

The Sachse News

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Shining on the community, events and people of Sachse

sachsenews.com

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Future facilities discussed by WISD trustees

By Chad Engbrock
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Wylie ISD trustees are expected to consider a bond proposal at their regular August 21 meeting and will likely call an election for Nov. 7.

Trustees were presented a

Comprehensive Facilities Plan at a July 17 workshop that was developed over the past several months by a Master Facility Planning Committee (MFP).

The workshop included a district demography update, review of the MFP's work, facilities cost estimate and an elec-

tion timeline to consider.

The MFP committee's proposal totals \$298,145,000 in estimated costs.

Deputy Superintendent Kim Spicer summarized the committee's findings, including four scenarios that would allow the district to keep up with student

population growth.

She said the committee of about 40 individuals from Wylie, Sachse, Murphy and St. Paul included parents and community members.

Spicer said the committee's goal was to make sure all community perspectives were present

in formulating the facilities plan.

The MFP committee used demographics, projections and facility needs, as well as program needs and family and community requests, to reach their conclusion.

The committee also relied on 367 replies to a survey that was

sent to patrons of the district requesting input during the planning process.

The presentation shows that about 3,800 single-family lots, planned or in-process, remain in WISD's boundary.

See TRUSTEES page 5A

NEWS YOU NEED

Looking great on 78

The Sachse Chamber of Commerce will host a litter pickup along Highway 78 Saturday, Aug. 5 from 7:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. Meet up location is at Jeanie Marten Real Estate 6306 S. State Hwy 78.

Varsity volleyball game

The Sachse Lady Mustangs varsity volleyball team plays Rockwall-Heath at the Sachse High School main gym Tuesday, Aug. 8 at 6 p.m.

Pancake Breakfast at In-Sync

In-Sync Exotics will host their All-You-Can-Eat Breakfast on Saturday, Aug. 19 from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. Tickets can be purchased at insyncexotics.org.

New year, new teachers

It's crunch time for area school districts as they race against the clock to prep for the 2023-24 year welcoming new students and new teachers.

In Wylie ISD, new teachers — 225 in all — were celebrated at the annual "New Teacher Luncheon" hosted by the chamber of commerce at Wylie East High School Tuesday, July 25. See page 3A.

Lady Mustangs keep expectations high despite roster turnover

The toughest part of being a dominant high school athletics program is keeping the momentum every year, and the Sachse volleyball team knows all about those challenges. See Sports.

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Lake Lavon Levels
Normal 492
490.37 ft.
as of 7/31/23
Source: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

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Courtesy City of Sachse

The Sachse Animal Shelter broke ground on a new 5,000 square-foot shelter Thursday, July 27. Helping in the groundbreaking efforts are volunteers, from left to right, Cullen King, Brandi Petee, Janice Brooks, Terri O'Neal (Animal Services Supervisor), David Lockaby, Monica Thomas (Animal Services Officer) and Jim Mathis. Construction for the new \$4.45M shelter is expected to continue through Fall 2024.

City breaks ground on new Animal Shelter

By Jenice Johnson Williams
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Following a lengthy planning process, the city finally broke ground on its much-needed Sachse Animal Shelter last week.

Mayor Jeff Bickerstaff, City Manager Gina Nash, Police Chief Bryan Sylvester, Sachse City Council members, Animal Control staff, Police Chief Bryan Sylvester, Architect Ron Hobbs, Animal Shelter Volunteers and Construction Manager-at-Risk is Steele & Freeman representatives were present at the groundbreaking ceremony held at 7 p.m. Friday, July 28.

The council recently voted to approve the construction of the new \$4.45 million animal shelter after \$5 million funding was approved by voters in the 2021 Bond Election.

According to the city, the new shelter will be approximately 5,000 square feet and contain a variety of animal holding rooms, staff workrooms and offices and a public meet-n-greet space with future pets. Construction is anticipated to run through fall 2024.

Architectural services are provided by Ron Hobbs Architecture & Interior Design and the Construction Manager-at-Risk is Steele & Freeman.

The new shelter will be nearly twice

the size of its current building, which is a retrofitted machine shop and garage, with limited potential to serve community needs.

Although space has been limited, the shelter has consistently stayed at capacity, often finding ways to entice potential adopters with incentives such as discounted or even free adoptions. Both scenarios include spaying or neutering animals, along with providing necessary vaccines.

Animal Control Supervisor Terri O'Neal said, "We find a way — we make room."

See SHELTER page 5A

Volunteers keep food pantry community garden thriving

By Jenice Johnson Williams
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Hot Texas summers are not always ideal growing conditions for local gardeners but that hasn't stopped volunteers from maintaining a community garden for patrons of Sachse's local food pantry.

Sachse Lions Club member Melanie Houston, a volunteer at the 5 Loaves Food Pantry on-site garden, said it is doing very well this year. Spring vegetables such as cucumber and beans are coming to an end and are being pulled for the summer, but wa-

termelon, sweet potatoes, okra, peppers and tomatoes continue to thrive if the plants are watered regularly and mulched.

"While the production of these fruits does slow down above 90 degrees, we still harvest from 10-25 pounds per week," she said.

To date, over 300 pounds of homegrown produce has been donated this year with much more anticipated in the next couple of months. Lion Club members added trellises to help save space, which has also allowed them to increase green bean production during the spring and early summer. They

have labeled the raised beds as well as documented planting dates and plant types. Volunteers tend to pest issues and take note of when organic matter was added to soil.

"This creates a history for what processes work as well as show where improvements can be made," Houston said. "Rotating crops, composting, adding organic components and mulching have also been introduced to help improve the garden."

Houston runs the garden alongside other Lions Club members Al Schroder, Ed

See COMMUNITY page 6A



Jenice Johnson Williams/The Sachse News

The 5 Loaves Pantry community garden tended by the Sachse Lions Club continues to thrive despite skyrocketing temperatures. Current crop includes watermelon, sweet potatoes, okra, peppers and tomatoes.

Vets face PACT Act filings deadline

From Staff Reports
news@csmmediatexas.com

Texas leads the nation in veterans filing disability claims associated with exposure to toxic substances, with 90,000 claims filed since the PACT Act was enacted in August of 2022.

Public Affairs Officer Jim Halbrook said the Texas Veterans Commission has experienced a 25% increase in VA disability claims assistance since that time.

The PACT Act greatly expanded the eligibility of various toxic exposures for VA disability compensation claims, healthcare and benefits for Veterans exposed to burn pits, Agent Orange, and other toxic substances.

The act added to the list of health conditions that are assumed (or "presumed") to be caused by exposure to these substances.

The full name of the law is The Sgt. 1st Class Heath Robinson Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics (PACT) Act.

There's no deadline to apply for PACT Act benefits. However, to receive maximum benefits backdated to Aug. 10, 2022, PACT Act claims or intent to file must be submitted by Aug. 9, 2023, Halbrook said.

Additional information about the PACT Act and claims can be found online by searching for "PACT" at va.gov.

Veterans should note that submitting an intent to file is not a claim. It establishes a date to be used for determining retroactive pay if any. Vets would still need to file a claim and submit supporting documentation.

The Texas Veterans Commission advocates for and provides superior service to veterans that will significantly improve the quality of life for all Texas veterans, their families, and survivors. The TVC assists veterans with receiving their benefits, provides funding to agencies which provide direct services to veterans and administers the Hazlewood Act education benefits.