

INSIDE



Lions Move On

Defending champs advance to regional finals. **B8**

FOR THE RECORD

Summer Lunch

La Grange ISD will serve good nutritious meals during the summer for local children 18 years and under. Summer curb-side breakfast and lunch meals may be picked up on Monday through Friday from 11 a.m. through 12:30 p.m. beginning June 1 and ending July 29 at the bus drop off at 192 S. Vail St.

Sheriff's Posse

Fayette County Sheriff's Posse monthly meeting will be held Monday, **May 23** at the posse arena on FM 609 at 6 p.m.

Winedale Talk

Join Winedale on Tuesday, **May 24** at noon for its monthly online talk, "Pistols for Two, Coffee for One: The Art of the 19th Century American Duel." In September 1826, Sam Houston fought a duel in Tennessee. Oddly enough, neither Houston nor the man he dueled had any animosity for each other but instead were entangled by the 19th century Code Duello. Join Derrick Birdsall, director of the Sam Houston Memorial Museum, who will discuss Houston's 1826 duel and the code that he fought by. E-mail Tricia.Blakistone@austin.utexas.edu for the link if you are interested.

Juneteenth Parade

The Juneteenth Committee welcomes the public to participate in the Saturday, **June 18**, Juneteenth Parade in La Grange, beginning at 10:30 a.m. Applications are available at www.juneteenthtexas.org and are due no later than **June 10**. There will be no judging of the parade entries. Please call or text Gail Henneke at (979) 525-9476 or email parade@juneteenthtexas.org if you have any questions.

There's more
For the Record
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WEATHER WATCH

This Week's Forecast		
	High	Low
Tuesday:	84	71
90% chance of rain		
Wednesday:	80	62
70% chance of rain		
Thursday:	85	64
Sunny		
Friday:	89	67
Sunny		

Burn Ban Is Lifted

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Workforce Solutions Celebrates New LG Facility

By ANDY BEHLEN
The Fayette County Record

Workforce Solutions of Fayette County hosted a ribbon cutting Friday at their new offices in La Grange, located at 851 S. Reynolds St. The Workforce Solutions offices shares the same building as AMEN Food Pantry.

Texas Workforce Solutions, a partnership between the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) and private workforce development boards across the state, offers a multitude of resources for both job seekers and employers.

TWC Commissioner Aaron Demerson was on hand for the grand opening. Demerson noted the current economic challenges facing businesses and the workforce.

"Throughout the state, we're hearing that employers are still needing employees," Demerson said. "We can figure it out, and this is an opportunity here, starting with this facility. We're putting boots on the ground."

Demerson encouraged businesses and job seekers to take advantage of the many programs offered by the local Workforce Solutions office. Those programs include job training, recruiting for business expansion or relocation, periodic conferences on topics such as employment law, internship programs and even a child care



Representatives of Workforce Solutions of the Rural Capital Area and the La Grange Chamber of Commerce cut the ribbon to official open the new Workforce Solutions office in La Grange, located at 851 S. Reynolds Street.

Photos by Andy Behlen

reimbursement program for qualified job seekers.

"People utilize them, and they make a difference," he said.

Missy Rusek, owner of Texas One Stop in La Grange, gave a moving talk about how Workforce Solutions not only helped her business, but improved the lives of several of her employees.

Rusek introduced the crowd to her employee David Valdez. Rusek said that when she hired Valdez, he didn't have a place to live and had no transportation. Workforce Solutions provided him with a bicycle and some new clothes. He has since

See *Workforce*, back page



Texas One Stop owner Missy Rusek looks on as her employee David Valdez describes the ways Texas Workforce Solutions has helped to improve his life.

85th Tomato Festival is This Weekend

Mark your calendar for the 85th Annual Ellinger Chamber of Commerce Tomato Festival planned for Friday, May 27 – Sunday, May 29.

For all you great cooks out there, the festival kicks-off Friday night with Chef's Choice Competitions. Categories include Entrée, Dessert, Chips and Salsa, and Margaritas. Enjoy live music from 8 – 11 p.m. by The Lederhosen Junkies. For early risers, the fun continues Saturday morning at 7:30 a.m. with the New Tomato Trot 5K run. Cooking continues with Farmer's Breakfast and Bloody Mary compe-

titions. BBQ teams from near and far will compete all day in brisket, chicken, pork spare rib, pork butt, and pinto bean cook-offs. The fan favorite Chopped Challenge with secret ingredients and local celebrity judges returns for its second year. Do you have what it takes to create a delicious meal with secret ingredients, while the clock counts down? Sign-up soon for this exciting event. If cooking is not your thing, come to cheer on your favorite team in the live Final Showdown under the ECC pavilion, where the Ellinger Pantry will be fully stocked just like on TV.

Following the awards ceremony, stick around for the live auction, followed by live music by The Bandits. Iced cold beverages will be available Friday and Saturday. Sunday wraps up the Tomato Festival with ECC President, Michael Schlabach saying, "Come hungry for our famous Chamber fried chicken and sausage drive-thru dinner." Serving begins at 10:30 a.m. Plates are \$12. Raffle tickets with 50 great prizes are available for \$20 or 3 for \$50.

Visit www.ellinger texas.com for details on all the fun and to register for any of the food competitions.

Juneteenth Parade is Back

The Juneteenth Committee is pleased to announce the return of the Juneteenth Parade which has been on pause since COVID began in 2020. The parade will begin promptly at 10:30 a.m. on Saturday, June 18, 2022.

The festivities have been a local tradition since the 1870s," Johnathon Ellis, President of the Juneteenth Committee explained. "The 1884 La Grange Journal indicated that Emancipation festivities were kicked off with a procession led by a wagon occupied by an African American brass band. Men, women, and children followed as the group made its way to Al-

exanders Park to hear speeches by Captain John L. Smith and J. G. Shermack."

Everyone is invited to participate in this historic event. Floats, horses, decorated automobiles and trucks, car clubs, antique automobiles, youth groups, and marching bands are urged to participate.

Applications are available at www.juneteenthtexas.org and are due no later than June 10, 2022. There will be no judging of the parade entries. Please call or text Gail Henneke at 979-525-9476 or email parade@juneteenthtexas.org if you have any questions or concerns.



Attendees at Sunday's memorial for Sandra Ellison stand in front of the new live oak that was planted at the La Grange elementary playground.

Photos by Jeff Wick

Tree Planted in Ellison's Memory on La Grange ISD Playground

By JEFF WICK
The Fayette County Record

La Grange elementary teacher Sandra Ellison died unexpectedly Feb. 14, but the im-

pact she had on her students and colleagues at the school will not be forgotten.

That impact was remembered in a special way Sunday

as the La Grange PTO hosted a tree dedication ceremony in her honor. The event was a combination of so many things that were important to Ellison – family, church, scouting (she was a longtime scout leader) and teaching. Dozens of members of her family were there, so too were members of her church family from Sacred Heart, and Father Brian Phillips gave a special blessing.

Members of Boy Scout Troop 204 and Pack 204 began the ceremony by processing in with flags. Then fellow teacher Melinda Dunk spoke of Ellison.

In part, Dunk said, "Deep roots allow us to be more Christ-like ... Find where you need to grow ... Sandra planted her roots in education, in the Boys Scouts and America and at Sacred Heart Catholic Church. Many of us knew Sandra as a kind and very

caring person ... We celebrate this tree in memory of our dear friend Sandra, she holds a special place in all of our hearts."

Lisa Muras followed by singing "Go Light Your World."

In front of the live oak that was donated and planted by Bargas Landscape, there was a table full of candles that attendees were invited to take home to light in memory of the light Ellison shared through her life.



Melinda Dunk talks about her friend and fellow teacher Sandra Ellison, in front of the tree that was planted in her memory.



Members of Boy Scout Troop 204 and Pack 204 began the ceremony by processing in with flags.

Workforce Solutions Ceremony Celebrates a Local Success Story in LG

Continued from front

climbed the ranks at Texas One Stop. Rusek described him as her “right hand man.”

“Texas Workforce has done a lot for me in my time of need,” Valdez said. “Everybody went through hard times with COVID. I got let off from work. It was hard. I was going check-by-check, trying to keep a roof over my head. By chance, when I applied for a job with Missy, she pointed me toward Workforce Solutions and their programs. It really helped me out. Now I’m married and I have my own place. It’s way better than I was a year ago.”

In another case, Rusek said Workforce Solutions provided QuickBooks training for one of her employees. That employee went from cashiering and leading a team to now assisting the business with accounting.

Jamie Fabre, operations director of the La Grange Chamber of Commerce, complimented the office’s location near AMEN Food Pantry and Second Chance Emporium,

“No one should be embarrassed or challenged or feel they don’t need to come here,” said Fabre. “I’d be proud to walk through the doors and further my education and skills at Texas Workforce Solutions.

“If it’s your kid, your niece or nephew, or a friend, send them here,” Fabre added.

Learn more about the services offered by Workforce Solutions at <https://workforcesolutionsrca.com>.

LGISD’s Kleiber Named WhataTeacher



During a special ceremony Friday at the La Grange Performing Arts Center, La Grange Middle School reading teacher Karissa Kleiber, right, was presented a \$1,000 check for winning the Whataburger WhataTeacher award. The presentation was made by Curt Harbers, left, of La Grange Whataburger. During the ceremony LMS principal Dr. Sarah Otto praised Kleiber’s work, saying, “she is an inspiration ... she makes a difference on our campus as a leader and radiates her love for her profession ... students in her class leave loving to read.” Working with local school administrators, education foundations and school districts for teacher nominations, Whataburger wants to honor teachers who have made especially great impacts on their students and in their communities. The WhataTeacher awards are part of Whataburger’s Feeding Student Success program, which focuses the company’s charitable giving on community philanthropy targeting needs at the intersection of food insecurity and education.

Photo by Jeff Wick

VFW Auxiliary Installs New Officers



At the May 17 meeting of the VFW Auxiliary #5254 of La Grange, officers were installed for the ensuing year, from left, President Marilyn Kothmann. Senior Vice President Twila Thurman, Junior Vice President Barbara Brauner, Treasurer Anna Boyd, Chaplain and Three Year Trustee Mary Gray, Conductress and Secretary Elizabeth Kallus, and Guard Lorine Bertsch. Moving into their new positions but not needing to be installed were One Year Trustee Jeannie Bertsch and Two Year Trustee Peggy Sulik. The officers will assume their duties at the next monthly meeting to be held at 5 p.m. on Tuesday, June 21, at the VFW Post Home in La Grange.

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