



Dmitriy Borovykh

SU Biology Professor Romi Burks said faculty is modeling behavior for students.

Council voids ethics code, OKs other items

The Georgetown City Council voted 4-2 Monday to default to a state ethics code, repealing most of the provisions in the city-specific ethics ordinance that has been in place since 2001.

Rachael Jonrowe and Anna Eby were opposed. Steve Fought was absent.

As she did on the amendment's first reading October 10, Mayor Pro Tem Eby expressed her opposition.

"Let's be clear. We're getting rid of our ethics ordinance," she said. "It doesn't make sense."

She and Ms. Jonrowe contended the current ordinance should be revised, not scrapped.

Ms. Eby said she was ready to make a motion to send the ordinance back to the Ethics Commission for review.

Monday's action will abolish the Ethics Commission set up by the city ordinance.

However, members of the current commission have agreed to serve as an Ad-Hoc Ethics Committee to consider what the majority of council members consider to be shortcomings of the ordinance. The committee has 60 days to provide the council with recommendations.

Councilman Ty Gipson said he had visited with members of the Ethics Commission and was convinced "it would be better to start with a clean slate."

Councilman Tommy Gonzalez agreed. He noted there was no penalty for ethics violations in the current code.

In voting against the proposal, Ms. Jonrowe said she had "a lot of respect for the citizens who crafted the ordinance."

Of the change, she asked, "Why now?"

She added, "I would be concerned about the reaction of the public if we threw out something citizen driven."

Issues regarding conflicts of interest had arisen earlier this year with the Planning and Zoning Commission. At a meeting where members were present, a quorum was not "present" because of perceived conflicts of interest, and the board did not review a development case.

Among other actions, the council approved 6-0 the designation of additional three-hour parking zones downtown as well certain 15-minute parking zones. The three-hour parking zones will be on Church Street, between Eighth and Ninth streets, on Eighth Street, between Rock and Martin Luther King streets, and on Main Street, between Ninth and Tenth streets.

Part of the reasoning behind the changes is to benefit people paying bills at the Williamson County Tax Office and to facilitate parking by the

Georgetown Public Library and nearby city offices west of downtown.

The council approved the first reading of an ordinance renaming the 800-1500 blocks of FM 1460 to Old 1460 Trail.

And the council approved the second reading of an ordinance granting American Medical Response a franchise to operate a medical transfer service.

Expenditures approved by the council included:

- a \$1.4 million request by Fire Chief John Sullivan to replace an aerial ladder truck;

- a \$533,072 request for Kasberg, Patrick and Associates of Georgetown to conduct a pavement condition analysis and five-year street maintenance program;

- a \$1.55 million request for Walker Partners of Austin to conduct professional engineering services related to the Berry Creek Interceptor.

SU faculty urges Congress to act on climate change

By DMITRIY BOROVYKH

The Southwestern University faculty has passed a resolution calling for Congress to take action on climate change.

"We urge Congress to pass measures that will acknowledge the serious threat posed by climate change, and that will reduce greenhouse gas emissions in a clear, transparent, and effective way," the text reads.

This resolution was passed earlier this month by a vote of 62 to 10, with nine faculty abstaining.

As far as I know, we are the first faculty body of a university to say 'we are urging political action on climate change,'" said Joshua Long, associate

professor of Environmental Studies. "In making that statement, we're not only urging policy action, but we're also hopefully making some cultural shift."

He added that other universities have made a commitment to taking action on climate change or they have talked about the need for including more science in the discussion.

Emily Northrop spearheaded the effort, believing that the resolution reflects one of Southwestern's core values: Encourage activism in the pursuit of justice and the common good.

"I feel like we are modeling for our students what we are teaching them," she said.

Continued on 2A

The nose knows

Dogs hunt scents at Expo Center

By CHARLOTTE KOVALCHUK

Fluffy pomeranians, golden corgis, poodles, labradors — about 70 dogs of various breeds and sizes competed at the Williamson County Expo Center's two-day K9 Nose Work Trials last weekend.

In the competition, dogs search out an odor — in this case, birch essential oil — on a cotton swab placed in a container or vehicle wheel. They then give the signal to their handlers, who call out "Alert" to the

judges, who say whether or not the canine has found the odor location.

Any kind of dog can compete, regardless of age or breed, and canines can start competing at 6 months old.

"What is unique about nose work versus other dog sports is that the handler must rely on the dogs to communicate where the trial odor is placed," trials host Jason Heng said. "It's like playing hide and seek

Continued on 3A



Charlotte Kovalchuk

Holly looks expectantly at her handler, Lana Neukirch, after finding the container that has the birch essential oil odor.



Andy Sharp

Happy Halloween!

Nevaeh Blair, 4, of Georgetown, adjusting her crown, was a princess in every sense of the word as she shopped for pumpkins at Georgetown's First United Methodist Church pumpkin patch. This popular patch got an additional 1500 pumpkins delivered last weekend from northern New Mexico, assuring that plenty of pumpkins were available to area shoppers for this church fund-raiser. Georgetown's other church pumpkin patch, at San Gabriel Presbyterian Church on Williams Drive, also offers pumpkins through Halloween day.

Symphony society wins Fast Pitch

The Georgetown Symphony Society has received the \$10,000 grand prize at the Chisholm Trail Communities Foundation Fast Pitch competition.

Also gaining grant awards in the competition are:

- Band of the Hills, Esther Weir People's Choice Award, \$5,000;

- The Williamson Museum, Film Short/Videographer Awards, \$3,000/\$500;

- Georgetown Festival of the Arts, Cammy Garey Award, \$3,000;

- Georgetown Art Works, Honorable Mention Award, \$1,000.

The symphony award will be used to support developing musicians.

The Children's Musical Enrichment Program and the Vivace Youth Orchestra are examples of the symphony society's emphasis on community outreach. The Children's Musical Enrichment Program offers two annual programs at the Klett Center to teach fourth and fifth graders about what makes music wonderful.

The Vivace Youth Orchestra strives to create musical enrichment and performance experiences for school-aged young people of Central Texas. The VYO gives students opportunities to perform high quality music literature. For information about the Fast Pitch competition, visit <https://chisholm-trail.org/request-support/fast-pitch/>



Members of the Georgetown Symphony Society accept the Chisholm Trail Communities Foundation's 2017 Fast Pitch grand prize of \$10,000. Left to right, John Argersinger, volunteer; Laurie Locke, president; Sandy Hayes, secretary; Scherry Chapman, grant development; Julia Taylor, member at large; and Marianne Inman, vice president.

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It's a demonstrable truth that Democrat values are American values. Three overarching principles of humane governance inspire Democrat proposals: respect for all residents, responsibility to help everyone, and freedom from legislative coercion.

Unfortunately, Democrats have done a terrible job of promoting their values, principles, and proposals. Moreover, they have completely failed to confront, criticize, and condemn the Republican agenda.

Specifically, Williamson County Democrats have refused to address unlawful and unethical behavior by Republican officials. Here are four blatant offenses.

First, three Republican commissioners were convicted in federal civil court of violating the constitutional rights of a resident. Taxpayers were obligated to pay \$724,398 in expenses for the commissioner's illegal behavior. Why haven't Democrats initiated action to remove the commissioners from office?

Second, the Republican senator who represents the county has been conducting a relentless war on women's reproductive rights for several years. His most recent harassment requires that aborted fetal remains be buried or cremated. Why haven't Democrats rebuked the senator for his anti-woman bigotry?

Third, an openly gay Georgetown city council candidate was "proudly endorsed" by Republican leaders. Texas Republicans have labeled homosexuality a chosen behavior contrary to God. Why haven't Democrats condemned this outrageous Republican hypocrisy?

Fourth, the Texas Republican platform constitutes a wholesale rejection of American values. Republican theological positions are unbiblical, unhistoric, unscientific, or unconstitutional, as well as unchristian and unAmerican. Why haven't Democrats denounced Republican theocratic dogma?

In order to confront ignorance, intolerance, and dishonesty, it is necessary to identify specific targets. The following twelve claims and proposals are taken directly from the Texas Republican manifesto.

- The U.S. Constitution is based on the Bible.
- Separation of church and state is a constitutional myth.
- There is a God-given right to carry a firearm.
- Religious liberty laws should over-rule public accommodation laws.
- Implementation of foreign law should be prohibited, including Biblical law.
- Only Christian observances should be public holidays.
- Climate change is a political agenda promoted to control Americans' lives.
- There is a right to produce and sell raw milk.
- Homosexual couples do not constitute a family.
- Bathroom use should correspond to biological sex.
- Texas should refuse to enforce all laws that permit abortion.
- Women who have abortions should be criminally prosecuted.

Each of these dozen assertions is false, irresponsible, illegal, prejudicial, hateful, or laughable. They represent Republican "alternative facts" and "post-truth." Why haven't Democrats refuted every one of them?

Brian Bolton is a retired psychologist living in Georgetown. He welcomes invitations to address this subject in speaking or debate formats.

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Postmaster - Send address changes to: The Sunday Sun, P.O. Box 39, Georgetown, Texas 78627. The Sunday Sun (USPS 018-790) published weekly by Sun Systems, Inc., 707 Main Street, Georgetown, Texas 78627. Periodicals Postage Paid at Georgetown, Texas.

SU faculty urges Congress to act

Continued from 1A

The resolution is another in a series of SU's environmental protection initiatives. Since the introduction of the Environmental Studies program in 1999, the university has made a commitment to sustainability — transitioning to wind power in 2010.

Following Southwestern's example, the City of Georgetown converted to 100 percent renewable energy.

SU's Environmental Studies program reaches across multiple disciplines, and in the last year, many faculty members have made an effort to introduce the issue of climate change into their curriculum.

"Climate change is everyone's problem, and it connects to every discipline in some way," said Romi Burks, professor of biology. "There's an atmosphere, a culture of paying attention to sustainability and environmental studies."

The next step for the Environmental Studies Committee is to directly address Texas Senators Ted Cruz and John Cornyn, as well as Representative John Carter.

While visiting East View



Dmitriy Borovykh

Emily Northrop, Professor of Economics and Joshua Long, Associate Professor of Environmental Studies.

High School on October 19, Congressman Carter was asked about the environmental issues by one of the students. He expressed his concerns about carbon dioxide levels and availability of water, but doubted the necessity of feder-

al regulation.

"I'm a conservationist, not an environmentalist," Mr. Carter said.

When asked to comment on the SU faculty resolution, he replied: "They have their opinion, I have mine."

Correction

The story about Clare Easley's fatal accident in the October 25, 2017, *Sun* ("Georgetown loses civic pioneer") should have reported the accident's location as State Highway 29 east of Georgetown.

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