

**AVFD working with TPWD on mapping app**

BY KARA GERBERT  
Managing Editor

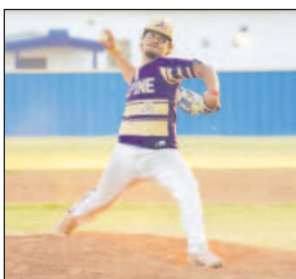
The Alpine Emergency Services Board held its regularly scheduled meeting on Tuesday, April 23 at 5:30 p.m. In attendance were Rusty Moore, Albert Benitez, Albert Lujan, Aaron Rodriguez, AVFD Chief Andrew Pierce, and arriving later were AVFD Captain Zack Davis and Chairman Paul Loeffler, who was detained due to inclement weather outside Sanderson. Stacey Wood was absent, and no one was as yet appointed to fill the board vacancy left by Stephanie Elmore.

In lieu of Chairman Loeffler being available to run the meeting, Aaron Rodriguez led the discussion according to the agenda, as there was a quorum present.

Being no public comments, Rodriguez moved on to approval of the minutes from the last meeting. A motion was made along with a second and the approval of the minutes was unanimous.

See AVFD • 6

**INSIDE**



FEATURED

See Sports 8-9

**Rainfall totals at Alpine-Casparis Airport**

|                 |       |
|-----------------|-------|
| 2024 . . . . .  | .205" |
| April . . . . . | .006" |



**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.**



**City submits letter to CBP: Alpine's response to the border light plan**

BY JOH COVINGTON  
Staff Writer

Earlier this month, the U.S. Customs and Border Protection agency opened the door for input regarding the potential environmental impacts and project alternatives for operational lighting along the border in Texas. That door closed last Monday, but not before the City of Alpine sent a response to it.

The CBP has proposed action consisting of the construction, operation, and maintenance of approximately 25.15 miles of newly installed lighting and the operation and maintenance of approximately 19.6 miles of pre-constructed lighting in El Paso and Starr County.

The city council of Alpine was alerted of the small window to respond to the CBP's inquiry, which closed on

April 22, and composed a letter to address the potential impact.

The letter addressed to CBP began with acknowledgments, "The City of Alpine understands the need for Customs and Border Protection's proposed plans."

This plan seems to be a continuation of high-intensity lighting that Border Protection has

See CITY • 6



Star trails swirl around Polaris, the North Star, above the Hobby-Eberly Telescope.

Photo by Ethan Tweedie Photography.

**Lady Bucks take Bi-District**



The Alpine Lady Bucks softball team took down the Brownfield Cubs in a three-game series this past weekend to become the Bi-District Champions. They face Amarillo River Road tomorrow and Saturday in Big Spring for the Area Championship.

Courtesy photo

**29 years of Cinco de Mayo in Alpine**

BY KARA GERBERT  
Managing Editor

The 29th Annual Cinco de Mayo celebration will kick things off this coming Saturday, May 4 on Historic Murphy Street. This year's celebration is a tribute to Joe Raul "Magoo" Torres, a long-time Cinco de Mayo organizer and community of Alpine supporter. He will be honored as the Grand Marshal for the parade.

Magoo, who passed in 2020 began the Cinco de Mayo celebration first as a cabrito and menudo cook-off. This led to the celebration it is today. When he opened his restaurant 17 years ago, he threw a party in the parking lot to kick off the festivities the first few years it was in

business, with bands and the like. As his son Billy Jack said, "Dad never met a stranger, and he was always involved in the goings on in Alpine."

On Saturday, Magoo's sons Billy Jack Torres, Joe Raul Torres, Jr., and their mother Marta Torres will lead the 29th Annual Cinco de Mayo parade representing their late father and husband as this year's Grand Marshal.

This year's celebration will also celebrate the ninth anniversary of the Tejano Sundays radio program in which Magoo was the very first sponsor.

Robert Alvarez, DJ for Tejano Sundays, had this to say, "This year we are combining the Alpine Cinco de Mayo festivities with the Tejano Sundays



Members of the 2010 Cinco de Mayo Association are pictured here to kick off the annual festivities. This year's 29th Annual Cinco de Mayo celebration is being held in memory of Joe Raul "Magoo" Torres, a committed member of the celebration as well as many other community events and activities. Pictured are Robert Polanco, Elidia Polanco, B.J. Gallego, Frankie Bettencourt, Letty Gonzales, Joe "Magoo" Torres, and Jesus Rodriguez.

Avalanche photo

Puro Party Celebration to make it an extra special event. Local bands will

be featured rather than "big names" but there is a ton of talent in Far West

Texas. We invite everyone to come dance under the stars on Saturday night. Also, thanks to our generous sponsors, this event is free to everyone so grab your lawn chairs and come celebrate Hispanic culture with us."

The celebration kicks off at 11 a.m. Saturday morning when the Gran Mercado located on Historic Murphy Street in downtown Alpine opens its vendor's doors. This is followed by the annual Cinco de Mayo parade down Holland Avenue at noon. After the parade, everyone will move to the Gran Mercado.

At 1 p.m., there will be a car show, followed by the Nueva Genera-

See CELEBRATION • 6

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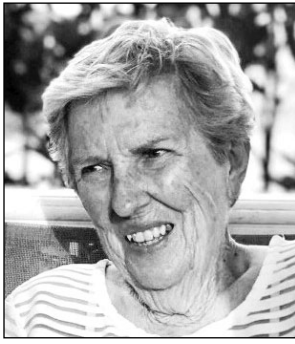
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# OBITUARIES

## Benny Sims Meredith



In the early morning hours of April 26, Benny Sims Meredith, 93, quietly and peacefully walked into the waiting arms of her Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. She did not waste one minute worrying about the future or what would happen next, she knew.

Born and raised in southern Arkansas, Benny was the oldest of three children. She attended Camden High School where she played the trombone and taught herself to play tennis. While getting her degree at Ouachita Baptist University in Arkadelphia, she was a cheerleader and sang and traveled extensively with the choir. An avid reader, Benny also loved playing the piano and was especially accomplished at boogie-woogie jazz tunes. Before she could

drive a car, Benny earned her pilot's license at sixteen. She embarked on what she knew would be an extensive flying career, ending only after crashing her plane into a hanger during her first solo flight. Benny wasn't injured but the plane and hangar weren't so fortunate and on to Plan B.

From an early age, Benny was drawn to missions. She attended the Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth where she was also drawn

to an outgoing, soon-to-be ordained minister from Oklahoma named Hugh Meredith. They married and she took up the complicated role of preacher's wife serving in churches in Oklahoma and Texas. Benny and Hugh had four children - Molly, Jim, Jack, and Ann. Benny's strong belief in the power of education and desire to see them succeed gave her a judge, an assistant federal public defender, a school principal/rancher, and a teacher/administrator at the renowned School for the Deaf in Austin. Benny, the daughter of a watch repairman and seamstress, could not have been prouder or more supportive of them.

When her children left home to make their own way, Benny and Hugh traveled the world—Europe, China, and Japan to name a few. She taught junior Eng-

lish at the high school level, a subject she loved. Her students learned to appreciate the joys of grammar, punctuation, and literature.

When the decision was made to move to Alpine, this child of the dense piney woods of Arkansas wasn't sure she was going to like it. And she didn't like it; she loved it. She loved the wide-open spaces, beautiful mountains, and intoxicating desert views. She loved the independence of the people who lived there. She was home.

Benny gave of herself and her money to many local organizations, regularly volunteering at The Sunshine House, and delivering Meals on Wheels for many years. At the Alpine Library, she not only planted and regularly watered trees, but entered and won the library's annual talent show

playing, of course, the trombone, accompanied on the piano by her good friend, Audrey Painter. Never interested in being the center of attention, Benny was always ready with a beautiful smile, an extended hand, and the desire to make someone else feel appreciated and seen. She grew especially attached to her little dog Frida, who was never far from her side.

Benny Meredith is preceded in death by her parents, Walter and Gladys Sims, and her brother, Dennis Sims. She is survived by her four children, Molly Meredith Francis, Jim Meredith and wife Debbie, Jack Meredith and wife Erica David, Ann Meredith and husband David Escamilla; five grandchildren, Meredith and Morgan LeNoir, Lane Meredith Lakey and husband Wade, Kelli Mer-

edith Cross and her husband Cameron, and Hector Meredith; five great-grandchildren, Hudson, Preston, Nolan, Jordan and Evan Lakey; and her brother Lewis and children Cindy, Stacey and Scott.

A memorial service will be held on Saturday, May 11 at 10:30 a.m. at the First Baptist Church of Alpine. In lieu of flowers, Benny would without a doubt ask you to show an unsolicited and unexpected act of kindness to a person in need, pick up a piece of trash and put it in the trashcan, participate wholeheartedly in a cause you believe in, and occasionally just look up at the sky and give a prayer of thanks that you live in this beautiful world.

Services have been entrusted to Alpine Memorial Funeral Home.

# Martinez, Green receive President's Volunteer Service Award

A local staff member and a student at Sul Ross State University in Alpine have been presented with the President's Volunteer Service Award for 2024.



Shelby Green



Manuel Martinez

PVSA is the nation's premier volunteer award program, encouraging U.S. citizens or lawfully admitted permanent residents to live a life of service through presidential recognition. Recipients complete various hours of "unpaid acts of volunteer service benefitting others."

The award offers three levels of annual recognition and a lifetime award. Each level has a designated number of hours required appropriate to the age of the individual volunteer.

SRSU became a certifying organization to verify service hours and award the Presidential Volunteer Service Award in Fall 2022.

Manuel Martinez, Gold Recipient (290 hours)

Manuel Martinez is a 2022 graduate and Tech Support Specialist for the Office of Information Technology at SRSU.

As a student, he received the PVSA Gold medal in December 2022. As a staff member, Martinez has con-

tinued his work in the Alpine community. He is an active member of the Knights of Columbus, currently serving as one of the youngest Grand Knights within the international organization. In addition, he volunteers as a head coach for Big Bend Little League and Big Bend Youth Soccer Association, and coaches cheer, dance, and tumbling at Epic Energy Studio.

"The volunteering that I do matters to me because I have big dreams of peace in the world. A world culminated by kind service to each other, no matter our physical and spiritual differences. Being able to give is not optional for me, but rather it is a necessity and

fundamental to making a positive impact," said Martinez.

Shelby Green, Gold Recipient (270 hours)

Shelby Green will graduate in May 2025 with a Bachelor of Science in Range and Wildlife Management. She has volunteered 270 hours in the last year. Green is active on campus and serves as the Vice President of the Student Government Association and Treasurer for the Range and Wildlife Club. Outside of school, she volunteers her time as a volunteer firefighter for Rossville and Alpine, completing annual trainings, responding to local emergencies like car accidents, fires, and medical calls, and supporting

the general maintenance and operations of the organization, along with outreach efforts.

"I am honored to be part of all the volunteer organizations and programs I took part in over

the last year. Fire Service volunteerism has become a huge part of my life and shaped me into who I am today. To have a passion that provides help to others is an amazing experience for me," said Green.

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**The Alpine Lions Club would like to thank our Sponsors for our Fourth Annual Golf Tournament**

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**The Alpine Lions have donated \$10,140 to various charities including:**

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Alpine Humane Society                                       | Frontier CASA   |
| Family Crisis Center  | Hurricane Relief  |
| Alpine Food Pantry  | BBSA Girls Softball   |
| Sunshine House  | Blue Santa  |
| High School Art Dept.                                       | Christmas & 4 <sup>th</sup> of July Parades                             |
| Big Bend Pets   | Free eye exams & glasses for adults & children who meet income criteria |
| Brown Santa   | High School Peace Poster Ad Essay Contest                               |
| Texas Lions Camp (free camp for children with disabilities) | 4th of July Fireworks and Activities at the Courthouse.                 |
| SRSU Scholarships   |   |
| Multiple Sclerosis Society                                  |   |
| Leader Dog (trains and provides seeing eye dogs)            |   |

We have also established a \$10,000 endowment for college scholarships, in addition to our legacy \$80,000+ in the Sul Ross State University corpus for Alpine High School seniors attending SRSU.

**That brings to date \$20,140 we've donated this fiscal year!**

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# School bus involved in accident

BY KARA GERBERT  
Managing Editor

Last week, the Avalanche was informed of a vehicle accident at the corner of 4th Street and Fort Davis involving an Alpine ISD school bus.

The bus was being driven by Coach Villanueva according to information from the Alpine Police Department. The bus failed to yield the right of way and did not see the vehicle on the left as it was making a right

turn, striking the vehicle. There were 20 people on board the bus, the Alpine High School tennis team, their coach, and the driver. There were no injuries reported in either vehicle involved.

# Alpine FFA installs new officers

The Alpine FFA installed new officers for the 2024-2025 year at Tuesday night's FFA banquet. From left, Collette Sharron-Sentinel, Riley Killingsworth-Treasurer, Kylie Maroney-Vice President, Kendyl Hardaway-President, Evelyn Smith-Secretary, and Sophie Janis-Reporter.

Photo by J.T. Maroney



# Texas A&M working with Homeland Security

Protecting U.S. food supply chain from threats via research, innovation

BY SUSAN HIMES  
Contributing Writer

The disruption of the food supply chain during the first few years of COVID made Americans aware of how critical the ability to move agricultural products reliably, safely, and efficiently is, according to Texas A&M AgriLife experts.

A Texas A&M AgriLife-led team is doing its part to protect the U.S. food supply chain from future threats that are accidental, intentional, or an act of Mother Nature. The project, Systematic Mapping of Cross-Border Threats to Enhance U.S. Agriculture Security, began in September 2023 and will continue through August 2025.

Leading the team is principal investigator Zhihong Xu, Ph.D., associate professor in the Texas A&M College of Agriculture and Life Sciences Department of Agricultural Leadership, Education, and Communications.

"Our goal is to be able to deter, prevent, thwart, respond to, and recover from any harmful consequences that may arise in the agricultural supply chain," Xu said. "Texas plays a crucial role in all of this," she said. "We are right at the border and agriculture is a massive part of our economy, not to mention how it impacts our environment and our daily lives. From the food we eat to the economic boost our state gets, it's all tied into this big picture."

Concentrating on identifying and assessing potential threats along America's agricultural food supply chains, this research is supported by a Department of Homeland Security Center of Excellence within Texas A&M AgriLife Research known as Cross-Border Threat Screening and Supply Chain Defense (CBTS). All results are being shared with the Department of Homeland Security.

"To prepare the country for future potential threats and situations that could cause disruptions, the team



Members of the team from Texas A&M AgriLife, the USDA, and the Department of Homeland Security work together to protect the U.S. food supply chain.

Photo courtesy of Jennifer Yezak-Texas A&M AgriLife

is pioneering research to enhance the understanding of how cross-border threats can affect agricultural and food supply chains," said Gregory Pompelli, Ph.D., Director of CBTS. "This research supports the efforts to safeguard these critical components of national well-being, which also have global implications."

The research findings are shared at a series of conferences held periodically throughout the length of the program in Washington, D.C., with Homeland Security and the officials responsible for the security of the food supply chain.

"The U.S. is at the heart of an extremely complex global trade network, facing constant threats that can be either intentional or unintentional," said Matt Baker, Ph.D., head of the Department of Agricultural Leadership, Education, and Communications. Supply chain interruptions can result in health threats, food scarcity, and economic losses.

Identifying all potential threats systematically can provide a clearer picture and inform policies that strengthen decisions toward preparedness for national security.

"These threats pose significant challenges to the intricate and interconnected supply chain networks that oversee massive volumes of trade critical to the country's economy and food security," Xu said. "Because of the complex and interdependent interactions at national and international levels, these threats can impact supply chain networks' integrity, re-

silience, and security."

The primary objectives of the project are to conduct a systematic approach to analyzing threats to agricultural/food security. By synthesizing existing knowledge through systemic mapping, the team aims to identify knowledge gaps, prioritize research areas, and promote collaboration to develop a holistic perspective on food and agricultural defense and security, she said.

The systematic mapping study objectives of the program are identifying factors affecting agricultural security, identifying the impact of threats to agricultural security, and developing an information system for research assistance. The objectives of the conferences are to identify agricultural security content experts and to organize and facilitate future research, especially identifying research gaps on the topic.

"By leveraging interdisciplinary approaches that combine social science and agricultural sciences, we aim to shed light on the vulnerabilities of the chains and strengthen the preparedness levels against such disruptions," Xu said. "Our goal is not only to contribute to the academic body of knowledge but also to provide actionable insights that can help mitigate risks to the U.S. agricultural and food sectors."

She said through pioneering research, the team strives to enhance the understanding of how cross-border threats can affect U.S. agricultural and food supply chains, thereby supporting

# Last chance to vote in city election

BY KARA GERBERT  
Managing Editor

This coming Saturday, May 4 from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. is the last chance to vote for the seats on the Alpine City Council in both the general and special election. Registered voters may cast their ballots at the council chamber room at 803 W. Holland Avenue.

In the special election,

voters will be choosing between Jennifer Peel and Reagan Stone to fill the Ward 1 seat being vacated by Judy Stokes.

In the general election, voters will be choosing between Lori A. Griffin and Lucy E. Escovedo for the Ward 4 seat on the Alpine City Council.

Voters must show a valid photo ID to cast their ballots.

# Texas poet laureates featured at library

A poet laureate rarely visits our remote region, but doubly exciting when two of them will be featured at the Jeff Davis County Library on Wednesday, May 8. Starting at 2 p.m., Karla K. Morton, a graduate of Texas A&M will introduce her recent work which highlights National Parks; a portion of the proceeds benefit the parks. Karla has authored 16 poetry collections and is the recipient of several literary awards, is a guest editor for TCU Press, and was honored with an E2C Grant. She has been published in many journals and was selected as Texas State Poet Laureate in 2010, later collaborating with her husband, Alan Birkelbach, on "The National Parks: A Century of Grace," the first book of poetry written in-situ by poets who have visited all 63 National Parks.

Alan Birkelbach



Alan Birkelbach Karla K. Morton

became a Texas Poet Laureate in 2005 and is a Texas native who is also an award-winning writer. He compiled the anthology, "8 Voices of Contemporary Poetry from the American Southwest" which became part of the teaching curriculum for SMU in Dallas as a valued resource. Alan is also published in numerous journals and will join his wife in a lively discussion regarding poetry at the library.

Light refreshments will be available. This program is free of charge and sponsored by Friends of the Library in Fort Davis. Join us as we welcome these poets to the Big Bend area.

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# DARK SKY WEEK

May 7-11, 2024



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McDonald Observatory collaborates with communities and businesses to preserve Far West Texas's famous night sky. Learn about our Dark Skies Initiative - and how you can get involved - at [McDonaldObservatory.org/DarkSkies](http://McDonaldObservatory.org/DarkSkies).

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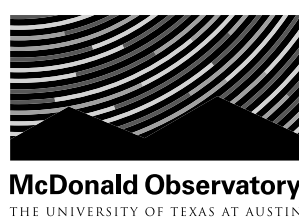
Residents of Brewster, Culberson, Jeff Davis, Hudspeth, Pecos, Reeves, and Presidio counties get free passes for Dark Sky Week programs using discount code BigBendSky at checkout.

# Pack donates to food pantry



Cub Scout Pack 141 recently collected 481 pounds of food and donated it to the Alpine Food Pantry.

Courtesy photo

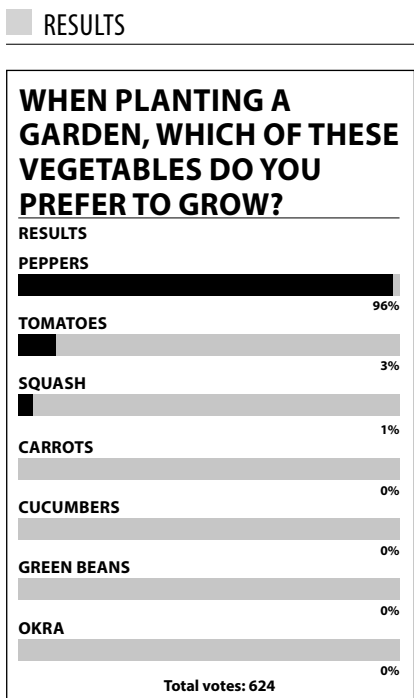


DarkSky International hosted International Dark Sky Week April 2-8. Learn more at [idsw.darksky.org](http://idsw.darksky.org).

Special thanks to Apache Corporation for their support and partnership to preserve the night skies over Far West Texas and to create the Preserving Dark Skies exhibit at the McDonald Observatory Frank N. Bash Visitors Center.

# Opinions

## ONLINE POLL



**THIS WEEK'S QUESTION**

Now the Avalanche asks:

**What is your go-to food to take to a BBQ?**

- Potato Salad
- Pasta Salad
- Fruit
- Vegetable Dish
- Cornbread
- Cole Slaw
- Dessert

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.

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## Thank you, Fightin' Buck teachers

BY DR. MICHELLE RINEHART  
 Superintendent, Alpine ISD

The week of Monday, May 4 is Teacher Appreciation Week. After a year of political scheming in Austin that held funding hostage for long-overdue teacher pay raises in a failed effort to push through voucher schemes, there has never been a more important time for local communities to show their teachers how much they are appreciated.

Here in Alpine, our public school system is incredible because our educators are incredible. Our people are our greatest asset and our greatest blessing.

Alpine ISD has a long history of exceptional educators who go above and beyond for our community's children, helping all students maximize their potential as Alpine Fightin' Bucks. Fightin' Buck teachers help students learn specialized content, refine their character, maximize their potential, and access newly opened doors as they progress through our school system.

Fightin' Buck teachers are content experts. Early elementary teachers unlock the code of the English language through explicit phonics instruction focused on letter sounds, letter patterns, and decoding principles. Students are also deeply immersed in content-building, studying rich topics in science and social studies to build their understanding of our world.



Middle grades teachers help students further develop their skills and voices as young writers, mathematicians, scientists, musicians, athletes, and more. High school teachers take students even deeper into robust courses that explore analyzing and composing texts, studying cause and effect throughout history, modeling our world using mathematics, designing, and creating new ideas, and so much more. Throughout the years, our elective teachers foster a love of the fine and industrial arts, robotics, languages, physical wellness, and teamwork that help our children flourish. Every Fightin' Buck teacher hones their content expertise to shepherd and equip our community's children on their educational journey.

Fightin' Buck teachers also help our students continually refine their character. Alpine families value character and raise their children to act with integrity, compassion, and a core sense of right and wrong. Our teachers reinforce these same ideals in our kids. It truly takes a village

to raise a child, a principle exemplified in our small town. Alpine ISD is blessed to work with parents to help us collectively actualize our goals for our community's children. Thanks to families' and teachers' collective work, our students graduate as even wiser, kinder, and more responsible versions of themselves.

Fightin' Buck teachers help students maximize their potential. Teachers often see the glimmer of interest, possibility, or aptitude that students bring to a particular subject, and help fan this flicker into a roaring flame. Our students often find their fit, their calling, and their gifts within our schools, connecting with content areas, extracurricular activities, or professional callings in which they flourish and excel. Our teachers help make that happen, day after day, year after year, for hundreds and hundreds of students.

More than anything, Fightin' Buck teachers help open doors for our students' future. From career pathways to college preparation to military readiness and everything

in between, our students forge their futures during their time as Alpine Fightin' Bucks and our educators help make many of these possibilities become reality.

Highly effective teachers are but one part of a thriving community, but they're such an essential part. Alpine, let's not miss this opportunity to thank our incredible educators for the tireless, excellent work they do on behalf of our community's children.

While there remains much for us to do as a larger society to show our teachers the deep respect we have for the critical role they play, there is much we can do locally in the interim. Next week, let's all show our appreciation for our community's teachers. You can send a note or an email with words of affirmation, encouragement, and gratitude. You can reach out to see if a teacher has an unmet need you could help with. You can send a small gift to show you're thinking of them and the incredible impact they have on our community. You can share a handshake, a high five, or a word of gratitude the next time you see them in town.

Gratitude can be as simple and profound as what former Alpine ISD School Board Member Justin Cross often says, "Thank you for helping raise our kids!" I wholeheartedly second that. Thank you, Fightin' Buck teachers, for the incredible work you do to help raise the children of Alpine.

## Nights when storms are raging

"If you don't like the weather, just wait a few minutes. It will change."

—Attributed to both Will Rogers and Mark Twain, depending on what you read.

A different column for this space was taking shape about the middle of last week. One intertwined with memories of growing up in Mount Pleasant. But that was before spring storms wreaked damage and havoc on much of Northeast Texas late last week, including my hometown.

I've lived most of my life in Shelby County. Still, there's something about the place where you grew up riding bicycles, playing marbles in the dirt, learning about life, and making friends at school. The place that always remains as home in the heart. For me, that was the south side of Mount Pleasant.

The column I was whittling on can wait while we pray for communities in that neck of the woods to get back on their feet. As I was crafting this second effort column Sunday afternoon, many residents in the storm's path still lacked electrical service. Many more were surveying storm damage and the aftermath of flooding, processing the impact it would have on their lives.

Just a couple hours south, down here in Center, we missed the

straight-line winds, tornadoes, and other hissy fits Mother Nature was spewing across several states.

I watched reports of weather happening not that far away, remembering other nights here in deep East Texas when winds wailed, and thunderstorms raged. Waiting out tornado watches and warnings in the wee hours before daring to go to sleep.

And here I am again, pondering sleep on a Sunday night in Center with storms again passing through East Texas. This time, unleashing on Center.

Tornado season in East Texas always reminds me of grade school years in West Texas, where storm cellars were commonplace in the 1950s. And still are. Underground shelters that provided excellent storage for vegetables from the garden and a place for kids to play hide-and-seek on hot summer afternoons.

But when skies darkened, and weather threatened, families huddled in the cellar. Some trying to ignore the storm long enough to steal a nap on Army surplus cots in the warm glow of kerosene lantern lights.

Dad was not a storm sleeper. He was a storm watcher. Often



LEON ALDRIDGE  
 Guest Columnist

standing at the top of the stairs in the cellar doorway to watch the show. Black funnels like the one that danced through Seymour, Texas one night. Surreally illuminated by lightning and sparks from snapping power lines. Debris filling the air.

I remember that one and another in East Texas at Crockett. My first year of school in 1954 when a mid-day tornado turned noonday skies to midnight black. When violent winds whipped large trees around like saplings while parents picked up children huddled near a row of lockers at one end of the classroom.

I attribute weather like that, and my father's affinity for storm watching, to my once secret dreams of being a storm chaser. Hunting down tornadoes, then playing tag with them to gather weather data.

What I have done in reality is keep one eye on developing weather and another on a place to hide should violent storms get too close for comfort.

That skill was learned from the best weather warning system I ever had. A couple of small dogs. Miniature schnauzers named Benny and Sassy. Benny was especially adept at weather prognostication.

Sensing an approaching storm long before the weather service reported it on radar caused him to hide under my chair and whine.

Once storms hit the area, both of them headed for the bedroom. Benny was too old to jump on the bed, so he went under it while Sassy hit the topside and burrowed under the cover. I usually joined the one on top of the bed but kept my options open for joining the senior canine hunkered under it.

With the same curiosity my father displayed decades ago, I used to bravely step outside and watch the weather. Observing late afternoon storms approaching across the water was magical when I lived on Lake Murvaul. Watching nature's power building and the rain coming down was mesmerizing.

However, the first up-close lightning flash usually sent me running, trying to beat the dogs back in the house.

Resuming our respective spots in and under the bed, I drifted off to dreamland as storms diminished, tornado watches expired, and dogs relaxed. Thankfully, like Mark Twain or Will Rogers indicated, the weather will always change.

That said, my all-clear for slumber was still reliant on one last thing.

I never went to sleep before the dogs did.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### The Rio Grande

There was a time of joyful people who came and went from both sides. They crossed the Rio as they pleased, no longer, now the Rio cries. The crossings are like jungles, with danger, deceit, and lies. People suffer, and many times die. Much sadness, so the

Rio cries. The want for "Yanqui Dollars" will be mostly the reason why. They live for "It" and die for "It". The almighty "It" is why the Rio cries. Many live in anger and frustration. Evil players profit as days go by. Others couldn't care less about it. How much longer must the Rio cry? Since January of 2021, many millions of illegal mi-

grants crossed open U.S. borders. With them came a flood of illegal drugs. Thousands of Americans die each year from these drugs, and many U.S. politicians don't seem to care. There was a time when outlaws threatened Americans, like cartels do now, who made the mistake of crossing the Rio Grande to attack New Mexico.

Thousands of U.S. Troops were sent to Mexico which put an end to it. So why isn't this much worse state of affairs not being handled in the same way? Very much like the Mexican Federales, the U.S. Federal Government can also be seen as pathetically corrupt.

James R. Le Blanc  
 Fort Davis, Texas



# Heard on the STREET

What is your favorite flower?



**Katrina Munoz:** Lillies!



**Kristen Rosas:** Geraniums!



**Jen Wilcoxon:** I like Lillies too.



**Julia Ferjo:** Hot chocolate roses!



**Chris Ferjo:** Bob's Red Mill artisan bread flour. It's in a purple bag.

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

UPCOMING EVENTS

**May 3 Big Bend Community Chorale,** 7:30 p.m. at Our Lady of Peace Catholic Church corner of 5th Street and Gallego Avenue.

**May 4 Cinco de Mayo,** 11 a.m. to 12 a.m. Historic Murphy Street in Downtown Alpine. Music, vendors, food, games, and dancing. Event is free of charge, and all are invited.

**May 4 Permian Basin Area Foundation,** 10 a.m. at the Fort Davis Community Center, Director Guy McCrary will talk about how the PBAF has benefited the Big Bend area and its citizens. Please join us for this informative talk sponsored by the Jeff Davis County Democratic party.

**May 7-11 Dark Sky Week at McDonald Observatory,** Celebrating the famous dark skies of Far West Texas, programming



to include special access tours, astrophotography workshops, science lectures, and a film screening. To book passes and for a schedule of events visit [McDonaldObservatory.org](http://McDonaldObservatory.org). Residents of Brewster, Jeff Davis, Presidio, Culberson, Hudspeth, Pecos, and Reeves counties may receive free passes using discount code Big-BendSky at checkout.

**May 8 Texas Poet Laureates,** 2 p.m. at the Jeff Davis County Library. Karla K. Morton and Alan Birkelbach will discuss

their poetry. This program is free of charge.

**May 10 BBQ and Boots Fundraiser,** 6 p.m. to 12 a.m. at the Ole Crystal Bar benefitting the Family Crisis Center of the Big Bend. Featuring live music from Craig Carter and the Spur of the Moment Band, a silent auction, and a BBQ dinner. Contact a member of Leadership Big Bend for tickets.

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. Dinner 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 appoint-

ment 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 to 1 p.m., first and third Wednesdays at the Alpine Public Library.

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

## PET OF THE WEEK



Come meet Churro. This puppy is a shelter staff favorite. He is as sweet as his namesake. He is handsome and has a great personality. He gets along with other dogs, walks well on a leash, and is ready to learn. He would be a great hiking and walking companion and would do well in any household that could offer the attention and training required to have a great dog.

Please spay and neuter your pets and keep them responsibly contained in your environment.

Consider volunteering to walk dogs or give play time to the puppies or cats at the shelter.

Meet us at our next Yappy Hour at Alcove (the Old Saddle Club) on Tuesday, April 30, from 4 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 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 2 p.m. to 6 p.m., 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 a.m. to 5 p.m. 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.

## Senior mass at OLP



The Class of 2024 attended their senior mass this past Sunday at Our Lady of Peace Catholic Church.

Courtesy photo

[www.alpineavalanche.com](http://www.alpineavalanche.com)

Parents,  
For over  
*100 years,*

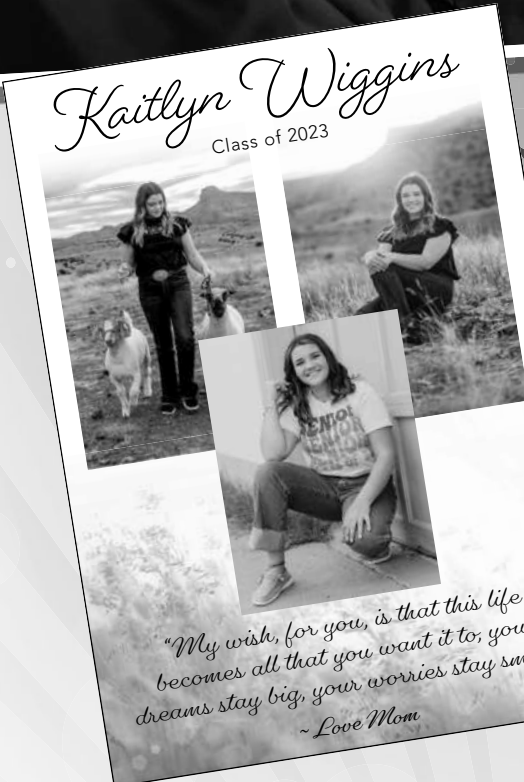
The Avalanche has been recognizing area Graduates!

On May 16<sup>th</sup>, Your Hometown Newspaper will publish the Annual Salute to Area Graduates.

Our staff will help you design a creative salute to your special graduate that you will cherish for years to come!

We are standing by with samples of award-winning layouts, ready to assist you!

Deadline: May 10<sup>th</sup>



CITY • FROM 1

already installed in protected lands in Arizona and New Mexico including sites set aside for wildlife conservation and public enjoyment. These places include Cabeza Prieta National Wildlife Refuge, Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument, San Pedro Riparian National Conservation Area, San Bernardino Valley, and San Bernardino National Wildlife Refuge.

According to the CBP, they sought input on potential impacts on the environment, culture, quality of life, and commerce, including potential socioeconomic impacts. They will be conducting environmental site surveys and assessments and are also gathering data and input from state and local government agencies, federal agencies, Native American tribes, and landowners who may be affected by, or otherwise have an interest in, the proposed action. CBP also reports that it will prepare an EA to evaluate potential environmental impacts and make that document available to the public.

The “bend” of Big

Bend is the border between Mexico and Texas, which runs through the International Dark Skies Reserve, the Big Bend region is currently the largest reserve in the world. Approximately two-thirds of the reserve lies in the Lone Star State and the rest is protected beyond the Rio Grande.

The reserve is also one of the largest motivators and inspiration for the city’s letter.

This proposed plan is for Starr and El Paso County, but in the event that it was to continue along the border, in Brewster County’s backyard, it is unknown whether a similar response period would be made available to the community. So, Alpine’s representatives made sure that its voice was put forward for this one. The CBP was commended for offering the opportunity.

“The designation granted by Dark Sky International was achieved through a partnership with other local communities and the McDonald Observatory,” the letter continued.

The maps provided by

the CBP website show lines of installed non-operational lighting and planned lighting in both counties. The lines run near Socorro, Fabens, and Tornillo in El Paso County.

The letter highlighted the “utmost importance to protect our dark skies.”

The proposed project is considering LED 4,000k Correlated Color Temperature. The city recommended the compromise of using a 2,700k color temperature. It also requested the light to be shielded to comply with the Dark Skies regulations to avoid unnecessary light pollution.

According to CBP other elements of the proposed project could include access roads, lay-down yards, light poles, lighting controls, shielding, an underground conduit, and water for construction and dust suppression purposes.

“The city appreciates your consideration and attention to this matter, the impacts of which may be extremely detrimental to many governments in our region,” the letter concluded.

# Legion donates to AFR



The American Legion Big Bend Post #79 recently donated a trailer and off-road tires to the Alpine Fire Rescue, part of the Alpine Volunteer Fire Department. The trailer will be used to transport the AFR’s Kubota that is outfitted with a water tank and pump that will allow it to reach places that the larger trucks are not able to get to.

Courtesy photo

CELEBRATION • FROM 1

cion de Terlingua Folklorico dancers at 1:30 p.m. At 2:30 p.m. there will be a Tejano talent show followed by the Marfa ISD Ballet Folklorico at 3 p.m. The music entertainment kicks off at 3:30 p.m. with vocalist Roxy Cabello, followed by Mariachi Santa Cruz at 4:30 p.m.

At 5:30 p.m. there will be awards presented and sponsor recognition followed by the musical stylings of Grupo Sauna de Presidio at 6 p.m. and then the Puro

Party Allstarz will take the stage from 8 p.m. until 9 p.m. when a candlelight ceremony honoring Magoo will commence.

The evening will conclude with more music from the Puro Party Allstarz at 9:30 and they will close out the night with the street dance.

The Gran Mercado

will feature vendors of all kinds, including food, and game booths, and there will even be a bouncy house for the kids. Everyone is encouraged to attend and bring their lawn chairs for the day’s activities. This event is BYOB and is free. For more information contact Mary Ann Lujan at 432-294-2370.

AVFD • FROM 1

Next on the agenda were reports from board members. Rodriguez spoke about fundraiser protocols for non-profits and a discussion ensued with Chief Pierce telling the board that he had been in discussions with Chairman Loeffler and the Brewster County Judge about a possible slush fund that the AVFD would have direct access to for things such as uniforms that may need to be purchased. Rodriguez said, “It is fine to have one (slush fund), but non-profits are specific on where the money comes from, and all money would need to go to the AESB treasurer and the main account and then could be distributed elsewhere. It just keeps everything straight for her and everyone accountable and transparent.”

Rodriguez also discussed the flatbed trailer that AVFD had that was to be used to haul the Kubota and a water tank for areas where vehicles were not able to access during brush fires. He mentioned to Pierce that the weight limit on the trailer may not be sufficient for the Kubota and that if needed, they could add another spring to the trailer for safety reasons when hauling it. Pierce said, “I am meeting with the Chairman in a few days and we are going to weigh each of them separately to make sure that everything is good. It is not currently in service, and it may be that when we add water to the tank it is too heavy for the trailer. If that is the case, we can always haul it to the site empty and fill the tank

there.”

Chief Pierce also gave his report, noting there were 16 calls in total for the month of March, one notable call being of a child stuck in an elevator at Graves Pierce on the Sul Ross campus. The child was rescued safely with no injuries using hand tools to open the doors of the elevator.

Recently there have also been suspicious brush fires occurring in the county and Pierce told the board that the Texas Forest Service was investigating and that they were working closely with the Brewster County Sheriff’s Office since they were serving as evidence custodians.

The AVFD had the opportunity to train on their “Mayday” procedures on March 21. This allowed the members to learn how to protect themselves, report their locations, work on the rescue of individuals needing to utilize the mayday, and allowed members to gain more practice with dispatch. Pierce next told the board that they had been working with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department with a mapping application for their phones that would allow them to see where all of the fire hydrants were located in town, whether or not they were functional, and also the water storage tank locations south of town. “This is not something that is GPS driven where you punch in coordinates and it takes you somewhere, but it is just a handy tool for us to have so we know if we’re called out to a fire in a specific location, we’re

not surprised by not having a working fire hydrant,” Pierce said.

Next on the agenda was a brief overview of the training schedule and calendar. Captain Davis told the board they were concentrating on water shuttles, and pre-planning for wildfire season and that in June they will be working on vehicle extrication and other things relevant for brush fires.

Next, Pierce gave the board the completed ICS training paperwork for all AVFD personnel that was to be completed no later than April 1 per Brewster County Judge Henington’s request.

It was also discussed that the hoses and hose washer along with the first aid kits and flashlights purchased with the FRS Grant should all be in within the week, and that they are still awaiting repairs to the pump on Brush 3 and on the broken tank on Engine 2. Pierce asked the board, that once Engine 2 was scheduled and sent for repairs the batteries be replaced as well since they have been having trouble starting the engine.

Finally, Pierce said that there were advancements in how the department was responding to calls. He said that more responsibility was being put onto the officers when a call came in. “When a call comes in, I respond directly to the scene while the officers, such as Assistant Chief Worden and Captain Davis help direct the experienced members to the correct vehicles and then less experienced members accordingly all while being in contact

with me directly. We will be getting updated radios in our vehicles as well as other handhelds soon, and this will help with non-essential vehicles and members responding to calls that don’t require the entire department,” Pierce said.

There were two training instances mentioned by Rusty Moore via Chairman Loeffler, one in Terlingua and one in Ozona for officers, and these were already on Pierce’s radar.

Finally, as there was no need for an executive session, the next meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, May 28 at 5:30 p.m. and the meeting was adjourned.

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NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN BY THE CITY OF ALPINE THAT CITY COUNCIL PUBLIC HEARINGS WILL BE HELD AT 5:30 P.M. ON TUESDAY, MAY 7, 2024 REGARDING THE FOLLOWING CAPTIONED ORDINANCES:

**ORDINANCE 2024-04-03:** AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 23 – CITY COUNCIL TO THE ALPINE CODE OF ORDINANCES; AMENDING ARTICLE I – IN GENERAL; AMENDING ARTICLE II – RULES OF PROCEDURE; AMENDING ARTICLE III – RULES OF DECORUM; ESTABLISHING ARTICLE IV – ETHICS; AMENDING RULES, REGULATIONS, AND GUIDELINES FOR CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS AND PROCEDURES; IMPLEMENTING AN UPDATED ETHICS POLICY.

**ORDINANCE 2024-04-04:** AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE VACATION, ABANDONMENT, AND SALE OF APPROXIMATELY 0.128 ACRES OF CITY PROPERTY, BEING THE UNDEVELOPED ALLEY LYING BETWEEN LOTS 1 – 10, BLOCK 71, ORIGINAL TOWNSITE, BETWEEN SOUTH 1ST AND SOUTH 2ND STREETS IN THE CITY OF ALPINE, BREWSTER COUNTY, TEXAS; AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO EXECUTE A DEED WITHOUT WARRANTY; DIRECTING THAT FUNDS FROM THE SALE OF THE CITY’S INTEREST BE DEPOSITED IN THE GENERAL FUND FOR THE PURPOSE OF STREET IMPROVEMENTS; PROVIDING FOR TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF SUCH THEREOF.

THE PUBLIC HEARINGS WILL BE HELD ON TUESDAY, MAY 7, 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 ORDINANCES 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. QUESTIONS MAY BE DIRECTED TO THE OFFICE OF THE CITY SECRETARY AT (432) 837-3301, OPTION 1.

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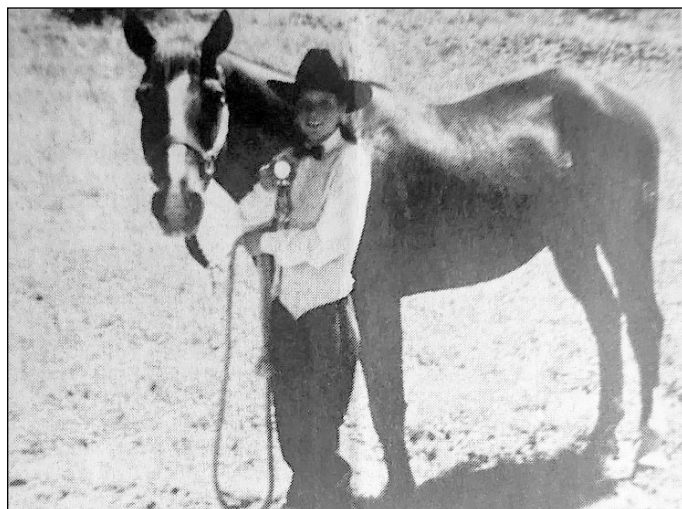
★ EST 1891

# LOOKING BACK

Alpine Avalanche

SERVING THE BIG BEND AND DAVIS MOUNTAINS COUNTRY

**May 2, 1991**  
Shannon Oitker, Carol Ballew, and Carry Yadon were chosen to represent First Baptist Church of Alpine in the all-state Baptist band and choir.



**May 2, 1991**  
At Culpepper's arena, Krystal McCobb was named High Point Rosette Winner at the April 20 playday of the Cross-Country Striders Youth and Adult Horse Club.

**May 2, 1991**  
Members of Mrs. Reba Cross's third-grade class welcomed Desert Storm veteran Rick Garcia home. Here the class, Cross, and Garcia can be seen under one of the school's trees that were decked out with yellow ribbons all winter.



**May 2, 1991**  
The Chihuahuan Desert Research Institute had its annual desert plant sale last Saturday. Plant buyers from all over select native plants that are suited to the area's climate.

## St. Augustine more dominant than bermuda if chinch bugs are kept at bay

**Dear Neil: This weed/vine/grass is overtaking the bare spots in my St. Augustine lawn where chinch bugs killed the St. Augustine last summer. Glyphosate works well where it has taken over fully, but I'm hesitant to spray that around my St. Augustine because I obviously don't want to kill it. What might work?**

Well, maybe I'm missing something, but your photo certainly appears to be very healthy plain old bermudagrass. It looks like it might have been pulled up a few minutes in the heat before the photo was taken since the leaf blades are rolled. Are you sure you want to kill it? If you let it do the filling in, and assuming your goal is to get turf in the bare areas as quickly as possible, it would accomplish that task within a month or two. Then, the next phase would be to let St. Augustine repopulate the space. It is the more

**GARDENER'S MAILBAG**  
by neil sperry



dominant of the two grasses. It will crowd out the bermuda if you will protect it from the chinch bugs in the summers.

**Dear Neil: What care does this plant require? I bought it some time ago at a local grocery. They don't know what it is, nor do I, so I can't look it up.**

I'd say you have been doing quite well with it owing to its size and great color. This is *Dracaena Janet Craig* compacta. Both the Missouri Botanical Gardens and North Carolina State University's fine

botanical website show it as a cultivar of *Dracaena fragrans*. I've long listed regular Janet Craig as one of my favorite houseplants. It's easily grown in interior conditions of modest light and "people" temperatures and humidities. This one is no different. I've just found it to be a little awkward to use because of its dramatically upright habit and tightly compact foliage. However, your plant looks great.

All I could offer would be that you pot it into a handsome terracotta container with a matching saucer. Use loose, highly organic potting soil and place it where you've had it since it seems to be really happy with that location. I might

be tempted to get two more of varying heights to grow alongside it for interest. It would also help to wash the leaves with two very soft sponges, Have a bucket of warm, lightly soapy water. Wring them almost dry, then put one sponge in one hand, the other in the other, and pull them simultaneously down each leaf. Repeat with fresh water to eliminate any soap residue.

**Dear Neil: I saved seeds from my leatherleaf mahonias and have planted them into 1-gallon nursery pots. Is that the way they are started? Do they come true from seeds?**

That's the way nurseries start their plants, so you will soon have nice seed-

lings. Yes, they will come true and give you the very same genetics as the mother plant. That's assuming you're talking about the regular species *Mahonia bealei*. You'll recognize them the moment they start growing. They'll look like miniature versions of the mother plant. Be patient – they'll come along slowly compared to many other plants you grow from seed. They prefer morning sun

and afternoon shade. Keep them moist, and fertilize them every few weeks with a diluted, water-soluble, high-nitrogen plant food. You'll have plants large enough to set out into your gardens by the end of the next growing season.

*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.*

- ACROSS**
- on highway 199, NW of Fort Worth
  - Texas \_\_\_\_ has a star of five points
  - "French Legation State Historic \_\_\_\_"
  - "Lake \_\_\_\_ Pines"
  - billiards stick
  - regulator of DFW Airport (abbr.)
  - TXism: "plain \_\_\_\_ nose on your face"
  - Texas has made \_\_\_\_ into controlling litter
  - TXism: "don't change horses in the middle of the \_\_\_\_"
  - meeting items lists
  - TX Ginger's "Heart-beat" with Jean-\_\_\_\_ Aumont
  - Gov. Greg \_\_\_\_
  - TXism: "he has short arms and \_\_\_\_ pockets" (frugal)
  - most Texas soldiers in the Civil War
  - tackle, Mark, who helped Cowboys win 3 Super Bowls
  - win 3 Super Bowls
  - 1999 film: "\_\_\_\_ Hill"
  - defamed someone's character
  - "W" of Texas crime "DWI"

- TXism: "that's \_\_\_\_ different color"
- one under par in golf
- this program brought women into the USAF from 1948 to 1976
- speech sound uttered with breath, not voice
- golf gadget (2 wds.)
- Green County
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- \_\_\_\_ hart, Texas
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- TXism: "\_\_\_\_ up" (mad)
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P-1687

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# Sports

## Lady Bucks conquer as Bi-District champs

BY JOH COVINGTON  
Staff Writer

Last weekend the Lady Bucks and the Brownfield Cubs met on neutral ground in Wink for this season's bi-district championship. Earlier in the week the Lady Bucks had been awarded the district championship with their great success against the Kermit Yellow Jackets 14-4.

"It was great to see the joy and excitement from the girls as they celebrated after the win. To watch the fans and family that came to watch them celebrate with excitement," said head softball coach Christopher Virdell.

On Friday, the Lady Bucks played their first game against the Cubs, and despite several impressive plays lost by two points 7-9.

This loss seemed to inspire the Alpine team the following day. This was their next opportunity to show the softball skills that they have been developing all season.

"The girls were ready and anxious to play. I think Friday we just didn't settle in and allowed the mo-



The Lady Bucks won the bi-district challenge against the Brownfield Cubs on Saturday. The Alpine team won both games in the Saturday doubleheader which followed and rebounded from Friday's loss.

Courtesy photo

ment to get us off track. We had some uncharacteristic errors, and we were not swinging the bat well. Even with all that we were leading in the late innings," Virdell said.

In the first game on Saturday, the Cubs opened the game, but the Lady Bucks put the first points on the scoreboard in the bottom of the first.

Taryn Hardin hit a home run on a line drive to left field, scoring two runs.

Neither team scored again until the Cubs singled on a line drive to Hannah Juett in left field.

In the bottom of the fourth, the Lady Bucks scored five runs on zero hits. Hardin was struck by a pitch, driving in a run, and an error scored three runs. Then, Sierra Ruckman grounded out, scoring a run.

The Lady Bucks collected 10 hits during this game. Player Emily Sweat

led with four runs batted in and the infielder went three-for-three on the day. In two bats, Hardin collected two hits and Kody Hawkins paced her team with two walks. The Lady Bucks showed their typical patience at the plate, gaining six walks in the game.

Ultimately, the Lady Bucks came out on top with a final score of 17-5.

"I felt a completely different focus and energy level from the team. The

girls came to fight and believed we were the better team," Virdell said.

With the loss on Friday and the win on Saturday, the two teams were pushed into a doubleheader. Alpine earned the first points on the board when Hardin singled, scoring a run in the top of the first inning. The Cubs met them with a point from a single in the bottom of the first.

Next, Sierra Ruckman scored when Galvan deliv-

### Sports Schedule

**FIGHTIN' BUCK BASEBALL**  
May 3-4 Denver City vs Alpine-Bi-District. @Andrews Friday 6 p.m. @Andrews Saturday noon

**LADY BUCK SOFTBALL**  
May 3-4 Amarillo River Road vs Alpine-Area-Round 2 @ Big Spring Friday 6 p.m. @ Big Spring Saturday noon  
\*If needed, and third game will follow for both teams 30 minutes after the Saturday games.  
\*\*All passes accepted in Big Spring, tickets \$5 adults/\$3 students.

ered a sacrifice fly, pushing Alyna Gutierrez to third and Jaycee Portillo to second.

The next points made by the Lady Bucks are owed to a walk from Hardin and a score from Gutierrez, a double from Hernandez driving Hardin, Portillo, and Hawkins to score, and a pop out from Emily Sweat with a score from Hernandez. Before the Cubs stepped up to the plate for the bottom of the second the score was in the Lady Buck's favor 7-3.

The Cubs tried to catch up with a single and a

See CHAMPS • 9

## AMS baseball teams win on the road

BY KARA GERBERT  
Managing Editor

The Alpine Middle School baseball teams hit the road last week to Presidio, with the seventh graders taking on Fort Davis and the eighth graders taking on Presidio.

Both teams were able to bring home the win.

The seventh-grade Bucks beat the Indians 6-1, with Colt Billings, Matthias Prieto, and Luis Lujan all on the mound.

The eighth-grade Bucks toppled the Blue Devils 7-2, thanks to the efforts of Ryli Vasquez and Graham Dubois.

On Saturday, both teams traveled to Van Horn for their end-of-the-season tournament. Only Alpine, Van Horn, and Presidio participated, with each team playing

one another in a single game.

The eighth graders would get things started in a game against the Blue Devils once again. This time, the game ended in a tie, with no runs on the board. "Defensively, both teams had great pitching, unfortunately, our guys were unable to score in this game," said Coach Marco Gomez. Ezra Lujan and Alex Uranga were on the mound against Presidio.

In the second game for the day, the seventh-grade Bucks were up against the Eagles of Van Horn. Matthias Prieto was on the mound for the entire game, and the seventh graders would take the win, 10-2. They had back-to-back games, taking on Presidio next. Unfortunately, they



AMS eighth-grade baseball team.

Courtesy photo

would fall short in this game 5-11. Luis Lujan and Colt Billings were on the mound against the Blue Devils. The day's final game for the Bucks saw the eighth graders up against Van Horn. The Bucks would overwhelm

the Eagles, facing four of the Bucks pitchers. Ryli Vasquez, Thaddeus Prieto, Jeremy Hinojos, and Alex Adams pitched an inning each in this game, toppling Van Horn 14-3.

"Overall, our Middle School Bucks had a

great season. Our seventh graders came home with a 2-2 record for the season. These boys have a lot of fight in them, with some of them having older siblings in the eighth-grade team. This makes them play at the

next level. The eighth graders finished the season 3-1-1 and the high school coaches are excited to see these kids next year. These boys are disciplined, play hard, and just love the game," remarked Coach Gomez.

## Bucks head to Andrews for Bi-District

BY KARA GERBERT  
Managing Editor

After a challenging season, the Alpine Bucks are headed to Andrews this weekend to take on the Denver City Mustangs. The Bucks will play their first game on Friday and their second on Saturday, with a third game scheduled a half hour after their second game on Saturday if needed.

The Bucks ended their regular season play on April 23, defeating the Presidio Blue Devils in a shut-out game, 4-0, with Alec Ramos taking the win.

Alpine ended their district play with a 4-6 record and will face the Mustangs on Friday



Jace Canaba slides into base during the Alpine Bucks game against the Presidio Blue Devils.

Photo by Annika Canaba-AMC Photography

night, May 3 at 6 p.m. with a 13-6 overall record. The Bucks fell to the Mustangs earlier in the season 2-11 and are

looking forward to some redemption.

This bi-district championship will be the best of two, with a third

game scheduled half an hour after the second one if needed. The second game will begin on Saturday, May 4 at noon.

### ATHLETE OF THE WEEK

**ESTHER LOTTI**

Esther advances to the Regional Tournament!  
Esther placed 2nd in Singles at the District Tournament in Fort Stockton over the weekend.

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# Buck singles player qualifies for regionals



The Fightin' Buck varsity tennis team represented Alpine at the district meet last week. L to R Back: Adayna Garcia, Solanus Prieto, Zane Wash, Esther Iotti, Aaliyah Villanueva, Megan Struthers, Shanna Tamale. L to R Front: Diego Hidalgo Miranda, Jaylynn Celaya, Vianney Santos

BY JOH COVINGTON

Staff Writer

The Alpine Bucks tennis players pulled out all the stops for the district challenge last weekend and one player is headed to regionals.

On April 22 in Fort Stockton, player Esther Lotti placed second in the district for varsity girls' singles and is set to advance to regionals on May 8-9.

This success for Lotti before the final challenge of the season is a happy moment that exemplifies the year.

This year was also head tennis coach Lauren Martinez's first as coach.

"This team has grown so much throughout the season and will have a lasting impact on my approach to coaching this sport," said Martinez.

Regarding the district meet, the coach shared that Lotti received the number two district seed and a first-round bye.

"Esther defeated the

number 10 seeded, Gutierrez from Crane 6-0, 6-1 before advancing to the third round to take on the number three seeded, Hammond from Odessa Compass 6-3, 6-2. In the Championship match, she fell to the number one seeded, Lewis from Crane 3-6, 6-2, 4-6," Martinez said.

The other Bucks stepped up to the challenge, winning some and losing some.

Vianney Santos received the number nine district seed and was eliminated in the first round by the number eight seeded, Boner from Odessa Compass 4-6, 4-6.

Adayna Garcia and Megan Struthers received the girl's doubles district number three seed and after a first-round bye, were eliminated after falling to the number six seeded pair, Harvel and Farmer from Odessa Compass 4-6, 2-6.

The Buck's other doubles duo, Solanus Prieto

and Zane Wash were the boy's doubles number seven seed in the district and were eliminated in the first round after falling to the number 10 seeded pair, Almanza, and Ocampo from Kermit 3-6, 6-3, 1-6.

Meanwhile, Diego Hidalgo Miranda and Shanna Tamale placed third in the district for Varsity Mixed Doubles. They received the number four district seed and a first-round bye. They defeated the number five seeded Kermit players Hernandez and Garcia 6-2, 6-4.

Tamale and Miranda then fell to the number one seeded, mixed doubles Chance and Ulate from Odessa Compass. 0-6, 0-6.

After defeating the number six seeded, Tornillo players Molinar and Pavia, remained in third place after they challenged Odessa Compass. Compass' Wilson and Wilson were in the second-place spot and number seven seeded,

Tornillo fell 2-6, 4-6 and Compass maintained their second-place spot.

The junior varsity girl's doubles swept up second and third place during the meet. Doubles players Maria Palazuelos/Elizabeth Marta placed second and Gabriela Dominguez and Emory Mercado placed third.

"My first year coaching tennis has been so fulfilling. I've played tennis since I was in middle school and throughout college at Sul Ross, so it has been a long-time goal of mine to become a tennis coach," said Martinez.

According to the coach, the tennis community has been so supportive in guiding her through all of her "firsts" of coaching tennis this season.

"I'm so thankful for that. I hope that we can keep growing our tennis program and become a force to be reckoned with!"

Courtesy photo

## Seventh-graders looking forward to next year



The Alpine Middle School seventh-grade baseball team had a season record of 2-2 and is looking towards improving on that next year.

Courtesy photo

### CHAMPS • FROM 8

double, but the Alpine team maintained the distance with a double from Galvan.

In the top of the fourth inning, Sweat hit a home run and Galvan hit a line drive and reached on an error by the right fielder, pushing Gutierrez, Portillo, and Ruckman to score. These points were followed by another home run from Ruckman in the fifth.

The Lady Bucks scored their final point in the seventh inning, with Hernandez hitting a ground out to the shortstop and Hardin scoring bumping them up to 14 points.

With two singles, the Cubs were only able to gain two more points in the final inning, ending the game 14-6.

"It is very tough to come back and win two games back-to-back in the playoffs after losing the first game. That showed the type of character, heart, fight, and team chemistry these

girls have. They want to win and want to play as long as possible," Virdell added.

With that win, the Lady Bucks became the bi-district champions and will soon move on to the area challenge.

The first area playoff game is scheduled for May 3, where the Lady Bucks will go up against the River Road Wildcats from Amarillo. Game two will be the next day, followed by game three if necessary.

Whichever team wins this playoff will continue to the regional qualifiers that will be held on May 11.

"They are working hard on cleaning up some little things that affected us against Brownfield and the atmosphere has been determined but relaxed. We are ready for this week of practice and looking forward to battling it out with River Road this weekend," Virdell said.

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# Multi-sport Alpine athlete signs with Lobos



On April 24, friends, family, and fellow Alpine High School students gathered in the gym to help Novah Carrasco celebrate her signing day. Carrasco has been a multi-sport athlete throughout her high school career and will be joining the Sul Ross Lobos volleyball team.

Photo by Joh Covington.

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§

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§ **OF**

**BILLY CHARLES THOMSON,** § **Deceased**

§ **BREWSTER COUNTY,**

§ **TEXAS**

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C/O Robert E. Steele  
P.O. Box 1765  
Alpine, TX 79831

All persons having claims against this estate which is currently being administered are required to present them within the time and in the manner prescribed by law. All persons having claims should address them in care of the representative at the address stated above.

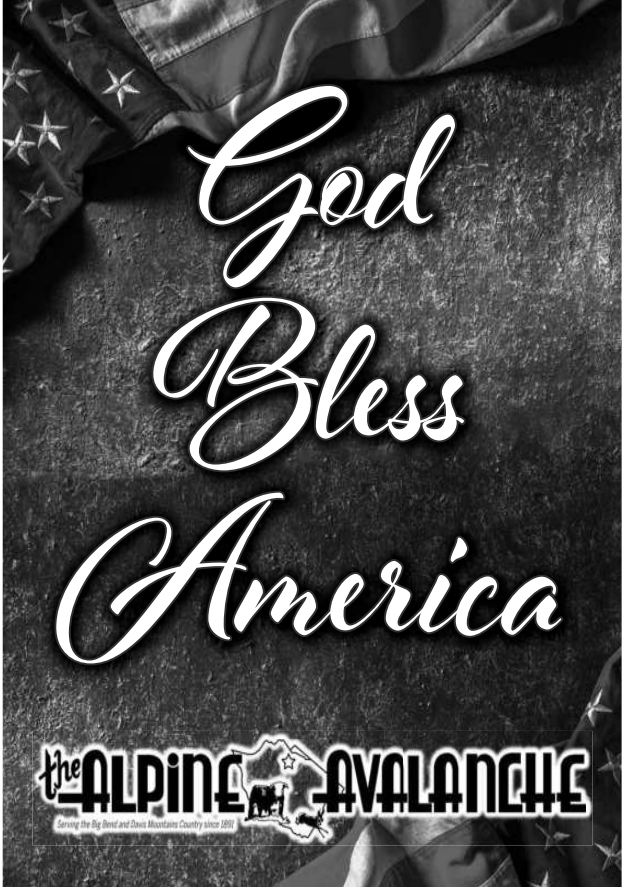
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# Sidewalk expressions



Alpine Elementary students took to the sidewalks at AES last week to express their artistic sides using chalk.

Courtesy photo

# Let er rip



Peyton Tays takes a swing at a ball during Alpine's last regular season game against Presidio.

Photo courtesy of Annika Canaba-AMC Photography

## SENIOR Spotlight



### JOBRE EVANS

**In what activities did you participate in high school?**  
I participated in Band, History Fair, One Act Play, Student Council, Academic UIL, and National Honors Society.

**Who was your favorite teacher/coach, and why?**  
My favorite teacher was my kindergarten teacher, Mrs. Fuentez. When I think about what a great teacher is she is the first person to pop into my head. The vivid memory of cutting and pasting paper shapes to create animals that helped us learn the alphabet while we all had bright smiles on our adolescent faces brings joy to my heart to this day. I will hold those positive memories with me forever.

**What was your favorite moment in the last four years?**  
My favorite time period in high school was Junior year. A moment in time that I loved almost every second of. I went to state for the History Fair with my best friend, Brodie Hale. I received an All-Star Cast award for my performance in our One Act Play, 'Tracks.' I helped plan and decorate prom with my class. I took my first-ever dual enrollment class at Sul Ross. I attended Texas Boys State and made unforgettable memories in Austin, TX. I also enjoyed every game and event I attended with my friends whom I adore. It was fantastic.

**What are your plans after high school?**  
I will be attending either Louisiana State University or the University of Arkansas this fall! I have yet to make a final decision, but I am sure I will do phenomenal things wherever I go and on. Go Bucks!

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## Devotional Page

# He loved us first

BY PHILIP FRANK

Redeemer Lutheran Church  
www.redeemerlutheran.net

Have you ever held a grudge against someone else? Have you ever said something mean to someone else in anger? Have you ever had those things done to you by someone else?

I think it's safe to say that we can all answer "yes" to one or more of those questions. And if you think you have never done or experienced that, you might be lying to yourself. Similarly, if you've only thought those things, then it's the same as doing it according to God's Law.

Sin is sin. All sin separates us from God. He knows that none of us can save ourselves from the eternal punishment for them.

So, God – out of the abundance of His everlasting love for us all – sent His only Son, Jesus Christ to step down from His throne in heaven and become one of us. And Jesus – out of His abundant and everlasting love for us all – took all of our sins onto Himself, and died on the cross for them, in our place.

His death on the cross destroyed the chains of sin that bound us, once and for all. Then Jesus – out of His abundant and everlasting love for us all – rose victorious from the dead, defeating death once and for all. Then Jesus – out of His abundant and everlasting love for us all

– ascended back to heaven to prepare a place for all who believe in Him.

But why would our Almighty God sacrifice a portion of Himself for us sinners?

LOVE: because God loves us more than He loves Himself.

So, what are we supposed to do with this knowledge of God's love for us as we wait for Jesus to return?

LOVE: love God and love our neighbors, with God's help.

Jesus told His disciples – and us – to go tell everyone about the great Gospel message of salvation and forgiveness of sins that He freely gives to anyone and everyone who believes His Words. He instructed them – and us – to baptize all people of all nations in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit and to teach them all that He has taught us.

The greatest way that we could ever show Christ's love to our neighbors would be to share this great news and God's love with everyone who will hear it.

"We love because He first loved us. If anyone says, 'I love God,' and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen." (1 John 4:19-20 ESV).

Soli Deo Gloria!

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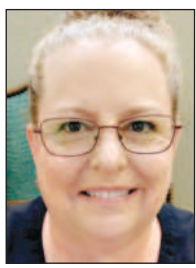
## Conquer your brunch with blueberries

It is the season to brunch. The weather is warming up, but the temperatures are still mild, so this is the best time to gather for brunch with your crew.

The best part about a brunch menu is that it can go either savory, sweet or a combination of the two. The latter is always my favorite, and one of the best things to add to your brunch menu is berries—preferably blueberries.

There are numerous ways you can add blueberries to your brunch menu, and you can utilize them not just in the sweet stuff they're usually seen in. If you're looking towards the savory side, prepare a blueberry port sauce to drizzle over roasted pork or pork chops, or add them to flatbread with cheese and perhaps arugula. On the sweet side, the sky is the limit.

You can have blueberry



### HEAD OVER MEALS

by kara gerbert



**Blueberry Mascarpone-Stuffed French Bread Casserole**

*Courtesy photo*

almost nutty-flavored Italian cheese, similar to cream cheese but not as tangy. Cream cheese could easily work instead, but your flavor profile would be a bit different.

And the great thing about this particular dish is that instead of indi-

vidual slices of bread, it uses loaves of French baguettes.

Therefore, if you're looking to add something simple and delicious to your menu, this blueberry mascarpone-stuffed French toast casserole might do the trick.

## Blueberry Mascarpone-Stuffed French Bread Casserole

**Ingredients**  
3 8-ounce French baguettes  
8-ounce mascarpone or cream cheese at room temperature  
2 teaspoons of vanilla  
2 cups powdered sugar  
2 cups fresh blueberries  
6 eggs  
2 cups milk  
¼ cup granulated sugar  
1 ½ teaspoon ground cinnamon

**Directions**  
Grease a 3-quart baking dish.  
Cut each baguette into 1-inch slices, cutting to but not through the bottom of the loaf.  
In a medium bowl beat mascarpone and one teaspoon of vanilla until smooth.  
Beat in powdered sugar until combined, then fold in blueberries.  
Spoon filling baguette slices; arrange baguettes side by side in the prepared dish.  
In a large bowl, whisk together eggs, milk, ½ cup granulated sugar, remaining vanilla, and ½

teaspoon of cinnamon.  
Pour over bread, cover, and chill overnight.  
Preheat oven to 350.  
Uncover dish. In a small bowl stir together the remaining ¼ cup granulated sugar and 1 teaspoon of cinnamon. Sprinkle over bread.  
Bake, uncovered, 40-45 minutes or until egg mixture is set, covering with foil the last 15 minutes if necessary to prevent overbrowning.  
Remove; let cool slightly, and serve with your favorite syrup.

## Brush fire breaks out West of Alpine



The Alpine Volunteer Fire Department responded to a brush fire on Saturday afternoon located on the westbound side of West US Hwy 90 near the roadside park. According to the AVFD, the blaze was large enough to enlist the aid of the Marathon Volunteer Fire Department and the Texas Forest Service. The fire was stopped quickly and had burned approximately 33 acres.

*Courtesy photo*



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