

# The Gonzales Inquirer

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## GISD voters re-elect Smith-Wright, choose Brown

Jordan wins City Council vote; Miller, Glass elected to GCUWCD

BY LEW K. COHN  
Inquirer Publisher

Gonzales Independent School District voters re-elected one trustee — Josie



Smith-Wright — and elected a new one — Naomi A. Brown — Saturday, May 4, in complete but unofficial returns. Meanwhile, challenger Mariah Jordan

was declared the winner on Monday, May 6, for the Gonzales City Council District 2 seat over incumbent Sherri Tumlinson Koepp and fellow challenger Johnnie Ross Hunt.

### GONZALES ISD

Smith-Wright, the District 4 trustee and board secretary, jumped out to a 106-75 lead in early and absentee voting totals and withstood a push by challenger and pastor David Schautteet Jr.

on election day to win by a final margin of 134-115. She has held the position for 21 years and will begin her eighth term on the board. She is the executive director of the Texas Caucus of Black School Board Members.

However, incumbent District 7 trustee Sandra Gorden, who was seeking her third term on the board, fell behind Brown, 84-34, after early and absentee

See **ELECTION**, page 12

## Waelder voters re-elect Tovar to mayoral post

Benavidez defeats Mills in Smiley rematch

BY LEW K. COHN  
Inquirer Publisher

Mayoral elections in Waelder and Smiley on Saturday, May 4 saw incumbents Roy Tovar and Lisa Benavidez re-elected in complete but unofficial returns.

New council members also were elected in both Nixon and Waelder as well as a new Waelder ISD trustee, while Smiley voters returned two incumbents to office in their council election.

### WAELDER CITY COUNCIL

Tovar may be facing an upcoming October preliminary hearing and a possible trial for a felony charge of deadly conduct, but it apparently did not discourage Waelder voters from re-electing him to another term as mayor.

The incumbent received 40 votes in early and absentee voting and another 37 on election day to defeat City Councilmember Curtis Hadnot, 77-46. Hadnot had 23 votes each during early and absentee voting and on election day.

Tovar was arrested by Waelder police on July 1, 2023, and charged with discharging a firearm, a third-degree felony punishable, if convicted, by a sentence of two to 10 years in the Texas Department of Criminal Justice — Institutional Division and up to a \$10,000 fine.

An individual is considered to be not guilty in the eyes of the Texas legal system until he or she has been proven guilty in a court of law beyond a reasonable doubt.

There were two seats up for grabs on

See **WAELDER**, page 12



The Gonzales Animal Control hosted a free rabies vaccinations for Gonzales residents Saturday, May 4 at the old Gonzales EMS building. Residents lined up in their vehicles with their dogs and cats on St Joseph Street entering Qualls Street where the EMS building is located. The event was sponsored by Pecan Grove Vet Clinic, Best Friends Animal Society, the City of Gonzales and Gonzales County EMS.

PHOTOS BY VANDY VAN EPPS

## FREE RABIES SHOTS PASS OUT FOR GONZALES RESIDENTS



## County submits final grant application for Courthouse renovation

BY LEW K. COHN  
Inquirer Publisher

Gonzales County submitted its grant application by the May 6 deadline to the Texas Historical Commission, seeking \$10 million in funding under the Texas Historic Courthouse Preservation Program (THCPP) to restore the Gonzales County Courthouse.

See **COURTHOUSE**, page 14



LEW K. COHN

Gonzales County Precinct 2 Commissioner Donnie Brzozowski, left, and Precinct 3 Commissioner Kevin La Fleur study proposed changes to the Gonzales County Courthouse. The county has applied for a \$10 million restoration grant for the Courthouse.

## When Sean Speaks ... students should listen



VANDY VAN EPPS

Sean Carter presses his tablet to speak with a synthetic voice to the Gonzales High School juniors and seniors about the dangers of drinking and distracting driving Wednesday, May 1. Carter is a motivational speaker for "When Sean Speaks" and goes around the country talking about his life altering accident because a drunk driver.

Accident victim 'talks' at Gonzales High about dangers of drinking, driving

BY VANDY VAN EPPS  
Gonzales Inquirer

Gonzales High School juniors and seniors had a presentation about the dangers of drinking and distracting driving from a non-profit group Wednesday, May 1.

Sean Carter, of When Sean Speaks, spoke to the students at the Apache Gym about his powerful story regarding his

See **SEAN**, page 13

## TJHRA finals return to JB Wells, Gonzales

BY VANDY VAN EPPS  
Gonzales Inquirer

The Texas Junior High Rodeo Finals return to Gonzales Saturday, May 25 through Saturday, June 1.

JB Wells Facility Manager Amanda Garza and her staff have been preparing for more than 30 vendors and more than 1,500

See **TJHRA**, page 13





# Bantam Fest 2024 to be held Saturday

BY BETTY COHN  
Gonzales Inquirer

Bantam Fest is almost here, and the Smiley Bantam Activity Group are excited to bring their annual festival to the Smiley Fire Department this Saturday, May 11.

Residents of Smiley, and all surrounding communities, are invited to this annual festival that will feature live music (provided this year by Paul Sanchez & Wrangler Country).

Events are set to begin at noon when all booths open and contest signups are scheduled to occur. Earlier in the day the 9 a.m. barbecue cookoff entry deadline will be observed, as usual. For more information, call

830-857-4712.

Family friendly events including a cake walk (1 p.m.), kids games (2 p.m.), Exes Reunion (2 p.m.), DJ & karaoke events by Sonido Scorpion de Alfredo Venegas from 3 p.m. - 6 p.m., with both adults and kids contests scheduled at 3:30 p.m. The all-time favorite cornhole tournament is set to begin at 4 p.m., with registration earlier in the day at 3 p.m. This friendly competition is open to all, with a \$40 per team signup fee.

The exes reunion will be set up in an area for all ex-students to meet and socialize. Tea and cookies will be available but bring your own chairs and BYOB. All ex-students who attended

Smiley High School before it consolidated with Nixon in 1983 are invited to attend. The special reunion this year will honor the Class of 1979, the Class of 1974, the Class of 1969 and the Class of 1964.

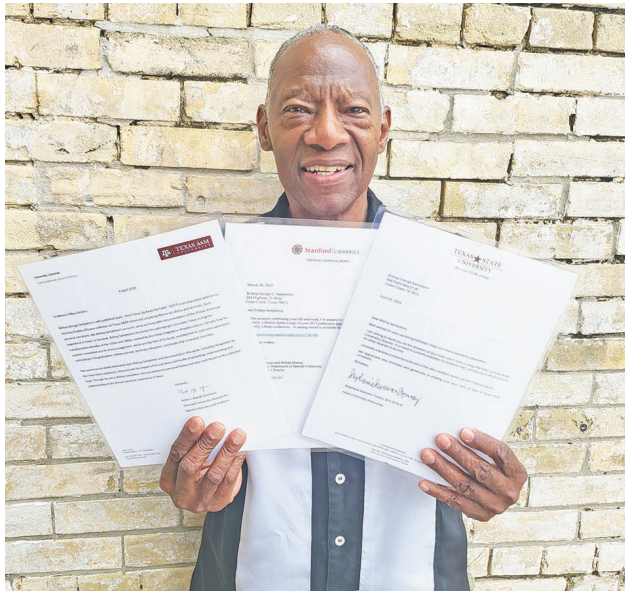
Among the vendors who will be at Bantam Fest are Triple Bee's, Lulu's Closet, Sweet Chaos, Barbie The Crafty Broad, K-Rod The Crafty Broad, Price Body Products, Yesenia Robles, Grandma Likes Bling/Paparazzi, CK Designs, Tacos Mama Luz, Funnell Cakes-Amanda Garza and T n Y Sweet & Savory Creations.

The evening will continue, and conclude, for the adults with the much anticipated live music and dancing from

7 p.m. - 11 p.m., offering all the opportunity to have a great evening. Again, the headliners for live music are Paul Sanchez & Wrangler Country.

Mark your calendars, come out to meet new friends, and see old ones, while having an amazing day enjoying the fun day planned for everyone. #Keeponsmilin' and follow Smiley Bantam Activity group on Facebook for more information.

Founded in 2012, Smiley Bantam Activity Group works to improve and provide safe activities for local youth with the help of members and volunteers in the Smiley, Texas community.



LEW K. COHN

Bishop George Sampleton, a Gonzales native, holds letters from Stanford University, Texas A&M University and Texas State University stating his self-published book, "Don't Give Up Keep the Faith," has been added to their library catalogs.

## Gonzales native's book added to more university libraries

BY LEW K. COHN  
Inquirer Publisher

A Gonzales native's self-published book chronicling his own experiences growing up in the community during integration has been added to the libraries and archives of more than 48 universities and counting worldwide.

Bishop George Sampleton, who now resides in Cedar Creek and is the pastor of the Spiritual Pentecostal Church in Bastrop, said his book, "Don't Give Up Keep the Faith," is now among the collections at the Stanford Libraries, Texas A&M University Libraries and the Texas State University Libraries.

An April 22 letter from Stephanie Swenson Towery, the head of scholarly resources for TSU Libraries, congratulated Sampleton on his birthday and thanked him for the donation of his book to their collection.

"Your book is currently available for students, staff and faculty to check out and for other libraries to borrow," Towery wrote. "University Libraries is honored to be one of the many libraries worldwide who holds your book. We appreciate your kindness and generosity and sharing your story with us here at Texas State University."

An April 4 letter from Robin Brandt Hutchison, associate librarian for Special Collections and Archives at the Texas A&M University Libraries called Sampleton's 2017 book "an important addition to the Area Studies Africana collection at Texas A&M University's Cushing Memorial Library and Archives."

"In his book, Bishop Sampleton chronicles his upbringing in Gonzales, Texas, during the transformative decades of the 1950s and 1960s, marked

by the initial integration of public schools. He tells how his mother's consistent words of encouragement through the title of his book enabled him to overcome adversities culminating in his graduation, military service, seminary education and leadership in several churches," Hutchison wrote.

"The numerous accolades bestowed upon Bishop Sampleton and documented in this work, including recognition by the Texas State Legislature, demonstrate the impact of this narrative in his life of preaching, understanding and hope. Through his story, Bishop Sampleton not only preserves personal history, but also contributes to the collective understanding of the African American experience in Texas."

The third letter, dated March 28, was from Benjamin Stone, curator for American and British History, associate director, Department of Special Collections, at Stanford University Libraries and it notes the book has been added to their library catalog as well.

Sampleton said he credits God for helping him see his message of hope and love being spread throughout the academic community.

"I just want people to know that it's not where you come from, it's where you're going," Sampleton said. "It's not about hatred. It's about peace. It's about joy. It's about love. It's about kindness."

"If I had been a hateful person, I never would have gone as far as I have. Hate does nothing but takes away from an individual."

Sampleton was a member of the first integrated class at Gonzales High School when he began attending in 1965.

## No Kid Hungry investing in Gonzales ISD school breakfast programs

### SPECIAL TO THE INQUIRER

No Kid Hungry announces its investment of \$90,200 in seven (7) Texas school districts, including Gonzales ISD.

The campaign's latest grant cycle marks a continuation of its commitment to support school breakfast programs across the Lone Star State. By providing resources in Spanish, No Kid Hungry seeks to alleviate language barriers to grant funding, helping connect more kids to school meals in Texas.

Studies find that healthy breakfasts promote academic success and positive behavior. However, many kids do not start the day with a nutritious breakfast, or any breakfast at all. School breakfasts are a convenient, affordable option for families, and research shows that they are often more nutritionally balanced than the ones they may eat at home or on the way to school.

"There is a palpable benefit when children start the day with full bellies and we want to make

sure all Texas kids are fueled for success from the start," said Stacie Sanchez Hare, director of No Kid Hungry in Texas. "We are excited to continue working with school districts to nourish children and foster inclusivity and equity across every community."

Offering assistance and grant applications in Spanish not only deepens relationships with primarily Spanish-speaking communities but also better serves their needs.

"We see children being able to focus more, showing higher attendance rates, and having a more overall positive school day following breakfast," said Rocio Madrigal, director of Food Services for Rio Hondo ISD. "We are grateful to receive resources in Spanish to expand our school breakfast program, which ultimately boost students in reaching their full potential."

This grant cycle is designed to expand school districts' current breakfast programs, developing innovative and convenient options that accommodate

the nutritional needs of their students.

"No Kid Hungry is helping us expand our breakfast meal services to students that normally do not go directly to the school cafeteria," said Robert Cuellar, Child Nutrition Program Director for Laredo ISD. "Breakfast by curbside is an innovative way we will be able to offer breakfast just before students walk into the school doors, providing delicious, nutritious, and appetizing grab-and-go meals that students will enjoy."

The following seven (7) school districts are part of the latest round of funding:

- Laredo ISD
- East Central ISD (San Antonio)
- Rio Hondo ISD
- Rockport Fulton ISD
- Gonzales ISD
- Wichita Falls ISD
- Del Valle ISD

To learn more about No Kid Hungry's advocacy work and year-round grantmaking in Texas, please visit <https://state.nokidhungry.org/texas>.

### ECONOMIC SUMMIT



CONTRIBUTED

The economic development team from Guadalupe Valley Electric Cooperative (GVEC) gathered the South Central Texas Economic Network, a summit of economic development directors from Gonzales, Cuero, Yoakum and Hallettsville, on May 6 in Cuero. The summit included a panel discussion as well as presentations on geofencing analysis for small businesses; Gen Z engagement and retention strategies; the state of Texas economic address; breaking down AI for everyday business success; Texas Department of Transportation regional updates and sharing the secrets to building better recruitment pipelines.

### Celebrations

#### Birthdays

##### May 9th

Jamie Ferguson  
Janie Padilla

##### May 10th

Jerrald Murphy  
George Tealer  
Carolyn Walton  
Kortney Wishert

##### May 11th

Tammy Lester

##### May 12th

Egon Barthels  
Bobby Jurek  
Jonathan Valenta

##### May 13th

Amanda Autry  
Lorina Gaytan  
Coltin Russell  
Susanna Spiller  
Beverly Stepan  
Wendy Washichek

##### May 14th

Wes Barfield  
Betty Contreras  
Vera Staggs Henk  
Missy Hull  
Bo Petrek  
Jo West

##### May 15th

Isaac Anzaldua  
Angie Horner  
Michelle Stephens

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### Gonzales Weather

	<b>May 9</b> 96°/70°	Very warm and humid with some sun 25% chance of rain • RealFeel 106
	<b>May 10</b> 83°/64°	Cloudy and not as hot with a strong thunderstorm in spots afternoon 40% chance of rain • RealFeel 86
	<b>May 11</b> 84°/63°	Mostly sunny and less humid 0% chance of rain • RealFeel 84
	<b>May 12</b> 86°/64°	Mostly cloudy 0% chance of rain • RealFeel 92
	<b>May 13</b> 85°/65°	Partly sunny 6% chance of rain • RealFeel 87
	<b>May 14</b> 84°/66°	Mostly sunny 0% chance of rain • RealFeel 93
	<b>May 15</b> 88°/65°	Watch for strong thunderstorms in the afternoon; otherwise, watch for a strong morning thunderstorm, variable cloudiness 73% chance of rain • RealFeel 89



# Upcoming Events at J.B. Wells Park in Gonzales

Sunday, May 12th

Happy Mother's Day

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## DUDS TO DAZZLE



Exciting time at 4-H District 10 Duds to Dazzle competition in Fredericksburg: The "Seekers Team" of Harper, Kylea and Elijah was coached by Evelyn Clark. The "Yoyos Team" of Evelyn, Arrianna, Emily, and Julia was coached by Fayerene Smith. The "Yoyos" brought home the first place banner!

CONTRIBUTED

## Garden Q&A

with CALVIN FINCH



**Q. I am confused by a recommendation you make on applying the same preemergent herbicides at 3 different times during the year for different annual weeds. Why should it be necessary to apply Crew or Dimension on March 1 and June 1 for sand burs and then again on August 30 for the winter weeds like beggars' lice?**

A. The simplest response is that the herbicides only operate for 3 to 4 months so a weed that is likely to germinate during a different season would not be controlled. Another issue is that most gardeners aren't plagued by all the existing weeds every year.

**Q. We have a red oak tree which has a sticky drip emerging from a short leak in its bark. The bees and other bugs seem to be attracted to the drippings. Is there anything we should do to protect the tree? The foliage looks good.**

A. It sounds like you are describing a bacterial disease secretion from a disease called "wetwood". In the old days it was actively managed to try and release the fluid with drain tubes, but the conclusion now is that the best treatment is to let the tree deal with it. It does not ap-

pear to be a threat that is reduced from active treatment.

**Q. We have huge live oak trees in our neighborhood. One neighbor has enlisted an arborist company to dig down at the base of the trunk to bare the old root flares. He says it will help to prevent rot at the base of the tree. Root flares should not be covered by soil.**

A. In general your neighbor is correct. Root flares that get covered by excessive amounts of soil later in their growth are susceptible to rot. The involvement of an arborist will help to make a reasonable determination of how much of a threat to the tree exists.

**Q. Is there a problem with planting coral vine? My husband and I want to plant it to support the pollinators. The vines are also beautiful, but my neighbor says it will be a threat to his fences and sheds.**

A. You are both right. The bees, butterflies and hummingbirds love the coral vine as a nectar source, but it is an aggressive grower. One limiting growth factor is that the coral vines are cold sensitive and freeze back to the ground every winter.

## LIVESTOCK WEEKLY REPORTS

### GONZALES LIVESTOCK MARKET

May 4th, 2024

Cattle - 753

Compared to our last sale: Number 1 choice calves and yearlings sold active with higher undertone. 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., 325-525; 300-400 lbs., 265-385; 400-500 lbs., 255-315; 500-600 lbs., 230-320; 600-700 lbs., 195-255; 700-800 lbs., 202-243. Bull Yearlings: 700-900 lbs., 90-155. Stocker-feeder heifers: Medium and large-frame No. 1: 150-300 lbs., 285-375; 300-400 lbs., 265-330; 400-500 lbs., 245-280; 500-600 lbs., 210-285; 600-700 lbs., 205-241. Packer Cows: Good lean utility and commercial, 109-121; Cutters, 126-133; Canners, 85-100; High yielding fat cows, 120-133. Packer Bulls: Yield grade 1 & 2, good heavy bulls, 141-148; Light weights and medium quality bulls, 124-138. Stocker Cows: \$900 to \$2,600. Pairs: \$1,800 to \$3,200.

Heifers: 200-300 lbs. - \$269-350  
300-400 lbs. - \$253-330  
400-500 lbs. - \$239-340  
500-600 lbs. - \$232-350  
600-700 lbs. - \$220-305  
700-800 lbs. - \$196-225  
Slaughter Cows - \$89-136  
Slaughter Bulls - \$108-147  
Stocker Cows - \$650-1100  
Pairs: \$1700-2000

### NIXON LIVESTOCK

May 6th, 2024

Cattle - 907

Steers: 200-300 lbs - \$296-410

300-400 lbs - \$295-395  
400-500 lbs - \$268-348  
500-600 lbs - \$255-303  
600-700 lbs - \$233-267  
700-800 lbs - \$217-255  
Heifers: 200-300 lbs - \$269-350  
300-400 lbs - \$253-330  
400-500 lbs - \$239-340  
500-600 lbs - \$232-350  
600-700 lbs - \$220-305  
700-800 lbs - \$196-225  
Slaughter Cows - \$89-136  
Slaughter Bulls - \$108-147  
Stocker Cows - \$650-1100  
Pairs: \$1700-2000

### HALLETTVILLE LIVESTOCK COMMISSION CO., INC.

Sale date: April 30th

Cattle on hand: 1004

Packer Cows: High Dressing: \$120-139  
Medium Dressing: \$110-123  
Low Dressing: \$100-115  
Poor/Weak Cows: \$80-100  
Packer Bulls: High Dressing Bulls: \$144-155  
Medium Dressing Bulls: \$120-145  
Low Dressing Bulls: \$105-120  
Stocker Cows: Good Stocker/Cows & Heifers: NONE  
Medium Stocker Cows & Heifers: \$1250-1900  
Good Cow & Calf Pairs: \$2400-2800  
Medium Cow & Calf Pairs: \$1400-1850  
Stocker & Feeder Calves & Yearlings: Number 1 steer & bull calves: Under 200 lbs.: \$340-440

200-300 lbs.: \$310-405  
300-400 lbs.: \$300-385  
400-500 lbs.: \$285-340  
500-600 lbs.: \$250-315  
600-700 lbs.: \$235-290  
700-800 lbs.: \$210-265  
Number 1 heifer calves: Under 200 lbs: \$320-415  
200-300 lbs.: \$280-350  
300-400 lbs.: \$265-335  
400-500 lbs.: \$255-325  
500-600 lbs.: \$235-285  
600-700 lbs.: \$210-255  
700-800 lbs.: \$185-245  
Replacement Heifers: 350-700 lbs.: \$275-330  
The calf market was strong again this week. Demand continues extremely good in all areas. Packer cows and bulls sold fully steady with last week's strong market on a supply of 200 head.

### SEGUIN CATTLE CO.

May 1st

Market Trend: Quality of cattle very good. Lots of big cattle moving. Market softer on big cattle with packer cow and bulls steady. Cattle - 570  
Sheep & goats - 961  
Medium & large frame #1 Steers: 200-300 lb. 1.50-2.60-3.38  
300-400 lb. .70-2.35-3.54  
400-500 lb. .40-2.35-3.10  
500-600 lb. .40-2.31-2.88  
600-700 lb. .70-2.33-2.74  
700-850 lb. 1.90-2.24-2.40  
Medium & large frame #1 Heifers: 200-300 lb. 1.30-2.28-3.15  
300-400 lb. .80-2.20-3.05  
400-500 lb. .75-2.25-2.76  
500-600 lb. .85-2.05-2.51  
600-750 lb. 1.75-2.10-2.30  
Cows: Utility & commercial - 1.14-1.28-1.35  
Cutters - 1.09-1.16-1.28  
Canners - .92-1.11-1.13  
Palpated cows - 610-1000  
Cow/Calf Pairs - 950-2200  
Bulls: Heavy High Yielding - 1.45-1.56  
Light & Low Yielding - 1.32-1.44  
Sheep & Goats: Nannies - 60-300  
Kid Goats (Fat) - 2.80-3.35

Wethers -2.65-3.40  
Billies - 1.80-2.40  
Dorp. Ewes - 70-155  
Dorp. Lambs (Fat) - 1.80-2.85  
Woolled Ewes - 80-155  
Woolled Bucks - 1.20-1.60  
Lambs - 1.40-1.75  
Barb. Bucks - 235-375

### CUERO LIVESTOCK MARKET

May 3, 2024

Number of head 1,424

There were 247 cows and 19 bulls. Packer cows and bulls sold to another week of strong demand. Packer bulls were up \$2/cwt to \$157, while cows were also up \$2/cwt to \$133. Each week continues to see prices at or near all-time highs. Demand continues to be very strong. The calf market continued to improve as calves were over \$56/hd higher on 26 more pounds of weight. It was a great day to be a seller! Packer bulls: All Weights 90.00-157.00  
Packer cows: packers & cutters 85.00-133.00  
poor & weak 30.00-57.00  
Palpated: 42 bred \$1,500-\$1,800  
132.00-176.00  
PAIRS: 11 \$1,750 - \$26500  
Steer/Bull Calves: (AVG-HIGH)  
Under 200 lbs. 346.00-410.00  
200-250 lbs. 332.00-405.50  
250-299 lbs 332.00-395.50  
300-350 lbs. 323.00-375.00  
350-400 lbs. 321.00-365.00  
400-450 lbs. 294.00-350.00  
450-500 lbs. 286.00-328.00  
500-550 lbs 270.00-308.00  
550-600 lbs. 256.00-302.00  
600-700 lbs 245.00-298.00  
700-800 lbs 215.00-278.00  
Heifer Calves: (AVG-HIGH)  
under 200 lbs. 339.00-420.00  
200-250 lbs NONE  
250-300 lbs 306.00-370.00  
300-350 lbs. 306.00-336.00  
350-400 lbs. 295.00-328.00  
400-450 lbs. 271.00-336.00  
450-500 lbs 253.00-305.00  
500-550 lbs 244.00-300.00  
550-600 lbs 237.00-282.00  
600-700 lbs 213.00-240.00  
Over 700 lbs 191.00-231.00  
\*Replacement Heifer

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## New study shows health disparities cost Texas billions of dollars

BY FREDA ROSS  
Texas News Service

Health disparities in Texas are not only making some people sick, but affecting the state's economy.

A new study shows Texas is losing \$7 billion a year because it does not adequately address quality-of-life issues and the health care needs of its lower-income residents.

The research was sponsored by the Episcopal Health Foundation, Methodist Healthcare Ministries of South Texas, and St. David's Foundation.

Brian Sasser, chief communications officer for the Episcopal Health Foundation, said health care includes more than doctors' visits and medication.

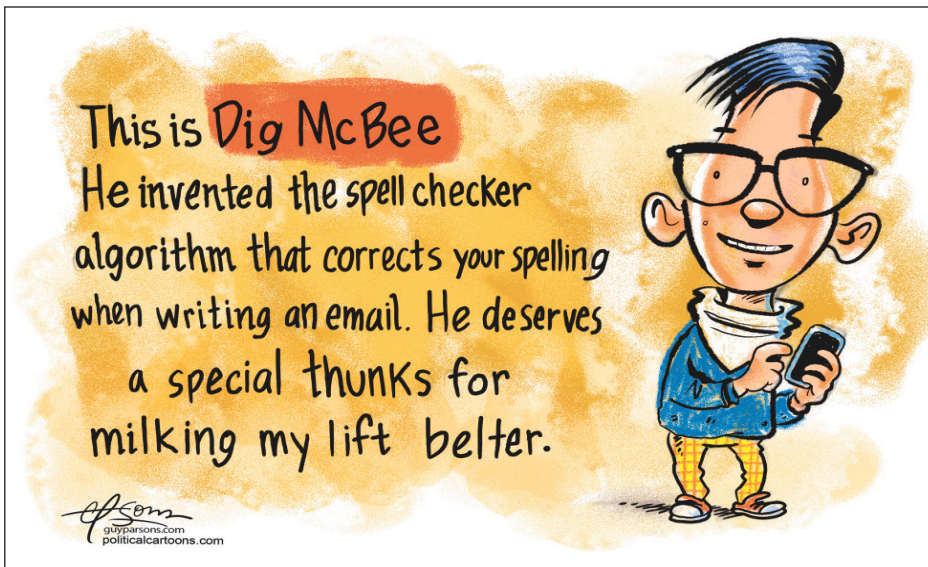
"Everything from increasing access to affordable health insurance to investing in under-resourced neighborhoods to give them more options, whether that's exercise options or food options," Sasser outlined. "Look at policy changes that expand health insurance coverage for new moms."

The report breaks down the economic costs of preventable health differences for every Texas county. It found Bexar, Dallas, Harris, Tarrant and Travis counties are losing the most money annually because of health disparities.

The amount of the economic impact depends on the racial and ethnic makeup of the county and the size of its working-age population. Sasser added the report shows Black and Hispanic children are more likely to grow up in neighborhoods with high poverty levels, and higher rates of diabetes and obesity.

"What can we do to work to make sure that the rate of diabetes isn't dramatically different between white households and Black households?" Sasser asked. "That we can make sure the food insecurity isn't dramatically different between someone who makes over \$100,000 and someone who makes less than \$30,000?"

The Texas Legislature has passed laws to address some of the disparities, including House Bill 12. It extends Medicaid health coverage for 12 months for new mothers, and pays for maternal health services for community health workers and doulas.



DR. DON NEWBURY  
The Idle American

## A queen like none other...

Many tourist destinations claim to be "all things to all people," but compared to Branson, MO, the rest of them miss the mark by a country mile. Nestled in the Ozark Mountains, the laid-back community not only survived the pandemic, but has roared back with numerous new attractions to strengthen its vows to be "number one" in tourism.

Since 2008, the "Branson buzz" has centered on the 2,000-seat Sight and Sound Theatre, where sold-out crowds are common for live performances of Bible figures. Queen Esther is the current attraction; it plays through October 5.

The theatre dazzles, as does the work of some 400 people who have added production of movies, streaming and other types of electronic delivery, evidence that not everything associated with the pandemic is bad. "Thanks to these expanded efforts, we are making a far greater Christian impact than with live performances alone," a spokesman said...

Sight and Sound's 50th anniversary of its founding in Lancaster, PA, looms in 2026. At the home base there, more than 800 employees set highest professional standards, as do counterparts in Branson.

We've been privileged to see several productions, and still "ooh and ahh" on the lavish grounds leading to the magnificent venue.

The productions have the grandeur of Broadway's best, and with admission prices that are fractional by comparison. But wait, there's more....

Every Branson visit provides great memories. We expect "God and country" tributes at all the shows, and undergirding most of them are intentional emphasis to the importance of family.

A great example is Clay Cooper, who also serves as an elected city government official.

He has his own theater, where he is joined in song by his wife and two sons. He loves his community, his work and his family, pointing with pride to his youngest son who set a record last year for the Branson HS basketball team. "He took more charges than any player in our school's history," Clay boasted....

We also took in shows featuring the Dutton, Haygood and Petersen families. The Petersens, known for bluegrass music, are anchored by the four kids' mom, Karren, who plays the bass fiddle. Their rendition of "Sweet Beulah Land" is a treasure.

The Haygoods--five brothers and a sister, now in their 32nd year--are known for their variety show that has achieved more than 2,000 sold-out performances. And the ever-popular Duttons span three generations.

Another "must see" is Pierce Arrow, which features Michael Cole, an amazing vocalist who came to the fore on America's Got Talent. Their best joke? We learned that alphabet soup might be even better if the letters were in cursive!....

Dean Z truly is the "ultimate Elvis" and illusionist Rick Thomas is world-class--carrying on brilliantly despite his being "under the weather" during our visit. Jay Osmond, best known for years with the Osmond Brothers, is an outstanding soloist. Now 69 years of age, he's new at "going it alone." He claims memories that go way, way back. "Even as a seven-year-old, I knew about ESP," he said. "Eat/Sleep/Practice."

Our memory chest runneth over. We learned that Branson now has a world-class aquarium, an attraction opening at the onset of COVID. It is remarkable....

As we wound up five days in Branson, we wished for more time to visit the more than 100 attractions, as well as The College of the Ozarks, aka, "Hard Work University." It has much to teach all of us.

It, too, is world class.

We marvel that so much has been invested in Branson, and there's no end in sight. Who could imagine, a couple of decades ago, that there would ever be a 482-room hotel in Branson? Well, there is, the Thousand Hills Resort Hotel. And there are more to come in this magical place where more than 10 million visitors showed up in 2023, with even more expected this year. The world needs more Bransons....

Dr. Newbury is a longtime public speaker and former university president who is Texas' longest-running columnist, now in 23rd year.

### Letters to the Editor Policy

It is the policy of The Inquirer to encourage reader participation on its Opinion page. Diverse and varied opinions are welcomed. Because of space limitations, we must limit all contributors to one letter per person per month. Letters of 400 words or less will be published unless they contain language or content that the editors feel is inappropriate.

Letters must either be about Gonzales County, from a resident of Gonzales County, or in response to a story that appears in print or online in The Inquirer.

Examples of content that will cause letters to be rejected include the following:

- Confusing or unclear points.
- Crude language.
- Poor taste.
- Disrespectful comments regarding a group's or individual's ethnicity, gender, religion, culture, sexual orientation or race.

- Other incendiary language or remarks.
- Endorsements for or complaints about individually named commercial products or services.

- Poetry.
- Personal attacks.
- "Thank You" letters that go beyond general thanks to the community; attempt to serve as an advertisement for a company, individual or political party; or is submitted in lieu of a paid "Thank You" advertisement.

During periods ahead of an election, The Inquirer does not accept letters to the editor urging voters to vote for or against candidates in local elections. Endorsements should be displayed in political advertising. In light of this policy, we reserve the right to reject or edit letters for references to candidates and whether or not they should be elected. The Inquirer will accept letters expressing views on bond measures, constitutional amendments and other such issues. Letters will not be accepted once early voting has begun.

The Inquirer will not knowingly publish factually incorrect information.

Only letters written exclusively to the newspaper will be published. Letters to a third party or those written to more than one newspaper are not accepted. "Wallpaper" -- submissions that are in large part copied-and-pasted from another author or organization -- will not be published.

Letters written in response to other letter writers should address the issue at hand. Discourse should be civil and people should be referred to in a respectful manner. Letters referring to news stories should also mention the headline and date of publication.

All letters must be signed and include the writer's street address or route address telephone number, which will be used for verification purposes only.

Please send Letters to the Editor:

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- U.S. Mail: The Inquirer, P.O. Box 616, Gonzales, Texas, 78629
- In person: The Inquirer, 622 St. Paul Street, Gonzales, Texas, 78629 (Please bring in a digital format, if possible).

Further questions may be directed to Publisher Lew Cohn, 830-672-2861.

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WANDY VAN EPPS

Lady Apaches seniors Sydney McCray (3) and Dakota Schmidt (15) hug each other in their final game as members of the Gonzales High School softball program. The Lady Apaches ended their season as area finalist in their, 2-0, loss to Needville.

# Lady Apaches' historical season ends at area round

BY WANDY VAN EPPS  
Gonzales Inquirer

The Gonzales Lady Apaches ended their historic playoff run with a 2-0 area loss to the Needville Lady Bluejays Thursday, May 2.

The Lady Apaches returned to the area round for the first time since the 2005 season and capped off a 7-3 second-place district record and 21-10 overall record.

Seniors Sydney McCray and Dakota Schmidt were glad to be part of the historical season and glad to contribute to it.

"It feels great to do it with the girls that you love and the girls you grew up with and everyone you got super close with," McCray said.

"It feels great. I love each and every one of these girls and it's been such a great experience having it with them and being able to bond with everybody so well. I think even though it ended tonight, everything was so great," Schmidt said.

Gonzales head softball coach Michelle Uribe, in her second year, turned the Lady Apaches into a state-ranked squad at the start of the season.

"It was so fun. I mean, these girls deserved it. They worked so hard and they earned every bit of everything that they got," Uribe said.

The Lady Apaches and the Lady Bluejays fought a defensive battle with freshman pitcher Dixie Rae Lester recording 10 strikeouts of Needville's batters.

Needville would win the batting game, scoring a two-run homer in the top of the fifth, but Uribe was proud of how her team's defense performed against them.

"They worked hard and they wanted it and they wanted to keep it going for the seniors. So they really put it all out there as much as they could. And I'm so proud of them," Uribe said.

Uribe and the Lady Apaches say their goodbyes to four of their seniors (McCray, Schmidt, Kelly Breitschopf and Haley Cantu) and they will miss their impact on the team.

Uribe was able to coach their final



WANDY VAN EPPS

Gonzales freshman pitcher Dixie Rae Lester (10) pitches for the Lady Apaches in the area match against Needville Thursday, May 2. Lester struck out 10 Needville batters in the area round loss to the Lady Bluejays.

two years on the team and was glad to coach them.

"They were just so awesome to coach. They work hard. They're coachable, they want to win. They just do what you ask them. They come every day and you know, just doing those things in life. Is going to put them ahead of the game," Uribe said.

The future of the Lady Apaches softball program is bright and Uribe and her players are ready for 2025.

"We are still so young, I know were

losing our four seniors, but still have so much talent on the field. I am looking forward to doing this again next year and go even further," Uribe said.

Schmidt and McCray had a message for the upcoming Lady Apaches and the future leaders on the team.

"Just keep playing for each other," McCray said.

"It doesn't last forever so don't take anything for granted, and play your best all the time," Schmidt said.

## Lady Apaches softball players earn All-District recognition

### STAFF REPORT

The Gonzales Lady Apaches capped off their historic 2024 softball season as area finalists and earned top district recognition.

Freshman pitcher Dixie Rae Lester took home Newcomer of the Year for the 2024 season with 219 strikeouts, 13 wins and a 3.341 ERA (Earned Run Average).

### FIRST TEAM ALL-DISTRICT:

Sophomore second baseman Ava Carrizales recorded 22 stolen bases, 20 RBIs and 35 hits for the Lady Apaches.

Senior outfielder Kelly Breitschopf recorded 28 RBIs, three home runs, three triples, six doubles and 16 stone bases.

### SECOND TEAM ALL-DISTRICT:

Senior catcher Sydney McCray recorded 12 caught stealings defensively, while on offense she had three home runs, four triples, and six doubles.

Senior designated hitter Haley Cantu recorded 14 hits, three doubles, three triples and earned nine wins as pitcher.

Junior outfielder Sarah Padilla recorded 34 hits, 25 RBIs, 33 runs, and nine triples.

Sophomore Gyzelle Guevara recorded 28 hits, 32 runs, 21 stolen bases, and three home runs.

Junior first baseman Peyton Springfield recorded 17 runs, 11 hits, nine stolen bases and one home run.

### ALL-DISTRICT HONORABLE MENTIONS:

Freshman first baseman Alexzis Hernandez recorded 31 RBIs, 29 hits, 15 runs and eight doubles.

Senior outfielder Dakota Schmidt recorded 13 hits, 11 hit by pitch, 17 runs and two triples

### ALL-DISTRICT ACADEMIC:

Kelly Breitschopf, Haley Cantu, Sydney McCray, Dakota Schmidt, Sarah Padilla, Peyton Springfield, Ava Carrizales, Alexzis Hernandez, Dixie Lester, Blakely Mercer and Alaina Valle

### THSCA ACADEMIC ALL-STATE:

Sydney McCray, Kelly Breitschopf and Dakota Schmidt

## Apaches, Mustangs to honor athletes with banquets

### STAFF REPORT

The 2023-24 high school sports season has ended in Gonzales County and many schools are now celebrating their athletes with awards season.

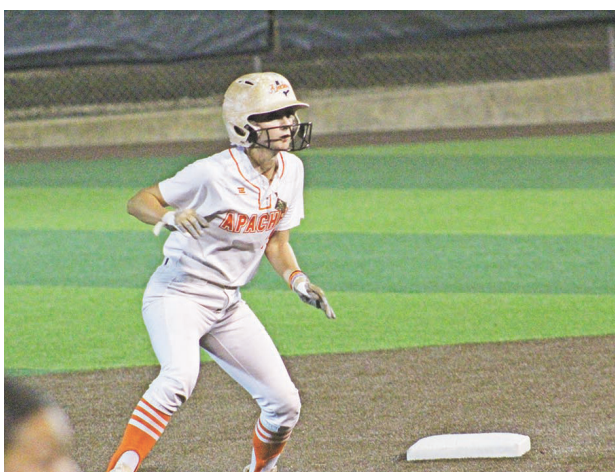
Nixon-Smiley kicked off its athletic banquet season Wednesday, May 8, honoring the Mustangs' athletes throughout their respective sports.

The Mustangs had both powerlifting teams make it to the state meet; the Lady Mustangs finished second in their district; Lady Mustangs basketball clinched a playoff spot; and the Mustangs track teams competed in the regional meet.

In Gonzales, the Apaches will celebrate their athletes for their annual banquet on Tuesday, May 17 at the JB Wells Expo Center.

The Apaches and Lady Apaches had several historic moments this season; the Apaches football team finished second in district; the Lady Apaches volleyball team swept the San Antonio teams to finish with an 8-4 district record; the powerlifting teams competed in the state meet; the track teams competed in the regional meet; the Lady Apaches basketball team returned to the playoffs; and the Lady Apaches softball returned to the area round for the first time since 2005.

The Apaches and Mustangs will be back on the sports field in fall 2024.



WANDY VAN EPPS

Above left: Lady Apaches head softball coach Michelle Uribe speaks to her players after the area round loss to Needville. Uribe in her second year turned the Lady Apaches from 9-22 (4-6 fourth place district) to a 21-10 (7-3 second place district) team. Above right: Lady Apaches senior outfielder Dakota Schmidt (15) slides away from second base in the area match against the Needville Lady Bluejays Thursday, May 2.





CONTRIBUTED

Pictured (left to right) are VC nursing instructors Alison Hewig, Lesley Poole, Kristi Pfeil, Debbie Pena, Rachael Hauboldt, Susan Sullivan, Kim McClure, Michelle Ulbrich, Stephanie Olivares, Nadine Van Beveren, Tracy Chomitzky, Jo Anne Settles, Juan Mata and ADN Program Chair Irma Moreno.

# VC's Associate Degree Nursing Program celebrates 100-percent pass rate

## SPECIAL TO THE INQUIRER

Victoria College's Associate Degree Nursing (ADN) Program recently celebrated its graduates' 100-percent pass rate on the National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses (NCLEX-RN). Out of 70

professional nursing programs in Texas, only 10 achieved a 100-percent pass rate in 2023, placing VC's program among the top performers in the state.

"Through their hard work and dedication, all 84 of our graduates who sat for the NCLEX-RN in 2023 passed the exam,

qualifying them for licensure as registered nurses," said Dr. Jennifer Kent, VC President. "This achievement is a direct reflection of our outstanding faculty and their dedication to preparing students for a rewarding career in nursing while helping meet the demand for highly skilled nurses."

## GOLF SCRAMBLE WINNERS



CONTRIBUTED

The winning team from the May 1 Golf Scramble at Independence Golf Course in Gonzales were, from left, J R Nelson, Mike Hinkle, Tim Cleveland, Frank Ingram and Garrett Sartin.



CONTRIBUTED

The second-place team from the May 1 Golf Scramble at Independence Golf Course in Gonzales were, from left, Spencer Breitschopf, Daryl Kifer, Grayson Meredith, Gary Schroeder and David Hernandez.

# VC students set to participate in summer engineering program



CONTRIBUTED

Pictured from left to right are Cecilia Perez Valdez, Sara Laredo and Christal Martinez

## SPECIAL TO THE INQUIRER

Victoria College students Cecilia Perez Valdez, Sara Laredo and Christal Martinez have been accepted into the Integrated Pathways of Excellence for Seamless Transition of Engineering Minority Students (IPE-STEMS) Summer Bridge Program at Texas A&M Univer-

sity-Kingsville's College of Engineering. All three students are enrolled in VC's ENGR 1304 Engineering Graphics class this spring and will receive stipends to participate in the summer program running July 1-19. They will work on engineering projects with university faculty and interact with engineers from across South Texas.

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# COOKING WITH PARIND

## Scotched eggs stay deliciously edible for months

Hello everyone. My name is Parind Vora. I am the chef/owner of Gonzales Bistro at 320 Saint George Street right off the historic Independence square. [www.gonzalesbistro.com](http://www.gonzalesbistro.com). In this column we talk cooking, tricks to cooking, and sometimes eating.



### Scotched egg

#### Ingredients

- 4 large super-fresh farm eggs
- ¾ lb. of your favourite loose raw sausage (except Mexican chorizo) made into four 6-7" diameter patties about ¼ inch thick.

A mix of ½ cup of Japanese panko breadcrumbs and ½ cup of white breadcrumbs (crust removed, oven dried overnight and pulsed into coarse breadcrumbs) seasoned with chopped Italian parsley (optional), salt & freshly ground pepper

½ cup rice flour (available at big city Asian markets or

online) seasoned with salt & freshly ground pepper

½ cup of beaten whole eggs seasoned with salt & freshly ground pepper

Ice bath (ice + water in a large bowl to cool cooked eggs)

Put the eggs in heavy simmering salted water for 4 minutes. Directly put the now soft-boiled eggs in the ice bath to stop any further cooking. Peel the skin in the water bath after they are fully cooled in about 30 minutes or so.

Pat the eggs completely dry. Lay the soft-boiled eggs in the sausage patties and completely wrap in the meat and gently seal them closed.

Bread the sausage wrapped eggs in a three-step breading of

1. rice flour
2. egg wash
3. breadcrumb mix

Dredge the wrapped eggs in rice flour first until very well coated and then shake the excess off. Next, dredge in the seasoned egg wash until very well coated and you have shaken the excess off. Third, coat with the breadcrumbs mix and you have shaken the

excess off. Put the breaded eggs on a cold plate/platter and put in the fridge for at least 30 minutes to firm up the breading.

In a big enough pot, bring the peanut oil to 350° F. Deep fry the eggs until the sausage is cooked (between 5-8 minutes) and the crust crunchy but the yolks are not fully cooked. Set aside to rest draining on a rack over a sheet pan/cookie sheet.

Lightly season the fried eggs with salt. Let it come to room temperature (70° F).

To plate: eat when desired with a mustard or mayonnaise. Or don't plate and wrap in a handkerchief, put in a pocket and eat at any quite inopportune time that hunger may strike.

For this dish I like a rather overly oaky Cabernet Sauvignon blend from Napa Valley for the red or a buttery chardonnay from Sonoma Valley for the white.

If you are 'picnicking' the egg then a wee poke off the flask of fine Irish whiskey like a decade old Red Breast or a Middleton should do quite nicely.

Cheers!

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### GENERAL FARM LABOR.

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### CAL - MAINE FOODS INC.

is hiring for Plant Palletizers & Cleanup positions. Benefits include: Vacation, Sick Leave, Hosp. Ins., Dental, Vision, 401K, ESOP. Apply in person. Cal-Maine Foods Inc. 1680 CR 431 Waelder, TX 78959. Mon-Fri 7-4. 830-540-4205 or 830-540-4684.

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Human Resources  
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### 950 PUBLIC NOTICES

### Construction Advertisement and Invitation for Bids

The City of Nixon will receive bids for N. Lee Avenue & Library Channel Improvements, 2017 Hurricane Harvey-DR 4332 (GLO Contract No. 20-065-051-C160) until 10:00 AM on Friday, May 24, 2024 at City Hall, 302 East Central Avenue, Nixon, Texas 78140. The bids will be publicly opened and read aloud at 10:00 AM on Friday, May 24, 2024 at City Hall, 302 East Central Avenue, Nixon, Texas 78140.

Bids are invited for several items and quantities of work as follows:

1. Approximately 2,500 LF of channel improvements
2. Installation of multi-box and single box culverts with headwalls
3. Approximately 1,100 SY of reinforced concrete slope paving
4. Asphalt street pavement repair at new culvert crossing

The Bidding Documents, including Drawings and Technical Specifications may be obtained from Civcast at [www.civcastusa.com](http://www.civcastusa.com). Prospective Bidders may examine electronic copies of Bid Documents by contacting BEFCO Engineering, Inc. at (979) 968-6474 or by electronic mail at [chad@befcoengineering.com](mailto:chad@befcoengineering.com).

A bid bond in the amount of 5 percent of the bid issued by an acceptable surety shall be submitted with each bid. A certified check or bank draft payable to the City of Nixon or negotiable U.S. Government Bonds (as par value) may be submitted in lieu of the Bid Bond.

Attention is called to the fact that not less than the federally determined prevailing (Davis-Bacon and Related Acts) wage rate, as issued by the Texas General Land Office and contained in the contract documents, must be paid on this project. In addition, the successful bidder must ensure that employees and applicants for employment are not discriminated against because of race, color, religion, sex, sexual identity, gender identity, or national origin.

The City of Nixon reserves the right to reject any or all bids or to waive any informalities in the bidding. Bids may be held by City of Nixon for a period not to exceed sixty (60) days from the date of the bid opening for the purpose of reviewing the bids and investigating the bidder's qualifications prior to the contract award.

City of Nixon  
Darryl Becker, Interim City Manager

All contractors/subcontractors that are debarred, suspended or otherwise excluded from or ineligible for participation on federal assistance programs may not undertake any activity in part or in full under this project.

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S-1687

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

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### 950 PUBLIC NOTICES

**Pubic Notice**

Nixon-Smiley CISD is accepting formal bids on gasoline, diesel, and propane for the 2024-25 school year. Bids are to be received in the Nixon-Smiley CISD administration office located at 800 North Rancho Road, Nixon, Texas by June 3, 2024, at 1:00 PM. Bids will be tabulated and presented for consideration to the Board of Trustees on June 10, 2024. Envelopes are to be clearly marked "BIDS". The school district reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids based on comparison of each individual item. Please contact Jeff Van Auken (830) 582-1536 ext 102 for additional information.

### 950 PUBLIC NOTICES

**Notice to Creditors**

Notice is hereby given that original Letters Testamentary for the Estate of Thomas Lee Oneill, Deceased, were issued on May 1, 2024, in Cause No. AD24-0316, pending in the County Court of Gonzales County, Texas, to: Annie Gwin.

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

c/o: Robert W. Bland  
Attorney at Law  
P.O. Box 119  
GONZALES, TX 78629

Dated the 2nd day of May, 2024.

*Robert W. Bland*  
Robert W. Bland  
Attorney for Annie Gwin  
State Bar No: 24044756  
P.O. Box 119  
GONZALES, TX 78629  
Telephone: (830) 672-2437  
Facsimile: (830) 672-2439  
E-mail: rbland@gvec.net

### 950 PUBLIC NOTICES

**CITATION BY PUBLICATION - TRC 109 & 114**

THE STATE OF TEXAS: Cause No. 28,790

Pat Mosher IN THE DISTRICT COURT  
V 25TH JUDICIAL DISTRICT  
Kenneth Vester Mosher, III GONZALES COUNTY, TEXAS

TO: Kenneth Vester Mosher, III and his respective unknown heirs

**NOTICE TO DEFENDANT: "You have been sued. You may employ an attorney. If you or your attorney do not file a written answer with the clerk who issued this citation by 10:00 am on the Monday next following the expiration of 42 days after the date this citation was issued, a default judgment may be taken against you."**

You are hereby commanded to appear by filing a written answer to the Plaintiff's Original Petition for Sale Pursuant to Chapter 23A Texas Property Code at or before 10:00 o'clock A.M. on the Monday next after the expiration of 42 days after the date of issuance of this citation before the Honorable District Court of Gonzales County, at the Courthouse in said County in Gonzales, Texas. Said Plaintiff's Original Petition for Sale Pursuant to Chapter 23A Texas Property Code was filed in said court on 04/23/2024 in the above entitled cause.

A brief statement of the nature of this suit is as follows, to-wit: Sale Pursuant to Chapter 23A Texas Property Code as is more fully shown by Plaintiff's Original Petition for Sale Pursuant to Chapter 23A Texas Property Code on file in this suit.

Issued and given under my hand and seal of said Court at Gonzales Texas this 2nd day of May, 2024.

Attorney for Plaintiff:  
Christie Ortman Fullilove  
403 St. George  
Gonzales, Texas 78629  
830-672-9535

Clerk of the Court:  
Janice Sutton  
414 St. Joseph St., Ste. 300  
Gonzales County, Texas

By *K. Alarcon* Deputy

### 900 BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

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- 3. DON'T ADVERTISE.** Just assume everybody knows what you sell.
- 4. DON'T ADVERTISE.** Convince yourself that you've been in business so long customers will automatically come to you.
- 5. DON'T ADVERTISE.** Forget that there are new potential customers who would do business with you if they were urged to do so.
- 6. DON'T ADVERTISE.** Forget that you have a competition trying to attract your customers away from you.
- 7. DON'T ADVERTISE.** Tell yourself it costs too much to advertise and that you don't get enough out of it.
- 8. DON'T ADVERTISE.** Overlook the fact that advertising is an inveseiment in selling - not an expense.
- 9. DON'T ADVERTISE.** Be sure not to provide an adequate advertising budget for your business.
- 10. DON'T ADVERTISE.** Forget that you have to keep reminding your established customers that you appreciate their business.

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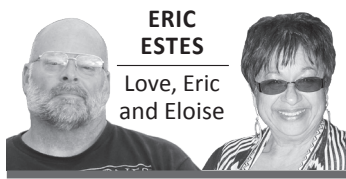
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# Life's a process



**ERIC ESTES**  
Love, Eric and Eloise

Howdy folks. I hope you and your loved ones are all doing well and getting along as God intended. I also hope you've taken some time to get out and enjoy this nice weather (between rain showers), as spring seemed to have started a little early this year, and the heat of summer could be right on its heels. But, seeing as some folks up north are still battling snow, I'm certainly not complaining. So get out and get you some while the getting's still good.

With springtime in the air, it's also mating season (just to clarify: not for me, for the critters, as my mating days are long gone). The "birds and the bees" are building their nests (ah, so that's where the saying came from), and preparing to add to the clan, as I'm sure my racoon buddies are doing

as well. I normally sit on the porch and feed anywhere from 10-20 per night, but lately only 4-5. Fortunately, my favorites are still coming around, and eating from my hand while sitting with me on my church pew and being petted, as I now consider them to be part of the family. Yep, we all need love, don't we?

As I just couldn't seem to get to it last year, about a month ago I jumped out of bed deciding it was a good day to start painting the exterior of the house. Seeing how outside paint is more of a protective coating than just

added color, maintenance is important and will keep this old boy from having to live in a bouncy castle. A couple of years ago, needing a change of scenery after the loss of Eloise, I revamped the interior in periwinkle and white, and decorated with a tropical theme, including palm trees, vines, surfboards, tin ceilings and slate tables and archways. Not everyone's cup of tea I'm sure, but being originally from Florida, and having lived in California and Hawaii, it brought me to my happy place. I've had several people tell me it looks like a resort and were pleasantly surprised upon entering. Now continuing the theme on the outside, the house and out buildings when finished will be periwinkle with white trim and fencing. I'm about half

way done, and in my humble opinion the house is turning out to be one sexy beast, further elevating my mood. For those of you that are fortunate enough to have survived some of life's many traumas, sometimes a change of scenery can do wonders, so don't be afraid to find your own "happy place." And for goodness sakes, don't worry about what other people think, many were laughing at you yesterday, and will continue to laugh at you tomorrow...but you cares, it's the one life that God's given you, so enjoy it to the fullest!

After just finishing the "fit for '24 and beyond" exercise series, my striving for better health is really paying off, especially noticeable after standing on a ladder 20' off the ground for hours. With a net weight loss of almost 70

lbs, my stamina is much better and I haven't needed to visit the chiropractor in over two years, a surprising and welcome development. I'm sure a positive attitude and a little more rest has also added to the scenario as well. While nothing is as quick and as easy as we'd like, I've noticed that with some consistency, a little here and a little there, will often snowball into some pretty impressive results. So, if there's something you've had trouble getting started on, don't make it such a big deal in your mind, just ease into it one day, hour, or minute at a time and eventually what you've accomplished will blow your mind. Yep, life is definitely a process... and meant to be enjoyed!

Until next time, love you guys, Eric.

## Have you registered your children for VBS?

### SPECIAL TO THE INQUIRER

Registration is now open for the First Evangelical Lutheran/Gonzales Presbyterian Church VBS. Kids will discover things about God and the world around them.

The theme is Breaker Rock Beach, and they will explore the seashore through songs, bible stories, arts and crafts, and games. The dates are June 4-6, 2024, and the hours will be 9 a.m. until noon. All children

from kindergarten through sixth (6th) grade are welcome.

Early registration can be by telephone, FELC (830-672-2057) or GPC (830-672-3521), or pick up a registration form in their offices.

The VBS will be held in the First Evangelical Lutheran Church, 1206 St. Joseph Street. Register now to secure your spot at Breaker Rock Beach.

## Gonzales Area Parkinson's Support Group meets monthly

### SPECIAL TO THE INQUIRER

Gonzales Area Parkinson's Support Group (GAPSG) held an open house Thursday, May 2.

If you want to know more about this disease, this is the place to come. The group holds meetings the first Thursday of every month. Come join us for sharing your experiences, ask questions about any aspect of the disease, and find latest information about the systems and treatments.

The time is 6 p.m. and the place is the Fellowship Hall of the Gonzales Presbyterian Church. The next meeting will be Thursday, June 6. Look forward to seeing everyone there to share and learn — all in strict confidence.

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First Assembly of God 509 E. 3rd St., Nixon	Stratton Primitive Baptist FM 1447, 9 miles east of Cuero	<b>FULL GOSPEL</b> Camp Valley Full Gospel Hwy 80, 7 mi. north of Nixon	El Centro Cristiano "Agua Viva" 403 Highway 90 W, Waelder
<b>BAPTIST</b> 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	<b>JEWISH</b> Adat Haderech, a Messianic shul HashemYeshua1@yahoo.com	Encouraging Word Christian Fellowship Highway 80, Leesville
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Elm Grove Baptist Church 4337 FM 1115 Waelder, TX, 78959	Union Valley Baptist Church FM 1681, NW of Nixon	Belmont Methodist Highway 90A, Belmont	River of Life Christian Fellowship 207 Steele St., Smiley
First Baptist Church 422 St. Paul, Gonzales	<b>CATHOLIC</b> 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	Sacred Heart Catholic Church St. John St., Gonzales	First Methodist 426 St. Paul, Gonzales	Two Rivers Bible Church 1600 Sarah DeWitt Dr., Suite 210, Gonzales
First Baptist Church Highway 108 N., Smiley	St. Joseph Catholic Church 207 S. Washington, Nixon	First United Methodist 410 N. Franklin, Nixon	<b>INTER-DENOMINATIONAL</b> Faith Family Church 1812 Cartwheel Dr., Gonzales
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Greater Rising Star Baptist Church	<b>CHRISTIAN</b> First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) 712 Crockett, Luling	Henson Chapel United Methodist 1113 St. Andrew, Gonzales	Holy Temple of Jesus Christ No. 2 1515 Dallas, Gonzales
Harwood Baptist Church North of Post Office, Harwood	<b>CHURCHES OF CHRIST</b> Church of Christ 1323 Seydler St., Gonzales	Monthalia Methodist CR 112 off Highway 97	Iglesia Pentecostes Filadelfia 893 S. Magnolia Ave., Luling
Iglesia Bautista Macedonia 201 S. Congress, Nixon	Church of Christ (Iglesia de Cristo) 201 E. Second St. Nixon	Smiley Methodist Church 1 blk. S. of Hwy. 87, Smiley	Temple Bethel Pentecostal 1104 S. Paul, Gonzales
Iglesia Bautista Memorial Highway 97, Waelder	Church of Christ E. 3rd & Texas, Nixon	Webster Chapel A.M.E. 1027 Church St., Gonzales	Life Changing Church of Gonzales 3.3 miles north on Hwy 183, right on CR 235, then right on CR 236
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Mt. Pilgrim Baptist Church 100 Capes, Gonzales	Gonzales Memorial Church of God in Christ 1113 Hastings, Gonzales	<b>Episcopal</b> Episcopal Church of the Messiah 721 S. Louis, Gonzales	Cheapside Presbyterian Church, Cuero
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# More than 1 million Texas kids disenrolled from Medicaid, CHIP

**BY FREDA ROSS**  
Texas News Service  
Special to the Inquirer

More than one million children in Texas no longer have health insurance through Medicaid, despite being eligible for coverage, according to a new report from the Georgetown University Center for Children and Families. During the COVID-19 pandemic, states were not allowed to cancel coverage

— then last year, state health departments were tasked with rechecking the eligibility of Medicaid recipients.

Brittney Taylor-Ross, senior policy analyst with the advocacy group Every Texan, said despite the option to slowly complete the task, Texas chose to do it in one year's time.

"We didn't take up a lot of the flexibilities that were offered, so that was a state choice at the leadership level. We also chose

to go through this unwinding process pretty quickly. Other states have paused their process when they've seen that things don't look right," Taylor-Ross said.

The report shows Texas has disenrolled more children than any other state. Anyone who lost coverage must reapply. Taylor-Ross says as of April, the median amount of time to process a new Medicaid application is 95 days. Federal law

requires this number to be 45 days or less.

Most families don't realize they no longer have coverage until they go to the doctor's office.

Joan Alker, research professor, McCourt School of Public Policy, and executive director, Center for Children and Families at Georgetown University, said the problem affects not only families, but the pediatricians and clinics that treat them.

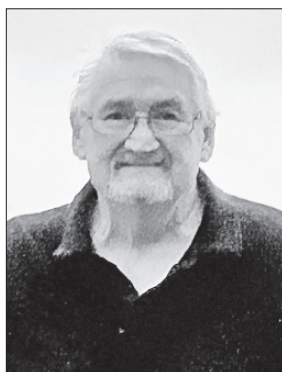
"Kids are going to miss out

on those well-child visits, they're going to miss out on getting the medications they need — be it an inhaler for their asthma or an ADHD medication. And that really sets them back, both in their health and their success in school," she said.

Because of the unwinding, more than four-million fewer children are enrolled in Medicaid. One out of four of those children lives in Texas.

## OBITUARIES

### HECTOR J. AMAYA SR.



Hector J. Amaya, Sr. passed away on Saturday, May 4, 2024, at the age of 75. He was born on January 8, 1949, in Robstown, TX to Juan and Blasita (Cisneros) Amaya. Hector was preceded in death by his parents; brother, Roel Amaya; nephews, J.R. Amaya and Jesse Lara, Jr.; and sister-in-law, Mary Magee. He is survived by his loving wife of 53 years, Lamar (Gaytan) Amaya; children, Jessica Ann Amaya, Hector Roman Amaya, Elijah "Ligee" Amaya, and Rebekah "Becky" Rene Smith (Shannon); grandchildren, KaSandra "Nikole" Maldonado, Gabrielle "Gabbi" Chudej, Abigail "Abby" Rocha (Logan),

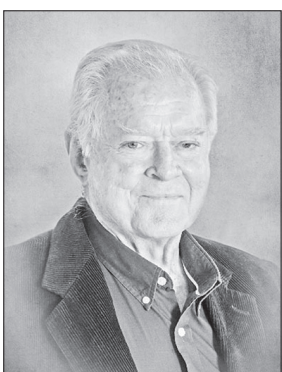
Rebekah "Bekah" Page (Treon), Isaiah Page, Deanna Chloe Amaya, Cali Smith, and Chance Beau Smith, great-grandchildren, Kai, Jocelyn, Hazel, Mason, Madilyn, Andreas, and Aria; siblings, Ramona Lara, John Amaya (Beatrice), Aida Camarillo (Johnny), Rene

Amaya (Erlinda), Velma Aguirre (Pat), Grace Bishop (Joel), and Cindy Santos (Bobby); sister-in-law, Nancy Amaya; numerous nieces, nephews, other relatives, and many friends. A visitation will be held on Wednesday, May 8, 2024, from 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at Finch Funeral Chapel- Nixon and a Prayer Service will begin at 7:00 p.m. that same evening at the funeral home.

#### FUNERAL SERVICE

Thursday, May 9, 2024 10:00 a.m.  
First Baptist Church  
Nixon, TX  
Pastor Michael VanMeter will officiate the services. Interment will follow at the Nixon Cemetery.

### WILLIAM LEE CARLETON



William Lee Carleton, 82, of Gonzales, Texas, passed away on Monday, April 22, 2024, in Gonzales, Texas. He was born January 31, 1942, to Harvey Vernon and Oneta Helen Carleton.

William grew up in Gonzales and graduated from Gonzales High School in 1960. He was popular in school for sports, especially his achievements in track, where he attended state meets for three of his four years in school, and also for being a running back for GHS.

William married Sandra Jane Vordenbaum on July 28, 1962, in Gonzales, Texas. They were married for 62 years and had two sons. William had a career in Communications, working for GTE (later Verizon) for about 35 years, and it was during this time that he served as area vice president for the Communications Workers of America Union (CWA). William devoted his life to his family; enjoying a good game of dominoes, little league baseball, and school track meets. He was very involved as a father, attending and filming any activities

they were in. He was a spectator for sports and even went to the Summer Olympics in Mexico City in 1968 with his dad and oldest brother Samuel.

William was also very in tune with family reunions and researching his family genealogy.

William is survived by his adoring wife Sandra Jane Vordenbaum Carleton, his two sons William Bryce Carleton (Kimberly Rogers) and Timothy Wray Carleton (Janice Marie), his brother Dale Carleton (Shirley), his sister in law Patricia Carleton and brother in law Griff Singer. He is also survived by his two grandchildren, Brittany Michelle Carleton and Brandt Alexander Carleton, along with numer-

ous nieces and nephews.

He is preceded in death by his parents, Harvey and Oneta Carleton, his brother Samuel Vernon Carleton and his sister Evelyn Carleton Singer "Sissy".

Friends and family will gather for a visitation at Seydler - Hill Funeral Home on Thursday, April 25, 2024, from 5:00pm to 7:00pm. A funeral service will also take place at Seydler - Hill Funeral Home on Friday, April 26, 2024, at 10:00am officiated by Pastor Robert Ramirez of Eastside Baptist Church. Interment will follow at Gonzales Hermann Sons Cemetery. Pallbearers will include Russell Wilke, Brandt Wilke, Chad Denman, Sean DuBose, Michael Selby and Kevin Carleton. Honorary Pallbearers include Charlie Pankey and Tara Carleton.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made out to East Side Baptist Church of Gonzales. Friends and family may leave their condolences online at [www.seydlerhill-funeralhome.com](http://www.seydlerhill-funeralhome.com)

All services are under the care and direction of Seydler - Hill Funeral Home.

## Texas leaders work to improve job opportunities for rural students

**BY FREDA ROSS**  
Texas News Service  
Special to the Inquirer

Work is being done in rural areas across Texas to make sure students are prepared for the workforce even if they intend to stay put after graduation.

One new study showed only 31 percent of adults in non-metro areas have a degree from a junior college or university. The nonprofit Jobs for the Future creates opportunities for the education system and local businesses to work together in hopes of increasing the number.

Sarah Jenness, senior manager of the group, said there are three key changes leaders in rural areas could make to improve training for students.

"Strategy number one, build on your local strengths and contacts," Jenness outlined. "Strategy number two is thinking about how to prioritize inclusive economic development. And then finally, the third strategy was around embedding remote opportunities."

Jenness argued schools, local

economic development agencies and businesses need to collaborate to create opportunities. A couple of options are dual enrollment, where high school students also earn college credits, and work-based learning, so they can hone their skills on the job.

The study found in the U.S., the benefits of economic systems are unevenly distributed and certain groups and communities suffer the most, particularly rural areas. Disparities are also seen across lines of race, ethnicity and gender.

Jenness stressed gaps can be closed if rural students receive training for the types of jobs available in their communities.

"What are the industries that employ the most rural workers? And the top three that we think tend to be — you know, have good quality jobs — are industries like government, manufacturing and health care," Jenness explained.

She added remote work is also a key strategy to ensure rural students have access to a variety of well-paid jobs.

## TRICARE extends, expands temporary prescription refill waivers

### SPECIAL TO THE INQUIRER

The Defense Health Agency announced that TRICARE has expanded the number of Texas counties in which TRICARE beneficiaries may receive emergency prescription refills due to storm damage. DHA also extended the date from May 10 to May 12, 2024.

The original counties impacted were Baylor, Chambers, Dickens, Ellis, Freestone, Galveston, Grimes, Harris, Haskell, Hill, Hood, Hunt, Kaufman, Knox, Leon, Liberty, Limestone, Madison, McLennan, Montgomery, Navarro, Polk, San Jacinto, Somervell, Tarrant, Trinity, Tyler, Walker, and Wichita.

DHA has expanded that list to include Anderson, Angelina, Austin, Bandera, Bastrop, Bell, Bexar, Blanco, Bosque, Brazos, Burleson, Burnet, Caldwell, Cherokee, Colorado, Comal, Coryell, De Witt, Falls, Fayette, Gillespie, Gonzales, Gregg, Guadalupe, Hamilton, Hardin, Hays, Henderson, Houston, Jasper, Jefferson, Johnson, Karnes, Kendall, Kerr, Kimble, Lampasas, Lavaca, Lee, Llano, Mason, Medina, Milam, Nacogdoches, Newton, Orange, Panola, Robertson, Rusk, Sabine, San Augustine, Shelby, Smith, Travis, Van

Zandt, Waller, Washington, Williamson and Wilson.

To receive an emergency refill of prescription medications, TRICARE beneficiaries should take their prescription bottle to any TRICARE retail network pharmacy. If the bottle is unavailable or the label is damaged or missing, beneficiaries should contact Express Scripts, Inc., or their retail network pharmacy for assistance.

To find a network pharmacy, beneficiaries may call Express Scripts at 1-877-363-1303, or search the network pharmacy locator.

If possible, visit the pharmacy where the prescription was filled. Prescriptions filled by a retail chain may be filled at another store in that chain. If the clinician who prescribed the medication is available, beneficiaries can ask them to call in a new prescription to any network pharmacy.

As a reminder, TRICARE beneficiaries, other than active duty service members, may receive urgent care from any TRICARE-authorized urgent care center or provider and do not need a referral. Beneficiaries are advised to visit Express Scripts' Weather Alert page for updates.

## LAW ENFORCEMENT WEEKLY REPORTS

### Gonzales County Sheriff's Office

04/28/24 – 05/04/24

#### 04/28/24

• Traeger, Scott, Age: 41, Leesville: Local Warrant – Agg Sexual Assault Child, Requires

\$250,000 Bond; Local Warrant – Injury Child/Elderly/Disable w/Int SBI/Mental, Requires \$250,000 Bond; Remains in Custody

• Alejandro, Isaiah James, Age: 21, Leesville: Warrantless/On-View – Poss Marij <2oz, Requires \$500 Bond, Released

• Arrellano, Jarrette Andrew, Age: 24, Gonzales: Local Warrant – Poss CS PG 1<1G, Requires \$30,000 Bond, Released

#### 05/01/24

• Long, Raegann Nicole, Age:24, Gonzales: Warrantless/On-View -Poss Marij <2oz, Requires \$500 Bond, Released

#### 05/02/24

• Sullivan, Devin Matthew, Age: 35, San Antonio: Warrantless/On-View – Poss CG PG 1/1-B>=1G<4G, Requires \$8,000 Bond, Remains in Custody

• Sanchez, Farah Lynn, Age: 46, Smiley: Local Warrant – Injury Child/Elder/Disable w/Int Bodily Inj, Requires \$25,000 Bond, Released

• Salinas, Ernest, JR, Age: 47, Smiley: Local

Warrant – Fail to Comply Sex Off Duty to Reg Life/Annual, Requires \$50,000 Bond, Remains in Custody

• Rendon, Stephanie Lorena, Age: 38, Nixon: Local Warrant – Assault Family/Household Member w/Prev Conv, Requires \$50,000 Bond, Remains in Custody

• Fletcher, Michael Thomas, JR, Age: 24, Corpus Christi: Other Agency Hold – False STMTTO PO/SP Inv/Law Enf Empl/Corr Off, Requires \$3,000 Bond, Released

• Chick, Deborah Lynn, Age: 63, Helotes: Commitment/Sentence – Driving While Intoxicated 3rd or More IAT, Released – Weekender

#### 05/03/24

• Blackmon, Ashley Renee, Age: 25, Waelder: Local Warrant – Poss Marij <2oz, Requires \$1,500

Bond, Released

Froster, Dana, Age: 40, New Braunfels: Other Agency Hold – Poss CS PG 1/1-B<1G, Requires \$100,000 Bond, Released

• Polk, Beatrice Nicole, Age: 34, Gonzales: Warrantless/On-View – Poss CS PG 1/1-B<1G, Released – Weekender

Total Arrest, Court Commitments, other agency arrest and processing's:	
GCSO	14
DPS	01
GPD	04
WPD	01
NPD	03
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	23

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# Luling Foundation's 97th annual Field Day scheduled for May 16

## SPECIAL TO THE INQUIRER

The 97th Annual Luling Foundation Field Day will be held from 7:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. May 16 at the Luling Foundation Demonstration Barn, 523 S. Mulberry, Luling.

This annual event is free and open to the public and includes a free breakfast and lunch provided by sponsors. Field day activities will include booths, exhibits, a tour of the foundation's agriculture demonstration barn and garden facilities,

speakers, practical demonstrations and an opportunity for networking. Up to two IPM CEUs will be offered; a bonus early bird IPM CEU session will be held from 7 a.m. - 8 a.m. at the Raised Bed Garden on pest management. (To receive the

2 IPM CEUs, attendees must attend both Early Bird Garden Session and Feral Hog Session.) The event will also be streamed on facebook.com/lulingfoundation. RSVP is recommended but not required at 830-875-2438.

Presentations will be followed at 3 p.m. by optional agricultural equipment & sponsor demonstrations. For more information on the Luling Foundation, go to <http://www.lulingfoundation.org>.

## MAY 4 MUNICIPAL ELECTION RESULTS — GONZALES COUNTY

### COUNCIL MEMBER, DISTRICT 2 - GONZALES

	TOTAL	ABSENTEE	EARLY	ELECTION DAY
Sherri Koepp	86	5	58	23
Johnnie Ross Hunt	35	1	23	11
Mariah Jordan	125	6	86	33

### SCHOOL BOARD, DISTRICT 4 - GONZALES

	TOTAL	ABSENTEE	EARLY	ELECTION DAY
David Schautteet Jr.	115	6	69	40
Josie Smith-Wright	134	3	103	28

### SCHOOL BOARD, DISTRICT 7 - GONZALES

	TOTAL	ABSENTEE	EARLY	ELECTION DAY
Sandra B. Gorden	47	9	25	13
Naomi A. Brown	114	1	83	30

### UNDERGROUND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT, PRECINCT 4

	TOTAL	ABSENTEE	EARLY	ELECTION DAY
Barry Miller	117	11	72	34
John Armstrong	107	4	58	45

### UNDERGROUND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT, PRECINCT 5

	TOTAL	ABSENTEE	EARLY	ELECTION DAY
Kermit L. Thiele	141	18	89	34
Glenn Glass	213	11	142	60

### MAYOR - NIXON

	TOTAL	ABSENTEE	EARLY	ELECTION DAY
Ellie Dominguez	77	2	44	31

### COUNCIL MEMBER - NIXON (Vote for 2)

	TOTAL	ABSENTEE	EARLY	ELECTION DAY
Shannon Smith	55	2	27	26
Jack Rogers	63	1	42	20
Jessica Smith	53	0	33	20

### MAYOR - SMILEY

	TOTAL	ABSENTEE	EARLY	ELECTION DAY
Michael Mills	60	0	11	49
Lisa (Dominguez) Benavidez	95	3	59	33

### CITY COUNCIL - SMILEY (Vote for 2)

	TOTAL	ABSENTEE	EARLY	ELECTION DAY
Melva Robinson Childress	90	2	46	42
Michaela Mills	58	0	9	49
Ellis Villasana	80	1	52	27
Elisa Douglas	55	3	26	26

### MAYOR - WAELDER

	TOTAL	ABSENTEE	EARLY	ELECTION DAY
Roy Tovar	77	4	36	37
Curtis Hadnot	46	0	23	23

### ALDERMAN - WAELDER (Vote for 2)

	TOTAL	ABSENTEE	EARLY	ELECTION DAY
Mike Harris	65	1	33	31
Connie S. Blackwell	38	2	16	20
Sandra K. Dickerson	16	1	8	7
Margie Olmos Benitez	19	3	9	7
Eric Mahler	7	1	1	5
Peggy Blackmon	74	0	40	34

### SCHOOL TRUSTEE - WAELDER ISD (Vote for 3)

	TOTAL	ABSENTEE	EARLY	ELECTION DAY
Donna J. Brown	75	3	39	33
Danna S. Kincaid	73	4	37	32
Donald R. Kincaid	77	7	38	32
Adolph Gonzales	101	4	54	43
JoAnn Ibarra	102	5	58	39

### MAY 4 ELECTION STATISTICS

	TOTAL	ABSENTEE	EARLY	ELECTION DAY
Registered Voters	8,394			
Ballots Cast - Total	1,155	70	684	401
Ballots Cast - Blank	9	3	2	4
Voter Turnout - Total	13.7%			

## ELECTION

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

voting and was unable to gain any more ground, as Brown, an assistant vice president and loan officer for Sage Capital Bank, won the seat by a large 114-47 margin. Gorden is also employed as a math teacher by Shiner Catholic School. Brown's election means that now two of the seven GISD trustees are employed by Sage Capital Bank, with the other being District 5 trustee and board president Ross Hendershot III, who serves as the bank's chief operating officer and senior vice president.

### GONZALES CITY COUNCIL

Jordan, a homebuying advisor, had 92 early and absentee votes, while Koepp, a clinical informatics nurse at Gonzales Healthcare Systems, had 63 and Hunt, who is retired, had 24. After election day voting was tallied, Jordan led with 125 votes, while Koepp had 86 and Hunt had 35. To be elected, Jordan had to receive one more vote than 50 percent of the total votes cast. There had been several outstanding mail-in ballots (which had to be postmarked no later than May 4) and the out-

come of those could have resulted in a forced June 15 runoff between Jordan and Koepp.

However, none of those mail-in ballots were received as of Monday, May 6, so Elections Administrator Gwen Schaefer called the election Monday night.

### GONZALES COUNTY UNDERGROUND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Incumbents went 1-for-2 in the GCUWCD races on Saturday as Precinct 4 board member and secretary-treasurer Barry Miller defeated challenger John Armstrong, 117-107. Miller had an 83-62 lead after early and absentee ballots were counted and withstood a late rally on election day by Armstrong. Challenger Glenn Glass defeated incumbent Precinct 5 board member and vice president Kermit Thiele, 213-141. Glass had a 153-107 lead after early and absentee voting and was all but assured victory after that as only 94 votes were cast on election day and 60 of those went to Glass, who along with Armstrong was part of a coalition called the Water Protection Association of Gonzales, Texas.

## WAELDER

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

the Waelder City Council. Incumbent Peggy Blackmon was the highest vote-getter and won re-election with 74 total votes, while Mike Harris won the second spot that had been vacant with a total of 65 votes. Other candidates in the field included Connie Blackwell (38 votes), Margie Olmos Benitez (19 votes), Sandra Dickerson (17 votes) and Eric Mahler (seven votes).

### SMILEY CITY COUNCIL

Benavidez was elected to her

first term as Smiley mayor by defeating incumbent Michael Mills in 2022 and faced him in a rematch on Saturday's ballot. Benavidez's early vote lead of 62-11 held up against a rally by Mills on election day and she won, 95-60.

In the race for two at-large alderman seats, incumbents Melva Robinson Childress and Ellis Villasana also jumped out to big leads in early and absentee voting over Michaela Mills and Elisa Douglas. Mills was able to get the most votes on election

day, but not enough to overtake the incumbents. Childress led all voters with 90 votes, while Villasana had 80, Mills had 58 and Douglas had 55.

### NIXON CITY COUNCIL

Ellie Dominguez was running unopposed for mayor of Nixon to succeed Dorothy Riojas, who did not seek re-election. But there were three candidates running for the two seats available on the Nixon City Council, guaranteeing there would be two new faces

on the dais at the May meeting. Jack Rogers was the leading vote-getter with 63 votes, including 43 during early and absentee voting, while Shannon Smith (55) edged out Jessica Smith (53) for the other seat. Shannon Smith received six more votes than Jessica Smith on election day to erase a four-vote deficit after early and absentee voting.

### WAELDER ISD

The closest race may have been for the third of three avail-

able spots on the Waelder ISD Board of Trustees. Incumbents JoAnn Ibarra (102 votes) and Adolph Gonzales (101) led all vote-getters and were re-elected to their seats. However, the final seat came down to a photo-finish between three candidates — Donald Kincaid (77 votes), Donna Brown (75 votes) and Danna Kincaid (73 votes).

The seven absentee ballots Donald Kincaid earned boosted him to the victory over Brown (three) and Danna Kincaid (four).



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### ACROSS

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- 5 "Mammas Don't Let Your Babies Grow \_\_\_ Be Cowboys"
- 6 Texas beach baskers want \_\_\_ tan
- 7 Texas has \_\_\_-banded armadillo
- 8 do your sums
- 9 Texas draws, e.g.
- 16 TXism: "tough as a boot \_\_\_"
- 18 TX Vikki Carr: \_\_\_Vicenta de Casillas-Martinez Cardona
- 21 TX Orbison (init.)
- 22 a Great Lake
- 23 TXism: "\_\_\_ Katy bar the door"
- 24 an organization's rules (hyph.)
- 30 TXism: "costs \_\_\_ \_\_\_ leg"
- 34 Rangers' Corey Seager pos.
- 35 stop a horse: "\_\_\_ in"
- 36 CSA general Robert \_\_\_
- 37 golf triumph: "hole \_\_\_"
- 39 TXism: "useless \_\_\_ \_\_\_ sow"
- 43 main principle
- 44 folk group "Peter, Paul \_\_\_"
- 45 puzzle based on Texas (abbr.)

### DOWN

- 46 oceans
- 47 final layer of paint on a car
- 49 TX Cruz or TX Cornyn
- 52 text messaging serv.
- 53 if it's elevated, it's one sign of prostate cancer
- 54 TX-based 1958 western: "\_\_\_ the West"
- 55 TXism: "you don't need much \_\_\_ you sleep fast"
- 58 go-\_\_\_ small cars
- 59 anger
- 60 TXism: "couldn't find hide \_\_\_ hair of him"
- 61 this TX Ron was a TV "Tarzan"
- 1 seat of Hardeman County
- 2 flying the Texas flag \_\_\_ down signals distress
- 3 "hide \_\_\_ \_\_\_ bushel. No!" (This Little Light of Mine)
- 4 firm the body: "\_\_\_ up"
- 9 Abilene's Dyess military br. (abbr.)
- 10 this Bill served two nonconsecutive terms as governor

## TEXAS CROSSWORD

by Charley & Guy Orbison  
Copyright 2024 by Orbison Bros.

## SUDOKU

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

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.



“...it’s amazing, watching them grow every year, and succeeding, and improving themselves better and better every year. And I just wish everybody luck.”

—Amanda Garza, JB Wells Facility Manager

## THJRA

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

people at the finals.

“There will be 1,500 people on the grounds, just with the rodeo coming in, not including their horses. Grandma and Grandpa, other members. You know, that’s mom, dad and a contestant. 1,500 plus, we’ll be there [at JB Wells],” Garza said.

This year, the finals will have 815 horses, and Garza said they are building fenced stalls to house them and have 457 RVs parked at the event.

Last year’s finals had 888 horses with the same amount of contestants, but the number fluctuates every year, Garza said.

“It’s really weird the way it worked out this year, horse-wise,” Garza said. “But you know it is what it is. And then we have 25 personnel — that means directors, staffing to help with putting on the rodeo. So right now, we’re just trying to get it together and we know any volunteers we can get we’ll be grateful,” Garza

Garza is excited to see the many junior high rodeo athletes compete for the next four years in Gonzales.

“Here in Texas, everybody comes from our border towns. It is a big deal for Gonzales,” Garza said. “It makes a big impact on our stores. It’s just a big thing for Gonzales and people need to come out and support it. Hopefully, we’ll keep growing and making JB Wells better. That way we can host and get bigger and better events out there.”

“This is one thing that hits me close to the heart, because my son did it for his junior high years, all the way to high school. And I’ve seen these kids grow. And the ones that are now in high school, you know, it’s amazing, watching them grow every year, and succeeding, and improving themselves better and better every year. And I just wish everybody luck.”

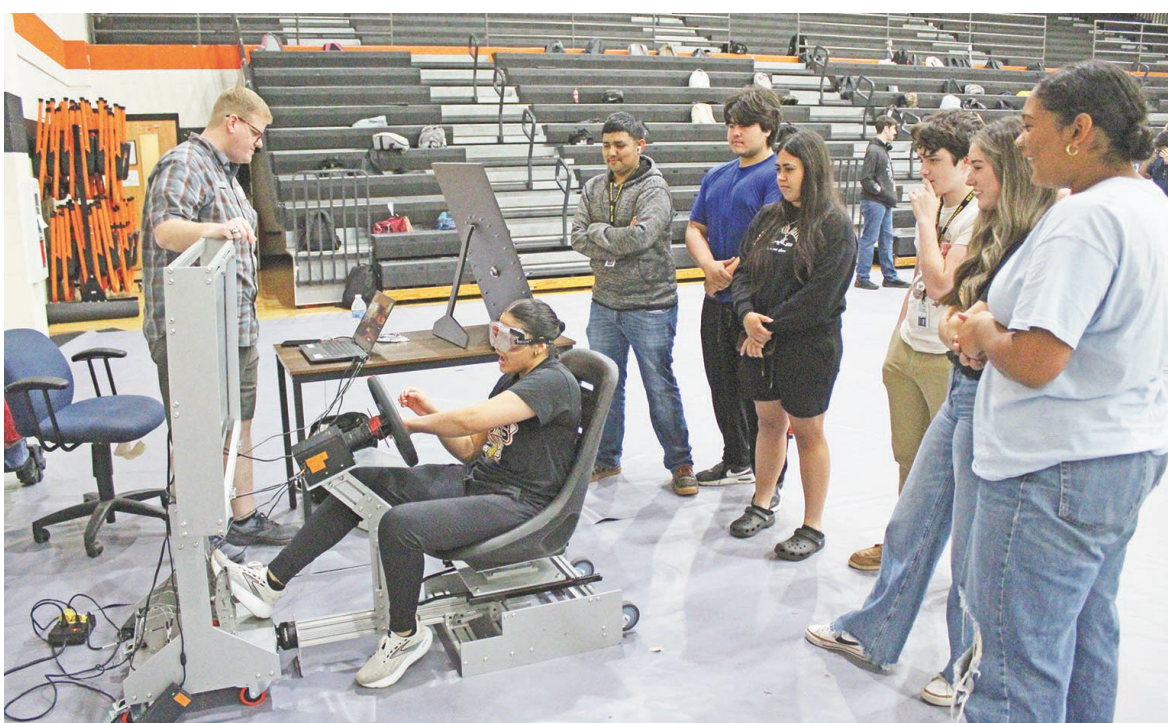
Regarding revenue for the event, Garza said they’ll have to do a new economic impact study, but they are looking at a good impact from money spent by those in attendance.

“I couldn’t give you the exact figures ... I mean, when you walk into Walmart and H-E-B, the shelves are picked,” Garza said.

The event will be livestreamed on TJHRA’s YouTube page and will be broadcast on the Cowboy Channel.

For more information about the junior high finals please visit: <https://www.tjhra.net/>

For volunteer opportunities, contact the JB Wells Office at (830) 672-6558.



Above: Gonzales High School seniors participating in many courses with special goggles to simulate a drunk driver presented by the Texas Department of Transportation. Left: Gonzales High School seniors at the drunk driver simulation station Wednesday, May 1 in the Apache Gym for the When Sean Speaks event. Below: The Gonzales High School juniors and seniors pledging to Sean Carter, of When Sean Speaks, to not drink and distracting driving.

PHOTOS BY VANDY VAN EPPS

## SEAN

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

experiences with the dangers of drinking and driving just days before the GHS Prom.

In the early morning hours of Sunday, March 27, 2005, Carter was 22-year-old Midwestern State University student and a passenger in his friend’s truck. His friend had been drinking and driving, causing a horrible accident in Wichita Falls when the truck spun and slammed into a tree.

The accident resulted in multiple fractures, internal injuries and a traumatic brain injury for Sean that left him unable to speak or walk.

Today, Carter uses a synthetic voice to communicate and speak around the country about his experience, along with his mother Jenny.

“Thanks for giving us this opportunity to speak to y’all. Thank you for sitting in that chair while listening to my thoughts. I guess you can already tell that I am a little different,” Carter said.

Before the accident, Carter was a model, a former high school athlete, an Ag Mechanics student, horse trainer and he was extremely focused on his school work, he said.

Today, Sean does not have



any obvious cognitive deficit. He has been able to harness his radiant smile and quick wit, as well as the power to communicate with assistance, to be a vital part of the Texas Traumatic Brain Injury Advisory Council (TBIAC). He has been on the Mentorship/Advisory Committee for the Texas EMS Trauma and Acute Care Foundation (TETAF) and represented the Survivors of Trauma.

Carter talked about the dangers of alcohol and how life altering it can be.

“Drinking was something that I snuck around. My

mother told us [him and his brother] to not drink and drive ... of course, what I didn’t know, it has taken many years and a life-altering crash to realize the truth in the words she spoke,” Carter said.

The students in the gym went to various stations presented by the Texas Department of Transportation and Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Office, including a drunk-driving simulator and courses with “drunk” goggles

“This bring us to the focus of today,” Carter said. “Did you know on Texas roads, we’ve

not had a day without a death since Nov. 7, 2000? There has been at least one traffic fatality a day. That is 23 years. This record is not one that Texas should be proud of.

“I want Texas drivers to do their part. If each driver commits to staying safe behind the wheel, not driving drunk, impaired or distracted, you can end the streak,” Carter said.

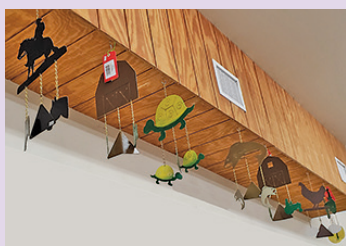
For more information about “When Sean Speaks” please go to <https://www.whenseanspeaks.com>. You can also email [jenny@whenseanspeaks.com](mailto:jenny@whenseanspeaks.com).

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# COURTHOUSE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Now the county will wait until July 26 to find out if their application will be chosen from among the 20 applicants seeking funding. There is a pool of just \$45 million available in this grant cycle, so competition among counties is expected to be heated.

The county has pledged to commit \$3.808 million of its own funding to the restoration project, well over the minimum 15 percent the county is required to put up to qualify for a grant. The total cost of the project is expected to be around \$13.808 million.

Tere O'Connell of O'Connell Architecture LLC told commissioners during a special May 1 meeting that if the county does receive the full \$10 million grant funding request, there are some changes that would have to be made to the parking lots at the Courthouse.

"The only real substantive comment (the THC) had of concern that needed some resolution was what to do about the parking lots," O'Connell said. "(THC) would typically like to see all parking removed from the courthouse grounds, but we were able, through a long conversation with the Texas Historical Commission a little over a week ago, to talk about the history of how there has been parking on the side of the courthouse since there were cars. Their concern is that cars detract from the historic beauty of the Courthouse."

The THC is recommending the county reconfigure the parking lot to remove the parking in front of the door by the county judge's office.

The lawn in front of the Justice Building would be taken out to make it even with the curb along the Courthouse and allow the county to still have 38 designated parking spaces in the south lot off Saint Louis Street, including two handicapped-accessible spots by the commissioners' court entrance and one in front of the Justice Building. The county will perform that work themselves so it will not be part of the costs associated with the grant.

THC also would like to see courthouse perimeter fencing restored, which would help provide a "good screen" of the adjacent parking lot, O'Connell said.

"They are not asking you to remove the Justice Building, which is not an historic structure obviously," O'Connell said. "I think that's a very practical approach for them to not recommend removal of that, so that works in your favor. A lot of other counties have been asked to remove new construction."

Asked if the county could leave the parking as is, O'Connell said the THC has in its scoring system an item called "fix inappropriate changes." Failure to address that would result in a loss of points in that particular category, but she believes making the changes as suggested would result in the county receiving all points available to score in that category.

The master plan compiled for the county by O'Connell — at a cost of \$219,000 — has been formally approved by the THC and is "a very comprehensive document, as you can imagine ... to qualify you for the grant program."

"This is a very detailed plan that I hope that you all will have some time to look through at some point," O'Connell said. "We've got an incredible historical account of Gonzales County, not just the Courthouse, but of Gonzales County and Gonzales city because it is so important to Texas history. And we wanted to make sure that everyone understands the historic value, not only of the courthouse, but of Gonzales as a community."

"We met all the THC requirements for the historic records that needed to be provided, the historic floor plans of the building, tied in with historic photographs. We've got detailed rehabilitation recommendations for the site, and for the building itself — architecturally, structurally, mechanical, electrical, plumbing, and waterproofing."

O'Connell said the master plan includes a "code analysis and life safety analysis for life

safety and building accessibility," in which the Courthouse scored well.

"There were obviously mechanical system issues that need to be addressed and masonry issues around the building envelope that need to be addressed," O'Connell said. "There is water infiltration that's coming from the roof, likely damage from Hurricane Harvey, and water coming in through the foundation. As you know by now, you're now in the FEMA flood zone, a special hazard flood zone, so water infiltration coming into the basement is part of all of that."

Recommendations for improvement to the courthouse include removing the paint coating that is on the Courthouse masonry.

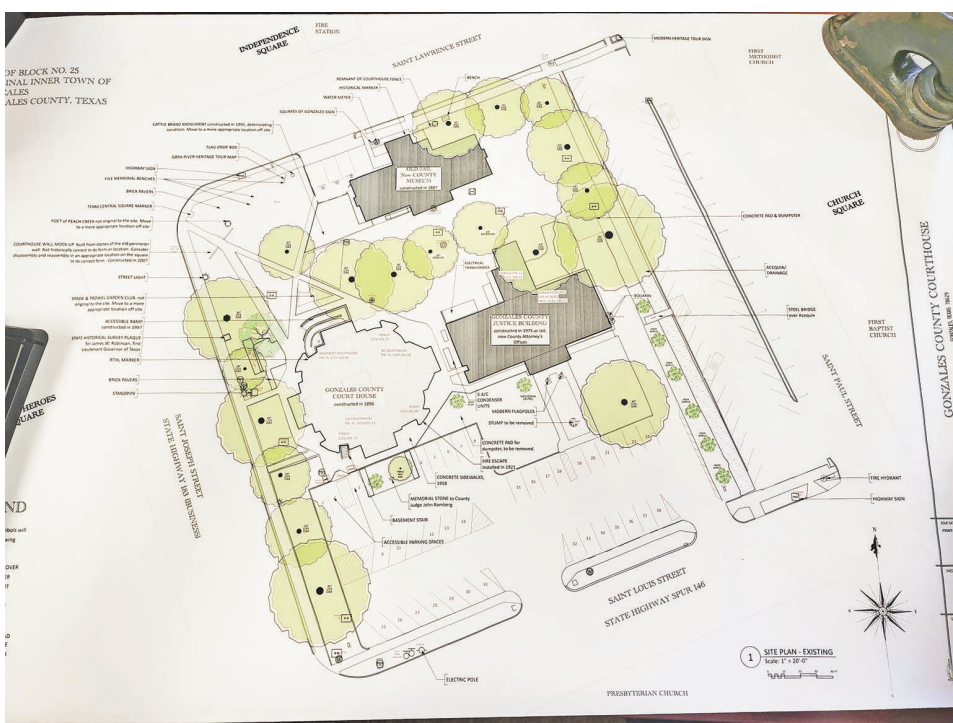
"That paint coating that has been on the masonry for a long time is eroding the stone behind the paint finish and it's holding water against the building, and it's slowly eroding the stone underneath it," O'Connell said. "One of the very important scopes of work we want to accomplish as part of this restoration program is to remove those coatings and let the masonry breathe again."

Another recommendation is to replace the existing clay tile roof, which was put on the building in 1957, with a slate roof to make it more historically accurate with the original Romanesque Revival theme of the building as designed by famed architect J. Riely Gordon.

The perimeter of the Courthouse will be excavated and sidewalks removed to repair masonry that is below grade and to put in a subgrade water proof system to help get water away from the foundation perimeter. Roof drains will move water to that subgrade drainage as well so it will not be pooling against the building anymore.

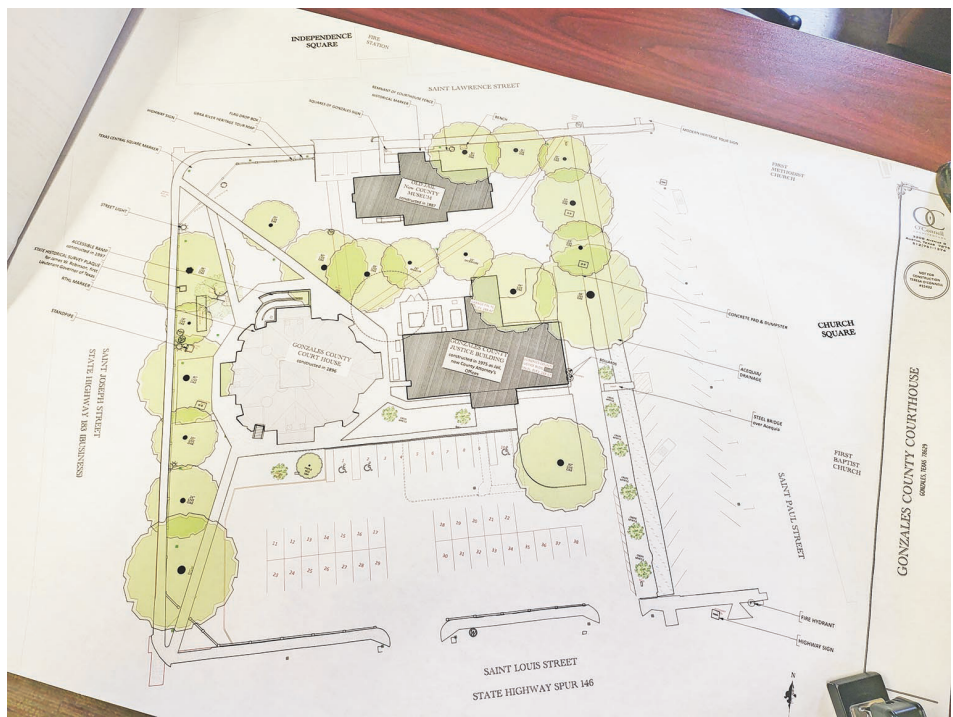
Window air units will be removed by county employees so they can be replaced by a central HVAC system with equipment both in the attic and basement of the courthouse.

O'Connell said even if the county is approved for the grant, it would be



The map above shows how the Gonzales County Courthouse is currently configured, while below is a proposal for reconfiguring the south parking lot off Saint Louis Street. The plans are part of an attempt to get a \$10 million grant from the Texas Historical Commission to restore the Courthouse. The county's contribution, if successful, would be \$3.808 million.

LEW K. COHN



at least a year before any construction would begin on the building.

"You'll have some time," she said. "It would be wise to let us go ahead and start developing plans and specifications at that point (to get the project shovel ready). The construction on the res-

toration, we most likely wouldn't start for another year."

O'Connell said the project includes a 12 percent contingency "for anything unforeseen at this point, which is a lot of money to cover change orders made during construction or unforeseen

circumstances."

If the county is able to get the work done with a minimal amount of change orders and without needing to use that much contingency, those funds would go back to the county and reduce the county's portion of the project.



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