



ROUTE 66 RAMBLE
PART 10: HOME TO TEXAS
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THE TEXAS SPUR

SINCE 1909 ★ NEWS FOR DICKENS AND KENT COUNTIES

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Vol. 114 No. 50 | Thursday, September 19, 2024 | www.TheTexasSpur.com | ONE DOLLAR

Spur gets cleanup help from Trinity Christian volunteers



SPUR SPIFF-UPS Last Saturday two busloads of student volunteers from Trinity Christian Academy in Lubbock rolled into Spur's Swenson Park, boosting local resources for cleanup and maintenance. | COURTESY PHOTOS



Local contractors, city finish up Rickels Parks grant improvements

BARBARA BRANNON | THE TEXAS SPUR

If you've driven by Spur's Rickels Park recently—the green space at the corner of Third and Burlington—you've spotted trees trimmed, grass mowed and plantings renewed.

But if you've entered the park or looked more closely, you've seen much more work done on hardscapes, including bandstand, benches and planters. Pressure-washing and repainting was done via a \$1,500 grant the City of Spur received this spring, to be completed by August 31. Those portions of the work were done by WestTX Blasting and Painting of Dickens. City technicians worked on tree branches and grass, while volunteers including Darla Thomason devoted time to sprucing up flowers and greenery.

Thanks go to everyone who helped in this endeavor, which crowds are sure to appreciate at Homecoming time in a few weeks.



COMMUNITY | news@TheTexasSpur.com

What's happening

COMING UP IN TEXAS SPUR COUNTRY

Submit your community announcements (maximum 75 words) to news@thetexasspur.com for events within the coming month, to run up to 4 issues

Special Bond Presentations for Jayton-Girard ISD Community

Tuesday, Oct. 8, 7 p.m., Kent County Community Center, 156 W. 4th St., Jayton
Tuesday, Oct. 29, 7 p.m., Kent County Community Center, 156 W. 4th St., Jayton

Local Events

Please let us know of any corrections: News@thetexasspur.com

DICKENS COUNTY-SPUR LIBRARY story time, Thursdays, 10 a.m., for babies to preschool, 403 E. Hill St., Spur

DICKENS COUNTY PUBLIC MARKET is scheduled for Saturday, Sept. 21, 10 a.m.—4 p.m., Spur Senior Center, 210 Burlington, Spur

SPUR GOLF ASSOCIATION will have its Club Championship and Annual Member Meeting, Saturday, Sept. 28, with 1 p.m. tee-off. The annual member meeting will take place following at approximately 5:30 p.m. A meal will be provided.

SPUR AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE will host National Night Out, Tuesday, Oct. 1, in Rickels Park. A hot dog dinner will be served.

SPUR INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT Homecoming, Friday, Oct. 4

SAVE THE DATE for the 1st Annual Spur Chili Cookoff, Saturday, Oct. 12, noon, Spur Senior Center, 210 Burlington. Entry deadline is Friday, Oct. 4, 5 p.m. All entries and fees must be received by this date. Please contact the Spur Area Chamber of Commerce, 101 E. Hill St. or (806) 271-3097, for more information.

SAVE THE DATE for a History Ramble in Dickens County with former state historian Bill O'Neal, Saturday afternoon, Oct. 4, preceded by a midmorning presentation at the Palace Theater in Spur. Lunch at the Spur Chili Cookoff is included; tickets for the full day's activities are \$20. Email PalaceSpur1929@gmail.com to reserve a space.

SAVE THE DATE for the annual Halloween Trunk or Treat in downtown Spur, Thursday, Oct. 31, on 2nd St. between First Baptist Church and the Lawrence Brothers Grocery Store. Free for all to participate.

SAVE THE DATE for Late Night Shopping with Santa at The Palace Theater and a lighted Christmas parade, Thursday, Dec. 5, in Spur.

South Plains Electric Cooperative opens Operation Round Up community grant application; deadline Sept. 27

STAFF REPORTS

South Plains Electric Cooperative's Operation Round Up has opened their community grant application process for the fifth year. The community grant is available for local non-profit organizations that serve members in the cooperative's service territory. Each grant is up to \$1,500, and the application period is from September 16–27. Applicants can apply online at SPEC.coop/operationroundup.

Operation Round Up was established in 1993 to help communities and individuals needing a hand up, not a hand out. The program's tagline, "neighbors helping neighbors," is at the heart of why South Plains Electric Cooperative

exists. Operation Round Up receives contributions from participating cooperative members whose monthly utility bills are rounded up to the next dollar. The average contribution is \$6 per year, but it makes a big impact on the lives of our members and in our local communities. Operation Round Up has dispersed over 2 million dollars since its inception and monies go to local high school students for scholarships, local teachers for mini-grants, house fire victims, volunteer fire departments, various non-profits and individuals.

The Operation Round Up board wanted to help the community and coop members even more after

See **SPEC**, page 4

PART 2 OF 2

JGISD fields community questions regarding bond issue

BARBARA BRANNON | THE TEXAS SPUR

In an open meeting Sunday afternoon, Sept. 8, school superintendent Scott Bicknell, as well as representatives of Hilltop Securities and MWMA Architects, presented information about the Jayton-Girard Independent School District's proposal to issue \$21 million in bonds, and expectations for repayment.

Between 50 and 60 people were present, as we reported in last week's part one of this coverage. This week, we'll share some of the questions they posed.

QUESTION: Will the auditorium improvements only be technology, and not to the building or actual auditorium?

SUPT. BICKNELL: Correct; the proposition does not involve changes to seating or other aspects; we haven't discussed a plan for improvements to the auditorium.

QUESTION regarding Prop. B for more houses; if the current homes



are to be auctioned off there's a lot of concern about what would happen to them. (The question centers on how JGISD can be certain the old houses would sell, at to whom.)

SUPT. BICKNELL responded that "the landscape of workplace has changed since Covid; we can't predict what they would do," but that trends show that many workers have continued to work remotely since then.

QUESTION: We have heard that Texas Solar Nova (the solar farm recently energized in rural Kent County) affects the school. Can you explain how?

SUPT. BICKNELL explained that the solar project will bring \$400 mil-

See **BOND**, page 7

JGISD board approves bond election, community outreach at August meeting

COMPILED FROM MINUTES

In the Jayton-Girard Independent School District regular monthly meeting on August 15, visitors present and making comments were Brodee Clay, Samantha Spray, Kenzie Chisum and Tiffany Ham.

Jamie Humphries gave a principal's report and Scott Bicknell gave a superintendent's report.

In board action there was a motion made by Andy Vargas, and seconded by Jeff Arnold to approve Consent Items as present-

ed, including minutes from the July 29, 2024 regular meeting, a request for county Permanent Funds in the amount of \$199,601.28 for capital improvements, and bills and financial reports. All voted in favor, 7-0.

In a motion made by Steven Collins and seconded by Cody Stanaland, trustees voted to approve the budget amendments as presented. All voted in

See **JGISD**, page 5



DICKENS CITY COUNCIL SEEKS RESIDENT TO FILL VACANCY

STAFF REPORTS

The City of Dickens has an empty council seat—and if you're a Dickens resident and would like a say in how your city decisions are made, here's your opportunity. If you are interested in serving as a council member, said City Manager Lillian Atkinson, please contact the Dickens City Hall at (806) 623-5224 for an application and plan to attend the next regular meeting on October 17, 2024. Interested persons must be a registered voter inside the Dickens city limits.

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Please send announcements, calendar events, and news items to news@thetexasspur.com

Display ads, classifieds, legal notices and obituaries should be submitted to spur@thetexasspur.com

Information may be dropped off locally at 424 N. Burlington Ave., Spur.

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SUBSCRIPTION QUESTIONS Changes of addresses, renewals, temporary stops can be emailed to spur@thetexasspur.com

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EDITORIAL | spur@thetexasspur.com
Paragraphs & pixels

BARBARA BRANNON

ROUTE 66 RAMBLE, PART 10

Home to Texas—with Mother Road memories

We're often prompted by leisure-travel marketers to think of our journeys as "making memories," and this must indeed be a strong urge for families planning vacations, couples designing destination weddings, school groups deciding where to go for the senior class trip.

But for my money the most valuable aspect of the Route 66 drive are the future musings. What does our past, experienced and considered in the present, signal about our future as a nation? Such ideas can be cultivated piecemeal, of course, over years; our summer 2024 trip was layered onto the cross-country drive in 2003 that incorporated much of Route 66, and many, many day trips to states like Oklahoma and New Mexico in between.

The singular opportunity for one continuous drive at an unhurried pace is like reading a novel—or, maybe more accurately, a volume of history—from cover to cover, rather than picking up a collection of short stories and dipping in from time to time. Or like watching a classic movie in a theater rather than sitting down to the TV for an hour-long drama once a week.

The result is a panorama of the westering impulse that helps to place the centuries of American migration into some perspective. From the arrival of newcomers on the continent's shores with a sense of wonder and conquest, to the continual push of indigenous inhabitants out of their homelands into ever more arid landscapes, to the establishment of industry and agriculture across the continent, the story unfolds in one sitting.

It isn't always a noble history. We traversed locations where slave or migrant labor built the rails and later roads, cultivated the fields, worked in the lodgings and eateries—or were often refused service in them. We've seen urban sprawl, blight, crime, poverty, greed. (One need only contrast the multitudes of roofless sleepers along Albuquerque's sidewalks against the thousands of lightbulbs beckoning gamblers' wallets to the nearby casino.)

But it is a living one. If we've "all come to look for America," no matter who we are, from this country or outside it, we'll find something of ourselves along the Mother Road. The two-lane generously gives back our respect for it, and all our efforts to protect it will be rewarded for generations to come.

All along the Route, from Illinois to California, the people we met were generous,



DROVE THE 2,448 MILES, GOT THE T-SHIRT Braggin' rights and a signed souvenir "certificate of completion" are fun to keep in the memory box, along with hundreds of travel brochures, a replica keychain to a wigwam motel, and a few new books for the sagging bookshelf. | THE TEXAS SPUR

interesting and helpful. From Bill Thomas in Atlanta, Ill., who helped us gain perspective on The Road Ahead, to Donna Miller in Joplin, to Brenda in Adrian, to the tire guy in Kingman, our way was made smooth by those who've gone before us.

It didn't take long, after pulling into the driveway in Spur again, to unpack suitcases and wash the bugs from the radiator grille. It didn't take long to settle back into the regular seven-day cycle of news coverage, or the habits of householding. But I'll be spending the cooler months unpacking observations recorded in a handful of journals, processing photos and uploading them (www.flickr.com/photos/barbarabrannon), and putting down on paper an extended record of the journey.

These essays over the past ten weeks have been a good start on that. Thank you for sticking with me from Texas to Chicago to Los Angeles and back. I welcome your feedback, and your own memories, at www.barbarabrannon.com/blog

And may your own journeys always be as fruitful as this one was for us. Stay safe, make friends, and keep your camera and journal always ready.

Thank you for sticking with me from Texas to Chicago to Los Angeles and back. I welcome your feedback, and your own memories, at www.barbarabrannon.com/blog

COMMENTARY
Check Your Mirrors

SUE JANE SULLIVAN

Sweet it is

Readers, welcome back to our pages columnist Sue Jane Sullivan for the season. While Sullivan also compiles many of our community calendars and event bulletins year-round, she takes a well-deserved hiatus from the demands of column writing during the summer. —The Editors

I'm a snacker. I would have fought my momma for the corner piece of a chocolate cake.

When I hear the word "snack" I visualize childhood, waking up from a nap and being rewarded for taking one. It also conjures up eating cookies washed down with Kool-Aid after scorching summer days playing with the gang on 33rd Street and Hill Avenue. The week of Vacation Bible School: I love the Lord, but make no mistake it was a morning snack that helped lead Jesus into my heart. And when we Sullivans ran through the doors after school, it was a beeline to the pantry to find anything to snack on before supper. Sometimes we hit the sauce, as in Hershey's-in-a-can.

I've gone through phases of preferred snacks. When I was in high school, I'd come in from volleyball practice and pour a glass of milk, stir in the Nestlé chocolate, and then dish in two or three scoops of vanilla ice cream. After burning all those calories on the court, a setter's gotta do what a setter's gotta do. My older brother went for the cereal—the entire box. Cap'n Crunch never stood a chance against a teenaged boy after athletic practice.

The year that my family hosted a high-school foreign exchange student, Robyn and I went through the brownie snack phase. When I was home from college on the weekends and holidays, she and I

frequently made a pan of brownies from scratch. Our philosophy was that the best brownies were the ones right out of the oven. Under my snack tutelage, Robyn returned to New Zealand with ten more pounds on the scale as a souvenir.

Another snack phase took place in my early years of empty nesting: the infamous Milk Duds/popcorn obsession. I was a lonely mom, drowning my solitude by watching lots of movies and "Law and Order: SVU." When Bertie at the Coyote Country Store in Gail learned this, she started carrying those snacks just for me because I did not have a car to get to town. The late legendary café owner did not sell gas, but she made sure I had my Orville Redenbacher and chocolate caramel nuggets.

Just last week, my snack habit was a source of comfort during the presidential debate. Some family members, who shall remain anonymous, texted me that they had poured their glasses of Scotch to get them through the mayhem. I sent back a photo of my glass of milk and gingersnaps, my choice of self-medication on this occasion. (Depending on how the election goes, I may ditch and switch from milk to Scotch. I wonder if it pairs well with popcorn and Milk Duds).

Now, as a full-grown adult in her senior-citizen phase, I admit that midnight snacks are still a thing, too, although my midnight is now 9 p.m.

Aging has impacted my sleep cycles but not my sweet tooth.

Snyder, Texas, native Sue Jane Sullivan is a retired schoolteacher whose thought-provoking commentary appears occasionally in several West Texas newspapers, including The Texas Spur and The Caprock Courier.

2024 Community Calendar
Community Services and Organizations

SPUR VISITOR CENTER, 101 Hill Street at Burlington Avenue, is operated by the Spur Area Chamber of Commerce and open during regular hours Tuesday–Saturday. Visitors seeking information on the area may email spurchamber@gmail.com or call (806) 271-3097.

THE SPUR AREA FOOD BANK serves families throughout Dickens County. The Food Bank is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization operating via private donations and welcomes donations to this community work. Donations are tax-deductible and are accepted directly into the Food Bank's account at Spur Security Bank or at 612 Burlington Ave. The Spur Area Food Kitchen Inc. does not discriminate due to race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability.

THE KENT COUNTY LIBRARY, 156 W. 4th St., Jayton, is open for patron services Monday–Thursday, 9:30 a.m.–5 p.m. Library patrons may also check out e-books and audiobooks on the Libby app for free with their library card. For information call (806) 237-3287 or "like" Kent County Library on Facebook.

THE KENT COUNTY SENIOR NUTRITION CENTER, 156 W. 4th St., Jayton, is open Monday and Wednesday from 8 a.m. to noon and Tuesday and Thursday from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. A lunch meal is served at noon on Tuesdays and Thursdays for a nominal cost, and is also available for carry-out. For information call (806) 237-3288.

THE SPUR-DICKENS COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY, 403 E. Hill St., is open Monday–Thursday, noon–5 p.m., and extended hours on the first Monday of each month until 7 p.m. Call (806) 271-3714 for questions. Free WiFi (password spurlib2017) is available inside and from the parking lot. Also contact the library for inquiries regarding the Spur Photography Club.

SPUR-DICKENS COUNTY MUSEUM, 327 Burlington Ave., Spur, is open April through October. For a tour please call a board member: Froyne Morris, (806) 271-3577; Linda Swenson, (806) 271-3238; Woodie McArthur, (806) 271-4415; or Don Wright, (806) 271-4520.

SENIOR CITIZENS CENTER/SOUTH DICKENS, 210 Burlington Ave., provides a dine-in meal at noon Monday–Friday. The salad bar is available on Wednesdays. A donation of \$4 is suggested for ages 60 and older, with an \$8 donation for those younger than 60. For more information call (806) 271-4472.

SENIOR CITIZENS CENTER/NORTH DICKENS, 511 Montgomery St., Dickens, provides a meal at noon Monday–Friday. A donation of \$5 is suggested. For more information call (806) 623-5520.

DICKENS COUNTY MUSEUM on Montgomery Avenue in Dickens is open 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., the second and fourth Saturdays monthly. For a special viewing or other hours please call Ruby Combs at (806) 269-6215 or Bron Combs at (806) 294-5302.

KENT COUNTY LIONS CLUB meets the second and fourth Mondays of each month at noon at the Kent County Community Center, 156 4th St., Jayton. Lunch is served at a cost of \$10 per person; please RSVP to Daryl Ham at (806) 269-1179.

SPUR ART GUILD Open painting day every third Monday at the Spur Senior Citizens Center, 201 Burlington Ave., Spur.

Public and Civic Meetings Coming Up

Please let us know of any corrections: News@thetexasspur.com

KENT COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT Monday, Sept. 23, 9 a.m., County Courthouse, 101 Main St., Jayton, (806) 237-3373

KENT COUNTY LIONS CLUB Monday, Sept. 23, noon, Community Center, 156 W. 4th, Jayton

JAYTON-GIRARD INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT board meeting, Thursday, Sept. 19, 6:30 p.m., school board room, 700 Madison Ave., Jayton, (806) 237-2991

SPUR INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT board meeting, Monday, Sept. 23, 7 p.m., school administration office, 800 Williams Ave., Spur, (806) 271-3272

PATTON SPRINGS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT board meeting, Monday, Oct. 14, 1261 E. FM 193, Afton, (806) 689-2220

DICKENS COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT Tuesday, Oct. 15, 9 a.m., County Courthouse, 201-US 82, Dickens, (806) 623-5532

ANDREW KENT MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT Tuesday, Oct. 15, 4:30 p.m., District office at Kent County Courthouse, 101 Main St., Jayton

SPUR CHAMBER OF COMMERCE Monday, Oct. 21, 6 p.m., Community Center, 101 E. Hill St., Spur, (806) 271-3097

WHITE RIVER MUNICIPAL DISTRICT Monday, Oct. 21, 7 p.m., District office at White River Lake

CITY OF SPUR CITY COUNCIL Tuesday, Oct. 22, 6 p.m., City Hall, 402 N. Burlington Ave., Spur, (806) 271-3316

CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS

Border Patrol faulted in Uvalde school shooting

AUSTIN— A 200-page report from the Department of Homeland Security faulted U.S. Border Patrol agents who rushed to the Uvalde school shooting in 2022, concluding they "failed to establish command and had inadequate training" in one of the deadliest classroom attacks, The Dallas Morning News reported.

A lone shooter killed 19 students and two teachers inside a classroom during a 70-minute standoff before a tactical team led by the Border Patrol went inside and killed him.

"The failure of arriving law enforcement personnel to establish identifiable incident management or command and control protocols led to a disorganized response to the Robb Elementary School shooting," the report stated. "No law enforcement official ever clearly established command at the school during the incident, leading to delays, inaction, and potentially further loss of life."

Two Uvalde school officers have been indicted for allegedly failing to act promptly and have pleaded not guilty. The victims' families have filed a \$500 million federal lawsuit against those who responded to the shooting.

VEHICLE INSPECTIONS END IN 2025. Texas car safety inspections will no longer be required in 2025, after HB 3297 passed the Legislature in 2023. The Austin American-Statesman reported inspections ending Jan. 1, though drivers living in and near major Texas cities will still be required to take their vehicles in for emission tests.

Although actual inspec-



tion is ending, all noncommercial vehicles in Texas still will be charged a \$7.50 inspection fee when the vehicle is registered with the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles.

Counties requiring emission tests to comply with federal clean-air requirements are Brazoria, Collin, Dallas, Denton, El Paso, Ellis, Fort Bend, Galveston, Harris, Johnson, Kaufman, Montgomery, Parker, Rockwall, Tarrant, Travis and Williamson. Costs range from \$11.50 to \$35.50, depending on what tests are required.

Diesel vehicles and motorcycles are exempt from emissions testing.

DEER DISEASE THREATENS STATE'S BREEDING INDUSTRY.

Texas deer breeders say their livelihoods are threatened by steps being taken by the state to limit chronic wasting disease, The Texas Tribune reported.

The easily transmissible disease has been detected in Texas since 2012. As of August, 387 cases have been reported this year in 31 of the state's 254 counties. This includes cases in 34 captive breeding facilities. The disease gradually erodes a deer's neurological functions. It is not known to infect humans.

"This disease is liter-

See CAPITAL, page 9