

Winter storm belts Belton area, chilling lows remain



Courtesy Photo/My Giving Tree

The streets of downtown Belton and the rest of the city are covered with ice on Sunday due to Winter Storm Fern which brought snow, sleet, and freezing rain to Central Texas.

By David Stone
The Belton Journal

Winter Storm Fern put Texas in the deep freeze this past weekend, icing roads and power lines, and closing schools, governments, and most businesses.

The storm passed earlier this week, but the chilly temperatures will be lingering for several more days, according to National Weather Service meteorologist Myles Langfeld.

“Over the weekend, we had a major arctic blast from Canada move through the US into north

and central Texas,” Langfeld said. “It combined with moist air from the Gulf of Mexico, causing frozen precipitation in the form of sleet and snow.”

“We’re looking at cold weather throughout the weekend, but nothing like we just had,” he added. “For the most part, we are not expecting more precipitation, except for a slight chance early Thursday. A storm is expected in South Texas and it could brush Bell County.”

Belton had its fair share of weather-related accidents and incidents, according to Paul Romer, the city’s communications director.

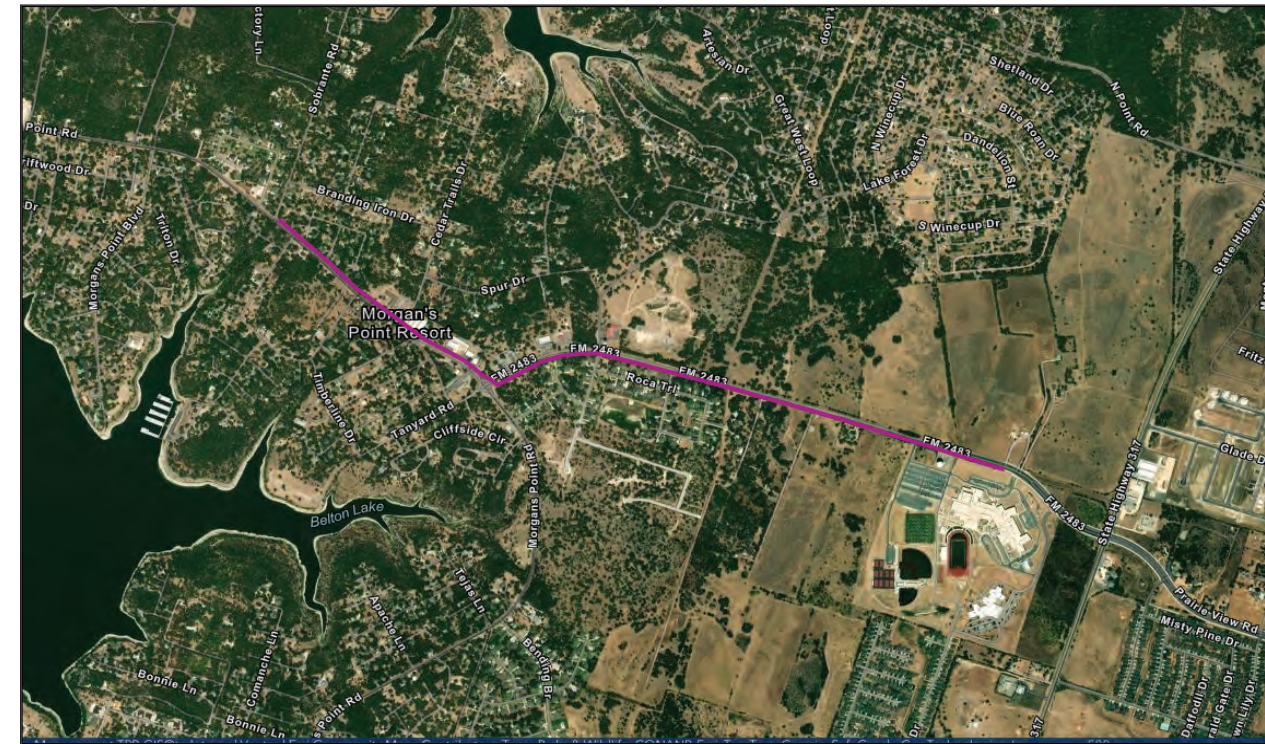
“Main Street was drivable in most places but slippery on hills at the Second Avenue traffic light and the bridge over the railroad tracks,” he said. “Two-wheel-drive vehicles are not making it up hills.”

“Most of the interior roads in Belton were still very slick Monday,” Romer added. “Service roads are passable, except for the hill near Crossroads Church. That hill is very slippery.”

Romer said Belton roads were in worse conditions Monday than over the weekend.

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Shared-use path construction on F.M. 2483 set to start this week



Courtesy Photo

Construction is set to begin on a shared-use path along F.M. 2483 that will connect Lake Belton High School to Morgan’s Point Resort. The \$2.5 million project is being funded by a combination of state and federal funds.

Special to the Journal

Starting this week, weather permitting, TxDOT and its contractor will start a project that will construct a shared-use path along F.M. 2483 from Lake Belton High School to Morgan’s Point Road.

The project will improve pedestrian safety and mobility in the area.

There will be various lane closures throughout the project, which is scheduled to end early 2027.

The pathway will continue along Morgan’s Point Road from F.M. 2483 to Sobrante Road.

Additionally, a crosswalk will be added at the intersection of F.M. 2483 and Morgan’s Point Road.

The project garnered notable endorsements from key stakeholders, emphasizing collaborative efforts to enhance transportation infrastructure and

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Need for County Treasurer’s Office debated at workshop

By David Stone
The Belton Journal

A candidate for Bell County treasurer’s desire to eliminate the elected position has caused a stir throughout the county and prompted a Tuesday morning Commissioners Court workshop last week to discuss the matter.

Ten of Texas’ 254 counties have either eliminated or not funded the county treasurer’s position, and others could soon follow suit.

Incumbent Bell County Treasurer Gaylon Evans and Adriane Hodges, co-owner of Bold Republic Brewing Co. in West Temple, are running in the Republican primary for the seat on March 3.

Last Tuesday’s workshop started with a public hearing about the issue, and about a dozen people commented. Commissioner Precinct 2 Bobby Whitson placed the item on the workshop agenda.

“The question has come up: Is the Bell County Treasurer’s Office needed?” Whitson said. “We have differing opinions on the value of the County Treasurer’s Office. Is it vital? What is required of a treasurer?”

He also questioned

what it would take to legally do away with the office.

“We have to remember: We are not voting (on March 3) to do away with the office, we are voting on the candidates.”

The first speaker was Mack Latimer of Belton. Latimer, an Army veteran and small business owner, said he has worked with the Bell County government for years. He also is a campaign consultant for Hodges.

“I was sparked by a comment years ago about the Treasurer’s Office, and I did deep research on the situation,” he said. “The office can be eliminated — 10 counties have already gotten rid of their County Treasurer.”

“The position of County Treasurer is a constitutional office started in 1845,” Latimer said. “The state created the County Auditor position in 1905 as a true check and balance for the Commissioners Court.”

According to Latimer, Texas counties often had fraud and mismanagement issues with Country Treasurers before auditors came into play.

Latimer said the current Bell County Treasurer has not made good choices in selecting investments for the county’s money.

“Bell County has got the worst returns possible since 2020,” he said.

Tyler County Treasurer Leann Monk made the drive from Woodville

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Belton City Council declares state of emergency

By David Stone
The Belton Journal

Winter Storm Fern battered Bell County last weekend with frigid temperatures, heavy winds, ice and snow, prompting Belton City Council to affirm a local disaster declaration for a weather-related emergency.

The council did so during a meeting on Tuesday evening.

“The City of Belton has experienced a winter ice storm that began Saturday, Jan. 24,” said City Manager Sam Listi. “The ice storm resulted in hazardous conditions including ice accumulation on roadways, bridges, trees, power lines and structures, creating dangerous travel conditions and an increased risk to public safety.”

Ice from the storm began melting away on Tuesday, but it still covered many yards and back roads on Wednesday of this week.

“Our citizens’ safety, health and welfare are paramount, and some residents of the City of Belton are still in jeopardy, requiring immediate action,” Listi said.

“Our local emergency response teams have been mo-

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Council hears CIP presentation

By David Stone
The Belton Journal

Assistant City Manager Matt Bates and Director of Public Works Scott Hodde presented Belton City Council with a presentation Tuesday night on current and future Capital Improvement Projects in the City.

The presentation included. A summary of active projects that are under way and projects scheduled to begin in the near future.

“The purpose of the update is to ensure Council remains informed on project status and progress milestones,” Bates said.

Active projects include the Bell County Water Control & Improvement District No. 1, \$27 million; the Temple Belton Wastewater Treatment Plant, \$16.8 million; I-14 Water and Wastewater improvements, \$2.78 million; the Nolan Creek Force Main replacement, \$922,916; and the Pop Shelf Cross Access project, \$133,936.

Future projects include the South

Connell Street reconstruction project, \$9.7 million; the East Central Avenue Bridge replacement, \$6.3 million; Rockwool Water & Sewer Improvements, \$1.85 million; the South Loop 121 Utility Relocations Phase 2, \$1.25 million; the South Penelope & Main Street side walk projects, \$953,454; West Avenue I drainage, \$817,000; and the East Sixth Avenue Sewer rehabilitation, \$1.5 million.

The projects were presented as an informational update to allow Council members the opportunity to review the status of the projects, ask questions and provide direction as needed. No action was taken.



MPR Council OKs fire equipment grant, hires firm to search for new city manager

By David Stone
The Belton Journal

Morgan’s Point Resort City Council accepted a \$25,000 Rural VFD Assistance Program grant during last week’s meeting.

The total project cost associated with the fire program grant is \$26,250. Up to \$25,000 will be reimbursed through the grant under a 95-percent-cost-share structure. The remaining \$1,250 will be funded by the city using already budgeted funds.

Morgan’s Point Resort was notified of its selection to receive the grant to purchase fire and rescue equipment — fire hose, nozzles, a portable fire pump, wildland-specific portable radios and

a mobile radio. The grant money can only be used for approved purchases.

The grant allows the city to modernize and improve fire and rescue equipment while minimizing the financial impact on MPR’s general fund.

Also at the last Council meeting, a resolution was passed to contract with Clean Career Professionals for the search for a new MPR city manager.

In a letter to residents of Morgan’s Point Resort the day following the Council meeting, Mayor James (Jimbo) Sawyer said: “The current city manager’s contract is set to expire at the end of April, and over the last two to three months, Council has been in dis-

cussion with him.”

“After considering several factors, both the city manager and City Council decided last night, during the regularly scheduled Council meeting, to allow the contract to expire and begin the search for a new city manager,” Sawyer said in his letter.

“Clean Career Professions LLC will conduct the search and begin immediately to allow time for the process to work,” he said. “This does nothing to change the day-to-day operation for the city of Morgan’s Point Resort, and we will continue to conduct business as we currently are.”

“I expect a smooth

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Debate - From Page A1

to speak at the workshop. She also serves as president-elect of the County Treasurers Association in Texas.

“Let me first say that I’ve never been in trouble, and neither have most treasurers in the state,” Monk said. “Constituents deserve another set of eyes to make sure checks and balances are met. I work hand-in-hand with our auditor — four eyes are better than two.”

“It’s not as simple as saying ‘Let’s get rid of the treasurer’s position,’” she added. “Someone has to do the work. If you get rid of the County Treasurer’s office, someone else will have to do the work. Other offices like auditor or County Clerk already have a thousand things to do. They just don’t have the time to handle the County Treasurers work as well.”

“My Daddy always told me: You get

what you pay for,” Monk said. “I’d rather pay for someone focused and determined to do treasurers’ work. It’s the County Treasurer’s job to be the keeper of the county and constituents’ money.”

Bell County Auditor Tina Entrop said her office does not duplicate tasks done in the Treasurer’s Office.

“We have no spare people in the Auditor’s Office,” she said. “We would need more people to take on the Treasurer’s Office work.”

Monk agreed that 10 counties in Texas are without a treasurer, but she added that one county is seeking to get their treasury office back.

“If you don’t like what your current treasurer is doing, get rid of him ... but don’t make a decision for future courts that y’all are going to regret later on. We

can’t take away the voice of the people.”

Monk said the County Treasurer’s duties vary from county to county.

“I do investments, receipts, disbursements and handle jury funds, payroll and the hotel occupancy taxes,” she said. “Every day, something new happens. The 244 county treasurers in Texas do 244 different things.”

Monk said the process for eliminating the Treasurer’s Office starts with the county commissioners.

“The Court would put together a resolution, and that would go to a state lawmaker,” she said. “You need a house and senate joint resolution to change the Texas constitution. Once that happens, it is put on the November ballot. It has to pass locally for the office to be eliminated.”

Hodges, the candidate seeking to re-

place Evans as County Treasurer, spoke about the process of eliminating the treasurer’s office in Galveston and other counties. She said Bell County is growing, and many departments need more employees.

“Some of the County Treasurer’s duties — like investing county funds — is not a daily duty,” she said.

“I think eliminating the position is the right thing to do,” Hodges added. “I think we can consolidate the duties of Treasurers Office employees. It’s our responsibility to take a deep dive into this and let voters have a voice.”

“You need a joint house and senate resolution — they make it hard so we have conversations like this. It’s not an instantaneous decision.”

Winter - From Page A1

Belton police responded to 12 accidents early Monday. Several vehicles that slid off roadways, causing enough damage to need a tow or assistance getting unstuck.

“There was no new ice or sleet Monday, but freezing temps cause the ice to form a glassy surface on less traveled roads,” Romer said.

Other trouble spots in Belton included the hill on West Second near the Loop 121 intersection where multiple vehicles slid backward into ditches. Lake Road between FM 2271 and Dunns Canyon Road was also hazardous.

In general, I-35 was very slick Sunday night and Monday morning. Five 18-wheelers slid off the road causing blockages and requiring heavy wreckers to be towed.

The Belton Fire Department responded to 14 calls Sunday and assisted Sparta VFD on a structure fire Monday morning.

Last Saturday and Sunday, Belton PD responded to five crashes, Romer said. By 11 p.m. Saturday most of the traffic on roads had dramatically decreased as most people heeded the warnings about the weather.

No trash service will occur on Tuesday in Belton, due to icy road conditions. Collections will resume on Wednesday, and the schedule will run one day late the rest of the week.

All area school districts and local colleges were closed Monday.

“Due to inclement weather, the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor campus was closed on Monday and Tuesday,” said UMHB Director of Marketing Ashley Smith. “The dining hall in Bawcom Student Union was open to serve students lunch and dinner.”

“Students should review their course pages in MyCourses for guidance from their professors on how Tuesday’s campus closure will affect their classes,” Smith said.

Because of icy roads and out of an abundance of caution, all Temple College campuses were closed Monday and Tuesday, and a Temple College Board of Trustees meeting originally scheduled for Monday will be rescheduled for a later date.

All Bell County offices were closed Monday and reopened Tuesday.

Belton ISD and Temple ISD were both closed Monday through Wednesday. The districts planned to resume normal operations on Thursday.

The city of Temple facilities reopened Tuesday. Monday’s trash collection in Temple was picked up Tuesday afternoon, along with Tuesday’s garbage.

Bell County Jail had some weather-related rooftop damage to a chiller/AC unit.

Bell County Judge David Blackburn released this

statement Monday night: “While there has been some improvement in road conditions, sub-freezing temperatures (Monday night) will make travel hazardous again (Tuesday) for most of the day. Wanting to err on the side of encouraging our residents to stay home, County offices will be closed on Tuesday.”

The Temple Police Department is investigating a traffic accident that left one individual deceased.

At around 3:24 p.m., on Monday, January 26, officers were dispatched to Hwy 317 and Airport Road for reports of an accident. Upon arrival, officers located a White SUV that had rolled over. Preliminary investigation suggests the vehicle was traveling northbound on HWY 317, left the roadway near Airport Road, and traveled into a ditch where the vehicle flipped.

One individual was pronounced deceased on scene.

Jake Smith of the Texas Department of Transportation said late Monday that no roads have been closed, but icy conditions exist on most if not all state roads in Bell County.

Residents and business owners are encouraged to report any damage to home or business through the Texas Division of Emergency Management STAT Damage Survey. Read more here: https://www.bell-countytx.com/publicnotice_detail_T3_R706.php.

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OBITUARIES



Joseph Jr.

Capt. Harry Joseph, Jr.
 June 25, 1939 – January 19, 2026

Capt. Harry Joseph, Jr., USAF (Ret.) age 86, of Ekron, KY, passed away on Monday, January 19, 2026, at his resi-

dence. He was born in Jersey City, NJ, on June 25, 1939, the son of Scottish immigrants, Harry Joseph Sr. and Christina Rankin Richardson.

Mr. Joseph proudly served his country for 27 years in the United States Air Force, retiring in 1984 with the rank of Captain. He traveled the world extensively and held very important and impressive positions. He was highly regarded by his superiors and his peers. He advanced in rank quickly and received several awards. Some of his most noteworthy assignments included working at the Pentagon, nuclear weapons detection, Military Postal Chief Inspector in the Panama Canal Zone. He was a lifelong member of the Air Force Officers Association, as well as a member of the Bell County Genealogy Association of Texas

which he and his wife, Patricia, were very involved in. Harry lived a large portion of his life in Texas and worked for Data General, Dell Computers and was a huge sports fan always cheering on his Dallas Cowboys, San Antonio Spurs, and Texas A&M Aggies. He was a church altar boy in his childhood, a great bowler, a Boy Scout and played Trombone in high school band and loved the outdoors. He was a generous man, with a high intellect.

Mr. Joseph was preceded in death by his parents; his loving wife, Patricia; and his daughter, Keely Joseph. He is survived by two sons, Jeffrey and his wife, Stephanie, and Gerry and his wife, Caroline; three grandchildren, Bryce, Bruen and his wife, Valeria, and Nicholas Ali; two great grandchildren, Gunner and Zophia; two siblings,

Marion S. Weisman of Florida and William C. Joseph and his wife, Sherry of New Jersey; five nieces and nephews, Donald (Mary) and Glenn Weisman, William, Jr., Andrew, and Larissa Joseph; and two great nieces and nephews, Natalia Collura and Charlie Weisman.

In honoring Mr. Joseph's wishes, the family has chosen cremation. Burial, with full military honors, will occur later this year joining his wife in Texas in the family cemetery. Expressions of sympathy may take the form of contributions to the American Cancer Society Lymphoma Foundation to battle Non-Hodgkins Lymphoma; the Alzheimer's Association; or the American Diabetes Association. Online condolence may be left at www.hagerfuneralhome.com.

Stockings keep Belton Lake hot for fishing

By David Stone
 The Belton Journal

More than 300,000 new fish have been introduced to Belton Lake waters this year, including 185,775 two-inch smallmouth bass and 123,850 Sunshine bass fingerlings, a Texas Parks & Wildlife official said last week.

"I've requested a full allotment of smallmouth and Sunshine bass," said Michael Baird, district supervisor for the Waco Inland Fisheries District of Texas Parks & Wildlife. "The numbers equate to 10 and 15 two-inch fingerlings per acre respectively."

Baird said no requests were made for Stillhouse Hollow Reservoir for this year.

In the past four years, millions of Sunshine and Palmetto bass were released into Belton Lake waters. In 2022, TP&W introduced 2.2 million Sunshine bass into the lake, and in 2023 400,812 Palmetto and

687,307 Sunshine bass were released. Millions more were released in 2024 and 2025, Baird said.

"Lone Star bass fingerlings are second-generation offspring of pure Florida strain ShareLunker largemouth bass that were at least 13 pounds," Baird said. "They have taken the place of Florida largemouth in our hatcheries and are being stocked statewide."

Sunshine and Palmetto bass are crosses of white and striped bass. Sunshine bass are a hybrid of female white bass and male stripers, and the Palmetto bass are the opposite — a hybrid cross between a male white bass and a female striper.

Baird added that smallmouth stockings also are common in Belton Lake.

"Belton Lake is a smallmouth bass brood fish source for our state hatcheries, and it consistently gets smallmouth stocked, mainly for that purpose," he said. "But it is one of the best smallmouth reservoirs in Texas for angling."

Fishing is a major draw for bringing visitors to Belton and Bell County. The area has long been known as home to massive medical and military communities, and both bring a large number of folks to the area every year. But one of the biggest attractions for visitors is world-class fishing at Belton and Stillhouse Hollow.

"The fishing here is excellent," said local guide Bob Maindelle, owner of Holding the Line Guide Service. "I've been fishing Stillhouse and Belton lakes for more than 30 years. Occasionally I get a client who wants to fish Georgetown or one of the Austin-area lakes, but most of my trips are here in Bell County."

"There's really no reason to go anywhere else," Maindelle said. "We focus on white bass on Stillhouse, and on whites and striped bass on Belton. The hybrids are a sterile fish and can't reproduce, so they have to be restocked. Belton is one of the lakes Texas Parks & Wildlife uses to invest in their hybrid sources."

F.M. 2483 - From Page A1

pedestrian safety in Morgan's Point Resort and the broader region.

These endorsements have come from Congressman John Carter, the City of Temple, the Killeen-Temple Metropolitan Plan-

ning Organization, Belton ISD, the Boy Scouts of America Troop 118, the Morgan's Point Resort Fire and Police Departments, and Mayor Dennis Green. These endorsements underscore the broad support for

the initiative and the shared vision for a safer and more connected community.

The contractor on the approximately \$2.5 million dollar project is Wellcraft Builders.

MPR - From Page A2

transition from our current city manager to the next city manager," Sawyer continued. "This was a mutual decision, and Dennis Baldwin is leaving on good terms. He will continue to serve MPR until his contract expires or as needed once a new city manager is located."

Clean Career Professionals is a Texas- and Montana-based executive recruitment and consult-

ing firm founded in 2022.

The company will gather information from local government and community stakeholders, then create a recruiting brochure and reach out to potential candidates.

It will also post brochure information in national, state and regional print and online publications.

Potential candidates will be screened, and

semifinalists will be interviewed, according to CCP information. Once the field is narrowed to a handful of finalists, Clean Career will conduct a verification process to make sure resume information is all true and correct.

Then, a new MPR city manager will be selected and announced.

Baldwin said it has been an "honor and privilege serving the residents

of Morgan's Point Resort.

"I sincerely want to thank our mayor and City Council for their steadfast leadership and friendship during my tenure," he said. "Our employees have and continue to serve this community with honor and distinction. I'm proud of their accomplishments and I'm honored to have served with them."

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A4
Thursday,
January 29, 2026

LIFESTYLES

THE BELTON JOURNAL

Fundraiser benefit set for Belton native

By Michelle Rodriguez
The Belton Journal

Tiffany Knight was born in Belton and now lives in Moody. Her friends and family are inviting the community to join in her fight against stage three breast cancer by participating in a BBQ plate lunch, live auction, live music, gun raffle, and car show benefit on Feb. 7, located at Seaton Star Hall, 10842 TX-53 in Temple.

The doors to the benefit open at 11 a.m. A BBQ lunch will be at noon with a cost of \$15 per plate. There will be a live auction at 1:30 p.m. Live music will be after the auction. There is a gun raffle with tickets costing \$20 each.

"Tiffany finished her chemo the day before Thanksgiving. On Jan. 6, she had a double mastectomy. She's doing well. She is in good spirits, but she struggles because she cannot hold her baby, who is now nine months old. His name is Kobe," said her mother, Charlotte Meyer.

"After this, she will be doing radiation. We don't know the date yet, she will have reconstruction surgery, and then a hysterectomy with ovaries and uterus. She's a young mother of two, a wife, and my beautiful daughter. She has a great support system with her husband's family and her family," said Meyer.



Courtesy photo

A community fundraiser is being held for Tiffany Knight, battling stage 3 breast cancer.

ing treatment plan that consists of chemotherapy and surgery. She cannot fight alone, and her friends and family

are requesting prayers and support from the community.

"But everyone needs to remember, when you are battling cancer, most of the time you may have a great support system, but you have to have this battle alone," said Meyer. "She is positive for the BRCA gene. I'm positive for that very same thing."

Having a BRCA gene mutation means a person has a significantly increased risk for types of cancers like breast, ovarian, prostate, and pancreatic cancer. Everyone has these genes, but a mutation impairs their tumor-suppressing function, raising lifetime cancer risk substantially, requiring increased screening, and potentially leading to preventative options like surgery or medication, and can be passed to children.

There will be a car show at the benefit. There is a registration form that needs to be filled out by people interested in participating. Just show up with your car or truck and bring the form to be put in the proper class. All proceeds from the car show will go to the benefit.

T-shirts are being sold by Knight's aunt Chantel Britton. There is a choice of three designs, and they cost \$28 each. Look up Tiffany Knight Breast Cancer Benefit on Facebook and reach out to Knight or Britton to place your order.

For any donations, please contact Charlotte and Wayne Meyer at 254-493-7300, Chantel Britton at 254-444-9494, or Misty Bosse at 254-624-7186.

According to her mother, Knight has wonderful doctors who have an ongoing

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Holy Trinity Catholic High School announces gala

Special to the Journal

Holy Trinity Catholic High School invites the Bell County community to step back in time for The Celtic Speakeasy: A Roaring Twenties Gala, an elegant evening of celebration, generosity, and purpose benefiting Catholic education.

The Gala will take place on Saturday, Feb. 7. Doors open at 6 p.m. for cocktail hour, followed by the gala itself at 7 p.m.,

at the Cultural Activities Center, located at 3100 N. 3rd Street, Temple.

The Celtic Gala is a community tradition and a powerful catalyst for the transformation of students, families, and communities throughout Bell County.

Each year, members of the Celtic Family, along with community leaders, ambassadors, influencers, and business partners, gather in support of Holy Trinity Catholic High School's mission of putting Catholic

education within reach for students of all backgrounds.

Guests will enjoy a sophisticated evening inspired by the glamour of the Roaring Twenties, featuring a lively cocktail hour, fine dining, live music, and an entertaining comedy performance.

The night will also include both a silent

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BOOK & AUTHOR LUNCHEON

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Belton shop owners schedule Galentine's events for Feb. 7

By Michelle Rodriguez
The Belton Journal

Belton's shops are planning Galentine's events for Saturday, Feb. 7, a week before Valentine's Day.

What is Galentine's? Galentine's Day is a popular unofficial holiday typically celebrated before Valentine's Day and is dedicated to honoring the friendships between women, or "gals," with brunches, gifts, and quality time. It's also been called a day for empowerment and showing appreciation for the support and love found in platonic friendships.

Candy's Beauty Lounge is partnering with Nail'd Acrylics by Amy Lee to celebrate strong women and beautiful stories.

Their event will be at Tirzah, located at 115 N. East St. from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. Tickets are \$15 per person and include access to vendors and activities and one free mimosa or mocktail.

"I am collaborating with Amy Lee to host a Galentine Soiree to give back to our loyal clients, bring women together, and support local women-owned businesses. There's an online event on Facebook where people can purchase their tickets. I'm excited to partner with other women and community. It's a fun way for people to meet and make new besties," said Candy Abreu, owner of Candy's Beauty Lounge.

Lee will be offering Apex press on nail tips to use for nail designing as an activity to enjoy with your gals. Alex brand is a thicker and more durable for reusable use up to three times, with proper removal. The activity will include how to create a Galentine design, how to package them, and will include a prepping kit with nail glue. The Apex tips will come in different lengths and shapes so you can choose what your heart desires.

"I will also teach press-on nail care: how to apply them and how to remove them. Everyone who participates in this activity will be entered into a drawing for a half-off customer press on nail set from me. All who attend this event can indulge in exclusive discounts for future press-ons and bookings with me," said Lee.

Vendors include Easy Life Boutique with their charm bar and boutique items. 1524 Boutique will have \$20 pick-and-press shirts, Troy Nutrition will have loaded teas, Luna Lylis Treats will offer baked goods, as will Lara's Sweet Treats. Sweets by Jaz will have specialty chocolate covered treats, and Mandy's Catering will serve Pink Tacos.

Activities include cakecicle decorating for \$1 per cakecicle or 2 for \$5, floral arrangements with one bouquet including four flowers for \$5, candle mak-

ing at \$10 for small and \$20 for large, press-on nail sets for \$7, beauty express hair with an option for hair waving or curling and two tinsel strands for \$20.

The Porch, located at 795 E. Central Avenue, will host Galentine's with sweet treats and more. They are inviting girlfriends to come and treat themselves with chocolate fondue, mocktails, hair feathers, tiny tats, mini facials, and permanent jewelry. Their event is from noon to 4 p.m.

"Mini facials are \$40, tiny tats are \$25, hair feathers \$5 for one of \$20 for 5, permanent jewelry \$5 off each, caricatures \$15 a face, mocktails, and the chocolate fondue is free," said Kim Earthman, Owner of the Porch.

Imeraki, My Giving Tree Gift Shop and Art Gallery, and Lindy Lu's are collaborating with an event called Sip and Shop. Roses and Retail with bubbies, shopping, and sweet deals.

Imeraki and My Giving Tree Gift Shop and Art Gallery are located at 121 N. East St.

Lindy Lu's is around the corner at 110 E. Central Avenue. They will open at 10 a.m. and plan to stay open late until 7 p.m.

Granny's Shaved Ice, located at 312 N. East St. will host a Galentine's Market with desserts, drinks, shopping, good vibes, and cute photo opportunities. Their event is from noon to 4 p.m.



Local Activities & Events

Newcomers Club Activities February

02/02: Chat 'n' Canasta	Night, Meet & Greet
02/09: Bookworms	02/21: Exploring Wine
02/10: Singing Bluebonnets	02/23: Well Read Women,
02/12: Mexican Train Dominoes	Monday Canasta
02/13: TGIF Lunch	02/24: Singing Bluebonnets
02/14: Exploring Wine	02/25: Fun Lunch
02/16: Snack Time Mah Jongg	02/26: Mexican Train Dominoes
02/17: Footloose Singles, Bunco	02/27: Trailblazers Walking Group
02/19: Nonfiction Book Club, Couples	02/28: Jimmy's Egg

**"To join or for more information, please call:
Mary Pringle (760)265-5035 or email at: pringlem@msn.com.
Visit the website: www.bellcountynewcomers.com."**

Baugh Center for the Visual Arts - Jan 12 - Feb 12

This collection of works highlights a year of dedicated portraiture resulting in a diverse selection of drawings and paintings. It includes energetic life drawings, often executed during collaborative sessions with students, which emphasize spontaneity and capturing immediate impressions. Complementing these are more intensive long form painted portraits, developed over multiple sittings in the studio. These focus on the subtle, untold narratives that emerge between artist and sitter, capturing not just a likeness, but the unique spirit and story of each individual. This exhibit will be on display January 12–February 12, 2026. Exhibitions are free and open to the public. Gallery Hours are Monday-Friday, 9AM-4PM. at 812 Shine St, Belton.

MPR Explorers @ The Point- Jan 29

The MPR Explorers (sponsored by the Mary Ruth Briggs Library) is holding their monthly "Conversation over Coffee" with entertainment by the Lake Belton High School Choir Show Ensemble. Join us for a discussion with the Friends of the Mary Ruth Briggs Library (non-profit 501 (c) 3 organization) and learn how you can help bring a stronger, more accessible library to life in Morgan's Point Resort, Garrett & Mic Hill Event Center 60 Morgan's Point Blvd., Morgan's Point Resort on Jan 29, 10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

Sons Of The Republic of Texas George W Tyler Chapter - Feb 7

The Sons of the Republic of Texas, George W. Tyler Chapter #3 is continuing to gain momentum after a brief period of reduced activity. In September 2025, 16 members and guests met to discuss and plan for the chapter's future. We remain committed to supporting and advancing the goals of The Sons of the Republic of Texas. Currently we have 11 active members and 10 individuals that have submitted their applications. We are actively seeking additional members. Our next meeting is schedule on February 7, 2026 from 10am to noon and will be held at the Bell County Agrilife bldg 1605 Main Street Belton, Texas. Come join us, we welcome those that would desire to work with us promoting our ancestors in Texas.

Bell County Master Gardeners - Feb 12 & 18

Join us for our next Herb Roundtable as we explore Valerian, Ashwagandha and St. John's Wart. We will discuss its history, uses, growing considerations, and more. These roundtables are an interactive, discussion-based sessions where everyone is encouraged to share and learn together. Choose between two dates- February 12th, Thursday 6pm or February 18th, Wednesday 10am Bell County Extension Office- Learning Center, 1605 N. Main Street, Belton. No registration needed.

Bell County Master Gardeners - Mar 7

Registration for the March 7th, 2026, Spring Garden Forum, "Gardens that Nourish" is now open! Join us Saturday, March 7th for a community gardening forum offering expert-led talks designed to inspire and inform Central Texas gardeners. Hear from an outstanding lineup of speakers Saturday, March 7, 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. at Temple College Pavilion, 1903 S 1st St, Temple, TX Registraer at txmg.org.

NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) will meet both on TUESDAY, Jan. 13th and Jan. 27th at 6:30pm at the Temple VA Hospital. Use the entrance on the Valet parking side of the hospital and take the elevator to the 5th floor -Conference Room 5G31. Both care-givers, supporters and those suffering from mental illness are welcome to join us for mutual support and sharing of information. For more information, call 254-771-3638.

Bell Area Parkinson's Support group (BAPS-North) meets at CTCOG, 2180 N. Main St, Belton on the 2nd and 4th Fridays from 2:30-4:00 PM every month. All are welcome, and there is no membership cost. The Bell Area Parkinson's Support group (BAPS-West) meets at St. Andrews United Methodist Church Fellowship Hall, 206 W Fowler Ave, Killeen on the 1st and 3rd Fridays from 2:30-4:00 PM every month. For more information contact Gayle Shull at GayleInBelton@gmail.com or (254) 718-4197.

Marine Corp League will meet the third Tuesday of each month at VFW 3859. Dinner is served at 6:30 p.m. and meeting will begin at 7:00 p.m. 201 VFW Dr, Harker heights, Tx 76548. Email commandant@mc1249tx.com for more information.

Aspen Hospice and Palliative Care Volunteers Needed Listed here are many ways you can help make a difference for our hospice patients. You can provide companionship, listen to music, read, reminisce, play games, cards, checkers, paint nails, apply makeup, curl hair or take them on walks. Please visit aspenhealthcare.net or call 512-856-5668 for more information.

Young's Daughters Funeral Home Dementia/Alzheimer's Caregiver Support Group occurs weekly on Fridays from 6-7 p.m. This group allows your loved ones to join. Loved ones will be doing activities while the group of caregivers are joining together to better understand and learn tips and tricks for daily life. Young's Daughters Funeral and Bereavement Center is located at 4235 East Hwy 190 in Temple.

Bell County Historical Commission holds their meetings on the fourth Monday of every month at 6 p.m. in the historical Bell County Court House, 101 E. Central Ave in Belton. Join us in our vision of preserving and promoting Bell County's rich historical heritage for current and future generations. We are dedicated to initiating and conducting programs that preserve and celebrate the county's historic cultural resources in alignment with state laws governing historical preservation in Texas. Our community resources consist of a research room, book repository, cemetery information, historical markers and monument records. Our services include information on historic preservation, educational programming, history community outreach and partnerships. We welcome you to join other history minded folks and get involved by serving on one of our committees that consist of preservation, cemetery, markers and education. To volunteer or for more information please visit historicalcommission@bellcounty.texas.gov, call 254-933-5917 or visit the office located in the historic Bell County Courthouse, 101 E. Central Ave., RM 117.

Pistons on the Creek will meet every third Friday from 5:30 p.m. to 11 p.m. Come down to Nolan Creek and show off your rides. From classic to modern, muscle, rat rod, exotic, all automotive enthusiasts are welcome. Support our awesome downtown businesses and restaurants surrounded by live music, food, drinks and a great atmosphere.

Bell Fine Arts Visitors welcome Wednesday's from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at 306 E 5th Ave in Belton. Majong games are available every Monday from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. Come join the fun and meet new folks. For more information text Jeanne at 409-313-0611.

Local chapter of the Crochet Guild of America meets from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. on Wednesday's at the Lena Armstrong Public Library, 301 E. First St., in Belton. The group is open to anyone interested in crochet. All skill levels are welcome. For information email Betty Reichert at bettyreichert@yahoo.com or Kathy Bement at katshookandneedle@gmail.com. Anyone interested in joining the local chapter of the Crochet Guild of America will also need to join the National Crochet Guild of America. Visit www.crochet.org for details.

Bell County Texas Democratic Women holds their monthly meeting on the third Saturday of each month at 10 a.m. in the Belton AgriLife Center, 1605 N Main in Belton. Join us to hear from local and state candidates and about important issues and events. This is open to the public.

Leadership Belton is an excellent source for learning leadership skills. This 10-month program focuses on three key elements: community awareness training, leadership training, and team building. Do you have someone ready to take the next step to become a leader? If so, Leadership Belton is here to make that difference. For more information on how to participate, contact the chamber at 254-939-3551 or e-mail at info@beltonchamber.com.

Community Information

TAKE ME HOME PROGRAM The Belton Police Department is adopting the Take Me Home Program, aimed at helping individuals who need special assistance to return safely home after getting lost. The program is a database with photos and personal information to help police officers find someone who is lost or wandered away from home. Take Me Home is designed for individuals who may need additional aid including those with Dementia, Autism or specific mental health needs. It's free to register someone and the data is kept confidential to first responders. You can sign up a loved one here: www.beltontexas.gov/takemehome. Read more about the program here: https://www.beltontexas.gov/news_detail_T11_R1166.php.

Dial 988 for Mental Health Emergencies To help those contemplating suicide, press option 1 for assistance with military/veteran population.

Text-to-911 for speech/ hearing impaired, those unable to call or speak due to home invasion, abduction or domestic violence or physically incapable. Providing location, city name and nature of the emergency in the first message is imperative. For further education on this service, don't hesitate to call 254-933-5500.

Citizens Helping in Police Service (CHIPS)

are extra eyes and ears while in areas where large groups may gather. Contact the Belton Police Dept. to join.

Belton Citizens Police Academy meets Thursday nights to enhance police and community partnerships. Apply online to be a part of this exciting program.

Slam the Scam Throughout the year, we give you the tools to recognize scams and stop scammers from stealing your money and personal information. Share the information with your loved ones & Slam the Scam! Visit ssa.gov/scam for tips.

Dementia/Alzheimers Support Group- Young's Daughters Funeral Home & Bereavement Center, 4235 E. US HWY 190 in Temple. Fridays from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m., Join us for activities while caregivers discuss and help each other during this difficult time. Call Sabrina at 254-401-1302



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 - Christ Bible Baptist Church
1590 Jack Rabbit Rd ~ 254.939.9247
 - Christ the King Catholic Church
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 - Christian Tabernacle Church
Apostolic UPC
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 - Cornerstone Community Church
5081 Dog Ridge Rd ~ 254.721.8250
 - Crossroads Church
500 South I-35 ~ 254.939.2122
 - Dominion Life Chapel
105 Green Briar St. ~ 254.563.0472
 - Elm Grove Baptist Church
6388 Elm Grove Rd. ~ 254.933.8127

- Family Gospel Church
2210 Holland Rd. ~ 254.721.0707
- Fellowship Baptist Church
2025 Morgan's Point Rd ~ 254.780.2388
- First Baptist Church Belton
506 N. Main St. ~ 254.933.3391
- First Mexican Baptist Church
703 S. Wall St. ~ 254.939.6900
- First Presbyterian Church of Belton
2500 Church Street ~ 254.939.2115
- First United Methodist Church
205 E. 3rd Ave. ~ 254.939.5703
- Free Pentecostal Church of Jesus
1111 Cacti Lane ~ 254.933.8201
- Freedom Bible Fellowship
3087 W. Ave. D ~ 254.933-3310
- Holy Temple of Our Lord Jesus Christ of the Apostolic Faith
519 S. Pearl St. ~ 254.613.4591
- Hope Community Church
507 Mitchell St. ~ 254.933.8222
- Hope Tabernacle
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3303 N. Main ~ 254.939.6910
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- Covenant Lutheran Church
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- Eighth Street Baptist Church
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- First Baptist Church Temple
8015 West Adams Ave. ~ 254.773.6866
- First Methodist Church Temple, GMC
102 N. 2nd Temple. TX ~ 254.773.7992
- First Presbyterian Church Temple
12 West French ~ 254.773.3407
- Foundation Church
10751 W. Adams ~ 254.780.9673

- Grace Baptist Church
740 Jayline Drive ~ 254.773.1401
- Grace Comm. Primitive Baptist Church
3111 N. 3rd St ~ 254.774.8192
- Grace Presbyterian Church
2401 S 57th ~ 254.773.2134
- Harvest Church
2501 General Bruce Dr. ~ 254.780.3566
- Immanuel Lutheran Church
2109 W. Ave H ~ 254.773.3898
- Leon Valley Church of Christ
4404 Twin City Blvd. ~ 254.939.0682
- New Hope Church of God
2005 W. Ave D., Suite D. ~ 254.742.2181
- Oak Park United Methodist Church
5505 South 31st St. ~ 254.773.3021
- St. Francis Episcopal Church & School
5001 Hickory ~ 254.733.4255
- St. Luke's Catholic Church
2807 Oakdale Dr. ~ 254.773.1561
- St. Mary's Catholic Church
1018 S 7th St. ~ 254.773.4541
- Taylor's Valley Baptist Church
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- Temple Bible Church
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5000 S. 31st ~ 254.773.3744
- Unity Church of Temple
318 N. 2nd ~ 254.770.0070
- Vineyard Christian Fellowship
7425 W Adams Ave. ~ 254.778.2802
- Vista Community Church
7051 Stonehollow Dr. ~ 254.774.7992
- Wildwood Baptist Church
5195 Cedar Creek Rd. ~ 254.773.3177

Your First Purpose in Life



John C. Perry

My wife and I attend a small group at our church each week for Bible study. Recently, we've been watching Pastor Rick Warren's series Live Your Calling. In our last session, he spoke about what he believes is the very first purpose of every human life: "To be loved by God." He explained

that this isn't something we do, not a task to complete or a box to check, but a posture of the heart, a willingness to receive the love God pours out. That idea made me reflect on the many "first purposes" I've chased over the years. Some of them I'm not especially proud of. Like most people, I wanted to be a good father and a good husband, though I'll admit my record has its blemishes. And for a long stretch of my life, I was a Christian mostly in name. My real purposes were far more material. Since my teenage years, I've been a car guy. I've owned everything from a hot-rod 1934 Ford coupe to several Corvettes. I've also been a devoted Civil War

buff, and for a time collecting artifacts from that era felt like a mission all its own. None of these interests were wrong, but they certainly weren't the highest calling God had for me. As my faith deepened, my priorities shifted. I still enjoy fast cars, and I still love history, but they no longer sit at the top of the list. Pastor Warren's message reminded me why. I know God loves me, loves all of us, so much that He sent His only Son to live among us, teach us, and ultimately suffer a terrible death for our sake. That kind of love is overwhelming. But I do see one thing a little differently than Pastor Warren. When I read Matthew 22:37-38,

where Jesus says, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment," I hear a clear call to action. Loving God isn't passive. It requires intention. To love God with our whole being means praying, worshiping, showing kindness, loving our neighbors, and striving to live a life that honors Him. I fall short of that more often than I'd care to admit. But I also know that God forgives freely when we ask, and that His grace is bigger than my failures. And there's one more step I believe belongs alongside that greatest commandment: the Great Commission in Matthew

28:18-20. Jesus tells us to go, to share the good news, to make disciples, to teach, to baptize, and to trust that He is with us always. Witnessing, too, is part of our purpose. Pastor Warren is right that we must first allow ourselves to be loved by God. But once we recognize that love, the natural response should be action. Faith is not only something we feel, it's something we live! John C. Perry is the Immediate Past Lay Leader with New Life Methodist Church. They meet every Sunday at 9 a.m. (Bible Study) and 10 a.m. (Worship Service) in the Salado Middle School at 1169 Williams Rd.



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Duffield puts hat in the ring for county judge



Ted Duffield

Special to the Journal

Ted Duffield, current Bell County Justice of the Peace Precinct 1, has announced his candidacy for Bell County Judge.

Duffield was first elected to his

current position back in 1995.

At the end of his current term this year, he will not be running for reelection.

Over the years, he has been known for his community service in the surrounding areas he serves.

“My priorities as County Judge are clear: strong communication, common-sense decision-making, and responsible leadership. I believe in open and transparent communication with residents, county officials, and the community partners so decisions are understood and government remains accountable. I will use experience and facts to manage growth responsibly, spend taxpayer dollars wisely, and avoid unnecessary bureaucracy. Responsible leadership means staying focused on results, accountability, and efficient county gov-

ernment that works for the people it serves.

“I bring disciplined, practical leadership to public service. My career includes service with local law enforcement and three decades as Justice of the Peace for Bell County Precinct 1. I have managed budgets, overseen court operations, and worked closely with county and state leadership. This experience has prepared me to serve effectively as Bell County Judge,” said Duffield.

Duffield served in the United States Army. He also worked for the Bell County Sheriff’s Department for seven years before becoming Justice of the Peace.

“If I lose on March 3rd, I have done what my heart told me to do by running for Bell County Judge,” said Duffield.



File Photo

Bell County Justice of the Peace Precinct 1 Ted Duffield flips pancakes at a fundraiser. The constable has announced his candidacy for Bell County Judge in the March 3 primary.

CTRW to hold commemorative gala

Special to the Journal

Central Texas Republican Women will host a Faith, Family, Freedom Gala to commemorate the 250th Birthday of America on Feb. 10, at the Christ the King Catholic Church Event Center in Belton.

Doors open at 6 p.m., and the event will feature a dinner, photo booth, refreshment bar, many special guest speakers and surprises, music with dancing, Champagne & Pink Sapphire Drawing, and a Live & Silent Auction. The requested attire is dressy formal, cocktail, or Texas Chic.

The evening will feature a line-up of special guest speakers that includes Rev. Ramiro A. Peña, Gary Heavin – founder of Curves & Philanthropist,

Steve Munisteri, Senior Advisor to Governor Greg Abbott, Dr. Dawn Buckingham – Texas Land Commissioner, Dr. Brad Buckley – TX Representative HD54, and Hillary Hickland – TX Representative HD55. Other well-known guests are expected to appear on this special evening.

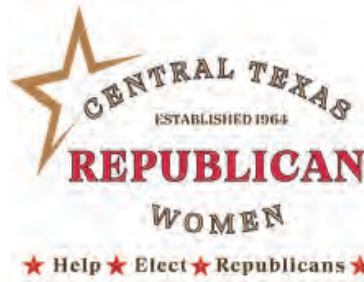
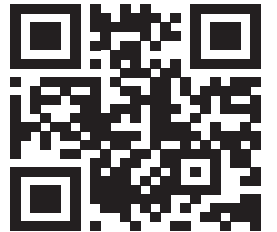
A silent and live auction with several unique Texas-inspired and custom-designed items will be held, with Bell County Commissioner Bobby Whitson presiding over the Live Auction. Thinking of Valentine’s, which evokes feelings of celebration, champagne, and timeless sophistication—an intimate moment of beauty captured—Central Texas Republican Women are pleased to feature a 2-carat pink sapphire

for one lucky winner that will be the star in the “Champagne & Sapphire” drawing, with tickets on sale for \$50 each.

Central Texas Republican Women, a Bell County Republican grassroots organization, was chartered in 1964 and has consistently received the highest recognition from the Texas Federation of Republican Women and the National Federation of Republican Women each year

for their political and community activities. Central Texas Republican Women’s efforts support the election of Republican Candidates. All Republicans are invited to join us for this unique, once-in-a-lifetime event. Tickets, sponsorships, and more information are available at www.ctrw-pac.com.

SCAN ME



SCAN ME



Holy Trinity - From Page A4

auction and a live auction, offering attendees the opportunity to directly support tuition assistance and student programming while bidding on unique and exciting items.

Admission to the Gala is \$75 per person, and proceeds will directly benefit Holy Trinity Catholic High School, helping ensure that students are formed academically, spiritually, and morally in a faith-centered environment.

“The Celtic Speakeasy Gala is more than a fundraiser—it is a cel-

ebration of community, faith, and the shared belief that a Catholic education should be accessible to all,” said representatives of Holy Trinity Catholic High School. “The generosity shown each year continues to open doors and change lives.”

Tickets may be purchased online at <https://give.hellofund.com/Gala2026>.

For more information about the event or sponsorship opportunities, please contact Holy Trinity Catholic High School.

Council - From Page A1

bilized to address the risks,” he said. “The City of Belton may request financial assistance from State/Federal agencies for personnel and equipment that is necessary to effectively respond to and recover from this storm.”

Fern caused icing that led to many accidents, especially on Sunday and Monday.

Listi and Mayor David Leigh signed the disaster declaration, which stated “the

winter ice storm has resulted in hazardous conditions, including ice accumulations on roadways, bridges, power lines and structures.”

The declaration stated that “an emergency exists in the City of Belton.” It also urged Belton residents to exercise caution and limit travel during storms such as Fern.

The declaration was unanimously approved by Council members.

Belton City Council 2 – City Council OKs firm to create tourism marketing roadmap

By David Stone
The Belton Journal

The Belton City Council on Tuesday agreed to hire Found TX to create a marketing roadmap to assist the city in future tourism planning.

The City has budgeted \$100,000 in the 2026 Hotel/Motel marketing budget to implement services outlined in the roadmap, according to Matt Bates, assistant city manager.

“Found TX demonstrated extensive experience working with municipalities of similar size and character, with a strong track record in destination branding, tourism marketing, and community-focused storytelling,” Bates

said. “Their proposal reflected a clear understanding of Belton’s goals, assets, and challenges, as well as the intent of the marketing roadmap developed through the Tourism Marketing Roundtable.”

Six firms submitted proposals which were evaluated by a scoring committee.

“Following the evaluation process, the scoring committee independently reviewed and scored each proposal based on the criteria outlined in the Request for Proposals,” Bates said in a statement to Council.

“This included demonstrated experience, understanding of the project scope, proposed approach, team qualifications, and

overall value,” he said.

On Sept. 17, Belton hosted a Tourism Marketing Roundtable. Participants included Mayor David Leigh; Council members Stephanie O’Banion and Dave Covington; local business owners Ashley Potts, Staci Schoepf and Jordan Samfield; Cynthia Hernandez of the Belton Economic Development Corporation; and city staff members Sam Listi, Bates, Paul Romer and Judy Garrett.

The purpose of the roundtable was to collaboratively develop an analysis, identify key priorities and create the marketing

See **ROADMAP**,
Page A8

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Roadmap - From Page A7

roadmap. The roadmap is intended to serve as a guide for pursuing future marketing services.

On Nov. 20, the City issued a Request for Proposals for Tourism Marketing Services covering all the key focus areas identified in the marketing roadmap, including:

Brand Development – Establishing a clear and consistent visual identity and messaging framework

Audience Segmentation – Defining target visitor personas and developing itineraries

Content Creation – Producing a professional li-

brary of photography and video assets

Tourism Website – Launching a standalone, SEO-optimized destination website

Social Media – Creating branded platforms and implementing consistent posting schedules

Graphic Design – Ensuring brand consistency across print materials and merchandise

Advertising – Executing targeted, primarily digital advertising campaigns

Assessment – Evaluating performance and develop-

ing recommendations for the following year.

Also at Tuesday’s meeting, Council held a public meeting regarding the annexation of the rights-of-way of Wheat Road from Sparta Road south to the city limits in the vicinity of Digby Drive, and from Sparta Road to Wheat Road east to the city limits at Dunns Canyon.

The rights-of-way are currently in the city’s Extra-territorial Jurisdiction. Council consideration of the annexation ordinance is scheduled for Feb. 24.

Winter Storm Fern around town



**Photo credits: My Giving Tree and Christopher Winston
Belton Journal/Shanna Grote/Michelle Rodriguez**



Belton blitzes Waco with longball, 97-47

By Tony Adams
The Belton Journal

The Belton Tigers continued their District 16-5A schedule Thursday night as they hosted Waco High at Tiger Gymnasium.

Belton hit 18 three-pointers, including eight in the opening quarter, put together multiple early runs to overpower Waco, 97-47.

Ty Johnson set the tone with a pair of three-pointers in a 58-second span to put Belton up 6-0.

Ja'dyn Loggins hit two three-pointers, and Johnson, Daniel Briscoe, and Noah Childers each drilled triples during the final stretch of the opening quarter during a 23-7 stretch as Belton led at the end of the period, 29-7.

Johnson, Loggins, and Gavin Ross hit three-pointers in the second quarter during a 14-0 run in middle portion of the quarter and 24-8 run during the entirety of the period to give the Tigers a 40-point lead at the half, 55-15.

The Tigers continued to dominate the offensive zone in the third quarter as Keishawn Coles and Abran Knight joined the offensive set for Belton with big field goals. Big Red outscored the Lions in the period, 26-11, and led by 55 points heading into the fourth quarter, 81-26.

Belton's biggest lead of the game came early in the fourth period, as the Tigers opened the frame on an 8-3 stretch and led 89-29 with 6:44 to go.

See **BELTON**,
Page B3

Belton basketball programs wrap up first round of district with wins

By Aries Ramos
The Belton Journal

As the first round of district play comes to a close, both Lake Belton and Belton girls basketball teams have put themselves in position to compete as the season moves into its most important stretch. Each program reached this point in different ways, but both showed an emphasis on team play during recent district matchups.

Lake Belton finished the opening round of district with a commanding win over Uni-

versity High. From the opening tip, the Lady Broncos controlled tempo and established momentum early, building a double digit advantage in the first quarter and continuing to extend the lead as the game progressed. Defensive pressure and scoring allowed Lake Belton to separate quickly, limiting second chance opportunities and forcing difficult possessions throughout the night.

The Lady Broncos continued to build on their early success with scoring and ball movement. Multiple players

contributed offensively, allowing Lake Belton to maintain pace across all four quarters. A strong third quarter widened the gap further, and the defensive effort in the final period sealed the result. The win closed out the first round of district play and kept Lake Belton unbeaten in district action, while also reinforcing the team's consistency over the course of the season.

Belton also wrapped up district play with a strong performance, earning a home victory against Ellison. The Tigers

set the tone early, opening the game with a shutout first quarter that immediately established control. That defensive effort carried over throughout the game, particularly on the glass, where Belton turned in its strongest rebounding performance of district play.

Offensively, the Tigers found rhythm behind a standout scoring night from Isabella Warner, while the rest of the lineup contributed through defensive effort, rebounding, and energy. Senior leaders Ke'Ara Shanks and Emma Flory anchored the defense and provided

leadership on the floor, helping Belton maintain composure as Ellison attempted to close the gap. The Tigers' ability to combine defensive intensity with timely scoring allowed them to pull away and secure the win.

With the victory, Belton heads into the final district game of the first round with both teams sitting at an even mark in district play. The Tigers will travel to Waco to close out the opening round, looking to build on recent defensive improvements and carry momentum into the second half of the district schedule.

Sharelunkers timid in 2026

By John Jefferson
Special to the Journal

I've been telling anglers for years that if they're casting for a 13-pound or heavier largemouth bass to enter in the forty-year-old TPWD/Toyota ShareLunker Program to not be discouraged if the first month of the entry period didn't produce one for them. January traditionally doesn't cough up many large fish.

Our Januarys are mild enough, though, that a few big female bass might think it's springtime and start thinking toward spawning.

Some bass caught in January might not be as heavy as bass caught later in the three-month ShareLunker entry season. Sometimes egg sacks take more time to mature. The most qualifying entry bass and the heaviest come in February and March.

When I hadn't received a news release about any Sharelunkers having been caught by January 22, I called the efficient and helpful coordinator of the program at the Freshwater

Fisheries Center in Athens, Natalie Goldstrohm, to see if any had been caught.

Natalie, as always, gleefully announced that two bass had been entered! She apologized for the lack of notice but the two bass had just been caught. One of the two was caught at 5:30 p.m. the day before! The first one was boated two days earlier. Press releases were still making their way through the editing and approval stages. They're coming. TPWD is careful and passes press releases before appropriate staff to read and approve.

The first bass entered in 2026 weighed 13.75 pounds and was caught in - guess where? Of all waters in Texas, Lake O.H. Ivie would be the waterbody most would guess. And they would be right! Ivie has been the dominant lake for lunker bass for the past three years.

It was caught by Charles Roberts and was the same bass Roberts caught and entered last year on Ivie, which is 55-miles east of San Angelo. No de-

tails of the catch or lure are available.

The second bass entered this year came from Lake Alan Henry, a picturesque waterbody south of Lubbock.

It's pretty far north in Texas, and the water stays cold later into the ShareLunker season. Some bass chasers that frequent LAH have even requested that its season end later to give the lake more time to warm to the magical spawning temperature of 60-degrees. That would consequently give the bass later into the season to develop eggs, and weigh more. So far, TPWD has declined to make that exception.

But it didn't take Ross Gomez any later to catch a ShareLunker, there. He caught the second one of the season on January 22 and it weighed 14.74 pounds. He used a jerk bait, this time.

Wait; did I just say "this time?" Indeed I did. Gomez caught the SAME BASS TWO OTHER

See **FISHING**,
Page B3

BISD soccer teams end non-district schedule begin district play

By Aries Ramos
The Belton Journal

As January comes to a close, both Belton and Lake Belton girls soccer programs have wrapped up non-district play and now shift their focus toward the start of district competition. While their paths to this point looked different, each team used the final stretch of the schedule to build experience, test lineups, and prepare for the challenges ahead.

Belton concluded non-district action with a road victory over Vista Ridge, earning its first win of the season. The Tigers delivered a steady, complete performance, showing improvement in multiple phases of the game. Defensively, Belton remained organized and disciplined, limiting breakdowns and staying connected across the back line. Offensively, the Tigers played with confidence, moving the ball with purpose and maintaining possession for extended stretches.

One of the key takeaways from the match was Belton's adaptability. Several players were asked to take on different roles, and the team responded well,

showing depth and a willingness to adjust as the game unfolded. The result moved Belton to 1-5-2 on the season and provided a positive benchmark heading into district play, especially after a series of close matches earlier in the year where the effort did not translate into results.

Meanwhile, Lake Belton closed out its non-district schedule at its third and final tournament of the season, facing a demanding slate of opponents. The weekend tested the Broncos against a variety of playing styles and game situations, offering valuable preparation for district competition.

In the opening match, Lake Belton responded well after falling behind early, battling back to reach halftime even before late mistakes allowed the opponent to pull ahead. The second match followed a similar pattern, remaining tightly contested deep into the second half before a late penalty decision determined the outcome. The Broncos concluded tournament play against Frisco Wakeland, currently ranked at the top of 5A Region II,

See **GIRLS**,
Page B2

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Sports Briefs

By Clay Whittington
The Belton Journal

Mother Nature wrecked havoc on Belton ISD's athletic schedule last week, forcing multiple events to be rescheduled.

District 16-5A basketball games originally set for Tuesday will be

played tonight after inclement weather created unsafe travel conditions.

As a result, the Lady Tigers will travel to No. 4 Lake Belton to begin the second round of league play, while Belton hosts the Broncos. Both games begin at 7 p.m.

The Tigers will then travel to Waco Univer-

sity on Friday and host Killeen Chaparral on Tuesday. Lake Belton will play against visiting Killeen Ellison and travel to Waco on Friday and Tuesday, respectively.

In girls action, Lake Belton will travel to Ellison (Friday) and host Waco (Tuesday), while Belton plays University at home Friday and travels to Chaparral on Tuesday.

In soccer, weather forced Belton and Gatesville to cancel their boys match, removing the Tigers' nondistrict finale. They begin league play Friday at Waco University.

The Lady Tigers host University to begin district Friday, when Lake Belton plays Ellison. The Broncos play at home, and the Lady Broncos will be on the road.

SOFTBALL

Practices and scrimmages for the upcoming season recently began for both Lake Belton and Belton, and games are allowed starting Feb. 9.

The Lady Broncos

will host three more scrimmages against Waco Midway (Friday), College Station (Monday) and Salado (Feb. 6).

Then, their season will begin Feb. 19 with a trip to Georgetown.

The Lady Tigers' first game is set for Feb. 10, when they play at Killeen Shoemaker.

Prior to the encounter, they will scrimmage at Round Rock Stony Point on Friday, Round Rock Cedar Ridge on Saturday Temple on Tuesday and Troy on Feb. 7.

District 16-5A play begins March 17, when the Lady Broncos host Waco University and Belton plays at Waco.

BASEBALL

Practices for the upcoming season recently begin for both Lake Belton and Belton with scrimmages permitted to begin Saturday. Games are allowed starting Feb. 16.

The Broncos will take part in scrimmages against visiting China Spring (Saturday), Temple (Sat-

urday) and Buda Johnson (Tuesday) before scrimmaging at Leander Rouse against the host Raiders and Round Rock McNeil on Feb. 7. Lake Belton closes its preseason with scrimmages at Round Rock Cedar Ridge (Feb. 10) and versus Austin Westwood (Feb. 13).

Then, the Broncos' season will begin Feb. 19 with another trip to Cedar Ridge.

The Tigers have an intrasquad scrimmage set for Saturday before scrimmages at Bastrop (Saturday), versus Georgetown East View (Tuesday), Troy and Little River Academy (Feb. 6), Hutto (Feb. 10), at Round Rock Stony Point (Feb. 13) and versus Leander Glenn (Feb. 16).

Belton's first game is set for Feb. 19, when it travels to compete in the three-day Pflugerville ISD tournament.

District 16-5A play begins March 24, when the the Broncos travel to Belton for the first game of the series, which moves to Lake Belton on March 27.



Dr. Jack Welch
From the Bleachers

Public Education Under Attack

Public education is under attack, even though states are legally required to provide an equitable and adequate education for every child. As an educator, I've learned to listen to older people. Seasoned adults have an uncanny ability to sense who can be trusted and who can't. Most of the time, I agree with them. In just about every job I've ever had, there have been a few older educators who became trusted comrades, people who had seen enough to know the difference between noise and truth.

People have instincts like that. Sometimes it's just a gut feeling. Sometimes it shows up in how someone treats employees or even their own friends. For me, my radar immediately goes up when anyone starts disparaging the teaching profession.

Like any profession, there are bad actors who should be removed, and public and state education can and should improve with the right support. A few bad apples never justify bullying an entire profession though.

Bullying is increasingly coming from social media. Online harassment, threats, and insults aimed at teachers have become the most common form of aggression educators face today. These attacks cause

See WELCH,
Page B3

Belton Lake: Stillhouse

EXCELLENT. Water normal stain; 60 degrees; 0.75 feet above pool. Winter patterns are in place now, therefore really keeping an eye on the weather will be key to fishing success. The best results will be had during the wind shift from south through west to north as dry cold fronts push in. Fishing will improve as the winds swing through the southwest and right up to the point where the northerly winds peak. The next best scenario will be on the first day of returning southerly winds. The worst results can be expected during post-frontal conditions with classic clear, cold, calm weather in the hours or days following the passage of a front. Foggy conditions will also make fishing very difficult whenever they set in. All other conditions will typically result in average fishing. We are in the midst of a short warmup between fronts right now and the water temperature is rising. The fish have responded positively and have shown a willingness to chase farther and faster than back in mid-December when the water was nearly 5 degrees cooler. Fishing has been solid in the first three hours of the morning following sunrise, and again in the mid afternoon, from 2-4:30 p.m. The MAL Dense with silver body used vertically has been my lure of choice. Fish it by dropping to bottom, removing all slack, then cranking the lure upwards through the lower third of the water column while observing fish response on Live-Scope. If the fish are reluctant, experiment with slowing the retrieve after the blade begins spinning. The best depths have been 35-41 feet. Report by Bob Maindelle, Holding the Line Guide Service. Catfish are excellent. Trophy size blue catfish can be found along river channels, sand flats and around steep ledges in 30-40 feet of water. Larger fresh cut baits have been effective for the trophy size fish while eater size fish under 10 pounds are still active and slow drifting with small cut shad along sand flats is best for those. Channel catfish are slow but can be caught on punch bait around timber in 10-25 feet of water. Report by Brian Worley, B&S Catfishing.

GOOD. Water stained; 58 degrees; 1.61 feet above pool. Winter patterns are in place now, therefore really keeping an eye on the weather will be key to fishing success. The best results will be had during the wind shift from south through west to north as dry cold fronts push in. Fishing will improve as the winds swing through the southwest and right up to the point where the northerly winds peak. The next best scenario will be on the first day of returning southerly winds. The worst results can be expected during post-frontal conditions with classic clear, cold, calm weather in the hours or days following the passage of a front. Foggy conditions will also make fishing very difficult whenever they set in. All other conditions will typically result in average fishing. We are in the midst of a short warmup between fronts right now and the water temperature is rising. The fish have responded positively and have shown a willingness to chase farther and faster than back in mid-December when the water was nearly 5 degrees cooler. Fishing has been solid in the first three hours of the morning following sunrise, and again in the mid afternoon, from 2-4:30 p.m. The MAL Dense with silver body used vertically has been my lure of choice. Fish it by dropping to bottom, removing all slack, then cranking the lure upwards through the lower third of the water column while observing fish response on Live-Scope. If the fish are reluctant, experiment with slowing the retrieve after the blade begins spinning. 28-35 feet is solid in the first 90 minutes of the morning, then 38-49 feet as the skies brighten. Report by Bob Maindelle, Holding the Line Guide Service. Bass are good, focus on roaming schools following baitfish in open water. Mid-strolling minnow-style soft plastics continue to be the most reliable option for both numbers and size. Umbrella rigs are also producing solid fish, especially when worked over submerged vegetation. Report by Ander Meine, Bassquatch Fishing.

Girls - From Page B1

in a fast paced match played under challenging wind conditions.

Across the tournament, Lake Belton faced constant pressure, quick tempo, and difficult environmental factors, all of which contributed to a demanding weekend. While the results did not fall in the Broncos' favor, the level of competition provided a clear picture of where the team stands and what areas will be critical moving forward.

With non-district play complete, both programs now turn their attention to district competition beginning January 30. Belton will open district play at home against University High, while Lake Belton begins on the road at Ellison. For both teams, the start of district represents a reset and an opportunity to apply lessons learned, and compete for position as the season enters its most important phase.

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Welch - From Page B2

real emotional and psychological harm and are driving good teachers out of the classroom. Left unchecked, this kind of rhetoric can spill over into real-world violence.

Much of it is politically motivated. Well-funded organizations have repeatedly targeted public and state education with false or misleading claims. In June 2023, as reported by author Glenn Rogers, Gordon ISD, a small, high-performing rural district in north central Texas, was viciously attacked online after being falsely accused of grooming students for transgenderism. The claim centered on a book available statewide through TexQuest, an online library coordinated with the Texas Education Agency. The book had never been accessed in Gordon ISD and had already been suppressed by school officials. None of that mattered. The attack rattled teachers, parents, and administrators. Educators who had done nothing wrong were subjected to fear, stress, and public shaming.

Let's just call it what it is, public education is taking some hard shots right now. Across the country, more teachers are being verbally abused and, in some cases, physically attacked by students and even parents. Some reports say as many as

10 to 14 percent of educators have been assaulted on the job. A lot of folks point to the post-pandemic years as the turning point, but regardless of the cause, the results are clear: teachers are worn down, morale is taking a hit, and too many good educators are deciding it's not worth the risk anymore. That's why school safety isn't just a talking point, it's something we've got to take seriously. Older, experienced educators seem to know who to trust. Maybe it's time the rest of us trusted our seasoned teachers again.

Thought for the Week, "A community's true values are revealed not by its slogans, but by how it treats the people entrusted with educating its children. When we choose education over outrage, we choose a stronger future." Blake Powell, a leading Texas educational attorney.

Dr. Jack Welch serves as President of Fort Scott Community College. With a career spanning professional sports, public education, and rural community development, he brings a servant-leader mindset and a passion for building trust-driven cultures that empower people to thrive in the classroom, on the field, and in life. He is also the author of *Foundations of Coaching: The Total Coaching Manual*.



Ross Gomez caught this same ShareLunker three times -- a ShareLunker record that will probably last for years. He was fishing with an artificial crappie lure the first time; the other time he was bass fishing. His 2026 ShareLunker was caught on Lake Ivie on a jerk bait. Photo courtesy of Ross Gomez.

Fishing - From Page B1

TIMES. The first time he was crappie fishing. Does that sound familiar? (Think Barry St. Claire's existing State Record bass.) Gomez was using artificial lures all

three times, however. Like Barry's record, catching the same ShareLunker three times is probably a record that will stand the time.

Belton - From Page B1

Waco closed the game on an 18-9 stretch as Belton won the game by 50 points.

Johnson and Loggins

each had 22 points for the Tigers.

Following the Cross-town Rivalry matchup with the Lake Belton

Broncos at Tiger Gym, the Tigers will head to University on Jan. 30 to complete the first pass through District 16-5A

and will host Chaparral on Feb. 3.





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LEGALS

THE STATE OF TEXAS CITATION BY PUBLICATION – CIVIL CAUSE NO. 25DCV353583

To: SHONDRAEUS KNIGHT AND
NATASHA KNIGHT

Greetings:

You are hereby commanded to appear by filing a written answer to the PLAINTIFF'S ORIGINAL PETITION at or before 10 o'clock AM of the first Monday after the expiration of 42 days from the date of issuance of this Citation, the same being Monday, at or before 10 o'clock AM, before the Honorable 146th Judicial District Court, Bell County, Texas to be held at the Bell County District Courts Building in Belton, Texas. Said PLAINTIFF'S ORIGINAL PETITION was filed in said court on May 01, 2025.

The file number of said suit being No. 25DCV353583. The names of the parties in said suit are:

M&T BANK VS. SHONDRAEUS KNIGHT, NATASHA KNIGHT, MIDLAND FUNDING LLC, DOES 1 THROUGH 10 AND ROES BUSINESS ENTITIES 1 THROUGH 10, INCLUSIVE

The nature of said suit being substantially as follows, to wit:

Service of the Plaintiff's Original Petition upon defendants SHONDRAEUS KNIGHT, NATASHA KNIGHT and DOES 1 THROUGH 10 AND ROES BUSINESS ENTITIES 1 THROUGH 10, INCLUSIVE as a potential party in interest.

This was issued at the request of attorney: WILLIAM G MALCOLM, 2112 BUSINESS CENTER DRIVE SECOND FLOOR, IRVINE CA 92612.

NOTICE TO DEFENDANT: You have been sued. You may employ an attorney. If you or your attorney do not file a written answer with the clerk who issued this citation by 10:00 AM on Monday next following the expiration of forty two days after you were served this citation and petition, a default judgment may be taken against you. In addition to filing a written answer with the clerk, you may be required to make initial disclosures to the other parties of this suit. These disclosures generally must be made no later than 30 days after you file your answer with the clerk. Find out more at TexasLawHelp.org.

Issued and given under my hand and seal of said Court at office in Belton, Texas, on January 13, 2026.

Joanna Staton District Clerk Bell County, Texas, 1201 Huey Road, P.O. Box 909, Belton, Texas 76513

By: Misti Cortez Deputy Clerk
01.15,22,29,02.05

LEGALS

THE STATE OF TEXAS CITATION BY PUBLICATION CASE NUMBER 22CPB00840

To: UNKNOWN HEIRS

MARK ROBERT OSMAN, Applicant, on April 22, 2024, filed an Application to Determine Heirship in a proceeding styled: LINDA JANE OSMAN, Deceased, and bearing the number 22CPB00840 in the County Court of Bell County, Texas.

The court will hear the aforesaid Application after the expiration of ten days, exclusive of the day of publication, from the date this citation is published which will be January 29, 2026 in the County Court at Law #1 Courtroom, at the Bell County Justice Complex, 1201 Huey Road, in Belton, Texas.

All persons interested in the aforesaid estate are commanded to appear at or before the time set for said hearing by filing a written contest or answer to said application should they desire to oppose or contest it.

Said written contest or answer shall be filed in the office of Shelley Coston, County Clerk, Bell County, Texas, PO Box 480, Belton, Texas 76513.

The name and address of the attorney for applicant is: GEORGE C LOBB, 2028 EAST BEN WHITE BLVD SUITE 240-8990, AUSTIN TX 78741

The officer serving this Citation shall, in compliance with the Law, serve it by publication once in a newspaper of the general circulation in this, the County in which the decedent last resided as required by Section 202.052 of the Texas Estate Code, for not less than ten days before the return day hereof, exclusive of the day of publication, and the date of publication said newspaper bears shall be the day of publication.

Issued and given under my hand and seal of said Court at office on January 21, 2026. Shelley Coston County Clerk of Bell County, Texas, PO Box 480, 1201 Huey Road, Belton, TX 76513

By: Lillian Phillips
01.29

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Notice is hereby given that original Letters Testamentary for the Estate of ERNA PEARL FORSON, Deceased, were issued on 01/21/2026, in Cause No. 25CPB00779, pending in the County Court at Law No. 1 of Bell County, Texas, to: MICHAEL GRIMM.

All persons having claims against this Estate which is currently being administered are required to present them to the undersigned within the time and in the manner prescribed by law. ESTATE OF ERNA PEARL FORSON c/o: MICHAEL GRIMM, P.O. Box 8813, Horseshoe Bay, TX 78657
DATED January 22, 2026.

KAREN M. VILLANUEVA, State Bar No.: 24102608, 2106 Bird Creek Drive, Temple, TX 76502, Telephone: (254) 771-1855, E-mail: karen@templolawoffice.com
01.29

THE STATE OF TEXAS CITATION BY PUBLICATION – CIVIL CAUSE NO. 26DCV358644

To

UNKNOWN HEIRS OF CARMEN GOMEZ, UNKNOWN HEIRS OF SAMUEL LOPEZ, UNKNOWN HEIRS OF RICHARD LOPEZ, UNKNOWN HEIRS OF RUDY LOPEZ, UNKNOWN HEIRS OF MARY MORALES SOTA, UNKNOWN HEIRS OF JOHNNY LOPEZ, UNKNOWN HEIRS OF YOLANDA GOMEZ, AND UNKNOWN HEIRS OF CHRISTINA GREESON

Greetings:

You are hereby commanded to appear by filing a written answer to the PLAINTIFF RAMONA MENDOZA'S ORIGINAL PETITION FOR PARTITION OF REAL ESTATE at or before 10 o'clock AM of the first Monday after the expiration of 42 days from the date of issuance of this Citation, the same being Monday, at or before 10 o'clock AM, before the Honorable 146th Judicial District Court, Bell County, Texas to be held at the Bell County District Courts Building in Belton, Texas. Said PLAINTIFF RAMONA MENDOZA'S ORIGINAL

LEGALS

PETITION FOR PARTITION OF REAL ESTATE was filed in said court on January 05, 2026.

The file number of said suit being No.

26DCV358644. The names of the parties in said suit are:

RAMONA MENDOZA VS. UNKNOWN HEIRS OF CARMEN GOMEZ, UNKNOWN HEIRS OF SAMUEL LOPEZ, UNKNOWN HEIRS OF RICHARD LOPEZ, UNKNOWN HEIRS OF RUDY LOPEZ, UNKNOWN HEIRS OF MARY MORALES SOTA, UNKNOWN HEIRS OF JOHNNY LOPEZ, UNKNOWN HEIRS OF YOLANDA GOMEZ, and UNKNOWN HEIRS OF CHRISTINA GREESON

The nature of said suit being substantially as follows, to wit:

A civil action for partition of real property has been filed in the 146th Judicial District Court of Bell County, Texas, in Cause No. 26DCV358644, styled Ramona Mendoza v. Unknown Heirs of Carmen Gomez, Unknown Heirs of Samuel Lopez, Unknown Heirs of Richard Lopez, Unknown Heirs of Rudy Lopez, Unknown Heirs of Mary Morales Sota, Unknown Heirs of Johnny Lopez, Unknown Heirs of Yolanda Gomez, and Unknown Heirs of Christina Greeson.

The subject of this suit is the partition and determination of ownership interest in the following real property located in Bell County, Texas, and more commonly known as 1010 E Ave O Belton, TX 76513:

Lot Number Eleven (11) in Block Two-B (2-B) of the Replat of Lots 7 through 12, inclusive, Block 2-B, lots 2 through 8, inclusive, Block 2-A of Highland Oaks, First Addition, and Lots 1 and 2, Block 3 of Highland Oaks Addition to the City of Belton, in Bell County, Texas, according to the Replat in Map Volume 3, Page H-6, of the Plat Records of Bell County, Texas.

This was issued at the request of attorney: RICHARD D. WILSON, HARRELL STOEBSNER & VILLANUEVA PC, 2106 BIRD CREEK DRIVE, TEMPLE TX 76502. NOTICE TO DEFENDANT: You have been sued. You may employ an attorney. If you or your attorney do not file a written answer with the clerk who issued this citation by 10:00 AM on Monday next following the expiration of forty two days after you were served this citation and petition, a default judgment may be taken against you. In addition to filing a written answer with the clerk, you may be required to make initial disclosures to the other parties of this suit. These disclosures generally must be made no later than 30 days after you file your answer with the clerk. Find out more at TexasLawHelp.org.

Issued and given under my hand and seal of said Court at office in Belton, Texas, on January 22, 2026.

Joanna Staton District Clerk Bell County, Texas, 1201 Huey Road, P.O. Box 909, Belton, Texas 76513

By: Misty Cortez Deputy Clerk
01.29, 02.05, 02.12, 02.19

NOTICE TO ALL PERSONS HAVING CLAIMS AGAINST THE ESTATE OF BILLY MACK OWEN

Notice is hereby given that original Letters Testamentary upon the Estate of Billy Mack Owen, Deceased, were issued to: Shirley B. Owen on the 31st day of December, 2025, Cause No. 25CPB00728 in the County Court At Law No. 1 of Bell County, Texas, which matter is still pending.

All persons having claims against said estate are required to present same within the time prescribed by law to: Shirley B. Owen, 3202 Wildcatter Drive, Belton, TX 76513
01.29

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

To all persons having claims against the estate of ROSEMARY GERSBACH STRIEGLER, DECEASED Notice is hereby given that original Letters Testamentary for the ESTATE OF ROSEMARY GERSBACH STRIEGLER, DECEASED, were issued on January 9, 2026, in Cause No. 25CPB00736, pending in the County Court at Law No. 1 of

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LEGALS

Bell County, Texas to MONICA M. CROUCH as Independent Executor. Claims may be presented to the Independent Executor at the following address: Representative, Estate of ROSEMARY GERSBACH STRIEGLER c/o Drew Popelka ,6173 W. Adams Ave., Ste. C-20,1 Temple, Texas 76502 All persons having claims against this Estate which is currently being administered are required to present them within the time and in the manner prescribed by law. Dated this the 20th day of January, 2026 Popelka Law Firm, PLLC, 6173 W. Adams Ave., Ste. C-201, Temple, Texas 76502 By: Drew Popelka, State Bar No. 24013345, Attorney for Independent Executor 01.29

THE STATE OF TEXAS CITATION BY PUBLICATION CASE NUMBER 26CPB00034 To: Unknown Heirs

LEGALS

RACHELLE LYNN IDOL, Applicant, on January 20, 2026, filed an application to determine heirship & application for dependent administration & letters of administration in a proceeding styled: RICHARD ALLEN VAUGHN, Deceased, and bearing the number 26CPB00034 in the County Court of Bell County, Texas. The court will hear the aforesaid Application after the expiration of ten days, exclusive of the day of publication, from the date this citation is published which will be January 29, 2026, in the County Court at Law #1 Courtroom, at the Bell County Justice Complex, 1201 Huey Road, in Belton, Texas. All persons interested in the aforesaid estate are commanded to appear at or before the time set for said hearing by filing a written contest or answer to said application should they desire to oppose or contest it. Said written contest or answer shall be filed in the office of Shelley Coston, County Clerk,

LEGALS

Bell County, Texas, PO Box 480, Belton, Texas 76513. The name and address of the attorney for applicant is: David Michael Butterbaugh, 3308 Broadway Suite 303, San Antonio, TX 78209 The officer serving this Citation shall, in compliance with the Law, serve it by publication once in a newspaper of the general circulation in this, the County in which the decedent last resided as required by Section 202.052 of the Texas Estate Code, for not less than ten days before the return day hereof, exclusive of the day of publication, and the date of publication said newspaper bears shall be the day of publication. Issued and given under my hand and seal of said Court at office on January 20, 2026. Shelley Coston County Clerk of Bell County, Texas, PO Box 480, 1201 Huey Road , Belton, TX 76513 By; Erika DeCasas Deputy 01.29

LEGALS

NOTICE TO CREDITORS Notice is given that original Letters Testamentary for the Estate of SHAWN ANTHONY EDWARDS AKA SHARON DIANE STILLMAN were issued on December 18, 2025, in Cause No. 25CPB00561, pending in the County Court at Law Number 1 of Bell County, Texas, to TROY ALLEN GRAVES. All persons having claims against the estate, which is presently being administered, are required to submit them, within the time and manner prescribed by law, and before the estate is closed, addressed as follows: c/o TROY ALLEN GRAVES, 2117 Hurstview Drive ,Hurst, Texas 76054 Dated: Jan. 20, 2026 R. Talmadge Hammock, w/permission BRETT H. PRITCHARD, Attorney for Executor of the Estate of SHAWN ANTHONY EDWARDS AKA SHARON DIANE STILLMAN 01.29

Belton PD seeks rifle-resistant armor

By David Stone The Belton Journal

The Belton Police Department will submit two criminal justice grants — one for rifle-resistant body armor, the other for renewal of the General Victim Assistance grant program.

The grant submittals were approved during Tuesday’s Council meeting.

According to Belton Police Chief Larry Berg, the body armor grant is for 23 rifle-resistant armor plates rated to stop rifle rounds.

The purchase would replace outdated ballistic vests for all staff at an estimated cost of \$100,000. The grant does not require matching funds.

The victim assistant grant would allow Crime Victims’ Assistance Program services to be expanded at the police department and would include counseling services, funding for the victim assistance liaison, training, equipment and supplies.

The estimated cost for personnel, supplies, equipment, and training is \$100,000, and the grant requires a 20 percent match.

The 20 percent match — about \$20,000 — would be included in the Fiscal 2027 budget.

Also at Tuesday’s meeting, Council received a report and provided direction for future revisions to the short-term rental ordinance.

On March 14, 2023, City Council adopted an ordinance to license and regulate short-term rentals

(STRs) within the city of Belton. In February 2025, the city executed a contract with Granicus LLC to assist with identification, compliance, and monitoring of STRs.

More than fifty STRs have been identified, but only nineteen of those have been permitted. Even fewer are remitting hotel occupancy taxes to the city. There are also a significant number of unregistered units that do not meet the 500-foot spacing requirement in the ordinance.

Staff seeks direction from City Council on three distinct components to craft revisions to the STR ordinance for future consideration:

- Collection/enforcement of hotel occupancy taxes
• Owner-occupied versus non-owner occupied designations
• Separation requirements for duplexes and multi-family units

Whether an STR is permitted or not, hotel occupancy taxes are due for any stay less than 30 days in length. Seventy-six percent of the identified STRs are delinquent on occupancy taxes. Staff recommends pursuing the collection of all taxes, penalties, and interest for occupancies occurring from Jan. 1, 2025, to present. If necessary, complaints may be filed with the municipal court.

In the current ordinance, the 500-foot separation requirement does not apply if “the owner of the property does reside on-site when a portion of the dwell-

ing unit is rented.” The owner-occupied designation is made when the property is permitted.

Because there is no practical way to verify that the owner is actually on site during each rental, this designation is essentially moot. Staff recommends eliminating references to owner-occupied properties from the ordinance.

Two non-owner-occupied duplex owners appealed the 500-foot distance requirement to Council. Both were approved. The Council then asked staff to review solutions to duplexes and other multi-family dwellings.

Staff recommends allowing STRs on both sides of a duplex that is located on one lot, regardless of the owner-occupied status. However, the method to measure the distance between applicable duplex lots is the same method as measuring between single family lots: nearest lot line to the nearest lot line.

For multi-family properties, staff recommends amending the ordinance to change how the 500-foot distance is measured between multi-family units located on the same lot. The current ordinance states that the distance is measured from lot line to lot line. A better measurement for multi-family properties may be the distance from exterior wall to exterior wall of the other dwelling unit. The distance between an STR in one multi-family development and another STR located on a separate lot would still be measured from lot line to lot line using the 500-foot distance rule.

BASKETBALL WORD SEARCH



WORDS

Y J Y T F E C V E Y E O K T L P C M D A
G I P T E P L S C O U R T M A W A L D R
Y B A S E L I N E W L J L W P L F J E E
P R B U S J R E V O S S O R C G U S F U
Y V E T P E E S K J D K H W J M L Y E P
N W K V V C B V I E I V W S P P E E N V
F W L B O K F F O P I T K S B W A S S T
O B A Y R N K I B H V T H M B E M V E C
U R V T P N R S I N O O E R T M J P B R
L E Y N U E O U G D T G N I L E V A R T
N T F Y E O S I T B D C V J R P T R B A
E N B R N J E N T W O R H T E E R F J C
E I Y T D M O M E U C H K L A Y U P U T
R O M L K N W F I F T P E D J Y Y K A C
C P M R G I U A G T F I I L U C P C S N
S E O J K H R O K E E O T V B L D O S U
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W R I H F C A K L E U R E Y B T I C S E
I H G R O I A D T S R D L E W U G R T R
C T W E C T B A C K B O A R D Y S S D W

- ASSIST
BACKBOARD
BASELINE
CLOCK
COURT
CROSSOVER
DEFENSE
DRIBBLE
DUNK
FOUL
FREE THROW
JUMP SHOT
LAY-UP
OFFENSE
PIVOT
REBOUND
SCREEN
SHOT
SUBSTITUTION
THREE-POINTER
TIMEOUT
TIPOFF
TRAVELING
TURNOVER

Find the words hidden vertically, horizontally, diagonally, and backwards.

EDITORIAL

A few choice words

My Front Porch • Lynette Sowell

“The difference between the almost right word and the right word is really a large matter. ‘Tis the difference between the lightning bug and the lightning.”

So wrote Mark Twain. Writers have used this quote to describe the process of writing, with good reason.

Twain’s words are true in fiction and equally true in news writing.

With the English language being what it is, there are many words which are easy to use and/or misuse. Accept and except, for example. Or the use of its versus it’s, or they’re, their, there. Looking at those words used in context, it’s usually not hard to decipher the writer’s intent, even if the word is misused (although warning bells go off if you’re a member of the Grammar Police).

However, using almost-right words and right words have as much to do with their impact on a reader’s understanding of the written word, and even how they feel about what’s written.

When we read the news, we always carry our feelings about the subject we’re reading about.

In its highest form, news is supposed to be unbiased and informative, without the writer’s own opinions being inserted into the narrative.

It should speak for itself, leaving the reader to come away with their own opinions or feelings, and can even spur them to take action and get involved. Ideally. It’s a tricky dance.

Things can get trickier when writing about something as mundane as city budgets, for example. People can get very emotional about budgets and spending, and rightfully so. If tax dollars are funding a particular budget item, readers can be delighted, dismayed, disgusted, depressed...you name it. It all depends on who you ask.

As an example, if I were to look at a city department’s budget from one year to the next, if next year’s funding is going to be less than the prior year, I could choose from an assortment of words to describe that change in funding.

I could simply write: *The projected budget is \$35,000 decreased from last year.* That’s kind of boring. It reads a little awkwardly, too. Or, *“\$35,000 less than last year”* might read better.

Or I could write: *The projected budget for next year was slashed by \$35,000 compared to year.*

That’s a bit more dramatic. That’ll sure make someone sit up and read.

But what does the word “slashed” mean? Slashed con-

notes a violent, forceful action. How about simply writing that the budget was cut? Chopped? Trimmed? Reduced?

If I was feeling especially outraged, I could write the budget was gutted, disemboweled? Yuck.

Does it matter how I, personally, feel about a department’s budget?

Of course, how I feel matters to me! I, like all writers, carry an opinion which I must put to the side when I write.

When I write, it doesn’t or shouldn’t matter how I feel, personally. What should matter is getting the information out to readers that a particular budget is not going to receive as much funding as it did last year, \$35,000 less.

How readers feel should be entirely up to them. It’s the job of the news to simply present the information and help get questions answered. Especially, to help readers understand something they might not understand before. Or, provide information that may help them understand.

Sometimes, people just want to feel mad about something and hold onto that. But, that’s another subject for another day.

The lightning bug and lightning are two very different things, changed by three little letters making up one word.

Entertainment 101: Shipping

Shop the Insanity • Darren Blair

Another Valentine’s Day is upon us, and so with that another Entertainment 101 where we look at a topic relating to love: shipping.

If only this was to be as simple as talking about logistics.

No, when used in the context of the fandom for a particular entertainment franchise, the word “shipping” refers to situations in which fans of that franchise presume two or more of their favorite characters to be in a romantic relationship or at the very least have romantic feelings for each other... regardless of what the actual material they’re engaging with depicts.

The origin of the term “shipping” when used in this context is unclear. One popular hypothesis holds that the term originates from the term “Rocketshipping” (or some variation thereof), which was used by fans of the “Pokemon” franchise to refer to those individuals who paired the characters of James and Jessie from Team Rocket. However, the term appears to actually be older than when the franchise first started, suggesting that perhaps the origin might actually have been lost to time; this might especially be so if it did indeed originate with the internet, given how much of what was on the early internet is now gone

forever.

As to why individual fans of a given work feel compelled to express their opinions on which characters should end up together, that does indeed vary from fan to fan. In some instances, the work depicts an existing romantic relationship and fans find themselves in support of it. In other instances, the work depicts multiple potential romantic partners for a single central character and people start to debate who would be the “best” choice. There are also works where the “official” relationship is written in such a fashion that some part of the audience rejects it, such as if they feel another character would be a better partner (such as a belief that there’s more chemistry between the proposed pairing, the personalities of the two characters are seen as being more complimentary, or the fan just doesn’t like one of the two involved individuals) or they feel that the relationship as presented is toxic in some fashion. In extreme instances, it’ll come down to “they shared more than 0.2 seconds together on-screen, so something must be going on” or some sort of similarly flimsy rationale.

Yes, spend enough time engaging with the fandom of a

particular franchise and you’re almost guaranteed to encounter fans debating or even feuding with each other over who is the best match for who. Some franchises, like the “Final Fantasy” and “My Little Pony” franchises, are practically synonymous with it at this point. On occasion, you’ll even see a “shipping war” or “waifu war”, a reminder of the quip about the word “fan” supposedly being descended from the word “fanatic”.

This can all be a challenge for content creators, as no matter how they establish and develop a given romantic relationship among their characters the odds are good that someone, somewhere will desire to argue the point with them, most likely loudly and on social media. Then again, I am reminded of the fact that the original manga version of popular Japanese romantic comedy series “We Never Learn” actually had *six* endings because of this: each of the first five endings depicts the lead character pairing off with a different character, while the sixth ending rather implies that the “will they or won’t they?” antics will continue for some time thereafter.

And there we have it, yet another bit of fandom behavior to be mindful of.

Random Thinks

Pleasant Ramblings • Mark Magnan

I am sure there are a lot of people that dislike self-checkout lanes, just as I do. I will sometimes, rarely I might add, need just one or two items and then I will attempt the self-check to save a little time. That doesn’t work as well as I hope. When I have a basket full of groceries and am looking for a cashier that will take 16 items or more, it seems like they are all busy with a few full carts in line waiting. All the express checkout lanes are empty, and the cashier is doing her nails and checking her phone. I realize that sounds a bit sexist, but I don’t do the hiring for those positions. When I am in a hurry the express lanes are full, so the self-check looks like a reasonable alternative.

I scan my first item, but since I haven’t touched anything on the counter or screen it balks at me. I

get the first item scanned and place it in the bag, then accidentally brush against the handle of the feather light plastic bag and the machine assumes I am trying to shoplift so it stops everything and alerts the nearby clerk that is standing there waiting for someone to make a mistake. They scan their finger, put in a code and pick out three bridge pictures from a series of boats, then I can proceed. I scan the other item and since the machine has run out of excuses to delay me any further it allows me to complete my transaction. By then three people that were in the express checkouts are heading out the door in front of me.

I have a few OCD tendencies, little things that bug me and I can’t go forward with my day until I correct those. A current issue is the faulty perforations on paper prod-

ucts. You select the length of what you want and give it a swift whip of the wrist, the paper in your hand completes a majority of the mission then you end up with a triangle of paper leftover that is torn from your selection, so now you have an incomplete piece. At this point I feel obligated to tear off that triangle so at least there is one clean edge. Why can’t we make the cut uniform all the way across, is there no quality control in paper production? This seems like one of the most important parts of selling a product where the selling point is the perforation, it might be worthwhile to make sure this works as advertised.

I often wonder why some people are so excited about going to Mars. I mean we can’t get a clean cut on paper-towels, and we want to hop in a metal tube and travel

months to another planet. Heck we can’t even fly to Alaska without a door popping off an airplane that is fairly new. This door wasn’t even supposed to be used, all the more reason to weld it shut and eliminate the problem completely. I used to like sitting close to the doors on my flights, now I am rethinking that. Why do we want to go to Mars anyway? I mean it will take a while to get there, I get bored and restless on a two-hour flight. When we do get to Mars it will be super cold and there is nothing really to do. Science has always painted Mars as a barren red planet with nothing that grows, just rocks. You can see this in parts of the southwest United States. Perhaps it is my lack of adventure that I don’t want to go to Mars. I might go to the Moon, it is a short trip, and I would do the feather

versus hammer drop thing, that was one of the most amazing things I had ever seen. Part of my issue in heading out to Mars is that the most active company in travel in outer space is the same group that makes a lot of battery powered cars. Many of these electric vehicles were crippled by the recent cold weather, and if I remember my science classes in school space is a very cold place.

What do the companies that produce sun dried tomatoes do when it is cloudy outside? Send everyone home until the sun comes back out? What if they have a rainy spell? Do they just sit inside and play cards?

I hope everyone has an eventful week, lots of successful paper tears and no excessive need for tomatoes.

Get Lost—in a Book!

Coffee Talk • Renae Brumbaugh Green

I remember it vividly. I was in third grade—Mrs. Shoemaker’s class. She was a tall, slender, foreboding woman with glossy nails and perfect hair. *“Renae! What are you doing? Are you taking this test with us?”*

Startled, I jumped from the old abandoned boxcar in the woods back into my skin, into my desk in her classroom. I closed my book and looked at her, wide-eyed. “Test?” I didn’t know whether to cry or crawl under my desk or run from the room.

Apparently, we were smack-dab in the middle of a spelling test. Or at least, the rest of the class was. I was living out the adventures of *The Boxcar Children*.

What kinds of books do you like to read? Maybe you enjoy curling up with a western shoot-em-up. Perhaps a zombie scream-fest is more your style. Or you might prefer a sweet romance. Whatever your pleasure, keep doing it! And if you’re not a reader, keep reading anyway. Research has proven reading comes with numerous health benefits.

Whether you read physical books or use an e-reader, the act of reading can help you relax and keep your mind sharp. But real books you can hold and touch, where you physically turn the pages, have an edge over reading on a device. And that makes sense, since the sound of cracking open a new book and the whoosh

of pages rubbing against pages heightens your sensory experience. Plus, the lack of blue light from your device gives your brain a much-needed break. Here are some compelling reasons to tuck into a real book:

Why Reading is Good for You

Books make you smarter. Early reading skills in children correlates to higher intelligence later on. And people who read more, even starting later in life, show decreased mental decline and fewer signs of dementia.

Books give you better social skills. When we read fiction, we’re living out those situations in our minds. When we encounter a similar situation in real life, it’s like we’ve lived it before and we can draw on our fictional experience to guide us with empathy, compassion, and wisdom.

Reading improves writing and speaking skills. The more we’re exposed to well-written language, the better we become in all aspects of that language.

Reading improves your vocabulary. The sweet spot for reading is when you can easily comprehend 75-90% of the text, and the rest you have to think about some. If you don’t have to look up any words at all, the reading may start to feel boring. But if you have to look up a word on every page, that becomes cumbersome.

Reading helps you relax. When we get lost in a book, we’re able to suspend our real-life

problems for a few minutes. It doesn’t even matter what kind of book you read. The simple act gets you out of your head and into the author’s imagination. We all need a break from our lives now and then.

Reading before bed can help you sleep. The soft glow from a lamp while you’re turning those pages can make your eyes heavy and help you doze off. *This isn’t true for reading on your phone or e-device, though, because the blue light signals your brain to stay awake.* So if you’re a fan of e-books, set them aside at bedtime in favor of a physical copy.

Reading provides self-care. Entertainment is an important form of self-care, and a great book provides that. It’s different from a movie because it’s more interactive. When you watch a movie or TV show, there’s little left to the imagination. With a book, you get to fill in the blanks about the character’s voice and appearance and even the surroundings.

Reading helps you live longer. A 2016 study published in *Social Science & Medicine* revealed that reading books reduces mortality rates by up to 20%. This was particularly true for adults over age 65 who decreased television viewing in order to read books. The book

part is important, as the benefit wasn’t nearly as strong for those who only read newspapers or magazines.

With all this evidence about the benefits of reading, you might be ready to head to the library right now. But you may wonder how much reading is enough. As little as ten minutes a day can benefit you, but the standard recommendation is between 30 minutes and an hour each day. And the great thing is, you get to choose the books! Go visit another time and place and experience life through the eyes of your hero or heroine. In the process, you’ll get smarter, relax more, become more socially adept, and increase your life span.

As for that day in third grade, Mrs. Shoemaker let me make up the missed portion of the test. (I made a 100.) She even bragged on me to the rest of the class for getting caught up in a book. It’s a habit I’ve never been able to break—and I don’t intend to.

“This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.”
Joshua 1:8

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Happy 250 BIRTHDAY AMERICA

WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

Three of these nine pictures are different. Can you find the differences?



Answers:
 Image #3: Eagle head is brown
 Image #5: Stars are missing inside circle
 Image #9: Flag pole is missing

GUESS WHO ?

I am a performer born in Indiana on January 29, 1982. I got my start doing local theater while in school. Eventually, I moved to Los Angeles to pursue a musical career. I was an "American Idol" runner-up, and released an album in 2009.

Answer: Adorn Lambert

World FACT:

This celebration occurs in many Asian countries and prominently features animals.

Answer: Chinese (lunar) New Year

Welcome to Belton, Texas

Belton starts 2026, nearly breaking even with sales tax compared to January 2025

By Lynette Sowell
The Belton Journal

The office of acting Texas State Comptroller Kelly Hancock's office released its monthly sales tax revenue report for January, and the City of Belton is receiving \$754,640.44 in sales tax revenue, starting the new year down by 0.52 percent compared to January 2025.

January's sales tax allocations to Texas cities are based on sales made in November by businesses that report tax monthly.

Hancock's office is sending cities a total of \$727.2 million in sales tax allocations for January 2026, which is up 4.3 percent compared to January 2025.

Nearby Morgan's Point Resort and the City of Temple are both up compared to last January, at 5.76 percent and 7.28 percent, respectively. The City of Troy's sales tax disbursement this month is up 6.65

Belton	\$754,640.44	down	0.52%
Harker Heights	\$909,900.67	up	1.24%
Holland	\$11,998.04	up	30.26%
Killeen	\$2,802,307.26	up	0.72%
Morgan's Point Resort	\$30,679.23	up	5.76%
Nolanville	\$119,620.30	down	20.01%
Salado	\$77,410.74	down	0.74%
Temple	\$3,290,700.85	up	7.28%
Troy	\$83,857.67	up	6.65%

Percentages reflect a monthly increase or decrease compared to January 2025

percent.

Salado is down 0.74 percent compared to last January, while Holland is up a whopping 30.26 percent to start the new year.

Killeen's sales tax rebate this month is \$2,802,307.26, up 0.72 percent from last January.

Harker Heights sees an increase of 1.24 percent for January 2026 and will receive \$909,900.67.

Bell Community Foundation accepting grant applications

Special to the Journal

The Bell Community Foundation will open their grant application period on Feb. 1, 2026.

Local nonprofit organizations serving Bell County are invited to apply. Eligible applicants must be registered 501(c)

(3) organizations serving residents of Bell County.

To apply, visit www.bellcommunityfoundation.org/grants and complete the online application form.

Each year, the Foundation provides grants to meet diverse community needs and support pro-

grams and projects in education, human services, health, cultural arts and other civic concerns.

Past recipients of Bell Community Foundation grants include Temple Children's Museum, 411 House, CASA of Bell and Coryell Counties, Central Texas Youth

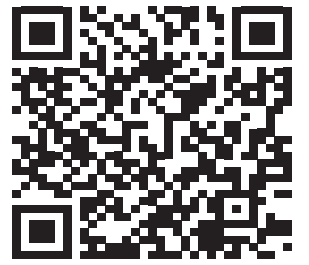
Services, Feed My Sheep of Temple, and Family Promise.

The Bell Community Foundation is an IRS approved public charity founded in 2018. The foundation is a community partner and resource for nonprofit organizations in Bell County and

the surrounding areas. Bell Community Foundation was created to provide support to the specific needs of the Bell County area and have a profound impact on the quality of life in our community.

For more information scan or visit, www.bellcommunityfoundation.org or

email info@bellcommunityfoundation.org.



Math Blocks

Fill in the missing blocks with numbers between 0-20. The numbers in each row add up to the totals on the right. The numbers in each column add up to the totals on the bottom.

		11	34
2		15	27
	5		20
29	18	34	

8	5	7
15	10	2
11	3	20

Solution

THIS DAY IN HISTORY



1781: Richmond, Virginia, is burned by British naval forces during the American Revolutionary War.

1875: The opera house the Palais Garnier opens in Paris.

1911: Kappa Alpha, the oldest Black fraternity, is founded.

People FACT:



This term for restaurant workers typically refers to those who wait on tables.

Answer: Servers

Get Scrambled

Unscramble the words to determine the phrase.

KMEA A SERVRENOTAI

Answer: Make a reservation

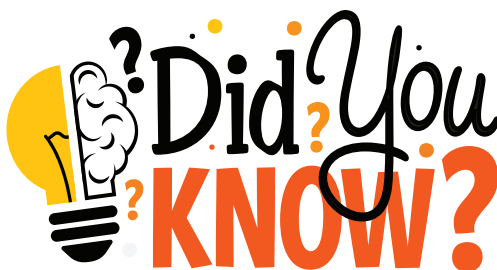
NEW WORD

GRATUITY

a tip given for service

How they say that in...

- English:** Food
- Spanish:** Comida
- Italian:** Cibo
- French:** Nourriture
- German:** Essen



When it comes to the busiest day of the year for the restaurant industry, Mother's Day tops the list for bookings and footfall.



Get the PICTURE?



Can you guess what the bigger picture is?

Answer: Restaurant host