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# THE TEXAS SPUR

SINCE 1909 ★ NEWS FOR DICKENS AND KENT COUNTIES

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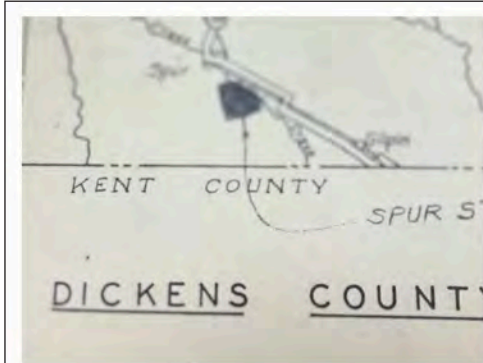
FREE DOUBLE FEATURE AT SPUR'S PALACE, SATURDAY 4 PM

## Locals, pool the focus of new documentary at Palace May 11

BARBARA BRANNON | THE TEXAS SPUR

On the website for Blockchain Media's new short film, "The Big Empty," the aerial shot of a dry, desolate and rusted-out rural swimming pool says it all.

Here in Spur, Texas—Pop. 873, ac-



A STATE PARK



HARD TIMES



PROMISES KEPT

ording to the green signs posted after the declines of the 2020 Census—business and industry, talent, and even water have been draining away as fast as people can escape for places like Lubbock or Dallas or Houston or

See POOL, page 5

## The Big Empty

runs approx. 30 minutes, as the first part of a double-feature matinee at Spur's Palace Theater Sat., May 11 at 4 p.m. Admission is free and all ages are welcome. Concession stand opens at 3:30. The second film is "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles: Mutant Mayhem."



BOBBY KAUTZ



DAVID WALLACE



MARVIN WEST

KAY ELLINGTON | THE TEXAS SPUR

On Saturday, May 4, when the City of Dickens voters cast their ballots for three at-large city council candidates out of five ballot choices, there was a tie for third place.

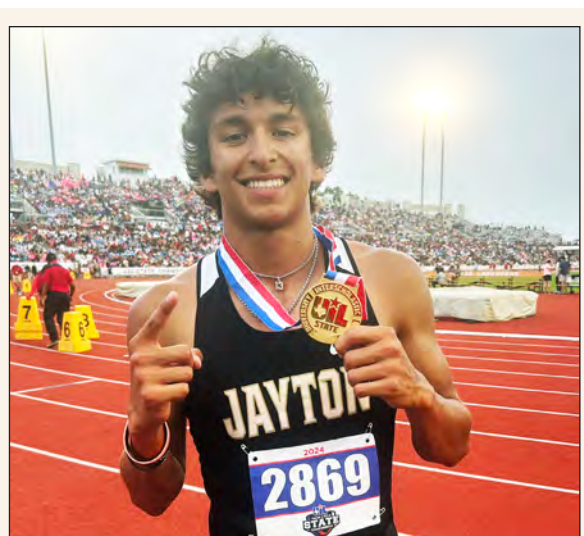
In unofficial results, the top vote-getter was Bobby Kautz, with 50 votes, will

be new to the council. In second place was incumbent David Wallace, and there was a tie for third place between two current incumbents, Jesus Zarate and Marvin West, each with 37 votes. A fifth candidate, Betty R. Atkinson, received 10 votes.

See DICKENS, page 2

## City of Dickens candidate concedes in tie; no runoff needed

AWR-2 Prescribed by Secretary of State Section 68.004, Texas Election Code 307 174167		
RETURN SHEET (PÁGINA DE DATOS SOBRE EL RESULTADO DE LA ELECCIÓN)		
Pct. No. (Num. de Pct.)	Authority Conducting Election (Autoridad Administradora de Elección)	
	Dickens City of Dickens	
Date of Election (Fecha de la Elección)	Type of Election (Tipo de Elección)	
5-4-24	Council	
Name of candidate (or "For" and "Against") (Nombre del candidato o "A favor de" y "En contra de")	Office Sought or Proposition (Puesto oficial solicitado o Proposición)	No. of votes received (Número de votos recibidos)
Jesus Zarate	City Council	37
Bobby Kautz	City Council	50
Betty R. Atkinson	City Council	10
Marvin West	City Council	37
David Wallace	City Council	38
Total number of voters who voted as indicated by poll list. (Número total de votantes que votaron según la lista de votantes.)		
I, the undersigned, the presiding judge for the above described election held at the above designated election precinct, do hereby certify that the above return is a true and correct return for said election.		
(Yo, el abajo firmado juez presidente de la elección señalada arriba que se llevó a cabo en el precinto electoral designado arriba, por lo presente certifico que los datos de arriba son los resultados verdaderos y correctos de dicha elección.)		
DATED this 4th day of May, 2024		
(FECHADA este día de 20		
	Presiding Judge (Juez Presidente)	



STATE CHAMP Jayton's Sean Stanaland is the 1A State track champion in the 800m run. | COURTESY PHOTO

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

### Local Events

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

**DICKENS COUNTY-SPUR LIBRARY** story time, Thursdays, 10 a.m., ages babies to pre-school, 403 E. Hill St., Spur

**SPUR METHODIST CHURCH** weekly Ladies Bible Class, Thursdays, 1:30-3 p.m., fellowship hall, 528 Burlington Ave., Spur

**SPUR HIGHWAY 70 CHURCH OF CHRIST** is hosting a Gospel Meeting with Fred Hall, Sunday-Wednesday, May 5-8. A meal will be provided each night.

**SPUR INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT** Teacher Appreciation Week, Monday-Friday, May 6-10

**JAYTON-GIRARD INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT** athletic banquet, Wednesday, May 8, 6 p.m.

**JAYTON-GIRARD INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT** high school academic awards assembly, Thursday, May 9, 1:30 p.m.

**SPUR INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT** Muffins with Mom, Friday, May 10, 7:30 a.m.

**SPUR INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT** students vs. faculty basketball game, Monday, May 13, 3 p.m.

**SPUR INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT** All Awards Banquet, Monday, May 13, 6 p.m.

**SPUR INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT** junior high and high school UIL assembly, Tuesday, May 14, 9:30 a.m.

**SPUR METHODIST CHURCH** Western Banquet for Graduating Seniors, Tuesday, May 14, 6 p.m., 528 Burlington Ave.

**JAYTON-GIRARD INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT** Spring Music Concert, Thursday, May 16, 6 p.m., school auditorium

**SPUR INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT** kindergarten graduation, Thursday, May 16, 9:30 a.m.

**SPUR INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT** high school graduation, Friday, May 17, 7 p.m., school auditorium

**SPUR AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE** Dickens County Public Market, Saturday, May 18

**KENT COUNTY GOLF COURSE** tournament scheduled is now posted. Saturday and Sunday, May 18-19, will be the first event, the Three-Person Joe Martinez Memorial. Call (806) 237-4970.

**JAYTON CHURCH OF CHRIST** Third Sunday Potluck Lunch, Sunday, May 19, with Ben Blankenship speaking in the morning service beginning at 11 a.m., 901 Clairemont St., Jayton

**PATTON SPRINGS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT** athletic banquet, Monday, May 20

**DICKENS 4-H SPAGHETTI SUPPER**, Tuesday, May 21, 6-7:30 p.m., Dickens County Senior Citizen Center. Proceeds benefit the Dickens County 4-H.

**JAYTON-GIRARD INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT** elementary and junior high academic awards assembly, Thursday, May 23, 10:30 a.m., school auditorium

**JAYTON-GIRARD INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT** Kindergarten/8th Grade graduations, Thursday, May 23, 6 p.m., school auditorium

**JAYTON-GIRARD INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT** high school graduation, Friday, May 24, 7 p.m., school auditorium

**PATTON SPRINGS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT** high school graduation, Friday, May 24, 8 p.m.

**GIRARD'S ANNUAL MEMORIAL DAY PROGRAM** will take place at 10 a.m. Monday, May 27 at the Chapel at the Girard Cemetery. Everyone is invited to come and share this day. Those who wish may bring cookies, brownies, or cake to share for refreshments after the programs. Water will be provided by Cap Rock Telephone.

**JAYTON FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH** Vacation Bible School, Tuesday-Friday, May 28-31

## JGISD voters elect Allen, Scott, Stanaland to board



STEPHANIE ALLEN



CODY SCOTT



CODY STANALAND

KAY ELLINGTON | THE TEXAS SPUR

Incumbent Cody Scott was reelected to the JGISD school board in Saturday's May 4 election, along with challenger Stephanie Al-

len and Cody Stanaland, who had previously served on the JGISD Board. Five candidates were running for three at-large positions.

See JGISD, page 2

Jayton-Girard ISD May 4, 2024 Results			
	Early Voting	Election Day	Total
Bailey Chisum	72	18	90
Stephanie Allen	108	20	128
Cody Scott	100	12	112
Jamie Braly (Bear)	33	12	45
Cody Stanaland	108	16	124



**IN THE HOME STRETCH** Builders of the Spur swimming pool renovation expect they'll make the grand reopening target for Memorial Day weekend — but it's tight! As of May 6, crews were installing uprights to support shade structures; concrete for the pool deck will follow soon, and a housing will be built over the pump house to keep it secure and out of the weather. The last step in the process will be to spray the pool interior with its bright white plaster coating—and fill it up. The Texas Spur will bring you more on opening-weekend plans for the public as the big day approaches. | THE TEXAS SPUR



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# Jayton competes at State track



**JAYTON STATE TRACK** The following Jayton athletes competed at the State track meet in Austin over the weekend: Daylee Chisum, Jace Chisum, Lorenzo Vargas, Bode Ham, Griff Reel, Sean Stanaland, Colt Gentry and Tucker Scott. | COURTESY PHOTO



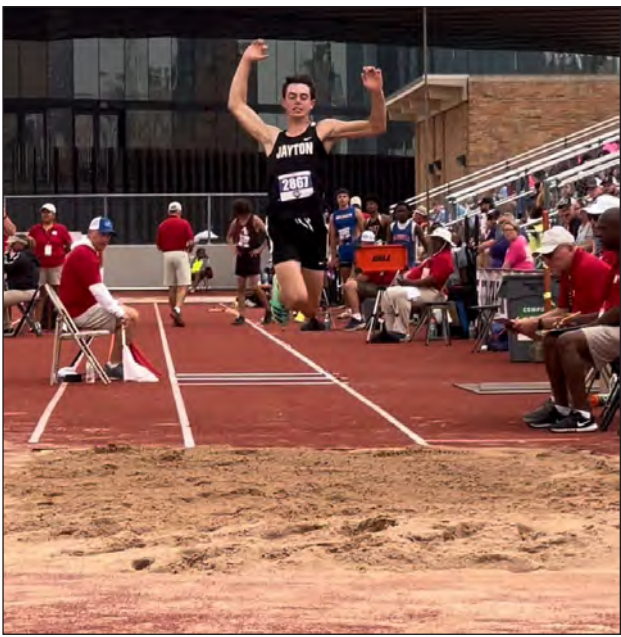
**POLE VAULT** Jayton's Daylee Chisum tied for 7th in the 1A Pole Vault at last weekend's State track meet in Austin. | COURTESY PHOTO



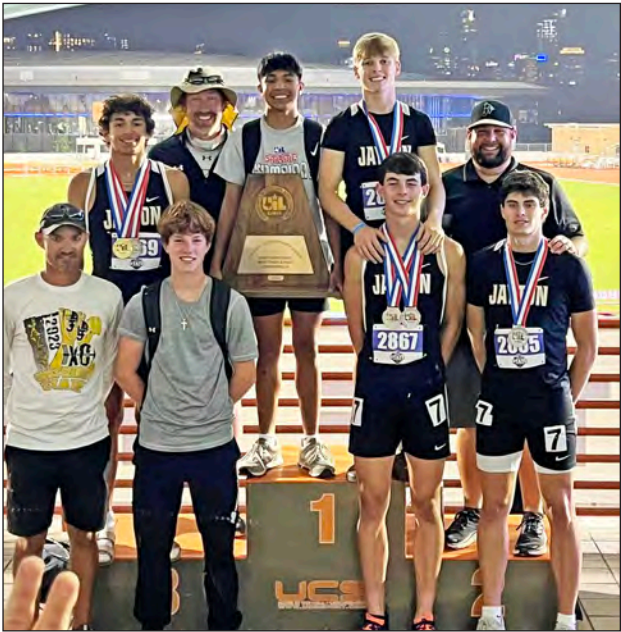
**TENNIS HONORS** Jayton Junior High tennis competed at the District meet last week. In girls singles, Reid Chisum was District Champion and Aerial Buerkle finished in 3rd Place. In boys singles, Casey Spray was District Champion and Easton Bleiker finished in 4th Place. In girls doubles, Brantley Ham and Lexi Long were District Champions and Sydney Branum and Ella Long finished in 2nd Place. In boys doubles, Kirby Miller and Ben Baldridge were District Champions; Tom Clay and Carson Long were in 3rd Place. In mixed doubles, Chris Guerrero and Rynne Boyd were District Champions and Cash Chisum and Maci Scott finished in 3rd place. | COURTESY PHOTO



**SILVER MEDALIST** Jayton's Jace Chisum finished 2nd in the mile, the State runner-up at the State track meet this past weekend. | COURTESY PHOTO



**SILVER MEDALIST** Jayton's Griff Reel finished 2nd in the 400 meter run, earning him the silver medal at this past weekend's State track meet. He also finished 7th in the triple jump. | COURTESY PHOTOS



**SILVER MEDALISTS** The Jayton boys 4x400 relay team won 2nd place at the State Track Meet, earning them the silver medal and State runners-up. | COURTESY PHOTO

## POOL FROM PAGE 1

New York City.

But the website image to the far right tells a different story.

In it, construction crews work feverishly on Spur's historic Swenson Park pool, pumping gunite concrete onto forms that are expected to soon bring this favorite recreational feature back into use.

"The Big Empty" tells the tale not only of Spur's rebuilt swimming pool, but of a bitcoin mining firm's pledge to do right by the community where it has, by now, put down its own roots.

**Small-town roots, big industry.** "We looked to shed a positive light on bitcoin," said the film's producer, William Foxley, "but bitcoin isn't the focus."

In October 2021, while the world was still reeling from setbacks of the Covid-19 pandemic, a startup cryptocurrency miner that had been in conversations with local landowners and the county commission to establish a plant in Dickens County 20 miles north of Spur burst into the public eye with a gala barbecue and an astonishing announcement.

Argo Blockchain, traded in London with facilities already in North America, had broken ground on a 125,000-square-foot building that would employ 20 local workers and keep construction contractors busy for months. And to show their appreciation to the community, they pledged to restore Spur's swimming pool, out of commission for half a decade.

When Argo found itself on the ropes a year later, its successor Galaxy Digital

Holdings said it would keep Argo's promise.

**Plunging into bitcoin.** While the cryptocurrency industry still remains a head-scratcher to many West Texans, the appeal of a cool dip in a brand-new pool on a steaming summer day isn't hard for anyone to grasp. Foxley, a friend of Galaxy's then head of mining Amanda Fabiano, pitched the idea of a film that would deal with both aspects of life in Spur.

Galaxy, said Foxley, also wanted the story of Spur to be told. For Foxley, with roots in the small town of Saratoga, Wyoming, felt he had a grasp on how to tell it. "Spur reminds people of the places where they grew up," he said. Or, for others, "most people can connect with neighbors, characters, values" that Dickens County residents share.

In June 2023, "we started sketching out what the structure of a film might be," said Foxley. By September the project had been greenlighted, and Foxley and his crew came to Dickens County in September for visits to the now-operational Helios plant and local towns. They filmed Spur during its annual Homecoming weekend, when folks are all about festivities and football.

After shooting in New York City, where Galaxy and its CEO, Mike Novogratz, are based, they returned to Spur in January for more shots. After addition of sound and music—which capture the flavor of Texas—the team wrapped up mastering in February.

The film went live in early April. Featuring interviews and footage of many area residents and enterprises (including The



Texas Spur, full disclosure), it melds the aims of New York investors and big finance with those of towns like Spur that don't want to dry up and die.

Contrasting the fast pace of Manhattan with the laid-back ranchlands of Dickens County, the film invites viewers to consider how industry can coexist with local values, and even help preserve them.

**Screening this Saturday as first part of double feature.** Thanks also to Galaxy's underwriting, the

first film date of The Palace Theater's summer season will feature free admission for all ages, and Galaxy giveaways during the movies.

"The Big Empty" will kick off the afternoon's entertainment at 4 p.m., followed by the feature "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles" Mutant Mayhem" (PG, 2023). The audience should be out in plenty of time to enjoy dinner hour (and patronize area restaurants!).

The Palace Theater is located at 422 Burlington Ave., Spur.



# Graduation

CONGRATULATIONS GRADUATES

## COMING NEXT WEEK: GRADUATION SPECIAL

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THE TEXAS SPUR

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# SPOTLIGHT ON WHITE RIVER HAIL



**ICEBALL** On Saturday, May 4, many residents in the White River Lake area reported golfball- to baseball-sized hail. | FACEBOOK



## VISITORS TO TEXAS SPUR



**SMALL WORLD SATURDAY** “Seeing the Texas Spur was one of the best parts of our travels,” wrote Bill Brooks of North Carolina and his friend Sharon, who were touring a wide swath of the U.S. in their Mercedes Sprinter motor home. On a rainy Saturday afternoon, April 20, their rambles brought them through Spur, and by chance the lights were on at the newspaper office. During their visit publishers Kay Ellington and Barbara Brannon discovered not only that the couple enjoyed reading local newspapers from the variety of communities along their route—but that they hailed from coastal North Carolina and had been longtime subscribers of the (Wilmington, N.C.) Star-News, the New York Times Regional Group newspaper for which Ellington worked and Brannon wrote when based in Wilmington years ago. | THE TEXAS SPUR

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Spring MARKET

Hosted by the Post Area Chamber of Commerce

Saturday, May 11, 2024

Doors open: 9:00 to 3:00

Community Center  
Post, Texas

See you there!

FMI contact:  
Office- 806.495.3461  
Michele-806.344.4801

galaxy

JOIN US FOR THE BIG EMPTY

The Palace Theater  
Saturday, May 11  
4:00 PM

FREE Popcorn & Soda

THE BIG EMPTY

SUNNYSIDE HONEY PRESENTS A WILLIAM FOXLEY, NEIL BERKELEY, JOSEPH GRANDA FILM

"THE BIG EMPTY" MUSIC BY AUDIO NETWORK EDITED BY JOE STAUFFER AND ZACHARIAH DALY CINEMATOGRAPHY BY NEIL BERKELEY

DIRECTED BY WILLIAM FOXLEY WITH PARTICIPATION BY GALAXY DIGITAL HOLDINGS