

Sidewalk projects under way in Belton



BELTON JOURNAL/David Tuma

Work is now under way on the sidewalk projects that will help pedestrians in the downtown area.

By David Stone
The Belton Journal

Construction began this week on sidewalk projects on Main and Penelope streets this week, and the work is expected to greatly improve pedestrian traffic and walkability in the Downtown area, according to Belton Public Works Director Scott Hodde.

“Staff has evaluated several traffic control and construction phasing options to allow the project to move forward while minimizing impacts to the contractor,

vehicle traffic, and adjacent businesses,” Hodde said.

“Under normal circumstances, a project of this scope would require a full street closure; however, we determined that this approach would not be beneficial to the downtown area,” he added.

After “careful consideration,” the recommended approach is to temporarily convert Penelope Street to a one-way southbound street between Central Avenue and the alleyway located between the city library and Millers BBQ buildings.”

“This configuration provides the contractor adequate space to safely operate equipment and vehicles, maintains a southbound traffic lane, and allows adjacent businesses to continue operating as normally as possible throughout construction,” Hodde said. “Traffic control features will be in place to include road closure signage, detour signage, etc.”

The sidewalk improvements are expected to take approximately two to three months to complete

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Belton Area Chamber holds annual awards banquet

By Michele Weisman
The Belton Journal

The Belton Area Chamber of Commerce held its 2026 Annual Awards Banquet on the evening of Jan. 29 at the Cadence Bank Center. The room was packed as dinner was served and awards were given for serving the community, and outgoing and incoming board members were honored.

Randy Pittenger, president and CEO of the Belton Area Chamber, prior to opening the evening with a prayer, quoted Belton Mayor David Leigh.

Pittenger, quoting Leigh, said, “Envision a better future. Have the willpower to do something about it. Plan

to do something now.”

The statement summarized those who took to the stage for awards of gratitude for community service.

The new board members were introduced and the outgoing members were thanked. The returning board from 2025 to 2026 were mentioned.

The theme of the evening was Better Together.

There were several Community Partner Recognitions. Bobby Bishoff, post commander for Henry T. Waskow VFW Post 4008 received the award. Dr. Christy Ponce for Temple College also received the award. The WorkForce Central Texas award was presented to Linda Angel, president/CEO and Jose Segarra, board chair.

There were two Businesses of the Year. One went to Roam Roof and Solar, with the award presented to John O’Brien. The second business was TrueHarvest Farms with Marshall McDaniel and Madison Delgado, accepting the award.

Apple Fulton received the 2025 Ambassador of the Year award.

Citizen of the Year was awarded to Rebecca Briggs, a realtor and registered nurse



Courtesy Photo

Wayne Carpenter received the Beltonian Award at the Chamber's Annual Awards Banquet last Thursday.

who serves on the chamber's board of directors.

Pittenger said, “This award is given to the person who made a significant contribution to the community through chamber related activities for the previous year.”

Briggs created the Better Together Benefit, combining pickleball, live music, food, and drinks. This event increased scholarships for Belton ISD students. And she was involved in the Belton Career Builder adopt a student initiative.

The Beltonian Award is

given in recognition of long-time achievement volunteer service to the Belton community,” said Pittenger. “It's really what we call a lifetime Legacy Award.”

Wayne Carpenter was announced as the recipient of the Beltonian Award.

Carpenter has been an educator, teacher, bus driver, principal, Deputy Superintendent, and served a total of 30 years on City Council.

Carpenter received two standing ovations at the dinner.

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Courtesy Photo

Past presidents of the Friends of the Belton Public Library are pictured, left to right: Betty Crowson, Judy Owens, Joan Gillette, Mike Anderson, Peggy Williams, Judy Cast, Al Waite, Juanita Smith, and Alice Wilkins.

Friends of the Belton Public Library celebrates 25 years

Special to the Journal

The Friends of the Lena Armstrong Public Library (Belton Friends) was organized 25 years ago to provide funds and services for the Belton library not covered by its budget. The group's name was changed to Friends of the Belton Public Library in 2019.

Judy Owens, first president of the Friends of the Lena Armstrong Library, stated, “The Friends was the best thing to happen for the library. The organization has been able to furnish needs beyond the library's budget. The library has experienced growth and has been able to implement a number of diverse community activities.”

The library in Belton is funded and managed as a department of the City of Belton with an advisory Library Board. The library

is not allowed to raise additional funds apart from their city budget; therefore, Belton Friends was organized to fill this gap.

In November of its first year, the Belton Friends sold engraved bricks to be placed in the Lena Armstrong Library's courtyard that was under construction. The welcoming space was intended as a nature learning center for children. Proceeds from the bricks were used to benefit the library.

In 2002, the Belton Friends became a beneficiary of Catherine Pirtle Howes, cousin of Joe Pirtle, long-time Belton coach and BISD superintendent. She stipulated that the funds be used primarily for the library building needs. Some of these funds were used for the recent renovation of the

See **LIBRARY**,
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UMHB Athletics wins NADIII AA Community Partnerships Award



Courtesy Photo

Children run the football field at UMHB during a past CHAMPIONS event. The university was recognized with a community partnership award by the National Association of Division III Athletics Administrators.

Special to the Journal

The University of Mary Hardin-Baylor's (UMHB) athletics department received the National Association of Division III Athletics Administrators (NADIII AA) Community Partnerships Award for its annual TOUCHDOWNS event.

Leadership from UMHB athletics accepted the award on behalf of UMHB at the NADIII AA reception at the 2026 NCAA Convention last month.

“We were honored to receive this award. TOUCH-

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Circuit Breakers make history in Belton ISD

Special to the Journal

Belton Independent School District marked a meaningful milestone with the successful debut of its first-ever Unified Robotics team, the Circuit Breakers, who earned second place at their first competition and advanced to the state-level Unified Robotics event.

The program expands inclusive opportunities in STEM and competitive robotics for students of all abilities and highlights Belton ISD's commitment to creating learning experiences that bring students with and without disabilities together.

The Circuit Breakers represented Lake Belton High School at the Texas Special Olympics Unified V5RC Event on January 21, 2026, in San Antonio. The event brought together Unified teams from across the state for a day of collaboration, innovation and competitive robotics. In their inaugural competition, the team's strong performance secured a spot at the upcoming state competition.

Belton ISD's Unified Robotics team included four students in grades 9 through 12, two students from Special Programs and two from general education, supported by three student mentors who are members of other robotics teams on campus.

The Unified team model intentionally brings together students with and

without disabilities to compete collaboratively as one team.

"This experience showed what's possible when students are given the opportunity to learn and compete together," said Jessica Persilver, Lake Belton High School engineering teacher and Unified Robotics advisor. "Students leaned into each other's strengths, solved problems together and took real ownership of their work. Watching them collaborate as one team was incredibly rewarding."

Students began working together on January 8, preparing for their first competition through hands-on engineering challenges, teamwork and problem-solving. Throughout the process, students built technical skills while forming meaningful connections.

"For many of our students, this was their first opportunity to participate in a competitive STEM experience," said Lauren Marx, Special Olympics Coordinator for Belton ISD. "Unified Robotics created a space where students felt included, challenged and valued. The confidence and pride they showed throughout this experience was powerful."

Principal Steele Hantgin said the team's debut reflects the culture of inclusion at Lake Belton High School.

"This team represents the best of who we are," Hantgin said. "Our students showed that when we create spac-



Courtesy photo

The Circuit Breakers put their robotic machines through their paces at their first competition, earning a spot at the state competition on Feb. 13.

es where everyone belongs, incredible things happen. We are proud of the Circuit Breakers and the way they represented our campus."

The Circuit Breakers have advanced to the state-level Unified Robotics competition scheduled for Feb. 13, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at HCI Sports and Fitness in Bee Cave, Texas.

Belton ISD plans to build on this

milestone by continuing to expand Unified opportunities that bring students together through shared learning, teamwork and innovation. The debut of the Circuit Breakers represents more than a robotics competition. It reflects a districtwide commitment to ensuring each and every student has access to meaningful experiences where they are seen, supported and empowered to succeed.

UMHB - From Page A1

DOWN is an extraordinary day that truly focuses not only on inclusion but also on celebrating individuals in our community with special needs. It is a blessing to share the field with them each year. Seeing all the smiling faces puts what we do in perspective," said Dr. Hunter Sims, UMHB's vice president for athletics. "We are extremely thankful for the work Sarah Harborth has done creating, designing, and organizing the hundreds of people who help accomplish such a wonderful event."

UMHB hosted its eighth annual TOUCHDOWNS event last fall, honoring individuals with special needs. Participants enjoyed spirit stations, face painting, sign making, photo booths, and tailgate games with athlete volunteers from eight Crusader athletics teams.

UMHB student-athletes helped facilitate games and served as buddies to participants.

Guests with special needs were also given the opportunity to join UMHB's cheer and dance teams on the sideline, while all participants had the chance to run on the field and score a touchdown during halftime.

The event also celebrated an honorary captain who walked out with the team and joined them on the field for pregame activities.

"TOUCHDOWNS is one of our favorite days of the year," said UMHB's Sports Information Director Sarah Harborth. "We had no idea how things would go when we first introduced this idea nine years ago, but we have been so blessed to enjoy not only the smiling faces of our participants and families, but also our volunteers who return each year to help us pull it off. It is a day full of goodness, and I am honored to be part of it."

The event, hosted and organized by UMHB's Sports Information department in conjunction with a UMHB football game each October, began in 2017 and has grown in popularity each year. This year, more than 145 people registered and approximately 90 participated in the event activities, despite weather concerns. To ensure everyone felt included, student volunteers mailed more than 50 packs, including a TOUCHDOWNS shirt, a handwritten note, and other items, to those who could not attend the game.

"These awards celebrate the incredible impact Division III programs and administrators have on their campuses and communities," said Laura Mooney, NADIII president and assistant dean of athletics & recreation at Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts (MCLA). "NADIII is proud to honor these institutions and individuals for their commitment to service and leadership."

NADIII encompasses athletics administrators from more than 350 institutions and conferences competing at the

Sidewalk - From Page A1

and will be constructed in phases.

Work will begin on the east side of Penelope Street at the Miller's BBQ location and will then transition to the west side once that phase is complete.

"Currently, we do not anticipate any significant impacts to nearby businesses as a result of this

traffic configuration," Hodde said. "Staff will be proactively reaching out to nearby businesses to inform them of the temporary one-way traffic adjustment and to communicate our ongoing efforts to minimize disruptions during construction."

According to Hodde, the

sidewalk project includes 12,000-square-feet of sidewalk and the relocation of existing sewer. It also includes storm sewers, hand-railing, American Disability Act ramps, reconstruction of drive-ways and a retaining wall with sloped concrete walls to create a drainage channel.

Library - From Page A1

library, mostly for research purposes. Additional funds, raised by Belton Friends, were used to help with the library's new playground equipment and the outside book return depository.

The Belton Friends has funded books to be given to youngsters since its inception. In December, 2008, Christmas on the Chisholm Trail first offered free books for children. The giveaways continued with the Bookfair for Summer Reading, which began in August of 2011, and with Turtle Fest beginning in April, 2012. Members of Belton Friends were always on hand to assist in giving books to the children.

"This has been one of the most important services of the organization," said Ann Carpenter, member of the Belton Friends. "It is great to see the children's

eyes light up when they realize the free book is theirs to keep."

Currently the major fundraiser for Belton Friends is the annual Book and Author Luncheon, featuring Texas Authors. Begun in 2005, the Luncheon has featured Central Texas authors as well as authors from around the state. Some of the luncheon presenters have been Debbie Lufborrow, Mark Parker, Stephen Harrigan, Patty Benoit, Wayne Carpenter, Michael Donahue, and Lisa Wingate.

This year's annual luncheon, set for February 28, will feature John Erickson, author of the Hank the Cowdog series of books.

Erickson's wholesome hometown wisdom and humor entertain all ages.

With the help of com-

munity events like this, the organization has been able, over the 25 years, to contribute more than \$125,000 to the library for free books for children, purchase of library equipment, and funds for planning and remodeling.

This fall, Belton City Council and the Belton Independent School District recognized the library's week-long Big Red Read. Jointly sponsored by the library, BISD, and Friends of the Belton Public Library, the event featured Stuart Little books by E. B. White. Class sets of the book, donated to elementary schools, allowed multiple students to simultaneously enjoy the same story. The event also included Stuart Little-related activities at the library and culminated with a Stuart Little movie

in the park.

The membership fees for Belton Friends have not increased during the last 25 years.

Student: \$1
Individual: \$10
Family: \$20
Supporter: \$50
Patron: \$100
Benefactor: \$500
Corporate: \$1,000+

Friends of the Belton Public Library encourage community individuals and businesses to support their library through membership in this organization. For further information, see FriendsBeltonLibrary.org.



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OBITUARIES

Chapman

Charles T. Chapman
 June 9, 1959 —
 January 16, 2026

Charles T. Chapman, a dedicated father and respected veteran, passed away peacefully on January 16, 2026, in Belton, Texas, surrounded by his family. Born on June 9, 1959, in Sioux, Iowa, Charles exhibited a strong will and unwavering determination throughout his life. He was not only proud of his role as a father but also committed to building a legacy for his two sons, Dylan Price and his wife Tessa Schneider, as well as Eric Hillhouse and his wife Genna Gendron.

Charles started his journey in education by graduating from high school before enlisting in the United States Army. His military service was marked by commendable dedication, as he advanced to the rank of Staff Sergeant (SSG) and proudly served for 23 years until retirement. His experiences during that time contributed significantly to his character and values, making him a man known for being tough but fair, always prioritizing the well-being of his family.

In addition to his military career, Charles embraced the joys of life outside of duty. He had a zest for adventure, demonstrated through his love for riding his Harley Davidson, hunting, fishing, scuba diving, and target practicing. His keen interest in reloading his own ammunition showcased his meticulous nature and hands-on approach to his hobbies. A proud lifetime member of the NRA, Charles held a deep love for history, which reflected his appreciation for knowledge and the stories of the past.

Charles' legacy lives on through his cherished family. He is survived by his beloved sons, Dylan Price with his wife Tessa Schneider, Eric Hillhouse with his wife Genna Gendron; his brother, Daniel Chapman, and his sisters, Marty Menard and Rae Monroe, along with four adoring grandchildren who will remember the strength and love he instilled in each of them.

He is preceded in death by his parents and his beloved wife, Lola Pollack Maedarrow, whose memory remains a guiding light for his family. Charles T. Chapman's presence will be deeply missed, yet his spirit will forever resonate in the lives he touched and the legacy he created.

In lieu of flowers please consider making memorial donations to the VFW POST 1820 on Airport Rd Attn: Disaster Funds to help local veterans in need.

A Visitation was held on Tuesday, Feb. 3, from 4-6 p.m. and a funeral service was held on Wednesday, Feb. 4, at 11 a.m. at Young's Daughters Funeral Home. A burial followed at 200 p.m. the Central Texas State Veterans Cemetery.

Arrangements are under the direction of Sabrina Young at Young's Daughters Funeral Home and Bereavement Center

immense joy in her life.

Her hobbies and interests were as varied as her talents; she loved quilting, creating beautiful stained glass pieces, reading books, and tending to her miniature red roses in her garden. She was an active participant on the family farm, helping care for the sheep and sharing her deep appreciation for nature. Moreover, she had a discerning eye for beauty, collecting crystal and porcelain antiques. These simple pleasures brought her joy, and those around her felt the warmth of her artistic spirit.

Betty's sharp mind, insightful nature, and strong mentality were evident in every aspect of her life. She enjoyed taking single-day trips to explore the Roman ruins in Germany with her children, and their many marches together forged a bond that would withstand the test of time.

She is survived by her beloved husband, Sam, her daughter Stephanie Trumblee and her husband John, her brother Jerry Puckett, and her sister Nancy. In addition, her legacy lives on through her grandchildren, Brian and Jenica.

Preceding her in death were her parents, alongside her son Jon Christopher Middlebrooks and her brother Connie Puckett. Though she has departed from this world, the impact of Betty Ann Middlebrooks's life will be felt by all she touched.

A Celebration of Life was held on February 3, 2026, from 1-2 p.m. at Young's Daughters Funeral Home & Bereavement Center in Temple, Texas, where family and friends gathered to honor her life and the beautiful memories they created together. Betty's spirit and the love she shared will live on in the hearts of all who were privileged to know her.

Arrangements are under the direction of Sabrina Young at Young's Daughters Funeral Home and Bereavement Center.

Herring

Willie "Frog" Lee Herring
 May 4, 1932 –
 February 1, 2026

Willie "Frog" Lee Herring, age 93, of Belton, Texas, passed away peacefully at his home on February 1, 2026, surrounded by the love of his family. Visitation is Thursday, February 5th, from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. at Dossman Funeral Home. Friday is the graveside service at 10:30 a.m. at Rest Haven in Belton.

Frog was born on May 4, 1932, near the Colorado River in San Saba, Texas, to Rev. Olen and Avo Herring. From an early age, it was clear that Frog possessed a rare natural talent, an unwavering work ethic, and a quiet determination that would guide him throughout his life.

Affectionately known to all as "Frog," he discovered his gift at just 14 years old when he was given the opportunity to repair a damaged rear quarter panel on a black vehicle, something an experienced older worker had been unable to fix. When Frog completed the task, he was immediately hired. That moment ignited a lifelong passion for automotive bodywork. By the age of 23, Frog opened Quality Paint & Body in Killeen, Texas, in 1955. Through dedication, craftsmanship, pride in honest work, he built a highly respected business. In 1969, he sold the shop to his younger brother, Harold "Wayne" Herring, leaving behind a legacy rooted in excellence and integrity.

At just 16 years old, Frog married the love of his life, Odellia "Maggie" Sellers, on December 3, 1948. Their marriage marked the beginning of a lifelong journey grounded in love, family, and shared memories that became the foundation of his life.

In his younger years, Frog spent countless hours on the lake with his children, water skiing and patiently teaching them how to ski. His ingenuity and love for craftsmanship extended far beyond his work—he even built his own boat. Frog also enjoyed many rounds of golf with friends and cousins, valuing the fellowship as much as the game itself.

Frog had a lifelong need for speed and a deep passion for racecars. He loved building and racing them and was a familiar presence at the track in Little River Academy, as well as many others. In later years, he shared this passion with his grandson David "DJ" Fuller and other family members, forming special bonds and creating memories that will be cherished forever.

Beyond his talents and interests, Frog was a genuine, honest, and kind man. He believed deeply in people and quietly invested in their potential. Over the years, he helped many individuals start businesses by providing

seed money to build their first home or purchase their first property. His influence is woven throughout Bell County, with quiet "crumbs" of generosity scattered across the homebuilding and development community. Frog never sought recognition—his joy came from giving others an opportunity and watching them create something meaningful.

At home, Frog found peace working on his land, often seen on his tractor tending to projects around his property—always building, fixing, and improving.

In his final moments, Frog was at home, surrounded by family who lovingly sang Southern gospel hymns as he passed. With peace in his heart, he went home to meet his Lord and Savior, in whom he placed his faithful trust.

Frog was preceded in death by his loving wife, Odellia Herring; his beloved son, Kenneth Herring; his parents, Olen and Avo Herring; and his brother, Harold "Wayne" Herring.

He is survived by his beloved daughter, Jan Martin, and her husband Mark of Belton, Texas; his grandson, David "DJ" Fuller and wife Audrey of Salado, Texas; and his granddaughter, Jana Herring of San Antonio, Texas. He also leaves behind his cherished great-grandchildren: Anthony Herring of San Antonio, Texas; Brettney Fuller of Washington, D.C.; Mea Fuller of Waco, Texas; and Samuel Fuller of Salado, Texas. He is further survived by his brothers, Johnny Herring and David Herring, both of Salado, Texas, and his sister, Jean Pedigo of Belton, Texas.

Willie "Frog" Lee Herring lived a long and meaningful life marked by faith, hard work, devotion to family, generosity, and a passion for building—both with his hands and through the lives he touched. His legacy will live on through the generations he leaves behind and the countless people who were given an opportunity because he believed in them.

Oliva

Harvey R. Oliva
 April 27, 1947 –
 January 17, 2026

Harvey R. Oliva, 78, of Winchester, Virginia, passed away on January 17, 2026 at his home.

A Celebration of Life Service will be held on Saturday, February 14, 2026, at Omps Funeral Home, Amherst Chapel, Winchester, Virginia. Visitation will be at 10 am with a service at 11 am, officiated by Pastor Tom Stevens of Shenandoah Farms Baptist Church, followed by a fellowship luncheon in the Omps Reception Center.

Harvey was born on April 27, 1947, in Lincoln, Nebraska to the late Emil L. Oliva and Mabel M. (Kalina) Oliva. Harvey graduated from Shelton High School in Nebraska in 1966 and joined the Carpenter's Union as an apprentice, moving up to Superintendent while working with several construction firms. He then started a 25-year career with the Barton Malow Company in Southfield, Michigan, retiring in 2013 as a Senior Vice President. Harvey also served

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Middlebrooks

Betty Ann Middlebrooks
 December 13, 1944 —
 January 24, 2026

Betty's journey began in the small town of Gladewater, where her deep roots in Texas shaped her proud identity. After graduating from Adamson High School in Dallas, she pursued her education with passion, earning a master's degree from East Texas State University on August 23, 1968. It was during this pivotal time that she met and subsequently married Sam Edmund Middlebrooks on August 24, 1968, a union marked by unwavering love that lasted 57 beautiful years.

Throughout her career, Betty excelled as a district manager of Herr Otto Gift Shop, where her creativity and leadership shone brightly. She also dedicated part of her professional life to helping soldiers in the community as a clinical psychologist, specializing in drug and alcohol addictions. Her commitment to helping others reflected her protective, selfless, and caring nature.

Betty was not just a remarkable professional; she was a devoted mother to her children, taking pride in her role as a mother to her son Jon Christopher whom she welcomed into the world in 1970, and again to her daughter Stephanie Ruth in 1978. She treasured each moment with her family, creating lasting memories that would be cherished by all. Betty's love extended to her two grandchildren, Brian and Jenica Trumblee, who were a source of



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A4
Thursday,
February 05, 2026

LIFESTYLES

THE BELTON JOURNAL

Belton ISD brings life saving heart screenings to its secondary students districtwide

Special to the Journal

Belton ISD school nurses are once again partnering with the Cody Stephens Foundation to offer heart screenings for all sixth through twelfth grade students across the district.

Screenings will take place at all secondary campuses on Tuesday, February 10, in recognition of Heart Month, providing families with a fast, painless electrocardiogram heart screening that can detect potential heart conditions early.

The cost for the screening is \$21.

Established in honor of Cody Stephens, a Texas high school senior who tragically passed away from sudden cardiac arrest, the foundation has partnered

with more than 400 schools, conducted over 180,000 screenings, identified more than 4,000 potential life-threatening conditions and potentially saved more than 200 lives through early detection.

“Through our partnership with the Cody Stephens Foundation, we are able to give families added peace of mind,” said Marylisa Fanning, Belton ISD Director of Health Services. “These screenings are quick, noninvasive and can help identify concerns early when intervention matters most.”

Parents can find registration details through the QR code. Screenings are also available for interested staff members.

Bozon to retire after more than three decades of service

Special to the Journal

After more than three decades of service, Barbara B. Bozon, CPA, will retire from her role as Executive Director of the Central Texas Housing Consortium, concluding a distinguished career marked by transformational leadership and lasting community impact.

An event will be held on Wednesday, Feb. 11, at the Santa Fe Depot in Temple.

The depot opens at 10 a.m. and the program commences at 11 a.m.

Bozon joined the Consortium in 1991 and was appointed Executive Director in 2005. During her tenure, CTHC expanded its housing portfolio from 506 to 1,224 units and secured millions of dollars in public and private funding to strengthen affordable housing and resident services across the cities of Temple and Belton.

A Certified Public Accountant and summa cum laude graduate of Texas A&M University, Bozon was recognized by the Texas State Board of Public Accountancy for earning one of the ten highest CPA exam scores in the state. Her financial expertise helped position CTHC for long-term stability while advancing its mission to serve families and individuals in need.

Bozon also led innovative redevelopment efforts, converting vacant



Barbara Bozon

buildings into vital community assets, and oversaw programs supporting childcare, homeownership, and resident engagement. Widely respected for her collaborative leadership, she cultivated partnerships with local governments, nonprofits, and community organizations.

In addition to her professional accomplishments, Bozon has been deeply engaged in civic leadership, including long-standing service with the Rotary Club of Temple and numerous regional boards.

Her retirement marks the conclusion of a remarkable legacy of service, integrity, and commitment to the Central Texas community.

Chili cookoff raises funds for CASA

By Michelle Rodriguez
The Belton Journal

Chili enthusiasts gathered at a fundraising event for CASA at Nolan Creek Brewery this past Saturday.

CASA of Bell County is a non-profit organization that provides trained volunteers to advocate for abused and neglected children in the foster care system, ensuring they have a voice in court to secure a safe, permanent home. These court appointed special advocates are appointed by judges to represent a child's best interest, working with the court, schools, and social workers to provide individualized attention and support. The organization is part of the national CASA movement and serves children in Bell and Coryell Counties.

“We are grateful for the support of Nolan Creek Brewery and donation to CASA. We love the community we have and how they come together to support the children and families we serve. It looked like it was a great turnout, and \$500 will be donated to CASA,” said Maddie Ramos, Director of Volunteer Engagement.

Chili tasters cast votes, and awards were given for best overall, most creative, and crowd favorite. Teams were able to sign up in the taproom or through messaging on Facebook. The teams paid to enter. The tast-

ing was held from 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. and winners were announced at 7 p.m.

Sue Ovenell coordinates food in the kitchen and events for Nolan Creek Brewery.

“This was the first annual chili cook off. I think I can make a good chili. I asked the regulars and they said they would like to do it. We had way more people here than we thought. I got second in most creative,” said Ovenell. “We wanted to donate to a good cause.”

Ovenell put brisket in her chili. She recommends putting good meat in a chili. Also added were herbs, garlic and a seven-chili blend. Next time Ovenell said she will put beer in it.

The best overall winner was Gab Guerrero with NE Bean Chili. The second-place winner was Dan Hancock who made “Joe’s Famous Chili”.

The winner of the most creative category was Bill Gibson with his Gibson’s stout-hearted chili. The second-place winner was Ovenell with Sue’s famous chili.

The crowd favorite was chili number three by Bill Booth with Dr. Bill’s chili. The second-place crowd favorite was chili number four by Bill Gibson with Gibson’s stout-hearted chili.

The Belton Police Department served as the judges for the best overall category.

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Local Activities & Events

Newcomers Club Activities

February

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

"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.

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 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.

SPJST Hosts Public 42 Domino Tournament - Mar 7

Compete in the Texas classic game of dominoes at the SPJST 42 Domino Tournament Saturday, March 7. All seasoned and new players are encouraged to join. The tournament offers a full day of friendly competition, prizes, and community fellowship. Held at the SPJST Home Office, 520 North Main Street, Temple, Texas, check-in runs from 8 to 8:45 a.m. Play time begins at 9 a.m. The tournament is open to players 16 and older. Registration is \$30 and includes admission, lunch, snacks, and refreshments. Seating is limited, with space available for 30 teams. This is a two-player format, and partners will be assigned if needed. Prizes will be awarded to the top teams. Registration is available online at spjst.org/tournaments. For more information, please call 254-773-1575, ext. 164, or email tamym@spjst.com

NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) will meet both on TUESDAY, Feb.10th and Feb. 24th 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 mont at VFW 3859. Dinner is served at 6:30 p.m. and metting will begin at 7:00 p.m. 201 VFW Dr, Harker heights, Tx 76548. Email commandant@mcl1249tx.comfor more inforamtion.

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 Wednesdays 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.

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.belontexas.gov/takemehome. Read more about the program here: https://www.belontexas.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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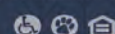
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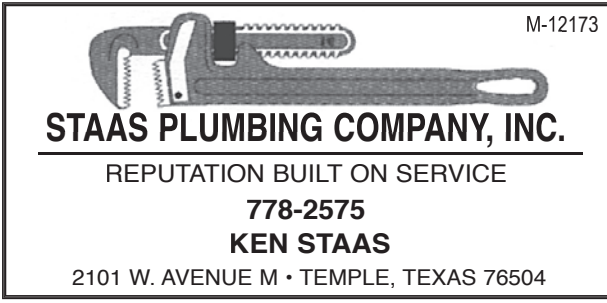
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321 N. Penelope ~ 254.939.WORD | Fellowship Baptist Church
2025 Morgan's Point Rd ~ 254.780.2388 | Nolan Valley Baptist Church
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| Anchor of Hope Fellowship
5700 F.M. 439 ~ 254.831.1035 | First Baptist Church Belton
506 N. Main St. ~ 254.933.3391 | Pentecostal Church of Jesus Christ
117 N. Birdwell St. ~ 254.939.0822 | Grace Presbyterian Church
2401 S 57th ~ 254.773.2134 |
| Belton Christian Church
9425 W FM ~ 436 254.939.1172 | First Mexican Baptist Church
703 S. Wall St. ~ 254.939.6900 | Redeemer Reformed Baptist Church
2378 FM 1670 ~ 818.519.9855 | Harvest Church
2501 General Bruce Dr. ~ 254.780.3566 |
| Belton Church of Christ
3003 N. Main ~ 254.939.1816 | First Presbyterian Church of Belton
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1215 S. Wall St. ~ 254.218.4008 | Immanuel Lutheran Church
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| Belton Church of God in Christ
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205 E. 3rd Ave. ~ 254.939.5703 | Temple Vision de lo Alto
4357 Orchard Hill ~ 254.563.1231 | Leon Valley Church of Christ
4404 Twin City Blvd. ~ 254.939.0682 |
| Belton First Assembly of God
500 S. IH-35 ~ 254.933.2803 | Free Pentecostal Church of Jesus
1111 Cacti Lane ~ 254.933.8201 | Trinity Full Gospel
810 East 2nd Ave. ~ 254.939.7673 | New Hope Church of God
2005 W. Ave D., Suite D. ~ 254.742.2181 |
| Belton Lighthouse
1001 NE Loop 121 ~ 254.654.7278 | Freedom Bible Fellowship
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1726 Morgan's Point Rd. ~ 254.778.8034 | Oak Park United Methodist Church
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| Belton Nazarene Church
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519 S. Pearl St. ~ 254.613.4591 | ~ TEMPLE ~ | St. Francis Episcopal Church & School
5001 Hickory ~ 254.733.4255 |
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A Mirror Moment



John C. Perry

I recently had the "joyful" task of setting up a vendor account for my church with a religious-based organization that provides content to congregations. As our treasurer, I expected a straightforward process, after all, we had our State of Texas Sales Tax Exemption form and number ready to go.

What followed was anything but simple. No matter how many

times I submitted the correct documentation, they kept rejecting it. Finally, in frustration, I told them how absurd their process was and that I had provided more than enough information.

The response I received was one of the most condescending messages I've ever read. The author managed to blast me in multiple ways while cloaking it all in Christian language. He referred to my "unique" comments and subtly implied I wasn't being very Christ-like. It was so masterfully written, I fully suspect he had AI write it, because I am not sure he is that clever.

But after the sting wore off, I found myself reflecting not just on the exchange, but on the deeper issue: what does it mean to speak with grace? And why does condescen-

sion, especially when dressed up in religious vocabulary can cut so deep?

Jesus dealt with condescension regularly. The Pharisees were experts at it, questioning His authority, belittling His background, and trying to trap Him with clever words. Yet Jesus never responded with sarcasm or spite. He spoke truth plainly, with authority and compassion. He didn't need to elevate Himself by diminishing others.

In contrast, condescension often masquerades as wisdom. It's the tone that says, "Bless your heart," while quietly suggesting you're not quite enlightened. When it comes from fellow believers, it can feel like betrayal, because we expect better from those who claim to walk in love.

I'll admit, my first reaction wasn't holy. I wanted to fire back

with my own "masterful" reply, maybe even quote a few verses myself. But then I paused. What if this was a mirror moment? What if God was inviting me to examine not just the tone of others, but my own?

Have I ever used my faith to subtly shame someone? Have I ever corrected with more pride than compassion? Have I ever been the Pharisee in someone else's story?

It's a humbling thought. Condescension thrives in ego. Grace thrives in humility. The difference isn't just in what we say, it's in how we see the person in front of us. Do we see a child of God, worthy of dignity and patience? Or do we see someone to be corrected, managed, or dismissed?

I'm learning that grace doesn't mean silence. It means speaking truth

with gentleness. It means standing firm without standing over. It means remembering that every interaction is a chance to reflect Christ, not just in content, but in character.

So, to the vendor who wrote that letter: thank you. You reminded me that even in frustrating moments, I'm called to respond with grace. And to anyone who's ever been talked down to, especially in the name of faith, please know that Jesus never did that. He lifted people up. He saw their worth. And He still does.

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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LOSS reaches out to those affected by suicide, the silent epidemic

By Michele Weisman
The Belton Journal

James (Randy) Dixon of Local Outreach to Suicide Survivors (LOSS Team), is the program specialist and a certified grief coach for Central Counties Services.

The LOSS Team serves Bell, Coryell, Lampasas, Hamilton, and Milam counties for what has been called the “silent epidemic” – suicide.

Dixon has been heading up this LOSS Team for one year. The all-volunteer team are vetted, trained, and typically have experienced a loss due to suicide.

Dixon brings into this new job decades of experience in providing service. A retired Sergeant from the Temple Police Department, a former Chief of Police for 18 years in two cities in Central Texas, and an Adjunct Professor teaching criminal justice and ethics for 14 years for the University of Phoenix, he came into his new role with a personal reason to bring healing and resources to those suffering loss through suicide.

Toward the end of his career in law enforcement, he was at a home where someone had died by suicide.

“The funeral home comes out. The JP leaves, the funeral home leaves, and then I leave. That leaves the surviving person alone in that house, without anybody to back them up. We just don’t think enough about who’s left sitting there by themselves. Not everybody has relatives close by. But when you leave a house and that person is left there by themselves, what do they think? How are they? There’s got to be some way we

can help them, and that’s what LOSS hopes to do.”

Locally, there have been 26 suicides since last March within the LOSS Team’s five counties of coverage, between the ages of 14 and 90, Dixon said. Statistically, for every person who dies by suicide, 135 people are said to be affected. This is 3,510 people whose lives were changed within Central Counties Services.

The LOSS Team comes alongside them for as long as they need.

“In 2024, there were 105 confirmed suicides in those five counties,” said Dixon of the areas his team covers.

When alerted by first responders, a team of two people from the LOSS Team goes to the scene. They talk with those onsite, whether they be friends or family members of the deceased, and help them in any way they can.

Another resource is Healing Hope Suicide Survivors Support Group which began this year, meeting at the Sunrise Center, located at 501 S. 3rd St. in Temple. The group meets every Monday night from 6 p.m. to 7 p.m. The group setting allows healing through telling stories, listening, and tears. There are no fees or registration required. Anyone who has lost someone to suicide is welcome, whether the loss was recent or many years ago.

“Suicide is a long-term solution for a short fix. If we can get help to somebody, if we can get information to them, we try to turn it around. Whether it’s their private medical, through counseling, we believe in prevention. But we also know that

not every prevention is going to work,” said Dixon.

Through Caring Cards, a part of the LOSS Team, Dixon is alerted by public hospitals, not private hospitals, about anyone who has been seen for mental health crises. Every month for six months, he sends each person reported to him a handwritten note.

The LOSS Team has also gone into two high schools and taught basic suicide prevention at the students’ level of understanding. The program is for high school and middle school. It is Dixon’s goal to have this program in every high school and middle school in the five counties their LOSS Team reaches.

“People are scared to talk about suicide. People think that if you talk about suicide, it puts the idea in people’s minds. It does just the opposite, bringing it to the forefront, where people start thinking maybe there’s another way,” Dixon said.

Dixon is a proponent of talking about the silent epidemic.

“We need to face it. We faced it with AIDS. We faced it with teen pregnancy. We faced it with abortion. I’m 100 percent passionate to help people not die by suicide,” Dixon said.

“If there are any families we have not been made aware of that a loved one passed away by suicide, or even a friend who died or passed away by suicide, all they have to do is call me and we’ll start providing some kind of grief assistance,” he added.

Dixon can be reached 24/7 at 254-298-7038 or at Randy.Dixon@CCS1967.org. The Suicide Hotline can be reached by calling 988 or texting 741-741.

SARW to host president of Texans for Life Coalition

Special to the Journal

Salado Area Republican Women will host a membership meeting Thursday, February 19 at the Salado Civic Center. The meeting will start earlier than usual, at 11 a.m., to cover various topics.

Barb Swarhout will review all the aspects of the local club, which is part of Texas Federation of Republican Women, and how it fits in with the National Chapter. President Brenda Howard will cover legislative issues. If you are a new member or have been a member for years, you will want to come to hear

the interesting presentation.

The keynote speaker for the 11:30 a.m. meeting will be Joe Pojman, PhD, the new president of Texans for Life Coalition.

Dr. Pojman brings more than 37 years of leadership in the pro-life movement as the founder and former executive director of Texas Alliance for Life, where he has been instrumental in the organization’s educational programs, public policy efforts, research, and political advocacy.

A former aerospace Engineer, Pojman earned his under-

graduate degree at the University of Notre Dame. He earned his Ph.D. at The University of Texas at Austin in Aerospace Engineering after working several years at NASA’s Johnson’s Space Center. Later, Dr. Pojman devoted his professional life to advancing the pro-life movement in Texas. He is recognized as one of the top lobbyists on pro-life issues in the Texas Capitol.

The luncheon cost is \$20. Everyone is invited but reservations are requested for food and seating.

Reservations need to be made by Friday, February 13 by contacting sherrilperhach@gmail.com or at 254 598-1559.

UMHB Promise offers free tuition for eligible students

Special to the Journal

The University of Mary Hardin-Baylor (UMHB) has announced a new free tuition program for eligible first-time freshmen and new transfer undergraduate students beginning with the incoming fall 2026 class.

The UMHB Promise program is designed to minimize financial barriers so more students can pursue a transformative Christ-centered education.

“The UMHB Promise makes Christian higher education accessible to more people,” explained Dr. Gary Lamm, UMHB’s vice president for enrollment management. “We are investing in students who may think they cannot afford a private college education at Mary Hardin-Baylor. Interested students should visit our website at www.umhb.edu or reach out to our Admissions

office at 254-295-4520 to find out more.”

- Eligibility requirements for the UMHB Promise include:
- Annual family income of \$65,000 or less;
- Federal Pell Grant eligible;
- Entering fall 2026 class;
- First-time freshmen or new transfer undergraduate students;
- Incoming freshmen must be in the top 50% of their high school class, or freshmen from non-ranking high schools must have a minimum 21 ACT or 1070 SAT or 67 CLT exam score;
- Incoming transfers must have a 2.0 cumulative GPA;
- Campus residency required.

“This program is about opening doors and changing lives,” said Dr. Brandon Skaggs, UMHB’s vice president for student life. “By minimizing financial barriers, we are inviting more stu-

dents into a Christ-centered education. We see God’s work in our students’ lives every day, and we are excited to share that transformative experience with more students than ever before.”

Founded in 1845, the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor prepares students for lives of leadership, service, and faith-informed discernment in a global society. Propelled by an unapologetically Christian commitment for more than 180 years, the university is dedicated to helping students deepen their faith and integrate Christian perspectives into every dimension of life. Located in the heart of Central Texas, UMHB offers bachelor’s degrees in more than 65 undergraduate majors, 12 master’s degree programs, and four doctoral degrees. The vibrant campus in Belton boasts state-of-the-art academic and athletic facilities. To learn more about the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor and the UMHB Promise, call 254-295-4520 or visit www.umhb.edu.

Obits - From Page A3

as a Master Sergeant in the Nebraska Army National Guard for 14 years.

Harvey was a wonderful husband, father, and grandfather (Pop-Pop) whose life was defined by love, hard work, and devotion to his family. A true outdoorsman, he found joy in hunting, fishing, and golfing, and some of his best moments were spent sharing those passions with family and friends. Known for his story telling and contagious laugh, he could captivate a room with memories, humor, and wisdom from a life well lived.

Surviving are his wife of 31 years, Leisa Vaught Oliva; daughters, Dana Oliva (Eckhart) Riegel and husband Daryl of Belton, TX; and De-

nise Oliva Steele of Chicago, IL. Also surviving are grandchildren Emily Eckhart and partner Kurt Morrill of Flatonia, TX; Matthew Eckhart and wife Emma of Houston, TX; Raegan Riegel Woodruff (Hunter); and Hayden Riegel Shaffer (Luke) all of College Station, TX. Great grandchildren Cash Bowen; Mila and Alaina Morrill; and Gemma Rae Woodruff.

Memorial contributions may be made to the Highland Food Pantry, 446 Highland Avenue, Winchester, VA 22601; Blue Ridge Hospice 333 W Cork St #405, Winchester VA 22601; or Winchester Area SPCA 111 Featherbed Lane, Winchester, VA 22601.

Banquet - From Page A1

ner. Pittenger passed along a statement that Carpenter’s granddaughter made about her grandfather, calling him an “artifact.”

“Meaning a treasured part of our history,” Pittenger said.

Upon receiving the award, Carpenter said, “I don’t deserve it but I sure appreciate this. It is a wonderful capstone to a long career.”

There were two new Special Awards this year. The first was the announcement of the Non-Profit Award. It was given to Helping Hands Ministry, which began in 1995.

The ministry has programs like the food pantry, Project Apple Tree and Laura Mae’s Resale Shop.

The second Special Award is the Com-

munity Connector Award and it was given to Judy Garrett.

Pittenger said, “Belton’s Bacon, Blues and Brews, Legends on the Chisholm Trail, Rockin’ Rotary, Polka Fest, and Christmas on the Chisholm Trail are examples where her creativity helped connect Belton businesses, residents, and visitors.”

Garrett said, “I’m very honored to receive this award. I love connecting people and businesses. I love living in Belton and building community.”

The Belton Area Chamber of Commerce humbly acknowledged people who act on their vision of caring together, leading to a positive difference in Belton.

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Josh Mann next Head Football Coach at Belton High School

Coach Mann joins Belton after 18 years as head football coach and campus coordinator at Rouse High School, where he opened the campus in 2008 and built one of Central Texas's most successful athletic programs. Under his leadership, Rouse earned three Top 25 finishes in the Lone Star Cup, reflecting excellence across athletics and academics.

Before his tenure at Rouse, Coach Mann served as the defensive coordinator and head track coach at Cedar Park High School. He is a graduate of Angelo State University, where he walked on to the football team, earned four letters, and was a three-year starter.

We are excited about the future of Belton Tiger Athletics under Coach Mann's leadership. A meet-and-greet will be held today at the high school commons from 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. It is a come-and-go event.

On the field, Coach Mann's teams consistently competed at a high level, making multiple playoff appearances, advancing to the regional round on numerous occasions, and reaching the state semifinals. His accomplishments have been recognized with several coaching honors, including Central Texas Coach of the Year and Dave Campbell's 5A Coach of the Year.

Coach Mann brings a strong commitment to culture, character, and competitive excellence. He is dedicated to building on the proud traditions of Belton High School and strengthening the Tiger Athletic Department through leadership, relationships, and high expectations.



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CRYPTO FUN

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Solve the code to discover words related to Valentine's Day.
Each number corresponds to a letter.
(Hint: 19 = E)

- A.** 24 7 19 14 19 12 9
Clue: Gift
- B.** 21 11 25 21 25 26 3 9 19
Clue: Confection
- C.** 7 25 5 3 12 21 19
Clue: Feelings of affection
- D.** 11 19 3 7 9 14
Clue: Love symbols

Answers: A. present B. chocolate C. romance D. hearts

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Belton ISD soccer enters district schedule

By **Aries Ramos**
The Belton Journal

District play is officially underway for Belton ISD soccer, and the opening week delivered a mix of gritty road battles and eye opening statement wins from both the Belton Tigers and the Lake Belton Broncos.

The Belton Tigers boys kicked off district action on the road Friday night against Waco University and came away with a hard

earned 1-1 draw. The opening half was a physical, evenly matched contest, with both sides generating chances but neither able to find the breakthrough. Belton's defensive shape held firm under pressure, and the match went into halftime scoreless. University managed to strike first after the break, capitalizing on a stretch of sustained pressure, but the Tigers refused to let the match slip away. Jacob Guzman delivered the equalizer with a strong header, finishing a key moment that rewarded

Belton. The draw may not have been flashy, but it was a valuable result to open district play, especially on the road. The Tigers now turn their attention to their first home district match this Friday against Ellison.

On the girls side, the Belton Lady Tigers wasted no time announcing themselves as a force in district. Playing in their home opener, the Lady Tigers put together a complete performance in a 5-0 win that showcased both attacking depth and defensive discipline. Adri-

ana Jaimes led the scoring with two goals, one set up by Destiny Schutz, who consistently sparked the offense and created opportunities in the final third. Karington Kopriya added a goal and later assisted Abby Idoux, who finished the night with two goals of her own. The movement off the ball and unselfish play stood out throughout the match. Defensively,

See **SOCCER**,
Page B3

Crosstown Rivalry: Belton's boys light scoresheet, down Lake Belton 78-58

By **Tony Adams**
The Belton Journal

The Crosstown Rivalry between Belton and Lake Belton High Schools has never been short of energy. No matter the score, the mood has always been fun and entertaining.

The same could be said for last Thursday's matchup between the Belton Tigers and Lake Belton Broncos boy's basketball game at Tiger Gym.

Though Belton and Lake kept things tight early, the Tigers outscored the Broncos 22-16 in both the first and second quarters. Belton was able to extend their lead and pull away in the fourth for a 78-58 win.

"It was great energy in the building," Belton Head Coach Phil McCaslin said. "We played great, and Lake Belton played really well against us."

"Belton scored at critical times where we were not able to score and get stops," Lake Belton Head Coach Zane Johnston said. "We played well, but came up short."

Luke Munden scored Belton's first basket 38 seconds and it was answered by Jackson Striegler's three-pointer to give Lake their first advantage 13 seconds later.

Lake built an 8-4 advantage before Belton closed the quarter on an 18-8 run and led at the end of the first period, 22-16.

Mikey Lockett's three-pointer closed the Broncos to within three points of the Tigers, 27-24, with 5:58 left in the first half.

Belton closed the first half on a 17-8 clip, with Ty Johnson, Noah Childers, Daniel Briscoe, and Gavin Ross all contributing to give the Tigers a 12-point lead at the break, 44-32.

Johnson, Briscoe and Ja'dyn Loggins fueled a 12-6 stretch to extend Belton's lead to 20, 56-36, with 2:58 left in the third.

Lake finished the quarter with an 8-2 run to pull to within 14 points, 58-44.

Belton would not be denied, as they put together a 20-8 stretch in the fourth quarter to lead by 25 before the Broncos scored the final six points to cut the final margin to 20.

Johnson led all scorers with 31 points for Belton. Loggins chipped in 19, and Childers 11 for the Tigers.

Ravizee led the Broncos with 17 points, Allen Mucunu added 13, and Lockett had 12.



Lake Belton girls dominate Belton in crosstown matchup 45-13

By **Aries Rmaos**
The Belton Journal

District play brought the Belton ISD rivalry to the hardwood on Thursday, January 29, as the Lake Belton Lady Broncos and the Belton Lady Tigers met in a matchup that showcased the pace and physicality typical of district basketball. The game also served as Teacher Appreciation Night at Lake Belton, with educators recognized for their impact on student athletes.

From the opening minutes, Lake Belton established control

with quick ball movement and defensive pressure, building an early 27-5 lead in the first quarter. Belton worked to settle into the game, but turnovers and contested shots made it difficult to find a consistent offensive rhythm early on. Lake Belton continued to push the tempo in the second quarter, extending the margin heading into halftime as both teams went to the locker room looking to make adjustments with the score set at 45-13.

The second half brought improved stretches from Belton, particularly in the third quarter, where

the Lady Tigers showed more composure on offense and competed more effectively on the boards. Belton was able to generate better looks and matched Lake Belton's energy for extended possessions, but Lake Belton's depth and defensive consistency prevented any sustained run that might have shifted momentum. The fourth quarter followed a similar pattern, with both teams continuing to compete while the outcome gradually became clearer. Lake Belton went on to win the contest 78-40.

Individually, several play-

ers stood out across the stat sheet. Anya Taylor led all scorers with 18 points, while also contributing as a facilitator and defender with four assists and four steals. Gemma Pierce added 13 points, including three shots from beyond the arc, while Ariella Polley and Alexa King provided scoring and defensive activity. King's presence was felt defensively with multiple deflections and steals. Lake Belton's rotation also saw contributions from Olivia Dann on the glass, Brylee Craddick as a distributor, Erica Taylor defen-

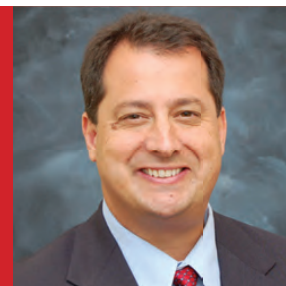
sively, and Ayaana Omisola with energy in the paint, underscoring the Broncos' depth.


For Belton, the night served as another learning opportunity in a challenging district schedule, offering film and experience against a fast, disciplined opponent.

Lake Belton moved forward in district play following the matchup, while both programs now turn their focus to the remaining games on the schedule as district standings continue to take shape.



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Sports Briefs

By Clay Whittington
The Belton Journal

Over the past week, change has swept across Belton ISD. After building the program from scratch since the school opened in 2020, Broncos head football coach Brian Cope stepped down from the position to accept the same role at New Caney West Fork.

Lake Belton competed for two seasons before officially becoming a University Interscholastic League program, and in the four years since, the Broncos amassed a record of 28-16, reaching the playoffs every season.

While one of Belton ISD's schools is now searching for a new head coach, another has found one.

Following the retirement of Brett Sniffin after six years overseeing the Tigers, Josh Mann inherits the job as head football coach.

Mann led Leander Rouse since it opened in 2008, producing an overall record of 91-89-1 and celebrating consecutive district championships in 2020 and 2021. His teams also went 13-9 during nine playoff appearances.

Regardless of who takes over for Cope, the landscape is changing.

The UIL released its biennial reclassification and realignment information for the upcoming two school years, rearranging the districts for Belton and Lake Belton.

With a school enrollment of 2,253 students, Lake Belton exceeded the threshold set at 1,970.5 and became a Class 6A program.

The Tigers were seventh (9) as 132-pounder Corbin Wittman won his weight class.

In the girls division, the Lady Tigers were second thanks in part to Kennedy Weston and Anahi Perez, who each earned gold medals.

The Lady Broncos saw Avery Park and Kaisley Forster each place third.

Lake Belton returned to action Wednesday at Little River-Academy, but final results were not available.

Belton is idle until next week, traveling to the Temple meet on Wednesday.

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.

For football, volleyball and basketball, the Broncos joined fellow newcomer Killeen Chaparral as part of District 12-6A along with Killeen Harker Heights, Copperas Cove, Temple, Bryan and Waco Midway.

Lake Belton and Chaparral replace Killeen and Shoemaker in the league.

The districts for all remaining sports will be released, but typically, they are the same.

Along with Killeen Ellison, Brenham, Bryan Rudder, Waco and Waco University, Belton will be part of District 12-5A, Division I for football, and in other basketball and volleyball, Belton, Killeen, Ellison, Shoemaker, Liberty Hill, Liberty Hill Legacy Ranch, Waco and Waco University will comprise District 16-5A.

MEET & GREET

A meet-and-greet for Belton new head football coach and athletic coordinator Josh Mann will be held today.

The come-and-go event will take place at the high school's commons, and it will last from 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

POWERLIFTING

Lake Belton and Belton each traveled to the Waco ISD Invitational last week, and the Broncos emerged from the event with a team title, scoring 45 points to beat out Copperas Cove (2nd, 44) and Waco (3rd, 32).

Along the way, Cooper Arnold won the 148-pound weight class, and Hunter Loraus placed first in the 220 division.

SIGNINGS

A pair of Lady Tigers standouts made their college commitments official Wednesday during a joint signing ceremony.

Kaitlyn McCracken signed to play volleyball at Austin College, while soccer player Destiny Schutz signed with Navarro College.

Schutz is a three-year member of the varsity squad and was an all-district first-team selection as a junior.

McCracken has also been on Belton's varsity roster for three years, and she was named all-district offensive player of the year during the fall.

SOFTBALL

Scrimmages for the upcoming season recently began for both Lake Belton and Belton, and games are allowed starting Monday.

The Lady Broncos' final scrimmage is against Salado on Friday, and their season will begin Feb. 19 with a trip to Georgetown.

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

Prior to the encounter, they will scrimmage Troy on Saturday.

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 at Leander

See **BRIEFS**,
Page B3

Lake Belton boys fall to Ellison 67-61 in district match

By Aries Ramos
The Belton Journal

The Lake Belton Broncos faced a challenging district matchup against Ellison this week, a game that tested Lake Belton's execution as the Broncos worked through a competitive night on the floor. While the final varsity score favored Ellison, 67-61, the overall evening reflected a program that continues to compete across all levels, with strong individual performances and encouraging stretches of

play as district action moves forward.

At the varsity level, Lake Belton stayed within striking distance throughout the contest, trading runs and answering momentum shifts. The Broncos leaned on balanced scoring and steady guard play to keep pressure on Ellison, particularly in the middle quarters where the game tightened and possessions carried extra weight. Ameer Williams led the way offensively with 20 points, adding six rebounds and an assist while consistently attacking the paint and finish-

ing through contact. Mikey Lockett followed with 15 points and contributed across the board, adding three rebounds, three assists, and three steals, often sparking transition opportunities with his defensive activity.

Allen Muchunu added 11 points, four rebounds, and three assists, providing a steady presence and helping facilitate the offense when the pace slowed. Dez Ravizee chipped in 10

See **BASKETBALL**,
Page B3

Tigers pick up key win over Waco University

By Aries Ramos
The Belton Journal

The Belton Tigers picked up a key district win Tuesday night, a 56-49 victory over Waco University in a game that required patience, and contributions from throughout the

roster. The Tigers had to earn every possession, especially early, but their response after halftime reflected a group that stayed connected and trusted the process.

The opening half proved difficult for Belton offensively, as shots were

hard to come by and the pace of the game favored a low scoring grind. Waco University controlled the tempo and forced Belton into contested looks, allowing the Tigers to score just 16 points before the break. Despite the offensive struggles, Belton re-

mained within reach by limiting transition opportunities and staying competitive on the boards, heading into halftime trailing 23-16.

The tone changed quickly after intermission.

See **BELTON**,
Page B3

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Lady Broncos to host Killeen Chaparral in district finale

By Clay Whittington
The Belton Journal

The Lady Broncos are one week away from achieving the improbable.

During recent years, Lake Belton's talent as a program has become evident, and this season, it has been on full display as the team has overcome almost every obstacle in its way.

Now, only two more roadblocks remain.

After winning 31 of 32 games played, the Class 5A No. 4 Lady Broncos conclude the regular-season

schedule by hosting Killeen Chaparral on Friday and traveling to Waco University on Tuesday. Both contests are set to tipoff at 7 p.m.

While its playoff berth is already secure, Lake Belton can also complete a one-loss schedule and add a District 16 championship to its resume.

With a victory against the Lady Bobcats, the Lady Broncos (8-0) clinch an outright league title, while a loss leaves the door open for Chaparral (7-1) to steal the championship should

Lake Belton lose out.

Although the Lady Bobcats, who lost 61-54 in overtime in the first encounter, will pose a threat, the Lady Broncos appear ready for the challenge.

In its last two games, Lake Belton has outscored the opposition by a combined 87 points.

The Lady Broncos were never threatened Friday, when they traveled to Killeen Ellison and dominated the Lady Eagles, limiting them to just two points in the first quarter.

Leading 24-2, Lake

Belton continued to increase its cushion, inflating it to 35-12 by halftime before winning the third period 13-10.

Junior point guard Aniya Taylor and Alexa King, a sophomore guard, guided the squad offensively with 14 points apiece, while sophomore guard Erica Taylor had nine points and sophomore shooting guard Layla King and freshman small forward Olivia Dann added six points each.

The Lady Broncos followed by beating Waco 85-32 on Tuesday.



Scot Hrbacek, CFP® Financial Advisor

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This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor.
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Edward Jones

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Belton - From Page B2

sion. Belton came out with greater defensive urgency, applying pressure on the ball and shrinking driving lanes. That defensive focus began to generate stops and allowed the Tigers to play faster in spurts, gradually closing the gap. Offensively, Gavin Ross and Jay'dn Loggins became catalysts, consistently attacking off the dribble and forcing the defense to collapse. Their downhill pressure created scoring chances at the rim and opened space for team-

mates as the Tigers began to find rhythm.

Rebounding played a major role in the turnaround. Ty Johnson, Noah Childers, and Daniel Briscoe were active on both ends of the floor, battling for position and securing key boards in traffic. Those extra possessions proved valuable in a game where margins were thin, and Belton capitalized by extending possessions and wearing down the opposition.

As the game moved into the fourth quarter, Belton's composure became increasingly evident. Abran Knight and Luke Munden delivered steady minutes, making smart decisions with the ball and coming up with timely defensive stops that helped maintain momentum. Just as important was the energy provided by the bench.

Down the stretch, Belton executed with discipline, valuing possessions and converting opportuni-

ties at the free throw line to create separation. The win served as a strong example of Belton's growth as district play continues. Rather than pressing when shots weren't falling, the Tigers leaned on defense, rebounding, and collective effort to change the trajectory of the game. With momentum building and confidence growing, Belton now turns its focus to the next challenge, aiming to carry that second half intensity forward as the district race tightens.

Basketball - From Page B2

points, knocking down timely shots to keep the Broncos within reach late. Christian Onchweri contributed five points along with a steal, while Jackson Striegler and Avery Diaz helped on the glass in limited minutes. Despite several late pushes, Ellison was able to close out the game at the free throw line and secure the six point win.

Earlier in the evening, the JV and freshman squads also saw close contests. The JV game mirrored the

varsity matchup, with Lake Belton falling just short in a 50-48 decision. The Silver team delivered one of the night's most lopsided results, earning a convincing 67-21 win. The Red squad also picked up a solid victory, defeating Mexia 51-36 and rounding out a night that featured competitive basketball across the program.

While the varsity result did not fall Lake Belton's way, the performance offered several

positives moving forward. The Broncos showed the ability to score from multiple spots on the floor, protect the ball for extended stretches, and compete defensively against a physical opponent. As district play continues, those elements will be critical in turning close games into wins.

Looking ahead, Lake Belton returns to action with an opportunity to apply lessons learned from the Ellison matchup. Ex-

ecution in late game situations, defensive rebounding, and limiting second chance points will be areas of focus as the Broncos prepare for the next stretch of district games.

Briefs - From Page B2

Rouse against the host Raiders and Round Rock McNeil on Friday. Lake Belton closes its preseason with scrimmages at Round Rock Cedar Ridge (Tuesday) and versus Austin Westwood (Feb. 13).

Then, the Broncos' season will begin Feb. 19 with

another trip to Cedar Ridge.

The Tigers have scrimmages set for Friday against Troy and Little River-Academy, Hutto on Tuesday, 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 Broncos travel to Belton for the first game of the series, which moves to Lake Belton on March 27.

Soccer - From Page B1

the Lady Tigers were just as sharp, limiting chances and controlling tempo. Goalkeeper Destiny Mendez earned the shutout behind a backline that stayed organized and composed from start to finish. Belton now heads on the road Friday, February 6, to face Ellison at 7:15 p.m.

Across town, the Lake Belton Broncos girls delivered one of the most dominant performances of the early district slate, rolling to an 11-0 victory. The scoring came from everywhere, highlighting both depth and balance. Evelyn Bragewitz led the way with three goals and two assists, while Samantha Vasquez added a goal and three assists. Teagan Pettijohn finished with a goal and two assists, Clara Hill contributed a goal and an assist, and Mikaela Ebberts and Kate Henn each scored twice. Briseya Lopez also found the net, and

Gracie Hassell added an assist. Defensively, Allyson McClanahan was named Defensive Player of the Game after anchoring a unit that never allowed the opposition to gain a foothold.

The Lake Belton boys were just as convincing in their district opener, shutting out Ellison 6-0 to earn their second straight win. Carson Judd scored twice, while Kai Zuniga, Zane Fitzwater, Shua Clark, and Logan Dlouhy each added goals. Aiden Lassich recorded two assists, with Jacob Johnson and Santana Herrera also setting up scores. Goalkeepers Caden Ortiz and Andres Gamio combined for the shutout, continuing a strong defensive start to the season. With nine district matches remaining and plenty of points still on the table, the Broncos look poised to stay in the race as they prepare to face Chaparral on Friday, February 6.

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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

CITATION BY PUBLICATION THE STATE OF TEXAS COUNTY OF BELL

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 the Monday next following the expiration of 42 days after the date this citation was issued, a default judgment may be taken against you.” To: UNKNOWN HEIRS AT LAW OF ROSA VANHORN A/K/A ROSA VAN HORN, DECEASED YOU ARE HEREBY COMMANDED to appear before the 169TH Judicial District Court of Bell County, Texas in the Courthouse in the City of Bell, Texas at or before 10:00 o’clock A.M. Monday, the 16th day of March, 2026, being the Monday next after the expiration of forty-two days after this citation is issued, and you are hereby required then and there to appear and file written answer to the Petition, filed in said Court on October 17, 2025, in suit numbered 25DCV357042 on the docket of said court, wherein Mill City Mortgage Loan Trust 2019-GS1, Plaintiff, v. David Vanhorn a/k/a David Van Horn and Rosa Vanhorn a/k/a Rosa Van Horn and The Heirs at Law of Rosa Vanhorn a/k/a Rosa Van Horn, Deceased, Defendants.

The Petition seeks an order to foreclose the lien on the property and assert a claim to the property located at 4457 West Drive, Belton, TX 76513 and legally described as: Being All That Certain Tract Of Land Containing 0.435 Acre, Being The East One-Half (E 1/2) Of Lots 3 And 4, Block 3, Lakewood Terrace, A Subdivision In Bell County, Texas, According To The Map Or Plat Of Record In Cabinet A, Slide 135-C, Plat Records Of Bell County, Texas, And Being The Same Tract Of Land Conveyed To David And Rosa Van Horn In A Deed Recorded In Volume 3202, Page 350, Official Public Records Of Real Property, Bell County, Texas, And Being More Particularly Described As Follows: Beginning At A 3/4 Inch Iron Pipe Found At The Northeast

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Corner Of Said Lot 4, Being On The South Right-Of-Way Line Of West Drive And On The West Right-Of-Way Line Of Lakewood Lane, A Gravel Road, For The Northeast Corner Of The Herein Described Tract; Thence South 19 Degrees 12 Minutes West - 160.06 Feet (Bearing Base)

Along The West Right-Of-Way Line Of Said Lakewood Lane, To A 1/2 Inch Iron Rod Found At The Northeast Corner Of Lot 2; Thence North 70 Degrees 57 Minutes 15 Seconds West - 118.45 Feet Along The North Line Of Said Lot 2, To A 1/2 Inch Iron Rod Set At The Southeast Corner Of A Tract Of Land Conveyed As The Fourth Tract To Ii & L Properties In A Deed Recorded In Volume 3049, Page 196, Official Public Records Of Real Property, Bell County, Texas; Thence North 19 Degrees 13 Minutes East - 160.19 Feet (Record 159.95 Feet) Along The East Line Of Said H & L Properties Tract, To A 1/2 Inch Iron Rod Set On The South Right-Of-Way Line Of Said West Drive, Being The North Line Of Said Lot 4, For The Northwest Corner Of The Herein Described Tract; Thence South 70 Degrees 53 Minutes 24 Seconds East - 118.40 Feet (Record South 71 Degrees East) Along The South Line Of Said Right-Of-Way, To The Point Of Beginning And Containing 0.435 Acre Of Land

Note: The Company Does Not Represent That The Above Acreage Or square footage calculations are correct.
GIVEN UNDER MY HAND AND SEAL OF SAID COURT at Bell, Texas this 29 day of JANUARY 2026
M. Cortez District Clerk Signature & Seal

Issued at the request of: LOGS Legal Group LLP - Counsel for Plaintiff Address: 13105 Northwest Freeway, Suite 960, Houston, TX 77040 (Clerk info) This document not prepared by the Bell County District Clerk
02.05,12,19,22

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 UNKOWN 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 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 STOEBNER & 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

CITATION BY PUBLICATION THE STATE OF TEXAS COUNTY OF BELL

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 the Monday next following the expiration of 42

LEGALS

days after the date this citation was issued, a default judgment may be taken against you.” To: UNKNOWN HEIRS AT LAW OF ROSA VANHORN A/K/A ROSA VAN HORN, DECEASED YOU ARE HEREBY COMMANDED to appear before the 169TH Judicial District Court of Bell County, Texas in the Courthouse in the City of Bell, Texas at or before 10:00 o’clock A.M. Monday, the 16th day of March, 2026, being the Monday next after the expiration of forty-two days after this citation is issued, and you are hereby required then and there to appear and file written answer to the Petition, filed in said Court on October 17, 2025, in suit numbered 25DCV357042 on the docket of said court, wherein Mill City Mortgage Loan Trust 2019-GS1, Plaintiff, v. David Vanhorn a/k/a David Van Horn and Rosa Vanhorn a/k/a Rosa Van Horn and The Heirs at Law of Rosa Vanhorn a/k/a Rosa Van Horn, Deceased, Defendants.

The Petition seeks an order to foreclose the lien on the property and assert a claim to the property located at 4457 West Drive, Belton, TX 76513 and legally described as: Being All That Certain Tract Of Land Containing 0.435 Acre, Being The East One-Half (E 1/2) Of Lots 3 And 4, Block 3, Lakewood Terrace, A Subdivision In Bell County, Texas, According To The Map Or Plat Of Record In Cabinet A, Slide 135-C, Plat Records Of Bell County, Texas, And Being The Same Tract Of Land Conveyed To David And Rosa Van Horn In A Deed Recorded In Volume 3202, Page 350, Official Public Records Of Real Property, Bell County, Texas, And Being More Particularly Described As Follows:

Beginning At A 3/4 Inch Iron Pipe Found At The Northeast Corner Of Said Lot 4, Being On The South Right-Of-Way Line Of West Drive And On The West Right-Of-Way Line Of Lakewood Lane, A Gravel Road, For The Northeast Corner Of The Herein Described Tract; Thence South 19 Degrees 12 Minutes West - 160.06 Feet (Bearing Base)

Along The West Right-Of-Way Line Of Said Lakewood Lane, To A 1/2 Inch Iron Rod Found At The Northeast Corner Of Lot 2; Thence North 70 Degrees 57 Minutes 15 Seconds West - 118.45 Feet Along The North Line Of Said Lot 2, To A 1/2 Inch Iron Rod Set At The Southeast Corner Of A Tract Of Land Conveyed As The Fourth Tract To Ii & L Properties In A Deed Recorded In Volume 3049, Page 196, Official Public Records Of Real Property, Bell County, Texas; Thence North 19 Degrees 13 Minutes East - 160.19 Feet (Record 159.95 Feet) Along The East Line Of Said H & L Properties Tract, To A 1/2 Inch Iron Rod Set On The South Right-Of-Way Line Of Said West Drive, Being The North Line Of Said Lot 4, For The Northwest Corner Of The Herein Described Tract; Thence South 70 Degrees 53 Minutes 24 Seconds East - 118.40 Feet (Record South 71 Degrees East) Along The South Line Of Said Right-Of-Way, To The Point Of Beginning And Containing 0.435 Acre Of Land

Note: The Company Does Not Represent That The Above Acreage Or square footage calculations are correct.
GIVEN UNDER MY HAND AND SEAL OF SAID COURT at Bell, Texas this 29 day of JANUARY 2026
M. Cortez District Clerk Signature & Seal

Issued at the request of: LOGS Legal Group LLP - Counsel for Plaintiff Address: 13105 Northwest Freeway, Suite 960, Houston, TX 77040 (Clerk info) This document not prepared by the Bell County District Clerk
02.05,12,19,22

THE STATE OF TEXAS CITATION BY PUBLICATION CASE NUMBER 25CPB00649

To: UNKNOWN HEIRS LACEY MANNING, Applicant, on October 15, 2025, filed an Application to Determine Heirship in a proceeding styled: JOHN WAYLAND MCBETH, Deceased, and bearing the number 25CPB00649 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 February 05, 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: CHARLES STERMER, 445 E. Central Texas Expy, Suite 5, Harker Heights, TX 76548

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 28, 2026.

Shelley Coston County Clerk of Bell County, Texas, PO Box 480, 1201 Huey Road, Belton, TX 76513
By Lillian Phillips Deputy
02.05

THE STATE OF TEXAS CITATION BY PUBLICATION CASE NUMBER 26CPB00054

TO: UNKNOWN HEIRS NEDRA POWDERS, Applicant, on January 23, 2026, filed an application for declaration of heirship and issuance of letters of dependent administration in a proceeding styled: CLIFFORD POWDERS, JR., Deceased, and bearing the number 26CPB00054 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 February 05,

LEGALS

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: KAREN VILLANUEVA, 2106 BIRD CREEK DR, TEMPLE, TX 76502

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 28, 2026.

Shelley Coston County Clerk of Bell County, Texas, PO Box 480, 1201 Huey Road, Belton, TX 76513

By: Erika DeCasas Deputy
02.05

CAUSE NUMBER 25CPB00769

ESTATE OF LILLIAN (LILLIE) BELL VERNON DECEASED, IN THE COUNTY COURT AT LAW NO. 1, BELL COUNTY, TEXAS

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Notice is hereby given that original Letters of Independent Administration for the Estate of Lillian (Lillie) Bell Vernon, Deceased, were issued on January 21, 2026 in Cause No. 25CPB00769 in the County Court At Law No. 1 of Bell County, Texas, to: Sandra Ann Higginbotham Independent Executrix.

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.

DATED the 29th day of January, 2026

Respectfully Submitted: /s/ Lane Heginbotham, HARRIS LAW OFFICE, 425 North Eighth Street, Killeen, Texas 76541, Phone (254) 526-0108, Fax (254) 526-7141, Lane Heginbotham, State Bar No.: 24000323, lane@centexlawyers.net

02.05

CAUSE NO. 23CPB00046

ESTATE OF WILLIAM CARTER CHURCHWELL DECEASED IN THE COUNTY COURT AT LAW NO. 1 BELL COUNTY, TEXAS

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Notice is hereby given that original Letters of Independent Administration for the Estate of William Carter Churchwell, Deceased, were issued on September 21st, 2023 in Cause No. 23CPB0046 in the County Court At Law No. 1 of Bell County, Texas, to: Michelle Rene MadduxRobinson Independent Executrix and Mark Edward Churchwell, Independent Executor.

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.

DATED the 28th day of January, 2026

Respectfully Submitted: Lane Heginbotham, HARRIS LAW OFFICE, 425 North Eighth Street, Killeen, Texas 76541, Phone (254) 526-0108, Fax (254) 526-7141, Lane Heginbotham, State Bar No.: 24000323, lane@centexlawyers.net

02.05

**CITATION BY PUBLICATION
THE STATE OF TEXAS COUNTY OF BELL**

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 the Monday next following the expiration of 42 days after the date this citation was issued, a default judgment may be taken against you." To: UNKNOWN HEIRS AT LAW OF ROSA VANHORN A/K/A ROSA VAN HORN, DECEASED YOU ARE HEREBY COMMANDED to appear before the 169TH Judicial District Court of Bell County, Texas in the Courthouse in the City of Bell, Texas at or before 10:00 o'clock A.M. Monday, the 16th day of March, 2026, being the Monday next after the expiration of forty-two days after this citation is issued, and you are hereby required then and there to appear and file written answer to the Petition, filed in said Court

LEGALS

on October 17, 2025, in suit numbered 25DCV357042 on the docket of said court, wherein Mill City Mortgage Loan Trust 2019-GS1, Plaintiff, v. David Vanhorn a/k/a David Van Horn and Rosa Vanhorn a/k/a Rosa Van Horn and The Heirs at Law of Rosa Vanhorn a/k/a Rosa Van Horn, Deceased, Defendants. The Petition seeks an order to foreclose the lien on the property and assert a claim to the property located at 4457 West Drive, Belton, TX 76513 and legally described as: Being All That Certain Tract Of Land Containing 0.435 Acre, Being The East One-Half (E 1/2) Of Lots 3 And 4, Block 3, Lakewood Terrace, A Subdivision In Bell County, Texas, According To The Map Or Plat Of Record In Cabinet A, Slide 135-C, Plat Records Of Bell County, Texas, And Being The Same Tract Of Land Conveyed To David And Rosa Van Horn In A Deed Recorded In Volume 3202, Page 350, Official Public Records Of Real Property, Bell County, Texas, And Being More Particularly Described As Follows: Beginning At A 3/4 Inch Iron Pipe Found At The Northeast Corner Of Said Lot 4, Being On The South Right-Of-Way Line Of West Drive And On The West Right-Of-Way Line Of Lakewood Lane, A Gravel Road, For The Northeast Corner Of The Herein Described Tract; Thence South 19 Degrees 12 Minutes West - 160.06 Feet (Bearing Base))Along The West Right-Of-Way Line Of Said Lakewood Lane, To A 1/2 Inch Iron Rod Found At The Northeast Corner Of Lot 2; DISTRICT SOU COUNTY, TEXAS M Cortez BELL Thence North 70 Degrees 57 Minutes 15 Seconds West - 118.45 Feet Along The North Line Of Said Lot 2, To A 1/2 Inch Iron Rod Set At The Southeast Corner Of A Tract Of Land Conveyed As The Fourth Tract To Ii & L Properties In A Deed Recorded In Volume 3049, Page 196, Official Public Records Of Real Property, Bell County, Texas; Thence North 19 Degrees 13 Minutes East - 160.19 Feet (Record 159.95 Feet) Along The East Line Of Said H & L Properties Tract, To A 1/2 Inch Iron Rod Set On The South Right-Of-Way Line Of Said West Drive, Being The North Line Of Said Lot 4, For The Northwest Corner Of The Herein Described Tract; Thence South 70 Degrees 53 Minutes 24 Seconds East - 118.40 Feet (Record South 71 Degrees East) Along The South Line Of Said Right-Of-Way, To The Point Of Beginning And Containing 0.435 Acre Of Land Note: The Company Does Not Represent That The Above Acreage Or GIVEN UNDER MY HAND AND SEAL OF SAID COURT at Bell, Texas this 29 day of JANUARY 2026 District Clerk Signature & Seal Issued at the request of: LOGS Legal Group LLP - Counsel for Plaintiff Address: 13105 Northwest Freeway, Suite 960, Houston, TX 77040 (Clerk info) This document not prepared by the Bell County District Clerk
02.05,12,19,22

NOTICE OF LIEN SALE

Notice is hereby given that the undersigned self-service storage facility operator, pursuant to the Texas Property Code Chapter 59, will conduct a public lien sale of the personal property described below to satisfy a landlord's lien.

The sale will be conducted online at www.StorageAuctions.com, where bidding will open and close on the date and time indicated.

Facility: Salado Eagle Storage, 11315 Blackberry Rd. Salado, TX 76571

Tenant: Jennifer Young, Unit Number: Unit #141

Contents: Household goods, boxes, totes, decorations and miscellaneous personal/ garage items.

Auction Date: January 22nd, 2026, Auction Time: February 12, 2025 at 04:41pm CST

Property will be sold to the highest bidder. The facility reserves the right to withdraw the property from sale at any time prior to the auction.
02.05

NOTICE TO ALL PERSONS HAVING CLAIMS AGAINST

THE ESTATE OF WILLIE RAINBOLT, DECEASED NOTICE is hereby given that original Letters of Testamentary were issued on January 29, 2026 in a proceeding styled Estate of Willie Rainbolt, Deceased, in Cause Number 25CPB00768, pending in the County Court at Law #1 of Bell County, Texas.

Claims may be presented in care of the attorney for the Independent Executor, addressed as follows: Rodney C. Rainbolt Independent Executor of the Estate of Willie Rainbolt, Deceased, C/O Burk Roberts, Roberts & Roberts, L.L.P., 2501 East Elms Rd., Ste A, Killeen, Texas, 76542-3023

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.

LEGALS

Signed on January 30, 2026
Roberts & Roberts, L.L.P., Attorneys for Rodney C. Rainbolt
By: Burk Roberts
02.05

NOTICE OF CLAIM OF OWNERSHIP BY ADVERSE POSSESSION BY COTENANT HEIR

TO: ALL HEIRS OF FRANK QUINTEROS, SR., deceased Property: Being Lot Three (3), in Block One (1), of the H. A. Brocker Subdivision of Blocks Five (5), and Seven (7) and part of Block Three (3) of Highland Addition to the City of Temple, Bell County, Texas, according to the map or plat thereof of record in Volume 621, Pages 241 et seq. Of the Deed records of Bell County, Texas. Name of cotenant heir claiming full title by adverse possession: Mary Quinteros Muriel. Name of owner under whom cotenant claims possession Frank Quinteros Sr., deceased.

Notice is hereby given to all heirs of Frank Quinteros, Sr. that Mary Quinteros Muriel claims the above described Property by her adverse possession of the Property in accordance with the provisions of Section 16.0265 of the Texas Civil Practice and Remedies Code.

The date the affidavit of adverse possession was filed in the Bell County Real Property Records is January 30, 2026.

DATED this 30th day of January, 2026.

By: Pat McGowan, Attorney for Mary Quinteros Muriel Attorney at Law, 2584 Blue Meadow Drive, Temple, Texas 76502, 254-778-8934, patriciafmcgowan@gmail.com, State Bar No: 13641900
02.05

**THE STATE OF TEXAS
CITATION BY PUBLICATION
CASE NUMBER 25CPB00770**

To: UNKNOWN HEIRS

TIMOTHY SWANE, Applicant, on January 30, 2026, filed an Application for Independent Administration and Letters of Administration and Application to Determine Heirship in a proceeding styled: JANICE CAROL BRANCH, Deceased, and bearing the number 25CPB00770 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 February 05, 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: ASHLEY S CLAPPER, CORBIN & CLAPPER PC, 603 N 8TH ST, KILLEEN TX 76541

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 30, 2026.

Shelley Coston County Clerk of Bell County, Texas, PO Box 480, 1201 Huey Road, Belton, TX 76513

By: Lillian Phillips Deputy
02.05

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Notice is hereby given that original Letters Testamentary for the Estate of DOYLE

LEROY MOBLEY, Deceased, were issued on November 14, 2025, in Cause No. 25CPB00607, pending in the County Court-At-Law No: 1, Bell County, Texas, to: DONNA FAYE MIDKIFF.

All persons having claims against this Estate which is currently being administered are required to present them to the undersigned within 120 days of this notice.

c/o: DONNA FAYE MIDKIFF, 2360 Masonwood Way, Round Rock, Texas 78681

DATED the 16th day of January, 2026.

Christopher T. Freyder, State Bar No.: 24126570, 204 S. IH-35, Suite 100, Georgetown, Texas 78628, Telephone: (512) 598-9005, Facsimile: (512) 598-9006, Email: chris@raineyandrainey.com,

Attorney for Applicant Donna Faye Midkiff
02.05



Valentine's Day is a celebration of relationships and love for people across the globe. Although Valentine's Day is widely celebrated across North America and Europe. The holiday also is celebrated in parts of Asia and Latin America. The Philippines is famous for mass weddings on Valentine's Day. Days devoted to love also are celebrated outside of February in different countries. Brazil celebrates Dia dos Namorados (Lover's Day) in June, while Colombia celebrates Dia del

EDITORIAL

Think before you click

My Front Porch • Lynette Sowell

With the WorldWideWeb and social media, we can be lost in a sea of information. It's hard to know what to believe anymore. This type of technology has brought people closer together, but also shoved the proverbial wedge between others.

Believe it – or not – what we see on social media is controlled by an algorithm. What we “click” on, we see more of. Sometimes, even, our “smart” phones will also hear conversations about our shopping lists, and wouldn't you know it? We start seeing ads pop up for those very items, or stores.

While it's funny, it's also sobering how much information can be inaccurate, or flat-out wrong.

Take the case of a man who was shot in DeSoto, California, after a balloon release ceremony.

A man named Kolby Graham was shot and killed after the deceased man's brother “mistakenly believed

the internet rumors about his brother's killer,” DeSoto Police said, “then took revenge against the wrong man at his brother's balloon release ceremony by shooting Kolby Graham.”

This should be nothing less than horrifying to all of us. This is how our children have grown up with social media, and have the potential to act because of something they believe to be true.

We are glad when schools keep up with the latest technology so our children can keep advancing.

While I think it's important to find the best ways for children to learn, because we all learn in different ways, it's also equally important for us to disconnect for a few moments and teach lessons in “real” communication and conflict resolution.

Becoming too digitized is a dangerous place.

We think we might “connect” with someone, but

we forget about true communication and problem-solving.

Digitally, it's too easy to virtually slam the door on someone when we don't agree with them. How can we resolve conflict when children learn from their parents it's easier to “unfriend” someone than work through a problem and talk about it?

Digitally, it's too easy to assume that when we disagree with someone and tell them so, we're “hating” on them.” Isn't that a ridiculous term? Since when does expressing our disagreement mean hatred?

The next step is like what happened to the Colliers. This family lost two sons, one to a murderer and the other to believing a social media rumor as truth.

Maybe this would be a great course, for anyone to take: Sifting to the truth on social media. What is truth? Think, before you click, and act.

Obligatory Seasonal Article

Shop the Insanity • Darren Blair

There are those for whom Valentine's Day is a day of happiness. They have a significant other to spend the day with. Or if they don't, then they have firm plans to be with someone or something whose company they enjoy. Regardless, they greet the hearts, flowers, cards, and other things that they give and receive as if it was another Christmas. Lucky them.

Then there are those for whom Valentine's Day is anything but a day of happiness. These people are alone on Valentine's Day, and it is *not* by choice. Some are separated from their loved ones because of work, school, illness, or even death. Others don't have anyone special to spend the day with, often through no fault of their own, and may (metaphorically speaking) have even had their hearts ripped out previously. For them, the day is nothing more than a bad reminder

of what they don't have, and what they're afraid they may never have again. The sight of other people in love further despairs them. And all the trinkets that go with the day? Only if they buy them themselves.

As you can imagine, this column is for and about this second group.

It's all too common for people who don't have anyone on Valentine's Day to spend the day locked away indoors by themselves. After all, the logic goes, if they don't have anything or anyone special on this day, then why bother going anywhere? Meanwhile, others may not have a choice in the matter, as their circumstances (such as hospitalization) may prevent them from going anywhere. Staying isolated, however, is one of the worst things that can happen. Not only does it shut them out from social experiences that could improve their circumstances, it

also leaves them with time on their hands to dwell on – and thus mentally reinforce – their situation.

If you find yourself in this situation, then there are ways around it you may be able to do. If you are obligated to be indoors, then don't let the time go to waste. Finish that book you've been trying to finish. Catch up on your Netflix queue. Discover a new hobby. Don't just sit around counting flowers on the wall. But if you can get out, get out. Yes, you can treat yourself to a movie and/or a meal. But you can also go for a walk. Or volunteer. In fact, if you do volunteer, you might wind up helping others who are just like you, people who for one reason or another are alone on Valentine's Day.

And if you know someone who is in this situation? Granted, it all depends upon the specific circumstances of the individual, but

one of the best things you can probably do is be a friend. Do try to understand them. Don't try to “fix” them unless you're a qualified expert. Do make it a point to talk to them. Don't let things drag down too far into depression about what and why. Do motivate them to keep going. Don't be pushy or insistent. Do try to find a balance between constructive criticism (if warranted) and harmful criticism. Don't put yourself out on a limb or try to “save” them. And so on.

Yes, the holidays can be stressful for people. This is especially the case when a person feels pressured or even compelled to participate when it isn't how they're actually feeling. And they can even amplify the feelings of being alone. But there's a difference between being alone and being lonely. You just have to find it.

Real Cooking

Pleasant Ramblings • Mark Magnan

There was a cooking show on TV that centered around some bad cooks, apparently inexperience and just lack of skill. The hosts seem to take pleasure in making fun of the contestants. The implication is that these “cooks” are used to either fast food or something that is prepared in a microwave oven.

To the defense of the guests on the show, this generation has a lot of options for food, fast food, instant meals and foods that are prepared to be warmed in a microwave oven and then served.

We are certainly not to the point where The Jetsons were in having our food pop out as little morsels and it turned into a meal. I am sure there are some families, because of time or some other reason, that may eat outside the home most of the time. Or when they do fix a meal at home it is something simple and easy, probably preprocessed and ready for the table.

My father liked to cook and

was actually very good at it. He had his specialties, sauces and gravies were at the top of that list. I was introduced to cooking early. I spent a lot of time at my grandmother's house and also at the family home of my grandfather, where my great aunt lived. Both of these kitchens were equipped with an old-fashioned gas range, the type you had to light with a wooden match. There was either an open box of matches on the counter, or my grandmother had a holder that dispensed the matches. I had to stand in a chair to reach the stove.

My great aunt's home had the oldest of the stoves. Her stove was a bit more of a challenge, including a knob that was missing and a bit of a wild flame once it was lit. Since there was a knob missing there was a pair of pliers on the counter next to the matches, I needed to use this to light the stove since my reach was not as long and I wasn't as fast as she was. I often

lit either of stoves and cooked with very little adult supervision.

Looking back, that probably wasn't good “grand” parenting. However I lived through the experience with very few incidents, and no lasting scars. My meal of choice was breakfast, bacon and then eggs cooking in the remaining bacon grease. I think they call that paleo cooking now.

My father let me, well maybe forced me, to try other meals at home. We had a more modern electric range, which he didn't really like that well. I learned quite a bit about his cooking abilities and absorbed most of it. One of these favorite dishes was what the military called “Creamed Chipped Beef on Toast.” Any veteran knows the slang for that dish, which my father never used in my presence, although he was well versed in SOS. His version was a bit different and was always good, often he used ham or even smoked turkey. His sauce is really what

made the dish. One of the other specialties was his gravy, mostly from a roast. I liked potatoes, and still do, but when you have a huge pot full of mashed potatoes and some of the best gravy on the planet that is a meal that is hard to beat.

My father, ever the entrepreneur, took to selling an expensive line of cookware on the side. He would load up the pans and go to a friend's house, invite a good number of guests, then cook an entire meal. Of course, the object was to sell the entire set of pots and pans, however most of the time it was limited sales, but he liked to host these parties. I enjoyed them as well. He never made his fortune in either cooking or selling the cooking sets.

Since he liked to cook and was basically cheap, we rarely ate out at fast food places. Those were a treat for me. When we did eat out, we dined well. My father started his career in the food business, so he was well connected.

We often ate at places with exceptional foods and often received special treatment because of who my father was. One of the most memorable was an Italian place, run by a rather large (tall) lady from Sicily. Her Italian food was nothing like what we see these days, that is my vision of Italian. We had a special table and often we were invited back to the kitchen to see something new or different. Although my father didn't really cook Italian food very often, save the basics with various pastas. We also had a favorite Mexican restaurant that later branched out into a fairly well-known chain, again we were treated as special guests when we dined there. I just grew up with that and thought it was normal.

I feel bad for the generations that have few of these wholesome food memories. It formed me and my thoughts about cooking and food, and I enjoy cooking to this day because of it.

Remembering the Dinosaurs

Coffee Talk • Renae Brumbaugh Green

A few years back, somebody found a rock near Glen Rose, Texas that showed a dinosaur footprint. Many authentic dinosaur tracks have been discovered in that area, but this one is different. The dinosaur's footprint is smack-dab on top of a human footprint, and they appear to have been made within minutes of each other. If proven authentic, this would supply evidence that man walked the earth alongside dinosaurs.

Experts are still arguing over the legitimacy of this find. Last I checked, the creationists and the evolutionists were still battling it out.

I won't speculate whether or not this discovery is real. I'm no paleontologist. I don't even know the proper names for even the most common dinosaurs. I still

call them “the one with the long neck” or “the short, fat, scaly one” or “the scary one with wings.” And whatever the experts decide, it won't change my views about creationism vs. evolution.

As I look at pictures of the stone, I can't help but wonder about the story behind the footprints. Was the dinosaur chasing the person? Did the guy know he was being pursued? Maybe he was just walking along, gathering seeds and berries, whistling Dixie (did they whistle Dixie back then?) when all of a sudden, WHOMP! He was cordon-bleu.

Talk about a bad day.

Or maybe the dinosaur was a pet. Anybody who's watched the Flintstones knows they had pets back then. Maybe they're authentic Fred and Dino foot-

prints! Next best thing to an autograph.

But seriously, I would hate to have been that guy or girl. I'd have been terrified. Even if the dinosaur was vegetarian, he was huge! And I've never seen a friendly-looking dinosaur.

I've never seen any dinosaur, but that's beside the point.

Sometimes it feels like I'm being chased—even stepped on—by a dinosaur. Bills show up, bigger than expected, like a Velociraptor looming overhead. People can be cruel, unkind, and dismissive, making them seem more Stegosaurus than human.

When Rick's parents' house burned to the ground last spring?

Big ol' stompin' T-Rex.

But there's good news! The God

who created dinosaurs is bigger than the dinosaurs. He loves each of His creations. But He loves us most of all. After all, we were made in His image. No matter what hovers over us, chases us, or threatens to eat us for lunch, God is stronger. He will help us.

He delivered Jonah from a whale's guts. He rescued Daniel from the lion's den. Surely, he'll save you and me from our own beasts. After all, you haven't seen any dinosaurs around lately, have you?

“And when Daniel was lifted from the den, no wound was found on him, because he had trusted in his God.” Daniel 6:23

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HEALTHY HEART WORD SEARCH

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

WORDS

- AEROBIC
- ARRHYTHMIA
- ARTERIES
- ATHEROSCLEROSIS
- BEATS
- BLOOD
- CARDIAC
- CARDIOVASCULAR
- CHOLESTEROL
- CIRCULATION
- CORONARY
- ENDURANCE
- EXERCISE
- HEALTHY
- HEART
- HYPERTENSION
- INFLAMMATION
- MUSCLE
- PLAQUE
- PULSE
- STRESS
- STROKE
- VALVES
- VEINS

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

Welcome to Belton, Texas

UNITED STATES TRIVIA

Test your knowledge of the history of the U.S.

- 1 How many original colonies were there?
- 2 Where was the Declaration of Independence signed?
- 3 Which explorer is America named after?
- 4 In what year were women finally granted the right to vote in the U.S.?
- 5 Who are the only two non-presidents to appear on widely used U.S. currency?
- 6 What are the three branches of the U.S. government?
- 7 If someone requests your John Hancock, what are they referring to?
- 8 Who was the first woman to serve on the United States Supreme Court?
- 9 Which Civil Rights figure led the Montgomery Bus Boycott in 1955?
- 10 True or False? Apple pie was invented in the U.S.
- 11 Who was the first U.S. astronaut in space?
- 12 What is the United States motto?
- 13 When was Washington established as the capital of the United States?
- 14 Which state was the first admitted to the Union?

Answers: 1. Thirteen 2. Philadelphia 3. Amerigo Vesputci 4. 1920 5. Alexander Hamilton and Benjamin Franklin 6. Legislative, Executive and Judicial 7. Signature 8. Sandra Day O'Connor 9. Martin Luther King, Jr. 10. False; it originated in England 11. Alan Shepard 12. "E pluribus unum," 13. 1790 14. Delaware



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.

6		19	27
	8	11	22
15	1		16
24	11	30	

0	1	15
11	8	3
16	2	9

Solution

Get Scrambled

Unscramble the words to determine the phrase.

R F E I H S E R O

Answer: Fire Horse

THIS DAY IN HISTORY



1778: New York becomes the third state to ratify the Articles of Confederation.

1840: The signing of the Treaty of Waitangi establishes New Zealand as a British colony.

1951: The Canadian Army enters combat in the Korean War.

NEW WORD

LANTERN

a lamp with a transparent case

Holiday FACT:

This holiday occurs each winter and is widely celebrated among Asian communities.

Answer: Chinese/Lunar New Year

How they say that in...

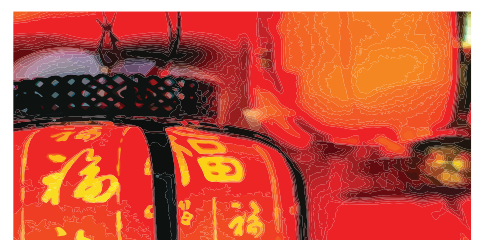
English: Dragon
Spanish: Dragón
Italian: Drago
French: Dragon
German: Drache

Did You Know?

The Chinese New Year is a 15-day festival that is very important for bringing families together in celebration and to foster good luck.



Get the PICTURE?



Can you guess what the bigger picture is?

Answer: Chinese lanterns