



Canyon, New Braunfels boys soccer teams continue chase for 26-6A crown.

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Celebration of Black History month to be held.

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NEW BRAUNFELS Herald-Zeitung

Reporting the life story of New Braunfels since 1852

More children in need in Comal County



Population growth, other factors driving a larger pool of kids who require foster care

By Lindsey Carnett
The Herald-Zeitung

In 2008, 132 children from Comal County were under state guardianship. Last year that number was 414.

As the county's population continues to explode, another need is growing with it — a need for foster parents and volunteers.

Organizations in New Braunfels and surrounding areas are advocating more than ever the need for locals to step up to help a growing population of children in need.

An upward trend

According to statistics from the Texas Department of Family and

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MORE PARKING, MORE MONEY



Parking spots around Hinman Island Park will be paid parking spaces. MIKALA COMPTON | Herald-Zeitung

“That means we are transferring the cost of river management to the users of the facility, which by far and away, are our visitors.”

Kristi Aday,
Assistant City Manager

Council backs more river-area paid spots

By Will Wright
The Herald-Zeitung

There will be more parking available for this year's river recreation season, but some will immediately pay more this summer after New Braunfels City Council approved first readings of ordinances updating river-area parking rules and fees on Monday.

The first creates paid parking spaces near river entrances off East San Antonio Street and Hinman Island Drive. The second amends the sports-related parking passes for Prince Solms Park. The third creates a resident parking pass for

use at the Elizabeth lots, San Antonio Street parking and the Hinman Island parking areas.

Assistant City Manager Kristi Aday said the moves would continue increased river revenues, which rebounded in 2018 after the city extended paid parking days to May 1, raised parking fees at Prince Solms Park, and created paid parking spaces in Elizabeth Avenue lots.

“Raising Prince Solms rates from \$10 to \$20, and adding \$10 fees collected at the new parking sites, generated \$448,463 from parking last year, compared to \$223,921 in

See **PARKING**, page 6A

CASHING IN ON PARKING

\$223,921
Amount city made from paid river parking in 2017.

\$448,463
Amount city made from paid river parking in 2018 after adding spaces, changing rates.

+\$111,000
Amount of additional revenue projected in 2019 by the city adding additional paid spaces off East San Antonio and Hinman Island Dr.

Ballots set for May 4 election

By Will Wright
The Herald-Zeitung

The filing period for candidates seeking city and school district board seats ended at 5 p.m. Friday — leaving only two contested races on May 4 and all but ensuring new terms for one council member and three school board incumbents.

Three candidates each will compete for the District 2 seat on New Braunfels City Council and for two New Braunfels Independent School District at-large trustee positions. Also on the May 4 ballot is the city's \$120 million bond measure.

CITY COUNCIL

District 1 incumbent Shane Hines, 37, a technical sales representative, is unopposed for his first three-year term. District 2 incumbent Justin Meadows, 38, an insurance agent, is seeking a second term against challengers Bryan Mortenson, 27, a teacher, and Krystal

See **FILING**, page 9A

LEGISLATURE

Biedermann aims to protect monument at Alamo site

By Will Wright
The Herald-Zeitung

AUSTIN — On Friday, State Rep. Kyle Biedermann, R-Fredricksburg, filed House Bill 1836, which he says protects the state's history and preserves the Alamo complex in San Antonio.

The Alamo Cenotaph, also

known as the Spirit of Sacrifice, commemorates the March 6, 1836 battle fought at the Alamo. The monument, erected during the 1930s, honored the 100th anniversary of the battle and bears the names of those who fought and died for Texas during its war for independence against Mexico.

Today, the six-story Cenotaph is aging and in need of repairs. Because that would require disassembling the statue, along with proposed renovations for Alamo Plaza, some have sought to relocate the landmark from its current home near the Alamo. Biedermann said his bill, the fifth he's filed this session, ensures

legislative oversight for the Cenotaph, also known as the empty tomb of the defenders.

“All politics aside, the state of Texas was shaped by the battle of the Alamo,” he said. “It is a historic and important tribute to that battle and all those who made the ultimate sacrifice for all of us.”

“We do a horrible disservice to Texas by allowing the removal of this important, and uniquely Texas monument. I am proud to fight to protect our history and our Cenotaph.”

Last week, Biedermann co-sponsored House Bill 1500,

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FOSTER

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Protective Services, in 2018 there were 63,657 confirmed cases of abuse and neglect in Texas. Approximately 423 of those were in Comal County.

Eloise Hudson, the community relations coordinator of Court-Appointed Special Advocate — or CASA — of Central Texas, said she’s seen the need growing over the last two years.

“Just as kind of this Central Texas area grows, we have seen the number of children who are coming into CPS grow,” she said.

CASA of Central Texas works to serves four counties in the area — Comal, Guadalupe, Caldwell and Hays, Hudson said. CASA pairs a volunteer with an abused or neglected child to advocate for the child as he or she goes through the court process.

In 2016 CASA of Central Texas served 497 children. In 2018, it served 573 children, Hudson said.

“So we went up — serving 100 more children, but we are still down in percentage from last year — last year we served 51 percent of the children and this year we served 49 percent,” Hudson said. “So we served more children but the percentage went down because there were just more children who came into the system.”

Because of those increased numbers, there’s a need for more volunteers than ever before.

“It’s kind of an uphill battle for us, but we just kind of keep working one volunteer at a time,” Hudson said.

Growth is great for a community and it’s businesses, but this is one area that nobody wants to see growth, said Tara Rousset, CEO of St. Jude’s Ranch for Children – Texas.

SJRC is a nonprofit that offers dozens of services for children or families who have been affected by trauma, abuse or neglect, including housing foster children. Its campuses are located in New Braunfels and Bulverde, and it has an office in San Antonio.

“So of course with any



Children spend time at St. Jude's Ranch for Children in New Braunfels on Thursday. **MIKALA COMPTON | Herald-Zeitung**

population growth anywhere, as it grows, the social problems come with it,” Rousset said. “In the normal business, growth is fantastic ... but for us, we really wish there wasn’t growth in our business ... because that just means more kids are being abused.”

Not one cause Multiple things may be leading to the increase in numbers of children coming into the foster system. Growth in the area is just one. Life is also becoming more stressful, Rousset said.

Education may also be a contributing factor.

Strawberry Creek Services is New Braunfels’ first child placement agency specializing in licensing local families for fostering and adopting. It opened in September.

“I mean when a population grows, you’re going to have a higher number (of kids) naturally, ... but people just didn’t know about it as much and they’re maybe starting to,” Natalie Motl, Assistant Director at Strawberry Creek Services said.

Public education means

people are becoming more aware of what abuse and neglect look like. That means more people are calling it in, said Cheronda Tillman, Region 8 DFPS rural foster and adoption recruitment specialist.

“We’re doing more recruitment efforts in educating the general population about abuse and neglect, it’s effects, and what it looks like, so just educating the community and keeping it in the forefront of their minds, it’s likely that heightened awareness providing encouragement for folks to actually make those reports,” Tillman said.

Sondra Ajasin, founder of TruLight127 Foster & Adopt Ministries, said she feels the media has a vital role in helping spread awareness to people so kids can be helped. TruLight127 Foster & Adopt Ministries is located in Guadalupe County and is a nonprofit contracted with DFPS to license families for fostering and adopting.

“I think since the news has kind of picked up more highlighting these things, people



are more aware of what’s going on around them,” Ajasin said.

The growth in numbers locally has caused a need for more shelters, Ajasin said. Because of this growth specifically in Guadalupe Coun-

ty, TruLight127 is currently in the process of building the first emergency shelter in the county for foster children, Ajasin said.

“It’s been on our hearts to do this for a while because we see the amount of kids

that end up sleeping at the CPS office,” Ajasin said.

The shelter will be called “The Village,” and is expected to be finished by April 1.

Next week: A look at the process and the problems foster children face.

The Herald-Zeitung is read everywhere!



New Braunfelsers traveling with Great Getaway Tours, visit Ellis Island, NY. Back row from left: Dinah Burgin, Jay & Gerri Cooper, Allison Scacco, Sherry Wooley, Vicki Amen, Karen Bumbernick. Front row from left: Lisa Munden, Audrey Schroeder, Donna Williams, Camille Albus, Jennifer Amen, Ginny Eanes, Diane Worley, Blanche Pape, Susie Bain.

Vacation Photo Contest

Take a vacation. Take a copy of the Herald-Zeitung. Take a photo.

It's Easy to Enter

- Take a photo of friends or family reading the Herald-Zeitung at the most recognizable landmark on your vacation. Be sure to tag us when you post it on Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram at @newbraunfelshz
- E-mail your photo (preferred), along with the location it was shot and the names of the people pictured, to photos@nbtzhz.com or mail to 549 Landa St., New Braunfels, TX 78130.
- A panel of judges selected by the Herald-Zeitung will choose the three most memorable vacation photos submitted by Sept. 1. Winners will be announced the last Sunday of September.
- Each photo submitted entitles the Herald-Zeitung to publish the photo for promotional purposes. Photos will only run in the paper one time — no resubmissions will be published or eligible for the contest. Limit of five photos per person per year.



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