

Calling for convention of states

Texas effort seeks to amend U.S. Constitution to reduce power of federal government

BY JEFF LOWE
DISPATCH RECORD

The Texas Senate voted on Tuesday to call for a Convention of States for the purpose of amending the U.S. Constitution. A Convention of States, as described in Article V of the Constitution, would take place when at least two-thirds of the state legislatures (34 of the 50) issue an application for a



Sen. Dawn Buckingham

convention to take place. The U.S. Constitution has been amended 27 times, but none of those changes took place through a convention of states. Senate Joint Resolution 2, which passed the Texas Senate this week, calls for a convention of states whose

purpose is to “impose fiscal restraints on the federal government, to limit the power and jurisdiction of the federal government, and to limit the terms of office of federal officials and members of Congress.” District 24 Senator Dr. Dawn Buckingham, whose district includes Lampasas County, voted for the resolution calling for the convention. The Senate’s vote echoes

Gov. Greg Abbott’s call for a convention that he made early last year, although the Senate did not propose specific amendments as Abbott did. Mrs. Buckingham, along with the bill’s author Sen. Brian Birdwell of Granbury, touted the resolution as a step toward returning power to the states. “I think every day we see how the overreaching

federal government affects our lives,” Mrs. Buckingham said. For example, “The EPA wants to take a puddle in your back yard and declare it a navigable waterway,” the senator said. “It’s time to stand up and get the balance of power back in the states where it belongs.” Some critics of a proposed convention of states are concerned

it could lead to a significant overhaul of the Constitution or possibly a new constitution. “We’re not trying to have a constitutional convention,” Mrs. Buckingham said. “That’s totally different.” Under the proposal, Texas’ delegates would consist of three state representatives from the

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Last month was warmest February on record

BY JEFF LOWE
DISPATCH RECORD

February 2017 was Lampasas’ warmest on record dating back to 1897, according to information from National Weather Service and Lower Colorado River Authority. National Weather Service reported an average high temperature of 72 degrees for the past month and an average low of 47.4. That produced an average temperature of 59.7 degrees – 9.1 degrees above the long-term

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DEREK MOY | DISPATCH RECORD

Beginning of Lent

During an Ash Wednesday service this week, Faith Lutheran Church Pastor Timothy Ochsner provides the imposition of ashes to Mandy Walsh, shown with her 1-year-old son Chance and 3-year-old daughter Sayla. Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of the Lenten season in preparation for Easter.

Lampasas to switch trash companies

BY DAVID LOWE
DISPATCH RECORD

The Lampasas City Council on Monday voted unanimously to switch the city to a different trash-collection provider. The council voted for City Manager Finley deGraffenried to negotiate a contract with Waste Connections, which had the highest score of the five companies that submitted proposals for trash service. Waste Management has provided Lampasas’ trash service for many years, but city officials determined Waste Connections will offer the best value of the companies that sent proposals. DeGraffenried, City Attorney Jo-Christy Brown and Finance Director Yvonne

Moreno ranked the proposals, and deGraffenried said Waste Connections had the top score on each person’s tally sheet. DeGraffenried said the switch to a different provider should result in lower trash-collection fees for customers. The city manager also said customers will continue to receive the same services available now: twice-per-week residential trash collection, commercial trash pickup a maximum of four times per week and a hazardous waste collection program. A three-year contract with Waste Connections is set to begin May 1. When it expires April 30, 2020, the

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Through restoration, property owners help revive downtown Lometa

BY DEREK MOY
DISPATCH RECORD

When Mary Costello and Kent Bloomstrand bought a small house near Lometa’s railroad tracks more than two years ago, they didn’t think they would be at the center of efforts to restore the community’s downtown. “We bought a little house, and that was our original investment on the edge of town,” Ms. Costello said. “We, believe it or not, were attracted to the town because of the [railway] depot. We drove up on a rainy Easter day when the wildflowers were in bloom. Kent loves trains and the railroad’s history with the town.” They soon bought a property across the street to hold bigger family gatherings and then noticed properties downtown very much in need of restoration. “When people came and saw that it was falling apart, falling in and in a various state of decay, their tendency would be, ‘Let’s just

knock it down and build something new,’” Bloomstrand said. “It’d be a shame to see this great Main Street of Lometa replaced by a bunch of new modern buildings.” The partners have more than five decades of experience in business and home renovation, but they’d never taken on a series of projects as daunting as the properties in Lometa. They brought in a Leander builder, Santos Diaz, and have hired locals to work on their Main Street and Railway Street properties. Diaz sees the project as a challenge and said he enjoys doing the kind of work that is so visible – going from four barely upright walls with no roof to a completed, restored building. “I said to them, ‘Are you guys seeing now, never take for granted what you can transform something into?’” Ms. Costello said. “I think the sense of pride I’m getting off these young construction workers is really nice.” When Bloomstrand and Ms. Costello



DEREK MOY | DISPATCH RECORD

Innovative Design owner George Roseberry is working with materials from buildings being restored in downtown Lometa by Kent Bloomstrand and Mary Costello. He is making a table from 100-year-old, long-leaf pine – a wood almost impossible to find today, he said.

are sweeping out debris or mowing the property’s back alleyway, they are reminded constantly of the “once thriving” community, Ms. Costello said. “I think we have a healthy appreciation of how disruptive [change] could be, and we don’t see Lometa as an ATM machine,” she

said. “This is really about the community [rather] than being about us just trying to grab up a bunch of properties. We really had no intention – it’s funny how we started out saying this would be a weekend place we’d

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WEATHER

Date	High	Low	Rain
Feb. 26	63	38	0
Feb. 27	78	58	0
Feb. 28	78	61	0
March 1	68	47	0

2017 rainfall total: 4.49 in.
Same date last year: 2.14 in.
Normal through March 1: 4.20 in.

Data from the National Weather Service through the Lampasas Municipal Airport.

BRIEFLY

LOMETA SCHOOL BOARD CANDIDATES

Monday is the deadline for candidates to file for inclusion on the ballot in the Lometa Independent School District special election. The May 6 special election is to fill the vacancy caused by trustee Ben Leggett’s resignation from the school board. Megan Lusty and Lowell Ivey have filed to enter the special election. Candidates may pick up applications at the Lometa ISD administration building, 102 S.

Eighth St. on weekdays from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Completed applications may be dropped off at the administration building or mailed to Lometa ISD, Attn: Board Application, P.O. Box 250, Lometa, TX 76853.

BOOK SALE

Rollins Brook Community Hospital Volunteers will conduct a book sale Thursday from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. The event will be in Room 5 of the hospital, on the first floor.

Proceeds go toward such things as hospital improvements and to help patients with their prescription costs.

RECEPTION

The public is invited to a reception for Micky Tower on March 10 from 2-4 p.m. at City Hall, 312 E. Third St. Tower -- who oversees Lampasas Municipal Airport, Oak Hill Cemetery and the city pools for the parks department -- is retiring from the city with approximately 15 years of service.

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