

## Summit yields all-project assembly

BY KARA GERBERT  
Managing Editor

Earlier this year, local business owners and community members gathered for Alpine's first-ever West Texas Community Building Summit. This summit featured guest speaker Doug Griffiths who introduced his book centered on the ways in which residents can kill their communities. After the initial gathering on Friday evening, the next morning yielded group gatherings, individualized under the headings of economic development, design, organization, and promotion. The ideas generated from these "bucket breakouts" have thus far yielded five different projects already underway.

This second gathering will once again focus on the "bucket" topics, and the projects

See SUMMIT • 8

## INSIDE



FEATURED

See Sports 6-7

### Rainfall totals at Alpine-Casparis Airport

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



### Burn Ban ON

INDEX 14 pages

Opinions. . . . .P.4  
Sports. . . . .P.6-7  
Puzzle. . . . .P.9  
Classifieds. . . . .P.10

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



## Rare Mammoth tusk discovered at West Texas ranch

*A new find will be only the second Trans-Pecos mammoth artifact to be carbon-dated.*

Although he was searching for deer, a hunter at the O2 Ranch (a privately owned ranch in Brewster and Presidio counties) found something very different and a little puzzling.

Could it be a mammoth tusk? In West Texas?

"I was skeptical

when a deer hunter showed me a picture of what he thought was a fossil," says O2 Ranch Manager Will Juett. "I figured it was likely just an old stump, but imagined how great it would be if he was right."

Juett says his great working relationship with the Center

for Big Bend Studies (CBBS) at Sul Ross State University in Alpine spurred him to immediately reach out to CBBS Director Dr. Bryon Schroeder and CBBS Archaeologist Erika Blecha. The researchers contacted graduate student Hal-

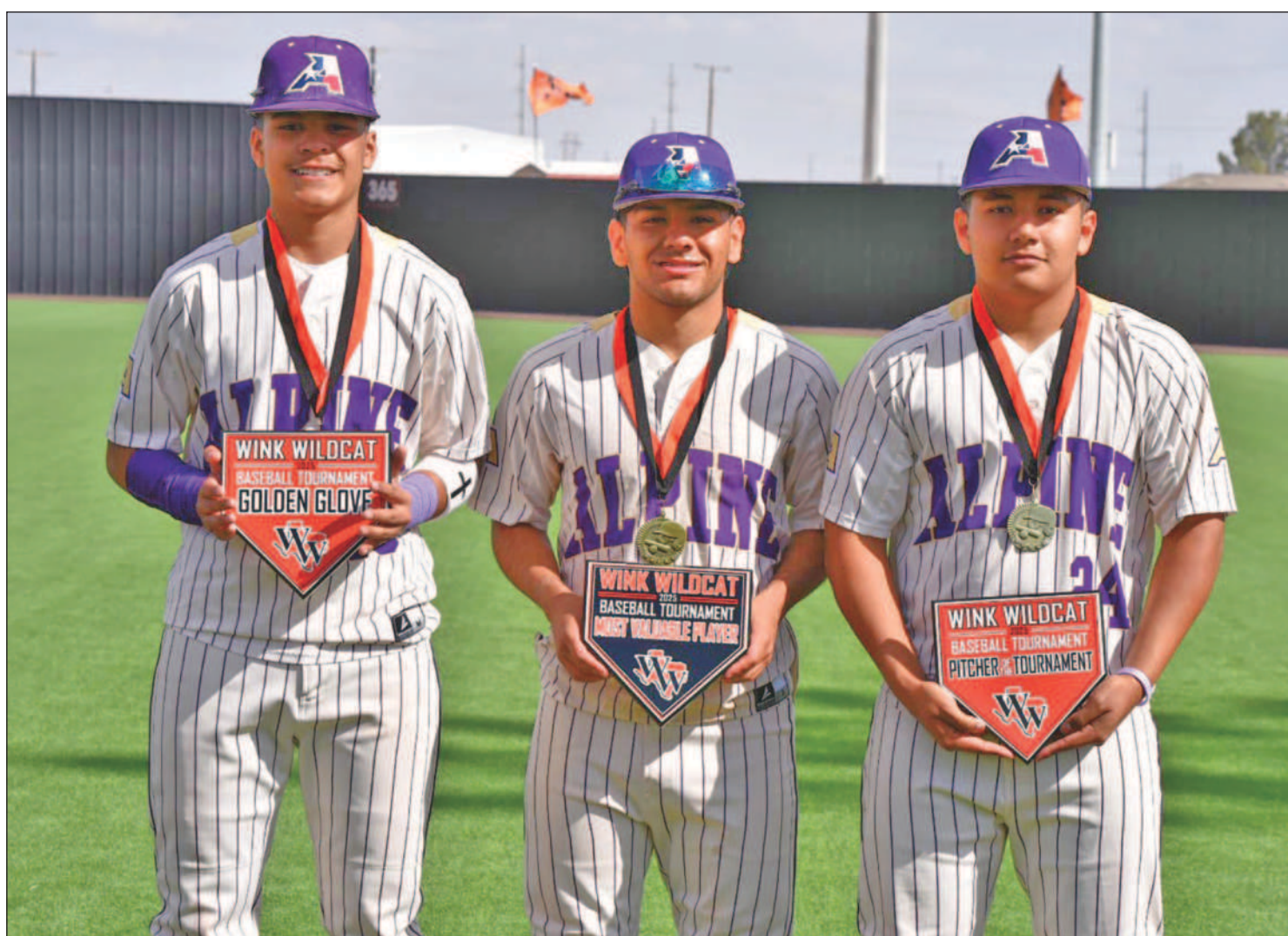
See MAMMOTH • 8



University of Kansas graduate student Haley Bjorklund and CBBS Archaeologist Erika Blecha work carefully to uncover a mammoth tusk recently discovered in West Texas.

Photo courtesy of Justin Garnett/CBBS

## Bucks undefeated in Wink



The Alpine Fightin' Bucks baseball team went undefeated in Wink last week, securing wins against Wink on Friday and Midland Texas Leadership Charter Academy. The tournament honored three outstanding players for Coach Adam Llanez' 100th win since becoming head coach. Iden Lujan earned MVP, Ezra Lujan earned the Golden Glove, and David Valenzuela was honored for the best Pitcher of the Tournament.

Photo by Noe Lujan

## Dark skies, tax ties, a new clinic on the rise for Brewster County

BY KERRY LAIRD

Contributor

Brewster County Commissioners Court met Tuesday, in the commissioners' courtroom. Brewster County Judge Greg Henington presided, and all commissioners were present except Precinct 4 Commissioner Mo Morrow. The meeting covered a range of topics, including a proposed subdivision, tax collection concerns, and the upcoming annual dump day events in Terlingua and Marathon.

Judge Henington opened the meeting with a warm greeting, setting a positive tone for the packed courtroom.

"Good morning, everybody," he said, glancing at the lengthy agenda before adding with a grin, "We've got a long agenda today. Let's see if we can get this done in 15 minutes."

His lighthearted remark drew chuckles from the audience, who filled nearly every seat in the courtroom at the beginning of the meeting.

During his opening comments, Judge Henington shared an update on the long-anticipated clinic serving the Terlingua and Study Butte communities.



Greg Henington, Brewster County Judge

"I'm real excited about the clinic we approved—it arrived on Sunday," he announced. He added that a soft opening is expected in early April, with a grand opening planned for May.

"Hopefully, we'll be opening the doors for service within the next week," he said.

One of the major discussions involved the preliminary plat application for the Ranches at Well Creek subdivision. Scott Beasley, who works in operations at the Lajitas Golf Resort, presented

plans for the 739-acre tract, which would be divided into lots of five acres or more.

While the development would have electricity, access to water remains a challenge. Beasley stated that they had explored solutions but found no viable options. As a result, water access would be left to individual property owners, similar to the situation in Terlingua Ranch.

"Water at the risk of each landowner," said Judge Henington, citing the legally required disclosure that would be applied to paperwork for land sales.

Precinct 1 Commissioner Jim Westermann

asked if property owners would have the option to drill for water. Beasley confirmed that they could and noted that a geologist had suggested that groundwater might be more accessible closer to the road. The preliminary plat hearing was informational, with final approval expected at a future meeting.

The court also discussed potential changes to the county's tax collection law firm. Judge Henington expressed dissatisfaction with the county's current firm, Linebarger Goggan Blair & Sampson, LLP, stating that they were not

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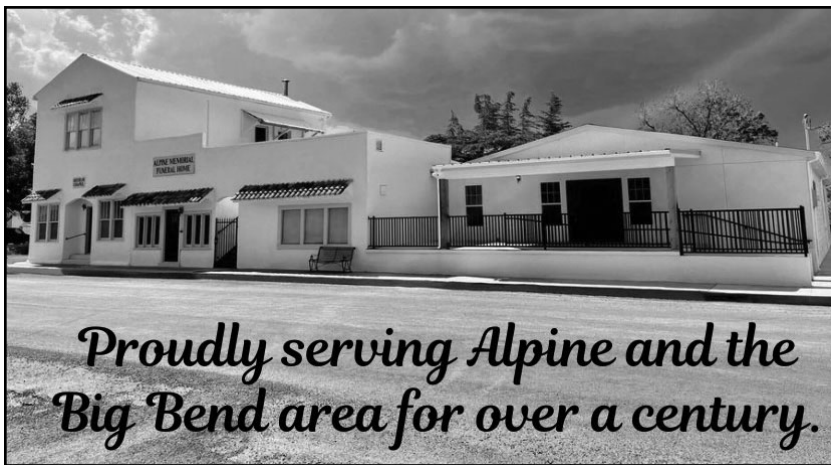
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## Gonzales leads charge to address key concerns in ag industry

Congressman Tony Gonzales (TX-23) led a bipartisan letter with 43 of his colleagues, including several U.S. Representatives seated on the House Committee of Agriculture and the House Committee on Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture, urging the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to expand eradication and containment efforts relating to the New World screwworm (NWS). The NWS poses a critical threat to our nation's livestock, farming, and wildlife industries. Without guardrails in place, an outbreak could in-

flict detrimental economic losses on the national economy.

"In November 2024, we first received reports of NWS detected in the Mexican state of Chiapas—the number of reported cases has surged from five to now at least 33 and has spread to the states of Campeche and Tabasco. This raises a critical question of how many cases are truly out there and whether we have mechanisms in place to ensure the safety of U.S. livestock and wildlife. Left unchecked,



**Tony Gonzales (R-TX23)**

an outbreak could cost livestock producers millions of dollars per year and inflict detrimental economic losses on the national economy," penned Congressman Tony Gonzales. "To address this growing concern across our livestock, farming, and wildlife industries, we urge the USDA to work with state, local, and relevant industry stakeholders to proactively address this emerging threat—including considering the feasibility of establish-

ing a sterile fly production facility in Texas or the Southwest."

"The New World Screwworm is a devastating pest that would cripple the United States livestock industry, and an infestation would cause significant losses to livestock and wildlife populations," said Texas Farm Bureau President Russell Boening. "Therefore, it's critical to be vigilant and provide resources to swiftly respond. Farmers and ranchers need assurance that their needs will be met since this pest has not been on the mainland United States in many decades. We thank Con-

gressman Tony Gonzales for leading a letter to highlight the need to be proactive to safeguard against this risk to animal health."

"As the threat of the New World screwworm inches closer to our southern border, Texas & Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association continues to work with our federal and state governments about possible solutions, with an emphasis on a U.S. sterile fly facility. Congressman Gonzales has been instrumental in raising awareness and garnering support for a proactive approach in Washington,

D.C. Texas & Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association would like to thank Congressman Gonzales and those who signed on to his letter for keeping this issue in the forefront of discussions in our nation's capitol. We look forward to continuing our work with federal, state, and industry partners to find a viable solution to protect the cornerstone of U.S. agriculture, American beef," said Carl Ray Polk Jr., Texas & Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association President.

## Animal habitats at AES



First graders in Mrs. Galindo's class worked on creating animal habitats last week as part of their study on animal adaptations. Students created deserts, rainforests, and everything in between as they learned how animals survive and thrive in their different environments.

Courtesy photo

## FCBB continues strides to better serve the area



Family Crisis Center of the Big Bend Executive Director Letty Carrillo, Transportation Director Angelica Gonzalez, and Transportation Consultant Sean Spell were on hand in McAllen this past weekend at the Texas Transit Association conference to learn ways to better serve the area's TRAX transportation clients.

Photo courtesy of Family Crisis Center



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## Marathon Independent School District Sale of Used School Bus

Marathon ISD will be accepting sealed bid for the sale of a 2006 Blue Bird School Bus. All sales are final, with the seller accepting no liability for the condition of the items purchased. Payments must be in the form of cash, money order, or cashier's check. Once notification is made of an accepted bid, payment must be made and item picked with 14 days of notification of award of bid. Note: State law requires purchasers of vehicles to obtain a new title within 30 calendar days of purchase, or face financial penalties. Vehicle may be viewed Marathon ISD High School at 109 N 5th St, Marathon TX, 79842. Please reach out to Pedro Martinez at 432-244-4032 for more information

Bids must be submitted in a sealed envelope by March 26, 2025 at 2pm. Please submit sealed bids to the address below:

Marathon Independent School District  
Marcus Celaya, Business Manager  
PO Box 416  
Marathon, Texas 79842

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

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## Texas Capital Highlights

### House proposes \$7.5 billion in new school funding

Critics say a House bill proposing \$7.5 billion in new funding for public education doesn't go far enough. The Dallas Morning News reported. House Bill 2 would raise the per-student allotment by \$220, to \$6,360 a year. It would also invest \$750 million in teacher pay and \$450 million in teacher training.

The bill by Rep. Brad Buckley, R-Salado, would increase the amount of allotment used to raise salaries for non-administrative staff from the current 30% to 40%. Some testifying against the bill said the proposed raises for teachers is inadequate.

"The pay teachers receive demonstrates the level of respect afforded to our children," said Megan Holden, a 10th-grade English teacher at an Austin-area high school. "They are getting the message that Texas doesn't value them or their future."

The basic allotment would need to increase by \$1,300 to keep up with inflation since 2019, according to The News. That's the last time the allotment was increased.

The Texas Senate has already passed its version of a public education bill: a measure that would give \$10,000 raises to teachers with at least five years working in districts with fewer than 5,000 students, with teachers in larger districts getting \$5,500 raises.

The average teacher in Texas made \$62,500 last year, according to the Texas Education Agency, up from \$54,000 in 2019. According to the federal Consumer Price Index, cumulative inflation over that period is about 20%, meaning teacher salaries have not quite kept up with inflation.

### State workers must return in person to offices

Gov. Greg Abbott has directed heads of state agencies to phase out remote work "as soon as practicable," the Texas Standard reported. That follows a similar mandate for federal workers issued by President Trump last week.

"Texans expect their

public servants to be present and engaged in the work on their behalf," Andrew Mahaleris, the governor's press secretary, said in a statement. "With remote federal workers returning to the office where possible, it's important that state agencies ensure they do the same."

No written policy has been given to department heads, but they were directed to transition to in-person work "as soon as practicable."

### Risk of wildfires increasing; feds provide funding

Wildfire season is underway in the state with burn bans in place in 111 counties, according to the Texas A&M Forest Service. The Welder Complex fire in Sinton was the only active fire as of Sunday. It had burned 803 acres and was 95% contained.

Abbott's office announced last week that the Federal Emergency Management Agency has approved the state's request for federal assistance for the Welder Fire in San Patricio County and the Duke Fire in Bexar County. The approval from FEMA makes the state eligible to be reimbursed for 75% of the costs associated with fighting the two fires.

On a single day last week, state emergency responders battled 41 new wildfires that burned more than 4,400 acres.

### Measles cases in South Plains near 200

The number of measles cases reported in the South Plains region of the state reached 198 as of last Friday, according to the Texas Department of State Health Services. Twenty-three people have been hospitalized, and one unvaccinated school-aged child has died.

More than two-thirds of the cases have been in Gaines County, southwest of Lubbock. An unvaccinated New Mexico adult in Lea County, just over the border from Gaines County, died last week.

Measles is highly contagious, and DSHS has said additional cases are likely to occur "in the outbreak area and the surrounding areas."

## AESB talks training, new software

BY KARA GERBERT  
Managing Editor

The Alpine Emergency Services Board held its regular meeting on Thursday, March 6, at 5:30 p.m. in the Alpine Volunteer Fire Department (AVFD) meeting room. All members were present, with Aaron Rodriguez attending virtually. Four AVFD members were also present: Ethan Sullivan, Larry Rodriguez, Alex Montemayor, and Zach Davis.

After calling the meeting to order, chairman Rusty Moore requested a motion to approve the last meeting's minutes. Mark Rose made the motion to approve with a second from Albert Lujan. The motion passed.

The next item of business was a report from Stacy Wood on the board finances. Wood reported that she and Carole Causey were still working on completing the QuickBooks entries to produce the requested P and L reports. "We are probably two days away from having those reports available. As soon as we are where we can run them, I will upload

them to the portal for everyone," said Wood.

She told the board that she and Causey were also working on reconciling last year's account so that the board would have a complete financial record of being in business for 12 months. It was also noted that she would be applying for the Yarborough grant again this year.

The next item of business was a report from AVFD Chief James Etchison. Etchison reported to the board about a couple of calls the department received, one of which involved a fuel spill at Sul Ross and a dumpster fire. "The fuel spill looked like the fuel line on the vehicle was rotted or cut. We hit this with some F-500 retardant, which immediately extinguished the fire," noted Etchison. A member of the Alpine Police Department reported the dumpster fire. The officer used his fire extinguisher to put out the flames, and the fire was contained by the time the



Rusty Moore, AESB Chairman

AVFD arrived on the scene. Firefighters continued mopping up the location.

Etchison also reported on recent training, such as the Mile High training in Fort Davis, SBCA pack training with the new packs, and Union Pacific Railroad training given by Ray Vasquez from UPRR out of El Paso.

"The railroad training was beneficial because he taught us how to shut off the engines if they catch fire. This will help with containment and putting the fires out a great deal. Vasquez will also be returning for another training in May," said Etchison.

The board then heard from Daniel Adam from Alpine Software via Zoom. Etchison brought this to the board as a proposal to purchase administrative software for the department. Adam presented how the company's software works with fire departments and their many needs. His company works strictly with fire departments

across the country, supplying a way for departments to track inventory, personnel, maintenance schedules, and equipment replacement and allowing departments to complete reports that go directly to state and federal agencies they are required to complete.

The cost for a 12-month contract for this software is \$3,500. After a brief discussion, Rose motioned for Chief Etchison to enter into an agreement with Alpine Software for up to \$3,500, with a second from Carla Spencer. The motion passed unanimously.

Finally, Etchison told the board that Big Bend Regional Medical Center had challenged the department to a softball game. He suggested they do some fundraising or ask for donations to help cover the cost of the t-shirts and any equipment. The game is scheduled for March 22.

The next Alpine Emergency Services Board meeting is scheduled for April 7 at 5:30 p.m.

## Native Plant Society to host Carder Nastri

BY KARA GERBERT  
Managing Editor

The Big Bend Chapter of the Native Plant Society will hold its monthly meeting on Saturday, March 15, at 1 p.m. in the AEP room of the Alpine Public Library.

This month's guest speaker is Carder Nastri, who will present a program titled "Success with Succulents."

Nastri will cover the basics of succulent care utilizing a slide show as well as live demonstrations. "West Texas has a fabulous climate for xeric plants, and with the right knowledge, anyone can grow a myriad of species here," says Nastri.

Nastri will also provide watering regimens and soil recipes ideal for xeric plant species. His program will cover the four main pillars of care for all cactus and succulents: water, soil, sun, and propagation. The presentation will also cover general tips for all plants and some species-specific care for commonly kept plants, and Nastri will

have products available for purchase for the care of succulents.

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## Area LEOS participate in memorial run



Members of the Alpine Police Department, Brewster County Sheriff's Office, Texas Department of Public Safety, U.S. Marshal Service, Department of Homeland Security, and the U.S. Border Patrol took part in the Fallen Heroes Honor Run last Friday morning. This 9th annual event is sponsored by the U.S. Marshals Service, Alpine office, and honors officers who were lost in the line of duty.

Photo courtesy of Alpine Police Department

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# Opinions

## ONLINE POLL

### THIS WEEK'S QUESTION

Now the Avalanche asks:

**What's your favorite spring break activity?**

- Relaxing
- Sightseeing
- Adventure Sports
- Shopping

Dining Experiences

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

### RESULTS

### WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE SPRING BREAK ACTIVITY?

#### RESULTS

##### RELAXING



##### ADVENTURE SPORTS



##### SHOPPING



##### DINING EXPERIENCES



## LETTERS

Send us your letters.

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

Letters should be no more than 300 words.

Letters become the property of the Alpine Avalanche and may be edited prior to publication for spelling and grammatical errors, clarity and length. Ad hominem attacks will not be accepted. Letters that include profanity or libel will not be printed.

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

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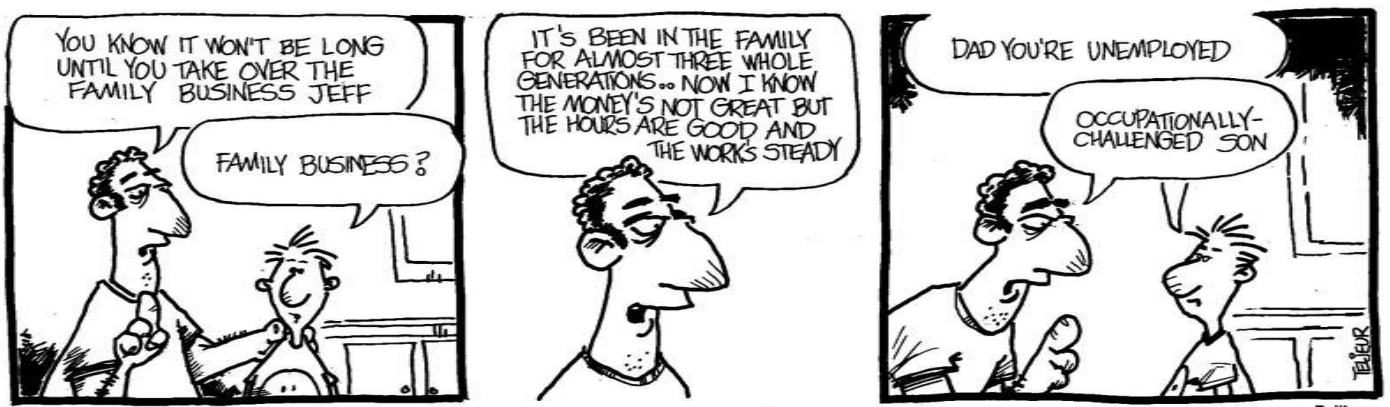
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# BOONIEVILLE



## SRSU alumni reinforce excellence for generations

At Sul Ross State University, our alumni are the backbone of our institution's past, present, and future. As president, I have the privilege of witnessing the incredible impact our graduates have on our campus community and beyond. Their contributions extend far beyond their time as students, shaping the legacy of our university and reinforcing the values that make Sul Ross a unique and cherished institution.

One of the most critical roles our alumni play is serving as ambassadors of Sul Ross. Whether in the workforce, in academia, or within their communities, our graduates represent the excellence and determination that define our university. They carry forward the traditions and spirit of Sul Ross, inspiring future generations to pursue higher education and professional success. Their achievements, both personal and professional, speak volumes about the quality of education and experiences provided here.

Alumni also serve as vi-

tal mentors and role models for our current students. Many of our students come from rural backgrounds or are first-generation college students, and the encouragement and wisdom from alumni who have successfully navigated similar paths can be transformative. These connections help our students see tangible examples of success and perseverance, fostering a sense of confidence in their own abilities.

Additionally, our alumni are instrumental in securing financial support for the university. Contributions from graduates help fund scholarships, research initiatives, and campus improvements that directly benefit current and future students. The generosity of our alumni allows us to continue offering high-quality education while enhancing the resources available to our students. Whether through endowments, fundraising events, or personal



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

donations, alumni support ensures that Sul Ross remains a vibrant institution dedicated to academic excellence and student success.

Beyond financial support, alumni engagement in university events and initiatives strengthens the Sul Ross community. Whether they return for homecoming, participate in career fairs, or volunteer for university-sponsored programs, their involvement fosters pride and unity. Our alumni network is a powerful force that connects graduates across generations, ensuring that the Sul Ross spirit remains alive no matter where life takes them.

Moreover, our alumni play an essential role in advocating for Sul Ross State University at the state and national levels. Their voices help to promote the importance of higher education and secure funding for programs that benefit students

and faculty alike. By championing the university's mission, alumni help shape policies that directly impact the future of Sul Ross and its ability to serve as a beacon of opportunity for students from diverse backgrounds.

Each year, we celebrate the alumni who have distinguished themselves since leaving our campus to pursue their lives and careers, and we're excited to host them on Saturday, March 29. We will welcome back Frederick Carter, Dr. Malia Ann Perez, Glenn Losoya, Josie Sanchez Contreras, Francis Jones, Caleb Thomasson, Shane Zimmerman, Wade Zimmerman, and Sally Oglesby, and we will honor Wade Smith posthumously.

The Hall of Honor induction ceremony is one my favorite events and the public is welcome to attend. Get your tickets and more information at [www.sulross.edu/alumni/lobo-night](http://www.sulross.edu/alumni/lobo-night).

## Lots of memories to remember

*"Take care of all of your memories, For you cannot relive them."*

— Song lyrics by Bob Dylan and The Band

Memories. I write about them often because, at this age, I have a lot of memories to keep up with.

Most amazing are moments remembered when I forget everything else. My phone. My keys. My checkbook.

It will come to me in a minute. But, while we're waiting, let me share my first-grade school memories. Recalled with a good friend not long ago. By chance or destiny, we arrived in Mount Pleasant, Texas, at about the same time, coming from opposite directions.

We talked the other day about what we remembered as new South Ward Elementary students. And we marveled even more at what we remembered about first grade.

My first-grade year was 1954 at Crockett. The small white frame structure my parents rented sat in the middle of an empty field next to the only nearby residence. Two houses not far from downtown with a long, shared dirt driveway, surrounded by woods on three sides.

We didn't have a television, nor a telephone. What we did have was the sound of rain falling on a tin roof,

the smell of Mom's morning glories covering the trellis on the front porch, and late-night crackers and milk with Dad. It was his favorite bedtime snack.

A green 1950 Studebaker was transportation for our one-car family until the fateful Sunday afternoon when Dad and the neighbor, Mr. Hooks, went fishing. Old timbers on a country bridge failed, sending them off into a dry creek bed below.

The crumpled car and my father in bandages are scary memories. He and Mr. Hooks were banged up and bruised, but otherwise, all right.

My youngest sister, Sylvia, was born in Crockett. I remember Dad showing off our newborn sibling at the hospital's back door, where middle sister Leslie and I waited in the car. Mom, in a bathrobe, stood behind Dad, both beaming with smiles.

My father worked for the old five-and-ten-cent store chain Perry Brothers. The small wooden crates in which china dishes were received at the store served many purposes, from garage storage to creative kid's activities. One pinnacle of playtime was the day I launched one in the creek behind our house to see if it would float.



**LEON ALDRIDGE**  
Guest Columnist

It did. Basking in that delightful discovery, I then talked Leslie into boarding it to see if it would still float.

It didn't. Thank goodness the creek was

shallow.

The bungled boating caper, plus the time I talked Leslie into jumping off the roof, certain that a bed sheet was a good parachute, probably accounts for less-than-good memories of parental punishment. Mom seldom administered any, deferring that chore to Dad. But her warnings were stern enough. "You just wait until your father gets home!"

Dad was good to take me to town following his lunch break on summertime Saturdays. Clutching a quarter and a dime, I walked to the nearby theater where the two coins were ample funding for a double-feature matinee plus popcorn and a Coke.

The last of 1954 summer movies was the beginning of first grade in the basement of an old brick school building. The quintessential teacher, whose name I don't remember, wore gray hair up in a bun and lace-up, high-heeled shoes. We wrote 1+1=2 on black chalkboards, over which hung examples of cursive writing and the obligatory portrait of George

Washington—the unfinished one that renders the appearance of clouds at the bottom.

First grade was my first and last playground fight. It went down near the front steps of the old schoolhouse. I don't remember what it was about or who won it.

I do remember thinking that I didn't particularly enjoy it and made a mental note to never get into another exchange of fisticuffs if I could help it.

First-grade classes moved into new classrooms after the Christmas break, from the basement into the modern mid-1950s structure with lots of glass and open spaces. That's where we stood in line for the Salk polio vaccine. It's also where a spring tornado turned the sky black, dark as night, as we huddled behind the new green chalkboards.

We left Crockett with our memories in 1955, arriving in Seymour about the same time Elvis did for an appearance at the Seymour High School gymnasium.

But that's a different memory for a different day.

For now, I'm still trying to remember where I laid my keys five minutes ago.

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

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Thank You

A silent auction was held last Saturday at The Ritchey to raise funds for the Patty Manning Pollinator Garden that will be planted at the Alpine Public Library. Many thanks go to the generous donors and

participants who supported the garden with their purchases. It was a great success, which would not have happened without the generosity of the those who attended. Many thanks also go to The Ritchey and their staff; Rio Grande Joint Venture

for the use of their conference room to organize the silent auction, the Swifts who provided music for the event, and Tom Kennedy and the crew who worked on this great event! It could not have happened without your support.

We have raised 55% of the funds needed for the garden. Thank you everyone for your support of the garden.

Cathy Wright, Alpine

See MORE LETTERS 5



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

**March 21 Holy Angels Cemetery Fundraiser,** 5 p.m. for pick up or delivery, red enchilada

plate with rice, beans, and dessert for \$12. Call 432-244-9805 to place an order.

**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.

**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](http://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 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 would you feel about living in a neighborhood with a bar that stays open until 2 a.m.?



**Albert Smith:**  
 If it's in a neighborhood, it shouldn't be there. It should be in a commercial area.



**Art Fitzgerald:**  
 I'm from Las Vegas, buddy. 24/7, 365 days a year. Doesn't bother me!



**Jubal Lane:**  
 The loud music and people running around would be troublesome, but you're also providing a location that would allow the younger generation who lives in the neighborhood a safe place so that they wouldn't have to drive.



**Lauren Hoyt:**  
 I wouldn't want to live next to a bar at all, but with that said, I also wouldn't mind avoiding DWIs. As long as it wasn't a biker bar.



**Stacey Sylvester:**  
 Bars shouldn't be in residential areas. Is that what you guys do here in Alpine?

## AES holds ribbon cutting



Alpine Elementary School held a ribbon cutting on Monday morning to celebrate the installation of the new playground equipment. On hand for the ceremony were the Alpine Ambassadors as well as members of the AES and AISD staff.

Courtesy photo

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR • FROM 4

### Thank You

In this time of profound grief and hardship, the family of Ruben D. Melgoza would like to thank everyone.

We appreciate your prayers, care, company, phone calls, and meals.

A special thanks to Chief Darrell Losoya, APD, Sheriff Ronny Dodson, BCSO, SRSUPD,

Kate and Jack Steiner, TX-DPS, Odessa PD Honor Guards, Tom Hyatt, Rene Ybarra, Chuck Wilson, Rick Ruiz, Kris Munoz, Our Lady of Peace Catholic Church and Alpine Memorial Funeral Home.

The amount of gratitude we genuinely feel for your support and thoughtfulness is beyond words.

With sincere gratitude,  
 The Melgoza Family

## Restaurant Guide

\$6 a week gets you a spot in our restaurant guide  
[www.alpineavalanche.com](http://www.alpineavalanche.com)

### REATA RESTAURANT

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

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

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

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## PET OF THE WEEK

Meet Binx!

Binx came into the shelter in mid-August with his seven siblings, including Draco, our featured Pet, last week. They were surrendered to the shelter as part of a neglect case. They did not have optimum living conditions or socialization, so the litter was shy when they arrived.

Binx loves other dogs, likes to rough and tumble in playgroups, and has learned how to walk on a leash. He shows no interest in cats and would likely do well in a household with kitties. He is treat-motivated and, therefore, easy to train and wants to please. He has sweet, soulful eyes, a cute little underbite, and beautiful brindle markings.

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 guests, such as Texas Twisted Treats Fun-

nel 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.

The 588 Educational Cooperative  
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### DESTRUCTION OF SPECIAL EDUCATION RECORDS

In accordance with applicable state and federal regulations, the 588 Educational Cooperative does hereby notify you of its intent to destroy student special education records. All special education records, prior to **July 1, 2018**, will be destroyed. The 588 Educational Cooperative will destroy special education records for the following school districts:

- Alpine Independent School District
- Balmorhea Independent School District
- Culberson County-Allamore Independent School District
- Fort Davis Independent School District
- Marathon Independent School District
- Marfa Independent School District
- Presidio Independent School District
- Terlingua Common School District
- Terrell County Independent School District
- San Vicente Independent School District
- Sierra Blanca Independent School District
- Valentine Independent School District

If you would like to be provided with a copy of the records to be destroyed, please contact the 588 Educational Cooperative by telephone at 432-837-3315, by fax at 432-837-3573, or via mail at 704 W. Sul Ross Ave, Alpine, Texas, 79830.

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# Sports

## No errors, no mercy: Bucks blaze past the competition with power at the plate

BY KERRY LAIRD  
Sports Editor

The Fightin' Bucks dominated the competition over the weekend, putting together four commanding victories to improve their record to 8-4. Alpine showed just how dangerous they can be when firing on all cylinders with explosive innings, clutch hitting, and dominant pitching performances.

Whether it was capitalizing on mistakes, working deep counts, or executing on the base paths, the Bucks played with energy and confidence, setting themselves up for a strong push heading into the next stretch of the season.

Alpine started the weekend with a 13-1 rout of TLCA Midland on Friday, fueled by a seven-run second inning that put the game out of reach early. The Bucks strung together hit after hit, with Kelton Tarrant, Iden Lujan, Peyton Tays, A.J. Llanez, and Devon Rojo all driving in runs.

Alpine continued to pour it on, adding five more runs in the fourth with a triple from Llanez, a double from Alec Ramos, and a single from Tarrant. The Bucks showed patience at the plate and aggression on the bases, keeping TLCA's defense on its heels all game.

Ramos delivered a stellar performance on the mound, allowing just one

hit and striking out eight over three and a third innings. Though he issued four walks, he worked out of jams and kept TLCA from generating any offense.

Behind him, the Bucks' defense was sharp, playing error-free baseball while swiping four bases to apply extra pressure. Lujan was locked in at the plate, going 3-for-3, while Llanez drove in three runs. Every player in the lineup contributed, proving that Alpine's offensive depth is one of its biggest strengths.

Later that evening, the Bucks stayed hot with a 10-1 win over Wink, led by freshman Ryli Vasquez, who drove in four runs. Vasquez delivered two clutch singles in the fourth and fifth innings, showing poise beyond his years.

The Bucks broke the game open in the fourth, scoring five runs off key hits from Valenzuela, Vasquez, and Tays. Alpine kept the pressure on in the fifth, with Tays doubling in two runs and Josh Solis adding a sacrifice fly.

Valenzuela was in control on the mound, tossing four scoreless innings while allowing just three hits. He struck out five and worked around four walks before turning the game over to Rojo, who finished the job in relief.

The Bucks' defense was once again flawless, playing error-free baseball for the second straight game. Vasquez and Tays each

recorded multiple hits, and Alpine continued to make the most of every opportunity, turning small mistakes into big scoring chances.

On Saturday, Alpine took on Presidio, where sophomore Josh Solis delivered a masterful performance on the mound. The right-hander struck out 10 over five innings, allowing just one hit in the Bucks' 8-1 victory.

Solis worked quickly and efficiently, keeping hitters off balance with a potent mix of pitches. Presidio managed to plate a run in the first inning, but Alpine responded immediately, tying the game when Lujan stole home in the third.

The Bucks took over in the fourth, erupting for five runs to put the game out of reach. Lujan doubled to drive in two, Solis lifted a sacrifice fly, and Llanez added a two-run single. While the bats were working, Alpine also showed incredible patience at the plate, drawing 14 walks. Ramos led the team with three.

The Bucks ran wild on the bases, stealing 15 bags and keeping Presidio's defense on edge the entire game.

Alpine closed out the weekend with a 17-2 blowout win over Seagraves, powered by a 10-run fourth inning that saw the Bucks send batter after batter to the plate.

Vasquez, Tays, and Valenzuela worked deep counts to draw bases-



The Alpine Fightin' Bucks baseball team proudly displays their well-earned hardware after sweeping the competition in Wink over the weekend.

Photo courtesy of Noe Lujan

loaded walks. At the same time, Solis delivered the highlight of the game—a towering two-run homer to center field that showed up on a radar over Dallas the next day.

The Bucks struck early with a three-run first inning and never let up, scoring in every frame. Tays led the charge with three RBIs, while Rojo and Llanez each tallied three hits. Vasquez showed tremendous patience at the plate, drawing four walks to help extend innings.

As for pitching, Llanez got the start and delivered a strong outing, allowing two runs (one earned) over four innings while striking out three. The Bucks' defense remained rock solid, making all the routine plays and turning in another error-free performance.

With a successful tournament in the books,

Alpine now shifts its focus to the home stretch of non-district play. The Bucks returned to Koker-not Field on Tuesday, March 11, for a much-anticipated matchup against Monahans whom they de-

feated 7 to 1.

Then, on Friday night, Alpine will take on McCamey at home at 7 p.m. as they look to keep their momentum rolling in front of their home crowd.

## Lady Bucks keep bringing home hardware

BY KARA GERBERT  
Managing Editor

The Alpine Lady Bucks continue topping the podium or at least bringing home hardware from recent track and field competitions. They traveled to Wink for the Wildcat Relays last Thursday with a full team, with the varsity taking second overall, just 10 points behind their hosts, while the JV team placed fourth and brought home several medals.

Exemplifying the Buck spirit and tenacity was junior Emy Hernandez. Hernandez, against a strong headwind, with a broken hand and no block start, ran a personal record time in the 400m race of 59.81. She was also a powerful anchor for the 4x400 relay team, and the Lady Bucks were able to secure three of the top six spots, with Colette Fowlkes and Nevaeh Carrasco placing 4th and 5th in the 400m.

Hurdlers for both the varsity and JV teams took

the podium in both the 100m and 300m races. Naida Morris and Taryn Hardin placed first and second, respectively in the 300m hurdles, with Morris also earning a third-place finish in the 100m hurdles.

Jianna Martinez and Rose De Guia brought home several medals for the day, with freshman Martinez placing 2nd in both the 100m and 300m hurdles and De Guia earning a third-place finish in the 100m race.

Alpine's sprinters and relay team members performed well, also. Senior Danica Mulholland won the varsity 200m race, and she placed second in the 100m. Sophomore Kylie Maroney earned a fourth-place finish in the 200m, and both girls ran well in the 4x400 relay. JV sprinter Mia Jimenez took first place in the 100m.

In the longer races, Hope Dominguez earned a 2nd-place finish in the 1600m varsity girls race

and had a great showing in the 4x400m and 4x100m relays. On the JV team, Alyssa Ramos placed second in the 800m.

In the relays, both varsity and JV placed first and third, respectively, in the 4x100m. The varsity team included Maroney, Mulholland, Morrissey, and Dominguez. The girls beat the second-place team by 20 meters. The varsity 4x400m relay of Fowlkes, Hardin, Dominguez, and Hernandez placed second.

For the field events, JV long jumper Mia Jimenez won the event with a personal record jump of 14'4". The varsity team earned first place in the triple jump, with Carrasco leading the herd. She also placed fourth in the long jump, followed by Maroney in fifth place. Ailea Fierro earned a fourth-place finish in the shot put with her longest throw of the season.

### ATHLETE OF THE WEEK

**EVELYN SMITH**

She placed 5th in Iraan tournament help team win 2nd place, and placed 6th in Baird tournament

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## Lady Bucks' offensive surge powers them to 2-1 week

BY KERRY LAIRD  
Sports Editor

After a weather-induced break, the Alpine Lady Bucks softball team returned to action with a hot offensive streak, posting a 2-1 record across three games. They faced off against Pecos High School, Big Spring High School, and Odessa High School, racking up an impressive 29 runs in the process.

On Wednesday, March 5, the Lady Bucks traveled to Pecos for a non-district game. The team came out strong, scoring two runs in the first inning and three in the third to establish a 5-0 lead.

Pecos started chipping away at the deficit, adding a run in the

fourth and another in the fifth. Alpine responded in the top of the sixth, tacking on three runs to take an 8-2 lead. But Pecos wasn't done yet.

The Eagles mounted a rally in the bottom of the sixth, scoring three runs to make it 8-5. The Lady Bucks couldn't quite close out the game in the bottom of the seventh, allowing Pecos to tie the game at 8-8.

In the top of the eighth inning, Alpine scored a go-ahead run, ultimately winning 9-8 in extra innings. The Lady Bucks' offense was on point, collecting 12 hits over the course of the game.

On Friday, March 7, the Lady Bucks hosted Big Spring for their district opener in Alpine. The game

quickly turned into a blowout, as Alpine put up a six-run fourth inning and played solid defense with only one error.

Junior pitcher Kody Hawkins was absolutely dominant, tossing five innings and striking out 11 batters while allowing just two hits and four walks.

Hawkins also showed her prowess at the plate, going 2-for-2 with a home run and four RBIs. By the time the fifth inning ended with Alpine holding a 12-2 lead, Big Spring had seen enough, and the game was called early due to the mercy rule.

On Saturday, March 8, Alpine faced a much tougher challenge with the Odessa Lady Bronchos coming to town. Odessa took an

early lead, going up 7-1 by the second inning, capitalizing on a few defensive miscues and some timely hitting.

However, the Lady Bucks weren't about to roll over. They fought back in the fourth and fifth innings, scoring six runs to tie the game at 7-7. But Odessa responded with a go-ahead run in the sixth inning, followed by a three-run seventh, ultimately securing an 11-8 victory.

The Lady Bucks' offensive firepower was evident throughout the week, and their 29-run total proves their ability to put up numbers. Pitcher Kody Hawkins was the standout star, dominating both on the mound and at the plate.

The Lady Bucks will face An-



Zariah Galvan plays sentinel at home plate for the Lady Bucks in a recent game.

Courtesy photo

thony High School on the road tomorrow, followed by a matchup against Midland Christian on Saturday, March 15, for non-district games. They will return to district play at home to take on Presidio on Tuesday, March 18, though the starting time for that game has not yet been announced.

## State Bound



Kody Hawkins and Hope Dominguez will compete in Edinburgh today at the State Powerlifting competition. Hawkins placed first at Regionals in her weight class and Dominguez placed second in her weight class, advancing these two Lady Bucks to the final round of competition.

Courtesy photo

### AHS Golf Schedule

#### Boys Golf

- Mar. 17 Alpine
- Mar. 24 District V and JV Fort Stockton
- Mar. 31 District V and JV Fort Stockton
- April 16-17 Regionals Diamondback-Abilene
- May 5-6 STATE Shadow Glen Golf Club-Austin

#### Girls Golf

- Mar. 18 Alpine
- Mar. 24 District V and JV Fort Stockton
- Mar. 31 District V and JV Fort Stockton
- April 14-15 Regionals Shady Oaks-Baird
- April 28-29 STATE Gray Rock - Austin

### Lady Bucks Softball Schedule

Date	Location	Varsity
Mar. 14	Anthony	5 p.m.
Mar. 15	Midland Christian	12 p.m.
Mar. 18	Presidio*	5 p.m.
Mar. 21	Colorado City	5 p.m.
Mar. 25	Tornillo*	5 p.m.
Mar. 28	Kermit*	5 p.m.
Mar. 31	Anthony*	5 p.m.
April 4	Presidio*	5 p.m.
April 11	Tornillo*	5 p.m.
April 17	Kermit*	5 p.m.
April 24-26	Bi-District	TBA
May 1-3	Area	TBA
May 8-10	Regional Semi-Final	TBA
May 15-17	Regional Final	TBA
May 22-24	State Semi-Final	TBA
May 29-31	State Tournament	TBA

\*District Play

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## Golfers travel West Texas

BY KARA GERBERT  
Managing Editor

The Alpine Fightin' Buck varsity and JV golf teams have been on the road to Iraan, Pecos, Baird, Andrews, and Marfa recently, hitting the links and facing some tough competition.

On February 24, the varsity boys and girls' teams traveled to Iraan where the boys earned a fourth-place overall finish. Contributing to this finish was Riley Killingsworth who shot a 94, Iden Lujan with a 98, AJ Llanez with a 99, and Levi Garcia shot a 102.

The girls' team earned a second-place finish with a total team score of 400, and Evelyn Smith earned a fourth-place individual finish.

The JV squad traveled to Pecos last Wednesday, where they also finished in fourth place. Alice Saunders was the lone medalist, finishing in sixth.

The dynamic duo of Ace Granado and Da-

vid Baca traveled to Andrews for one of the largest tournaments in West Texas. Baca finished in 64th while Granado finished in the 114th spot out of a group of 144 players from across West Texas.

The varsity girls traveled to Baird on Monday, where they earned an overall 4th-place finish, with Smith earning a sixth-place spot. Head Coach Marco Gomez commented, "This was a good experience for our girls to get to play at the course where the regionals will be held this year."

The JV boys had a chance to play against some varsity players in Marfa on Monday, where they were able to secure a second-place team finish. The team of Camilo Celaya, Alec Ramos, Thaddeus Prieto, and Ferris Daley had a combined score of 401. The varsity boys traveled to Wink yesterday, and everyone is back in Alpine on March 17 for the Alpine tournament.

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COUNTY • FROM 1

proactive in addressing abandoned properties. The goal, he explained, is to get these properties into the hands of buyers and back on the tax rolls.

“We have to be aggressive with our tax collection because it’s revenue we’re leaving on the table,” he said.

He also clarified the county’s intentions, addressing concerns about fairness. “We’re not here to take houses from widows and orphans,” he said, “but the fact is we have a lot of houses that have been abandoned in South County.”

District Clerk Sarah Martinez and Sheriff

Ronny Dodson spoke in favor of switching to Purdue Brandon Fielder Collins and Mott LLP, which already represents several other taxing entities within the county.

Martinez criticized Linebarger for its handling of a recent public sale of 73 properties, alleging that the firm had failed to provide adequate notice to property owners.

“They are not giving us the customer service that we deserve at all,” said Martinez.

“At the end of the day, the law is the law,” said Judge Henington, referring to the nature of the job, “but it is customer service” that makes the differ-

ence.

Commissioners opted to gather more information before making a formal decision.

The annual dump day events for Terlingua and Marathon were also on the agenda. The county has received an \$8,000 grant to help fund the bulk trash disposal. Still, Precinct 3 Commissioner Ruben Ortega noted that this amount would not cover the full cost. Last year’s collection totaled \$25,000, he said.

To make the process more efficient, Commissioner Ortega suggested staggering the events so that the County’s Road and Bridge crew could assist residents. Precinct

2 Commissioner Sara Colando noted that this would be particularly helpful for elderly individuals who might need help unloading their bulk items.

The commissioners set the dates: Terlingua’s dump day will be April 5 at the Brewster County Road and Bridge yard on FM 170. Marathon’s will be on April 26 at the same location.

The commissioners also addressed the rising costs of autopsies and cremation services for unattended deaths in the county. Judge Henington reported that 13 autopsies had already been conducted this calendar year, with a budget of

\$75,000 allocated for such services. No action was taken at this meeting, but the court acknowledged the need to revisit the issue as costs continue to increase.

Looking ahead, Brewster County will again recognize Dark Sky Week with a proclamation setting the April 21-25 event. Commissioner Colando made the motion to approve, and Commissioner Westermann seconded.

Westermann also expressed his support for the county’s new dark sky ordinance, which will go into effect on January 1, 2026. At that time, law enforcement will have

the authority to issue citations for non-compliant outdoor lighting.

He noted that the City of Alpine has already passed a similar measure, ensuring that both city and county residents will be held to the same standards in preserving the region’s pristine night skies, which Judge Henington noted is part of what draws hundreds of thousands of tourists to the Big Bend each year.

The next regular meeting of the Brewster County Commissioners Court is scheduled for Tuesday, March 25, at 9:30 a.m. in the commissioner’s courtroom.

MAMMOTH • FROM 1

ey Bjorklund from the University of Kansas, a CBBS collaborator specializing in environmental archaeology who is interested in studying ancient animals like the mammoth. All three, plus anthropology professors Dr. Justin Garnett and Dr. Devin Pettigrew, met up at the ranch as soon as possible to explore the discovery further.

“It paid off big time,” Juett says of their visit. “When they confirmed what they had uncovered, I couldn’t believe it.”

Schroeder says the researchers quickly verified that it was indeed a mammoth tusk, a very rare find in West Texas.

“The tusk was located in the drainage area of a creek bed,” Schroeder says. “We realized pretty quickly there was not more to the skeleton; it was just an isolated tusk that had been separated from the rest of the remains.”

The researchers then spent two days plaster-jacketing the tusk — covering it in strips of plaster-covered burlap for protection — and building a frame to

transfer it to Sul Ross State University for further study.

“A local [who subsequently wrote his PhD dissertation on it] found one in Fort Stockton in the 1960s,” Schroeder says, noting that it’s the only mammoth tusk in the Trans-Pecos that was carbon dated, as that process began in the 1950s. “There was a big range of error back then. Now we can get it down to a narrower range within 500 years.”

Carbon dating results will be available in the next few months. While researchers study the new find with newer technologies, the discovery sparks our imaginations.

“Seeing that mammoth tusk just brings the ancient world to life,” Juett says of the find that created a buzz of excitement for everyone involved. “Now, I can’t help but imagine that huge animal wandering around the hills on the O2 Ranch. My next thought is always about the people that faced those huge tusks with only a stone tool in their hand!”

SUMMIT • FROM 1

underway currently will be discussed at the meeting to be held on March 24, from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at Our Lady of Peace Catholic Church. Kirsten Moody, one of the organizers of the event and a board member of Alpine Community Projects, asked that those who are interested contact her so that they have an idea of how many people to expect.

Once again, this is free of charge to the public and everyone is invited.

Of the ideas that came out of the inaugural summit that are

currently underway to being implemented are kids summer programming, a regional business and promotional alliance, an upcoming housing symposium, the possible creation of a new Alpine Chamber of Commerce, and a beautification project, along with some other ideas that are brewing.

The organizers hope to leave this second gathering with at least five new projects emerging from this second round of sessions. For more information or to register your attendance, contact Kirsten Moody at [kirsten@alpinecommunityprojects.org](mailto:kirsten@alpinecommunityprojects.org).

BCSO continues crackdown on illegal aliens



A common occurrence in Brewster County and for the Brewster County Sheriff’s Office is the apprehension of illegal aliens. Last Friday, a group of five suspects were reported on private property southeast of Marathon. Deputies and U.S. Border Patrol tracked the group, who were from Brazil and Mexico. They were turned over to USBP for processing and deportation.

Photo courtesy of BCSO

U.S. Attorney prosecutions result in multiple sentencing

BY KARA GERBERT  
Managing Editor

Multiple sentences have been handed down recently pertaining to human smuggling as well as the smuggling of narcotics involving cartels and other criminal organizations, and assaults on federal officers.

Sentencing for Kevin Dominguez, 26, of Katy, was held on January 24

after he was indicted in a two-count indictment in September. He was sentenced to 18 months in prison in a Del Rio courtroom for one count of assaulting, resisting, or impeding certain officers or employees. Court documents noted that Dominguez drove a sedan to the U.S. Border Patrol immigration checkpoint on U.S. Highway 57 on August 1, 2023, where a U.S. Border Patrol canine alerted the agents to the trunk. This revealed an individual inside, and when USBP noticed the individual, Dominguez backed up and struck the agent with the vehicle before fleeing the checkpoint, which resulted in a high-speed chase.

A U.S. Border Patrol helicopter noticed two occupants exit the vehicle into an open field, where one of the individuals was located and confirmed to be an undocumented citizen from Honduras. The FBI investigated the case, and Assistant U.S. Attorney Matt Kass prosecuted the case.

A New York man was sentenced to 10 years in federal prison in a San Antonio courtroom after leading a deputy from the Kendall County Sheriff’s Department on a high-speed chase in July 2022, resulting in injuries to 11 undocumented citizens after a quick exit off the highway resulted in him

crashing the vehicle.

Peter Diaz-Vasquez, 28, of Bronx, admitted traveling from New York by plane and renting a vehicle where he was hired to pick up an unknown number of undocumented citizens near Uvalde. Diaz-Vasquez said he was to be paid \$800 per person to transport them to a location near San Antonio or Austin.

“This case clearly highlights the extreme dangers posed by human smuggling,” said U.S. Attorney Jaime Esparza for the Western District of Texas.

Homeland Security Investigations and the Kendall County Sheriff’s Department investigated this case, which Assistant U.S. Attorney Amanda Brown prosecuted.

A Mexican national unlawfully residing in Texas was sentenced on February 13 to life in federal prison for criminal actions as the leader of a drug trafficking organization that was tied to a Mexican cartel.

Jose Ramon Castillo-Lopez, aka “Pepo,” 30 of Namiquipa, Chihuahua, Mexico, according to court documents, supplied a co-conspirator with a firearm, along with methamphetamine, cocaine, heroin, and fentanyl “M30” pills for distribution purposes. Castillo-Lopez also utilized a garage in Midland to disassemble stolen vehicles as load vehicles used to transport illicit drugs and money.

Castillo-Lopez pleaded guilty on September 23, 2024, to one count of conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute 50 grams or more of actual methamphetamine and 5 kgs or more of a mixture and substance containing a detectable amount of cocaine. “Mr. Castillo-Lopez now

has a lifetime to contemplate his terrible choices,” said Towanda R. Thorne-James, Special Agent in Charge of DEA’s El Paso Division. “He willingly put the lives of Texans and Mississippians at risk, and now he’s facing the consequences. The men and women of the DEA will continue to bring other drug traffickers like him to their own day reckoning.”

The DEA investigated this case with assistance from the Texas Department of Public Safety, the Midland Sheriff’s Department, the Odessa Police Department, and the Midland Police Department. Assistant U.S. Attorney Patrick Sloane prosecuted the case.

Finally, a member of an El Paso transnational criminal organization, Luis Edward Castro, 28, working for “La Empresa,” was sentenced on February 20 to 235 months in prison for his role in a hostage-taking conspiracy. According to court documents, Castro forcibly kidnapped a man in Juarez, Mexico, from his motel room at gunpoint in August 2023. After the kidnapping, Castro sent proof-of-life videos to the victim’s family, and multiple unknown subjects sent threatening phone calls and demanded payments from his family. The family ended up sending approximately \$9,000 for the safe travel and release of the victim.

An investigation of Castro led to law enforcement officers descending to his address in El Paso, where searching the residence yielded six undocumented noncitizens and multiple unknown subjects and multiple firearms. Castro was arrested on September 5, 2023, and charged with six counts pertaining to harboring and transporting

undocumented noncitizens for money, hostage-taking, and possession of a firearm with an obliterated serial number. Castro pleaded guilty to the hostage-taking in September 2024.

Acting U.S. Attorney Margaret Leachman for the Western District of Texas stated, “This case highlights some of the many dangers posed by transnational criminal organizations on both sides of our southern border, and Castro’s sentencing of two decades in federal prison is a significant penalty. I am thankful to our partners at the FBI and the U.S. Border Patrol, whose investigative skill and expertise led to the recovery of these kidnapping victims and the outcome of this case.”

Assistant U.S. Attorneys Mathew Englebaum and Kyle Myers prosecuted the case through an investigation by the FBI and USBP.

On May 6 of last year, a Mexican national, Carlos Ernesto Guerrero-Gutierrez, pleaded guilty to three counts of assault on a federal officer. Guerrero-Gutierrez was being detained with 20 other individuals at an El Paso processing center in November 2023 when he became disruptive, forcing U.S. Border Patrol agents to isolate him. He then proceeded to dismantle the pod’s frame he was in, removing a wooden board containing nails. When agents responded, Guerrero-Gutierrez bit one agent on the leg and injured two others with the board. He was ultimately subdued after two taser employment attempts, handcuffed, and restrained. He was sentenced in federal court in El Paso to 46 months in prison.



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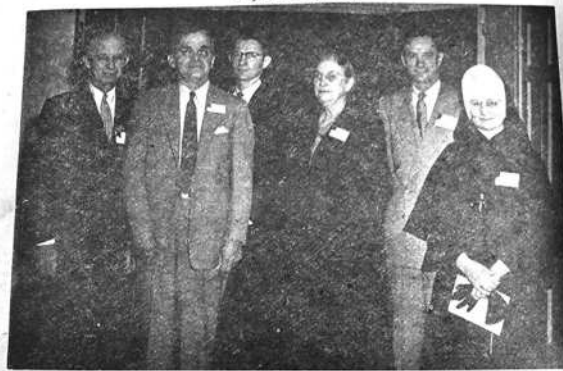
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March 5, 1954

Alpha Chi Officers



Shown above are the officers who presided over the annual regional Alpha Chi convention held at Sul Ross college here last week. Left to right: National Sec. Treas. Dean A. H. Nolle, South Texas State college, San Marcos; Dr. Bryan Wildenthal, president of host Sul Ross college; Jerry Earhart, Abilene Christian college; Miss Bessie Shook, regional Sec. Treas., North Texas State college, Denton; regional president, Dr. T. C. Cronshaw, Texas Christian University; regional vice-president, Sylvia Margaret Rose, Our Lady of the Lake college, San Antonio.

March 5, 1954

Cousins Meet In Korea



Pfc. Agustin Garcia, left, son of Mr. and Mrs. Tuburcio Garcia, and Pfc. Timoteo Fierro, son of Mr. and Mrs. Pablo Fierro, both of Marathorn, met recently in Korea. The two boys are cousins and had not seen each other for 16 months. Garcia has been in Korea six months and Fierro for four months, stationed only five miles apart and each not knowing the other was there until Fierro's mother sent him Garcia's address. The parents are happy to know the boys are together—and of course the boys are happy too.

March 26, 1954



Newly installed Sigma Tau Delta Chapter at Sul Ross State College is pictured above. Bottom row: Sue Britt, Amarillo; Shirley Parker, Alpine; Charlotte Holmes, Alpine. Middle row: Frances Weeg, Big Spring; Alice Owens, (pres), Alpine; Lynette Sullivan, Houston; Mrs. Vianna Wade, Top row: Dr. Elton R. Miles (sponsor), Dr. Allen Briggs, both of the Sul Ross English faculty; Cordell Green, and Andy Kurie, San Antonio. These students are English majors on minors at Sul Ross State College and form a part of the membership of the Alpha Zeta chapter of Sigma Tau Delta. national English fraternity. The Alpha Zeta chapter, installed March 3, is the fourteenth Texas chapter to be formed. It is the only national chapter formed during 1954, the thirtieth anniversary of the membership of the Alpha Zeta chapter of Sigma Tau Delta.—Photo by Carl Williams.

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

**Devil's ivy needs to grow vertically for large foliage**

Dear Neil, I saw a devil's ivy plant with huge (dinner-plate-sized) leaves in a tropical botanic garden. How can I get mine to produce leaves that large?

That's "adult" foliage, and it's only produced on stems that are growing vertically. For home gardeners, that usually means growing them on what florists used to call "totem poles." When you see a plant that's been trained in that way, you'll notice that the bottom-most leaves are smaller than the top leaves. As the plant reaches the top of the pole and its stems start to droop past its support, the leaf sizes quickly decrease. Many years ago, my wife and I were on Maui near Hana. We were visiting the small cemetery where Charles Lindbergh is buried. The lane back to the entrance was lined with trees draped with devil's ivy plants and leaves 18 inches across. They were spectacular.

**GARDENER'S MAILBAG**  
by neil sperry

As a side note, you'll see a common Texas landscape plant, English ivy (unrelated to devil's ivy), doing a similar thing as it climbs. Its relatively small leaves on the ground transform into larger, almost rounded leaves when they're produced on vertical stems. That's also the only place that you'll see English ivy producing its clusters of flowers. It will never happen on the trailing juvenile growth.

Dear Neil, I have had trouble growing **Russelia (firecracker fern) in pots. They get full sun. I bring them in during cold**

weather. I keep the soil moist and give them fertilizer. They thrive in the ground where I grow them at our place in South Texas, but they're puny in pots and never bloom. What could I be doing wrong?

Without a photo, I'll have to guess a little. This is a vigorous plant that grows to several feet tall (although it weeps, so it may not appear to be that tall). If your container plants are "puny," it may be that the pots are too small and the reservoir of soil is too little to accommodate their water and nutrient needs. We frequently water plants in pots because of that, which can leach nutrients out of the soil quickly. That would be my first guess. I'd also wonder about how hot the exposure was. Again, plants in pots can get much warmer when their root systems are exposed to the hot summer sun. You mentioned that you protect your plants during cold



weather, which is a good thing. Plants that are at all tender to cold lose about two hardiness zones of winter durability when their roots are left exposed to freezes in pots. You don't have that much wiggle room with this plant. However, that doesn't sound like the problem here. Other than those thoughts, I'm out of ideas without seeing the plants.

Dear Neil, what is the best way to trim my Asian jasmine? It browned from the second cold spell.

I set my mower as high as it will go (almost 4 inches). I carefully push it into one side of a bed to see its impact before I commit to doing the entire bed. I trim mine often enough that it's usually just about right, but if a bed

hasn't been trimmed for several years, that might be a severe cut that would leave things looking really barren. Either way, the jasmine will come back very quickly. Apply a high-nitrogen fertilizer and water it thoroughly. You may be amazed at how pretty it looks as it starts to regrow.

Your other alternative would be using a gasoline-powered hedge trimmer to cut. You'd have to rev it up to a fairly high speed to cut

through the wiry stems, and it would wear your back out if the bed was very large. But if the planting has built up some depth, it may be the only alternative. Line trimmers, at least in my experience, tug at the jasmine stems too much, pulling them loose in the process.

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**
- TXism: "\_\_\_ pipe cinch" (certain)
  - TXism: "got time on my hands"
  - film made in Texas: "\_\_\_ Zapata!"
  - TX Penal Code makes \_\_\_ offense to drive while intoxicated
  - TXism: "couldn't find neither hide \_\_\_ hair of him"
  - many cowboys once chewed it
  - Galveston has largest Mardi \_\_\_ celebration in Texas
  - TXism: "nervous as a frog \_\_\_ pan"
  - elected county prosecutor (abbr.)
  - shallowest Great Lake
  - Pope \_\_\_ XIII established the diocese of Dallas
  - Toyota mid-sized truck
  - TXism: "mad as a rained-\_\_\_"
  - Clint of film "Space Cowboys," also starring TX Tommy Lee Jones (init.)
  - farmer, e.g.
  - bad golf shot
  - loading areas in Texas coastal cities
  - former name: "Starr \_\_\_ Historical Park"

- Texas "ragtime" Joplin
  - Texas Longhorn beef has \_\_\_ than many other breeds
  - early Texas film actress, Vinson (init.)
  - McAllen religious AM
  - Astro or Ranger pitcher injury: \_\_\_ cuff
  - this TX Brown won bronze medal in shot put in 1960
  - early cooler
  - TXism: "close but \_\_\_ cigar"
  - TXism: "fandango"
  - TXism: "I'd rather \_\_\_"
  - (unappetizing)
  - Dumas' county
  - actress, TX Longoria
  - nevertheless
  - to Tyler from Waco
- DOWN**
- TXism: "\_\_\_ high off the hog"
  - VIP at the Tyler County Booster
  - in Johnson County off I-35
  - Texas sausage maker, James
  - TX high tech co.
  - Gatesville has \_\_\_ last drive-in theaters in Texas
  - honky tonks
  - TXism: "pitched \_\_\_" (tantrum)
  - systems of beliefs
  - Astro Mike Scott won 1986 \_\_\_ Young Award
  - TXism: "black gold"
  - rock found in Palo Duro Canyon
  - TXism: "Satan's \_\_\_"
  - TX Sissy's "\_\_\_ Miner's Daughter"
  - Jerry Jones to the Cowboys
  - TXism: "a \_\_\_" (a lot)
  - label of soundtrack for "Happy, Texas"
  - wagon track
  - TXism: "a horse \_\_\_ different color"
  - Houston NBA team
  - TXism: "\_\_\_ dogs" (fair food)
  - TXism: "he's got the morals \_\_\_ alley cat"
  - \_\_\_ King Cole
  - from liquid to vapor
  - wander
  - steak order
  - noted TCU coach
  - "Dutch" Meyer (init.)
  - TXism: "seein' eye \_\_\_" (agreeing)
  - from a loom?

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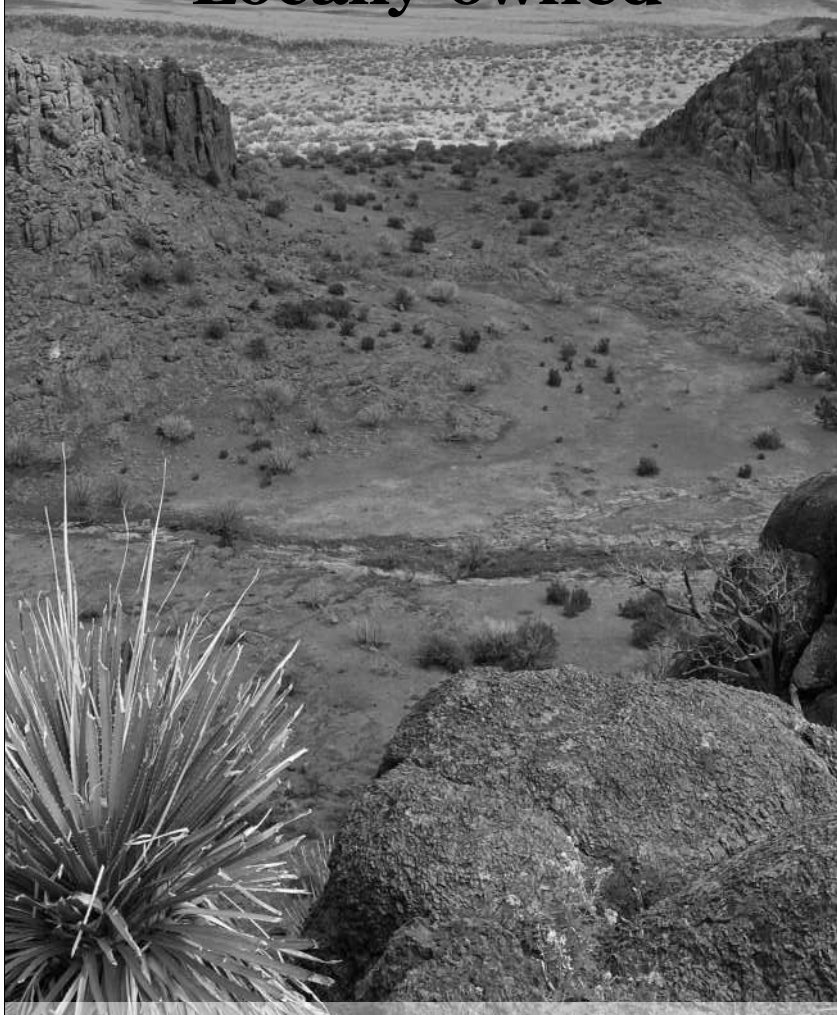
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# Celebrating highest attendance



Alpine Elementary second graders celebrated their highest attendance records with popsicles and extra recess this week.

Courtesy photo

**DAVID VALENZUELA**


**In what activities did you participate in High School?**  
I participated in Baseball, Football, and NHS.

**Who was your favorite teacher/coach, and why?**  
Coach Dominguez, because he encourages everyone to be the best version of themselves.

**What was your favorite moment in the last four years?**  
Probably going to the football games and also looking forward to the next few years.

**What are your plans after High School?**  
I plan on going to college to study business and marketing.

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## Devotional Page

### 'Mountaintop Christianity'

BY COLEMAN REIDLING  
FBC Alpine, Texas

One of the great things about living in the Big Bend area is the mountains. Mountains seem never to change, yet the passing of the seasons or shadows brings new vistas and elicits fresh wonder.

On a recent hiking trip, I got to thinking about mountains and how they offer the Christian a few reminders on living well.

First, mountains are steady and sure. Psalm 18 describes God as one's strength and rock of refuge. In Psalm 40, David has a crisis that felt like sinking in the sand, but God saved him and set his feet on a solid rock, making his steps secure. In the New Testament, Jesus Christ is said to be the "cornerstone" (Eph. 2:20).

Mountains evoke awe and remind us of God's eternity. Mountain peaks offer a sense of something almost timeless because they are so vast and solid.

We, on the other hand, are here today and gone tomorrow. Without Jesus as the center of my life, my short life will be full of shaky decisions and aimless direction. You and I are only as steady and sure as our relationship to God. We can try to find security in other things or relationships, but God alone is the solid rock. He will never fail us. As we love God and draw near to Him through His Son Jesus, His Spirit will transform us to become steady and sure people who chase the

Kingdom, follow through on our commitments, and are wise enough not to over-promise.

Second, mountains got that way because of a lot of time and pressure. It is a reality of Scripture and of life that God refines us through pain and discomfort. "Pain," C.S. Lewis said, "is God's megaphone." Pain gets our attention. Once God has our attention, we either draw near to Him in trust or turn away in distrust. Never let the pain you are walking through today make you believe that God doesn't have a purposeful tomorrow for you. Besides, if God could make solid Christians out of a La-Z-Boy and Netflix, He would have. But the Bible and church history indicate God uses the storms, trials, and pressures of life to build us up — higher and closer to Him than we ever could be otherwise.

Third, mountains share. A mountain never hoards rain for itself but instead "sips" what it needs and generously passes the rest down to places a little lower than itself. A mountain sharing the water of life with the valley below is a metaphor for a Christian's attitude toward others. God's material and spiritual gifts are never to store up for ourselves. Luke 12 tells the story of a man who stored up hay in bigger and bigger barns. He was the talk of the town. Then, one day, he died, and all his hay rotted. God pronounced a dreadful decree over this man: "You fool!" So, let's take it from a mountain and share a little with someone today.

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# WEST TEXAS ROUNDUP

## ABSTRACT AND TITLE



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# Gear up for St. Pat's with Irish favorites

## COLCANNON

### INGREDIENTS

- 2 1/2 pounds of potatoes, peeled and cubed
- 4 slices of bacon
- 1/2 a small head of cabbage, chopped
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 1/2 cup milk
- 1/4 cup butter, melted
- salt and pepper to taste

### DIRECTIONS

In a saucepan, bring potatoes to a boil and cook until tender, about 15-20 minutes. Drain.

As the potatoes are cooking, cook the bacon until browned. Remove and drain on paper towels, then crumble, reserving the fat.

Saute the cabbage and onion in the bacon fat until soft and translucent, about 10 to 15 minutes. Cover the skillet to decrease cooking time if desired. Remove from heat.

Mash potatoes with milk, salt, and pepper in a large bowl. Fold in bacon, cabbage, and onion, then transfer to a large serving bowl.

Make a well in the middle of the potatoes and pour in the melted butter. Serve hot.



Colcannon

Courtesy photos

Nothing says St. Patrick's Day better than Beef Guinness Stew and Colcannon. Perhaps besides green beer and Jameson's, but not all, can partake in the merriment that ensues after copious amounts of those libations.

Everyone, however, can dig into a hearty stew and buttery potatoes and cabbage.

Traditionally, Irish Stew does not contain beef or Guinness. Instead, it was commonplace to use mutton or lamb shanks and necks along with root vegetables such as potatoes and onions. The addition of the lamb or mutton allowed the stew to be stretched to better feed the family. Beef was not part of the equation until the Irish immigrated to America. And it is thought that the Guinness was added by some ingenious pub owner, adding flavor and tenderness to the beef.

Colcannon is considered Ireland's "fortune-telling mashed potato dish." Potatoes were a main staple in Irish cooking in the 17th century, and by the mid-18th century, colcannon had



## HEAD OVER MEALS

by kara gerbert

emerged as an Irish staple food. This dish of mashed potatoes and garden kale or cabbage helped link ancient and modern Ireland, as kale and cabbage were staples in the Irish diet prior to the potato's arrival.

While colcannon is considered a side dish, Beef Guinness Stew is often paired with mashed potatoes, so technically, these two dishes could be eaten together since mashed potatoes are an option for the stew.

However, if you choose to enjoy either of these tasty Irish cuisines, whether together or separately, they both will help to ring in a wholesome St. Patrick's Day.



Guinness Stew

## BEEF AND GUINNESS STEW

### INGREDIENTS

- 4 slices of bacon
- 2 1/2 lbs. boneless beef chuck, cut into 2-inch pieces
- 1 1/2 teaspoons salt, divided or more to taste
- Fresh ground black pepper to taste
- 2 onions, coarsely chopped
- 4 cloves of garlic, minced
- 1 can of Guinness
- 1/4 cup of tomato paste
- 3 carrots, cut into 1-inch pieces
- 2 ribs of celery, cut into 1-inch pieces
- 4 sprigs of fresh thyme
- 1 teaspoon white sugar
- 1 teaspoon white vinegar
- 1/4 teaspoon fresh ground black pepper to taste
- 2 1/2 cups of chicken stock, or as needed to cover
- 4 cups of mashed potatoes (optional)

### DIRECTIONS

Cook and stir bacon in a heavy skillet until browned and crisp. Remove from the skillet and transfer to a large stew pot, reserving the bacon fat in the skillet.

Season the cubed beef with one teaspoon of salt and black pepper to taste. Turn the heat to high

under the skillet and sear the beef in the hot fat on both sides until browned about five minutes. Place the beef in the stew pot with the bacon, leaving the fat in the skillet.

Turn the heat down to medium. Cook and stir the onions until browned and season with a large pinch of salt. Add the garlic and cook for about one minute. Then add the beer and stir with a wooden spoon, scraping the bottom and sides of the skillet and dissolving any brown bits in the liquid.

Pour the liquid from the skillet into the stew pot. Stir in tomato paste, carrots, celery, thyme, sugar, 1/2 teaspoon black pepper, and enough chicken stock to cover.

Bring to a gentle simmer, stirring to combine; reduce heat to low and cover pot. Simmer for about two hours or until beef is fork tender. Stir stew occasionally and skim fat or foam if desired.

Remove the cover and raise the heat to medium-high, bringing the stew to a boil and cooking until slightly thickened about 15-20 minutes. Remove the thyme sprigs and adjust salt and pepper to taste. If adding to mashed potatoes, arrange the potatoes in a ring in a bowl and add the stew to the center of the potatoes.

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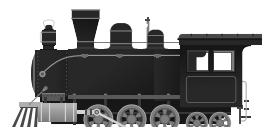
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## Bull riders learn from champion



World Champion bull rider and Rodeo Hall of Famer Cody Custer visited the Sul Ross Rodeo Team last week and gave a lecture as well as a clinic on bull riding, how to tackle things in the arena and in life. Clinics such as this are one of the many learning tools being employed by Coach C.J. Aragon to help his team.

*Photo courtesy of Sul Ross Rodeo Team*

## SRSU at Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo

Caleb and Cali Hughes were on hand last week to represent the Borderlands Research Institute and Sul Ross' Department of Natural Sciences at the Ranching and Wildlife College Day program. The event is for 4-H and FFA students who are interested in attending a Texas university for wildlife resource management, ranch management, or similar programs.

*Photo courtesy of Borderlands Research Institute*



## Playground fun



Students at Alpine Elementary enjoy checking out the new interactive portions of the new playground that was installed. Along with traditional playground equipment such as slides and swings, this new playground incorporated items such as this interactive musical component for students to learn and play on.

*Courtesy photo*

## Yancy named to All-Lone Star Conference team

Senior Ethan Yancy was named to the All-Lone Star Conference Men's Basketball team. He earned an honorable mention.

Yancy had a very strong season for the Lobos. He averaged 18.16 points, 5.8 rebounds, and 2.24 assists per game while shooting 74.3% from the line.

Yancy had 21 double-figure scoring games with 12 at 20+. He scored an NCAA school record 44 points against Eastern New Mexico (January 16). He was named LSC Player of the Week for Week 11 and the point total is the most in the LSC this season.



**Yancy**

Yancy is currently second in scoring for the Lone Star Conference. For school single-season history, he is second in free throws made (136) and attempted (383). Yancy is just the fourth player in school history to score 450 points in a season.

## Safe at home



An Alpine Buck slid into Homeplate at Wink last Friday as a Wildcat player attempted to tag him out.

*Photo by Noe Lujan*

## Aguayo earns All-Lone Star honors



**Aguayo**

Junior Victoria Aguayo was selected to the All-Lone Star Conference Women's Basketball team. She earned an honorable mention.

Aguayo had a strong season for the Lobos averaging 9.8 points, 6.72 rebounds and 1.92 steals a game. Aguayo led the team in free throw percentage at 75%.

Aguayo had 13 double-figure scoring games and recorded four double-doubles on the season. She is currently ranked fourth in steals per game and seventh for total steals (48) in the Lone Star Conference.

Aguayo had a steal in all but five games this season. She became just the third player in school history to reach 150 steals and 400 rebounds in a career.

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