

BRIEFS

Retirement party set for McArthur

A retirement party for Mamie McArthur, associate municipal judge, will be held at 10 a.m., Friday, Jan. 3, 2020, at City Hall.

Weekly meetings:

- New Hope Narcotics Anonymous meeting, 7 p.m., each Sun., Tues., Fri., 2606 McKinney
- Santa Rosa Belles, Mon., 6:30 p.m., Wilbarger Street Church of Christ
- Rotary Club, 12 noon, Tues., Wilbarger Auditorium
- Vernon Bridge Club, 12:15 p.m., Wed., & Fri., Herring Bank
- Kiwanis Club, 12 noon, Wed., Vernon College
- Celebrate Recovery, 6 p.m., Thurs., First Baptist Church, 6 p.m.
- Grief Recovery Group, 6 p.m., Thurs., Second Baptist Church
- TOPS Club, weigh-in 6 p.m., meeting 6:30 p.m., Thurs., Wilbarger Auditorium
- Lions Club, 12 noon, Fri., Wilbarger Auditorium

2019

FROM PAGE 1

Directors of the Business Development Corporation of Vernon unanimously approved the submission of an application for rezoning BDC property possible to be sold to a Houston developer near the Wilbarger County Jail.

The Vernon City Commission approved allowing food trucks to stay for extended periods of time.

A Black History Month breakfast was held at New Vision where Jason McArthur presented “Lift Ever Voice and Sing,” which was then followed by a message from Brian McArthur.

The Wilbarger County Sheriff’s Office handed out certificates of appreciation for supporting the department’s children educational activities. Honorees included VUSD superintendent Jeff Byrd, Shive Elementary principal Stefanie Merrell, Waggoner Bank’s Reagan White, CJ Liquor’s Sam Taing, Wilbarger County Judge Greg Tyra, Sheriff Bill price, Sullivan Funeral Home’s Robert Webb, Central Elementary’s Phyllis Adams, Texhoma Bail Bonds’ Phil Bartee, Middle School principal Blaise Boswell, McCord Elementary principal Scott Mills, Vernon high School principal Tommy Cummings, Vernon Record’s Daniel Walker, WCSO chief deputy Clint Nava, WCSO deputy and Crime Stoppers coordinator Jerry Rangel and WCSO deputy Jim Rogers.

New Visions contributed new playground equipment at Lyday Park so that it could be enjoyed by children of all ages.

Vernon’s robotics team, the VR Fitness Crew, had a strong showing at the First Lego League Championship Robotics Tournament held in Dallas.

MARCH

Vernon Police credit the quick action of two ‘Good Samaritans’ with stopping an attack on a woman.

Students in Vernon schools are participating in Read Across America, an annual reading motivation and awareness program that calls for youngsters to celebrate reading along with the birthday of children’s author, Dr. Seuss.

The Vernon Record received five top place awards, the most in its division, at the annual meeting of the Texas Associated Press Managing Editors, held on the campus of the University of Texas.

Vernon Middle School students win awards at South Plains Regional Science and Engineering Fair and six students advanced to participate.

Dennis Jack was selected as the Wilbarger General Hospital’s new chief executive officer.

State Rep. Drew Springer introduced legislation last week that would change how candidates run for a seat on the board of directors of Wilbarger General Hospital, HB 2888, removing the provision requiring candidates for the Wilbarger General Hospital Board to gather 100 signatures before being on the ballot.

The RFD TV show “Red Steagall Is Somewhere West of Wall Street” filmed an episode in Vernon.

Vernon Tourism Board Members unanimously approved funding for a July 4 celebration to be sponsored by the City of Vernon of Saturday, July 6, at the Santa Rosa Rodeo Grounds south of the city during a monthly business meeting.

A grease fire gutted the Hillcrest Country Club restaurant (Photo below).



The Vernon high School cheerleaders were selected and announced.

The Citywide Clean Up Day is planned to be held on March 30. A survivors’ dinner is planned to kick off Relay for Life.

Joe Bacon was honored with a special certificate denoting his 60 years as a member of the American Legion Robinson Chaney Post 67 in Vernon.

APRIL

Ten Vernon high School students placed in events during the High School District Academy UIL Contest in Burkburnett with five members of one team and another student advancing to the regional contest scheduled for April 12-13 in Lubbock.

Relay for Life is set up to be on Saturday, April 6, 2019.

A city-wide clean-up (photo below) was held and it was an overwhelming success, according to city officials.



Members of the Wilbarger County Child Welfare Board (photo below) placed 211 blue pinwheels on the courthouse lawn as a reminder of the 211 child deaths that took place in Texas in 2018 from child abuse. The group also displayed 203 pairs of shoes representing the 203 confirmed cases of child abuse in Wilbarger County in 2018.



April 10th, 2019 marks the 40th anniversary of the 1979 tornado that left 11 dead, dozens injured, and millions of dollars of property destroyed.

A night of hope, inspiration, memories, and celebration as the 2019 American Cancer Society Relay for Life was held at the First Baptist Church CLC.

The Vernon Camp Fire held their annual program to teach senior girls the art of self-defense as part of that change.

Local civic and business leaders (photo below) pick up the first hibiscus plants at the Wilbarger County Exhibit Building that were donated by the Texas A&M AgriLife Research-Vernon Center to be planted at various locations.



The 74th annual Santa Rosa Rodeo theme is chosen to be “Three Cheers for the Red, White and Blue.”

Vernon Tourism Advisory Board members unanimously approved funding requests for the Red River Valley Museum.

A large group gathered at the Boys & Girls Club for the dedication of a new playground to the memory of Rhett Sullivan.

Vernon ISD trustees unanimously approved a proposal at their monthly business meeting April 16 to authorize Supt. Jeff Byrd to negotiate terms on how to pay for a proposed energy efficiency project involving district

SEE 2019, PAGE 5

Two killed in church shooting in Texas

WHITE SETTLEMENT, Texas — A gunman who killed two people during a Texas church service was fatally shot within seconds by armed congregants, said Texas officials, who hailed the state’s gun laws that allow weapons in places of worship.

More than 240 parishioners were in the West Freeway Church in the Fort Worth area town of White Settlement at the time of the shooting on Sunday, authorities said.

Parishioner Isabel Arreola told the Star-Telegram that she sat near the gunman and that she’d never seen him before Sunday’s service. She said he appeared to be wearing a disguise, perhaps a fake beard, and that he made her uncomfortable.

She said the man stood up, pulled a shotgun from his clothing, opened fire and was quickly shot by two congregants who were part of a volunteer security team.

“I was so surprised because I did not know that so many in the church were armed,” she said.

Tiffany Wallace told Dallas TV station KXAS that her father, Anton “Tony” Wallace, was one of the victims killed in the attack. She said her father was a deacon at the church and had just passed out communion when the gunman approached him.

“I ran toward my dad and the last thing I remember is him asking for oxygen and I was just holding him, telling him I loved him and that he was going to make it,” Wallace said.

Wallace said her father was rushed to a hospital but he did not survive.

“You just wonder why? How can someone so evil, the devil, step into the church and do this,” she said.

At a press conference Sunday night, Texas Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick said the gunman was killed within six seconds of opening fire. Patrick hailed the state’s gun laws, including a measure enacted earlier this year that allowed licensed guns in places of worship, unless the facility bans them.

“Two of the parishioners who were volunteers of the security force drew their weapons and took out the killer imme-

diately, saving untold number of lives,” Patrick said.

Britt Farmer, senior minister of the church, said, “We lost two great men today, but it could have been a lot worse.”

Officials have not released the names of the victims or the gunman. FBI Special Agent in Charge Matthew DeSarno said they’re working to identify the gunman’s motive, adding that he is “relatively transient” but had roots in the area.

DeSarno also said the gunman had been arrested multiple times in the past but declined to give details.

An elder at the church told the New York Times that one of those killed was a security guard who responded to the shooter, calling him a dear friend.

“He was trying to do what he needed to do to protect the rest of us,” said the elder, Mike Tinius.

“It’s extremely upsetting to see anyone committing violence,” he said.

Tinius said he didn’t know the gunman and that the shooting appeared to be random.

A woman who answered the phone at the West Freeway Church of Christ said she could not answer any questions and that she was told to direct inquiries to authorities.

In a livestream of the church service, the gunman can be seen getting up from a pew and talking to someone at the back of the church before pulling out a gun and opening fire. Parishioners can then be heard screaming and seen ducking under pews or running as papers fly to the floor.

Two people with minor injuries that were sustained while ducking for cover were treated at the scene, MedStar Mobile Healthcare spokeswoman Macara Trusty said.

Gov. Greg Abbott asked the state to pray for the victims, their loved ones and the community of White Settlement, about 8 miles (12 kilometers) west of Fort Worth.

“Places of worship are meant to be sacred, and I am grateful for the church members who acted quickly to take down the shooter and help prevent further loss of life,” Abbott said in a tweeted statement.

Hanukkah stabbing suspect had mental illness history

MONSEY, N.Y. — A man accused of storming into a rabbi’s home and stabbing five people as they celebrated Hanukkah in an Orthodox Jewish community north of New York City was raised to embrace tolerance but has a history of mental illness, his family said.

“Grafton Thomas has a long history of mental illness and hospitalizations. He has no history of like violent acts and no convictions for any crime,” his family said late Sunday in a statement issued by attorney Michael Sussman. “He has no known history of anti-Semitism and was raised in a home which embraced and respected all religions and races. He is not a member of any hate groups.”

“We believe the actions of which he is accused, if committed by him, tragically reflect profound mental illness,” the statement said.

“Finally, we express our deepest concern and prayers for those injured physically and otherwise deeply affected by the events of Saturday night. ... We thank those who rendered medical attention to each of those injured.”

Police tracked a fleeing suspect to Manhattan and made an arrest within two hours of the attack Saturday night in Monsey. Thomas had blood all over his clothing and smelled of bleach but said “almost nothing” when officers stopped him, officials said.

Republican President Donald Trump condemned the “horrific” attack, saying in a tweet Sunday that “We must all come together to fight, confront, and eradicate the evil scourge of anti-

Semitism.”

The stabbings on the seventh night of Hanukkah left one person critically wounded, Democratic Gov. Andrew Cuomo said. The rabbi’s son was also injured, he said.

Thomas, 37, was arraigned Sunday and pleaded not guilty to five counts of attempted murder and one count of burglary. Bail was set at \$5 million, and he remains jailed.

Thomas’ criminal history includes an arrest for assaulting a police horse, according to an official briefed on the investigation who was not authorized to discuss the matter publicly and spoke to The Associated Press on condition

of anonymity. A lawyer representing Thomas at the arraignment said he had no convictions.

The Greenwood Lake street where Thomas lived with his mother, about 20 miles (32 kilometers) from Monsey, was blocked with police tape Sunday as FBI agents and police officers carried items from their home.

The FBI was seeking a warrant to obtain his online accounts and were scouring digital evidence, the official said.

The attack was the latest in a string of violence targeting Jews in the region, including a Dec. 10 massacre at a kosher grocery store in New Jersey.

NOW SHOWING DEC 27-JAN 2



**JUMANJI: THE SECOND LEVEL**  
Fri. 6:30 • 9:15  
Sat. 4:00 • 6:30 • 9:15  
Sun. 4:00 • 6:30  
Mon. 4:00 • 6:30  
Tue. 4:00  
Wed. 6:30  
Thu. 4:00 • 6:30



**STAR WARS: THE RISE OF SKYWALKER**  
Fri. 6:00 • 9:00  
Sat. 3:00 • 6:00 • 9:00  
Sun. 3:00 • 6:00  
Mon. 3:00 • 6:00  
Tue. 3:00  
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Thu. 3:00 • 6:00

*The Vernon Plaza Theater*  
1717 Cumberland • 940-553-3999 Merry Christmas