

■ IN BRIEF

Head-on collision kills Lockesburg man, 20

LOCKESBURG, Ark.—A 20-year-old Lockesburg man was killed Sunday in a head-on collision between the vehicle he was driving, a Ford Fusion, and a 2017 Volvo semi. Bobby Smith, 20, was driving the 2010 Ford northbound on U.S. Highway 71 when it crossed the center line into the southbound lane and collided head-on with the semi, according to a report from the Arkansas State Police. The accident happened at 4:45 p.m. Sunday south of Lockesburg in the Penney Hill community in Sevier County. No other injuries were reported.

Arkansas House votes to cut gun-license fees

LITTLE ROCK—The Arkansas House has voted to cut in half the license fees for carrying a concealed handgun. The House on Monday approved by a 74-18 vote a bill that would cut the initial filing fee for a concealed handgun license from \$100 to \$50. The measure would also cut the license renewal fee from \$50 to \$25. The measure now heads to the Senate. Arkansas State Police has said the financial impact of the proposed fee cut would be \$1.2 million.

Groundbreaking set for new Hope clinic

CHRISTUS Trinity Clinic is breaking ground on a new Family Medicine Clinic in Hope, Ark. The official groundbreaking ceremony will take place at 10 a.m. Thursday at the southwest corner of the intersection of Peck Circle and Julia Street. The location will be marked by a tent, banner and balloons. Providers at the new clinic include Dr. W. Brent Bennett, Dr. Allyson Hanson and Devin Shepard, nurse practitioner. The community is invited.

Lifeshare Blood Center to hold grand opening

LifeShare Blood Center will have a grand opening for its new blood donation center at 2:30 p.m. Friday at 4020 Summerhill Road. The community is invited. There will be a ribbon-cutting, and refreshments will be provided.

The new and improved Blood Center provides additional space for better workflow, an additional private pre-screen interview room and more. LifeShare's administrative offices will remain at the previous location at 1321 College Drive, Texarkana, Texas. For more information, call 903-794-3173.

—FROM STAFF, WIRE REPORTS

Bowie officials agree on road maintenance

NEW BOSTON, Texas—Bowie County commissioners agreed Monday to allow the county to take maintenance responsibility for two roads inside Precinct 4's Red Springs subdivision. Precinct 4 Commissioner Mike Carter said both roads, Morgham Lane and Red Springs Road, are short, connected and have been inspected and approved for county maintenance. Commissioners also approved a letter addressed to the Texas Legislature regarding the county having to take responsibility for unfunded mandates handed down by the state. Precinct 1 Commissioner Tom Whitten, who presided over the meeting, said the county issued a similar letter and resolution during the state's last legislative session. The letter states the Legislature shouldn't approve and issue any new local measures that will force the county to have to pay for implementing those measures without receiving any financial aid or compensation from the state. "This is something we've done before regarding unfunded mandates," Whitten said. "We need to let the Legislature know that they don't need to be passing and approving any unfunded mandates that have to be paid for by the counties." In other business, commissioners approved paying accounts for all purchases the county made last month.

Arkansas bill would tap revenue, levy new tax for state's highways

By **ANDREW DEMILLO**
The Associated Press

LITTLE ROCK—An Arkansas lawmaker on Monday proposed tapping into tax revenue from car sales and imposing a new tax on motor fuels to raise money for the state's highways, a proposal that quickly drew opposition from the state's Republican governor and Democrats. Republican Rep. Dan Douglas said he hoped the bill he filed would start the conversation on highway funding, which legislative leaders and Gov. Asa Hutchinson have called a priority for this year's session. No funding plan had emerged as lawmakers entered the third week of this year's session.

"Here's the thing: If we don't do something, we're just going to let our highways continue to deteriorate and fall apart and then wait until the bill comes due," Douglas said. "We have to do something." Douglas' proposal calls for gradually diverting up to \$120 million a year in tax revenue from car sales to highways over a four-year period. The state would begin diverting the money once its gross sales tax revenue exceeds \$2.5 billion a year. In the first year, the state would transfer \$30 million to highways and would increase that by \$30 million a year until reaching \$120 million.

"If we don't do something, we're just going to let our highways continue to deteriorate and fall apart and then wait until the bill comes due."
—Republican state Rep. Dan Douglas

The proposal also calls for imposing a 3.5 percent sales tax on the wholesale price of motor fuel, which Douglas estimated would raise another \$100 million to \$120 million a year. Hutchinson has said he's usually opposed to diverting general revenue to roads and that he couldn't support Douglas' plan. "Pulling additional money from general revenue is not the answer," the governor said in a statement. "We are already devoting \$50 million a year from state revenue to the highway department. Doing more will only create new

problems elsewhere and will negatively impact education, prisons, public safety, and more."

Democrats, who have raised similar objections to tapping general revenue, also said they were worried that it could open the door to even more money being diverted later.

"This is in a way the most important time to stand up against general revenue being diverted to highways," Democratic Rep. Andrew Collins said.

The motor fuel sales tax is also likely to face resistance in the majority-Republican Legislature, with many GOP members vowing opposition to any tax increase. Since it's imposing a new tax, Douglas' proposal would require only a simple majority rather than the three-fourths needed to increase existing taxes. Republican House Speaker Matthew Shepherd has said he would prefer for the Legislature to look at existing revenue before considering any tax increases. He reiterated that stance Monday.

Republican Senate President Jim Hendren said he expected to see more work on highways once lawmakers tackle Hutchinson's proposed income tax cut.

"I think you'll see half a dozen ideas, serious ideas, floated out there and we'll just see which one of them solves the problem and has the ability to pass the Legislature," Hendren said.

Texas side approves land code revisions

By **KARL RICHTER**
Texarkana Gazette

The Texarkana, Texas, City Council approved minor revisions to the city Land Development Code during a short regular meeting Monday. The council updated zoning rules for the University Planned Development District, adding some acceptable land uses and making other small changes such as punctuation corrections. Uses now acceptable under Richmond Road Mixed Use Development zoning in the district include neighborhood health

centers; mini-warehouse development with retail and/or office uses fronting on Richmond Road, University Avenue, Kings Highway and Pleasant Grove Road; garden shops and plant sales; veterinarian offices; barber and beauty shops; and day spas. The city established the University Planned Development District in 2012 to allow stricter-than-usual planning and zoning for development around Bringle Lake and the Texas A&M University-Texarkana campus, according to previous Gazette reports. The council also heard several

first briefings on other zoning and permitting matters, including:

- rezoning land at 5812 McKnight Road to allow an inspection business there;
 - specific-use permits to allow electronic billboards at 3408 and 6241 St. Michael Drive;
 - a specific-use permit to allow a tattoo studio at 1423 New Boston Road; and
 - site plan approval for a dentist's office to be built at 4009 Moores Lane.
- Public hearings and votes on those items will be held during the council's next meeting, scheduled for Feb. 11.

TC board hears positive report, OKs lease

By **JENNIFER MIDDLETON**
Texarkana Gazette

Texarkana College's Board of Trustees heard a report on their being named the top community college in the state for three-year completion rates during a regular meeting Monday. Dr. Donna McDaniel, vice president of instruction, told the board that a report from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board shows that their rate of 45.8 percent is the highest of the state's 50 community colleges and double the state average of 22.8 percent. She said the high rate was due to many factors including the dedication of the TC faculty. "There is no faculty around that does as much as our faculty does," she said. "They not only teach, they advise our students and that's above and beyond what most do at

community colleges. Our faculty really do truly care about our students and they want to see them get through the process. We tell them at orientation that our goal is to see you at graduation. I think everyone has embraced that philosophy and the goal of seeing them at graduation." She added that in 2013, the rate was 10.8 percent. "It's a lot of people working together to make it happen," McDaniel told the board. "It is a culture that's been established. Not only is it our quality enhancement plan, all the things we do with Achieving the Dream as well as the Texas Success Center Pathway Project, we are leaders in those areas and they attribute us to getting this great rate. It's our faculty and everyone engaged with that student from start to end and helping them find ways with

tutoring, whatever it might be to help them finish." She also said that spring enrollment is 3,776, up from 3,643 last year, and that the workforce and health sciences departments show an increase of 29.14 percent. In other business, the board agreed to a three-year lease with Community Healthcare for the college's property at 2435, which is known as the College Drive Center. The business has been in the facility since 2014, and their five-year lease ended in December 2018. The lease is for \$2,500 per month, and Community Healthcare also maintains the facility. Trustees also approved the 2019-20 academic calendar, which shows classes beginning Aug. 19 and Spring Break beginning March 19, 2020. The calendar is available at texarkanacollege.edu.

Screening set for film on child sex trafficking

Texas A&M University-Texarkana and the Program for Learning And Community Engagement will hold a screening of the film "I Am Jane Doe" followed by a lecture and discussion on censorship versus protection. The event will be 4 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. today in University Center Room 210. It is free and open to the public. Light appetizers will be served. "I Am Jane Doe" is a documentary that follows the stories of real teens caught up in the child sex trade. IMDb describes the film as "The epic battle that several American mothers are waging on behalf of

their middle-school daughters, victims of sex trafficking on Backpage.com, the adult classifieds section that for years was part of the iconic Village Voice. The documentary follows the journey of these young girls and their mothers in real time as they run headlong into a collision course not only with Backpage but with judges, powerful corporations, special interest groups and an outdated internet freedom law that has been interpreted by federal judges to protect websites from any responsibility for hosting ads which sell underage girls. 'I am Jane Doe' is a gut-wrenching human story and fresh look at a social and legal

issue that affects every community in America." PLACE is a faculty-led program designed to create a community of learners comprised of A&M-Texarkana students, faculty, staff and the community at large. PLACE chooses an annual theme around which to organize a lecture series and other activities that provide focal points for learning and discussion. This year's theme is "Gender Issues." For more information, contact Dr. Angie Sikorski, PLACE chair, at asikorski@tamut.edu or visit the PLACE website at tamut.edu/PLACE.

TxDOT urges football fans to plan ahead, avoid drinking and driving

With Super Bowl weekend just days away, the Texas Department of Transportation is urging football fans to "Plan While You Can" for a sober ride before enjoying game-day watch parties and other activities that may involve alcohol. "Super Bowl weekend is a potentially dangerous time for alcohol-related crashes," said TxDOT Executive Director James Bass. "With so many transportation options available, there is absolutely no excuse to drink and drive. If you plan to drink alcohol, plan

ahead for a sober ride. It's a game plan that could save a life." During last year's Super Bowl weekend, there were 258 alcohol-related crashes in Texas. Those crashes killed eight people and seriously injured another 21.

Drivers under the influence of alcohol not only risk killing or seriously injuring themselves or others but also face up to \$17,000 in fines and fees, jail time and loss of their driver's license. As always, TxDOT urges drivers to find alternatives to drink-

Community Calendar

Mosaic Art Class
6 to 8 p.m. today
Regional Arts Center
321 W. Fourth St., Texarkana, Texas
Local artist Sheila Keever will be the instructor.

ECET² Texarkana 2019
8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Friday
Texas A&M University-Texarkana
7101 University Ave., Texarkana, Texas

This national campaign aims to provide a network of support and collaboration to teaching professionals in the Texarkana region. There will be food, beverages and professional development opportunities. Dress is business casual. For more information, visit ettaonline.org.

LifeShare New Donor Center Grand Opening
2:30 to 4 p.m. Friday
LifeShare Donor Center
4020 Summerhill Road, Texarkana, Texas
For more info, contact Tenille Terry at 318-673-1450 or tenille.terry@lifeshare.org.

ECET² Texarkana 2019
8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Saturday
Texas A&M University-Texarkana
7101 University Ave., Texarkana, Texas
This national campaign aims to provide a network of support and collaboration for teaching professionals in the Texarkana region. There will be food, beverages and professional development opportunities. Dress is classroom casual. There will be a reception and semi-formal dinner in the evening. For more information, visit ettaonline.org.

80s & 90s: The Collaboration
8 p.m. to 2 a.m. Saturday
2821 New Boston Road, Texarkana, Texas

ON THE BEAT

Following are some of the calls emergency officials responded to on Sunday.

Bowie County Sheriff's Office
1:45 a.m., DWI, 101 N. State Line Ave.
9:24 p.m., disturbance, 91 Private Road 13261

Texarkana, Texas, Police Department
7:33 a.m., theft, 2600 St. Michael Drive
9:20 a.m., burglary, 710 Lumpkin St.
9:57 a.m., theft, 2317 Richmond Road
10:06 a.m., disturbance, 2600 St. Michael Drive
3:01 p.m., theft, 1001 Dan Haskins
3:08 p.m., disturbance, 508 Robbins St.
4:36 p.m., auto theft, 2322 Magnolia St.
6:56 p.m., assault, 300 Brookwood Drive
10:18 p.m., disturbance, 5101 State Line Ave.

Texarkana, Texas, Fire Department
7:56 a.m., fire at residence, 1615 W. Sixth St.
8:03 p.m., electrical, 317 W. 22nd St.

Texarkana Ark., Police Department
7:41 a.m., disturbance, 912 Senator St.
2:47 p.m., disturbance, 5100 State Line Ave.
4:30 p.m., theft, 4801 Pinson Drive
4:53 p.m., forgery, 711 Hickory St.
9:47 p.m., disturbance, 201 Airport Drive
10:51 p.m., vandalism, 2225 East St.
11:26 p.m., noise disturbance, 4303 County Ave.

Texarkana, Ark., Fire Department
5:14 a.m., fire, Oats/Washington streets
1:21 p.m., gas leak, 2601 College Drive
7:35 p.m., vehicle accident, Jefferson Avenue and Sugarhill Road

Miller County Sheriff's Office
3:54 p.m., theft, 1 Quill Creek Drive

ing and driving, such as:
■ Designating a sober driver.
■ Contacting a cab or ride-share service.
■ Using mass transit.
■ Asking a sober friend or family member for a ride home.
■ Spending the night.