

## From Feral hogs to final calls: Council meeting mixes critters, commerce

BY KERRY LAIRD  
Correspondent

The Alpine City Council met on Tuesday, March 4, for its regular meeting in the council chambers. All council members were present, with Mayor Catherine Eaves presiding over the meeting.

The council addressed concerns about wild hogs within city limits, a growing problem for many residents. Ward 5 Councilor Rick Stephens discussed possible deterrents for the animals. He suggested using motion-activated sprinklers and flashing lights to chase them away, adding that watering lawns at night attracts the hogs.

Jennifer Stewart of Alpine Animal Services explained how her department handles

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## INSIDE



FEATURED

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### Rainfall totals at Alpine-Casparis Airport

2025 . . . . .0.00"  
March . . . . .0.00"



**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.**



## USBP Big Bend Sector deputizes National Guard

BY KARA GERBERT  
Managing Editor

Continuing the fight against illegal immigration, the lead agent for the Big Bend Sector of the U.S. Border Patrol issued the oath of office to Texas National Guard soldiers at the Alpine Border Patrol Station, granting them the ability to enforce federal immigration laws.

On Monday, March 3, Big Bend Sector Chief Patrol Agent Lloyd Easterling administered the oath, which grants the Texas National Guard Title 8 authority.

These recently deputized Texas National Guard soldiers now have enhanced authority to arrest individuals for immigration-related offenses under the direction and supervision of a Border Patrol

agent.

On taking the oath of office, soldiers now have the power to apprehend and detain individuals who unlawfully cross the border, thus expanding their role beyond intelligence gathering, observation, and logistical support, which they were tasked with in the

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Texas National Guard soldiers were deputized in a ceremony held on Monday at the U.S. Border Patrol Station in Alpine in front of the 9/11 Memorial.

Photo courtesy of U.S. Border Patrol

## AMS flying high



These Alpine Middle School pole vaulters are flying high for the Lady Bucks this track and field season. From left are Layla Chavarria, Isabel Villanueva, Athena Villanueva, Henleigh Anderson, and Maxine Pitts.

Courtesy photo

## Future looks bleak for Marathon Animal Shelter

BY KARA GERBERT  
Managing Editor

Sometimes, unforeseen circumstances for pet owners make animal shelters a necessity, and since 2017, D.J. Hensley has been sheltering animals in Brewster County. Her journey to those humble beginnings officially began in 1996, when she moved to Brewster County and just started taking in stray animals that needed a home. To date, she says she's taken in over 1500 animals in total.

"When I started this, I was just taking in animals from Marathon, but that grew to taking in animals from all over Brewster County and even some from

Fort Davis," Hensley said.

Since starting the shelter officially, Hensley has taken in 500 cats, half of those ferals that she has trapped, and over 400 dogs that she's worked towards finding their forever homes.

The Marathon Animal Shelter is an official 501c3 non-profit, and as with most non-profits they depend upon donations, grants, and volunteers. Hensley says, she's at the bottom of the barrel of it all.

"I am now a one woman show. I have no volunteers, I can't find foster homes, I'm not eligible for grants because the shelter is

not a separate brick-and-mortar building, there's no monetary help from the county, and most of the food, vet visits, and overall care of the shelter animals end up coming out of my own pocket. My savings are gone. I get a few donations here or there, but it's not enough to keep me up and running at this point," Hensley declared.

Hensley said she is no longer doing intakes, because of the lack of funds and help.

"I have four dogs currently that are in desperate need of a forever home. I've

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Phobos the Husky is currently searching for his forever home and would make a great companion for energetic kids.

Photo by Kara Gerbert

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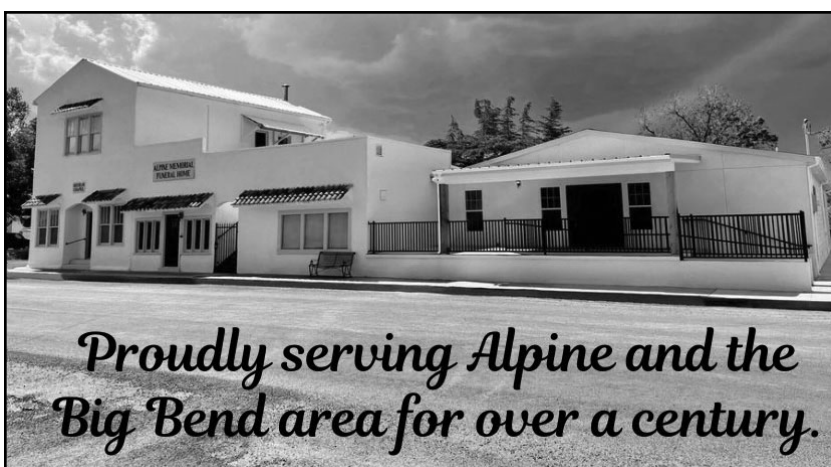
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## All paws on deck



Members of the Terlingua Fire and EMS, along with their best mates were on hand for the Texas Independence Day parade held in Terlingua on Sunday.

*Photo courtesy of TFEMS*

## Sul Ross launches new MBA

Sul Ross State University is launching a new Master of Business Administration in Aerospace and Defense Industry Management in Fall 2025.

The aerospace and defense industry is a significant part of the state's booming economy. Texas is home to numerous manufacturing facilities producing aircraft, missiles, and drones, including both the world-famous F-16 and F-35 fighters. Texas also hosts numerous military bases and is the center of the flight training operations for the U.S. Air Force and

U.S. Navy. The creation of an MBA will provide individuals, including those serving in the military, with the business expertise to be part of the future in the aerospace and defense industry.

The MBA program at Sul Ross, long recognized as one of the most affordable in the country, is designed with working executives in mind, individuals who need to learn the latest theories and strategies to succeed in today's economy. All courses are in an eight-week online format that makes classes easy to

fit into a busy schedule.

"The new MBA in the Aerospace and Defense Industry is rapidly transitioning and provides students with the depth of knowledge needed to advance to leadership positions in the industry," said Dr. Thomas Matula, chair of the MBA program at Sul Ross's Rio Grande College of Business. For more information or to schedule a meeting, email [thomas.matula@sulross.edu](mailto:thomas.matula@sulross.edu) or call 830-279-3035.

## Area LEOs honor one of their own



Tom Hyatt, a piper for the U.S. Border Patrol, leads the procession for former Alpine Police Department Chief Ruben Melgoza, whose watch ended on February 14. Services were held last Thursday at Our Lady of Peace Catholic Church with officers from the Texas Department of Public Safety, Brewster County Sheriff's Office, U.S. Border Patrol, and Alpine Police Department in attendance with friends and family.

*Photo courtesy of Alpine Police Department*

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

**PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION MEETING ON MARCH 24, 2025, AT 5:30 P.M.**

**CITY COUNCIL MEETING ON APRIL 1, 2025, AT 5:30 P.M.**

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

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

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# Texas Capital Highlights

## Voucher bill has backing of House majority

A slim majority of Texas House members have indicated they will back House Bill 3, which creates education savings accounts that allow families to use taxpayer money for private school education. The Dallas Morning News reported that 75 Republican legislators have signed on with the bill's author, state Rep. Brad Buckley, R-Salado, to support the measure.

"For the first time in our great state's history, the Texas House has the votes to pass a universal school choice program," Gov. Greg Abbott said in a statement.

The Texas Senate has already passed a voucher bill, though it contains different provisions. The two measures will have to be reconciled before a bill reaches Abbott's desk.

The House bill has more stringent requirements based on income and whether a child has a disability. Both bills carry a \$1 billion price tag.

House Speaker Dustin Burrows, R-Lubbock, said his chamber welcomed public input.

"We want to continue to make the bill better and improve it," he said. "If there's room for improvement or to make the bill better, that's part of the process."

## First measles fatality recorded in West Texas as cases rise

A measles outbreak in West Texas has resulted in the death of a school-aged child, and 146 cases have been identified as of Friday, according to the Texas Department of State Health Services. DSHS predicts more cases are likely to occur, given the highly contagious nature of the disease.

An additional case was reported in an adult living in Rockwall County, in North Texas. An adult male tested positive after traveling out of the country. State officials say he was not vaccinated. The man spent about a week in a hospital but is now recovering at home.

Dr. Peter Hotez, co-director of the Center for Vaccine Development at Texas Children's Hospital, told the Houston Chronicle also believes the outbreak, the state's largest in 30 years, will continue to increase because of a growing number of children who are not being vaccinated. The Centers for Disease Control estimates nine in 10 people who are not vaccinated will become infected if exposed to measles.

"I think these numbers will continue to accelerate for a while," Hotez said. "So this is going to be a very large, very dangerous measles epidemic."

Wildfire risk growing in western half of state

State officials are gearing up for an increased wildfire danger across the western half of Texas, including the Panhandle, South Plains, Permian Basin, and parts of the Hill Country. The Texas A&M Forest Service is reporting one active wildfire in Kimble County. It has consumed 722 acres and was 70% contained as of Sunday.

"It's important for Texans to prepare for wildfires, work to prevent them and heed warnings of local officials" Jared Karns, forest service fire chief, said.

The Texas comptroller's office recently released a report concluding that Texas communities face elevated wildfire threats as subdivisions spread

into previously undeveloped areas with easy-to-ignite vegetation. Since 2005, more than 243,000 separate Texas wildfires have burned 13.9 million acres.

Last year, the Smokehouse Creek Fire near Canadian burned more than 1 million acres, the largest wildfire in state history.

As of Sunday, 100 Texas counties had burn bans in place.

## 'Floodgate' of uncertified teachers causing concern

More than half of new teachers hired last year lacked state certification, according to The News, and Education Commissioner Mike Morath expressed concern at a recent House committee hearing. Morath said it was impossible to know what type of training uncertified teachers received.

"We are setting these folks up for a very rough ride," Education Commissioner Mike Morath told lawmakers during a recent House committee hearing.

The Legislature a decade ago loosened hiring requirements for school districts to hire teachers because of a shortage of certified applicants.

"We need to take responsibility for some of that because we've made it easier to get into a classroom without certification," state Rep. Gina Hinojosa, D-Austin, told her colleagues. "That is a policy decision that we have made."

The Texas Education Agency reports that schools with higher shares of uncertified teachers have worse outcomes on annual standardized tests. Legislation has been proposed to rein in the system that allows districts to hire uncertified teachers.

# Footballers keep Alpine beautiful



Members of the Sul Ross football team were on hand Saturday to help clean up the west side of Alpine. The team collected 87.96 lbs. of trash on 7.96 acres along 2.6 miles of road.

Photo courtesy of Keep Alpine Beautiful

## City opens HOT funds grant applications

Applications will be accepted beginning March 10 for Hotel Occupancy Tax (HOT) grants from the City of Alpine for the 2025-2026 fiscal year. Visitor events and other projects that draw overnight visits to the City are eligible for funding consideration, according to the requirements of state law. A workshop on Alpine's HOT Grant program will be held at 5:30 p.m. on March 25 in the Alpine City Council Chambers. The workshop will cover the grant application process and the legal uses of the HOT funds. A Zoom link to the workshop will be available for those who cannot attend in person.

Details can be found at cityofalpine.com. The grant application and guidelines can also be found on the city website (cityofalpine.com) under "How Do I > Apply For > Hotel Occupancy Tax Funding." The first day to submit a grant application is Monday, March 10, 2025. The grant application deadline is 5 p.m. on Thursday, April 17, 2025, by which time all applications must have been received by City Secretary Geo Calderon. This grant application window is only for events and activities taking place during the 2025-2026 fiscal year, which runs from October 1, 2025, through September 30, 2026. Ques-

tions about the grants program can be directed to Director of Tourism Chris Ruggia at chris@visitalpinetx.com. State law identifies the various ways that Hotel Occupancy Tax funds may be used. Grants are offered under the following expense categories: Advertising, Promotion of the Arts, Historical Restoration and Preservation, Sporting Events, and Transportation. All expenditures must also directly encourage overnight stays at Alpine's hotels and short-term rentals. The City of Alpine's Hotel Occupancy Tax Grants Committee will review all eligible applications

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# Opinions

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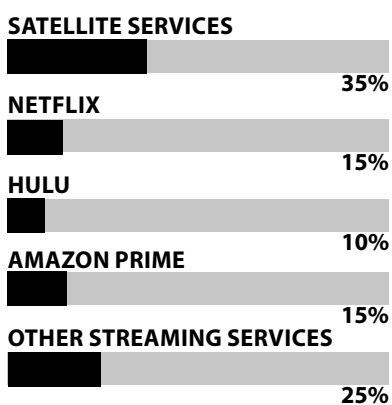
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Send us your letters.

Please include your name, address and phone number for verification purposes. Only your name and city will be published.

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Send your letters to [kara.gerbert@alpineavalanche.com](mailto:kara.gerbert@alpineavalanche.com) by noon Monday for consideration.

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# BOONIEVILLE



## The end of a season

To say that Texas this year had an above-average quail season would be an understatement, by my predictions. From the Rolling Plains to South Texas, all reports from fellow quail chasers have been nothing but a decade high.

I have been blessed to hunt with a lifelong friend for many years. My close buddy, Hunter Slaton, by way of East Texas, is one hell of an upland bird shooter and dog handler; he is also fortunate enough to have married into one of the most prestigious quail conservation-minded ranches in Texas. The Rolling Plains' topography and habitat east of Lubbock make for some of the best bobwhite hunting in the state. In addition to their conservation efforts and this year's population boom, nothing could be a better combination for a quail enthusiast.

My most recent trip, closing weekend, was a hunt that even Theodore Roosevelt would have written about.

For a group of my friends who share a love for hunting, our weekend ahead promised the perfect mix of camaraderie, excitement, and hunting. Our destination: the heart of quail country, where the bobwhite quail flit through the underbrush. The thrill of the chase is matched only by the laughter and stories shared around the campfire at the end of a long day.

Waking up in the lodge just before dawn, the crisp morning air was filled with birds calling. The smell of coffee greeted me, and last night's campfire was still smoldering.



J.T. MARONEY  
 Publisher

The chatter of familiar voices still laughing from the night before. There's something about these early mornings—the anticipation, the quiet excitement—that bonds friends even closer.

We took breaks here and there, swapping stories of past hunts, each one becoming a part of our friendship's mythos. In many ways, hunting is a time to reflect, not just on past hunts but on life itself.

As the sun began to dip low in the sky, we found ourselves with a satisfying harvest. The dogs were whipped but happy. We stood in a circle, a mix of gratitude and pride in our eyes, as we admired this state's incredible sunsets over the rolling plains. A whiskey toast to end another great season.

But more than a covey rise, the shared experience made the day unforgettable.

I would be remiss if I didn't mention the dogs. Quail hunting behind a good set of dogs is a work of art, truly! How many paintings have you seen of pointer dogs in the field? Well, there is a reason for that. Hunter and his father-in-law, Russ Ford, have a multigenerational German Shorthaired Pointer bloodline that I have been so fortunate to witness. I am now the new owner of part of this lineage.

I hope you have been fortunate enough to join friends in the field. If you have, you know exactly what I am talking about. Those lucky enough to live in Texas and enjoy the outdoors understand this is a collection of memories to relish over time.

## We were just there for the fun

*Life is about the adventures you take and the memories you make.*

—Katie Grissom, author

News that Jimmy Mason in Mount Pleasant had passed away reached Center a couple of days ago.

Everybody in town knew Jimmy. Soft-spoken, kind-hearted, and ready to help anyone he came in contact with, he never gave anyone the option of not liking him.

He was also the hardware store guy. Third generation. The Mason Family Hardware store was a reliable resource for nails to nuts and bolts, and gift items to garden supplies. They were located on the north side of the downtown store when I was a youngster in Mount Pleasant. By the time Jimmy retired in 2022, the iconic store was on North Jefferson in the old Safeway building.

After I left Titus County, I stopped in to say "hello" every chance I got when I was back in town. Because Jimmy and I shared a friendship and a couple of common memories related to airplanes. One easily classified as an adventure I've recounted before. One worth telling many times.

I was a brand-new licensed pilot in 1974 with less than 100 hours in my logbook. Jimmy was a student pilot working on his license. We shared a common in-

structor in Grady Firmin, who instigated this adventure turned good memory.

"Let's go to the CAF air show down in Harlingen," Grady offered during conversation one evening. For decades, the Commemorative Air Force has produced one of the best air shows in the country that celebrates vintage warbirds.

A plan was forged for flying to the southernmost Texas border, packing bags and bedrolls for camping under the wings. I was designated pilot-in-command for reasons lost to time. Student pilot Jimmy filled the right seat. Grady, the Vietnam veteran combat pilot and military instructor with Huey gunship experience in his logbook, took the back seat. Jimmy and I looked at each other and shrugged. "OK," we agreed.

Ready for an evening departure with a planned stopover in Corpus Christi, Grady said, "Load up."

"Wait," I objected. "Yeah," Jimmy added, "We haven't done a weight and balance check with all this baggage and full fuel."

Grady countered, "Give it ten degrees of flaps, run up full power and release the brakes. If it doesn't rotate by mid-field, stop and we'll throw some stuff out and



LEON ALDRIDGE  
 Guest Columnist

try again."

Jimmy and I also agreed that we never met a Vietnam vet pilot that wasn't fearless or fun.

The plane groaned a time or two, hesitated, and lifted off. We were on our way south as sunlight slipped below the right wingtip. In my book, sunsets and sunrises viewed from a mile high or more are the best.

With Jimmy's navigation, we found the Corpus airport a few hours later, and we were on the runway.

The next morning, I preflighted the plane and Jimmy went to grab a sectional to get us to Harlingen. Navigation then was with paper "sectionals." Think aviation version of a Texaco road map.

"They're sold out," Jimmy reported. "No problem, though," He added. "Someone suggested we fly the coastline south until we don't understand the radio language. Then fly back about 30 miles and we should be pretty close."

"He was kidding ... I think," Jimmy added.

The serenity of the early morning coastline viewed from low altitudes was soon disrupted by hundreds of other planes swarming the area, all headed for Harlingen.

A radio recording repeated, "enter holding pattern over Combes,

maintain 500-foot spacing, listen for the last digit of your N number to breakout, switch to tower frequency and enter left downwind for 36 left maintaining one-mile spacing."

We circled until we had the instructions memorized. Then Jimmy heard it. "Our turn." In the pattern at Harlingen, we were about to land; a good thing because fuel was low. Then the tower instructed, "Green Cessna on final, go around—too close to aircraft ahead."

"Forget it," Grady said from the back seat, "Go!" I looked at Jimmy, he looked at me, and we agreed, "OK." Keying the mic, I replied, "Harlingen tower, green Cessna, negative go around. Insufficient fuel."

We breathed a sigh of relief when the plane's tires chirped on the concrete.

Two days of memories later, we headed home. One stop for fuel in Bryan, and we touched down at Mount Pleasant around midnight with no clue regarding the value those memories made with friends would hold in the years to come.

Because Jimmy, Grady, and I ... we were just there for the fun.

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

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

**Upcoming events**

**March at Davis Mountains Resort**

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

**March 6 Free Citizenship Classes**, 5:30-6:30 p.m. Alpine Public Library (Spanish), 6:30-7:30 p.m. (English). Fort Davis at Mobile Comunidad, classes via Zoom from Alpine Public Library. For information contact Rev. Mike Wallens 214-862-7292 (English) or Rev. Katy Hudak 720-401-8195 (Spanish).

**March 10 Free Citizenship**

**Classes**, 5-6 p.m. Terlingua at Terlingua High School (English). Marfa at Marfa Public Library classes via Zoom from Terlingua High School. For information contact Rev. Mike Wallens 214-862-7292 (English) or Rev. Katy Hudak 720-401-8195 (Spanish).

**March 10 CDRI Cactus and Succulent Sale**, 9 a.m. at CDRI on the porch of the Powell Visitor Center. Plants range in price from \$5 to \$150. No early sales. For more information call 432-364-2499.

**March 14 Knights of Columbus Fish Fry**, 5 p.m. at Our Lady of Peace Parish Hall. Plates are \$15 each.

**March 22: Chili, Taters, and Tunes**, the Alpine Humane Society, is holding a fundraiser at the American Legion featuring music by Marathon Moonhorse and Hall's Last Call Band.



ciety, is holding a fundraiser at the American Legion featuring music by Marathon Moonhorse and Hall's Last Call Band.

**Ongoing Events**  
**Alcoholics Anonymous**, 502

E. Lockhart Ave. Schedules are available on the front door. For more information, call 915-562-4081 or [aa-intergroup.org](mailto:aa-intergroup.org).

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

**American Legion Post 79 meeting**, 6:30 p.m., second Monday each month, Legion Hall, 306 W. Sul Ross Ave. Dinner provided.

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

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

at Amigo. Call 432-837-4012 for more information.

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

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

**Citizenship Classes**, at Alpine Public Library by appointment only, 805 W. Ave. E. 432-837-2621

**ESL Tutoring**, at Alpine Pub-

lic 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**

*What do you like most about West Texas?*



**Chris Green:**

The first thing I like is the people. Secondly, I love the landscape.



**Johnathan Cole:**

It has to be the people. I moved to West Texas for college from Canada, and it was kind of scary, but the people immediately treated me like family.



**Daniel Alvarado:**

Honestly, there are so many things. I grew up west of Plainview and spent my college years in Alpine. West Texas shaped me, and there's no place else like it.



**Sam Miranda:**

I get to live the dream that most people really do only dream about.

**PET OF THE WEEK**

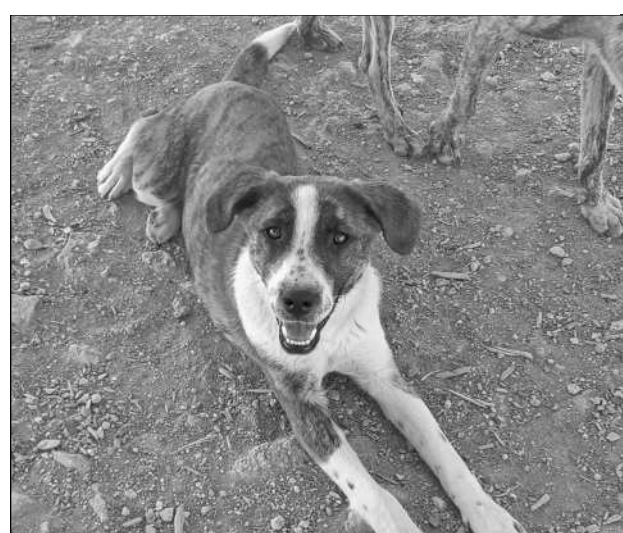
Meet Draco!

Draco has been sheltered since mid-August; he came from a neglect case with his seven siblings. He was shy at first, not having had a lot of socialization, but he improved daily. He has learned how to leash-walk and loves to play groups with other dogs; he is shy of cats, so he may be alright in a home with cats. He is a calm guy who wants to please. He is looking for a special person with whom to share his life. Meet Draco at the Alpine Animal Services Shelter, 2900 Old Marathon Hwy.

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. Pre-sale tickets



are available at the Alpine Humane Society Thrift Store or at the door. \$15 for a stuffed baked potato and a drink; we will also have chili available by the bowl and special guest Texas Twisted Treats Funnel Cakes!

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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The Brewster County Clerk is introducing GovOS Property Alert—a free real property fraud alert system. After creating an alert record, you will receive email notifications anytime a document is recorded against your property or name.



**Sarah Vasquez**  
Brewster County Clerk, TX

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**Clean up in Alpine Creek**



Boy Scout Troop 41 was hard at work on Sunday afternoon, picking up trash blown into the creek by all the windy weather.

Photo courtesy of Samantha Jensen

**IMPORTANT UPDATE**  
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# Sports

## Miles of travel for track and field

BY KARA GERBERT  
Managing Editor

The Alpine Runnin' Bucks track and field teams have kept the road and the tracks hot these past few weeks. Since Valentine's Day, the Runnin' Bucks have undertaken meets in Del Rio, Fort Stockton, and, most recently, Monahans.

On February 14, the Lady Bucks brought home hardware and personal records from the Queen City Relays in Del Rio. Seniors Danica Mulholland and Hope Dominguez plan to continue their athletic careers into college and prove their worth on the track at Del Rio. Mulholland earned silver medals in the 100m and 200m dash behind San Angelo Central and Uvalde.

Junior Naida Morris earned a bronze in the 100m hurdles and placed fourth in the 300m hurdles. Nevaeh Carrasco also placed in the triple jump and the 400m, coming in fourth.

The following Friday, the Lady Bucks competed in Fort Stockton at the Comanche Relays with a much larger team. Mulholland took gold in both the 100m and 200m dash, along with Hope Dominguez, who won the 1600m. Dominguez also won a bronze medal in the 400m. Mulholland also had PR times of 12.62 in the 100m and 26.03 in the 200m.

Kylie Maroney earned a seventh-place finish in

the 100m and an eighth-place finish in the 200m but earned PR times of 13.44 and 28.45, respectively. The 4x100 relay of Maroney, Mulholland, Morrissey, and Dominguez earned a third-place finish out of 11 teams in their first relay this season.

On the JV team, Colette Fowlkes earned gold in the 400m and silver in the 200m high jump. Alice Saunders won gold and silver in the 800m and 1600m JV divisions, respectively. Also competing was Jianna Martinez, who placed third in the 300m hurdles, and Ailea Fierro earned third-place finishes in both the shot put and the discus, along with a new PR for the shot put.

This past Friday, the high school and middle school track teams traveled to Monahans to compete in the Sandhills Relays.

The boys and girls high school teams competed on Friday, with Runnin' Bucks earning multiple honors. Maroney earned a bronze in the 100m dash with a PR of 13.43, while Gyllian Morrissey placed 14th. For the boys' team, JP Valenzuela placed fifth in the 100m for the varsity Bucks. Mia Jimenez placed sixth in the 100m in the JV division, with Sophie Janis in 12th. For the boys' team, Ferris Daley placed ninth, with Thaddeus Prieto coming in 15th in the 100m.

Taryn Hardin won sil-

ver in the girls' JV 300m hurdles. The varsity girls' 4x200 relay of Maroney, Fowlkes, Mulholland, and Emy Hernandez also won silver, and their 4x400 relay took bronze.

Hatfield Cason earned silver in the 800m and gold in the 1600m for the boys' team.

For the field events, varsity high jumpers Mulholland and Fowlkes place first and second, respectively. Maroney placed third in the long jump, and Carrasco came in sixth.

For the varsity boys field events, Dae Hardwick placed third in the high jump, and Logan Smith earned fifth place in the long jump with a leap of 19'6.75".

Middle school track stars shined in Monahans on Friday. Alpine 7th graders, both boys and girls, earned gold in the 100m with Aubrie Tamale and Jeffrey Castillo. Both runners also ran PRs of 14.24 for Tamale and 13.44 for Castillo.

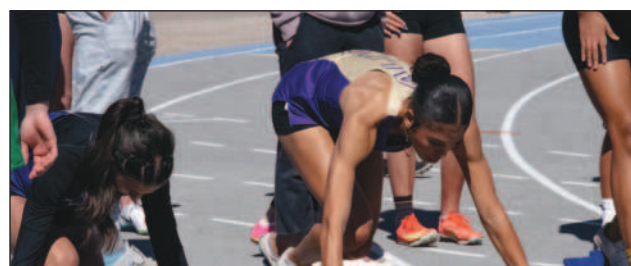
The 8th-grade girls also earned gold in the 100m dash, with Iliana Dominguez earning some hardware with a PR of 14.60. In the 200m for the 8th-grade girls, Shannon Tamale earned a silver with a PR time of 29.75. Tamale also earned silver in the 100m hurdles.

Seventh-grade girls 400m took the podium with a silver and bronze finish from Zoe Munoz and Eivary

Mercado, respectively. Iliana Dominguez earned a gold for the 8th-grade 400m race.

Seventh graders Eivary Mercado, Georgia Muratori, and Zoe Munoz earned silver, bronze, and a fourth-place finish in the 800m. In

See TRACK • 7



Danica Mulholland prepares for her race at the starting blocks in Fort Stockton on February 22.

Courtesy photo

# BIG BEND

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## TERLINGUA

## Stealing the show: Bucks rack up 10 stolen bases in statement win

BY KERRY LAIRD  
Sports Editor

The Alpine Fightin' Bucks took the field over the weekend, facing a grueling slate of games against Muleshoe, Denver City, Seminole, and Kress. The Bucks showed flashes of dominance, particularly on the mound and the basepaths, but also encountered some tough lessons against strong competition.

With district play approaching, the team continued to fine-tune its approach, learning from both victories and setbacks.

The weekend kicked off with a hard-fought battle against Muleshoe, in which the Bucks emerged with a 2-1 victory in a classic pitcher's duel. Senior David Valenzuela was in command from the start, striking out 10 batters while limiting Muleshoe's offense to a single run.

His ability to mix speeds and keep hitters off balance proved invaluable, as the Bucks relied on his performance to secure the win.

At the plate, A.J. Llanez led the way with key hits, helping Alpine manufacture just enough offense to come

out on top. Though runs were hard to come by, the Bucks capitalized on opportunities when they presented themselves, making the most of their limited scoring chances.

The momentum from Friday's win didn't carry over into the next game, as the Bucks struggled against a tough Denver City squad, falling 11-1.

Llanez took the mound to start, but control issues made for a difficult outing, with the right-hander allowing three runs over one and two-thirds innings.

Freshman Ezra Lujan came in to relieve, battling through three and two-thirds innings while surrendering three more runs on five hits.

Offensively, the Bucks found little success against Denver City's pitching staff, with Llanez driving in the team's only run. The game proved to be a reminder of the importance of sharp execution, as Denver City capitalized on mistakes and turned small openings into big innings.

Saturday morning brought another tough test against Seminole, and the Bucks quickly found themselves in a

See BUCKS • 7



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## Buck tennis topples some Mustangs



Alpine varsity doubles players Zane Wash and Solanus Prieto brought home third-place medals this past weekend at the Fort Hancock Invitational. Also placing third in mixed doubles were Ashlee Neal and Marco Salcido.

Courtesy photo

## Smooth sailin'



Kylie Maroney sailed through the air to a third-place long jump finish at the Sandhills Relays in Monahans last Friday. Maroney had a jump of 15'10".

Courtesy photo

## TRACK • FROM 6

comparison, Hallie Wood earned the gold for the 8th-grade 800m race.

For the boys' team, Roman Holguin earned bronze in the 7th-grade 800m race, and Matthias Prieto brought home gold for the eighth graders.

In the 1600m, 7th-grader Muratori earned gold, while 8th-grader Wood earned silver. In the boys 2400m, 7th-grader Roman Holguin earned gold with a PR of 9:14.80

In the field events, 8th-grade pole vaulters from both the girls' and boys' teams had strong performances. Alpine took gold on both teams, with Cooper Roach winning the boy's event and Athena Villanueva winning the girls. Layla Chavarria earned a silver in the pole vault, while Isabel Villanueva earned a fourth-place finish. Matthew Reagan and Colt Billings rounded out the boys' event in third and fifth place, respectively.

In the long jump events for 7th grade, Aubrie Tamale earned gold, while Zoe Munoz placed fourth. 8th graders earned the silver, bronze, and sixth place finish in the long jump with Wood, Dominguez, and Shannon Tamale. For the boys, Castillo earned a fifth-place finish for the 7th graders, and Zane DeLeon placed fourth for the 8th graders.

In the triple jump event, 7th grader Zoe Munoz earned a gold medal, while Castillo earned a silver med-

al for the boys' team. The 8th-grade girls saw Wood place second, Shannon Tamale place fourth, Matthias Prieto place fourth, and Emerson Roach place sixth

for the boys. Finally, in the 7th grade discus, Jaxon Minor earned a bronze medal for the boys, while Carmen Montoya placed fourth for the girls.

## BUCKS • FROM 6

deep hole after giving up nine runs in the first inning. The early deficit proved too much to overcome, and the game ended in an 11-0 defeat.

While the scoreboard was lopsided, Alpine showed resilience in the later innings. Peyton Tays stepped up in relief to throw three and one-third innings, allowing only three runs while striking out two.

Despite the early struggles, the Bucks played clean defense, finishing the game without a single error. At the plate, Tays, Josh Solis, and Leon Mucharraz each recorded a hit, but the team was unable to string together enough offense to mount a comeback.

Looking to close the weekend on a high note, the Bucks bounced back in dominant fashion against Kress, securing an 11-2 victory behind an outstanding all-around performance from Valenzuela.

The senior delivered at the plate, collecting three hits and driving in four runs, including a two-run double in the fourth inning that broke the game open. The Bucks struck first in the second inning, with Valenzuela and Ryli Vasquez each driving in a run to give Alpine an early lead.

After Kress evened

the score, Alpine responded with a decisive fourth inning, as Valenzuela's clutch double gave the Bucks the lead for good.

The Bucks put the game out of reach in the fifth inning, erupting for five runs on four hits. Llanez, Ezra Lujan, and Iden Lujan each delivered key RBI hits, showcasing the depth of the lineup.

Aggressive baserunning played a huge role, with Alpine stealing 10 bases in the game, putting constant pressure on the Kress defense.

On the mound, Devon Rojo was dominant in relief, pitching four innings while allowing just two hits and striking out eight. Josh Solis got the start and set the tone early, tossing two hitless innings with four strikeouts.

The Bucks once again played mistake-free defense, proving that even after a tough stretch of games, they remained focused and disciplined

on the field.

With their final tournament of the season approaching in Wink this weekend, the Bucks have one last opportunity to fine-tune their game before heading into the heart of their schedule.

The tournament will serve as a crucial test, allowing the team to build momentum and make key adjustments before returning to home turf.

Next Tuesday, Alpine will take the field at Kokernot for their season home opener against Monahans, with the first pitch set for 7 p.m.

The highly anticipated matchup will allow the Bucks to showcase their progress in front of the home crowd. With the energy of Kokernot behind them, they'll look to turn their early-season lessons into a strong performance as they swing for Twin Peaks.



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## SHELTER • FROM 1

had them all for over a year, and if I'm unable to find a way to get them to a new home I'm not sure what I'll do." Currently, she has two males and two females available for rehoming.

Phobos, is a six-year-old neutered male Husky who is all white with striking glass-blue eyes. Her other male, Gunther, is also six and he is a gray and white Pitbull who sits calmly for treats and is a lovebug.

Her two females are Heeler mixes. These two-and-a-half-year-old sisters are named Cinnamon and Daisy. "As with many siblings they don't get along with each other so well, nor do they get along with other female dogs, but they get along great with males. The same goes for Gunther and Phobos, but just the opposite. They get along with females but are dominant males, so they don't get along with other male dogs," Hensley said.

Hensley is currently looking for some land outside Marathon and Alpine to begin the restructuring process but finding this has been a challenge. "I don't have the money to purchase a large piece of land. At one time, there was a lady who I was in talks with that was willing to donate a small portion of some

land that she owned for me to get this going, but she passed away, and her family isn't willing to donate the land any longer. I can't continue to have the shelter at my home. It must be relocated, but without the availability of grant money or a large donation for land, the future of the shelter is grim."

Hensley says that restructuring would result in a name change, a brick-and-mortar building that is not her home, and this would allow her to qualify for grant funding to keep the shelter going.

"If I'm unable to restructure the shelter this year, I will have to close the service permanently. I don't want to do that, but it may very well come down to that. If that happens, I may be able to foster an animal or two for other shelters, but that would be about the extent of the services I could provide for these homeless pets."

All animals are fully vetted and spayed or neutered and ready for their forever homes. For more information or for those wishing to help they can contact Hensley at 432-386-4593 and leave a message if there is no answer. The Marathon Animal Shelter accepts PayPal @marathon-animalshelter, or donations may be mailed to PO Box 208, Marathon, TX 79842.

## AMS gets new playground equipment



The Alpine Ambassadors were on hand Monday morning to officially announce the completion of a new playground with new equipment at Alpine Middle School. The entire staff, faculty, and student body celebrated the event.

Courtesy photo

## COUNCIL • FROM 1

hog calls.

"We scoot them off the property when we get calls, or we contact game wardens for trapping when necessary," she said. "They can be big and dangerous animals."

Alpine Police Chief Darrell Losoya advised that residents outside city limits can legally eliminate hogs themselves, but inside the city, people should call the police.

Stewart emphasized that residents should pick up pet food at night to avoid attracting hogs. She also warned that homeowners with water features in their yards should expect visits from wild animals.

Another topic of discussion was the need to replace the city's pet crematorium. Stewart reported that over the past five years, Alpine's crematorium has handled at least 2,000 deceased pets. However, the current incinerator has developed a serious crack, and a replacement is urgently needed.

The current cremator has been in service for 12 years but can only cremate one animal per day. To meet demand, the city operates the machine daily, including on holidays.

A lower-grade replacement costs \$15,000 to \$20,000, while a state-of-the-art model better suited to Alpine's needs would cost between \$65,000 and \$100,000.

Private cremations currently cost between \$90 and \$130 per pet, depending on weight. The service has generated an estimated \$35,000 in annual revenue over the last five years. It is also used for communal cremations, which include

large roadkill removals.

The council agreed to move forward with reviewing available cremation systems and pricing.

The council also discussed a proposed draft of a Chapter 380 ordinance and application process. Chapter 380 of the Texas Local Government Code allows municipalities to offer grants and loans to promote economic development and stimulate business activity.

Councilor Stephens proposed setting thresholds to avoid overwhelming the council with requests. Restaurants, hotels, tech companies, and manufacturers are among the businesses eligible for these incentives.

To further explore the potential impact of these agreements, the council scheduled a workshop for April 1 at 4 p.m. in the council chambers.

In action items, the council approved a resolution allowing the Alpine Police Department to participate in the Office of the Governor's Public Safety Office Homeland Security Grants Division under Operation Lone Star (OLS) for fiscal year 2026.

Operation Lone Star, a border security initiative launched by Governor Greg Abbott in 2021, aims to detect and prevent illegal crossings, disrupt human smuggling, and reduce drug trafficking.

"It provides more income for officers, provides deterrence—more police cars on the road, deters crime, also border protection such as fentanyl trafficking reductions," he said. Five APD officers have volunteered to partici-

pate in the program.

Councilor Stone voted against the resolution, while the remaining members voted in favor, allowing the resolution to pass.

The council also considered American Legion Post #79's request to extend its alcohol service hours until 2 a.m. The establishment, located at 306 W. Sul Ross Avenue, currently holds a beer and wine permit and requested a special use permit to obtain a Late Hours Certificate from the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission. The Planning and Zoning Committee recommended approval.

Residents living nearby voiced opposition, citing concerns about noise and disruption. Councilors Stephens, Stone, and Nance acknowledged that the business is in a residential area and expressed hesitation about granting the permit.

After a lengthy discussion, the council initially voted to postpone the decision, citing concerns that the special use permit would allow the bar to remain open until 2 a.m. every night, despite American Legion representatives stating they only intended to extend hours on Fridays and Saturdays, with "rare" exceptions.

After a recess, the American Legion rep-

resentatives proposed a compromise, agreeing to limit the extended hours to Fridays and Saturdays only, without exception. Alpine City Attorney Cynthia Trevino confirmed that the council had the authority to amend the permit request accordingly.

The council revisited the motion to postpone the decision, but the motion failed on the second attempt, with only Councilor Stephens in favor. Following this, Councilor Stone proposed an amendment to approve the permit with the condition that the American Legion could stay open until 2 a.m. only on Fridays and Saturdays. The motion passed, with Councilor Stephens casting the sole dissenting vote.

Additionally, the council approved a five-year contract with Continental Utility Solutions, Inc. (CUSI) for cloud-hosted utility billing services. The contract covers meter reading, work order management, and a customer web portal. The first-year implementation fee is \$36,750, and the monthly service fee is \$2,559.

The next regular city council meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 18, at 5:30 p.m.

## GUARD • FROM 1

past.

"We share a historic partnership. One that plays a vital role in securing our communities and protecting our fellow Americans—whether overseas or right here at our borders," said Chief Patrol Agent Lloyd Easterling. "I appreciate your

dedication to this mission, and we look forward to continuing our mission with you."

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# LOOKING BACK

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Alpine Avalanche

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## POPE BLESSES U. S.



After a recent private audience with Pope Pius XII, Cardinal Mundelein of Chicago stated that the new pontiff "considers the faithful back home among the dearest in the world." The pope imparted his apostolic blessing in English, specifying that it extended "to America and your families."

## Candidate



**A. G. BEARDEN**  
A. G. Bearden, manager of the Lamesa chamber of commerce, is being sponsored by the Lamesa Lions club for governor of Dist. 2-T, in which Alpine is located.



## Rotary Governor Visits In Alpine

Harry P. Stagg, Albuquerque, N. M., governor of District 170, Rotary International, paid an official visit to the Alpine Rotary club last week, attending an assembly held Wednesday night and speaking to the luncheon meeting held Thursday at the Holland hotel.

## BLACK BEARS, FAIRLY COMMON IN CHISOS MTS. 20 YEARS AGO, ARE STILL TO BE FOUND IN AREA



By JOHN C. FULLERTON  
Ranger, Big Bend National Park  
Black bears were fairly common in number in the Chisos mountains 20 years ago, according to statements that are made by persons who hunted deer in the mountains at that time. A few of these animals are known to have crossed the Rio Grande into Mexico about 10 years ago. One of these bears crossed the river in the vicinity of the old deserted village of Coyote and was then pursued by three boys. This animal went to the Santa Elena canyon. Pursuit was given up when the animal reached narrow ledges and had its choice of turning back upon its pursuers or recrossing the river.

**Three Types of Bears**  
There are three main types of groups of bears in North America. Polar bears are found along icy coastlines north of the Arctic Circle. Grizzly bears are the largest kind of meat-eating mammal native to this continent. The huge brown bears of the Alaskan peninsula usually are classified with the grizzlies.

is the black bear. The total number of specific kinds of black bears alone that once roamed various parts of the continent was about 12. Half of this number of specific kinds is found only in Canada and Alaska.

**Found Only In Chisos Mts.**  
The black bears of the Chisos mountains are known as Mexican black bears. This is the only remaining area in Southwestern Texas that has enough high mountains covered with scrub oaks and pine for requirements of bears that of fers in addition complete protection.

A few reports have been received during the last few years by Dr. Ross A. Maxwell, superintendent of the Big Bend National Park from persons who have seen a bear in the park. It is thought that bear are not as numerous in the Chisos mountains as they were 20 years ago. There is a possibility that a few bears remained in the mountain along the east margin of the park when protection began for wildlife. This kind of black bear has not been seen since.

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

# Azoxystrobin is recommended for patch diseases in turf

Dear Neil, we started to notice these spots in the St. Augustine in late summer and they are still here. They began as yellowed grass. Many started out round. There is a slight dip along the line of the spots. The fence was installed about two months before the problem began. Our nursery gave me a couple of fungus products in October. I was told to treat it again recently.

Your lawn has brown patch, also called large patch by some university turf people. It affects only the leaf blades where they attach to the runners. You will first notice that they turn yellow, then brown a few days later. You normally won't see it until the first cool, wet weather of early fall (as you described). If you pull on those first yellowed blades, you'll find that they will pull loose quite easily from the runners so that you can see the decay caused by the fungus. If you treat

**GARDENER'S MAILBAG**  
by neil sperry

those first signs, you can stop the disease before it gets to this point. The good news is that it won't kill the grass. It does weaken it, but the roots and runners remain healthy. As your lawn greens up again this spring, it will recover and grow through this problem. However, the brown patch will return, so be prepared to treat it again this fall. Treating now will also be beneficial. The fungicide Azoxystrobin is often recommended for patch diseases in turf.

Dear Neil, attached is a photo of one of the larger branches we cut off one of our

madrone trees. A local gardener said it was due to carpenter ants. We have been in a severe drought. The first tree started sending good shoots out from the bottom, with the top badly damaged, so we cut that part off. We thought that would stop it. Now the second tree is also dying with the branches turning black. Should we be watering more? They told us the ants would be seeking water.

No photo was attached to your email, nor can I tell where you live and garden. Therefore, I'll have to write rather generically.

Carpenter ants are opportunists. They live in decaying, hollowed out parts of trees, for example where limbs have died, woodpecker holes, cracks from storm damage, etc. They do not feed on the tree's living wood. I guess you could call them secondary invaders. They do not kill trees.

If the drought has been really severe, you



can certainly water your madrones. Make sure the drainage is good and check the trunks closely for any signs of damage. Perhaps you can see what might have happened. Depending on where you are, the winter cold could also damage them. While they're native to southwestern parts of the state, that doesn't guarantee that they'll survive in colder regions. I had a friend years ago who lost several in the Dallas area, so he switched over to growing one or two in large patio pots.

Dear Neil, is there anything I can put on my cabbage plants as a preventive to avoid

cabbage loopers this spring?

Not that I know of. Watch for the little white butterflies that will be circling around your plants in numbers in a few weeks. They'll be laying the eggs that will hatch and develop into the hungry loopers. As soon as you see the first holes in the leaves apply Bacillus thuringiensis as the biological worm spray or dust. It's totally organic and it also happens to be the most effective control. The

loopers will stop feeding within a couple of hours. You can eat produce that has been protected as soon as the same or next day. Just wash it to clean it up and you'll be fine. You'll want to keep an eye on other Cole crops as well: broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cauliflower, and even rutabagas.

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

- ACROSS**
- 1 Abilene NBC TV affiliate
  - 5 this Ephron wrote "My Blue Heaven" starring Texas-born Steve Martin
  - 6 TX Vikki Carr Latin pop album: "Hombres" (1988)
  - 7 marries
  - 8 this Buechele was Rangers third baseman (1985-95) (init.)
  - 9 org. for Texas pro golfer, Scheffler
  - 12 Houston's: "Johnson Center"
  - 17 in Jones County on highway 6
  - 19 citizenship prove citizenship
  - 21 "\_\_\_ if I stood up" (old and brittle)
  - 22 cartographer
  - 23 Alvarez de Pineda see 22-across: it was \_\_\_ that first depicted Texas
  - 28 Lufkin FM radio speck, scintilla
  - 29 TXism: "better than a poke in the eye with \_\_\_ stick"
  - 31 unaccompanied music performances
  - 35 Daingerfield, TX newspaper (2 wds.)
  - 36 Johnson County Lake (2 wds.)
  - 42 "Texas, our Texas! So \_\_\_ so great!"
  - 44 noted Texas poet: \_\_\_ Shihab Nye

- 46 noted Texas fullback: Byron "\_\_\_"
  - 48 corrected for publication
  - 49 49ers QB who never beat the Cowboys in a NFC championship game (init.)
  - 50 suprise expression
  - 51 container to hold Texas bluebonnets
  - 52 Dallas KERA-FM net. they're "upon you" in Texas
  - 54 "\_\_\_ old cowhand..."
  - 56 Xmas drink: egg\_\_\_
  - 57 game antelope in Texas
  - 58 nat'l ID no.
- DOWN**
- 1 "what I \_\_\_ mind" (done forgot it)
  - 2 in Falls County on U.S. 77
  - 3 TX Jacob \_\_\_ flew 100 feet before the Wright Brothers
  - 4 Linden's County
  - 9 \_\_\_-a-boo
  - 10 what a mower creates (2 wds.)
  - 11 Garth hit: "\_\_\_ Me How I Know"
  - 12 hot tub
  - 13 Sunday before Easter (2 wds.)

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### SENIOR Spotlight



## BRITTANY MALTOS

**In what activities did you participate in high school?**  
As a freshman, I participated in volleyball, and now, as a senior, I have not done any sports. I am a band tech right now, and I am also a certified photographer, but right now, I am mainly focusing on work.

**What was your favorite moment in the last four years?**  
I think every day of these four years was my favorite because the best part about high school was my friends; the bonds that grew between me and my friends are something people will never understand. High school gave me the best opportunities to make friendships and build social skills.

**Who was your favorite teacher/coach, and why?**  
My favorite teacher is Ms. Reyna although Ms. Reyna never actually taught me as a student, she always had faith and never doubted me she stood by me and helped with any work I had she's the best if you can't find me in class, I'm definitely in her room.

**What are your plans after high school?**  
My plans after high school or to attend cosmetology school or take a gap year to build work skills.

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## Devotional Page

### Time for self-reflection

BY REV. KATY HUDAK  
St. James Episcopal Church-Alpine

It's that time of year again, what we Christians call Lent. It is a time for self-reflection, for wondering where we have done wrong to ourselves, to others, and to God. While this is a uniquely Christian season, other religions follow this example as well. Yom Kippur for those who are Jewish allows for a time of atonement and repentance for wrongdoing. Ramadan for those who are Muslim also has an emphasis on this aspect. These times of self-reflection hopefully lead us on a path to ask for forgiveness, a fresh start to correct our wrongdoings, and to rely on God to see us through to a new beginning, to see us through to growing into the people that God created us to be.

While this is essential for us to grow and become the people that God imagines for each and every one of us, this personal growth is also a springboard to act out our faith in the real world. There is a passage from the Christian Bible that says, "By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have

love for one another." (John 13:35) So, the question that I have is how do we show that love for one another? There are a lot of folks that not only today, but over the many long centuries since Jesus appeared on earth, that have wondered if that is really true, because it seems that we may not have done a very good job of it.

This Lent I would like to offer a challenge. This is a challenge to love one another as Jesus asks us to love. This is a challenge to show that love to all. We can ask ourselves; how do we welcome the stranger? How are we moved to show love to the hungry, the mourning, the poor? How do we love our enemy? How do we love those who have hurt us? How do we forgive? Believe you me, this is a tall order. It is not easy to love those who have hurt us, or to love our enemy, or to forgive. But perhaps, just perhaps, the one thing we can do each day is reflect on that verse from John 13:35: "By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another." Then we can ask ourselves how we will live that out each day.

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# WEST TEXAS ROUNDUP

## ABSTRACT AND TITLE



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# Chops and taters can't be beat for comfort food

### HASH BROWN AND PORK CHOP CASSEROLE

**INGREDIENTS**  
 Five pork chops (boneless preferably)  
 One 10.5 ounce can condensed cream of celery soup  
 On cup of sour cream  
 Half a cup of milk  
 One 2-pound bag of frozen hash brown potatoes  
 One cup of chopped onion  
 One cup of shredded Cheddar cheese

**DIRECTIONS**  
 Preheat oven to 375 degrees.  
 In a large skillet, cook pork chops over medium-high heat until brown, around 2-3 minutes per side. Transfer pork chops to a plate and set aside.  
 Combine condensed soup, sour cream, and milk in a large bowl. Mix well.  
 Add hash browns and onions to the bowl and mix well until onions and hash browns are coated.  
 Pour the mixture into a 13x9 baking dish and sprinkle with cheese.  
 Arrange pork chops on top.  
 Bake in a preheated oven until potatoes are cooked through and pork chops are tender, about 50-55 minutes.  
 Pork chops should be at least 145 degrees in the center before serving.

It's hard to beat a good pork chop. It's also pretty hard to beat hash browns, and when you combine these two, you have top-notch eating.

We're talking about a hash brown and pork chop casserole that will make ya wanna slap ya, mama! This is creamy and hearty comfort food at its best.

When purchasing your chops, make sure you buy the ones without bones. While bones inevitably add flavor to meat when cooked, this being a casserole makes bones in your meat more of a challenge.

The idea behind casseroles is to make your meal simple and easy. In other words, you want to pick up that pork chop with those creamy



### HEAD OVER MEALS

by kara gerbert

hash browns in one big scoop, be able to cut the meat with a fork, and not eat around a bone. Of course, one could be limited by what the local grocer had available, so bone-in chops aren't prohibited in this dish; it's just easier without them.

Speaking of simple and easy, this dish calls for frozen hash browns, making it super easy compared to peeling and



Hash Brown and Pork Chop Casserole

Courtesy photo

grating the two pounds of potatoes needed for this casserole. But, if you prefer the extra work, fresh potatoes are not a bad option.

By the time you mix in all those other yummy ingredients and bake this off for about an hour,

dinner or lunch, depending on the time, is ready to be served. The simplicity will make the cook happy and the deliciousness will make the family happy.

So, don't contemplate ordering that pizza or making that run to the

local burger joint. Truck yourself down to the local grocery store, grab these few simple ingredients, and surprise your family with a hearty, comforting, home-cooked meal they'll likely fight for seconds on.

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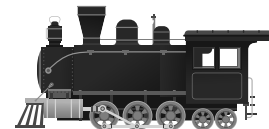
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## AMS track shined in Monahans



This group of AMS track stars performed exceptionally well in Monahans this past weekend at the Sandhills Relays. Members of both the 7th and 8th-grade boys' teams are John Ritchie, Cooper Roach, Matthias Prieto, Emerson Roach, Cesar Pompa, Roman Holguin, Jett Ryan, and Brody Warren.

*Courtesy photo*

## Golfers challenged in Andrews



AHS golfers David Baca and Ace Granado took on competitors from Lubbock, Midland, Odessa, and El Paso in one of the biggest tournaments in West Texas this past weekend. Baca shot 85/83 for the two-day tournament, and Ace shot 91/96, with Baca placing 64th and Granado placing 114th out of 144 players.

*Courtesy photo*

## High winds damage transformers



High winds above 30 mph on Tuesday had workers from AEP out and repairing blown transformers, leaving numerous Alpine customers without power during the day. Reports from law enforcement encouraged motorists to stay home due to low visibility in the area.

*Photo courtesy of Judy Stokes*

## Game, set, match



Zane Wash lobs a tennis ball to his opponent as the Fightin' Buck varsity tennis team competed in the Mustang Tournament in Fort Hancock last week.

*Courtesy photo*

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