

## AESB discusses finances, AVFD focuses on training

BY KARA GERBERT  
Managing Editor

The regular meeting of the Alpine Emergency Services Board was held Tuesday, May 28 in the Alpine Volunteer Fire Department meeting room. Aaron Rodriguez was the only board member absent, with the only position still left to be filled was that vacated by former Emergency Services Coordinator Stephanie Elmore.

Chairman Paul Loeffler spoke to the board about filling Elmore's position and said that in talks with Brewster County Judge Greg Henington, a member of the community had expressed interest in filling that position. The county and the city would be in talks about this individual being placed on the board soon.

See AESB • 6

## INSIDE



FEATURED

See Sports 8-9

### Rainfall totals at Alpine-Casparis Airport

2024 . . . . . 2.06"  
June . . . . . 0.00"



**Burn Ban ON**

INDEX 16 pages

Opinions . . . . . P.4  
Sports . . . . . P.8-9  
Puzzle . . . . . P.7  
Classifieds . . . . . P.10

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



# Brewster County commissioners discuss local fire response

BY JOH COVINGTON  
Staff Writer



**Brewster County Judge Greg Henington**

The Brewster County commissioner's court met for its regularly scheduled meeting on Tuesday, May 28. This meeting occurred two days after the historic fire that began on Sunday afternoon which destroyed several buildings and businesses in downtown Alpine.

Brewster County Judge Greg Henington

said, "The fire started around 3:30 in the afternoon, and the fire

department was called out." Henington shared that when they arrived no flames were visible but there was abundant smoke. It appeared that the fire had spread through the space above the ceiling.

The official fire report's listed cause was undetermined.

"By 6:30 the buildings were engulfed. We had agencies from Marfa, Fort Davis, Marathon, Terlingua, Alpine, and

the Texas Forest Service," said Henington, sharing that the Texas Forest Service was luckily in town with approximately 30 personnel.

"You never have enough people on a fire like this, with the exhaustion, heat, pulling hoses, and the logistical challenges," Henington said.

According to the judge, they had a few minor injuries that were attended to at the hospi-

tal for precaution. The county kept a fire truck at the location for several days afterward to handle the spot fires that were expected to occur.

During the announcements, Mo Morrow, Pct 4 commissioner, and the county representative on the appraisal district board shared that the chief appraiser, Raymond Herrera, submitted his resignation. Ac-

See RESPONSE • 6

# Community holds fundraiser for fire victims



Kendall Craig performed as "Jeb Spacepilot" and entertained a local crowd Wednesday night who gathered to listen to music, reminisce, and donate to those businesses who lost their livelihoods last Sunday evening to the tragic fire across the street. Other acts followed throughout the evening that began at 5 p.m. including Rick Ruiz and A Few Too Many and a mash-up of The Swifts and The Latecomers.

Photo by Kara Gerbert

# Texas grants mountain lions historic protections

BY JOH COVINGTON  
Staff Writer

At the recent May 23 Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission meeting, commissioners unanimously voted to ban the canned hunting of mountain lions and to require that live mountain lions not be held in traps for longer than 36 hours.

According to a press release from Texans for Mountain Lions, this decision is a significant win for the species, and it's the first step for the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department to actively manage the state's mountain lion population.

Texas now stands with all 16 states home to breeding mountain lions in regulating the hunting

and trapping of the species.

Texans for Mountain Lions coalition member and wildlife filmmaker Ben Masters said, "If there's one thing that Texans can agree on, it's that the symbol of wildness in our state, the mountain lion, shouldn't be left in traps for days or weeks on end until they die from dehydration and exposure."

The ruling follows a call from TPWD Commissioners for public comment on the proposal, which produced a total of 7,531 comments, with 91% or 6,881 saying they support a prohibition of canned hunting of mountain lions and implementation of a 36-hour trap or snare check for the species according



Texas now stands with all 16 states home to breeding mountain lions in regulating the hunting and trapping of the species.

Photo by Ben Masters

to the release.

People from all backgrounds came forward to show their support for this ruling.

"It was inspiring to see ranchers, trappers, hunters, hippies, outfitters,

biologists, and wildlife advocates from across the state all converge to support more respectful management of our cats.

We are grateful for the Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission's leader-

ship on this issue and for the thousands of people who chimed in supporting these changes," said Masters.

See WILDLIFE • 6

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# Beef buying basics: what buyers look for, more

As we are all well aware, we live in a consumer society, and as such, successful marketing is a critical component in the success of any product. The advertisement and marketing of beef to everyday consumers is no different, and the industry features a wide array of advertising strategies. However, as consumers, we often need to cut through these various marketing strategies and simply identify the product that will give us the most bang for our buck regarding palatability and satisfaction.



LUKE HENDRYX  
Ag Agent

When selecting a beef product, the first component of selection is often based on the effectiveness of the packaging and labeling, with products featuring labels that identify them as grass-fed, grain-fed, organic, breed-specific, etc. While this is certainly a decision of personal preference by the consumer

about production practices, it is important to keep in mind that about 99% of supermarket beef is actually derived from traditionally, grain-fed cattle. The important takeaway here is that there is no significant difference regarding safety and nutrition between the various finishing practices available.

To ensure satisfaction with the purchase and consumption of a beef product, consumers can look at the much more reliable aspect of quality grades. Quality grades are formulated using carcass indicators that

measure the estimated eating quality of cooked beef cuts. The USDA quality grades from greatest to least are as follows: Prime, Choice, Select, Standard, Commercial, and Utility, with the upper two-thirds of most consumer beef being Choice or better.

One of the key indicators used in quality grading is the presence of intramuscular fat, also known as marbling. Marbling affects the juiciness, tenderness, and flavor of beef products, with a higher presence of intra-muscular fat

leading to a greater increase in palatability and consumer satisfaction. Marbling can be visibly assessed and ranked on a scale of slight to moderately abundant. Beef that is practically devoid of marbling is often used for other commercial products, and not marketed directly as retail cuts.

As with most purchases, the end result ultimately comes down to consumer preference, however utilizing visible indicators like marbling can help assist us with our everyday beef purchases.

## Rangeland conditions vary across the state based on moisture, precipitation outlook

BY SARAH FULLER  
Texas AgriLife Extension

Rangeland conditions across the state vary as producers contend with an abundance of precipitation in the east, and little, if any, in the west, according to experts with Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service.

Texas is home to roughly 100 million acres of grazing lands, which include native rangelands and non-native pastures. Non-native pastures are typically monocultures comprised of introduced species such as Bermuda grass. Conversely, native rangelands are a diverse ecosystem of native grasses and forbs that support livestock like cattle, sheep, and goats, as well as wildlife such as white-tailed deer, pronghorn, turkey, and more.

This makes rangelands the largest native cover type in the state- both an ecological and economic powerhouse.

While a multitude of factors play a role in sustaining rangeland health, precipitation is the most critical factor for forage production.

"Thanks to the rain we've received this season, rangelands in our part of the world are going to grow a lot of grass," said Jeff Goodwin, Ph.D, assistant professor in the Texas A&M College of Agriculture and Life Sciences Department of Rangeland, Wildlife, and Fisheries Management and director of the Texas A&M Center for Grazinglands and Ranch Management, at Bryan College Station. "I would say everyone east of Interstate 35 is in pretty good shape."

The same can't be said for western and some northern portions of the state that have been dealing with abnormally dry conditions, varying stages of drought, and triple-digit temperatures for multiple years.

Roughly 47% of the state is dealing with some level of drought, ranging from moderate to pockets of extreme, according to the U.S. Drought Monitor.

Morgan Treadwell, Ph. D., Department of Rangeland, Wildlife, and Fisheries Management associate professor and AgriLife Extension rangeland specialist, San Angelo, said she is trying to remain hopeful by also encouraging producers to plan for potentially worsening conditions.

"The forage we have available now is likely



what we're going to have to work with for the growing season," Treadwell said. "At this point, we can't run our rangeland pastures with the assumption we will eventually get rain and conditions will improve."

A major factor guiding Treadwell's outlook is the La Niña climate pattern meteorologists predict will emerge late this summer.

Originating in the Pacific Ocean, both La Niña and El Niño are climate patterns that impact the weather worldwide. While El Niño typically results in cooler, wetter weather patterns for much of Texas, La Niña is characterized by warmer, drier conditions.

Moving forward, Treadwell said producers should relieve grazing pressure to prevent compromising rangeland health.

"We need to make sure we're rotating our animals and that we're incorporating ample pasture rest into our grazing system," she said. "If we can't provide enough rest for what these conditions are requiring, then we have to assess the number of animals in our herd and really start to think about reducing stocking rates."

Treadwell said while she knows producers want to maintain their cattle numbers, the cattle market is currently in a positive place, which should help.

"If you don't have the grass, it is simply not worth holding onto your cattle and deteriorating the overall range condition past the point of recovery," Treadwell said.

In addition to reassessing one's herd size, Treadwell said it may also be time to reevaluate land management techniques implemented this season.

For example, while prescribed fire plays a critical role in maintaining rangeland health through nutrient cycling, promoting forage production, managing invasive species, and curbing woody encroachment, many producers may choose to forego the practice this year to conserve what little forage they have.

"Growing-season burns are exceptionally effective," Treadwell said. "But, right now, prescribed fire is probably on the back burner for producers out west just because we are so limited in the fine fuel and herbaceous components of our rangelands."

While some vegetation may struggle in the arid conditions, Treadwell said many woody species will thrive.

"Honey mesquite and redberry juniper love a good drought," she said. "They put all their energy into root development so they're able to tap into reserves and nutrients that aren't normally found during these limiting times of the year."

Belowground root development is also reflected in aboveground biomass production, which exhibits unique adaptations to survive drought.

"As drought persists, many woody species that are the target of management concern also start to develop waxy, impenetrable layers on their leaf surface, preventing herbicide from being absorbed and transmitted throughout the plant," Treadwell said.

Because of this, Treadwell said stem spray and basal spray applications of herbicide during drought to individual woody plants are more effective at controlling spread than aerial or broadcast treatments.

Goodwin said producers in the eastern half of the state should not be complacent with good grazing conditions- especially considering the region is just emerging from two years of moderate to exceptional drought.

"Just because it rains doesn't mean the land has recovered," he said. "In areas hit hard from the past two dry years, you might need a growing season or two of consistent moisture to fully recover. The trouble is, we don't ranch in a world with much consistency- we operate with uncertainty every day- that's why having a contingency plan

and implementing it is so important. We need to be thinking about the next drought when it's raining."

Goodwin said ensuring herds are at the proper stocking rate is also critical to prevent overgrazing, exposed bare soil, and subsequent ecological degradation.

This cautious approach should be also applied to rangelands recovering from this year's Panhandle wildfires.

Both Goodwin and Treadwell said they have positive reports of forage recovery and growth in the areas hardest hit by wildfire. But native pasture green-up doesn't mean they are ready to support a herd.

"Now is the time to let the grass recover," Goodwin said. "If your cows are still being pastured somewhere else that wasn't hit, don't turn them back in the first time you see some green forage. Allow the land to recover first."

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### Public Notice

Nominations for voting membership  
Region E Far West Texas Water Planning Group

**The Far West Texas Water Planning Group** is seeking nominations to fill four voting positions on the Far West Texas Water Planning Group. The positions are as follows:

Tourism - Term expires December 2025

Economic Development (Urban)  
– Term expires December 2025

Economic Development (Rural)  
– Term expires December 2025

Electric Generating Utilities  
– Term expires December 2025

**Conditions of Membership:** To be eligible for voting membership on the Planning Group, a person must represent the interest for which a member is sought, be willing to participate in the regional water planning process, and abide by the Bylaws of the Region E Far West Texas Water Planning Group.

**Nominations** (Nomination letter and a Résumé or biography of nominee are required) must be received by June 21, 2024, addressed to:

Annette Gutierrez  
Administrative Officer  
Far West Texas Water Planning Group  
8037 Lockheed Drive, Suite 100  
El Paso, Texas 79925

Or

By email to: [annetteg@riocog.org](mailto:annetteg@riocog.org)

### Corrections

In the May 23 edition, a Letter to the Editor thanking a group of ladies for participating in a benefit fundraiser for Blanca Caughman mistakenly left off Mrs. Elidia Polanco as one of the key participants in the fundraising efforts.

In the May 30 edition, it was noted that Forchheimer's was misspelled, leaving out the second 'h' in the name.



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# Big Bend Amateur Radio Club prepares for this year's field day

BY KARA GERBERT  
Managing Editor

As June kicks off in Big Bend Country, the Big Bend Amateur Radio Club (BBARC) gets ready for its annual ARRL Field Day, which is a nationwide "ON-AIR" event held annually. This year's event is slated for June 22-23.

Ham radio operators from the BBARC in Alpine will participate in this national amateur radio exercise beginning at 1 p.m. on June 22 and continuing through 1 p.m. on June 23. This field day was first organized in 1933 by the National Association for Amateur Radio, and the local club has been participating in the national exercise since the club was formed 50 years ago.

The late David Cockrum organized the first Field Day for the local club, and the club is hon-



**Jim Fowler, a local Ham Radio operator participates in last year's nationwide on-air event. Fowler is operating a voice transceiver radio during the annual Field Day.**

oring him this year by holding this year's Field Day in his memory.

"Hams from across North America participate in this Field Day by

establishing temporary ham radio stations in public locations or their homes to demonstrate their skill and service," said Matt Greer BBARC Public Information Officer.

This use of radio signals, that reach beyond borders is capable of not only bringing people together but provides essential communication to serve area communities. This annual event highlights ham radio's ability to work reliably under any conditions from almost any location and allows for the creation of an independent, wireless communications network.

Each year, the BBARC will conduct its Field Day from the Double Diamond community center, located eight miles south on Hwy 118. There will be radio stations set up for voice communications, Morse code (CW),

and digital operations. There will also be a "Get on the Air" (GOTA) station for adult and youth visitors to participate in making radio contacts under the direction of licensed operators.

Given the recent tragic fire in Alpine, this year's event is noteworthy.

"Hams have a long history of serving our communities when storms or other disasters damage critical communication infrastructure, including cell towers," said Bob Ward, BBARC Emergency Response Coordinator. "Ham radio functions completely independently of the internet and phone systems and a station can be set up almost anywhere in minutes. Hams can quickly raise a wire antenna in a tree or on a mast, connect it to a radio and power source, and communicate effec-

tively with others," Ward added.

In the case of the recent fire in downtown Alpine, Ward mobilized the Alpine ERC and was ready to assist with emergency communications and messaging if necessary.

All ages of the public are invited to visit the BBARC Field Day exercise coming up to see hams in action and learn about their activities as well as learn how to become a ham radio operator.

Interested members of the public should look for the BBARC banner alongside the road on South Hwy 118 and check in with the welcome desk. For more information, contact Matt Greer at mgreer88@protonmail.com or call 281-910-7403.

## Hon. Roy B. Ferguson elected to board of trustees of the Texas Bar Foundation

Judge Roy B. Ferguson, presiding over the 394th Judicial District Court of Texas, has been elected to the Board of Trustees of the Texas Bar Foundation. Judge Ferguson took office on June 1.

Judge Roy Ferguson presides over the largest judicial district in Texas, covering roughly 20,000 square miles including over 20% of the US-Mexico Border. Before his election in 2012, Judge Ferguson served Far West Texas through private practice in Marfa. He is an avid proponent of equal access to justice for all Texans and serves as a commissioner and

executive officer of the Texas Access to Justice Commission. An early adopter and embracer of technological innovation, Judge Ferguson was a founding member of the Texas Supreme Court's Remote Proceedings Task Force, and currently serves on the Judicial Committee on Information Technology and the Texas Taskforce for Responsible A.I. in the Law.

Judge Ferguson is active in the State Bar of Texas, serving or having served on the Court Rules Committee, the governing boards of the Family Law, General Practice, Solo and Small Firm, and Judicial Sec-

tions, and as judicial liaison to the Computer & Technology Section. He is a commissioner on the Texas Children's Commission, for which he serves as chair of the Standards of Representation Committee. Judge Ferguson is a sustaining life fellow of the Texas Bar Foundation, is a member of the Texas Bar College's Society of Legal Scholars and is designated a Champion of Justice.

Judge Ferguson is a sought-after speaker for lawyers and judges and is the 2024 recipient of the Texas Bar College Pat A. Nester Outstanding Achievement in CLE Award. Founded in 1965

by attorneys determined to assist the public and improve the profession of law, the Texas Bar Foundation has maintained its mission of using the financial contributions of its membership to build a strong justice system for all Texans. To date, the Texas Bar Foundation has distributed more than \$27 million throughout Texas to assist nonprofit organizations with a wide range of justice-related programs and services. More than \$1.6 million will be distributed for grants this fiscal year. For more information, please visit www.txbf.org.

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## Investigation into downtown fire ruled 'undetermined'

BY KARA GERBERT  
Managing Editor

The devastating fire that consumed several local businesses more than a week ago has been ruled 'undetermined' by the State Fire Marshall's Office and the Alpine Police Department which led the investigation. This information was issued by Alpine Chief of Police Darrell Losoya last Wednesday afternoon in a press release.

Losoya's press release

went on to state that heavy smoke was reported in the area around Judy's Bread and Breakfast located at 113 West Holland Avenue at around 3:43 p.m. on Sunday, May 26. The Alpine Police Department, Brewster County Sheriff's Office, Texas Department of Public Safety, and the Alpine Volunteer Fire Department responded to the call shortly after it was received and attempted to extinguish the fire. The building design proved to be an

issue as crews attempted to access the fire, which spread quickly. A request for help from area fire stations from Marathon, Marfa, Jeff Davis County, and Terlingua as well as members of the Texas Forest Service was issued to assist in saving the structure. Firefighters from the area as well as those stationed here from the Texas Forest Service worked tirelessly to extinguish the blaze but were unsuccessful. Although several firefighters were treated for

smoke inhalation, none suffered serious injuries.

See FIRE • 11



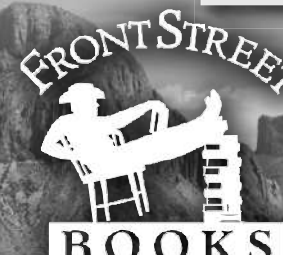
Members of area government agencies, as well as local contractors, conferred last Thursday during the collaborative effort to complete the extinguishing of any leftover hot spots in the tragic fire that wiped out local businesses in downtown Alpine recently.

Photo by Kara Gerbert

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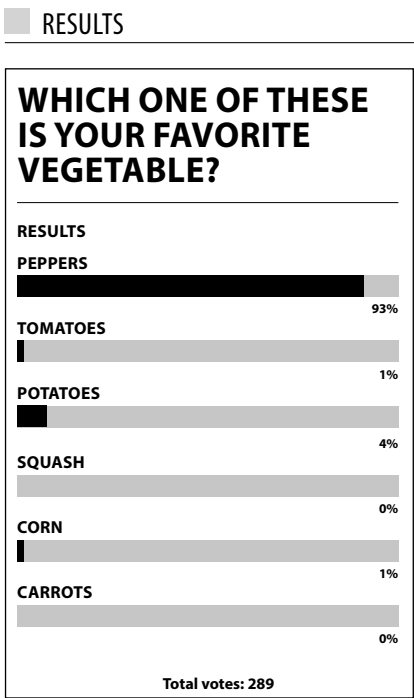


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# Opinions

## ONLINE POLL



## THIS WEEK'S QUESTION

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## 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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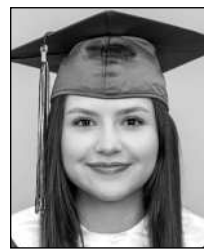
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## Support is far-reaching as an Alpine Buck

As a proud “former” Buck, I find myself reflecting on the many gifts our school district has given me. From academic opportunities to invaluable life lessons, my journey through Alpine ISD’s three campuses has been nothing short of transformative. Today, I extend my gratitude for the countless experiences and memories I have gained from being part of this educational community.



**ZOE ARREDONDO**  
 Class of 2024 Valedictorian

In Alpine ISD, from the moment you’re enrolled in school, you are taught kindness, generosity, and integrity. You are taught what it means to be a good student, friend, and kid, not only within the school but also within the town. As you grow, these characteristics are strengthened by the teachers who shape you, and then by the fellow students who surround you and have also been molded into good humans. Being a Buck in Alpine ISD means being given the tools and the opportunities to flourish and become the best version of yourself to contribute fruitfully to the real world you’ll one day become a part of, while also being given the time to make lasting memories.

If I could describe Alpine ISD in one word, it would be “close.” The close, tightly-knit culture of our school dis-

trict provides the best family-like atmosphere for us to learn in. Even as a high school student, I had the opportunity to visit the other two campuses, visit old teachers, and meet and interact with younger kids. Being able to do this always dug up the old memories that kept my class tethered together, no matter how far our many extracurricular activities and pathways stretched us apart. I remember when I was a junior in the student council, we came up with the initiative to become more involved with the elementary school students in the mornings. The student council members would take shifts to give out high fives and make conversation with the little ones before their school day started. I know that talking to the “big kids” probably made their day, but they’ll never know how seeing their big smiles and excitement to talk to us made mine.

As a citizen of such a small town, it is very evident to me that one of the biggest focal points and topics of conversa-

tion within our community is our school district and all the great accomplishments that come out of it. Being a Buck means being proud. It means being proud of yourself and all you’ve done, being proud of your peers’ success, always lifting them up, and finally, being proud to represent your school inside and outside of its walls. Because our town is so small and our students’ accomplishments are so big, it’s not uncommon for a kid to go to our local grocery store and get recognized for their academic abilities, athletic abilities, musical abilities, etc. The skill of being able to take pride in oneself while staying humble, and appreciating every ounce of support from the community, is one of the biggest lessons I’ve learned from being so involved in my school.

While I’m grateful for all of the lessons being a Buck in Alpine ISD has given me, I will always be most grateful for the blessing it has brought me to meet new people and form lifelong bonds. People are beautiful and Alpine is full of them. From providing me with amazing mentors to giving me great kids to babysit, Alpine ISD has been and always will be a huge part of my life. This sentiment genuinely rings true for me: Once a Buck, always a Buck.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Thank you

The Big Bend Arts Council and the other businesses lost in the fire on May 26th would like to thank Jennifer Harrod, owner of Javelinas on Holland Gift Shop & Boutique, and her staff for the event last Wednesday night. They had an event scheduled already for a new product launch with their VIP group members that night, but, once they saw the flames on Sunday, plans immediately transformed into a benefit for those that they saw lose so much.

They made this happen in three days. With the help of Heidi and Scott Wasserman of Was-

serman Wranch who volunteered to bring Carl the Camel for selfies with the crowd to encourage donations and others, there was an instant response from the community.

Teri with Celebration Liquor donated drinks along with local distributor L&F. Local musicians Kendall Craig “Jeb Spacepilot”, The Latecomers, The Swifts, Texas Sage, and Rick Ruiz with a Few Too Many, all also answered the call for volunteers for live music performers for the event within hours.

Hotel Parker and Spice-wood, Suvalgo Jewelry, Face Painting by Leinora, Clara Mendias of Mendias and Com-

pany Salon, Bread Garden Bakery, and Murphy Street Provisions all stepped up and committed their services and donations to the event as well.

They went forward with this event to try to raise some immediate funds to help both the business owners and their employees in the short term as they move through the process of rebuilding their businesses. Jan Anderson, the owner of Vintage Antiques & Snazzy Things, has pledged that any donations made to V.A & S.T. go to assist the consignors that sold their merchandise in the store.

Displaced artists were also invited to sell work at the

event.

Their work is ongoing. There are multiple donations available.

Donations may be made at the Javelinas on Holland store during business hours with cash or credit card or online at <https://shopjavelinas.com/products/online-donation-for-downtown-alpinefire>

We have a wonderful community both in the Big Bend area and beyond. Thank you to those who attended and to those continuing to help all of us move forward.

Jan Moeller  
 Big Bend Arts Council-Alpine

### Volunteer firefighters

Thank you to the Alpine Volunteer firemen/women and police department for showing up and putting out a fire

that someone started, just after dark, on the front end of ours and my cousin’s property on West Fort Davis Street. Special thanks to Paul and Ebby Loeffler for being on your

front porch and seeing the vehicle stop and then flying by after starting the fire. We have found it so hard to believe that anyone in our community would start a fire, especially

after the devastation downtown. We’ve said a prayer for you in that the evil that resides in your soul is removed.

Dale and Robbie Burns  
 Alpine

### Disagrees with vision

In regard to the recent column by Heather Yadon in the May 23rd edition of the Alpine Avalanche, I pray her vision for Alpine does not

come to pass, which seemingly is the vision of her colleague from Irving, TX. I have long believed that ‘progress’ is not measured by the yardstick Ms. Yadon uses; increases in population,

demands, businesses, and services. For me, and perhaps a few others, Alpine is a small, uncongested community that is safe, friendly, and easy to access and navigate. I would hate for Alpine to

lose the qualities that make it such a great place to live, all of which I believe will happen if Ms. Yadon’s vision is realized.

Joe Franklin  
 Alpine

### What has changed since the tragedy in Uvalde?

Recently, Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton sued the Biden Administration over the new ATF rule changes announced in April, which would expand the definition of who needs a background check in private gun sales, along with clearly defining those sellers who will have to register as a licensed dealer.

At least three mass shootings could have been preventable with universal background checks. These include the Midland/Odessa mass shooting, where the gunman previously tried to purchase a firearm from a sporting goods store but was turned down due to his mental health history, only to later purchase an AR-15 assault-style

rifle from an unlicensed seller he met online. A UT Tyler poll notes Texans want to prevent tragic events like this, “Eighty-six percent of Texas voters support strengthening background checks, recognizing that we must do more to keep guns out of the hands of individuals with documented violent histories.”

Of course, Attorney General Ken Paxton and his buddies are going to lie to boost their camera spotlight. Kansas Attorney General Kris Kobach recently said, “Under the new rule, if Ken [Paxton] and I were to trade guns, one of us would have to get an FFL, pay \$200, and have the ATF issue a license.” The law only requires you to get an FFL if you plan to make a profit or run a business.

These new rules on increasing background checks come at

a time of increased mass shootings but also confusion on what steps gun shows should be taking to stay within the law as well as reduce their risk of arming the next mass or school shooter. In Alpine, Brewster County Sheriff Ronny Dodson said he’d be happy to help a local gun show come into compliance with the new law, while also noting the Paxton suit could create an injunction, therefore not requiring his services to perform background checks for a small fee. (A current injunction on the AFT rule change is in effect until June 2.) However, in a similar conversation, a local Lions Club representative, the organizer of the annual Big Bend Gun and Knife Show, was worried. He said if they required licensed dealers or background checks, they might lose vendors and at-

tendees. It’s quite possible, as in past years, that anyone will be able to walk in and buy an automatic weapon without any check on their criminal record. Even more disturbing, the event takes place at Sul Ross.

Paxton’s actions are especially despicable in light of the second anniversary of the tragic shooting in Uvalde, which took 21 lives, including 19 children, on May 24, 2022. Do you remember weeks later when Uvalde native Matthew McConaughey begged those in Washington to act because we knew the Texas Legislature would do nothing? Well, you were right. The NRA-backed, conservative majority will mourn the children who died two years ago while taking no action.

Reagan Stone  
 Ward 1 Alpine City Council member

# Heard on the STREET

What decade had the best music, and what is your favorite band/artist from that decade?



**Clarissa Alvarez:** The 80s definitely had the best music and my favorite band from that decade is Def Leppard.



**Bryan Bullard:** I have to go with the 90s. Radiohead was and still is my favorite band from that time and the rock and metal scene was gaining more traction as well as the rap scene. They had some of the best artists around!



**Monica Skinner:** The 80s and my favorite band is Poison.



**Kelly Springfield:** Being a Gen Xer I would have to say the 80s. All genres from country to metal had great songs. My favorite band from that decade would have to be Metallica, as they are the iconic heavy metal band.



**Jawanna Sanderson:** I believe the 90s are the best. My go-to music is always 90s country, pop-rock, or alternative and my favorite band from that decade is Matchbox 20.

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

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**June 7 Desert Plant Discovery Walk,** 9 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. at the front office of the Davis Mountains State Park.

**June 7, 14, 21, and 28 Tinker-Cad Open Lab,** 10 a.m. to Noon each Friday in June at the Alpine Public Library. Come learn the basics of 3D design and make models of your ideas.

**June 8 Birding for Beginners,** 9 a.m. to 10 a.m. Davis Mountains State Park Interpretive Center.

**June 8 Fort Davis National Historic Site Summer Program Series,** 6 p.m. to 7 p.m. at the Amphitheater. Join park interpreters as they share tales from the old days. Bring water, hats, and cushions for the benches, and in case of bad weather, the series will be held inside the interpretive center.

**June 11, 18, and 25 Adventure Begins at APL,** 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. for ages 6-12. Each session begins with 30 minutes of playful



exercise, followed by a popsicle break, and ends with themed reading and activities.

**June 12, 19, and 26 Cubelets,** 9:30 a.m. to 11 a.m. at the Alpine Public Library. Build robots that spin, squeak, and sing.

**June 15 Bicycle Rodeo,** 9 a.m. to Noon at Sul Ross entrance 2. Learn the ABCs of bicycle safety with the Alpine Police Department and TxDOT. All ages are welcome.

**June 15 Summertime Smoothies and Stories,** 2 p.m. at JUGO, 208 W. Holland for ages 6 and up. Partnering with Alpine Public Library.

**June 17-20 Colors and Plants: Crafts and Activities,** 9 a.m. to Noon. For more information contact [kirstenmoody2003@yahoo.com](mailto:kirstenmoody2003@yahoo.com)

**June 24-28 First Baptist Church of Alpine Vacation Bible School,** 8:30 to Noon for ages 3 through completed 5th grade. To register go to [http://www.fbc Alpine.com/vacation\\_bible\\_school](http://www.fbc Alpine.com/vacation_bible_school)

**July 8-12 Alpine Summer Music School: Music of the Middle Ages,** 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Kids 7-12, teens 13-17. For more information visit <https://www.alpineschoolofmusic.com/summer-school-i>

**July 27 Viva Big Bend Kid's Show with Mr. Will,** 11 a.m. at the Alpine Visitor's Center. All ages welcome. Free show.

## 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 Choral 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 [bbchorale.wixsite.com/bbcc](http://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 the Davis Mountains State Park Interpretive Center 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 American Legion.

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

## Weather, possible tornado destroys power lines

A severe storm passed through and across Hwy 67 this past weekend, downing power lines, snapping poles, and stripping vegetation. This photo from reader Jackson Wilbourn was taken after he was caught in what he described as a tornado with 100-plus mile-per-hour winds, with rain and hail. Wilbourn said he was unable to see due to the dirt and debris in the wind and had the driver's side window of his semi blown out as well as the windows on the tractor he was hauling on his flatbed. He suffered abrasions from hail and broken glass.

Photo courtesy of Jackson Wilbourn



## PET OF THE WEEK

Meet Asta. Asta was found as a stray in Alpine. She is about two years old, a Husky/ Heeler mix. The breed mix makes her intelligent as well as beautiful. Huskies are fun-loving and enjoy company, while Heelers are loyal, have a strong sense of duty, and are a working dog that takes their job seriously. Asta enjoys play group with other dogs and would be a great companion for a single person, a couple, or a family with older kids.

Asta is learning the leash with shelter volunteers, keeps her kennel neat and clean, and has learned the "sit" command easily and is treat motivated, so she will be easy to train. Come meet this loveable smarty pants.

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, June 25, from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. We receive a portion of beverage sales during that time.

Stay tuned for a Pups



and People Ice Cream Social.

Look for us at the courthouse square on July 4.

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., seven days a week 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. If you find a stray or injured pet, call the Alpine Police Department at 432-837-3486 to dispatch an Animal Control Officer.

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**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING**

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN BY THE CITY OF ALPINE THAT PUBLIC HEARINGS WILL BE HELD AT THE FOLLOWING MEETING DATES AND TIMES:

**PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION MEETING ON JUNE 24, 2024, AT 5:30 P.M.**

**CITY COUNCIL MEETING ON JULY 2, 2024, AT 5:30 P.M.**

THE PUBLIC HEARINGS WILL BE HELD IN CONSIDERATION OF THE FOLLOWING ITEMS:

**REPLAT 2024-06-01:** A REPLAT APPLICATION ALLOWING THE APPLICANT, PENELOPE V. AVERY, TO AMEND THE SETBACK REQUIREMENTS OF THE SUBJECT PROPERTY. THE SUBJECT PROPERTY IS LOCATED AT 1308 N. 4TH STREET AND IS LEGALLY DESCRIBED AS LOT SEVEN (7), BLOCK FORTY-SEVEN (47), NORTH ADDITION, LOCATED IN THE CITY OF ALPINE, BREWSTER COUNTY, TEXAS, ACCORDING TO THE PLAT OF SAID SUBDIVISION RECORDED IN PLAT ENVELOPE NO. 108 IN THE OFFICE OF THE COUNTY CLERK OF BREWSTER COUNTY, TEXAS. THE RECORD PROPERTY OWNER IS PENELOPE V. AVERY. THE PROPERTY ID OF THE SUBJECT PROPERTY IS 11666. THE CURRENT ZONING CLASSIFICATION OF THE PROPERTY IS R-1 ONE FAMILY DISTRICT. IF THE REPLAT IS APPROVED THE ZONING CLASSIFICATION WILL REMAIN R-1 ONE FAMILY DISTRICT.

**REZONE 2024-06-01:** A REZONE APPLICATION ALLOWING THE APPLICANT, SEAN HOPPER, TO ESTABLISH A LAUNDROMAT AT THE SUBJECT PROPERTY. THE SUBJECT PROPERTY IS LOCATED AT 1003 E. GALLEGU. AND IS LEGALLY DESCRIBED AS 0.5 ACRES, MORE OR LESS, LYING IN BREWSTER COUNTY, TEXAS, LOT TEN (10), THE W 1/2 OF LOT NINE (9), TWO (2) AND THE W 1/2 OF LOT THREE (3), EXCEPT THE NORTH 20 VARAS OF LOTS ONE (1), TWO (2) AND THE W 1/3 OF THREE (3), IN BLOCK THIRTY-THREE (33) HANCOCK ADDITION SOUTH OF THE RAILROAD, ACCORDING TO THE MAP/PLAT ON OF SAID ADDITION FILED IN PLAT ENVELOPE NO. 112, BREWSTER COUNTY PLAT RECORDS. THE PROPERTY OWNER OF RECORD IS SEAN A. HOPPER. THE PROPERTY IDENTIFICATION NUMBERS OF THE SUBJECT PROPERTY ARE 10746 AND 10749. THE CURRENT ZONING CLASSIFICATION OF THE SUBJECT PROPERTY IS R-4 MOBILE HOME DISTRICT. THE ZONING CLASSIFICATION IF THE REZONING APPLICATION IS APPROVED WILL BE C-1 NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL DISTRICT.

ALL PUBLIC HEARINGS WILL BE HELD AT CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS LOCATED AT 803 WEST HOLLAND AVENUE TO HEAR CITIZEN VIEWS AND COMMENTS CONCERNING THE PROPOSED APPLICATION. COPIES OF THE APPLICATION ARE AVAILABLE AT CITY HALL, 100 N 13TH STREET, BETWEEN THE HOURS OF 8:00 A.M. AND 12:00 P.M. AND 1:00 P.M. AND 5:00 P.M. MONDAY TO FRIDAY. QUESTIONS MAY BE DIRECTED TO THE OFFICE OF THE CITY SECRETARY AT [CITY.SECRETARY@CITYOFALPINE.COM](mailto:CITY.SECRETARY@CITYOFALPINE.COM) OR AT (432) 837-3301, OPTION 1.

RESPONSE • FROM 1

According to Morrow, the district has approximately 300 protests while last year they had 2,700. They anticipate being done with the protests by Herrera's last day, July 18.

Adding to the subject, Henington updated listeners that the appraisal district office has moved out of the tax assessor's office, where it has been for many years. It is now located westbound on Highway 90 in what was previously the Nurses Unlimited agency building, 1604 US-90.

The court approved most of the items on the agenda table during this meeting, including the proposal to begin the process for applying to the Texas Community

Development Grant Program for 2025 and 2026.

This approval extends to the procurement process, or phase I, in which the county submits that they are interested in applying for the grant project. The grant funds would apply to the county's water, sewer, and road projects. Phase II is the application, which is expected to be submitted late this year or early next year.

The court approved the contract renewal between Brewster County and PermianCare for the mental health deputy service that they provide to the county's judicial process.

Next, the court approved the updated contracts between the county and the Big Bend Library

of the Terlingua Common School District and the Big Bend Citizen's Alliance. The court had previously budgeted \$27,000 to support the libraries, and that amount has not changed, however, the amount has been divided equally between the two South County entities in the amount of \$13,500.

During this meeting, Marathon's Chamber of Commerce board member, Nadine Mannhart, presented some of the activities that the Marathon community has been involved with developing. Mannhart expressed that Marathon, while somewhat isolated in the county, has been very active and has many plans for the summer. Henington

offered the county's website as a platform for the chamber to share those events with the rest of the area.

Kayse Muratori, 9-1-1 GIS coordinator, had three more roadways to add to the MSAG database during this meeting. First, the court approved the new "Desolate Road" located off of Hen Egg Road. Second, they approved appropriately designating an approximately 0.5 mile of road littered with multiple cell towers as "Cell Tower Road." Lastly, the court made no action on the road name application for a road that does not exist yet, as the applicant will be advised to gain adjoining landowner's approval for easement

along property lines.

Muratori also shared that in the next few months, she and her office will be working on updating 30 pages of 9-1-1 addresses that are in question before the state designates the address issue as a critical error, prohibiting Muratori from fixing the issues herself.

Handling this time-sensitive project has put the Brewster County Road project on pause for the time being.

The last item on the agenda was reserved for Robert Alvarez, executive director for Brewster County Tourism. Alvarez shared that the tourism board recently held a meeting with a quorum which allowed

them to update the by-laws to reflect the allowance of remote attendance and remote voting. This update is expected to have a positive impact on the participation and meeting quorums in the future. Alvarez also reminded the court that Brewster County will be participating in and hosting the Outdoor Writers of America Conference at the end of the summer and the beginning of fall. Their annual conference will be held in El Paso this year and Alvarez expects 10 to 12 writers to come visit the Brewster County area.

The next regular commissioner's court meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, June 11 at 9:30 a.m.

AESB • FROM 1A

Reports from Stacy Wood, AESB treasurer said that their bank statement was looking good, and that she had tried to create a QuickBooks report, but that the technology was not cooperating, so she gave the board the total of monies in the bank currently.

Focusing back on the last board meeting she reiterated to AVFD Assistant Chief Charles Worden that because the board was the oversight entity responsible for the funding of the AVFD and because they were a non-profit any other accounts the department had would need to be closed immediately, a cashier's check issued for the money left in the account(s), and a verification that these accounts from the bank was needed to be turned over to the board. These "slush funds" monies as they were described would be deposited into the AESB account. Wood also requested that all bank statements be turned over to her and the board from the closed account. Wood then made a motion to have any accounts that were not the AESB account that the AVFD had currently open be closed, a cashier check issued, proof of the closing, and the turnover of all bank statements from the closed account, and the motion was seconded. Chairman Loeffler asked if there was any discussion, and board member Albert Benitez remarked, "There should be no slush funds or other accounts, period. The board account is the only one that there should be providing operating funds for the department."

Next on the agenda were reports from the AVFD on local calls as well as training that was being worked on and that is coming up shortly.

Colby Nunn, a firefighter with AVFD is participating in the six-week-long Big Bend Fire Academy in Terlingua hosted by the Terlingua Fire and EMS. Four other AVFD members are heading to Wildland Fire School, while newly hired EMC James Etchison will be enrolled in Fire Fighter One training.

Other training included some preplanning training at Alpine High School, where firefighters familiarized themselves with the layout of the school and all key areas for first responders. The department also participated in some team-building exercises which Worden said, "This is the first team building

I have done in the 13 years I have been a part of AVFD."

The department continues to work on water shuttle training, especially now that it is wildfire season.

The AVFD was called out on April 4 to a structure fire in the 700 block of East Avenue I, where they evacuated residents. According to the report from Chief Andrew Pierce, they quickly determined that the improper installation of a wall heater was the cause of the fire. The fire was quickly extinguished, and they were able to save the structure.

On April 7, the department was called out to a one-vehicle rollover in the area of the roadside park. AVFD assisted in the removal of three victims from the wreckage. The cause of the wreck was determined that an overloaded trailer caused tire failure resulting in the crash. The three individuals were transported by Emergent EMS and AVFD aided Sixtos Wrecker Service in cleaning debris from the roadway so that it could reopen.

On April 27, AVFD responded to a call of a brush fire west of Alpine at the roadside park. The fire was quick moving due to a west wind and the department requested the assistance of the Texas Forest Service and the Marathon Fire Department. With the help of the assistance of these two organizations, the fire was quickly extinguished, although it did consume approximately 33 acres.

In other news, Worden reported that the First Aid kits that had been purchased had been distributed to all of the vehicles that were in need of one and that the hose washer had also come in. These items were purchased with money from the Rural Services Grant. Worden told the board that the hoses were listed as being on backorder, so they were still waiting on those.

AESB board secretary Rusty Moore told Worden that because these items are being purchased with grant money, the grant provider would like to see what the money was spent on. "If they see that their money is being well spent and that we can document that, we stand a greater chance of securing funds in the future. The board is the oversight of the department, and with that comes the need to be completely transparent with how this public money is being spent. The best way to accomplish this is to have the paperwork, such as receipts and shipping manifests to explain what the funds are being used for," said Moore.

Finally, Worden told the board that the Texas Forest Service was still in the area and ready to assist with strike teams due to fire weather persisting in the area and the Marathon VFD communicated they are always willing to assist when needed.

Chairman Loeffler announced that he was going to call a rare executive session, but the board first set the next meeting for the AESB to be held on June 27. The meeting was then adjourned and the board went into executive session at 6:45 p.m.

WILDLIFE • FROM 1

The possible next step in managing the state's mountain lion populations is for the Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission to request that TPWD prepare materials on mandatory mountain lion harvest reporting, which is a standard hunting practice and wildlife management tool used in other states that would begin to fill the significant gap in scientific data on the species abundance, mortality causes, and population trends.

Texans for Mountain Lions is a coalition of landowners, biologists, conservationists, and organizations that is working to improve the status and conservation of our state's largest wild cat, the mountain lion. Their self-stated purpose is to

support the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission, and other stakeholders to implement a science-based management strategy to ensure the long-term survival

Commission's formal request for TPWD to prepare materials on mandatory harvest reporting."

According to Elbroch, harvest reporting is the most cost-efficient way to gather information about mountain lion

*[...] the mountain lion, shouldn't be left in traps for days or weeks on end until they die from dehydration and exposure."*

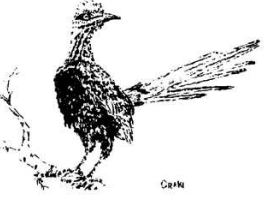
of healthy mountain lion populations in Texas.

Dr. Mark Elbroch, who leads Panthera's Puma Program and who is also a member of the Texans for Mountain Lions coalition, said, "Establishing trap check standards is a historic moment for Texas, but I was particularly appreciative of the

abundance and their trends over time.

"It will help TPWD make informed decisions about the conservation management of mountain lions far into the future," Elbroch said.

Visit [TexansforMountainLions.org](http://TexansforMountainLions.org) for more information about mountain lions in Texas.



**Terlingua Common School District**  
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## REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Terlingua Common School District is accepting proposals to complete approximately 1,500 square feet of outdoor sidewalks at the campus located at 550 Roadrunner Circle, Terlingua, TX 79852. Proposals must be submitted in a sealed envelope, with the outside of the envelope clearly marked "Sealed Proposal - Sidewalks". Proposals will be submitted to: Reagan Reed Superintendent Terlingua Common School District PO Box 256 Terlingua, TX 79852 Received proposals will be opened Tuesday, July 2nd, at 4:00 PM, at the administrative office of Terlingua CSD, located at 550 Roadrunner Circle, Terlingua, TX 79852. For questions or to view the job site, contact Reagan Reed by email at [rreed@terlinguacsd.com](mailto:rreed@terlinguacsd.com) or by phone at 432-371-2807.

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**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

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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  
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 Cup of Daily Soup  
 1/2 Reata Club or Steak Sandwich  
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# LOOKING BACK

Alpine Avalanche

SERVING THE BIG BEND AND DAVIS MOUNTAINS COUNTRY



June 3, 1993

Kokernot o6 Ranch employees battle range fires north of Alpine using a water truck that was furnished by the High Frontier School.

**June 24, 1993**  
The Big Bend Ranch Rodeo team spent time in San Angelo at the San Angelo Stock Show and Rodeo. They are pictured here with SASSR president Charles Probrandt. Team members from left are Curtis Evans and Little Curtis, Stormy Pruitt, Shelly Evans, Rick McIvor, coach Apache Adams, Joy Adams, David Adams, and two other officials of the rodeo.



June 24, 1993

The Longest Day of Golf tournament is set to kick off this next weekend, and these four ladies are getting in much-needed practice before the big day. Kathy Reed, Sally Johnson, Carol Jackson, and Terry Jean Allen are ready to tackle the course.



June 10, 1993

Jason Sullivan (center) recently completed the TCU Ranch Management Program. Here he is pictured with Dr. William Koehler (right), TCU's vice chancellor of academic affairs, and John Merrill, director of the year-long program.

# Don't mess with the success of hydrangeas

**Dear Neil: My hydrangeas have been beautiful this year. I did not cut them back last year. When and how much can I cut them back this year?**

Well done! Those are lovely. Frankly, as beautiful as they are, I'm not sure I'd feel compelled to prune them much at all. I would trim off the brown heads after they have finished blooming. If you have a branch or two that extend out beyond all the others, they could be cut, too, just to even things up, but otherwise just leave them alone. I wouldn't mess with success like this.

**Dear Neil: We have a crape myrtle that was planted in 2018. Until Spring 2023 I trimmed its branches back in mid-February**

**GARDENER'S MAILBAG**  
by neil sperry

**each year and it always bloomed beautifully. I did not trim it back last year or this year. It is now fully leafed out, but it is only blooming on one side. It bloomed as usual last year. What could the problem be?**

It's difficult to answer without seeing the plant. The past three winters have seen significant freeze damage to several varieties in some parts of



Texas (notably Natchez, Tuscarora, Country Red, Sioux, and Muskogee). Of those, Natchez and Tuscarora were hurt the worst, but I've even seen normally reliable types like Catawba hurt. Tender types leafed out and bloomed one year but were obviously weakened by the cold. It wasn't until the strong

new shoots from their bases grew up and took over that they started to act normally. Please don't assume that the "topping" you were doing back in the 2018-2021 time period was helping them bloom. It never does, although some will try to tell you otherwise. I'm part of a not-for-profit that has been working

with about 30,000 crape myrtles, and we've observed that over many years. I'd suggest you look at the side that is shy to flower. If it's not as vigorous in putting out new leaves, look at the base of the plant. If you're getting a lot of new shoots, cold damage could be the reason. I've included a photo

of a plant that has been hurt badly by one of the recent winters. Perhaps it will match up with yours. Next time, feel free to attach a photo.

*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 TX Trini's "If \_\_\_ A Hammer"
- 5 Oldham County seat
- 6 TX Percy Foreman defended James \_\_\_ Ray (MLK killer)
- 7 western writer Zane
- 8 TXism: "fits like scales \_\_\_ fish"
- 9 struts
- 16 this Harper was in "Crimes of the Heart" with TX Sissy
- 18 San Antonio Zoo has big collection of these animals
- 21 Taylor of Texas-based "Giant" (init.)
- 22 \_\_\_ Sandberg said "Texas is valor and swagger"
- 23 Trinity High class
- 24 uncommissioned officer
- 30 TXism: "as hollering 'snake' at a quilting bee"
- 34 Sally of "Back Roads" with TX Tommy Lee (init.)
- 35 TX rancher Norris' "\_\_\_ of Norris"
- 36 Don \_\_\_ Aury was first to claim Galveston
- 37 this Michael was in TX Audie film "Arizona Raiders"
- 39 Austin bridge mammals (3 wds.)
- 43 WWII atom bomber \_\_\_ Gay

**DOWN**

- 1 TX Buck Owens tune: "\_\_\_ a Tiger by the Tail"
- 2 in Robertson County on U.S. 79
- 3 TXism: "slippery as \_\_\_ pig"
- 4 this Timothy starred with TX Crystal Bernard on "Wings"
- 9 "Father of Texas" (init.) predecessor
- 10 Lone \_\_\_ State
- 11 this TX Jack was president of the MPPAA
- 15 TXism: "good \_\_\_ boy"
- 16 "\_\_\_ the night before Christmas . . ."
- 17 UT astronomers measure the distance between the \_\_\_ earth
- 19 chief counsel to "Red Scare" Sen. McCarthy (2 wds.)
- 20 Texas "Mr. Sam" (init.)
- 24 TX Audie Murphy
- 25 refer to indirectly
- 26 TX creek: \_\_\_ Lo Digo Creek
- 27 whirlpool tub
- 28 Aggie coach Gene (1965-71)
- 29 home of "Old Rip" the horned frog
- 30 TXism: "\_\_\_ a squirrel up a tree"
- 31 "doesn't apply" on a form (abbr.)
- 32 TXism: "living high \_\_\_ the hog"
- 33 ex-Cowboy offensive coach, Turner (1991-93)
- 34 flavored coffee additives
- 35 spotted wildcat endangered in Texas
- 36 "falling star"
- 37 TXism: "wore my fingers to the \_\_\_"
- 38 this Scala was in "Ride A Crooked Trail" with 12-down
- 39 TX O. Henry's "A Fog in \_\_\_"
- 40 "\_\_\_ gone and done it" (uh oh)
- 41 Gov. Richards
- 42 TXism: "call \_\_\_ day" (quit)
- 43 TXism: "write \_\_\_ he can't read fast"
- 44 TXism: "\_\_\_ a bull give milk?" (no)
- 45 Astro headwear
- 46 Lufkin High class
- 47 TXism: "big fish in a \_\_\_ pond"

## TEXAS CROSSWORD

by Charley & Guy Orbison  
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# Sports

## Cowboys corral competition



The team congratulates Hunter Reid as he adds yet another run to the Cowboy's total.

Photo by Julie Meyer

## Pecos Bills, Austin Weirdos fall victim to dominant streak

BY TRISTIAN BARRAGAN  
Contributor

In an awe-inspiring display of baseball mastery, the Alpine Cowboys have stormed through the initial week of the Pecos League season, maintaining an unblemished 7-0 record. Their commanding pitching and explosive offensive capabilities have propelled them to the forefront of the league, leaving their opponents trailing in their wake.

The Cowboys kicked off the season with a relentless five-game sweep against the Pecos Bills, overwhelming them with a combined score of 51-9. Their season opener on May 28th concluded in a resounding 21-0 victory, a testament to the team's unwavering determination and sheer talent. This offensive onslaught persisted throughout the series, with standout performances from AJ Folds (#64), Drew Bayard (#24), and Drake Angeron (#1), who con-



The Alpine Cowboys Baseball Club proudly displays the late Jared Strait's jersey number behind home plate at Kokernot Field. Jared's number will be permanently displayed all season at Kokernot and is also a part of the Cowboy's jerseys this season and going forward.

Courtesy photo

sistently found ways to get on base and bring runs home.

Following their decisive victory over the Pecos Bills, the Cowboys set their sights on the Austin Weirdos, an-

other traveling team in the Pecos League. The Weirdos, despite their efforts, proved to be no match for the Cowboys' offensive firepower and pitching dominance. In the first two games of

the series, the Cowboys outscored the Weirdos 35-11, further solidifying their position as a top contender in the league.

See COWBOYS • 9

## Alpine's 7-on-7 qualifies for State Tournament



The Alpine 7on7 football team qualified this past weekend in Wink for the State Tournament that will be held June 27-29. The Alpine 7on7 team is coached by Danny and Derek Rojo and organized and sponsored by Felipe Fierro and Angie Smith.

Courtesy photo

## Beginners to pros



Alpine's Braves come through the Alpine Cowboy's welcome line during opening day ceremonies at Alpine's Kokernot Field.

Courtesy photo

## Caught on film



Alpine High School's head girls' softball coach Christopher Virdell was caught off-guard by the camera during opening day at Kokernot Field last Thursday.

Courtesy photo

**ATHLETE OF THE WEEK**

**ACE GRANADO**

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# Opening day crowd

The Alpine Cowboy's opening day game at Kokernot Field had a good crowd of baseball fans from the area who came out to watch the Cowboys topple the Pecos Bills.

Courtesy photo



## Alpine Sports Summer Training Schedule

Grades 7-12

AHS Field House Weight Room

**Week one:** June 10-13, 8 a.m. to 10 a.m.

**Week two:** June 17-20, 8 a.m. to 10 a.m.

**Week three:** June 24-27, 8 a.m. to 10 a.m.

**Week four:** July 15-18, 8 a.m. to 10 a.m.

**Week five:** July 24-25, 8 a.m. to 10 a.m.

**Week six:** July 29-Aug. 1, 8 a.m. to 10 a.m.

# Alpine topples Compass Academy



Alpine's 7on7 football team took on Odessa's Compass Academy this past Saturday in Wink to try and qualify for the State Tournament to be held at the end of the month in College Station. Alpine beat Odessa Compass 34 to 0 and followed that up with a game against Hale Center where they defeated the Owls 20 to 15 in game two, and closed it out by defeating Crane 26-7 in the State qualifying Semi Finals.

Photo courtesy of Felipe Fierro

## COWBOYS • FROM 8

Pitcher Sam Russell's exceptional performance on June 2, where he secured a 15-5 win was a highlight of the series.

Reflecting on the team's extraordinary start, Head Coach Sean Persky acknowledged the level of competition within the Pecos League, stating, "While both the Pecos Bills and the Austin Weirdos are relatively new teams, the Austin Weirdos have several players with affiliate experience, making them a formidable opponent. In fact, I'd say this is probably the best Austin team in the last three years."

Persky also noted the increased competitiveness of the Pecos Bills as the series progressed, attributing the Cowboys' ability to maintain their dominance to their exceptional pitching depth. "The games definitely got more competitive as the series went on," Persky observed. "Having more pitching depth definitely helped us out."

The Cowboys' home opener at Kokernot Field was nothing short of a spectacle, drawing a massive crowd from the neighboring communities of Alpine, Fort Davis, Marfa, and Marathon. The electric atmosphere and unwavering support from the fans were a testament to the deep

**"The games definitely got more competitive as the series went on. Having more pitching depth definitely helped us out."**

— Sean Persky, Cowboys head coach

connection between the team and the community. Persky expressed his gratitude for the overwhelming support, stating, "It was great to see so many people show up to the home opener. It's always a big game on the schedule."

As the Cowboys gear up for their upcoming road trip, they remain focused on the challenges ahead. "The biggest challenges are yet to come," Persky cautioned, noting that the team will soon face formidable opponents like Roswell, Garden City, and Tucson. However, he remains confident in his team's abilities and their unwavering determination to continue their winning streak.

The Alpine Cowboys have ignited the Pecos League with their electrifying start to the season. With a perfect 7-0 record and a roster overflowing with talent, their journey is captivating baseball fans across the region.



50-280 (Rev. 4-22/6)

### NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING TO DISCUSS BUDGET AND PROPOSED TAX RATE

The SAN VICENTE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT will hold a public meeting at (6:00 pm, Thursday, June 20th, 2024) in SVISD Meeting Room, 195 Escuela Vista Dr,  
(Big Bend National Park, Texas 79834). **The purpose of this meeting is to discuss the school district's budget that will determine the tax rate that will be adopted. Public participation in the discussion is invited.**

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

**Maintenance Tax** \$ 0.7380 /\$100 (Proposed rate for maintenance and operations)  
**School Debt Service Tax**  
**Approved by Local Voters** \$ \_\_\_\_\_ /\$100 (proposed rate to pay bonded indebtedness)

#### Comparison of Proposed Budget with Last Year's Budget

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

Maintenance and operations	<u>20.91</u>	% increase	or	_____	% (decrease)
Debt service	_____	% increase	or	_____	% (decrease)
Total expenditures	<u>20.91</u>	% increase	or	_____	% (decrease)

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

	Preceding Tax Year	Current Tax Year
Total appraised value* of all property	\$ <u>17,721,358</u>	\$ <u>21,150,089</u>
Total appraised value* of new property**	\$ <u>0</u>	\$ <u>573,173</u>
Total taxable value*** of all property	\$ <u>9,684,506</u>	\$ <u>12,674,366</u>
Total taxable value*** of new property**	\$ <u>0</u>	\$ <u>523,376</u>

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

#### Bonded Indebtedness

Total amount of outstanding and unpaid bonded indebtedness\* \$ 0

\* Outstanding principal.

50-280 (Rev. 4-22/6) (Back)

#### Comparison of Proposed Rates with Last Year's Rates

	Maintenance & Operations	Interest & Sinking Fund*	Total	Local Revenue Per Student	State Revenue Per Student
<b>Last Year's Rate</b>	\$ <u>0.73800</u>	\$ <u>0.00000</u> *	\$ <u>0.73800</u>	\$ <u>867</u>	\$ <u>10,236</u>
<b>Rate to Maintain Same Level of Maintenance &amp; Operations Revenue &amp; Pay Debt Service</b>	\$ <u>0.65439</u>	\$ <u>0.00000</u> *	\$ <u>0.65439</u>	\$ <u>629</u>	\$ <u>5,776</u>
<b>Proposed Rate</b>	\$ <u>0.73800</u>	\$ <u>0.00000</u> *	\$ <u>0.73800</u>	\$ <u>631</u>	\$ <u>10,326</u>

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

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

	Last Year	This Year
Average Market Value of Residences	\$ <u>266,123</u>	\$ <u>189,097</u>
Average Taxable Value of Residences	\$ <u>166,123</u>	\$ <u>96,367</u>
Last Year's Rate Versus Proposed Rate per \$100 Value	\$ <u>0.73800</u>	\$ <u>0.73800</u>
Taxes Due on Average Residence	\$ <u>1,226</u>	\$ <u>711</u>
Increase (Decrease) in Taxes		\$ <u>(515)</u>

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

**Notice of Voter-Approval Rate: The highest tax rate the district can adopt before requiring voter approval at an election is 0.73800. This election will be automatically held if the district adopts a rate in excess of the voter-approval rate of 0.73800.**

#### Fund Balances

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

Maintenance and Operations Fund Balance(s)	\$ <u>1,181,043</u>
Interest & Sinking Fund Balance(s)	\$ <u>0</u>

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

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

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

# Avalanche Classifieds

**ERRORS** - Please check your ad the first day of publication. We are only responsible for the first incorrect insertion of any ad. Publisher's liability for damages resulting from errors in any advertising that it has agreed to publish shall be limited to the amount actually received by the publisher in consideration for its agreement to publish the advertisement in ques-

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tion. It shall not be responsible for any consequential damages suffered by any party.

**DEADLINES** - All ads are due in the office by 12:00 (noon) on Tuesday.

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30¢ FOR EACH ADDITIONAL WORD

**CANCELLATIONS** - All ads

may be cancelled for the next publication until 12:00 (noon) on the Monday before publication.  
**ACCEPTANCE** - The publisher wants to do everything that is possible within the confines of good taste and legal constraints to help you advertise your product or service to the best advantage. We reserve the right to edit or reject any copy or insertion

that does not meet our standards of acceptance. The Alpine Avalanche does not run ads for anyone whose balance on previous ads is not current.  
**PAYMENT** - All Classified Ads must be paid in advance.  
**EMAIL** - Send your Classified Ads to the Alpine Avalanche by email at shelley.maroney@alpineavalanche.com.

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407 E Lockhart #2 3 BR / 1 Bath Rent \$1095.00/mo + Deposit 432-249-0293

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**HOUSE FOR RENT**

Small house for rent outside of Alpine, Texas. Partially furnished one bedroom all utilities paid except Internet. Big backyard with a view. \$900/mo. Please contact owner if

**HOUSE FOR RENT**

interested 915-479-1576.

**HELP WANTED**

Hampton Inn is seeking dedicated employees to fill night audit. Excellent pay and benefits. Please apply in person at 2607 West Highway 90.

Holiday Inn Express is seeking dedicated employees to fill morning front desk, breakfast attendant, and housekeeping positions. Please apply in person at 2004 East Highway 90.

Action Heating and cooling is hiring service tech. Must have a current driver's license and be in good physical shape. We will train right candidate. Please call 432-386-0275 for more information.

Black Gap Utilities is now accepting applications for our outside plant construction division. We are currently searching for laborers, equipment operators with knowledge of (mini excavators, backhoes, directional drilling rigs (Ditch Witch and Vermeer) and locating equipment). A valid Class C driver's license is a must but Class A CDL is a +. Pay will be dependent on experience. Potential employees must pass drug screening. Please have dependable transportation to and from work.

**HELP WANTED**

Black Gap employees work very closely with the public and our valued customers, so Candidates should be always courteous and professional. Positions are 1099 employees. Job Type: Contract Schedule: Weekends as needed Ability to Relocate: Alpine, TX: Relocate before starting work (Preferred) Work Location: In person.

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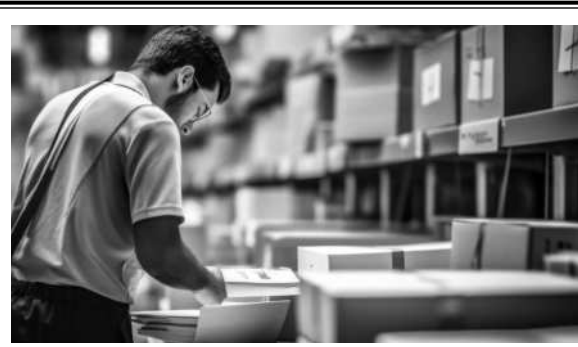
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Responsibilities include loading and unloading, forklift operation, preparation of shipping documents, verify deliveries, maintain warehouse and other general duties.

**Requirements:** Must be willing to work flexible hours including evenings, weekends and holidays, ability to work independently, verbal, and written communication skills, working knowledge of computers and forklift experience preferred. Must be able to pass a pre-employment drug screen.

**Interested candidates should call (432)729-3071 Ext. 607 or fax resume to (432)375-6241.**

Applications are also available at Village Farms Security Stations 3 Miles N. Hwy 17 Marfa, TX or 3 Miles S. Hwy 17 FT. Davis, TX



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**BLACK GAP UTILITIES IS NOW ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS FOR OUR OUTSIDE PLANT CONSTRUCTION DIVISION.**

We are currently searching for laborers, equipment operators with knowledge of (mini excavators, backhoes, directional drilling rigs (Ditch Witch and Vermeer) and locating equipment). A valid Class C driver's license is a must but Class A CDL is a +. Pay will be dependent on experience. Potential employees must pass drug screen. Please have dependable transportation to and from work. Black Gap employees work very closely with the public and our valued customers, so Candidates should be courteous and professional at all times. Positions are 1099 employees.

**Job Type:** Contract  
**Schedule:** Weekends as needed  
**Ability to Relocate:** Alpine, TX: Relocate before starting work (Preferred)  
**Work Location:** In person

Jason Henry  
Chief Operations Officer  
8520 Beeson Ave, Odessa Tx 79764  
432-940-0753  
jason@blackgaputilities.com



**NOTICE TO CREDITORS**

Notice is hereby given that original Letters of Independent Administration for the Estate of CHARLENE TORBA WEST, Deceased, were issued on May 21, 2024, in Cause No. PR03163 pending in the County Court of Brewster County, Texas to: CINDY DECKER.

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


DATED the 29th day of May, 2024.

/s/David M. Hurst  
Hurst & Hurst, P.C.  
P.O. Box 3015  
Abilene, TX 79604  
State Bar No. 10313750  
david@dhurstlaw.com  
Attorney for the Independent Administrator with Will Annexed

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**LEGAL NOTICE**  
Application has been made with the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission for a Distiller's and Rectifier's Permit (D) by Thomas Roberts dba Desert Ghost Distilling Company, LLC, to be located at 303 NW First Street, Marathon, Brewster County, Texas. Owner of said corporation is Thomas Cody Roberts, President.

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FIRE • FROM 3

Early in the week following the fire, crews were called to the site to extinguish hot spots that were flaring up and the building remains were still smoking in places as of Wednesday morning.

On Thursday of last week, five members of the AVFD were on hand along with two employees from Brewster County, a member of the Terlingua Fire and EMS, Chairman of the Alpine Emergency Services Board, Paul Loeffler, and three members from TxDOT, who were directing traffic and overseeing the use of heavy equipment brought to the site by Rick Stephens and his construction crew and Herman Acosta to turn over debris and soak the building to extinguish any remaining hot spots. Acosta supplied at least two cement trucks full of water to flood portions of the site while AVFD crew members utilized soapy water and hand tools to turn over debris and soak the premises with more water.

As of Friday morning, Brewster County Judge Greg Henington said, "As of today, the fire is out, and fire crews are finished with their part of the incident. Now all that remains is the building owner and the city coordinating their efforts to clean up the debris and continue dismantling the remaining structure that is left standing. I would like to thank everyone who not only responded to the original fire call but also those who were involved in the final extinguishing of the fire yesterday. A huge thanks to Anthony Marquez, Isidro Sanchez, and Joel Muniz from TxDOT for helping to direct traffic, Ward 5 City Councilman Rick Stephens and his construction crew of Joe

Pineda and Jose Ramos who brought in equipment to help the fire department extinguish hot spots, Herman Acosta for the seven concrete trucks full of water, Brewster County employees Mercedes Hernandez and Israel Natera for helping out, AVFD firefighters Colby Nunn, Jeremiah Pearce, David Neet, Ethan Sullivan, and Chief Andrew Pierce, as well as Paul Loeffler, Chairman of the Alpine Emergency Services Board and Jared Thomason of Terlingua Fire/EMS for helping direct the crews."

On Monday evening, the City of Alpine held a workshop specifically relating to the fire. The workshop consisted of an update on the response to the fire, a discussion of a business impact plan, the destroyed building, and lessons learned from the tragic fire.

The council heard from business owners, Abbey Branch who heads up Historic Alpine, the building owner Bill Ivey, and members of the community. Branch said that as of the meeting, they had collected \$29,000 in donations and that the business owners affected as well as employees could go to their website [historicalpine.org](http://historicalpine.org) and fill out an application to receive a portion of these funds in order to get back on their feet and reopen their businesses as soon as possible. The deadline to apply is June 12.

Director of Tourism for Alpine Chris Ruggia told the council and the audience that on Friday, June 28 there will be another musical fundraiser to be held at the Granada because he'd had at least 15 bands and musicians reach out wanting to contribute. This will be sponsored by Visit Alpine, Artwalk Alpine,

and other organizations focused on Alpine, and this money will go to Historic Alpine to continue to help those businesses affected. On Saturday, June 29, there will be a BBQ and music held at the American Legion Big Bend Post 79, and this fundraiser will be specifically to raise funds for Gallery on the Square and any of the artists affected from there and Catchlight. Lance John-

son, Executive Director of Artwalk Alpine said, "Seeing as how this has affected artists that are always a big part of our event, we wanted to step up and do something for these individuals. Not to take away from the other businesses, but there are around 30 artists who were affected by this and lost their work."

Many ideas were talked about as far as what happens to the space go-

ing forward, and owner Bill Ivey said, "I'm not sure where we go from here exactly. I'm heartbroken for the business owners and I'm still in shock. When I bought that property, downtown Alpine was a ghost town, and I bought it to bring some life back to the downtown area. It has been a part of my entire family's life ever since. I know that my family and I are not able to rebuild it

to what it was, but I am open and transparent to discussion of what steps we take going forward." Ivey also told the council and the audience that he was available anytime and gave his phone number out to those wishing to contact him. "This will be a long road. Nothing will be done quickly, so I'm just taking this day by day and moving one step forward at a time," Ivey said.

50-280 (Rev. 4-22/6)

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING TO DISCUSS BUDGET AND PROPOSED TAX RATE**

The Terlingua Common School District will hold a public meeting at 6:00 PM on June 19, 2024 in the Big Bend High School Room at 550 Roadrunner Circle, Terlingua, TX 79852. **The purpose of this meeting is to discuss the school district's budget that will determine the tax rate that will be adopted. Public participation in the discussion is invited.**

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

**Maintenance Tax** \$ 0.66690 /\$100 (Proposed rate for maintenance and operations)  
**School Debt Service Tax**  
**Approved by Local Voters** \$ 0.0 /\$100 (proposed rate to pay bonded indebtedness)

**Comparison of Proposed Budget with Last Year's Budget**

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

Maintenance and operations	<u>2.05</u> % increase	or	<u>          </u> % (decrease)
Debt service	<u>n/a</u> % increase	or	<u>n/a</u> % (decrease)
Total expenditures	<u>2.05</u> % increase	or	<u>          </u> % (decrease)

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

	Preceding Tax Year	Current Tax Year
Total appraised value* of all property	\$ <u>213,806,790</u>	\$ <u>225,936,510</u>
Total appraised value* of new property**	\$ <u>9,426,341</u>	\$ <u>7,191,311</u>
Total taxable value*** of all property	\$ <u>189,558,040</u>	\$ <u>197,079,575</u>
Total taxable value*** of new property**	\$ <u>9,108,774</u>	\$ <u>7,123,779</u>

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

**Bonded Indebtedness**

Total amount of outstanding and unpaid bonded indebtedness\* \$ 0.0

\* Outstanding principal.

50-280 (Rev. 4-22/6) (Back)

**Comparison of Proposed Rates with Last Year's Rates**

	Maintenance & Operations	Interest & Sinking Fund*	Total	Local Revenue Per Student	State Revenue Per Student
<b>Last Year's Rate</b>	\$ 0.66920	\$ 0.0 *	\$ 0.66920	\$ 9,577	\$ 5,164
<b>Rate to Maintain Same Level of Maintenance &amp; Operations Revenue &amp; Pay Debt Service</b>	\$ 0.67147	\$ 0.0 *	\$ 0.67147	\$ 10,180	\$ 4,561
<b>Proposed Rate</b>	\$ 0.66690	\$ 0.0 *	\$ 0.66690	\$ 10,287	\$ 4,884

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

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

	Last Year	This Year
Average Market Value of Residences	\$ 119,586	\$ 139,962
Average Taxable Value of Residences	\$ 54,617	\$ 28,482
Last Year's Rate Versus Proposed Rate per \$100 Value	\$ 0.66920	\$ 0.66690
Taxes Due on Average Residence	\$ 365.50	\$ 189.95
Increase (Decrease) in Taxes		\$ (175.55)

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

**Notice of Voter-Approval Rate: The highest tax rate the district can adopt before requiring voter approval at an election is 0.66690. This election will be automatically held if the district adopts a rate in excess of the voter-approval rate of 0.66690.**

**Fund Balances**

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

Maintenance and Operations Fund Balance(s)	\$ 2,014,300
Interest & Sinking Fund Balance(s)	\$ 0.0

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

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

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



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# Steak and veggies roll up in five-star style

If you're looking for something different to whip up for the weekly family dinner or to serve to a group of friends at your next dinner party, consider trying these steak roll-ups as they will surely be a hit with everyone.

It isn't uncommon for those of us living in the last frontier to plate up a nice, juicy steak with a side of veggies and perhaps potatoes or some other delightful starchy side dish such as mac and cheese or even rice. I mean, we're West Texans, and that's what we do. Unless of course, we're getting our Mexican food cravings satisfied. Then all bets are off.

These days, the price of groceries and especially beef can be a bit steep, so those juicy ribeyes and t-bones may have to take a backseat to other more affordable cuts. Cuts such as flank steak or sirloin work best here. But that's ok because this meal can be just as delicious using these cuts of meat and helps to satisfy that beef craving without breaking the bank.

Similar to those fruit roll-ups the kids used to eat all the time, but much better and better for you,



HEAD OVER MEALS

by kara gerbert

these beefy, veggie-laden delights will dress up your dining table in a way that will wow your family, friends, and tastebuds.

Not only are they delicious as is, but the end result is that they are drizzled in a rosemary balsamic glaze to kick their flavor up a notch. And the best thing about these beef and vegetable bouquets is that they're done in half an hour.

And if you want to keep them keto, don't add the balsamic glaze. It contains brown sugar, and that's not going to help you adhere to that keto lifestyle unless you can come up with a substitute ingredient that would work similarly. Either way, you slice it, this is a dish you'll want to come back to time and time again.

- INGREDIENTS
- 8-ounce sirloin or flank steak, thinly sliced
  - Extra virgin olive oil to taste
  - Salt, to taste
  - Ground black pepper, to taste
  - Rosemary, to taste, chopped
  - 1 red bell pepper, sliced into thin strips
  - 1 orange bell pepper, sliced into thin strips
  - 1 medium zucchini, sliced into thin strips
  - 1 medium yellow onion, halved and thinly sliced
  - White button or cremini mushrooms, to taste, cut into thin strips
  - For rosemary balsamic glaze
    - 1 teaspoon extra-virgin olive oil
    - 1 large clove garlic, minced
    - ¼ cup dark balsamic vinegar
    - 2 tablespoons dry white wine
    - 2 teaspoons brown sugar
    - 2 sprigs rosemary
    - ¼ cup beef broth

- DIRECTIONS
- Lay the flank steak or sirloin out onto a cutting board and rub each side with olive oil, salt, pepper, and chopped fresh rosemary.
  - Heat 1 tablespoon of olive oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat.
  - Cook the red bell pepper, orange bell pepper, zucchini, yellow onion, and mushrooms until tender, about five minutes
  - Season the vegetable mixture with salt and pepper.
  - Place the cooked vegetables on one end of each steak cutlet.



Steak Roll-Ups

Courtesy photo


Roll up each steak so the vegetable mixture is on the inside. The vegetables should be sticking out of the ends of the steak roll-ups. Secure each with a toothpick. Heat one teaspoon of olive oil in a saucepan over medium-high heat. Add the garlic and cook until fragrant, about one minute, while stirring. Add the balsamic vinegar, red wine, brown sugar, and rosemary sprigs. Bring the contents to a boil. Once contents are at a boil, immediately reduce to a simmer

and cook for another five minutes. Add the beef broth and bring the mixture to a boil once again. Reduce mixture to a simmer for another 15 minutes, uncovered. Remove the rosemary sprigs. Grill the steaks either on an outdoor grill or on the stovetop in a grill pan on either side until fully cooked, measuring about 130 degrees when checked with a meat thermometer, about 3-5 minutes on each side. Drizzle steaks with the rosemary balsamic glaze and serve immediately with your favorite sides.

## The Great Wagon Train of 1850: 340 wagons, 1,800 mules, more

In late June 1850 three hundred and forty wagons, 1,800 mules, 500 cattle, numerous horses, oxen, and various other animals, numbering 4000, left Fort Inge on the Frio River where the road to Eagle Pass separated from the newly established road to El Paso. In addition, there were 450 civilians headed to the California gold fields and 175 soldiers. It was 585 miles to the next point of civilization, El Paso.

It was less than a year since a viable route west to El Paso had been surveyed by Lieutenant-Colonel Joseph E. Johnston, Army Corps Topographical Engineers, and improvements made during the survey by soldiers under the supervision of Lt. William F.



FIDDLER'S GREEN

by larry francell

Smith (TE). Already over three thousand had used to road across West Texas to California.

The purpose of this wagon train was to supply the garrison at the newly established Fort Bliss, to supply protection to traders hoping to create new trading routes west, and to provide escort to those numerous people heading

for the gold fields. Brevet Major John T. Sprague was in command. Sprague, originally a marine lieutenant, was the son-in-law of General William Jenkins Worth and arrived in Texas with the Eighth Infantry as the officer in charge of subsistence, an experience that proved helpful when he asked for field duty and was put in command of this massive undertaking.

At the time El Paso del Norte was a place, not a town. In the immediate area were Hart's Mill, Magoffinsville, Coon's Ranch, and Franklin (Ben Coon's middle name). Fort Bliss was now added to this mix and helped consolidate the area into a city.

Ben Coon, dedicated to creating a trading route through Texas to El Paso,

and convinced that El Paso would become a major trading center was a major participant in the great wagon train. In addition, there were several other independent traders, all subject to the command of Major Sprague, as were the numerous groups and individuals headed to the gold fields. By accepting army protection everyone agreed to Sprague's leadership.

As one can imagine the size of this expedition and the scarcity of water and grass created huge logistical problems. As a result, Sprague divided the train into two segments so that the limited water sources, springs, and creeks, could recharge in the interim. On July 9 the first group of 200 wagons and an escort of the First Infantry

began the march. The next day Major Sprague, with Coons, and an escort began the trip.

The difficulties are hard to imagine. The problems of corralling that many loose animals, finding forage and water, and dealing with soldiers and teamsters were immense. In frustration with the harsh environment and all the personnel problems at one point, Coons wrote, "There seems to be something in the air of Texas very well adapted to the growth of rascality and meanness."

Coons was so bothered by the situation that when the train reached the Pecos River, he sold a portion of his wagons to another trader and decide to split from Sprague and take the trail, soon to be called the

Upper Road, through Guadalupe Pass. The difficulties encountered virtually bankrupted Coons, who failed in his desire to control the El Paso trade. In the meantime, the balance of the train began to arrive at Fort Bliss on September 19, but struggles continued into November.

The great wagon train of 1850 was deemed not a success and the next year when another supply train was authorized for Fort Bliss and El Paso it consisted of only 150 wagons and a thousand animals and was placed under the command of Captain Samuel French, a qualified quartermaster and the officer, who under Colonel Joseph Johnston, managed the construction of the Lower Road in 1849.

## Researchers find unexpected link between essential fats, insulin aggregation

BY ASHLEY VARGO  
Texas AgriLife Extension

Scientists within Texas A&M AgriLife Research have discovered a surprising connection between certain fatty acids and insulin when mixed in solution. Their study, published in ACS Chemical Neuroscience and funded by the National Institutes of Health, showed the presence of fats led insulin to clump together and form toxic aggregates.

These omega-3 and omega-6 fatty acids are essential dietary components needed for cell growth and membrane structures. They are also believed to provide an array of health benefits including improved memory and cognition as well as lowered inflammation and unhealthy cholesterol levels.

Because of these benefits, foods rich in these fatty acids-like plant-based oils and fatty fish- are often favored dietary choices. Many of these fatty acids can even be taken as supplements. On grocery store shelves, it's easy to find long-chain fatty acid supplements like docosa-

hexaenoic acid, DHA, and arachidonic acid, ARA, as well as fish oil- a cocktail of different types of fatty acids.

"Most of us think of these fats as good or health, and, for many people, they are," said Dmitry Kurouski, Ph.D., professor in the Texas A&M College of Agriculture and Life Sciences Department of Biochemistry and Biophysics. "However, we found that these polyunsaturated fatty acids can do a very unexpected thing when they interact with insulin. And this is not just true for one or two of these fatty acids, but a large group of them."

Insulin is a protein important to human metabolism, and defects in insulin production or function are associated with diabetes. Previous research has shown that some fatty acids speed up the aggregation of insulin. This is a potential problem because the aggregation, or clumping together, of various proteins in the body is linked to a range of diseases and disorders.

Researchers in Kurouski's lab, including Zachary Hoover, a graduate student who designed

the experiments with Kurouski and served as the study's first author, wanted to test the interactions between insulin and a greater range of fatty acids. They did so by mixing them together in a solution meant to mimic the bodily condition of a person with insulin-derived amyloidosis- a rare but potentially serious condition that occurs in people with Type I diabetes when repeated insulin injections result in a buildup of insulin in the skin.

Their study analyzed the impact of 10 different fatty acids on insulin aggregation, and they found that all the fatty acids significantly accelerated aggregation. Further, the team observed the effect of insulin aggregates in animal model brain cells. Insulin aggregates formed in the presence of the studied fatty acids were more toxic than insulin aggregates formed in a fat-free solution.

"What happens is the insulin becomes very rigid in the aggregate form," Kurouski said. The insulin clusters are shaped like rods, he explained, which enter cells and cause a lot of damage

because they are so rigid. "It's like the cells are eating iron nails."

Despite these results, Kurouski does not recommend cutting these essential fatty acids from anyone's diet. "This is fundamental research that requires more investigation," he said. "What this work shows is that the picture is more complex, nutrition is complex, and we shouldn't treat anything as black and white, universally healthy or unhealthy."

Kurouski believes the next steps in this research will involve studying the health impacts within animal models and eventually within human studies. Right now, Kurouski's lab is working with the animal model C. elegans, a type of microscopic worm.

In the future, mammalian studies could help clarify the dosage of fatty acids within a living organism that might trigger a harmful amount of insulin aggregation- a question that currently remains unknown.

Kurouski, an associate member of the Texas A&M Institute for Advancing Health Through

Agriculture, said this type of research might also be investigated by the institute one day as part of its work studying precision nutrition, an individualized approach to wellness.

Looking forward, Kurouski's lab plans to examine the interaction between fatty acids and proteins beyond insulin, especially those whose aggregates have already been implicated in the onset of neurodegenerative diseases like Alzheimer's and Parkinson's diseases.

He said that elucidating the molecular interaction between these proteins and fats is a key foundational step to understanding disease onset. This research may one day help with the development of therapeutics capable of breaking up toxic aggregates- and potentially even reverse the damage of these currently incurable diseases.

In the meantime, Kurouski said individuals may need to strike a balance between ensuring their diet includes essential fatty acids while limiting excess fats. This is where precision nutrition becomes very useful.

# West Texas town in need of help



This is a photo of former Alpine Buck Christopher Matthew Galvan's grandmother's house after the tornado blew through Sanderson this past Sunday. Galvan along with many others in Sanderson need donations in the form of household goods and other items that were completely lost in the storm.

Courtesy photo

## SENIOR Spotlight

### TANNIN RITCHIE

**In what activities did you participate in high school?**  
In high school, I participated in track, cross country, FFA, athletic leadership council, and student council.

**Who was your favorite teacher/coach, and why?**  
It's hard for me to choose a favorite teacher or coach because every individual who has taught me has had a significant impact on the person I am today. However, if I had to pick one person who has influenced me the most, it would be Coach Cason. Since the seventh grade, she has been like a second mother to me. I am forever grateful for the love, lessons, and discipline she has instilled in me.

**What was your favorite moment in the last four years?**  
I have had numerous unforgettable experiences in the last four years, but if I had to choose, I would say that qualifying for state with my cross-country team was the most remarkable one. It was a challenging season, full of hard work, sweat, tears, and emotions, but our perseverance and dedication paid off in the end.

**What are your plans after high school?**  
After high school, I plan on attending Texas Tech University and majoring in animal science. Eventually, I want to go to Vet school and specialize in large animals to become a veterinarian.

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## Devotional Page Reflection

BY REV. KATIE HUDAK  
St. James Episcopal Church, Alpine

Memorial Day has come and gone, but we take a moment to remember and thank all who have given their lives for us in this country, along with their family members, thank you for allowing us to enjoy the summer months that are coming up. So, for those of us of a certain age, we may remember that old song: "It's summertime, summertime, sum, sum, summertime," by the Jamies. (For those of you not of a certain age, look it up on YouTube. Somebody will undoubtedly have uploaded it.) Memorial Day is the official or is it the unofficial kickoff to summer? Summer is a time of both increased outdoor activity and increased chances to rest, relax, and renovate ourselves.

And so, just because it is summer, we don't have to neglect our spiritual resting, relaxation, and renovation during this time! As we find ourselves outdoors more often, take a moment to stand in awe of God's creation as we look around this Big Bend area. We stand in awe of

the mountains, the dark skies at night, the myriad animals that grace this land, and the majestic thunderstorms that infrequently visit us. We stand in awe, and we proclaim praise, just like in parts of Psalm 148 in the Christian Tradition.

Praise him, sun and moon; praise him, all you shining stars.

Praise the LORD from the earth, you sea monsters and all deeps;

Fire and hail, snow and fog, tempestuous wind, doing his will;

Mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars;

Wild beasts and all cattle, creeping things and winged birds;

Yes, just because it is summertime we don't forget the renovation of our spirits that nature can provide to us. As our bodies and minds relax, let us soak up the incredible beauty and peace of this special part of the earth where we live. Let us also commit ourselves to protecting this land for the right use of it for all creatures who live here. Think of Psalm 148 and thank God the Creator for the opportunity to be a part of this majestic landscape.

This Devotional and Directory are sponsored by these businesses who encourage us to attend worship services.

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## Putting out old flames



Alpine Volunteer firefighter Ethan Sullivan sprays water into the ruins of Judy's Bread and Breakfast to continue extinguishing lingering hot spots after last Sunday's devastating fire as fellow Alpine firefighter David Neet and Terlingua Fire/EMS representative Jared Thomason along with two Brewster County employees, Merced Hernandez and Israel Natera look on.

Photo by Kara Gerbert

## USBP celebrates a century of service in downtown Marfa

On Friday, May 31, the U.S. Border Patrol Big Bend Sector celebrated the 100th anniversary of the U.S. Border Patrol with a parade in downtown Marfa. The parade began at the USO building and ended at the Presidio County Courthouse, where the USBP pipe and drum corps and the rifle team performed. Along with these performances, a proclamation was read in honor of the centennial anniversary along with remarks from the mayor of Marfa.



U.S. Border Patrol Big Bend Sector celebrated the USBP 100th anniversary with a parade in downtown Marfa that included their pipe and drum corps as well as their horse patrol unit.

Photo courtesy of U.S. Border Patrol

## AVFD responds to Sanderson tornado



This past Sunday, June 2, the Alpine Volunteer Fire Department responded to the tornado that descended upon the town of Sanderson. AVFD sent three members of their team along with one apparatus full of supplies and water and was just one of several area first responders to render aid to the town Sunday night. Pictured are members of the AVFD resting between jobs before they arrived back in Alpine around 2 a.m. Monday morning.

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