

Boatright votes down closed-door negotiation with LCRA over tower project

Court will hold Dec. 19 meeting to appoint county contract negotiator

BY LEW K. COHN
Inquirer Publisher

A closed-door negotiation session between Gonzales County commissioners and representatives from the

Lower Colorado River Authority (LCRA) did not take place Monday, Dec. 16, after Precinct 4 Commissioner Collie Boatright voted against going into executive session. Just last week, LCRA was

awarded a \$4.998 million bid to build a new emergency radio communications system for Gonzales County on a 3-2 vote. Representatives from LCRA sought a private meeting with commissioners in order to

negotiate terms, which include future use, leasing and other possible benefits and considerations. However, incoming County

See **TOWER**, page 15



Miracle on Main Street took place in Nixon on Saturday, Dec. 14, with events at the Nixon Community Center and a lighted parade downtown. Santa Claus was present to meet with the kids while damp weather didn't lighten spirits or the reason for the season.

COURTESY/JASON MONTOYA AND NATIONS FELLOWSHIP CHURCH



Annex renovation could cost Gonzales County in excess of \$11 million

BY LEW K. COHN
Inquirer Publisher

A preliminary project budget breakdown indicates renovating the Gonzales County Court-house Annex on Sarah DeWitt Drive could cost the county in excess of \$11 million, or \$439

per square foot, according to a report delivered Monday, Dec. 16, by a project management company.

The figures presented by John Duke, a team lead at CPM Texas, would have the county spend-

See **ANNEX**, page 7

Community celebrates grand opening of new All-Inclusive Playscape at Lions Park

BY LEW K. COHN
Inquirer Publisher

It was a day of celebration at the brand-new East Avenue Lions Park All-Inclusive Playscape on Thursday, Dec. 12, as a grand opening ceremony was held by the Gonzales Noon Lions Club.

The event was the culmination of years of work that began when community members noticed a lack of ADA compliant play structures for children with special needs and brought that to the attention of the Noon Lions Club, which had installed the existing playground equipment 25 years earlier.

"You know, I don't think that any of us really recognize day



LEW K. COHN

Mayor Steve Sucher pushes the merry-go-round for kids at the new All-Inclusive Playscape at East Avenue Lions Park on Thursday, Dec. 12. The new playscape officially opened with a ribbon cutting ceremony.

See **PLAYSCAPE**, page 16

Council approves lease with Gonzales Dog Adoptions

BY VANDY VAN EPPS
Gonzales Inquirer

The Gonzales City Council met for their regularly scheduled meeting Thursday, Dec. 12 at the Municipal Building. One of the big agenda items that

See **CITY**, page 11

Strokes of genius

Jessa Clements' watercolor showpiece earns champion honors in San Antonio

BY LEW K. COHN
Inquirer Publisher

Homeschooled senior Jessa Clements of Gonzales can see greatness on the horizon as well as what lies above and below. It is a

See **PAINTING**, page 16



CONTRIBUTED

"One Last Ride" is a watercolor painting by Jessa Clements

Gonzales County ends ban on outdoor burning

BY LEW K. COHN
Inquirer Publisher

A two-month-old ban on outdoor burning in Gonzales County was lifted Monday, Dec. 16, by County Judge Pat Davis.

"Due to recent rains, the hazardous conditions have been alleviated," Davis said. "Citizens are cautioned to exercise extreme caution when burning is necessary."

Commissioners discussed the burn ban at their Dec. 16 meeting and were told by Emergency Management Coordinator and Fire Marshal Jimmy Harless

See **BURN**, page 7

Nixon names Becker city administrator

BY LEW K. COHN
Inquirer Publisher

The Nixon City Council unanimously named

interim City Manager Darryl Becker the new City Administrator and took away the word "interim" at their Monday, Dec. 16, meeting

following a lengthy executive session. "Everything we've

See **NIXON**, page 11



VC Law Enforcement Academy graduates honored at ceremony

SPECIAL TO THE INQUIRER

Ten cadets from Victoria College's 105th Law Enforcement Academy Class were honored at a graduation ceremony on Dec. 11, 2024, at VC's Emerging Technology Complex.

Job Smith of Victoria was named class valedictorian, and Cobey Wasicek of Victoria received the John Baylor Award for Outstanding Achievement. The award, named in honor of the former Victoria Police Department officer, is given to the "most outstanding student" as selected by class instructors.

Other graduates were Austin Christensen and Briley Yancey of Victoria; Mario Barron, Justin Cano and Vanessa Ragsdale, all of Beeville; Adrian Castillo and Abad Obregon of Gonzales; and Joseph Salinas of Kenedy.



Pictured are, front row from left, instructors Julian Huerta, former Victoria Police Department (VPD) sergeant; VPD Lieutenant Ralph Buentello; VC Law Enforcement Academy Director James Martinez; and Victoria County Sheriff's Office (VCSO) Investigator Tony Daniel. Graduates pictured are, second row from left, Justin Cano, Adrian Castillo, Austin Christensen, and Vanessa Ragsdale; and, back row, Job Smith, Briley Yancey, Cobey Wasicek, Mario Barron, and Joseph Salinas. Not pictured is Abad Obregon.

VC offers two academies a year – one in the fall semester and another in the spring semester. Both

academies are held Monday through Friday, with classes meeting eight to ten hours a day. For more information

on VC's Law Enforcement Academy, call (361) 573-3291 or email James. Martinez@VictoriaCollege.edu.

Gonzales Healthcare Systems earns 2024 Performance Leadership Award

SPECIAL TO THE INQUIRER

As part of the recent National Rural Health Day, Gonzales Healthcare Systems announced it has earned a 2024 Performance Leadership Award for excellence in quality.

Compiled by The Chartis Center for Rural Health, the Performance Leadership Awards recognize top quartile performance (i.e., 75th percentile or above) among rural hospitals in Quality, Outcomes and/or Patient Perspective.

Gonzales Healthcare Systems CEO Brandon Anzaldua commented on the recent award.

"At Gonzales Healthcare Systems, we are unwavering in our commitment to delivering exceptional care and fostering a culture of quality that meets and exceeds the expectations of our patients and community," Anzaldua said.

"Excellence is not just our goal; it is the standard that guides every aspect of our work. Our focus on quality reflects our belief that every individual deserves outstanding care, and we remain steadfast in our mission to advance health and wellness in our community. This award does not signify we've reached our goal but is a mile marker in our journey for high quality healthcare, every time."

The Performance Leadership Awards are based on the results of the Chartis Rural Hospital Performance INDEX®, a comprehensive and objective framework for assessing how rural hospitals are performing. INDEX benchmarks are relied upon by rural hospitals, health systems with rural footprints, hospital associations, and state offices of rural health to measure performance across multiple areas impacting hospital operations and finance.

"The Performance Leadership Awards capture the commitment, diligence, and innovation with which America's rural hospitals approach the delivery of care within their communities," said Troy Brown, Network Consultant, The Chartis Center for Rural Health. "It's a tremendous honor to be able to recognize the efforts of this year's award winners and celebrate their achievement as part of National Rural Health Day."

Gonzales Healthcare Systems is made up of a number of entities, but at the core is Memorial Hospital, a general acute-care facility offering 33 beds for patient care. The current facility, built in 1978, follows a tradition of community service begun by the Holmes Hospital, which opened in 1921.

Whether entering the system through the Emergency Room, with its Trauma Level IV designation, or as a direct admit from a primary care physician's office, patients coming to Memorial Hospital can access state-of-the-art diagnostic and therapeutic services.

Detailed information about Gonzales Healthcare Systems may be found online at www.gonzaleshealthcare.com.



ROTARY CLUB

Several organizations joined together with the Rotary Club of Gonzales for the ninth annual Breakfast with Santa event at the Methodist Church during Winterfest. They include the GHS Apache Flames drill team (top left), GHS Anchor Club (top right) and Come and Take It Dance (right), which provided special entertainment. The Come and Take It Cookers (not pictured) made more than 700 pancakes for kids and their parents to enjoy.

COURTESY/ROTARY CLUB OF GONZALES



Prescribed burn to take place at Neasloney WMA

SPECIAL TO THE INQUIRER

The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department will conduct a prescribed burn between Jan. 3 to April 3, 2025 on the M.O. Neasloney Wildlife Management Area. The M.O. Neasloney WMA is

comprised of 100 acres located in Gonzales County, south of Luling, midway between Luling and Gonzales off Texas 80. M.O. Neasloney donated the property to the Wildlife Division to be developed as a wildlife education center. It is also Neasloney's burial place.

The WMA is used primarily for wildlife ecology field tours by public school groups. Outdoor recreational opportunities include wildlife viewing, hiking and an interpretive nature trail.

For additional information, call 830-203-0896.

CLARIFICATION

In a Dec. 12 article about the Gonzales County emergency communications tower project it was stated that "LCRA was the sole bidder the first time the project was bid in April and the Texas General Land Office, which had awarded the county the \$6,071,588.57 mitigation grant used to help pay for the system, then required the project to be rebid due to a lack of bidders."

In an email the Inquirer received from Brittany Eck, director of communications for disaster recover for Texas General Land Commissioner Dawn Buckingham, "the GLO did not require the county to rebid the project."

"The GLO is helping our grant recipients follow federal laws in administering mitigation and infrastructure funding from HUD," Eck said. "In accordance with federal requirements, if a grant administrator receives only one bid, the GLO requires them to document that a proper federal procurement process was conducted resulting in a single bid that was acceptable. This protects the grant recipients, such as Gonzales County, during the HUD auditing process, from being accused of not following federal law, which could result in mandatory repayment of the funds.

"The GLO would only recommend a grantee rebid if federal procurement procedures were not followed to prevent them from having to repay HUD due to that failure. The GLO is committed to helping local communities be successful in administering funding in adherence with complex federal laws and requirements."

Celebrations

Birthdays

December 19th Frank Benes Janie Guevara Elaine Hoffpauir Kalie Leal Lupe Longoria Glynnia Penney Timoteo Solis Damian Sprayberry Isaac Villareal Sylvia Yackel	December 20th Frances Bibas Charise Brown Debbie Brown Sorrelle Goodwin Sandra Tomas Philips Ray Lee Raley III Sue Shilling	December 21st Ben Brothers Tammi McKinney Maria Nelson Mary Barfield Tomas Rhonda West	December 22nd Bubba Mikes Quinton Parker Rode Paskie Robby Whitaker Tammy Whitaker	December 23rd Becky Bennett-Guerra	December 24th Reanna Brown Lisaura Condel James Maldonado Jason Rogers Josie Tomas Jimmy Voigt	December 25th Darrell Catchings Betty Cox Adam Garza Duke Irle Rafe Jackson
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Gonzales Weather

 December 19 61°/42° SUNNY	Plenty of sun 0% chance of rain • RealFeel 68
 December 20 61°/36° SUNNY	Plenty of sun 0% chance of rain • RealFeel 60
 December 21 50°/30° SUNNY	Plenty of sun 0% chance of rain • RealFeel 51
 December 22 57°/35° RAIN	Cloudy with a little rain in the afternoon 56% chance of rain • RealFeel 52
 December 23 65°/49° SUNNY	Plenty of sunshine 0% chance of rain • RealFeel 66
 December 24 68°/52° SUNNY	Plenty of sunshine 0% chance of rain • RealFeel 71
 December 25 71°/50° PARTLY SUNNY	Times of clouds and sun 0% chance of rain • RealFeel 73

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3

Sutton Albert ranks sixth in world after Junior National Finals Rodeo

SPECIAL TO THE INQUIRER

Gonzales resident Sutton Albert may be 17 years old, but he is already an accomplished rodeo cowboy not only in the state of Texas, but recognized nationwide for his talent.

Albert commenced his rodeo career at a young age, primarily focusing on roping. Within the last two years, he transitioned to other end of the arena in roughstock, specifically bronc riding. Notably, he emerged as the 2023-2024 Texas High School Rodeo Region champion and competed at the Texas High School State Finals, where he finished seventh overall.

Furthermore, he secured the year-end saddle bronc champion title for Lester Meier Rodeo Company, an open pro series and holds membership in the Junior Roughstock Association. This led to a dual qualification and earned him



a spot to compete in the Junior National Finals Rodeo in Las Vegas.

The top competitors from the United States, Canada, and Australia converged Dec. 5-14 at the Junior World Finals to vie for a world champion-

ship title. Sutton was one of three Texas qualifiers in his division, which was comprised of 34 contenders from throughout the nation.

Each competitor at the world finals participates in two rounds, and the top 10 advance to a short round. Sutton returned to Gonzales ranked sixth in the world and was the only Texas cowboy in his division to cover his bronc in all three rounds. Sutton is a home schooled senior and plans to attend college continuing his career in the sport of rodeo.

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Q. We have a limited budget but would like to bring an attractive plant to each of our older relatives that we plan on visiting this Holiday Season. Are poinsettias and Christmas cactus the best choices?

A. They are good choices, but my favorite is cyclamen. The plants are in bloom when you purchase them from your favorite nursery, and they will stay in bloom indefinitely if you place them at a window with an eastern exposure and you keep them well watered. They are available in spectacular red, white, pink, and purple for about \$7 each.

Q. We were at the nursery the other day and noticed the wonderful fragrance of the alyssum. Will they survive the winter in the garden?

A. Yes, they survive most Central Texas winters. Plant them in full sun and have some agricultural fiber or an old blanket ready to cover them if the temperature is forecast to be 28 degrees or colder. If



with
**CALVIN
FINCH**

you like alyssum you may also want to plant some stocks. The transplants are in bloom, and they smell great and make good cut flowers. Treat them just like the alyssum.

Q. We visited our cousins in Michigan at Thanksgiving. The shade trees, especially the maples had brightly colored leaves. Can we plant maples here in South Texas? If not, do we have any other options to consider for fall colored leaves?

A. Maples are tough to grow in this area. They mostly prefer acid soils and less hot weather. The Big

Tooth Maple grows and produces colorful leaves in canyons in the Hill Country such as at Lost Maples State Park, and some survive in area landscapes, but the best bet for colorful leaves is some of the crape myrtles and Texas red oaks. For the crape myrtles with the most colorful fall foliage watch for the plants with colorful leaves now in area landscapes and see what your favorite nursery has.

Q. We want to grow potatoes this winter but are having trouble finding seed potatoes, can we use potatoes from HEB?

A. The recommended time to plant potatoes is at the end of January or early in February. Ask your nursery if they will have seed potatoes by then. It is better to use seed potatoes from an area nursery because they have been stored in a manner that allows them to more reliably germinate, but if your supermarket potatoes are sprouting, they will probably successfully grow in the garden.

LIVESTOCK WEEKLY REPORTS

GONZALES LIVESTOCK REPORT

December 14th
Cattle – 1259
Compared to our last sale: Number 1 choice calves and yearlings sold very active and steady. Less quality calves and yearlings sold very active. Packer cows and bulls sold steady.
Stocker-feeder Steers: Medium and large-frame No. 1: 150-300 lbs., 345-450; 300-400 lbs., 285-425; 400-500 lbs., 270-360; 500-600 lbs., 215-325; 600-700 lbs., 230-265; 700-800 lbs., 225-250. Bull Yearlings: 700-900 lbs., 165-202.
Stocker-feeder heifers: Medium and large-frame No. 1: 150-300 lbs., 310-375; 300-400 lbs., 285-350; 400-500 lbs., 241-323; 500-600 lbs., 215-277; 600-700 lbs., 240-2585.
Packer Cows: Good lean utility and commercial, 101-108; Cutters, 109-116; Canners, 75-85; High yielding fat cows, 97-111.
Packer Bulls: Yield grade 1 & 2, good heavy bulls, 128-136; Light weights and medium quality bulls, 120-126.
Stocker Cows: \$900 to \$1,800. Pairs: \$1,500 to \$3,200. Have a Merry Christmas & Happy New Year. No sale December 21st or 28th, first sale of 2025, January 4th.

NIXON LIVESTOCK

NO INFORMATION AS OF PRESS TIME

HALLETTSVILLE LIVESTOCK COMMISSION CO., INC.

Sale date: December 10, 2024
Cattle on hand: 1576
Packer Cows: High Dressing: \$107-100 Medium Dressing: \$110-114 Low Dressing: \$88-102 Poor/Weak Cows: \$75-90
Packer Bulls: High Dressing Bulls: \$142-147 Medium Dressing Bulls: \$118-143 Low Dressing Bulls: \$110-120
Stocker Cows: Good Stocker/Cows & Heifers: \$1850-2450 Medium Stocker Cows &

Heifers: \$1250-1850
Good Cow & Calf Pairs: None
Medium Cow & Calf Pairs: \$1750-2300
Stocker & Feeder Calves & Yearlings: Number 1 steer & bull calves: Under 200 lbs.: \$320-460 200-300 lbs.: \$340-465 300-400 lbs.: \$330-410 400-500 lbs.: \$290-390 500-600 lbs.: \$275-340 600-700 lbs.: \$240-290 700-800 lbs.: \$220-252
Number 1 heifer calves: Under 200 lbs.: \$310-460 200-300 lbs.: \$280-395 300-400 lbs.: \$275-410 400-500 lbs.: \$260-380 500-600 lbs.: \$235-305 600-700 lbs.: \$215-265 700-800 lbs.: \$200-240
Replacement Heifers: 350-700 lbs.: \$265-340
The calf market was much higher again this week. Heavier weight classes sold \$4 to \$8 higher. Light weight classes sold \$10 to \$25 higher. Grazing demand is very strong. Packer cows and bulls sold steady on a supply of 150 head. Stocker cows sold very strong. Tuesday, December 17th is our last sale for the year.

SEGUIN CATTLE CO.

December 11th
Stocker cattle steady with last week. Packer cows & bulls off \$5.00
Cattle – 481
Sheep & goats – 833
Medium & large frame #1 Steers: 200-300 lb. 1.65-3.15-4.00 300-400 lb. 1.85-3.27-4.25 400-500 lb. 1.20-3.07-3.85 500-600 lb. .75-2.57-3.50 600-700 lb. .95-2.26-2.70 700-850 lb. 1.25-2.13-2.40
Medium & large frame #1 Heifers: 200-300 lb. 1.50-2.99-3.50 300-400 lb. 1.10-2.78-3.55 400-500 lb. 1.30-2.55-3.25 500-600 lb. 1.20-2.32-3.10 600-750 lb. 1.30-2.09-2.75
Cows: Utility & commercial – .32-1.00-1.17
Cutters – .68-.79-.90
Cannors – .60-.66-.72
Palpated cows – 1250-1525

Cow/Calf Pairs – None
Bulls: Heavy High Yielding – 1.40-1.52
Light & Low Yielding –.73-1.39
Sheep & Goats: Nannies – 50-300 Kid Goats (Fat) – 2.80-3.60 Wethers -1.30-3.50 Billies – 1.00-2.65
Dorp. Ewes - 45-160
Dorp. Lambs (Fat) – 2.00-3.40
Woolled Ewes –None
Woolled Bucks – None
Lambs – 1.80-2.90
Barb. Bucks – 350-525
December 18th, will be the last sale of the year.

CUERO LIVESTOCK MARKET

December 13, 2024
Number of Head: 1902
There were 245 cows and 23 bulls. The packer cow and bull market remain strong. Heavier weight calves were up in price while smaller weights fluctuated. The demand is still very strong, and the market is solid. We genuinely appreciate all our sellers and buyers and send blessed holiday wishes. OUR FINAL SALE OF 2024 WILL BE ON DECEMBER 20, 2024.
Packer bulls: 135.00-147.00
Packer cows: canners & cutters 114.00-127.00
poor & weak 50.00-110.00
Palpated: 33 bred \$1700-2000
PAIRS: one @ \$2100
Steer/Bull Calves: (AVG-HIGH) 200-250 lbs 324.00-420.00 250-299 lbs 333.00-430.00 300-350 lbs. 335.00-420.00 350-400 lbs. 313.00-400.00 400-450 lbs. 294.00-390.00 450-500 lbs. 286.00-365.00 500-550 lbs. 267.00-317.00 550-600 lbs. 261.00-312.00 600-700 lbs 235.00-272.00 700-800 lbs 213.00-249.00
Heifer Calves: (AVG-HIGH) 200-250 lbs. 301.00-338.00 250-300 lbs. 301.00-275.00 300-350 lbs. 292.00-380.00 350-400 lbs. 289.00-350.00 400-450 lbs. 274.00-330.00 450-500 lbs. 259.00-355.00 500-550 lbs. 243.00-330.00 550-600 lbs. 236.00-272.00 600-700 lbs 219.00-274.00 Over 700 lbs. 213.00-239.00

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Should they stay or should they go?

Things to know before taking pets on holiday trips

BY TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF VETERINARY MEDICINE AND BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES

Special to the Inquirer

Walking into your room to find a curled-up dog or cat resting within your opened suitcase can be heart-wrenching, to say the least. With the winter chill sweeping in, a holiday trip may be on the horizon, leading owners to consider whether they should invite their furry friends to join in on the fun.

Dr. Christine Rutter, a clinical associate professor at the Texas A&M College of Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences, delves into the debate on whether owners should bring pets along for holiday vacations — and the travel stress that inevitably comes with the journey.

CHOICES, CHOICES

The desire to introduce your dog or cat to the extended family may be great, but it's more important to prioritize what is best for your pet's comfort and overall well-being.

Pets accompanying their owners on holiday trips should feel safe and not as if they are being uprooted from the normal routines that bring them comfort and security. Each animal's personality is different, so owners should gauge their pet's comfort with travel before embarking on a big trip.

"Some pets are extremely anxious in new environments and won't settle down, won't eat or eliminate on a leash, or will bark at every noise or new animals in their environment," Rutter said. "Other pets are very chill about traveling, love a car ride, and are perfectly happy in new environments; this usually happens because owners have done 'practice trips' with the pet to let them know that changing environments is OK."

It's also important to consider whether the people and other animals at the destination will be comfortable with a new dog or cat in their midst.

"Travel can be stressful for everyone, including your pet," Rutter said. "Pets can also pick up on the stress of their owners."

RULES AND REGULATIONS

To mediate this stress, Rutter suggests that owners be prepared and aware of all of the stipulations that travel with pets may entail, including knowing requirements for bringing animals across state and country lines. Rules for how pets can travel internationally vary. Owners who wait until the last minute or skip steps will likely be unable to travel internationally with their pets.

In addition, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has also put in place several pet-travel mandates to help prevent the spread of rabies between dogs in the U.S.

Researching rules and regulations in advance is not only important for taking pets to other countries but also for bringing them back home at the end of the trip.

But even within the U.S., there are often rules for traveling with pets.

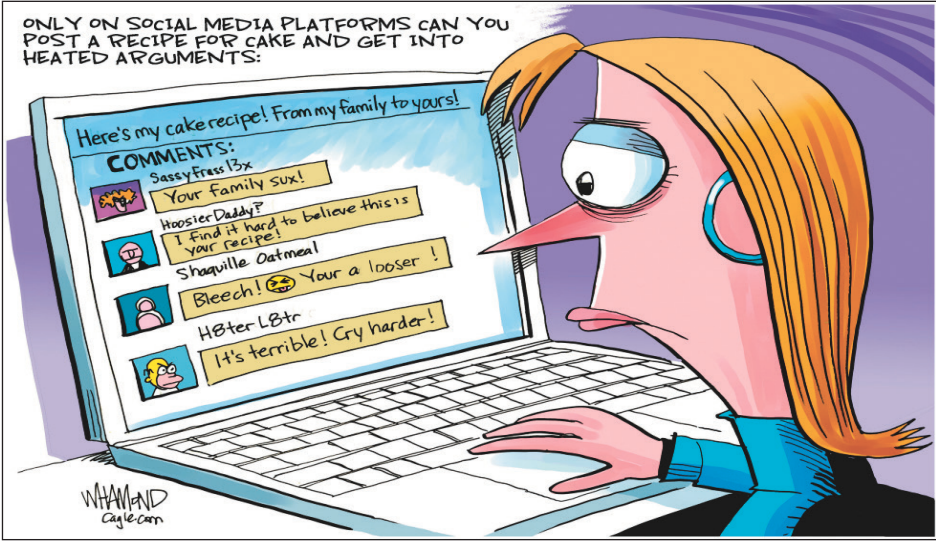
"Domestic travel across state lines requires a special veterinarian-issued health certificate," Rutter said. "Enforcement of this requirement is usually lax for domestic pets, but an airline or state law enforcement officer can elect to enforce it at any time."

EXPLORING ALTERNATIVES

For owners who ultimately choose not to travel with pets, pet sitting and boarding are great options for making sure your furry friend does not feel forgotten.

"For me, personally, I do like to travel with my pets, but the cost and difficulty of the process makes international travel with them unappealing," Rutter said. "I find a good in-home pet sitter or boarding kennel that I trust and leave my dogs in a familiar environment, which gives them fewer new stresses at a time."

Surprising the in-laws with a tail-wagging friend at the family holiday has the potential of bringing abounding laughs and joy, as long as the environment and any hosting pets are "guest pet safe" and all of the people involved are happy and comfortable with the extra visitors.



LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear editor,

Friends, I learned a valuable lesson today!

I send physical cards for important occasions to a variety of folks, In today's mail, two of the cards I had sent were returned!

I have been writing my return address on the center of the back of the envelope. I called the Gonzales Post Office and spoke to a very nice gentleman, who told me the U S Postal Service is upgrading their sorting equipment. He stated that much of today's mail is never touched by human hands — machines 'read' the addresses and sort our letters!

Consequently, some of the letters get on the conveyor belts with the back side up and the return address is "as-

sumed" to be the delivery address! So my cards were "delivered" back to me! I have some 150 or so Christmas cards out there with my return address on the back of the envelope! If I get yours back, resend it with my return address on the front! Sorry for the delay!

In researching this situation on the internet, I found that the U S Postal Service highly recommends that the return address be indicated in the top left-hand corner of the envelope face.

I sincerely hope this helps you to have your mail (be it cards, payments, or whatever) to be delivered in a timely manner! Merry Christmas & Happy New Year!

Shirley Carleton
Gonzales



DR. DON NEWBURY
The Idle American

Routes old and new...

The song has been a staple in Christian hymnals for more than a century, underscoring deeply held beliefs. "The Way of the Cross Leads Home" --written in 1906--might be in the running for Christians' national anthem if it ever came to a vote.

Until here lately, the "way" to Branson, MO, has not been quite so clear. Though highway routes to this Christian entertainment mecca are many--some of them picturesque--they can easily eat up the better part of a day for Texans driving there.

Eureka! Southern Airways Express now offers twice-daily flights from Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport to Harrison, AR, just a half-hour from Branson. Round-trip airfare is around \$150, parking is free and the two-hour flight a few thousand feet aloft provides welcome "look-sees" at the colorful foliage below. (The aircraft has eight seats, with some safety requirements that may be unfamiliar, such as use of scales to determine weight of both passengers and luggage. Rent a car, use an Uber app or lean on a friend for pick-up in Harrison and the short final "leg" to Branson. Remember to pack light and arrive early for check-in.)....

En route to this one-of-a-kind entertainment center that emphasizes God and country, one sees an exit for College of the Ozarks in Point Lookout, MO. It's a stop worth taking, a scant half-dozen miles from Branson, this college of some 1,500 students. The Lord is honored and patriotism is the hallmark of the appropriately nicknamed "Hard Work University."

Students earn their way to four-year degrees by working at numerous campus sites. They graduate free of debt, unlike many college graduates.

Named C of O president in 2022, Dr. Brad Johnson envisioned an additional symbol to enhance the institution's spiritual and patriotic values. It already had The Missouri Vietnam Veterans Memorial. Now, the giant cross erected last year reminds students and visitors of Christ upon entering or leaving the campus. Artist/designer Max Greiner, Jr., was commissioned for the project-- The Empty Cross" --made of steel--is 40 feet tall and weighs 28,000 pounds....

I have written about Branson many times, but somehow was never present for the much-heralded "Christmas in Branson." Though "late to the party," I recently was "wowed" by a community emblazoned by lights and Christmas décor, and a bevy of shows "glitized up" with festive costumes, Christmas music and creative dancers. (The season starts in November and runs through the first week of January.)

During a whirlwind 46-hour visit, I attended seven shows, including the Sight and Sound Theater's "Miracle of Christmas." This is Branson's "crown jewel" where all 2,200 seats often are taken for productions that dazzle with Broadway quality and are always Christ-centered. "David" opens March 8, 2025.

Other shows included The Duttons, The Hughes Brothers, Pierce Arrow (featuring a world-class baritone and a Guinness Book of Records holder for the lowest bass voice), Doug Gabriel, A Tribute to ABBA and "Hot Rods and High Heels." They, too, sparkled....

Branson is a "family place" on both sides of the flood lights. Central to its "warp and woof" are shows dominated by multiple family members, including three generations of Duttons and their across-the- street neighbors, the Hughes Brothers. They even "borrow" each other's grandbabies for manger scenes. This year, the Hughes Brothers family has two of their four infants "on loan" to the Duttons!

The Clay Coopers have to be proud of son Colton, star of the "Hot Rods" show, a high energy production featuring 1950s music.

Doug Gabriel has been "at it" for decades, playing a stringed instrument his dad made from a car muffler. He calls it a "muff-tar"

This account barely touches the garment's hem of Branson. Experiencing it--coupled with a visit to C of O--never grows old, at Christmas and throughout the year....

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.

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SPORTS



Apaches senior center Dylan Hunt (40) dribbles the ball around three Navarro defenders in the non-district game Tuesday, Dec. 17.

VANDY VAN EPPS



Apaches senior guard Jzyah Melancon (3) dribbles the ball down in Navarro territory Tuesday, Dec. 17.

PHOTOS BY VANDY VAN EPPS

Apaches travel to Navarro for tournament



VANDY VAN EPPS

Gonzales head basketball coach Steven Pinchback on the sideline for the Navarro game.

STAFF REPORT

The Gonzales Apaches went back on the road Thursday, Dec. 12 for a tournament at Navarro High School. The Apaches went 1-3 in the tournament; beating Hallettsville, 59-51, and losing to Marion, 66-40, Davenport, 71-28, and Lockhart, 46-35. The Apaches dropped to 6-9 on the season. Gonzales hosted the Navarro Panthers for a non-district game Tuesday, Dec. 17; and they'll host the Goliad Tigers Friday, Dec. 20. The Goliad game tips off at 4:30 p.m.

Apaches fall to Panthers at home

BY VANDY VAN EPPS
Gonzales Inquirer

The Gonzales Apaches hosted the Navarro Panthers for a non-district game Tuesday, Dec. 18. The Apaches fell to Navarro, 48-23, and dropped to 6-10 on the season. Gonzales struggled early in the game with Navarro jumping out to a 10-1 lead in the middle of the first quarter. The Apaches quickly turned it around in the second period and made it 24-20, and trailed by four at half, but the offense stalled in the second half and only scored three points. "Couldn't make a shot. They were getting confused defensively. They just, I'm gonna say, it's my fault. They just, they weren't ready. You know, we knew what they're gonna do. They just didn't execute, so we've got to do a better job and just keep learning, keep growing," Apaches head basketball Steven Pinchback said. The Apaches will host the Goliad Tigers at home Friday, Dec. 20 and Pinchback and his team will be preparing for their next challenge to move on from the Navarro loss. "We just gonna go back to the drawing board, watch film, prepare. Know our opponent, try to shoot the ball a little bit better. I mean, 23 points is probably, you know, that's not normally what we

See **APACHES**, page 6

Lady Apaches' defense stalls Calhoun's offense in win



BY VANDY VAN EPPS
Gonzales Inquirer

The Gonzales Lady Apaches returned home from the Brazos tournament to host the Calhoun Sandies Tuesday, Dec. 17. Gonzales routed the Sandies, 52-30, and secured its 12th win of the season. The Lady Apaches and Calhoun kept the game close in the first half with Gonzales trailing, 18-17, but quickly turned things around in the second half. "We knew we had to come out and make our runs and play the basketball. We know how to play. We got a little fed up in the first once we started playing the basketball. We know playing slow, going down and kind of getting everybody touches. That's when we opened up the lead," Senior Bella Aguero said. Aguero scored 30 points on Calhoun; the second most points scored in a game in her Gonzales career.

The Lady Apaches defense held Calhoun to 12 points in the second half and recording 19 steals in the win. "Kudos to Jordyn [Gonzales]. Jordyn, my little sophomore. She came out and she put her head down, and she knew what she had to do. She knew she had to bring the table, and she shut everyone down. I'm proud of Jordyn," Aguero said. The Lady Apaches dominated in the rebounds recording 41; juniors Jayda Glass and Isabella Ikard led the team with 10 rebounds in the win over Calhoun. "So gotta thank my defensive coach Behal because she really whips us into shape, and we're really good at communicating on defense, so we were really able to get a stop in that second half," Glass said. Lady Apaches head basketball



PHOTOS BY VANDY VAN EPPS

Above: Senior Kilee Schwausch dribbles the ball past a Calhoun defender Tuesday, Dec. 17. Left: Lady Apaches senior Bella Aguero moves the ball down court against the Calhoun Sandies Tuesday, Dec. 17 at home.

Lady Apaches compete in Brazos tournament

STAFF REPORT

The Gonzales Lady Apaches went back on the road for their final tournament of the season in Brazos Thursday, Dec. 12. The Lady Apaches finished the tournament with a 2-2 record; beating Brazos, 48-34 and Caddo Mills, 55-34, and losing to Weimar, 54-52, and La Grange, 40-36. Gonzales returned home Tuesday, Dec. 17

for a game against the Calhoun Sandies. The Lady Apaches will close out 2024 on the road against Smithville, Friday, Dec. 20 and host Victoria West Monday, Dec. 30. Gonzales will open up district play against the La Vernia Lady Bears Friday, Jan. 3, 2025. The Smithville game tips off at 3:15 p.m. The Victoria West tips off at 1:30 p.m. The La Vernia game tips off at 1:30 p.m.

coach Mark Belford was proud with his coaching staff preparing the defensive plan in the second half. "Coach Behal, coach Cantu, they do a great job working with our defensive kids. You know, we just kind of put in some schemes, and they really, really been working those kids, and defense is where we hold our hats on, because we know we need defense in order to be successful, especially in our district," Belford said. The Lady Apaches have two more games remaining against Smithville and Victoria West before the start of district play against La Vernia Friday, Jan. 3, and the Lady Apaches have their mind set focused on the last two non-district games. "Just try to keep our head down and keep working and kind of do what we do, what we know, what to do, and just keep working and hopefully make an upset up and here in the district," Agureo said.

"So the last two games we have they are pretty good competition. But, we've learned that we could really play with anybody, no matter who they are, how big the school is, you know, we know that as long as we work together, we're gonna be able to beat whoever we need to beat," Glass said. The Smithville game tips off at 3:15 p.m. and the Victoria West game tips off at 1:30 p.m.

--STATS--

POINTS: B. Aguero: 30 points, J. Glass: seven points, Syrenity Smith and Ikard: four points, Amaya Ibarra: three points, and Kilee Schwausch: two points
REBOUNDS: J. Glass and I. Ikard: 10 rebounds, J. Gonzales: six rebounds, B. Aguero: five rebounds Kianna White: three rebounds, McKenzie Gillette and Skarlett Cerda: two rebounds and S. Smith and Zniyah Washington: one rebound
ASSISTS: S. Smith and K. Schwausch: three assists, B. Aguero: two assists and Jordyn Gonzales and S. Cerda: one assists
STEALS: B. Aguero: six steals, K. Schwausch: five steals, J. Gonzales and I. Ikard: three steals and S. Cerda: two steals.
BLOCKS: J. Gonzales: two blocks and J. Glass, I. Ikard and A. Ibarra: one block



Mustangs freshman guard Henry Benavides (4) moves the ball pass two Moulton players in the Moulton Tournament Thursday, Dec. 12.

Mustangs finish third in Moulton Tournament

STAFF REPORT

The Nixon-Smiley Mustangs traveled to Moulton for their second tournament of the season Thursday, Dec. 12.

The Mustangs took home third place in the tournament with a 1-3 record; they beat Tribe, 81-35, and lost to Sacred Heart, 61-49, Moulton, 48-38, and Austin Royals

Homeschool, 54-40.

Senior Tristen Mikesch and freshman Joe White were named All-Tournament by Moulton.

The Mustang return home for a game against the La Vernia Bears, Thursday, Dec. 19 and will close out 2024 with their home tournament Friday, Dec. 27 through Saturday, Dec. 28.



Above: Seniors Ryan Piaz (23) and Tristan Mikesch (1) shoot two free throws in the Moulton Tournament. Mikesch was named to the all-tournament team at the Moulton Tournament. Left: Mustangs junior guard Joaquin Monge (14) defends a Moulton Bobkatz player in the first tournament match.

PHOTOS BY VANDY VAN EPPS

GYMNASTS BRING HOME AWARDS



CONTRIBUTED

Avery Molina, Bentlie Burnett, Harper Patterson, Kinsley Valdez, Sofia Juarez and Peyton Ontiveros competed Saturday at the Extreme Gymnastics facility bringing home 10 first place, 6 second place, 4 third place and 8 fourth place ribbons. Harper Patterson and Kinsley Valdez also won all around for their age group.



CONTRIBUTED

Kinsley Valdez placed second on vault (left) and Bentlie Burnett placed 4th on beam at the finals.



Harper Fullilove came back with three first place ribbons and a second place. She won all around gymnast in her age group. Harper competed in the finals Sunday, Dec. 15, coming back with 5th on the bars and 6th on vault in the level 2 silver excel program.



CONTRIBUTED

Lady Mustangs fall to Lady Ro-Hawks in road game

STAFF REPORT

The Nixon-Smiley Lady Mustangs traveled to San Antonio for a game against the Randolph Lady Ro-Hawks Monday, Dec. 16.

The Lady Mustangs lost to Randolph, 56-29, dropping to 7-12 on the season.

Senior Janaelyn White led the team with 10 points; Ashly Garcia led the team with six rebounds; and freshman Ruby Mendez led the team with two assists and six steals.

The Lady Mustangs will close out 2024 with their home tournament Friday, Dec. 27 through Saturday, Dec. 28.

--STATS--

POINTS: J. White: 10 points, R. Mendez and Alize Davila: four points, Brooke Crisp: three points, Janice White, Grace Gomez and Juliana Kendrick: two points, and Ayanna Corpus and A. Garcia: one point
REBOUNDS: A. Garcia: six rebounds, J. White: four rebounds, R. Mendez, A. Corpus and G. Gomez: two rebounds, and Brooke Crisp, J. Kendrick, Janice White, Madison Yanes and A. Davila: one rebound.
ASSISTS: R. Mendez: two assists and G. Gomez, B. Crisp and M. Yanes: one assist
STEALS: R. Mendez: six steals, J. White: four steals, Janice White, A. Garcia and B. Crisp: two steals, and M. Yanes, A. Corpus, G. Gomez and J. Kendrick: one steal

APACHES

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

do. So just got to tighten up and keep playing. We're still trying to figure things out. But like I said we're about a .500 team, so we do good, do bad. We just got to do more good than we do bad," Pinchback said.

The Apaches will travel to Wimberley Friday, Dec. 27 for their final tournament of the season; they'll take on Belton and Village Tech.

Gonzales will return home Tuesday, Dec. 31 for a game against Smithville.

The Smithville game tips off at 6:30 p.m. and the Goliad game tips off at 4:30 p.m.



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The Gonzales Inquirer
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Deadline for January 2 publication is Thursday, December 26, Noon

CITY

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

ing a little more than \$8 million, or about \$318 per square foot, on actual construction costs, with the remaining \$3 million (about \$121 per square foot) divided into professional services, technology allowances, regulatory and permitting fees and project contingencies.

“I did want to point out just to keep in mind this is a preliminary projection and will likely evolve as we move through the reconstruction phase and we gain additional insights,” Duke said. “It does provide a realistic sense of the project scale complexity based on the information we have today.

“This budget was developed based on the review of the current project documents and historical cost data. It provides a projection of cost to deliver a functional facility that meets the county’s needs. It’s important to note that the construction estimate is derived from historical data rather than direct market feedback, so adjustments may be necessary as the project progresses.”

CPM, which Duke said is a “project management and owners representation firm,” was brought in by Gonzales County commissioners at the recommendation of O’Connell Architecture LLC, which noted the company had been invaluable in helping Mason County build a new courthouse after losing its original to a fire in February 2021.

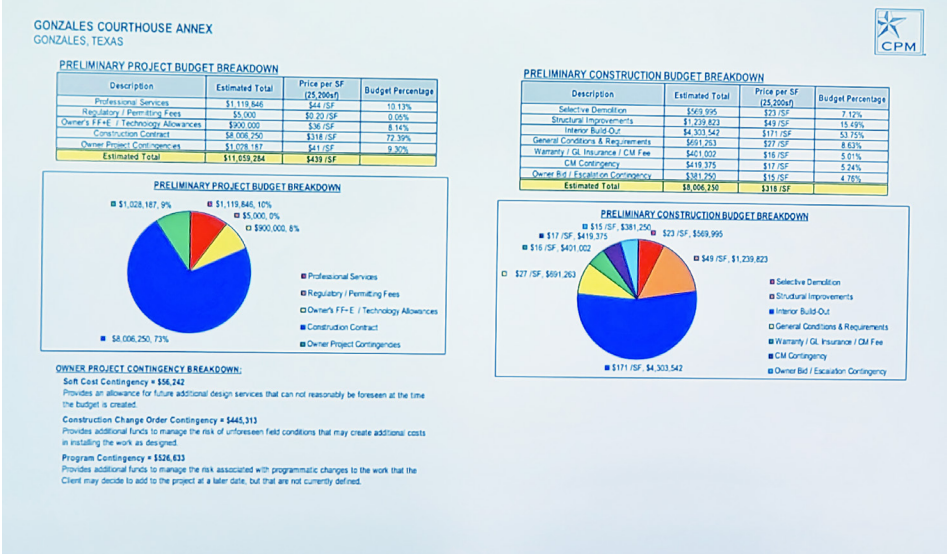
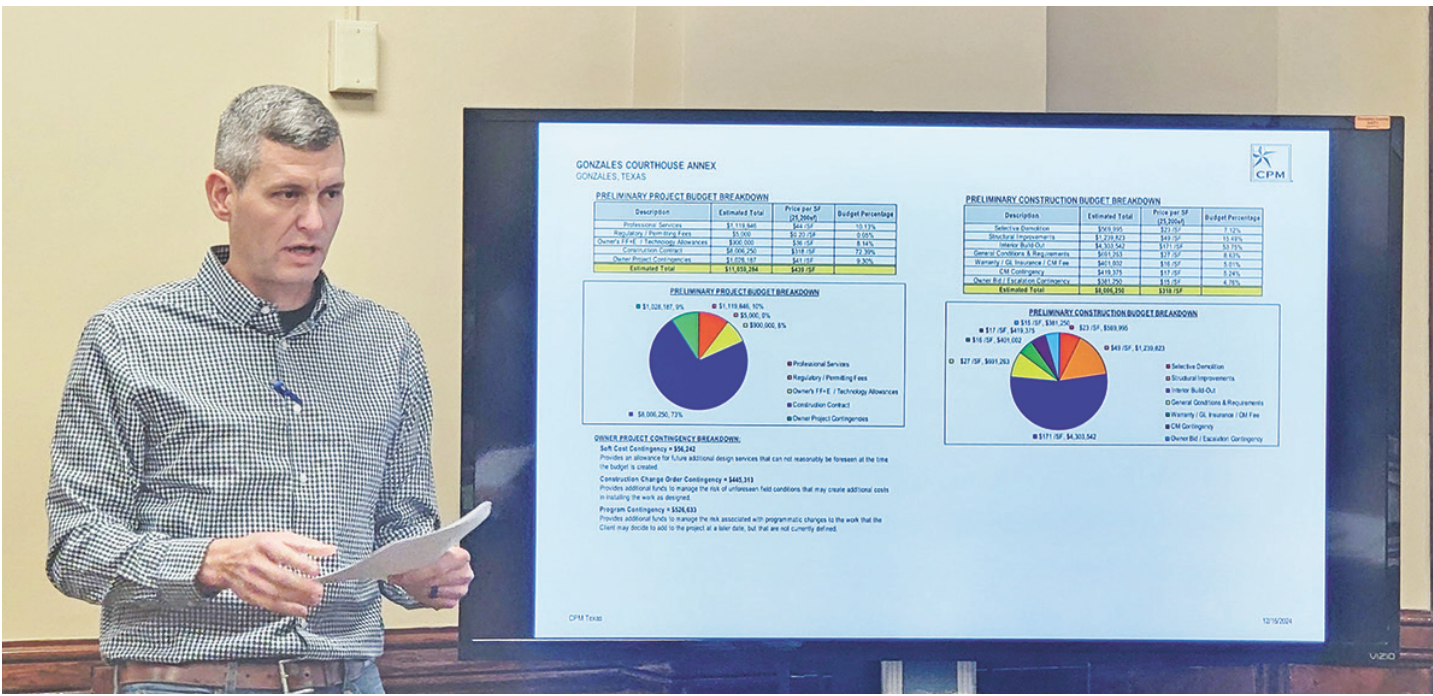
Duke said he expects pre-construction work to continue through mid-April 2025. This includes completing design documents, which are currently about 95 percent complete, as well as permitting and then “selecting a construction manager at risk for a competitive process.”

“We are recommending a GMP, or guaranteed maximum price approach, or construction manager risk approach, for this so that we can work with a contractor in a pre-construction capacity to help identify ways to save money and hopefully reduce the budget that I showed you before,” Duke said.

Selective demolition would actually begin as early as the end of February, which Duke noted would “still be during the pre-construction phase for the overall project, so that there’s going to be a significant savings if the county hired a demolition contractor directly, rather than going through a contractor and having their markups on top of it.”

Duke said the construction phase would begin towards the end of April with substantial completion achieved in March 2026.

“These are things that we will work with the contractor to refine,” Duke said. “It could be this is too long, but this is an estimate that we put together based



John Duke, team lead at CPM Texas, goes over estimates with the Gonzales County Commissioners Court for what renovating the Gonzales County Courthouse Annex on Sarah DeWitt Drive would cost if the building was taken down to the steel shell and rebuilt. Duke indicated the total cost, including professional services, would be in excess of \$11 million, with construction costs alone in excess of \$8 million. The project would have an estimated completion date of April 2026.

LEW K. COHN

“I think we need to look into what building a new building would cost and compare it,” Brzozowski said. “We may want to put a two-story building there, we have two stories and there would be room for more people. I want to be able to look at all our options.”

“I’d like to explore what you’re talking about and come up with a figure, you know, where we can double our square footage if we go two stories,” Precinct 3 Commissioner Kevin La Fleur said. “I know it’s always cheaper to build up.”

Duke agreed to bring cost estimates on building a new building, including the potential of one that is two stories tall, at the court’s Jan. 13 meeting.

Commissioners have not indicated yet how they will pay for renovation of the annex or construction of a new building.

The county does not have a debt service tax rate and had a projected total fund balance of \$20,472,594.18 as of Sept. 30, which includes \$9.5 million in the general fund and \$9.5 million across the various road and bridge funds.

The Government Finance Officers Association recommends governments maintain an unrestricted budgetary fund balance equal to no less than two months of regular general fund operating expenditures. For Gonzales County, which has fiscal year 2025 budget of \$19,126,793.66, that would be about \$3,187,798.94.

I would recommend that maybe we ease up on the burn ban over the holidays and let folks get stuff done while our moisture content is high, and then revisit that after the first of the year.”

—Jimmy Harless, Emergency Management Coordinator

BURN

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

that the Keetch-Byram Drought Index (KBDI) for Gonzales County had dropped from 688 on Nov. 25 to 623 as of Dec. 16.

“There are some areas that are under six (hundred), there are a few that are over the 623 and we have received a little bit of slow drizzle and moisture over the last couple of weeks,” Harless said. “I have issued several burn ban permits for folks that are wanting to burn household trash and such. I would recommend that maybe we ease up on the burn ban over the holidays and let folks get stuff done while our moisture content is high, and then revisit that after the first of the year.”

Harless said the Gonzales County Sheriff’s Office

has been helping respond quickly to burn ban violations and he has tried to be understanding with residents who have been antsy about not being able to burn trash for two months.

“I can see where folks would, with the moisture and stuff, assume that it’s been lifted, so I’ve been very understanding about that, about issuing permits,” Harless said. “They don’t cost anything.”

Harless said even though the burn ban has been lifted, there are rules regarding burning that the state requires all residents to follow:

- You can only burn

when the wind speeds are between 6 mph and 23 mph.

- You can only burn between 1 hour after sunrise and 1 hour before sunset.

- The burn must be attended and water must be readily accessible.

- You may not burn any prohibited materials such as rubber, plastic, metal or treated wood and it must come from your property only.

If conditions worsen, the commissioners court could consider putting a burn ban back on as soon as their next regular meeting, which will be on Monday, Jan. 13.

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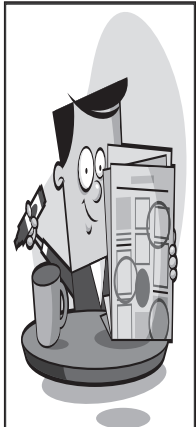
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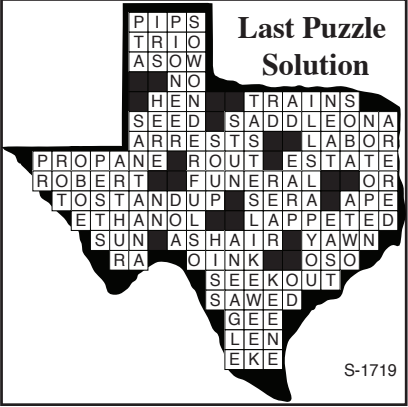
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7	6	5	8	9	4	3	2	1
2	3	8	7	5	1	4	9	6
1	9	4	6	2	3	8	5	7
9	8	7	2	4	6	5	1	3
6	1	2	3	8	5	7	4	9
5	4	3	9	1	7	6	8	2
3	2	1	4	7	8	9	6	5
8	7	9	5	6	2	1	3	4
4	5	6	1	3	9	2	7	8

Last Puzzle Solution



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NOTICE OF SEALED BID FOR SALE OF REAL PROPERTY

The City of Gonzales, Texas (the “City”) is accepting sealed bids for the purchase of City Owned real property (the “Property”) as described in this Notice of Bid Opening. Bids must be for all of the real property described and not just a portion thereof. No late, emailed, or faxed bids will be accepted. The receipt of responses does not require the City to accept any bid, enter into a contract, or to complete a sale. Any and all bids may be rejected. Additionally, the City reserves the right to waive insignificant and administrative errors found in any bid.

Legal Description: Being 0.2293 acres of Lot No. 7 and No. 8, in Block No. 2, of the Neuman Heights Addition, Gonzales County, Texas

Street Address: St. Paul / Cone St., Gonzales, Texas 78629

The City of Gonzales seeks to obtain fair market value for the property and reserves the right to reject any and all bids. The appraisal report is available upon request. The estimated Fair Market Value of this property is \$19,476.00.

The sale of the Property may be awarded, at the discretion of the City Council, to the bidder submitting a bid in accordance with the terms outlined below and providing the best value to the City.

It is the intention of the City to sell the Property based on the best value bid that is submitted. If in the judgment of the City Council the bids submitted do not represent the fair market value of the Property, the Council reserves the right to reject any and all bids. Should any bid be accepted, payment shall be made by earnest money deposit, subject to closing, and shall be deposited with the City or designated escrow agent by cashier's check or money order payable to the City of Gonzales within three days of the award notice. Provisions of the sale of the Property shall include:

- For the purchase of the real property in “as is” condition;
- For the conveyance of the Property by special warranty deed, and the deed will specify the property is sold “as is”;
- For the Buyer to pay all survey fees;
- For the Buyer to pay all fees, commissions and costs associated with closing the sale of the Property; Should the Buyer use a realtor, any such fees due the realtor will not be deducted from the bid/purchase price;
- For the Buyer to assume all responsibility or liability for any environmental condition affecting the Property, or any clean-up or remediation that may be required by law;
- For the development of the Property, acceptable to the City.
- Bidder/Purchaser is responsible for obtaining any title history information and title insurance desired by Bidder/Purchaser;
- Seller desires to retain all mineral interests and royalties to the property;
- Execute Contract for Sale and Purchase of Real Property acknowledging any conditions restricting the future use of the Property.

Certification of Financial Ability to Pay Purchase Price: Certification of financial ability to pay the offered purchase price is required on the bid form.

Inspection of Property: Bidder/Purchaser and its agents or employees shall have the right to enter upon the Property during regular business hours (8am to 5pm) and upon reasonable notice and conduct such inspections, tests, and studies as they may deem necessary. Bidder/Purchaser must contact City Hall at (830) 672-2815 to schedule an appointment. Bidder/Purchaser may enter the Property to conduct its inspection but shall be solely responsible for any damages caused thereby. Bidder/Purchaser shall repair any damage to the Property it causes or that is caused by its agents or invitees and shall indemnify and defend Seller and hold Seller harmless from and against any and all claims, liabilities or damages to the Property or against Seller caused by the intentional or negligent acts or omissions of Bidder/Purchaser and/or Bidder's/Purchaser's authorized agents, representatives or employees as a result of any inspection of the Property by such parties.

Brokers or Real Estate Agents Fee: The City is not represented by a broker or real estate agent and no seller's fee will be paid to a broker or real estate agent. If the Bid Form designates a broker or real estate agent representing the Purchaser, a fee may be paid at closing to a Purchaser's Broker or Real Estate Agent representing the successful Purchaser.

The Property will be sold “as is” with no warranties or representations as to suitability for any particular use. Conveyance of the Property will be by special warranty deed. By submitting a bid, each bidder agrees to waive and does hereby waive any claim the bidder has or may have against the City of Gonzales, Texas, and the City's respective employees and representatives for the award of damages or attorney fees, arising out of or in connection with the administration, evaluation, or recommendation of any bid, waiver, deletion or amendment of any requirements under this Notice of Bid Opening, acceptance or rejection of any bids, and award of the bid. By submitting a bid, the bidder specifically waives any right to recover or be paid attorney fees from the City of Gonzales, Texas, or any of the City's employees and representatives under any of the provisions of the Texas Uniform Declaratory Judgments Act (Texas Civil Practice and Remedies Code, Section 37.001, et. seq., as amended). The bidder acknowledges and agrees that this is the intentional relinquishment of a presently existing known right and that there is no disparity of bargaining power between the bidder and the City of Gonzales, Texas.

By execution and submission of this bid, the bidder hereby represents and warrants to the City that the bidder has read and understands this Notice of Bid Opening and that the bid is made in accordance with the terms stated herein. Bidder acknowledges that it understands all terms herein, which include the waiver provisions, and that it had the right to consult with counsel regarding all applicable documents.

The City reserves the right to waive, delete or amend any of the requirements connected with this bid.

Bids shall be delivered in writing on the attached bid proposal form, signed by the bidder or an authorized representative, and enclosed in a sealed envelope to the City of Gonzales, City Secretary, 820 North Saint Joseph Street, Gonzales, Texas 78629, or can be delivered in person to City Hall, 820 North Saint Joseph Street, Gonzales, Texas 78629. All bids shall be plainly marked “**SEALED BID TO PURCHASE REAL PROPERTY.**” Bids must be received before **2:00 p.m. on Friday, January 3, 2025** and any bid received after that time will not be considered. Use of the U.S. Postal Service, private delivery companies, or courier services is undertaken at the sole risk of the bidder. It is the bidder's sole responsibility to ensure that the bid is in the possession of the issuing office by the deadline. The City will date and timestamp each bid upon submission.

Bidder's Representation: By submitting its bid, Bidder represents that:

- Bidder has read and understands this solicitation;
- Bidder's bid is made in accordance with this solicitation;
- Bidder's bid is based upon the information set forth in this solicitation; and
- Bidder accepts the terms and conditions stated in this request for sealed bids.

City staff will publicly open, read and tabulate the bids at **2:00 p.m. on Friday, January 3, 2025**, at City Hall, City of Gonzales, 820 North Saint Joseph Street, Gonzales, Texas 78629.

Bidders may contact City Secretary Kristina Vega at (830) 672-2815 for clarifications and questions.

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Legal Description: 0.9195 acres being part of Lot No. 10, in Range No. 2, East of Water Street, in the Original Outer Town of Gonzales, Gonzales County, Texas

Street Address: 1814 Saint Paul Street, Gonzales, Texas 78629

The City of Gonzales seeks to obtain fair market value for the property and reserves the right to reject any and all bids. The appraisal report is available upon request. The estimated Fair Market Value of this property is \$226,990.00.

The sale of the Property may be awarded, at the discretion of the City Council, to the bidder submitting a bid in accordance with the terms outlined below and providing the best value to the City.

It is the intention of the City to sell the Property based on the best value bid that is submitted. If in the judgment of the City Council the bids submitted do not represent the fair market value of the Property, the Council reserves the right to reject any and all bids. Should any bid be accepted, payment shall be made by earnest money deposit, subject to closing, and shall be deposited with the City or designated escrow agent by cashier's check or money order payable to the City of Gonzales within three days of the award notice. Provisions of the sale of the Property shall include:

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- For the Buyer to pay all fees, commissions and costs associated with closing the sale of the Property; Should the Buyer use a realtor, any such fees due the realtor will not be deducted from the bid/purchase price;
- For the Buyer to assume all responsibility or liability for any environmental condition affecting the Property, or any clean-up or remediation that may be required by law;
- For the development of the Property, acceptable to the City.
- Bidder/Purchaser is responsible for obtaining any title history information and title insurance desired by Bidder/Purchaser;
- Seller desires to retain all mineral interests and royalties to the property;
- Execute Contract for Sale and Purchase of Real Property acknowledging any conditions restricting the future use of the Property.

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Brokers or Real Estate Agents Fee: The City is not represented by a broker or real estate agent and no seller's fee will be paid to a broker or real estate agent. If the Bid Form designates a broker or real estate agent representing the Purchaser, a fee may be paid at closing to a Purchaser's Broker or Real Estate Agent representing the successful Purchaser.

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Bidders may contact City Secretary Kristina Vega at (830) 672-2815 for clarifications and questions.

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PUBLIC NOTICES

CITY OF WAELDER INVITATION TO BID ON CITY SURPLUS ITEMS

POLICE VEHICLES

2017 Ford Explorer, 67,000 miles. Min. bid: \$14,276.00

2014 Chevrolet Tahoe, 100,000 miles. Min. bid: \$4,896.00

Note: If sold to anyone other than law enforcement, the police vehicles will be stripped of all emergency equipment.

PUBLIC WORKS

Yamaha 4-Wheeler 660 – Needs rim, tire and carburetor kit. Min. bid: \$1,500.00

E-Z Go Workhorse (Golf Cart) - Gas powered with no keys, not sure if in operating condition. Min. Bid: \$500.00

Carryall 2 (Golf Cart) - Gas powered with no keys, not sure if in operating condition. Min. Bid: \$500.00

Carryall 2 (Golf Cart) - Gas powered with no keys, not sure if in operating condition. Min. Bid: \$500.00

580 Super K – Case Backhoe – Rear digging doesn't work & has numerous hydraulic leaks. Min. bid: \$1,000.00

1982 International Bucket Truck – Will not pass dielectric test, has air brake leak, rear outriggers come down on their own, the motor is good. Min. Bid: \$1,500.00

2000 Chevrolet Astro Van 4.3L V6 – Rear A/C is not working & needs tires. Min. bid: \$1,500.00

2000 Ford F350 – Runs, needs a tune up. Min. bid: \$3,000.00

All items are sold "AS IS" and "WHERE IS" with all faults. The City makes no warranty, express or implied with respect to the condition of the goods. The City specifically disclaims any and all UCC warranties of merchantability and fitness for a particular purpose.

All bids should be sent to the City Secretary in sealed envelopes, plainly marked "Sealed Bid Enclosed – City Surplus Items" and mailed to the attention of the City Secretary, City of Waelder, P. O. Box 427, Waelder, TX 78959, or hand delivered during regular business hours and to the attention of the City Secretary, City of Waelder, 300 Hwy. 90 West, Waelder, TX 78959. General inquires may made by calling City Hall at 830-788-7331.

Sealed bids will be accepted until 3:00 p.m. on Monday, January 13, 2025.

The City Council will open all received bids on Tuesday, January 14, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. at the Waelder City Council Chambers, located at 300 Hwy. 90 West, Waelder, TX 78959. The City of Waelder reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids, and to remove any or all items from the sale.

950
PUBLIC NOTICES

NOTICE

The Texas Parks and Wildlife Dept. will conduct a prescribed burn between January 3rd and April 3rd, 2025 on the Neasloney WMA. For additional information, call 830-203-0896.

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PUBLIC NOTICES

NO. PW24-0379

IN THE ESTATE OF	\$	IN THE COUNTY COURT
GERTRUDE LYDIA ILEY	\$	OF
DECEASED	\$	GONZALES COUNTY, TEXAS

NOTICE TO CREDITORS IN THE ESTATE OF GERTRUDE LYDIA ILEY, DECEASED

Notice is hereby given that original Letters Testamentary for the ESTATE OF GERTRUDE LYDIA ILEY, DECEASED, were issued on DECEMBER 9, 2024, in CAUSE NO.PW24-0379, pending in the County Court of GONZALES County, Texas to: SHARON DALE SMITH.

All persons having claims against this Estate which is currently being administered are required to present them within the time and in the manner prescribed by law, with any claim being addressed:

SHARON DALE SMITH
c/o: Candace B. Kaiser
Attorney for Sharon Dale Smith
P. O. Box 792
La Grange, TX 78945

KAISER LAW PLLC

BY: */s/ Candace B. Kaiser*
CANDACE B. KAISER
Attorney for Sharon Dale Smith
Independent Executor of the
Estate of Gertrude Lydia Iley, Deceased

STATE BAR NO. 00796510
P. O. Box 792
LA GRANGE, TX 78945
979-429-4600 (OFFICE)
candace@cbkaiserlaw.com (EMAIL)

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VANDY VAN EPPS

The Gonzales City Council at its regularly scheduled meeting Thursday, Dec. 12 in the Municipal Building.

CITY

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

was approved by the council was the lease agreement with Gonzales Dog Adoptions.

Johnnie Fogle spoke to the council during the public comments about the lease.

“I received an email this week from Miss (City Secretary Kristina) Vega that had a document which is going to allow us, with your approval, to negotiate with manager Tim Crow to get our Gonzalez Dog Adoptions lease service agreement expanded to a five-year period with maybe a renewal for 10 years after that,” Fogle said.

“We are very happy with the opportunity. We know that there’s a lot of things that we’ve kind of finished working through to make it fit for both parties,” Fogle added.

Mayor Steve Sucher said he compliments the Gonzales Dog Adoptions center for having Fogle as their point man for negotiations.

The council approved to execute a ground lease agreement with Gonzales Dog Adoptions.

In other business, the council approved the following agenda items:

- approved Amending the City of Gonzales’ Future Land Use Map within the Gonzales Comprehensive

Plan changing the designation from “Commercial District” to “Single-Family District” on the property located 1132 Seydler Street.

- approved Amending the Official Zoning Map by Zoning Property for the property commonly known as 1132 Seydler Street, said property being currently zoned as C-2 Heavy Commercial District and seeking to be rezoned to SF-6, Single Family 6 District.

- approved Amending the City of Gonzales’ Future Land Use Map within the Gonzales Comprehensive Plan changing the designation from “Single-Family Residential” to “Commercial District” on the property located at 418 St. Michael Street.

- Amending the Official Zoning Map by Zoning Property for the property commonly known as 418 St. Michael Street, said property being currently zoned as Sf-6 Single Family 6 District and seeking to be rezoned to C-1 Light Commercial District.

- approved Closing and Abandoning to the abutting property owner a portion of a certain unimproved street and authorizing the City Manager to execute the Real Property Contract.

NIXON

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

discussed as far as his pay and what he’s doing is going to stay the same, but he will no longer be the interim city manager,” Mayor Ellie Dominguez said. “He’s going to be our city administrator until further notice.”

Dominguez said the city will not be looking for a new administrator or city manager at this time and the job will be Becker’s “until he tells us otherwise.”

Becker’s role at the city is part time and he receives a salary of \$45,000 per year but no healthcare or retirement benefits for the position, though he is furnished a city truck for use while he is on the job. Becker also serves as the elected Gonzales County Precinct 4 Justice of the Peace.

The announcement regarding Becker comes nearly one year to the day he was first appointed interim city manager to replace Harold Rice, who was terminated in December 2023 after five years in office with four years and four months still left on his contract.

Two residents spoke up during the regular meeting in support of keeping Becker on as city manager or city administrator after seeing the item was on

the agenda to discuss and take possible action on posting of the city manager position.

Pablo Aguirre told council members that “in order to have effective municipal governance, you have to have a very competent city manager.” He complimented Becker on his leadership, strategic vision, governance, policy implementation, accountability and administrative and financial management.

“Ever since Daryl has been there, he has talked to me about his vision of where he wants to take Nixon and his leadership skills, I think, are impressive,” Aguirre said. “Public accountability — he has that. He has legal and ethical compliance awareness, and is able to see what is right and wrong, and his execution of all of these policies — I’ve been impressed as a citizen of Nixon.

“Every time I talk to Daryl, he’s talking about the budget, and he’s aware of where his limits are, and he’s working within the budget. To me, that was pretty impressive in that he’s trying to do so much and still trying to juggle a small budget or a minimal budget, depending on what the situation is.”

Aguirre also praised Becker’s communications and interpersonal skills, saying he calls or texts him back whenever he asks a question or reaches out.

Don Watt called Becker “a known entity” and said “everybody I talk to right around town all say he’s doing a great job.”

“Everyone tells me the same thing — ‘Best city manager we’ve had in years,’” Watt said. “So we have a known entity right now, but now we’re thinking about going outside and hiring another individual to operate our city who’s going to come here and try to take a city manager position in Nixon, Texas?”

“If you have somebody successful, they’re not going to come here. They’re going to go for the big job, they’re going to go to Seguin, Gonzales, Victoria. We’re going to have an extremely hard time finding a competent city manager. We have a known condition that’s managing our city for us. Why would we put outside risk in the city by bringing an unknown?”

Council members met in executive session for an hour to discuss the position and meet with Becker and City Attorney Eddie Escobar.

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There was a full day of events for Miracle on Main Street in Nixon on Saturday, Dec. 14 and the rain didn't get in the way of people having a great time. The first-ever Santa Shuffle 5K was held while kids had breakfast with Santa Claus at the Community Center. There was a volleyball tournament, a Christmas Cook-Off, a comedy show featuring Cleto Rodriguez, live music by Glory Road, games and children's activities and, of course, the lighted Christmas parade. The event was a partnership between Nations Christian Fellowship and the City of Nixon.

PHOTOS COURTESY JASON MONTOYA AND NATIONS CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP





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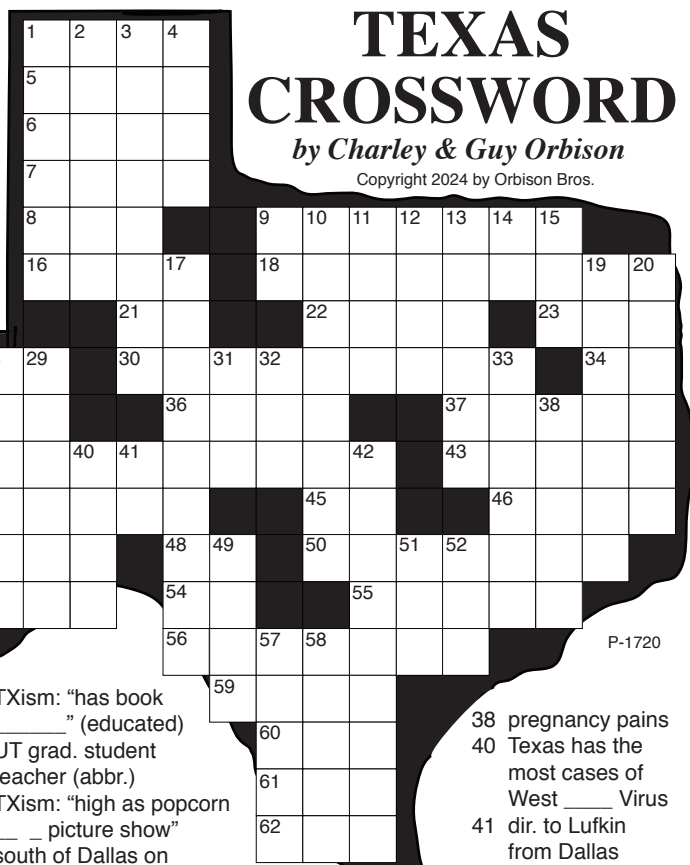
1 UT football coach, Brown (1998-2013)
5 TXism: "bone ____" (study)
6 TX Phyllis George was in "Meet the Parents" with actor Robert De ____
7 pickup blemish
8 TXism: "____ in the hole" (reserve)
9 TXism: "hasta ____" (see ya)
16 Friday night cheer
18 TXism: "looking for a gas leak with ____" (tricky)
21 state of TX Buddy Holly crash (abbr.)
22 this Guerrero was Railroad Commissioner in 1991
23 TXism: "his facts ____ elastic" (liar)
24 this was a tiny "wet" town just north of Abilene
30 19th century Texans the city was named for this Dallas (init.)
34 1967 Texas hurricane that spawned 115 tornadoes
36 winter garment
37 in Titus County on U.S. 271
39 TXism: "happy as ____ lap"
43 TXism: "____ a hoof" (run, dance)
44 Redskins & Eagles to the Cowboys
45 Texas electronics co.

DOWN

1 in Knox County on U.S. 277
2 TXism: "just down the road ____"
3 Taylor Swift song: "____ Street"
4 TXism: "don't get your shorts in a ____" (calm down)
9 ____ Porte, TX
10 this company insures many Texans
11 many Texans fought in ____ nam
12 TXism: "pay ____ never mind" (ignore)
13 TXism: "has book ____" (educated)
14 UT grad. student teacher (abbr.)
15 TXism: "high as popcorn ____ picture show"
17 south of Dallas on highway 342
19 TXism: "jaw ____" (dentist)
20 TXism: "changes his mind as often as ____ his socks"
24 this Irving wrote songs for TX Ginger Rogers (init.)
25 TXism: "gave ____ song and dance"

TEXAS CROSSWORD

by Charley & Guy Orbison
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P-1720

SUDOKU

	7	2						1
8			6					4
			2	8				6
	9			7	5			
4	6	3	9					5
								4
					1			
	4	5	8			3		
9	2							5

Level: Intermediate

Fun By The Numbers

Like puzzles? Then you'll love sudoku. This mind-bending puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your sudoku savvy to the test.

Here's How It Works:

Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

Answers found in next week's Classifieds.

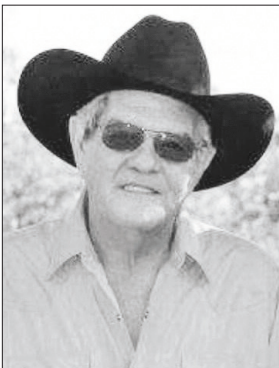
OBITUARY

JERRY WAYNE EDWARDS

Jerry Wayne Edwards passed away on December 1, 2024 at the age of 77. He was born on May 16, 1947 in Luling, TX. He grew up in Gonzales, TX. Jerry was the son of O.B. Edwards, Jr. and Lenore Burnett Holtkamp.

He worked in the HVAC sales & service industry for most of his working life. He also spent many years as a volunteer firefighter for the Luling Volunteer Fire Dept. Over the years, he enjoyed hunting trips to Colorado with his friends and taking vacations with his wife, Frances Kay. Jerry married Frances Kay, the love of his life, on February 18, 1966.

Jerry is survived by daughter, Manell Lynn Martin and her husband Randy; daughter Tammy Edwards (Jeremy Leal); and daughter Jerri Dawn Hellums; sister Terry Jane Voges (Larry); great aunts Bitsy Johnson and Carolyn Grau (Jim). He has 9



grandchildren and 14 great-grandchildren. He is preceded in death by his wife, Frances Kay; his parents, a brother and one grandchild.

A memorial service will be Friday, November 6 at 4:00 p.m. at Harwood Baptist Church in Harwood, TX. In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to the American Cancer Society or Harwood Baptist Church.

Services under the care and direction of O'Bannon Funeral Home

Pilot Thrift Store closing for holidays

SPECIAL TO THE INQUIRER

The Pilot Thrift Store and donation shed in Shiner will be closed for the holidays from Dec. 22 through Jan. 6.

The store appreciates your donations so

please wait until Jan. 6 to bring your donations so the members can enjoy the holidays with their families. No dumping will be allowed during the time the facility is closed. Wishing all a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Santa returns to Edwards CommUNITY Center

SPECIAL TO THE INQUIRER

Santa Claus is coming to the Edwards CommUNITY Center at the corner of Kleine and Fly streets in Gonzales from 6 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Friday, Dec. 20.

Come and enjoy free games, bikes, toys, food, and a visit with Santa! For more information contact the Rev. C.A. Roaches at 830-822-0830 or Mr. David Tucy at 830-263-1611.



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SENTENCINGS

25th District Court Sentencings

Dec. 13

Neffali Victor-Briones, sexual assault, eight years deferred adjudication/probation.

James Hellums, aggravated assault with deadly weapon, cruelty to animals, motion and order to dismiss.

Joseph McDaniel, possession of a controlled substance, four years TDCJ with credit for 302 days.

2nd 25th District Court Sentencings

Dec. 12

Max Ramirez Castillo Jr., evading arrest or detention with a vehicle or watercraft, 12 months in state jail with three days credit.

Kevin Cuellar-Montiel, possession of a controlled substance PG 2<1G, three years deferred adjudication, \$1,000 fine plus court costs.

Hunter Reed Guthrie, manufacture or delivery of a controlled substance PG 1>=4G<200G, 10 years deferred adjudication.

Irene Salas, fraudulent use or possession of identifying information less than 5 items, 15 months in state jail with credit for 141 days.

Hilary Ann Sanchez, possession of a controlled substance PG 2 <1G, case dismissed Dec. 4.

LAW ENFORCEMENT WEEKLY REPORTS

Gonzales County Sheriff's Office

12/08/2024-12/14/2024

12/08/2024

• Watson, Staton Allen, Age:44, Cuero: Other agency hold-Driving w/lic inv w/prev conv/susp/w/o fin res, Required \$5,000.00 Bond, Released

• Cannon, Scotty, Age: 49, Floyd: Local warrant-Assault peace officer/judge, Required \$25,000.00 Bond; Local Warrant-Bail jumping and fail to appear felony, Required \$25,000.00 Bond; Remains in custody

12/09/2024

• Perez,Joe Alexander, Age: 46, Gonzales: Commitment/sentence-Proh substance/item correctional facility, Remains in custody

12/12/2024

• Castillo,Max Ramirez Jr, Age: 44, Gonzales: Commitment/sentence-Evading arrest det w/veh or watercraft, Remains in custody

• Arrellano,Jarrette Andrew, Age: 24, Gonzales: Commitment/sentence-Poss CS PG 1<1oz, Remains in custody
• Torres, Erica Ann, Age: 34, San Antonio: Local Warrant-Fail to identify fugitive intent give false info, Requires \$1500.00 Bond, Remains in custody

12/13/2024

• Barnes, Steven Kyle, Age: 19, Bastrop: Local warrant-Unauth use of vehicle, Requires \$150,000.00 Bond; Local warrant-Unauth use of vehicle, Requires \$50,000.00 Bond; Remains in custody
• Vidal, Manuel, Age:21, San Antonio: Commitment/sentence-

Poss CS PG2 >=4G<400G, Commitment/sentence-Unl carrying weapon, Remains in custody

Total Arrest, Court Commitments, other agency arrest and processing's:

GCSO	08
DPS	01
GPD	04
WPD	00
NPD	02
GISD	00
SMO	00
Constable 1	00
Constable 3	00
Constable 4	00
DWCSO	00
DEA	00
TPW	00
GCAI	00
Rangers	00
Other	00
Total	15

SPECIAL TO THE INQUIRER

AUSTIN, Texas – The Lower Colorado River Authority recently awarded \$890,973 in grants to support community projects across LCRA's wholesale electric, water and transmission service areas.

The Community Development Partnership Program grants will help fund 37 projects, including a new emergency response/rescue boat for the Tow Volunteer Fire Department and new emergency gear for 11 other first-responder agencies; museum expansions and renovations in Columbus, Cuero and Marble Falls; new all-inclusive playground equipment in Leakey; and new fencing and other improvements at youth baseball and softball fields in Giddings and Matagorda.

Other grants will help fund upgrades to community centers and meeting spaces in Blessing, Coleman, El Campo, Giddings, La Grange, Junction, Luling and Manor.

LCRA General Man-

ager Phil Wilson said LCRA is committed to supporting the health, safety and development of communities throughout its diverse service territory, which includes all or parts of 73 counties.

"A community is more than buildings and businesses," Wilson said. "A community is a place where people live, work and raise their families. It's where people build their lives. We are pleased to provide these grants to help these communities continue to thrive through projects such as improving museums, libraries and civic centers, and providing first responders much-needed equipment."

Nearly half the recently awarded grants support first responders, including helping fund a new generator for the Blue Volunteer Fire Department in Lee County, additional life-saving equipment for the Lakeway Police Department and new air packs for the Frelsburg VFD in Colorado County.

"These grants help provide reliable equip-

ment to first responders who do so much to protect their communities," he said. "The first responders don't hesitate when help is needed, and we are proud to play a role in helping provide vital equipment and gear that can help them do their jobs more safely."

To date, LCRA has awarded 2,093 community grants totaling more than \$53 million. When combined with more than \$240 million in community-raised matching funds, the program has invested almost \$294 million in local communities.

Some of the grants awarded in the latest cycle include:

• BASTROP: A \$24,400 grant from LCRA and Bluebonnet Electric Cooperative to Bastrop County First Responders for cardiac monitors/defibrillators and medical devices used to deliver lifesaving medication to critically ill patients.

• CUERO: A \$50,000 grant from LCRA and the City of Cuero to the Chisholm Trail Heritage Museum for restoration of two historic buildings

to accommodate three new exhibit galleries and a multipurpose community space.

• CUERO: A \$18,568 grant from LCRA and the City of Cuero to the Cuero Volunteer Fire Department for new self-contained breathing apparatus systems.

• FREDERICKSBURG: A \$25,000 grant from LCRA to the City of Fredericksburg Volunteer Fire Department for a rainwater collection system to aid in water conservation and fire suppression.

• GIDDINGS: A \$25,000 grant from LCRA and the City of Giddings to the American Legion York Post 276 for a new roof on the American Legion hall.

• GIDDINGS: A \$20,080 grant from LCRA and the City of Giddings to Lee County Little League for the addition and repair of fencing around the ball fields, and a new shed to store equipment.

• LA GRANGE: A \$25,000 grant from LCRA and the City of La Grange to the La Fayette Masonic Lodge #34 for a new roof and HVAC for the historic lodge.

• LA GRANGE: A \$23,684 grant from LCRA and the City of La Grange to the La Grange Education Support Program Foundation for restroom renovations in the 1938 Hermes Gym used by local schools and youth sports organizations.

• LULING: A \$25,000 grant from LCRA to the City of Luling for upgrades to the Luling Civic Center.

• LULING: A \$25,000 grant from LCRA and the City of Luling to the Luling Foundation to install air conditioning in the demonstration barn.

CDPP grants are awarded twice a year for capital projects for volunteer fire departments, emergency responders, cities and counties, schools, libraries, civic groups, museums and other tax-exempt nonprofit organizations. Applications for the next round of grants will be accepted during January at lcra.org/cdpp. Applications are due by midnight Jan. 31.

Gonzales Healthcare Systems

December 2024

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
2 Austin MFM	3 Dr. Echols	4 Dr. Quebedeaux Dr. Miller	5 Dr. Ryan Dr. Echols	6
9 Austin MFM Dr. Malik Dr. Desai	10 Dr. Echols Austin MFM Dr. Quintero	11 Dr. Quebedeaux Austin MFM	12 Dr. Ryan Dr. Echols	13 Amy Trost Dr. Miller
16 Austin MFM	17 Dr. Echols Austin MFM	18 Dr. Quebedeaux Austin MFM Dr. Miller	19 Dr. Ryan Dr. Echols Dr. Malik	20 Dr. Bui
23 Austin MFM	24 Closed at 12pm	25 Closed Christmas Day	26 Dr. Ryan Dr. Echols Dr. Kirchner	27
30 Austin MFM	31 Closed at 12pm			

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Amy Trost
Hearing Specialist
830-372-2237

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Jeff Echols, DC
512-799-6811

Dermatology
Vicente Quintero, MD
830-626-5551

Nephrology
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361-576-0011
Yong Du, MD
361-576-0011

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830-379-1500

Pain Management
Eric Miller, MD
830-272-7746

Urology
Robert Ryan, III, MD
830-379-8491

Ophthalmology
Joseph Kavanagh, MD
830-379-3937

Austin Maternal Fetal Medicine
512-821-2540

Podiatry
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830-303-0005



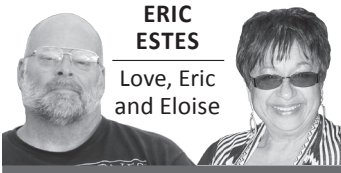
Merry Christmas 2024

Well hey there y'all, are we excited yet? By the time you read this, Christmas will be less than a week away. And yes, I said ... CHRISTMAS. While I have no problem saying Happy Holidays, for me and many others, Christmas is first and foremost still about celebrating the birth of our lord and savior, Jesus Christ, without whom we wouldn't have a chance in hell of salvation (no pun intended). It's just God's way of reminding us that he created us out of love, and has given us the opportunity, that by choosing to accept and follow him through Jesus, we'll be able to spend a great deal of quality time with him, here and beyond. I believe it's the best gift we could ask for, and has certainly worked out great for me.

The three wise men were wise for understanding who the baby Jesus actually was, and traveled quite a distance to pay their respects. It seems to me that wisdom these days is in shorter supply than it was two thousand years ago, as much of society rejects even the thought of saying Christmas in fear of peoples' opinions and not being politically correct. Yep, that's surely wisdom alright? Proverbs 3:5-6 reminds us to "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to Him, and He will make your path straight." After my acceptance, I'm very thankful for God stepping in and straightening my path, as stumbling through life and tripping over myself was getting pretty old and exhausting...again, thank you, Lord!

As I woke up this morning and eagerly poured my first cup of coffee, I noticed the yard was white and glistening, as last night was the first official freeze of fall/winter this season. Not enough ice to roll up a makeshift snowball, but that coffee flavored snow cone sure was tasty, after pulling out all of the grass,

ERIC ESTES
Love, Eric and Eloise



of course. Seeing as how I've painted the trim on my house and out buildings white this year, and am sporting a white beard and hair (wherever it grows), it looks like I'm definitely in for a white Christmas this year. That being said, I've been praying for some seventy degree weather for my grandkids to enjoy, and it looks like we'll get it. While living many years in Illinois, a white Christmas was rarely a problem. However, I did actually prefer the twinkling lights on the palm trees in Honolulu, and who couldn't love the alligator wearing a santa hat in Miami? But in Texas, my tree's up, the armadillo in the back yard's covered in tinsel, and my red cowboy hat's ready to go!

This year will be the 67th Christmas I've had the pleasure of experiencing on planet earth. While some were better than others (due to life's inevitable hardships along the way), I have been appreciative of them all. From my dad's DIY train set, complete with mountains, houses, roads and orange groves in 1963, through all of them with Eloise and the boys, and now with two beautiful grandkids, who could ask for more? It's all just icing on the cake, and I thank God for baking me a much bigger and better cake than I actually deserve. I would've been happy with a moldy cupcake from the week-old cupcake store, but God had bigger plans. Even with all of life's ups and downs along the way, I still feel most days like a spoiled child on Christmas morning. I've been blessed with the God-given ability to see life through rose colored glasses, regardless of what's been thrown my way. If you haven't already, please give some serious thought to allowing Christ into your life, it's a decision you'll never regret. Jesus "is" the reason for the season. Love you guys, Eric.

JOIN US CHRISTMAS EVE



CONTRIBUTED

The Episcopal Church of the Messiah invites the community to join them on Christmas Eve, Tuesday, Dec. 24, at 10:30 a.m. for a joyous morning of singing and worship. All baptized Christians are welcome to receive the Sacrament of Christ's body and blood as they celebrate his nativity.



THE CHRISTMAS STORY IN RHYME

Christmas 2024
By Lynn Wilson

About two thousand years ago, in a town called Bethlehem,
A precious gift was given to all the sons of men.
In a stable that starry night, the virgin Mary had given birth;
Emmanuel, God with us; God incarnate came to earth.
His birth announced by angels who proclaimed God's peace
and a vast angelic choir, singing praise that will not cease.
Into the darkness of sin and death came an everlasting light,
Illuminating the grace and truth God sent to Earth that night.
Awed by all they saw and heard, shepherds quaked with fear.
But the majestic truths they heard filled their hearts with cheer.
They went rushing to the stable where the Christ child lay,
sharing all they'd seen and heard as they went on their way.
The birth of Jesus on that night was the beginning of God's plan
to open His redemption to every sinful man.
That plan continues even now; redemption will not end,
for Jesus Christ is coming back for all who call Him friend.
To all who hear this story and accept Him as their king,
Jesus Christ, when He returns, eternal life will bring.

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First Assembly of God 509 E. 3rd St., Nixon	Stratton Primitive Baptist FM 1447, 9 miles east of Cuero	FULL GOSPEL Camp Valley Full Gospel Hwy 80, 7 mi. north of Nixon	El Centro Cristiano "Agua Viva" 403 Highway 90 W, Waelder
BAPTIST Clark Baptist Church FM 794, Gonzales	St. James Baptist Church Hwy 80, north of Belmont.	Full Gospel Church 1426 Fisher, Gonzales	Emmanuel Fellowship 1817 St. Lawrence, Gonzales
Country Baptist Church Highway 87, Smiley	St. Paul Baptist Church SE 2nd Street, Waelder	JEWISH Adat Haderech, a Messianic shul HashemYeshua1@yahoo.com	Encouraging Word Christian Fellowship Highway 80, Leesville
Eastside Baptist Church Seydler Street, Gonzales	Shiner Baptist Church	LUTHERAN First Evangelical Lutheran 1206 St. Joseph, Gonzales	Lighthouse Church of Our Lord 1805 Weimar, Gonzales
Efeso Iglesia Bautista Highway 87, Smiley	Union Lea Baptist Church St. Andrew St., Gonzales	Abiding Word Lutheran Church LCMS 1020 St. Louis St., Gonzales	New Life Temple for Jesus Christ 16214 US 90 W, Harwood
Elm Grove Baptist Church 4337 FM 1115 Waelder, TX, 78959	Union Valley Baptist Church FM 1681, NW of Nixon	METHODIST Belmont Methodist Highway 90A, Belmont	River of Life Christian Fellowship 207 Steele St., Smiley
First Baptist Church 422 St. Paul, Gonzales	CATHOLIC St. James Catholic Church 417 N. College, Gonzales	Dewville United Methodist West of FM 1117 on CR 121	Thompsonville Community Church CR 423, Thompsonville Between Harwood & Waelder off old Hwy. 90
First Baptist Church 403 N. Texas, Nixon	St. Joseph Catholic Church 207 S. Washington, Nixon	First Methodist 426 St. Paul, Gonzales	Two Rivers Bible Church 1600 Sarah DeWitt Dr., Suite 210, Gonzales
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First Baptist Church 406 N. Avenue E, Waelder	St. Phillip Catholic Church Highway 87, Smiley	Flatonia United Methodist	Living Waters Fellowship 306 St. Paul, Gonzales
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Iglesia Bautista Macedonia 201 S. Congress, Nixon	Church of Christ E. 3rd & Texas, Nixon	Monthalia Methodist CR 112 off Highway 97	Temple Bethel Pentecostal 1104 S. Paul, Gonzales
Iglesia Bautista Memorial Highway 97, Waelder	Church of Christ, Belmont	Smiley Methodist Church 1 blk. S. of Hwy. 87, Smiley	Life Changing Church of Gonzales 3.3 miles north on Hwy 183, right on CR 235, then right on CR 236
Leesville Baptist Church E. of Highway 80 on CR 121	CHURCHES OF GOD Community Church of God 1020 St. Louis, Gonzales	Webster Chapel A.M.E. 1027 Church St., Gonzales	PRESBYTERIAN Pilgrim Presbyterian Church CR 210 off FM 1116
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PAINTING

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

simply a matter of perspective. The young artist has already placed in the Fort Worth Stock Show Art Competition the last three years, and this year competed for the first time ever at the San Antonio Stock Show Western Art Competition.

The Western Art Contest at the San Antonio Stock Show, held annually in early December, is one of the most prestigious in the state, as it is open to high school students who are enrolled in one of 183 eligible school districts or those attending private school or home-schooling in one of 54 of Texas’ 254 counties, including Gonzales County.

Clements not only won champion in the Watercolor category with her piece, “Ghost of the Whitebrush,” but she also in the running for Best of Show as one of 13 class champions and, as a result, will receive a college scholarship.

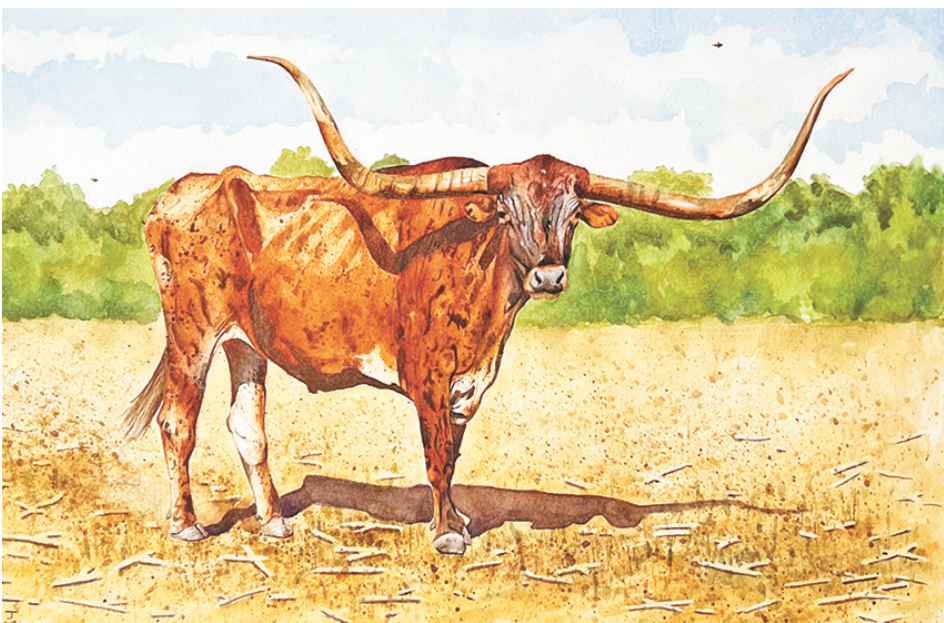
“I have been fortunate to receive scholarships for each piece I have placed with across all the competitions,” Jessa said. “I am truly blessed to have been gifted this talent by God and that He has given me parents and mentors that have encouraged me in my growth as an artist.”

Jessa’s artwork will be on display at the Briscoe Western Art Museum from Jan. 4, 2025 through Feb. 3, 2025, and the announcement for Best of Show will be made at the Brushstrokes and Ballots event on Friday, Jan. 31, 2025.

After that, Clements’ work will be exhibited in the museum throughout the San Antonio Stock Show & Rodeo from Feb. 6-23, 2025 at the Freeman Expo Hall.

“It has been a longstanding dream of mine for my work to be showcased at the Briscoe, and I am thrilled that opportunity is available to me as part of this award,” Clements said.

Jessa said she has always loved art



Senior Year: “Ghost of the Whitebrush” (watercolor), Place: Champion



Senior Year: “Grit and Glory”(oil) Place: 4th Overall

from an early age.

“My parents have given me notebooks and art supplies since I was a little girl and have never been without something to always sketch on,” she explained. “In my high school years, I have been given the opportunity to learn and develop my drawing, watercolor, and oil painting techniques through the support of my parents and my mentor, teacher, and



Sophomore Year: Reserve Grand Champion: “Rooster” (watercolor),

friend.”

As she entered high school age, Clements began participating in the Fort Worth Stock Show Art Competition, which receives more than 2,000 entries each year. In her first year, as a sophomore, she was awarded Reserve Grand Champion (second highest award overall) for her watercolor painting entitled “Rooster.”



Jessa Clements at the 2024 Awards Ceremony in Ft. Worth.

Reserve Grand Champions typically receive a scholarship of about \$8,000, a Reserve Grand Champion belt buckle and four tickets to the rodeo as well as having their entry sold at the November art sale, during which they can receive additional scholarship money.

In her second year, as a junior, she won first place with an oil painting entitled “One Last Ride.” She received a \$6,000 scholarship for this work. Finally, as a senior this year, Jessa submitted another oil piece, “Grit and Glory,” which ended up winning fourth place in the high school competition and won her another \$3,000 scholarship.

As a finalist, her entry will be displayed Jan. 17 through Feb. 8, 2025 at the Fort Worth Stock Show & Rodeo in the Amon G. Carter Jr. Exhibits Hall Concourse.

TOWER

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Attorney Eddie Escobar, who is serving as a consultant for the court before he officially takes office on Jan. 1, advised the court that Section 551.0725 of the Texas Open Meetings Act will not let a commissioners court go into executive session to negotiate a contract un-

less the court “votes unanimously that deliberation and open meeting would have a detrimental effect on the position of the commissioner’s court in negotiations with a third person.”

“There’s got to be a unanimous vote of the commissioner’s court to be able

to get into executive session,” Escobar said. “Just wanted to point that out to everybody. We don’t want to do anything contrary to what the law says. It’s got to be legal; otherwise, if there isn’t a proper vote, then going into executive session would be contrary to law.

“Every specific code section to go into executive session has its own set of rules, and I just reviewed that a few minutes ago to make sure everything was fine. I have to advise commissioners that the vote to go into executive session needs to be done prior to that executive session, and pursuant to that code section, it has to be unanimous.” Precinct 2 Commissioner Donnie Brzozowski asked Escobar why this was the first time in his 18 years on court that he had been made aware of this.

“Where’s that been the last 18 years I’ve been here because we’ve had executive sessions before,” Brzozowski said. “It looks like someone would have stumbled onto that.” Escobar said the section of code actually has been in effect since 2003 and was last updated in 2013.

“I’m not suggesting that the negotiation has to happen in open session. What I’m saying is that there has to be a vote before it goes into executive session,” Escobar added. Boatright said he didn’t understand the need to go into executive session as “it shouldn’t have a detrimental effect on negotiation as we only have one bidder and one negotiation.”

Precinct 3 Commissioner Kevin La Fleur made a motion to go into executive session, which was seconded by Brzozowski. La Fleur, Brzozowski and Precinct 1 Commissioner K.O. “Dell” Whiddon all voted in favor of the motion, while Boatright voted against it. County Judge Pat Davis did not indicate his vote.

La Fleur, Brzozowski and Whiddon were the three votes that had awarded the contract to LCRA, while Boatright and Davis had voted against awarding the bid as they favor a partnership with the Texas Department of Transportation and the Greater Austin Travis Regional Radio System (GATRRS).

Following the vote, Eric Anderson, the vice president of telecommunications at LCRA, addressed the court and expressed they appreciated the court awarding LCRA a bid, but unwilling to negotiate any changes in an open session.

“I would never want to do anything that’s detrimental to Gonzales County, so I didn’t quite understand what (Escobar) shared,” Anderson added. “I am happy to also remember the last meeting when I was here (in October), and I remember sitting up there and (current County Attorney Paul Watkins) said ‘we don’t negotiate an open session’ when I asked if it was customary to negotiate in open court in Gonzales County.

“I respected that advice from the meeting, so we don’t believe in negotiating in open court based on that last advice from Gonzales County’s counsel,

but we’re happy to answer questions, talk about anything, or share ideas that we have.”

La Fleur questioned Escobar about how a negotiation could take place if one member of the court votes against an executive session.

“You are never always going to have a unanimous decision with the court, so how do you get from where we’re at to negotiate?” La Fleur asked.

Escobar suggested the court could grant authority to “a particular county official to negotiate with a third party” as long as the vote is made in open session.

“Negotiations can happen outside of commissioners court as long as that authority is given,” Escobar said. “That’s just one of a few ways to be able to do that, but that’s not my call.”

A new meeting would have to be called no sooner than 72 hours after an agenda is posted if the court wanted to appoint La Fleur or another commissioner to be the lead negotiator and meet in private with LCRA officials, Escobar said.

Davis advised either the county judge or a group of three commissioners can call for a special meeting, but it must meet all requirements for posting under the Texas Open Meetings Act.

A notice for a 2 p.m Thursday, Dec. 19, called meeting — signed by Whiddon as Judge Pro Tem for the court — was posted later Monday during which the court will consider appointing an individual representative “to further negotiate with the Lower Colorado River Authority (LCRA), regarding the future use, leasing and possible benefits of the previously approved Emergency Communication Tower Project.”

Sec. 551.0725. COMMISSIONERS COURTS: DELIBERATION REGARDING CONTRACT BEING NEGOTIATED; CLOSED MEETING. (a) The commissioners court of a county may conduct a closed meeting to deliberate business and financial issues relating to a contract being negotiated if, before conducting the closed meeting: (1) the commissioners court votes unanimously that deliberation in an open meeting would have a detrimental effect on the position of the commissioners court in negotiations with a third person; and (2) the attorney advising the commissioners court issues a written determination that deliberation in an open meeting would have a detrimental effect on the position of the commissioners court in negotiations with a third person. (b) Notwithstanding Section 551.103(a), Government Code, the commissioners court must make a recording of the proceedings of a closed meeting to deliberate the information.



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PLAYSCAPE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

to day what it is to get up and put one foot in front of the other and not need something like this,” said Lions Club Park Committee Chair Garen Reese as she was overcome with emotion.

“The kids love it. As you can tell, we’ve seen lots of kids playing over the last several days, and we have also played on it. It means a lot that people would open their hearts and their checkbooks to support this.”

Reese said the club made funding and building the new playscape a high priority to tackle immediately after installing the sun shade at the adjacent Lions Splash Pad.

“There’s been numerous people that have played a very large role in seeing that this was designed, and reviewing playscapes, and making sure that we provided something that was really beneficial to our community,” Reese said.

The Gonzales Noon Lions Club Foundation, represented by President Cindy Rodriguez and Treasurer Britney Jones Caka, stepped up immediately, as did Gonzales Noon Lions Club President Kristi Posey and Lions Club International Foundation and Past District Governor Andy Rodriguez and Texas Lions District 2-S5 – Past District Governor Jane Istre.

The project got a much needed shot in the arm from Gonzales Economic Development Corporation executive director Susan Sankey and her board of directors as well as Gonzales Area Development Corporation (GADC), led by President David Lindeman.

From there the project started to gain a lot of momentum with assistance from G & K McLain Charitable Fund, Gonzales County Mental Health Advisory Board, The Horner Family Charitable Gift Fund and a late contribution via Amazon and Texas Sen. Lois Kolkhorst’s office.

City officials, including City Manager Tim Crow and Parks Director Ralph Camarillo, made



Gonzales Noon Lions Club, Gonzales EDC and City of Gonzales officials cut the ribbon to celebrate the grand opening of the new All-Inclusive Playscape at East Avenue Lions Park on Thursday, Dec. 12. The new playscape replaces the one the Lions Club first installed 25 years ago. Among those who played a big role in getting the new playscape built were Noon Lions Club President Kristi Posey, Noon Lions Club Foundation President Cindy Rodriguez, Noon Lions Club Park Committee Chair Garen Reese and Noon Lions Club Foundation Treasurer Britney Jones Caka.

LEW K. COHN

sure the old playscape was removed after the new playscape was installed, Reese said.

Even more exciting, however, was that the community bought into the need for the playground and donated more than what was originally sought, Reese added.

“Our original goal was \$275,000 and a large part of that comes from the EDC and LCIF, but our community

raised in excess of \$150,000 that exceeded our project total, which allowed us to add more flooring,” Reese said. “There’ll be other things that come out here as well to the park. We have a fountain and a really cool bench coming. There’s going to be other seating areas as well to provide people a lot of different opportunities to share the park and this space.”

Reese said she hopes that

the next generation of Lions will one day add on to the playscape so that it remains an asset for the community.

Cindy Rodriguez echoed Reese’s sentiments, stating she knows all Lions are “extremely excited about the community’s interest and investment in the All-Inclusive Playscape!”

“In addition to major funders, numerous individuals, churches, organizations,

financial institutions, and foundations have made monetary donations,” Cindy Rodriguez added. “The City of Gonzales removed the 25-year-old playscape and made way for the new and improved All-Inclusive Playscape we see standing in front of us today.”

“What a wonderful addition to our community! We invite children and parents to come to the playscape and see all the features it has to offer. As we gift Lions Playscape to the City of Gonzales, we are ever thankful that we were able to provide this unique playscape to our community.”



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