

TFEMS
kicks off first annual fire academy

BY KARA GERBERT
 Managing Editor

The Big Bend Regional Fire Academy hosted by Terlingua Fire and EMS (TFEMS) held its first skills weekend this past Saturday and Sunday as part of a six-month academy. Seventeen fire cadets from across the region received instruction and hands-on experience on several skills pertinent to their training.

Cadets were instructed on the proper inspection and cleaning of personal protective equipment, including SCBAs (self-contained breathing apparatus), the donning and doffing of PPE (personal protection equipment) and SCBAs, the proper use of SCBAs, emergency communications via radio and phone, and fire extinguisher training with two types of fires, dry chemical extinguishers, and water extinguishers.

During the six-month course, cadets will engage

See ACADEMY • 6A

INSIDE



FEATURED

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Rainfall totals at Alpine-Casparis Airport

2024.2.06"
 May0.01"



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.



AISD presents scholarship, administers oaths of office, approves Montessori partnership

BY KARA GERBERT
 Managing Editor

The Alpine ISD Board of Trustees held their regularly scheduled meeting last Wednesday, May 15 at the AISD Administration Building. A lengthy agenda was discussed, and action items were implemented.

First on the agenda was the Alpine ISD Board of Trustees Scholarship presentation, which was presented to Jake Esparza by his principal Mr. Jarrett Vickers. Following this was administering the oaths of office to

the newly elected board members of Single Member Districts #1, #3, and #4 which was immediately followed by the consideration of reorganizing the board and its officers. The board determined that everything should stay as is and all board members approved it.

The next item on the agenda was the campus principal's reports. Mr. Curtis Wubbena, principal at Alpine Elementary brought green star lettuce and basil that the fourth-grade class had grown in their FlexFarm hydropon-

ics growing system and gave it to all the board members. Wubbena also told the board about how the fourth graders were helping prepare the third graders to lead in their absence when they move on to Alpine Middle School next year and how well the entire school is doing thanks to the implementation of a standardized curriculum for reading, language arts, and math.

Alpine Middle School principal Mrs. Judith Pardo-Alferez also spoke

See AISD • 6A



Jake Esparza is pictured here with the Alpine ISD School Board after he was awarded the AISD Board Scholarship. From left are board members Haley Babb, Mary McCallister, Niki Ahrens, and Eddie Natera, Esparza, and board members Joe Portillo, Dr. Adrian Billings, and Jimmy Morris.

Photo by Kara Gerbert

Keeping it cool at AES



The Fightin' Bucks came out to play on Tuesday for the Alpine Elementary's Field Day. The helpful high school students guided the students in games and summer fun.

Photo by Joh Covington

Smoke is on the horizon

BY KARA GERBERT
 Managing Editor

The Smoke in the Mountains BBQ & Rib-eye Shootout is less than a month away, and the board of the organization has been busy making plans since last year. The 2023 event was very successful, raising \$50,000 for local fire departments. This event is held in loving memory of Sara Adams and Robert Rubio.

"I knew Smoke in the Mountains 2023 was a

total success when my phone was ringing non-stop, and texts were rolling in from all around. They were full of compliments above "their" fun-filled weekend with family, entertainment, and great BBQ. Then, being able to donate \$50,000... wow, just wow! We couldn't do it without the amazing support of our community, the surrounding area, and beyond," said Jennifer Webster.

"I'm amazed at what the board of this organization has been able to

accomplish. Being able to donate that amount of money to our local first responders in year one of this event is impressive. We've had so many people from this community step up and show their support in many different ways. This year will be even better and we're going to have a blast," remarked Brenda Sanchez Vargas.

When the registration opened earlier this

See BBQ • 6A



Pictured from left to right are Board Members: Sandra Chambers, Brenda Vargas, Stephanie Rubio, Janna Stubbs, Jennifer Webster, Jeremiah Rubio, Janet Adams, Trae Dutchover, Audrey Hurley, Maralea Miller, and Lynne Baldwin.

Courtesy photo

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OBITUARIES

James Dickie Vaughn

James Dickie Vaughn passed on into eternal life on May 8 and is now in the arms of Jesus. He was born to Katherine Valentine and James Raymond Vaughn on September 24, 1935, in Henry County, Tennessee. He grew up in Paris, Tennessee, and graduated from E W Grove High School in 1953. He was drafted into the Army and served from 1953 to 1956. After the service, he attended Memphis State University. He managed several tire dealership stores until starting D&D Tire in Alpine, in 1974. In his heyday, he was an avid golfer and pilot. In April 1983, he accepted Jesus Christ as his savior after crashing his plane into the side of a mountain and has walked with Him ever since.

He was preceded in death by his parents



and his sister, Bobbie Vaughn (Goggin) Fulcher.

Survivors include his wife of 32 years, Thuykhai Vaughn; children, Rick Vaughn of Kansas, Janet (Bill) Jackson of Florida, Chris Vaughn of Texas, Sherri (Don) McGinnis of Texas, Sonny (Julie Le) Nguyen of Texas, Mike (Nana) Vaughn of Maryland, and Matt Vaughn of New Jersey; 21 grandchildren; 23 great-grandchildren; brother Rex Millington Vaughn (Terry); nieces and nephews. The burial service will be at 11 a.m. on Tuesday, May 28 at DFW National Cemetery.

Linda Jean Martin (Smith)

Linda Jean Martin, 79, of Alpine went to be with our Lord on May 10. Linda was born in Houston on September 15, 1944, to James and Elene Smith. She was the oldest sister to Jimmy and Margaret.

Linda graduated from Smiley High School in 1962. She married Quincy Martin, of Ingram in 1963. The Martins moved to Alpine in 1968.

Linda was an active member of the community. She was a member of the Big Bend Memorial Hospital Women's Auxiliary and the Civil Air Patrol. She also worked at Comet Cleaners. Linda was a skilled seamstress and enjoyed crochet. She was a licensed beautician and enjoyed helping others obtain their licenses also.

Linda loved her church. She attended services at the Assembly of God regularly and lived as a witness to the Good



News of Jesus Christ.

Linda was a devoted mother to James (J.J) Martin and his wife Donnie, Robert Martin and his wife Kim, Betty Tidwell (Martin) and her husband Aaron, and David Martin and his wife Selena. She was also grandmother to thirteen grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren who adored her.


Linda was preceded in death by her husband, Quincy Harrison Martin, her father, James Smith, and her mother, Elene Smith. She is survived by her siblings, Jimmy

Smith and wife Liz, and Margaret Middleton, her children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren, who will never forget the love she brought to their lives.

A celebration of Linda's life will be held at Alpine Assembly of God on June 1, at 2 p.m. A private graveside service will be held at Nichols Cemetery in Ingram.

Proverbs 31:25-31
Strength and honor are her clothing; and she shall rejoice in time to come. She openeth her

mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness. She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness. Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her. Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all. Favor is deceitful, and beauty is vain; but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised. Give her the fruit of her hands; and let her own works praise her in the gates.



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Eaves will serve second term



Last Tuesday evening, Judge Greg Henington swore in Catherine Eaves for her second term as Alpine city mayor.

Photo by Joh Covington

Stone takes over Ward 1 seat



Reagan Stone and Judy Stokes shake hands after Stone is sworn in as Ward 1 City Council member, taking Stoke's vacated place after the recent election.

Photo by Joh Covington

Olivas replaces Rodriguez for Ward 2

The new city council member for Ward 2, Eva Olivas, was sworn in last Tuesday evening.

Photo by Joh Covington



Escovedo replaces Sandate for Ward 4

New Ward 4 council member Lucy Escovedo signs her name after she is sworn into office.

Photo by Joh Covington

ATTENTION PROPERTY OWNERS

Notices of value are in the mail to local taxpayers showing significant increases in almost all types of property. Sales continue to rise and are well above previous appraised values, so the district must raise values to comply with the state law which requires composite values to be at least 95% of selling prices.

Migration to Texas and a movement from cities to more rural areas has driven demand upward causing prices to spike. Many people coming to Brewster County are from other states where values have been much higher, and they see Texas real estate as a bargain while others are buying property here to take advantage of the beauty of the area and the recreational opportunities.

Additionally, schools in Alpine and Terlingua are facing the loss of state funding because the locally appraised values of homes and land did not reach the ratio mandated in state law. The appraisal district and local schools learned of the study results in early February. Appeals have been filed by attorneys, but the differences are so significant that the appeals are unlikely to bring the school into compliance.

Notices will include a protest form as well as instructions on how to file a protest online.

Taxpayers will have the opportunity to visit with staff and receive answers as to why the values were set on their property. If an agreement on value cannot be reached, the taxpayer may appeal their value formally to the local Appraisal Review Board, a group of local citizens appointed by the District Judge.

Record interest rates and people moving to Texas from other states have driven up the demand for all types of housing. Unfortunately, the Appraisal District must keep pace with the increases in order for local schools to receive full funding and to comply with equal and uniform taxation.

When the taxpayer looks at the value proposed by the appraisal district, they should ask themselves if their property would likely sell for that amount. If not, they should file a protest on the form that will be enclosed. The deadline for filing is 30 days from the date of the notice mailing. They will receive a call from the local appraisal district to discuss the value informally or they may be scheduled for an in-person meeting. If the taxpayer is not agreeable after the sharing of data between the appraisal district and them, then they have a right to appeal to the Appraisal Review Board (ARB), a group of local citizens who live in the appraisal district and have been appointed by the local Appraisal District Board of Directors. They will listen to the evidence provided by both parties and make a decision based on the preponderance of the evidence presented. The taxpayer may appeal the findings of the ARB to District Court or arbitration.

The issues that may be protested include:

- The appraised or market value of the property
- Unequal appraisal of the owner's property
- Inclusion of the property on the appraisal records
- Denial of a partial exemption such as a homestead exemption
- Determination that agricultural or timberland designation has been denied
- Determination that agricultural of timberland has had a change of use and is subject to a rollback tax
- Identification of the taxing unit or taxing units in which the property is located
- Determination that the taxpayer is the owner of the property

Any other action of the appraisal district office or the ARB that adversely affects the owner

The ARB schedules a hearing and sends the protesting property owner written notice of the date, time, and place of the hearing. The law contains specific timelines and procedures for both the property owner and the ARB through the appraisal protest process.

Copies are available from (your appraisal district name and address, Texas, on our website or from the Comptroller's Property Tax Assistance Division website at comptroller.texas.gov/property-tax/

Additional local information can be obtained by contacting (your appraisal district and phone number)

New changes regarding appraised values for non-homestead real properties will be capped at 20%. The bill refers to this new cap as a "Circuit Breaker" The cap will benefit a property with an appraised value of \$5,000,000 or less in 2024. The \$5-million figure will change from year to year as determined by the controller and based on changes in the consumer price index. The appraised value of a qualifying property will be limited to the preceding year's appraised value plus 20% plus the value of any new improvements. In order to benefit in a particular year, the property owner must have owned the property in January 1 of the preceding year. If a property changes hands during a year, the cap will not apply in the following year.

The law currently calls for this new cap to expire after 2026, but that is subject to change when legislation meets in 2025 and 2027.

Early voting has commenced for runoff election

BY KARA GERBERT
Managing Editor

Early voting began this past Monday for the runoff election scheduled for May 28. This runoff election is for the U.S. Representative District 23 seat currently held by Tony Gonzales.

Gonzales is facing a

runoff against challenger Brandon Herrera.

Early voting polls will be open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. through tomorrow, May 24.

Gonzales is seeking his third term in the 23rd congressional district but has been forced into a runoff against Herrera.

Gonzales received only

45% of the vote in the March 5 primary election, a substantial difference from the 78% he received in 2022, yet not the 50% of the vote needed to secure the seat. Herrera likewise only garnered 24.2% of the vote, but as one of the top two finishers in the five-candidate primary, this forced a runoff.

The winner of this runoff election will face Democratic nominee Santos Limon in the November 5 general election.

All early voting will take place in the Val Clark Beard Office Complex at 203 N. 7th Street. On election day, May 28, registered voters may cast their ballots at the follow-

ing locations.

Precinct 1 may cast their ballots at the Assembly of God Fellowship Hall across from Alpine High School at 1802 N. Hwy 118.

Precincts 2 and 8 may cast their ballots at the Val Clark Beard Office Complex.

Precinct 3 may cast their

ballots at the Marathon Community Center, 2nd and Ave E in Marathon.

Precinct 4 may cast their ballots in the Alpine City Council Chambers at 803 W. Holland, and Precincts 5, 6, and 7 may cast their ballots at the JW "Red: Pattillo Community Center located at 201 Rex Ivey Road in Terlingua.

First annual community bicycle rodeo searching for vendors

BY KARA GERBERT
Managing Editor

The Alpine Police Department in collaboration with the Texas Department of Transportation (El Paso) is seeking vendors for their first annual community bicycle rodeo.

The bicycle rodeo is set

to take place on June 15 from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. on the Sul Ross State University campus in front of the Briscoe Administration Building.

The bicycle rodeo is open to all ages and abilities and will cover the ABCs of bicycle safety, along with a vendor fair,

and is free of charge. Interested participants should bring their bicycle, a helmet, and a water bottle. There will be activities for all ages and vendors wishing to participate may contact Chief Losoya at losoya.police@cityofalpine.com or Adriana Rodriguez at txdot.gov.

Hardaway elected as Area FFA officer



Kendyl Hardaway has been elected as an Area II FFA officer for 2024-2025. Pictured here at the Area meeting are Kylie Maroney, Hardaway, Sophie Janis, and Collette Sharron.

City council meets with new members: City appoints municipal court judge

BY JOH COVINGTON
Staff Writer

The Alpine City Council held its regularly scheduled meeting on Tuesday, May 21, and seated the three newly elected members for Wards 1, 2, and 4.

Reagan Stone of Ward 1, Eva Olivas of Ward 2, and Lucy Escovedo of Ward 4 greeted the community and joined the council for their first discussion and action items.

This meeting also saw the appointment and administration of the oath of office for Elizabeth Lewis as the new municipal court judge. Lewis grew up in Marathon and currently has a private practice there. She



Pictured here is the current Alpine City Council. Shown left to right are council members Reagan Stone and Eva Olivas, Mayor Catherine Eaves, and council members Darin Nance, Lucy Escovedo, and Rick Stephens.

started out as a city prosecutor in Midland before working in its district attorney's office. Alpine is a familiar place, as she previously served as an assistant United States attorney for a year before beginning her private practice.

Ward 3 council member Darin Nance said, "I think your position will be very important, as we

hold people accountable for the ordinances that we as a legislative branch put in place."

Stone addressed Lewis and asked whether she would be open to indigent payment plans and community service as an alternative for those who are unable to pay court bills.

"I believe there are always going to be cre-

ative solutions that can be reached to further the city's goals, protect citizens, and keep things moving forward," said Lewis.

At the top of the meeting, the Alpine City Mayor, Catherine Eaves, shared the proclamation that May is Community Action Recognition

See CITY • 14A

Former Mexican police officer pleads guilty to trafficking meth

BY KARA GERBERT
Managing Editor

U.S. Attorney Jaime Esparza of the Western District of Texas and the U.S. Attorney's Office issued a statement on Tuesday about a Mexican national, formerly a Mexican police officer pleading guilty to trafficking methamphetamine into

the United States.

The Mexican national, Cesar Alonzo Lopez Ruiz, 34, of Rosales, Mexico pleaded guilty in a federal court in Alpine to possession with intent to distribute methamphetamine.

According to court documents, Lopez Ruiz attempted to enter the U.S. port of entry at Pre-

sidio from Mexico and a search revealed 50 packages of methamphetamine in the gas tank of his vehicle. The total weight was approximately 27.8 kilos.

Lopez Ruiz is scheduled to be sentenced in a federal court on August 26 and faces a penalty of 10 years to life in prison. A federal district court

judge will determine the sentence after considering the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and other statutory factors.

Homeland Security Investigations and Customs and Border Protection are investigating the case and Assistant U.S. Attorneys Scott Greenbaum and Amy Greenbaum are prosecuting the case.

Davis Mountains State Park offers weekly adventure

BY KARA GERBERT
Managing Editor

The Davis Mountains State Park located just north of Fort Davis offers weekly programs, hikes, and adventures to park visitors.

If hikes are not your thing, the park offers slide shows and presentations such as Rock Stars of the Davis Mountains State Park which was held this past Sunday. This presentation detailed how the rock formations of the park were formed and is repeated frequently.

Another informative presentation that the park repeats from time to time is a presentation on the first peoples of the Davis Mountains, detailing the various cultures that have called the area home dating back 1000s of years.

The park offers short hikes with master naturalists to learn about the local history, geology, and ecology of the area

as well as plant discovery walks, informative birding talks, and bird watching and identifying basics. They also offer informative information about all of the animals that can be seen within the park.

Each Thursday morning, the park offers a Hike with Homeless Dogs program. The local animal shelter provides the dogs for this short

walk through the park.

The park also offers a full moon hike during full moon cycles detailing information about the moon and why each full moon is called something different, such as May's "Flower Moon." They also offer Dark Sky tours, allowing visitors to appreciate some of the darkest skies in the U.S.

All hikers should wear

sturdy shoes, bring hats, water, and sunscreen, and be prepared for rocky terrain and moderate elevation change during the hikes.

For more information contact the Davis Mountains State Park at 432-426-3337 or visit their website at https://tpwd.texas.gov/state-parks/davis-mountains/park_events

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Star Party

Sunday, May 26
7:30-11:30pm

Event Schedule

Judd Foundation and the McDonald Observatory invite everyone to a star gazing party at La Mansana de Chinati/ The Block located at 400 West El Paso Street in Marfa.

Guests are encouraged to bring blankets, flash lights, picnics, and binoculars and observational equipment.

Food and drink are welcome. No pets allowed.

This event is free and open to the public.

7:30-9:30pm
Open Hours of the Block and live music by Ross Cashiola & Friends

Tacos from Antojitos El Turista will be available first come, first served

9:30-10:00pm
Dark Skies Talk with Stephen C. Hummel of the McDonald Observatory

10:00-11:30pm
Star Viewing

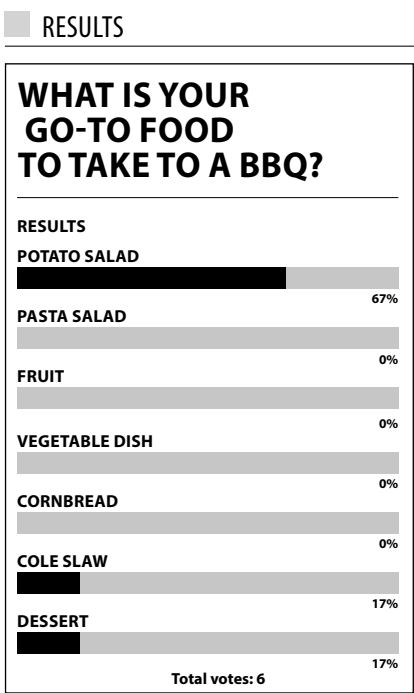
For more information please contact:
marfa@juddfoundation.org or 432 729 4406 ext. 1

This program has been made possible through the generous support of the Brown Foundation, Inc. and a grant from the Texas Commission on the Arts.

JUDD

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

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 by noon Monday for consideration.

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Why should we care about tourists

Because it all starts with a visit

First, think beyond just smiling faces downtown and look at the numbers. Tourists bring a much-needed boost to Alpine's economy. A couple checks into a cozy short-term rental, they grab breakfast at Magoo's, then hike to the desk and visit the Museum of the Big Bend. They head downtown to take the Historic Tour and see all the murals. Shopping at the art galleries and stores along the way and grabbing lunch at a food truck. They have dinner at Reata before heading over to The Ritchey to hear some music. Every step of the way, they're pumping money into Alpine's economy. That's direct travel spending to the tune of \$49.6 million in 2023.



HEATHER YADON
 Visit Alpine

This creates a ripple effect. The money tourists spend doesn't disappear; it circulates. Restaurant owners hire staff, shops restock their shelves, and artists and musicians continue earning a living. More visitors translate to busier restaurants, shops, and hotels, which means more jobs for our community members. From servers and cashiers to housekeeping staff and event organizers, tourism

creates a web of employment opportunities. In fact, 900 jobs in Alpine are directly related to the travel industry generating \$28.2 million in earnings in 2023. Local businesses thrive and the community benefits. Every dollar a tourist spends at an Alpine shop or restaurants goes straight back into our local economy. And, the sales tax they pay goes back into the local community via the City of Alpine General Fund to pay for things like road repairs and parks. In 2023 local tax collected from travel was \$2.8 million.

The money collected through Hotel Occupancy Tax (HOT) is reinvested right back into tourism initiatives designed to attract new visitors and create repeat customers. This tax is paid by the visitor spending the night in our hotels and short-term rentals. How the money can be spent is heavily regulated by the state legislature. One of the best ways locals enjoy the benefits of the HOT money right along with tourists is by attending many of the events held in Alpine each year. Of the \$739,000 in HOT collected in 2023, the

City of Alpine awarded \$420,000 of it to 18 organizations in the form of HOT grants. This money is used to help put on events like Artwalk, Alpine Cowboys Baseball, Viva Big Bend, Big Bend Bluegrass Festival, etc.

The City of Alpine is currently accepting HOT grant applications for the 2024-25 fiscal year. Applications are available online at cityofalpine.com or at City Hall.

The deadline to submit your application is Friday, June 14 at 5 p.m. Beyond the impressive economic impact of tourism, you never know where that spring break trip, honeymoon getaway, anniversary weekend, or Christmas vacation could lead. Because before anyone buys a house, invests in a revitalization project, starts a business, or relocates their family, it all begins with a visit!

My colleague Maura Gast, the CEO of Visit Irving, explained it best, "If you build a place where people want to visit, you'll build a place that people want to live."

If you build a place where people want to live, you'll build a place where people need to work.

If you build a place where people want to work, you'll build a place where business wants to be.

And, if you build a place where business is, you'll build a place where people want to visit."

Signs of our time

"Hard work spotlights the character of people: some turn up their sleeves, some turn up their noses, and some don't turn up at all."

— Sam Ewing, Former American baseball player for the Chicago White Sox and the Toronto Blue Jays.

Now Hiring. Help wanted. Positions Open.

Signs of our time. Try traveling through town, reading a newspaper, or scrolling on your smartphone without seeing a help wanted sign. America is looking for people who want to work.

If you are wondering why that is, reread that last sentence, then pause. Let it sink in.

Maybe it's just another sign, one of getting older, but today's work ethic is a mere shadow of the once-revered trait. One that prevailed when I started filling out job applications. I remember working at Buford-Redfearn Insurance and Real Estate on North Jefferson Street in Mount Pleasant. During Nixon's administration. The first one. Office hours were 8 to 5, six days a week. But we got off an hour early on Saturdays. Got to go home at four.

While that might not pass for a perk in today's culture, it was the work ethic of a nation that was strong and independent. A time when taking pride in your job meant a job well done. When the "do what you gotta do" philosophy of the American work ethic was not just a job, but a way of life.

The workday started on time and ended when the work was done. Then someone invented the five-day workweek, and in less than one generation, the work ethic culture began slipping away.

The current lack of individuals willing to exchange an honest day's work for a paycheck was the topic of conversation at a local coffee convention one-day last week. "It's a crisis," said one caffeine consumer. "Oh, I get applicants," another local business manager chimed in. "But not many



LEON ALDRIDGE
 Guest Columnist

who would recognize work, even if they tripped over it."

"In my lifetime, I've seen the six-day work week evolve into the six-day weekend," I laughed facetiously. "Dedicated to your job is considered old-fashioned now," someone else chimed in before asking for a coffee refill.

"Arrive at work five minutes early and be involved in your job before eight," my father reared me. "And work until straight up five, then get ready to go." These days, phone calls one minute before opening time now go unanswered. And if you wonder whether there's life after death, just get between employees and the door two minutes before quitting time.

"Jim Chionsini, who gave me my first publisher's job," I offered, "said the publisher is the one who unlocks the door every morning and turns on the lights, and the one who turns them off at night and locks the door after the last employee leaves."

The group of gray hairs was on a roll. Solving the country's problems. "Applicants now ask 'How much time do I get off with this job,'" one said. "And employers are asking 'Who's going to do the job.'"

"Between two-day weekends, three and four weeks of vacation, birthdays off, personal leave time and an increasing calendar of state and federal holidays, there's no more time for work," another testified from across the table.

Enter the "new American work week," we all agreed. Tuesday. That's it. One day. Workspaces will still be occupied on the other days, but not much will get accomplished except on Tuesday. Look at the Wednesday newspapers, and

you'll find the "Weekender" edition. Radio D.J.s proclaim Wednesday as "hump day"... over the hump and downhill toward the weekend. "Hey, the weekend is almost here."

Thursday will be spent discussing weekend plans. Can't be bothered with getting any work done. Got to see what everyone else is doing this weekend and see if they've got a better plan than we do before it's too late to change ours.

And Friday? Forget that. Anything that comes in Friday can wait until Monday. We've got too many errands and phone calls to make, getting ready for the weekend.

Plus, Friday is already the national day of two-hour lunches, one-hour coffee breaks, and "Hey, nothing's happening, let's close up early." And if weekend travel is more than thirty miles, gotta get off early, you know.

And then Monday rolls around again. After three days of preparation and two days of play, a day at work is needed to recover. Don't make too much noise. Take that project to someone else. And hey, can you get that phone, please?

Monday will also be the day to postpone those Friday orders until Tuesday while we meet at the water cooler to see who had the best weekend. Real work on Monday? Come on, get serious.

So, there you have it. The official six-day weekend. Okay, so it's not official yet. But it's being tested in the Beta version.

We all laughed. "I'm trying to figure out where to sign up for it," I concluded with the last sip of cold coffee. "But for now, I have to get back to the office. We're short-handed. At the office."

"Maybe I'll get around to it next week. Not today, though. It's Thursday."

—Contact Leon Aldridge at leon.aldridge@gmail.com. Other Aldridge columns are archived at leonaldridge.com

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

To whom it may concern:

We would like to thank you for participating in Blanca Caughman's, kind and local resident, benefit fundraiser. We

were very pleased with the successful benefit contributions, donations, turnout, and funds raised. The funds will go a long way to cover travel, lodging,

and medical expenses. Blanca has a long recovery road ahead of her: however, she will not be as financially stressed. Please keep her in your prayers and

God bless all of you!

Sincerely, Blanca Caughman, Debbie Newberry, Scott Kelly, Loretta Garcia, Maribel Ramirez, and Bernie Ramirez

Heard on the STREET

Our Avalanche reporter asked, "What is the best dessert for summertime?"



Ashley Chavez: Tiger's blood-flavored ice cone.



Jill Jahn: Homemade ice cream!



Jared Johnson: Cheesecake. It is not necessarily a seasonal dessert, but it's nice and light.



Audrey Rice: Strawberry shortcake is a great summer treat because you don't have to heat up the house with the oven when you make it.



Emma Zent: Key lime pie! Tart and sweet. Graham cracker crust. Yes, thank you.

Boy Scout receives highest designation



Ariel Holguin, member of Alpine's Boy Scout Troop 41 received his Eagle Scout ranking at a ceremony held at the American Legion Big Bend Post 79 on Sunday. The Eagle rank is the highest award a scout can receive. Ariel is pictured receiving the award from his dad and Scoutmaster Hector Holguin.

Courtesy photo

Send your community events to kara.gerbert@alpineavalanche.com

UPCOMING EVENTS

May 24 Travel Talk at Alpine Public Library, 7 p.m. Denis Foley and Rozelen Stanford present their 30-day circumnavigation of the United States via Amtrak. Free to the public.

May 24 Desert Plant Discover Walk, 9 a.m. to 10 a.m. at the front office at Davis Mountains State Park. This is a guided walk to learn about hardy desert plants, how they survive, and how humans and animals use them. Bring walking shoes, water, and a hat.

May 24 Birding for Beginners, 3 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. at the Interpretive Center at Davis Mountains State Park. Come learn birding basics during a slide show presentation, then apply them at the bird blind, and enjoy a short bird walk through the park.

May 25 Desert Mindfulness Walk, 9 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. at the front office at Davis Mountains State Park. Join a local master naturalist on an easy, meditative walk to learn strategies to get in touch with your five senses and ease stress.

May 25 Critters of Davis Mountains State Park, 2 p.m. to 3 p.m. at the Interpretive Center. Curious about the animals that call this park home? Come learn about commonly seen critters.

May 25-26 Free movie showing at Alpine First Assembly of God, 3 p.m. each day the movie "Heavens Heroes" will be shown. All friends and family are invited and



popcorn and bottled water will be provided.

May 28-29 APD Sponsored Blood Drive, 11 a.m. - 3 p.m. Tuesday, May 28 at the Alpine Police Station 309 W. Sul Ross Ave. and Wednesday, May 29, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. For any questions contact Chief Darrell Losoya at 432-837-3486 or email losoya.police@cityofalpine.com

June 6- July 30 Big Bend Arts Council Art Show, Animals, Real and Imaginary. Take in entry deadline is June 4 with a reception on Friday, June 7. Prospectus to follow soon.

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.

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, call 432-837-8216, or visit bbchorale.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, 9 a.m. to 10 a.m. every Thursday at Davis Mountains State Park Interpretive Center in collaboration with Grand Companions. For more information contact Charlie Ewing at 432-246-3337 x301.

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.

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Alpine Police Department

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2005	FORD	LL	1FMFU19575LA76576	LP-RFR2243	WHITE	TEXAS
1999	CHEVROLET	LL	1GNNT13W2X2216033	LP-NWM1140	RED	TEXAS
2004	DODGE	PK	3D7LU38C6G4104100	LP-1KT139	WHITE	TEXAS
2005	FORD	VN	2FMZA57695BA88298	LP-91B120A	WHITE	TEXAS
2000	KERV	TRVTRL	4YDF28527Y4051896	LP-B077605	WHITE	TEXAS
1997	MERCURY	4D	1MELM6537VK600273	LP-BVR2809	RED	TEXAS
1997	FORD	PK	1FTCR15X2VPA27035	LP-6SDWD	BLU	TEXAS
2004	CHEV	LL	1GNNT13S742204453	LP-FKT4558	BLUE	TEXAS
1996	ISUZU	LL	4S2CK58EST4324504	LP=JDG9638	BLACK	TEXAS
1992	CHEVROLET	4D	1G1BN53E5NW120050	LP- LFK0171	SILV	TEXAS
1996	INFINITY	4D	JNKAY21D8TM305252	LP- DYD1857	GREEN	TEXAS
2012	Subaru	4D	JF1GJAA6XCH004511	LP- JXZ4246	WHITE	TX
2004	PONTIAC	4D	1G2HX52K34U167305	LP- LTC2604	TAN	TX
2020	Interstate	UT Trlr	4RALS2024LK073687	LP-12177TRL	BLACK	NM
2003	FORD	CP	1FAFP404X3F374848	LP-GMK1372	BLU	TX
1998	CHEV	PK	1GCDT19Z4J2181352	LP-DYH1361	GREY	TX
1992	MERCURY	4D	1MELM50U8NA650745	LP-DWT5856	UNK	TX
UNK	HORSE TRAILER	TRLR	NO VIN	NONE	TAN	UNK
2014	KAWASAKI	UTILITY	NO VIN	NONE	GREEN	TX

ACADEMY • FROM 1A

in both hands-on learning as well as online training. Upon completion, cadets will receive their Fire Fighter I and II certificates through SFFMA (State Fire Fighters and Fire Marshals Association) plus Hazardous Materials Awareness and Operations.

This past weekend's instruction was led by Chief Eddie Martin and Asst. Chief Gil Komechak of the Crockett County Fire and EMS. The Texas A&M Engineering and Extension Service organized this academy. Instructor Ruben Camacho also assisted.

According to Brewster County Emergency Management Coordinator James Etchison, this academy provides the same instruction and skills as the summer fire school program that has been held in College Station each year. "It's the Texas A&M extension office. They are the same people who teach the one in College Station. It's one and the same."



Cadets from the region participated in the First-Annual Big Bend Regional Fire Academy this past weekend in Terlingua which was organized by Texas A&M.

Courtesy photo

AISD • FROM 1A

highly of the standardized curriculum that is also being used at the middle school. These two curriculum forms follow the students from elementary into middle school. Pardo-Alferez also complimented the band and mentioned how well they did at their recent concert and praised board member Mr. Joe Portillo on volunteering during the middle school's "Foodie Fridays" by cooking up burgers for the students.

Alpine High School principal Vickers told the board about Kendyl Haraway becoming an Area II FFA officer recently, and that Mr. Doug Fox and the Alpine FFA recently hosted the District FFA meeting for the region. Vickers also noted that there had been four collegiate athletics signings recently and told the board about what ceremonies and events were left as the year winds down.

Next on the agenda, Dr. Michelle Rinehart discussed with the board the end-of-year data analysis for the K-2 reading and mathematics reports. Rinehart noted that thanks to the standardized curriculum using Amplify (reading and language arts) and Eureka (mathematics), although this is the first year to standardize it across the district it made a noticeable difference in the growth of student achievement, noting that students were ranked nationally at almost the 50-percentile level.

"We've come to realize, with the numbers of how our students in the district are not performing that it was not a teacher issue nor a student issue, but a curriculum issue. When each teacher is doing something different as far as curriculum, it can be difficult to keep a level playing field for student achievement because all of them learn differently. Now, thanks to using Amplify and Eureka district-wide, we can track and determine where our students need extra help and are best served by our educators," said Rinehart.

Following this report was a report from athletic director and head football coach Andy Smith. Smith updated the board on updated district alignments, coaches who have received their CDs and who are completing their training to become licensed, and highlighted the accomplishments of the student-athletes throughout the year. He also told the board about summer workouts, first practices for fall sports,

and Midnight Madness.

Next on the agenda was an overview of the AISD finances including a property value study discussion, preliminary budget figures for 2024-2025, and a budget driver analysis. There were no budget amendments at this time.

The board then unanimously approved the consent agenda items followed by a review of the Alpine ISD investment policy which was also unanimously approved.

The board next approved several donations including bats from the Alpine Buck Boosters for the middle school baseball team, and bounce houses by the Alpine Elementary PTO, to be housed at the elementary school.

Next, the board was required to pre-approve contracts for technical assistance providers which was required to accept grants from the Texas Education Agency. These grants include the Strong Foundations Grant (SFG), for which the board is required to pay \$100,000 of the grant monies to the Texas Center for School Supports (ESC 16) in order to access the \$1M grant funds from the Strong Foundations Grant. The board was also required to approve the contract to pay the Region 18 Service Center \$60,000 from the SFG, along with another \$139,000 to the Region 18 Service Center for the LASO SF Grant. These were approved unanimously.

The sublease for the Alpine Cowboys in the amount of \$7,500 was approved by the board and a discussion of the Kokernot Field lease between AISD and Sul Ross was discussed, but no action was taken.

The board then approved the partnership with Alpine Montessori School for dual enrollment that allows for more state funding to come to the district along with a portion of this funding going to the Montessori for each student that they have dually enrolled in AISD.

Finally, a review and consideration for granting an exception to the board policy delegating temporary hiring authority to the superintendent for the months of May through August was discussed. Rinehart explained that many of the new hires would come in between the two scheduled board meetings during the summer months and that this would allow her to hire without board approval if candidates

were interested in the positions.

Questions were raised by Joe Portillo about keeping the board in the loop about any actions taken towards hiring individuals and Eddie Natera asked if someone is hired how we would go about voicing our thoughts on the subject as well as noting that the request for May through August was a long period of time. Rinehart then suggested that if it would make things easier for the board, they could vote on a month-by-month basis, approving hiring authority from May to the next board meeting in June, and then this item would be on the June agenda to extend this authority through July, etc.

Initially, Mary McCallister made a motion to approve and then after discussion, re-worded her motion to approve hiring authority to the superintendent without board approval on a month-by-month basis but also included keeping the board informed of any hiring. The board then approved the item unanimously.

The next regular meeting of the Alpine ISD Board of Trustees is scheduled for June 19 at 5:30 p.m. in the AISD Administration Building.

BBQ • FROM 1A

year, the maximum 60 entries for the three main meats (brisket, chicken, ribs) were met in less than 24 hours. "When we filled up all 60 BBQ team spaces in 24 hours after launching our online registration... That right there shows what an incredible event we pulled off," Webster added.

Come June 7-8, some of the best barbecue teams from across Texas and New Mexico will roll into the mountains to compete for cash, awesome prizes, and major bragging rights. The event is held around the courthouse in Fort Davis. There is still room for entries in the following categories: salsa, dessert, rib-eye, kids-que, cabrito, and margaritas. Interested parties can e-mail smokeinthemountainsbbq@gmail.com to sign up or for more information.

The Friday schedule kicks off with the Junior Pitmaster entries at 6 p.m., Senior Pitmaster at 6:30 p.m., ribeye at 7 p.m., and margarita at 8 p.m. The Bucket of Bullets Band will be live on the lawn from 6-9 p.m. and the silent auction will start

at noon on Friday.

On Saturday the salsa entries will start the day at 11 a.m., chicken at noon, ribs at 1 p.m., brisket at 2 p.m., cabrito at 3 p.m., and dessert at 4 p.m. with awards starting at 7 p.m. The cornhole tournament sign-in starts at 10 a.m. and Hall's Last Call Band will be live on the lawn from 3:30 - 6:30 p.m. There will be a "Taste for Tips" station where spectators can get a taste of some of the best barbecue. There will also be t-shirt sales and food vendors.

On Saturday night, the event finale will be a good old-fashioned street dance featuring the Memphis Band and the Puro Party All Starz starting at 8 p.m. There is no fee for the dance, but donations are welcome to help cover expenses. "This year's will be even better, with the old-fashioned street dance on Saturday night. It doesn't get

much better than dancing under the stars with the smell of BBQ in the air," Webster concluded.

Anyone interested in judging can also email smokeinthemountainsbbq@gmail.com.

Restaurant Guide

\$6 a week gets you a spot in our restaurant guide
www.alpineavalanche.com

REATA RESTAURANT

COCINERO: Beef-Chicken-Shrimp
STARTERS: Tortilla Soup Bowl-Jalapeno and Cilantro Soup-Bacon Wrapped Shrimp with Onion Jam and Pico de Gallo-Bacon Wrapped Asparagus-Tumbleweed Onion Rings with Spicy Serrano Ketchup-Alpine Black Bean & Chicken Nachos

CF Burger with Aged Cheddar Cheese on a Kaiser Roll-Fried Chile Relleno stuffed with Cream Cheese, Corn and Peppers Carne Asada with Reata's Cheese Enchiladas-Chicken Caesar Wrap with Hand Cut Fries-Tenderloin Tacos with Sundried Tomato Cream Sauce-Grilled Chicken Breast topped with Mango Chutney

SADDLE PACK COMBINATION: (Your choice of any two items)
Cup of Tortilla Soup
Cup of Jalapeno and Cilantro Soup
Cup of Daily Soup
1/2 Reata Club or Steak Sandwich
1/2 BLT Sandwich with Peppercorn Bacon

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<p>COBALT CALM PLUSH PILLOW TOP SALE!</p> <p>Queen Mattress - WAS \$1,299 \$1,199 King Mattress - WAS \$1,699 \$1,599</p>	<p>ICOMFORT ECO Q10 MEDIUM SALE!</p> <p>Queen Mattress - WAS \$1,499 \$1,299 King Mattress - WAS \$1,999 \$1,799</p>	<p>ICOMFORT ECO F40 PLUSH SALE!</p> <p>Queen Mattress - WAS \$2,999 \$2,499 King Mattress - WAS \$3,599 \$3,099</p>

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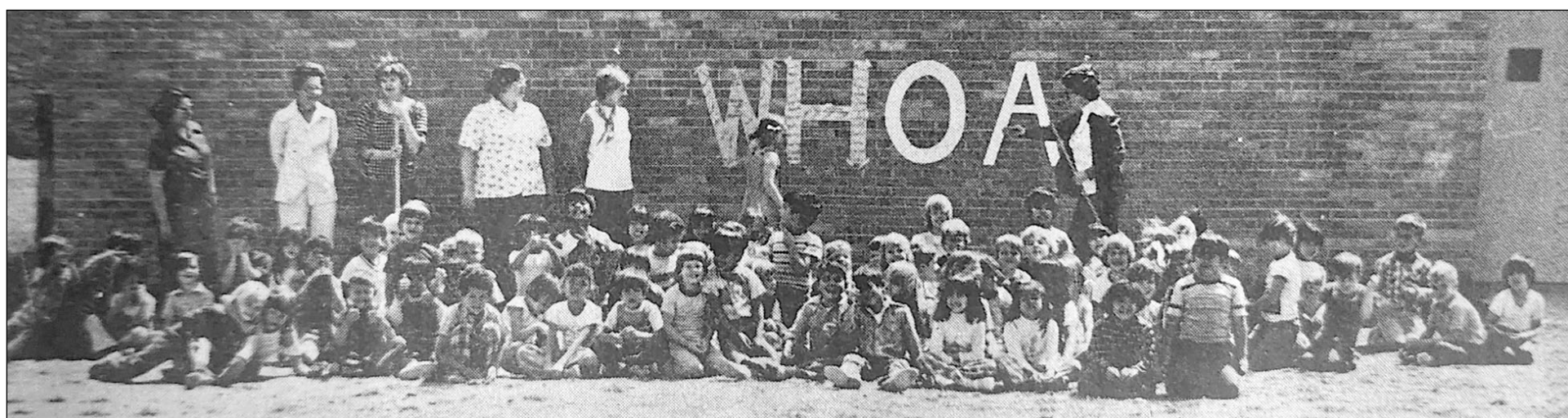
May 12, 1977
Ballerina Kathryn Sheehan poses before the "Dancers in Fantasy Land" recital at the Sul Ross Auditorium on Saturday.



May 27, 1976
Sul Ross University students Ronnie Merrill and James Miculka portray a Calvary soldier and an Infantry Musician at the Fort Davis National Historic Site.



May 27, 1976
Alpine Girl Scout Troup 207 took a year-end celebration trip to the Balmorhea State Park last weekend. Members Angela Bayer, Monica Wolleben, Venus Snedecor, Susan Reesing, Samie Harman, Andriana Wolleben, and Michelle Jackson are pictured here.



May 12, 1977

Central Elementary School kids sit in front of the WHOA sign after their gardening project related to the "High on Alpine" project was completed to support why they like Alpine.

Larval stage of snout beetle causes issues with peach crop

Dear Neil: What would be causing this to happen to my peach crop? I've Googled until I'm cross-eyed.

Google me one more thing. Search for "Plum curculio peaches" and you will find a ton of matches on this serious insect pest. It's the larval stage of a snout beetle. Look for university websites for the most trustworthy information. You will need to be on a regular spray program beginning as the plants come into bud in early spring, again as the petals fall, and on 10-day intervals until harvest. Use a labeled organic or inorganic insecticide according to label directions.

Dear Neil: Are those ugly galls on my peach tree harmful? What can I use to treat them?

That's peach leaf curl. It's a bacterial infection that overwinters on the

GARDENER'S MAILBAG
by neil sperry

tree's twigs, then infects the new growth in the spring. It doesn't do a lot of damage, but if you want to try to reduce its impact, apply a copper-based fungicide soon after all the leaves have fallen in autumn. The curled leaves on your peaches will be dropping soon if they haven't already.

Dear Neil: How would you compare fescue, zoysia, and hybrid bermudagrass for Texas



conditions? Much of the information I have found seems to be for other states.

Fescues are cool-season grasses, meaning that they do most of their vigorous growing in fall and spring and that they stay green during the winter. Their biggest struggle comes in summer, and it's especially bad where nights stay warm. Fescues are best adapted to the Texas Panhandle and not so much in East or South Texas. Fescues require more water

than other grasses.

Zoysias are well adapted to all of Texas. They have a somewhat longer dormant season than other warm-season grasses, but they do well across the state. Lots of research and development work is being done for Zoysias in Texas. As zoysias are becoming more prevalent, I'm seeing more questions about gray leaf spot, take-all root rot, and other diseases that bother St. Augustine show up with zoysias, too.

Hybrid bermudas are just as well adapted as common bermuda. They all do well in all of the state except the northern Panhandle. If you're talking about the dwarf hybrids that are used on athletic fields and golf courses, those are started vegetatively (plugs, sod, or by hydro mulching

sprigs). If you're talking about the seed-grown hybrids, those are probably superior to common bermuda, but they are hard to tell apart from common.

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

- 1 TXism: "___ day" (Saturday)
- 5 Eden newspaper
- 6 this Ratliff played a year for the San Antonio Spurs
- 7 TXism: "horny ___"
- 8 ___ cup
- 9 fed. agcy. before it was the FAA
- 12 "it wasn't ___ as I expected"
- 17 an issue in presidential elections
- 19 "behind the ___"
- 21 containing iron
- 22 TXism: "that bucket won't ___ milk" (unacceptable)
- 23 ___ laca (the Mexican pheasant, also in Texas)
- 28 TXism: "siestas"
- 29 TX-born Robin Wright 1992 film with Robin Williams
- 30 profession
- 31 TXism: "he's wound tighter than an ___-day clock"
- 35 Cameron is the seat of this county hotel built in 1900 by the SMS brand for visitors (2 wds.)
- 42 this has been used for cartel money laundering (2 wds.)
- 44 this "Buck" was born in Sherman
- 46 TXism: "desirable as ___ in hell"

- 48 parsley family plants with aromatic seeds
- 49 TX George H.W. nominated this Thomas for the Supreme Court (init.)
- 50 earlier call sign for KFCD in Sherman
- 51 flower droop
- 52 indicating academic perf. at Texas universities
- 53 snakelike Gulf fishes
- 54 TXism for "northerners"

DOWN

- 1 TXism: "you can ___ that" (certain)
- 2 "I don't have ___ in the matter"
- 3 TXism: "___ doesn't fall far from the tree"
- 4 Granbury is the seat of this county
- 9 TXism: "build a ___ before you buy chickens" (plan)
- 10 Six Flags, Joyland, and SeaWorld, e.g. (2 wds.)
- 11 early Native Americans in east Texas

TEXAS CROSSWORD
by Charley & Guy Orbison
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P-1690

- 12 TX Mary Kay ___
- 13 SMU grad who won silver at 1992 Olympics (2 wds.)
- 14 A.H. ___ founded The Dallas Morning News in 1885
- 15 this Bean won 1986 Byron Nelson Golf Classic in Texas
- 16 rattlesnake casas
- 18 gun group (abbr.)
- 20 TX Buddy Holly's "It's ___ Easy"
- 23 TV captioning (abbr.)
- 24 TXism: "___ on the hoof" (hog)
- 25 oil drilling equipment (2 wds.)

- 26 ___ disease (can't digest food)
- 27 owner of the Houston Chronicle
- 32 TX George Strait's "___ I Know Me"
- 33 TXism: "rarin' to ___"
- 34 Astro or Ranger four-bagger (abbr.)
- 36 female pig

- 37 "nip and ___"
- 38 lots of rain creates ___ day
- 39 Dolly's "___ Always Love You"
- 40 bird casas
- 41 dir. from Eden to Baird
- 43 Santa's word
- 45 pos. of Rangers' Corey Seager
- 47 historic ___
- 48 Episcopal building in Lockhart
- 48 Brewster is ___ Texas county
- 55 Snyder AM/FM

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Sports



Alpine Cowboys playing the Roswell Invaders.

Avalanche photo.

Alpine Cowboys Ready to Lasso a Championship

BY TRISTIAN BARRAGAN
Contributor

The Alpine Cowboys are back in the saddle and aiming for a championship run in the 2024 Pecos League season. With a revamped roster, a new assistant coach, and a burning desire to

reclaim their glory, the Cowboys are poised to be a dominant force on the field.

Head Coach Sean Persky revealed that a record-breaking 16 players from last year's team moved up to MLB-partnered leagues, leading to a near-complete roster overhaul. This year's

team boasts a mix of promising new talent and returning veterans, including league MVP James Prockish, who is expected to once again be a key player.

"With such a competitive spring training, we had the luxury of choosing from 45 talented individuals to build our 25-man

roster," said Coach Persky. "The energy and skill level we've seen in camp have been exceptional. From day one, I could see the championship potential in this team."

The Cowboys welcome Lance Myers as their new head assistant coach. Myers, who pre-

viously managed the Roswell Invaders, brings a wealth of experience and a championship pedigree, having played on the Cowboys' 2019 championship team.

See COWBOYS • 9A

Alpine 7on7 football qualifier set for end of month

BY KARA GERBERT
Managing Editor

The Alpine 7on7 summer football is set to begin soon, with several scrimmages that will happen locally before the state qualifying games scheduled for May 31 in Wink. Alpine is currently scheduled in Pool B to play against Hale Cen-

ter, Odessa Compass, and Morton for the first rounds.

This year, organizer Felipe Fierro said that the 7on7 boys will have the same coaches as last year, Danny and Derek Rojo. The boys practice at Buck Stadium in the evenings. "We only have a few scrimmages locally set up because with all the coaching changes

in the area this year, scheduling specific scrimmage games is difficult," Fierro said. Fierro has been involved with the summer program since 2007 and only sat out for two years before he was back at it.

The Alpine team must win two games in the first round of the state qualifying matchups and the first

game of the semi-finals if they make it to that level to advance to the state competition.

"Each game consists of two halves, each 15 minutes in length with a continuous clock. The only time the clock stops is if

See 7on7 • 9A

AHS athletics stay strong in summer

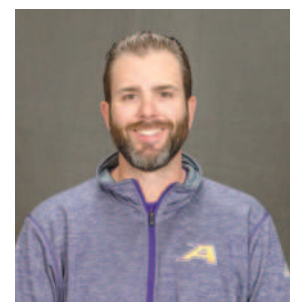
BY JOH COVINGTON
Staff Writer

This summer, the Alpine High School athletes will still be hard at work to keep their skills sharp for the upcoming fall sports season. The summer activities include the Strength and Conditioning, SAC program, which lasts from 8-10 a.m. four days a week for six weeks.

This voluntary program welcomes girls and boys from seventh to 12th grade and begins on June 10.

Head football coach and athletics director Andy Smith shared that they expect good numbers for student turnout and that there will be a lot of growth in the coming months.

"It's critical for us to throw, catch, and maintain the skills you need to succeed during the sum-



Andy Smith

mer months," said Smith.

According to the coach, the students have the opportunity to lift weights, take advantage of the open gym, do conditioning, and also learn sports skills from the head coaches. The UIL regulations allow coaches to work with their athletes for up to an hour a day with a skill-specific focus. During this time, coaches can work with their student-athletes on the skills that are needed for their

See AHS • 9A

Sul Ross to hold basketball camp once again

BY KARA GERBERT
Managing Editor

Lobo women's head basketball coach E.J. Lee Smith will once again hold girls' basketball camps at the Pete P. Gallego Center this summer. This is the second straight summer for Smith to hold these camps.

The camps are separated into two categories, girls' basketball day camp and girls' basketball elite camp.

The day camp is for ages

See SUL ROSS • 9A



Alpine ISD athletics posts summer strength and conditioning workout times

BY KARA GERBERT
Managing Editor

The Alpine ISD athletic department has issued the dates and times for their summer strengthening and conditioning workouts. All workouts are for boys and girls for incoming seventh graders through 12th grade and will be held at the Alpine High School field house from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. in the weight room.

Student-athletes will be led through a series of weight room, core, and cardio exercises during a six-week period this summer. The workout

dates are as follows.

Week one is scheduled for June 10-13 (M-Th) from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m.

Week two is scheduled for June 17-20 (M-Th) from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m.

Week three is scheduled for June 24-27 (M-Th) from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m.

Week four is scheduled for July 15-18 (M-Th) from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m.

Week five is scheduled for July 24-25 (Wed-Th) from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m.

Week six is scheduled for July 29-August 1 (M-Th) 8 a.m. to 10 a.m.

Sul Ross athletes earn numerous honors

BY KARA GERBERT
Managing Editor

From tennis to softball to baseball, Sul Ross athletes take their sports seriously. Many of them have earned top recognition this season in their respective sports.

In Lobo men's tennis, Jackson Taylor earned a co-sportsmanship honor. Taylor, who earned the honor once before in 2022, was recognized again this year as an American Southwest Conference West Division Sportsmanship Athlete of the Year. He shares this honor with five other athletes in the conference.

In women's softball, seven Lady Lobos have been named to the ASC All-

Conference team for 2024.

Sam Chavez earned first-team at-large honors this year after having earned all-conference honors last year also. Lobo Lily Wiser was named to third-team All-Conference, and Ciera Avila, Madison Hodges, Toni Mishnick, Kyndell Garcia, and Leanza Chamber all earned honorable mention.

Five Lobo baseball players were named to the 2024 All-Conference team this season. Sul Ross' Carsen Thor and Primo Vasquez both earned second-team honors, while Estevan Ortiz was named third-team All-Conference. Lobos Corbin Dube and Lee Kubosh were each named honorable mention.

ATHLETE OF THE WEEK

SHANNA TAMALE

Shanna Tamale place 3rd in the District for Varsity Mixed Doubles. Her and her partner received the number 4 District seed and a first-round bye. They defeated the number 5 seeded, Hernandez/Garcia (Kermit) 6-2, 6-4 before falling to the number 1 seed.

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Think Greek, think low-carb

Eggplant Moussaka is the Greek version of comforting lasagna

Most people would be hard-pressed to say that they dislike lasagna. I mean, what's not to love about pasta, a meaty Bolognese sauce, and cheese?

Well, the Greeks have done us one better. Their version of lasagna, while still possessing a significant amount of carbs, takes out the pasta and replaces it with eggplant.

And although per serving, lasagna contains about the same carbohydrates as eggplant moussaka, the moussaka offers some other benefits that traditional lasagna does not.

Such as 351 milligrams of calcium, three milligrams of Iron, and 742 milligrams of potassium. The protein in both is about the same, with lasagna coming in just slightly higher, and the fat content is the same. And the calories per serving in traditional homemade meat lasagna comes

in a bit lower than moussaka, 402 to 567.

But these are the traditional values of full-on regular recipe values. Now, what if I told you that there's a low-carb version of this yummy dish? The difference? Instead of a traditional bechamel sauce for the moussaka, substituting Greek yogurt and feta cheese helps drop the carb load from 28 to eight grams per serving. That's a significant difference if you're watching your carbohydrates. The calories also drop to 300 per serving, and the fat drops a couple of points as well.

Regardless of which version of this tasty Greek meal you decide to make, it is satisfying enough to bring your family back for seconds and offers an option to help you stick to your low-carb diet yet still enjoy a rich-tasting, comforting meal.

LOW-CARB EGGPLANT MOUSSAKA

INGREDIENTS

- 1 red onion, finely diced
- 2 cloves minced garlic
- 1 28-ounce can of diced tomatoes
- 1 pound ground beef
- ½ teaspoon nutmeg
- ½ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon ground cloves
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Extra virgin olive oil
- 2-3 eggplants, peeled and cut lengthwise into ½ inch slices
- Parmesan cheese-optional
- For bechamel sauce
- 1 ¼ cups unsweetened plain Greek yogurt
- 3 ½ ounces feta cheese
- 3 egg yolks
- Salt and pepper to taste

DIRECTIONS

- Preheat oven to 350.
- In a skillet, add the olive oil and diced onion and sauté for a few minutes.
- Add the garlic and cook until the onion is clear.
- Add the ground beef and cook until browned. Note: traditional moussaka uses ground lamb
- Add the tomatoes and spices, then cook on low for 15 minutes while preparing the other layers.
- Slice the peeled eggplant into ½-inch slices lengthwise, adding to a frying pan with a generous amount of olive oil. Fry until golden on both sides.
- Place in a single layer on the bottom of a baking pan, keeping the half slices for another layer once the



Eggplant Moussaka

Courtesy photo

moussaka is assembled. For the bechamel sauce, add the yogurt, crumbled feta, and egg yolks and whisk together with a fork until well incorporated. Place the meat mixture on top of the fried eggplant slices, followed by more eggplant slices, then pour the bechamel sauce over the entire dish. Sprinkle with Parmesan cheese if desired. Bake for 20 minutes, remove from oven, and serve warm.

AHS • FROM 8A

respective sports. As an example, football players can work on specific skills during this time, like throwing, catching, blocking, and tackling.

Otherwise, the instruction focuses on weights, core, and cardio for a maximum of two hours a day. This allows the student-athletes in AISD to stay in shape for future sports programs that will arrive in the fall and spring of the upcoming school year.

For the students taking advantage of the open gym, coaches may open the gym facilities for their student-athletes to have access, but no sports instruction occurs during this time.

"The girls always have really good numbers, and a majority of the varsity foot-

ball players come," Smith said.

This summer, football, softball, and volleyball skills will be offered for those going into the next school semester. Each sport will have a designated time throughout the day to work on their game.

Smith and his wife, head volleyball coach Adrian Smith, are approaching the anniversary of their coming to Alpine and joining the AHS athletics family. They both completed their first seasons here last fall.

Soon, the Smiths will no longer be the new coaches on the Alpine block. With the departure of coach Wayne Schroeder, who is retiring after 54 years of teaching and coaching, they are welcoming a new coach

to the roster, whose name is to be announced at a later date.

Regarding the upcoming football season, Smith shared that despite several seniors graduating from the team, they have the offensive benefit of 10 of 11 returning starters.

"We had a heavy junior team last year, so we are going to have a heavy senior team this year," said Smith.

The coach shared that they did lose some key senior players, like Reese Ahrens, JJ Victorino, Patrick Contreras, and Eddie Morrison.

"Those guys will be hard to replace, but as for the core content of the team, we have the quarterbacks returning for their senior year, Devon Rojo and Iden

Lujan. Dae Hardwick is a junior and the returning leading receiver.

Offensively, the team will be in great shape. Defensively, they will be on the lookout for those linebacker replacements.

According to the coach, there are some very promising eighth-grade to freshman transfers who had a good season last year that the team is looking forward to welcoming.

The 7on7 summer football is also quickly approaching, which the department's coaches are not involved with per UIL rules. Instead, local parents, like Philip Fierro and Danny and Derek Rojo, offer their expertise to help prepare the athletes.

They will be playing in

two tournaments, one 7on7 state qualifier on May 31 in Wink and one tournament on June 7 in Abilene. If the team qualifies, they go to the state tournament later in June.

For volleyball, coach Adrian Smith has already held the pre-season meeting to prepare the newest incoming players for how the program operates. The meeting was mandatory for anyone who planned to try out for the season and their parents.

Volleyball season starts well before the beginning of school, and summer is littered with tournaments that set the tone for the fall season. Their skill training will be offered in July, and the department supplies an open gym for the players

throughout the year.

This month, on May 31, the junior varsity and varsity divisions will be traveling to Wink for their Shin-Dig Tournament. On June 7, they have another in Andrews, followed by one in Monahans on June 14. The program's first scrimmage is scheduled for August 9.

Cross country is slated to start on August 5 as well, and students are encouraged to keep running in the summer to avoid a cold start for their challenges.

Overall, the athletics department will be staying very active with the kids who elect to participate outside the school months, offering them the opportunity to continue their athletic journey outside their sports season.

COWBOYS • FROM 8A

Coach Persky emphasized that the primary goals for the season are two-fold: to help players develop and advance their careers in affiliated baseball and to win a championship. "With the talent we have, it's too good not to make a deep run this year," he said.

In addition to Prockish, returning players Josh Rigo, Drake Angeron, Drew Bayard, Jessie Garcia, and Dom Spinoso are expected to make significant contributions. New key players to watch this year will be Taylor Darde, Tommy Kretzler, Jonathan Fleckenstein, Alberto Vela, and Dieterich Guertzen. While the team is strong in several areas, Coach Persky identified the pitching rotation, corner infielders, and backfield as positions where new players will need to step up and prove themselves.

The Cowboys have high expectations for the 2024 season. "Anything less than a division championship would be considered an

unsuccessful season," Coach Persky declared. "Our goal is to be the number one overall seed for the regular season and make a deep playoff run."

The Cowboys are deeply rooted in the Alpine community and have a loyal fanbase that extends to neighboring towns of Marfa, Marathon, Fort Davis, and beyond. The team is planning several promotional events this season, including:

May 28: Season Opener against the new Pecos Bills team at Cyclone Ballparks

May 29: Home Opener against the Pecos Bills, also designated as Little League Day

July 4: Fireworks after the game

With a talented roster, a seasoned coaching staff, and unwavering community support, the Alpine Cowboys are ready to lasso a championship in 2024. Don't miss the action! Be sure to catch the Cowboys' home opener on Wednesday, May 29 at 6 p.m. at Kokernot Field. Go Cowboys!

SUL ROSS • FROM 8A

seven to 14 and will take place Monday through Thursday from 8:30 a.m. to 12 p.m. June 24-27. Registration will be Monday, June 24 from 7:45 a.m. to 8:20 a.m. and the deadline for applying is Monday, June 10. The cost is \$100 per person, which includes a camp fee, awards, a T-shirt, and prizes. Snacks

7ON7 • FROM 8A

and bottled water will be provided daily. The elite camp is scheduled for Saturday and Sunday, July 6-7 for players in grades 9-12. Registration takes place from 1:30 p.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday, July 6. The camp runs from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. and 2:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. each day. Cost

there is an injury," said Fierro. "It's six points for each touchdown. Teams can gain an extra point by passing only from the third-yard line or they may collect two points from the 10-yard line." Due to UIL rules and regulations, no high school coach may serve as a coach or stand with the team on the sidelines during the games. They do, however, require a coach to accompany the team to all events to serve as a school administrator, but the coach must stay in the end zone and not on the sidelines.

All team coaches must wear an identifying tag for clarification purposes and a team may not have more than four coaches on the sidelines during a game.

is \$150 for an on-campus experience which includes two meals and a room for one night, while off-campus is \$100. The cost includes a camp fee, awards, a T-shirt, and prizes. Snacks and bottled water will be provided. The deadline to apply is

Saturday, June 15. Campers may register online at <https://srlobos.com/sports/2021/8/27/hometown-tickets-page.aspx> and for more information they may contact coach Smith at ej.smith@sulross.edu or call 318-372-5203.

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NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Notice is hereby given that original Letters Testamentary for the **Estate of Chester Wilson, Deceased**, were issued on March 14, 2024, under Docket No. PR03167, pending in the County Court of Brewster County, Texas, to **Brenda Wilson**.

Claims may be presented in care of the attorney for the estate, addressed as follows:

Representative,
Estate of Chester Wilson, Deceased
c/o Elizabeth J. Lewis, Attorney at Law
Law Office of Elizabeth J. Lewis, PLLC
Post Office Box 101
Marathon, Texas 79842

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.

DATED May 16, 2024

Brenda Wilson

By: *Elizabeth J. Lewis*
Elizabeth J. Lewis, Attorney for Representative

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AHS crowns prom king and queen



Alpine High School crowned this year's prom king and queen this past Saturday night. Prom king Reese Ahrens and queen Elyse "Chiquita" Ramos are pictured.

Courtesy photo

SENIOR Spotlight

AALIYAH CHAVEZ

In what activities did you participate in high school?
I have participated in photography, yearbook, and student council throughout all four years in high school.

What was your favorite moment in the last four years?
My favorite moments have been when I'm taking pictures for Mr. Grisham's photography class.

Who was your favorite teacher/coach, and why?
I'd definitely say Coach Hardwick because he's always uplifting and positive. He's always there if you need help.

What are your plans after high school?
After high school I plan to attend Angelo State University to study social work and become a CPS worker.

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Devotional Page

Watch!

BY SCOTT HUCKABY
Big Bend Bible Fellowship

Jesus promised to return someday, and He commanded us to watch for Him in Matthew 24:42. He didn't tell us to wait for His return which would be a passive activity; He said to watch which is active. And He gave us signs of His coming to help us watch.

Unfortunately, most of the Lord's people today are ignoring His command to watch. This neglect is actually characteristic of the end of the Church Age per 2 Peter 3:3-4. And this is in the face of all the things happening that indicate the return of Jesus is near.

Certainly, we cannot know when Jesus will return, so it would be foolish to speculate on it. We just need to live being ready by trusting in Him. However, if we are watching, we can get a sense we are in the season of His return (1 Thess 5:1-4). The Lord's return for the church will be suddenly, without warning and it will be when His faithful are transformed into eternal, glorified, resurrected bodies. This future supernatural event is called our "blessed hope" in Titus 2:13 and is also referred to as the rapture of the church.

One reason God's people neglect Bible prophecy is that it is uncomfortable to consider what comes after the rapture. It will be a terrible time when God pours out His wrath in

preparation for Jesus returning for His 1,000-year reign on earth. That's right, His coming is in two phases, first as the Bridegroom for His bride, the church, and later to reign.

Most Christians don't take literally what the Bible says about Jesus' return lumping it all into one event immediately preceding the Eternal State. So that is another reason people neglect Bible prophecy. Why study the return of Jesus if it means the end of the world? But it doesn't, there will still be mortal people who need to recognize Jesus as the Savior who paid their sin-penalty on the cross.

The signs Jesus gave us for His return were for the time of God's wrath. There are a lot of things going on today indicating we are very close to that time. Israel being back in their ancestral homeland is the number one sign. And, related to that is the preservation of the Jewish culture despite the Diaspora, the resurrection of the dead Hebrew language, and the alignment of nations opposing Israel. Other signs of the end of the Age include the rapidly growing globalism, the state of technology, cultural trends, and developments in nature.

Watching for the Lord's return helps us make sense of the world's craziness, it gives us incentive to better conform our lives to Christ and gives us a sense of urgency to get on with what He is calling us to do. Fulfilled prophecy proves the Bible really is God's Word. It is what led me to Christ, and it continues to be a blessing. Watch!

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AVFD participates in Splash Day



The Alpine Volunteer Fire Department participated in the Alpine Elementary second-grade splash day held at the AES playground. Each year, the AVFD uses their fire trucks to spray water onto the playground while the kids run through the water.

Courtesy photo

Alpine Elementary Pre-K holds graduation



Brewster and Jeff Davis County Extension Agent Luke Hendryx is pictured here with his daughter Bristol who graduated last week from Alpine Elementary's Pre-K.

Courtesy photo

AES grads moving on to bigger and better



Alpine Elementary's Pre-K class held their graduation ceremony last week and were escorted into the gym for the ceremony by the 2024 Alpine High School graduates.

Courtesy photo



Gifted and talented students present end-of-year projects

Mrs. Felicia Locke's gifted and talented program students presented their end-of-year projects last Thursday night. The students presented everything from historical figures, weather phenomena, animal adaptations, and more.

Courtesy photo

Enjoying lunch in Marfa

Alpine Elementary's third and fourth graders spent last Thursday in Marfa at the U.S. Border Patrol's Big Bend Sector Headquarters learning about what they do to secure our borders and what vehicles and instruments, such as helicopters, four-wheelers, and drones that they use in their job. Pictured are some of the students enjoying a hot dog lunch during their visit.

Courtesy photo



CITY • FROM 3A

Month. Escovedo informed the council chambers that May is also Mental Health Awareness Month and Fibromyalgia Month.

During announcements, Eaves thanked the city's water department employees, saying, "For everything they do all the time but especially in the last four or five days, which have been incredibly difficult in regards to water leaks and maintaining water and wells. Without them, we would be in a world of trouble."

Eaves also thanks the community for its patience, understanding, and generosity. Several citizens offered their own water to those whose access was cut off during the break event.

After Eaves closed her statement, Alpine City Manager Megan Antrim shared that the Alpine Police Department will be holding a blood drive on May 28 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. and May 29 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Antrim reminded the community that the lead and copper survey that they received in the mail, along with their water bill, is due back by May 31.

There is going to be a tire amnesty event starting June 1 until full capacity is reached, which will welcome residential tires off the rims, limiting each community member to four tires each. More information can be found on the environmental services Facebook page.

The city, TxDot, and Sul Ross State University will also host a community-wide "bicycle

rodeo" on the university campus. The police department and TxDot are working together to make this educational event accessible to all ages.

During this meeting, the council members decided who would fill the vacant board and commission representative positions. Currently, Eaves represents planning and zoning, Darin Nance of Ward 3 represents parks and recreation, and Rick Stephens of Ward 5 represents the HOT committee. They all decided to remain council representatives of their respective boards, while Escovedo volunteered to represent the vacant building and standards board position, Olivas volunteered for the animal advisory board, and Stone for the music advisory board.

Antrim reminded everyone that the scheduled budget discussions are approaching, with open workshops on June 4-6 at 4 p.m. A presentation on the use of the hotel occupancy tax use will be given on June 5. June 6 is the last day that citizens can protest tax rate changes that reflect property appraisal updates.

The city's budget priorities for water, wastewater, employees, and streets have been set through public town hall meetings. Antrim suggested that the city begin to strategize its grant application process and perhaps even look to hire a professional to aid in the process to ensure the best rate of acceptance. The council tabled

the first action item of this meeting, an item to amend the animal section of ordinances. The court decided that it needed some language and reasoning clarifications before they approved the proposed amendment.

Next, the council approved the first reading of amendments to the zoning and annexation process ordinance. Additional requirements have been added for annexation and the R-1 zone designation requirement for annexation was removed.

The council amended and approved the ordinance's first reading to change the council's process for initiating spot zoning. Building Services encourages applicants to approach their offices first so that they can advise on the best route for their property.

The council changed the amendment to include the four state legislature requirements for spot zoning and the requirement that applicants pay a fee of \$350 even if a council member brings it forward on their behalf.

In other news, Stephens volunteered to be the Brewster County liaison, replacing the previous Ward 1 council member Judy Stoke's spot. Olivas volunteered to be the city representative for the Family Crisis Center board after she was recommended by the board. Stone accepted the nomination as a representative for the Alpine Public Library board.

The next regular city council meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, June 5.

TRANSPECOS BANKS 100th ANNIVERSARY

TransPecos Banks would like to applaud our area seniors on a job well done!

Congratulations!

We wish you all the best for what's to come. This year, TransPecos Banks awarded over \$35,000 in scholarship awards to the Class of 2024!

Many area students submitted applications for the **TransPecos Banks Sixth Annual Future Leaders Scholarship contest.**

We are proud to announce the following area students who received a scholarship for their entry:

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Bryson Bennett Kermit High School	Zachary Noll Big Bend High School
Jace Canaba Alpine High School	Jose Perez Pecos High School
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