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Rockwall County News

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Sarah Horan is awarded the WAI and AOPA Student Pilot Scholarship, during the Feb. 2017, Annual WAI Conference in Orlando, Florida. The Poetry Community Christian School Senior also received a \$28,000 academic scholarship from Oklahoma State University. Courtesy photo/Rockwall County News

Horan awarded industry and university scholarships

According to Poetry Community Christian School, Sarah Horan (Sr.) was awarded by the Women in Aviation International (WAI) the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA) Student Pilot Scholarship last week at the Annual WAI Conference held in Orlando, Florida.

The prior week she received a \$28,000 academic scholarship from Oklahoma State University.

Horan will major in aviation and run with the college sprint team during the fall of 2017.

As an honors student, Sarah has a weighted GPA of 4.04 and is involved in extra-curricular activities, including National Honor Society-publicity officer, praise team percussionist, theatre program, mission trips, and other community service.

She has been in track since age six and is a Junior Olympian sprinter, and a solo pilot working on her private license and flying a Cessna 172 out of Phillips Flying Ranch, a public grass airstrip owned by Mike and Sue Jaffe of Poetry.

RISD trustee part of leadership program

Stephanie Adams, trustee from Rockwall Independent School District, joined 34 other school board members from across Texas Feb. 16-18 at the third session of the Leadership TASB class of 2017.

Selected by the Texas Association of School Boards, the group is participating in a yearlong education leadership study program, according to a district news release. These trustees represent school districts of all sizes, with student populations of 1,000 to 159,000, and reflect a similar range of property wealth.

Participants who complete all required elements of the study will graduate next year by earning Master Trustee status. This is the highest designation recognized by TASB, according to the release.

Meeting in Austin, the trustees began their session by hearing featured speaker Mark Elberfeld, president of the Gabriel Center for Servant-Leadership in Atlanta, Georgia. Elberfeld is a recognized authority on leadership training and focused on characteristics of leaders as servants. Other speakers included Kelly McDonald and Harvey Kronberg. McDonald spoke on critical interpretations from the census data and how they impact school decisions, and Kronberg addressed happenings from the 85th Legislature. The class also visited KIPP Austin and learned about one of the state's largest charter schools.

Other Leadership TASB sessions are scheduled for McAllen, April 20-22 and Fort Worth, June 22-24. Each session has a theme that builds on the previous session and features nationally recognized experts in the fields of leadership development and education. Teams also work throughout the year on extended learning assignments between meetings. Created in 1993, Leadership TASB has more than 800 graduates to date, according to the release.

TASB is a voluntary, nonprofit association established in 1949 to serve local Texas school boards. School board members are the largest group of publicly elected officials in the state. The districts they represent serve more than 5.3 million public school students.



Stephanie Adams

Rockwall County chimes-in on concerns about unfunded state laws

During the Tuesday, Feb. 24, 2017 meeting of the Rockwall County Commissioners Court, Commissioner David Magness (Precinct 4) offered a presentation summarizing the functions of the Benefits Committee. The item of business was related to division of responsibilities that was not included when the Commissioners approved the action during January 2017. Magness explained the Benefits Committee addresses issues regarding health insurance, retirement, life insurance and salaries. Judge David Sweet moved to reappoint the following to the Benefits Committee, Magness, Dennis Bailey, Sheriff Harold Eavenson and David Peek. The action passed unanimously upon a second by Lee Gilbert.

Magness presented a copy of the results of the 2016 Unfunded Mandates Survey, and praised County Auditor Lisa Constant for preparing the response from Rockwall County. A total of 98 counties participated in the report.

Magness said the report indicated many of the mandates pushed down to the county from the state legislature had little or no impact, but that the impact does not stay the same.

Examples include a 20% increase in the justice department. Sweet spoke about the importance of getting the report to the legislature so they can understand the impact that legislative mandates have on counties. He attempted to persuade the people of Rockwall County to understand that when the state legislature issues mandates, the affected governments must implement them.

Sweet highlighted areas of interest such as impacts on elections, justice system, court appointed attorneys, child protective services, collections improvement programs, jury pay, victim assistance coordinator, bail bond boards, indigent health care of county jail inmates, indigent health care, training for all staff, the jail, probation, indigent burials, motor vehicle registration, veterans services.

Sweet asked Representative Justin Holland and Senator Bob Hall to please keep in mind the impact of the legislature's decisions have on the counties.

Gilbert spoke about how Rockwall County is able to weather the programs, and expressed "heartfelt" feelings for "half of the counties" that lost population last year. He dissented to the legislature's "cookie-cutter" approach to unfunded mandates that, in his belief, creates problems for counties that are "struggling just to pay their bills."

County Clerk Shelli Miller spoke of concerns about requirements

for counties over a certain population to offer video recording of open meetings.

The officials did not discuss the meaning of "impact," and whether the unfunded mandates would offer positive impact toward improved accountability, responsibility and trust with the people they serve. There was also no discussion about the potential impact related to county officials who violate legislative mandates in the form of state law.

Within days after the meeting, Rockwall County Elections Administrator Chris Lynch made the decision to disregard a state legislative mandate in Texas Government Code 2051.046, which requires the county to select a newspaper published in the county for publication of each required notice.

Upon further inquiry, the Administrator later indicated that he chose a newspaper entitled, "Banner" for publication of required election notices.

To date, Lynch has not answered further inquiries into the exact name of the selected newspaper and whether he confirmed the selected newspaper was published in Rockwall County.

He instructed Rockwall County News Publisher Tim Burnett to send all communications to the "County Attorney."

Lynch did not provide a reason for avoiding the questions related to his actions and duties as administrator in comparison with state law.

The court approved out-of-state travel funds for Sheriff Eavenson to attend the Western State Sheriffs' Annual Conference and Training, March 5-9, 2017, in Reno, Nevada.

The court approved an Interlocal Agreement with the City of McLendon-Chisholm for use of the Rockwall County Interoperability Radio Network. Bailey explained the cities of Fate and Heath are still working toward approval. Sweet noted that Fate recently approved the agreement.

Kami Webb presented proposed revisions to the Policy on Worker's Compensation. She explained that "by law" the county is required to offer continuation of salary at 100% any time elected or appointed officials are injured while on duty for the county. All other employees may use sick, vacation or comp-time leave for seven days of missed work. On the eighth day, the Worker's Compensation administrator pays the employees 70% of gross income.

(Continued on Page 2)

Burgess convicted for 1st degree sexual abuse of a child, life sentence

According to press release from Rockwall County District Attorney Kenda Culpepper, less than an hour after retiring to deliberate, a Rockwall County jury returned a verdict of guilty against Rockwall resident Christopher Michael Burgess, 34, on charges of Continuous Sexual Abuse of a Child. On March 7, 2017, the same jury unanimously sentenced Burgess to life in the Texas State penitentiary. Burgess will be ineligible for parole.

According to the judicial records found online, case number 2-16-0489 was filed Oct. 5, 2016 in the 439th District Court, Judge David Rakow presiding. Burgess was arraigned Oct. 18, 2016. The records indicate he pled guilty to the charge.

The defendant was represented by lead attorney Wayne D. Lacy. Lead prosecutor was Lauren Black.

According to the online jail inmate list and judicial records, Burgess was listed as a resident of Addison, Texas, Feb. 26, 2016, when he was admitted to the Rockwall County jail.

Burgess was also charged May 24, 2012, with first-degree felony of aggravated sexual assault against a child.

According to Culpepper, jurors heard testimony that Burgess sexually abused his 10-year-old stepdaughter multiple times over a span of two years. The abuse came to light when the young victim "out-cried" to her mother.

Prosecutors called several witnesses to corroborate the victim's allegations. Upon further investigation, child pornography was

found on the defendant's personal home computer.

The possession of child pornography case was forwarded to the FBI for prosecution.

Jurors heard additional evidence that on February 3, 2016, the defendant was convicted and sentenced to 15 years in federal prison for possession of child pornography.

"The victim in this case showed great bravery by taking the stand and recalling the abuse inflicted upon her by someone she once looked to as a father figure," said Black. "I am thankful that the jurors recognized that child sexual abuse not only affects the child, but can have a larger impact on the child's family and the community. Jurors were diligent in recognizing Burgess' future danger and removed this predator from society."

Multiple expert witnesses educated the jury on the effects of trauma following sexual abuse and the dangers a high-risk sex offender can present to society. Testimony lasted five days after which the jury returned the life sentence.

"We appreciate the hard work by the jury in listening to some very difficult evidence," said Culpepper. "We also really appreciate the cooperation of and our collaboration with the FBI and other law enforcement agencies. Everyone's assistance was necessary to make sure that justice was served in this case."

According to the online records, Burgess filed a notice to appeal.

Culpepper has long been a champion for protection and prevention related to family violence and child abuse.

During 2008, the Rockwall County News verified that Culpepper served on the Board of the Lillian Smith Foundation, which was managed by John Joseph "J.J." Smith.

Culpepper became active in bringing the Childrens Advocacy Center to Rockwall County, during her current term as D.A.

Rockwall County News Briefs

School to host Family Fun Night today

Amy Parks-Heath Elementary will host its March Madness Family Fun Night starting at 6:30 p.m. today, March 9.

ARC blood drive set in Rockwall

The American Red Cross will host a blood drive from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on March 11 at Lowe's, 851 N. Steger Town Dr. All blood types are needed. A blood donor card or driver's license or two other forms of ID are required. To make an appointment download the free Red Cross Blood Donor app, visit redcrossblood.org or call 1-800-733-2767.

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 20.

First Responder Luncheon set March 22

The Rockwall County First Responder Luncheon will run from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Wednesday, March 22, at the Thomas H. Nalls Fire Station, 920 Rockwall Parkway. A



(Continued on Page 2)

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

Aggravated robbery investigation underway

The Criminal Investigation Division and the Internal Affairs unit of the Rockwall Police Department are investigating an aggravated robbery and officer-involved shooting that occurred the morning of Thursday, March 2, in the 2100 block of Ridge Road, according to a police department news release.

At approximately 10:30 p.m., a Rockwall Police officer observed what he believed to be an aggravated robbery in progress, according to the release. Two armed suspects wearing ski masks were observed entering a business.

While fleeing the scene, the suspects were confronted by police officers and one of the suspects "made a threatening move toward the officers," according to the release. An officer fired two rounds from his service weapon, but neither of the suspects was hit. They immediately surrendered to the officers and were taken into custody.

A third suspect believed to be the "getaway driver" also was arrested, according to the report. A semi-automatic handgun and a tire tool were recovered at the scene.

No injuries resulted from the incident, according to the release. The officer who discharged the weapon has been placed on routine administrative leave as per departmental policy, according to the release.



Reinhardt Elementary School students recently celebrated Texas Independence Day while learning about the state's history in their fourth grade social studies classes. Pictured above are a few of the students (from the left), Tesia Smithey, Torie Dauphin, Kaylen Pruitt and Janie Deapen.

Courtesy photo/Rockwall County News

University Scholastics Degrees

Seven receive WGU degrees

Seven local residents were among the more than 11,000 graduates who received degrees from Western Governors University at its 32nd semi-annual commencement ceremony at the Disney Coronado Springs Resort in Orlando on Feb. 11, according to a news release from the Salt Lake City university.

Degree recipients included Rachel Megyesi of Fate, bachelor's degree in interdisciplinary studies; Jennifer Najmabadi of Rockwall, bachelor's degree in nursing; Jennifer Groh of Rockwall, bachelor's degree in special education; Gina Saint-Elien of Rockwall, bachelor's degree in accounting; Jacklyn Kellogg of Royse City, bachelor's degree in nursing; Janae Posley of Royse City, bachelor's degree in business/human resource management; and Terri Wigington of Royse City, master's degree in nursing/leadership and management.

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- Fate - Fate Grocery Store.

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TEXAS CROSSWORD

by Charley & Guy Orbison
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ACROSS

- Livingston is the seat of this county
- TX Tanya's "Texas When..."
- TX-born singing cowboy Autry
- news wrangler
- TXism: "... your hand at it"
- Dangerfield is the seat of this county
- TV son of TX-born Phylicia Rashad
- these rolls are a breakfast treat
- TXism: "passed me like I..."
- jacks in the garage" (fast)
- TXism: "he ... to be tied" (angry)
- spilling a bowl of chili will leave this on a carpet (2 wds.)
- "right as ..." in slip
- pine paneling
- "comin' a ... the seams"
- "... dine"
- Dez Bryant's pos. on the Cowboys
- TXism: "just cause a chicken has wings don't..."
- fly/ (decaying looks)
- TX Pecos Bill's girl...
- Foot Sue
- TXism: "a windy"
- another cowboy
- state
- Houston married the daughter of Chief ...-ka
- NY QB Manning
- "... no glory"
- "Famous ... cookies"
- journalist, TX Rafter
- this Vance founded Houston's "Alley Theatre"
- short yelp
- "Dallas ..." is held Memorial Day weekend
- TX Willie wrote "Funny How Time Slips"
- Pence is ... President
- dir. to Quanah from Levelland
- hallucinogenic drug
- TX hosp. nurse
- game interruptions for the Astros or Rangers (2 wds.)
- TX B.J. Thomas recorded ... Lone-some I Could Cry"
- TXism: "... as a baby's bottom"
- Corway Twitty's ... "Two-Stepper"
- nickel or dime, e.g.
- TXism: "chuckleheads"
- "no ... no gain"
- this TX Glenn was a noted trombonist
- London oil co.
- TX Lyle Lovett's "Here ..." (1990)
- actor Matthew McConaughey up in TX
- remained behind
- Carthage college
- Tyler FM
- "... well that ends well"
- TX technology co.
- TX resident Glenn Beck is a regular contributor to this news network
- TXism: "... takes a big ... to rope him"
- leave out
- this Scala was in "Ride a Crooked Trail" with TX Audie
- figure out something complicated
- TXism: "... cute as a white ... calf"
- TXism: "in a pig's ..." (never)

Rockwall County meetings update ...

(Continued from Page 1)

Webb suggested a revision allowing employees to use crude-paid time to fill in the gap between the 70% pay and up to what the gross pay would equal.

The court approved the revisions, with Magness casting the opposing vote.

The consent agenda was approved, including payment to Bear Creek Special Utility District for Pump Station 1 Replacement Modifications Project associated with FM552 for January in the total amount of \$23,550; and final payment to Parsons Transportation Group Inc., for engineering services through Nov. 25, 2016 at the FM551/I-30 interchange in the amount of \$13,946.91.

The court approved property acquisitions by Emergency Management from CRI Grant Fiscal Year 2017, a Quartet Prestige 2 DuraMax whiteboard, marker caddy and cleaning supply caddy for an estimated cost of \$273.59; and 1000 emergency preparedness public education booklet for an estimated cost of \$1,883.39.

The court approved the following as presented by Constant: paid claims in the amount of \$334,619.92; unpaid claims in the amount of \$492,697.76; payroll for pay period ending Feb. 11, 2017, in the amount of \$587,289.37.

Feb. 14, 2017 regular meeting

The court discussed the issue of providing office space at the Historic Courthouse for State Representative Justin Holland and the District Director. Sweet reminded the court that Holland came to him with the proposal, and that he liked the idea of giving Holland and his constituents access to the Courthouse.

Sweet opened the court for discussion without a motion on the issue. Bailey addressed concerns about the fact that employees have been asked to transfer office space. He offered to share an office with Magness, let Ron Merritt's Environmental Health office move into Bailey's office, allowing Holland to set up office in the previous Treasurer's office. He referred to a court hearing related to individuals setting up offices in county courthouses.

After the commissioners and judge kicked around ideas for a motion, Sweet raised a motion to provide for a legal agreement with Representative Holland to provide the space downstairs that is identified as the Treasure's office currently utilized by Environmental Health, effective April 1, 2017 through Jan. 1, 2019 for \$100 per month. Bailey seconded the motion. After the second, commissioners continued to discuss the issue. Magness recommended a follow-up motion to move Merritt's office.

Gilbert questioned the \$100 price, and recommended a \$200 price.

Assistant District Attorney Grant Brenna advised the court that any price below market value is considered a donation, and the court should be aware of this when making the decision.

The motion passed unanimously without investigating to determine whether the \$100 price was below the market value.

The court approved the transfer of Bailey and Merritt to the different offices.

Rockwall County Entertainment

'Wedding Singer' set for RCP stage

The Rockwall Community Playhouse, 609 E. Rusk (two blocks off the square in downtown Rockwall), will present "The Wedding Singer" musical, directed by Stacey Klutz, March 24-26 and 31 and April 1-2 and 7-9. Friday and Saturday performances will begin at 8 p.m., with Sunday matinees at 2 p.m. Tickets may be purchased online at rockwallcommunityplayhouse.org, by calling 972-722-3399 or at the box office a half-hour prior to curtain.

FOL to host Spring Fling Tea

Friends of the Rockwall Library will host an Afternoon with Friends Spring Fling Tea with Hats from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. on Tuesday, March 27, at the library's Community Room, 1215 Yellow Jacket Lane. Speaker will be Rose Mary Rumbley, who will speak on The Ides of March. Cost will be \$25; prepaid reservations should be made to Pat Calhoun at pat2792@att.net or call 214-738-7547.

RISD to host district-wide art show

The Rockwall ISD's District Art Show is scheduled to run from 5 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Friday, April 21, and from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, April 22, at Rockwall-Heath High School, according to the district website. Those attending are asked to enter at the Heath PAC entrance.

New Subscriber? Call 972-722-3099 for 3 months on request.

In other business the court:

• Approved an agreement from Geo-Comm, Inc., to update Rockwall County's Geographic Information System (GIS) road centerline layer for 9-1-1 at a cost of \$4,605.

• Approved out of state travel expenses for Radio System Administrator Tim Williamson to attend Radio System Training in Lynchburg, Virginia, Feb. 27 - March 9, and March 12 - March 17, 2017.

• Approved a revised scope of work and invoice for monies needed up front from Detention Lock & Equipment Service, LLC for maintenance work at the Detention Center at a cost of \$43,90750 with \$21,866 to be paid prior to start of work.

• Approved an Interlocal Agreement with the City of Royse City for use of the Rockwall County Interoperability Radio Network.

• Approved addendum 1 to the Interlocal Agreement with the City of Rockwall for use of the Rockwall County Interoperability Radio Network. Changed terms that stated the City of Rockwall would submit payment to Rockwall County, who would pay Harris Corporation.

• Approved Change Order 1 to the System Purchase Agreement with Harris Corporation for a radio communications system.

• Approved grant request for Fiscal Year 2018 Homeland Security Grant Program for the period of Sept. 1, 2017 through August 31, 2018.

• Accepted a donation of a framed before/after preservation of a Rockwall County historical finance ledger from Kofile Technologies, Inc., to be displayed in the County Clerk's office.

The court went in to closed meeting to discuss: Pending or Contemplated Litigation and Attorney-Client information related to a case in cause number 9:17-cv-00012-RC-KFG; Real Estate matters out of the B.F. Boydston Survey in Rockwall; Personnel matters regarding employee numbers 790 and 400, position numbers 001435105, 001690103, and 001655111.

The court returned from closed session and voted on Resolutions 2017-01 and 2017-02 regarding real property to be deeded to the county due to sufficient bid offers in Sheriff's Sale.

The court continued to approve the consent agenda including minutes of previous meetings, reports by Constables and Justices of Peace, Environmental Health Coordinator, payment to Bear Creek Special Utility District for the Pump Station #1 Replacement Modifications Project associated with FM552 for December 2016 in the total amount of \$19,200, payment to Dannenbaum Engineering Company for engineering services provided during December 2016 at FM549 from SH276 to SH205 in the amount of \$35,263.84, and payment to HNTB Corporation for engineering services provided thru 01/27/17 at FM552 from SH205 to SH66 in the amount of \$1,000.

The court approved the following submitted by Constant: paid claims in the amount of \$311,714.38; unpaid claims in the amount of \$599,333.45; payroll ending Jan.28, 2017, in the amount of \$605,571.39.

Rockwall County News Briefs

(Continued from Page 1)

portion of the event's proceeds will be given to the Children's Advocacy Center for Rockwall County. For more details call 972-771-5733 or email Savannah@rockwallchamber.org.

'Pillow Talk' auditions slated April 1, 2

The Rockwall Community Playhouse, 609 E. Rusk (two blocks off the square in downtown Rockwall), will host auditions for "Pillow Talk," directed by Monica Phillips, on Saturday, April 1, and Sunday, April 2. Auditions will begin at 1 p.m. on April 1 and 6:30 p.m. on April 2. Performances will be May 12-14, 19-21 and 26-28.

Newcomers & Friends plan April 3 luncheon

Rockwall County Newcomers & Friends will have a gardening show expert speak on how beautiful new growth can enhance homes when the group meets April 13 for a luncheon at Occasions at Stone River in Royse City. Reservations must be made by April 3. Call Becky at 712-202-6916 or Cathy at 927-400-9934. This is a social organization for women of Rockwall County. Visit the group online at newcomersrock.com.

T-shirt design contest offered in Fate

The City of Fate is hosting a T-shirt design contest as part of this year's fourth annual Celebrate Fate event. Potential designs will be accepted through April 3. Contest eligibility is limited to Fate residents who are 13 years old or older. A limit of three entries per person will be accepted. Designs must include no more than four colors; the complete design must be no larger than 8"x8". Entries must be submitted in .jpg, .png, .pdf, .ai or .eps format in a size no larger than 10 MB. More information can be found at <http://cityoffate.com/279/T-SHIRT-DESIGN-CONTEST>.

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 benefiting women and children, including the Children's Advocacy Center of Rockwall. For more details or to sign up visit rockwallcountryfair.com.

On God's Word

by Timothy W. Burnett

Jesus' suffering under the powerfully wicked set an example for us ...

When people take a stand for good and right, they might experience hard times every once in a while. God's first 10 commandments are the basics of right, and are generally agreed-on by most religions and cultures, with some exceptions.

There is another kind of stand in life that often brings highly charged and dynamic results and reactions from others. This is about the stand by the Holy Ghost in the service of God through the Lord Jesus. More specifically, it relates to a service that involves exposing corruption and wickedness in the world.

The perfect example of this kind of life was our Lord Jesus. Throughout his last year, Jesus walked and talked by the spirit of God. Jesus taught, prayed, reproved, and wielded the sword and fire of the spirit with great authority from his Father.

A study of the Gospels will show that during Jesus' last year on earth, the Jewish leaders and attorneys grew more frustrated and gradually plotted ways to capture and kill him. Why? Jesus was a threat to their control system. Jesus spoke truth to all people around him, and in so doing, he exposed the corrupt and wicked.

Jesus understood the difference between the evil leaders who appeared to shine as light, compared to their servants in the government positions. While dying, Jesus forgave the deceived soldiers and people who cried out for his death sentence.

Jesus distinguished between truly evil people and their servants, and knew by the spirit who they were.

John 8:38, Jesus said, "I speak that which I have seen with my Father, and you do that which you have seen with your father." In verse 40 he said, "But now you seek to kill me, a man that has told you the truth, which I have heard of God ..." "The enemy comes not but to steal, kill, and destroy" (John 10:10).

Jesus' enemies gradually amassed and rose up to destroy the product of his labor, and his life. Jesus trusted God, who allowed them to have their day of glory. Jesus' sufferings set an example (1Peter 2:21-23).

Rockwall election to fill mayoral post, 3 council seats

The City of Rockwall sent a specially formatted notice of "General Election" announcing candidates, early voting and election day schedules. Upon further inquiry, City Secretary Kristi Cole advised that the notice was not sent as an order for publication of required notice.

Voters in the City of Rockwall will be asked to fill the positions of mayor and three City Council members in the May 6 General Election.

Open Council positions are in Places 1, 3 and 5. Each of the positions to be filled is for a full, two-year term.

The following candidates have filed for the open spots, according to information from the City of Rockwall:

• Mayor – Jim Pruitt • Place 1 – Enid Marie Reyes, Bree McCleskey and Bennie Daniels • Place 3 – Daniel Janik, incumbent Kevin Fowler and Adan "Adam" Tovar • Place 5 – Incumbent Scott Milder, A. Christine Hanna and Dana K. Macalik

The election will be administered by the Rockwall County Elections Administrator Chris Lynch, who is responsible for making sure the City of Rockwall election is in compliance with state law.

Early voting, which will run April 24 through May 2, and Election Day voting will be conducted at the Rockwall County Library, 1215 E. Yellowjacket Ln., according to the information provided by the city.

Early voting is scheduled as follows:

- 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., April 24-29
- 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., May 1-2

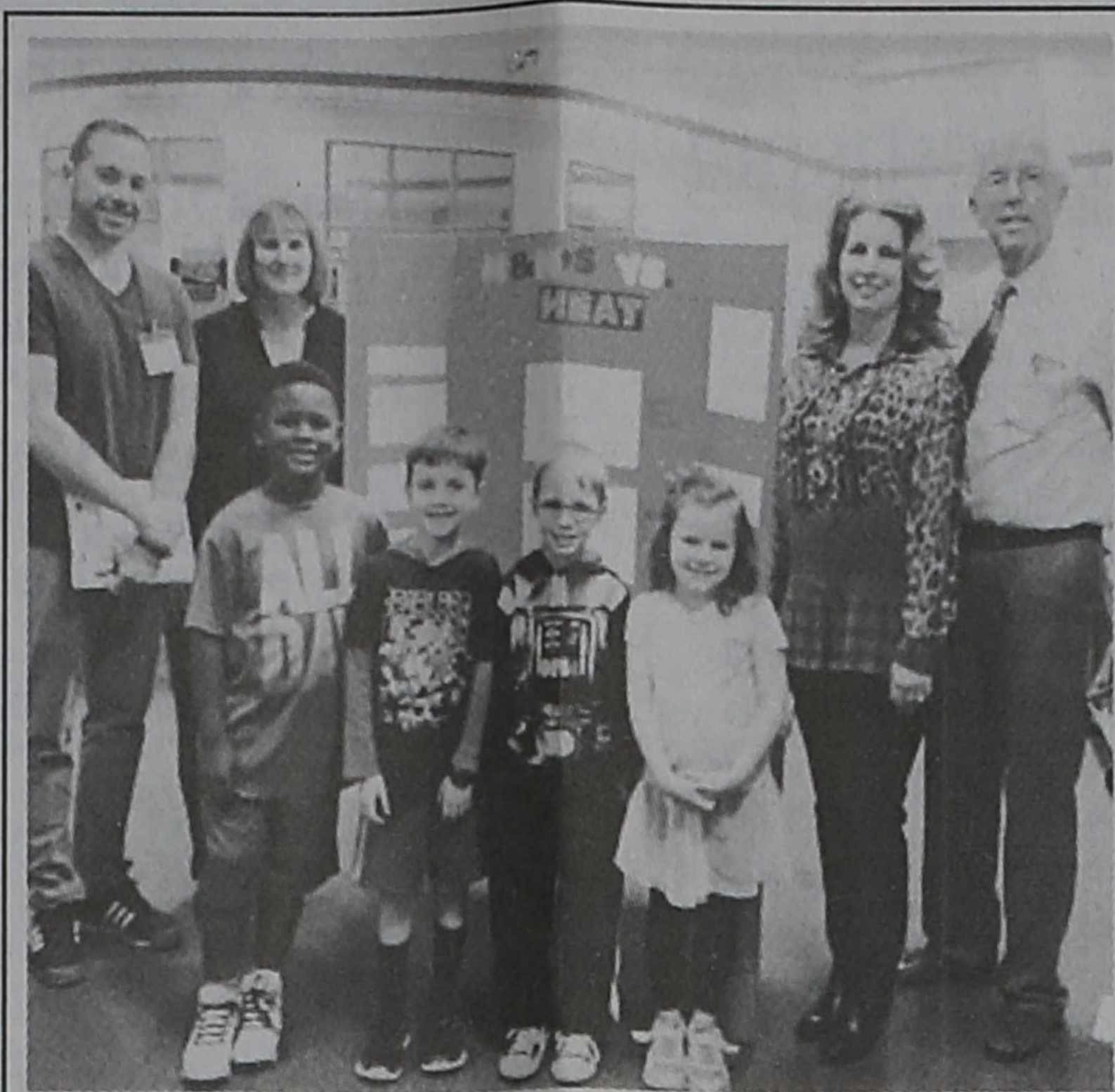
Election Day balloting will run from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. on May 6.

Applications for ballots by mail must be requested from and mailed to the Rockwall County Elections Administrator's Office, 915 Whitmore Dr., Suite D, Rockwall, TX 75087. Applications must be received by 5 p.m. April 25, according to the release.

Follow the Rockwall County News for legal publication of all required election notices.

Housewarmers of Rockwall County logo and contact information. Includes website and phone number.

Rockwall County News advertisement. Includes publisher name, address, subscription rates, and contact information for advertising.



Nebbie Williams recently conducted its fourth annual science fair. Science fair projects were judged during the day and the exhibition and awards ceremony took place in the evening. Twenty-seven students participated in the event, ranging from kindergarten to sixth grade.

Courtesy photo/Rockwall County News

Rockwall ISD Board to host public hearing

The Rockwall Independent School District Board of Trustees adopted a resolution at its February meeting that will initiate the District of Innovation consideration process, according to a district news release.

In compliance with the Texas Education Agency eligibility guidelines, the board will host a public hearing within 30 days to consider whether the district should pursue the District of Innovation designation.

The public hearing will begin at 6 p.m. on March 20 during the regularly scheduled board meeting in the RISD Administration Building, 1050 Williams St.

Within 30 days of the hearing, the board may decline to pursue the designation or appoint a committee to develop a local innovation plan, according to the release.

The District of Innovation designation was passed into law by the 84th Texas Legislative Session, according to the RISD news release. The law provides independent school districts the opportunity to gain exemption from many Texas Education Code requirements and allows for more local control. The innovation plan is unique to the local school district and community it serves.

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ROCKWALL COUNTY CHURCH DIRECTORY

Local business directory including Jackson Automotive Specialist, Chick-fil-A, Lakeside National Bank, Bostick Roofing Co., and a comprehensive list of churches in Rockwall County such as Anglican, Lutheran, Methodist, Baptist, and Catholic churches.

Religious quote: "Let every thing that hath breath praise the Lord. Praise ye the Lord." Psalm 150:6. Another quote: "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not unto thine own understanding."

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Meetings

Alcoholics Anonymous, 24 hour help line, 800-503-8602.

AA Meetings

Rockwall, 7 days a week, Big Book Group, 213 Rusk St., 972-722-6366.

Al-Anon Meetings

Call for information and locations in Dallas area, 214-363-0461.

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>.

Rockwall County Kiwanis Club

Meets every Tuesday at noon at the Rockwall Wedding Chapel, 203 S. Fannin. For more information call 972-772-6001

Senior Services

If you are interested in delivering weekday meals to homebound seniors in Rockwall County, we will be holding volunteer training sessions the second Wednesday each month at 1 p.m. Please call 972-771-9514 for location.

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.

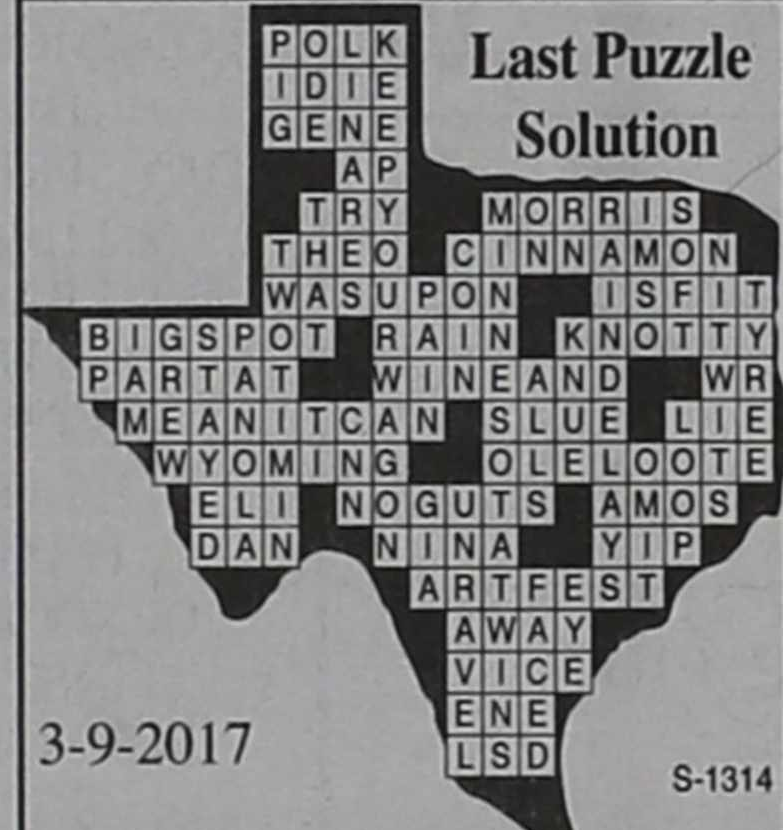
Everyone is invited to attend the "SAVING AMERICA THROUGH PRAYER" event, on the second Sunday of each month, 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., at Rockwall Bible Church located at the corner of Hwy 66 and Zion Circle, west of FM 3549, in Rockwall. The free event will include guest speakers. This is not church affiliated, and is open to everyone interested. For more information contact Mike Kennedy (972) 998-2680 or Kenneth Shores (214) 334-1206 or Jerry Minx (972) 896-7081

Required Notices

Public Sales

Notice of Sale
In accordance with the revised Civil Statutes of Texas, Chapter 59 as revised in 1985, Harbor Bay Marina will conduct a public sale of vessels listed below to satisfy a mortgage lien. Sales will be conducted at Harbor Bay Marina - 3701 Windjammer Lane, Rockwall TX 75087; 972-771-0071 Lake Ray Hubbard on 03/11/2017 beginning at 10:00AM for CASH only, with a 20% nonrefundable deposit due on the day of the sale and balance paid in full by 03/13/2017, to the highest bidder. All successful bidders shall take possession and remove the vessel from the marina upon full payment, or by separate arrangements with marina manager. Harbor Bay Marina reserves the right to withdraw any vessels from the sale and reject any bid. All vessels are sold "AS IS" with no warranty expressed or implied. Member name and general descriptions as follows;
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Notice to the people of Rockwall County

As of March 7, 2017, the cities of Royse City, Fate, McLendon-Chisholm, Heath, Rockwall and their respective representatives have not published each required notice in a newspaper that is published in Rockwall County, as the term "newspaper" is defined in the state regulatory statutes.

The City of Royse City has not published each required notice since before year 2002.

The City of Heath has not published each required notice since October 2008.

The City of Fate has not published each required notice since October 2012.

The City of McLendon-Chisholm has not published each required notice since October 28, 2014.

The City of Rockwall has not published each required notice since December 1, 2014.

By the above stated non-actions by the respective representatives, the right of the people to be duly notified of each city action, in accordance with state law, may have been impaired on multiple counts.

The Rockwall County News continues to be legally qualified to publish each required notice for the Cities of Royse City, Heath, Fate, McLendon-Chisholm, and Rockwall.

Rockwall County News continues to meet the statutory criteria established under Texas Government Code Sections 2051.044, 2051.045, 2051.046 and 2051.048 (b) and (c), as a newspaper of general circulation published in Rockwall County, to be selected, and paid by the responsible city officer for publication of each required notice in accordance with state law.

It is our belief that the representatives of the government units, in their official capacity, have a duty under Oath of Office to select the newspaper in accordance with Texas Gov. Code Chapter 2051 Subchapter C, and to execute each required notice in accordance with state law; and

The law that requires elected council members to annually vote to "designate" a newspaper of record does not override or trump Texas Gov. Code 2051, Subchapter C Selection of Newspaper.

(See Texas Government Code Section 2051.049 for selection requirement).

Each City Manager, Chief Financial Officer, and Secretary have a duty under Oath of Office and any other Licensing/Commissioning Certificates, to comply with state law, and such duty shall not be impeded or neglected in cases where the councils vote to violate state law.

All council members and mayors in Rockwall County have repeatedly allowed the City Secretaries to not select a newspaper that meets the statutory criteria, when selecting a newspaper for publication of each required notice; and

All council members and mayors in Rockwall County have repeatedly allowed the City Managers, Chief Financial Officers, and/or Secretaries to release tax dollars for payment to newspapers that may be found to be unqualified to be selected for publication of each required notice.

By the above referenced selection practices, and release of tax dollars, the City Managers, Chief Financial Officers, and Secretaries in each one's Official Capacity, may be found to have impaired the right of the people to be duly notified of actions of the municipal corporations in accordance with state law under the Right of Due Course of Law and Due Process of Law; and defrauded the taxpayers.

Any and all adversely affected parties to any action by the above referenced municipalities in Rockwall County, where required notice was not published in accordance with state law, may file proper legal actions in a Court and/or Grand Jury of competent jurisdiction.

Respectfully submitted by Timothy W. Burnett
Publisher Rockwall County News

Royse City Police Blotter

Feb. 24 – March 2

- Friday, 24 Feb.:** Alarm, 1700 block Audrey Drive; Alarm, 200 block Midnight Drive; Suspicious vehicle, Area of Maverick Lane and Hunters Glen; Suspicious person, 300 block Rustic Grove Lane; Disturbance, 100 block W. I-30 NSR; Alarm, 1400 block FM 1777; Welfare concern, 700 block Hutson Drive; Accident, 800 block E. I-30; Criminal trespass, 600 block Chestnut Street
- Saturday, 25 Feb.:** Suspicious person, 100 block W. I-30 NSR; Reckless driver, I-30 eastbound from the 73-mile marker; Medical assistance, 300 block E. Lamar Street; Medical assistance, 800 block Peterson Street; Disturbance, 400 block W. I-30 NSR; Alarm, 300 block Audobon Lane; Theft, 400 block W. I-30 NSR; Duty on striking fixture/highway landscape, E. I-30 SSR near the 78-mile marker; Possession of a controlled substance/Driving while license invalid arrest, I-30 eastbound near the 80-mile marker
- Sunday, 26 Feb.:** Suspicious vehicle, Area of Evergreen Street; Suspicious person, Area of FM 548 and Welch Street; Suspicious person, 900 block S. Erby Campbell Boulevard; Alarm, 200 block Regal Court; Medical assistance, Area of Industrial Drive; Alarm, 2300 block E. I-30 SSR; Accident, I-30 westbound near the 77B exit; Suspicious vehicle, 1400 block Englewood Drive
- Monday, 27 Feb.:** Welfare concern, 500 block W. I-30 NSR; Disturbance, 3200 block Spruce Street; Reckless driver, Area of Lakes Drive; Reckless driver, I-30 eastbound near the 74-mile marker; Medical assistance, 1900 block Green Terrace Drive; Noise disturbance, Area of CR 2594; Reckless driver, I-30 eastbound near the 76-mile marker; Department of Criminal Justice/Dallas County Sheriff's Office warrants arrest, Area of Preston Drive
- Tuesday, 28 Feb.:** Welfare concern, 300 block Cookston Lane; Two welfare concerns, 300 block W. Main Street; Accident, 400 block W. I-30 NSR; Suspicious person, 200 block Nacona Court; Welfare concern, 100 block W. Main Street; Suspicious vehicle, Area of FM 35 and CR 2595; Unauthorized use of a motor vehicle, 100 block E. I-30 SSR; Assault, 3300 block Overstreet Lane; Medical assistance, 2600 block Sabine Circle
- Wednesday, 1 March:** Suspicious vehicle, 100 block W. I-30 NSR; Welfare concern, 3200 block Spruce Street; Suspicious vehicle, 700 block W. I-30 NSR; Accident, 100 block E. I-30 SSR; Accident, I-30 westbound near the 77B exit; Reckless driver, Area of Circle Lane; Accident, I-30 westbound from the 84-mile marker; Possession of drug paraphernalia, I-30 westbound near the 74-mile marker; Welfare concern, 1000 block Pullen Street; Reckless driver, I-30 westbound near the 79-mile marker; Fail to identify fugitive/Dallas Police Department's warrant arrest, I-30 westbound near the 77-mile marker
- Thursday, 2 March:** Medical assistance, 1500 block Hafner Drive; Suspicious vehicle, 100 block E. Old Greenville Road; Alarm, 300 block Briar Oaks Drive; Alarm, 900 block S. Erby Campbell Boulevard; City ordinance violation, Area of Preston Drive and Marsha Lane; 911 hang up, 1800 block Cemetery Street; Suspicious vehicle, Area of I-30 SSR and Erby Campbell Boulevard; Suspicious vehicle, 1700 block Sams Circle; Theft, 300 block E. I-30

Rockwall County News

qualifies for publication of required 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, 2051.048 (b) and (c), and 2051.049.

To Submit legal notices call 972-722-3099 or email rcn.advertising@yahoo.com

Opinions

States rights and the war on drugs

by Laurence M. Vance
Future of Freedom Foundation

On February 22, a joint letter was issued by the Civil Rights Division of the Department of Justice and the Office for Civil Rights of the Department of Education rejecting the Obama administration's position that federal nondiscrimination laws require public schools to allow transgender students to use the bathrooms of their choice.

In May of last year, the Obama administration issued a "Dear Colleague" directive in response to "an increasing number of questions from parents, teachers, principals, and school superintendents about civil rights protections for transgender students." The directive stated that the prohibition against sex discrimination in Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and its implementing regulations "encompasses discrimination based on a student's gender identity, including discrimination based on a student's transgender status."

The Trump administration's joint letter states that "the Departments believe that, in this context, there must be due regard for the primary role of the States and local school districts in establishing educational policy." White House press secretary Sean Spicer commented, "The president has made it clear throughout the campaign that he's a firm believer in states' rights and that certain issues like this are not best dealt with at the federal level."

But just one day later, on February 23, the Trump administration rejected a states' rights approach on the issue of marijuana, a departure from some things the president had said on the campaign trail.

Speaking at a White House press briefing, Spicer said that he expects states to be subject to "greater enforcement" of federal laws against marijuana use. While President Trump "understands the pain and suffering that many people go through who are facing, especially, terminal diseases, and the comfort that some of these drugs, including medical marijuana, can bring to them," the president sees "a big difference" between use of marijuana for medical purposes and for recreational purposes. Spicer also said that a state's allowance of marijuana for recreational use "is something the Department of Justice, I think, will be further looking into."

The new head of the Justice Department, former Sen. Jeff Sessions, is a noted opponent of the legalization of marijuana. In his Senate confirmation hearings, he acknowledged that "disrupting states' marijuana markets by enforcing federal marijuana laws could create a strain on federal resources," but also said that he "won't commit to never enforcing the law."

Kevin Sabet, head of the anti-marijuana group Smart Approaches to Marijuana, chimed in: "The current situation is unsustainable. This

isn't an issue about states' rights; it's an issue of public health and safety for communities."

Democratic officials in states where recreational marijuana use is legal have suddenly embraced the concept of states' rights. Although half of the states have legalized the use of medical marijuana, only seven states (Alaska, California, Colorado, Maine, Massachusetts, Nevada, Oregon, Washington) and the District of Columbia have legalized marijuana for recreational use.

Jay Inslee, the Democratic governor of Washington, and Bob Ferguson, another Democrat, the state's attorney general, sent a letter last week to Attorney General Sessions "asking to discuss the issue and laying out the state's arguments for keeping its regulated market in place." Ferguson, who has said that he and the governor "will resist any efforts to thwart the will of the voters in Washington," has also requested a meeting with Sessions "about his approach to legal, regulated marijuana."

Democrat John Hickenlooper, the governor of Colorado, invoked the concept of states' rights on a recent appearance on NBC's Meet the Press when he was asked "if Attorney General Jeff Sessions might enforce federal law against the recreational use of marijuana." Speaking of the state constitutional amendment allowing the recreational use of marijuana that Colorado voters approved in 2012, Hickenlooper said, "It's in our constitution. I took a solemn oath to support our constitution. So, I am — and it's interesting, it's the sovereignty — the states have a sovereignty just like the Indian tribes, just like the federal government does." The governor went on to say that it is not a "clear-cut case" that the federal government could "stop" the recreational drug industry in Colorado.

The principle of states' rights embodied in the Tenth Amendment is an important one when it comes to the drug war.

The United States was set up as a federal system of government where the states, through the Constitution, granted a limited number of powers to a central government — not the other way around. As James Madison succinctly explained in Federalist No. 45,

The powers delegated by the proposed Constitution to the Federal Government, are few and defined. Those which are to remain in the State Governments are numerous and indefinite. The former will be exercised principally on external objects, as war, peace, negotiation, and foreign commerce; with which last the power of taxation will for the most part, be connected. The powers reserved to the several States will extend to all the objects, which, in the ordinary course of affairs, concern the lives, liberties and properties of the people; and the internal order, improvement, and prosperity of the State.

But as this language did not appear in the text of the Constitution, some urged that a Bill of Rights be added to the Constitution that included such a distinction.

Our third president, Thomas Jefferson, in a letter to Joseph Priestley dated June 19, 1802, regarding his role in planning and establishing the Constitution, wrote,

I was in Europe when the constitution was planned & established, and never saw it till after it was established. on receiving it I wrote strongly to mr Madison urging the want of provision for the freedom of religion, freedom of the press, trial by jury, habeas corpus, the substitution of militia for a standing army, and an express reservation to the states of all rights not specifically granted to the union. he accordingly moved in the first session of Congress for these Amendments which were agreed to & ratified by the states as they now stand. this is all the hand I had in what related to the Constitution.

That is why we have the Tenth Amendment to the Constitution: "The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people."

The federal government considers the growing, distributing, buying, selling, possessing, or smoking of marijuana to be a crime. It makes no distinction between the medical and recreational use of marijuana. It classifies marijuana as a Schedule I controlled substance with a high potential for abuse, no currently accepted medical use, and a lack of accepted safety for use under medical supervision. The Supreme Court has ruled that the federal government has the authority to prohibit marijuana possession and use for any and all purposes.

There is just one problem. There is nothing in the Constitution that gives the federal government the authority to have a Controlled Substances Act, a Drug Enforcement Agency, a National Drug Control Strategy, a drug czar, or an Office of National Drug Control Policy. There is nothing in the Constitution that gives the federal government the authority to prohibit or regulate marijuana or to wage war on drugs.

If we are to have any of those things, it is on the state level that they must be instituted and funded.

The libertarian position is that neither the federal government nor the state governments should do any of those things. But given that we have the Constitution, the Tenth Amendment, and the principles of federalism and states' rights, it is only on the state level that libertarians should have to be making the case for drug freedom.

Obama FISA request, wiretaps on Trump server: Conspiracy or coincidence?

by Mark Landsbaum
BarbWire

Yours truly is a conspiracy theorist.

Be patient for a few minutes and I promise to demonstrate why this is important today.

It's obvious that the murder of President John F. Kennedy was a conspiracy. Before you scoff, consider this fact: Gallup pollsters say as much as 81% of Americans have agreed. That means those who think Lee Harvey Oswald was a lone-nut assassin are roughly the same percentage that believe Elvis Presley is still alive. In fact, according to Gallup, a majority of Americans have always thought more than one gunman was involved. Who's on the fringe here?

The complaint most often lodged against those of us in the majority is, "That happened a long time ago. Nobody cares anymore." So, what on earth can justify obsessing about Kennedy's assassination nearly 54 years after the fact?

In one of the more than 100 books on the Kennedy assassination in my library, the author invoked this Biblical passage as justification:

"Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them." (Ephesians 5:11)

My calling in life was to be an investigative reporter. I had some moderate success, investigating stories that sent one man to jail, five others to prison, enjoined a public agency from breaking the law and prompted a change in campaign finance laws. I was hired by a top-flight newspaper and eventually given a plumb investigative job that often assigned me to work exclusively to uncover stories you could only call, "conspiracy theories."

When some people hear "conspiracy theory" they hear "crackpot," or "obsessed" or even "irrational." When I hear "conspiracy theory" my mind recalls a memo drafted by the Central Intelligence Agency in 1967. You could look it up (that's a real plus when dealing with conspiracies).

As public criticism and doubt increased about the Warren Commission's lone-nut gunman explanation, the CIA coined the term "conspiracy theorist" in 1967 to discredit critics. The government scheme has been effective. Today, about the fastest way to get people to doubt something is to call it a "conspiracy."

The CIA memo was sent to agents with instructions to pass along the advice to their assets and cooperative sources in the media, government and academia to discredit Kennedy conspiracy theorists. It was labeled "psych," short for "psychological operations," or disinformation. A decade later, a Freedom of Information Act request by the New York Times revealed the memo's existence, which up to then had been merely another conspiracy theory.

The CIA's goal had been "to inhibit the circulation of such claims" by suggesting they are "without serious foundation" and the work of "propagandists." The spy agency even suggested book reviews and articles "are particularly appropriate for this purpose." If conspiracy theorists persist, the memo advised countering them by insisting that, "Conspiracy on the large scale often suggested would be impossible to conceal in the United States."

Some of you may recall Watergate, which for all intents and purposes appeared to be a routine burglary — until news reporters probed deeper and found, lo and behold, a conspiracy!

Long before Watergate, there was the 1953 coup against Iran's democratically elected prime minister Mohammad Mosaddeq, who was sentenced to three years' solitary confinement in a military prison. Later, Patrice Lumumba, the first legally elected prime minister of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, was ousted in a coup d'etat, locked up, beaten then executed. About this time, multiple assassination attempts failed to kill Cuba's Fidel Castro.

Were all these acts of violence by isolated cranks? In the 1970s, a congressional investigation pulled back the curtain to show these assassinations, attempts, coups and other violent acts were conspiracies carried out by agents of your federal government. No theory. Fact.

If you doubt the reach of the invisible intelligence community, you might review the work of Carl Bernstein, the Pulitzer Prize-winning Washington Post reporter, who exposed the Watergate conspiracy. Later in the 1970s, Bernstein wrote extensively on how the CIA had infiltrated newsrooms and board rooms of U.S. newspapers and broadcast media to influence what news is covered, and how it is covered. This was no mere conspiracy theory. It's fact.

Arguably, the world's trajectory has been altered repeatedly by conspiracies in fact, not theory. As truth has seeped out, the damage done to credibility has been devastating and cumulative. For example, whom do you trust today?

One reason (there are many others as well) that yours truly continues to read about and in my modest way to investigate JFK's assassination is because contrary to the nay-sayers, it does matter, even after all these years.

As a lifelong journalist, dedicated to unearthing the truth, and as a Christian, who understands it is truth that sets us free, I find it terribly disconcerting when people slough off the murder of an American president as if it was inconsequential.

Many of those same people have no problem obsessing over who will win the next Super Bowl, or which actress is worthy of an Oscar. As if those things matter.

For the record, I am not a Kennedy admirer, as are so many others who have researched his murder. I believe JFK was an ineffective president whose policies and practices were inconsistent and unrooted in any long-standing ethic. He was an even worse husband. But murder is not the way civilized republics should remove presidents.

As a journalist, I am ashamed of the state of my profession. The most critical moments in journalistic history are when things of great magnitude occur. When the press fails by epic proportions to do the very thing it exists to do — find the truth — it's disgraceful. When the press is complicit in covering up the truth, it's shameful.

In the JFK assassination, the press, the lamestream media if you prefer, failed big time. You could look that up too.

A near universal cynicism has gripped our culture since the JFK murder. Government's ham-handed cover-ups eventually have been shown leak by leak, expose' by expose' to have concealed a factual conspiracy, not a theoretical one. There's even one school of thought that says the cover-ups were clumsy on purpose, sort of an in-your-face arrogance by conspiratorial powers to let America know those conspiring don't care if you find out because there's nothing you can do about it. If that doesn't chill you, you're un-chillable.

But the worst consequence of conspiracies by powers unaccountable to voters and to the law is what we now see playing out. Here's why the JFK conspiracy murder and all those conspiracies before and since are still important today: It was unwise for Donald Trump to publicly criticize the intelligence community. The last president to do that ended up in a premature grave.

Sure enough, since Trump took on the intelligence establishment he has been afflicted by one leaked scandal-in-the-bud after another, all clearly originating from that realm of secrecy populated by agents and spies. Coincidence? Or conspiracy?

Maybe you think it's a coincidence that on his way out the door Barack Obama is said to have obtained special court authorization to eavesdrop on Trump's campaign and then continued monitoring when no evidence of wrongdoing was detected. Maybe you think it's coincidental that as he left office, Obama relaxed NSA rules to allow intelligence to be widely shared with government agencies that up to then were not permitted to see such material. And you may think it's coincidental that intelligence data is springing forth almost daily from who knows how many anonymous sources within the permanent, career bureaucracies into the laps of a cooperative press that rushes it into print and onto the airwaves — all to Trump's detriment.

One of the books on the Kennedy assassination is titled Coup d'Etat, and purports to explain "the motives of high ranking government officials" in the murder of JFK. In recent days, conservative commentators have begun describing what is happening to Trump as a "silent coup."

Words matter, as the CIA realized half a century ago when coining the phrase "conspiracy theories" as a pejorative. A definition of conspiracy is a joining or acting together, as if by sinister design. A definition of coup d'etat is the sudden overthrow of a government by a usually small group of persons in or previously in positions of authority.

Here are some more words that matter: "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it."

Some more of the past will be revealed this year that might help us remember. By October, the federal government is required to release 40,000 more secret documents, the final collection of known records that could shed light on JFK's murder. Because it matters.

Mark Landsbaum can be reached at Mark.Landsbaum@gmail.com.

Hold government officials responsible for statutory violations

A widely recognized problem in governments is non-compliance with state law.

Solution: Call on the House and Senate to amend Penal Code Section 39 Abuse of Official Capacity and Official Oppression to:

1. Remove "with intent to harm or defraud another;" and
2. Remove "intentionally or knowingly."

Intent of the government officer logically goes to sentencing or punitive damages.

'Fiddler,' 'Peter Pan' set for RSM's 2017 season

Rockwall Summer Musicals will present "Fiddler on the Roof" June 23 through July 2 and "Peter Pan" Aug. 11-20 at the Rockwall Performing Arts Center at the Utley Middle School campus.

"Fiddler on the Roof," a classic, heartwarming story of fathers and daughters, husbands and wives and life, love and laughter, is rich with musical hits, including "Sunrise, Sunset," "If I Were a Rich Man," "Matchmaker" and "Tradition."

"Peter Pan" opens is a timeless Broadway musical classic that will whisk the audience away to a place where dreams are born and no one

ever grows up. Favorite songs such as "I'm Flying," "Never, Never Land," "I Won't Grow Up" and many more will be performed.

Audition dates for the two productions are "Fiddler on the Roof," April 8-9, and "Peter Pan," May 6-7. Children and adults are welcome to participate. Location and audition signups will be posted on the website. Visit rockwallsummermusicals.org for audition and ticket information.

Discounts are offered for churches, groups or season subscribers. For advance tickets or more information on "Fiddler on the Roof," "Peter Pan" or how to become a RSM sponsor visit the website.

T-shirt design contest part of Celebrate Fate

The City of Fate is hosting a T-shirt design contest as part of this year's fourth annual Celebrate Fate event.

Each year the city hosts a free festival complete with live music, games, vendors, food and fireworks, according to the municipality's website, and part of the festivities is an official Celebrate Fate T-shirt. Potential designs for this year's T-shirt will be accepted through April 3.

Contest eligibility is limited to residents of the City of Fate who are 13 years old or older as of the date of entry, according to the website. A limit

of three entries per person will be accepted.

Designs must be limited to no more than four colors; the complete design must be contained within an 8-inch by 8-inch space. Entries must be submitted in .jpg, .png, .pdf, .ai or .eps format in a size no larger than 10 MB.

A panel of judges chosen by the city will determine the winning entry. The winning artist will be notified by email within seven days of selection.

Rockwall Area Chamber group visits state officials

A group of almost 90 business and industry leaders, elected officials, Leadership Rockwall Class of 2017 and Chamber staff representing the Rockwall Area Chamber of Commerce and Rockwall County spent two days in Austin meeting with state legislators and other officials in Austin to discuss the issues most important to Rockwall area residents.

The group spent Monday morning listening to several speakers including, among others, Rep. Four Price, Rep. Angie Chen Button and Texas Land Commissioner George P. Bush and Comptroller Glenn Hegar, according to a chamber news release.

From there, the Rockwall delegation spent some time in the Texas Supreme Court where they heard from Texas Commissioner of Education Mike Morath and Texas Supreme Court Justice Don R. Willet, who spent his formative years near the Rockwall area.

"It is so important that members of the community have a chance

to hear from local lawmakers on issues affecting Rockwall County, and ask questions to their elected officials. We had a great visit at the Capitol," Dana K Macalik, president of the chamber, said in the news release. "It was a great opportunity to discuss legislative priorities and upcoming legislation with them, plus a chance to watch the legislative process in action."

After hearing from Willet, the delegation was recognized on both the Senate and House floors, culminating with Rockwall Native Representative Justin Holland presenting H.R. 426 declaring February 26th-28th, 2017 Rockwall County Days.

"It was great to have Rockwall recognized at such a high level," said Shaun Kirkland, board member for the Young Professionals of Rockwall, said in the release. "Moreover, seeing close to 100 citizens take two days of their personal and professional time to make sure their voices were heard was inspiring."

On Tuesday, the Rockwall delegation delivered the chamber's and community position papers to all 181 State Legislators. County issues of importance were transportation, water, education and workforce development, economic development and health care and human services.

Solomon finishes basic training

U.S. Army Spc. Marcus H. Solomon recently graduated from basic infantry training at Fort Jackson, South Carolina.

During the nine weeks of training, the soldier studied the Army mission, history, tradition and core values. He also received instruction and practice in physical fitness, rifle marksmanship and bayonet use, chemical warfare, unarmed combat, drill and ceremony, marching, map reading, military courtesy, basic first aid, field tactics and the military justice system.

Solomon is the son of Driselda and Marion Solomon and brother of Matthew Solomon, all of Rockwall.

He is a 2003 graduate of Dallas Christian School in Mesquite.



The Old Town Block Party conducted on the historic Main Street in Royse City on Saturday, March 4, proved the old cliché of "cold blowing March winds" to be true. The event, which ran from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., saw a meager turnout due to cold damp weather and blowing winds, but the enthusiasm was high for those who attended. Mandy Johnson is pictured talking with a customer at her booth, which was selling T-shirts for the Royse City Youth Sports Development cheer and football little leaguers Bulldogs team. The event included rides and games, vendor and live music all day.

Photo by Millie Jean Coppedge/Rockwall County News

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Child death investigation underway in Rockwall

The Rockwall Police Department is investigating the death of a 10-year-old child reported Monday afternoon in the 3000 block of Pineridge Drive.

At approximately 4:07 p.m., authorities received a call about a gunshot victim in a residence in the area. Upon arrival, officers discovered the child with what appeared to be a self-inflicted gunshot wound, according to a police department news release.

The child was transported to Lakepointe Medical Center for treatment, but later died.

"The exact circumstances of the shooting remain under investigation but by detectives of the Criminal Investigation Division; however, there are no signs of foul play," the release states.

Rockwall ISD announced Teacher of the Year nominees

The Rockwall Independent School District recently announced its 2017 Teacher of the Year nominees.

Nineteen teachers, one representing each campus, were selected for recognition by their peers and colleagues, according to a district news release.

Nominees include:

- Veronica Leal, Amanda Rochell Elementary School
- Kory Turner, Amy Parks-Heath Elementary School
- Kayse Williams, Billie Stevenson Elementary School
- Katy Ruff, Celia Hays Elementary School
- Debby Schmucker, Doris Cullins-Lake Pointe Elementary School
- Lindsey James, Dorothy Smith Pullen Elementary School
- Blanca Parades, Dorris A. Jones Elementary School
- Michelle Broussard-Pacot, Grace Hartman Elementary School
- Rebecca Cloud, Howard Dobbs Elementary School
- Lana Edwards, Nebbie Williams Elementary School
- Elizabeth Kelly, Ouida Springer Elementary School
- Kristie Fergeson, Sharon Shannon Elementary School
- Amy Hyvl, Virginia Reinhardt Elementary School
- Amber Panter, Herman E. Utley Middle School
- Shari Allison, J.W. Williams Middle School
- Delia Summy, Maurine Cain Middle School
- Leigh Shelton, Rockwall High School
- Kristen Hopkins, Rockwall-Heath High School
- Kirsten Stanford, Rockwall Quest Academy

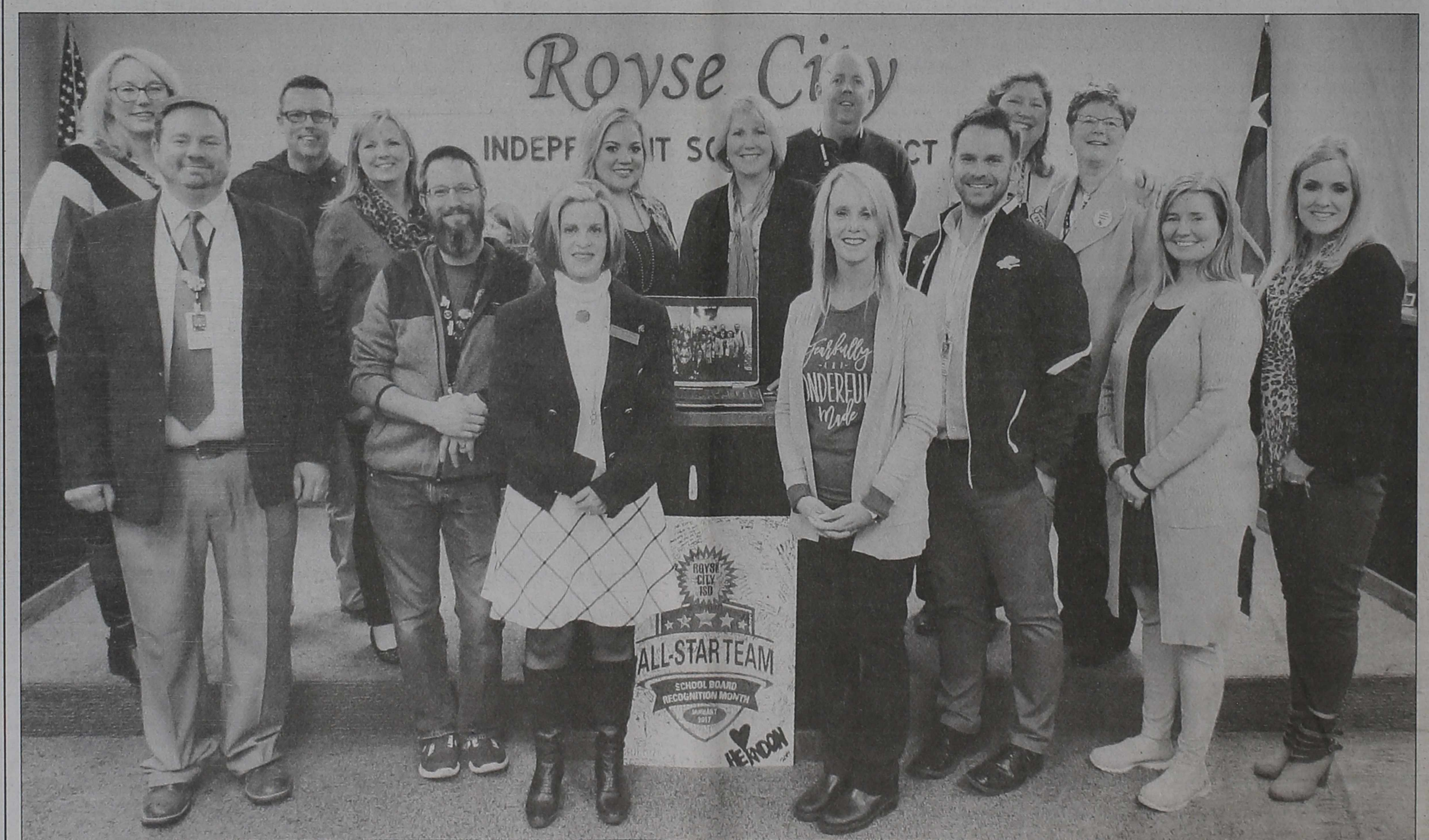
The overall elementary and secondary Teachers of the Year will be selected and announced at the district's Teacher of the Year Banquet on May 5, according to the news release.

Members of the Rockwall Breakfast Rotary, as well as previous Teachers of the Year, serve on the selection committee, which reviews each application and conducts in-class observations as part of the selection process.

Area News Briefs

Dallas Blooms runs through April 9

The largest floral festival in the Southwest, Dallas Blooms, will run at the Dallas Arboretum through April 9 with the theme Peace, Love and Flower Power. The event will include more than 500,000 spring-blooming blossoms. Each weekend will highlight a different 1960s motif. The Dallas Arboretum and Botanical Gardens is located on the southeastern shore of White Rock Lake at 9525 Garland Rd., Dallas. It is open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily. General admission is \$15 for adults, \$12 for seniors 65 and older, \$10 for children ages 3-12 and free for members and children ages 2 and younger. For more details visit dallasarboretum.org.



Royse City ISD personnel who attended the Texas Computer Education Association Convention 2017 in Austin the week of Feb. 6-10, were honored during the Feb. 13 Board of Trustees meeting. This convention and exposition is an annual professional development to teach educational professionals how to use technology in the classroom and online resources to improve teaching and learning and assure success for their students. During the board meeting, each educator shared impressive technology they learned during the week that would encourage their students to reach even higher in their goals for knowledge. Pictured from the left are Sherri Duggan, Richard Pense, Shane Aultman, Merrill Redfern, Cody Holt, Dorcas Schale, Kamey Herpeche, Tommy Whitaker, Stuart Burt, Melanie Little, Zach Snow, Nichole Hahn, Julia Robinson, Kimberly Sherman and Jana Freeman.

Photo by Millie Jean Coppedge/Rockwall County News