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For city, school posts throughout county . . . May elections produce contests

In the final days of the filing period, candidates started signing up for ballot places in city and school district elections set for May 8 throughout Freestone county. The filing deadline was Monday afternoon and all entities except Teague Independent School District must hold elections. Teague ISD is exempt this spring because neither of the top places on the board are contested.

Running unopposed for the Teague school board are Brian Bowers in place two and incumbent Jeff Gonzales in place four. Most crowded field is for three at-large posts on the Fairfield ISD board of trustees, sought by seven candidates. Signed up are incumbents Teresa Vandiver and LaCharles Bass, along with Marcus Turner, Charlene Ward, Susan Keen, John Fryer and Tracie Ezell. Two City of Fairfield

offices, those of mayor and place four on the council, are contested. Running for mayor in Fairfield are incumbent Roy Hill and challenger James Gunter, while place four is sought by Donna Tyus and Scott Schick. The place four election is to fill the remaining year in an unexpired term. Unopposed for re-election to the Fairfield council are Joe Lee Kirgan, Jr., in place one and Luke Ward, Jr., in place two.

Teague city voters must fill the office of mayor and four spots on the council, two of which are for the remaining year of unexpired terms. Running unopposed are Earnest Pack for mayor and Chris Nickleberry, for an unexpired term in place

four. Incumbent James Monks faces David D. See MAY, p2-a

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Fairfield inks contract to find retail businesses

City of Fairfield will enjoy the benefits of a high-end contract for retail development strategies, without shouldering all the costs. At last week's council meeting, city councilmen and officials with Fairfield Industrial Development Corporation agreed to share the costs of a contract signed with Buxton Company. Costs to retain the company's services are \$70,000, which will be paid by FIDC. Annual contract maintenance costs, estimated at about \$40,000 per year, will be paid by the city. Buxton Company provides information regarding types of businesses

County jobless number increases

The unemployment rate for Freestone county rose a half percent, to 7.3 percent, in January, as did the jobless rates in surrounding counties. January unemployment figures were released last week by Texas Workforce Commission. The 7.3 percent for Freestone county marks its highest level in more than a decade, increasing from 6.7 percent in December. Reflected in the percentage are 748 jobless persons out of a total labor force of 10,234. Statewide, the 8.2 percent unemployment rate remained unchanged from December to January, and remains well below the national rate of 9.7 percent. Labor statistics for January were delayed by the U.S. Department of Labor because of recent inclement weather on the East Coast. Highest unemployment rate in the area is 10.5 percent in Anderson county, an increase from 9.6 percent reported for December. In Anderson county 2,228 workers are jobless out of a total labor force of 21,240. Navarro county had a January unemployment rate of 10.1 percent, with 2,214 out of 21,860 workers unemployed. The December rate was 8.4 percent.



WILLIE TATUM
 . . . District MVP



TEVIN GREEN
 . . . Defensive Player of the Year



LaDARIUS BRACKENS
 . . . All-District First Team



EVAN SIMPSON
 . . . All-District First Team

Father rides across country . . . Trek targets teen suicide

A grieving father pedaled through Freestone county last week on a year long bicycle trek to heal the loss of a teenage daughter to suicide and raise awareness of teen suicides. "I ride so another family does not go through the pain and agony I went through," David Alexander, 49, of Durand, Mich., says.



TO RAISE AWARENESS of teen suicides, David Alexander of Durand, Mich., made a stop in Fairfield as part of a trip that has already covered more than 6,800 miles.

Eagles earn top positions . . . All-District picks unveiled

The four senior members of the Fairfield high school Eagles varsity basketball team picked up top All-District honors this season. All-District honors for 20-AAA were released after the Eagles bowed out of the post season playoffs Friday night at the Region III tournament. Named most valuable player in the district is FHS senior guard Willie Tatum, senior post Tevin Green is defensive player of the year and senior guards LaDarius Brackens and Evan Simpson earned first team nods. Rounding out the starting five, junior post Dominique Owens earned All-District second team honors. Along with the player honors, FHS head coach Joey Worley and coach Brian Merrick are named co-coaches of the year in district. Worley points out that the Eagles were

picked fourth in district when the 2009-10 season opened and wound up winning the district and area championships en route to the region tournament. "For the kids to come out and win district, then go on to the region tournament really exceeded expectations," Worley says. The Fairfield quintet posted a 9-1 district mark and were 24-8 overall. As district MVP, Tatum averaged 15.5 points per game to lead the Eagles, scoring 155 points over 10 games. He shot 50 percent from the field, 63 percent from the free throw line and made 17 3-point shots. Tatum was a second team All-District pick a year ago. Green moves up from first team last year to defensive player of the year, based

See ALL-DISTRICT, p3-a

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