

The Sun

MONDAY

July 17, 2017

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Social media leads to reported bullying

BY SARAH MORRIS
Sun Staff Writer

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JONESBORO — Posting selfies on social media can have painful consequences, as a Valley View Junior High student recently discovered.

Now, the girl's mother is on a quest to find the parents of teens who used a picture of her bikini-clad daughter to create a vulgar Instagram post that stirred awareness that bullying is happening in Jonesboro.

"I've now decided to take it to

social media, as they did. Only not to roast, but to educate," the Valley View mother said in a Facebook post earlier this week. "Even if this gets me no information, even if all I can do is shine a light into the world of teenage girl cyberbullying, I will have accomplished something. Do not think for a second that the school of your choosing is above any kind of bullying."

While incidents of bullying are not new, social media has created a larger venue that experts say is now affecting social

interactions in real life.

Children are taught name-calling is wrong and told of the perils of online bullying, even as they watch celebrities receive worldwide attention for engaging in flagrant attacks on social media.

President Donald Trump's most popular tweet to date is a video that shows him faking a personification of CNN. Reality TV star Rob Kardashian trended last week after attacking his former fiancée on Instagram in posts so explicit

his account was shut down. His attacks continued on Twitter.

"Over time, the attitudes and behaviors that we are concerned with right now in social media will bleed out into the physical world," said Karen North, a psychologist and director of the University of Southern California's Digital Social Media Program, told The Associated Press. "We're supposed to learn to be polite and civil in society. But what we have right now is a situation where a number of role models are acting the op-

posite of that ... And by watching it, we vicariously feel it, and our own attitudes and behaviors change as a result."

Catherine Steiner-Adair, a psychologist and author of "The Big Disconnect: Protecting Childhood and Family Relationships in the Digital Age," told the AP she's already seeing the effects.

She said she's been confronted by students across the country asking why celebrities and

Please see **BULLYING** | A2



Sarah Morris | The Sun

Alexis Morgan (right), choral instructor for Arkansas State University's Global Youth Academy, leads students in song during a fine arts session on Friday. Forty-four students, who are 14 years old to college age, from India, Peru and Vietnam arrived July 8 at A-State for the three-week academy. An additional 12 students from China arrived Sunday.

ASU Global Youth Academy hosts international high school students

BY SARAH MORRIS
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JONESBORO — Ysabel Tarqui Zea does not know what she wants to do after graduating high school. But, the 16-year-old Peruvian is hoping to find the answer at Arkansas State University.

Tarqui Zea, of Arequipa, Peru, is one of 56 14-year-olds to college-age international students currently staying on campus for a three-week A-State Global

Youth Academy. She said everyone has been nice and wants them to feel like they are at home.

"I am looking forward to making new friends," said Tarqui Zea, who is currently in her final year of classes. Peruvians attend 11 years of school. "I also needed a break because I am leaving school, and I don't know what to study or do with my life. I hope this will help me. I also want to learn about the U.S. culture."

It is Tarqui Zea's first time in

the United States, although she is well experienced in studying abroad. She studied in China, France and Spain last year through her school's exchange programs.

"I feel like when you go outside your little bubble, and you get to know different cultures, you really open your mind and your vision so you get to know more stuff about other people," she said. "Because when you live

Please see **STUDENTS** | A2

Council to consider rezonings, appeals, condemnations

BY KEITH INMAN
Sun Staff Writer

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JONESBORO — The Jonesboro City Council will address a wide array of issues on Tuesday.

Topics include a proposed 300-unit apartment development, a master street plan, tax collections, condemnations and budget amendments.

Local businessman Victor J. Ditta seeks to rezone 20.44 acres in the 500 block of Park Place Apartments, from C-3 General Commercial District to RM-14 multifamily residen-

tial. It would allow for development of about 280 housing units per acre.

The Metropolitan Area Planning Commission voted 5-1 to recommend approval last week after the Ditta family agreed to reduce the density, and provide sight and sound buffering for neighboring single family homes.

Access to the apartments would be from Harrisburg Road, but real estate broker Kent Arnold Sr. said the family is negotiating with a neighboring property owner for

Please see **COUNCIL** | A6

Principals find life skill classes important

BY GRANT STEWART
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JONESBORO — In a world of benchmark scores and college entrance requirements, it can be easy for students to focus purely on classes that will take them to the next level, but some schools are trying to prepare them for lies beyond the next step.

While students might not see the immediate value in life skill courses, the classes

could help them in ways both big and small, said Greg Lewis, Jonesboro High School principal.

"I learned to cook and sew while I was in my home economics class when I was in school," Lewis said. "I remember having to make sure buttons match up with button holes on a vest. These are essential skills that you don't think you need all the way,

Please see **SKILL** | A2

Reginelli touched many lives on field and off

BY PAT PRATT
Sun Staff Writer

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JONESBORO — Former Razorback football player, high school coach and local businessman and Realtor Phillip Reginelli passed away on June 6 much the same way he lived — peacefully and surrounded by people who loved him.

The source of Phil's compassion and commitment to team, according to his daughter Patsy White, largely stemmed from his childhood and growing up in a large immigrant family. Phil was one of 11 children of Silvano and Rosa Reginelli, who settled and farmed near Lake Village.

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"His parents came over to Lake Village from Italy on a boat and were basically servants for a plantation there called Sunnyside," White said. "Eventually, they were able to buy and own a little land down there in Lake Village, and that is where he

grew up."

Phil was awarded a football scholarship after graduating from Lake Side High School in Lake Village. He attended the University of Arkansas — for a time rooming with football player and famous sportscaster Pat

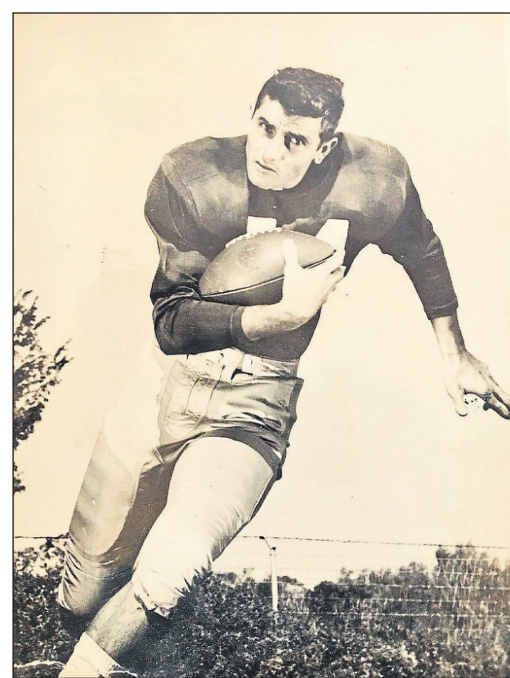
Summerall — and was a star wing back and defensive back from 1950 to 1954.

Longtime Hogs fans might remember 1954 was a special time in the history of Arkansas college football. The team that year, famously dubbed the "25 Little Pigs," had an 8-2 record and were at one point ranked No. 4 in the nation.

With Floyd Sagely at quarterback and Joe Thomason and Phil at wingback, Coach Bowden Wyatt had dubbed the team a passing machine, one who that year would go on to win the Southwest Conference championship.

Following his gridiron

Please see **REGINELLI** | A2



Submitted photo

Phil Reginelli, No. 14, is shown during his stint as a Razorback in 1954.

TODAY'S WEATHER

Sunny, with a high near 93. Calm wind becoming east around 5 mph in the afternoon.

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Staci Vandagriff | The Sun

Fire at Frito-Lay

The Jonesboro Fire Department respond Sunday afternoon to a reported tractor trailer fire at the Frito-Lay factory at 2810 Quality Way. According to E-911 dispatch, the call went out at 6:40 p.m. for a fire near the back of the building. The Jonesboro Police Department confirmed there was no criminal investigation being done by their department in connection to the fire. JFD reported they responded to the same factory at 12:34 p.m. for a reported building fire.

STUDENTS

CONTINUED FROM A1

in your own little bubble, you don't really know what is happening. You hear the news somewhere in the Middle East something is happening there, but you feel it is not that close to you. It is like a different universe.

"But when you go there, it is real, and it is actually happening. The problems that are all over the world matter to all of us and not just if you are living there. You have to care about other people and be nice and kind because even though we are different and have different cultures, we are humans and need to be respected. I think that is why I really like traveling to other countries."

Tarqui Zea and 43 other students from India, Peru and Vietnam arrived July 8 in Jonesboro. An additional 12 students and one

teacher arrived Sunday from China. Their mornings will be spent in an intensive English as a Second Language (ESL) course. They will then separate into three different programs focused on leadership, digital creative media and fine arts.

"The bottom line is we'd love for them to come be Red Wolves," international programs specialist Wendy Stotts said. "The program gives them exposure to Arkansas State University and with the short-term objective of immersing them in the English language."

Holly Hall, digital creative media instructor, plans to teach her students the basics of what it takes to be a good storyteller. She has already sent them across campus on a scavenger hunt designed to introduce them to the campus and test their photography

and video skills. She was impressed at the quality of the pictures and video taken because they gave each item some thought, she said.

Tarqui Zea has enjoyed the lessons.

"The teachers are really funny and teach you in a way you do not know you are learning, but you are," she said.

The afternoon sessions are open to area teens. Stotts said they wanted to offer a multi-cultural experience to the local teens and allow them the chance to interact with other cultures in their own hometown. They had four Jonesboro teens sign up, including Ben Stewart, 14.

Stewart and a friend signed up because they wanted something to do this summer. He said it has been interesting to meet people from places one might never get to visit and

learn how much they have in common, like a love of pizza.

A closing program, a showcase-format themed around "The Wizard of Oz," will be held at 2 p.m. July 28 at the Fowler Center. Stotts said it is a student-led final performance that will have the leadership students serving as masters and mistresses of ceremonies, introducing the acts and promoting the events.

Digital creative media students will produce video elements for the performance and promote it. Fine arts students will give a theater and choral performance as well as perform instrumentally or provide visual art, Stotts said.

It is an amazing experience for program mentor Kevin Lopez, 23, of Acapulco, Mexico. He first visited A-State two years ago for a monthlong intensive

ESL program. He said he wants to make this a great experience for students.

With the program's participants housed in one residence hall, he said the merger of different cultures under one roof has been the best part because they are all learning about each other's cultures, such as customs and dancing.

"Myself, I am an English teacher in Mexico and getting my master's in English teaching," he said. "I work with elementary kids and middle school kids. I enjoy being in America improv-

ing my English and practicing my translatable or interpretative skills."

Still, he said Arkansans tend to talk fast and cut words, making it hard at times to understand their thick Southern accents. It is a challenge, especially to students.

"They enjoy it because it is one way they can practice their listening skills," Lopez said, "because they are going to encounter people with different English accents when they practice their English day to day."

REGINELLI

CONTINUED FROM A1

days at UA, Phil had aspirations to join the Air Force and become a pilot, but an eye infection caused his medical discharge. However, that dark cloud resulted in a silver lining and spurred his return to football as a coach.

"He was in the ROTC and was going to be a pilot, but he ended up with an eye infection, so he didn't get to do that," White said. "He was second lieutenant and second in his class in the Air Force. I hate it for him."

"He got his master's in '56 and then he was an athletic director and football coach at Prescott, Arkansas, and that's where he coached his first team."

The Prescott team, which won only one game the year prior, under Phil went 9-3 and totaled 21 wins during their new coach's three-year tenure. The impact of his coaching resonated so deeply, 45 years later, 18 of his players traveled from around the country to honor him at a reunion.

"These guys loved him," White said. "They came back here and did a roast. I was like, 'Dad, they won't come back.' Well, they did. They were barely two years younger than him, because that was his first job."

Phil left the gridiron as a coach, but always loved the game.

"He was obsessed with football," White said. "He was obsessed with the Razorbacks. He watched everything that went on with the Razorbacks."

College and football life, however, as is the case with many athletes, eventually gave way to family and a way to support them.

For two years, he managed a family recreation center in McGhee, then another for a year in Vicksburg, Miss. In 1963, Phil joined Dillard's Department Stores, where he would spend the next 15 years of his career, initially as a buyer in Little Rock and then as longtime store manager of the Jonesboro store.

Phil then worked as a Realtor and co-manager for Fred Dacus Associates for 33 years until retirement. However, all throughout his career, White said he focused on being a team player.

"It was always about a team whatever he did," White said. "It was all about a team when he managed Dillard's. It was all about a team when he was working at Dacus. He was the head of their sales group at Dacus. He loved to be the manager. That was his thing."

Career aside, White said at home Phil was a wonderful father who dearly loved his five children and his wife of 54 years, Peggy, who preceded him in death.

"He was an excellent dad," White said. "He loved you no matter what, always. We were so diverse, all of us were different, and he loved each one of us equally. He was supportive and never told us what to do, what not to do." "He would give you advice, and if you took it, that was good. If you didn't, it was your own fault."

BULLYING

CONTINUED FROM A1

political leaders are allowed to engage in name-calling and other activities for which they would be punished.

Valley View Superintendent Bryan Russell has noticed more problems stemming from issues with social media.

Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior that is repetitive and involves an imbalance in power, which stopbullying.gov describes as someone using physical strength, access to embarrassing information or popularity to control or harm others. It could be name-calling, spreading rumors or tripping someone.

As awareness increases, Russell said he has found people have trouble distinguishing between bullying and isolated incidents where children act inappropriately and require discipline.

He stressed bullying is repetitive and can involve different victims. Any

time a parent contacts the school about an issue, it is investigated. He said those issues are documented and reviewed for trends.

Russell's district had 2,743 students last school year. He said they talk to students as often as they can about safe usage of the computer and the internet. "What might feel as harmless fun if done face-to-face can blow up when put on social media," he said.

During the school day, Russell said teachers can quickly learn of an issue and put a stop to it. However, it is not that easy if the issue occurs out of school and online where 100 students could see a post before an adult learns of it.

"We can't police 24/7 from the school standpoint," he said. "Our parents do a good job of policing on their end, but there are a lot of parents who do not know what their kids are posting. They are trying to give them some privacy."

"... There is a very fine

line. As a parent, it is hard to figure out the balance of providing some privacy to their child, but parents have a responsibility to see what their kids are posting."

If a parent or student is fearful he or she will be harmed, Paul Holmes, the Jonesboro Police Department's public information specialist, said the thing to do is report it to the school and to its school resource officer and/or come to the police station to make a report.

Arkansas does have a law against bullying. Depending on the nature of the bullying or threats, he said it could be considered harassing communications or perhaps terroristic threatening.

The police department does not get many reports on bullying, but one report this past spring involved a student who claimed he was being harassed and allegedly threatened to bring a gun to school to deal with people he felt were bullying him. Holmes said

it was investigated and ultimately turned over to the Craighead County Juvenile Court where it was dealt with.

The recent Facebook post was shared more than 195 times and commented on more than 83 times. It created a dialogue between Jonesboro parents and their family and friends who shared similar concerns, what course of action should be taken and ultimately helped shut down the account, "vvhjs.roasts."

The account was linked to Valley View Junior High School students. Some of their parents commented on the Facebook post to say they had taken action regarding their children.

The action taken by the mother and other parents is what Russell said he wants to see happen. He described it as a "good example of parents policing and working together to get an issue shut down because it becomes an issue."

"That's what we want," Russell said.

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Periodicals postage paid at Jonesboro, AR and published daily at 518 Carson St. Jonesboro, AR

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Daily & Sunday:	EZ-PAY	4 weeks	\$23.83
	Billed	4 weeks	\$22.00
Weekends (Fri. Sat. Sun.) \$16.00 four weeks			
Single copies: \$1.00, \$1.75 Sunday			

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