



SPORTS
Rockwall Hoops
Yellowjackets showing signs of improvement lately.....Page 10A

Contacting the County News

To submit stories, photos, briefs and letters to the editor to the Rockwall County News, direct your e-mails to the following addresses.
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To contact sports editor Cliff Gibson, e-mail sports@rockwallcountynews.com.
To contact the RCN by phone, call (972) 722-3099. Send fax submissions to (972) 524-8083.

Around Town

Newcomers Club

The Rockwall Newcomers Club meets at 10 a.m. Thursday, Jan. 3, at the Shores Country Club, 6000 E. Cecil, (972) 771-3362, or Carol East, (972) 772-1774 by Monday, Jan. 7. Cost is \$16.

Our Savior Lutheran

Our Savior Lutheran Church will install the Rev. Paul Ferguson as senior pastor at 3 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 6. 3003 Horizon Road. (972) 771-8118.

Library Amnesty

The Royse City Public Library will be offering amnesty for overdue items during January if you bring your overdue materials along with some nonperishable food items. (972) 635-2772.

Reading Tutors

Rockwall County Library's Reading For Adults needs tutors. Training session from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 12. (972) 882-0340

Women's League

Rockwall Women's League will hold its January meeting at Rush Creek Yacht Club at 9 a.m. Friday, Jan. 11. The program will be "ASA serves our Rock-walled Kingdom" by Lucille Bell. New members will also be introduced. Nikki Alexander, (972) 772-0337.

RARTA

The Rockwall Area Retired Teachers Association's next meeting will be at 1:30 p.m. Monday, Feb. 11 at the RISD Educational Complex.

Volunteers

Rockwall County Committee On Aging office needs volunteers interested in serving the elder/disabled community. (972) 771-9514.

Ministerial Alliance

Rockwall Ministerial Alliance sponsors a short prayer service at noon on the fourth Wednesday of each month. (972) 771-5526.

Helping Hands

Rockwall County Helping Hands needs help stocking its food pantry. Visit www.rockwallhelpinghands.com for a full list of needed items. Drop off donations from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday at 950 Williams St. (972) 771-4357.

GOP primary filers far outnumber Democrats

By MARCUS FUNK
news@rockwallcountynews.com

Twelve Republicans filed for placement on Rockwall County party primary ballots before the 6 p.m. Jan. 2 deadline. No candidates filed for the Democratic primary.

That total was significantly higher than the seven who seven who had filed at the beginning of the final day.

The most crowded race is for Rockwall County commissioner for Precinct 3, a seat that opened after incumbent Bruce Beatty announced he would not seek re-election. Three Republicans - Dennis Bailey, Randy Puckett and Leon Tuttle - have filed for

“The Republican establishment here is such a juggernaut, and I don't think the Democrats here have been organized enough to meet their financial power.”

Stephen Taylor
Rockwall County Democratic Chairman

placement on the ballot.

The opening county commissioner seat was one of two races Democrats had hoped to fill, but Party Chairman Stephen Taylor

said it had been difficult finding quality candidates for the position. Taylor said that although the bulk of Rockwall residents support Republicans, there is a large number of politically inactive residents who are dissatisfied with national and state Republican governance. There are also many local Democrats who vote in the Republican primary to ensure they have a local voice, Taylor said.

“The Republican establishment here is such a juggernaut, and I don't think the Democrats here have been organized enough

SEE FILERS ON PAGE 2A

Newsmakers of 2007



Rockwall High School players (from left) Shelby Adamason, Kayla Kimmons and Meredith Gordon celebrate the team's Class 5A girls basketball state championship. The Lady Jackets' title was one of the RCN's top stories of 2007. See all the choices on pages 3-7A

Participating in Relay For Life often a personal commitment

By BRITNEY TABOR
news@rockwallcountynews.com

Mary Thacker knows all too well the effects of cancer. Throughout her family, she's seen her parents diagnosed with skin and breast cancer and her cousin survive a cancerous brain tumor. She's also seen loss at the hands of cancer including her grandmother who died of breast cancer and her cousin had melanoma, a form of skin cancer.

It's hard, the Heath resident said of seeing family members battle cancer. Thacker said it makes her take “stock of what's most important” and even more so, it makes one want to do something to fight back.

“It makes it so personal because you really want to find a cure,” she said. “The more research that can be done for a cure, the better it will be for my family, me, my children and more people on down the line.”

Thacker, along with organizers of the

Annual cancer fundraising event kicks off registration effort with Jan. 24 party

Rockwall County Relay For Life, will host a kickoff party to sign people up for the annual event to be held in May that helps raise funds to fight cancer and find a cure. The party, which will be from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. Jan. 24, will be held at Cinemark Theatre's The Harbor 12, located at 2125 Summer Lee Drive in Rockwall. Registration is \$25 per team.

According to the Relay For Life Web site, www.relayforlife.org, more than 3.5 million people among 4,800 community events nationwide participate in the walk, which celebrates the lives of patients battling cancer, remembers those who lost their lives to the disease and raises money to help find a cure and combat a disease that affected more than an estimated

91,000 people in Texas alone in 2007.

Thacker, who also serves as the Rockwall County Relay For Life publicity chairwoman, said the walk will be an experience participants will never forget. The walk lasts 24 hours and is the American Cancer Society's “single biggest fundraiser,” in reminding people that “cancer never sleeps.” This year's walk will commence at 7 p.m. May 2 at Cain Middle School, located at 6620 Farm-to-Market Road 3097. Survivors of cancer will start the relay walking the first lap, which Thacker said is “a symbol of their courage and in celebration of their survivorship.”

In previous years, Rockwall County's Relay For Life has had between 600 and 750 people participate on teams while another hundred or so participated as volunteers and alternate team members. By holding a kickoff registration, Rockwall County is trying to get more people

SEE RELAY ON PAGE 2A

ROAD HAZARD

Mayor hopes change will ease Horizon, I-30 danger

By TEREASA NIMS
news@rockwallcountynews.com

A Rockwall trouble spot at Horizon Road and the Interstate 30 service road is days away from being renovated to one-way east-bound following several wrecks.

“I think that will help some,” said Frank E. Fite II, whose Nationwide Insurance office is still being repaired after a truck crashed into it in November. The driver of a Ford Ranger went through the middle of the build-

ing. It was 9 p.m. and no one was in the office.

“The Horizon exit ramp from I-30 ends at the entrance to our building,” Fite said.

He said drivers exit I-30, turn, hit a bump and go uphill.

“What happens is that anytime it rains, vehicles exiting [I-30] lose traction going uphill,” Fite said. “Their tires begin to spin and they lose control.”

Fite said that on Dec. 19, two people wrecked. That's not the

first time for multiple crashes.

Once Fite took his digital camera outside to capture the crashes he was certain would happen. Thirty minutes later a man spun out of control and ran into a stop sign. A half hour later, Fite heard the familiar sound of a vehicle about to crash. This time it was a woman who spun out and became trapped in her truck, upside down and a few yards



This rolled truck is an example of the crashes that have occurred on the Interstate 30 service road near Horizon Road in Rockwall. This vehicle rolled over in front of Nationwide Insurance located at 311 E. I-30 last month. The two-way service road is being turned into a one-way road as of Jan. 9.

SEE HAZARD ON PAGE 2A

Royse City man facing trial in death of singer

STAFF REPORT

A Royse City man will face the music next week for a March traffic accident that killed a country and western singer.

Chaddrick Hunter, 36, has pleaded not guilty in the March 17, 2006 death of Adrian “Buck” Jones, a Nashville, Tenn. singer on his way to a performance when he was hit by Hunter's 1997 Chevrolet pickup as he walked along the north-bound service road of east-bound Interstate 30 after his vehicle blew a tire. Hunter is accused of intoxication manslaughter and failure to stop and render aid.

A final pretrial hearing was scheduled for Jan. 3 in the 354th State District Court and jury selection is set for Jan. 7. Nine witnesses have been subpoenaed by prosecutors to testify.

SEE TRIAL ON PAGE 2A

Judge strikes part of award in case against Ebby Halliday

Appeals still likely in case brought by Kaufman County homebuyers

By MARCUS FUNK
news@rockwallcountynews.com

KAUFMAN - A state district court judge has struck a \$1 million provision from a damage award in a case against a Rockwall realtor.

Eighty-sixth State District Court Judge Howard Tygrett issued an order late last month eliminating \$1 million in punitive damages and \$35,000 in mental anguish damages from a \$1.3 million verdict against Ebby Halliday Realtors. The order approves the remaining \$300,700 in damages and attorney fees from a September verdict. Tygrett said his order was a rare but legal review of a jury verdict and after judgement has been signed, the case will likely progress to the court of appeals in the coming months.

The case was brought by Rick

SEE EBBY ON PAGE 2A



Filers

From Page 1A

to meet their financial power," Taylor said. "But I don't think that means this won't be a turning point year. I think there will be a different tone in the state races and the national election."

Taylor said the big emphasis for Rockwall County Democrats will lie in the general election in November. Taylor said he hopes to organize voters to support national and statewide candidates while building a local infrastructure.

Taylor assumed the party chairman position after the former chairwoman resigned last summer and said he intends to remain in the position.

Republican Party Bill

The following are candidates who filed for Rockwall County office by the deadline of 6 p.m. Wednesday. An asterisk denotes an incumbent.

REPUBLICANS
Judge, 382nd State District Court
*Brett Hall

Judge, County Court at Law
*David Rakow

Sheriff
*Harold Eavenson
Teresa Tuggle

Tax Assessor-Collector
*Barbara Barber

Commissioner, Precinct 1
Bruce Clark
*Jerry Wimpee

Commissioner, Precinct 3
Dennis Bailey
Randy Puckett
Leon Tuttle

Constable, Precinct 1
*Randy Earl Parks

Constable, Precinct 2
*John Cullins

DEMOCRATS
No filings

Broderick said the short Democratic list could reflect that short preparation time, but it is also indicative of conservative values and voters across Rockwall County.

"As far as those voters who

get out and vote, 93 percent of the people who vote in the county vote Republican," Broderick said. "I think that Republicans seem to fit the niche that most people in Rockwall County desire in their elected officials."

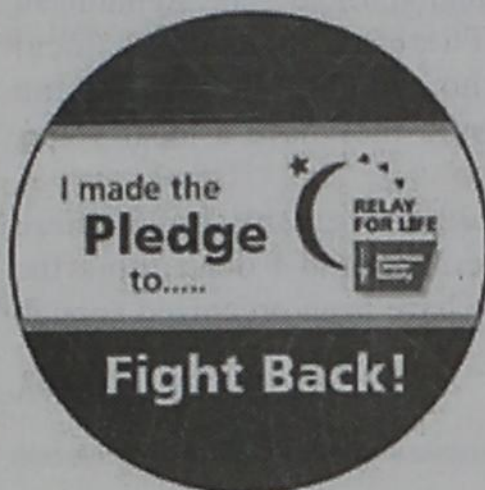
Relay

From Page 1A

signed up so more walk in May, Thacker said.

"It's an event that really pulls the community together," she said. "We desperately need Rockwall [County] to come together [and participate.] Without the walkers, it will not be successful."

In a release from the Rockwall County Relay for Life organiza-



tion, Greg Blair, a past-relay participant said he enjoys various aspects of the walk including the Relay's

Ceremony of Hope in which luminarias - candles set inside paper bags - are lit to honor and remember loved ones who have had cancer. Since becoming involved with the walk about three years ago, Blair has raised more than \$5,000 toward the fight against cancer, the statement noted.

"I enjoyed raising money and met some wonderful people in the process," he said.

For more information, visit www.events.cancer.org/rflrockwalltx.

Hazard

From Page 1A

from Fite's front door.

"It doesn't happen every so

often, it happens every time it rains," Fite said. "It's unbelievable how constant the accidents are."

Rockwall police were not available for comment.

Rockwall Mayor Bill Cecil

agrees there have been a lot of crashes in that area and is anxious to see what help the one-way will provide.

"I think that will help the situation quite a bit," Cecil said.

The Texas Department of

Trial

From Page 1A

According to Texas Department of Public Safety records, Jones, 33, was struck about 2:30 a.m. from behind at mile marker 81 between Farm-to-Market Road 1565 and Farm-to-Market Road 2642 east of Roysse City as he attempted to

find the mile marker to give to a tow truck driver.

Hunter allegedly had a blood alcohol content of three times the legal .08 percent limit in Texas.

According to the DPS, Hunter allegedly told a trooper who responded to the scene that he had attempted to swerve and miss Jones but was unable to do so. Hunter, according to the DPS, failed a field sobriety test and a breath test administered after

his arrest was .25. The trooper report also stated that Hunter's truck was damaged.

In addition to the criminal proceedings, Jones' widow, Amy-Beth Jones is asking for the court's permission to finalize a civil settlement in a suit brought by the family against Hunter and his father, who owned the pickup.

Plaintiffs and defendant have reached an agreement for \$20,000 in damages.

Ebby

From Page 1A

Sutton and Stacey McCrimmon against Ebby Halliday Realtors and Rockwall office employees Diana Morris and Judy Harris. Plaintiffs' attorneys claimed Ebby Halliday agents in Rockwall knowingly and willingly defrauded first-time home-buyers Sutton and McCrimmon when they sold them a home in a flood zone without proper disclosure. The house sold for just under \$165,000, and after rains began flooding the property regularly, Sutton and McCrimmon filed the lawsuit.

Ebby Halliday was sued alongside individual employees because attorneys felt both the corporate leadership and individual employees should be held accountable for the sale. A Kaufman County jury agreed with them - 77 per-

cent of the \$1.3 million verdict was in punitive damages, a category designed to enforce corporate accountability and not related to actual damages.

Tygett struck those punitive damages alongside \$35,000 for mental anguish. Tygett said he was not condemning the jury's verdict, but instead ensuring it was in line with legal precedent. He said that in his opinion, the facts of the case did not meet the legal criteria and definition of punitive damages or mental anguish, and it a judge's responsibility to apply those legal guidelines.

"It's strictly a question of law. Did they prove all of the alleged items, or not?" Tygett said. "But short of them reaching a settlement, I'd say there's a 99 percent chance one or both sides will file an appeal, and the court of appeals will look at the case with fresh eyes."

Kent Newsom, a Dallas lawyer with Newsom, Terry and Newton who represents Ebby Halliday said he could not comment on pending litigation.

Brian Lauten, an attorney with the Lauten Law Firm representing Sutton and McCrimmon, said he planned to appeal the order. Lauten said the million dollar amounts to only two hours worth of sales for Ebby Halliday's national chain, and would enable Sutton and McCrimmon to sell the property and move on with their lives.

"This is the kind of case where the dishonesty was so pervasive that punitive damages were really appropriate," Lauten said. "We have tremendous respect for Judge Tygett, but we're very confident the court of appeals will reverse the order."

Transportation begins work on the roadway at 9 a.m. Jan. 9. They are changing the two-way direction of the service road on the south side of I-30 to a one-way between Shoreline Trail and Horizon Road.

Cecil said the permanent change is improve driver safety on a portion of the service road.

The work is expected to be completed the same day, weather permitting.

Drives attempting to access

businesses along I-30 service road should use Summer Lee Drive to Shoreline Trail or Lakefront Trail.

TxDOT began putting up signs Jan. 2, to reflect the directional change.

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Cecil read

By JUSTIN JONES

Leading up to the Saturday 12 election, incumbent Rockwall Mayor Bill Cecil felt he was the best fit for the job because over the past few years he had proven his leadership to the city.

Apparently the voters were not as convinced as Cecil received in the 2004 election, but he managed to defeat his two-term opponent, current City Council member Ken Jones, in the runoff election.

"I'm very encouraged by the results [voting]," Cecil said. "I really do appreciate the opportunity to continue to support the community, which is great to live in."

Cecil, who in the past has said his ultimate goal is to transform Rockwall into a true community, received 6,238 votes while McCallum received 1,087 and Jones had 611.

He had also said that he was moving forward in all areas, most importantly roads and transportation.

"Obviously, I talked

Rockwall

with smok

By EMILY BERMAN

The Rockwall City Council passed a smoking ban - a topic that received much consideration and discussion at the regular meeting Monday. Rockwall Mayor Bill Cecil believes it was a positive move for the city.

"We decided to not allow smoking on the inside of buildings but will not regulate smoking on patios and outdoor areas around the entrance," Cecil said. "We're going to regulate the entrance so people don't have to walk through a smoke mirror to get inside a restaurant."

Cecil said feedback from business owners and proprietors was positive about being able to live with

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RETROSPECT

2007's Most Newsworthy Stories

— May 17, 2007 —

— April 12, 2007 —

Cecil ready to finish what he started

By JUSTIN JONES
news@rockwallcountynews.com

Leading up to the Saturday, May 12 election, incumbent Rockwall Mayor Bill Cecil said he felt he was the best fit for mayor because over the past two years he had proven his leadership to the city.

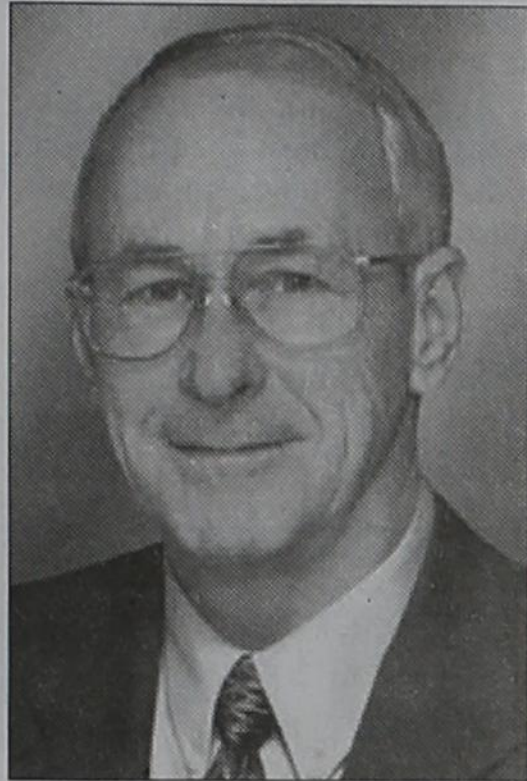
Apparently the voters think the same as Cecil received 57.65 percent of the votes to be re-elected to another two-year term, easily defeating his two opponents, current City Councilman Jim McCallum and Ken Jones, a former mayor.

"I'm very encouraged by the numbers [voting]," Cecil said May 16. "I really do appreciate the opportunity to continue as mayor and support the community, which is great to live in."

Cecil, who in the past said his ultimate goal is to transform Rockwall into a true self-organized community, received 3,187 votes while McCallum garnered 1,087 and Jones had 616.

He had also said that the city was moving forward in all areas, most importantly roads and transportation.

"Obviously, I talked a lot



Bill Cecil
Rockwall Mayor

about aggressively attacking roads and infrastructure. We did that, but there is still so much that needs to be done," Cecil said.

"[We will] put a lot of effort and vigorously attack the roads issue and continue with the momentum we have."

During his previous term, according to Cecil, Rockwall changed its comprehensive plan and ordinances to require a higher quality and lower density of

development, which he said softened the city's growth to around five to six percent compared to when it was 8 to 9 percent.

"We are getting the results we want and will continue to focus on that," Cecil said. "I [also] talked a lot about realigning the city to be more customer friendly."

We are in the process of doing that and are becoming more efficient in the way we do business."

In moving forward into his new term, one of Cecil's primary goals is to make sure Rockwall has all the facilities it needs so that residents won't never have to leave the city.

He also touched on the hospital district and new retail coming, continuing the progress the city has made on its parks and economic development at the industrial level, which will continue to take some of the lax pressure away from rooftops in the community."

"I want us to have a highest quality of retail and life in the community," Cecil said. "I want to continue along that path so that we have everything we need in Rockwall."

Grand jury indicts DA Sumrow in funds case

STAFF REPORT

County officials are taking a wait-and-see approach to the legal woes engulfing District Attorney Galen Ray Sumrow after a Travis County grand jury on April 11 returned an indictment charging Sumrow with three counts of abuse of official capacity.

"What we have to do at this time is seek some type of legal opinion," Rockwall County Judge Chris Florance told The Associated Press.

Sumrow, 57, stands accused of diverting nearly \$68,000 of taxpayer money into his personal account in 2003 and 2004. He has since repaid the money.

Sumrow surrendered to authorities Feb. 28 and testified before a Travis County grand jury April 10 and has maintained his innocence, saying the state comptroller's office made a mistake in depositing the money into his personal account.

Authorities, though, say the form authorizing the deposits was signed by "G.R. Sumrow."

Investigators say Sumrow used the money to pay expenses such as child support, utilities and credit card bills.

Two of the charges are third-degree felonies-punishable by up to 10 years in prison and fines of \$10,000 each.

The third charge is a state jail felony punishable by up to two years in prison and a \$10,000 fine.

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— March 29, 2007 —

Rockwall officials pleased with smoking ordinance

By EMILY BERMAN
news@rockwallcountynews.com

The Rockwall City Council passed a smoking ban — a topic of much consideration and analysis at the regular meeting March 19 and Rockwall Mayor Bill Cecil said he believes it was a good move for the city.

"We decided to not allow smoking on the inside of facilities but will not regulate smoking in patios and outdoor areas other than around the entrance," Cecil said. "We're going to regulate the entrance so people don't have to walk through a smoke mirage to get inside a restaurant."

Cecil said feedback from the owners and proprietors was that being able to live with the

Council's decision. One Council member said that in the case of a private party an exception should be made but Cecil said the Council as a whole felt it should be a complete ban inside establishments.

The ban takes effect May 1.

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RETROSPECT

2007's Most Newsworthy Stories

- June 28, 2007 -

Rape charges against 3 former, current RHS students dropped

STAFF REPORT

Nine months of public scrutiny has apparently come to an end for three now-former and current Rockwall High School students with the decision this week to dismiss charges accusing them of sexually assaulting a 16-year-old female classmate after the parents of the alleged victim decided they did not want their daughter to testify in the court.

tify in the court.

Bobby Earl Taylor, now 18, and two juveniles had been accused of luring her to one of the suspect's homes in Rowlett, holding her captive and raping her in a Sept. 3 incident. All three of the alleged suspects were part of the RHS football team and Taylor, a senior starting receiver and all-district defensive back for the Yellowjackets, was consid-

ered a legitimate NCAA Division I prospect.

As an adult, Taylor had faced from five to 99 years or life in prison had he been convicted. The other two suspects were 16 at the time of the incident.

Rowlett police said last fall that the victim told them one of the suspects called her Sept. 3, inviting her to his home. The other two suspects were also

there when she arrived. Police said two of the suspects allegedly held the girl down while the other assaulted her with all three eventually raping her. The incident was reported to Rowlett police Sept. 19.

Rockwall County District Attorney Ray Sumrow, himself under multiple investigations for alleged misappropriation of county funds and forgery, said there

was no question that sex took place but the issue was whether the sex was consensual or not.

Attorneys for the three suspects, who had all been indicted, said the case never should have gotten as far as it did.

"We've been saying all along that these guys should not have been indicted," Larry Jarrett, attorney for Taylor told The Dallas Morning News. "We are

just happy the wheels of justice moved, although they did move slowly, they did move."

An attorney representing one of the other suspects questioned the evidence, or lack thereof. Danyale Holland said law enforcement officials mishandled the case, adding that police never conducted a crime scene investigation at the house where the assault allegedly took place.

ROCKWALL COUNTY CHURCH HIGHLIGHTS & DEVOTIONAL

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 Proverbs 18:7

"Let every thing that hath breath praise the Lord. Praise ye the Lord."
 Psalm 150:6

FEATURES FROM THE BIBLE
 TRUTH IN SCRIPTURE
SPIES TO the Promised Land
 Numbers 13 and Deuteronomy 1

Moses sent 12 spies to check out the land of Canaan, the land to which they were going. One was selected from each tribe: Shammua from the tribe of Reuben, Shaphat from the tribe of Simeon, Caleb from the tribe of Judah, Igal from the tribe of Issachar, Hoshea (Joshua) from the tribe of Ephraim (a tribe of Joseph), Palti from the tribe of Benjamin, Gaddiel from the tribe of Zebulun, Gaddi from the tribe of Manasseh (a tribe of Joseph), Ammiel from the tribe of Dan, Sethur from the tribe of Asher, Nahbi from the tribe of Naphtali, Geuel from the tribe of Gad.

After searching out the land the spies were to report to Moses what they had found.

At the end of 40 days the spies returned to Moses and Aaron and reported that there was great produce of the land, but that the people living there were very large.

10 of the spies said the task of taking the land from the people already there was not possible.

Joshua and Caleb said that the land was exceedingly good. They said that if the Lord was pleased with the Israelites He would lead them into the land and give it to them. "...do not rebel against the Lord. And do not be afraid of the people of the land, because we will swallow them up. Their protection is gone, but the Lord is with us. Do not be afraid of them," they plead before the entire assembly of the Israelites. Numbers 14: 9.

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"But God demonstrated His own love for us in this: while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."
 Romans 5:8

"That if you will confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord', and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved."
 Romans 10: 9-10

For in thee, O Lord, do I hope; thou wilt hear, O Lord My God.
 Psalm 38:1

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RETROSPECT

2007's Most Newsworthy Stories

— March 8, 2007 —

Austin road trip bountiful for Rockwall team and fans

By Cliff Gibson
cliffgibson@rockwallcountynews.com

AUSTIN - One year ago, Rockwall fans came in droves to Austin to watch their Lady Jackets earn their first-ever state ketball title.

Unfortunately, they returned home with the bitter taste of defeat after Plano West handed Rockwall a 54-47 loss, ending their hopes of trimming down the nets at Austin's Frank Erwin Center.

A year later Rockwall was back with a vengeance — and so were its fans.

Anybody in attendance for the Lady Jackets' semifinal victory over Mansfield Summit can attest to the fact that Rockwall fans traveled — and travel well.

But the fan support that turned Saturday's championship game into more than an impressive victory was more than impressive. Senior forward and championship Most Valuable Player Haley Weest was among the many who were impressed by the show of

support from Lady Jacket fans.

"Our fans are awesome to come out and support us and have a turnout like this," Day said. "We wouldn't be here without their support, we have to hand this state championship to them as well."

With an atmosphere that would rival some big college scenes, Rockwall's fans turned out by the thousands it seemed, and never went quiet. But the presence of Rockwall fans wasn't just inside the Erwin Center. Their reach extended through every square mile of Austin.

But was the turnout bigger than last season's championship run? No doubt about it.

Lauren Weest, a junior cheerleader at Rockwall High School, could definitely vouch for that.

"The support this year was so much bigger than last year," Weest said. "We all felt the girls were going to do something special and everybody wants to be supportive of that. They worked so hard and we're really proud of

them. The feeling is awesome."

The experience is something senior Kiara Slaton will always remember. Slaton moved to Rockwall after Hurricane Katrina forced her family from their Louisiana home.

"This is definitely the happiest moment of my life," Slaton said, with the UIL championship trophy held tightly in her arms. "This team, this school, these fans and this community are my family now. This [Rockwall] is my home."

Coach Jill McDill was another in a long line of players and coaches who gave their appreciation to the community.

"This is a special group and the community is a part of that," McDill said. "Our goal was to get back to Austin and win the gold."

We did that and put some icing on the cake by going 40-0."

The Lady Jackets spent a large portion of the season ranked in the USA Today Super 25 national poll and entered the state tournament ranked No. 3 nationally, two



Rockwall Lady Jackets celebrate winning the Class 5A state basketball title March 3 in Austin.

Rockwall County News / FILE PHOTO

spots ahead of Cy-Fair, which, ironically, had held the top ranking in Class 5A all season.

But with a state championship and nice, shiny gold medals in their hands, McDill says that even if the Lady Jackets were not to win the mythical national title, they'd still be satisfied with what they've already earned.

"The girls got the gold and got the ring and that's what we set out to do" McDill said. "If we don't get it [the national title], I'm sure we'll be happy just being the champions of Texas."

Now that the goal has been reached and the perfect season set in stone, every team member as well as community member

carries with them a great deal of pride — and rightfully so.

"It's a privilege to be part of a school with a state championship," said Deedee Davis, an RHS junior. "It's a great feeling and we're all very proud of the girls and our town."

— September 28, 2007 —

Officials reach consensus on jail expansion

By Justin Jones
jonesj@rockwallcountynews.com

In continued planning efforts regarding the Rockwall County Detention Center's proposed expansion, Sheriff Harold Eavenson said a consensus on the facility's number of beds was reached Friday, Sept. 21 at a county commissioners workshop.

The choices, according to Eavenson, were between 388- and 450-bed facilities, with the commissioners selecting the lesser of two.

By choosing the 388-bed facility, Eavenson said, the jail would cost less and take less time to build.

"I think it was a matter of economics on why they chose the 388 over the 450," Eavenson said, noting nothing during the workshop was voted on. "But I'm OK with that. What we did Friday was identify in the minds of everyone, commissioners specifically, on where we are and what we think we need to do based on the research and information we had."

According to Eavenson, building a 388-bed facility will enable the jail to operate for probably eight years before another facility would have to be built.

Once ground is broken on the expanded facility, Eavenson said, the minimum security facility can probably be completed in a year less while the regular facility would be completed in around two years.

He also said a 288-bed facility would give the jail 529 beds.

Currently, the jail has 241 beds and only 221 are usable because of the separation sales the facility mandated to have by the Texas Commission on Jail Standards.

Because of the separation sales, the 529 beds would drop to 490 useable beds, according to Eavenson, who also said that since August 2001 to July 2006,

the daily inmate population has doubled, rising from 100 to 215.

Compared to other jails, an architectural firm that has helped the county plan for the proposed expanded facility, according to Eavenson, said the inmate population is now increasing at the rate of 45 inmates a year.

"They [the firm] have calculated all of those numbers and have come up with a projection in regard to where we will be eight years from now," Eavenson said. "Also, the Texas Commission on Jail Standards did an evaluation on our facility in April and told us we would need 47 more beds by the end of 2007. So they are going to be pretty close to right."

The steady increase in inmate population over the years has not only resulted in the facility's proposed expansion, according to Eavenson, but has forced the jail in the past to contract out inmates because it had been full.

Eavenson said that currently the facility doesn't have any inmates contracted out but he said that could change tomorrow or next week.

Eavenson said it costs \$44 a day to contract out an inmate.

"When those numbers get high enough that we would have a problem with the Texas Commission on Jail Standards, we are going to ship them [inmates] out of here," Eavenson said. "It's not a matter of do we want to have a jail [or expand]. We are mandated by law to do that. I'm mandated by law to provide a safe and secure environment for the people who are in this jail."

Although there hasn't been a vote on what to do with the proposed jail expansion, Eavenson said he thinks everybody is on board to get the final decision made, put it on the agenda and vote on it.

He also said that at least two to three hearings will have to take place before any of that happens to give the public a chance to

comment on the proposed expansion.

"The reason I did those 10 or 11 powerpoint presentations [over the past year at various civic clubs and organizations] was so I could get a feel for what the community thinks about this project," Eavenson said. "The consensus I've got from the community, from those powerpoint presentations, was overwhelmingly in favor of doing this."

— January 4, 2007 —

Royse City ISD names superintendent finalist

ROYSE CITY — The Royse City ISD board of trustees voted unanimously on Thursday, Dec. 21 to name Randy Hancock as the lone finalist for the position of superintendent for Royse City ISD.

Hancock grew up on a far outside of Texarkana and attended high school at Liberty-Eylau, where his dream to teach was cultivated. Hancock graduated from East Texas State University-Commerce with a bachelor's in

Science in May 1977 and earned his master's in Science from the same university in 1983.

He began his teaching career in 1977 as an agriculture and science teacher and has served in administration as a high school assistant principal in Texarkana ISD and high school principal at Howe ISD.

Hancock is currently the superintendent for Howe ISD, where he has served for three years.

Previously, Hancock served three years at Maypearl ISD as superintendent.

Hancock and his wife of 30 years, Mary Alice, have one grown son and a new grandson, born on Tuesday, Dec. 26. Hancock enjoys golfing, fishing and hunting in his spare time.

After the 21-day waiting period, the board will visit with Hancock about an agreeable start date for all parties.

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RETROSPECT

2007's Most Newsworthy Stories

— September 20, 2007 —

Rockwall girl latest victim of cheese

By TEREASA NIMS
news@rockwallcountynews.com

Cheese, a heroin-based drug and other illegal drugs may have played a role in the death of a Rockwall High School 11th-grader Monday.

Paige Elliott, 16, of Heath was found unconscious on a sofa at a friend's home on the 1400 block of Greenbrook Drive, said Rockwall Police Lt. Carl Alsbrook. She was later pronounced dead at an area hospital.

An investigation into Elliott's death suggests illegal drugs, including the possibility of cheese — a heroin-based drug that surfaced in the United States in 2005, may have played a role in Elliott's death, Alsbrook said Wednesday. There have been numerous reports of Texas students who have died after using

cheese.

Rockwall ISD school officials are offering counseling for students dealing with Elliott's death.

"It's very sobering for high school students when a peer passes away," said Sheri Fowler, Rockwall ISD spokeswoman. "It's a very sad thing."

Rockwall police continue to investigate the teen's death. An autopsy was performed at the Dallas County Medical Examiner's office and toxicology results aren't expected back for several weeks.

Because of the pending police investigation, few details were released to the school, Fowler said.

Elliott's was the first death the school encountered this year.

As of press time Wednesday, there were no funeral arrangements for Elliott.



Dawn Elliott holds a photo collage of her daughter, Paige, who died in September. Dawn said she believes her daughter's death was meant to serve as an example to other teens.

Rockwall County News / FILE PHOTO

— May 17, 2007 —

With bond OK in hand RISD moves forward

By SYNTHIA BELL
Rockwall County News

Less than one week after a unanimous vote to approve a nearly \$200 million capital improvement bond, Rockwall ISD administrators are moving forward with preparations to implement the bond proposals.

The district's timeline for some of its bond projects include completion of the new No. 13 and No. 14 elementary schools in 2009 along with Phase 2 of the Rockwall-Heath High School project and expansion of the Cullins Lake Pointe and RISD kindergarten facilities in 2008.

The district also anticipates completing modifications to Rockwall High School, the Aquatics Center and Wilkerson-Sanders Memorial stadium in 2009. The early childhood North and South centers and land acquisition are scheduled for completion in 2009 while the technology facility will not be complete before 2012. According to Sherry Fowler, RISD executive director of marketing and public relations, Superintendent Gene Burton has always said the bond proposal would be a defining moment for the school district and the Rockwall community.

"What we saw this weekend was a community embracing our vision and residents coming together to endorse the future of our schools and community," Fowler said. "As we speak, administrators are already reviewing bond implementation plans."

More than 4,000 voters were



Sherry Fowler, RISD Executive Director of Marketing and Public Relations.

in favor of the RISD bond election was so successful because the district's Citizens committee and parents did a great job helping the public understand why the bond would benefit the school and community.

She said the district is grateful to those who went out and worked hard to get the bond approved while at the same time ensuring that voters understood the overall scope of the project.

"Obviously, the bottom line is that this was hugely significant for the district in a way that is incredibly positive," Fowler said. "I really wouldn't say there is anything negative to this situation, because any time you can advance the education of the children in your school district, it is an incredibly positive, wonderful thing."

Rockwall has had a number of previous bond elections in the past but according to Fowler, the 2007 bond was the largest to date. The 2006 bond totaled almost \$75 million.

For complete details on the various RISD bond projects, all the school district or visit the district's Web site online at www.rockwallisd.org.

"Obviously, the bottom line is that this was hugely significant for the district in a way that is incredibly positive."
— Sherry Fowler

— November 8, 2007 —

Voters OK all four wet/dry referendums within county

By MARCUS FUNK
news@rockwallcountynews.com

Residents of Rockwall County approved four proposals to legalize the sale of alcohol during elections Nov. 6.

Voters in Rockwall, Fate and Royse City approved proposals to legalize the sale of beer and wine for off-premise consumption and Rockwall residents also approved the sale of mixed beverages in licensed restaurants. Hard liquor remains unavailable in Fate and Royse City and available only in some restaurants in Rockwall. The ordinances are city-based and do not apply to the county at large.

The first proposal allows grocery stores and other outlets to sell beer and wine, but bars them from serving alcohol to customers. The

second proposition in Rockwall refers to the classification of restaurants, not the alcohol itself. Paul Longinotti, chairman of the Rockwall Citizens for Economic Progress, said the proposition will allow restaurants to serve alcohol without requiring private membership or collecting personal information, which is safer and more convenient.

"Restaurants will still be serving the same beverages but they'll take less information. The only reason we'll ask for a drivers license now is for proof of age," Longinotti said. Supporters of the initiatives such as Rockwall City Councilman Cliff Sevier said the previous dry laws stunted economic growth in the county. Large businesses and grocery chains

were unwilling to open stores in Rockwall without the opportunity to sell beer and wine, Sevier said, and a significant amount of sales tax revenue left the city whenever a resident drove out of town to purchase beer and wine elsewhere. The proposals increased development potential and tax revenue throughout the county, Sevier said.

"I'm very pleased. This is probably the biggest economic development opportunity that we've had in a long time," Sevier said. "It benefits all the taxpayers of Rockwall."

Opponents of the measures focused on the social and health implications of the proposals rather than their economic ramifications.

Les Joslin, pastor at Community Baptist Church in Royse City and founder of Citizens for a Better Royse City, said the proposals could bring unwanted alcohol abuse and safety hazards to local communities. The proposal in Royse City won by a 5 percent difference, and although he accepted the outcome, Joslin said he wished the election had gone differently.

"I've seen how alcohol has affected individuals and families, and I think it's a sad day," Joslin said. "I'm the one that gets calls at 12 o'clock at night from people whose lives and families have been destroyed by alcohol, and they're trying to find help. I was just hoping we could keep it out of Royse City."



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By Marcus Funk
news@rockwallcountynews.com
Rockwall Mayor Bill Ce
said he only needs one word
to describe the potential benefits
of the new Presbyterian Hospital
in Rockwall.
"Unlimited," Cecil said. "It
brings huge advancement to
the area and has the type of techno
logy and capability in our commu
nity. It's an economic engine, a
quality of life advancement."
The new facility is a 125,000
square-foot general-care hos
pital located at 3150 Horizon R
oad in Rockwall. Cecil called a grow
ing medical corridor. The fac
ility will offer 50 inpatient be
drooms, seven operating
rooms, six intensive care
units and a host of other services.
According to Richard Boyd, vice
president of marketing and busi
ness development for TphR, the
company that built the hospital, the
facility will serve as a regional hub for me
dical care and could attract patients
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RETROSPECT

2007's Most Newsworthy Stories

- December 13, 2007 -

- July 26, 2007 -

Presbyterian Hospital should be a boon for Rockwall

By Marcus Funk
news@rockwallcountynews.com

Rockwall Mayor Bill Cecil said he only needs one word to describe the potential benefits of the new Presbyterian Hospital of Rockwall.

"Unlimited," Cecil said. "It is huge, huge advancement to be able to have this type of technology and capability in our community. It's an economic engine, and it's also a quality of life advancement."

The new facility is a 125,000-square-foot general-care hospital located at 3150 Horizon Road in what Cecil called a growing medical corridor. The facility will offer 50 inpatient beds, eight delivery rooms, seven operating rooms, six intensive care units and a host of other services, according to Richard Boyd, vice president of marketing and business development for TpHR, the company that built the hospital.

Cecil said the hospital would serve as a regional hub for medical care and could attract patients as far east as Paris.

Services traditionally located

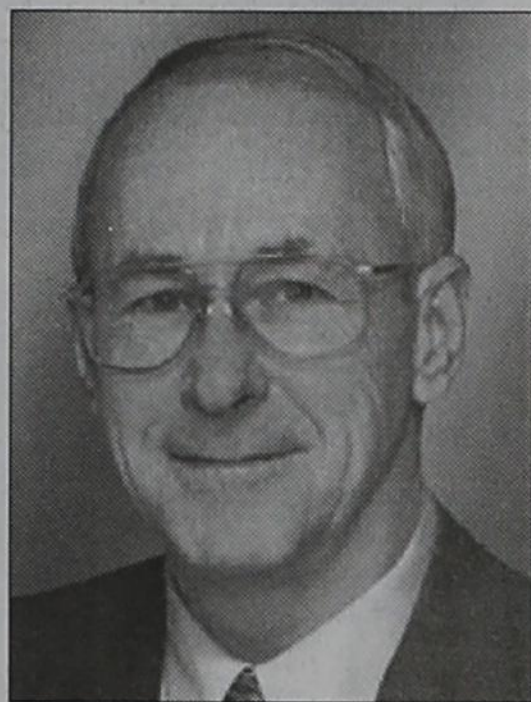
only in downtown Dallas will now be available in Rockwall, and the hospital will provide rural and suburban patients with a closer alternative to metropolitan facilities, according to Ken Teel, president of the Presbyterian Hospital of Rockwall. Founders were also responding to elements within Rockwall itself.

"We picked Rockwall because it is a fast-growing area that did not have a hospital," Teel said. "There's so much growth here that it seemed to be a fit."

Boyd said the hospital is celebrating its grand opening Dec. 15 and tours will be offered to interested residents. The hospital will begin accepting patients between Christmas and New Year's Eve.

Alongside that medical care is serious economic potential and job growth.

Around 350 new jobs will be open to the community once the facility reaches full swing in January, according to Boyd. Many of those positions are already open and hundreds of people have responded to job



Bill Cecil
Rockwall Mayor

fairs and other notices.

"We will be the second-largest employer in Rockwall, behind the city, and we're staffing our facility right now," Boyd said. "We've hosted several health fairs and we've had more than 3,000 people respond to potential openings."

For more information on employment at the hospital, visit www.presbyrockwall.com. Tours begin at 11 a.m. Dec. 15.

Hilton Bella Harbor a dream development

By JUSTIN JONES
Rockwall County News

Rob and Sara Whittle have traveled all across the world.

Throughout their adventures, Rob said one thing has remained constant wherever they vacationed.

"Every place we would go," he said, "the first thing you would want to do is stay in a hotel near the water."

For 25 years, the married couple dreamed of building an upscale, full-service waterfront hotel in Rockwall.

On Wednesday, July 18, the Whittle Development owners' dream inched one step closer to becoming a reality as the Hilton Bella Harbor - a 31-acre project that will include 231 rooms - celebrated its "topping off at The Harbor."

The Hilton, which will be the centerpiece of The Harbor, will feature 25,000 square feet of event space, 16 meeting rooms, a 1,200-capacity ballroom and a full-service spa and fitness center.

Hilton Bella Harbor will also have direct shoreline access and is located nearby 25 shops and restaurants.

"We are all very excited about the hotel and it's a really nice project that has come to our

area," said Andy Papoutsis, who came out of retirement to become Hilton's general manager. "The Rockwall and nearby communities are all very excited. It will bring tremendous growth to the area, huge revenue and 250 jobs. It's a win-win for all."

Guest rooms and suites include an oversized desk with a Celle chair, 32-inch high-definition flat screen TV, hospitality center with coffeemaker and a mini-refrigerator.

Guests will also receive a complimentary USA Today each weekday morning and local and 800 phone calls up to 60 minutes per call.

"We have so many people involved in this and we just want it to compliment the whole Harbor and other businesses that are already here. With the hotel being introduced and all of these people turning out, it helps keep the excitement going in the whole Harbor area," Sara said.

Also engulfed in the widespread excitement is Rockwall Mayor Bill Cecil, who was nearly at a loss for words in trying to describe the emotions surrounding the project and the "topping off" turnout, which was huge.

"We actually started this with a dream. There is no way this could have been done as a public

development only and there's no way it could have been done as a private development," Cecil said. "Putting together a public and private development here on this [31 acres] has meant everything to this community. We now have lake access, which is the reason why we started this."

With the addition of the Hilton, when The Harbor is completely built out, Cecil said there will be more than 1,200 employees working.

And according to Cecil, when you look at the sales tax revenues the entire project will bring to the city, he said this is truly an economic engine for the community.

"From a community standpoint, the impact is immeasurable," Cecil said. "There is no dollar value that you can put on the community impact this [The Harbor] has."

The Hilton Bella Harbor is scheduled to open in 2008 during the Valentine's Day weekend.

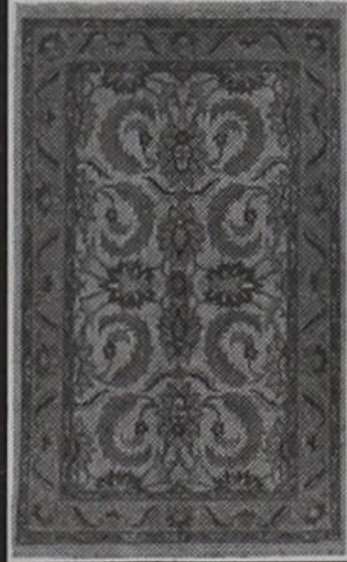
"Normally in a community the size of Rockwall, you wouldn't have anything this big," Whittle said. "The foundation [of the hotel] alone is 2 acres. The whole Harbor, when it's finished in two years, will employ more than 1,000 people. It has made Rockwall a true destination point for North Texas."

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05 CHEVY MALIBU LS V6	\$12,988	\$10,964	06 CHEVY CREW CAB LS	\$20,988	\$18,912
03 GMC SIERRA EXT CAB Z71	\$17,988	\$15,912	06 TOYOTA HIGHLANDER	\$20,988	\$18,964
06 BUICK RENDEZVOUS CX	\$18,995	\$15,990	07 PONTIAC SOLSTICE	\$24,988	\$22,644

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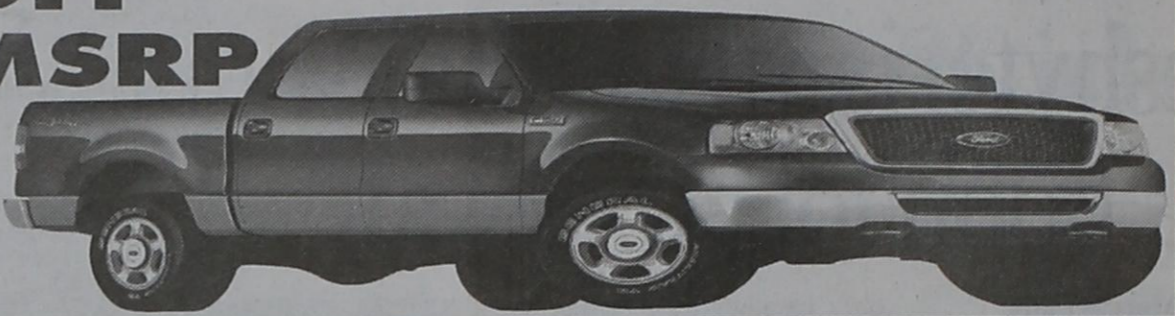
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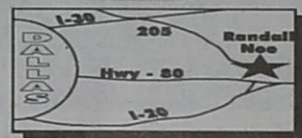
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Legal Notices

Application has been made with the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission for Mixed Beverage Restaurant Permit With FB, Food and Beverage Certificate, and Beverage Cartage Permit by SIK Texas License Corp. dba Carino's Italian Grill, 819 IH 30 E., Rockwall, Texas 75067. Officers of said corporation are Roger Farley Thompson, Pres/Sec & Director; Jeffrey Alan Hoban, Vice Pres. & Asst. Sec.; Laura Ann Richard, Asst. Sec. and Bryan Douglas McCrory Vice Pres/Treasurer & Asst Sec.

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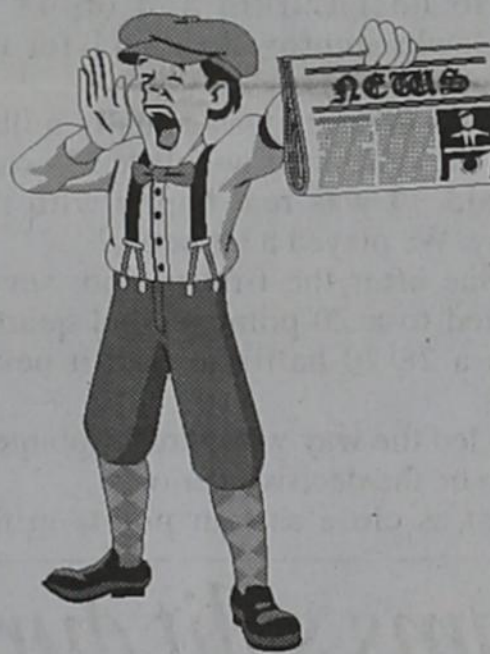
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Request for Sealed Competitive Proposals

ORCHESTRA START UP 2008 RFP 08-01.17-76

Proposals received until 2:00 PM August 17, 2008

DIGITAL CAMERA RECORDING EQUIPMENT FOR BUSES RFP 08-01.18-77

Proposals received until 2:00 PM August 18, 2008

The Rockwall Independent School District is receiving sealed competitive proposals for the above mentioned products/services. Proposal packages may be requested by email to dmacdonald@rockwallisd.org or downloaded at DemandStar.com. The District anticipates award at the February board meeting. Proposal forms should be in a sealed envelope to the attention of the Director of Purchasing and marked with the proposal number and name. Proposals will be received until 2:00 PM on January 17 or 18 (as noted above), 2008 at the Administration Center located at 1050 Williams Street, Rockwall TX 75087 at which time sealed proposals will be publicly opened but not read.

The Board of Trustees for the Rockwall Independent School District reserves the right to reject any and all bids/proposals and to waive any irregularities, technicalities or informalities in any bids or the bid process.

Public Notices

NOTICE OF PUBLIC SALE

of property to satisfy landlord's lien. Sale will be at 9:00 o'clock a.m. on January 15, 2008 at 1760 I30 East, Rockwall, TX. 75087. Property will be sold to highest bidder for cash. Deposit for removal and cleanup may be temporarily required. Seller reserves the right to not accept any bid and to withdraw property from sale. Property in each space may be sold item-by-item, in batches, or by the space. Property being sold includes contents in spaces of the following tenants, with brief descriptions of contents of each space:

Michael O. Curtis-bed mattress, refrigerator & misc. household goods; Machell R. Tatro-Misc. household goods, lots of boxes, work tools, furniture, including sofa, table, & bed, clothes, pictures; Dustin R. Woods-Filing cabinets, clothes, baby bed, refrigerator, furniture & misc. household goods; Christopher M. Davis-Washer & dryer, lawn furniture, game table, bed, BarBQ grill & misc. household goods; Staev Staiko-Paint, roofing shingles & misc. construction goods. Contact Mary Lou Garza, 972-771-0138 @ Rockwall Mini Storage, 1760 i-30 East, Rockwall, TX 75087

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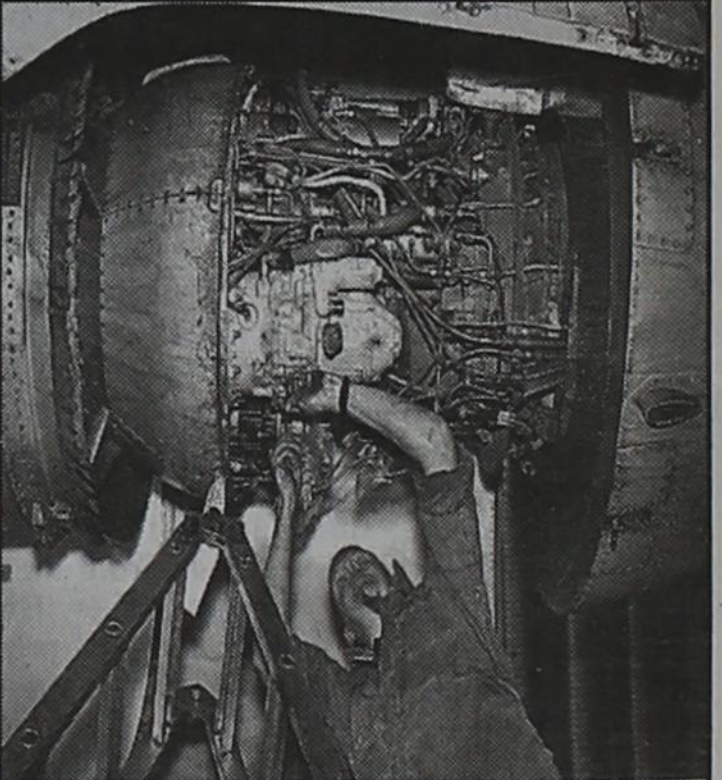
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SPORTS

The best source for Rockwall County high school and community sports

A FAMILIAR POSE

By MATT MCGILLEN
sports@rockwallcountynews.com

DALLAS – Having won their first three games at the Parish Episcopal tournament Dec. 27-29 by an average of 32 points, the real question wasn't whether anyone could beat the seventh-ranked Rockwall-Heath Lady Hawks.

The real question was, could anyone even slow them down? The answer: Not really.

Surging out to a lead that grew to as much as 24 points and never letting Houston's St. Pius X get closer than 11 after the midpoint of the second quarter, Heath knocked off the Lady Panthers, 70-58, in the tournament's championship game for their ninth win in a row.

It was the second tournament title for the Lady Hawks, who improved to 21-2 for the year.

And just like the Quinlan tournament, it was Sequeena Thomas who carted off the Most Valuable Player plaque. The 5-9 junior scored 26 points and pulled down 18 rebounds in the

Lady Hawks capture another tourney title, improve to 21-2

title game and averaged 20 points and 12.5 rebounds for the tournament.

Joining her on the all-tournament team was her front court cohort, 5-11 sophomore Shanae Lowrance as well as 5-4 senior guard Adrienne Boswell. Lowrance had 12 points and 12 rebounds against the Lady Panthers while Ashlyn Reyes added 11 points and Boswell nine.

Heath opened the tournament with a 67-25 demolition of Trinity Christian-Addison before pouncing Greenhill, 74-35. The Lady Hawks then downed tournament host Parish Episcopal, 71-55 to reach the final.

The Lady Hawks may have played their best quarter of the year against Parish, racing to a 34-6 lead after one period on the strength of 14-of-19 shooting,

with Boswell (13 points), Thomas (10) and Lowrance (9) accounting for all but two of Heath's points.

Thomas and Lowrance finished with 20 points each with Boswell adding 19. Lowrance had a game-high 16 rebounds.

Against Greenhill, it was Boswell who led Heath, scoring 17 points on 8-of-12 shooting. Thomas, who spent almost half the game on the bench after taking an elbow to the mouth early in third period, had just 10 points and a season-low four rebounds.

In the tournament opener, the Lady Hawks rolled out to a 27-3 first quarter advantage and never looked back against the Lady Trojans. Thomas had 24 points and 17 rebounds while Lowrance added 16 points and 14 boards.

The Lady Hawks, 4-0 in District 10-4A action, resume their district schedule Jan. 3 when they travel to Highland Park before hosting Terrell on Jan. 5.



Rockwall County News / DAVE KIRWAN

The Rockwall-Heath Lady Hawks pose after winning another tournament title, this time in Dallas on Dec. 30. (bottom from left) Audrey Craven, Adrienne Boswell, Ashlyn Reyes, Arielle Pace and (front from left) Emily Kirwan, Katelyn Morris, Britton Massar, Sequeena Thomas, Shanae Lowrance, Mariah Washington and Nadia Thomas.

Jackets showing signs of improvement lately

By LARY BUMP
sports@rockwallcountynews.com

DALLAS – Despite losing twice in three games at the Dallas ISD Coca-Cola Invitational, the Rockwall boys' basketball team was in good shape to resume its District 10-5A schedule Jan. 2.

That was the opinion of coach Alan Simmons coming out of a whirlwind three games in two days at Ellis Davis Field House on Dec. 29-30.

The biggest highlight was a come-from-behind victory over Dallas Molina.

The Yellowjackets (4-12) had showed that morning that they could stay with strong competition by holding defending Class 4A state champion South Oak Cliff to a 30-30 halftime tie.

Then came a jolt of reality as the taller Golden Bears ran off the third quarter's first 15 points. They outscored Rockwall 17-5 to take a 47-35 lead on the way to a 73-47 victory.

Against Molina, RHS had another bad quarter – the second, when the Jaguars outscored the Jackets, 11-1, to take a 25-20 halftime lead. The lead reached double figures in the second half, but Rockwall bounced back from adversity and a 43-36 deficit after three quarters to win, 58-54.

The hero was junior guard Kyle Sandlin. He scored a team season-high 32 points – making all eight foul shots and 9-of-14 field goals, including 6-for-8 from 3-point range.

Rockwall didn't shoot as well the next day against Dallas Carter – 17-for-43 from the field, including just 7-for-23 on 3-pointers. But the Jackets improved against the Cowboys' pressure, and were in the game except for a lapse late in the second quarter.

That allowed Carter to go on a 12-1 run for a 28-17 halftime lead. Trying to catch up, RHS got into more of a running game with another team featuring a 6-11 center. Even so, the second-half



Rockwall County News / J.D. BRYANT

Rockwall's Chase Adair tries to avoid having his shot blocked by South Oak Cliff's J'Mison Morgan on Dec. 28.

deficit was just 45-36.

"We had only 12 turnovers, and 12-14 is our goal," Simmons said.

Unfortunately, almost all of those turnovers came late in the first half and during the second. The good news was that Carter's half-court trapping defense didn't bother Rockwall as much as South Oak Cliff's had.

"We're not going to play anybody better, and the teams aren't going to be that big, in our district," Simmons said. "I'm excited to see what will happen at Naaman Forest on Wednesday night."

After that District 10-5A game, the Jackets will be home for 6 p.m. games Jan. 4 against Sachse and Jan. 8 against Garland.

Late victory sends Hawks home happy

By MATT MCGILLEN
sports@rockwallcountynews.com

LUFKIN – Propelled by a big second quarter, the Rockwall-Heath Hawks ended what had been an otherwise disappointing weekend on a high note by holding off Mount Pleasant, 55-51, on the final day of the Lufkin tournament Dec. 29.

After dropping their first two tournament games, 60-41 to host Lufkin and 66-48 to Longview, the Hawks improved to 6-11 for the season by downing the Tigers.

"I thought Mount Pleasant was actually a little better team than the other two we played," coach Justin Morett said. "I was real happy with the effort on Saturday. We played a lot better."

Up by only one after the first period, seven Hawks contributed to a 20-point second quarter that gave Heath a 28-20 halftime lead it never relinquished.

Dustin Morett led the way with three 3-pointers in what proved to be the decisive period.

The Tigers got as close as four points in the

fourth quarter, but the Hawks not only held off Mount Pleasant, they ensured themselves a more pleasant three-hour ride back to Heath.

"It sure made the trip home a lot better," Morett said.

Chris Buttermore topped the Hawks' scoring with 16 points while Morett finished with 10.

Chase Neilson provided the brunt of Heath's offense against Lufkin and Longview, scoring 22 and 14 points respectively. Buttermore added nine in the Longview loss.

In both losses, the Hawks fell behind early and never came very close to catching up. Against Lufkin, Heath was outscored, 42-14, in the middle two quarters while in their loss to Longview they were outscored, 20-8, in the final period as the Panthers pulled away from a 4-point lead after three quarters to 18 by game's end.

The Hawks (0-2) resume district action in search of their first league win when they host Highland Park on Jan. 3 before traveling to rival Terrell on Jan. 5.

RC teams split during holiday tourneys

STAFF REPORT

Both basketball teams from Roysse City played four games in three days from Dec. 28-30 and both returned home with 4-game splits.

The Bulldogs (12-9) opened play in the Kaufman tournament with a 56-53 loss to Palestine Westwood but rebounded with wins over Greenville (81-53) and Kaufman (58-45).

They finished the tournament with a 72-60 loss to Class 2A

Krum.

The Lady Bulldogs (6-14) alternated wins and losses at the Dallas ISD Coca-Cola tournament.

Roysse City's girls opened with a 53-36 loss to Irving MacArthur and came back to beat Dallas Pinkston, 78-21.

The Lady Bulldogs suffered a 52-39 setback to Kimball in their next contest but closed out their tournament schedule with a 53-42 win over Forney.

The girls also took a 45-44

win over Sulphur Springs on home Dec. 31.

The Bulldogs hosted Plain John Paul II on Jan. 2 but results were not available at press time. They will host Kennedale on Jan. 5.

The Lady Bulldogs will begin their District 10-3A schedule Jan. 4 against Nevada Community. The Lady Braves are ranked No. 4 in Class 3A on the TABC.

The girls will host Commerce on Jan. 8.

RHS girls take third at All-Star Invitational

By LARY BUMP
sports@rockwallcountynews.com

COLLEGE STATION – For a third time this season, the Rockwall girls went into a tournament as the defending champions and came away with a strong effort but no first-place trophy.

After being the runners-up in the Allen and DeSoto tournaments, the Lady Jackets won three times but lost a semifinal game Dec. 29 to Houston Madison in the Bryan-College Station All Star Invitational at Bryan High School.

"We played really well, especially after not practicing for five days," coach Jill McDill said.

RHS went on to defeat Katy Cinco Ranch, last year's runner-up, for third place Dec. 30 at A&M Consolidated in College Station.

The Lady Jackets had allowed Madison's Lady Marlins to run their way past 60 points, a level unheard of against last year's state Class 5A champions, for a 62-55 victory.

The five times RHS has allowed 60 or more points this season, the Lady Jackets have lost. They are perfectly capable of scoring that many – they've reached 60 in 15 games, and are 13-2 in those contests.

"We're 19-5, but I feel like all five losses were to really good teams," McDill said.

In three games at the Bryan-College Station tournament, RHS was at its defensive best. Rockwall reached its goal of holding opponents to 40 points or fewer in defeating Huntsville 64-40, Pine Bluff (Ark.) 43-38 and Cinco Ranch, 40-37.

Another factor that has struck down Rockwall in its tournament losses was fatigue. Without last year's deep bench, the Lady Jackets have worn down and lost leads late in the game.

They led Madison, 47-44, after three quarters but were outscored, 18-8, over the final eight minutes.

Keeping Rockwall in the game had been Peyton Adamson, who scored 18 points, and Sunny Satery, with 17. She made five 3-point shots. Shelby Adamson added 10.

"The next day, we played great defense against Cinco Ranch. They were coming off a tough loss in the last five seconds to A&M Consolidated. Their starting shooting guard (Briana Gilbreath) is 6-2 and she's going to USC. We held her to 10 points," McDill said. "Sunny played really well down the stretch against Cinco Ranch after Shelby had fouled out."

Adamson scored 12 points in that game and Satery had 11.

Peyton Adamson continued to lead the Lady Jackets in scoring during the tournament. Her 63 points included 23 against Huntsville. Her sister led Rockwall with 19 against Pine Bluff.

After what McDill called a "tough preseason," the Lady Jackets return to what should be the most difficult stretch of their district competition. They're playing three games in seven days that began with a Jan. 3 showdown at Naaman Forest between District 10-5A's only 4-0 teams. Rockwall will be home for games Jan. 4 against Sachse (1-3) and Jan. 8 against Garland (3-1).



Wild and quacky swim meet finds Rockwall teams on top

STAFF REPORT

A fun tradition was started Dec. 22 when the Rockwall and Rockwall-Heath swim teams hosted the first RISD Duck Call meet.

The meet pitted RISD against swimmers from Mesquite ISD. In place of medals that are won at a typical meet were rubber ducks.

Both the Rockwall Orange Wave and Heath's Aqua Hawks combined for a big win over Mesquite, which included swimmers from Horn, North, West, Potect and Mesquite High School's.

The girls topped Mesquite, 106-59, while the boys took a 100-67 victory.

RISD won 40 ducks in all, including wins in the girls 200-yard medley relay (Rebekah Yount, Jacey Hodan, Aly Heuer and Caitlyn Wells), 200-yard freestyle (Dominique Cordova and Katelyn Gaston), 200-yard IM (Katie Langdon) and 50-yard freestyle (Morgan Madrid and Wells).

RISD also won the girls 100- and 500-yard freestyle (Coral Davenport), the 100-yard backstroke (Astrea Sait), 100-yard breaststroke (Jacey Hodan and Astrea Sait) and 400-yard freestyle relay (Rosie Hughes, Davenport, Rogers and Langdon).

Rockwall boys won several events, including the 200-yard medley relay (Ryan Lang, Jonathan Walters, Mitchell Foster and Dustin Fontenot),



Rockwall County News / COURTESY

Rockwall-Heath swimmers Caitlyn Wells (left) and Morgan Madrid display their winnings from the first-ever RISD Duck Call swim meet Dec. 22.

the 200-yard freestyle (Zach Crumply and Brandon Woolbright), the 200-yard IM (Zach Crumply and Kyle Killion) and the 50-yard freestyle (Samson Chung Yu and PJ Rock).

The boys also won the 100-yard butterfly (Samson Chung Yu and Sterling Lockhart), the 100-yard freestyle (John Michael Baker), 50-yard freestyle (Jonathan Walters) and 100-yard breaststroke (Brendan Wells).

The 200-yard freestyle relay team of Dustin Fontenot, Jonathan Walters, Jared Tokuz and Sterling Lockhart also came out on top.

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Contacting the County News

To submit stories, photos, letters and letters to the editor to the Rockwall County News, direct your e-mails to the following addresses:

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To contact sports editor Cliff Gibson, e-mail sports@rockwallcountynews.com.

To contact the RCN by phone, call (972) 722-3099. Send fax submissions to (972) 524-8083.

Around Town

'Les Miserables'

Rockwall High School's theatre and choral departments are presenting the musical, "Les Miserables," at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 31 and Feb. 14, 7:30 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, Feb. 2-3 in the RHS Theatre.

Tickets are reserved seats only \$10 and can be purchased from Margaret Mayo in the county office between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. or by e-mailing mmayo@rockwallisd.org.

Support Group

Rockwall area Widowed Person Support Group will meet at 5 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 15 at Texas Land and Cattle on Bass Pro Drive in Garland and at 1 p.m. Friday, Jan. 12 to pack lunch at The Center in Rockwall. Don Wilson, (972) 771-6815.

Young Republicans

County Judge Chris Florance will be the guest speaker for the Tuesday, Jan. 15 meeting of the Rockwall County Young Republican Club. The meeting will be held at 7 p.m. in the historic downtown court house in Rockwall. The Rockwall County Young Republicans is an organization comprised of men and women 18-40 who want to become more actively involved in local, state and national politics. Aaron Moore, amoores@yahoodom.com or (972) 489-3648.

Centerstage

PHS Centerstage Productions presents "Identity," the 2008 student-written show, in the Blaine Theatre on Friday, Jan. 11 at 7 p.m. and Saturday, Jan. 12 at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$8 the door.

Breakfast Rotary

Rockwall Breakfast Rotary meets at 7 a.m. Tuesday, Jan. 15 at the Rotary Hall at 408 S. Goliad in Rockwall with portfolio manager and guest speaker Don Hodges. RSVP to aggie@cas@hotmail.com.

American Legion

American Legion Post 117 in Rockwall meets at 7 p.m. on Thursday, Jan. 17 at the Community Center at Harry Myers Park with guest speaker Dr. Stan Scott who is an enlisted combat medic in Korea and later became a chaplain. Chuck Bealme (469) 698-0114.