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FAIRFIELD, FREESTONE COUNTY, TEXAS 75840 50 CENTS www.thefairfieldrecorder.com THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2010 NUMBER 25

In opinion of investigator . . . Museum believed to be haunted

Freestone County Museum in Fairfield may really be haunted. At least that is the opinion of Jimmy Kelly Billman, lead investigator with Texas Paranormal Advanced Research Team which investigated the museum over the weekend of Jan. 8-10.

Billman presented a "reveal" of the team's findings to the museum board Monday evening.

"In my own personal opinion, I would say it's haunted," he says. "We feel like there is paranormal activity."

Museum board members viewed a 12-minute

video and audio program prepared by TEXPART showing some of the evidence gathered that indicates activity of a ghostly nature.

Billman says that the

team captured 45 minutes of electronic voice phenomenon during the week-end investigation.

The EVP was captured on digital recorders throughout the museum

grounds—the old county jail, exhibits building, Bethel Church and log cabins.

"I go over these for weeks at a time, over and over," the paranormal

investigator reports.

The findings indicate that the museum grounds are a hotbed of otherworldly activity.

"This turns out to be the one place we captured the most activity, ever," Billman says.

More than a dozen TEXPART members manned audio, video and electromagnetic monitoring equipment during the weekend at the museum, and logged personal experiences.

EVP recordings picked up men's and women's voices uttering "What's going on?"; "Get down," "No hope," and "Oh, my

God."

Many of the voices were made clear only after the recordings were enhanced. Sometimes an investigator thought they heard something, but what they heard was not intelligible until it was separated and enhanced.

However, the team did pick up what is known as a Class A EVP, a voice that was clear without electronic help.

In the church, a voice said, "Help me."

"True, boss" was recorded in response to a statement by Billman, in which

See MUSEUM, p7-a



SOMETIME THURSDAY NIGHT, sculptors took advantage of a 3-inch snowfall to build a pair of snowmen on the Freestone county courthouse lawn in downtown Fairfield. Above freezing temperatures Friday meant a short life for the pair.

City, school filings slow for May vote

Political hopefuls for May 8 school district and city elections remain few and far between, but they still have a little more than two weeks to toss their hats in the ring.

Voters throughout Freestone county will elect school trustees, city council members and mayors this spring.

In all 22 positions must be filled.

The only full slate, but without any contests, is in the City of Fairfield where Mayor Roy Hill, place one councilman Joe Lee Kirgan, Jr., and place two councilman Luke Ward, Jr., have filed for new terms.

Also signed up, to fill the remaining year of an unexpired term in place four, is Donna Tyus.

See CITY, p5-a

Fairfield EMS receives new ambulance

Fairfield Ambulance Service has taken delivery of a new ambulance, a 2010 Dodge Frazer Bilt with a price tag of \$118,000.

The ambulance takes over the slot of the number one unit and the first in line to be sent on calls throughout Freestone county.

Backup units, for transports and at times when more than one ambulance is needed, are 2008 and 2006 models, both also Dodge Frazer Bilt.

Fairfield Ambulance Service has served the community for more than 30 years, growing from an all-volunteer organization to a paid service to handle an ever growing demand for emergency healthcare.

The service staffs one ambulance with two certified personnel 24 hours a

See FAIRFIELD, p6-a

To fill new city job . . . Development director signs

A contract was officially signed last week making Elizabeth Thornton the City of Fairfield's first community development director.

A starting date, however, has not yet been nailed down.

Approval to offer Mrs. Thornton a contract was given to city administrator Jeff Looney by Fairfield city council members at a special called meeting Jan. 20. The new hire signed her name to the contract at last week's regular city council meeting.

Starting pay for the position is \$41,600 per year.

Mrs. Thornton, who spends weekends at her home in Fairfield, has been employed with Tarrant County College in several capacities for 26 years, and with other learning institutes for 10 years before that. She earned an associates degree at Southwestern College in Oklahoma City in 1973, a bachelor of science degree from Central State University in Edmond, Okla. in 1980, and a masters degree from Oklahoma State University in 1982.

She and her husband, Jack, have been

married some 26 years, have two grown children, and six grandchildren.

Mrs. Thornton is a native Texan, born in the Rio Grande Valley, the youngest of seven siblings.

She says she and her husband enjoy spending time with family watching grandchildren and great-nieces participate in sports, school activities and rodeo competitions. Some of her hobbies are listed as fishing, yoga, traveling, stained glass, reading, photography and birding.

When the new job begins, Mrs. Thornton will move to Fairfield full time, and says she is excited to be a part of the city's expansion of the retail, entertainment and community events.

"I want to have the opportunity to connect my understanding of the challenges facing the community and my vision of the preferred future with the skills I have to contribute," she says.

As community development director, Mrs. Thornton says she will be encouraging community improvement activities,

See DEVELOPMENT, p2-a

Fairfield council cancels retreat

Fairfield city council members addressed more than a couple of important issues last week at two meetings that lasted several hours and included a room full of interested citizens.

Topping the list was the cancellation of a previously proposed "retreat", granting requests for funds for Fairfield chamber of commerce, New Leash on Life and Relay for Life, approving a contract for a new city website and a contract to update city codes, as well as hearing proposals for city development strategies, election orders, and city employee realignment.

First was a called meeting to discuss the needs of the New Leash on Life animal shelter in Fairfield. Shelter officials and supporters explained in detail to the city how the shelter works and the animals' daily needs.

With costs at about \$5,000 per month, the shelter does not have enough money to finish out this month, says president Cindy Phillips, the facilities are muddy, and there is no room for additional animals.

A permanent location is necessary, with concrete that is dry and easy to clean, and a play yard for the animals, Mrs. Phillips pointed out.

The nonprofit group received \$20,000 from Freestone county this year, and some donations do come in, she noted, including some feed from Walmart and a building from Bubba Rutherford.

Council members discussed deeding two acres of land on North Cotton to New Leash, and city administrator

See COUNCIL, p6-a



FAIRFIELD CITY ADMINISTRATOR Jeff Looney prepares paperwork for Elizabeth Thornton to sign on as community development director, a new municipal post.

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