

# Luling apartment complex gives food to residents

**MARK LUBE**  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Prior to the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, Prospera Housing Community Services realized there was a need for food among residents of its Luling property, Nolan Terrace Apartments, and the surrounding community.

“There are just not enough local resources to access regularly. Many residents across Texas who are considered low- to moderate-income residents are often hourly-wage earners in retail, food and hospitality and services industries,” Prospera Housing Community Services communications and funding development manager Rachel Halvaksz said.



Food items from the Nolan Terrace Apartments Angel Food Pantry are available on Wednesdays this month from 1-3 p.m. via an appointment. Call (830) 875-3833 for more information. Photo courtesy of Prospera Housing Community Services, Nolan Terrace Apartments.

Once the pandemic started and businesses started closing or reducing their hours, it affected the finances of just that many more workers.

“Prospera felt in order to assist in making Luling and Lockhart strong and more resilient communities during a pandemic, we needed to help our residents and the community by offering assistance,” she said.

Thus, the Angel Food Pantry service was created for the Nolan Terrace Apartments. Prospera has done the pantry for other properties, but this was the first at Nolan Terrace.

Some organizations in Austin pitched in for the funding of the project which not only benefited Nolan Terrace and Luling community but the Meadow Park Village Apartments in Lockhart and the surrounding

community in Lockhart as well.

“With a COVID relief funding grant from the Austin Community Foundation and United Way of Greater Austin’s All Together Fund, Prospera was able to apply some of the funding towards maintaining an Angel Food Pantry to assist not only the residents of Nolan Terrace Apartments but also Meadow Park Village Apartments (in Lockhart) and the Luling/Lockhart communities,” Halvaksz said.

She estimated at least 10-12 families at Nolan Terrace will need food assistance because of the effects

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# Local man arrested for Assault with Deadly Weapon

On May 29, Officers responded to the 200 block of Hillview in reference to the sound of gun shots.

While patrolling the area, officers were then dispatched to Seton Edgar B. Davis Emergency Room in reference to a report of a male subject with a gunshot wound to the head.

The victim walked into the emergency room and was found to be in stable condition.

Investigations revealed the subject was shot at the 200 block of Hillview and the shooting was due to an illegal drug deal that escalated into a physical altercation.

Jeremiah Stanford, a Luling resident, was placed in custody for Aggravated Assault Deadly Weapon during the investigation.

The investigation is ongoing and further charges are pending.

# Rising COVID case count hits home for local businesses

**BOBBY HORECKA** MANAGING EDITOR  
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With continued rise in confirmed coronavirus cases in and around Luling, something like it was bound to happen sooner or later.

A faithful provider of needed goods and services has been hit by the disease, and it’s impacting the business itself just as much as the staff members who got sick.

Luling’s Dismukes Pharmacy, a locally owned, small town independent pharmacy that’s been in business since 1948, reached out to the public via social media after one of their own tested positive COVID-19.

“To our patients, friends and community,” the pharmacy’s Facebook post read. “Dismukes was notified on Sunday, June 7 that one of our staff members has tested positive for COVID-19. Symptoms are mild and a quarantine is in place. Two other staff members tested negative last night and are also in quarantine as a best practices protocol. The one remaining staff member will be tested today (June 8), and we will report on those results.”

“The Health Department has informed us that prescriptions dispensed from this store do not represent a risk to our customers,” they continued. “The health and well-being of our employees and customers is our top priority. The staff members are all

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# Luling ISD board fills holes left by resignations

**MARK LUBE**  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

With the resignation of trustees Sam Shuler and Shane Watts, the Luling ISD board of trustees had to find two individuals to fill in for the remaining five months until the November elections (originally scheduled for last month).

The board found a solution to the vacancies at a special meeting Monday evening at the Lulling ISD Conference & Learning Center.

Board president Jeff Ferry said the board accepted the resignations of Shuler and Watts, and said two options were available to the board.

“Option one is to basically do nothing until the next election, which is not advisable,” he said. “The second option is to appoint two people who are already going

to run for the board for the remainder of the election cycle (until the November election).”

The board voted to appoint Keith Conley and Seth Powell to fill the empty seats and administered the oath to both appointees.

In other business:

- The board approved the nomination of Ferry as board president, Glenn Miles as vice president and Ashley Taylor as secretary.
- Trustees set a tentative date of Friday, July 17 for the annual board retreat.
- Board members set Monday, June 22 as a budget workshop starting at 5:30 p.m., followed immediately after by their regular monthly meeting, as well as Monday, July 20, as the date for the regular July meeting.

# National Watermelon Queen visits Luling Farmers Market

**BOBBY HORECKA** MANAGING EDITOR  
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Were it any other year, Paige Huntington of Tyler would likely be making appearances some place at a supermarket near you. Or maybe not exactly NEAR you, necessarily.

As part of her duties as the reigning National Watermelon Queen—a title she picked up earlier this year at the National Watermelon Association’s annual convention held at Disneyworld in Florida—she normally has the better of her summer staked out

already, making appearances all over the continent as part of her role as official spokesperson for National Watermelon Promotion Board (NWPB).

She usually spends the year traveling to cities all over the nation, and often into Canada, talking to people in supermarkets, fairs and festivals, telling everyone about the nutritional benefits and economical values of watermelon.

But not this year. Not since the coronavirus reared its ugly head, anyway. COVID restrictions all but quashed her travel plans and appearances in 2020.

So, rather than visit with shoppers and consumers, as is

usually planned, Huntington set out in May with NWPB chapter one Kerri Wiggins, also of Texas, on a more 1,800-mile journey to see watermelons at their source, visiting with growers and shipping houses from the Rio Grand Valley to the farthest reaches of West Texas.

And wouldn’t you know it? Part of that five-day journey led them straight to Luling, just last week, where Huntington spent the afternoon visiting with growers, sellers and customers at the Luling Farmer’s Market, just down the street.

“We were on our way from a farm in Dilley to College Station when we happened by,” Wiggins said in phone interview with the newspaper on Monday. “We just had to stop for a visit. It’s just a beautiful community, and so full of people. We fell in love with it instantly.”

While Luling’s Watermelon

Thump—like many town festivals planned across Texas in 2020—may not be taking place because of the ongoing COVID concerns, that didn’t stop the reigning national queen from sharing some about the event’s history on Facebook.

“On the way to our last visit on our #WestTexasTour, we stumbled across the little town of Luling, home of the Watermelon Thump!” Huntington posted on the National Watermelon Queen’s page.

“What is a Thump anyway?” she wrote. “In 1954, Hermon Allen, principal of the Luling Elementary School, proposed the idea of a celebration to honor the growers and promote the Luling watermelon market. Numerous events and attractions since have been added, and the four-day annual event now draws an estimated 30,000 visitors to this

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PANTRY

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of the pandemic, and that any-where from 10-50 families could be helped per each food distribution day.

No meals are prepared onsite as items are handed out to those in need.

“The food assistance provided is mainly non-perishable pantry items and some limited perishable items to create two full meals for a family of four or to help stretch out current meals/pantry needs to five days,” Halvaksz said.

Long-term pantry items such as canned goods, skillet meals, canned protein (beans, tuna, etc.) cereal, peanut butter, etc. and minimal perishable items such as meat, eggs and some vegetables are distributed.

Items can be picked up at Nolan Terrance Apartments, 221 Peach St. in Luling, from 1-3 p.m. on Wednesdays this month, by appointment only. To schedule an appointment, call (830) 875-3833.

“We will have the pantry run as long as it is needed for our residents and the Luling community,” Halvaksz said. “We will continue to look for funding revenue to help keep the Angel Food Pantry in operation.”

There are several ways Luling residents can help the pantry.

Monetary donations can be made via the complex’s website: [www.prosperahcs.org/donate](http://www.prosperahcs.org/donate) or via check to Prospera Housing Community Services, 3419 Nacogdoches Road, San Antonio, Texas 78217 (Please add to the memo line: “NTA food pantry,” to ensure your monetary donation goes directly to the Angel Food Pantry at Nolan Terrace).

“In-kind donations, such as non-perishable pantry items, can be dropped off by contacting Christy Lynch at [nolanterraces-vc@prosperahcs.org](mailto:nolanterraces-vc@prosperahcs.org),” Halvaksz said. “During COVID-19, volunteer opportunities are limited at the moment but to discuss future volunteer opportunities, feel free to reach out to Christy.”

Nolan Terrace Apartment is one of 49 Prospera Housing Community Services properties across Central and South Texas. Prospera Housing Community Services is a non-governmental, community-based 501(c)(3) Texas nonprofit housing provider with its headquarters based in San Antonio.

Since 1993, Prospera’s mission is to provide safe, high-quality affordable housing with support services for individuals and families in need across Central and South Texas.

Each Prospera property of-fers on-site resident services managers to provide support services and programming to the apartment community residents and the neighboring community. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, Prospera Resident Services has reduced onsite programming at its properties to mainly food assistance programs.

Prospera Resident Service Managers provide weekly telephonic outreach and wellness checks to every resident to help address and ensure their basic needs and inquiries are being met. For more information about Prospera, please visit their website at: [www.prosperahcs.org](http://www.prosperahcs.org).

State transportation officials approve \$3.4 billion project along I-35 in Austin

A major reconstruction of I-35 through downtown Austin is a step closer to reality, following action taken by the Texas Transportation Commission earlier year.

The Commission approved on April 30 an update to the 2020 Unified Transportation Program (UTP) to allocate \$3.4 billion for the I-35 Capital Express Central project.

The \$3.4 billion is from the Commission’s discretionary funds not previously allocated in the UTP, a 10-year planning document that guides the development of the state’s future transportation projects.

Recently, the Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization passed a resolution committing \$633 million to the Capital Express project. In addition, around \$300 million will be considered by the Commission when it votes on the 2021 UTP in August 2020.

The funding, identified by Chairman J. Bruce Bugg, Jr., is the result of years of planning and discussions with Texas Gov. Greg Abbott, regional transportation planners and stakeholders.

The Capital Express Central project proposes to add two continuous non-tolled managed lanes in each direction along the 7.9-mile section on I-35 from U.S. Highway 290 East to U.S. 290 West/State Highway 71. Additional auxiliary and frontage road lanes would also be built.

In other action last month, the Commission also approved a conditional award for a design-build contract to construct the Oak Hill Parkway project. Colorado River Constructors was selected as the design-build contractor and will complete the final design for the more than \$600 million project and construct the state-of-the-art highway at the intersection of US 290 and SH 71 in Oak Hill.

The project includes three main lanes in each direction along US 290, as well as two to three frontage road lanes in each direction. Flyovers will be built at the US 290 and SH 71 intersection, where the main lanes of US 290 would be depressed or go under SH 71. Construction is expected to begin in late 2020.

QUEEN

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town of 5,000. This year would have marked the 67th anniversary of the Watermelon Thump!”

Suffice it to say, Huntington concluded, “you never know what you’re going to stumble onto while on a watermelon tour.”

Unfortunately, Huntington was not available for interviews when the newspaper contacted her this week. In addition to her many road tours planned throughout the year—next week, for instance, she’s off to Florida to visit farms and growers in that state—she busy working on her master’s degree in public health at the University of Texas Health Science Center in Tyler.

She graduated magna cum laude from Texas A&M University in Texarkana with a bachelor’s degree in psychology in 2017, and she was inducted into the National Society of Leadership and Success in 2018.


A native of Jefferson, she also helps regularly with her family’s farming and ranching interests in northeast Texas, which she says she hopes to take over the management of at some point in the future.

Huntington was crowned the Texas Watermelon Queen in 2019, and later went on to claim the national crown in late February, becoming the first Texan to hold the national queen title in more than a dozen years.

For more information about the National Watermelon Queen program, visit <https://www.watermelon.ag/queen/> or follow her posts on Facebook at @NationalWatermelonQueen.

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**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING**

NOTICE is hereby given that the ZONING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENTS of the City of Luling, Texas, in a regular meeting at 9:00 o'clock a.m. on Thursday, June 11, 2020 in the City Council Chamber, 509 East Crockett Street, Luling, Texas, will consider the following matter:

PUBLIC HEARING REGARDING A VARIANCE REQUEST BY CAIN 5 DEVELOPMENT LLC TO REQUEST A VARIANCE ON A (R-1) SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL DWELLING DISTRICT, TO REQUEST THAT THE MINIMUM SIDE/FRONT YARD SETBACK OF 25 FEET BE REDUCED TO 13 FEET OFF OF THE S. MAGNOLIA AVE. FRONTAGE. THE PROPERTY IN QUESTION IS LOCATED AT 102 PARKVIEW DR., LULING, TX 78648, ON A TRACT OF LAND WITH THE LEGAL DESCRIPTION OF PARKVIEW, BLOCK 3, LOT 28-B (PID 118620) LULING, CALDWELL COUNTY, TEXAS. THE REQUEST IS IN REFERENCE TO CITY OF LULING CODE OF ORDINANCES SECTION 9.05.

PUBLIC HEARING REGARDING A VARIANCE REQUEST BY ANDRES RODRIGUEZ AND ADAN CANTRERAS TO REQUEST A VARIANCE ON A (R-1) SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL DWELLING DISTRICT, TO REQUEST THAT THE MINIMUM 60 FEET WIDTH LOT SIZE BE REDUCED FROM 60 FT TO 54 FT, FOR PURPOSES OF A FUTURE SINGLE-FAMILY DWELLING. THE PROPERTY IN QUESTION IS LOCATED AT W. JONES ST., LULING, TX 78648, ON A TRACT OF LAND WITH THE LEGAL DESCRIPTION OF BELL HAVEN, BLOCK 2, LOT 24 (PID 25633) LULING, CALDWELL COUNTY, TEXAS. THE REQUEST IS IN REFERENCE TO CITY OF LULING CODE OF ORDINANCES SECTION 9.05

PUBLIC HEARING REGARDING A VARIANCE REQUEST BY LUIS G. GARCIA TO REQUEST A VARIANCE ON A (R-1) SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL DWELLING DISTRICT, TO REQUEST THAT THE MINIMUM 60 FEET WIDTH LOT SIZE BE REDUCED FROM 60 FT TO 50 FT, FOR PURPOSES OF A FUTURE SINGLE-FAMILY DWELLING. THE PROPERTY IN QUESTION IS LOCATED AT 1309 E. FANNIN ST., LULING, TX 78648, ON A TRACT OF LAND WITH THE LEGAL DESCRIPTION OF A018 MORRIS, SPENCER, ACRES .1515 (PID 25375) LULING, CALDWELL COUNTY, TEXAS. THE REQUEST IS IN REFERENCE TO CITY OF LULING CODE OF ORDINANCES SECTION 9.05.

All interested parties are invited to be present and to offer testimony either for or against the proposed determinations.

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**HELP WANTED** - Prairie Lea ISD Hiring immediately: Secondary ELAR Teacher (Certified 6-12); Math Teacher (Certified 6-12); Elementary/Secondary Art Teacher (Certified EC-12); Assistant Coach. Apply online at [www.plisd.net](http://www.plisd.net). (13-2-CH)

**NOTICES**

**LEGAL NOTICE**

Application has been made with the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission for a Package Store Permit, Beer Retail Dealer's Off-Premise Permit, Local Cartage Permit, and Local Distributor's Permit by **Gilmary O. Powell**, trade name Plum Nelly Liquors, to be located at 350 IH 10 E Suite A, Luling, Caldwell County, Texas. Owner is **Gilmary O. Powell**.

**HELP WANTED** - Magnolia Living & Rehab is currently accepting applications for a dishwasher and cook. Please apply in person at 1105 N. Magnolia. Ask for Juanita. (1-TFN-CH)

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