

A Revamped Website

Sentinel's Turns to 'Daily' Local New Source with Web Upgrades

The world in which news is reported to the masses is ever changing.

And, for readers of the *Seminole Sentinel*, the change is one which is geared at bringing local, regional, state and even national news coverage in quicker manner.

In late September, the *Sentinel* unveiled a new website format for www.seminolesentinel.com through the services of JAWS Media and their NewsPro web software system.

Paired with the *Sentinel's* recent partnership with the Associated Press -- which occurred earlier this calendar year -- the *Sentinel* has transformed its website into a location for local residents to keep up to date with local, state and national headlines on a format which rivals many area daily newspapers.

"Essentially, what we have done is taken the *Seminole Sentin*

SEMINOLE SENTINEL READERS: Through this Friday (Nov. 19), free access to our news coverage is available online at www.seminolesentinel.com

nel's website and turned it into an online daily news source for our customers," said Dustin Wright, Managing Editor of the *Sentinel*. "Our number one goal with this website, along with our print product, is to provide the best in local, Gaines County coverage to our readership. However, with the additions of the new website format and our partnership with the Associated Press, we can expand that coverage to so much more."

Wright said with the website upgrades, the *Sentinel's* goal is keep readers "up-to-date" with news hap-

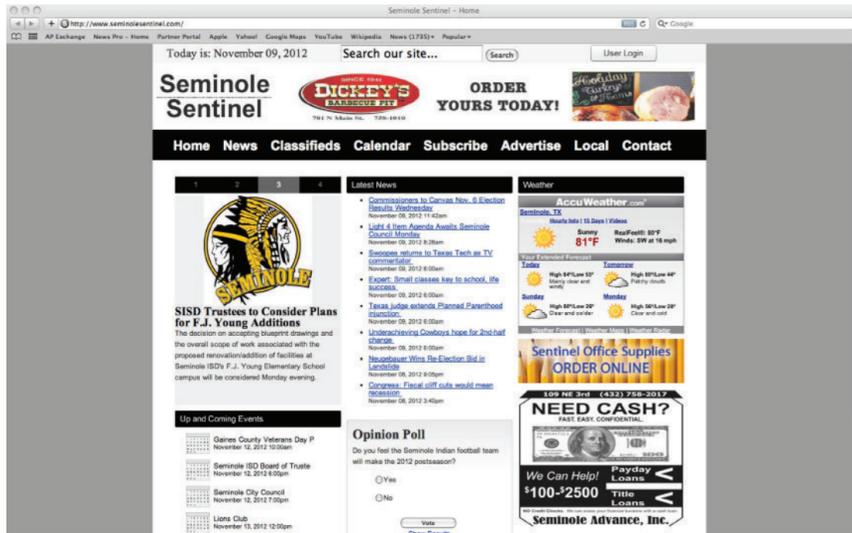
penings in a more timely manner.

"We have the capability of filing our stories online as soon as they have been composed and edited," said Wright. "In the world we live in now, with social media sites such as Twitter and Facebook taking a stake in the journalism realm, our goal with the revamped website is to upload our stories for our readers in a more timely manner."

Access to news stories, as well as portable document format (PDF) pages of the *Seminole Sentinel's* semi-weekly print editions can be accessed online for a yearly fee of \$19.95 per year.

Current *Seminole Sentinel* subscribers can purchase an online subscription to the website for a \$5 fee.

The *Sentinel's* print editions remain unchanged with the recent website changes, and is produced



each Wednesday and Sunday.

"We feel these recent additions online help enhance our news coverage to a new market," said Wright. "A market which craves the latest in local news coverage at a

faster pace."

Additional Changes

The *Sentinel* also joined the mainstream social networks of Facebook and Twitter, with news coverage accounts on both websites.

Through those social media sites, the *Sentinel* is attempting to keep its followers up-to-date with news happenings concerning the Gaines County community.

Those interested in following the *Seminole Sentinel* on Facebook can search for the newspaper's page by searching "Seminole Sentinel" and clicking "like." Those who use Twitter can follow local news happenings by searching "@sentinelad-

tin" on the social media site.

SeminoleSentinel.com also has unveiled a new online classified ads section, which allows for local residents to post classified ads onto the site from the comfort of their home computer or internet-ready smart devices. Classified ads on the site can be uploaded for a small, nominal fee.

In addition, classified ads on www.seminolesentinel.com can be viewed free of charge.

The *Sentinel's* website also features interactive reader polls and a community calendar where local residents can keep current on local happenings within the Gaines County community.

Local/State News Stories

Water Well Testing Available this Week

When Have You Tested Your Private Water Well?

Private water wells should be tested annually, according to officials with the Texas AgriLife Extension Service.

The Texas Well Owner Network, with support through the Gaines County Office of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, the Texas Water Resources Institute, and the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board is providing a water well screening day for area residents on November 14, 2012 at the Gaines County Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service Office, 101 S. Main, Courthouse, Room 108, in Seminole.

Please turn samples on Wednesday, November 14th from 8 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. at the Gaines County Extension Office. Samples from private water wells will be screened for common contaminants including fecal coliform bacteria, nitrates, and high salinity. The cost is \$10 per sample.

The presence of fecal coliform bacteria in water indicates that waste from humans or warm-blooded animals may have contaminated the water. Water contaminated with fecal coliform bacteria is more likely to also have pathogens present that can cause diarrhea, cramps, nausea, or other symptoms.

Water with nitrates at levels of 10 parts per million (ppm) is considered unsafe for human consumption. Nitrate levels above 10 ppm can disrupt the blood's ability to carry oxygen throughout the body, resulting in a condition called methemoglobinemia. Infants less than 6 months of age and young livestock are most susceptible.

Salinity as measured by Total Dissolved Solids (TDS) will also be determined for each sample. Water with high TDS levels may leave deposits and have a salty taste. Additionally, using water with high TDS for irrigation may damage the soil or plants.

Pick up a sample bag and sampling instructions from the Gaines County AgriLife Extension Office. You can contact the Gaines County Extension Office by calling (432) 758-4006x140. It is very important that only sampling bags from the Gaines County Extension Office be used and all instructions for proper sampling followed to ensure accurate results. Sample bags may be picked up on Tuesday, November 13th.

A meeting explaining screening results will be held at 6:30 p.m. on November 15, 2012 at the Andrews County Extension Meeting Room, 851 E. Broadway, Andrews, Texas. For more information, please contact the Gaines County Extension Agent, Temy Millican (432) 758-4006x140. It is extremely important to be at this meeting to receive your results, learn corrective measures for identified problems, and to improve your understanding of private well management.

Support for the Texas Well Owner Network program is provided through Clean Water Act

§319(h) Nonpoint Source funding from the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency under Agreement No. 10-04.

Expert: Small Classes Key to School Success

AUSTIN (AP) — Students in smaller public-school classes tend to do better on standardized tests and even eventually become better citizens, more likely to own their own homes and save for retirement, an expert told Texas' sweeping school finance trial Thursday.

Northwestern University economist Diane Whitmore Schanzenbach testified before state District Judge John Dietz that she could not advocate for a specific student-to-teacher ratio that would improve educational outcomes. But she said that study after academic study shows that smaller classes often mean greater success for students.

More than 600 school districts have sued the state, claiming the way it funds schools is so inefficient and unfair that it violates the Texas Constitution.

Six lawsuits have been rolled into a single case being heard by Dietz. They grew out of the state's Legislature 2011 decision to cut \$5.4 billion in funding to schools and educational grant programs, including pre-kindergarten classes.

The state argues that the system is adequately funded and that school districts don't always spend money wisely.

Still, budget cuts have forced many districts to layoff teachers and reduce support staff. That has led to larger classes, and administrators say, the cuts have been especially costly since they came as Texas implements a new and more-difficult standardized testing system.

State law caps the sizes of kindergarten through fourth-grade classes at 22 students per teacher, though districts can seek waivers allowing some classes to exceed that limit.

Whitmore Schanzenbach testified that between 90 and 150 districts request waivers in an average year but that more than 280 did so in 2011-12. She said she thought it was "unwise policy" to impose tougher standards while increasing class sizes.

"I would predict that test scores will be worse, and that will be especially true for low-income students," she said. "And that other life outcomes, such as criminal behavior, will be affected."

Whitmore Schanzenbach pointed to a 1970s Tennessee study that followed randomly select-

ed students in classes with average sizes of 15 pupils from kindergarten through third grade. After that, they were returned to regular-size classes. Those kids were compared to a control group whose average class size was about 23 students.

She said researchers found that students who had been in the smaller classes improved their scores on standardized tests by an average of 6 percentile points, and that black and economically disadvantaged students saw even greater gains.

Whitmore Schanzenbach said that between fourth and eighth grade, kids who had been in smaller classes continued to outscore other students and, as teenagers, they were less likely to have committed crimes or become pregnant.

The students in that study are now in their 30s and have been found to be more likely to have gone to college and graduated. They are also more likely to have majored in lucrative fields, saved for retirement, be homeowners and be married. She said other major studies have yielded similar results.

Whitmore Schanzenbach was cross-examined by Chris Diamond, an attorney for a group of plaintiffs pushing for expanded school choice and more efficiency in Texas schools. He asked how big Whitmore Schanzenbach's largest class was at Northwestern. "It was 35," she said, "but that was before my midterms. Now it's about 28."

Assistant Texas Attorney General Nicole Bunker Henderson asked Whitmore Schanzenbach if she was testifying that "small classes were required by the Texas Constitution."

"I'm not a constitutional expert by any means," Whitmore Schanzenbach said.

Judge Extends Stay on Planned Parenthood

AUSTIN (AP) — Texas District Judge Steve Yelenosky has issued an injunction that will keep Planned Parenthood in the Women's Health Program pending resolution of the organization's lawsuit claiming a rule banning it violates state law.

The organization had asked Yelenosky to extend a temporary order issued two weeks ago that stopped Texas from defunding clinics and doctors that have ties to groups that provide abortions. A new rule, which took effect this month, would effectively deny critical funding to Planned Parenthood clinics that provide preventive health care and contraception services to poor women, even though they do not provide abortions and are financially separate institutions.

Unless overturned on appeal, the injunction will remain in effect until a trial can decide Planned Parenthood's lawsuit. Yelenosky decided Thursday that Planned Parenthood has a reasonable chance to win its lawsuit and that allowing the rule to go into effect would cause irreparable harm to the organization.

Lauren Bean, spokeswoman for the

Texas attorney general's office, said the state would immediately appeal Yelenosky's decision.

Planned Parenthood attorneys recently lost a federal lawsuit that hinged on a doctor's right to freedom of speech and association. The argument before Yelenosky on Thursday hinged on whether the so-called "affiliate rule" could result in the loss of federal funding for health care.

Steve McKetta, arguing for Planned Parenthood, explained that a section of Texas law clearly states that any rule that violates federal law, and therefore endangers federal matching funds, is automatically inoperable. He said lawmakers have made it clear that the state Department of Health and Human Services should do everything possible to gain federal matching funds for health programs.

The federal Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services sent a letter to state officials Wednesday that said the affiliate rule violates federal law, and therefore the center was cutting off \$36 million a year for the Women's Health Program on Dec. 31. McKetta said that since the affiliate rule led to the end of federal funding, it should not be enforced.

Republican Gov. Rick Perry has known since March that federal officials would cut off funding and ordered state officials to develop a new program that depended solely on state funding. That program was due to launch on Nov. 1, but Perry and Health and Human Services Commissioner Kyle Janek said they would continue to accept federal funding for as long as possible.

However, Perry did say that he would cut off funding to Planned Parenthood immediately, and Planned Parenthood won a temporary order the next day to retain funding. Janek and Perry have both said they will cut the Women's Health Program, which provides services to 110,000 poor women, if a court decided the affiliate rule is illegal and the state must fund Planned Parenthood clinics that do not provide abortions.

Perry said state lawmakers made it clear that they don't want any state funds to reach groups such as Planned Parenthood under any circumstances.

Assistant Solicitor General Kristofer Monson argued that the court should not interpret state law in a way that would interfere with the state executive branch performing its duty to write administrative rules. He also questioned whether the federal decision to cut off funding should be considered a legal ruling.

Planned Parenthood clinics provided services to 50,000 women from 40 health centers under the Women's Health Program. They presented an expert witness on reproductive health, Joseph Potter, who testified that his research shows that other doctors do not have the capacity to take for all of the poor women where Planned Parenthood operates in impoverished areas.

Janek has said his agency has signed up thousands of doctors, but his agency has not tested whether there is enough capacity to absorb all of the women who currently rely on Planned Parenthood for basic health needs.

Seminole Trade Days

November 16-18

Start Your Christmas Shopping Now!





Girls on a Limb Christmas Open House

Thursday, November 15th

2:30-6:30 p.m.

Door Prizes & Refreshments Served

213 S. Main 758-3333

Ship N More

201 NE 3rd, Ste B 432-245-2425



Christmas OPEN HOUSE

Thursday, November 15 * 12-6

Door Prizes & Refreshments

20% Off Christmas Decor

10% Off Shipping (excludes International)

15% Off Gifts



Authorized Ship Center



Leave Christmas Gift Wrapping To Us

Over 30 Different Designs

Allyson Rene Davis

Oct. 10, 2012, 12:36 p.m.

Seminole Memorial Hospital

7 lbs. 13.6 oz. 19" long

Daughter of Doug Davis & Jasmine Gahagan-Davis, Hobbs

Granddaughter of:

Alonso and Tammy Espinoza, Ellicott, Colorado

Larry and Julie Davis, Des Moines, Iowa

