

THE COMMUNITY NEWS

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POLITICS

Williams says he will run again in 2026

Touts work with President Trump

Staff Reports
The Community News

Less than four months after being re-elected as the U.S. Representative for Texas' 25th Congressional District, Rep. Roger Williams has announced he will seek the office again in 2026.

In a statement, Rogers said "representing Texas' 25th Congressional District has been the honor of a lifetime, and our work is just beginning! Last November, we all spoke with our feet and voted to save our country by sending President Trump back to the White House. Everyday since, as Chairman of the House Small Business Committee, I've worked side by side with our President making sure we deliver on his promises to America."

In addition to his chairmanship, Williams is a member of the DOGE Caucus in Congress.

His positions include finishing the border wall, making the Trump tax cuts permanent, eliminating the Washington D.C. bureaucracy, cutting spending to bring down the deficit, and "unleashing" American energy.

Williams was first elected to congress in 2012.



Roger Williams

Foosball Fabrication



GEOFF MANTOOTH

Phil Kite provides both a sense of scale and anticipation at the human foosball table constructed at Glen Lake Camp.

Friends persuade joining a ridiculous game

By Geoff Mantooth
Special to The Community News

Feel free to disagree, but foosball is a ridiculous game; waste of time. It's because the direction of play is side-to-side and the players stand out of bounds and above the table. It's not that I'm bad at foosball, it's that I've never wanted to get better. Now that I'm a writer, I realize the point of view, the narrative distance, is too great to hold my interest.

When a kids' camp asked Aledo United Methodist Church for help in fabricating a human foosball court, the men's group said, "Sure, we'll do it." The Church welcomes everybody, with the men's group even putting up with somebody like me.

Nestled inside a bend of the shallow Paluxy River at Glen Rose, cliffs on the other side, Glen Lake Camp allows kids to be outdoors with friends and to find themselves and their

place in the world. The underfunded camp charges modest fees and never turns away a camper who can't afford it. The thinly stretched, full-time staff has captured our hearts, and we try to assist as we can.

Not that we'd heard of human foosball. No problem. Daran Miller, camp director, provided the plans. We were to build a corral large enough to hold a dozen players kicking

Turn to **FOOSBALL**, page 2

CORRECTION

In the Feb. 21 issue of *The Community News*, a guest editorial appeared by Dr. Glenn Rogers. Although Rogers is no longer a state representative, the context of the editorial indicated he was.

The error was entirely on our part, and we regret the oversight.

WEATHERFORD COLLEGE

2025 alumni award recipients announced

Gough named Alumnus of the Year

By Crystal Woerly
Weatherford College

Weatherford College has announced Brent Gough as the 2025 Alumnus of the Year. He will be honored during the annual Alumni Awards Luncheon on March 28, along with Distinguished Alumni Award honorees Dr. Deborah Liles and Fort Worth Chief of Police Neil Noakes.

Gough, a 1985 WC graduate, serves as president of the



Brent Gough

Turn to **ALUMNI**, page 2

WILLOW PARK

Council approves incentive for Pulido's

McMullen sworn in as city secretary

By Randy Keck
The Community News

In a very short meeting, the Willow Park City Council unanimously approved a Chapter 380 development agreement between the city and Pulido's Westland Willow Park, LLC at its Feb. 25 meeting.

Under the terms of the agreement, Pulido's anticipates spending an estimated \$400,000 for renovation and construction of the property at 104 South Ranch House Road, the site of the former Lazy J Ranchwear.

Once developed, the completed restaurant at that location is anticipated to produce annual taxable sales of \$2.5 million dollars. The city agrees to provide a development incentive grant of 50% of the local sales tax generated during the first two years of the restaurant's operation.



RANDY KECK/THE COMMUNITY NEWS

Deana McMullen was sworn in as Willow Park's new city secretary at the Feb. 25 city council meeting. McMullen retired as Aledo's city secretary on Sept. 30, 2024.

Under the agreement, the developer agrees to be operational by January 1, 2026.

During the meeting the council also welcomed new City Secretary Deana McMullen with a standing ovation following her swearing-in.

COMMUNITY LIFE

Stock show staff shares humor for luncheon

Local celebrity entertains

Careity Foundation
Special to The Community News

Guests to the annual Careity Foundation Cancer Survivor Luncheon were treated to uproarious laughter, rodeo tickets, and special Careity gift bags January 28 during the Fort Worth Stock Show & Rodeo's "Stock Show Goes Pink" day at the rodeo.

"We wanted to create a special time for cancer survivors in this community and this one really scored big," said Careity Foundation Co-Founder and CEO Lyn Walsh. "Our good friend, amazing ventriloquist and former Miss Texas Gloria Gilbert-Barron, with her friend Homer, as well as the Fort Worth Stock Show and Rodeo's very own Jarred Hammer really brought the house down. Jarred wasn't just an incredible sport for volunteering to participate but he took his role seriously as he added some real zest to his performance."

Walsh noted that attendees included longtime survivors as well as others who are new into



CAREITY FOUNDATION

Local celebrity Gloria Gilbert Barron kept the crowd entertained along with the Fort Worth Stock Show and Rodeo's very own Jarred Hammer.

their journey. The luncheon, which began with Co-Founder Beverly Branch performing "The Lord's Prayer," a cappella, served as a moment for guests to leave their anxieties, enjoy meeting people and concentrate on healing.

Careity exists to provide direct care that saves lives, gives hope, eases pain, and allows cancer patients and families to focus on healing.

Half of the Fort Worth Stock Show & Rodeo's "Stock Show

Turn to **LUNCHEON**, page 2

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CAREITY FOUNDATION
Cancer survivors received free admission to the special performance at the Fort Worth Stock Show & Rodeo.

LUNCHEON

from page one

Goes Pink,” rodeo performance ticket sales and grounds passes will

benefit Careity Foundation again in 2026.

For more information, or to donate to the life-saving efforts of the Careity Foundation, visit <https://www.careity.org/>.

ALUMNI

from page one

Weatherford College Foundation. He has served on the WC Foundation Board of Directors for 10 years and has been instrumental in securing significant donations for student scholarships.

“I can’t think of another volunteer that has done more in the last three years to promote scholarships and giving to Weatherford College than Brent Gough,” wrote a nominator. “He has invited multiple potential donors to events, hosted lunches, and spoken to multiple prospects about giving to support student scholarships.”

A native of Graham, Gough paid his way through Weatherford College while also competing in rodeo, and he continues to believe in the college’s mission and works tirelessly to increase scholarship funds available to students.

In the past 12 months alone, Gough has brought three new endowed scholarship funds to the foundation from donors who previously had no ties to WC. He is passionate about fostering positive relationships with donors and is currently working with the foundation’s Executive Committee to establish a plan to systematically stay in touch with them, listen to their ideas, express gratitude and develop stronger ties with the college.

Gough and his wife, Meredith, have also established a permanent scholarship endowment for WC students. He is the founder of Gough Wealth Management in Aledo and has been in the financial planning business for more than 25 years.

Liles, a 2005 WC graduate, is the W.K. Gordon Chair of Texas History at Tarleton State University. She has authored or co-edited five

books, including award-winning titles on Texas women’s history.

“Attending WC inspired Liles to continue her education,” wrote a nominator. “Building on the passion for history inspired by her mother... and former WC instructor Bill Coody, Liles immersed herself in the history of Texas.”

Liles is a Fellow in both the East Texas Historical Association and the West Texas Historical Association. She serves on several boards, including the Texas State Archives and Libraries and the Bob Bullock State Museum.

Noakes, a 1997 WC graduate, serves as police chief for the City of Fort Worth. He has spent more than 25 years in public service and will retire from his position in May 2025.

“Chief Noakes manages a department of 1,875 sworn peace officers serving more than 978,000 residents,” wrote a nominator. “In May of 2021, Chief Noakes rolled out the Fort Worth Safe initiative, a more strategic approach to violent crime prevention that combined community policing with technology and data.”

Noakes has served in multiple ranks within the FWPd, including patrol, DWI, motors and internal affairs. He is a graduate of the Southern Police Institute’s 137th Administrative Officers Course and TCU’s inaugural Leadership, Executive and Administrative Development program.

The Alumni Awards Luncheon will take place at 11:30 a.m. Friday, March 28, in the third-floor community room of the Emerging Technologies and Workforce Building.

Tickets are \$20 in advance and \$25 at the door. To purchase tickets, visit <https://bit.ly/wc2025tickets>.

For more information, email Susan Sodek at ssodek@wc.edu or call 817-598-8924.

WEATHERFORD

Council pauses tractor dealership permit approval

By Christopher Amos

The Weatherford News

A Weatherford City Council item concerning a new tractor dealership was momentarily put in neutral as the council seeks clarification on a detail before a conditional use permit is approved.

The existing conditional use permit for a new Kioti Tractor dealership was approved in a previous meeting for 2.46 acres at 1435 Fort Worth Hwy., next to All About Kids Daycare. However, at the Feb. 25 meeting the final approval, which included changes, was paused with Place 2 council member Zack Smith requesting clarification with the article’s

wording, “Display, storage, and sale of equipment is limited to new tractors, implements, UTV’s, compact construction equipment, utility trailers, lawn mowers and associated parts.”

“Since it says display, storage and sales are for only new, I guess that means they plan on taking trades, used equipment sales, repairs and leases not on location, is that right?”

The applicant for the conditional use permit was not present at the meeting.

Smith questioned Kaleb Kentner, director of development and neighborhood services, if

indeed all business transactions will be strictly new equipment sales only. After a discussion, Kentner said he will have the subject clarified for a future submission of the conditional use permit. Place 1 council member and mayor pro tem, Heidi Wilder, made a motion to table the vote for another meeting and the members agreed unanimously.

The council also considered appointing Jim Jeter as a regular member to the Zoning Board of Adjustments and Marc Sager as an alternate. With the subject discussed at a previous meeting, the item quickly passed 4-0.

FOOSBALL

from page one

a ball into a goal at either end. Imagine mini-soccer but crowded.

Human foosball is a phenomenon. Can’t say if it’s a huge phenom or a tiny one. Some build the corral from stacked hay bales. Others use wood fences or walls of vertical wood pallets.

Our plans called for a metal corral. Kris Grimland, who knows a lot about metalwork, heavy equipment, and shares not just the name but the generosity of Santa, remarked the corral was over-engineered. We were to use 3 inch by 3 inch metal tubes, material so heavy it takes two to lift a length.

We spent part of a day at the shop of another generous friend, Larry Chapman, cutting the tubes to length, grinding the sharp edges, and trimming the heavy-duty hog panels, a stiff wire mesh meant to contain ticked-off feral hogs weighing hundreds of pounds. Larry arranged for welders to fabricate the rectangular sides of the corral, saving us hours of work.

After spending a Friday night at camp, we unloaded the heavy welded panels. We aligned them and drilled holes to bolt them together. Larry had already drilled some holes in his shop, which helped because field drilling through metal is physical work. The spinning bit sits on the metal, ever so slowly biting into the material. Jimmy Britton manhandled the drill. Despite wearing gloves, he took skin off the back of a hand against the hog panels.

Naturally, our thoughts returned to PVC plastic, and how nice it would have been to work with PVC, which drills like butter. Amanda Garza, one of the camp staff, stopped by and I asked her if kids really play human foosball. My thinking was not only was this thing over-engineered, but it had the makings of a fad. Play today, empty corral tomorrow. She said her own kids loved it, but she only had experience with PVC. Hah!



MAYO TUBBS

Jimmy Britton drills, while supervised by (from left) Darren Dietrich, Scott Sadler, David Sides, Geoff Mantooh, and Larry Chapman.

Someone to reaffirm our own thoughts.

The upper ends of the hog panels protruded as sharp-edged snags. Several of us ground them down. Scott Sadler sent a shower of burning grit my way. He discovered how annoying he was and adjusted on the fly. I thought I did a good job for a grinding novice until I saw Jimmy Britton’s work. I went back over my section a second time.

We drilled holes on the top of the panels. I’d thought drilling with gravity would be easier than drilling sideways, but it was harder, and soon, despite Jimmy/Kris helping by putting weight on the bit to push it through, I was worn out, arms shaking. I asked Charlie, another of the camp staff assisting us, if he’d played the game. Because there’s nothing more reaffirming than having two people agree PVC was the way to go. He said not only was it fun, the opposing team told him, “Ya’ll came to play, didn’t you.” I’d get no PVC vote from Charlie.

We laid casing pipe, the small stuff used in oil wells, on top, spanning side to side. Unlike flexible

PVC, casing pipe is stiff and takes two to lift. Every component in this corral took two or more guys to lift, slide, shimmy, pry, clamp, and bolt. Charlie had fabricated PVC sleeves, painted with team orange and blue for the players to grab. We threaded the pipe through and secured each end. As we slowly drilled, fitted, and secured the cross-pipes, I mentioned we needed to break the corral in after we finished. Don Sorensen tossed in a shiny new soccer ball. I kicked it out of the way to avoid tripping.

The other crews from our group, new friends and old, came by to gawk, breaking from their tree-trimming, sawing, dirt work, and other jobs the short-staffed camp needed done. They’d stopped on their way to the cafeteria. They said, “No need to hurry because a couple hundred kids are lined up for lunch.” Indeed, the camp seemed to fill during the morning.

We finished drilling the last hole, laying the last pipe, tightening the last U-bolt, and broke for lunch. The cafeteria was close, the walk long from oncoming stiffness

Turn to BUILD, page 3

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BUILD

from page 2

in muscles we writers who are proficient at keyboards rarely use. We ate camp food, designed to feed many mouths quickly, and sauntered out again, determined to wrap it up. I mentioned the corral was near ready for us to break it in. As our creation came into view, we discovered the other crews were already breaking it in for us. Our friends hadn't asked us for permission.

Mayo Tubbs, the guy who put the trip and projects together, inexplicably played on a team of two against five. The odds seemed unfair, so I joined in, weaving among the players, ducking under pipe stout enough to raise a welt to a forehead. Opposing players stood only a few feet in front, hands on their colored segments, and a few feet in back.

Just like table foosball, the ball zips in the small spaces, with point blank kicks, carom shots off the sides. I didn't know the rules, but heard them explained on the fly, "You have to keep both hands on your color." Unlike table foosball, there is no narrative distance, players are immersed in the action. The stiff hog wire led to faster caroms, the cross pipes of oil well casing provided support for swinging under to extend leg reach.

In a game where scoring wasn't kept, of three against five, Mayo, Bob Todd, and I came to play.

Human foosball's a total blast and I'm glad we didn't make it out of wimpy PVC. I can't wait to go back to Glen Lake Camp, where the all metal corral will remain standing for years to come.

An edited version of this story appears in the Substack newsletter <https://trialsbywriting.substack.com>.

COMMUNITY LIFE

Love Weatherford litter project targets county, aims for Texas

Group membership approaches 1,000

By Christopher Amos
The Community News

The movement started when the church Jeff Oakes attends, Weatherford Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, encouraged members to become more involved with the community. The half-mile road in front of his house was becoming unattractive with litter, so one day Oakes and his wife, Jennifer, spent a half hour picking up trash together.

"It was the most wonderful experience. It was an amazing feeling," Oakes recalled. "After we got finished with it I thought, 'This is so cool, I have to clean the next road.'"

The next day he took one of his daughters and cleaned the next road. As the days went on, one road led to another until Oakes decided to do the 10 mile stretch from his neighborhood to Weatherford, down and back.

"That same feeling was there again. A wonderful, spiritual feeling," Oakes explained. "It is invigorating to look back and see the good that you have done, and you are outdoors breathing the clean air, working your body and seeing nature up close. I just wanted others to experience that same feeling too. I wanted others to feel uplifted."

Oakes began inviting friends, and then strangers to arm themselves with litter pickers and join in. The movement grew into Love Weatherford, a 501(c)(3) non profit organization with the immediate goal of growing their movement throughout Parker County and eventually across Texas.

Although Oakes often removes litter for 2-4 hours at a stretch to satisfy his trash-picking craving, his



CHRISTOPHER AMOS/THE COMMUNITY NEWS

Love Weatherford is a 501(c)(3) non-profit, and founder Jeff Oakes says the litter picking organization relies heavily on donations.

main responsibility is organizing groups to work 1-2 hours in their local areas cleaning roadways, making new friends, and enjoying the outdoors. The group is approaching 1,000 members.

The group was honored in March of last year by the Weatherford Chamber of Commerce. At that time, Love Weatherford removed 500 bags of trash totaling 2.5 tons of litter. Since then, the group has removed 6,500 bags of litter.

The Love Weatherford Kid's Club and Friday seniors group makes sure every age group has a chance to enjoy litter picking, and the movement keeps growing. Love Weatherford is a "Keep Texas Beautiful" associate affiliate, and after growing across Parker County they hope to become an official "Keep Texas Beautiful" affiliate.

Health benefits

Oakes believes picking litter has health benefits, both physical and mental. At one point in his life, Oakes gained so much weight from high cholesterol, diabetes and other

health problems, he and his wife sat down and discussed what the family would do to get by if he were to die. Today, eating healthier and staying active picking litter, Oakes is 65 pounds lighter than his heaviest weight.

Oakes said many Love Weatherford regulars view the roadsides as their own personal gym, putting in miles and absorbing fresh air as they de-litter the county.

"It is life changing," Oakes said. "It is just you and nature and God smiling down at you. What can be healthier than that?"

Fellow picker Ron Hall said removing litter has changed his life. Five days a week Hall begins the morning picking the downtown square with Oakes before heading to other locations.

"I am disabled and I was just sitting around at home doing nothing," Hall explained. "I saw what Love Weatherford was doing and when I did it I was hooked. I just can't let it go."

Oakes said he has put more than \$20,000 of his family's money



CHRISTOPHER AMOS/THE COMMUNITY NEWS

Jeff Oakes can't pass up a piece of litter, no matter where he finds it. The Love Weatherford founder says picking up trash on Parker County roadsides is an amazing, beneficial experience.

into Love Weatherford with a vehicle, trailer, and ATV to cover rough terrain. Also, Love Weatherford members Ed and Sasha Yeager donated a used truck which will go into service after modifications. However, the non-profit relies greatly on donations for upkeep, bags, and pickers.

Love Weatherford activity updates can be found on social media and you can call or text Jeff Oakes at 605-906-4322 or email jeff@loveweatherford.org to volunteer, donate, or request a particular area in Parker County that needs to be cleaned.

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

The Community News does not charge for time-ly 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

House unveils its voucher version



Gary Borders
gborders@texaspress.com

Texas House members filed a bevy of education bills last week, including a proposed \$8 billion investment in public education and a voucher bill that ties the amount of money spent for private schooling to the dollar amount provided to public schools. *The Austin American-Statesman* reported the bill, filed by Rep. Brad Buckley, R-Salado, would increase the base level of per-student funding by \$220 — from \$6,160 to \$6,380. Additional funds would be provided for special education, bilingual education, transportation and to rural school districts.

The House voucher proposal differs from the version already passed by the Texas Senate in that it sets out a tiered system depending on a family's income and prioritizes children with special education needs.

"We want kids in Texas to do better," Buckley said. "That's what it's about."

At least two Democratic legislators have pushed back. Rep. Gina Hinojosa, D-Austin, said she was "disappointed" by the proposed increase in per-student funding. The \$220 proposed increase does not cover increased costs due to inflation.

"Our neighborhood schools are desperate for the funding they need to keep their best teachers in the classroom," Hinojosa said. Rep. James Talarico, D-Round Rock, cast skepticism on Republicans' claim they have enough votes in the House to pass a voucher program.

"Voucher proponents have a habit of declaring victory prematurely," Talarico said.

Senate bill would criminalize hemp products with THC

A bill filed in the Texas Senate would ban all products containing THC, the psychoactive ingredient in marijuana, *The Dallas Morning News* reported. Thousands of retailers across the state are selling CBD products

derived from legally grown hemp but often containing THC. The ban would not affect the sale of nonintoxicating products that contain CBD.

The ban is a priority of Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick, the Senate's presiding officer.

"We must take bold action to keep dangerous drugs away from our communities and out of our schools, and SB 3 is a critical step in protecting Texas families from unregulated and mislabeled intoxicating products," Patrick said in December.

Advocates for consumable hemp — gummies, vapes, drinks and other types of products — are advocating a more measured approach that would include limiting the strength, increasing oversight, and banning sales to minors. The proposed ban would not affect the state's medical marijuana program.

Even if passed, the proposed ban faces an uncertain fate in the House, where no companion legislation has been filed.

Agriculture commissioner wants state fluoride ban

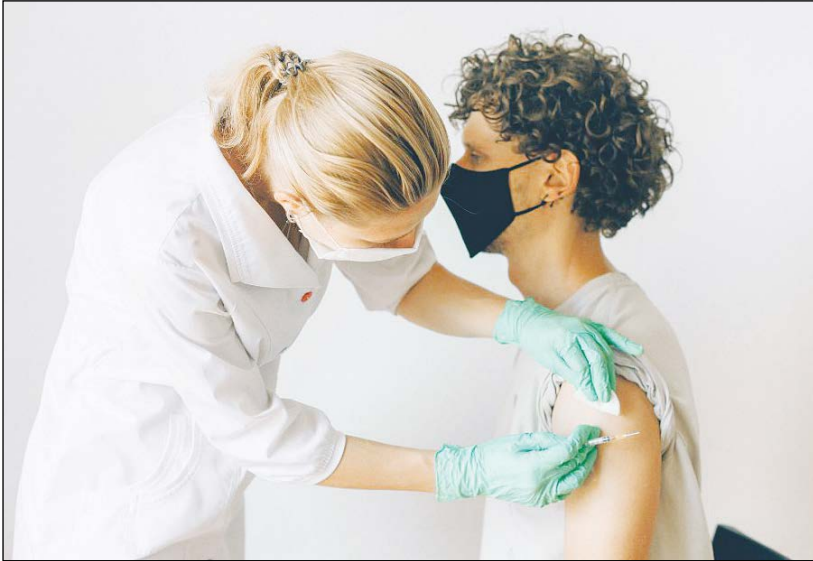
Texas Agriculture Commissioner Sid Miller is urging state officials to ban adding fluoride to public water systems, *The News* reported. Miller said he was swayed by U.S. Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr., a longtime opponent of fluoridation.

"I don't want big brother telling me what to do," Miller. "Government has forced this on us for too long."

Across Texas, more than 100 public water systems serving nearly 10 million people add fluoride to water. According to the American Dental Association, fluoridation reduces cavities by about 25% in both children and adults. However, critics say the practice is no longer needed because fluoride is already found in toothpaste and other dental products.

Measles outbreak spreading in South Plains region

The number of people identified as having contracted measles has risen to 90 since late January, according to the Texas Department of State Health Services. Of that number, 16 have been hospitalized.



CANVA

A measles outbreak is spreading in the South Plains region. The DSHS said the best way to prevent is to get the MMR vaccine.

"Due to the highly contagious nature of this disease, additional cases are likely to occur in the outbreak area and the surrounding communities," a DSHS news release stated.

Gaines County, between Lubbock and Midland, has reported the largest number of cases: 57 as of last Friday. Five of the people contracting measles said they had been vaccinated against the virus.

Most of the cases have been reported in children from infancy to age 17. DSHS said the best way to prevent getting sick is to be immunized with two doses of the measles-mumps-rubella vaccine.

A cooler, wetter January reported

Texas weather was wetter and cooler in January than in past years, resulting in a slight drop in the percentage of the state in drought, now at 42%, according to Dr. Mark Wentzel, hydrologist with the Texas Water Development Board.

Wentzel said he expects drought conditions to expand modestly in the next few months.

"A big factor in this outlook is an ongoing La Niña event, cooler-than-normal sea surface temperatures in the eastern Equatorial Pacific, that typically bring warmer and drier conditions to the southern U.S., including Texas, during the winter," he wrote. "Farther out, we're still hopeful for more drought relief."

La Niña is expected to be less of a factor after April, meaning that May — historically the wettest month in Texas — could bring added drought relief.

Coalition pressing transparency legislation this session

The Texas Sunshine Coalition, which consists of 16 organizations (including Texas Press Association, the Freedom of Information Foundation of Texas and the Texas Association of Broadcasters), is working to pass legislation to improve citizens' access to public information.

Seven measures have already been introduced, including a bill that would require governments to produce public records in their original format instead of converting them into PDF images that are impossible to search and sort.

Other proposals would require governments to respond to Public Information Act requests. The bills resulted from complaints that some government officials simply ignore requests in spite of state laws. The legislation provides for a complaint process when officials fail to respond. Other measures call for resuming access to dates of birth in public records to ensure accuracy when reporting on people with common names; requiring an open government hotline in the Texas Attorney General's office; and establishing a complaint process when public information is withheld.

More transparency bills are expected to be filed soon.

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

Kids and a food fight



Dr. Don Newbury
newbury@speakerdoc.com

Column deadlines often are near enough to nudge before first paragraphs are actually written.

Some might think such to be sheer procrastination. I prefer to consider my "delays" to be viewed as being more akin to prolonged research. Pretend that I am hacking through the vines of a word jungle with a machete, searching for just the right ones.

Ernest Hemingway considered it a good writing day if he turned out 500 words (think Old Man and the Sea), while Stephen King had goals of writing at least 2,000 words between sunrise and sunset.

Heavens to Betsy, I'm not trying to compare my writing to these literary giants, but rather acknowledging great authors who "stayed at it," no matter how much

time was required. I make the same pledge, to "stay at it," even if time is short and deadlines loom.

Before leaving recently on a five-day speaking trip to Florida, I prepared a draft of my next column. I wanted to return home to put finishing touches on column #1,132 with comparative ease.

Alas, I couldn't find the draft, even prying into my computer's deepest innards, finding zilch. There is the temptation to remember that speaking should always be an improvement over silence. This said, the printed word should always be preferable to a blank space. Editors, however, never approve of blankness, even when their faces suggest otherwise. So, I write, even if hurriedly, almost fearful that a draft is flying aimlessly about in cyber space. I do recall that it centered on a church youth minister and the luncheon setting on the final day at summer youth camp, shortly before he left youth ministry.

He will never forget an unexpected "food fight" waged by a bunch of youngsters chowing down in the dining hall, soon to board a couple of buses for the ride home. It's just as well that

this man of the cloth remains unnamed, since a mild epithet flew from his mouth—one that would hardly be noted in today's culture even if uttered by the Pope.

Yet, it was strong for this man, whose previous typical utterances were squeaky clean. Okay, it was a four-letter word, but not one of the worst ones. Still, it shocked the youth, his wife, the camp director and a handful of parents, all of whom had been in prayerful mode earlier for the several life-changing spiritual decisions by several students during the week-long outing.

He stood on a table to make what began as a one-word expression to "describe what the place looked like." He spoke bravely at the height of a food fight, with splatterings of steak, potatoes and buttered rolls flying by. (Okay, the expression was screamed, and the word began with "c," and that's the only clue I'll provide. And don't even think of asking me the name of the church.)

The leader then bellowed out specific instructions. The kids were told to grab their towels that already were packed and ready for home washing machines. They

were then to return to the dining hall for scrubbing of the painted concrete floors on "all fours." Then, he joined them in a crawling mode, determining that another scrubbing session would be needed, followed also by a third. He didn't want campers during the upcoming week to slip and slide due to his kids' silliness.

Before a fourth scrub started, the camp director grabbed the microphone. "I appreciate your efforts," he said. "But enough is enough. You're rubbing the paint off the concrete." (Addendum: Chris remains in ministry for ages, and for, uh, all ages.)

Finally, my initial piece had a remembrance of yet another preacher, the late Homer (Bud) Stephens, who twice annually made the same announcement at Easter services and Sundays nearest Christmas at his small rural church. "On the other 50 Sundays, we don't have real flowers."

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



REMEMBERING THE TOADIES

Bassist to podcaster Umbarger now calls Aledo home

By John English
The Community News

When Lisa Umbarger, Vaden Todd Lewis, and Charles Mooney met while working at Sound Warehouse on Camp Bowie Blvd. back in the late 1980s, they forged what would become arguably the greatest rock band to ever come out of the city of Fort Worth.

"We all loved music and decided to start a band," Umbarger said. "Charles and I were beginners, so it was like being thrown in the deep end of the pool. We had to learn to swim quickly."

The Toadies bassist now makes her home in Aledo, but reflects fondly on her time with the band renowned for such classics as Possum Kingdom, I Come From the Water, Tyler, and Back Slider.

"It was my dream from a very young age to be in a band," Umbarger said. "I played college sports and never really had the time to take on anything else. I was in a place where I was reevaluating my life and I made the switch to music and never looked back."

And the fact that she, Lewis, and Mooney all happened to be working in the same store at the same time is not lost on Umbarger.

"The Toadies was catching lightning in a bottle," Umbarger said. "We had a deep love for what we were creating and we were doing it with our best friends. The music community in DFW was amazing and we were very fortunate to be a part of this surge of great bands...Reverend Horton Heat, Tripping Daisy, Brutal Juice, Baboon, Caulk, and Slow Roosevelt to name a few.

"We all supported each other and helped propel the music scene. It's something that is lacking in DFW now,

although it is really interesting to see what Leon Bridges is doing. It feels similar and Leon is definitely lifting up the new up-and-coming talent."

Umbarger comes from an Air Force family and grew up in many places, eventually settling in Fort Worth and graduating from Western Hills High School.

The Aledo woman said she has many great memories from her time with the Toadies, having had the opportunity to meet and play with so many of her idols.

"Although we were in a very successful band, we never lost that awe of seeing great musicians play," Umbarger said. "When we were recording our second record, Feeler at Willie Nelson's studio in Austin, John Paul Jones of Led Zeppelin stopped by the studio. It is very hard to describe how nervous and excited I was just being in the same room as that genius."

Umbarger is still in touch with Mark Reznicek and Darrel Herbert, but sadly a falling out with Vaden Todd Lewis has never been resolved.

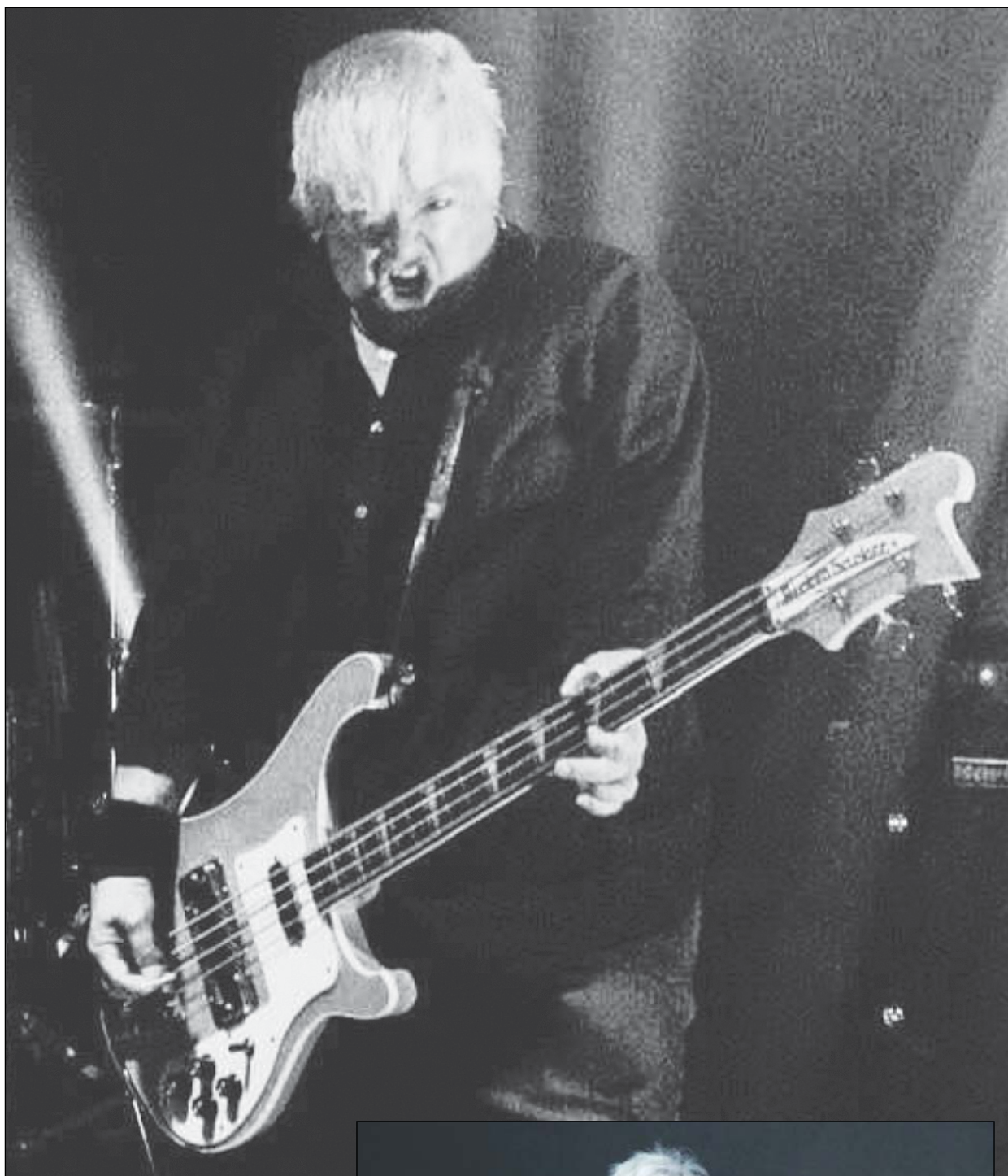
Umbarger said that the life of a rock star can be overwhelming and that there were times when she wished that she could just spend an evening "chilling and watching TV," but said for the most part, it was really amazing.

"I made lifelong friends and got to see the world," Umbarger said. "I woke up every day grateful that this is my life. The biggest challenge was the one that eventually broke the band apart. We had a lot of people telling us things and the truth got muddled. Our really tight friendships were stressed and couldn't withstand the outside pressure. I think we all still love each other. It would be hard to go through all those years and not have fondness in your heart for these people."

Two years ago, Umbarger began a new venture when she started her podcast Jackalope Tales with Charles Mooney, and Umbarger said the podcast has allowed her to rekindle her times with her band.

"Jackalope Tales really began when we had to do interviews for the Toadies," Umbarger said. "We loved to spin yarns and it became a creative way to talk about touring. When Charles and I started talking, we realized that people were interested in our band stories, especially when we pulled back the curtain and talked about things other musicians were afraid to divulge. We were lucky enough to be picked up by the folks at Wicked Apple Media and started the official podcast in 2023."

Umbarger said she loves doing the podcast but added it is not always easy.



SPECIAL TO THE COMMUNITY NEWS

Lisa Umbarger is shown in rock music form playing the bass in The Toadies band. The bassist for The Toadies, now calls Aledo home.

"It is more work than most people might think," Umbarger said. "Charles and I are a good team, but I have to admit, Charles is doing the heavy lifting of recording and editing. He is not only a great guitarist and creative guy, he is good at tech stuff."

People can find the podcast on Spotify, AmazonMusic, YouTube, and Apple and Umbarger said the duo is "proud to be in the top 25 of music podcasts."

"Being in the Toadies still opens doors for me," Umbarger said. "I am humbled by the love that people still have for the music we created. It is crazy to think about the little legacy we made from playing in a garage."





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

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- BREAKFAST BARS

Food pantry requests for the week!

This week requests are milk, cereal, butter, deli meat, fresh fruit and breakfast bars. If you're able to donate toward the food pantry requests, donations may be dropped off at 1225 Holland Lake Dr. Weatherford, TX 76086 Monday-Thursday from 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. We appreciate your continued support to help feed our Senior community



FEBRUARY 28

Weatherford First Monday Trade Days

Discover the charm of one of Texas' oldest open-air markets, happening the weekend before the first Monday of every month. From 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Friday to Sunday, at Heritage Park (317 Santa Fe Dr) transforms into a vibrant marketplace filled with treasures! Shop an incredible variety of antiques, furniture, jewelry, plants, artwork,

collectibles, and so much more. Feeling hungry? Swing by the food park to grab some delicious eats while you browse. With free entry and parking, there's no reason to miss out! Bring your friends, family, or just yourself for a unique shopping experience.



MARCH 4

Mardi Gras Festival

Join us for our 3rd Annual Mardi Gras Festival from 6-9p.m. on March 4, at the Weatherford College - Alkek Fine Arts Center. We'll have mouthwatering food, a gumbo cook-off that'll spice things up, live music to get you moving, and plenty of activities to keep the kids entertained. Let the good times roll!

MARCH 9

REMINDER: Daylight Saving Time

Clocks spring ahead at 2 a.m. on Sunday, March 9.

MARCH 11

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.

MARCH 13

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.

MARCH 29



Aledo Spring Fling Craft Fair and Market Expo

The Aledo Spring Fling will be from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. on March 29 at the Aledo High School.

Come and shop creative quality craft vendors and market vendors who have everything to share with you from wood crafts and paper goods to beauty, floral, and boutique products! Proceeds benefit the Junior Class at Aledo High School every year.

19th Annual Glow Run

Get ready to GLOW! Join us for the Aledo Advocats Glow Run, Walk and Crawl—a night full of fun, fitness, and flashing lights! Gate open at 6:30 p.m. at Bearcat Stadium on

ACROSS

1 TXism: "mobile mouse" (cat)

5 TX George Strait's "Ace in the ____"

6 TX Strait's "All My ____ Live in Texas" (var.)

7 TX Don Henley co-wrote "Take ____ the Limit" (1975)

8 TXism: "____ gut" (liquor)

9 TX Bill Paxton was in this epic film about a 1912 disaster

16 close-fitting jeans

18 TX Cindy wrote this empty pages book: "Everything Men ____ Women"

21 Lynda Bird Johnson wed this Robb (init.)

22 a cable car

23 state org. for nurses

24 beauty treatment

30 TXism for "observant" (hyph.)

34 birth state of TX Goodnight (abbr.)

35 TXism: "he's got more on his plate ____ can say grace over"

36 Texas-based "____ 1 Imports Online"

37 give a speech

39 TXism: "busy ____ on ____ pay day"

43 Texas pitcher, Ryan

44 TX Martha Hyer 1965 film: "____ of Katie Elder"

DOWN

1 TX Willie album: "____ Tapes"

2 in Lamar County on FM 137 & 38

3 TXism: "so green he could hide in ____ patch" (rookie)

4 100 centavos in Mexico

9 TX Tom who won 1992 U.S. Open in golf (init.)

10 extra money paid for a loan

11 ripped up

45 TXism: "want it ____ bad I could spit"

46 benign skin growth

47 Texan who can vote

49 dictatorship

52 to fall asleep after a chicken fried steak meal, e.g.: ____ off

53 Santa ____, Texas

54 what TX A.J. Foyt did

55 Tex Ritter: "America's Most ____ Cowboy"

58 TX Willie 1986 film: "____ coach"

59 a color

60 make a mistake

61 corporate area in Irving: ____ Colinas

12 TXism: "salt some ____ (save)"

13 TX Audie Murphy 1959 film: "No ____ the Bullet"

14 he wrote the songs in TX Ginger Rogers 1935 "Top Hat" (init.)

15 Alamo bed for Col. Jim Bowie

17 the Joads traveled through Texas in "The ____ Wrath"

19 single, uniform

20 natural skill

24 ____ Worth (abbr.)

25 TX Dale Evans wrote "____, San Antonio"

26 toss a fishin' line

TEXAS CROSSWORD
by Charley & Guy Orbison
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P-1728

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APRIL 12

Annual Plant Sale

Join Parker County Master Gardeners from 8 a.m. - 1 p.m. on Saturday, April 12 at 311 Santa Fe Drive,

Weatherford, for the annual plant sale!

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Parker County Master Gardeners Association in a non-profit organization affiliated with the Texas Master Gardeners through Texas A&M AgriLife.

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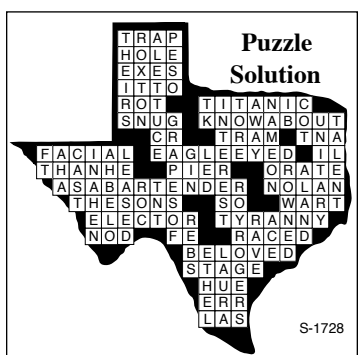
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12:00 Noon, Wednesday, March 12, 2025

and publicly opened. Bids must be mailed or delivered to the place of opening prior to the time stated above. Any bidder desiring an electronic copy of the proposal form and bid documents should email their request to Ottis Lee at olee@bhbinc.com.

The Proposal (s) shall be for the furnishing of all labor, materials, and equipment for performing all work required for the construction of Rio Vista Phase 2 Grading and Bear Creek Road Storm Drain Improvements.

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March 7, 2025

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SWIMMING

Aledo wraps up season at state

Roberson captures two top-10 finishes

By Rick Mauch
The Community News

Haley Roberson's final performances swimming for Aledo High School were her best. In a fourth consecutive appearance at state, she posted a pair of top-10 finishes, leading a contingent of eight from Aledo at the Class 5A State Swim Meet Feb. 21-22 at the Lee & Joe Jamail Texas Swimming Center at the University of Texas in Austin.

Roberson placed sixth in the finals of the 200-yard individual medley and was eighth in the 500 freestyle. She clocked a time of 2:07.66 in the former and 5:08.18 in the latter.

Her time of 5:04.69 in the preliminaries of the 500 free shattered her seed time of 5:11.18.

"Haley has progressed further each year, and finishing her high school career with a finals appearances and sixth- and eighth-place finishes is an outstanding achievement," said her coach and mother Meghan Roberson.

Roberson joined fellow senior Victoria Crews — also making her fourth straight state appearance — on both the 200 free relay and 400 free relay, along with junior Julia Gordy and freshman Mackenzie Oligschlaeger. The quartet finished 13th in the state in the 200 and 17th in the 400.

Turn to **SWIM**, page 12



COURTESY OF AVERY FAULKNER

These 12 members of the Aledo High School swim team were in Austin Feb. 21-22 for the Class 5A State Swim Meet. Pictured are (front row from left) Sydni Kellam (alternate), Mackenzie Oligschlaeger, Haley Roberson, and Julia Gordy; (middle row) Evan Bradley (alternate), Victoria Crews, and Avery Faulkner (alternate); and (back row) Brayden DeBoer, Ian Perez, Kale Roberson, Jaxon Robinson (alternate) and Tyler Jackson.

POWERLIFTING

Aledo qualifies four for regionals

Captures two bronze medals at district

By Rick Mauch
The Community News

Four members of the Aledo Bearcats will continue their 2025 powerlifting competition — with the possibility of a fifth joining them — at the Region I Meet on Thursday, March 6, at Abilene Wylie High School.

In the 242-pound division, Anthony Flowers lifted 1,465 at a meet earlier in the season and is seeded seventh in his weight class.

Chase Wilburne qualified in the 220 division after lifting a qualifying total of 1,410 pounds at district to place third. He is ranked 10th in the region.

Kreuger Summers will compete in the 275 weight class and is seeded 10th in the region. He placed third at district after lifting 1,575 pounds and qualifying.

Omari Din-Mbuh was fourth in district in the 308 class. That total lift of 1,420 pounds qualifies him as the seventh seed in the region.

Turn to **LIFTING**, page 9

SOCCER

Bearcats, Ladycats lead districts with wins over Fossil Ridge



RYAN WADE/THE COMMUNITY NEWS

Allie Weimer and her teammates celebrate following her goal with 13 minutes left in the match against Fossil Ridge on Tuesday, Feb. 25.

District season winding down

By Ryan Wade
The Community News

With the regular season winding to a close both Aledo soccer teams sit atop their

respective districts following close wins over Fossil Ridge on Tuesday, Feb. 25. Allie Weimer led the Ladycats (12-4 overall, 7-2 in district) to a 1-0 victory as they successfully defended their home turf. Meanwhile, the Bearcats (11-3-2 overall, 6-1-1 in

districts) earned a 2-1 road win to reclaim first place in District 5-5A.

Just keep shooting

Although the scoreboard read 1-0 as the final whistle

Turn to **SOCCER**, page 12

SPORTS BRIEFS

By: Rick Mauch
The Community News

BASEBALL

Coyotes No. 1 in nation

The Weatherford College Coyotes, off to a 13-1 start to the season, entered this week as the No. 1 National Junior College Athletic Association Division I team in the nation according to the NJCAA website. They were ranked No. 11 in the preseason poll.



JOSEPH DUFRAIN

Trace Mazon of Aledo was recently named the Northern Texas Junior College Athletic Conference Position Player of the Week.

Mazon extends WC's POW streak

For the third straight week, a Weatherford College baseball player was honored with an award from the Northern Texas Junior College Athletic Conference. Aledo High School graduate Trace Mazon earned the NJCAC Position Player of Week for Feb. 9-15.

Previously teammates who have also earned this honor include right-handed pitcher Evan Brandt and second baseman JC Davis.

Mazon, a sophomore third baseman, hit .667 for the week. He scored nine times on three doubles and seven walks. On top of that, he drove in five runs. His on-base percentage for the week was .765, and he posted an on-base plus slugging of 1.765.

Kangaroos get first win via no-hitter

The Weatherford Kangaroos (1-2) garnered their first victory of the young season, defeating Saginaw Chisholm Trail 8-0 in the Roos' own weather-shortened tournament on Feb. 22. The victory was a combined no-hitter from pitchers Cutter Kennedy and Kaden Fleming.

Kennedy pitched five innings, striking out seven and walking two for the win. Fleming hurled the final two innings, striking out two.

GIRLS SOCCER

Lady Roos finally surrender goal

The Weatherford Lady Kangaroos (14-0-1, 7-0-1 in District 3-6A) surrendered their first goal of the season in a 4-1 victory against Mansfield Legacy on Feb. 21. Weatherford has outscored its opponents 51-1 this season.

Goals against Legacy were two by Addy McElhaney and one each from Hanna Redington and Landree Cooper, with assists from Ava Garrett and Mia Saldivar.

The Lady Roos were previously ranked No. 1 in the state by the Texas Girls Coaches Association. They are currently No. 7 after going to a shootout against Mansfield following a 0-0 tie in regulation.

LADYCAT OF THE WEEK



Sofia Brandenburg
Track & Field

At the Argyle Relays, the junior won a gold medal in the 800-meter run and placed fourth in the 1600. She also ran a leg of the winning 4x400 relay.

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BEARCAT OF THE WEEK



Adam Averett
Track & Field

The senior won the discus at the Argyle Relays, along with placing third in the 300-meter hurdles. In addition, he ran the anchor leg of the second-place 4x400 relay.

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SPORTS BRIEFS

By: Rick Mauch
The Community News

SOFTBALL
Ladycats still
state-ranked

The Aledo Ladycats are ranked No. 14 in the latest Texas Girls Coaches Association Class 5A rankings. They entered this week with a 5-1 record.

Coyotes nationally ranked

The Weatherford College Coyotes are off to a 12-2 start to the season. They are No. 21 in the nation in the NJCAA Division I rankings. Weatherford College was not ranked in the preseason.

Lady Roos salvage two
games in own tourney

While weather forced the cancellation of most of the tournament, the Weatherford Lady Roos (4-2) won the two games they played. They defeated Springtown 7-4 and Jacksboro 9-5.

Players of the Game vs. Springtown: Londyn Martin, 2-for-3 with two RBI.

Player of the Game vs. Jacksboro: Kylie Addison with the pull-ahead home run.

SOFTBALL

McKean no-hitter, hot bats lift Ladycats

Aledo rolls past
John Horn 11-0
in 6 innings

By Geoff Heppes
The Community News

The Aledo Ladycats softball team put on a show for their home fans on a slightly breezy Tuesday night (Feb. 25) in a dominant performance against the John Horn Lady Jaguars. After battling the Lady Jags through a couple of scoreless innings, Aledo’s bats began to heat up as the game progressed. In the end, Aledo crossed the finish line with an impressive 11-0 victory in six run-rule-shortened innings that came to an end after junior Delaney Rosser smacked a stand-up RBI triple to walk it off.

“Softball is such a mental game and no stage is too big,” Ladycats head coach Heather Myers said. “We’ve obviously been on the big stage before, so whenever they take that stuff they learned from last year into this year, they know how to overcome obstacles better. They’re growing and coming together after learning a lot last

year, and they are welcoming and teaching a lot to these new faces. Some of the new faces are doing a lot on their own where no one has to teach them because they are just that good.”

Meanwhile, standout junior pitcher Taylor McKean continued to produce bagels on the scoreboard from the mound with a confident defense surrounding her. Not only did McKean eclipse a double-digit strikeout total but did so without allowing a single hit to go with just one surrendered.

“I feel like they’re always really confident behind Taylor (McKean) and Taylor doesn’t miss many pitches,” Myers said. “I call the pitches typically in a game, and I require my pitchers to hit at least 80 percent of their pitches – Taylor usually hits 90 to 95 percent. With that, our defense knows how to set up because they can anticipate where the ball will go based on the pitch she throws. We’re pretty tenured out there, though. They are comfortable and unafraid.”

Despite leaving a pair of runners on in the first inning, the

Ladycat offense was able to begin recalibrating the scoreboard in the third inning. Rosser drew a two-out walk and junior third baseman Kyleigh Pawlak singled up the middle to put two runners on. After that, sophomore Marina Taveras smacked a towering RBI double to right center that deflected off the John Horn right fielder’s glove and plated both baserunners to give Aledo a 2-0 lead.

After another 1-2-3 inning in the top of the fourth, Aledo’s scorching bats continued to cook in the bottom of the frame.

McKean drew a walk and was replaced at first base by sophomore courtesy runner Rylee Marx, who stole second base and was then moved to third on a sacrifice fly to center by senior Gracie Jones. Marx eventually crossed home plate for the home team’s third run of the game from an RBI groundout by Jordyn Edington. Later in the frame, Rosser smacked a bloop single to shallow right that dropped in for a hit that scored two more runs, the second coming after the speedy senior Addie Perry slid

beautifully under the tag at home plate. Holland added another RBI single in the inning with her furry younger brother Rolly, her family’s 9-month-old French bulldog, viewing the action whimsically from the bleachers.

Aledo’s offense continued to roll, adding five more runs to decide the game in six innings. Freshman first baseman Brooklyn Taloa thumped a two-run homer to left – called as she swung by a young Aledo fan – followed by Rosser’s bases-clearing triple. Although the pitching and power hitting were major factors, Myers was pleased to see her team’s small-ball execution this early in the season.

“We have been diligently working on executing bunting on our first try,” Myers said. “Since it’s been so cold, we’ve been focusing on our bunting and they did a really good job of executing their bunts on the first try.”

The Ladycats will begin their district slate at 7 p.m. Tuesday, March 2, at Brewer following a tournament slate at Eaton High School from Thursday through Saturday.

TRACK AND FIELD

Aledo opens season at Argyle

Varsity squads take
second place

By Rick Mauch
The Community News

After a week of weather that more closely resembles Minnesota than Texas, the Aledo Bearcats and Ladycats competed in their first official meet of the 2025 track season this past Saturday, Feb. 22, at the Argyle Relays.

Both Aledo varsity teams placed second in their respective divisions. The Ladycats scored 105 points behind Northwest Byron Nelson with 122, while the Bearcats tallied 78 to 120 for Nelson.

Winning gold medals for the Ladycats were Sofia Brandenburg in the 800-meter run, which had a 1-2 finish with Mykel Murry taking second, and the 4x400 relay of Murry, Mayden Mitchell, Brandenburg, and Addison Smith.

“The meet was good, very competitive,” Ladycats coach Mike Pinkerton said. “It was a really good first meet. Very proud of the way the girls competed.”

Gold medals for the Bearcats were won by Braylon Brown in the pole vault, Adam Averett in the discus, and Trey Warner in the 400.

“Ran good for the first meet, one of our fastest times for the first

meet in the 4x400. Adam Averett will have several school records in multiple events before the season is over,” Bearcats coach Andrew Clark said. “Braylon won the pole vault, and it was a competitive pole vault meet, so that’s a great start.”

Both the Bearcats and Ladycats will compete in the Northwest Invitational at Northwest High School in Justin on Friday, Feb. 28. They will host the Bearcat Relays on March 6.

Argyle Relays

(Running distances in meters, field event distances in feet)

Aledo Varsity Girls

Team score: 105, second place

Pole vault: 2. Maggie Kilburn, 11-0; 3. Claire Campbell, 11-0

Shot Put: 5. Kennedy Cardenas, 29-8.50; 6. Katelyn Lowe, 28-10

3200: 2. Micah Neal, 11:30.74; 5. Madison Larsen, 11:56.19

4x100 Relay: 6. Victoria Crews, Macie Laidley, Savannah Thompson, Sarah Edwards, 51.78

800: 1. Sofia Brandenburg, 2:20.44; 2. Mykel Murry, 2:22.63. 4. Mayden Mitchell, 2:27.44

100 Hurdles: 6. Thompson, 17.43

400: 4. Emery Thompson, 1:01.85

300 Hurdles: 6. Sawyer Voight, 50.5

200: 2. Addison Smith, 25.56

1600: 3. Larsen, 5:22.12; 4. Brandenburg, 5:22.98; 5. Neal, 5:24.36

4x400 Relay: 1. Murry, Mitchell, Brandenburg, Smith, 4:01.99

100: 2. Smith, 12.30

Aledo Varsity Boys

Team score: 78, second place

Pole Vault: 1 Braylon Brown, 16-0; 6. Kantyn Kasich, 13-6

Discus: 1. Adam Averett, 162-9

3200: 2. Tyler Connelly, 9:35.60

800: 5. Jace Lay, 2:03.07

4x200 Relay: 5. Adrian Fuller, Kai Taylor, Jacob Patton, Cash Martin, 1:32.99

400: 1. Trey Warner, 49.40

300 Hurdles: 3. Averett, 39.57

200: 4. Fuller, 23.07

4x400 Relay: 2. Lay, Warner, Patton, Averett, 3:25.20

100: 6. Fuller, 11.39

110 Hurdles: 4. Isaac Brooks, 15.55

1600: 5. Connelly, 4:32.10

Aledo JV Girls

Team score: 50, sixth place

Pole Vault: 1. Addie Fields, 9-6; 4. Elizabeth Gamez, 7-0

3200: 3. Hadleigh Walton, 12:30.26; 5. Maggie McQuatters, 13:05.39

4x100 Relay: 5. Hannah Hubley, McKenna Smith, Brooklyn Clark, Evie Revard, 55.38

100 Hurdles: 2. Hailey Wuenstel, 18.24

4x200 Relay: 6. Hubley, Smith, Clark, Ashton Teague, 2:02.07

300 Hurdles: 2. Wuenstel, 53.35

1600: 4. Walton, 5:51.66

4x400 Relay: 6. Jenessa Valadez, Allison Fearneyhough, Audrey Reaves, Walton, 4:41.36

Aledo JV Boys

Team score: 87, third place

3200: 3. Ian Robbins, 10:27.67; 4. Thatcher Pettit, 10:33.40

4x100 Relay: 2. Kaden Winkfeld, Nolan Barker, Sky Bradford, Zane Walker, 45.74

800: 1. Dominick Barrera, 2:08.25; 4. Reed Murray, 2:11.54

110 Hurdles: 5. Briley Perkins, 18.50

4x200 Relay: 3. Charles Lanier, Barker, Walker, Lamel Swanson, 1:36.73

300 Hurdles: 2. Perkins, 44.23

200: 6. Bradford, 24.74

1600: 3. Robbins, 4:50.76

4x400 Relay: 3. Perkins, Barrera, Landon Kusich, Rock West, 3:45.74

Discus: 3. Casen Evans, 116-7

LIFTING

from page 8

The top 12 lifters in each weight class after the regular season qualified for regional competition. From regionals, the top two lifters in each weight class advance to state, along with any others who achieved a qualifying lift total.

State is March 21 at the Taylor County Expo Center in Abilene.

Another who could find himself competing at regionals should someone not be able to participate is Luke Campbell. He is seeded 13th in the 308 division with 1,345 pounds, which placed him eighth in that weight class in district.

“All of our lifters did well at district and achieved our highest totals of the year,” Aledo coach Brad McCone said of the league meet, which his team hosted on Feb. 20.

Other competitors at district from Aledo, their places and pounds lifted include:

132: 7. Jason Vititow, 795;

148: 5. Matthew Long, 1.085;

165: 8. Carson Bobbit, 1,090;

181: 6. Ethan Pickett, 1,145;

220: 13. Cason Miller, 765;

275: 7. Roland Krieger, 1,315;

Super heavyweight: 5. Peyton Williams, 1,075.

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IN-KIND



BASKETBALL

Senior duo led Eagles’ turnaround with second-year coach

Enjoyed winning season

By Rick Mauch
The Community News

It had been a while since the Trinity Christian Academy Eagles had enjoyed a winning basketball season. In fact, the last time they had such, their two senior stand-outs, Sam Carson and Cole Massey, were still in junior high.

Now the duo are exiting their high school careers in winning style, while head coach Jeff Peterson experienced his first playoff appearance at the school, leading TCA to one of their best seasons ever.

The Eagles finished 26-9 overall and were 7-3 in the Texas Association of Private and Parochial Schools District 1-4A for second place.

“With changes in our roster, Sam took it upon himself to be a leader. Cole has always been a vocal leader, and he never let anybody doubt his energy on the court,” Peterson said. “They bring two types of leadership, but I would credit much of our success to dual leadership.”

And then there were two

The Eagles were supposed to have four seniors return from last season’s 16-21 team. However, one developed some health challenges and left to be homeschooled and another decided not to play this season.

That left Carson, a point guard/shooting guard, and power forward/small forward/center Massey as the only seniors with varsity experience. Carson, in fact, was on the varsity four seasons.

“Dayton Sheridan (former head coach, now assistant) had been preaching a player-led team, and I do feel a player-led team will be successful,” Peterson said. “I think we

had a bunch of guys ready to show what they can do.”

And Carson and Massey were just the guys to lead that charge.

“They were already a tight-knit group as friends and they bought into each other this season with a goal to accomplish,” Peterson said.

Peterson knows a thing or two about getting players to buy in. He started the program at Victory Baptist in Weatherford and led the program to its first Texas Christian Athletic Federation district championship. Then, in four seasons at Sunrise Christian Academy in Wichita, Kansas, he led the team to three playoff appearances in four years, including a league championship.

Following in footsteps

“My older brother was one of the TCA leaders and he went on to play college ball,” Carson said, referencing Luke Carson, who played at Southwestern Assemblies of God before transferring to the University of Dallas.

Luke is now coaching in the Courtside United club basketball programs.

“From my freshman year until now I took after my brother to build up the program, build up my leadership skills,” Sam said. “But there’s no one person to give credit to. The guys we have now won’t back down from anything, and I’m proud to be a part of that.

Massey transferred from Victory Baptist before his junior season. He said he could tell there was something special ahead for himself and his teammates.

“I just saw the leadership and energy the team had last year and I wanted to add to that spark,” Massey said. “Last year in a big game I didn’t feel like I did my best. I was determined not to feel that way again.”



JEFF PETERSON

Seniors Sam Carson (left) and Cole Massey led the way as the Willow Park Trinity Christian Eagles enjoyed one of the best basketball seasons in program history.

And so he hasn’t. Behind his play and that of Carson’s, the Eagles enjoyed success like they haven’t experienced in quite some time. After starting the season 2-2 they reeled off 16 straight wins, followed by a 4-1 start to district.

“Building that record, and then to start district like that, folks realized Willow Park Trinity is for real,” Massey said.

No leaving behind

Carson had an opportunity to leave the program when his mother left her teaching position at TCA to become a college advisor at Southwest Christian in Fort Worth. His sister moved to SWC also.

But Carson stayed because he felt like there was unfinished work for him at TCA.

“For me, it was immediately a no, and not just for basketball,

but also for the administration and teachers, they all made an impact on my life,” he said. “I knew I was building leadership skills — and I was not going to leave my team.”

“To us, as parents, we are so proud of him for sticking to his guns, now, and becoming so involved at his school,” said his father, Mark Carson. “Of course, none of that would have mattered if the guys weren’t willing to buy in and follow and help change the culture.”

Unfortunately, Carson was not able to be on the court for the Eagles’ final game after suffering a torn anterior cruciate ligament. He was, however, on the sidelines cheering for his teammates, albeit in a 70-49 loss to Carrollton Prince of Peace in the area round of the playoffs.

The Eagles received a bye in the bi-district round.

“He’s a pretty good assistant coach, too,” Peterson said of Carson. “We wish he could be out there, but he was a big part in us getting here.”

Lifelong memories

Neither plans to play in college, they said. Carson plans to study kinesiology and perhaps become an athletic trainer and Massey plans to study business management.

But, as Peterson noted, they have the memories of their final season of competitive basketball to look back on for the rest of their lives, along with helping their teammates to equally special memories of this season.

“One of our mission statements is to be a light in the Texas basketball community,” Peterson said. “We’ll always remember the time walked into Barber Gym and the accomplishments.”

SPORTS BRIEFS

By: Rick Mauch
The Community News

BOYS BASKETBALL Weatherford Express wins state championship

The Weatherford Express won the Division II state championship in the Texas Association of Independent Athletic Organizations recently. At the state tournament in Round Rock,

the Express defeated The Winston School of Dallas 41-20 and Granbury Grace Classical 53-18 to reach the championship game.

In the title contest, the Express edged Mercy School Institute of Edmond, Oklahoma, 46-43.

Kangaroos fall in bi-district

The Weatherford Kangaroos’ 2024-25 basketball season came to an end with a 57-41 bi-district loss to Southlake Carroll recently. The

Kangaroos had one of their best seasons, finishing with a 26-9 record.

This was their second straight season to reach the playoffs.

POWERLIFTING Kangaroos qualify four for regionals

Four members of the Weatherford Kangaroos powerlifting team have advanced to the Class 6A Region I Meet in Abilene March 7. Qualifying were Rylan Todd, 114-pound divi-

sion; Ryan Ekberg, 148 weight class; Talan Tart, 275; and Brenton Linehan, super heavyweight.

From regionals, the top two finishers in each weight class qualify for state, along with any other lifters who meet a regional qualifying weight total.

Lady Roos have almost two dozen at regionals

The Weatherford Lady Kangaroos had 22 lifters competing in the

6A Region I Meet in Prosper at press time. Participants from Weatherford included Zoe Todd, Alli Zapata, Maddie Seago, Lauren Schweiss, Samantha Vice, Khala Kuehler, Selah Galindo, Bailey MacDougall, Itzehl Acosta, Reagan Hunt, Ella Jester, Kylie Daniel, Hayden Spaulding, Alyssa Morse, Kylie Baruch, Brooklyn Boyd, Jaclynn Gomez, Kiara Carson, Analia Barcenas, Sophie McCloskey Riley Childers and Kyla Bates.

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Seniors Haley Roberson and Victoria Crews share a hug after competing for the final time together as members of the Aledo High School swim team. Each advanced to state all four years in the program.

SWIM

from page 8

Their consolation finals time of 1:40.75 in the 200 eclipsed their seeding time of 1:41.57. They also narrowly missed making the consolation finals in the 400 by .16 seconds.

“Placing 13th in the state in a highly competitive race took strong performances from all four swimmers, and I couldn’t be prouder,” coach Roberson said. “For Haley and Victoria, this season was about making the most of their final high school swims, and they did just that.”

The boys 400 free relay of sophomores Kale Roberson (Haley’s brother), Brayden DeBoer, and Ian Perez, along with senior Tyler Jackson, placed 23rd in the prelims. They posted a time of 3:23.75.

“Each season, we aim to improve on the one before, and this year was no exception,” coach Roberson said. “We advanced three relays to the state meet, and for the first time in a while, we made it to finals in one of them. In the four years we’ve been taking Haley and Victoria to state, this was their first time reaching finals in a relay — a huge accomplishment.

“The boys’ relay exceeded their seeding, and with a young team, they continue to grow stronger and faster. This will be an exciting group to watch in the coming years.

“As we graduate seven seniors, we remain an underclassman-heavy team, with six sophomores and six freshmen. This is a dedicated, hardworking group that has been guided by strong leadership and examples of success. The future of Aledo swimming is bright, and I’m excited to see what’s ahead.”

SOCCER

from page 8

sounded, the Ladycats dominated Fossil Ridge both in terms of time of possession and shots on goal. The Lady Panthers sat back in their defense hoping to play the numbers game and nullify Aledo’s speed up front. In the first 30 minutes of the match the Ladycats had several near misses. Despite their efforts to have a numbers advantage defensively, Weimer managed to slip behind Fossil Ridge’s defense creating a one-on-one attempt at a goal. Her shot on goal got by the outstretched hands of the diving keeper, but ended up being just wide of the far post as the would-be opening goal missed by mere inches.

Aledo nearly scored on two more shots on goal along with a trio of set pieces, but just weren’t quite able to find the net as time continued to tick by in the first half.

With 10 minutes left until half-time, the Lady Panthers began to find their way as they put the Ladycat defense on its heels slightly. Both squads took their opportunities to push the ball down the field before any advances were snuffed out. Through the first 40 minutes of play, the score remained 0-0.

For much of the second half the story, along with the scoreboard, remained unchanged. Aledo pressured the Lady Panthers, creating multiple quality scoring opportunities to no avail.

Midway through the second half Avery Sands appeared to have a chance to take a contested shot on goal before being tackled from behind in the box by a Lady Panther defender creating a certain opportunity for a penalty kick. However, the officials didn’t call the foul resulting in a goal kick instead.

Minutes later Katie Cox sent a perfect cross into the box that

connected with Kylee Vandiver. Vandiver got a clean look at the goal between a pair of centerbacks as she fired yet another close shot on goal that sailed just over the crossbar.

With 13 minutes left to play Weimer was finally able to get the Ladycats on the board. Aledo’s top scorer managed to fake out her marker creating just enough space to get a look at the goal from around 30 yards out. She fired a high, arching shot towards the goal that sailed just out of reach of the outstretched hands of the leaping keeper as the ball found the net just inside the upper right corner of the goal. An elated Ladycat team breathed a collective sigh of relief as they swarmed Weimer in celebration.

Fossil Ridge was determined not to go down without a fight, and even managed to create some drama for a brief moment. The Lady Panthers advanced deep into Aledo territory and took their best shot of the night at the goal. Freshman goalkeeper Audrey Obana made a diving stop to keep the Ladycat lead secure with seven minutes left to play.

Aledo continued to work in the waning moments of the contest, hoping to find a second goal to solidify the win. They almost found it as Katie Cox made a left-footed shot from 15 yards out that beat the keeper. Unfortunately, the ball ricocheted off the near post and was cleared by a Fossil Ridge centerback for good measure.

“I was getting nervous,” Ladycat head coach Bryan Johnson said after the match. “That’s three halves we’ve been shut out. But right now we’re sitting in good shape [after the win]. That’s three points. That puts us in the driver’s seat with 21 points overall.”

Bearcats reclaim top spot

Aledo entered the match on Tuesday against Fossil Ridge in

second place in the District 5-5A standings in spite of only suffering a single loss during their district schedule this season. The win over Fossil Ridge coupled with Brewer handing Saginaw their second district loss of the year propelled the Bearcats back into the top spot in the district standings.

The Bearcats jumped out to an early lead as Hunter Waugh set up Trapper Davis with a scoring opportunity he managed to capitalize on to put Aledo up 1-0 over the home team. From there the match stayed relatively quiet until the Panthers scored the tying goal with just seconds left until halftime.

As the teams made their adjustments in the second half, the Panthers were determined to neutralize Austin Randriamahefa even if it meant double and triple teaming him. Aledo’s resident oracle of futbol and gaffer, Derek Vierling, decided to move Randriamahefa to striker in order to create scoring opportunities up the middle for his other players.

The plan worked to perfection.

With 11 minutes remaining in regulation Davis found Robby Sloan, who put in the game-winner as the Bearcats went on to win 2-1.

Looking ahead

With just three matches left on the regular season schedule, both Aledo teams will be in action on Friday when they take on Saginaw. The Ladycats will hit the road looking to secure another three points as they take on the last place Lady Rough Riders.

The Bearcats will play host to a Saginaw club coming off the loss to Brewer and hoping to reclaim the top spot in the district standings with a win in Aledo.

Both varsity matches are slated for a 7:45 pm start.

Great at State
Class 5A State Swim Meet



COURTESY OF AVERY FAULKNER

Pictured are (front row from left) Sydni Kellam (alternate), Mackenzie Oligschlaeger, Haley Roberson, and Julia Gordy; (middle row) Evan Bradley (alternate), Victoria Crews, and Avery Faulkner (alternate); and (back row) Brayden DeBoer, Ian Perez, Kale Roberson, Jaxon Robinson (alternate) and Tyler Jackson.

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