



Chipping away at construction

A hazy Saharan dust sunset begins over the site of the Samsung semiconductor plant, as seen from County Road 406 on Sunday, July 30. The chip-making plant is expected to open next year.

— Photo by Andy Sharp

August Art at the Georgetown Public Library

Sherilyn Vineyard's "Hidden in Plain Sight: Macro and Landscape Photography of Central Texas" opened on July 25 in the Café Gallery at the Georgetown Public Library. The show is a collection of imagery showing places and things that can be found just beyond the shoulder of a Texas county road or down a small-town lane. Using a rustic color palette and a personal perspective, these images show beauty in the mundane.

Vineyard is a wife, mom and photographer who has lived most of her life in Texas. She started in a culinary career then found herself immersed in photography a decade ago. She currently teaches photography courses part-time to students online while finishing her double major in fine art photography, and photojournalism and editorial photography.

"Through my photography, I hope to express what my eyes and soul see simultaneously, not just what is trapped within the confines of the frame," Ms. Vineyard said. "I believe that an image should feel

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Ann Evans

like an unlocked window, not just a visual record. If an image evokes mental sounds and scents, then I feel that I have done my job. Because I am drawn to more weathered subjects, I tend to keep the tone earthy and subdued through muted colors or black and white, attempting to reveal the character and story of places or things, not unlike the style of revealing street portraits of living subjects. In the end, I hope that all of my work feels honest, but perplexing, like there is something more lurking under the surface or a story about to be revealed."

"Hidden in Plain Sight: Macro and Landscape Photography of Central Texas" runs through August 31.

Throughout the library, visitors can still view the 59 pieces in the 15th Annual Texas Society of Sculptors Show. Thank you to everyone who came out to vote for their favorites in June. The awards were announced on July 16. As usual, The Peoples' Choice was a close vote, with the ribbon going to "The Messenger" by Matt Donner,

the owl that greets you to the exhibit in the lobby. The Librarian's Choice was an even closer race, with the ribbon going to the purple octopus "Adrian's Compadre" by John Pezze.

All other prizes were determined by this year's juror, Danny Grant, a teacher at Atelier Dojo and Art+ Academy. Cash awards were funded by the City of Georgetown Arts and Culture Board. The winners were:

- First Place – "Final Fetch" by J.P. (Pat) Childress
- Second Place – "PELECAAN" by Ken Law
- Third Place – "Fallen Heart" by John Pezze
- Honorable Mention: Metal – "Being for Self" by Lyle Adair
- Honorable Mention: Stone or Wood – "The Working Men" by Jim Woodruff
- Honorable Mention: Mixed media – "Gatekeeper" by Patrick Fleming

Congratulations to all the winners. The TSOS sculpture show continues into September, and award winners are marked with ribbons. Visitors can pick up a num-

bered list of all sculptures in the show to make sure they see everything from the Circulation and Reference Desks.

Usually, during summer months the library has three or four art exhibits running at a time. This year is a little different. The library aims to make our art exhibits enjoyable for both the viewer and the artist. During the month of August, there will be some disruptions as new carpet is installed in the library meeting rooms, hallway and bridge areas upstairs. We expect minimal disruptions for accessing the library stacks, but meeting rooms and much of the area where art is displayed will be inaccessible. There may also be some noise, dust and odor as the old carpet glue is removed and new carpet is installed. With this in mind, the planned exhibit of "Emergence" by the group Kindred Threads has been rescheduled from August 2023 to April 2024. We are very appreciative of the artists' flexibility and patrons' patience in this endeavor.

See you soon at the library!

Ann Evans is the Adult Services Librarian at the Georgetown Public Library.

TEXAS TRIBUNE

One in five Texans lives in a floodplain, first analysis shows

By ERIN DOUGLAS

Almost 6 million Texans, or about 20 percent of the population, live in an area susceptible to flooding, according to first-of-its-kind data gathered as part of a statewide effort to harden Texas against floods and rising sea levels.

The analysis is part of the Texas Water Development Board's first statewide flood plan, still in development, which the Legislature required in a 2019 law passed in response to Hurricane Harvey. Flood risks in Texas are increasing as climate change brings heavier precipitation, stronger hurricanes and sea level rise and as the state's population continues to climb.

More than 2.4 million Texans live in areas that have a 1 percent chance of flooding each year, known as the 100-year floodplain, the analysis found. Another 3.5 million people live in areas with a 0.2 percent chance of flooding each year, known as the 500-year floodplain.

One-fifth of the state's land — roughly 56,000 square miles — now fall within the 100-year floodplain, TWDB staff said in a presentation this week.

It will likely cost Texas tens of billions of dollars to protect people and property from floods. The first projects proposed in the plan add up to \$38 billion, including the massive coastal barrier proposal with its "Ike Dike," a huge gate system proposed for the mouth of Galveston Bay.

"Getting this program up and running is a really big deal," TWDB Chair Brooke Paup said before the board approved the 15 regional plans, a major step in creating

the statewide flood plan. Each region is built around one of the state's major watersheds.

"I know it'll truly go so far to save lives and people's homes," Ms. Paup said.

As climate change worsens, higher global temperatures increase the amount of moisture in the air and thus the risk of extreme rainfall events, the Texas state climatologist and a national climate assessment have found. Heavier precipitation linked to climate change likely increased Hurricane Harvey's total rainfall by as much as 19 percent, one study found. Almost 50 inches of rain fell in some areas of Houston during Harvey — the highest rainfall amount in a single storm for any place in the continental U.S.

At the same time, higher global temperatures are melting glaciers, increasing sea levels around the world — including in Texas — and making coastlines more vulnerable to storm surges. Between 2000 and 2019, rising sea levels caused the Texas coastline to retreat about 4 feet per year on average, according to a 2021 University of Texas Bureau of Economic Geology report for the Texas General Land Office.

Reem Zoun, director of flood planning at the TWDB, said that to decide how to prevent flooding in Texas, the agency first needed to identify which areas of the state were at the most risk. The analysis identified how many buildings, homes, people, hospitals, roads and agricultural areas are in a floodplain.

The San Jacinto region, which includes Harris County and Galveston, has the most people living in a floodplain: almost

2.5 million people are in a 100- or 500-year floodplain. The Lower Rio Grande region, which spans much of Texas' southern border and includes the Rio Grande Valley, is next with about 1 million people at risk.

Though floodplains are defined by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the agency does not map every inch of the U.S. and its maps have long been criticized as out of date and underestimating actual flood risk.

Texas used existing flood data to create the maps that served as a baseline that regions could add to with their own flood hazard maps — if any existed — and supplement with knowledge from local water managers. In regions with very little data, gaps were filled with data from a contracted flood risk modeling data company called Fathom.

Sixty-three of Texas' 254 counties had no existing flood hazard information prior to the planning effort, according to the TWDB.

In the Canadian-Upper Red region, for example, which includes much of the Panhandle and Wichita Falls, hardly any flood maps existed, while 98 percent of the

Lower Red-Sulphur-Cypress region in the northeast corner of the state had inadequate flood mapping, James Bronikowski, TWDB's manager for regional flood planning told the board on Tuesday.

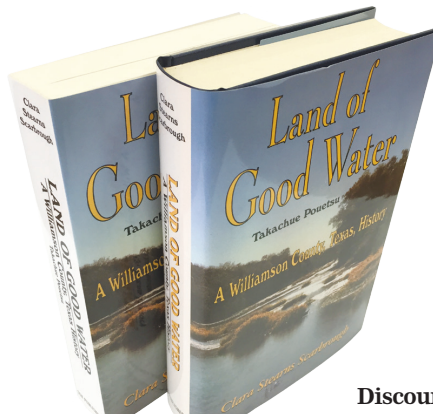
The TWDB often functions as a water infrastructure bank and intends to use the planning process to help finance the construction of flood prevention projects with low-cost loans and grants, although the cost of the projects far outweighs the money that's been dedicated to the agency by lawmakers.

During the 2023 legislative session, lawmakers allocated \$625 million to finance flood prevention projects through the Flood Infrastructure Fund. Once the statewide flood plan is finalized, projects will have to be included in the plan in order to access those funds.

Another \$550 million of the surplus was allocated to the coastal barrier project that includes the Ike Dike.

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