

Burleson County Tribune

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Thursday, June 25, 2020

County's COVID-19 cases climb to 67 this week

Burleson County tax office, Caldwell ISD impacted

Burleson County's COVID-19 cases climbed to 67 this week with the courthouse and Caldwell ISD both impacted.

The county tax office closed for three days last week before re-opening on Monday,

"We are depending on our citizens to make the right decision" – Burleson County Judge Keith Schroeder

June 22, and Caldwell ISD's Summer Feeding Program also closed.

The tax office was closed on Wednesday,

June 17, after Tax Collector Cheryl Story Castaneda learned of a COVID-19 exposure at the tax office, Burleson

County Judge Keith Schroeder said.

However, a partial staff continued working inside Wednesday through Friday, while wearing masks and social distancing, and the office reopened after an

See COVID, page 9



MARIA ZUNIGA cleans this desk in the office at Caldwell Elementary School.

Snook HS to hold graduation this Friday

Ceremony marks first event in new stadium

Snook High School will graduate 36 seniors from the Class of 2020 with ceremonies at 8 p.m. this Friday, June 26, at Bluejay Stadium.

Burleson County high schools will have had a total of 167 seniors graduate this year, with this Friday's ceremony in Snook and with the two previous graduations in Somerville on May 30 and Caldwell on June 12.

See GRADS, page 3



COLBY SEE, VALEDICTORIAN



LEWIS CONRAD, SALUTATORIAN

CISD approves \$19.4M budget

Even with the uncertainty of COVID-19 and not having the final local taxable valuations, Caldwell ISD plans to have a balanced budget of \$19.4 million for the 2020-2021 school year.

The school board approved the budget during its regular meeting on Monday, June 22, after holding a public hearing.

The 2020-2021 budget is about \$1.4 million more than last year's budget of \$17,797,500.

The budget includes \$19,418,420 for the dis-

trict's general operating fund.

The district expects to receive \$13,301,645 in local revenue, \$5,816,775 in state revenue and \$300,000 in federal revenue for a total of \$19,418,420.

Then, the district estimates that it will spend \$19,418,420, resulting in a balanced budget.

Heather Escalante, director of business services, told the board the taxable values would help determine the tax rate, which the board

See CISD, page 11



THE PAD FOR THE NEW building at the future Pre-K through third-grade campus is under construction. Also, demolition in the current middle school building has been completed.

POSGCD eyes water discharge

The Post Oak Savannah Groundwater Conservation District recently monitored the San Antonio Water System's flushing of 10 million gallons of water daily exported from Burleson County into a northside San Antonio creek.

And they are still asking questions.

Water is being exported from a field in Burleson County off F.M. 696 to San Antonio, a process that began in

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DEANVILLE SONS OF HERMANN Lodge members get ready for the July 4 holiday. They include, from left, Tammy Jones, Camden Wideman, Bennie Jones, James Fritsche, Mildred McLemore, Donnie Blinka, Marsha Kocurek and Roger Coble. See story inside.

Snook hires grant admin

The Snook City Council on Monday, June 22, authorized a request for proposals for administrative services to apply for a \$3 million grant to address drainage issues in the community.

The Community Development Block Grant

See SNOOK, page 14



CALDWELL VFW POST No. 4458 members raise these new American and Texas flags at the Burleson County Sheriff's Office on Wednesday, June 17. -- Tribune photo by Roy Sanders

Council OKs plan with Texas A&M

The Caldwell City Council has unanimously approved a partnership in Texas A&M's Texas Target Communities (TxTC) to develop a comprehensive plan for the city.

The council approved participation at their Tuesday, June 16, meeting.

TxTC is a highly competitive program that helps communities plan

for long-term development. Caldwell was chosen out of 17 other cities to participate, Caldwell City Administrator Camden White said after the meeting.

TxTC is a service-learning program and university-wide community engagement initiative under the Office of the Provost at Texas A&M. Fac-

See COUNCIL, page 2

Graveside service was held for Doonan

Graveside services for longtime Burleson County resident, Judge Bob L. Doonan, 86, will be held at the Chriesman Cemetery at 10 a.m. on Wednesday, June 24, 2020.

Bob was born a "Valentine's" Day baby to John and Eva Doonan. After graduation from Glade-water High School, he attended Sam Houston State Teacher's College (SHSTC) meeting his future bride, Lee Evelyn Boedeker Doonan,

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BOB L. DOONAN

Pipe joints stolen on Park Road 57

Burleson County sheriff's deputies are investigating the recent burglary of a home on Park Road 57 in which some pipe joints were stolen.

The burglary was reported on Tuesday, June 16, and the owner said 77 joints of pipe were missing, said

Chief Deputy John Pollock.

Deputy Zachary Strouth arrived at the scene to investigate, he said.

The case remains under investigation as a felony burglary of a habitation, and no arrest has been made, Pollock said.

Man charged in drug possession

An Austin man was arrested by Caldwell police on a felony methamphetamine possession charge on Wednesday, June 17, after a traffic stop in a parking lot off State Highway 21, near the State Highway 36 intersection.

James Thompson Dundon, 57, was charged with possession of a controlled substance in Penalty Group 1, 4-200 grams, and was released Saturday, June 20 on \$20,000 bond, according to the Burleson County Sheriff's Office.

Caldwell Police Officer John Hammons con-

ducted a traffic stop at 9:23 p.m. on a 2004 silver Toyota van, talked to the driver and got verbal consent to search after a field sobriety test.

He located a large crystal-like substance of suspected methamphetamine, a prescription red liquid labeled methadone that was not prescribed to the man and a small square tab of suspected LSD, according to the report.

Hammons arrested the man and confiscated the drugs, the report stated.

RIDGE

FROM PAGE ONE

mid-April.

The Vista Ridge water export project involves pumping up to 50,000 acre feet of water annually from Burleson County to San Antonio in a 140-mile pipeline, a contentious issue that has drawn criticism through the years by those who object to water from Burleson County being shipped elsewhere.

The Vista Ridge project is permitted through POSGCD, which covers Burleson and Milam counties.

And with large quantities being dumped into a creek, the issue drew questions from POSGCD, said POSGCD General Manager Gary Westbrook.

An underground pipeline that hooks up Vista Ridge's last leg from Burleson County to the SAWS system, located south of Loop 1604, is running behind schedule, SAWS officials said at their June board meeting.

The pipeline, known as the Central Water Integration Pipeline (CWIP) helps SAWS connect to the water shipped in from Burleson County.

Due to the CWIP delays, the water was only getting to about 34,000 San Antonio customers in the Stone Oak region, according to the Rivard Report. And about the same quantity was being dumped into Mud Creek, which is located south of the Vista Ridge stopping point on Hardy Oak Boulevard, according to the Rivard Report.

At one point, about 10 million gallons a day were being released into Mud Creek, according to Rivard Report.

And that equates to \$50,000 a day, using the calculation of about \$1,600 per acre foot.

SAWS officials said in a recent e-mail to Westbrook that they planned to stop the pumping into the creek when they begin flushing the pipelines, a process used before fully blending the Vista Ridge water into San Antonio's system.

But for Westbrook and Post Oak Savannah's board, the issue was one of principle.

With the water export project already such a hotly debated issue, allowing that much water to be discharged seemed alarming, Westbrook said.

Westbrook briefed his board in a June 12 e-mail. E-mails between Westbrook, the board and SAWS officials are now posted online on the POSGCD website for public disclosure, Westbrook said.

"I have endeavored to verify information and get answers so our board can better understand the situation, and so the board can accurately identify our responsibilities and appropriately discharge its duties," Westbrook said in the June 12 e-mail.

"I would expect the (POSGCD board) advisory committee to review all information by mid next week (June 15-19) so they may chart a course forward," Westbrook said.

Westbrook said in the June 12 e-mail that SAWS had notified him that the discharges into Mud Creek were ending on that day.

"Although this may not be the end of our responsibilities in this situation, it is welcome news," Westbrook said.

Donovan Burton of SAWS explained the reasons for discharging water into Mud Creek in a June 11 e-mail to Westbrook.

Burton said recent events in Flint, Mich., serve as a reminder that water utilities need to be vigilant about integrating news sources of water into their distribution systems.

"SAWS cannot put our customers' health and safety at risk due to a failure to perform adequate due diligence and analysis of actual finished water," Burton said in the e-mail.

SAWS wants to proceed in an incremental manner and to phase delivered water into the distribution system to ensure that there are no leaching effects on plumbing or any other currently unanticipated adverse water quality effects, he said.

Burton's June 11 e-mail stated that SAWS would begin sending water into other areas of the system over the next several days, which would halt further discharges into Mud Creek.

Also, when the pipeline infrastructure is flushed and does not show any water quality issues, SAWS will start putting water into the distribution system, he said.

Burton also said in the e-mail that the SAWS Aqua Vista Station water treatment plant was still in the operational startup period.

"The structural integrity of the system is still undergoing tests," Burton said. "Discharges from this process and of the distribution system that will convey the newly delivered water are authorized" by a TCEQ permit "and thus do not constitute waste."

In a subsequent 1:56 p.m. June 12 e-mail, Burton tells Westbrook that the process is underway to stop the discharge into Mud Creek. By 4:43 p.m., he e-mails Westbrook to tell him the flow into Mud Creek has ceased.

Westbrook said on Monday, June 22, that POSGCD has made no decisions on what, if anything, the district can do to address the issue after the fact.

"Any time you learn of water being used in a manner you perceive as inconsistent with its proper use, you are concerned," Westbrook said.

"The permit to produce this water is issued to Vista Ridge and requires all water to be used for beneficial purposes. We don't regulate SAWS, but we do regulate the permit holder, and that would be Vista Ridge," he said.

Westbrook said POSGCD continues to inquire and gather information, but no decision has been made at this time.



Happy 50th Anniversary!

Franklin and Ellen "Desi" Weber were married on June 27, 1970, at Hyde Park Baptist Church with Doctor Ralph Smith officiating.

They made their home in Austin for 41 years and then came back to live in Caldwell, where they had family and friends.

They hope to have a celebration at a later date when the time is safe.

Baptist Church plans Vacation Bible School

First Baptist Church Caldwell will host Vacation Bible School, from 6-8:45 p.m. from Sunday, June 28, to Thursday, July 2.

The theme for this year is, "Concrete & Cranes," and students will be "Building on the Love of Jesus."

A meal will be provided each night to students attending.

This year's VBS is for children who have completed Kindergarten through those who completed fifth-grade.

To register your child for Vacation Bible School, please visit the church's website at www.fbccaldwell.org and find the VBS registration form on the home page.

Please contact the church office at (979) 567-3646 with any questions.

Bluebonnet Electric to close on July 3

Bluebonnet Electric Cooperative's offices will be closed Friday, July 3, in observance of Independence Day.

Bluebonnet members can access their account information and make payments during Independence Day through the co-op's website at bluebonnet.coop.

Bluebonnet members can report power outages by calling 800-949-4414, or through the co-op's mobile app or website at bluebonnet.coop.

Members enrolled in Bluebonnet's Outage Alerts can report an outage by texting OUT to 85700. To enroll, text BBOUTAGE to 85700 from a mobile phone or tablet and follow the prompts.

Should an outage occur, Bluebonnet personnel will be on call throughout Independence Day weekend to restore power, Bluebonnet officials said.

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PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice of Sale

The following tenants units will be sold to satisfy a landlord's lien. Each unit will be sold to the highest bidder. Various household items and furnishings, along with recreational, office and garden items will be sold. Terms of the sale are cash.

Bulldog Storage Caldwell, 1300 State Hwy 21 E, Caldwell, TX 77836, Thursday, July 9, 2020 @ 9:30 am.

- Kerry Gibson
- Takiyah Harlmon
- Ike Sheppard
- Andrea Butler
- Justin & Ashley Brackman
- Brittnay Richmond
- Daniel Anderson
- Tiffany Baggerly
- Ketchera Foster

Please call 512-446-4858 for information.

Brymer Custom Hay Baling

William Brymer
Owner

5765 CR 316 Caldwell, Texas 77836

Email: williambrymer@yahoo.com

Mobile: 979-595-7451

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