

# Fatality in Big Bend

BY KARA GERBERT  
 Managing Editor

Another fatality has recently plagued Big Bend National Park. At around 4 p.m. on November 27, the communication center at BBNP received a 911 call from a group of hikers reporting a gunshot and a seriously injured visitor at the summit of Emory Peak.

Park officials quickly mobilized aerial assets, including U.S. Customs Air and Marine Operations and the Texas Department of Public Safety.

Upon reaching the mountaintop, a Big Bend National Park ranger located the body of a 35-year-old man from Florence. With nighttime rapidly approaching and due to the lack of daylight, the park ranger remained on the scene throughout the night.

See FATALITY • 6

## INSIDE



FEATURED

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### Rainfall totals at Alpine-Casparis Airport

2024. . . . .14.73"  
 December . . . . .0.01"



### Burn Ban ON

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



# Brewster County delivers tax refunds, auction gains

BY KERRY LAIRD  
 Contributor

The Brewster County Commissioners Court held its regular meeting on Tuesday, December 10, in the commissioner's courtroom at the Brewster County Courthouse.

Brewster County Judge Greg Henington presided over the session, attended by Pre-

cinct 1 Commissioner Jim Westermann and Precinct 3 Commissioner Ruben Ortega. Commissioners Sara Colando (Precinct 2) and Mo Morrow (Precinct 4) were absent.

Judge Henington highlighted the success



**Brewster County Judge Greg Henington**

of an auction managed by the Brewster County Sheriff's Office, which featured nearly 50 abandoned vehicles. The event raised \$129,310, which was designated for the county's abandoned vehicle account. Among the items sold,

a 2021 GMC Sierra fetched the highest bid at \$36,000.

Brewster County District Clerk Sarah Fellows Martinez provided an excess tax proceeds report, explaining that over \$150,000 in unclaimed taxes, collected between 2015 and 2017, was distributed to local taxing entities. Terlingua School District received

the largest share at \$96,000, while Brewster County benefited from \$34,000. Martinez emphasized that the funds were identified and processed after she took office, and she introduced a tracking system to prevent future delays.

"Now that I am in

See BREWSTER • 6

# Dedication produces winners



SRSU team ropers Hessten Zack and Ryley Hasten practice their heading and heeling just before the Thanksgiving break. These young men and the rest of the team will be back at it once school is back in session, showing why Sul Ross Rodeo is making headlines.

Photo by Kara Gerbert

# Feral hogs wreak havoc at golf course

BY KARA GERBERT  
 Managing Editor

The Alpine golf course is one of the more recent locations to fall victim to the destruction of feral hog activity. This non-native invasive species causes significant damage to agriculture and natural resources across the state and has now moved into town to continue their destructive ways.

They are considered one of the world's top 100 worst exotic invasive species, causing millions of dollars in damage each year. They damage property and natural resources with their rooting and competition with native wildlife. These pests also transmit pathogens that can spread to livestock, destroy crops, and pollute wa-

ter sources. The only county in Texas that is free of them so far is El Paso County. They are capable of transmitting diseases to humans, too.

In 2016, Texas was estimated to be home to 2.6 million feral hogs. Those numbers are likely rising due to their lack of natural predators, a generalist diet, and a high reproduction rate.

According to information from Amy White, president of the Alpine Country Club board, they are procuring traps to try and capture the hogs responsible for the destruction of the golf course. "We've seen them on camera around Fighting Buck Avenue, and we're not sure if they're coming in that way or

See HOGS • 6



The #2 green at the Alpine golf course is one of three that have recently fallen victim to invasive feral hogs and the destruction they leave behind.

Courtesy photo

**MONICA WOODALL**  
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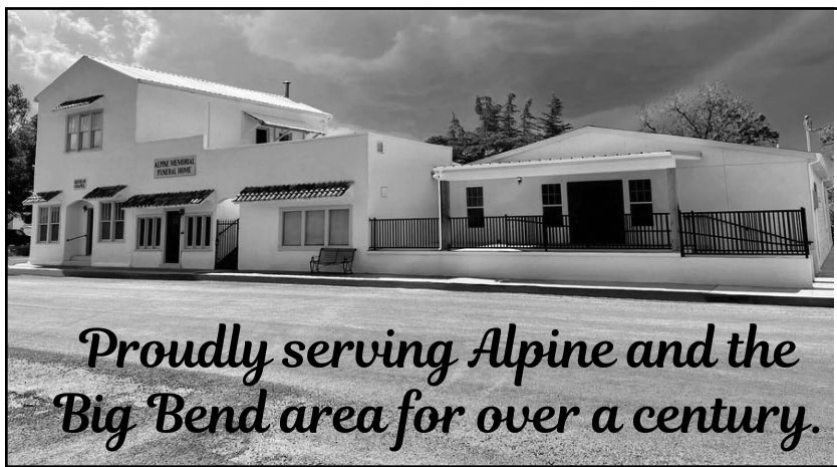
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## OBITUARIES

### William J. Shackelford

William "Bill" J. Shackelford, a cherished son of Texas, was called to his eternal rest on December 5 in Odessa. Born on June 18, 1940, in the small town of Marathon, he grew up with a heart as expansive as the landscapes that surrounded him.



A devoted husband, Bill found endless joy and partnership in his life with Isabel Shackelford, whom he affectionately referred to as "old woman." Their bond was a testament to love's ability to flourish in simplicity, marked by shared laughter and deep affec-

tion for one another. His life was one richly woven with the threads of genuine companionship and heartfelt moments.

Bill's journey was characterized by steadfast commitment, exemplified through his years of dedicated service to

the State of Texas until his retirement. Prior to this, he honored his country with pride as a member of the United States Army, embodying the spirit of duty and sacrifice. A proud graduate of Marathon High School, Bill carried the versatile lessons of his education into the vibrant tapestry of his life. He was an unwavering enthusiast of the great outdoors, indulging in hunting and fishing, pursuits that allowed him to connect with nature and reflect on life's simple pleasures. His love for animals was profound, showcas-

ing his compassionate spirit that endeared him to many. He spent countless days in the embrace of the wilderness, forging a profound appreciation for the beauty that surrounded him.

Bill's legacy is enriched by his siblings, who have predeceased him: his father, William Shackelford, and mother, Marjorie Shackelford, instilled in him a strong sense of family values that he cherished throughout his life, along with his brother, Bunky Rutledge, and brother, Lee Roy Rutledge, who watched over him from beyond this world.

In days to come, Bill's memories will resonate in the lives of his surviving family, including his loving wife Isabel, his nephews Jon Rutledge of Midland and Roy Rutledge of Monahans, and his nieces Karen Austin of Lubbock and Patsy Rutledge of Midland. Surviving stepchildren are Macky McGuire of Sunrise Beach Village, Eric McGuire of Laredo, Joel McGuire of Burnett, and Roxie McGuire of Marathon. They will carry forward the warmth of his spirit and the joy he brought into their lives.

Bill Shackelford's days on this earth were

a testament to love, duty, and a splendid appreciation for nature, enveloping all who knew him in kindness and camaraderie. His life will be celebrated, and his memories cherished as a guiding light for those he leaves behind.

Funeral services will be held on Saturday, December 21, at 1 p.m. at Marathon Cemetery.

Services have been entrusted to Alpine Memorial Funeral Home, and gifts and condolences may be extended by visiting [www.alpinememorialfuneralhome.com](http://www.alpinememorialfuneralhome.com).

### Chastity Ann-Marie Torres-Vega

Chastity Ann-Marie Torres-Vega, a cherished homemaker and loving family member, passed away on December 2 in Odessa at the age of 48. Born on January 1, 1976, in Alpine, she grew up surrounded by the warmth of family and the spirit of her hometown.



Chastity's love and compassion extended beyond her human family to the animals she adored, including her beloved German Shepherd, Clover. She had a unique way of connecting with animals, demonstrating her gentle spirit and kind heart.

She is survived by her beloved husband, Guadalupe "Cuate" Chavez Vega; her devoted daughter, Savannah Vega; her daughter's boyfriend, Saul Baeza; her father, Vivian Torres; her sister, Virtudes "Birdie" Torres; and her cherished companion, Clover.

Chastity was preceded in death by her mother, Diana Valencia, and her brother, Robert Valencia. Her legacy will live on in the hearts of all who knew her, remembered for her warmth, culinary talents, and the love she shared unconditionally. The impact

she had on her family and friends is immeasurable, and she will be deeply missed.

Donations to fund Chastity's funeral services are welcome. They may be made by visiting Alpine Memorial Funeral Home at 209 W. Sul Ross Street in Alpine or calling (432) 837-2222.

Services have been entrusted to Alpine Memorial Funeral Home, and gifts and condolences may be left at [www.alpinememorialfuneralhome.com](http://www.alpinememorialfuneralhome.com).

Chastity's great passions. She found joy in listening to the sounds of George Strait, Dolly Parton, and Johnny Cash, often filling her home with melodies that brought comfort and joy to those around her. In the kitchen, Chastity displayed remarkable skill, delighting her family and friends with her cooking and baking. Her famous enchiladas and the traditional bischochos became legends in her circle, often requested and never forgotten.

Chastity was a proud graduate of Alpine High School, where she cultivated lifelong friendships and cherished memories that would always hold a special place in her heart. Her life as a homemaker was not simply a career for her; it was a reflection of her nurturing nature and her love for her family. Chastity poured her heart into creating a warm and inviting home for her loved ones.

Music was one of Chas-

### Ke Koa Baldwin Kealoha

Ke Koa Baldwin Kealoha, age 58, of Honolulu, passed away on March 12, 2024. He was preceded in death by his parents, Thelma Ululani Baldwin Kealoha and Moses (Moke) Wahunui Kealoha. He is survived by his sisters, Ke Kai Kealoha and Kehaulani K. Kealoha Scullion (Kevin), and his niece, Kealoha L. Scullion.



Hawaii, where he embraced the Aloha spirit, which he later brought with him to Alpine. He was a wonderful friend to many and made a lasting impact on those around him. If you were fortunate enough to have met Ke Koa, you will never forget how kind and genuine he was to everyone. He will always be remembered for his big smile, infectious laugh, and the positivity he radiated in every

interaction, making everyone feel appreciated and uplifted.

Ke Koa and his parents returned to the water together in a paddle out at Kaimana Beach, also known as Sans Souci, which means "without a care," in Honolulu. Growing up, Ke Koa and his family spent countless days enjoying the ocean at this beach. Hawaiians believe that water is the source of life, and by returning to it, one can find healing and be made whole again.

A visitation was held at Thurston Memorial Chapel, Punahou School, on Saturday, May 11, 2024, at noon, followed by a service at 1:00 p.m. Arrangements were provided by Nuuanu Memorial Park & Mortuary LLC.

## New downtown landscape



Jarratt Dirtwork out of Fort Davis has been systematically dismantling the former Alpine Medical Center where Dr. David Sanchez once had his medical practice. The property was purchased by Lowe's to expand its parking options.

Photo by Kara Gerbert

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## New gallery holds grand opening



The new 5th Street Gallery on the corner of North 5th Street and Avenue E held its grand opening and ribbon cutting this past Thursday evening. The Alpine Ambassadors welcomed owner-operator Rachel Waller and her staff as one of Alpine's new businesses.

Photo by Kara Gerbert

## Plant society to fundraise for memorial garden

BY KARA GERBERT  
 Managing Editor

The Big Bend Chapter of the Native Plant Society of Texas is raising funds for a pollinator garden that will be dedicated to the memory of Patty Manning. This garden will be created and placed at the Alpine Public Library. The garden is being created to honor Patty's legacy by providing an educational and attractive landscape for the community as well as a food source for native pollinators.

ning, known to all as Patty, was a field botanist, a member of the Native Plant Society of Texas, a long-time grower of native plants in the Big Bend, and the co-founder of Twin Sisters Natives in Alpine. Manning's propagation and distribution of native species is known throughout the Big Bend area. For those interested in donating visit <https://square.link/u/6WakeS3e> or mail a check payable to NPSOT to P.O. Box 1265, Alpine, TX, 79831.

Patricia Rose Man-

## High schoolers become Santa's elves

Last Friday, AHS students Collette Sharron, Kody Hawkins, Naida Morris, Navaeh Carrasco, Ryanna Pineda, and Khristal Soto were on hand at Alpine Elementary to help Santa decorate and set up his station to meet and greet the faculty, staff, and student.

Courtesy photo.



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## Alpine Memorial FUNERAL HOME

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## Service of Remembrance DINNER & GATHERING

In honor of our community's loved ones who have passed, Alpine Memorial Funeral Home is hosting a night of remembrance. Please join us to celebrate their memory. There will be appetizers, beverages, a guest speaker, door prizes, dinner, and dessert as well as live entertainment by Rick Ruiz.



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6:00 PM - 9:00 PM

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More Info Call 432-837-2222

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# Opinions

## ONLINE POLL

### THIS WEEK'S QUESTION

Now the Avalanche asks:  
**What's your favorite way to spend the holidays?**

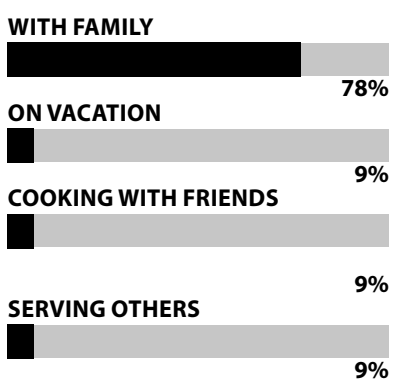
- With family
- On vacation
- Cooking with friends
- Serving others

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

### RESULTS

#### WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE WAY TO SPEND THE HOLIDAYS?

##### RESULTS



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



## Life Lessons through livestock

As fall turns to winter again, the changing seasons bring more than holiday cheer to many families. For youth livestock exhibitors and their families, this time of year also brings late nights, early mornings, cold temperatures, and an increased commitment of time and energy as they prepare their animals for livestock shows. The skills and life lessons learned through youth livestock projects are immeasurable, but their impact can be observed if you have the opportunity to watch these youth in the show ring.

Livestock exhibitors can dedicate over a year to a single livestock project, depending on the species. Additionally, youth participants begin to understand the high level of responsibility and commitment that is required when livestock is in their care. Much like with other competitive events, practice makes perfect, and in the case of livestock projects, a lack of time and effort invested in the feeding, train-

ing, and grooming of the project animal directly correlates with the outcome on show day. While animals are judged based on a combination of conformation characteristics and body condition, exhibitors are also judged on their showmanship skills, which are honed during countless hours of preparation and practice. Showmanship, which depends largely on a cooperative animal, is pivotal. As such, it is one of the most important aspects of the livestock project. Like all good things, these skills take time and effort to develop.

There are many different opportunities for youth livestock exhibitors to display their hard work and dedication. Families travel to any number of weekend jackpot shows scattered across the area throughout the fall, trying to gain valuable ring experience for both animals and exhibitors alike.



**LUKE HENDRYX**  
 Extension Agent, Brewster & Jeff Davis Counties

Winter and spring bring the opportunity to show on the largest scale at locations like Houston, San Antonio, San Angelo, Austin, or Ft. Worth. While these options provide tremendous benefits and opportunities, none even come close to the overall impact and importance of county livestock shows. Much akin to a homecoming football game, the county livestock show is the opportunity for local youth to display the fruit of their efforts in front of friends, family, and the entire community. County livestock shows are also vitally important as they provide the best opportunity for youth to recoup some of the costs associated with their livestock projects due to the incredible support from area businesses and individuals at the county livestock sale.

Here in the Big Bend region, we are fortunate to have a pre-

mier opportunity for youth livestock exhibitors through their participation in the Big Bend Livestock Show. Every year, dozens of families and volunteers dedicate their time and effort to help ensure that the Big Bend Livestock Show Association continues its legacy of providing youth in the tri-county area with a top-of-the-line experience while exhibiting their livestock projects. January 9–11, 2025, will mark the 81st year of the Big Bend Livestock Show, and if you have the opportunity, it is well worth the time to stop by and see for yourself the lasting impact that livestock projects continue to have on today's youth.

For more information, please contact the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension office for Brewster and Jeff Davis Counties at (432)-837-6207 or by email at [luke.hendryx@ag.tamu.edu](mailto:luke.hendryx@ag.tamu.edu).

## Still wishing for that slower time

*"It is strange that the years teach us patience; that the shorter our time, the greater our capacity for waiting."*

— **Actress Elizabeth Taylor (1932 – 2011)**

"I'm going up to W.R. DeWoody's Western Auto," my grandfather announced one summer day in the early 1960s.

Summertime was fun for a kid at my father's parent's house in Pittsburg. Sleeping late. Home-cooked breakfast. Playing in the tree-filled yard and afternoons sailing homemade boats in the city park pond.

"What for," Grandmother quizzed, pouring another cup of coffee.

"See if they have a mower part," was his short response.

"Why don't you call?" she retorted. We've got a telephone now." The recently acquired black dial-operated device was mostly ignored—sometimes even when it rang.

"I'm not going to answer that thing," I heard Granddaddy say often. "I can't think of anybody I want to talk to right now."

The number was University 8-3721, I think. All that was required for a local call, however, were the last four digits. The University 8 was used only to give the operator when dialing "0" to place a long-distance call, which my grandparents rarely did

because it cost an extra 20 cents if you kept your conversation under three minutes.

"I'd rather see who I'm talking to," my grandfather said, responding to the "why don't you call" question. "Looking at who you're talking to cuts down on confusion, builds relationships, and teaches patience. Ain't got time to talk to nobody I can't look in the eyes."

Granddaddy was on to something more than lawnmower parts.

The rush between Thanksgiving and Christmas makes me yearn for a slower time when people were patient—except for kids looking forward to Christmas.

From an adult's perspective, time speeds up every year. But a child is born into the world counting the days until Christmas.

Once considered a virtue, patience appears to be diminishing as the number of loose nuts behind steering wheels keeps increasing. Take the story I heard last week about a driver being tailgated by a stressed-out woman on a busy street. When the traffic light ahead turned yellow, the driver in front of her stopped as the light turned red—as he should have.

The tailgater was enraged, honking her horn

and hollering at the driver ahead. She was still in mid-rant when a police officer walked up and asked her to get out of the car and put her hands behind her head. She was taken to the

station and held for questioning before the police officer told her she was free to go.

"We're very sorry for the mistake," he said. "I saw you honking your horn, gesturing at the driver ahead, and cussing a blue streak. Then I saw the 'What would Jesus Do' license frame, the 'Follow me to Sunday School' bumper sticker, and the chrome Christian fish symbol and naturally assumed you had stolen the car."

I laughed, but that recalled an incident my mother encountered years ago. Back when I was a kid, counting the days until Christmas. South Jefferson Street in my hometown of Mount Pleasant differed from the busy, booming street it is now. There was no bypass loop then. No shopping Center with a parking lot full of cars. Just three businesses that faced the street. The Dairy Bar, a tractor dealership, and Larry Talley's small neighborhood grocery—without gas pumps. Because there was no such thing then as self-service gasoline.

Mom drove her green-and-white '54 Chevy under the railroad overpass and slowed at the corner at Boatner's Furniture. The light was turning yellow as she approached, and being the careful driver my mother was, she stopped just as the light changed to red.

Everything was fine until a honking horn blared behind her. A lady emerged from the car and walked to Mom's window, hollering about a carton of broken eggs. They conversed about whether yellow means slow down and stop or "floor it and run the red light."

The discussion was short-lived. The light turned green, and other horn honkers egged them both to get on down the road.

I'm a few years down the road myself since that incident. Christmas is coming again, and I'm, once more, wishing for that slower time when people had more patience, took time to relax, and weren't joined at the hip to a telephone.

My capacity for waiting is better, but I still ask God to grant me patience. I ask Him to do it now ... please.

— *Contact Aldridge at [leonaldridge@gmail.com](mailto:leonaldridge@gmail.com). Other Aldridge columns are archived at [leonaldridge.com](http://leonaldridge.com)*

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

**Upcoming events**

**December 14 & 21,** Davis Mountains State Park, 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. Holiday Ornament Workshop at Interpretive Center.

**December 28,** Davis Mountains State Park, 7 p.m. to 8 p.m. Dark Sky Tour at CCC Rock Lookout (End of Skyline Drive). Bring a chair and a red lamp flashlight.

**December 17 Davis Mountains State Park,** 7 p.m. to 8 p.m. Star Chat at the parking lot across from Interpretive Center. Bring a chair and binoculars.

**December 13-14 Mountain Country Christmas at Alpine Civic Center.** On Friday, hours are 1 p.m. to 9 p.m., and on Saturday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Dozens of vendors and photos with Santa

on Saturday. Presented by the Woman's Club of Alpine.

**December 14 Library Music Program,** 4:30 p.m. at the Jeff Davis County Library in Fort Davis. A special free music program offered by the Friends of the Library will showcase a guitar ensemble from Sul Ross. Local pianist Lana Potts will lead sing-alongs beginning at 5:30 p.m. followed by the guitar ensemble at 6 p.m. with more Christmas carols. Refreshments and hot cocoa will be served prior to the music. Everyone is invited to attend.

**December 14 Christmas Around the World,** 7:30 p.m. at the First United Methodist Church, presented by the Solfege Choir, Vivace Youth Singers, and the Big Bend Children's Chorus.

**December 15 Alpine School of Music Winter Recital,** 4 p.m. beginner recital, 5 p.m. reception, 5:30 p.m.



advanced recital at the First Presbyterian Church, 103 E. Lockhart.

**December 18-20 Live Nativity,** 7 p.m. each night at the Kokernot Lodge stable.

**December 20 Cowboy Christmas Ball,** 8 p.m. to 11 p.m. at the Granada Theatre hosted by Doug Moreland. Adults are \$10, teens \$5, and kids are FREE.

**December 21 Alpine Christmas Parade,** 5 p.m. line-up at city hall, and the

parade begins at 6 p.m. The parade route will continue down Holland Ave, turn at 2nd Street, and end up at the Alpine Visitor Center, where there will be refreshments, photos with Santa, float winner awards, and entertainment by the Big Bend Community Band.

**December 24 Christmas Eve Candlelight Service,** 7 p.m. at Hillside Baptist Church. The public is cordially invited to attend.

**Ongoing Events**

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

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

**American Legion Post 79 meeting,** 6:30 p.m., second

Monday each month, Legion Hall, 306 W. Sul Ross Ave. Dinner provided.

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

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

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

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

**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.

**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.

**VFW Post 7207,** 7 p.m., first Wednesday of each month at 605 E. Ave F. All members are welcome.

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**Piper Donaldson:** "Ordinary World" by Miranda Lambert



**Linda McAnally:** "Friends in Low Places" by Garth Brooks



**Tory Munoz:** "Crossroads"



**Marie Porres:** "Waltz Across Texas"

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## PET OF THE WEEK

Meet Armie!

Armie came into the shelter in early November after being found running loose in the City of Alpine. He loves to meet new friends, both humans and dogs, and he likes attention and pets. He has been great in playgroups and likes to keep an eye on the humans as if he is looking for his person.

Armie walks well on a leash and wiggles the whole way. He is treat-motivated, and being a puppy, he still needs work on potty training and basic commands, but he wants to please the people in his life and should be easy to train.

American pit bull terriers make excellent companions when raised and trained with respect and knowledge. When trained appropriately, they are kind towards children, intelligent, loving, playful, and loyal. Just like any other

working breed, they need exercise and stimulation; they will become bored and frustrated if left in a yard all the time with no interaction. Armie is neutered, vaccinated, and microchipped, ready to start his new life.

Alpine Animal Services can always use community participation; please consider volunteering to walk dogs, play with puppies in the yard, or interact with the cats. Thirty minutes of your day can make a huge difference to the shelter and the animals.

Call 432-837-2532 to donate, foster, or volunteer for the Alpine Humane Society. Support the Alpine Humane Society Thrift Store and Cattery with donated furnishings, décor, and household goods. See us at the Women's Club Mountain Country Christmas on December 13 and 14 at the Alpine Civic Center. 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 shel-

ter pet adoptions, cremation services, or lost/found pets, call the shelter at 432-837-9030. If you find a stray or injured pet, contact the Alpine Police Department at 432-837-3486 to dispatch an Animal Control Officer.

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**BREWSTER • FROM 1**

there, I have a system so that I am keeping track, so the money is flowing the way it is supposed to," said Fellows Martinez. By law, unclaimed taxes are held for two years, after which they are distributed if no claims are filed. Judge Henington praised the effort, calling it "great work in getting this money to its proper place."

Emergency Management Coordinator James Etchison provided updates on recent activities, including

overseeing the safety of a Chris Stapleton music video shoot for his award-winning song White Horse. Filmed along Highway 118 South, the production featured a controlled car explosion, with Etchison's office ensuring compliance with safety protocols. Stapleton, a Grammy and CMA Award winner, expressed his gratitude by gifting the county a signed fire helmet and axe. Etchison also announced the extension of the countywide burn ban for another 45 days, citing ongoing dry conditions despite

the presence of some humidity.

A significant portion of the meeting focused on a property tax refund affecting approximately 600 citizens who receive the homestead exemption. The overpayment, totaling \$453,000, stems from an error in calculating 2023 property taxes for Alpine ISD taxpayers. Refunds will be issued to taxpayers who claimed the homestead exemption and fall under the 65 and over tax freeze. The Texas Homestead Exemption provides property tax relief to homeowners

by reducing the taxable value of their primary residence. Individuals who are 65 or older, have a disability, or are military veterans may qualify for a homestead exemption.

In 2023, the Legislature increased the standard exemption from \$40,000 to \$100,000, significantly lowering tax bills for eligible homeowners. The mistake occurred because the County Appraisal District needed to account for an increase in the Texas Homestead Exemption passed by the State Legislature. "When they calculated

it, they did not calculate the increased rate," said Judge Henington, adding that the 2024 tax bill is wrong as well. "Pay the second one [you receive]; it will be smaller. "It will be like a post-Christmas bonus." Commissioners will schedule a special meeting the week of December 16, most likely on Thursday or Friday to finalize the refund process, after the AISD School Board meets on Wednesday evening, December 18, to approve its disbursement order.

In a briefer, light-hearted discussion,

the court approved the salvage and auction of lamp fixtures that once lined the courthouse lawn. The copper-colored, vintage lamp posts have unique, nineteenth-century features. "I call them the Disney Land lights," said Judge Henington.

The court canceled its regular meeting scheduled for December 24 in observance of Christmas. The next regular meeting will be held on January 14, 2025, at 9:30 a.m. in the commissioner's courtroom at the Brewster County Courthouse.

**HOGS • FROM 1**

leaving that way, but they've hit the course the past several nights," White said.

These wild pigs become active around dusk and continue their activity throughout the night and into the early morning hours. Having these animals close to a roadway creates hazards for motorists and pedestrians. Feral hogs are known to be aggressive towards pets and humans, and the area of Alpine's golf course at the corner of Fighting Buck Avenue and Brown Street could easily create a dangerous situation for residents who walk the loop.

Texas Parks and Wildlife Game Warden Captain Bo Hancock said,

"Feral hog management falls under Texas AgriLife Extension as far as state agencies. TPWD does not handle their management, and it would be the City of Alpine's or the golf course's responsibility to hire someone to trap them, and that person or group would have to have a trappers/hunting license." Feral hogs on private land outside the city limits do not require a hunting license for management, and many area ranchers and landowners trap and kill these nuisance animals.

Luke Hendryx, Texas AgriLife Extension Agent for Brewster and Jeff Davis Counties, commented, "These animals are becoming a big problem in town. Brewster County does not have a county trap-

per like many counties do, but anyone inside the city limits who is having a problem with them should contact Richard Dickerson in Fort Stockton. Mr. Dickerson is the District Director for Wildlife Services, and he can help direct those who need help in controlling these animals."

The Avalanche also reached out to Brewster County Judge Greg Henington to discuss the possibility of the addition of a part-time trapper position for Brewster County as well as the possibility of sharing the cost of someone who might take on this job with both Jeff Davis and Presidio Counties. "It hasn't really been something on my radar, but this is definitely

a conversation worth having and something we should look into, although this coming to fruition would likely be on up the road a bit," Henington stated.

J.C. Kiddo Campbell, Trans-Pecos Senior Biologist with TPWD, told the Avalanche, "Currently, there are no population estimates for Brewster County. The statewide estimates from the study done in 2016 estimated there were around 2.6 million individual animals residing in Texas," Campbell said.

Campbell also noted that because most of the state was privately owned, feral hog management was usually conducted at the local level, with ranchers deciding how to deal with them on their land. Fe-

ral hogs are managed by trapping, aerial gunning, and hunter efforts.

"Even with these efforts, research has shown that we still need more tools to help with population management. Whether this be chemical toxicants like Hoggone or Kaput or utilizing USDA resources to remove feral hogs, they are rapidly populating faster than we can keep up with," Campbell added.

Officials with the golf

course with help from other agencies were able to capture six, large hogs on Monday evening, but will continue to try and manage hogs that may come through the area.

For more information or help with the management of feral hogs, contact Richard Dickerson at 432-360-9169 or J.C. Kiddo Campbell at John-Clayton.Campbell@tpwd.texas.gov.

**FATALITY • FROM 1**

The following day, a team from the park, along with an officer from the Texas Department of Public Safety, recovered the body by helicopter.

The cause of death was determined to be a self-inflicted gunshot wound, and the body was transported to the Alpine Memorial Funeral Home on Thurs-

day, November 28. This is the second fatality this year that was determined to be self-inflicted, the other one occurring on March 20.

Big Bend National Park superintendent Anjna O'Connor commented, "This loss saddens the entire park community. Our sympathy goes out to the individual's family and friends. This was a challenging response

from our rangers and partners during one of the park's busiest times. I wish to extend my deep gratitude to our amazing team for their professional efforts."

Emory Peak is the highest point in Big Bend National Park, reaching a summit height of 7,832 feet. This strenuous five-mile trail is a popular hiking activity for park visitors.

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**Four amigos**



Marathon ISD students Marcos Briones, Joe David Gonzales, Kaden Whetten, and Teegan Whetten enjoyed hanging out on the main street in Marathon this past Saturday night as the community celebrated their annual Fiesta de Noche Buena.

Courtesy photo

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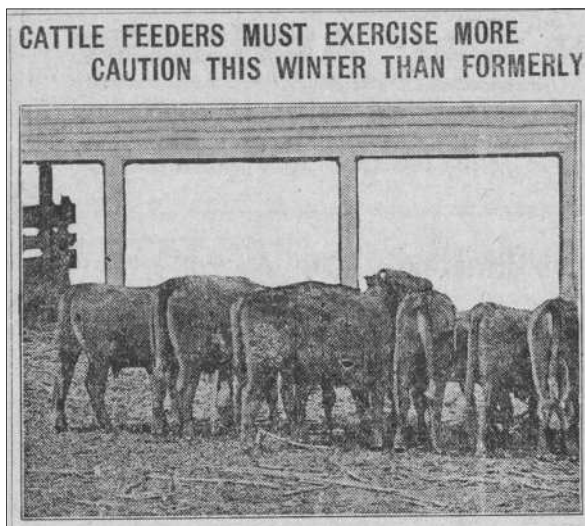
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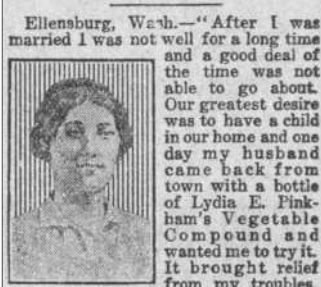
Alpine Avalanche

December 11, 1919



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December 25, 1919

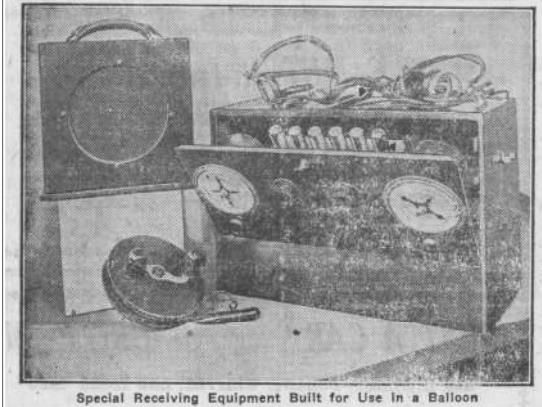
**DOUGLAS FAIRBANKS COMING TO ALPINE FOR ONE DAY ONLY**



Real entertainment is in store for Alpine people. The Empire Theatre always on the lookout for the best in film attractions hearing that The Queen Theatre at Marfa had secured Douglas Fairbanks' first new picture from his own studios "His Majesty The American" for xmas day got busy and arranged with the film distributors at Dallas for its presentation here the day after Christmas, which is Friday. This is the first picture Fairbanks has made since the "Kniekerbocker Bucheroo" which was shown at the Ardmore last fall and as Fairbanks has a large following in Alpine a large crowd is expected to view this picture which is said to be his best as he produced it himself. If it hurts you to laugh the manager of the Empire advises you not to come.

December 7, 1928

**RADIO PLAYS STELLAR ROLE IN MODERN BALLOON RACING**

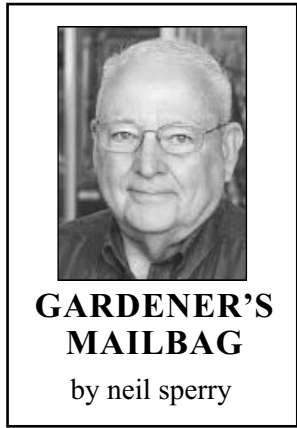


Special Receiving Equipment Built for Use in a Balloon

Photos from the Alpine Avalanche Archives at Archives of the Big Bend, Bryan Wildenthal Memorial Library and Portal of Texas.

**Too much sunlight adversely affects dwarf green aucubas**

Dear Neil, This plant did fine through the hot, dry summer. Then, in late September, its leaves started turning black. The leaves that still look green look wilted. Seven other plants of the same kind are doing well. What gives?



**GARDENER'S MAILBAG**  
by neil sperry

This is dwarf green aucuba, sister to the popular Gold Dust plant. They are all great in full shade. I've never seen insects or diseases bother them. I've grown them for 40 years, and the only problems I've ever encountered were when branches grew out into the sun or when the sun's angle changed late in the season. A part of a plant that had been shaded suddenly was cast into more sunlight than it could tolerate. That's when the leaves turn as black as coal. The extreme cold of February 2021 killed some of them, but that wouldn't have happened in September.

The only other variable was that it turned unusually dry during that month. That would certainly account for the wilting, and it's common for one plant out of a group to reach the "permanent wilting point" without the others being so adversely affected.

**Dear Neil, My neighbor's oak tree is 15 feet from our water meter and the line going into my house. Should I worry about its roots being a problem?**

Water lines are sealed tightly and are under

pressure. Roots do not invade them like they used to get into the very old clay sewer "slip" tiles that fit together loosely. If a crack were to develop into which a root could grow, it would quickly develop into a very conspicuous leak. You would have far bigger concerns that would demand instant attention.

Your only concern would be if a surface root were to grow directly beneath the water line or within the meter. As the root grew larger and larger, it could swell to crack the pipe or valve. Avoid that by severing the root and installing a rigid barrier to divert the root's growth.

**Dear Neil, I have a jalapeno pepper in a pot. It was productive on our patio all summer, and I protected it from the first cold spells. Is it practical to keep it indoors this winter so I can take**

**it back outside next spring?**

Probably not. You'd be better off starting seedlings in January so you could have transplants ready with the first warm days of late March or April. They would be much more vigorous than a plant forced to limp through four months indoors in dark conditions. Or buy transplants at a nursery come spring if all you need is one or a few. You're always better off starting with new plants when it comes to annual flowers and vegetables. The exception would be with plants such as coleus, which are generally started from cuttings.

*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.*



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**ACROSS**

- dice dots
- Texas band "ZZ Top," e.g.
- TXism: "useless as earrings on \_\_\_"
- TXism: "all vine, \_\_\_ watermelon" (fake)
- female chicken
- TX Sam Bass robbed these
- "Watermelon Thump" in Luling has a \_\_\_-spitting contest
- TXism: "useless as a \_\_\_ \_ sow"
- police seizures
- childbirth process
- Texas is a major producer of this gas
- when one team trounces another
- TX Howard Hughes' was \$2.5 billion
- this Duvall was "Gus" in Texas-based "Lonesome Dove"
- TXism: "he'll kick you into a \_\_\_ home" (mean horse)
- Travis: "I shall never surrender \_\_\_ retreat"
- TXism: "she'd have \_\_\_ twice to cast a shadow" (skinny)
- Italian "good evening": "buona \_\_\_"
- TXism: "fits like ugly on an \_\_\_"
- alcohol content
- when a religious garment has a hanging flap
- 1951 film about TX Ben Hogan: "Follow the \_\_\_"
- TXism: "thick \_\_\_ on a dog's back"
- sign of boredom
- this Robert directed TX Shelley Duvall in 1980 film "Popeye" (init.)
- pig sound
- "bear" in Mexico
- search for someone (2 wds.)
- cut a board
- TX Kris wrote "Me and Bobby Mc \_\_\_"
- this Dawson was QB for the Dallas Texans and stayed on as a Chief
- "\_\_\_ out a living"
- init. of actor in 29-across
- money maker for the Pampa News
- TXism: "\_\_\_ a new hat size!" (threat)
- tidy
- Japanese noodles
- \_\_\_ National Wildlife Refuge"
- daze
- a Texas restaurant after closing (2 wds.)
- "roses \_\_\_ . . ."
- hot Texas chili: "\_\_\_ of the devil"
- TX Rashad who was Clair Huxtable (init.)
- 23 TXism: "\_\_\_ gut" (liquor)
- Dallas Symphony reed instrument
- fire ants, e.g.
- Port \_\_\_ TX
- 1994 film with TX Dennis Quaid: "Wyatt \_\_\_"
- 31 "bring up the \_\_\_"
- 34 this Nick coached the Rio Grande Valley Vipers (init.)
- 1988 film starring Dennis Quaid and Meg Ryan
- TXism: "weak as \_\_\_ -day-old kitten"
- Tyler: in \_\_\_ Texas
- snake sound
- TXism: "if a hog had wings, he'd be \_\_\_"
- 50 in Johnson County on U.S. 67
- 51 TX Janis Joplin died of one (abbr.)

**DOWN**

- TX Jeannie C.'s "Harper Valley \_\_\_"
- TX Willie album: "The \_\_\_ Tapes"
- a Texas settler
- "Texas, our Texas! \_\_\_ great!" (state song)
- TXism: "skeedad-dle out of \_\_\_"
- TXism: "\_\_\_ -old dishwater" (bad flavor)

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# Sports

## Lady Bucks proving formidable on the court

BY KERRY LAIRD  
Sports Editor

The Alpine Lady Bucks surged back into the win column with a commanding 51-32 victory over the Van Horn Eagles on Monday night, December 3. Sophomore Colette Fowlkes led the team with 12 points and eight rebounds, while freshman Gyllian Morrissey contributed 10 points and seven rebounds.

Sophomore Evelyn Smith also made a significant impact, finishing with 14 points to seal the win. This victory came on the heels of the Lady Bucks' participation in the Longhorn Classic Tournament in Buena Vista, December 5-7.

Over the weekend, the team played four games, securing three wins and one loss, including a forfeit victory over New Way Christian Academy. Their strong showing highlighted the team's growth and determination this season.

In their tournament opening game, Alpine faced Van Horn in a rematch. The Lady Bucks dominated with a relentless offense and tenacious defense, replicating their earlier success against the Eagles and solidifying their momentum with a 54-23 win.

This performance set the tone for the rest of their tournament run.

Alpine's second game was scheduled against New Way Christian Academy, resulting in a forfeit victory due to unforeseen circumstances. Despite not playing, the team maintained focus and prepared for their next matchup that same day.

The Lady Bucks squared off against Trinity in game three, showcasing their depth and teamwork. Outstanding performances across the board propelled Alpine to a 38-27 victory, strengthening the team's momentum in the tournament.

Senior Hope Dominguez led the charge with 11 points, showcasing her scoring ability and leadership on the court. Senior Masiela Miranda also stepped up, contributing

10 points, and her presence was vital in pushing the team to the 11-point victory.

The Lady Bucks also displayed impressive strength on the boards, recording 45 rebounds, both offensively and defensively. This dominant performance allowed Alpine to control the game's tempo, limit Trinity's second-chance opportunities, and create more scoring chances for themselves. The team's effort on the glass was a key factor in their 38-27 victory, reflecting their hustle and determination all around. With these key contributions, Alpine demonstrated a well-rounded effort that only boosted their confidence going into the next round.

The tournament concluded with a challenging game against the host team, Buena Vista. Despite a hard-fought effort, the Lady Bucks fell short in a close contest, 43-37. Despite a strong performance on the boards, the Lady Bucks found themselves outmatched by Buena Vista's size and shooting in their final game of the Longhorn Classic Tournament. Morrissey led Alpine with 10 points, but Buena Vista's defense kept the rest of the Lady Bucks' roster in check, holding them to single digits. The Lady Bucks controlled the glass, out-rebounding Buena Vista 55 to 36, and dominated defensively with 16 steals compared to the Longhorns' 10. However, despite their dominance in these areas, Alpine struggled to overcome Buena Vista's shooting efficiency and size, leading to a narrow loss. Both teams played strong defense, but Buena Vista edged Alpine in scoring, ultimately securing the win.

The Lady Bucks' resilience and adaptability throughout the tournament demonstrated their potential to compete against tough competition throughout the rest of the season, reflecting their upward trajectory this season.

On Tuesday, December 10, the Alpine Lady Bucks delivered an im-

pressive performance at home against one of the Midland Legacy junior varsity teams. Alpine started strong, with Morrissey and Fowlkes leading the offensive charge. However, by the end of the first quarter, the Lady Bucks struggled to convert shots, trailing by one point, 12-11.

The second period remained tightly contested. The Lady Rebels tied the game at 23. After a determined defensive stand, they retook the lead just before halftime, keeping the Lady Bucks from getting near the basket. At the half, Midland Legacy led Alpine 25-23.

The third quarter began with both teams trading baskets. Still, Alpine quickly surged ahead with two fast scores, forcing the Lady Rebels to call a timeout to disrupt their momentum. Improved shooting and strong defense allowed Alpine to hold onto their lead, closing the third period with a 42-37 advantage.

The Lady Bucks carried their rhythm into the final quarter, maintaining dominance on both ends of the court. They kept the pressure on Midland Legacy and ultimately secured a decisive 63-51 victory. With key contributions from underclassmen like Fowlkes, Morrissey, and Smith, the team is poised for continued success as they advance deeper into the schedule.

Alpine hits the road on Monday, December 16, to face Klondike at 6:45. Then, on Friday, December 20, they face Monahans for a 1 p.m. game. The Lady Bucks travel to Kermit on January 3 for their first district game. The next home game for the Lady Bucks will be Tuesday, January 14, against Presidio.



Sophomore Evelyn Smith was a top scorer in Tuesday night's game, where the Lady Bucks defeated the Rebels 63-51.

Photo by Kara Gerbert

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## ATHLETE OF THE WEEK

EVELYN SMITH

Sophomore standout and multi-sport athlete is this week's Athlete of the Week after her standout performance against Midland Legacy.

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### Fightin' Buck Basketball Schedule 2024-2025

Dec. 12-14 Sanderson Tourney, AWAY 9th TBD JV TBD V TBD  
Dec. 17 Fort Stockton, HOME 9th 4:30 JV 6:00 V 7:30  
Dec. 20 Monahans, AWAY 9th 1:00 JV 1:00 V 2:30  
Dec. 26-28 Caprock Tourney, AWAY 9th TBD JV TBD V TBD  
Jan. 3 McCamey, HOME 9th 4:00 JV 5:00 V 6:30  
Jan. 7 Buena Vista, AWAY V 7:30

### DISTRICT 4-3A GAMES

Jan. 10 Tornillo, AWAY 9th 5:00 JV 6:30 V 8:00  
Jan. 14 Presidio, HOME 9th\*\*6:30 JV \*\*5:00 V 8:00  
Jan. 17 Anthony, AWAY 9th 5:00 JV 6:30 V 8:00  
Jan. 21 Kermit, HOME 9th \*\*6:30 JV \*\*5:00 V 8:00  
Jan. 24 OPEN  
Jan. 28 Tornillo, HOME 9th \*\*6:30 JV \*\*5:00 V 8:00  
Jan. 31 Presidio, AWAY 9th 5:00 JV 6:30 V 8:00  
Feb. 4 Anthony, HOME 9th \*\*6:30 JV \*\*5:00 V 8:00  
Feb. 7 Kermit, AWAY 9th 5:00 JV 6:30 V 8:00  
Feb. 11 OPEN  
Feb. 17-18 Bi-District  
Feb. 24-28 Regional Semifinals  
Feb. 27-March 1 Regional Finals  
March 3-4 State Semifinals  
March 6-8 State Finals

*\*Dates and times are subject to change. \*\*Games played at Alpine Middle School*



# Bucks balance triumph and adversity in packed week of play

BY KERRY LAIRD  
Sports Editor

The Alpine Fightin' Bucks Varsity boys basketball team demonstrated dominance and resilience during a busy early-season play week. The Bucks kicked off the week with a commanding road victory over Van Horn on Tuesday, December 3, before facing a tougher challenge against San Elizario on Friday, December 6.

On Tuesday, Alpine rolled into Van Horn for their first away game of the season and delivered

an impressive 68-24 win.

From the opening tip-off, the Bucks set the tone with a tenacious defensive effort, holding the Eagles to single-digit scoring in all four quarters. The team forced an astounding 29 turnovers and converted them into 32 points, emphasizing their aggressive approach on both ends of the floor.

Offensively, the Bucks showcased their ability to adapt. While their three-point shooting wasn't on target, they dominated inside, shooting 60% from two-point range (24-40).

Additionally, they were highly efficient at the free-throw line, knocking down 11 of 14 attempts for a solid 78%.

Leading scorers for the game included Ferris Daley with 19 points, Dae Hardwick and Zane Wash with 10 points each, Kelton Tarrant with 9, and Tae Hardwick with 8. The Bucks also made their presence felt on the boards, out-rebounding Van Horn by a margin of 10. The combination of relentless defense and effective offense left little room for Van Horn's young squad, composed mostly of freshmen and sophomores, to mount any significant challenge.

By the end of the third quarter, Alpine had built a commanding 51-19 lead, effectively putting the game out of reach.

"I was pleased with our defensive intensity and attention to detail," said Head Coach Aaron Hardwick. "Although we didn't shoot it well from deep, we had multiple players step up, and we found different ways to score the basketball, particularly through our transition, which is something we stressed leading up to this contest."

The win marked Alpine's second consecutive victory to open the season, improving their record to 2-0. "It is good to get a win, but we

have to continue to get better in order to accomplish our goals that have been set for this season," said Coach Hardwick.

The Bucks didn't have much time to rest before hitting the road again on Friday, December 6, for a non-conference matchup against the San Elizario Eagles.

The game proved to be a tougher test, with San Elizario seeking redemption after falling to Alpine 57-45 last season. Despite their best efforts, the Bucks fell short in a 41-31 defeat, marking their first loss of the season. San Elizario's disciplined play and strong fourth quarter ultimately made the difference.

The game was competitive, with both teams trading defensive stops and key plays early on. Alpine showed flashes of the intensity that had propelled them to their first two wins, but the offense struggled to maintain rhythm against San Elizario's stifling defense. Fast breaks and transition plays, a hallmark of the Bucks' success earlier in the week, were harder to come by as San Elizario tightened their coverage and forced Alpine into contested shots. Although the loss was a setback, the Bucks showed skill and grit that will serve them well as the season progresses.



2024-2025 Fightin' Bucks Varsity Basketball

"We felt we were prepared, but we couldn't quite get it done," said Coach Hardwick. "You want to win them all, but that's just not how it goes all the time. The key is how we respond to adversity." The coaching staff remains focused on using these early-season games to build toward their long-term goals.

Tuesday, December 10, the Bucks traveled to Midland Greenwood, which Coach Hardwick described as "another team who is playing well right now." Greenwood won the battle with a score of 44-68, outpacing Alpine. Adjustments in strategy and execution will be key as the team prepares for an increasingly challenging schedule.

Despite the abbreviated beginning to the season, the Fightin' Bucks have

shown early promise with a blend of defensive intensity, offensive versatility, and contributions from a deep roster.

"This is a different year overall," said Head Coach Aaron Hardwick. "We haven't had as many games as we have been accustomed to having by this point of the year, so it's going to take us a while to build that total team chemistry."

Having not played a home game in nearly a month, the Bucks will return to their home court to face Fort Stockton on Tuesday, December 17, at 7:30 pm. They hope to improve on their 2-2 season. "Tuesday, we are finally back home to take on Fort Stockton in the Battle of Highway 67, Hoops Edition," said Coach Hardwick.

## BRANDS WE CARRY

## Lady Buck Basketball Schedule 2024-2025

- Dec. 16: Klondike, WINK JV 5:30 V 6:45
- Dec. 20: Monahans, HOME JV 2:30 V 1:00
- Dec. 26-28: Caprock Tourney, AWAY JV TBA V TBA
- Jan. 3: Kermit, AWAY JV 5:00 V 6:30
- Jan. 7: Buena Vista, AWAY JV 5:00 V 6:30
- Jan. 10: Tornillo, AWAY JV 5:00 V 6:30
- Jan. 14: Presidio, HOME JV 5:00 V 6:30
- Jan. 17: Anthony, AWAY JV 5:00 V 6:30
- Jan. 21: Kermit, HOME JV 5:00 V 6:30
- Jan. 24: Balmorhea, AWAY JV 5:00 V 6:30
- Jan. 28: Tornillo, HOME JV 5:00 V 6:30
- Jan. 31: Presidio, AWAY JV 5:00 V 6:30
- Feb. 4: Anthony, HOME JV 5:00 JV 6:30
- Feb. 8: District Certification
- Feb. 10-11: Bi-District
- Feb. 13-15: Area
- Feb. 17-18: Regional Semifinals
- Feb. 20-22: Regional Finals/Optional Regional Tournament
- Feb. 24-25: State Semifinals

\*\*Dates and times are subject to change.

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## Texas wildlife photo contest offers \$40,000

*Wildlife in Focus expands statewide to promote conservation*

Wildlife in Focus (WIF) is expanding its popular photo contest statewide in 2025 and is offering a record \$40,000 in prize packages for the talented winners. The contest has been around for two decades, but in past years, it has been limited to select counties. In 2025, contest organizers want to reach more landowners and photographers across the state.

The competition's goal is to promote wildlife habitat conservation and create a visual record of the beauty of native Texas land and wildlife. The prize-winning photos are assembled in a coffee table book and are also used in WIF's educational outreach program for children in grades K-8.

"We're really excited about expanding our reach and celebrating wildlife conservation across Texas," said WIF Photo Contest Director Miles Phillips. "We're also adding a videography category in 2025."

The contest pairs landowners with participating photographers, so advance registration is required. Registration is now open, and the deadline is February 1, 2025. Register at [wildlifeinfoocus.org](http://wildlifeinfoocus.org). Photographers and landowners can select their own teams, or WIF can assist in pairing teams.

The photo contest window is February 21-May 31, 2025. Photog-

raphers will create a diverse portfolio of photos captured at any time during the contest window. Photos can be submitted in 50 categories. A panel of professional photographers will judge the photos.

The contest provides an opportunity to tell a story of private land wildlife stewardship while having a truly unique experience being a team partner with a landowner.

"The photo contest has been a wonderful opportunity for our family," said Claire Vaughan, a participating landowner who now serves as WIF's board of directors president. "We have documented the beauty of the land and wildlife we love. It has also created opportunities for our ranch business to diversify."

Nature photography tourism is growing as a sustainable income stream for private landowners across Texas.

"I have participated as both a landowner and a photographer, and I can testify that it has been the most rewarding experience I have had in ranch ownership and in photographing wildlife," said Dr. Sandy Hurwitz, who also serves on WIF's board. "The friends that I have made, the insights I have gained, and the opportunity to repeat it all on a regular basis has been a wonderful game changer

for me. We encourage all interested landowners and photographers to participate."

Whether participants aim to win, learn, or simply share their passion for conservation, this contest is a gateway to a deeper connection with wildlife and the photography community.

Contest details and registration can be found at [wildlifeinfoocus.org](http://wildlifeinfoocus.org).

**P H O T O S**  
HERE: <https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/kbd7lg0ezpaj04n3wop-wv/AltD96r43HRmY6mcca6eMyo?rlkey=grzl04vt841wnaeboup69uc2a&st=tms3ox9x&dl=0>

## AHS nursing program receives grant



The Alpine High School Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) program recently received a \$68,000 grant from the Big Bend Regional Hospital District (BBRHD). CNA instructor and district nurse Gayla Owen and some of her students recently welcomed BBRHD executive director Lynette Brehm and board secretary Angela Juett to AHS to learn more about the district's CNA program.

*Courtesy photo*

### NOTICE OF SALE

THE STATE OF TEXAS

§

BY VIRTUE OF AN ORDER OF SALE

COUNTY OF BREWSTER

§

DATED: December 2, 2024

and issued pursuant to a judgment decree of the District Court, 394<sup>th</sup> Judicial District, of Brewster County, Texas, by the District Clerk on said date, and to me directed and delivered as Sheriff of said County, I have on the 9<sup>th</sup> day of December, 2024, seized, levied upon, and will on the first Tuesday in January, 2025, the same being the 7<sup>th</sup> day of said month, at the Courthouse door, of said County in the City of Alpine, beginning at 10:00 o'clock a.m., on said day, proceed to sell for cash to the highest bidder all the right, title and interest of the defendants in such suit to the following described real estate levied upon as the property of said defendants, the same lying and being situated in the County of Brewster and the State of Texas, to-wit:

**CAUSE NO. TXB22366; ALPINE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT V. PRESCOTT TRADING & EQUIPMENT CO.**

TRACT 1: R19445

The Southwest Quarter (SW/4) of the East Half (E/2) of Survey 3, Block NC, being 32 acres of land, more or less, Brewster County, Texas; being that property more particularly described as a Warranty Deed recorded in Volume 53, Page 223 in the deed records of Brewster County, Texas.

or upon the written request of said defendants or their attorney, a sufficient portion thereof to satisfy said judgment, interest, penalties, and costs; subject, however to the right of redemption by the defendants or any person having an interest therein, to redeem said property, or their interest therein, in the manner provided by law, and subject to any other and further rights to which the defendants or anyone interested therein may be entitled, under the provisions of law. Said sale to be made by me to satisfy the judgment rendered in the above styled and numbered cause, together with interest, penalties and costs of suit, and the proceeds of said sale to be applied to the satisfaction thereof, and the remainder, if any, to be applied as the law directs.

I have appointed the following as agent to conduct the sale, to-wit:

Perdue, Brandon, Fielder, Collins & Mott, L.L.P.  
Attorneys at Law  
2500 N. Big Spring St., Ste. D  
Midland, Texas 79705  
(432) 522-2427

THIS SALE IS BEING CONDUCTED PURSUANT TO STATUTORY OR JUDICIAL REQUIREMENTS. BIDDERS WILL BID ON THE RIGHTS, TITLE, AND INTERESTS, IF ANY, IN THE REAL PROPERTY OFFERED.

THE PROPERTY IS SOLD AS IS, WHERE IS, AND WITHOUT ANY WARRANTY, EITHER EXPRESS OR IMPLIED. NEITHER THE COUNTY NOR THE SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT WARRANTS OR MAKES ANY REPRESENTATIONS ABOUT THE PROPERTY'S TITLE, CONDITION, HABITABILITY, MERCHANTABILITY, OR FITNESS FOR A PARTICULAR PURPOSE. BUYERS ASSUME ALL RISKS.

IN SOME SITUATIONS, A LOT OF FIVE ACRES OR LESS IS PRESUMED TO BE INTENDED FOR RESIDENTIAL USE. HOWEVER, IF THE PROPERTY LACKS WATER OR WASTEWATER SERVICE, THE PROPERTY MAY NOT QUALIFY FOR RESIDENTIAL USE. A POTENTIAL BUYER WHO WOULD LIKE MORE INFORMATION SHOULD MAKE ADDITIONAL INQUIRIES OR CONSULT WITH PRIVATE COUNSEL.

ESTA VENTA SE LLEVARÁ A CABO DE CONFORMIDAD CON LOS REQUISITOS LEGALES O JUDICIALES. LOS POSTORES HARÁN UNA OFERTA POR EL TÍTULO, LOS DERECHOS E INTERESES, SI ALGUNO, EN LA PROPIEDAD OFRECIDA.

LA PROPIEDAD SE VENDE COMO ESTÁ, EN EL LUGAR DONDE SE ENCUENTRA, Y SIN NINGUNA GARANTÍA, YA SEA EXPRESA O IMPLÍCITA. NI EL CONDADO, NI LA OFICINA DEL ALGUACIL GARANTIZAN O HACEN NINGUNA REPRESENTACIÓN SOBRE EL TÍTULO DE LA PROPIEDAD, CONDICIÓN, HABITABILIDAD, COMERCIABILIDAD, O IDONEIDAD PARA UN PROPÓSITO PARTICULAR. LOS COMPRADORES ASUMEN TODOS LOS RIESGOS.

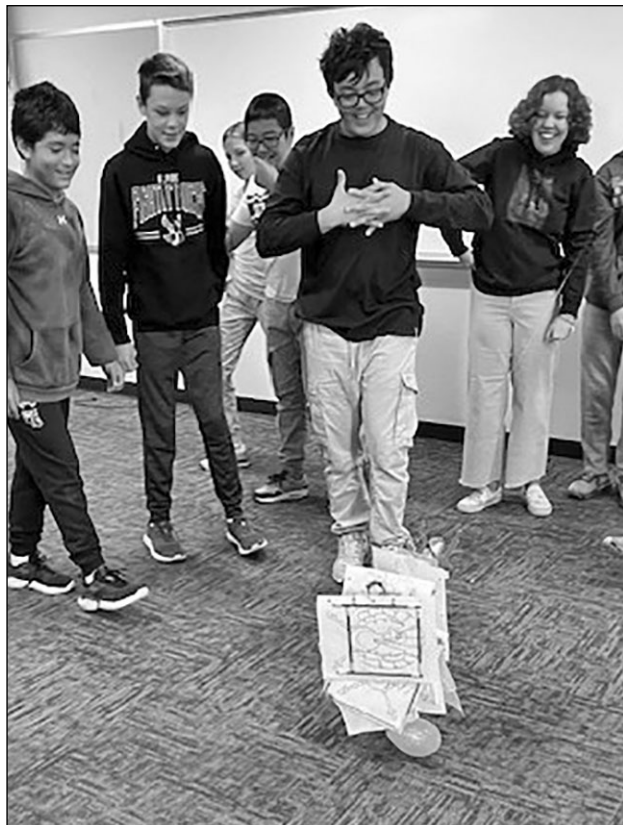
EN ALGUNAS SITUACIONES, UN LOTE DE CINCO HECTÁREAS O MENOS SE PRESUME QUE ES APTO PARA USO RESIDENCIAL. SIN EMBARGO, SI LA PROPIEDAD NO TIENE SERVICIOS DE AGUA POTABLE O AGUAS RESIDUALES, LA PROPIEDAD NO PUEDE CALIFICAR PARA EL USO RESIDENCIAL. UN COMPRADOR POTENCIAL QUE DESEE MÁS INFORMACIÓN, DEBERÁ HACER ESTUDIOS ADICIONALES O CONSULTAR CON UN ABOGADO PRIVADO.

At the time the sale begins, all bidders at the sale must be registered with the above named agent conducting the sale and be eligible to bid according to the Property Tax Code.

Dated at Alpine, Brewster County, Texas, this the 9<sup>th</sup> day of December, 2024.

/s/ Ronny Dodson  
RONNY DODSON  
SHERIFF, BREWSTER COUNTY

## Special Delivery



Alpine Middle Schoolers built a device that will safely deliver their turkey to the dinner table, just in time for Christmas.

*Courtesy photo*

## STEAMers visit Big Bend Ranch State Park



A group of middle schoolers involved in STEAM recently took a trip to Big Bend Ranch State Park to participate in a water testing experiment using water in the Rio Grande. These students also learned how some of the cliffs around the river are formed using hands-on experience.

*Courtesy photo*

# Brunch ideas to satisfy the whole family

For many people, the holidays are all about food. It's that time of year when the matriarchs or even the patriarchs of the family break out those time-honored family recipes. These dishes are different across the country, but adding something new should not be out of the question.

Brunch is a great way to try something new on the family and not upset the apple cart, as the saying goes.

Many brunch recipes involve casseroles, quiches, or frittatas. Some are sweet, and some are savory, but they can be one of the best parts of the holiday or a new item to add to your brunch menus throughout the year.

One such casserole that I have on my list to try is a pancake breakfast casserole. The pancakes can be made ahead of time and frozen, saving time when getting this sweet dish to the table. All that is needed is to defrost the pancakes before using them, and then you can bake them in a rich, creamy custard.



## HEAD OVER MEALS

by kara gerbert

Another item on my brunch list is a hash brown breakfast bundt. Yes, that means you break out your bundt pan as if you were going to bake a cake, but instead, take everything we love from a traditional diner breakfast and bake it in a bundt pan. This includes hash browns, eggs, cheese, and sausage. This, too, can be prepared ahead of time and can easily be served on Christmas morning.

And let's not forget the quiche. This brunch favorite is probably the most versatile of all brunch options. The ingredients that can be added are almost unlimited and can be tailored to everyone's liking, especially if you make more than one.



Hashbrown Breakfast Bundt

Other brunch options include French toast and Belgian waffles, and none of this would be complete without sides of bacon or sausage. Bread puddings are another brunch option and can be savory or sweet, although traditionally, they lean towards the sweet side.

Finally, my favorite part about creating a brunch casserole is that a variety of vegetables may be added to many of these dishes. While this mostly tricks your mind into believing every-

thing you're partaking in is healthy, it still adds a healthy element that might not be considered at breakfast or brunch-time.

Therefore, whether you choose the sweet or savory route, know that a brunch casserole, quiche, or even a frittata can satisfy the ravenous hordes clamoring for something tasty besides the traditionally scheduled holiday meal.

For full recipes, visit [www.alpineavalanche.com](http://www.alpineavalanche.com).



Upside-down apple French toast with cranberries and pecans



Pancake breakfast casserole

## Grinches all around



This Alpine house is all about the Grinch this holiday season, but we're pretty sure they won't allow him to steal Christmas.

Photo by Kara Gerbert

## Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick launches legislative initiative to ban all THC

"Thousands of stores have opened to sell all types of dangerous products with unlimited THC. These stores even target your children," stated Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick.

Patrick issued a statement on December 4, announcing Senate Bill 3, which will be legislation to ban all forms of consumable Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) from being sold in Texas.

"Everyone knows that agriculture is part of the fabric of Texas. In 2019, the Texas Legislature passed House Bill 1325 by Rep. Tracy King, R-Uvalde, to bolster agriculture in Texas. Part of that bill allowed for the commer-

cialization of hemp, which might include un-removable non-intoxicating trace amounts of Delta 9 THC.

"Dangerously, retailers exploited the agriculture law to sell life-threatening, unregulated forms of THC to the public and made them easily accessible. These stores not only sold to adults, but they targeted Texas children and exposed them to dangerous levels of THC. Since 2023, thousands of stores selling hazardous THC products have popped up in communities across the state, and many sell products, including beverages, that have three to four times the THC content that might be found in marijuana pur-

chased from a drug dealer. Under Senate Bill 3, these products, and all forms of THC, will be banned in Texas.

"Senate Bill 3, which will be carried by Sen. Charles Perry, R-Lubbock, will ban all forms of THC and keep these unsafe products off our streets. We are not going to allow these retailers to circumvent the law and put Texans' lives in danger. This bill will have broad bipartisan support in the Senate. I trust the House will also see the danger of these products and pass this bill with overwhelming support so it can become law immediately," Patrick concluded.

## Slaughter to deliver commencement address

BY KARA GERBERT  
Managing Editor

This Friday, December 13, at 5:30 p.m., Sul Ross State University will hold its fall commencement ceremony at the Pete P. Gallego Center. Texas Criminal Appeals Judge Michelle Slaughter is the guest speaker who will address this fall's graduates.

Judge Slaughter was elected to the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals (CCA) in 2018, receiving more than 4.7 million votes, more than any other contested candidate in the United States for

that year's general election. Before her election to the CCA, Judge Slaughter served six years as a district judge in the 405th District Court of Galveston County.

She earned her J.D. cum laude from the University of Houston Law Center in 2004 and B.A. magna cum laude from the University of Houston in 1998. During law school, she was an intern for two federal district judges for the Texas First Court of Appeals. After graduating from law school, Judge Slaughter worked as a litigation attorney for two international



Judge Michelle M. Slaughter.

Courtesy photo

law firms. She had her own successful practice until she was elected as a district judge in 2013.

### Marathon Independent School District Request for Bids No. 2024-1 Security Fencing

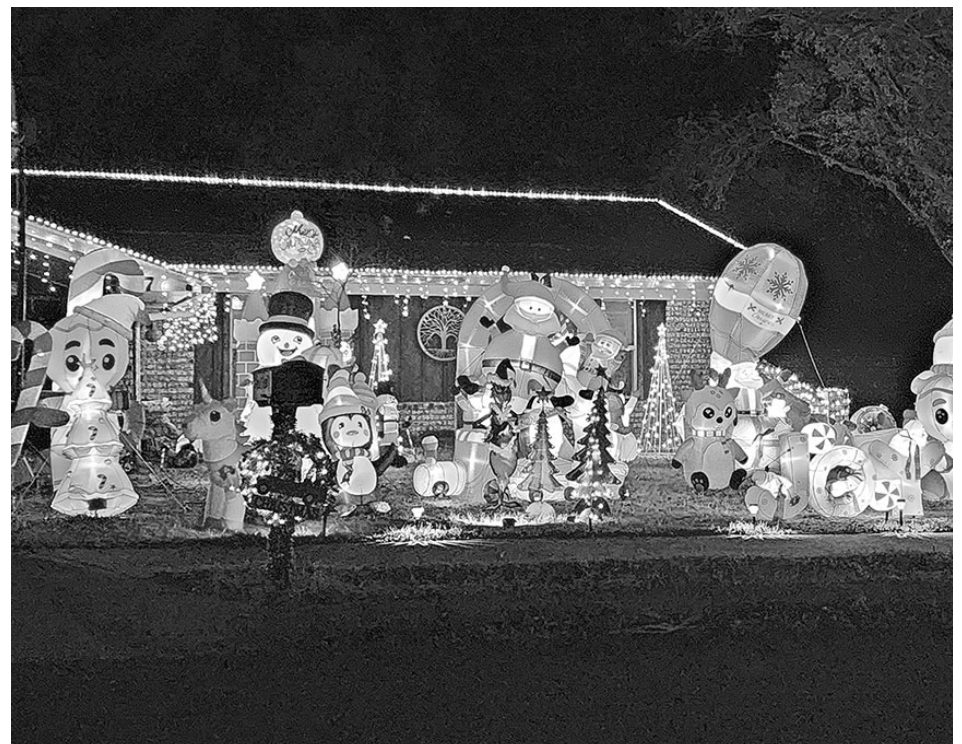
Marathon ISD is soliciting bids for a contractor/company to install new fencing, remove and replace existing fencing, and install gates at locations needed. The new fencing is needed for the safety and security of the students and staff members. Sealed bids will be received until 1:00 p.m. on Wednesday, December 18, 2024. Bids will be presented to the Board of Trustees during the regularly scheduled board meeting, to be held on December 18, 2024. At 6:00 p.m., at 109 N. 5th Street, Marathon, TX 79842.

Project specifications and timelines are available at [www.marathonisd.net](http://www.marathonisd.net) under the School Finance/Procurement tabs, or may be obtained from the district's business office:

Marcus Celaya, Business Manager  
mcelaya@marathonisd.net  
432-386-4431  
109 N. 5th Street  
Marathon, TX 79842

Marathon ISD reserves the right to reject any and all bids.

## Festive Cheer



Alpine residents have gone all out this season, decorating their yards and houses with Christmas cheer.

Photo by Kara Gerbert

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# 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 question. 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.  
**HOURS**- You may place your ad in person at 704 E. Holland, Alpine, TX 79830 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Call 432-837-3334.  
**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](mailto:shelley.maroney@alpineavalanche.com).

## MOBILE HOMES FOR RENT

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## SERVICES

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## GARAGE SALES

GARAGE SALE II - 1002 E. NATIONS. Saturday, Dec. 14th from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Clothes, jewelry, and much more.

Estate Sale for Gayle Gordon, 1018 Yale, Marfa, Dec. 14-15, Sat. - Sun., 9-3. Fine Art including works by Julie Speed, Cesar

## GARAGE SALES

Martinez, Lamar Briggs, Billy Ray Mangham, Terry Ybanez, Jean Jack, Kaeko Moti, Charles Rebworth, Josephine Rubirosa, and many more. Herman Miller Eames chair and footstool, 7 ft. burlwood parsons table, Isamu Noguchi floor lamp, antique tables, church pew, Chippendale dining chairs, Secretary desk, kitchen/hoosier table, thousands of books and cookbooks, Mexican folk art, Oaxacan figures and ceramics, clothes, linens, kitchen ware-glass, dishes, small appliances, pots/pans by Staub, Le Crueset, All Clad. Antiques - cut glass, fine porcelain, mid century glass, Asian art, Inuit, pre-Columbian pottery, queen bed, Willie Nelson's First July 4th Picnic poster and so much more! Don't miss this sale!

**APPLICATION HAS BEEN MADE WITH THE TEXAS ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE COMMISSION FOR A WINE AND BEER RETAILER'S OFF-PREMISE PERMIT BY ALPINE VELOCITY OPS LLC D/B/A VELOCITY #18 TO BE LOCATED AT 610 W HOLLAND AVE, ALPINE TEXAS 79830, BREWSTER COUNTY. THE OWNER OF SAID COMPANY IS RAJA S. DODDI, LLC MANAGER.**

**APPLICATION HAS BEEN MADE WITH THE TEXAS ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE COMMISSION FOR A WINE AND BEER RETAILER'S OFF-PREMISE PERMIT BY ALPINE VELOCITY OPS LLC D/B/A VELOCITY #19 TO BE LOCATED AT 1500 W HWY 90, ALPINE TEXAS 79830, BREWSTER COUNTY. THE OWNER OF SAID COMPANY IS RAJA S. DODDI, LLC MANAGER.**

## ADMINISTRATION/PROFESSIONAL SERVICES REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS BREWSTER COUNTY

The Entity of Brewster County plans to apply for the upcoming 2025-2026 Texas Community Development Block Grant Fund Program of the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA). which is managed by the National Forest Service (NFS). These services are being solicited to assist Brewster County in its application and administration of the CWDG contract, if awarded, to support eligible activities associated with the program in the Entity of Brewster County. Accordingly, Brewster County is seeking to contract with a qualified Professional Administrator or Service Provider (individual/firm) to prepare the application and/or administer the awarded contract. Please electronically submit your proposal in .pdf format via email to [County.Judge@co.brewster.tx.us](mailto:County.Judge@co.brewster.tx.us) Proposals must be received by Brewster County no later than 3:00 p.m. on Tuesday, December 31st, 2024, to be considered. Brewster County reserves the right to negotiate with all individuals or firms that submit proposals, as per the Texas Professional Services Procurement Act and the Uniform Grant and Contract Management Standards. Section 3 Residents and Business Concerns, Minority Business Enterprises, Small Business Enterprises and Women Business Enterprises are encouraged to submit proposals. Brewster County is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer. Servicios de traducción están disponibles por petición.

## ADMINISTRATION/PROFESSIONAL SERVICES REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS BREWSTER COUNTY

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# Rocketeers at AMS



Eighth graders at Alpine Middle School built and launched rockets last week as part of their science class.

Courtesy photo

## PEYTON TAYS

**In what activities did you participate in high school?**  
I participated in varsity baseball and played second base.

**Who was your favorite teacher/coach, and why?**  
My favorite coach is Coach Dominguez because when I was on the JV baseball team he pushed me to be where I am now.

**What was your favorite moment in the last four years?**

I don't have any favorite moments, but I have some great memories with my friends.

**What are your plans after high school?**  
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## Devotional Page

### Lessons from the Woodshed

BY COLEMAN REIDLING  
First Baptist Church-Alpine

I wonder what Jesus learned in his dad's shop. Joseph, Jesus's earthly father, was a craftsman, after all. I, however, am no craftsman. If you need proof, just look in my garage where my newest project stands rickety and out-of-square. I recently constructed some homemade shelving. It is functional, but once it was finished all I could say was, "Yikes." Nevertheless, I did learn some lessons from the woodshed.

**Lesson #1:** If it's warped, it's warped. Using scrap wood means I came across some pieces that were warped. When I tried to use them, they threw everything out of alignment. This got me thinking about how falsehood is like a warped piece of wood. No matter how much we fix it up or bang on it, it will never become true. It will throw the whole project "off," and it's usually best to discard it. The devil is the "father of lies" (John 8:44), but God is concerned with the truth because Jesus is, in fact, Himself the truth (John 14:6). We must, therefore, test information and even our thoughts against the standard of Christ (2 Corinthians 10:5). How do you judge what is true? If it does not line up with Jesus, there is a good chance you are building with a warped worldview. You are better off to scrap it!

**Lesson #2:** Don't force it, or you may lose it. When building, I impatiently forced some nails into positions

that began to split the board. As soon as I noticed, I backed off and took a different course. If I hadn't, I would have ruined the wood entirely. This got me thinking about a vital thing called Christian witness (Acts 1:8, Matthew 28:18-20). If you are a Christian, never force your convictions down other people's throats. If a person is not receptive to the gospel, take it that the Lord has not yet opened their mind (Luke 24:45). Not only is cramming foolish (Proverbs 18:2), but it also damages the collective witness of the church whose Lord gives people the freedom to disagree and even oppose Him. We will never argue or insult someone in the Kingdom of God. Don't force the issue or you may lose the person entirely.

**Lesson #3:** We all have our knots. Every board is unique. The "knots" (the discolored, tough spots) vary even if the dimensions are identical. Though the "knot" is not pretty, it's part of what makes that board what it is. Similarly, our past hurts are not pretty, but they do not prevent God from building something beautiful in our lives. Ephesians 2:10 says that we are God's poiema (handiwork/masterpiece) created in Christ Jesus to do good works that He prepared in advance. God will work through our past hurts and weaknesses when we yield them to Him (2 Corinthians 12:9-10). We all have our "knots." Let's entrust them to Jesus, the master builder, Son of God, and the son of a carpenter.

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## SRSU holds tree-lighting



Students, faculty and staff, and area community members braved the chilly, wet weather Friday evening for the First Lady's tree lighting ceremony held in front of the Morelock Academic Building on the Sul Ross campus.

*Photo by Kara Gerbert*

## Santa appeared at Fiesta de Noche Buena



Marathon's Fiesta de Noche Buena that was held this past Saturday had a visit from Santa, who set up inside Trans Pecos Banks to visit with kids like Caius and Luna Gonzales and ask them what items were on this year's Christmas list.

*Photo by Kara Gerbert*

## Brown Santa collects toys for needy children



Brewster County Sheriff Ronny Dodson and his trusty "elves" Chief Deputy Ryan Skelton and Captain Omar Holguin work on wrapping some of the many presents the Brewster County Sheriff's Department collects each year for their annual Brown Santa gift program. The gifts, along with monetary gifts to purchase toys, are donated to supply children who would not ordinarily receive Christmas gifts at Christmas time. The program also has 55-gallon barrels set up in local businesses to collect toys.

*Photo by Kara Gerbert*

## The toys are piling up



Alpine Police Department's Blue Santa program is collecting gifts for underprivileged children again. Those wishing to donate may drop the gifts off in the lobby. Pictured are APD officers Prada with her handler Valerie Kettani, Felipe Fierro, Victor Santana, Alexis Armendariz, Chief Darrell Losoya, Kurt Caughman, and Anthony Vargas.

*Photo by Kara Gerbert*



You're Invited To Our

# Christmas Open House

**Thursday, December 12, 2024**  
**9 a.m. to 3 p.m.**

**West Texas National Bank**  
**101 East Avenue E**  
**Alpine, TX 79830**

Refreshments Provided

Take free photos with Santa from 3-5 p.m.



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