

Education Focus

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Leander Independent School District 2010

Leander ISD set to open new regional stadium

By Jenn Rains

When high school football season kicks off, Leander ISD will welcome a new stadium—its second in two years.

John Gupton Stadium will open Aug. 27 as a central stadium for LISD's five high schools, making it the third stadium in the district. The two others are Ed W. Monroe Memorial, built in 2009, and A.C. Bible Jr.-Memorial, built in 1983. The inaugural game pits Cedar Park against Westwood.

The new stadium sits on a tract of land at the corner of Vista Ridge Boulevard and Park Street. The school district purchased the land in 2000 for a stadium.

Ground broke on the stadium in July 2009. During this two-year alignment Cedar Park and Vista Ridge high schools will call Gupton Stadium home before it becomes a regional stadium, said Dick Ellis, communications director for the district.

The new stadium has many of the same features as Bible Stadium, which was renovated last year.

Gupton and Bible stadiums can each hold 10,200 people and feature a distributed sound system on poles around the stands that projects sound downward rather than from the scoreboard.

"We want to be a good neighbor and not have the sound blasted," said Jimmy Disler, executive director of capital



Progress is being made on the construction of John Gupton Stadium, which will open in August.

improvements for LISD. "There has been a big improvement [for the neighborhood near Bible Stadium] because they cannot hear the sound as much."

The traffic patterns have been thought out to minimize traffic through the surrounding neighborhoods, he said. A new road, John Gupton Way, is being built to connect Brushy Creek Road and Park Street, creating another entrance and exit that will not disturb the neighborhood.

The roadway is under construction and will be completed in time for the stadium's opening.

LISD's newest stadium will also have the same type of turf as Bible Stadium as well as a lightning detection system that is already in place.

Several unique aspects of the stadium include having

surveillance cameras near the bus parking and on either side of the stadium because those areas are more isolated. The stadium is also built on a slope making the field 14.4 feet below ground level at the parking lot, so there are no walking ramps to get into the stands like at Bible Stadium, Disler said.

The locker rooms, concession stands and other buildings all have a stone-looking finish made of textured and painted concrete.

The stadium, which is projected to cost about \$22.5 million, is currently on schedule and under budget, Ellis said. Funding for the stadium came from the 2007 bond package.

A stadium dedication date has not been set.

For additional photos of the stadium visit more.impactnews.com/9054

Leander ISD stadiums

<p>A.C. Bible Jr.-Memorial Stadium 3301 S. Bagdad Road, Leander Year opened in LISD: 1983, renovated 2009 Seating capacity: 10,200 Home teams: Leander Lions, Rouse Raiders</p>
<p>John Gupton Stadium 200 John Gupton Way, Cedar Park Year opened in LISD: 2010 Seating capacity: 10,200 Home teams: Cedar Park Timberwolves, Vista Ridge Rangers</p>
<p>Ed W. Monroe Memorial Stadium 9700 McNeil Drive, Austin Year opened in LISD: 2009 Seating capacity: 5,000 Home teams: Vandegrift Vipers</p>

Gupton Stadium's namesake
John Gupton Stadium gets its name from retired Leander ISD employee, John Gupton, who worked for the district for 21 years. Gupton died on Aug. 24, 2008.

During his time with the district, Gupton worked in the Plant Services Department. He retired as the director of construction management in 1999.

Outside of his work with the school district, Gupton also stayed active in the community, helping to organize the Cedar Park Volunteer Fire Department and eventually becoming the assistant fire chief. He was also a member of the Cedar Park Planning and Zoning Commission for seven years.

The board of trustees voted unanimously to name the central stadium for Gupton Feb. 19, 2009.



With the information gathered from the project, Dean of the College of Science Michael Moyer said Concordia University Texas will create several kiosks along the perimeter of the property that describe different aspects of the preserve environment. Concordia will also develop signage for plants found in the preserve throughout campus.

LISD students, Concordia to study preserve

By Samantha Bryant

Concordia University Texas and Leander ISD faculty and students will soon venture out to map and identify various features of the Concordia Preserve, a nature and wildlife preserve situated on the university's recently acquired land. The preserve has not been explored extensively in more than a decade.

Concordia received an \$85,000 grant from the State Farm Youth Advisory Board in the spring that will fund a project to map the preserve and perform other service-learning activities.

"There's never been a complete in-depth study to find out exactly what kinds of plants and animals are out there," said Michael Moyer, dean of the College of Science at Concordia.

Concordia moved its campus from

downtown Austin to the 386-acre tract of land near RM 620 and RM 2222 in 2008. Approximately 250 acres of the property is part of the Balcones Canyonlands Preserve, or BCP. The BCP is made up of about 28,500 acres around Travis County and was created to protect the habitat of eight endangered species and 27 other at-risk species, while at the same time allowing development to occur.

Travis County helps manage the Concordia Preserve, and access is limited.

"You can only go in there if you have a scientific reason and that in itself has to be approved, both by the university and by individuals from Travis County," Moyer said.

Not many people have set foot on the