### GHS is more than you expect!







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Vol. 172, No. 6

Thursday, July 4, 2024



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# **Emmitt Smith** praises retiring pharmacist **Bruce Blackwell**

BY LEW K. COHN

Inquirer Publisher

When a local legend like Walmart Gonzales pharmacist Bruce Blackwell is scheduled to retire after more than 50 years of service, it is only fitting that he be feted by an NFL Hall of Famer.

Leading all-time rusher and former Dallas Cowboy Emmitt Smith came to Gonzales Thursday, June 27, to meet Blackwell, praise him for a long and illustrious career and offer him sage advice on what to do to remain active and vital after he hangs up his lab coat for the last time.

See SMITH, page 12



LEW K. COHN

Walmart Gonzales pharmacist Bruce Blackwell, left, shakes hands with NFL Hall of Famer Emmitt Smith on Thursday, June 27, after receiving an autographed football. The former Dallas Cowboy legend was brought in by Walmart to surprise Blackwell, a lifelong Cowboys fan, to celebrate Blackwell's impending retirement.

# Longtime municipal judge Schroeder passes away at 71

BY LEW K. COHN

Inquirer Publisher

Judge Gary J. Schroeder, who was the longest-serving municipal judge in the history of Gonzales County, passed away Tuesday, June 25. He was

At the time of his death, Schroeder was the municipal judge for the city of Smiley and recently celebrated 41 years as a jurist — a milestone

See **SCHROEDER**, page 5

Schroeder



LEW K. COHN

Luling Deputy Fire Chief Keith Lohse, right, takes command of the scene of a fire at the old Buc-ee's travel center Monday, July 1. Multiple departments, including Gonzales and Ottine, responded to the incident, which is still under investigation.

Demolition crews can only watch as firefighters battle a blaze at the old Buc-ee's travel center in Luling on Monday, July 1. The fire appeared to start while an excavator was tearing down a portion of the building. Thankfully, no one was injured.

# Blaze consumes old **Buc-ee's travel center**



something started the fire," Lohse said. "There was no

mander on scene.

BY LEW K. COHN Inquirer Publisher

Fire crews on the scene are still investigating what caused a blaze in the old Buc-ee's travel center at the corner of I-10 and US 183 on Monday, July 1. Demolition crews using excavators were tearing the

building down at about 10

according to Luling Deputy

who was the incident com-

"They were in the process of demolition and

a.m. when the fire started,

Fire Chief Keith Lohse,

using the excavators when power or gas hooked up to

See FIRE, page 12

## Two teens dead after Water Street collision

#### FROM STAFF REPORTS

Two teens from Temple were killed in a three-vehicle accident Saturday, June 29, on Water Street (US 183) in Gonzales.

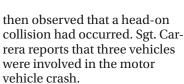
According to a Gonzales Police Department report, at about 8:35 p.m., GPD Sgt. Alberto Carrera was traveling north on Water Street when he observed



multiple vehicles stopped near

the 1100 block and individuals

gathered near them. Sgt. Carrera



The report indicates that a gray Ford escape was traveling northbound on Water Street and struck the rear driver side of a

See WRECK, page 5

# Gonzales enchants the Traveller's Elixir website

#### BY BETTY COHN

Gonzales Inquirer

The Traveller's Elixir published an online shout out to our beautiful small town of Gonzales, Texas, in a Tom Jackon-penned article entitled "14 Enchanting Small Towns in Texas That Will Steal Your Heart."

The list places Gonzales in 13th place out of 14, though it is always No. 1 in our hearts.

Listed among these were, in

• Bandera, a small Hill Country region town, about an hour northwest of San Antonio. Known as the "Cowboy Capitol of the World" this town embraces its title in the

charm of its authentic cowboy lifestyle with rodeos, horseback riding live country music venues. We're told you might even ride through the streets on a horse or longhorn.

• Next on the list is Dripping Springs, located west of Austin,

See ELIXIR, page 11

#### 1 SECTION

12 PAGES

BY BETTY COHN Gonzales Inquirer

Unemployment in Gonzales County decreased to 3.2 percent in April 2024, while previously decreasing in March 2024 to 3.7 percent, with the county continuing

Unemployment decreases to 3.2 percent

See JOBS, page 5

# Softly call the muster

Andrew Kent descendants to gather in Gonzales for biennial reunion

#### **BY VANDY VAN EPPS**

Gonzales Inquirer

Descendants of Andrew Kent will be heading to Gonzales for a family muster (reunion) Saturday, July 20 in honor of his legacy of fighting for Texas Independence.

Eighth-generation Texan Glennece Beckett, a five-time great granddaughter to Kent, said the biennial event is a celebration of the life of Kent and the part he played in the history of Texas.

"It is a day of history, stories, and extended family bonding. The first muster was held in

See MUSTER, page 11

# GCVMA hosts July 4th golf tournament, fundraiser

#### FROM STAFF REPORTS

The 12th annual Gonzales County Veterans Memorial Association (GCVMA) threeman scramble golf tournament returns this Thursday, July 4 for the Independence Day holiday at the Gonzales Independence Golf Course off Water Street in Gonzales

Tee time is at 8 a.m. and the cost is \$150 per team. There

will be a Superman Drive on Hole No. 10 for \$20. Cart rental is available at the club house and players have two Mulligans

The price includes refreshments (meat, snacks, soda and water), but players must BYOB. Prizes will be given for first through third based on a full field, plus there will be closest to the pin and longest drive

All proceeds for the tournament will go towards the Gonzales County Veterans Memorial Association, and will go towards funds to build a memorial to honor veterans past, present, and future.

The GCVMA has raised around \$245,000 from donations, fundraisers and paver brick sales and is now just \$80,000 short of finishing at this time. GCVMA is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

For more information about the tournament, you can also call Derek Grahmann at 830-857-3199 or Bill Kessler at 830-203-0002 or the golf clubhouse at 830-672-1324.

There will also be a Gonzales County Veterans Memorial Association benefit fundraiser on Saturday, July 13, at the American Legion Hall in Gonzales.

Doors open at 6 p.m. and there will be a meal comprised of a half BBQ chicken, cheese potatoes, green beans and peach cobbler and a performance by Jewell's Jewels.

Tickets are \$25 and there will be tickets for a prize drawing at the door as well as two patriotic lap quilts as silent auction items. Come out and help the GCVMA raise money for the memorial.

# LCRA awards \$50,000 grant to Belmont Volunteer FD

#### **SPECIAL TO THE INQUIRER**

A \$50,000 grant from the Lower Colorado River Authority will help the Belmont Volunteer Fire Department purchase a new mini pumper truck and extrication equipment to help with response efforts during emergency calls.

The Community Development Partnership Program grant, along with \$337,307 in matching funds from the department, will help the VFD gain better access to property and people in life-threatening situa-

"The mini pumper truck is going to be a much more versatile truck for us that we can take out to rescue calls and house fire calls," said Brian Schauer, Belmont VFD fire chief. "Many of our areas are hard to get to, so this truck will make it easier for us to get to different locations."

The department also

plans to update its extrication equipment with new battery-powered tools, which will speed up response time and reduce the number of firefighters needed to operate the equipment.

"We plan to purchase a package of rescue tools that will include the Jaws of Life, spreaders, rams and more," Schauer said. "They will be made with more advanced technology compared to what we currently use."

LCRA General Manager Phil Wilson said the new truck and equipment will help keep Belmont VFD prepared for any type of emergency.

"The new truck will have many new capabilities, making it an important addition to the department's fleet," Wilson said. "Not only will it be able to store the new life-saving equipment, it also can hold a significant amount of water and access rural areas, which will make a difference in the communities served

by the department. I'm proud that LCRA can provide this grant to support the firefighters and the residents in the area."

Belmont VFD operates in Gonzales County and provides mutual aid to all departments in Gonzales and Guadalupe counties and several other departments in the surrounding

The community grant is one of 44 grants awarded recently through LCRA's Community Development Partnership Program, which helps volunteer fire departments, local governments, emergency responders and nonprofit organizations fund capital improvement projects in LCRA's wholesale electric, water and transmission service areas. The program is part of LCRA's effort to give back to the communities

Applications for the next round of grants will be accepted in July. More information is available at lcra.org/cdpp.





BYK USA donated \$1,000 to the Gonzales Dog Adoption Inc. organization to help with the new kennel building project. Pictured from left are Earline Cmackal, Raul Cortes, Lori Benes, Adi Raut-Desai, Susan Simper (BYK) and Norma Turk, Dr. Kathleen Koerner and Keiko McCormick (Gonzales Dog Adoption).

# Local program needs volunteers to serve as long-term care ombudsmen

#### **SPECIAL TO THE INQUIRER**

Golden Crescent Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program is seeking volunteers in Calhoun, Dewitt, Jackson, Lavaca, Goliad, Gonzales and Victoria counties to advocate for residents living in nursing and assisted living facilities.

Volunteer ombudsmen visit residents, identify, and investigate complaints, and educate residents, families, and facility staff on protecting the health, safety, welfare, and rights of individuals living in long-term care settings. Ombudsman services are

free and confidential.

Volunteers must be at least 18-years old and complete a free, 36-hour training course that includes classroom, self-study, and in-facility training. No prior experience is required. Hours are flexible and determined by each volunteer.

Training starts soon. Registration is required. If you have an hour a week to make a difference in someone's life, please contact Christina Guajardo, MLO at 361-578-1587 X 217 or 361-920-1400 or christinag@gcrpc.org for more information.



LCRA representatives present a \$50,000 grant to the Belmont Volunteer Fire Department for a new mini pumper truck and vehicle extrication equipment. The grant is part of LCRA's Community Development Partnership Program. Pictured, from left to right, are: Rick Arnic, LCRA Regional Affairs representative; Kenneth Schauer, Belmont VFD captain; Jay Tinsley, first assistant fire chief; Margaret D. "Meg" Voelter, LCRA Board member; Brian Schauer, fire chief; Kevin T. La Fleur, Gonzales County Commissioner, Precinct 3; and Austin McDonald and John DuBose III,

# FEMA designates disaster areas, counties which can apply for federal funding

#### **SPECIAL TO THE INQUIRER**

The Federal Emergency Management Agency designated multiple Texas counties as Primary Natural Disaster Areas due to severe storms, straight-line winds, tornadoes, and flooding which occurred, beginning April 26, 2024.

This presidential disaster declaration allows the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) to extend much-needed emergency credit to producers recovering from natural disasters through emergency loans.

Emergency loans can be used to meet various recovery needs including the replacement of essential items such as equipment or livestock, reorganization of a farming operation, or to refinance certain debts. FSA will review the loans based on the extent of losses, security available,

and repayment ability.

• Triggering Disaster: Severe Storms, Straightline Winds, Tornadoes, and Flooding beginning April 26, 2024, and continuing.

- Application Deadline: January 22, 2025
- Primary Counties Eligible: Callahan and Guadalupe
- Contiguous Counties Also Eligible: Aransas, Bexar, Caldwell, Comal, Gonzales, Hays, Jackson, Matagorda, Refugio, Victoria, and Wilson

On farmers.gov, the Disaster Assistance Discovery Tool, Disaster Assistance-at-a-Glance fact sheet, and Loan Assistance Tool can help you determine program or loan options. To file a Notice of Loss or to ask questions about available programs, contact your local USDA Service Center.

FEMA offers different assistance programs for individual citizens, public groups including government agencies and private nonprofit organi-

zations. To find the FEMA

help you need following a disaster event, visit fema. gov/assistance.





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#### **Birthdays**

July 4th Happy Birthday USA!

July 5th Claire Harkey Marquise Hastings

Kirby Knox Heath Lipke Corrien Scivally Jose Torres

July 6th

Alice Johnson Cline Dorothy Guiterrez Michelle McKinney Brittany Pakebusch

> **David Staton** July 7th

Randy Zella

July 8th Hagan Brown Dena Fritz Will Lamb Cynthia West Kaily Zumwalt

facebook.com/GonzalesInquirer

July 9th Fernando Casares Del DeLa Santos Ken David DuBose

> July 10th Vernene Corby

Ches Ellev Trent Fernandez Cherry Moeller Esther Molina Janet Raabe Collin Richter D.J. Richter Cain Segura Aaron Ray-Lee Webb

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# **Gonzales Weather**





Mostly cloudy and very warm; a stray afternoon thunderstorm



July 6 100°/76° 38% chance of rain • RealFeel 101



Mostly sunny and hot 1% chance of rain ● RealFeel 103



July 7

Mostly cloudy and hot 4% chance of rain ● RealFeel 102





**加**数8

Mostly sunny and hot 8% chance of rain • RealFeel 99





Mostly sunny 10% chance of rain • RealFeel 97



**July 10** 96°/77°

Very warm and humid with sunshine 20% chance of rain ● RealFeel 105

# Upcoming Events at J.B. Wells Park in Gonzales

July 6th - 7th **South Texas Tour** 

July 4th – Happy 4th of July Proudly brought to you by:

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¶/GonzalesInquirer

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#### LIVESTOCK WEEKLY REPORTS

GONZALES LIVESTOCK June 29th, 2024 Cattle - 942 Compared to our last sale: Number 1 choice calves and yearlings sold 3.00-4.00 higher. Less quality calves and yearlings sold steady. Packer cows sold steady & bulls sold steady

to higher. Stocker-feeder Steers: Medium and large-frame No. 1: 150-300 lbs., 325-475; 300-400 lbs., 275-385; 400-500 lbs., 255-350; 500-600 lbs., 245-315; 600-700 lbs., 245-280; 700-800 lbs., 235-268. Bull Yearlings: 700-900 lbs., 125-

Stocker-feeder heifers: Medium and large-frame No. 1: 150-300 lbs., 315-375; 300-400 lbs., 285-325; 400-500 lbs., 255-312: 500-600 lbs., 215-280; 600-700 lbs., 223-241.

Packer Cows: Good lean utility and commercial, 119-129; Cutters, 135-151; Canners, 95-110; High yielding fat cows, 125-141.

Packer Bulls: Yield grade 1 & 2, good heavy bulls, 155-164; Light weights and medium quality bulls, 131-147. Stocker Cows: \$900 to \$2,250.

Pairs: \$1,800 to \$3,200. HALLETTSVILLE LIVESTOCK

COMMISSION CO., INc. Sale date: June 25th Cattle on hand: 960 Packer Cows: High Dressing: \$134-155 Medium Dressing: \$120-135

Poor/Weak Cows: \$85-110 Packer Bulls: High Dressing Bulls: \$152-179 Medium Dressing Bulls: \$130-

Low Dressing: \$112-125

Low Dressing Bulls: \$115-130 Stocker Cows: Good Stocker/Cows & Heifers:

Medium Stocker Cows & Heifers: \$1250-1800 Good Cow & Calf Pairs: NONE Medium Cow & Calf Pairs: 4 PR. \$2350-2700

Stocker & Feeder Calves & Yearlings:

Number 1 steer & bull calves: Under 200 lbs.: \$340-425 200-300 lbs.: \$340-415 300-400 lbs.: \$320-395 400-500 lbs.: \$295-375 500-600 lbs.: \$260-315 600-700 lbs.: \$242-280 700-800 lbs.: \$215-265 Number 1 heifer calves: Under 200 lbs: \$320-400 200-300 lbs.: \$280-360 300-400 lbs.: \$280-355 400-500 lbs.: \$260-345 500-600 lbs.: \$245-290 600-700 lbs.: \$220-265 700-800 lbs: \$195-240 Replacement Heifers:

350-700 lbs.: \$285-320 The calf market was once again higher. All classes sold #1 to \$5 higher. Average of all calves sold was \$3 higher. Heavier weights were particularly strong. Packer cows and bulls sold \$4 to \$6 higher on a supply of 130 head. Top Bull 179. Top Cow 155.

SEGUIN CATTLE CO.

June 26th Market Trend: Quality of cattle good today. Stocker cattle steady with packer cows & bulls 2-3 better Cattle - 626

Sheep & goats - 1136 Medium & large frame #1 Steers: 200-300 lb. 1.05-2.96-3.95

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300-400 lb. .90-3.20-3.80 400-500 lb. 1.20 2.54-3.55 500-600 lb. 1.20-2.52-3.05 600-700 lb. 1.15-2.33-2.63 700-850 lb. 1.10-2.13-2.47 Medium & large frame #1 Heifers:

200-300 lb. 1.80-2.59-3.20 300-400 lb. 1.05-2.55-3.70 400-500 lb. 1.00-2.65-3.50 500-600 lb. 1.15-2.42-2.88 600-750 lb. 1.35-2.33-2.55 Cows:

Utility & commercial - 1.12-1.36-

Cutters - 1.00-1.15-1.30 Canners. - 1.00-1.11-1.22 Palpated cows - 1575-1900 Cow/Calf Pairs - NONE

Heavy High Yielding - 1.55-1.68 Light & Low Yielding - 1.45-1.54 Sheep & Goats: Nannies - 30-205 Kid Goats (Fat) - 2.20-3.12 Wethers -1.25-3.35 Billies - 1.50-2.15 Dorp. Ewes - 20-145 Dorp. Lambs (Fat) - 1.80-2.45 Wooled Ewes - 90-110 Wooled Bucks - 1.20-1.65 Lambs - 1.65-2.07 Barb. Bucks - 250-475

CUERO LIVESTOCK MARKET June 28th, 2024 Number of head 1418 NO SALE NEXT WEEK, JULY 5TH, IN OBSERVANCE OF INDEPENDENCE DAY There were 273 cows and 43 bulls. A big jump in prices on slaughter cows and bulls. Tops on packer bulls was \$14/cwt higher at \$179/cwt, while tops on cows was up \$8/cwt at \$153/ cwt. Demand continues to be very strong and getting stronger. The calf market was stronger across the board as demand is higher. All classes were in line with previous weeks. Calves were \$5/cwt higher on over 13 pounds of weight resulting in over \$60 per head more value. A great day to sell. Packer bulls:

All Weights 155.00-179.00 Packer cows: canners & cutters 95.00-153.00 poor & weak 75.00-93.00

Palpated:27 bred \$1,200 & \$2,050 PAIRS: 2 \$1,900 & \$2,150 Steer/Bull Calves: (AVG-HIGH) Under 200 lbs. NONE 367.00-417.50 200-250 lbs. 250-299 lbs 356.00-410.00 300-350 lbs. 348.00-395.50

350-400 lbs. 330.00-370.00 400-450 lbs. 310.00-356.00 450-500 lbs. 303.00-360.00 500-550 lbs 272.00-324.00 550-600 lbs. 260.00-288.00 600-700 lbs 247.00-283.00 700-800 lbs 236.00-270.00 Heifer Calves: (AVG-HIGH)

under 200 lbs. 283.00-410.00 200-250 lbs 341.00-410.00 250-300 lbs 288.00-345.00 300-350 lbs. 287.00-340.00 350-400 lbs. 310.00-340.00 400-450 lbs. 287.00-336.00 450-500 lbs 272.00-355.00 500-550 lbs 256.00-312.50 550-600 lbs 245.00-276.00 600-700 lbs. 218.00-308.00\*

Brent Franques

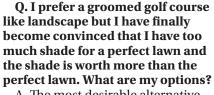
180.00-232.00

Over 700 lbs

\*Replacement Heifer

METRO CREATIVE GRAPHICS

**CALVIN FINCH** 



A. The most desirable alternative that comes to my mind is a "lawn" of shade tolerant groundcovers such as Asian jasmine, dwarf ruellia, mondo grass, and liriope. They can be planted in layers and be manicured. If you get a chance to visit the King William area south of downtown San Antonio there are some spectacular examples of such landscapes.

Q. We are growing Oscar Okra which we obtained from a Master Gardener from our area. It is a reasonable sized plant and can be harvested over a long period without getting unpleasantly crisp. The problem seems to be that sources of the seed are hard to find. Any special hints on how to collect and store the seed?

A. Just let some of the pods mature on the plant and then store them in a paper sack in a shed until planting time next summer. Some gardeners designate one plant to be the seed

source so you can keep harvesting all the pods at the right time on the other plants. It seems to keep the plants at maximum production until the harvest season ends.

Q. What is the recommended mowing height for zovsia grass. I mow it at 2 inches when it needs it but it makes a mess with leaving brown torn areas.

A. There are a couple of issues that are probably contributing to the problem. The 2 inch height is right but it should be mowed with a reel mower or a sharp rotary mower every week. Zoysia grass is tough and the rotary mowers have a tendency to rip it especially if you are not mowing every week.

Q. I grow my herbs and flowers in containers on the patio. In order to expand the planting, I have begun to use some of the black plastic containers. It has not been very successful. Could the containers be allowing the soil inside to get too hot and kill the roots?

A. Actually that often happens. Using larger pots, clay pots, or shading the plastic containers will help the roots to survive.

# No cost summer meals available for Texas kids

#### **SPECIAL TO THE INQUIRER**

When schools close for the summer and kids no longer have access to school meals.

Texas food banks see 830-203-0738 Sprinklers



hunger spike and increased need in their communities. The good news is that resources are available this summer to keep Texas kids nourished.

In addition to the food available from local food banks, the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) administers the Summer Meals Program, which provides meals at no cost to children and teens 18 years old and younger and students with disabilities up to 21 years old. These nutritious meals are available now to keep kids fed this summer.

"Food banks know that here in Texas, hunger doesn't take a summer vacation," said Celia Cole, CEO of Feeding Texas, the state association of food banks. "While summer should be a time of fun and relaxation for kids, it can also mean up to 90 days without the reliable school meals so many kids depend on to thrive. That's why the Texas Department of Agriculture's Summer Meals Program is so important to our communities." Nearly 1 in 4 Texas

kids experience hunger, according to Feeding

America's latest Map the Meal Gap study. Child hunger only worsens during the summer months when the loss of school meals and higher utility bills can reduce a family's budget

for food. Families can visit SummerFood.org or text FOOD or COMIDA to 304-304 to find a summer meal site near

them. "We encourage Texans to share this information with friends, family and members of their communities," Cole said. "Keeping children nourished during the summer improves nutrition and sends them back to school ready to learn. Together, we can keep kids fed in Texas."

Because meal site schedules can be subject to change, we recommend families call to confirm dates, times and meal-service details. Families do not have to apply, register or provide identification.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) funds the Summer Meals Program - including the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) and the Seamless Summer Option (SSO).



# **OPINION**

#### **GONZALES CO. HISTORY**

- 1826 July 2, settlement attacked by Indians. Settlers were on their way to Mina (Bastrop) to celebrate the Fourth of July with friends on the Colorado River. John Wightman stayed behind and was killed. The settlers evacuated the area
- 1853 July 2, large group of German immigrants passed through town. Their wagons were loaded with sheep they had brought from Germany.
- J.H. Remschel opened Remschel **Brothers Lumber Company**
- 1887 -Estimated 19,988 persons live in Gonzales County
- 1907 J.M. Mohrmann bought out his partner, Kelly, to found Mohrmann's Drug Store in the west corner of the Randle-Rather Building (Later moved to 407 St. George Street and then in 1974 to 413 St. George Street. During this time the store changed hands at least once and was re-purchased by the Mohrmanns after WWII).
- 1911 August 7, Judge Ben W. Fly receives 100 piece silver table service (Gorham) from Antiabolitionists of Victoria County. Name "Fly" engraved on each
- 1913 July 10, a census report shows that land in Gonzales County now averages \$21.13 per acre, up \$11.25 per acre in the last decade.

#### Letters to the **Editor Policy**

It is the policy of The Inquirer to encourage reader participation on its Opinion page. Diverse and varied opinions are welcomed. Because of space limitations, we must limit all contributors to one letter per person per month. Letters of 400 words or less will be published unless they contain language or content that the editors feel is inappropriate.

Letters must either be about Gonzales County, from a resident of Gonzales County, or in response to a story that appears in print or online in The Inquirer.

Examples of content that will cause letters to be rejected include the following:

- Confusing or unclear points.
- Crude language.
- Poor taste.
- Disrespectful comments regarding a group's or individual's ethnicity, gender, religion, culture, sexual orientation or
- Other incendiary language or remarks
- Endorsements for or complaints about individually named commercial products or services.
- Poetry.
- Personal attacks.
- "Thank You" letters that go beyond general thanks to the community; attempt to serve as an advertisement for a company, individual or political party; or is submitted in lieu of a paid "Thank You" advertisement.

During periods ahead of an election, The Inquirer does not accept letters to the editor urging voters to vote for or against candidates in local elections. Endorsements should be displayed in political advertising. In light of this policy, we reserve the right to reject or edit letters for references to candidates and whether or not they should be elected. The Inquirer will accept letters expressing views on bond measures, constitutional amendments and other such issues. Letters will not be accepted once early voting has begun.

The Inquirer will not knowingly publish factually incorrect information.

Only letters written exclusively to the newspaper will be published. Letters to a third party or those written to more than one newspaper are not accepted. "Wallpaper" - submissions that are in large part copied-and-pasted from another author or organization - will not be published.

Letters written in response to other letter writers should address the issue at hand. Discourse should be civil and people should be referred to in a respectful manner. Letters referring to news stories should also mention the headline and date of publication.

All letters must be signed and include the writer's street address or route address telephone number, which will be used for verification purposes only.

#### Please send Letters to the Editor:

- Email: publisher@gonzalesinquirer.
- U.S. Mail: The Inquirer, P.O. Box 616, Gonzales, Texas, 78629
- In person: The Inquirer, 622 St. Paul Street, Gonzales, Texas, 78629 (Please

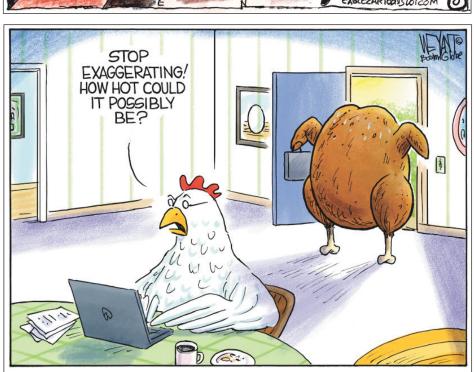
bring in a digital format, if possible). Further questions may be directed to

Publisher Lew Cohn, 830-672-2861.











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DR. DON **NEWBURY** The Idle American

# 5 o'clock Friday at the factory...

Texas doctor, closing out a hectic week, hoped it to be his final medical appointment. He stared at a Q-tip that was devoid of cotton at both ends.

"This Q-tip must have gotten right up against 5 o'clock Friday at the factory," he muttered.... In the span of one week recently,

I felt that my photograph might be placed alongside a "customer is always wrong" essay, thinking my value about the same as a "cottonless" Q-tip.

On three occasions, I was "done wrong." In each case, I felt as if I'd been hit full in the face with a blivit, a rural term coined by a farm boy whose job it was to feed the hogs. He said a blivit describes a five-gallon bucket filled with 10 gallons of hog slop....

Okay, maybe my beefs didn't rise to that degree of disappointment, but surely the requisites for a "frankfurter foul-up" have been met.

Maybe you've had a similar week or plowed through a "clinker" recently.

Whatever, I have chosen to smile about my misadventures, now making headway toward a "smiley-face" expression from one deeply frowned. I have opted, though, to "rattle some chains" at Best Buy, the Carnation Company and Sam's Club...

Let me offer details in order of chagrin. At Best Buy, attempts to buy a new computer went awry. I used my credit card for the purchase, understanding there'd be an additional charge for data transfer and extended warranty.

When it became evident the data transfer to the new computer would be delayed, I decided to forego the purchase. I returned to the sales clerk--the computer box unopened--about a half-hour later, requesting that the transaction be voided. I got the obligatory "no problem" response.

But there was. He had voided the charge for the computer only, and when I questioned him, he said that I would need to void the remaining \$180 online....

That didn't sit well with me, but I decided to "play it out." Back home, I was never able to explain my problem to TWO Best Buy "online" responders. After an hour, I gave up.

I sent two emails to Best Buy's media relations email address, but the only responses were two emails indicating that my emails had been received.

Two days later, I received an apologetic phone call from a local Best Buy manager. He promised to void the charge, adding that the sales guy should have given me the option of handling the matter by phone. The clerk didn't, though, perhaps leaning "right up against 5 o'clock Friday at the factory."....

Second is an ongoing issue with plastic cap removals from Carnation Instant Breakfast cartons. Neither my wife nor I can do so without pliers.

I sent emails to the media relation office. Again, I received emails that mine had arrived, but nothing more. Is this not a legitimate beef, or at least chopped liver?...

Now, on to Sam's, where I purchased new eyeglass lenses in January. The technician indicated that there'd likely be a bill later for charges not covered by insurance. I understood, I really did!

In March, I received the expected bill, responding with a check for \$125, expecting a "paid in full" acknowledgement.

Three months later, however, I received a second "statement balance" due for the same amount. With but a vague recollection of the earlier notice, I almost wrote another check. Instead, I called customer service, learning that the bill had been paid, so I could "tear up the second notice."...

I'm in the slack-cutting mode in all three instances. Many customers, I'm thinking, would simply have written a check for the second eyeglass billing, since there were no "past due" reminders. (I'm just sayin'...)

Let's be eternally vigilant. "Cornercutting" seems to be prevalent in our world, so we should be vigilant at every turn. Too many, it seems, are "right up against five o'clock Friday at the factory" somewhere, perhaps everywhere.....

Dr. Newbury, a longtime public speaker and former university president, is Texas' longestrunning syndicated columnist, writing weekly since 2003.

#### **JUDGE SWORN IN**





Above: The Smiley City Council with the new Municipal Judge Darryl Becker Friday, June 28. LEFT to RIGHT: Councilman Ellis Villasana, City Secretary Scott Jewell, Municipal Judge Darryl Becker, Mayor Lisa Benavides, Councilman Daniel Benavidez, Councilwoman Lori Price and Marshall Jason Torres. Left: Smiley Mayor Lisa Benavides swears Darryl Becker as the new municipal judge for the city Friday, June 28 in the wake of the passing of Judge Gary Schroeder earlier that week. Becker served as the Justice of the Piece for Precinct 4 and was named interim city manager for Nixon in 2023.

PHOTOS BY VANDY VAN EPPS

#### WRECK

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

white Mazda CX5, which was traveling southbound on Water Street. It was reported that the Escape then continued traveling in the southbound lanes, colliding head on with a black Dodge Ram.

Gonzales Fire Department and Gonzales County EMS arrived on the scene and extricated the driver, 18-year-old Taylour Maddison Pechal of Temple, and her passenger, Krisna Soto, 18, also of Temple, from the Escape. Both were transported by ambulance to San Antonio Military Medical Center. Sgt. Carrera was later notified hat both Soto and Pechal were pronounced deceased at the hospital.

The driver and a passenger from the Dodge Ram were transported by EMS to Gonzales Healthcare Systems Memorial Hospital, where they were treated and released.

The cause of the accident is under investigation and it is undetermined at this time as to why the Escape, operated by Pechal, veered into oncoming traffic.

According to GoFundMe accounts, Pechal had just graduated from Temple High School and was planning on attending Texas A&M.

"She was excited about her new adventures in College Station. Our hearts are broken but we will never

forget her infectious smile and loving soul," family members said of her in the GoFundMe page.

Soto also had just recently graduated from Temple High School and wanted to become a dental hygienist, according to sister Kathya's GoFundMe page.

"Freshly graduated and with so much ambition for college with dreams of working as a dental hygienist. She was a very loving, smart and funny person, there is not enough words to describe her beautiful soul. Krisna leaves our family in broken pieces, but the memories we have with her will never be forgotten," Kathya said of her sister.

#### **JOBS**

**CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1** 

to place the thirdhighest of all seven counties which comprise the Golden Crescent Workforce Development Area.

This decrease ends a trend of unemployment rates rising for the county for the current year, according to state Labor Market Information (LMI) figures released by the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC).

For the entire Golden Crescent Workforce Development Area, the unemployment rate for April 2024 was 3.2 percent, lower than the state average of 3.5 percent. This represented a total of 2,992 residents in Gonzales, Calhoun, DeWitt, Goliad, Jackson, Lavaca and Victoria counties seeking employment out of a total workforce of 92,112 people.

Similarly, Market Information (LMI) figures released by the Texas **Workforce Commission** (TWC).

For the entire Golden Crescent Workforce Development Area, the unemployment rate for March 2024 was 3.7 percent, lower than the state average of 4.1 percent. This represented a total of 3,766 residents in Gonzales, Calhoun, DeWitt, Goliad, Jackson, Lavaca and Victoria counties seeking employment out of a total workforce of 92,098 people.

The counties reporting in lower than Gonzales County are Lavaca County, with the lowest unemployment rate at 2.7 percent, followed by Calhoun and Dewitt Counties at 2.9 percent, Jackson County following at 3.1 percent. Gonzales follows with 3.2 percent, and Goliad with 3.5 percent, rounding out with Victoria County closing in the highest position(s)

at 3.6 percent.

For April 2024, there were 304 individuals in Gonzales County seeking employment out of a workforce of 9,626 with 9,322 reported as employed. In March 2024, there were 357 people seeking work in Gonzales County out of an employment force of 9,573 for a total unemployment rate of 3.7 percent.

In April 2023, Gonzales County had an unemployment rate of 3.7 percent. The 3.2 percent unadjusted unemployment rate for April 2023 was the lowest seen in Gonzales County since it was reported at 2.7 percent in March 2022.

Unemployment rates since May 2022 for Gonzales County are:

- May 2022, 2.7 percent • June 2022, 3.5 percent
- July 2022, 3.2 percent
- August 2022, 3.2 percent
- September 2022, 3.1 percent
- October 2022, 3.1 percent
- November 2022, 3.1 percent • December 2022, 2.7
- percent • January 2023, 3.7
- percent • February 2023, 4.0 percent
- March 2023, 3.5 percent
  - April 2023, 3.2 percent • May 2023, 3.5 percent
  - June 2023, 3.7 percent
- July 2023, 4.0 percent • August 2023, 4.0
- percent • September 2023, 3.5
- percent • October 2023, 3.3
- percent • November 2023, 3.1
- percent • January 2024, 3.7
- percent • February 2024, 4.0
- percent • March 2024, 3.7
- percent • April 2024, 3.2 percent

#### SCHROEDER

**CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1** 

achievement for any presiding judge.

"I know that the majority of people that come in contact with the judicial system is through the municipal courts and their impression is formed by how they are treated, be fair, follow the law and most of all use some common sense," Schroeder said in November 2022.

A practicing attorney for 47 years, Schroeder had only been practicing law full time for about four years when he

was first appointed by then-Gonzales Mayor Carol Wiley and the Gonzales City Council to be the municipal judge on Jan. 1, 1981 — which made him the youngest judge in Gonzales County history.

Schroeder served the city of Gonzales for more than 30 years before being appointed Smiley's municipal judge. He also has served as the presiding judge for the city of Cuero for nearly a decade and worked for the City of Shiner Municipal Court for more than a quarter of a

century.

Smiley city officials remembered and praised Schroeder.

"I've known Judge Schroeder for probably 20 years or more, he helped us," Mayor Pro Tem Ellis Villasana said. "When we started with a Marshal's office, he helped us put that together, along with his wife Laura. And I've known him all time he was an excellent magistrate and did a wonderful job for us and I'll

miss him. "He swore me in three or four weeks ago. He made a little joke. I don't know if y'all heard it. That I was one of the oldest Councilman around as old as Abraham Lincoln. So I'm gonna miss him. He was a good friend."

"I had the honor of working with Judge Schroeder for my first year term," Mayor Lisa Benavidez said. "He inspired me a lot. His wife was always pleasant as well to work with. Anytime I had a question. He was there to answer it with a smile, and he will be truly missed with the City

of Smiley."

"Judge Schroeder was definitely a cornerstone in regards to opening and holding open the Marshal's office," City Marshal Jason Torres said. "So he did a lot for our office and supported it all the way through. He will be missed. He also saw me in about two years ago at this point. So it was a very good honor to have met him and work with them throughout that time. Very fair judge, very easy to get along with. He will be

miss as a good person." In addition to practicing law, Schroeder was a cattle rancher who, along with his wife Laura, raised premium and champion Charolais bulls that were highly coveted at auction time. He was also known for his love of entertaining and cooking for guests at his ranch.

Schroeder's family received visitors at Seydler-Hill Funeral Home in Gonzales on Sunday, June 30 from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. Funeral service was held at 10 a.m. Monday, July 1 at the funeral home.



John Miller

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John is originally from Gonzales, TX, he is a member of the United Methodist Church of Gonzales, the Texas Wildlife Association and is Vice President of Gonzales County Wildlife Management Association. In his down time, John enjoys spending time on the family ranch. John resides in Gonzales, TX. Specializing in:

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 $\star \Leftrightarrow \star \star \Leftrightarrow \star \Leftrightarrow \star \Leftrightarrow$ 

#### **OBITUARIES**

#### JUNE ROSE CARLEY

June Rose Carley, known to most as 'June', passed away on June 24, 2024, while surrounded by her family. She was born on June 17, 1938, to Joseph and Carrie Halliburton, in Gonzales County, Texas. She was the twelfth out of twelve children. She was proceeded in death by four brothers; Johnie, Ray, Joseph, and an infant baby boy and seven sisters; May, Viola, Joyce, Lonie, Jewel, Dorothy, Opal and niece Patsy Patten. June was raised in Waelder, and she was a Waelder Wild cat. She loved athletics.

She married Elmer 'Bud' Carley on December 19, 1953 and they began to raise their family. June cherished her family the most in life. June loved to go fishing, camping, playing dominos and bunco. She was a member of Memorial Heights Baptist Church and attended Two Rivers Bible Church. June was very faithful in her study of the Word of God.



She was a joy to everyone she met, and her smile lit up the room as she entered.

June is survived by her four children: Charlotte Sanders of Harwood, Texas, Jeff Carley (Kim) of Hockley, Texas, Phil Carley (Vicky) of Canyon Lake and Sheila Spivey of Cypress, Texas. She is also survived by her seven grandchildren; Kimberly Lee (Chris), Khristy Kubran (Adrian), Janelle Sanders, Jeffrey Carley, Joshua Carley, Ashley Spivey and Justin Spivey and eight great-grandchildren; numerous nieces and nephews.

The family will receive friends Friday, June 28, 2024, from 5 to 7 pm at Seydler-Hill Funeral Home. Funeral services will be held at 10 am Saturday, June 29, 2024 in Seydler Hill Funeral Home with Rev. Clint Lowery officiating. Interment will follow in Harwood Cemetery. Pallbearers: Chris Lee, Josh Carley, Jeffrey Carley, Garett Ludwig, Justin Spivey, and Adrian Kubran. Honorary Pallbearers: Kevin Carley and Johnie Halliburton.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in her name to the Memorial Heights Baptist Church or Two Rivers Bible Church, both in Gonzales, Texas.

Friends may leave their condolences to the family by visiting www. seydlerhillfuneralhome. com. Services are under the care and direction of Seydler-Hill Funeral Home.

#### GARY J. SCHROEDER

Judge Gary J. Schroeder, born on October 26, 1952, passed away on June 25, 2024, at the age of 71.

Judge Schroeder worked as a practicing attorney for 47 years. In 1981, at the age of 28, he was appointed as the youngest judge in the history of Gonzales County and would go on to serve as such for over 41 years for the Cities of Gonzales and Smiley, earning him a milestone achievement as the longest-serving municipal judge in the history of the county. Judge Schroeder also served as the presiding judge for the City of Cuero for nearly a decade and worked for the City of Shiner Municipal Court for over 26 years.

Aside from practicing law, the judge spent much of his time as a cattle rancher. He and his beloved wife, Laura, meticulously built up a herd of premium cattle that produced champion Charolais bulls at auction.

Gary James Schroeder was a force to be reckoned with, and those who knew him well felt a deep love and appreciation for the high set of standards he held. To friends and family, he was the consummate host with nearprofessional level culinary skills. One never went hungry (or thirsty, for that



matter) as a guest at his ranch. He was truly one of a kind and will forever be remembered for the strength, fortitude, and providence he provided his family.

Judge Schroeder is preceded in death by his father, Max Schroeder, Jr., the man he called Dad, Daniel Seidenberger, his grandparents, aunts, uncles, and dear friends.

He is survived by his mother, Mildred Seidenberger (Cuero), wife, Laura Schroeder, daughter Jennifer Schroeder Gottschalk (Brian), grandchildren, Avery and Grayson (New Braunfels); son Gary James Schroeder II (Julie), grandchildren Autumn and Hudson (Ft. Collins, Colorado); children by marriage Kasie Brown Carroll (Courtney), granddaughter, Olivia (Buda), Colt Brown (Lori), grandson, Elliot (Poth),

Fanci Brown, grandchildren, Lilith, Liam, and Luz (Alamogordo, New Mexico), and beloved chosen brother. Steve Whalen (Ronna) and chosen sister, Carol Sandlin (Lance).

The family received visitors at Seydler-Hill Funeral Home in Gonzales, TX on Sunday, June 30 from 3:00 – 6:00 p.m. Funeral Service was held Monday, July 1st at Seydler-Hill at 10:00 a.m. Private family burial followed. Pallbearers: Gary Schroeder II, Brian Gottschalk, Colt Brown, Steve Whalen. Mitch Holverson, Lester Warzecha, Mike Ortman, and Terry Parker. Honorary pallbearer: Rob Glomb

In lieu of flowers, donations are welcome to The Wounded Warrior Project or the forthcoming Gary I. Schroeder Memorial Scholarship fund, which will be established with the Gonzales National Bank for local students interested in a career in law. (Please send checks for the memorial fund to P.O. Box 73, Gonzales, TX 78629.) Friends may leave their condolences to the family by visiting www. seydlerhillfuneralhome. com.

Service are under the care and direction of Seydler-Hill Funeral Home.

#### VICTOR EARL BROWN JR.

We lost a good one... may he Rest in Peace.

On June 28, 2024, at the ripe old age of 89 years and 3 days, Victor Earl Brown, Jr. ("Vic"), passed away peacefully at his home surrounded by his family. Vic was born in Luling, Texas, on June 25, 1935, to Victor E. Brown and Joyce Jacobs Brown. His mother, who passed away shortly after his birth, wished for him to be called "Dicky" - and to this day, that is how Luling friends and family refer to

Vic ("Dicky") attended Luling High School where he excelled as a leader. He was elected President of his senior class, Co-Capt. of the football team, and President of the Future Farmers of America all during his senior year. He also played basketball, ran track, was actively involved in FFA, and a member of the Student Council and the Thespian Club. Dicky was also, perhaps, a bit of a prankster. Legend has it that he and a group of fellow students once hoisted a calf to the top of the high school building. When everyone arrived at school on Monday morning, the baby calf's cries greeted the students below. Most who could confirm or deny this story are likely no longer with us, but he never denied it when asked by his children or grandchildren. He just grinned.

He hit the jackpot in high school when he met Sally Lou Few, the love of his life. According to Sally, they met when she went to his friend's house and he answered the door. The friend was not home, but they sparked up a conversation. By the end of the conversation, he asked her for a date that night to the picture show at the Stanley Theatre in Luling. The rest, as they say, is history. They married on August 19, 1955 and their love affair continues to this day.

After graduation he joined the National Guard and enrolled in college. He graduated from Southwest Texas State Teachers College (now Texas State University) and was offered a teaching and coaching position in Gonzales. He decided to "Come and Take It." During his time with the school district and involvement in sports, he also began filming under the Friday Night Lights with his friend, Verlin Witt. This continued for years as they traveled near and far, regardless of the weather, capturing film for the Apache football team and coaches.

His students and athletes loved him. Even in recent weeks, tales have been relayed to his family from some of his former students of how much they liked him and often stopped by to hang out, even when



they weren't in class. Sally recalled how a group of female students, in particular, would stop by their house on Saturday mornings to watch television!

As Vic and Sally's family grew with the birth of their two children: Vicki (1956) and "Bruddy" (1959), Vic made the difficult decision to leave the classroom and students he loved in order to support his wife and children. He worked for many years as the Office Manager & Bookkeeper at Gonzales Cottonseed Oil and Manufacturing Company. In the early 70's he began a career in banking. Originally with the First National Bank of Gonzales, he later transitioned to American National Bank (now "Sage Capital Bank") where he remained until his retirement several years ago. Many local residents often refer to him as "their banker."

He did take a detour from banking in the early 80's to join his best friend, Fletcher Johnson, as a sales rep at Johnson Oil Company. Fletcher and Vic had originally met through their service in the National Guard and the two developed a keen friendship and mutual respect for one another that lasted a lifetime. They traveled together, had regular Friday night dinner dates with their wives, and often rode together to keep a watchful eye on Fletcher's cattle when the river was rising and flooding was a possibility.

Vic and Sally built a life in this community and were involved in many local organizations. Vic was a member of the First Methodist Church. He served as a City Councilman, proudly walking door-to-door to meet every voter in his district. A former President of the Gonzales Chamber of Commerce and Agriculture, the Lions Club, he also served on the Gonzales County Tax Appraisal Board, the G.A.D.C Board, and the EMS Board over the years. He was once the recipient of the David B. Walshak Lifetime Achievement Award - a recognition particularly meaningful to him as he and David had worked closely together at the First National Bank for many years.

His favorite hobbies were fishing, golfing, and meticulously caring for his own yard until well into his late 70's. He would not hire

Most wildfires start with someone being careless.

Make sure you know when you can burn outdoors

Check with your city and county about

burn bans and local rules for outdoor fires.

Statewide, Texas limits outdoor burning to:

· Campfires, bonfires, fire pits, and cooking fires.

Aerosol cans or anything that could explode.

Plastics and asphalt-based materials

· Household trash fires on your home property and only if you

If your city and county allow outdoor burns, put trash, grass,

• Keep water, shovel, and a rake handy in case the fire starts to

· Building / construction materials including treated lumber.

If you see a dangerous fire, call local law enforcement. You may also call the

Texas Commission on Environmental Quality's Environmental Complaint

leaves, and branch trimmings in a burn barrel or container. Top it

The Texas A&M Forest Service's map lists

1. When can you burn outdoors?

don't have trash pickup.

with a screen or metal grid.

Stay by your fire until it's out.

• Don't burn on dry, windy days.

2. Keep your fire from spreading

and how to do so safely.

county burn bans.

spread.

Hotline at 888-777-3186.

3. Don't burn these items

· Electrical insulation.

a lawn company, because no one could do it like he wanted it done. His reward to himself after hot summer's day in the yard was a cold brew on the back patio.

He could often be found with his buddies (or his wife) playing a round of golf in Independence Park. He was a member and former President of the Gonzales Independence Golf Association. He enjoyed the comradery immensely but was a constant critic of his own golf game.

He loved fishing - anywhere, anytime. He had many fond memories of fishing, especially with his cousin Tommy Brown in Matagorda Bay. Just a few years ago, Vic and his son Bruddy, went out on a fishing charter in Matagorda with Cap'n Tom Brown -Tommy's son.

Vic is survived by his wife of 68 years, Sally Brown, his daughter Vicki Brown Ainsworth (Price), son Victor Earl Brown, III ("Bruddy") (Debby), brother Donald Earl Brown (Patricia), four grandchildren: Brooke Jackson (Quantaa), Tyler Brown (Lauren), Parker Ainsworth (Rachel), and Colin Ainsworth and five great grand-children: Brealyn Smith, Cavan Smith, Drake Jackson, Brady Brown, and Lyndon Ainsworth. We will forever love our "Papa" and remember the wisdom, integrity, and lessons he taught by way of example through his kindness, quick wit, warm smile, and loving hugs over the years. He was a courageous, amazing man - small in stature, but mighty until

The family extends a special thanks to all of those involved in Vic's care over the last many years. His doctors, Dr. William Craig and Dr. Commie Hisev: his caregivers: Susie Martinez, Natalie Eureste, Mary Rangel, Brandy DaSilva, Shelby Molina, and Andrea Smith: as well as the employees and volunteers who serve with the Gonzales Emergency Medical Services

the end.

Visitation was held from 5 to 7 pm, Tuesday, July 2, 2024, in Seydler-Hill Funeral Home. Services were held on Wednesday, July 3, 2024, and began with a graveside service at the Luling City Cemetery at 10 a.m., followed by a Celebration of Life Service at the First Methodist Church in

Gonzales at 11 a.m. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the First Methodist Church of Gonzales, the Alzheimer's Association (www.alz.org) or to the charity of one's choice. Friends may leave their condolences to the family by visiting www.sey-

dlerhillfuneralhome.com. Services are under the care and direction of Seydler-Hill Funeral Home.

**Outdoor burning: What to know** 

before you light the match

#### SHINER CATHOLIC SCHOOL HONOR ROLL

(High Honors-All grades 94 and above; Honors-Grades 85 and above)

St Paul High School **Honor Roll Q4** 

High Honors: Tate Anders, Julia Barecky, Zane Barta, Brooke Cerny, Gracie Machart, Gabrielle Rodriguez, Emi Stamport

Honors: Nate Boedeker, Alex Brown, Joseph Davis, Thomas Klozik, Maurin Knesek, Faith Machart, Carter Novak, Stefany Pokluda, Nathan Timmons, Tori Walker

#### **JUNIORS**

High Honors: Gus Collins, Jessica Fikac, Erica Hunke, Dallyn Pesek

Honors: Kennedy Dodson, Mary Sue Filip, Holden Jacobs, Alyssa Jasek, Petra Koch, Cody Malinovsky, Emily Moeller, Samantha Moeller, Avery Pesek, Hunter Zella

#### **SOPHOMORES**

High Honors: Karis Barta, Kristin Cerny, Riley Mozisek, Jenna Stock, Presley Tuch Honors: Annslie Callais,

Nora Koch, Gracie Malinovsky, Adalyn Stoll, Audrey Thibodeaux,

#### **FRESHMEN** High Honors: Gabe

Darilek, Jack Ehrig, Sloane Kocian, Gabriela Rivas, Eden

Rodriguez, Tatum Walker Honors: Jacob Arriola, Faith Brown, Carter Chilek, Michael DeSarro, Frances Filip, Rylan Jalufka, Donnie

Jones, Kylie Kelso, Clara

Kinney, Jack Leonard. Addison Matias, Skylar Mozisek

> St Ludmila Elementary **Honor Roll Q4**

#### **EIGHTH GRADE**

High Honors: Noah Bonorden, Rebecca Brown,

Reese Chilek, Lexie Ulcak Honors: Celestine Filip. Lana Lucas, Emma Marshall, Jace Matias, Levi Morkovsky, Annie Werner

#### **SEVENTH GRADE**

High Honors: Ashlin DeSarro, Reese Patek Honors: Eli Barton, Deuce Blaschke, Annabelle Collins, McKinley Jacobs, lan Kennedy, Levi Leonard, Emori Rodriguez, Hayden Rother, Presley Rother

#### **SIXTH GRADE**

High Honors: Jude Boedeker, Evangeline Chilek, Hannah Machacek Honors: Jacey Picha, Emma Sanchez, Gabe Werner

#### **FIFTH GRADE** High Honors: Ryan Bays,

Anna Boedeker, Harper Patek Honors: Luke Barton, Reese Blaschke, Wren Chilek, Matthew DeSarro, Paul Filip, Jake Good, Gracyn Kennedy, Lexi Lamson, Ayden McCord, Kolton Wilgus

#### **FOURTH GRADE** High Honors: Jesslyn

Garrett, Ricardo Gonzales

Moncada, Brooke Hermann Honors: Emma Bargmann, Elena Basquez, Bowen Davis, Alexis Dodson, Fallon Foxell,

William Lake, Hudsyn Parker

#### **THIRD GRADE**

High Honors: Eli Bays, Gage Janak, Andrew Machacek, Alexandra Rivas, Ezra Rodriguez, Sonney Tuch

Honors: Brody Blaschke, Adella Davis, Grady Hurt, Phinn Ince, Tate Kutzer, Dario Lekgegja, Ainsley McCord, Hazel Meischen, Evelyn Picha

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# Feeling Lonely?

Howdy everyone. I hope you're having (or did have) a great Fourth of July. Also recognized as Independence Day, it's a true American holiday, as it pays homage to our separation from the rule of Great Britain, forming the United States of America, and ratified by congress on July 4th, 1776. An awesome day to spend with family and friends, cooking out, going to the lake, shooting off fireworks, or whatever else makes your life more enjoyable. But just a reminder, if you're going to visit grandma at her assisted living home, don't load up her hot dog with heaps of raw onions, as it may offend the other residents... just sayin'.

It seems that many life changes can also cause us to declare our own independence. Moving away from parents and siblings, heading off to college, changing jobs, divorce, or loss of friends and family members along the timeline of life. There are those times when we'll feel isolated or cut off from the rest of the world, wondering how exactly to cope, and what our next move should be. This can lead us to feel a bit lonely. In 2023 the U.S. Surgeon General labeled loneliness a public health pandemic. A recent (2024) poll by the American Psychiatric Association revealed that about 30% of people feel lonely at least once a week, while 10% felt lonely every day. As we expected,



these feelings increased about 25% due to the isolation caused by

Most of the research I've done on the subject agreed that deep feelings of loneliness and isolation demonstrate increased health risks. According to recent studies, people dealing with these feelings are approximately 25-30% more likely to develop heart disease, strokes, diabetes, anxiety, depression, dementia and other mental health afflictions, and could significantly shorten their lifespan. While there are many helpful ways to combat this situation, my first go-to is always God. Life is tough and I couldn't imagine trying to muddle through it without his guidance and comfort, but unfortunately, too many have declared their "Independence" from God these days. In Matthew 11:28 Jesus said "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest." So, if you find yourself feeling lonely, why not go directly to the source for some

It also helps if we take a pro-active approach also. As Ed Sheeran sang in his song "Save Myself", "life can get you down, so before I save someone else, I've got to save myself!" Some of the ways

assistance?

people deal with these feelings are keeping busy through hobbies, exercise, gardening, etc. It also helps to keep your mind stimulated through reading, puzzles, podcasts, classes and the like. Engaging with people you meet, friends, or even engaging through social media have been shown to have very positive results. Spending time with pets is also very effective. Of course counseling and therapy is great, as talking through these feelings can often lead to some healthy relief. Unfortunately, many turn to overeating, alcohol and drugs to ease the pain. So, to run the gamut of self help strategies: pop a xanax, take your dog for a walk while checking your social media outlets and woofing down a triple cheeseburger, then wash it down with large quantities of booze, while trying not to pass out dialing your therapist...yep, about covers it all!

Only kidding! Just stick with God, or establish a new membership if you don't already have one (as they're free), while actively staying on the positive path, and the feelings of loneliness we all experience should ease up a bit. And try to keep in mind what was said in the 1996 movie Independence Day starring Will Smith..."We will not go quietly into the night, we will not vanish without a fight, we're going to live on!"

Until next time, Love you guys,

#### **Gonzales Area Parkinson's Support Group July 4** meeting postponed

#### **SPECIAL TO THE INQUIRER**

Due to the July 4, 2024, celebration falling on our regular meeting date, the Gonzales Area Parkinson's Support Group (GAPSG) has been rescheduled for July 11, 2024.

It will be at the same time (6 p.m.) and place (Fellowship Hall of Gonzales Presbyterian Church). The entrance is on the St. Joseph Street side of the building. Everyone is welcome, so please join us on July 11, 2024. Light refreshments will be furnished. See you there!



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1121 N. College, Gonzales

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St. James Baptist Church Hwy 80, north of Belmont.

St. Paul Baptist Church SE 2nd Street, Waelder

Shiner Baptist Church

Union Lea Baptist Church St. Andrew St., Gonzales

Union Valley Baptist Church FM 1681, NW of Nixon

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417 N. College, Gonzales Sacred Heart Catholic Church

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RUMMAGE SALE: COUN-**TRY** Village Square, 1800 Waelder Rd., Saturday, July 6th, Miscellaneous items.

> 055 **ESTATE SALES**

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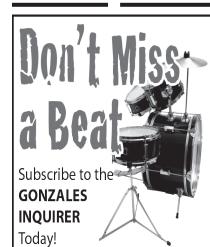
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950 950 **PUBLIC NOTICES** 

950 **PUBLIC NOTICES** 

**LEGAL NOTICE:** Application has been made

with the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission for a Wine and Malt Beverage Retailer's Permit (BG) by Harold Rice dba Diamond R Coffee, to be located at 804 North State Hwy 80, Nixon, Gonzales, Texas. Officers of said corporation is Harold Rice.



#### CITATION BY PUBLICATION - TRC 109 & 114

THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SouthStar Bank, S.S.B

Cause No. 28,509 IN THE DISTRICT COURT

2nd 25th JUDICIAL DISTRICT

GONZALES COUNTY, TEXAS

Marvin Rowland, Jr., Et Al

Defendant: GREETING

TO: HANNAH ROWLAND, and any potential Unknown Heirs of Marvin L. Rowland, Jr., Deceased, other than Jessica Leigh Rowland

NOTICE TO DEFENDANT: "You have been sued. You may employ an attorney. If you or your attorney do not file a written answer with the clerk who issued this citation by 10:00 am on the Monday next following the expiration of 42 days after the date this citation was issued, a default judgment may be taken against you. " In addition to filing a written answer with the clerk, you may be required to make initial disclosures to the other parties of this suit. These disclosures generally must be made no later than 30 days after you file your answer with the clerk. Find out more at Texaslawhelp.org." Tex. R. Civ. P. 99

You are hereby commanded to appear by filing a written answer to the Plaintiff's Original Petition for Judicial Foreclosure at or before 10:00 o'clock A.M. on the Monday next after the expiration of 42 days after the date of issuance of this citation thereof, the same being the Monday, the 12th day of August, 2024 before the Honorable District Court of Gonzales County, at the Courthouse in said County in Gonzales, Texas. Said Plaintiff's Original Petition for Judicial Foreclosure was filed in said court on 03/14/2023 in the above-entitled cause.

A brief statement of the nature of this suit is as follows, to-wit: Foreclosure of heirs'/defendants' fee simple interest in the property at 1520 Gardien Street, Gonzales, TX, said property having a legal description of Lots 8-14, Block 11, Rivercrest Place Addition, Gonzales County, Texas.

Issued and given under my hand and seal of said Court at Gonzales Texas this 25th day of June, 2024

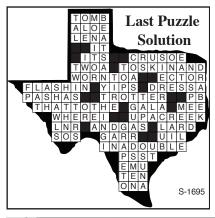
Attorney for Plaintiff or Plaintiff: I. Milton Chapman Anderson Smith Null & Stofer LLP 4611 E Airline, Ste. 202 Victoria, TX 77902 361-573-9191



Clerk of the Court: **Ianice Sutton** 414 St. Joseph St., Ste. 300 Gonzales County, Texas



#### **June 27 Puzzle Answers**



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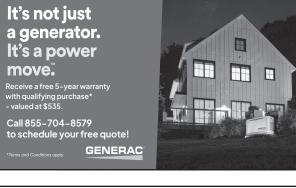


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# Main Street discusses forming Junior Main Street Board

#### **BY VANDY VAN EPPS**

Gonzales Inquirer

The Gonzales Main Street board met for a regularly scheduled meeting Tuesday, June 25, to go over plans to establish a Junior Main Street Board at the Gonzales High School.

This was brought to the board as an idea when I got back from the Main Street Now conference in Birmingham. The

idea is to create a club at the high school and those members of the club will be a Junior Main Street Board," Main Street Director Tiffany Hutchinson-Padilla said.

The Main Street Now conference gave an example of placing club members in different Main Street businesses as an intern, Hutchinson-Padilla said.

'The business will won't pay this individual, but they will

get experience in things like merchandising, or they can help with marketing. Many of our business owners in the Main Street area have struggled to find time for funds to either hire a marketing person or to do it themselves. So, maybe we can get some of the youth in high school that are already super awesome at social media to help replace them in their precarious hours," HutchinsonPadilla said.

The item was brought up so the board can change the bylaws so they can form subcommittees.

"I could see a need for something like this in the old Main Street that we had when we had summer concerts," board member Del De Los Santos said. "It would have been great to have the youngsters after to help move the barriers and

help pick up the trash. You know that but and I liked the idea of using their computer skills nowadays to assist out merchants and marketing."

Hutchinson-Padilla added this will be an experience for those high schoolers that want to see how a business is run for the experience.

The board approved to update the bylaws to form a Junior Main Street Board in the future.





#### FROM A PATCHY FIELD TO APACHE FIELD

The grass from Apache Field has been removed for renovations. Gonzales ISD approved spending \$498,400 to replace the stadium's natural grass; the cost of the project will come from the district's fund balance. Also pictured is one of the goalposts that was removed so the project could

VANDY VAN EPPS

# Four G-Town Striders qualify for Junior Olympics

#### **SPECIAL TO THE INQUIRER**

After three days of competition at the AAU Region 19 Qualifying Meet on June 28-30 at

D.W. Rutledge Stadium in Converse, four members of the G-Town Striders qualified for the Junior Olympics to be held July 27-28 at North Carolina

A&T - Marcus T. Johnson Track at Truist Stadium in Greensboro, N.C.

They are:

- Amara Behrendt Pentathlon
- Avionna Houston Discus, Javelin
- Logan Valdez Shot Put, Discus, Javelin
- La'Niyah Miller Shot Put, Turbo Javelin

#### 25TH DISTRICT COURT **SENTENCINGS**

#### **JUNE 12**

Gabriel Juarez-Castruita, bail jumping/failure to appear, pleaded guilty, three years TDCJ-ID with 42 days credit; assault/family violence, three years TDCJ-ID with 359 days credit.

Jorge Castillo, cruelty to non livestock animals/kill/poison (two counts), dismissed and to be determined with reindictment; driving while intoxicated, agreement reached, five years TDCJ-ID with 53 days credit.

Monica Curlee, manufacture/delivery of a controlled substance, eight years TDCJ-ID with 439 days credit; possession of a controlled substance, eight years TDCJ-ID with 421 days

Lijah Leos, burglary of a habitation (four counts). Count 1 six years TDCJ-ID with credit; Counts 2-4, two years state jail felony with 798 days credit.

#### **JUNE 17**

Kody K King, possession of a controlled substance PG 1 <1G, five years TDCJ, \$1,000 fine, plus attorney fees and court costs.

Christopher Adam Henson, unauthorized use of a vehicle, burglary of a building: criminal mischief >= \$2.500 <\$30K, 10 years TDCJ-ID with 139 days credit; possession of a controlled substance PG 1/1-B <1G, tamper/fabricate physical evidence with intent to impair, 10 years TDCJ-ID with 147 days credit.

Koltan Thomas Gage Condrin, possession of a controlled substance PG 1/1-B<1G, three years deferred adjudication, \$400 fine.

Nicholas Lee Meyer, driving while intoxicated with a child under 15, 18 months in state jail facility, five years probation, \$500 fine, 10 days in jail plus court costs. Juan Domingo Ramirez, evading

arrest or detention with a vehicle, seven years deferred adjudication, \$800 fine, plus attorney fees and court costs. Michael Anthony Rodriguez Jr., tamper/fabricate physical evidence with

intent to impair, eight years probation, \$500 fine, plus attorney fees and court costs.

#### **JUNE 24**

Krystal Lynn Filip, possession of a controlled substance PG 1 <1G, five years deferred adjudication plus fine, attorney fees and court costs; possession of a controlled substance PG 1 >=4G<200G, 10 years deferred adjudication, \$1,000 fine, attorney fees and court costs.



# Your Real Estate Resource for Life **Serving Gonzales County and Central Texas**

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# ACROSS 47 TXism: "

her" (pretty girl) 1 "got a throat" (emotional) 49 degraded 5 TX Roy Orbison hit " (1964) 6 home of Baylor

8 commercials, e.g. 9 Clay Allison epitaph: 54 wind turbine part "He never killed did not need killing'

7 flim\_\_\_\_ (scam)

"It's

16 pekoe and green 18 in Bandera, "Dixie " for city slickers

Campo, Texas Maureen O' of film "Rio Grande" TXism: "his facts

\_ elastic" (liar) TXism: "it poke in the eye with a sharp stick' 30 TX-based Sunoco

once was ' \_ Company" TXism: "bend

elbow" (drink) 35 record companies 36 TX Roy Bean's court was in

his Langtry saloon 37 petty quarrels Court is last resort

for civil appeals TX Gene Tierney 1945 film: "Leave \_ Heaven"

44 delicious melon:

45 WBAP \_\_/FM

46 "it's \_

"Pecos Can

better days"

52 Texas-based American Airlines would hire this aircraft mainten, worker 53 dir. from Andrews

to Junction 55 TXism: "never sign anything in neon light"

out"

"A Travelin" "and so on" abbr. 61 TX George Strait's "Marina del \_

59 Slim Whitman's

(in golf)

DOWN Texas Registered Longhorn Beef is this (2 wds.)

2 birth town of TX McConaughey TXism: "

su casa" (neighborly)

4 seniors dance 9 just one of 8-across 10 this Ali took TX

Foreman's title in 1974 "Rumble" TX singer Meat Loaf was born

Marvin Lee

12 noted fictional

detective, Wolfe 13 thin, ghostly figure 14 laugh word 15 TXism: "plain as the ears \_\_ \_ mule" 17 7-Eleven slushies

Texas Nokona baseball gloves are hand 20 this Josh was Aggie

offensive line coach (2019-22)24 great NFL and UT

26 you can make \_

at Lone Star Park

quarterback, Bobby 31 neither's sidekick 32 abortion case that's (init.) 25 enjoy fried okra

60

29 TXism:

27 Bank in East Texas

been overturned

\_ v. Wade"

33 hides out (2 wds.)

28 Olympic ski race

as a baby's

backside'

**CROSSWORD** by Charley & Guy Orbison Copyright 2024 by Orbison Bros. 45 49

**TEXAS** 

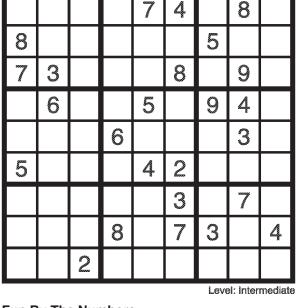
on U.S. 59 \_ Ross State University in Alpine 41 once a rival to the

38 in Duval County

AP news agency 42 "E" of "EMT" Ward, Texas

in Hale County 50 TX Kenny sang you gotta know when to hold 'em and when 'em

51 OJ's judge, Lance four-bagger by an Astro or Ranger 57 make ecstatic



**Fun By The Numbers** Like puzzles? Then you'll love sudoku. This mind-bending

puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your sudoku savvy to the test.

Here's How It Works: Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you

Answers found in next week's Classifieds.

name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

also in the lovely Hill Country, and known as the "Gateway to the Hill Country" with beautiful natural scenery and an abundance of win-

- eries, breweries and distilleries.
   Jefferson comes in at third, a historic town in East Texas, near the Louisiana border. Known for history and 19th century architecture it is a true back in time experience. With ghost tours, haunted houses and plenty of spooky stories, those seeking thrills love to visit! Located in Jefferson is the home thought to be the most haunted place in the United States, The Grove.
- Fourth brings Wimberley, which is listed as a quaint town, also in the Texas Hill Country, sensing a pattern? Located between Austin and San Antonio this is known as a place of stunning beauty with crystal clear creeks, green hills, cypress trees and other beautiful areas, including the famous Blue Hole Regional Park. Another site to behold in Wimberley is Jacob's Well, a deep natural well known for its great swimming.
- Fifth is Port Isabel which is a coastal Texas town, on the southern tip of the state, right before crossing over to South Padre Island. With a rich maritime history, and historically beautiful waterfront views, with must sees such as Port Isabel Lighthouse, with a museum including a panoramic view of the Gulf of Mexico. Dolphins watching tours are another past time which enchants visitors.
- Sixth on the list is Castroville, a small town along the Medina River, 25 miles west of San Antonio, and known as the "Little Alsace of Texas" because it was founded by immigrants from Alsace, France in the 1840s and it maintains this unique Alsatian heritage to this day. Historical heritage tour, including the Steinbach Haus, actually transported from Alsace and reassembled in Castroville. This beautifully historic town is famous for beautiful parks, and day hiking.
- Lockhart and Seguin are listed seventh and eighth, with both areas not far from our own small town. Lockhart is home to the oldest continuously running library in Texas, The Dr. Eugene Clark Library estab-

lished in 1899. Seguin is a historic Central Texas town found along the Guadalupe River, about 35 miles of San Antonio and is known as one of the oldest towns in Texas. Known for having actual mammoth remains were found in Seguin, as is one of the town's most unique attractions is the "World's Largest Pecan" statue, built to celebrate its pecan heritage. The Sebastopol House Historic Site which is an example of a unique 19th century limecrete construction.

• Bellville is ninth on the list, a small town located in the heart of Texas, about 70 miles northwest of Houston. This small town has a unique and rich historic area, charming and endearing, as it gives a glimpse into the years of Texas' history. While visiting don't miss out on Newman's Castle, featuring a moat, drawbridge, turrets and a view on the surrounding countryside that is said to be stunning.

• Tenth on the list is Canyon, a small town in the Texas Panhandle, south of Amarillo, which is known for being the gateway to Palo Duro Canyon State Park, which is the second largest canyon in the United States. Home to the Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum, which is the largest museum in Texas with insight into the region's history and fascinating culture. Canyon certainly holds true to all things being bigger in Texas.

 Eleventh is Granbury, a North Central Texas small town about 40 miles southwest of Fort Worth. A well preserved 19th century square, surrounded by historic buildings, is a huge draw for visitors, as well as the real heart of this community. While admiring the square don'/t miss out on some of the lovely Victorian era homes with a walk through of the Granbury Historic District. Also of (no small) note is that this is said to be the final resting place of infamous outlaw Jesse James, according to local lore, having lived there under an alias.

• Twelfth on the list is Driftwood a well loved and peaceful town located in the Texas Hill Country, southwest of Austin. This town holds a population of only around one hundred (100) people, swelling, of course, with visitors to see the main attractions of scenic landscapes and many hidden "gems" for those seeking the love of food and wine in the area.

Not to miss on this list is The Salt Lick BBQ, a world honored and renowned barbecue restaurant where people converge from all over to sample the brisket and ribs, while washing it down at the Fall Creek Vineyards, known as one of the best in Texas.

• Skipping ahead to the number fourteenth spot, because the best will be last, we end the list with Ennis, a lively small town located in the northeastern part of Texas, less than forty miles south of Dallas. Famous for the phenomenal Bluebonnet Trails (which are a sight to behold in the Texas springtime, with miles of beautiful country roads covered in our state flower. In this small town is also located the Texas Motorplex, a major drag racing venue, which hosts multiple events throughout the year with fans of the sport converging from all around. Finally, but not to be dismissed, is the beautiful Lake Bardwell, with fishing, boating, and camping. Celebrating the rich Czech heritage, with an annual Polka Festival, considered a national

· Gonzales, the reason we started mention this list, is noted to be a historic town, located between San Antonio and Houston, made famous for its role in the Texas Revolution, especially for the "Come and Take IT" cannon event and festival, annually celebrating and symbolizing both the Texas defiance and heart. Much mention of this event, with the town's parades, music, food and events being historical and memorable. Also mentioned are the Gonzales Memorial Museum, where this cannon now resides, as well as the beautiful historic homes and buildings with both guided and self guided tours for those who are enchanted with the local architecture and history. Also mentioned are the Guadalupe River, with a mention of fishing, kayaking and picnicking available in the town's river edge-line.

For more information, see https://www.travellerselixir.com/best-small-towns-texas.

#### **MUSTER**

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Fredericksburg, Texas, in 1986. There were over 400 Kent descendants in attendance," Beckett said. "In 1996, the Kent muster moved to Gonzales. It was a more appropriate location because this is where our Texas ancestors settled and the Kent legacy began."

Beckett estimates that there are thousands of descendants of Kent around the United States and the world, she said.

"Elizabeth Zumwalt family descendants are also invited to the Kent Muster; after all, if not for Elizabeth, none of us descendants would be here. We are all cousins and the ties that bind are strong," Beckett said.

Kent was born in 1791 in Kentucky and moved to Missouri in 1810 and would later met his future wife Elizabeth Zumwalt and married in 1816.

"In 1826, they met Green DeWitt and James Kerr, who told them of opportunities in Texas. Andrew, Elizabeth and their nine children (they had two more in Texas) moved to Green DeWitt's colony in the spring of 1930 and secured a league of land on the eastern edge of the DeWitt colony," Beckett said. "The family often made the 40-mile trip from their homestead into Gonzales to conduct business, sell and trade and to see friends and family in town."

According to Beckett, in Gonzales, Kent would frequently trade with Joseph Martin and Horace Eggleston; Kent was a farmer, rancher and skilled carpenter.

"He and his family lived peacefully on their land as Mexican citizens from 1830 until 1834, when Santa Anna came to power. Santa Anna refused to honor the Constitution of 1824, and this threatened their way of life and previous agreements made between Mexico and the colonists in DeWitt's colony," Beckett said.

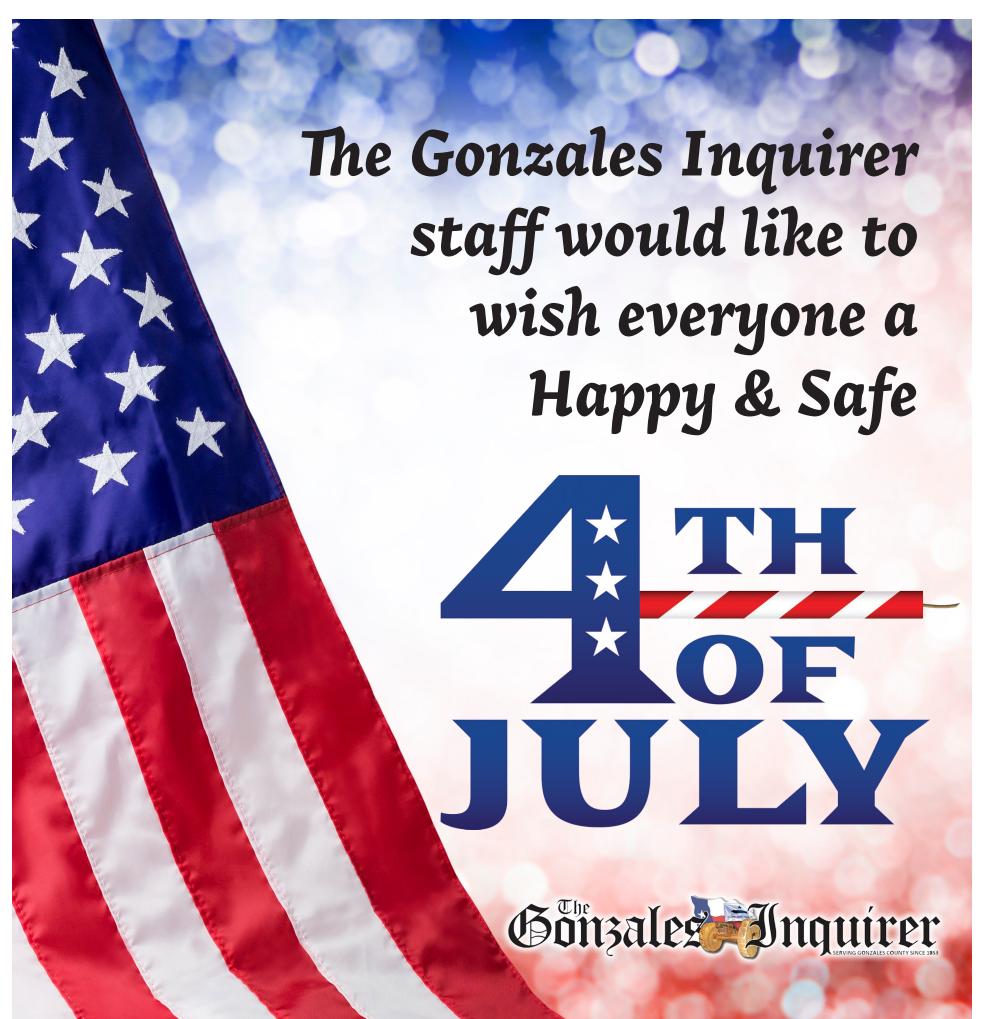
Kent was one of the Immortal 32 who gave their lives at the Battle of the Alamo in San Antonio.

"Knowing that I am a descendant of such heroic people who played an important role in securing Texas Independence is exciting. They are worthy, even 200 years later, of being remembered, honored and celebrated. I feel it is not only a privilege, but also my responsibility, to endeavor they are never forgotten. Many of us feel this way," Beckett said.

The reunion will be held at Presbyterian Church in Gonzales from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. with guest speakers including Doug Kubicek, chairman of the Lavaca County Historical Commission; Lee Spencer White, president of the Alamo Defenders Descendant Association; Glenda Gordon, chairman of the Gonzales County Historical Commission; and Gonzales Mayor Steve Sucher.

"We also plan to caravan to the Kent homestead, which is located just south of present day Halletts-ville and is marked with a historical marker. We also plan to visit the monument site in Cost, Texas," Beckett said.

The muster has a Facebook page (Original Andrew Kent Family Muster) and family descendants are welcome to join or email them at ajkentmuster@gmail. com for any questions or for more information.



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

"I never in my lifetime thought something like this would happen, Blackwell said of Smith's visit. "I was completely caught off-guard. (Store manager) Danny (Trevino) called me in to come and visit with him some and I thought he was going to fire me. This was a complete surprise"

Smith said he was inspired by hearing Blackwell's story of overcoming non-Hodgkin's lymphoma en route to becoming the longest-tenured Walmart pharmacist in the nation as well as the impact he has had on the health and welfare of the Gonzales community.

"When you have pharmacists like him that serve in the community for over 50 some years — he's served probably some people's mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers, nieces and uncles and everything else because he's been here just that long," Smith said. "He's seen young men and women grow up from little boys and little girls to now they are grown women and grown men that have their own kids now and he's probably serving those kids as well. He's kind of like the go-to figure here if you need some type of assistance when it comes down to a medication.

"EMTs, nurses, doctors, police officers, our military people who serve our country and protect our borders and do everything so everyday life can be normal — they all should be commended," Smith added. "When something goes wrong, we want to go to someone like Bruce, when something goes wrong, we need to go to a doctor or we want the EMTs to come and help us and save us so that our doctors can do what they need to do. Even as a football player, when you get injured, you want to recover, so I may need a specialist to help me do that.

Smith said he has been fortunate enough to fill his life with people like Blackwell — whether growing up in Pensacola, Florida, to stepping on campus in Gainesville at the University of Florida to walking out on the star in Texas Stadium and beyond.

"It's that kind of legacy that you leave behind and

that you work with and that gives you this level of comfort that when you go into that office, to see someone like that — or see a "Bruce" — you feel comfortable that you will be taken care of," Smith

For his part, Blackwell said the credit for success is not his alone, but should be shared by all those who have worked in the Walmart pharmacy with him.

"I'm just sort of the figurehead, because I couldn't have done it if it hadn't been for all the people back there," Blackwell said. "This is a family — the whole store. And if we didn't have this, I wouldn't do this. That's not just me. It's the whole mentality of Walmart and the company. It's just an honor to be here. I love the contact with people and the satisfaction I get when I hear someone say 'I appreciate that. Thank you, Bruce.' That just makes my day.

"Gonzales just opened its arms and embraced me as a person and our business here. It's been a fantastic, fantastic journey through life and I couldn't have asked for anything more."

Smith spoke to the resilience Blackwell has shown — including overcoming cancer — as a reason for his longevity.

"That's part of his DNA, that's part of his character," Smith said. "That's one reason why he has lasted 50-some-odd years. That's one reason why he's such an important individual for this community because of those things. And when you do that, and you've been recognized for the



NFL legend Emmitt Smith, right, was effusive in his praise of Walmart Gonzales pharmacist Bruce Blackwell, who has overcome non-Hodgkin's lymphoma and is the longest-tenured Walmart pharmacist in the nation with more than 50 years of service. Smith also gave Blackwell advice about finding another passion to keep himself going when he retires.

longevity, the best analogy I can give you from my sports standpoint, is the best ability is availability. He's been available for this community for over 52 years. That's a beautiful thing.

"Some people think of this as a thankless job, or as a job itself, but you've got to have passion for what you do," Smith added. "Because trust me, there's been many times folks probably walked up to that window and said some things that were not so nice to Bruce, I'm sure, but mentally overcoming that and understanding that the individual on that other side is really hurting right now and they need a resolution — he rose above the

occasion and he looked beyond their faults, he looked beyond the words and he saw a human being on the other side of building, on the other side of the wall."

Blackwell said he learned his work ethic from his parents, who taught him the value of work — especially his beloved mother.

"When they were in the fast food business, and I worked there, when I was young, for many years for them, all through high school and part of college. Then they let me go off to college and that's when I became a pharmacist and I've been working as one ever since," Blackwell said.

Smith said he believes

a large number of people living in the United States suffer from main-character syndrome, in which they believe everything going on is all about themselves.

"They are selfish, while Bruce is selfless," Smith said. "That's the way I see it and that's the only way you make it this far and be able to serve a community the way he's been able to serve this community for more than 50 years."

Smith retired from the gridiron 20 years ago in 2004, but found his calling in real estate after he hung up his cleats because that became his new passion.

"I think the key to retirement is finding another passion because passion number one is no longer an option, because you're just putting it behind you," Smith said. "But finding that second passion itself, something that keeps you motivated, getting up in the morning motivated to live life, outside of just traveling and just relaxing and not stimulating your mind, can be a problem. In my opinion, this is just my opinion. I'm still young, I'm 55 years old, and I'm still moving, but at the end of the day, I've just seen it over the years of people that just slow it down completely, and do nothing with life and they just have a tendency to just wither away.

"I don't want to see that happen to him. I mean, he's been a lively guy for 50 some odd years, so why stop? Keep on doing, stay active, stay motivated, find things that you're very passionate about and just keep living life."

"I know I need to do that — I really do," Blackwell said. "I don't want to come home and just be watching television all day long. I want to be out and be with people. I need that and I've always been happy when I am around people."

When it comes to how to be a Hall of Famer in life, Smith served up great words of inspiration.

"I always tell people don't try to be like me. Try to be better than me," Smith said. "I'm trying to live my life to the best that I can, and if that's inspiring to someone, great. I want to inspire you. I mean, I think all of our lives should be one that inspires others to be the best version of themselves. The only way that you can do that is by trying to do the right thing.

"I'm gonna say 'try' to do the right things. We don't always do the right thing. We are human; we fail at times. But learning from our mistakes, getting better and better every day, coming to work with the proper attitude, knowing that I have a character of integrity and I have a life of service to provide and whatever that may mean to you individually. It's not all about you; a lot of times, it's about how you treat others."

Blackwell's advice was to "enjoy what you're doing" but always be ready to embrace change.

"This company is constantly changing and you have to embrace change for change," Blackwell said. "It will knock you down if you are not ready, so you have to be prepared to change."



#### **FIRE**

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

the building. All utilities were off at the time. We don't know what happened, but it appears they may have something and it ignited."

Lohse confirmed there were no injuries, either civilian or among the fire crews that responded at the scene. As of 1:15 p.m. Monday, the fire had been completely contained and all departments except Luling had been cleared from the scene.

"We have no more hoses on the ground at this time," Lohse said. "The demolition crew is monitoring the area to make sure it is safe before they continue any more demolition."

The fire did not ever threaten the new 75,00-square-foot Bucee's superstore which opened last month to great fanfare — including a ribbon cutting featuring Texas Gov. Greg Abbott. That store is now the world's largest travel center, bringing the title back

to the Lone Star State. The old Buc-ee's store which burned was the brand's first travel center built in 2003.

INDEPENDENCE SOUARE 5:00PM - 10:30PM



**DJ BUDDY 5:00-7:00 JOHN BREWER** 7:00 - 8:15

**FIREWORKS** 

SHOW AT DARK

**DAWSON DEBORD** 8:30-10:00





**PETTING Z00** 

**VFW #4817** 

**PATRIOTIC BIKE PARADE** 

**CHECK IN AT 5:30PM, PARADE** 

**BEGINS AT 6:00PM AT GVEC** 

**LARGE RED TENT** 

**WINNERS RECEIVE NEW BIKE** 

**DONATED BY WALMART** 

Additives & Instruments





Helping Here.

**UASTE** 





