

Brewster County approves new health clinic builder

BY KERRY LAIRD
 Correspondent

The Brewster County Commissioners Court held its regular meeting on Tuesday, February 25, in the commissioner's courtroom at the Brewster County Courthouse. The court addressed several key issues, including the approval of a new health clinic builder in Study Butte, an extension of the burn ban, and an updated lease for a copier at the county jail. Following Esther Howard's resignation, the court considered a replacement nominee for the Brewster County Appraisal District on behalf of the Big Bend Regional Hospital District. Precinct 4 Commissioner Mo Morrow nominated Daniela Lara for the position, and the commissioners approved her appointment unanimously. One of the meeting's

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INSIDE



FEATURED

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Rainfall totals at Alpine-Casparis Airport

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Burn Ban ON

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 A MEMBER OF THE
ARMED FORCES,
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 OFFICER EVERY DAY.



New plant species discovered in Big Bend

BY KARA GERBERT
 Managing Editor

Two staff members encountered a tiny plant in Big Bend National Park that they did not recognize. Upon further investigation, they discovered that it is a species previously unknown to science.

Thanks to genetic analysis that allowed for a better understanding of the plant's evolutionary relationship to other species

in the Asteraceae family, a scientific description of the species along with the results of the genetic testing was recently published in *PhytoKeys*, a peer-reviewed botanical journal.

In March of last year, a supervisory interpretive park ranger and a Big Bend National Park botany program volunteer noticed the tiny plants among the desert rocks in the park's northern remote reaches. After closer examination,

they quickly realized that the fuzzy, flowering plants were like nothing they'd ever seen.

After photographing the plants, they consulted species databases, plant taxonomy publications, herbarium records, and local experts. They even posted photographs of the plants online to help identify them. The duo grew ex-



Ovicula biradiata or "Wooly Devil".

Photo courtesy of D. Manly, NPS

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Starting out young



Inspiring Chuck Wagon cook Virgil Clark was on hand this past weekend during the Lone Star Cowboy Poetry Gathering's annual Chuckwagon breakfast. Clark was there to learn all the tricks of the trade that these seasoned cooks had to offer.

Photo courtesy of George Delgado

Wildlife and Wine merge to foster awareness

Save the date: March 11-13 for a celebration of our region

BY KARA GERBERT
 Managing Editor

The culmination of a conversation has given rise to a new event in Terlingua. The event's vision is to build regional awareness of what this area has to offer. Spearheaded by Kaci Kothmann and Brock Estes, their mission statement, according to Kothmann, is "Bringing education and entertainment to folks in the Big Bend region."

Kothmann, a Terlingua resident, spoke with the Avalanche about the event and what area residents can take away from it.

"This all began with a conversation between myself and my high school classmate, Brock Estes. We started discussing how to do a pop-up food and beverage event in Terlingua. Wildlife and Wine is what came about," said Kothmann.

Kothmann said her inspiration came from the great ideas she gathered at the January Far West Texas Community-Building Summit.

The event will take place from March 11 to 13 from noon to 10

See WINE • 8



Banners are up, announcing the Big Bend Wildlife and Wine Festival in Terlingua.

Courtesy photo

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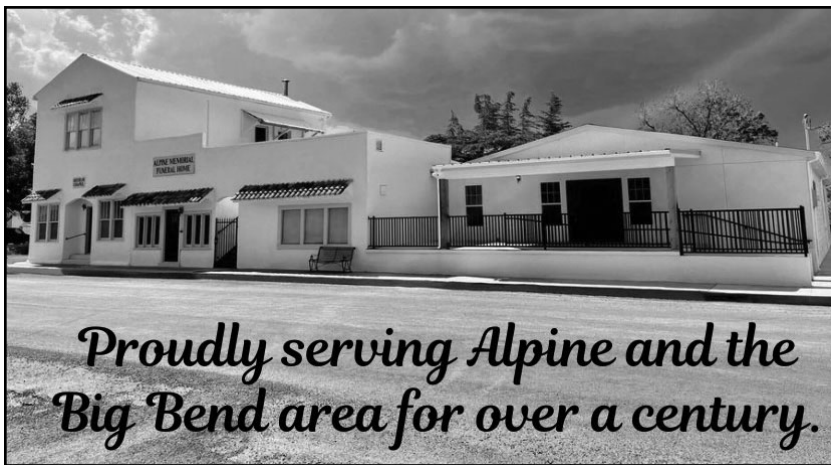
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OBITUARIES

John Michael Pahl

John Michael Pahl, known to many as JP, passed away on January 31 in El Paso at the age of 67. He was born on June 12, 1957, in San Francisco, California, and spent his life building—both in his work and in the relationships he cherished.

John embraced the freedom of riding his horse in



his youth and later believed owning/riding a motorcycle was not optional. He

was a man of many skills and strong convictions. He spent 50 years in the construction industry. Before following his dad to Alpine, he engaged in the building of tract homes and commercial properties in Reno, Nevada. John was a believer in taking no shortcuts with anything that he built. He had a passion for woodworking and perfection was the standard. He also spent

time driving big rigs and enjoyed playing the drums.

John is survived by his wife of seventeen years, Bobbi Pahl; his brothers, Stephen Pahl of Portland, Oregon, and Larry (Rose) Pahl of Northern California, his stepdaughter Jessica (Ben) Roberts of Midland, his stepson Quinton (Meagan) Sledge of Alpine; and his beloved grandchildren,

Caitlyn Roberts, Tyson Roberts, Joseph Roberts, Connor Ramirez, Colleen Sledge, and Keagan Sledge. He also leaves behind numerous nieces and nephews who held a special place in his heart.

John was preceded in death by his parents, Jerome Pahl and Barbara Ward, as well as his brother Chuck Pahl.

John's legacy will live

on in the homes he built, his beautiful woodworking, and the family he embraced.

Funeral services will be held Saturday, March 1st at 11 a.m. at Grace Christian Fellowship Church in Alpine. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Grace Christian Fellowship in John's honor.

Patricia Ann Watts

Patricia Ann Watts, born August 29, 1936, passed peacefully on February 3 at home in Fort Davis.

Retired teacher, devoted wife, loyal and faithful mother, and grandmother, Patricia loved her students and strived to be as guiding and supportive to the hidden plights some stu-



dents may have endured throughout her career just

as if they were one of her own children. She taught for twenty years at the district, where she helped forge some of the best minds and professionals to walk the halls of Fort Davis High School.

Patricia loved traveling with her husband on a motorcycle or towing an RV to take the boat on the lake. She loved all her puppies

and cats! She always expressed her love and pride for her children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. She truly loved each one of them; however, that did not prevent her from pointing out areas of their lives that needed correcting.

Patricia was preceded in death by her parents, Maj. Fletcher Smith Randall (ret. US Army), and

Elizabeth Ruth. Siblings Ed Randall (Nancy) and Claudia Pearce. Her oldest son, Roger Kinzie, and step-granddaughter, Danita Kinzie, step-grandson Jonathan Salcido

She is survived by her husband of fifty-four years, Barrick Watts. Her youngest brother, Richard Randall (Lynn). Her

children, Debbie Billing (David), Randall Kinzie (Belinda), Step-sons Bradley (Sylvia) Watts, Gary (Vickie) Watts, daughter-in-law, Ellen Kinzie, numerous grandchildren, great-grandchildren and great-great-grandchildren, cousins, nephews and nieces.

There are no services planned at this time.

Charley William Oates

Charley William Oates was born on October 16, 1943, in Saragosa, Texas, to Halley Oates and Jay M. Oates. He died on February 21.

A Celebration of Life will be held on Saturday, March 1, at 1 p.m. in Balmorhea at the Balmorhea Community Center.

Preceding him in death



is his sister, Marian J. Oates Borden, and son, Russell M. Oates. Balmorhea was his home. Charley married

Sharon K Oates on May 26, 2002. He Ranched, Farmed, and worked in Law Enforcement.

He is survived by his loving children, Cyndi K. Oates-Wright, husband, Marty Wright, children, Amanda K. Oates, Beau Wright, Holly Wright, and Braden Wright. Robert Moore, wife, Lacey Moore. Jacob Moore, wife, Elyse

Moore, and daughter, Maggie Moore. Katie Wilson, husband, Mark Wilson. Sarah Prunty and her husband, Jeff Prunty, and children, Ethan Prunty and John Prunty. Ryan Stieg, wife, Trisha Stieg, children, Ryanna Pineda, Hunter Stieg, Talynn Stieg, and Ty Muench. His brother, John A. Oates, wife, Susan Oates, and daughter, Kay Oates.

His brother, Jay H. Oates, and daughter in Law, Tina K. Oates

Special Thanks to Pecos County Home Health and Hospice and to our Sweet Angels, Sharaya Ortega, and Martha Beltran, for taking such good care of our sweet, loving, and Rough-Around-the-Edges Cowboy, Charley

made many lifelong friends and touched so many with his kind and fun spirit!

I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus. Philippians 3:14

In lieu of flowers, please donate to TransPecos Dusty Paws.

Gilberto Martinez Rodriguez Sr.

Gilberto Martinez Rodriguez Sr., affectionately known as "Gily," was a remarkable individual whose passionate spirit and nurturing nature touched the lives of many. He was born on February 22, 1955, in Alpine. Gily spent his years building both a thriving career and a loving family. He passed away peacefully on his 70th birthday, February 22, 2025, in the town he cherished.

Gily's career was as diverse as his interests. He was a business owner and self-employed entrepreneur. His journey led him through significant roles at Toltec, Metal Mart, and a local feed store. Gily was a master of his craft, welding, and each step of his professional life was marked by dedication, a strong work ethic, and a love for crafting tangible results with his hands. Outside of work, Gily had a passion for life



that radiated through everything he did.

A devoted family man, he adored his children—Andy Rojo, Gilbert Rodriguez, Hilary Smith, Felicia Rodriguez, and Harley Rodriguez. Additionally, he is survived by his grandchildren, Kael, Gilbert "Vinny," Kaleb, and Jasmine Rodriguez, Destiny Mandevi, Genesis Huerta, Malary Smith, Scarlett, and Violet Rodriguez and great-grandchild, Alanah Rodriguez; his siblings, Manuel "Manny" and Dola Rodriguez, Rodolfo "Roy" Rodriguez, Raul "Stufa" and Brenda Rodriguez, Hector and Esmida Rodriguez and Ruby Rodriguez. He

brought a sense of camaraderie and loyalty that was a significant part of his journey, and while he was loved by many, one stood above the rest: his long-time partner, Marsha Cooper.

Gily was preceded in death by his parents, Manuel and Felicita M. Rodriguez, and by his beloved sister, Maria "Mary" Rodriguez Ramon.

Gily was known for his adventurous spirit. He loved attending biker rallies and relished the freedom of being on his bike. He was the champion of rally games. Dance floors became a stage for his joyful expression, and these memories will forever echo in the hearts of those who knew him. Gily had a knack for standing out, making headlines in newspapers, and capturing the essence of living fully. His zest for life perfectly mirrored his accomplishments, most notably when he bought his first house at the age of 15—a testament to his determina-

tion and independence.

As we remember Gilberto Martinez Rodriguez Sr., we celebrate a man whose life was a beautiful tapestry woven with love, resilience, and a vibrant spirit. His legacy will continue to inspire those who were fortunate enough to know him, reminding us to embrace life passionately and support one another with a loving heart. Gily, you will be deeply missed but never forgotten.

Services will be held in Gily's honor, with visitation to begin at 8:30 a.m. on Friday, March 7, at Our Lady of Peace Catholic Church in Alpine. The recitation of the Holy Rosary commences at 9:30 a.m., and the funeral Mass begins at 10 a.m., with burial to follow at Holy Angels Cemetery in Alpine.

Services have been entrusted to Alpine Memorial Funeral Home. Gifts and condolences may be left by visiting www.alpinememorialfuneralhome.com.

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Texas Capital Highlights

House unveils its voucher version

Texas House members filed a bevy of education bills last week, including a proposed \$8 billion investment in public education and a voucher bill that ties the amount of money spent for private schooling to the dollar amount provided to public schools. The Austin American-Statesman reported the bill, filed by Rep. Brad Buckley, R-Salado, would increase the base level of per-student funding by \$220 — from \$6,160 to \$6,380. Additional funds would be provided for special education, bilingual education, transportation, and to rural school districts.

The House voucher proposal differs from the version already passed by the Texas Senate in that it sets out a tiered system depending on a family's income and prioritizes children with special education needs.

"We want kids in Texas to do better," Buckley said. "That's what it's about."

At least two Democratic legislators have pushed back. Rep. Gina Hinojosa, D-Austin, said she was "disappointed" by the proposed increase in per-student funding. The \$220 proposed increase does not cover increased costs due to inflation.

"Our neighborhood schools are desperate for the funding they need to keep their best teachers in the classroom," Hinojosa said. Rep. James Talarico, D-Round Rock, cast skepticism on Republicans' claim they have enough votes in the House to pass a voucher program.

"Voucher proponents have a habit of declaring victory prematurely," Talarico said.

Senate bill would criminalize hemp products with THC

A bill filed in the Texas Senate would ban all products containing THC, the psychoactive ingredient in marijuana, The Dallas Morning News reported. Thousands of retailers across the state are selling CBD products derived from legally grown hemp but often containing THC. The ban would not affect the sale of nonintoxicating products that contain CBD.

The ban is a priority of Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick, the Senate's presiding officer.

"We must take bold action to keep dangerous drugs away from our communities and out of our schools, and SB 3 is a critical step in protecting Texas families from unregulated and mislabeled intoxicating products," Patrick said in December.

Advocates for consumable hemp — gummies, vapes, drinks, and other types of products — are advocating a more measured approach that would include limiting the strength, increasing oversight, and banning sales to minors. The proposed ban would not affect the state's medical marijuana program.

Even if passed, the proposed ban faces an uncertain fate in the House, where no companion legislation has been filed.

AISSD talks financial integrity, academic performance, announces new athletic director

BY KARA GERBERT
Managing Editor

The Alpine ISD Board of Trustees held its regular meeting on Wednesday, February 19, at 5:30 p.m. in the administration building. Single Member District 3 board member Niki Ahrens was absent.

After the call to order, board president Eddie Natera opened the public hearing to discuss Alpine ISD's financial integrity rating report.

The report included 20 indicators, four of which were critical. Those four included the requirement of public notice of the rating, a public meeting to discuss the rating, the superintendent contract, and school board and superintendent travel and gifts.

Of the 20 indicators, some noted ones included the submission of the completed annual financial report to the Texas Education Agency within the deadline, an unmodified opinion on the annual financial report, district compliance with payment terms on all debt agreements by the end of the fiscal year, and was the measure of current assets to current liabilities ratio for the district sufficient to cover short term debt. The district received an A-Superior rating, accumulating all 100 points available within the indicators required and assessed.

Natera then adjourned the public hearing and immediately opened the second public hearing of the meeting to discuss Alpine ISD's ratings on the Texas Academic Performance Report. This rating is based on the STAAR testing for the 2023-2024 school year.

Alpine ISD superintendent Dr. Michelle Rinehart told the board that all special education detection statuses met the requirements and that there were noticeable increases in third—and fourth-grade reading and math.

While highlighting any increases and decreases in performance for different grade levels, Rinehart noted that students at AISD surpassed the state and Region 18 percentages in approaching grade level or above in all subjects overall, with 81% in 2023 and 76% in 2024.

President Natera then adjourned the public hearing and reconvened the open meeting, where the next item on the agenda was campus principal reports.

The board heard from Alpine Elementary principal Curtis Wubbena, who reported that AES had conducted its middle-of-the-year assessments using the 2024 STAAR tests and the middle-of-the-year map testing to track student growth. Wubbena also reported that 42 AES students recently participated in the academic UIL contest in Kermit.

At the middle school, AMS principal Judith Pardo-Alferez reported that the teachers and students are continuing with tutorials, as this program has shown marked improvement in students' grades

and achievements.

She also told the board that the middle school will begin identifying a Buck and Lady Buck of the Month for students who exemplify Fightin' Buck values.

Jarret Vickers gave the Alpine High School report to the board, noting that interim assessments had been completed and that the school had completed another round of drug testing. Vickers said that Taryn Hardin was the December Student of the Month and Tae Hardwick was the January Student of the Month. He also reported that February 10 was FAFSA day at AHS, which was done in partnership with Sul Ross State University.

Next on the agenda was the financial report, which included several budget amendments. These amendments simply transferred funds to different accounts; they did not affect the overall budget or any salaries. However, they cleared up the financials and moved excess funds in some overbudgeted accounts into accounts that had reached their limits to balance the financial reporting. The budget amendments required a motion and a second for approval, which was acted on with a motion from Single Member District 7 Mary McCallister, followed by a second from Single Member District 2 Joe Portillo. The motion passed unanimously.

Next on the agenda was the acceptance of multiple donations to Alpine ISD. Five of these donations included softball, basketball, and baseball. The Lady Buck Softball parents donated \$5,000 for softball expenses, including meals and tournament fees. Hometown Ticketing also donated over \$6,000 to the softball program for the same purposes. Many coaches schedule multiple tournaments for their players, and AISD only funds one tournament for each sport. Hence, fundraising and donations are a necessity.

The Buck Boosters donated \$1,100 to Lady Buck Basketball for expenses and \$2,170 for uniforms. They also donated \$1,900 to the baseball program for miscellaneous expenses.

Other donations included \$5,000 from Ahrens Ranch and Wildlife to FFA leadership, \$50 from Richard Bodell for Angel Meals, and \$2,500 from the Brewster County Historical Commission for History Fair costs. These donations were approved with a motion from McCallister and a second from Portillo.

The board next approved the consent agenda from last month's meeting, including the minutes and financial report. Single Member District 6 Dr. Adrian Billings motioned to approve with a second from McCallister.

The board next approved a memorandum of understanding for the BB-Rise and R-Pep agreement between Marfa ISD, Marathon ISD, and Alpine ISD. For the districts to

enter into the partnerships for BB-Rise and R-Pep, this must be approved by each school board for the legal team that represents each district, Walsh-Gallegos.

After reviewing and updating the wording on the TASB Board Policy, which was approved with a motion from Portillo and a second from Single Member District 5 Haley Babb, the board heard a brief report from the superintendent. In her report, Rinehart mentioned that they were looking to sell some of the buses that were no longer in circulation and two Chevy Equinox SUVs. "The revenue, at Kelly Blue Book value, that we hope to get for the two Equinox will be used to purchase a new suburban," said Rinehart.

After her report, the board moved into executive session, where they selected the new athletic director. The board approved Jerry Dominguez, the current interim athletic director, as the new athletic director for Alpine ISD.

The next regular meeting of the Alpine ISD Board of Trustees is scheduled for March 19 at 5:30 p.m. at the school administration building.



New Alpine ISD Athletic Director Jerry Dominguez is pictured with his two daughters, Hope (left) and Gabby.

Courtesy photo

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Opinions

ONLINE POLL

THIS WEEK'S QUESTION

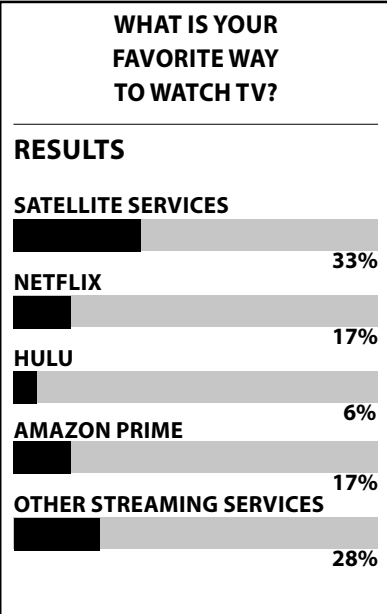
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RESULTS



LETTERS

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Letters should be no more than 300 words.

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Send your letters to kara.gerbert@alpineavalanche.com by noon Monday for consideration.

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Zoning Changes on the Horizon

The City of Alpine is preparing to implement significant updates to its zoning ordinance, a move aimed at modernizing land use regulations, streamlining processes, and enhancing enforcement mechanisms. These changes, recommended by the Planning & Zoning Commission and approved for consideration by the city council, mark a major step forward in Alpine's long-term development strategy.

What's Changing?

The proposed amendments to the zoning ordinance cover a broad range of regulations, including land use definitions, minimum standards, permits, and enforcement.

Key changes include:

- **Revised Land Use Categories** – The new ordinance updates definitions for zoning districts, ensuring clarity on permitted, conditional and prohibited uses.
- **Improved Permit Requirements** – Improved and updated guidelines for obtaining building and zoning compliance permits.
- **Accessory Structures and Storage** – Regulations concerning carports, storage containers, and accessory buildings are being refined to better align with residential and commercial property aesthetics.
- **Nonconforming Uses and Structures** – The re-



MEGAN ANTRIM
Alpine City Manager

vised ordinance outlines new provisions regarding structures and land uses that pre-date current regulations, limiting their expansion or modification.

• Home Occupation Rules

– Small home-based businesses will now be required to meet specific conditions, ensuring they remain secondary to residential use and do not disrupt neighborhoods.

SE• **Penalty Enhancements** – Violations of zoning regulations will continue to incur fines of up to \$500 per occurrence, reinforcing the city's commitment to enforcement.

These updates are de-

signed to create a more efficient, enforceable, and predictable zoning framework that balances development with maintaining Alpine's unique character.

Public Input and Next Steps

A public hearing on the ordinance is tentatively set for Tuesday, April 15, allowing residents and business owners the opportunity to voice their opinions and ask questions before final adoption.

Pending public input, the City Council is expected to vote on the ordinance during its April 15 meeting. If approved, the revised zoning regulations will take effect upon official publication, ensuring a seamless transition for property owners and developers.

One song is worth a thousand memories

"Music is probably the one real magic I have encountered in my life. It's pure, and it's real. It moves, it heals, it communicates and does all these incredible things."

— Tom Petty

Leadville, Colorado, came to mind. 1976. Or was it '77? It was me, Oscar Elliott, and others from Mount Pleasant. We were in the middle of a motorcycle sabbatical through the Rockies.

The same trip where we topped Monarch Pass and crossed the Continental Divide. Elevation 11,312 feet. Which was the first time I rode a motorcycle over the Continental Divide. And the first time, I rode one on snow-covered roads. With snow still steadily falling.

The song playing on my Pandora today brought back those memories. It was the same tune I remembered hearing on the jukebox in the bar at the back of that restaurant where we were eating that night in Leadville. The one next to the motel where we spent the night and woke up the next morning to find the city and our bikes covered in snow. The tune was "The Y'all Comeback Saloon" by the Oak Ridge Boys.

Funny how that works.

As a kid, it amazed and amused me when my Uncle Bill, mom's little brother,

told stories about how he and his Navy buddies spent time listening to music. "When a song came on the radio," he told me with a smile, "the objective was to recall a car we owned at the time, where we were when we heard the song, and the name of the girl we were with when we heard it."

As a writer and journalist introduced to the news business through the art of photography, the adage, "a picture is worth a thousand words," makes a great deal of sense to me. But it's also apparent that any wordsmith worth the paper their thesaurus is printed on can likewise argue for a thousand words expressing as much as one photo.

However, as a lifelong music lover, I will concede the power of both words and pictures to the magic of music.

My mother introduced me to that magic with her collection of 78 r.p.m. records from her central Kentucky high school days. I remember the mixture of tunes by Tennessee Ernie Ford, Patty Page, Eddie Arnold, Glenn Miller, Tommy Dorsey, and Hank Williams, Sr., Played over and over while she went about her Saturday



LEON ALDRIDGE
Guest Columnist

housecleaning, singing along with them.

As a grade-schooler in the 1950s, that genetic appreciation for music led me to exchange weekly allow-

ance money for records at the Richardson's White's Auto Store in Mount Pleasant. Elvis Presley, Ricky Nelson, Fats Domino. High school and college band memories from the '60s are infused with John Phillip Sousa marches like "King Cotton" and "The Washington Post," remembering goodness knows how many football games. At the same time, my car radio was always tuned to KLIF in Dallas during the day. Making memories at night, it was WNOE in New Orleans, whether cruising the streets or watching the moon rise over the city lake.

Viet Nam era music by The Box Tops, Creedence Clearwater Revival, or Country Joe and the Fish typified the times broadcast on drag strip PA systems somewhere I was hanging out. Even today, the tunes evoke memories of changing spark plugs at Interstate 20 Raceway in Tyler on Saturday night one weekend and the next, listening for the next round

of class calls to the Dallas International Motor Speedway staging lanes.

Even work memories are bookmarked by music. Let me hear "Crazy" by Patsy Cline, and I'll tell you about the night Johnny Garner and I sprayed a late-night paint job on a big truck at Sandlin's Body Shop in Mount Pleasant with the radio keeping us awake.

And should I hear George Strait's "Does Fort Worth Cross Your Mind," you might have to endure my memories of good times with a dear friend 30-plus years ago at Joe T. Garcia's Mexican Restaurant.

Long-time American Bandstand host Dick Clark whose name is synonymous with music, is credited with saying, "Music is the soundtrack of our lives."

Maybe that's why mom always appeared as though she was in a different world, lost in time while house cleaning.

It might also be why you might catch me at home on any given evening after work. Sitting and strumming a few chords on the guitar. Singing. Smiling. Remembering that time that me and ...

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

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Profit Motive

If two words most accurately describe how free enterprise works, they would be "profit motive." But so far, not even President Trump, who has advanced an idea, has chosen them to explain how it would work.

Trump thinks he can improve the lives of Palestinians in what they call the "largest outdoor prison in the world" by creating a new, modern

community in the wreckage that now is Gaza.

But how will you pay for it? Won't it have to be taxpayers? "Profit Motive," says it all, but no one has uttered that, at least that I have heard.

And, no, it will not require us to send in the military. Armies don't create wealth. Profit motive does.

How did all the great cities of the world happen? Was it taxpayer dollars? Or invading the military?

No. A large undeveloped area was zoned commercial, and officialdom sat back, and it happened. Individual investors bought property and built something that would provide them with a nice profit, such as a hotel, apartment complex, shopping center, or what have you.

When enough investors develop property, a city will happen. Trump's proposed development in Gaza will happen exactly the same way.

Individual investors will buy land and develop it, making them a profit.

Everything doesn't have to be built by taxpayers. There is such a thing as a free market, and yes, it works because of two little words: "Profit Motive."

Trump is a builder who has created great wealth for himself and thousands of individual investors. Now, Mr. President, tell it like it is.

Jim Street, Alpine

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

Upcoming events
February at Davis Mountains State Park

February 28, The Bewildering Barbary Sheep, 2-3 p.m. at the Amphitheater. Learn about this African exotic and the consequences of its rise to prominence in West Texas.

Saturdays, Art in the Park, 2 – 3 p.m. at the Interpretive Center.

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 Auxil-



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

Amigo Run Club at Al-

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

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

Big Bend Community Chorale rehearsals on Monday evenings at 6 p.m. in the Sul Ross Fine Arts Building, Room 200.

All are welcome, but first contact Andrew Alegria at Andrew.alegria@sulross.edu, call 432-837-8216, or visit bbchorale.wixsite.com/bbcc.

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, 10 a.m., first Saturday of each month at 605 E. Ave F. All members are welcome.

ALPINE AVALANCHE
Heard on the STREET

How concerned are you with the increase in seismic activity?



Judy Banks: What seismic activity? Oh, earthquakes. Okay. We have earthquakes?



Don Clark: I'm sure we may have more, and they may become more severe. But if you don't like it, stop driving your car. Petroleum exploration is critical to our economy.



Joey Jahnke: I felt the Tuesday morning earthquakes last week, and it was scary. My cat freaked out. I'm glad we don't have tall buildings.

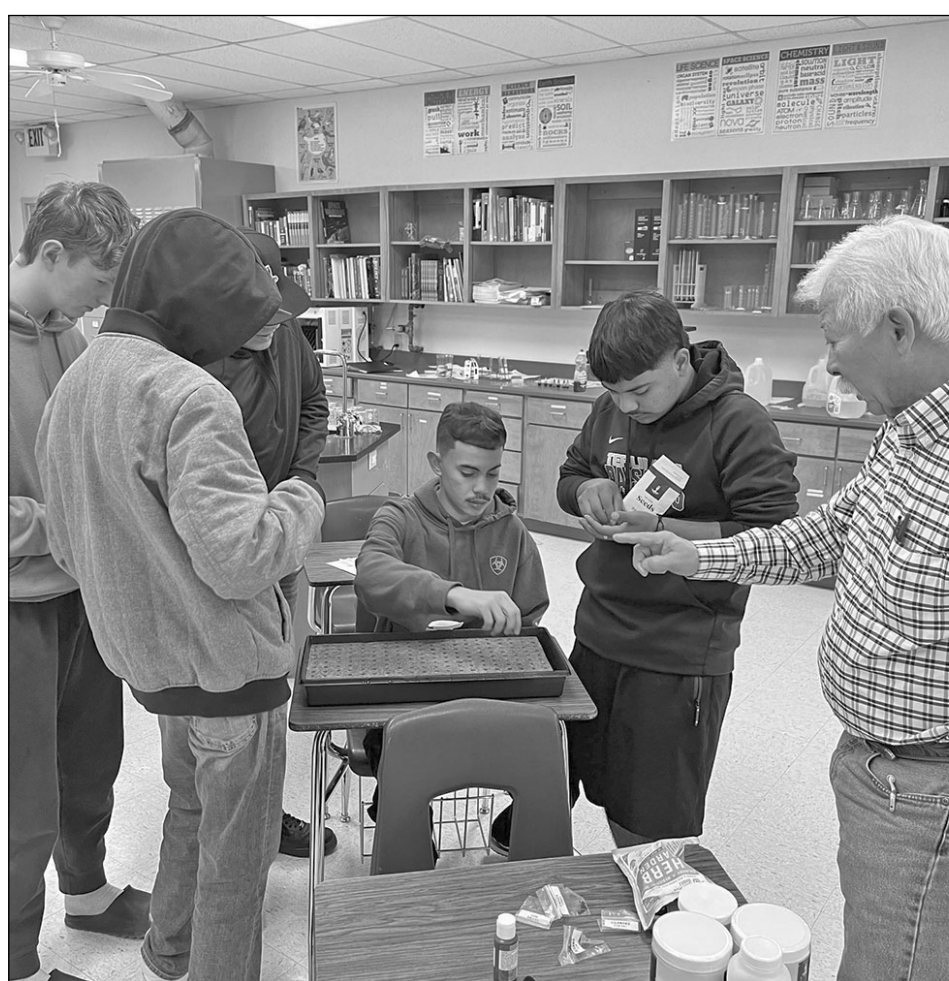


Hana Rizzo: I don't like it. It does seem like they've gotten worse. We live in Odessa, but we're here a lot. I thought we had one last night, but it was just my husband.



Susie Rodriguez: If it's shakin' we're quakin'! I'd rather have earthquakes than tornadoes.

Terlingua students get hydroponic



Terlingua High School students in Mr. Flori's Biology class got a shot at using the Flex Farm for the first time. They planted lettuce seeds and learned how to balance the pH of the water and mix nutrients. This is Terlingua CSD's second year growing hydroponic lettuce. Previously, the lettuce was being grown by their elementary students. The Flex Farm is being shared by teachers who've shown an interest in the hydroponic program.

Photo by Elvira Hermosillo

PET OF THE WEEK

Come meet all the dogs at the shelter!

This month, the Alpine Animal Services shelter offers an adoption special of \$25, a steep discount from the regular rate of \$100. Alpine Animal Services is planning some maintenance on the kennels. It would be helpful to them not to have as many dogs to move, and it would certainly be helpful to the dogs waiting for their forever home. There is a nice mix of breeds, personalities, and ages to suit the needs of any household. All the pets are spayed, neutered, vaccinated, and micro-chipped.

There are multiple good reasons to consider a shelter pet. You are saving more than one life by making space for another animal in need; you are giving a second chance to a deserving animal; you will receive unconditional love; you get an opportunity to stay active; you destress and unwind with someone who will never judge you; and you will have a lifelong best friend.

Make this year about helping our community. Contact Alpine Animal Services to volunteer 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. 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.

Plan on joining us for our Chili, Taters, and Tunes fundraiser on Saturday, March 22, at

the American Legion with music by Marathon Moonhorse and Hall's Last Call Band.

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.

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Sports

Alpine's young guns step up as Bucks dominate the diamond

BY KERRY LAIRD
Sports Editor

The Alpine Fightin' Bucks took the field over the weekend, battling through a revised schedule that included games against Odessa Compass, Fort Stockton, and Reagan County.

With strong pitching performances and key contributions from both upperclassmen and underclassmen, the Bucks walked away with two wins and a narrow one-run loss.

Alpine opened the weekend against Odessa Compass in a game that saw both teams

collect six hits. Freshman Ezra Lujan led the Bucks at the plate with two knocks, while senior Peyton Tays took the mound for Alpine.

The right-hander threw five and one-third innings, allowing five hits and four runs—three of them earned. Despite a slow start at the plate, the Bucks found their swing as the game progressed but ultimately fell just short, dropping a 4-3 decision.

The Fightin' Bucks rebounded on Thursday night with a hard-fought win over the Fort Stockton Panthers in frigid temperatures



Coach Llanez gathers the team around in Fort Stockton at the Comanche Tournament to go over their game plan.

Courtesy photo

in the 20s at first pitch. Alpine wasted no time jumping out to an early lead in the first inning, capital-

izing on an error that plated two runs before junior Leon Mucharras

See DOMINATE • 7

Lady Bucks battle through adversity at San Angelo, score two wins

BY KERRY LAIRD
Sports Editor

The Alpine Lady Bucks faced a tough test at the Concho Classic Tournament in San Angelo over the weekend. They dealt with injuries and bitterly cold weather while competing against strong competition.

With only 13 players available, the team had to dig deep to overcome a tournament run filled with adversity.

Friday's conditions were brutal, with temperatures hovering at 32 degrees but feeling like 21 due to the wind. The Lady Bucks struggled to find their rhythm in the opening game, falling to Forsan 7-1.

However, they bounced back later in the day, showing resilience in a 7-1 victory over Stamford.

Saturday started on a high note, as Alpine took down the San Angelo Texas Leadership Charter Academy Eagles with a solid 4-2 win.

In their second game, they jumped out to a 4-0 lead against Lamesa, looking poised to close out the weekend strong. However, one rough inning proved costly, and they were unable to recover, dropping a heartbreaking 5-4 loss.

Head Coach Chris Virdell believes the Lady Bucks had the potential for a much stronger showing in San Angelo. While the team secured the two solid wins, he felt they let a perfect tournament record slip away due to early struggles and uncharacteristic mistakes.

"Despite the two losses, I truly believe we should have been 4-0 in this tourney," he said. "We had a very slow start, made some uncharacteristic errors, and came out playing flat."

Coach Virdell acknowledged that the team struggled in all aspects of the game and didn't see the progress they expected with each outing.

Even in victory, Virdell saw room for improvement. While the Lady Bucks came away with two wins, he emphasized that the team has yet to reach its full potential.

For Virdell, success isn't just about the scoreboard—it's about constant growth

and focusing on what the team can control.

"I think both games we won, we were not at full potential," he said. "It was really good to get those wins, but we always talk about growth despite our opponent's good or bad. Our main motto this year has been 'Us.' We want to focus on our controllables and do our job."

He pointed to the adversity they faced as a valuable learning experience that will help them grow as the season continues.

With a short roster due to

injuries and other circumstances, the Lady Bucks have had to rely on players stepping up in key moments. Coach Virdell sees this as a valuable opportunity for younger or less experienced players to rise to the challenge and make an impact.

"With the injuries we have and some of the circumstances with numbers, it is a great opportunity to see other girls try to step up and make the most out of these opportunities," he said.

The Lady Bucks traveled

to Fort Stockton on Tuesday, February 25, for their next matchup. Tuesday night, Alpine jumped out to a 3-1 lead against Fort Stockton by the middle of the second inning, but the Panthers roared back with a five-run surge in their half of the frame, tacking on three more in the fourth. The Lady Bucks mounted a late rally, pushing four runs across in the final inning, but it wasn't enough to erase the early deficit, falling 9-8 on the road.

See WINS • 7

Lady Bucks Softball Schedule

	Location	Varisty	TV
Feb. 27-Mar. 1 Fox Tournament	El Paso	TBA-varsity only	
Mar. 4 Pecos	Pecos	5 p.m.	7 p.m.
Mar. 7 Big Spring	HOME	4 p.m.	6 p.m.
Mar. 8 Odessa High	HOME	12 p.m.	2 p.m.
Mar. 11 Midland Legacy	Midland	4 p.m.	6 p.m.

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Bi-District Champs fall to Slaton in Area Championship

BY KERRY LAIRD
Sports Editor

The Alpine Bucks' playoff run came to an end Friday night in Odessa, as they fell to the Slaton Tigers 69-52 in the Area Championship.

Despite a hard-fought effort, Alpine couldn't overcome the No. 15-ranked Tigers, closing out the season with a 14-8 record and back-to-back Bi-District titles.

"I'm disappointed for my seniors and the rest of the team, but I'm extremely optimistic for my returners," said Head Coach Aaron Hardwick, anticipating a deeper playoff run next season. "Our seniors were a fun group of guys who showed up to work every day for two years—some for three—they will be greatly missed."

The Bucks opened the

game with energy, matching Slaton shot for shot in the early minutes. However, foul trouble quickly became an issue. The Tigers capitalized at the free-throw line, building a lead that Alpine struggled to erase.

"Slaton is a tough team, and they deserve that No. 15 ranking," Coach Hardwick admitted. "If I'm being honest, I felt we did not adjust well to the officiating that was taking place. A few years ago, it was almost the same thing for us."

"I think this experience will help strengthen our in-game mindset—we have to get to a point where nothing bothers us on the floor."

Despite adversity, Alpine refused to back down. Even with four players fouling out, the Bucks fought hard in the fourth quarter, finishing strong and proving their resilience.

"The guys did well and

competed well! Their coach? Not so much," Coach Hardwick joked. "Our team finished strong in the fourth despite having four of our guys foul out, which is insane—proud of them for this!"

One of Alpine's biggest challenges this season was the limited number of games before district play, which made it difficult for the team to build early momentum. Coach Hardwick acknowledged this as a key factor and plans to address it moving forward.

"For a team that only played 22 games all season long, I thought we did well," he said. "We really didn't get going until right before district. I will definitely do a better job with scheduling this upcoming year in order to remedy this!"

Looking back on the season, Coach Hardwick ac-

knowledged the challenges but praised his team's perseverance.

"The season was marked by a lot of ups and downs and distractions, but I really loved the fact that these young men kept each other up and kept chipping away at it," he said. "We were able to achieve back-to-back Bi-District Championships! All the credit goes to our team for their sacrifices and hard work."

With the 2024-2025 campaign in the books, Bucks fans have plenty to look forward to next season.

"Alpine Fightin' Bucks fans should be excited and looking forward to a roster that will return several key starters from this year's group that went 14-8 overall, Caprock Tourney consolation champs, 5-3 in District—district runner-up—and Bi-District Champs!" said Coach



Alpine proudly celebrates their Bi-District win over Lamesa last Tuesday in Monahans.

Courtesy photo

Hardwick. "We will be back next year... stronger than ever!"

Despite the tough loss, the Bucks have plenty to build on as they look ahead to next season. With a strong core of returning players and a coaching staff

determined to fine-tune their approach, Alpine is poised to make another deep playoff run. The fight and resilience shown throughout the season prove that the Bucks are a program on the rise.

Alpine sweeps McCamey Invitational



Just as the girls' team did, the AHS boys' golf team took first place at the McCamey Invitational last week. David Baca brought home the individual first-place win, while also earning accolades for the longest drive and closest to the pin. Ace Lujan earned an individual third place.

Courtesy photo

DOMINATE • FROM 6

roped a double to bring another run across. Freshman Ezra Lujan showed patience at the plate, drawing a walk to score an additional run.

Junior A.J. Llanez added to the offensive push with a sharply hit double in the second inning, extending the Bucks' lead to 5-0.

Senior David Valenzuela delivered a strong performance on the mound, surrendering four runs on seven hits over five innings while striking out seven and walking just one.

Senior Devon Rojo came in to close things out, pitching a scoreless inning in relief with two strikeouts.

The Bucks collected nine hits in the victory, with Llanez leading the way, going 2-for-4 at the dish. Valenzuela

and Tays each drove in two runs to help secure the 7-4 win.

In an early Friday morning matchup, Alpine's bats came alive in the fourth inning, putting up an eight-spot en route to an 11-1 rout of Reagan County. A.J. Llanez took the hill and dominated, allowing just three hits and one run over five innings while fanning nine without issuing a walk.

Llanez wasn't just dealing on the mound—he also led the offense with two RBIs. Freshman Ryli Vasquez, Iden Lujan, and Devon Rojo each chipped in with a hit. At the same time, the Lujan brothers, Ezra and Iden, showcased their speed, swiping multiple bases.

The Bucks ran wild on the base paths, racking up six stolen bases on the day. Defen-

sively, they were flawless, playing error-free baseball to cap off a stellar performance.

Reflecting on the weekend, head coach Adam Llanez praised his team's effort, particularly on the mound.

"Overall, the pitching for the weekend was on point," he said. "I am proud of the boys' effort this weekend. They played really well—even with some help from underclassmen."

With two wins under their belt and valuable experience gained, the Bucks look to carry this momentum forward as they continue their season.

Bucks baseball hits the road again this weekend to travel to Seminole for week-end-long tournament play, where they'll face Muleshoe (2/28), Denver City (2/28), and Seminole (3/1).

WINS • FROM 6

With a full week of practice ahead, the team plans to focus on fundamentals while rebuilding confidence at the plate and in the field.

Despite the challenges, the Lady Bucks remain determined to push forward, learn from their setbacks, and prepare for the battles ahead this season.

The Lady Bucks varsity softball team travels to Pecos on Tuesday, March 4, to take on a red-hot Pecos High School team that has scored 77 runs in nine games.

Despite the ups and downs of the Concho Valley Tournament, Coach Virdell remains confident in the team's long-term growth. He deliberately structured a challenging schedule to test the Lady Bucks early, knowing the tough competition will pay off when it matters most.

"It is a long, grueling season for us, but I set it up on purpose that way," he said. "It will only benefit us in district play and beyond."



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BREWSTER • FROM 1

most significant approvals was for a new skid-mounted clinical facility in Study Butte. The court reviewed two proposals for the project, ultimately selecting Hamilton Health Box, which received the highest evaluation score.

According to Hamilton Health Box, the new portable health clinic will feature two exam rooms, a restroom, and utility hookups. Its insulation is designed to withstand the climate of South Brewster County.

Based out of Houston, the company informed the commissioners in

its proposal that a unit is readily available and could be delivered as soon as March 4. The cost for purchase, delivery, and assembly totals \$150,000.

Precinct 2 Commissioner Sara Colando moved to approve the proposal, which was seconded by Precinct 1 Commissioner Jim Westermann and carried unanimously.

Sheriff Dodson presented the Brewster County Sheriff's Office annual profiling report for 2024, which detailed statistics on traffic stops.

The report, which was submitted to the state, in-

dicated that deputies conducted 2,722 traffic stops last year. In only four of those instances was the driver's race known prior to the stop.

The report showed that traffic stops in the county reflected the local population's demographic breakdown. Approximately 50% of those pulled over were white, while 42% were Hispanic. Additionally, 26% of drivers stopped were female, and 74% were male. The commissioners accepted the report unanimously.

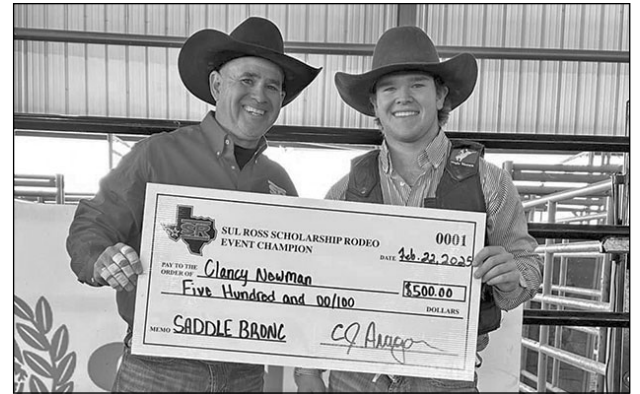
In the absence of Brewster County Emergency Management Co-

ordinator James Etchison, the commissioners voted to reinstate the countywide burn ban for another 45 days.

A brief discussion on recent fires emphasized the necessity of the extension, with commissioners noting that dry conditions continue to pose a fire hazard. The motion passed unanimously.

The next regular meeting of the Brewster County Commissioners Court is scheduled for Tuesday, March 11, at 9:30 a.m. in the commissioner's courtroom at the Brewster County Courthouse.

Newman receives rodeo scholarship



Recent Alpine High School graduate Clancy Newman, picture with SRSU Rodeo Coach C.J. Aragon, participated in this past weekend's Sul Ross Rodeo Scholarship event at the S.A.L.E. Arena. Newman was one of eight scholarship recipients. The Sul Ross Rodeo Team puts on these scholarship rodeos for graduating or recently graduated high school students as a means of recruitment.

Photo courtesy of Sul Ross Rodeo

WINE • FROM 1

p.m. each day at the original chili cookoff site behind the store. Camping options for the three-day event will be available, and tickets are \$10 per day or \$25 for all three days.

The event also offers free vendor spots for all area non-profits and Brewster County vendors who may be interested in participating. Anyone interested may contact Kaci Kothmann at 325-456-5983.

"We have three wineries that will be a part of the event. Flygap Winery is from Mason, Wild Texas Wines is from Sonora, and Farmhouse Vineyards is from Brownfield. We also have two vendors from Alpine, Alcove Social, Brews, and Hues. Alcove will provide burgers and mixed drinks, and their sister business, Brews and Hues, is providing craft beer. Our local Rio Grande Lemonade will also be on-site. Flatrock Sourdough and the Oh My Pizza Pie

wood-fired pizza trailer will also be here."

Along with the great food and drink, local artists such as Michelle Billings, Raki-Taki, a mosaics booth, a real estate booth, a beef jerky booth, and much more will offer their wares to festival goers.

Musical entertainment will be locally represented by some of the region's well-loved musicians, including Ted Arbogast and Charlie Maxwell on Tuesday night, Terlingua's own Los Pinche

Gringos on Wednesday, and Thursday night, the Scott Walker Band will close out the festivities.

The wildlife portion of the event came into play when Kothmann was asked about it, and this is where things became interesting.

"A few years ago, we had a PhD student here studying bats. Julie Zeysus is returning to town for this event and will lead daily talks on bats, their behaviors, and the different species in our area. She and her assistant, a

biologist from Angelo State University, will also lead bat walks in the evenings. She has a high-powered microphone specifically set up to the frequencies of bats and their vocalizations, and it amplifies these for humans to hear," Kothmann said. Zeysus' graduate research included developing a protocol to detect and collect environmental DNA of the federally listed and IUCN-endangered Mexican long-nosed bat at flowering Harvard Agave at known

foraging sites in Big Bend National Park. Bats are a major player in our desert ecosystem, so Kothmann believed they were a great species to kick off the inaugural celebration.

"We have great food and beverage options, conservation education, and other great items and entertainment. It's shaping up to be a great three days of community fellowship and connection."

Middle School Indians take district



The Fort Davis Indians middle school basketball teams, both boys and girls, won the district championship last week.

Courtesy photo

PLANT • FROM 1

cited as it became apparent that these tiny plants were previously unknown.

Sul Ross State University, the California Academy of Sciences, and the Centro Interdisciplinario de Investigación para el Desarrollo Integral Regional joined the park staff to study the new plant. Its genetic analysis revealed that the plant is so distinctive that it is not only a new species but also classified as an entirely new genus within the Asteraceae (Daisy) family.

The plant was named due to its interesting appearance. Ovicula biradiata originates from Ovicula, which means tiny sheep, in reference to the white "wool" that covers its leaves, and biradiata, which refers to the two conspicuous ray petals in each of the

flowers. Researchers working with the plant have affectionately named it "wooly" or "wooly devil."

"Now that the species has been identified and named, there is a tremendous amount we have yet to learn about it," said Big Bend National Park Superintendent Anjna O'Connor. "I'm excited to discover whether there are other populations in the park, details of its life cycle, what the pollinators are, and if it will be observed at all this spring due to the current drought."

Other recent scientific discoveries in Big Bend National Park include a fossil record of a new species of Duck-billed dinosaur (Malefica deckerti) along with the detection of a species of oak (Quercus tardifolia) once considered extinct.

Restaurant Guide

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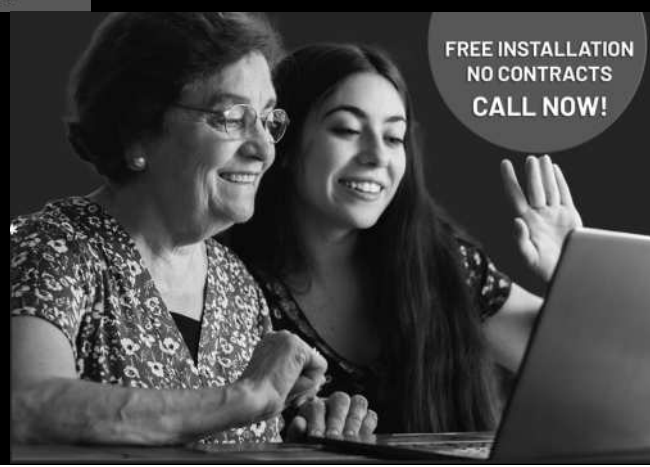


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February 14, 1947



Show Judge
 H. A. Fitzhugh, manager of the Strauss Medina Hereford farm, San Antonio, who will judge cattle entered in the 3rd annual Big Bend Livestock show to be held here Feb. 24-25.

February 16, 1957



Shown above is the Sul Ross Lobo basketball squad which will play Trinity University at 7:00 in the Lobo Gymnasium tonight. They are (front row) Dwain Turner, A. C. Copland, Boyd Lowry, Berry Mansell, Reymundo Ramon, manager "Dog" Dawson, (second row) Bob Pauley, Lee Burnett, "Buck" Owens, Clyde May, and Lyndall Lockett.

February 12, 1954



The five boys pictured above were chosen from 52 freshman Range Animal Husbandry majors to represent Sul Ross State College at intercollegiate livestock judging contests in Fort Worth, Houston and Oklahoma City. Mark Wingham, Odessa; James Leick, Big Spring; A. J. Odessa; Bierschwale; Frank Clegg, Bierschwale, head of the department, and Jack Richardson, head coach of the team, Fort Worth. First competitors for the contest from left to right are John, team was in Fort Worth on Feb. 1. By Gibbs, Big Lake; Doug Clegg.

February 28, 1941



"BILL" MARSHALL
 Student Union Secretary Coming Here Next Week

Bill Marshall of Dallas, state secretary of the Baptist Student Union, will make his annual visit to Sul Ross next Tuesday morning at 10:10, and that evening at the Baptist church at 8 o'clock. The Alpine BSU, anticipating Mr. Marshall's visit, has scheduled its annual banquet for Wednesday evening, and the secretary will be the chief speaker for the evening. "Bill," as he is called by his friends, conducted a meeting at the Baptist church here two years ago and is well known in Alpine.

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

Bark scale a big issue for crape myrtles

Dear Neil, regarding the crape myrtle bark scale – Southeastern Virginia has been battling this pest for years. The scale itself will not kill the plants. However, the sooty mold is the real problem. The more insects, the sootier mold there is. The mold covers the leaves, which reduces photosynthesis. It also covers the thin bark, resulting in poor respiration. After several years of uncontrolled pests, the plant will die. I've seen even plants with 8-in. diameter trunks require removal after three to five years. Foliar applications of dormant oil do not work. Contact sprays offer very limited control. Systemic insecticides do the job. After two years, the pests are gone, and the sooty bark has sloughed off. In my opinion, this is not a pest to ignore.

I appreciate your taking the time to write. I suspect you may not have seen my prior writings of having been involved with this pest since the first week it was brought to a nursery in the North Dallas suburb of Richardson. I took it to the

GARDENER'S MAILBAG
 by neil sperry

Texas A&M Center in Dallas. I worked alongside their entomologists, who, in turn, sent it to the University of Florida (where much work on scale insects is done) and the Smithsonian (where scales are identified). We assumed it to be a mutation of the azalea bark scale, a long-known pest.

Research trials were begun in 2007 on several miles of crape myrtle medians in the Crape Myrtle Trails of McKinney (Texas), a project I helped found. TAMU entomologists concluded that the systemic insecticide Imidacloprid, applied May 15 as a soil drench, offered the best control of crape myrtle bark scale (the name that by then had been assigned to

the pest) and crape myrtle aphids.

A few years later, a group of Texas A&M horticulturists visited China, and to their surprise, they found the pest abundant on Chinese cities' crape myrtles. That was confirmation that the insect had been imported from China and that it was not a mutation of another species here in the United States.

I have not seen a recommendation for application as early as you suggested, nor for a second treatment at the later date you listed in your note; therefore, I did not include them as I retyped your message. I also have never observed here in Texas, working with crape myrtles many days per month for the past 30 years, any plants dying specifically from either the scale or the sooty mold that develops in the honeydew left behind by the pests. The plants are certainly weakened, and flower production is severely reduced, so you're correct in saying we need to control this pest.

However, I have learned to watch for the twice-stabbed



ladybug. That voracious predator really reduced our bark scale population after the initial burst. We just had to teach people what the immature stages look like so they would hold off on spraying (which wasn't going to do much good on the scale anyway).

I hope that helps fine-tune a few things. We are almost in total agreement. Given a few more years for your population to reach equilibrium, I'll bet we will. Thanks again for writing!

Dear Neil, how can I find someone qualified to tell me if a very large tree needs to be removed? I've received conflicting comments.

You need a Certified Arborist. They will be a member of the International Society of Arboriculture, and they will have taken and passed all the tests that are

required for that certification. That organization has both a professional side of its website as well as one for consumers. The homeowner side is labeled as www.treesaregood.org, with a page dedicated to helping you find a certified arborist. You enter the zip code and radius within which you'd like to search, and it will list all the arborists who are certified within that area and their contact information. I'm certain they are used to giving second opinions. And, if you do need to have the tree re-

moved, you'll find excellent information online about questions you should ask before hiring an arborist. I recently spent several hours researching that very topic for a story I was writing elsewhere. I was amazed at the good help out there.

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

- ACROSS**
- 1 TXism: "slapped ___ new hat size" (hit hard)
 - 5 ___ and reel
 - 6 this Lionel was head of Texas education, and later a dean at San Diego State
 - 7 TXism: "turn about ___ fair play"
 - 8 TXism: "table grazed"
 - 9 TXism: "he uses barbed wire for ___ floss" (tough)
 - 15 TXism: "___-phoo water" (perfume)
 - 16 this Herb was co-founder and CEO of Southwest Airlines
 - 18 Southwest usually has the lowest
 - 20 heavy colorless gas
 - 22 TXism: "so ___ melts my ear wax" (loud)
 - 27 TXism for "you all"
 - 28 TXism: "he ___ stamped" (brave)
 - 29 Bean was 1st Texan to walk ___
 - 30 difficult events
 - 32 Cowboy Lilly-of-Famer; Lilly (init.)
 - 33 "FU" of "SNAFU" (clean version)
 - 36 TXism: "___ up" (won't talk)
 - 37 "shop '___ you drop"
 - 38 Ranger WWI oil: "The Boom That Won ___"

- 39 big east TX lake in three counties
- 41 TXism: he ___ short arms and deep pockets"
- 42 up-to-date
- 45 wash lightly
- 46 co. started by TX Perot
- 47 San Antonio TV
- 48 TXism: "that ___ won't hunt" (disagree)
- 49 in Texas law, they are a "controlled substance"
- 52 cruise ___ depart from Galveston
- 53 lemon or lime ending
- 54 Emmitt Smith ___ for a mess of yards
- 55 Emmitt made a mess of these (abbr.)
- 10 ___ Paso
- 11 former Astro leag.
- 12 "___ Gras" is held in several cities
- 13 TXism: "rare as a June bug in ___ house"
- 14 made a loan
- 15 no discomfort
- 16 Dallas news/talk AM
- 17 most Texans prefer chocolate at Baskin-___
- 19 assn. for "geezer" Texans, et al. (abbr.)
- 21 she was TX John Connally's wife
- 22 TXism: "he's ___ spring chicken" (old)

TEXAS CROSSWORD
 by Charley & Guy Orbison
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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.

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

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Big Bend Regional Hospital District Employment Opportunity

The Big Bend Regional Hospital District is now accepting applications for a **full-time Patient Advocate position at our office in Alpine, Texas.**

The Patient Advocate will assist clients with enrollment in state/local assistance programs and other health initiatives. Job requirements include: high school diploma or equivalent, proficiency in English and Spanish, excellent communication skills with clients and the community, solid grasp of how state and federally funded benefits programs work, two years experience in social services, customer service, case management, or other field-related experience. Monthly travel in a company-provided vehicle is required to our Presidio office and for outreach in areas of Presidio and Brewster County. Salary commensurate with experience. Benefits include: health insurance, generous PTO and paid holiday schedule, and retirement contributions.

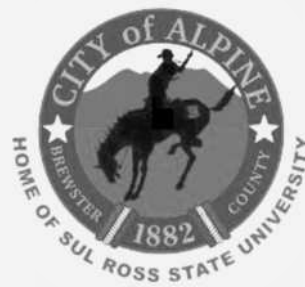


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APPRAISAL REVIEW BOARD MEMBERS NEEDED



The Brewster County Appraisal District is seeking applications for the position of Appraisal Review Board member. The board meets numerous times primarily during the summer. Training is required to sit on the board. A daily rate of \$200 is paid for service.

Applicants must have been a resident of Brewster County for at least two years. Applications are available at the district office at 1604 W. HWY 90, Alpine or an application is available on the district website.

<https://brewstercotad.org/>

Applications will be accepted until February 28. The district judge appoints members from the applications received.

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Alpine Avalanche

MoBB earns national recognition

The Museum of the Big Bend on the Sul Ross State University campus has once again earned national recognition, securing the No. 7 spot in USA Today's 10 Best Readers' Choice Awards for 2025.

The USA Today 10 Best awards celebrate excellence across various categories, with millions of readers voting each year to recognize top destinations, attractions, and institutions. This honor underscores the museum's widespread appeal and continued dedication to preserving and sharing the Big Bend region's history, art, and heritage.

In 2024, the Museum of the Big Bend claimed the top position in the poll, a testament to its exceptional exhibits and community engagement.

"We are honored to be recognized once again among the nation's top museums," said Dr. John Klingemann, director of the Museum of the Big Bend. "This achievement reflects the hard work and passion of our team, as well as the support of our visitors and community. We remain committed to preserving and celebrating the rich history and culture of the



Avalanche archives

Big Bend region for generations to come."

As a premier cultural destination in Far West Texas, the museum offers a rich collection that spans centuries of exploration, settlement, and artistic expression. Visitors can explore Native American artifacts, pioneer memorabilia, and contemporary works of art, all

showcasing the diverse heritage of the Big Bend region.

Beyond its permanent collection, the museum hosts rotating exhibitions, educational programs, and community events throughout the year. From hands-on workshops and guided tours to thought-provoking lectures, there's always something new to experience.

ADRIAN MONGLOVA

In what activities did you participate in high school?
I did track, baseball, and football for two years.

Who was your favorite teacher/coach and why?
Coach Dominguez and Ms. Golden, because they always

check up on me and make sure I am doing well and push me to do better.

What are your plans after high school?
To go to college to get my diesel mechanic license and work in the oil field.

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Acts 2: Verses 17-21
verse 17, "And it shall come to pass in the last days, said God, I will pour out of my spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams;"
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

Restoration of mankind

BY CLARK NUSSBAUM

First Assembly of God

As we enter the Easter Season next month, I wanted to reflect on scriptures that speak to what was accomplished in the death, burial, and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. Before mankind was created, God had a redemption plan in place to allow each of us to be restored to our Heavenly Father. What was lost in the Garden of Eden would be forever resolved by the cross and the empty tomb. Jesus Christ accomplished what mankind could not. Because of that, each of us can have a personal relationship with our Heavenly Father.

Please reflect on the following scriptures as they remind us of the fulfillment of the plan.

John 3:16 For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that everyone who believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life. 17 For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through Him.

1 Peter 1:18 For you know that God paid a ransom to save you from the empty life you inherited from your ancestors. And it was not paid with mere gold or silver, which lose their value. 19 It was the precious blood of Christ, the sinless, spotless Lamb of God. 20 God chose him as your ransom long before the world

began, but now, in these last days, he has been revealed for your sake.

Roman 5:8 But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners.

1 Corinthians 15:21 So you see, just as death came into the world through a man, now the resurrection from the dead has begun through another man. 22 Just as everyone dies because we all belong to Adam, everyone who belongs to Christ will be given new life. 23 But there is an order to this resurrection: Christ was raised as the first of the harvest; then all who belong to Christ will be raised when he comes back.

Luke 24:5 ... Then the men asked, "Why are you looking among the dead for someone who is alive? 6 He isn't here! He is risen from the dead! Remember what he told you back in Galilee, 7 that the Son of Man must be betrayed into the hands of sinful men and be crucified and that he would rise again on the third day."

Matthew 28:18 And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

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Congregation B'nai Zion El Paso, an independent congregation following Conservative movement practices, is pleased to announce outreach to individuals in the Big Bend interested in Jewish experience Judaism.
Services are available in person or live stream.
Interested persons may contact our local representative at (432) 664-8619 or visit our website congregationbnazion.org

First United Methodist Church
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Ephesians 4: 31-32
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A Mardi Gras tradition: Let them eat 'King' cake!

Laissez les bons temps rouler! Or, for those of you who don't speak French, Let the good times roll. This common New Orleans saying is especially true during Mardi Gras.

The traditional Mardi Gras or Carnival season, with one final hurrah on Fat Tuesday next week, marks the end of this annual celebration. Lent is just around the corner, beginning on Ash Wednesday. In keeping with this tradition, nothing says Mardi Gras like King cake. Although it coincides with this yearly party season, it is also synonymous with the Epiphany celebration.

Epiphany, or Twelfth Night, marks the arrival of the three wise men to Bethlehem, who brought gifts to the baby Jesus. Thus, the baby is incorporated into the



HEAD OVER MEALS

by kara gerbert

cake, a distinctly New Orleans tradition.

King cake is different around the globe, but those of us in the U.S. associate it with the circular, braided sweet dough decorated in the traditional Mardi Gras colors of green, gold, and purple, representing faith, power, and justice.

The dough's twisting or braiding and circular pattern are meant to resemble a crown. With

the addition of the baby to the cake, the tradition is that whoever gets the slice of cake with the baby is "king" for a day and will have good luck. They are also responsible for providing the King cake for the following year's celebration along with starting the party off. The plastic baby represents the baby Jesus, but other trinkets have also been

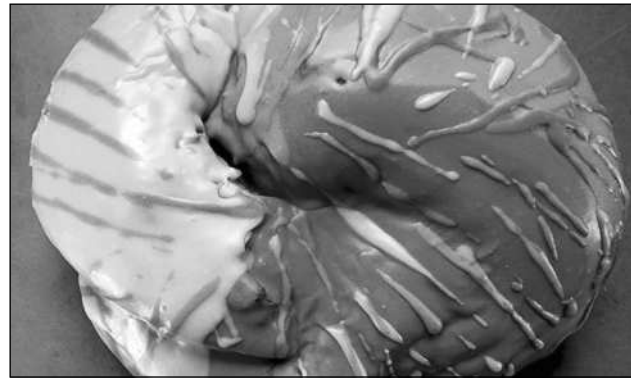
placed in these cakes. King cake is said to have originated in Spain and France and became associated with Epiphany during the Middle Ages. In France, it is called galette de rois, which translates to "cake of kings."

In Spanish-speaking countries, such as Spain and Latin America, it is called Rosca de Reyes. Bolo rei is the Portu-

guese version of King cake, and all are a little different from the NOLA version.

Whichever version you choose, don't let

your next Mardi Gras celebration go by without enjoying traditional King cake. See the full recipe online at www.alpineavalanche.com.



King Cake

Photo by Kara Gerbert

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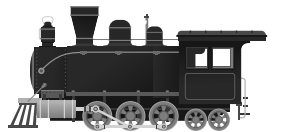
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Thimble of West Texas holds grand opening



Vi Thi Dotter, owner of Thimble of West Texas, held her grand opening and ribbon cutting on Thursday, February 20, at 5:30 p.m. Dotter is pictured here with her children and members of the Alpine Ambassadors in front of her business, located at 117 West Holland Ave.

Courtesy photo

Presidio HS dominates competition



Two Applied Engineering teams and two Engineering Technology Design teams brought home some hardware from the SkillsUSA STEM competition held at Odessa College. In the Applied Engineering competition, the Presidio HS Team F of Luis Sanchez, Dharlene Garcia, Lourdes Carrera, and Anna Carrasco earned gold and qualified their team for the state competition. Their Team G earned a bronze medal, and that team included Leilani Brito, Saul Bojorquez, Claudia Piedra, and Kevin Carrasco-Hinojos. In the Engineering Technology Design category, PHS took the top two spots in the competition, with Team A earning gold and state qualification that included Karla Valdivia, Abodiel Bustamante, and Jaslene Saens and Team B earned the silver and were also state qualifiers. This team consisted of Ahicssa Urias, Rio Morales, and Armando Moreno.

Courtesy photo

Blue Devils get busy building



The Presidio High School CTE welding class is working hard, building projects for their welding competition.

Courtesy photo

Fort Davis holds firefighter training



Multiple fire departments descended on Fort Davis this past weekend to participate in the Mile High Area Fire School. Departments included Fort Davis, Davis Mountain Resort, Alpine, Marfa, Seminole, San Angelo, Horizon City, and Northwest Hudspeth County. Firefighters attended lectures on how to respond to electric vehicle fires and had hands-on training for that, as well as hose and nozzle training, engine pump operations, and smoke reading.

Photo courtesy of Marathon VFD

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