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[SATURDAY, December 27, 2025]
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Tolar cheerleader taking pom-poms to Tarleton

–See Page B1

County delays approval of jail architect contract

BY JEFF OSBORNE
jeff@hcnews.com

Hood County Commissioners Court members disagreed on how soon to approve a contract with DRG Architects related to the Hood County Jail expansion, resulting in a 3-2 vote to delay approval during the Dec. 19 court meeting.

The fee schedule for the contract previously was approved at the Nov. 25 meeting, an approval Dec. 19 would have finalized that.

Precinct 2 Commissioner Nannette Samuelson was the first to express her view the contract needed more attention before approval.

"This is a very important document to guide expansion of the jail," she said. "Voters approved a $24 million" bond, so more attention should be paid to the contract details, she said.

Samuelson suggested a special workshop should be held related to the contract after the holiday season to govern the jail expansion bond work.

"We should take our time and see if any tweaks are needed," she said.

Precinct 3 Commissioner Jack Wilson said he thought the contract should be approved immediately.

"It's time to quit kicking the can down the road," he said. "We need to move forward."

County Judge Ron Massingill expressed his agreement with Wilson, saying there already has been plenty of discussion about jail expansion and the contractor already has appeared before the court several times.

"The people of Hood County elected us to make decisions," Massingill said. "We can't have feedback on every issue. It's time to move forward. I don't see how a workshop ... what, are we going to get another 50 opinions from lay people. I agree with Commissioner Wilson. We need to get moving."

Precinct 4 Commissioner Dave Eagle said he seconded Samuelson's motion to table (delay) approval of the contract with DRG.

Precinct 1 Commissioner Kevin Andrews also talked about how additional attention should be given to the contract's details.

"This is a big thing," Andrews said. "If we can take three more weeks to look at this, let's get that done. There are a couple things we need to look at to make sure we'll get what we're looking for."

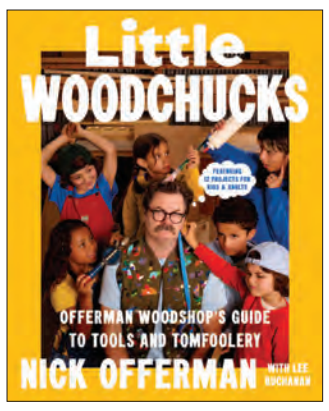
Samuelson, Andrews and Eagle

PLEASE SEE **JAIL** | A10



New Year's Eve celebration options

–See Page B4



Read all about it: Best books of 2025

–See Page B5



GISD campuses celebrate yuletide season

–See Page A11



Lady Pirates pull out tough win against Lady Indians

–See Page B1

Santa has a lot of helpers in Hood County



CHLOE LAING | HOOD COUNTY NEWS

Dozens of volunteers, including Shelly Fowler O'Toole pictured above, are needed each year to ensure each Christmas for Children recipient receives what they wrote Santa Claus for.



For more photos, see Page A12.

MARY VINSON | HOOD COUNTY NEWS

The Rancho Brazos Community Center serves as a key resource for Rancho Brazos, Sandy Beach, and Park 377/Carter Court communities and beyond. RBCC's goal is to become a second home to everyone who walks in the door while offering a future with hope by giving a "hand-up" instead of a handout. All hands were on deck at the Toys for Tots distribution.

Year in Review: A look at some of the stories published in 2025

Editor's Note: The Hood County News staff compiled the following stories from each issue this January through June. These are not the "top" stories of the year, but rather a glimpse of news coverage from each issue. July through December will be published in the Jan. 3, 2026, issue.

Jan. 4

From the rodeo arena to the courtroom, Roger "Cotton" Howell has spent a lifetime corralling bulls, horses and even the occasional criminal — but now, at 73, he's ready to retire from the bench and hang up his judge's robes for good.

Since 2013, Howell has served as justice of the peace for Precinct 1, doling out judgements while also staying true to himself and to his faith.

Jan. 11

On Dec. 11, 2024, a Hood County jury convicted Christian Gerardo Merancio, 36, of escape causing serious bodily injury or threat of deadly weapon, aggravated assault against a public servant, two counts of aggravated assault with deadly weapon, criminal mischief, fraudulent use or possession of identifying information more than five items but less than 10, and credit/debit card abuse. The case was tried in the 355th District Court in Granbury.

In February 2024 he was transported to Lake Granbury Medical Center for treatment of alcohol and Xanax withdrawal. He attempted to escape custody by diving through a second story window. The jailer grabbed his leg shackles, and Merancio grabbed a shard of glass and attempted to stab the jailer and nurses. The jailer and nurses eventually released the leg shackles, and Merancio hit the ground.

***

Rachel Ledbetter, a Granbury resident since 1976 and faithful friend to Granbury ISD, turned 100 Jan 27. Ledbetter has dedicated her long life to her two passions — travel and philanthropy.

Jan. 18

Visit Granbury is kicking off the new year in style after receiving 10 Ray Cammack Marketing Awards of Excellence from the Texas Association of Fairs and Events this past weekend.

***

At the TAFE State Convention in Fort Worth Jan. 11, the city of Granbury Convention and Visitors Bureau was honored with seven first-place and three second-place awards in the state competition. The Visit Granbury team consisted of Director Tammy Dooley, Assistant Director Kristen Gibson and Event Coordinator Rhiannon Moline.



FILE PHOTO | HOOD COUNTY NEWS

Judge Roger "Cotton" Howell retires in January 2025.

***

This year marked 70 years for the Hood County Junior Livestock Show and Sale. As often is the

PLEASE SEE **YIR** | A2

139TH YEAR, NO. 48
Local, zone(s): 2 sections, 24 pages, plus supplements | State: 2 sections, 24 pages

INSIDE
From My Front Porch — A3 | Classifieds — B9,B10 | Obituaries — A4, | Puzzle Page — B7 | Zed — A3

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YIR

FROM PAGE A1

case for the Hood County Junior Livestock Show, the week was cold and wet, but that didn't stop the excitement emanating from the Reunion grounds as young contenders from Granbury, Lipan and Tolar FFA groups and Hood County area 4-H groups gathered to show their animals, their skills and their wares.

Jan. 25

Granbury Independent School District officially has a new leader at the helm of its Pirate ship, as the GISD Board of Trustees announced Dr. Courtney Morawski will serve as the district's new superintendent.

The announcement was made during the GISD board meeting Jan. 13, when the board voted unanimously to bring Morawski on board in an official capacity.

Morawski was declared the lone finalist for the superintendent position Dec. 16. However, state law requires a 21-day waiting period following the naming of a lone finalist before officially hiring a new superintendent.

***



FILE PHOTO | HOOD COUNTY NEWS

Granbury Independent School District officially has a new leader at the helm of its Pirate ship, as the GISD Board of Trustees announced Dr. Courtney Morawski will serve as the district's new superintendent.

Antarctica is the largest desert in the world. It also holds most of Earth's fresh water — 90 percent of the earth's ice. Antarctica is visually quiet but on average is the windiest continent on earth. Perhaps it is the dichotomy of Antarctica that makes it such a fascinating place to visit, as Hood County residents Andy and Deborah Simon recently did.

Feb. 1

It's official: the cat's out of the bag on Granbury's newest business: The Twisted Whisker and Hideaway. Located at 1901 S. Morgan St. — in the former Morgan Street Animal Hospital building — this new cat lounge and boarding boutique will have cat lovers everywhere wanting to sink their claws into a new and "purr-fect" experience.

Co-owners Gayle McGuire and Amber Hausler created the cat lounge as a way for residents to relax and unwind from their busy lives, as they spend time petting and playing with the adorable felines. While loading up on all the cuddles and purrs they can handle, the hope is that guests will leave the lounge "feline" fine and "paws-itive."

***

On Jan. 22, Granbury High School senior James Barber was honored with a $180,000 NROTC scholarship to the Naval Reserve Officer Training Corps.

The NROTC program at GHS is for students who want to serve in the military after graduation; they can join as soon as they start high school.

The scholarship was presented during an NROTC class where Barber's instructors, classmates (cadets) and parents Andrea Barber and Randall Love were present. James Barber is the youngest of three children with a lot of inspiration to join the Corps coming from his oldest brother, Rick Barber.

James Barber comes from a family of military service with his grandfather, father and older brother serving in the Marine Corps. He said his mind has been set for years to accomplish his goal of joining the Corps.

Feb. 8

Those with a penchant for law enforcement probably spend an unhealthily amount of time watching crime shows like "CSI," "Law and Order" and new favorite "The Rookie" — but what if someone could actually witness firsthand how local law enforcement handles day-to-day situations right here in Hood County?

That's where the Hood County Sheriff's Office ride-along program comes into play.

The program — which was officially reinstated by the Hood County Commissioners Court Jan. 28 — provides an opportunity for residents to accompany a deputy on one of their shifts to gain a better understanding of what they encounter in the line of duty on a daily basis.

***

Danny Williams Combat Martial Arts Program's Team "Lightning" hit a successful stride with its 13-person roster representing the Texas Karate Organization in a world championship tournament.

Team Lightning went to the World Karate League World Grand Finals Jan 4 in Galveston at the San Luis Convention Center. The WKL invites teams and competitors to the World Grand Finals by a seeding system where contestants earn a higher seed based off their record in their division in a region. Players are not limited to a region and can attend outside their region to get a better seed at the World Grand Finals.



FILE PHOTO | HOOD COUNTY NEWS

A Brawner Elementary School teacher took a walk on the wild side last fall when she was whisked away by a helicopter and dropped off in the Canadian wilderness.

Feb. 15

The Hood County Sheriff's Office uncovered a major drug ring last month after the conclusion of Operation Fresh Start — a month-long operation aimed at removing illegal narcotics and drug dealers from the local community.

According to an HCSO news release, the operation resulted in 16 felony arrests at the local level for manufacturing or delivery of a controlled substance in penalty group 1/1-B — a first-degree felony charge in every case but one. Multiple defendants were also charged with unlawful possession of a firearm by a felon.

***

A Brawner Elementary School teacher took a walk on the wild side last fall when she was whisked away by a helicopter and dropped off in the Canadian wilderness — armed with nothing but the clothes on her back, a rain jacket and a canteen of water.

While this situation may seem like the beginning of a horror movie or a high-stakes dare, it was nothing short of exhilarating for Ashley Tyler-Metheny, who had willingly agreed to partake in "Extracted" — a new reality television show that pushes untrained contestants to survive in the most extreme conditions imaginable.

Feb. 22

Four male suspects have been arrested on capital murder charges following the death of a Hood County resident last week.

According to a news release from the Hood County Sheriff's Office, deputies responded to the 3000 block of Gerry Drive in the Montego Bay subdivision at 1:21 p.m. Feb. 12. Upon arrival, they located a male suffering from a gunshot wound.

The male — who was later identified as 20-year-old Billy Sheffield IV — was flown by helicopter to John Peter Smith Hospital in Fort Worth where he was later pronounced deceased. The resulting investigation determined Sheffield had been the victim of a homicide, and several persons of interest were identified.

***

Residents of Harbor Lakes Nursing and Rehabilitation Center have a new reason to celebrate — an occasion bigger than Valentine's Day, Presidents Day and Groundhog Day combined.

In a proud moment for the Granbury community, Harbor Lakes staff revealed the facility was recently named No. 2 in Newsweek's Best Nursing Homes in Texas.

Following only behind St. Francis Nursing Home in San Antonio, Harbor Lakes was ranked among the best in Newsweek's fourth annual Top 40 list of Texas nursing homes with 100-149 beds.

***

Connor Ryan Darland, a 33-year-old Granbury resident, was sentenced to 14 years in a Texas penitentiary earlier this month after pleading guilty to a first-degree felony charge of attempt to commit capital murder. The verdict — delivered Feb. 3 — took place in the 355th Judicial District Court of Hood County.

March 1

Glen Rose residents Brandl and Janan Stephenson found themselves making last minute plans at the beginning of February to attend none other than the NFL season finale. Super Bowl LIX was viewed by 127 million people this year — in the New Orleans Saints' stadium, the Caesars Superdome, 65,719 fans were in attendance, including the Stephensons.

The couple received tickets through a giveaway by American Red Cross. Brandl Stephenson has been a regular blood donor for about 10 years now for American Red Cross and did not know about the Super Bowl ticket giveaway. He was chosen out of 300,000 people in the month of January.

***

Two Granbury High School students received an

PLEASE SEE YIR | A5



What I Would Like for Christmas



BY SAM HOUSTON

Sam Houston is the publisher of the Hood County News. He is also an actor, author, playwright, performer and entertainment producer/promoter.

In this moment, my mind is drifting to Christmas' past and trying to recall the excitement of being a small child with heightened anticipation of what Santa Claus might bring me. Images of old Sears and Montgomery Ward catalogs dance through my brain and I remember paging through those publications and earmarking all the items I hoped to receive. I still can see the Christmas tree in my parents' front room and the smell of evergreen permeating the house.

I was fortunate to live in a loving home, with good parents and a wonderful sister, and thus my recollections of Christmas are positive and pleasant. At the same time, I remember my folks talking about being small children during the Great Depression and if they received an orange or a banana in their Christmas stocking, they were very grateful because they understood there was no money to do otherwise.

Christmas will always be special to me for a different reason than everyone else. This year marks my grandparents' 105th wedding anniversary. They were married for nearly 73 years, and it all began Dec. 25, 1920. By all accounts they were a wonderful, loving couple who were the embodiment of the American dream: working hard, raising a family, taking pride in their nation, their community and their relationship with each other. I miss them every day. It is one of my favorite things about Christmas because the day makes me think of them and the relationship they had and the relationship we had. They might be the best gift I ever received.

As I mark my 70th Christmas on this earth, I cannot help but create a Christmas wish list. It is void of desires for a bicycle, a BB gun or a set of roller skates. While those were all great presents when I was 10, my current list of Christmas wishes is a little broader based.

Wish List

1. I wish that every man, woman and child on our planet had adequate food and shelter so to sustain their lives in a positive and meaningful way.
2. I wish that nowhere on our planet were people engaged in war and that all people in the world could live in peace, with security and freedom.
3. I wish that we Americans would stop looking at each other as enemies and understand that both the left wing and the right wing must work together for the Eagle to fly.
4. I wish our troops, both at home and abroad, feel the love and admiration we hold for them and the deep appreciation we have for their service.
5. I wish our elected officials would stop following agendas of special interest groups and their biggest donors and instead act based on what is best for Texas and for Texans.

Not sure how many of my wishes will come true; I have my doubts but then again it is Christmas and hope is eternal.

Thank you for giving me the blessing of so many loyal readers. My sincere best wishes to you all for a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year! God bless you.

Thought for the day: Christmas is more about giving from the heart than giving from the store.

Until next time…I will keep ridin' the storm out!

sam@hcnews.com

Kelly Landon will hold ANC's January lecture

BY CHLOE LAING
chloe@hcnews.com

Kelly Langdon is passionate about saving the native prairies of North Texas — so passionate he helped preserve his family's 1,400-acre Acton ranch through a land easement — and wants to help other local landowners do the same.

Langdon will begin the new year as the Jan. 4 guest speaker of Acton Nature Center's lecture series, where he will discuss what land easements are, their benefits, how to obtain one and his own personal history with the process.

The Langdon family have been ranching the same 1,400-acre property between Acton and Godley for three generations.

Within the course of these three generations, the metroplex, and Hood County along with it, have developed at an exponential rate, leading the family to wonder just how long they could protect their slice of unadulterated North Texas land. Their solution — a conservation easement.

"The ranch is pretty special to us, and with all the growth and development in Granbury, we decided to voluntarily place the ranch in a conservation easement," Langdon said. "A conservation easement is a perpetual thing. Once we did it, there's no way to reverse it, so ba-

PLEASE SEE **ANC** | A8

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Folks around town



MARY VINSON | HOOD COUNTY NEWS

Say hello to our neighbor Damon Sprang!

Damon Sprang has called Hood County home since 2015, when he moved to town in the eighth grade – from Ohio to Tennessee, Arlington and finally settling in Granbury, the fourth school for him that school year.

His immediate impressions of Texas: "It was hot," he said. "But it was cool. It was a different culture here. I wasn't even here two months when I went to a rodeo." He finished out 2015 at Acton Middle School, then was in the last class at the Crossland Ninth-Grade Center. After that, he went on to Granbury High School and finished at STARS Academy.

He works at the Rancho Brazos Community Center, describing his job as: "Doing about anything they need to do at any given time." Which is a lot. He manages aspects of the food pantry, oversees teens in Rancho's after-school program, takes in donations, tends the chicken, and works the garden.

"I'm just trying to pivot and keep up with the changes we're making around here." Sprang first came to Rancho Brazos as a teenager in community service. That first year, he enjoyed attending the Thanksgiving feast and eventually started coming back "without court-ordered community service."

In his words, "I just know that as a teen and young adult, I was a beneficiary of a lot of the services Rancho offers. I know it helps, and that's why I wanted to be here." Sprang has an overall goal of growing with Rancho's after-school teen program to inspire kids who are not in the best situations.

"They only get one life, one opportunity, one time to play the game," adding they need to know there's no reason to risk everything by doing stupid stuff that will land you in jail. He wants to help keep them on the right track. Sprang reflects that his childhood would probably have been different, for the better, had there been a food pantry in his town.

He loves how a "wealthy" town like Granbury has so many who give back in time and support. Sprang likes the RBCC so much that the logo is tattooed on his arm. Sprang and his wife, Brianna, celebrated their son's first birthday here. The couple got married at the Sandy Beach dock with the Rancho Brazos Community Center staff attending. They lead a busy life raising three sons, Hendrix, 5, Lorenzo, 3, Luka,1.

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Hood County News

A Hyde Media Group, LLC Company

Publisher
SAM HOUSTON
sam@hcnews.com

Lead Writer
JEFF OSBORNE
jeff@hcnews.com

Staff Writer
JAXON HANSARD
jaxon@hcnews.com

Staff Writer
CHLOE LAING
chloe@hcnews.com

Photographer/Designer
LAYTH TAYLOR
layth@hcnews.com

Designer
SHAY CUELLAR
shay@hcnews.com

Graphic Designer
RYAN STAFFORD
ryan@hcnews.com

hcnews.com

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USPS 249-520
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HYDE MEDIA GROUP

Chief Operating Officer
SAM HOUSTON
sam@hcnews.com

Executive Editor
RICHARD NELSON
richard@hcnews.com

Managing Editor
JOSH BURTON
josh@hcnews.com

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OBITUARIES

Robert 'Bob' Warren Cook
1942 – 2025

Granbury resident, Artist Robert Warren (Bob) Cook passed into the hands of our Lord on Dec. 14, 2025, at his home in Granbury, Texas. Born in Kansas City, Missouri, to Charles and Ada Lou (York) Cook Dec. 24, 1942.

Bob graduated from Shawnee Mission High School, attended Baker University and the Kansas City Art Institute, and went straight to the architectural illustration business for 45 years. He moved to Florida to work as an architectural artist for Disney on the Disney World Complex, creating dozens of works, exhibits and cruise ships. He later moved to Dallas, Texas, to take the job of art director of Prelim, Inc. Two years later he bought the company creating hundreds of projects in the United States, including NFL stadiums, schools, commercial and government, then took his company internationally working with companies from Japan, Mexico, Europe and the Middle-East creating over 14,000 projects that included commercial buildings, ships, aircraft, schools and more across the globe.

Upon retirement, he donated his entire portfolio of Prelim's work to the architectural department, where he had donated time as a guest instructor, at Texas Tech University in Midland, Texas. During his career in Prelim, Inc. he continued with his fine art paintings, entering shows and exhibits across the United States and internationally.

Once retired, he began painting full-time, entering art shows nationwide. His prestigious wins included first place at the Los Angeles Audubon Society National Show, Florida and Louisiana Watercolor Societies, and more. Bob won the Tarleton State Rio Brazos Art Exhibit four years consecutively, and the Southwestern Watercolor Society, Florida Watercolor Society, Louisiana Watercolor Society, and The Stars of Texas "Best of Show" awards. He has received awards from Italy, Japan, Vietnam, England, Germany and Australia. Awards from Lake Granbury Art Association and across the United States are too numerous to list.

One dear to him as a classic car enthusiast was the commission to create the illustrations for the National Corvette Museum, where two of his original paintings hang and prints are for sale at the museum. Other unique art projects include creating five book covers for several authors and logos for four state Corvette Clubs.

Locally, Bob donated his time for 20 years to create illustrations of new buildings and work to help raise funding to build 15 buildings, including the new school, at Happy Hill Farm, North Central Texas Academy, working closely with founder Ed Shipman. Collectors of his work number into the thousands, including Disney Corp, Champlain Oil Company, Texas Instruments, The National Corvette Museum, Texas Baptist Convention and others.

His art has also been featured on the covers of magazines and in newspapers as the winning artist or featured artist for years. In 2017, he was selected as the featured artist of the year by Tarleton State University in their annual Langdon Review Book and art show featuring eight of his paintings. His painting, Lipan Portrait, was the university's choice for the book's cover. His painting, Oak Island, has been used in scenes on the national TV show and for two other book covers. His wife Carol has used two of his paintings for covers for her books. Bob is a member of the Lake Granbury Art Association and a past board member of the Arts Commission in Granbury, Texas. While living in Florida, Bob took up sailing and competed in sailboat racing from Florida through the Caribbean, winning award after award. An avid car enthusiast, he participated with the National Corvette Restoration Club, becoming a constant winner with his Corvettes, as well as an accredited judge for show Corvettes. He sold his last Corvette in 2005, bought his lake home, and took up fishing and creating dozens of paintings in his studio overlooking Lake Granbury. Your Private Collection, on



the square in Granbury, Texas, has featured and sold his work since 2009. Bob completed 90 percent of his bucket list by 2017 that included being hired by Disney for designs of Disney World in Orlando, Winning a National Sailing Championship in Ocean Racing, being featured on the cover of Yachting Magazine sailing a 55' Morgan racer, caught a 114-pound Sailfish off the coast of Mexico, won the Senior Ocean Racing Circuit, beating his rival Ted Turner for first place, owned/operated Prelim, Inc. creating illustrations/paintings across the globe, restored two classic Corvettes, won four Top Flight awards with NCRS, Man of the Year award and NCRS Master Judge, invited to the White House to meet President Carter with the business owners of the USA, sailed and won his race on America's Cup Yacht Stars and Stripes, Sailed on a large sailing yacht through the Panama Canal, won the National Watercolor Society Silver Star for Best in Show, painted in plein-air with ten international accredited artist in Spain and France.

He is survived by his wife Carol of 35 years; his son Steven W. Cook and wife Holly; his brother Charles(Chuck) and wife Kim, and their children, Christopher, Taylor, and Ashley; step-daughters Stephanie Adame and husband Adam, and Deanna Stirling; step-granddaughters Ana Maccioli, Misha Johnson, Amy Jacobsen, and Sonya Adame. He was preceded in death by his parents and daughter, Kelly Cook Anderson.

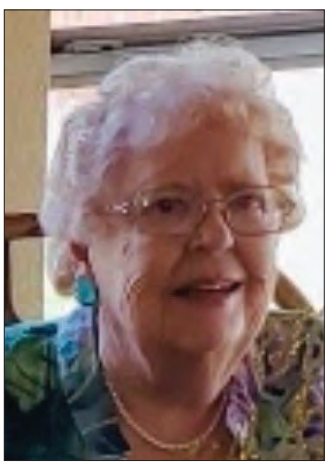
Barbara Ann Speer Haberthur
1934 – 2025

Barbara Ann Speer Haberthur, "Mamaw," 91, cherished wife, mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother, passed away peacefully Thursday evening, Dec. 18, 2025, in Granbury, Texas.

Barbara Ann was born June 28, 1934, in Dallas, Texas, to the late Leo and Anna Ruth Speer. Early on, she helped manage and operate her family-owned grocery store in Dickens. Always a competitive equestrian, Barbara won a rodeo scholarship to attend Hardin-Simmons University. As a bank teller in Lubbock, she met Charles. On August 23, 1959, she married the "love of her life," Charles Haberthur. This is when Barbara believed "her life began."

Barbara and her husband, Charles, moved often. A devoted homemaker, she made every place they moved to feel like home. She also loved working as a kindergarten teacher. Barbara had many interests, including baking, reading, puzzles, and playing bridge and games. She shared all of these passions with her grandkids. Barbara served as president of the Woman's Club of Pecan Plantation and was active in her community. Additionally, she was a long-time member of Acton Methodist Church, where she served faithfully. Most of all, Barbara will be remembered as being a loving wife, mother, and the ultimate "Mamaw" to her beloved family.

Barbara is survived by her husband of 66 years, Charles Haberthur; her children, daughter Patricia Sabandal (Bryant) and son Chuck Haberthur (Dawn); grandchildren: Anna, Rachel, Sara, Allison, and Brandon; great-grandchildren: Anthony, Adon, Ariella, Amos, Tommy, Elliott and Lona; and by her special aunt, Doris White.



Barbara was preceded in death by her parents and beloved grandparents.

A memorial service celebrating her life will be held at 10 a.m. Saturday, Jan. 10, 2026, at the Wiley Funeral Home Chapel, 400 Highway 377 East in Granbury. Family and friends will gather for a reception at Aviva Senior Living, 2300 Paluxy Highway at noon in the Great Room. Burial will be private.

Susan Florence Nagel
1945 – 2025

On Dec. 18, 2025, Susan Florence Nagel was embraced by the loving arms of her Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Susan was born June 6, 1945, at Camp Blanding, Florida, and grew up in New Franklin, Missouri. In November of 1964, Susan met the love of her life, Orin Arthur Nagel, and they were married at First Baptist Church of Booneville, Missouri, July 30, 1965. They have been blessed with over 60 years of marriage. Susan is the mother of four children: Michael, Scott, Sean and Sarah; grandmother to nine grandchildren and great-grandmother to three great-grandchildren. Susan was a generous, compassionate, loving and nurturing wife and mother.

Susan was a U.S. Army wife who volunteered countless hours in the service of soldiers and their wives for 30 years. She is a graduate of the University of Texas at El Paso with a bachelor's degree in fine arts. Susan was an accomplished artist. She loved antiques, crafting, cooking, interior design and making jewelry, donating handmade jewelry to women in Zimbabwe. Susan loved to travel all over the world, even living in Italy for three years, England for two years and Pakistan for two years. In addition to her other achievements, Susan was a successful entrepreneur who owned and operated two small businesses, Red Door Antiques and Perfect Accents.

Susan is now reunited with her son, Michael, in the presence of Jesus Christ. Her humble and altruistic legacy will be carried on by her family for generations to come.



Celebration of Life service will be held Monday, Dec. 29, 2025, at Lakeside Baptist Church, Granbury, Texas, beginning at 11 a.m.

Arrangements under the care of Wiley Funeral Home, Granbury, Texas.

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The Hood County News deadline for obituaries is 10 a.m. Wednesday for the Saturday paper. Deadlines are subject to change during holidays.

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FINANCIAL FOCUS

Is this a good year for tax-loss harvesting?

CHAD CARROLL
Edward Jones
Financial Adviser

Thanks to market swings, evolving tax laws and new technology, it may be a good year to consider tax-loss harvesting — a strategy that can help reduce taxes and improve long-term returns.

What is tax-loss harvesting? When you sell an investment for less than you paid, you may be able to use that loss to offset gains from other investments, potentially reducing your overall tax bill.

If your total capital losses exceed your gains, you can use up to $3,000 of those losses to reduce ordinary



Chad Carroll

income each year. You can carry any remaining losses forward to future tax years. The strategy doesn't eliminate taxes altogether; it simply defers them, which can free up money to reinvest elsewhere.

How it works. Imagine an investor who sold one stock for a $10,000 gain and another for a $10,000 loss. The two transactions cancel each other out, meaning no capital gains tax is owed for that year. The investor can then reinvest the proceeds while following the IRS' "wash-sale rule." This rule prevents you from claiming a loss if you, or your spouse or a related party, repurchase the same or a "substantially identical" investment within 30 days before or after the sale.

Because of this rule, you should consider how tax-loss harvesting will affect your investment strategy, as the benefit of holding on to that investment (and letting it grow in time) may outweigh the benefit of lowering your capital gains tax bill for a given year.

Good candidates for tax-loss harvesting include investments that no longer fit your strategy (when rebalancing your portfolio, for example), have poor investment potential or can be easily substituted with other investments.

Why 2025 may be favorable. Several factors suggest 2025 may be a good time to consider tax-loss harvesting.

First, market volatility has created more opportunities to realize losses. The first half of the year saw sharp market swings that left some portfolios uneven. Many large asset managers already have harvested billions in losses, using them to help lower clients' tax liability while keeping investment strategies on track.

Second, tax law changes are on the horizon. With major tax reform provisions scheduled to expire in the coming years, many investors are motivated to manage their gains and losses proactively. Those in higher tax brackets stand to benefit most, as the savings increase with your tax rate.

Finally, technology has made the process more efficient. In the past, investors typically harvested losses near year-end. Today, automation and direct indexing allow for continuous monitoring and harvesting throughout the year, capturing losses as they appear.

Putting it into practice. Tax-loss harvesting isn't right for everyone, and it's not a reason to overhaul your investment strategy. The approach works best for investors with taxable accounts, current or expected capital gains and a long-term perspective.

Consult your financial advisor and a tax professional before making decisions. When used thoughtfully, tax-loss harvesting can help you navigate a volatile market, reduce taxes and keep more of your money working toward your future goals.

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor.

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honor like never before Tuesday, when they were presented with a Certificate of Congratulations from none other than U.S. Rep. Roger Williams.

James Barber and Colton Jernigan, two students involved in the Marine Corps Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps (MCJROTC) program, were recognized for their multiple academy nominations, during the Hood County Commissioners Court meeting Feb. 25.

Barber was recognized for his nomination to the United States Military Academy and the United States Naval Academy, while Jernigan was commemorated for his nomination to the U.S. Air Force Academy, the U.S. Military Academy, the U.S. Naval Academy and the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy.

March 8

What started out as a small-town movie backdrop soon became the setting of a real-life love story for Aledo film director Bill McAdams Jr. — and it's all thanks to Granbury's starring role.

Filmed almost entirely in Granbury, "God's Here," tells the story of Jack Gilmore — played by McAdams himself — a decorated firefighter and man of deep faith whose wife and son are killed in a texting-and-driving crash three weeks before Christmas.

***

On Feb. 28, Visit Granbury unveiled two new trolleys, replacing the one that had been operating since the service began more than a decade ago.

At Friday's weekly Rise and Grind event, Visit Granbury, in conjunction with the Granbury Chamber of Commerce, performed a ribbon-cutting ceremony celebrating the long-anticipated addition of the two brand-new 2025 Villager Trolleys.

March 15

Despite 100 years spent galivanting around the globe, earning medals of valor, and maintaining Midland through its oil boom, centenarian Wendell Brown still is most known for two things — his enduring optimism and dedication.

Wendell completed his 100th lap around the sun Wednesday, March 5, with much fanfare from his friends, family and Granbury's most prominent community leaders. His birthday bash was held at Harbor Lakes Nursing, whose team pulled out all the stops to ensure that his big day lived up to the legacy he'd been workshopping for the past 99.9945 years.

March 22

The Granbury community is mourning the loss of one of its students, who tragically passed away Monday morning following an incident involving a school bus.

According to a release from the Texas Department of Public Safety, the incident occurred around 6 a.m. March 17, when a bus driver for Granbury Independent School District was traveling northeast on Pecos River Drive in the Comanche Cove subdivision.

The release reads the bus, driven by a 66-year-old female, stopped to pick up students and then started to pull away. However, as the bus began to pull away, a 5-year-old child ran up beside the driver's side and in front of the bus, where he was struck.

***

Dr. Calvin Lawrence has achieved a feat many dream of accomplishing, yet few attempt. On Jan. 25, Lawerence published his first book — "The Happy Leader," an autobiographical narrative cataloging his life's experiences revolving around themes of leadership, perseverance and inspiration.

The primary themes of "The Happy Leader" are leadership and influence. The book follows Lawrence coming to terms with the concept of leadership throughout his education and career, as he walks his audience through relationships and experiences that solidified for him exactly what a proper leader looks like, and how through trial and error, he was able to emulate this image.

March 29

The Granbury community came together with heavy hearts March 20, to host a candlelight vigil honoring 5-year-old Exodus Crockett, the young boy who lost his life earlier last week.

Held at Hewlett Park, the vigil paid tribute to the Emma Roberson Early Learning Academy student, as attendees lit candles and sang along to powerful songs like "Amazing Grace," and "Jesus Loves Me."



FILE PHOTO | HOOD COUNTY NEWS

"Hands Off" and "Hands On" demonstrators showed up in droves at Granbury's downtown square April 5. "Hands Off" protestors advocated against President Donald Trump's administration, urging Republicans to keep their "hands off" of Social Security, public education and Medicare. On the other side of the political spectrum, the "Hands On" counter-protestors defended Trump's policies and decisions, brandishing Trump flags and cheering as other residents drove by the square. During the hour-long protest, there were a few accounts of an altercation involving a minor and a few choice words expressed between individuals on opposing political viewpoints. However, both sides were able to remain vocal about their beliefs in a mostly peaceful protest.

In a sea of red and blue, Exodus' classmates and other members of the community could be seen sporting the colors of Spider-Man — Exodus' favorite superhero.

While emotions were high, the outpouring of love and support for the Crockett family was palpable, as more than 100 residents and first responders came out to honor the life of this special child — one who had touched not only the lives of his classmates, but also the hearts of an entire town.

Donations for the Crockett family are currently being accepted at First National Bank of Granbury. A meal train and a GoFundMe have also been set up at these links: mealtrain.com/trains/mvn1wl and gofund.me/e02f0c82.

***

The Hood County Commissioners Court unanimously passed a resolution March 11, opposing Battery Energy Storage Systems.

Battery Energy Storage Systems, shortened to BESS, are devices that enable renewable energy sources, like solar and wind, to be stored and released when the power is needed most.

According to nationalgrid.com, the dominant storage technology for large-scale plants are lithium-ion batteries, which are used in cell phones and electric cars. The website reads the batteries help these electricity grids ensure a reliable supply of renewable energy.

The county's resolution reads these storage systems can pose several fire and environmental risks.

April 5

Construction has officially started on a 47-acre mixed-use community located along Highway 377 — a project that will bring new restaurants, shops and homes to the Granbury area.

The project, called LakeView Landing, will include lakefront restaurants, shops, waterfront single-family homes with boat docks, patio homes, townhomes, active-adult multi-family housing, market rate multi-family residences, a SpringHill Suites by Marriott and a large lakefront public park.

***

T.E.X.A.S. Rescue has officially launched a new project — one that will surely "burro" into the hearts of many Hood County residents.

Husband-and-wife duo Tracy and Vicki Miller have set their sights on a new rescue mission aimed at rescuing hundreds of wild burros in the Davis Mountain Resort in Fort Davis.

As co-founders of T.E.X.A.S. (Texas Equine Xperience and Sanctuary) Rescue, the Miller duo — along with their son, Austin — have made it their life's mission to rescue, rehab and rehome donkeys, horses and mules.

April 12

Decker Gym is getting a new

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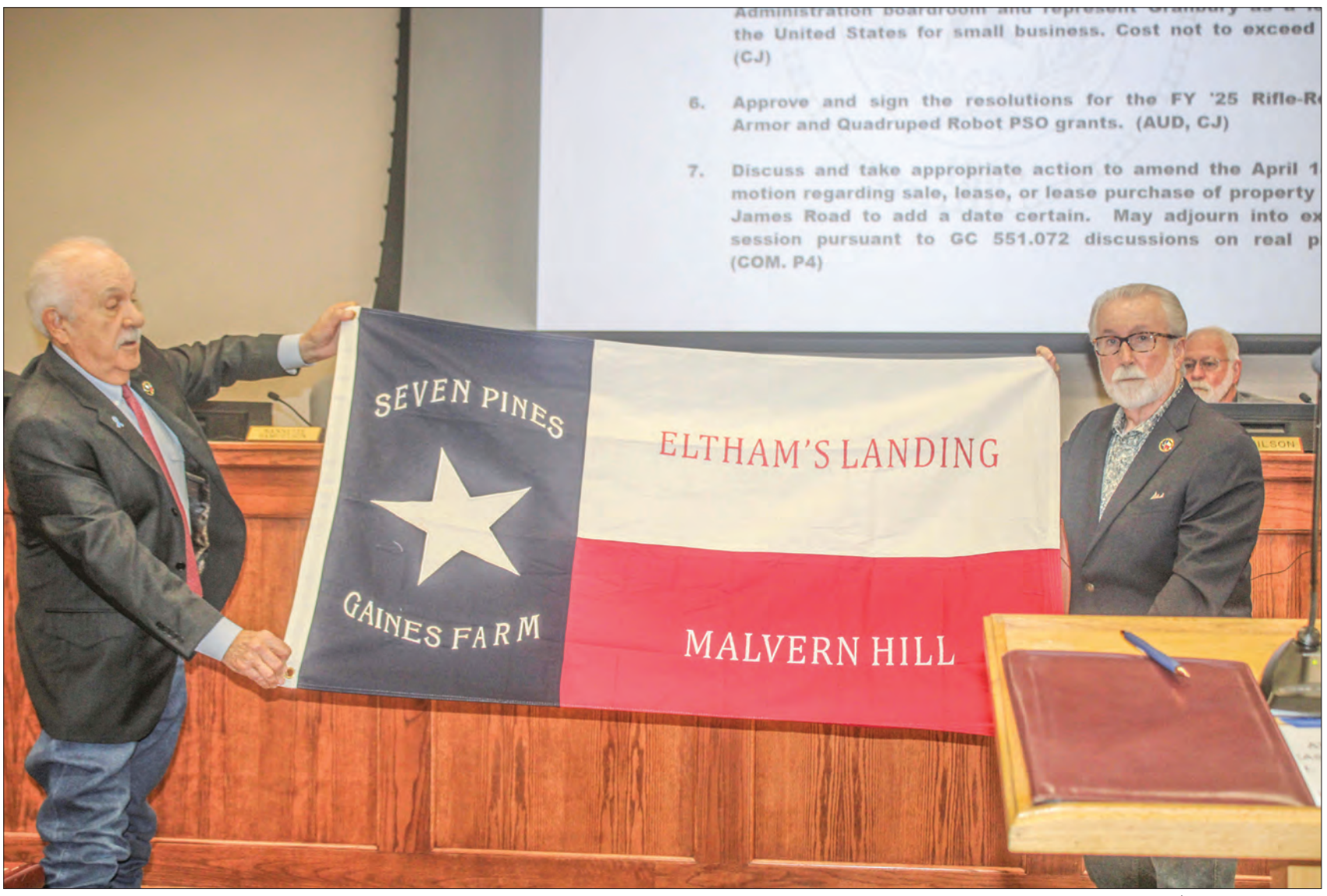
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"hat." The United Way of Hood County shared through a generous donation from Chad Ammons with A+ Roofing, the historic building will receive a brand new roof, fully donated and installed. This gift is a major milestone in the ongoing restoration of the facility, which is being brought back to life as a shared space for the entire community.

Thanks to a visionary lease agreement with Granbury ISD, United Way already has transformed one side of the building into a thriving nonprofit hub — complete with free communal workspace, training rooms, meeting space and resources that serve agencies throughout Hood County.

Now, with the support of A+ Roofing, the gym side of the building is one huge step closer to being completed and opened for community gatherings, nonprofit events and recreational use.



FILE PHOTO | HOOD COUNTY NEWS

Hood County Judge Ron Massingill, left, and Ron Sutton, member of the Sons of the Republic of Texas David Crockett Chapter, show off Gen. John Bell Hood's first Texas infantry brigade flag. The flag was donated by SRT President Phil Harris on behalf of the David Crockett Chapter and will be displayed in the hallway of the historic courthouse.

April 19

Granbury has done it again — and then some.

The former three-peat winner of USA Today's Best Historic Small Town in America competition has just reclaimed its fourth win for 2025.

Every year, the USA Today 10 Best panel selects 20 historic small towns with big histories — the very qualities that make Granbury shine as a Texas treasure.

***

A Hood County Republican Party official was arrested on two outstanding warrants last week, relating to allegations claiming a false address was provided on election-related documents.

According to a Hood County Sheriff bond report, Eva Royer — the chairwoman of HCRP's events and fundraising committee — was taken into custody Monday, April 7.

The bond report reads Royer was arrested on one count of perjury on certain election procedures, a state jail felony, and one count of election fraud, a class A misdemeanor.

April 26

A recent topic at the Hood County Commissioners Court drew both residents and officials into a fiery discussion — literally.

During a special hour-and-a-half-long workshop April 10, officials debated whether to enforce a state fire code safety policy in Hood County.

While some residents and officials were open to additional safety policies due to the fire risk associated with Battery Energy Storage Systems, others were hesitant and expressed concerns about government overreach.

Though no final decision has been made as of yet, the conversation has sparked a widespread debate between public safety and personal property rights.

***

The Granbury City Council recently approved the issuance and sale of $15.7 million in Special Assessment Revenue Bonds to fund infrastructure improvements for the new LakeView Landing mixed-use community.

But while bonds sometimes can mean an added cost to taxpayers, it's a little different with a Public Improvement District.

During the Granbury City Council meeting April 15, City Manager Chris Coffman said the bonds will be entirely funded by LakeView Landing property owners.

"This is a process where the city is able to issue debt that this property actually will service. It will not affect the rest of the community on servicing the debt for this project," Coffman said. "I just want to make that real clear to everybody here, that this bond will be serviced by the improvements on this property, and there will be a lien placed on that property until such debt has been removed."

LakeView Landing is a 47-acre project established by Dallas/Fort Worth-based development firm Realty Capital. The mixed-use community will be located at 300 E. U.S. Highway 377 and is expected to bring new restaurants, homes and shops to the area.

May 3

An unwavering love in a tight-knit community truly knows no bounds — and that couldn't be more evident than with Kroger's recent $21,000 donation to Mission Granbury.

As part of its End Hunger Here campaign, Kroger recently held a food drive for Mission Granbury, with both customers and associates contributing to the cause.

***

As Granbury High School basketball coach Alan Thorpe reflects back on his 37-year career, he said his players keep him humble.

As the 2024-25 school year comes to a close, Thorpe has decided to retire.

"Well, after 37 years of work, it came to the point where, if I couldn't put 100 percent into it, I just couldn't take away from the kids," Thorpe said. I felt like I was getting to the point where I just couldn't do 100 percent." "It's time for somebody younger to come in and take this great group of kids."

***

Granbury High School Principal Jamie Robinson is leaving to take a position as superintendent at Karnes City Independent School District.

Late Wednesday evening, Robinson wrote to the GHS family, "While I am humbled by the opportunity, leaving the wonderful students and staff of Granbury High School will be bittersweet."

During his interview Thursday morning, Robinson said, "I high five them every day. I see them go to their events, but I truly love those kids and I try to know all of them. That was that and (then I'm) leaving a great staff."

May 10

Granbury Independent School District's latest progress monitoring report is revealing just how much of an impact student attendance has on funding and student learning.

During a GISD board meeting April 21, Assistant Superintendent Tammy Clark presented a snapshot on attendance and disciplinary removal data, with results revealing a substantial revenue loss of $2.5 million to date.

Clark said the district is funded on ADA or Average Daily Attendance, which means the amount of money GISD receives from the state is based on the average number of students in attendance each day.

"The flu hit, and it hit us hard," she said. "We are still trying to recover to catch back up to those good numbers. It was promising to see March was ahead of the past two years, so hopefully April and May will track the same."

According to Clark, GISD's ADA absences is 58,034, which has resulted in nearly $2.5 million in missed revenue — $1.5 million for excused absences and $1 million for unexcused.

***

It's a rare scenario when a family has become so engrained in a community they can boast five consecutive generations to have all graduated from the same high school, but the story of the Huston/Warren's family out of Tolar is one such example.

This legacy began a century ago this month, with the graduation of the family's matriarch, Floy May McIntosh-Huston, in 1925 and concluding with the graduation of her great-great grandson, Merrick Warren in a couple weeks.

May 17

Fairfield, Iowa, resident Marvin Taylor soon will be enjoying his favorite pastime of fishing again — and it's all thanks to his loved ones and a heroic Hood County 911 dispatcher for refusing to let him slip away.

What should have been the start of a faith-filled Sunday morning, March 16, on a vacation to Granbury quickly turned into a harrowing life-or-death experience for Taylor.

While getting ready for church, Taylor had a medical emergency, as his wife said, "He had no pulse and no heartbeat."

Panic-stricken, his wife cried out and went down the hall to ask her sister-in-law for help. The pair quickly called 911, where they reached 23-year-old Hood County Telecommunications Officer Isabel Martinez.

With Martinez's guidance, Donna and Sandra were able to rotate, each taking turns performing CPR on Marvin until help arrived.

***

The Granbury Police Department lost one of its own last month when retired narcotics K-9, Shorty, peacefully crossed the rainbow bridge at the age of 13.

"She was like a kid," Shorty's former handler Sgt. Richard Branum Jr. said. "She was a handful. She was rambunctious. She was just a unique dog."

May 24

Granbury Independent School District's school board made two announcements during Tuesday night's meeting, including naming Duane Fish as the new principal at Granbury High School.

Along with that announcement, the board named Jennifer Anderson as the new director of Special Programs.

Fish comes to Granbury from Keller ISD.

***

If someone thought they were having a bad day Friday, May 16, try being the dummy that was pinned below a tractor bucket having its leg sawed off by a man who learned what a gigli saw was only 30 seconds prior. It starts to put things in perspective, doesn't it?

While it may sound rather macabre, this scene proved more meaningful than masochistic. It wasn't some sketchy youths hanging out in the DeCordova Bend Park, delimbing a rubber body — but rather an amputation demonstration held by the Texas Health Resources' Amputation Team to educate Hood County's first-responders on proper amputation procedures.

Granbury's youngest mayor may not have been able to see above the dais — but she had no problem stealing the show during Tuesday's council meeting.

Nine-year-old Abigail Junkins took city leadership for a test drive May 20, as she stepped into her role as Mayor for the Day.

With an honorary mayor sash and an official seat on the dais, Abigail wielded the gavel like a seasoned pro, as she called the Granbury City Council meeting to order and led the pledges to the U.S. and Texas flags.

May 31

After more than a year of negotiations and discussions, Hood County Commissioners Court has selected a proposal for the Hood County YMCA property — and it's none other than the YMCA itself.

Following an executive session meeting May 27, commissioners unanimously voted to award the real estate proposal to YMCA Metropolitan Fort Worth, pending the signing of a sales contract. Officials said they could not disclose the terms of the contract until it is signed.

***

Tolar High School has opened the doors to the real world for the Class of 2025. The Tolar High School gym marked the end of their secondary school lives. Sixty-seven students received diplomas draped in caps and gowns with cords from various high school achievements as they switched tassels from one side of their square cap to the other, signifying their completed duties as a high school graduate to Tolar alumni.

***

The Lipan High School Class of 2025 is on its way to the real world, following the Friday, May 23, commencement at the high school gymnasium.

"We stand at the threshold of a new chapter, ready to embark on journeys that will shape us in ways we cannot yet imagine," Valedictorian Hanna Gaylor said in her address to her classmates.

June 7

Everyone's favorite volunteer doctor is memorialized through several of his habits and the natures of his character — his affinity for

PLEASE SEE YIR | A7



FILE PHOTO | HOOD COUNTY NEWS

Mayor Jim Jarratt instructs Granbury's honorary Mayor of the Day, 9-year-old Abigail Junkins, how to use a gavel at the dais before the Granbury City Council meeting May 20.



FILE PHOTO | HOOD COUNTY NEWS

It was a bittersweet night May 23 for the Granbury High School Class of 2025, as all 448 graduates accepted their diplomas and exited Pirate Stadium, closing the gate — and chapter — of their high school lives.

18 Graduate from Stars Accelerated High School



COURTESY PHOTO

The STARS Accelerated High School held commencement for its 18 fall semester graduates Dec. 18 in the Granbury High School Fine Arts Auditorium. The graduates, front row from left, are Dorothy Moore, Misty Meyers, Heaven Hanchett, Hanna Barrera, Wendy Lopez-De La Rosa, Kasie Defonce and Shelbi Davis; Back row, are Kaden Marfia, Kolby Kamp, Cayden Smith, Kylie Smith, Tyson LeBlanc, Ethan Kowalewski, Jorge Hernandez, Armani Patton, Bailey Weldon, Gavin Smith and Caden Winters.

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his daily kisses from the receptionist (Hershey's kisses that is), his quick-witted humor and his passion for the intricacies of medicine. But what Dr. Romeo Bachand will be most fondly remembered for is his ability to really listen — and more importantly — really hear.

Bachand joined Ruth's Place's team in its earliest days, when the clinic still was operating out of an old doublewide mobile home in Oak Trail Shores. Legend has it in 2009, Bachand, living in the area and hearing of the work being done for his community, knocked on the clinic door and demanded to be put to service. The retired veteran, pharmaceutical chemist and doctor never once regretted this impulse in the 16 years that followed, and he had Ruth's Place patients booked the very day he left this life, May 26.

Bachand operated as a volunteer adult practitioner at Ruth's Place every Tuesday and Wednesday, popping in on other occasions to say hey to his "work" friends. Through this schedule, Bachand logged more hours than any of the other volunteers combined — for every single one of the 16 years he shared with the clinic.

June 14

A lightning strike is suspected to be the cause of a gas well fire late Saturday night, June 7, along Mitchell Bend Highway.

Indian Harbor Volunteer Fire Department responded to the call at 11:38 p.m. from Hood County Dispatch and battled the blaze, clearing the scene at 11:27 a.m.

"(The) danger of the fire being at the gas well was the hazardous materials and the fully flammable materials," said Jeff Harper, assistant chief of the Indian Harbor VFD.

The fire was quickly contained in an area so the well companies could turn off the valves to the head of the gas well.

***

Hood County now is without an IT director after the Hood County Commissioners Court voted 3-2 last month to terminate Drew Wiederkehr.

In the recently released video from the May 19 special-called meeting, commissioners expressed their frustration with Wiederkehr regarding failure to meet critical cybersecurity deadlines.

June 21

Residents of the Mitchell Bend community now are in the process of becoming an incorporated city — a change that's dependent upon the outcome of the November election.

Danny Lakey, a four-year resident of Mitchell Bend, said this decision didn't come lightly. In fact, Lakey said he views it as a last-ditch effort to protect the health and safety of the community.

For the past couple of years, Lakey said Mitchell Bend residents — a community of about 350 — have suffered from the effects of the low-frequency hum emanating from the MARA-owned bitcoin plant, located south of Mitchell Bend Highway.

***

Granbury City Council unanimously approved to amend the Master Fee Schedule to increase the water and wastewater rates.

It was determined a rate increase for all water and sewer rates is necessary to keep pace with rising costs. The Phase 1 rate increase will raise the water and sewer monthly minimums and rates by 2.5 percent, increase the highest water tier rate and create a tiered sewer rate structure.

Council first increased these rates with the adoption of the budget in September 2024. According to city officials, this increase is being brought forward due to the cost of chemicals, supplies and rising operating expenses.

June 28

The city of Granbury is officially moving forward with plans to restore the Granbury Square Plaza, following damage caused by a recent storm.

Granbury City Council unanimously approved, during the June 17 meeting, the transfer $222,137.45 in insurance proceeds to the Granbury Historic Properties (GHP) to fund repairs and improvements to the historic building.

***

Hood County Commissioners Court approved in a 4-1 vote, a resolution establishing a 20-percent homestead exemption on property taxes.

A homestead exemption lowers the taxable value of a homeowner's primary residence, meaning Hood County residents will now pay property taxes on 80 percent of their home's appraised value.

The county previously adopted a 10-percent homestead exemption in July 2023 but decided to increase the exemption to provide the maximum tax relief available to property owners.



FILE PHOTO | HOOD COUNTY NEWS

An Indian Harbor firefigthter works to contain a gas well fire Saturday night, June 7, along Mitchell Bend Highway.



FILE PHOTO | HOOD COUNTY NEWS

Members of the David Crockett Chapter of the Sons of the Republic of Texas (SRT) and Hood's Texas Brigade Association Reactivated gathered to witness the unveiling of Gen. John Bell Hood's first Texas infantry brigade flag June 13.

Texas REALTORS® elect local realtor as regional vice president

Special to The News

Paula McDonald, a Granbury real estate broker, has been elected to serve as the Texas REALTORS Region 3 Vice President for 2026-28. McDonald was selected through a month's-long process in February at the Texas REALTORS® Winter Meeting in Austin.

"I am honored to have been selected by my colleagues to serve in this important role with our local associations and our state association," she said.

The regional vice presidents are representatives for policy decisions at the association. Their role is to gather feedback from their regions and provide it to the Texas REALTORS® Executive Board so it can make informed decisions about association policies.

Association of REALTORS Region 3 includes associations from Granbury, Johnson County, Greater Metro West, Greater Fort Worth, Arlington, Greater Lewisville, and Greater Denton-Wise.

Regional vice presidents also serve for other real estate board or office presentations and can share the latest information about the industry, including how Texas REALTORS advocates on behalf of the value of membership.

McDonald has been involved in the real estate industry for two decades. She formerly has served as the Granbury Association of REALTORS president, Texas REALTORS Board of Directors, Texas REALTORS 2024 commercial chair, and was a member of the inaugural Texas REALTORS Leadership Program with the Houston Association of REALTORS.

McDonald is the broker/owner of Beam & Branch Realty in Granbury.



Paula McDonald

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Graft earns paralegal certificate



JEFF OSBORNE | HOOD COUNTY NEWS

Hood County District Clerk Melanie Graft, who recently completed her paralegal certificate from Weatherford College, is recognized for outstanding service to the county by Precinct 4 Commissioner Dave Eagle (shown with Graft) and other members of the commissioners court. "She has gone above and beyond and has done a fantastic job," Eagle said. Earning a paralegal certificate requires completion of 90 hours of continuing education.

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FROM PAGE A3

sically, it just ensures that this piece of ranch land will continue to be a ranch from here on out."

With the easement, the family is still permitted to use its land as they always have — this legal agreement just ensures they always will.

"Two hundred years from now, everything around us might be developed and that kind of stuff, but this, this part won't," Langdon said.

Now, no matter how much development occurs, Hood County always will have at least 1,400 acres of rangeland, providing a haven for local flora and fauna.

"We wanted to conserve the native prairies and wildlife," Langdon said. "As far as the wildlife goes, they don't have a voice in the battle of whether things get chopped up or not, so we're kind of their voice."

Following his obtaining a land easement for the family's ranch, he joined the Board of Directors for the organization that made it all possible — the Texas Agricultural Land Trust.

Now, he continues to work full-time on the ranch, spending all of his spare time with the land trust board; educating, guiding and helping other local land owners obtain land easements of their own.

Join Langdon's lecture in person at 2 p.m. Jan. 4 at the Opal Durant Acton Community Center, located at 6430 Smoky Hill Ct. or join online via Zoom through the below QR code.



COURTESY PHOTO

Kelly Langdon is the speaker for January's ANC lecture series.

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GRANBURY LIVE
December 31st - 7:30pm
Midweek at Midnight
(New Year's Eve with Michael Hix)
January 3rd - 7pm
Windbreakers
"Yacht Rock" Tribute
January 8th - 7:30pm
Mike Eli
Mike Eli from the Eli Young Band
January 9th - 7pm
ZZ Tex / Kraig Parker
ZZ Top Tribute
January 10th - 7pm
Queen Legacy
A Tribute to Queen
January 16th - 7:30pm
James Carothers
January 17th - 7pm
Pigs on the Wall
Pink Floyd Tribute
January 23rd - 7pm
Glen Templeton
January 24th - 7pm
Know Return
A Kansas Tribute
January 30th - 7pm
Grand Illusion
STYX Tribute
January 31st - 7pm
Chad Prather & The Ragamuffins
an American conservative political commentator, comedian and internet personality

GHS choir brings Christmas joy



JEFF OSBORNE | HOOD COUNTY NEWS

Kendra Fisher, director of Granbury ISD choirs, directs a performance by students Dec. 16.



Members of the GHS choirs pose for a picture with members of the Golden Pirates Dec. 16.



Kendra Fisher, director of the Granbury ISD choirs, leads combined choirs during a performance Dec. 16.



Varsity boys and girls in the Granbury High School choirs sing Christmas carols during the first meeting of the GISD Golden Pirates Dec. 16.



Girls in the Granbury High School choirs sing Christmas carols during the first meeting of the GISD Golden Pirates Dec. 16.



Boys and girls in the Granbury High School choirs sing Christmas carols during the first meeting of the GISD Golden Pirates Dec. 16.



The GHS choirs sing Christmas songs during a Dec. 16 performance at a meeting of the GISD Golden Pirates.

The Granbury High School choirs sang Christmas songs to entertain members of the Golden Pirates Dec. 16. The Golden Pirates are a recently organized community group that seeks to connect people age 55 and older with opportunities to be involved with activities and also students and staff in the Granbury Independent School District. More information about the group is available online on the GISD website.

GVFD honors Members of the Year

Special to The News

The Granbury Volunteer Fire Department has recognized four firefighters as Members of the Year, including Brian Serratelli, who was named Firefighter of the Year by a vote of his peers.

Battalion Chief Donnie Hurd presented the award, calling it "well-deserved."

"Brian has taken advantage of opportunities and achieved a great deal," Hurd said. "GVFD provides many opportunities for members to succeed and do great things."

Serratelli received a traditional leather firefighter's helmet in recognition of the honor.

Eric Fleckenstein was named Rookie of the Year, also by a vote of department members. The award is unique in that recipients only are eligible once.

"This is pretty special," Hurd said during the presentation. "Eric has dedicated a lot of time to the department, responded to calls and spent many hours away from his family. It means a lot."

Ami Bush received the Officer's Award, which is selected by captains and chiefs. Fire Chief Matt Hohon said Bush consistently goes above and beyond.

"There are always a handful of people who give a little extra attention and effort, and that makes a huge difference," Hohon said. "Ami does a tremendous amount of work for the organization behind the scenes."

Carter Chance was honored with the Chief's Award. Hohon said Chance's contributions have not gone unnoticed.

"It is widely recognized by the chiefs that Carter deserves this recognition for the time, energy and effort he puts in behind the scenes," Hohon said.

Those interested in learning more about the Granbury Volunteer Fire Department or becoming a volunteer firefighter can visit gvfd.org or contact GVFD Station No. 1 at 817-579-1111.



COURTESY PHOTO

Granbury Volunteer Fire Department members of the year for 2025, from left, are Brian Serratelli, Ami Bush, Eric Fleckenstein and Carter Chance.

POLICE BLOTTER

Granbury Police Department criminal activity report

The following is a breakdown of activity occurring through the Granbury Police Department during Dec. 14-20. While there were many incidents, this is a partial list of more significant activity.

Dec. 14

2:25 a.m.: report of an assault in the 1000 block of Quiet Cove.

2:50 a.m.: report of an assault in the 1700 block of W. Pearl Street.

8:30 a.m.: report of an animal in the 3200 block of Ferry Boat Lane.

12:08 p.m.: report of an animal in the 4400 block of Sapphire Lane.

6:37 p.m.: report of an animal bite in the 3100 block of Ferry Boat Lane.

police reported 34 incidents, including four traffic stops.

Dec. 15

7:32 a.m.: report of an animal in the 3200 block of Ferry Boat Lane.

10:27 p.m.: report of an animal near E. Pearl Street and S. Houston Street.

police reported 59 incidents, including four major traffic accidents, one minor traffic accident and six traffic stops.

Dec. 16

7:53 a.m.: report of an animal in the 600 block of E. Pearl Street.

10:28 a.m.: report of criminal trespass in the 700 block of E. U.S. Highway 377.

12:43 p.m.: report of credit card abuse in the 200 block of W. Bridge Street.

1:51 p.m.: report of a parking problem near E. Bluff Street and S. Crockett Street.

4:38 p.m.: report of fraud in the 1000 block of Mickelson Drive.

11:38 p.m.: K-9 sniff in the 2800 block of Cypress Street.

police reported 97 incidents, including one major traffic accident, four minor traffic accidents and 10 traffic stops.

Dec. 17

2:03 a.m.: K-9 sniff in the 3200 block of Fall Creek Highway.

9:51 a.m.: report of road rage in the 700 block of S. Morgan Street.

12:28 p.m.: report of a disturbance in the 400 block of N. Travis Street.

1:40 p.m.: report of an animal in the 1700 block of W. Pearl Street.

2:33 p.m.: report of an animal in the 3900 block of E. U.S. Highway 377.

2:42 p.m.: report of an animal in the 1000 block of Quiet Cove.

3:11 p.m.: report of an animal in the 100 block of W. Bridge Street.

4:43 p.m.: report of road rage near Harbor Lakes Drive and E. U.S. Highway 377.

5 p.m.: report of an animal in the 2100 block of Loop 567.

5:43 p.m.: report of an animal in the 2300 block of N.E. Loop 567.

6:49 p.m.: report of animal welfare in the 300 block of Donna Circle.

10:44 p.m.: k-9 sniff in the 1900 block of E. U.S. Highway 377.

10:53 p.m.: report of loud music in the 1500 block of 2nd Street.

police reported 79 incidents, including one major traffic accident, two minor traffic accidents and 21 traffic stops.

Dec. 18

12:25 a.m.: report of a DWI near Weatherford Highway and Reed Road.

10:55 a.m.: report of an animal in the 100 block of Spieth Court.

11:54 a.m.: report of an animal in the 4800 block of Sapphire Lane.

7:35 p.m.: report of a disturbance in the 1700 block of Swale Lane.

police reported 79 incidents, including one major traffic accident and 44 traffic stops.

Dec. 19

2:03 a.m.: report of drug possession in the 3500 block of E. U.S. Highway 377.

8:57 a.m.: report of an animal in the 4800 block of Sapphire Lane.

10:42 a.m.: report of theft between $100-$750 in the 1400 block of James Road.

11:58 a.m.: report of property damage near Meander Road and Old Granbury Road.

4:57 p.m.: report of a panic alarm in the 3400 block of E. U.S. Highway 377.

10:09 p.m.: report of a disturbance in the 300 block of Parkwood Lane.

11:49 p.m.: report of a sexual assault in the 1200 block of N. Plaza Drive.

police reported 87 incidents, including one major traffic accident, one hit and run traffic accident, four minor traffic accidents and 46 traffic stops.

Dec. 20

3:40 a.m.: K-9 sniff in the 1200 block of N. Plaza Drive.

4:37 a.m.: report of a SWAT callout in the 1200 block of N. Plaza Drive.

8 a.m.: report of an animal in the 200 block N. Baker Street.

3:04 p.m.: report of a disturbance in the 3700 block of E. U.S. Highway 377.

9:37 p.m.: report of a DWI near Fall Creek Highway and Acton Highway.

11:49 p.m.: report of an assault in the 800 block of Chanel Drive.

police reported 56 incidents, including one major traffic accident, one minor traffic accident and 14 traffic stops.



JAIL

FROM PAGE A1

voted to delay contract approval, with Massingill and Wilson opposing, which effectively tabled approval until January 2026 or thereafter.

In other action, the commissioners court:

• Approved a request for qualifications for a radio communications consulting firm to implement the work plan of Avistas' evaluation of a radio systems strategy for Hood County.

"I think this is the next logical step in moving forward," Samuelson said. She said the evaluation was "very detailed and included several next steps we need to embark on."

• Approved a resolution to conduct a joint primary election March 3, 2026. The Republican and Democratic primaries will include local, state and national candidates on the ballot.

The resolution was presented by Stephanie Cooper, the county elections administrator.

"It looks like everybody is happy," Eagle said. "You're doing a great job, Ms. Cooper."

• Approved payment of $7,995 to Bracewell LLP for legal services for November.

• Recognized Mary Flores for 10 years of service to the Hood County Sheriff's Office Victim Assistance Program.

• Recognized Lakeside Baptist Church, Salvation Army, Granbury Church of Christ and the Hood County Victim's Assistance Program for their support of the Victim Assistance Program.

• Recognized District Clerk Melanie Graft for completing her paralegal certificate from Weatherford College.

• Approved the future placement of a plaque outside the Hood County Courthouse noting that this courthouse was the first in Texas to be placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1974.



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A 'Claus' for celebration: GISD Schools celebrate the holidays

COURTESY PHOTOS

Across Granbury Independent School District's Elementary campuses, students were celebrating the yuletide season — and the end of the first semester— with parties, crafts, cocoa, dress up days and movie watches. See each school below to see how each campus got into the Christmas cheer.













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Christmas for Children holds annual distribution day









CHLOE LAING | HOOD COUNTY NEWS

TOP LEFT: This year, Christmas for Children made the Christmas wishes of 1,600 Hood County kids come true.

TOP RIGHT:Once a year, Christmas for Children volunteers, including Becky Gibson pictured above, get to dawn their Santa hats and participate in spreading Christmas magic.

BOTTOM RIGHT: Christmas for Children's distribution day is based out of Decker Gym, where each year, the entire floor is covered in gifts provided by the community, for the community.



Toys for Tots distribution day Dec. 19, 22







MARY VINSON | HOOD COUNTY NEWS

TOP Left: Rancho Brazos Community Center recently sent a message to families still in need of toys this holiday season, inviting them to the Toys for Tots distribution Friday, Dec. 19, or Monday, Dec. 22.

TOP RIGHT: All hands were on deck at Friday's Toys for Tots Rancho Brazos distribution, as the monthly Tarrant Area Food Bank mobile food distribution also was taking place at the Center. The folks at RBCC truly cherish their TAFB partnership.

BOTTOM LEFT: The folks at Rancho Brazos Community Center are forever grateful and truly cherish every volunteer and individual who dedicates their time, especially during this cold season.



Full-Service ER Now Open in Fall Creek

When someone in your family needs emergency care, you want it fast. Now, with a **new ER at Fall Creek**, **Lake Granbury Medical Center** provides patients with:

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Hood County News

SPORTS

GRANBURY ★ CRESSON ★ TOLAR ★ LIPAN

B

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 27, 2025

Tolar senior to cheer at Tarleton

Rattler cheerleader is staying purple

BY JAXON HANSARD
jaxon@hcnews.com

Tolar senior Chyenne Talbot will be taking her talents and positive cheer elsewhere after graduating this May. Luckily it won't be far as the cheer captain has committed to cheer down the road at Tarleton State University.

While she did not originally like cheer in her first experience when she was age 4 at a pee wee cheer event, that changed when she was involved with competitive gymnastics in the third grade. By the sixth grade, she was involved with competitive cheer trampling and tumbling with "Miss Tammy's All-Star" in Cleburne and then with "Outlaw Cheer Company" in Weatherford when she started high school.

She originally was inspired to cheer competitively by a classmate who competed. She was required to try sports in junior high but "I was not coordinated enough for that."

"She could always do these awesome flips and I remember my mom showing me pictures of her and the uniform and the makeup and the lights. I thought it looked like so much fun and exactly what I wanted to do," Chyenne said.

Cheer season is all year with three practices a week in Weatherford that last multiple hours and competitions on the weekend. All the time required for it was not enough for Chyenne in her first year.

"I feel like I could not get enough of it. I really enjoyed going up there and I was really close to my teammates. Once the season ended, I was ready to go again and be with my friends," Chyenne said.

Getting home late most nights and still having school did make her wish for having some kind of break, but it didn't make her love it any less. The friends she made along the way has been one of her favorite things about competitive cheer.

"You're with them on their best days and their worst days, and just seeing people that vulnerable gets you really close, really fast. Some of my best friends I've made are through competitive cheer," Chyenne said.

The glitz and glam of being a cheerleader is one of the other parts of cheer she likes. Her favorite action on a cheer team is when she helps hold up the girl up in the air (stunting).

"I love the makeup. I love getting my hair all big. It always was my goal to have it the biggest. I like tumbling, but being able to stunt was one of my favorite things," Chyenne said.

She's been the cheer captain at Tolar for two years and has enjoyed leading and having an impact on her team. As a child, she was an avid cheer camp participant so cheer captain was a natural goal.

"I've known since my freshman year that cheering in college has always been a goal of mine. I've always had eyes on Tarleton, I've gone to Tarleton clinic since the seventh grade. This last year is when I got the email letter of intent, I really knew it is something I wanted to pursue," Chyenne said.

She originally wanted to cheer at a Southeastern Conference school but some did not have sideline cheering for sports so they were not on her list anymore. The three consecutive national championships that resided 21 miles down the road did pique her interest. Tarleton's Division 1 classification and successfully proven cheer program just made sense. Some current Tarleton cheerleaders are former Tolar Rattlers and friends of Chyenne, so she had a connection.

After reaching contact with Texan cheer members and being scouted by the program, a good email was found in her junk folder.

"One day, I was going through my junk in my email and it said Tarleton cheer. I went to my friends because I was at school and I thought this has to be a joke. I was dumbfounded that it happened," Chyenne said.

"We always wanted her to go to Tarleton because we wanted her close to home, at the same time we're going to let her go out and make decisions. I think Tarleton was always where she wanted to go, but once they kind of pursued her it was clear as day," Chyenne's father Blake Talbot said.

Being in contact with her future cheer teammates has been an exciting and surreal time as she is ready to graduate from Tolar. She is trying to enjoy her senior year, but a case of "senior-itus" definitely has set in.

"Now that I am committed, I've met so many people. Now they'll come up and introduce themselves to me, which is so cool to me because now they know who I am," Chyenne said.



COURTESY PHOTO

Chyenne Talbot is on stage in her competitive cheer uniform and makeup for "Outlaw Cheer Company." The makeup and hair are some of her favorite things about cheer.



COURTESY PHOTO

Tolar senior Chyenne Talbot (center) officially signs to cheer at Tarleton State after high school. She is sitting with her family: Her brother, Ty Talbot (far left); father, Blake Talbot (middle left); mother, Katie Talbot (middle right); and sister, Bryleigh Talbot (far right).

There are some nerves for the Rattler senior as she understands how good the girls and program she's coming into is, but the anticipation is killer her.

"From an early age, she was doing gymnastics and we were always going to events. It just became part of our normal life. The past few years the potential to cheer in college was a reality. We're super excited and super proud of her. Can't wait to go see her do her thing and be in her element," Blake said.

"I love Tarleton because it's a D1 but it still feels small and homley. Going to a small school, you get used to knowing a lot of people and it being a small environment is how Tarleton feels to me, just like small-town Tolar does," Chyenne said.

She will be studying in the nursing program at Tarleton and deciding on being a nurse or pharmacist.

Lady Pirates pull out a tough win in Lipan

BY JAXON HANSARD
jaxon@hcnews.com

The Lady Pirates evened up their overall record to 10-10 after beating Lipan 54-48 Dec. 19. This was a first for head coach Brad Blalock and the first matchup between the two Hood County schools in at least 20 years. Lipan fell to 15-4.

"I've coached against her seven times and I've never beaten her. She is phenomenal. She does a great job. That's a phenomenal program, they have a state championship caliber team this year," Blalock said about Lipan girls coach Amber Branson and her team.

In a very physical game, defense and shot making was the dividing factors for the two teams. Both teams had intense defense but Lipan struggled to make shots in the first half of the game, digging them a hole they just couldn't climb out of.

Freshman Skylar Harrison and junior Jacy Bolton split point guard responsibilities and made a big difference down the stretch. Senior Finley Shockley made tough shots to keep the Lady Indians in the game but still fell short of a win in the end.

Blalock received praise from Branson on how prepared his girls were. He had his team prepared specifically to what Lipan is best at and what "small town basketball" would be like with an intense home game for Lipan.

"That's a great compliment coming from a great coach. We treated it like a district game a little bit. We make sure we see what everybody can do and we try to look at their actions. I think that's what we do really well, we defend their actions really well and I think that's been a case for the last three games," Blalock said.

Granbury was able to take a lead in the second quarter when senior Hannah Dafoe was fouled and made both her free throws to put the Lady Pirates ahead 18-17. From there on, Lipan never was able to take the lead back. Granbury's intense defense and ability to score off turnovers gave them all the momentum they needed to win.

"They had the momentum because they came ready to play. Our shots weren't falling and it was partly due to their defense. We were back on our heels and they just played really great, made us do some things that we don't normally do and just hats off to them," Branson said.

"We're playing really good basketball at the right time. We're going to keep learning from these situations and keep trying to get better for the second half of the district," Blalock said.

"Hats off to Coach Blalock and Granbury. They came in ready to play and they played hard from the very start. I don't think we matched that energy," Branson said.



JAXON HANSARD | HOOD COUNTY NEWS

The Lady Pirates celebrate their win against the Lady Indians at Lipan.

Kendra Fisher is 'A.C.E.s'



Kendra Fisher

Kendra Fisher has been chosen as this week's winner of the Hood County News A.C.E. (Achieving Campus Excellence) Award.

Kendra is a choir teacher at Granbury High School. She was nominated by student Katie Pigg.

Kendra has this to say about Jennifer: "She loves her students and does her best to show that. She helps us break out of our bubble and embrace our talents as one. She is truly a saint and deserves to be recognized for it. Her work is truly the most welcoming, and she makes sure that her classes know they're family. Ms. Fisher is extraordinary due to her patience, kindness, and love for her job. She recognizes the talent in all of her students and gives them the confidence so we can embrace our true selves. Dealing with 45 students in one room must be hard, but with her hard work, we get a beautifully composed and directed song out of it. I believe out of all the teachers in this school, Ms. Fisher is definitely one of the best."

About A.C.E.

Hood County schools are filled with incredible people who go above and beyond every day, and now we're celebrating them with the A.C.E. Award — Achieving Campus Excellence. Nominations are open from 5 p.m. Monday through Friday each week to students, parents and colleagues. Nominate your favorite teacher or staff member from any district across Hood County. The winner will be announced and featured in the next edition of the Hood County News.

TACO CASA

Lipan flips a switch in win against City View

BY JAXON HANSARD
jaxon@hcnews.com

Lipan improved its record to 15-1 with a 73-56 win against City View Dec. 19. The Mustangs surprised Lipan by starting the game playing man-to-man defense instead of their usual two-three zone. This made the start of the game more difficult, but Lipan made it's perimeter shots and played defense.

"Once we settled in and got a little better ball movement, we were able to knock some shots, but we really extended our lead because we played good defense the first half," head coach Brent Gaylor said.

The Indians built a 44-25 lead at halftime. City View made some three-point shots and forced Lipan to take some less desirable shots. Lipan was ahead 59-41 at the end of the third quarter. Gaylor credited the players on City View and emphasized to his team how they can't let up.

"We just flipped the switch back on and kind of pulled back away. I told them we can't afford to do that, it's going to slip up and a good team's going to come back and beat us one these days if we don't keep the pedal to the metal on them," Gaylor said.

Junior Court Gaylor started the final quarter with nine straight points for Lipan. He started the third quarter with five straight points, but the team was able to keep up their run from the first half.

"It's a blessing and curse in some ways because we have a lot of really talented players. We all can score the ball in different ways and we don't have to come down and shoot it after one pass, let's make the defense work a little longer," Gaylor said.

Sophomore Levi Mason played a majority of the second half and got important minutes sharing the guard duties with Court Gaylor. The offense and ball movement improved after halftime. Mason's defense is the catalyst for his playing time and his ability to play off-the-ball with the bench unit.

"Let's get everybody involved. The same shots you can take and pass one or two, they're going to be there in the sixth or seventh pass of the possession. When you're making shots, everything looks really good, it's just a matter of missing and making shots," Gaylor said. "He's improving (Mason). He's still young. This is his first year of varsity ball and he makes some mistakes sometimes. It's one of those things where you also have to throw him in the fire sometimes and learn from it. I try to play him and set him up, especially a game like that," Gaylor said.

Court Gaylor had 28 points. Sophomore Brayden Harrison had 16 points. Senior Darius Steed had 14 points. Junior Evan Lott had 10 points.



JAXON HANSARD | HOOD COUNTY NEWS

Sophomore Brayden Harrison pulls up for a three-point shot. He finished the game with 16 points.

Lady Rattlers improve to 3-0 in district play

BY JAXON HANSARD
jaxon@hcnews.com

Tolar beat Millsap 62-28 Dec. 19. The Lady Rattlers are 3-0 in district play. Junior Jaycee Jones had 19 points, four rebounds, six steals and four assists. Freshman Macy Price had 13 points, one block, three rebounds, two steals and three assists. Sophomore Reilyn Brown had 11 points, four rebounds, two steals and two assists. Sophomore Atley Kolb had eight points, one block, eight rebounds and one steal.

"Millsap is always scrappy, and they play hard. They're a great team that we tip our hats to. Coach Wooldridge is doing a great job there," Head Coach Ericka Halfmann said.

Granbury boys basketball

Granbury lost a close game to Abilene Wylie 61-56 Dec. 18. Junior Kylan Loving had 16 points. Senior Miller Schenewark had 12 points. Sophomore Brannon Burns had 12 points. Sophomore Karson Barrington had seven points.

Tolar boys basketball

Tolar beat Millsap 75-36 Dec. 19 to start its district portion of the season. The Rattlers now are 1-0 in district and 7-6 overall. Junior Cayden Abrego had 25 points. Junior Madok Delgado had 15 points. Juniors Kelvin Murray had nine points. Juniors Briton Rice had eight points and Lucas Mills had seven points.

Lipan boys basketball

Lipan improved its record to 15-1 with a 73-56 win against City View Dec. 19. Junior Court Gaylor had 28 points. Sophomore Brayden Harrison had 16 points. Senior Darius Steed had 14 points. Junior Evan Lott had 10 points.



Hood County High Five Athlete of the Week
Court Gaylor

Junior Court Gaylor had 19 points and six rebounds in Lipan's 58-47 win against Fort Worth Country Day Dec. 12. (Credit: Josh Burton)

Hood County High Five, sponsored by Taco Casa, is all about celebrating the athletes who inspire us with their talent, dedicatation, and sportmanship. Eash week, our community has the chance to cheer on local standouts and give them the recognition they deserve. Shining a spotlight on Hood County's athletes — this is where home town pride meets athletic achievement. To vote, go hcnews.com and click on the "Local Contest" link at the top of the page.







Late-season, Christmas buck a favorite meat



BY LUKE CLAYTON

Luke Clayton is an outdoors enthusiast. Email him through his website www.catfishradio.org.

I love spending time in the fall and winter woods hunting deer and venison, and when properly handled in the field and prepared for the table, it is one of my favorite meats.

This season has been a "different" one for me. I enjoy hunting when it's cooler for several reasons. There is no mad rush to ice the meat when it is chilly, it's really better to allow venison to age a few days when temperatures allow. During warm weather, it's necessary either to take the venison to a processor with a walk-in cooler immediately — which is not always possible — or to quarter the animal and place it on ice soon after harvest.

I kept procrastinating on my bow hunts because of an over-abundance of mosquitoes and temperatures more suited to sunbathing on the beach in July. It was well into November before I seriously began hunting deer and most of my time afield was spent hunting, not harvesting.

Oh, I passed on some nice bucks but they were not fully mature and through the years I've taken lots of bucks and some heavy antlered ones. Through my many years of deer hunting, I've become very picky when it comes to hanging a buck on the meat pole. My primary criteria is age, I want to shoot a fully mature animal, and the size of the rack is not a hindrance to the one I release the arrow or pull the trigger on.

I actually favor hunting old bucks with racks most hunters would pass. When it comes to shooting doe, I often opt for the younger animal rather than the older does, which is contrary to most hunters that target the bigger doe that pack the most venison. I was raised in an era when the mere thought of killing female deer was tabu with many hunters but decades ago, the boys with the sheep's skins on the wall proved it's necessary to keep deer numbers in balance with the habitat and that equates to removing surplus doe.

When possible, I target younger doe and leave the older mature animals as brood stock. I figure they have been around long enough to become proficient at raising fawns so why not let them continue a few more years.

With last year's venison supply depleted in the freezer and an appetite for chicken fried backstrap and venison fajitas. Last week's colder weather was all I needed to inspire me to devote the time in the woods to accomplish my goal.

I'm fortunate to have some very good deer hunting close to home and my trail camera had captured the image of what appeared to be a couple of very nice bucks, one of them near a feeder where I had set up one of the new see-through pop-up ground blinds. I've had great luck hunting from the ground and now in my mid-70s, I feel more comfortable sitting on a hunting stool ground level than perched 15 feet up in a tree. My goal is to still be hunting deer a decade from now and I think my odds will be much better if I stay "grounded."

The feeder near the ground blind is set to throw corn at precisely 5 p.m. I arrived about 4 p.m. and got settled in with my 51 caliber Tex Rex air rifle topped with an ATN X-Sight digital scope. My furthest shot would be 40 yards in the heavy cover and the rifle is quite capable of taking deer at least twice that far. The cool thing about using a digital scope is being able to film quality video in color. At precisely 4:55 p.m., I caught movement in very heavy cover off to my left. At first, I thought it might be a bobcat or even a raccoon. I was just getting quick glimpses.

I soon saw an impressive set of antlers appear as a very nice buck moved from behind a big oak. I clicked the record button on the scope and began filming. The buck was cautiously making his way to the feeder, in true nature of an older buck. He was in no hurry, a step or two then a pause to test the wind. I totally forgot the feeder was set to throw corn at 5 p.m. You guessed it. Just as the deer walked close to the feeder, it went off and the buck disappeared in an instant in the direction from which he came. I later discovered the scope had captured the entire scene in vivid color.



COURTESY PHOTO

Luke used his 51 caliber Tex Rex air rifle last week to stock the freezer with some "Christmas Venison" on a close to home hunt.

It's not uncommon for a deer to return to a feeding area after being spooked. I'm sure the buck had heard a game feeder motor distributing corn many times. I settled back to see what the next hour of legal shooting light might hold. Then, with 10 minutes of legal shooting time left, I again caught a glimpse of a deer with antlers on the offside side of the little clearing I was hunting. I thought it was the same buck, a mature 10-pointer and one I wanted to take.

Again, I activated the video camera on in the scope and nudged the rifle's safety off. The shot was good and I watched the buck disappear down the well-used game trail that it came in on. The shot was at a mere 27 yards, more like bow range than rifle. I was positive the shot was good and that I'd find my Christmas venison a few yards down the trail. Darkness was about to fall and I gambled and immediately followed the trail to the buck. It's always best to wait a few minutes after the shot but I guessed right and made an easy recovery.

If you were like me and did your serious deer hunting late in the season, have heart; we still have a few days of the regular season left and then there's muzzleloader season. I have my CVA 50 caliber Optima muzzleloader cleaned and ready. My goal is to put a couple more deer in the freezer. Waiting this late to do my serious deer hunting, I shouldn't have to worry much about keeping the meat chilled and that's a big plus to hunting late season deer.

Check out Luke's air gun hunt on YouTube or Carbon TV by searching "A Sportsmans Life" and open the current show. Email Luke through his website catfishradio.org.

Strolling along Lake Granbury, on the search for fish



BY MICHAEL ACOSTA

As a licensed professional fishing guide, Michael Acosta shows you how to find them. A Granbury resident of more than 35 years, he has been fishing all of his life, and has been a licensed guide since 1998.

I have talked about several techniques used in the winter to catch stripers, hybrids and sandbass. My favorite method of catching these species in the winter is typically called "dead sticking;" however, there are times when "strolling" can be more effective.

What is "strolling?" Strolling is a slang term used to mean "slow trolling." Slow trolling or strolling is typically done with a weighted jig head with a swim bait attached or a jerk bait. We all know slow is the best philosophy in the winter in presenting a bait and that is true, but strolling allows you to cover a little more water than dead sticking.

Strolling is not much different than "dead sticking." The only difference is you are using your trolling motor a little faster than dead sticking, covering an area looking for an active predator to chase. The real trick is to get your bait to the correct depth based on the weight of the lure and the speed of the boat. The best way I know is to get in water that is the same depth as you believe the fish are holding at and run your trolling motor at the slow speed, and let out enough line so the bait is bouncing off the bottom, then reel up a turn or two to get your bait just above that depth.

Of course, your best depth to work your presentation is where the majority of the bait fish are holding. Use of your sonar is key to locating bait and predators. The gulls can also assist in finding fish this time of year, as we all know.

If you find the striped bass on top, you may stop and cast your swim bait and let the bait fall through the fish, and more than likely you will get bit on the way down. Remember approximately how many seconds your bait fell before you got bit, you never know, there may be a pattern lurking at a certain depth that may be repeatable.

Generally, strolling will typically work better on those warmer days in the winter when the fish will be a little more active. I prefer dead sticking on the really cold days, as this is what I have confidence in. It still is a good idea to have both available, as you never know.

So, what baits work best strolling? I know some of the newer Storm Wildeyes really are effective. The shad and chartreuse colors are preferred. These types of baits have the weighted head built into the soft plastic, which makes your life easier (just tie it on and go). Another good choice in swim baits are sassy shad type baits. The "glow" color sassy shad threaded on a half to three-quarter ounce jig head is effective. It also is important to match what the fish are feeding on. Typically, a good 3-6 inch bait is effective for stripers and hybrids.

Remember, however, this is a slow troll. This is an easy method of fishing that can be applied to other species other than stripers. Sandbass this time of year also will bite this same method; however, you of course, will be better off using a much smaller swim bait.

Hood County fishing report

Granbury water temperatures have been see-sawing some with the cold and then warm-ups. Water temperatures are in the low to middle 50s. The lake is not stained and the lake is full. Best action for striped bass continues to be on the lower ends on live bait and jigs. Look for those striped bass in 20-30 feet of water. Largemouth also are being caught at those deeper depths as that is where the bait fish are. Soft plastics and crankbaits are on order. You might find them on top where sandbass and striped bass are feeding. Big blue and yellow cats have been hit and miss, but your best option is cut shad fished mid lake to near Hunter Park on the upper ends. Crappie continues to be good suspended on structure (timber/bridge pilings) in many areas of the lake. Sandbass have been slow to fair on slabs and spinners near hovering birds mid-lake.

Comanche Creek (formerly Squaw Creek) Black Bass continue to be good in numbers on soft plastics. The warm lake draws anglers from all across the state. Catfish anglers are catching good numbers of eater-sized channel catfish on prepared baits. Tilapia continue to be abundant in the warmer water and many are taken using a cast net. Tilapia are an invasive species and are not to be returned to the lake if caught. They are great table fare, so take as many as you can catch.

Acton Little dribblers halftime show



JAXON HANSARD | HOOD COUNTY NEWS

Cru Ellis (sitting) wins the basketball musical chairs game against Rush Whithett.



JAXON HANSARD | HOOD COUNTY NEWS

Aniston Goodman (left) and Kylie Thomas (right) circle the chairs before they have to run to the hoop for a layup.



JAXON HANSARD | HOOD COUNTY NEWS

Acton Middle School students participate in a basketball-themed game of musical chairs.

GRANBURY GONEBY



BY JOSH BURTON

The Hood County News is looking back on what's been published this week. As part of Granbury Goneby, staff have found stories from 20, 40 and 60 years ago that may have made a significant impact on the community.

Granbury Goneby

The Hood County News is looking back on what's been published this week throughout the years. As part of Granbury Goneby, staff have found stories from 20, 40 and 60 years ago that may have made an impact on the community.

Dec. 23, 1965 — 60 years ago

Dec. 28 will be the last day residents can go to the present post office for their mail, stamps, packages, money orders and other services, because after that work day, the move to the new building along W. Bridge Street will be completed, Postmaster J.T. Maness said.

Students in the three schools in the county are out for the holidays. Classes were dismissed in the Granbury schools at 3:40 p.m. Dec. 22 and will resume Jan. 3. Similar schedules are being followed in Lipan and Tolar.

The Granbury High School choir will appear at 7:30 p.m. tonight at the First Presbyterian Church. The event will be the culmination of the Christmas season. A memorable candlelight service will be conducted, along with the singing of Christmas carols.

Dec. 26, 1985 — 40 years ago

Volunteer firefighters were kept busy dec. 23 fighting two separate fires in Hood County, bringing the total number of fires to five the area departments had to battle recently. Four of the five calls involved residences, resulting in a lot of damage. No injuries were reported.

The hospital board voted Dec. 23 to obtain individual liability insurance policies for the hospitals emergency room doctors. The board previously had insured the doctors within a group liability policy, but due to increasing costs and unavailability of insurance, the board chose the individual insurance.

Hood County commissioners Dec. 23 approved a resolution authorizing County Judge Milton Meyer to accept grant funds for a new juvenile center. Meyer also was given authorization to name the project director and financial officer for the proposed facility.

Dec. 22, 2005 — 20 years ago

A veteran deputy with the Hood County Sheriff's Department is facing a three- to five-day suspension without pay following the "overzealous" treatment of two juveniles in an incident Nov. 22. Jim Scroggins did not violate any department policy by handcuffing the boys, ages 11 and 12, but he did show a lac of respect toward the juveniles, Sheriff Gene Mayo said.

More than 90 people attended a public hearing regarding the Brazos River Authority's boating capacity study for Lake Granbury. John Titre, directors of Park Study, Inc., said the authority board of directors voted to contract with his company to conduct the study. The process began in March of this year with a workshop.

Lawmen report a "quick change artist" hit three local banks Dec. 19, scamming the tellers for an undisclosed amount of money. The suspect visited the drive-through windows at the First National Bank in Tolar, First National Bak along South Morgan Street and First National Bank on the square in Granbury.

SUPPORT SYSTEMS

Every day

Alcoholics Anonymous. Do you or someone you know have a problem with alcohol? Meetings at 10 a.m., noon and 7 p.m. each day at 1205 Lipan Highway, Granbury.

Sunday through Friday

Acton 12 Step Group meets at 7 p.m. at 3609 Acton Highway behind Madison Park.

Every Saturday

Women's Way Out AA-Alcoholics Anonymous. Closed discussion for women only. Meets at 10 a.m. every Saturday at 301 W. Bridge St. For more information, call 317-772-8124.

Every Monday

Promises Al-Anon group meets at 6 p.m. every Monday at First Presbyterian Church, fellowship hall, west entrance, 303 W. Bridge St.

***

Acton Al-Anon 12 Step Group meeting noon to 1 p.m. Located in the Acton Library in the same building as the fire department, 6430 Smokey Hill Court. For more information, call 817-308-3300.

Every Tuesday

Punchin' Parkinson's in Granbury. 12:30-1:30 p.m. A noncontact boxing and fitness program designed for people with Parkinson's Disease. First Christian Church, 2109 W. U.S. Highway 377 next door to Tractor Supply.

***

GriefShare 14-week seminar. Next session begins 6:30-8 p.m. Sept. 10. Presented by StoneWater Church, Granbury, this program is a support group designed to help rebuild lives. Book for course, $20, "Finding Hope After the Loss of a Loved One." Register: GriefShare.StoneWaterChurch.com or call 817-579-9175. May call anytime for help.

***

Celebrate Recovery is a Christ-centered recovery program. Free dinner 6-6:45 p.m., large group meetings 7-8 p.m., small group meetings 8-9 p.m. Lakeside Baptist Church, 500 W. Bluebonnet Drive. 817-573-2094. Questions: Tim White 817-223-0973 or Becky Pierce 254-396-5918.

***

Acton 12 -Step Women's Group meets at 5:30 p.m. at 3609 Acton Highway behind Madison Park.

***

WeightWatchers, 9:30 a.m. and 6 p.m. Fun, supportive group for achieving a healthy weight, with or without GLP-1 medication. At Healthy Connections, 1321 Waters Edge Drive, Suite 1001, Granbury.

Every Thursday

Take Off Pounds Sensibly or TOPS. 8:45-10:30 a.m. Lakeside Baptist Church, room 133, 500 W. Bluebonnet Drive. For information, call 262-227-7144.

***

GriefShare Recovery seminar and support recovery seminar and support group meets at 10 a.m. at Interim Hospice, 1314 Paluxy Drive, Suite 200. Childcare is not provided. Fee for Griefshare workbook is $15. Details: 817-573-7474.

***

Re | engage marriage enrichment meets at 6:30 p.m. every Thursday at StoneWater Church in Granbury. For more information email to paige.kitchens@stonewaterchurch.com.

***

Acton 12 -Step Women's Group meets at 5:30 p.m. at 3609 Acton Highway behind Madison Park.

***

Men's prayer group meets 7-8 p.m. in the Outreach Center at Lakeside Baptist Church in the building to the right of the main church, 500 West Bluebonnet Drive in Granbury.

Every Friday

Celebrate Recovery, Christ-centered recovery program. 12-step groups meet 7-8 p.m., "Friday Night Live! Church" 8:15-9 p.m. Lakeside Baptist Church, 500 W. Bluebonnet Drive. 817-573-2094. Questions: Tim White 817-223-0973 or Becky Pierce 254-396-5918.

***

Acton Al-Anon 12-Step Group meeting noon to 1 p.m. Located in the Acton Library in the same building as the fire department, 6430 Smokey Hill Court. For more information, call 817-308-3300.

First Monday

Alzheimer's Support Group, join others to share concerns, 10 a.m. at Acton Methodist Church, 3433 Fall Creek Highway. Details: 817-326-2355.

First Tuesday

Alzheimer's Caregivers support group, 10:30-11:30 a.m. in the 1894 Building at Acton Baptist Church, 3500 Fall Creek Highway. For caregivers, family members, friends and anyone in the community. Details: 817-326-4693.

Second Saturday

Grief support group for anyone grieving a loss in their life. This is an informal gathering for breakfast. Please join us for conversation and community, location varies. Call for info: Amy Dwight 817-894-2449 or Danny Dwight 817-219-9833.

Second Monday

DAV Granbury Memorial Chapter 238 monthly chapter meeting at 7 p.m. at 959 Charterhouse Circle. DAV Granbury assists veterans and their families in getting the benefits they have earned. The group can assist in filing claims and navigating the Veterans Administration process for benefits. Contact info: 682-719-5560; davgranbury@gmail.com.

Third Monday

Alzheimer's Support Group, join others to share concerns, 10 a.m. at Acton Methodist Church, 3433 Fall Creek Highway. Details: 817-326-2355.

Third Tuesday

Alzheimer's Caregivers support group, 10:30-11:30 a.m. in the 1894 Building at Acton Baptist Church, 3500 Fall Creek Highway. For caregivers, family members, friends and anyone in the community. Details: 817-326-4693.

Fourth Tuesday

Parkinson's Support Group, 1 p.m. at Lakestone Terrace, 916 E. U.S. Highway 377. Open for those with Parkinson's Disease and their families who want to understand more about this disease. Details: 817-999-1470.

Fourth Saturday

Grief support group for anyone grieving a loss in their life. This is an informal gathering for breakfast. Please join us for conversation and community. Location varies. Call for info: Amy Dwight 817-894-2449, or Danny Dwight 817-219-9833.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Saturday, Dec. 27

Visit Granbury will hold the Granbury Great American Petting Farm from noon to 8 p.m. at the Granbury Square Plaza, 201 E. Pearl St. Expect festive holiday photo ops, adorable animals to feed and merchandise available for your holiday gift shopping. Cost is $5.

***

Sunday, Dec. 28

Visit Granbury will hold the Granbury Great American Petting Farm from noon to 6 p.m. at the Granbury Square Plaza, 201 E. Pearl St. Expect festive holiday photo ops, adorable animals to feed and merchandise available for your holiday gift shopping. Cost is $5.

***

Wednesday, Dec. 31

Granbury Live presents Midweek at Midnight New Year's Eve with Michael Hix. Dinner will be served at 6 p.m. and show begins at 7:30 p.m. The show will feature live performances of pop love songs, funky soul and party anthems from Marvin Gaye to Bruno Mars. Attendees should dress to impress: sparkles, suits and sass encouraged. The event features a champagne countdown and a kiss from a loved one. Tickets can be purchased at granburylive.com.

***

Saturday, Jan. 3

Granbury Live presents Windbreakers "Yacht Rock" Tribute at 7 p.m. The group is a distinctly smooth "Yacht Rock" tribute dedicated to resurrecting the best music ever to hit the airwaves — 1970s and 1980s "AM Gold." The Windbreakers are all multi-instrumentalists and lead vocalists who harmonize magnificently together. Tickets can be purchased at granburylive.com.

***

Friday, Jan. 9

Granbury Live presents ZZ Tex/Kraig Parker ZZ Top Tribute at 7 p.m. It's fuzzy guitars, long beards and cheap sunglasses. Experience the explosive sound, look and style of that iconic band from Texas, ZZ TOP. It's ZZ TEX, one of the nations premier tribute acts. Tickets can be purchased at granburylive.com.

***

Saturday, Jan. 10

Granbury Live presents Queen Legacy A Tribute to Queen at 7 p.m. Queen Legacy is the most authentic tribute to Queen in the United States. With all the vocal power and raw energy of the band in their prime, Queen Legacy showcases all of the eras of this legendary band through their timeless songs and iconic outfits. Tickets can be purchased at granburylive.com.

***

Monday, Jan. 12

Texas Democratic Women of Hood County will hold its monthly meeting beginning at 11a.m. at Spring Creek Barbeque. The discussion will follow the election and installation of the organization's new officers and plans for the new year. For more details, call 817-565-0459.

***

Friday, Jan. 16

Granbury Live presents James Carothers at 7:30 p.m. Nashville honky-tonk crooner James Carothers is best known for his stone-country originals and spot-on impressions of some of country music's greatest icons. James has performed in Nashville since 2015, having played more than 2,500 shows. Tickets can be purchased at granburylive.com.

***

Saturday, Jan. 17

Granbury Live presents Pigs on the Wall Pink Floyd Tribute at 7 p.m. With sonic masterpieces from Animals to The Wall, and everything in between, Pigs on the Wall transports their audience through the intricate and psychedelic soundscapes created by Pink Floyd. Tickets can be purchased at granburylive.com.

Celebrate the new year with events scheduled New Year's Eve

NYE Party on the boardwalk

Ring in 2026 with 92.1 Hank FM and its sister station K-HITS 95.5's New Year's Eve Party on the Boardwalk at the David Southern Lake Granbury Conference Center from 7 p.m. to midnight.

Enjoy a night of great music from The Raised Right Men, dancing, food and fun.

Complimentary black-eyed peas and a champagne toast will be served at midnight.

Tickets are available for $160 a couple, $90 for singles and $600 for a table of eight. Purchase them today at the Holiday Inn Express in Granbury.

Silver Saddle Saloon New Year's Eve Party

Silver Saddle Saloon is offering a free admission, no reservation required, New Year's Eve bash for the Hood County community.

Icehouse and patio seating open at 7:30 p.m. with Johnny Cooper kicking off the live entertainment for the evening at 8 p.m.

Justin Ross and Deadwood Revival will then take the stage at 9 p.m. and carry the crowd into 2026.

Drink specials will be offered from 7:30-9:30 p.m., and a complimentary champagne or Fireball toast will be served at midnight.

Midweek at midnight New Year's Eve

Granbury Live is sending off 2025 with the whole song and a dance.

Midweek at midnight is a complete dinner and show event featuring live performances by Michael Hix, including pop love songs, funky soul and party anthems from Marvin Gaye to Bruno Mars.

Dinner will be served at 6 p.m. and the show begins at 7:30 p.m.

In addition to the dinner and show, the event will feature a complimentary champagne countdown at midnight.

Attendees should dress to impress in formal New Year's Eve attire.

Dinner and show tickets begin at $95, and can be purchased through the below QR code:

NYE Irish Celebration 2026

Enjoy a New Year's celebration, the Irish way, from 9 p.m. to midnight at the Pub McDonough, located at 529 N. Houston.

The event will feature live entertainment by the River Driver band and a complimentary champagne toast and black-eyed peas at midnight.

Tickets are $10 and available at the door or online through the attached QR code:

SENIOR CENTER MENU

The following is this upcoming week's menu for the Hood County Senior Center's Lunch Club program. Anyone age 60 and over is invited to dine during the Lunch Club's service, held every weekday from 11:30 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. While payment is not required, the Lunch Club is made possible by the generous donations of the community, with the average donation per meal equating to $5.

Monday, Dec. 29

Chicken tenders with gravy, mashed potatoes, mixed greens, cornbread and banana pudding

Tuesday, Dec. 30

BBQ pork, baked beans, coleslaw and a peach crisp

Wednesday, Dec. 31

Citrus chicken with baby bakers, steamed broccoli, mixed fruit and bread

Read all about it: Best books of 2025

Ten standout books to refresh, challenge and entertain you in the new year.

This past year, you've often had to make do.

Saving money here, resources there, being inventive and innovative. It's a talent you've honed, but isn't it time to have the best? Yep, so grab these Ten Best of 2025 books for your new year pleasures

Nonfiction

Health care is on everyone's mind now, and "A Living: Working-Class Americans Talk to Their Doctor" by Michael D. Stein, M.D. (Melville House, $26.99) lets you peek into health care from the point of view of a doctor who treats "front-line workers" and those who experience poverty and homelessness. It's shocking, an eye-opening book, a skinny, quick-to-read one that needs to be read now.

If you've been doing eldercare or caring for any loved one, then "How to Lose Your Mother: A Daughter's Memoir" by Molly Jong-Fast (Viking, $28) needs to be in your plans for the coming year. It's a memoir, but also a biography of Jong-Fast's mother, Erica Jong, and the story of love, illness, and living through the chaos of serious disease with humor and grace. You'll like this book especially if you were a fan of the author's late mother.

Another memoir you can't miss this year is "Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea: A Veteran's Memoir" by Khadijah Queen (Legacy Lit, $30). It's the story of one woman's determination to get out of poverty and get an education, and to keep her head above water while she goes below water by joining the U.S. Navy. This is a story that will keep you glued to your seat, all the way through.

Self-improvement is something you might think about tackling in the new year, and "Replaceable You: Adventures in Human Anatomy" by Mary Roach (W.W. Norton & Company, $28.99) is a lighthearted — yet real and informative — look at the things inside and outside your body that can be replaced or changed. New nose job? Transplant, new dental work? Learn how you can become the Bionic Person in real life, and laugh while you're doing it.

The science lover inside you will want to read "The Grave Robber: The Biggest Stolen Artifacts Case in FBI History and the Bureau's Quest to Set Things Right" by Tim Carpenter (Harper Horizon, $29.99). A history lover also will want it, as will anyone with a craving for true crime, memoir, FBI procedural books and travel books. It's the story of a man who spent his life stealing objects from graves around the world, and an FBI agent's obsession with securing the objects and returning them. It's a fascinating read, with just a little bit of gruesome thrown in for fun.

Fiction

Speaking of a little bit of scariness, "Don't Forget Me, Little Bessie" by James Lee Burke (Atlantic Monthly Press, $28) is the story of a girl named Bessie and her involvement with a cloven-hooved being who dogs her all her life. Set in still-wild south Texas, it's a little bit western, part paranormal and completely full of enjoyment.

"Evensong" by Stewart O'Nan (Atlantic Monthly Press, $28) is a layered novel of women's friendships as they age together and support one another. The characters are warm and funny, there are a few times when your heart will sit in your throat, and you won't be sorry you read it. It's just plain irresistible.

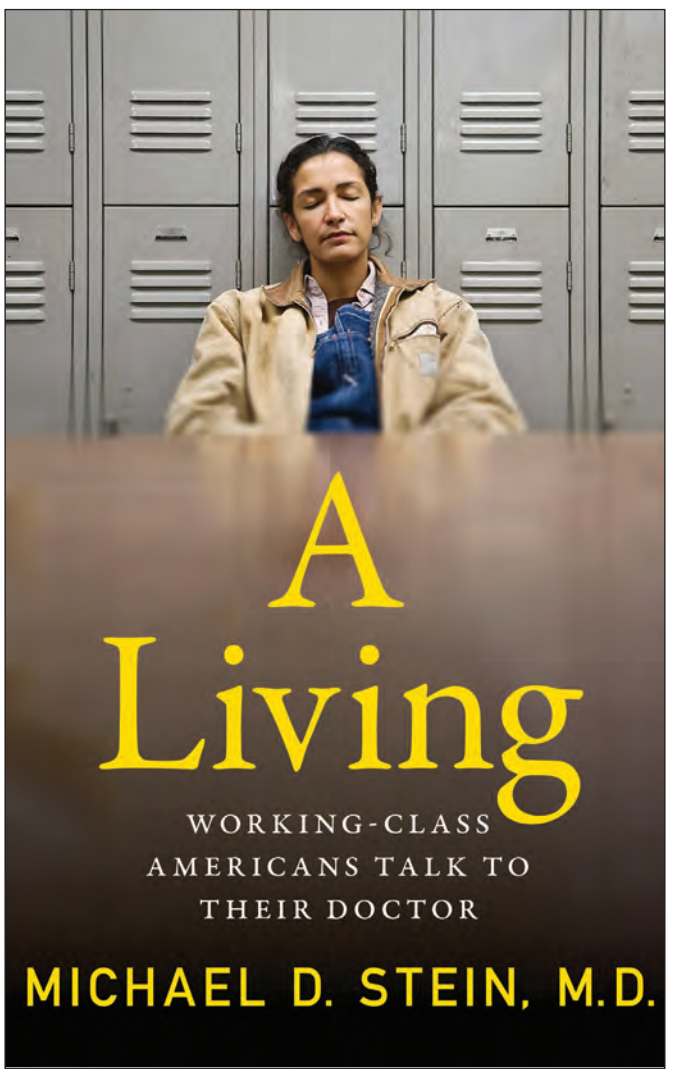
If you need a dark tale for what's left of a dark winter season, then "One of Us" by Dan Chaon (Henry Holt, $28), is it. It's the story of twins who become orphaned when their mama dies, ending up with a man who owns a traveling freak show, and who promises to care for them. But they can't ever forget a nefarious con man is looking for them; those kids can talk to one another without saying a word, and he's going to make lots of money off them. This is a sharp, clever novel that fans of the "circus" genre shouldn't miss.

"When the Harvest Comes" by Denne Michele Norris (Random House, $28) is a wonderful romance, a boy-meets-boy with a little spice and a lot of strife. Davis loves Everett but as their wedding day draws near, doubts begin to creep in. There's homophobia on both sides of their families, and no small amount of racism. Beware that there's some light explicitness in this book, but if you love a good love story, you'll love this.

Another layered tale you'll enjoy is "The Elements" by John Boyne (Henry Holt, $29.99), a twisty bunch of short stories that connect in a series of arcs that begin on an island near Dublin. It's about love, death, revenge and horror, a little like The Twilight Zone, but without the paranormal. You won't want to put down, so be warned.

If you need more ideas, head to your local library or bookstore and ask the staff there for their favorite reads of 2025. They'll fill your book bag and your new year with goodness.

Season's readings.



COURTESY

"A Living: Working-Class Americans Talk to Their Doctor" by Michael D. Stein, M.D. is one of the nonfiction books of the year for 2025.

BOOK REVIEW

Book documents parents, children working together



BY TERRI SCHLICHENMEYER

Terri Schlichenmeyer, aka The Bookworm, has been reading since she was 3 years old and she never goes anywhere without a book. She lives on a prairie in Wisconsin with a spoiled little dog, one patient man and 23,000 books.

Your child needs something to do this winter.

Boredom is bad, projects are good, so how about a parent-child undertaking, maybe introduce them to a new hobby, something that's not electronic, something they'll learn from and that you both can enjoy? Sure, grab your toolbox and "Little Woodchucks" by Nick Offerman with Lee Buchanan, and hammer out a great idea.

When he gets a little downtime, Nick Offerman likes to make things with his hands, including books like this one. Creativity, he says, really is a super-power because it lets kids of all ages do all kinds of things. You can, for instance, make your own toys, or gifts for others, you can make a musical instrument and then you can make music. This will lead to learning problem-solving skills and a lot of other cool things you never thought about.

To start, Offerman says, it's a good idea to get some help from a "Big Woodchuck" (also known as a parent or grandparent). They'll need to help you find a place for your workspace, which doesn't have to be fancy; they'll help you to find wood; and an adult can help put together your tool kit, which also doesn't have to be expensive or fancy.

In fact, Offerman says, wood scraps are cheap or even free for the asking, and you can find a lot of decent tools at estate sales or garage sales. Just remember that "used tools are great, but dull tools are not" and a "splurge" is usually worth it.

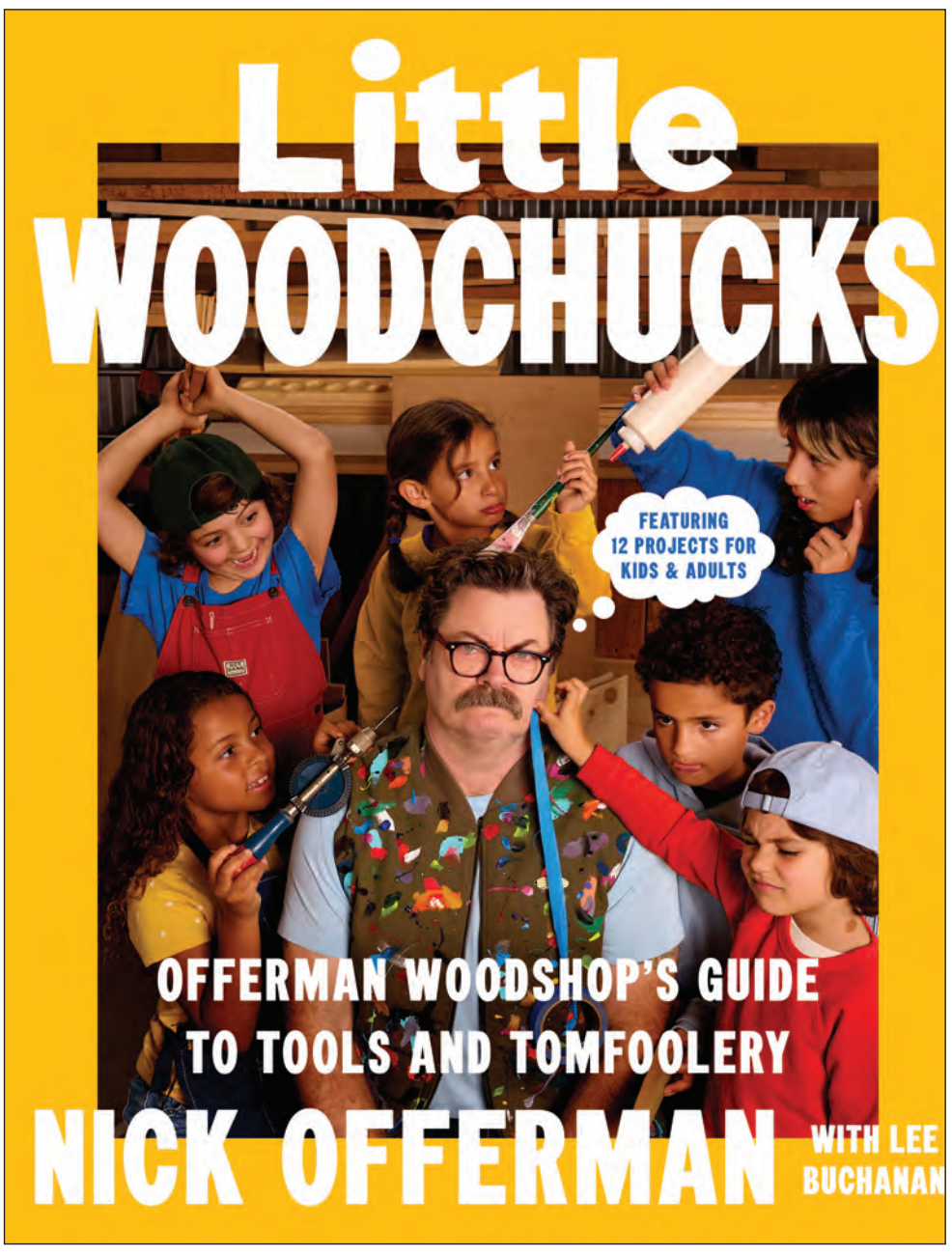
Also remember safety absolutely is important here. Always.

Launch your new hobby by making a slapstick, which is super loud but doesn't hurt anybody when you play with it. Then learn how to carve animals and make-believe creatures you can play with (plus, carving is fun). Later, you'll need a sawhorse, and making your own is really satisfying. So is making gifts for parents or siblings — or even for yourself.

The very first thing adults will want to know about "Little Woodchucks" is it's not a book for little woodchucks. From the introduction onward, author Nick Offerman uses grown-up language and one questionable photo here; that's hilarious for you, but not so much for a kid. Lee Buchanan's part is quite a bit tamer, but still.

Fortunately, none of this ruins the fun you and your child will find together inside this book, or the projects that are organized by skill-level, or the sense of accomplishment your child will get at each step. This is a book that will make your kids want to get started right away, and you will, too — just know that for a supervising adult, one good read-through is nearly imperative before launching any endeavor.

If you're a total newbie at woodworking, "Little Woodchucks" will help you learn along with your kids. If you're an old-hand in the shop, it offers a launching point for you both so look for this book and get ready for fun. Your child will love it. Wooden you?



COURTESY

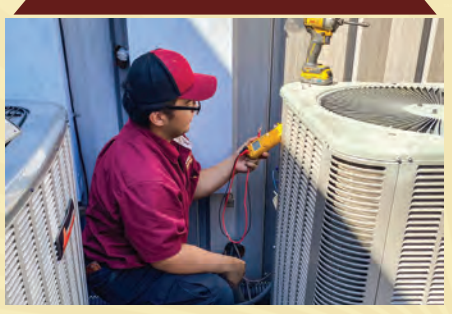
"Little Woodchucks: Offerman Woodshop's Guide to Tools and Tomfoolery" is written by Nick Offernam with Lee Buchanan. The book is available for $35.

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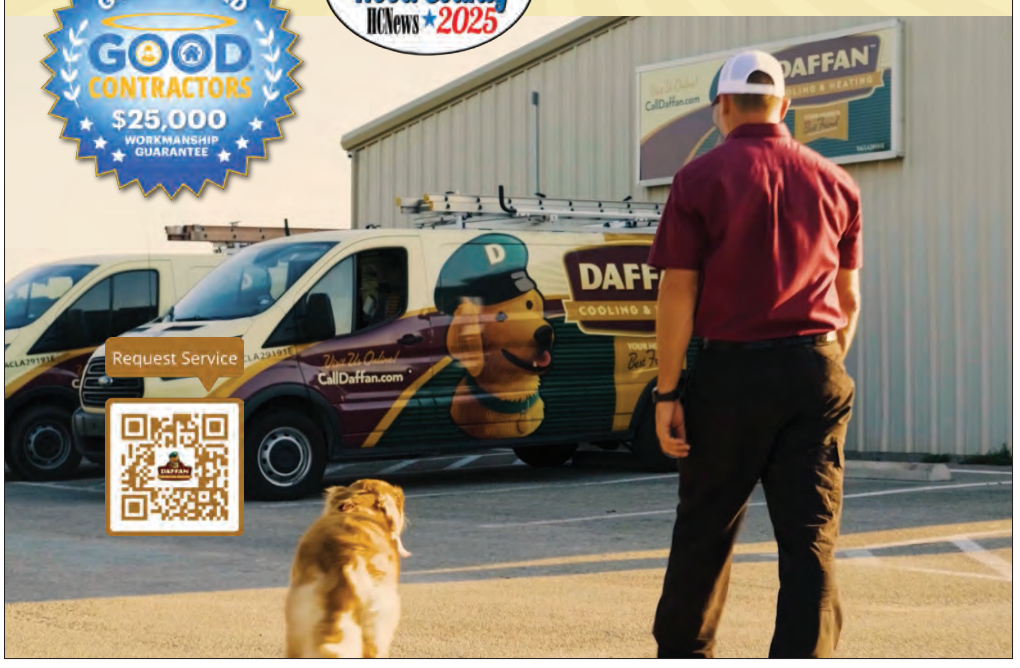
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When I thought, "My foot slips," Your steadfast love, O LORD, helped me up. When the cares of my heart are many, Your consolations cheer my soul.
Psalm 94:18-19

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For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.
Jeremiah 29:11

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CHURCH DIRECTORY

A guide to Granbury-area churches.

No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.
1 John 4:12

ANGLICAN

Good Shepherd Anglican
3600 Fall Creek Hwy.,
817-326-2035

ASSEMBLY OF GOD

Crossing Place
1900 W. Hwy. 377
817-573-1581

Elm Grove Assembly Of God
3630 Hill City Hwy., Tolar
254-835-4755

Faith Assembly Of God
300 Granbury Court
817-326-2270

BAPTIST

Acton Baptist
3500 Fall Creek Hwy.
817-326-4693

Allison Baptist
9926 Allison Ct., Lipan
254-646-9926

Bible Baptist
4804 E. Hwy. 377
817-579-5424

Brazos River Baptist
2201 Mitchell Bend Hwy.
817-663-5384

Dennis First Baptist
7600 Fm 1189, Lipan
817-565-9027

Exalted Redeemer Baptist
1840 Acton Hwy.
817-247-7209

Fairview Baptist
5041 Weatherford Hwy.
817-573-8968

Faith Baptist Of Hill City
Hwy. 56
254-965-3840

First Baptist
7600 Fm 1189, Lipan
817-613-2322

First Baptist
214 Kickapoo Ct., Lipan
254-646-2484

First Baptist Granbury
1851 Weatherford Hwy.
817-573-7137

First Baptist Thorp Springs
2815 Lipan Hwy.
817-573-3339

Glen Rose First Baptist
201 West Gibbs Blvd.,
Glen Rose
254-897-2351

Granbury Baptist
1200 Weatherford Hwy.
817-573-4943

Iglesia Bautista Cristo Roca Viva
315 Holly Hills Cemetery Rd.
254-396-5773

Iglesia Bautista La Hermosa
3300 Oak Trail Dr.

Lakeside Baptist
500 W. Bluebonnet
817-573-2094

Mambrino Baptist
1625 Mambrino Hwy.
817-573-4901

Mission Bautista El Buen
315 Holly Hills Cemetery Rd.
817-573-4133

Oak Trail Baptist
4501 Peppertree Rd.
817-279-6430

Paluxy Baptist
1844 Acton Hwy.
817-579-5111

Patillo Baptist
4791 Fm 2803, Lipan
940-769-2968

Pecan Baptist
7178 Fall Creek Hwy.
682-205-1565

Rainbow Baptist
1571 North Fm 200,
Rainbow
254-897-2121

Southside Baptist
910 Paluxy Rd.
817-573-1462

Sovereign Grace Baptist
820 Paluxy Rd.
682-936-4988

Tolar Baptist
400 Tolar Hwy.
254-835-4375

Vineyard Baptist
320 W. Pearl St.
817-573-5318

Waples Baptist
1200 Temple Hall Hwy.
817-579-0509

Western Hills Baptist
507 Western Hills Trail
817-573-7588

BIBLE

Grace Bible
201 E. Clifton Rd.
682-498-3014

Granbury Chapel Bible Church
5150 N. Gate Rd.
817-736-9647

CATHOLIC

St. Frances Cabrini Catholic
2301 Acton Hwy.
817-326-2131

CHRISTIAN

Dayspring Christian
3314 S. Clifton
817-573-0107

First Christian
2109 W. U.S. Hwy. 377
817-573-5431

Iglesia Christiana Vino Nuevo
4900 Sonterra Ct.
817-578-0626

Promise Point Church
5904 Walnut Creek Circle
817-910-8868

The Evangelical Christian
608 Shady Grove Dr.
817-736-3041

CHURCH OF CHRIST

Downtown Church Of Christ
310 W. Pearl St.
817-573-9862

Granbury Church Of Christ
1905 W. Pearl
817-573-2613

Lipan Church Of Christ
112 N Caddo St., Lipan
254-646-2297

Old Granbury Church Of Christ
4219 Old Granbury Rd.
817-573-6878

Thorp Spring Church Of Christ
3006 Thorp St.
817-776-1547

Tolar Church Of Christ
8604 W. Hwy. 377, Tolar
254-835-4397

CHURCH OF GOD

Church Of God
1106 Weatherford Hwy.
817-279-6753

EPISCOPAL

Good Shepherd Episcopal
4530 Acton Hwy.
817-326-6074

JEHOVAH'S WITNESS

Granbury Jehovah's Witnesses
3734 W. Hwy. 377
817-573-4259

LUTHERAN

Emmanuel Lutheran Elca
2301 Fall Creek Hwy.,
817-326-2201

Our Savior Lutheran
1400 N. Meadows Dr.
817-573-5011

METHODIST

Acton Methodist
3433 Fall Creek Hwy.
817-326-4242

Cresson United Methodist
110 South Crook St.,
Cresson
469-730-6496

Granbury First United Methodist
301 Loop 567,
817-573-5573

Solid Rock Global Methodist Church
3410 Glen Rose Hwy
682-498-3838

Temple Hall United Methodist
5601 Temple Hall Hwy.,
682-317-9385

Tolar United Methodist
8812 Hwy. 377, Tolar
254-835-4005

Waples United Methodist
4323 Waples Rd.
817-573-9076

MORMON

The Church Of Jesus Christ Of Latter-Day Saints
1226 Ross Lane
817-573-6825

NAZARENE

Granbury Church Of The Nazarene
921 Lipan Dr.
817-573-4041

PENTECOSTAL

Hood Pentecostal
3100 Beechwood St.,
817-279-0363

Calvary Church of Granbury
4800 Glen Rose Hwy
817-559-7372

PRESBYTERIAN

First Presbyterian
303 W. Bridge St.
817-573-2337

SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST

Granbury Seventh Day Adventist
2016 Acton Hwy.
817-326-3573

OTHER

Anchor Fellowship
1300 James Rd.
682-990-8551

Bear Creek Community
18553 South Hwy. 377,
817-396-3245

Brazos Covenant Ministries
1950 Acton Hwy.
817-579-0968

Calvary Family
3306 Oak Trail Dr.
314-606-1211

Center Point
4332 E. Hwy. 377,
817-554-3432

Christian Science Society
528 N. Crockett
817-573-0457

Crossroads
200 S. Crook St., Cresson
817-886-9577

Fellowship Church Of Hood County
2401 Cedar Crest Dr.,
817-579-9332

Generations Church
5718 E. Hwy. 377,
817-326-5378

Hope Community
3206 W. Hwy. 377
254-243-0350

Lipan Cowboy
205 West Lipan Dr., Lipan
254-396-3162

New Season Global Ministries
3755 Acton Hwy.
817-910-8777

Promise Point Church
5904 Walnut Creek Cir.
817-910-8868

Pure Praise
2901 Glen Rose Hwy.
817-279-3063

Rock Church Chapel
6101 Rock Church Hwy
Tolar, Texas 76476

St. John Victorian Mission Of Granbury
5031 Bandy Rd.
817-573-2669

Stonewater
911 E. U.S. Hwy. 377
817-579-9175

The Bridge
1107 Weatherford Hwy
254-522-5330

The Heights
1921 Acton Hwy
817-558-2121

Triple Cross Cowboy
3470 Lipan Hwy
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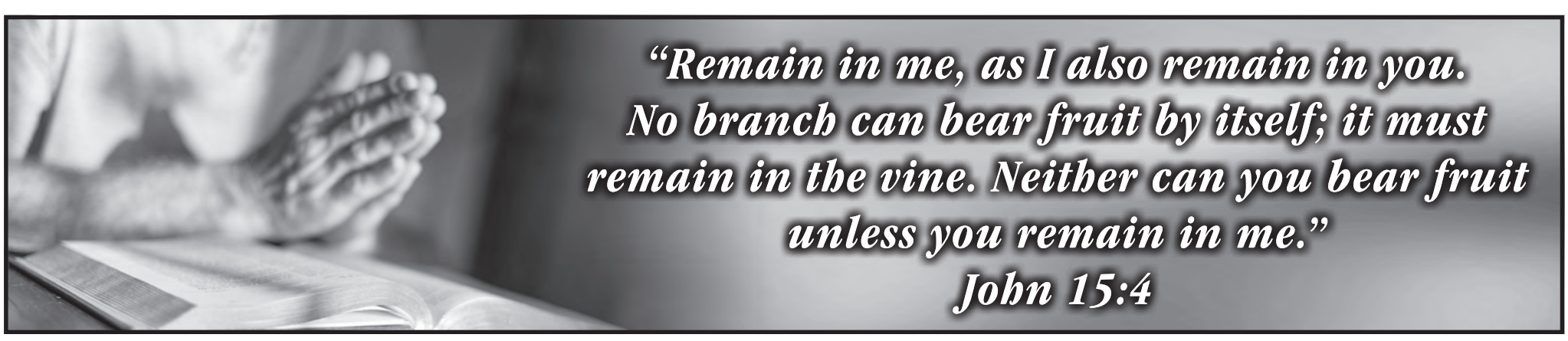
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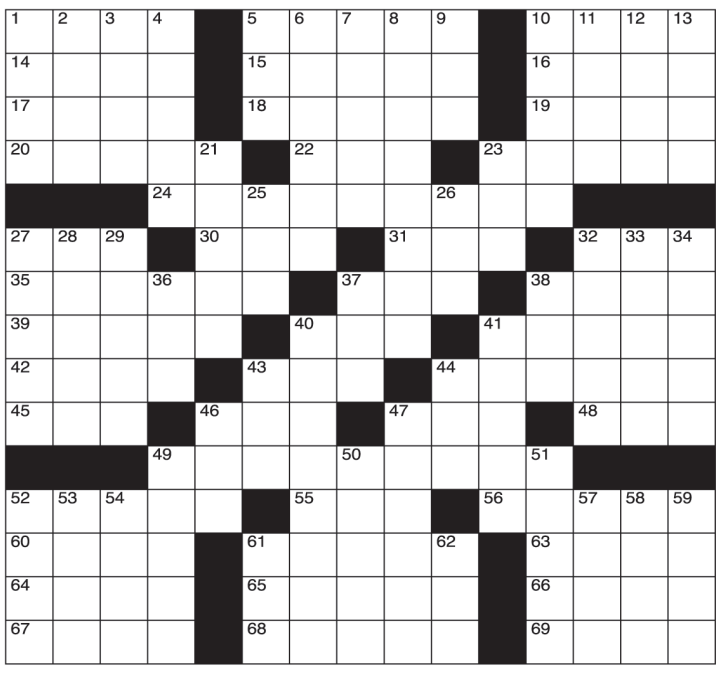
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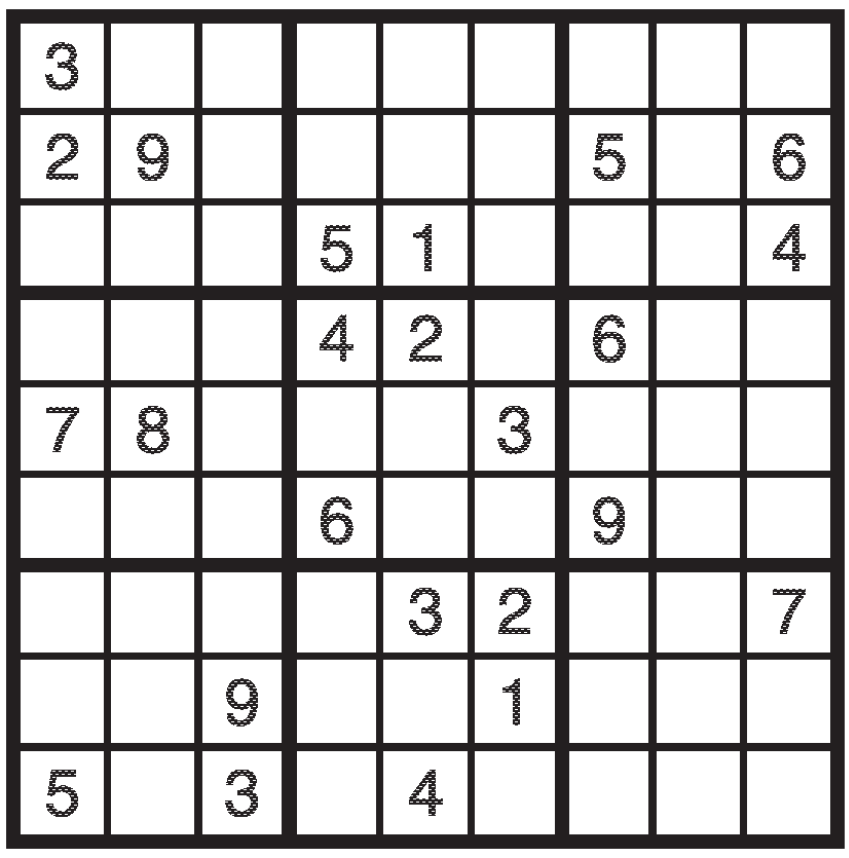


CLUES ACROSS

1. Light cavalry
5. Coconut palms
10. Rounded knob
14. Central Japan city
15. Sandwiches
16. Shape produced by a curve
17. Ancient region in modern-day Syria
18. French modernist painter
19. Grandmother
20. Mammary gland of cattle
22. Rocky peak
23. Secret plan
24. Songs to one's lover
27. More (Spanish)
30. Father
31. Chinese principle underlying the universe
32. Ballplayer's accessory
35. Together
37. A person's brother or sister
38. Evil spirit
39. Monetary units
40. Partner to cheese
41. About Sun
42. Group of like-minded people
43. After B
44. Seaside room
45. Recipe measurement
46. Partly digested food
47. Flat-faced dog
48. People of southern Africa
49. Salts
52. Beard lichens
55. Sanders is one
56. Fencing sword
60. Ethnic group of Albania
61. Metric weight unit
63. Italian seaport
64. Longtime late night host
65. Extremely angry
66. Miami mascot
67. Mid-month day
68. Marked for omission
69. Body part

CLUES DOWN

1. Two-toed sloth
2. Fat from a pig's abdomen
3. Romanian city
4. Specifies
5. Rounded, glaciated valley
6. Spoke
7. Collection of sacred books
8. Extravagantly theatrical
9. Very fast airplane
10. Forearm bones
11. Ancient kingdom
12. Legitimate: __ fide
13. Semitransparent gemstone
21. Counsels
23. Head honcho
25. Cool!
26. Touch lightly
27. Extract money via taxation
28. Dyes
29. Cloying sweetness
32. Sodas
33. Coastal village in Guam
34. Chemical ring
36. The bill in a restaurant
37. Car mechanics group
38. One-time presidential candidate Dole
40. Health care for the aged
41. Wise persons
43. Passage with access at one end
44. Make a wound
46. America's spies
47. Roof of the mouth
49. Plants of the lily family
50. Pinkish-red color
51. Vaccine developer
52. Mottled citrus fruit
53. A place to store garden tools
54. Rare goose native to Hawaii
57. Popular Hollywood pig
58. Musician Clapton
59. A move exposing one to danger
61. Historic Spanish soldier
62. CNN's founder



Level: Advanced

HOROSCOPES

ARIES - MAR 21/APR 20

If you are feeling half-hearted about what you are working on, then put it off for a little bit and focus on something more interesting this week, Aries. You can use the rest.

TAURUS - APR 21/MAY 21

Make it your business to remind others not to take life so seriously this week, Taurus. The best way to do that is to show them how to laugh by example.

GEMINI - MAY 22/JUN 21

Your thoughts are on an important decision that you need to make, Gemini. It's best to wait a few days before you get into the thick of things. You need to mull all possibilities.

CANCER - JUN 22/JUL 22

Cancer, you may have the courage and the confidence to deal with whatever life throws at you right now, but not everyone is as dedicated as you. Make allowances for others this week.

LEO - JUL 23/AUG 23

Sensitive feelings are coming to the surface this week and you are not sure what to do about them, Leo. You won't find peace of mind until you have dealt with them thoroughly.

VIRGO - AUG 24/SEPT 22

Virgo, some unexpected news could come your way between now and the weekend. It may seem like a lot, but in the grand scheme of things, it will only be a minor issue.

LIBRA - SEPT 23/OCT 23

You have reason to be suspicious of someone's motives this week. Just don't go to extremes and start reading into every message or nuance, Libra.

SCORPIO - OCT 24/NOV 22

Scorpio, you might look super confident on the outside, but underneath you get anxious like everyone else. At some point this week you may need to ask for some help.

SAGITTARIUS - NOV 23/DEC 21

It is easy to believe you have enemies around every corner, Sagittarius. Although you might have rubbed a few people the wrong way, most people actually are on your side.

CAPRICORN - DEC 22/JAN 20

Capricorn, usually you couldn't care less what other people think about you. But this week it seems important to get another person's approval for your actions.

AQUARIUS - JAN 21/FEB 18

Aquarius, be careful when dealing with someone in a position of power. They may have sights on a promotion you also hope to earn. Keep your cards close to the vest.

PISCES - FEB 19/MAR 20

Pisces, some people believe the world is full of doom and gloom, but you know that every day is what you make of it. Brighten the days of others with your positivity.

kids' corner

What's the Difference?

Find the four differences between the two pictures.

A



B



Answers: 1. Cake on plate 2. Missing candy cane 3. Missing design on inside of cup 4. Computer screen is lit up

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

DEC 22

1807: The Embargo Act is passed by the U.S. Congress, forbidding trade with all foreign countries.

1808: Ludwig van Beethoven conducts and performs at the Theater an der Wien, Vienna.

1937: The Lincoln Tunnel opens to traffic in NYC.

Holiday FACT:

This time of year is one of the most profitable for businesses and busiest for consumers.

Answer: Holiday season

NEW WORD

MERRY

cheerful and lively

How they say that in...

English: Ribbon
Spanish: Cinta
Italian: Nastro
French: Ruban
German: Band

Did You KNOW?

Festive decorations are commonly featured in homes and stores throughout the holiday season.

Get the PICTURE?



Can you guess what the bigger picture is?

Answer: Nutcracker

TEXAS CROSSWORD

by Charley & Guy Orbison

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P-1774

ACROSS

1 in Montague County on U.S. 82 (abbr.)
5 TXism: "lower than a snake's belly in _ ___"
6 he ____ me money when I needed it
7 Tex-Mex tasty
8 superlative ending
9 TX Jim Reeves label: ___ Victor
12 TX King Ranch has 825,000 of 'em
17 teenagers' goal at Six Flags over Texas? (3 wds.)
19 Texas stock fraud "_____town Scandal" (1971-72)
21 TXism: "doesn't know enough to come __ ___ __ the rain" (dumb)
22 "Eagle," TX Don
23 TXism: "blind __ _ ___"
28 TXism: "stirred up a hornet's ____"
29 "____ out a living" (barely got by)
30 Travis Tritt's "_____ _ Quarter"
31 it ain't "tails"
35 milk is _ ___ material for Texas' Blue Bell
36 this Anna Maria was in 1955 Alamo film "The Last Command"
42 "_____ ____ Choir" is located in Fort Worth
44 paint layers
46 a light Texas boxer
48 this Skeeter won a Pulitzer for photography at Dallas Times Herald
49 former Cowboy Jason Witten's position (abbr.)
50 fly high
51 Olajuwon as a Cougar
52 DA evidence (abbr.)
53 Rockport is "Where the fun never ____"
54 TXism: "he could shoot the eye out of a ____"
56 TXism: "____ bien" (good)
57 ___ Grande
58 pig casa

DOWN

1 TXism for "saved money" (3 wds.)
2 in 1862, 40 Unionists were hanged in north Texas for this crime
3 Kimble County seat
4 this Preminger directed TX Gene Tierney in "Laura"
9 barn rodents
10 closet items (2 wds.)
11 TX Jim J. Bullock was on this TV "alien" sitcom (1989-90)
12 fire residue
13 popular product from New York, TX (now from Athens)
14 TX Nimitz's ____ in WWII was admiral
15 UT has ____ Stanley Gardner's complete study
16 drove fast
18 election day (abbr.)
20 this Young created storied "Curtain Club" at UT (init.)
23 _ _ Belo started The Dallas Morning News in 1885
24 dir. to Azle from Springtown (abbr.)
25 TXism: "fast as _ ___ up a rafter"
26 desolate by death
27 TXism: "unnecessary __ ____ grease on a jackrabbit"
32 TXism: "let '__ rip!"
33 Ken Paxton pos.
34 22-across init.
36 "Honest ___"
37 Texas "Moonraker" actress, Chiles
38 outlaw Hardin quote: "Texas, __ ___!"
39 TXism: "I'd have __ ___ better to die"
40 "tall Texas _____"
41 bit of gossip
43 to Dublin from Azle
45 final h.s. year
47 DART is Dallas' mass _____
48 "_____ la vista"
55 X-mas gift for a kid (2 wds.)

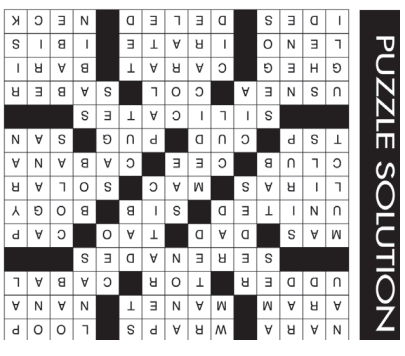
COLD & FLU WORD SEARCH

E	Z	E	E	N	S	N	B	C	A	N	F	V	G	E	Z	M	I	B	C
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M	Z	Y	T	T	I	Y	B	C	C	E	P	M	I	P	L	M	F	T	V
B	L	T	U	N	T	N	U	E	P	S	R	I	M	M	U	N	I	T	Y
H	I	L	F	E	Y	C	Y	G	A	E	A	H	H	H	A	T	E	M	B
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R	T	I	N	R	P	N	B	H	L	H	O	D	Z	C	U	O	A	U	L
A	C	S	G	P	Z	M	G	L	Z	U	S	P	N	C	P	A	D	S	F
T	E	O	E	Y	S	U	U	C	R	R	S	V	H	L	R	T	A	G	C
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O	I	T	F	C	C	Y	I	L	P	N	Z	P	R	A	L	Z	H	C	Z
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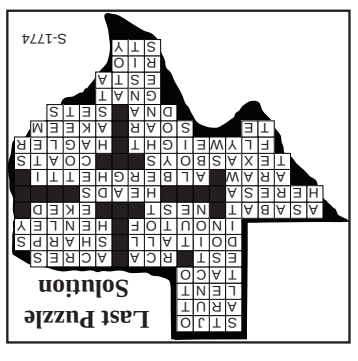
Find the words hidden vertically, horizontally, diagonally, and backwards.

WORDS

ACHES
ANTIBIOTICS
CHILLS
CONGESTION
CONTAGIOUS
COUGH
FATIGUE
FEVER
GERMS
HEADACHE
HYDRATION
IMMUNITY
INFECTION
MEDICINE
MUCUS
PREVENTION
REST
RUNNY
SNEEZE
STUFFY
THROAT
TISSUES
VACCINE
VIRUS

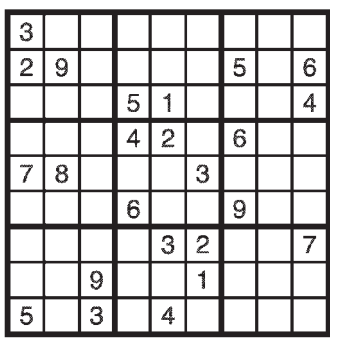


PUZZLE SOLUTION



Last Puzzle Solution

S-1774



PECAN PLANTATION BITS

Pecan educator network enjoys a festive holiday season



BY DIANE LONG

A Mississippi native who has been a Texas transplant for 30 years, Diane Long is a wife, mother, and former English teacher who has written Pecan Plantation Bits for 17 years cumulatively. She spends her time both gathering neighborhood news and collecting new books to read. dianedlong@yahoo.com | 817-579-9360

Pecan Plantation is home to various interest groups, and a new one added to our community in 2025 is the Pecan Educator Network. The group welcomes former and current teachers, administrators and paraprofessionals from public, private and home school backgrounds. PEN meets the second Wednesday of each month. In December, the group enjoyed both a Christmas party and a cookie exchange. Interested in PEN and its place in our neighborhood? Text 940-393-3070 for complete information.

Light bright

Judging for the 2025 Pecan Christmas lighting and home exterior display contest runs through tomorrow, Sunday, Dec. 28, thus giving residents plenty of time to shine. Winners will receive gift certificate prizes, and homes will be evaluated on creativity and originality, theme execution and effort, visual impact, craftsmanship or technical skill and overall presentation.

Fish date

Little anglers will want to save the date of Monday, Dec. 29, for the annual Dr. Barna Memorial Kids' Trout Fishing Tournament. This Wildlife Committee-sponsored event grows in popularity each year as the youngest residents of our community have proven themselves skilled at reeling in healthy catches. Registration begins at 8:30 a.m. at the pond behind the clubhouse pool. Fisher boys and girls should bring their fishing poles; bait will be provided. Ages 17 and younger are invited to partake, and participants will fish for one hour, compete for prizes and then keep their catch.

Take aim

Also Dec. 29, while Pecan children are out of school, they may participate in a very popular dodgeball event at the PAC. Free and no sign-up is needed. All ages are welcome. Show up and enjoy.

New year

Pecaners will have a party in our neighborhood to celebrate the coming of 2026. Beginning at 6 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 31, folks may enjoy an evening consisting of a meal (including black eyed peas), a champagne toast, live music and dancing; in addition, the dress code for the party is bright and glowing clothing to complement the neon theme. Reservations may be secured through member portals or by calling 817-573-2641.

Sportsman's Club

The Brazos River Sportsman's Club looks forward to its next gathering set for Thursday, Jan. 8, at the clubhouse, when Bob Lusk will be sharing information about ecology, plant and animal life, and water quality of the Brazos River. Also on the horizon is a chili cookoff happening Thursday, Feb. 12. Folks interested in this group may send an email to Joe Fritz at jcfritz56@gmail.com.



COURTESY

The Pecan Educator Network (PEN) was organized in Pecan Plantation in 2025 and welcomes former and current teachers and administrators from all educational backgrounds. The group celebrated Christmas with both a party and a cookie exchange.

Good game

Pecan's Entertainment Committee will ring in the new year with its next bingo night set when buffet dinner service begins at 5:30 p.m., followed by bingo play at 6:15 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 8.

Breakfast Club

The very popular Breakfast Club in Pecan gathers again Wednesday, Jan. 14, with guest speaker Kevin Pratt of Pacifico Energy coming to discuss the data center planned for development opposite the Brazos River. Both coffee service and a full breakfast option will be available. Reservations are required and may be made by calling the clubhouse front desk: 817-573-2641

Governing group

A board of nine directors serves Pecan Plantation, and each year, three members complete their terms, and thus, our community elects three new members for the group. Neighbors who are passionate about our Pecan and desire to make a difference in our vicinity are invited to complete an application, qualifying them to be on the ballot next year. Dedicated members who guide our association into the future and lend their voices in decisions concerning our homes are invaluable.

Members have received an email with both an application link and a QR code containing an application, and the deadline for submission of paperwork is 5 p.m. Monday, Jan. 5. Newly elected board members will be announced at Pecan's annual meeting Saturday, March 7, and take office immediately. Board service is a volunteer position that requires attending monthly meetings and dedicating time each week to projects, email, training and committee liaison roles.

Giving back

The Pecan Plantation Employee Christmas Bonus Fund is open and receiving donations from members who would like to recognize our dedicated staff. Folks may visit the Pecan website or stop by the front desk to participate.

Community activities

The Pecan Activities Center will continue to boast a list of weekly activities and classes in the new year, and one offering is piano lessons for adults and children Thursday afternoons. Instructor Amy Mings leads the classes.

In addition, exercise classes continue with yoga, chair yoga, Pilates, and aerobics every day of the week, and line dancing comes from 10:30 a.m. to noon Fridays. Call the PAC front desk to join any of these gatherings: 817-573-7952.

Pickleball play

Pecan's pickleball community is a thriving one with open play (all levels) from 9:30 a.m. to noon in the mornings, advanced level play from noon to 1 p.m. on the half court, and ladies only play time from 1-3 p.m. Tuesday and Thursday, resuming Jan. 6.

Big year

Pecan's Widows and Widowers Club had a year filled with gatherings and fellowship, some outings of which included lunch and blue bonnet viewing in Walnut Springs, a trip to Sledge Distillery, attending The Promise in Glen Rose, and an artist home tour and lunch event. The Christmas gala included dinner, Monty Lewis taking the stage as MC for the evening, and a gift exchange. This group welcomes all widows and widowers who are Pecan residents and meets the second Thursday of each month. For more information on the group and its presence in our community, send an email to Caryl Mahaffey at caryl.mahaffey@charter.net.

Good shot

The Pecan Plantation Archery/Air Gun Association had an excellent turnout for its "Don't Shoot Your Eye Out" BB gun tournament. Congratulations to the winning shots on their success.

Successful build

This Christmas brought the twentieth year for the PAC to host a family gingerbread house building afternoon, and this year's gathering was filled with fun and holiday cheer. The participants used artistic creativity in their designs and had a great time making their ideas come to life.

Woman's Club

The Pecan Plantation Woman's Club supports our community in countless ways, one of which is encouraging its ladies when a little extra cheer is warranted. For ladies who are aware of PPWC members in need of exhortation, send an email to Claudette Lewis at originaldesignTX@gmail.com. The PPWC will gather collectively Thursday, Jan. 15, for its inaugural meeting of 2026.

Sympathy

Our deepest sympathy goes to the family of Mark Fishback who passed away Nov. 6.

dianedlong@yahoo.com | 817-579-9360

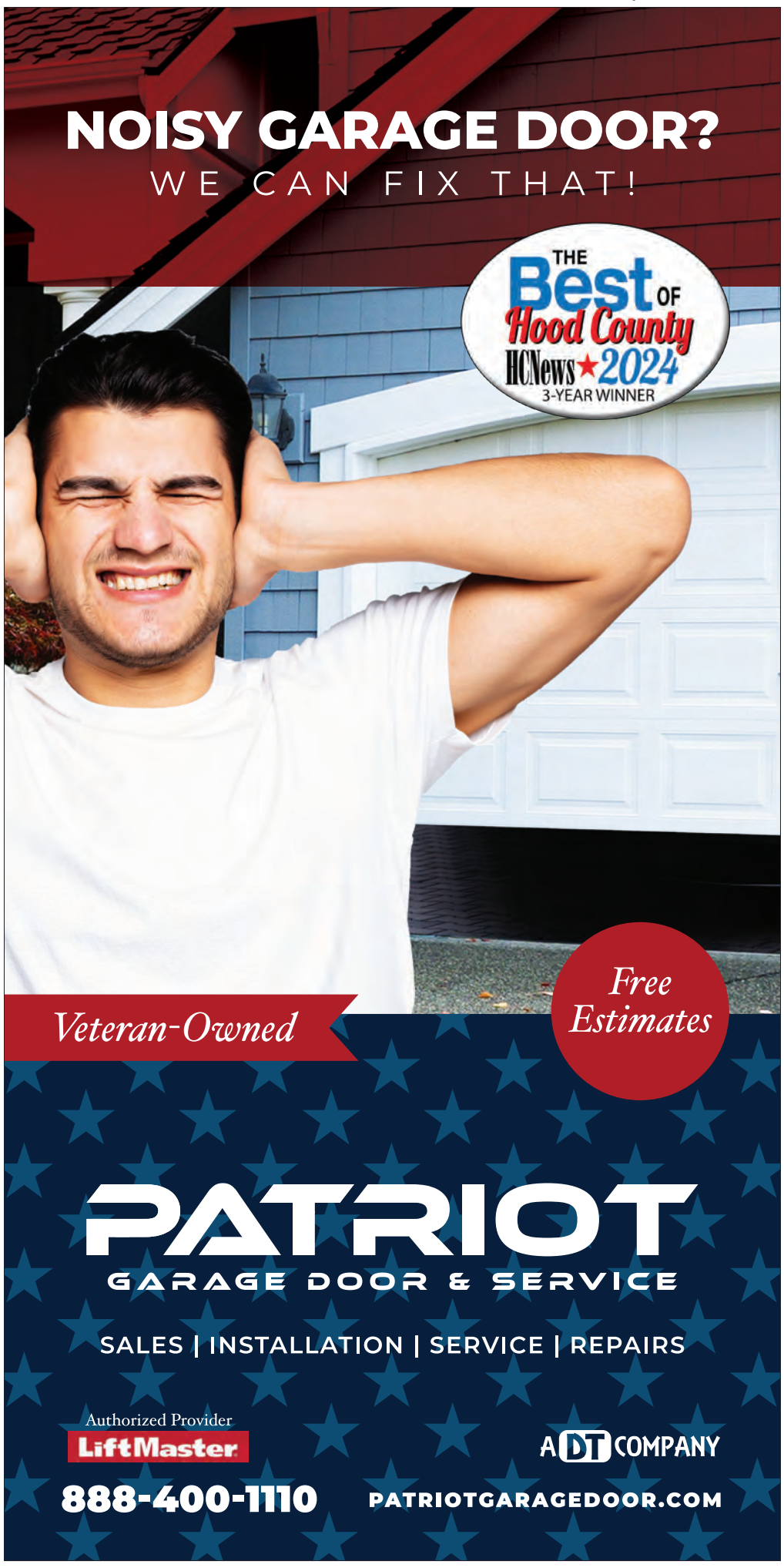
Habitat for Humanity® of Hood County

Match Fund drive is November 15, 2025 thorugh January 31, 2026 All donations will be matched up to the amount of the fund.

Thank you StoneWater Church, Acton Methodist Church, Jean Harris Memorial Foundation and our anonymous Matching Fund Sponsors!

Please send your gift to:
Habitat for Humanity of Hood County
PO Box 1866, Granbury, TX 76048

Or give online at
habitatofhoodcounty org



THE IDLE AMERICAN

One grateful guy: it's better to give than receive



BY DON NEWBURY

Dr. Newbury, longtime university president, continues to speak and write. The Idle American, begun in 2003, is Texas' longest-running syndicated column. Contact: 817-447-3872. Email: newbury@speakerdoc.com. Website: www.speakerdoc.com.

The Holy Bible teaches that it is more blessed to give than receive.

Many folks along the way have — through various ways — expanded boundaries of giving. Someone campaigning for increased giving to the church reminded that "the Lord also accepts from a grouch."

How grateful I am, as 2025 closes out, to be the recipient of much good provided by health care professionals. The generous spirit of many warrants the greatest of blessings. Thanks to them, I'm still vertical and ventilating at age 88.

Some already have been enumerated in past columns, but, an admitted victim of terminal senility, I want to say "thanks again" at this Yuletide season.

I'd be remiss not to begin with the cardiologist who has kept my heart ticking since my quadruple bypass surgery in 1998. Only recently did he "get off my case."

This spring, he informed me of his upcoming retirement plans to spend most of it near Estes Park, Colorado, where his beautiful Rocky Mountain home was near completion. I was stunned, feeling like Bill Murray in the movie What About Bob? (You remember it, the one where Bill couldn't believe his psychiatrist was going on vacation, leaving him to find his own way psychologically for a couple of weeks. So, he followed the doctor and his family as they tried unsuccessfully to get away from it all — and from Bob).

Anyway, as my final appointment ended, he mentioned I was welcome to drop by if ever in the Rockies.

I'd never been to Estes Park, but saw the exit sign as I motored toward Casper, Wyoming, some three months later. I called to see if I could take him and his wife to lunch on the way back through, but he made a better offer. He offered to prepare lunch, "rather than deal with the throng of tourists." (Later, I learned tourists had pretty much cleared out a few days earlier).

Sure enough, Mrs. Willard and I watched him prepare a wonderful, semi-healthy lunch. It was served a bit late, since I was lost in the mountains before finding their home. He was accustomed to my being late for appointments, so no surprise there.

Sadly, my gullet seems to be thickening, too, so Dr. Kamal Syed entered the picture for an esophagus stretching procedure that often requires repeating.

He has remedied this issue three times now, always in an excellent manner.

Now, I can even spell "gastroenterologist."

More recently, Dr. Ivan Vrcek worked his magic to restore the "lift" in my upper eyelids. They now are as much "like new" as old body parts can be.

My eyesight is fully restored thanks to this oculoplastic surgeon.

Whatever, I can view upcoming days with eyes wide

PLEASE SEE **IDLE** | B10

Hood County News CLASSIFIEDS

AD CLASSIFICATIONS

001 Asphalt & Cement
002 Auctions
003 Business/Commercial
004 Business Opportunity
005 Cleaning Services
006 Construction/Contractors
007 Demolition
008 Electrician
009 Excavating
010 Fencing
011 Firewood
012 For Sale
013 Garage & Estate Sale
014 Help Wanted
015 Home Improvement
016 Landscape & Mowing Services
017 Livestock & Pets
018 Lost & Found
019 Masonry & Stonework
020 Moving & Hauling
021 Painting
022 Plumbing
023 Pressure Washing
024 Real Estate for Rent
025 Real Estate for Sale
026 Repair Services
027 Roofing
028 Sand, Gravel & Soil
029 Small Business
030 Storage
031 Welding
032 Miscellaneous
033 Legal Notices

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014 Help Wanted

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Warehouse/Office/Retail space for lease. 1200+ sf. Hwy 377 W and Hwy 51 N from $695. 817-349-2535.

TOLAR 2-2 duplex for rent. $1,000 deposit, $1,100/mo. Fenced-in backyard, carport, no smoking. 122 and 124 Donley. 817-578-7378

Large master bedroom in 3-bedroom, 2-bathroom house. Large bathroom with 2 walk-in closets. Queen size bed, cable, utilities paid. $950 per month. 817-559-2637.



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033 Legal Public Notices

CITATION BY PUBLICATION - TRC 109 & 114

STATE OF TEXAS CAUSE NO.C2024330

LAKEVIEW LOAN SERVICING, LLC

VS.

BRANDON MICHAEL RUSSELL, BONNIE RUSSELL AND SECRETARY OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

IN THE 355TH DISTRICT COURT OF HOOD COUNTY, TEXAS

TO: BRANDON MICHAEL RUSSELL, DEFENDANT

Defendant, Greeting:

NOTICE TO DEFENDANT: "You have been sued. You may employ an attorney. If you or your attorney do not file a written answer with the clerk who issued this citation by 10:00 am on the Monday next following the expiration of 42 days after the date this citation was issued, a default judgment may be taken against you."

You are hereby commanded to appear by filing a written answer to the Plaintiffs Petition at or before 10:00 o'clock A.M. on the Monday next after the expiration of 42 days after the date of the issuance of this citation the same being Monday the 12TH day of JANUARY, 2026, before the Honorable BRYAN T. BUFKIN, 355TH Judicial District Court of Hood County, Texas, at the Hood County Justice Center of said County in Granbury, Texas. Said Plaintiff's Petition was filed in said court, on the 25TH day of NOVEMBER, A.D. 2024, in the above entitled cause.

A brief statement of the nature of this suit is as follows, to wit:

Plaintiff Lakeview Loan Servicing, LLC, by and through its attorney of record, Kelly M. Doherty of Codilis & Moody, P.C., 20405 State Highway 249, Suite 170, Houston, Texas 77070, brought suit under Cause No. C2024330 in the 355th Judicial District Court of Hood County, Texas, for enforcement and foreclosure of Deed of Trust Lien on the following described real property of which Defendant, BRANDON MICHAEL RUSSELL is a potential party in interest: LOT 483 OF DE CORDOVA BEND ESTATES, UNIT VIII, A SUBDIVISION IN HOOD COUNTY, TEXAS ACCORDING TO THE PLAT THEREOF RECORDED IN VOLUME 1, PAGE 47 OF THE PLAT RECORDS OF HOOD COUNTY, TEXAS.

Commonly known as 6319 Sonora Dr, Granbury, TX 76049.

Issued and given under my hand and the seal of said Court, at office in Granbury, Texas, this the 24TH day of NOVEMBER, 2025.

STATE OF TEXAS COUNTY OF HOOD

NOTICE OF SALE

By VIRTUE OF A WRIT OF EXECUTION - 90 DAY issued out of the 355th Judicial District

Court, Hood County, Texas on a judgment rendered in said county on the Cause No: C2025093 Comanche Harbor/Ports O'Call Owners Association vs Tracy Galloway

I did on the 12th day of November 2025, at 11 :00 AM. Levy upon the following property of: TRACY GALLOWAY MORE COMMONLY KNOWN AS: 1115 INDIAN DRIVE, GRANBURY, TEXAS 76048, BLOCK 1 LOT 23/24/25, OF SECTION D, COMANCHE HARBOR SUBDIVISION, A SUBDIVISION IN HOOD COUNTY, TEXAS, ACCORDING TO THE PLAT THERE OF RECORDED IN VOLUME 1, PAGE 150, PLAT RECORDS OF HOOD COUNTY, TEXAS AND THE DEED RECORDS IN DOCUMENT #2017-0004916. On the 6th day of January, 2026 between the hours of ten o'clock A.M. and four o'clock P.M., more specifically at 10:00am. At 100 E Pearl St Granbury, TX 76048 in Hood County, Texas I will offer for sale and sell at public auction, for cash to the highest bidder, all the rights, title and interest of the property of the said. Tracy Galloway Dated at this 4th day of December A.D., 2025 Chad Davis

Hood County, Constable Precinct 1

VISIT WWW.HCNEWS.COM

033 Legal Public Notices

Granbury ISD is seeking competitive bids for VM Infrastructure replacement all scope of work, specifications, timeline listed on our electronic bidding system granbury.ionwave.net under bid# RFP 2025-37.

Questions related to the bid must be submitted in IONWave any technical questions please contact Kami Timmons in the Finance Dept. kami.timmons@granburyisd.org.

Notice of Public Sale

Pursuant to Chapter 59 Texas Property Code, DONE Storage, located at 4508 Old Granbury Road, Granbury, TX 76049 will begin an online auction at www.LockerFox.com of contents to satisfy a landlord's lien. The sale will begin online on January 3, 2026.

Unit contents will be sold as-is to the highest bidder for cash only. Cleanup deposit is required. Contents must be removed from the property within 72 hours of the winning bid. Seller reserves the right to reject any bid or withdraw the property at any time before the sale. All units contain household items unless additional items are noted. Contents from the following tenants will be sold: Thomas H Foster, Thomas N Barton.

City of Tolar

Request for Proposal (RFP) | Municipal Waste Collection and Disposal Services

The City of Tolar is seeking proposals from qualified waste management companies to provide comprehensive municipal waste collection and disposal services. The selected contractor will be responsible for the collection, transportation, and disposal of residential and commercial solid waste in accordance with all applicable local, state, and federal regulations.

Current Contract Expiration Date:

Scope of Work

The awarded contractor will provide the following services:

—Weekly curbside collection of residential solid waste.

—Scheduled collection of commercial waste from businesses within the city.

—Provision of appropriate waste receptacles (poly carts/dumpsters).

—Transportation and disposal of collected waste at an approved facility.

—Compliance with environmental and regulatory requirements.

Proposal Submission Requirements

Interested bidders must submit a complete proposal, which should include:

—Company Information: Name, address, contact details, and years in business.

—Experience & Qualifications: Details of similar contracts performed, including references.

—Service Plan: Proposed collection schedule, equipment to be used, and customer service strategy.

—Pricing Structure: Detailed cost proposal, including per-unit collection fees and optional services.

—Environmental Compliance: Description of waste disposal methods and sustainability practices.

—Insurance & Licensing: Proof of necessary liability insurance and workers' compensation coverage.

Submission Deadline and Contact Information

Deadline: All proposals must be submitted no later than January 9, 2026. Late submissions will not be considered. Contract will be awarded on January 20, 2026

Submission Address: City of Tolar 8712 W. Hwy 377 Tolar, TX 76476 or email to mburdettecityoftolar@windstream.net

For any questions regarding this RFP, please contact:

Michelle Burdette at 254-835-4390 or email mburdettecityoftolar@windstream.net

The City of Tolar reserves the right to reject any or all proposals.

The selected contractor must enter into a formal agreement with the City off Tolar.

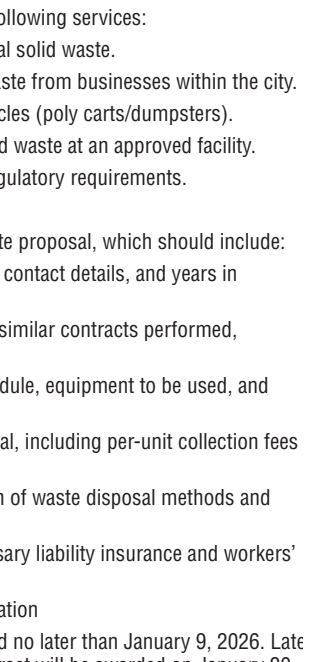
The City of Tolar looks forward to receiving proposals from qualified waste management providers. Thank you for your interest in serving our community

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Notice is hereby given that original Letters of Testamentary for the Estate of Ricky Don Harder, Deceased, were issued on December 17, 2025, in Cause No. P10849, pending in the County Court, Hood County, Texas, to: Vonnie Lynn Harder as Independent Executrix.

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: Jon C. (Kit) Gallini, attorney
GALLINI LAW, PLLC
Chase Bank Building, Suite 1003
990 N. Walnut Creek Drive
Mansfield, Texas 76063
DATED the 18th day of December, 2025.
Jon C. (Kit) Gallini
Attorney for Estate
State Bar No.: 00795360
Chase Bank Building, Suite 1003
990 N. Walnut Creek Drive
Mansfield, Texas 76063
Telephone: (817) 303-2820
Facsimile: (817) 303-2821
kitgallini@gallinilaw.com





Hood County News CLASSIFIEDS

033 Legal Public Notices

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Notice is hereby given that on December 17, 2025, Letters of Independent Administration were issued to MAKAYLA F. MULLINIX by the County Court of Hood County, Texas, in the case styled In the Estate of Lisa Ann Brassfield, Deceased, under Cause No. P10825, pending on the probate docket of the Court.

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

Dated: December 17, 2025

Makayla F. Mullinix

Independent Administrator of the Estate of Lisa Ann Brassfield

c/o Christian & Christian PLLC

1405 W. Pearl St.

Granbury, TX 76048

/S/ MarJoe D. Barnhart-Jones

State Bar No. 24045498

Email: marjoe@christianandchristianlaw.com

1405 W. Pearl St.

Granbury, TX 76048

(682) 936-4003

CITATION BY PUBLICATION

THE STATE OF TEXAS: To all persons interested in the Estate of Thomas Guy Grissom, Cause No. P10870, County Court of Hood County, Texas.

Haley Grissom, in the above numbered and entitled estate filed an Application to Determine Heirship and declare who are the heirs and the only heirs of the said Estate of Thomas Guy Grissom, deceased, and their respective shares and interests in this Estate.

Said application will be heard and acted on by said court at 10:00 oíclock a.m. on the first Monday next after the expiration of ten days from date of publication of this citation, at the County Courthouse in Granbury, Texas.

All persons interested in said estate are hereby cited to appear before said Honorable Court at the above mentioned time and place by filing a written answer contesting such application should they desire to do so.

Given under my hand and seal of said court at office in Granbury, Texas on the 17th day of December 2025.

Christine C. Leftwich

Hood County Clerk

P.O. Box 339

Hood County, Texas 76048

By /s/ Jamie Barfield, Deputy

ORDINANCE NO. 25-77

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF GRANBURY, TEXAS, AMENDING THE UTILITY FUND FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025-2026.

ORDINANCE NO. 25-78

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ARTICLES 1.50.800 OF THE CITY OF GRANBURY, TEXAS, CODE OF ORDINANCES; PROVIDING FOR THE ADDITION OF NEW FEES AND AMENDMENT OF CERTAIN OTHER FEES ADOPTED BY SAID ORDINANCE; PROVIDING FOR A SEVERABILITY CLAUSE; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

ORDINANCE NO. 25-79

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF GRANBURY, TEXAS, AMENDING THE GENERAL FUND FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025-2026.

These ordinances as adopted by the Granbury City Council are on file in the Office of the City Secretary, 116 W Bridge St. and can be seen in its entirety during normal business hours.

CITATION BY PUBLICATION - TRC 109 & 114

CAUSE NO. C2025166

THE STATE OF TEXAS

SHONDA RENEA BAILEY

Plaintiff

vs.

UNKNOWN HEIRS OF JUANITA OREAR, DECEASED,

Defendant

IN THE 355TH DISTRICT COURT OF HOOD COUNTY, TEXAS

To UNKNOWN HEIRS OF JUANITA OREAR, DECEASED.

Defendant(s), GREETING:

NOTICE TO DEFENDANT(S): You have been sued. You may employ an attorney. If you or your attorney do/does not file a written answer with the clerk who issued this citation by 10:00 a.m. on the Monday next following the expiration of forty-two days after you were served this citation and petition, a default judgment may be taken against you. In addition to filing a written answer with the clerk, you may be required to make initial disclosures to the other parties of this suit. These disclosures generally must be made no later than 30 days after you file your answer with the clerk. Find out more at TexasLawHelp.org.

You are hereby notified that a suit has been brought by SHONDA RENEA BAILEY as Plaintiff(s), against the above-named UNKNOWN HEIRS OF JUANITA OREAR, DECEASED as Defendant(s), by PLAINTIFF'S ORIGINAL PETITION filed on the 14th day of MAY, 2025, in a certain suit styled SHONDA RENEA BAILEY VS. UNKNOWN HEIRS OF JUANITA O REAR, DECEASED. A suit is now pending in the 355th Judicial District Court of Hood County, Texas. The cause number is: C2025166.

A brief statement of the nature of this suit is as follows, to wit:

Suit to Quiet Title - Lots 236,237,274,275 and 276, in Lake Granbury Harbor Subdivision, Section "D", a Subdivision in Hood County, Texas, according to the Revised Plat thereof recorded in Slide A-219 of the Plat Records of Hood County, Texas.

Address(es) of Property: 4316 W. Virginia Dr., Granbury Texas, 76048; 4317 Montana Trail, Granbury Texas, 76048.

Legal Description of Property: Lots 236,237,274,275 and 276, in Lake Granbury Harbor Subdivision, Section "D", a Subdivision in Hood County, Texas, according to the Revised Plat thereof recorded in Slide A-219 of the Plat Records of Hood County, Texas

ISSUED AND GIVEN under my hand and seal of said court in the City of Granbury, Hood County, Texas, on DECEMBER 9, 2025.

ATTORNEY FOR THE PLAINTIFF (S)

CAIN AND KIEL, P.C. Attorneys at Law

508 NORTH RIDGEWAY

Cleburne, Texas 76033

817-645-1717

MELANIE GRAFT CLERK OF THE 355TH JUDICIAL

DISTRICT COURT OF HOOD COUNTY, TEXAS

By: Sarah Roach

Deputy Clerk of the 355th Judicial District Court

033 Legal Public Notices

Notice is hereby given that original Letters of Independent Administration for the Estate of ROBERT JAMES RIOUX, Deceased, were issued on December 17, 2025, in Cause No. P10764, pending in the County Court of HOOD County, Texas, to: Logan Rioux. 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: Lukas A. Lawrence Attorney at Law

3016 E. Hwy 377

Granbury, Texas 76049

Lukas A. Lawrence

Attorney for Sandra Gray

State Bar No.: 24078832

Telephone: (682) 231-1407

Facsimile: (817) 984-3954

E-mail: Attorneys@LFirmTX.com

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Notice is hereby given that Letters Testamentary were given to Mark Edward Cheney, as Independent Executor on the 17th day of December, 2025, in the proceeding indicated below my signature hereto, which proceeding is still pending, and that he now holds such Letters Testamentary.

All persons having claims against said Estate, which is being administered in the County below named, are hereby required to present the same to the undersigned attorney at 1320 S. University Drive, Suite 806,

Fort Worth, TX 76107 before suit upon same is barred by the general statutes of

limitation, before such Estate is closed, and within the time prescribed by law.

Dated this 18th day of December, 2025.

Karen H. Gordon, as attorney for, Independent Executor for the Estate of Kathryn Kay Cheney; Cause Number P10856, in Probate Court Number One, Fort Worth, Hood County, Texas

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Hood County Commissioners' Court has received an application to consider a revision of the plat for:

PORT'S O'CALL, Lot 146R

The Hood County Commissioners' Court will meet to consider the application and to hear any protest to the revision on Tuesday, January 27th, 2026, at 9 a.m. in the Central Jury Room of the Ralph H. Walton Jr. Justice Center, 1200 West Pearl Street, Granbury, Texas 76048.

Hood County Commissioners' Court has received an application to consider a revision of the plat for:

THE LANDINGS EAST, LOTS 3799-R, RESERVE AREA C-R & THE RANCHES AT PECAN PLANTATION, PHASE 1, EQUESTRIAN SPORTS AREA-R

The Hood County Commissioners' Court will meet to consider the application and to hear any protest to the revision on Tuesday, January 27th, 2026, at 9 a.m. in the Central Jury Room of the Ralph H. Walton Jr. Justice Center, 1200 West Pearl Street, Granbury, Texas 76048.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

The following Public Hearings will be considered by the PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION of the City of Granbury on Monday, January 12, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. The Public Hearings will also be considered by the GRANBURY CITY COUNCIL on Tuesday, February 3, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. All Public Hearings will be held at Granbury City Hall, 116 W. Bridge Street, Granbury, Texas.

1. ZONE-25-19 Amend the Planned Development/Light Commercial [PD/LC], adopted ordinance 24-48, to revise the development plan; located at 5284 E US Hwy 377

2. SUP-25-11 Specific Use Permit for self-service storage in Heavy Commercial zoning; located at 4426 E US Hwy 377.

3. O-2022-02, Request of the City of Granbury to amend select sections of the City of Granbury Subdivision Ordinance. Amendments proposed are to Section 2.6.B Approval authority for amending plat, to remove the 21- calendar day approval term for staff approval of amending plats.

For more information, contact Community Development at 682-279-8250, Granbury City Hall, 116 West Bridge St., Granbury, TX 76048.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

The following Public Hearings will be considered by the GRANBURY CITY COUNCIL on Tuesday, January 6, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. All Public Hearings will be held at Granbury City Hall, 116 W. Bridge Street, Granbury, Texas.

1. Annex- Ordinance to annex 4.186 acres of the John Howard Survey, Abstract No. 717, and platted as Lots 25-28 of the Gateway Addition, Hood County, Texas, addressed as 200 Gateway Ct. per petition for voluntary annexation in the City of Granbury, Texas

2. Annex- Ordinance to annex 18.088 acres of the Benjamin Green Survey, Abstract No 197, and Platted as Lot 1 Block 1 Enterprise Addition, Hood County, Texas, addressed as 4911 Old Granbury Rd. per petition for voluntary annexation in the City of Granbury, Texas.

3. Annex- Ordinance to annex 2,098 acres in the Milam County School Land Survey Lower League, Milam County School Land Survey Upper League, John David Crow Survey Abstract No 110, Ebenezer Millican Survey Abstract No 114, J.W. Ownsby Survey Abstract No 814, G.W. Williams Survey Abstract No 600, Jose Maybarbo Survey Abstract No 749, the C.C. Harvick Survey Abstract No 290, E.T. Gatlin Survey Abstract No 211, J.W. Dawson Survey No 805, J.H. Davis Survey Abstract No 157, and E. Hammack Survey Abstract No 650 Hood County, and all of Scottish Rite Village Unit One, Tract One, Hood County, Texas per petition for voluntary annexation in the City of Granbury, Texas. Hood County, Texas, addressed as 2801 W HWY 377.

For more information, contact Community Development at 682-279-8250, Granbury City Hall, 116 West Bridge St., Granbury, TX 76048.





IDLE

FROM PAGE B8

open and through eyeglass lenses slightly rose-colored. If my lower lids give way, however, I may use them for rain gauges.

My dentist, Dr. Marshall Brown, must be credited. It was once said of Fort Worth Star-Telegram columnist George Dolan by one of the world's greatest sportswriters, Blackie Sherrod, that "Before God made George, he broke the mold." (Maybe I'm from a broken one as well).

I won't go quite that far describing Dr. Brown, but his mold may have had a slight crack in it.

At first glance in his office, one might think him to be all about sports, this proud graduate of the University of Texas. He is that, what with dozens of football helmets adorning shelves and him in bright orange scrubs.

But, he's much, much more, this world-class dentist with a good word and warm heart for all.

Then there's Dr. Gerald L. Chase, our neighbor for a couple of years. It was his smiling face I recognized upon gaining consciousness in the hospital following cardiac arrest that interrupted my announcements from our church podium 50 months ago.

I am thankful for him and his charming wife — former nurse Layna — a pair whose medical expertise is remarkable, and their friendship, treasured.

Finally, a "thank you" to United Healthcare for bearing the financial brunt of my health issues.

Dr. Newbury, a speaker in the Metroplex, may be reached at 817-447-3872; email: newbury@speakerdoc.com. Column audio version at speakerdoc.com.

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GARDEN PATCH

Dream in December — gardeners look ahead to spring plantings



BY PHYLLIS WEBSTER

Phyllis Webster earned a degree in journalism before embarking on a long career in public relations and marketing. A Granbury resident since 1998, she has been deeply involved in the community. She is an award-winning writer and photographer, as well as a Master Gardener. She has authored Garden Patch since 2001. 817-680-4849

As winter settles in and landscapes need less tending, gardeners look ahead. On chilly days it's fun to cozy up on the couch with a computer and a pile of seed and plant catalogues. Thumbing through page upon page of plant offerings helps drive away winter blues.

December and January are ideal months in which to order plants, particularly cool season performers that will be planted early for spring blooms or harvest. Many easy-to-grow, long-lasting varieties sell out quickly, so it's best to have a clear idea about what you need. Always select plants that will thrive despite predominantly alkaline soil and unpredictable weather.

Some reliable bulbs will tolerate winter planting in North Central Texas, such as snowflakes, grape hyacinths, species tulips and late season daffodils. Snowflakes (Leucojum aestivum) are among the most dependable bulbs for the area. They tolerate clay soils, drought and moist winters. Snowflakes bloom anytime from late February through March, so if they are not in the ground long enough, it may be a year before their long-lasting white, bell-shaped flowers appear.

Grape hyacinths (Muscari) are tiny flowering plants that are perfect at the front of the border, used as edging or naturalized. They produce small, blue bloom spikes in early spring. Species tulips (Tulipa clusiana varieties), unlike traditional hybrid tulips, sometimes perennialize. They must be planted as soon as received. Pre-chilled daffodils (Narcissus), often called late-season daffodils, may establish and bloom if planted promptly in early January. These include jonquils and tazettas.

Several annual flowers thrive when direct sown in the garden in late February to March. Larkspur is a cool season favorite that reliably reseeds. By April, you will have colorful blue, white or pink flower spikes. Poppies, also reseeding annuals, love chilly soils. Scatter seed for spring blooms; color depends upon variety. Bachelor's buttons, also known as cornflowers, (Centaurea cyanus) are exceptionally cold hardy and simple to grow. In cool weather, they produce classic blue flowers. Annual phlox (Phlox drummondii) is an early blooming Texas native with red, pink or white bloom clusters. Annuals also may be started indoors and transplanted into the garden after all danger of frost is past.

When it comes to cool season crops, timing is everything so order seeds now to ensure they are ready for planting during their optimal times. According to Texas AgriLife Extension, these seeds can be planted directly into garden beds as the soil warms through spring: (Feb./March) beets, carrots, leaf lettuce, mustard/turnip greens, radishes, spinach and (Feb./mid-April), Swiss chard. Warm season crops are planted later in spring, typically after the last frost (mid-March) after soils warm to about 65 degrees. These include beans, corn, cucumbers and okra with black-eyed peas, squash and melons planted April to May.

Many vegetables can be started from seed indoors 6-8 weeks before the last frost, but the AgriLife Extension recommends purchasing transplants for heat-sensitive crops like tomatoes, peppers and eggplants to ensure they set fruit before intense summer heat. If starting them from seed, do so indoors well in advance of expected planting time.

Ordering in early winter ensures the best selection of varieties well adapted to Texas soils and climate and allows for proper timing of winter and early spring sowing/planting. The reward is extended blooms and harvests. Exploring seed and bulb catalogues, both printed and online, is more than a pastime, it's the first step toward shaping a vibrant, resilient spring garden.

For answers to your horticulture questions, please call the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension, Hood County at 817-579-3280 or online at lakegranburymastergardeners.org.



COURTESY

December and January are ideal months in which to order plants, particularly cool season performers that will be planted early for spring blooms or harvest.

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