

Vector program tracks Wilco West Nile cases

Encourages use of repellents, eliminating standing water

By NALANI NUYLAN

Summer is a season of sunny days and family vacations. A time when Texas barbecue junkies show off their brisket recipes and smokers. Kids spend their days at local pools, and using slip and slides and kiddie pools in the backyard, enjoying the refreshing water. But they are not the only ones looking for water to enjoy. Mosquitoes, which can carry diseases like West Nile, lay their eggs in

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Jason Fritz, Williamson County and Cities Health District Integrated Vector Management Program lead, assembles a mosquito trap.

PHOTO BY NALANI NUYLAN.

Historic home tax exemptions discussed

By KAITLYN WILKES

Georgetown residents who live in historic homes in Old Town and the city’s downtown area will soon be eligible for funding to aid in rehabilitating their properties. Georgetown City Council was presented with details about the tax exemption program that the council last discussed in November 2022. City staff, during a workshop Tuesday, July 25, gathered final feedback from council members. The program should begin next year. The program will allow homeowners in Old Town and downtown — who are working on exterior projects of \$10,000

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Summer Earn and Learn

Shelby Costilla checks inventory at WagHeaven. She is part of the Summer Earn And Learn program, which provides experience and job training to people with special needs by connecting them with local businesses. **Learn more on Page 2**

PHOTO BY ABBEY ARCHER

City, YMCA partnership explored

Possible funding from fall bond election

By KAITLYN WILKES

More details were shared Tuesday, July 25, about a future partnership between the City of Georgetown and the YMCA of Central Texas. Funding for the collaboration, which would build a new YMCA center to Georgetown on Williams Drive, would have to be approved by residents through a bond election in November. The city

would contribute an estimated \$9-10 million to the project. “I see this [partnership] as a way to leverage our resources to build another facility that can work for our community,” said Amanda Parr, District 1 council member. Three scenarios were proposed to city council at Tuesday’s workshop. Each ranged in the amount the city would contribute, the size of the facility and additional facility features. • Scenario 1: Without monetary participation from the city, a proposed YMCA would have a 35,000-40,000 square-foot facility with a total cost of \$13.6

million. • Scenario 2: If the city contributed \$9 million to the partnership, the facility could be 50,000-65,000 square feet and could have an outdoor pavilion and community room. The facility would cost \$22.5 million in total. • Scenario 3: A \$13.5 million contribution from the city would create a 70,000-76,000 square-foot facility with a total project cost of \$27.3 million. “I’ve found [the YMCA] has always hit their projections,” said Mike Triggs said, District 3 council member. “Their

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G’town updates residents on water restrictions

By KAITLYN WILKES

The City of Georgetown further explained its decision to enact Stage 2 and Stage 3 water restrictions across the city and spoke about the stability of the city’s water system during a Tuesday, July 25, news conference. Due to excessive irrigation, water supply challenges and severe drought conditions, the city announced July 17 that Stage 3 water restrictions would be in effect through September 4 for about 35 percent of its customers, all in areas of Georgetown generally west of D.B. Wood Road and southwest of Williams Drive. Stage 3 restrictions include no outdoor watering. Other Georgetown water customers must follow Stage 2 restrictions. City Manager David Morgan and Water

Stage 3 watering restrictions

Stage 3 restrictions prohibit outdoor watering for impacted areas. Stage 3 restrictions will remain in effect through September 4 for areas generally west of D.B. Wood Road and southwest of Williams Drive. The rest of Georgetown’s water service is under Stage 2 restrictions.

Stage 2 watering schedule

Watering using automatic irrigation systems, hose-end sprinklers, soaker

hoses and drip irrigation can only take place on a property’s designated day, either in the morning before 7 a.m. or the evening after 7 p.m. Hand watering is still allowed any day of the week.

Monday:	No watering allowed
Tuesday:	Addresses ending in 1
Wednesday:	Addresses ending in 2 or 6
Thursday:	Addresses ending in 0
Friday:	Addresses ending in 5 or 9
Saturday:	Addresses ending in 4 or 8
Sunday:	Addresses ending in 3 or 7

Utilities Director Chelsea Solomon spoke during the event. “The reason we made that decision to move into [the Stage 2 and Stage 3] strategy was specifically based on the

design of our system and to be able to provide as much water as possible to our water utility customers,” Mr. Morgan said.

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Keeping cool on a hot afternoon

Friends have fun splashing in the cool water at Blue Hole Park on Wednesday. Temperatures again climbed into the low 100s, prompting many to seek cooling comfort. — Photo by Andy Sharp

Lake Levels	Percent Full
Lake Georgetown:	57.2 %
Lake Granger:	93 %
Lake Stillhouse:	63.5 %

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WagHeaven provides experience to special needs students

By ABBEY ARCHER

This summer, Georgetown pet shop WagHeaven has been providing people with special needs with on-site work experience through the Summer Earn And Learn program, referred to as SEAL.

SEAL provides people between the ages of 14 and 22 with work experience and job training. The program is supported by the Texas Workforce Commission and Texas Workforce Solutions-Vocational Rehabilitation Services. The SEAL program pays participants for the hours they spend training and provides them with health insurance.

Shelby Costilla is a SEAL program participant who recently graduated from high school. She feels that her job at WagHeaven will open doors for her in the future and hopes to incorporate what she has learned into her future job. As a retail associate, Shelby has learned how to restock the store and work the cash register.

"I have fun working at WagHeaven," Shelby said.

WagHeaven has two locations, one on Williams Drive and another



SEAL workers Shelby Costilla and Donovan Jones with WagHeaven Staff.

PHOTO BY ABBEY ARCHER

er on West Sixth Street. The four SEAL participants working with the business switch between the two locations so that they learn how to work in different environments.

WagHeaven works with many organizations to help people with special needs. They have been named Coolest Retailer in the County by PETS+ Magazine and Pet Retailer of the Year by

Pet Business Magazine—in part because of their philanthropic work.

During the school year, they partner with GISD to provide special education students with work experience. One of their employees, Javier Pineda, was hired after participating in the program with GISD.

WagHeaven is co-owned by couple Jeff Manley and Jusak Yang Bernhardt, who found out about the SEAL program through a job fair hosted by GISD.

"We were very interested in the program because Jeff's brother is autistic and we want to be involved in helping people with special needs," Mr. Bernhardt said. "We feel like they aren't being explored to their full potential, so we wanted to be a part of the program."

Kevin Manley, who is Mr. Manley's brother, is currently working for the GISD maintenance crew at East View High school.

Through being a part of the SEAL program, WagHeaven hopes to create more job opportunities for people with special needs. WagHeaven hopes to hire SEAL program participants as well.

Georgetown Family Orthodontics helps ROCK

Georgetown Family Orthodontics gave a check for \$1,900 to Ride on Center for Kids earlier this month to help with the dental expenses for ROCK's horses. ROCK's team brought miniature horse Peggy Sue by to help collect the donation.

"Thank you to the wonderful doctors and staff at Georgetown Family Orthodontics for their generous donation, helping ROCK with our horse dental needs," ROCK said in a statement. "We had so much fun surprising the staff yesterday, by bringing our miniature horse Peggy Sue along with us to the check presentation.

"We appreciate their partnership by honoring ROCK's herd with a fundraiser that will cover their dental expenses by more than half."

Georgetown Family Orthodontics is located at 4507 Williams Drive and offers comprehensive orthodontic care. Every time a new patient starts orthodontic treatment at the office, doctors donate \$100 to a local charity. The office picks a new charity each month.

To donate to ROCK, visit <https://rockride.org/donate>.

— Nicholas Cicale



ROCK and Georgetown Family Orthodontics staff meet. From left, ROCK Development Director Karah Powell, Dr. Kenneth Havard, Dr. Aaron White, Dr. Travis Hildebrand, ROCK Equine Manager Mark Dial, and miniature horse Peggy Sue.

PHOTO COURTESY ROCK

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