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GOP candidate says improving government efficiency; transparency will be priority as Texas comptroller

JORDAN GREEN
Longview News-Journal

Christi Craddick, a long-time member of the Texas Railroad Commission, said her experience in making government more efficient and transparent will make her effective if elected as the next Texas comptroller. The Texas Comptroller's Office is in charge of all as-

pects of state money – from collecting sales tax revenue to ensuring that state agencies are spending money appropriately. She said she will prioritize auditing state agencies, local governments and schools to root out waste, fraud and abuse. Craddick will be on the Republican ballot for the March 3 primary, and she's running against incumbent

Comptroller Kelly Hancock, former lawmaker Don Huffines and accountant Michael Berlanga. "The comptroller's office touches every single dollar that comes in and out of the state," Craddick said. "It's the CFO of the entire state. Well, why is that important? Because we all are concerned about what happens in our own family, in our

own family budgets. That's how I look at this budget. It's your money. It's our taxpayer dollars." She also said she hopes more people will pay attention to the work of the comptroller's office and get engaged with an election that all too often seems to slip under the radar. See CRADDICK Page 5A



MTC offers tuition free pathway to LDCD-I



Special to The Henderson News Management & Training Corporation (MTC) today announced a tuition free training pathway that helps Texans earn the education and practicum requirements for Licensed Chemical Dependency Counselor Intern (LDCD I) roles.

Participants complete 270 education hours through MTC's career school and a 300 hour supervised practicum at one of 13 treatment sites statewide. Applications are open now for Texas residents 18 or older.

"If you've been waiting for a sign to start a counseling career, this is it," said Misty Edwards, school director. "With this program, you'll train from home, complete a supervised practicum near you, and move forward with confidence."

How the pathway works

- **Education:** Complete 270 hours with MTC (remote or in person)
 - **Practicum:** Complete 300 supervised hours at a nearby MTC treatment site
 - **Next step:** Receive guidance to apply for Texas LDCD I registration
 - **Employment:** MTC will assist qualified graduates with job placement, including identifying open positions at MTC to which the candidate may apply (employment at MTC is not guaranteed; contingent on standard hiring requirements)
- "Texas needs more counselors who can meet people where they are," Edwards added. "This pathway makes it easier for motivated adults to step into behavioral health roles and serve their communities."

See MTC Page 3A

COOKING FOR A CAUSE

Addi's Adventures Chili Cook Off brings community together



TOP: Tables and tummies filled during last weekend's 2nd Annual Addi's Adventures Chili Cook-Off. A shining reminder of the heart of the organization rested among the many silent auction items. **BOTTOM LEFT:** There's chili, then there's chilly. The savory steam created from cooking a hearty warm chili in last weekend's cool conditions made for the best smelling facial. **BOTTOM RIGHT:** Products lined shelves in the vendor corner where event attendees shopped for sweet treats, homemade crafts and healthy concoctions. (Amber Lollar/The Henderson News)

AMBER LOLLAR
Staff Writer

The aroma of slow-simmered spices and the sound of friendly competition filled the Rusk County Youth Expo Center on Saturday, Jan. 17, as the Addi's Adventures Chili Cook Off welcomed teams and supporters from across East Texas for a day of fundraising and fellowship. Hosted by Addi's Adventures Inc., the annual event served as a fundraiser to support families

facing serious medical challenges and offering special scholarships, the winner of which was Lane Meador. "On behalf of Addi's Adventures Inc., it is truly an honor to present this scholarship in the amount of \$5,000," announced Tori Foster, Addi's Adventures board member and sister to the foundation's namesake. "This scholarship is given in memory of Addison 'Addi' Shepherd and represents everything our organization stands for—hope,

determination, and supporting individuals who are working toward a bright future. After careful consideration, we felt that this individual embodied the character, determination, and heart that reflect Addi's legacy." "We hope this scholarship helps support you as you continue your education and pursue your goals. It is a privilege for us to be a small part of your journey," she continued. "Congratulations, Lane Meador. We are so proud of you and can't wait to

see all that you accomplish." Competition was strong as teams vied for top honors, with judges evaluating each entry on flavor, consistency, and overall appeal. When results were announced, Muscle Man Moving claimed first place, earning top honors for their standout chili. Second place was awarded to Thomas Shepard Consulting, while the People's Choice Award went to CDL Training Academy.

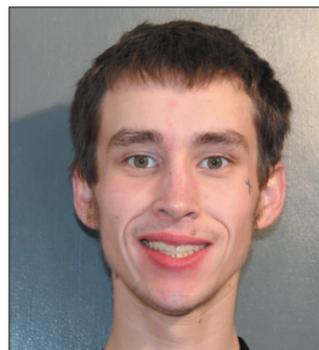
See COOKING Page 3A



Laneville man arrested for Abuse of Corpse during Rusk County Sheriff's Office warrant service

From Staff Reports

On Thursday January 15, 2026, the Rusk County Sheriff's Office served an evidentiary search warrant at 9483 FM 1251 in Henderson. Seized during warrant service was suspected methamphetamine, suspected drug paraphernalia, and items that had been reported stolen from a burglary of a habitation reported to the Rusk County Sheriff's Office in December 2025. Arrested at the scene was Aaron Knight, 37, of Henderson, Natasha Knight, 39, of Henderson, and Kayden Wilson, 21, of Laneville. Aaron Knight, Natasha Knight, and Kayden Wilson all received felony criminal charges of Possession of a Controlled Substance in Penalty Group 1 (methamphetamine).



Additional arrest warrants were served on Kayden Wilson for the felony offenses of Abuse of a Corpse, and Burglary of a Habitation. The search warrant was issued

by Rusk County Court at Law Judge Chad Dean. The arrest warrants were issued by Justice of the Peace Precinct # 5 Jana Enloe. This is currently an ongoing investigation by the Rusk County

Sheriff's Office, and Investigators anticipate additional charges as the investigation continues. Aaron Knight, Natasha Knight, and Kayden Wilson are currently confined in the Rusk County Jail.

SPORTS

ME Wildcats take down Carlisle Indians, Tatum falls to Troup in Friday games... more on 8A.



SCRIPTURE

"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest." Matthew 11:28

WEATHER

High near 60, low around 49. Chance of precipitation is 100%.

