

## New Tech Robotics heads back to VEX Worlds

Special to the Journal

Belton New Tech @Waskow is once again headed to the global stage, as its robotics team has earned a second consecutive trip to the VEX Robotics World Championship in St. Louis, April 21-24, placing the campus among the world's top student innovators.

For senior Davin Thomison, team lead, driver and builder, the return to VEX Worlds represents more than another competition. It reflects a year of growth, resilience and shared belief.

After competing on the world stage last season, Thomison said the team returned with renewed focus, stronger communication and the



Courtesy photo

The Belton New Tech @Waskow robotics team is once again heading to the VEX Worlds Robotics Championship in St. Louis, being held this week.

confidence that anything is possible. This year's opportunity, he said, is a chance to show that a small school can do big things.

That same sense of growth is felt across the team. Senior Annabel Ferniza, the team's note-

booker, said returning to VEX Worlds gives the team an opportunity to show just how much they have improved.

Through disagreements, difficult decisions and the challenge of working through adversity together, the team

learned the importance of honesty, trust and kindness.

For Ferniza, representing Belton New Tech @Waskow on a global stage is especially meaningful because it allows

See **ROBOTICS**, Page A2



BELTON JOURNAL/Michele Weisman

John Hadon, owner of the Town and Country that sets the stage of "style" for each of Our Hospice House fundraisers.

## Arriving in Style Fashion Show, a benefit for Our Hospice House

By Michele Weisman The Belton Journal

Our Hospice House hosted its annual Spring fashion show Sunday afternoon at the Rustic Acres Event Center.

Four boutiques showcased their Spring line on first-time and returning models. Guests dressed up for the occa-

sion, enjoying mimosas, iced tea, and light snacks.

Providing hospice care in the final days of life, Our Hospice House does not charge the guest or bill insurance. Fully funded by community giving, this allows family visits without the strain

See **HOSPICE**, Page A2

# Downtown Belton sees first Market Day of 2026



BELTON JOURNAL/Shalee Corey Wiebe

The hour delay and gray weather didn't dampen the spirits of those who attended Market Day in downtown Belton on Saturday.

By Shalee Corey-Wiebe The Belton Journal

On Saturday, people flocked to downtown Belton, starting at 10 a.m. and going until 4 p.m., to check out the wide variety of vendors.

Despite the hour delay and the chilly wind, happy shoppers bustled as live music played, showing interest not only in the tents and food trucks, but also in some of the local businesses.

The food trucks were noticeably popular as noon approached. Texsubs, Lowe's Legs, and Hill Country Kettle Korn were just some of these vendors.

Kathy, from B's Treats, a veteran-owned company, said that her favorite part about being at Market Days was, "meeting all the new people, getting new customers and talking to people. I'm originally born and raised here in Belton. I love being a part of my hometown."

See **MARKET**, Page A8

## Council OKs facade improvement grants

TABLE OF CONTENTS	
Obits.....	A3
Servic Directory.....	A5
Lifestyles.....	A6
Churc Directory.....	A7
Sports.....	B1
Classifieds.....	B4
B-TOWN.....	B5
Editorial.....	B6
Busines Showcase.....	B8



Courtesy Photo

Belton City Council last week approved Facade Improvement Grants for buildings located at 114, 116 and 118 N. Main St. in the Downtown Belton Commercial Historic District.

By David Stone The Belton Journal

Belton City Council last week approved Facade Improvement Grants for buildings located at 114, 116 and 118 N. Main St. in the Downtown Belton Commercial Historic District.

All three locations are currently vacant, but the owner wants to create three separate leasable office spaces.

According to Tina Moore, a City of Belton planner, the application proposes updates to the approved scope of work. The rear portion of the property will be demolished and reconstructed, and work on the front facade will primarily consist of repairs, along with the replacement of windows and doors.

The work on the Main Street-facing facades will include repairing damaged brick, replacing win-

dows and doors, and adding accent-paint around archways of windows and doors. Facades facing the rear alley will include removing damaged materials at the rear and along shared walls as required by a structural engineer, and reconstructing the rear of the three buildings to accommodate a secondary entrance, improving pedes-

See **FACADE**, Page A2

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# ASCO Belton Spartacus Dash to raise funds for Family Promise of Bell County

Special to the Journal

ASCO Belton has announced that they will donate all race day proceeds of the annual ASCO Spartacus Dash to Family Promise of Bell County.

Each year, ASCO Belton hosts the ASCO Spartacus Dash event to give back to the local community.

This year, the annual fundraising event will partner with Family Promise of Bell County to eliminate homelessness for all children and families in Bell County.

The ASCO Foundation will match the total gift up to \$10,000, with the total amount matched by the ASCO Foundation from all donors not to exceed \$500,000.

"Currently, we need local businesses to spon-

sor the event and volunteers to help us on race day. To become a sponsor or volunteer register at [www.ascospartacusdash.net](http://www.ascospartacusdash.net)," said Spencer Ridgway, ASCO Regional VP of Central Texas.

The ASCO Spartacus Dash is a three-mile obstacle course designed for all ages and abilities. Obstacles include rope climb, cargo net, mud pit, mud tunnels, slip 'n' slide, ice bath, and more fun yet challenging obstacles.

The 14th ASCO Spartacus Dash obstacle course event will be held at Liberty Park in Belton on Saturday, May 23.

The race begins at 9 a.m. and includes divisions for individuals, families, and teams.

Both serious competitors and weekend warriors just looking for



File Photo

The ASCO Belton Spartacus Dash 2026 is set for May 23 and will be raising funds to benefit Family Promise of Bell County.

some fun are invited to participate.

At the completion of

the race each participant receives a medal, post-race food and custom

awards will be presented to the top three winners in each age division.

To learn more visit [www.ascospartacusdash.net](http://www.ascospartacusdash.net).

## Facade - From Page A1

trian access from the rear parking lot.

According to the 2022 City of Belton Historic Resources Survey, 114 and 116 N Main were built around 1895. Character-defining features included arched windows, door openings and fanlight transoms. Second-story arched windows are currently boarded.

The building at 118 N. Main — also constructed around 1895 — features decorative windows, a fanlight over the door, and arched window openings. The building has been unaltered over the years.

Because of structural damage, the applicant pro-

poses demolishing the rear walls and reconstructing a new entrance accessible from the alley.

According to Historic Preservation Consultant Steph McDougal, the rear façade does not contain character-defining features and its alteration will not impact the building's appearance from the primary streetscape. Brick masonry is proposed for the reconstructed rear façade.

Second-floor windows are currently missing or boarded up for properties at 114 and 116 N Main. The applicant proposes replacing them with wood-framed

windows and doors featuring non-tinted glass. The archways at 114 N. Main Street are proposed to be painted to create a more cohesive appearance with 118 N. Main Street.

This entire project is estimated at \$565,000, and Commissioners approved the maximum amount eligible for the façade improvement grant for each individual building.

The maximum allowed for each front façade is \$25,000, and each rear façade is eligible for \$10,000 — a total of \$35,000 per building.

## Hospice - From Page A1

of finances while their loved one's day-to-day needs are cared for.

Our Hospice House kept with its fundraiser theme of arriving in style. Per their request, John Haydon drove his Town and Country car, parking it at the entrance for all to see. Haydon enjoys supporting these events in this way.

"The boutiques are so supportive of Our Hospice House and our mission. Many of the models and each of the boutique owners have been touched by hospice care," said Annie McCall of Our Hospice House. "They know the importance of this event in raising funds for us to be able to sustain it."

Charity Gaines opened the event singing "Home."

The cost of a ticket was \$50, and additional donations were accepted online. A donation box was located inside the event center. Each guest was given raffle tickets to enter to win gift baskets.

The participating boutiques were Susan Marie's of Salado, Christy's of Salado, Presley Boutiques, and Zooty's Boutique. The models walked down the center aisle of the tables, pausing and turning toward guests' tables to show their outfits. Each boutique owner exceed their wares.

Ladies heard about the Spring

trends, saw several large flower prints, jeans, pantsuits, and handbags. Many guests were surprised when a model they all knew walked the runway, State Representative Hillary Hickland. She wore a striking, long-sleeved black jumpsuit with a white collar.

Our Hospice House founders, Dr. Jeff Bates and Jennifer Bates, RN, FNP, were in attendance.

"We are the fastest-growing, most successful hospice house in the country. We are totally donor-supported. If God wants this, nothing will stop it. My friend gave me a million dollars to start this as a pilot project. We spend over \$1,000 a

day taking care of people. That's what we do, and we're really good at it. But community needs to take this as their project. That's the reason I named it Our Hospice House. It's not my project. It's our project. The closest one is San Antonio. Now we just have to continue to fund it through donor support," said Dr. Bates.

If you'd like to know more about Our Hospice House or to donate, visit their website at [ourhospicehouse.org](http://ourhospicehouse.org) or call 254-500-7123. They serve guests during the last 30 days of their lives. They are part of THE LORDS WORK INC a 501 (c)(3) non-profit.

## Robotics - From Page A1

the team to challenge the misconception that smaller schools are less successful.

According to Stephen Tysor, Career and Technical Education robotics and Unmanned Aerial Vehicles instructor, lead teacher and head coach, the team's mission to return to VEX Worlds began the moment they stepped off the stage last year.

Since then, he said, the students have remained locked in, steadily raising the bar in every phase of preparation. Their prior experience at the World Championship has sharpened not only their technical readiness but also their ability to anticipate challenges, refine strategy and perform under pressure.

Tysor said robotics continues to give students authentic opportunities to think critically, test solutions, document their process and improve through iteration in ways that closely mirror real-world engineering and business environments.

For Neill Plemons, interim principal of Belton New Tech @Waskow, the team's back-to-back qualification is proof that the campus'

project-based learning model delivers world-class results. He said returning to the world stage confirms that student ownership, innovation and collaboration are not just instructional ideals but lived experiences that prepare students to compete and lead at the highest levels.

Plemons added that robotics embodies everything the New Tech experience stands for by pushing students beyond textbooks and into real-world problem-solving, where teamwork is nonnegotiable and innovation is essential.

He said the campus often jokingly refers to the robotics team as "the football team of New Tech," but the sentiment reflects something deeper: it is the team the entire school community rallies behind each year.

From students volunteering to reset arenas and help run competitions to theater students bringing school spirit as Archie the Dragon, the team's return to VEX Worlds has become a source of pride shared across the campus and throughout the Big Red Community.



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# Belton High barbecue team heads to state

**By David Stone**  
*The Belton Journal*

A small group of Belton High students has found its niche, and they are going to state.

But instead of lacing up cleats and running laps, this group is slathering on the sauce and cooking up ribs, Dutch oven delights and chicken lollipops.

“We have five members and an alternate,” said Kathy Firkins, a culinary instructor at Belton High who doubles as the barbecue team’s instructor.

A group of pitmasters — John Hernandez, Juan Jimenez and Sam Vaca — mentors the group and helps with spicing.

“They give us direction and give us advice if we need help,” said team captain Leo Williamson. “They watch and supervise. They can be at the competitions, but they have to shout advice from outside the pit area.”

Leo specializes in chicken lollipops, a popular appetizer, especially in Indian and Indo-Chinese cuisine, made from chicken winglets or drumettes where the meat is cut and pushed down to one end of the bone, creating a “lollipop” shape.

Other team members and their specialties include Jasmine Pecina, ribs; Aidan Buan, ribeye steaks; Eliza Biles, grilled bacon and cheese sandwiches; Keaton Richardson, upside-down pineapple cake cooked in a Dutch oven; and Sue-Ellen Grant, a do-it-all alternative who specializes in baking.

Buan is the only team member who will be back next year. This year’s squad is heavy on experience — both Buan and Pecina are in their third year with the team.

“The Belton High School barbecue team started in January 2020,” Firkins said. “The previous culinary teacher did a lot with the group, but we got it off the ground and started competing. We went to nationals our very first year.”

Last year, Belton actually had two teams, but this year they pared the program to one team.

“Barbecue is expensive,” Firkins said. “The team is not part of the Belton High School culinary program — it’s separate, and we are considered a club.”



Courtesy Photo  
Elijah Biles, Leo Williamson, Jasmine Pecina, Sue-Ellen Grant and Aidan Buan are shown with certificates for winning at the Regional Cookoff, a state qualifier.

The team qualified for the state cookoff by placing in the top 10 at a regional event in Temple.

“There will be about 100 teams at the state event,” Firkins said. “We will be competing in ribs, ribeyes, chicken lollipops, grilled bacon cheese sandwiches and dutch oven, and we will be entering the brisket competition as well.”

“The top 25 teams at state go to nationals,” Firkins said. “The national competition keeps getting bigger. They

added three more states this year. There’s a long list of states that compete — high school barbecue is exploding — but Florida, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Missouri and Arkansas are some of the states that compete at the national level.”

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# Belton mayor declares Lemonade Day, Arbor Day

**By David Stone**  
*The Belton Journal*

Belton Mayor David K Leigh signed a proclamation last Tuesday declaring May 2 as Lemonade Day in Belton.

Belton’s Lemonade Day falls under the umbrella of the Fort Hood Area Lemonade Day, according to event organizer Sarah Olaley.

“Our program is dedicated to teaching local youth entrepreneurial skills through having them start, own and operate their very own lemonade stand,” Olaley said.

“After a season of learning these skills, the children can set up their stands across Bell County on Lemonade Day weekend, which is the first weekend in May in front of locations such as their homes, local businesses and in parks,” she said.

“While our program is targeted to the Fort Hood Area as a whole,

we have been able to hold city proclamations for Lemonade Day in neighboring cities such as Belton, Killeen, Harker Heights and Copperas Cove,” Olaley said.

“The city proclamation in Belton grants official recognition to the young entrepreneurs who will be setting up stands across the city,” she added.

According to Leigh’s proclamation, “Lemonade Day is a special day when the youth of Belton grab their pitchers, set up their stands, and learn the exciting world of entrepreneurship.”

“Children in our community discover how to plan, market and run their own lemonade stands, building confidence, responsibility and teamwork,” the proclamation continued.

“Lemonade Day teaches our young people important life skills such as goal-setting, money

management and giving back while having fun and engaging with neighbors and friends ...”

“...the creativity, energy and determination of Belton’s young entrepreneurs inspire our entire community, showing that even the smallest ideas can make a big difference.”

Also Tuesday, Leigh presented a second proclamation — this one declaring April 24 as Arbor Day, an event started by the Nebraska board of agriculture in 1872. The purpose of Arbor Day was to set aside a day every year for planting trees.

That first Arbor Day, more than 150 years ago in Nebraska, saw the planting of more than 1 million trees. It was adopted nationally and internationally and it now combats climate change by reducing the erosion of precious topsoil by wind and water, cutting

heating and cooling costs, moderating temperature, cleaning the air, producing life-giving oxygen and providing habitat for wildlife.

“Trees are a renewable resource giving us paper, wood for our homes, fuel for our fires and countless other wood products,” states Leigh’s proclamation.

“Wherever they are planted, trees are a source of joy and spiritual renewal,” according to the proclamation.”

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## Bike races support local Lions Club projects



File Photo

Riders prepare to head out for the annual Stampede on the Chisholm Trail. This year's event will be held May 10 at the Harris Community Center, 401 N Alexander.

By David Stone  
The Belton Journal

Stampede on the Chisholm Trail — a series of bike races sponsored by the Belton Lions Club — will be held May 10 at the Harris Community Center, 401 N Alexander.

Participants can compete in one of four races, including a 12-miler with a single rest stop; a 30 miler with three rest stops; a 55-mile race with five rest stops; and a 62-mile race, also with five rest stops.

“The Stampede begins at 8 a.m. and takes riders along the picturesque bike trails and countryside roads of Bell County,” said organizer Karen Stagner. “All routes finish along Belton’s Hike & Bike Trail beside Nolan Creek, providing a scenic end to a memorable ride.”

The event will be held rain or shine. Register at Active.com. (search for Stampede on the Chisholm).

According to Stagner, Belton ISD’s JROTC will present the colors before and during the singing of the National Anthem by the Belton High Harmony singers. Belton Police will lead the riders to the Stillhouse Hollow Dam Road turnoff, then Belton Lions will follow riders on each route.

“Each rest stop will have a shade canopy and a fun theme, plus ice and coolers of gatorade and water,” she said.

Juice, fruit and snacks will be provided before the race, the after the ride cyclists will be treated to a free hot dog, chips, snacks and sodas, thanks to the Lions Club and H-E-B. The Belton High Delta+ Special Needs Department students will have snow cones available.

Online registration ends Thursday, May 7, at midnight, and on-site registration will be at 6:30 a.m. on race day.

Packet pickup will be Friday, May 8, from 5-7 p.m. at John Corsi State Farm Insurance, 101 Lake Road in Belton.

Each rider will be entered into a Bib Raffle and can ride for one of 32 prizes.

An activity that coincides with the bike races is Legends on the Chisholm Trail on May 8 and 9.

Step back in time to 1850 and celebrate Belton’s rich heritage with music, culture and cowboy traditions. The event will include a Native American flute performance, vendors with Western and Native American products, a chuckwagon lunch, teepees and the Texas Old-Time Fiddlers Contest.



Courtesy Photo

On Saturday, April 11, the Betty Martin Chapter of the National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) held a Program and Dedication to a daughter of an American War soldier. Pictured are Honorary President General Lynn Forney Young, Betty Martin Chapter Regent, Janie Reed and the TX State Chair America 250 Nancy Davis, who placed a banner at the grave marker for Eliza Tice Hall, daughter of an American Revolutionary War Soldier Richard Tice (1762-1848).

## Church to hold Coyote Flats frontier event

Special to the Journal

On May 2, the First Presbyterian Church of Belton is transforming into Coyote Flats—where Faith and Family meet the frontier. From 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. the church will come alive with the sights, sounds, and spirit of an old-time gathering.

The community is invited to view displays of model trains in three different scales, homemade quilts, learn to crochet, try some painting, and discover plenty of hands-on activities for all ages—while enjoying toe-tapping, foot-stomping music that sets the frontier mood.

There will also be a silent auction going on with

several great items up for bid. Outdoors, there will be classic outdoor games like horseshoes, washers and cornhole.

The day also includes a Noon Chili Cookoff. Contestants may register in advance on the church website or sign up the morning of the event. The rules follow the legendary Chili Appreciation Society International of Terlingua, the gold standard for Texas Chili cookoffs.

After the Saturday festivities, the public is invited to join the congregation for the 11 a.m. Sunday Worship Service.

First Presbyterian Church is located at 2500 Church St. in Belton.

## Belton ISD Penguin Project returns for fourth annual production

Special to the Journal

Belton ISD’s Penguin Project is set to return to the stage for its fourth annual production, bringing the energy, joy and heart of Madagascar—A Musical Adventure Jr. to the Belton High School Performing Arts Center, 600 Lake Road in Belton, April 24-26.

This year’s production features more than 90 student performers, making it the largest Penguin Project cast in district history.

To create even more meaningful opportunities for students to shine, the production team introduced two casts, the Adventure Cast and the Wild Cast, and added a fourth performance.

“The incredible growth of this year’s production speaks to the heart of what the

Penguin Project is all about,” said Bree Strnad, choreographer for the production and a Texas history teacher and cheer coach at North Belton Middle School. “With more than 90 students involved, adding a second cast and an additional performance allowed us to create even more opportunities for students to step into larger roles, build confidence and truly shine on stage.”

The Penguin Project is designed to provide students with special needs the opportunity to perform in a fully staged musical alongside peer mentors, creating an experience that celebrates inclusion, confidence and the unique talents of every participant.

“The Penguin Project is a powerful reflection of Belton ISD’s commitment to each and every student,” Superintendent Dr. Malinda Golden said. “This produc-

tion creates a space where students are celebrated for their unique abilities, build confidence through meaningful experiences and remind all of us what is possible when belonging and opportunity take center stage.”

Filled with beloved characters, high-energy musical numbers and themes of friendship, teamwork and embracing individual strengths, Madagascar—A Musical Adventure Jr. captures the spirit of the Penguin Project mission while creating unforgettable moments for students and families alike.

Performance schedule:  
Adventure Cast: Friday, April 24, at 7 p.m. and Saturday, April 25, at 2 p.m.  
Wild Cast: Saturday, April 25, at 7 p.m. and Sunday, April 26, at 2 p.m.  
All performances will take place in the

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## The Day Everything Broke in Belton

It all started on a Tuesday... because of course it did.

First, Jim's coffee maker quit working. Not a drip. Not a sound. Just silence. So he did what any reasonable person would do—he drove straight to the local coffee shop.

"Machine broke?" the barista asked.

Jim nodded.

"Yeah... we've already had six of you this morning."

Caffeinated and slightly more hopeful, Jim went home—only to find his sprinkler system had turned his front yard into what looked like Lake Belton Jr.

So he called a local plumber.

The plumber showed up, took one look, and said, "Well... good news is your grass is thriving."

While fixing the leak, the plumber leaned back and said, "Funny thing—you're the third house on this street today."

Turns out, Jim's neighbor had the same issue... and so did the neighbor across the street.

By lunchtime, the whole block looked like a coordinated effort to start rice farming.

Then Jim's wife called.

"The AC just went out."

Silence.

Jim slowly turned to the plumber.

"You know an AC guy?"

The plumber smiled. "In Belton? I know three—and they're all booked till Thursday."

By the end of the day, Jim had visited a coffee shop, called a plumber, scheduled an HVAC repair, and somehow ended up chatting with a lawn care guy who said, "Honestly, I'm just here for moral support at this point."

But here's the thing...

By that evening, everyone knew Jim.

The coffee shop had his order ready before he walked in.

The plumber waved when he drove by.

The neighbor brought over cookies "in case the house floods again."

And Jim sat on his porch, sweating a little, drinking iced coffee, watching his lawn slowly drain, and said: "You know... everything broke today... but somehow, everything feels like it's working."

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A6  
Thursday,  
April 23, 2026

# LIFESTYLES

THE BELTON JOURNAL

## Belton Locksmith, a business of service and family legacy

By Michele Weisman  
The Belton Journal

Owner of Belton Locksmith, Ricardo Trevino, has served customers from Belton to the border, admittedly that was not a typical call.

He gives free quotes for his services, and customers talk about his lower-than-dealership prices.

"We work all of Bell County, some Williamson County, some McLennan. We'll travel just about anywhere in Texas that somebody's willing to pay us," said Trevino.

Belton Locksmith opened in 1980, helping customers for 46 years. The original owner, Robert Burns, hired and educated Pete Trevino Jr., who would purchase the business in 1993.

He hired and trained Wallace Toutant, who served in the Army and worked as a service technician until his recent passing at age 82.

"Burns deserves a lot of credit. He taught all of us locksmithing. He changed the trajectory of our family. My dad had always worked in factories. And once he got into locksmithing, he loved it. He taught it to me and my son. I'm teaching the young man Ernyve," said Trevino.

Something his father added to the business was a collection of antiques that line the walls at the store on Central Avenue.

"He actually wanted to get rid of them before he passed. He was saying, 'Let's just sell everything.' I said, 'Everybody

loves looking at this stuff. Leave it.' So, he did," Trevino said.

Belton Locksmith services automotive, including chip key and remote programming, residential, RVs, boats for ignition and compartments, lock boxes, cabinets, and commercial. They do not service institutional or industrial locks.

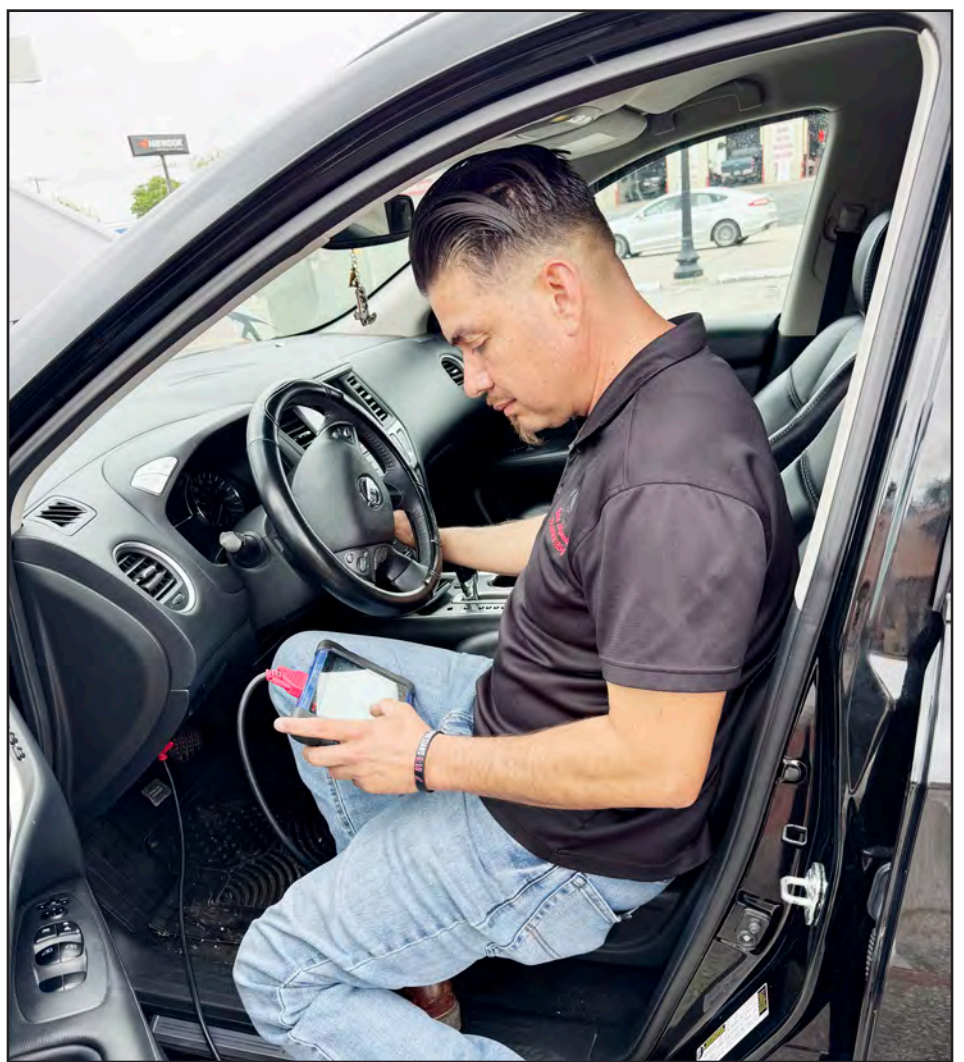
Trevino said many customers don't realize that their 20-year-old vehicle has a key with a chip in it and are shocked at the replacement cost.

"It's an anti-theft system. I can make a metal key for six bucks. It won't start it. This key that's got the chip, we have to take a computer out to the vehicle, hook into the diagnostic port, and match the actual chip in the key to the vehicle's computer. It'll start with that key," said Trevino.

When needing a locksmith, no one wants to be taken advantage of, and Trevino cautions what to look for when calling a locksmith service.

"We don't always have somebody available to come out late, but we're always happy to make a recommendation," Trevino cautions. "Make sure you get the price in writing, whether it be a text, email, or record the phone conversation. Make sure you get a firm price, because if not, it's a tactic that they can use on you."

To learn more, visit their website at [www.beltonlocksmith254.com/contact](http://www.beltonlocksmith254.com/contact). They can be reached at (254) 493-4212. They are an English and Spanish speaking company.



BELTON JOURNAL/Michele Weisman  
Ricardo Trevino, owner of Belton Locksmith, works on the key ignition on a vehicle.

## AC4P, community initiative to promote positivity

By Michelle Rodriguez  
The Belton Journal

AC4P is a new initiative coming to Central Texas that has its roots in the science of positivity.

AC4P stands for "Actively Caring for People."

According to AC4P's Executive Director, Bobby Kipper, the science behind the idea was first taught at Virginia Tech for five decades by Dr. Scott Gellar, who taught psychology to 900,000 students over that career – establishing the science of kindness.

"From a faith perspective – it means, love your neighbor. AC4P is simply seeing people doing acts of kindness and rewarding them," said Kipper. "It's a science, actually psychological science, proven to work because even in the darkness, there is light."

"The goal is to promote positivity. The Central Texas community will be the first community to take on AC4P as a community wide application. It will be the model for other communities."

Kipper has assembled a board of directors and will be coming to Central Texas to meet community stakeholders on May 4.

Central Texas resident Clarence Enochs was intro-

duced to AC4P while a graduate student at Texas A&M University Central Texas.

Enochs has a background in public safety and law enforcement and is an educational and fundraising consultant for the National Center for the Prevention of Community Violence.

"Violence is a process and not an event. We need to do more as a society to interrupt the process," said Enochs. "AC4P is a great way to reduce violence in schools and communities. It's also a way to help because when people show they care, it improves the culture and the climate of the schools and community...What you allow within your midst becomes your environment. Positive caring can do a lot to change the community and organization. If you're going to do anything, be kind."

The initiative recognizes people for simply doing something kind. They receive a green wristband with the AC4P logo and it is theirs to keep or they can even "pay it forward" by passing it along to someone else. But it's more than a simple wristband.

"It's a great community service tool," said Enochs. Enochs is Board Chairman of the Central Texas

College Foundation, Board Member of Central Texas Youth Services, Casa of Bell and Coryell Counties Training Facilitator, Child Trafficking Awareness Consultant, on the Texas A&M University - Central Texas Learning Advisory Board, a Board Advisor for the Association of Responsible Citizens, Wreath for Vets Committee Member, Actively Caring for People Coordinator, Special Olympics Coach, a part of the Big Love Cancer Care, Board of Governors for the Association of the U.S. Army, and National Center for the Prevention of Community Violence.

"We all have a responsibility to be kind and compassionate to one another. That's what makes the world truly a better place. I have experienced the impact of AC4P and what occurs when you're expressing kindness. It reduces stress, lowers anxiety, and lowers blood pressure. We get to experience being recognized as a good person, and that means a lot," said Enochs.

For more information, contact Enochs at [Presidential66@gmail.com](mailto:Presidential66@gmail.com).



BELTON JOURNAL/Michelle Rodriguez  
Bell County resident Theresa Schwab receives an AC4P wrist band from Clarence Enochs, a proponent of Actively Caring For People, which promotes and recognizes positivity in communities.

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## A Clinic Built on Love



**John C. Perry**

There is a nonprofit in Belton that is especially near and dear to my heart, the Body of Christ Community Clinic. I wrote about them last year, but with their annual banquet coming up on April 30th at the Bawcom Student Union building at 5:30 PM at UMHB, I wanted to remind you of the remarkable ministry they provide

to East Bell County.

The vision for the Clinic began in 2008, when a group of Godly men and women saw the growing need for medical and dental care among the underserved in our community. They believed that Christians from many churches could come together as one Body of Christ to care for those who had nowhere else to turn, and in 2010 the Clinic opened its doors.

Today, the Clinic is supported by 15 churches of all denominations, Baptist, Methodist, Church of Christ, Catholic, Nondenominational, and others. These congregations stand united in their desire to help people in need.

The concept is simple, if you have very limited resources and no

insurance, you can come to the Clinic and receive medical and dental care at no cost. And once you walk through those doors, you will be treated by volunteers who are among the most loving, compassionate people you will ever meet.

Many years ago, the church I was attending asked me to serve on the Clinic's Board. Each participating church has a seat, and I agreed, thinking I would do my part for a year or two and then move on. That was thirteen years ago. I'm still there, and I plan to serve until the Lord calls me home or I become too feeble to help.

Never have I been touched by a ministry the way I have been by the Body of Christ Community Clinic. It opened my eyes to the deep needs

so many of our neighbors quietly carry. Some arrive at the Clinic at their wits' end, hurting, worried, and unsure where to turn. Here, they are welcomed, respected, and cared for. Because we take no government funding, they are also prayed with and gently witnessed to, not to join any particular church, but to help them see the love of Jesus, perhaps for some the first time.

Every Thursday night, one of the sponsoring churches provides a meal for the volunteers who come straight from their day jobs to serve. When it's our church's turn, I like to visit with the patients in the lobby, encouraging them and reminding them that this is a place where they will be loved. I go hoping to bless them, but

often, I am the one who receives the greater blessing.

The Clinic's annual banquet on April 30th is our major fundraiser, and we truly need your help. Medical and dental equipment and supplies are expensive, and the last couple of years have been financially challenging.

Please consider attending. We have an excellent speaker, wonderful food, a silent auction, and great fellowship. Tickets are only \$40. For information, please call the Clinic at 2549399500.

*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 Saludo Middle School at 1169 Williams Rd.*

# Market - From Page A1

Amaya from Popcorn Friday said about Market Days, "I think it brings people together, and it definitely draws people from surrounding areas to Belton. Since it's not that big of a town, it brings a lot more traffic."

Chunk from the US Veterans Motorcycle Club, a nonprofit that raises money to help out veterans, talked about Market Day's benefit to the local community.

"It brings (the community) together, and everybody that comes out here is a small business,

so it brings awareness to the businesses that are out here and the different organizations."

Iceman, also from the US Veterans MC, said his favorite part about being at Market Days was, "Generally just getting to meet people and getting our cause out there to the public."

Lisa, owner of Pickle Barrel Crafts, said, "It's really a lot of fun to just kind of mix and mingle with people and talk to different people from different areas because some people are not all from

Belton."

Danielle, who crochets stuffed animals and is also with Pickle Barrel Crafts, talked about how her town doesn't host as many events that support small businesses.

She said, "It's really nice to come to these places that do have that." Her favorite part about being at Market Days was interacting with people and interacting with the kids, especially.

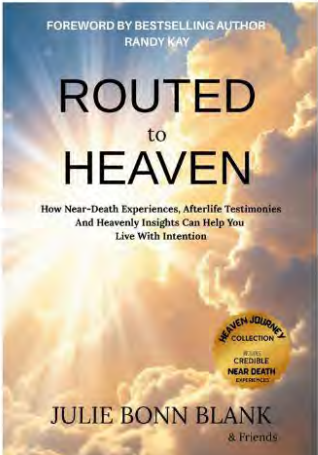
"They come over and they really want to touch everything and play with everything."

# Local La Quinta Inn and Suites celebrates 20 years




BELTON JOURNAL/Michele Weisman

La Quinta Inn & Suites has received top awards for the past four years.



## Including a story from local writer Michele Weisman



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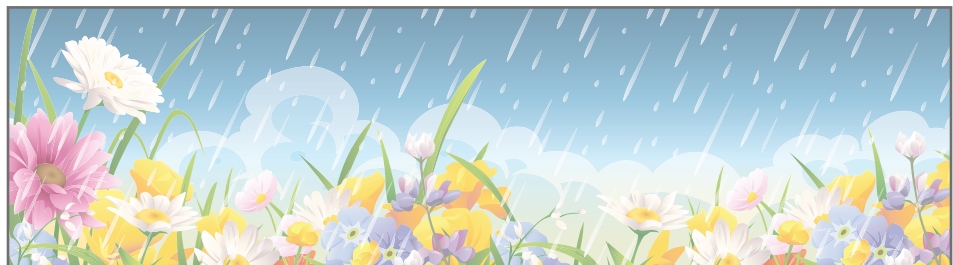




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By Michele Weisman  
The Belton Journal

La Quinta Inn & Suites by Wyndham, Belton-Temple South, is celebrating 20 years with a Belton Area Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting.

Sarah Thorne, general manager, is getting the word out about La Quinta's upgrades and its ideal location for the Belton and Temple areas.

On their front desk sits their awards: four years running for Best Of and President's Award for 2022, 2023, 2024, and 2025.

They are proud of recent and some ongoing improvements that began in the early 2020s. All the beds are brand new and all the furniture is new. The three-story inn has re-carpeted the first floor, with the second and third next in line. Their covered, heated indoor pool has been resurfaced, making it into an indoor and outdoor pool and handicap accessible. A hot tub and gym are also available to the guests.

The hotel has an extended breakfast, offering eggs, sausage, waffles, biscuits, gravy, hot and cold cereals, yogurt, pastries, fresh fruit, juice, coffee, and tea.

The Expo Center is a huge draw for

guests at La Quinta. Their pet policy allows for cat and dog show participants the convenience of rooming with their animal.

"We are 100 percent pet-friendly," Thorne said. "We've had guinea pigs, rabbits, lizards, and snakes. You name it, we've had it here."

Other Expo Center events that bring reservations are the 4th of July Rodeo, Liberty Weekend Fair, TCI, Buttery Hardware, National Swine Show, Ram Radio Fest, Robotics, men's gymnastics, and horse shows.

They have happy hour for guests that stay with them during the weekdays, providing beer and freshly baked cookies.

The staff at La Quinta also believe they are a good choice for guests travel into the area for things such as a family funeral.

"We're here for the community. We're still standing strong after 20 years, and we just love it here in Belton. We love the people. We love the community," said Thorne.

The community is invited to the ribbon cutting, hosted by the Belton Area Chamber on Tuesday, May 19 at 1 p.m.



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## BISD succesful in Area, eyes set on Region II meet

By Clay Whittington  
The Belton Journal

The state meet is just one step away, and multiple Belton ISD are on the verge of taking it.

After months of practice and competition, the Region II-5A meet, where the top two finishers in each event automatically advance, is just beyond the horizon, occurring May 1-2 at Arlington's Maverick Stadium.

The competition will be stiff, but Belton and Lake Belton recently proved to be ready.

At the District 15-16 area meet, the Broncos and Lady Broncos delivered the top showings, placing in the top five of their fields, and more importantly, sent several on to state.

By placing among the top four of their events, numerous representatives from the school will be on hand at regionals, including an area champion.

J'yson Sherman, a junior, won the triple jump with a mark of 47 feet, 1 inch, and he will be joined by third-place finish-

er Allen Muchunu. The junior had a leap of 44-3.

The fourth-place Broncos, who amassed 57 points, also qualified senior Kendrick Jones Jr. (2nd, 400-meter run, 48.82 seconds), the 1,600 relay team (2nd, 3:20.24), sophomore Prince Moore (4th, 400, 50.12), freshman J'areus Mitchell (4th, high jump, 6-0), freshman Drew Houston (4th, pole vault, 12-0), the 400 relay team (4th, 41.27).

In the girls division, the Lady Broncos were fifth (49) thanks in part to senior Laila Page, who was second in the pole vault, clearing 9-6, freshman distance runner Keira Dzenowski, who was third (12:11.31) in the 3,200, senior Bella Garcia, who was third (11.69) in the 100.

Additionally, Moriah Rydberg, a senior, was third (45.69) in the 300 hurdles, matching the finish from the Lady Broncos' 800 relay team (3rd, 1:40.40).

The Tigers and Lady Tigers will also be on hand at regionals after placing seventh (49) and 10th (21), respectively.

Kiara King, a junior, was third (5-2) in the high jump, and sophomore Tara Stone

was fourth (124-10) in the discus for Belton, while counterparts Christian Porter, a senior, won the 100 in 10.24 and the 400 in 48.70, junior Graham Chambley won the 110 hurdles (13.82), and Luke Roberts, a freshman, was third (12-6) in the pole vault.

Finishing fifth, Lake Belton senior Nylah Berrian (400, 56.66), junior Danika Kelley (high jump, 5-2; 100 hurdles, 15.81), Belton Junior Amani House (long jump, 21-3½; 300 hurdles, 41.15), Lady Broncos sophomore Lucy Loa (1,600, 5:49.98) and the Tigers' 400 relay team (41.29) and two Lady Tigers' relay teams (400 relay, 47.17; 1,600 relay, 4:04.17) fell just shy of moving on.

Also competing at the area meet for Belton was junior Melissa Farmer (7th, shot put, 31-9), junior Alexander Matos (7th, 300 hurdles, 42.49), sophomore Cason Morton (8th, high jump, 5-10), sophomore Jada Gage (8th, long jump, 16-7½), sophomore Jayden Trevino (6th, 200, 22.57), sophomore David McCallum (7th, 400, 51.99), sophomore Oakley Torres (8th, discus, 111-6), Stone (6th, shot

put, 33-10), Page (8th, triple jump, 35-4; 7th, 200, 25.73), King (7th, 100 hurdles, 16.64), House (8th, 100 hurdles, 15.31), Chambley (8th, 300 hurdles, 43.61) and Porter (7th, long jump, 20-8).

For the Broncos and Lady Broncos, Brynley Haynes (8th, pole vault, 7-0), junior Avelyn Ponce (7th, pole vault, 7-6), junior Isaiah Fulk (7th, discus, 135-10), junior Madelyn Rivas (6th, 3,200, 13:08.39; 7th, 800, 2:35.02), junior Sarah Gray (7th, 3,200, 13:20.69), junior Noah Stevens (6th, 300 hurdles, 41.53), sophomore Camryn Mikulas (6th, 300 hurdles, 47.48), 7th, triple jump, 36-8), sophomore Ayaana Omisola (7th, long jump, 16-9½) and Loa (6th, 800, 2:34.94) saw their seasons conclude.

In relays, the Lady Tigers were sixth (4:16.67) in the 1,600 relay, and the Tigers were eighth (3:33.15) in the 1,600 relay.

Red Oak claimed the boys team title, scoring 124 points to beat out Killeen Chaparral (2nd, 77) and Midlothian (3rd, 61), while Midlothian Heritage (1st, 146), Red Oak (2nd, 84) and Midlothian (3rd, 71) occupied the top three spots in the girls division.

## Broncos dismantle Lions 11-0, Tigers drop close one with Heights

By Aries Ramos  
The Belton Journal

Lake Belton made a strong case for district supremacy on Tuesday, dismantling Waco University 11-0 in a performance that was never in doubt from the opening frame. The Broncos, who entered the game holding a one game lead over the Trojans in the standings, did nothing to relinquish that advantage, they tightened their grip on first place from the very first inning.

Logan Winkler got the offense started early, lacing an RBI double to score Zavian Rodriguez, who had reached on a single, to put Lake Belton on the board in the first. That early lead was just a preview of what was to come.

The second inning turned into another productive frame for the Broncos. Travis Moore contributed an RBI single, and Rodriguez returned the favor for an earlier run scored by coming up with a two run single of his own. By the time the dust settled after two innings, Lake Belton had stretched the advantage to 4-0 and University was already facing a significant mountain to climb.

The third inning added another layer to an already impressive afternoon. Braxtan Cope came up big with a triple, and DJ Lavallee drove him home with a groundout to push the lead to five. From there, the Broncos continued to pour it on, eventually capping the game at 11-0 to secure the run rule victory.

The win keeps Lake Belton firmly in first place in district, one game ahead of University. The two teams are scheduled to meet again Friday in Waco, giving the Trojans a chance at revenge while the Broncos look to finish what they started and lock up the district title out-

right. The Belton Tigers came into Saturday's contest against Harker Heights on the back of a dominant stretch. The Tigers had just finished sweeping a two game district series against Killeen Ellison, winning both games by a score of 15-0, and looked to carry that momentum into the weekend matchup at Tidwell Field.

Early signs were encouraging. Belton jumped out to a 2-1 lead after the first inning, showing the same offensive punch that had made life so difficult for Ellison just days before. But the game shifted in a hurry, and it was walks that proved to be the undoing of the Tigers on this particular afternoon.

Costly free passes put Belton in an early hole that kept getting deeper as the game progressed. Harker Heights capitalized on every opportunity the Tigers gave them, turning what could have been a competitive district game into a one sided 18-8 final. The loss stings, but context matters this was a team that had just posted back to back 15-0 victories, and a single rough outing does not define what has been a strong district campaign overall.

Despite the defeat, Belton's position in the standings remains solid. The Tigers currently sit in third place in district, which is good enough to earn a playoff spot as the regular season winds down.

For Belton ISD baseball as a whole, the week illustrated just how far both programs have come. The Broncos are playing their best ball at the right time and look every bit like a district champion. The Tigers, despite the loss, are playoff bound and dangerous. Both programs will be worth watching as the postseason approaches.

## Belton softball teams punch tickets to UIL's post season tournaments

By Aries Ramos  
The Belton Journal

It was a big week for Belton ISD softball as both the Belton Tigers and Lake Belton Broncos picked up significant wins to close out their respective district schedules.

Belton's varsity softball team found itself in a winner take all situation against University, needing a win to secure second place in district. When the final out was recorded, the Tigers had done exactly that, escaping with a hard fought 4-3 victory that punched their ticket to the postseason.

Tara Stone was the story in the circle. The right hander went the full seven innings and was sharp throughout, striking out 13 batters while surrendering just five

hits. Stone's ability to limit damage and keep University's offense in check proved to be the difference in a game that could have gone either way.

Offensively, the Tigers didn't pile up gaudy numbers, but they were efficient when it counted.

Iris Molina was the catalyst at the plate, reaching base on three walks and a hit to finish with a perfect on base effort on the day. She also drove in two runs, providing a significant portion of Belton's offensive production.

The Tigers trailed at one point during the contest, making the comeback victory

See **SOFTBALL**,  
Page B2

## Nulls ends golf career at Region II-5A tournament

By Clay Whittington  
The Belton Journal

An era is over. After claiming two of the last three district championships, including the most recent, Broncos standout Jackson Null's career came to a close at last week's Region II-5A tournament.

Playing at Pottsboro's Tanglewood Golf Course, the senior placed among the top 35 of the field by shooting two-round 158 while guiding Lake Belton to an 11th-place finish.

Led by Null, the Broncos shaved 29 strokes off their opening-day 355 to finish with a 681 (tied 28th) in excessively windy conditions.

Contending with winds in excess of 20 miles per hour during each round, senior Miles Parker complemented the team leader by posting a 43rd-place score of 163, while seniors Gavin Kerr (tied 73rd, 182) and Brayden Hoff (78th, 185) and freshman Carter Johnson (tied 75th, 183) completed the outing.

The quintet helped Lake Belton extend its recent district dominance with five league titles in six seasons.

In its 19th consecutive regional tournament appearance, the Tigers were 14th (732).

In his final high school competition, Belton senior Owen Babcock led the team with a 162 to tie for 40th, while the remaining representatives finished in a cluster.

Bryson Necessary, a senior, followed with a 190 (80th), and freshman Bennett Boland (81st, 193), junior Wyatt McLean (82nd, 194) and sophomore Cooper McDonald (83rd, 198) rounded out the score.

Playing as an individual, Broncos freshman Jacob Sullivan made his debut at the event and tied 87th (207).

With a first-place score of 143 — one stroke lower than Dallas Wilson senior Jaxson Henegar (2nd, 144) — Dallas Highland Park senior Jeffrey Rubenstein guided the Scots to the team title with a 587.

Prosper Walnut Grove and Highland Park's second team followed with tying second-place totals of 604.

## Belton ISD golf teams eliminated in Area round tournament

By Clay Whittington  
The Belton Journal

The Lady Tigers and Lady Broncos have the right to be disappointed. They also have plenty of reasons to be hopeful.

The season came to a close for both Belton and Lake Belton at the Region II-5A tournament, where only the top three teams and top three individuals not on a qualifying team advanced to the state tournament.

Unfortunately, however, the field was simply too talented for either team to emerge.

The Lady Tigers placed eighth among the 13 teams in attendance, posting a two-round total of 757, while the Lady Broncos were 12th (892).

Belton junior Anya Jinadatha produced the top individual showing, shooting a 179 to place 35th out of 79.

With the Lady Tigers' standout pacing the squad, junior teammate MacKenzie McGarry (48th) served as her sidekick, posting a 193, while senior Annaleigh Holliday (50th, 195), junior Abby Beck (56th, 199) and sophomore Isha Jinadatha (60th, 201) completed the total.

Belton rose two spots in the final

standings after recording their lowest round of the year — a 376 — on the second day.

The Lady Broncos were 12th (892) behind Lyliana Gonzalez. The junior shot a team-low 186 to place 43rd.

The remaining four players — senior Suellen Tillis (71st, 225), Kaylee Carubelli (72nd, 239), freshman Hayleigh McConnell (73rd, 247) and junior Lillie Mikes (75th, 252) — finished with five spots of one another.

Belton was also represented by Ella Hice, who competed as an individual. The junior was 65th with a 207.


Frisco Reedy won the team title by two strokes as its 607 narrowly edged out runner-up Frisco Centennial (609). Dallas Highland Park was third (640).

Frisco Independence junior Megan Lee finished with a 132 to earn the individual championship.

The future, however, is bright for both Belton ISD squads.

Coming off consecutive district championship runs, the Lady Tigers are only losing one player from their roster, while the Lady Broncos will also return a wealth of talent as they elevate to Class 6A next season.

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# Sports Briefs

By Clay Whittington  
The Belton Journal

New Tech senior Samatha McKenzie made history at last week's Region III-3A tournament, where she placed fifth en route to becoming the program's representative at state.

She was 16th following the opening round at the Brenham Country Club, but her second-round 82 catapulted the standout up the leaderboard.

Only the top three teams and top three individuals

not on an advancing team qualify for state.

The two-day University Interscholastic League Class 3A State Tournament will be held at Austin's Jimmy Clay Golf Course beginning May 4.

### PHYSICALS

Lake Belton will be hosting a free clinic offering ninth- and 11th-graders athletic physicals Wednesday, beginning at 5 p.m.

Participants must have a completed medical history form signed by a parent or guardian in order to take part.

### STRENGTH & CONDITIONING

Belton's summer strength and conditioning program begins June 1 and will be open to all middle school and high school athletes.

On the available dates throughout June and July, high school boys will begin two-hour sessions at 8 a.m., while middle school boys start at 7 a.m.

Regardless of school, all girls will begin each day at 9 a.m.

For more information, visit BeltonTigers.com.

## Belton Lake: Stillhouse

**FAIR.** Water normal stain; 60 degrees; 0.87 feet below pool. It is a "tale of two fisheries" right now for Lake Belton white bass. There are fish steadily making their way up the Leon River to spawn, and there are fish still residing in the main lake. Both have their pros and cons. The river fishery is best on the weekdays and during poor weather when fishing pressure is minimized, otherwise, expect plenty of company. Trolling crankbaits which imitate medium-sized threadfin shad, like the Bomber 5A, or the Storm Smash Shad will put fish in the boat slowly but steadily. If you closely watch side-imaging, you will likely spot migrating schools which can be cast to to put bonus fish in the boat. Horsehead-style jigs with an under-spin in white and chartreuse less than 2 inches long do well. Back on the main lake the deep, lethargic fish which have been present but difficult to goad into biting are now much more aggressive. Look in 35 feet or less along the old Leon River channel or Cowhouse Creek channel during bright conditions, and as shallow as 12-14 feet at first light, last light, and under cloud cover. The Mini White Bass Alabama rig with white paddle tails less than 3 inches long or MAL Originals get the job done when retrieved with a sawtooth retrieve. Report by Bob Maindelle, Holding the Line Guide Service. Catfish are excellent in 10-25 feet of water. Slow drifting with suspended baits around points and river channels has worked best for blue catfish. Flathead catfish are slow, but have been caught near structure and rock piles with live perch and shad. Channel catfish are fair and have been caught in shallow water around timber using punch bait. Report by Brian Worley, B&S Catfishing.

**FAIR.** Water stained; 60 degrees; 1.90 feet below pool. It is a "tale of two fisheries" right now for Stillhouse white bass. There are fish steadily making their way up the Lampasas River to spawn, and there are fish still residing in the main lake. Both have their pros and cons. The river fishery is best on the weekdays and during poor weather when fishing pressure is minimized, otherwise, expect plenty of company in tight quarters. Trolling crankbaits which imitate medium-sized threadfin shad, like the Bomber 5A, or the Storm Smash Shad will put fish in the boat slowly but steadily. If you closely watch side-imaging, you will likely spot migrating schools which can be cast to to put bonus fish in the boat. Horsehead-style jigs with an underpin in white and chartreuse less than 2 inch long do well. Back on the main lake the deep, lethargic fish which have been present but difficult to goad into biting are now much more aggressive. Look in 35 feet or less along the old Lampasas River channel during bright conditions, and as shallow as 12-14 feet at first light, last light, and under cloud cover. The mini white bass Alabama rig with white paddle tails less than 3 inches long or MAL Originals get the job done when retrieved with a sawtooth retrieve. Report by Bob Maindelle, Holding the Line Guide Service.



## Softball - From Page B1

all the more meaningful for a program that will now shift its focus to postseason competition.

With the win, Belton clinches second place in district and heads into the playoffs riding the confidence of a team that proved it can win a pressure packed game when everything is on the line.

If Lake Belton's district finale was a statement game, the Broncos sent a wave of runners across the plate en route to a 10 run frame that all but ended the contest before it had a chance to develop.

The damage started on a pair of early mistakes by the Lions that led to three runs. From there, Analicia Diaz drove in a run with a double and Alexis Walker scored on a sacrifice fly to push the lead further.

The inning kept rolling as Brysen Gott hit a two run double and Avery Park added an RBI single to cap one of the most productive opening frames of the season.

Lake Belton wasn't finished. In the third inning, the Broncos added three more runs, with Addison Sims delivering a RBI double down the left field line, Walker coming through again with an RBI single to right, and a Waco error bringing home the final run of the frame.

On the mound, the Broncos used a three pitcher rotation to keep Waco completely off balance. Lilliana Herrera

opened the game with a clean inning, allowing nothing across the board. Natalie Hosch and Kayleigh Jackson followed in relief and continued to shut the door, preserving what became a comfortable victory.

Lake Belton will look to close out district on a high note as the Broncos travel to face Chaparral on Friday. After a performance like this one, they'll head into that matchup with plenty of confidence.

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**Four estate planning myths that could cost your family**

Scot Hrbacek, CFP® Financial Advisor

Many people think that estate planning is just for wealthy people, but that's a myth. An estate plan is for anyone of any means who has assets to distribute. They could include a house, investment accounts or family heirlooms.

Another myth is that a will is enough. However, a will doesn't protect you if you become incapacitated.

Myth No. 3 is that equal distribution is always fair, but truthfully, every child's situation differs.

And the final myth is that you can set it and forget it. Instead, you should review your plan every few years or as major life events occur.

Estate planning can help ensure your voice is heard and your loved ones are cared for, no matter what happens.

*This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor. Edward Jones, Member SIPC*

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## LEGALS

### THE STATE OF TEXAS CITATION BY PUBLICATION CASE NUMBER 26CPB00212

To: UNKNOWN HEIRS  
PATRICK PRIMO ICKERODT, Applicant, on April 08, 2026, filed an Application to Determine Heirship in a proceeding styled: GISELA GARCIA, Deceased, and bearing the number 26CPB00212 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 April 23, 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: JOHN ERIC STOEBNER, 2106 BIRD CREEK DRIVE, 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 April 08, 2026.  
Shelley Coston County Clerk of Bell County, Texas, PO Box 480, 1201 Huey Road, Belton, TX 76513  
By: Lillian Phillips Deputy 04.23

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## LEGALS

### NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Notice is hereby given that original Letters Testamentary for the Estate of VEDA KAY WAHEED, Deceased, were issued on March 11, 2026 in Cause No. 26CPB00067, pending in the County Court at Law No. 1, Bell County, Texas to: LEAH WAHEED.

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.

c/o: Mary Wiley Attorney at Law 100 W. Central Texas Expressway, Suite 306 Harker Heights, Texas 76548

DATED the 14th day of April, 2026  
MARY WILEY Attorney for LEAH WAHEED, State Bar No.: 24032669 100 W. Central Texas Expressway, Suite 306, Harker Heights, Texas 76548, Telephone: (254) 634-6969, Facsimile: (254) 634-6587, E-mail: mary@lindleylawoffices.com  
04.23

### NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Notice is hereby given that original Letters of Administration for the Estate of BARRY DEWAYNE REED, Deceased, were issued on January 29, 2026, in Cause No. 25CPB00477, pending in the County Court at Law No. 1 of Bell County, Texas, to: JOE REED.

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. c/o: ASHLEY CLAPPER Attorney at Law, 603 North 8th Street, Killeen, TX 76541

DATED the 3<sup>rd</sup> day of Feb 2026.  
CORBIN & CLAPPER, PC, 603 North 8<sup>th</sup>, Street Killeen, TX 76541, Tel: (254) 526-4523, Fax: (254) 526-6711

By: ASHLEY CLAPPER, DANIEL A. CORBIN, State Bar No. 04814300, ASHLEY CLAPPER, State Bar No. 24076317, Legal@CorbinLegalTeam.com  
Attorney for JOE REED  
04.23

### THE STATE OF TEXAS CITATION BY PUBLICATION CASE NUMBER 26CPB00223

To: UNKNOWN HEIRS  
EVA MARIA AGUILAR, Applicant, on April 13, 2026, filed an Application for Determination of Heirship, for Appointment of Independent Administration, and for Issuance of Letters of Independent Administration in a proceeding styled: KITTY ELOUISE AGUILAR, Deceased, and bearing the number 26CPB00223 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 April 23, 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: DON E. WALDEN, 8310-1 N CAPITOL OF TEXAS HWY SUITE 305, AUSTIN TX 78731

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 April 13, 2026.  
Shelley Coston County Clerk of Bell

## LEGALS

County, Texas PO Box 480 1201 Huey Road Belton, TX 76513  
By: Lillian Phillips Deputy  
04.23

### THE STATE OF TEXAS CITATION BY PUBLICATION CASE NUMBER 26CPB00228

To: Unknown Heirs  
KELIN J. MOCK, Applicant, on April 15, 2026, filed an application to determine heirship and for letters of independent administration in a proceeding styled: CARL MOCK, Deceased, and bearing the number 26CPB00228 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 April 23, 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: BRETT PRITCHARD, 1201 S WS YOUNG DR. SUITE C, KILLEEN, TX 76543

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 April 16, 2026.  
Shelley Coston County Clerk of Bell County, Texas, PO Box 480, 1201 Huey Road, Belton, TX 76513  
By: Erika DeCasas Deputy  
04.23

### THE STATE OF TEXAS CITATION BY PUBLICATION CASE NUMBER 26CPB00229

To: Unknown Heirs  
MARIA DE LOS ANGELES-RODRIGUEZ, Applicant, on April 15, 2026, filed an application to determine heirship and for letters of independent administration in a proceeding styled: SAUL ENRIQUE LOBO, Deceased, and bearing the number 26CPB00229 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 April 23, 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: BRETT PRITCHARD, 1201 S WS YOUNG DR. SUITE C, KILLEEN, TX 76543

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.

**LEGALS**

Issued and given under my hand and seal of said Court at office on April 16, 2026. Shelley Coston County Clerk of Bell County, Texas, PO Box 480, 1201 Huey Road, Belton, TX 76513  
By: Erika DeCasas Deputy  
04.23

**THE STATE OF TEXAS  
CITATION BY PUBLICATION-PARENT  
AND CHILD**

To: Sal Vasquez, any Unknown Father and All Whom It May Concern, Respondents, in the hereinafter-styled and numbered cause: 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 a.m. on the Monday next following the expiration of 20 days after you were served this citation and petition, a default judgment may be taken against you. The Original Petition of the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, Petitioner, was filed in the 146th Judicial District Court of Bell County, Texas, on November 25, 2025, against Aniyah Contreras and Sal Vasquez, Respondent(s), numbered 25DFAM357903, and entitled "In the Interest of AHDRIAN CONTRERAZ, minor child." The suit requests to terminate the parent-child relationships and/or to appoint a managing conservator of the child. The date and place of birth of the child who is the subject of the suit is: AHDRIAN CONTRERAZ, DOB: February 24, 2023, Place of birth: Texas The court has authority in this suit to render an order in the child's interest that will be binding on you, including the termination of the parent-child relationship, the determination of paternity, and the appointment of a conservator with authority to consent to the child's adoption.

The name and address of the attorney for plaintiff is Ryan Smith, Bell County Attorney's Office, P.O. Box 1127, Belton, TX 76513

Issued and given under my hand and seal of the Court at Belton, Texas, this the 20 day of April 2026

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

By : C. Rodriguez Deputy.  
04.23

**THE STATE OF TEXAS  
CITATION BY PUBLICATION  
CASE NUMBER 26CPB00234**

To: Unknown Heirs  
BARBARA J. LITTLEJOHN, Applicant, on April 16, 2026, filed an Application to Determine Heirship in a proceeding styled: ROBERT LITTLEJOHN, Deceased, and bearing the number 26CPB00234 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 April 23, 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: SARAH E SIBLEY, FORD + BERGNER LLP 221 W. 6TH STREET SUITE 900, AUSTIN, TX 78701

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

**LEGALS**

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 April 17, 2026. Shelley Coston County Clerk of Bell County, Texas PO Box 480 1201 Huey Road Belton, TX 76513

By: Erika DeCasas Deputy  
04.23

**THE STATE OF TEXAS  
CITATION BY PUBLICATION  
CASE NUMBER 25CPB00588**

To: UNKNOWN HEIRS

LaRue Bullion, Movant, on April 15, 2026, filed an objection to reshilete offutt's application to determine heirship and for letters of dependent administration-intestate and LARUE BULLION'S application to appoint dependent administrator and for issuance of letters of dependent administration in a proceeding styled: TEE-TIMOTHY CHARLES OFFUTT, Deceased, and bearing the number 25CPB00588 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 April 23, 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 Clapper 603 North 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 April 17, 2026.

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

By: Erika De Casas Deputy  
04.23

**THE STATE OF TEXAS  
CITATION BY PUBLICATION  
CASE NUMBER 26CPB00230**

To: Unknown Heirs

TAMIKA TYESHIA GEORGE, Applicant, on April 15, 2026, filed an application to determine heirship and for letters of independent administration in a proceeding styled: JOHN DEAN GEORGE, Deceased, and bearing the number 26CPB00230 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 April 23, 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.

**LEGALS**

The name and address of the attorney for applicant is: BRETT PRITCHARD, 1201 S WS YOUNG DR. SUITE C, KILLEEN, TX 76543

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 April 17, 2026.

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

By: Erika DeCasas Deputy  
04.23

**THE STATE OF TEXAS  
CITATION BY PUBLICATION  
CASE NUMBER 26CPB00237**

To: UNKNOWN HEIRS

KEVIN TODD LAWHORN, Applicant, on April 17, 2026, filed an Application to Determine Heirship and for Letters of Independent Administration in a proceeding styled: RAY VERNON LAWHORN, JR, Deceased, and bearing the number 26CPB00237 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 April 23, 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 M. 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 April 17, 2026.

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

By: Lillian Phillips Deputy  
04.23

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS**

Notice is given that original Letters Testamentary for the Estate of Helen Gutierrez were issued on April 15, 2026, in Docket No. 26CPB00026, pending in the County Court at Law Number 1 of Bell County, Texas, to Jessica Gutierrez Ward.

All persons having claims against the estate, which is presently being administered, are required to submit them, within the time and manner prescribed by law, and before the estate is closed, addressed as follows: c/o Joshua Wilson, 1000 Heritage Center Circle, Round Rock, TX 78664  
04.23pd

**CAUGHT YOU  
LOOKING!**

# EDITORIAL

## Pardon me, but your bias is showing

My Front Porch • Lynette Sowell

The more I see the news, whether it's real, #fake-news, #alternativenews, the more I believe that most of us really don't want new information at all.

I think most of us are full of it.

Bias, that is. It's called confirmation bias.

We've already made up our minds on an issue and we home in on whatever supports our opinions, whether we be right or wrong.

We look for what backs us up, because we can't be wrong. Or, can we?

One example of confirmation bias is dealing with teenagers. There's an age when some teenagers think their parents' ideas are lame at best, or their parents' ideas stupid beyond belief, at worst.

Anyone who has parented a teen knows that you can suggest a great idea to them, but because it comes from you, they ignore it. However, if their best friend or another adult of whom they are a fan comes out with the same idea, the teen thinks it's the best thing they've ever heard and should do it right away. Or, if they ask someone for advice, they keep going until they hear exactly what they want to hear.

Another example is election time. When candi-

dates debated, I found it amusing to hear reactions from people I knew on both sides. Whoever they were, they believed their candidate had the best "showing" and therefore was truly the best candidate. Same debate!

Confirmation bias goes beyond elections and how teenagers filter information.

Confirmation bias pops up in how we do business, how we solve problems, how we make decisions and how we treat other people.

We might hear of what we think is a great idea proposed by an individual or group locally, but as soon as we learn who came up with the idea, does it lose its value?

The brain wants to hear what it already believes to be true and magnify that, but it discounts what goes against those beliefs.

This leads us to often ridicule those who believe differently than we do, on another side of an issue.

We want to be right about how we see the world, so we shy away from anything that goes against that.

I read an interesting quote about how this bias causes problems.

"If one were to attempt to identify a single problematic aspect of human reasoning that deserves attention above all others, the confirmation bias would have to be among the candidates for consideration. Many have written about this bias, and it appears to be sufficiently strong and pervasive that one is led to wonder whether the bias, by itself, might account for a significant fraction of the disputes, altercations, and misunderstandings that occur among individuals, groups, and nations," said a guy by the name of Raymond S. Nickerson.

Short version: our biases could be the reason that people get into disputes and misunderstandings in the first place.

It is a challenge to turn off that bias filter and truly listen to each other, but it can be done.

What problems could we solve, if we were to do that? What if we were willing to listen and maybe even change our minds on an issue?

Or maybe, at least, we wouldn't agree 100 percent, but there would be a lot less animosity going around.

## Grill Friends

Shop the Insanity • Darren Blair

Near the end of March 2026, something very interesting happened online.

It started when social media platform X, formerly known as Twitter, decided to automatically begin translating each user's social media postings. What this meant is that no matter what language a person first made their social media post in, whenever another user went to view that person's post it would automatically display in whatever language the viewing user had set up as their default preference. This was actually a very major turn of events, as contrary to what one might think there are a great many X users all over the world. With automatic translate in place, pre-existing language barriers were now largely erased.

For those who don't know, Temple, Texas – based indie comic publisher Iconic Comics has an ongoing comic book series called "Kamen America", a masked superhero series

that overlays American and Japanese superhero cliches onto the same set of characters, alternating between spoofing these cliches and playing them straight. Not only is the series quite popular in the United States, it's also become incredibly popular in Japan. Fans of the franchise have been finding each other on social media, and X is where many of them gather.

One of these fans, upon learning that they were now able to more freely speak with people from other countries, decided to begin asking Americans various questions about American culture... including American barbecue. Within hours of their initial posting, a large number of individuals, myself included, took turns explaining what it is, the regional variations in how meat is cooked & flavored, the common side dishes, and so forth. This led to a large number of folks from Japan joining the conversation and asking for more in-

formation. Soon, people were comparing and contrasting recipes, cooking styles, and even American versus Japanese cuisine in general. (Yes, brown rice and wild rice do have their places in American cuisine, so rice in and of itself wouldn't be out of place at a barbecue.)

Even as barbecue remained the core topic of mutual discussion, however, other topics emerged. What are monster trucks? Is American gun culture the same as it's depicted in popular media? Are school buses a real thing? And so on. In time, a number of American users decided to reciprocate by asking questions about Japanese culture.

All told, within about 72 hours of that first question being asked, the Pacific Ocean metaphorically vanished as people from two different continents reached out to each other and made acquaintances. A few people even decided to spin that wheel & take a chance seeking romantic companionship. From one

simple question, an untold number of people found peace, harmony, and common ground.

This, folks, is what I've been talking about when I say that we need to get out more, circulate, meet new people, and learn new things. Not only will we ourselves benefit from doing so, but so will the communities around us. Yeah, world peace is still a bit of a tall order at this point, however as we've seen even simple gestures can make a big difference, even if only for one or two people.

PS – if you intend to post recipes online or use recipes that you're finding online, remember that while the United States still uses standard units of measurement, most of the rest of the world has switched to metric. This means that you may well find yourself needing to convert from one to the other. There are references both in print and online that you can consult for the appropriate conversion formulas.

## It Ain't About How We Talk

Pleasant Ramblings • Mark Magnan

Preface; I just committed a journalism sin and I am sure my editor's finger is twitching to correct that word in my title. (*Editor's note: Nope, iss-ok.*)

I was reading a newspaper from a small town in another state. It is much like the Belton Journal. It has small town stories and local ads. There is also a weekly section of happenings in past years. Like most papers it has a chronicle of events from previous editions. What caught my eye was a story that was about grammar in school. It seems that students using the words "ain't" and "pritnear" were punished for using those words. It was one minute at their desk instead of recess for each violation.

Of course, this had me thinking about a lot of other words that are used without a second thought and have just become a part of our language, usually regionally.

Like this other school when I was growing up I was also chastised for using the word "ain't." One of the sayings was: Ain't, ain't a word. Like that taught us much.

Of course, Texans and a lot of southerners get labeled as less intelligent because of some of the things we say and words we use. Well, there are words and phrases that people from the north use that just don't make much sense to us either.

Now I won't point fingers, but the folks from Boston have words that sound like some foreign language. I

would swear what they are speaking is not English at all. I have conversed with a true foreigner that had an accent and spoke better English than a Bostonian.

I was thinking, there are words that I use that I am not sure I could live without. Words that color our speech that just are a part of life here and we would be lost without them. One of those is "fixin'." Now, I have taken a lot of ribbing from non-Texans over the years for using that word. What would we say in place of that simple word, and would it mean the same. For example: I am fixin' to go to town. I guess I could rephrase that as; I am getting ready to go to town. It seems simpler my way.

Of course you have all heard the Texas joke, "Hey get me a coke."

"OK, what kind?"

"Dr Pepper."

You do know that Dr Pepper is the oldest "cola" drink in the U.S., predating Coke by a year, and it was developed in Waco, Texas.

I have always heard all soft drinks called "cokes," and yes there were varieties within that including "Coke" or "Co Cola". No one from Texas that I know has ever called a coke, a "pop." I did have an uncle that called soft drinks "sodee water."

I learned to speak "Texan" when I was young, mostly

as standard communication with other Texans. We talked like our friends and relatives; it was just natural. As students in school, we did learn the proper words and how to spell correctly. We obviously didn't use "ain't" in class. We could say "coke" as a generic description of soft drinks. Even "y'all" was tolerated at times. That is more common in the south and is a good allaround term. I have heard "pritnear" and also other wayward words. There is another word that I have no clue as to how to spell. It is the "word", or perhaps the sound, that a parent would use to indicate that what you are about to do is wrong and don't even think about doing it and stop right this second.

I appreciate the need to speak well and sound intelligent. I learned a long time ago to lose my "Texas" accent, even though it was Texas radio that pushed me to change. It doesn't matter here since my accent doesn't show through in the newspaper print. It is good to keep part of your heritage, certain words or habits that you grew up with, even if you have the Boston accent. However, there are times when it just ain't right to use words that make you seem less intelligent. I am glad my recess wasn't cut short because of my "Texas" words and phrases, that would have been a terrible punishment. Y'all tune in next week for a continuation of some Texas specifics.

## Confessions of a Rock Star Wanna-be

Coffee Talk • Renae Brumbaugh Green

Have you ever had one of those awful moments when you realized the whole world was laughing at you, but not with you? You know what I'm talking about – the toilet paper on the shoe moment. The broccoli stuck in the teeth moment. I had one of those moments a few years ago, and the memory still haunts me.

About a decade ago, I had the honor of performing a couple of numbers in the Dream Legends production at Vives Les Arts Theater in Killeen. First, I was a member of the gospel group, Point of Grace. Then I donned a long blonde Hannah Montana wig and impersonated Mama Michelle in the Mamas and the Papas. I looked like a middle-aged Barbie. I shared the stage with such legendary greats as Captain and Tennille, the Spice Girls, Kenny Rogers and Dolly Parton, and many others.

I love performing. On stage, I can pretend to be the person I wish I were in real life. On stage, I get to be one of the cool kids. In real life, I fit into the slightly-nerdy-awkward, kinda-clueless category.

So as a member of the Legends cast, I felt like a rock star. As far as the audience knew, I was one of the in crowd. Nobody really knew that beneath the confident exterior hid a true-blue geek.

In the last number of the evening, the entire cast performed a Beatles song. We all wore those little dark, round

John Lennon sunglasses – the kind you order from Oriental Trade Company. Mine had purple lenses. We entered the stage, swayin' and singing. We ventured into the audience, groovin' and clapping. We returned to the stage for final bows. During the entire song, I noticed people looking at me. Nudging and pointing. I waved. They waved. I sang. They smiled and nodded. In that moment, I spread the joy. I repeat – I was a rock star!

The song ended, and we all filed into the lobby to shake hands and meet the audience. I stowed the glasses in my pocket and acted gracious and humble, because that's what rock stars do at this point in the concert. People politely shook my hand, nodded, and moved on to the next person. Finally, a woman paused and said, "You were so funny up there, with your one-eyed glasses!"

One-eyed glasses? I pulled the shades from my pocket. Sure enough, there was one lens. I promise there were two when I put them on.

The realization flooded in. Dream Legend my foot, this was more like a comic nightmare. All the air escaped from my over-inflated rock star ego as I faced the truth. I was not one of the cool kids, even on stage. My true nerdy-geeky-toilet-paper-on-shoe identity was too overpowering to hide. Everyone knew the truth.

My former friend, who shall remain nameless, burst

into laughter. "I thought you knew," she said. "I thought you were just being goofy! That would be so like you." (I planned to hold this grudge against her for eternity, or at least two days, at which time I would consider gracing her with my forgiveness.) She laughed so hard she had to leave the line and sit down.

Then, I couldn't help myself. I was embarrassed. I was indignant. And she was right. This was one of the funniest nerdy things I'd ever done – thinking I was all that, when in reality I was a Cyclops. Before I knew it, I had joined her in a fit of junior high giggles. People around us were starting to wonder if our water bottles were spiked.

So now you know the truth about me. I'm not cool. I'm a geek. A nerd. A rock star wanna-be.

But if you could just, for a moment, see past the weird one-eyed sunglasses, beyond the nerdiness, I assure you, you'll find the soul of a... well, to be honest, I'm pretty much a what-you-see-is-what-you-get kind of gal. So I guess you'd find the soul of a loveable, slightly nerdy rock star wanna-be.

But seriously, guys. If you see me walking around with one lens in my sunglasses, take pity and tell me.

*"Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart." 1 Samuel 16:7*



### Newcomers Club Activities April

- 04/24: Trailblazers Walking Group
- 04/25: Jimmy's Egg
- 04/27: Well Read Women,  
Monday Canasta
- 04/28: Singing Bluebonnets

### May

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 05/04: Chat 'n' Canasta                             | 05/18: Snack Time Mah Jongg                  |
| 05/06: Monthly Luncheon,<br>Popcorn Bridge          | 05/19: Bunco                                 |
| 05/11: Bookworms                                    | 05/20: Popcorn Bridge                        |
| 05/12: Singing Bluebonnets                          | 05/21: Meet & Greet,<br>Nonfiction Book Club |
| 05/14: Mexican Train Dominoes,<br>Couples Night Out | 05/22: Trailblazers Walking Group            |

**"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](http://www.bellcountynewcomers.com)."**

**AS+K and Safety Planning Suicide Prevention Training - Apr 24**  
Central Counties Services and CTCOG will be sponsoring AS+K and Safety Planning Suicide Prevention Training on Friday, April 10 and again on April 24. The class will run from 8:30 AM to Noon on both dates. These are identical one-day sessions offered twice to accommodate those who may have scheduling conflicts. This FREE, evidence-based training is one of the most effective tools available to help prevent suicide and address this silent epidemic in our communities. To register, please visit Eventbrite or text 254-718-3563 with your name and the date you would like to attend.

**Killeen Kickers Square Dance Club - Apr 28 & May 5**  
Square Dancing is a great activity for the mind, the body and a way to meet new friends. The Killeen Kickers will have (2) "Open House" nights on Tuesday, April 28 and May 5 from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. We invite you to come join us and experience square dancing for yourself. Singles, Couples and families are welcome. We meet at the Keys Valley Baptist Church, 4393 W US Highway 190, Belton. Check out our website: [killeenkickers.weebly.com](http://killeenkickers.weebly.com). For more information contact Christina Wiggins at 915-309-7919.

**MPR Explorers@ The Point - Apr 30**  
The MPR Explorers will host Michele Weisman, an MPR resident, author, and member of the local small-business community. Weisman also reports for the Belton Journal, a regional newspaper serving Belton and nearby areas. She will present "My Life as a Newspaper Reporter," sharing how she entered the field, prepares for assigned stories, and how reporting differs from writing a book. April 30, 10:00 am. - 11:30 a.m. at Sol de Jalisco, 101 Morgan's Point Blvd, Morgan's Point Resort. Open to the community; guests purchase their own meal.

**CENTEX Salsa & Hot Sauce Festival- May 2**  
Hosted by LULAC Council 4971 in partnership with Chef Flaco's Gourmet Foods, Wicked Provisions, and Sovy Realty Group, this vibrant, family-friendly festival promises a full day of flavor, fun, and community celebration—and best of all, admission is completely FREE. Festival-goers can look forward to the Salsa Contest, open to the public—bring your best recipe and compete for bragging rights. Award-winning salsas and fiery hot sauces to sample and enjoy. A wide variety of local vendors showcase unique goods. Festive music to keep the energy high all day long, and delicious eats from food trucks on-site. May 2, 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 pm at Whistle Stop Park, 58 S 11th St, Temple.

**Mary Ruth Briggs Library Open House — May 2**  
A family-friendly Cinco de Mayo Open House featuring a 10:30 a.m. performance by the Lake Belton High School Performance Choir, a kids' craft table, and an interactive "Imagine the Possibilities" community idea board — all designed to welcome residents into the one-room Mary Ruth Briggs Library, introduce the new Friends group, and invite the community to help shape a vibrant, creative future for Morgan's Point Resort, 8 Morgan's Point Blvd, May 2, 10:00 a.m. to noon. For more information email [library@mprtx.us](mailto:library@mprtx.us).

**Bell County Master Gardener - May 6**  
Join Master Gardener Angela Brunaugh as we explore the world of bees. From honeybees to our native bee population including bumble bees, we will take a deeper dive on the role they play in our local ecosystem including pollination. We will discuss the plants they like and what we can do to bring them to our gardens and help ensure their success. May 6, 6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. at SMART Musuem, 408 N 10th St, Nolanville, T. Register at [xmg.org](http://xmg.org)

**The Murph Challenge - May 23**  
Honoring the legacy of Michael P. Murphy. Step up to the Murph Challenge and test what you are truly capable of. One mile run, 100 pull-ups, 200 push-ups, 300 air squats, and another one mile run at Chupacabra Strength & Conditioning. For more information call 254-228-5771.

**NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness)** will meet both on TUESDAY, April 14th and April 28th 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.

**Temple-Belton Ladies Lion Club Meeting** Second and Fourth Monday of every month at 6:30 pm at the Belton V.F.W., 2311 S. Pearl St., Belton.

**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](mailto:GayleInBelton@gmail.com) or (254) 718-4197.

**Marine Corp League** will meet the third Tuesday of each month at VFW 3859. Dinner is served at 6:30 p.m. and meeting will begin at 7:00 p.m. 201 VFW Dr, Harker heights, Tx 76548. Email [commandant@mc11249tx.com](mailto:commandant@mc11249tx.com) for more information.

**Aspen Hospice and Palliative Care Volunteers Needed** Listed here are many ways you can help make a difference for our hospice patients. You can provide companionship, listen to music, read, reminisce, play games, cards, checkers, paint nails, apply makeup, curl hair or take them on walks. Please visit [aspenhealthcare.net](http://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](mailto: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](mailto:bettyreichert@yahoo.com) or Kathy Bement at [katshookandneedle@gmail.com](mailto:katshookandneedle@gmail.com). Anyone interested in joining the local chapter of the Crochet Guild of America will also need to join the National Crochet Guild of America. Visit [www.crochet.org](http://www.crochet.org) for details.

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

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

**Engage & Empower with BISSD** Belton ISD believes the learning experiences of our students are enhanced through the engagement of our community. We invite parents and community members to get involved in our schools. Register as a volunteer with our new volunteer and partnership system at the following link: [https://beltonisd.ezcommunicator.net/edu/beltonisd/login\\_form.aspx?app=0](https://beltonisd.ezcommunicator.net/edu/beltonisd/login_form.aspx?app=0).

## Community Information

**TAKE ME HOME PROGRAM** The Belton Police Department is adopting the Take Me Home Program, aimed at helping individuals who need special assistance to return safely home after getting lost. The program is a database with photos and personal information to help police officers find someone who is lost or wandered away from home. Take Me Home is designed for individuals who may need additional aid including those with Dementia, Autism or specific mental health needs. It's free to register someone and the data is kept confidential to first responders. You can sign up a loved one here: [www.beltontexas.gov/take-me-home](http://www.beltontexas.gov/take-me-home). Read more about the program here: [https://www.beltontexas.gov/news\\_detail\\_T11\\_R1166.php](https://www.beltontexas.gov/news_detail_T11_R1166.php).



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

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

**Citizens Helping in Police Service (CHIPS)** are extra eyes and ears while in areas where large groups may gather. Contact the Belton Police Dept. to join.

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

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

### STAY CONNECTED: STAY INFORMED

GOT A LOCAL EVENT, CHURCH GATHERING, OR MEETING?  
TELL US AND KEEP EVERYONE IN THE LOOP.

EMAIL DETAILS TO:  
**NEWS@BELTONJOURNAL.COM**  
OR CALL (254) 939-5754

IF WANT TO SPONSOR THIS PAGE  
EMAIL: **DAVID@BELTONJOURNAL.COM**

# Business Showcase

## Scotti's Italian Ice, bringing the Jersey shore to Texas



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www.scottisitalianice.com

**Michele Weisman**  
The Belton Journal

Scotti's Italian Ice ships gourmet New York-style Italian ice for Belton residents to enjoy. Owner and retired veteran Ann Scotti, inspired by her daughter's fond memories of Italian ice when visiting family in Jersey, has faithful customers less than one year after opening.

People who don't know about Jersey Shore Italian ice come expecting an icy treat and leave with a creamy ice with multiple flavor options ready for enjoying. Scotti and her daughters, Mikayla Devins and Danielle Devins, enjoy the customer excitement over the newfound dessert in Belton, Texas.

"What we have is a cream base and also a water base," said Scotti.

Proud of their flavor selection, including U.S.A. Rainbow, Cotton Candy, and Pina Colada, they also sell Italian soda, iced espresso, and, in multiple flavors, fresh squeezed lemonade.

Easy to spot in the teal trailer parked at local events, first located last summer in a rented space behind the Gin, is now sought out for community events and for contractual events.

Talking about their start, in June 2025, Scotti said, "Luamae's Cajun Cuisine showed the way and helped us."



Scotti's Italian Ice, hosted by the Belton Area Chamber of Commerce, invites you to their ribbon cutting, Thursday, June 4 at 4 pm at 7546 Prairie View Rd Ste 130 in Temple. At this location, they plan to have more of what their customers have asked for, including soft serve and more flavors.

The location in Temple, "came about, and we thought, let's take the leap of faith and just go for it," Scotti said.

Events coming up that Scotti's Italian Ice will be at: The 46<sup>th</sup> annual Rabbit Fest in Copperas Cove on Thursday, May 14 through Sunday the 17, the Belton Downtown Street Party 4th of July celebration, the Liberty Park Belton celebration at noon, Bell County Comic Con at the Cadence Bank Center Saturday, Aug 1 and 2, and Oktoberfest in Copperas Cove on Saturday, Sept 12.

Scotti's Italian Ice gives a 10% military discount. Read their full menu at scottisitalianice.com and consider booking Scotti's Italian Ice for school activities, company events, birthdays, or a wedding.

**Bell County Museum**  
**Spring Lecture Series:**  
*Texas Writers*  
An Evening with Stephen Harrigan and Bryan Burroughs





Join us for a special presentation exploring the career and works of Stephen Harrigan, one of Texas' more beloved authors.

**Date: May 08, 2026**  
**Time: 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM**

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**kids' corner**



### What's the Difference?

Find the four differences between the two pictures.

**A**



**B**



Answers: 1. Bunnies in background 2. Missing egg in hand 3. Extra egg in grass 4. Shadow on tree trunk

Answer: Easter

### THIS DAY IN HISTORY



**1792:** "La Marseillaise," the French national anthem, is composed by Claude Joseph Rouget de Lisle.

**1859:** British and French engineers break ground for the Suez Canal.

**1954:** The first practical solar cell is demonstrated by Bell Telephone Labs.

### NEW WORD

**FAITH**

a strong belief or trust in something

### Holiday FACT:



This religious holiday is celebrated by billions of people across the globe each spring.