in the district opener. In the two matches combined she had 30 kills, four aces, five blocks, 24 defensive digs and 18 serves received.

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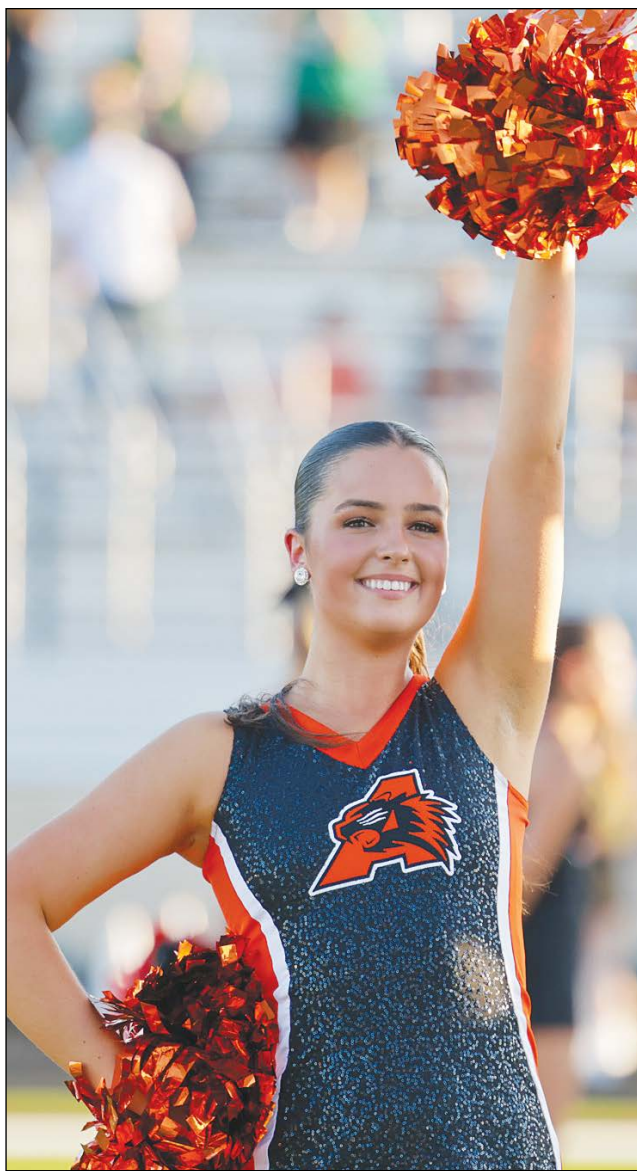
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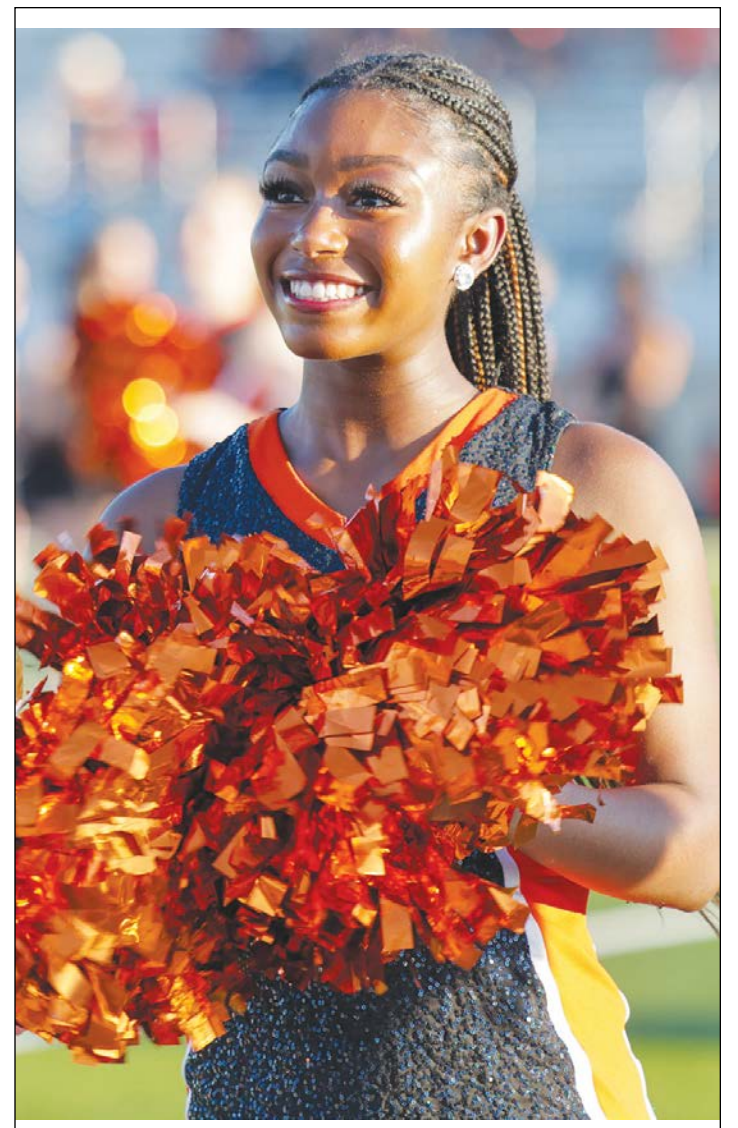
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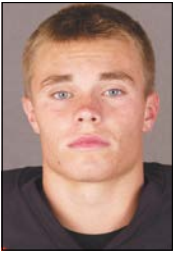


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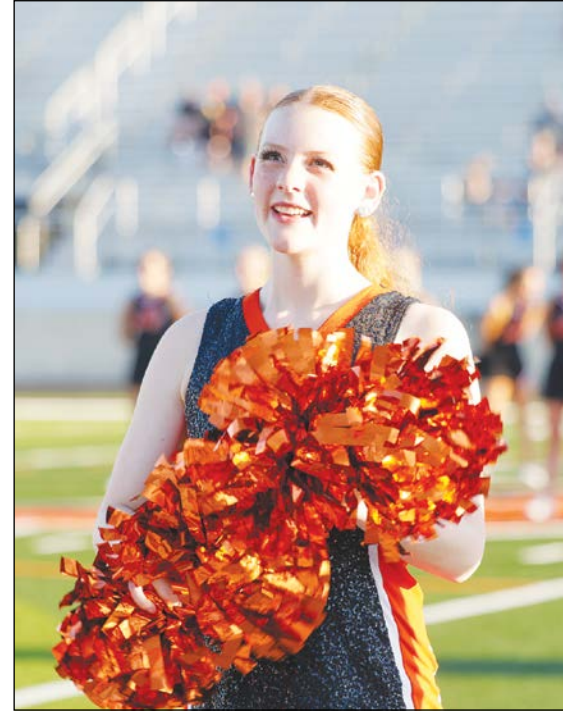
**Gavin Beard**  
**Football**

The junior quarterback returned from a two-week absence with an injury to complete 12 of 13 passes - including his final 11 straight - for 179 yards and three touchdowns with no interceptions in the Bearcats' 56-0 homecoming victory against Birdville.

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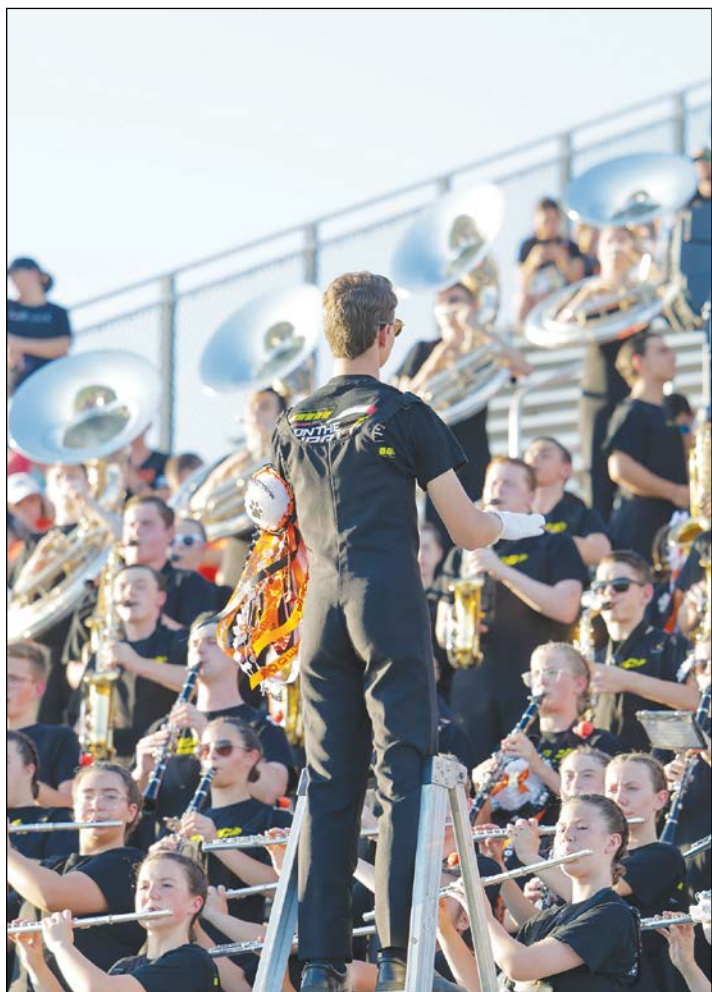
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VOLLEYBALL

# Ladycats fire on all cylinders in dominant win

## Aledo sweeps Saginaw on homecoming night

By Geoff Heppes  
The Community News

In their third District 5-5A outing of the season, the Aledo Ladycats volleyball team hosted the Saginaw Lady Roughriders on homecoming night. Before the Aledo football team shined under the bright Friday night lights, the Ladycats showed out in their home gymnasium, dominating Saginaw in straight sets by a final score of 25-10, 25-9 and 25-5.

"They were doing a really good job of just sitting back and letting us swing, so we decided to make shots happen after the fifth point," Ladycats head coach Claire Gay said. "When they started throwing in different shots in space, we started to see more offensive production. We served well and moved the ball around while throwing them on their toes."

Aledo began to pull away from Saginaw early in the opening set. A big block from senior middle blocker Haley Lowe followed by two kills apiece from star junior Alyssa Todd and Lowe turned an 8-7 lead into a 13-7 advantage, forcing a Saginaw timeout call in the process.

Senior middle blocker Ella Isbell forced Saginaw's second timeout of the set after she pushed the ball to the back line for a kill and added a traditional slam to the hardwood on the next point, which put Aledo's lead at 20-9. Todd served aces on two of Aledo's final three points to secure the first-set victory.

Todd put down a kill for a 5-1 lead in the second set as Aledo continued to fire on all cylinders.



RYAN WADE PHOTOGRAPHY

Alyssa Todd fires a shot over the net during a recent home volleyball match. On Tuesday, Sept. 17, Todd led the Ladycats in kills with 17 to her credit as Aledo bested Granbury in District 5-5A action.

Later, junior outside hitter Tatum Kosse put down a kill that preceded a Saginaw hitting error, which put Aledo in front 14-6. The Ladycats claimed a double-digit lead at 16-6 following back-to-back kill shots from senior Kinley Elms and Lowe. Aledo continued to gain separation throughout, outscoring Saginaw 11-4 from the 14-6 point of the set.

After that, Aledo played its best all-around set of the match in the decisive third game, running away for a 20-point win. Gay's emphasis on expanding each players' offensive and defensive skill sets in practice

proved to have paid dividends in Aledo's red-hot start to district play.

"We worked on a lot of different types of shots for each of our hitters in practice," Gay said. "We challenged them to hit different, challenging locations on the court and what to do to score. When you get to the next level where you have good defenders in front of you and behind the ball, they're going to dig you off the court. We really focused on changing pace and direction with our attackers' hitting - where

Turn to LADYCATS, page 7

GOLF

# Aledo teams get season underway

## Bearcats in Granger event, Ladycats in Granbury

Staff Reports  
The Community News

The Aledo Bearcats and Ladycats got the fall golf season going over the Sept. 13 weekend. The Bearcats played in the Bart Granger Memorial at Pecan Valley in Benbrook, while the Ladycats were at the Granbury Lady Pirates Fall Classic at Harbor Lakes in Granbury.

The Bearcats shot a three-round total of 957 in the Granger, named after the late Fort Worth Paschal golfer who died in a car wreck years ago. They had rounds of 320, 326 and finished strong with a 311.

The tournament featured a field of more than 50 teams.

The Ladycats Black team finished sixth with a team score of 701 (347-354), while the Ladycats Orange shot 825.

The Bearcats were led by state qualifier Braden Stokes, who shot 236 (74-86-76), followed by William Kirkman, 238 (81-78-79); Ethan Elmore, 240 (83-83-74); Tyler Anderson, 245 (84-79-82) and Logan Lund, 252 (82-86-84).

The four lowest individual scores in each round comprise the team score.

The Ladycats were led by Kylie Kirkland with a 178 (89-89), followed by Sydney Purdon, 179 (88-91), Reagan Gilliland, 182 (97-85); and Harper Price, 186 (97-89).

Emily Crick shot a 73 on the opening day, but missed the second day due to a commitment with the Texas Junior Golf Tour.

### SPORTS BRIEFS

#### Fight Like a Girl Golf Tournament

Squaw Creek Golf Course will host the Fight Like a Girl Golf Tournament on Oct. 25, benefitting Erin Miller and her fight against cancer. The tournament, featuring a four-person scramble format, will have a 9 a.m. shotgun start, with lunch, raffle and prizes to follow. Entry fee is \$250 per player and \$250 for hole sponsors. Other opportunities available are team sponsor (one team and tee box sign), \$1,000; gold sponsor (two teams, a tee box sign and a sign in the common area), \$2,500; and

tournament sponsor (two teams, tee box sign, tournament banner, giveaway), \$5,000. For more information, call or text Whitney at 817-360-5381.

#### Weatherford Hall volleyball

Hall went 2-2 in matches against Granbury Acton. Seventh grade: A won 25-10, 24-26, 15-7; B lost 25-18, 25-22. Eighth grade: A won 25-20, 25-8; B lost 27-25, 10-25, 25-15. Players of the match were Mayson Soper, 7A; Maci Hardin, 7B; Laine Tomlinson, 8A; Colbie Ogle and Mackenzie Glasgow, 8B.

# Homecoming Court



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