

## Spirits of the West festival hits April 19-20

BY JOH COVINGTON  
Staff Writer

The third annual Spirits of the West fest is right around the corner and has found a home at a new, bigger location. Brought to Alpine by Alpine's Gallery Night, April 19-20 the Brewster County courthouse grounds will host the larger-than-ever event.

"We've grown the fest each year and doubled both attendance and vendor participation each year. We outgrew the first and second-year location on 6th Street, and we're so excited to take the fest to the Brewster County courthouse grounds," said organizer Krista Kirkland.

The fest will take place across the courthouse campus lawn areas, as well as West Sul Ross and North 6th Street surrounding the courthouse.

This year, over 40 vendors are participating, coming from all across Texas including eight wineries, eight distilleries, three breweries,

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## INSIDE



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### Rainfall totals at Alpine-Casparis Airport

2024 . . . . . 2.11"  
April . . . . . 0.06"



### Burn Ban ON

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PLEASE REMEMBER TO THANK A VETERAN, A MEMBER OF THE ARMED FORCES, OR A LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER EVERY DAY.



## Court thanks medical director for 20 years of service

BY JOH COVINGTON  
Staff Writer

The Brewster County Commissioners Court held its regularly scheduled meeting on Tuesday, April 9. Della Hensley, operator of the Marathon Animal Shelter, came forward during the public comments section of this week's meeting. Hensley shared that her animal shelter endeavor, which she runs out of her home, began in 2017 and has helped approxi-

mately 871 dogs and cats since the start.

"The county should become more involved with the animals that are in the county," said Hensley. On June 14, Hensley will be hosting a meeting called "Laws for Paws" regarding ordinances and regulations for animals that need to be updated to reflect recent house bills. The meeting will be at Sul Ross and open to the surrounding counties.



Greg Henington

In other news, Pct. 2 Commissioner Sara Colando offered recognition for the Big Bend High School girl's track team, which won their district championship. "Thank you for being a good example of excellence for Terlingua and Brewster County," said Colando.

The court also recognized Dr. Hemant Vankawala and Dr. Matt Earle for their service to Terlingua Fire and EMS.

Vankawala has been serving as a medical director for TFEMS for the last 20 years.

To the two doctors who were present at this meeting, Judge Greg Henington said, "I want to thank you, guys, for great work and all your dedication, we hope you'll stay another 20 or 30 years. We appreciate everything that you do."

In other EMS news, regarding the Alpine Emergency

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## Historic site holds eclipse viewing



On Monday, visitors to the Fort Davis National Historic Site could view the solar eclipse with park rangers, their telescope, and solar protective glasses. The Fort Davis location in Texas saw a 92.3% totality with clear skies for the astronomical event. A solar eclipse occurs during the new moon phase, when the moon passes between Earth and the sun, casting a shadow on Earth and totally or partially blocking our view of the sun. While an average of two solar eclipses happens every year, a particular spot is only in the path of totality every 375 years on average. The last solar eclipse that was visible in North America was in 2017 and the next will be in 2044.

Photo by Joh Covington.

## Guitar concerts: New musical event for the Big Bend

BY JOH COVINGTON  
Staff Writer

Beginning tomorrow, one weekend will be full of music with the addition of the newly announced "Guitar in the Big Bend" event.

Nicolas Hurt, adjunct professor of music at Sul Ross State University said, "I am thrilled to announce a new and exciting event for music lovers in our region."

The event is presented by Sul Ross State University music, the Museum of the Big Bend, Music Friendly Community, and the First Presbyterian Church of Marfa.

Guitar in the Big Bend is a series of classical guitar concerts in Marfa and Alpine as well as a masterclass at Sul Ross State University and a workshop at Far West

Texas Guitars. The free events will occur the weekend of April 12-14.

The concerts will include performances by Jeremy Waldrip of Memphis, Tennessee, and Nicolas Hurt of Marfa. The featured concert artist for this year is Dragos Ilie of Romania.

That Friday, Far West Texas Guitars will host the welcome reception and workshop at 6 p.m. On Saturday, Dragos Ilie will lead a masterclass at Sul Ross State University in the Francois Fine Arts Building, FAB 200, from 12-2 p.m. That evening, the Museum of the Big Bend will showcase Dragos Ilie and Nicolas Hurt in a concert starting at 6 p.m.

On the last day of the event, Sunday at 7 p.m., there will be a Marfa concert at the First Pres-



Renowned guitarists, pictured left to right, Dragos Ilie, Jeremy Waldrip, and Nicolas Hurt will be gracing the Big Bend area for one special weekend in April.

Courtesy photo

byterian Church, featuring Dragos Ilie and Jeremy Waldrip.

Dragos has performed all over the world and has won an impressive number of grand prizes in international guitar competitions like the Koblenz International Festival, the Tokyo International Guitar Com-

petition, and the Texas A&M Guitar Competition.

"The programs will include an eclectic section of classical guitar music from all over the world, including Alpine," Hurt said.

Hurt was born and raised in Austin and began studying music in

the Austin tradition of Stevie Ray Vaughn and T-Bone Walker electric blues guitar.

Hurt later began to study the classical guitar with Dr. Kim Perlak and Dr. Klondike Steadman in his teens and was accepted into

See GUITAR • 6

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# OBITUARIES

## Barba Evelyn Dunn Clanton



Barba Evelyn Dunn Clanton went home to her Lord and Savior in peace on Friday, March 22. She was met there by her loving husband of 66 years, Robert Cloman Clanton, her parents, CJ and Evelyn Dunn, and her siblings Betty Glass, Bobby Dunn, and Beverly Howard. Barba was born in Sterling City on September 15, 1939. She attended Sterling City schools through the ninth grade. As an active and

adventurous child, she had many fond memories of ranch living, her childhood, and her classmates. Her family moved to Alpine when Barba was in 10th grade, and not long after she met Robert Clanton. They were mar-

ried in Alpine on March 16, 1957. Throughout her married life, she had many titles including teller, Nursery Director, and administrative assistant, but none were more important to her than the title of "mom" to her five kids, as she called them: Peggy, Terry, Henry, Elaine, and Robbie and later "Nana" to nine grandkids and six great-grandsons. As an accomplished seamstress, she would often make dresses, costumes, and window treatments when called upon. Her fried chicken was seasoned to

perfection for the family of seven. When she did have free time, which wasn't often with a house full of kids and their friends, Barba enjoyed Doris Day movies, thrifting and gifting, coffee at the cafe, and Norman Rockwell art. She was a fan of professional tennis, even amassing a collection of 60+ Jack Kramer Signature tennis rackets, the same racket she played with as a youth. Together with Robert, they were active members of First Baptist Fort Davis and Balmorhea. Their

firm foundation of faith and their union is everlasting and a model to all who knew them. Barba is survived by her kids: Peggy Clanton DeSpain (Ray), Terry Clanton, Henry Clanton (Allison), Barba Elaine Clanton Nelson (Brad), Roberta Clanton Cromeens. Grandkids: Brian DeSpain, Brittany DeSpain Roten (Charlie), Breanna DeSpain Ball (Daniel), Robert Clanton, Reid Clanton, Rachel Clanton, Reagan Nelson, Landry Nelson, and Sterling Cromeens. Great Grandkids: Beau

DeSpain; DeLainey, Jackson, and Annalee Roten; Madalynn and Maevery Ball. Sisters-in-law: Ann Sawyer and Raye Dunn, and numerous nieces and nephews. The family would like to extend their heartfelt appreciation to special care providers from A Page in Life and Amedisys Hospice. In lieu of flowers, a donation may be made to Paisano Baptist Encampment, the church of your choice, or your local food bank. Details of a joint memorial in far West Texas will be shared at a later date.

## Oliver Lee O'Bryant



Oliver "Olie" Lee O'Bryant passed away on April 6 in Alpine, leaving behind a legacy that will forever be cherished by those who knew him. Born on September 20, 1949, in Del Rio, he graduated from Del Rio High School in 1967. After high school, he attended Uvalde Junior College, then was employed constructing the development of the Amistad Dam. He later was employed with Southern Pacific Railroad in 1971 in Del Rio. He then retired as an Amtrak Conductor in 2009. Oliver led a remarkable life

dedicated to his work as an Amtrak Conductor out of El Paso and San Antonio.

Throughout his career, Oliver touched the lives of many passengers with his warm smile, unwavering dedication, and commitment to ensuring safe and comfortable journeys

for all. Everyone knew him as "The Cowboy Conductor". Colleagues remember him as a beacon of professionalism and kindness, always willing to go the extra mile to help others. He always had his guitar ready to play anytime. He enjoyed playing music and singing country songs with his friends and family. He enjoyed hunting, fishing, playing golf with many of his buddies, and spending time with his loving family. He was also an avid cook, who loved making deer jerky, sweets, or anything he saw on TV that he had to

try, and he also enjoyed sharing them with his friends.

In addition to his successful career, Oliver was a beloved husband to Merel Dean Walker O'Bryant whom he met in Del Rio in 1978, and later married on February 26, 1981. They had their first child Melissa Lee Ann in 1984. In 1987 their son Wesley Dean was born. Their bond was a source of strength and love that endured the test of time, for 43 years of marriage. They did everything together during their years whether it be at the golf course or down at the

American Legion.

He is preceded in death by his father Raymond C. O'Bryant and his mother Irene Green, and sisters Norma Jean Smith and Helen Cross.

He is survived by his sister Janey Vick of Bandera and brother James (Frankie) O'Bryant of Rocksprings. His wife Merel O'Bryant, daughter Melissa O'Bryant of Alpine, son Wesley O'Bryant of Midland, and his beloved grandchildren Andrew and Alexis Rodriguez, of Alpine whom he loved and bragged about and was so proud of.

Oliver "Olie" Lee O'Bryant's presence will be sorely missed by his surviving family and friends who cherished all of the memories throughout his lifetime. His memory will live on in the hearts of those who were fortunate enough to have known him. May he have eternal rest knowing that he made a positive impact on all who crossed his path.

A celebration of life will be held at a later date. The family requests that memorial contributions be made to their charity of choice in Oliver O'Bryant's name.

## Travis Leo Tucker



Long-time Alpine resident, businessman, and civic leader, Travis Tucker, passed away at his home among family on April 4.

Born to parents John and Vera Tucker (Sprott) in Bandera, where he attended high school and would meet and later marry Joslyn Joyce, "JJ", Wright in 1956. They had four sons before moving to Alpine in 1964 and their fifth son was born in Alpine in 1968. Travis's work led him to West Texas where he fell in love with Alpine and soon moved the family.

Over his 60 years in Alpine, Travis established several businesses. Com-

panies included T&S Contractors dirt work and paving, Lone Star Beer Sales distributing franchise, and Rio Concrete with three plants serving the tri-county area. After his business days were over, he continued to work into his early 80s doing what he loved, operating heavy equipment on area ranches.

His generous support

for the community included sponsoring Sul Ross student-athletes, the Lone Starlets softball team, and hosting the annual July 4th celebration at the Marathon Post.

He also served on the city council where he helped shape Alpine's future. He was an advocate for our city parks and ballparks, where he donated many hours of work.

He loved fishing, hunting, and playing dominos at the Crystal Bar, as well as cheering for his favorite sports teams, the Dallas Cowboys, Texas Rangers, and '06 Cowboys baseball.

Travis was preceded in death by his parents, brother Jack, son Steven Doyle, grandson Jeremy,

and daughter-in-law Lawrie. He is survived by his wife of 67 years, Joslyn Joyce, brother and sister-in-law, John and Anna Lee; sister, Yvonne; sons and daughters-in-law, Travis Michael and Lisa, Darrell Scott and Stacey, Sharon, Cameron Baine, and Barbra and Vernon Kyle as well as 25 grandchildren and great-grandchildren. A life well lived. He will be missed.

Memorial services are to be held at Alpine Memorial Funeral Home Memorial Chapel in Alpine on Friday, May 3 from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. Attire is street casual. A celebration of life gathering will follow to be announced at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, we ask

you to donate to the organization of your choice in Travis' memory.

Services have been entrusted to Alpine Memorial Funeral Home.

# Texas Mountain Trail Heritage Tourism Grant

The Texas Mountain Trail mini-grant was awarded to the Fort Davis Historical Society (FDHS) for exhibit preservation and development at the Overland Trail Museum in Fort Davis.

"The ongoing project will include lining shelves and drawers with 100% cotton board, and framing photos, and documents with museum-grade materials to preserve and improve visuals. Original photographs will be copied for display and retired to the fire-proof vault", says Julie McIvor, treasurer of the FDHS.

The Texas Mountain Trail Region (TMTR) is part of the Texas Historical Commission's (THC) award-winning Texas

Heritage Trails Program (THTP) heritage tourism initiative. This economic development initiative encourages communities, heritage regions, and the state to partner and promote Texas' historic and cultural resources. These successful local preservation efforts, combined with statewide marketing of heritage regions as tourism destinations, increase visitation to cultural and historic sites and bring more dollars to Texas communities. This in turn supports the THC's mission to protect and preserve the state's historic and prehistoric resources for the use, education, economic benefit, and enjoyment of present and future generations.

"The TMTR strength-

ens the future of our region by investing in projects that exhibit initiatives that support our mission" says Wendy Little, Executive Director of the TMTR. "We will continue to support and facilitate recreational, cultural, and educational opportunities and promote economic development compatible with the heritage of Far West Texas".

The Texas Mountain Trail Region (TMTR) offers small grants to help fund special projects, events, and programs to promote heritage tourism within the region. These grants are designed to promote public awareness of the history of the TMTR, encourage community involvement and participation, and enhance

the visitor experience.

The annual grant amount per project is \$1,000 and the TMTR awards two (2) grants per fiscal year.

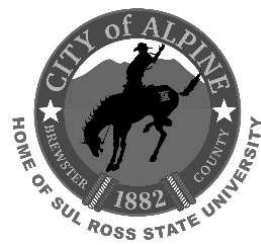
**Thank you**  
to the **American Legion** for the Fish Fry that benefited Alpine Christian School. The staff, teachers, and parents appreciate your support and your generous donation!

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## NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN BY THE CITY OF ALPINE THAT A CITY COUNCIL PUBLIC HEARING WILL BE HELD AT 5:30 P.M. ON TUESDAY, APRIL 16, 2024 REGARDING THE FOLLOWING CAPTIONED ORDINANCES:

**ORDINANCE 2024-04-02:** AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE INSTALLATION OF ADDITIONAL THREE WAY STOP SIGNS AT THE EASTBOUND AND WESTBOUND INTERSECTIONS OF NORTH HANCOCK DRIVE AND AVENUE B; ESTABLISHING UP TO A \$500 PENALTY FOR VIOLATIONS OF THE ORDINANCE.

THE PUBLIC HEARING WILL BE HELD ON TUESDAY, APRIL 16, 2024, AT 5:30 P.M. IN CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS LOCATED AT 803 WEST HOLLAND AVENUE TO HEAR CITIZEN VIEWS AND COMMENTS CONCERNING THE PROPOSED ORDINANCE.

COPIES OF THE PROPOSED ORDINANCE ARE AVAILABLE AT CITY HALL LOCATED AT 100 N. 13TH STREET BETWEEN 8:00 A.M. TO 12:00 P.M. AND 1:00 P.M. TO 5:00 P.M. COPIES ARE ALSO AVAILABLE BY EMAIL REQUEST TO [CITY.SECRETARY@CITYOFALPINE.COM](mailto:CITY.SECRETARY@CITYOFALPINE.COM). QUESTIONS MAY BE DIRECTED TO THE OFFICE OF THE CITY SECRETARY AT (432) 837-3301, OPTION 1

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# DAR Good Citizen Awards

The Paisano Chapter of the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution presented DAR Good Citizen Awards to seniors from six area high schools at an awards ceremony on April 6 held in the First Presbyterian Church of Alpine. On behalf of the Paisano Chapter, Regent Kay Houston welcomed Good Citizens, their parents, and school representatives to the meeting. Vice Regent and Good Citizens Chair Judy Perry discussed the significance of the awards. Dr. Kendra DeHart, chapter member and associate professor of history at Sul Ross State University, presented the awards.



**DAR recipients are Hardeman Boutwell, Jack Marquez, Sierra Ruckman, Selene Baeza-Duarte, and Madeline West.**

Good Citizens are Sierra Ruckman, Alpine; Hardeman Boutwell, Alpine Christian; Zachary Noll, Big Bend; Selene Baeza-Duarte, Fort Davis; Madeline West, Marathon; and Jack Marquez, Marfa. They each received a Good Citizen's pin, a monetary award, and a certificate honoring them with this prestigious national award.

Good Citizens were eligible to enter an optional NSDAR scholarship contest by submitting their

credentials including an essay. Independent judges selected Sierra Ruckman as the winner of the Paisano Chapter Scholarship. During the program, Miss Ruckman read her essay: "Our American Heritage and Our Responsibility for Preserving It."

Following the awards presentation, DAR members and guests enjoyed a reception honoring the Good Citizens and their families.

Daughters of the

American Revolution is a non-profit, non-political, service organization focused on historic preservation, education, and patriotism. In 2023 nearly one-half million dollars was awarded to students across the nation through the DAR Good Citizens program. For more information on NSDAR membership or the Good Citizens Award, you may contact Kay Houston at regent-paisano@gmail.com.

*Courtesy photo*



## Keep Alpine Beautiful receives prestigious Governor's Award

Keep Texas Beautiful (KTB) has recognized Keep Alpine Beautiful as one of 10 winners of the 2024 Governor's Community Achievement Awards (GCAA) as an outstanding clean and beautiful community. KTB, in partnership with the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), has awarded the GCAA to Texas communities for 55 years. Keep Alpine Beautiful will receive \$130,000 for a landscaping project to be completed in collaboration with TxDOT along a state-maintained road.

Keep Alpine Beautiful is truly honored to receive the Governor's Community Achievement Award for 2023 Achievements. This recognition is a significant milestone in our journey as a program. Keep Texas Beautiful & TxDOT support is deeply appreciated, and this award not only acknowledges our work but also affirms the importance of our program in the community. Thank you for this esteemed award, and we are inspired to continue with even more passion and dedication.

KTB created the GCAA in partnership with the Governor's office in 1969 to recognize towns and

cities for their efforts to create clean and beautiful communities. TxDOT has provided landscaping award funding since 1985. To date, 261 projects have been funded, totaling \$47 million in project costs.

Keep Alpine Beautiful will also receive a stately cast aluminum metal plaque to be placed in a prominent public location. The award is one of the most coveted annual environmental and community improvement honors in Texas. A community's environmental program is judged by a group of diverse, multi-sector judges on achievements in seven environmental and community improvement areas: public awareness and outreach, environmental education, beautification and community improvement, litter prevention and cleanup, solid waste management, litter law, and illegal dumping enforcement.

Communities compete in 10 population categories with the size of the landscaping awards based on their population.

To learn more about the Governor's Community Achievement Awards and the 2024 winners, visit [ktb.org/gcaa](http://ktb.org/gcaa).

# Nueva Generacion brings home honors to Terlingua

BY KARA GERBERT  
Managing Editor

The Terlingua folkloric dance group, Nueva Generacion, attended and competed in Lubbock recently at the longest-running folkloric competition in Texas, the Viva Aztlan Festival.



**Terlingua's Nueva Generacion high school folkloric dancers.**

the Paisano Dancers. I left in 2014 but returned in 2016, where I started the group back up again, and gave it the new name of Nueva Generacion," said Rodriguez.

He offered dance classes after school, and it was open to anyone. Rodriguez says that they put on fundraisers to purchase their costumes for the different states of Mexico that they dance to, such as Chihuahua and Sinaloa.

"The Terlingua community is the best because they are always willing to help and to give back," Rodriguez said.

In total, there are 11 middle school students and 10 high school students who make up the folkloric dance group.

The middle school members are Xiomara

Armendariz, Michelle Orozco, Mileiry Hernandez, Hank Reed, Melissa Orozco, Edna Gomez, Nahomi Trujillo, Andrew Lujan, Elijah Lujan, Eduardo Villa, and Jovany Orozco.

High school members include Zach Noll, Shyla Garcia, Luna Barrett, Isis Lujan, Asa Reed, Nereida Gomez, Desiree Lujan, Usiel Escalante, and Jose Rodriguez.

Rodriguez explained that folkloric dance reflects the traditions, cultures, and beliefs of people from a particular region and that it expresses the life and spirit of a people through its movement and music.

Dancer Asa Reed commented on the Lubbock event, "My experience going to the Lubbock

*Courtesy photo*

Viva Aztlan Festival for the first time was one of my best. I enjoyed the workshops we had on the first day, and overall, it was a very good and fun experience. I'm looking forward to next year."

Shyla Garcia spoke nostalgically about her experiences, "Most of my favorite memories are due to folkloric, and being a part of a group is something I'm forever grateful for."

Nueva Generacion performs any time they are asked and are regular participants at the CASI chili cookoff, their annual school Christmas program, and other local performances.

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4:00 PM THE SWIFTS  
6:00 PM FELINE FOX  
8:00 PM JOE KING CARRASCO

**SATURDAY, APRIL 20  
11:00 AM - 11:00 PM**

**LIVE MUSIC**  
11:00 AM ANGEL & THE BADMEN  
1:00 PM SCOTT WALKER BAND  
3:00 PM DAWN & HAWKS  
4:45 PM DOUG MORELAND  
6:30 PM RED SHAHAN  
7:45 PM ANTHONY RAY WRIGHT  
9:30 PM LOS PINCHE GRINGOS

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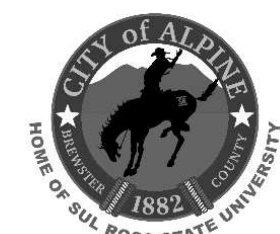


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RFP 2024-04-04**

The City of Alpine is soliciting Request for Proposals and Statement of Qualifications for Financial Advisor. The complete Request for Proposal (RFP) may be viewed on the city website at [www.cityofalpine.com/bids](http://www.cityofalpine.com/bids).

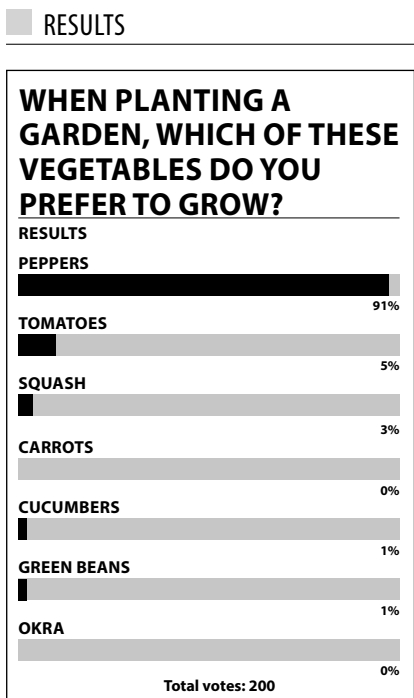
Sealed proposals are due to the Office of the City Secretary by 5:00 p.m. on May 10, 2024. To be considered, the sealed proposal must address each of the requests for information in the Summary of Qualifications section. Proposals should be clearly marked "2024-04-04 TWDB FINANCIAL ADVISOR RFP" and mailed or hand-delivered to the address below:

City of Alpine  
City Secretary  
100 N. 13th St  
Alpine, Texas 79830

Questions and inquiries about this RFP shall be directed to Megan Antrim, City Manager, at (432) 837-3301 or [city.manager@ci.alpine.tx.us](mailto:city.manager@ci.alpine.tx.us).

# Opinions

## ONLINE POLL



THIS WEEK'S QUESTION

Now the Avalanche asks:

**When planting a garden, which of these vegetables do you prefer to grow?**

- Peppers
- Tomatoes
- Squash
- Carrots
- Cucumbers
- Green beans
- Okra

Vote for this week's poll online at: [www.AlpineAvalanche.com](http://www.AlpineAvalanche.com)

## LETTERS

Send us your letters. Please include your name, address and phone number for verification purposes. Only your name and city will be published. Letters should be no more than 300 words. Letters become the property of the Alpine Avalanche and may be edited prior to publication for spelling and grammatical errors, clarity and length. Ad hominem attacks will not be accepted. Letters that include profanity or libel will not be printed. Send your letters to [kara.gerbert@alpineavalanche.com](mailto:kara.gerbert@alpineavalanche.com) by noon Monday for consideration.

## STAFF

**J.T. Maroney**  
Publisher  
[jt.maroney@alpineavalanche.com](mailto:jt.maroney@alpineavalanche.com)

**Kara Gerbert**  
Managing Editor  
[kara.gerbert@alpineavalanche.com](mailto:kara.gerbert@alpineavalanche.com)

**John Covington**  
Staff Writer  
[john.covington@alpineavalanche.com](mailto:john.covington@alpineavalanche.com)

**Shelley Maroney**  
Office Manager  
[shelley.maroney@alpineavalanche.com](mailto:shelley.maroney@alpineavalanche.com)

**432-837-3334**

**www.AlpineAvalanche.com**

**Facebook: Alpine Avalanche**

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Any erroneous reflection upon the character, standing or reputation of any person, firm or corporation will be corrected when such occurs in this newspaper and is brought to the publisher's attention.



## How I became a cat person

As I write, I'm trying to relax in my recliner on a cold winter's day next to a roaring fire, yet my feet are freezing because a large, semi-elderly cat named "Missy" – AKA "The Loaf" – is lounging on the fireplace hearth directly in front of the firebox and hogging all of the heat. "How did I reach this state?" you might wonder. So, do I.



JASE GRAVES  
Guest Columnist

When my middle daughter was six years old, she looked up at me with her big, manipulative green eyes and said, "All I ever wanted was a baby Siamese."

Unfortunately, I've never been a "cat person." Most cats shed like middle-aged hippies, so if you spend any amount of time with them, you wind up looking like a body double for Chewbacca. Then there's that special feline/surlly teenager person-

ality. If only they could roll their eyes and call you "bruh!"

Due to my lack of a backbone, however, I found myself on a quest to locate a Siamese kitten. Luckily, the search didn't take long, and I didn't have to go to Siam. I found Missy through a local rescue operation that was undoubtedly laughing at me as I drove away.

Life with Missy is all about HER. Unlike many cats, Missy actually enjoys a limited amount of petting. I think she considers it a type of massage therapy. When I pet Missy, I feel like I'm performing a service and should be tipped afterward.

During daytime hours, her signal that she wishes to make an appointment to be petted is that she flops onto her side, just out of reach. She demands that I come to

her, and it's often at the most inconvenient time imaginable – like when I'm sitting on the toilet. If I refuse her reluctant advances, she saunters away (giving me the high-tailed, one-eyed salute) and looks for the perfect rug to barf on.

A few days ago, I actually found myself leaning over her to operate my laptop to avoid disturbing her while she napped in my computer chair. Something is clearly amiss. I didn't want a cat in the first place, and now I can't go to the bathroom or buy underwear on eBay without feline interference.

But the true test of my pet tolerance came one evening when we were startled by the sound of glass shattering in the master bathroom, followed by the entrance into the living room of a bleeding (on the carpet, of course) and limping Missy. Scooping her up, I saw that she had a serious laceration on her forearm.

About an hour after I had rushed her to the local emergency vet clinic/cash vaporizer, Missy came out of surgery with assurances from the vet that she would be fine – and a recommendation that I carefully store all breakable items in my home (or sell them to help pay for the vet bill).

Missy is now 13 years old, which, in human years, is approximately 4,745 litter-box scoops. Since acquiring "Missy," we've also adopted two small doglets that Missy mainly ignores like tacky pieces of home decor.

The consolation to life with Missy is that my three daughters love her dearly and she makes them happy. And I kind of like her, too. I guess I see her as a challenge, and after all these years, I'm still determined to make her understand who's in charge.

Now excuse me while I lean over Missy to search eBay for a second computer chair.

## God is still my co-pilot

*"Go on to Mount Pleasant. They've got a long, wide runway up there."*

— Center Airport Manager Bill Neve's advice after I reported instrument issues with my airplane.

It was about forty years ago. Give or take a flight or two. A sunny Saturday afternoon. Piloting a Piper Cherokee 180 out of the Center Airport. Destination Mount Pleasant, to visit my parents.

The short 45-minute hop with a panoramic perspective of East Texas was easy. A familiar one I had made numerous times flying a variety of aircraft. Previous trips had been routine, but this one went in a different direction from the get-go.

Before we got the bugs worked out, you might say.

Memories of that trip grew wings again last week in a discussion about airplanes and the old Mount Pleasant airport. It was located smack dab in the middle of what is today the Preifert Manufacturing facilities complex.

The present-day Preifert event center, in fact, started life as a hangar at that old airport and remains as the last reminder of where it used to be. Whether it is the one that was dubbed "the main hangar" or not, I don't know. The hangar was once adorned with a Mobil flying red horse and a windsock at the roof's peak. The one with faded letters

noting the airport's name and field elevation. About 400 feet above mean sea level as I recall.

Bill Phinney was the airport manager. Pilot friends who encouraged my interest in aviation to take off at that airport included David Brogoitti, Frank Glover, Ronny Narramore, Jim McGuire, Gale Braddock, James Spann, and others for which brain cells are failing to fire at the moment.

Instructor Doyle Amerson got me through ground school and my first solo before his untimely death. Soon afterward, Grady Firmin returned from military duty as a Vietnam-era military pilot and flight instructor, guiding me to the goal — a private pilot's license.

The preflight for the trip to Mount Pleasant was routine. With family on board, I taxied onto the runway and applied full power for the take-off roll.

Midway of the runway, the airplane began to feel light and started to fly. That was good. However, just clear of the ground as Highway 7 passed underneath us, the airspeed indicator fell to zero. That was not good.

Contradictory to the instrumentation display, we had power, and the airplane was performing as it should. We were airborne and climbing.



LEON ALDRIDGE  
Guest Columnist

But critical flight instruments were not functioning.

"Center Unicom." It was my voice this time. "We're airborne, but we have instrument problems."

The pitot-static system controls three flight instruments: airspeed indicator, altimeter, and vertical speed indicator. So, we were flying but I had no idea how fast. We were going up, but I had no idea how high or how fast.

This lack of primary data gave new meaning to the old saying, "flying by the seat of your pants."

"Probably a dirt dauber in the pitot system," Bill said. "Come on back around and land, and I'll clean it out."

Silence. Then I responded, "How do I set up a landing approach without knowing my airspeed, altitude, or rate of descent?"

After another moment of silence, Bill offered his suggestion that I attempt that at the larger Mount Pleasant airport.

The typically short trip seemed like an eternity. Pilot training emphasizes being sensitive to the feel and sound of your aircraft at all times. I felt and heard everything the aircraft offered for the next 40 minutes or so. It was a 40-minute relationship best described as intimacy between man and machine.

Using my "oneness with the airplane" and little else at my disposal other than the seat of my pants, I reached Mount Pleasant. The sweet feel of tires touching asphalt conjured visions of a bumper sticker popular at the time ... "God is my co-pilot."

Taxiing the plane to a stop at the terminal was followed by a long sigh, which was followed by wiping sweat from my brow and offering a prayer of thanks.

No maintenance was available on Saturday. Assuming that if we did it successfully once, we could do it again, the visit was cut short and took off to beat the darkness back to Center.

With shadows long and the sun's orange glow mere moments from disappearing behind me, wheels gently kissed the runway again. This time safely at home.

Sleeping kids in the back seat never woke up.

Remembering that adventure reminded me again how some things never change.

One, it's been a long time since I was "pilot in command" of any aircraft. But apparently, dirt daubers are still a threat to working the bugs out of flying. I still see red "Remove Before Flight" warning flags on pitot tube covers.

And the other thing? God is still my co-pilot. In the air or on the ground.

## CONTACT YOUR REPRESENTATIVE

Joseph Biden  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20500  
202-456-1111

Tony Gonzales  
United States House  
of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515  
202-225-4511

John Cornyn  
United States Senate  
517 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510-4305  
202-224-2934

Ted Cruz  
United States Senate  
185 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510-4306  
202-224-5922



# Heard on the STREET

What is a place that you want to see someday?



**Anne Stein:** Paris definitely! I want to see the Eiffel Tower, tour the Louvre, and eat the food.



**Jake Bryant:** I'd like to see a Chicago Cubs game in person. They were one of the first televised games I saw as a kid, and it stuck with me.



**Jeremy Bryant:** I want to go to New Orleans for Mardi Gras someday.



**Rina Cole:** Just one place? I guess I would like to see China's Cherry Blossom Festival.



**Karen Barkley:** I would like to go to Japan. I have some friends who live there so I might actually get to go soon!

Send your community events to [kara.gerbert@alpineavalanche.com](mailto:kara.gerbert@alpineavalanche.com)

UPCOMING EVENTS

**April 13 Old Sheriff Museum Ribbon Cutting,** 11 a.m. at Old Jail in Fort Davis, the Old Sheriff Museum and Research Center will hold their official ribbon cutting at 102 W. Woodward Ave. Tours, and visits with regional law enforcement officials as well as regional county government officials along with food will be available until 2 p.m.

**April 19 Dark Skies Art Show Reception,** 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. honoring the Big Bend Dark Sky Reserve.

**April 19-21 Alpine Gem and Mineral Show,** 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. at the Alpine Civic Center. FREE admission featuring gems, minerals, jewelry, rough and finished stones, beads, and more.

**April 20 Alpine Public Library Flea Market,** 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the library 805 W Avenue E.

**April 20 Sunshine House's Annual Quilt Show,** 10 a.m.



to 3 p.m. 402 E. Holland hosted by the Desert Sky Quilters. A drawing will be held to win a quilt and vendors will be available.

**April 20 Paint Party for the Parks,** 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. The City of Alpine is hosting a paint party to paint the playground equipment at Medina Park, 301 S. 10th Street. Paintbrushes will be provided, and all are welcome to attend.

**April 20 Earth Day on Historic Murphy Street,** 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Keep Alpine Beautiful and the City of Alpine will have educational booths, kids' ac-

tivities, mural painting, along with other activities. This event is FREE and located next to the Alpine Farmer's Market.

**April 20 SRSU Borderlands Research Institute Guided Hike,** 9 a.m. hike up Hancock Hill with bird guide David Tønnessen. Hikes are free but pre-registration is required.

**April 26 Friday Night Lights Jackpot,** 6 p.m. Sul Ross SALE Arena including barrel racing, breakaway roping, and team roping. All entries are cash only. NIRA rules in all events except for youth breakaway.

ONGOING EVENTS

**Alcoholics Anonymous,** 502 E. Lockhart Ave. Schedules are available on the front door. For more information, call 915-562-4081 or [aa-intergroup.org](mailto:aa-intergroup.org).

**Alpine Lions Club meeting,** noon Tuesdays at the BBT conference room, 5th St. and Brown St.

**American Legion Post 79 meeting,** 6:30 p.m., second Monday each month, Legion Hall, 306 W. Sul Ross Ave. Din-

ner provided. **American Legion Auxiliary meeting,** 4 p.m., third Monday each month, Legion Hall, 306 W. Sul Ross Ave.

**Amigo Run Club at Alpine City Place,** 5: 30 p.m. to 8 p.m. at 101 W. Ave E. Weekly running club to walk/run 1-3 miles. Meet at the Amigo garage and finish at Amigo. Call 432-837-4012 for more information.

**Big Bend Amateur Radio Club meeting,** 7 p.m., second Tuesday each month, Frontier Masonic Lodge #766, 2300 Highway 118 North.

**Big Bend Community Chorale rehearsals,** on Monday evenings at 6 p.m. in the Sul Ross Fine Arts Building, Room 200. All are welcome, but first contact Andrew Alegria at [Andrew.alegria@sulross.edu](mailto:Andrew.alegria@sulross.edu), call 432-837-8216, or visit [bbcchorale.wixsite.com/bbcc](http://bbcchorale.wixsite.com/bbcc).

**Celebrate Recovery,** at Big Bend Cowboy Church on Thursday evenings from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. For more information contact CW at 432-386-3628 or Stacey at 432-386-2979.

**Citizenship Classes,** at

Alpine Public Library by appointment only, 805 W. Ave. E. 432-837-2621

**ESL Tutoring,** at Alpine Public Library, 805 W. Ave. E. Call 432-837-2621 to make an appointment.

**Exercise Classes,** at Sunshine House, 402 E. Holland Ave. Tuesdays-yoga and balance, Thursdays-strength and conditioning. 10:30 a.m. to 11 a.m. Free to all. Contact Cindy at 512-423-2409 for more details.

**GED tutoring,** at Alpine Public Library, 805 W. Ave. E. Call 432-837-2621 to make an appointment.

**Hike with Homeless Dogs,** 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. every Thursday at Davis Mountains State Park in collaboration with Grand Companions. For more information contact Charlie Ewing at 432-246-3337 x 301.

**Kiwanis Club of Alpine,** noon, Wednesdays at the Sul Ross University Center, room 210

**Late Night Game Night,** 9 p.m. to 11 p.m. every Thursday night at Amigo, 101 W. Ave E.

## Local grocer donates water to AVFD



Lowe's Market in Alpine recently donated a pallet of drinking water (84 cases) to the Alpine Volunteer Fire Department for use during this year's wildfire season that is currently underway.

Photo courtesy of AVFD

## PET OF THE WEEK

Meet Eustice. Eustice was from one of the multiple litters of puppies that ended up at the Alpine shelter over a period of a couple of months, overwhelming staff, and resources. Fortunately for all these dogs and puppies, the shelter has worked diligently to find them homes, placement with other organizations, or a spot on a lifesaving transport to another state. Eustice is one of the remaining puppies with his brother, with whom he loves playing. He is easygoing and a little shy, but he will make a perfect household addition with some love, guidance, training, and patience.

Look for Alpine Humane Society at Spirits of the West on April 19 and 20 or meet us at our next Yappy Hour at Alcove (the Old Saddle Club) on Tuesday, April 30, from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. We receive a portion of beverage sales during that time.

Call 432-837-2532 to donate, foster, or volunteer.



Pet promotions are courtesy of the Alpine Humane Society. Alpine Animal Services handles pet adoptions at the city shelter, 10 am to 1 pm and 2 pm to 6 pm, Monday through Friday at 2900 E. Old Marathon Highway. For information about shelter pet adoptions, cremation services, or lost/found pets, call the shelter at 432-837-9030.

The Alpine Humane Society Thrift Store and Cattery is at 706 N. 5th Street in Alpine, open 10 am to 5 pm Monday through Saturday. The Pet Pantry is at 600 N. 5th Street. The AHS helpline is 432-837-2532. To view adoptable pets, visit [Petfinder.com](http://Petfinder.com) or [www.alpinehumane-society.org](http://www.alpinehumane-society.org) and check us out on Facebook and Instagram.

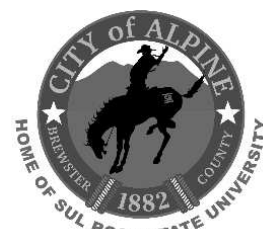
### PUBLIC NOTICE REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS AND STATEMENT OF QUALIFICATIONS FOR BOND COUNSEL RFP 2024-04-02

The City of Alpine is soliciting Request for Proposals and Statement of Qualifications for Bond Counsel. The complete Request for Proposal (RFP) may be viewed on the city website at [www.cityofalpine.com/bids](http://www.cityofalpine.com/bids).

Sealed proposals are due to the Office of the City Secretary by 5:00 p.m. on May 10, 2024. To be considered, the sealed proposal must address each of the requests for information in the Summary of Qualifications section. Proposals should be clearly marked "2024-04-02 TWDB Bond Counsel RFP" and mailed or hand-delivered to the address below:

City of Alpine  
City Secretary  
100 N. 13th St  
Alpine, Texas 79830

Questions and inquiries about this RFP shall be directed to Megan Antrim, City Manager, at (432) 837-3301 or [city.manager@ci.alpine.tx.us](mailto:city.manager@ci.alpine.tx.us).



### PUBLIC NOTICE REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS CLASSIFICATION AND COMPENSATION STUDY RFP 2024-04-01

The City of Alpine is soliciting Request for Proposals for Classification and Compensation Study. The complete Request for Proposal (RFP) may be viewed on the city website at [www.cityofalpine.com/bids](http://www.cityofalpine.com/bids).

Sealed proposals are due to the Office of the City Secretary by 5:00 p.m. on May 10, 2024. To be considered, the sealed proposal must address each of the requests for information in the Summary of Qualifications section. Proposals should be clearly marked "SEALED BID -2024-04-01 CLASSIFICATION AND COMPENSATION STUDY:" and mailed or handdelivered to the address below:

City of Alpine  
City Secretary  
100 N. 13th St  
Alpine, Texas 79830

Questions pertaining to this RFP should be submitted via email with "Questions about Comp Study" in the subject line, at least two days prior to the due date to Megan Antrim, City Manager, at (432) 837-3301 or [city.manager@ci.alpine.tx.us](mailto:city.manager@ci.alpine.tx.us).

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# Alpine Middle School band excels at UIL competition

The Alpine Middle School band performed at the UIL sight reading and concert competition recently in Crane. The band earned a superior rating in sight reading and an excellent rating in their concert performance.

Courtesy photo



## Fire danger brings in Forest Service



Members of the Texas A&M Forest Service have been stationed in the area due to the extreme fire weather and danger prevalent across the state. High winds and low humidity make the possibility of wildfires likely.

Photo courtesy of Texas A&M Forest Service and K. Hines

### SPIRITS • FROM 1

eight food booths, and 16 art retailers.

This event is particularly a great time for local businesses to shine. Chateau Wright, Cathedral Mountain Vineyard, and Brews and Hues Alpine will showcase their creations for this festival which is a celebration of Texas' best winemakers, spirit distillers, and brew masters.

Food will also be available from some of the area's culinary stars like Bock Burger, Sky Island Culinary, Failla Farm and Table, Jeff Vadjos with his Texas Ranger Grill, and Slow Burn BBQ.

Artwork from local artists like Michelle Billings, Linda Walker, Missy

Walker, Butch Caserez, and Peach's Leather will be available for visitors to see.

This year has some very special activities and fest features.

Alpine Galley Night's Executive Director, Lance Johnson, expressed his excitement for the 2024 Spirits Festival, "We are excited to bring back Spirits bigger and better this year! Year after year, we've grown the festival in both participation and attendance. The courthouse lawn and surrounding streets will give us more space for more vendors, food, and fun. We're excited to have shaded lawn areas to hang out, eat, drink,

and dance all day."

On Friday, the gates open for the street festival at 4 p.m., and on Saturday the fun begins at 11 a.m. with live music playing all day open to close. Musicians include long-time West Texas favorites headliners The Swifts, Feline Fox, the Texas original headliner Joe King Carrasco, and Los Pinche Gringos.

On Saturday morning, those who make it will be able to donate to raise funds for art student scholarships at Tito's Vodka complimentary bloody mary bar. Rebecca Creek Distillery is hosting the VIPs tent this year.

Local organization participants include Visit Al-

pine, Visit Big Bend, Go Texan, West of the Pecos Cattlewomen, and Marfa Blooms student organization.

"Spirits of the West Fest is a truly unique, authentically Far West Texas experience to the best of Texas," said Johnson.

Tickets for this event are now on sale and include General Admission or VIP exclusive-access wristbands, and add-on wine tasting classes.

"We look forward to this event, not only for the fun time it will surely be, but for the community support and local commerce it brings with it! We are proud to host a growing event in the heart of Alpine," concluded Kirkland.

### COUNTY • FROM 1

Services Board, the court approved the renewal of Albert Lujan for another term on the board. Lujan's previous term was one year and the next is a three-year term. Another seat on the board is currently open with the departure of Stephanie Elmore, who was also the emergency management coordinator. The court will wait to receive recommendations to fill the seat.

Next, the court approved and ratified the interlocal agreement between Brewster County and the Alpine Independent School District for funding their childcare

operational needs in the amount of \$50,000.

Luke Hendryx, AgriLife and Natural Resource Extension agent updated the court on the activity during this season in his quarterly report. Hendryx shared that they had a good stock show season this year, having several kids participate both in the Houston and Austin sales, which is always an accomplishment.

In the youth programs, 4-H taxes have been filed for all the clubs, the district round-up is coming up in May, and there is a district horse show in June. In partnership with the Sportsmen's Club,

there will also be outdoor training for extension agents and volunteers who want to be certified to lead outdoor projects and hunter's education projects in May.

Last Thursday, Hendryx served as superintendent for the SRSU Invitational horse judging contest which was also the District 6 horse judging contest. The Brewster County junior team placed sixth overall.

This Saturday, Big Bend Telephone is hosting the Far West Texas Landowner Seminar, which has limited registration meeting spots left.

In other news, the court

approved the resolution of the Operation Lone Star Grant Program application for fiscal year 2025.

Finally, local legal representative Rod Ponton came before the court on behalf of his clients who own the Agua Fria ranch in South County. His clients mine bentonite and need legal access to county roads. The court approved the extension of the Agua Fria county road from the current terminus to the subject property by two miles.

The next regular Brewster County Commissioners Court meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 23.

### GUITAR • FROM 1

the renowned studio at the University of Texas at Austin with Professor Adam Holzman. During his studies at UT, Hurt also performed in festivals in Italy and Mexico. He earned the certificate for the Teacher Training Program in 2008 while performing and teaching at the National Guitar Workshop in New Milford, Connecticut for several years. Hurt then began a teaching studio at the Orpheus Academy of Music in Austin.

Hurt and his wife, artist Janelle Borsberry, then moved to Marfa in 2017, where he lives today while teaching music at Sul Ross State University. He began teaching studio and a radio show called In Tune on Marfa Public Radio, West Texas' source for NPR.

In 2022, Hurt released a performance video of Heitor Villa-Lobo's Five Preludes that was featured in the Fretboard Journal. Later that year, Hurt commissioned new works for the solo guitar from friends and composers in Austin. The collection resulted in a performance documentary short film called Serenade I Miss You, which premiered last April at the Rosette through Austin Classical Guitar and was featured at the Mu-

seum of the Big Bend this February.

The featured Romanian guitarist, Dragos Ilie, has played for audiences across Europe, Asia, and the United States. Listening to his father play, Dragos fell in love with the instrument, and he soon enrolled at the Popular School of Arts and later the National College of Arts in his native city Iasi, with Professor Marius Timpau.

His dedication to the art led him to compete, perform, and study in his home country and abroad. Dragos began his studies in the United States at the Schwob School of Music at Columbus State University in the studio of composer Andrew Zohn.

He has performed, taught masterclasses, and led workshops across the United States and Europe, now offering his expertise to the Big Bend.

In 2021 he joined the Austin Guitar Quartet, whose first recording "The Singing Guitar" was nominated for a Grammy.

Dragos and Jeremy Waldrip are both currently completing their doctoral studies at the University of Texas at Austin, with the renowned performer, re-

cording artist, and teacher Adam Holzman.

Jeremy Waldrip is an accomplished classical guitarist whose international musical journey includes a transformative experience at the Accademia Musicale Chigiana in Siena, Italy, where he honed his skills in a series of masterclasses led by the esteemed Maestro Oscar Ghiglia. Waldrip has graced stages worldwide, participating in a captivating tour of France with the US Guitar Orchestra and performing at the esteemed Guitar Art Festival in Belgrade, Serbia, as part of the World Guitar Orchestra.

Recognized for his playing, Jeremy has earned accolades in over 20 competitions, securing prestigious prizes at notable events such as the Southern Guitar Festival, Florida Guitar Festival, Denver Guitar Festival, and the CSU Guitar Symposium.

His musical journey has been enriched by esteemed artists, having participated in masterclasses with luminaries such as Christopher Parkening, Sergio Assad, David Russell, Roland Dyens, Lily Afshar, and other renowned musicians.

"I enthusiastically invite you to attend this exciting event," Hurt said.

More information about all the performers can be found at <https://visitalpinetx.com/guitar-in-the-big-bend/>

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**STEPHANIE N. ELMORE**

Brewster County EMC/Reserve Deputy

As she embarks on a new journey, lets gather to celebrate the wonderful memories and wish her all the best in her future endeavors



### PUBLIC NOTICE REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS AND STATEMENT OF QUALIFICATIONS FOR ENGINEERING SERVICES RFP 2024-04-03

The City of Alpine is soliciting Request for Proposals and Statement of Qualifications for Financial Advisor. The complete Request for Proposal (RFP) may be viewed on the city website at [www.cityofalpine.com/bids](http://www.cityofalpine.com/bids).

Sealed proposals are due to the Office of the City Secretary by 5:00 p.m. on May 10, 2024. To be considered, the sealed proposal must address each of the requests for information in the Summary of Qualifications section. Proposals should be clearly marked "2024-04-03 TWDB ENGINEERING RFP" and mailed or hand-delivered to the address below:

City of Alpine  
City Secretary  
100 N. 13th St  
Alpine, Texas 79830

Questions and inquiries about this RFP shall be directed to Megan Antrim, City Manager, at (432) 837-3301 or [city.manager@ci.alpine.tx.us](mailto:city.manager@ci.alpine.tx.us).

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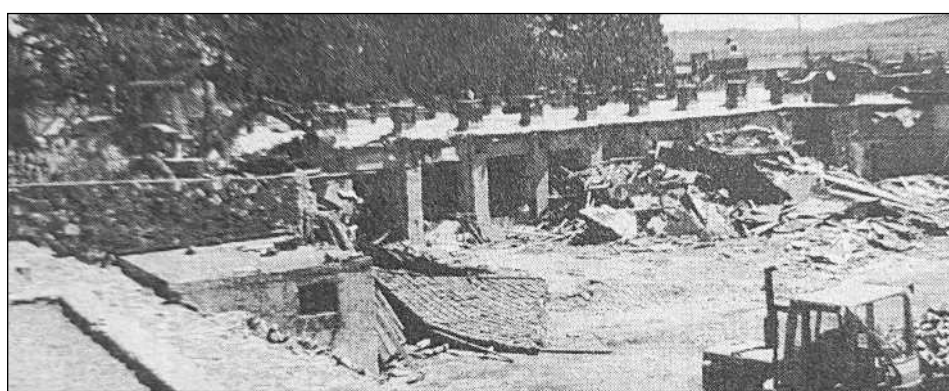
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# LOOKING BACK

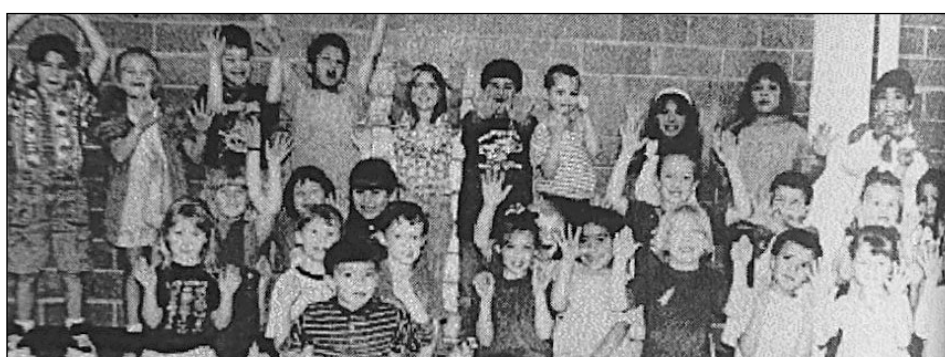
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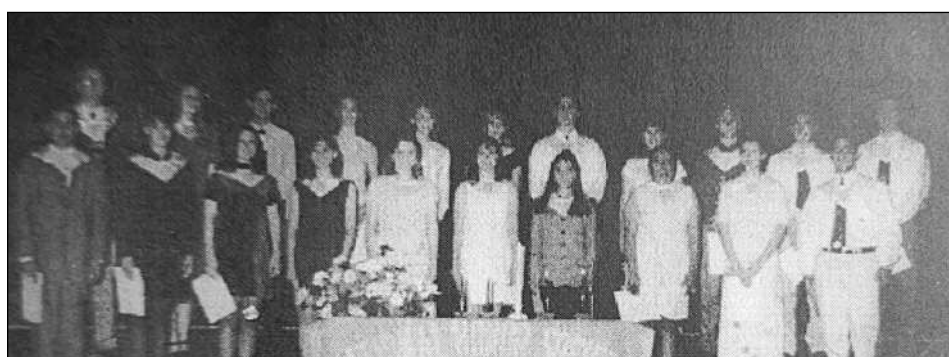
April 9, 1998

The demolition of the former location of the Museum of the Big Bend began on March 31. The project, located on the Sul Ross campus, is expected to last about 60 days.



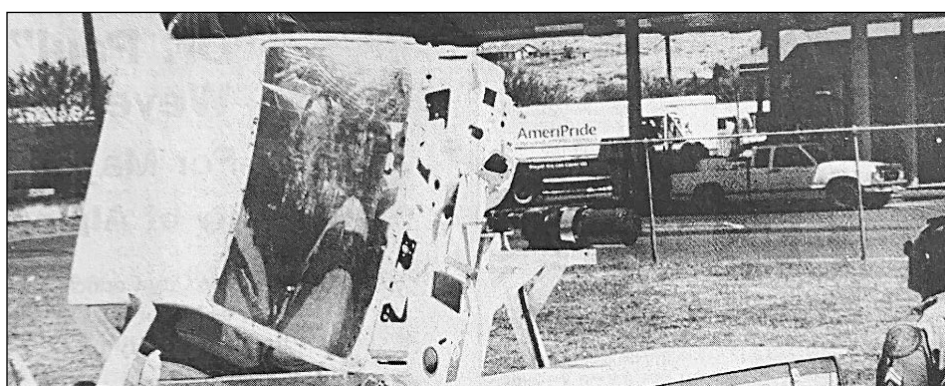
April 9, 1998

Marathon Elementary School students show off their dirty hands after learning how to make and mold seed balls. Photographer and naturalist scientist, Jim Bones came to the school to share his knowledge and know-how.



April 9, 1998

Pictured here are the new members of the Alpine Chapter of the Alpine National Honors Society. Alpine High School held its annual induction ceremony for the National Honors Society on April 2.



April 9, 1998

DPS Trooper Nick Rose demonstrated to Alpine Elementary students the safety of seat belts with a simulator.

# Horticulture is not a precise science

**Dear Neil: My HOA is giving a neighborhood a heads-up on enforcing lawn violations. I have lost much of my lawn to shade, slope, erosion, and drought. Who can I contact to assess my lawn and recommend what to do? I'm puzzled by whether I can reseed, or whether I should sod, and also if I should plant St. Augustine or Bermuda? What about buffalograss?**

HOAs can be very unbending. Horticulture is not a precise science. Unyielding rules may not always work. For example, those large live oaks will make growing any type of grass challenging. St. Augustine can survive with six hours of sunlight. Bermuda needs eight. You didn't mention Zoysia, but some people do use it where they have seven hours of sunlight or more, I do encourage you to ask to see Zoysia lawns in your neighborhood before you go to that expense.

You are probably going to have several different answers for several different areas. I can see a ground

**GARDENER'S MAILBAG**  
by neil sperry

cover beneath the live oaks. I would use regular mondo-grass, but there are a dozen others that might give you a look more to your liking. I think you could grow common bermudagrass in most of the backyard (sunny portion). In the more shaded areas, you should probably switch over to St. Augustine. All of these should be planted from sod, either in strips or by solid sodding. That's too much slope for seeding Bermuda, and St. Augustine is only planted from sod or plugs. Buffalograss would not be my choice. Almost everyone who has grown it reports

back within five years that Bermuda has invaded and taken over completely.

You asked who would make a good person for contact. That would be a landscape contractor. These people do this kind of work full-time – but not as consultants so much as for doing the actual soil preparation and planting. Hopefully, you'll work with a member of the Texas Nursery and Landscape Association.

**Dear Neil: We have a red oak in our backyard. Bark started peeling in the fall, but it has become prevalent this spring. There are also tiny holes in the trunk like a woodpecker might cause, but we don't have any of those birds around. Is this**



**caused by beetles? We want to save our tree.**

I can't tell if the bark loss higher up on the trunk is on the same side as the stub of a branch at the base. If so, leaving that stub in place has probably resulted in decay that has moved up the side of the tree. You can see the difference in coloration of the wood of the bark above the stub. There is likely active decay beneath that bark, and the rest of that bark will probably let loose starting soon. The other two photos show extensive damage done to the bark. I see this all the time when people do not wrap the trunks of young red oaks (and Chinese pistachios, red maples, and Chinquapin oaks, among others). Those trees have thin layers of bark when they're young, and

when they're first out of the nurseries they have little protection from sunscald during their first summers. This kind of damage typically shows up on the west or southwest sides of the trunks after three or four years. Within a couple more years the decay becomes so extensive that the trees are lost entirely. A few dollars spent on paper tree wrap at the time of planting could have avoided all this damage, but not all nurseries tell their customers about it.

The tiny holes are damage from borers that moved in after the fact. They were "invited" in by the damage done by the sunscald injury. Sadly, there's not much you can do about any of this now other than wait to see if the tree can heal itself over the years. It will take a good while.

*Have a question you'd like Neil to consider? E-mail him at mailbag@sperrygardens.com. Neil regrets that he cannot reply to questions individually.*

## TEXAS CROSSWORD

by Charley & Guy Orbison  
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**ACROSS**

1 mammal found under Austin's Congress Bridge (2 wds.)

5 TXism: "keeps his \_\_\_ polished" (do gooder)

6 TXism: "eagle \_\_\_" (observant)

7 Monte \_\_\_\_, Texas

8 TXism: "\_\_\_ gut" (whiskey)

9 feisty

16 TX Buddy Holly's "\_\_\_ Love Ways"

18 Friday night halftime performer (2 wds.)

21 investment for a specified period (abbr.)

22 TXism: "let \_\_\_" (leave alone)

23 TX Howard Hughes dated this Gardner commotion

24 many of these settled in Texas

34 extra play for Texas pro teams (abbr.)

35 coffin transport

36 an overthrow of a government

37 TXism: "pulled the wool over \_\_\_ eyes" (deceived)

39 it often happens when a rich Texan dies (2 wds.)

43 TXism: "that's a fine how do \_\_\_"

44 Hill Country is one for white-tailed deer

45 "Gig '\_\_\_ Aggies!"

46 "\_\_\_ mouth, insert foot" (blunder)

**DOWN**

1 TXism: "got \_\_\_ \_\_\_ as big as Texas" (kind)

2 Seymour newspaper: "\_\_\_ County Banner"

3 TXism: "so green he could hide in \_\_\_ patch"

4 like 24-across: "a big \_\_\_"

9 TX Shelley of 1980 film "The Shining" (init.)

10 \_\_\_ cow-boys (disabled)

11 religious ceremony

12 in Wood County, on U.S. 69

13 TXism: "\_\_\_ savvy" (knows a lot)

14 rehab after surgery (abbr.)

15 opposite of nay

17 TXism: "book learned"

19 kept away from

20 prison guard at the Patrick O'Daniel Unit near Gatesville

24 Houston univer.

25 Texas-filmed "\_\_\_ wee's Big Adventure"

26 skin breakout

27 "bottle \_\_\_ \_\_\_"?

16 17 18 19 20

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# Sports

## Lady Bucks track and field bring home fourth district title

*More than athletes advance to Area competition*

BY KARA GERBERT  
Managing Editor

The Alpine Lady Bucks varsity has done it once again. A four-peat performance at the 3A District 4 track meet held in Crane last week saw the girls bring home the championship trophy and score 233 points, beating out their second-place hosts by 113 points.

The Alpine varsity boys team placed third in the district competition and the JV team also placed third. The JV girls' team came in fourth.

In the 100M dash, Valeria Crespo placed first, followed by Danica Mulholland in second with a personal record best of 12.79, and Kylie Maroney placed sixth. For the boys' event, John Paul Valenzuela brought home a silver medal second-place finish, while Aaron Miller placed seventh.

The 200M dash would see an Alpine Lady Buck take first as well, with Danica Mulholland bringing home the gold with a personal record of 26.65. Ali Maroney



The Lady Buck 4x200 relay team of Mia Morris, Danica Mulholland, Valeria Crespo, and Novah Carrasco became District Champions last weekend, placing first in their event. The team advanced to the Area competition in Denver City being held today.

Courtesy photo

would also hit a personal record with a time of 28.24 and would place fourth.

In the 400M, Aaron Miller would bring home a seventh-place finish for

the Alpine boys, while the girls would top the podium in a sweep with Emy Hernandez placing first, Colette Fowlkes placing second, and Novah Carrasco placing third.

## Bucks topple Yellow Jackets and Blue Devils

BY KARA GERBERT  
Managing Editor

The Alpine Fightin' Buck baseball team took on the Kermit Yellow Jackets at home on March 28, followed by a Tuesday, April 2 match-up with the Presidio Blue Devils. Despite a rocky start to district play, the Bucks were able to get the 'W' against both teams.

In their game against Kermit, the Bucks were able to score eight runs in the second inning that would allow them to eventually defeat the Yellow Jackets. Alpine would be first on the board in the bottom of the first thanks to a double to right center

by Josh Solis that would bring Iden Lujan across the plate. Kermit would tie things up at the top of the second until the Bucks rallied with their eight runs in the bottom of that same inning, starting things off with a triple by Devon Rojo that would bring in Peyton Tays and Alec Ramos. Michael Ybarra would follow up with a sacrifice to first to drive in Rojo. Lujan would add another point to the board for the Bucks followed by two runs from Solis and David Valenzuela due to a series of errors on behalf of the Yellow Jackets.

See BASEBALL • 9



Iden Lujan tags out a Kermit player as he attempts to slide into base.

Photo by Felipe Fierro

In the 800M race, Solanus Prieto placed ninth, John Paul Prieto placed 10th, and Tony Harris placed 14th. The girls placed second, fourth, and fifth with Emy Hernandez, Hope Dominguez, and Fowlkes respectively.

In the 1600M race, Hatfield Cason took the gold with a time of 4:44.48, with John Paul Prieto in 14th and Solanus in 15th. The varsity girls Hope Dominguez would place second in the 1600M followed by Molly Garrett in fourth.

The 3200M would have Cason once again on top of the podium in first place, and Molly Garrett would earn a fourth-place finish for the varsity girls.

In the boys' 110M hurdles, fifth place went to Martin Sablatura, followed by John Mendoza in sixth, and Ethan Flores in eighth.

In the girls' 100M hurdles, Naida Morris would bring home a third-place finish for the Lady Bucks.

See TITLE • 9

## Fightin' Bucks impress at invitational



Esther Lotti makes a serve during the Jean Everett Memorial Tennis Invitational at Sul Ross where she placed first in girl's singles.

Courtesy photo

BY JOH COVINGTON  
Staff Writer

The Fightin' Bucks tennis team recently competed in the Jean Everett Memorial Tennis Invitational at Sul Ross and succeeded in some impressive placement in the challenge.

Esther Lotti, the number one girl's singles player placed first and Solanus Prieto and Zane Wash, their number one boy's doubles team placed second. There were eight teams in attendance and the competition was great.

After the invitational, head tennis coach, Lauren Martinez, said "We all walked away with more experience and are excited to get back to practice, to work on specific skills that need improvement."

Earlier, the Bucks traveled to Big Lake for the RCHC Invitational at the end of March, and according to the coach, they also performed there very well.

"None of our players placed, but they were able to advance further than they had before. Our girl's doubles made it to the third round of the consolation bracket and our boys' singles made it to the second round of the consolation bracket."

On March 22, they met up with teams from Tornillo and Immanuel

See TENNIS • 9

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### Sports Schedule

**FIGHTIN' BUCK TRACK & FIELD**  
Apr. 11 Area @ Denver City  
Apr. 19-20 Regionals @ Abilene  
May 2-4 State Championship @ Austin

### BUCK BASEBALL

Apr. 12 Alpine vs Stanton\* JV @ 4:30 p.m. Varsity @ 7 p.m.  
Apr. 19 Alpine vs Kermit\* JV @ 4:30 p.m. Varsity @ 7 p.m.

### LADY BUCK SOFTBALL

Apr. 12 Stanton vs Alpine\* Varsity @ 5 p.m. JV @ 7 p.m.  
Apr. 19 Alpine vs Kermit\* Varsity @ 5 p.m. JV @ 7 p.m.  
Apr. 27 Bi-District TBA

### TENNIS

April 12-13 Sanderson Invitational @ Sanderson

### BUCK AND LADY BUCK GOLF

Apr. 15-16 Regionals @ Abilene  
\*Denotes District Game

## ATHLETE OF THE WEEK

**JAYCEE PORTILLO**

Jaycee plays 2nd base for the Lady Bucks and rotates to the outfield when needed. Jaycee scored 6 runs, knocking in 5 rbi's and had 4 stolen bases in the last three games. Jaycee helps anchor the defense at 2nd base and is the Lady Bucks lead off hitter. Jaycee is a Junior and a third year varsity starter.

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**DAVID BACA**



**TENNIS • FROM 8**

Christian of El Paso in Tornillo. There, the players were able to play doubles and singles and continue brushing up on their skills. "These duels with surrounding schools

are crucial to building our tennis skills," Martinez said.

Last Tuesday, April 2, the junior varsity and varsity teams traveled to Monahans to duel against

both Crane and Monahans. Martinez shared that this was another crucial practice round for them to work on skills and get better at moving around the ball and working on

game situations.

Next for the Fightin' Bucks is the Sanderson Invitational in Sanderson on April 12 and 13 for the junior varsity and varsity teams.

**BASEBALL • FROM 8**

Jace Canaba would single, advancing A.J. Llanez to third, followed by Tays with a single fly ball to right field that scored Llanez and advanced Canaba to third, where he would eventually score on a passed ball with Ramos at bat. The Bucks led 9-1 at the top of the third.

Kermit would add three more runs to their score in the top of the third, followed by Alpine adding four more to their total in the bottom of the fourth. Kermit would add three runs to their total at the top of the fifth, but still trailed the Bucks by six. The Yellow Jackets would

add one more run to their total for the day in the top of the sixth, and Alpine would add their final run to the board in the bottom of that inning thanks to a sacrifice bunt by Lujan that advanced Rojo to home. Alpine defeated the Yellow Jackets 14-8.

In their Tuesday match-up at Kokernot Field against the visiting Blue Devils of Presidio, the Bucks were once again able to end the night victorious. Solis was hot at the plate for the Bucks, collecting three hits in four at-bats, with a single in the first, a double in the fourth, and another single in the fifth.

Canaba would lead things off for Alpine with a double, scoring Solis. The Bucks would add two more runs to their total in the bottom of the second thanks to a triple by Valenzuela to center to advance Eddie Morrison. Alpine would add another run in the bottom of the third and two more in the bottom of the fourth, leading Presidio 6-0.

Alpine would add their last three runs to their total in the bottom of the fifth, bringing the score to 9-0. Presidio would pick up their only three runs of the game in the top of the sixth, and Alpine would

take the win 9-3.

Alpine next faced Crane on Friday, April 5 for their second meet-up of the season. The Golden Cranes soundly defeated the Bucks at home last month 2-15, but only managed to edge out the Bucks by a single run, 6-7. Next up for the Bucks was their second match-up against the Coyotes from Tornillo on Tuesday, April 9. The Coyotes swept the Bucks on their home field in their earlier meeting 0-10. The Bucks would fall once again to the Coyotes 6-11. The Bucks are currently 6-13 on the season and 2-5 in district play.

**TITLE • FROM 8**

Both the boys and girls would have top 10 finishers in the 300M hurdles. For the boys' team, John Mendoza would place fourth and Sablatura placed sixth. The girls had a second-place finish by Mia Morris while her sister Naida placed third.

All varsity relay teams were in the top five.

In the 4x100m relay, the boys' team of John Mendoza, John Paul Valenzuela, Daedrick Hardwick, and Logan Smith placed fifth with a time of 46.37.

The girl's relay team took the gold, with a time of 51.03, and was made up of Kylie Maroney, Valeria Crespo, Mia Morris, and Novah Carrasco.

The 4x200M boys' varsity relay team of Ethan Flores, John Paul Valenzuela, Daedrick Hardwick, and Logan Smith placed third and also had a personal record time of 1:34.74

The girls' varsity team took gold in this relay also, with a time of 1:48.95, and was made up of runners Mulholland, Crespo, Mia Morris, and Novah Carrasco.

In the 4x400M relay, the girls placed second and the boys third, and both teams ran personal record times. The boys' team of Logan Smith, Ethan Flores, Daedrick Hardwick, and Hatfield Cason ran a time of 3:41.64, while the girls' team of Ali Maroney, Emy Hernandez, Hope Dominguez, and Colette Fowlkes ran a personal record time of 4:15.58.

Varsity shot put had a personal record throw by Adam Llanez of 36-11.25 for a seventh-place finish, and Eddie Morrison would place 12th. In the girls' shot put, Sierra Ruckman would also have a personal record throw with 28-06.50 to place fifth followed by Ailea Fierro in ninth.

In the discus, Eddie Mor-



**The Lady Bucks track and field team are four-peat District title winners. The varsity girls had a combined total team score of 233, 116 points over second place, and district championship hosts Crane.**

*Courtesy photo*

ison placed sixth with a throw of 111-03, and Ailea Fierro would throw a personal record best for third place with 87-03. Ruckman would also place eighth in the discus.

The boy's high jump would take the top spot on the podium with a jump from Daedrick Hardwick of 5-08.00. The girls' high jumpers of Mulholland and Fowlkes would tie for second with a 4-10.00 jump.

In the pole vault competition, the boys' would bring home third and fifth place with Dane Jeffers hitting a personal record of 9-06.00 and John Mendoza with 8 feet even. The girls brought home a first-place vault with Mia Morris, a second from Naida Morris, and a fourth-place finish from Ali Maroney

In the long jump, the boys' Logan Smith placed third with a jump of 18-09.25 followed by 10th place from Dane Jeffers, who had a personal record jump of 16-03.50. The girls would follow up with a second-place finish by Novah Carrasco, and a fourth-place finish by Kylie Maroney.

Finally, the triple jump had a single placement in sixth place from Ethan Flores while the girls' Nevaeh Carrasco took the gold with a personal record jump of 33-07.25, while

Mia Morris brought home fourth place with 31-08.75.

The JV teams took home a single first place and several second places in various events, along with a few personal records. Sophie Janis placed second in the 100M with a personal record run of 13.96. In the 200M, Trinity Vega would also bring home the silver with a personal record time of 29.58, while Zeke Guillan would run a personal best at 25.51 to place fifth.

In the 400M, the boys' Everett Edwards brought home the gold and Ferris Daley would round out that race in fourth place. Vega would also run another personal record time in this event for the girls with a time of 1:08.66.

Although no girls placed in the 800m race, Landon Velasco would get to the podium, taking third place and Ferris Daley just missed the mark, coming in fourth.

In the boys' 100M hurdles, Izaak Fierro placed second with a personal record time of 19.92 and he also placed fifth in the 300M hurdles.

In the boys' high jump, Kelton Tarrant had a personal best jump of 5-02.00 to take second place.

The boys' pole vault would see two of their JV competitors achieve per-

**Golfers advance to regionals**



**David Baca and Evelyn Smith placed high enough at the district tournament in Pecos last week to advance to the regional competition in Abilene.**

*Courtesy photo*

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Notice is hereby given that the automatic tabulating equipment that will be used in the City of Alpine Election held on May 4, 2024 will be tested on April 16th at 10:00 AM. at The Elections Office located at 203 N 7th St, Alpine Texas to ascertain that it will accurately count the votes cast for all offices and on all measures.

*Signature of Officer*

**AV/SO PUBLICO DE PROBAR EL EQUIPO PARA TABULAR AUTOMATICAMENTE**

Por lo presente se da aviso que el equipo para tabular automaticamente que se usara en la Elección de la Ciudad de Alpine que se 1/evara a cabo el 4 de mayo de/ 2024 se probara el 16 de abril a las /0:00 a.m. en la Oficina de Elecciones, localizada en 203 N 7th St, Alpine TX para determinar si el equipo contara con exactitud los votos para todos los puestos oficiales y sobre todos los proyectos de ley.

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# Learning the art of woodworking



Students enrolled in the Industrial Arts class at Alpine Middle School learn how to build birdhouses.

Courtesy photo



**In what activities did you participate in high school?**  
In high school, I participated in softball and in powerlifting from freshman year through junior year.

**Who was your favorite teacher/coach, and why?**  
My favorite teacher/coach has to be Coach Dominguez by far because he could always tell when I was having an off day, and he could always bring a smile to my face as well as having many encouraging words to make me never give up on my goals.

**What was your favorite moment in the last four years?**  
My favorite moment from the last four years has to be junior year prom because it was the last memories, I shared with my upperclassman friends/family.

**What are your plans after high school?**  
My plans after high school are to attend Sul Ross and get my bachelor's degree in either economics or business then I plan to go to law school in San Antonio.

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## Devotional Page

### King of Kings and Lord of Lords

BY LANA COVINGTON  
First Christian Church, Alpine

During the Season of Lent or on Easter Sunday, you may have had the opportunity to listen to all or part of Handel's "Messiah." Based on a text by Charles Jennens, Handel's oratorio tells the life story of Jesus Christ. Its best-known section and the climax of the piece is the "Hallelujah" Chorus. The Biblical text for the chorus is found in Revelation 19:6, "And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, 'Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth';" and in Revelation 19:16, "And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, King Of Kings, And Lord Of Lords"; and Revelation 11:15. "... 'The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign forever and ever.'" Handel completed the 260-page work in 24 days and was reported to have said when he finished 'Hallelujah, "I did think I did see all heaven before me, and the great God Himself seated on His throne with His company of angels." Standing for the chorus is said to have been started by King George II and is still practiced today. The exuberance of the chorus is

intensified as all the voices and instruments join together to exclaim Jesus as "King of Kings and Lord of Lords," repeating the words in higher and higher registers. It is easy to get carried away with the music, and at the end of the chorus, when the voices and instruments are silent, one might think that this is the end of the entire oratorio, but it is not. Instead, there is a response by one soprano who proclaims faith in the King of Kings and Lord of Lords with the song, "I Know That My Redeemer Liveth."

When the excitement of this exuberant piece of music is over, we are left with the question of who Jesus is. In Matthew 16:16, Peter declared to Jesus, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." In Matthew 27:54, at Jesus' crucifixion, a centurion said that Jesus must surely be the Son of God." In John 20:28, after seeing Jesus' nail-pierced hands, Thomas called Him, "My Lord and My God." If we truly believe that He is King of Kings and Lord of Lords, we will proclaim it by our words and our actions in all places both private and public, and at all times, and in all circumstances. Who do you think Jesus is? May God be with you as you respond to those questions and as you live out your own "Hallelujah" chorus.

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**PUBLIC NOTICE**

This is to give notice of the intent to replat the west half of Block 26 of Anderson Addition to Marathon, Brewster County, Texas into four separate lots. The subject tract is located south of S. 2nd Street and one block east of S. Lee Street. Please direct questions/concerns to Brewster county clerk.

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# National Gardening Month: Time to clean your garden or start one

BY SUSAN HIMES

April is National Gardening Month, so if you're not already a gardener, now is the perfect time to try your hand at developing a green thumb. Experienced gardeners, in addition to "spring cleaning," may want to learn a new skill or expand the scope of their gardens.

"Gardening Month was created years ago as a way to encourage more folks to venture into their outdoor space," said Larry Stein, Ph.D., Texas A&M AgriLife Extension horticulture specialist at Uvalde and professor in the Texas A&M College of Agriculture and Life Sciences Department of Horticultural Sciences.

"No doubt the pandemic did a lot to stimulate many people to give gardening a try and some interesting statistics have emerged from that," he said. "About 70% of the folks who tried gardening were successful and are increasing the size of their plantings."

Gardeners should grow what they like," Stein said. If you are ready to give gardening a try, the most important factor is to start small. He suggested a plot of 10 feet by 10 feet but no more than 20 feet by 20 feet to start. He also advised only planting what you like, whether that be vegetables you'll want to eat, a pollinator garden to attract butterflies, or plants and flowers you find attractive. It is important to plant what you love. As long as plants are suitable for your region, plant what brings you joy.

"There is no point in using resources to grow things that aren't appealing to you," he said.

Stein said studies show the cost is around \$70 to get started gardening and most people realize at least a \$600 value from that activity. The most popular garden crop is tomato, followed by cucumber and sweet peppers.

## Top Garden Tips for April

Stein offered the following tips for gardeners this month.



Garden flowers

Photo by Michael Miller/Texas A&M AgriLife

1. Prune spring-flowering shrubs soon after flowering. Keep the natural shape of the plant in mind as you prune and avoid excessive cutting except where necessary to control size. Wait to prune fruit trees if you're in an area that has delayed or protracted blooms due to the lack of chilling temperatures; you'll want to see what the final bloom/fruit set will be first. Climbing hybrid tea roses may be pruned as soon as they complete flowering.

2. Fertilize trees and shrubs. Place fertilizer at the drip line and be sure to water it in. As soon as azaleas have finished flowering, apply an acid-type fertilizer at the rate recommended. Don't over-fertilize, as azalea roots are near the surface and damage can occur. Water thoroughly after fertilizing.

3. Care for your roses. Roses have high fertilizer requirements and need a complete fertilizer for the first application as new growth starts. Then every four to six weeks use ammonium sulfate or another high-nitrogen source as the subsequent growth cycles start following a flowering cycle. Ideally, use a slow-release product. For organic sources

use cottonseed, rotted manures, or alfalfa meal. Rose varieties susceptible to black spot will need a spray treatment of fungus control every seven to 10 days. Many of the old garden rose varieties and some of the newer ones have considerable resistance to black spot.

4. Be prepared to battle pests. Soon bagworms will attack junipers and other narrow-leaved evergreens; control measures should be applied while the insects and bags are about one-half inch in length. Check plants' new tender growth for aphids. A few can be tolerated, but large numbers should be controlled. Always follow label instructions on approved pesticides for control. Washing plants with a strong spray of water may sometimes be all that is necessary for adequate control. If caterpillars start to attack live oak trees en masse, it can be very alarming, but usually nothing can be done about it. A healthy live oak will usually regrow its leaves and resume normal activities.

5. Sow warm-season annual ornamental seeds directly into beds. These include Amaranthus, celosia, cosmos, marigold,

portulaca, and zinnia. Keep seeded areas moist until seeds germinate. Thin out plants as soon as they are large enough and transplant surplus to other areas.

6. Buy annuals with buds but not open flowers. Select short, compact plants and any existing flowers should be pinched to give the plants the opportunity to become established. These annuals will provide your garden with beautiful color in no time.

## Spring cleaning for your garden

Just as your house may need a thorough spring cleaning about now, so may your garden.

"Start weeding early in the flower garden," Stein said. "Early competition with small plants can delay flowering. A mulch will discourage weed growth and make those that do come through easier to pull."

If spring cleaning includes your indoor plants, Stein said when moving houseplants outside to be repotted, remember not to place them in direct sunlight. Tropical plants, however, usually can be placed in containers in full sunlight for a dazzling display of summer color.

For gardeners who make their own mulch, Stein suggested they continue to collect fallen leaves and catkin blooms as organic materials.

"Removing spent flowers, trimming back excessive growth, and applying fertilizer to an established annual bed can do wonders toward rejuvenating and extending the life of the planting," Stein said whether for creating new beds, replenishing beds, or filling pots and containers, purchase new soil now as needed.

However, Stein

stressed, that it needs to be examined closely.

"Often, nut grass and other weeds, nematodes, and soilborne disease are brought into a yard through contaminated soil sources," he said. "You don't want to introduce new problems to your garden."

Let your region's weather and temperatures guide you on planting summer crops, Stein said. Most folks can

start to plant okra, melons, lima beans, and southern peas, but others may want to hold off until it warms a bit more.

"Once you're done planting, any leftover flower or vegetable seeds can be saved for the next season by closing the packets with tape or paper clips and storing them in a sealed glass jar in your refrigerator," he said.

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### **NOTICE OF RATE CHANGE REQUEST**

AEP Texas Inc. (AEP Texas) publishes this notice that on February 29, 2024, AEP Texas filed with the Public Utility Commission of Texas (Commission) its Petition and Statement of Intent to Change Rates (the Petition), a copy of which is kept at AEP Texas' office at 400 W. 15<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 1500, Austin, Texas, 78701. The Petition has been assigned Docket No. 56165. This notice is being published in accordance with 16 Tex.Admin. Code § 22.51(a) (1).

AEP Texas' Petition is based on the system-wide financial results for a 12-month test year ending on September 30, 2023, adjusted for known and measurable changes. Related to its distribution cost of service, the Company requests a rate increase of approximately \$100.4 million over its adjusted test year revenues. This net change is a 13.1% increase over net present distribution revenues. When expected annualized Transmission Cost Recovery Factor revenues are included in the comparison to present revenues, the net increase to distribution cost-of-service is 8.4%. Related to its transmission cost of service, the Company requests a rate increase of \$63.1 million above its adjusted test year revenues, an increase of 9.29%.

In addition to new rates, AEP Texas requests a prudency determination on all capital investment made to its system for the period from January 1, 2019, through September 30, 2023.

AEP Texas' Petition requests Commission approval to continue its offering of facilities rental services, as described in tariff schedules 6.1.2.3.6, 6.1.3.3.6, and 6.1.4.3.6, and a good-cause exception to the Commission's rule requiring AEP Texas to obtain the Commission's approval to provide these services every three years. If approved, the requested good-cause exception will allow the Company to extend the effective date of its existing tariff schedules through the effective date of the tariffs approved in its next comprehensive rate case.

Finally, AEP Texas requests recovery of its reasonable rate-case expenses associated with this proceeding and certain prior rate proceedings, including those expenses paid to reimburse municipalities for their participation.

If approved, the increased rates will be charged to AEP Texas' direct customers, all retail electric providers (REPs) in AEP Texas' service area, as well as the retail electric customers of those REPs. The extent to which the REPs pass along to their customers the increased retail rates is a function of the competitive market. In addition, AEP Texas' petition affects customers taking service under the Company's wholesale transmission rates.

AEP Texas has requested its proposed rate change become effective 35 days after the filing its Petition.

Persons who wish to intervene in or comment upon these proceedings, in Docket No. 56165, *Application of AEP Texas Inc. for Authority to Change Rates*, should notify the Commission as soon as possible, as an intervention deadline will be imposed. A request to intervene or for further information should be mailed to the Public Utility Commission of Texas, P.O. Box 13326, Austin, Texas 78711-3326. Further information may also be obtained by calling the Commission at (512) 936-7120 or (888) 782-8477. Hearing-and-speech-impaired individuals with text telephones (TTY) may contact the Commission at (512)936-7136. The deadline for intervention in the proceeding is 45 days after the date the Petition was filed with the Commission.

### **AVISO DE MODIFICACIÓN DE TARIFA**

AEP Texas Inc. (AEP Texas) publica este aviso de que el 29 de febrero de 2024, AEP Texas presentó ante la Comisión de Servicios Públicos de Texas (Comisión) su Petición y Declaración de Intención de Cambiar las Tarifas (la Petición), una copia de la cual se encuentra en la oficina de AEP Texas en 400 W. 15<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 1500, Austin, Texas, 78701. A la Petición se le ha asignado el Número de Expediente 56165. Este aviso se publica de conformidad con 16 Tex.Admin. Code § 22.51(a)(1).

La Petición de AEP Texas se basa en los resultados financieros de todo el sistema para un año de prueba de 12 meses que finaliza el 30 de septiembre de 2023, ajustados por cambios conocidos y medibles. En relación con el costo de servicio de distribución, la Compañía solicita un aumento de tarifas de aproximadamente \$100.4 millones de dólares sobre sus ingresos ajustados del año de prueba. Este cambio neto supone un incremento del 13.1% sobre los ingresos netos actuales de distribución. Si se incluyen los ingresos anualizados previstos del Factor de Recuperación de Costes de Transmisión en la comparación con los ingresos actuales, el aumento neto del costo del servicio de distribución es del 8,4%. En relación con el costo del servicio de transporte, la Compañía solicita una subida de tarifas de 63,1 millones de dólares por encima de los ingresos ajustados de año de referencia, lo que supone un incremento del 9,29%.

Además de las nuevas tarifas, AEP Texas solicita una determinación de prudencia sobre toda la inversión decapital realizada en su sistema para el período comprendido entre el 1 de enero de 2019 y el 30 de septiembre de 2023.

La Petición de AEP Texas solicita la aprobación de la Comisión para continuar con su oferta de servicios de alquiler de instalaciones, tal y como se describe en los programas de tarifas 6.1.2.3.6, 6.1.3.3.6 y 6.1.4.3.6, y una excepción de causa justificada a la norma de la Comisión que exige a AEP Texas obtener la aprobación de la Comisión para prestar estos servicios cada tres años. Si se aprueba, la excepción de causa justificada solicitada permitirá a la Compañía ampliar la fecha de entrada en vigor de sus programas de tarifas existentes hasta la fecha de entrada en vigor de las tarifas aprobadas en su próximo caso tarifario global.

Por último, AEP Texas solicita la recuperación de sus gastos razonables relacionados con este procedimiento y algunos procedimientos tarifarios anteriores, incluidos los gastos pagados para reembolsar a los municipios por su participación.

Si se aprueban, las tarifas incrementadas se cobrarán a los clientes directos de AEP Texas, a todos los proveedores minoristas de electricidad (REP) en el área de servicio de AEP Texas, así como a los clientes minoristas de electricidad de esos REP. La medida en que los REP repercutan a sus clientes el aumento de las tarifas minoristas depende del mercado competitivo. Además, la petición de AEP Texas afecta a los clientes que contratan el servicio según las tarifas de transmisión al por mayor de la empresa.

AEP Texas ha solicitado que el cambio de tarifa propuesta entre en vigor 35 días después de la presentación de su Petición. Las personas que deseen intervenir o hacer comentarios sobre este procedimiento, en el expediente N°56165, *Aplicación de AEP Texas Inc. de Autoridad para Cambiar las Tarifas*, deben notificarlo a la Comisión lo antes posible, ya que se impondrá un plazo de intervención. Las solicitudes de intervención o de información adicional deben enviarse por correo a Public Utility Commission of Texas, P.O. Box 13326, Austin, Texas 78711-3326. También puede obtenerse más información llamando a la Comisión al (512) 936-7120 o al (888) 782-8477. Las personas con discapacidad auditiva o del habla que dispongan de teléfonos de texto (TTY) pueden ponerse en contacto con la Comisión en el número (512) 936-7136. El plazo para intervenir en el procedimiento es de 45 días a partir de la fecha de presentación de la petición a la Comisión.

# WEST TEXAS ROUNDUP

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# Recipes don't always match their photos

Have you ever baked or cooked a meal or dessert that didn't look like the photo that may have been associated with the recipe? Or perhaps a better way to describe this would be the photo of that delicious-looking cheeseburger you see on a TV ad that never matches up with the reality of what you buy at the restaurant. Sound familiar?



With the miracles of technology and the post-processing magic of photo enhancement, this particular recipe did just that for me. To the point that I won't share with you what my version looked like, just know that it did not look like the associated courtesy photo.

Because we have become an increasingly visual society, the photo that was associated with this recipe was stunning. For someone who looks at a lot of cookbooks, and watches a lot of food shows, with all the editing and photoshopping that goes into that, the photo of this cake really pulled me in and made me want to bake it.

If you follow my column, you will know that baking is not something I'm particularly fond of, but I will dabble from time to time. This was just such a time. So, I gathered my ingredi-

ents, followed all the instructions, and began what I believed would be a transcendent experience. I followed the instructions verbatim. Well, turns out that was not what happened. What did happen were a few "lessons" I believe that I learned.

First of all, when it calls for navy blue food coloring, it would probably behoove you to purchase some. Not the drops of blue you can buy at the grocery store, but actual cake decorating coloring that you can get at craft stores probably like Michael's or Hobby Lobby, or you can order it online. While I used actual cake food coloring that my mom had (she used to decorate cakes for a living), the colors still did not resemble the photo close enough to my liking. However, it was beautifully dense, moist, and tasted fantastic. Its color reminding me of those Saturday morning cartoon characters the Smurfs.

As for the icing, it calls for the blackberries to be pureed and the seeds strained

out of the puree. This is where I recommend you change up your recipe. As you are instructed to do for your icing, you should also do so for the cake itself. The recipe calls for gently folding the berries into the cake mix, but this leaves berries in random places throughout the cake, not allowing for a uniform color that a baked blackberry with a bit of navy-blue food coloring should produce. I definitely recommend pureeing the blackberries and straining the seeds for the cake mix as well.

Therefore, there are two things I took away from this experience that will stay with me going forward. One, don't worry if the result doesn't look like the glossy photo, just worry about it tasting good. And two, always find ways to learn from your mishaps or failures.

The best thing about this experience was the cake itself. The basic recipe minus the berries will definitely win over anyone you serve it to.

## Blackberry Cake

**For the Cake:**  
2 cups all-purpose flour  
1 1/2 teaspoons baking powder  
1/2 teaspoon baking soda  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
1/2 cup unsalted butter, softened  
1 cup granulated sugar  
2 large eggs, at room temperature  
1 teaspoon vanilla extract  
1 cup buttermilk, at room

temperature  
1 1/2 cups fresh blackberries  
22 drops of dark navy blue food coloring (As needed)

**For the Blackberry Buttercream Frosting:**  
1/2 cup unsalted butter, softened  
3 cups powdered sugar, sifted

1/4 cup blackberry puree (made by blending fresh blackberries and straining out the seeds)  
1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract  
Pinch of salt

**For Decoration (Optional):**  
Fresh blackberries  
Lemon zest  
Mint leaves

### Directions:

**Preheat the Oven:**  
Preheat your oven to 350. Grease and flour two 9-inch round cake pans or line them with parchment paper.

### Prepare the Cake Batter:

In a medium bowl, sift together the flour, baking powder, baking soda, and salt. Set aside. In a large mixing bowl, cream together the softened butter and granulated sugar until light and fluffy. Add the eggs one at a time, beating well after each addition. Stir in the vanilla extract then add 22 drops of dark navy blue food coloring (as needed). Gradually add the dry ingredients to the wet ingredients, alternating with the buttermilk, beginning, and ending with the dry ingredients. Mix until just combined. Gently fold in the fresh

blackberries until evenly distributed throughout the batter.

### Bake the Cake:

Divide the cake batter evenly between the prepared cake pans. Bake in the preheated oven for 25-30 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted into the center of the cakes comes out clean. Remove the cakes from the oven and let them cool in the pans for 10 minutes before transferring them to wire racks to cool completely.

### Make the Blackberry Buttercream Frosting:

In a large mixing bowl, beat the softened butter until smooth and creamy. Gradually add the sifted powdered sugar, blackberry puree, vanilla extract, and salt, beating until smooth and creamy. Adjust the consistency by adding more

powdered sugar if too thin, or more blackberry puree if too thick. Once the cakes are completely cool, place one cake layer on a serving plate or cake stand. Spread a layer of blackberry buttercream frosting evenly over the top of the first cake layer. Place the second cake layer on top and frost the top and sides of the cake with the remaining blackberry buttercream frosting.

**Decorate (Optional)**  
Garnish the top of the cake with fresh blackberries, lemon zest, and mint leaves for a beautiful presentation. Serve and enjoy!

**Preparation Time:** 20 minutes

**Baking Time:** 25-30 minutes

**Total Time:** Approximately 1 hour

**Servings:** Makes one 9-inch double-layer cake



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