

THE COMMUNITY NEWS

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WILLOW PARK

Council approves land acquisition

Over 300 acres coming for development

By Rick Mauch
The Community News

Willow Park, the second largest city in Parker County, is about to get a lot bigger in the next few years following a decision by the city council at its Nov. 12 meeting.

The council approved the annexation of 317 acres of land owned by Dean-Beall Ranch, Ltd. The land is located on the

southwest corner of Interstate 20 and Highway 1187, running all the way to Bankhead Highway.

"We could not be more excited to have Beall come into our city," Mayor Pro Tem Lea Young said.

The addition of the property will include 35.3 acres of single family residential space, 91.7 acres of multi-family residential, 135.2 acres of commercial and 55.5 acres of light industrial.

Potential businesses for the area include sit-down restaurants, fast food restaurants, big box retail, grocers, convenience stores,

office and work space. The residential portion will include some green space with a neighborhood park and some small water areas.

"I think everything is going to be beautiful where it's going," said Toni Fisher, Assistant City Manager of Development and Parks.

City Manager Bryan Grimes thanked and credited Fisher for getting the idea going for the development.

"I don't know if this happens if Toni Fisher is somewhere else," he said. "She's the one who reached out."

Grimes said the development will be "the front door to Willow Park."

The housing could greatly add to the already booming population of the city. The most recent population was recorded at around 9,000, according to city officials, up from around 5,000 in 2020. This project is estimated to bring several thousand more to the community, likely more than doubling or more the 2020 population.

Turn to LAND, page 2



PHOTOS COURTESY OF ALEDO ISD

The Aledo Bearcat Regiment posted its best showing ever at the UIL State Marching Band Competition on Nov. 5.

BAND

Aledo High School Bearcat Regiment fifth at UIL State

Best showing ever

By Mercedes Mayer
Aledo School District

In its 50-year history, never has the Aledo Bearcat Regiment performed such an intricate and challenging show as their 2024 show "On the Throttle." And, consequently, never in a half century has the Aledo marching band finished so high at the UIL State Marching Band Competition.

On Tuesday night, Nov. 5., having narrowed the 247 Class 5A bands in the state to 38 state qualifiers and then 12 finalists, the Bearcat Regiment's near-flawless performance helped them to be recognized

as the fifth-best marching band in Texas at the annual culmination of the UIL marching season at the Alamodome in San Antonio.

"We are so proud of the student's efforts this year," Aledo Director of Bands Joey Paul said. "From the beginning of summer band, they took a more mature approach to individual accountability and they never let up. 'On The Throttle' is a show that the students very quickly made an emotional connection with, and it was very apparent they were bought in to doing whatever it took to perfect this show."

"The band directors felt like rock stars after each competition

Turn to BAND, page 5

CITY OF ALEDO

Council approves purchase for two cruisers

Water also discussed

By Ryan Wade
The Community News

Starting up the first police department in Aledo's proud history is a long, arduous journey. On Thursday, Nov. 7, the city council took a significant step in that journey by approving the purchase of two new police cruisers.

The council gave City Manager Noah Simon permission to complete the purchase of two Dodge Durango police pursuit vehicles at a purchase price of \$45,000 each. Once the transaction is complete, the new cruisers will be sent to Defender Supply in Argyle, where they will be transformed into true police patrol vehicles ready to hit the streets of Aledo.

Simon noted that as the city continues to take the necessary steps to starting up the new police department, they are rapidly

approaching the juncture in which they will have to pass a Texas Commission on Law Enforcement (TCOLE) inspection. A critical criteria of passing that inspection is the city having at least one patrol vehicle on the ready when the inspection takes place.

Councilman Shane Davis proposed the council approve the resolution. Councilwoman Shawna Ford seconded the motion to put the measure before the council for a vote.

The council unanimously approved the measure, permitting Simon to complete the purchase of the cruisers.

Delivery for the patrol vehicles is expected in January 2025. However, Simon said he plans to request Defender Supply complete the modifications to one vehicle as soon as possible to ensure delivery before the potential TCOLE inspection.

Well, there's no water

A resolution was brought to the council seeking approval to decommission water well No. 2. The City of Aledo has four water wells in the event that there is a significant water shortage.

However, the wells are old. Two of the four wells have undergone improvements with funds the council approved last fiscal year.

In the case of water well No. 2, the well is no longer productive. As wells age, it is common that they deteriorate, or the source feeding the well dries up.

In this case, the cost associated with maintaining the well in its present state isn't worth spending since the well does not produce water any longer.

The council voted unanimously to spend the funds to have the well decommissioned, eliminating the liability and cost associated with its maintenance.

WEATHERFORD COLLEGE

WC signs transfer agreement

Partnering with Sam Houston State

Courtesy Weatherford College

Weatherford College and Sam Houston State University entered a new partnership this week designed to create seamless transfer pathways for WC students.

The agreement, signed by WC President Tod Allen Farmer and SHSU President Alisa White at the university's campus in Huntsville, provides a streamlined process for WC students transferring into any SHSU program.

"This agreement exemplifies our commitment to expanding educational opportunities and providing our students with a clear path towards advanced degrees," said Farmer. "By partnering with esteemed institutions like Sam Houston State University, we ensure our students have access to high-quality programs that meet their academic and career aspirations."



PHOTO COURTESY OF WEATHERFORD COLLEGE

Weatherford College President Tod Allen Farmer and Sam Houston State President Alisa White shake hands after the two schools announced a new partnership this week.

The collaboration also offers a significant advantage for students pursuing the Bachelor of Applied Arts and Sciences in Organizational Leadership at WC, granting them a direct pathway into SHSU's Master of Business Administration program.

"I'm excited to work with President Farmer and Weatherford College to support Texas' workforce

needs," White said. "Our shared priorities of student access and success are at the forefront of all we do, and this MOU makes perfect sense."



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WEATHERFORD COLLEGE

Sukup teaches inspiration

Artist draws from many sources

By Christopher Amos
The Community News

Inspiration comes to Richard Sukup from many places. A mountain range or a Texas sunset are reliable sources.

The artist recently returned from the Big Bend area, which can conjure abundant ideas and themes. Inspiration came once by a sidewalk when a homeless man was comforting his dog as they sat withdrawn in the cold. Sukup gave the man \$5 and took a photo.

"That photo burned in my mind for four years," Sukup recalled. "It got to the point that I just had to paint him."

The painting, reproduced with the high-tech giclée technique, captures the man with a vague, hazy face, indicating the person could be anyone. "The Forgotten Unknowns," which was donated to Beautiful Feet Ministries of Fort Worth, was among the many Sukup works of a recent show at the Alkek Fine Arts Center, Weatherford College.

Other noted works in the show included "Only the Courageous," dedicated to the firefighters of the Roberts County range fire, the worst range fire in Texas history, which was sold at the victim's fundraising auction. Also, "Perseverance"

depicting a rancher on horse gazing at fire scorched land, "Cut'n 'Em Out," which earned national notoriety, and "Wildfire," which was gifted to singer Michael Martin Murphey on his birthday this year.

His work was recently displayed in the Weatherford Art Association Spirit of the West exhibit at the Doss Heritage and Culture Center.

Sukup is an intense advocate of art at all levels, encouraging and teaching artists as a regular art workshop member at the Kimbell Art Museum.

"If you are the kind of person that wants to get into art, you have to have perseverance," Sukup encouraged. "You have to follow that passion and to be true to the passion. You have to be true to what is in your heart because that is where your inspiration comes from."

"Do you want recognition? Are you following your passion for recognition, or are you following your passion because that is who you are? You see, there's a difference," the artist explained. "It's like a musician that has that breakout song that finally brings recognition. Maybe it's a breakout painting that will bring you recognition, but you first have to follow your passion and have perseverance."

Many of his works can be viewed online and two books, Spirit and Hand Vol. I and II, are also available at www.RichardSukupArt.com.



CHRISTOPHER AMOS/THE COMMUNITY NEWS

Richard Sukup explains the inspiration behind his work, "The Forgotten Unknowns," in the lobby of Alkek Fine Arts Center, Weatherford College.

LAND

from page one

"Obviously, those who live here enjoy the beautiful scenery, but in Texas private property rights are fiercely protected by state law," Willow Park Communications Director Rose Hoffman said. "Development in this area was inevitable and was foreseen as far back as the 1970s."

"By annexing this land into the City of Willow Park, we are exercising some control over this development and our future."

Hoffman stressed the City of Fort Worth is relinquishing the property from its extraterritorial jurisdiction because they could not provide utilities to the area. Beall Development asked if Willow Park could and the city leaders responded with a yes, she added.

Beall Development Director Robert Beall told the council, "We were kind of stuck in Fort Worth's jurisdiction. We're glad to get out of that and into Willow Park's ETJ."

City officials estimate that, at build out, the value of the property would be around \$500 million. Build out will take place in three phases, with dates to be determined.

Once the city has the development agreement in place, they have up to 24 months to get water and sewer in place. When that process is complete, it is anticipated that businesses and residences will begin to pop up in the next 12 to 18 months.

To help with the purchase and renovating of the land, etc., the council approved issuing certificates of obligation not to exceed \$5,135,000. This is long-term borrowing that cities can use to fund major capital projects without voter approval.

The council also approved the creation of a public improvement district (PID) and a tax increment reinvestment zone (TIRZ) in the area. The TIRZ abatement buys down the property taxes as an incentive to the developer and property assessments from the PID will be used to cover the cost of improvements.

Council also approved entering a sales tax agreement with Parker County Emergency Services District 1 that officials noted could essentially double the current sales tax collection of around \$2 million annually in years 1-5 and more than

BEALL/DEAN DEVELOPMENT

Fast facts and FAQ's

CONCEPT PLAN - BY THE NUMBERS

The mixed-use development will include retail, restaurants, single family housing, multi-family housing, and office space.
Disclaimer: elements in the concept plan are subject to change

317

35.3

91.7

135.2

55.5

TOTAL
SIZE
(APPROXIMATE)

SINGLE
FAMILY
RESIDENTIAL

MULTI
FAMILY
RESIDENTIAL

COMMERCIAL

LIGHT
INDUSTRIAL

HOUSING DENSITY

The single family houses will be on R5 zoning, which is 9,000 sf lots (just under a quarter acre).
The multi-family housing will follow the same guidelines as our existing multi-family.

WHO IS PAYING FOR THIS?

Simply put, the businesses and residents who will be inside the development. The city is creating a Public Improvement District and assessments from that District will be used to cover the cost of the improvements.

WHEN WILL THIS HAPPEN?

The City of Willow Park is required to have all utilities to the site within 24 months of the executed agreement.

We are expecting businesses to begin opening roughly 12-18 months after the date utilities are available.

WHAT ABOUT TRAFFIC?

The developer will be required to do a traffic impact study and consult with TxDOT, Parker County, and the City on the final ingress and egress plans.

quadruple that amount to more \$8 million in years 6-10.

Concerning water to the area, Hoffman said Willow Park has more than enough that they receive through an agreement with the City of Fort Worth to provide to the new area. She added that wastewater service will have to be expanded, with Hudson Oaks as a partner, and that there is a lift station closer to the area to satisfy that need.

The addition of the property will expand Willow Park's city limits by half a square mile.

"We are excited for the growth opportunities this brings to the City of Willow Park and Parker County. The Beall-Dean Ranch project stands as a testament to Willow Park's commitment to thoughtful expansion and its bright future," Beall said.

"I remember vividly when Robert called and said, 'We want to be in Willow Park,'" City Manager Bryan Grimes said. "I can't imagine a developer understanding a city and a city's needs as much as Robert."

"We're gonna have some really cool stuff in Willow Park."

Use of TikTok on city devices banned

In connection with the Texas 88th Legislature's Senate Bill 1983, the council approved the banning of TikTok on city devices. Hoffman said it was a formality as the city already does not allow the use of TikTok.

"This is not going to affect how we do business," she said.

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SCOUTING

Bedford-Blackwell-Pickard-Shaw Historic Fencing Project



PHOTO BY BILL WARREN

Thirteen-year-old Grant Burnette, center, led this team of Troop 75 Scouts to straighten the wrought iron fence at the Bedford-Blackwell-Pickard-Shaw Cemetery.

Burnette receives Eagle certification

Staff Reports
The Community News

Grant Burnette of Scout Troop 75 in Weatherford has received his Eagle Scout certification for a project in which a historic wrought iron fence around the Blackwell family plot in an abandoned cemetery was straightened. The cemetery also bears the names of other Parker County founding families.

At age 13, he is one of the youngest recipients of this distinguished award not only in Parker County, but in the United States.

The cemetery is part of the Abandoned Cemetery Association.

The fence surrounding this family plot was once part of the fence around the Parker County Courthouse completed in 1886. An early picture shows a horse tied to the fence, hinting it was taken before the arrival of the automobile.

The ACA cares for 78 abandoned cemeteries throughout Parker County. Donations help maintain these cemeteries and pay for materials on projects such as this one. Contributions may be mailed to: ACA, PO Box 61, Weatherford, TX 76086, or made through our website at <https://www.acaparker-county.org/>

WEATHERFORD CHAMBER

Paschall named James H. Doss Award recipient

Annual awards presented

By Ryan Wade
The Community News

The Weatherford Chamber of Commerce held their 2024 Awards Ceremony at the Dove Ridge Vinyard on Tuesday, Oct. 29. Weatherford Mayor and owner of Paschall Insurance Group, Paul Paschall received the group's most prestigious award on the night, named in honor of James H. Doss' legacy in Weatherford.

Chamber members packed the house to celebrate their peers and local business men and women who are making a positive impact on the community. The festivities started off with Gena Hunn receiving the Ambassador of the Year award. Luke Williams of PlainsCapital Bank was named the 2024 Rising Star, an award given to professionals under 40 years of age.

Jamak earned the award for Large Business of the Year while Buffalo Rental took home the hardware as the Small Business of the Year.

Elizabeth Baker was named the 2024 Athena Award winner for her work promoting the arts at Martin Elementary and Weatherford ISD. Dan Carney was named Outstanding Citizen of the Year for 2024 for all his work as the chair of the Weatherford College Board of Trustees.

The awards ceremony closed out with Paschall thanking his wife and the Lord for their unwavering love and support as he accepted the Doss Award.

Before the night came to a close, Chamber members Landon Meecker and Tammy Gazzola announced plans to begin construction on a brand new Chamber of Commerce building. So far the Chamber has secured the land and a \$3 million gift towards the cost of construction.

The facility will feature a welcome space, classrooms for extended learning and training, meeting spaces, and a banquet hall. The building design will be sufficient for the Chamber needs for years to come, even as Weatherford continues to grow.



PHOTOS BY RYAN WADE/THE COMMUNITY NEWS

Weatherford mayor and owner of Paschall Insurance Ryan Wade PhotographyGroup, Paul Paschall, is honored with the 2024 James H. Doss Award as the Weatherford Chamber of Commerce Awards.



Gena Hunn receives the Ambassador of the Year Award



Dan Carney earned the Outstanding Citizen Award from the Weatherford Chamber of Commerce for his work as the Chair of the Weatherford College Board of Trustees.



Elizabeth Baker delivers her acceptance speech after being named the 2024 Athena Award winner for her outstanding work championing the arts program at Martin Elementary and at Weatherford ISD.

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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

GOP win raises stakes for Cornyn's leadership bid



Gary Borders

gborders@texaspress.com

With Republicans regaining majority control of the Senate, U.S. Sen. John Cornyn, R-Texas, is making his bid to become that chamber's majority leader. U.S. Sen. Mitch McConnell, R-Kentucky, had previously announced he would step down as party leader. Republicans will hold at least a 53-45 edge in January, with Senate races in two states still undecided as of Friday morning.

According to *The Dallas Morning News*, Cornyn said voters rejected Democrats' "years of disastrous border policies, reckless spending, and failed management that has caused the Senate to lurch from one avoidable crisis to the next."

Cornyn faces competition from Senate Minority Whip John Thune of South Dakota and Sen. Rick Scott of Florida. Senate Republicans plan to hold their leadership elections this week by secret ballot. If elected leader, Cornyn vowed to improve transparency with GOP senators.

"There will be no more backroom deals or forced votes on bills without adequate time for review, debate, and amendment," he said.

Republicans largely flip Rio Grande Valley from blue to red

More counties in the Rio Grande Valley and surrounding areas went Republican this election, continuing what GOP leaders are calling the culmination of a years-long strategy. The party has managed to flip

16 counties since the 2016 presidential election, according to the *Texas Standard*.

The economy clearly was a major issue among voters in this election between former president Donald Trump and Vice President Kamala Harris.

"A lot of the rural parts of Texas are shifting red because the economy is less good," said Brandon Rottinghaus, a University of Houston political scientist. "And the threats to the oil and gas industry that people perceive are coming from Democrats are driving the communities to vote Republican."

For example, in Starr County, Biden beat Trump by five points in 2020, but four years later voters there chose the former president over Harris by 16 points.

Election Day runs smoothly across state

Voting in Texas went fairly smoothly in Texas with no major disruptions reported, according to *The Texas Tribune*. Roughly half of the state's 18.6 million registered voters cast ballots in person either in person or by mail, and another two million went to the polls on Election Day. That is slightly under the 11.3 million who voted in 2020, thus far, with counting of provisional ballots nearly complete.

There was only one violent incident reported at the polls, when a man punched an election worker in Bexar County after being asked to remove his Trump hat. Wearing clothing backing a candidate or proposition inside a Texas polling location is illegal. After the assault, the man was charged with a felony.

In another case, a Tarrant County man claimed a voting machine flipped his ballot from Trump to Harris, but election officials say he made a mistake while filling out his ballot. That ballot was discarded, and he was

allowed to cast another ballot, prompting Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick to note that machines were not flipping votes.

"In Tarrant County, we have only had one person say their vote was flipped out of 591,885 votes cast to date," he said.

State population estimates released by demographic center

The Texas Demographic Center has released its population estimates for July 1, 2023, and Jan. 1, 2024. Final population estimates are available for counties and places by age, sex, and race/ethnicity at demographic.texas.gov. Information for the estimates is collected through five surveys taken from October to February, gleaned information from counties, cities, and educational institutions.

The state's estimated population rose from 29,145,505 in 2020 to 30,749,924 on Jan. 1, 2024 - an increase of 5.5%. Counties showing the largest percentage increase in that time period were Kaufman (26.7%); Rockwall (25%); Kendall (22.2%); and Liberty (20.3%).

The U.S. Census Bureau also makes annual population estimates, and TDC says differences in input data and methodologies lead to slight variations between the two.

DFW area predicted to be hottest real estate market in 2025

A real estate trends study reported by the *Texas Standard* predicts the Dallas-Fort Worth area will be the hottest real estate market in the nation for investment and development next year. The study compiled data from more than 2,000 industry experts.

"Obviously, it's the really strong post-pandemic recovery. It's also

size," Nick Wooten, real estate reporter for *The Dallas Morning News*, said. "We've seen the metro top 8 million people in the latest census estimates," he said. "And there's just continued demographic growth. Those are the three big factors that these experts cited."

Both sales and home prices are fairly flat in 2024, with supply reaching levels not seen in a dozen years, Wooten said.

"You're not seeing sales change a lot," he said. "I think a lot of people are still sitting on the sidelines trying to figure out what's going to happen in 2025."

Record number of Texas horned lizards released to the wild

The state reptile, the Texas horned lizard, has been listed as a threatened species since 1977. *The Houston Chronicle* reports that thanks to captive breeding efforts to populate the wild with the iconic critter, more than 600 hatchlings were recently released to the Mason Mountain Wildlife Management Area in Central Texas in cooperation with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.

The lizards are popularly referred to as horny toads. Their population decline is blamed on the pet trade, wild habitat loss, and the spread of invasive fire ants. The Texas horned lizard was designated as the state reptile in 1993. Their range takes them across the state's borders to northern Mexico and throughout much of Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas and New Mexico. The hatchlings, about three-fourths of an inch in length, can reach as much as 7 inches in length at maturity.

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

Idle American

When Boredom Seems Terminal



Dr. Don Newbury

newbury@speakerdoc.com

Now that the election is over, my ancient Uncle Mort and his domino-playing buddies down in the thicket can resume their usual mostly-minutia confabs that too often lack authenticity.

This reminds me of the annual extravaganza birthed in 1929 when old-timers of Burlington, Wisconsin held their first-ever "Liars' Contest." They called it "harmless fibs for fun and folly."

The contest caught on nationally, thanks to hundreds of newspapers providing free publicity. One winner, some 50 years ago, was the late Choc Hutcheson of Lubbock, a brilliant eccentric before he learned to shave. He "lied" about a man who invented a duck call so authentic that it attracted decoys.

All this to say that Uncle Mort and his gang may usher in a new contest. It's goal in some respect is to mimic the Burlington bunch, but entries must be based on facts, even if loosely hinged.

Soon, Burlington will announce its 2024 winner, near New Year's Eve on a slow news day.

Shucks, Texas may have bigger liars every year than contestants in Wisconsin, but with the East Texans' slant may garner even more attention that outright lies. They, too, are expected to announce their winner around year's end.



They're requiring contestants not only to cite threads of truth, but also to restrict entries to a topic. The first will center on the two most unlikely robberies in Texas history.

Someone mentioned the Santa Claus bank robbery that occurred on December 23, 1927, in Cisco, TX. In those days, bank robberies were commonplace, occurring an average of four times daily in the Lone Star State. Who "woulda think" that jolly old St. Nick would brandish a pistol while he and his gang made a record haul of \$12,400 in cash and \$150,000 in negotiable securities?

The record was disallowed, however, since the goods were left behind during the melee of gunfire that followed.

"Baloney, that was 'chump change,'" Mort asserted. "A far more unusual robbery occurred on Sept. 4, 2024. The total grab was \$240 million and, even with inflation, this record figure eclipses \$12,400, even with inflation factored in. And not a single shot was fired." Three sets of eyeballs would have been hard-pressed to open wider. "What, in



the name of the National Football League, are you talking about?" one asked.

Mort had done is homework, pointing to Dak Prescott's \$240 million contract as quarterback of the Dallas Cowboys. This is the largest NFL contract in history, and no doubt it will be eclipsed next year.

"It's been more than 96 years--nearly 36,000 days--since the robbery in Cisco, so I think it's time to pin-point a more recent unusual 'robbery,'" Mort chuckled. He mentioned that the bank robbers left their treasure behind, but Dak--and/or his agent--had enough 'smarts' to include a guaranteed payment of \$231 for the four-year commitment."

As their "yakking" continued, someone mentioned that Dak's being paid almost \$1,000,000 per game, regardless of the outcomes and whether or not he's sidelined by injuries, as is currently the case.

Another quickly added that he earns more in one quarter than the \$985,000 San Francisco's Brock Purdy makes for the entire season. (Footnote: The 49ers

beat the Cowboys, and Purdy's salary will shoot upward next season.)

The fourth member of the "geezer group" suggested comparing Prescott's salary with Babe Ruth's record haul of \$80,000, grudgingly paid to the baseball star for the 1914 season. One reporter commented that Ruth's salary was more than President Wilson's. "I had a better year than the president," Ruth responded.

Who can blame Prescott? There are two signatures on the contract. And all of this craziness is supported by gullible fans whose football appetites are insatiable. Stay tuned for Burlington's 2024 winning lie. It may pale compared to the East Texans' powerful comparison that has more than a few shreds of truth.

Dr. Newbury, longtime university president, continues to speak and write. The Idle American, begun in 2003, is one of the nation's longest-running syndicated humor columns. Contact: 817-447-3872. Email: newbury@speakerdoc.com. Website: www.speakerdoc.com.

WEATHERFORD

Seller named economic development director

Served in assistant capacity past year

Courtesy City of Weatherford

The City of Weatherford announced the promotion of Ashley Seiler to director of economic development. She has served as assistant director of economic development since July 2023.



Ashley Seiler

In her new role, Seiler will continue to lead the department in advancing economic initiatives, fostering business growth, and enhancing the city's appeal as a prime destination for investment and talent.

Seiler brings a wealth of experience and dedication to the position, having served with distinction in previous experiences, including PepsiCo Sales district leader, leading the team and market to multi-million dollar success. She has also served in the Air National Guard for the past 14 years, serving on two tours, and continues to support the Mission Support Group with the North Dakota Air National Guard.

Her background in sales, economic strategy, and business development has been instrumental in driving numerous successful projects that have generated job growth, spawned development in key areas, and supported local businesses.

"We are thrilled to promote Ashley to Director of Economic Development," City Manager James Hotopp said. "Her tenacity, leadership, and understanding of our

community make her the ideal person to continue our efforts in creating a vibrant, sustainable economy.

"Ashley's work has already brought significant benefits to our community, and we look forward to the positive impact she will make in her new role."

In her capacity as director, Seiler will focus on implementing strategic initiatives aimed at attracting new industries, supporting entrepreneurial endeavors, and promoting a resilient economy.

"I am honored to take on this role and excited to continue working with our incredible team and community partners," Seiler said. "Together, we'll work to strengthen our economic foundation and ensure a prosperous future for all."

For more information on business opportunities in Weatherford, contact Seiler at 817-598-4279 or email aseiler@weatherfordtx.com.

BAND

from page one

due to the amount of people approaching them and praising both the students' performance as well as the engaging design of the visual and musical elements."

"On the Throttle" had four parts: "Pressure" by Stephen Bausted; "Ominous," with building intensity, from Symphony No 3 by Kimberly Archer; "Whisper of a Thrill" by Thomas Newman; and "Asphalt Cocktail" by John Mackey.

The show featured, among other things, 40 choreographed wind moments, drills that were boxes, curves, diagonals, scatters, pods, lines and circles, and moments

where wind player's sound would be severely delayed if they did not anticipate the battery/drum major's time, which is one of the hardest things to do in marching band.

The show was meticulously planned on a theme of an F1 driver who has attitude, confidence, strength and heart. Band members wore uniforms designed to imitate an F1 driver uniform with bright red and yellow in front and black in back. They used the colors of the uniforms to match the music and take your eye to the key areas of the field, even brightening visually with a crescendo.

"We are so proud of the Bearcat Regiment being rewarded for their incredibly hard work," Aledo ISD Superintendent Dr. Susan Bohn said. "Early mornings and late nights,

intricate formations and difficult music - it all came together with a history-making finish. The entire band program is all in on being the very best they can be, and that was evident with 'On the Throttle.' Congratulations to all involved!"

The Bearcat Regiment's 215 performers were led by student Drum Majors Isabella Stamper, James Leising, Jackson Sirois and Gracie Isaacs. Along with Paul, the assistant directors for the Bearcat Regiment are Jake Albin, Dexx Moore and Scott Stephens as well as colorguard director Junior Marquez.

To continue reading visit: <https://www.weatherford-news.com/stories/aledo-high-school-bearcat-regiment-fifth-at-uil-state,99120>

FAMILY ASSISTANCE

Resale clothing shop opens in Hudson Oaks

Just in time for holidays

Staff Reports
The Community News

Once Upon A Child, a leading children's clothing and accessories retail resale concept, has announced the grand opening of its location in Hudson Oaks located at 200 S Oakridge Dr.

The brand is known for its affordable, gently used children's clothes, shoes, toys, equipment and more, and provides local parents with a place that not only puts cash back into their pockets, but sells gently used brand name clothing and accessories for less.

With a focus on being a sustainable shopping resource for local families, the new Once Upon A Child in Hudson Oaks opened on Nov. 7. Once Upon A Child is part of Winmark - the Resale Company, a unique national retail resale franchise that focuses on sustainability, small business formation and providing resale for everyone.

This marks the second Winmark location for local entrepreneurs, Sarah Altom and Rick Batten. With backgrounds in secondary education, the couple was drawn to bringing a resale concept to support teenagers and young adults in the area, resulting in them opening Plato's Closet Weatherford in 2022.

After the success of that store, Altom and Batten wanted to expand their sustainability efforts.

The unique retail resale concept allows for clothing, toys and

accessories for kids to end up in someone else's house rather than thrown into a landfill, providing a resource for new or existing parents who are looking to update their children's closet on a budget and in a mindful environmental manner.

"As parents, Rick and I know how expensive raising children can be," Altom said. "Our goal for Once Upon A Child is to ease some of that stress for parents. By buying and selling quality-used items, we can ensure that every person is prepared for parenthood, and Once Upon A Child will be here to support them every step of the way as their child grows."

Unlike a typical consignment store, Once Upon A Child does not require appointments and pays on the spot for items it purchases from consumers. Families are able to buy necessities for their children at great values, and turn their gently used items into cash.

In addition, Once Upon A Child ensures that all products purchased and sold meet mandatory and voluntary safety standards. Staff members stay up-to-date on current recalled items, immediately pulling all recalled products from shelves and making sure all items purchased are safety-checked to meet current standards.

For questions on the buying process or store hours, the new Once Upon A Child can be reached at 817-757-7037 or <https://onceuponachild.com/locations/hudson-oaks-tx/>.

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



NOVEMBER 28
Thanksgiving Trot
The 13th annual Marcia Walters Memorial Thanksgiving Trot will be from 8 - 10 a.m. with the start at 8:30 a.m., on Thursday, Nov. 28 at Aledo High School. Both 5K and 1 mile will have the same 8:30am start time this year. Not a runner?? You can walk, crawl or just come hang out!! Going to be out of town?? For more information visit <https://www.aledothanksgivingtrot.com>



DECEMBER 5
2nd Annual "It's A Bearcat Christmas"
Come join us for a night of celebrating two of our favorite things, Christmas and our Bearcats from 5-7 p.m. on Thursday, December 5 at Aledo High School/Daniel Ninth Grade Campus. Come see Santa himself and get a professional family photo during a scheduled time frame. Tickets: <https://aledoef.networkforgood.com/>

events/77502-it-s-a-merry-bearcat-christmas
100% of proceeds go to Aledo Education

DECEMBER 3
Willow Park Christmas Tree Lighting
Join the City of Willow Park at 6 p.m. on Tuesday, December 3rd for the City of Willow Park Christmas Tree Lighting! Food, music, twinkling lights, and of course an appearance by the big guy in the red suit!

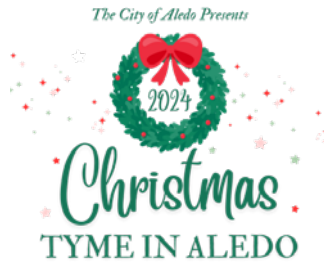


FRIDAY, DECEMBER 6
COHO Christmas Tree Lighting
Join us for the lighting of the COHO tree and an evening of FREE holiday fun Friday, December 6 from 5:30 - 8 p.m. Enjoy activities in Santa's Workshop and snap a picture with Santa himself. Take a ride on the COHO Express, enjoy activities at community booths, watch local stage performances and more.



DECEMBER 7
Christmas on the Square
Join us in celebrating the holiday season at Christmas on the Square, from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 7. The Weatherford Lights the Night Parade 2024 begins at 6:30 pm (Long route) Historic Downtown Weatherford, TX. It is a cherished tradition

that brings the community together for a day filled with festive cheer, local vendors, live entertainment, children's activities and more! The festivities will conclude with the award winning, "Weatherford Lights the Night Parade", lighting up the evening with holiday magic



Christmas Tyme in Aledo
It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year and Christmas Tyme in Aledo is the perfect way to start your holiday season! Enjoy the day with good music, great food, endless shopping and special visitors from the North Pole, on Saturday, December 7, 2024. Craft Fair from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. - Church at the Crossing Gymnasium @ 128 Elm Street Aledo, TX 76008 & Festival - Downtown Aledo at 104 Maverick Street, Aledo, TX 76008. FFestival - 5 to 9 p.m. Admission is FREE!

DECEMBER 10
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

DECEMBER 12
Alzheimer's Group
The East Parker County Alzheimer's Group meets

TEXAS CROSSWORD
by Charley & Guy Orbison
Copyright 2024 by Orbison Bros.

ACROSS

- fancy word for "satisfy an appetite"
- clothed
- "could hear ___ drop" (quiet)
- this Cockrell served four terms as mayor of San Antonio
- TX Ross Perot first naval rank (abbr.)
- several surgeries today are assisted by ___ devices
- mo. in which State Fair of Texas begins
- TXism: "could put a loop ___ on a mule's back" (good roper)
- "Big Jim" Hogg's daughter (init.)
- "on an ___ keel"
- Mineola High class
- many Texas state parks have these for rent
- kidney disease
- TX Rayburn nickname: "___ Sam"
- noted Comanche medicine man
- unit of Dallas-based Greyhound (2 wds.)
- Texas-born Forest Whitaker was in "___ 3"
- nocturnal insects found in moist areas in buildings
- TXism: "loud as ___ boot heels on ___ floor"
- Astro: major ___
- TXism: "chompin' ___ the bit" (impatient)
- these could be Roths
- TX Buck Owens "I've Got a Tiger By ___"
- Hispanic surname
- TXism: "___ buster" (farmer)
- state nurses org.
- this Paul and TX Farrah film: "The Burning Bed"
- forbidden by law
- house coverings
- TXism: "___ big for his britches"
- "bear" in Mexico
- Guadalupe is a spring-___ river
- TX Tanya's first child: Presley ___ Tucker
- TXism: "treat ___ with kid gloves"
- TX George H.W. was a short time director of this agcy.
- TXism: "he took everything but ___ my lungs" (robbed)
- broadcasters use 12 to 20 of these to televise a NFL game
- county west of DeWitt County
- 101 in ancient Rome
- biblical donkey
- response question
- in Uvalde County on U.S. 90
- 24-___ gold
- track made in a dirt road
- big achievement
- old bread, e.g. (2 wds.)
- lion's den, e.g.
- cowboys might have bow ___
- first name of 21-across
- TXism: "a ___ (many)"
- ___ as a goose"

DOWN

- TXism: "fits like ___ on a fish"
- home of Sul Ross State University
- nosedive
- seat of Jackson County
- "Crying" singer from Texas (init.)
- 9-down spent a lot of time performing
- UT live mascot
- rocks containing valuable minerals

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.



DECEMBER 14
Christmas at the Castle
Christmas at the Castle 2024 is from 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. on Saturday, December 14 at the Texas Pythian Home, Inc. 1825 E Bankhead Dr, Weatherford, TX, United States, Texas 76086

Come and tour our beautiful castle while it is decorated with Christmas Spirit. This event is free and great for the whole family. Donations are always welcome! This is a FREE event so no tickets are sold.

Jingle All The Way
There will be a Fun Run/Walk benefiting Meals on Wheels & Senior Center on Saturday, December 14, 1225 Holland Lake Dr. Weatherford, TX 76086. Live music, s'mores, Santa and more following the event. It is \$25 per person or a team of 5 for \$100. For more information or to register, please visit <http://tinyurl.com/mr3bfpe8>.

DECEMBER 19
Christmas Movie Night
Join us for a movie in the

park brought to you by Film Alley from 6-8 p.m. on Thursday, December 19. Bring your family, friends, blankets, chairs, coolers (no glass please) and watch a Christmas movie on the big screen. Movie will be announced as we get closer to the event time.

EVENT SUBMISSIONS

Send event submissions to events@community-news.com. Please include time, date, and place of the event, a short description, and phone/email for obtaining further information, along with photos, graphics, or flyers.

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REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

The City of Aledo ("City") is pleased to issue this Request for Qualifications ("RFQ") to identify experienced and qualified firms to provide on-call professional services for future projects.

The City is requesting Statements of Qualifications ("SOQ") regarding professional services across various disciplines including General Engineering, Stormwater Drainage Design, Water/Sewer Utility Design, Right-of-way/Property Services, Landscaping Design, and Construction Materials Testing & Special Inspection as more fully defined in this RFQ.

Submittals will only be accepted until 2:00 p.m. on Monday, December 2, 2024.

Bid # PW-2024-007

CITY OF ALEDO – RFQ FOR PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

RFQ documents may be obtained in person from Aledo City Hall, 104 Maverick Street, Aledo, Texas 76008, or downloaded at www.aledotx.gov. RFQ documents will be ready for pickup on and after November 8, 2024.

The City's website will be updated with addenda, additional reports, or other information relevant to the RFQ. It is the sole responsibility of all plan holders, whether they have received digital downloads or paper copies of the plans and specifications, to periodically check for addenda that may have been posted on the City's website.

There will be a non-mandatory, pre-submittal conference on November 21, 2024 at 10:00 AM. The pre-submittal conference will be held at the Aledo Community Center Conference Room, 104 Robinson Court, Aledo, Texas 76008.

Interested firms should submit all inquiries and/or questions concerning this RFQ to the person identified below by Monday, November 25, 2024, at 5:00 P.M. Questions that result in changes to the RFQ will be answered in writing and copies distributed to bidders of record in the form of an addendum.

Luis Gatica, P.E., CFM
104 Maverick Street
Aledo, Texas 76008
817.441.7016
lgatica@aledotx.gov

Advertisement dates:
November 8, 2024
November 15, 2024
November 22, 2024

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Zoning Board of Adjustment for the Town of Annetta will conduct a public hearing on December 2, 2024 at 7:00 p.m. at Town Hall, 450 Thunder Head Lane, Annetta, and will act upon the following request:

1. A Special Exception for 189 Portales Drive, a property containing .816 acres of land (Lot 21, Block F, Subdivision: Meadow Park Estates 3) to allow for a 1,200 square foot accessory structure that exceeds the allowed square footage as set forth in Section 8.10.B.2.c of the Town of Annetta Zoning Ordinance 215.
2. A Special Exception to Section 8.10.B.10 of the Town of Annetta Zoning Ordinance 215 for 189 Portales Drive, a property containing .816 acres of land (Lot 21, Block F, Subdivision: Meadow Park Estates 3), to allow garage doors on any size accessory structure to face the right-of-way with additional landscaping, exterior materials or colors and ornamental features to ensure compatibility with the neighborhood.

All interested persons are urged to attend.

TO BE PUBLISHED: Friday, November 15, 2024

/s/

Jamee Long, City Secretary/Administrator
Town of Annetta, Texas

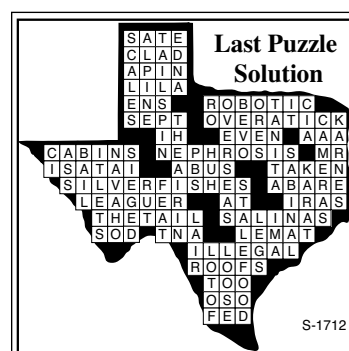
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EVENTS

Pleasanton, TX — Merry on Main, Dec. 6 & 7. Light parade, fireworks, a variety of vendors, live music, carols, Little Miss Merry on Main, and the lighting of the Christmas tree that marks the start of the season.

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DARKNESS

from page 12

He said it also made him a better team leader.

"I'm more vocal. I'm gonna speak up, if I like or don't like something," he said. "I also got a big lesson in patience."

Appreciating game more

Guillory said he'd never thought before the injury about the possibility of not being able to play. Suddenly, that being the case, like being reunited with a lost love, he realized what was taken away.

"Every game I'm grateful," he said. "Once you're out, you're out. There's no time machine to go back."

Guillory had never suffered a serious injury before.

Rehabbing

Along with battling the depression, Guillory underwent a hard physical rehabilitation. However, for someone who was used to leaving defenders shaking their heads after a move that also made their jaw drop, the process couldn't go fast enough.

Then, one day his dad joined in. "My dad made me get up early one morning. He had set up some cones," Guillory said. "I started going in between them, making some moves I do on the football field. After that, I knew I was coming back."

College

Guillory recently announced his plans to graduate early in 2025 and is being pursued by many big-time universities and has around 40 NCAA Division I offers to play college football. He verbally committed to the University of Texas after his sophomore season, but



BRELEIGH MAYER/THE COMMUNITY NEWS

Aledo's Raycine Guillory drags defenders over the goal line in the Bearcats' come-from-behind victory over Denton Ryan.

then withdrew that commitment and is still weighing his options.

"It's a process. It's narrowing down, but then, another one comes through the door," he said.

He plans to study communications and wants to enter the broadcasting industry some day - after his professional playing days are over, of course.

"I will play pro. I feel like I'm meant to play," he said. "People might say I'm cocky, but it takes confidence to reach your goals. If you're not confident, you won't get there."

He would join former Bearcat Jase McClellan in that capacity. McClellan, after a standout career at the University of Alabama, was drafted by the Atlanta Falcons and has seen regular-season game action this season.

"If he goes to a school where he'll continue to get even better and becomes what he's capable of becoming, I might be looking for a Ray Guillory jersey to hang in my office," Aledo head coach Robby Jones said. "I'm getting a Jase Guillory one also."

Back in a strong way

Last season Guillory rushed for 1,207 yards and 17 touchdowns while catching 10 passes for 175 yards and four more scores. This season he appears poised to surpass those numbers as, through nine games, he has 1,039 yards and 19 TD rushing, with eight catches for 118 yards and two TD receiving.

"This season's great. To be able to come off a season-ending injury and produce like I have, it feels great," he said.

There's one thing that would make it even better, he said, smiling. That would be not only winning state, but being able to play in the game.

Last season he watched as his former teammate, Hawk Patrick-Daniels, now a standout at Tyler Junior College, was named Offensive MVP in the Bearcats' state title game victory.

"When we're playing in Jerry Jones World, they'll know Raycine Guillory was there," he said. "We're going to have a party."

GUILLORY

from page 9

"After deep conversations with God and my family I have made the decision to reclassify to 2025. Commitment coming soon," Guillory posted.

Earlier this year Guillory made a verbal commitment to play for the University of Texas, but then rescinded that choice. He is being pursued by college football programs from coast to coast.

"It's something that high school programs are going to have to deal with," Aledo head coach Robby Jones said. "It started when Quinn Ewers did it."

"When high schools have talented athletes, colleges are going to offer them money. You can enjoy playing with kids, often those you grew up with, or you can graduate early and start making NIL money."

While Guillory hasn't officially said benefitting from the Name/Image/Likeness rule is the reason behind his decision, he would not be the first to take advantage of the rule that went into effect in July of 2021. The rule allows athletes to benefit financially from their name, image or their likeness being used in advertising, resulting in many athletes signing endorsement deals.

Ewers graduated from Southlake Carroll early, announcing it was for NIL reasons. He first played for Ohio State before transferring to and currently playing quarterback for the Texas Longhorns.

He received over \$1 million in NIL benefits.

"It's something that's going to start happening more and more," Jones said. "Colleges pay kids who are good players to leave high school early."



Guillory played for Mansfield Lake Ridge as a freshman. He led the Broncos with 769 rushing yards and nine touchdowns, along with catching 18 passes for 154 yards and three TD.

Last season he transferred to Aledo and helped the Bearcats to a 16-0 record and a second consecutive state championship. Despite being injured (knee) for part of the season, including the state semifinals and finals, he led the Bearcats with 1,207 rushing yards with 17 TD, and also caught 10 passes for 175 yards and four more scores.

Guillory had offseason surgery on his knee and has returned to enjoy his best season yet as the Bearcats carry a 9-1 record into the postseason in quest of the program's 13th state title. Guillory has 1,055 yards on the ground with 20 TD and has nine receptions for 124 yards and two more scores. He scored a career-high six touchdowns and rushed for a career-best 244 yards in a 49-42 overtime victory against Richland.

PREVIEW

from page 12

"Looking through the history, we have our sights on bringing home a district championship, the first one since the 2019-2020 season," Ott said. "We will

I be a contender in the playoffs and look to make a strong state run while advancing multiple rounds."

Lady Roos looking for strong culture

The Lady Roos, who are now led by Caleb King, are ready to establish a strong culture under the leadership of the upperclassmen in an effort to provide the jolt needed for the program to take the next step.

"I'm most looking forward to our returning seniors and leaders," King said. "They have brought an energy and excitement to what we are doing to this year. They want to have a great season Laand re-energize the program, so we can reach new levels we haven't been to before."

Led by star senior guard Landrie Polk, who reached her 1,000-point

milestone in her junior year, the Lady Roos showcase plenty of talent and versatility in age and skill throughout the roster, and King expects these pieces to mesh well together.

"We have five returning seniors that have experience at the varsity level," King said. "Landrie Polk and Kennedy Jarrett are two leading scorers that are returning. They can play off the bounce and shoot the ball well, and they are play-makers that help the entire team play better."

Kodi Martin, a junior, and Charli Clark, a senior, are two returning forwards that can shoot and spread the floor. They can also operate around the basket to give us abalanced attack. Kelsey Henderson, a senior, also returns to play wing and will lead our defense with intensity and effort.

"We have a strong core group of players that are excited to get after it this year."

To continue reading visit: <https://www.community-news.com/stories/local-teams-amped-for-24-25-season,99175>

LADYCATS

from page 7

defensive specialist Logyn Denbow finished with five digs.

The Ladycats and Lady Panthers will battle for a spot in the state semifinals at 5:30 p.m. Friday at W.G. Thomas Coliseum in Haltom City.

Ladycats Blank Burleson in second round

Trying to win a single point, much less a set or match, is a big task for opponents of the Aledo Ladycats volleyball team these days.

The latest team to try - and to fall far short - was the Burleson Lady Elks in the Class 5A Division I area round playoffs. The Ladycats controlled the match from start to finish, leading wire-to-wire, in a 3-0 sweep at the Arlington ISD Athletics Center on Thursday, Nov. 7.

The Ladycats (33-7) humbled the Lady Elks (24-16) 25-10, 25-12, 25-12, winning for a 22nd straight match. It was their 27th win in straight sets this season and the

15th in the past 16 matches, including all 12 of their District 5-5A matches.

Much of their success against Burleson was connected to serving. Aledo was able to do consistently and the Lady Elks had difficulty.

Seventeen of Aledo's points in the first set came off of their serves, including a 7-0 run to end the contest. It started with a kill by Alyssa Todd to give them the ball, with Logyn Denbow then serving six straight points, with the help of a pair of blocks and a kill by Haley Lowe.

Meanwhile, it was the second set before Burleson scored a point off its serve.

In all, Aledo scored 48 points via their own serves compared to seven for the Lady Elks.

"We've been working on taking location away from their (opponents) side of the net, keeping the ball away from their best players on serve," Aledo coach Claire Gay said. "If you can take away the better hitters when you serve, it's easier for us to move the ball around."

Denbow served 14 points in the match, including seven straight in

an 8-0 run in the second set to give Aledo a 14-5 advantage.

"Serving is a big part of our game. We struggled with it a little in district, but we've been honing our skills," said Morgan Estevez, who served the match-ending point, with a kill from Todd.

Statistical leaders for the Ladycats included:

Kills: Todd 12, Kinley Elms 10, Haley Lowe 8.

Aces: Denbow 2, Ava Reding 1, Todd 1.

Assists: Reding 19, Sophie Frank 8, Hailey Hamilton 7.

Digs: Ella Meador 15, Kenrie Pruitt 8, Denbow 8, Todd 7, Reding 6, Hamilton 5.

Blocks: Lowe 7, Elms 3, Ali LoBaugh 3, Ella Isbell 2.

Gay praised the play of her team during its winning streak, saying, "They're a wonderful group of girls. They've been together a long time and they are willing to work more for each other than themselves."

This was the second win for the Ladycats over Burleson this season, the first being 3-0 in the Arlington Classic Invitational on Aug. 31.

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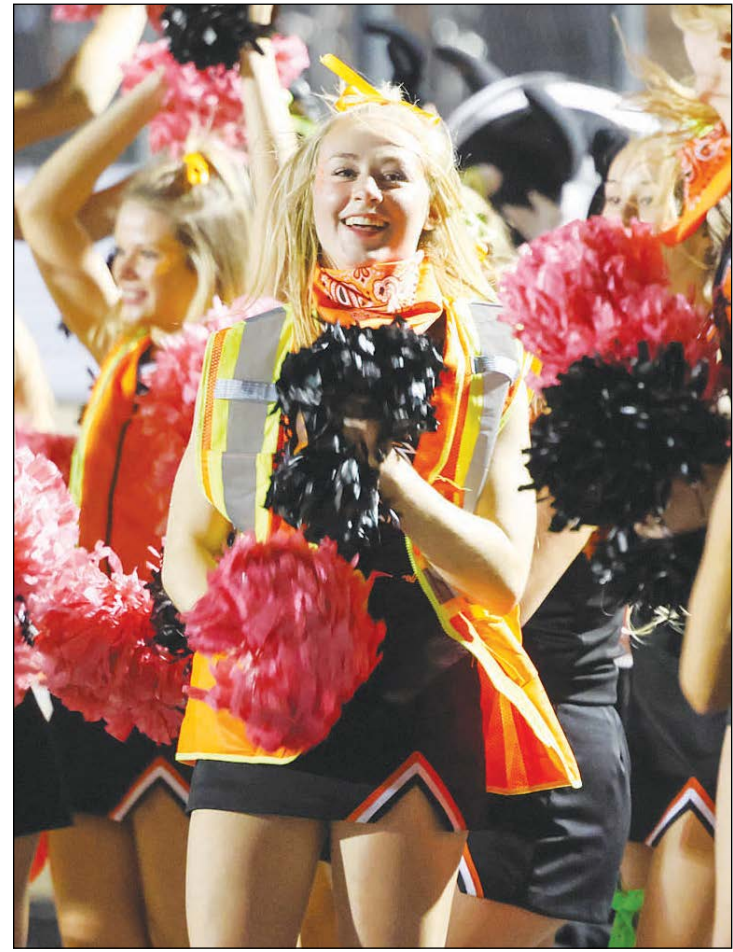
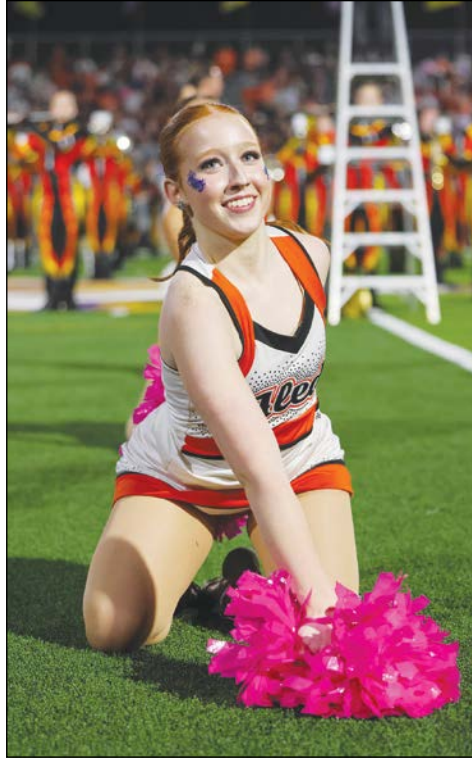
Haley Lowe
Volleyball

The senior middle hitter was a force at the net in the Ladycats' two playoff wins last week, 3-1 over Birdville and a 3-0 sweep of Burleson. She finished with 16 kills and 10 blocks in the two matches.

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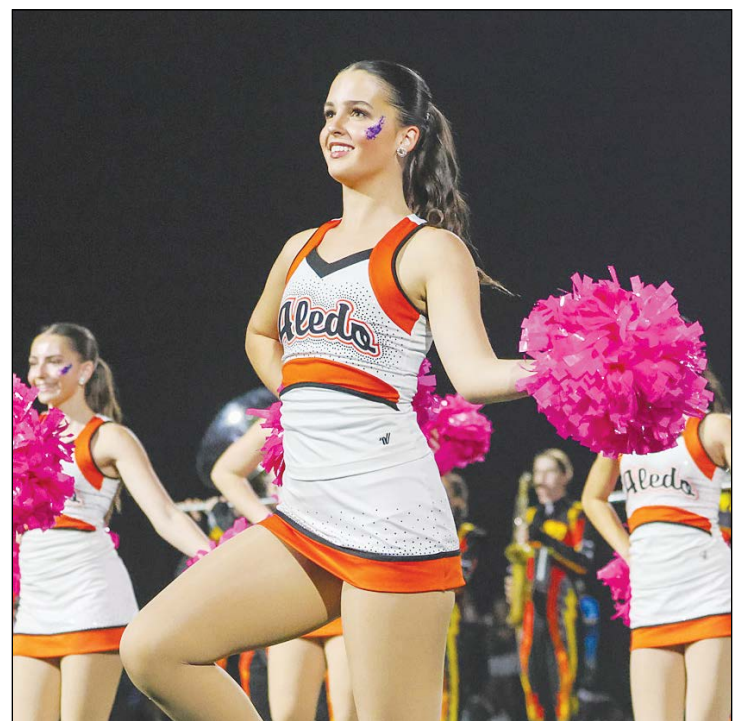
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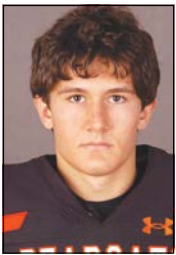
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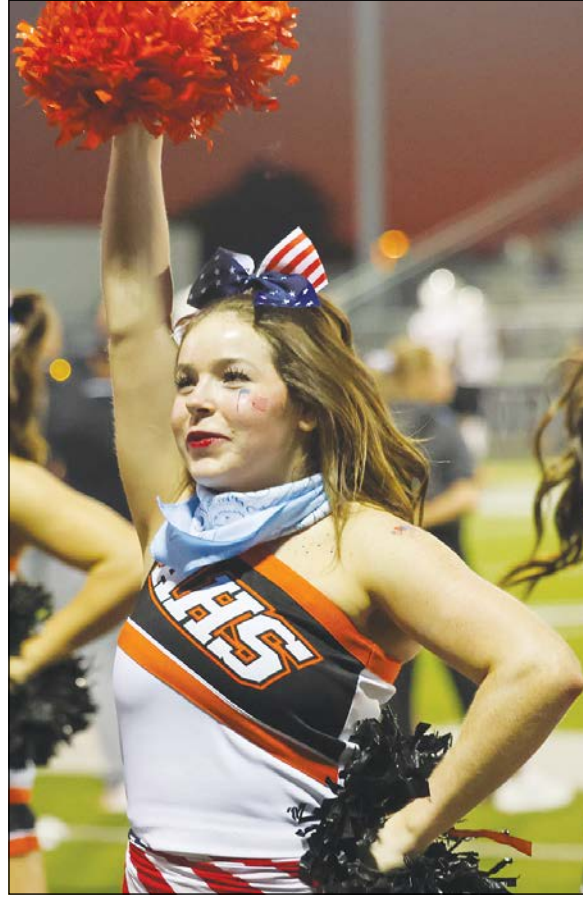
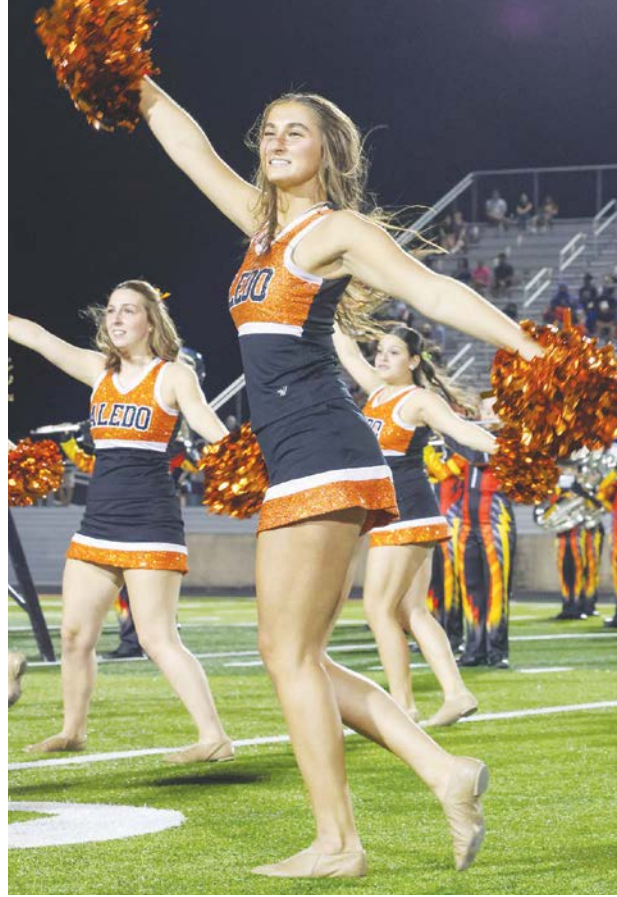
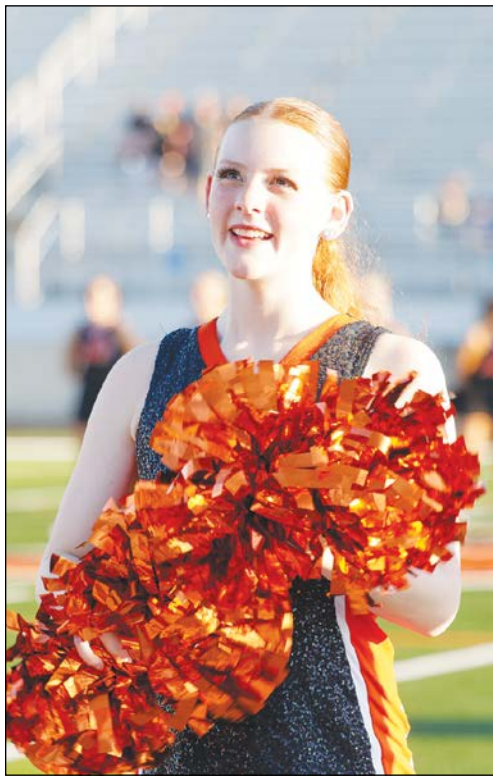
Joseph Hancin
Football

The senior linebacker led a defensive effort that saw the Bearcats shut down every facet of the game in defeating the Denton Broncos 62-0 to wrap up the regular season at Tim Buchanan on Nov. 8. He had 3.5 tackles, including 1.5 for a loss.

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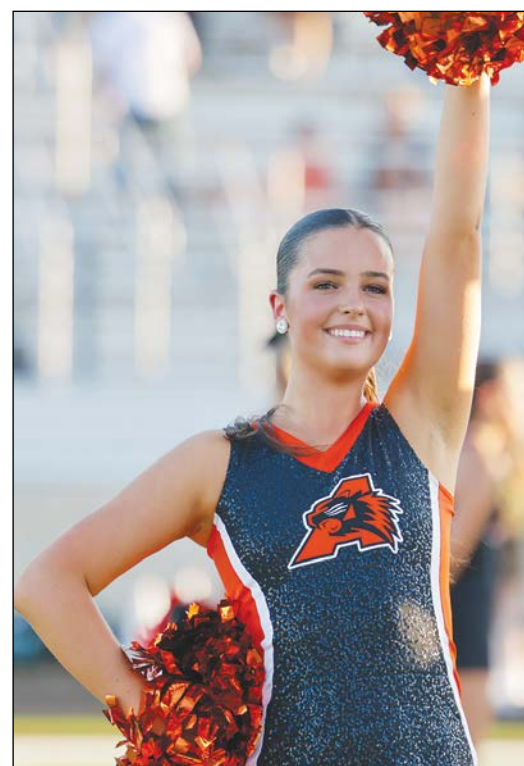
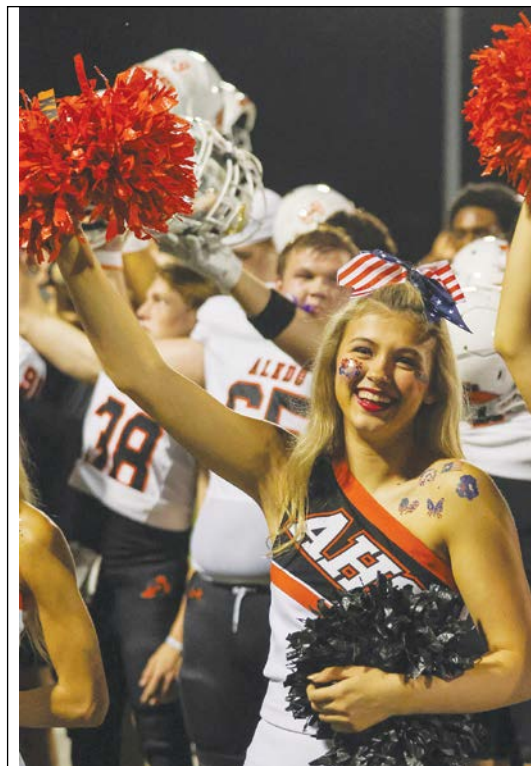
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FOOTBALL

Outrunning the darkness

Guillory back strong from injury

By Rick Mauch
The Community News

Raycine Guillory is one of the best high school running backs in the state with a goal of helping the Aledo Bearcats win a third straight state championship - and a 13th overall. He fears no defense, giving the Bearcats faithful plenty to cheer about, such as when he scored six touchdowns recently in a win over Richland.

There is, however, a time not too long ago when he was anything but excited. His electrifying moves squelched by a knee injury that sidelined him for several games last season, including most of the playoffs.

He had offseason surgery, and with that came the dark period as he worked to recover.

"It was hard. I got depressed. I had a lot going on mentally," Guillory, a junior, said. "I started praying and giving it to my Lord and saviour. I don't know how I got through it without him."

Feeling empty

While the vast majority of athletes bounce back successfully following knee surgery today, the mind will play games with the person experiencing the injury. Such was the case with Guillory.

"I didn't know who I was without football," he said.

Football had been a part of his life since he was 3 years old.

"My dad had me walking around the barber shop when I



KRISTIN MORALES/THE COMMUNITY NEWS

Guillory Raycine carries the ball in the district game against Denton.

was little, saying '1, 2, 3, hut!'" he recalled with a chuckle.

His father, Raycine Sr. owns the famous Lonnie's Barber Shop in Fort Worth, which was started by Raycine's grandfather. Raycine Sr. was also a standout running back in high school before switching to defensive back at Louisiana Tech.

Finding a new self

Guillory was always described by others as a good guy, but during his recovery he said he nonetheless did some soul searching, especially

while being in the hospital. It was enhanced by some additional complications that he said extended his post-surgery stay.

"I realized life is precious. I'm a better person because of it," he said. "I wanted to be a person who brings joy, I had to be - and not just with the football."

"Getting out of that struck something in me. It made me a better person - and a better football player and teammate."

Turn to **DARKNESS**, page 9

GIRLS BASKETBALL

Local teams amped for 24-25 season

New head coaches in charge

By Geoff Heppes
The Community News

The hardwood season has just tipped off throughout Texas high school basketball gymnasiums and local hoop squads such as the Aledo Ladycats and the Weatherford Lady Kangaroos have stepped onto the hardwood to begin their respective 2024-25 campaigns.

Both schools' varsity programs will feature new head coaches as Donnie Ott takes over the reigns from recently retired Nikki Hyles in Aledo, while former Weatherford assistant Caleb King took the helm in Weatherford after Jeff Guice began a new chapter of his coaching career at Gunter High School.

Ladycats out to continue tradition

For the Ladycats, Ott - a 26-year coaching veteran - is eager to continue the strong tradition of a reputable Ladycats basketball program.

"I am looking forward to continuing the success of the Ladycat Basketball Program," Ott said. "It's exciting to have a team with a great mix of youth and experience. I'm going into my 26th year and having coached in this area before for nine years, so I am very confident in my abilities to perform this job and continue to add to the rich traditions of this program. It is my hope that my personal experience coaching deep in the playoffs and at the state-championship level will help to enrich this program's potential throughout the season."

Ott brings a bevy of high quality experience to the table for a new-look Ladycats squad that lost key seniors such as Natalie Anderson but is returning key pieces like Elizabeth Griffin and Brooklyn Dempsey. Aledo will get more front line reinforcements from seniors Kinley Elms and Ella Isbell after their postseason run in volleyball concludes.

"We currently have great leadership with several returning players from last year," Ott said. "The leaders in this program have been extremely coachable and have shown a willingness to learn. They have been instrumental in creating a positive culture that will lead to success both on and off the court."

Furthermore, Ott said he hopes to see his team develop of tough, hard-nosed mindset, starting on the defensive end to make the opposition work hard to score, and he hopes to see the players achieve all things in unison on the court.

"I am hoping we embody team spirit, toughness, togetherness and commitment to a culture that will make the Aledo Independent School District and community proud," Ott said. "I do believe this has been on display so far this season and feel that it will continue because we have great kids here, great parental support and a strong community to support our student athletes."

In addition to making lasting memories through the pre-district and tournament cycles, Ott is confident that this team can etch even more lasting memories through a potential long postseason run.

Turn to **PREVIEW**, page 9

Fight Like a Girl

Twenty teams gathered at Squaw Creek Golf Course in Willow Park to do their part in the fight to beat cancer. The tournament benefited Erin Miller to help supplement medical expenses incurred with her cancer battle.



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