

TAKE ONE IT'S FREE

The Strawn Advocate

The Community's Local News Source

VOL. 2. ISSUE 10

SEPTEMBER 2014

Proposed Plans for State Park Presented to Community

(MicroplexNews.com) Texas Parks and Wildlife officials hosted a public meeting in Strawn on August 7 to discuss the planning stages of Palo Pinto Mountains State Park. During the meeting, Park Superintendent John Ferguson and Texas Parks & Wildlife (TPWD) representatives Chris Beckcom and Rodney Franklin were on hand to present three park usage plans under consideration and get input from the public. Over 100 people crowded into Guest Chapel for the meeting, with over half of them coming from outside of Strawn. Visitors from equestrian and astronomy clubs were on hand to give ideas that were specific to their groups. For instance, having a location down in a "bowl" that could be accessed easily by vehicle was important to the astronomy members. Both the equestrian and astronomy groups have already been able to make use of the park. Although not yet open to the public, the park has hosted several



One of the countless beautiful vistas waiting to be seen by visitors to the new Palo Pinto Mountains State Park. (Photo courtesy TPWD)

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Strawn School District Proposes New Tax Increase

At their August 18 regular meeting, the Strawn ISD Board of Trustees voted unanimously to move forward with a Tax Ratification Election to be held on November 4, 2014. The Board is recommending that voters approve an increase in the school tax rate from \$1.04 (per \$100) to \$1.17 (per \$100), which equates to a 12.5% increase. This rate increase would generate an additional

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Strawn ISD Proposed Tax Increase *(continued from page 1)*

\$123,000 per year and is slated to be used for long-deferred maintenance issues such as aging HVAC units, leaking & deteriorating roofs, ongoing drainage issues that have plagued the campus for years, building repairs and

general maintenance. Long term plans are to prudently increase the maintenance budget through the coming years so that issues can be addressed before becoming problematic. Currently, Strawn ISD has the lowest tax rate in Palo

Pinto County. The current tax rate of \$1.04 was a result of a State mandated tax cut that was passed by the Legislature and took effect in tax year 2007. As a comparison, in 2005, the Strawn ISD tax rate was \$1.43. A direct result of

Pinto County school district tax rates.

To determine how this tax increase might impact your property, on your 2013 tax statement, look under the heading "Taxing Entities." On the line titled "Strawn ISD", multiply the "Taxable Value" amount by 12.5% and subtract the amount listed under "Base Tax". The difference is the approximate increase you will pay if the tax increase is approved. To illustrate, the average value of a Strawn residence is \$50,064 (taxable value = \$26,086). At a rate of \$1.04 the school taxes would be \$271. At a rate of \$1.17, the school taxes would be \$305 (a difference of \$34). Persons 65 and older would see no increase in the tax rates for their Homesteads.

Comparing Palo Pinto County School District Tax Rates						
School District	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Gordon ISD	\$1.10	\$1.11	\$1.10	\$1.09	\$1.09	\$1.09
Graford ISD	\$1.09	\$1.08	\$1.08	\$1.07	\$1.06	\$1.07
Lipan ISD	N/A	\$1.34	N/A	\$1.33	\$1.41	\$1.39
Millsap ISD	N/A	\$1.54	N/A	\$1.67	\$1.67	\$1.67
Mineral Wells ISD	\$1.27	\$1.27	\$1.24	\$1.24	\$1.30	\$1.30
Palo Pinto ISD	\$1.06	\$1.06	\$1.06	\$1.06	\$1.06	\$1.06
Perrin-Whitt CISD	N/A	\$1.12	N/A	\$1.16	\$1.23	\$1.24
Santo ISD	\$1.20	\$1.20	\$1.18	\$1.32	\$1.31	\$1.30
Strawn ISD	\$1.04	\$1.04	\$1.04	\$1.04	\$1.04	\$1.04

the current low tax rate is that Strawn has the lowest "per student" funding in the County at \$5082 per student. The included chart shows a list of Palo

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254-595-0197

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City of Strawn News

The Strawn Volunteer Fire Department is now seeking donations of bottled water. Donations can be dropped off on Tuesdays at 7:00 p.m. or any time at the city hall. Any and all donations are appreciated. The fire department currently has less than 10 cases of water on hand. This dry weather will usually mean more fire calls and more use of drinking water. Please donate!

● **Strawn received another increase in sales tax revenue for August.** The city received \$9,971, which is approximately 2.5 percent more compared to last year's check of \$9,735. For 2014, Strawn has received \$93,715, which is up nearly 25 percent from last year's total of \$85,038. (www.lake-countrysun.com)

● **The City of Strawn will hold a meeting** at 7 p.m. on Monday, September 8, at City Hall to consider adopting a proposed tax rate for tax year 2014. The proposed tax rate is 0.27300663 per \$100 of value. The proposed tax rate would increase total taxes in the City of Strawn by 7.00 percent.

● **TriCity EMS desperately needs volunteers!** According to City Secretary Danny Miller, "There is a very real chance that Strawn, Minus, and Gordon will lose our ambulance service in the next two months if we do not get more people to volunteer to operate the service. If we are required to operate a paid service, we will all see a very large increase in our property tax and each patient will be re-

quired to pay for their use of the ambulance." You can read more about this issue by accessing the August 13 posting on <http://www.facebook.com/CityOfStrawnTexas>.

● **The City of Strawn and the Development Corporation of Strawn are very proud** that we are home to the Strawn Wellness Center at 119 Central Ave. Dr. Janette Kurban offers Chiropractic Services as well as Acupuncture. Her hours are Monday, Tuesday and Friday 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Wednesday from 9 a.m. to noon, and Satur-

day by appointment. She can be reached at (817) 266-5558. Sarah Rodriguez is a Licensed Massage Therapist. She can be reached at (817) 718-0848. The Wellness Center is also home to Doctor Christopher Tidroski and Doctor Jennifer Tidroski. Dr. Christopher Tidroski is a family practice physician. Dr. Jennifer Tidroski is pediatrician. They are in the office every Wednesday from 1:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. They can be reached anytime at (940) 329-0553. Please support our local health care professionals!

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State Park Draws Media Attention to City of Strawn

The Ft. Worth Star-Telegram and KERA News were just two of the news media who focused favorable attention on Strawn and the Palo Pinto Mountains State Park due to the public meeting with Texas Parks and Wildlife officials on August 7.

An editorial urging support for funding the park appeared in the Star-Tele-

gram on August 8. Entitled "Attention, Texas Legislature: We're still waiting for Palo Pinto park," the editorial can be accessed at <http://www.star-telegram.com/2014/08/08/6030432/attention-texas-legislature-were.html>. Before the public meeting, an article entitled "New state park west of Fort Worth awaits funding" was included in

KERA News had a live broadcast and article about Strawn and the park on August 8 entitled "Take A Sneak Peek at the Newest

State Park in Texas." If you missed it, go to <http://kera.com> and enter the title of the broadcast in the "search" feature. *Lake Country Sun* also had an in-depth article with pictures in the August 15 edition. Access the article at <http://www.lakecountysun.com> by entering the title "About 100 attend state park briefing."

district provide a revamped network infrastructure, Promethean® interactive white boards for each of the 17 classrooms, teacher laptops, two classroom sets of the dynamic TI Inspire® calcula-

Strawn ISD Awarded Technology Integration Grant

(LakeCountrySun.com) Strawn Independent School District has been awarded a technology integration grant in excess of \$178,000 for the 2014-15 school year from a private foundation.

The goal of the grant is to support the district in its effort to provide 21st century skills that will foster excellence in teaching practices and student performance. The grant will help the school

tors, and a newly outfitted computer lab. To learn more about this grant, go to http://www.lakecountysun.com/News/ci_2633599/Strawn-ISD-receives-major-grant-for-technology.



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Museum to Hold Membership Meeting September 16

The Strawn Historical Museum will hold its annual membership meeting on Tuesday, September 16, at 6:30 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chambers. All current members, as well as those who

wish to join, are invited to attend. Membership is open to anyone interested in preserving the history of Strawn and helping to support the museum. The meeting agenda in-

cludes a review of the past year's activities/accomplishments and discussion of current projects and future plans for the museum. Membership forms are available at the museum for those

who wish to renew membership or join as a new member. The museum charges no admission and is open Thursday-Saturday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. For more information, call 254-672-5281.



Always Dreamed of Being a Super Hero?

Well, believe it or not, you don't have to leap tall buildings or catch bullets in the palm of your hand or even climb skyscraper walls with spidery finesse. When you join the Tri-City EMS as a volunteer you automatically become a real, true-life super hero in your community. Right now the cities of Strawn, Mingus and Gordon and the surrounding area are dependent upon super heroes like you to keep Tri-City Ambulance operating. Without local super heroes, we may not make it. So grab your phone right now and call 254-693-5311 or 254-693-5467 to find out how YOU can save the day.

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Area Happenings

**Boot Scoot and BarBQue -
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September 6th @ 7 p.m.
Possum Kingdom Chamber of Commerce
Music, dance lessons, auction items, food, and more.
Cost is \$30 per person, \$50 per couple
Call 940-325-4848 for more information.

**TRIFECTA Triathlon
at Possum Kingdom Lake**
Sunday, September 14th
@ YMCA Camp Grady Spruce
The Sprint & Olympic Distance Triathlon event will feature a swim, bike, and run on the picturesque Possum Kingdom Lake and Palo Pinto County. Athletes from throughout the state of Texas and rest of the country will take part in the event. Proceeds of TRIFECTA go to the YMCA-Camp Grady Spruce.

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Roaring Ranger Days Festival
September 20th @ 10 am - Downtown Ranger
The festival will include the Roaring Ranger Run, parade, vendors, games and rides for the kids, great music, unique entertainers. Parade theme "1917 through the Roaring 20's". (parade entries encouraged) See Microplex News.com or call 254-647-3340 for more info.

If you know in advance of an event taking place that you would like to see listed in Area Happenings, please give us a call at 254-672-5281. Thank you.

**Larry Joe Taylor's Rhymes & Vines
Texas Music Festival**
September 18 - 20
@ Melody Mountain Ranch
Advanced pricing: 3 day - \$48, 2 day - \$32, 1 day - \$16 / At the gate pricing: 3 day-\$56, 2 day - \$40, 1 day - \$22 Ticket outlets: Barefoot Athletics and Signs & Designs;
Web Link: www.larryjoetaylor.com

Gordon Ex-Student Homecoming
Sept. 19th & 20th Everyone Welcome!
Fri 9/19 Longhorns vs Rising Star 7:30 pm
Sat 9/20 Registration/ Visiting (new gym 8am)
Lunch/Bingo/Horseshoes/Vendors (noon)
Parade (6pm)
Homecoming Dance-Kenneth Doyle Band (8pm)
Contact - Pam McQueary, ph 940-452-6384
email phinkson@sbcglobal.net

**Texas Frontiers Fall Production
"Buffalo Altar"**
A Texas Symphony
Saturday, September 20, 2014 7 - 10 pm
TFT Western Heritage Park,
2009 N. Oak Ave., Mineral Wells
\$40 per person in advance /
\$50 per person at the gate
Purchase tickets at PPC Farm Bureau Insurance,
Bennett's Office Supply or Mineral Wells Area

United Way 4th Annual Penny Auction
Saturday, September 27th 5 - 8 pm
Lots of great prizes that can be bid on for pennies!
100% of funds stay in Palo Pinto County! Bring your own pennies or purchase them there! Doors Open at 5:00pm - Auction Begins at 6:00pm
Mineral Wells Junior High, 1301 SE 14th Ave., Mineral Wells

Proposed Plans for New State Park *(continued from page 1)*

trail rides and star gazing parties and has more events planned for the future. Some of the amenities being considered for the park are mini-cabins, a pavilion, a recreation hall, and equestrian camping spots, along with regular camping spots ranging from primitive to those with water, electric and sewer.

Texas' newest State Park sits outside of Strawn, Texas and has 4,399 acres of some of the prettiest land around. The park is home to Tucker Lake, a secluded 90-acre lake and a popular fishing spot for the locals. The park has a variety of trees, plant life and wildlife, with topography that includes some prairie land and many hills with steep slopes and rugged terrain. Some of the hills offer fairly easy access to scenic overlooks. The Palo Pinto Mountains State Park is far enough off busy I-20 to enjoy the quiet of nature, yet close enough for easy access to and from the park. The park's location sits halfway between Ft. Worth

and Abilene, with a short 76 miles to reach it from either direction. That 76 miles also moves it far away from the light pollution of the big cities, allowing for a night view of the sky you just can't get in the city. Strawn recently added shields for all their street lights to keep light directed downward, further darkening the night skies for the state park.

The City of Strawn and its residents are eager to have this state park opened in their backyard. They negotiated with the TPWD to keep the entrance to the park on FM 2372, requiring visitors to travel into Strawn on their way to the park. The City donated the land around Lake Tucker to the park; however, the lake, the dam and the water rights will continue to be owned by the City of Strawn. The City and TPWD have been working together in preparation for the visitors they know will come when the funding comes through to develop the park. TPWD will be submitting

their budget requests for the Texas Legislative session that will meet in January 2015. Please contact your elected state representatives to tell them that funding state parks is important to you. For contact information and a list of who represents you, go to www.microplexnews.com/palo-pinto-mountains-state-park-seeks-public-opinion/ and follow the instructions in the last paragraph of the article. The three proposed plans presented at the public meeting may also be viewed by accessing the web address listed above.

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