



Photo by Katie Kraus

Netting a championship

Jubilant members of the Westlake High School tennis team swarm onto the court after WHS senior Leonora Slatnick won the 10th and decisive match at Saturday's Class 5A state finals in Lakeway. The Chaps defeated El Paso Coronado for the fourth state championship in school history. See story, page 29.

E3 meetings gather information for better education

By Dane Anderson
Staff Writer

Meetings organized by the E3 Alliance in the Westbank and other Central Texas neighborhoods to gather information on how to close education gaps and provide students with skills necessary to be successful in the workplace of the future concluded this week.

More than 100 students, parents, educators, business leaders and other community members attended two Eanes-based meetings.

Nola Wellman, superintendent for the Eanes school district, said she thought information gathered during the local discussion sessions would provide tools for change in Central Texas.

"It can also give those of us

in the Eanes community better perspective," she said. "It's another avenue of communication, another way to stay connected with the larger Central Texas community. It's a changing world out there, and our students are going to need to be able to maneuver it."

E3 president Susan Dawson

See **EISD**, Page 28

EISD softens stance on ethics violation

By Dane Anderson
Staff Writer

Eanes school board members asked district superintendent Nola Wellman on Monday to send a letter to the State Board for Educator Certification clarifying the district's intention in the filing of a complaint against Dan Harper, a former Westlake High School advanced placement physics teacher.

Both Wellman and school board president Jim Strickland said that neither the administration nor the school board anticipated a suspension of Harper's

teaching certification.

"In recognition of the fact that it would be a disservice to remove a talented educator from the classroom, the letter will provide further clarification to SBEC about what the district is seeking as an appropriate outcome," Wellman said.

"This is a minor personnel matter," Strickland said. "Mr. Harper will get a minor reprimand and never miss a day teaching, and good luck to him. That's what I think will happen."

Harper, a nationally-renowned teacher who had been with the See **WESTLAKE**, Page 19

Hope on horizon

Family of 25-year-old
turns tragic death
into support group

By Elizabeth O'Brien
Contributing Writer

Danni Morford's last Christmas letter began with the greeting: "Happy Holidays from the Morfords. It has been a busy year. The boys are all doing various activities; unfortunately, most of them are illegal."

Her humorous message, which she read aloud annually at her support group meetings, was her way of dealing with the chaos of her family's life, which culminated this summer in the death of her son, Travis, at 25.



Photo by Michael O'Brien

Danni Morford holds a photo of her son, Travis, whose death spurred her and other area parents to start D.O.A., for Disease of Addiction.

See **D.O.A.**, Page 20



DISTINCT: A perfect shot

Through his photos and prose, Tosh Brown paints a portrait of rural Texas

SPORTS: Ryan's hope
Ryan Swope scores 5 TDs in 15 minutes
as Chap clinch playoff spot, Page 29



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Located in The Schoolyard, next to Eanes Elementary

EISD residents offer insight, ideas benefiting Central Texas

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said delegates chosen at the meetings will meet later in November for a regional forum to discuss ideas she hopes will help close education gaps in the region.

"The large differences in education outcomes we see in different demographic groups in Central Texas are of huge concern to the area's economic future," Dawson

said.

She believes that better educational programs and better alignment of the overall education system from birth through college can help Central Texans increase their competitiveness, economic vitality and quality of life.

Ideas generated by people from a wide variety of backgrounds and perspectives during the community discussions gave participating educators information they couldn't get from any other source, said Dawson.

"It was tangible and something they could start acting on," she said.

She said that information from the discussion sessions and the fo-

rum of delegates will eventually lead to the Blueprint for Change, an E3 strategic plan for education across Central Texas.

"We've been good at incremental change in the area, but not so good at systemic change," she said.

Wellman said she was impressed with the participation she saw during local E3 meetings, and she looks forward to the report that will be drafted from the discussions to forward to the delegates' forum.

"I think we will be amazed at what comes out of that process," she said.

Questions? Comments? Contact Dane Anderson at danderson@westlake-picayune.com



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