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THURSDAY, MARCH 5, 2020

ELECTION RESULTS

Mann, Imam in Dem runoff to face Carter

By **RICHARD STONE** and **JOSH MONIZ**
Hill Country News

Democrats Christine Eady Mann and Donna Imam will face each other in a runoff election to determine who will face incumbent U.S. Congressional Rep. John Carter.

Mann lead Imam narrowly with 35 percent , or 24,010 votes, to Imam's 31 percent, or 21,258 votes.

Nearly 105,000 voters turned out for the 2020 Primary Election in Williamson County Tuesday. While that is a record in terms of shear numbers, it represents only 29.7 % of registered voters.

"Voter count-wise, never have more folks voted in this county during a presidential primary than this cycle," said Christopher Davis, WilCo's elections administrator. "But percentage-wise, it looks like we're going to fall well short of a record in presidential primary turnout of 37.12% in 2008."

According to the WilCo elections website, more than 60,000 people voted in the Democratic Presidential Primary. The Republican Primary netted 43,868.

See **ELECTION** page A8

LEANDER ISD

School board approves attendance zoning charter

By **APRIL S. KELLEY**
HCN Community Reporter

The Leander Independent School District approved an Attendance Zoning Charter for elementary schools for the 2021-22 school year at their Feb. 27 meeting.

During an emotional plea with the board, John Lack, a resident of the Hazelwood neighborhood and parent of an elementary school student, said the neighborhood had already been rezoned three times since he and his family moved to Leander from Austin.

Lack said his family chose to live in Leander due to the outstanding schools in Leander ISD, and they chose a home based on its proximity to their child's school.

"It's a bit life-altering, honestly," Lack said. "My daughter is looking at three different schools in just her elementary education."

Lack also said the school his child may have to attend in the 2021-2022 school year will be 30 minutes from their home, and there would be no bus service.

"When does this stop?" Lack said. "What do I tell my kids? They don't understand why every two years they're going to have to move schools. If you guys have any input on how I can tell my kids that, I'm all ears."

After Lack's comment, Board President Trish Bode said the board had not yet made decisions on zoning.

See **LISD** page A7

LEANDER ISD | COOL WEEK

COOL Week

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES ON LOCATION

"[THE STUDENTS] ARE SUCH FABULOUS EMISSARIES. BY REFLECTION, WE LOOK GOOD BECAUSE [THEY] LOOK GOOD."

WHAT'S COOLER THAN BEING COOL?

"LEANDER HIGH SCHOOL STARTED [COOL WEEK] WITH 21 STUDENTS. THIS YEAR, WE HAVE BEEN WORKING WITH OVER 899 STUDENTS."

"WE WENT FROM JUST A COUPLE OF BUSINESSES TO 190 BUSINESSES."


LISD STUDENTS SHADOW LOCAL BUSINESSES FOR COOL WEEK

By **HILL COUNTRY NEWS COOL TEAM**

Every child dreams of a job they can enjoy.

This week, Leander Independent School District seniors had the opportunity to try out their dream jobs as a part of the district's Career Opportunities On Location Week, otherwise known as COOL Week.

"I thought being able to basically extern at a place for a week was a really cool opportunity, and it would be really nice to get an insight on the career that I want to go into just to make sure this is really what I want to do." Jonathan Kauffman, a student at Cedar Park High School, externed at Leander Middle School's band department.



HILL COUNTRY NEWS COOL TEAM

(from left to right) Glenn High School student Dillon Gephart, Cedar Park High School student Majeston Haverda, Leander High School students Cole Smith, Chelsea Tubonemi and Jamison Henderson and Vandegrift High School student Audra Voelkel get dressed up in their full gear to perform some drills at Leander Fire Department.

COOL Week was from Feb. 24-March 6 and allowed graduating seniors the chance to get on-site experience in the career they want to pursue.

"I'm going into college for music, music performance to be exact, and I want to see just in case I end up in education, if I would like to be a music educator or would I hate it, I just want to see," he said.

"The community doesn't know that LISD has this depth and breadth of knowledge that we're sharing with our students, so it lets us shine," LISD COOL Week Coordinator Pat Lopez said. COOL Week allows students to try out different career paths before they graduate and to learn about the skills and requirements for their chosen profession.

See **COOL** page A6

CEDAR PARK POLICE

CP Chief Mannix recounts career with pride

By **JOSH MONIZ**
HCN Senior Reporter

Reflecting over his nearly four decades of law enforcement service, Chief Sean Mannix said he felt honored to have served with the Cedar Park Police Department, which he called the "best police force in Texas."

Mannix, who served 7 years of his nearly 37 years in law enforcement with the Cedar Park Police Department, retired on Friday, Feb. 28.

"It won't be hard to step away from the work. It will be hard to step away from the people,"

Mannix said. "This department is a special place full of very special people, some of the most capable folks I've met. It's going to be an adjustment not being able to work among my heroes every day."

Looking forward, Mannix was overwhelmingly positive and excited to enter the next stage in his life. He spoke about undergoing treatment for "fully treatable" cancer and being confident he will be clear of it "by the end of this year."

He spoke with relish about being able to spend time fishing and touring the country in an

RV with his wife, including them being able to attend the birth of their first grandchild.

Record of excellence

Under his leadership, the department doubled its investigative capacity, saw a major increase from a criminal investigation division of only five generalist when he joined in 2013, and expanded its scope in several areas, including adding an organized crime division and a special victims unit focused on sexual assault victims and

See **MANNIX** page A7

FILE PHOTO
Cedar Park Chief of Police Sean Mannix retired Friday, Feb. 28, after 7 years with the Cedar Park Police Department and nearly four decades in law enforcement.

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CEDAR PARK CITY COUNCIL

Bell Blvd. Redevelopment gets \$15M funding approval

By JOSH MONIZ
HCN Senior Reporter

Cedar Park celebrated a “major milestone” for the planned \$350 million Bell Boulevard Redevelopment project Thursday, Feb. 27, after the Cedar Park City Council approved the critical step of formalizing the city’s partnership with RedLeaf Bell LLC as the official developer for the project.

The council approved both the Master Development Agreement, which outlines the city’s vision of the project, and \$15.3 million in funding from Cedar Park Community Development (Type B) Corporation plus \$1.4 million from the city’s utility fund to finance the city building parking, water and wastewater infrastructure for the project.

The vision for the 50 city-owned acres between Buttercup Creek Boulevard/Brushy Creek Road and Park Street is to transform it into a family-friendly destination with “vibrant pedestrian-oriented mixed-use district with a mix of commercial, (high-density) residential and civic uses.” The project will feature the city’s new public library, public access to Cluck Creek with more than one-third of the land, or 16 acres, dedicated to green space and a public park.

RedLeaf partner Rob Shands unveiled Thursday RedLeaf’s plans for a “Social Hub” orienting the restaurants and residential areas around the park.

He explained how the first phase of the project, after infrastructure construction is completed, will prioritize completing the “exciting” elements first, including the “Social Hub” and park space, the new library, two high-density residential housing buildings with ground floor retail space and two parking garages.

He said they will focus on attracting “destination restaurants,” particularly restaurants with outdoor patios, as a means of encouraging people to visit the district. He said they have also received inquiries from several “unique” businesses interested in opening in the district, including from a “destination movie theater chain.”

Shands said RedLeaf is excited to work on the project with the



REDLEAF BELL

Cedar Park celebrated a “major milestone” for the planned \$350 million Bell Boulevard Redevelopment project Thursday, Feb. 27, after the Cedar Park City Council approved the critical step of formalizing the city’s partnership with RedLeaf Bell LLC as the official developer for the project.

city because it is so rare to be able to tackle projects with such unique aspects and “generational significance.”

Approximately 87% of the funding for the \$350 million redevelopment will come from private investments. Under the Master Development Agreement, RedLeaf will be responsible for handling the work of rezoning and replating of the district, and then later overseeing construction and attracting the businesses to fund the cost of the district. The agreement also outlines all the design elements for the project to ensure it adheres to the city’s vision for the district.

All sales tax and property tax revenues collected from the district will go exclusively to the city under the agreement to repay the city’s spending on infrastructure.

Under the terms of the agreement, the project will take 20 years to complete — although Shands said they aim to complete the project in 10 to 12 years — but

its initial phase of construction for the streets and infrastructure will be pending the completion of the Bell Boulevard Realignment project.

The complimentary realignment project will start construction this summer and is expected to last through the end of 2021. The project will realign Bell Boulevard while closing and demolishing the old portion between Buttercup Creek Boulevard/Brushy Creek Road to just north of Park Street to make room for the redevelopment project.

Decade in the making

“We have had the blessing of working with six councils on this project,” said Cedar Park Assistant City Manager Katherine Caffrey. “I saw more than 60 votes at city councils on this project, and from what I saw, I couldn’t find a single one that wasn’t unanimous. I think that really speaks to the commitment these councils have shown on this project.”

Shands said it is very usual to see a city to stick with a project over this many years and different city councils. He said the long-term commitment will prove invaluable when they try to convince high-profile businesses to be confident enough to open in the district.

Cedar Park Mayor Corbin Van Arsdale, the only council member still serving since the city officially began the project in 2014, recounted how city documents show previous councils discussing the project back as far as 2011. Other council members



JOSH MONIZ

Cedar Park City Council members pose for a picture Friday, Feb. 28, following them approving a “major milestone” by approving the Master Development Agreement for the \$350 million Bell Boulevard Redevelopment.

recalled the redevelopment being informally discussed as far back as 2005. He called the project a major accomplishment and spent time thanking by name each previous council member who served over the course of the project.

Bond funding approved

The Council also approved a combined total of \$31.3 million from a citizen approved bond Thursday for a variety of city projects, including several major items related to the new city library planned for the district. The pooling of the funds formalizes

the city debt from the bonds, and often is legally required to be in city bank accounts before some types of contracts can be finalized.

The approved funds will pull \$18.5 million from 2015 General Obligation bonds for the construction of the new library and \$10 million from 2020 bonds to build its new public parking spaces and cover any inflationary costs for the project.

Other funding approved for notable projects includes:

- \$11 million for the City’s portion of the Brushy Creek Regional Wastewater System East Plant expansion, representing the portion of the city’s \$29 million share that will not be covered by community impact fees and utility funds,
- \$10.3 million for several street projects, including the Brushy Creek Road (Arrowhead to Ranch Trails), Lakeline Park – Off-site Roadway Infrastructure, and RM 1431 (Bagdad to Anderson Mill Road) projects, \$9.1 million for high priority stormwater projects in the city’s Stormwater Master Plan;
- and \$2.2 million for re-configuring several departments in Building 1 at the city’s City Hall Campus and several improvements to various Fire Department facilities.




Bell Boulevard Redevelopment Land Map



JOSH MONIZ

Cedar Park City Council members toured the site for the planned \$350 million Bell Boulevard Redevelopment on Friday, Feb. 28, including the portion of Cluck Creek that will be incorporated into the project, following them approving a “major milestone” by approving the Master Development Agreement for the \$350 million Bell Boulevard Redevelopment.



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REDLEAF BELL

NEWS

LEANDER ISD

CPHS Choir to put on show

By APRIL S. KELLEY
HCN Community Reporter

The Princess Tea: Aurora's Sleepover is coming to Cedar Park High School's Little Theatre March 6-8, to put on an interactive and exciting musical show performed by the Cedar Park High School Choir.

Princess characters from all of your Disney favorites will be portrayed by the members of Seasons, an elite audition-only subset of the Varsity Women's Choir. With humor, theatrics, audience participation, dancing, singing and eating, this show will provide fun for all ages.

The princess lineup is going to be different this year, along with the script written by senior cast members. Wholesome lessons about friendship, acceptance, cooperation and kindness are always a theme for Princess Tea.

All who attend are encouraged to wear their finest royal attire, and guests can meet the



COURTESY PHOTO

The Cedar Park High School Choir puts on a Princess Tea production every Spring.

princesses to get their autographs and pose for a picture after the show.

Showtimes will be 7 p.m. March 6, 11 a.m. and 3 p.m.

March 7 and 2 p.m. March 8. Tickets are \$15 and can be purchased at cphschoir.com.

Refreshments and a light meal will be provided.

LEANDER CITY COUNCIL

Council considering revisions, report

By JOSH MONIZ
HCN Senior Reporter

The Leander City Council will consider whether to approve several changes to the city's Ethics Ordinance this Thursday during their regular council meeting.

The proposed changes, which originate from the Leander Ethics Commission's December 2019 meeting, would modify the following parts of the ordinance:

- strengthening the Standards of Conduct section by lowering how valuable of a gift they are allowed to receive before violation the section to any gift over \$50, or gift cumulatively worth more the \$250 over a 12-month period,
- increasing how long former council members and commissioners are temporarily banned from lobby for



SCOTT COLEMAN

City of Leander

- anybody for compensation before any city entity except when they are representing themselves or their family members; and
- several clean-up language changes to clarify deadlines, such as changing the language from "working days" to the clearer "business days."

The council will also dis-

cuss the Leander Chamber of Commerce's Semi-Annual State of the Chamber report prior to the meeting during their 5 p.m. workshop session.

A returning item will be the Council considering \$69,197 for continued construction administration costs associated with Lakeline Park Project extending beyond the original project time frame.

The Council had originally approved the project at their Feb. 20 meeting while voicing serious concerns about the delays and other complications that have arisen with the project but ended up voting to reconsider the items after coming out of executive session.

Lastly, the council will review and consider whether to direct staff to draft any future agenda items pertaining to the city's parking space requirements for multi-family developments.

WILLIAMSON COUNTY

Detective pleads for mental health services

By APRIL S. KELLEY
HCN Community Reporter

Williamson County Deputies Association President Michael Klier, a detective currently on administrative leave from the Sheriff's Department, asked Williamson County Commissioners for improved mental health services for Sheriff's Department personnel on administrative leave.

Klier said he was placed on administrative leave on Jan. 29. "On Jan. 29, I walked out of the Sheriff's Office and my chain of command has not been in contact with me in any way," Klier said. "As far as they know, I'm lying dead in my closet by my own hand."

Klier compared the isolation of being on administrative leave with isolation veterans, like himself, often feel when returning to civilian life.

"We, at the Sheriff's Office, respond to dozens of welfare concerns a month to support our citizens, their fears and their families and friends, yet our employees suffer in agonizing silence," Klier said.

Klier recalled a tragic moment he and County Judge Bill Gravell shared at the scene of a devastating traffic accident.

"It was the reliance of my sergeant, my fellow deputies and



APRIL S. KELLEY

Williamson County Commissioners meet at 9:30 a.m. most Tuesdays at the County Courthouse in Georgetown.

the camaraderie and fellowship that helped me through that trying time," he said. "The stress and fear is no different when you find yourself on administrative leave."

Klier said he understands it is possible to survive administrative leave and return to work.

"With the forced isolation, you must certainly understand, it is the definition of a hostile work environment," he said. "We are still employees. These are people we have trusted with having our backs in deadly

situations."

Klier said the county must do better, that they need to be checking on personnel who are on administrative leave.

"It is ironic that we take greater lengths to safeguard the inmates under stressful situations by assigning someone to watch them, however we walk our employees to the streets and tell them, 'We'll call you when we're ready,'" he said. "And every time your phone rings, you're wondering if that's your termination."

and homicide detectives were called to the scene.

However, after further investigation, detectives were able to determine the individual was a white male. They have also been able to identify the individual, although they are declining to share the name with the public at this time as they seek to notify the individual's next of kin.

The investigation remains open at this time but the department has determined it is not investigating it as a suspicious death.



FILE PHOTO

discover the body's location.

Initially, identification wasn't possible due to decomposition

NEWS BRIEFS

Governor gives update on actions to combat coronavirus

AUSTIN — As the worldwide threat of novel coronavirus increased, state agencies already were working together to ensure the health and safety of all Texans, Gov. Greg Abbott said Feb. 27.

After a briefing from state and federal health officials on coronavirus (COVID-19), Abbott provided an update on steps the state is taking. He said the Department of State Health Services has activated the State Medical Operations Center to serve as a touchpoint for any requests from local entities. The center also ensures consistent collection, tracking and reporting of public health activities and data.

Also, DSHS is preparing state laboratories with testing capabilities for the novel coronavirus and is updating public health response plans in the event of the spread of the virus. Abbott said multi-level and multi-agency coordination and communication efforts are practiced daily to ensure up-to-date information is flowing between federal, state and local partners.

Furthermore, DSHS is coordinating with the Texas Department of Emergency Management, Texas Hospital Association, Texas Medical Association and state university systems to provide educational materials and the latest developments in research and treatment methods for the virus.

And, relevant agencies will implement disinfecting measures at places such as driver license offices and schools and ensure that high-risk populations such as those in day-care centers, nursing homes, assisted living associations and health-care facilities are prepared and properly cared for, Abbott said.

Meanwhile, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has confirmed multiple cases of COVID-19 in people under federal quarantine at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland. The first was a traveler who returned on a U.S. State Department-chartered flight from Wuhan City, China. The others returned on a State Department flight for passengers from the Diamond Princess cruise ship quarantined in Yokohama, Japan. The individuals will remain isolated at medical facilities until they test negative for the virus and are no longer at risk of spreading it. The CDC has the latest information on the number of people under quarantine who are infected and is updating its national numbers each Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

New cards being issued

The Texas Department of Public Safety on Feb. 27 announced that it is now issuing redesigned, tamper-resistant Texas driver's licenses, identification cards and license-to-carry cards.

The cards have a new look with an updated design and enhanced security features. The driver's license and ID cards also have visible and discrete identifiers on the front.

The DPS said that previously issued driver's licenses are still valid until the expiration date listed on the card and, beginning Oct. 1, travelers will need a valid passport, U.S. military ID or a REAL ID compliant driver's license (one with the gold star) to travel on commercial airlines or enter federal facilities.

Paxton welcomes ruling

Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton on Feb. 26 applauded a federal district court ruling holding that a 1998 comprehensive settlement agreement with R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company and other tobacco companies stands and the agreed payments to the state for smoking-related healthcare costs must be enforced.

The U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Texas rejected Reynolds' argument that selling acquired brands included in the settlement nullified its obligation to Texas taxpayers, declaring that "Reynolds remains as liable today as it was when it entered into the Texas Settlement in 1998."

"I applaud the court for holding tobacco companies accountable to the terms of the settlement to which they agreed. Texas taxpayers are owed substantial back payments and we will not allow any company to shirk their obligations to the people of this state," said Paxton. "No matter how large the company or how long the fight, my office will continue to fight for the compensation that taxpayers are owed."

Vaping case count: 250

The Department of State Health Services on Feb. 25 reported some 250 Texas cases of severe lung disease in people who used e-cigarettes before developing symptoms. Four of them have died.

Patients range in age from 13 to 75 years old with a median age of 22 years. About one-quarter of the people affected in Texas are minors. Three-quarters are male and nine in 10 report vaping THC or marijuana possibly in conjunction with other substances. Almost all patients were hospitalized and the DSHS said many required intensive care.

— Compiled by Ed Sterling of the Texas Press Association



• Williamson County — WilCo. org

The Williamson County Commissioners Court is the county's governing body. Commissioners meet beginning at 9:30 each Tuesday morning at the Williamson County Courthouse in downtown Georgetown. Agendas and packets are available, and the meetings are streamed live, on the county's website. Meetings are open to the public. If you wish to speak, arrive early and register.

• Leander Independent School District — leanderisd.org

Leander ISD Board of Trustees meet the third and fourth Thursday each month at 6:15 p.m. at 1900 Cougar Country Dr. in Cedar Park. Meetings are open to the public. If you wish to speak, arrive early and register. You can find agendas, board meeting packets and a live stream on the district's website.

• Lago Vista Independent School District — lagovistaisd.net

Lago Vista ISD Board of Trustees meet at 6:15 p.m. on the second Monday of the month at 8039 Bar-K Ranch Road in Lago Vista. Meetings are open to the public. If you wish to speak, arrive early and register. You can find agendas and board meeting packets on the district's website.

• City of Cedar Park — cedarparktexas.gov

Agendas and minutes for all boards and commissions are available, and many meetings are streamed live, on the city's website.

• Cedar Park City Council

Meets at 6 p.m. the second and fourth Thursday of each month at City Council Chambers, 450 Cypress Creek Road, Building 4. Council agendas and packets are available on the city's website. Meetings are open to the public. If you wish to speak, arrive early and register.

• City of Leander — leandertx.gov

Agendas and minutes for all boards and commissions are available, and City Council meetings are streamed live, on the city's website.

• Leander City Council

Meets at 6 p.m. the first and third Thursday of each month in the City Council Chambers, Pat Bryson Municipal Hall, 201 N. Brushy Street. Council agendas and packets are available on the city's website. Meetings are open to the public. If you wish to speak, arrive early and register.

• City of Lago Vista — lagovistatexas.org

Agendas and minutes for all boards and commissions are available on the city's website.

• Lago Vista City Council

Meets 6:30 p.m. the first and third Thursday of each month in the Council Chambers at City Hall, 5803 Thunderbird Drive. Council agendas and packets are available on the city's website. Meetings are open to the public. If you wish to speak, arrive early and register.

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EDITORIAL CARTOON



MY VIEW

Swimsuit shopping: a cautionary tale

On a recent frigid day in February as I was entering Target to defrost my nose hairs and purchase a designer toilet brush, I noticed that they already had an array of skimpy women's swimsuits on display, which dredged up some disturbing memories for me.

If you've ever wondered how awkward it might be taking adolescent daughters shopping for swimwear, imagine that you're taking adolescent daughters shopping for swimwear. That should do it. For fathers of girl children all over the world, except maybe in Saudi Arabia, bathing suit shopping is a task that ranks right up there with taking an armload of feral cats down a waterslide.

For me, this harrowing event with all three of my daughters took place a couple of years ago on a Sunday afternoon in March, ALL Sunday afternoon. When we hit Target's swimwear section, I first noticed that each suit was designed to reveal everything except one shoulder blade. I actually thought we might have strayed into the first aid section and were looking at a new line of colorful ACE bandages.

I've never understood the apparent gender bias of swimwear. Bathing suits for males typically look like long gym shorts, and most of the girls' suits I was looking at would have made J-Lo blush. Whatever happened to those nineteenth-century bathing machines that were rolled down to the water so that no one could get a glimpse of female skin? I guess Target has something against history.

My main criteria was that any suit we



JASE GRAVES
GUEST COLUMNIST

purchased exposed only enough anatomy to allow for the intake of oxygen. Eyesight and hearing would be optional.

Surrounded by bikinis, tankinis, monokinis, and other suits with important segments missing, I was in a constant state of paranoia about being tackled by security, struck with a purse, or spotted by someone from church while I held each suit up to the light to determine whether I could see through the fabric.

After gathering a few unlikely options, the next phase of the ordeal involved my daughters' attempts to wedge their bodies into these perforated sausage casings in the dressing room. My task would be to evaluate each suit modeled by one of my daughters and, inevitably, return to the swimwear section (exactly one mile from the dressing room) to look for something with more coverage.

Each time I returned to the dressing room, I first had to knock on the door and identify myself, which always resulted in screams and giggling—and not just from me. Then the girls would castigate me for opening the door too widely. When I managed to squeeze into the dressing room through an opening almost large enough for my left earlobe, the real agony began.

The room looked like the aftermath of an Olympic Swim Team slumber party. As the girls modeled the suits, my wife had them squat, stoop, and contort themselves into various unnatural poses while I made rude gas noises to lighten the mood. The girls would then disdainfully order me back out of the dressing room (to my great relief) and tell me to look for another size, color, shape, style, texture, etc. Apparently, they weren't open to something made of burlap.

Eventually, my wife and I were able to find a few fairly modest swimsuits that I could tolerate (once I'm dead). And the process was no more painful than having a chimpanzee remove my spleen with a popsicle stick.

These days, our swimsuit approval process is done mostly through text message since I've now been banned from participating in-person. (Thank the sweet and merciful Lord!) And despite my ongoing disappointment that their bathing attire choices don't more closely resemble hazmat gear, I really am proud of the mature young ladies my girls have grown to be.

I trust that their maturity will show itself again when I surprise them with my plans to move us all to the Middle East. Burkinis, anyone?

Graves is an award-winning humor columnist from East Texas. His columns have been featured in Texas Escapes magazine, The Shreveport Times, The Longview News Journal, and The Kilgore News Herald. Contact Graves at susanjase@sbcglobal.net.

TEXAS TRIBUNE ANALYSIS

The Texas Supreme Court and the ruling class

Sometimes the job of a columnist is simply to say, "Read this story."

If that's all you require, read this story, "Speaking statistically, this GOP donor wants to convince you that money buys justice in Texas," by The Texas Tribune's Emma Platoff.

It's about the highest civil court in Texas. More to the point, it's about a system that is either set up to favor the rich, educated and powerful — or a system in the unfortunate position of operating honestly while seeming to function as if serving the elite were what it was designed to do.

Either way, it makes you mad enough to sue somebody.

This starts with Salem Abraham, a West Texas investor who is also an active donor in Republican politics. He got into a legal fight with BP America, the big oil company, over oil and gas rights on a property in the Texas Panhandle.

Abraham won in district court, won the first-level appeal and then lost to BP in the Texas Supreme Court.

It wasn't close. It was unanimous. And honestly, this was one of those battles of the titans that mattered to the contestants and not so much to the average Texan

But Abraham had the research capability to analyze his loss, to figure out why he lost a lawsuit he thought he had a very good



ROSS RAMSEY
GUEST COLUMNIST

chance of winning.

His conclusion was that big companies like BP, represented by top lawyers from firms based in tall downtown buildings in major cities, have a much-better-than-average chance of prevailing in the state's highest civil court.

And he spices up that exploration by noting the correlations between contributions to the nine elected judges on that court and the success rates of nine particular law firms. His conclusion, as related by Platoff: "If you're a billion-dollar company represented by one of nine elite law firms, you are 5.4 times more likely to win some or all of what you seek from the justices."

He's not saying this works like a specialized vending machine, where you put money in and get the ruling of your choice in return. In fact, he's really measuring the size of his own miscalculation: He expected a particular result and thought he had the odds figured out when, in fact, the odds were against him the whole time.



MIGUEL GUTIERREZ JR./THE TEXAS TRIBUNE

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He probably discovered some things already known to the people on and around the Texas Supreme Court. Justices there have complained for years — for decades — that putting judges on partisan ballots taints their reputations. First, it requires them to make sometimes uncomfortable alliances with whatever political parties they've joined. Worse, it has them taking contributions from the people most interested in what happens in the courtrooms of Texas — lawyers and the people and companies they represent.

Abraham's post-op comes up short at its final step, failing to prove that the high court's decisions are actually caused by those apparent conflicts of interest. It's a possibility without certainty. It looks the way it would look if it were a specialized vending machine. But it could be something else, too.

The richest companies have the capabilities, whether they use them or not, to manage risk better than others. They hedge their bets. Then they hire the tall-building law firms that hire the best and most capable lawyers with the most experience.

That's the kind of planning and preparation that makes the big dogs the big dogs. Maybe the judges like these lawyers and the cases they bring because they're some of the best lawyers around. Imagine a car race where the most experienced, winningest drivers mostly drive for the other side.

That's a good argument. But on the other hand, it would be interesting to get rid of the money in judicial politics, to separate the advantages of talent from the alleged advantages of campaign largess and political affiliation.

It would increase trust in the courts. And losers would have to find new things to blame for their losses.

Disclosure: BP America has been a financial supporter of The Texas Tribune, a nonprofit, nonpartisan news organization that is funded in part by donations from members, foundations and corporate sponsors. Financial supporters play no role in the Tribune's journalism. Find a complete list of them here.

UPCOMING EVENTS



DEEN VAN MEERT

Disney Theatrical Productions under the direction of Thomas Schumacher presents Aladdin, the US tour, music by Alan Menken, lyrics by Howard Ashman and Tim Rice, book and additional lyrics by Chad Beguelin, photographed: Clinton Greenspan (Aladdin), Lissa deGuzman (Jasmine), Zach Bencal (Babkak), Jef Feder (Kassim), Philippe Arroyo (Omar), Jonathan Weir (Jafar), Jay Paranada (Iago) directed and choreographed by Casey Nicholaw. On stage at the Bass Concert Hall through March 22. Call Broadway Austin at 800-731-SHOW (7469) for tickets and information.

MARCH 6

Support local nonprofit organizations by donating on Amplify Austin Day. Through the I Live Here I Give Here Amplify Fund, your donation has the opportunity to be amplified through matching gifts, challenges and incentives. Visit amplifyatx.org.

The community is invited to Cedar Park's inaugural International Women's Day Celebration, March 6, 6:30 p.m. to 9 p.m., Toyota of Cedar Park, 5600 U.S. Highway 183A, Cedar Park. Enjoy refreshments, live music and speakers. Visit cedarparkchamber.org for tickets and information.

Southwestern University performs "Little Women," the Broadway musical, Fridays and Saturdays at 7:30 p.m. and Sundays at 3 p.m., until March 8, Alma Thomas Fine Arts Center, Jesse H. And Mary Gibbs Jones Theater, E. Rutersville Road, Georgetown. Visit southwestern.edu for tickets.

St. Thomas More Catholic Church hosts a fish fry every Friday until April 3, 5 p.m. to 8 p.m., 10205 N. FM 620, Austin. Visit stmaustin.org.

MARCH 7

Support local farmers and vendors by visiting the Farmers Market in the Lakeline Mall parking lot Saturdays, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Shop local at Old Town Leander Farmer's Market, where local businesses, artists and farmers offer their products Saturdays, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., 203 W. Broade St.

Enjoy an old-fashioned barbecue with food, games, cooking and family activities at the Twin Lakes Family YMCA fundraiser, March 7, 4 p.m. to 7 p.m., 204 E. Little Elm Trail, Cedar Park. Visit ymcagwc.org.

Enjoy live music Saturday nights at Shooters Billiards and Sports Bar, 601 E. Whitestone Blvd., Cedar Park. Visit shootersbilliards.net for the schedule of bands.

MARCH 8

Learn the basics of how to play chess, or just meet with other chess fans to play a few games at the Kids' Chess Open Play on Sunday, 1:30 p.m. to 3 p.m. at Cedar Park Public Library, 550 Discovery Blvd.

Whitestone Brewery and Hoodoo Crawfish host a crawfish boil, March 8, 601 E. Whitestone Blvd., Cedar Park. The event starts at noon and continues until the crawfish are sold out.

Anitra Jay and husband Rob perform a unique upbeat blend of sultry soul and pop, Sunday, March 8, 1 p.m. to 4 p.m., Bent Oak Winery, 2000 Windy Terrace, Cedar Park. Visit bentoakwinery.com.

MARCH 11

North Shore Republicans will host a meet and greet with Lt. Col. Allen West, March 11, 6:30 p.m., K Oaks Clubhouse, 7000 Bar-K Ranch Road, Lago Vista. Visit the group's Facebook page for information and reservations.

MARCH 12

Free tax help is available Tuesdays, 12 p.m. to 4 p.m., Thursdays, 12 p.m. to 8 p.m., and Saturdays, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., until April 11 at Leander Public Library, 1011 S. Bagdad Road. This service is provided on a first come, first served basis to senior citizens and households earning less than \$55,000 annually. Visit wilcofreetaxprep.org or unitedway-wc.org for information.

Learn about crape myrtles at the monthly gardening program, Green Thumbs Up, presented by A&M Agrilife Extension Office, March 12, 7 p.m., Cedar Park Public Library, 550 Discovery Blvd. Call (512) 401-5608 with questions.

MARCH 13

Cedar Park's Daddy Daughter Dance is a night of fun, laughter and dancing, March 13, 6 p.m. (infants to 7-year-olds) and 8 p.m. (8 years and older), Cedar Park Recreation Center, 1435 Main St. Cookies and punch will be served. Register online at cpparks.net.

MARCH 14

The Teen Library Council invites teens ages 12 to 18 years to a Nintendo Teen Party, March 14, 2 p.m. to 4 p.m., 550 Discovery Blvd., with games, trivia, snacks and a Nintendo-inspired costume contest. Call (512) 401-5608 with questions.

Enjoy live Irish music with The Thunder on St. Patrick's Day weekend, Whitestone Brewery, 601 E. Whitestone Blvd., Suite 500, Cedar Park. Visit whitestonebrewery.com.

MARCH 21

Sam Riggs performs songs from his newest album, "Love & Panic," March 21, 8 p.m., Wild West Cedar Park, 401 E. Whitestone Blvd. Visit wildwestcedarpark.com.

MARCH 27

Bring your fort materials, flashlights and favorite books to read for Family Blanket Fort Storytime, March 27, 5:15 p.m. to 6:30 p.m., Cedar Park Public Library, 550 Discovery Blvd. Visit cedarparktexas.gov for more information.

Way Off Broadway Community Players presents the comedic mystery "Murdered to Death" Fridays and Saturdays at 8 p.m., March 27 to April 11, 11880 Hero Way West, Leander. Visit wobcp.org for tickets and information.

The Joyce Meyer Conference Tour shares Joyce's message about applying the biblical truth to every aspect of their lives, March 27 and March 28, H-E-B Center at Cedar Park, 2100 Avenue of the Stars. Visit hebcenter.com for times, tickets and details.

Bring the family for a free movie in the park, beginning at dusk on March 27, Milburn Park, 1901 Sun Chase Blvd., Cedar Park. Bring your lawn chairs, blankets and a picnic. Visit cedarparktexas.gov for more information.

MARCH 29

Leander's residential spring cleanup event offers residents a free non-hazardous waste drop-off, March 28, 8 a.m. to 12 p.m., 607 Municipal Dr. Visit leandertx.gov for tips and details about accepted items.

5 THINGS TO DO THIS WEEKEND



Water lanterns, cars and mudbugs! Oh my! This weekend showcases quite the eclectic group of events. Just look at this list.

1 INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY CELEBRATION

The Inaugural International Women's Day Celebration will be held from 6:30 - 9 p.m. Friday, March 6 at Toyota of Cedar Park, located at 5600 183A, Leander. Enjoy refreshments, food and music provided by the all-female rock band, THE MRS. Celebrate, recognize and inspire women's accomplishments in the workforce and their contributions.

2 ROCKNRIDES CAR SHOW

The 7th Annual RockNRides Car Show will be held from 8:30 a.m. - 2 p.m. Saturday, March 7 at Gupton Stadium, located at 200 Gupton Way, Cedar Park. Don't miss this rain or shine event that is considered one of the largest car shows in central Texas. With surprise guest appearances, music, food and tons of prizes, everyone and anything on wheels are encouraged to come out. Visit RockNRides.org for more information.

WATER LANTERN FESTIVAL



3 WATER LANTERN FESTIVAL

Austin's Water Lantern Festival will be held at 4 p.m. Saturday, March 7 at Mueller Lake Park, located at 4550 Mueller Blvd., Austin. This family-friendly event can be shared with everyone as people create a magical, memorable experience. Visit waterlanternfestival.com for more details.

4 HOLI - THE FESTIVAL OF COLORS

Bring color to a child's life and celebrate HOLI - The Festival of Colors at 11 a.m. on Sunday, March 8 at Brushy Creek Lake Park, located at 3300 Brushy Creek Rd., Cedar Park. Enjoy food, water blasters, dancing, games and a live DJ at this charitable event led by CRY (Child Rights and You) Austin, a registered non-profit that helps to ensure rights of education, healthcare and protection from exploitation and abuse are restored to underprivileged children.

5 CRAWFISH BOIL!

Whitestone Brewery will be hosting their first crawfish boil of the season with Hoodoo Crawfish from 12 - 6 p.m. Sunday, March 8 at 601 E. Whitestone Blvd., Cedar Park. For \$9 per pound and \$4 select pints until 5 p.m. and \$13 select pitchers from 5 - 7 p.m., this will surely make for a Sunday Funday.

SUDOKU

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

Level: Intermediate

Here's How It Works:

Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

Fun By The Numbers

Like puzzles? Then you'll love sudoku. This mind-bending puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your sudoku savvy to the test.

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

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COOL WEEK

COOL

from page A1

Students externing at Zynga Game Developing, an internationally-known video game developing company, used their time at the office to participate in Q&As with staff and have been attending company meetings all week to discuss plans for the company.

"I feel like the COOL Week experience in general is going to impact what I want to do in the future," said Jeremy Payte. Payte is a Leander High school student spending the week at Zynga.

"It was more of a thing that I just wanted to do but I wasn't sure yet. Going through this day gave me more of a strong feeling to be here, be a part of this culture, and just do what I enjoy," he said.

Business partners, who participate in COOL Week are able to plan activities specifically for their company. Students' externships at the businesses lasted 1-5 days depending on where they decided to go.

"We always enjoy being able to link professionals with students, so a lot of the students will go home with business cards," Zynga Business Operations Manager Alica Hendrickson said. "I'll send contacts of everybody that they have met today to their teachers, so as they grow and go into college, they can start networking. We want people to be excited about gaming, and the way to start that excitement is by inviting students, especially at a younger age."

At Kendra Scott, externs get a look at a wide variety of departments. From design to information technology, students can get an overall experience of the company while gaining knowledge in multiple fields.

"I think it's just fun when we get to talk about what we do and talk about the company," Kendra Scott Business Partner Alyse Bolda said. "It energizes us as individuals working here because students get excited and we're like, 'Oh yeah, we love it here too.' It's a



HILL COUNTRY NEWS COOL TEAM

(from left to right) Glenn High School student Meagan Staniszewski, Rouse High School student Taylor Shorb, and Leander High School student Daniela Conchas show off their "evidence" while at Jonestown Police Department.

fresh perspective, a new set of eyes and energy I think."

In addition to having an impact on businesses and students, the surrounding communities gain advocates. Jonestown Police Department allowed COOL Week externs to look at a wide variety of law enforcement agencies such as the FBI and the Texas Rangers.

"We try to be transparent and open their eyes to a whole different world of what we do and why we do it," Chief of Police Paul Taylor said. "Hopefully, they find their career path, and once they see what we do, they'll either get into it or decide early that this is not what they want to do and go pursue something else."

LISD's COOL Week is generally held every year in the Spring, usually the last week of February. If you run a local business and would like to host a team of externs, contact Lopez at 512-570-0269.

The Hill Country News' Cool Team was led by Avery Smith (Rouse High School). The team included Emily Mahoney (Cedar Park High School), Kaitlyn Wheeler (Leander High School), Kacy Wycoff (Vista Ridge High School) and photographer Jasmine Rosas (Glenn High School). Everyone contributed to the project.



HILL COUNTRY NEWS COOL TEAM

Cedar Park High School student Emily Hunter working with a payroll employee at the Kendra Scott home office in Austin, TX.



HILL COUNTRY NEWS COOL TEAM

(from left to right) Leander High School student Cole Smith and Cedar Park High School student Majeston Haverda attend a CPR training class led by Leander Fire Department Community Outreach Coordinator, Cheryl Arnold.



HILL COUNTRY NEWS COOL TEAM

Vandegrift High School student Kurt Wokek, Rouse High School student Isabella Donovan, Leander High School student Jeremy Payte, Vista Ridge High School student Sergio Ruenes, Glenn High School student Logan Griffin and Cedar Park High School student Jalie Sullivan meet with their coordinator Alica Hendrickson at Zynga Game Developing.

HILL COUNTRY NEWS COOL TEAM



RICHARD STONE

Leander ISD assigned an exceptional team of young high school journalists to the Hill Country News as our COOL Team. Here, they talk to page designer Don Grabowski about the look of this week's layout. L-R, the team was made up of seniors Emily Mahoney from Cedar Park HS, Kaitlyn Wheeler from Leander HS, Jasmine Rosas from Glenn HS, Avery Smith from Rouse HS, and Kacy Wycoff from Vista Ridge HS.



HILL COUNTRY NEWS COOL TEAM

Vandegrift High School student Samantha Sorsby-Jones, Glenn High School student Kayla Gertner and Rouse High School student Catherine Smith talk about the artwork inside of the Elsworth Kelly building at the Blanton Museum of Art.

FIGURING OUT THE FUTURE

Leander ISD's Career Opportunities on Location Week, shortened to COOL Week, is an annual externship opportunity for high school seniors across the district to shadow local businesses and organizations. The program, which has been running for 24 years, gives students from all six high schools the chance to gain experience in a variety of career paths with direct support from the school district.

COOL Week coordinator Pat Lopez has helped to develop the program for the 19 years she has been active in her position.

"Leander High School started [COOL Week] with 21 students," Lopez said. "This year, we have been working with over 899 students, and have placed about 768. We went from just a couple of businesses to 190 businesses."

An externship differs from an internship in that it generally lasts for a shorter period of time and is primarily associated with learning experiences rather than specific vocational training.

Participating businesses include large corporations like Dell, Zynga Game Developing, and Kendra Scott to local entities such as the Blanton Museum of Art, Jonestown Police Department, and Leander Fire Department, among others.

Lopez said that the impact of COOL Week on students, businesses, and the community is "immeasurable." She explained how the influence of the program has the potential to transform the futures of students in their job prospects and positions.

"One of the things that I like about education is teachers affect eternity. They never know where their influence stops," Lopez said. "I've been doing this long enough that I see the ripple effects. Now, some kids that did COOL Week with me at Cedar Park High School are now our business partners because they're adults and managers and owners of companies."

Students have the chance to participate on location during the workday within the weeks of either February 24 through 28 or March 2 through 6 for a duration of one to five days, depending on the business.

For many students, this unique opportunity not only enriches their high school experience, but provides insight and valuable guidance for important decision-making throughout their careers. Representing their schools and their district, Lopez praises the students for their ambition and positive impression on the community.

"[The students] are such fabulous emissaries," Lopez said, "By reflection, we look good because [they] look good."

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CEDAR PARK POLICE

Harmon named Interim Police Chief

By JOSH MONIZ
HCN Senior Reporter

Cedar Park Assistant Chief of Police Mike Harmon was named the Interim Police Chief on Thursday following approval by the Cedar Park City Council.

Harmon is replacing Cedar Park Chief of Police Sean Mannix, who resigned Friday, Feb. 28 after more than 36 years in law enforcement and over 7 years with the Cedar Park Police Department.

Harmon said he is excited and humbled to have been selected to take the new leadership position. He originally joined the department back in 1998, and was appointed as Assistant Chief in 2013. He said he loves being able to serve the same community he and his family live in, and looks forward to “leading the



FILE PHOTO

Cedar Park Assistant Chief of Police Mike Harmon was named the Interim Police Chief on Thursday, Feb. 27, following approval by the Cedar Park City Council.

great men and women in this organization.”
Harmon said he anticipates the first major challenge he will face in

the position will be tackling the city’s accelerating growth and working to maintain or hire enough staff to address the increased demand created by that growth.

He said he has learned a lot serving under Mannix and will miss his positive approach to working with fellow officers and staff, such as how he would always have a joke or a movie quote ready to lighten any situation.

“I’ve never met anybody who could quote movies as well as he can,” Harmon said.

Harmon has earned a Bachelor’s Degree in Criminal Justice, a Master’s Degree in Strategic Leadership and is a graduate of the FBI National Academy Session 254, as well as the Senior Management Institute for Police. Mike is also a graduate of the Leadership Command College through Sam Houston State University.

CEDAR PARK POLICE



JOSH MONIZ

Greg Kelley was fully exonerated in November 2019 for his conviction for sexually abusing a child. His story will be the focus of a Showtime documentary airing March 14 at the South by Southwest festival in Austin.

Mannix responds to Greg Kelley criticism

By JOSH MONIZ
HCN Senior Reporter

During his final interview with The Hill Country News, former Cedar Park Chief of Police Sean Mannix defended his department’s handling of the Greg Kelley case and pushed back against some of the criticism of how the investigation was originally conducted.

“People, like yourself, want to talk a lot about one case only because it got a lot of attention,” he said. “It’s just another criminal case, and there are so many out there that never got any attention, that never got a fan club. [So, sometimes] I appear resentful of that, thinking, ‘Really? We’re going to talk about that again?’ It is cataloged as another criminal case. Not one that was ever personal. Not one that goes home with me at night. Not one that is anything other than what the judicial system decided it was.”

The Kelley saga lasted almost as long as Mannix has been with the department. Just a few months after he joined in 2013, the department opened an investigation into Kelley for allegations that he sexually abused a child. He was subsequently convicted by a jury in 2014 and spent a year advocating for his case. Over time, he drew a large contingent of local residents who defended him until he was eventually exonerated in November 2019 in Williamson County District Court.

The case gained national attention and will be the focus of a five-part Showtime documentary that will premiere March 14 during the South by Southwest festival in Austin. The documentary will then premiere on the channel on April 3.

Criticism, response

Mannix said people often fail to understand that many criminal cases mostly rely on testimony of the victim.

“Sometimes all you have is a victim’s statement, and that victim’s statement holds value,” Mannix insisted.

Mannix said many critics want to “isolate it to only one detective’s initial report” without recognizing the case was “part of a bigger judicial system.” He noted the detective had no involvement in the former district attorney’s and decisions to present the case to a grand jury and later a trial jury.

“That detective determined probable cause, which is his job. Nothing more, nothing less,” Mannix said.

Mannix called it “baloney” that critics allege, “it’s a police officer’s responsibility to try and find somebody different,” when they have a suspect directly accused of the crime.

Does the department owe Kelley an apology?

“Not at all,” he said. “The department’s role in that case was to investigate allegations against Mr. Kelley and nobody else on the planet. The detective developed probable cause based on the outcry, at the time, of two children — and one later recanted — at the Child Advocacy Center with professionals.”

Mannix did express regret that he called Kelley “diseased” and his supporters “cult-like” in a now infamous internal email he sent to department officials criticizing the tactics Kelley’s supporters used.

He said that even though he believed Kelley was a convicted pedophile at the time, it was unprofessional of him as an officer, and something he wouldn’t repeat if he could go back in time.

Mannix

When asked whether he personally believed Kelley was innocent, he argued the question is fundamentally flawed because police officers don’t view cases with a “scorecard.” He said he believes any officer would be doing a disservice to his profession and community if they approached work in this manner.

“I live with the determination of the law. I’ve never once come to work with a scorecard in my pocket. ‘Did we win that one? Did we lose that one?’ We don’t think that way. We develop probable cause, turn over our information to a district attorney’s office who takes it from there.”

In response to an earlier question about his view of the case, given all that has transpired in 7 years since Kelley’s conviction, Mannix said, “After having watched that child’s CAC, (or Children Advocacy Center), interview, I’m not swayed that the kid did not know who his attacker was. That jury did not think there was reasonable doubt after listening to that child.”

“But, let me be clear — I believe in our judicial system. Nobody should be in prison unless they committed the crime,” Mannix said.” This is just one man’s opinion — that he is innocent because the law says so. He’s as innocent as O.J. Simpson is because the law says so.”



APRIL S. KELLEY

Leander ISD held their Feb. 27 board meeting at the Leander Extended Opportunity Center, located at 300 S. W. Drive.

LISD

from page A1

“At this point, we are only talking about charters,” Bode said. “We have not said which neighborhood will go to what school.”

The approved charter presents

different scenarios for possible elementary attendance rezoning for the 2021-22 school year. The district intends to gather additional feedback from the community about the scenarios prior to making a decision on a final, detailed attendance zone.

Following a community survey that ended Feb. 11, Leander ISD reviewed an elementary attendance zoning charter. The administration analyzed survey submissions to

identify the community’s top priorities in order to develop the charter, which will be used to plan a detailed elementary attendance zone for the 2021-22 school year, with the opening of Nancy Tarvin Elementary in August 2021.

Based on already gathered community feedback, the district focused on four development criteria: school size, proximity, minimizing change and feeder patterns.

MANNIX

from page A1

crimes against vulnerable populations like children and the elderly.

Mannix said managing staffing and hiring for this expansion was critical to the department tackling the defining challenge of his tenure — the city’s accelerating growth and the resulting swell in demand for service.

“Every rooftop is a potential crime scene when you think about things like family violence and sexual assault. Those things that happen behind closed doors,” he said. “With the increase in retail, you have increase in shoplifting and an increase in people parking in one place, so you have an increase in car burglaries. It all drives your call load up.”

In 2019, the department had an “unusual year” handling several high-profile, complicated homicides “that just don’t happen as a matter of course in this city.”

The planning and training for the department’s expansion, coupled with the officers’ talent and dedication, allowed the department to clear all the cases, Mannix said, while also achieving difficult accomplishments, such as officers recovering firearms that were disposed of before the investigation began, in two of the cases.

Evolution

Mannix is particularly proud of “being part of the evolution of the profession.”

He recounted starting out in Alameda, Calif. in 1983, following six years of service with U.S. Marine Corps Reserve. He was amazed, over the following years, as technology transformed the field, from watching the arrival of “this new magic called DNA” testing to seeing difficult coordination with a helicopter crew on a case giving way to, potentially, having only one officer fly a drone with his or her cellphone.

He spoke with pride about how Cedar Park and the department “was not only willing to evolve, but demand that evolution” by adopting new policies and programs years ahead of other departments. Those evolutions ranged from being among the earliest adopters of body cameras, to pioneering comprehensive wellness programs for officers, to mandating de-escalating training like ICAT years before the Sandra Bland Act was passed.

While attending a training in Huntsville last week, Mannix marveled how all of the programs being taught to “every chief in the State of Texas” was “essentially how to build the Cedar Park Police Department.”

“That’s a pretty good feeling,” Mannix said.

He recalled police officers being mortified about the idea of being filmed while they work back when he was starting out in the 1980s. Decades later, Cedar Park was a leader in adopting body cameras, he said.

Contrary to original fears, he argued, the body cameras grew public faith in local policing by providing transparency while simultaneously allowing him to be able to investigate and clear “almost every Internal Affairs case that has come our way that spoke to discrimination or rudeness” because they had clear, direct video evidence.

Another evolution he observed during his decades in law enforcement was a change in the culture of the profession away from the mindset “that what makes a good cop is how big is the guy, can he hold his own in a fight” to “hiring people for their talents, their ability to communicate with people” and, being “the best fighter” no longer matters because “the expectation today is you use your cognitive and verbal abilities to never have to have that fight.”

“Today, policing is a more professional profession that it was when I started,” Mannix said. “We are bringing people into the profession now that

are community-oriented, helping people-oriented, as opposed to ‘I want a badge and a gun and the ability to drive fast.’”

Stress, grief and mental health challenges are equally part of the police experience for all officers.

Mannix said helping victims of crimes through their ordeal was easily the hardest part of the job. He said dealing with these difficult situations, including murders and rapes, also affects the officers, resulting in almost all officers struggling with PTSD or other mental health issues at some point in their career.

He said he is grateful to have participated in the cultural change towards implementing programs like Peer Support and psychological services for victims and officers alike, along with encouraging people to seek help instead of encouraging “self-medication in the bottle or other unhealthy behaviors.”

Career recounted

A healthy sense of humor is critical to being able to deal with the stress of the job, Mannix said. He recounted incidents like a person pulled over for running a flashing red light who argued “they hadn’t violated the law because they drove through between flashes” or another person he pulled over for going 88 miles per hour on a highway who said “I’m sorry officer. I was just trying to get back to the future.”

Looking back over his career, he said he knows the police work can make a lasting impact because of a case he worked during his 20-year tenure with the Austin Police Department, prior to coming to Cedar Park.

Following the response to an officer-involved shooting on Springdale Road, the department decided to look into the cause of the incident, instead of moving on, and ultimately conducted an extensive investigation in a operation with multiple agencies utilizing three different SWAT teams who were able to arrest between 12 and 16 indi-

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ELECTION

from page A1

“You can look at the turnout. 60,000-plus voters,” said Imam late Tuesday. “In the last primary election in 2018, we had something around 33,000 voters. We more than doubled that in 2020.”

“We’re really excited about the results, especially about the huge Democratic turnout in the district,” said Mann. This is work that has been done for several decades by people who started to see the potential in the district and just worked and worked and worked, even when it looked like they couldn’t get there.”

The WilCo Democratic vote aligned with the statewide results, though they flipped the order. Statewide, Democrats gave former Vice President Joe Biden a slight edge over Bernie Sanders, 32.4% to 29.7%. WilCo Democrats gave Sanders the edge, 31.8 to 29.8.

Sen. Elizabeth Warren and Michael Bloomberg took the next two spots both locally and statewide.

Closer to home, Jeff Anderson won the Republican nomination for WilCo Constable Pct. 2 with 61.8% of the vote over Renee Harrell. Robert Tijerina defeated Greg Papst for the Democratic nomina-



Tuesday’s primary election saw a record 104,972 voters cast ballots. However, the 29.7% turnout fell short of the record turnout of 37% set in 2008.

tion with 55% of the vote. And, while she will have a runoff in May, hometown favorite Mary “MJ” Hegar handily won the WilCo Democratic Primary for

U.S. Senate with 58.7% of the vote. The statewide vote was much narrower, though Hegar led the field with 23.25% of the vote. She will face Cristina Tzintzun Rameriz in

the runoff. Rameriz finished Tuesday with 13.9% of the vote.

While the WilCo Democrats surged, Republicans significantly under-performed Tuesday, when

compared to the turnout from the 2016 primary. More than 67,000 Republicans voted in that Presidential election compared to 43,868 Tuesday.

Democrats logged 31,141 primary votes in 2016 compared to 60,677 this year.

The results also show more than a third of the total votes are up for grabs in the House District 31 Congressional runoff.

Mann and Imam split the Williamson County and Bell County portions of the district respectively with Mann seeing a 6% win in Williamson County compared to Imam’s narrower 3% victory in Bell County.

The split was even reflected in their final totals’ share of Williamson County voters, with Imam drawing 5% less of her total from Williamson County voters. Mann had 82% of her votes come from Williamson County. Imam had 77 percent her votes come from Williamson County.

However, Mann’s lead in Williamson County could be significant because the county’s voters still accounts for the majority of the total votes, representing more than three-fourths of both candidate’s total votes.

Bell County turned out 15,298 total votes in the Democrat primary compared to 53,961 in Williamson County.

Democrats will hold runoff elections for U.S. Senate and CD 31, among others, on May 26.

North Shore News



North Lake Travis CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Lago Vista
Jonestown | Point Venture

Upcoming Events:

- March 6, 13, 20 & 27 - 5pm-7pm - St. Mary’s Fish Fry
- March 7 - 11am-1pm - Teddy Bear Picnic, City of Jonestown
- March 13 - 5pm-7pm - Rolling Hills Friday Night Dinner
- March 22 - Fly-In Pancake Breakfast at Rusty Allen Airport
- March 25 - North Lake Travis Chamber of Commerce Luncheon with guest speaker Amanda Sanders, Outreach Director for the Texas State Attorney General
- March 25, 26, 27 - 7:30 pm - March 29 - 2 pm MATINEE - Lago Vista Players present Jack of Diamonds at K-Oaks Clubhouse
- March 26 - 8:45am-11:30am - Lago Vista High School Career Day

HOT FOOD

COLD BEER

CAJUNFEST

JONESTOWN

10th Annual Jonestown Cajun Fest

Saturday, April 18 • 11:00 – 7:00pm

Jones Brothers Park, 10301 Lakeside Drive

On the North Shore of Lake Travis

Music | Crawfish | Live Alligator Shows | Vendors |Crawfish Eating Contest | Parade | Food Trucks

Newest Members

The North Shore is a welcoming and exciting combination of three communities; Lago Vista, Jonestown and Point Venture. An obvious symbol of our growth is the expansion of our Chamber of Commerce. Five new members joined and came to our February luncheon to receive their plaques and address the 100+ crowd. We also congratulated the recently elected Ambassador of the Year, Member of the Year and Business of the Year; all pictured here.



Left to right, Ambassadors Tex Tubbs, Kyle Higgins, Joyce Chong, New member Crystal Gill with J.B. Goodwin Realty, Ambassadors Jen Pizer and Mariah Lang.



Left to right, Ambassadors Tex Tubbs, Joyce Chong, Kyle Higgins, New Member Stacy Gibson from Roof Rescue, Ambassadors Jen Pizer and Mariah Lang.



Left to right, Ambassadors Tex Tubbs, Kyle Higgins, and Joyce Chong, New Member Stacy Coale with the Liberty Hill Independent newspaper, Ambassadors Jen Pizer and Mariah Lang.



Ambassador of the Year, Jen Pizer from N2 Publishing with Chamber of Commerce President, Stormy Johnson.



Chamber of Commerce President Stormy Johnson, left with Emily Dieckmann, recently elected Chamber Member of the Year.



President of the Chamber Stormy Johnson presents Alec Baker and John Baker with a plaque honoring Baker’s Brisket as Business of the Year.



Left to right, Ambassadors Tex Tubbs, Joyce Chong, Kyle Higgins, New Member Tami Lee from Daniel’s Plumbing & AC, Ambassadors Jen Pizer, and Mariah Lang.



Left to right, Ambassadors Tex Tubbs, Joyce Chong, Kyle Higgins, New Members Jay Reed and Ray Mondro from Starr Roofing and Gutters, Ambassadors Jen Pizer and Mariah Lang.

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(512) 259-8889 fax

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DEADLINES

Thursday Edition

Display Ads are due Friday by 5 p.m.
 Word Ads are due Monday by Noon

PAYMENT

Pre-payment required on all line ads.



PUBLIC NOTICES

PUBLIC NOTICE

Please take notice that the street address of the ESD #12's administrative office is:

Williamson County ESD #12
 2114 Downing Lane
 Leander, TX 78641

PUBLIC NOTICE

Allen Mauldin, M.D.,
 WellMed at Leander
 will be relocating effective
 March 9, 2020

For questions or copies
 of medical records call:

512-259-5111
 NEW LOCATION
 WellMed at Leander
 601 Crystal Falls Parkway,
 Suite 100
 Leander, Texas 78641
 512-259-5111

Application has been made
 with the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission for a Wine and Beer Retailer's Permit by Indigo Play – Austin, LLC dba Indigo Play, located at 13530 Research Blvd., Suite 102, Austin, TX 78750. Officers of the business are Tucker Patterson, owner, and Anna Ulbrich, owner.



LEGAL

**NEED TO
PLACE A LEGAL
NOTICE?**

Call the
HILL COUNTRY NEWS
512-259-4449

PUBLIC NOTICE

Leander Independent School District (LISD) is soliciting proposals for:

RFP # 20CRH0001
Classroom Instructional Materials

The solicitation may be obtained through LISD's online procurement system, Bonfire, at <https://leanderisd.bonfirehub.com/portal/>. Proposals are to be submitted electronically in Bonfire no later than 2:00 p.m. on June 30, 2021. 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 # 20CRH0002
Miscellaneous Contracted Services

The solicitation may be obtained through LISD's online procurement system, Bonfire, at <https://leanderisd.bonfirehub.com/portal/>. Proposals are to be submitted electronically in Bonfire no later than 2:00 p.m. on June 30, 2021. Visit www.leanderisd.org/purchasing for additional information on doing business with LISD.

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

Sealed responses addressed to the Purchasing Department, City of Leander, 105 N. Brushy Street, Texas 78641, for:

PROFESSIONAL AUDIT SERVICES

will be received prior to 3:00 P.M., March 26, 2020. The City of Leander seeks an agreement with a qualified public accounting firm whose principals are certified public accountants to audit its financial statements and comprehensive annual financial report (CAFR) for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2020, and for each of the two (2) subsequent fiscal years.

Audit is to be conducted in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and the standards acceptable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards*, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States.

Should the City require single audit services, the provisions of the federal Single Audit Act of 1984 (as amended in 1996) and U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-133, *Audits of States, Local Governments, and Non-Profit Organizations* shall be used. This service will be negotiated separate and apart if necessary.

Solicitation documents may be obtained from the Purchasing Department at the above address or downloaded from the City website at <http://www.leandertx.gov/rfps>.

NOTICE OF INTENTION TO ISSUE CITY OF CEDAR PARK, TEXAS COMBINATION TAX AND REVENUE CERTIFICATES OF OBLIGATION, SERIES 2020

NOTICE is hereby given that it is the intention of the City Council of the City of Cedar Park, Texas to issue Certificates of Obligation (the "Certificates") of the City in one or more series for the purpose of providing funds for paying contractual obligations incurred or to be incurred for: (i) constructing, improving, equipping, renovating and/or expanding City library facilities, including the acquisition of land, (ii) constructing, improving, equipping, renovating and/or expanding City parking facilities, including a new parking garage, (iii) drainage facility improvements and constructing new drainage facilities, and (iv) payment of professional services in connection therewith including legal, engineering, architectural and fiscal fees and the costs of issuing the Certificates. The City Council tentatively proposes to authorize the issuance of the Certificates at its regular meeting place in the City Hall, 450 Cypress Creek Road, Cedar Park, Texas to be commenced at 6:00 p.m., on the 23rd day of April, 2020. The City Council presently proposes to provide for the security and payment of the Certificates by a pledge of ad valorem taxes upon all taxable property within the City within the limits allowed by law and from a limited pledge of the City's surplus water and sewer system revenues not to exceed \$1,000. The following information is required pursuant to Texas Local Government Code, Section 271.049(b)(4) to be provided by the City (excludes \$35,875,000 in principal amount of outstanding debt obligations that the City has designated as self-supporting and which the City reasonably expects to pay from revenues sources other than ad valorem taxes; provided, however, that in the event that such self-supporting revenue sources are insufficient to pay debt service, the City is obligated to levy ad valorem taxes to pay such debt obligations): As of February 27, 2020 principal of all outstanding debt obligations of the City is \$146,195,000. As of February 27, 2020 combined principal and interest required to pay all outstanding debt obligations of the City on time and in full is \$194,792,034.66. The maximum principal amount of the Certificates to be authorized is \$19,155,000. The estimated combined principal and interest required to pay the Certificates to be authorized on time and in full is \$25,177,250. The estimated interest rate for the Certificates to be authorized is 3.00%. Such estimates take into account a number of factors, including the issuance schedule, maturity schedule and the expected ratings of the proposed Certificates. Such estimated maximum interest rates is provided as a matter of information, but is not a limitation on the interest rate at which the Certificates, or any series thereof, may be sold. The maximum maturity date of the Certificates to be authorized is February 15, 2045. More information on the specific debt obligations that the City has designated as self-supporting is available upon request to the City at the address noted above.

The City of Leander is now accepting applications for a FT Streets Maint I position in the Public Works dept. Salary range is \$15.00-\$17.50 hrly, plus benefits. Full details of job duties, min qualifications, knowledge, skills & abilities and the submission process are available on the web at <https://www.leander.tx.gov/jobs>. EOE

Employment Opportunity, Leander Police Department, Police Cadet. The starting pay is \$20.59/hour (\$42,827.20 annualized) plus benefits. Full details of general duties, minimum qualifications, selection process, application and personal history statement are available online through the city's governmentjobs.com employment page. Application deadline is May 01, 2020 at Noon. (<https://www.governmentjobs.com/careers/leandertx>).

Employment Opportunity, Leander Police Department, Police Officer I. The starting pay is \$27.45/hour (\$57,096.00 annualized) plus benefits. Full details of general duties, minimum qualifications, selection process, application and personal history statement are available on the web at www.leandertx.org/police or at the police department, 705 Leander Drive, Leander, TX 78641. Applications are only accepted online at <https://www.governmentjobs.com/careers/leandertx>. Application deadline is May 01, 2020 at Noon. EOE.

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PUBLIC NOTICES

City of Leander City Council Seeks Citizens to Serve on City Boards, Commissions and Committees

The Leander City Council is currently accepting applications from citizens interested in volunteering their service by filling vacancies of unexpired terms of various city boards and committees.

To be eligible to serve on boards and committees, one must be a Leander resident and a registered voter.

Anyone interested in serving is encouraged to forward a completed application along with a brief biography to Debora Penberg, Sr. Deputy City Secretary, 105 N Brushy Street, Leander, TX 78641. An application form can be downloaded from the City's website www.leandertx.gov or obtained by contacting Ms. Penberg at (512) 528-2940.

PUBLIC NOTICE REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

JOERIS GENERAL CONTRACTORS, LTD.,

Joeris General Contractors will be accepting competitive Proposals from Subcontractors and Suppliers for the: **Leander ISD – Steiner Elementary HVAC Update**, until **2:00pm, 03/12/2020**. Proposals will be received by fax or email at bidsAustin@joeris.com. Your proposal shall demonstrate the Offeror's ability to deliver the "best value" to the Owner.

The project will be located at 4001 N Quinlan Park Rd., Austin, TX. The project consists of demolition, site work, plumbing, HVAC, electrical and interior finishes. This project will be executed in multiple phases.

Plans may be reviewed at: Joeris Website - www.joeris.com or at Joeris General Contractors, 9211 Waterford Centre Blvd, Suite 150, Austin, TX 78758. O: (512) 920-0338; F: (512) 920-0339.

Participation by S/M/W/DBE, HUB and all other similar firms is encouraged. Joeris General Contractors is an equal opportunity (EEO) employer.

REQUEST FOR QUOTE

Sealed responses addressed to the Purchasing Department, City of Leander, 105 N. Brushy Street, Willis St. Leander, Texas 78641, for:

WATER METER RECYCLING

will be received prior to 3:00 P.M., March 19, 2020 then be publicly acknowledged.

The City of Leander, herein after "City", seeks to enter into an agreement with a qualified Individual, Firm or Corporation, (Respondent), to provide collection and recycling services for used brass water meters of varying sizes on as as-needed basis. City seeks respondent to purchase brass water meters from the City for a percentage of the YELLOW BRASS SOLIDS HOUSTON HIGH SIDE INDEX published by the American Metals Market (amm.com) on the month of collection.

Questions can be directed to the City of Leander Purchasing Department at kwenzel@leandertx.gov or 512-528-2792. Solicitation documents and complete specifications may be downloaded from the City website at <http://www.leandertx.gov/rfps>.

Notice of Public Hearings

Notice is hereby given that the City of Jonestown Board of Adjustments will be hearing variance requests at a meeting to be held on Monday, March 23, 2020, at 7:00 p.m. in the City Council Chamber, 18649 FM 1431, Suite 3A. The purpose of the meeting is to give all citizens the opportunity to speak and be heard regarding the variance requests below. Information concerning this matter is available for viewing at the Jonestown City Hall, Community Development Dept., 18649 FM 1431, Suite 1A, during the hours of 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. You may also contact the Community Development Services Department at 512-267-0359 or cjolly@jonestown.org.

A variance from the Jonestown Code of Ordinances, Chapter 14 Zoning Code, Section 14.02.061(h)(3) (C), is requested by Eric D. Bobbitt to allow construction of a second driveway for property located at 11000 Crestview Drive (Lot 136A, Jonestown Hills Unit 4), Jonestown, TX.

A variance from the Jonestown Code of Ordinances, Chapter 14 Zoning Code, Section 14.02.061(b)(1), is requested by Kermit Belzer to allow location of a structure in the building setback for property located at 18626 FM 1431 (Lot 50A, Jonestown Hills Unit 2 Replat of Lots 50 & 51 Blk B & Lot 52-A Replat Lot 52 & 53 Blk B Jonestown Hills Unit 2), Jonestown, TX.

CITY OF LEANDER REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

Sealed responses addressed to the Purchasing Department, City of Leander, 105 N. Brushy St. Leander, Texas 78641, for:

ARCHITECTURAL AND ENGINEERING SERVICES FOR FIRE STATION #2 EXPANSION AND REMODEL

will be received prior to 3:00 P.M., April 9th, 2020. City seeks Professional Architectural and Engineering Services for the design and construction administration of an expansion and remodel of Fire Station #2. Fire Station #2 located at 1950 Crystal Falls, Leander, TX 78641. Renovations shall provide space for two additional staff and an additional vehicle bay. Professional services for this project include but are not limited to:

- 1.1. Programming;
- 1.2. Schematic Design;
- 1.3. Design Development;
- 1.4. FF&E, IT and Security
- 1.5. Construction Documents;
- 1.6. Competitive Sealed Proposal Administration; and
- 1.7. Construction Administration Services.

The MANDATORY pre-solicitation meeting will be conducted on:

March 13, 2020 at 10:00 AM
City of Leander Fire Station #2
1950 Crystal Falls Parkway
Leander, TX 78641

Solicitation documents, complete specifications and budget may be downloaded from the City website at <http://www.leandertx.gov/rfps>.

Visit us at HillCountryNews.com

ONE WORLD THEATRE

Grab your ‘Raspberry Beret’; ‘Purple Rain’ is coming to town

By APRIL S. KELLEY
HCN Community Reporter

Marshall Charloff & the Purple Xperience, a high-energy, five-piece Prince tribute, will be coming to Austin’s One World Theatre on Saturday, March 14. The Purple Xperience is the only tribute band licensed by The Prince Estate.

“It’s truly a celebration of Prince,” Charloff said. “It’s his catalog, honoring my mentor and everybody’s musical hero.”

Charloff said attendees will witness iconic Prince costumes while listening to Prince’s songs and seeing world-class musicians.

Though Charloff’s favorite Prince song (at least right now) is the deep cut “The Ballad of Dorothy Parker,” he said he most enjoys playing the very, very famous “Purple Rain.”

“It’s an anthem,” he said. “The emotions in that song bring a sense of community to the show. People are dealing with their own stuff, mourning Prince and they’re celebrating. It’s almost religious for me when I play that song.”

The band of course plays all the hits Prince is known for, but Charloff said every show is unique as it’s never the same exact set list or experience.

“There’s a segment of the show where the band leaves and it’s just me and the piano,” he said. “That’s where I kind of feel out what to play.”

After nine years of touring and performing, Charloff said some audiences want those deep cut tracks while others want mainly the hits. He said he feeds off of the energy of the audience, and creates the set list around each individual crowd.

“When you can experience a shared, live experience, it’s only going to happen in a fleeting moment,” he said. “It’s never going to happen again. Whatever show performed in that room is only happening once with that group of people and with the energy they’re bringing.”

Charloff said paying tribute to Prince by performing his songs is important.

“I feel like there’s some purpose representing the greatest showman of all-time, the greatest musician of all-time, and to be in a room with that spirit - I feel it’s important,” he said. “Get off your cellphone at least for a couple of hours, get in a room, sing along, celebrate with me, just escape for a couple of hours with other people.”

Charloff said he first met Prince when he was 17 years old, outside of a warehouse in Minneapolis.

“Do you lie?” Prince asked Charloff.

“No, I try not to,” Charloff responded.

“That’s good. You should never lie,” Prince said.

Charloff said he then asked for his autograph, to which Prince responded, “No, I don’t give autographs,” quickly followed by “I’m just kidding. I’ll give you an autograph.” Charloff, however, did not have a pen, so he had to run and get one.

“He waited there outside this warehouse in Minneapolis,” Charloff said. “He waited for me to go get a pen - just stood there.”

Prince transcended, Charloff said.

“When you were in his presence, you knew you were in the



COURTESY PHOTO

Marshall Charloff & the Purple Xperience will play at 9 p.m. Saturday, March 14 at Austin’s One World Theatre, located at 7701 Bee Caves Rd., Austin.

presence of somebody just a little higher up than anybody else,” he said.

Charloff said he is still learning from Prince.

When he met him, Charloff said his whole world outlook changed.

“To walk away with that feeling of ‘Man, that dude is the alpha male of all alpha males and he’s tiny,’ that kind of changed my whole outlook on the world,” he said. “I didn’t feel like I was less than ever again because I was short.”

Prince’s music teaches Charloff to this day, especially his work ethic and musicianship. Like

Prince, Charloff learned to play every instrument at shows, as does the rest of the band.

“As a writer, a composer and a producer, he would write a song a day - produced, finished, in the vault, done,” he said. “Don’t look at the song like it’s your baby. You’re going to have a thousand babies if you channel that source Prince was on. Just get it out, birth it, get on to the next one.”

Prior to seeing Prince do it, Charloff said he did not know it was possible to play every instrument.

“I play every instrument because he played every instrument, and I realized it was possible,” he said.

Not only is Charloff the front-man for the Purple Xperience, but he has also worked with Prince, written for The Commodores, worked with Dr. Fink of The Revolution, played keys for the Atlanta Rhythm Section and has written, composed and produced solo music.

Charloff recently collaborated with Sharon Nelson, Prince’s sister, for a track titled “Colours.” He has also released the single “2 Chords,” also off of his second solo album. Charloff said his first album came out one month prior to Prince’s death in 2016, so it did not receive his attention nor time for promotion or tours. With his

new album, he also worked with legendary producer John Fields on a couple of tracks. Fields produces music for many high-profile artists including Andrew W. K., Pink, Miley Cyrus, the Jonas Brothers and Demi Lovato.

Charloff said his solo work stems from all of his major musical influences, stating that it is as if Prince, Sade and Steely Dan had a lovechild.

For more information on Marshall Charloff & The Purple Xperience and to buy tickets, visit purplexperience.com. For more on Charloff, visit marshallcharloff.com.

PUBLIC NOTICES

INVITATION FOR BID

Sealed responses addressed to the Purchasing Department, City of Leander, 105 N. Brushy Street, Willis St. Leander, Texas 78641, for:

CRYSTAL FALLS GOLF COURSE CHEMICALS

will be received prior to 3:00 P.M., March 19, 2020 then be publicly acknowledged.

The City of Leander, herein after “City”, seeks to establish a multiple year agreement with a qualified person, firm or corporation, herein “Respondent,” to provide all equipment, material and labor necessary to supply and deliver various herbicides, pesticides, and fungicides chemicals, herein “Chemicals” for treating the Crystal Falls Golf Course located at 3400 Crystal Falls Pkwy, Leander, Texas 78641.

Questions can be directed to the City of Leander Purchasing Department at kwenzel@leandertx.gov or 512-528-2792. Solicitation documents and complete specifications may be downloaded from the City website at <http://www.leandertx.gov/rfps>.

NOTICE PUBLIC HEARING

The Village of Volente Planning and Zoning Commission will hold a Public Hearing on Tuesday, March 24, 2020 at 5:30 PM at the Volente Fire Hall, 15406 FM 2769, Volente, Texas 78641 to consider the following:

Request by Rick Redmond and Jay Fox on behalf of Volente Visions LLC and Beaches LTD to re-zone 7.09 acres located in Lake Travis Subdivision Lot 78A, 53A, 51A (8014 Lime Creek Road) from a “SR” (Single – Family Residential) to “MFR” (Multi – Family Residential) in accordance with Ordinance No. 2016-O-173, Sec 9.02.049, Sec 30.116 (MFR – Multi Family Residential)

ALL INTERESTED PERSONS ARE INVITED TO ATTEND. For information email city.secretary@volentetexas.gov.

Notice of Public Hearing

The Lago Vista City Council will hold a Public Hearing on March 19, 2020 at 6:30 P.M. in the Council Chambers at City Hall, located at 5803 Thunderbird St., Lago Vista, Texas to receive citizen input and possibly act on the following item(s):

An Ordinance of the City Council of the City of Lago Vista, Texas amending Article 1.000 “General and Administrative fees,” Article 3.00 “Building related fees,” and Article 7.000 “Zoning and annexation fees” of Appendix A “Fee Schedule” of the Lago Vista Code of Ordinances; and providing for the following: effective date, repealer, severability, proper notice and open meetings clause.

All interested persons are invited to attend.

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March 1, 2020

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AUCTION

Special Replacement Spring Female Sale, Sat. Feb. 29, noon, Hallettsville Livestock Commission Co., Hallettsville, TX. Brangus, Braford, Crossbred, Brahman; Bred, Pairs, Open Heifers. 361-293-4949 or 361-293-8116.

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.

EVENTS

Ingleside Round-Up Days and Music Festival, March 20 & 21, N.O. Simmons Park, Ingleside, TX. Music, Food & Fun. Admission \$5. Presented by the Ingleside Chamber of Commerce, www.inglesidetxchamber.com.

LEGAL ASSISTANCE

Mesothelioma may occur 30 to 60 years after exposure to asbestos. Many workers were exposed from the 1940s through the 1970s. Industrial and construction workers, along with their families (second hand exposure) are among those at risk for mesothelioma, lung cancer or gastro cancer (throat, stomach, colon). Call 800-460-0606 for professional legal insight or visit www.AsbestosLaw.com.

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REAL ESTATE

For Sale by Owner – Ready to build plots in Runaway Bay, TX next to Golf Course, neighboring fast growing Denton county. Information: www.rockwall-group.com. Phone: 214-436-2153.

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HIGH SCHOOL BASKETBALL

Cedar Park loses in overtime in regional final

By ZACH SMITH
HCN Sports Editor

HOUSTON — In basketball, one minute can change the outcome of a game.

A few late turnovers by Cedar Park and some hot shooting from College Station signaled the end of the Timberwolves' historic season following a 58-54 overtime loss at the M.O. Campbell Center in Houston on Saturday afternoon.

"They're the best team that I've ever coached in my 21 years, and I'd go to work with them any day of the week," Cedar Park head coach Donny Ott said. "This loss doesn't define this team or take away what they've done the last three years to get to this point."

I'm so proud of them."

Cedar Park hit two free throws with less than a minute left in regulation, but College Station came right back down and nailed a 3-pointer to tie things and had a golden opportunity to win in regulation, but their wide-open layup clanked off the rim.

The Cougars continued their hot shooting in the extra period, hitting a triple on their first possession and starting overtime on a 5-0 run that was accentuated by a few costly turnovers by the Timberwolves.

"I'm proud of our kids, I thought they fought really hard," Ott said. "We got into a situation where I think our youth and nerves showed up a little bit today. We made some uncharacteristic turnovers."

The No. 2 Timberwolves downed Fort bend Hightower 56-40 in the regional semifinals on Friday night, while the No. 23 Cougars outlasted Shadow Creek 68-49.

"College Station did an unbelievable job prepping for this game," Ott said. "It was a war."

Freshman Gisella Maul finished with a team-high 13 points for Cedar Park. Seniors Hanna Wheeler and Takara Holst each scored 10 points while Nicole Leff had nine points and eight rebounds.

Sophomore Shelby Hayes finished with six points, 11 rebounds and three blocks. Alisa Knight had six points, nine rebounds and three steals.

See **CEDAR PARK** page A12



ZACH SMITH

Freshman Gisella Maul finished with a team-high 13 points, but Cedar Park lost to College Station 58-54 in overtime on Saturday afternoon.

HIGH SCHOOL BASKETBALL



PAUL KNIGHT

Zion Neat and Vista Ridge lost 60-46 to Plano Friday night at the Davis Field House in Dallas. It was the second straight trip to the regional tournament for the Rangers.

Vista Ridge falls in regional semifinals

By ZACH SMITH
HCN Sports Editor

DALLAS - Every time Vista Ridge tried something new, Plano had the answer.

The 19-ranked Rangers fell behind in the first quarter and could never recover, losing 60-46 to the No. 6 Wildcats Friday night in their second-straight trip to the regional semifinals at the Davis Field House in Dallas.

"(They were) being athletic, in your grill and physical. That's really it," Vista Ridge head coach Keith Allen said. "We had a hard time getting open because they were so physical. We tried doing some other things with ball screens here and there, but they cut right through our screens."

Victoria Baker finished with a team-high 16 points for Vista Ridge while A.J. Marotte posted a double-double with 15 points and 10 rebounds. Jazra Williams scored seven points, and Weade Adeleke added four points.

It will be an all-DFW area showdown in the regional final on Saturday after McKinney beat Hendrickson in the first game of the doubleheader.

"They made the plays when it counted," Vista Ridge head coach Keith Allen said. "They made some really tough plays. That's the difference in Metroplex basketball and Austin basketball right now. They find ways to finish those plays, and I think we're still a little lacking in that area."

Not to say the Rangers weren't battle-tested.

Of the six Vista Ridge losses before Friday, four were playing in the regional tournaments, one is a highly ranked team from Tennessee and one of them lost in the second round of the playoffs.

Vista Ridge downs Cypress Springs in the first round, Spring in the second round and District 13-6A rival Vandegrift in the Regional Quarterfinals to advance to the fourth round for the second straight year.



PAUL KNIGHT

Victoria Baker and Vista Ridge lost 60-46 to Plano Friday night at the Davis Field House in Dallas. It was the second straight trip to the regional tournament for the Rangers.

The Rangers jumped out to a four-point lead early on and didn't allow the Wildcats to score until midway through the first quarter.

But once Plano got rolling, the Wildcats were hard to stop. Plano scored 18 of the first 20 points in the second quarter. Vista Ridge finished with 11 turnovers in the first half and trailed by 16 at the break.

Vista Ridge kept the lead from ballooning too far with a run late in the third quarter,

and Baker scored nine points in the fourth quarter - and finished a perfect seven-for-seven from the free-throw line - to help the Rangers stay alive.

But the Wildcats continued to dominate on the glass while hitting most of their free throws down the stretch to seal the win.

The class of six seniors - Baker, Zion Neat, Angela Bauer, Chloe Chestier, Jordyn Lyons and Taegen Gunn - have seen the program improve dramatically over the last four years,

which include back-to-back trips to the regional tournament and four straight playoff appearances.

"It's more than just being great basketball players, those seniors are great kids," Allen said. "They're passionate about the game. You could practice six hours a day and they'd be all about it. It's a special thing when you have kids that enjoy practicing every day. That's what's special about this group."

AUSTIN BOLD

Bold FC gearing up for second season

By ZACH SMITH
HCN Sports Editor

Austin Bold FC had a successful season last year, advancing to the playoffs in the club's inaugural season.

Head coach Marcelo Serrano is setting his sights even higher this time around.

Austin kicks off the 2020 season against New Mexico united this Saturday at 7:30 p.m. at Bold Stadium at Circuit of the Americas.

"My bar is always high," Serrano said. "But I think it's too early to tell. We always train and play for the title. It's a process. First, seeing how the guys are on a human side, and then working the players as they grow in the side."

Austin continues the opening month of the season on the road against LA Galaxy II on March 13 and returns home to face Reno 1868 FC on March 21, its only other home game of the month.

After advancing to the fourth round of the U.S. Open Cup, Austin will once again participate in the national competition, facing either Atlantic City FC or Newtown Pride FC on April 8 with a time and location yet to be determined.

"For a diamond to be made, you've got to have pressure," Serrano said. "It's not easy, it's time demanding and it's complicated to form a diamond. That's what a soccer team is about. The league is very competitive."

Many of the key players from last season have returned for a second season with the club, including midfielders Sonny Guadarrama and Xavi Baez, forward André Lima, defenders Amobi Okugo and Jermaine Taylor and keeper Diego Restrepo.

Serrano said that familiarity accelerates the work in the preseason, and the team begins the year in a much more advanced state of preparedness.

Lima led the team with 14 goals in 35 games last season, defender Sean McFarlane had a team-best 12 assists in 33 appearances and Restrepo kept 10 clean sheets in 31 appearances in goal.

Forward Ema Twumasi returns to the Bold for the season on loan from FC Dallas, and 20-year-old central defender Brecc Evans is on loan from North Texas SC.

Former San Antonio FC striker Billy Forbes and Gambian defender Ismaila Jome, who scored four goals in 34 games with the Colorado Springs Switchbacks last season, joined the team on a permanent basis.

"It's been an adjustment — everybody's been telling me how hot it's gonna be," Jome said. "It's a good group of guys. I feel like I'm more settled now that I've been here for a few weeks."



SCOTT W. COLEMAN

Austin Bold FC coach Marcelo Serrano during a United Soccer League game between Austin Bold FC and El Paso Locomotive FC on April 21, 2019 at Bold Stadium in Austin, Texas.

TEXAS LONGHORNS

UT fighting for tournament bid

Longhorns back in the hunt entering final week

By ZACH SMITH
HCN Sports Editor

A four-game winning streak has put Texas back on the NCAA Tournament bubble, and two tricky games will go a long way to determining whether the Longhorns will be dancing or watching from home.

Texas closes out the regular season this week with a trip to Oklahoma on Tuesday before hosting Oklahoma State Saturday at 3 p.m.

“You want your guys playing with confidence at the end of the year,” head coach Shaka Smart said. “Our guys have done a good job with their preparation, and not making any excuses. They’ve done a good job losing themselves in the fight.”

Since a lopsided loss to Iowa State on Feb. 15, the Longhorns have rattled off four wins in a row, beating TCU and Kansas State on the road and returning home to down West Virginia last Monday.

They traveled to Lubbock and beat Texas Tech 68-58 on Saturday, led by Andrew Jones’ 22 points.

“You go three with that crowd and the dynamic in that building, their mindset is ‘We’re going to blow you guys out,’” Smart said. “If you go in there with anything other than confidence, it’s going to be a tough day.”

The redshirt sophomore picked up his first weekly conference honor after being named Big 12 Co-Player of the Week. He averaged 22 points, 3.5 rebounds in 39.1 minutes in the wins over the Mountaineers and Red Raiders.

Jones is second on the team in scoring this season, averaging 11.7 points per game. He’s third on the team with 1.9 assists per game and has 21 steals.



Texas Longhorns guard Andrew Jones (1) goes to the basket during an NCAA men's basketball game between Texas and Texas A&M at Dickie's Arena in Fort Worth, Texas, on Dec. 8, 2019. Texas won, 60-50.

“He has an energy to him that is allowing him to play,” Smart said. “He’s come a long way, and he’s put a lot of work into his body and does a good job taking care of himself. His spirit and confidence are at a very high level, and that’s what we want to continue.”

Donovan Williams injured his knee in the win over Texas Tech and is questionable for the games this week, adding another name to the growing injury list for the Longhorns, which already includes Jericho Sims,

Jase Febres and Gerald Liddell.

“Give the guys that are playing a ton of credit from the standpoint of playing confident, loose and aggressive basketball,” Smart said. “One advantage of a shorter rotation is that those guys know they can attack even if they make a mistake. We have to play with an aggressiveness.”

The Longhorns are firmly on the bubble for an NCAA Tournament bid, a notion that sounded preposterous a couple of weeks ago.

ESPN college basketball analyst Joe Lunardi has Texas in his ‘Next Four Out’ category, meaning the Longhorns need a couple more wins or some help to get off the NCAA Tournament bubble.

“Sometimes the best performances come when you’re on the brink,” Smart said. “This time of year, there are a lot of projections and predictions, and that just goes along with our game. I told them if they’re not making predictions about you, you’re probably having a bad year.”

CEDAR PARK

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The Timberwolves finished with 18 turnovers. “They shot the ball a little bit better than they’ve shown on film, and definitely better than they shot (on Friday),” Ott said. “It’s basketball, sometimes they fall and sometimes they don’t. We didn’t get all of our to fall today, and it’s just how it is.”

The first half went back-and-forth, with each College Station run being answered by the Timberwolves. The Cougars went on a 9-0 run late in the second quarter and took a two-point lead into the break.

Maul and Holst powered the Timberwolves in front in the third quarter, combining for 13 points, and helping to cut a double-digit lead to three points.

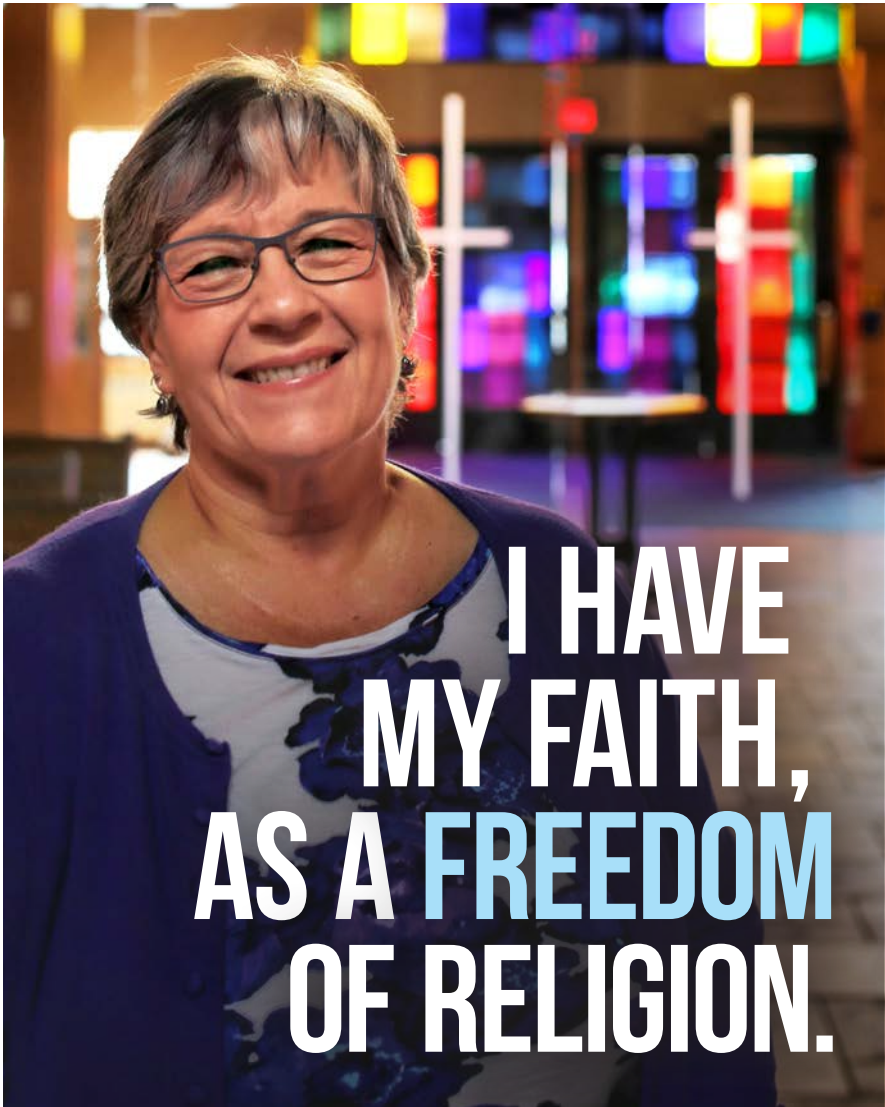
Cedar Park scored the first five points in the fourth quarter, and Knight came away with a crucial steal when under a minute to go.

It’s been quite a dynasty for Cedar Park over the last three years. In that span, the Timberwolves are 92-16 over, are a perfect 40-0 in district play with three straight district titles and have made it to the regional tournament two times.

“The seniors did a great job, and I’m proud of them,” Ott said. “They’ve left a legacy for our kids to follow, and I believe we’ll be back here in no time, we’ve just got to keep working.”



Nicole Leff had nine points and eight rebounds, but Cedar Park lost to College Station 58-54 in overtime on Saturday afternoon.



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