

The Brackett News

Volume 21, No. 13

Thursday, April 30, 2009

1 Section, 6 Pages

Serving the communities of Brackettville, Fort Clark Springs, Spofford and Kinney County

Community News

HEADSTART FIELD DAY
CDI Brackett headstart/early head start will be hosting their annual field day at tiger stadium on Friday, May 8 at 9am until noon.

4H MEETING
There will be a 4-H General Meeting on Sunday, May 3 at 6pm in the District Courtroom of the County Courthouse. We will elect officers, and club managers. Pizza, drinks and dessert will be served! Don't miss it!

CHURCH FESTIVAL
St Mary Magdalene Catholic Church will be having an Annual Church Festival on Saturday, May 3 at 12-5pm bring your family.

ALAMO VILLAGE 50TH
Alamo Village is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year. John Farkis, author of the book "Alamo Village-How a Texas Cattleman Brought Hollywood to the Old West" is interested in speaking with anyone associated with John Wayne's movie "The Alamo" if you were a member of the cast, crew or production support, or had a relative who was, and wish to be interviewed for an upcoming book, please contact John at 810-225-3277 or J.K.Farkis@Earthlink.net

KICKAPOO BIRD WALK
April 25, 2009 - Kickapoo Cavern State Park - Morning Bird Walks - Every Saturday. Staff will conduct a nature walk and program throughout the park in search of migrating birds and endangered species like the black-capped vireo at 8:30-10:30am. Reservations are required for more information call 830-563-2342

FOOD BANK NEWS
THE CSFP OVER AGE 60 DISTRIBUTION will be on Friday, May 22 from 11am-5pm at the newspaper office. PLEASE DO NOT ARRIVE EARLY. ALL FOOD MUST BE PICKED UP ON THIS DAY. FOOD WILL NOT BE HELD FOR YOU TO PICK UP AT A LATER TIME. All clients must present a Photo ID every month. Distribution dates for 2009 are as follows: May 22, June 19, July 17, August 21, September 18, October 16, November 20 and December 18.

TEXCAP FAMILY FOOD DISTRIBUTION will be on Friday, May 22 from 11am-5pm at the newspaper office. PLEASE DO NOT ARRIVE EARLY. ALL FOOD MUST BE PICKED UP ON THIS DAY. FOOD WILL NOT BE HELD FOR YOU TO PICK UP AT A LATER TIME. You will not receive a phone call, it is first come, first served. All clients must present a Photo ID every month. Distribution dates for 2009 are as follows: May 22, June 19, July 17, August 21, September 18, October 16, November 20 and December 18.

Weekend WEATHER Friday
High: 92
Low: 67
Partly Cloudy

Saturday
High: 89
Low: 68
Am Clouds/PM Sun

Sunday
High: 86
Low: 68
Partly Cloudy

Swine Flu rumors scare community Softball team ill, but not from piggy flu

By Leigh Volcsko
tnews@sbcglobal.net
Brackett Independent School District reported zero cases of the feared Swine Flu as several girls on the softball team fell terribly ill this past week.

The spread of the airborne flu virus, now internationally labeled Swine Flu because of the jump it made from pigs to humans, is of major concern to local school officials.

BISD Superintendent Robert Westbrook said Wednesday the softball girls that were rumored to have the flu do *not* have it, but several had in fact contracted a stomach virus which quickly spread to other members of the

team. The varsity softball team was named tri-district champs and they are in the number one slot as they move on to regional play, however, all UIL sanctioned events have been cancelled until after May 11.

Westbrook encouraged parents to take the proper precautions to protect their children and to contact the school if they had any questions.

According to the Texas Department of State Health Services website on Wednesday afternoon, sixteen confirmed cases of Swine Flu had been reported in Texas. The case count is as follows: "DSHS has reported 16

other cases are from Cameron (1), Dallas (3), Guadalupe (5) and Starr (2) counties. County information for the remaining four cases is pending."

FCA Golf Ball Drop Winner returns prize

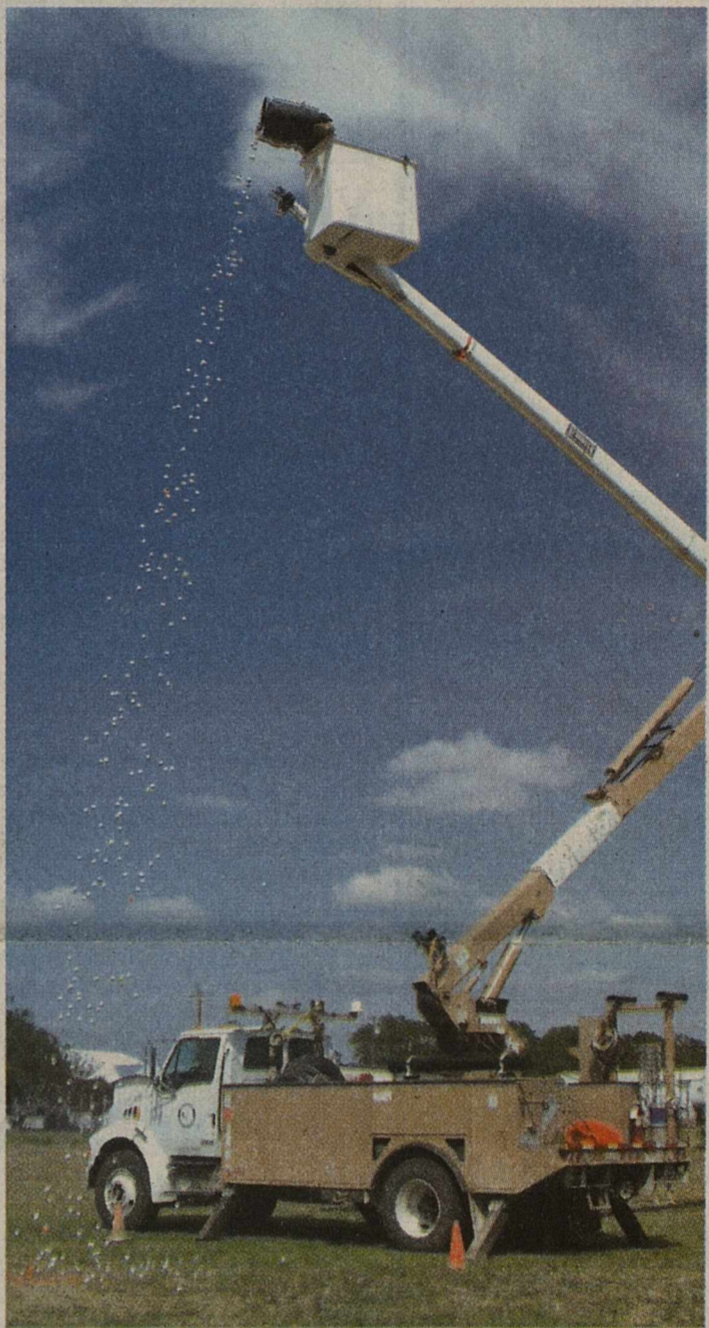


Photo By Leigh Volcsko

The Brackett Fellowship of Christian Athletes raised \$6,000 at their annual Golf Ball Drop on April 25 on the Lawn of Rio Grande Electric Coop. The balls were sold and then dropped from high in the air. The ball that dropped into a tiny hole in the ground was then declared the winner and given a cash prize of \$1,000. This year's winner, Kari Hinds of Charlotte, donated her prize back to the FCA where the proceeds send youth to camp.

Letter to Parents from BISD Administration

April 29, 2009
Dear Parents, Students, Faculty and Staff:
As I am sure you are aware, there have been cases of swine influenza (swine flu) reported in the United States and Mexico, as well as in other parts of the world. At this time there have been confirmed cases of swine flu in Texas. However, at this time there has not been any confirmed cases of swine flu in Brackettville or Kinney County.
I wish to assure you we are taking the possibility of swine flu seriously. We have taken the following actions:
-Increase levels of sanitizing bathrooms, faucets, light switches, etc.
-Encouraging students, faculty and staff to wash their hands frequently with soap and water.
-Encouraging the covering of the mouth and nose when sneezing or coughing.
-Contacting parents/guardians when a child is absent to find out the reason for the absence. If there is any flu like symptoms present, the child needs to stay home until the flu like symptoms have passed. In addition, if any family member that is not enrolled in school suffers from flu like symptoms, the children who are in school need to stay home until the sick family member's flu like symptoms have passed.
If any case of swine flu is confirmed in Brackettville or Kinney County, we will take appropriate steps as recommended by the Texas Department of State Health Services.
Attached is a fact sheet from the Texas Department of State Health Services regarding the swine flu. If you have any questions concerning the swine flu or what the school is doing to monitor the situation, do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,
Robert K. Westbrook, Superintendent
Brackett Independent School District

WANT TO ADVERTISE YOUR BUSINESS? Call 830-563-2852

Smith's charitable hearts lead to literacy

By Katie Brown
Staff Reporter

The Seventh Annual St. Henry de Osso Family Literacy Gala was held in Uvalde at the SWTJC Ballroom in the Matthews Center in Uvalde on March 28, 2009.

The Keynote Address was given by Gracie Romo and the honored guests were recognized by Sister Hortensia Coloma, STJ, the founder and director of the St. Henry De Osso Family Project. Honorees included were Drs. Don and Anita Smith of FCS who have supported the project from its beginning.

The Society of Saint Teresa of Jesus, the Teresian Sisters, was founded in 1876 by Father Henry de Osso-Cervello in Spain. It began with just eight women who were to be foremost in promoting the honor of Jesus through prayer, teaching and

sacrifice. The order grew very quickly from Spain to Portugal, Africa and to North and South America.

Today, according to their web site, over 5,000 Teresians have passed through the fourteen novitiates of the Institute and they staff more than one hundred schools around the world.

Sister Hortensia Coloma, of the Teresian Sisters, came to the United States ca 1980 to the convent in Uvalde that was established in 1910. The Teresians are an education group; they all teach school or have something to do with parish schools, Catholic schools according to Dr. Smith. They were brought to Uvalde to teach in the parish school there.

As the Sisters came from Spain they taught in Spanish. Then in the 1940's, Father Lyons requested English speak-

ing nuns and they came.

Dr. Don Smith was raised in Illinois, receiving his Bachelor and Master degrees at the University of Illinois and his Doctorate at ISU in 1969. He was offered a job at a church college in Houston which he accepted and he was there for six years when the opportunity arose for a full time position with Sul Ross in 1973 in Uvalde. Dr. Smith was the first full time professor in what is today the Rio Grande College, an entity under the umbrella of Sul Ross University. His wife Anita has her Doctorate in Education with a major in both English and Spanish. She taught in the public school system in Uvalde and also part time at Sul Ross.

Dr. Smith first met Sister Hortensia in the late 1970's or early 1980's. That semester he was teaching a graduate course in individual intelligence testing. Under his supervision, some of his students had to administer a certain number of these tests in order to qualify to do them. A parent of a 4th grade student at Sacred Heart School came to him requesting that they test her son whom she thought him to be exceptionally bright. He was bored in school and they didn't know what to do with him. Every parent thinks their child is bright, but she was adamant and so Dr. Smith had his students test him. He was found to be very highly intelligent. So Dr. Smith went to speak to the principal at the Sacred Heart School, who at that

time was Sister Hortensia. He expressed that in his professional opinion this student could be moved up a grade next school year. Sister Hortensia was very adamant that it would not be in the best interest of the child as he would not fit in socially with 6th grade students. However, over the summer Dr. Smith and his students brought the young man up to speed both socially and academically and in the Fall, Sister Hortensia advanced him to 6th grade where he excelled. This was the first encounter between the Drs. Smith and Sister Hortensia.

Shortly after that Sister gave up her position at the school as she felt that her calling was something besides teaching. Dr. Smith said, "She came to us, why she picked us I don't know except that God kind of leads you in a direction that...well, she had this vision that had to do with literacy." She wasn't sure just what she wanted to do or where to start, but she called on the Smiths frequently, expressing her ideas and concerns. "I was trying to get it in my mind where she was going with this and what it was she wanted to do." They met several times at the Smiths home, throwing out ideas and eventually it became clear that she wanted to work with the families and she wanted to have a literacy program. It was just a matter of how to go about it and she wouldn't take no for an answer.

continued on page 4



Photo By Katie Brown
Don and Anita Smith

What's Happening

Swine Flu Tips

Health Services Region 8

A Guide For Parents and Caregivers: Swine Flu

What is Swine Flu?
Swine flu is a form of the influenza virus that occurs in pigs, but can be spread from person to person.

What are the symptoms of swine flu?
Fever over 100 degrees AND

Cough or sore throat
People may also feel tired, have loss of appetite, headache, runny or stuffy nose, or sore muscles. Some people may have nausea, vomiting and diarrhea.

How does the swine flu spread?

People that have swine flu usually cough, sneeze and have a runny nose. This makes droplets with virus in them. Other people may get swine flu by breathing in these droplets, getting them in their nose or mouth, or touching contaminated surfaces.

How long can a sick person spread the swine flu to others?

Adults who are normally healthy are able to spread the flu from 1-3 days. Children and some adults may spread the illness longer because they do not fight off disease as well as normal healthy adults. It is also possible to spread the illness the day before a person starts having symptoms, before they know they are sick.

Someone in my household has symptoms of swine flu. What should I do?

All members of the household should limit their contact with others as much as possible. No one from your household should go to work, school, or large gatherings until 7 days after recovery.

Call your family doctor or local clinic, but do not go to the doctor's office unless absolutely necessary. If a visit is necessary, call ahead of time so measures can be taken to keep from infecting others during your visit.

The person who is ill should cover his/her nose and mouth with a tissue when coughing and sneezing. The tissue should be immediately thrown away in a trash can.

Cough into the crook of the elbow.

Treat the ill family member with Tylenol not aspirin.

The child or adult I care for does not have symptoms of swine flu. How can I protect his/her from the flu?

Avoid contact with people who are sick.

Try not to touch the nose, mouth and eyes.

Wash your hands with soap and water (sing "Happy Birthday" twice) once every hour.

If water is not available use alcohol-based hand cleaners.

Practice healthy habits: get enough sleep, manage your stress, drink enough fluids, eat nutritious food, and be physically active.

Lower Back signs and symptoms



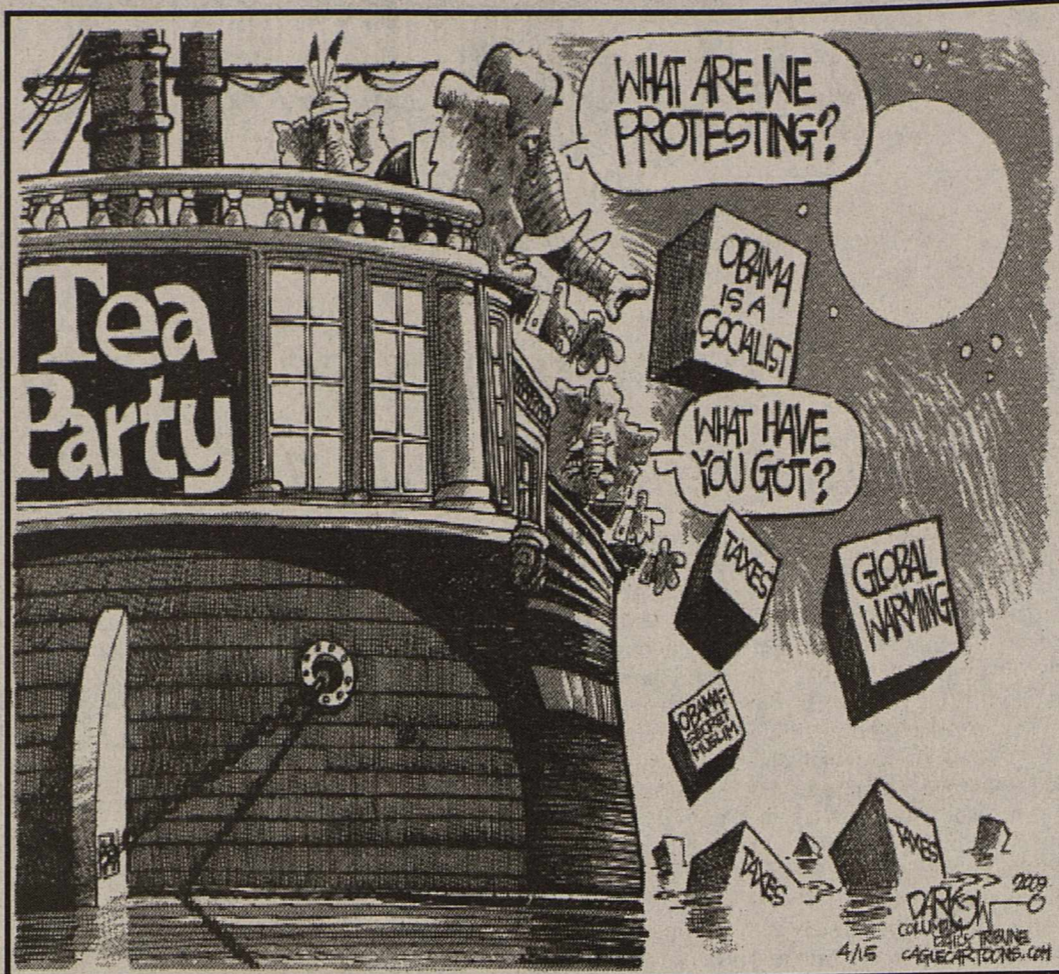
Dr. Kent Lowery, D.C., FIAMA

80% of Americans will suffer back pain at some point in their lives. Lower lumbar subluxation can affect the prostate gland, muscles of the low back, and the sciatic nerve. Your chiropractor can find the source of the problem and correct it so the body can heal naturally. He may also recommend a plan of care that includes

chiropractic adjustments, hot or cold compresses, exercises to strengthen and retrain muscles, and diet or lifestyle changes. Many times a pelvic imbalance is the source of the problem and can be corrected fairly quickly. Are you depending on pain relievers or muscle relaxers for relief from low back pain? Are you postponing or avoiding altogether the activities you enjoy? Are you thinking surgery might be the only option left to consider? If so, consider safe, effective chiropractic care as an alternative.

If you are experiencing low back pain, please call Dr. Kent Lowery, D.C., FIAMA for an appointment at 563-6249 in Brackettville.

Our clinic is located at #1 Mesquite Alley. We offer acupuncture and accept most major insurances.



You can help move a mountain (of cash)



Emily Cooper

In an uncertain economy, it's natural for people to "tighten their belts" by cutting down on their spending. And yet by having too much cash on hand today, you could actually slow your progress toward your financial goals of tomorrow.

Before we get to the possible pitfalls of hoarding cash, let's consider your fellow Americans' recent savings habits:

How much? In the last quarter of 2008, the personal savings rate was 2.9 percent, the highest level since the third quarter of 2001, according to the U.S. Department of Commerce.

Where? People are putting

their money in what they consider safe vehicles. At the end of 2008, the ratio of money market fund assets and bank savings deposits to stocks as measured by the Wilshire 5000 Index, one of the broadest market indices was 95.4 percent, according to Ned Davis Research. (Keep in mind that the Wilshire 5000 index is unmanaged and not available for direct investment.) This ratio is the highest it's been since money market accounts were created in the early 1980s.

Of course, given the stock market decline, it's not surprising that so much money is going into these accounts, because people are looking, above all else, to preserve their principal. Consequently, as a nation, we are now sitting on a "mountain" of cash. However, the trip up this mountain does not come free. While it's true that these vehicles may help preserve your principal, they may not provide

you with returns that can keep up with inflation, which means that the more of these instruments you own, and the longer you own them, the greater the likelihood that you will lose purchasing power. Furthermore, if you're putting most of your assets into cash, you're incurring "opportunity cost" the chance to invest that money into vehicles that have the potential to provide the growth you need to help achieve your long-term goals, such as a comfortable retirement.

So here's the situation: On the one hand, you have a tough economy and a stock market that has probably already saddled you with losses. On the other hand, you need to consider investing in stocks or other growth-oriented investments to help you reach your long-term goals. What's the solution? Balance. There's probably a place in your portfolio for short-term instruments whose chief benefit is helping to preserve your principal. But you may need to balance these holdings with investments that can potentially reward you with growth. The exact mix of assets depends on your risk tolerance, time horizon and individual goals.

In these days, you may need a leap of faith to invest some of your cash. But history is on your side: Downturns have typically been followed by market rallies. Plus, we will eventually see the unleashing of all that pent-up cash seeking higher returns, and that force should have a positive impact on the financial markets. It may feel comforting to have a lot of cash on hand. But if you're going to be comfortable in the years ahead, you should consider putting some of that cash to work.

Vacation get-away



The Fly Lady Marla Cilley

What is it about going on vacation that makes it worth all the preparation and hassle? Is it getting away from the phone? I don't think so; most of us have our personal cell phones. Is it getting to seeing new places?

Maybe but many of us usually want to go back to old familiar areas. Is it the food? It could be, or is the fact that cooking is not hard in an efficient clean kitchen. How about the people?

They are usually the same ones you have at home. So what is it about being in a different place with the same people? Could it be that the surroundings do not choke you!

Hotel rooms are sparse: Two beds, a desk, one bathroom, a night table, one small closet, a little dining table and maybe a little refrigerator. Hey I am leaving the Television and video games out. Ignore them. Let's say you rent a condo at the beach.

It has a small kitchen, two to three bedrooms, a living area, a balcony, a couple of bathrooms and empty closets. The same thing for a house at the lake or a cabin in the woods; they have all the conveniences of home without ALL YOUR CLUTTER!!!

Oh it's not clutter, it is your stuff, I can hear you yelling at me. Well your stuff makes you feel like you need to leave home to breathe. So what does that tell you? Your stuff is killing you. You are uneasy in your own home. Another word for uneasy is disease. Get it???

Your house has become a storage unit for your stuff, not a home. This is why it feels so good to walk into a sparsely decorated room. The space frees you to breathe without you feeling closed in. How do we get this vacation feeling in our cluttered homes? By evicting Clutter and Just-in-Case forever!

These things have chased you away from your home. They have taken over your residence. They are squatters and it is time to take back your home and make it your sanctuary instead of a storage unit. Start by Crisis Cleaning: we are attacking the surface clutter that is residing in our favorite hotspots.

Spend 15 minutes in the Kitchen, then 15 in the living room and then 15 in the bathroom. Then you get to rest for 15 minutes.

Don't skip this step! It is the most important one. I promise those few minutes are going to make a difference if you will get up and do it, instead of whining that 15 minutes is not enough time.

The clutter will be out of sight and you will start to say to yourself that this doesn't look half bad; even if the floors are dirty. Clutter is what makes your home look awful. Oh you still don't believe me; then do an experiment.

Clear off your coffee table. I mean move everything off into a box and just stand back and look at it. How do you feel? The clean and clear is contagious.

Now go put away, give away or throw away everything that is in that box. You deserve to have a home that gives you a beautiful clean feeling. You can get that vacation get-away by taking babysteps to eliminate your clutter. Set your timer and allow that beautiful clean to put a smile on your face!

For more help getting rid of your CHAOS, check out her website and join her free life coaching at www.FlyLady.net, listen to her channel www.blogtalkradio.com/lylady show or read her books, Sink Reflections published by Bantam and her New York Times Best Selling book, Body Clutter published by Fireside. Copyright 2009 Marla Cilley Used by permission in this publication.

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The Brackett News

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Letter To Editor POLICY

The Brackett News welcomes and encourages letters to the editor. We reserve the right to edit all letters for accuracy, taste and grammar. We reserve the right to condense letters for space purposes. We reserve the right to refuse letters for any reason. Letters should be approximately 350 words in length. Letters to the editor should not attack private citizens. Letters to the editor regarding any upcoming election and/or candidates shall be charged the same rate as a political ad and will be subject to state law. All letters must be signed and include a mailing address and phone number for verification purposes. All writers are subject to being asked to provide proof of identity. Letters found or believed to be written by a person other than that of the signed author will be rejected. We do not publish form letters, copies of letters or letters written to other publications. Unless otherwise noted, letters to the editor and columns on the opinion page reflect the opinion of the writers and not necessarily those of The Brackett News.

The Brackett News

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MUSICAL NUNSENSATIONS
BY Dan Goggin

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Cindy Rhinesmith, Karen Gridley & Julia Grey
Directed By: Fred Brockwell

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8:00 PM
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The Emporium - 800 South Main St.
Del-Tax RV - 4220 Hwy 90 West
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Adult Tickets:
\$12 in advance
or \$16 at the door
Student Tickets:
\$8 in advance
or \$12 at the door

Partially funded by the Val Verde Community Foundation

Uvalde Masonic Lodge Scholarship Invitational

Skeet Shoot

Free lunch with registration
lots of door prizes
May 9 in Uvalde 2730 CR 400

for more details call
830-279-6533 or 713-502-1084



BHS students compete; advance to state

Students from Brackett High School traveled to Brenham to compete at the UIL Region IV IA Academic Meet.

Eleven students compete in Mathematics, Accounting, Social Studies, Number Sense and Current Events. The Mathematics team consists of Laura Swinson, Victor Cantu, Emily Calk and Brandon Allen. The team scored a total of 390 points to win the contest. Flatonia HS placed second with a team total of 368 points.

Laura Swinson placed first individually followed by Victor Cantu placing third. The team is coached by Jamie Ballew. The Accounting team consists of Laura Swinson, Arlene Roth and Jeff Sitgreaves. The team scored a total of 807 points to capture first place team. Granger HS was second with 645 points. Swinson won first place individually followed by Arlene Roth placing fourth. The team is coached by Misti Rose.

The Number Sense team consists of Victor Cantu, Kelsey Bruce, Brandon Allen and Cynthia Bland. They scored a total of 183 points to get second place team. Lovelady won the event with 194 points. Victor Cantu won first place individually.

The Social Studies team consists of Sahara Rodriguez, Bryan Calk, Jeff Sitgreaves and Jacob Schroeder. They scored a total of 166 points to get third. San Isidro HS won with 220 points. The team is coached by Kathy

Bader. Competing in Current Events was Jacob Schroeder. He was coached by Belinda Schroeder. The Mathematics team, Accounting team, and Victor Cantu for Number Sense was scheduled to compete at the State UIL meet in Austin May 7-9, but due to the scare of Swine Flu transmission, all UIL sanctioned events have been postponed until after May 11.

See <http://www.uil.utexas.edu/academics/> for more details about the postponement of UIL activities.

Kinney County Little League *Part 2 of 4*



Team Cardinals - Coach Pitch: (Not in Order as pictured) Coaches: David Palmer and Javier DeLeon. Team members: Sam Palmer, Javier DeLeon, Christian Luna, Michael Falcon, Zachary Koontz, Gracie Maddox, Taylor Smith, Kristal Cook, Autumn Clementz and Ty Edwards.



Team Athletics - Coach Pitch (Not in Order as pictured) Coaches: Patrick Sheedy and Samantha Sheedy. Team members: Baldomero Vasquez, Kristopher Creel, Stetson Schuster, Nat Terrazas, Matthew Sheedy, Levi Earwood, Natalee Terrazas, Martin Garcia, Brendan Tusckett, Juliette Baker and Jewel Swift.



Team Braves - Coach Pitch: (Not in Order as pictured) Coaches: Jesse Terrazas, Elda Terrazas and Frank Castillo. Team members: Logan Fisher, Thomas Herrera, Zuehl Conoly, Karina Terrazas, Diego Castillo, Trey Seargeant, Noah Flores, Brilliance Buitron, Sara Titchenell and Devin Villareal.

Come to the Frontier

A Bible Based New Testament Church
9:45 am Bible Study/Sunday School
11:00 am Worship Service
6:00 pm Sunday Night at the Movies or Bible study.
7:00 pm Wednesday Night Service
Nursery Provided
Pastor: Ned Sitzes
Frontier Baptist Church (SBC) Corner of Ann & El Paso

First Baptist Church

Sunday
Bible study for all ages 9:45 a.m.
Worship Service - 11:00 a.m.
Discipleship Training 6 p.m.
Evening Service 7 p.m.
Wednesday
6 p.m. Children's Ministry
7 p.m. Bible Study
Pastor Jeff Janca
website: fbcbrackett.org
Phone: 563-2245
301 N. Ann St.

Welcome! Church of Christ

808 N. Ann 563-2616
Sunday AM, 9:30 Classes & 10:30 Worship
Sunday Evening Service, 6:30 pm
Wednesday PM 6:30 Classes
Minister: Ray Melton

First United Methodist Church

109 James Street, next to the clinic
Sunday School 9:30 * Worship 10:45
Staffed Nursery Every Sunday
Hear the Bible, Feel the Spirit, Find a Welcome!
830-563-2823
open hearts, open minds, open doors

St. Andrew's Episcopal Church

"Welcomes You"
Sunday Worship 11:00 AM
Wednesday Bible Study: 7:00 PM (October - April)
Reverend Nathan Lafrenz 563-9607

OUR REDEEMER LUTHERAN CHURCH

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH OF AMERICA
Corner of Fort & Henderson
Sunday: Worship 9:00 a.m.
Bible Study Wednesday 7 p.m. (October - April)
Lutheran Church Women 11 a.m. Parrish Hall (Second Monday of Month)
Email: www.ourredeemerlutheran.org
PASTOR NATHAN LAFRENZ 563-9607

BHS SENIOR SPOTLIGHT

Class of 2009



Arlene Roth

Name: Arlene Roth
Mother Or Guardian: Sara Lane
Father Or Guardian: John Lane
Siblings: Dand Roth

What are your plans after graduation? I plan to attend Abilene Christian University in the fall and I hope to be a pediatric oncology social worker eventually.

What teacher influenced you the most? I think all my teachers have influenced me and left a mark in my life. I've been blessed to encounter many amazing mentors threw out my school years.

What are you most looking forward to after graduation? I look forward to exploring life and the "Real World" and becoming myself and surrounding myself with my choice of people. The freedom of life and education.

What will you miss most after graduation? I think I will miss the laid back atmosphere of a small town and the ability to call upon my parents with any request. I'll miss the Friday night football game and all the fun trips we are taken, like state UIL meet with Mrs. Brandt.



Sandy Leigh Tate

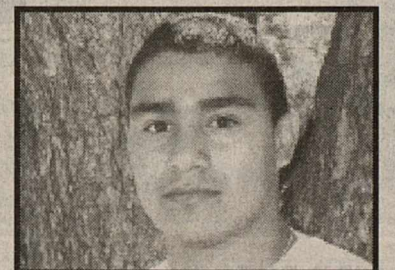
Name: Sandy Leigh Tate
Mother Or Guardian: Sandra Tate
Father Or Guardian: Todd Lee Tate
Siblings: Brenda Tate

What are your plans after graduation? I plan on going to College of the Ozarks in Missouri, and get a degree in culinary arts and also a degree in French and German.

What teacher influenced you the most? Miss Jaso because she was there when I needed help with my paper work and if I had a problem I was able to go to her and talk about it. I just want to tell her and the rest of my teachers thanks.

What are you most looking forward to after graduation? I am looking forward to going to college.

What will you miss most after graduation? I will miss all of my friends!!



Jacob Schroeder

Name of Senior: Jacob Schroeder
Mother: B. Schroeder
Father: Todd Schroeder
Siblings: Gabby Schroeder

What are your plans after graduation? I plane on attending the United States Coast Guard Academy or going to Iowa State or UT with an ROTC Scholarship.

What teacher influenced you the most? The teacher that most influenced me was to Mr. Ramon.

What are you most looking forward to after graduation? Becoming independent and experiencing new things.

What do you think you will miss the most after graduation? Playing football with my former teammates. I wish them the best of luck in the upcoming football season.

The Spa at Mountain Valley

Full Service Salon and Day Spa
Manicures • Pedicures • Facials
Hot River Rock Massage • Spa Packages

Let us pamper you from head to toe

ConCan Country Club www.concangolf.com

Located on River Road (CR 348), 3.5 miles north of 127 and US 83 in Concan

830-232-4538



Professional Services

Thursday, April 30, 2009 The Brackett News 4

Connie's Gym

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Smiths support St. Henry de Osso literacy program

Dr. Smith had received a grant one year to do a research program with the Head Start children in Uvalde with the permission of the school system. The families were low income and many of the parents did not speak English. The whole thing revolved around getting the parents involved in the verbal development of the children and in their schoolwork. They found that the parents who did participate in their children's education were the key and that their children did better all the way through school. These were the people that Sister Hortensia wanted to reach. All of the focus of the public schools in their tutoring programs has been on the kids; it did not impact the home. Sister wanted to impact the parents.

In 1993 Sister Hortensia began evangelization ministry in Uvalde to assist parents with their children's academic needs; focus was on kinder through second grade at-risk students. Working with the Smiths who were already involved in the Head Start Program, they found ways to identify children, with the cooperation of the schools, who needed help in the lower grades. Sister's idea, their idea, was to get those parents involved in the child's learning at home; that the home is a place where the children learn. So, they helped Sister to devise ways of training volunteer tutors in the culture and other aspects of the home environment; to be able to go into the home to help the children with homework and at the same time teach the parents what they were doing and model for them how to help their children with homework. A major side benefit to this is the increasing communication between children and parents. It worked. The whole philosophy of parental involvement and parental interaction with the child academically in the home was the foundation of what Sister was trying to do. "Later on we began to offer counseling and the counseling part of it now has become a significant part of St. Henry de Osso," said Dr. Smith who is licensed as a counselor. Besides offering counseling to others, they do parental training in groups teaching the parents how to respond to their children i.e. emotionally and instructing them in behavioral manage-

ment. So often these parents themselves grew up in broken homes leaving them unprepared to handle behavioral situations. Mothers were often left to raise children alone because father was in prison, in jail or otherwise absent. This offered parents and caregivers a support system; a place to turn to for help with parenting skills.

Drs. Don and Anita Smith bought property at Fort Clark in 1990 even though they lived in Uvalde. They came over here weekends and started building their place to retire. Anita had retired in 1988 after 34 years in the public school system in Uvalde and Don retired ten years later. They moved over here to Fort Clark in 1998.

They decided to try the St. Henry de Osso program here, as much of it as they could with what they had to work with. "We didn't have the resources here that had developed in Uvalde by that time. Sister was a wonderful beggar," he said fondly, "she would talk to people, organizations and all, and they'd contribute what they could and get us into their budgets." Then she got some people around her who could look for grants from foundations and she began to get some grants. And so it grew.

So the Smiths went to work in Brackettville bringing the program here. Their main focus was on tutoring and parenting. They solicited volunteers from the churches, mostly the Catholic church as other pastors were often skeptical of what they were trying to accomplish. The schools here were very supportive; sending information home with the children and providing the names of the teachers who had children in their classes who needed help.

So, following the same pattern that was developed in Uvalde, they began to get referrals from the school. "Getting volunteers was always a struggle, yet somehow every year they always had the exact number of volunteers for the exact number of students who were referred. Only God can do that!" said Dr. Smith. The teachers were good about working with the tutors that were provided. Maxine Bonner, who was a second grade teacher at BISS at that time said that "the program greatly relieved the stress on the teachers to work with these needy children and it received a lot of sup-

port from the community."

The tutors would work with the same child from kindergarten through second grade, developing good personal relationships with the children. There were adult classes in the evenings to help families develop parenting skills. Everything went really well. They trained the tutors who then went out into the homes and worked with the children twice a week through the Fall. Testing was in the Spring.

In January of 2002, under the George W. Bush Administration, the *No Child Left Behind* law went into effect. This law is based on four "commonsense" pillars; accountability for results; an emphasis on doing what works based on scientific research; expanded parental options; and expanded local control and flexibility. The children are administered benchmark tests that help to determine which children are performing well and those who are not, regardless of background. These annual tests to measure children's progress provide teachers with independent information about each child's strengths and weaknesses. Those who need additional help receive supplemental educational services such as tutoring, after-school programs or remedial classes.

With the introduction of this law, the St. Henry de Osso Literacy Program fell by the wayside in Brackettville. Parents of the children who were referred to St. Henry de Osso felt that with mandatory tutoring being provided in school they didn't need the in-home help anymore. Even though some of the children are not required to receive supplemental educational services, many parents are taking advantage of the additional help to build good language skills in the early grades for a better chance to excel in the upper grades.

There wasn't anything more the Smiths could do here and so the program in Brackettville died. The system here relied solely on volunteers while the program in Uvalde has a paid staff as well as volunteers. The tutoring in the schools now focuses strictly on the child, leaving the parents out of the loop. Again, the parents were the key; helping them to assist with their children's academic needs.

The objective of the St. Henry de Osso Family Project is a faith based non profit organization dedicated to helping families in the community to reach their potential. Their focus is on literacy with tutoring in the home for students in kindergarten through second grade. The project serves low to moderate income families with children who are experiencing problems with their schoolwork and who have been referred by the schools. In times of diminishing family values, as evidenced by the growing drug related activities, domestic violence, higher rates of pregnancy in our schools and violence attributed to gangs, perhaps reinforcing family values and literacy at a young age would greatly benefit our communities.

Last year, former Texas Governor Dolph Briscoe Jr. donated, to the St. Henry de Osso Project, a building that was built by his father in 1939 located at 114 E. Nopal St. in Uvalde. He strongly believes in Sister Hortensia Coloma and the project she started in 1993. "I think that you are the closest person I have ever known who has a direct line up to where we'd all like a line," he was quoted saying. Gov. Briscoe also donated \$100,000 to the capital campaign for the project. The community has also been very supportive as all the labor and furniture have been donated. AT&T set up high-speed Internet service for the center and in addition, donated \$40,000 in the form of a check. What started out in the laundry room of the convent with a family literacy program has now grown to meet a much broader range of needs. Their services cover the southern part of Texas, the border areas of Eagle Pass, Del Rio, Brackettville, Batesville, Camp Wood and Uvalde.

Today, Drs. Don and Anita Smith are retired. They remain great supporters of the project, sponsoring such events as the St. Henry de Osso Family Literacy Gala that, even in these tough times of a weakening economy, raised \$26,000. Don still does some counseling on the side, but mostly they are just enjoying their retirement at Fort Clark with summer vacations in Colorado. Their dedication to working with and strengthening the family unit has been a blessing that will be linked to them for many years to come.

Juan E. "John" 2009, in Spofford Rio, Texas. Resendez.
Left to cherish Ashly, Lydia Resendez, Chris Holmes and Paul Resendez and his nephews and in his life. He was a graduate of School. Gentlemen Castillo, Cod Steven Cahé are Paul Resendez Visitation W Funeral Home 9am at St. M Brackettville, Hunt.
Interment Please visit sign our onli Local funeral Oaks Fu

Mary Bo April 10, 20 Mary wa of Pete and sister Kath Leroy Edga Howard Ma who died at She wo many years ment she Pink Lady. destination Springs in and brothe Bridge Clu Mary move and event daughter A She w Edgar, her parents Pe Bonneau-l lived by h 5 Grandcl Patrick Ec Liscum ar Ga, and S Grandchil and Hayd and neph plete.
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