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## **CHEERS AND JEERS**

**Cheers:** To the Euless Water Department for quickly responding to my call concerning a leak at my home. Within a day, the leak was found and fixed. Cheers also for replacing sod that had been dug up to get to the leak. Your quick work saved hundreds of gallons.

-- Rob Dahlen, Euless

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## SEE IT IN THE STAR



Smith

■ **Spencer Smith** has served as patrol leader and assistant patrol leader. He received the World Conservation and Order of the Arrow awards. Smith's service project entailed designing, planning and supervising the planting of a xeriscape at Bedford Heights Elementary. Smith is a member of First Baptist Church of Euless and recently graduated from L.D. Bell, where he was drum captain in the marching band and participated in Mu Alpha Theta and the National Honor Society. He is the son of **Todd** and **Nancy Smith** of Euless.

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### **WORK FACES**

■ The H-E-B Chamber of Commerce announced the graduation of the 2010 H-E-B Leadership Class during the May chamber membership luncheon. The 2010 graduates are: **Steve Bowden**, city of Hurst; **Kay Brown**, city of Bedford; **Ryan Clifford** and **Zsanett Clifford**, Veritas Payment Solutions; **Martha Eberlain**, MidCities Dental; **Roger Fisher**, Qualex; **Jeanne Green**, Bedford library; **Minyon Levels**, H-E-B Chamber of Commerce; **Michael McCann**, Chesapeake Energy; **Chris Orona**, Baylor Regional Medical Center at Grapevine; **Walter Ott**, Carter BloodCare; **Kim Rocha**, Alliance for Children; **Connie Scott-Ortiz**, city of Euless; **Nancy Smith**, Todd Smith Law Firm; and **Shea Stanfield-McGarrah**, H-E-B school district.

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# Golf course artwork is conversation piece

**"Most of the people ask what it is," one worker says.  
 "I don't know what to tell them."**

By TERRY EVANS

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**EULESS** — As a Texas Star Golf Course cart attendant, Jerry LaFond drives by *Symphony*

on Texas 80 to 90 times a day.

"I don't really understand it," said LaFond, who shuttles guests from the parking lot to the clubhouse.

Perched near a trio of post oaks on a grassy hill in front of the Bird's Fort Pavilion, the *ikebana* sculpture can't be missed. It most closely resembles an intricate wooden fence. Its 20-or-so-foot length has interlaced segments of limbs and branches, several large blue plastic discs and a few dozen old CDs.

Some CDs have elaborate labels, some are solid colors, and others are plain. They're attached to the sculpture by thin wires. The slightest breeze makes them jitterbug and flash brilliantly.

"Most of the people ask what it is," LaFond said of his riders. "I don't know what to tell them."

But Eules Mayor Mary Lib Saleh does. "It's really been a showstopper," she said. "Art is truly art only in the eye of the beholder."

Those who behold *Symphony on Texas* either like it or don't, Texas Star General Manager Glenda Shelton said.

"I actually like it," she said. "There have been positive and negative comments. But, if nothing else, it's been a conversation starter."

Shelton said she had her

doubts when she saw the concept drawing. When she heard the explanation, she understood.

Saleh explained *Symphony on Texas* eloquently. The limbs and branches, she said, represent the people coming to Texas and to Texas Star. The discs represent the weather that greets them.

"The big blue discs are the cold and the snowstorms that we had last winter," she said. "The smaller discs, as you go forward, are the changes in the weather from the silvery spring through to the gold of the hot summer sun."

The representative nature of *ikebana* can best be appreciated through meditation, Saleh said. Its 600-year history is rooted in Japanese Buddhism, and Saleh quoted a Buddhist priest who said, "You can only learn to meditate when you can hear the rocks grow." Traditional *ikebana* uses flowers in its arrangements. But the three *ikebana* teachers who conceived *Symphony on Texas* are from the Sogetsu School. For them, virtually any material is fair game.

The three women — masters Eiko Arai and Yoshiko Kato and advanced student Noriko Kokuryo — taught classes the week of May 24 in Fort Worth. Saleh said that when they complete a week of teaching, "they leave something behind."

On May 29, they brought

more than 20 students to Texas Star to attack a pile of branches with hatchets and saws to erect the sculpture.

Anchored with rebar, heavy limbs serve as sturdy columns on which the intricate network of branches is built. Wood screws and wire hold critical junctures together. Its creators built it to last, and Saleh said it should remain through the end of June.

"They worked from 8 a.m. until 4 p.m. with the temperature in the high 90s," she said. "The Japanese masters' farewell was that Eules had been the best place they've worked. They got a lot of attention and had so much fun."

While their business here was teaching, the *ikebana* masters' mission was friendship, said Saleh, who is a first-degree master in the Ohara School of *ikebana*. She said she learned from her mother, Martha Meese, who was a grandmaster.

For those who have trouble understanding *Symphony on Texas*, Saleh said, an explanatory sign will soon be posted nearby. She wanted to give people a week or so to try to figure it out on their own.

"If you stand and meditate and know the title, you can have your own story of what it means to you," she said. "Art appeals to everyone in a different way."

TERRY EVANS, 817-390-7620

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EULESS



STAR-TELEGRAM/JOYCE MARSHALL

"The big blue discs are the cold and the snowstorms that we had last winter," says Mayor Mary Lib Saleh, who also knows *ikebana*.

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GIVING SCHOOLS

## Program gives animals chance at homes

**The GAP students “knocked our euthanasia down at least 70 percent,” a shelter official says.**

By TERRY EVANS  
 tevans@star-telegram.com

**EULESS** — A girls group at Trinity High School is doing its part to find homes for pets at the Euleless Animal Shelter.

Students in the Girl's Awareness Program, or GAP, help take care of pets at the shelter, conduct fundraisers and promote adoptions.

Animal Services Supervisor Larry James said GAP is the best thing that has happened at the shelter since it was built in 1977.

“They knocked our euthanasia down at least 70 percent,” he said. “Most of the remaining 30 percent is injured or sick wildlife, sick dogs and cats and feral cats that can't be adopted.”

Betsy Deck, Euleless communications director, said that's the most tangible reason GAP received the city's 2009 Youth Volunteer of the Year Award.

“They are down there every weekend, walking, brushing and loving on the pets,” Deck said. “They also host two fundraisers a year for the animal shelter. For teenagers to donate such a significant chunk of their free time to the animal shelter is incredible.”

Danielle Dreyer, who was GAP president until she graduated last week, still volunteers at the shelter.

“We try to come every Monday,” she said. “Some girls try to train the dogs and make them easier to adopt.”

The girls also give cats the loving attention they crave.



SPECIAL TO THE STAR-TELEGRAM/BOB BOOTH

Stephanie Cronk, left, a Trinity High School teacher and GAP sponsor, and senior Alice Church clean a cat last week at the Euleless Animal Shelter.

### Euleless Animal Shelter

- 1517 Westpark Way; 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. Mondays through Fridays and 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturdays.
- Call 817-685-1594 or go to [www.eulesstx.gov/animal](http://www.eulesstx.gov/animal) for more information on adoptions.

“I really love animals,” said Monique Oatis, a senior. “I want to be a vet when I grow up. All of the people I know in GAP want to be vets.”

English teacher Steffenie Vela, who founded the club eight years ago and is its lead sponsor, said a number of people at Trinity are involved in the program.

Vela said Stephanie Cronk, an English as a second language teacher, photographs the dogs and cats and posts them on such websites as Petfinder and Adopt-a-Pet. Other educators, like Lory Palmer, Beth Pizzuto and Linda Munz, work alongside the students. The adults also administer immunizations against diseases such as parvo.

“A lot of things get done at the shelter that wouldn't get done if GAP wasn't there,” Pizzuto said.

James said GAP makes it easier to get animals adopted not only by advertising them on the Internet but also by reducing adoption fees. The shelter's fees, which include vaccinations and mandatory spay or neuter, are \$155 for a male dog and up to \$250 for a female. Cats are \$99 for a male and \$135 for a female.

But GAP-sponsored adoptions, whether dogs or cats, are \$50 for males and \$75 for females.

Alice Church, a junior, said more than 300 dogs and cats were adopted last year because of GAP.

“We come to this shelter because it's off the beaten path

and needs more exposure she said.

TERRY EVANS, 817-390-7620

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SPECIAL TO THE STAR-TELEGRAM/BOB BOOTH

Above, Alice Church, center, GAP vice president, brother Bailey Church and Monique Oatis help socialize a group of dogs last week. At left, two of the shelter dogs get acquainted.

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FINANCE

# Sales-tax revenue up for 2nd month in a row in Texas

**Government officials hope the economy is finally on the rebound.**

By MIKE LEE  
 mikelee@star-telegram.com

Sales-tax revenue increased for the second straight month, indicating that some parts of the state's economy are beginning to rebound, according to figures released by the Texas comptroller's office.

Texas Comptroller Susan Combs said the increase — 0.1 percent over June 2009 — came from retail sales, oil and gas activity, and restaurants. Taxes from construction and manufacturing continued to decline. Sales taxes dropped for 14 straight months, until showing a slight increase last month.

"While overall economic conditions and sales-tax revenues appear to be stabilizing, there remains a risk of further deterioration, before a sustained recovery is under way," Combs said.

Sales taxes to cities in Texas declined 1.5 percent compared with June 2009, but cities in Tarrant County fared better, with a 0.9 percent increase in sales taxes, and some local cities are faring even better.

This month's figures reflect sales taxes that were collected in April.

Most cities rely on sales taxes for a sig-

nificant part of their budgets. Arlington had the best performance among the larger Tarrant cities, with a 5.4 percent increase compared with the same month in 2009, and a 4 percent increase for the first four months of the year.

Arlington's budget manager, Mike Finley, said the Highlands shopping center and the Arlington entertainment district seem to be producing most of the increase.

"We're cautiously optimistic," he said.

Most cities are beginning to plan their budgets for the next fiscal year, and many are predicting a decline in revenue because the economic downturn has also eaten into their property tax base.

"We're still looking at a gap. If sales taxes continue to perform it'll mitigate that," Finley said.

Fort Worth has the most serious budget problem, with a projected \$77 million shortfall.

Tax collections were up 2.3 percent in Fort Worth, although they're still down about 2 percent for the first four months of the year.

"It's obviously a good news story. We've reached bottom and we may be beginning a very long, slow recovery," Fort Worth budget officer Horatio Porter said.

## Municipal collections

Here's a look at sales tax collections in Tarrant County cities. The figures represent the percent change for sales taxes collected in April and returned to the cities by the Texas comptroller's office.

City	Change
Arlington	5.40
Bedford	2.89
Benbrook	12.70
Blue Mound	7.63
Colleyville	0.71
Crowley	-0.70
Dalworthington Gardens	25.16
Edgecliff Village	32.73
Eules	7.01
Everman	-8.30
Forest Hill	-5.07
Fort Worth	2.27
Grand Prairie	-3.34
Grapevine	-8.30
Haltom City	-9.01
Haslet	62.72
Hurst	-2.05
Keller	-8.98
Kennedale	37.73
Lake Worth	-2.34
Lakeside	19.66
Mansfield	5.67
North Richland Hills	-1.55
Pantego	-11.78
Pelican Bay	282.48
Richland Hills	1.99
River Oaks	-3.36
Saginaw	14.50
Sansom Park	-4.47
Southlake	-6.31
Watauga	4.93
Westlake	-0.69
Westworth Village	2.00
White Settlement	2.87
<b>County total</b>	<b>0.92</b>

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## Ex-boyfriend kidnaps Euless woman, police say

Thursday, June 10, 2010

By **DOMINGO RAMIREZ JR.** [ramirez@star-telegram.com](mailto:ramirez@star-telegram.com)

A Euless woman was kidnapped by an ex-boyfriend Wednesday night and held captive for almost an hour before she was released in Fort Worth, Euless police said.

The woman was found in good condition, police said.

Euless police continued to investigate the incident on Thursday.

Police received the report shortly after 7:30 p.m. Wednesday from an apartment complex in the 200 block of Martha Drive in Euless.

Witnesses told Euless police that they saw the woman, who lived in the complex, being forced into a car by a man. A witness told police that the woman had said, "I don't want to go." The man placed her in a car and drove away, police said.

Investigators later determined that the man was an ex-boyfriend.

Officers obtained the woman's cell phone number and contacted her.

During conversations with police, the woman confirmed that she had been kidnapped and she was being held against her will, authorities said.

Shortly before 8:25 p.m., the man released the woman in Fort Worth, police said. She was able to tell officers during a phone conversation that she had been released and she then returned to Euless, police said.

No one has been arrested.