SECTION B

Do Christmas shopping in the country, 2B, 6B

Historic Moments in Wllson County, 3B Creating a winter wonderland, 7B

Occasions, 8B • TV Scene, Movie Review, 9B

More than an online newspaper click wilsoncountynews com

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CHAPTER [20]

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By Nannette Kilbey-Smith Wilson County News

FLORESVILLE — If you haven't visited wilsoncountynews.com lately, you may not know what you're miss-

"The immediacy is great," said Kristen K. Weaver, the Wilson County News director of operations. "Everything from the calendar events, comments on stories and blogs, and, most recently, our classifieds, go

online as soon as you hit 'submit.' In the recent elections, unof-

were posted as soon as they became available from the county clerk's office. Friday-night football game results are also posted soon after the games, so area fans can celebrate or commiser-

The Web site is the brainchild Weaver. The newspaper launched its first Web site 1999.

Since then, it's gone through several major improvements. In addition to top news stories, wilsoncountynews. com includes feature stories, youth items, local sports, farm and agricultural articles, meeting agendas for city councils and other public entities, and more. Services include a user-submitted calendar of events, classified ads, online submission of engagement and wedding announcements, and more.

Wilson's List

when you need comething

"We now have a more sophisticated site," Weaver said. "We have 'smart' forms, which calculate the cost of an ad or announcement as you enter the information. You can also submit photos online."

Using the Internet gives the Wilson County News an alternate way to

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make information available to the public, Weaver said. The Web site also reaches a wider audience: Former area residents can keep up with hometown news via the Web site, and prospective new residents can research the community online.

Comments on stories are received from around the world, including from readers serving overseas in our nation's military.

"We're averaging 1 million hits a week," Weaver said. "Our highest hits are on Wednesday, when people check for new stories and updates, following the print edition hitting

newsstands." Although the Web site is fairly comprehensive, it by no means contains all that readers of the print edition see, Weaver cautioned. Nor does the print edition contain all the content of the Web site.

"They complement each other," Weaver said.

She's very excited about the launch, in the near future, of the Wilson County News in a PDF format for online subscribers.

Our digital subscription is very exciting," she said. "Online subscribers will receive a full PDF file of the entire print edition. They'll get the same content as a conventional

subscriber — they'll just view it on their computer screens." This will enable the news-

paper to better serve out-ofstate or overseas subscribers, where it has traditionally been difficult or cost-prohibitive to send the newspaper before now. The printed newspaper

and Web site complement each other to reach a variety of audiences with similar

"The calendar of events is a great example of this," Weaver said. "It's an

online service, and it's great for nonprofits and community organizations to get the word out and promote their events. You reach wil-

soncountynews.com readers, but the newspaper also processes the information from the online calendar for the print edition, too." Calendar Events," on the left-

hand navigation bar on the home page, remains up-to-date on its own; as event dates pass, items are automatically removed from the calen-Also popular are the online funer-

al notices. These are posted online as soon as they are received from funeral homes or family members, even over the weekend, when the newspaper's office is closed. This allows the Wilson County News to keep readers notified. Online funeral notices appear in conjunction with obituaries in print and are provided free of

charge to benefit the community. Obituaries prepared for the print edition also appear online; there are no extra fees for this service. There is a minimal charge for photos in the print edition.

Online readership benefits businesses, too.

"Our banner ads are a great way for businesses to get visibility, too," Weaver said. "It's a cost-effective way to brand your business, and they're guaranteed to get local and all-over traf-

In a seven-day period, some banner ads receive as many as 349 clickthroughs — that's someone clicking on the ad on the Wilson County News Web site to go to the advertiser's site. Some ads receive as many as 1,600 click-throughs in a month, Weaver

"And we have a waiting list for our top three banner ad spots!" she said.

The site offers online readers the opportunity to receive updates as they become available, usually by a single bulk e-mail daily. This notifies subscribers of any breaking news, new classified ads, funeral notices, coming events, yellow-pages listings,

and news stories posted that day. To receive free daily updates, simply click on "Get the News via E-mail" on the left of the site's homepage and regis-

Online "Services" (scroll down the left-hand navigation bar) includes forms to submit business reviews, calendar events, classified ads, Yellow Pages items, obituaries, subscriptions, and engagement and wedding announcements, as well as photos for the newspaper's "Springtime in

South Texas" photo contest.

Visitors to wilsoncountynews. com can find advertising rates, buy photos taken by newspaper staff, respond to blogs or news stories, read movie reviews, and more. In addition, find out about Newspapers In Education, a free program placing newspapers in the hands of local students, and learn more about the staff of the Wilson County News by clicking on "Meet the Staff" under 'Contact Us.'

Find out more about the new Wilson's List in today's Classifieds, section D, as well as online Wilson County News Sports on page 1C and Agriculture Today, page 1D.

There's a world of Wilson County News outside the print edition. It's just a mouse-click away!
nkilbey-smith@wcn-online.com

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Make Us Your Horse Page

WCN/N, KILBEY-SMITH • Reprints at wilsoncountynews.com Wilson County News employees (from left) Lynette Lopez and Taryn Smith-Morales work along with Director of Operations Kristen K. Weaver to update the newspaper's Web site, wilsoncountynews.com, every day, so readers around the world can stay upto-date on happenings in Wilson County.



"Our highest hits are on Wednesday, when people check for new stories and updates, following the print edition hitting newsstands."

- Kristen Weaver, Wilson County News director of operations





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