

# Alto ISD buys new school bus

By LELAND ACKER  
STAFF WRITER

Lee Pearman and Jay Jones were sworn in as Alto ISD Board of Trustee members during Monday's regular meeting of the school board. Dr. Ray DeSpain, superintendent, wasted no time in getting them busy.

Freddy Johnson was re-elected as board president. Greg Duplichain was re-elected vice president and Britton Tilley was re-elected as board secretary. All were elected by unanimous votes.

Alto Police Chief Charles Barron addressed the board concerning school security, saying currently the Alto Police Department handles all of the school's security.

"We do the best we can, but we can't be here all the time," Chief Barron said. "I would like for the school to consider creating its own

security or law enforcement department."

Alfred Danhiem canvassed the votes from the school board election.

Principals Melody Witt, Kelly West and Donald Patton each gave a report on their respective campuses, saying TAKS test scores have improved, but they are still not satisfied. Alto school officials have the Texas Education Agency's "exemplary" rating as a goal.

## Gas bill resolved

The board approved the accounts payable, including a \$1,100 gas bill to the city, which previously had been assessed at \$11,000.

Maintenance Director Kim Bradshaw said the city employees were reading the meter correctly, but the decimal had been misplaced.

The board voted to keep

their accounts at Bancorp South and Lone Star Investment Pool. The board also voted to purchase a new Thomas school bus for \$70,250.

The board accepted the resignations of science teacher Rosezene Moorman, who has accepted a position closer to home in Douglass, and Sonia Howell, school nurse, who is returning to school.

The board hired Kay Kattner (elementary reading), Erica Tiedt Hunt (high school science), Richard Wilson (high school paraprofessional), Laverne Sessions (elementary special needs paraprofessional), Allison Threadgill (middle school paraprofessional-computer lab) and Sheena Sturrock (elementary paraprofessional).

The board will meet again at 7:30 p.m. Monday, June 18, at the Alto ISD Administration Building.

# Tomato Fest to feature new contests

By LELAND ACKER  
STAFF WRITER

Every year, thousands of people flock to Jacksonville for the annual Jacksonville Tomato Festival. Tourists who visit this year's festival, to be held June 8-9, will notice a new event.

"The newest thing to the Tomato Fest is the Tomato Peeling Contest, where contestants actually peel tomatoes with their teeth," said Peggy Renfro of the Jacksonville Chamber of Commerce.

While normally confined to downtown, this year's Tomato Fest will branch out into other parts of Jacksonville.

"The Best Home-Grown Tomato Contest, which is sponsored by Capital One, will be held at the bank on Friday, June 8," Ms. Renfro said. "It's open to Cherokee County residents and there will be \$600 worth of cash prizes."

Ms. Renfro said the Tomato Eating Contest will be held at 6 p.m. at Chubby's/El Dorado Jack's on South Jackson St.

Ms. Renfro said activities

will be held from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, June 9 on Commerce St. in downtown Jacksonville.

A Gospel concert will take place at the Norman Activity Center from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. Saturday, while a street dance will be held at 6 p.m. at Chili's on South Jackson St. in Jacksonville.

"Brochures and applications (for booths) are available on our Web site, www.JacksonvilleTexas.com," Ms. Renfro said.

## RISD

continued from pg. 1A

1988 there were 55 students in the high school band program; 45 beginning band students and 40 junior high band students. There are 115 students in the high school band; 55 students in the eighth grade band; 55 in the seventh grade band; and 85 in the beginning band. The choir is composed of 20 students in the high school program; 31 students in the seventh and eighth grade program; and 21 students in the beginning program.

The board authorized Doug Whitt, financial adviser, to issue refunding bonds, Series 2007. A Hall of Honor nomination committee will be composed of Dr. Largent, Ricky Hassell, high school principal and Rodney Huggins, board member.

Citizens 1st Bank was selected as the district's depository. Austin Bank is the current depository.

SSC Service Solutions was selected as the district's janitorial service vendor. The firm, a nationwide large company, cleans several Texas schools. A supervisor will be located at Rusk and all personnel will be required to attend training sessions. A training center is located at Fairfield. Lesa Jones, business manager, said the bid price is 10 percent higher than the district currently pays.

The current contractor is Seebie Cleaning of Nacogdoches and its bid price was higher than the SSC Service Solutions.

Cafeteria bids were approved from Oak Farms for milk; Blue

Bell for ice cream; and Flowers for bread.

Resignations were accepted from Leslie Brummett, Randall Bruton, Patricia Guess, Jeff Humphries, Tifni Nowell, Cody Smith, Karey Smith, Theresa Smith and Lauren Watson. Employed were Daina Alston, Susie Blackmon, Elizabeth Cahalane, Matt Garvin, Ramona Gillen, Billy Harrell, Kenneth Jaggars, Krista McNew, Debbie O'Maine, Kirk Rebeck, Sheri Whiteside and Craig Wilcox.

Attending the meeting were Mr. Fulton, Dr. Holcomb, Mrs. Long, Roy Cavozez, Mr. Huggins, Mr. Ross and Britt Patterson.

The board will meet again at 6 p.m. Monday, June 11.

## Great Debaters

continued from pg. 1A

a train for Boston. Arrangements for the sequence have been changing throughout development, said Mr. Price.

"At one time they were thinking of following the train (as it departed) with a helicopter," he said. "At this phase, things tend to change."

Mr. Price expressed how happy he is for the state railroad to be assisting in this film project, saying, "It's nice to go out on a high note."

Mr. Price said the company

is looking for extras and has held casting calls during the last two Saturdays in Palestine.

Christopher Gray, extras casting director for "The Great Debaters," said the Palestine casting calls were "awesome."

"The people there were so open, so ready, so into doing this," Mr. Gray said, adding that such is not uncommon for smaller towns. "When you go into smaller towns,

people have a chance to see something, to see how this is done."

Mr. Gray is still looking for extras, but these actors will have to be willing to travel to Shreveport, La. He said he is looking for people who can play college students, or relatives, both African American and White.

"Those interested can call our hot line at (318) 682-5679," he said.

## Gas Pains

continued from pg. 1A

"I will be staying in Rusk for the Fair on the Square, so I don't need to buy gas," said Sarah Welch of Rusk.

Matthew Wallace of Alto said the Alto Veterans of Foreign Wars will go to all the local cemeteries to put out flags for the veterans. They will also play Taps.

Phyllis Wilburn of Jacksonville said, "I do not travel during the Memorial Day weekend. I stay home to honor our local veterans by attending the memorial services at Hazel Tilton Park in Jacksonville."

Sixty-seven percent of respondents to an online poll on www.thecherokeean.com said that gas prices will affect their travel plans.

Many of those whose travel plans have been altered say that their day-to-day lives have been altered as well.

Jim Harper of Gallatin said he will likely plan for a shorter trip.

"I think, in general, gas prices have resulted in plan-

ning for combining trips and fewer visitations than in the past," he said. "Most folks tend to continue to budget for the necessary use of gasoline for work and cut back on recreational trips."

Debbie Miller of Cushing said gas prices have forced her to stay home most of the time.

"I am carpooling to work, saving up trips to the store and running the errands all at once now," she said. "I can't afford to change vehicles to get something smaller just for better gas mileage."

Ms. Miller said it will cost more to buy the gas to get to her vacation destination than it will to stay there.

"The price of gas has jumped so fast that it has negatively affected my budget," said Leroy Richardson of Longview. "It will figure into most of my extended trip plans, including Memorial Day weekend."

Others say the price of gas will have little impact on their summer plans.

"If I had plans, I would not cancel them because of gas prices," said Shirley Babb of Dry Creek, La.

Dana Long of Rusk said, "I will continue to drive and gripe about how high the gas is."

"I spent last weekend and part of last week in Galveston. I'm thinking of going to either Austin or Shreveport next week," said Woody Edmiston of Whitehouse, who is currently promoting his book, "Why Parents Should Fear MySpace."

W.L. Smallwood of Pasadena said he plans to be in Atoy this weekend even if it does cost an arm and a leg.

Rebecca Koenning said she still plans to travel Memorial Day weekend to attend a high school graduation.

Many respondents fell into the same category as Don Vandever, who said, "I will complain about the price while I burn it up. I never dreamed I'd have a truck big enough to hold \$75 worth of gasoline."

# Pool perfect



A member of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice work squad manicures the grounds at the Rusk City Pool and Rusk Civic Center. The swimming pool will have a "soft" opening June 2 with a grand opening June 8. The work squad is painting the bottom of the pool and continuing improvements to the facility.

## Fair on the Square

continued from pg. 1A

be Lana Phillips, an American Idol winner in Houston.

From noon to 12:30 p.m. Clogging with Peggy Huggins is planned. Terry Downs and "Peculiar People" Christian rock band will perform from 12:30-1:30 p.m. and Cheer Ethics by Stacy Bartlett from 1:30-2 p.m.

Participants at the dunking booth will include Jan Michael (Chuckie) Pate, 9 a.m.; 10 a.m.-1 p.m. dignitary auction with the highest bidder dunking the dignitary; 10 a.m. Bob Goldsberry, 10 a.m.; Connie Brown, 10:30 a.m.; Mike Murray, 11 a.m.; PO Ford, 11:30 a.m.; Angela Raiborn, noon; Eddie Breen, 12:30 p.m.; Steven Crosby, 1 p.m.; Anthony Holcomb, 2 p.m.; and Howard King, 3 p.m.

The Mr. and Miss Beauty Contest will have competition for girls from birth to 18

years and boys from birth to 16 years. Entry fee is \$10. The winners will ride on a float at the June 30 celebration and with Santa at Christmas.

Vendors for the fair will include Marylyn Hoy Bennett, Cherokee County Democratic Club, Ted Kammel Foods, Southwest Concessions, Anna and Floyd L. Chapman, Alto Sons of Confederate Veterans, Rocky Springs Baptist Church, Ruth Goodson, J&D's Little Cafe, Rebecca Liles Vandever, Harry's Building Materials Inc., L&R Marketing, Lu Taylor, Barbara's Jewelry, Dale W. Smith, C.R. Lester, Cherokee County Republicans, David Trotter, Twin Oaks Health and Rehab, Anna Kelso, Nelson George, The Southwest Station, Adventure II Miniature Horses, P&H Wholesale Distribution, Rusk

Church of Christ, Republican Party, Ricky L. Graham, Douglas Wall, James Edward Given, JDEES Concessions, ACCESS, Patsene Kirby, Jean Hielscher, Branded by Christ-Cowboy Church, Jackie Safford, Toyboxes Plus, J.D. Hester, Pat's Purses and More, Fowler Jones, Rusk Police Department, Elite Massage Spa, Double H Company, Melinda Roberts, Jassica and Amber Cummins, Rusk Area Buyers Group, Annette Sims, Rebecca Castillo, Country Wood Crafts, R&S Telecommunications, Birmingham Health Care, Patti Wolf/Messengers of Peace, Jennifer and Jeff Humphries-Flip Flops, Hair Bows and Purses, Gourmet Nuts, Loretta Springer, Mary Kills-Silver Jewelry and Wind Chimes, Estelle Grisham-Famous Burritosa and Mexican Candy.

## Ringside

continued from pg. 1A

warship saw lots of action on the island hopping campaign to drive the nips back toward Tokyo. The Allied Forces were now the aggressor, taking important landing strips and launching areas from the enemy and cutting off supply lines to other occupied atolls. Among those taken were Peleliu, Tarawa and Saipan.

However, the most important and traumatic battle was yet to come. Iwo Jima. Much has been written about Iwo Jima. The facts are not in dispute. Seven thousand marines and sailors were killed and almost 21,000 Japanese. Its importance is not in question. Between March 1945, when the island was taken, until the end of the war, 2,252 B-29s and 24,761 crew members were saved by emergency landings on the airstrips at Iwo Jima (Sulphur Island).

Herbert never shared much of his military experience with his family. He shared some of his memories with us, from his ringside seat, some 200 yards off the shore of this horrific historical battle. To have plenty of binoculars on board was a naval necessity, so what could not be seen with the naked eye, could be brought to focus with the spyglass.

Although the navy had rained down artillery and bombs for several days, and the enemy in their labyrinth of

caves and underground bunkers were virtually unscathed. When the first two divisions of marines hit the beach, they were nearly all killed. It was hard to witness. The bodies of the dead comrades floated in the water among the ships, cut up by the propellers. Hub could not eat because he was so sickened by the carnage.

Water was all he consumed for several days. But on the fourth day, he watched, as a platoon of men scaled the steep, loose rock and volcanic gravel of Mt. Suribachi with the intent to plant a flag. They were able to find a vent pipe in one of the caves and attached the flag to it. At about 10:30 a.m., Feb. 23, 1945, the Stars and Stripes caught the wind and unfurled, proudly, over the volcano, among thunderous applause from the marines and sailors. The photographer was Staff Sgt. Louis Lowery of Leatherneck Magazine. The Japs sailed a grenade in his direction. He had to tumble down a hill to avoid it, breaking his camera. A more famous picture was staged later in the day. Only one of the original flag raisers was in the second picture.

The armada remained at this site for four more weeks, before being assigned to the invasion of Okinawa. The ironic mission of Taylor's ship was to protect the battleship Texas. Shortly

## Memorial Day service will be at 10 a.m.

### Monday

The Rusk annual Memorial Day service is slated for 10 a.m. Monday at the monument on the courthouse lawn. Speaker for the event will be Col. Sam Hopkins, PhD.

after arrival, two kamikaze pilots flew a beeline toward the battlegroup. The crew of the gunship shot down one, but the other got through, blowing a big hole in the bow of the Texas, above the water-line. It was repaired in a few days and back in action.

A few weeks later, the Japanese surrendered and the men felt that it would not be long now, until they were on their way home. Then the typhoon hit. The 728 was found floating belly-up, rolled back over and repaired. It took several months. Taylor was discharged in April 1946.

Hub Taylor lives in the Oakland community. He has out-lived much of his family, but he is on dry ground and not alone, surrounded by the love of his grandson and scores of friends.

Frank Bowden is commander of the local Veterans of Foreign Wars Post.