

# First organized effort in Wylie

continued from 1A

"I got kind of upset with the church," Lucas said. "I needed to get back to God."

He found that opportunity when he was accepted as a resident and student at YWAM, where he is in a 5-month program that will eventually lead to mission work. He would like to work with the homeless, which led him to the Point-In-Time count last week.

"Me being a Christian, it really hits home," the 24-year-old said.

The homeless found during the organized count were asked to answer a Point-In-Time survey with questions covering military service, criminal history, where they are sleeping, age, race, sex, time they have been homeless, what led to homelessness, health conditions, drug and alcohol use, sources of income and what are their immediate needs.

Respondents who were 18 years old, or younger, were brought to FBC to visit with Lisa Rodgers, director of City

House, a 48-bed shelter serving at-risk youth in the area.

"Our kids in the shelter are like a snapshot of the community, every social, ethnic and religious group," Rodgers said.

Wylie ISD is ahead of the curve in identifying homelessness and is working with 133 students at last count, reported Alan Bennett, Family Liaison with Achieve Academy. Bennett said that students fill out a survey, and as a result of their answers to questions they can be identified as homeless.

"This is just the ones who are not afraid to say so," Bennett said, pointing out that the number could be significantly higher.

He noted that students who are homeless do not meet the "Hollywood" version of homelessness of a disheveled person pushing a shopping cart. A student without a permanent home may stay short periods with friends on their couches, but moving regularly.

If a student meets the criteria as homeless, Bennett said



Joe Reavis/The Wylie News

Volunteering to help with the Point-In-Time homeless county in Wylie last week were, front left to right, Shannon Pierson, Kelsey Hammons, Jane Johnson, Tony Jacinto, Althea Brannon and Ginger Shocklee; middle left to right, Lee Salnave, Vielka Edwards, Aziza Kassem, Ronni Fetzer, Barbara Jacinto, Mary Ward, JoAnn Pierson and Joshua Lucas; back left to right, Nancy Miller, Lew Miller, Chuck Johnson, Terrie Moore, Bob Falkenberg and Ann Mayer.

they are automatically enrolled in the school reduced price breakfast and lunch programs and receive a \$90 voucher to buy toiletries and school clothes. Within WISD, Wylie Way Outfitters operates as a PTA clothes closet providing clothes that meet

school dress clothes, and Wylie Way Closet sells discounted toiletries.

As the first time that the homeless have officially been counted in Wylie, information gathered last week will serve as a benchmark for future counts and to help guide as-

stance efforts.

Anyone in the area who is homeless can contact a number of agencies for help. Those include Wylie Police, 972-422-8171; Wylie Christian Care Center, 972-442-4341; Amazing Grace Food Pantry, 972-292-7241; Bridge

Connection, 972-455-5541; First Baptist Church, 972-442-2261; St. Vincent de Paul Society, 972-648-6000; Wylie ISD Family Assistance, 972-429-2397; Collin County Relief Center, 972-782-8428 and Family Promise of Collin County, 972-442-6966.

## Storm victims warned by FEMA about fraudulent services

From Staff Reports  
news@wylie.com

Texas residents to watch for and report any suspicious activity or potential fraud from scam artists, identity thieves and other criminals who may try to prey on survivors vulnerable due to losses caused by severe weather.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) does not endorse any commercial

businesses, products or services and encourages survivors to be especially vigilant for these common post-disaster fraud practices:

Fraudulent building contractors. When hiring a contractor, use licensed local contractors backed by reliable references; demand that contractors carry general liability insurance and workers' compensation; and don't pay more than half the

costs of repairs upfront.

Bogus pleas for post-disaster donations.

Unscrupulous solicitors may play on the emotions of disaster survivors. Disaster aid solicitations may arrive by phone, email, letter or face-to-face visits.

Verify legitimate solicitations by asking for the charity's exact name, street address, phone number and Web address, then phone the charity directly and confirm

that the person asking for funds is an employee or volunteer.

Don't pay donations with cash, and request a receipt with the charity's name, street address, phone number.

Fake offers of state or federal aid.

Beware of visits, calls or e-mails — claiming to be from FEMA or the State of Texas — asking for an applicant's Social Security number, bank account number or other sensitive information. Avoid scam artists who promise a disaster grant and ask for large cash deposits or advance payments in full.

Federal and state workers do not solicit or accept money. FEMA and U.S. Small Business Administration staff never charge applicants for disaster as-

sistance, inspections or help in filling out applications.

Phony housing inspectors.

Homeowners and registered FEMA applicants may be vulnerable to phony housing inspectors claiming to represent FEMA or the SBA.

Inspectors have each applicant's nine-digit registration number. FEMA inspectors NEVER require banking or other personal information.

The job of FEMA housing inspectors is to verify damage. Inspectors do not hire or endorse specific contractors to fix homes or recommend repairs. They do not determine eligibility for assistance.

If you suspect fraud, call the FEMA Disaster Fraud Hotline at 866-720-5721. If you are the

victim of a home repair scam or price gouging, call the Office of the Texas Attorney General at 800-252-8011.

Survivors with questions regarding the application or the appeals process, or who need to register for assistance may visit online at DisasterAssistance.gov or by phone (voice, 711 or relay service) at 800-621-3362. (TTY users should call 800-462-7585.) The toll-free lines are open 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. seven days a week. Multilingual operators are available. For more information on Texas recovery, visit the disaster web page at [www.fema.gov/disaster/4245](http://www.fema.gov/disaster/4245), Twitter at <https://www.twitter.com/femaregion6> and the Texas Division of Emergency Management website, [www.txdps.state.tx.us/dem](http://www.txdps.state.tx.us/dem).

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## City accepting board applications

From Staff Reports  
news@wylie.com

Wylie residents wishing to serve the community by volunteering for a city board or commission must sign up for selection by May 15.

A 3-member panel of city council members will meet with all applicants in late May/early June prior to making appointment nominations. All nominations and appointments will be made in open session at a council

meeting.

"Our boards and commissions play a vital role in shaping the city today and as we plan for the future," said Mayor Eric Hogue. "The Wylie City Council members look forward to selecting and working with citizens who embody the spirit of volunteerism and service."

Wylie boards and commissions include the Animal Shelter Advisory Board; Board of Ethics; Construction Code Board; Library Advisory Board; Parks and

Recreation Board; Planning and Zoning Commission; Public Arts Advisory Board; Wylie Economic Development Board; Historic Review Commission; and the Zoning Board of Adjustments.

To apply, visit [www.wylietexas.gov](http://www.wylietexas.gov) and click on Boards, Agendas & Minutes under City Government, or pick up an application in City Secretary Carole Ehrlich's office in City Hall, 300 Country Club Rd., Building 100. For more information, call 972-516-6020.

### Sachse Chamber of Commerce 32nd Annual Awards Banquet Winter Wonderland

Friday, January 29, 2016

The Atrium at the Granville Arts Center  
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Contact the Chamber for tickets or more information  
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