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Rockwall County News

Volume Number 31 • Issue Number 5 • USPS 002-495 • Thursday, February 2, 2017 • Single Copy Price 75 Cents • Copyright 2017 Rockwall County News

Rockwall approves long-term stay Hotel near high school

Elected representatives of the City of Rockwall, Inc., unanimously approved ordinance Z2016-045 related to a request from Randall Noe of Rockwall Rental Properties, L.P. for a Specific Use Permit to build a residence Hotel in a Commercial District on approximately three acres of land.

It was confirmed during discussion that the proposal would be for a 100% residency hotel that would include kitchens and other amenities for long-term stay.

Councilmember David White compared the ordinance with another agenda item Z2016-003 related to residence hotel known as Comfort Inn & Suites located at 700 E. IH-30 near Vigor Way, that was debated in a divided Planning & Zoning Committee meeting.

White noted that the 033 ordinance involved a hotel with 25% residency including four residency rooms, and the 045 ordinance involved a hotel with 100% residency with all rooms available for long-term stay. He expressed concerns about a conflict between the council's decision to send the 25% residency Hotel ordinance back to P&Z, and the decision to approve the 100% residency Hotel.

It was also explained that the dissenting P&Z commissioners expressed concerns about the 100%. residency hotel being built close to Rockwall High School on Greencrest Boulevard and the IH-30 Frontage Road. The approval followed the first reading of the ordinance.

The mayor later reminded council that ordinance 033 would reappear on the agenda for the Feb. 21 regular meeting.

Prior to prayer and recitation of their pledge of allegiance to the United States and Texas, the council went into a closed meeting to discuss a lease of real property or land in the vanity of the downtown area. The agenda included a citation of state law under Texas Government Code Section 551.072 involving real property.

Following the closed meeting, the council unanimously approved a motion for public parking in downtown.

Councilmember Fowler asked to remove from the Consent Agenda an ordinance amending the Code of Ordinances in Chapter 10; Article IV, Residential Code and Article VII Fuel Gas Code related to corrugated stainless steel tubing (CSST) regulations.

The Consent Agenda included an ordinance establishing a "prima facie" speed limit on IH-30 that reduces the speed limit to 60 miles per hour along the main lanes from the intersection of John King Boulevard to the Rockwall east city limits. The ordinance also establishes a speed limit of 45 miles per hour along the eastbound and westbound frontage roads on IH-30. The ordinance establishes a misdemeanor criminal offense with penalty not to exceed \$200.

The council unanimously approved the Consent Agenda with the second reading of the above mentioned speed restriction ordinance.

The council returned to the CSST regulations.

Fowler asked Rockwall Fire Marshal Arianna Hargrove for a count of the number of fires caused by CSST. Hargrove explained during the last 10 years, seven out of 79 fires involved CSST damaged by lightening. (Continued on Page 2)



Brandon Taylor (right), a junior at Rockwall High, recently was awarded the Gold Presidential Service Award for his volunteering efforts in and around Rockwall. The President's Volunteer Service Award is a volunteer award program that encourages citizens to live a life of service. While Taylor participated in several programs for volunteering, the majority of his time was spent spreading STEM. He earned his hours by being a robotics mentor to elementary and middle school students around Rockwall, participating in robotics summer camps through both the YMCA and ROCK as well as judging at local robotics competitions. Taylor is a member of the FRC Team 1296 - Full Metal Jackets (RHS Robotics team). Pictured above with the honoree is Courtney Gober (left), RHS principal, who presented the award.

Courtesy photo/Rockwall County News

University scholastic honors

Applegate tapped for Dean's List

Kylie Applegate of Fate was among students named to the Dean's List for the fall semester at Schreiner University, according to a news release from the Kerrville university.

To qualify for the Dean's List, a full-time student must earn at least a 3.50 grade-point average and at least 12 hours of credit for the term.

Whitson named to Honor Roll

Claud Whitson of Rockwall was named to the Dean's Honor Roll for the fall semester at McMurry University, according to a news release from the Abilene university.

To be eligible for the Dean's Honor Roll, a student must complete 12 or more credit hours with at least a 3.5 grade-point average.

26 locals named to Baylor honors list

More than two dozen local residents were among the 3,900-plus Baylor University students named to the Dean's Academic Honor Roll for the fall semester, according to a news release from the Waco university.

Honorees included, from Fate, Madison D. Apuan and Wesley S. Scivetti; Tori Celeste Ewing from Royse City; and Hannah Nicole Adley, Samantha Nicole Lopez, Sarah M. Lopez, Hailey Elizabeth Platz, Courtney A. Sosnowski, Spencer Davis Sosnowski and Preston K. Webb of Heath.

Rockwall honorees were David J. Alderman, Jade L. Brown, Anabel Glynn Burke, Cathleen Cheyenne Conrad, Ashley Kathleen Faris; Alexis Rae Greenhill, Alexa Briel Hein, Mary Catherine Hinton, Taylor Rae Lemons, Christian Daniel Mackin, Nathan Sheeder Mateer, Gage Mitchell Mayborn, Patrick Sam Ntchobo, Dillon T. Stokes, Karina Traxler and Abigail Parrish Young.

To be named to the Dean's List, a student must be an undergraduate with a minimum grade-point average of 3.7 while enrolled in a minimum of 12 semester hours, according to the release.

Locals tapped for SFA honors

Several local residents were among students named to the Stephen F. Austin State University President's and Dean's lists for the fall semester, according to news releases from the Nacogdoches university.

Honorees included Sheydon Botheras, Stephen Janovsky and Bradley Simpson of Fate; Victoria Lack of Heath; Haley Coleman, Caitlyn MacCormack and Clark Norris of Rockwall; and Sara Gray · of Royse City.

To be eligible for the President's List, a student must be enrolled in 12 or more semester hours and maintain a grade-point average of 4.0.

Honorees included Alexander Cooter of Fate, Christopher Coleman of Heath and Andrea Chavez-Hernandez of Royse City. Rockwall residents included Janet Barker, Amber Britton, Michael Deguenther, Hannah Duncan, Cole Grimes, Braeden Hiles, Emily Hughes, Cassandra Hutcheson, Bailey Jameson, Riley Kelley, Lindsay Kraft, Julia Lott, Meagan McNabb, Mackensie Mrva, Courtney Munoz, Eric Pacheco, Hannah Passon, Adriana Romero, Carole Smith, Amanda Thornton, Kaylei Whalen and Christina White.

To be eligible for the Dean's List, a student must be enrolled in 12 or more semester hours and maintain a 3.5 or better GPA.

• Crosswords: Page 2 • On God's Word: Page 3 • Classifieds: Page 4 • Opinions: Page 5 • Sports: Page 6

Johnson tapped for Dean's List

Rebekah Johnson of Rockwall was named to the Dean's List at Miami University for the fall semester, according to a news release from the Oxford, Ohio, university.

Students who achieved a 3.5 or higher grade-point average for the semester were eligible for inclusion on the Dean's List, according to the release.

Johnson is working toward a bachelor's degree. Her major is music performance, linguistics.

Smith named to Dean's List

Katharine Smith of Rockwall was included on the Dean's List at the College of New Jersey for the fall semester, according to a news release from the Ewing, New Jersey, college.

Smith is a communication studies major.

To be named to the Dean's List, a student must carry 12 or more credits for the semester and earn a 3.5 or higher grade-point average.

TAMU Dean's Roll honorees recognized

Texas A&M University recently named its honor students for the fall semester, according to a news release from the College Station university.

The Dean's Honor Roll recognizes students taking a minimum of 15 semester hours during the fall semester who maintained a 3.75 or higher grade-point out of a possible 4.0. A second designation, Distinguished Student, recognizes those who earned a 3.5 to 3.74 while taking the minimum number of hours.

Local honorees included Holly A. Bender of Rockwall, Dean's Honor Roll; Chelsea M. Briggs of Rockwall, Dean's Honor Roll; Andres Caballero of Rockwall, Dean's Honor Roll; Elaine B. Chinn of Fate, Dean's Honor Roll; Anna M. Digirolamo of Heath, Distinguished Student; Nathan W. Eldridge of Rockwall, Distinguished Student; and Emmalee D. Evans of Rockwall, Dean's Honor Roll.

Also, Brent C. Farley of Rockwall, Dean's Honor Roll; Nicole A. Goff of Heath, Distinguished Student; Laura-Noelle C. Grumbine of Rockwall, Dean's Honor Roll; Paul A. Guardiola of Rockwall, Distinguished Student; Amanda E. Hall of Rockwall, Dean's Honor Roll; Hannah B. Hernandez of Rockwall, Dean's Honor Roll; Stone A. Kinsey of Rockwall, Dean's Honor Roll; and Tyler A. Lew of Rockwall, Dean's Honor Roll.

Rounding out the list were Kailey N. Litherland of Rockwall, Distinguished Student; Austin S. Lu of Heath, Distinguished Student; Logan P. Nixon of Rockwall, Distinguished Student; Joshua A. Patel of Rockwall, Distinguished Student; Evan J. Perlitz of Rockwall, Dean's Honor Roll; Brian T. Porter of Rockwall, Dean's Honor Roll; Kristin T. Pruitt of Heath, Dean's Honor Roll; Colton L. Smith of Heath, Dean's Honor Roll; Alexis G. Starkey of Rockwall, Dean's Honor Roll; Caitlyn G. Tunnell of Rockwall, Dean's Honor Roll; Michael P. Weidman of Rockwall, Dean's Honor Roll; Logan D. Whitley of Rockwall, Dean's Honor Roll; Tyler A. Wiener of Heath, Dean's Honor Roll; and Erica N. Wood of Heath, Dean's Honor Roll.

Enjoy the County News and call 972-722-3099 or send order by mail for Your New Subscription Delivered by USPS Mail. [Ask about donation to your favorite non-profit, with new subscription]

FM 3549 bridge demolition scheduled next week in Rockwall

The Texas Department of Transportation will perform demolition of the FM 3549 bridge over Interstate 30 beginning Wednesday, Feb. 8, weather permitting, according to a City of Rockwall news release.

The project will start with removal of the bridge over the eastbound frontage road from 10:30 p.m. to 6 a.m. Traffic on the eastbound frontage road will be detoured, and motorists should expect delays.

On Thursday, Feb. 9, the contractor will move equipment to the north side of the bridge and begin demolition of the bridge over the westbound frontage road from 10:30 p.m. to 6 a.m. on Friday, Feb. 10, according to the release.

Demolition of the bridge over the main lanes of Interstate 30 will be on Saturday, Feb. 11, from 10:30 p.m. to 6 a.m.

During demolition of the main lanes, there will be a full road closure, and all traffic will be detoured to the frontage roads. Demolition work is being performed at night to minimize the

impact to the public, but expect delays along this route, according to the release.

The FM 3549 / I-30 Interchange project will include total reconstruction of the roadway south of I-30, north to an area before the railroad tracks and creating an overpass of I-30 over FM 3549. The construction cost is \$32.8 million and is anticipated to be completed in August 2018, according to the release.

The Texas Department of Transportation and the City of Rockwall will provide further updates as the project progresses.

Rockwall County News Briefs

Democratic Men's Group to meet Feb. 4

The Democratic Men's Group of Rockwall County will host its next luncheon at noon on Saturday, Feb. 4, at Arboleda's Mexican Grill, 1103 Ridge Rd., Rockwall. The group meets for lunch on the first Saturday of each month at various local restaurants. Open-minded, progressive men who are concerned about the future of Texas and Rockwall County are welcome. Speaker for this month will be Peter Hancon, who will speak on the legal immigration process.

RISD PTA event, scholarship applications

The Rockwall ISD Council of Parent Teacher Associations will offer "Successful Scholarship Applications," beginning at 7:00 p.m., Tues. Feb. 7, 2017 at the Rockwall High School Cafeteria Annex. The event will be for parents, teachers and students grades 5 and up. Texas TPA Vice-President Leadership Heath Ashwell-Hair will provide the presentation, with the assistance of RISD Director of Counseling Services Marty Barbieri. Attendees are asked to RSVP at risdcouncilpta.rsvpify.com.

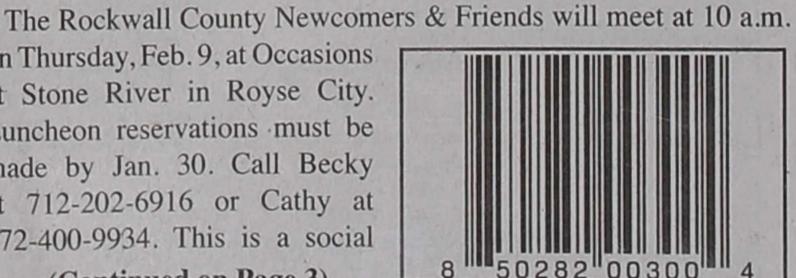
Utley to host Expo

Connecting the dots Expo '16-'17 will be held, 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., Sat. Feb. 4, 2017, at Utley Middle School, 1201 T.L. Townsend Drive, Rockwall. The event will offer community and educational resources for youth and adolescents.

Newcomers & Friends to meet Feb. 9

on Thursday, Feb. 9, at Occasions at Stone River in Royse City. Luncheon reservations must be made by Jan. 30. Call Becky at 712-202-6916 or Cathy at 972-400-9934. This is a social

(Continued on Page 3)



Royse City Council members opt to sell historic house

by Millie Jean Coppedge/ Rockwall County News

Before: messy,

Call now!

Ask Dr. Danette

by Danette McNew, D.D.S.

FREE Estimates!

Call Mickey

clogged gutters!

The oldest house in Royse City, located at 107 N. Houston and built in 1882, will go up for sale for 90 days.

This was the final decision of the Royse City Council following an executive session conducted in a Tuesday, Jan. 4, meeting.

The last residents of the house were Leta Weatherford, her mother, Mattie Sisk, and sister, Lena Sisk. Leta Sisk, the last of the three, died in 2009.

According to the book "The Rockwall County History" published in 1984 by the Rockwall County Historical Society, the three were descendants of Nancy Francis McCasland, who died in 1864. The McCasland family members were early settlers of Kaufman and

After:

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POSSIBLE WARNING SIGNAL

As we learn more about the potential health dangers that gum

disease may pose, new research provides yet another reason to have

the dentist check for periodontal disease. While previous research has

uncovered an association between gum disease and pancreatic cancer,

a new study has found the people with high levels of a specific oral

bacterium are more likely to get this form of cancer, which strikes

50,000 people annually. Researchers found that individuals with high

levels of Porphyromonas gingivalis had a 59 percent greater chance

of developing pancreatic cancer. While these findings do not establish

a direct association, they are the first to reveal that significant oral

bacteria levels can precede pancreatic cancer rather than developing

At McNEW DENTAL, we do our best to ensure our patients can

get the gum disease care they need in one convenient location. We

provide a variety of gum disease treatments for your convenience. If

gum disease gets too severe it may need to be treated through surgery

or extraction. This is why it's important to get it treated at the first

sign of a problem. To schedule a consultation, please call (972) 771-

2213. Our office is located at 1300 E. Ralph Hall Pkwy., Suite 114.

P.S. Because inflammation is related to cancer, Porphyromonas

214-883-7669

ever clogs...we'll clean it out!

Rockwall counties, owned a lot of land and helped create a rich history for the Royse City and Rockwall area.

The house was built by Byrd Royse, who platted the town site for the city in 1886, the same year the Missouri, Kansas and Texas Railroad came through Rockwall County and caused a large surge in population and need for new homes, according to a newspaper article provided by Deloris Ballard of the Zaner Robison Historical Museum. Royse built the house for his new bride.

It is thought that a doctor and his family and possibly some renters lived in the house until Leta Weatherford bought the house. She, her sister, Lena Sisk, who never married, and her mother, Mattie Sisk, were the last owners of the house.

"The house, the lot the house sets on, along with two other lots, were purchased in early 2012 for the sum of \$57,000 by the city,' City Manager Carl Alsabrook said on Dec. 5, 2012. "The prevailing thought at the time of the purchase was to preserve the house, not so much for those of us living now, but for our children and

days of Royse City."

At the time of the purchase Alsabrook said, "We have several options. We could build a heritage park to celebrate the history of Royse City and the house could be refurbished from that time period and turned into an extension of our Zaner Robison Historical Museum. We have considered moving the house to a lot across the street that was included in the original purchase, or if it proves that the house is structurally or financially cost preventative to be moved, we will consider alternatives to maintaining it in its current condition and location."

Since the purchase of the house, it has continued to deteriorate as the City Council debated what to do with the property. Estimates proved all the options for moving or turning it into a museum were not feasible for a variety of reasons, mostly because of financial concerns. The house is too deteriorated to try to take any earlier considered actions. The property is valuable and it is the city's hope that someone will purchase the site for the vision of prospects for

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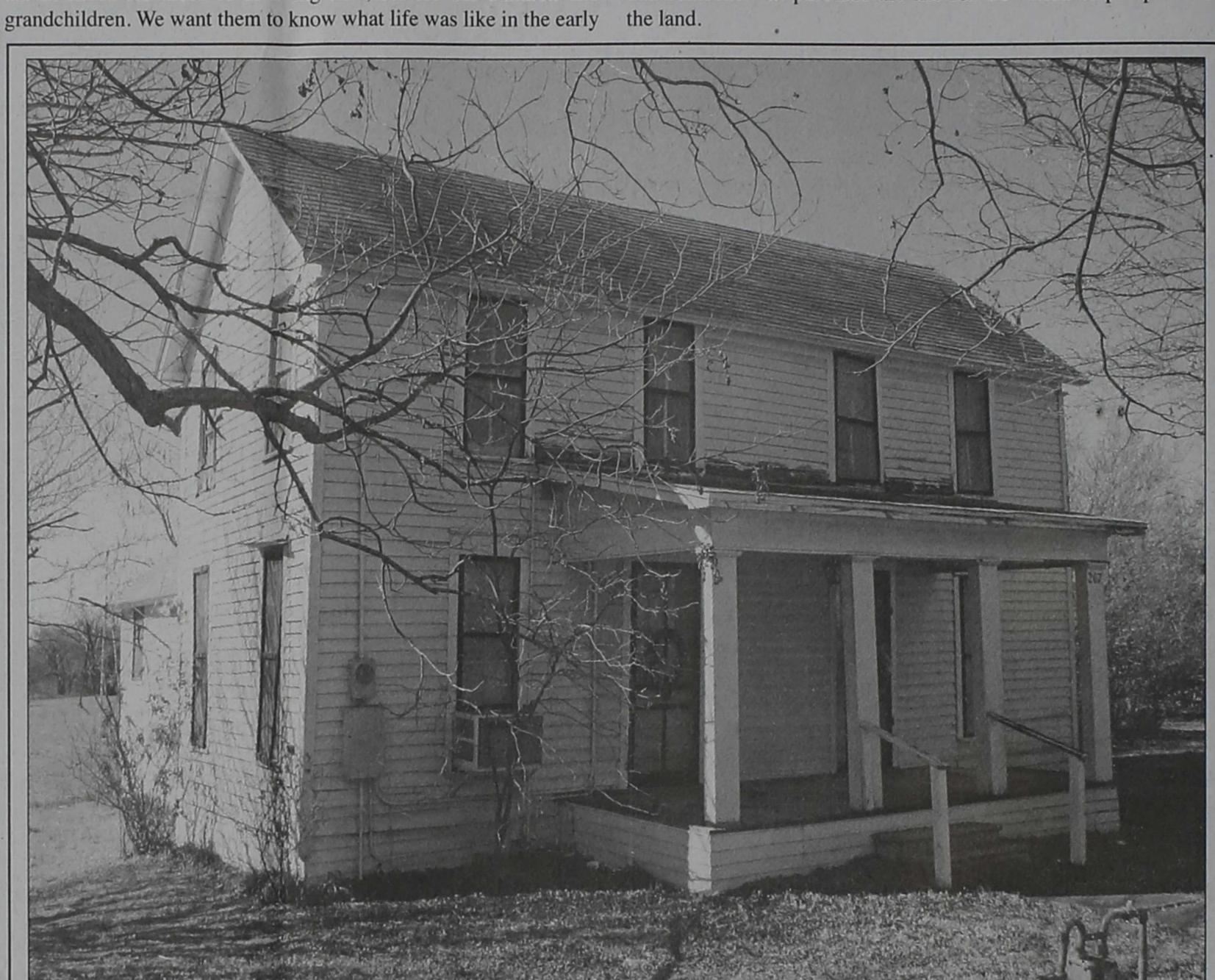
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The oldest house in Royse City, located in the 100 block of North Houston, is scheduled to go up for sale. The house, pictured above, was built in 1882. Photo by Millie Jean Coppedge/Rockwall County News

Rockwall bans use of legal tubing ...

(Continued from Page 1)

She emphasized her opinion that the low number of fires caused by CSST does not reduce the importance of banning use of the product. Hargrove also said that bonding and grounding of CSST might help mitigate risks, but it does not protect it from direct lightening strikes.

It was also confirmed that CSST was officially considered a legal product.

During the discussion, Mayor Pruitt asked Hargrove whether "we have the power to do this." Following the mayor's question, a number of council members immediately broke into laughter.

The Fire Marshal suggested that his was a legal question that should be addressed by the City Attorney. The mayor and council did not ask City Attorney Frank Garza to address whether the council and city officers had the "power" or authority under state law to ban, and/or enforce a ban, on the use of a legal product.

Pruitt presented his proclamation for "Lake Pointe Church Christmas in Mexico Recognition Day.

According to the proclamation, pilots from the Rockwall Municipal Airport flew to Mexico with planes loaded with Christmas presents for children in need, as part of Lake Pointe Church's "Christmas in Mexico" mission. The ministry is called "Wings of Witness Ministries."

Tracy Tuttle represented Lake Pointe Church during the meeting. Did not seek advice from City Attorney

The council discussed a mural that would appear on the south wall of 110 South Goliad in downtown Rockwall. As owner of the building, Pruitt recused himself.

It was explained that the cost of the mural would be \$15,000, which will come from the \$74,000 bond issue for different art projects.

The item was unanimously approved, with Pruitt abstaining. approved the deed of easement

Next, the council unanimously related to the mural, with the mayor abstaining.

Following the above mural votes, Pruitt told the council that about six months ago, he received a letter from the City of Rockwall instructing him to paint the side of the building. He expressed appreciation over the city's decision to use the building for a mural.

Also during the Appointments portion of the meeting, Leslie Milder of "Our House," requested an amendment to the city's Sign Ordinance related to "on premise traffic signs."

She explained that a sign she posted showed people what parking entry to use for the business. Because the sign included a business logo, the City sent a letter alleging violation of an advertising sign ordinance. Ms. Milder clarified her intentions were not to advertise the business.

It was explained that signs are not in violation when they

simply include an address without business logo. The mayor directed

staff to bring back a sign ordinance amendment. Suntex Marinas was unanimously approved to make certain infrastructure improvements within Chandlers Marina. The lease agreement with Suntex Marinas was extended until year 2041. According to a memorandum from Parks and Recreation manager Any Hesser, the extension would provide the ability to finance capital improvement projects for a longer period of time.

Suntex presented a proposal to the Park Board with the following capital improvement plan changes:

Redevelop H Dock which currently includes 52 uncovered slips;

Adding a bulkhead wall to contain approximately 12,500 yards of

dredge material on site. The council was divided on whether to approve a Specific Use Permit for hacienda Car Wash within the Scenic Overlay District located south of the intersection of West Yellow Jacket Lane and

Ridge Road. The council was challenged with the consideration that continued granting of SUPs might undercut the purpose of the Scenic Overlay District.

White moved for approval with an amendment to include screening and no expiration date on the SUP. Hohensheldt, Fowler and Pruitt cast the dissenting votes.



Maddie Stovall, a sixth grade student and cello player at Nebbie Williams, earned a second-place finish at the Rockwall All-City Orchestra competition on Saturday, Jan. 21, at Williams Middle School. She auditioned against other sixth, seventh and eighth grade students from throughout the Rockwall Independent School District.

Courtesy photo/Rockwall County News

gingivalis could cause inflammation in the pancreas, or the oral bacterium may simply be a marker for cancer-causing inflammation. www.mcnewdental.com

Rockwall County News

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ACROSS 42 Aransas Pass festival: TEXAS "Shrimpo___" 1 TXism: "one-armed 43 growl with teeth bared bandit" (CROSSWORD 44 androids, e.g. machine) 45 TX-created __ Pepper 5 ex-star Cowboy by Charley & Guy Orbison 46 hot tub, e.g. RB, Dorsett 47 first TV game show in 6 former office for TX: "___ the Street" TX George W. 48 Alice newspaper 7 small rodents Journal" 8 town in 1990 film 19 20 50 a Texas way of "Texasville" (2 wds.) looking at things 17 country cable net. 18 retired TX gymnast 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 who co-owns "Texas Dreams Gymnastics" 21 TXism: "__ could strut sitting down" (big ego) 22 TXism: "____ the 51 TX Don 23 TBN program: the Lord" Innocence 24 powerful bomb 52 TXism: "plain 29 plague or curse as the ears 30 Hilton's first TX P-1309 mule" hotel: "cross be-53 negative vote 14 this company made 50 tween a gold mine **DOWN** the first big copier and a ___house" 31 Ken Paxton's state 1 noted TX meteoro-15 do it quickly abbr. 16 activity on TX lakes Street" (Astrodome logist Harold Taft title (abbr.) 19 TXism: "tough ___ died of this (2 wds.) 38 TXism: "bend an 32 TX Ginger was in " (drink) 2 TX Waylon sang 1931 film " 20 NBA development 40 sexual assaults "That's What You Lovers" 41 "wish offense" team in Frisco: 34 Edna, TX FM Get For was created in TX 35 "Honest ____" Lincoln "Texas 3 TXism: "covered 29 large pill used by and rave" 22 fig tree 36 TX Gary Morris' 24 "_ _ Belo Corp." 47 TX "Dandy Don" TX veterinarians 4 Smith County seat 30 TXism: "tells a Meredith was first owns newspapers 37 TX Johnny Rodriout a living windy" color commentator in North TX guez's "Pass 10 "night" simplified 33 TX Ivory Joe 25 Coach Landry 38 univer. course 11 prison mafia: Hunter sang "Since 26 wallet stuffers 39 TX has several of Football" I ___ You Baby" 27 TXism: "___ 49 theme park in these bird refuges 12 Houston Oiler kicker Spring, TX in 1984 41 TXism: "his 34 "on an even _ in 1980s, Zendejas (toothbrush) and 1985: "_ 28 TXism: "we 35 TXism: "in' (init.) is colder than freon" age" (long time) 13 hire out our differences" Barbera Land" (heartless)

On God's Word

by Timothy W. Burnett

The Magi search for the King of the Jews ... Matthew, Part 6

We've been following the accounts of Luke related to the conception and birth of Jesus up to the events surrounding his circumcision and presentation to God, who was also his Father.

Luke continues with the special story about Jesus at around 12 to 13 years of age. For now, we will move to the accounts of Matthew that complete the events between Jesus' birth and early childhood years.

It is unknown whether Matthew, the Gospel writer was the same Matthew the tax collector, who was chosen to be one of Jesus' disciples an sat with the 12 apostles.

Unlike Luke, Matthew did not assert that his accounts were by devine intervention, by the Holy Ghost. Yet, there is no reason to assume he was not led by the Holy Ghost in the research and writing of the Gospel.

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Matthew's experience as a tax collector may have offered an opportunity to use precise and mathematically sound logical reasoning; and his service with the Lord Jesus as a fellow witness of his life, death and resurrection, would have provided for the essentially important meek and humble mental state.

By allowing the Gospels and Luke and Matthew to harmonize, we can see a perfect and beautifully complete picture of what happened starting after Jesus' birth.

Matthew 2:1, "Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saying, 'Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him."

Ernest Martin and Victor Wierwille independently researched and wrote excellent books that harmonize a significant frequency of celestial events in the stars, planets and constellations, with the Gospels, to show how the "wise men" concluded a King was born. The "wise men" were called Magi. They were dedicated to studying and following the stars, and understood there symbolic meanings.

Both authors deduced that "his star" was the planet Jupiter. The Magi were able to track the child's location by marking the horizon with Jupiter when at its highest ecliptic point. We will briefly touch on the position of the stars in a later article.

It goes on to describe how Herod the king was troubled about what he heard from the Magi. Considering he was troubled over the birth of a King, this no doubt troubled all the people in Jerusalem. Herod had the power to make life miserable for them.

Herod inquired about the location and time of Jesus' birth, and asked the Magi to report back when they find him.

The next series of events reveals why Herod asked about his age.

Rockwall County News Briefs

(Continued from Page 1)

organization for women who live in Rockwall County; new residents and women who have lived in the county for many years are welcome.

RCP plans 'Wedding Singer' auditions

The Rockwall Community Playhouse will host auditions for its upcoming production of "The Wedding Singer" beginning at 1 p.m. on Feb. 11. Dance auditions will be at 3 p.m. Auditions will continue at 7 p.m. on Feb. 12, with dance auditions set for 8 p.m. Performances will be conducted March 24-26 and 31 and April 1-2 and 7-9. For more details visit rockwallcommunityplayhouse.org or call 972-722-3399.

Friends of the Library luncheon set Feb. 14

The February Friends of the Rockwall Library luncheon will begin at 11 a.m. on Valentine's Day, Feb. 14, in the library's Community Room, 1215 E. Yellow Jacket Lane. Speaker will be Jill Rumbley Beam, an event management professional and seniors recreation programmer for the Rowlett Parks & Rec Department. Her topic will be You're Not Getting Older, You're Getting Better. Lunch reservations are required, but lunch is optional. Lunch cost is \$20 and may be ordered by 5 p.m. on Tuesday, Feb. 7, by contacting Leigh Plagens at cplagens65@aol.com or 972-771-8976. Payment will be required unless cancelled by deadline.

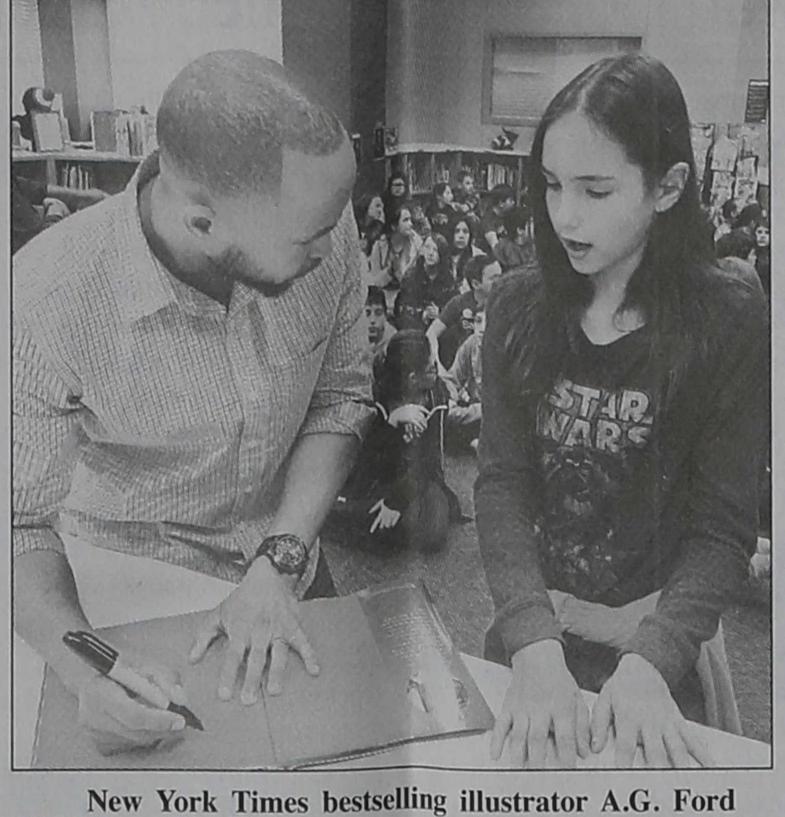
Early release set for RISD schools

The Rockwall ISD will observe early releases from schools on Feb. 22. Elementary students will be dismissed at noon; secondary school students will be released at 1 p.m., according to the district's website. Students will return to classes on Feb 23.

Rockwall's Got Talent registration ends Feb. 28

Registration is underway for Rockwall's Got Talent, sponsored by the Rockwall Community Playhouse. Prizes include \$1,000 for first place, \$500 for second and \$250 for third. Auditions will be Saturday, March 4, by appointment only. Schedule at rockwallcommunityplayhouse@gmail.com or call 972-722-3399. Registration fee is \$20 per person. Deadline for entries is Feb. 28. Semi-finals are set for 7 p.m. on Friday, March 10; finals will take place at 7 p.m. on Friday, March 24. Tickets will cost \$10. Auditions and performances will be conducted at Utley Middle School's cafeteria, 1201 T.L. Townsend Drive, Rockwall.

(Continued on Page 6)



(left) signs a book and visits with Isabel Hernandez (right) along with other fourth and sixth grade students at Cullins Elementary. Some of the books he has illustrated include "Michelle," "Barack," "My Daddy Martin Luther King Jr." and "Under the Same Sun." He talked with students about his journey becoming a children's book illustrator and how many times he has to draw something before it is published. He also taught those present some of the basics of drawing.

Courtesy photo/Rockwall County News

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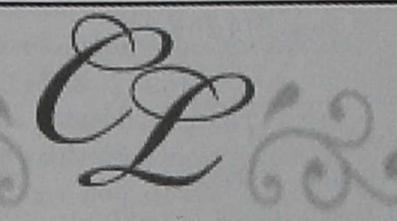
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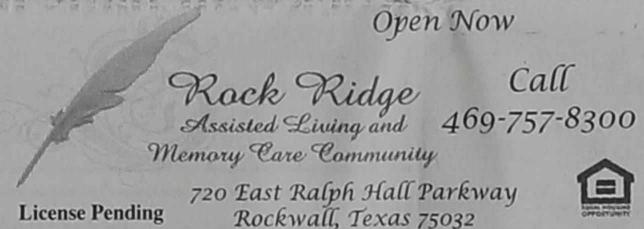
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Rockwall County News

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www.rockwallcountynews.com All material Copyright 2017 Rockwall County News Reproduction only by permission of the publisher Mission Statement

It is the mission of this newspaper to promote the rights of individuals, guided by the principles so eloquently described in the American Declaration of Independence. The right of life, liberty and ownership of property are the cornerstones of our freedom. The sole purpose of government is to enhance our liberty and freedom. Therefore, we hold every elected and appointed agent of government accountable to that standard.

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Al-Anon Garland

Meetings Monday & Friday, 8 p.m. at 2206 South Jupiter St., Suite 130, Garland.

Sons of the American Revolution East Fork-Trinity Chapter meets 6:00 p.m., second Thursday each month. 4881 Bass Pro Dr. Garland, Texas. Guests & family welcome. http://www.txssar.org/ EastForkTrinity.

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24 Hour Help Line for substance & mental health counseling. 800-662-4357.

NAMI (National Alliance of Mental Illness) meets second Saturday monthly. We offer support and education for families and individuals affected by mental disabilities. For more information call the Dallas office at 214-341-7133.

-----Everyone is invited to attend the "SAVING AMERICA THROUGH PRAYER" event, on the second Sunday of each month, 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., at Rockwall Bible Church located at the corner of Hwy 66 and Zion Circle, west of FM 3549, in Rockwall. The free event will include guest speakers. This is not church affiliated, and is open to everyone interested. For more

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Rockwall Estate Sale. Full house plus garage. 303 Meadowdale 75087. Thurs., Feb 2, noon to 5:00 p.m.; Feb 3 & 4, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

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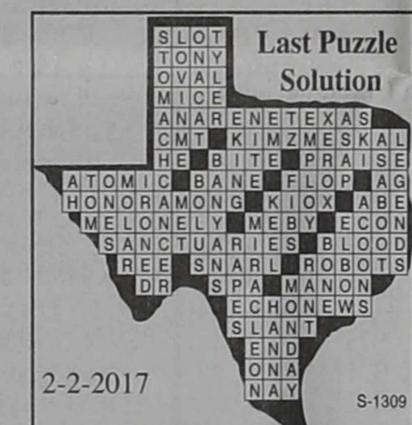
NOTICE OF PUBLIC SALE: Pursuant to Chapter 59 of the Texas Property Code, The Vault Self Storage located at 1280 E. Ralph Hall Parkway, Rockwall, Texas 75032 will hold a public auction of property to satisfy a landlord's lien. Sale will be at 10:00 AM, February 17, 2017, at The Vault Self Storage, 1280 E. Ralph Hall Parkway,

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Rockwall County News

legally qualifies for publication of required legal notices for all government units located in Rockwall County as a newspaper of general circulation under Texas Government Code Section 2051.044, 2051.045, 2051.046 and

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771-1105. Public Hearings

Contact The Vault Self Storage,

1280 E. Ralph Hall Parkway,

Rockwall, Texas 75032, (972)

A public hearing regarding the Texas Education Agency's (TEA) Texas Academic Performance Reports (TAPR) for Royse City Independent School District will take place in conjunction with the regularly scheduled February meeting

of the Board of Trustees. The meeting will begin at 7:00 p.m., Monday, February 13, 2017, at the Ernest Epps Education Center located at 810 Old Greenville Road in Royse City. The purpose of the TAPR hearing will be to allow for public discussion of the TAPR district and campus reports. Copies of these reports will be available for public review at each school building and the administration office. This release is tendered to and in compliance with Texas Education Code (TEC) requirements to provide notice of the hearing by means of local

Request for Proposals

PUBLIC NOTICE Rockwall County invites the following: Request for Proposal to provide **Emergency Disaster Debris** Removal, Reduction, Disposal

Rockwall County Auditor's office, 1111 East Yellowjacket Ln., Ste. 202, Rockwall, Texas 75087 and also on the Rockwall County website: www. rockwallcountytexas.com. Sealed submittals shall be marked on the outside "17-01-010 Debris Removal", to Lisa Constant Wylie, Rockwall County Auditor, 1111 East Yellowjacket Ln., Ste. 202, Rockwall, Texas 75087. The deadline for submission is Tuesday, February 28, 2017 at 10:00 AM Central Time. Rockwall County reserves the right to accept or reject any and all submittals. BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSIONERS COURT Rockwall County Lisa Constant Wylie **Rockwall County Auditor**

and other Debris Related

Specifications are on file in the

Services

Required Notices

Rockwall Central Appraisal District Public Notice

If you own tangible personal property that is used to produce income, you must file a rendition with the Rockwall Central Appraisal District by April 15.

A rendition is a report that lists all the taxable property you owned or controlled on Jan. 1 of this year. Property includes inventory and equipment used by a business. Owners do not have to render exempt property, such as church property or an agriculture producer's equipment used for farming.

The appraisal district may use the information submitted in the rendition to set property values.

You can also file a report of decreased value to notify the appraisal district of significant depreciation of your property. For example, if your property was damaged by a storm, floor or fire last year, you should file a report of decreased value. The appraisal district will look at your property before assigning a value.

The last day to file a rendition or report of decreased value is April 15. A 10 percent to 50 percent penalty may be imposed if a rendition is filed late, incomplete or not at all. Property owners who need more time to file their renditions may file a written request with the chief appraiser on or before April 15 to receive an automatic extension to May 15 or the next business day.

For more information about rendering property, deadline extensions, penalties and rendition forms, taxpayers may contact the Rockwall Central Appraisal District at 972-771-2034 or info@rockwallcad.com. Information is also available from the Comptroller's Property Tax Assistance Division's website at comptroller.texas.gov/taxes/property-tax/.

841 Justin road Rockwall, TX 75087

Rockwall Central Appraisal District Public Notice

One of the easiest ways a homeowner can lower his or her property tax bill in 2017 is to file a homestead exemption. A homestead is generally the house and land used as the owner's principal residence on Jan. 1 of the tax year.

Homestead exemptions reduce the appraised value of your home and, as a result, lower your property taxes. To apply for an exemption on your residence homestead, contact the Rockwall Central Appraisal District at 972-771-2034 or visit our website at www.rockwallcad.com and see the forms section for an online application.

Available homestead exemption include:

School taxes: All homeowners may receive a \$25,000 homestead exemption for

school taxes.

- County taxes: If a county collects a special tax for farm-to-market roads or flood control, a homeowner may receive a \$3,000 homestead exemption for this tax.
- Age and disability exemptions: Individuals 65 or older or disabled as defined by law may qualify for a \$10,000 homestead exemption for school taxes, in addition to the \$25,000 exemption available to all homeowners. Also, any taxing unit may offer a local optional exemption of at least \$3,000 for taxpayers age 65 or older and/or disabled. Older or disabled homeowners do not need to own their homes on Jan. 1 to qualify for the \$10,000 homestead exemption. They qualify as soon as they turn age 65 or become disabled.

Taxing units may offer a local option exemption based on a percentage of a home's appraised value. Any taxing unit can exempt up to 20 percent of the value of each qualified homestead. No matter what percentage of value the taxing unit adopts, the dollar value of the exemption must be at least \$5,000.

- Partial exemption for disabled veterans: Texas law provides partial exemptions for any property owned by veterans who are disabled, surviving spouses and surviving children of deceased disabled veterans. This includes homesteads donated to disabled veterans by charitable organizations at no cost to the disabled veterans and their surviving spouses. The exemption amount is determined according to the percentage of service-connected disability.
- 100 Percent Residence Homestead Exemption for Disabled Veterans: A disabled veteran who receives 100 percent disability compensation due to a service-connected disability and a rating of 100 percent disabled or of individual unemployability from the United State Department of Veterans Affairs is entitled to an exemption from taxation of the total appraised value of the veteran's residence homestead. Surviving spouses of veterans who qualified for this exemption or who would have qualified for this exemption if it had been in effect at the time of the veteran's death are also eligible with certain restrictions. The residence homestead application must be filed if this exemption is claimed.
- Surviving Spouses of Members of the U.S. Armed Services Killed in Action: The surviving spouse of a member of the U.S. Armed Services who is killed in action is allowed a total (100 percent) property tax exemption on his or her residence homestead if the surviving spouse has not remarried since the death of the armed services member.

For more details on homestead exemption, contact the Rockwall Central Appraisal District at 972-771-2034 or info@rockwalcad.com. The homestead exemption application is available online at www.rockwallcad.com and at comptroller.texas.gov/ forms/50-114.pdf.

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Rockwall County News

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Opinions

America's unchecked security State

by Peter Dale Scott

Future Freedom Foundation

By the 1960s [J. Edgar] Hoover had become one of the most powerful political figures in America, thanks chiefly to his ability to use the FBI's notorious Division Five (successively named the National Defense Division, the Security Division, and the Domestic Intelligence Division) to intimidate, blackmail, or destroy the careers of people who were not accused of any crime, but whom he deemed to be dangerous.

Hoover had first exercised such powers during the Red Scare of 1919, when, as head of the Justice Department's General Intelligence Division, he had without trial deported hundreds of aliens (along with Emma Goldman, who was arguably an American citizen) in the socalled Palmer Raids. Hoover had acted at times without consulting or informing President Wilson, in collaboration with a huge army of volunteer spies, the American Protective League, which had been organized by business executives. Hoover did not by any means act alone; to help put down a national steel-industry strike at this time, the U.S. Army imposed martial law in certain areas.

One should acknowledge that Hoover himself briefly played a different role, professionalizing the Bureau of Investigation, and accepting for about a decade the directive given him by Attorney General Harlan Stone on May 13, 1924: "The activities of the Bureau are to be limited strictly to investigations of violations of law." Although he had been a major player in the Palmer Raids of 1919-1920, Hoover now (for over a decade) dismantled his General Intelligence Division, concentrated on solving personal crimes already committed, such as bank robberies, and never again involved the Bureau in anything like the Palmer Raids. On the contrary, in 1941 he was a leading opponent within the government of the decision (which originated with a local Army field commander) to round up and intern Japanese Americans. This wholesale internment program overrode Hoover's own proposal for the selective detention of those Japanese already identified on the FBI's Custodial Detention list.... It represented, in effect, an unexpected Army rebuff to Hoover.

Instead, the Bureau of Investigation, which in 1935 became the Federal Bureau of Investigation, pursued bootleggers, bank robbers, and other gangsters, from John Dillinger to Al Capone. But noncriminal intelligence files on the general public became

the hallmark of the FBI after 1936, when [Franklin] Roosevelt told Hoover he was interested in "obtaining a broad picture' of the Communist and Fascist movements" in America.

The use of intimidation

Roosevelt was responding to a troubling message from Hoover about American right-wing activity at the highest level. In 1935 Marine Corps Major General Smedley Butler reported to Hoover that he had been approached by two representatives of Wall Street to lead a right-wing coup d'état against President Roosevelt. Curt Gentry writes that "Hoover informed Butler that since there was no evidence that a federal criminal statute had been violated, he did not have the authority to order an investigation." We see here a key to Hoover's political astuteness: his refusal ever to involve himself in disputes among those whose power was equal to or greater than his own. (We see this again in his refusal, for years, to involve the FBI in the investigation of either organized crime or the international drug traffic.)

However Hoover sought and obtained authority from [Roosevelt] to reestablish an Intelligence Division, after a second report from General Butler: that the indigenous American Fascist, Father Charles Coughlin, had "approached General Butler and urged him to lead an armed expedition into Mexico, its purpose to oppose the Cárdenas government and restore the church."

This time Hoover reported Butler's information to Roosevelt; and obtained from the president, on August 24, 1936, a verbal goahead to conduct investigations on a wide range of domestic political activities, Right and Left. With this go-ahead, Hoover reestablished an Intelligence Division, which eventually evolved into the source of his power over others, including law-abiding Americans.

According to Marc Aronson,

"That secret conversation was the moment when Hoover's life story changed American history. He was given real authority to protect the nation, which he slowly but surely transformed into the right to play by his own rules, even if that totally undermined the laws and principles of the democracy he was protecting."

Because no law or written document had conferred this power on him, Hoover was free to rely increasingly on illegal methods to collect intelligence, ranging from bugs, mail-openings, and wiretaps, to break-ins. He knew very well that information gathered illegally

A better solution than Trump's border wall

by Ron Paul

DOC

Ron Paul Institute

Just one week in office, President Trump is already following through on his pledge to address illegal immigration. His January 25th executive order called for the construction of a wall along the care if you cross the border illegally is a powerful incentive for entire length of the US-Mexico border. While he is right to focus on the issue, there are several reasons why his proposed solution will unfortunately not lead us anywhere closer to solving the problem.

First, the wall will not work. Texas already started building a border fence about ten years ago. It divided people from their own property across the border, it deprived people of their land through the use of eminent domain, and in the end the problem of drug and human smuggling was not solved.

Second, the wall will be expensive. The wall is estimated to cost between 12 and 15 billion dollars. You can bet it will be more than that. President Trump has claimed that if the Mexican government doesn't pay for it, he will impose a 20 percent duty on products

imported from Mexico. Who will pay this tax? Ultimately, the American consumer, as the additional costs will be passed on. This will of course hurt the poorest Americans the most. Third, building a wall ignores the real causes of

illegal border crossings into the United States. Though President Trump is right to prioritize the problem of border security, he misses the point on how it can be done effectively and at an actual financial benefit to the country rather than a huge economic drain.

The solution to really addressing the problem of illegal immigration, drug smuggling, and the threat of cross-border terrorism is clear: remove the welfare magnet that attracts so many to cross the border illegally, stop the 25 year US war in the Middle East, and end the drug war that incentivizes smugglers to cross the border.

The various taxpayer-funded programs that benefit illegal immigrants in the United States, such as direct financial transfers,

medical benefits, food assistance, and education, cost an estimated \$100 billion dollars per year.

That is a significant burden on citizens and legal residents. The promise of free money, free food, free education, and free medical people to do so.

It especially makes no sense for the United States government to provide these services to those who are not in the US legally Likewise, the 40 year war on drugs has produced no benefit to the American people at a great cost.

It is estimated that since President Nixon declared a war on drugs, the US has spent more than a trillion dollars to fight what is a losing battle. That is because just as with the welfare magnet, there is an enormous incentive to smuggle drugs into the United States.

We already know the effect that ending the war on drugs has on illegal smuggling: as more and more US states decriminalize marijuana for medical and recreational uses, marijuana smuggling from Mexico to the US has dropped by 50 percent from 2010.

Finally, the threat of terrorists crossing into the United States from Mexico must be taken seriously, however once again we must soberly consider why they may seek to do us harm. We have been dropping bombs on the Middle East since at least 1990.

Last year President Obama dropped more than 26,000 bombs. Thousands of civilians have been killed in US drone attacks. The grand US plan to "remake" the Middle East has produced only misery, bloodshed, and terrorism. Ending this senseless intervention will go a long way toward removing the incentive to attack the United States.

I believe it is important for the United States to have secure borders, but unfortunately President Trump's plan to build a wall will end up costing a fortune while ignoring the real problem of why people cross the borders illegally. They will keep coming as long as those incentives remain.

could not be used in prosecutions. But Hoover's aim was to use information, not for prosecution, but to intimidate and control all sectors of society, especially those with other forms of power.

His method of dealing with Father Coughlin is a good example of this. Hoover kept a sharp eye on the outspoken priest, who by 1940 was probably America's most powerful pro-Nazi anti-Semite, with a radio show reaching possibly 30 million listeners. In January 1940 the FBI raided an office of the Christian Front, a group supported by Coughlin, for plotting to overthrow the government. Two years later Coughlin was silenced and his radio show went off the air.

Coughlin's subsequent silence, which lasted for decades, is usually attributed to an order from his bishop, after a deal negotiated with Attorney General [Francis] Biddle. But after Coughlin's death in 1979, his psychiatrist revealed that what silenced the priest had not been sudden obedience to his bishop, whom he had successfully defied for several years. That cover story was circulated in May 1942 by church authorities.... Coughlin felt the effects of ... J. Edgar Hoover [who] had proof of Coughlin's homosexual activity. That proof, communicated in the verbal exchange between Hoover and Coughlin, was sufficient to silence Coughlin's public voice until May 24, 1972.... Hoover had died just three weeks earlier, on May

Hoover's silencing of Coughlin demonstrates that he used his intelligence files, not just against the Left, but against any force threatening the somewhat corrupt status quo maintained by his own secret powers.

Armed in 1936 with Roosevelt's verbal authorization, Hoover proceeded to amass a list of files on tens of thousands of Americans. He was not timid in selecting targets. In 1946, bypassing Attorney General Tom Clark, who he knew would be disapproving, Hoover reported in a memo to Truman via George Allen, a wealthy businessman who was a friend, that "There is an enormous Soviet espionage ring in Washington," including "a number of high officials" - specifically including Undersecretary of State Dean Acheson and former Assistant Secretary of War John J. McCloy.

When Truman proved uninterested in Hoover's dire warnings, Hoover turned instead to the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) and the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee (SISS), sharing his files above all with two selected spokesmen, young Congressman Richard Nixon of HUAC in 1947, and later Sen. Joseph McCarthy of the SISS in 1950. Armed with information from Hoover to capture headlines, first Nixon and later Ronald Reagan were launched into careers of public prominence that led them to the White House. Both men, in different ways, would then contribute to the further institutionalization of the covert intelligence powers first developed by Hoover.

Purges

Hoover eventually collected information on all those with political influence, from members of Congress to the very wealthy; and he retained personal control over this information in his files to protect his position. For example he reportedly had "closely held case files on the business activities of Joseph P. Kennedy, starting with the bootlegging years and including coverage of several illegal -. treasonous, even - transactions brought off while Kennedy was Ambassador to the Court of Saint James."

By all accounts, Hoover's wealth of such information is what enabled him to retain his office as director for life; and perhaps influence other major political decisions.

The election of Eisenhower in 1952 enhanced Hoover's status in

Washington, and also that of his projects.

Hoover's men ... oversaw internal security purges throughout the government, destroying lives and careers over suspicions of disloyalty or homosexuality.... With the full backing of Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, an FBI agent [personally approved by Hoover] named R.W. "Scott" McLeod took a job as internal security chief at State. His political purges of Washington and embassies and consulates overseas used FBI methods, including wiretaps, to force liberals and suspected leftists out of the foreign service. Between May 1953 and June 1955 only 8 persons were dismissed as security risks but 273 submitted their resignations.... The result was a selfcensorship which undoubtedly had an effect on American foreign policy, few daring to express their opinions freely for fear they would be accountable to McLeod and, eventually, McCarthy, with whom he shared the findings of his investigations. Through McLeod and his cadre, Hoover was tapped into every part of the State Department. Aides say he knew many of [John Foster] Dulles's decisions even before the president did.

The victims particularly affected were old "China hands," like John Paton Davies, who had offended the China lobby by their negative assessments of Chiang Kai-shek and the Kuomintang. Thus was officially instituted a system whereby one part of government, the FBI, gained the power to install its agents in another, for the purpose of affecting its policies by purging its personnel. The resulting demoralization and re-orientation of State long outlasted the fall of McCarthy. It led to two decades of unreal China policy, accompanied by a long-lasting inability of State to oppose reckless CIA and Pentagon escalations of anti-communist violence in Southeast Asia. State Department veteran James C. Thomson, after resigning in 1966 over the Vietnam War, wrote an important article blaming America's errors and failures in Southeast Asia on the purging of expertise in the McCarthy era, along with Democratic Party remembrance of the "loss of China" charges.

Criticizing this state of affairs from the perspective of someone who had witnessed the SS purges in Nazi Germany, political science professor Hans Morgenthau in 1955 deplored the condition of a similar "dual state" in America, in which the "authorities charged by law" were subordinated to a hostile right-wing clique with "an effective veto over the decisions of the former."

Swedish professor Ola Tunander, expanding on Morgenthau's critique, called the second state a "deep state." Following him in 2007 and 2008, I also defined the deep state somewhat restrictively, as an unrepresentative "restricted locus of top-down power," or as a parallel "hard-edged coalition," consisting primarily of the covert agencies (like the CIA) that are "responsive ... to the overworld, but with little or no other public constituency."

... I now use the term "deep state" for the larger aggregation of extralegal powers inside and outside government that Hoover helped consolidate, including not just covert agencies like the FBI, but also their media allies and other allied elements both in the wealthy overworld and the criminal underworld. In short my "deep state" is roughly the "deep political system" I defined in 1993 as "one which habitually resorts to decision-making and enforcement procedures outside as well as inside those publicly sanctioned by law and society." Since 1963 this system has included at least some elements responsible for covering up the assassination of a president.

Local school districts, A-F school accountability system causing confusion

According to a press release from Royse City ISD, vast confusion is evident over the upcoming A-F School and District Rating System not only among parents, but educators and administrators trying to understand the new rating system and how the success of a school or district can be based almost predominately on the once-a-year standardized test known as STAAR (State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness).

This is a multiple choice, bubble in test that usually takes three to four hours to complete.

Information furnished by the TASA (Texas Association of School Administrators), beginning with the 2017-2018 school year, "the Texas commissioner of education will label each public school district and campus with a rating in the form of an A-F letter grade to comply with House Bill 2804, passed by the 84th Texas Legislature in 2015."

This form of labeling has produced strong opposition from states across the union and some states that put the system in place already have pulled out, due to the unfairness to the students, campuses and districts. There are no guidelines presented for the schools to know what is expected from them in order to receive a passing grade. The school and districts will have no advanced idea as to whether they will be ranked A, B, C, D or F.

A Region 10 Educational Service Center publication titled Legislative Priorities states that it represents 80 public school districts "vary greatly in size, demographics and socio economic status ce.

represent 82,000 students."

The publication also states that Region 10 is "seeking at least \$275 increase in the basic allotment for the next biennium to a total of \$5,415 per weighted average daily attendance. Since 2008, local property taxes have risen 44.2 percent, from\$18.2 billion to \$26.25 while state aid has increased only 7.4 percent, from \$18.24 billion to \$19.59 billion."

The new law, the A-F School and District Rating System, could pit schools and districts against each other. If schools are ranked as failing, they could lose teachers and personnel who will seek out the schools that are higher rated. Region 10 plans to appeal the law. Other states have struggles to implement the new system and Virginia has already repealed the A-F system.

On another note, there has been a lot of controversy over the Voucher System (Education Savings Accounts) as taxpayers fund subsidies for private school tuition, tutors, or home-schooled student's materials. Region 10 superintendents are against vouchers as there are no ways in which to measure accountabilities for those with vouchers.

The argument from Region 10 as to why private schools should not be funded are that their teachers do not have to be certified in the subjects they teach, private schools do not have to provide special education, bilingual education, free and reduced lunches, they do not have a class size mandate and finally "public schools are required to provide equal access to education to all children, even those in the country without documentation, while private schools are not."

Representatives from most of the North Texas schools met Jan. 9 at the Curtis Culwell Center in Garland to discuss the A-F Rating System, the need for an increase in government funding for schools, and to voice their opinions against the school voucher system. Royse City ISD Superintendent Kevin Worthy spoke during the conferen-

The Royse City ISD and Rockwall ISD Board of Trustees strongly support accountability for the students, schools and administrators. They believe that one single test, STAAR, can in no way show a real assessment of what the students have learned or the level of their knowledge.

Both school districts in Rockwall County want the A-F School and District Rating System repealed by the Texas Legislature.

Rockwall ISD under budget, notes low use of Health Clinic

Rockwall ISD Board of Trustees regular meeting, Jan. 17, 2017. Attending Trustees were Chris Cuny, Leigh Plagens, Linda Duran, Stephanie Adams, Russ Childers, and Jon Bailey. Not attending was Jim White.

RISD Education Foundation's Robotics Competition Winners presented by Ashlei Neill.

Competition took place Nov. 5, 2016 at RHS.

The Board went into a closed meeting to receive consultation with the attorney about pending or contemplated litigation or a settlement offer, related to a civil action number 3:16:-cv-03376-N, in the United States District Court of the Northern District of Texas, DynaStudy, Inc. v. Rockwall Independent School District.

Board President Linda Duran did not provide a specific reason for closed meeting related to Texas Gov. Code 551.072 deliberating the purchased, exchange, lease, or real property. The closed meeting was also held under Texas Gov. Code 551.074 deliberating the appointment, employment, evaluation, reassignment, duties, discipline, or dismissal of a public officer or employee ... or to hear a complaint or charge against an officer of employee related to superintendent evaluation instrument, duties, responsibilities and evaluation of superintendent.

No action was taken on items covered during closes meeting. The Board unanimously approved the Legislative Priorities

Accountability in the A-F District and School Rating System. The District is against the A-F system which heavily relies on one highstakes test

Finance – ISD supports an improved finance system that supports all its needs with adjustments for inflationary costs.

The District does not support any state voucher plan, tax credits, tax payer savings grants, tuition reimbursements, or any program that diverts public tax dollars to private school entities with little or not accountability or financial accountability.

Approved the Order and Notice of Election for the May 6, 2017 Board of Trustees Election.

Chief Academic Adviser Sara Bonser presented the Texas Academic Performance Report as required under Section 39,306 of the Texas Education Code. Rockwall ISD and its secondary campuses achieved the highest rating by meeting the standard performance levels.

FM 3549 bridge demolition scheduled next week in Rockwall

The Texas Department of Transportation will perform demolition of the FM 3549 bridge over Interstate 30 beginning Wednesday, Feb. 8, weather permitting, according to a City of Rockwall news release.

The project will start with removal of the bridge over the eastbound frontage road from 10:30 p.m. to 6 a.m. Traffic on the eastbound frontage road will be detoured, and motorists should expect delays.

On Thursday, Feb. 9, the contractor will move equipment to the north side of the bridge and begin demolition of the bridge over the westbound frontage road from 10:30 p.m. to 6 a.m. on Friday, Feb. 10, according to the release.

Demolition of the bridge over the main lanes of Interstate 30 will be on Saturday, Feb. 11, from 10:30 p.m. to 6 a.m.

During demolition of the main lanes, there will be a full road closure, and all traffic will be detoured to the frontage roads.

Demolition work is being performed at night to minimize the impact to the public, but expect delays along this route, according to the release.

The FM 3549 / I-30 Interchange project will include total reconstruction of the roadway south of I-30, north to an area before the railroad tracks and creating an overpass of I-30 over FM 3549. The construction cost is \$32.8 million and is anticipated to be completed in August 2018, according to the release.

The Board approved employment for the Construction Project Manager. Chief Financial Officer Randy McDowell explained there were over 40 respondents to the notice published during Nov.

The December financial report was approved.

Highlights by McDowell included Cash and Investment positions as of Dec. 31. Over \$177M invested, with \$109M as Bond money that has not been expended. Interest for the month was just over \$120,000. Interest for the fiscal year is just under \$725,000. It was recommended by advisor, First Southwest, that the Board stay with short-term investments in the investment pool.

Enrollment during 2015-2016 period was 15,462, compared to 15,826. The projected shot by demographer Templeton's 16,000 projection.

Saw a 10.7% increase in taxable property values. Last year was \$7.1 Billion, compared to this year's \$7,866,000,000, being higher than the projected values. Duran expressed happiness over the increased taxable property values, and McDowell agreed that he was also happy with it.

Total budget is \$126,722,000, with \$48,000,000 collected, and 62% uncollected.

To date, the Board has spent just under \$47,000,000, and under \$3M encumbered.

Payroll is over 80% of the budget.

Health Center. Made decision to extend the clinic through Aug. 31, 2017, and eliminated outside blood work, with project savings of \$25K to \$30K per year.

Two Royse City residents found dead at residence

by Millie Jean Coppedge/Rockwall County News

At approximately 5:25 a.m. on Tuesday, Jan. 17, a 911 call was made by a female caller at 1400 Laurel Lane in the Briarstone Estates in Royse City. The caller, according to a news release from the Royse City Police, indicated that two males had been shot at the residence.

When officers arrived, they found two deceased men, according to the news release issued by Royse City Chief of Police Jeff Stapleton. The dead men were identified as James Stevens, 42, and his stepson, Travis Hicklin, 24, both residents of the home.

The adult female and child who also resided in the home were unharmed, according to the report.

Stapleton said both Stevens' and Hicklin's bodies were transported to the Dallas County Medical Examiner's Office.

On January 30, Chief Stapleton said the deaths are being ruled as murder-suicide.

There is no further information available at this time.

Student video contest targets poison prevention

The North Texas Poison Center is hosting its fifth annual Poison Prevention Week Video Contest for teens ages 13-18.

Each participant can create a 30- to 90-second video using a digital camcorder or smart phone to illustrate how to prevent poisonings and/or how the North Texas Poison Center provides assistance to those who have been poisoned.

First-, second- and third-place prizes will be awarded during Poison Prevention Week, March 19-25.

For more details visit poisoncontrol.org/videocontest or call 214-590-9015.

Finished videos must be uploaded to Facebook (use the tag @ NorthTexasPoisonCenter) by Wednesday, March 1.

Rockwall HS men's gymnastics take Highland Park

The Rockwall High School men's Gymnastics team competed Thurs. Jan. 26, 2017, to outscore Highland Park. According to Coach Cameron Sweny, "this was the team's first optional competition of the season (meaning they throw harder skills)."

TEAM:

1st - 157.3 Rockwall

2nd - 143.0 Highland Park INDIVIDUAL:

FLOOR: 2nd - Mckay Larman; 3rd - Sean Denny; 4th - Preston Gage (tie); 4th - Jonah King (tie); 6th - Zane Larman; 7th - Jake Hodges (tie); 7th - Aaron Cory (tie).

POMMEL HORSE: 1st - Josh Creamer; 3rd - Hodges; 4th - Wyatt Logan; 5th - Louis Jelic; 6th - Zach Dougal; 8th - Mckay Larman; 9th - Keil Pauga; 10th - Bryan Kottke.

Szafran; 7th - Wilson Farris; 8th - Kottke; 10th - Scott Mackenzie. VAULT: 1st - Connor Campbell; 3rd - Mckay Larman 4th - Denny; 5th - Zane Larman; 6th - Brett Garcia; 7th - Cory; 10th - Hodges.

RINGS: 1st - Hodges; 3rd - Mckay Larman; 4th - Denny; 5th - Ryan

PARALLEL BARS: 2nd - Mckay Larman; 3rd - Jonah King; 4th - Hodges; 5th - Gage (tie); 5th - Szafran (tie); 7th - Mackenzie; 9th - Aidan Culp (tie); 9th - Garrett Sutherland (tie).

HIGH BAR: 2nd - King; 3rd - Culp; 4th - Mckay Larman; 5th -Connor Campbell; 6th - Cory; 7th - Gage; 9th - Jack Butcher; 10th - Anael Gomez.

ALLAROUND: 2nd - Mckay Larman; 4th - Hodges; 6th - Denny; 7th - King; 8th - Cory; 9th - Gage; 10th - Zane Larman.

Rockwall HS basketball update

The Rockwall High School Lady Jackets varsity basketball defeated Longview 43-41, Tues. Jan. 24, 2017 in the RHS gym. According to Coach Lacey Yankie, Faith Mason-Vestal led with 11

points. The JV team won 33-22, with Mikki Witcher scored 11 points.

The Freshman won 65-19, with Emma Stelzer had 24 points.

The Lady Jackets will be in the RHS gym for Senior Night, 6:30 p.m., Fri., Feb. 3, for a game against Mesquite HS.

On Fri. Jan. 27, Mesquite Horn fell to the Yellowjackets 63-52, in the RHS gym. According to Coach Josh Goellner, Sam Williamson led with 12 points, Alec Grandstaff finished with 11 points,

and Cameron Crayton had 10 points. The win pushed the Jackets to 8-1 in district.

The Yellowjackets will travel to Mesquite HS for a 7:00 p.m. for a Fri. Feb. 3 game.

The Freshmen A team won easily 59-33, while the JV struggled with a 38-78 loss.

The Yellowjackets took a road trip to power over Longview 56-47 to go 7-1 in district 11-6A.

Coach Josh Goellner reported the leading scorers were Sam Williamson with 16 points, Andrew Taylor with 12 points include four three-point shots, followed by Cameron Crayton and Alec Grandstaff with 11 points each.

The 9th grade B team fell to Longview 43-40, during the final seconds. The A team lost 58-56 in an action-packed double overtime

High School Varsity Sports schedule

Rockwall HS

Fri. 2/3 Basketball Women 6:30 p.m., v. Mesquite at RHS.

Bskb Men 7:00 p.m., at Mesquite. Scr W 7:15 p.m.

at Mesquite Horn. Scr M 7:15 p.m. Mesquite Horn (H). Tues. 2/7 Bskb W 6:30 p.m., at North Mesquite. Bskb M 7:00 p.m.,

North Mesquite (H).. Scr W 7:15 p.m. Tyler Lee (H) Scr M 7:15 p.m., at Tyler Lee. **Thurs. 2/9** Gymnastics 1:00 p.m., at Mark

Fri. 2/3 Bskb W 6:30 p.m., at Longview. Bskb M 7:00 p.m., Longview (H). Scr W 7:15 p.m.,

Williams Invitational at Forest

Tennis 8:00 a.m., McKinney

Wrestling District Tournament

Rockwall-Heath

at Richardson Berkner HS.

E. Watson Center.

Varsity Tournament

John Tyler (H).

Mesquite (H).

Sat. 2/11

Scr W 7:15 p.m.,

Bskb Men 7:00 p.m.

Fri. 2/10

John Tyler (H). Scr M 7:15 p.m., at John Tyler. Tues. 2/7 Bskb W 6:30 p.m. Mesquite Horn (H). Bskb M 7:00 p.m., at Mesquite Horn. Scr W 7:15 p.m. at Mesquite. Scr M 7:15 p.m., Mesquite (H).

Thurs. 2/9 Gym at Mark Williams Invitational at Forest E. Watson Cen-

Sat. 2/11 Wrestling District Tournament at Richardson Berkner HS.

Royse City

Fri. 2/3 Bskb W 7:00 p.m. Highland Park (H). Bskb M 7:00 p.m., at Highland Park. Scr W 7:15 p.m., at North Forney. Scr M 7:00 p.m. North Forney(H). Tues. 2/7 Bskb W 7:00 p.m., at Lovejoy. Bskb M 7:00 p.m. Lovejoy (H). Scr W 7:15 p.m.

Mesquite Poteet (H).

Scr M 7:00 p.m.

Poteet (H).

Just under 1800 employees eligible. Last year saw 1523 visits, compared to 1263 during 2017 to date. Fewer people are using the clinic. Possible reasons offered were change to the Physician's Assistant, and increases to co-pay on deductible.

Under 30% of the eligible employees used the RISD operated Health Center clinic during the first four months.

The Board approved Engineering Services for Bond Construction Project. Alliance GeoTechnical Group was slated for Cain Middle School, and Pullin Elementary parking lot project.

Test and Balance Engineer was approved for the Nebbie Williams Elementary Project, Engineered Air Balance (EAB).

The consent agenda was approved.

Dignitaries help unveil new Rockwall park

The City of Rockwall unveiled The Park at Stone Creek, located at 200 Featherstone Drive within the Stone Creek neighborhood, on Saturday, Jan. 28.

In accordance with Rockwall's mandatory park land dedication ordinance, the developer donated nearly 12 acres of land valued at \$385,000, and contributed additional equipment fees totaling \$200,000 to help develop the park, according to the news release. The city also received a \$400,000 grant from the Texas Parks & Wildlife Department. the Roc

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Rockwall County News Briefs

(Continued from Page 3)

RISD spring break schedule outlined

The Rockwall ISD will be closed March 13-17 for spring break, according to the district's website. All school and offices will be closed. Staff and students will return to campuses on Monday, March

Vendors sought for Country Fair in June

The Rockwall Soroptimists are accepting applications for vendors for their fourth annual Country Fair from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Saturday, June 10, at the Rockwall County Courthouse, 1111 E. Yellow Jacket Lane. Admission will be free to the public. Live music, dancing, vendors, food, a kid zone, rides and vintage games are planned. Sign-ups will be first-come, first-served and sponsorships also are available. Proceeds will fund the Soroptimists' ongoing projects benefitting women and children, including the Children's Advocacy Center of Rockwall. For more details or to sign up visit rockwallcountryfair.com.

Rockwall County Entertainment

RISD to host Multi-cultural Celebration

Rockwall ISD will host its annual Multi-cultural Celebration, beginning at 7:00 p.m., Thurs. Feb. 2, 2017, in the Rockwall-Heath High School Performing Arts Center (PAC). The district invites all families who have come from another country to allow their 1-12 grade students participate in the Parade of Nations, where students march into the PAC auditorium wearing traditional clothing of their native countries.

Amy Parks-Heath to honor vets, active duty personnel

The Amy Parks-Heath Elementary School Starlight Singers will honor U.S. veterans and active duty servicemen and women at their 18h Annual USO Show Feb. 3-4. The show will feature music from the Korean War. The Friday, Feb. 3 show, begins at 7 p.m. and includes dessert from Nothing Bundt Cakes of Rockwall. Tickets cost \$15 each. Tickets for the Saturday, Feb. 4, show include dinner catered by Chiloso Mexican Bistro and cost \$20 each. Both shows will take place at Cain Middle School, 6620 FM 3097 in Rockwall. Due to the popularity of the show, advance ticket purchases are recommended. Contact Gina Allen at dkgrallen@gmail.com with questions.

Chocolate Indulgence to benefit WIN

Chocolate Indulgence, a celebration of dinner, dancing and chocolate, will begin at 6:15 p.m. on Feb. 3 at the Hidden Creek Event Center, 215 Chris Cuny Parkway, in Heath. The event will benefit local families served by WIN (Women in Need). Sponsors are needed, as are donors to the silent and/or live auctions. For more information contact Cheryl Bahm at 972-772-3000 or cbahm@ wintexas.org. To purchase tickets or obtain a sponsorship visit wintexas.org/donation.php.

'Love, Loss and What I Wore' set at RCP

The Rockwall Community Playhouse, 609 E. Rusk (two blocks off the square in downtown Rockwall) will present "Love, Loss and What I Wore," in performances set for Feb. 10-12, 17-19 and 24-26. The production is a "touching series of monologues covering relationships, wardrobes and the music of the time, using the female wardrobe as a time capsule of a woman's life story." Friday and Saturday shows will be at 8 p.m., Sunday matinees at 2 p.m. Tickets will cost \$20 (general admission), \$15 for seniors and may be purchased at the box office a half-hour prior to show time, online at rockwallcommunityplayhouse.org or by calling 972-722-3399.

Love Notes event set Feb. 12

Love Notes, an evening of fine food and romantic love songs, will be presented by Rockwall Summer Musicals beginning at 7 p.m. on Sunday, Feb. 12, at The Crown Room at the Rockwall Golf & Athletic Club, 2600 Champions Drive, Rockwall. Performing will be cast members from previous RSM productions. A fundraising auction also will be conducted. Cost for the evening is \$50 per person. Tickets may be purchased at rockwallsummermusicals.org or by calling 972-771-3700.

Area Entertainment

Collin College hosts Guitar Festival

The Collin College Music Department and Guitar Studies will present the Fifth Annual Collin College Guitar Festival, Feb. 10-12, at the Spring Creek Campus Living Legends Conference Center, located at 2800 E. Spring Creek Parkway in Plano. The Student Concert will begin 3:00 p.m., Sun. Feb. 12, and the Faculty Concert will begin 8:00 p.m., Fri., Feb. 10. The Faculty Concert will include guest artists Kithara Duo, Elliot Frank and Mitch Weverka. The event will be open to guitarists of all skill levels. Both concerts are free for Collin students, or \$15 general admission. For more information, contact Fernand Vera at fvera@collin.edu.

Rockwall County Sports Notes

Jacket Classic set for Feb. 18

The Jacket Classic Track Meet will start 8:15 a.m., Sat. Feb. 18, 2017 at Wilkerson Sanders Stadium in Rockwall. Field events are set begin at 8:15 a.m. 3200 Meter Run begins at 10:00 a.m. Running finals will begin at 1:00 p.m. Participating teams include Rockwall HS, Rockwall-Heath, Wylie East, Dallas Skyline, Allen, Forney, North Mesquite, North Garland, Cedar Hill and Sachse. Admission for the event will be \$4 for adults, and \$3 for students.