





## CORRECTION

Bill McCurley and his son Drew were mistakenly referred to as McCarthy in the caption of the photo in "Fire claims pieces of art history" article in the Sept. 22 issue.



## FEMA to open recovery center in Steiner

The US Government declared Steiner Ranch as a disaster area due to the fires on Labor Day weekend and the Federal Emergency Management Agency will set up shop in Steiner to help.

Starting Friday at 3048 Steiner Ranch Blvd, FEMA will be available from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. at a makeshift Disaster Recovery Center. A full schedule of the days FEMA will be in Steiner is listed below.

Anyone affected by the fires is eligible to apply for disaster assistance, even if they have settled with their insurance company. To apply call 1-800-621-

3362 (FEMA) Or apply online at [www.disasterassistance.gov](http://www.disasterassistance.gov) or [m.fema.gov](http://m.fema.gov) using a smart phone.

**Please have the following information available when you call.**

- A phone number where you can be reached
- Social Security Number
- Current mailing address
- Address of the affected property
- Brief description of the damages
- Insurance information including policy number

**FEMA will be set up at the following locations. The schedule is subject to change:**

**Briarcliff**  
801 Bee Creek Rd., 78669  
on 9/23 from 9-6

**Briarcliff**  
801 Bee Creek Rd., 78669  
on 10/3-10/4 from 9-6

**Steiner**  
3048 Steiner Ranch Blvd.  
78732  
on 9/30-10/1 from 9-6

**Steiner**  
3048 Steiner Ranch Blvd.  
78732  
on 10/10-10/11 from 9-6

**Steiner**  
3048 Steiner Ranch Blvd.  
78732  
on 10/13-10/14 from 9-6

FEMA's Ericka Lopez said "Disaster assistance covers basic needs only and will not normally compensate you for your entire loss."

## LCRA will limit water going to rice farmers

Because of the extreme drought gripping Texas, the Lower Colorado River Authority will ask the state's permission to deviate from the Water Management Plan to significantly cut back or even cut off water to farmers next year.

Rice farmers downstream buy water from LCRA each year to raise their crops in Colorado, Wharton and Matagorda counties.

The Board of Directors made the decision at its Sept. 21 meeting. Farmers, lake area residents and business owners, and representatives from LCRA's municipal customers, including Austin, all endorsed the decision.

"This shows how people from all across the region can come together under difficult circumstances and make decisions to benefit the entire basin," said LCRA General Manager Becky Motal.

LCRA will now ask the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality for permission to deviate from the Water Management Plan in 2012 to include the following:

- Cut off Highland Lakes water to farmers in the Gulf Coast and Lakeside irrigation divisions if lakes Travis and Buchanan contain less than 850,000 acre-feet of water on March 1, 2012; or
- Allow no more than 125,000 acre-feet of Highland Lakes water to be pumped from the Colorado River to LCRA's four irrigation divisions if the lakes contain between 850,000 acre-feet and 920,000 acre-feet of water on March 1, 2012. The 125,000 acre-feet pumped from the river is equivalent to about 145,000 acre-feet of water released from the Highland Lakes because of the water lost from evaporation and seepage as it flows downstream to the farming areas of Wharton, Colorado and Matagorda counties.

**If water is available for farmers:**

- It would only be available for the first crop of the season (a second crop would be subject to LCRA Board approval), and
- Pumping would not begin before April 1 and would last no longer than 145 days or until 125,000 acre-feet is pumped, and
- If the lakes contain more than 920,000 acre-feet of water on March 1, LCRA would manage the water according to the Water Management Plan.

As of last week lakes Travis and Buchanan were 39 percent full and held 789,000 acre-feet.

If the lakes hit 600,000 acre-feet, the Board will take action to cut off water to farmers immediately and to reduce the water available to LCRA municipal and industrial customers by 20 percent.

Another drought relief measure approved by the Board last week was increasing the excess use surcharge for farmers.

"This intense drought is painful for everyone, but with these drought relief measures in place, we will continue to responsibly manage the region's water supply to meet our customers' critical health and safety needs through this challenging time," Motal said.

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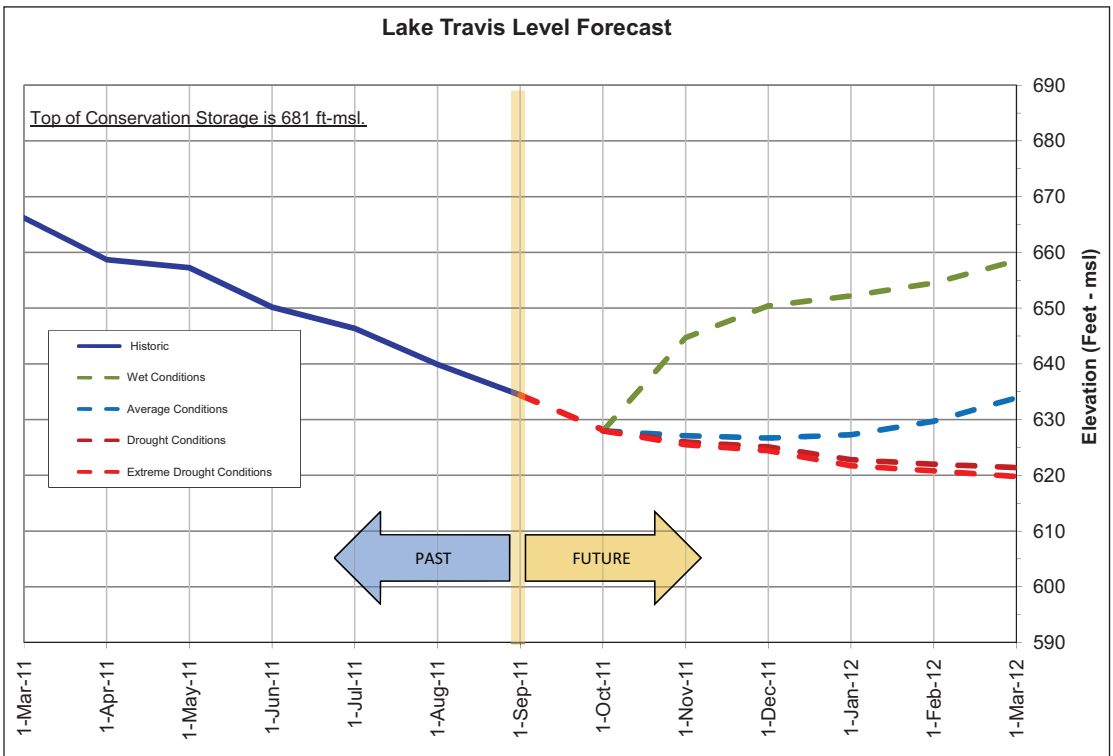
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Lake Travis is 39 percent full. This photo was taken last week by the Lower Colorado River Authority.

## 2nd Four Points Business Expo features VHS Coach Sanders

The Four Points Chamber of Commerce hosts its second annual Business Expo and Networking Reception on Oct. 20 at the River Place Country Club.

The community is invited to attend this free, Thursday event from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. at RPCC supported by local businesses.

Vandegrift High School Athletics Coordinator, Drew Sanders, will be the keynote speaker.

This year's event promises a silent auction with proceeds to benefit the Vandegrift High School Parent Teacher Student Association.

Vandegrift PTSA supports programs for students and teachers and its role has become increasingly important in light

of state and local budgetary cuts.

Coach Sanders, VHS football head coach, will give a motivational speech. He arrived at VHS in the spring of 2009 and since then VHS has seen tremendous success for the young athletic program.

VHS Athletics has already earned district championships, regional and state qualifiers, and multiple playoff qualifiers. The VHS football program has grown from 35 players to over 200, played for a playoff spot in their first year playing varsity football and came within one game of qualifying for the AAAA playoffs in their very first year of varsity competition. With more than 100 mem-

bers and growing, the Four Points Chamber of Commerce brings businesses together along RM620 and FM2222 from Jester to Volente to support business growth in the community.

The Business Expo is a unique opportunity to get to know neighbors and businesses in the community where we live, work and play and hear from a local hero, say event organizers.

For more information in participating in these and upcoming events email committee chair Marie McGrath at [mariemcgrath@mmcg-law.com](mailto:mariemcgrath@mmcg-law.com) or call 512-696-6575.

Membership inquiries may also be sent directly to [membership@FourPointsChamber.com](mailto:membership@FourPointsChamber.com).



## Destination ImagiNation promotes student learning

Over recent weeks, I have addressed Leander ISD's Seven Student Learning Behaviors, how we are working to ensure that students are self-directed learners, and steps we are taking to prepare students for college and beyond. This week, I want to highlight an activity in which all students can participate to develop the life-long skills we believe are essential for success in our ever-changing world. Destination ImagiNation, or DI, as it is commonly called, is an extracurricular, school-sponsored program that fosters creativity.

DI is open to LISD students in third through 12th grades. Each team consists of between two and seven students, with two

adults serving as team managers. DI tournaments comprise of competitions in two areas — the Team Challenge and the Instant Challenge. Solutions to the challenges are limited only by the teams' imagination. If you are unfamiliar with DI, it can appear to be pretty wild, with challenges requiring students to dress in crazy costumes and construct interesting contraptions to creatively problem-solve. A perfect example of the Seven Student Learning Behaviors is DI teams working together to design and create, without adult assistance, all of the elements necessary to bring their solution to life.

This year, the types of Team Challenges are technical, scientific, fine arts, improvisational, structural, service-learning and rising stars. Participants spend about six months working on their Team Challenge, but are not completely done until they receive the final unknown element just before their presentation which must be used in their solution. Instant Challenges, on the other hand, are designed to teach students how to think quickly, creatively and strategically. At competition, the team is given an Instant Chal-

lenge they have not seen before, and then have minutes to develop a strategy and create a solution.

The components of challenges and solutions are usually pretty random. For example, teams may be asked to describe a situation, research a topic, create a story, make a soundtrack, build a structure or write a skit. After showcasing their solution at a regional meet, DI teams may advance to state and international competitions in the spring. Historically, LISD

has been well represented at both the State and Global DI Competitions.

With all that said, DI is not really a program, it's a process. While participants are having fun, sometimes discovering talents they never knew they had, becoming friends with kids they might not have ever met, they are also growing and learning. DI dovetails with LISD's college- and career-readiness initiatives and encourages the Seven Student Learning Behaviors because it promotes teamwork, student ownership of learning, self-assessment, problem-solving, higher-level thinking and creativity.

A key ingredient in DI is the

work of our parent volunteers. Without them, the LISD DI program would not work. They help students stay on schedule, manage logistics, gather materials and score Instant Challenges.

Only the number of adults who are willing to be team managers limit the number of students who can participate in this great program. If you're interested in helping a team or being an appraiser for the DI competitions, contact Kathy Wood, LISD QUEST coordinator at 570-0211. All DI team managers must be approved LISD volunteers.

To learn more about DI or to volunteer, visit [www.leanderisd.org](http://www.leanderisd.org).



BRET CHAMPION

## Hill Country Education Foundation is having a membership drive

The Hill Country Education Foundation has launched their 2011-2012 membership drive to recruit families, individuals, students and faculty to their organization. Members of HCEF will help to support Four Points-area students achieve academic success in the areas of entrepreneurship, leadership, science, technology, engineering and math (STEM).

Specifically, memberships will help the Foundation reach their goal of providing:

Grants to teachers, administrative and parent organizations that focus leadership, entrepreneurship and STEM education.

Teacher development/training grants to support new or established curricula

Enrichments programs, such

as FIRST® LEGO® League Robotics Clubs

Scholarships to Vandegriff High School students pursuing careers in science, technology, engineering or mathematics (starting in 2012)

A community children's library in the Four Points community

College Insider, a college-readiness program for parents and students

Annual membership levels range from \$100 for families and \$50 for individuals to \$15 for students and \$1 for faculty. To learn more about membership benefits and to pay online, interested parties can go to [www.hillcountryedfoundation.org](http://www.hillcountryedfoundation.org).

In the past year, the Foundation has funded \$2,650 for

robotics programs, \$1,000 for garden clubs, \$500 towards a college scholarship endowment fund and \$10,000 for Naviance Succeed, the college readiness tool that will be made available to all Leander ISD high school students this school year.

In addition, the Foundation has earmarked \$25,000 for education grants to be distributed this fall along with \$750 for each area robotics club. Much of the funding for these programs is largely due to those who attended the inaugural Gala in May 2011, which raised \$32,000.

The Foundation already has plans for the next Gala set for March 3, 2012 with student demonstrations, dinner, live and silent auctions, live band and dancing.



A group of CRMS girls won the middle school division at Zilker Relays on Sept. 2. Sydney Prucha, Allie Turner, Maddie Hill and Anna Schaal competed in a 2.5 mile relay race in Zilker Park. Their team "Eat Our Dust" finished in 1:27:25.

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## Just a thought

### Canadian Thanksgiving makes me think of cooler weather

We've been celebrating fall since late last week. The pumpkins are out and I'm starting to look for soup recipes.

But the extreme high temperatures - at this point nearly 90 this year in the triple digits - do not feel like fall.

I'd welcome an "Indian summer" which refers to a weather pattern with a stretch of above normal temperatures, accompanied by dry and hazy conditions. These usually occur after there has been a killing frost between late September and mid November.

Bring it on. Frost seems like a foreign term around these parts.

The weather is forcing me to daydream about cooler times and one trip comes to mind.

It was nine years ago when we took in Canadian Thanksgiving in a memorable way - tooling around the Thousand Islands with a five week old.

Some may say we were crazy but my maternity leave was about half over and we wanted to squeeze in a memorable trip.

We lived in Upstate New York at the time so it was not difficult to get to the islands that straddle the Canada-U.S. border in the Saint Lawrence River.

The guy we rented a houseboat from said we were the last of the season. And that was probably a good thing, fewer boaters to navigate around.

Certainly there were enough other obstacles - ships and islands.

My husband did an outstanding job of being the captain even when he had to rev up the engine to get across the Saint Lawrence Seaway because a large freighter was gaining ground on us. We

were tiny in comparison to that ship.

The islands were fun to boat around. We saw hundreds but there are actually 1,793 islands in all, ranging in size from over 40 square miles to islands that are occupied by a single residence.

The islands are located in the northeast corner of Lake Ontario and cover about 50 miles in the state of New York and downstream from Kingston, Ontario.

When it was meal time, we would boat to a restaurant or to a market. At night we would anchor at the state park islands, we chose a different one each night.

We would drop the anchor early enough to hike around on the island. At one stop some Canadians were hiking around too, enjoying the day off and celebrating Thanksgiving. This Canadian holiday is the second Monday of October and is set aside to give thanks at the end of the harvest season.

Harvest in Canada comes sooner and is likely the main reason their Thanksgiving is earlier than ours.

That night we had caught a few fish and had our own Canadian Thanksgiving feast from the galley of the houseboat.

It was a beautiful setting, fall foliage all around us and crisp air to breathe.

I kind of felt like a pilgrim in a foreign land, eating food we worked to get and unsure of the adventures that lie ahead.

Being new parents at the time magnified those feelings, and the whole time our First Mate, infant daughter filled us with warmth and kept us smiling.



LYNETTE HAALAND

## FOUR POINTS OF VIEW

If you could choose where the falling satellite falls, where would it be?



Wendy Launius, Grandview Hills

"The Atlantic Ocean"



Carter Fojtik, Grandview Hills

"In the garbage"



Matt Ward, Steiner Ranch

"Cedar Park" (asked before the Friday night Vandegrift-Cedar Park football game)



Halle Hill, Long Canyon

"In the middle of the Pacific Ocean because no one lives there"



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR:

Four Points News welcomes all Letters to the Editor. All letters must be signed and include phone number for verification. Deadline is Friday before publication. Four Points News reserves the right to edit letters for clarity, length and for libelous or objectionable statements. Letters containing more than 400 words will be edited for length.

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## Reality check: Students, underage drinking and alcohol poisoning

By LESLEE BASSMAN  
LBassman@austin.rr.com

It's late and I just arrived home after covering an event sponsored by a nearby high school. In fact, not only was the program hosted by the school but it was deemed so important that students were given academic credit for attending. The topic was acute alcohol poisoning. No, this wasn't just another talk to convince kids not to drink or drink and drive. It was a reality check given by a mom who discovered the real truths about teens and drinking, just a little too late. Let me explain.

Although Debbie Allen flew

from her native California to Texas for last week's engagements, as she walked across the church stage, I noticed that this lady could have easily been mistaken for any local mom found in the carpool lines of Vandegrift High School or Canyon Ridge or Four Points Middle Schools. Dressed in chic black leggings and a jersey tunic, she might have been on her way to dinner at Flores or a Viper football game. But she wasn't.

Instead, Allen was addressing hundreds of West Austinites about the December night her youngest daughter, Shelby, died of acute alcohol poisoning at only 17 years of age. The hushed

crowd listened as Allen talked about how her outgoing, athletic daughter went to a friend's home on the first evening of winter break. When Shelby arrived, a celebration was already in full swing, with her friend's parents, college-age siblings and their college friends drinking.

Allen was raised in a law enforcement household and became an officer herself. She was proud of running her home with lots of fun but always "with safety in mind". Yet, almost three years later, she doesn't know exactly how her daughter died.

What she did piece together was that Shelby had played a drinking game that night and

completed the quantity she was supposed to drink within an hour. She began vomiting violently, hitting her head numerous times on the porcelain toilet bowl and splitting her lip. She was semi-conscious when her friends propped her up over the toilet and left her. Even after being observed convulsing, no one called an adult, texting only friends instead. By the time someone did get aid, it was too late. Allen learned of her daughter's fate when the coroner arrived at the friend's home and phoned her with the news.

An autopsy confirmed that Shelby died of acute alcohol poisoning with only eight fluid

ounces of vodka in her system, the same amount of liquid contained in one of those 'mini' bottles of Ozarka water. Allen wondered, "How could that be?"

Before Shelby's death, even with her police background, Allen had never known a teen that died after one night of drinking. Her father, a law enforcement officer, hadn't seen it either. But the emergency room staffers knew. They had seen it. It's called Binge Drinking and it goes like this: drink until you're drunk, vomit or pass out. Players drink a lot of alcohol in a short amount of time. Teens are doing it on Friday nights, Saturday nights, after football games, before proms.

Allen told the northwest Austin community that it's a serious and real issue facing our kids and the scary part of it is that adults aren't even fully aware of all the facts.

At the time of Shelby's tragedy, Allen hadn't realized teens were unaware that drinking just a few too many sips of 80-proof vodka could kill them. And parents had no idea of the risk factors for alcohol poisoning. Growing up in the 1960's and 70's, many of us just thought someone could 'sleep it off' if they had one too many. Most of us never imag-

SEE REALITY, 5

## FOUR POINTS NEWS

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Published weekly in Four Points, Texas by Four Points News LLC. For subscription information, email inquiries to fourpointsnews.bookkeeping@gmail.com

Four Points News welcomes all Letters to the Editor.

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# WTP #4 approved to continue construction

Construction will not be stopped on the \$508 million Water Treatment Plant 4 after the Austin City Council unanimously voted last week to keep it going.

The announcement was made last week after the fate of the Four Points area plant was put under the microscope this summer.

Five council members voted two months ago to stop work on the project but after looking at the costs to delay, everyone was in favor of keeping it going.

Deferring the project to 2019 would have cost an estimated additional \$138 million and the cost for upgrading the current water treatment and transmission system to handle the capacity during the interim five years would have been an extra \$115 million for a total of \$253 million.

Council members on Sept. 21 confirmed that it would be too costly to stop it.

WTP4, being built off of RM 620 near the intersection of FM 2222, has been debated for three decades.

Some environmental activists are not in favor of the plant and said the city had not done its due diligence. They said costs should have been analyzed also on the potential savings to the city if it did not spend money on finishing the plant.

Proponents of WTP4, including Mayor Lee Leffingwell, Council Member Mike Martinez and city water engineers say the growing city could need more treatment capacity as early as 2014.

# Paving at Quinlan Crossing & Steiner entrance starts next week

Paving will start next week at the Quinlan Crossing/Steiner Ranch entrance at Quinlan Park Rd and RM 620.

"We are scheduled to begin paving operations on October 3, with an overall completion date of November 4," said John Hurt, Texas Department of Transportation Public Affairs Officer.

TxDOT is installing a dual left turn from westbound RM 620 to southbound Quinlan Park Rd. Northbound Quinlan Park is being re-configured to have two right turn lanes and one left turn lane.

At Marshal Ford Rd, TxDOT will construct a new signalized 4-way intersection; eastbound right turn into the new development (south of RM 620), a westbound left into the new development, and an eastbound left turn into Marshal Ford.

TxDOT authorized the work to begin work on June 29. Hunter Industries is the contractor. The project is estimated to cost \$400,000.

TxDOT has been busy on other roadways that affect Four Points commuters. On Wednesday there will be a RM 2222 Bull Creek Bridge Ribbon Cutting ceremony with State Sen. Kirk Watson, State Rep. Donna Howard and Carlos Lopez - Austin District Engineer, TxDOT on hand.

## LTFR, FROM 1

Pflugerville fire but it turned around quickly when the Steiner fire was gaining momentum. "When they (LTFR fighters) realized the fire was going to jump road, and they were not stopping it, they called in more resources as structures were threatened," Linardos said.

There was more structure gear and structure units called in to fight the wind driven fires.

"There were also brush units on the flanks (of the fire) to try to contain it but access was difficult," he said. They had wind, steep terrain and power lines to contend with.

"The fire took a down slope and left hook then an up slope toward structures," he said.

At about an hour into the fire, LTFR was asking for more resources. Two Star Flight helicopters arrived on scene dumping Lake Travis water on burning areas and fire retardant. Also two Travis County bulldozers were brought in to work the greenbelts to protect areas from flames.

The heat of the battle occurred between 7:30 p.m and 9 p.m. when 31 trucks were pumping water on the fires.

That included three engines and a ladder from LTFR, eight engines and a ladder from City of Austin, and one engine from Travis County's Volente department. Other county engines were fighting other fires. There were also six brush units and five more engines that came from the pre-staged North Texas TIFMAS Strike Team. The team was positioned in Travis County because weather conditions were conducive to the threat of fires. Twenty two fighters responded to the Steiner fires.

"(The strike unit) was a Godsend," Linardos said.

Austin Fire Department also provided critical help in the emergency.

"The City of Austin gave us as much as they could get. We really drew them down. Austin Fire Department kept sending engines and fresh crews

out when our guys were just beat up," Linardos said. Crews worked in shifts where they would go back and rest for four or five hours and then come back out.

"In 100 degree plus heat you can't keep working like they were for long," he said.

The strategy to fight the fire was extremely difficult.

"We had three zones that gave us the biggest problems at one time. The first zone that was the hardest hit was Medina River Way. We tried to get between the fuel (trees and brush) and the houses," he said.

"We tried to hit it on the sides and tried to stop it but then had to pull back to Schleicher Trail," Linardos said.

At the same time Varner Court was intensifying and simultaneously the third zone taking a lot of hits was Cowden Drive.

"It was hard to stop at all points," he said.

At one point, it appeared the three zones could not be

stopped and the strategy was being considered to pull back to a certain point and let several hundred homes burn to save the rest of the community, thousands of homes, Linardos said.

But as evening came, the winds slowed down and firefighters started gaining ground and containing the fires.

"We still wish we could have saved every house," he said.

Many agencies supported the efforts including water district WCID 17. They let Linardos know that the water tanks were full which gave confidence to those on the front lines that they could accomplish what they needed to.

It was one of the toughest fires Linardos, who has made a career in fighting fires, has ever fought.

"This one hit home. This is my community where my family lives, my work is, my church family is and friends are," Linardos said.

## REALITY, FROM 4

ined anyone could die from alcohol poisoning; just bear with the headache and hangover the next day. We were wrong.

Shelby isn't the only child to die like this and her story is eerily familiar to the residents of our Four Points community.

### Here's what I learned tonight:

- Vomiting is a big 'alarm' that something is extremely wrong with someone who has been drinking. It's not part of the act of 'drinking' but it's actually a warning sign that a person is being poisoned by alcohol and needs immediate medical attention;
- If someone who has been drinking is vomiting, can't be roused, is semi-conscious or even unconscious, you've got to call 9-1-1; waiting can mean

brain damage, coma or death and every second counts;

- Teens' alcohol of choice today is vodka using a shot glass. One shot (one ounce) is the same as consuming a 12-ounce beer in a medium-tall glass or an average size (four to five ounces) glass of wine. According to an April, 2011, Good Housekeeping magazine article relating Shelby's story, the high school junior consumed 15 shots of 80-proof vodka within one hour.

- Girls are more likely than guys to be victims of acute alcohol poisoning;

- Downing about four or five drinks or even less within two hours is the "recipe" for alcohol poisoning and nothing, not even vomiting, drinking coffee or eating can reverse it. In fact, showering can even

send a person in this state into shock. Competitive drinking games increase the likelihood of alcohol poisoning.

### If an alcohol poisoning victim gets professional medical help early, he or she will survive.

Debbie Allen was responsible for California's recent passage of its Underage Drinking Immunity Law allowing teens to get help, without the threat of prosecution, for friends who have been drinking and are in trouble. The Four Points News reported last week that Texas passed similar legislation: 911 Lifeline Law.

Allen made it clear tonight that neither she nor her husband, Steve, condones underage drinking. However, as a realist, she is willing to "do

whatever it takes to save a life".

I just pray that, as they head out to next month's Homecoming parties and later, to their first senior prom, our Vande-grift kids remember Shelby's story.

Debbie Allen has been nominated for a Congressional Medal of Honor for her work with alcohol poisoning education. For more information, go to [www.shelbysrulesfoundation.com](http://www.shelbysrulesfoundation.com).

**"It is the hard truth that despite our best efforts to protect them, in the end our children's safety, their very lives can come down to other young people knowing when and how to ask for help." ~ Debbie Allen**

## Running or Sports Related Injury? Injury of the Foot & Ankle?

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## INVESTIGATION, FROM 1

If the cause of fire is something that can be preventable, Travis County will do what it can to help prevent such causes, Lee said.

For example, power lines are designed to meet certain fire safety codes. If it is found, through investigation, that there is a design flaw in this case, a new design will be considered or codes modified, Lee said.

"We are not saying it was a poor design," he said.

"One thing we do know is that we were riding the perfect storm that day. We had a weather phenomena... the degree of drought we're in has not occurred since 1921. And the high winds were a factor," Lee said.

The weather will be taken into consideration in considering the official cause of fire, he added.

Also a number of other things may have happened contributing to its cause including the earth may have shifted under the utility poles, or there could have been shifting of wires and conductors.

## River Ridge 4th graders collect \$3,600 for firefighters

River Ridge Elementary fourth-grade students paid tribute to the victims of 9/11 and honor the National Day of Service and Remembrance by collecting more than \$3,600. It took volunteers more than 5 hours to count all of that change! On Friday they donated the money to local fire fighters.



## Music Lessons

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## Legacies going to Macy's Thanksgiving Parade in NYC

Smiles were big and laughter pervasive in Vandegrift High School's main gym as 'little Legacies' tried to keep in step with 'big Legacies' during the recent dance clinic. The event is held twice a year and constitutes an essential fundraiser for the dance troupe.

"The money goes towards operational costs," said Legacies Director Holly Lyons. "This year, a portion will be allocated to our New York travel trip."

The local team has been selected to appear in this year's Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade in New York City.

Registration is currently underway at [www.vhslegacies.org](http://www.vhslegacies.org) for the upcoming Little Legacies Homecoming event on October 28, 2011.



Leslee Bassman



Leslee Bassman



Leslee Bassman

Left: Legacies' Social Captain Katheryn Skinn (pictured) explains a step in a routine performed during last week's dance clinic.

Middle: Strike a pose! That's River Ridge third grader Kylie Leblanc enjoying last weekend's Legacies dance clinic.

Right: Legacies sophomore Paulina Esqueda takes a much deserved break with River Ridge second grader Rachel Jensen during the squad's biannual dance clinic.

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## Steiner Ranch Ladies Night drew hundreds

Approximately 400 ladies came out for the first Steiner Ranch Ladies Night on Sept. 17.

Over 40 women-owned businesses from the Steiner Ranch area participated and made this a great event to celebrate, said Myrta McGugan-Mogen, event coordinator.

Steiner Ranch Yoga, Lake Austin Day Spa, B Fitting Make-

overs and Blush Austin were just a handful of the vendors who enjoyed the event.

Catherine Ford, Independent Scentsy Consultant, said the response she got was positive as she drummed up some new business. "Participating in the event was great publicity for my business. I look forward to participating again next year!"

Other vendors received pages of new client contacts.

"All in all it was a great networking tool for the women in the neighborhood," McGugan-Mogen said.

Money was also collected at the event to donate to the domestic violence shelter.

# walls

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# US Forest Service has dedicated fleets for fighting wildfires

The Forest Service wants to assure the public that the Forest Service has ample aircraft strategically placed around the country to support on-the-ground teams combating this year's wildfires.

Chief Tom Tidwell said its current available airplane fleet includes:

- 17 Large Air Tankers which have a capacity of delivering an average of over 2000 gals. of water or retardant per trip.
- 1 DC-10 Very Large Airtanker with a capacity of 12,000 gals.
- 8 military aircraft specially outfitted to fight fires with an average capacity of 3000 gals.
- 3 CL- 215 scooper aircraft which can deliver an average of 1300 gals. of water per trip.
- More than 100 wildland fire response helicopters, including exclusive use contracts for:
  - 2 dozen Type-1 heavy helicopters
  - Over 40 Type-2 medium helicopters on national contracts
  - Over 50 Type-3 light helicopters on local or regional contracts
- Additional helicopters are available through call-when-needed contracts

All of these assets support the more than 16,000 federal fire-fighters (10,500 are Forest Service), and 1,000 Forest Service firefighting engines.

The Forest Service takes the safety of its employees and contractors seriously and it insist on maintaining stringent airworthiness standards that were developed after two airtankers crashed in 2002, resulting in the loss of both crews. The Forest Service does not take shortcuts on safety.

# Boy Scouts work with power tools for Craftsman achievement activity



Piers Hendrie



Piers Hendrie



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Pack 2030 Webelos 2 scouts from River Place show off their wooden picture frames. With help from den leaders Brian Smith and Piers Hendrie and other volunteer parents, these 10-year olds worked with miter saws and x-acto knives to create these tree-branch frames for their Craftsman achievement activity.

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FOUR POINTS NEWS

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**"The Vine"**  
11:00 am  
Traditional Worship  
{Sanctuary}

**"The Way"**  
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{Ministry Activities Center, MAC Hall}

9:45 am  
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FOOTBALL



**Alex Kotlarz**  
Senior

**Favorite part about being involved in Viper Football:**  
It means a whole lot to be a Viper football player. I've never felt so much a part of a team. I love my team and all my teammates. It's an honor.

CHEER



**Amey Langford**  
Junior

**Favorite part of being involved in Viper Cheer:**  
My favorite part of being a VHS cheerleader is promoting school spirit, leadership and being a positive role model for future Vipers.

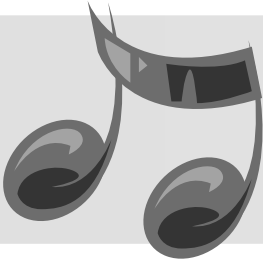
DANCE



**Delaney Bull**  
Sophomore

**Favorite part about being involved in Viper Legacies:**  
Being able to be involved with school activities and knowing I have a second family that always has my back!

BAND



**Jenni Abbarno**  
Freshman

**Favorite part about being in the Viper Band:**  
The Viper Band has an environment where I always feel comfortable and can be myself!"

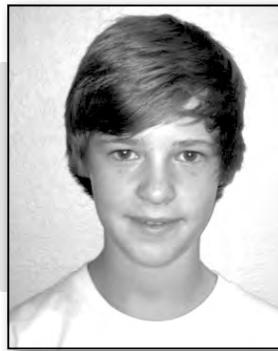
VOLLEYBALL



**Mollie Bailey**  
Junior

**Favorite part of being involved in volleyball:**  
I love this sport and the rush of energy I get when my team does well. And working together as a team to accomplish goals has helped me become more confident on and off the court. It's also incredible to be a role model for future Vipers! What an experience it has been to be a lady Viper from the beginning ... we truly are second to none.

CROSS COUNTRY



**Cole Groom**  
Freshman

**Favorite part about being involved in Viper Cross Country:**  
My favorite part about cross country is being able to see all of your hard work and effort show on your results at the races. It is very rewarding to feel the sense of accomplishment at the end of the race and to know how hard you have worked for the results.

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FOUR POINTS NEWS

## Vipers challenge Timberwolves in toughest battle of season

LESLEE BASSMAN  
LBassman@austin.rr.com

Viper Football, with only one full district season under its belt and utilizing only a single quarterback, was nothing short of stunning at the end of one of their toughest battles to-date. Don't let the game tally fool you; the T'wolves were on the run for the entire three-and-a-half hours of play and, despite ultimately falling 29-28 after Friday night's overtime play, Vandegrift solidified its position as a top 4A contender.

Judging from the cramped stands, the entire Four Points community seemed to come out to witness the gridiron showdown between Cedar Park High School, which just last June graduated its final students from Grandview Hills, River Place and Steiner Ranch, and Vandegrift High School, whose first class of seniors were once privy to the Timberwolves' playbook. And the players didn't disappoint the fans at Monroe Stadium.

The Vipers got on the board first with a pass from quarterback Dakota Prukop, recently named to ESPN's 2012 Top 100 Quarterbacks, to receiver Dylan Hosek. An onside kick kept the ball in Viper hands; however, special teams appeared to bow to the pressure and Vandegrift couldn't convert. With just under three minutes remaining in the half, Prukop's quarterback keeper accounted for Vandegrift's second score and their momentum continued to shut out the T'wolves at the half, 13-0.

Cedar Park quarterback Alex Curl turned the game over to Brian Hogan in the third quarter.

The T'wolves' option plays plagued the Vipers throughout the second half, allowing Cedar Park to capitalize on the strategy. With the strength of a fresh quarterback, Thomas Middleton's gains and Zac Espinoza's defense, the Timberwolves appeared to have wrapped up the rivalry with a 21-13 lead late in the fourth quarter.

With only 43 seconds left, Viper receiver Brandon Brown connected with Prukop on a 48-yard touchdown pass. Vandegrift receiver Mark Giles managed to break free deep in the Cedar Park end zone to catch a quick pass from Prukop and score in the two-point conversion needed to push the game into overtime at 21.

Viper running back Yuron Shears scored with a 25-yard run on Vandegrift's first overtime play. Brett Koster put up the extra point, 28-21, and the game was on. Following a penalty, Cedar Park answered with Thomas Middleton for both the touchdown and two-point conversion to win the game, 29-28.

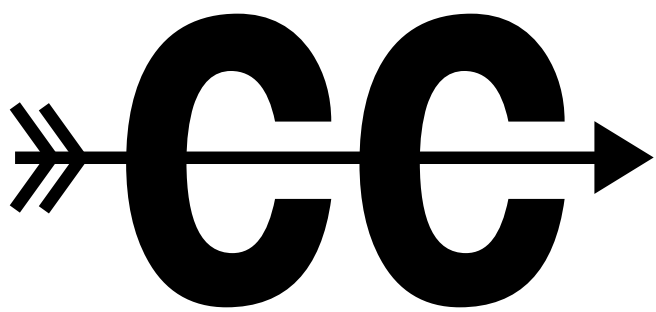
Turnovers, five for Cedar Park and three for Vandegrift, as well as ten penalties apiece will certainly give Vandegrift Head Coach Drew Sanders and Cedar Park Head Coach Chris Ross something to work on this week.

Vandegrift passed for 138 yards and rushed for 161 yards to Cedar Park's 88 passing yards and 278 rushing yards.

The Vipers (4-1, 0-1) hit the road Friday for a 7:30 p.m. game against Dripping Springs High School (3-2, 0-1).







# Viper Cross Country

## Q & A with Viper Cross Country Coach Jennifer Gegogine

1) Please give an update on your season so far including some highlights or milestones?

*All teams have made huge progress since the beginning of the season. They have been working hard and I know they will continue to make Vandegrift proud.*

*According to the CCCAT poll, which is a poll that coaches vote on for rankings, the Viper boys team is ranked 6th in the state for 4A and the Viper girls team is ranked 10th in 4A.*

*At the San Antonio UTSA Invitational on Sept. 17, the girls team got 1st place against 31 teams and competed against more than 260 runners. Nikki Keys was 8th finishing with a 2 mile time of 11 min and 40 seconds, and Gretta Smith was 10th overall, Leah Butterfield was 26th, Haley Conroy was 35th and Cody Cox was 44th.*

*At the same meet, the boys team got 3rd out of 31 teams and competed against over 280 runners. J.R. Hardy was 7th overall with a finishing 5K time of 15 min and 49 seconds, Topher Jensen was 8th overall, Brandon Keys 20th, Marshall Wilson 44th and Matthew Richardson was 65th.*

*On the Sept. 24th Cedar Park Invitational, varsity boys ran in the 5A division and placed 3rd out of 17 teams. JR hardy led the way for the Vipers finishing 3rd with a 5k time of 15.58. Topher Jensen was 5th, Brandon Keys was 9th, Marshall Wilson was 23 and Matt Villegas was 48th.*

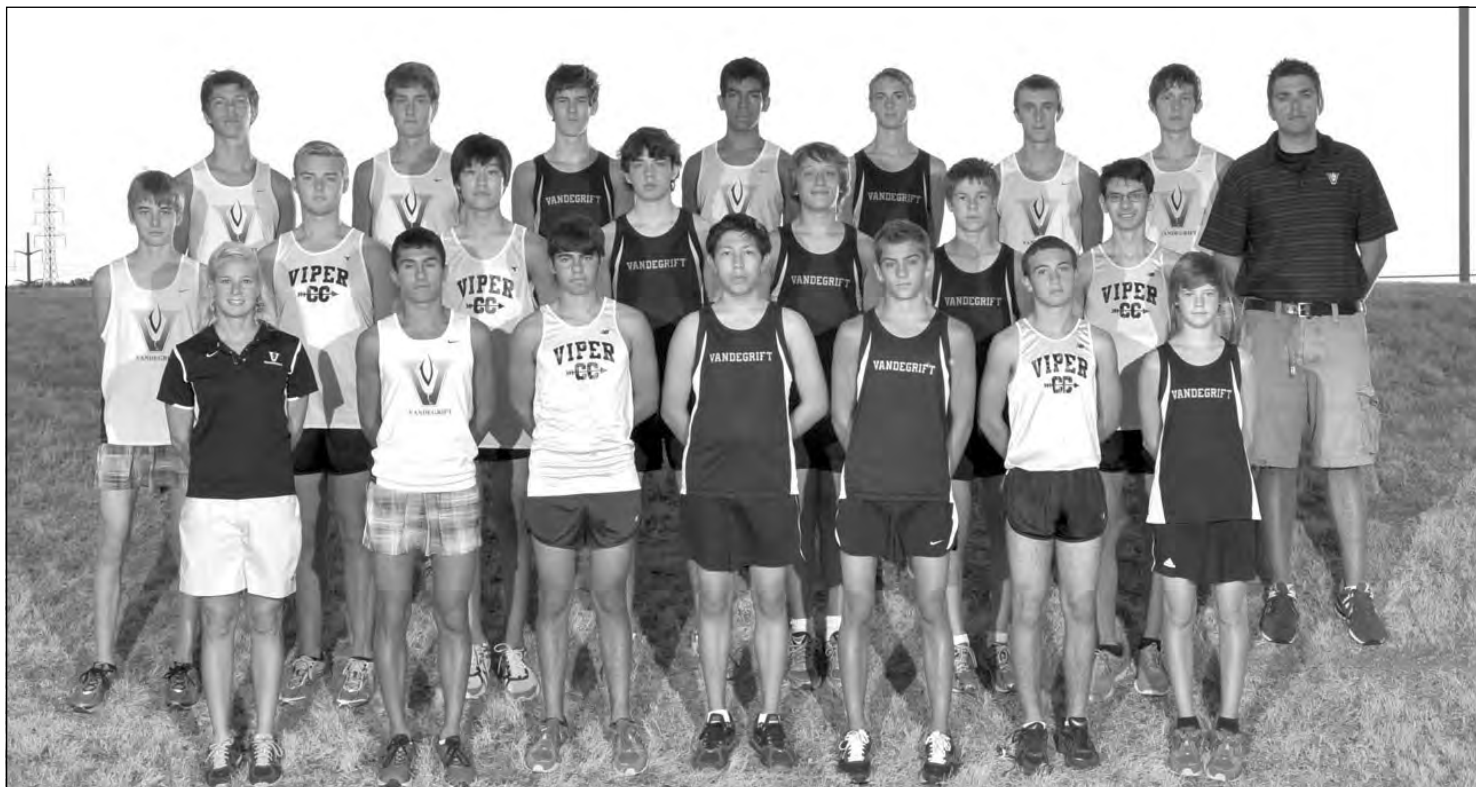
*Varsity girls ran in the 4A division and came in 6th out of 18 teams. Nikki Keys led the way for the Vipers finishing 5th overall, running the 3200M course in a time of 11.58. Cody Cox was 27th, Haley Conroy was 38th, Isabella Chestney was 41st and Zhanya Griffin was 52nd.*

2) What do you expect going forward with Viper Cross Country?

*I expect the teams to continue to work hard and compete in the state meet on November 12.*



Courtesy of Photo Texas Photography



Courtesy of Photo Texas Photography



Photos by Chris Smith

## Viper Band



## Q & A with Viper Band Director Jeremy Spicer

1) Please give an update on your season so far including some highlights or milestones?

*We have completed the show and are working towards polishing it for our first contest performance on October 8. The students have been amazing and met all goals set before them...even in this unbelievable heat.*

2) What do you expect going forward with the Viper Band?

*Our expectations are to improve every day against our own standard. We work to not allow outside influences to dictate our sense of accomplishment or excellence. The vision for the Vandegrift High School Band program is to "Define the Standard" in all we do. If we work to live the vision, day in and day out, then we will undoubtedly achieve greatness.*

3) What are some of your upcoming events?

*We will be competing at the following events in October:  
October 8 – Bands of America, Conroe Regional  
October 15 – Vista Ridge Marching Festival  
October 22 – University Interscholastic League Region Contest  
October 29 – University Interscholastic League Area Contest  
November 5 – Bands of America, San Antonio Super Regional*

4) Any added comments about the season?

*The staff and I are honored to lead such a fine group of musicians and dancers. The students continue to push the envelope of what is possible...TRULY AMAZING!*



# Go Vipers!



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# Viper Volleyball



## Q & A with Viper Volleyball Coach Kelly McCarter

1) Please give an update on your season so far including some highlights or milestones?

*Prior to district play, we were 20-8 overall and we came home with two tournament championships. We won the Copperas Cove tournament and the Cedar Creek tournament. These are the first ever volleyball tournament championships for Vandegrift and 20 wins is an overall record of wins so far.*

2) Where does your team stand, overall and district records?

*We are currently 20-13 overall and 0-4 in district play.*

3) What do you expect going forward with Viper Volleyball?

*We are disappointed with our first three games of district play and are currently making adjustments to get back on track. We are working on our defense, pursuing the ball, and limiting our unforced errors.*

*We played much better against Cedar Park on Friday. We lost, but we are heading in the right direction. We wrap up the first round of district play this week. We are at home on Tuesday versus Vista Ridge and at Dripping Springs on Friday.*

4) Any big rival games ahead?

*We play Rouse at home on October 4th. We will also be honoring our middle school programs that night. JV and 9th A start at 5:30, followed by the varsity at 6:30.*



## Brick by brick - the foundation of a football program is born

By JOHN DOPSON  
YouthSportsPage@gmail.com

Little did I know 11 years ago while sitting around a campfire with a good friend and our young boys, we were sitting where our boys would be playing middle and high school football.

The spot was approximately where the flood control pit is behind the Four Points Middle School football field.

Gone are the old farm house, washer pits, dirt track for the go-karts, and the deer stands. Born in their place are Vandegrift High School

and Four Points Middle School with the foundation of a top football program wedged in the middle.

Last Friday night's wildly exciting game against Cedar Park proved that a solid foundation is in place and looks to have a very bright future.

Most of the well known programs around the state have similar beginnings to Vandegrift. Southlake Carroll, Katy, Trinity, Lake Travis, etc. all got to where they are today by sharing similar "best practices" that Coach Sanders employed his first week as an LISD employee.

Sanders immediately instilled the Viper culture into Four Points Pop Warner, Canyon Ridge MS and Four Points MS. The little things for the future Vipers such as the 7 v 7 leagues, the coaching staff's tireless work with the summer camps, coaching clinics for the Pop Warner coaches, etc. are what makes memories like last Friday night sure to be a common occurrence for years to come!

John Dopson has coached youth sports in Four Points since 2002. In the fall of 2008 he joined Chance Mock and Scott Hanna to launch Four Points Pop Warner, which has grown into the 2nd largest Pop Warner Association in Central Texas. The Dopson family lives in Steiner Ranch.

## Viper Football

## Q & A with Viper Football Coach Drew Sanders

1) Please give an update on your season so far including some highlights or milestones?

*We are currently 4-1 (0-1 in district) and coming off an overtime loss to a state-ranked team, Cedar Park. We are showing our dramatic program improvement by improving from a 53 point loss just last year to this opponent. We are slowly building this program to be one that is respected in all of Central Texas. What a credit to our kids and our program.*

2) What do you expect going forward with Viper Football?

*I expect to perform well in all district game and qualify for the playoffs in class AAAA. We expect to have 100% passing for our entire football program.*

3) Any big rival games ahead?

*I think the crowd at the CP game probably answered this question, but a lot of fans will be attending our Lake Travis game also to see how our young, up and coming program performs against the best in the state.*

4) Added thoughts about the season?

*We are thankful for the rabid support of our Viper fans. Monroe Stadium is a tough place to play for our opponents! We play Dripping Springs in Dripping Springs this Friday at 7:30 pm. We need every single Viper fan there!*



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# IT TAKES A COMMUNITY



Leslee Bassman



Leslee Bassman



Leslee Bassman

Above: Game on! At the coin toss: Brian Hogan (#12), Adam Hill (#43), Felix Romero (#75) for Cedar Park and Cam Harris (#2), Brandon Brown (#3), Dakota Prukop (#9), Peyton Perret (#78) for Vandegrift.

So much goes into the Friday night games. Booster parents prep the players and concession stands. Workers prepare the fields with paint and freshly cut grass. Band members pump up the team and audiences. Cheerleaders lead the crowd with chanting. The spectators beat their own drums. In fact the Viper student section has a tradition they started with "trash can" drums to rally support. The dance teams work hard on their halftime routines. And the players give it their all for the show under the Friday night lights. It's not just about the football team, it's about the entire community pulling together as one.

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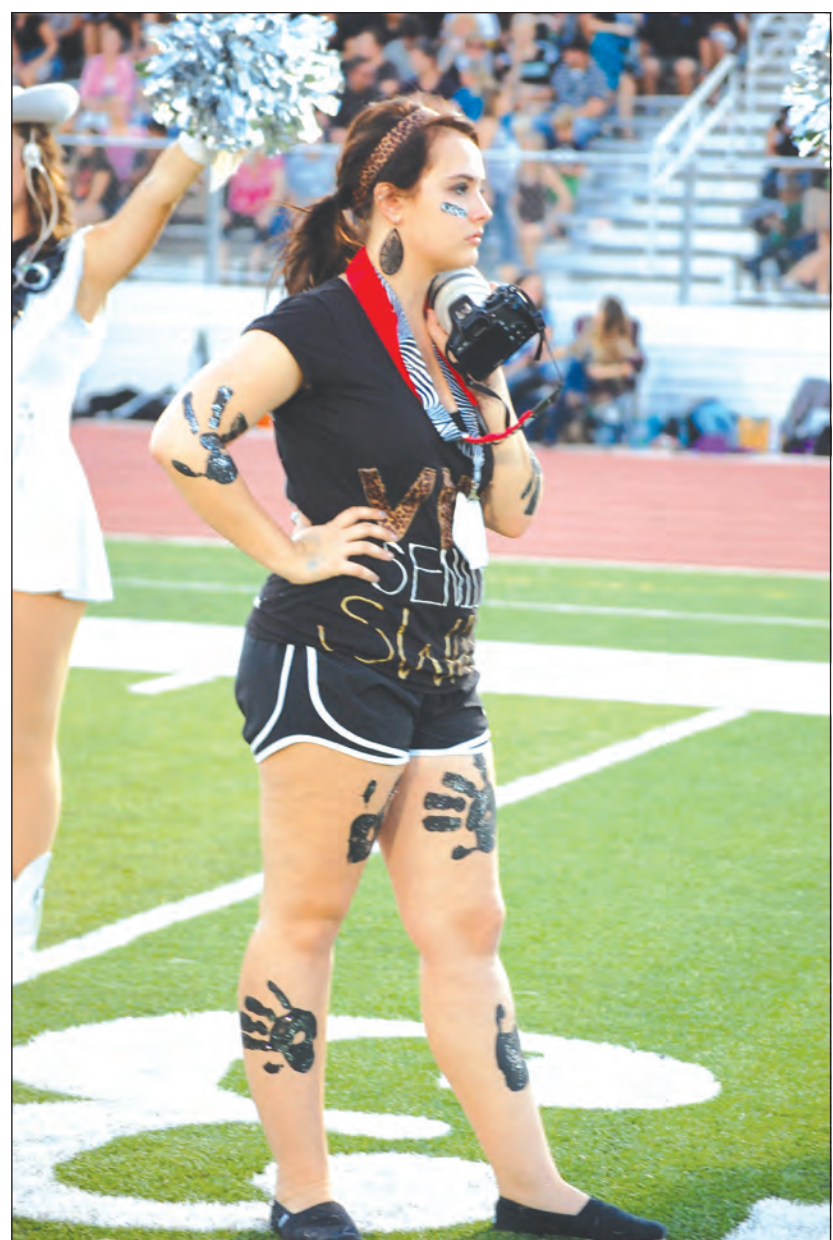
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Left Top: Pumped up and ready to go! Pictured are Kolton Joines (with flag) and Forrest Threadgill (#11).

Right Middle: Legacies' Brittany Le entertains the Monroe Stadium crowd as the Vipers prepare to take the field for Friday night's game. Photo by Leslee Bassman

Right Bottom: Senior Jennifer Mertz shows her Viper spirit on the field prior to last week's match up with Cedar Park. Mertz is a photographer with the Vandegrift Voice student newspaper.

Right Top: Vandegrift's Lauren Poole enjoys Friday evening's halftime show.



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# MID-SEASON Update

- Volleyball
- Cross Country
- Football

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