



Hill Country News



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Living with AUTISM

By SARAH DOOLITTLE
Special to the Hill Country News

April is National Autism Awareness Month and two local families living with autism share what their lives look like, how their children might behave differently from other children, and how lack of awareness about autism affects them every day.

Mindy Minto lives in Steiner Ranch with her husband Sean and their two kids, 15-year-old Delia and 12-year-old Charlie. While Delia is a typically developing child, Charlie was diagnosed at age four with autism.

Struggle to get a diagnosis

Charlie had been unable to hear for the first part of his life due to severe, chronic ear infections. Still, his parents suspected something else was wrong because, “He wasn’t talking for a long time,” said Mindy. “He didn’t walk until he was about 20 months old... So we realized there was obviously some developmental delays happening.”

Mindy had no known risk factors for autism: she was 29 when he was born and there is no known family history of autism. And Charlie didn’t fit all the autism stereotypes; he regularly made eye contact and was outgoing with others.

All of which contributed to the difficulty of getting a diagnosis. The neurologist who treated Charlie throughout his young life insisted that Charlie was just delayed and would eventually catch up with his peers.

“Finally after three years of hearing that, I sat in the room with the doctor and I said, ‘You’re going to sit here with me until you see what I’m seeing,’” described Mindy. “About 30 minutes later it became apparent to him, and he said, ‘Okay, I was wrong.’”

New vision

While the diagnosis gave the family a direction to point for treatment options, it also meant accepting a new vision for their son’s life. said Mindy, “At first it was a hard pill to swallow. Any parent who gets an autism diagnosis — it’s hard to accept because you don’t know what to expect.”

It also meant navigating a world with which they had no previous experience: special schools that cater to kids with developmental disorders; delayed developmental milestones such as potty training; a special diet to help manage his behavior; and negotiating daily life with a child who could be unpredictable and easily set off by noises, smells or unfamiliar surroundings.

With this new world also came new expenses. “It’s like all of a sudden you have a baby and you have a college tuition on top of that. Normally people save for it,” said Mindy.

“Absolutely perfect the way he is”

Still, it was all worth it because, while inconvenient and expensive, this new life included Charlie, who his mom describes as, “the most amazing, the most fantastic person you’d ever meet in your life. The minute someone meets him they don’t want to leave him! He’s just all consuming in happiness and the most pleasant person I’ve ever been around.”

She also adds that, despite the challenges, “I wouldn’t change him for the world. He is absolutely perfect the way he is. Rather, I want the world to change for him.”

When asked what that change would look like, Mindy doesn’t hesitate. “More understanding. I can’t tell you how many times I’ve been approached and told off or told you need to control your son.”

Mindy recounts being asked on numerous occasions, “Can you please make him be quiet? I would love to!” she said with a laugh.

More than the demands to change Charlie’s behavior, “I can’t stand when people stare at him,” said Mindy. “When he starts flapping (his hands) or is loud... I wish those stares would stop. He sees it.

He understands everything that is going on around him. I feel like eventually — maybe not now but eventually — it will hurt his feelings.”

In addition to wishing that people would show respect for Charlie’s humanity, Mindy would like the same, “for the families... A lot of people are really isolated with (caring for a child with autism).”

Staggering statistics

Autism is defined as a developmental disorder that affects millions of children and adults in the U.S. and around the world. The Centers for Disease Control estimate that 1 in 68 children in the U.S. has been diagnosed with autism.

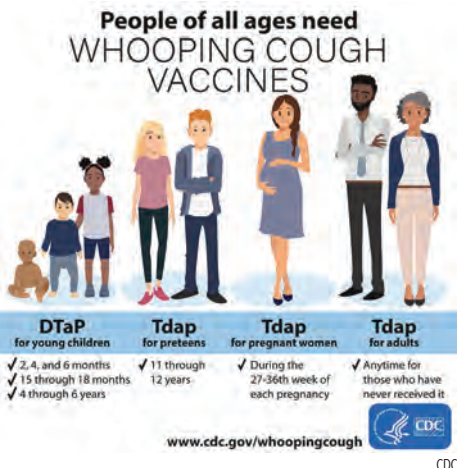
But a new study by the Cohen Children’s Medical Center of New York in New Hyde Park looked at data collected by the National Institutes of Health and estimated that rate to be considerably higher, with 1 in 59 children diagnosed.

Autism does not strike all children equally, however. Four boys will be diagnosed with autism for every one girl.

Furthermore, autism is what is known as a spectrum disorder, meaning that

See **AUTISM** page A3

SCHOOLS



Whooping cough case confirmed at Cedar Park MS

STAFF REPORTS

A student at Cedar Park Middle School was diagnosed with whooping cough earlier this week and Leander ISD recommended parents check with a doctor to determine if their children were exposed to the highly-contagious respiratory disease.

“A child in our school has pertussis, otherwise known as ‘whooping cough.’ Our office has been working with the school’s administration to prevent further spread of this disease. The following are recommendations that we ask you to follow without delay to protect your child and family:

Parents are advised to consult with their child’s physician due to this pertussis exposure for medical care other than observation for signs of pertussis,” a notice sent to parents read.

According to the Centers for Disease Control, Pertussis is known for uncontrollable, violent coughing which often makes it hard to breathe.

In the letter to parents, LISD officials urged parents to observe all household members for the symptoms described in an information sheet distributed in both English and Spanish.

“If signs and symptoms develop in a household member, please contact your physician for evaluation and possible treatment. Be sure to mention your child’s exposure to pertussis and provide your physician this letter,” the notice continued.

The district said it is working with the Travis County Health and Human Services Department to prevent the illness from spreading further in the school.

School officials also advised parents to check immunization records and obtain “age-appropriate pertussis-containing tetanus/diphtheria vaccine” for any adult or child in the household who is under-immunized or has not been immunized.

Parents are also urged to notify the school and district administration office if anyone in the household is suspected of having pertussis.

“If your physician suspects you or your child has pertussis, please do not attend school until you/your child has been cleared to return by the physician and health department,” the letter to parents concluded, adding the district phone number (512) 972-5555 for additional questions.

LEANDER ISD

Leander ISD considering another attendance zone option

STAFF REPORTS

Another attendance rezoning option cleared a milestone at the April 4 Leander ISD board meeting, with Scenario D being approved for presentation at a pair of community meetings this week.

Scenario D is described in district documents as placing a priority on keeping student groups together from middle to high school, while keeping larger groups of fifth-grade students together as they transition from elementary to middle school.

In Scenario D, all students in the

Rutledge Elementary attendance boundary would be moved from Stiles to Henry middle schools. As a result, Henry Middle School would be expected to expand to 1,500 students, but the plan would keep more students together from elementary to middle and middle to high schools.

“Acting on community priorities continues to be our focus during this process,” Trustee Gloria Gonzales-Dholakia said. “Scenario D addresses many of the topics we’ve been urged to consider, and I look forward to hearing more from our stakeholders at the community forums next week.”

The current rezoning work is in preparation for the opening of Danielson Middle School, in the north of the district, currently scheduled for 2020. A final decision on which zoning scenario will be adopted is expected in May.

Scenario A, presented earlier this year, would provide relief for Stiles and Leander middle schools, eliminate small cohorts in middle school to high school feeder patterns of Running Brushy Middle School to Cedar Park High School and Henry Middle School

See **LISD** page A10



The Leander ISD board reviewed another attendance zoning scenario at its April 4 meeting and will obtain feedback from the community on Scenario D at the April 18 meeting.

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GAS PRICES

Local gas prices (finally) hold steady in the past week

STAFF REPORTS

Austin gas prices are unchanged in the past week, averaging \$2.41/g on Monday of this week, according to GasBuddy's daily survey of 830 stations. Gas prices in Austin were 21.7 cents per gallon higher than a month ago and 3.4 cents per gallon higher than a year ago.

"The national average gas price has now risen for two months straight, tacking on a total of 50 cents per gallon in the last 90 days, which will cost Americans nearly \$200 million more at the pump today than back in early January," said Patrick DeHaan, head of petroleum analysis for GasBuddy. "The road doesn't end here, however, with California and the West Coast seeing a surge in unexpected refinery outages, leading to extremely tight supply of cleaner summer gasoline and causing prices to skyrocket."



COURTESY PHOTO

Gas prices across the Austin metro area held steady last week, while the national average has risen for two consecutive months.

According to GasBuddy price reports, the cheapest station in Austin was priced at \$2.22/g on Monday while the most expensive was \$2.79/g, a difference of 57 cents per gallon. The lowest price in the state on Monday was \$2.09/g while the highest was \$3.59/g — a difference of \$1.50/g. The cheapest price in the entire country was \$1.74/g while the most expensive was \$5.01/g, a difference of \$3.27/g.

The national average price of gasoline has risen 4.8 cents per gallon in the last week, averaging \$2.74/g on Monday. The national average was up 27.6 cents per gallon from a month ago, yet stands 9.3 cents per gallon higher than a year ago.

Gas prices in San Antonio were also unchanged from last week, remaining at \$2.32/g. Prices in Waco were up 1.9 cents to \$2.41/g, and prices in College Station were up 2.9 cents to \$2.48 per gallon.

"California will soon be home to something not seen in nearly five years: a statewide average of over \$4 per gallon, with some of the largest cities there swelling to averages as high as \$4.15 per gallon before any relief arrives," said DeHaan. "It really is going to be ugly this week in the West Coast, and any further issues could lead to more spikes, but for the rest of the country expect the rise to continue for a ninth straight week with little good news on the horizon."

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- Offices Closed for Good Friday – April 19
- Household Hazardous Waste Clean-Up – April 27

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WHAT'S HAPPENING

April 11

The Leander ISD Empowered Parenting Series invites parents to a free workshop, "Keeping Your Kids Safe Online." The workshop is scheduled for April 11, 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m., Leander High School, 3301 S. Bagdad Road, Leander. Visit leanderisd.org.

Cedar Park City Council will meet April 11, at 7 p.m. at City Council Chambers, 450 Cypress

Creek Road, Building 4. Meetings are open to the public.

Learn about turf management at the monthly gardening program, Green Thumbs Up, presented by A&M Agrilife Extension Office, April 11, 7 p.m. to 8 p.m., Cedar Park Public Library, 550 Discovery Blvd. Call (512) 401-5608 with questions.

Concordia University hosts its Fourth Annual Nature Fest, a

week-long event including tours of Concordia's nature preserve, guided bird watching, presentations and more, every day through Saturday, April 13. Visit concordia.edu/naturefest for the schedule of events.

April 12

The 16th Annual Leander Chamber of Commerce Golf Classic begins April 12, 10 a.m., at Crystal Falls Golf Course, 3400 Crystal Falls Parkway, Leander. Find details and registration information at leandercoc.org.

Enjoy a free concert in the park by cover band Suede, April 12, 7 p.m. to 9:30 p.m., Elizabeth Milburn Park, 1901 Sun Chase Blvd., Cedar Park. Visit cedar-parktx.gov for more information.

Latin music artist Marco Antonio Solís performs at H-E-B Center at Cedar Park Friday, April 12, 7 p.m., 2100 Avenue of the Stars, Cedar Park. Find tickets and information at hebcenter.com.

Way Off Broadway Community Players presents the comedy thriller "Anybody for Murder?" Fridays and Saturdays, 8 p.m. April 12 until May 4, 11880 Hero Way West, Leander. Visit wobcp.org or call (512) 259-5878 for information and tickets.

April 13

Leander residents, bring your non-hazardous waste to the city's 2019 Residential Spring Cleanup, April 13, 8 a.m. to 2 p.m., 607 Municipal Dr. Visit leandertx.gov for details and the list of items that will be accepted.

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NEWS

AUTISM from page A1



LAUREN LESLEY PHOTOGRAPHY

Mindy, Delia, Charlie and Sean Minto in one of their favorite family photos from a few years ago. The children are 15 and 12 now.

those diagnosed with autism fall on infinite points along a scale of development, from the lowest to the highest functioning and everything in between.

The family cost

The average family spends \$42,000 a year on services and additional living and medical expenses, never mind the endless hours spent caring for their autistic child. “And so you look at the caregivers, too, they need people to be aware so that they have the respect and the compassion and the dignity that they deserve. Because they’re working their asses off 24/7 with these kids.”

Mindy and her husband take care of their emotional, mental and physical needs with weekend getaways and jogs in the neighborhood.

For Charlie’s sister Delia, they go out of their way to make sure she gets special one-on-one time whenever possible. “But we also tell her, sometimes she has to miss stuff,” explained her mom. “That’s the reality of it. I don’t think she knows any different... She’s really independent.”

Delia loves Charlie and is his fiercest defender. The two enjoy a normal sibling relationship, although Delia would disagree and tell you it’s not normal because Charlie is her best friend.

Mindy understands in part people’s misconceptions of her son. Charlie, “looks like a 12-year-old boy and he doesn’t have any visible differences. So it’s hard for people to understand what it is... Before this, I was as ignorant as anybody else when it came to understanding special needs.”

Autism’s lessons

Life with Charlie has taught her and her family, “compassion and empathy. Completely. He has absolutely taught me to accept differences.”

She knows, too, that others can learn the same lessons by using one simple tool. “Ask questions. Ask me anything. I’m never offended with questions,” said Mindy. “I’d rather somebody ask me a question like, ‘Why is your son flapping?’ Or ‘Why does he make that noise?’ Or ‘Why is he jumping?’”

“Any kind of communication would be better than staring or being rude. Ask me a question... Or ‘How can I help?,” adding that, “Some people might not want to be asked questions. I love it.”

Helping others

Life with Charlie also inspired Mindy to follow an unexpected career path, and she founded both Spectrum Sitters and Spectrum Ed, businesses aimed at families living with kids on the spectrum.

The former provides babysitters specifically trained to care for children on the autism spectrum and the latter helps to connect families with educational support services.

“I’ve had clients tell me, ‘We have not ever in 18 years been able to go out,’” explained Mindy. “And it’s because you can’t just hire a 16-year-old... You need somebody that understands (autism) and respects your kid, and treats them with respect and compassion.”

Whereas Spectrum Ed has, “trained professionals that work on the behavior side to set the kid up for academic success.”

Progress

Charlie has experienced considerable growth in the seven years since his diagnosis. He recently became potty trained and appears to be able to read, though, his mom adds, “We don’t know what his intellectual ability is because it’s hard to test a kid like (Charlie).”

Still, she explained, “He’s very tech savvy. He can do anything and everything on a computer, iPhone or iPad.”

Charlie’s parents expect to be caring for their son in one form or another for the rest of their lives. This year he has started to learn vocational and life skills as part of his schooling with the goal of independent living when (and if) possible.

“My main goal for him eventually is to be a fully independent, functioning adult. What that looks like, I don’t know... He’s always going to have autism,” said Mindy.

“A constant struggle to balance”

Another Steiner Ranch mom shares her story of living with autism. Kristina and Ryan Ritchie have three kids Chase, Jillian and Graham, ages 11, 10 and 7. Graham has autism.

“Autism has changed our family,” explained Kristina. Graham had to be switched to River Ridge Elementary from Steiner Ranch Elementary in order to be enrolled in their Early Learning program, which means having two kids at one school and one at another.

“My older two are really sad they don’t get to go to school with their brother,” she said. “But it’s what is best for our son so we’ve made the best out of it.

“We still have to hire a babysitter to attend sporting events... so we can give our other two the undistracted cheering section they deserve,” Kristina continued. Graham’s autistic behaviors mean that the family is often split up and, “Life often-times feels like it revolves around our son with special needs.”

It’s important to Kristina that others understand the challenges and sacrifices, which may be invisible to bystanders. “I won’t sugar coat it. We live with a constant struggle to balance,” she said. “But we try tirelessly to make sure our other two kids get all the attention, love and opportunities that they deserve.”

Chase and Jillian, like Charlie’s sister, have grown up looking out for their brother. “Our life is lived on high alert. Our older

two kids have had to become protectors, little therapists and teachers at a young age,” said Kristina.

They are also witnesses to a public that can be unkind and insensitive to their son’s special needs. One day while at Randalls supermarket, Graham had a tantrum because he was denied a movie from Redbox.

As he lay on the floor melting down, Kristina said, “My daughter heard someone call her brother ‘Obnoxious.’ That is really tough, because our kids see our whole family, and especially our son, working hard every day to help him communicate better.”

Hopes for increased awareness

Kristina, like Mindy, hopes that sharing her story will increase awareness, as her two oldest kids, Chase and Jillian, were able to do at River Ridge during an Autism Awareness assembly for students.

“For me, the end goal for Autism Awareness is kindness, lack of judgement, acceptance of our differences, being comfortable with differences and embracing and supporting families and children affected by autism,” explained Kristina.

In addition, Kristina was grateful that her kids were given the opportunity to advocate for their Graham, their family and themselves.

After all, as Kristina explained, “They say, ‘To meet one person with autism is to meet one person with autism,’ and that couldn’t be more true. Every child is very different, which is why they call it a spectrum.”

Kristina could not be more proud of her unique son. “Our son is an amazing boy. He’s worked harder in his seven years of life than some people have in a lifetime. He sees the world differently, and because of that we do too.”

“Autism has taught us all to be better people,” she emphasized. Despite the hardships, “We are all more thankful for all of the little moments that are truly magical in life. I know I am a more grateful, optimistic person because of autism.”

Though as a mom, Kristina said that if she, “could take away some of the struggles he has, I would in a heartbeat. But I would never change who he is. He is adored and loved beyond belief for exactly who he is.”

Both Mindy and Kristina work every day for a world that is kinder to their kids, whether typically developing or living with autism.

And while both see what logistical support is still needed for theirs and other families living with autism — whether more early intervention, government funding or something as seemingly simple as summer camps and after school programs — their primary goal is a more compassionate, understanding society.

Kristina recounts the words spoken by a third grader at the RRE assembly. “Don’t stare, just care.’ She hit the nail on the head with that phrase. Just care.”

NEWS BRIEFS

House passes legislation to reform school finance, property taxes

The Texas House of Representatives on April 3 approved much-anticipated legislation written to revise the state’s public school finance system. The vote was 148-1, and the bill now moves to the Senate for consideration.

House Bill 3 would increase pay for public school classroom teachers, librarians and other full-time personnel and also would enable property tax relief. Primarily authored by House Education Committee Chair Dan Huberty, R-Houston, joint authors include Reps. Diego Bernal, D-San Antonio; John Zerwas, R-Richmond; Ken King, R-Canadian; and Alma Allen, D-Houston.

HB 3’s estimated net cost would be \$9.5 billion, covering the fiscal biennium that ends Aug. 31, 2021. In addition to pay increases and incentives, HB 3 would reduce recapture and enable some \$2.7 billion in property tax relief. The legislation, among its general provisions, changes the order in which the Foundation School Program is financed so that state-available school funds would be applied before locally generated property tax revenue.

After the House voted, Gov. Greg Abbott applauded lawmakers for their work and said, “Texans are demanding meaningful reforms to our school finance system, and today’s passage of HB 3 in the House is a vital step toward that goal. By reducing recapture, investing more money in our schools and in our teachers, the Legislature is making changes that will have a lasting impact on our education system, and more importantly, our students.”

State Rep. Gina Hinojosa, D-Austin, chair of the House Democratic Caucus Special Committee on Education, in an April 3 news release called HB 3 “the bill we have been working for.”

“To the teachers who dedicate their working lives to our kids, who for too long have been under-appreciated and unheard: We hear you, and this bill is for you,” she said.

“In February, House Democrats put forward our Texas Kids First Plan. We laid out a number of key priorities for our vision for the future of public education in Texas. Today, I am pleased to say that this bill incorporates most of those priorities.

“House Bill 3 is an example of what happens when we come together — Democrats and Republicans — and instead of fighting about our different visions, speak honestly about what we want and what we can achieve together. We can expect and can tolerate no less,” Hinojosa added.

Both houses must agree

Meanwhile, the Senate Finance Committee on April 3 unanimously approved a budget bill that matches the House’s appropriation on two of the session’s top priorities: education finance and property tax reform.

A report filed by the Senate News Service points out that while the House and Senate have settled on \$9 billion in additional funding toward those priorities, exactly how the funds would be spent is still up for debate.

Senate Finance Committee Chair Jane Nelson, R-Flower Mound, said, “We continue to negotiate this issue with the House, but both chambers have now reached \$9 billion set aside for whatever agreement we reach.”

Revenue increase noted

State sales tax revenue totaled \$2.6 billion last month, an amount 9 percent greater than the amount calculated for the month of March 2018, Texas Comptroller Glen Hegar announced April 2.

The comptroller’s office reported increased collections in all major economic sectors, including retail trade, information services, oil and gas and restaurants. “Much of the increase stemmed more from consumer spending rather than business spending,” Hegar said.

Furthermore, total sales tax revenue for the three months ending in March 2019 was up 7.3 percent compared to the same period a year ago, according to agency statistics.

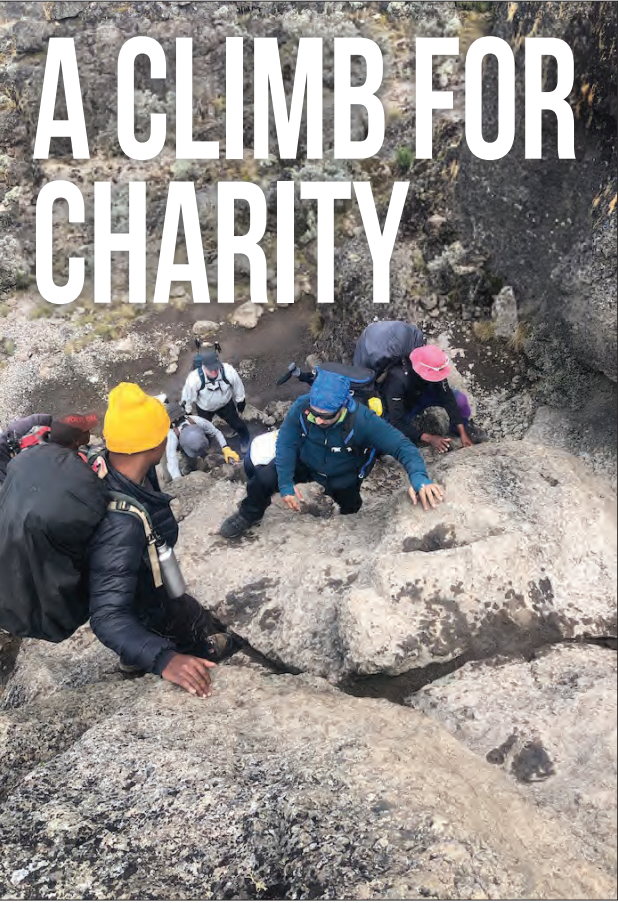
RRC marks anniversary

On March 31, 1919, the Texas Legislature enacted a statute giving the Texas Railroad Commission regulatory authority over the oil and gas industry in the Lone Star State.

Railroad Commissioner Christi Craddick wrote an April 1 editorial commemorating the milestone. Among the points she made was that the commission’s well-plugging program is hitting historic numbers. In fiscal years 2018-2019, the Texas Legislature set a performance goal for the agency to plug 1,958 abandoned wells. However, Craddick said, the commission is on track to plug about 3,000. Craddick pointed out that funds to plug the wells come from fees paid by the energy industry, not from Texas taxpayers.

— Compiled by Ed Sterling of the Texas Press Association

MOUNT KILIMANJARO TRIP



COURTESY PHOTO

David Lesniak’s group of nine climbers summited Mount Kilimanjaro in March, raising more than \$20,000 for local charity Miracle Foundation.

By MADISON PHARIS

Special to the Hill Country News

A local business executive formed a team to conquer Mount Kilimanjaro, raising \$20,000 for charity in the process.

David Lesniak, a resident of Northwest Austin who lives within the Leander ISD school zone, is CEO of Austin-based business process outsourcing services company Personiv. Lesniak and eight members of the company’s management formed a group intent on climbing the famed mountain — actually a dormant volcano — in the African country of Tanzania.

The group began its trek on March 2 and summited the mountain six days later on March 8.

“All nine of our team were able to make it to the top successfully thanks to the superb program guides provided by the African Walking Company,” Lesniak said.

Part of the motivation for this trek came from Lesniak wanting to reward his senior management team of eight with the special trekking experience, as it had been considered a bucket list item for many.

Lesniak wanted to do more so with this trip he decided to also raise money a charity. His fundraiser, called “Trek for a Cause,”

raised money online for Miracle Foundation — founded on Mother’s Day in 2000 by another local resident, Caroline Boudreaux.

The charity provides life changing care to orphaned and vulnerable children globally and with a strong presence in India. Sharing Austin roots and support for communities in India brought these two organizations together.

“To date, we have raised over \$20,000 to benefit this Austin non-profit,” Lesniak said.

To prepare for the Mount Kilimanjaro journey, the Personiv team trained for six months, with Lesniak running some 3 miles nearly every morning and hiking 20 miles each weekend through the Steiner Ranch neighborhood where he has lived for more than a decade.

The Personiv team was made up of Lesniak, Michael Murphy, CFO, Paulo Cheung, EVP operations Philippines, Fredricks John, EVP operations Coimbatore India, Vishal Bora EVP operations Gurugram India, Lydia Adams VP marketing and communications, John Nichols VP account management, David Graham VP client services and Matt Wood senior program manager.

See CLIMB page A10

OUR VIEW

Ted Cruz asks whether the FAA is too close to the aviation industry

U.S. Sen. Ted Cruz has called for an investigation into why the Federal Aviation Administration certified the Boeing 737 Max and whether the agency is getting too close to the corporations it regulates. The Texas Republican is right.

After two of the new 737 Max airplanes crashed, aviation regulators around the world grounded the planes. The FAA took longer to do so, and Cruz said at a speech to the Texas Lyceum that's a concern. Cruz held hearings on the state of aviation safety in his role as chairman of the Senate subcommittee on aviation and space.

We expect regulators of our most important industries to minimize red tape that can choke commerce. And we also expect regulators to remain independent of the industries they oversee and to create firm, fair rules that protect the public. Because as Cruz warned, public safety is paramount, but so is the trust of the flying public.

At issue with the 737 Max is that Boeing included a new software system that, according to media reports about initial reviews of the accidents, pilots couldn't override in the same way as prior versions of the plane. Pilot training materials didn't include training on overriding the software system.

"Why didn't they require training of the pilots to understand this system," Cruz said at the Lyceum conference. He said he has "questions about agency



Boeing's first 737 MAX, the Spirit of Renton, takes off for its first flight on January 29, 2016. Since then, two high-profile crashes have put Boeing and the 737 MAX in the midst of global controversy.

capture, about the FAA getting too close. Look Boeing is a huge job producer, a huge supplier."

Cruz also said he's in favor of passing a bill to fund more infrastructure projects, and he's hopeful a bill could pass because of bipartisan support in an otherwise sharply divided Congress. He said a bill is an opportunity for Texas to get a larger share of federal infrastructure funds at a time of rapid growth, and a bill could allow lawmakers to reduce some regulations that slow down construction of roads and pipelines.

"My priorities are, No. 1, Texas needs to get our fair share. The money needs to flow where the need is. The population is grow-

ing like crazy, the jobs are growing like crazy, the energy is growing like crazy, the commerce is growing like crazy," he said.

We'll leave for another editorial speculation about whether meaningful infrastructure legislation is possible in Washington just now, but it's worth pausing on the senator's points about the FAA. This kind of government work doesn't grab as many headlines, but it's crucial to public trust. Getting to the bottom of precisely what is happening with this jetliner and why is the essential task we ask of officials in Washington. Air safety needs to be a bipartisan issue.

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EDITORIAL CARTOON



MY VIEW

Tax time: Better to laugh than cry

Tax season is upon us, which gives us a choice: Laugh or cry. I choose to laugh.

Dave Barry offers useful advice for getting through this trying time: "It's income tax time again, Americans: time to gather up those receipts, get out those tax forms, sharpen up that pencil, and stab yourself in the aorta."

You got that right, Dave! For the sin of being self-employed, I spend hours navigating a sea of receipts, which I share with my CPA, who tells me I owe \$5,000 more than I feared I would.

That's why this quote from an anonymous pro athlete resonates with me: "I want to find out who this FICA guy is and how come he's taking so much of my money."

Officially, FICA stands for the Federal Insurance Contribution Act tax, which funds Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid for some 60 million beneficiaries.



TOM PURCELL
GUEST COLUMNIST

Unofficially, I believe FICA is a Latin term for "hammer," and the government uses that hammer to bludgeon the self-employed who have even modest success.

Herbert Hoover presided over the stock market crash that signaled the Great Depression, but he got this one right: "Blessed are the young, for they shall inherit the national debt."

In February, the U.S. posted the largest budget deficit in its history, adding to our already unimaginable debt. Somebody has to pick up that tab. And that "somebody" will be the young.

Though polls show most millennials favor socialism, Dan Bennet offers hope that they'll come to their senses as those massive bills come due:

"There's nothing wrong with the younger generation that becoming taxpayers won't cure."

Two quotes posted on the IRS website particularly agitated me:

"Taxes are what we pay for civilized society." — Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr., U.S. Supreme Court justice

"The power of taxing people and their property is essential to the very existence of government." — James Madison, U.S. president

Hey, Ollie, I don't mind paying taxes for a civilized society. It's paying for the uncivilized part that grates on me. And Jimmy, I'm happy our government exists, but does it have to be so big?

Three of our thinkers make great sense, though:

"What the government gives, it must first take away." — John S. Coleman

"What is the difference between a taxidermist and a tax collector? The taxidermist takes only your skin." — Mark Twain

"The best things in life are tax free." — Joseph Bonkowski

The great Will Rogers' wit and wisdom is always helpful at tax time:

"It costs 10 times more to govern us than it used to, and we are not governed one-tenth as good."

"The income tax has made more liars out of the American people than golf."

"The difference between death and taxes is death doesn't get worse every time Congress meets."

I wish you and all Americans the best of luck as you sort through receipts and curse about never-ending tax obligations.

Here's an old joke to help cheer you up:

The IRS commissioner is on a D.C. sidewalk. A mugger jumps out of an alley and says, "Give me all your money!"

The commissioner says, "You can't do this to me! I run the IRS."

"In that case," says the mugger, "give me all of MY money!"

— Tom Purcell is a nationally-syndicated humor columnist and author of "Misadventures of a 1970's Childhood."

MY VIEW

Why are we so bad at science?



JOHN L. MICEK
GUEST COLUMNIST

What do most Americans know about science? If a March 28 Pew Research Center poll is to be believed, not nearly enough. And at a time when knowledge and facts are under assault as they have not been in recent memory, that's a problem.

On the upside, about eight in 10 respondents to the new Pew poll knew that increase resistance is one of the big concerns about the overuse of antibiotics. And more than three-quarters know that an "incubation period" is the time when a person has an infection — but isn't showing any visible signs of it.

But only about four in 10 people were able to correctly identify the main components of antacids. Those are "bases."

And I'll admit, I'd forgotten that one.

In general, "there are striking differences in levels of science knowledge by education, as well as by racial and ethnic group," Pew researchers found. "Men tend to score higher than women on the science knowledge scale, but gender differences are not consistent across questions in the scale."

And here's the finding that sticks out: Pew researchers found that "political party groups are roughly similar in their overall levels of science knowledge — although conservative Republicans tend to score higher on the scale than do their more moderate counterparts."

That matters because scientific issues of huge importance now inform our policy debate.

In Pennsylvania last week, for instance, a self-described "climate contrarian" who acknowledges that human activity is heating the Earth, but who — unlike a majority of scientists — also believes the potential consequences are overblown, got a star turn before the state House's oversight committee on environmental issues.

Despite a scientific consensus to the contrary, Gregory Wrightstone, a geologist with ties to the natural gas industry, spent an hour arguing that increased carbon dioxide in the atmosphere is a good thing.

Encouragingly, based on a December 2018 Morning Consult/Politico poll, more Americans find such views as Wrightstone's total poppycock — even with that knowledge gap identified by the Pew poll. They agree that climate change is caused by human activity and they're concerned by the consequences.

More than two-thirds of respondents to the Morning Consult/Politico poll were concerned about the results of last year's National Climate Assessment, which says climate change could cause billions of dollars in economic losses.

But less than half the Republican respondents to the poll said they were worried about its findings, compared to 87 percent of Democrats and two-thirds of independents.

And Republican respondents to the poll were "about as likely to consider President Donald Trump" as credible on environmental matters as they were scientists. Trump, by the way, expressed skepticism on the study by the government's own scientists.

And this is where science education comes into play.

While there's a renewed push by both policymakers and educators to stress the importance of "STEM" education (or Science, Technology, Engineering and Math), the data suggests we still have some catching up to do.

In 2017, Pew researchers found that American students tended to fall into the middle of the international pack on math, science and reading, according to one worldwide benchmark.

Given that, it's not surprising that the Pew poll finds that greater levels of scientific fluency correspond with greater levels of education. Americans with a post-graduate degree, for instance, got about four more questions correct than those with a high school diploma or less, Pew found.

So what's the cure?

It's on the media to fill in gaps in knowledge — seven in 10 respondents to a 2017 Pew Poll got their information from press accounts. And ditto for museums. 62 percent came across their information that way in that same 2017 poll.

It's often said that those who fail to learn from history are doomed to repeat its mistakes. The consequences of failing to pay heed to science are even greater.

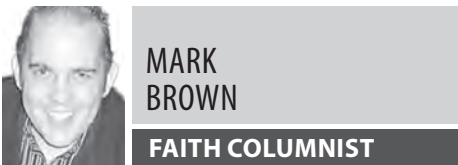
— An award-winning political journalist, John L. Micek is the Opinion Editor and Political Columnist for PennLive/The Patriot-News in Harrisburg, Pa.



The deadline for filing tax returns with the IRS is Monday, April 15.

FAITH COMMENTARY

Don't settle, your promise is ahead



MARK BROWN
FAITH COLUMNIST

Sometimes in life we fight the wrong battles, or we've been on a road for so long we settle and never reach our destiny. Don't settle for mediocre when God has prepared greatness for you. In fact, we can miss destiny when we have not followed through on what the Lord has spoken. Others settle because it is taking too long. And some, simply because they do not understand the bigger picture. You have others who do not listen to the Lord and think their way or what they have is more than enough. Settling is your enemy.

In Deuteronomy 1:6, Moses was speaking and told the children of Israel "You have stayed at this mountain long enough." Have you been at your mountain long enough? Are you accustomed to settling?

Sometimes we get used to settling. It can stem from pain, frustration, fear of the unknown, failure and rejection. God wants you to know it is time to move on. It is time to reach for higher. It is time to open the gates of the potential that lies inside.

The Bible tells of a time, God sent an angel to a man name Gideon. He said, "You mighty man of Valor." In that moment, God was speaking to Gideon's purpose not his pain. At this time Gideon was hiding and making food for his family, yet the angel of the Lord called him by who he was in Christ, a mighty man of valor. Even in our lowest moments, we are who God says we are.

What has the Lord put on your heart that you have set aside? What do you know deep down on the inside you have not acted on? In the bible there were ten brides waiting for the bridegroom. While the ten waited, their lamps began to go out and only the five wise took extra oil. The other five had to go back, leave their waiting place and buy extra oil. While the five foolish brides were away, the bridegroom came. They were left behind. They didn't plan for the bridegroom to be late.

Are you prepared for the dream God placed in your heart? Are you ready to see promise fulfilled? Is there anything God keeps speaking to you, to step out on — but you continue to ignore it? I guarantee if the five foolish had the opportunity to do it all over again, they would have invested into more oil.

What God has put on your heart, act on it. He knows exactly what, where, why, and how. Settling is saying — God your plan is not good enough. It's saying I know more than you. No, God has already laid out what He has foreseen.

God's timing is impeccable. He is flawless when it comes to plans for our life. In the bible, Elijah was on a journey and an angel of the Lord came and woke him up. The angel told Elijah to eat, for the journey is long. He was telling Elijah, you need more than what you think. God will prepare you and instruct you. Do not settle. On the other side of your obedience is someone who is waiting on your gift to the world.

Settling prohibits us from reaching our full potential. It produces language like "almost" and "why didn't I," instead of "I obeyed the Lord."

Settling is the enemy's method of stealing and robbing your time, vision, purpose and potential. Refuse to settle, but for God's best. People are waiting on you and all that God has pre-ordained you to be and live out. What God has for you is greater than you have seen before. The opinion of others never alters what God has already spoken. The Bible tells us some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we will trust in the name of our God. Don't settle.

You are loved, approved, appointed, anointed, over coming, victorious, highly favored, and reaching your destiny.

— Mark Brown is senior pastor of Faith City Church (www.gofaithcity.org).

FAITH COMMENTARY

Pay attention to your world

Every morning I follow a ritual as inevitable as the rising of the sun and a hot cup of coffee (one Splenda and a splash of cream, please). Reaching into a wicker basket that sits beside the front door, I pick up two leashes and attach them to Toby and Moe, the little mutts who have been in charge of our home for almost a decade.

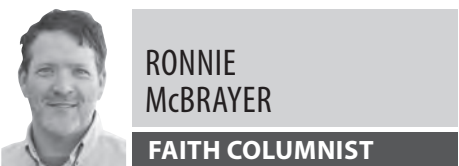
Out the door we go, and "neither snow, nor rain, nor heat, nor gloom of night stays us from the completion of our appointed rounds." These rounds include the pups "doing their business," of course, but there is also a necessary and enlightening bit of exercise. The exercise is for all of us, and the enlightening is my own, for my canine pals always teach me a lesson: Pay attention to your world.

The three of us can walk for half an hour along the same sidewalks we have covered hundreds and hundreds of times. We can take new, twisting trails into the nearby woods. We can do laps around the yard. It makes no difference, the dogs always find something new to sniff, to see, or to investigate.

Their world — our world — is a cacophony of discovery.

I want to live my days like they take a walk, bounding out the door each morning, my lease on life renewed. I want their incurable curiosity, searching for the unexpected in the routine. I want to learn to chase butterflies, to eagerly meet people along the way, and to stop and listen for what is barely audible over the horizon.

Like them I probably need a yank on my leash from



RONNIE McBRAYER
FAITH COLUMNIST

time to time to keep me from danger, or from getting into a big mess. I'll need to be told to "Shhh... be easy, now," more than once. But the occasional correction or misstep is better than allowing the years to rob me of the simple joys of seeing, hearing, exploring, and being.

And when each day is done, and I've spent the energy I have, like them I want to come home happy, eat well, drink cheerfully, curl up with those I love, and fall into the deep sleep of blessed assurance. A little scratching behind the ears wouldn't be so bad, either, would it?

Yes, this is the lesson I am learning on these daily walks: Take it all in. Soak it all up. Be "grasped by what cannot be grasped, and be changed by what cannot be reached." The act of exploring, of being open to whatever is next, of welcoming whatever is around the bend even though you don't know what it is, isn't a bad way to approach the world.

As Turkish novelist and Nobel laureate Orhan Pamuk says, "Dogs do speak, but only to those who know how to listen." Figuring out how to listen — both to our dogs and to all that is around us — might be the greatest lesson we ever have the opportunity to learn.

— Ronnie McBrayer is a nationally-syndicated columnist and the author of several books.

OBITUARY

Luca Nathaniel De Marco left this world all too soon on April 3, 2019. He was 23 years old.

He was a most beloved son and brother that even in his darkest days brought joy and laughter to his family. He loved life and he loved people. Luca did not know a stranger. He worked hard, cherished his family, and cherished his friends. His many worldly accomplishments in his short but well-lived life include going to UT Austin business school, working three jobs and taking ACC classes with a 4.0 grade average to get there, being involved in campus ministries, and being involved in church.

His many spiritual accomplishments include loving everyone



LUCA NATHANIEL DE MARCO
1995-2019

regardless of race, background, or social status, providing laughter and joy to those around him, loving and coaching kids, defining love to his then single mom, adoring his two

brothers and baby sister, and fighting his fight for as long as he could to be close to his family.

Near the end Luca lived two lives as many with mental illness do. He lived one life of hope with a dream to return to UT and graduate, marry a woman he loved, and have babies, and serve God. He also lived a second reality with a brain that went against those dreams and made him struggle daily.

He no longer struggles but is now with his Creator and Lord whom he cherished more than anything. He will forever be remembered for the joy and laughter he brought to all who knew him. May he finally rest and live his "enlightened" life in peace.

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SUDOKU

9								
7			8	1	4	5		
				3				7
			2	4				
6		2			5			
	1			7		6		
			4	2	9	1		
	8	6				9		
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Level: Intermediate

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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!

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2	8	6	1	9	7	8	4
8	9	1	6	2	4	9	8
6	2	9	8	7	8	4	1
4	7	8	9	6	1	2	8
1	9	8	9	4	2	6	4
4	8	7	2	8	6	9	1
9	6	9	4	1	8	8	7
8	1	2	4	9	8	9	6
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GAME OF THRONES



The eighth and final season of HBO's Game of Thrones premieres this Sunday at 8 p.m.

By **STEVE JOHNSON**
Chicago Tribune

In the end, the Night King will reign supreme over Westeros, and all of the humans who tried to resist him will be converted into those proto-zombies known as White Walkers, sad trombone.

Sorry, no, that's wrong. When it is all over, when the epic battle of battles has been fought, Sansa Stark will be left occupying the Iron Throne, saddened over the loss of so many friends, family members and even worthy enemies but nonetheless determined to rule what remains of humankind with compassion and resolve, moderately triumphal bugle cry.

Or, wait: It's the Clegane brothers, the Hound and the Mountain, once mortal enemies, who will emerge from the coming test of tactical mettle as survivors and co-sovereigns on this side of the Narrow Sea. Their champion at tournaments — and commercial sponsor — will, of course, be the Bud Knight, no trumpet notes necessary.

What I'm trying to say here is that A) everything sounds better with a horn section and B) almost anything could happen when "Game of Thrones," HBO's sprawling epic about dragons, monarchy and the gratuitous nudity they inspire, comes back to our screens April 14 and then, five weeks and six episodes later, goes away again forever.

Like Jon Snow back in the early years of "GoT," when he was but a handsome illegitimate lad on a frosty inter-tribal carnal lark, I know nothing. And I can give away nothing in these coming paragraphs that will taint your viewing of the wrap-up of this eight-year sword opera played across an imaginary Middle Ages.

But like any decent "GoT" follower, I suspect things. I hope for things. But I do not know.

And not knowing, to my way of thinking, is a good thing. You can go deep into the corners of the internet to find wildly entertaining fan theories: Ned Stark is really alive thanks to a body switch engineered by the faceless men. This whole story we have witnessed is actually from the writings of Samwell Tarly, and he is, by the way, yet another secret Targaryen. Speaking of Targaryens, Daenerys is a Mad King-in-waiting.

*...like any decent "GoT" follower,
I suspect things. I hope for things.
But I do not know.*

Or you can sit back and revel in the ride, experience, perhaps for the last time, television the way television has historically been presented: one episode at a time, over time. This way, anticipation can build, characters (and actors) can grow and change, and a great number of us can afterward stand around water coolers of the thirst-quenching or metaphorical kind and enjoy this broadly shared storytelling experience, one of the few cultural commonalities that remains to us. Oh, and without the temptation to binge watch, we can all report to work the next day without telltale eye bags.

There are a few important things that we cannot help but know about this season. For one thing, the show is building toward a super-mega-battle that will make even Season 6's "Battle of the Bastards" look modest. The 11-week filming of this battle and the endurance it required of cast and crew is one of the few plot facts that HBO has allowed the actors to talk about, and it is "expected to be the longest consecutive battle sequence ever committed to film," Entertainment Weekly said in an exclusive report from the set.

This will be, to one degree or another, the "Winter Is Coming" battle that the whole series has been pointing toward, the one where the Night King's frozen undead armies from the North plus his newly undead zombie dragon try to take over from those petty, perpetually feuding humans situated south of them. Given their documented venality over seven seasons, many of these particular bipedal persons may not particularly deserve survival, but viewers should have a rooting interest in it, nonetheless, grounded in basic Darwinian theory and unapologetic speciesism. Also, I think we all root for the Starks, not counting Bran, who is the Dorne of the Starks.

This battle will most likely come in Episode 5 of this season's six, partly because "GoT" has a history of doing big things in penultimate episodes, partly because we have been told that episode was directed by Miguel Sapochnik, who was so masterful with the Battle of the Bastards (which aired in a penultimate episode). Sapochnik also directs the season's third episode, but that just seems too soon for the show's equivalent of the World Series, Wrestlemania and Waterloo wrapped into one. Both episodes, incidentally are about 80 minutes long, like the other two of the final four episodes.

We know that a top HBO executive has said the showrunners D.B. Weiss and David Benioff delivered an ending that will be "dramatically satisfying and emotionally satisfying" to fans.

"Satisfying" probably means a human being and his or her kind will emerge victorious, in one way or another, again for unabashedly speciesist reasons. But given the "Thrones" history of tinkering with main-character lifelines and audience expectations, "satisfying" could very well mean we'll end up with a big surprise on the throne. Rather than the expected Jon Snow and/or his lover/aunt Daenerys, it could well be a Tyrion Lannister in the big knifey chair. Perhaps his sister Cersei will be ensconced in a revolutionary co-monarchy with her perpetual glass of wine.

Or just maybe the good people who remain will get together and decide the traditional system of hereditary feudal rule is inherently unfair to the peasant classes and antithetical to the idea of a meritocracy and now is the time to give agrarian socialism a true chance.

We don't know what to expect from some of the show's wild cards — figures who have receded into the background but just may return in the final season. What

of Melisandre, ageless and red, off to some foreign isle, ostensibly to recruit allies? And Brandon Stark, whose forays back into time would seem to allow him to maybe, possibly, alter current events? And what about the direwolves? I miss the direwolves.

We do know a few things from the Season 8 trailer. We learned Arya has apparently continued on her assassinary ways rather than, say, going off to study the classics at university. Jaime Lannister, last seen finally abandoning his treacherous sister/lover to join the fight for humanity up by Winterfell, has enough of a beard that he looks like an investment banker just starting in his new career at the microbrewery he funded.

We didn't learn much about Tyrion or Sansa, except that they are, at some point, still alive in the season. Ditto for time-traveling mystic and wet blanket-to-drama Bran; the answer, he always seems to be trying to tell us, lies right where I am looking, in the middle distance.

We also learned that Dany and Jon are seemingly still an item. They hold hands together. They approach the two living dragons together. Apparently nobody has told them what Bran and Samwell and viewers now know, that Jon is really a Targaryen and rightful heir to the throne and that Dany is really his aunt. Oh, and that Jon is not illegitimate, but rather the product of a secret marriage. Even if they had been told, it may not have mattered, because in the lore of the series, Targaryens marry Targaryens.

But, really, it's not necessary to know any more. I came across a new promotional teaser, just out this week, showing a certain important place in the series in seeming ruins. You can look it up if you want, but it is a thing I really wish I did not know as I prepare to watch.

At its best, "Game of Thrones" has been rollicking storytelling that you can enjoy without thinking about it as a climate-change allegory, without wondering which character derives from which historical monarch, and without having or wanting to work hard to stay ahead of the plot.

It is enough to know that winter is here, and the battle shall be joined, and maybe spring is coming?

The new season starts this Sunday, April 14, at 8 p.m. Central.

MOVIE REVIEW

Upbeat and sarcastic 'Shazam!' feels young at heart

By **RAFER GUZMAN**
Newsday

Even by the standards of mid-1970s television, the CBS superhero series "Shazam!" was pretty hokey stuff. The story of Billy Batson, a teenager who can become a superhero by uttering a magic word, "Shazam!" suffered from low-impact action sequences and one corny-looking suit — a vaguely Greco-Roman combination of golden boots, white cape and red jumpsuit. The characters were barely even one-dimensional: The superhero, confusingly named Captain Marvel, was little more than a gleaming smile; his mentor, played by Les Tremayne, was named Mentor.

"SHAZAM!"

★ ★ ★

CAST: Zachary Levi, Asher Angel, Jack Dylan Grazer

DIRECTOR: David F. Sandberg

RATED: PG-13 (some strong violence and disturbing imagery)

RUNNING TIME: 132 minutes



Jack Dylan Grazer and Zachary Levi in 'Shazam!'

All of this makes "Shazam!," the latest Warner Bros. adaptation of a DC Comics property, an unexpected choice to release in 2019. Where can this slice of American cheese fit in among the dark and snarky and sometimes even nasty superheroes of today? What "Shazam!" has going for it is the

youth and innocence of its hero. Billy, played by an engaging Asher Angel, is just 14, barely pubescent. A serial foster-home kid, he's taken in by the Vasquezes (Marta Milans and Cooper Andrews, both wonderful), who oversee a warm little nest filled with multiethnic chicks, most notably bright-eyed

Darla (Faithe Herman), galumphing Pedro (Jovan Armand) and brainy Eugene (Ian Chen, slightly stereotyped). Billy forms his strongest bond with Freddy, a wiseacre with a damaged leg played by a show-stealing Jack Dylan Grazer. We know, though Billy doesn't, that this will be his family.

Billy becomes a superhero in the darnedest way: A wizard (Djimon Hounsou) simply summons him and names him the guardian — or "champion" — of the world. It's not the most compelling origin story, but the movie makes it work by playing up Billy's bafflement, especially when he finds that he has suddenly become a grown adult (Zachary Levi) wearing a rather gaudy-looking costume. Freddy, a superhero fan, helps Shazam (for that will apparently be his name) test out his new powers in a series of enjoyable, "Jackass"-style stunts involving power tools, fire and bullets. (The free-wheeling direction is by David F. Sandberg; Henry Gayden wrote the kid-friendly script.)

"Shazam!" has some surprisingly dark moments involving its villain, Dr. Thaddeus Sivana (Mark Strong), who was turned down by the wizard as a child and — understandably — has been fuming about it ever since. Sivana wreaks some very real havoc on people, slightly unbalancing the movie's otherwise light tone. Overall, though, "Shazam!" is a welcome antidote to the usual brooding DC fare, an upbeat superhero movie that feels young at heart.

WARNER BROS. PICTURES

HIGH SCHOOL GIRLS SOCCER

Rouse can't break through in overtime loss to College Station

By ZACH SMITH
Hill Country News

For more than 80 minutes, the Rouse girls' soccer team was arguably the better of-fensive team. The Lady Raiders just couldn't break through.

Rouse's season came to an end Tuesday night in the Area Round of the playoffs after a 1-0 loss to College Station in extra time. The Lady Raiders outshot the Lady Cougars 7-6 in the playoff match.

"They had some momentum and they stepped up their pressure on us (in the second half)," Rouse head coach Katie Marek said. "We had a lot of chances and I thought we dominated the midfield in the first half. (College Station) came out in the second half with a little more of a presence. I'm proud of my girls and the team."

The early stages of the game saw lots of physical play in the midfield whiteout a lot of action towards the net. College Station had the best chance of the first half 31 minutes in when the Lady Cougars got behind the Rouse defense with a lofted ball over the top, but the ensuing shot sailed high.

Less than 10 minutes into the second half, College Station appeared to have scored the first goal, but the side judge's flag was up signaling offside.

Rouse started to gain more possession as the second half went on. The Lady Raiders had good looks at crosses and a few shots, but none were connecting in the box. The Lady Cougars had another good look just before the end of regulation.

Marek said attacker Alivia Sparschu moved out wide in the second half and

speedy sophomore Sophia Castillo was free to attack at will, which frustrated Col-lege Station for a period.

Early in the first extra period, Rouse goalkeeper McKenzie Hunninghake charged out of the net and received a yel-low card and, per high school rules, had to be subbed off. The College Station penalty kick was missed.

The Lady Cougars went right up the middle of the field just six minutes later and chipped Hunninghake to take a late lead they wouldn't give up.

Senior Delaney Carrell was a defensive and midfield beast for the Lady Raiders, winning just about every tackle she faced, dribbling in and out of defenders and completing passes at a high rate.



Delaney Carrell and Rouse lost to College Station 1-0 in extra time Tuesday night at Giddings High School in the Area Round of the playoffs.

See ROUSE page A12

TEXAS STARS



Andy Nietupski/Texas Stars

Jake Oettinger made 23 saves in his first start at the HEB Center in the Stars' 2-1 shootout win over the IceHogs on Friday night. Texas is on the outside of the playoffs looking in with three games left in the regular season.

Stars fighting for playoff lives with regular season winding down

By ZACH SMITH
Hill Country News

If the playoffs started today, the Stars would be on the outside looking in.

With the regular season in its final week, the defending Western Conference Calder Cup representatives need to win three straight games and get some help for a return trip to the postseason.

Texas takes on rival San Antonio Rampage in all three games to finish off the regular season. The Stars host the Rampage on Wednesday night, travel to San Antonio on Saturday and finish the regular season at home on Sunday.

The Stars finished March with three straight wins and started April with a 2-1 shootout win on Friday over the Rockford IceHogs and lost to Rockford 4-3 in a shootout on Saturday.

"We've been in the playoff mode for three weeks," head coach Derek Laxdal said after Friday's win. "Give our guys a lot of credit. They grinded out a hard-fought win. There's a 'never say die' attitude in that dressing room. A lot of good, young energy in that room."

The magic number for the Stars as of Tuesday is eight, meaning they must win all three of their final games and get some help from the teams ahead of them in the Central Division standings. Texas has qualified for the postseason in five of e last six years.

The Stars' quest continued with a win on Friday, when Ty Dellandrea scored his first goal with the team and Jake Oettinger made 23 saves in his first start at the HEB Center. Brad McClure scored his fourth goal of the season in the first period.

On Saturday, Joel L'Esperance, who recently returned from a long stint in the NHL, scored his 30th goal with Texas this season in the first period. The Stars and IceHounds scored one goal in each of the final two periods to send the game to overtime and a shootout.

Texas currently has 80 points in the regular season. Even with wins in the final three games, their point total will be the third-lowest in franchise history.

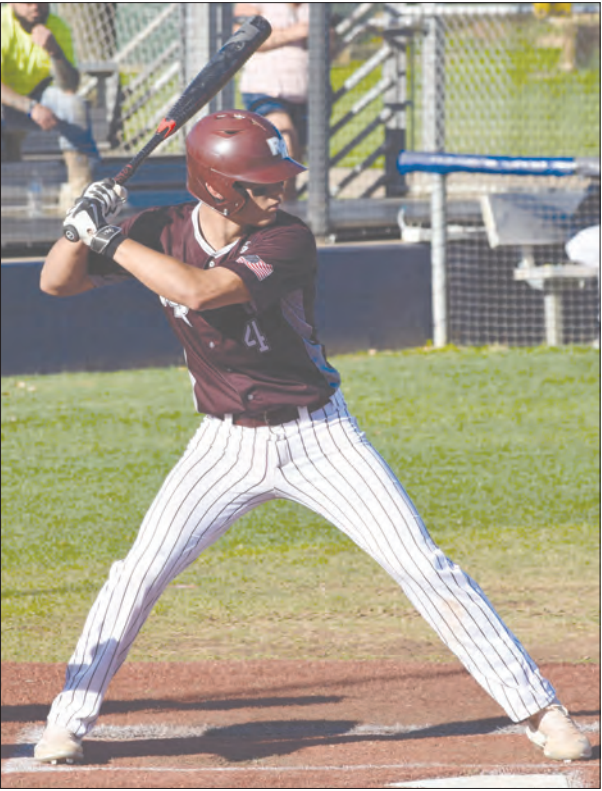
HIGH SCHOOL BASEBALL



Kam Kelton, center, hit a 2-run home run and Stony Point beat Round Rock 8-3 at home on Monday afternoon. It was the first loss of the district season for the Dragons.

Kelton's home run powers Stony Point

By ZACH SMITH
Hill Country News



Zach Smith

Luke Almendarez and Round Rock lost to Stony Point 8-3 on Monday afternoon. It was the first loss of the district season for the Dragons.

Kam Kelton's two-run blast helped boost Stony Point into the playoff driver's seat.

The Tigers' third baseman hit his second home run of the season and Stony Point handed Round Rock its first district loss with an 8-3 win at home on Monday. The Tigers (7-3) are alone in second place in District 13-6A.

"I just told the kids to go out and compete and give it all they had," Stony Point head coach Brandon Creek said. "Round Rock always has a good program and competes well. But our guys like to compete too."

Carter Poulson pitched 6.1 innings for Stony Point. Kelton finished with three RBIs after driving in another run in the seventh inning.

Jared McKenzie finished with one RBI and scored a run for Round Rock.

The loss snapped a nine-game winning streak for the Dragons. But playing from behind is nothing new after playing more than 10 teams ranked in the top 20 in the state before district play started.

"We've been hit in the mouth a couple of times this year," Round Rock head coach John Carter said. "(Stony Point) had their best guy back on the mound today. They came out and swing the bat and played with a lot of confidence."

The Dragons aren't letting the loss affect how they approach the rest of the season. Instead, they're adopting a, "So what? Next pitch" mentality for when they take the field next.

"We've got to live in the moment," Carter said. "We know how to bounce back. The kids are going to come back and give their best tomorrow and they can't control anything other than giving their best. We're resilient."

See BASEBALL page A12

ROUND ROCK EXPRESS

Expectations are high for top prospect Whitley, Express

By ZACH SMITH
Hill Country News

Forrest Whitley was pitching in the state semifinals at Dell Dimond the night he was drafted 17th overall in 2016.

The San Antonio native will make his triumphant return to Round Rock when the Express, now affiliated with the Houston Astros, return for their 20th season beginning Tuesday night against the Nashville Sounds.

"This is the first time I've been here since (that night)," Whitley said. "To take the mound here for the first time since becoming an Astro is gonna be a pretty special moment and I'm pretty excited for it."

In 23 games between Class-A, Class-A Advanced and Double-A last season, Whitley finished with a 5-4 record and 2.83 ERA with 143 strikeouts in 92.1 innings. He was invited to Astros spring training this season.

He said the biggest lesson he learned is that every pitcher does things differently. Whereas Justin Verlander throws a lot of pitches during a bullpen session, Gerrit Cole is more selective with how many he throws.

In February of 2018, Whitley was suspended for 50 games for violating Major League Baseball's drug prevention and treatment program.

His goal this year is to stay healthy, and the title of top pitching prospect in baseball isn't changing his approach.

"I feel like there aren't any biggest expectations than what I put on myself," Whitley said. "Any of the outside stuff, in my opinion, is little smaller. I set pretty stout goals for myself, so it doesn't affect me too much."

Whitley isn't the only top prospect in the Express' loaded young lineup. Out-fielders Kyle Tucker and Yordan Alvarez, the No. 2 and No. 3 prospects in the



Zach Smith

The Round Rock Express is once again affiliated with the Houston Astros, are loaded with top prospects and begin their home season this week against the Texas Rangers' affiliate Nashville Sounds.

See EXPRESS page A12

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HANDYMAN READY TO WORK Call Anytime For Instant Estimate. Bob the Handyman 512-745-6809. Residential & Commercial repairs. HAPPY CUSTOMERS FOR OVER 19 YEARS. GREAT WORK AT REASONABLE PRICES. CALL TODAY FOR A FREE ESTIMATE.

**150
ELECTRICAL**

NEED AN ELECTRICIAN? No job too small. Licensed & insured. J. Patrick Roberts, 512-775-7941. M.E. #6263, T.E.C.L. #31285.

**190
LAWN & GARDEN**

ACCENT LANDSCAPING
Year round maintenance. Tree trimming & trees, shrubs, sod & beds installed. 512-659-7200. Accent6770@sbcglobal.net

CATHEYS TREE SERVICE
512-573-6187
Removal, trimming, wood chipping, brush haul off, land clearing. www.CatheysTreeService.com

BMC TREE & LAWN
Mowing, trimming, weedeating, edging, blowing, leaf removal. 512-751-8904 Ask for Barry.

**290
HOUSE CLEANING**

COOPER'S CLEANING
I am available for once a month and bi-weekly cleaning. Single story houses only. References upon request. Call Nancy at 512-249-8925.

**410
FURNITURE**

JIM'S FURNITURE
600 South Bell Blvd., (HWY 183) Cedar Park, warehouse #201, (behind Jardin Corona). Closed Wednesdays. 512-331-4455 www.jimsusedfurniture.com

**710
HOUSES FOR RENT**

1703 CANDLELIGHT DR., Leander. 3bd/2ba. \$1575/month. Call Jakk. 512-567-1949.

**850
HELP WANTED**

LOCAL PEST CONTROL COMPANY
seeking person for Admin position. Must be dependable, punctual, able to multi-task and handle multi-line phone. Duties include scheduling service appointments from incoming/outgoing phone calls. Hours 8-5, Monday-Friday. Please forward resume to: ginger@researchpest.com

PUBLISHER'S NOTICE:
All real estate advertising in this newspaper is subject to the Fair Housing Act which makes it illegal to advertise "any preference, limitation or discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status or national origin, or an intention or discrimination." Familial status includes children under the age of 18 living with parents or legal custodians, pregnant women and people securing custody of children under 18.
This newspaper will not knowingly accept any advertising for real estate which is in violation of the law. Our readers are hereby informed that all dwellings advertised in this newspaper are available on an equal opportunity basis. To complain of discrimination call HUD toll-free at 1-800-669-9777. The toll-free telephone number for the hearing impaired is 1-800-927-9275.

**850
HELP WANTED**

Employment Opportunity: The City of Leander is accepting applications for a Crew Leader in the Parks department. Full details of job duties, qualifications, and submission process are available on-line at <https://www.leandertx.gov/jobs>. Salary is \$17.80/hrly DOQ. EOE

Employment Opportunity: The City of Leander is accepting applications for a Permit Technician. Full details of job duties, qualifications, and submission process are available on-line at <https://www.leandertx.gov/jobs>. Salary is \$17.80-\$20.83/hrly DOQ. EOE

Employment Opportunity: The City of Leander is accepting applications for a part-time Building Inspections Intern for an assignment up to 12 weeks. Full details of job duties, qualifications, and submission process are available on-line at <https://www.leandertx.gov/jobs>. Salary is \$12.12/hrly DOQ. EOE

**850
HELP WANTED**

TEXAS STATEWIDE CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING NETWORK
TexSCAN Week of April 7, 2019
ACREAGE
21.88 acres, Menard/Eldorado. Gently rolling with beautiful oak tree cover. Whitefaced, blackbuck, axis, hogs, and turkey. \$3,450/acre, fixed rate 30 yr. owner financing with 5% down payment. 800-876-9720, www.ranchenterprisesltd.com.
EVENTS
Buda Lions Country Fair and Wiener Dog Races, April 27-28, Buck's Backyard, FM 1626, Buda, TX. For more info, visit www.budalions.com.
Hearne - Crossroads Home Town Festival, April 13, 2019, Hearne, TX. Festival opens at 10 a.m., Street Dance 8-11 p.m. Kids zone, live entertainment, food & more. www.crossroadshometownfestival.com.
New Braunfels Area Car Club Swap Meet, April 19-21, Comal County Fairgrounds, 801 E. Common St., New Braunfels. No dogs please. www.newbraunfelsareacarclub.com.
McQueeney - Texas Reptile Expo, April 13-14, 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Lions Club, 3211 FM 78, McQueeney, TX. Adults \$10, \$5 for kids under 10. 501-454-9357, texasreptiles.com.
Mount Vernon - 15th Annual Tour de Cypress Ride, Sat., April 20. Enjoy a Franklin County weekend of activities: Bike Ride, Music and Barbecue. 10, 20, 45, 52 Mile and 100K rides. Beautiful routes past Exotic Animal Farm and Lake Cypress Springs. www.tourdecypress.com.
Seguin - 49th Texas Ladies State Chili Championship, Sat., April 13, 10 a.m.-9 p.m., Max Starcke Park East, Seguin, TX. Chili, Craft and Food Vendors, Music, Silent Auction, Raffles, Family Fun! Judging begins at 12:30 p.m. Sign up to be a judge at <https://www.tlscoco.com/chili-judges-needed.html>. 830-401-5000, visitscguin.com.
Texas Press Statewide Classified Network
273 Participating Texas Newspapers • Regional Ads Start At \$250 • Email ads@texaspress.com
NOTICE: While most advertisers are reputable, we cannot guarantee products or services advertised. We urge readers to use caution and when in doubt, contact the Texas Attorney General at 800-621-0508 or the Federal Trade Commission at 877-FTC-HELP. The FTC web site is www.ftc.gov/bizop.

**850
HELP WANTED**

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ARROWHEADS

Indian Arrowheads Wanted. Point types: Clovis, Firstview, Eden, Midland, Yuma, Cody, all nice Alibates Points. Must be authentic, unbroken. Top \$\$ paid X3. Call 979-218-3351 or text photos.

CAREER TRAINING

Airlines Are Hiring - Get FAA approved hands on Aviation training. Financial aid for qualified students - Career placement assistance. CALL Aviation Institute of Maintenance, 877-207-0345.

CHARITY

Donate a boat or car today to Boat Angel. 2-Night Free Vacation. Sponsored by Boat Angel Outreach Centers to stop crimes against children. 800-700-BOAT, www.boatangel.com.

HEAVY EQUIPMENT

Absolute Public Auction, Houston, TX, Thurs., April 11, 2019, 2076 Selden Rd., 9:00 A.M. 150+ Tractors & Trailers, Late Model Conventional Tractors, Aluminum Vans, Reefers, Tankers, Flatbeds & More. 409-316-4935, www.taylorandmartin.com. Texas Auct. No.: 15825, 17454, 17456, 18027, 18031.

OIL AND GAS RIGHTS

We buy oil, gas & mineral rights. Both non-producing and producing including non-Participating Royalty Interest (NPRI). Provide us your desired price for an offer evaluation. 806-620-1422, LoboMineralsLLC@gmail.com. Lobo Minerals, LLC, PO Box 1800, Lubbock, TX 79408-1800.

MISC. FOR SALE

Kill Bed Bugs! Buy Harris Bed Bug Killers, Mattress Covers, Kits. Available: Hardware Stores, The Home Depot, homedepot.com.

TRUCK DRIVERS

Be Your Own Boss! Get Paid to See the Country! Quality Drive-Away is looking for CDL Drivers to Deliver Trucks! www.qualitydriveaway.com, 574-642-2023.

LEGAL

NEED TO PLACE A LEGAL NOTICE?
Call the
HILL COUNTRY NEWS
512-259-4449

Application has been made with the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission for a Mixed Beverage Restaurant Permit with FB by Lago Quality Foods LLC dba Baker's Bar & Grill to be located at 4616 Rimrock Drive, Lago Vista, Travis County, Texas 78645. Officers are John R. Baker, President; Danny Parrott, Vice President; and Susanna L. Issoglio, Treasurer/Secretary.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Leander Independent School District (LISD) is soliciting proposals for:
RFP # 19MAN0004
Grounds & Landscape Material
The solicitation may be obtained through LISD's online procurement system, BID-EZ, at <https://bid-ez.ionwave.net/Login.aspx>. Proposals are to be submitted electronically in BID-EZ no later than 2:00 p.m. on April 23, 2019. Visit www.leanderisd.org/purchasing for additional information on doing business with LISD.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Leander Independent School District (LISD) is soliciting proposals for:
RFP # 19CJK0002
Propane and Delivery Services
The solicitation may be obtained through LISD's online procurement system, BID-EZ, at <https://bid-ez.ionwave.net/Login.aspx>. Proposals are to be submitted electronically in BID-EZ no later than 2:00 p.m. on May 14, 2019. Visit www.leanderisd.org/purchasing for additional information on doing business with LISD.

Notice of Public Hearing

The Lago Vista City Council will hold a Public Hearing on May 2nd, 2019 at 6:30 P.M. in the Council Chambers at City Hall, located at 5803 Thunderbird St., Lago Vista, Texas to receive citizen input on the following item:
AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LAGO VISTA, TEXAS, AMENDING APPENDIX A, FEE SCHEDULE, ARTICLE 10.000, PARKS AND RECREATION FEES TO MODIFY 10.200, GOLF COURSE FEES; PROVIDING A SAVINGS CLAUSE; PROVIDING A SEVERABILITY CLAUSE; AND, PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.
All interested persons are invited to attend.

PUBLIC NOTICES

**NOTICE OF GENERAL ELECTION
(AVISO DE ELECCION GENERAL)**

To the Registered Voters of the City of Leander, Texas:
(A los votantes registrados de la Ciudad de Leander, Texas:)

Notice is hereby given that the polling places listed below will be open from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., on May 4, 2019 for voting in the following elections:
Notifíquese, por la presente, que las casillas electorales citadas abajo se abrirán desde las 7:00 a.m. hasta las 7:00 p.m. el 4 de Mayo de 2019 para votar en las siguientes elecciones:

General Election: To elect a Council Member Place 1, Council Member Place 3, and City Council Member Place 5 from the city at large.
Elección General: Para elegir un Miembro del Consejo, el Lugar 1, un Miembro del Concejo, el Lugar 3, y el Miembro del Concejo Municipal, el Lugar 5 de la ciudad en general.

**LOCATION(S) OF POLLING PLACES
(DIRECCION(ES) DE LAS CASILLAS ELECTORALES POR DISTRICTO)**
Registered voters of the jurisdictions participating in the May 4, 2019 Election may vote at any location listed below. 7am-7pm
Los votantes registrados en las jurisdicciones participantes en la elección del 4 de mayo del 2019, podrán votar en cualquiera de los lugares de votación listados abajo. 7am-7pm

Location	Address	City	Zip
Bartlett Town Hall	140 W. Clark Street	Bartlett	76511
Cedar Park Library	550 Discovery Boulevard	Cedar Park	78613
Cedar Park Randalls	1400 Cypress Creek Road	Cedar Park	78613
Vista Ridge High School	200 S. Vista Ridge Boulevard	Cedar Park	78613
Florence City Hall	106 S. Patterson	Florence	76527
Cowan Creek Amenity Center	1433 Cool Spring Way	Georgetown	78633
Georgetown Randalls	5721 Williams Drive	Georgetown	78633
GISD Technology Building	603 Lakeway Drive	Georgetown	78628
Williamson County Inner Loop Annex	301 SE Inner Loop	Georgetown	78626
Granger ISD	300 N. Colorado Street	Granger	76530
Hutto City Hall	500 W. Live Oak Street	Hutto	78634
Leander High School	3301 S. Bagdad Road	Leander	78641
Leander Public Library	1011 S. Bagdad Road	Leander	78641
Pat Bryson Municipal Hall	201 N. Brushy Street	Leander	78641
Rouse High School	1222 Raider Way	Leander	78641
Liberty Hill High School	16500 W. SH 29	Liberty Hill	78642
Baca Senior Center	301 W. Bagdad Avenue Bldg. 2	Round Rock	78664
Round Rock High School	300 N. Lake Creek Drive	Round Rock	78681
Round Rock Randalls	2051 Gattis School Road	Round Rock	78664
Williamson County Jester Annex	1801 E. Old Settlers Boulevard	Round Rock	78664
Taylor City Hall	140 W. Clark Street	Taylor	76574

EARLY VOTING by personal appearance will be conducted each weekday at:
(La votación adelantada en persona se llevará a cabo de lunes a viernes en:)

Dates and Times for Full-Time Locations:
Fechas y horarios para localidades de tiempo completo

Monday, April 22 through Saturday, April 27
8:00 am - 6:00 pm
NO Sunday Voting

Monday, April 29 and Tuesday, April 30
7:00 am - 7:00 pm
Del Lunes 22 de abril al Sábado 27 de abril
8:00 am - 6:00 pm
Domingo NO habrá votación
Lunes 30 de abril y Martes 30 de abril
7:00 am - 7:00 pm

Williamson County Inner Loop Annex, 301 SE Inner Loop, **Georgetown**
Georgetown ISD Technology Building, 603 Lakeway Drive, **Georgetown**
Cowan Creek Amenity Center, 1433 Cool Spring Way, **Georgetown**
Baca Senior Center, 301 W. Bagdad Street, Building 2, **Round Rock**
Williamson County Jester Annex, 1801 E. Old Settlers Boulevard, **Round Rock**
Round Rock Randalls, 2051 Gattis School Road, **Round Rock**
Pat Bryson Municipal Hall, 201 N. Brushy St., **Leander**
Cedar Park Public Library, 550 Discovery Boulevard, **Cedar Park**
Cedar Park Randalls, 1400 Cypress Creek Road, **Cedar Park**
Hutto City Hall, 500 W. Live Oak Street, **Hutto**
Taylor City Hall, 400 Porter Street, **Taylor**

Mobile-Temporary Locations, Dates and Times
Fechas y horario de las localidades móviles temporales:

Monday, April 22 through Saturday, April 27 <i>Del Lunes 22 de abril al Sábado 27 de abril</i>	10:00 am - 6:00 pm <i>10:00 am - 6:00 pm</i>
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Monday, April 22
Lunes, 22 de abril

No Mobile Voting sin votación móvil

Tuesday, April 23
Martes, 23 de abril

Bartlett Town Hall, 140 W. Clark Street, **Bartlett**

Wednesday, April 24
Miercoles, 24 de abril

Florence City Hall, 106 S. Patterson Avenue, **Florence**

Thursday, April 25
Jueves, 25 de abril

Williamson County Annex, 3407 RR 1869, **Liberty Hill**

Friday, April 26
Viernes, 26 de abril

Williamson County Annex, 3407 RR 1869, **Liberty Hill**

Saturday, April 27
Sabado, 27 de abril

Granger ISD School, 300 N. Colorado, **Granger**

Applications for ballot by mail shall be mailed to:
(Las solicitudes para boletas que se votarán en ausencia por correo deberán enviarse a:)

Williamson County Elections Administrator (Name of Early Voting Clerk)
(Nombre del Secretario(a) de la Votación Adelantada)
Williamson County Elections Department
PO Box 209 (Address) (Dirección)
Georgetown, TX 78627 (City) (Ciudad) (Zip Code) (Zona Postal)

Applications for ballots by mail must be received no later than the close of business on April 23, 2019 (date)
(Las solicitudes para boletas que se votarán en ausencia por correo deberán recibirse para el fin de las horas de negocio el) 23 de abril, 2019 (fecha)

Issued this the 4 day of April, 2019
(Emitada este día 4 de abril, 2019)

Troy Hill
Mayor (Alcalde)

SPECIAL EDUCATION FUNDING

State may owe \$223 million for illegally decreasing special ed funding

By ALIYYA SWABY
The Texas Tribune

Last October, Texas education officials told lawmakers they would likely owe the federal government \$33 million for illegally decreasing funding for kids with disabilities. They reassured them it was a fraction — just 3 percent — of their federal special education grant and wouldn’t hurt students.

Now, the state’s estimate for how much it could owe has risen to \$223 million, nearly a quarter of Texas’ annual special education grant, officials confirmed to The Texas Tribune Friday. That total includes an estimated \$111.6 million it may have to pay back for failing to spend it on kids with disabilities this fiscal year.

The U.S. Department of Education has found Texas in violation of a federal statute prohibiting states from reducing their funding for kids with disabilities from year to year, and warned the state that a financial penalty was coming. Now, advocates are concerned that Texas could lose an even bigger chunk of its funding, harming its efforts to overhaul special education for hundreds of thousands of students.

With seven weeks left in the legislative session, lawmakers could still spend the \$111.6 million needed this year to avoid a federal penalty for 2019 — but the budget is well on its way to being decided.

“It’s good that we’re becoming aware of [these violations] now, even late during this legislative session, because there’s an opportunity to amend the state budget to account for the loss of federal aid,” said Steven Aleman, a lawyer and advocate at Disability Rights Texas. “But the opportunity to bring even some degree of resolution is closing. It would be best if the state could resolve the entire issue, because otherwise we will be in a perpetual situation of having to address shortfalls.”

The Texas Education Agency said Friday that it is discussing solutions with the federal government and the Legislature.



EDDIE SEAL FOR THE TEXAS TRIBUNE

Vanessa Tijerina addresses the panel about her 13-year-old special needs child who has been denied special education for four years on December 13, 2016. U.S. Department of Education officials held a meeting in Edinburg on their tour of Texas to hear community members’ experiences with special education, continuing an investigation of whether Texas is capping services for students with disabilities.

“The primary objective of the discussions in progress is to ensure that special education services for students are not negatively impacted,” said DeEtta Culbertson, a TEA spokesperson.

The issue is tied to a major flaw in the way Texas chooses to spend money on kids with disabilities. Texas “weights” its funding for kids with disabilities, paying schools more to educate kids who have more severe disabilities or need more personalized attention in the classroom. The state’s lawyers unsuccessfully argued at the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals last year that it decreased spending on kids with disabilities in 2012 because students just didn’t need services that cost as much.

A panel of Fifth Circuit judges bluntly opined in November that Texas’ system “creates a perverse incentive for a state to escape its financial obligations merely by minimizing the special education needs of its students.”

Earlier this week, Rep. Mary E. González, D-Clint, successfully added wording to a House school finance bill that would require the Texas education commissioner to shore up school district special education funding this school year.

“This amendment is one step in addressing the state’s shortfall with respect to special education funding,” Gonzalez told the Tribune Friday. “In order to ensure a complete process, we need to put more money towards our students who need special education services, and make sure that those who need services have access to them.”

But getting the money to schools would also require additional appropriations. Any additional spending tweaks House lawmakers want to make must be ironed out in conference committee negotiations toward the end of the session, said the House’s lead budget writer Rep. John Zerwas, R-Richmond.

In the last few years, Texas has continually fielded reprimands from the federal government for violation special education law. A federal investigation in 2018 found Texas in violation of effectively capping the percentage of students who could receive special education services.

Education officials say they have followed federal requirements to overhaul special education, allowing them to “improve the standard of service to students with disabilities across Texas.”

Advocates worry any financial penalty would end up decreasing money given to schools for providing student services.

“The loss of federal aid because of the state’s failure to spend at the appropriate level will directly affect agency operations and efforts to bring the state into compliance with the federal investigation, but more importantly would also affect the availability of services at the local level by putting even more of a burden on local tax dollars to pay for services,” Aleman said. “Any shortfall in federal aid because of a state violation needs to be made up by the state.”

Leander

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & VISITORS CENTER

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

April 12

16th Annual Leander Chamber of Commerce Golf Classic
10:00 AM to 4:00 PM
Crystal Falls Golf Course
3400 Crystal Falls Pkwy, Leander, TX 78641

April 16

Crystal Falls Foot + Ankle Specialists Ribbon Cutting
4:00 PM to 5:00 PM
Crystal Falls Foot + Ankle Specialists
15609 Ronald Reagan Blvd Suite B110
Leander, TX 78641

April 17

1-800 Water Damage Ribbon Cutting
4:00 PM to 5:00 PM
Leander Chamber of Commerce
100 N. Brushy, Leander, TX 78641

April 17

Leander Women's Network: Sip 'n' Stain Doormat Workshop
4:30 PM to 6:30 PM
Sip 'n' Stain Leander
11894 Hero Way West, Ste C.
Leander, TX 78641

April 23

Maximize your Membership (Orientation for new and existing members)
11:00 AM to 11:30 AM
Hill Country Bible Church Leander
11880 Hero Way West Ste. 600
Leander, TX 78641

April 23

Monthly Membership Lunch and Learn: Leander City Council Candidate Forum and Online Marketing Workshop
11:30 AM to 1:00 PM
Hill Country Bible Church Leander
11880 Hero Way West Ste. 600
Leander, TX 78641

April 24

LISD Summer Job Placement Expo
4:00 PM to 7:00 PM
LEO Conference Building, Room 112
300 SW Dr, Leander, TX 78641

April 25

SCORE Workshop: Facebook for Your Business
10:00 AM to 12:00 PM
Leander Chamber of Commerce
100 N. Brushy, Leander, TX 78641

April 25

Perch Dentistry Ribbon Cutting & Mixer
5:00 PM to 7:00 PM
Perch Dentistry
14005 Ronald Reagan Blvd Ste B
Cedar Park, TX 78641

SATURDAY MAY 18

100 N. BRUSHY

ALL DAY

EST. 2015

Old Town STREET FESTIVAL Leander

Beer, Wine, Food, & Music

DOUG STONE 6:30pm

LC ROCKS AFTER PARTY 8:30pm

Old Town 5K • Boutique Vendors

Artisan Food Trucks • Kids Fun Zone

ACDI

AL CLEWORTH DISPOSAL, INC.

TEXAS FAMILY RECARE

AUSTIN COMMUNITY COLLEGE

IMPACT

BRYSON

FROST

ST DAVID'S HEALTHCARE

WWW.OLDTOWNSTREETFESTIVAL.COM

Parking: LISD Lots & Capital Metro Park & Ride

Welcome New Members

Bare Mama, LLC

Bluebonnet HVAC, LLC

Frontier Bank of Texas

Glemco

Jana Prickett

MAYA Partners

Ribbon Cuttings



March 12 - We were so excited to celebrate Brother's Keeper In-Home Care!



March 14 - We loved celebrating with Innovative Health Fitness during their ribbon cutting!



March 27 - We are so excited to welcome Dr. Ordonez-Sanchez, Family First Healthcare.



March 28 - We are so excited to welcome Maple Ridge Gracious Retirement Living.

LISD from page A1

to Cedar Park High School, move Wiley Middle School students zoned to Glenn High School to Danielson Middle School, raise the Cedar Park Middle School enrollment to 1,500 students and would make no changes to the attendance zones of Canyon Ridge and Four Points middle schools.

Scenario B, presented last month, would see students living in Avery Ranch neighborhoods west of Parmar Lane moved from Stiles Middle School to Henry Middle School. North Buttercup Creek students would go to Cedar Park Middle School instead of Henry Middle School and would go to Cedar Park High School instead of Vista Ridge High School. Scenario B would also eliminate a projected overcrowding issue at Cedar Park Middle School noted in Scenario A. Cedar Park High School would see decreased enrollment and Leander High School would see increased enrollment.

Feedback from community meetings on Scenario D, held April 8 and April 10, along with feedback gathered through the district’s online ‘Let’s Talk’ portal, will be presented to the board during its April 18 meeting.

CLIMB from page A3

Mount Kilimanjaro — Africa’s highest peak, with an elevation of 19,341 feet — took about fifteen hours for the team to travel after seven days hiking prior to summit day.

“The trek was intense,” Lesniak said. “We burned an average of 1,500 calories per day.”

He described the summit day hike as the most intense day.

“We woke at 11 p.m., had ‘breakfast’ and began hiking at midnight from base camp up 4,000+ feet,” he explained. “It took us 8.5 hours of hiking in the dark with headlamps to reach the summit. We summited at 8:30 a.m. and spent about 20 minutes at (peak) altitude, then began hiking back down.”

The hike down to base camp only took two hours, after which, they hiked another four and a half hours to their next camp.

“Total hiking on summit day with virtually no sleep was about 15 hours in total,” Lesniak said.

Looking back on the adventure, Lesniak said he and his team grew closer with the experience of a lifetime, with the added bonus of helping others in the process.

THIS WEEK IN BASEBALL



CEDAR PARK AT ROUSE
Rouse High School
Friday, April 12, 7 p.m.



GLENN AT CONNALLY
Connally High School
Friday, April 12, 7 p.m.



LEANDER AT WESTWOOD
Westwood High School
Friday, April 12, 7 p.m.



HENDRICKSON AT VISTA RIDGE
Vista Ridge High School
Friday, April 12, 7 p.m.



CEDAR RIDGE AT ROUND ROCK
Round Rock High School
Friday, April 12, 7 p.m.



STONY POINT AT MCNEIL
McNeil High School
Friday, April 12, 7 p.m.



LEANDER AT VANDEGRIFT
Vandegrift High School
Saturday, April 13, 12 p.m.



CEDAR RIDGE AT MCNEIL
McNeil High School
Saturday, April 13, 12 p.m.



ROUND ROCK AT HENDRICKSON
Hendrickson High School
Saturday, April 13, 12 p.m.



STONY POINT AT WESTWOOD
Westwood High School
Saturday, April 13, 12 p.m.

THIS WEEK IN SOFTBALL



ROUSE AT CEDAR PARK
Cedar Park High School
Friday, April 12, 7 p.m.



CONNALLY AT GLENN
Glenn High School
Friday, April 12, 7 p.m.



LEANDER AT WESTWOOD
Westwood High School
Friday, April 12, 7 p.m.



HENDRICKSON AT VISTA RIDGE
Vista Ridge High School
Friday, April 12, 7 p.m.



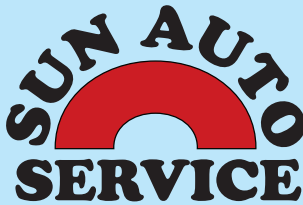
CEDAR RIDGE AT ROUND ROCK
Round Rock High School
Friday, April 12, 7 p.m.



STONY POINT AT MCNEIL
McNeil High School
Friday, April 12, 7 p.m.

YOUR COMPLETE AUTO SERVICE PROVIDER

Quality Service
at Competitive
Prices
**Family Owned
& Operated**
Since 1978



NEW!
2 Year/
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Engine Repair | Diagnostics | Alignment | Clutches | Transmission
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Ceramic or OEM
Equivalent Pads

Service Includes:

- ✓ New brake pads or rear shoes
- ✓ Inspect master cylinder & brake hoses
- ✓ Resurface rotors or rear drums
- ✓ Repack front wheel bearings
- ✓ Road test the vehicle

(Except sealed units)

Offer Exp. 5/19/19

*Per Axle. Must present coupon at time of service. One coupon per customer. Cannot be combined with any other advertised special.

*See Store Manager for Details Most Cars & Light Trucks HCN0419

TIME FOR AN OIL CHANGE?

All Oil Changes Include:

- ✓ New Premium Oil Filter
- ✓ Tire Rotation, Check Fluids
- ✓ Lube - if applicable
- ✓ Complete 50+ Point Vehicle Inspection

Includes Tire Rotation \$15 Value!!

*Plus waste disposal fee & tax. Please call or go online for an Appointment.

PREMIUM SYNTHETIC BLEND

5w-20 or 5w-30 Premium Synthetic Blend Motor Oil - Up to 6 Qts

\$19.95*

Most cars & light trucks

PREMIUM FULL SYNTHETIC

0w-20, 5w-20 or 5w-30 Premium Valvoline Full Synthetic Motor Oil - Up to 5 Qts.

\$45.95*

Many new vehicles require Full Synthetic Motor Oil

PREVENTIVE MAINTENANCE IS THE KEY TO A LONG LASTING VEHICLE



ALAN SMITH
STORE MANAGER

ENGINE DIAGNOSIS

FREE!

WE WILL SCAN YOUR ON-BOARD COMPUTER FOR DIAGNOSTIC CODES FREE OF CHARGE!

Symptoms Include:
All Runability Problems
No Power - Misfires
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BASEBALL from page A8

Stony Point scored four runs on five hits and Round Rock committed two errors in the first inning. The Dragons got on the board in the second after a couple of walked.

Kelton blasted his two-run home run over the left field wall to extend the Tigers' lead in the bottom half of the inning. The Blinn College signee is batting over .500 this season with a pair of home runs.

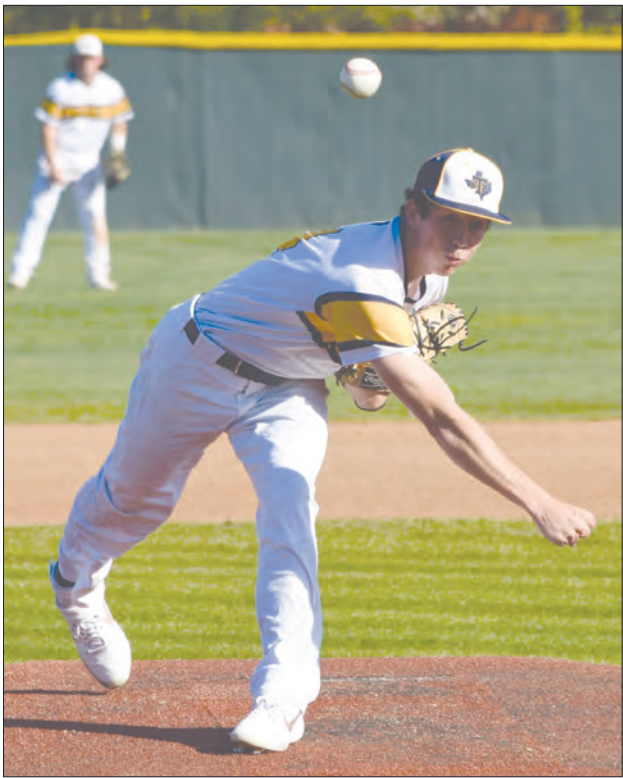
"Our approach at the plate is to be aggressive early," Creek said. "Kam swung it well and he's been swinging it well all year. That home run was a big shot for us."

McKenzie drove in a run and scored on a fielder's choice in the third inning and Round Rock cut the lead in half.

Poulson got out of a bases-loaded jam in the fifth inning and Isaac Carlin and Kelton each drove in a run in the six to add to the Tigers' lead and give them some momentum for the final few weeks of the season.

Round Rock travels to meet Cedar Ridge on Tuesday, hosts the Raiders on Friday and Hendrickson on Saturday. Stony Point hosts McNeil on Tuesday before traveling to face the Mavericks on Friday and Westwood on Saturday.

"We talked about (Poulson) pitching tonight or tomorrow and he told me he wanted the ball today," Creek said. "We'll come back and our rotation will be back to what it was to start district. We'll be good to go."



Carter Poulson and Stony Point beat Round Rock 8-3 at home on Monday afternoon.

ROUSE from page A8



Alivia Sparschu and Rouse lost to College Station 1-0 in extra time Tuesday night at Giddings High School in the Area Round of the playoffs.

"She was one of our leading scorers this year," Marek said. "She used to be our left back and she was still a leading scorer. We moved her into the midfield and she can dribble. She is one of our go-to girls and she distributes really well."

The 15 seniors on the Rouse team have had quite a bit of success, making the playoffs in three straighter and advancing to the state tournament two seasons ago

for the first time in school history two seasons ago. "Everybody is so thoughtful and they have made my whole soccer experience fun and unforgettable," Carrell said. "Everyone was trying their hardest tonight and everyone was getting frustrated that we had so many chances and none of them would go in. In the end, everyone was working as hard as they could to get a goal."

EXPRESS from page A8

system, respectively. Three more top-20 Houston prospects are on the squad to start the year as well.

Baseball America named the Round Rock Express as the most exciting team for 2019.

Round Rock will be led by the youngest managers in Triple-A with 32-year-old Mickey Storey managing the club. He went 81-59 last season with Single-A Quad Cities, his first year as a manager.

"It's a gift and a curse — if I was old I would've played longer," Storey said. "I played six years in Triple-A, four in the PCL. I'm very familiar with the mindset of the player. I'm working with them every day as if they're going to be in the big leagues."

The Express opened up the regular season with three wins in five games on the road against the New Orleans Baby Cakes. Round Rock exploded for 14 home runs in the five-game series, led by Alvarez with four.

Following a three-game set with the Sounds, Round Rock welcomes defending PCL champions Memphis Redbirds to Dell Diamond for four games beginning Friday night.

With the MLB team in Houston being one of the most successful the last few seasons, and the Triple-A team equaling that mark the last few seasons, expectations for the Express this season are sky high.

"The goal is the one laid out by the organization," Storey said. "That's to develop these guys into major league players. They have the talent and this is kind of the last stop. This team is versatile and deep with strong pitching. This is the best we've got in the Astros' system. This team is going to be exciting."

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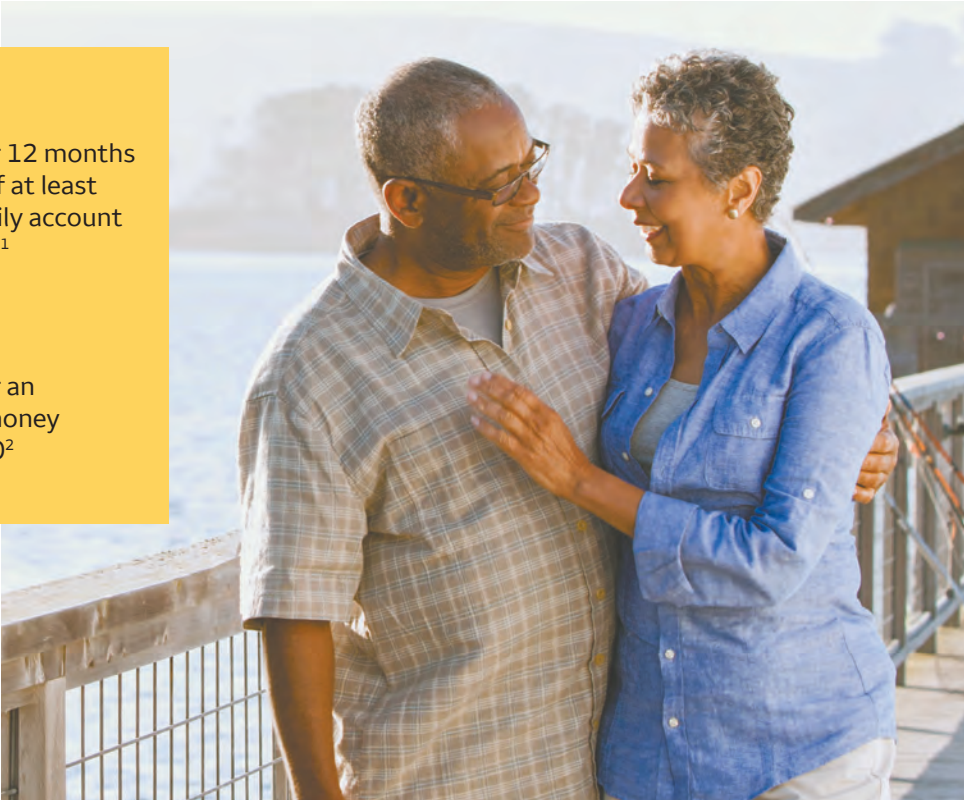
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