

Lake Watch

Lake Level
on May 24

532.56'

Normal Elevation 533.00'
Lake Watch is provided by the
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
on Lake Whitney

Lakeline

Farmers market open in Whitney

The Lake Whitney Farmers Market is operating on Saturdays through September from 8 a.m. to noon. The market is located along South Brazos Street in downtown Whitney. Shoppers can find produce, fresh jams and jellies, baked goods and other items. The market will be held each Saturday, weather permitting. For more information, follow Lake Whitney Farmers Market on Facebook.

Blum Masons to hold fish fry

Blum Masonic Lodge #607 will hold a fish fry at the lodge Saturday, May 30, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. or until the food runs out.

Paw Pals seeks garage sale site

Hill County Paw Pals is seeking a site to hold its annual garage sale, which is a major fundraiser to support the animals in Paw Pals' care. A large, indoor space is preferred. Paw Pals needs the space for about two weeks to set up and hold the sale. Call Debbie Ford at 972-351-2524.

Meet & Greet set for May 28

The Lake Whitney Chamber of Commerce will hold its next quarterly business meet-and-greet event Thursday, May 28, from 5 to 7 p.m. Go Store It, located at 1401 North Brazos, will host the event. All are welcome to bring a business card and a door prize and enjoy an evening of networking and socializing.

Dog training classes offered

Applications are now available for a six-week basic obedience dog training course offered to the community by Sherry Pritchett, a professional dog trainer of over 30 years. The course is donation based to the sponsor, Paws Place Rescue. Classes will be conducted at the Whitney High School student parking lot. Limited enrollment is available. To register or for more details, visit pawsplacerescue.com.

**For information
about fishing
in Texas, visit:
[tpwd.texas.gov/
fishboat/fish](http://tpwd.texas.gov/fishboat/fish)**

Whitney High School to present 86 diplomas Friday

The Whitney High School Class of 2026 will walk the stage at 7:30 p.m. Friday, May 29, at Wildcat Stadium. There are 86 graduates this year, with Valedictorian McKenna Lynn Driessner and Salutatorian Elijah Grace Hughes at the top of the class.

Driessner is the daughter of Chad and Tierni Driessner of Whitney. She is graduating with a grade-point average (GPA) of 99.692 and will study business management at Texas A&M University in the fall.

During her time in high school, Driessner has participated in varsity volleyball and track and was a varsity cheerleader. She has also been active in Whitney FFA all four years of high school, serving as greenhand president her freshman year, chapter officer her sophomore and senior years, and chapter president her junior year.

The valedictorian is a member of the National Honor Society, served as varsity volleyball team captain her senior year and has earned many personal and team awards as a member of the FFA's state-qualifying nursery/landscape team.

She already has a head start on college courses, as she will graduate with 42 dual-credit hours.

Driessner's advice for incoming seniors is not to be so hard on themselves. "You are likely to face some rejection senior



Valedictorian McKenna Lynn Driessner



Salutatorian Elijah Grace Hughes

year, whether it's rejection from a college/university, rejection of a scholarship or even just feeling overwhelmed with the workload and anxious about college," she said. "Know that the best you can do is give everything 100 percent effort. If things don't go your way, keep your head held high and be proud that you tried your best."

Hughes is the daughter of Emily Hughes and Michael Leverett of Whitney. She is graduating with a GPA of 99.352 and will study environmental engineering at Tarleton State University for one year before transferring to Texas A&M University to study biological engineering.

During high school, the salutatorian has participated in marching band, concert

band, choir, National Honor Society, Student Council, the Anti-Bullying Committee and Wildcat Strong.

Her high school honors include: best new marcher (2022), assistant music librarian (2023), marching band section leader (2024), drum major (2025), Whitney High School Student of the Month (October 2024), Lake Whitney Chamber of Commerce Young Person of the Year (2026) and John Philip Sousa Award (2026).

The salutatorian's advice to incoming seniors is: "If you haven't already, make a schedule or have a planner for all of your assignments, tests, events or anything else significant," she said. "Assuming that phones won't be allowed next year, a planner or personal calendar

is the next best thing to have during school, especially if you do sports, dual credit and/or have a job."

Hughes also thanked the people in her life. "I'd like to thank all of my family, no matter how much blood we do or do not share," she said. "All of your love and support over the years nurtured my personality, which now lets me bloom and flourish wherever I land."

Honor Graduates

Kambree Ward: Parents - Cherri and Karry Ward; College/Career Plans - attend Texas Tech University and study biology with pre-medicine emphasis with the goal of working in orthopedic medicine

Shaylin Shelton: Parents - Dameon and Angela Shelton; College/Career Plans - attend

University of Texas at Arlington and major in nursing, with plans to become a CNA until college in the fall, then become a CRNA

Chelsea Lynn Rodriguez: Parents - Gloria and Julian Rodriguez; College/Career Plans - attend Texas A&M University and major in architecture with the goal of helping people build their dream homes and businesses

Shaella Smith: Parents - Billie and Mark Smith; College/Career Plans - finish business associate's at Hill College and transfer to study cardiovascular sonography

Mason Andrew Pelham: Parents - Sonya Moore and Chad Pelham; College/Career Plans - attend Oklahoma Baptist University and major in marketing

Cate Meador: Parents - Desiree and Ricky Meador; College/Career Plans - attend Texas A&M - Corpus Christi for a year then transfer to Texas A&M to double major in biology and nursing

Emily Taylor: Parents - Danielle and Matthew Taylor; College/Career Plans - attend Texas A&M - Corpus Christi to major in marine biology with a minor in psychology with the goal of training sea lions

Taylor Ray-Garcia: Parents - Bertha and Clay Ray; College/Career Plans - attend Texas A&M - Galveston for a year then transfer to Texas A&M to complete a Bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering

Council reorganized following election

The Whitney City Council welcomed new and returning members during its regular monthly meeting held Thursday, May 21. Jason Sneed, who received the majority of the vote in the recent city election, received his certification of election and took his seat at the table. Vicki Wilson and Cheryl Taylor-West also started new terms on the council after their reelection, although Taylor-West was attending training and not present for the meeting.

Mayor Janice Sanders presented a plaque expressing appreciation to outgoing council member Valery Peacock, who did not seek another term this year. Peacock had served on the council since 2018.

With the new and returning council members in place, Jason Ince was selected to serve as mayor pro tem, and Wilson was selected to serve as deputy mayor pro tem. The mayor pro tem is a member of the council selected to serve as acting mayor whenever the mayor is absent, unable to serve or if the office becomes temporarily vacant.

Council member Amy Teal requested an update on the city's wastewater treatment plant and any planned town halls or public information sessions that would precede a bond election, if one is necessary.



Judge Trey Jetton issued certificates of election to Jason Sneed (left) and Vicki Wilson (right) as the Whitney City Council meeting began Thursday, May 21. Sneed was elected and Wilson kept her seat in the May election. Cheryl Taylor-West is also returning to the council but was out of town for a training session. The new and returning members were sworn in prior to this month's meeting.

The city has long had compliance issues with its wastewater plant, which was built in the early 1990s and was having problems by the end of that decade. The city has been considering a new plant in recent years as it continues to struggle to meet the requirements of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ).

The council has had previous discussions about the need for a new plant and how to fund it. City Administrator Billy Pribble said that he has been in contact with TCEQ, which suggested the

city try a natural method to reduce the algae in its stabilization ponds.

Pribble explained that the amount of algae in the ponds has caused an issue with meeting "total suspended solids" requirements, and under the guidance of the TCEQ, the city is attempting this method to address the issue before resorting to a new plant.

"When I tell you this is a Hail Mary, it is a Hail Mary," said Pribble. "We are diligently working and hoping beyond hope that this technical advice does not require us to spend \$6 million on a

new wastewater plant."

Pribble said that it will take some time to see if the plan works.

Lieutenant Chris Jackson, Hill County Emergency Management coordinator with the sheriff's office, spoke to the council to commend the work of the fire department. Jackson gave special recognition to Director of Emergency Services Robert Matthews and Fire Chief Wayland Price for their work to serve city residents as well as those in neighboring areas. He also commended

Sen. Birdwell confirmed by US Senate

State Senator Brian Birdwell (R-Granbury) was confirmed by the U.S. Senate last week as assistant secretary of war for sustainment.

Birdwell was nominated to serve as an assistant secretary of defense by President Donald Trump last year.

In an announcement Monday, May 18, Birdwell said that he is in the final period of his service to District 22 before taking the oath of office and beginning his work at the Pentagon.

"As I prepare to depart, please know that there will see BIRDWELL on back

Central Texas Cattle Stocker program set

The McLennan County Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, in partnership with area beef and forage committees in Bell, Bosque, Coryell, Falls, Hill, Limestone and McLennan counties, will host the 16th Annual Central Texas Stocker Cattle Program Wednesday, June 24, from 8 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

The morning will start with a breakfast provided by Ag-Trust Farm Credit, followed by featured presentations from industry specialists.

Dr. Sonja Swiger, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension see CATTLE on back

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