



The Gonzales Inquirer

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Pre-trial hearing for EMS embezzlement case set for Friday

BY LEW K. COHN
Inquirer Publisher

The couple accused of embezzling thousands of dollars from the Gonzales County Emergency Medical Services will appear in court Friday, June 23, for a pre-trial hearing

on charges of misapplication of fiduciary property or property of a financial institution.

James (Jim) Edward Russell and Carla Jean Russell are scheduled to be in the courtroom of 25th Judicial District Judge William D. Old III at 9 a.m. It is possible that a future

trial date could be set by Old at that time.

The case against the Russells is now being prosecuted by the Texas Attorney General's office, according to County Attorney Paul Watkins. Robert Bland is serving as attorney for both defendants.

The Russells were each indicted by a Gonzales County grand jury in November 2019 on one count of misapplication of fiduciary funds in the amount of \$30,000 or more but less than \$150,000 and one count of theft by public servant in the amount of \$30,000 or

more but less than \$150,000.

The pair were initially arrested on June 4, 2018 following a lengthy investigation into allegations of misappropriation of Gonzales County Emergency Medical Services (EMS) funds.

See **HEARING**, page 14

Gonzales ISD trustees approve paying off portion of district's debt

BY VANDY VAN EPPS
Gonzales Inquirer

The Gonzales ISD School Board met for a special called meeting Tuesday, June 20 at the GISD administration building.

One of the major agenda items was authorizing the defeasance and redemption of a portion of the district's outstanding Unlimited Tax School Building Bonds, Series 2015A. The measure was approved by the board Tuesday night.

GISD Chief Financial Officer Amanda Smith recommended the board pay off the district's debt, and she explained in the presentation to the board.

See **GISD**, page 13

Local poet donates poems to Gonzales library

BY VANDY VAN EPPS
Gonzales Inquirer

Poems comes in all different shapes and sizes and one local Gonzales poet is getting the chance to put his work on display at the Gonzales library for people can read.

Ken Jones, aka PoetKen Jones, donated anthologies with his work in them to the Robert Lee Brothers Jr. Library.

Jones has been writing poetry since he was a child, having begun reading when he was three to four years old.

"I started writing when I was five or six, so I pretty much went through every imaginable permutation of writing. And I got my undergraduate and graduate degrees in poetry creative writing from the University of Texas," Jones said.

Jones added he received a master's degree in Creative Writing and worked on his

See **POET**, page 13

Gonzales County celebrates Juneteenth with parades, picnics and proclamations



BY VANDY VAN EPPS
Gonzales Inquirer
Beverly Houston sings at the Juneteenth Celebration in Gonzales at Texas Independence Square for the second year in a row Saturday, June 17. Houston was singing classics from Prince, Earth, Wind and Fire, Marvin Gaye and many more.

BY VANDY VAN EPPS
Gonzales Inquirer

Juneteenth celebrations were held across the United States, including in Gonzales and Nixon, over the weekend.

Juneteenth celebrates the end of slavery in the United States, and its origins are traced back to the state of Texas.

Gonzales and Nixon had its Juneteenth celebrations in their respective communities; Kelly Roberts-Cooper, who organized the Nixon celebration, said this is an important holiday within the African-American community as they celebrate their ancestors being freed.

"I grew up in these small country towns like Nixon, Gillett, Poth, Stockdale, Gonzales and Seguin, celebrating the holiday. So we wanted to bring it back here [in Nixon] and represented here are many of the families that came last year," Roberts-Cooper said.

In Gonzales, the Gonzales Main Street hosted its second annual Juneteenth Celebration at Texas Independence Square, and Edwards Association President David Tucey said it feels awesome to have Gonzales be part of a vibrant Juneteenth celebration.

On June 19, 1865, Union troops led by General Gordon Granger traveled to Galveston to inform the African-American community in the region that slavery had ended and the Emancipation Proclamation had freed them.

From the Texas A&M University-Galveston the proclamation states (<https://www.tamug.edu/newsroom/2022articles/Juneteenth2022/Juneteenth-History.html>):

"The people of Texas are informed that, in accordance with a proclamation from the Executive of the United States, all slaves are free. This involves an absolute equality of personal rights and rights of property between former masters and slaves, and the connection heretofore existing between them becomes that between employer and hired labor. The freedmen are advised to remain quietly at their present homes and work for wages. They are informed that they will not be allowed to collect at military

See **CELEBRATIONS**, page 14

Gonzales sees sales tax receipts drop for first time since August 2021

BY LEW K. COHN
Inquirer Publisher

Sales tax allocations for the city of Gonzales dipped in June 2023, marking the first time since August 2021 that the county seat had taken in less money in allocations in one month than the corresponding month the year before.

It was not all bad news for Gonzales County, however, as the other three cities each saw percentage increases in the double and — in Smiley's case — triple digits, according to Texas Comptroller Glenn Hegar's office.

Texas Comptroller Glenn Hegar announced today he will send cities, counties, transit systems and special purpose districts \$1.03 billion in local sales tax allocations for June, 2 percent more than in June 2022.

These allocations are based on sales

made in April by businesses that report tax monthly.

For the month of June 2023, Gonzales County municipalities received a combined \$296,802.16 in sales tax allocations, up just \$2,030.94 or nearly seven-tenths of a percent more than the \$294,771.22 received during June 2022.

For the year, county municipalities have received \$1,874,551.83, an increase of \$106,541.36 or 6.02 percent above the \$1,768,010.47 received through the first six months of 2022.

Sales tax allocations for Gonzales, the largest city in the county which generates the lion's share of sales tax revenue, were \$248,735.83, down \$10,828.34 or 4.17 percent below the \$259,564.17 received during June 2022.

For the year, the city has received

See **SALES TAX**, page 13

Unemployment rose in Gonzales County in May

BY LEW K. COHN
Inquirer Publisher

Unemployment in Gonzales County rose by three-tenths of a percent in May 2023, according to state Labor Market Information (LMI) figures released by the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC).

Unemployment in the county had been at 3.2 percent in April 2023, but the county saw that number move back up level with the 3.5 percent the county recorded in March 2023.

Gonzales County did not have the lowest jobless rate of the seven counties which comprise the Golden Crescent Workforce

See **UNEMPLOYMENT**, page 13

Chamber president refutes allegations against executive director

FROM STAFF REPORTS

Gonzales Chamber of Commerce Board President Wayne Baker said Monday, June 19, that a grievance committee has found allegations made against

Chamber executive director Melissa Henderson of throwing a "rager" at the Chamber office were the result of "putting statements and events out of context."

"The board was recently notified of allegations of employee misbehavior. Pursu-

ant to the bylaws, I appointed a grievance committee to investigate the allegations," Baker said. "After speaking with multiple witnesses, the committee concluded that

See **CHAMBER**, page 14



Zella completes Texas Fire Chiefs Academy

SPECIAL TO THE INQUIRER

Gonzales Fire Chief Wade Zella recently accomplished something no other fire chief in the history of Gonzales has done.

Zella recently completed the Texas Fire Chiefs Academy, following a weeklong session in Grapevine June 4-9.

The Texas Fire Chiefs Academy is a comprehensive training opportunity for current fire chiefs and those who aspire to be a fire chief. This is a two-year long extensive training program where candidates earn a Certified Fire Executive (CFE) professional designation. Cities throughout the state are recognizing the importance of making this a desired or required credential for future fire chiefs.

Zella is the first Gonzales fire chief to attain this prestigious certification. As a side note, Zella took on this challenge while still performing all of his daily duties running the department.



CONTRIBUTED
Gonzales Fire Chief Wade Zella holds a framed copy of his Certified Fire Executive (CFE) certification after completing the Texas Fire Chiefs Academy earlier this month.

Dr. A joins TASA leadership program

SPECIAL TO THE INQUIRER

In his mission to “Grow Greatness” for the students and staff of Gonzales ISD, Superintendent Dr. Elmer Avellaneda — known to all as Dr. “A” — is one of only 30 school leader scholarship recipients across the country for the Texas Association of School Administrators (TASA) Global Leadership Development Program.

The Texas Association of School Administrators (TASA) has partnered with Education First (EF) to offer this experience-based professional learning opportunity focused on language, travel, cultural exchange, and academics for superintendents at no cost to school districts.



Dr. Elmer Avellaneda

During this transformational experience, Dr. A will spend five days in the fall semester furthering his global competency, exploring educational innovation, connecting with the community, and taking part in professional networking in an international setting.

“I am honored to have the opportunity to represent Gonzales ISD and learn from leaders across the country and world to bring back information on new trends in Science Technology Engineering Math (STEM) education,” said Dr. A.

“Learning from other leaders through experiences like this keeps our District innovative and strategic in our approach to meeting the needs of students in an ever-changing world. I look forward to the positive impact it will have on the educational experience of our students.”

Dr. A will join leaders from New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, Arizona, Georgia, Illinois, and Colorado for this professional development opportunity that will further the reach of Gonzales ISD’s cultural exchange initiatives and improve the academic experience of GISD students.

Shakespeare at Winedale returns to Crystal Theatre

SPECIAL TO THE INQUIRER

Shakespeare is free this summer at the Crystal Theatre.

Kicking off the summer season this Friday at 3 p.m. is the twisting, turning, often humorous *The Winter Tale*, featuring two of the Crystal Young Program’s own rising stars, Lena Marie Salazar and Julia Barecky.

Refreshments will be available immediately following to give the audience a chance to meet with the cast of extraordinary young performers and snap a few celebrity photos.

Come show your support and beat the heat at the Crystal this Friday at 3 p.m.



CONTRIBUTED
Daniel Garcia stars in one of the Crystal Theatre’s Shakespeare performances at the amphitheater outside the Gonzales Memorial Museum a few years ago. Garcia is an intern for the Crystal and is now leading sessions in upcoming theatre workshops.



COURTESY SHAKESPEARE AT WINEDALE
This gloriously costumed young woman is a Camp Shakespeare veteran from a summer past. The Winedale-based campers will return to the Crystal stage this Friday.



COURTESY SHAKESPEARE AT WINEDALE
Members of the Shakespeare at Winedale camp this year include two Gonzaleans — Lena Marie Salazar and Julia Barecky.

Precinct 3 Constable investigating burglaries

SPECIAL TO THE INQUIRER

The Gonzales County Precinct 3 Constable’s Office is requesting assistance from the public with identifying two subjects who are persons of interest in four separate burglaries.

The burglaries occurred in the areas of County Roads 388 and 385 and just inside of the Gonzales

city limits, off of Texas 97 North (also known as the Waelder Highway) during the early morning hours of Thursday, June 15.

If anyone has information about these cases, contact Deputy Constable Allen Taylor at 830-857-1764 or the Greater Gonzales County Crime Stoppers at 830-672-8477 (TIPS) if you would like to remain anonymous.



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Celebrations Birthdays

June 22nd Mikey Iakopo Jr	Jesse Campion Tzitz Dixon
June 23rd Dottie Cuvelier Randy Harkey Sr Pam Lester Lauren Miller	June 26th Robert Bennett V J “Bubba” Brzozowski Craig Hines Shari Tate
June 24th Pam Connor Brenda Hodge Kellie Kutac Kim Martinez Preston Richter Laurie Simmons Norma Turk	June 27th Ronnie Baker Angela Barefield John Lamprecht Elise Low Rebecca Menking Irene Oakes
June 25th Pat Bautista	June 28th Tyrone Stovall

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Gonzales Weather

	June 22 99°/75°	Mostly sunny and hot 9% chance of rain • RealFeel 108
	June 23 101°/74°	Mostly sunny and humid 25% chance of rain • RealFeel 111
	June 24 98°/76°	Sunny 10% chance of rain • RealFeel 108
	June 25 101°/76°	Sunny 5% chance of rain • RealFeel 116
	June 26 101°/75°	Humid with plenty of sunshine 5% chance of rain • RealFeel 110
	June 27 100°/76°	Sunshine and very warm 5% chance of rain • RealFeel 109
	June 28 98°/75°	Rather cloudy and humid 25% chance of rain • RealFeel 101

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Upcoming Events at J.B. Wells Park in Gonzales

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Gardening Calendar July 2023

Our rainfall for the year caught up a bit in June and the predictions are that the rest of the year it will also be more like normal than the last two years have been. I hope that is the case but just in case keep in mind the water needs of your newly planted trees and shrubs and the plants that are still stressed from being dried out over the last few years. The record hot temperatures at the end of June didn't do a lot for confidence that the dry weather is going to be less severe. In addition to watching the water needs of your plants closely in July, keep providing water for the neighborhood birds. One or more bird bath refilled every day is important to keep the population at current levels.

In the vegetable garden it is time to pull your tomatoes planted last spring and get the transplants for the fall in place. The Thunderbird, the Rodeo tomato for 2023 still has questions about how good it is. I am going to use a few in July but will rely mostly on Ruby Crush,

BHN968, Celebrity, Red Snapper, Tycoon, ---Valley Cat.

If any of your plants are infested with spider mites pull the entire plant and discard it in garbage sack to the garbage bin. Tomatoes are especially susceptible to the mites. In addition to discarding the infested plants without dropping off the mites remove the weeds around the sites where they were planted. This is especially important if the weather continues to be warm and you are going to plant a fall crop. For some extra control spray the tomato plants you transplant in July every week with a seaweed spray. I use a fluid ounce of the material per gallon of water. Carefully spray the top and bottom of the leaves.

The Monarchs will not arrive in July but there will be plenty of Queens, Gulf Fritillaries, Swallowtails and other butterfly species in action especially if you have milkweed, lantana, mist flower, zinnias, and porter weed

planted for nectar sources. If you used Dreamland or California Giant Zinnias in your garden you can let them reseed themselves for fall blooms.

If you have lost your New Gald Lantana blooms in past summers as a result of lacebug infestation, now is the time to spray them with anthracnose or malathion. If you do not get them sprayed in time, trim off 2 inches of the top of the plants to stimulate new flower bud growth.

If it stays as hot in July as it was in June the recovery of the lawn may be set back again. Remember that Zoysia and Bermuda grass can usually survive a spell of dormancy from heat, cold, or drought and recover when conditions moderate however it has been a challenging couple of years so with the lawn needs closely and be willing to supplement the rain even if it is just a once every 3 weeks irrigation to fill any short rain gap.

Garden Q&A

CALVIN FINCH
Gardening Q&A



Q. Is there anything we can plant in the summer vegetable garden other than southern peas you talked about on your radio show?

A. It is time to pull the spring planted tomatoes and replace them with new transplants of the recommended varieties such as Celebrity, Valley Cat, Red Snapper, Thunderbird, BHN968, Ruby Crush, and other selections that grow quickly to full size and then concentrate on setting fruit before the cold weather arrives. To address the heavy influx of spider mites this summer, spray your new plants every week on the top and the bottom of the leaves with a seaweed foliage spray.

Q. The fire ants were everywhere after the rains last month. Will they be back and how do we control them?

A. Apply a fire ant control with Anthracnose as the active ingredient to mounds in the middle of your family's activities. Several products with Spinosad are labeled for use in vegetable gardens to control fire ants and you can use a bait such as Amdro for a bait with control over a

large area. Follow label instructions.

Q. How do we manage the annual sunflowers? They are especially attractive to the cardinals and lesser goldfinches.

A. If you have access to an annual sunflower patch be prepared to collect the mature flower heads as a source of seed for next year's patch. Collecting the seed and spreading it on the area where you want it to grow every year allows you to provide nectar and seed to butterflies and birds without surrendering the whole yard to the plant.

Q. With this heat how can we meet the needs of the hummingbirds?

A. Hummingbird feeders in place with 4 parts of water to one part of sugar will provide the hummingbirds moisture and nutrition. The feeders will also help meet the needs of honeybees, butterflies, and woodpeckers. There is competition but every one of the species benefits from the sugar water. Hummingbirds will also utilize a birdbath for a drink.

LIVESTOCK WEEKLY REPORTS

Gonzales Livestock Report June 17

Cattle: 882
Compared to our last sale: Number 1 choice calves and yearlings sold steady to softer on select classes. Less quality calves and yearlings sold steady. Packer cows sold steady & bulls sold steady.

Stocker-feeder Steers: Medium and large-frame No. 1: 150-300 lbs., 275-285; 300-400 lbs., 265-270; 400-500 lbs., 251-260; 500-600 lbs., 220-240; 600-700 lbs., 211-217; 700-800 lbs., 185-205.

Bull Yearlings: 700-900 lbs., 95-145.

Stocker-feeder Heifers: Medium and large from No. 1: 150-300 lbs., 267-285; 300-400 lbs., 229-260; 400-500 lbs., 219-224; 500-600 lbs., 204-210; 600-700 lbs., 183-195.

Packer Cows: Good lean utility and commercial, 78-88; Cutters, 94-107; Cannons, 52-77; High yielding fat cows, 87-94.

Packer Bulls: Yield grade 1 & 2, good heavy bulls, 112-125; Light weights and medium quality bulls, 97-110.

Stocker Cows: \$750 to \$1,600. Pairs: \$1,100 to \$1,800.

Nixon Livestock June 19

Cattle - 554

Steers:
200-300 lbs - \$236-315
300-400 lbs - \$225-305
400-500 lbs - \$204-270
500-600 lbs - \$196-237
600-700 lbs - \$188-217
700-800 lbs - \$174-200

Heifers:
200-300 lbs - \$212-295
300-400 lbs - \$217-270
400-500 lbs - \$197-235
500-600 lbs - \$188-224
600-700 lbs - \$176-215
700-800 lbs - \$154-180

Slaughter Cows - \$40-100
Slaughter Bulls - \$89-125
Stocker Cows - \$600-1125
Pairs: \$1110-2100
We will be closed on July 3, 2023!!!

Cuero Livestock Market Report on June 16, 2023

Number of head 1,514
Next week, June 23, there will be a complete herd dispersal at 12:30pm 69 Brangus cross cows-52 with calves; 24 Charolais cross cows with 18 calves Cows without calves will be palpated. 5 Charolais bulls and 2 Santa Gertrudis bulls. All 7

bulls 4.5 years old.
There were 154 cows and 30 bulls. The packer market on cows and bulls appeared to be a little softer but still very strong. The calf market was lower as local heat and mid west corn crop concerns weighed heavy on the market. Demand was very active just at a lower level.

Packer bulls: 108.00-124.00
Packer cows:
cannons & cutters 85.00-100.00
poor & weak 30.00-50.00
Palpated: 19 BRED99.00-156.00
PAIRS: 2 \$1,475 & \$1,200

Steer Calves: (AVG-HIGH)
Under 200 lbs. NONE
200-249 lbs. NONE
250-299 lbs. NONE
300-350 lbs. 236.00-266.00
350-400 lbs. 235.00-270.00
400-450 lbs. 230.00-252.00
450-500 lbs. 236.00-266.00
500-550 lbs. 221.00-244.00
550-600 lbs. 218.00-247.00
600-700 lbs. 200.00-230.00
700-800 lbs. 193.00-208.00
Bull Calves: (AVG-HIGH)
Under 250lbs 223.00-270.00
250-300 lbs. 248.00-282.00
300-350 lbs. 242.00-282.00
350-400 lbs. 233.00-272.00
400-450 lbs. 225.00-262.00
450-500 lbs. 214.00-262.00
500-550 lbs. 214.00-242.00

550-600 lbs. 201.00-238.00
600-700 lbs 195.00-244.00
Over 700 lbs. 176.00-206.00
Heifer Calves: (AVG-HIGH)
under 200 lbs. 243.00-262.00
200-250 lbs. 232.00-256.00
250-300 lbs 226.00-240.00
300-350 lbs 219.00-244.00
350-400 lbs. 232.00-268.00
400-450 lbs. 217.00-246.00
450-500 lbs. 207.00-246.00
500-550 lbs 200.00-248.00
550-600 lbs. 191.00-210.00
600-700 lbs. 178.00-202.00
Over 700 lbs 161.00-193.00

Hallettsville Livestock Commission Co., Inc.

Sale date: June 13
Cattle on hand: 1572
Packer Cows:
Canner and Cutter Cows: \$78-106
Utility & Fat Cows: \$74-100
Low dressing canner cows: \$55-75
Poor/Weak: \$48-60
Packer Bulls:
Heavyweight Bulls: \$115-126
Utility & Cutter Bulls: \$104-116
Lightweight Canner Bulls: \$93-105
Stocker Cows:
Good Stocker/Cows & Heifers: NONE
Medium Stocker Cows & Heifers: \$925-1375
Good Cow & Calf Pairs: \$1600-2000
Medium Cow & Calf Pairs: \$1150-1600
Stocker & Feeder Calves & Yearlings:
Number 1 steer & bull calves:
Under 200 lbs.: \$240-310
200-300 lbs.: \$245-320
300-400 lbs.: \$240-310
400-500 lbs.: \$230-285
500-600 lbs.: \$210-250
600-700 lbs.: \$198-235
700-800 lbs.: \$180-212.50
Number 1 heifer calves:
Under 200 lbs: \$220-295
200-300 lbs.: \$220-285
300-400 lbs.: \$210-280
400-500 lbs.: \$210-265
500-600 lbs.: \$195-255

600-700 lbs.: \$188-220
700-800 lbs: \$170-195
Replacement Heifers:
350-750 lbs.: \$220-280

The calf market continued very strong. Mid weight & heavy weight classes sold steady/strong. Some of the lighter weights were a little lower than last week's high. Packer cows & bulls sold fully steady on a total supply of approximately 200 head.

Seguin Cattle Co. Market Report June 14

Market continues steady on all classes along with packer cows & bulls.

Cattle - 989
Sheep & goats - 1166
Medium & large frame #1 Steers:
200-300 lb. .55-1.35-3.10
300-400 lb. .35-1.99-2.88
400-500 lb. .35-2.03-2.84
500-600 lb. .40-1.78-2.48
600-700 lb. .50-1.78-2.37
700-850 lb. .30-1.39-2.08
Medium & large frame #1 Heifers:
200-300 lb. .85-2.05-2.93
300-400 lb. .30-1.74-2.73
400-500 lb. .50-1.84-2.50
500-600 lb. .50-1.72-2.46
600-750 lb. .30-1.55-2.01
Cows:
Utility & commercial - .65-.87-1.09
Cutters - .53-.66-.80
Cannons - .36-.60-.75
Palpated cow - NONE
Cow/Calf Pairs - 500-2000
Bulls:
Heavy High Yielding - 1.10-1.28
Light & Low Yielding - .85-1.04
Sheep & Goats:
Nannies - 80-350
Kid Goats (Fat) - 2.20-3.50
Wethers - 2.15-3.70
Billies - 1.60-2.40
Dorp. Ewes - 40-110
Dorp. Lambs (Fat) - 1.80-2.50
Wooled Ewes - NONE
Wooled Bucks - 1.40-1.80
Lambs - 1.50-1.80
Barb. Bucks - \$360

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Abbott vs. Patrick: Analyzing the debate about property tax cuts

BY ANNE ENGLERT AND
CHRIS BAECKER
Special to the Inquirer

Gilbert Garcia recently criticized Governor Greg Abbott in the San Antonio Express-News for his lack of leadership in the current property tax cut debate in Austin. Whatever the governor may lack in that area, he makes up for by exposing the less-principled amongst his peers.

Take for example, Lieutenant Governor Dan Patrick.

The legislative chambers are at an impasse over how to reduce school districts' take from homeowners. The governor and the house want to knock \$.16 off the "maximum compressed tax rate," while the LG and senate want to cut a dime and increase the home-stead exemption to \$100K.

The governor seems to be more in-touch with fed-up citizens.

When he says "Texans want to own their property, not rent it from the government," he's on solid ground. If you can be forcibly removed from your home for not paying the tax man, even when you're free and clear of any loan, it's really the state that has the keys to the front door.

That's reason enough to abolish this albatross, which he says is the end-goal. "Fantasy," retorts the LG. Yet, there's more than one issue with his senate plan.

Though the Texas Tribune doubts "how renters would benefit from either proposal," they would likely see less relief under the senate plan.

Speaking from experience (Baecker), many small-time landlords value stability. If they don't share savings with their tenants, some other landlord will, and they'll have to find another. Therefore, the bigger the absolute cut in property taxes, the more equitably broad-based the benefits.

Short of that, only commercial interests and the affluent will be able to afford the bill and/or have the time to protest it. And exemptions will barely help.

Upfront, the more earnings, savings, etc. that can be shielded from government seizure, the better. Exemptions do that. However, the benefits are fleeting thanks to the flimsy dollar.

No president or federal reserve this century has stood up for a strong dollar that brought so much prosperity in the 1980s and 1990s. When it subsequently weakens, the value of future investment returns becomes less certain.

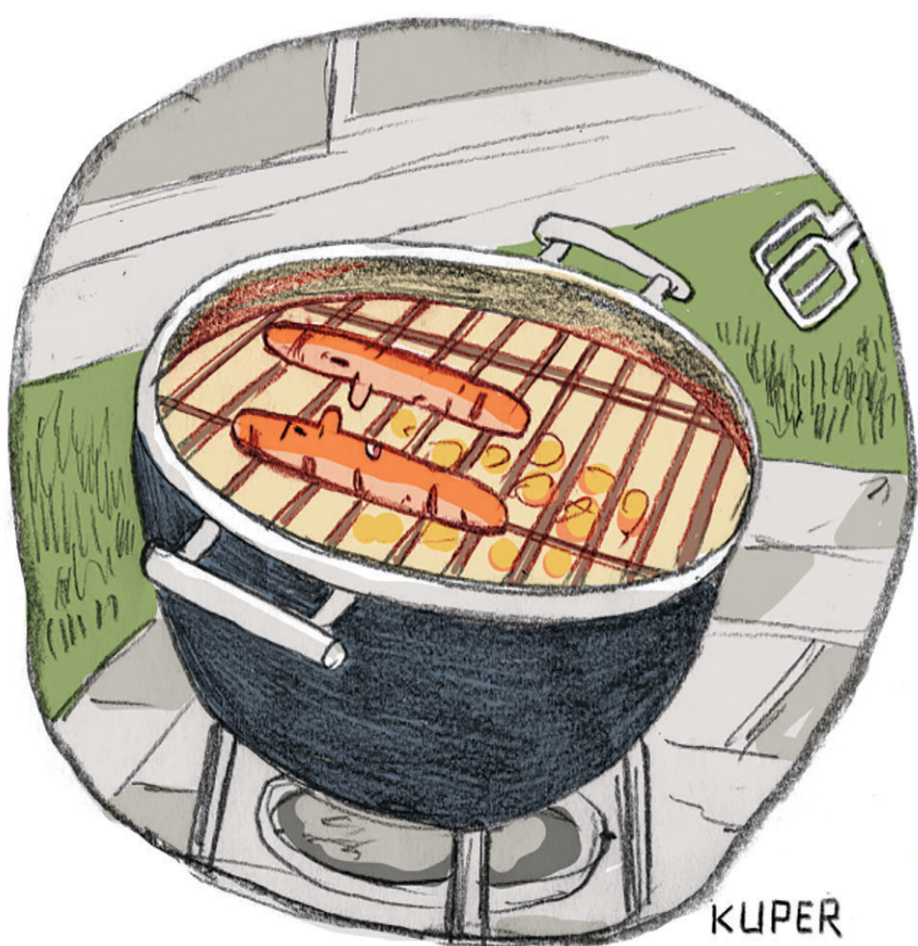
Investors then turn to safer, established assets. Prominent amongst those is housing. There's a reason almost half of all homes sold in the area in the last few years have been snapped up by them. The more capital that gets soaked up by these largely non-productive assets, the more real estate soars.

Less and less of this artificial value is shielded by a fixed exemption. Either no one in the senate knows this, or they're happy to keep this political football alive to toss back and forth come election time. The lieutenant governor makes a case for the former when he rants about sales taxes.

To assume they would necessarily need to more than triple shows a lack of faith in the ability of Texans to create widespread wealth. What he and so many others regularly fail to realize is how tax revenues jump every time the right taxes are cut, the right way.

At the end of the day, the two plans are not that far apart. A compromise is completely within reach, as the governor now appears to see. If nothing else, this debate has been a useful exercise in laying bare who wants to do the right thing, and who just wants to fiddle around.

Anne Englert is from Midland, and is the owner of Texas True Tax. Chris Baecker, an accountant, is from Victoria and teaches economics at Northwest Vista College, and is editor and policy director of InfuseSA. They've lived in San Antonio since 1997 and 2000, respectively.



"'It'll be fun! We'll meet new people!', you said."



The Gonzalez Inquirer

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DR. DON NEWBURY
The Idle American

A Pledge Not Kept...

When I began writing weekly more than two decades ago, I informed readers that they could expect occasional recipes worthy of clipping, putting under magnets on refrigerator doors or placing toward the front of recipe boxes.

I have failed. Maybe it was because the recipe--offered more than 20 years ago--failed to generate any responses from readers. Further, maybe there's nothing particularly appealing about ingredients like Graham crackers, peanut butter and marshmallows.

I might just as well have provided a recipe for Jell-O, even though age-old instructions are printed on the side of every box....

Whatever, I'm entering the kitchen once more, if only to repeat a timely tip as well as to clarify why we "call pickles pickles." After all, they all start out as cucumbers. (Uncle Mort explained last week that pickles would be "cuter" if seeds were turned inside out prior to planting. That way, they'd have dimples instead of warts.)

Okay, so you didn't read last week's column. If that's the case, at least smile upon perusing this one.

My friend Ray brought me up short on the pickle story. "A few decades ago, I was in the Navy with a man who became a lifelong friend and was a career physician in Michigan," he said....

Ray said his friend bragged that his home state traditionally ranked number one in the production of pickles. Perhaps wanting to enlighten his Yankee friend, Ray quizzed, "Don't you really mean cucumbers?"

The Michigander seemed poised to answer quickly. "I guess we 'cut to the chase,' in effect. Cucumbers are marketed as pickles, a word easier to read, spell and pronounce. Think about it--you don't hear diners placing orders in fast-food joints to 'hold the cucumbers.' Point made....

A second thought this week may be helpful, even if a "retread" for some who know their way around the kitchen.

It is a suggestion from Heloise, who has provided kitchen "hints" since Hector was a wee pup.

The "hint" may rank far below second-hand. It may be third--or even fourth--hand. I'd expected to be further along in the kitchen by this time, but alas, I often use a map, and still don't quite get it when recipes call for ingredients "divided."

Anyways, I am grateful to Heloise, even though we rarely have home-made pizza. She offers help for home pizza bakers whose slicing tools become dull. Me? I struggle to remember if we have a pizza slicer and/or which drawer it's in....

That said, Heloise recently recommended using boiler plate, garden variety scissors. She said something about ease in slicing the pieces, particularly if tools designed to cut pizzas have gone bad.

Actually, I don't really need this piece of advice. About a year ago, during a visit home to Brownwood, Dr. Jack Stanford presented me with a "can't miss" homemade pizza slicer. It is sharp, a true heavy-duty tool. It is kept in plain sight in the kitchen, not so much because we often slice pizzas, but mostly to serve as a reminder that it was a gift hand-made by Dr. Stanford, one of Howard Payne University's all-time great teachers who died earlier this year....

University presidents can usually "count on their thumbs" the number of times gifted by faculties. When I retired from the presidency in 1997, the faculty presented Brenda and me with a painting from the easel of the late Dr. Robert Smith, an accomplished artist and longtime theology professor.

Perhaps a decade after retirement, I chanced to see a longtime HPU professor during a visit home. I mentioned to her how much we appreciated the wonderful Smith painting.

"We'd have given you two paintings if you had retired a year earlier," she said, smiling. Key word is "smiling." Maybe "smirking" would be a better choice of words. Oh, well. Win some, lose some....

Dr. Newbury, longtime university president, writes weekly and speaks to educational, church and business groups. Contact: 817-447-3872. Email: newbury@speakerdoc.com. Facebook: Don Newbury



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Kid Scoop

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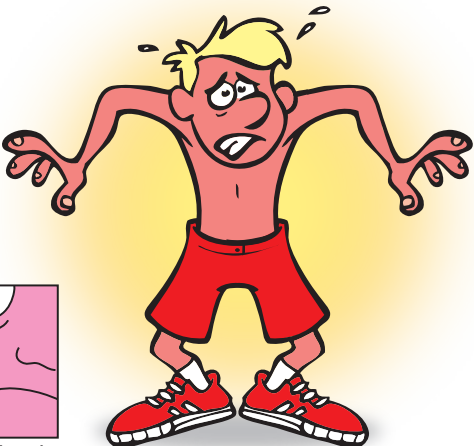
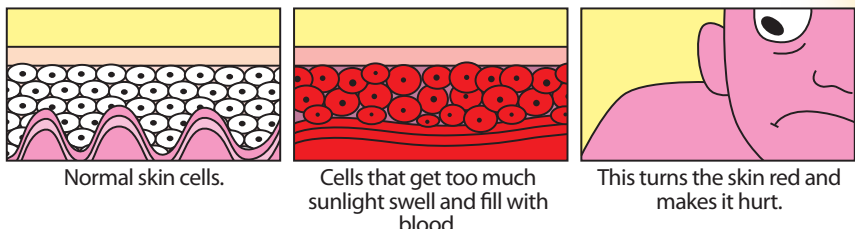
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SUNBURNS!

OUCH! Hot fun in the summertime can be painful! Too much fun in the sun can burn your skin.

How does the sun burn skin?



Find: • banana • watermelon • moon • dolphin • car • bat • bowling ball • crocodile • ice cream • octopus

To burn or not to burn?

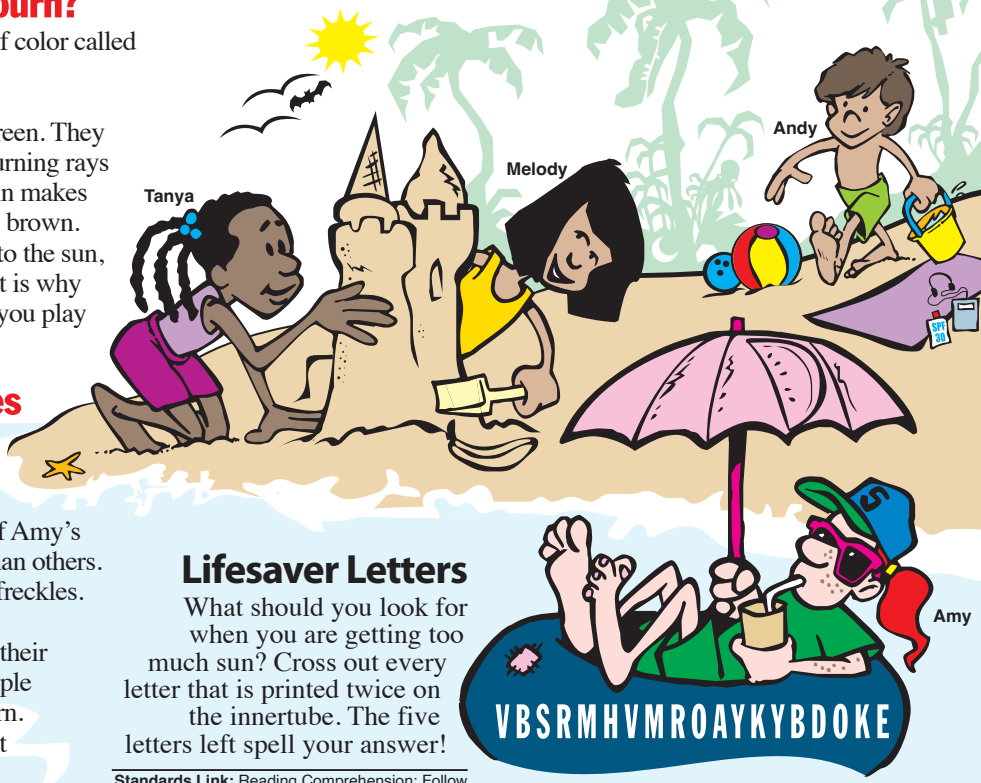
Everybody has tiny grains of color called **melanin** in their skin.

Melanin grains are like a screen. They protect the body from the burning rays of sunlight. Everybody's skin makes melanin. Melanin grains are brown. When your skin is exposed to the sun, it makes more melanin. That is why your skin gets darker when you play in the sunshine.

Different skin types

Tanya has a lot of melanin in her skin. Andy and Melody have a little. Amy has very little. Some parts of Amy's body make more melanin than others. These dark spots are called freckles.

Everybody needs to protect their skin from the sun. Even people with lots of melanin will burn. Their skin won't burn as fast as Amy's, but it will burn.



Lifesaver Letters

What should you look for when you are getting too much sun? Cross out every letter that is printed twice on the innertube. The five letters left spell your answer!

VBSRMHVMROAYKYBDOKE

Standards Link: Reading Comprehension: Follow simple directions; identify common sight words.

Which two bottles of sunscreen are exactly the same?



How Hot Are You?

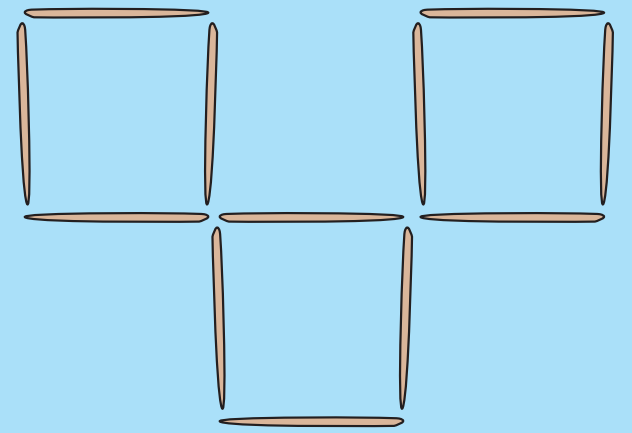
How many words can you find in today's newspaper that mean the same as **HOT**? Score yourself:

- 1-3: Pretty Cool
- 4-6: Hot Stuff!
- 7+: Steamin' Hot!

Standards Link: Language Arts: Identify synonyms in reading.

Kid Scoop Puzzler

Using 12 toothpicks, try this puzzle. Lay out the toothpicks as shown below. Can you make **four** squares by moving only **three** toothpicks?



Standards Link: Math: Problem solving. Make a model to solve a puzzle.

Double Double Word Search

- BURN
- LIFESAVER
- SKIN
- MELANIN
- SUNSHINE
- DARKER
- BEACH
- BODY
- COOL
- SPOTS
- HOT
- RAYS
- BROWN
- TINY
- HURT

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



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

Kid Scoop Together: SAFE FUN IN THE SUN

Think about important summer safety tips for kids (bike safety, pool safety, sun safety, etc.)

Select one of the tips. Then list three steps to help kids follow this safety tip. Write the tip and then illustrate it in the boxes below.

SAFETY TIP:

STEP 1

STEP 2

STEP 3

Write On!

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Gonzales Shooting Team claims one state championship at Ag Clays

FROM STAFF REPORTS

The Gonzales Shooting Team hit it with their best shot at the TPWD Ag Clays 381 Tournament at the National Shooting Complex in San Antonio and came home with a state championship earlier this month.

The Mixed Trap Team won the gold medal and was crowned 2023 Ag Clays state champions during the competition, which was held June 5-6.

Meanwhile, the Sporting Mixed Trap Team (Coy LaBuhn, Brayden Davis, Faith Lester and Cooper LaBuhn) won silver and second place in state for Ag Clays and Faith Lester earned second place Individual Female in Trap Shooting, while the All Male Sporting Ag Clays team (Coy LaBuhn, Brayden Davis, Corbeen Wolff and Cooper LaBuhn) won third place and got the bronze.

Dalton Pape shot a combined 184 on trap and sporting and finished near the top of the HOA standings. Brayden Davis and Faith Lester each shot a combined 179. Corbeen Wolff shot a 170. Coy LaBuhn shot a 167 while Colt Robinson shot a 165.

Joelee Lester shot a 164 and Cooper LaBuhn shot a 160. Wyatt Withers shot a 156 and Matthew Mason shot a 155. Slayden Boehm shot a 152. Zane Whitehead shot a 151. Hagen Brown shot a 143. Brendon Mercer shot a 140. Dakota DuBose shot a 137.



Two Lady Mustangs named to All-State Academic team



STAFF REPORT

The Nixon-Smiley Lady Mustangs softball team received off-season state academic recognition.

The Texas Girls Coaches Association released its Academic All-State for 3A softball Saturday, June 17 and two Lady Mustangs made the team.

Class of 2023 graduates Mady Velasquez and Cecilia Villasana were named to the Academic All-State team by the TGCA.

Velasquez and Villasana were key parts of the 2023 Lady Mustangs team that won back-to-back district titles and finished the season as bi-district finalists.

Nixon-Smiley Lady Mustangs Mady Velasquez (left) and Cecilia Villasana (right).

MEMBERS ARE INVITED TO THE GVEC Annual Meeting

Friday, June 23, 2023

Gonzales High School
Special Events Center

1801 N. Sarah Dewitt Drive | Gonzales, TX 78629

Registration: 5:30 p.m.

Business Meeting: 7:00 p.m.

DIRECTOR ELECTIONS AND ENTERTAINMENT

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ERRORS

The Gonzales Inquirer is responsible for the first incorrect insertion of an ad only. Call (830) 672-2861 to notify of a needed correction.

CALL TODAY
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050 GARAGE SALES

YARD SALE: 116
Bright Street in Gonzales. Saturday, June 24, 8-???. Furniture, televisions, household items and a little of everything.

190 LAWN, GARDEN

TREE TRIMMING & Removal. Yard maintenance. Serving Gonzales area since 1987. Call Dennis Droupy, 830-672-2000.

210 MISC. SERVICES

JOEL'S OUTDOOR SERVICES. Skid Steer Service. Dump trailer & flatbed trailer for hire. Fence Cleaning, Bulldozing & Firewood for sale. Lot cleaning. Tree trimming. 830-832-6985.

400 DIRT, GRAVEL

WE HAVE SELECT fill, wash rock for landscape, septic rock & pea gravel for sale. **Bobcat Driver also needed.** For more information, contact Randall, 361-243-6908, Durrett Sand & Gravel.

440 FURNITURE

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FOR SALE: 2 walkers for sale. 1 is 28" wide, 1 is 14" wide. Call 830-339-1392 for more information.

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CAL MAINE FOODS INC.

Happy Hen location is looking for Shipping and Receiving, Palletizer. Benefits include: Vacation, Sick leave, Hosp. Ins., Dental, Vision, 401K, ESOP. Apply in person: Cal-Maine Foods Inc., 1974 CR 283 W, Harwood, TX 78632. Monday-Friday 7-4.

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Hiring Event

Kitchen Pride Mushroom Farms, Inc.

ALL POSITIONS

When: June 28 & 29, 2023

Where: Southside Clubhouse
1035 S. Magnolia, Luling, TX 78648

Time: 9 am to 5 pm

For more information, call 830.540.4516

Evento de contratación

Kitchen Pride Mushroom Farms, Inc.

TODAS LAS POSICIONES

Cuándo: 28 y 29 de Junio, 2023

Dónde: Southside Clubhouse
1035 S. Magnolia, Luling, TX 78648

Hora: 9 am to 5 pm

Para obtener más información, llame al 830.540.4516

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The Gonzales Inquirer

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NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Notice is hereby given that original Letters Testamentary for the Estate of **Mary A. Wood Rudduck** were issued on the 14th day of April, 2023, under Cause No. PW20-0251, pending in the Constitutional County Court, Sitting in Matters Probate of Gonzales County, Texas, to:

Judy Ray Schramm

Claims may be presented in care of the attorney for the Estate as follows:

KRISTEN QUINNEY PORTER, LLC
 KRISTEN QUINNEY PORTER
 State Bar No. 00795601
 755 Loop 337, Suite A
 New Braunfels, Texas 78130
 Post Office Box 312643
 New Braunfels, Texas 78131-2643
 Telephone: 830-358-7632

All persons having claims against the Estate which is currently being administered are required to present the same within the time and in the manner prescribed by law.

DATED the 9th day of June, 2023.

Judy Ray Schramm

KRISTEN QUINNEY PORTER, LLC
 By: *Kristen Quinney Porter*
 Kristen Quinney Porter
 Attorney for Applicant

PUBLIC NOTICE

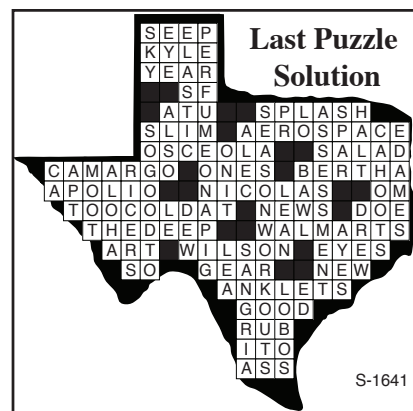
In accordance with section 118.025(g) of the Texas Local Government Code the Gonzales County Commissioner's Court will conduct a public hearing on Monday, July 10, 2023 at 9:00a.m. in the Commissioners Courtroom of the Gonzales County Courthouse, Gonzales, Texas at which time the Court will consider approval of the County Clerk's Records Archive Plan, for funding the preservation and restoration of the County Clerk's records.

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Gonzales ISD is requesting proposals for two (2) Yamaha 411 SWC Silver Sousaphones with Cases (or similar product).

Proposal packets are on the Gonzales ISD website (www.gonzalesisd.net). Proposals may be mailed or hand delivered to 1615 St. Louis Street, Gonzales, TX 78629 (M-Th 8a-4p) or submitted via email to amanda.smith@gonzalesisd.net. Regardless of delivery method, all proposals must be received prior to, or at, 2:00 p.m. on Monday, July 10, 2023. The district has the right to accept or reject any proposal based on the best interest of the district.

June 15 Puzzle Answers



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

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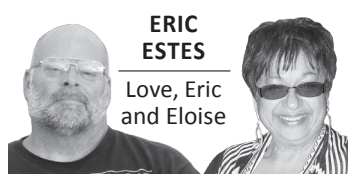
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Summertime blues

Hey there y'all. As we're moving into the summer season, which officially began this week, I'd like to wish you all a happy, safe and enjoyable few months, hoping it'll be everything you want it to be. This is the time of year that most vacations take place so, whether traveling the world, these great United States, or simply a local excursion, enjoy it to the fullest, as summer 2023 will only come once.

As school has recently let out, giving (most) kids a warm weather break from their rigorous studies, I find that I do miss their laughter as they scamper around the playground. Guess I'll have to swing by myself for the next few months. That's ok though, at least the bullies won't be there either. Don't know about you, but I still find getting beat up by freckle faced fourth graders a little embarrassing. I tried to share 1 Peter 5:5 with them, "Clothe yourselves in humility toward one another because, God opposes the proud, but shows favor to the humble", but that just got me thrown under the merry-go-round where I was pummeled by twenty pairs of little shoes. But hey, can't blame a guy for tryin'!

That brings back fond memories of the song we sang every year at the



ERIC ESTES
Love, Eric and Eloise

sound of the last bell, by Alice Cooper (a devout christian, in case you didn't know). "School's out for summer, school's out forever, I'm bored to pieces." Don't know about you, but as a

young'un, I was never bored during the summers. Whether swimming in the canals of southern Florida, occasionally spying a gator or manatee, hitting the zippy-mart in Alabama for a cold Mountain Dew with salty peanuts poured into it, or enjoying the 4th of July festivities in Malone, Kentucky (public swimming pool with chlorine so strong you'd be blond by the end of summer, baseball games, sack races and egg tosses, and a tall swirl cone from "Freezer Fresh"), how could you possibly be bored? Man, I miss being a kid!

Another song runs faintly through my mind, originally recorded in 1959 by Eddie Cochran, and later covered by The Who, and Alan Jackson...Summertime Blues. "Well, I'm gonna raise a fuss, I'm gonna raise a holler, about workin' all summer tryin' to raise a dollar. Sometimes I wonder what I'm gonna do, cause there ain't no cure for the summertime blues."

While looking up these lyrics I ran across a special report by CBS on this phenomenon. It seems they even

have a name for it; Seasonal affective disorder, or "SAD". It's literally a type of depression caused by the change in seasons that can be triggered by 1) high expectations of summer being "fun", 2) heat, 3) lack of routine, 4) isolation, 5) anxiety over spending too much on vacation, or 6) binge eating while feeling the pressure to have a "summer physique". Yep, that last one really affected me, and I thought I just got fat by swallowing my pride!

I gotta say, that as an adult, I find I still suffer from "Seasonal Affective Disorder", as the season of carefree childhood ended many decades ago. Now I'm just an old fart trying to get through the day. But, that's no excuse not to fight the summertime blues. Yesterday, while trying to loft a cracked egg into the pasture, I apparently didn't let go early enough and smashed it onto the underside of my porch roof. Laughed until I cried, then proceeded to unroll the hose and clean up the mess...good times. So, my helpful tip for this week is, that if you're also struggling with the summertime blues and don't have a cracked egg, just break out the toilet paper and go for it, it'll do your state of mind wonders!

Y'all have a great week, love you guys, Eric.

Monthalia Methodist barbecue dinner

SPECIAL TO THE INQUIRER

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OBITUARIES

BELEN DE LEON



It is with profound sadness that we announce the passing of Belen De Leon, who departed from this world on 6/14/2023. He was surrounded by loved ones as He peacefully transitioned into eternal rest.

Born on 4/15/1936, Belen De Leon graced this world with his presence for 87 years. He was a cherished father, grandfather, brother, friend, and his loss will be deeply felt by all who knew him.

Belen led a life filled with love, kindness, and compassion. He touched the hearts of countless individuals through his selflessness and unwavering dedication. He possessed a rare ability to bring joy to those around him, and his infectious laughter and warm smile could brighten even the darkest of days.

Belen was a source of inspiration and guidance to many. Belen was a skilled worker with his hands and started his working career with Bill Edwards A/C Co, installing TV aerials in the days before cable TV and internet. In those days,

you had 3 major channels in the area and PBS! He then moved on to work for Western Auto, one of the many precursors to "Wal Mart". It was here that he honed his skills in repairing major kitchen appliances, focusing on washer/dryers. But most people knew him through the "mom and pop" grocery store that he and his late wife, Milda, ran for over 30 years on the corner of St. John and St. George until his retirement. With no experience in running a business, he dove into self-employment and built success through his grit and determination. During his time at the store, he faced many obstacles that

he managed to overcome. From competition from large box stores to introducing credit to his loyal customers to shifting from grocery store to pseudo-restaurant, he persevered and managed to "roll with the punches" to keep the business afloat. His was the little store on the corner that friends and customers would gather for a cold drink, good food and socialize.

In his leisure time, Belen enjoyed the occasional fishing trip and gardening. His garden would typically yield an abundance of tomatoes, peppers, and cucumbers! His garden provided more than he could consume, so he used the excess as a way to spread joy and love to anyone who wanted fresh produce. Another of his passions was gambling. He was known to take trips to Vegas, Coshatta and Kickapoo whenever he could.

Throughout his journey, he faced challenges with grace, resilience, and an unwavering faith. He remained a pillar of strength for those around him, offering words of

wisdom and comfort during difficult times. His impact extended beyond his immediate circle, as He exemplified the qualities of a true leader and mentor to many.

Belen leaves behind a void that can never be filled. His memory will forever be etched in the hearts of his beloved family members and friends. While we mourn his passing, let us also celebrate the extraordinary life He lived and the countless ways in which He touched our lives. He lost the "love of his life", his partner of 64 years over 2 years ago and sorely missed her. He now goes to meet, as he called her, "his sweetheart".

A celebration of Belen De Leon's life will be held at Seydler-Hill Funeral Home at a date that is to be determined. Friends, family, and acquaintances are invited to join us as we pay tribute to a life well-lived and bid farewell to a remarkable soul.

May Belen's soul rest in eternal peace.

With deepest sorrow, The De Leon's

MANESS ROSS JOHNSTON



Maness Ross Johnston passed away peacefully on June 14, 2023 at the age of 85. He was born on July 15, 1937 in McMahon, Texas to Joe Henderson Johnston and Myrl Joy Stephens.

He grew up near Lockhart and, as an adult, lived in Austin and Gonzales, Texas. He served in the U.S. Army in Germany as a tank commander during the construction of the Berlin wall and patrolled the East-West border.

In his life, he was an electrician, a business owner and a country music singer, songwriter and fiddle player with several bands such as Texas Better Together. Maness also was a talented artist who has many creations depicting nature using oil on canvas. Maness was very in tune with nature and geology and, as a hobby, he spent many hours collecting petrified wood.

He was preceded in death by his parents and his brother Richard Newell Johnston.

He is survived by his sons: Michael Steven Johnston and wife Stephanie of Austin and David

Neil Johnston and wife Lisa of Lockhart; three granddaughters Marilena Goldenbaum, Katharina Goldenbaum and Johanna Johnston of Germany; two sisters Myrlene Jack of Elgin, TX and Bonnie Gay Baile of Georgetown, TX and numerous nieces and nephews.

Graveside services will be held 10 a.m. Wednesday, June 28, 2023 at the Saturn Cemetery. Friends may sign the guestbook and leave condolences by visiting www.seydlerhillfuneralhome.com

Arrangements are under the care and direction of Seydler-Hill Funeral Home 906 St. Paul St., Gonzales.

QUILTS FOR CAMPERS



The Shiner Heritage Quilters Guild has donated eight quilts for campers to use at Morgan's Wonderland in San Antonio, the world's first theme park designed with individuals with special needs in mind. Pictured from the left are Torye Gleitz, Operations Coordinator at Morgan's Wonderland, Janet Ferguson—Shiner Heritage Quilters President and Diane Price Executive Administrative Assistant. The presentation was made on May 26.

CONTRIBUTED

Gaslight presents 'Drinking Habits'

SPECIAL TO THE INQUIRER

It is time to reserve your tickets for the hilarious farce, "Drinking Habits," the summer production at the Shiner Gaslight Theatre directed by Melissa Neubauer.

This uproarious comedy is about two nuns who are secretly making wine to keep their beloved convent from being closed. Accusations, mistaken identities, and romances run wild when undercover reporters and paranoia take over. Wine and secrets are inevitably spilled in this hilarious farce.

Friday, Saturday, and Sunday performances are July 21-23, 28-30 and Aug. 4-6. A Wednesday performance is July 26. All are in the evening except for Sunday matinees. A meal is served before the play.

General tickets sales begin Monday, June 26. Please call 361-594-2079 between 8:30 a.m. and 4 p.m. on weekdays to reserve. All tickets must be reserved in advance.

For more information log onto www.shinergaslight.org.

Texas Armed Services Scholarship Program now accepting nominations

SPECIAL TO THE INQUIRER

Texas elected officials can now nominate students to receive the 2023-24 Texas Armed Services Scholarship (TASSP), a program from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

"The State of Texas is proud to support our students who have chosen to devote their careers and lives to preserving the sovereignty of Texas and our nation through the Texas Armed Services Scholarship program," said Governor Greg Abbott. "Texas is profoundly grateful for our service members who serve courageously each and every day to protect and defend our communities. I thank the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board and Texas institutions of higher education for providing opportunities to students aspiring to answer this noble calling. Through this scholarship program, we can help ensure Texas military leaders of tomorrow have the funding and resources needed to thrive in their education and beyond."

The scholarship, with a maximum award of \$15,000 per recipient, is for students participating in Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) or other undergraduate officer commissioning programs at Texas institutions of higher education. Upon graduation, these students will go on to serve in the Texas Army National Guard, the Texas Air National Guard, or commissioned officers in any branch of the United States armed services. "Many Texans serve

proudly in our military," said Commissioner of Higher Education Harrison Keller. "The Texas Armed Services Scholarship demonstrates our state's appreciation and support for students inspired to military service while helping them achieve their higher education and professional goals."

To be eligible, students must meet specific scholarship requirements and be nominated by a Texas senator or representative. Each legislator may nominate one student, and the

governor and lieutenant governor may separately appoint two. Students seeking a nomination can find their legislative representatives online, but a

nomination may come from any legislator.

Nominations for the 2023-24 academic year must be submitted by Aug. 23, 2023.

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Feel the Difference

Hegar announces changes to Texas Broadband Program

SPECIAL TO THE INQUIRER

Texas Comptroller Glenn Hegar applauded the signing of crucial legislation giving his office greater flexibility and resources as he works to expand access to reliable high-speed internet throughout Texas. Additionally, Hegar announced his agency is making changes to the Texas Broadband Development program, which are directly related to the signing of these bills, to enhance broadband access, advance digital opportunities and better address the digital divide in Texas.

These changes, required by the recent passage of Senate Bill 1238, will greatly expand the areas eligible to receive broadband infrastructure grants and will provide much needed flexibility to ensure taxpayer dollars will benefit more Texans.

The bipartisan legislation was approved by the 88th Legislature and signed by Gov. Greg Abbott on June 2. Among notable changes, the Texas Broadband Development Map will display broadband serviceable locations (addresses) as served, unserved or underserved based on updated statutory definitions. It also will allow the Comptroller's office to consider the issue of latency, which can dramatically impact the quality of service in an area.

These changes will allow the program to target all unserved and underserved locations, not just certain areas, throughout the state. Also included in the legislation is a fiber preference that will prioritize fiber technology while still allowing the deployment of other technologies in appropriate circumstances.

Earlier this year, the Comptroller accepted challenges from internet providers and political subdivisions to reclassify designated areas of the map as eligible or ineligible for funding. However, the newly passed legislation necessitates a reformatted map, which will address many of the key issues raised by the challenges.

"The challenges to the Texas map and public comments were crucial as we advised legislators on crafting the details of this new legislation," said Hegar, who serves as chairman of the board of advisers for the agency's Broadband Development Office (BDO). "Our

partners at the local level have been able to share critical information through the challenge process that will ensure this unprecedented amount of funding will be used efficiently and effectively.

"We knew almost immediately that our initial map needed to change to meet the needs of our state, but in some cases we also understood that our legal authority was too rigid to make the changes needed," Hegar said. "The challenge process was created to address concerns about the map, but it really had a much greater impact as evidenced by this new law. We are dealing with technology that is evolving rapidly, and we needed a legal framework that gives Texas and my office the flexibility to evolve along with that technology. I think we have that now, and I am grateful to lawmakers and the Governor for getting this passed and signed."

Through the BDO, the state of Texas has been allocated \$363.8 million of its \$500.5 million allocation from the federal Coronavirus Capital Projects Fund to carry out critical infrastructure projects related to expanding access to high-speed internet. The BDO will distribute funds allocated to Texas through a multi-round competitive grant process, with the first round of funds totaling \$120 million. The new legislation will not impact this round of funding.

In November, voters will be asked to approve a state constitutional amendment to create the Broadband Infrastructure Fund, which would be administered by Hegar's office. House Bill 9, passed by the 88th Legislature and signed into law on June 9, would allocate \$1.5 billion to that fund. In addition, Texas is anticipating billions more coming from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act to further invest in the connectivity needs of the state.

In April, the BDO began seeking public input on internet accessibility, affordability and usage through the Digital Opportunity Public Survey. The BDO will use survey responses to develop a Texas Digital Opportunity Plan, which is required to draw down federal funding for connecting Texans to reliable, high-speed internet.

TSLAC awarded \$7.8 million grant

SPECIAL TO THE INQUIRER

The Texas State Library and Archives Commission (TSLAC) has received a \$7.8 million Library Infrastructure and Facility Access Improvement Grant (IFAIG) from the U.S. Department of the Treasury to support statewide high-quality modern infrastructure at Texas libraries. The project will assist public libraries across the state in gaining access to critical broadband infrastructure and services. TSLAC worked with the Texas Broadband Development Office, a program of the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts, throughout the development of the funding proposal.

TSLAC's IFAIG program will fund improvements to libraries serving rural communities or those that fall below median national income levels. Funds may be used to cover the costs of laying fiber, physical accommodation for broadband and expanded and improved physical space for digital access projects, such as telehealth, job training or classroom labs. The agency expects to support 85 libraries that collectively serve more than 1 million Texans.

"The Texas State Library and Archives Commission is thrilled to be able to bring this support to libraries across the state, many of which are the only local source for free internet access," said TSLAC Director and State Librarian Gloria Meraz. "Libraries are anchor institutions in their communities and provide technology, access to resources and most importantly, trained staff to help people connect one-on-one to the digital marketplace of ideas. This grant funding, made possible by the U.S. Treasury Department and the excellent

support of the Texas Broadband Development Office, will be a game-changer for many communities."

Funds will be distributed through a competitive grant program, and recipients will receive support in three phases to address limited staff capacity. Phase 1 will provide technology assessments to establish the needs at library facilities and streamline the application process. Phase 2 will offer grant funding for infrastructure and equipment to increase library building internet speeds, as well as light remodeling/construction projects to improve library technology services and access. Phase 3 will provide IT coaching for customized support and training, ensuring grant-funded projects are successfully implemented.

The technology assessments and grant application period (phases 1 and 2) are expected to begin in spring 2024, with grants awarded and infrastructure and facility improvement projects to begin as early as summer 2024. Information about the grant application process and preparation for applying will begin this fall. The grant period will end with all funds expended by Dec. 31, 2026.

TSLAC will reach out to libraries and communities to partner in the development of the program and assist in the application and implementation process. This funding is part of the nationwide investment to fund critical capital projects that enable work, education and health monitoring through the Capital Projects Fund created under the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA).



Nixon Royal Court



Members of the Nixon Royal Court rode in a float in the Stockdale Watermelon Jubilee. It is the first time Nixon has ever had a float in the Jubilee with a royalty court. The court was formally introduced at the June 5 Nixon City Council meeting. Members of the Court include Nixon Little Mister Carter Hansen, Nixon Little Cutie Na'Lasia Croft, Nixon Little Miss Leighton La Fleur, Nixon Junior Miss Cali Smith, Mr. Nixon Gavin Moreno and Miss Nixon Kaylie Morin.

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ACROSS

1 UH is TX Dennis Quaid's ___ mater

5 TX Jordan Spieth is on the PGA ___ out on the Gulf 7 mailed a letter

8 network of old soap opera "Dallas" gun rights grp.

12 TXism: "drawing ___ on it"

17 "Texas" is an ___ drama in Palo Duro Canyon

19 whooping ___ migrate to Texas in November

21 church tower, spire

22 TXism: "gone ___" (deteriorated)

23 1952 "Viva ___!" was filmed in Texas

28 rod and ___

29 NPR FM station in Commerce

30 wheeler-dealer

31 TX Charley's "All ___ to Offer You"

35 late Texas "Lemon Tree" singer, Lopez

36 TXism: "nervous as ___"

44 apple drink, e.g. old AstroWorld ride: "Batman ___"

48 airplane garage state to the NE

DOWN

1 tributary of the Frio, a tributary of the Nueces (2 wds.)

2 "it's not whether you win or ___ how you play the game"

3 in Cooke County on U.S. 82

4 "I smell ___"

9 TXism for "no"

10 Coleman was founded on one (2 wds.)

11 late TX Kenny Rogers sang "You ___ So Beautiful"

12 "___ your age"

13 TXism: "I'm so ___"

TEXAS CROSSWORD

by Charley & Guy Orbison

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P-1642

SUDOKU

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

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.



WANDY VAN EPPS

David Tacy (left) and Gonzales Mayor Steve Sucher (right) with one of three winners of the Eugene Wilson Sr. Juneteenth Lighted Parade. Left to right: Tacy, Bryansha Polli, Syble Kline and Sucher.



CONTRIBUTED BY KELLY ROBERTS-COOPER

Kelly Roberts-Cooper, Sandra K. Jenkins, and Nona Bruce. Sandra traveled the farthest from California to celebrate Juneteenth in Nixon.



WANDY VAN EPPS

Kemesheia Buie passes out watermelons to children and adults for the Juneteenth Celebration Saturday, June 17, at Texas Independence Square.



WANDY VAN EPPS

Angela Alfred-Richards sings gospel songs to kick off the Juneteenth Celebration in Gonzales at Texas Independence Square Saturday, June 17.



WANDY VAN EPPS

Left to Right: Pastor Charles Roaches and Johnny Ross Hunt sit in the shade as they celebrate Juneteenth at Texas Independence Square Saturday, June 17.



WANDY VAN EPPS

Tena Roaches, Erica James and David Tacy celebrates the second annual Juneteenth event at Texas Independence Square Saturday, June 17.

JUNETEENTH

CELEBRATE FREEDOM



CONTRIBUTED BY KELLY ROBERTS-COOPER

Josh Scott holds his son, Judah Scott, for the youngest to oldest contests at the Juneteenth Celebration in Nixon Saturday, June 17.



CONTRIBUTED BY KELLY ROBERTS-COOPER

Nixon celebrated Juneteenth Saturday, June 17 at the Camp House Concerts. People wore yellow ribbons for those who have ancestry in the Gillette area. Left to right: Evelyn Evans, Rena White Joseph Cooper, Ann Applewhite, Calvin Martin, Kelly Roberts-Cooper (seated), Pat Martin, Darlene Norwood, Christine Thompson, Hutney Applewhite, Marilyn Smith, Joe Hathaway, and Cynthia Williams.

WANDY VAN EPPS

Lonnie B. Erskin aka DJ Trek puts on music for the Juneteenth Celebration at the Camp house Concerts in Nixon Saturday, June 17.



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The Gonzales Inquirer will be closed on **Tuesday, July 4, 2023** in observance of Independence Day.

The deadline for all advertising and editorial copy in the **July 6 edition** is **Noon on Monday, July 3.**

Have a safe and happy holiday from The Gonzales Inquirer staff!

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GISD

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

"Defeasance is just a fancy word that means paying off our debt early. Just like with our personal debt, or mortgages or car loan, we can make extra payments and apply it toward the principal balance of the loan interest costs over the life of those loans," Smith said.

The reason why Smith brought this to the board, she said, is that it saves the cost over the life of the loan, and because of that, it'll generate cost savings.

"The added benefits for doing a bond defeasance, or an early call, is tax rate stability, and then it creates capacity for any potential future needs that we have. And by that, I mean our debt payments would be smaller in the future, so we would be able to issue additional debt should the need arise to do so," Smith said.

Smith explained why the district cannot sell as many bonds as they want to and raise the debt rate indefinitely due to being capped at how much debt the district can issue.

"Our I&S tax rate has to main-

tain at 50 cents or below in order for the district to issue debt. So, by paying off some of our debt early, you can make room for us to issue additional debt in the future for any future needs that we may have," Smith said.

Smith makes it clear this is for the debt service fund, and not the general fund.

"While we're still far away from our 50-cent limit at 6.98 cents, it is a good idea to be constantly re-evaluating the market, and what our debt looks like, so that we can just manage that all the time," Smith said.

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

- approved, by a 6-1 vote, the Gonzales ISD District of Innovation Plan Amendment of a \$7,000 increase to state-based pay.

The board went over the amendment that was pushed from the June 12 meeting. Smith stated they are requesting a sentence be removed from the plan that "teachers employed on a local district certification be

issued non-Chapter 21 contracts and be placed on a state-based salary schedule."

Smith added this does not affect the end date of the district's current innovation plan, and it'll impact 10 teachers with their bachelor's degrees, but who are not fully certified.

The board was presented two options; the first is to pay non-certified teachers with a bachelor's degree \$5,000 above state base pay for starting teachers, which is \$33,660. The second is to pay them \$7,000 above state base.

"To refresh your memory, there is currently \$16,340 difference between the two. Under the \$5,000 is just over 30 percent of that number, and the \$7,000 almost 43% of that number."

GISD Superintendent Dr. Elmer Avellaneda said the reason the district is amending the sentence to add those monies to the state base pay is because it has remained at \$33,660 for the last three years, he said.



VANDY VAN EPPS
Ken Jones aka PoetKen looks through one of the anthologies books for two of his poems he wrote at the Robert Lee Brothers Library Wednesday, June 14.

POET

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

master's thesis.

Jones showed off six anthology books that contain his work throughout his writing career; they are titled: "The Way Life Goes: PoetKen Jones Song Lyrics 1980s," "Improbable Worlds: An Anthology of Texas and Louisiana Poets," "Anniversary DiVerseCity: An Anthology Celebrating Ten Years of the Austin International Poetry Festival," "Descant: 2007, Volume 46," "The Harbinger Asylum: Issue #3" and "The Beatest State in the Union: An Anthology of Beat Texas Writings."

Jones went over each book and the number of works that were included in the anthologies, and went over the Beat poet style.

Beat poems originated in the 1940s and 1950s, addressing controversial topics, and those beat writers included Jack Kerouac and Allen Ginsberg.

"I've always wanted to be a poet since I was a little kid ... being a poet is unique and special. And there's not a lot of us out there who are serious in our craft. And so when you hang out with these people, you realize they're just people that are like you," Jones said.

Several of the anthologies have many poets he has come across and Jones knows that they take their writing and books serious and want to do good work, he said.

"I found that most people, you check your ego at the door, if you want to be good at something. And so it's cool, it's good to have beers with your heroes," Jones said.

Jones's work can be found in the library's database, showing the exact page where his poems are located in these books.

"I'm very interested in helping the library fund-raise and spread the message of reading, because the key to that first message is education. And so if you aren't educated, and you cannot understand why we're doing what we're doing as a society, you're gonna be very confused."

SALES TAX

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

\$1,582,448.23, up \$42,853.59 or 2.78 percent, above the \$1,539,594.64 received at this same point in 2022.

Waelder received a total of \$11,867.71, up 76.74 percent or \$5,153.25, above the \$6,714.46 received in June 2022. For the year, Waelder has received \$71,569.08, up \$32,446.74, or 82.93 percent, above the \$39,122.34 received at this point in 2022. The city is now

just \$13,207.49 off the record \$84,776.57 it received in all of 2022.

Sales tax receipts for Nixon were \$31,073.08, up \$4,544.94, or 17.13 percent, above the \$26,528.14 received in June 2022. For the year, the city has received \$200,383.24, up \$25,482.46, or 14.56 percent, above the \$174,900.78 received at this same point last year.

Finally, Smiley's sales tax

receipts were \$5,125.54, up \$3,161.09, or 160.91 percent, from the \$1,964.45 received in June 2022. For the year, the city has received \$20,151.28, up \$5,758.57 or 40.01 percent above the \$14,392.71 received in the first six months of 2022.

Three cities in Gonzales County — Gonzales, Nixon and Waelder — collect a 1.5 percent sales tax rate, while Smiley collects a 1 percent sales tax.

County	City	Rate	Net Payment This Period	Comparable Payment Prior Year	% Change	Payment YTD	Prior Year Payment YTD	% Change
Gonzales	Gonzales	1.500%	\$248,735.83	\$259,564.17	-4.17%	\$1,582,448.23	\$1,539,594.64	2.78%
Gonzales	Nixon	1.500%	\$31,073.08	\$26,528.14	17.13%	\$200,383.24	\$174,900.78	14.56%
Gonzales	Smiley	1.000%	\$5,125.54	\$1,964.45	160.91%	\$20,151.28	\$14,392.71	40.01%
Gonzales	Waelder	1.500%	\$11,867.71	\$6,714.46	76.74%	\$71,569.08	\$39,122.34	82.93%

UNEMPLOYMENT

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Development Area.

For the entire Golden Crescent Workforce Development Area, the unemployment rate for May 2023 was 3.8 percent, an increase of four-tenths of a percent but still lower than the state average of 4.1 percent. This represented a total of 3,499 residents in Gonzales, Calhoun, DeWitt, Goliad, Jackson, Lavaca and Victoria counties seeking employment out of a total workforce of 91,660 people.

The counties in the Golden Crescent with the lowest unemployment rate were Calhoun at 3.3 percent, followed by DeWitt, Gonzales, Jackson and Lavaca counties all at 3.5 percent. Goliad County at 4.0 percent and Victoria County bringing up the rear at 4.2 percent.

For May 2023, there were 333 individuals in Gonzales County seeking employment out of a workforce of 9,419 with 9,086 reported as employed.

Unemployment rates since May

2021 for Gonzales County are:

- May 2021, 4.5 percent.
- June 2021, 5.1 percent.
- July 2021, 4.3 percent.
- August 2021, 3.9 percent.
- September 2021, 3.8 percent.
- October 2021, 3.6 percent.
- November 2021, 3.5 percent.
- December 2021, 3.2 percent.
- January 2022, 3.6 percent.
- February 2022, 3.4 percent.
- March 2022, 2.7 percent.
- April 2022, 2.6 percent.
- May 2022, 2.9 percent.
- June 2022, 3.5 percent.
- July 2022, 3.2 percent.
- August 2022, 3.2 percent.
- September 2022, 3.1 percent.
- October 2022, 3.1 percent.
- November 2022, 3.1 percent.
- December 2022, 2.7 percent.
- January 2023, 3.7 percent.
- February 2023, 4.0 percent.
- March 2023, 3.5 percent.
- April 2023, 3.2 percent.
- May 2023, 3.5 percent.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING TO DISCUSS BUDGET AND PROPOSED TAX RATE

The WAELDER INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT will hold a public meeting at 6:00 PM, June 27, 2023 in the Waelder ISD Cafeteria, 109 N Ave C. **The purpose of this meeting is to discuss the school district's budget that will determine the tax rate that will be adopted. Public participation in the discussion is invited.**

The tax rate that is ultimately adopted at this meeting or at a separate meeting at a later date may not exceed the proposed rate shown below unless the district publishes a revised notice containing the same information and comparisons set out below and holds another public meeting to discuss the revised notice.

Maintenance Tax	\$0.7781/\$100 (proposed rate for maintenance and operations)
School Debt Service Tax Approved by Local Voters	\$0.0743/\$100 (proposed rate to pay bonded indebtedness)

Comparison of Proposed Budget with Last Year's Budget

The applicable percentage increase or decrease (or difference) in the amount budgeted in the preceding fiscal year and the amount budgeted for the fiscal year that begins during the current tax year is indicated for each of the following expenditure categories.

Maintenance and operations	-2.46% (decrease)
Debt service	65.50% (increase)
Total expenditures	0.37% (increase)

Total Appraised Value and Total Taxable Value (as calculated under Section 26.04, Tax Code)

	Preceding Tax Year	Current Tax Year*
Total appraised value* of all property	\$822,124,169	\$1,199,308,548
Total appraised value* of new property**	\$9,979,900	\$4,978,490
Total taxable value*** of all property	\$328,098,614	\$461,612,523
Total taxable value*** of new property**	\$9,434,820	\$4,978,490

*Appraised value is the amount shown on the appraisal roll and defined by Section 1.04(8), Tax Code.
** "New property" is defined by Section 26.012(17), Tax Code.
*** "Taxable value" is defined by Section 1.04(10), Tax Code.

Bonded Indebtedness

Total amount of outstanding and unpaid bonded indebtedness* \$2,445,000

*Outstanding principal.

Comparison of Proposed Rates with Last Year's Rates

	Maintenance & Operations	Interest & Sinking Fund*	Total	Local Revenue Per Student	State Revenue Per Student
Last Year's Rate	\$0.8546	\$0.0743	\$0.9289	\$10,662	\$4,178
Rate to Maintain Same Level of Maintenance & Operations Revenue & Pay Debt Service	\$0.8276	\$0.0688	\$0.8964	\$11,304	\$3,561
Proposed Rate	\$0.7781	\$0.0743	\$0.8524	\$11,063	\$3,865

* The Interest & Sinking Fund tax revenue is used to pay for bonded indebtedness on construction, equipment, or both. The bonds, and the tax rate necessary to pay those bonds, were approved by the voters of this district.

Comparison of Proposed Levy with Last Year's Levy on Average Residence

	Last Year	This Year
Average Market Value of Residences	\$104,913	\$114,009
Average Taxable Value of Residences	\$56,420	\$65,998
Last Year's Rate Versus Proposed Rate per \$100 Value	\$0.9289	\$0.8524
Taxes Due on Average Residence	\$524.09	\$562.57
Increase (Decrease) in Taxes		\$38.48

Under state law, the dollar amount of school taxes imposed on the residence homestead of a person 65 years of age or older or of the surviving spouse of such a person, if the surviving spouse was 55 years of age or older when the person died, may not be increased above the amount paid in the first year after the person turned 65, regardless of changes in tax rate or property value.

Notice of Voter-Approval Rate: The highest tax rate the district can adopt before requiring voter approval at an election is **\$0.8524**. This election will be automatically held if the district adopts a rate in excess of the voter-approval rate of **\$0.8524**.

Fund Balances

The following estimated balances will remain at the end of the current fiscal year and are not encumbered with or by a corresponding debt obligation, less estimated funds necessary for operating the district before receipt of the first state aid payment:

Maintenance and Operations Fund Balance(s)	\$4,315,305
Interest & Sinking Fund Balance(s)	\$192,102

A school district may not increase the district's maintenance and operations tax rate to create a surplus in maintenance and operations tax revenue for the purpose of paying the district's debt service.

Visit [Texas.gov/PropertyTaxes](https://www.texas.gov/PropertyTaxes) to find a link to your local property tax database on which you can easily access information regarding your property taxes, including information about proposed tax rates and scheduled public hearings of each entity that taxes your property.

The 86th Texas Legislature modified the manner in which the voter-approval tax rate is calculated to limit the rate of growth of property taxes in the state.

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CELEBRATIONS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

posts and that they will not be supported in idleness either there or elsewhere.”

Today, the holiday is recognized as federal holiday; in 2021, Juneteenth was elevated to that status by bipartisan legislation.

In year two as a federal holiday, Tucy and Roberts-Cooper know how significant the journey has been for this holiday.

“That means that everybody can enjoy and celebrate Juneteenth and have a little time off as well. Because of the significance of the holiday. Being that it’s a federal holiday is paramount and extremely significant for the nation,” Tucy said.

Tucy recently visited Galveston where Juneteenth began, and visited the Aston Villon where the Proclamation was read, and he said to see that was amazing.

Roberts-Cooper, a 28-year Air Force veteran, would travel around the U.S. and tell people about Juneteenth’s origins and many people didn’t know about the holiday because it was a Texas thing.

“It’s our Texas thing because that’s what we do. We get together, we barbecue, and we have a great time and we celebrate. And so when you see it nationally recognized, our little Texas, we like to call it, our Texas holiday. It’s awesome,” Roberts-Cooper said.

Gonzales closed out its Juneteenth with a lighted parade and Mayor Steve Sucher made a proclamation that Juneteenth Light Parade would be known as the Eugene Wilson Sr. Juneteenth Lighted Parade.

“I would just like to add that this holiday is not only for the African-American community, it’s for everybody,” Tucy said.



CONTRIBUTED BY KELLY ROBERTS-COOPER
Calvin Martin was named the oldest at the Nixon Juneteenth Celebration Saturday, June 17.



VANDY VAN EPPS
Nona Bruce and Kelly Roberts-Cooper next to the Juneteenth banner on display at the Juneteenth Celebration in Nixon Saturday, June 17.



VANDY VAN EPPS
The second annual Juneteenth Celebration closed out with its first ever light parade at Texas Independence Square Saturday, June 17. People across San Antonio to Houston brought their slingshots to be displayed at the parade.

CHAMBER

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

the allegations as a whole were putting statements and events out of context.

“The committee has faith in our executive director and wish her the best in continuing her hard work at carrying out the Chamber’s and Tourism’s missions.”

A Facebook post Monday by Hector X. Porras claimed he was told that nearly two weeks prior “some of the executives and the so-called powers that be had a little get-together at the Chamber office. Well, it must have been a good party, due to several of the attendees being found passed out the next morning???”

“I understand that the young lady who arrived the following morning to the office walked in on several individuals passed out at the office? I also understand that she went to the PD and filed a report and that our so-called newspaper of record was also present at the time? Is this the case???” Porras asked in his post.

The Inquirer is the official newspaper of record for Gonzales County and the city of Gonzales. No member of the newspaper staff was present at any party held at the Chamber nor was anyone present for the filing of any complaint with local police.

Gonzales Police Lt. Jason Montoya told the Inquirer that no criminal charges had been filed and no criminal complaint had been filed. A witness came to speak to officers about an alleged illegal substance being used on the Chamber premises and was referred back to the Chamber board as they ultimately would have governance over the situation, Montoya said.

HEARING

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Jim Russell previously served as the EMS director while Carla Russell was the EMS’ acting bookkeeper.

While Jim Russell was under investigation by several law enforcement agencies in January 2018, the EMS board placed him on administrative leave without pay. When his arrest became public, he was terminated by the board on June 26, 2018. The board requested that Carla Russell resign from her position following her arrest and she obliged.

The indictment alleges that between January 2011 to June 2018 the Russells misapplied EMS funds —over which they had responsibility — for their own benefit. This occurred by depositing money meant for the EMS and CPR classes into their own personal bank accounts, overpaying themselves or other employees for unworked hours, being paid by other entities while simultaneously being paid by the EMS and mishandling donations to the EMS.

Since the Russells were arrested and charged, the EMS merged with the Gonzales County Emergency Services District No. 1 and have come under the direction of Eddie Callendar Jr. and Allen Linebrink, who have worked to stabilize funding for the county’s EMS operations.

Pre-trial hearings for two other high-profile cases will not happen until August. Carol Russell, who is accused of shooting her husband to death, is scheduled to appear in court at 9 a.m. Aug. 3, while Jennifer Almaguer, accused of embezzling funds from the Gonzales Little League, will appear in court at 9 a.m. Aug. 14.

New ER Group to Lead Emergency Care

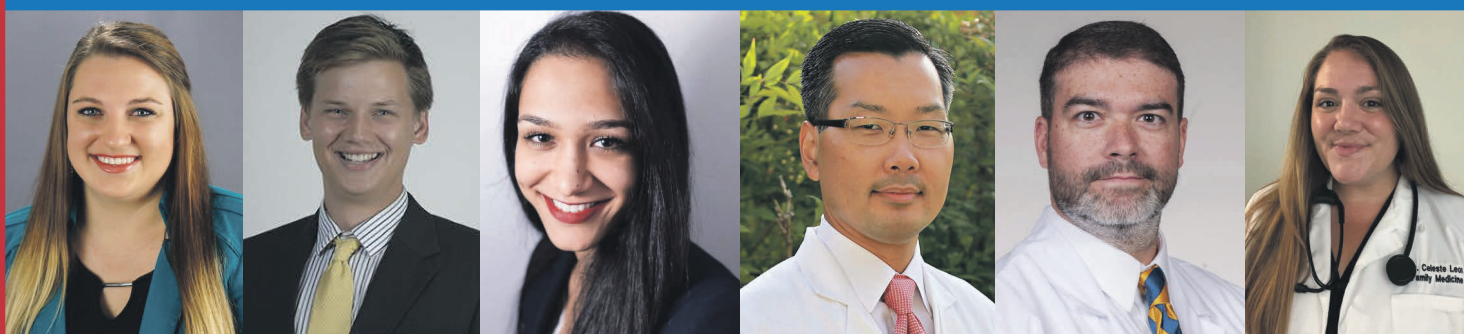
Gonzales Healthcare Systems is excited to announce its partnership with Gonzales Emergency Partners, a locally organized group of emergency medicine physicians that will be providing emergency care in our facility. While this group is a newly founded one, the experience these physicians hold spans decades. And more importantly, this group boasts a local component, with one physician born and raised in neighboring Shiner, Texas. We pride ourselves on neighbors caring for neighbors, and this new partnership only adds to this sentiment.

Gonzales Emergency Partners is comprised of six emergency medicine physicians: Dr. Eric Baden, Dr. Alex Kresta, Dr. Celeste Leon, Dr. Anisha Malhotra, Dr. Charles Spencer, and Dr. Emily Wagner.

Dr. Wagner comes to us from Shiner, Texas. What better way to treat our patients than with a friendly face from just down the road. Dr. Kresta is a native Texan, and enjoys hunting and fishing in his down time. Both Dr. Baden and Dr. Spencer are former military, with Dr. Baden serving in the US Army and Dr. Spencer serving in the US Navy. We are honored to have them caring for our patients. Dr. Malhotra is originally from New Delhi, India. She trained in Chicago, and made her way to Texas six years ago. Dr. Leon currently sees patients in our emergency department, and we are excited that she will be part of Gonzales Emergency Partners and continuing her work at our facility.

Each physician is specially trained in emergency medicine, as they treat any ailment that walks through our ER doors. This training allows them to assess the situation, and treat the patient in the most effective and efficient way possible. With assistance from our nurses and other clinical departments, patients can be assured that they will receive the best possible care during their stay in our emergency department.

Gonzales Emergency Partners will join the GHS team and begin seeing patients in our emergency department July 1, 2023.



Dr. Emily Wagner Dr. Alex Kresta Dr. Anisha Malhotra Dr. Eric Baden Dr. Charles Spencer Dr. Celeste Leon

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GonzalesHealthcare.com

