Collier rekindles Sandy Creek dredge project
Alternative group forms to combat mining company

By Connie Swimney Staff Writer

As a mining company owner rekindles his interest in a Sandy Creek dredging permit, a citizen’s group has formed to try to come up with its own plans to remove silt and sand deposits in the waterway and on Lake LBJ due to severe flood events.

During the October 2018 flooding of the Llano River, massive sand deposits settled into Sandy Creek and Lake LBJ downstream of Junction.

Along the lake, the communities of Sandy Harbor, Sunrise Beach, Henderson Bay and Kingsland became inundated with sand in the lake beds and along shorelines decreasing storage capacity and launching boating safety concerns.

In the aftermath, developer Steve Neath and Kevin Collier of Collier Materials proposed a sand dredging operation based on private property along Sandy Creek about three miles upstream of Lake LBJ. A group of residents protested, fearing this would compromise the waterway and threaten the environment without substantial remedy to the issue.

The permit plan appeared to waver after a blowback from opponents.

By early 2019, Collier opted to submit a Texas Parks and Wildlife permit application; however, he continued his action without opposition to the project.

He explained the permit withdrawal delayed but did not halt his plans.

“I never stopped working on this project. We were trying a different angle,” Collier said in a phone interview with The Highlander June 7. “I voluntarily pulled the last one (permit application) out for other reasons. I was looking at another approach.

“We’re moving forward. We’re about to submit our Texas Parks and Wildlife permit,” he added. “We’re going to see what Parks and Wildlife says.”

While Collier and Nash prepare to dredge… see Page 3

Buchanan Dam suspect accused of manslaughter

From staff reports

A Buchanan Dam man will face manslaughter and aggravated assault charges stemming from a bloody injury charge, following a encounter that killed a man and injured his family members according to Llano County deputies.

Thomas Reyes, 27, was booked into the Llano County Jail June 6 and released on bonds totaling $90,000.

His charges are in connection with a Kingsland man’s death following a collision at an intersection in Buchanan Dam. Reyes was arrested in connection with the intersection and a stop sign and hitting a second vehicle, according to the Department of Public Safety report.

The incident happened just after 6 p.m. on June 2 at the intersection of IH Line Drive and Lillian Dean Street.

The report stated that a 2014 Ford Fiestas driven by Reyes was traveling southwest on IH Line Drive.

Leonard T. McCullar, 86, of Kingsland was driving a 2011 Chevy Equinox eastbound on Lillian Dean Street.

The Fiesta “diediriged” the Equinox and collided with the Equinox, the DPS report stated.

McCullar was pronounced dead on the scene by Precinct 4 Justice of the Peace Brian Alexander.

Other occupants of the Equinox were Erik McCullar, 11, of Kingsland; and Oliva McCullar, 3, of Kingsland.

Erik McCullar was taken to Dr. Charles L. Shelton Hospital in Austin with serious injuries.

Olivia McCullar was taken to Seton Highland Lakes in Burnet. Reyes was taken to Seton – Williamson County with incapacitating injuries, according to the report.

Buchanan experienced some snow flurries, according to a description by

tornadoes, caused power outages, mile per hour winds uprooted trees, caused power outages, damaged property and drenched the area for at least an hour.

The Vanishing Texas River Cruise tour boat – on a regular tour which travels for miles up the lake and into the Colorado River channel – began experiencing engine issues just after 6 p.m. that evening as choppy conditions began pulling the multi-story vessel.

“The boat was beached on Shaw Island during the storm and was unable to get off the island due to a flooded engine compartment,” said Capt. Chris Jett, in a Burnet County Sheriff’s Office statement.

“The boat did not sink, and all persons are safe and accounted for with no injuries.”

Emergency crews ferried passengers off the island by the peninsula the off-duty law enforcement assisted in transporting the tourists back to their vehicles this was for a return trip to San Antonio.

Stalker suspect leads cops on pursuit

From staff reports

A Marble Falls man faces several charges including stalking, reckless driving and evading arrest after a follows with his estranged wife and a police pursuit, authorities report.

Marble Falls Police officers received a call to a Brunswick Place home in the 900 block of Avenue G in Marble Falls.

The streak continued as the suspect continued to drive his vehicle in a Childress police report.

An MPD press release states.

Collier found the vehicle in the 2400 block of U.S. 281 and initiated a traffic stop. The vehicle was driven by Lake Altavista, Travis County.

The suspect refused to yield and a vehicle pursuit ensued. The suspect had their chase near FM 1431 and FM 8080. The suspect vehicle entered the city of Granite Shoals.

The pursuit continued to evade and eventually returned to Marble Falls where he was forced to stop as he reached the dead end of a residential road.

The pursuit then evolved into a foot chase. Mortonstorms were dispatched by BCSO deputies.

Authorities transported him to Taylor Scott & White Rehabilitation Center for a minor injury, the report stated.

The MPD obtained arrest warrants for the suspect for evading arrest with vehicle; possession of a controlled substance; and reckless driving.

“During the arrest the suspect became combative and was also charged with the offense of evading arrest with ‘criminal intent,’ the report stated.

The suspect was remanded in the Burnet County Jail, county bonds totaling $137,500.

Tour boat temporarily stranded during storm

By Connie Swimney Staff Writer

A brief but powerful thunderstorm which swept through Burnet and Llano counties the evening of June 1 caused several thousand dollars worth of damage to structures and some personal property as well as riped down live trees caused intermittent power outages. The storms were part of the weekend, leading to a few wintery temperatures plummeted by about 40 degrees, according to a description by

Weather event includes outages, property damage

By Connie Swimney Staff Writer

The Highlander

Nearly 75 passengers on a river boat cruise on Lake LBJ experienced some tense moments as a brief but severe thunderstorm swept into the Highland Lakes June 9 and stranded the tourists on a remote peninsula on the waterway.

Overall, the weather event which included 65 mile per hour winds tossed unmoored boats, caused power outages, damaged property and drenched the area for at least an hour.

The Vanishing Texas River Cruise tour boat – on a regular tour which travels for miles up the lake and into the Colorado River channel – began experiencing engine issues just after 6 p.m. that evening as choppy conditions began pulling the multi-story vessel.

“The boat was beached on Shaw Island during the storm and was unable to get off the island due to a flooded engine compartment,” said Capt. Chris Jett, in a Burnet County Sheriff’s Office statement.

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