



Lady Hornets nab pre-holiday win. Sports, page 6.



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# ENTERPRISE

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Photo by Steve Snyder

Margo Blevins, a Ph.D. student at the University of Texas-Austin studying with the Texas German Dialect Project, interviews, from left, Jeanette and Harold Flusche, Leonard Vogel, and Rufus Henscheid. Betty Ann Blockus, also in the interview, and Christel Vogel, are out of the photo.

## City OK's Sicking development site 14-lot expansion

By Steve Snyder  
Editor

The Muenster City Council reconsidered Troy Sicking's request to add 14 new lots to the Lakeside Meadow Subdivision at its Dec. 6 meeting. Sicking wants to add them to the west side of Lakecrest Drive. After extensive debate, the council signed off on his preliminary plan.

"Roads are going to run north and south from now on, and there will be one road east and west at each end," Sicking responded.

Deweber added that the city currently requires one sewer manhole each 300 feet, among other things. Seeing things like that on

a preliminary plat would help to make sure whether that was being met.

Sicking responded that he didn't feel Deweber had given him enough time to fine tune his new preliminary plat map.

Deweber added that with him in position, not former city administrator Stan Endres, that "things were going to change." He added that the city had certain standards on its ordinance book, but that these hadn't always been followed in the recent past.

He added that whether or not things did change, he said he appreciated further direction from the council.

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## Early Muenster history, documented

### Texas German Dialect Project comes to town

By Steve Snyder  
Editor

To outsiders, the most famous German-Texan area is surely the Hill Country, in towns and cities like Fredericksburg and New Braunfels. But, of course, focused German immigration came elsewhere in the state as well, such as the settlers of Muenster and Lindsay.

So it was that Margo Blevins, a Ph.D. student at the University of Texas-Austin studying with the Texas German Dialect Project, came to the Muenster History Museum Dec. 8. She interviewed Jeanette and Harold Flusche, Leonard Vogel and German-born wife Christel, Rufus Henscheid, and Betty Ann Blockus about first-generation German-American customs, tradition and language usage in the area.

The project is about 20 years old, Blevins said. She referenced the German Hill Country at the start of explaining its work.

"We primarily go around central Texas, but go anywhere we find people with German heritage," she said.

The project looks to preserve German heritage and stories in

Texas. That includes seeing how German language use persevered and was preserved, especially in the breaking points of World War I and World War II.

Vogel and Henscheid took the lead in the discussion and interviews Blevins conducted.

Vogel talked about the German immigrants, and the first and second generations of their descendants, versus the "Americans" in the surrounding area, especially when they went to Gainesville and beyond.

"We had a lot of fun with those Americans," he said. "They were a little different but we got along OK."

Both he and Henscheid went on to talk about the farm-based economy of Muenster and its outlying area nearly a century ago, and how that was hit by the Great Depression.

"We never ever had \$5 in our house. We went on about 12 years with nothing," Henscheid said. "I remember a lot of people lost their farms."

Vogel talked about killing hogs and making sausage on the farm.

"My dad worked for Fischer's. Their recipe comes from my fa-

ther," he said.

Blevins then asked him how often they did sausage making. Vogel said it was a couple of times a year, no more, with not having refrigeration.

"When a blue norther came along, that was the perfect time," he said.

The Depression, or economic issues in general at that time, may have hit different people differently. In addition, what constituted economic class division lines were perceived differently by different people, per further discussion by Vogel and Henscheid. That was illustrated by further talk about refrigeration, or substitutes for it.

"We didn't have an icebox, like the rich people," Vogel said.

"We weren't rich, but we had an icebox," Henscheid observed.

Vogel then explained why going to church was often about more than going to church.

"You lived out in the country, you never saw anybody. You went to church Sunday and saw everybody," he said.

Henscheid then talked about the old cheese plant and how it got started.

SEE HISTORY, pg. 4

## Muenster ISD getting more US COVID funds

### Unofficial version of normal TEA rating stays unchanged

By Steve Snyder  
Editor

In his report to the Muenster School Board at its Dec. 8 meeting, Superintendent Steven Self said the district would be getting extra federal coronavirus money. The ESSER 3 funding has approximately \$99,000 on top of the original \$199,000. Self recommended holding off on spending it until the 2022-23 school year, and use it primarily to pay any staffing funded this year by the same program.

Later in the meeting, Self noted that, although the district and its individual schools were not subject to the Texas Education Agency's controversial A-F report card, suspended statewide this school

year due to coronavirus issues, that an unofficial report card had the district receiving the same grades as its last pre-COVID report. The district as a whole got an A, as did the high school. The elementary school got a B, falling short on the "school progress" and "closing the gaps" areas.

Next, Self gave the board a snapshot report of national trends in ACT testing results. The ACT is one of two college entrance examinations, along with the SAT. The report said that the English portion of the test had fallen the most, with 45 percent of students nationally failing to meet ACT's college English benchmark.

SEE MISD, pg. 4

## Sheriff's Office gets another 'employee'

By Steve Snyder  
Editor

The Cooke County Sheriff's Department is getting a new employee. Or, "employee."

At its Dec. 13 meeting, the county approved a memorandum of use with Deputy Janeen Bagette for the use of an explosive-finding K-9. So, "Munroe" will be joining the staff.

Sheriff Ray Sappington explained that Bagette was the county's K-9 officer. Munroe is her personal dog, hence the need for the agreement.

Sappington said that the only preconditions are that Bagette would be the handler, and that the county would cover any veterinary bills for Munroe.

"I think it's a great offer," Sappington said.

Sappington said that Munroe's skill in detecting explosives included gunpowder and ammunition. Munroe is a Belgian Malinois, similar to a slightly

smaller German shepherd. The Malinois is considered even better for this type of work and is handled more easily.

County Auditor Shelly Atteberry said the Texas Association of Counties said the county would be insured for Munroe up to \$30,000. This includes any injury to Munroe or any injury it might cause to a person not a suspect in a case.

In one other item related to the Sheriff's Office, the county approved taking insurance money from a 2018 Chevy Tahoe involved in a deputy sheriff's wreck, plus contingency money, to buy a new vehicle. Net cost, minus the insurance, is about \$10,000.

Courthouse nighttime lighting could get better, per a discussion item at the meeting.

"Jeff and Laura Johnson have reached out to me about getting lighting around the courthouse

SEE OFFICE, pg. 3

## St. Joseph



A beautiful bronze statue of Saint Joseph, patron of Sacred Heart parish, was donated by the Tony Luke family to be installed in front of the chapel. Fr. Joseph Keating led the dedication service following the 8 a.m. mass of the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary on Wednesday, Dec. 8, which coincides with the anniversary date of the first mass held in Muenster in 1889. It also marked the close of the Year of Saint Joseph proclaimed by Pope Francis.

Courtesy photo



# Local

## Meals on Wheels Christmas help

Courtesy photo  
Members of TEAM (Together Everyone Achieves More) assembled Christmas bags to be delivered to clients of Cooke County Meals on Wheels. The bags included socks, soap, lotion, fruit and snacks. Members of TEAM who helped include (left to right) Darin Allred of North Texas Medical Center, Tera Lucas of River Valley Health and Rehab, Gwen Potz-Nielsen of Home Helpers, Mollie Sandmann of Heart to Heart Hospice, Lori Holland of Universal Behavioral Health, Megan Anderle of Renaissance Care Center, Courtney Sewell of 1st Texas Home Health, and Karyl Thomas of Ardent Hospice. Other contributors included Paloma Hospice, Carrus Hospital, AssistCare Home Health and Elara Caring Home Health.



## Republican candidates



Courtesy photo  
Pictured from left to right: Lynn Switzer, County Court at Law; Pam Harrison, County Clerk; Steve Starnes, County Judge; John H. Morris, County Court at Law; Carroll L. Johnson, Justice of the Peace Precinct 2; Jeremy Jay Bayer, County Commissioner Precinct 4; Marci A. Gilbert, District Clerk; Chris McNamara, County Chairman; Patty Brennan, County Treasurer; Bradley "Brad" Mitchell, Justice of the Peace Precinct 2; John O. Roane, County Judge; John Metzler, County Commissioner Precinct 4; John J. "Jody" Henry, Justice of the Peace Precinct 1; Matt P. Sicking, County Commissioner Precinct 4; Jason M. Snuggs, County Commissioner Precinct 2; Leon Klement, County Judge.

## HISTORY .... Cont from Page 1

"I guess that was probably our first industry ... or business," Henscheid said. "It was owned by all the farmers, and that's how we paid for our groceries, with the milk."

Vogel followed up with noting that egg-laying and chicken raising were also important. At one time, chicks were ordered by mail. Later, a hatchery was created at the current site of the Muenster Garden Center, he said.

After this and more discussion, Blevins asked the attendees for German-language equivalents of English words and phrases, to get more information on the local German dialect and usage.

The Texas German Dialect Project is an umbrella organization connected with The University of Texas created to carry out research in representative Texas German speech communities in central Texas. One of its primary goals is to preserve the Texas German dialect as it reflects the cultural and linguistic traditions Texas German-Americans.

To do this, members of the TGDP conduct interviews with residents of representative Texas German speech communities. Portions of these interviews are digitized and subsequently stored for preservation in the Texas German Dialect Archive.

This allows users to listen to portions of interviews in combination with their transcriptions and translations.

Blevins also talked more about the TGDP and how she got involved.

"I got involved with the TGDP when I first came to UT Austin," she said. "The first graduate course that I took was about Texas German. The class was taught

by Hans Boas, the director and founder of the Texas German Dialect Project, and I was immediately interested and wanted to be more involved."

And, that chance to be more involved was gifted to her. Several years later, she was offered the job of project manager for the TGDP, which is basically responsible for the day-to-day workings of the project. She said that the job has traditionally been offered to graduate students in the Germanic Studies department who have an interest in linguistics. She has worked for the TGDP for the past five years.

She then explained how the TGDP came to Muenster.

"We do a number of things to find people to interview. Word-of-mouth is the most successful way to find new people, but we also sometimes cold-call museums, city halls, chambers of commerce, clubs, and churches in towns that were founded by Germans, have historically had high German populations, or that just have German names," Blevins said.

And, it was word of mouth in the case of Muenster.

"A German teacher who has collaborated with the TGDP a great deal told us about her visiting Muenster with her students, and how there was still a strong German community there. Based on her recommendation, we decided to see if there was anyone in Muenster who would be interested in being interviewed," Blevins said.

And, obviously, there was.

For more information, visit <https://tgdp.org/>.

## MISD ..... Cont from Page 1

In his technology report to the board, Jeff Presnall included his regular tip to the general public. That was whether or not personal computer users in the Microsoft world need to update from Windows 10 to Windows 11. His recommendation was to wait until Microsoft issues its first update next year. Otherwise, he said that Windows 10 should be generally good until 2025.

Aside from the public tip, Presnall said that he had set up a secure data portal in conjunction with North Central Texas College to serve its Red River Promise scholarship program.

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