

## Holy Angels to host fundraiser; expresses appreciation

BY KARA GERBERT  
Managing Editor

The Holy Angels Cemetery was busy in the latter part of this year, and they appreciated all the time, effort, and money that the cemetery supporters contributed.

On December 31, the Holy Angels Cemetery Association will host a New Year's Eve dance at the Granada Theatre. Tickets are \$15 per person, and table reservations are available at [www.granadatheatre.events](http://www.granadatheatre.events). Tables for a group of eight are \$175 and include the tickets and two bottles of wine. Tickets may be picked up at the door.

For those who don't wish to attend, Holy Angels hopes those interested in donating to the cause will consider purchasing tickets as gifts or donating outright.

See ANGELS • 3A

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FEATURED

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### Rainfall totals at Alpine-Casparis Airport

2024. . . . . 14.73"  
December . . . . . .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.**



## Ink on paper, hooves on the ground: Barney Nelson's legacy in literature

BY KARA GERBERT  
Managing Editor

For some, writing is a challenge. For someone like Alpine's Barney Nelson, it is a way of life that began in middle school when she wrote her first column for the school newspaper.

That single journalistic endeavor led to more than 300 articles published in periodicals such as Texas Monthly, West-

ern Horseman, Range Magazine, Equus, and Horse and Rider.

Nelson's writing has included environmental journalism, personality profiles, humor, essays, and technical and literary reviews. She's also a prolific editor for newsletters, magazines, and professional journals, as well as an ac-



Barbara "Barney" Nelson

complished photographer.

Nelson grew up on her family's stock farm in Iowa until she was 10 when the family moved to Arizona. There, Nelson says she did everything she could to stay connected to agriculture, including rodeoing, riding horses for hire, ranch and feedlot work, and work-

ing for Case tractors as a parts girl.

In 1968, her journey led to Sul Ross where she was offered a job her sophomore year editing the student newspaper. In her senior year, she published an article in Western Horseman magazine, branding herself a professional writer. Nelson graduated from Sul Ross in 1971 with a B.S. in English and a minor in range animal science.

Continuing the agriculture theme, Nelson married a local cowboy in 1971 after she graduated, and they lived on several ranches. One significant chapter in Nelson's life unfolded at the local 06 ranch, where she lived for 13 years. During this time, she continued to write for horse and cattle magazines while also working as a full-time

See NELSON • 6A

# All I want for Christmas



Aurora and Catalina Baeza visited with Jolly Ol' St. Nick last Wednesday afternoon when he stopped at West Texas National Bank to talk to kids and ask what they wanted for Christmas.

Photo by Kara Gerbert

## Catching greatness: Hardwick cements his name in Alpine history

BY KERRY LAIRD  
Sports Editor

*Editor's Note: This is part one of a two-part series.*

Some call it the Highway 67 rivalry, but for a junior wide receiver, the game against Fort Stockton was another opportunity to suit up and showcase his God-given talents. The home crowd erupted as the ball soared through the air, landing in Dae Hardwick's outstretched hands for his 16th reception of the night—a catch that shattered a 15-year-old school record.

With 243 receiving yards and two touchdowns against a powerhouse team, it was a performance for the books. For Hardwick, it was just another game under the Friday night lights.

This scene, repeated throughout the season, solidified Hardwick as a record-breaker and one of the most dynamic players Alpine High School football has ever seen.

Don't be mistaken. Hardwick hasn't let his outstanding performances and

historic games explode his ego. The kid's a beast on the field, but he quickly points out that record-breaking nights don't happen without team effort and hard work.

"It feels great," said Hardwick, "especially being able to accomplish those goals with the people I had around me. The hardest part was definitely keeping my body in shape and staying humble."

Dae's football journey didn't begin until he was 10 years old, but sports have always been a central part of his life.

Growing up in a family where athletics was a way of life—his father played basketball at Sul Ross State University—Hardwick's passion for competition blossomed early.

Initially drawn to basketball, he eventually found his way to the football field, where his natural talent and determination set him apart.

Hardwick's success on the field is no accident—it's the result of relentless effort and an unwavering commitment to improvement.

According to Andy Smith, Dae's head coach and AISD athletic director, Dae's work ethic during practice reflects his dedication to perfecting his craft.

"What sets Dae apart from others is his attention to detail and how he practices," said Smith. "He will run every route during practice without a sub or a break. We have to make others go in for him because he loves the process of getting reps. He very rarely drops a pass in practice."

Coach Smith added that Hardwick approaches every route with full effort, always focused on improving his skills. He emphasized that Hardwick's coachability is a rare and valuable trait for a wide receiver, adding that his ability to judge and adjust to the football in the air is another quality that sets him apart.

"His upside is endless, which will be scary for our future opponents because he will continue to develop as a student-athlete," he said.

Hardwick broke school records for single-season re-



Dae Hardwick carries the ball towards the end-zone in the Bucks match-up against the Anthony Wildcats this past season.

Photo by Noe Lujan

ceptions (89) and receiving yards (1,161) this season. These achievements are the product of relentless effort both on and off the field.

His dedication to staying in peak physical condition was one of the greatest challenges he faced. It required a careful balance of training, recovery, and discipline.

Yet, it's not just his athleticism that makes him a standout—it's his humility and the connection he shares with his teammates that define his success.

One of Hardwick's proudest moments came

in a hard-fought game against Crane on the road, a game where the team accomplished something that hadn't been done in five years.

It wasn't just about personal accolades but about team success and proving what they could achieve together. Moments like this highlight his leadership and ability to inspire those around him.

"To be able to go out there and do something as a team that hasn't been done

See HARDWICK • 3A

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## OBITUARIES

### Alexander Lopez

Alexander Lopez, known affectionately as Alex or "Turtle" (YKYK), passed away on December 13 in Alpine at the age of 32. Born on September 23, 1992, Alex demonstrated a deep commitment to serving his community from an early age, which guided both his personal and professional life. Alex graduated from Van Horn High School and furthered his education at Sul Ross State University, where he earned a Bachelor of Science degree, specializing in criminal justice. This academic foundation propelled him into a dedicated career as a deputy for the Alpine Police Department. He then served as a School



Resource Officer (SRO) at Alpine High School, employed by the Brewster County Sheriff's Department, and deeply cared for the safety and well-being of the students he protected. Most currently, Alex served our community as a dispatcher for the Brewster County Sheriff's Department, where his compas-

sionate nature and sense of duty were evident.

A passionate advocate for his community, Alex's life was marked by memories of his constant desire to help others. He was known for his loving spirit and remarkable ability to connect with those around him. Whether it was through his work or in his personal life, Alex made a lasting impact on many individuals and families.

On September 7, he celebrated one of his proudest accomplishments: marrying his beloved wife, Arely Lopez. Their bond exemplified love and partnership, and they cherished spending time with family and friends. Alex had a variety of interests, including

golfing, fishing, and enjoying music from artists like Peso Pluma, Grupo Firme, and Pantera, as well as the loud tunes that brought him joy. One of the most important and talked-about pastimes was definitely going on a ride-along with his brother-in-blue, Ismael Hernandez. Trips back home to Van Horn to visit his mom, grandma, and sibling and to catch up with childhood friends were also a highlight of his life. He was an ardent supporter of the Dallas Cowboys and displayed pride in "The Thin Blue Line," symbolizing his commitment to law enforcement.

Alex is survived by his loving wife, Arely Lopez; his grandmother, Socorro

Lopez; his sister, Destinee Acosta; his brother, Marc Acosta; and his cherished fur baby, Bingo. He is preceded in death by his mother, Lupe Acosta Lopez, and his grandfather, Antonio "Tony" Lopez.

The community mourns the loss of a true servant leader who dedicated his life to making a difference. Alex Lopez will be remembered for his kindness, unwavering dedication to others, and the loving memories he created with those fortunate to know him. His legacy will continue to inspire all who were touched by his life.

Visitation for Alex will take place at the Alpine Memorial Funeral Home Chapel on Friday, De-

cember 27, beginning at 12 p.m. The recitation of the Holy Rosary will take place at 7 p.m., also at the Alpine Memorial Funeral Home Chapel, located at 209 W. Sul Ross Avenue in Alpine. A funeral Mass will be held at Our Lady of Fatima Catholic Church in Van Horn, (308 Almond Street, Van Horn, Texas) beginning at 10 a.m. (Central Standard Time) with interment thereafter at Van Horn Cemetery.

Services have been entrusted to Alpine Memorial Funeral Home, and gifts and condolences may be left at www.alpinememorialfuneralhome.com.

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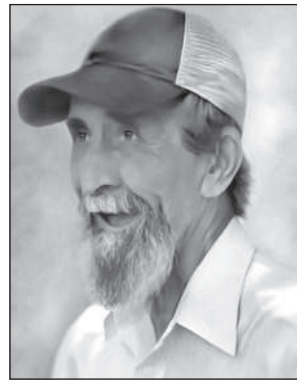
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### Juan Sotelo Ramirez

Juan Sotelo Ramirez, a beloved son, father, grandfather, and friend, passed away peacefully at his home in Alpine on December 5 at the age of 80. Born on July 7, 1944, in the same town that would cradle his life, Juan was a man who found joy in the simple pleasures of everyday moments.

Juan's warm and engaging personality endeared him to friends



and family alike. He had a unique knack for striking up a conversation, welcoming everyone with open arms, and having a heart full of kindness. His laughter and stories will echo in the hearts of those who had the privilege of knowing him.

Throughout his life, Juan diligently worked in various roles, with his most recent position being a dedicated maintenance worker at the Stripes Store in Alpine. His strong work ethic was evident in everything he did, and he took pride in con-

tributing to his community.

Educated at Alpine Centennial School, Juan carried the spirit of learning and discovery into adulthood. In his spare time, he found joy in the thrill of scratching lottery tickets, watching football games, and preserving the serenity of quiet moments shared on his porch, where he loved to watch the world and cars go by.

Juan was proud of his family, including his daughter Mary Jane Ramirez, his sons Jackie Ramirez, Nathan Ramirez, and Juan Ramirez, Jr., five cherished grandchildren, eight great-grandchildren, and numerous nieces and nephews. His legacy will live on through the lives he touched. Juan's love for his family was unwavering, and he poured affection into every interaction, nur-

turing bonds that will be cherished forever.

He is reunited in spirit with his beloved family members who preceded him, including his father, Francisco Ramirez, his mother, Eloisa Sotelo Ramirez, and his sons, Andrew "Andy" Ramirez and Robert Ramirez. He also joins his siblings Manuel Ramirez, Jose Ramirez, Francisco Ramirez, Celia Villalva, Alvina Mata, Margarita Madrid, Genoveva Ortega, Maria Ramirez, and Audelia Betancourt, as well as dear great-granddaughter Julissa. Their memories remain alive in the hearts of those who knew and loved them.

As we celebrate the life of Juan Sotelo Ramirez, let us remember a man who lived fully and loved deeply. His gentle spirit, ever-ready smile, and constant curiosity about people and life itself will be sorely missed. May he rest in peace, and may his family find comfort in the beautiful memories they shared.

The family of Juan Ramirez would like to extend sincere thanks and gratitude to Angels Care Hospice for their passionate patient care and to the Sunshine House in Alpine for providing warm meals throughout the years.

Visitation will begin at 9 a.m. on Friday, December 27, at Our Lady of Peace Catholic Church, 406 S. 6th Street in Alpine. The recitation of the Most Holy Rosary will follow at 10 a.m., followed by the funeral Mass at 10:30 a.m., also at Our Lady of Peace Catholic Church. Inurnment will take place after the Mass at Holy Angels Cemetery in Alpine.

Services have been entrusted to Alpine Memorial Funeral Home, and gifts and condolences may be left at www.alpinememorialfuneralhome.com.

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each night to robe up and  
receive instructions.**

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The Texas State University System nor Sul Ross State University Board of Regents sponsor or endorse the Live Nativity.

# Live Nativity set for this week

The annual Live Nativity began last night and will continue through Friday evening. Performances will occur at the "stable" area between Kokernot Lodge and the Sul Ross Outdoor Theater at 7 p.m.

A long-standing event, the Live Nativity began in the late 1980s in front of the Presbyterian Church in Alpine. The tiny, costumed cast was part of a "still" scene as motorists drove by to view the Nativity family (complete with an angel standing on a hidden ladder). The production moved to its present location in 1992 and added animals, including a donkey, goats, and, every other year, camels from the Texas Camel Core in Valley Mills. Other additions included a welded wire panel stable, ostrich feather wings for the angels, lights, music, and action!

The narration for the production comes from the Biblical account of the birth of Christ, and the lights and music provide the cues for the scene changes. For the last several years, Carl, the Bactrian camel owned by the Wasserman Wranch of Alpine, has been the regal steed accompanying the wise

men. Pumpkin, his stable mate at the Wasserman's, will again be Mary's trusty mount to ride to Bethlehem!

"To produce a reenactment for three nights, complete with costumes, lighting, various props, animals, and a cast of all ages, many of whom will be in it for the first time, I have to have a host of volunteers! I couldn't make this happen without them!" said Karen McGuire, director of the Live Nativity. "Of course, all of the performers are volunteers, but we need individuals to unload and reload the big trailer where we store everything, people to help stuff hay in the stable, people to put up the tall star, set up (and take down) all the electric cords, lights, and props each night, help participants dress in costume and put wings on the angels. Others make cookies and serve hot chocolate each night, and still, others have worked for many days at our Fall Rummage Sale at Hillside Baptist Church. The money we raise during that sale is used to rent Kokernot Lodge and pay for our insurance, the hay, lights, and extra publicity. But it is all worth every penny, every

ounce of energy it takes to be a part of the Live Nativity!"

"We have children now coming to be a part of the Nativity whose parents were participants when they were young. It really is a time of reflection and celebration. It is the high point of the Christmas season to many, and you won't find a prettier Christmas card than the final scene of the Live Nativity!" added McGuire.

Our new addition this year is Caroline Luna, who has graciously volunteered to sing a few Christmas carols at the beginning of our production each evening. Everyone is invited to come to be a performer - all ages of folks are needed - no lines to learn, and all the costumes are provided.

Please be at Kokernot Lodge between 6:15 and 6:30 p.m. to get in costume. The audience and performers alike should dress warmly and in layers. Bring a lawn chair or blanket for your viewing comfort. "If we are going to have any winter weather, it will likely come during the Live Nativity!" laughed McGuire. McGuire may be contacted at 432-386-3071 for any information or questions.

## ANGLES • FROM 1A

All board members are selling tickets, or they will be available at the door. Door prizes will also be given away using the ticket number; people must be present to win.

So far this year, Holy Angels has raised over \$5,000 in the last few months with their enchilada dinner held in September and the Dia de los Muertos event in October, which included a raffle, t-shirt, and menudo. The association continues to raise money for the ongoing care of the cemetery and improvement projects.

Monthly board meetings are held to discuss financials, future fundraisers, complaints, and cemetery upkeep updates. In August, Mike Pallanez resigned as president, and the association wishes to thank him for his five years of service and his determination to complete the pump well project at the cemetery, which totaled over \$28,000. With his help and dedication, along with the supporters of the cemetery,

this project was completed. The association's new president is Susie Gonzales, who has committed herself to continuing the maintenance, upkeep, and perpetual care of Holy Angels Cemetery.

Since October, the update to the Veterans section and the Grotto section of the cemetery has been completed, with the repair of the slab at the chapel and a new pump house for the well. There is an update to the flagpole section and the creation of a new road to the East. Future projects include developing the land to the South, a big project requiring consistent fundraisers.

Besides fundraising and updating the cemetery, one of the association's main goals is creating and maintaining relationships among the descendants of the loved ones buried at Holy Angels.

As the holiday season ensues, when memories of departed loved ones are felt the most, the Holy Angels Cemetery board requests that contributions be con-

sidered before the end of the year.

Those considering making charitable contributions may do so by mailing a check payable to Holy Angels Cemetery Association and send to Alpine Community Credit Union, Attn: Holy Angels Cemetery Association, 111 N. 2nd Street, Alpine, Texas 79830, or Holy Angels Cemetery at PO Box 1444, Alpine, Texas 79831.

The Holy Angels Cemetery board of directors extends its heartfelt gratitude to all donors, volunteers, and friends for their loyal support and generosity and wishes everyone a blessed Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

Interested parties may email [holyangels.alpine@gmail.com](mailto:holyangels.alpine@gmail.com) to connect with relatives and board members.

The Board of Directors includes Susie Gonzales, Diana Gonzales, Epi Galindo, Norma Bermudez, Duvy Garcia, Rena Gallego, Jean Sierra, Virginia Lujan, and Elva Torres.

## HARDWICK • FROM 1A

in five years was a really good feeling for the team," said Hardwick.

That night, Hardwick had two interceptions, including a pick 6 early in the game to give Alpine an early lead and momentum. He also locked down Crane's top receiver, holding him to only 13 yards on the night.

Unfortunately for his opponents, Hardwick's explosive play extends to both sides of the ball.

"Whether it's on defense or offense, he has a sixth sense of how to play the ball in the air," said Coach Smith. "Teams respect him on the defensive end and rarely test his side of the ball. He had his own island as a defensive back."

Special Teams Coordinator and Defense Coach Matthew Chavez worked extensively with Hardwick to guide his success as a corner, witnessing the young player's character and work ethic and the impact he has on those around him.

"Dae has been the ultimate teammate and leader on and off the field," said Coach Chavez. "He gets

along well with teammates and coaches and is always ready to get to work and compete in games and at practice.

"Since his freshman year, I have been fortunate enough to see Dae grow and work at his craft in football, basketball, and track, and we saw how that translated to this past football season when he broke the school receiving records for a game and season as well as receptions in a game and season."

For Hardwick, the goal isn't just about numbers or awards; it's about the journey, the grind, and the faith that drives him to be better every day.

With basketball season in full swing, Dae's story continues.

But whether he's on the football field or the hardwood, one thing remains certain: he never lets the spotlight dim his commitment to staying humble and working hard.

Dae's journey is far from over as the sun sets on a record-breaking season.

Next week, we'll shift focus from the field to the classroom and court, ex-

ploring how this multi-talented student-athlete manages it all while keeping his sights set on a future at the collegiate level.

"Dae will have the ability to play at the next level in any of the sports that he chooses to pursue," said Coach Smith. "The best advice any coach can give a young student-athlete is to make sure that they find competition and continually work to compete."

"Competition brings out the best in us. Dae loves to compete, whether that's on the gridiron, the hardwood, or the track."

As Hardwick continues to break records and lead by example on the field, his perspective on success goes beyond the scoreboard.

For him, the true measure of accomplishment lies in the lessons learned along the way.

"The most valuable lesson I've learned," said Hardwick, "is never to get comfortable. Always keep working, don't let outside noise affect you, always stay humble, and always keep faith in God."

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Very best wishes to everyone we know for a beautiful holiday season and a wonderful new year.

**Merry Christmas**  
 and Happy New Year

Whatever the occasion, we can't think of anywhere we'd rather be celebrating than right here with all of you! On behalf of our entire team, thank you for your continued support. We are so grateful for the trust and generosity you've shown us throughout 2024, and we look forward to partnering with you in the new year and beyond.

**AMERICAN LEGION**

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# Opinions

## ONLINE POLL

### THIS WEEK'S QUESTION

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

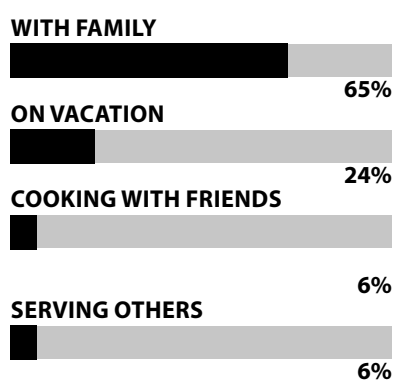
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Vote for this week's poll online at:  
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### RESULTS

#### 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.

# BOONIEVILLE



## That's a wrap for 2024

As we wrap up the fall semester and the year, I want to review some of Sul Ross State University's many accomplishments in 2024.

It's been a success by all measures, including enrollment and retention – though we remain steadfast in our commitment to pursuing growth and success in our student population and for the entire campus community.

Enrollment increased by approximately 20% across all campuses and 30% in Alpine. We earned the Seal of Excelencia for 2024-2027.

Dr. Minerva Gonzales, the director of Nursing, received the Dr. Charles Sponsel Rural Healthcare Pioneer Faculty Award for her commitment to rural nursing education and service. Dr. Jennifer Miller-Ray, associate professor of Education, and Jacob Spurlock, a communication major, were recipients of the 2024 Regents' Teaching and Student Scholar Awards, respectively. We also earned a second provisional year for NCAA Division II athletics.

James W. Downing, a psychology professor, received a Fulbright U.S. Scholar Program award in Psychology for Croatia for the 2024-25 academic year. Theatre Program students Justin Hinton (Dallas) and Olivia Pertuso (Alpine) were invited to perform a scene at the Region 6 Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival in Abilene.

The Museum of the Big Bend was named the Best Small-Town Museum in USA Today's 10 Best Reader's Choice Awards.

OnlineMastersDegrees.org ranked the Homeland Security, Criminal Justice, English, Public Administration, and Political Science graduate programs among the best in the U.S.

Thanks to Sen. John Cornyn, we received nearly \$7.5 million in grant funding from the U.S. Department of Education PPOHA that will help us develop new degree



**DR. CARLOS HERNANDEZ**  
President Sul Ross State University

programs, including a new Ph.D. in Natural Sciences.

Thanks to Rep. Tony Gonzales, SRSU and Lamar University will collaborate on a \$3.4 million grant from the Department of Energy to establish and operate a state-of-the-art Center of Excellence focused on innovative research and education in Midstream Industry Cybersecurity.

La Frontera Research Initiative (LFRI), along with NASA, the National Science Foundation (NSF), the National Solar Observatory, and several other scientific research institutes, led the educational effort during the total eclipse in Eagle Pass. Its (LFRI) initiative for STEM was awarded a grant of nearly \$150,000 from the National Science Foundation to support education students in rural border communities.

The Water in the Desert conference in January was a rousing success, resulting in

the creation and grant support of the new West Texas Water Research Center.

The Texas Court of Criminal Appeals visited the Alpine campus for oral arguments in late September. Presiding Judge Sharon Keller chose Sul Ross State University specifically for her last off-site hearing before retiring. Sul Ross State University and the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center joined forces to address the critical shortage of mental health providers in West Texas, one of the nation's most underserved regions.

In case you missed it, our instructional sites in Eagle Pass, Del Rio, and Uvalde will now be referred to collectively as SRSU International, a name that recognizes their geographical significance while embracing their Sul Ross roots. The Alpine name is unchanged, and there are no plans to change it.

We wish you a very Merry Christmas and a healthy, happy New Year from up on the hill.

## I don't need another cat

*"Singin' the blues while the lady cats cry,*

*'Wild stray cat, you're a real gone guy.'*

*I wish I could be as care-free and wild*

*But I got cat class, and I got cat style."*

— **The Stray Cats, an American rockabilly band**

I saw another news item about big cats in East Texas last week. This time, it was about a huge one up near Longview that ran out in front of a police cruiser at 3 a.m.

Identified by Texas Parks and Wildlife as a mountain lion, the feline lost its battle with the law enforcement vehicle. This left the popular feud as to whether big cats really roam East Texas unsettled.

I'm not a hunter. Not even much of an outdoorsman if there's any chance of encountering snakes, mosquitos, chiggers, or having to get up before sunrise. And communing with nature? My favorite camping style is a hotel room with a nice view of trees.

My first sort-of camping adventure was during grade school. I was with my neighbor, Eddie Dial, on Redbud Street in Mount Pleasant. We roughed it under a tent made by throwing a couple of old bedspreads over the backyard clothesline.

"What's that noise," Eddie

said in the middle of the night. Just as we were ready to make a run for the house, Mom's house cats poked their noses into our makeshift tent, expressing curiosity about the backyard visitors and snacks.

Camping trips with Coach Parker's Boy Scout troop never involved cats, just cat sounds. Older scouts made noises to scare the tenderfoot campers. Even weeklong excursions to scout camp in the hills of Oklahoma offered nothing but a herd of wild hogs one night. Mount Pleasant High School teacher turned scout camp counselor James Criscoe demonstrated hog-calling skills we considered entertaining—until a herd rumbled through camp in the middle of the night.

But big cats? Nope. None in Oklahoma.

Nor Arkansas, either. Mom and Dad spent their vacations camping at Albert Pike. I joined them on weekends a couple of times. Arriving the first time after dark on Friday night, I looked at their small camper and asked, "Where do I sleep?"

"Here's a sleeping bag," said Dad. "That picnic table under the canopy looks like a great spot."

"But what about mountain lions and stuff," I asked.



**LEON ALDRIDGE**  
Guest Columnist

"They don't have them in Arkansas," he laughed. "At least, I don't think so." Sleeping with one eye open, all I saw were big mountain raccoons rummaging in trash cans in the middle of the night.

However, I did not hear raccoons one-night several years ago while visiting the lower latitudes of Shelby County, down between Possum Trot and Goober Hill. Yes, those are real places—check your Cracker Barrel Road atlas.

Air conditioning did not grace the dirt road residence I was visiting near the Sabine National Forest that night. And since it was Springtime, the windows were open, allowing pleasant East Texas breezes for comfort.

It was way after dark when I heard it—a blood-curdling, ear-piecing scream.

"That's just a panther," someone said nonchalantly.

That was 40 years ago, and I didn't dare dispute my host's opinion. Who was I to say, anyway? My big cat experience in East Texas was limited to lions, tigers, and all kinds of ferocious felines in zoos like Tyler and Lufkin. And that was my first visit to the Possum Trot, Goober Hill area.

I still remember it. It was a cross between the

time Mom encountered a mouse scampering across the kitchen floor and the epic shower scene from the movie Psycho.

These days, I see cats daily. Just city cats that call my house home. They are big, only if you count extra pounds from regular feedings of good quality cat food and sleeping upwards of 20 hours a day. And I see them sometimes from the travel trailer I bought a few years ago. I've enjoyed many nights camping in it. Right where it's parked in my backyard, a few steps from the house.

They're always the same three regular cats: Lover Boy, Fluffy Bottom, and Marshmallow. There are also two occasional walk-ons nicknamed Scrappy Cat and Mouthy. I just set an extra place at the food bowls when they show up.

If there really are big cats in East Texas, mountain lions like the one that ventured out in Longview last week, I just hope they are not fond of good-quality cat food and sleep upwards of 20 hours a day.

I don't need another cat ... of any class, style, or size.

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

## CONTACT YOUR REPRESENTATIVE

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

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

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

Ted Cruz  
United States Senate  
185 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510-4306  
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Send your community events to [kara.gerbert@alpineavalanche.com](mailto:kara.gerbert@alpineavalanche.com)

**Upcoming events**  
**December 21, Davis Mountains State Park, 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.** Holiday Ornament Workshop at Interpretive Center.  
**December 19-20 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. 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.

**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 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 [bbcho-rale.wixsite.com/bbcc](http://bbcho-rale.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 collabora-

tion 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.

## Alpine Retirement Low Income Housing

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[alpineretirementhomes.com](http://alpineretirementhomes.com)  
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## the ALPINE AVALANCHE

# Heard on the STREET

*If Santa added a reindeer to his team, what would you name it?*



**Acy Gentry:**  
Pluto



**Leamsi Vega:**  
Sparkles



**Anahi Aguilar:**  
Nick



**Arlett Aguilar:**  
Doodles

## PET OF THE WEEK

Meet Bruiser!  
Bruiser is a five-year-old lab mix surrendered to the shelter in mid-November. The shelter was familiar with him, as he had come in multiple times between 2019 and 2020 due to his owner's inability to keep him confined. He had recently been rehomed outside the shelter, but unfortunately, that did not work out for him.

Bruiser is still in good spirits despite all his thwarted attempts at a permanent home and remains hopeful that his forever person is coming for him.

He is okay with other dogs but does require his space. He is not fond of another dog getting in his face to smell or lick. He is great with people, friendly with everyone, and excited to see you! He walks great on a leash at whatever pace you choose. He knows

basic commands and will gladly sit, shake his paw, and lie down. He is brilliant and a joy to have around.

Bruiser is neutered, vaccinated, and microchipped. He is ready for his new life! Meet him today at the Alpine Animal Services Shelter, 2900 Old Marathon Hwy.

Alpine Animal Services can always use community assistance, 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 massive 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. It will soon be time for kitten



fosters, we provide supplies and support, so come in and sign up to be a foster at the Thrift Store.

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, contact the Alpine Police Department at 432-837-3486 to dispatch an Animal Control Officer.

## Alpine Memorial FUNERAL HOME

CREMATIONS - PRENEED PLANS



# 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.



**FRIDAY - DECEMBER 20  
6:00 PM - 9:00 PM**

**GRANADA THEATRE - 207 E HOLLAND AVE  
OPEN TO THE PUBLIC WITH RSVP  
DOOR PRIZES - LIVE MUSIC**



**In order to reserve your meal, please RSVP by calling 432.837.2222.**

More Info Call 432-837-2222  
<https://www.facebook.com/AlpineMemorial>

## 33rd Annual Black-eyed Pea Off Downtown Terlingua Ghostown Wednesday, January 1, 2025



**2:00 pm ~ Turn-in time**  
(\$10 Entry Fee ~ Cook onsite or off)

**2:30 pm ~ Start the year off with a bowl of "GOOD LUCK" ~ \$10 donation.**

**Local Music & "Hot Date" Raffle**

*Proceeds will benefit continuing education scholarships for Terlingua School Graduates!*



NELSON • FROM 1A

secretary for the Agriculture Department at Sul Ross State University.

Nelson received her secondary teaching certificate in English and biology in 1975. She earned her master's degree in English in 1990 and continued teaching in the Languages and Literature Department at Sul Ross. Afterward, the dedicated literary scholar took a leave of absence to pursue a Ph.D. at the University of Nevada-Reno, which she completed in 1997 before returning to Sul Ross to resume her teaching career until her retirement in 2013.

"I love Sul Ross and the kind of students we

attract," said Nelson. "When I retired from teaching, I started writing more books. I think my latest is number nine."

Nelson has completed an Afterword for Mary Austin's "The Flock" and was co-editor for Mary Austin's Southwest: An Anthology of Her Literary Criticisms.

Nelson's titles include The Last Campfire: The Life Story of Ted Gray, A West Texas Rancher (1984), Voices and Visions of the American West (1986), Here's to the Vinegarroon! (1989), and four others over the last 24 years, including The Wild and Domestic Rancher, Making Circles: The Memoir of a Cowboy Journalist, God's Country or Devil's Playground: An Anthology of

Nature Writing from the Big Bend of Texas, and her most recently published work, One Hundred Horses: Drama as a Novel, Memoir as Drama (2024).

In addition to books and articles, Nelson has also written numerous scripts, some of which morphed into her latest book.

When asked about her writing process, Nelson commented, "I begin with coffee, a lined yellow writing pad, and a pen, almost always from about 6 a.m. until noon. I just make a mess. I call it 'throwing up on paper,' and eventually, I will type it all up to see what I've got."

The length of which, she said, is determined by how much she has to

say about the subject.

Nelson added that sometimes it's just a letter to a friend, a poem, or sometimes an article or book. Sometimes, she crumples it all up and throws it away. "I've never kept a journal, but I've written thousands of letters," Nelson said.

After more than 50 years in the "writing business," Nelson has some sage wisdom for those wishing to embark on the same endeavor.

"My advice to first-time authors is mostly what NOT to do," she said. "First of all, don't do it for the fame—even your hometown won't know; money—my last royalty check was \$2.50; career—I always had to have a real job, or to save the world—the world is

pretty set in its ways.

"I did it because I couldn't stop. Writing has been my therapist, best friend, and worst enemy, and it has helped me look at the world very closely. Writing a book is relatively easy. You push a pen across the paper while drinking coffee. But organizing a book—what comes first, next, and last—is agonizing."

Nelson's writings stick to what she knows best: ranching and livestock. Though she's explored her favorite subject from many angles, it all circles back to a cup of coffee, a lined yellow writing pad, and a few hours of contemplation about what to pull out of her pen and push across the paper.

**Restaurant Guide**

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

**REATA**  
RESTAURANT

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

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

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

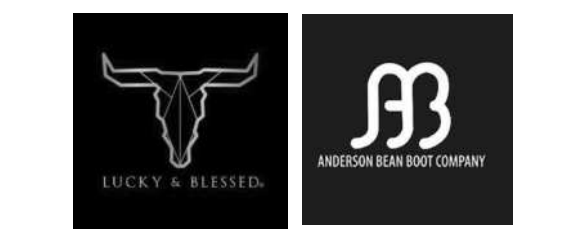
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**NOTICE OF SALE**

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, COMERCIALIZACIÓN, 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

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**LOOKING BACK**  
 Alpine Avalanche

SERVING THE BIG BEND AND DAVIS MOUNTAINS COUNTRY

December 23, 1927

**The New Gymnasium**

**NEW GYMNASIUM TO BE UNDER CONSTRUCTION EARLY IN NEXT YEAR, SAYS VICTOR J. SMITH**

December 17, 1926

December 17, 1926

**LOBOS ANNOUNCE TENTATIVE PROGRAM, 1927**

YOUNGER, TWO-LETTER MAN, WILL LEAD THE PACK NEXT SEASON; KELL, STAR QUARTER, BACKFIELD CAPTAIN.

**FUQUA YOUNGER**  
 Captain Elect

**Celotechnic Institute Studies Home Builders' Problems**

THE Celotechnic Institute of America was recently established, with headquarters in Chicago, to study the problems of American home builders and to place at their disposal the latest discoveries in scientific construction.

It is the aim of H. G. Dahlberg, its founder, to delve into all home building problems and to give to the American public the benefit of its research work and to supply the very latest data on most modern building practices.

It will be a veritable laboratory of building facts including structural problems, modern plans, roof and floor insulation, building trends, analysis, laboratory tests, experimentation in refrigeration, sheathing and interior finishes.

"Important discoveries are constantly being made which practically revolutionize previous home building methods," declares Mr. Dahlberg. "In all the facts we give the public we will have an eye on economy, as well as utility, comfort, health and beauty. It is the aim of the institute to help the home builder build better homes without any material increase in the cost of construction. It will be a real service bureau for the home builder."

**H. G. Dahlberg.** Mr. Dahlberg is among the youngest of America's captains of industry. Born in Sweden, the early part of his life in America was spent in railroading, a good portion of it as an associate of the late James J. Hill, the great empire builder of the Northwest. In more recent years he has been prominently identified with a number of large construction projects. A vision of great efficiency and economy in building, growing out of his experience, finally led to the decision to establish the institute.

December 17, 1926

**BASKETBALL MEN CHOOSE FORD CAPTAIN**

**PAUL FORD**  
 Basketball Captain

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

**Several options available for fall flame-red foliage**

Dear Neil, I'm looking for a shrub or small tree with bright red leaves in the fall. It also needs to be adapted, and I need one that can handle partial shade. I've seen some around the state in the past several weeks. What options do we have, and do nurseries commonly sell them?

**GARDENER'S MAILBAG**  
 by neil sperry

Rusty Blackhaw Viburnum has excellent fall color, usually rich burgundy red. It also produces small oval blue fruit at about the same time, an added spot of color. They're favorites of birds, I might add. And no small tree in Texas has better red fall foliage than flameleaf sumac. It's adapted to various soils, and its leaves turn red for a few weeks every autumn. Finally, for great color from fall through the winter, you should consider Warren's Red Possumhaw holly. Its leaves don't matter because once they're out of the way, the thousands of bright red berries are proudly displayed to the world for several months. However, you do

want to specify Warren's Red because it has larger and redder fruit. All these plants are adapted to partial shade and are widely sold in nurseries during the season.

Dear Neil, we want to transplant a red oak. It's four years old in our landscape, but it is very lanky. Is it possible to move it, or will it always be shaped like a power pole? Can I trim it to redirect its growth?

It can certainly be moved, and yes, you can trim it back to correct the lanky growth. Choose the point at which you'd like branches to originate and

make the cut just above that spot. You'll have several new sprouts. Choose three or four naturally scattered around the trunk and remove all the rest. Keep the tree moist at all times and feed it monthly for the first year with a liquid root stimulator.

Dear Neil, how can I stop my 6-foot pear tree from sending up sprouts from its base? I cut them off, and they regrow with twice as many. Should I put black sealant on them and wrap them? That is all of the growth it has had.

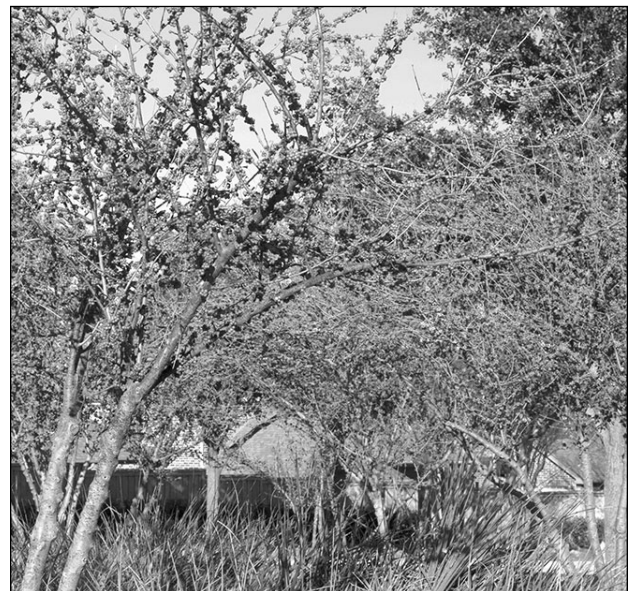
I'm worried about the long-term vigor of your tree. There is a thing called "apical dominance" in trees. The buds at the growing tips produce a hormone that sends a message down through the tree that all growth will occur at the top and outer branches. When there is some problem in the trunk or branches of the tree, apical dominance is lost, and the tree will begin sending out sprouts.

Your tree sounds like it has been severely weakened by damage to the trunk or dieback from drought or transplant shock. If some of these shoots are above the graft union, you could let one of them grow into a new trunk. You may be getting ready to lose the top of the tree.

Dear Neil, what are the guidelines for winter watering for newly planted 3-foot crape myrtles and 10-foot live oaks? It's hard to know, as the weather can change.

The primary advice doesn't change. Never let the soil become dry to the touch. Keep it moist at all times. Learn to "read" the soil visually and by feeling it. However, in general terms, for the winter, if it's been more than seven to 10 days without rain, you probably should soak them.

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



**TEXAS CROSSWORD**  
 by Charley & Guy Orbison  
 Copyright 2024 by Orbison Bros.

**ACROSS**

- UT football coach, Brown (1998-2013)
- TXism: "bone \_\_\_" (study)
- TX Phyllis George was in "Meet the Parents" with actor Robert De \_\_\_
- pickup blemish
- TXism: "\_\_\_ in the hole" (reserve)
- TXism: "hasta \_\_\_" (see ya)
- Friday night cheer
- TXism: "looking for a gas leak with \_\_\_" (tricky)
- state of TX Buddy Holly crash (abbr.)
- this Guerrero was Railroad Commissioner in 1991
- TXism: "his facts \_\_\_ elastic" (liar)
- this was a tiny "wet" town just north of Abilene
- 19th century Texans the city was named for this Dallas (init.)
- 1967 Texas hurricane that spawned 115 tornadoes
- winter garment in Titer County on U.S. 271
- TXism: "happy as \_\_\_" (see ya)
- TXism: "\_\_\_ a hoof" (run, dance)
- Redskins & Eagles to the Cowboys
- Texas electronics co.
- Mr. Lincoln, et al. "and others" (abbr.)
- ex-Cowboy Dorsett (init.)
- George H.W. attended \_\_\_ Hirohito's funeral as president
- dir. to College Station from Fort Worth
- TXism: "let '\_\_\_ rip!"
- opposite extreme
- Ward County town named for oil checks
- Geraldine of Texas "Bountiful" film
- TXism: "fraily \_\_\_"
- medical insur. type (abbr.)
- \_\_\_-gallon hat
- in Knox County on U.S. 277
- TXism: "just down the road \_\_\_"
- Taylor Swift song: "\_\_\_ Street"
- TXism: "don't get your shorts in a \_\_\_" (calm down)
- \_\_\_ Porte, TX
- this company insures many Texans
- many Texans fought in \_\_\_ nam
- TXism: "pay \_\_\_ never mind" (ignore)
- TXism: "has book \_\_\_" (educated)
- UT grad. student teacher (abbr.)
- TXism: "high as popcorn \_\_\_ picture show"
- south of Dallas on highway 342
- TXism: "jaw \_\_\_" (dentist)
- TXism: "changes his mind as often as \_\_\_ his socks"
- this Irving wrote songs for TX
- Ginger Rogers (init.)
- TXism: "gave \_\_\_ song and dance"
- pregnancy pains
- Texas has the most cases of West \_\_\_ Virus
- dir. to Lufkin from Dallas
- goofus
- TXism: "just a \_\_\_ in the bucket"
- TXism: "a watched \_\_\_ never boils"
- Texas TV "Tarzan," Ron
- pleasure cruiser
- TXism: "boring as a fishing trip with \_\_\_ warden"

**DOWN**

- in Knox County on U.S. 277
- TXism: "just down the road \_\_\_"
- Taylor Swift song: "\_\_\_ Street"
- TXism: "don't get your shorts in a \_\_\_" (calm down)
- \_\_\_ Porte, TX
- this company insures many Texans
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- TXism: "a watched \_\_\_ never boils"
- Texas TV "Tarzan," Ron
- pleasure cruiser
- TXism: "boring as a fishing trip with \_\_\_ warden"

**BARGAINS OF THE MONTH**

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**39.99** Lasko® Oscillating Personal Tabletop Ceramic Space Heater W 121 456

**14.99** durafume® 6-pk. 2.5 lb. Firelogs F 206 959

**19.99** Master Mechanic® 2-pk. 22 in. Sawhorses H 132 006

**15.99** Stanley® FatMax® 25 ft. x 1-1/4 in. Tape Measure H 729 253

**25.99** DeWALT® 12 pc. Reciprocating Blade Set + Case R 194 073

**7.29** YOUR CHOICE Sylvania® 100 ct. Micro LED Lights T 130 582, 584, 585

**19.99** YOUR CHOICE Holiday Wonderland® 200 ct. Mini LED Light Set T 195 539, 540, 541

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# Sports

## Alpine Bucks fall to Panthers in Highway 67 battle

BY KERRY LAIRD  
Sports Editor

The Alpine Bucks varsity boys' basketball team faced off against the Fort Stockton Panthers in the much-anticipated Highway 67 Shootout. In front of a packed house filled with passionate fans from both sides, the Bucks battled hard but ultimately fell short, losing 77-63, dropping to 2-3 on the season.

The game started competitively, with the Bucks keeping pace with the Panthers throughout much of the first period. Key defensive plays, including a steal by junior Isaiah Jimenez and a rebound-and-basket sequence from Kelton Tarrant, helped Alpine stay within striking distance.

However, Fort Stockton capitalized on late first-period opportunities, closing out the quarter on a strong note to take a 21-14 lead heading into the second period.

In the second, the Bucks worked tirelessly to close the gap. A pair of three-pointers, including one from junior Dae Hardwick, kept the offense alive. Despite their efforts, the Panthers' offense proved relentless, answering every Bucks basket with one of their own.

Fort Stockton's balanced attack and solid shooting allowed them to widen the gap, as they headed into halftime

with a comfortable 40-25 lead.

Coming out of halftime, Alpine showed renewed energy and determination. An early three-pointer from senior Ferris Daley sparked a rally that cut the deficit to 10 points. Moments later, Jimenez made two free throws that trimmed the Panthers' lead to eight.

Hardwick added a free throw of his own, bringing Alpine within seven points, the closest they had been since the first period. However, the Panthers stepped up with critical plays in the paint, helping the boys from the north regain momentum and restore their double-digit lead.

By the end of the third period, the Panthers were ahead 60-41. In the fourth period, the Panthers found their rhythm from beyond the arc, sinking multiple three-pointers to extend their lead.

Despite the Bucks' best efforts, Fort Stockton's ability to control the ball and dominate from long range kept the game out of reach. The Bucks continued to fight until the final buzzer. Still, they couldn't cut the deficit to single digits, and the Panthers walked away with a 77-63 victory.

Though the loss was tough, Hardwick continued to impress with his scoring and leadership on the court, while Daley's early second-



Senior Ferris Daley pushes the ball up the court, setting the pace for the Alpine Bucks' offense.

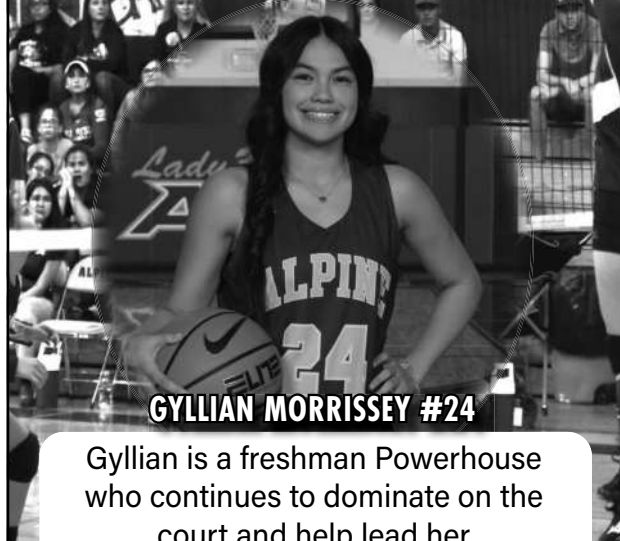
half three-pointer demonstrated the team's resilience. Jimenez and Tarrant also contributed with strong defensive efforts, including steals and rebounds that kept Alpine in the fight. Alpine's big man, senior Zane Wash, brought energy to the defense and showcased his strength under the rim, making key contributions on both ends of the court.

Looking ahead, the Bucks aim to regroup and learn from this challenging game. They travel to Monahans on Saturday for a 2:30 p.m. matchup, where they'll look to bounce back with a strong performance. After a brief Christmas break, Alpine will head to Lubbock to compete in the prestigious Caprock Classic Tournament. The tournament, featuring some of the best high school teams in the region, offers the Bucks an oppor-

tunity to sharpen their skills and build momentum for the second half of the season. Fans are encouraged to support the team as they continue their journey through a challenging but promising season.

Photo by Kara Gerbert

## ATHLETE OF THE WEEK



GYLLIAN MORRISSEY #24

Gyllian is a freshman Powerhouse who continues to dominate on the court and help lead her team to victory!

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### Fightin' Buck Basketball Schedule 2024-2025

Dec. 20 Monahans, AWAY <b>9th</b> 1:00 JV 1:00 V 2:30	JV **5:00 V 8:00 Jan. 17 Anthony, AWAY <b>9th</b> 5:00 JV 6:30 V 8:00	Feb. 7 Kermit, AWAY <b>9th</b> 5:00 JV 6:30 V 8:00
Dec. 26-28 Caprock Tourney, AWAY <b>9th</b> TBD JV TBD V TBD	Jan. 21 Kermit, HOME <b>9th</b> **6:30 JV **5:00 V 8:00	Feb. 11 OPEN
Jan. 3 McCamey, HOME <b>9th</b> 4:00 JV 5:00 V 6:30	Jan. 24 OPEN	Feb. 17-18 Bi-District
Jan. 7 Buena Vista, AWAY V 7:30	Jan. 28 Tornillo, HOME <b>9th</b> **6:30 JV **5:00 V 8:00	Feb. 24-28 Regional Semifinals
<b>DISTRICT 4-3A GAMES</b>	Jan. 31 Presidio, AWAY <b>9th</b> 5:00 JV 6:30 V 8:00	Feb. 27-March 1 Regional Finals
Jan. 10 Tornillo, AWAY <b>9th</b> 5:00 JV 6:30 V 8:00	Feb. 4 Anthony, HOME <b>9th</b> **6:30 JV **5:00 V 8:00	March 3-4 State Semifinals
Jan. 14 Presidio, HOME <b>9th</b> **6:30		March 6-8 State Finals

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

### Lady Buck Basketball Schedule 2024-2025

	JV	V
Dec. 20: Monahans, HOME	2:30	1:00
Dec. 26-28: Caprock Tourney, AWAY	TBA	TBA
Jan. 3: Kermit, AWAY	5:00	6:30
Jan. 7: Buena Vista, AWAY	5:00	6:30
Jan. 10: Tornillo, AWAY	5:00	6:30
Jan. 14: Presidio, HOME	5:00	6:30
Jan. 17: Anthony, AWAY	5:00	6:30
Jan. 21: Kermit, HOME	5:00	6:30
Jan. 24: Balmorhea, AWAY	5:00	6:30
Jan. 28: Tornillo, HOME	5:00	6:30
Jan. 31: Presidio, AWAY	5:00	6:30
Feb. 4: Anthony, HOME	5:00	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.*

## Christmas at King Jewelers



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**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.

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**PAYMENT** - All Classified Ads must be paid in advance.

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## MOBILE HOMES FOR RENT

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## HELP WANTED

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We are seeking a highly skilled and experienced **Master Electrician** to join our team in Marfa and FT Davis.

Responsibilities:

- Install, maintain, and repair electrical systems
- Conduct routine inspections and maintenance on electrical systems to ensure compliance with safety regulations
- Read blueprints and schematics to identify electrical systems and locate faults
- Ensure all electrical work is done in accordance with the National Electric Code (NEC).
- Train and lead teams performing electrical system work

Qualifications:

- Master Electrician License for the State of Texas (Required)
- Strong problem-solving skills and attention to detail
- Ability to work at heights and in confined spaces
- Ability to read and interpret electrical schematics and blueprints
- Experience with electrical troubleshooting and repair
- Proficiency with ohmmeter usage
- Strong technical background and excellent problem-solving skills
- Bilingual English/Spanish preferred

Please send resumes to [ebaeza@villagefarms.com](mailto:ebaeza@villagefarms.com) or call 432-729-3071 ext. 607 to inquire

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This position is responsible for reviewing, evaluating and analyzing work environments to control and prevent employee injury/Illness at our Fort Davis facility.

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- Conduct/coordinate various safety trainings
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Requirements:

- Strong verbal/written communication skills
- Attention to detail
- Proficiency in Microsoft Office
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## Advertisement for Bid

Preventative Care Health Services  
1605 North Fort Davis Hwy STE. B  
Alpine Texas 79830

## South Edition to Presidio County Medical Clinic

Separate sealed BIDS for the construction of South addition to Presidio County Medical Clinic located at 1501 North Erma Ave, Presidio TX 79845. The scope of work, without any force or effect involves a 3, 167 sq. ft. addition to an existing building. This includes new exam rooms, a nurse station, a laboratory, providers offices, restrooms, and the expansion of the existing pharmacy.

Bids will be received by Linda Molinar CEO at the office of Preventative Care health Services, 1605 North Fort Davis Hwy, STE. B, Alpine, TX 79830 until 2:00 pm CST, Friday, January 31, 2025 and then at said office publicly opened and read aloud.

The CONTRACT DOCUMENTS may be examined at the following locations:

New Republic Architects, 7100 Westwind Dr. STE 150, El Paso, Texas 79912 or bidders can request a digital PDF copy by emailing Angel Ramos at [angel@nraia.com](mailto:angel@nraia.com). For any other inquiries, please contact him at 915-585-7028.

Copies of the CONTRACT DOCUMENTS may be obtained at the office of New Republic Architects located at 7100 Westwind Dr, STE 150, El Paso, TX, 79912 upon payment of \$300.00 for each set.

Any BIDDER, upon returning the CONTRACT DOCUMENTS promptly and in good condition, will be refunded the payment, and any non-bidder upon so returning the CONTRACT DOCUMENTS will be refunded \$150.00

09/12/2024

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**MOUNTAIN COUNTRY Christmas**

The City of Alpine is seeking non-profit organizations and clubs for the sponsorship of the

**2024-2026**

*Mountain Country Christmas Arts & Crafts Fair*

to be held at the Alpine Civic Center!

Interested organizations may submit a Sponsorship Application to City Hall, located at 100 N. 13th Street, by 5:00 P.M. on January 17, 2025. The City Council will select the event sponsor during the regularly scheduled council meeting on February 4, 2025. Questions may be directed to the Office of the City Secretary at (432) 837-3301, option 1,

# NOTICE OF TAX SEIZURE

In accordance with Property Tax Code §33.912(b)(2), notice is hereby made to the following defendants, if living, and if any or all of the Defendant(s) be dead, the unknown heirs of each or all of the said named persons who may be dead; and the unknown heirs of the unknown heirs of said above named persons; and the unknown owner or owners of the described property; and the executors, administrators, guardians, legal representatives, legatees, devisees of the above named persons, and who own or claim some interest in the described property and any and all other persons, including adverse claimants, owning or having any legal or equitable interest in or lien upon the following described property, that the Tax Assessor Collector for Brewster County intends to seize the below described property as abandoned property and will sell it at public auction without further notice unless all delinquent taxes, penalties and interest are paid before the sale of the property. Owners and properties are:

ITEM 1: John Alford, et al; Address Unknown; BLK NC, SEC 18, TR: NC394. (Parcel #19894)

ITEM 2: Catherine Elaine Angle; Address Unknown; BLK NC, SEC 30, TR: 8525A W/2-W/2-SW/4-SE/4. (Parcel #20433)

ITEM 3: Arthouse Communications; Address Unknown; BLK NC, SEC 17, TR: NC200. (Parcel #19748)

ITEM 4: Roy Dr Beaman; Address Unknown; BLK NC, SEC 25, TR: 8055 N/2-NE/4-NE/4. (Parcel #20243)

ITEM 5: Harold L Bledsoe; Address Unknown; BLK NC, SEC 33, TR: 8323 N/2-NW/4-SE/4. (Parcel #20487)

ITEM 6: Lisa Borke; BLK NC, SEC 18, TR: NC331. (Parcel #19865)

ITEM 7: Bettyanne Boydston, Deceased; Address Unknown; BLK NC, SEC 17, TR: NC206 (Parcel #19754);

ITEM 8: Leonard E. Brenkus, et al; Address Unknown; **Tract 1:** BLK NC, SEC 20, TR: 8494 E/2-NW/4-SW/4. (Parcel #20064) and **Tract 2:** BLK NC, SEC 20, TR: 8495 W/2-NE/4-SW/4. (Parcel #20065)

ITEM 9: Norman etux Cathy Bricker in trust for Aaron; Address Unknown; BLK NC, SEC 19, TR: NC483 (Parcel #19981)

ITEM 10: Harry M Brown; Address Unknown; **Tract 1:** BLK NC, SEC 18, TR: NC339 (Parcel #19839) and **Tract 2:** BLK NC, SEC 18, TR: NC340 (Parcel #19840)

ITEM 11: William L. Brown; **Tract 1:** BLK NC, SEC 18, TR: NC325 (Parcel #19825) and **Tract 2:** BLK NC, SEC 18, TR: NC326 (Parcel #19826)

ITEM 12: Kenneth G Bullard, et ux; Address Unknown; BLK NC, SEC 16, TR: NC12 (Parcel #19651)

ITEM 13: Glen A Burch; BLK NC, SEC 17, TR: NC218 (Parcel #19766)

ITEM 14: Loree Lee Burrows; Address Unknown; BLK NC, SEC 30, TR: NC511 (Parcel #20396)

ITEM 15: Norma Muri Calvert; Address Unknown; BLK NC, SEC 18, TR: NC353 (Parcel #19853)

ITEM 16: Robt W Carter, et al; Address Unknown; BLK NC, SEC 30, TR: NC529 (Parcel #20414)

ITEM 17: Teresa Casiano; Address Unknown; BLK NC, SEC 18, TR: NC358 (Parcel #19858)

ITEM 18: Jewell Clem; Address Unknown; BLK NC, SEC 30, TR: NC520 (Parcel #20405)

ITEM 19: Terry etux Mary Craig; Address Unknown; **Tract 1:** BLK NC, SEC 12, TR: 8116 E/2-NW/4-NE/4 (Parcel #19578) and **Tract 2:** BLK NC, SEC 17, TR: NC235 (Parcel #19783);

ITEM 20: Lord Anthony Edward Croft; Address Unknown; BLK NC, SEC 20, TR: NC271 (Parcel #20021)

ITEM 21: Henry L Darby; Address Unknown; BLK NC, SEC 12, TR: 8117B S/2-W/2-NE/4-NE/4 (Parcel #19580)

ITEM 22: Art etux Virginia Delong; Address Unknown; **Tract 1:** BLK NC, SEC 9, TR: 8382 S/2-SW/4-SW/4 (Parcel #19492) and **Tract 2:** BLK NC, SEC 16, TR: NC106 (Parcel #19742)

ITEM 23: Ygnacio Espaillat et ux Anita Louise; Address Unknown; **Tract 1:** BLK NC, SEC 21, TR: NC155 (Parcel #20113) and **Tract 2:** BLK NC, SEC 28, TR: 8353 N/2-NE/4-SW/4 (Parcel #20316)

ITEM 24: Larry E etux Pat Ferguson; Address Unknown; BLK NC, SEC 17, TR: NC227 (Parcel #19775)

ITEM 25: Roy L. Fletcher, Sr.; Address Unknown; BLK NC, SEC 21, TR: NC127 (Parcel #20085)

ITEM 26: Dennis Floyd; Address Unknown; BLK NC, SEC 20, TR: NC282 (Parcel #20032)

ITEM 27: Steven Scott Gainer; Address Unknown; BLK NC, SEC 16, TR: NC27 (Parcel #19665)

ITEM 28: Gardhouse; Address Unknown; BLK NC, SEC 20, TR: NC303 (Parcel #20053)

ITEM 29: Dick Gibson; Address Unknown; BLK NC, SEC 17, TR: NC210 (Parcel #19758)

ITEM 30: Golden Five, Inc.; Address Unknown; **Tract 1:** BLK NC, SEC 16, TR: NC37 (Parcel #19675) and **Tract 2:** BLK NC, SEC 32, TR: 8450 E/2-NW/4-NE/4 (Parcel #20474)

ITEM 31: Nicholas etux Govoroff; Address Unknown; BLK NC, SEC 25, TR: 8035 W/2-SW/4-SE/4 (Parcel #20223)

ITEM 32: David Greer; Address Unknown; BLK NC, SEC 18, TR: NC415 (Parcel #19915)

ITEM 33: Henry A Gueringer; Address Unknown; BLK NC, SEC 19, TR: NC429 (Parcel #19928)

ITEM 34: Ike Hammond; Address Unknown; BLK NC, SEC 19, TR: NC467 (Parcel #19965)

ITEM 35: Horace W etux Ruth Henry; Address Unknown; BLK NC, SEC 11, TR: 8178 S/2-NW/4-NW/4 (Parcel #19553)

ITEM 36: Jonie Hetrick; Address Unknown; BLK NC, SEC 19, TR: 8539 W/2-SE/4-SW/4 (Parcel #19983)

ITEM 37: William L. Hildebrand; Address Unknown; BLK NC, SEC 27, TR: 8192 W/2-SW/4-SW/4 (Parcel #20273)

ITEM 38: Michael S. Hoff; Address Unknown; 40.00 acres, more or less, situated in the Southeast ¼ of the Northwest ¼ of Section 13, Block 221, T&StLRR Co. Survey, Abstract 1154, as described in deed dated October 29, 1984 from Molly J Hoff to Michael S Hoff, in Volume 249, Page 402, Official Records of Brewster County, Texas. (Parcel #19592)

ITEM 39: Roy E etux Pearl E Holley; Address Unknown; BLK NC, SEC 16, TR: NC31 (Parcel #19669)

ITEM 40: Mark A Holloway Jr et ux Alfreda R; Address Unknown; BLK NC, SEC 21, TR: NC149 (Parcel #20107)

ITEM 41: Robert Isaacks; Address Unknown; **Tract 1:** BLK NC, SEC 17, TR: 8501 N/2-SW/4-NW/4 (Parcel #19793) and **Tract 2:** BLK NC, SEC 16, TR: NC10 (Parcel #19647)

ITEM 42: John Dillon Jackson Jr., Address Unknown; BLK NC, SEC 21, TR: NC144 (Parcel #20102)

ITEM 43: Vito C Johncola etux Kathryn E; Address Unknown; BLK NC, SEC 21, TR: NC141 (Parcel #20099)

ITEM 44: Joseph J etux Ethel Jones; Address Unknown; **Tract 1:** BLK NC, SEC 9, TR: 8410 NW/4-NE/4 (Parcel #19517); and **Tract 2:** BLK NC, SEC 4, TR: 8416 SW/4-E/2 (Parcel #19454) and **Tract 3:** BLK NC, SEC 21, TR: NC129 (Parcel #20087)

ITEM 45: Colin Kraft; Address Unknown; BLK NC, SEC 18, TR: NC423 (Parcel #19922)

ITEM 46: Lelo Luett; Address Unknown; BLK NC, SEC 17, TR: NC242 (Parcel #19790)

ITEM 47: Benjamin R Martin; Address Unknown; BLK NC, SEC 16, TR: NC16 (Parcel #19655)

ITEM 48: Shirley J McCall; Address Unknown; BLK NC, SEC 17, TR: 8511 W/2-NE/4-NE/4 (Parcel #19792)

ITEM 49: Myranell McDonald; Address Unknown; BLK NC, SEC 18, TR: NC348 (Parcel #19848)

ITEM 50: George E McGrede; Address Unknown; BLK NC, SEC 30, TR: NC519 (Parcel #20404)

ITEM 51: John J Miller, Jr.; Address Unknown; BLK NC, SEC 30, TR: NC526 (Parcel #20411)

ITEM 52: Regis Shay Miller; Address Unknown; BLK NC, SEC 21, TR: NC165 (Parcel #20123)

ITEM 53: James William Morris; Address Unknown; BLK NC, SEC 16, TR: NC101 (Parcel #19737)

ITEM 54: Jane Morris; Address Unknown; BLK NC, SEC 18, TR: NC364 (Parcel #19864)

ITEM 55: Wayne Mullican; Address Unknown; BLK NC, SEC 30, TR: NC516 (Parcel #20401)

ITEM 56: Bobby Newson; Address Unknown; BLK NC, SEC 30, TR: NC531 (Parcel #20416)

ITEM 57: Ricardo J Pacheco; Address Unknown; BLK NC, SEC 30, TR: NC515 (Parcel #20400)

ITEM 58: Billy Wayne Peden; Address Unknown; BLK NC, SEC 18, TR: NC374 (Parcel #19874)

ITEM 59: Arthur Phillips; Address Unknown; BLK NC, SEC 16, TR: NC46 (Parcel #19682)

ITEM 60: Durrell D Pierce; Address Unknown; BLK NC, SEC 18, TR: NC400 (Parcel #19900)

ITEM 61: Prescott Trading & Equipment Co.; Address Unknown; BLK NC, SEC 3, TR: 8305 SW/4-E/2 (Parcel #19445)

ITEM 62: Ra Asociados Sderldecv; Address Unknown; BLK NC, SEC 11 S/2-W/2-SE/4-NE/4 (Parcel #19842)

ITEM 63: Kathleen Salsberg; Address Unknown; BLK NC, SEC 30, TR: NC506 (Parcel #20391)

ITEM 64: Joseph T Shimp Jr., et ux Stella; Address Unknown; BLK NC, SEC 18, TR: NC342 (Parcel #19842)

ITEM 65: Dr. Herbert R Stuart etux Margaret; Address Unknown; BLK NC, SEC 21, TR: NC140 (Parcel #20098)

ITEM 66: Jerry C Taylor et al; Address Unknown; **Tract 1:** BLK NC, SEC 16, TR: NC35 (Parcel #19673); and **Tract 2:** BLK NC, SEC 28, TR: 8351 N/2-NW/4-SW/4 (Parcel #20314)

ITEM 67: Robert C Urbon; Address Unknown; BLK NC, SEC 20, TR: NC276 (Parcel #20026)

ITEM 68: Hector C Valdes; Address Unknown; BLK NC, SEC 29, TR: 8469 S/2-SW/4-NW/4 (Parcel #20353)

ITEM 69: Claude Randolph Walden; Address Unknown; BLK NC, SEC 30, TR: NC532 (Parcel #20417)

ITEM 70: Wendel C Weaver; Address Unknown; BLK NC, SEC 16, TR: NC20 (Parcel #19658)

ITEM 71: Priscilla K Weissmuller; Address Unknown; BLK NC, SEC 13, TR: 8090 W/2-SW/4-NE/4 (Parcel #19593)

ITEM 72: J F Williams; Address Unknown; BLK NC, SEC 30, TR: NC538 (Parcel #20423)

ITEM 73: Luron D Wilson etux Mary E; Address Unknown; BLK NC, SEC 18, TR: NC402 (Parcel #19902)

ITEM 74: William C Wolfe; Address Unknown; BLK NC, SEC 20, TR: NC247 (Parcel #19998)

ITEM 75: Brenda Youngblood; Address Unknown; BLK NC, SEC 2, TR: 8186 S/2-W/2-W/2 (Parcel #19434)

# Gifts galore at civic center

Artists and crafters were on hand this past Friday and Saturday at the Alpine Civic Center, hocking their wares for locals and visitors alike at the annual Alpine Woman's Club Mountain Country Christmas.

Photo by Kara Gerbert



## SENIOR Spotlight

### MARCO AGOSTA

**In what activities did you participate in high school?**  
I have been a graphic designer and have been in the Fightin' Buck Band for all four years. I was in robotics and engineering for the first two years and participated in football and journalism this year.

**Who was your favorite teacher/coach, and why?**  
I don't have a favorite teacher or coach, but

Jesse is an amazing bus driver, and he is great to be around.

**What was your favorite moment in the last four years?**  
The band trips are always fun to go on.

**What are your plans after high school?**  
I want to get an education in paleontology or graphic design.

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**verse 21,** "And it shall come to pass that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved"

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# Devotional Page

## Celebrating God's Promise

BY REV. BILL COTMAN  
Saint Luke Presbyterian Church- Amarillo

A recent survey on popular Christmas songs says the top four are *White Christmas*, *Winter Wonderland*, *Silver Bells*, and *The Christmas Song* (Chestnuts roasting on an open fire). They all focus on the sentimental feelings of the holidays with no mention of Christ. Traditions have a way of wrapping up truth in small, manageable pieces, and tradition is to truth as a bottle of water is to a river. The water in the bottle came from a river; it's part of a river, but the real river is miles of life streaming across the land with rapids and swimming holes, muddy banks, and rocky bottoms. Inside the bottle is a tiny, incomplete piece of the river. Our Christmas traditions: the star, manger, wise men and shepherds, even Mary, Joseph, and baby Jesus, are just part of what God is doing; the action of God is vast and sweeping. We want God in our traditions, but it's like trying to catch a river in a bottle; the Spirit of God at work is more than tradition can convey. Traditions are predictable, the Spirit is not, and traditions are comforting. Still, the action of God's Spirit is always challenging and will change our lives. Tradition brings happiness, which is nice, but the Spirit leads us to joy, which is better and deeper.

People all over the world are fearful of the future, but we should heed the words of the Prophet Zephaniah. In the 6th Century BC, after many prophets had

brought God's people oracles of doom announcing the coming *Day of the Lord* when Israel would be destroyed, the *Day of the Lord* did arrive in the form of the Babylonian army obliterating Jerusalem. Everything that mattered to God's *Chosen People*, Israel, had been destroyed; it was a social and political crisis, and it was a crisis of Faith. How could they continue to believe in a God who had allowed everything they'd built in the Promised Land to be destroyed? It was arguably the greatest crisis to have ever been inflicted on God's people; there was weeping and gnashing of teeth.

This context makes the prophet's words so amazing; despite the pain and sorrow in the hearts of everyone around him and completely independent of the suffering of their present, Zephaniah sings for Joy! The Prophet's joy and optimism defies logic and common sense; even with the rubble of the Temple and pieces of Jerusalem all around, he insists things are not what they appear to be. Zephaniah insists the disaster is over; the people's deliverance and liberation are about to happen! He insists that one day, God will keep his promise and rescue the people!

Zephaniah refuses to base his faith on the reality of the present; his joy is based solely on the future. Today, we call people like this crazy or delusional! But to the people of Israel, he was speaking for God; the people's faith was restored, and they believed and rejoiced!

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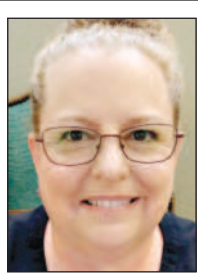
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# Baklava or Baklava: That is the question

When thinking about holiday desserts, baklava or baklava comes to mind. It is a delicious combination of sweet and salty that is addictive and difficult to put down. But what is the difference between the two?

Well, this dish traces its origins back to the Ottoman Empire. As these people expanded their realm, whether through conquering others for land or trade routes, this epic dessert changed ingredients, which made the distinction between the two.

According to history, Baklava has a lot of conflict behind it. Armenia claims to have been the first to come up with this sweet pastry, but as



## HEAD OVER MEALS

by kara gerbert

the recipe changed hands over the years, variations changed through Persian, Greek, Lebanese, Arabic, and Balkan versions.

The Greeks brought baklava from Mesopotamia through trade and brought it home to Athens. Their people loved this dish so much that they created a process

to make the dough thinner; thus, phyllo, meaning "leaf" in Greek, came about. The Greeks used roller machines to accomplish this task and to produce quality baklava phyllo sheets; this process could take several hours.

Each culture contributed a part of the recipe. Whether it be cloves and cinnamon from the Armenians, diamond-shaped cuts and a touch of jasmine with the nuts, or rose and orange water from the Arabs, they all contributed to how we make baklava or baklava today.

The ultimate result depends on the ingredients used, but both consist of two parts: the syrup and the phyllo.

If baklava is to be made, pistachios, rose water, and orange blossom water are part of the recipe. Baklava, on the other hand, typically uses walnuts but adds cinnamon and honey, and of course, there are variations on the theme of both.

Regardless of which version is made, there are sure to be some happy tastebuds with every bite.



Greek Baklava.

Courtesy photo

### BAKLAVA

**INGREDIENTS**

- 16 ounces of phyllo dough, thawed according to package directions.
- One ¼ cup clarified butter (Ghee can be purchased to save having to clarify the butter)
- 1 lb. of walnuts, finely chopped (about 4 cups)
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 2 tablespoons of fresh lemon juice (juice of half a lemon)
- ¾ cup water
- ½ cup honey

**DIRECTIONS**

Thaw the phyllo dough according to the package directions (overnight in the fridge is the best), then place it on the counter for one hour before starting to bring it to room temperature.

Trim the dough to fit the baking dish, then stack and cover it with a damp towel to prevent drying.

Butter the bottom and sides of a 13 x 9 non-stick baking pan.

Begin the honey sauce, as it needs to cool while the baklava is baking.

In a medium saucepan, combine the sugar, honey, lemon juice, and water and boil, stirring until the sugar is dissolved. Reduce heat and boil an additional four minutes without stirring, then remove from heat and let cool while preparing the baklava.

Preheat oven to 325 degrees.

Add the walnuts to a food processor and pulse 10 times until coarsely ground. Remove the walnuts to a medium bowl and stir together with the cinnamon.

Place ten phyllo sheets into the baking pan, one at a time, brushing each sheet with butter once it's in the pan before adding the next.

Keep the remaining phyllo covered with the towel at all times.

Spread about 1/5 of the nut mixture (3/4 cup) over the phyllo dough.

Add five more buttered sheets of phyllo and then another layer of nuts. Repeat four times and then finish with ten more layers of buttered phyllo and butter the top.

Cut the pastry into 1 ½ inch wide strips, then cut diagonally to form diamond shapes.

Bake for one hour and 15 minutes or until the top is golden brown.

Remove from the oven and spoon the cooled syrup evenly over the hot baklava. It should sizzle, which makes sure that it stays crisp and does not become soggy.

Let the baklava cool completely, uncovered for four to six hours, or overnight at room temperature so that the syrup can penetrate and soften all the layers.

If desired, garnish with finely chopped nuts and store at room temperature, covered with a tea towel, for one to two weeks.

## Blow-up characters, a popular décor



Blow-up decorations have become a popular option for all holidays, but especially during Christmas time when you can see everything from Santa to Rudolph, to Frosty, and even a T-Rex or two.

Photo by Kara Gerbert

## Talking to Santa

Emy Yadon had a chance to talk to Santa last Tuesday evening at Morrison's True Value Hardware, thanks to efforts from the Big Bend Amateur Radio Club. One of Santa's elves, Dr. Rob Kinucan was on hand to help work the shortwave radio used to contact the North Pole.

Photo courtesy of Heather Yadon



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