

Grayson College

The Viking

October 1, 2021
Volume XIV Issue II

Get Involved

Viking Deadline

October 22

Send your articles, stories, poems, etc. to the editor, Emily Sileven, at emnsileven@vikings.grayson.edu.

Phi Theta Kappa

Wednesdays

12:30 pm - 1:00 pm

Room LA 101 or Zoom

Music Club

TBA

Cultural

Diversity Club

TBA

Psychology Club

TBA

Room CIS 202

Art Club

1st Wednesday of every month

Design Room AC 105

BSM

Navigate

12:00 pm - 12:45 pm

Free Lunch

Wednesdays

12:00 pm - 12:45 pm

Summit

Thursdays

7:00 pm - 8:00 pm

Heart of a Matter Ministries: Uniting Services for People in Need



Tina Gardner is the Executive Director of Heart of a Matter Ministries which unites services for area people in need. Shown outside the Creator Studio booth at the Sherman Arts Festival

By Kaidyn Johnston
Student

In December of 2019, a homeless woman and her two daughters reached out for help and instantly connected with Tina Gardner, the Executive Director of Heart of a Matter Ministries, currently in Sherman, Texas. Gardner helped provide the family with new beds, food from a local food bank, and gifts for Christmas, all while making an unforgettable impact on their lives by showing them the love and character of Jesus.

This woman who was served is just one of the many people and orga-

nizations who are immensely grateful to Gardner and her ministry team for the continued support offered to her and her young children.

Gardner believes God gave her the vision for Heart of a Matter Ministries 6 years ago when she was working as a Court Appointed Special Advocate and serving children and their families through the welfare system. James Hamilton, Executive Director of CASA in Grayson County, writes of her character, "It did not take long to notice her genuine nature to serve and passionate heart for those around

her."

Being heart broken by the generational poverty and wanting to connect those people with local resources, Gardner realized there was no unity and cooperation between these organizations. This disconnect made it difficult to contact and acquire the necessary assistance for people in need.

But not until 2017, did Gardner finally say "yes" to what she knew was God's commission to unite these programs into a stronger community to greater improve people's lives.

Cont. on pg. 2

Ultimate Guide to Answering the #1 Most Common Interview Question

By Marlene Phillips
Director of Advising and
Outreach

Tell Me About Yourself

You know every job interview is going to start with some version of, "tell me about yourself." Yet you never know what to say. You question every syllable coming out of your mouth. Ugh. It's a train wreck, and you're not even past the first three minutes of the interview. Join the club. Everyone hates this question. Since you know it's coming, why not prepare for it with some advice from Grayson's Career Center and get a smooth start to your next interview?

Cont. on pg. 4

Sneak Peek

See how
Covid-19 has
affected mental
health in the
Denison/Sher-
man community
on pg. 2

How can the
community raise
awareness about
addictions? Find
out on pg. 3

Learn how to
answer the infam-
ous question,
"Tell me about
yourself," on pg.
1 and 4

Learn about the
GC food drive
success on pg. 5

The Healthcare Work- force: Covid Changes and Vaccine Indecision

By Emily Skinner
Student

Tammy Skinner, Director of Nurses on the Labor and Delivery floor at Wilson and Jones Hospital in Denison, Texas, has been profoundly affected by the current pandemic, specifically in the way she must now do her job. "I no longer can talk to any of my patients without a mask. I can't see my patient's face, nor can they see mine," she explains.

"PPE [Personal Protection Equipment] is in low-stock," Skinner observes. "There have been times that I have worn the same mask for 2 weeks or more because there weren't any other N95 masks, [prior to Covid, all N95 masks were disposed of between patients]."

Although Skinner may not always work with Covid in her day-to-day work, she still has to treat sick, pregnant women who come in contact with Covid and take certain precautions when around these patients.

Working with the public in general has become a risk for healthcare workers since the start of the Covid pandemic because

they come in contact with the virus almost every day when working in the hospitals, clinics, and nursing homes.

Most hospitals and nursing homes now have a hall or floor that is designated a Covid unit to isolate Covid patients from the other patients or residents who are in the hospitals or nursing homes, states Skinner.

Jessika Lee, Assistant Director of Nurses at Settlers Ridge Care Center in Celina, Texas, explains that Covid is not only putting the residents and employees at a high health risk with being around Covid every day from their Covid unit, but it has also affected their staff and jobs by a major decrease in staffing.

"It has been not only hard to find staff, but when I have found staff, they only stay a short amount of time. Because of being low staffed, [current staff] are having to work long shifts, double shifts, and cover for call-ins, which causes them to be overwhelmed and feel overworked," Lee explains.

Cont. on pg. 3

Homeless Homer Trilogy Part III

Cont. from Sept. 16 Viking newspaper

By Laura Haworth
Library Cataloguer

"What happened to them?" I asked, my eyes wide.

"There was...there was a fire in our house in Massachusetts. Smoke surrounded me, suffocated me."

His hand shook as he pointed to the last framed picture, a family portrait. Joseph stood, beardless, smiling, next to the boys, Becky in the center, and a woman, his wife, holding Brenda.

"This is all of us, before the fire. We were a good-looking family, weren't we?" he asked with tears in his eyes.

"They...they all died?" I asked, my voice a whisper.

"Not Mary, not my wife, but she left me...because they perished, and I didn't. I only have scars."

Joseph pulled back his shirt and revealed his badly scarred chest, his skin twisted and gnarled.

"I've one more picture to show you..." he said, wiping his tears and opening another drawer.

"It's of my sister, Margaret. She's my twin. She

saved me from killing myself."

She was a rather petite woman with facial features similar to his, but with short brown hair, and wearing a plain blue dress, and a wide, pleasant smile.

All of a sudden, loud banging came from the front door, and we both jumped.

"This is Delton Police! Come to the door!" said the loud, male voice.

Cont. on pg. 4



Disclaimer



The Viking is published by Writers Unlimited and Sigma Kappa Delta as an ongoing service project to the college. This newspaper is provided as a forum for public opinion.

Participation in the production of The Viking is open to all students, faculty and staff of Grayson College.

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What's Happening Around GC

Page 2

When Will It End: Mental Health during Covid-19

By Colette Teague
Student

There is no question that Covid-19 has affected everyone in some way. Some lost their jobs. Some got Covid-19 themselves or lost someone due to Covid-19. What mental toll has this pandemic had on the general population?

Mental health was brought into the spotlight like never before when Covid-19 sent the world into quarantine.

Many people saw an explosion in anxiety and depression when they were forced to live a life of isolation.

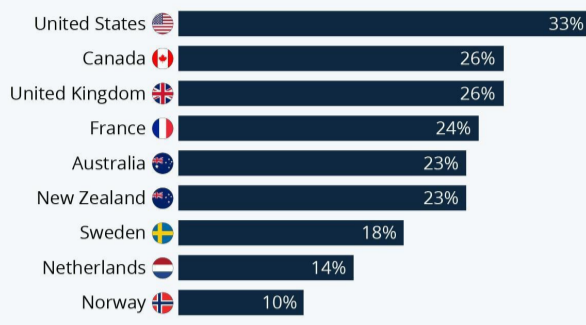
But how has mental health been handled by everyone between wearing masks, quarantine, and overall loneliness?

Covid-19 has caused mental health issues, whether initially brought on by financial stress or

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Covid-19's Widespread Impact On Mental Health

Share of adults who experienced stress, anxiety or sadness that was difficult to cope with alone during the pandemic



Stress experienced by different regions during Covid-19
(Chart by Statista.com)

emotional stress.

Mia Daniel remembers exactly where she was when the quarantine was announced in March 2020.

She was rolling silverware in the back of BJ's Restaurant and Brew-house in McKinney, Texas when it was announced by her managers that there would be no more dine-in options, only to-go orders, which meant no tips for a restaurant

server.

"My first thought process was how I was supposed to pay a \$1,000 rent by doing only to-gos," she recalls. "I had to find a second job, but with no jobs hiring, I knew it would be awhile before I could pick one up." This financial stress during Covid-19 quickly sent her into a stressful whirlwind of a depressive state. *Cont. on pg. 3*

Covid-19: Impacts in the Sherman, Denison Community

By Breeonna Overman
Student

When Covid-19 was first detected in the Sherman/Denison community, it was devastating for all aspects of the community. Local businesses were hurting due to having to shut down, colleges were having to transfer all classes online, and everyone was scared due to not knowing what was going to happen.

By the beginning of March 2019, the pandemic was in full effect. The country's borders were shut down, people were told to stay home and stay six feet apart from others not dwelling in the same household, and a mask mandate was put into effect. But how did this disruption affect our community?

Denny Callahan, owner of City Limits, a restaurant in Sherman, Texas, says, "At the first of Covid-19, employee attendance was down, most people were afraid to go out. ... Thankfully the community supported us so much, [that] we were able to keep ALL employees on full time and not lay any employees off."

Non-food businesses also had their fair share of struggles when Covid-19 first hit. Belinda Neans, owner of Texoma Top Shelf E-Cig and Vape, also in Sherman, ran into her own issues with employee attendance.

"When Covid-19 first came around, I was unsure of what I could do and what I couldn't do with my company.

"I had my manager come down with

Covid-19, and he was out for 1 month. I learned I could stay open and did curbside for my customers. I had to get the PPP [Paycheck Protection Program] loan from the government to keep all my employees," says Neans.

Attendance from employees is important, but what about for students? Savannah Taylor, a sophomore nursing major at Grayson College, explains how Covid-19 affected her school work.

"My [class] attendance didn't really suffer any consequences from Covid-19, mainly because I was in online classes to begin with due to conflicting work schedules and lack of childcare.

"The only thing it [Covid-19] may have affected was the proctored exams, which were rescheduled many times from either staff/student exposure or policy changes."

Area residents were struggling with in-person shopping that they normally would've done without a second thought. Neans had trouble keeping her business running.

She says, "Covid-19 caused my sales to drop by a third. Customers didn't know I was open because they just assumed that we were shut down. The customers also went back to smoking cigarettes because they didn't want to go places as they were afraid of getting Covid-19."

Throughout the pandemic, online shopping started to become popular as items showed up at one's door without one

having to leave home.

Neans adds, "I had trouble getting products if I could order [them] because shipping was affected by Covid-19. I lost vendors because of the states shutting down all businesses. The country had everyone buying everything online, and had it shipped to them [customers]. This caused a slow down in the delivery of products."

Callahan had other kinds of issues with getting products but states how he was able to get supplies.

"Covid-19 affected the food chain greatly. Many meat processing plants had to completely shut down [due] to Covid-infected employees. We had to buy from many different suppliers, and sometimes the quality of meats was not up to our standards. Sometimes we would have to go to Sam's Club to pick up meat and supplies."

Covid-19 affected our community in ways that hurt the community but also helped us learn how to adapt and work together to make our businesses and education work. From locally owned restaurants to small smoke shops, Covid-19 changed the way the community pulled together and worked hard to keep everyone afloat. Learning how to adapt to the changes in local and government policies, getting supplies, and taking classes is just an inspiring example of what local businesses and students did to get through this rough time.

Heart of a Matter Ministries,

Cont. from pg. 1

"I had to learn to die to myself and fully surrender to God," she says.

Because of this self-sacrifice, Heart of a Matter Ministries has grown to have a remarkably significant impact on Grayson County.

The team's mission is to empower people in need and display the character of Jesus to everyone. Many citizens who call for aid want the ministry to do everything for them and fix their problems, Gardner says, but doing so would only temporarily solve the issue.

By creating the website <https://thecomunityresource.org/>, the HOAMM team has assembled the human resources and services of Grayson County for easy access to anyone in need.

Hamilton reports that Heart of a Matter Ministries created an opportunity for collaboration of community partners and unity through socio-economic and multi-cultural differences.

The leadership and volunteers of MasterKey Ministries, the Homeless Coalition, Grayson County Child Welfare Board, and many other organizations, services, and churches have been inspired by the HOAMM team.

Stacie Wright, a local businesswoman, has been honored to work with Gardner on many projects.

Recognizing a profound amount of leadership and dedication in Gardner, she writes, "[Gardner] is by far the one of the hardest-working, dedicated, and passionate women I have ever met. Her compassion for people, her passion to help others heal, her drive to make her community better, and her sheer grit and determination is nothing short of heroic."

But Gardner understands that her sphere of influence can only go so far. "Your responsibility is only to where your influence can reach," she warns. You can make a difference right where you are, in your home, school, or local community.

An easy way to get connected with Heart of a Matter Ministries and serve the community is through their website: <https://aheartmatter.org/>. By participating in one of the 8 mission teams, volunteers can learn about the ministry, serve veteran-

Visit the BSM Wednesdays for free lunch, or Thursdays at 7:00 pm for worship!

Text @graysonbsm to 81010 to receive daily notifications.

ans, foster children, the homeless or other clients that they may have compassion for. Some upcoming events where one could meet some of the HOAMM team would be at:

- The Creator Studio, which is one of the ministry's programs that provides a space for people to express themselves through creative art and build healthy relationships
- Their booth at the Sherman Arts Festival on September 18, where ministry members will be available to help connect the community.
- The Giving Heart Showcase and Silent Auction on Oct. 9, where artists and craftsmen can display their gifts, talents, tools and, trades.

Heart of a Matter Ministries desires to recognize the unique skills and creativity that they believe God has given each of us and to be a beacon of light and hope to anyone by bringing heaven to earth.

"What do you see?" This was the question that Gardner believes God asked her innumerable times over the last year when the world seemed like it was falling apart, full of hopelessness and division.

But Gardner says, "I saw ministries uniting to efficiently meet needs in their community, church leaders stepping outside their buildings to lead their congregations in being the hands and feet of Jesus, neighbors sharing their gifts, business owners putting community over profitability, and individuals honoring and protecting one another through considerate actions.

"I could go on, but I believe I've seen what 'on earth as it is in heaven,' 'Kingdom design,' 'be the church' and what the 'body of Christ' truly means," Gardner affirms.

And finally, Heart of a Matter Ministries believes that God's vision for them is to be His design for "The Church," which is not so much the buildings that believers gathered in to grow their faith, as it is the communities that care for each other and grow in their faith because of the miracles they see God do through their service toward one another.



When Will It End

Cont. from pg. 2

Officer Luke Brown encountered additional stress due to the pandemic in an already-stressful job when trying to help in the growing number of mental health crises, specifically, when individuals were in danger of hurting themselves.

Officer Brown stated, "One major disconnect was that most people in a mental health crisis like to see if others are being sincere or not when trying to talk them off the ledge, so to speak." Referring to officers having to wear facial coverings, "It's hard to determine authenticity. It's hard to know if you're [the officer is] being sincere or not."

This has been a common complaint about masks when referring to mental health during Covid-19--the inability to see facial expressions and not knowing whether someone is being sincere since they cannot see if the other person is smiling or frowning.

It can be difficult for people to determine the kindness or emotions of strangers in times like these when those strangers are wearing masks, and that concern has been overlooked until now.

Another problem many

people encountered during the pandemic was the beginning of quarantine. People transitioned from seeing multiple other people during a day to seeing only the people in their household or others with masks.

The beginning of quarantine might have been launched from becoming a stay-at-home worker, getting fired from a job, or getting the coronavirus itself.

Dr. Pamela Evans of Cerebro Psychiatry in Prosper, Texas states that this situation has also affected children who never had to live a life of quarantine.

"Everyone, including children, had to adjust to learning and living a life of quarantine," she said. "Everyone needed adjustment for mental health, whether that was between losing your job, starting to wear a mask, or developing stress or anxiety."

While Mia Daniel is doing better, the emotional and financial stress she felt at the beginning of the pandemic still impacts her life. "Every day I wake up thankful that I am still here and got through the whirlwind of quarantine and Covid-19," she said.

Healthcare workers

Cont. from pg. 1

"Hospitals lost about 2,000 jobs from December to January based on the preliminary figures."

At first, taking the vaccine was optional, but it is currently being highly recommended and even mandated for some nurses and healthcare facilities.

Both Tammy Skinner and Amanda Skinner, the Business Office Manager at Settlers Ridge Care Center in Celina, Texas, come in contact with residents and are around residents on the Covid unit when getting paperwork that's needed from them. Both have been affected by this mandate.

"When it comes to the vaccine, it's a tough subject for me. I am not 100% sold on the vaccine although I did eventually get it. Not only were we told it [the Covid vaccine] is highly encouraged but if it's my risk of preventing hospitalization or death, that was my ultimate decision to take it," explains Tammy Skinner.

"The shot is highly recommended by our employer although it is not required."

"If we choose not to take the vaccine, then the government can withhold Medicare and Medicaid funding [from the facility]. That is the main source of funding for nursing facilities; there-

fore, we must take the vaccine or find another job."

"I am going to go ahead and take the vaccine because I like my job and would never want to risk the health of my coworkers nor the residents that we care for on a daily basis," emphasizes Amanda Skinner.



Jessika Lee, Assistant Director of Nurses at Settlers Ridge Care Center, Celina, Texas, says the strain of dealing with Covid patients makes retaining staff difficult.

What Can the Community Do to Raise Awareness About Addiction?

By Hailey Upchurch
Student

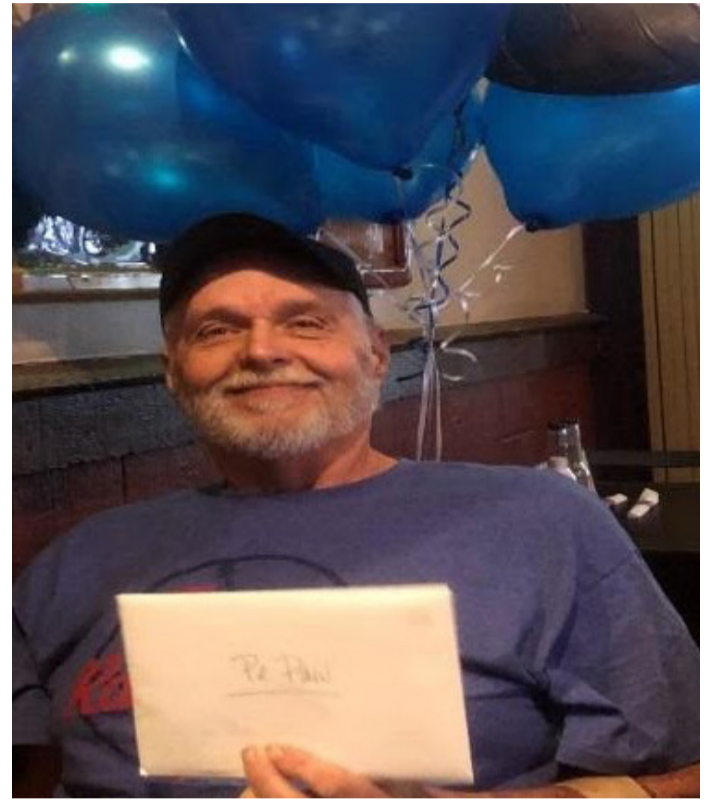
During the pandemic, the abuse of pain pills has increased by 13%, according to Debbie Knutson, a nurse practitioner at Texoma Medical Center Behavioral Health Center. Addiction is worse right now than it has ever been, states Knutson, but most people are not aware of how to assist addicts with getting help for their addiction.

"I don't believe that something that is self-inflicted is a disease," Knutson confesses. For her, a disease is something that can lead to long-term problems in the body, like destroying organs.

Jaida Grisolia has seen addiction firsthand throughout her life in family members who are addicted to alcohol and pain pills. She says, "Your upbringing and the environment that you surround yourself with has a lot to do with addiction."

Just because one's parents or the people that one is around are addicts doesn't mean that one is going to be an addict, but this exposure does play a role, according to Grisolia.

When people start to develop an addiction problem, it's due to stress, financial problems, and not getting along with



Johnny Hall eating at a Mexican restaurant for his 70th birthday, after being clean for 2 years.

Johnny Hall, a former alcoholic and pain pill addict who has been clean for 2 years, states, "Most addicts will steal, lie, and everything else to get what they want."

Even when the family says that they have had enough of the addict's behavior, until the addict gets that pressure that their abuse is not okay, some addicts still may not stop using drugs, Knutson explains. Addicts need to realize that they're destroying their bodies and need to get help for themselves.

Addiction effects create a divide between friends and family members. It is hard to watch someone that one loves struggling with addiction because it's not something that anyone can control except them, Grisolia describes.

It doesn't matter how the addict's abuse affects everyone else in their lives; when they want something, they will do anything to get it, Hall emphasizes.

According to Knutson, addiction is the number one barrier in family dynamics. The spouse will be working while the other person is spending \$300 to \$400 a week on drugs or alcohol.

Cont. on pg. 4

The Impact of the Delta Variant

By Colten Borah
Student

Covid-19 has made an impact on every person's life but more so on the employees in the healthcare system. The rise of the Delta variant has actually helped the healthcare system by enforcing standard health protocols like wearing masks and protecting others.

When Covid-19 hit, nurses were struggling because they were in such high demand that they were burning out faster than new ones could be hired.

Once the Delta variant arrived, it seemed like there was no end to new

Covid-19 cases, and nurses could not handle the increased care demands.

However, the nurses knew they needed to stay in their jobs to help those who were being affected by this variant. Nurses became part of the patient's life because they were there from the time they were admitted to the time they were discharged or when the patient died.

Since the Delta variant arrived, there has been a shortage of nurses.

Izzy Jordan, a nurse at Texoma Medical Center Covid Unit, said, "We are tired and overloaded. We don't have enough hospital beds, respiratory machines, nurses, and doc-

tors to cover the load."

According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, "The Delta variant causes more infections and spreads faster than the early forms. . . It may cause more than [double] as many infections."

Sonja Borah, a pharmacist at Sam's Club in Sherman, Texas, has administered a lot of vaccines. She has seen an influx in individuals requesting vaccines since the Delta variant arrived 8 weeks ago. She says, "Since the Delta variant started eight weeks ago, we have seen about a 50% increase in Covid vaccines."

Cont. on pg. 4

Financial Aid Job Opening

Are you interested in working at Grayson College as a work study? We work around your schedule, up to nineteen hours per week. If so, please reach out to Financial Aid to complete an application.

Work Study Needed!

- Earn extra money
- Work on campus
- Work around your school schedule

GC CONTACT FINANCIAL AID

Homeless Homer Trilogy, Pt. III

Cont. from pg. 1

I looked at Joseph, my eyes wide. Joseph took a raincoat off a hook on the wall and placed his sister's picture in one of the pockets after taking it out of its frame. The voice at the door continued.

"We've talked to your sister, Joseph. We just want to talk, not take you back to the hospital."

"You're going to open the door for them, aren't you?" I asked. He stared at me with sad eyes.

"You go first. I'll be right behind you."

"But I'm scared!" I said, nearly crying. He shook his head.

"They won't hurt you. Go on," he insisted.

I did so slowly, looking back at him as he stood and watched me go. I noticed the front door was locked with a heavy deadbolt as the banging continued.

"I...I am in here, and I'm coming out. My name is Charla," I said loudly.

"Charla Hayes?" the voice asked. I answered with a quiet, "Yes."

"Are you in there alone?" I looked back behind me and saw that Joseph wasn't there. "I don't know," I said, turning the knob on the deadbolt and opening the door.

A policeman stood, pointing a gun at me, while the one behind him lowered his.

Staring past me and seeing no one, they motioned for me to leave the house, then grabbed me by the arms and led me down the porch steps before entering the house.

Another one came up

and ushered me to the yard and past the For Rent sign. Across the street, behind police cars, was my brother's car with Jason in the back seat.

"Go to your brother," the policeman urged. I couldn't run fast enough. Dale and I met in the middle of the street and hugged.

"Thank God!" Dale cried. "Jason said he saw the homeless guy carrying you through the woods while going there looking for you. Buck led us here. We were afraid you were in there dead!"

"No! He helped me. He took care of my wound and..."

Three gunshots rang out. The policeman ran toward the backyard. I pulled away from Dale and ran too, fearful of what had happened. Beyond the fence lay Joseph's still and bloody body, the photo of his sister fluttering between his two fingers.

"I thought he was pulling out a gun!" said the fourth policeman. I started to scream at him, at how wrong he was. Then came the crash, the breaking of glass. From the shattered basement window flew Chance, dragging a chain, a muzzle on his snout, a growl from his throat. They aimed, the shots rang out. Bang, bang, bang, rapid and loud, drowning out my screams. "No, no, stop, stop!"

There were three deaths that day. Joseph's, his dog Chance, and my childhood innocence.

The Impact of the Delta Variant

Cont. from pg. 3

More shots have been given in the last 8 weeks because people do see that Covid is not a hoax. She says, "Due to the Delta variant, we have seen an increase of about 250 vaccines..."

A lot of patients opened up to Borah that some area companies are requiring that employees be tested for Covid frequently if they are not vaccinated in order to continue working for the company. Unfortunately, these companies will no longer pay for sick time if an employee tests positive for Covid if they are not vaccinated, these patients revealed.

The healthcare system has been greatly impacted by Covid-19. However, with the Delta variant, its impact had a worse effect on the system as a whole. Some hospitals may not

have enough resources and a workforce to resist the stress load, and pharmacies may experience shortages of vaccines.

However, the Delta variant has brought greater attention to the pandemic, with more people getting vaccinations compared to with the original variant. People who are



Sonja Borah administers the Covid vaccine to a fellow tech in the Sam's Club Pharmacy

Addiction

Cont. from pg. 3

This is going to cause problems at family functions also, while the addict is being inappropriate or falling, with everyone around them watching, notes Knutson.

The hard truth is that people go through these rough patches and abuse drugs to cope with what's happening in their lives, states Knutson.

The family members know what is going on with the addict, and the best thing they can do is be there for them during these hard times.

Addicts can reach out for help in many ways, and there are also numerous factors that contribute to their staying clean.

"Someone mandates them to go get help. Most of the time it's not their choice," Knutson explains.

Rarely someone will come into a rehabilitation

facility and say they have a problem and need help, states Knutson. Most of the time, there is an external factor, or the addict is on their third Driving While Intoxicated charge and wants to go to rehabilitation to make it look better in court, explains Knutson.

"There are rehab centers, but you have to do that for yourself; you can't do it for anybody else. You have to decide that you want to do it to stay alive," says Hall.

There are AA meetings and Celebrate Recovery that are free to everyone, but residential rehabilitations require insurance that many addicts don't have. The mental health system is the only free outlet that will help addicts, but these facilities are all severely overloaded and running out of money, explains Knutson.

son.

"You have to decide that you want to do it to stay alive."

The most hurtful thing one can do to an addict is turn one's back on them. The addict already feels like a failure, so saying this is only going to make it worse, states Knutson. Can one say, "Don't come around my house when you are drinking"? Yes, one can, says Knutson. Family and friends can set that boundary with the addict to establish control of the situation.

The public needs to become more educated about addiction and how to help addicts in their communities. Bringing awareness to addiction will improve the world positively for years to come, explains Grisolia.

Guide to Answering the #1 Question

Cont. from pg. 1

To keep things simple, just remember your vowels, and in this case, you only have to remember three Es and an I.

1. Enthusiasm - Start off your response by thanking the interviewer for his/her time and by expressing your enthusiasm at being considered for the position.

2. Education - Next mention the fantastic education you've received at Grayson College, of course, and the credential you've earned or will soon earn.

3. Experience - Relate any past experience, don't forget to consider volunteer work, to the position you're applying to.

Be sure to point out any special achievements, knowledge or skills

able to get vaccinated would help decrease the spreadability, helping contain the virus and stop the mutation from creating new variants.

The Career Center has many fantastic resources to help you pursue your pathway to success at Grayson College!

The Center is open Monday through Friday from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm. A huge array of career services is available any time via the Career Center page linked directly to the grayson.edu homepage.

You can also email the Career Center at careers@grayson.edu.



The Career Center is in the Student Affairs building

you've acquired through experience.

4. Interests - Tell them about your interests and how they relate to the job.

We're not talking about your fantastic Pokemon card collection or your love for the Jonas Brothers. We're talking about your specific interests and how they relate to work.

If you don't know your interests, no problem! Stop into the Career Center in the Student Affairs building and let Corey Leird guide you on inter

-est exploration OR visit the Career Center website <https://grayson.edu/gettingstarted/advising/career-center/index.html> to have access to career assessments and resources. Be sure to connect your unique interests to the job you're applying for, using Career Coach found on <https://grayson.emsicc.com/>.

That's it! Just 3 Es and an I, and you'll be on your way to the best interview ever and the job of your dreams!

Find Your Passion, Purpose, and Pathway at the GC Career Center!



Covid, Lumber Prices Affecting Local Business

By Gavin Jarabek
Student

The price of lumber has never been as expensive as it is today. Two-by-fours are more than three times their normal price, and prices for other products used to build houses like plywood, concrete, and paint have also increased dramatically.

An unexpected boom in demand for lumber caused these rising prices in the market. Commodities ranging from crude oil to corn have shown an increase in pricing, but nothing compares to the change of price in lumber.

Lumber futures in the market have more than tripled since April of 2020 and have been steadily rising since.

Nobody expected the price of lumber to increase, not even sawmills, lumber dealers, or anyone else who makes a profit from rising prices.

When the pandemic started, sawmills like many other companies, had to either shut down completely or run on the bare necessities needed to operate.

Before the lockdown, the United States was projected to have quite a busy homebuilding season, but when the global economy came to a stop in early 2020, new housing construction in the States plummeted.

Lumber dealers started liquidating their products, and speculators began to short lumber futures. But Eli Ersch, a real estate agent with Easy Life Realty in Sherman, Texas, stated that no one

expected the increased amount of home renovations taking place while we were all stuck in lockdown.

Low mortgage rates drove demand for suburban housing outside of the virus pit of big cities, despite the recently slowed business of building new houses earlier in the year, explained Ersch.

Restaurants began to remodel to accommodate outside seating and doing some instore renovations to be virus-free, he noted.

Nita Sudderth of JP Heart Lumber Co. in Sherman, Texas, took note of a boom in sales in the beginning of 2020.

She has worked for this company for three and a half years at the position of inside sales. This boom occurred because of the remodeling surge that happened while everyone was locked up in their houses.

Sudderth speculated she first noticed the dramatic increase in the price of lumber in March 2020, but the company she works for was not negatively affected by this increase.

JP Heart had to increase their staff because of the high demand, and they had more business than ever. Eventually, the effects of other companies shutting down did affect some of the outsourcing they did for certain housing materials that they don't produce themselves like siding, but overall, the pandemic has helped their business more than hurt it, Sudderth proclaimed.

Cont. on pg. 6

At Last; Spur 121: Expanding Dallas North Tollway through Grayson County

By Brent Riddle
Student

For residents of the little town of Whitesboro in Grayson County, the tremendous growth that has occurred over the last few years has been astonishing. Of course, along with this growth comes more traffic and congestion, straining all infrastructure including roads, housing, water sources, and the work demand.

A north and south corridor through Grayson County has been needed and talked about by many residents over the last 10 years. Currently, Highway 75 that passes north and south through Grayson County and into Oklahoma has been a notoriously rough and extremely congested highway for years.

Finally, though, with enough attention from across the state, leaders in

Austin finally set aside the funding to upgrade the corridor for the fast-moving expansion across the region.

With the U.S. 75 expansion it is also clear that other north and south routes such as State Highway 289 and U.S. 377 need relief.

This is where the tollway expansion makes its way into the picture. With the small amount of right of way owned by the Texas Department of Transportation and the city of Sherman and Denison's fast expansion, there is not room for the super-highway that 75 needs to be.

According to Texas Department of Transportation Assistant Area Engineer Colby Shelton, "There's a lot of misconception with the [Dallas North] Tollway expansion. A lot of people hear

'tollway' and immediately think of the [current] tollway, and that's simply not it."

The Dallas North Tollway that will connect to the new route into Grayson County will not be a tollway.

It will be a Spur 121, and that it will look like any other highway till the expansion gets so big that North Texas Tollway Authority or a private company wants to purchase the road from the Texas Department of Transportation to maintain and try to financially benefit from it.

But Shelton doesn't foresee this happening for many years to come.

Shelton stated that "this expansion will be good for everybody.

Cont. on pg. 6

Food Drive Success



Grayson College students and faculty members volunteering to help nearly 600 people who are in need of food



By Emily Sileven
Viking Editor

A few weeks ago, there was a food drive being hosted at Grayson College to help students, faculty, or anybody living near Denison and Sherman county who needed food during these uncertain times. People from all over campus came out to volunteer, such as students, faculty, social work interns, and even the campus police. The food drive resulted in helping nearly 600 people, making it a huge success. To all the people who helped, your help was so important to our project of reducing food insecurity at our college and community.

"The food drive resulted in helping nearly 600 people,"

If you did not have a chance to volunteer, there will be plenty of opportunities for you to get involved. The next food distribution will be held on campus on October 27, from 9:30 am-1:00 pm.



GC sports teams packing up oranges for the food drive

How many people were helped:

271 Adults

166 Children

34 Senior Citizens
Denison Soup Kitchen
(serves 60 people daily)

Crisis Center in Sherman

Ada's Ministry
(serves 70-80 homeless daily)

20 Students and Staff

Total Served: 593

Careers in Texas Industry Event

By Brenda Madore
Associate Dean of
Academic & Workforce
Instruction

On Friday, September 24th, Grayson College- in partnership with Texas Workforce Solutions presented the annual Careers in Texas Industry event on the Main Campus in Denison.

This fun and engaging event showcased GC Career and Technical programs for 122 area high school students and 13 teachers and administrators.

Students from S&S, Sherman, Sherman-Franklin, Whitesboro, Van Alstyne, Gunter, Wolfe City, and Trenton High Schools experienced a high-energy simulation by the Health Sciences Programs of a cardiac event and life-saving actions taken by pro-

fessionals in each of those programs.

Students also toured labs and saw hands-on demonstrations in Advanced Manufacturing, Welding, and a hair-raising display on electricity in Industrial Maintenance.

Grayson's President Dr. McMillen spoke on opportunities available at GC, students also heard from recruiters, and GC Career Coach Corey Leird talked about the new Career Center.

The event took planning and support from nearly every division in the college and was heralded by visitors as a wonderful success. The program is planned to be scaled up next year as numbers will likely increase.

At Last; Spur 121

Cont. from pg. 5

With this expansion, most people that drive the Dallas North Tollway will not have to take routes such as 75, 377, or 289."

Currently, most drivers, when the tollway ends, have to pick one of the three main corridors and have to get on 380 and essentially "pick their poison."

However, with this new route, travelers will never have to stop and decide on another route.

This option helps everyone, Shelton said. With this new alternative, it will help much-needed parts not under construction on Highway 75 currently to be upgraded.

He observed, "Often times, we can't get out there long enough to do a job right because of traffic, and that is why 75 looks the way it does."

Gina Riddle, a resident of Gunter, Texas, stated that "I think that there is not enough infrastructure

ready for the expansion.

"There will be too many pinch points into smaller highways and roadways."

She added, "I don't see a positive. The negative effects outweigh anything positive. The expansion is going to push everything north," which is a fear shared by most people who live in the area.

As Shelton explained, Riddle's belief that the expansion will be huge simply isn't the case, though.

After learning that the tollway was going to look like 377 or 289, Riddle was more open to the idea.

People are often scared of change. But when area residents see that this new Spur 121 project will cut the traffic in half on roads such as State Highway 289 and U.S. 377, most will welcome the roadway and be thankful for the new relief corridor.



Join the BSM at Summit! Summit is held at the BSM every Thursday at 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm. We hope to see you there!

Local Business

Cont. from pg. 5

Plywood and lumber began to fly off the shelves, and large home improvement companies such as Lowes and Home Depot had their share price in the market elevated by the building boom, leaving them ahead of the broader market like the Dow Jones industrial average, Sudderth assessed.

Wood was in short supply, and sawmills attempted to ramp up production, but they couldn't keep up with the demand, leading to the price increase.

Mark Schleuse of Schleuse Construction and Remodeling in Pottsboro, Texas, said there was no change in his business due to the pandemic. He still had around the same number of projects as he always does.

The only trouble he had was getting ahold of certain manufactured products used to build houses.

Sheetrock, wooden siding, wooden studs, concrete slabs, and paint are a few examples of materials that were hard to come by.

Some of these materials like paint and different cuts of wood are still hard

to come by, but Schleuse doesn't operate on a large scale, so his small business was not too affected by the limited supply because he never needed a large quantity.

The construction of housing has not slowed for many parts of the country outside of big cities due to the pandemic.

The distributors of lumber are making a fortune on all the products that are available, and related jobs are opening back up for some places.

While major manufacturers of housing materials have missed out on a lot of the profit to be made, they are attempting to keep up with the high demand without all the workers that they had before.

People are more eager than ever to get out of the city, so suburban and small-town realtors are having no shortage of business.

The lasting impact on the industry is the cost of lumber itself because we don't know how long pricing will be so high for the buyers.

Upcoming Events in the Career Center

October 6th

Arts and Humanities Spotlight

10:00 am - 12:00 pm

October 12th

Business and Entrepreneurship Spotlight

10:00 am - 12:00 pm

October 19th

Resume Workshop

10:00 am - 12 pm

and

1:00 pm - 3:00 pm

October 21st

Public Services Spotlight

1:00 pm - 3:00 pm

October 26th

Industrial Technologies Spotlight

1:00 pm - 3:00 pm

October 28th

Career Exploration

10:00 am - 2:00 pm

November 1st

Health Science Spotlight

11:00 am - 1:00 pm

Loaner Laptop Program

If you are a student who is looking for a boost to help with their academic journey, then the Loaner Laptop program may be right for you!

The Loaner Laptop Program is a new program that is still in the works, but is available for GC students to use.

If you would like to try the program, please contact one of the following below:

For students enrolled in credit programs, contact Barbara Malone at maloneb@grayson.edu

For students enrolled in noncredit programs, contact Marlene Phillips at philipism@grayson.edu