

County Record

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Proposed state bill would hurt cities with industrial contracts

MARGARET TOAL
For The Record

The Texas Legislature is now in session and several bills controlling what cities can do have been introduced, but one especially could seriously affect the city of Orange's income.

State Senator Paul Bettencourt, a Republican from Harris County and a former Harris County tax assessor-collector, has introduced a bill restricting the amount of land that can be included in a city's extra-territorial jurisdiction, or ETJ.

Orange City Manager Mike Kunst said the proposed bill would eliminate the industrial plants along FM 1006, known as Chemical Row. Most of the petrochemical plants lie within Orange's ETJ and since the 1940s, have paid in-lieu-of-taxes money to the city.

Recent city budgets report 24 percent to 33 percent of the city's income coming from the Industrial District Contracts negotiated with the plants to pay in-

lieu-of-taxes.

The proposed bill, which if passed could go into effect September 1, "will certainly challenge us," Kunst said.

A similar house bill has been introduced. Kunst said so far, the bills have remained in committee and have not been brought out for a vote. Before it becomes a law, the bill must pass in the Texas Senate and the Texas House of Representatives, and then be signed by Governor Greg Abbott.

The Industrial District Contracts have a long history in Texas, particularly in Southeast Texas, which has many oil refineries and petrochemical plants.

Under an Industrial District Contract, a city negotiates with a plant to not annex the facility and the plant will pay to the city a percentage of the amount of property taxes the plant would pay under full city taxes.

"That understanding goes back decades with city

STATE BILL Page 3A

BCISD will have three start times for campuses

MARGARET TOAL
For The Record

The Bridge City school districts is making a major change in the times for school days for the 2023-24 schedule. The district will have three different start and end bells schedules. Previously, the district has had two different schedules.

The changes will help the district accommodate more bus routes for students. Adding one more start time will allow the district to have all regular, full-time bus drivers working each route. In addition, fewer students will travel together, plus the students will be riding with others closer to their age.

The high school and middle school will begin at 7:15 a.m. and end at 2:45 p.m. In the district's announcement about the changes,

traffic on Texas Avenue in front of the high school was one of the problems the district has been facing.

Texas Avenue is also State Highway 87 and goes along the massive construction site for the new \$8.5 billion Golden Triangle Polymers Plant.

"Due to shift change traffic added to the already high volume of traffic in front of the high school in the afternoon, allowing our staff and teen drivers to get home before the rush hour is the safest course of action," the district said.

The elementary school will begin classes each day at 7:55 a.m. and end at 3:25 p.m. Bridge City Intermediate will start school at 8:35 a.m. and end at 4:05 p.m.

The school district currently transports 1,100 students a day on buses that

BRIDGE CITY Page 3A



Governor Greg Abbott was a featured guest Monday at the groundbreaking ceremony for the new \$1.8 billion Entergy power plant outside of Bridge City. About 200 people attended the ceremony. Posing for the groundbreaking are, left to right, are Public Utilities Commissioner Jimmy Glotfelty, Public Utilities Chair Peter Lake, Public Utilities commissioners Kathleen Jackson and Lori Cobbs, Entergy utility operations president Rod West, Governor Abbott, Entergy Texas president and CEO Eliecer Viamontes, Entergy Corporation president and CEO Drew Marsh, and executive vice president and COO Pete Norgeot.

Construction begins on new OC Entergy plant

MARGARET TOAL
For The Record

Lamar State College Orange is the leading example of how industrial growth in the county is leading to building expansions to accommodate the influx of newcomers and the need for trained workers.

Wednesday morning at 10, LSCO will have a ground-breaking ceremony for the new construction of a 55,000 square foot academic building. The two story brick building with wide windows will cost about \$38.1 million.

In addition, LSCO is opening its first satellite campus outside of Orange County. The college, under President Dr. Tom Johnson, has purchased a 3,000 square foot on Main Street in Lumberton, which is in Hardin County.

The building is being renovated with classes expected to be held there by Spring 2024.

The growth is coming after the official announcement late last year that the Chevron Phillips had chosen Orange as the site for its new \$8.5 billion petrochemical plant. The construction of the Golden Triangle Polymers Plant off Highway 87 South is expected to create up to 4,500 construction jobs and 500 permanent jobs.

At the ground-breaking ceremony in March for the new plant, Chevron Phillips announced a \$1.3 million grant to LSCO to buy professional-grade equipment to train process operators and instrument technicians for the petrochemical industry.

According to Dr. Johnson, president of LSCO, the

college has drawn more students in recent years and a study showed more than 10 percent were coming from the Lumberton area in Hardin County. Opening a satellite center will make it easier for Hardin County residents to go to LSCO classes.

Dr. Johnson has also been touting the cuts in tuition the Texas Legislature has approved for LSCO, along with the number of scholarships available for students of all ages.

Last week, Dr. Johnson was Vidor ISD Superintendent Dr. Jay Killgo and the Lamar University president to announce a program to help Vidor school paraprofessionals get an education to become a certified teacher. Teachers will be needed as workers come to the area with their families for the new jobs.

The new academic building will be replacing the original building the college used in downtown Orange nearly 50 years ago after starting in a World War II-era elementary school. That original building was once a bowling alley and had a few sloping hallways.

The new building will on Fourth Street and the Gate-mouth Brown Plaza LSCO opened in 2022, and take up the south block of Green Avenue between Fourth and Fifth Streets. Part of the block was the old Orange National Bank neo-Greek designed building that was demolished in the 1970s for a modern multi-storied mirrored glass building. Through the years, the band went through a variety of owners and was a Capital One bank

ENTERGY Page 3A

County has 505 early votes for city, school races

MARGARET TOAL
For The Record

After two days of early voting, a total of 505 people in Orange County have cast ballots for the city and school board races set for May 6.

Some of the entities did not have contested races and were able to cancel elections. The positions with elections are for Orange City Council, Bridge City City Council, Vidor City Council, Vidor ISD

board, and West Orange-Cove CISD board.

The Orange County Elections Administration Office reports a total of 249 people have voted early at the Orange Public Library, 72 at the Orange County Airport, and 159 at the Raymond Gould Community Center in Vidor. So far, 25 mail-in ballots have been recorded.

However, registered county voters may go to any of the early sites to vote, so the totals do not necessarily

reflect the elections that are drawing the most votes.

The contested Bridge City Council seat is for the vacated Place 3 with Bryant Champagne facing Kenneth Prosperie. All voters in the city will be able to cast a ballot in the race.

For the Orange City Council, the At-Large Position 6 incumbent Paul Burch is being challenged by Old Orange Historic District neighbor Henry Junior Leger. Any qualified registered voter in the city

may vote for the position.

The West Orange-Cove school board has two incumbents and one challenger running for the two at-large position openings. Voters in the district may vote for one or two of the three candidates. The two candidates receiving the most votes will be seated. The incumbents are Ruth Hancock and Tommy Wayne Wilson Jr., with Donny Teate Jr. challenging

EARLY VOTE Page 3A

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JULY 5, 2023



Lamar State College
Orange

My 5-Cents By State Sen. Robert Nichols

A weekly column by Sen. Robert Nichols, Senate District 3

April 21 is San Jacinto Day in Texas, which celebrates the final battle of the Texas Revolution in 1836 when Texas won its independence from Mexico. The battle was fought in present-day La Porte, Texas and lasted just 18 minutes before General Sam Houston defeated General Santa Anna's Mexican army.

Here are five things happening around your state:

1. Beaumont, Orange County award General Land Office grants

Last week the General



Sen. Nichols

Land Office announced awards in the Beaumont and Orange County areas for the Affordable Rental Program rehabilitation projects and Infrastructure awards.

These awards form from \$300 million in Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery funds for long-term disaster recovery from flooding during Tropical Storm Imelda and other significant flooding in South Texas. In Beaumont, there was a total award of almost \$10 million in rehabilitation for affordable rental complexes and almost \$5 million in a

variety of infrastructure projects. In Orange County, there was a total award of \$11 million for infrastructure projects.

2. Bill moving Stephen F. Austin State University to the University of Texas System passes Senate

This week, Senate Bill 1055 was voted unanimously out of the Senate. I authored this bill with the help of Representative Travis Clardy and our partners at SFA and the University of Texas System. The bill now goes to the House where Representative Clardy's identical legislation has already received a House hearing. There is over-

whelming support in both chambers for these bills. We both look forward to working together to ensure there is a seamless transition for SFA into the UT-System. This will be an exciting new era in SFA's 100 year history.

3. School Safety bill passes Senate

This week my bill, Senate Bill 11, passed the Senate unanimously. This bill increases school districts' school safety allotment and changes the formula to reflect a per campus funding basis. It includes \$230 million in increased funding for school safety, in addition to the \$600 million in

the supplemental appropriations act for school safety and security grants. The bill also creates regional school safety review teams that will provide technical assistance to school districts in their region and perform intruder detection audits of each campus in their region on an annual basis. In addition, the newly created Office of School Safety and Security at TEA will conduct in-depth vulnerability audits on campuses once every four years to ensure that all facility access controls, emergency operations procedures, and other school safety requirements are being followed. The office will also serve as a resource for districts relating to school safety and host a registry of approved school safety vendors. That office will be led by the Director of School Safety and Security who will be appointed by the governor and confirmed by the Senate. This bill creates a layered approach to school safety while maintaining local control for districts to assess their needs and choose their school safety solutions. I'm proud to have worked on this bill and I'd like to thank the Lt. Governor and the other members of the Senate for their input and support.

4. Law enforcement accreditation bill passes Senate

This week the Senate passed Senate Bill 267, by Senator Phil King, which would create a grant program to provide financial assistance to law enforcement agencies to achieve accreditation. The bill

would also require law enforcement agencies employing at least 20 peace officers to become and maintain accreditation. Investing in law enforcement agencies through a grant program will help professionalize the industry, create an environment that fosters better communication between local governments and law enforcement agencies, and ensure the highest standards of excellence in law enforcement. The bill would offer \$18 million in grants of up to \$30,000 through the Comptroller's Office. Agencies could be accredited through the Texas Police Chiefs Association Law Enforcement Agency Best Practices Accreditation Program, the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, Inc., the International Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators, the Sheriffs' Association of Texas, or another association identified by the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement.

5. Sales tax holiday

This weekend April 22-24 is the emergency preparation supplies sales tax holiday. Those supplies include portable generators, emergency ladders, hurricane shutters, axes, batteries, nonelectric can openers, carbon monoxide detectors, nonelectric coolers and ice chests, fire extinguishers, first aid kits, and more. There is no limit on the number of qualifying items you can purchase, and you do not need to give an exemption certificate to claim the exemption.

WHAT'S WORSE?

Sen. Carl Parker For The Record

As a longtime churchgoer from the time I could walk and follow my mother around, I have decided there is ample hypocrisy in our churches to the point that we don't necessarily need more, especially in the field of political leadership. Hypocrisy of course is simply advocating one thing and doing the opposite. Unfortunately, we the voters of the United States are letting too many politicians get by with doing what they claim should not be done, particularly in the area of moral conduct.

We should all ask ourselves, "Is it worse to have someone not read about immoral conduct, or participate in immoral conduct?" I think today according to today's news, we are faced with that exact circumstance.

Currently, a set of Republicans are hell bent on removing from libraries and schools any written materi-



Former State Senator Carl Parker

his celebrity to simply grab the private parts of females who attracted him and then passed off the comment as simply, "A locker room joke." The fact that he did and said these things is bad enough, but what's even worse is that while dozens of Republican elected officials are now trying to purge written materials of immoral material, they have not said a word about the conduct of Mr. Trump.

I recall a time when one of three or four absolute qualities needed to gain the trust of the voters was honesty; now here we are in Texas with our chief law enforcement officer, our attorney general, having been indicted for felony conduct and untried as well as accused by his own employees of serious crimes like bribery and yet he is elected overwhelmingly.

One of the examples of immorality swept under the rug is the information about Justice Clarence Thomas of the U. S. Supreme Court. He says of course he has been totally uninfluenced

al that mentions "dirty" words, segregation, something called CRT, or detailed descriptions of sexual acts. Unfortunately, too many of our elected folks are participating on a regular basis in the kinds of things they would have us ban from our libraries.

Our immediate past president, Mr. Trump, has paid out almost a quarter of a million dollars to cover up the fact that he had affairs with a Playboy bunny and a woman who does sexual films. Before his election, Mr. Trump boasted about how easy it was because of

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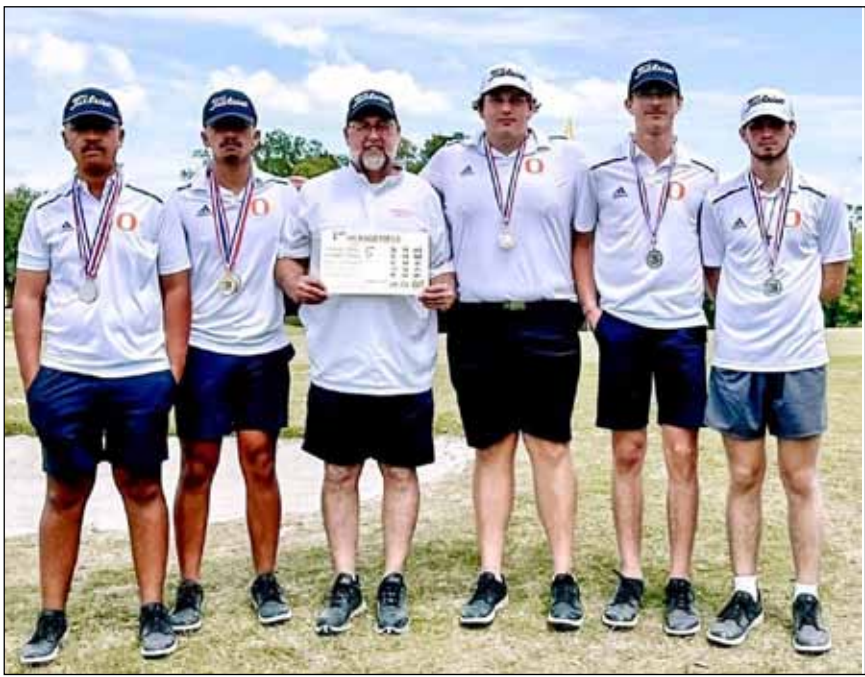
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Orangefield golfers returning to state



The Orangefield Bobcats are going back to State after a 1-2 finish by the Parks brothers in the Regional Tournament held in Brenham. Xander finished first shooting a 76-74 and Lincoln finished 2nd shooting a 75-78. The Bobcats team consisting of Xander Parks, Ethan Gunter, Reese Johnson, and Alex Montz, finished second overall as a team shooting 335-332 for a 2 day total of 667. The 3A State Tournament is May 22-23 at Jimmy Clay Course in Austin.

Entergy From Page 1

before closing a decade ago. It was vacant for several years before LSCO acquired the land and began demolishing the building two years ago.

The new academic building will have lecture classrooms, computer classrooms, science laboratories, student gathering places, and faculty rooms.

The state-supported college under Dr. Johnson has worked to help train people to meet the needs of the population and jobs across Southeast Texas. Those jobs include the fields of nursing, pharmacists, and medical technology, along with jobs in the petrochemical industry. The school has even developed a bus-driving course to help school districts get drivers.

Bridge City schools From Page 1

cover 14 routes. Of those students riding, two-thirds of them are in elementary and intermediate schools.

After an in-depth transportation study, the district identified major problems facing the bus program. The first one was keeping the number of licensed commercial bus drivers needed every day. The district also has had a steady increase in the number of students using the buses every day. Another problem the district has faced is that it is taking longer to travel each route because of the added numbers of children and increased traffic on roads.

BCISD is calling the different schedules "tiers" with Tier 1 being the high school and middle school times of 7:15 a.m. to 2:45 p.m. Tier 2 is the elementary school from 7:55 a.m. to 3:25 p.m. Tier 3 is the intermediate school from 8:35 a.m. to 4:05 p.m.

The district is currently calculating details for the bus routes and stops for the upcoming year. In addition to the start times, the schools will need to determine what times they will open for students to come inside.

State bill affects industrial contracts From Page 1

leaders and management," Kunst said. The corporate industries decided "We want a good place for our employees to live and this is the way to do it."

The Industrial District Contracts also allow the city to provide police and fire protection services to the plants. The money helps maintain city streets and services, along with parks and recreation for citizens who work at the plants.

The city's 2022-23 general operations budget has 24 percent of the income from the Industrial District Contracts, 21 percent from regular property taxes for homes and businesses, plus 17 percent from sales taxes, franchise taxes and other miscellaneous taxes. Other money for city operations comes from a variety of resources including grants, fees, and fines.

The city will begin budget workshops in the summer for the 2023-24 fiscal year, which will start October 1. The Texas Legislature meets until the end of May, unless a special session is called. City officials should know by summer whether or not they will have to deal with a loss of income from Industrial District Contracts.

A new, \$8.5 billion chemical plant is now under construction by Chevron Phillips. The city of Orange disannexed a large portion of the 2,000-acre site so the corporation could qualify for state economic development incentives. The city worked out a contract with the company that the plant will not pay the city for 10 years and after that, it will have in-lieu-of-taxes payments through an industrial district contract. If the state bill passes, Orange could lose that future income.

DuPont opened the first

petrochemical plant in Orange 75 years ago and had agreements with Orange. A new Orange city charter in 1960 forbid the city from annexing an existing plant, however a charter change election in 1996 eliminated that.

In recent years, the city has used a threat of annexation to negotiate tax rate percentages for plants in their extraterritorial jurisdiction. Although most of the city's industrial district contracts are with Chemical Row plants, other industrial sites also pay in-lieu-of-taxes under contracts.

A 1981 dispute between the cities of Bridge City, West Orange, and Orange left most of Chemical Row in the Orange extraterritorial Jurisdiction, but a small part of the old Firestone plant went to the Bridge City ETJ and a small part of the old DuPont plant went to West Orange ETJ.

Southeast Texas cities like Beaumont, Port Neches, and Nederland also have industrial district contracts for plants in their jurisdictions and the proposed legislation could also affect them.

Early voting

From Page 1

them.

The Vidor City Council has one open challenged position with Ward 6 candidates Victoria M. Jones, Kathryn Weldon, and Lisa M. Harris.

The Vidor ISD board has three positions with challengers. Position 4 candidates are Billy Jordan and Natalie Martinez Long. Brooke Hoosier Gilthorpe and Rodney White are running for Position 5. The Position 7 candidates are Michael Helms, Ben Howard, and Jeremiah Harrington.

The early voting hours will continue from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday. Extended early voting hours will be Monday, May 1, and Tuesday, May 2, from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

May 6 voting will be 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. at the Orange Public Library, St. Francis Catholic Church in Orange, the Salvation Army in Orange, the Bridge City Knights of Columbus Hall, and the Raymond Gould Community Center in Vidor. Under the county's new extended voting program, a registered voter may go to any polling site on Election Day, and not their assigned box as in previous years.

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<p>ALL-YOU-CAN-EAT CRAWFISH SAT 11AM-6PM</p>	<p>CRAWFISH EATING CONTEST CRAWFISH RACES CRAWFISH BOILING CONTEST</p>	<p>LEMONADE CORN DOGS</p>
<p><i>Saturday Live Music Line-Up</i></p>	<p>Junior LaCrosse</p>	<p>TEXAS BORN AMUSEMENTS TICKETS - \$1 each 24 TICKET - \$20 EACH RIDE TAKE 4-5 TICKETS EACH BOLETOS \$1 CADA UNO 24 ENTRADAS \$20 CADA VIAJE TOMA 4-5 ENTRADAS NO DEVOLUCION</p>
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From the Creaux's Nest

ENTERGY BREAKS GROUND AT BRIDGE CITY

The ground breaking Monday of Entergy's newest facility at Bridge City kicked off what is expected to be the biggest economic boom in Orange County since WWII. Gov. Greg Abbott, government and county officials took part in the ceremony. Even though the new plant, like the old one, is in Orange County, it is in the city of Port Arthur. The plant however is in the Bridge City school district. The project is estimated to be complete in 2026. Over 7,000 construction workers will build the new plant providing \$1.8 billion in economic development. Entergy Texas is committed to investing with local vendors to maximize the economic impact in the area. When complete, the plant will employ 25 permanent workers who will produce 1,215 megawatts of electricity per year, enough to power 230,000 homes. This is just the beginning of great changes that will grow the community to new heights and make Orange County a bright star on the Gulf Coast. It never again will be the quite community that we all know and love.

JOE BIDEN LAUNCHES 2024 REELECTION BID

President Joe Biden Tuesday announced he has launched a re-election campaign. Biden told supporters to "finish the job" in a long-expected online video announcement, arguing that there remains a "battle for the soul of America." He formally enters the race as the overwhelming favorite to secure the Democratic nomination and will face the winner of a contentious Republican primary field that includes former President Donald Trump.

CARLSON--LEMON FIRED BY FOX AND CNN

Fox News Monday parted ways with prime-time host Tucker Carlson, whose stew of grievances and political theories about Russia and the Jan. 6 insurrection had grown to define the network in recent years and influence GOP politics. The break comes less than a week after Fox agreed to pay \$787 million to settle a lawsuit with Dominion Voting Systems over the network's airing of false claims following the 2020 presidential election. Carlson was also recently named in a lawsuit by a former Fox producer who said the show had a cruel and misogynistic workplace. Meanwhile, CNN axed its own controversial anchor, Don Lemon, part of a one-day bloodletting in cable television news. "Tucker Carlson had become even bigger than Fox News," said Brian Stelter, who is writing an upcoming book about Fox, "Network of Lies." "His sudden ouster will have profound consequences for Fox News, for TV news and the Republican Party." In several messages, Carlson spoke candidly about his distaste for Trump at the time and his fear that the network was losing viewers among the former president's fans. He was also quoted using profane language to describe Sidney Powell, the Trump supporter and conservative attorney who was given airtime on other Fox shows to spread lies about Dominion, and called her a "psychopath." Carlson was recently named in a lawsuit filed by Abby Grossberg, a Fox News producer. Grossberg had gone to work for Carlson after leaving Maria Bartiromo's Fox show. Her lawsuit says that Grossberg learned "she had merely traded in one overtly misogynistic work environment for an even crueler one, this time, one where unprofessionalism reigned supreme, and the staff's distaste and disdain for women infiltrated almost every workday decision." On her first day of work at Carlson's program, Grossberg said in her lawsuit, she was met with large, blown-up photographs of Rep. Nancy Pelosi in a bathing suit with a plunging neckline. Fox News Tonight will air in Carlson's 8 p.m. Eastern primetime slot, hosted by a rotating array of network personalities, for the time being. Fox News, with its conservative viewership, will live to fight another day. In 2017, Bill O'Reilly's reign atop cable news ranking came to an end and Carlson quickly filled the void. The same audience that propelled Carlson to fame will likely usher in the next pundit.

TURNING BACK THE HANDS OF TIME 10 Years Ago-2013

We got the list down to three candidates but in the end the choice was very obvious. Over the years, we honored citizens in many different vocations, school teachers, administrators, law enforcement, mayors, city officials and others. We were long over due to honor this year's recipient, Judge Carl K. Thibodeaux. For many years, he has led Commissioner's Court, often through some trying times. Over the years, every election has brought new commissioners for the Judge to work with. He always saw to it that it was a smooth transition. Several officials who worked beside him say how fortunate we were to have Judge Thibodeaux in a leadership role when hurricanes Rita and Ike struck. He not only guided us through

the vast destruction but squeezed every nickel available from the federal government to rebuild our structures, roads and repair of damages. No county judge in our history has done more, built more, for less money from the tax payers. We are proud to have him as our "2013 Person of the Year."****On Thursday, April 25, the George W. Bush Presidential Library will open at SMU. All living presidents will attend the dedication. Presidents Jimmy Carter, Geo. H. Bush, Bill Clinton, Geo. W. and Obama.****Former Olympic boxing hopeful Oshanique Foster, of Orange, has signed a deal to be training with the Mayweather crew.****We visited with Quincy Procell who is recovering from back surgery. The procedure involved more than he expected. It's been a rough recovery. According to Quincy, he couldn't have made it without the services of Sara Peterson, Barbara Murr and the staff with ILC Assisted Living. "I was helpless and hopeless and those wonderful ladies got me through it."****Despite having a 54 to 46 vote to pass background checks, the measure failed in the Senate. It was the first gun bill since Newtown. To pass the bill required 60 votes out of 100 senators. Both Texas senators, Cornyn and Cruz, voted against background checks.****Orange boxer Cody Richard is 13-0 as a pro boxer after a second round knockout of Andre Lopez Saturday at Evangeline Downs Casino.****Former West Orange -Stark and Northwestern star, Roy Locks Jr., was hired by Central High Coach Toby Forman to be his defensive coordinator.****Kree Harrison, our girl on American Idol, after last week has her back against the wall. After coming in first or second all season, she was fourth last week, mostly because of song selections, I believe if Kree makes this week's cut she will likely win it all. Her voice is the best but she needs everyone's vote.****Since we visited last week after the Boston Marathon bombing, one brother was killed, the other will face the death penalty in Federal Court. We also had the fertilizer explosion in West, killing 13, injuring many. Most of the structures were destroyed. Willie Nelson will hold a benefit concert for the stricken town. Willie was raised and has a home five miles away at Abbott.

20 Years Ago-2003

The Bridge City council is honoring Steve Worster with a proclamation that recognizes April 29th as "Steve Worster Day," the same day the Bridge City High and University of Texas All American is being inducted into the "Cotton Bowl" Hall of Fame. In 1965- 1966, Steve was the talk around the state. All football fans knew where Bridge City was because of Worster's exploits on the high school football team. Bridge City went to the state finals in 1965 and won the state championship in 1966, four years before the city was incorporated. The University of Texas consensus All American was on the cover of Sports Illustrated in 1970. Texas went on to be national champions that year. Coach Darrell Royal recruited Worster but it was Asst. Coach Emory Bellard, using his son, who developed the Wish Bone offense in his back yard, especially designed for Worster. He made it famous. (Editor's note: The number 30 Steve wore at Bridge City has been retired 57 years. (Steve passed away in 2022 at age 73).****Elaina Clinton, a freshman, is the youngest of a staff of pitchers on the Bridge City Lady Cards 12-0 team. Pitchers include Laura Gremillion and Meagan Goduin. Elaina, in her first full game pitching debut, pitched a perfect game shutting down a good Kountze team 15-0.****Bridge City police sting halts burglars. After getting a tip, Bridge City detective Jason Ashworth approached Chief Steve Faircloth about setting up a sting. After at least 14 business burglaries, Ashworth and four other officers, Maj. Joey Hargrave, patrolmen Frank Carpenter, David Soileau and Shannon Meaux busted three suspects. Merchant, age 19, Grasty, 26 and Purkey, 18. Chief Faircloth praised the officers and said 99 percent of the stolen items were recovered. "This is real police work," Faircloth concluded. ****Randy Jarrel bought a prize chicken at the Mauriceville 4-H auction. Joel Steirman made another kid happy when he bought his goat. "Buckshot" and Johnny Montagne were the big buyers. They claimed Bobby Cormier dodged the auction and action by attending his Orangefield class reunion. They were going to buy stock in his name but lost their nerve. (Editor's note: "Buckshot" is gone now and he's still missed. What a fine guy.)

50 Years Ago-1973

Former Bridge City High School linebacker and son of Coach Chief Wilson, takes a bride. Pretty Debbie Berry and Rusty Wilson wed after his dad signed the okay. Brad Roy was best man. **** Joe Burke likes high school track. He caught the 4-A regional meet in Houston Friday night, raced to Conroe Saturday for the 3-A competition. Joe says Bridge City's David Guidry is too short to jump hurdles. All he does is beat people on sheer guts and determination. Joe watched Dave advance to the State Finals. Guidry will also be part of the state bound mile relay team of Bo Worrell, Larry Hagler and Mark Truncale.****Local hurlers Dennis Duhon and Doug Patterson have received their assignments. Duhon will join St. Petersburg, of the Florida State League; Patterson launches the campaign with Stockton, of the California League. Both pitchers are products of Stark High.****West Orange is sending seven athletes to the state track meet in Austin. They are high jumper, Waymon Sibley; long jump, Roy Williams; miler, Miron Gautier; sprinter, Randall Teate; 440 yarder relay quartet consists of Sibley, Williams, Steve Fisher, Teats and Kenneth Britton.

A FEW HAPPENINGS

Saturday ended up a pretty spring day for outdoor activities like Eco Fest at Shangri La with the famous butterfly release. Lots of parents and grandparents took their little ones out for the event. Vanessa Buford took Anna Belle, who turned 11, a couple of days earlier, to the festival. Anna Belle's grandmother, Sandra Cash, was there giving away free small trees to plant. Sandra is the unofficial "Tree Lady" of Orange County.***Rebecca Willey took curly-head-

ed daughter Willow to the event.***Amy Bonneaux was there with her little girl.***Melissa and Elvis Rushing enjoyed their time with grands Emma and Milla.***The Ragsdale family turned out to watch baby Janie Nash get her first butterfly. The group included grandparents Randy and Paula Ragsdale, plus Aunt Rebekah Ragsdale. Of course mom, Sarah Ragsdale Nash, was with the family.***Other grandparents spotted strolling the gardens included Brandy and Roderick Robertson with toddler Zayvin.***Tony and Nancy Dallas accompanied little Drue to release her butterfly. Dad Jack Dallas was out playing minor league baseball, but Drue's mom, Reid was there, along with aunt and uncle, Leigh Anne and Broderick Harrell. The next day, the Harrells had a gender reveal party to announce they are expecting a little girl, Adeline Honey Harrell. ****More big news was coming this week from Sydney Brittain and Cody Carr. They became officially engaged at a beach setting in the Turks and Caicos. Of course, she's now got some finger bling.****Latouia DuBois is also showing off a big sparkle on her finger, thanks to an early Mother's Day gift from husband Aaron DuBois.****The Orange Lions Club hosted the District Conference Saturday at the county expo center, bringing lots of out-of-towners to Orange County. Local Lions member Chris Kovatch has been serving as district governor and brought the convention here. Of course Stump and Dayle Weatherford were there. Stump is "Mr. Lions" around the OC. Kovatch gave a special service award to Benitris Edwards, who is one of the top volunteers for a number of groups. Her energy to help others keeps on going and going. Other local Lions included Tiffany Brown-Bell and Rachel Hannan. Orange Mayor Larry Spears Jr. was invited to give remarks to the convention.****Birthdays this past week included Ann Mooney turning 80. Christian Simonton is now 28 and Zoe Winn became 15. Mary Hardin Baylor star football player and former WOS Mustang KJ Miller hit 24. Other birthdays included Shana Ivey, Brandi Griggs, Richard Spector, Bill Nickum, April Hargrove King, Lisa Petry, Orange City Councilor David Bailey, and Dr. Amy Townsend.****Gary and Allisha Bonneaux celebrated their 39th wedding anniversary and Kade and Kirstie Parkhurst married six years. Other wedding anniversaries this week were Rex and Debbie Gibson, and Melanie and Lannie Claybar. Reanna Lynch and Linda Mathis tied the knot and are now Linda and Reanna Mathis.****Congratulations to Bridge City seniors Grant Hale and Amaris Larkin who were named Male and Female Athletes of the Year. The Cardinal Pride award went to Shaun Hallman. The awards were presented at the Bridge City All-Sports Banquet.****Saturday, April 29, is the day two fine men died. Both community caring folks; both lived a long life and passed away at age 93. Wilson "King" Dunn died in 2012. He was a longtime post master at Mauriceville.***Donald Cole, a master plumber and former county commissioner, died in 2019. We're proud to have known them.

BREAUX BIRTHDAYS

A few folks celebrating their birthdays in the next few days. April 26: Celebrating are Susanne Parker, Luke Domas, Stephen Russell, Christi Goodyear and Donna Lee.****April 27: Gus Harris celebrates today along with John Applebach, Mike Cain, Chelsea Ballard.****April 28: Peggy Dunbar and Josh Blanchard are a year older today.****April 29: Happy Birthday to Kelsea Burns, Jimmie Simmons, Judy DeCuir, Tommy Bourgeois and Drew Wappler.****April 30: Paula Johnson, Alissa Williams, Dr. Nina Leifeste, Harold Haymon, Janice Gooch, Jenni Barrow, Kim Izer, and Samantha Ziller. This is also Willie Nelson's 90th birthday.****May 1: Chad Prouse, Jo Lynn Salazar, Flo Arnold, Carolyn Doiron, Frank Carpenter, Christina Johnston, and Jason Mayfield are all a year older.****May 2: Celebrating their big day today are Mary Stewart, Megan Cornwell and Glenda Dailey. (To announce birthdays or anniversaries call 409-886-7183 or email news@therecordlive.com.)

CAJUN STORY OF THE WEEK

We got a note from Cuzan Sostan, wit an update about Aunt Maude Breaux, wat turn 86 las week. She also went on trial. It went like dis. Da defense lawyer ask Aunt Maude, "Tell us in you own words wat happened on da first of April dis year."

Aunt Maude say, "It's like dis. I was sitting on my porch at sundown, enjoying da nice spring weather wen a young man comes creeping on da porch and sat nex to me." "Wat happen after he sat down?" axe da lawyer. "He started rubbing my thigh," answered Aunt Maude. "Did you stop him?" axe da lawyer. "No, I didn't," say Aunt Maude. "Why not?" axe da lawyer. "It felt good," said Aunt Maude. "No one do da since my Felix pass away turdy years ago." "Wat happen next?" axe da lawyer. Aunt Maude looked at Judge Boudreaux and answer, "It's like dis you honor, I was feeling so spic me, dat I jus lay down on dat swing and said to him do wit me wat you want." "Well, did he?" axe the lawyer. "Hell no, he jus yell, 'April Fool'" and dat's wen I shot dat little coon ass, me." Cuzz, Aunt Maude beat dat rap. I got to go to da store for Sugar Bee. Tell everyone hello.

You Cuzz,
Sostan

C'EST TOUT IT'S CRAWFISH TIME...FUN FACTS

There are more than 500 species of crawfish found throughout the world, and more than 350 of those live in the United States. Of these, only two species are actually harvested and eaten.***Most crawfish in the U.S. grows to 3-4 inches, there are species Down Under in Australia that grow to 15.5 inches and weigh more than 8-pounds, and no, they are not lobsters.***Crawfish come in a variety of colors. The most common is red but crawfish also come in blues, whites, greens, and yellow. When cooked, however, all crawfish turn the color red.***Crawfish live on every continent in the world except for Antarctica. Now you know.****My time is up for another week. I thank you for yours. Take care and God bless.

Deaths & Memorials

Stacy Lynn Cook, 54, League City

Stacy Lynn Cook of League City, Texas died on April 23, 2023 surrounded by her family. She was 54.

Stacy was born on June 22, 1968 in Orange, Texas. She was the eldest child of a large number of siblings. A wonderful daughter, granddaughter, sister, aunt, niece and friend, she was loved by everyone who knew her.

Stacy was baptized and made her First Communion at St. Mary Catholic Church in Orange, Texas. She graduated from Little Cypress-Mauriceville High School in Orange with honors. She received her Finance degree summa cum laude from Lamar University in Beaumont.

After working in an accounting firm for over a decade, and other challenging jobs, Stacy became the accountant for a very large marina in Seabrook, Texas. She quickly was promoted with the company until she became the General Manager. Stacy managed the employees as well as the financials of the business growing it into one of the biggest and best marinas in the Kemah and Seabrook area.

She had a special role as godmother to nephew Keegan and niece Alexis; and, loved being a special aunt to Justin, Hannah, Mikayla, Ryker and Ayden. Stacy never had children of her own but at age 13 she became godmother to her younger cousin, Wendy Kinchen Savarino, and she became second mom to Wendy for life. Also, for nine years, she loved children Garrett Priddy and Renee Priddy. She helped them grow and was very proud of them.

Stacy loved the Dallas Cowboys with a passion. She truly understood football. Last year, while watching a fateful game, she texted her mom and said, "Is it wrong that I sprinkled holy water on myself and asked for the Lord to help the Cowboys win today?"

Stacy loved to cook. She always made her famous chicken and dumplings, deviled eggs, and her mom's cornbread dressing and gravy. She managed to do this for Thanksgiving 2022 in a wheelchair.

Stacy loved life! She really lived! She packed so much life into her nearly fifty-five years. She traveled, chased her dreams, went sky diving and snow skiing, and worked in a profession she loved. Starting at an early age of only six months old, she headed to Japan with her mom to meet her dad who was in the military there. They lived off-base and learned Japanese.

She was a bubbly person who loved nature and the outdoors, swimming, boating, red roses, and animals. She was a gifted speed reader and always had a love for reading, games, cross-words, and puzzles. She had a love for music of all kinds and loved playing the Encore game with all of the Lawrence family in which she was one of fifty-two first cousins. The most valuable thing you could give Stacy was your time.



Stacy Cook

For 7 1/2 years, she battled cancer, many surgeries including two hip implants, and the loss of her left leg. She proudly showed off her new prosthetic leg and worked hard to master the use of it while still working. Through all of these illnesses, Stacy tackled each with grace, dignity, courage and a smile for everyone. She had lots of humorous shirts made especially for amputees. Stacy was a true inspiration to all.

Stacy is preceded in death by her dad, Jimmie Chris Cook, Sr., her grandparents, Dewey "Buck" and Mabel Wingate Lawrence, and Eddie and Noreen Cook; her nieces Caydance Cook and Jordan Wilson, her dear uncles Dr. Darrell Lawrence, Timothy Lawrence, and Michael Cook; and, first cousins Jodi Kinchen Spiers, Aaron Calvert and Alex Cook.

Stacy is survived by her mom and stepdad, Maureen Lawrence Shupp and Mike Shupp of Orange, her eight siblings Jimmie Cook and wife, Vanessa, of Houston, Tx; Derek Shupp and wife, Jessica, of New Braunfels Tx; Michelle Cook Icton and husband, Darren, of Prosper, Tx; Tim Cook and wife, Cyndi, of Mont Belvieu, Tx; Becky Cook Nations and husband, Mike, of Santa Fe, Tx; twins Morgan Shupp and Michael Shupp of Orange, Tx; and, Stephanie Shupp Wilson and husband, Robert, of Canyon Lake, Tx. She is also survived by her nieces and nephews, Justin and Hannah Cook, Keegan and Alexis Icton, Mikayla Nations, Ryker and Ayden Cook, Presley and Hudson Shupp, and Hannah and Luke Wilson, and, an extended family of aunts, uncles, and cousins in the Lawrence and Cook family.

Stacy loved her miniature dachshund, Maze, who was as feisty as Stacy. Stacy's fighting spirit, fierce love, and tender concern for those around her will be dearly missed. Stacy had an infectious laugh and smile that drew people to her. Stacy will have ballerina slippers on so she can dance in heaven.

One of the best things that has ever happened to us is now a special star that shines brightly above us.

Visitation and family remembrances will be from 10:00 to 11:00 am on Thursday, April 27, 2023 at St. Francis Church in Orange, Texas with rosary taking place at 11:00 am and a Mass of Christian Burial following at 11:30. Officiating will be Reverend Francis Conroy. Burial will be private at St. Mary's Catholic Cemetery.

Serving as honorary pallbearers will be Jimmie Cook, Derek Shupp, Tim Cook, Michael L. Shupp, Darren Icton, Mike Nations, Justin Cook, and Keegan Icton.

The family wishes to send special thanks to the ICU staff at UTMB, League City, for their many weeks of excellent care of Stacy.

Mike Anderson, 59, Orange

Michael Hays Anderson, 59, of Orange, Texas, passed away on April 20, 2023, with his daughter by his side.

Born in Houston, Texas, on February 2, 1964, he was the son of John Hays Anderson and Nancy Lou Leese Anderson. Mike had an incredible sense of humor, always joking or pulling a prank on someone. He loved children, especially his four grandkids, whom he proudly passed that sense of humor down to. Mike could usually be found crawling around on the floor with them or hiding behind corners to jump out and scare them. He was a hardworking man, spending many years working as a plumber A-1 Peterson Plumbing and his free time working on the vehicles he was endlessly ordering parts for, which he enjoyed doing more than anything.



Mike Anderson

Mike was a great father, grandfather, and friend, always there to help anyone who needed it. He was dearly loved and will be deeply missed by all who knew him, especially his "second family" Marvin Schatte and children Logan Schatte and wife, Randi, and their children, and Cody Schatte and wife, Jordyn.

Mike is preceded in death by his parents, John and Nancy Anderson.

He is survived by his loving daughter, Taylor Leigh Anderson and husband, Anthony Wardell; his grandchildren, Devan Anderson, Kinlee McNamara, Bowen Lucas, and Ava Wardell; his brothers, Bill Anderson, Chris Anderson, and Tony Anderson; his sister, Nan Anderson; as well as many nieces, nephews and other loving friends and family.

Annual Depot Day festival May 6

Staff Report For The Record

The annual Depot Day festival to support the historic Orange Train Depot is getting help this year from the Little Cypress-Mauriceville High building trades class.

The students in teacher Matthew Huckaby's class made wooden cutouts of a miniature train that will allow families at the festival to take photographs as they look out the windows of the train. Carrie Woliver, founder of the non-profit Friends of the Orange De-

pot, said local artist Lauren Leigh will paint the train in time for Depot Day on Saturday, May 6.

Woliver said Alicia Booker, president of the Friends board of directors, thought a train for posing would be a good idea. Board member Paul Burch, who also is a member of the Orange City Council, contacted Huckaby at LC-M, where Burch graduated. She said the building trades teacher and students enthusiastically volunteered for the project.

LC-M students working on the train cutouts were Marshall Oldbury, Zane

Lopez, Richard Ammean, Blake Huckaby, Blake Kay, and Alec Westbrooks.

Depot Day will be from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday, May 6, at the grounds of the restored early 20th Century Southern Pacific train depot in the 1100 block of Green Avenue. The family-festival is free with minimum charges for some rides. Vendors and food trucks will participate. The annual fundraiser helps keep up with the maintenance and care of the depot-museum.

Related article & photo Page 5B

'First Saturday' FBC giveaways

First Saturday at First Baptist Church is scheduled for Saturday, May 6 at 10:00 am until 12 noon. This month we will give away fun items for children to take while traveling on vacation, such as coloring books and crayons, crossword puzzles, card games, children magazines, sand buckets,

etc. Snacks will be available for wiggly, bored children as well as a children's Bible for mom or dad to read aloud. Look for the blue canopy in the church parking lot at 200 West Roundbunch Rd in Bridge City and for the sign offering prayer for discouraged and worried adults.

BC Library hosts support group for Widow/Widowers

The Bridge City Public Library will continue its Widows/Widowers group after the success of its opening meeting. The group's purpose is to provide an opportunity for those who often lead lonely lives after the death of a spouse to have an outlet to share with others in the same situation. It is not a dating group but a place to gather, share with others and to play games as entertainment. Snacks and coffee will be provided.

We do require participants to call the library the Monday before the Friday of the meeting so that we can know how many to plan for.

Planned meetings will be from 10 am to noon on the following Fridays, May 5, May 19, June 2, June 16 and July 7 and July 21. If you have any questions, call the library at 409-735-4242. We look forward to getting to know you.

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Notice is hereby given that original Letters Testamentary for the Estate of **JACKIE SUE MAYS**, Deceased, were issued on the 02/11/2022, in Cause No. P19254, pending in the County Court at Law of Orange County, Texas, to: **TREY PAUL RHODES**.

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

TREY PAUL RHODES
3557 Carpenter Circle
Orange, TX 77630

DATED the 11th day of February, 2022.

Jim Sharon Bearden
JimSharon Bearden

Attorney for:
Trey Paul Rhodes
Bar No.: 01983000
116 Border Street
Orange, TX 77630
Phone: (409)883-4501
Fax: (409)883-0259
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ACROSS

- Attired
- *Alabama, for short
- Type of pit, at a concert
- *Nevada's "biggest little city in the world"
- October birthstone
- Don't do this to words?
- Elusive Himalayan
- Poet Sandburg
- Come to pass
- *Home of the Bourbon Trail
- Not us
- Winds to a ship captain
- *Dish popular in the 50th state
- *Largest state, by area
- Dick ____ of "Be-witched"
- Tombstone acronym
- Spews
- Succulent medicinal plant
- Cast member
- Greek "L"
- Gibson garnish

DOWN

- Have a bawl
- Potato's soup partner
- Initial stake
- Happenings
- Lickety-split
- Shenanigans
- Friend in war
- *State with longest freshwater shoreline
- It's enough?
- Pond gunk
- Joaquin Phoenix
- 2013 movie
- Relating to eye

*Michigan's " ____ City"

- Selfish one
- Pavlova's step
- Middle East natives
- Permissible
- In a fitting way
- Half a ticket
- Sober Ness
- Not a soul (2 words)
- Operatic voice
- *Home to Arches National Park
- Tucker of "Modern Family"
- *State with pan-handle
- Round openings
- School of thought suffix
- Google search category
- Often-missed humor
- Hide craftsman
- Little one
- Lowest deck on a ship
- Timeline divisions
- His was a merry old soul
- Tiny bottle
- *"Field of Dreams" movie setting
- Port in Yemen
- Tax pro
- Bit of work

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Orangefield ready to clinch third straight title

DAN PERRINE
Orange County Sports
For The Record

For the third straight season the Orangefield Bobcats are the champions of their district in baseball. After capturing their Class 4A district title the last two seasons the Bobcats won the District 22-3A baseball championship last week.

Orangefield took a decisive step closer to the district title on Tuesday, April 17, with a 10-0 win over the Hardin Hornets at Paul Cormier Field. The victory raised the Bobcats to 12-0 in district to clinch the outright title with no chance of another team even tying Orangefield for first place.

Senior Morgan Sampson got the starting assignment on the mound for the Bobcats and he responded pitching three scoreless innings allowing three hits, no walks, and striking out seven to get the win for Orangefield. Colton Myers pitched two innings with four strikeouts, and Garrett Rawls threw one inning walking one and striking out one Hornet batter to complete the shutout.

Orangefield opened the scoring in the bottom of the first inning. Leadoff hitter Logan Cheek was hit by a pitch, was sacrificed to second by Cameron Dearing, and scored on a base hit to right by Kyle Michael.



Jason Bodin is on the hill for the Orangefield Bobcats. RECORD PHOTO: Darren Hoyland



Gavin Pollock nails a base hit for the Orangefield Bobcats. RECORD PHOTO: Darren Hoyland

Two runs were added in the third by Orangefield. With one out Dearing hit a sinking liner to left that skipped by the Hardin outfielder allowing Cameron to reach second base on the single and an error. Michael walked and then the Bobcats pulled off a double steal with Dearing taking third and Michael going to second. Sampson hit a long fly to left to bring home Dearing after he tagged up to make the score 2-0 for Orangefield.

Rusten Traxler walked

ORANGEFIELD Page 2B

Lady Bears claim district softball title



The Little Cypress Mauriceville Lady Bears celebrate their district softball championship after winning the clinching game at Silsbee. Lady Bears claim district title in softball.

DAN PERRINE
For The Record

Little Cypress Mauriceville won this season's District 19-4A softball championship. The Lady Bears completed their district schedule with a record of 11-1 finishing one game ahead of their cross-county rivals the Bridge City Lady Cardinals.

A discouraging report came from doctors early last week concerning Bridge City's number one pitcher Carson Fall. The doctors indicated Fall has an injury to her right arm which is her pitching arm and the injury will keep Carson from throwing for three months.

Disappointing results followed last Tuesday when the Lady Cardinals lost their game at Jasper 9-8 in nine innings without the services of Fall. Cambree LaComb and Kaydence Corkran pitched instead and did strike out ten Lady Dawgs.

Nicole Sasser of the Lady Cardinals had a big game with her bat going four for five driving in one run and scoring twice. Jasper scored two runs in

the bottom of the ninth to hand Bridge City the tough loss.

The Lady Cardinals rebounded big against West Orange Stark on Friday winning 15-0 in four innings when the 15-run rule was invoked. Kaydence Corkran allowed only one hit in pitching the abbreviated shutout and striking out six Lady Mustangs.

Leadoff batter Haley Munoz went three for four and drove in three runs for the Lady Cardinals. Nicole Sasser, Marlie Strong, and Makenna Carey each had two hits in the game. Nataleigh Sims had the lone hit for West Orange Stark.

Little Cypress Mauriceville closed the district schedule like champions walloping West Orange Stark 21-1 and then slamming Silsbee 15-1. The Lady Bears won both games on the road.

Sophomore Ella Stephenson got the pitching win on Tuesday against WOS. Stephenson threw all four innings giving up just one hit and striking

LCM LADY Page 2B



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Orangefield Bobcats From Page 1B



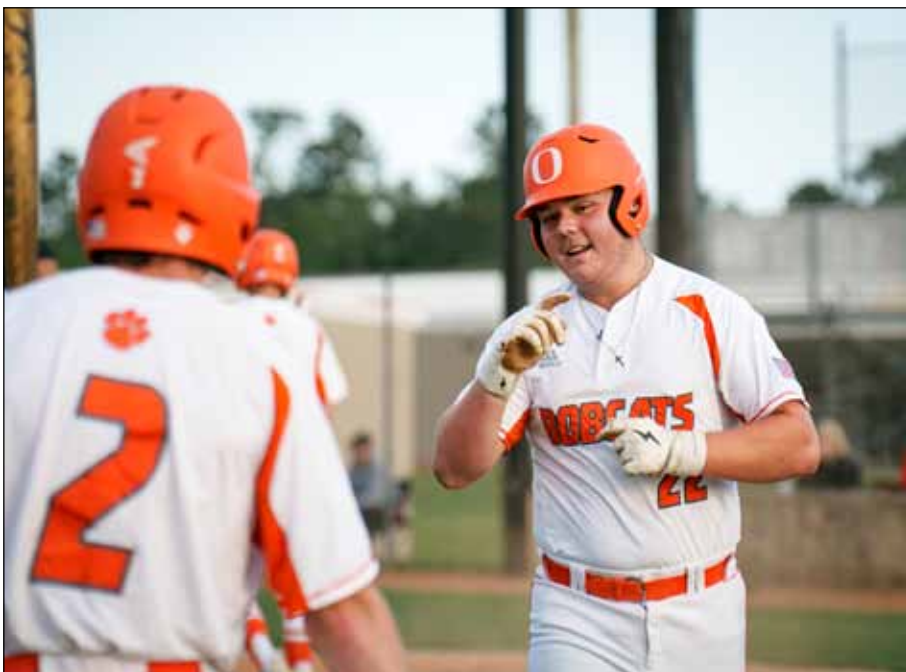
Jason Bodin drove in four runs and Morgan Sampson pitched three shut-out innings to get the win in Orangefield's 10-0 victory over Hardin.
RECORD PHOTO: Dan Perrine



Bobcat seniors Rusten Traxler and Gavin Pollock both drove in two runs in the first inning of Orangefield's 12-0 win over Kountze.
RECORD PHOTO: Dan Perrine



The Orangefield Bobcats celebrated Senior Night on Monday. Departing Orangefield Bobcat seniors are (left to right) Gavin Pollock #22; Morgan Sampson #18; Jason Bodin #17 and Rusten Traxler #9. The teammates are seen with their families.
RECORD PHOTO: DARREN HOYLAND



Orangefield senior Gavin Pollock is met by teammates at homeplate after rounding the bases.
RECORD PHOTO: DARREN HOYLAND

before Jason Bodin singled to left center. Michael came home on Bodin's hit to put the Bobcats up 3-0 after three innings. Michael started a rally in the fifth with a leadoff stand-up double. Gavin Pollack smacked a base hit to left that Michael could only advance one base to third. Bodin drove in Kyle from third with his second hit of the game. Mason Houghton

pinch ran for Pollack and scored on a sacrifice fly by Caleb Fregia to give Orangefield a 5-0 lead through the fifth. The Bobcats iced the game in the sixth inning scoring five runs. Cheek got things started with a single that glanced off the Hardin pitcher. Dearing and Michael singled to score the first run, Sampson was hit by a pitch, Bodin knocked in

two more runs with his third hit of the game, and a Hardin error allowed the last two runs to come home invoking the 10-run rule and giving the game to Orangefield.

The Bobcats played Kountze on Monday of this week and won again in shutout fashion 12-0 in five innings at Paul Cormier Field. The Bobcats improved to 13-0 in district with only a game played on Tuesday, April 25, at home against the Anahuac Panthers before the playoffs start next week.

Pitching was again dominant for Orangefield as starter Jason Bodin and reliever Garrett Rawls retired all fifteen Kountze batters they faced during the five innings in an abbreviated perfect game. Bodin struck out six Lions in three and two third innings and Rawls registered a strikeout to end the game.

The Bobcat bats got the offense going early when the first seven hitters reached base. All seven eventually crossed the plate with Rusten Traxler and Gavin Pol-

lock both delivering two-run hits in the seven-run first inning.

Four more runs scored in the second as Bodin and Caleb Fregia produced run scoring singles. Matt Johnson hit a sacrifice fly to drive in the third run and Bodin scored the fourth run on a throwing error following the catch to put Orangefield up 11-0 after two innings. The final run was scored by Fregia who reached on an error to leadoff the fourth inning. Camden Fountain singled to center to drive him home.

Orangefield Coach Tim Erickson emphasized his goal now is for the Bobcats to be playing their best ball with the playoffs only a week away. "We want to be playing our best baseball going into next week. I thought we played well against Hardin. we played a bit better tonight against Kountze, and we want to play little bit better in the final game against Anahuac. It's good to see that this time of the year," Erickson confirmed.

"We want to be playing our best baseball going into next week."

LCM Lady Bears From Page 1

out five Lady Mustangs. Lady Bear Lexis Moss let her bat do the talking with four hits including two triples and three runs driven home. Keylie Washburn had three hits and scored three runs while Jillian Brown got two hits with one of them a double and brought four Lady Bears in to score. Friday against Silsbee Tessa Erickson was the pitcher for LCM. Erickson gave up two hits and had four strikeouts in the five inning victory for the Lady Bears. Little Cypress Mauriceville pounded out fifteen hits as all the Lady Bear starters got at least one base knock in the game. Six of the hits were doubles. Ava White and Ella Stephenson both scored three runs for the Lady Bears. Eden Frenzel had three runs batted in to be tops in that category during the rout. At 26-6 on the season the Little Cypress Mauriceville Lady Bears enter the playoffs on a five game winning streak. The opening opponent for LCM in the post season is Hardin-Jefferson which finished fourth place in its district. The Lady Bears play the Lady Hawks in game one of their series at Lamar University in Beaumont on Thursday, April 27, at 5:00 PM. Game two will be Friday night in Woodville at 7:30 PM. A third game if necessary would be played Saturday with the location and other details to be determined by a coin flip after game two.



Starting pitcher Carson Fall of the Bridge City Lady Cardinals will miss the entire post season with an arm injury that will keep her from throwing for three months.
RECORD PHOTO: Dan Perrine

The Bridge City Lady Cardinals are 23-13 on the season. They play the Huffman Lady Falcons in their bi-district playoff. The first two games of the series will be played at Huffman on Friday, April 28. The first game will start at 5:00 PM and the second game will begin at 7:00 PM. A third game if necessary will be played Saturday in Bridge City at 11:00 AM.

TPWD: Managed Lands Deer Program enrolment now open

AUSTIN — Enrollment in the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department's Managed Lands Deer Program (MLDP) is now open for the 2023-24 hunting season. Open enrollment for the MLDP Conservation Option runs April 2 through June 15; the Harvest Option opens May 1 and ends Sept. 1. MLDP is a program intended to foster and support sound management and stewardship of native wildlife and habitats on private lands in Texas. Deer harvest is an important aspect of habitat management and conservation. Landowners enrolled in either the MLDP Harvest Option or Conservation Option can take advantage of extended seasons and property-specific customized harvest opportunities. Fees are charged for each enrollment option. Enrollments and fee payments

can all be made through the Land Management Assistance online system. Payments can be made by credit card only. The online system will require landowners hoping to enroll to create an account and draw a property boundary. An email address is required for the landowner and any designated agents the landowner may assign to the account. Enrollment fees for each MLDP option are as follows:

- Conservation Option:
 - Standalone Property: \$300 for the first management unit, \$30 for each additional management unit
 - Aggregate Site: \$300
- Wildlife Management Cooperative member: \$30 per management unit
- Harvest Option:
 - Standalone Property: \$30 per management unit

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Orangefield Lady Bobcats seal District Championship

DANPERRINE
For The Record

The Orangefield Lady Bobcats won the softball district championship on Tuesday. The Lady Bobcats defeated the Hardin Lady Hornets in three innings 15-0 at Paul Cormier Field to clinch first place in District 22-3A.

Orangefield Coach Rebekah Ragsdale was excited for her Lady Bobcats to be district champions. "It's awesome! Considering we missed the playoffs a year ago and then to be able to turn it around and do this it's something super special especially with the group that we have. They're bought in, and you can tell from just day one to today it's a completely different team, and they get all the credit," Ragsdale responded.

Pitcher Abigail Curphey had another strong showing in the circle for the Lady Bobcats pitching an abbreviated shutout. Curphey gave up one hit, one walk, and struck out one during the game which was shortened to three innings because of the 15-run rule.

Every Lady Bobcat



Tessa Erickson pitched a one-hitter for the Lady Bears against Jasper and centerfielder Ava Wright made two great catches to preserve the shutout.

RECORD PHOTO: Dan Perrine

reached base at least once by either walking or getting a hit. The top of the batting order Aubree Beck reached base all three times she batted as did Harleigh Rawls and Emily Meyers for Orangefield.

Senior Rylee Dougay singled with two outs to start a five-run rally in the second inning. Alysén Vincent and Charlee Sanches had clutch hits to drive in Lady Bobcats that put Orangefield up 7-0 af-



The Lady Bobcats celebrate after nailing down the district championship.

RECORD PHOTO: Dan Perrine

ter two innings. Emily Meyers singles for the Lady Bobcats in their win over Hardin

Meyers led off the third inning for Orangefield with a walk. It was the start of thirteen Lady Bobcats coming to the plate in the inning. Eight runs scored the last coming on a bases loaded walk to Abby Broussard forcing in the final run to invoke the

15-run rule for Orangefield's victory. The champion Lady Bobcats are actually a fairly young group of players. Coach Ragsdale elaborated, "These five freshmen have had a lot of playing time. So, it's only up from here. I can only imagine in the next three years, next four seasons, what this group will do."

The first round playoff opponent for Orangefield

will be the Central Heights Blue Devils out of Nacogdoches. The Lady Bobcats will play a best of three series with the Blue Devils. A doubleheader is scheduled for Wednesday, April 26, at Jasper with game one at 5:00 PM and game two to follow at 7:00 PM. A third game if necessary would not be played until Monday, May 1, at 6:00 PM also in Jasper.

District 19-4A baseball season wraps up this week

DANPERRINE
Orange County Sports
For The Record

This is the final week of the District 19-4A baseball season for the Bridge City Cardinals, the Little Cypress Mauriceville Bears, and the West Orange Stark Mustangs. The state playoffs start next week.

Of those three county teams Bridge City has the best chance to make the post season. The Cardinals pulled off a sweep of the Jasper Bulldogs last week to improve their district record to 7-3 and hold second place in district one game behind the first place Vidor Pirates with two games to play.

Bridge City went to Jasper on Friday and won the second game of the series 7-1. Braylen Collins got the win on the mound for the Cardinals with reliever Landon Reeves closing out the victory. The two pitchers combined to allow only three hits to the Bulldogs.

Collins added some pop with his bat going two for four with a double and three runs batted in. Reeves had three hits including a double. JS Bearden and Justin Abate also had key hits for the Cardinals to help them to the win.

Tuesday's contest at Bridge City was a tight one



Pitcher Braylen Collins of Bridge City got the victory on the mound against Jasper and drove in three runs for the Cardinals in the 7-1 win

RECORD PHOTO: Dan Perrine

with the Cardinals edging the Bulldogs 4-3 in a walk off win. A Jasper error in the bottom of the seventh inning allowed John Van Huis to score the winning run for the Cardinals.

Bridge City got strong pitching from a couple of different Cardinal hurlers on Tuesday as well. Aidyn Mulholland and JS Bearden combined to strikeout ten Jasper batters in the game.

The Bears and Mustangs played two games last week with Little Cy-

press Mauriceville winning both of them. The Bears improved their position in the district standings which has them tied for fifth place with Jasper two games behind fourth place Silsbee.

Friday's game was played at Ronnie Anderson Park under dark clouds, but the rain and lightning held off with no weather delays. Little Cypress Mauriceville used three homeruns and good pitching to beat West Orange Stark 5-2.

The Bears' Marco Bandiero broke a scoreless tie in the third inning. Bandiero hit the first of his two homeruns on the night with a blast over the 330-foot mark in right center field off of Mustang starting pitcher Tyrone Wilson scoring courtesy runner Cole Johnson who was running for catcher Justin

McCarver in front of him to put Little Cypress Mauriceville up by two runs.

LCM went up 3-0 in the top of the fourth. Parker Seago got a two-out single to left to score courtesy runner Ethan Fry from second base.

Bandiero led off the fifth for the Bears. After falling behind in the count no balls and two strikes Marco poled one to right field which like his blow in the third sailed over the fence for a homer to give Little Cypress Mauriceville a 4-0 advantage.

Starting Bear pitcher Dylan Istre had pitched four scoreless innings to that point allowing only one hit, one walk, and hitting a Mustang batter while striking out four. In the bottom of the fifth Istre walked the first two WOS hitters Carlos Calana and Zach Nation. Park-

er Freeman came on to pitch for Little Cypress Mauriceville.

Christian Anderson lined a single to center fielder Dean Reynolds gloved the ball and threw in it allowing Calana to only advance one base to third which loaded the bases. William Lee followed with a base hit to left that brought home the first run for the Mustangs while keeping the bases loaded.

Tyrone Wilson the best hitter on West Orange Stark hit a hard grounder up the middle, but Clay Raney playing shortstop for LCM fielded the ball cleanly tossed to Seago at second base for the force out who then relayed to first just ahead of Wilson for a huge double play. On

DISTRICT Page 4B

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Bridge City Lady Cardinals sign softball scholarships



Amaris Larkin of Bridge City High School has signed a scholarship to attend Lamar University where she will throw the shot in track and field. RECORD PHOTO: Dan Perrine



Bridge City senior Kaydence Corkran will be playing softball at John Melvin University in Crowley, Louisiana. RECORD PHOTO: Dan Perrine

Sight fishing is the best of both worlds

OUTDOORS Capt. Chuck Uzzle For The Record

The famous line from the movie "The wizard of Oz" where Dorothy tells her dog Toto "we're not in Kansas anymore" came to mind as my small skiff settled out over a bright white endless Caribbean flat covered with air clear water. The whole sight was far and away different from my normal upper coast water where clarity is measured in inches rather than feet. From the poling platform I could see a school bonefish milling about in the shallow water in search of small crabs and shrimp, it was classic as they showed their tails and easily gave away their location. It was a no brainer, a gimme, as easy as you could ever expect from one of the most wary fish that swims. All of the good vibes that came from the initial sighting were soon dashed as one awkward move led to another awkward cast which led to two anglers shaking their



Chuck Uzzle

heads wondering "how did we miss that one?" Scenes like this play out over and over every day as anglers who enjoy seeing their fish before they cast to them make mistakes that just leave you wondering why am I doing this and not soaking dead shrimp someplace else. The frustration factor for the sight fisherman is high and more often than not outweighs the success ratio, but on the day it all happens just right there is no better feeling. If I had to put it all in perspective I get as much or more enjoyment out of "coaching" an angler to a fish as I do catching one myself. I never thought in a million years I could be in a boat all day long, never pick up a rod, and call the trip a success. I routinely never cast on sight fishing trips because I get such a kick out of watching

clients, especially those who have never tried this style of fishing. Hunters have the illness "buck fever" where at the moment of truth when it's time to make the shot an uncontrollable shaking comes over the hunter and often causes them to miss. Well I have seen "redfish fever" have the same effect on fishermen. You can take an accomplished caster and make them look like they have never held a fishing rod before when they see a big redfish well within range. Fly casters will wrap fly line around themselves, the boat, and anything else in the immediate vicinity thanks to the excitement of the moment. It gets crazy sometimes.

Perhaps the most important piece of this sight fishing puzzle is the ability to see well and that can be enhanced with quality glasses. Without a good pair of polarized glasses you are basically fishing blind. There are a ton of good glasses out there and they range in all types, styles, and price rang-

es. I wear Bajio and I can honestly say they are worth every penny. The key to good glasses is to pay as much as you can afford because the quality of glass used in each pair gets better as you go up in price. One very valuable lesson is to not pinch pennies on polarized glasses, I promise you there is a difference and you can tell it at the end of the day.

Another valuable lesson learned the hard way is to keep you movement in the boat to a minimum. Remember if you can see the fish they can see you as well. Fly fishermen need to keep false casts to a minimum while conventional anglers need to stay away from sudden moves as their outline is silhouetted against the sky. One technique that we borrowed from the freshwater anglers is flipping and pitching, the rod stays low and the movement needed to accomplish the cast is minimal. Spinning gear is a great option for this technique, the ease of casting light lures makes the spinning

gear ideal in spite what any crusty old Texas saltwater veteran says.

Now in keeping with lessons learned it's a good idea to talk with your partner about how you will read the water, make sure your version is the same as theirs. One thing I normally try to do is to get a feel for how well the anglers in my boat judge distance, let's just say it varies greatly from person to person. I will often pick out an object in the water and ask the client "how far is that?" so I can get a feel for their ability. Some folks want you to tell them in feet while others want yards. Fly fishermen seem to like feet while conventional anglers prefer yards. Also get a common point on the boat where everyone uses as 12 o'clock, this will be the position from which all of the instructions start. When my son Hunter was small I actually would take chalk and write the numbers on the bow of the boat, I would call out "redfish at 2 o'clock going right to left" and Hunter would look down at the numbers, adjust himself accordingly, and make his cast. Incidentally we would

also practice this at home as I would walk around in the yard pretending to be a fish while Hunter would cast at me. It was really funny when I would stop and stand on one foot pretending to be a tailing fish, my neighbors thought I was out of my mind but it worked wonders as Hunter understood from that point on how to properly cast to these fish. By learning some of the in's and out's of sight fishing from someone who has made plenty of mistakes hopefully your learning curve is better than mine when I started. Understanding how these fish react to different factors, reading their body language, and putting yourself into position to catch them are all pieces of the puzzle that we strive to put together. A puzzle that produces both heartache and euphoria in equal amounts. Sight fishing is not for everyone but for those who have been on both the good and bad side you know how addicting it can be. I for one can't get enough and will keep trying as long as the big fisherman upstairs continues to bless me with the opportunities.

District baseball From Page 3B

the play Nation did score the second run of the inning to make it 4-2 in favor of the Bears after five innings.

The Bears got the final run of the game in the sixth. With two outs Seago ripped a sinking liner down the right field line which Lee made a diving effort to catch but could not get his glove on the ball and it rolled all the way to the fence. Seago motored around the bases and slid home head first just before

the Mustangs' catcher Grayson Gregory got the relay throw to make the tag culminating an inside the park homerun.

Bandiero moved in the sixth inning from first base to the mound making his first pitching appearance this season. Marco threw the final two innings for the Bears.

Noah Robles walked for the Mustangs in the sixth, and Bandiero surrendered a double to Lee in the seventh followed by a walk to Wil-

son but did not yield a run in his two innings of pitching. Istre was credited as the winning pitcher for Little Cypress Mauriceville with Bandiero getting a save.

The first game of the week between the two Orange rivals was played Tuesday at Don Gibbens Field. The Bears won that game 9-5 over the Mustangs.

Little Cypress Mauriceville scored four runs in the first inning to take the early

lead. West Orange Stark would answer with four runs of their own in the fourth before the Bears rallied in the fifth to put some distance between the two teams on the scoreboard.

The Bears were led by Parker Seago, Parker Freeman, and Cameron Bilbo who each had two hits in the game. Carlos Calana got two base hits for the Mustangs with Tyrone Wilson and Grayson Gregory having one hit apiece.

Coach Hunter Hagler of the Bears was pleased with the two wins in a week which keeps the chance of a playoff berth alive for LCM. "We've put ourselves in a situation that we can come

out and have a dogfight next week. I believe if we win two we at least insure a play-in game depending on what happens throughout the rest of the district," Hagler explained.

The Bears' opponent in the final two games is Silsbee. Little Cypress Mauriceville is 4-6 and Silsbee is 6-4, so two wins by the Bears would move them into a tie for fourth place the final playoff spot. Jasper needs to win two games against first place Vidor to make it a three-way tie for fourth.

Bridge City at 7-3 still has a chance to capture the district title but the Cardinals will need some help. The

Cardinals close the district schedule with two games against West Orange Stark playing Tuesday's game at West Orange and Friday's game in Bridge City.

If the Cardinals can win both games this week and Jasper beats Vidor in its two games Bridge City would be the district champion outright. If Jasper and Vidor split their two games and Bridge City sweeps West Orange Stark the Cardinals and the Pirates would finish tied for first place. A seeding game between the Cardinals and Pirates would be on Saturday, April 29, with the time and location to be determined if necessary.

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Entertainment: Big names highlight events

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FOR THE RECORD**

There are a lot of big shows being added to the schedule for spring and summer. Recently added concerts for the region include Guns N' Roses, Jelly Roll, Beck, Mark Chesnutt, Diamond Rio, Pat Green and more. Check out the schedule below for upcoming shows and see the full listing of events online at www.therecordlive.com

• **April 28**

Mark Chesnutt, Golden Nugget Casino, Lake Charles, La.

• **April 29**

The Kentucky Headhunters, The Toman Brothers Band, Honky Tonk Texas, Silsbee, Scarface, Doug E Fresh, Rakim, Slick Rick, Big Daddy Kane, DJ Jazzy Jeff, Smart Financial Center, Sugar Land



Pony Bradshaw will be performing at Courville's in Beaumont on May 4.

• **May 4**

Pony Bradshaw, Courville's, Beaumont, (hed)PE, Crazy Town, Adema, Tantic, Rise Rooftop, Houston

• **May 5**

Carly Pearce, Golden Nugget Casino, Lake Charles, La., Tom Jones, Smart Financial Center,

Sugar Land

• **May 6**

For King and Country, Ford Arena, Beaumont

• **May 7**

Santana, Cynthia Woods Mitchell Pavilion, The Woodlands

• **May 11**

Natali Rize, Kumar Minori, Scout Bar, Houston

• **May 12**

38 Special, Golden Nugget Casino, Lake Charles, La., Hammerfall, Warehouse Live, Houston, Hunter Hayes, House of Blues, Houston

• **May 13**

Tanya Tucker, Golden Nugget Casino, Lake Charles, La.

• **May 14**

Loudness, Warehouse Live, Houston

• **May 18**

Joshua Ray Walker, Courville's, Beaumont

• **May 19**

Pat Green, Golden Nugget Casino, Lake Charles, La., Dave Matthews Band, Cynthia Woods Mitchell Pavilion, The Woodlands

• **May 26**

Morgan Wallen, Hardy Ernest, Bailey Zimmerman, Minute Maide Park, Hous-

ton, The Sisters of Mercy, Bayou Music Center, Houston

• **May 27**

Morris Day and The Time, Zapp Band, Rose Royce, Confunkshun, Ohio Players, Atlantic Starr, Cynthia Woods Mitchell Pavilion, The Woodlands

• **June 3**

Janet Jackson, Ludacris, Cynthia Woods Mitchell Pavilion, The Woodlands

• **June 9**

Duran Duran, Nile Rodgers and Chic, Bastille, Cynthia Woods Mitchell Pavilion, The Woodlands

• **June 10**

Jo'El Sonnier, The Oaks Event Center, Vidor Koe Wetzel, Cynthia Woods Mitchell Pavilion, The Woodlands

• **June 15**

Liliac, Rise Rooftop, Houston

• **June 16**

Thomas Rhett, Cole Swindell, Nate Smith, CajunDome, Lafayette, La.

ORANGE COUNTY GARDENING:

Singing the 'Blues' berries



**JOHN GREEN
ORANGE COUNTY
MASTER GARDENERS**

Gardeners, unfortunately most of us are pressed for time and due to our time constraints, we tend to shop for everything hurriedly! Many of us shop for plants in the same manner, quickly, without regard to the plant label instructions (planting instructions listed on the reverse side of the label-though instructions are vague at best). For most annual bedding plants, perennials, herbs, vegetables, shrubs, and trees it isn't a huge issue and can often be managed simply by amending the soil as plants are planted, especially if new plants are placed in existing garden locations. There are numerous plant exceptions we as gardeners should be mindful of, plants that require specific soil types, such as acidic soil in which to thrive. There is a vast array of plants which are classified as "acid-loving" plants which include: evergreens, rhododendron, hydrangea, camelia, azalea, and blueberry to name a few. Before I continue, note it is always best to have your garden soil analyzed before planting, to understand exactly the amendments needed the amount for optimal plant growth. Today we're going to focus on growing blueberries and getting them to thrive in our Southeast TX climate.

There are numerous species of blueberry native to North America. The best types for SETX gardeners are rabbiteye blueberries (*Vaccinium ashei*), A healthy rabbiteye blueberry,

mature plant can produce up to 15 pounds of fruit per season. The southern highbush blueberries (hybrids of *Vaccinium corymbosum*, *V. ashei* and *V. darwini*) require fewer 'chill' hours, and bloom earlier in spring than rabbiteyes, but are susceptible to damage by late frosts. Since our environment is ever-changing, this gardener has chosen to plant three different varieties of rabbiteye blueberries, which have yet to disappoint! Note that southern highbush blueberries tend to fruit up to a month earlier than rabbiteye blueberries, so having both varieties can extend fruit availability.

Some of the more common rabbiteye varieties are: 'Brightwell', 'Austin', 'Premier', and 'Vernon'. To maximize fruit set and increase production, a minimum of two different varieties must be planted. There are a couple varieties which are slightly self-fruitful but produce better yields with another variety for cross pollination. Blueberry flowers are bell-shaped, whitish pink in color, hanging upside-down and require insects to pollinate each flower. The best time to plant is winter through early spring, bare-root, or container-grown plants (my preference). One of the biggest mistake gardeners make when planting blueberries is planting them too deeply. The plants have very fine, fibrous root systems that will not recover when planted too deep. All blueberries require acidic soil and thrive when the pH range is maintained between 4.5-5.5. Our SETX clay soil tends to be more alkaline

(having a higher pH) than the ideal range required by blueberries but also tends to hold too much water, so consider growing them in raised beds or containers. This gardener filled several large (150-gallon) livestock troughs (note: multiple 2-inch holes were drilled into the bottom of each drainage) and each was filled each with a mix of peat moss/partially composted pine bark. A 1/4 or 1/3 peat and 3/4 or 2/3 finely ground composted pine bark which is a great ratio, wetting each layer, then thoroughly mixing with a spade before adding additional layers. Note, that only two plants were planted into each of the 150-gallon containers, my message to you is do not crowd blueberries into a container! A raised bed can be made approximately two feet tall and three feet wide. If growing in individual containers, remember the bigger the container, the bountiful harvest, the better! Good drainage is imperative.

Blueberries root systems are highly sensitive to fertilizer, care must be taken to not apply too much at any given time. My recommendation is to use products specifically formulated for blueberries or azaleas. They are also sensitive to drought conditions, especially during the first year, so moisture levels must be managed, i.e., don't keep the soil saturated nor let the soil completely dry out, especially when the plants are loaded with fruit or during our summer months. Blueberries' shallow root systems don't require deep watering but benefit from a mulch layer, minimizing moisture loss due to evapo-

ration. Applying a 2 or 3-inch layer of organic mulch (pine straw or pine bark) to soil surface is the key to successful blueberry production.

Blueberries do not ripen at once, with each cluster of fruit having berries at varying stages of ripeness. For the best quality and maximum ripeness, pick berries that are entirely blue (no

hint of red). Blueberries do not get sweeter after harvesting, so harvest them as they ripen (daily) before the birds harvest them for you! Birds can be problematic, enjoying the fruit as much we do, so consider investing bird netting to cover your plants before fruit begins to ripen.

Blueberries are easy to grow when provided with the optimum growing conditions, variety selection and soil preparation with few pests requiring little

fertilizer. Blueberries don't like clay soil or standing water, but don't let this be a deterrent to stop you from growing them! They perform admirably in raised beds and large containers with a little TLC and the right soil mix!

So long for now fellow gardeners, let's go out and grow ourselves a greener, more sustainable world, one plant at a time! Contact me by email: jongreene57@gmail.com to have gardening questions answered.

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Mercy in Jonah's Story: The Whale and the Cow

**TIM PORTER
PASTOR
DESIRINGGOD.ORG**

Though only four chapters long, the book of Jonah is filled with strange and unique elements.

Whereas most prophets speak to other nations from Israel, God calls Jonah to address Nineveh from Nineveh. Prophets often resist God's call, but Jonah actually runs away. On the boat headed for Joppa, idolatrous sailors encounter the living God and immediately begin to worship him. And then, of course, Jonah survives the sea by being swallowed by an enormous fish and living in its belly for three days.

When Jonah finally does preach to the Ninevites, they respond to his preaching with unrivaled repentance — and everyone, including the animals, takes part in mourning for sin. And though every preacher I know longs for Nineveh-like revival, Jonah is distraught at the city's repentance and angry that God would show such wide compassion.

Finally, the book doesn't end with a nice resolution. By the Lord's providence, a plant grows up quickly to shade Jonah from the heat, but then, by that same providence, a worm destroys the plant. In the face of Jonah's anger, God asks the prophet a question that is also intended for the reader: "Should not I pity Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than 120,000 persons who do not know their right hand from their

left, and also much cattle?" (Jonah 4:11).

Among all these strange and unique elements, consider the book's last phrase. Why does the story of Jonah end with the mention of "also much cattle"?

God's Angry Prophet

To get to an answer to that question, let's remember the near context. Chapter 4 begins with Jonah enraged with God. And here, we find out why Jonah ran away from Nineveh the first time. He tells the Lord, "I knew that you are a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, and relenting from disaster" (Jonah 4:2). Jonah didn't want to go to Nineveh because he knew the Lord's heart to bless; he knew and believed the Lord's own self-disclosure that he is gracious and merciful and relents from disaster (Exodus 34:6-7).

Because Jonah knew God's character, he knew that if he went to Nineveh and preached, the Ninevites might turn from their violence — and God, being the gracious God he is, would relent. Jonah was running away from giving Nineveh an opportunity to experience the mercy of God. One of the tragic ironies of this book is that Jonah himself experiences great mercy from the Lord (who spares him from death through the great fish), and yet Jonah is angry when the Ninevites experience that same mercy.

But just as God drew near to Cain when Cain was angry at him (Genesis 4:6-7), in mercy and compassion, God draws near to Jonah. Though Jonah is quick to anger, the Lord is slow to anger. He asks Jonah an important heart-revealing question: "Do you do well to be angry?" (Jonah 4:4). God is not only interested in Nineveh experiencing his mercy; he is also pursuing Jonah. God is the missionary in this book, pursuing both Nineveh and his prophet with his amazing grace.

While Jonah waits to see what God will do with Nineveh, God moves into the next stage of pursuing Jonah's angry heart. After Jonah makes some shade for himself from the heat, the Lord appoints a plant to add extra shade. Jonah is very happy about the Lord's kindness to him (Jonah 4:6). But when God appoints a worm to destroy the plant, and a scorching east wind to beat down on, Jonah is angry again — this time about the loss of the plant that shaded him from the heat. And now, in a very personal way, the Lord draws near to highlight his own compassion for Nineveh.

Pitying Plants and People

God's words to Jonah follow a common form of argumentation as he moves from the lesser to the greater:

You pity the plant, for which you did not labor, nor

did you make it grow, which came into being in a night and perished in a night. And should not I pity Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than 120,000 persons who do not know their right hand from their left, and also much cattle? (Jonah 4:10-11)

In this question, God affirms that Jonah is right, in a way, to have pity for the plant. But Jonah neither labored for nor cultivated the plant, and he experienced its relief for only a day. If Jonah is right to have compassion on the plant, is not the Lord's right to have compassion on a city of more than 120,000 people, along with much cattle?

Now, with the context settled, we can get back to our question: Why does the Lord mention cattle?

In one sense, the mention of cattle is simply a part of the lesser-to-greater argument. Plants are important, and Jonah is right to have pity for the plant, but people and cattle are even more important than plants. Isn't it right for the Lord to have pity on a great city with all kinds of people and cattle?

But to me and other commentators, the mention of cattle also signals something important that we need to remember about God's love for all creation, for all he himself has made, from plants to animals to humans.

God's Care for All His Works

God has made humans in his image (Genesis 1:26-

27), and this was the crowning act of the six days of creation. He made humans a little lower than the angels (Psalm 8:5). To save humans, the Son of God became like us in every way, except for sin (Hebrews 2:17; 4:15). We humans are of great value to God, and though we have rebelled, God has much mercy for us.

At the same time, though not in the same way, God cares about animals. He has pity and compassion on animals. Animals are his creation, and God cares about what animals experience in his world. This is one of the reasons Israel was not to muzzle the ox (Deuteronomy 25:4). This is also why Jesus teaches us not to be anxious, based on the beauty of the plants of the field and the Father's care for birds (Matthew 6:25-34). Notice Jesus's lesser-to-greater argument regarding our Father's care:

Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? (Matthew 6:26)

Jesus's logic is clear. Our Father feeds and cares for the birds of the air; they have what they need when they need it, though they do not sow, reap, or gather. The Father himself feeds them. And we are of more value than birds.

But just because we humans are of more value than birds, plants, or cattle doesn't mean they are of no value to our gracious and compassionate God. Cattle are of value to God, and we

are to value them, as he does.

He Cares for Cattle — and Dogs

We could apply God's surprising regard for animals in various ways, but I want to close with just one.

In 2007, I had to euthanize the first dog my wife and I owned. His name was Elliott, and he was a black-and-white English springer spaniel who went everywhere with us. We loved Elliott. I learned how to pheasant and grouse hunt with him, and we had a great bond. But in time, his body filled with cancer. When I took him to the vet to be with him in his last moments, I was not prepared for the waves of grief that would come upon me then and for weeks after we put him down. I felt silly and embarrassed telling friends about this because I would start to weep. He was just a dog, but I was grieving as if I had lost a close friend.

And that's when Jonah 4:11 and the Lord's pity for cattle started to help me. Yes, Elliott was a dog. But the Lord cares about dogs because he created dogs. I am right to have compassion on my dog. The Lord is right to have compassion on cattle; he made, sustains, and cares for cattle. Even more, God is right to have compassion on Nineveh, that great city. And it is absolutely amazing that the Lord would have compassion on me and you.

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Jeremiah 29:11-13

"For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare[a] and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope. 12 Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will hear you. 13 You will seek me and find me, when you seek me with all your heart."

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