

OHS Renovations



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\$75K awarded to Keep Olney Beautiful for park updates

BY DIONECIA PETIT editor@olneyenterprise.com

On the afternoon of March 29, Holly Bailey received the news, in person, that the Keep Olney Beautiful organization was awarded the Local Parks Grant by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department at the department's annual commission meeting in

Austin. "We got the maximum amount awarded for our community size, which is kind of unheard of," KOB member Valorie Mahler said.

"There were

some communities on their third or fourth try at getting a grant, and we were very blessed to have gotten it the first go-around," KOB member Holly Bailey said.

The grant requires a population of less than 20,000 for small communities and is a "50/50" grant which requires the applicant to match the awarded amount of \$75,000 with a three-year timeline for grant completion.

The awarding of this grant was an encouraging

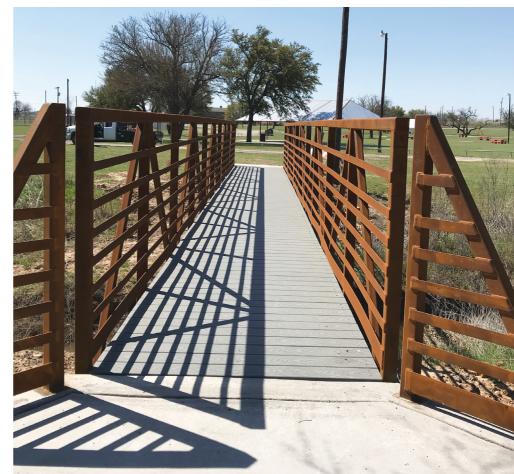
step in a positive direction for KOB, who plans to use the award to redo playground equipment at Tom Griffin Park.

"We want to replace the old with new," Bailey said. "We want to install new picnic tables and benches, new playing equipment, a walking trail and maybe even a new basketball court."

The recipient of these park improvements has been taken into careful consideration by the organization over the course of their planning.

"We want the community to know this is something we've worked on for a long time," Bailey said. "We have looked at what would best benefit the kids in the community. We just wanted to be able to make sure to reach the entire community."

While Bailey said the organization plans to wait on installation until a majority of the matching grant money has been raised, progress has been made with the installation of a new bridge at the



The newly installed bridge at Tom Griffin Park in Olney. **OLNEY ENTERPRISE PHOTO BY VALORIE MAHLER**

New Century Veterans

See GRANT on page 8A

Hughes hired as interim city administrator

BY RONNI WALKER publisher@olneyenterprise.com

Olney City Council voted to hire Doug Hughes as interim city administrator at a meeting held on April 9. Agenda Item 7 noted as "Consider **Entering Agreement** to Hire Interim City Administrator," was not clear to many people City Secretary Tim Houston said. "Many people did not understand that on Monday evening when the council voted to approve the agenda item, that the agreement actually hired the city administrator with an

April 16 start date." Although Hughes will start on Monday, Houston said they want to run a background check and make sure everything is in the clear before finalizing the offer. Upon completion of a satisfactory background check, Mayor Jeske will sign the official documentation and Houston will attest.

"With some of the

recent issues with city employees, we want to perform a thorough background check and make sure everything is in the clear before we hire anyone," said Houston.

Hughes will fill the seat as an interim for six months until the council decides on a final candidate. Houston said the city has been operating without a city administrator for nine months after the previous city administrator, Danny Parker, made a lateral move to Wichita Valley Water Supply Corporation as general manager.

Hughes' background and locality reaffirmed the council's decision to hire him as interim. Hughes was previously mayor of Springtown for eight years before becoming the city administrator in 2014. After Hughes' resignation from that position last year, the

council interviewed him for employment with the City of Olney, said Houston.

"We recently reconsidered his application for a shortterm position since he is local to the area," Houston said. They posted the position on Indeed and the Texas Municipal League (TML) website. "Most people who are in city administration go to the TML website to look for positions," said Houston.

Houston further explained he is confident they will find a qualified candidate via TML as most Texas cities participate in TML, which is an organization that provides city benefits, legal counseling and legislative support. He says they attempt to get the best outcome for

participating cities. The search for a permanent city administrator will continue while Hughes is fulfilling the interim role. Houston said it is a possibility that Hughes may be offered a permanent position if he is willing to move to Olney, accept a longer position and the council likes the direction he is

moving the city. Houston said the mayor, who has a fulltime job and who is designated as the chief executive officer of Olney, currently has to address issues normally handled by the city administrator.

"Hiring an administrator will help us move forward in the right direction. We have not had anyone in the position for nine months, and to be honest, the responsibilities that fall on our support team and council can be overwhelming. We have volunteer council members who don't get paid for what they do. They don't get reductions on their water bill or anything. It will help

See ADMINISTRATOR on page 2A

Memorial enters the HOMESTRETCH

BY RETA MCCALLUM rm@ccrinc.biz

YOUNG COUNTY VETERANS and current active duty military of the past 20 years soon will see their nan join those of their predecessors on a Wall of Honor, the New Century Veterans Memorial. Occasionally someone is heard saying they were not aware this project was happening. Thanks to newspaper, radio, television and Facebook coverage, those who are caught by surprise are by far the minority.

A February challenge grant issued by Perry Foundation of Olney to businesses and individuals to step up and show support for honoring those from Young County who are serving and have served to defend our freedoms has resulted in over \$12,000 in donations in the past eight weeks,

bringing the project \$24,000 closer to the \$125,000 goal. That amount includes funding to erect a 20' granite wall enabling updates to the names on the wall for decades to come as well as funds for annual updates to engrave additional names. In essence, the entire Young County Veterans Memorial soon will become a living Wall of Honor. All donations to NCVM are 501(c)(3) qualified tax deductible.

For now, deadlines have begun arriving. On April 13, 148 names were submitted to the granite company for engraving. May 1 is the deadline for plaque sponsorships, which help support the wall financially and keep the wall design consistent with that of the existing wall.

See VETS on page 8A

HIGHLIGHTS

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WEATHER STATS: Courtesy of Accuweather

	DATE	HIGH	LOW	RAIN
Thursday	4/19	78	56	0%
Friday	4/20	73	49	50 %
Saturday	4/21	70	44	40%
Sunday	4/22	74	54	10%
Monday	4/23	78	55	20%
Tuesday	4/24	77	55	40%
Wednesday	4/25	79	56	40%

Lake Levels



Lake Graham: Lake Kickapoo:

1074.23 95.8% Full Lake Arrowhead: 924.45 90.5% Full 1042.38 83.1% Full Possum Kingdom 998.07 96.9% Full

COMMUNITY NEWS BRIEF

Summer programs at the Refuge will begin soon. For more information, call 940.564.4673.

The House of Mercy Car Wash Fundraiser scheduled on 4/14 was canceled due to weather. It will be rescheduled.

The Baileys are planning to open Hometown Coffee Tea shop in Olney. Some of the menu items will include espresso-based coffee, Frappuccino®, cold and hot tea,ice-coffee, smoothies

Support National Library Week and the Photography Show and contest April 23-27 at the Olney Community Library and Arts Center. See contest details on page 3A.

Olney High School renovations will begin this summer. You can see the 3D model at the OISD Administration Office. More details inside this issue in the Cub Hub.

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