

Wylie sales tax revenue increases

From Staff Reports
news@wylie.com

The city of Wylie received a sales tax reimbursement check from the Texas State Comptroller this month for \$729,998, an 11.63 percent increase from a year ago. Reimbursements to Texas cities were distributed by the comptroller this month for taxes collected on retail sales made in February.

In April 2018, the check to Wylie was \$653,939. This year the city has been reimbursed \$3.7 million, a 13.26 percent increase from the \$3.3 million received for the same period in 2018. Statewide, the comptroller distributed sales tax proceeds to cities totaling \$454.2 million this month, up 8.3 percent from the April 2018 total. So far this year, cities in Texas have seen a 5.2 percent increase in sales tax proceeds.

Police continue assault investigation

From Staff Reports
news@wylie.com

Wylie police detectives are continuing to investigate an incident from Saturday, April 6 in which a woman with extensive injuries to her face was found in the alley of the 400 block of Elliot Street. Police were summoned to the scene at 10:42 p.m. and initial investigation led officers to believe that an assault had occurred, Sgt. Donald English reported.

Wylie Fire-Rescue provided medical treatment and transported the 44-year-old woman to a regional hospital. A detective and crime scene technician also responded to the scene. Detectives have conducted several interviews and canvassed the neighborhood in an effort to determine what happened to the victim, English reported. The sergeant said that there is no reason to believe that there is a risk of danger to the public.

News earns second place sweepstakes win

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composition. These photos really make me smile. Fun!" The Wylie News earned a second place and tied with another C&S Media publication for its Sports Special Section(s) produced by Jenkins, Engstrom and Loggins. Judges said, "If something works - don't fix it; replicate! That's what David Jenkins succeeded in doing very well for both these publications. Equal care went into both and it shows and shines!" Newspaper headlines are essential to a story and judged in the contest as well. The News earned second place for headlines "Golden Girls," "Chickens could find roosts in Wylie" and "Coffee with the Clauses." Third place wins for the News included Sports Writing, Feature Story, and News Writing. Fourth place wins included Column Writing and News Photography. Associate Publisher Sonia Duggan received second place for Journalist of the Year. Each journalist entering must submit five stories for judging. Includ-

ed were stories about human trafficking, new community services offered, cancer survivors who compete in dragon boating, a leukemia survivor and a tribute to a special mother from her daughter. Judges commented, "Duggan has a nice style of writing and shows good creativity in many of her leads. Solid reporting and writing, covering a variety of stories." Overall, the News placed second in Sweepstakes earning a total of 725 points. Awards are earned by point accumulation in contest categories. Publisher Chad Engbrock commented, "I'm proud of the staff and the quality of work they produce with the resources we have available. Hopefully, this will serve as a catalyst for increased support for the paper through subscriptions and advertising." C&S Media publishes five weekly newspapers in north-eastern Collin County; The Wylie News, The Sachse News, Murphy Monitor, The Princeton Herald and The Farmersville Times.

Local dentist living the American dream

By Joe Reavis
Staff Writer
news@wylie.com

Most people dream of cash rewards when they play the lottery, but for Wylie dentist Dr. Fesaha Gebrehiwot the lottery was a way to get a visa and permanent residency to pursue his vision of opportunity in the United States more than 20 years ago.

Gebrehiwot (Dr. G) is a native of Eritrea on the eastern coast of Africa who won the Green Card Lottery under the Diversity Immigrant Visa program of the U.S. Department of State in 1997.

He saw the United States as a destination for opportunity.

"I figured the best way I could get an education was in the United States," Dr. G recalled.

The dentist is the son of farmers and grew up in a small village, in a stone house that had neither electricity nor plumbing. Water for cooking and cleaning had to be fetched from a well two miles away.

He and his eight siblings had a 6-mile walk each day to attend school, which Dr. G describes as rudimentary, at best. What the students learned was provided solely in the classroom because the school did not have any books for students.

"I was a good student, but the resources were limited," he said.

Dr. G completed 12 grades of public school in his village and was a freshman student attending a community college when he heard about the visa program and decided to apply. He was selected by lottery, but the next hurdle was to find someone to sponsor his immigration.

"I didn't know anyone here," the dentist recalled.

As fate would have it he met "a cousin's, friend's brother" from Chicago who was visiting Eritrea.

"He asked me one question. What would I do if I came to the United States," Dr. G recalled "I said I would study."

With sponsorship and a green card, the then 20-year-old with broken English embarked on an



Joe Reavis/The Wylie News

After winning the visa lottery in 1997, Dr. Fesaha Gebrehiwot (Dr. G) emigrated from Africa to the United States, earned a pair of college degrees and now operates a dental practice in Wylie.

adventure to improve his life.

"The first two years were the hardest. I grew up in a family of nine kids, then I was all alone," he says of coming to the United States by himself.

Arriving at a Chicago airport, the first need was finding a job. The dentist said he secured a job with Skycheffs before he left the airport. For the first year, he worked and saved his money so that he could attend college.

Dr. G first enrolled at Phoenix (Ariz.) Community College to take classes in English and get the basics out of the way, then transferred to Arizona State University where he earned a degree in electrical engineering in 2002.

Working as an engineer with Motorola in Phoenix, the young man received benefits as well as earned a good salary. A dental benefit sent him off in a new direction, to pursue a degree in dentistry.

"I saw a dentist for the first time in my life when I was 25. That experience changed me," Dr. G said.

He related that he had to get a root canal, a crown and treatment for bleeding gums. The experience set him on a course that would better enable him to help others.

"People like me had no idea of dental health," he recalled. "For me, it inspired me to know more."

Initially, he continued working as an electrical engineer while returning to ASU, taking night classes in biology and other sciences required to attend dental school. In 2008 he was accepted into the dental program at the University of Washington in Seattle, and four the next four years worked to become a doctor.

"I was the oldest student in my class," Dr. G recalled. "I was 32 when I started dental

school." After earning a dental degree, he returned to Arizona and worked in a practice until deciding to strike out on his own. The dentist said he looked at possible areas to relocate, studied demographics and decided on the Dallas area, eventually zeroing in on Wylie, opening his private practice in October 2018.

"Once I moved to Wylie, I fell in love with this place," he declared. "The entire Wylie community has been amazing. It's really a dream come true."

His clinic, Trusted Dental Care, at 560 Country Club Road, includes 2,850 square feet of space that eventually will provide room for eight exam/surgery suites. Plans are to add specialists so that patients need make only one stop for any dental services that they may require.

"The practice will be multi-specialty. We want to be a center where patients are taken care of in all aspects of dentistry," he explained. "Patients don't like being referred."

Housing several specialists in one practice should help in quality control, at least from the aspect of proving the best service to patients. Customer care is the area in which the dentist especially wants to excel.

Outside work, Dr. G enjoys hiking and the outdoors. However, since moving to Wylie those pursuits are on hold as he concentrates his efforts on the practice.

It has been 22 years since he has been in Eritrea. He has not seen his parents since leaving and had to overcome homesickness as he became accustomed to the United States.

These days, though, he is not as alone. He has a 5-year-old daughter, Eribella, who lives in Seattle and will spend summer in Wylie. Two sisters live in California and improvements in cellular telephone technology have provided the ability to call home and talk to his parents and siblings.

"It's been a long journey," Dr. G declared, but one that he is grateful he made.

Annual charity benefit luncheon April 29

By Joe Reavis
Staff Writer
news@wylie.com

Advance tickets are available for the 25th annual Taste of Wylie fundraiser set for Monday, April 29 and benefiting Wylie Christian Care Center.

Taste of Wylie is an opportunity to sample foods from restaurants throughout town.

"It looks like it's going to

be a big time," Christian Care Chairman Raymond Cooper said. "We already have 22 restaurants. We have a variety."

The fundraiser is from 11 a.m. until 1:30 p.m. at the Special Event Center of Wylie First Baptist Church, located at 200 N. Ballard Ave.

General admission tickets are \$10 in advance and \$12 at the door. Advance tickets are available at American National Bank in Wylie and Sachse,

Wylie Flower Shop, Inwood Bank and Legacy Texas Bank, both of Wylie, and Independent Bank in Lavon. Senior citizen tickets are \$8, children six and older are \$5 and children under the age of five are free.

"I'm expecting between 1,000 and 1,200 people," Cooper said. "The main thing is the word gets around that we are here to help."

The mission of Christian Care Center is to provide short-

term emergency needs for area families by paying certain bills, and providing food and clothing. The center serves Wylie, Lavon, Nevada, Josephine, Copeville, Royse City, Sachse and Murphy.

Cooper pointed out that Taste of Wylie gives center volunteers an opportunity to meet and sign up more volunteers.

Also planned as part of the event are silent and live auctions.

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