



THE POWER
OF MURALS
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Q&A WITH
NONG WEITZEL
PAGE 6



TIGERS FALL TO
KINGWOOD IN HARD
FOUGHT BATTLE
PAGE 8

Dripping Springs Century News

34rd Year No. 23

June 5, 2025

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75 cents

Community Calendar

Free Dance Lessons
June 6 • 7:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.
Every Friday, Mercer Dance Hall opens 5-11 pm with free dance lessons with John Luper and 2Z. Mercer Dance Hall • 23490 Ranch Road 12 • Driftwood, Texas 78619

Blanco Lavender Festival
June 6 • 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
June 7 • 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.
June 8 • 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
The Blanco Lavender Festival is a project of the Blanco Chamber of Commerce and the major fundraiser for the year for the Chamber. Take in some live music in Bindseil Park. Shop the market on the grounds of the Historic Old Blanco County Courthouse, and sample specialty foods, wines and beer in the Texas Made tent. Visitors can also drive out to Hill Country Lavender and take a tour of Texas' first commercial lavender farm. For specific market and tour times, visit www.blancolavenderfest.com. Old Blanco

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7



Thank you veterans for your service!

INSPIRATIONAL
QUOTE OF THE DAY:

LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF; BUT DON'T TAKE DOWN THE FENCE.
- CARL SANDBURG



Builder found guilty of defrauding homeowners

Staff Reports

A Hill Country area builder was found guilty May 22 in Llano for allegedly bilking several property owners out of hundreds of thousands of dollars over a period of time.

Following the verdict at the Llano County Courthouse, Wayne Alan Erickson was sentenced to a year in a state jail facility with a 10-year deferred prison sentence.

The guilty verdict at the two-week trial involved a 12-person jury

and later that day the sentencing agreement among attorneys.

Erickson of Erickson Custom Homes is a builder most recently based in Hays County.

"We wanted him to have some sort of accountability through a felony conviction that

carries all the liabilities and restrictions that go along with that," said Wiley "Sonny" McAfee, the special prosecutor in the trial. "They (victims) also didn't want him doing it to anyone else."



SEE **GUILTY** PAGE 8

WAYNE ALAN ERICKSON



A family participates in the petting zoo at the kickoff celebration for the library's summer reading program.

PHOTOS BY LAURIE ANDERSON

THE READING RACE BEGINS

Library celebration kicks off summer program

Laurie Anderson
Interim Editor

On Monday, June 2, the Dripping Springs Community Library hosted its summer kickoff party with free family activities and sign-ups for the "Color Our World" summer reading program. The event featured face painting, a petting zoo, kid-friendly archery and axe throwing stations and frozen treats.

"It's been amazing today. We doubled the event attendance from last year," said Christina Thompson, communications manager for the Beyond Books, Building Community campaign. "Last year we saw around 300 people. So far today we're only an hour and a half in and we're over 600 people."

At the halfway point of the event, the children's librarian had already signed up over 200 people for summer reading.

"This is the first year that we're using an app called Beanstack to track summer reading," Thompson said. "And what's great about that



A visitor vaults onto the inflatable slide.



Mando Daniel helps Amelia Daniel line up a shot at the archery station.

SEE **LIBRARY** PAGE 2



Nong Weitzel celebrates her retirement with The Friends Foundation board members, Wayland Clark, Kathy Clark, and Kathy Carriker.

PHOTO BY CHARLIE REED

Farmers Market heads into summer - and AC

Laurie Anderson
Interim Editor

Summer has arrived, and that usually means that the Dripping Springs Farmers Market changes its hours to escape the worst of the heat. However, the market organizers recently surveyed vendors and customers about an option to keep regular hours and move into an

air-conditioned space, and 74% of respondents preferred that plan.

So, starting with the Farmers Market on June 4, vendors will be located inside Dripping Springs Ranch Park. The market will still be on Wednesdays from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.

While the air condi-

SEE **MARKET** PAGE 6

Annual community garage sale coming June 13-14

Staff Reports

The Women in Mission organization of Dripping Springs Methodist Church has scheduled their annual Community Garage Sale June 13-14.

Drop-off donations will be accepted June 9-10, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. and July 11-12, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Items accepted include gently used clothing, shoes, handbags, linens, jewelry, kitchen items, furniture, toys, bikes, and holiday décor. Old bedding, throws, and towels are acceptable to be

used for pet bedding. Items not accepted are electronics, books for ages over 10, mattresses, car seats, broken and soiled items, and major appliances.

The sale begins Friday, June 13 from 8 a.m. -5 p.m., and will continue Saturday from 8 a.m. -12 p.m. Shoppers are encouraged to shop early as items sell quickly. It will be held in the Family Life Center Gym in the church's main building, located at 28900 Ranch Road 12, Dripping Springs.

An event serving

SEE **GARAGE SALE** PAGE 6

*Wimberley Metaphysical
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SUNDAY, JUNE 08, 2025
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Admission



Free
Lectures

Capital Highlights

Legislative session wraps up



Gary Borders
Texas Press Association

The dust hasn't quite settled on the 2025 legislative session, but here's a sampling of bills already sent to Gov. Greg Abbott.

- A ban on clubs supporting gay teens in public schools won final legislative passage on Saturday. The measure sponsored by state Sen. Brandon Creighton, R-Conroe, would prohibit schools from authorizing or sponsoring student clubs based on sexual orientation or gender identity.
- Several Democrats argued passionately against the bill, the Texas Tribune reported.
- "Getting silence in schools from the LG-BTQ community, which is what this bill is

designed to do, will not stop your kids from being gay," state Rep. Erin Zwiener, D-Driftwood, said. "It will just make them afraid to come out."

Supporters of the bill said it solidifies parents' rights to determine their child's exposure to diversity, equity, and inclusion policies, including discussions about LGBTQ issues and gender identity.

- Depending on inevitable court challenges, every public-school classroom in Texas could be required to display the Ten Commandments. A similar law in Louisiana has been ruled unconstitutional by a federal court and is under appeal.
- Texas voters in November will be asked to approve raising the homestead exemption from \$100,000 to \$140,000 for all homeowners and to \$200,000 for homeowners who are 65 and older or have a disability, the Austin American-Statesman reported.
- "I'm looking forward

to what I think will be a record turnout by the public," said Sen. Paul Bettencourt, R-Houston, the bills' author. "This is great news, because these commitments — once they're enshrined in the constitution — are going to be there forever."

The increased property tax exemptions overwhelmingly passed both the House and Senate. If approved by voters, they will cost the state's general revenue fund about \$3 billion. Another \$3.5 billion will reimburse public school districts for reduced local property tax revenue.

These exemptions are only for homesteads and don't apply to rental or business properties. A separate bill increased the business personal property tax exemption from \$2,500 to \$125,000.

- Legislation banning non-citizens from China, North Korea, Iran and Russia from owning property in the state, except for a homestead, is headed to the governor's desk, The Dallas Morning News reported.

Of that number, 8,900 have no established owner because the company no longer exists or has gone bankrupt.

At least eight of these so-called orphan wells have become conduits for water traveling beneath them and have burst since last October, costing the state millions of dollars to plug them. The Texas Oil and Gas Association applauded passage of the bill.

The bill "recognizes that once a well has reached the end of its economic life and there is no useful purpose, the owner should be responsible for the plugging," said Todd Staples, association president.

The Texas Railroad Commission will be responsible for enforcing the new regulations.

- The Legislature has passed a statewide ban on all products containing TCH, the psychoactive ingredient in many products being legally sold in shops across the state. Now Gov. Gregg Abbott faces an onslaught of political pressure from business interests, veterans' groups and others to veto the measure, which could wipe out the \$8 billion hemp industry.

"This is to save an entire generation from being hooked on drugs," Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick said at a news conference.

Abbott has not taken a position on the issue. He has the authority to either the sign the bill into law, allow it to become law without his signature, or veto the measure.

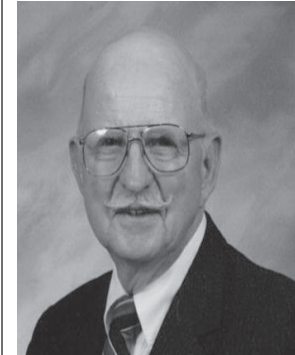
Many opponents of the ban said they are willing to place regulations on the consumable hemp industry. Currently there are no age limits or marketing rules in place. Stores that sell these products must register with the state, but only three employees with the Texas Department of State Health Services are responsible for inspecting more than 8,500 locations in Texas.

Gary Borders is a veteran award-winning Texas journalist. He published a number of community newspapers in Texas during a 30-year span, including in Longview, Fort Stockton, Nacogdoches, Lufkin and Cedar Park. Email:gborders@texaspress.com.

OBITUARIES

Frank J. Raymond

July 11, 1933 — 5/21/2025



Frank J. Raymond

Frank J. Raymond was born July 11, 1933 to what he called "unsettled parents and a Great Depression roaring throughout the country." Life was tenuous. They often spoke of their situation as "far beyond welfare." There were no organizations to support the family, and jobs were short, distant, and fragile. Rules and laws of the time put a heavy burden on families, parents, and children.

He said their neighborhood was called "gasoline alley" after the comic strip of that name and because the two streets or blocks were mostly garages; no footers or foundations, just wood frames with no floors. Buyers took the frames with two swinging garage doors and finished or remodeled the "house" into a livable structure. His family had one frame house on three lots which gave them room to garden, raise animals, and survive.

When his Daddy died in 1939, they were isolated. His Mother got a sales job at LaSalles, an upscale department store in Toledo, Ohio. To get there was a mile-plus walk to a suburban bus. The wages and the hours were long and short. Frank and his sister, Henrietta, were put in charge of doing the chores and maintaining the house, yard, pens, pets, etc. A paper delivery route became available, and Frank took it, much to his teachers' chagrin. This gave them sustenance and a reason to get out and try to better themselves. As the route grew, Sunday papers and morning papers supported the family year-round. Lawn mowing was a side job as well. As the route grew, Frank's contribution rivaled his mother's income and he became a provider at a very young age. He joined the military and was a proud Korean War veteran, serving from 1953-1956 with the US Army 11th Airborne in the tank division and as a paratrooper in the

101st Airborne.

Frank loved his wife, his family, god, and his country. He met his wife, Kathleen, when he was 19 and they married on September 26, 1952. He was devoted to her, and inseparable from her, throughout their almost 69 years of marriage, until she passed away of diabetes complications on July 13, 2021. They raised 5 children-Susan, Karen, Joseph, Melissa, and Heather. He was an active church member of many congregations throughout his life; in his later years his home base was the First Baptist Church of Dripping Springs, where he took on odd jobs, served as a deacon, and attended his Sunday School class without fail.

Frank never met a stranger, could literally chat up anyone, and made friends wherever he went. He loved singing, was perpetually whistling, and was an avid gardener and voracious reader. He was a carpenter by trade and enjoyed building projects large and small. He took his only son, Joseph, to work with him when he was a kid so he could teach him the tricks of the trade and, in a full-circle moment, helped Joe build his own house as an adult. Frank had to stop working with him on it before completion due to Kathleen's fragile health, but it remains one of Joe's fondest memories of his Dad.

He might have been one of the most stubborn people ever born. He never went anywhere without a hat (especially once all that red hair of his youth went away). His favorites were his Michigan State cap, his casual Army Airborne (in green), and his favorite Army Airborne with all of his pins (in black).

He is survived by his 5 children, 9 grandchildren, 12 great grandchildren, 1 great, great grandchild, and his sister, Henrietta Huff.

In lieu of flowers, donations to First Baptist Church, Dripping Springs, to the missions committee and/or Spanish Church, would be appreciated.

Funeral services will be 11:00 AM on Wednesday, June 11, 2025 at the First Baptist Church Dripping Springs. Burial will follow at Phillips Cemetery.



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Dripping Springs Century News

STAFF

MANDY FARROW — Publisher/Group Operations Manager
mfarrow@mosercommmedia.com

DALTON SWEAT — Regional Editor
dscenturynews@gmail.com

SHANNON WEST — Staff Reporter
swest@sanmarcosrecord.com

JAMES JONES — Regional Advertising Director
jjones@sanmarcosrecord.com

TERESA KENDRICK — Contributor
tkendrick@wimberleyview.com

KARITTA LOVE FITTS — Advertising

JONATHAN LIMA — Design

CONTACT

(512) 858-4163 • dscenturynews@gmail.com
P.O. Box 732, Dripping Springs, TX 78620

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LIBRARY FROM PG. 1

is it ties in with what children are using at school." When parents sign their kids up on the app, they'll be able to select a challenge that's appropriate to their age range and it will log the number of minutes read over summer. For example, a child who's 8 years old and reads 600 minutes will qualify for a free book at the end of summer.

"Our children's librarian has a whole treasure trove of books for children to select when they complete the challenge," Thompson

said.

The "Color Our World" summer reading program is available for adults as well.

"Adults can log their reading minutes over summer and our adult programming director has selected some gift cards that adults can qualify for, too," Thompson said.

For more information on the summer reading program and on the variety of other activities that will be going on at the library this summer, visit www.dscl.org.



A young library patron adds their handprint to the "Color Your World" banner.

PHOTO BY LAURIE ANDERSON

THE POWER OF MURALS

Renee D'Arienzo
enee.saylor@gmail.com

Art and specifically painting has been a big part of my life from a very young age. In fact my first mural was done at my house at the age of 6 in our game room. (I don't think my parents saw it that way at the time but laugh about it now.)

Fast forward 13 years later, I am in college for an art degree and I found a summer job faux finishing (this is a decorative painting technique that replicates the appearance of things such as marble, wood or stone) with an incredible artist in Houston. I enjoyed it so much that it changed my focus on creating fine art to learning more about murals and all the possible techniques!

I learned how to paint on all types of surfaces including: brick, concrete, wood floors, domed ceilings, metal tanks, and furniture. I realized with the right process, paint and sealant I could paint almost anything!

ART AFFECTS PEOPLE

Now, I have been painting murals for almost 20 years and I am still blown away by the meaningful

and inspiring interactions I get to be a part of through my art:

- a nursery where a baby falls asleep in a comfortable calming room with a soothing color palette
- a doctor's office where the artwork helps distract and comfort an anxious patient
- on the side of the building to brighten a city, send a positive message, or bring a community together.

I was lucky enough to see this firsthand in our beautiful city of Dripping Springs during the unveiling of the stars. So many community members of all ages came out to see the artwork and hear the stories behind them. I could feel the bond and unity as we walked Mercer Street that day. The pop of color the stars bring to our downtown demands attention, slows people down, brings them in, and begs for more.

THE POWER TO BOOST BUSINESS

The visual wow factor that a mural brings to a city or business is a chance for a first and lasting impression. It offers the unique ability to stand out and get noticed. Which is why murals have the power to boost business!

Just the other day the DSAL mural club painted a vibrant mural at Jennifer Terry's Fun Farm Day Drippin' Air BnB and she's thrilled:

"Our custom mural has brought the Instagram 'wow' factor people seek when traveling, and our business has increased substantially since we updated the listing with photos of the tank. We have been blown away with the support of our guests as a result of our Day Drippin' mural."

WHAT IS MY MOST UNIQUE MURAL TO DATE?

One of my most unique mural requests was to create the illusion of a hole in a client's wall with a snake coming out and crawling along their wood floor. The reasoning behind this was that my client's house had a step down that was very hard to see. She wanted something fun painted on the floor to grab people's attention to keep them from tripping! I am happy to report there have been no falls since the snake has been created.

DO I PAINT COMMERCIAL AND/OR RESIDENTIAL?

I also do both commercial and residential jobs. Lately, I have had the pleasure to paint space themed playrooms, sunset accent walls, a jungle nursery, faux tile, and oversized plants/flowers all in my own neighborhood!

WHAT IS MY FAVORITE MURAL I HAVE DONE?

I truly don't have one favorite mural but my favorite mural experience is within pediatric care. I have been lucky enough to work in many pediatric dentist and doctor's offices all over Texas where the artwork ranges from realistic animals to



The DSAL Mural Team (L-R): Leigh Watson, Renee D'Arienzo, Morgane Xenos, Natalya Holbrook working on the water tank. @funfarmdaydrippin

CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS



bright colored abstracts. The goal is always the same though, take away those sterile white walls and ease the patients' worry. I have seen it firsthand with my own children the difference of walking into a building with and without art. The excitement over colors, questions about what animals

do we see painted, to counting how many ladybugs are hidden within the wall, are all welcome conversations when waiting for a shot.

All of these interac-

tions, big or small, remind me of the reason I got into art so many years ago - to create something meaningful that someone connects with. I feel grateful everyday!



PEC warns of phone scam targeting members

Staff Reports

Pedernales Electric Cooperative (PEC) is warning its members to stay alert of phone scams.

Some PEC members have reported scammers impersonating PEC employees and phone numbers, asking for payment, and threatening disconnection for past-due balances.

Members who receive a suspicious phone call should hang

up and call PEC directly at 888-554-4732.

As a reminder, PEC will never:

- Ask members to pay with a prepaid card or payment app such as Cash App, Venmo, or Zelle. PEC's official app is SmartHub, which members can use to access their balance.
- Call from an out-of-state number.
- Instruct members not to call any other PEC number to make a payment.

- Have a technician call members to say they are coming to disconnect power.
- Request a cash payment at a member's home or business.
- Try to sell products or services by phone or door-to-door, including solar panels, energy audits, and "important energy-saving initiatives." PEC does not endorse any solar company or installer.

PEC will:

- Make recorded courtesy calls and di-

rect members to the co-op's secure payment line at 855-938-3589.

- Use a credit bureau, Collection Services, for delinquent balances on closed accounts. Members can reach Collection Services to verify calls at 800-286-2487.
- Send field agents to collect payments — never in cash — at residential and commercial locations.

More information on avoiding scams and PEC's business practices are available at mypec.com/scams.



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Public Notice

NOTICE OF PUBLIC SALE

Pursuant to Texas Property Code Chapter 59, **Right Space Storage**, Said property 16955 Ranch Rd 12 Wimberley, Tx 78676 512-648-4988 will hold a Public Sale in order to satisfy a landlord's lien **Thursday on 19th day of June, 2025, at 10AM.** Property will be sold to the highest bidder online on **Storage Treasures** and must be removed within 48 hours. The seller reserves the right to reject any bid and withdraw property from the sale. Bidding takes place on [StorageTreasures.com](#). Unless otherwise noted, all units contain household goods and items. For a more detailed listing, please visit [Lockerfox.com](#) 16955 Ranch Rd 12 Wimberley, Tx 78676:
Thomas Cloud

PUBLIC NOTICE

Let it be known to one and all throughout the United States of America and the World that on this date of the 3rd of May, 2025, of our Lord, that Texas State and Hays County Resident, **Sarah Jane Fohl**, was Ordained with the Title and Bestowed with the High Honor of: **Deaconess (Licentiate)** by the Sacred Medical Order, of the Catholic Church of Hope, of the East – in the St. James House of Prayer Episcopal Church, 2708 N. Central Avenue, Tampa Florida.

Enjoining His Ministry, **Sarah Jane Fohl** of Church of Hope, having been elected by **EPISCOPA OF THE THRONE**, to continue their ministry of tutoring, cultivation, development, healing, counseling, and teaching as part of their sacerdotal duties and divine and specifically offering services in Austin, TX and Dripping Springs, TX as a Christian Science Reading Room. Let it be known today **Sarah Jane Fohl**, shall be known as

TITLE & NAME: Reverend Deaconess Sarah Jane Fohl
ADDRESS: Dripping Springs, Texas
On this Day: May 03, 2025
In the Name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen

For Rent

**2/2 very
CLEAN!!**

Wimberley, on Deerfield St, well maintained, large fenced yard, full kitchen. Avail May or June move-in, lease \$1600 w \$1000 deposit, Pet Nego. Incl W/D and paid water. Looking for clean, responsible tenant. 850-855-5438 Steven 512-858-9999 Bob



Legal Notice

This is a public announcement that an Application has been made with the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission for a liquor license applied for by Jp's Wimberley Bbq to be located at 500 River Rd, Wimberley Texas. Owner of said corporation is Justin Pearson.

Public Notice

Public Notice

AUCTION- NOTICE OF PUBLIC SALE

To satisfy Landlord's Lien at Cen-Tex Storage 26552 RR 12, Dripping Springs, Tx. 78620 on Thursday, June 19th, 2025 at 10:00 a.m. Property includes contents of 1) John Golat: Table, Golf Clubs, Boxes, Fabric rolls, Fabric cutter.

ADVERTISEMENT AND INVITATION FOR BIDS

The City of Woodcreek will receive bids for the street and drainage improvements along Deerfield Drive from Woodcreek Drive until 2:00 PM on Friday, June 13, 2025, at 41 Champions Circle, Woodcreek, Texas 77676. The bids will be publicly opened and read aloud at 10:00 AM on Monday, June 16, 2025, at 41 Champions Circle, Woodcreek, Texas 77676. Bids are invited for several items and quantities of work as follows: Woodcreek CDV23-0080 Street Reconstruction.

1. Reconstruct approximately five hundred and ninety-eight linear feet (598 LF).
2. Drainage Improvements.

Bid/Contract Documents, including Drawings and Technical Specifications are on file at 41 Champions Circle, Woodcreek, Texas 77676. Copies of the Bid/Contract Documents, including drawings and technical specifications (with option to purchase hard copies) may be obtained at 41 Champions Circle, Woodcreek, Texas 77676. There is NO charge to view or download at Bid Documents at <https://www.woodcreektx.gov/rfps>. A bid bond in the amount of 5 percent of the bid issued by an acceptable surety shall be submitted with each bid. A certified check or bank draft payable to the City of Woodcreek, Hays County or negotiable U.S. Government Bonds (as par value) may be submitted in lieu of the Bid Bond.

Attention is called to the fact that not less than the federally determined prevailing (Davis-Bacon and Related Acts) wage rate, as issued by the Texas Department of Agriculture Office of Rural Affairs and contained in the contract documents, must be paid on this project. In addition, the successful bidder must ensure that employees and applicants for employment are not discriminated against because of race, color, religion, sex, sexual identity, gender identity, or national origin. All contractors and sub-contractors must be cleared (not suspended or debarred) prior to any formal action authorizing the award of a contract to the contractor. Minority Business Enterprises, Small Business Enterprises, Women Business Enterprises, Veteran-Owned Businesses, and Section 3 Businesses are encouraged to submit bids.

This solicitation is for services related to a project that is subject to the Build America, Buy America Act (BABA) requirements under Title IX of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. Absent an approved waiver, all iron, steel, manufactured products, and construction materials used in this project must be produced in the United States.

The City of Woodcreek reserves the right to reject any or all bids or to waive any informalities in the bidding. Bids may be held by The City of Woodcreek for a period not to exceed 60 days from the date of the bid opening for the purpose of reviewing the bids and investigating the bidder's qualifications prior to the contract award.



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CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

One Hour Heating & Air Conditioning celebrates new location with ribbon cutting

Staff Reports

The Dripping Springs Chamber helped celebrate the opening of One Hour Heating & Air Conditioning on May 29 with a special ribbon cutting ceremony. Owned and operated by an Austin veteran, this franchise goes beyond the services it provides. Even before opening its doors, the team has actively supported the community by sponsoring Little League and soccer

teams, participating in the Dripping Springs Annual Founders Day Festival, and donating to Wounded Warriors. As part of its commitment to giving back, the company offers the “Heroes Club,” a complimentary maintenance membership for firefighters, first responders, teachers, and military members. This is the 300th location for the company. It serves Dripping Springs and all of Hays County, and prides itself on providing transparent service

from start to finish and ensuring there are no hidden fees or unnecessary upselling - just honest, dependable HVAC solutions. General Manager Blake Landon brings 17 years of HVAC experience to the business. For more information and to explore grand opening specials, visit www.one-hourheatandair.com, call 512-SOO-COOL (512-766-2665), or email Blake at blake.landon@onehourair.com.

Fire and Flow Pilates celebrates Grand Opening with ribbon cutting ceremony

Staff Reports

Fire and Flow Pilates officially marked the grand opening of its expanded boutique studio with a ribbon cutting celebration on Friday, May 16, hosted in partnership with the Dripping Springs Chamber of Commerce. The event highlighted the launch of Fire and Flow’s new space, now featuring a private duo room and a small group reformer room — offering a Pilates experience that fuses strength, mobility, and flow. “This isn’t your typical Pilates studio. Fire and Flow is a bold, empowering space designed to help clients build real strength, improve flexibility, and feel amazing in their bodies,” according to the studio. “Whether you’re new to movement or ready to level up your training,



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

there’s something for everyone—and now is the perfect time to join the movement.” Founding member pricing is still available for a limited time. The studio is located at 13743 Nutty Brown

Road, Austin, TX 78737. Studio hours are Monday to Friday, 6 a.m. to 6 p.m., plus Saturday and Sunday, 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. To learn more, visit www.fireandflowpilates.com.

Ribbon cutting event honors 40 years of service for CASA

Staff Reports

On May 22, CASA of Central Texas celebrated four decades of service with a ribbon cutting ceremony in Wimberley. The event was held in partnership with the Wimberley Valley Chamber of Commerce and the Dripping Springs Chamber of Commerce to honor the organization’s commitment to children

and families across the region. CASA of Central Texas has proudly served local communities with a mission rooted in compassion, advocacy, and service. In Hays County, they served 92% of the children in foster care last year. Their renewed goal is to serve 100% of the children in foster care in all our counties. “This celebration is not just about

looking back at what we’ve accomplished, but about reaffirming our promise to every child in foster care in our service area,” said CASA CEO Norma Blackwell. “We believe every child deserves access to the support and resources they need to thrive, and we are committed to making that a reality.” The ceremony brought together community leaders, partners, fami-

lies, and supporters to honor the legacy of the past 40 years and to energize the vision for the years ahead. With heartfelt speeches, community engagement, and a shared sense of purpose, the event highlighted the power of unity and service to children and families. For more information about programs, services, or how to get involved, please visit www.casacentex.org.



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SERVICE DIRECTORY

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MARKET FROM PG. 1

tioning will be a welcome change for many, there is another change that has everyone a little sad - longtime vendor Nong Weitzel has retired, and will no longer be cooking up her legendary Thai food at the market.

Nong's final market was on May 28, and customers past and present showed up to wish her a happy retirement.

"It's overwhelming," Nong said. "The Friends Foundation showed up, and past

vendors who don't even work anymore - they retired before me - they showed up. Many longtime customers came and I was really surprised."

Nong said she didn't expect such a huge response, and she sold out very fast.

"They took everything on my table today. It can't be better than that," Nong said. "They took salsa and cooking sauce and everything. I mean, the table's empty. It was in an hour and a half, all

gone."

Nong said that for most of the time she lived in Dripping Springs, there were not a lot of different types of food in the area. In fact, when she and her husband Rick Weitzel first moved into their home here, they even had to drive to Oak Hill to buy groceries.

In those days, the town only had a couple of stop lights, and everyone recognized each other's cars. She saw the community pull together to build a se-

nior center and then a nursing home. She was involved with those efforts from the beginning.

"Everything was nonprofit and belonged to the community," Nong said.

Nong worked at the nursing home for 17 years. It was her way of giving back to the people who helped her learn about country life.

"I'm sad that many of them that have taught me so much have gone but I'm happy that I was at the nursing

home taking care of them as well. So that was my goal."

It wasn't until she retired from the nursing home that she took up cooking for others.

"I wanted to do something close to my roots. I wanted to show the community who I really am," Nong said. "I still have Thai in me to do it."

Soon enough, Nong had a dedicated group of customers. And at the Farmers Market, she also formed close relationships with the

other vendors.

"I enjoy meeting people, enjoy these people," Nong said. "They are hard workers, you know, to grow all the vegetables and stuff. I'm gonna miss all of them."

To read a more in-depth Q&A with Nong, see the story below.

To keep up with the latest Farmers Market happenings, sign up for the weekly newsletter at www.cityofdripping-springs.com/farmers-market.

Q&A with Nong Weitzel

Charlie Reed
Special to the News

Q: What does "Nong" mean?

Nong: It's "little sister." In Thailand, someone younger than you is always called "Nong." I was the youngest, so I've always been "Nong."

Q: Where did you learn to cook?

Nong: I learned to cook at my school in Thailand. Back then, teenagers, especially women, had to go to school to learn how to be the lady of the house. I liked cooking, but I didn't want to do it for just anyone, only people I love.

Q: When did you move here, and what brought you?

Nong: I moved to America on June 9th, 1972. We first moved to Ohio for Rick's work. He was a colonel in the Air Force at the time. I became a U.S. citizen in 1976.

We met several months, almost a year, before he left Thailand. We weren't dating, but he asked me to guide him whenever he came to Bangkok. He even asked me to help him pick furniture to send home for the house he would be moving into. After he left, he sent me my first Christmas card - I didn't know what it was about back then and had no idea what it was.

Whenever anyone asked how we met, Rick would joke around and tell everyone that he just landed his helicopter in the jungle and picked me

up. Really, he took time off his work in the Pentagon and came back to Thailand to ask me to marry him. I was afraid to say yes, because it was against family tradition to marry outside, but he said not to worry about that. We married on June 2nd and left Thailand on June 9th. I don't regret leaving Thailand - I have too much independence for traditional Thai relationships. I've been back twice, and both times I knew I made the right decision. I love it here and know I belong here, and I found someone who loved me more than I could say.

Q: Tell us about your work with the community.

Nong: I first came to Dripping Springs in 1973, and the community here took me in, really embraced me. They all wanted to adopt me - I had so many mothers back then. They taught me so many things, how to garden and pickle what I grew, and how to be a good person in the community. I still have a taste of that first pickled okra.

How else am I supposed to pay back all of my American mothers than to give to this community? I help with fundraising for the senior center, for the nursing home, and I've done a lot of work for my Church. I still help with fundraising for the Friends Foundation, and I love being part of the Empty Bowls Project, but last year might have been my last.

When I'm helping

with fundraising for the elderly, the goal is for them to be at home with the environment they know, where they're comfortable. We help them with food, with meals cooked at the nursing home, and with electricity if they need it. We want them to be at home as long as they are able to be there. All of that is from volunteers and donations.

Q: When did you start cooking for your neighbors?

Nong: I started in 2007. I felt that I needed to do something that made me happy, to remember where I came from. Back then, there weren't many people who wanted to eat Thai food. But younger people were interested. I started with ten orders, and a few weeks later I was making deliveries at the flagpole at the high school, and that's when it really started growing. My son, Travis, became a lawyer around then, and his first official job was helping me get all the permits I needed. He said, "No underground work, mom," and I had to ask him what that meant.

Q: How long have you been at the market?

Nong: I used to deliver meals at the Home Depot parking lot, then at The Barber Shop. I don't remember what year, but Marianne, Sherri, and Gouri finally convinced me to join them at the Farmers Market. At first it was only two times a month before I realized I needed to



Nong Weitzel at her table in the Farmers Market.

PHOTO BY CHARLIE REED

be all the way in. Rick told me I didn't need to work, but to me, work is not work and I need to contribute, and he came around to supporting me.

Q: Has it been hard cooking your native recipes with Texas ingredients?

Nong: Somewhat, but I like the fact that I can get fresh food that hasn't been washed with chemicals. In Thailand, we always had to wash our vegetables about ten times and treat the water we cooked them in because of the chemicals. I love the variety of fresh vegetables we can always get here, and the meats I get at market have always been perfect. For things I couldn't find, I was able to grow it myself, like certain limes, cilantro, mint, Thai basil... those are the ones I grow in my own garden, and I know what goes into them. When I make people food, I want it to be safe.

Q: What's your favorite American food?

Nong: Rib eye steak... medium rare. In Asia, you feed the whole family with one piece of meat. In Ohio, Rick asked if I wanted to try a steak and I had no idea what he meant. He ordered rib eyes, medium rare. When I first cut the meat, I jumped back because blood came out, and all the officers at the table had a good laugh. My kids just did a filet mignon for Mother's Day - my two grandkids even helped - so that might be my favorite now.

Q: What do you plan on doing now that you're retiring from cooking?

Nong: My plan is to see how much I can build and stay here at home for as long as I can. I love the peace out here, and I want it to stay pretty for myself.

Q: What will you miss the most about being part of the market?

Nong: I will miss people.

Q: I guess I can ask since you're leaving: who's your favorite vendor?

Nong: Oh, I can't say just one. Fran, Sherri, the Tolly's, Jessica who sells coffee, Erika with Solaro, who helped us cook for Empty Bowls last year, Ray... Don't ask me that question! They're all so good. I just love everyone.

Q: Any chance of you coming back from time to time?

Nong: When I walk away from something, I walk away from it. I know it's the right thing to do. I'm going to miss it, but my time to leave has come.

Charlie: On behalf of Dripping Springs Farmers Market, thank you, Nong. You will be missed.

This article is reprinted, in shortened form, with permission. It first appeared in the Dripping Spring Farmers Market Weekly Newsletter, and was written by Charlie Reed, market manager.



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GARAGE SALE FROM PG. 1

the needs of the community, all proceeds are donated to local charitable organizations such as Helping Hands, Burke Center for Youth, and others. The focus of Women in Mission is to serve the needs of women and children with a spirit of grace and compassion. Over the past years, women and children have been helped through various ways, and one of the most important has been the annual garage sale.

For additional information, contact Ginnie Street at womeninmission@ds-methodist.org.



Adonis
Male
2.5 years old
Great Dane mix

Yeah, I'm as handsome as my name suggests! I'm a playful pup who loves zooming around the yard with other dogs, chasing and having a blast. Even though I'm big, I'm not into roughhousing. I prefer to play in a more fun way that doesn't involve wrestling. I love going for walks and I'm pretty sure I could learn to bring you the leash to tell you it's time to go to the park! I'm crate trained, house trained, and super quiet, just happy to chill with my pals. Car rides? I'm a pro, sitting calmly and soaking in the view through the window. Cats? Haven't met one yet, but I bet we could be buddies. I hope I can find a human best friend forever to hang out with, go on adventures, and just have a good time. A fabulous foster home or a fantastic forever family would make my tail wag like crazy. Please visit LizzysHospice.com or email us at LizzysHospice@gmail.com for details.



Dahlia
Female
10 years old
Terrier mix

Some folks call me a rock star, but I'm just a sweet girl who's lived life to the fullest and then some. I've heard I've got a pawsome personality and love to be around people and dogs. Sadly, my old humans thought that meant I should be a mama over and over. But let me tell you, I'm a fun gal! Not the wild party type, but the loyal kind who'll stick by your side, follow you everywhere, listen to every word you say, and tag along for errands or chill at dog-friendly spots. I love other dogs. I guess you could say I'm a natural mama type. All I want now is a cozy foster home or my forever family to share my big heart with. Please visit LizzysHospice.com or email us at LizzysHospice@gmail.com for details.



Estelle
Female
Pit bull mix
3 years old

Meet Estelle! This playful pup is full of energy and loves to engage in chase, fetch, and active play. She's had a great time with her dog pals and gets along wonderfully with them! She also has good leash manners and knows several commands! Estelle is also a total sweetheart with people (including kids!)—she loves affection, treats, and spending time with her favorite humans. She may be a bit shy at first but once she gets to know you, she warms up! If you're looking for a fun-loving, friendly dog who's always ready for some playtime and cuddles, Estelle is the perfect match. Come meet her and see how she can bring happiness to your home! Visit www.pawshelter.org for more information.



Universal Crossword

6/1

Themeless Sunday 136 by Rafael Musa

ACROSS

- 1 Alabama-to-Mississippi direction
5 Word before "rain" or "tongue"
9 Transcript figs.
13 Not up to anything
14 Halves of diameters
16 Bit of 42-Across
17 Count of consecutive days of activity on a certain social media app
19 Spends time in the sun, maybe
20 Need not worry about success
21 "Starry ____ sparkin' up my darkest night" (Taylor Swift lyric)
22 Breathe out

23 Bias

- 24 "Gross!"
27 "Yikes!"
28 Acted out silently
30 HS student body spokesperson
33 Official approval, informally
36 Currency in Porto
37 Nike competitor
39 ____ colada
40 Make airtight
42 Film set on the water?
44 Japanese beef with a high degree of marbling
46 Cow's sound
47 Particularly, for short
48 Tequila cocktail, colloquially

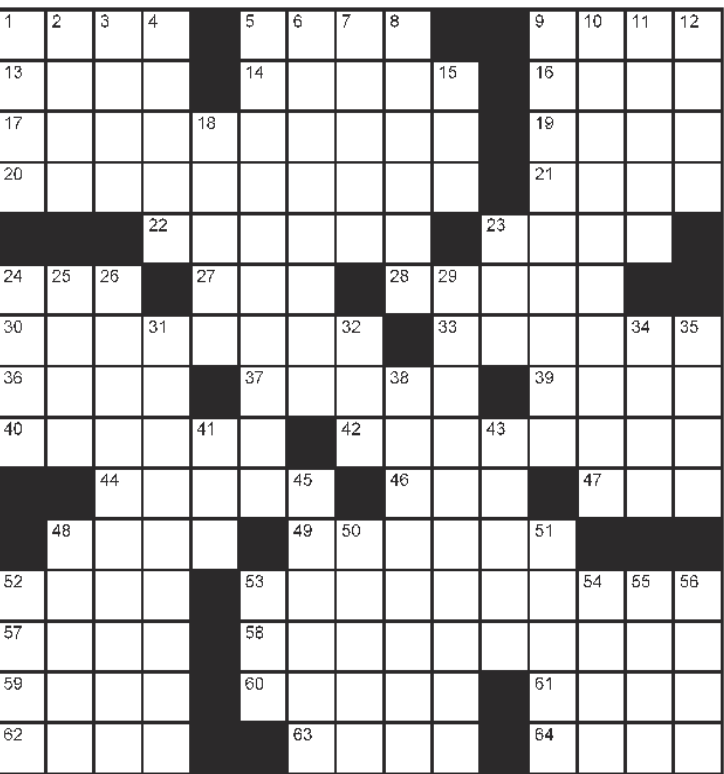
- 49 Strikes firmly, in the Bible
52 One, for two
53 Lighthearted escapist novels, say
57 ____-Seltzer
58 Shoulder-toning exercises
59 Word after "top" or "god"
60 Pumbaa's pal
61 Unable to decide
62 "No ____, no foul!"
63 "Fudge!"
64 Certain children
DOWN
1 Make-A-____ Foundation
2 Name that anagrams to "Dane"

PREVIOUS PUZZLE ANSWER

B	A	A	S		C	H	E	W	S		A	W	O	L
L	U	M	P		L	Y	D	I	A		M	E	M	O
A	D	I	O	S	A	M	I	G	O		B	E	E	F
H	I	N	T	H	I	N	T				D	I	D	N
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A	C	M	E		L	E	V	A	R		E	G	G	Y
M	E	S	S		R	E	E	L	S		D	O	E	S

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- 3 Certain Eastern European
4 Cone-shaped home
5 Discipline helping people interpret emotions through creative expression
6 Lincoln and others
7 Just perfect
8 Ornamental royal headband
9 Prevents others from accessing
10 Was friendly and cooperative
11 VP under Nixon
12 Attitude
15 Mike and ____
18 High dice rolls
23 Texter's "Tsk"
24 Soothes, as a sprain
25 "Soothes, as a sprain," e.g.
26 "Fons Americanus" artist
29 "No biggie!"
31 Green sight in a desert?
32 Die dot
34 Burden
35 Like clothes that came out of the dryer too early
38 Yearly gathering where many attendees cosplay
41 Comfy boot brand
43 "All the Light We Cannot See" author
45 Password's counterpart
48 Elder Obama daughter
50 "____ Mia!"
51 Sunni and Shia, e.g.
52 "Hell ____ no fury ..."
53 Echolocating mammal
54 ____ gobi
55 Actress and gay icon
56 Sensitive figs



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CALENDAR FROM PG. 1

County Courthouse • 300 Main St. • Blanco, TX 78606

Picker's Circle
June 8 • 7 p.m. to 10 p.m.
Every Sunday, The Barber-shop Bar hosts a Pickers Circle for anyone who wants to get in on the action or stop by and listen to some local musicians. The Barber Shop • 207 Mercer Street • Dripping Springs, TX 78620

Family Nerf Night
June 10 • 6 p.m. to 7 p.m.
Dripping Springs Ranch Park is hosting Family Nerf Night, an evening of family fun and friendly competition. Participants should bring their Nerf blasters and gear. Traditional Nerf darts will be provided. Tickets are \$8 in advance. Dripping Springs Ranch Park • 1042 Event Center Dr. • Dripping Springs, TX 78620

Dripping Springs Farmers Market
June 11 & 18 • 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.
The Dripping Springs Farmer's Market is held on Wednesdays at Dripping Springs Ranch Park.

Visitors can gather and shop for fresh agricultural and related products. For the summer, the market will keep its afternoon schedule, but will move inside into the air conditioning. Dripping Springs Ranch Park • 1042 Event Center Dr. • Dripping Springs, TX 78620

Beekeeping for AG Exemption (adults 18+)
June 12 • 12 p.m. to 1 p.m.
Learn what is needed to qualify for and maintain a Texas Ag Valuation in Hays County using bees as the qualifying agricultural activity. This class covers Central Appraisal District requirements, documentation tips, land and apiary setup advice, and how to stay compliant year after year. Taught by local Master Beekeeper and President of the Texas Natural Beekeepers Association, Nathalie B., who brings years of experience helping landowners navigate the Ag exemption process with confidence and success. For adults 18+, registration required at www.dscl.org. Dripping Springs Community Library • 501 Sportsplex Dr. • Dripping Springs, TX 78620
Women in Mission Annual

Garage Sale
June 13 • 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
June 14 • 8 a.m. to 12 p.m.
The annual garage sale serves the needs of the community, and all proceeds are donated to local charitable organizations such as Helping Hands, Burke Center for Youth, and others. For donations and other information, contact Ginnie Street at womeninmission@dsmethodist.org Dripping Springs Methodist Church • 28900 Ranch Road 12 • Dripping Springs, TX 78620

150th Anniversary - Rambo Masonic Lodge No. 426
June 14 • 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.
The public is invited to the celebration, which will include an open house and a classic car show by Speeding Springs. There will be free hamburgers, hot dogs, corn dogs, popcorn and drinks. Rambo Masonic Lodge No. 426 • 103 Old Fitzhugh Rd. • Dripping Springs, TX 78620

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND EDUCATION

Dripping Springs

Community Library
The Dripping Springs Community Library hosts multiple events every week day. Events include Toddler Story Time, Homeschool Chess Club, Legos @ the Library, Mah-Jongg, Master Gardeners on the Porch, Everyday Yoga, Graphic Lit Lounge and many more. For library events, visit dscl.org/event-calendar.

City of Dripping Springs Public Meetings
The City of Dripping Springs welcomes residents and others doing business with the city to attend any of the public meetings below. Streaming options and meeting packets at: cityofdrippingssprings.com. Meetings are traditionally held at City Hall Council Chambers. However, a remodel has many meetings at Ranch Park or Dripping Springs ISD Center for Learning & Leadership. See cityofdrippingssprings.com for more information.

• June 5 • 4 p.m.
Historic Preservation Commission Regular Meeting
• June 9 • 4 p.m.
TIRZ No. 1 & No. 2 Board Regular Meeting
• June 9 • 6:30 p.m.

Founders Day Commission Regular Meeting
• June 11 • 11 a.m.
DSRP Board of Directors Regular Meeting

Hays County Commissioners Court Regular Meeting
June 10 • 9 a.m.
This is a regular meeting of the Hays County Commissioners Court, the governing body of the county. This group of elected officials and staff oversees the functions and budget for all county-related business. Hays County Historic Courthouse • 111 E. San Antonio St. • San Marcos, Texas. Streaming option available at hayscountytexas.com

DRIPPING SPRINGS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Dripping Springs Board of Trustees Monthly Meeting
June 23 • 6 p.m.
Live meeting of the DSISD Board of Trustees which sets policy, agenda and strategic planning for the Dripping Springs school district. Agendas and live streaming option available at dsisdtx.us. Live meeting at the Center for Learning & Leadership • 300 Sportsplex Dr.

SPORTS

Tigers fall to Kingwood

Carl Waits
Sports Reporter

The state semifinals match between the Dripping Springs Tigers and Kingwood was all that it should be when two very good teams go at it for the right to play for the state title. It would go all three and then some before Kingwood would be able to claim the honor. The Tigers will be replaying this series for some time to come.

In the first of the three, the Tigers held a 4-1 lead after three but Kingwood struck for four in the top of fourth to take a 5-4 lead. The Tigers were able to cross the plate in their half to tie it up. However, Kingwood would score three more in the next two innings to take the 8-5 victory. Kingwood would out-hit the Tigers 10-9.

This would put the Tigers with their backs to the wall. They had been there before in the playoffs and had the confidence they could do it again. With their strong pitching staff, the Tigers proceeded to shut down the bats and blanked Kingwood. The Tigers used their five hits to get single runs in the first, fourth and fifth to take a 3-0 win and draw even for the series.

Now it was for all



Senior Traigh Perry makes a play during the game against Pharr-San Juan-Alamo.

PHOTO BY GABRIEL DE LEON PHOTOGRAPHY

the marbles in the third and deciding game and it was a beaut. The Tigers were the home team in this game. Neither team scored in the first but Kingwood would cross the plate twice in the second to temporarily take a 2-0 lead. The Tigers would answer with three in the third and two in the fourth for a 5-2 lead after four.

At this point the Tigers had to think they would keep scoring and their pitching would keep Kingwood from scoring. Things looked to be in their favor. Good teams hang in there and Kingwood did. They scratched out single runs in the fifth and sixth. Even so the Tigers still had a 5-4 lead going into the seventh. Kingwood put runners on second and third with one out. A walk loaded the bas-

es. The Tiger pitcher got the next batter to pop up for the second out.

Unfortunately, a passed ball on the next batter allowed the tying run to score before getting out of the inning. The game would continue for two more innings before Kingwood would manage a run that the Tigers could not duplicate and took the game and the series 6-5.

It was one of those heart-breaking situations that happens all too often in the sports world. So close, yet so far. Everyone understands how hard it is to get that far in the playoffs. You still have to have great pride in the effort the Tigers put forth throughout the season, as they ended the season as District 26-6A co-champs and with a 29-12 record.

GUILTY FROM PG. 1

“As the conditions of his probation, he can't be in an employee of his family in the contracting business, and he can not be a contractor in any way,” he added. “And third, some jail time. One year was satisfactory to him as a lesson to let him what he'd be in for if he messes up on his probation.

“My thought was to add restitution, and see if we could get some restitution from these families.”

The total amount of restitution will range from \$300,000 to \$500,000, pending the outcome of a hearing.

The defendants indictments stemmed from incidents which occurred from 2013 to 2021 with two sets of victims from Llano County and four from Travis County. Retired Judge Daryl Coffey of Tarrant County presided over the trial.

McAfee, appointed by 33rd/424th Judicial District Attorney Perry Thomas, tried the case with the assistance of Llano County Attorney Matt Rienstra. McAfee served as the local DA prior to Thomas.

“We appreciate the jury holding Mr. Erickson accountable for his actions,” Thomas said. “It just goes to show we have a commitment to victims of fraud.

“It involved large amounts of money defrauding homeowners, people trying to build homes,” Thomas added. “Because of the large amount of money and people involved, it's a huge verdict.”

The punishment

“This guy didn't just steal money. He stole their dreams.”
— **Wiley 'Sonny' McAfee**
Special Prosecutor

phase involved impact statements from the victims.

“It's so important because of the problem we have with contractors. He stole tremendous amounts of money,” McAfee said. “There was the side effect of the emotional stress, taking away the resources they needed for family, children's schooling.

“This guy didn't just steal money. He stole their dreams.”

After the guilty verdict, the defense moved to “sever” a number of other counts involving first degree felony misapplication of fiduciary/financial property and three of four state jail felony charges of securing the execution of documents through deception.

The prosecution focused on “count 1”, which was a first degree felony charge of theft of property (greater than \$300,000).

The punishment agreement also took into account a state jail felony charge of securing the execution of a document through deception which involved a \$10,000 check.

“Normally, I would ask for as much prison time as possible on this because he was a thief. Some of these families have been at it for 12

years,” McAfee said. “He hurt so many people financially, emotionally.”

Erickson, who is now a convicted felon, waived his right to an appeal and will serve his probation while paying back the money over the 10-year period. He was given two weeks to get his “affairs in order” before being transported to the state jail facility.

“It has been going on for several years now, and some of the folks that have been with us for many years said they'd like for this to be final where he doesn't have the right to an appeal,” McAfee said.

Erickson's trial began May 12 with jury selection at the Llano County Courthouse, followed by opening statements and the first witness on May 13. Closing arguments were underway by May 21.

Thomas said, “We appreciate Sonny McAfee continuing to assist this office and the extremely hard work in trying this case.”

McAfee added, “The jury was very thoughtful and deliberative. They spent a lot of time going over different exhibits and evidence. Matt and I both thought they did a great job.”

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Dripping Springs, TX 78620
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A great Commercial opportunity awaits on this 7.1-acre tract which boasts prominent frontage on Ranch Road 12, is Ag Exempt, and also fully entitled and permitted for a massive 42,000 sq.ft. of flex commercial space, primed and ready for construction.

2201 W Hwy 290 Suite #B
Dripping Springs, TX 78620
For Lease - \$2.00 + NNN
2,175sf historical farmhouse that has been renovated for office, retail, hospitality, and other mixed uses. Includes separate 400sf private office/showroom with HVAC and water connected.

133 Glosson Ranch Rd Unit #A
Dripping Springs, TX 78620
For Sale - \$1,799,000
For Lease - \$1.00 + NNN
14,000sf across two versatile buildings with no zoning restrictions. Utilities are in place, with power, septic, and water connected, making this site move-in ready.

133 Glosson Ranch Rd Unit #C
Dripping Springs, TX 78620
For Sale - \$1,125,000
For Lease - \$1.00 + NNN
5,000sf fully HVAC warehouse, with 1,000sf of Office Space. This property is equipped adequately for efficient loading, there is both a loading dock and regular ground-level loading.

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