

LOCAL MUSICIAN TO PERFORM AT BAND AGAINST MS GALA PAGE 2



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BUCK'S BACKYARD HOSTS 2ND ANNUAL CRAWFEST PAGE 8



# Hays Free Press

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## THE WALL THAT HEALS

# Local Vietnam veterans invited to be honored



PHOTO BY BRITTANY ANDERSON

### Submissions due April 4

By Brittany Anderson  
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**KYLE** — They may not have died in service, but they deserve to be remembered. Vietnam veterans who died following their time in service will have the chance to be honored as part of the prestigious Wall That Heals display coming to Kyle.

From May 4 to 7 at Lake Kyle Park, the city will be hosting The Wall That Heals, a 375-foot replica of the

Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington D.C. created by the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund (VVMF). VVMF estimates that between 7,000 and 10,000 people will attend the display in Kyle.

As an added component, VVMF is adding an "In Memory" honor roll display to the exhibit. Family members and friends of Hays County Vietnam veterans

See **VETERANS**, Page 3

# Council searches for new attorney

By Brittany Kelley

**KYLE** — During its March 21 meeting, Kyle City Council voted 4-3 to direct staff to start the process of hiring a project-based attorney to assist with the new city manager contract.

Council member Yvonne Flores-Cale proposed the agenda item, saying she received negative feedback regarding the situation with the former city manager, Scott Sellers, who resigned amid allegations of sexual harassment. He was paid \$179,480.37 in severance, as well as up to 480 hours of accrued, unused sick and vacation leave due to his special separation benefit.

In July 2022, Sellers was on sabbatical when council voted to place him on paid administration leave while an investigation was being carried out regarding a sexual harassment claim from a city employee.

After both an internal and external investigation, the city found "no unlawful harassment or discrimination," however, on Sept. 6, Sellers resigned.

"So, to protect ourselves moving forward, we want to make sure that we have a solid agreement that is fair to both sides," said Flores-Cale.

The attorney would be project-based and only consult on the new contract that would be developed once a new city manager is hired. The city currently utilizes Knight Law Firm for candidate referrals and the creation of the city manager contracts, but it is the council's role to decide what terms are desired.

"I personally don't think that we get better services by hiring someone new than with the Knight Law Firm on this case," said Mayor Travis Mitchell. "I think the Knight Law Firm has a very long history of negotiating city manager contracts throughout multiple cities and

See **ATTORNEY**, Page 2

# KASZ honored at council



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The Kyle Area Senior Zone (KASZ) seniors who volunteer at the front desk at city hall were honored at the March 21 Kyle City Council meeting. Front row from left to right: Irene Martinez, Essie Merrill, Margie Alvarado, Rosa Loera, Virginia Bryan and Nelia Barrera. Second to back row from left to right: Bruce Gilson, Joe Calaruso, Fred White, Don Crowe, Gilbert Arizmendez, Howard Cowen, Chris Calkins, Nellie Astorga, Domingo Castilleja and council member Miguel Zuniga. From left, council members Bear Heiser and Yvonne Flores-Cale stand with Mayor Travis Mitchell and council members Ashlee Bradshaw, Daniela Parsley and Michael Tobias in the back row.

# Mental Health Court gains traction

By Brittany Anderson

**HAYS COUNTY** — Self-sufficiency, accountability, holistic wellness, empowerment and successful recovery — these are the goals of Hays County's new Mental Health Court (MHC) to address a growing need.

According to the Hays County-Vera Justice Institute Jail Dashboard, there were 595 inmates in the Hays County Jail as of March 21. Of those, 72.6% were pretrial detainees, or those awaiting trial, and are legally innocent. On average, these

inmates could sit in the jail for upwards of three months — even if some have mental health or substance use challenges.

After several years of work with county commissioners, filling positions and getting state approval, the MHC officially started in summer 2022 when court administrator Kaimi Mattila was hired. It's a 12-month, three-phased rehabilitative treatment and specialty court focused on serving individuals with mental health, substance use or intellectual disabilities who are facing pending

misdemeanor charges, and its gaining traction.

According to Mattila, the MHC currently has just under 10 participants (who are doing "fantastically well"), but is on track to have a caseload of 30-35 by the end of the year. The team consists of Mattila, caseworker Lisa Welch, Judge for County Court-at-Law 3 Elaine Brown and a small network of other locals including a chief misdemeanor prosecutor, community supervision officer, assistant district attorney and two members of Hill Country MHDD, a mental health service provider.

"Last fall was dedicated to creating a handbook and tools for the Mental Health Court and really creating a base of the program to grow it from the ground up," Mattila explained.

The MHC first receives a client referral from a family member, court official or attorney. The court will then go through the process of determining if the potential client is a good fit for the program and later, work as a team to begin screenings and develop a treatment plan.

The court's eligibility criteria for clients includes that they:

- Are a Hays County resident (out of county clients are on a case-by-case basis)
- Are 17 years or older
- Have been diagnosed with a mental health disorder such as schizophrenia, schizoaffective disorder, major depressive disorder, generalized anxiety disorder or post-traumatic stress disorder; substance use disorders and intellectual and developmental disabilities are also considered
- Have a misdemeanor offense(s); assaultive

See **COURT**, Page 7

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

**'ALL OF US KNOW SOMEONE WHO HAS MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES OR SUBSTANCE USE CHALLENGES ... [WHEN] YOU LOOK AT IT IN THAT SENSE, YOU'RE LOOKING AT IT WITH A LENS OF HUMANITY. AND THAT'S THE WAY IT SHOULD BE LOOKED AT.'**  
— KAIMI MATTILA

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**FIGHT AGAINST MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS**

# Local musician to perform with nationally acclaimed artists

*‘My heart and passion is to inspire others with music’*

**By Megan Navarro**  
megan@haysfreepress.com

**KYLE** — From singing hymns in church as a kid to wearing sparkles from her hat to cowboy boots for performances, well-rounded musician Janie Balderas continues to make her mark in the Texas music scene.

“I just started off in church doing the hymnals. I would see the choir, and it was really inspiring to see them in church so energetic. I loved it and music was so comforting to me even when I was a young girl,” the country singer/songwriter said.

The Austin native, who has called Kyle her home for at least 10 years now, has been nominated for the Josie Music Awards four times for accolades including Country Music Rising Star, Female Vocalist of the Year, Single of the Year and Songwriter Achievement. She has also performed the national anthem at Texas Rangers baseball games, NASCAR, PBR, Rodeo Austin and other concerts and events.

Balderas was invited to perform at the Band Against MS Gala alongside Clay Walker and Billy Dawson on April 27 in Houston. Walker was diagnosed with Relapsing Remitting MS in 1996 and established Band Against MS in 2003 because he wanted to help others living with the same disease.

“When I was asked back in January [to perform], it was one of those moments where you are just

like quiet and ‘I can’t believe this is happening,’” Balderas said. “I have that philanthropy part of me that I love to give back, especially in music. I was excited about it, but also honored at the same time [to do it] for a cause ... This is an awareness for a lot of people.”

Multiple Sclerosis (MS) is a disease that impacts the brain, spinal cord and optic nerves, which make up the central nervous system and controls everything, according to the Multiple Sclerosis Society. The exact cause of MS is unknown. The resulting damage to myelin, the protective layer insulating wire-like nerve fibers, disrupts signals to and from the brain. This interruption of communication signals causes unpredictable symptoms such as numbness, tingling, mood changes, memory problems, pain, fatigue, blindness and/or paralysis.

There is no cure for MS. However, there are treatments that can reduce the number and severity of relapses, according to the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke, as well as delay long-term disability progression.

While she does not know anybody personally who has MS, Balderas said her heart goes out to them.

“My mom did not have MS, she had pancreatic cancer and she passed away a couple of years ago. I just feel like people who are dealing with anything in life, my heart goes out because I see the

struggle and I see firsthand what they go through,” Balderas said. “I am very blessed and grateful to be a part of a cause like that. Who knows, down the line, I may meet someone with MS.”

There are millions of songs in the world to choose from when scrolling through a playlist. For Balderas, she goes back to her roots in the church when she needs an inspiring song. She loves “You Say” by Lauren Daigle.

“Every single lyric speaks to me in this song,” Balderas said. “This is my story in a nutshell. She is also one of my inspirations in the gospel industry [as] I was a former worship leader. My heart and passion is to inspire others with music.”

For young kids who want to pursue their dream, Balderas encourages them to go for it.

“Chase that dream. I know it’s going to be hard, there are going to be struggles [and] disappointments,” she said. “It’s not all roses, and I’ve learned that, but if someone has a dream and they have a passion for it, just pursue it. Light up that passion and do it ... There are going to be those moments where you are going to realize this is why I’m doing what I do.”

Balderas’ music can be found by searching Janie Balderas on Spotify.

More information about the Band Against MS and Clay Walker’s story can be found at [www.bandagainstm.com](http://www.bandagainstm.com).



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Local musician Janie Balderas was invited to perform at Clay Walker’s Band Against MS Gala on April 27 in Houston. From her hat to her cowboy boots, Janie Balderas is not afraid to show off her sparkly personality.

**COUNCIL ROUNDUP**

# Buda CC discusses local happenings

**By Brittany Anderson**

**BUDA** — From ongoing development negotiations to local events, Buda City Council discussed several items at the March 21 meeting.

**Persimmon term sheet negotiations to continue**

Following a several hours long executive session, the council directed staff to continue negotiations with MileStone Community Builders on the

proposed Persimmon development’s term sheet as part of its development agreement. Prior to recessing into executive session, two community members spoke during the public form in favor of the council approving the development, including Bob Parks, a Driftwood resident and chairman of the Hays County Republican Party.

“It’s not a matter of ‘if,’ it is now. The people are here and they keep coming more and more

every day,” Parks said. “I implore you to do your job. City councils need to look at this growth and think, ‘It is our job to work with quality developers to create a quality of life in a city that all this mass of population really wants to move into’ ... This developer that’s come to you with the Persimmon project is a quality developer. He’s bent over backwards to offer streets, recreation, fire station, schools, quality

of life, great homes. I can tell you, I’ve knocked thousands of doors in your community [and] I’ve talked to thousands of more people on the telephone. That’s what your citizens want. They want quality neighborhoods, quality community and they want leadership who does their job.”

**Charter Review Committee members finalized**  
In 2007, Buda residents

voted to become a Home Rule City, which means a city charter is adopted through a local election. The city appointed a Charter Review

Committee in 2011 and 2016 and elections were held in 2012 and 2017, respectively. A

See BUDA, Page 7

ATTORNEY From Page 1

is extremely well-versed on the various skills that a city manager [should hold] and maneuvers that a city manager may come to the city with.”

To hire a new attorney, the city is required to create a request for qualifications (RFQ) and allow law firms to apply to be considered. Flores-Cale made it clear that her intention was not to sever ties with Knight Law Firm, but only that the council should be given the opportunity to review other attorneys.

“I think, as a city, we’re growing to the extent where we need to expand ourselves and we need to be able to include a new set of eyes,” Flores-Cale said. “This is a big deal for us moving forward to get a city manager, so I want to make sure we feel confident ... We

are going to educate ourselves enough to know that we feel comfortable and that we have the best information going forward to know that this is the person we want to use to make the agreement.”

Council member Michael Tobias agreed with Flores-Cale’s sentiment, stating that he believes it would benefit the city to have a “modern and current contract” that would protect both the city and the new city manager while also allowing the council to write in yearly reviews in order to set goals with the new employee in the agreement.

City Attorney Paige Saenz provided her insight to the situation, citing that a viable option would be to create a subcommittee to

determine and agree on what terms are important for the council. She also mentioned that there are many options of contracts available and that the city should consider its experiences with prior contracts used in regard to the city manager.

“In my experience, the best outcome for the parties is when there is a subcommittee who’s tied into what terms are important to the city and there is real clear communication on what those terms should be and then that results in a good contract for everybody,” said Saenz. “Then, you have time to also engage staff because there are terms of the contract that require an understanding of what the benefits are and what would work with the current benefit structure

because staff will have questions about how you implement that.”

Ultimately, Flores-Cale motioned to direct staff to create a RFQ for an attorney to assist with the new city manager contract. The motion was seconded by Tobias and was approved 4-3, with Ashlee Bradshaw, Miguel Zuniga and Mitchell dissenting. The RFQ will be active for approximately 30 days.

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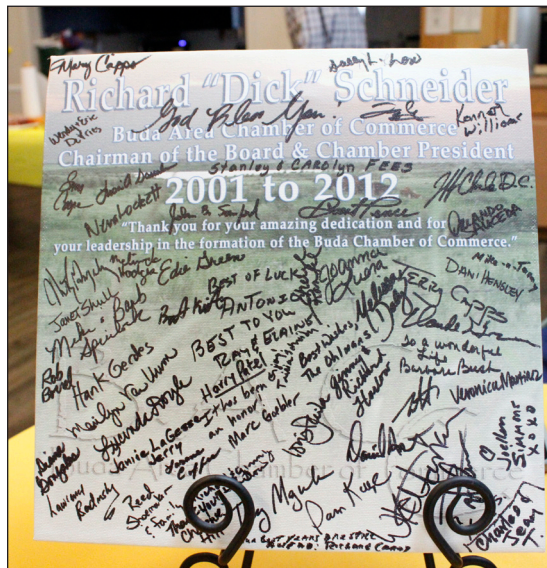
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# Celebration of life held for Buda Chamber founder



Dozens of family, friends, neighbors and former co-workers gathered to celebrate the life and legacy of Buda Chamber of Commerce founder Richard "Dick" Schneider on March 25 at the Onion Creek Senior Center, who passed away in September 2022. Pictured below, Schneider's wife, Barbara Atkinson, recalls many fond memories with her husband.



Pictured above, a toast to Dick Schneider: Schneider was a known wine lover, especially of Zinfandel. Longtime friend Chris Harkrider (center) brought a bottle to the celebration for family and friends to toast to. Throughout the celebration, Schneider's loved ones continued to share stories of road trips, Chamber events, "wine and stinky cheese" parties and more, remembering him as someone who never met a stranger, lived his life unapologetically and was optimistic, helpful and a good friend. "He touched many lives in and around this room and in and around this community. I feel like we're obliged to take what we learned from Dick and pay it forward wherever we go," Harkrider said.

PHOTOS BY BRITTANY ANDERSON

## VETERANS From Page 1

who died after returning home due to Agent Orange exposure, PTSD or other service-related illnesses are invited to honor them as part of the display. The In Memory program enables these veterans to be forever memorialized and will be part of The Wall That Heals' mobile education center.

"The impact of the Vietnam War stretches far beyond the 58,281 names on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial," said

Jim Knotts, president and CEO of VVMF. "More than three million Americans served in Vietnam and an untold number of those who served have suffered from service-connected illnesses. No one knew that when the war ended, Vietnam veterans and their families would still be feeling the effects of their service more than 50 years later. In Memory is our way to honor these Vietnam veterans for the sacrifices they made."

Central Texas AMVETS Post 115, located in Kyle, has been instrumental in getting The Wall That Heals to Kyle. Commander Kerman Hammond said the process began in September 2022. More than 100 requests are made to the VVMF each year and only 32 locations are chosen.

AMVETS' 73 members have just under 300 events planned so far for 2023 with The Wall that Heals being one of the biggest undertakings so far. Along with having to raise approximately \$22,000 to cover the cost, around 200 to 220 volunteers are needed for the 24-hour a day, four-day long display.

Post members involved with The Wall were also required to take a 7-week orientation to learn the different aspects of the program, such as what

they can and can't do and what is required of the display, before they could recruit volunteers or solicit for donations.

"It's [The Wall] something that allows us to bring the program here because there's a lot of our veterans that are older, especially Vietnam veterans like myself, and they've never been to Washington D.C. and they can't afford to go ... [So] you bring it to them," Hammond said.

However, the job wasn't AMVETS' alone. Along with getting to know other area VFWs better and collaborating with them — from San Marcos to Dripping Springs to South Austin — the journey has also been one that shows the power of the community.

The Post is close to hitting its target money goal thanks to the support of

local businesses and organizations, and is only about 40 volunteers short of what it needs.

"It's a challenge for a small Post like ours, but without the help of the city, we couldn't do it," Hammond said. "It's [Kyle] one of the best I've ever been involved in ... This city is a place that looks out in their own way, not only for the citizens, but the veterans. You don't find that often."

As part of the In Memory program, an online personal remembrance page will be created for each honoree with their photo and biographical information and family members can share the page and leave remembrances about their loved one. To see the honor roll, visit [www.vvmf.org/honor-roll](http://www.vvmf.org/honor-roll). Additionally,

families will receive an invitation to the In Memory weekend in Washington, D.C., which includes a ceremony at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial site.

To honor a veteran at no cost, visit [www.vvmf.org/InMemory](http://www.vvmf.org/InMemory) to complete a short application and submit the veteran's DD214 showing their proof of service in Vietnam, a copy of their death certificate and two photographs. Submissions are due by April 4 in order for them to be honored while The Wall That Heals is on display in Kyle.

If you are a local business or organization interested in donating or a community member interested in volunteering, visit [www.cityofkyle.com/TheWallThatHeals](http://www.cityofkyle.com/TheWallThatHeals) for more information.

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by Linda Thistle

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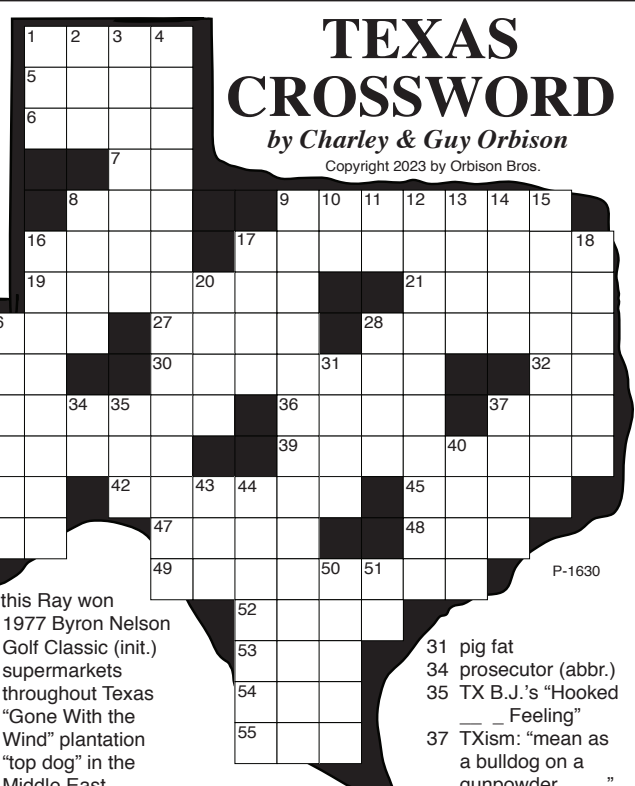
**ACROSS**

- Texas-based "The \_\_\_\_\_ Picture Show"
- \_\_\_\_\_ Park, TX
- a Mike McCarthy design: "game \_\_\_\_\_"
- Dallas County namesake (init.)
- TXism: "in a coon's \_\_\_\_\_" (long time)
- took illegal video recordings
- TXism: "up and \_\_\_\_\_ juice" (coffee)
- TX Mark Chesnut's "\_\_\_\_\_ Have New Names"
- device inside Texas Comanche Peak Nuclear Power Plant
- this Bill founded Texas-based "I Can't Believe It's Yogurt!"
- former Rio Grande river channels
- TXism: "neon light \_\_\_\_\_" (inspiration)
- creepy term of endearment
- "Border \_\_\_\_\_" along the Rio Grande
- Rockets first round pick in 1990, Alec
- degree available at a Texas univer.
- twisters in Texas
- Tyler is in \_\_\_\_\_ TX
- \_\_\_\_\_ Rio, TX
- Rangers won first AL \_\_\_\_\_ in 2010
- historic Austin hotel built in 1886
- TXism: "\_\_\_\_\_ a spell"
- Barbary sheep found in West Texas
- wallet stuffers
- TXism: "Texas \_\_\_\_\_" (oil)
- TXism: "he \_\_\_\_\_ barbed wire as dental floss" (tough)
- TXism: "I'm working without a safety \_\_\_\_\_"
- an answer to a test question
- TXism: "\_\_\_\_\_ 'nuff"
- TXism: "the tail \_\_\_\_\_" (last)
- one of TX Roy Orbison's labels: "\_\_\_\_\_ Victor"
- "Honor \_\_\_\_\_ Father and Mother"
- 11 this Ray won 1977 Byron Nelson Golf Classic (init.)
- supermarkets throughout Texas
- "Gone With the Wind" plantation
- "top dog" in the Middle East
- sound loudness measures
- Jay Gould's rail-road car on display in Jefferson, TX
- "threw everything they had \_\_\_\_\_"
- TXism for "satisfied" (3 wds.)
- DL or SSN

**DOWN**

- TXism: "he couldn't lick his upper \_\_\_\_\_" (weak)
- internet provider
- Carl Sandberg: "Texas is valor and \_\_\_\_\_"
- two can take a \_\_\_\_\_ in the TX wine country
- "threw everything they had \_\_\_\_\_"
- TXism for "satisfied" (3 wds.)
- DL or SSN
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- "threw everything they had \_\_\_\_\_"
- TXism for "satisfied" (3 wds.)
- DL or SSN
- 31 pig fat
- TX B.J.'s "Hooked \_\_\_\_\_ Feeling"
- TXism: "mean as a bulldog on a gunpowder \_\_\_\_\_"
- TXism: "\_\_\_\_\_ walking drunk"
- TXism: "\_\_\_\_\_ your head for something besides a hat rack"
- pecan pie, e.g.
- "night \_\_\_\_\_" (anytime)
- dir. from Mineola to Mount Pleasant

**TEXAS CROSSWORD**  
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**OBITUARIES**

**Benton Roberts Jr.**

Benton Alvin Roberts Jr, 63, of Kyle, Texas passed away on March 19, 2023 in his home. Benton was born in Austin, TX to Benton and Jimmie Roberts on January 7, 1960. Benton went to Lockhart High School and graduated in 1978. He went on to earn an Associates of Occupational Studies Degree in Electronics Technologies From Southwest School of Electronics, and many years later his HVAC Certification from Austin Community College. He worked as a Diesel Mechanic for Holt Caterpillar for many years, and later in life transitioned to the

HVAC industry with both Casa Mechanical and Christianson Air Conditioning and Plumbing. In his early years his biggest joy in the world was sitting in a tree stand hunting, and later in life he turned to hosting and singing karaoke.

Benton was predeceased by his son Justin Roberts & wife Jennifer, his granddaughter Lilly Roberts, and grandson Lucas Roberts of Buda and his horse Holly of Kyle, Texas. Family and friends will gather for



a viewing and visitation at 2:00 pm prior to a 3:00 pm Funeral Service at Harrell Funeral Home in Kyle on March 30, 2023 with Pastor Chad Long of Delhi Baptist church officiating. Donations can be made to, Delhi Baptist Church, and/or Delhi Community Cemetery. Delhi Baptist Church 6172 State Hwy 304 Rosanky, TX 78953 Delhi Cemetery Association 6150 State Hwy 304 Rosanky, TX 78953

**Herbert Eugene Brown**



Herbert Eugene Brown, 81, of Niederwald, Texas, passed away on Sunday morning, March 19, 2023 in Austin, Texas. He was born March 6, 1942, in Waco, Texas to the late Mildred (Harper) Brown and Kenneth Brown. Herb was a devoted father and husband who dedicated himself to a life of service to his family and his community. As a high school teacher and a school sports coach, Herb provided inspiration for thousands of students throughout his 30 year professional career. An honest and skilled craftsman, Herb was known for his expertise and talent as a builder and advisor for building and remodeling homes. Recognized for his generosity, cheerful spirit and selflessness, Herb supported charitable functions and projects in his various roles in the Buda Lions Club, the Niederwald Volunteer Fire Department, the Buda United Methodist Church, and numerous personal and professional associations. Herb is survived by his wife of 60 years, Darlene (Walters) Brown; his brother Jimmie E. Brown; his daughters Darla Brown and Audra (Brown) Godsil; grandchildren Galen, Tyler, Brenda, Gisela, Rene, Stephanie; great-grandchildren Efrain, Valery, Christopher, Mathias, Sofia, Leah, Ryder, Bastian; and friends and honorary family too numerous to list here. In addition to his parents, Herb is preceded in death by his great-grandchild Michael and his sister Pauline (Brown) Willingham.

# Transparency at Texas Capitol: A bipartisan effort

By Kelley Shannon



To witness bipartisanship at the Texas Capitol, look to the lawmakers who are working to improve open government laws.

Legislators from both political parties are igniting interest in transparency and creating the opportunity for all lawmakers to protect the people's right to know. They're carrying on our state's legacy of openness.

When the reform-minded 1973 Legislature enacted the Texas Public Information Act, known then as the Open Records Act, it established one of the nation's strongest transparency laws. This year marks its 50th anniversary. Court rulings and other actions have weakened the law, but as we celebrate open government during Sunshine Month throughout March let's rally around the bills Texas legislators have filed this session to fortify the landmark act:

Contracting transparency: Access to government contracts allows taxpayers to see how their

money is spent. A bipartisan proposal would enhance a law passed in 2019, ensuring the release of "super public" information, including the overall contract price and description of items and services. Senate Bill 680 by Sen. Nathan Johnson, D-Dallas, and

House Bill 2492 by Rep. Giovanni Capriglione, R-Southlake, are the bills addressing contracting transparency.

Public records business days: A definition of "business day" in the Public Information Act is needed to provide consistency for everyone seeking public records. Currently, governments declare on their own which days they are open or closed for handling TPIA requests. Sometimes they don't respond to requests. Proposals to correct this are contained in Senate Bill 618 by Johnson; House Bill 2135 by Rep. Terry Canales, D-Edinburg; and Senate Bills 43 and 44 by Sen. Judith Zaffirini, D-Laredo.

Dates of birth: Birthdates in criminal justice documents,

such as police reports and incarceration records, and in candidates' applications for public office allow the public to accurately identify a person. Correctly identifying someone charged with a crime protects the reputation of those who have the same name but aren't facing charges. A date of birth also helps with thorough vetting of political candidates. Senate Bill 46 by Zaffirini and House Bill 2309 by Rep. Todd Hunter, R-Corpus Christi, allow access to birthdates in these records.

Public records and attorneys' fees: If a records requestor runs into roadblocks and must sue to obtain public documents, the ability to recover legal fees levels the playing field between that individual and the government, especially if a government hands over records at the last minute after months of costly litigation. This legislation is House Bill 2874 by Rep. John Smith, R-Amarillo, and Senate Bill 2286 by Sen. Mayes Middleton, R-Galveston.

Searchable-sortable records: While some governments provide data in searchable-sortable spreadsheet form, often making

See TRANSPARENCY, Page 7



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312-1917

**Sudoku Solution**

Answer

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

Sudoku Puzzle, from page 3

**Texas Crossword Solution**

Last Puzzle Solution

Texas Crossword, from page 3

## Come worship with us

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First Baptist Church-Kyle  
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Hays Hills Baptist Church  
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Sledge Chapel Missionary Baptist Church  
709 Sewell, Kyle  
Southeast Baptist Church  
5020 Turnersville Rd., Creedmoor  
Manchaca Baptist Church  
Lowden Lane & FM 1626  
Immanuel Baptist Church  
4000 E. FM 150, 4 miles east of Kyle  
Center Union Baptist Church  
Goforth Rd., Buda  
Primera Mision Bautista Mexicana  
Kyle  
Baptist Church of Driftwood  
13540 FM 150 W.  
**CATHOLIC**  
Santa Cruz Catholic Church  
1100 Main Street, Buda  
St. Anthony Marie Claret Church  
801 N. Burseson, Kyle  
St. Michael's Catholic Church  
S. Old Spanish Trail, Umland  
**CHRISTIAN**  
New Life Christian Church  
2315 FM 967, Buda  
Iglesia Israelita Casa de Dios  
816 Green Pastures Dr., Kyle

**CHURCH OF CHRIST**  
Buda-Kyle Church of Christ  
3.5 miles south of Buda on FM 2770  
Southern Hills Church of Christ  
3740 FM 967, Buda  
**EPISCOPAL**  
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725 RR 967, Buda  
St. Stephen's Episcopal Church  
RR 3237 (Wimberley Rd.), Kyle  
St. Alban's Episcopal Church  
11819 IH-35 South  
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Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses  
FM 2770, Kyle  
Jehovah's Witnesses South  
10802 Manchaca Rd., Manchaca  
**LUTHERAN**  
Living Word Lutheran ELCA  
2315 FM 967, Buda  
Redeeming Grace Lutheran LCMS  
FM 1626 & Manchaca Rd., Manchaca  
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9865 Camino Real, Umland  
The Well  
Buda  
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Kyle United Methodist Church  
Sledge & Lockhart St., Kyle  
Journey United Methodist  
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St. Paul's United Methodist Church  
7206 Creedmoor Rd., Creedmoor  
Manchaca United Methodist Church  
FM 1626 & Manchaca Rd., Manchaca  
Driftwood United Methodist Church  
RR 150 at County Road 170

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The Connection Church  
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Antioch Community Church  
Old Black Colony Rd., Buda  
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Tobias Elementary Cafeteria, FM 150, Kyle  
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New Covenant Community Church  
1019 Main Street, Buda (in Dance Unlimited)  
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400 Old Post Road, Kyle  
A Fountain of Life Church  
302 Millenium Dr. Kyle  
Fellowship Church at Plum Creek  
160 Grace Street at 2770, Kyle  
Word of Life Christian Faith Center  
118 Trademark Drive, Buda  
Por Tu Gracia Fellowship  
701 Roland Lane, Kyle  
Trinity United Church of Niederwald  
13700 Camino Real, Hwy. 21, Niederwald  
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# Classifieds

## PUBLIC NOTICES

### NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Notice is hereby given that original Letters Testamentary for the Estate of Jackie Faye Joslin, Deceased, were issued on September 21, 2022, in Cause No. 22-0358-P, pending in the County Court of Hays County, Texas, to Kimberly Ann Stoddard.

Claims may be presented in care of the attorney for the estate, addressed as follows:

Representative,  
Estate of Jackie Faye Joslin, Deceased  
c/o Max Soeldner  
151 E. Mercer Street,  
Suite E  
Dripping Springs, TX 78620

All persons having claims against this Estate which is currently being administered are required to present them to the undersigned within the time and in the manner prescribed by law.

DATED the 29th day of March, 2023.

Dorothy Butler Law Firm

By: /s/ Max Soeldner  
Max Soeldner  
Attorney for Jackie Faye Joslin

### CITY OF KYLE CITY COUNCIL NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING ON REINVESTMENT ZONE TWO, CITY OF KYLE

THE KYLE CITY COUNCIL WILL HOLD A PUBLIC HEARING ON TUESDAY, APRIL 18, 2023 AT 7:00 P.M. IN THE KYLE CITY HALL, LOCATED AT 100 W. CENTER STREET, KYLE, TEXAS 78640, ON EXTENDING THE TERM OF AND APPROVING AN AMENDED PROJECT AND FINANCE PLAN FOR TAX INCREMENT REINVESTMENT ZONE NUMBER TWO, CITY OF KYLE AND ITS BENEFITS TO THE CITY OF KYLE AND TO PROVIDE A REASONABLE OPPORTUNITY FOR ANY INTERESTED PERSON TO SPEAK FOR OR AGAINST THE EXTENSION OF THE TERM OF THE ZONE AND/OR THE AMENDED PROJECT AND FINANCE PLAN, WHICH ZONE CONSISTS OF APPROXIMATELY 179.3 ACRES GENERALLY LOCATED EAST OF POST ROAD AND SOUTH OF COUNTY ROAD 158 AND AS MORE PARTICULARLY DESCRIBED BY A METES AND BOUNDS DESCRIPTION AVAILABLE

AT KYLE CITY HALL AND AVAILABLE FOR PUBLIC INSPECTION. AT THE PUBLIC HEARING, ANY INTERESTED PERSON TO SPEAK FOR OR AGAINST THE EXTENSION OF THE TERM OF THE ZONE AND/OR THE AMENDED PROJECT AND FINANCE PLAN. FOLLOWING THE PUBLIC HEARING, THE KYLE CITY COUNCIL WILL CONSIDER ADOPTING AN ORDINANCE EXTENDING THE TERM OF THE TAX INCREMENT REINVESTMENT ZONE NUMBER TWO, CITY OF KYLE AND APPROVING THE AMENDED PROJECT AND FINANCE PLAN.

### NOTICE OF APPLICATION TO SUBDIVIDE

An application has been filed with Hays County Development Services to subdivide an existing 4.99-acre lot that is located 447 E. Summit Dr in Wimberley, Texas 78676. For additional information regarding the application can be obtained from Hays County Development Services, 512-393-2150. Tracking number PLN-2160-PC

### NOTICE TO ALL PERSONS HAVING CLAIMS AGAINST THE ESTATE OF RICHARD WILLIAM SCHNEIDER, DECEASED

Notice is hereby given that in Cause No. 22-0513-P, styled Estate of Richard William Schneider, Deceased, pending in the County Court at Law of Hays County, Texas, original Letters Testamentary were issued on March 1, 2023, to Barbara Ann Atkinson.

Claims may be presented and addressed to the personal representative of the estate in care of her attorney at the following address:

Key Law Office PC  
Attn: Alicia Key  
1760 FM 967, Suite A  
Buda, Texas 78610

All persons having claims against this estate are required to present them within the time and in the manner prescribed by law.

DATED this the 23rd day of March 2023.

Key Law Office PC  
1760 FM 967, Suite A  
Buda, Texas 78610

/s/ Alicia Key  
Alicia Key  
Attorney for Joy Leal  
State Bar No. 08314300  
Phone: (512) 400-2350  
Fax: (512) 236-5148  
Email: service@keylawoffice.com

### PUBLIC NOTICE CITY OF NIEDERWALD

On May 1st, 2023, at 7:15 p.m. in the City Council Chambers of the City of Niederwald, Texas, located at 8807 Niederwald Strasse Road, Niederwald, Texas, the City Council will hold a public hearing giving all interested persons the right to appear and be heard on a zoning variance, as petitioned by the property owner, said property being located at 1860 Mathias Lane and 2130 Mathias Lane. The property owner is requesting variance from requirements for lot width, flag lots, and shared driveway access.

If you have any questions regarding this annexation, contact Niederwald City Hall at 512-398-6338.

### PUBLIC NOTICE

Carpenter Road Ranch LLC, (584 McKinnon Loop, Hays, TX 78610) filed two well drilling applications on October 10, 2022 with the Barton Springs/Edwards Aquifer Conservation District (District) for two new nonexempt wells. One well is proposed to be discreetly completed in the Lower Trinity aquifer and the second in the Middle Trinity aquifer. They are planned to be used as a public water supply well to support the RV park development staff and visitors. Both wells will also be used for landscape irrigation throughout the park and to supply water to both a recreational lake and swimming pool. Two separate Production Permit Applications will be required in order to operate and produce from these wells in the future. The proposed wells are located in Hays County at 584 McKinnon Loop (30.1256190, -97.8831640 and 30.1255680, -97.8826050 respectively.)

Publication of this notice begins a 20-day public response period for which comments, written formal protests and requests for a public hearing will be accepted by the District. Parties interested in formally participating in a hearing on a contested application should refer to District Rule 4-9.13. For further information, please contact the District, 1124 Regal Row, Austin, Texas 78748, (512) 282-8441, bseacd@bseacd.org. You may also contact the applicant's representative, AustinNNN at (512) 801-2547.

### NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Notice is hereby given that original Letters Testamentary for the Estate of Robert Newton Warren,

Deceased, were issued on March 20, 2023, in Cause No. 23-0049-P, pending in the County Court-At-Law, Hays County, Texas, to: Mary Susan Warren.

All persons having claims against this Estate which is currently being administered are required to present them to the undersigned within the time and in the manner prescribed by law.

c/o: M. Elizabeth Raxter  
Attorney at Law  
705 State Park Rd.  
Lockhart, Texas 78644

DATED the 21st day of March, 2023.

/s/ M. Elizabeth Raxter  
M. Elizabeth Raxter  
Attorney for Mary Susan Warren  
State Bar No.: 24050084  
705 State Park Rd.  
Lockhart, Texas 78644  
Telephone: (512) 398-6996  
Facsimile: (512) 668-4501  
E-mail: eraxter@tx-elder-law.com

### NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Notice is hereby given that original Letters Testamentary for the Estate of Ruth Trinidad Ferrer, Deceased, were issued on January 28, 2023, in Cause No. 23-0025-Pending in the County Court-At-Law, Hays County, Texas, to: Maria Cynthia Dean.

All persons having claims against this Estate which is currently being administered are required to present them to the undersigned within the time and in the manner prescribed by law.

c/o: Maria Cynthia Dean  
1011 Conway Drive  
San Marcos, Texas 78666

DATED the 22nd day of March, 2023.

/s/ Fay Cliett Gillham  
Fay Cliett Gillham, State Bar No. 04382170  
325 East Hopkins  
San Marcos, Texas 78666

Telephone: (512) 392-3300

Fax: (512) 392-3334  
E-mail: faycliett@gillhamlaw.com

Attorney for Richard Lawrence McGuinness

### NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Notice is given that the Barton Springs/Edwards Aquifer Conservation District Board of Directors will hold a Public Hearing at its regularly scheduled meeting on Thursday, April 13, 2023, at 5:00 p.m. at the District office located at 1124 Regal Row, Austin, Texas.

DC South Fork, LLC (3939 Bee Caves Road, Suite C-100) and Creedmoor-Maha Water Supply Corporation (13709 Schriber Road) filed a well drilling application on July 5, 2022, with the Barton Springs/Edwards Aquifer Conservation District (District) for one new nonexempt well. The well is proposed to be discreetly completed in the Middle Trinity aquifer and is planned to be used as a public water supply well to support residents connected to the Creedmoor Maha WSC. A separate Production Permit Application will be required in order to operate and produce from this well in the future. The proposed well is located in Travis County on a 2-acre tract located at Twin Creek Park Dr (30°7'49.702" 97°49'18.017").

For further information, please contact the District, 1124 Regal Row, Austin, Texas 78748, (512) 282-8441, bseacd@bseacd.org. You may also contact the applicants, DC South Fork, LLC at (512) 368-4000 and Creedmoor-Maha Water Supply Corporation (512) 642-5622.

### NOTICE TO CREDITORS

NOTICE is hereby given that original Letters Testamentary for the Estate of Rita De Winne, a/k/a Rita Ann De Winne, a/k/a Rita Anne De Winne, Deceased, were issued on March 21, 2023, in Cause No. 23-0079-P, pending in the County Court at Law of Hays County, Texas, to: Charles De Winne a/k/a Charles William De Winne.

The notice to the Independent Executor may be delivered at the following address:

c/o Barnes Lipscomb & Stewart PLLC  
Attorneys at Law  
Rollingwood Center  
2500 Bee Cave Road  
Building II, Suite 150  
Austin, Texas 78746

All persons having claims against this Estate which is currently being administered are required to present them within the time and in the manner prescribed by law.

Dated the 21st day of March, 2023.

/s/ Clint Alexander

Clint Alexander  
Attorney for Independent Executor

### NOTICE OF APPLICATION TO SUBDIVIDE

An application has been submitted with HAYS COUNTY and the CITY OF WIMBERLEY to subdivide 6.506 acres of property located along FM 2325, Wimberley, TX 78676. Information regarding the application may be obtained from Hays County Development Services (512)393-2150. Hays County tracking number: PLN-2171-NP

### NOTICE OF PUBLIC SALE/AUCTION

Notice of Public Sale/Auction of property to satisfy a landlord's lien. Sale is April, 10 2023 at 9:00 am at Park Place Storage located at 2101 Bebee Rd. Kyle, TX 78640. Clean-up deposit is required. Seller reserves the right to withdraw the property at any time before sale. Unit items sold to the highest bidder with no title. Property includes contents of spaces of following tenants Lauren Nichols. Items to be sold include: 1999 aluminum Skeeter boat with trailer with an outboard 1999 Yamaha 50hp motor.

### PUBLIC NOTICE

By order of the Hays County Commissioners Court, notice is hereby given that on April 11th, 2023 at 9 a.m. in the Hays County Courthouse, 111 E. San Antonio Street, the Hays County Commissioners Court will hold a public hearing to consider: Hays City Holdings, Lot 9, Replat

### PUBLIC NOTICE

By order of the Hays County Commissioners Court, notice is hereby given that on April 11th, 2023 at 9 a.m. in the Hays County Courthouse, 111 E. San Antonio Street, the Hays County Commissioners Court will hold a public hearing to consider: Hurlbut Ranch West, PT of Tract 20, Replat

### NOTICE TO BIDDERS

Sealed proposals addressed to Landsea Homes ("OWNER"), on behalf of Anthem Municipal Utility District ("DISTRICT"), for furnishing all labor, materials, equipment, and performing all work required for the site and utility construction of the following project: FREEDOM SUBDIVISION PHASE 1-A AND PHASE 2 IMPROVEMENTS, will be received at the office of Atwell, LLC ("ENGINEER") at 805 Las Cimas Parkway, Building 3, Suite 310, Austin, TX 78746 until **Friday, April 14th, 2023 at 2:00 pm**. Bids will be opened and read aloud. Any proposal received after the closing time will be returned unopened. Proposals shall be plainly marked with name and address of the BIDDER and the following, bolded, words:

#### FREEDOM SUBDIVISION PHASE 1-A & PHASE 2 IMPROVEMENTS

The FREEDOM SUBDIVISION PHASE 1-A AND PHASE 2 IMPROVEMENTS proposal includes: right of way preparation, roadway construction, storm sewer with inlets, manholes and all associated appurtenances; a stormwater water quality pond and all associated appurtenances; PVC water line with fire hydrants, valves and all associated appurtenances; PVC wastewater line with manholes; associated erosion controls; dry utility improvements; and a lift station with all other necessary appurtenances and improvements. All work must conform to State of Texas, County of Hays, City of Kyle, TxDOT, TCEQ, and Anthem MUD applicable rules and criteria.

Copies of the Plans, Specifications, Bidding Documents, Geotech, and Qualification Requirements will be on file at the office of Atwell, LLC at 805 Las Cimas Parkway, Building 3, Suite 310, Austin, TX 78746, where they may be examined without charge. Copies may be examined or obtained from the ENGINEER on or after **Wednesday, March 29th, 2023** for a non-refundable fee of \$100.00 per set, or you can request an electronic version by emailing [cschedler@atwell-group.com](mailto:cschedler@atwell-group.com). Checks for Plans and Specifications, and Bidding Documents shall be made payable to Atwell, LLC.

A Cashier's Check, Certified Check or acceptable Bidder's Bond, payable to Landsea Homes in an amount not less than five percent (5%) of the Bid must accompany each bid as a guarantee that, if awarded the Contract, The BIDDER will enter into a contract and execute bonds within ten (10) days of award of the Contract. Performance and Payment Bonds shall also be executed on the forms furnished by the DISTRICT and shall specifically provide for "Performance" and for "Labor and Materials Payment". Each bond shall be issued in an amount of one hundred percent (100%) of contract price by a solvent Surety company, authorized to do business in the State of Texas and acceptable to the DISTRICT.

The DISTRICT reserves the right to reject any and all bids to waive any and all technicalities and formalities in bidding. The DISTRICT reserves the right to determine which bids are most advantageous to the OWNER and the DISTRICT, and to award the Contract on this basis. No bid may be withdrawn for a period of sixty (60) days after opening of the bids. If a submitted bid is withdrawn within said period, bid guaranty shall become the property of the OWNER, not as penalty, but as liquidated damages, or DISTRICT may pursue any other action allowed by law. Prospective bidders are encouraged to visit the site before bidding

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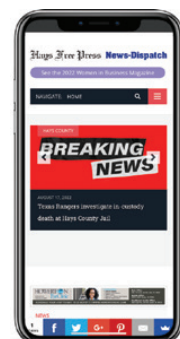
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# What's happening this week in Texas

## Senate passes tax cut package

The Texas Senate last week unanimously approved a \$16.5 billion package to lower property taxes and inject billions of dollars into public schools.

As reported by the Texas Tribune, the three separate bills require the state to send at least \$5.38 billion to public schools while at the same time raising the state's homestead exemption from \$40,000 to \$70,000, with an additional \$20,000 exemption for homeowners 65 and older. According to the Tribune, the proposal would save an average homeowner \$341 on their annual tax bill. Seniors would save an additional \$227 annually.

In exchange for the increased state funding, local school property tax rates would be cut by 7 cents for every \$100 in appraised value. An owner of a \$300,000 home paying the state's average school tax rate would save \$210 annually in property taxes.

"This is off-the-charts, incredible property tax relief for millions of Texas homeowners," said state Sen. Paul Bettencourt, R-Houston.

### Deadline to register for May 6 election nears

The deadline for eligible Texas voters to register in order to vote in the May 6 local elections is just around the corner, Secretary of State Jane

## Capital Highlights

by Gary Borders



Nelson announced. "If you are not already registered to vote in the upcoming local elections - there is still time! Make sure to submit your voter registration application to your county voter registrar by Thursday, April 6 so that you can have an opportunity to make your voice heard in

your local community," Nelson said.

Check with the local elections office to learn which municipalities, school districts and other entities are holding elections. Early voting begins on April 24 and ends on May 2, with Election Day on May 6.

### Paid parental leave for state workers?

For the first time, state employees could get 30 days of paid leave for childbirth or adoption. A bipartisan bill passed the Texas Senate last week with unanimous support.

The Austin American-Statesman reported that Senate Bill 222, besides allowing the 30 days of paid leave, would apply to anyone paying into the Employee Retirement System of Texas; to employees working within the executive branch of state government; and give 10 days of paid leave to employees whose spouse gave birth.

"Paid parental leave will help the state attract and retain talent while combating the workforce shortage," the bill's main

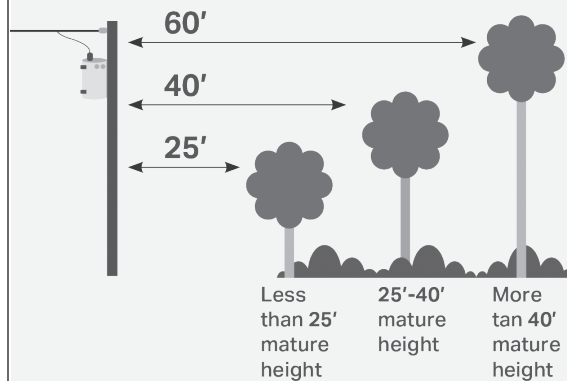
sponsor, state Sen. Robert Nichols, R-Jacksonville, said. A similar bill in the House would grant 60

days of paid leave under the same circumstances

See HIGHLIGHTS, Page 8

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Juno, 3-year-old, Domestic Shorthair/Mix, Female

Juno is just the sweetest little cat that you ever did see. She loves resting on our cat patio area and playing with her roommate Cottonwood. If you are looking for a lap friend, Juno's your girl. Don't be shy, stop by and meet Juno today at our Dripping Springs location!

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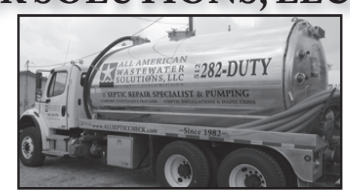
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# League of Women Voters to host candidate forums

## Staff Report

**HAYS COUNTY** — The League of Women Voters of Hays County will hold three live candidate forums in April ahead of the Hays CISD, San Marcos CISD and Dripping Springs ISD boards of trustees elections in May.

As part of the LWV's mission to empower voters, the candidate forums are a valuable resource for voters to fully inform themselves before heading to the vote center. The U.S. Census reports that Hays County experienced the fastest rate of growth, adding more than

83,000 new residents, many of which are eligible voters. The LWV encourages new Hays County voters to attend these local forums to learn of and experience the candidates vying for their votes; however, as always, all voters are urged to attend.

Forum questions for the candidates have been prepared by the LWV with input from the community. Forums will begin at 7 p.m. on the following dates:

- Hays CISD: April 6 at Kyle City Council Chambers
- San Marcos CISD: April 11 at San Marcos Public Library

• Dripping Springs ISD: April 13 at Sentenia Vera Cultural Hub

The forums will also be recorded and listed on the LWV of Hays County website at [www.lwvhaysco.com](http://www.lwvhaysco.com) on the Candidate Forums page. After the completed events, you will be able to view a recording of each forum within 48 hours. The event schedule will also be accessible on the website event calendar and LWV Hays County Facebook page.

Candidate information will be available on [VOTE411.org](http://VOTE411.org) in early April and updated as it becomes available.

## TRANSPARENCY From Page 4

it easier to analyze, others do not. Senate Bill 965 by Johnson, Senate Bill 45 by Zaffirini and House Bill 2493 by Capriglione would codify the ability to obtain searchable-sortable records if such a format is available.

These measures are supported by the Texas Sunshine Coalition, made up of more than 15 diverse organizations united around the principle that access to information is essential in advocating for public policy and participating in our democracy.

Additional proposed transparency measures deal with public meetings, police accountability and other timely

subjects.

For example, when someone dies in police custody, the public needs to know what happened. Some law enforcement agencies use a loophole in the Public Information Act to withhold records. Rep. Joe Moody, D-El Paso, filed House Bill 30 to remedy the problem.

Addressing public notices, Senate Bill 943 by Sen. Lois Kolkhorst, R-Brenham, and House Bill 2178 by Hunter would require government notices that by law must be published in a newspaper to also be posted at no extra cost on the newspaper's website and on a Texas Press Association

statewide public notice website. This posting through a neutral third party provides an easy, reliable source for viewing public notices.

Transparency advocates will be speaking out until the legislative session ends May 29 to urge passage of these proposals that shine light on government, enabling us to hold it accountable. Simply put, open government is good government.

*Kelley Shannon is executive director of the nonprofit Freedom of Information Foundation of Texas, based in Austin. For more information go to [www.foift.org](http://www.foift.org).*

## BUDA From Page 2

committee is appointed every six years and consists of seven citizens who review and make recommendations on various proposed amendments within the charter.

Following a vote in February to allow each council member to nominate two individuals — one as a member of the committee and a second as an alternate — the following people were officially nominated on March 21:

• Mayor Lee Urbanovsky; Colin Strother; alternate Shane Phillips

• Council member Evan Ture; Ricardo Garay

• Council member Matt Smith; Wendy Scott; alternate Jana Dobson

• Council member Monica Davidson; Colin Strother; alternate LaVonia Horne-Williams

• Council member LaVonia Horne-Williams; Sandra Tenorio; alternate David Tarver

• Council member Paul Daugereau; David Nuckels

• Council member Terry Cummings; Grant Henry; alternate Ray Bryant

From now through June, the committee will propose recommendations to the charter. A report will be submitted to the council to review in July before ordering an election the following month ahead of the November election.

## Buda turns 142

Buda is gearing up to celebrate its 142nd birthday in a big way. The city is adding a new component to this year's celebration with a Friday night kick-off on March 31 with live music at 8 p.m. at Meridian and 9 p.m. at Willie's Joint; the Greyhounds and Wyatt Weaver Band will be performing, respectively, and the shows are free.

Beginning at 3 p.m. on Saturday, April 1 at the Buda Amphitheater and City Park, the celebration will continue with a carnival and craft/food market, live birthday card art by Jaz Davis and other art activities with Inspired Minds Art Center, story times by Buda Public Library, free cake from Friends of the Buda Library and the Old Settlers' Youth Talent Show.

The live music lineup for the event includes opener Kathryn Legendre, W.C. Clark and headliner Uncle Lucius. Clark will also be awarded the Local Legend Award during his performance slot; following his induction into the Texas Heritage Songwriters' Hall of Fame, the Buda council voted for him to be honored with this community award.

More information, including a schedule of events and parking map, can be found at [www.budaamphitheater.com/budasbdy](http://www.budaamphitheater.com/budasbdy).

## COURT From Page 1

offenses will be considered on a case-by-case basis and cannot have a past or current charge of a sex offense or substantial history of violent offenses

• Have a link between the mental health/substance use/IDD

disorder and their current offense

• Are determined to be legally competent

• Are pre- or post-adjudicated

The program's three stages include clinical stabilization, pro-social habilitation

and rehabilitation and adaptive habilitation and continuum of care. In the first stage, clients begin taking the proper medication if prescribed, attending counseling and receiving case management. In the second stage, clients continue stabilization with additional goals like sobriety support, employment, education and social activities or volunteering. The final stage is where clients maintain their progress and continue using positive habits learned in the program.

"There's quite a few different community organizations that we

are already connected with that we can make referrals to for employment support, help applying for benefits or getting benefits turned back on, transportation," Mattila added. "It's really trying to look at what the court participant's individual needs are and help them solve it around those needs to ensure that they have the resources."

Mattila said that the court takes a very "low barrier" approach to its clients, striving to meet them where they are at — whether that means they need more stabilization or less stabilization, depending on their situation and charge — and working to ensure that money is not an object.

"As far as the fees to get into the court [go], that's something that we have been discussing to make it as barrier-free as possible," Mattila said. "[The court] is primarily focused on getting

people the help that they deserve and need. That's the goal of it. We want to make sure that the people are getting those services [and] if there are financial constraints, that we're being mindful of that ... We never want money to be the reason that someone doesn't get help."

While other surrounding counties such as Travis, Comal and Bexar have all implemented specialty courts like the MHC, this one being the first for Hays County is a major stepping stone in addressing how mental health and the legal system interact and finding healthier alternatives to incarceration when possible.

Mattila said she also hopes it will help reduce the stigma surrounding mental health and wellness, noting that it takes "all hands on deck" in every city, county and community to address

these needs holistically and collaboratively.

"That in itself is a challenge to help educate the community, the legal community, the family members of the court participants — to help people understand that physical and mental wellness are interrelated. You can't have one without the other," Mattila said. "All of us know someone who has mental health issues or substance use challenges. We all know someone. So it now is personal when you think about it that way. These are our neighbors, our community members, our family members, our friends. [When] you look at it in that sense, you're looking at it with a lens of humanity and that's the way that it should be looked at."

To learn more about the specialty court or to make a client referral, visit [www.hayscountytexas.com/courts/hays-county-mental-health-court](http://www.hayscountytexas.com/courts/hays-county-mental-health-court).

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**CITY OF KYLE, TEXAS**  
**NOTICE OF INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT**  
**FOR FISCAL YEAR ENDED SEPTEMBER 30, 2022**

In compliance with the requirements of the City Charter, Article VIII, Section 8.13, the City of Kyle completed an audit of all accounts and funds of the City by an independent certified public accounting firm for the fiscal year ended September 30, 2022.

The City's Annual Comprehensive Financial Report and the Independent Auditor's Report for the fiscal year ended September 30, 2022 was reviewed and accepted by the City Council during their regularly scheduled meeting held on March 21, 2023.

Highlights of the City's Annual Comprehensive Financial Report and the Independent Auditor's Report for the fiscal year ended September 30, 2022 include the following:

- The independent auditors conducted their audit of the City's financial statements in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America.
- The auditors issued a "clean" or an unqualified report on the financial statements of the City of Kyle for the fiscal year ended September 30, 2022. This is the highest level or the best type of independent auditor's report that can be issued on the financial statements of a governmental entity including city governments in the United States of America.
- The independent auditor's report did not identify any specific audit findings regarding the City's financial management policies and procedures, internal controls, or the City's accounting and financial reporting systems.
- Based on the independent auditor's examination and audit of the City's financial records, the auditor's report states that "the financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the respective financial position of the governmental activities, the business-type activities, each major fund, and the aggregate remaining fund information of the City as of September 30, 2022, and the respective changes in financial position and, where applicable, cash flows thereof for the year then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America."
- For fiscal year ended September 30, 2022, the City's Net Assets totaled \$594.0 million, Net Liabilities totaled \$162.8 million, and the combined Net Position totaled \$431.2 million.
- The City's overall net financial position of \$431.2 million as of September 30, 2022 is an increase of \$78.2 million or 22.2 percent as compared to the prior fiscal year.
- General Fund:
  - Revenue and transfers-in for the General Fund for fiscal year ending September 30, 2022 from all sources totaled \$53.7 million on a modified accrual basis (GAAP).
  - Expenditures and transfers-out for the General Fund for fiscal year ending September 30, 2022 totaled \$41.6 million for public safety, public works, parks and recreation, permits and inspections, land planning and zoning, code enforcement, animal control, public library, municipal court, economic development, capital improvement projects, and general government functions.
  - The ending fund balance for the City's General Fund at September 30, 2022 totaled \$33.1 million on a modified accrual basis (GAAP). This is an increase of \$12.1 million or 57.6 percent from the prior fiscal year.

A complete copy of the City's Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR) and the Independent Auditor's Report for fiscal year ended September 30, 2022 are available on the City's website at: <https://www.cityofkyle.com/finance/city-kyle-financial-audits>

Date Issued: March 22, 2023

Issued By: Perwez A. Moheet, CPA  
 Director of Finance  
 City of Kyle, Texas

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# 2nd Annual Buda Crawfest delights



It was all sunshine and crawfish at the 2nd Annual Buda Crawfest, which was held at Buck's Backyard on Saturday, March 25. In addition to a feast of crawfish and games of cornhole, Rick Trevino, Django Walker, Cedryl Ballou and Los Texmaniacs performed for the crowd, top left. Pictured bottom left, from left, are Steve and Bridgette Hammond and Vanessa and Ryan Clay. CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS



Keith Armstrong shows off his bag of crawfish at the 2nd Annual Buda Crawfest.

**HIGHLIGHTS From Page 6**

**Agency warns of dangerous drug combination**

An animal tranquilizer called xylazine has been found mixed with illegal drugs distributed in the state, resulting in at least four deaths, the Texas Department of State Health Services reported. The tranquilizer has been combined with fentanyl and other opioids, as well as Xanax and other drugs. It produces a strong sedative effect and can cause unconsciousness, low blood pressure, a slowed heart rate and breathing. It can also cause organ damage due to loss of blood flow. Since it is not an opioid, the effects of xylazine cannot be reversed by using Narcan, officials said.

**New foster care model launched**

Community groups representing nearly 50 counties in North and East Texas are assuming oversight of foster care from the state of Texas in a groundbreaking attempt to boost capacity and essential services for children under the state's conservatorship. Three contracts were signed by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services and private groups. One serves Dallas County along with eight surrounding counties. Another serves 23 counties in Northeast Texas, while a third serves the Beaumont-Port Arthur area. "This largest expansion to date for Community-Based Care is a real turning point in our

state's intensive effort to move to local control, and a better system overall for the children and youth in our care," Stephanie Muth, DFPS commissioner, said. "Those kids belong to their communities, and those communities want the opportunity to make every day better for a child in foster care." The expansion means that community-based care is now in place in half of the state geographically, representing a third of the population. **First case of avian flu in mammals in Texas** A striped skunk recovered from Carson County in the Panhandle has been confirmed as the first case of avian flu in a mammal in the state. Officially called Highly Pathogenic

Avian Influenza, it is a highly contagious virus transmitted easily among wild and domestic birds. It has been detected in all states except Hawaii, according to the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. Transmission occurs through consumption of infected animal carcasses. Symptoms include stumbling, tremors, seizures, lack of fear of people, lethargy, coughing and sneezing or sudden death. While transmission risk from infected birds to people remains low, precautions should be taken, such as wearing gloves and face masks if in contact with wild animals, TPWD advised. **School choice hearing draws hundreds** A Senate Education Committee meeting on

proposals that would give parents public money for private schools drew about 200 people and stretched past midnight last Thursday, the Statesman reported. Supporters spoke about allowing school choice and financial relief for parents of private school students, while opponents warned against siphoning money from public districts, lack of oversight and using taxpayer money for religious schools. State Sen. Brandon Creighton, R-Conroe, is sponsoring Senate Bill 8, which would provide \$8,000 per child for private school, homeschooling, tutoring or other educational costs. He told the Statesman that education savings accounts would not hurt public schools.

"We can lift up public schools and teachers like never before," Creighton said. "We can reconcile both very easily." Opponents say the proposal would harm public schools. "For the state to statutorily tarnish the reputation of our public schools by directly putting dollars to private entities, that would further the vicious cycle," Francesca Fraga Leahy, an Austin mother attending the hearing, said. Gary Borders is a veteran award-winning Texas journalist. He published a number of community newspapers in Texas during a 30-year span, including in Longview, Fort Stockton, Nacogdoches, and Cedar Park. Email: [gborders@texaspress.com](mailto:gborders@texaspress.com).

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