

Gonzales County officials sworn into office



Precinct 3 Commissioner Roy Staton, left, is sworn in to office by Gonzales County Judge Pat Davis during a Wednesday, Jan. 1 ceremony.

BY LEW K. COHN
Inquirer Publisher

Eight Gonzales County elected officials took their oaths of office and were sworn in by County Judge Pat Davis during a Wednesday, Jan. 1 ceremony in the District Courtroom at the Courthouse.

They include three new office holders as well as five who were re-elected to their position in the November general election. Several brought family Bibles or other important documents to hold while taking the oath.

Re-elected officials include Sheriff Keith Schmidt, who will

serve his first full term after being elected in November 2022 to serve out the remainder of the late Robert Ynclan's term; County Tax Assessor-Collector Crystal Cedillo; Precinct 1 Constable Johnnie Hall; Precinct 3 Constable Derek Johnson; and Precinct 4 Constable John Moreno, who has served nearly 30 years in office.

Newly elected officials include County Attorney Eduardo "Eddie" Escobar, who succeeds the retiring Paul Watkins; Precinct 1 Commissioner Anton "Tony" Matias, who succeeds the retiring K.O. "Dell" Whiddon; and Precinct 3

Commissioner Roy Staton, who succeeds the retiring Kevin La Fleur.

"We are looking very forward to 2025 and for the new folks that are taking office, it's going to be a wonderful year that is coming," Davis said.

Some officials who had not done so already also had to swear to and sign the "statement of officer," which promises the official has not "directly or indirectly paid, offered, promised to pay, contributed, or promised to contribute any money or thing of value, or

See **OATHS**, page 13



Pictured with the family is Dr. Sean Hattenbach and OB Nursing staff at Gonzales Healthcare Systems.

Welcome to the world!

Gonzales Healthcare Systems welcomes first baby of 2025

SPECIAL TO THE INQUIRER

Gonzales Healthcare Systems' first baby of the New Year has arrived!

The 2025 New Year's Baby was welcomed on Jan. 2, 2025.

We congratulate parents Yulissa Garcia Giron and Luis Angel Morales Saquia! Baby Brayan Ezequiel Morales was born on January 2, 2025 at 6:51 a.m., making him the first baby born at Gonzales Healthcare Systems in 2025. He weighed 7 pounds, 11 ounces and was 20 inches long.

The New Year's baby received a big bag full of baby goodies, including diapers, clothing, and more from Gonzales Healthcare Systems ... a special gift for a special baby.

Gonzales Healthcare Systems wishes the New Year's baby and family a healthy and happy new year!

Apaches set to honor former coach Vic Salazar by renaming gymnasium Friday, Jan. 10

BY LEW K. COHN
Inquirer Publisher

No name is more synonymous with the "Runnin' Apaches" than longtime former head basketball coach Vic Salazar.

Salazar led the Tribe to 12 district championships, five zone championships, six area championships, three regional championships and three state semi-finalist finishes during

his 20 years as Gonzales High School's high chief of the hardwood court.

To honor his legacy, Gonzales ISD will hold a series of events on Friday, Jan. 10, leading up to a presentation by his former players and the official naming of the Vic Salazar Gymnasium and Vic Salazar Court just prior to the tipoff of the Apaches' home district contest versus the La Vernia Bears.

The day will start with all former Runnin Apaches meeting up in the GHS Library at 3:45 p.m. Friday and a short meet and greet with refreshments from 4 p.m. to 4:45 p.m.

From 5 p.m. to 5:45 p.m., there will be presentation of short videos of players in action against opposing teams during their time wearing the orange

See **SALAZAR**, page 13

Dr. Kennon Vaughan: Tragedy to Redemption

Remarkable true story about how the Sovereign Hand of God turned something bitter into something beautiful

SPECIAL TO THE INQUIRER

On a foggy January morning in 2023, a small plane carrying five men from Memphis, Tenn., crashed in Yoakum, Texas, rocking the Yoakum community and leaving a deep scar on the hearts of many in Memphis.



Vaughan

Among those on board were five men: beloved fathers, husbands, and leaders of the faith community. Four of the passengers lost their lives on impact, while their pastor, Dr. Kennon Vaughan, miraculously survived.

Vaughan was transported to a Victoria hospital and eventually to a larger trauma center in San Antonio, where he underwent numerous operations and procedures to save his life. Through the power of prayer, and the overwhelming grace of God, Pastor Vaughan lived and has made a nearly full recovery.

For Dr. Vaughan, survival came with both physical challenges and emotional devastation. While grieving the loss of his friends, he endured a long and painful recovery process. Yet, amidst the darkness, Vaughan found himself grateful for every day with his wife and five sons, and leaning more deeply into his faith than ever before.

While his life is marked by a deep sense of

See **SURVIVOR**, page 7



FILE PHOTO/NADINE REX

Four people were killed and another person was injured when a single-engine plane crashed near the intersection of FM 317 and County Road 462 near Yoakum on Jan. 17, 2023.

WPA fights to protect Gonzales County's groundwater, surface water

BY TED BORIACK
Special to the Inquirer

The Water Protection Association (WPA) was established

in 2006 by volunteer officers and members to protect the groundwater and surface water resources and the rights of the people of Gonzales County.

Friends of Lakewood president Joe Solansky recently made a generous donation to the WPA as a show of support for WPA efforts in protection

of water resources in Gonzales and Caldwell counties. WPA donations can be mailed to PO

See **WATER**, page 7

Emergency Management to make 911 address signs for public

BY LEW K. COHN
Inquirer Publisher

Residents who live outside the city limits in Gonzales County and need a new 911 address sign can get one from the County Emergency Management office for a nominal fee, Emergency Management Director Jimmy Harless told commissioners last month.

The blue sign with reflective white numbers can be posted at the entrance to a driveway. A one-sided sign can be purchased for \$25, while a two-sided sign is just \$30, Harless

said. Purchasers will need to bring address verification so the department can make sure the address number is correct.

“In the past, ESD 1, which is our EMS folks, provided a service for addressing for folks that that needed an address on an entrance to their property but they had gotten away from that,” Harless said. “The most logical thing would be for that to come out of the emergency management permitting office, because we require them to have a physical 911 address, not only for our septic permitting, but for driveways.

“We purchase the plates and the numbers and we just do it at cost. It’s not a profit-making thing. We’re doing it as a community service to the folks that come in and when they get 911 addresses, we give them the option to purchase a sign.

“In all fairness, they can go out and get their own or they can make their own,” Harless said. “They can do whatever you want to do, but this would just give them an option when they come in to get a permit.”

Harless said having a sign out at the entrance to a property is also a benefit “to our first re-

sponders, to the sheriff’s office, on the addressing side, to EMS, and specifically to our fire folks.”

He added that a similar program has been very successful in neighboring Fayette County and that while “I’m not looking to do a lot of extra work, I think that this is probably extremely important.”

Harless said it is not a requirement for residents to put up a sign, but it is a requirement for all residences to have a physical 911 address and the presence of a sign shows that requirement has been met and makes it easier to find in case of emergency.

Signs can be purchased and picked up at the County Emergency Management office, located at 1811 Water St., Gonzales. For more information, you can also call the office at 830-672-6209.

Harless also encouraged residents to sign up for the county’s Hyper-Reach emergency notification system, which can alert individuals to hazardous conditions in the area and give information about how to keep safe. To sign up for Hyper-Reach, go to https://signup.hyper-reach.com/hyper_reach/sign_up_page_2/?id=112702.

Local bail bond company’s clients being targeted by scammers

SPECIAL TO THE INQUIRER

Gonzales County Sheriff’s deputies have been made aware that clients for one Gonzales bail bond company are being targeted in a phone scam.

An unknown individual has been contacting individuals in Gonzales County who have had dealings with All Freedom Bail Bonds, GCSO reported. The unknown individual is claiming to be an investigator with a local law enforcement agency and demands money be sent or threatens the victim will be arrested.

The unknown individual is also attempting to

have victims provide their identifying information such as social security number, date of birth, driver license number, etc.

Please remember the sheriff’s office and most law enforcement agencies will never call individuals asking for money or personal information over the phone. Anyone claiming otherwise is simply trying to scam victims out of money.

These type of scams typically pick up around the holidays and unfortunately claim many victims.

If you are ever in doubt about the legitimacy of a phone call, please contact the sheriff’s office at the non-emergency number 830-672-6524.

73rd Texas State Championship Domino Tournament to be held Jan. 19

SPECIAL TO THE INQUIRER

The 73rd Texas State Championship Domino Tournament will be held Sunday, Jan. 19, at the Knights of Columbus (K of C) Hall in Hallettsville, Texas. Registration will begin at 7 a.m. and playing will begin at 9 a.m. sharp. Entry fee is \$20 per person (\$40 per team) in this double-elimination tourney.

A consolation tournament will be held immediately for the first two settings of losers. The top two winners in the consolation bracket will receive plaques and cash. In the championship bracket, the top five teams win plaques and prizes with overall winners getting bragging rights for the year. Awards will be presented at 5 p.m.

Two individuals — Wink Bludau of Hallettsville and Kevin Tesch of Moulton — will be inducted into the Texas Domino Hall of Fame at 8:30 a.m.

A barbecue chicken dinner will be served in the hall for players and spectators. There



will also be plates to go for drive-through customers. Short orders and refreshments will be served during the tournament.

Come join in the official Texas State Domino Championship Tournament play, where there is no better competition and fellowship. You can boast you played in the Texas State Championship Domino Tournament. You and your partner many even have the honor of winning this prestigious title.

Plenty of full camper hookups are available — call 361-798-2311 for more information or

visit www.kchall.com for more details on how to register for the tournament.

2024 TEXAS STATE DOMINO CHAMPIONS

1st place: Gary Fuller of Hallettsville, TX and Kevin Tesch of Moulton, TX

2nd Place: Louis Kolos of Hallettsville, TX & Ade Agbogun of Houston, TX

3rd Place: Al North of El Campo, TX & Darrell Hardway of El Campo, TX

4th Place: John Flanery of New Boston, TX & Larry Jackson of Bokchito, OK

5th Place: Sylvester Martinez of Victoria, TX & Mark Padierna of Victoria, TX

2024 Consolation Winners:
1st Place: Jeremy Judd of Hallettsville, TX & Harvey Woytek of Hallettsville, TX

2nd Place: Wink Bludau of Hallettsville, TX & Marty Patek of Sweet Home, TX

3rd Place: Ronnie Klekar of Hallettsville, TX & Tommy Nes-kora of Moulton, TX

Vehicle Safety Inspection Program changes now in effect

SPECIAL TO THE INQUIRER

The Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) reminds Texans that changes to the state’s Vehicle Safety Inspection Program are now in effect. These changes — which took effect on Jan. 1, 2025, and eliminate many vehicle safety inspections — are due to House Bill 3297. The bill was passed by the 88th Legislature and signed into law by Governor Greg Abbott in 2023, abolishing the Vehicle Safety Inspection Program for non-commercial vehicles.

As a reminder, as of Jan. 1, 2025, non-commercial vehicles no longer need a vehicle safety inspection prior to registration. All non-commercial vehicles in the state are still subject to a \$7.50 inspection program replacement fee per HB 3297. The inspection program replacement fee will be paid when you register your vehicle with the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles.

New vehicles (those of the current or preceding model year on the date of purchase) purchased in Texas that have not been previously registered in Texas or another state are required to pay an initial inspection program replacement fee of \$16.75 to cover two years.

Please note the inspection program replacement fee is not an increase in the cost of your vehicle registration. As its name suggests, this fee simply replaces the revenue source for state programs and operations—like the construc-

tion and expansion of state highways—once supported by vehicle safety inspections.

VEHICLES REGISTERED IN EMISSIONS COUNTIES

It is important to note that emissions tests are different than vehicle safety inspections. While comprehensive vehicle safety inspections are eliminated for all non-commercial vehicles, Texans whose vehicles are registered in emissions counties are still required to have emissions tests. The price of vehicle emissions tests varies by vehicle and county. Vehicles exempt from inspections, including electric-only vehicles, continue to be exempt.

Emissions tests are required in major metropolitan areas, including Brazoria, Fort Bend, Galveston, Harris and Montgomery counties; Collin, Dallas, Denton, Ellis, Johnson, Kaufman, Parker, Rockwall and Tarrant counties; Travis and Williamson counties; and El Paso County. Bexar County will be added to the counties requiring emissions tests in 2026.

COMMERCIAL VEHICLES

All commercial vehicles in all counties are still required to obtain a passing vehicle safety inspection. Because they still need to pay for a safety inspection, commercial vehicles are exempt from the inspection program replacement fee.

Remember, all vehicles still need to be registered; the registration process continues to be managed by the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles.

GVEC scholarship again being offered

SPECIAL TO THE INQUIRER

The Guadalupe Valley Electric Cooperative (GVEC) is pleased to once again offer scholarships to high school seniors graduating in Spring 2024. For eligibility information and the online application, please visit www.gvec.org/community/scholarships.

All applications must be submitted online prior to midnight on Feb. 3, 2025.



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Celebrations

Birthdays

January 9th
Trudy Dierlam
Doris Carter
Callie Jordyn Cobler

January 13th
Diane Cook
Kathy Lacina
Keith Schmidt

January 11th
Marsha Decker
Andy Hohensell
Terry Pierpont

January 14th
Carolyn Cain
Tony Dunning

January 12th
Josh Daniel

January 15th
Gary Heximer
Sheri Shelton

Anniversary
January 14th
Jesse & Mary Jane Cardenas

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Gonzales Weather

 CLOUDY	January 9 44°/36°	Cloudy and cold 25% chance of rain • RealFeel 43
 PARTLY SUNNY	January 10 46°/30°	Partly sunny and cold 0% chance of rain • RealFeel 49
 SUNNY	January 11 55°/40°	Plenty of sun 0% chance of rain • RealFeel 54
 PARTLY SUNNY	January 12 63°/40°	Partly sunny 1% chance of rain • RealFeel 63
 RAIN	January 13 60°/38°	Periods of rain 60% chance of rain • RealFeel 53
 PARTLY CLOUDY	January 14 54°/39°	Variable cloudiness with a shower in the area 38% chance of rain • RealFeel 53
 RAIN	January 15 67°/33°	Occasional morning rain; otherwise mostly cloudy 65% chance of rain • RealFeel 59

Your Ticket to Local Finds



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LIVESTOCK WEEKLY REPORTS

GONZALES LIVESTOCK

January 4, 2025
Cattle – 971
Compared to our last sale:
Number 1 choice calves and
yearlings sold very active at
8.00-15. higher. Less quality
calves and yearlings sold
active. Packer cows sold 2.00-
4.00 higher.
Stocker-feeder Steers:
Medium and large-frame No. 1:
150-300 lbs., 400-560; 300-400
lbs., 285-445; 400-500 lbs.,
270-365; 500-600 lbs., 215-
325; 600-700 lbs., 230-265;
700-800 lbs., 235-261.
Bull Yearlings: 700-900 lbs.,
175-215.
Stocker-feeder heifers:
Medium and large-frame No. 1:
150-300 lbs., 310-415; 300-400
lbs., 285-370; 400-500 lbs.,
265-321; 500-600 lbs., 215-
305; 600-700 lbs., 240-252.
Packer Cows: Good lean utili-
ty and commercial, 101-108;
Cutters, 109-119; Canners,
75-85; High yielding fat cows,
105-125.
Packer Bulls: Yield grade 1 &
2, good heavy bulls, 128-145;
Light weights and medium
quality bulls, 120-126.
Stocker Cows: \$900 to \$1,800.
Pairs: \$1,500 to \$3,200.

NIXON LIVESTOCK

January 6, 2025
Cattle – 1075
Steers:
200-300 lbs - \$320-400
300-400 lbs - \$351-435
400-500 lbs - \$299-380
500-600 lbs - \$265-325
600-700 lbs - \$243-278
700-800 lbs - \$228-258
Heifers:
200-300 lbs - \$300-405
300-400 lbs - \$296-390
400-500 lbs - \$273-365
500-600 lbs - \$246-360
600-700 lbs - \$227-258
700-800 lbs - \$207-243
Slaughter Cows - \$82-134
Slaughter Bulls - \$95-154
Stocker Cows – None
Pairs: \$2600
Cattle – 1021

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Annual K of C Wild Game Supper scheduled for Jan. 25

SPECIAL TO THE INQUIRER

The annual Knights of Co-
lumbus Wild Game Supper will
be held at the K of C Hall in
Hallettsville from 5:30 p.m. to
11 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 25.

This is a fun night everyone
waits for all year and it could
be your lucky night to win a
new four-wheeler with 12-foot
trailer or one of 101 new guns in
the annual gun drawing. More
than \$50,000 in prizes are up for

grabs in the drawings.

Tickets for the drawings are
available at Hoffers Drive-in
Grocery, Rainosek's True Value
and at the K of C Hall. There
will be a \$13 hall admission and
supper is free. Doors open at 5
p.m.

There will be an abundance
of expertly prepared shrimp,
deer, hog, dove, duck, wild rice,
duck gumbo, Lavaca County
Sausage and wild pinto beans
— all marinated and prepared

by head cook Brother Robert
(Bub) Henke, Too Tall Bludau,
Marty Bludau, Leonard Ebner
and the rest of the prestigious
Lavaca County wild game chefs.

See the results of this year's
Big Buck Contest or get into a
game of dominoes or just visit
with folks. There will be com-
mercial display booths and ven-
dors as well.

There are plenty of full
camper hook ups available. Just
call 361-798-2311.

Garden Q&A with CALVIN FINCH



On groundcover, potatoes and long-blooming begonias

**Q. What are some medium
sized groundcovers that look
good in the landscape and are
easy to take care of?**

A. The most common used
for the shade are dwarf ruellia (Mexican petunia), Asian jasmine,
and liriopse. They are all evergreen.
For larger plants consider shrimp
plant, Turk's cap, or dwarf Chinese
holly. There are also several selec-
tions of dwarf nandina and yaupon
holly that work in sun or shade.
Spreading rosemary and cem-
etery iris make excellent evergreen
groundcovers for full sun with
unusual textures and resistance to
deer. If you don't need an ever-
green groundcover for full sun the
"New Gold" and lavender lantana
are also deer resistant.

**Q. Are potatoes hard to grow
in Central Texas? Please give me
some hints at how to successfully
proceed with growing them.**

A. Potatoes are not as easy to

grow in Central Texas as in Idaho,
Minnesota, or Maine but it is
relatively easy. I plant red potatoes
such as Pontiac on or about Febru-
ary 1. Some of the local nurseries
sell seed potatoes which you cut up
so there are 20r more sprouts on
each planting piece. Plant them up
to 18 inches deep with about 3 feet
between plants. If you don't have
18 inches available in your raised
bed garden it works to mound the
soil on the plants. Add soil over the
plant as the stems emerge. You can
start your harvest of new potatoes
when the plants begin to bloom.

**Q. What is the best St Augus-
tine sod variety to plant? When
can it be planted? Do I have to
wait until spring?**

A. I think the best St Augustine
to plant if you live south of Austin
is Floratam or one of those such
as Scott's Pro Vista which is related
to Florita. Floratam is very drought
tolerant and pest and disease res-
istant. Pro Vista is even better
because it is tolerant of glypho-
sate herbicide which means it
can be treated with the herbicide
for weed control. St Augustine sod

can be planted now as long as you
level the soil and roll the sod for
root to soil contact. The ProVista
is more expensive than the other St
Augustine varieties.



METRO CREATIVE GRAPHICS

**Q. My Whopper and regular be-
gonias plus the pentas that I use
for color in the shade during the
summer are still blooming well.
Do you recommend I stick with
them or go ahead and replace
them with cyclamen and primula
now before the nurseries run
out?**

A. Tough decision but I would
be loyal to them until cold weather
ends their blooms (if it does!). If
we have a cold spell some will
freeze but others will survive and
the same will probably be true of
the supply of winter annuals at
your favorite nursery.



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DPS recognizes Human Trafficking Prevention Month

SPECIAL TO THE INQUIRER

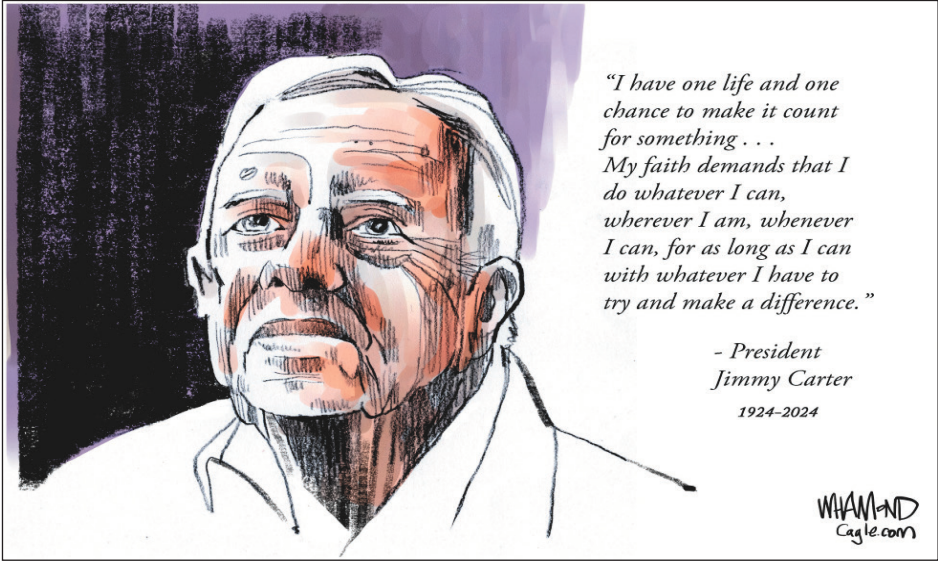
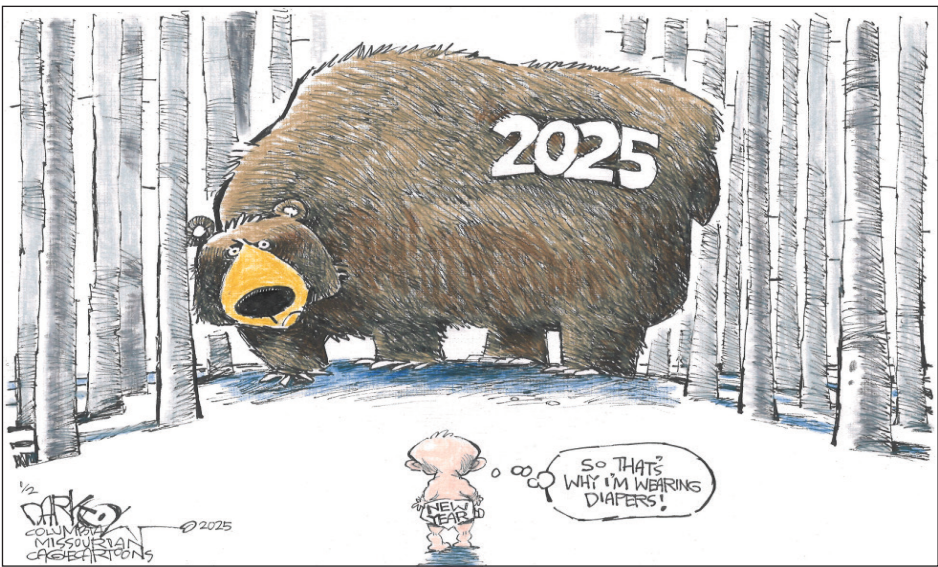
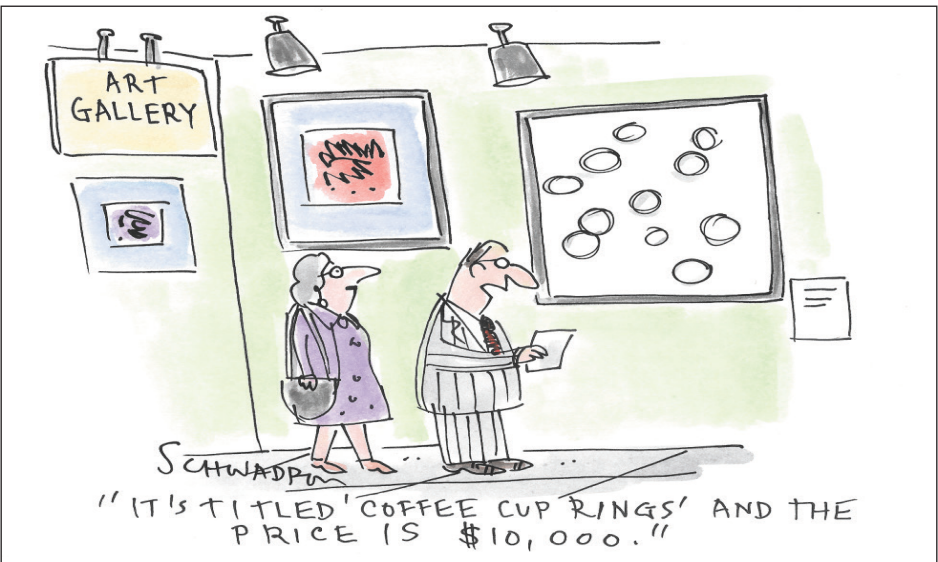
AUSTIN –Throughout January, the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) is reminding Texans to be vigilant and educate themselves about the dangers of human trafficking as part of Human Trafficking Prevention Month.

“Human trafficking is a heinous

See **TRAFFICKING**, page 12

GONZALES CO. HISTORY

- 1821 – January, the Spanish government gave Moses Austin of Missouri a contract to establish a colony on the Brazos River with 300 Catholic families. He died soon after and his son, Stephen F., took over. Settlement was primarily around San Felipe de Austin.
- 1825 – James Kerr, appointed Surveyor General by Green DeWitt, was sent to survey area between Guadalupe and San Marcos Rivers.
- 1829 – January 10, first brand recorded, JP, by Green DeWitt
- 1830 – Population of DeWitt Colony, approximately 377
- 1839 – January 25, first post office opened in Gonzales.
- 1847 – estimated 16, 770 persons live in Gonzales County with approximately 296 living in town of Gonzales.
- 1854 – January 21, fire reported at Gonzales College.
-January 28, jail completed. It was on Market Square, cost \$5800.
- 1857 – January 27, City Council passed tree ordinance stating “the cutting of full living trees growing along public avenues within two miles of the courthouse” banned.
- 1858 – January 9, City Council declared that everyone should be entitled to a trial by jury when filed upon for an offense.
- 1879 – January 31, citizens first saw and heard Edison’s new invention, the phonograph, in Kleine Hall.
-January & February, the river banks at the upper and lower “wash” places graded down to permit easier access to the river. These were at the west ends of St. Louis and St. Lawrence Streets on Water Street in inner town.
- 1891 – January 15, Will Blackwell, convicted of murder of Lump Rainey last year, sentenced Monday by Judge McCormick to be hanged on Friday, March 6. The law requires hanging inside the jail whenever possible and he will be hanged inside the Gonzales jail.
- 1893 – January 2, electricity turned on by five year old Jennie, daughter of R.H. Walker, to approximately 200 house lights and one arc street light at the corner of St. Joseph and St. Lawrence Streets.
- 1896 – fourth courthouse completed 414 St. Joseph Street – architect, J. Riely Gordon. (This is the current courthouse.) An artesian well capable of producing 8000 gallons of water in three hours provided water for the courthouse.
- 1901 – Henry Kane selected to erect a cotton mill and on January 31 ground was broken for the Cotton Mill on St. Lawrence Street.
- 1902 – January 10, F.D. Glover will have a 200 acre rice plantation about two and a half miles above the city on the west side of the San Marcos River.
-January 30, some of the machines at the cotton mill were successfully tested but the business is not quite ready to open.
-January 31, public school enrollment at 670; up from 484 last year.
- 1910 – January 13, excavation being made for cement fence to be placed around Gonzales County Courthouse. On top of the footing will be cement blocks and then on top of that, an iron fence. Cost \$1300.
- 1912 – January 2, many of the homes were opened for guests who called on New Year’s Day to wish each other a happy new year. The Beau-Nots received at the W.M.Fly home. The KD Club opened their club rooms to the many friends who called and a dance was held for those who chose to remain. The younger set who will become debutantes upon their graduation, received at the beautiful new home of Mr. and Mrs. R.S. Dilworth (903 St. Lawrence).
-January 17, Krochmann’s Mercantile building, which was bought by Steiren and Forcke many years ago, will be razed in order for the Dilworth Bank building to be built on that lot, the corner of St. George and St. Joseph. (In 2025 La Bella Tavola Restaurant occupies this lot.)
- 1915 – January 6, plans for a private hospital here have materialized. Drs. J.A. Manness and G. Schulz, proprietors of the project, have leased the second floor of the Stahl-Joseph building on the corner of the square, (second floor of 2025 Come and Take It Bar and Grill) opposite the Dilworth Bank, and they will shortly open a hospital equipped with all modern facilities.
- 1925 – population of town 5,200



The Gonzales Inquirer

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DR. DON NEWBURY
The Idle American

Spell check runs amok...

“Spell Check” -- first thought to be a handy computer feature to help us use the correct letters in the proper order for word formation--often goes haywire.

Like oft-discussed Artificial Intelligence (AI is the abbreviation, despite my thinking it to be short for “Alfred” in the early going), it can be dead wrong, reddened faces and run far afield from what is intended.

This may be true when the name of our current hometown--Burlson, TX, where we have domiciled in semi-retirement since 2002--is typed....

Burlson had hardly gotten the “sleepy” rubbed from its eyes when we moved into our modest tract home on a cul-de-sac near Interstate Highway 35W. Longtime residents at the time bragged about the community’s immense growth, its population reaching 20,000 shortly before the turn of the century.

Old-timers rattled on about memories of one traffic light, a couple of eating places and it being the “crepe myrtle capital” of Texas. Many comments seemed trivial, usually trailing off to other topics like grandchildren and the weather. (Similarly, Brownwood, TX, where I grew up, once was known as “the feather duster capital of the world,” to which millions of deceased turkeys might attest.)

Over the past two decades, though, there’ve been interesting--or at least, semi-interesting--facts surfacing long enough to pique interest about Burlson, now wide awake....

Interestingly (and most sentences beginning with this word aren’t), our town is named for a university president, Dr. Rufus Columbus Burlson.

Not only was the late educator a president, he took on the task twice -- 25 years apart--at Baylor University, which was chartered by the State of Texas in 1845. (BU almost moved to Dallas in 1929, but in that initial year of the Great Depression, most everything huddled in place.)

That a man would serve in this role for a decade (1851-1861) and be asked to return in 1886 for 11 more years defies both probability and imagination....

I have digressed shamelessly. Research entices with “rabbit trails,” many of which I traverse gleefully. Initially, I was addressing spell check.

But wait. There is a connection. Often when I type the word “Burlson,” spell check suggests that my intent might have been to type “burlesque.” It even offers to make the correction for me with the click of a key.

Burlson was a good ten miles from any known sin at the time of its founding in 1912....

Fact is, there were only a few hundred people to sin and/or walk the straight and narrow at the time. Humbly begun, Burlson was but a stop on the Interurban (tram-like electrical rail cars) that ran 10 times daily between Fort Worth and Cleburne.

Henry Renfro, a visionary who owned much land and cut a wide swath politically, wanted to honor the man who had been his teacher, then president, at Baylor.

Thus Burlson was born, even if spell check doesn’t cotton to the choice....

We’ll never know for sure, of course, whether Dr. Burlson cared to have his name on a city limits sign. He might have wished his middle name — Columbus — had been chosen. But, another community had chosen that historic name a half-century earlier. “Rufus” doesn’t set well, either. Neither do “Rufusville,” “Rufusburg” or perhaps “Crepe Myrtleville.” We can only guess how spell check might have mangled these....

Burlson has grown threefold, now around 60,000, since our arrival, with no end in sight. (Proximity to Fort-Worth--now ahead of Austin as Texas’ fourth-largest city--helps.)

Our family name identifies buildings at Howard Payne University in Brownwood, TX, where I graduated in 1961 and served as president, 1986-1997.

A couple of dozen students gathered for the naming of Newbury Place Apartments, claiming it to be an historic day. “Now they’ll know where to deliver the pizza,” one student bragged, seemingly relieved....

Dr. Newbury, longtime university president, continues to speak and write. The Idle American, begun in 2003, is one of the nation’s longest-running syndicated humor columns. Contact: 817-447-3872. Email: newbury@speakerdoc.com. Website: www.speakerdoc.com.

SPORTS

Lady Apaches FC kicks off season with 1-1 tie



Lady Apaches senior Abby Reyna (13) moves the ball down Apache Field with two defenders for the season opener against the Victoria East Lady Titans.

BY VANDY VAN EPPS
Gonzales Inquirer

The Gonzales Lady Apaches FC are back for the 2025 soccer season under third year head coach Shantael Trimm.

The Lady Apaches hosted the Victoria Lady Titans for the season opener Monday, Dec. 30 at Apache Field.

The Lady Apaches got on the board early with a goal by Adriana Pop in the first half and the defense put on a very strong performance until the final five minutes of the game.

“We came in strong. We were prepared. We played this team the last two years that I’ve been with them. Our first year we had a loss against them. Last year we won against them, so we knew that it was like a good, hard competition. We were prepared for that, and they came in strong, and really showed up today,” Trimm said.

Victoria East scored the game-

tying goal from an accidental own goal by the Lady Apaches in the final five minutes of the game, but the defense held its ground despite allowing the late goal.

“Our defense had to be strong today. They have over the last few years, and they continue to hold up. Unfortunately, things like that happen — the deflection off of our defender into our own goal. So I just made sure the girls know that they need to keep their heads held high. We didn’t let the team score on us. We had an accidental own goal and that’s okay, because things like that happen. What was more important is that we got that good, hard, competitive game in before our district games start,” Trimm said.

The Lady Apaches competed in the Bay City tournament Thursday, Jan. 2 through Saturday, Jan. 4, and Trimm set up that

See **SOCCER**, page 6

Lady Apaches fall to Lady Bears in district opener

STAFF REPORT

The Gonzales Lady Apaches opened up the new year with the district opener against the La Vernia Lady Bears at home Friday, Jan. 3.

The Lady Apaches kept La Vernia within five points at the end of the first quarter, but La Vernia shut down Gonzales’ offense in two of the last three quarters.

Senior Bella Agüero led the team with 16 points in the 63-31 loss to La Vernia, dropping to 0-1 in district play.

The Lady Apaches hosted their rivals, the Cuero Lady Gobblers, Tuesday, Jan. 7 and will go

on the road to San Antonio Friday, Jan. 10 for a game against the JFK Lady Rockets.

The JFK game tips off at 6:30 p.m.

--STATS--

POINTS: B. Agüero: 16 points, Kilee Schwausch: six points, Isabella Ikard: four points, Kianna White: three points and Skarlett Cerda: two points

REBOUNDS: K. Schwausch: nine rebounds, K. White: eight rebounds, Zniyah Washington and I. Ikard: six rebounds, McKenzie Gillette: three rebounds, and S. Cerda and Jordyn Gonzales: one rebound

ASSISTS: K. White: two assists, and K. Schwausch, B. Agüero, and I. Ikard: one assist

STEALS: J. Gonzales and B. Agüero: three steals, K. White: two steals, and M. Gillette and K. Schwausch: one steal

BLOCKS: K. White and I. Ikard: one block



Lady Apaches junior small forward Jayda Glass (21) moves the ball into Cuero territory in the district game Tuesday, Jan. 7.

Lady Apaches fall to Lady Gobblers in second game of district play

BY VANDY VAN EPPS
Gonzales Inquirer

The Gonzales Lady Apaches squared off against their rivals the Cuero Lady Gobblers at the Apache Gym Tuesday, Jan. 7.

The Lady Apaches struggled against Cuero’s height advantage as the Lady Gobblers scooped up multiple rebounds to score on Gonzales.

“The core came out They played well. You know, we did

some things that we would like to do better, but you know, we continue to work. We’ll give another shot,” Lady Apaches head

See **BASKETBALL**, page 6

Apaches close out non-district with loss to Fredericksburg

STAFF REPORT

The Gonzales Apaches went on the road Tuesday, Jan. 7 for one last non-district game against the Fredericksburg Billies.

The Apaches fell to Fredericksburg, 51-35, to close out district play with a 9-13 record.

Gonzales will open up district play against the La Vernia Bears Friday, Jan. 10 at home.

The Apaches will continue their home stand with a game against their rivals, the Cuero Gobblers, Tuesday, Jan.14.

The La Vernia and Cuero games tip off at 6:30 p.m.

Apaches FC win season opener against Canyon Lake

STAFF REPORT

The Gonzales Apaches FC returned to Apache Field for the season opener against the Canyon Lake Hawks Monday, Dec. 30.

The Apaches shutdown the Hawks, 6-0, kicking off the season with a 1-0 mark.

The Apaches went on the road Thursday, Jan. 2 through Saturday, Jan. 4 for the Bay City Tournament and went 0-1-2

in the tournament to run their record to 1-1-2.

Gonzales will take on Pleasanton at home Tuesday, Jan. 14 at Apache Field.

The Pleasanton match kicks off at 7 p.m.

Lady Apaches’ Padilla signs to play softball with Hill College



Above: Lady Apaches senior Sarah Padilla with her family for her signing day at Come and Take It Bar and Grill Saturday, Jan. 4. Padilla was surrounded by her family, friends and coaches on the signing day. Right: Sarah Padilla signs her commitment letter to play softball with Hill College in Hillsboro, Texas.

BY VANDY VAN EPPS
Gonzales Inquirer

Gonzales Lady Apaches softball center fielder Sarah Padilla is heading to the next level to continue her softball career in college.

Padilla — surrounded by family, friends and coaches at Come and Take It Bar & Grill — signed her commitment letter to play softball with the Hill College Rebels in Hillsboro, Texas.

Padilla is a four-year varsity player for the Lady Apaches softball team since the 2022 season. She has recorded 46 hits, 31 runs, 27 RBIs, nine triples, five doubles; last season she recorded a season-high nine triples and was named second team All-District.

Padilla is looking forward to her next chapter of her softball career.

“It’s truly a blessing. I’m really excited and really ready to compete at the next level,” Padilla said. “As soon as I went



to Hill, it just felt at home. And I love the environment, the coaches and the atmosphere and I just knew that’s where I needed to be.”

Padilla will be playing center field with the Rebels and will be studying nursing at Hill College.

Mustangs rally past Wildcats in second half in intra-county tilt

BY VANDY VAN EPPS
Gonzales Inquirer

The Nixon-Smiley Mustangs returned home Friday, Jan. 3 for a intra-county match against the Waelder Wildcats.

The Mustangs and the Wildcats were in a neck-to-neck battle in the first three quarters; the Wildcats closed out the first half with a five-point lead against Nixon-Smiley.

Wildcats head coach Mary Cruz Gonzales was proud of her team's performance against the Mustangs.

"We played well as a team in the beginning We still have a couple things or a few things to work on but we'll get better as we have more practices together," Gonzales said.

The Mustangs would take control of the fourth quarter, outscoring Waelder, 18-7,

and securing the 63-49 win.

"Tale of two halves. I mean, unfortunately, I'm always leery of that after the break, kids coming back and, you know, being away from us for a while, and then they try to get themselves back into it. So that first half, we're sleepwalking," Mustangs head basketball coach Carlton McKinney said.

The Mustangs underestimated Waelder and that mindset is not what McKinney is looking for heading into district.

"Fortunately enough, we were able to turn it on in the second half and change the attitude. But we can't let that happen. We're getting ready to start district, so we can't underestimate anybody," McKinney said.

The Mustangs will conclude their non-district schedule against Randolph Tuesday, Jan. 7 and will open



VANDY VAN EPPS
Mustangs senior guard Tristen Mikesch (1) dribbles the ball by a Waelder defender in the Friday, Jan. 3 game at the Nixon-Smiley High School gym.

district play against Stockdale on the road Friday, Jan. 10.

"I think it's ideal for us. I mean, Randolph is a very common opponent. They've been in our district for the last, you know, at least six years, so our kids are very familiar. They're going to be solid a good basketball team, which prepares us for Stockdale. Stockdale goes young but they are going to

play hard, they're going to run their stuff, the coach has done a great job with those kids. So it's a good test for us, just like tonight was as far as us preparing for our district," McKinney said.

The Wildcats will open up district against Prairie Lea Friday, Jan. 10.

The Nixon-Smiley vs. Stockdale game tips off at 8 p.m. and Waelder vs. Prairie Lea game tips off at 7:15 p.m.

Lady Mustangs fall to Poth in district opener

STAFF REPORT

The Nixon-Smiley Lady Mustangs open up district play against the Poth Lady Pirates Friday, Jan. 3 on the road.

The Lady Mustangs fell to Poth, 61-39, in the district opener.

Senior Madison Yanes recorded 10 points and seven rebounds in the Poth game.

Four Lady Mustangs led the teams with two assists and two steals.

The Lady Mustangs hosted the Goliad Lady Tigers Tuesday, Jan. 7 and went back on the road for a match against Stockdale Friday, Jan. 10.

The Stockdale game tips off at 6:30 p.m.

--STATS--

POINTS: M. Yanes: 10 points, Grace Gomez: nine points,

Ruby Mendez: five points, Ayanna Corpus: three points, and Ashly Garcia, Kaylie Morin, Alize Davila, and Janaelyn White: two points.

REBOUNDS: M. Yanes: seven rebounds, A. Garcia: five rebounds, Brooke Crisp: three rebounds, Janice White: two rebounds, and G. Gomez, K. Morin, J. White, and Ruby Mendez: one rebound.

ASSISTS: Janice White, A. Garcia, G. Gomez, and K. Morin: two rebounds, and M. Yanes, B. Crisp and J. White: one rebound

STEALS: A. Garcia, Janice White, M. Yanes, and B. Crisp: two rebounds, and J. White, K. Morin and Alize Davila: one steal.

BASKETBALL

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

basketball coach Mark Belford said.

The Lady Apaches will be without their star scorer Bella Aguero; Aguero went down with an injury before the end of the half and there is no timeline for when she'll be back in action.

Gonzales fell to Cuero, 60-35.

Belford said he has no idea Aguero's status or when she'll be back on the court, but he added the mentality of the team is it is now up to the next person up to play in place of her.

The Lady Apaches will go on the road to San Antonio Friday, Jan. 10 for a game against the JFK Lady Rockets.

Belford will be getting his team ready for a huge road match.

"We'll come into practice tomorrow. We will do what we always do. Tomorrow is a fundamental day for us. So we're working on our fundamentals and Thursday, we'll come in do our team stuff and be ready to go for Friday," Belford said.

The JFK game will tip off at 6:30 p.m.

SOCCER

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

appearance to take on tougher opponents in preparation for district.

"I set it up like that so that they are prepared to play these hard teams so that they come in knowing that they're going to have to fight hard from the first second of the game from the time the whistle blows, and they did a really good job doing that today. So I think we're really prepared for that tournament," Trimm said.

The Lady Apaches will go on the road again for the Lago Vista tournament Thursday, Jan. 9 through Saturday, Jan. 11 and will have back-to-back road games against Bastrop (Monday, Jan. 13) and Hallettsville (Tuesday, Jan. 14).

The Hallettsville and Bastrop matches start at 5 p.m.

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Lady Mustangs fall to Goliad in second district game

STAFF REPORT

The Nixon-Smiley Lady Mustangs returned home for their second district game against the Goliad Lady Tigers Tuesday, Jan. 7.

The Lady Mustangs fell to the Lady Tigers, 43-16, and dropped to 0-2 in district play.

Nixon-Smiley will go on the road Friday, Jan. 10 alongside the Mustangs for a game against their rivals, the Stockdale Lady Brahmas and Brahmas.

The Lady Mustangs will return home Tuesday, Jan. 14 for a game against the Luling Lady Eagles.

The Luling and Stockdale games tip off at 6:30 p.m.

Mustangs fall to Ro-Hawks in final non-district game

STAFF REPORT

The Nixon-Smiley Mustangs concluded their non-district games on the road in San Antonio against the Randolph Ro-Hawks Tuesday, Jan. 7.

The Mustangs lost to the Ro-Hawks, 57-34, and closed out non-district a with 6-9 record.

Nixon-Smiley shifted its focus to district as they will now take on their rivals, the Stockdale Brahmas, in the district opener on the road Friday, Jan. 10.

The Mustangs will be on the road for two of the three district games against Stockdale and Karnes City.

The Mustangs will take on the Luling Eagles Tuesday, Jan. 14 for the district home opener.

All three games tip off at 8 p.m.

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WATER

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

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Groundwater permits are managed by the Gonzales County Underground Water Conservation District (GCUWCD), which includes most of Gonzales County and part of Caldwell County.

The GCUWCD is currently revising the groundwater rules that it applies to the permitting of wells and exporting of water. According to the GCUWCD general manager, Laura Martin, the GCUWCD will hold a rule making workshop on Saturday, Jan. 18 at 9 a.m. The GCUWCD board members, general manager, and the attorney hired by the GCUWCD (Greg Ellis) have prepared a revised set of rules for public comment.

In response to a Public Information Act records request to the GCUWCD for documents and communications about the source of the new rules proposed by the GCUWCD, the general manager’s response is “no such documentation exists and cannot be produced.” The GCUWCD attorney Greg Ellis responded by stating “While the public is entitled to access to public records, that does not entitle the public to information on which Board or staff member recommended which rule.”

The GCUWCD is proposing 14 pages of rule revisions, but won’t say which individual at the GCUWCD is behind a particular rule change or the justification for any rule change. It is clear, however, that comments from local stakeholders to help protect family farms and ranches were not incorporated in the GCUWD’s proposed rules.

Furthermore, the GCUWCD has yet another groundwater permit application in process with the Guadalupe Blanco River Authority (GBRA), which already has a permit to produce and export 15,000 acre-feet per year of groundwater from seven wells. GBRA has applied for an additional 9,000 acre-feet per year and three new wells.

The GBRA groundwater wells are tightly concentrated in the northeast corner of Gonzales County north of Waelder. The WPA, along with other landowners, have protested this additional permit request by GBRA due to the massive amount of groundwater already approved by the GCUWCD,



LEW K. COHN

Friends of Lakewood representative, Joe Solansky, makes a generous donation to the Water Protection Agency. Mark Ploeger and James McNabb of the WPA accept this donation and will continue efforts to save our declining lakes, rivers and aquifers.

and concerns about GBRA’s pumping on area farms and ranches.

The permit application is in the late stage of a contested case hearing with the State Office of Administrative Hearings. This groundwater project began with a permit application more than 10 years ago as the Texas Water Alliance (TWA) project, which was actually a California-based San Jose Corporation project. San Jose Corporation sold the TWA project to GBRA for \$30 million in November 2017 for a \$12.5 million profit.

According to the Texas Water Development Board, the GCUWCD modeled available groundwater for the Carrizo Aquifer at 47,584 acre-feet per year in 2020 and 61,365 acre-feet per year in 2030, but GCUWCD has already permitted a massive 92,205 acre-feet per year.

The vast majority (70,990 acre-feet per year, or 77 percent) of the groundwater permits approved by GCUWCD are for exporting the groundwater out of the district, leaving only a small portion (21,215 acre-feet per year, or 23 percent) for use by towns, agriculture and businesses within Gonzales and Caldwell counties.

In addition, the GCUWCD mitigation program for addressing local wells that incur problems due to dropping water levels has had funding issues and does not include municipal water wells, such as Gonzales, Nixon, Smiley and Waelder. Mitigation funds for local agriculture are at the bottom of a priority ranking and have spending restrictions.

It’s important that our civic leaders and landholders get involved and raise concern about the massive export of groundwater outside of Gonzales County. It’s time the GCUWCD stopped approving permits for exporters, and started protecting our aquifers and our local stakeholders and water rights.

The GCUWCD has a monthly board meeting every second Tuesday of the month at 5:30 p.m. at the GCUWCD office and the public is encouraged to attend and voice concerns. Let’s not go the way of California by destroying our most precious asset (our water resources), leaving our own towns, farms and ranches in distress.

Ted Boriack is a Gonzales County resident and member of the Water Protection Association (WPA).

SURVIVOR

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

grief and gratitude each day, he sees how God is using the tragedy of the crash, which brought such pain to many, to bring hope and the Gospel to so many more.

On a visit with his family to the site of the crash this past spring, landowners Mitch and Larissa Harbus shared with Pastor Vaughan their conviction that God did not bring that plane to rest in their field by chance. Watching the funerals of the men who died in the crash, Larissa shared that they were moved with a desire to know God more deeply.

She and Mitch also shared their desire for the Gospel to go forth from the very site of the crash. Now, two years later, Vaughan returns to the crash site with a powerful message of hope and redemption, seeking to share his story with others who may be struggling through their own trials.

On Jan.18-19, 2025, the “Redemption Story Texas” event will bring together families, faith-seekers, and the local community for a weekend of music, worship, and inspiration in Yoakum. The free, family-friendly event will feature performances by Dove Award-winning artist Ellie Holcomb on Saturday and country music star Aaron Watson on Sunday.


Both evenings will include worship led by the Harvest Memphis Worship Team, followed by Dr. Vaughan’s testimony of how faith sustained him through the aftermath of the crash and how God is doing something extraordinary in the lives of many in both the Memphis community, as well as the Yoakum and surrounding south central Texas communities that is truly unbelievable, as He brings redemption out of tragedy.

Sure to be a time of fellowship, celebration, and hope, the event also includes activities for children on Saturday afternoon, such as inflatables and face painting. Attendees are encouraged to bring lawn chairs and picnic blankets for a relaxed, welcoming atmosphere. There will be plenty of food trucks on site, as well as restroom facilities.

Dr. Vaughan believes the event is not only a way to honor those who were lost but also an opportunity to inspire and encourage others to find hope in God in the midst of their own struggles.

For more information about Redemption Story Texas or to RSVP, visit RedemptionStoryTexas.com. This is a weekend you won’t want to miss — a chance to see how hope and faith can triumph, even in the face of unimaginable loss.

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Public Notice

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**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
TO DISCUSS WAELDER ISD's
Texas Academic Performance
Reports (TAPR)**

Waelder ISD will hold a PUBLIC HEARING - T.A.P.R.
Report - at 6:00 p.m. on January 27, 2025, in the Cafeteria,
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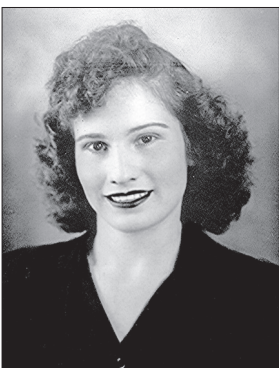
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OBITUARIES

ANNA BELLE STULTING

Anna Belle Stulting, our beloved mother, grandmother, great-grandmother and great-great grandmother, passed away peacefully on January 2, 2025, in Moulton, Texas at the age of 99. Born on March 24, 1925, in Edna, Texas, Ann grew up in a time of profound transformation, witnessing nearly a century of remarkable change and progress. She was raised during the depression and this formed a foundation of how she approached life. She embraced each chapter of her life with grace, resilience, and an enduring sense of humor that brought comfort and joy to all who knew her.

Ann spent 82 remarkable years as the First Lady of the Stulting Ranch and the matriarch of our family. A devoted wife, loving mother, and adoring “Grannie,” she led with unwavering love, strength, and compassion. Whether raising her children, supporting her husband, or serving her community, Ann approached every task with pride, determination, and a deep sense of purpose. Ann loved supporting the Waelder Wildcats and you could always count on her having a car load of kids following the bus to most games. She enjoyed dancing and being with good friends. As most women of that generation, she was an excellent cook and seamstress. She was always ready to volunteer to be a



chaperone, bake a cake for the sports banquet, set up a sock-hop or sew a dress, shirt or costume for anyone. She made many prom and wedding dresses.

Her legacy is one of kindness, compassion, and an unwavering faith that guided her through life's challenges. Ann's laughter was contagious, her wisdom profound, and her love boundless. She leaves behind a family that cherishes her memory and a community that was enriched by her presence. Her life was a testament to the power of love, the strength of family, and the beauty of a life well-lived. Anna Belle Stulting will be deeply missed but never forgotten. We find comfort in knowing that she is at peace, reunited with her beloved Elvis, and surrounded by the love of those who have gone before her.

Anna is survived by her loving family, including her daughter, Marjorie Winn; her son, Elvis Stulting; and her grandchildren, Amy Reeves and

husband Bert, Joe Winn, and Matthew Stulting. She also leaves behind her cherished great-grandchildren: Cortney Parker, Brittany Neel, Summer Winn, Evan Winn, Antonio Stulting, Christoph Stulting, and Bert Reeves Jr., as well as her beloved great-great-grandchildren: Cade, Cason, Adley, Jaycee, Barrett. Her family will continue to honor her legacy by living with the same love and dedication she exemplified and by preserving her memory on the Stulting Ranch.

She is preceded in death by her husband, Elvis Stulting, as well as her three brothers and two sisters.

Services will be at Seydler-Hill Funeral Home, 906 St. Paul, Gonzales, TX 78629. Visitation will be Thursday, January 9, 2025 from 5:00 PM to 7:00PM. Funeral Services will be Friday, January 10, 2025 at 10am. Interment will follow at Saturn Cemetery. Refreshments served at the Baptist Church Annex in Waelder following the cemetery service. In lieu of flowers, please make a donation to Saturn Cemetery Association at PO Box 114, Waelder, TX 78959.

Friends may sign the guestbook and leave condolences by visiting www.seydlerhillfuneralhome.com

Arrangements are under the care and direction of Seydler-Hill Funeral Home, 906 St. Paul, Gonzales, TX.

ALBERT LEE NUNN

Albert Lee Nunn was born on April 6, 1937, to the parentage of Mr. Hose Nunn and Mrs. Vandora (White) Nunn.

He accepted Christ at a young age, where his father was the pastor of a Church of God in Christ, his grandfather was a pastor, and his son, James Nunn, is the pastor of Mt. Eden Baptist Church.

He graduated from Wiley High School in Terra Haute, Indiana in May 1954. Upon receiving a track scholarship, he attended Prairie View A&M University, where he received his Bachelor of Education and his Master of Education. He also served two years in the Texas Army National Guard.

He was united in Holy Matrimony to Ms. Ethel Warren in 1959. He chose the educational field where he taught and coached at Brookshire Royal High School, Brookshire, Texas, Sealy High School, Sealy, Texas, and Page Middle School, in

San Antonio, Texas.

He began his administrative positions at Wheatley High School, San Antonio, Texas. His last service in education was at Roosevelt High School, San Antonio, Texas, where he held the position of Assistant Principal.

During his retirement, he and his wife Ethel Warren Nunn moved to Armstrong Colony Fayette County, Texas. He assisted in many community projects, including the rural water system for Armstrong Colony and surrounding communities. The Mt. Olive Museum in Armstrong Colony, and the community park.

He was also pivotal in establishing the Waelder extension of the Guadalupe College Seminary in Waelder, Texas. He was a member of the Waelder Lions Club. He also worked in the Fayette Soil and Water Conservation District as a Board member.

In his service to the

Lord, he was the Guadalupe College Waelder Extension president. He also served as Deacon to the Mt. Olive Baptist church Armstrong Colony Fayette County Texas. Also served in the office as Deacon of the Mt. Eden Baptist Church. He served in his office as a Deacon until he was physically unable. His favorite hymn was Guide Me O Thou Great Jehovah.

He leaves to cherish his memory his devoted wife of 65 years Ethel Nunn, and two sons, Pastor James A. Nunn, and Terry Nunn. Grandchildren, Jaymes Nunn, Marcus Nunn, Granddaughter-in-law, Kayla Nunn. Great grandchildren, JayMaria Nunn, Jaymee Nunn, and Aaliyah Nunn. Brother-in-law, Theron Warren, Jr, Sister-in-Law, Dolores Carter (Jack, Jr.) Nephews, Jack Carter III and Ansel Carter. Niece, Jill Carter. Other Nieces and Nephews and Friends.

GERRI LAWING CROW



Gerri Lawing Crow, 61, of Gonzales, passed away peacefully Sunday, December 29, 2024. Gerri was born in Albuquerque, New Mexico April 18, 1963 to Neil and Gail Kyle Gholson.

She had three children, Andrew Wayne, Lindsey Rae and Jodi Kyle while living in the piney woods of East Texas. During that time her first grandchild, Collin Wayne, was born. Collin quickly became the man of her heart living with Gerri for several years. Gerri had four more grandchildren who she adored beach trips with, teaching them a great love for Jesus and sharing her knowledge of the history of Texas.

Later in life Gerri moved to Gonzales, Texas where she met her husband, Tim Crow. Gerri instantly knew that Tim was going to be the greatest love of her life. She was passionate about her job in Gonzales working in economic development for GVEC. She always saw the potential in

each small Texas town she would visit with a specific love for Cuero, Texas.

She always said her soul lived in the pink clouds at the top of the mountains. Tim purchased their casita trailer to head out at a moment's notice to Big Bend or the mountains of Colorado. Traveling with a good cup of coffee, cool mountain air and a game of “Sorry” became her favorite thing.

Gerri is survived by her father, Neil Gholson, husband, Tim Crow, sons, Andrew Lawing and wife Rachel, Timmy Crown and Ashely, daughters,

Jodi Maria and husband Steve, Lindsey Lawing and Tabitha Pittman and husband Daniel. Grandchildren Collin Lawing, Lucy Lawing, Ellie Maria, Skylar Lawing and Mason Lawing. She is also survived by her sister Gay Freels and husband Tim.

Memorial services celebrating the life of Gerri Lawing Crow will be held at 1:30 pm Sunday, January 12, 2025 in Seydler-Hill Funeral Home, to honor Gerri, please wear the color red. A reception will follow at 2:30 pm in the First Lutheran Church, 1206 N St Joseph St. Gonzales, TX 78629. Friends may leave their condolences by visiting www.seydlerhillfuneralhome.com. The family requests, in lieu of flowers, please donate to: The Magdalen House, A Recovery Community for Alcoholism, <http://www.magdalen-house.org/donate>.

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

CYNTHIA GAIL SMITH

Cynthia Gail Smith, 68, of Gonzales, passed away peacefully, Sunday, January 5, 2025. Cynthia was born March 22, 1956 in Hemphill, Texas to William Huey Warren and Bonnie Jane Edwards Warren. She married Ross Smith on June 24, 1988 in Las Vegas. She had been a member of the First Baptist Church.

Cynthia moved to Gonzales with her family at a young age. She attended and eventually graduated from the Gonzales School System. She had been a member of the Gonzales Riding Club where she became an accomplished Barrel Racer and frequently led the Riding



Club in the local parades. After high school Cynthia went to work as an accountant for an oil field company.

She was an excellent cook and exceptional baker and took the time to teach her grandchildren

how to cook and bake as well. When not working in the kitchen, Cynthia loved to sew and work on her arts and crafts projects.

Cynthia will be remembered as a very sweet lady whose bright smile warmed the hearts of all she greeted. She was naturally funny, and one could always listen as she talked to herself and frequently answered herself as well. Cynthia loved animals, especially her dogs that were more family members than pets.

Cynthia is survived by her adoring family, husband, Ross Smith, daughters, Jennifer McRae, and Sarah McRae, son, Wade Hill, 8 grandchildren and 3 great-grandchildren. She was preceded in death by her parents.

Private family services will be held at a later date. Memorials may be made to Heart-to-Heart Hospice. 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.



BRITNEY JONES CAKA
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20 Austin MFM	21 Dr. Echols Austin MFM	22 Dr. Quebedeaux Austin MFM	23 Dr. Ryan Echols Dr. Kirchner	24
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- Parker of Highlands and several grandchildren, great-grandchildren and great-great grandchildren.


She was preceded in death by her parents, husband Weldon Wayne Rawls, sons Michael Rawls and Steven Rawls.


Visitation will be held Saturday, January 4, 2024 from 10 a.m. until 11 a.m. at Seydler-Hill Funeral Home. Funeral service will be 11 a.m. Saturday at Seydler-Hill Funeral Home with Reverend Jesse Elizondo officiating. Interment will follow at the Gonzales Memorial Park Cemetery.

Pallbearers include: Brian Rawls, Cory Rawls, Joshua Henley, Jonathan Henley, Jeremy Wilburn, John Rawls and Joshua Rawls.

Friends may sign the guestbook and leave condolences by visiting www.seydlerhillfuneralhome.com

Arrangements are under the care and direction of Seydler-Hill Funeral Home, 906 St. Paul Street, Gonzales.
- More obituaries,
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OBITUARY

WILLIAM (BILL) ARTHUR BERGER



William (Bill) Arthur Berger, 98, passed away peacefully on New Years Day, Wednesday, January 1, 2025. Bill was born April 18, 1926, in Victoria Texas to the late Fred William and Lena Reuter Berger.

The oldest of six children, at the age of 17 and with his parents’ permission, he enlisted at Fort Sam Houston in January of 1944. He trained in Texas, Arizona, Florida, Michigan and finally North Hampton England, where he was assigned to the 92nd Bomb Squad and the 327th Bomber Squadron. His crew was trained in combat, aerial maneuvers and gunnery. Later in life he spoke about those successful missions as a tail gunner. One happened on his birthday, April 18, 1945. While on a mission and flying formation, the lead plane took a hit and exploded. The force of the blast caused the second plane to flip upon the third and they both exploded. His plane felt the blast and as he looked to his right, saw a burning engine headed toward them. He yelled on the intercom “hard right rudder!” The pilot did just that and it saved their plane. Bill flew only one more mission the next day and was told to stand

down. Then came the end of the war in Europe and Berger’s life as a combat tail gunner was over.

He returned home and met Ruby Nell Dreier and they were married on September 30, 1946, in Victoria County. Bill and Ruby enjoyed life and were blessed to share 77 years together along with their three sons. On December 25, 2023, Bill lost a big part of his life with the passing of Ruby.

Bill served in the Air Force Reserve for over 20 years. After doing a brief stint as a delivery driver for RC Cola and Nehi Beverage. Bill then became a DPS trooper in 1947 where he was assigned as a driver license examiner, and Bill spent 33 years and 10 months in that position. While on duty in Nixon in 1951, Bill was almost shot in the line of duty. He had gone into a bank to have

a check cashed, but the bank was being robbed while he was there. He had his uniform on, and the robbers thought he had been called to the scene. One took a shot at Bill, but it hit the teller window as shrapnel hit Bill. He hit the floor and played dead like he had been trained in the military and survived. After serving nearly 34 years as a DPS officer, Bill retired and then became the Justice of the Peace of Gonzales County on July 1, 1981. He served in that position for 20 years before retiring in 2002. Bill Berger was a STUDENT. WARRIOR. FATHER. DPS OFFICER. and JUDGE.

Bill is survived by his sons Robert Berger (JoAnn), Richard Berger, and Randall Berger (Trish), Grandchildren; Wayne Berger, (Mariah) of Cuero, Keith Berger of Gonzales, Jessica Baldasari (Matthew) of Schertz, Michelle Berger Schoener of Victoria, Ashley Berger (Dominic Vega) of Meyersville. Brother Fred Alvis Berger (Marie) and sister-in-law Lillian Berger and a great-grandson Aaron Berger.

Bill is preceded in death by his parents, wife, brothers, Allen Berger (Edna Mae) and Baltus James Berger, sisters, Doris Liest Eichman (Daniel

& William Loest) and Marjorie Tater (Charlie).

The family will receive friends from 5 pm to 7 pm Monday, January 7, 2025 in Seydler-Hill Home, with prayers of the Holy Rosary following at 7 pm. A Mass of the Resurrection will be celebrated at 10 am, Tuesday, January 7, 2025 in St. James Catholic Church with Fr. Paul Raaz as celebrant. Interment will follow in Hermann Sons Cemetery. Pallbearers include government dignitary and friends Pat Davis, Johnnie Hall, Ronald Holub, Ken Hedrick, Keith Schmidt and Pete Cenotti. Honorary pallbearers include Jim Connally, Tim Markham and Richard Dawson.

For those who wish, memorials may be made to Heart to Heart Hospice, St James Catholic Church or The Heights of Gonzales. The family wishes to express their gratitude to the Heights of Gonzales for their loving care of their mom and dad for the last 2 years and 10 months. Friends may leave their condolences to the family by visiting www.seydlerhillfuneral-home.com.

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

TRAFFICKING

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

crime that preys on the most vulnerable in our society,” said Colonel Freeman F. Martin. “We are committed to working tirelessly with our partners to identify and rescue victims, hold traffickers accountable and empower our communities with the knowledge they need to recognize and report suspicious activity. It will take all of us to stop it.

Human trafficking is the use of force, fraud or coercion in any type of labor exploitation or commercial sex act – or when an individual under the age of 18 is involved in commercial sex. It can happen to anyone, anywhere and it occurs in every state, every day and often goes unnoticed by communities.

DPS is charged with the overall direction of the state’s human trafficking enforcement efforts. Through its Human Trafficking Program, Special Agents within the department’s Criminal Investigations Division (CID) work with local, state and federal agencies in Texas and other states to identify, investigate, disrupt and/or dismantle major human trafficking organizations.

DPS Special Agents focus efforts to combat human trafficking by utilizing a victim-centered approach, which places equal importance and value on the identification, recovery, safety and stabilization of victims in addition to the investigation and prosecution of traffickers. In FY 2024, DPS Special Agents recovered 446 human trafficking victims and arrested an additional 874 suspects on human trafficking related charges.

Public awareness is critical to preventing and combating human trafficking, as these operations are often masked as legitimate businesses in highly visible areas. Traffickers tend to prey on the vulnerabilities of high-risk populations, like those experiencing homelessness, juvenile runaways, historical or active drug users, individuals with difficult or abusive home lives and individuals with language barriers or a reason to want to avoid law enforcement personnel.

DPS reminds Texans to remain observant of their communities and take note of the following possible indicators of human trafficking:

- A person appears to be under control of another person either physically (someone else controls the person’s possessions i.e., ID, money, phone) or psychologically (little to no eye contact, unable to speak for themselves or unable to make simple decisions without approval).
- A person has little to no awareness of their surroundings including where they are or where they are headed.
- A person has untreated illness or infection, visible injuries, appears malnourished or sleep deprived.
- A person’s clothing is inappropriate for the weather or environment or is dressed in a manner that does not appear age appropriate or makes them appear older.
- A person is being transported to and from work by their employer.
- A person lives where they work or works excessively long or unusual hours.
- A person’s workplace has security measures that are unusual or excessive for the type of business (i.e., boarded or opaque windows, excessive security cameras).

The presence of an indicator does not confirm an occurrence of human trafficking; however, the combination and context of indicators may indicate human trafficking pending law enforcement investigation and you are encouraged to report it.

If you see signs of human trafficking, call 911 immediately to report it and be ready to give as many details as possible. You can also make a report on iWatchTexas or call the National Human Trafficking Hotline at 1-888-373-7888 or text “BeFree” to 233733.

Remember: do not endanger yourself or others by intervening or confronting someone you suspect of engaging in human trafficking.

LAW ENFORCEMENT WEEKLY REPORTS

Gonzales County Sheriff’s Office
12/15/2024-12/21/2024

12/14/2024
• Nease,Shelby Lynn, Age:32, Gonzales: Other Agency Hold-Poss CS PG 1/1-B<1G, Required \$15,000.00 Bond; Transferred to Guadalupe Co.

12/19/2024
• Trevino,Oscar Gonzales, Age:48, Uvalde: Local Warrant-Smuggling of Persons, Required \$100,000.00 Bond; Local Warrant-Smuggling of Persons, One bond all Counts; Local Warrant-

Smuggling of Persons, One Bond all Counts; Other Agency Hold-Unl Poss FirearmBy Felon, Required \$50,000.00 Bond; Other Agency Hold-Poss CS PG 1/1-B<1G, PR Bond; Remains in Custody

12/20/2024
• Mathis,Timothy Glen, Age:45, Saint Hedwig: Local Warrant-Driving W/Lic Inv W/Prev Conv/ Susp W/O Fin Res, Required \$2000.00 Bond; Remain in Custody

Total Arrest, Court Commitments, other agency arrest and processing’s:

GCSO	03
DPS	04
GPD	05
WPD	00
NPD	01
GISD	00
SMO	00
Constable 1	00
Constable 3	00
Constable 4	00
DWCSO	00
DEA	00
TPW	00
GCAI	00
Rangers	00
Other	00
Total	13

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ACROSS

1 TX Buddy Holly tune: “___ On”

5 Jack of sitcom “The Texas Wheelers”

6 large birds raised on some Texas ranches

7 Edwards Aquifer is the ___ source of drinking water for San Antonio

8 TX Pride was 1971 CMA ___ of the Year

16 Dallas Morning News banned these from front page in 1907

17 TXism: “he’s ___” (not alert)

21 TX Barbara Mandrell sang “If Loving You ___ Wrong”

22 Olney hosts “One-Armed Dove ___”

23 TX rancher Chuck Norris was ___-weight karate champ

24 TXism: “couldn’t fight his way out of ___ bag”

29 TXism: “___ up on” (study)

30 TX Lefty Frizzell hit: “Always ___ With Your Kisses”

31 Grapeland High class

32 big oil producer: East ___

34 TX Buddy Holly hit: “Not ___ Away”

35 Nolan’s full initials

36 the Capitol was ___ in 1995

37 this Meredith was in 1941 western “The Son of Davy Crockett”

38 TX Kite green stroke

39 film “JFK” had this type of cast (2 wds.)

41 once a Bellview AM and the rest (abbr.)

42 crime or shopping ___

44 TXism: “he’s only got one ___ the water”

45 ___ Harvey Oswald

46 pronounced punishment

48 TX Patrick Mahomes, e.g.

49 actress Sorvino

50 camp bed

51 wonder

52 hallucinogenic drug (abbr.)

DOWN

1 former ___ Base in Lubbock

2 they’re in a “Joy” candy bar

3 where Texas banks keep the dinero

4 TXism: “never let ‘___ you sweat”

9 cattle ___-up

10 noted Texas choreographer, Tommy

11 Cowboys play in ___ Stadium

12 TX Vikki Carr hit: “___ Must Be Him”

13 West Texas plains tribes were these

14 cream of the crop

15 discourteous

18 this school beat A&M in 1993 and 1994

19 Texas outlaw Ringo sometimes rode with the ___ gang

20 TXism: “cold as a banker’s ___”

22 TX Bonnie & Clyde pulled ‘em (2 wds.)

24 Austin band: Asleep ___ The Wheel

25 Corpus Christi is 65 ___cent water

26 tree choppers

27 delicate hue

28 after football, Staubach worked in real ___

29 Texas garden crop

30 TXism: “___ up” (bed ridden)

33 Willie 1992 album: “The ___ Tapes”

34 penalty point tries by the Mavs or Rockets (2 wds.)

35 expressed clearly

37 TXism: “spittin’ image of”

38 French pronunciation of Paris

40 TX Hagman show: “I ___ of Jeannie”

41 Andrews FM

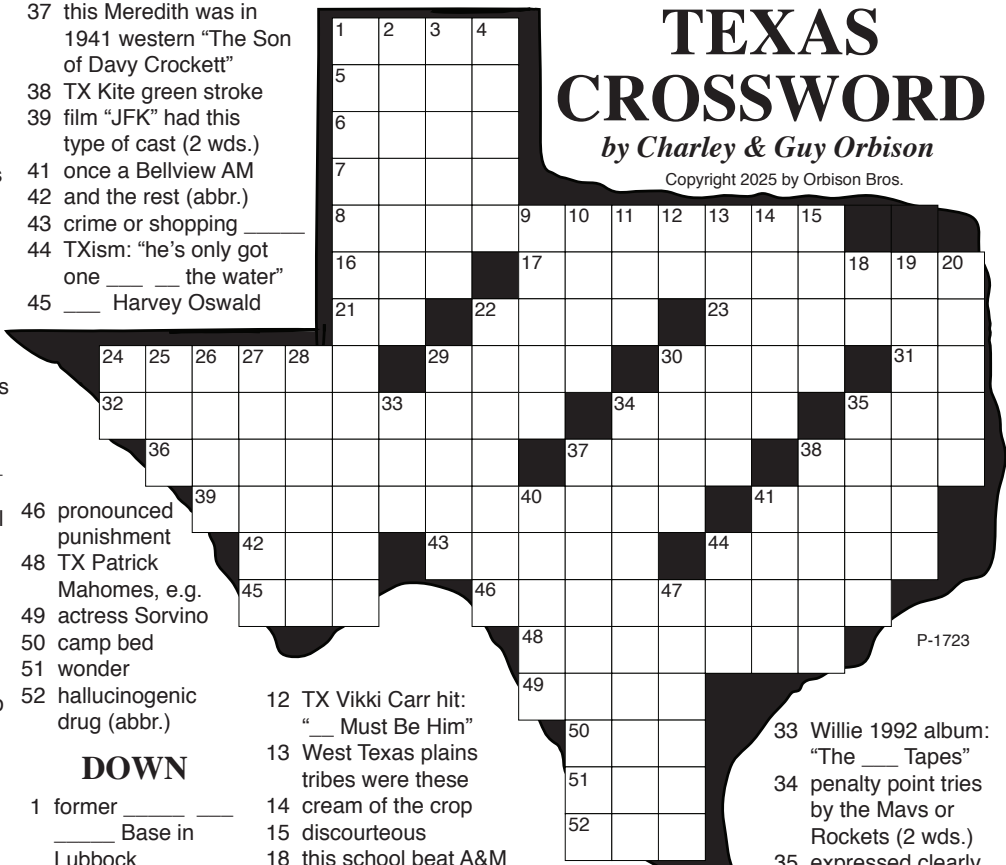
44 Texas is number ___ in Fortune 500 companies

47 overjoyed

TEXAS CROSSWORD

by Charley & Guy Orbison

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P-1723

SUDOKU

9	6	2						
		8	4	1				9
			6					
	5		2					
			1	3			6	
2						4		
4		1	9			8		
		6						1
	3							7

Level: Intermediate

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 name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

Answers found in next week’s Classifieds.



Top: County Tax Assessor-Crystal Cedillo receives the oath of office from Judge Pat Davis. Right: Precinct 1 Deputy Constable Travis Vega and Missy Hall are among those watching as Precinct 1 Constable Johnnie Hall is sworn into office.

LEW K. COHN



LEW K. COHN

Eight Gonzales County elected officials were sworn into office Wednesday, Jan. 1. From left are Sheriff Keith Schmidt, Precinct 3 Constable Derek Johnson, Precinct 1 Constable Johnnie Hall, Tax Assessor-Crystal Cedillo, County Judge Pat Davis, County Attorney Eduardo “Eddie” Escobar, Precinct 4 Constable John Moreno, Precinct 1 Commissioner Anton “Tony” Matias and Precinct 3 Commissioner Roy Staton.

OATHS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

promised any public office or employment for the giving or withholding of a vote at the election at which I was elected.”

Davis praised all of the newly sworn in elected officials for their commitment to serving Gonzales County.

“I want to say congratulations to all of our elected officials for running for office,”

Davis said. “It takes a special person to do that, and you know that this person cares about the county, the place in which they live, the place in which their kids are growing up. As elected officials, it’s our job to make this environment a great environment for everybody to work, live and raise their children, so I commend each and every one of

you on coming into office.”

Davis encouraged his peers that “if I can ever do anything for you or you need anything from me, please just pick up the phone and call me.”

“I’m sure you all will be the same, but my door is always open, and I’ll always make time to assist in any way that I can,” he added.

SALAZAR

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

and black. Then, from 5:55 p.m. to 6:20 p.m., a number of Salazar’s former players, including Quincy Johnson — who will serve as emcee — will speak about their mentor before Salazar addresses the crowd. After the game, there will be a social gathering for more reminiscences. “We are also honoring the players that played for me as they were loyal, made a commitment to the program, and worked hard to entertain the community every Tuesday and Friday night, to include playoff games, with up and down exciting winning basketball,” Salazar said of the ceremony as he noted that his many accomplishments are due to the hard work of players who bought in to his system.

Salazar first took over as head coach of the Runnin’ Apaches in 1974 after

the team had won the state title under former Coach Vernon Hill. It was Salazar who would come up with the name “Runnin’ Apaches” and would make sure the players would live up to it — implementing an all-year offseason basketball and conditioning program as well as Salazar’s Basketball Camp during the summer.

He also made sure the team was playing games against first-class competition on the GHS gym floor by starting up the first basketball tournament in school history. He demanded commitment and loyalty from his players and got it as they would go 517-147 in his 20 seasons, winning at least 20 games every single year. In fact, the average record for those 20 years was 25.8 wins against just 7 defeats and the team lost only two

district home games in two decades!

And while the Apaches in 2024-25 are fond of saying “Fear the Spear,” that was a way of life for Gonzales’ opponents in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s.

In his first season, Salazar’s squad went undefeated in district play to capture the championship — the first GHS team to ever accomplish the feat. It wouldn’t be the last time they would do that as the Apaches won their district a dozen times. And worth noting is that during the first seven to eight years of Salazar’s stint in Gonzales, just the district champion would advance to the playoffs. Today, four teams qualify for the postseason.

Among the many honors Salazar received were numerous accolades from multiple publications, including



GISD PHOTO

Vic Salazar in the gymnasium that will bear his name after Friday, Jan. 10. He is the winningest coach in any sport in GHS history.

the San Antonio Express-News, Victoria Advocate and the Austin American Statesman, all of whom awarded him several Coach of the Year honors.

Salazar would share his coaching talent as one of 12 Texas high school basketball coaches to be involved in the first Texas Association of High

School Coaches Basketball Camp at Texas State in San Marcos. He also was a guest speaker at regional coaches meetings for Region IV, at the Austin Basketball Coaches Clinic, at the Texas High School Coaches Association Conference and the annual South Texas Whataburger Basketball

Clinic held at South Padre Island.

While coaching basketball, Salazar would be offered the head football coaching job at Gonzales as well as the athletic director position. He turned it down, preferring to stay committed to building the best basketball program possible at GHS.

When he finally hung up his whistle at the end of the 1993-94 season, he was the one of the winningest coaches in South Central Texas and, to this day, is still the winningest head coach in any sport at GHS. Salazar would go on to climb the ladder at GISD, serving as assistant high school principal, Gonzales Junior High School principal, GHS principal, head of GISD Human Resources and finally superintendent of schools.

In that final position, he spearheaded a \$5 million school construction bond program with basically zero interest that was used to build a new gymnasium, weight room and separate dressing facilities and coaches’ offices for the boys’ and girls’ teams. He also saw the construction of a new high school band hall and always said his “main concern was always for the health and safety of all students.”

He retired after 36 years from Gonzales ISD in 2010 and once was honored with a proclamation by Gonzales Mayor Carroll Wiley declaring Vic Salazar Day.

Following his retirement, he worked as vice president of the Trevor Romain Company’s Educational Department from 2010 to 2013 and then started his own public school consulting business from 2013 until 2018. When he retired from that in 2018, he accepted an adjunct professorship at Tarleton State University that he held until 2023.

Happy New Year!

We look forward to continuing to serve and support the health of our community in 2025!

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ELLIE HOLCOMB

* FAMILY ACTIVITIES (SATURDAY ONLY)

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AARON WATSON

EVENT 6-8 PM (BOTH NIGHTS)
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